EVOLVING THE *POCHÉ*:
FROM WALL TO OCCUPIED SPACE IN THE DESIGN FOR COMM/UNITY IN
NORTH ST. BONIFACE, WINNIPEG, MANITOBA, CANADA

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ABSTRACT

This project is a point of departure for re-thinking one of the major tools of interior design practice - the wall. Ubiquitous in nature, the wall has a seemingly straightforward and simplistic understanding. The focus of this project is to re-examine it's typical understanding, and re-situate it's poetic presence within the built environment through a designed intervention. Through investigating theoretical concepts such as boundary, interiority and threshold, along with memory, trace, and void; an evolution of wall into *poché* begins to ensue. *Poché* is an alternate term used here to regard the hidden depth and dimensionality of the wall. Through an adaptive reuse methodology, a new use for a derelict industrial building in North St. Boniface has been redesigned into a community center for members of that given neighbourhood. Overall, the study facilitated a fresh understanding of both terms - *poché* and wall - then subsequently translated those findings into a designed interior.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF SCALE DRAWINGS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL

Figure 1: Example of interior wall graphic. Found on page 23. Used with permission from Amerikka Design Office Ltd. <http://www.contemporist.com/2012/08/21/chicos-restaurant-by-amerikka-design-office/>

Figure 3: Interior courtyard created by void cut. Found on page 42. Used with permission from photographer Roland Halbe. <http://www.designboom.com/weblog/cat/9/view/13017/jakob-macfarlane-orange-cube.html>

Figure 4: Floor plan showing conical void cut. Found on page 44. Used with permission from architecture firm Jakob+Macfarlane. <http://www.designboom.com/architecture/jakob-macfarlane-orange-cube/>

Figure 5: *Le cube orange* in site context along river. Found on page 45. Used with permission from photographer Roland Halbe. <http://www.designboom.com/weblog/cat/9/view/13017/jakob-macfarlane-orange-cube.html>

Figure 6: *Le cube orange* building section. Found on page 46. Used with permission from architecture firm Jakob+Macfarlane. <http://www.designboom.com/architecture/jakob-macfarlane-orange-cube/>

*Unless otherwise stated all Images, tables and photographs are the original work of the author.

1.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

In 1909, St. Boniface, a neighbourhood district of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, faced a thriving industrial boom when financial grants encouraged multiple industries to relocate to the area. This included places such as tanneries, stockyards, meat packers, and flourmills (Siamanadas, n.d., under "Commerce and industry"). The building located at 75 Archibald Street is a remnant of this industrial boom, and reminds us of the architectural edifices once packed with life, objects, and process. However, what currently remains there is a dilapidated, abandoned building. The building itself is situated on a 2.2-acre lot that backs onto the confluence of the Seine River and Red River: a one-of-a-kind site inside the city worthy of an overhaul.

This practicum project for the University of Manitoba as fulfillment for the degree of Master of Interior Design is an adaptive reuse strategy for this neglected structure and respective site at 75 Archibald Street. Along with its industrial past, St. Boniface is also historically Winnipeg's hub of Francophone culture and language (City of WInnipeg. Province of Manitoba. 2002, 6). According to the Canadian Census Data of 2006, approximately one-third of the neighbourhood's residents speak both official languages of Canada: French and English, and just less than two-percent speak only French. The majority of the district although, at almost seventy-percent, does not speak French - only English (Statistics Canada and City of Winnipeg 2006, 4). During a Building Communities Initiative project for the City of Winnipeg, a number of St. Boniface residents responded to a survey regarding their thoughts and impressions of their neighbourhood. Among the top qualities of the district that they valued was the French culture and its family and people oriented community (2002, 13). This practicum project aims to reconnect this disengaged building with the residents of its respective district. It will do so as a re-adaptation to a community center typology, appropriately

named Comm/unity. This center has a two-part focus in its overall reconstruction. Like most community center typologies the major focus for the building is recreational programming with the inclusion of sporting facilities and facilitation of leisure activities for the local community. The other component of the programming is dedicated to providing an educational environment focused on language. Through the use of technology, an open computer lab offers self-directed language learning programs. This lab operates as a drop-in facility, allowing community members to use it whenever they desire during the operating hours of the building. The programming is a response to the building's situation in Winnipeg's Francophone district, which has seventy-percent of residents that are Anglophone. The lab enables those who want to learn, expand, or further practice their French language skills to do so in an economically viable way.

1.1.1 Language Learning Through Technology

For quality language learning, the use of technology currently cannot fully replace the traditional pedagogical model of a teacher-student relationship in a classroom setting, but it does however offer up its many advantages. Among these advantages, this approach to language learning offers a flexible, enjoyable, and non-threatening format for gaining further knowledge of a targeted language (Felix 1998, 54).

According to Uschi Felix of Monash University in Australia, technology like the World Wide Web she attests "is the most exciting tool that has emerged to date in language learning" (Felix 1998, 54). For the purposes of Comm/unity, it becomes an easily accessible and supplementary program for those interested in learning another language. Although Comm/unity is focused on the French language specifically, technology allows for a multitude of other language programs to be easily integrated into the facility as well. Therefore the center can be used not only by nearby residents for French, it can also serve the greater population of Winnipeg and the multitude of people who have immigrated from non-English speaking countries to further their English language skills. According to a statistical report conducted by the Province of Manitoba, 97,000 people from around the world have immigrated to Manitoba since the year 2000. The growth of this population segment will only continue to increase; by 2016 the province's goal is to welcome 20,000 immigrants into the province each year. This is a significant source of Winnipeg's population growth and continues to be a critical part of the city's economy and society as a whole (Manitoba Labour and Immigration 2010, 2). Language plays a significant role in being able to integrate successfully into a new culture and society, and Comm/unity aims to facilitate that process.

1.1.2 Comm/unity: What's in a Name?

The words 'comm' and 'unity', which are intentionally split in the title for this community center, were chosen for their significance to the project. They suggest unity of communication, which refers to the objective of this center to encourage Anglophone users to engage with the French language through an accessible and casual format of individual computer learning. Some nearby facilities of note such as the Franco-Manitobain Cultural Center or Centre Culturel Franço-Manitobain exist in the neighbourhood, but focus on the promotion and implementation of French-language artistic and cultural activities (Centre Culturel Franco-Manitobain 2010). Although usage of these facilities is not strictly for the Francophone residents, its inherent French overtone segregates a large portion of the neighbourhoods English speaking residents.

Lori J. Miller suggests that facilities such as recreation centers have refocused to act as town centers that are "community driven in planning, design, and use," as opposed to a place of mere scheduled activities and sporting events (Miller 2001, 23). The words 'community' and 'unity' relate to this idea of a community facility operating as more of a town center, whereby all members of the community comprised of any age, gender, race, or language are welcomed and encouraged to drop by on a regular basis and linger as desired. Comm/unity is focused on offering intergenerational programming from youth to adult, to senior citizens and families.

Lastly, the word communication also relates to information technologies. This facility offers more technological advances than what is currently available from most other community centers in Winnipeg. Wireless Internet will be readily available throughout the community center, from within the interior of the building and also the landscaped exterior, enabling an unobstructed Wi-Fi connection from inside to out. The computer lab offers a stationary touchdown point for those who do not have or prefer not to bring their own computers, tablets or smart phones to use only the Wi-Fi. The computers are also equipped with language learning software programs where community members can drop-in on a desired basis to learn and practice their language skills. The computer lab also provides a technologically driven classroom setting that can be rented out for various community-based programs such as those listed in the Winnipeg Leisure Guide.

1.1.3 Theoretical Background

As an inquiry into interior design methodology, this project also examines the spatial experience of a wall section. My theoretical research for this project initially began with an interest in boundaries and conditions of threshold. Through a gradual process I focused on the subject of the wall section specifically. Walls are fundamental tools used in the formation of space in interior design practice. A wall acts not only as a restrictive separation segmenting various spaces, but when considered effectively, a wall section can be an extended threshold or transition between distinguished spaces. This can aid in users' interaction, memory, and overall experience of place. Through Chapter 2, I examine the use of the term poché as opposed to wall and discuss the spatial opportunities that it affords. This design for a community center in North St. Boniface is an exercise in evolving the wall into poché.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

A number of objectives have been established to assist in understanding the overall direction and motives of this project as a whole. These objectives are as follows:

1. To breathe new life into a diminishing, seemingly neglected building that represents part of the city's industrial fabric and history.

2. To expand my knowledge of interior design and related skills through an in-depth exploration of the wall and poché.

3. To design a comprehensive project that responds to the unique site and neighbourhood conditions of the selected building, as well as the projected user groups of the facility.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

A set of research questions is used to provide a limited scope for this project and serves as a guiding framework for the research. These questions are as follows:

1. How can I reinstate a derelict building and revitalize its meaning and purpose within the community without resorting to a complete demolition?

2. How can I further explore and utilize such a trivial and banal aspect of the built environment, the wall, in order to further my understanding and perspective of interior design as a whole?

3. How is it possible to design a wall so that it is further utilized within a spatial environment as opposed to a mere background presence?

1.4 LIMITS AND BIASES

A design project developed for academic purposes as opposed to real world practice is inevitably subject to a few inherent biases. Considering the design intervention for this particular practicum had no intentions of actually being built, aspects such as budget, timeline, and feasibility were outside the scope of the project. This project's intentions focused on implementing the theoretical concepts studied in Chapter 2 into a successful design intervention, which yielded a conceptual approach to the design itself and associated drawings, as opposed to a design package that would be ready to issue for construction.

In regards to the adaptive reuse approach to the project, in a real world situation the need for input and expertise from other professions, such as a structural engineer, would be imperative. As well, an exceedingly accurate account of the existing building's as-built measurements and in-depth knowledge of foundation construction and structural properties would be needed.

Such an in-depth account on the building's existing structural state was beyond the scope of this academic design project.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

Throughout this project, a number of methods and techniques are employed to provide a foundation for informing the final design intervention. The primary method utilized is that of a comprehensive qualitative analysis of relevant literary sources. These sources are related to the main subject of inquiry for the practicum project, which is the wall section or poché. This encompasses such correlated concepts as boundary, thresholds, and liminal or transitional spaces. Sources from a variety of disciplines such as literary criticism and theory as well as philosophy are analyzed to provide a broad perspective on the subject area at large, being careful not to limit the discussion to a strictly architectural or design point of

view. This investigation and analysis process provides a theoretical framework needed for exploring the design intervention phase of this project.

Another method utilized in this practicum is an analysis of selected precedents. The precedents, outlined in Chapter 3, are comprised of two architectural design projects and one art installation. They were chosen for their varying degrees of relevance to this practicum, considering aspects such as design aesthetic, programmatic functions, and spatial planning. The analysis of these precedents revealed a number of practical and theoretical approaches for this project that subsequently aid in informing the overall design strategy for Comm/unity.

Lastly, a site inventory and analysis was conducted of 75 Archibald Street and its surrounding neighbourhood context. The site analysis bears great significance for this practicum, as one of the objectives is for the design intervention to respond to the specific site conditions and neighbourhood context of which the building is situated.

The site analysis takes stock of any noteworthy features of the neighbourhood along with a SWOT[1] analysis for the immediate site context. This information assists in guiding design decisions during the programme development stage of this project and developing circulation paths within the building.

[1] SWOT analysis refers to establishing the various strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of a given situation, in this case it is the site at 75 Archibald Street.

1.6 CLIENT

Community centers in Winnipeg operate as a dual partnership between the municipal government and the General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres (the GCWCC). The City of Winnipeg is the official owner of any community center in the city, however they are run and managed by the GCWCC. According to the council's website, the organization is comprised of a board of volunteers consisting of an elected Executive Committee. Comm/unity will operate under these particular guidelines for community centers in Winnipeg. The volunteer board will coordinate all programmed activities and organizational needs related to the facility.

1.6.1 History of the GCWCC

According the GCWCC's website, the organization was established in 1971 when Unicity was formed in Winnipeg through the amalgamation of the thirteen autonomous municipalities and the City of Winnipeg. The representative board of the council is comprised of members who are "appointed by each of the five

District Centre Boards, a representative of the City of Winnipeg, Community Services Department, and the Winnipeg Minor Hockey Association" (under "About Us"). The GCWCC's responsibilities have dramatically increased over the past decade due to changes in their mandate. Such increased areas of responsibility include leadership development, policy statements, as well as administering grants – both Municipal and Provincial.

1.7 USERS

Users of the community center fluctuate depending on the type of programming offered throughout the year and during the week. According to the facility coordinator for the GCWCC, the main demographic frequenting community centers in Winnipeg continue to be children and youth but with an increasing trend to offer daytime programming for preschoolers and seniors (Cindy Fox, October 29, 2012, telephone conversation). Other users of the building are likely to include parents of children attending scheduled activities, coaches and instructors, support staff such as janitorial or kitchen staff, full-time facility managers and any part-time staff needed.

1.8 UPCOMING CHAPTERS

This practicum document is subdivided into five Chapters. The first Chapter serves as an introduction to the project providing an overview of the entire project including significance, objectives, research questions, research methods and techniques used, along with an overview of the clients and users considered for this project.

Chapter Two outlines the theoretical framework for this project through an investigation and analysis of a number of seminal texts. The majority of subject matter for the investigation is that of the wall or *poché*, which is a specific term I have chosen to use throughout this project because it best describes the potentials embedded in the wall section. A background context to the *poché* has also been examined through tangential concepts such as boundary, interiority, and threshold. Literature from disciplines such as philosophy, literary criticism and theory, as well as from architectural discourse has been reviewed to provide a broad spectrum to the investigation. A section on memory, trace, and void has also been included in the theoretical framework to further contextualize the adaptive reuse strategy of this project. Two contemporary artists, Doris Salcedo and Gordon Matta-Clark are studied to demonstrate their unique visual approach to expressing the concept of memory and facilitating the act of remembering. Authors considered in this Chapter include: Gaston Bachelard, Colin Rowe, Robert Slutsky, Wolfgang Meisenheimer, Subha Mukherji, and Mieke Bal.

Chapter Three identifies a number of precedents related to this practicum. The first project is *Le Cube Orange*, which is a visually outstanding office and retail building located in Lyon, France and designed by architecture firm Jakob + MacFarlane. The second precedent considered is Gallery White Block located in Heyri, South Korea. This gallery was designed by interdisciplinary firm SsD Architecture + Urbanism, and exemplifies a responsive approach to the building's site context. It demonstrates an innovative approach to interior spatial planning that develops a relationship to the respective exterior landscape, according to the firm's website, it is said to be experienced as an interior topography (SSD Inc. under "White Block Gallery"). The final precedent considered is a deconstructive art installation by Gordon Matta-Clark involving an abandoned, derelict building located in Belgium. Each of these precedent analyses includes a description and examination of the design, or its typology depending on its selected relevance, and then culminating with a summary of its overall relevance to this project.

Chapter Four consists of the site investigation, where an in-depth look at the neighbourhood and immediate site context is compiled – outlining circulation, notable landmarks, movement of the sun's path through the seasons and time of day, noteworthy views and vistas from the building, and a SWOT analysis. This Chapter includes information on the buildings layered history and construction, then concludes with a creative exercise and conceptual direction for the project.

Chapter Five includes the complete design intervention for Comm/unity, where it is described and illustrated in full detail. Incorporated in this Chapter is the schematic design phase, programming, and final design drawings consisting of floor plans, sections, elevations, details, and perspectives.

1.9 KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

TABLE 1 KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Boundary	A point of delineation between two disparate elements or zones. A boundary inherently embodies movement and transition.
Interiority	A set of phenomenological characteristics that make up a physical interior space, but which is not necessarily a physical space in and of itself.
Threshold	A transitory zone of change.
Adaptive Reuse	The reuse of an old building to suit a new use, which the building was not originally intended for.
Liminal Space	Synonymous with in-between space, threshold space, or transitional zone.
Transition	A threshold of change. Can be a single point or a extended zone.
Poché	This term is an alternate to the term wall. It specifically refers to the hidden depth and dimensionality of the wall, focusing on it's existence as a thick-edge as opposed to a surface condition.

For more detailed information on these terms, please refer to Chapter 2.

Key words: boundary, interiority, threshold, interior and exterior, interior design, community center, adaptive reuse, liminal space, transitions.

LITERARY INVESTIGATION AND ANALYSIS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Walls are a staple of everyday life and a vital component to the built environment. They provide structure and rigidity to the framework known as architecture. Walls also act as spatial guides that direct the user through buildings, delineating and demarcating spaces into a path of clarity and understanding. Such a significant but often mundane and arguably ill-considered aspect of the built environment deserves further investigation and reexamination. This Chapter reviews a critical selection of contemporary literature on the subject of wall and its related concepts. Firstly, I have reviewed the wall not only in its literal sense as a tangible surface, but also in its phenomenological context as a condition of boundary. The idea of boundary is analyzed and defined through seminal texts by authors such as Elizabeth Grosz and Beatriz Colomina. Boundary is then contextualized through the analysis of the tangential concept of interiority and as well as through Gaston Bachelard's prominent text on *The Poetics of Space*. Subsequently, I discuss the inherent banality embodied in the semantics of the term wall and consider an alternative use of the word *poché* as outlined by Wolfgang Meisenheimer – who reveals opportunities embedded in the walls or "pockets" of architecture. Thirdly, threshold as a concept is examined to resituate the wall or poché as an interstitial, transitional space, as opposed to a mere two-dimensional surface condition. Lastly, to contextualize my approach to adaptive reuse with this project, an investigation of two visual artists who deal with concepts of memory, trace, and void are examined. Doris Salcedo and Gordon Matta-Clark have produced work with powerful influence throughout the field of the visual arts as well as architecture, and examining their practice has helped to inform the planning stages of my design for reuse of an industrial building as a community center. Finally, this Chapter culminates with a summary and conclusion of my investigation and discusses the potential design implications this literature review has on the design phase of this project found in the following Chapters.

2.2 CONTEXT

Beginning this practicum project, I had a deep interest in boundary conditions and the potentiality of interconnecting interior and exterior spaces of the built environment. The process commenced with reviewing and researching these broad subject matters from a wide array of sources and from different disciplines. Through a reductive process, the focused point of inquiry culminated at the spatial condition of the wall. Lois Weinthal, editor of interior design theory reader *Toward a New Interior*, discusses the subject of the wall in a profile reviewing the work of contemporary Dutch designer Petra Blaisse. Weinthal examines the typical practice of representing a wall in architectural drawing as simply a line. She asserts that the line contains no information regarding the structure or materiality of the particular wall or boundary condition that it is representing – ultimately signifying that the wall is "an absolute fixed position" (Weinthal 2012, 227). This method of representation indicates an understanding of wall as a fixed and rigid object – a non-permeable entity that embodies restriction, limitation, and rigidity. Boundary on the other hand is more flexible in its definition. The terms wall and boundary are inextricably linked, even interchangeable at times. Walls, in general, are all specific instances

of a boundary condition, alternatively however all instances of a boundary condition are not necessarily tangible walls. To provide a contextual foundation to my investigation into the wall, this Chapter begins by defining the concept of boundary to further enlighten the preconceived notions of wall – beginning with the analysis of the relationship between interior and exterior.

2.2.1 The Dialectics Of Outside And Inside

The built environment has three distinct zones that can be experienced explains Meisenheimer. These include: the space outside of the building-covering or exterior space, the interior space and the body of the building. Each of these zones has distinctive spatial characteristics to be felt and experienced.

The space outside of the building-body, or the exterior as it is perceived from the interior of the building, is an "open, limitless expanse," while "the interior is closed in all around," and the building-body subsequently gives form to these two spaces (Meisenheimer 2011, 626).   The experiences of the built environment as outlined by Meisenheimer suggests the building-body, which is also contested here as walls or boundary, functions to delineate the world we live in into specified segments. The boundary effectively demarcates that which is interior and that which is exterior - or otherwise, the private from the public. French philosopher Gaston Bachelard highlights the role this line of separation plays in "The Dialectics of Outside and Inside," which is a subsection of his seminal book *The Poetics of Space*. The use of the term dialectics is of particular importance here as it characterizes the link between the two seemingly

disparate realms of the built environment - interior and exterior. The word dialectic is synonymous with discussion, debate, dialogue, logical argument, reasoning, argumentation, and polemics. He writes:

> outside and inside form a dialectic of division, the obvious geometry of which blinds us as soon as we bring it into play in metaphorical domains. It has the sharpness of the dialectics of 'yes' and 'no', which decides everything. (Bachelard 1964, 211)

The boundary acts as a mediator – a point where these realms meet and the discourse begins. Bachelard denotes, "outside and inside are both intimate - they are always ready to be reversed, to exchange their hostility" (Bachelard 1964, 217-218). suggesting that the inside and outside are in a constant state of flux – influencing one another while entwined in a dynamic and fluid relationship. The boundary

therefore is not rigid nor of a fixed position, like their modes of representation would suggest. Without a somewhat malleable condition of boundary, this inherent dynamism that Bachelard suggests would be hindered.

2.2.2 Boundary

The boundary between the inside and the outside, just as much as between self and other and subject and object, must not be regarded as a limit to be transgressed, so much as a boundary to be traversed. (Grosz 2001, 65)

Elizabeth Grosz in her monograph, *Architecture from the Outside*, suggests that a boundary is not the harsh and strict limitation that it is often regarded as. Instead, it should be considered as a point of delineation between two realms such as inside and outside that is journeyed over or passed through. This then suggests that the boundary embodies movement and transition, as opposed to simply just a separating line. Iain Borden, noted architectural scholar and authority on the subject of boundaries, discusses the re-conceptualizing of architecture, which he defines as a "space of flows" (Borden

2006, 50). This comprises of an architecture that is conceptualized not in terms of objects, but instead "as the interrelationship between things, spaces, individuals and ideas" (Borden 2006, 50). He also attests that the boundary is a "zone of negotiation," following Bachelard. The boundary then, is contextualized through movement, fluctuation and relationships, suggesting it is a permeable object derived from the "spatial flows" as Borden would denote. Brian Massumi, a contemporary social theorist, corroborates when he writes "boundaries are not barriers; they are not impermeable. They are more like filters than walls" (Massumi 2013, 21). The ancient Greeks also described the boundary in terms of movement, denoting "a boundary is not that at which something stops but… the boundary is that from which something begins its presencing"

(Colomina 1995, 1). It is a start rather than a finish line, an initiation as opposed to a limitation.

2.2.3 Interiority

Interiority, a concept tangential to that of boundary, helps define its phenomenological characteristics. Interiority is dependent on the presence of a boundary condition, however it does not require the typical architectural definition that literal interior space does (McCarthy 2005, 112). Described by Christine McCarthy, an architecture professor at Victoria University, interiority is:

> intimate with and contaminates every interior and every inside. It adheres to sensual possibilities (acoustic, haptic, olfactory, tactile, visual); conditions that are intimate with, but that defy, the specificity of particular interiors. (2005, 112)

McCarthy attests that unlike literal interior spaces that are tangible components of the built environment, interiority is a phenomenological concept that is separate from, but inherently complimentary to that of the interior. One of its primary distinctions, she denotes, is its autonomy from a "restrictive architectural definition" (2005, 112). In her article "Toward a Definition of Interiority" she outlines a number of subcategories –

control, boundary, exteriority, habitation, bodies, time, and atmosphere – all of which contribute to defining this abstract term.

Among the seven categories outlined in the article, the most pertinent to this project, and one that helps characterize the essence of the theoretical boundary condition – is that of atmosphere. During the site analysis portion of this project in Chapter 4, I was attracted to the site's distinctive dualism – part urban busy streetscape and part natural forest and riverbed. Without bounded confines or an architectural definition defining these distinct zones, the transition from urban to natural exemplifies what McCarthy describes as atmosphere. She indicates, "atmosphere provides a sense of interior agency and contrasts with a subservient space that

usurps its shape and legitimation from the perimeters prescribed by architecture" (2005, 121). Entering the natural part of the site, you cross a boundary – not one that is a specified edge condition, but instead one that is an elongated and transitory ephemeral zone. It is not physical or even visible – it is a point of transit that is heard, felt and understood. It is an interior environment that is created solely by the atmospheric conditions of the site as opposed to an architectural enclosure.

2.3 WALL VS. POCHÉ

Previously in this Chapter, the wall was briefly analyzed by examining the writings of Weinthal regarding their simplistic and limiting mode of representation in architectural drawing – suggesting that wall tends to represent limitation, enclosure, definition, and separation, among other restrictive notions. Wall, like boundary, is often a point of control that separates outside from in and functions to shield and protect us from the exterior elements.

As McCarthy notes, "the ability of the boundary to regulate and control intrusion (to ostracize) have produced ideas of interiors as hidden, private, and mysterious" (2005, 121). Depending on the amount, size and location of penetrations through the wall, such as door or window, extreme separation or alternately, ease of accessibility can be achieved. Walls are constructed three-dimensional

objects – an assemblage of materials with depth, layers, and structure – however their presence in spatial environments is often two-dimensional and surface oriented. Weinthal reminds us of the wall's background presence in the built environment where she indicates, "they play a supporting role, literally acting as wallflowers," furthermore attesting that the other focal points and furniture in the room then command the attention (2012). Akin to a piece of paper, the wall is presented as a flat two-dimensional surface. Through an additive process, such as affixing artwork, paint, shelves, or wallpaper – the wall then begins to embody meaning and have tangibility. Contemporary interior design practice has begun to explore this additive technique by adding bold graphics to the surface of walls (see Fig. 1). While these projects add a certain level of visual appeal to the interior space, they lack depth and tangibility; therefore they only slightly elevate the status of the "wallflower," but remain still as an elaborate backdrop.

To neglect the wall and allow furniture, graphics and material objects to assert the focus of the room is somewhat undermining to the interior design profession. Furniture, graphics, and materials along with textiles

are creations of another profession such as industrial, graphic or textile design. While these material additions are no doubt significant components to the constructed interior, interior designers subsequently set the stage for other designers to claim the credit. The wall is an interesting canvas in and of itself, so why do we as interior design professionals rely so heavily on an additive process? As Matta-Clark attests, "why hang things on a wall when the wall itself is so much more a challenging medium?" (Diserens 2003, 188) From Borden's assertion that "a boundary is not a surface, but a thick-edge" (2006, 52) comes an understanding of the possibilities of wall or boundary as beyond that of a mere surface condition. The term poché instead of wall delivers more accurately the message of Borden's "thick-edge." Subsequently, by converting to

the term *poché*, I outline how the wall can be further utilized as occupied space.

2.3.1 Poché

In architectonic terms, *poché* refers to the shading that represents parts of a structure, like a wall, that is cut for architectural drawings such as floor plans and sections (Rowe and Slutsky 1997,118) – literally it is a "thick-edge." This term suggests the wall's existence as more than just a flat surface – it regards its hidden depth and dimensionality. Meisenheimer discusses the significance of the wall thickness, or *poché* in his article "Of the Hollow Spaces in the Skin of the Architectural Body." He criticizes the early modernist architects who were so adamant at dissolving the spatial condition between inside and out. During this period of architectural and technological advances, Meisenheimer denotes, the "limits of the building were to dissolve away," the protective zone of the body thinned out to become merely a "membrane between air-conditioned and non-air-conditioned space" leaving no room for any recesses, projections, cavities or "coat-pockets of the building-body" (2011, 627). Advocates for the "thin-skin ideology" he writes, were "too quick in renouncing the

charm of deep jambs, or staggered thresholds… of niches in the wall and seats by the window…" (2011, 628). It is these cavities, which he names "interiors of the second order," that bring subtleties and nuance to the building and that help transition from outside to inside (Meisenheimer 2011, 628).

Like Bachelard, Meisenheimer likens the role of *poché* to that of mediator, where he names it the "conversational zone." He describes this border-area as "the most eloquent backdrop of the architectonic stage" (2011, 627). A stage it is, with a series of decisive events occurring just there. Not only is *poché* where the "demands of the environment are accepted or rejected" he indicates, but it is also the backdrop for many a human interaction. A visitor comes to the door to be received;

an invitation inside may or may not be extended. Meisenheimer discusses this nominal act of a visitor's arrival: the visitor, he writes, does not simply "'fall' into the house with the door; rather he wishes to loiter in the adjoining area." Furthermore stating, "it is here [in the *poché*] that the curiosity-game of expectation and disappointment is enacted; the other person comes to meet (or accompanies) the visitor as far as this point, or does not, as the case may be" (Meisenheimer 2011, 628). This is a game of social interaction and communication that is enhanced by the architecture of the building. The *poché* and interiors of the second order then therefore enable the inhabitant to make choices regarding who should or should not gain entry into the sanctity of the interior. Without these spaces, the visitor, or even intruder if that is the case, has just fallen right into the principal interior. "Good architecture" Meisenheimer writes, "utilizes the door-area to offer a scene for the contradictory meeting, to provide room for cultivated doubt" (2011, 628).

Originating from the French language, the term *poché* signifies 'pocket'. As Weinthal notes, pockets "share an ambiguous conceptual space

between clothing and body" (2011, 576). These niches or cavities then, are essentially the pockets of architecture. Ambiguously situated, they are half-exposed to the outside world, easily accessible compared to the more inner interior spaces, but yet half-protected at the same time. Socially speaking, we often desire a hint of protection before we fully enter the outside world – a buffer zone of sorts (Meisenheimer 2011, 628). When it pours rain out, a moment of contemplation is needed before striking up the courage to enter the potency of nature's elements. Front porches and window seats enable a connection to the outdoors - to wait, to contemplate, to observe – all the while still affording the comfort and protection of the interior. As Meisenheimer affirms, "for many of these situations between inside and out we need such interiors of the second order,

our 'coat-pockets'" (2011, 629).

The periphery of the building is also where architectural statements of our cultural identity are realized (Meisenheimer 2011, 629). A noteworthy example is that of Islamic courtyard housing and their representation of the inherent privacy requirements of the Muslim woman. Described to them by the Holy Scriptures of Islam, women require privacy and protection in the domestic dwelling from any strangers and onlookers on the street (Bekleyen and Dalkilic 2011, 910). A specific architectural exemplification seen from the periphery of the building is the mashrabiya. Mashrabiyas are screened-in rooms that protrude from the domestic interior onto the streetscape, providing a space with a cool breeze and glances to the street below. Fully screened, often with elaborate woodwork and detailing, they obstruct any visual intrusion in but allow the inhabitant to visually and audibly connect with the public streetscape. These ornate and protruding "interiors of the second order" are exceptional because typically the courtyard dwellings of Arab lands are highly introverted with a strong clear-cut division between private interior and public exterior (el Safty 1981, 194). Few exterior windows, balconies, or penetrations

in general are apparent on the dwelling's street side façade. This, in turn, ensures protection of the contents of the interior. Thus, the periphery of these Islamic dwellings, depict a hint of the specific cultural identity of the Islamic family.

Like any notable artistic or sculptural composition, the floor plan of an interior has a series of components comprised of dominant and subordinate or supportive elements. The dominant elements are the primary interior spaces. These spaces are the larger rooms of the floor plan that fulfill the functional requirements that are delineated by the overall program or use of the building. The coat-pocket interstitial spaces that Meisenheimer named "interiors of the second order," act as the subordinate support spaces (Meisenheimer 2011, 631). Complimentary to one

another in the composition as a whole, the support spaces provide a protective cushioning around the primary spaces, adding significance to the main arena of inhabitation. Meisenheimer confirms writing:

the hollow spaces, and gaps, the slits and holes of the skin provide accompanying services. They prepare us and put us in the right state of mind, they endow the main text with special significance and emphases by the very act of their framing it. (2011, 631)

In a sense, they become extended threshold spaces, enabling movement and connection between the primary spaces of the building and between the disparate realms of interior and exterior.

2.4 THRESHOLD

Subha Mukherji, author of Thinking on Thresholds, indicates that the threshold

is not only a potential site of suspension as well as irruption, but also a place of rigour and work - the threshold between body and mind is also one between poetry and its reader, painting and its observer, music and its audience (2011, xxiii).

Threshold as a polysemous concept can be an object, a space, or even a metaphoric concept. However, above all, threshold concerns relationships. As the previous statement from Mukherji confirms, the inconceivable space between artist and viewer, musician and listener, or design professional and inhabitant, is that of the threshold. It is a truly unnamable space of powerful embodiment. Grosz describes the in-between as being devoid of a particular identity itself however its existence enables all other things to become understood and to form an identity (2001, 91) It is a strange place as she describes it, but certainly nonetheless intriguing. As Mukherji indicates, "it cannot be an accident that so many writers and artists have found in the threshold a metaphor for the creative process" (2011, xvii). The threshold as a tangible space is

often a point of contemplation, it is a place where writers go to write, thinkers go to think, "the place where (as Derrida puts it) one may remain, avoid speaking or naming, yet speak from" (Mukherji 2011, xvii). Mukherji describes it as having a "combination of porosity and resistance that creates pressures between which the imagination thrives" (2011, xxi.) It is that porosity that she asserts was central to Walter Benjamin's writings on the city of Naples. This densely populated southern Italian metropolis is a place of routine performance and spectacle. What makes it unique and interesting is the city's inherent porosity. As Benjamin attests, "porosity is the inexhaustible law of the life of this city, reappearing everywhere" (1986, 168). In Naples, porosity filters throughout most aspects of the city and life – private and public comingle effortlessly and the interstices of architecture become the stage for these performances (Benjamin 1986, 167, 171). The in-between spaces of buildings such as balcony, courtyard, window, gateway, staircase, and roof Mukherji writes, "become the most fascinating sites of performance and expectation" (2011, xxii). "Life bursts not only from doors," describes Benjamin, but it spills out into the front yard where the living room reappears on the street.

Personal, and typically private, items of the home are regularly displayed in public and project out into the streetscape – "housekeeping utensils hang from balconies like potted plants. From the windows of the top floors come baskets on ropes for mail, fruit, and cabbage" as Benjamin observes (1986, 171). No longer are public and private so rigidly delineated by the architectural definitions, instead an interweaving of activity takes place. Like McCarthy's defining of interiority, here, Benjamin describes that fluid traversing of inside and out and of interiority's disregard for the architectural confines. Movement and process then activate these spaces. An example of this activated space that Benjamin writes of is the café. Cafés are the true laboratories of this intermingling and movement of the city he notes, "life is unable to sit down and stagnate in them" (Benjamin 1986, 172).

The threshold becomes a means for extending or expanding the ordinary wall section. The wall is a connector between disparate spaces, and then the threshold becomes a point within that wall at which the transition is felt and experienced. The threshold can be expanded beyond to become an occupied space, although, it can never be fully programmed. As Mukherji and Grosz have indicated, the essence of the threshold lies within its inherent ambiguity and lack of identity. Grosz confirms:

> the space in-between is that which is not a space, a space without boundaries of its own, which takes on and receives itself, its form, from the outside, which is not its outside (this would imply that it has a form) but whose form is the outside of the identity, not just of an other (for that would reduce the in-between to the role of object, not of space) but of others, whose relations of positivity define, by default, the space that is constituted as in-between. (Grosz 2001, 93)

Therefore, similar to Meisenheimer's "interiors of the second order," the threshold then becomes a subordinate yet crucially supportive element to the larger interior. As a result, the threshold should never embody an identity of its own. Once particular meaning or identity is attached to that space, it no longer becomes the supportive, elusive and intriguing in-between.

2.5 MEMORY, TRACE, AND VOID

Doris Salcedo is an artist who tackles major political issues such as violence and war, influenced by current issues in her home country of Colombia. Her work is unique in that instead of simply documenting details of specific events or tragedies, it embodies a certain ambiguity that allows the viewer to attach their own personal feelings, memories, and associations to the work. Occurrences of memory are inherent in Salcedo's art (Huysen 2003, 110-111). Andreas Huyssen, author of *Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory*, describes Salcedo's work as "memory sculpture: a kind of sculpture that is not centered on spatial configuration alone, but that powerfully inscribes a dimension of localizable, even corporeal memory into the work" (Huyssen 2003, 110). He cites her work as being markedly different from that of monuments or memorials - work that also concerns the concept of memory. Memory, Huyssen indicates, is "a mode of re-presentation" and is contemporarily being thought of as "belonging ever more to the present," as opposed a regression to the past (2003, 3-4). Salcedo's art "re-presents" significant historical moments and noted acts of violence that have happened and continue to happen in her homeland of Colombia. Huyssen also writes, "the act of remembering is always in and

of the present, while its referent is of the past and thus absent" (2003, 3-4) – consequently indicating the significance of the present over the past when concerning memory. This intimate relationship between past and present is ever apparent in acts of memory and remembering, and as Salcedo expresses, "if we don't know our past, there is no way we can live the present properly, and there is no way we can face the future" (2004). Depicting aspects of trace is one particular method that Salcedo employs in her art to acquaint the viewer with the past.

2.5.1 Trace

Mieke Bal, noted critic and theorist, indicates "Salcedo deploys the trace as an alternative to representation and its abstracting effects" (2010, 34). Through her "memory sculpture," Salcedo elevates the traces

left from tragedies into acts of remembering. In her installation entitled Atrabiliarios, Salcedo places the shoes of lost victims into niches carefully carved into the gallery wall. They are then covered with translucent animal skin and then salaciously stitched to the wall with surgical thread. The shoes, visually worn, have layers of trace embedded in them - "The way the leather has adapted to the shape of the feet, in the discolorations, in the wear and tear to which articles of clothing or domestic objects are subject"- it is this worn quality that Bal argues, "makes visible the traces of life" (2010, 31). These traces enable the viewer to be aware of the presence of the lost victims without Salcedo having to inscribe specific details such as names, age or gender into the work. Thus, an ambiguity remains, leaving the viewer to complete the work with his or her own imagination. As cultural theorist Walter Benjamin prominently attests, "to live means to leave traces" (1986, 155) and thus, traces are the formidable memory evokers of the past – or, in the context of Salcedo's work, the once lived.

2.5.2 Void

From trace, void is revealed. Likening trace in a semantic fashion to that of an index, Bal denotes "like all indices, it has no content, only a void that points to a content in the past or future" (2010, 34). It is this void that has the directive power to lead the viewer through time and space. In fact, similar to that of threshold, this trace lacks its individual identity. According to Bal's previous remark, the trace then exists to facilitate movement and to help define the identities of its surroundings.

Even though void is negative space that lacks an identity; it plays a significant role in Salcedo's art to facilitate contemplation. Salcedo, describing her artistic approach, notes that she does not "try to control the experience of the

viewer," instead, she states, "I simply reveal - expose - an image" (Princenthal, Basualdo, and Huyssen 2000, 134). This method leaves void spaces, which directs viewers to attach their own personal thoughts, memories, fears, or queries to the exhibition experience. One of her most recent works entitled *Shibboleth* exemplifies the power of such void.

Amidst the vast open volume of the Turbine Hall at the Tate Modern, Salcedo's subtractive addition of a 167-metre long crack in the gallery's floor is among the most profound installations invited to exhibit in that immense space (Dorment 2007). Instead of filling the space with an object, she carved away – producing a crack or chasm resulting in negative space. Salcedo addresses the viewer "directly, relentlessly, and violently" by fracturing the ground in which is known and trusted - "the negative space is literally bottomless" as Bal notes (2010, 238). When critic Richard Dorment from the United Kingdom based Telegraph newspaper reviewed the exhibition; he described the lingering affects the crack had on his mind post-visit. He determined that it was "because it looks like a wound, a gash that can't heal. It offers no hope, leaving you feeling as empty as the abyss it opens up beneath your feet" (Dorment 2007). The

void is contemplative. The crack does not tell a story or even speak at all, however, the silence is activated by the contemplative state of the viewer. The crack has since been filled culminating the term of the exhibition, however its trace still remains.

2.5.3 Gordon Matta-Clark

Salcedo was also aware of other influential artists whose work deals with aspects of void and memory. Of Gordon Matta-Clark's art, she described that "[it] makes us aware of space, specifically of spaces that are negated, that we can no longer inhabit" (Princenthal, Basualdo, and Huyssen 2000, 12). While Salcedo's work involves installations and found objects such as chairs and shoes, Matta-Clark's canvas was the built environment. For

his renowned "building cuts" series he literally carved pieces out from the structural components of abandoned buildings. As Corinne Diserens editor of Gordon Matta-Clark notes that the artist "altered places" (2003, 6). With a saw in hand, Matta-Clark pierced edifice foundations "cutting into the ceilings, walls, and floors" (Diserens 2003, 6) creating large-scale graphical voids in the buildings, which he then photographed and filmed. As with Salcedo's ground altering *Shibboleth*, Matta-Clark's calculated voids disrupt the known and trusted elements of the built environment and world as we know it. As Katherine Benzel, author of *The Room in Context*, notes, "the floor of the building represents the earth or ground plane that supports and sustains life" (1998, 239). The spatial components such as floor, wall, and ceiling, represents the world within which we as humans inhabit and trust. When that trust is altered, the viewers' attention is captured. Diserens notes the off-kilter and reflective qualities that these fragmented Matta-Clark interiors have. The view through the voids she writes, resembles "a surface - as though it were just an accumulation of images" (2003, 6).

Fig. 2a-c are a series of photographs from Matta-Clark's Office

Baroque project, exemplifying this "accumulation of images" that Diserens describes. These voids create a sequential layering of space connecting room-to-room and floor-to-floor, thus abstracting the viewer's normal perception of space. "The act of cutting through from one space to another produces a certain complexity involving depth perception" Matta-Clark declares (Diserens 2003, 188). The visual and spatial connection in his "building cuts" is transparency, as described by Colin Rowe and Robert Slutsky. In their two-part seminal essay entitled "Transparency: Literal and Phenomenal," they define transparency not only in its literal sense of a transparent or see-though object, but also as an ambiguous spatial ordering system. Phenomenal transparency they attest "means a simultaneous perception of different spatial locations. Space not only recedes

but fluctuates in a continuous activity" (Rowe and Slutsky 1997, 23). It is inherently ambiguous yet evokes clarity when composed as a whole. Matta-Clark's voids enable a flattened layering of space, tricking the depth perception of the viewer.

Cubist paintings are the subject matter from which Rowe and Slutsky's definition and understanding of transparency evolves. Cubist works such as that of Picasso and Braque, comprise of representations of implied space, which is intentionally flattened by the artist into a two-dimensional painting. Matta-Clark's building cuts are a reversal of this. His work involves real space, which is then flattened through the viewer's own perception, or through the camera's lens if it is viewed as a photograph in a gallery or a book. This overlapping of varying planes, or the "accumulation of images" as Diserens has noted, allows for an ambiguous reading of the work. It brings the viewer into the canvas or scene by means of soliciting their personal interpretation. Bernhard Hoesli, in a commentary Addendum of Rowe and Slutsky's essay, indicates,
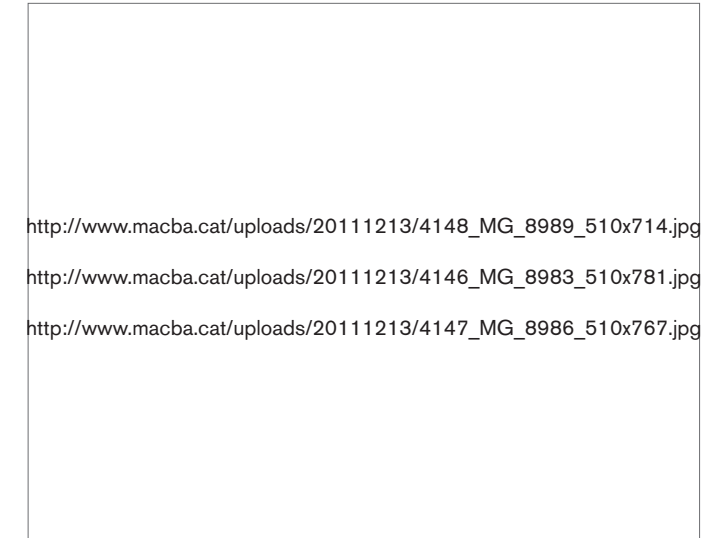
> the spectator remains not observer "on the outside", he becomes part of the composition through his participation. He enters a

dialogue. He has to decide and in "reading" a façade, choosing one of several possible readings of the composition he is, at the same time, in his imagination, engaged in its creation. (1997, 99)

The viewer then, abandons their traditional role as passive observer. Instead, they play an active role in deciding how they would like to perceive the final composition. As with Salcedo's art, spectators play a primary role in activating the work – soliciting contemplation, association, and imagination. While Salcedo activates these viewers in a cerebral way with her memory sculptures, Matta-Clark's approach exemplifies the spatial principles of transparency.

2.5.4 Matta-Clark And Memory

A closer look at the void cuts also reveals an act of memory. His building cuts expose the hidden aspects of the built environment – electrical wiring and plumbing stacks, structural frames of the wall and floor, material adhesions, along with any layers of paint and wallpaper applied over time. This process reveals the passage and layering of history, reminding the viewer of how the building was built and manipulated over time. While Salcedo's art deals with acts of memory and remembering, Matta-Clark exposes memory in a tangible and visible way. Cutting the walls, floor, and ceiling, the artist attests "reveals the autobiographical process of [the building's] making" (Diserens 2003, 188). By cutting, a cross-section emerges, revealing the structure within the wall and the various surface conditions that have manipulated and changed the wall over time. Layers of paint and wallpaper, and even dust describe the story of the building. Extrapolations of the inhabitants along with the taste

http://www.macba.cat/uploads/20111213/4148_MG_8989_510x714.jpg

http://www.macba.cat/uploads/20111213/4146_MG_8983_510x781.jpg

http://www.macba.cat/uploads/20111213/4147_MG_8986_510x767.jpg

▲ FIGURE 2 a, b, c - OFFICE BAROQUE

and style of the interior can be made. Once again, history and memory are revealed through traces.

2.6 CONCLUSION

From boundary, to wall, to *poché*, a logical path evolves – one of movement and transitions, of making connections and facilitating relationships between object and viewer or artwork and spectator. The writings of Grosz, Massumi, Colomina, and Borden all describe the boundary as a point of transit, where movement and interaction ensue. As well, Bachelard and Meisenheimer indicate that the boundary acts as a mediator – becoming a zone where decisions are made and actions occur; "it has the sharpness of the dialectics of 'yes' and 'no', which decides everything" as Bachelard declares (1964, 211). *Poché* is the term of choice for this project as it corroborates with the understanding of boundary defined by these selected authors. It realizes the wall as a gradient, or a "thick-edge" as Borden denotes, as opposed to a mere surface condition that recedes into the backdrop of our spatial surroundings. The poché is of focus, and a further extension of it is the threshold. The threshold and the surrounding support spaces, or "interiors of the second order" as Meisenheimer terms them, are spaces of intrigue and allure. Activated by movement and porosity, these spaces often lack an individual identity, however as Benjamin describes, "life is unable to sit down and stagnate in them" (1986, 172). Memory, trace, and void, as seen through the works of Salcedo and Matta-Clark help situate my position on adaptive reuse for this project. As Salcedo indicates, "if we don't know our past, there is no way we can live the present properly, and there is no way we can face the future." Deriving from the characteristics of phenomenal transparency as outlined by Rowe and Slutsky and exemplified in the work of Matta-Clark, a layered approach is taken with this design project. Celebrating the process of merging new and old subsequently reveals the traces that evoke acts of memory. Then the layering of spatial elements allows the spectator to become a part of the design - activating it through their individual interpretation of it. This process is further outlined in Chapter 5.

In conclusion, a reimagining of the wall beyond banality has begun to emerge. The poché as a spatial object effectively blends the delineative conditions of a boundary with the occupied and alluring characteristics of the liminal. In the subsequent Chapters I explore these concepts and theories through the design of a community center for the St. Boniface neighbourhood of Winnipeg, Manitoba. The project explores the act of occupying the wall – where movement is embodied and imagination emerges.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

From France, to Korea, then Belgium, three divergent precedents are selected for analysis in this Chapter. The first two are of architectural significance and the third holds prominence both in the art and design disciplines. The first precedent studied is *Le Cube Orange*, an office and retail building in Lyon, France by architecture firm Jakob+MacFarlane. This building was selected for its aesthetic prowess and formal qualities that experiment with boundary conditions. The second precedent of note is Gallery White Block in Heyri, Korea by SsD Architecture + Urbanism. This contemporary structure was chosen for its spatial planning and overall approach to promoting an interior and exterior relationship. Lastly, for the third precedent I determined it was important to also consider artistic works. The work of Gordon Matta-Clark, an artist who was initially trained as an architect, assisted in framing an alternative perspective for this practicum. His body of work is described as 'anarchitecture'- as it was never meant for habitation. It effectively straddles the disciplines of art and design with a strong theoretical underpinning. Following *Le Cube Orange* and Gallery White Block, Matta-Clark's project entitled Office Baroque is analyzed in this Chapter.

3.2.1 Description

Situated in a post-industrial zone of Lyon, France, *Le Cube Orange* is a key component to the neighbourhood's renewal program. A visually outstanding structure, designed by Parisian architects Jakob + MacFarlane, functions as office and retail space. Located on the banks of the Saône River, the building has a multitude of views and vistas. From certain viewpoints, the building appears to be a mere vibrantly colored but static cube. Built on a grid of 29 x 33m this quasi-perfect cube form is anything but static. The presence of large voids generates an unique spatial experience, such as the large conical entrance void. This void pierces through the northeast corner, which forms a large open atrium space with connecting outdoor corridors surrounding the perimeter. Online blog Designboom describes that

> the facade is pulled into the depth of the volume, resulting in a shift in interior/exterior relations, as well as facilitating light and views. [Along with] another volumetric subtraction on the entry and roof level [that] establishes direct relations between the building, its users, and the site." (2011)

An additional element that further enhances the interior/exterior relations is the exterior cladding. The distinctive bright orange façade plays a number of roles in the building. Firstly, it allows daylight to filter in as well as facilitating views to the exterior. It also gives the building a distinct identity. Most notably amongst the surrounding industrial streetscape of the riverside wharf. This precedent was selected for its formal design elements as well as its spatial attributes.

FIGURE 3 - INTERIOR COURTYARD CREATED BY VOID CUT. ▶
PHOTO CREDIT: ROLAND HALBE

Designers: Jakob+MacFarlane
Location: Lyon, France
Building size: 10,301 sqft.

3.2.2 Analysis

My focus for the analysis of this precedent is on the atrium 'void space' and the building's relationship with the exterior surroundings. The conical void piercing into the building is an excellent example of how a form can connect with the surroundings and further blur the conditions separating inside and out. The void creates an atrium space that establishes an interstitial zone within the building. It begins to pull the qualities of the exterior environment such as views, natural ventilation, and auditory stimulation, into the programmatic elements of the building's interior spaces. Users can feel protected and secured by still being inside the building, but also get the stimulating characteristic qualities of the natural exterior environment.

The façade of the building has unique qualities as well. Providing a gradation of visual translucencies, which evoke a natural irregularity that is reminiscent of many naturalistic elements such as a forest canopy or swiss cheese. The façade is a metal mesh material that is visually permeable with a gradation of void sizes, from small penny-sized openings, to large empty holes. This intentional façade choice provides engagement as it's appearance changes and shifts as you

circumambulate. The façade unites the overall form of the building. Using varying scales of 'solid and void' to create a visual and tangible engagement with the exterior environment.

The boundary conditions of the building are in flux. The accentuated conical void space piercing the regular box form of the building establishes a unique interstitial zone that questions where the interior and exterior space begin and end. There are 'exterior' corridors or balconies that line the inside of the atrium space – allowing daylight, natural ventilation, and exterior auditory stimulation to penetrate into the 'interior' spaces of the building. The façade creates a irregular view to the exterior surroundings allowing viewpoints to be dynamic and interchangeable from inside to out. This is significant because it allows opportunities for the user to interact visually with the exterior

environment on a more constant level as opposed to limited viewpoints such as regularly placed windows. This differs drastically and I would argue is more successful than having fully glazed facades because it offers a variance in visibility levels. It is not completely transparent but instead offers a more protected and comfortable view for users based on their level of privacy desired.
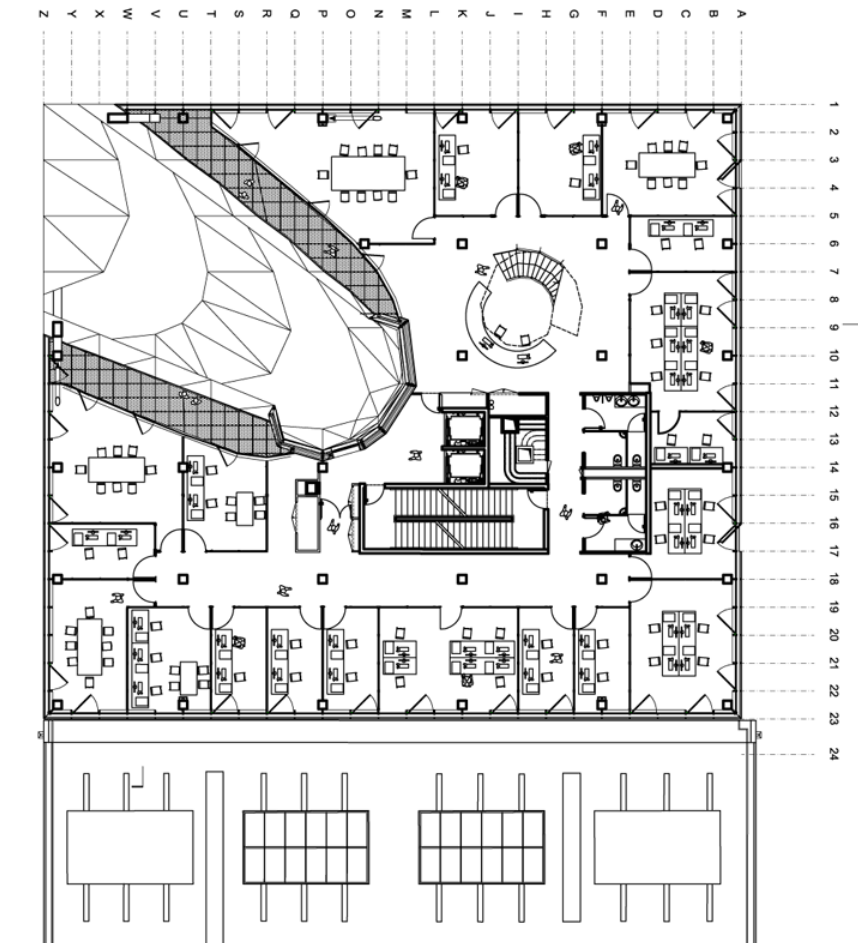

FIGURE 4 - FLOOR PLAN SHOWING CONICAL VOID CUT. ▶
IMAGE CREDIT: JAKOB + MACFARLANE

3.2.3 Relevance

This precedent embodies many experiential qualities and spatial attributes that I seek to achieve for the design component of this practicum. In a similar manner to Office Baroque, *Le Cube Orange* deals with the dichotomy of solid and void. However, in this context it is a new construction as opposed to a manipulation of an existing structure as in the case of Office Baroque. The architect fragments the static and regular base form by cutting large as well as small voids into the façade. These voids generate engaging spaces within the building that connect with the exterior environment and begin to liberate the rigid boundaries of the initial cube form. Generating not only a visual relationship to the exterior, but also a tangible one. Just as Matta-Clark carves out the façade, Jakob + Macfarlane take it further by continuing the exterior cladding into the void, enhancing the experience of the outside coming

in. Calculated fragments of the boundary conditions create moments of ambiguity. Suddenly the user is in a space that is neither entirely inside nor out. A curious but also liberating place to be – in between realms. *Le Cube Orange* represents the core issues I am seeking to address in this project.

▲ FIGURE 5 - *LE CUBE ORANGE* IN SITE CONTEXT ALONG RIVER
PHOTO CREDIT: ROLAND HALBE
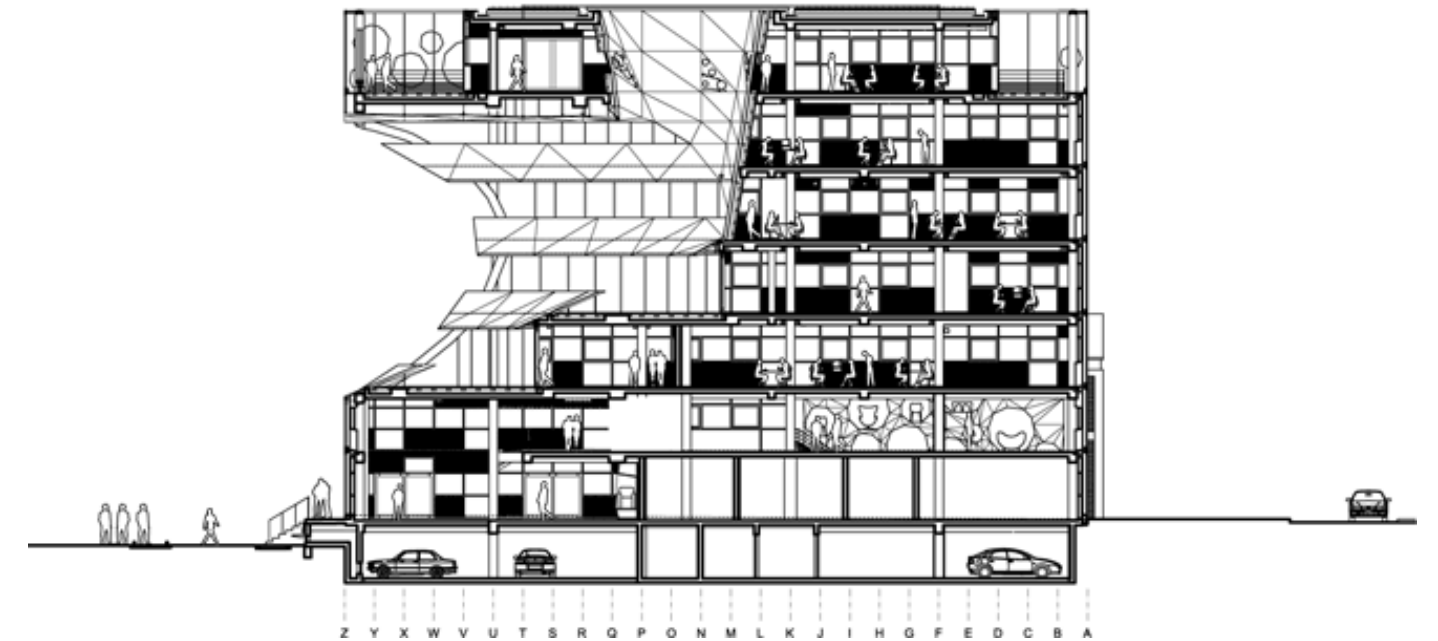
▲ FIGURE 6 - *LE CUBE ORANGE* BUILDING SECTION
IMAGE CREDIT: JAKOB + MACFARLANE

3.3.1 Description

Completed in 2011 by emerging international architecture firm SsD, Gallery White Block is a unique cultural and exhibition space located at the Heyri Art Valley in South Korea. This 16,150 sqft. building encompasses a varied array of gallery spaces. The entire gallery is created from arranged solid volumes. This technique creates a unique configuration with many usable interstitial spaces, resulting in a total of ten proportionally varied gallery spaces. According to SsD's website, the building was designed to showcase a multitude of art forms from large-scale sculpture and painting to multi-media installations. These spaces also allow for new and unknown forms of art and media to be accommodated. An understanding of the building's surroundings was also a major component of the architect's design strategy (SsD).

3.3.2 Analysis

As its name suggests, the gallery does in fact appear to be a 'white block'. Blocks, cubes, and many geometrical forms have the tendency to be weighty, solid and introverted. However, a further analysis into the spatial planning leads to a surprising revelation that the architect's intention was to relate the interior volumes with the surrounding site context. The overall composition of the interior spaces mixes solid volumes and void spaces to create an atypical building section filled with multiple layers of volumes. Gallery White Block opposes a building approach that simply stacks one floor plate after the other to create an even three-storey building. According to SsD they have conceived the interior floor plan as more of an "interior topography," which in turn "allows exhibition spaces to vary radically in height while maintaining strict overall building height zoning regulations." The ground floor interior, directly relates to the landscape design that is exterior.

Designers: SsD Architecture + Urbanism
Location: Heyri, Korea
Building size: 16,150 sf.

http://www.archdaily.com/204928/white-block-gallery-ssd/wb_final_ext_066-large-1280-x-853/

FIGURE 7 - GALLERY WHITE BLOCK EXTERIOR ▲

Figure 8 shows the supercore, which is where the core vertical circulation is located.
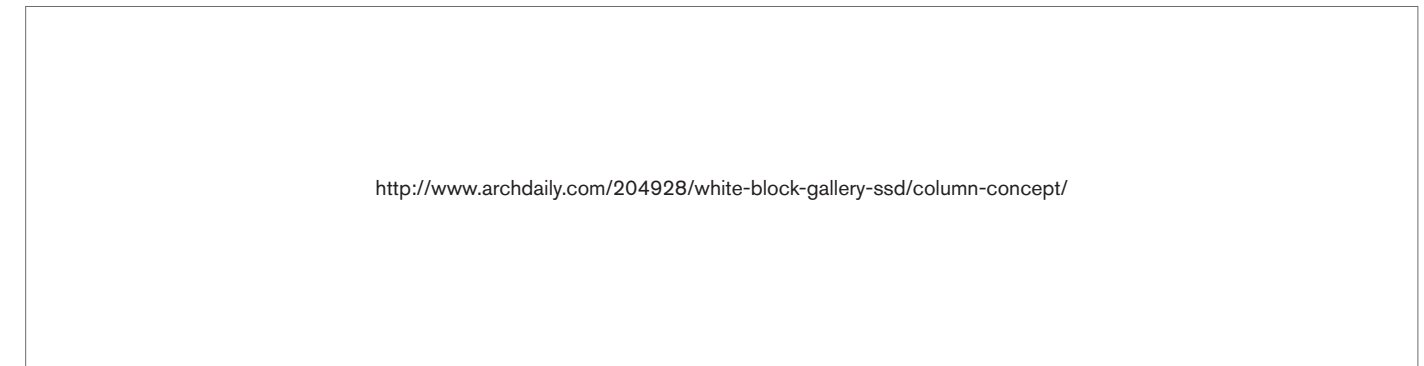
The photograph of the space highlights the abstracted naturalistic qualities intended and achieved in the design. There is a strong sense of repetition here. Numerous long linear elements such as the columns, lighting fixtures, and stair risers, repeat simultaneously to create a sense of rhythm, balance, and ambiguity. The 'stramp' – an amalgamation of stair and ramp – emerges from the distance as a winding path through this interior topography.

the user would have to deliberately move around to get a glimpse at what is behind the columns. The smaller columns obstruct smaller portions of the sightline, allowing your eye to piece together the missing viewpoints more easily, especially as the user moves through the space. The column choice not only provides a less interrupted sightline, it also further enhances the notion of repetition inherent within the space.

A study of column sizes and spacing was also done during the planning phases (Figure 9) in order to determine the level of visual disruption through the glazing. The type of structure chosen was intentional for a number of reasons. SsD explains on their website, "the structure is distributed across many smaller columns rather than a few larger ones increasing the visual connection between interior to the site as well as providing more curatorial freedom for the gallery spaces by eliminating structural obstructions." It provides the user with a more continuous view as opposed to a sightline that has large unobstructed views coupled with larger gaps of invisibility where

FIGURE 8 - SUPER CORE AND STRAMP ▶

FIGURE 9 - COLUMN STUDY ▼

http://www.archdaily.com/204928/white-block-gallery-ssd/wb_final_int_022-large-1280-x-853/

http://www.archdaily.com/204928/white-block-gallery-ssd/column-concept/

The entrance threshold is another designed element that intentionally questions the conditions that separate inside and outside. It is sandwiched between ground level and the gallery box above, creating two thick horizontal planes that the user moves through. The thin profile separating inside from out is floor-to-ceiling glazing, appearing as an almost invisible element that dissolves the distinct condition separating inside from out.

The notion of the interior topography is represented well in the continuous drawing of the building section (Fig. 11). You can see that the floor plane and the ceiling plane fluctuate, providing a varied interior landscape for users navigating within the building. Anything but predictable, the spatial planning alternates solid enclosed gallery rooms with voluminous, fully glazed spaces, providing views to the outdoors as well as ample day lighting. This allows users to always be near the surrounding landscape. The treatment of the glass in the fully glazed spaces also vary in opacity from opaque near the top and bottom, to transparent at eye-level. This prevents a fishbowl effect, or feelings of being exposed for any users occupying the inside spaces.

http://www.archdaily.com/204928/white-block-gallery-ssd/wb_final_int_013-large/

▲ FIGURE 10 - FRITTING PATTERN

In Figure 10, the fritting pattern provides as a filter for sunlight, as well as an exterior façade that appears to fade into the foggy sky mornings (SsD).

▼ FIGURE 11 - CONTINUOUS BUILDING SECTION

http://www.archdaily.com/204928/white-block-gallery-ssd/section-759/

▼ FIGURE 12 - GALLERY ENTRANCE

http://www.archdaily.com/204928/white-block-gallery-ssd/wb_final_int_005-large-1280-x-853/

http://www.ssdarchitecture.com/works/cultural/white-block-gallery/

3.3.3 Relevance

This project is relevant in multiple ways to this practicum. Firstly, the buildings are of a similar square footage, with 75 Archibald Street at approximately 18,000 sqft. and Gallery White Block at just over 16,000 sqft. The designer's approach to spatial planning is significant; responding to specified parameters that were established on the site, such as location on site and height restrictions. As a response, enclosed boxes of interior space are arranged within those parameters allowing for interstitial space to be formed. Establishing ambiguous zones of interior space that serve to connect the user with the surrounding landscape outside the gallery. The manipulation of various volume sizes and proportions along with varying visual weights of solid and void is a design strategy that I explore in this practicum project. The interior topography explores differing floor levels and ceiling planes to create an intriguing, experiential journey throughout the building. The design of Gallery White Block incorporates a strong theoretical underpinning – experimenting with notions of inside and out as well as varying boundary conditions. This is an approach that I have considered throughout the design phase - one that questions the norm and promotes a fluid connection between the disparate realms of the built environment.

http://www.macba.cat/uploads/20111213/4148_MG_8989_510x714.jpg

http://www.macba.cat/uploads/20111213/4146_MG_8983_510x781.jpg

http://www.macba.cat/uploads/20111213/4147_MG_8986_510x767.jpg

▲ FIGURE 14 a, b, c - OFFICE BAROQUE

3.4 OFFICE BAROQUE

With a chainsaw in hand, Matta-Clark carves calculated voids into abandoned buildings to reveal their interior space. His work embodies depth with the layering of voids that create a sequential series of spaces within. A multitude of questions and insights can be drawn from the work. As Pamela M. Lee, an assistant professor at Stanford University, describes the work striking a " precarious balance...between exterior and interior, urban and suburban, public and private, violence and enlightenment causes many to check themselves, to still their movements as they negotiate their way through the space" (2000, 220,223). His work straddles boundaries and experiments with dichotomies that are inherent in the built environment. Concepts such as inside versus out, art versus architecture, private versus public, and solid versus void, are present in the majority of his artistic projects. Matta-Clark's work was chosen as a precedent for this reason, as his work draws a parallel to the concepts explored in this practicum. His attention to site-specificity and deconstruction of prevailing boundary conditions has a significant relevance to this practicum project. The project entitled Office Baroque will remain the focus here for analysis.

Artist: Gordon Matta-Clark
Location: Antwerp, Belgium
Building size: N/A

3.4.1 Description

The site for Matta-Clark's project entitled Office Baroque was once an office building located in Antwerp, Belgium. Standing as an abandoned building, this was one of Matta-Clark's last artistic endeavors. This work involves him cutting through the floors, walls, and ceilings of this dilapidated building. Similarly to the succeeding precedents, this particular work is also situated in an industrial waterfront neighbourhood of its respective city. The building used for the project Office Baroque is described as being

> ...a bland modernist affair [that was] erected in 1932. Five stories high, it was the former headquarters of the Seo shipping company; it had fallen into possession of Marcel Peters [and company]...who planned to tear the building down and eventually rebuild on its site. (Lee 2000, 220,223)

Matta-Clark obtained permission from Marcel Peters to use the abandoned building as a site for his building cuts. His original plan for the site was to open up the building to the street by cutting voids into the façade. However, city officials subsequently rejected this plan, as it would have been too exposed and public. His interest was then directed to the interior of the building (Lee 2000, 220).

Matta-Clark's concept for the project was derived from wet imprints leftover from a teacup, where he then subsequently designed a plan for the space around two interlocking rings (Lee 2000, 223). From schematic concept to implementation, the approach is not dissimilar to that of designers and architects when they attempt to establish a design solution for a project. However, one particular distinction here is

> that the types of voids and cuts he makes, are purely aesthetic rather than functional. The interior spaces capture a certain intrigue not typical of an interior design project, perhaps because the voids do not adhere to a standard size and shape of any window or fitting that would eventually need to fill the opening. His cuts capture views and vistas not only to the outside, but also to other spaces within the building, which creates an inquisitive layering of

space. This project becomes more of a lesson in designing an interior space with response to pure aesthetic value rather than user-defined needs – a unique approach different to that of a typical interior design project. The space does however have the potential to be somewhat practical with a few modifications such as adding glass or railings to avoid the users of the space from falling into the voids.

3.4.2 Analysis

Matta-Clark's approach to unveiling and displaying the hidden aspects of the built environment along with his graphic approach to revealing and exposing various viewpoints in the building are unique characteristics that define his body of work.

Matta-Clark's work begins to question the mainstream built environment, his willingness to expose the hidden aspects of a building is a characteristic of his work. According to Michael Kimmelman in an article for the *New York Times*,

> [Matta-Clark] often talked about edges: about the areas between walls, between a floor and a ceiling —about gaps and voids, which he made into art. [At the Matta-Clark retrospective exhibit at the Whitney Museum of American Art] are photographs that he took of the spaces under chairs, between the floors of buildings, on the ceiling of a loft, where the sprinkler pipes were: places people don't usually bother to notice. "Opening up view to the unvisible" (he loved wordplay), was something he jotted on a note to himself. It might be his manifesto. (2007)

So often in the built environment designers and architects try to gloss over or hide the minute functional aspects of a space, such as insulation and plenum space. However, these necessary elements are what make up the building and could never be done without. Matta- Clark is posing the question 'why not expose them' ? There are opportunities to display glimpses of these hidden details, so that the users of the space can gain a better understanding of the composition of the building. This is particularly relevant when dealing with an existing building that has been renovated multiple times. Matta-Clark was interested in the notion of memory. By removing a piece of the building's wall to display as art in an exhibit, you are able to see the layers of wallpaper and paint that were applied over time. This evokes a sense of curiosity in the onlooker by bringing them back to the time in which the layer existed and stimulating their imagination about the time period.

Not only does Matta-Clark cut voids in the exterior of the building, he also generates voids in the interior. Creating views from room to room and from floor to floor. Figure 14 shows three photographs of different cuts made by Matta-Clark into the floor. Looking through one cut, you are able to see several other cuts beyond, enabling you to see multiple floors down. These series of cuts create a rich layering of space that stimulates your curiosity. Previously, I have described the significance of interiors connecting to their surrounding context, but it also applies to interiors as a whole. Matta-Clark shows us the beauty in creating a view from one interior room to the next. He layers and connects the interior spaces by way of penetrations cut through the boundary conditions. Figure 14 and 15 both exemplify the many carefully calculated cuts that make up Matta-Clark's work. Using the interior walls, floors, and ceilings as his canvas, he artfully composes a graphic composition in which to carve his artwork. Subsequently captured with the lens of a camera, the cuts and the spaces within the rooms play tricks on the eye. For instance, Figure 15 shows cuts in the ceiling and walls. Near the left in the photo, the ceiling void dips down to the wall cutting into the doorway so it becomes no longer recognizable as such, and then consequently reveals the staircase located beyond. The viewer no longer has the information needed to trigger an understanding of what is ceiling, wall, or floor. As inhabitants of the built environment, we typically understand those elements within a room because any penetrations that are present – doors or windows – are often restricted to the vertical wall plane. Without that understanding, the distinct boundary planes become distorted.

3.4.3 RELEVANCE

There are a number of parallels that can be drawn between the art of Gordon Matta-Clark and the work of an interior designer. Most notably is the inherent temporality of the works - a certain understanding that it will last only for a limited time. Unlike building structures that generally withstand multiple generations, time periods, styles, and trends, interiors are inherently more expendable. The use and functionality of an interior space may outgrow the lifespan of the building, therefore requiring a change in the designed interior. The existence of an interior design strategy may eventually solely exist through photographs and media. Matta-Clark understood the fundamental temporality of his work. In dealing with derelict and abandoned structures that he did not own, it was inevitable that his artwork would live on solely through the videos, photographs, and artifacts taken from the project during its fleeting lifespan. The same can also be said regarding designed interiors. Not only because they have the potential to be short lived, but also because that is often the only way that some interiors are experienced. Well-designed spaces disseminate through periodicals, blogs, and monographs. A number of designed interiors could potentially be private property and restricted to the public, whereby only the users are the ones who get to experience the space first hand. The rest of the general public, or those who do not get the opportunity to travel to the actual location, experience the design only through photographs, drawings, and video.

Office Baroque exemplifies the beauty of interior spaces, revealed through photographs and other digital media. Matta-Clark reveals the "unvisible" and connects surrounding interior spaces together with voids. He treats the built environment as a canvas open for interpretation and is not restricted to the conventional horizontal and vertical planes that bound the interior volume.
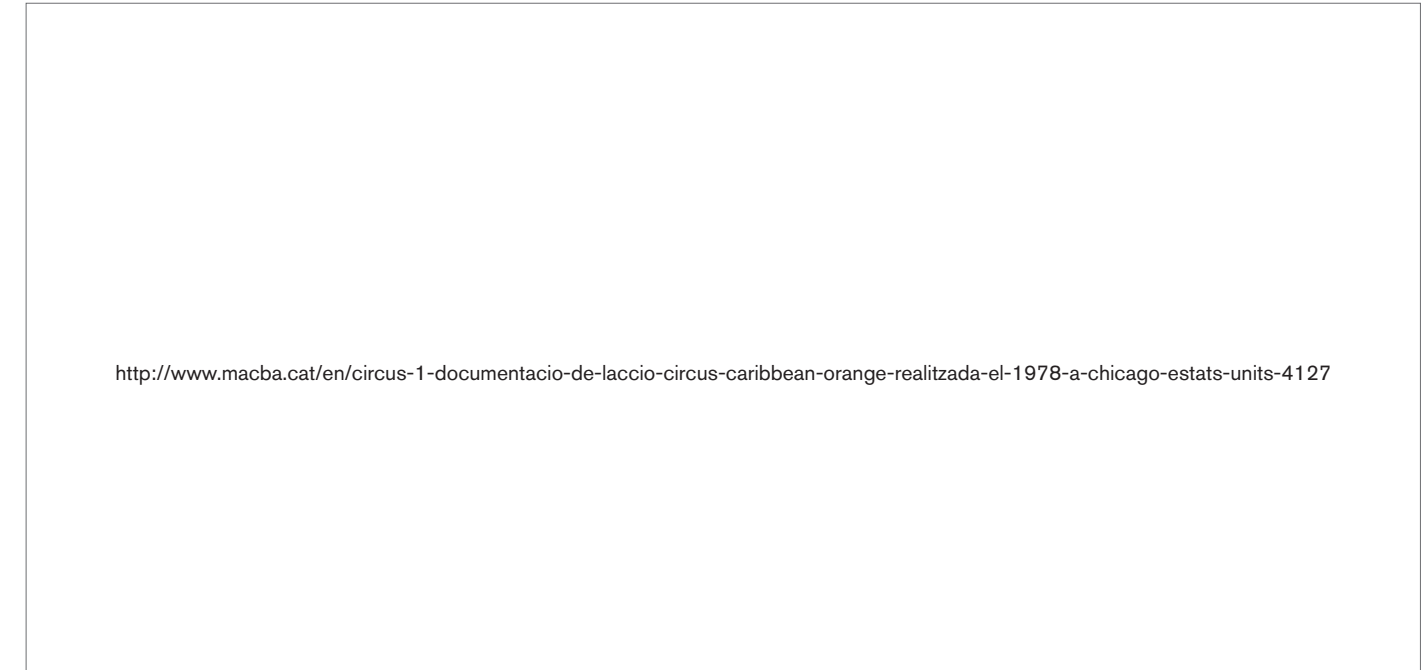
http://www.macba.cat/en/circus-1-documentacio-de-laccio-circus-caribbean-orange-realitzada-el-1978-a-chicago-estats-units-4127

FIGURE 15: WALL AND CEILING CUTS ▲

The three precedents serve as inspiration for this practicum project, each with differing degrees of relevance. Office Baroque is a unique precedent that straddles the realms of architecture and fine art. Matta-Clark is an artist who treats the built environment as his canvas. His approach is admirable and different, and can further inform the more pragmatic discipline of interior design. *Le Cube Orange* uses form and shape to connect the building's interior with the exterior environment. Its permeable exterior façade also creates a casual relationship between the users inside the building and the surrounding landscape. Gallery White Block employs multiple design strategies to dissolve boundary conditions and create a persistent connection from inside to out and visa versa. The design achieves this through the overall spatial planning, the architect' s choice in structural columns, and the compressed entrance portal. Similar to this practicum project's site context, the three chosen precedents are also situated near a body of water. This is a noteworthy coincidence that was not an intentional decision during the selection process

for precedents. An exploration of the relationship between the interior and exterior is entirely appropriate for a site graced with a body of natural water, be it a river, stream, pond, lake, or ocean. These precedents further reinforce the site chosen for this practicum project.

▲ FIGURE 16 - ROOFTOP PANORAMA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Among the confluence of the Seine and Red Rivers is an abandoned industrial building surrounded by 2.2 acres of land. Located on a main thoroughfare at the edge of the Elmwood-Transcona district of Winnipeg, anyone looking at its street frontage would never expect to find the beauty and nature that lies just beyond its desolate structure. The address is number 75 on Archibald Street, this building once housed clients such as the Winnipeg chapter of the Habitat for Humanity organization and Henn-Rich Manufacturing LTD. Currently abandoned, this dilapidated building straddles the robust industrial character of Archibald Street and the serene natural setting of two of Winnipeg's illustrious rivers. This rare dichotomy between natural and the industrial was the main reason I selected this particular site for this practicum project. A scaled approach is taken with the following site investigation and analysis, beginning with the broader context of the St. Boniface district to the immediate site context and building analysis, and then culminating with the development of a concept for the design of this building. The concept derived from this site investigation leads into the design phase, which is found in the subsequent Chapter 5.

4.2 NEIGHBOURHOOD CONTEXT + ANALYSIS

St. Boniface is a diverse community with rich history and culture as well as abundant natural resources. Figure 17 shows a visual depiction of the neighbourhood's overall zoning and land use. Within its designated parameters there is a multitude of land uses including industrial, commercial, institutional, and residential, as well as a number of green spaces interspersed throughout.

According to the 2006 Canadian Census data for the St. Boniface community area, the population was 49,155 for the area at that time, which was an increase of 7.8% since 2001 (2006, 2). This area is known to have a rich Francophone culture and heritage. Its largest green space, known as Whittier Park, has 15 hectares of land and is the location of Winnipeg's annual Festival du Voyageur - Western Canada's largest winter festival. This 10-day

event celebrates French life, culture, and heritage as well as Canada's fur trading history. Whittier Park and the adjacent Lagimodiere-Gadboury Park are both located along the red river, and the latter also occupies a stretch of the Seine River. These parks have scenic river walks, soccer fields, and a community baseball diamond, along with other necessary amenities such as washroom facilities and a parking lot. From 75 Archibald Street, which is at the northern most tip of the designated St. Boniface neighbourhood, Lagimodiere-Gadboury Park is a short 10-minute walk along pathways through naturalistic green spaces and over a pedestrian bridge crossing the Seine River. It is a serene escape from the urban industrial context that is Archibald Street.

According to a document compiled for the City of Winnipeg and the Province of Manitoba by the McGowan Russell Group for a project entitled Building Communities Initiative (2002), survey results of a group of residents in St. Boniface identified a number of strengths and weaknesses within the neighbourhood. Among the weaknesses identified, the highest-ranking topics were; the lack of quality sports facilities in the area, preservation of the natural environment, condition of sidewalks, and accessibility. The report also reveals some of the top

aspects that respondents enjoyed most about their community. Among them were; proximity to downtown (19%), French culture (16%), proximity to local services including schools, churches, stores, hospital and library (16%), family/people oriented community (13%) and quiet community (12.5%)" (City of Winnipeg and Province of Manitoba 2002,13).

LEGEND

☐ AGRICULTURAL
🟩 PARKS
🟨 ONE FAMILY RESENDENTIAL
🟧 TWO FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
🟫 MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
▨ INSTITUTIONAL
🟧 COMMERCIAL
⬜ INDUSTRIAL

FIGURE 17 - LAND USE AND ZONING PLAN ▶
NOT TO SCALE

4.3 SITE CONTEXT + ANALYSIS

Although 75 Archibald Street is officially located within the bounds of the St. Boniface neighbourhood, its situation along the northern edge of the neighbourhood's parameters, renders its immediate site context vastly different from the rest of its attached community. Figure 18 - site plan, shows the building in its immediate context on Archibald Street. On one edge it expresses the industrial characteristics of Archibald Street, on the other it exudes the calmness and serenity of nature – a unique dichotomy that was the deciding factor in choosing this particular site. The major borders establishing this immediate site context are; the CN railway tracks to the North, South, and East, along with the Seine and Red River to the West.
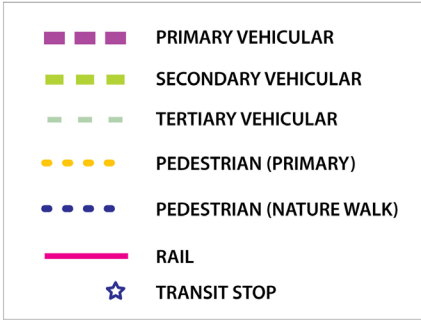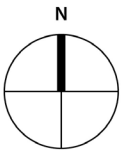
N

ARCHIBALD STREET

75

MISSION ST

MISSION ST

LAFLECHE RUE

RUE LA VERENDYRE

McTAVISH ST

FIGURE 19 (top) - NATURAL SETTING BEHIND BUILDING
FIGURE 20 (bottom) - INDUSTRIAL STREET FRONTAGE

◄ FIGURE 18 - SITE PLAN
NOT TO SCALE

The main vehicular route passing through the middle of this site context is Archibald Street– a heavily trafficked roadway in Winnipeg that effectively links the southeast with the northeast areas of the city and visa versa. While there are minute segments of Archibald that are residential, it is mainly a traffic thoroughfare with commercial and industrial buildings fronting it. Building 75 has approximately 300ft. of frontage along this busy thoroughfare, offering extensive exposure to the passing vehicular traffic. Public transportation to and from this site is also readily available. Northbound and southbound transit stops are located in close proximity to building 75, and are serviced by Winnipeg transit route #43. A pedestrian sidewalk runs parallel along the traffic thoroughfare. A pathway veering off from this sidewalk into a residential section, passes by Notre Dame East park and ultimately connects to Lagimodiere-Gadboury Park across the Seine.

N

▄ ▄ ▄	PRIMARY VEHICULAR
▄ ▄ ▄	SECONDARY VEHICULAR
▄ ▄ ▄	TERTIARY VEHICULAR
● ● ●	PEDESTRIAN (PRIMARY)
● ● ●	PEDESTRIAN (NATURE WALK)
──	RAIL
☆	TRANSIT STOP

◄ FIGURE 21 - CIRCULATION PATHS
NOT TO SCALE

FIGURE 22

FIGURE 23

FIGURE 24

FIGURE 25

FIGURE 26

FIGURE 27

N

RAIL

☆ TRANSIT STOP

LEGEND
A. CENTRAL GRAIN BUILDING
B. CN RAIL LINE
C. NOTRE DAME EAST PARK
D. PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE OVER THE SEINE
E. LAGIMODIERE-GABOURY PARK
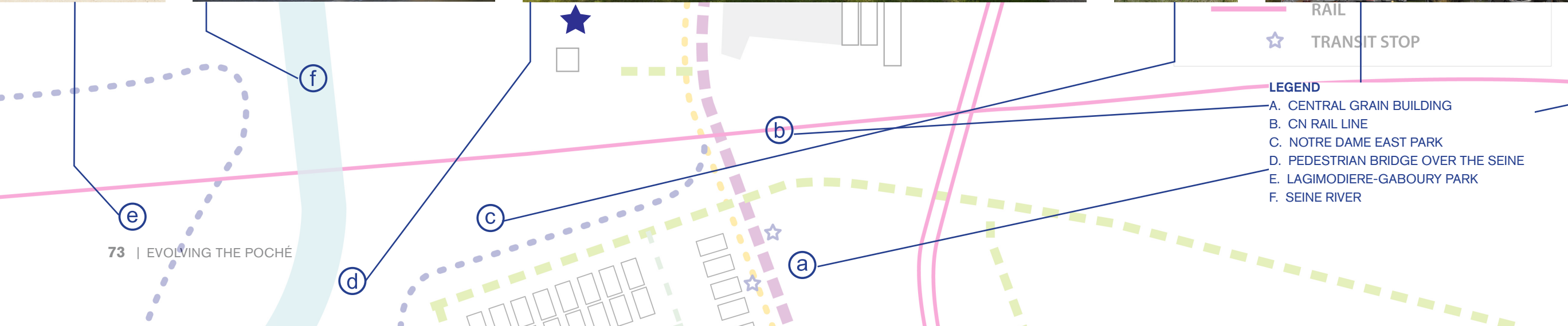F. SEINE RIVER

A variety of notable landmarks are located around the site of 75 Archibald Street. These landmarks are not only from a vehicular standpoint but a number of them are only visible from pedestrian routes. This selected inventory shows the variation in aesthetics and atmosphere within a relatively close vicinity of the project site.

4.3.2 SUN PATH

The importance of understanding the movement of the sun's path throughout different times of the year is essential for any architectural design project. This diagram (Fig. 28) displays the sun's path through the sky at June 21st and December 21st, demarcated by the green and blue lines respectively. During the summer the sun is at a higher angle in the sky and is lower in the winter months. This affects the amount of sunlight able to reach the interior of the building.

Another significant factor affecting sunlight penetration on this particular site is the riparian forest located between the back side of the building and the river. Since there is an abundance of deciduous trees that lack any leaves during the winter months, it allows more sunlight to pass through in the evening when the sun is at its lowest angle moving towards the West.
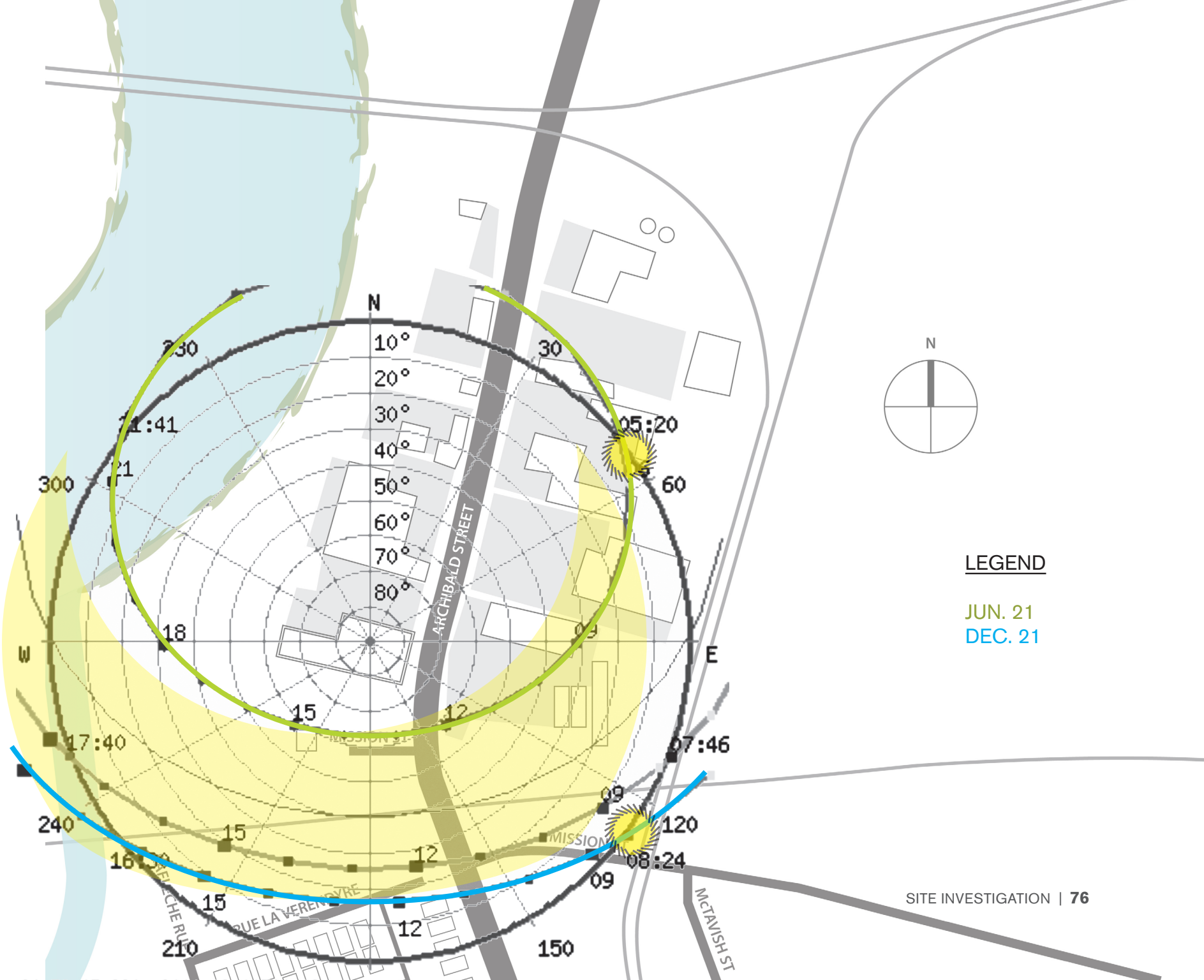

FIGURE 28 - SUN PATH DIAGRAM ▶

From the project site, a number of views and vistas are achieved. North, South, and East from the front of the building is the Archibald Street context. Towards the West, Figure 32 shows the abundant forest behind the building during the summer when the deciduous trees are lush and full.

4.3.3 VIEWS AND VISTAS

FIGURE 30 (top) - VIEW SOUTH ▶
FIGURE 31 (bottom) - VIEW NORTH ▶

▼ FIGURE 29 - VIEW EAST
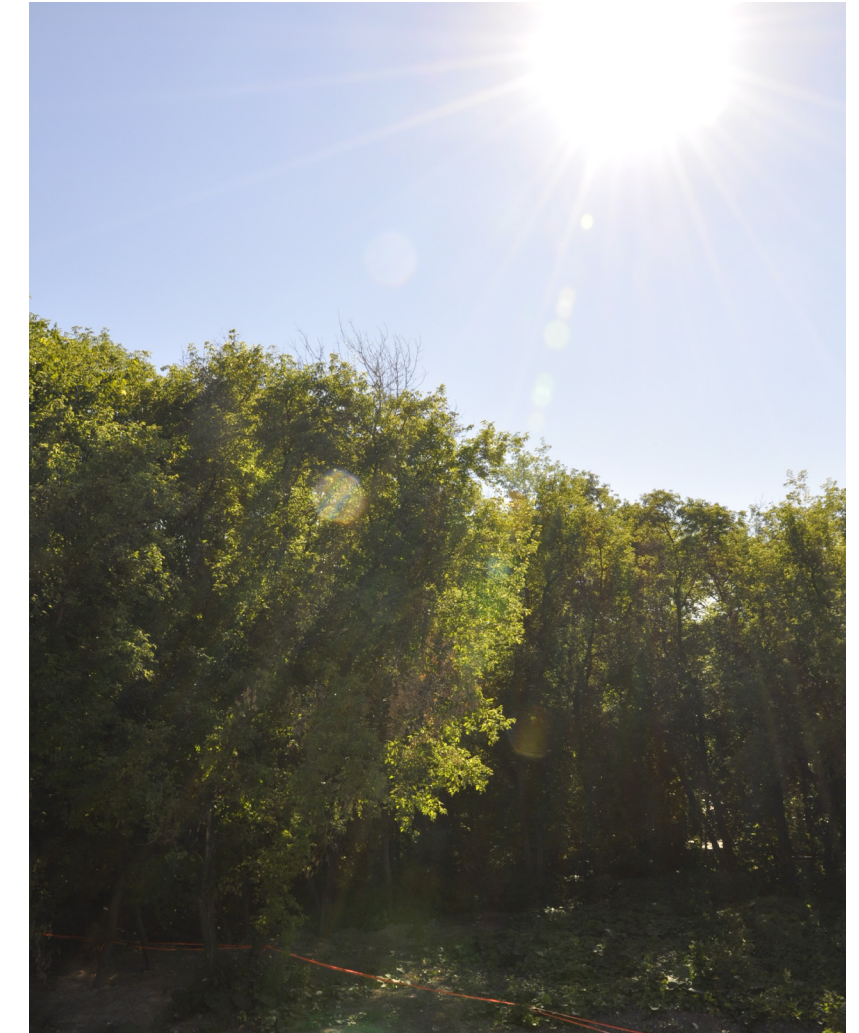
▲ FIGURE 32 - VIEW WEST

STRENGTHS

- Close to downtown core – approximately 3.2 km.
- Access to public transit.
- Natural surroundings – lot backs onto Seine and Red River.
- Large river lot - approximately 2.2 acres with large mature trees.
- Close to tourist destinations such as the Forks Marketplace, Esplanade Riel, Canadian Museum for Human Rights, Winnipeg Goldeyes Baseball club at Shaw Park.
- Diverse neighbourhood - within a 3km radius from 75 Archibald Street, there is a University, a hospital, large industrial park, downtown Winnipeg entering into the exchange district, parks and rivers, shopping.

WEAKNESSES

- Commercial plants in the vicinity that occasionally release strong, unpleasant smells into the air.
- Many neighboring buildings on Archibald Street are not visually stimulating.
- Visual appeal of 75 Archibald Street is lackluster from a vehicular approach.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Emphasize and develop the sites untouched natural surroundings.
- Establish a river walk and connect with other public walkways.
- Can potentially build vertically to get a view of downtown and the rivers over the tree canopies.

THREATS

- Busy thoroughfare at frontage of lot – could be a hazard for children or pets arriving at the building or cause difficulties trying to turn into lot with a vehicle.
- Limitations to the amount of development that can be done to the riverbank area – area close to river is technically owned by the City of Winnipeg.

4.4.1 BUILDING HISTORY + CONSTRUCTION

Similar to the surrounding site and neighbourhood context, this building's structure and history are also an assemblage of diversity. Since the original structure was built in 1910, there have been two major additions functioning to drastically increase the buildings overall square footage. From reviewing existing floor plans, the original structure appears to be located towards the middle of the floor plan as noted in Figure 34, with newer constructions added to its surrounds in 1964 and 1968.

Due to the different eras in which the additions were made to the original structure, the building also has a variety of construction methods employed. The exterior wall assembly around the

perimeter consists of a concrete block and masonry structure. But the 1910 construction remains as a heavy timber post and beam structure. The interior partitions on the second floor that subdivide the floor plate into rooms, are constructed of 2 x 4 inch metal studs.

The exterior facade exemplifies the diverse nature of this building with a variety of finishes from painted and unpainted brick to block masonry. Along with its assorted finishes, the building also exhibits a multitude of height differences as well.

▲ FIGURE 33 - EXTERIOR VIEW OF 75 ARCHIBALD STREET

ORIGINAL 1910
CONSTRUCTION

5'   10'   20'

N
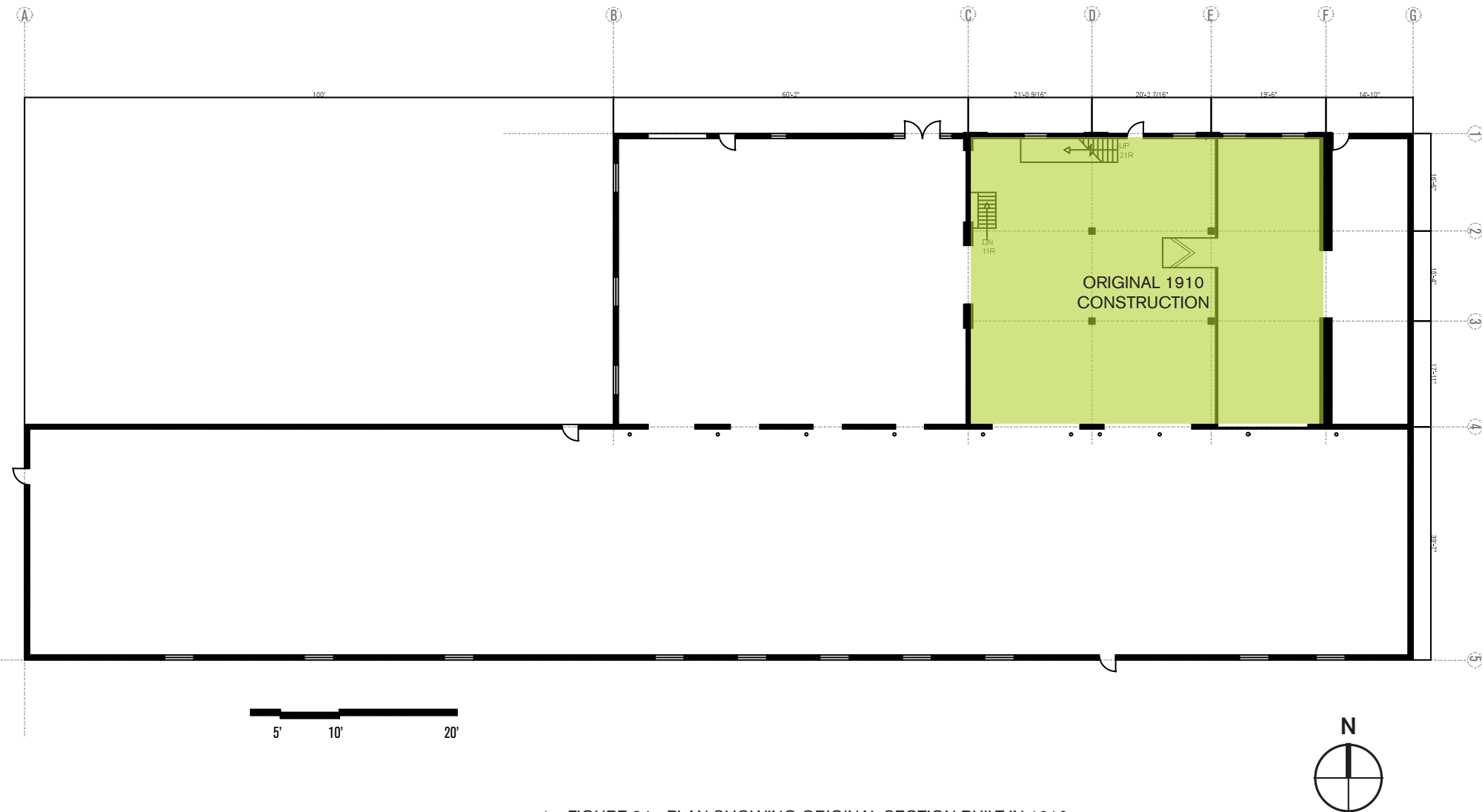
▲ FIGURE 34 - PLAN SHOWING ORIGINAL SECTION BUILT IN 1910

4.4.2 INTERIOR

The building has a 15,300 sqft. ground floor plate, 2,700 sqft. second floor, and a partial unusable basement.

Once used as a storage warehouse, half of the ground level has a vastly open floor plate absent of columns. The other half reflects smaller subdivided spaces that open up to each other.

The second floor, which is more than five times smaller than the overall ground floor reflects a more human scaled interior with rooms that appear to have been once used for offices. Considering this building has been vacant for many years, the second floor shows evidence of derelict and abuse.

▲ FIGURE 35 - PLAN OF EXISTING BUILDING - FLOOR TWO
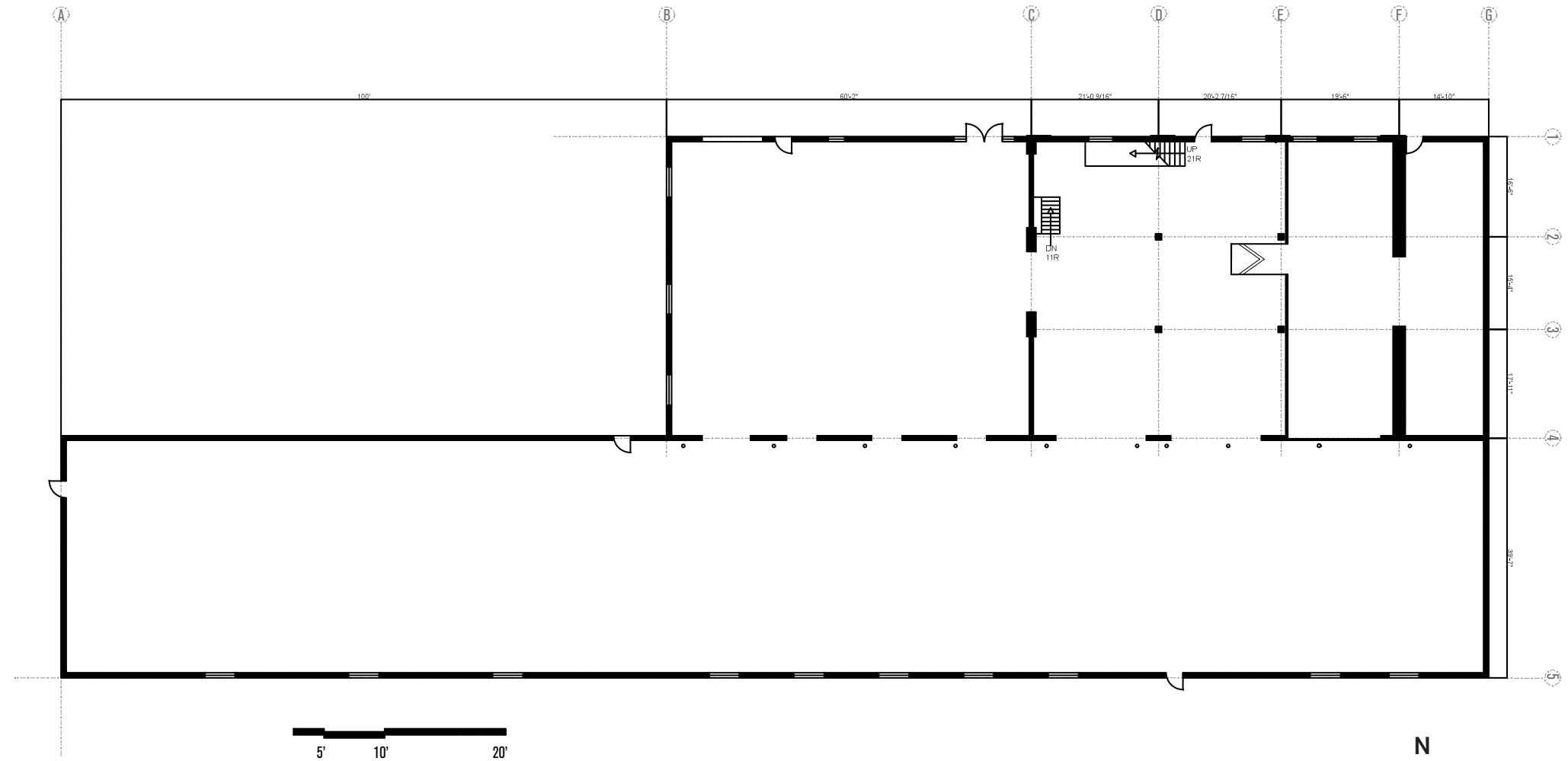
▲ FIGURE 36 - PLAN OF EXISTING BUILDING - FLOOR ONE

N

FIGURE 37 - VISUAL EXERCISE REPRESENTING THE AUDITORY THRESHOLD OF CHANGE

4.5.1 ANALYSIS

Through thorough investigation of the building along with its site and neighbourhood context, the essence of the site emerged. The interest in this particular site begins with the dichotomy between urban and natural.

The site commences with the urban condition of Archibald Street then transitions into a thick forest and eventually slopes down to the calmness of the river bank. The thick band of forest buffers the urban condition and inhibits the view of the river from onlooking bystanders - establishing a secretive and intensely private space beyond the forest buffer.

An auditory stimulation expressing this urban to natural transition was the most distinct feature when investigating this site in person. I became interested in where the point of equilibrium existed, how to represent the line visually, and what it meant.

The point of equilibrium, or threshold of change, is the line at which crossing from one side to the other will render the user in either the urban condition of the street or the natural calm of the forest and river. Figure 38 is a diagrammatic sketch that locates where this threshold of change occurs.

An exercise documented in Figure 37 (previous page) was explored to further grasp the understanding of this auditory threshold of change and how to represent it in a visual way. The photographic exercise represents the linear demarcation of the auditory change taking place on the site.

Upon completing these conceptual exercises, I realized that this threshold is in fact a fractured zone as opposed to a strictly linear representation.
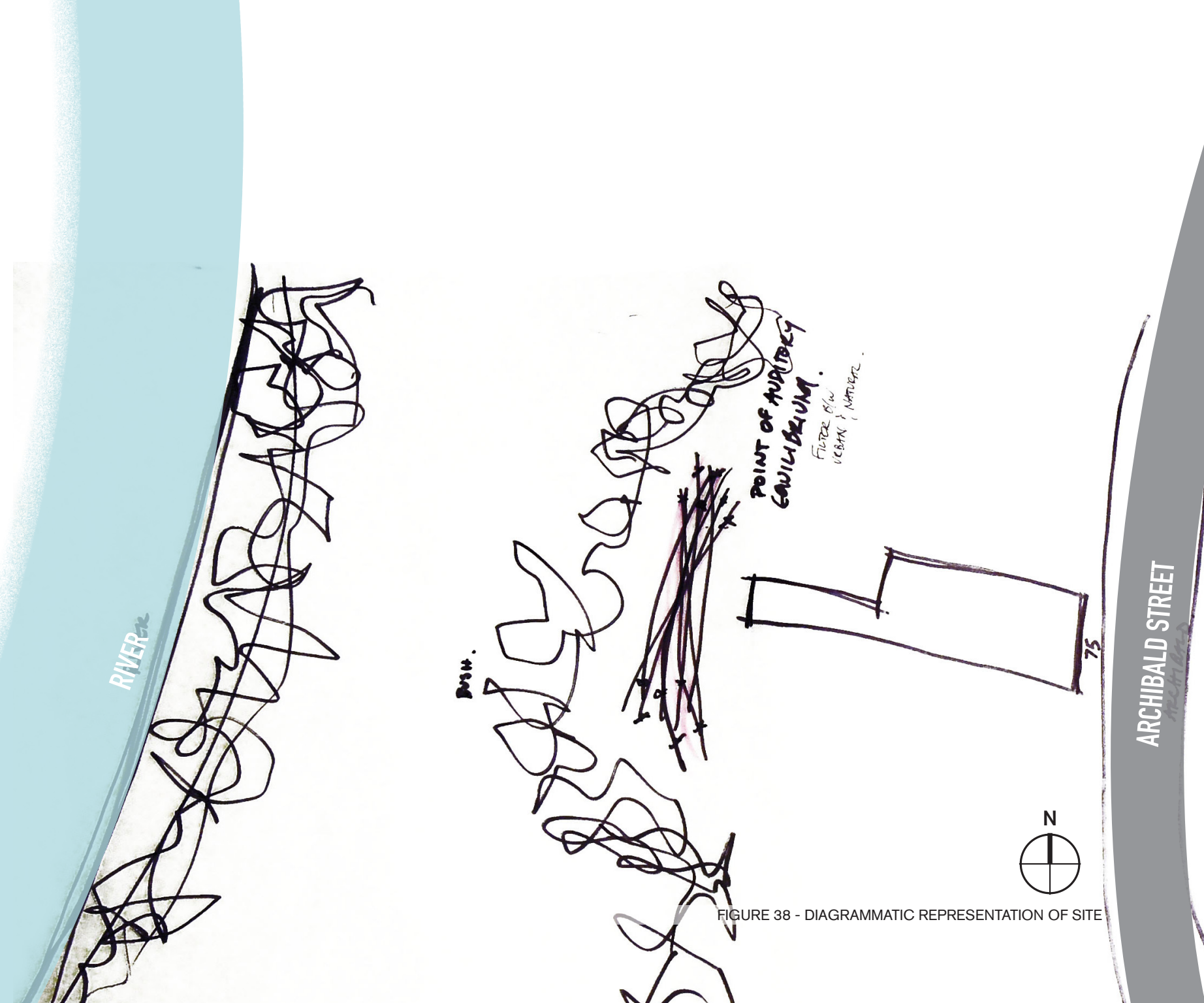
NATURAL   /   URBAN

FIGURE 38 - DIAGRAMMATIC REPRESENTATION OF SITE

FILTRATION is used in this particular sense as the process of slowing down or removing unwanted stimulus from each side of the filter boundary. The filter becomes an auditory as well as visual threshold - a point of obstruction. Essentially acting as a type of wall condition that prohibits physical movement through but allows visual and audio permeability.

This concept arose through trying to represent a space or zone with strictly linear elements. Singular lines are combined and assembled to create a condition that allows permeation.

◄ FIGURE 39 - FILTER ESTABLISHING THE THRESHOLD BETWEEN URBAN AND NATURAL
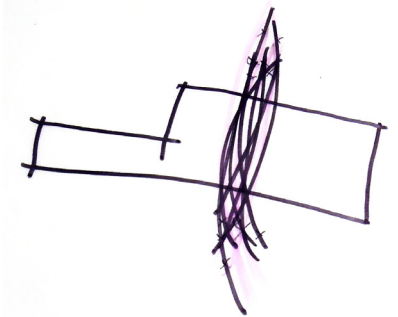
▲ FIGURE 40 - DESIGN INTERVENTION SKETCH
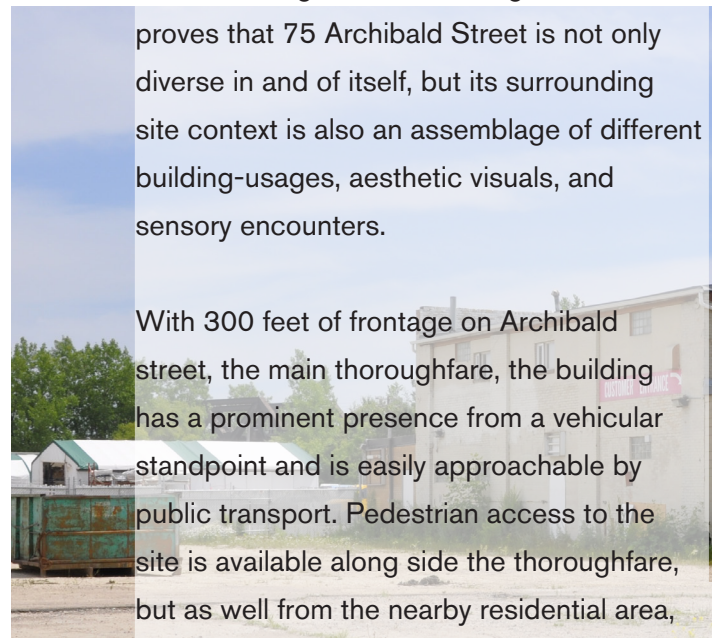
FIGURE 41

FIGURE 42

4.6 OUTCOMES

From a large to small scale investigation of the building and surrounding context, it proves that 75 Archibald Street is not only diverse in and of itself, but its surrounding site context is also an assemblage of different building-usages, aesthetic visuals, and sensory encounters.

With 300 feet of frontage on Archibald street, the main thoroughfare, the building has a prominent presence from a vehicular standpoint and is easily approachable by public transport. Pedestrian access to the site is available along side the thoroughfare, but as well from the nearby residential area, which passes through Notre Dame East park. A pedestrian bridge crossing the Seine river allows for an easy connection between Lagimodiere-Gaboury Park and Archibald Street.

The building's interior evokes potential with its large open floor plate on the ground level. Its ample 2.2 acre site also allows for potential interventions or additions to be made to the structure if needed.

FIGURE 43

FIGURE 44

A comprehensive understanding of the site and building aids in the initial planning stages of the design to move forward in making appropriate design decisions, which are found in the subsequent Chapter.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

From existing building to designed intervention. This Chapter focuses on translating the theoretical concepts studied in Chapter 2 into a 3-dimensional design intervention for Comm/unity, a community center that straddles the districts of North St. Boniface and Norwood along the Archibald Street context.

This intervention focuses on the evolution of the wall condition into that of *poché*. Even though walls are constructed 3-dimensional objects; their function, use, and overall presence in designed spaces remains surface oriented. Lois Weinthal notes the background presence walls have in spatial environments, stating that "they play a supporting role, literally acting as wallflowers," attesting further that the other focal points and furniture in the room then command the attention (2012).

The *poché*, as outlined in Chapter 2, is a "conversational zone" according to Meisenheimer, describing it also as being "the most eloquent backdrop of the architectonic stage" (Meisenheimer 2011, 627). The *poché* is the heart of architectural flows of the building, it is where decisions are made or rejected, and is the stage for social interaction.

Theoretical concepts that have informed design decisions and planning for the subsequent design are as follows: threshold, memory, trace, void, boundary, and interiority.
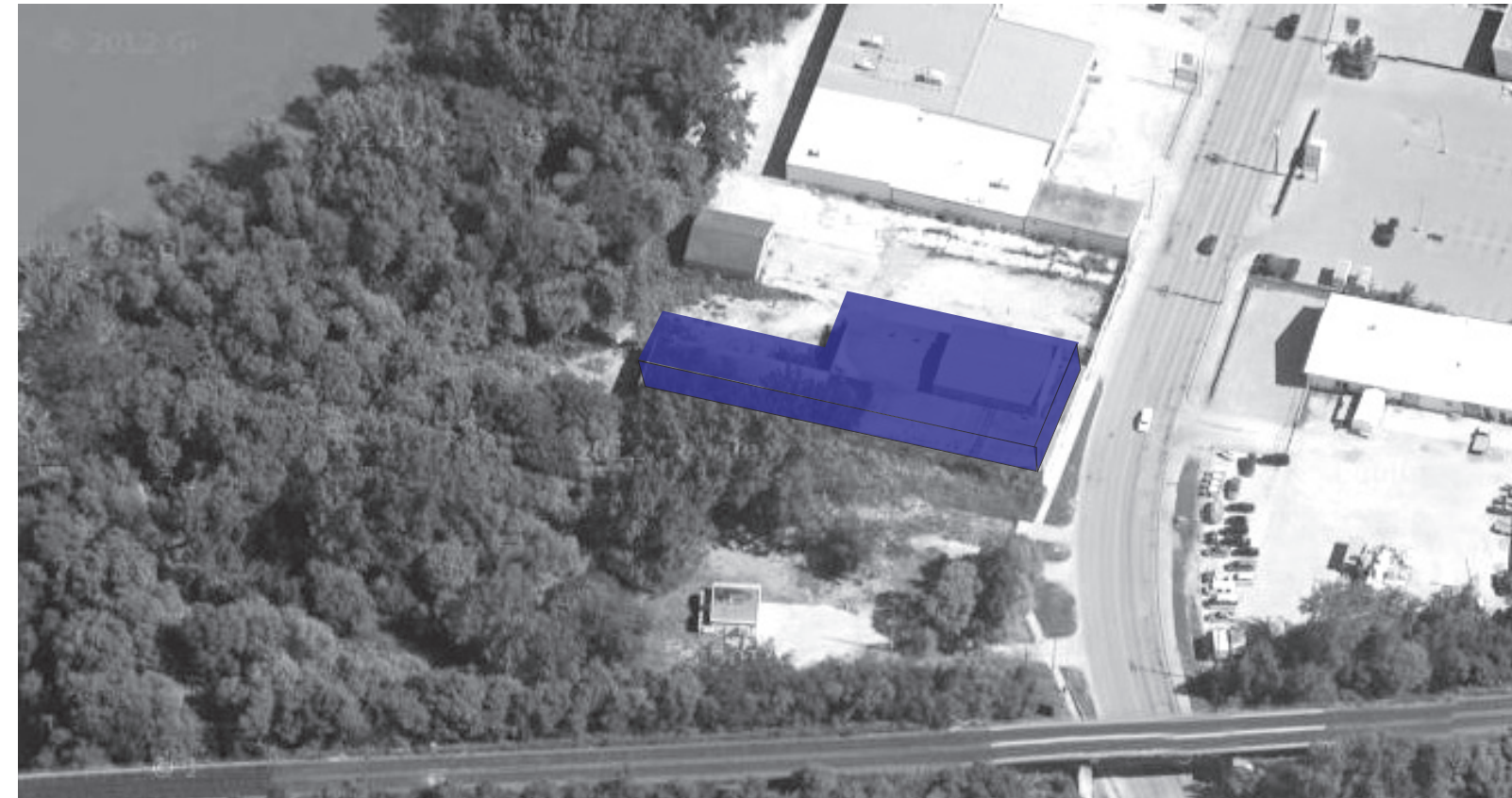

FIGURE 45 - AERIAL VIEW OF SITE ▶

5.2 PROGRAMMING

5.2.1 USER GROUP

Overall the user group for a community center is highly dependant on the type of activities offered by the facility. For Comm/unity, the primary user group will be that of children and youth who take part in after-school and evening activities.

The only users to frequent the building on a regular daily basis would be the full-time staff, whether facility managers, or janitorial staff.

The overall frequency of user groups within a community center is sporadic, typically a primary user would come once or twice a week anywhere from 1-2 hours per visit depending on how many activities they partake in and the duration of the session. However, for Comm/unity, the programmatic addition of café and eatery as well as learning center, offers more opportunity for people to use the building as a casual drop-in center without having to attend a specific activity or sport.

Evenings and Weekends continue to be the peak times for activity-goers however some daytime programming will be offered for seniors and pre-school groups.

TABLE 2 USER GROUPS

PRIMARY	The primary user group is the group of users who frequent the building most often. In this case, it is children, youth, young adults, instructors, and coaches, as well as full-time staff members of the facility and the general public who frequent the building.
SECONDARY	The secondary user group are people who occupy the building but not to the same extent that the primary users do. In this case, it would include people who come to supervise, spectate, drop off and pick-up children or youth involved in the activity programs offered at the center. This could include parents, guardians, friends, etc.
TERTIARY	Tertiary users include janitorial staff and any part-time support staff of the center.
PERIPHERAL	Peripheral user groups would be those frequenting the building for only a short period of time, for example guests attending a special event such as a wedding, social, or recital.

5.2.2 CLIENT PROFILE

The client for this project is the Municipal Government (The City of Winnipeg) and the General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres (GCWCC).

These two clients work in partnership with each other to run all the community centers in the city. The role of the Municipal Government is to be the financial owner of the facility, while the GCWC is the governing body for the facilty - in charge of the organization and activity programming within the building.

Current needs:
▪ To provide the community with indoor and outdoor public facilities for leisure and learning activities.
▪ Additional multi-purpose areas incorporated to the building programme. These areas are utilized to generate additional revenue for the centre as they can be rented out by members of the community or third parties for events such as weddings, recitals, or exhibitions.

Future goals:
▪ Future goals consists of flexibility and ability for the building to adapt to the changing needs of the community centre.
▪ Ability for additions and renovations as needed in the future years as the center becomes increasingly more utilized and used for varying functions.

5.3 DESIGN SOLUTIONS

5.3.1 METHOD, PROCESS, and APPROACH

The initial approach to adapting the
existing building stems from the need to
expand the square footage of the building
based on its programmatic requirements,
and at the same time striving to expose
the *poché* and leave aspects of trace
in the new design from the existing
structure. The process involves cutting,
overlapping, and layering the new
enclosed structure with the existing.

The existing building, since not entirely
useful in its as-is state, is partially cut to reveal an exposed
poché. This displays the construction, materiality and history
of the building. The *poché* is then utilized within the new
spatial planning for the building to organize space and define
areas, all the while facilitating an act of memory and serving
as a reminder of what the building once was, and celebrating
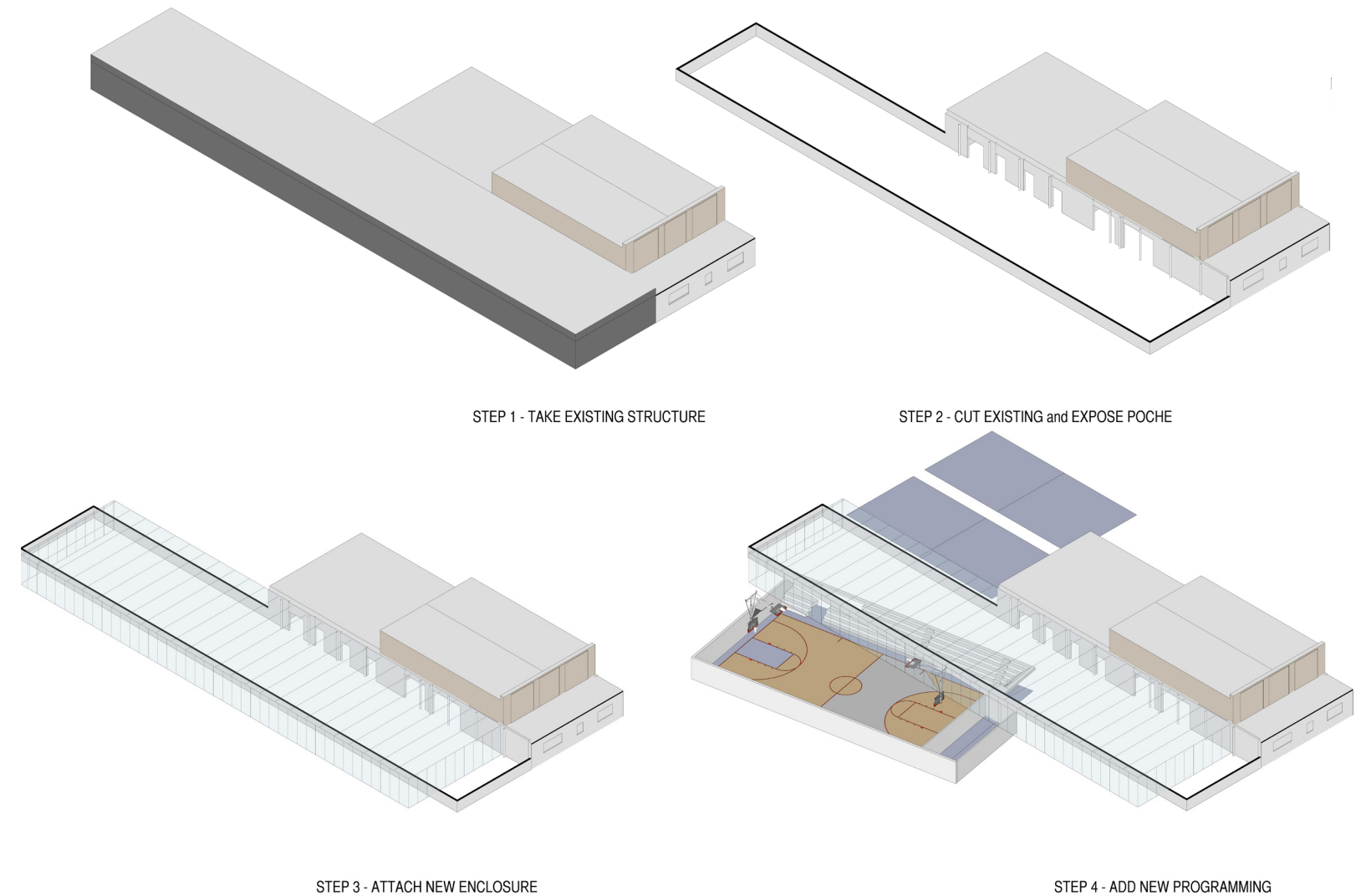it's existing materiality.

STEP 1 - TAKE EXISTING STRUCTURE

STEP 2 - CUT EXISTING and EXPOSE POCHE

STEP 3 - ATTACH NEW ENCLOSURE

STEP 4 - ADD NEW PROGRAMMING

FIGURE 46 - SKETCH MODEL DESCRIBING THE PROCESS OF ADAPTING EXISTING STRUCTURE ▶

5.3.2 SPACE PLANNING

PARKING LOT

ACCESS TO PARKING

MAIN ENTRANCE

BOULES COURTS

OFFICES

STAIRS

HALLWAY/FOYER

LOUNGE

LEARNING CENTER

ENTRY FOYER

RECEPTION

MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM

ARCHIBALD STREET

KIDS PLAY AREA

CLASSROOMS

GAMES ROOM

ELEV.

CAFE

GALLERY

GYMNASIUM

N
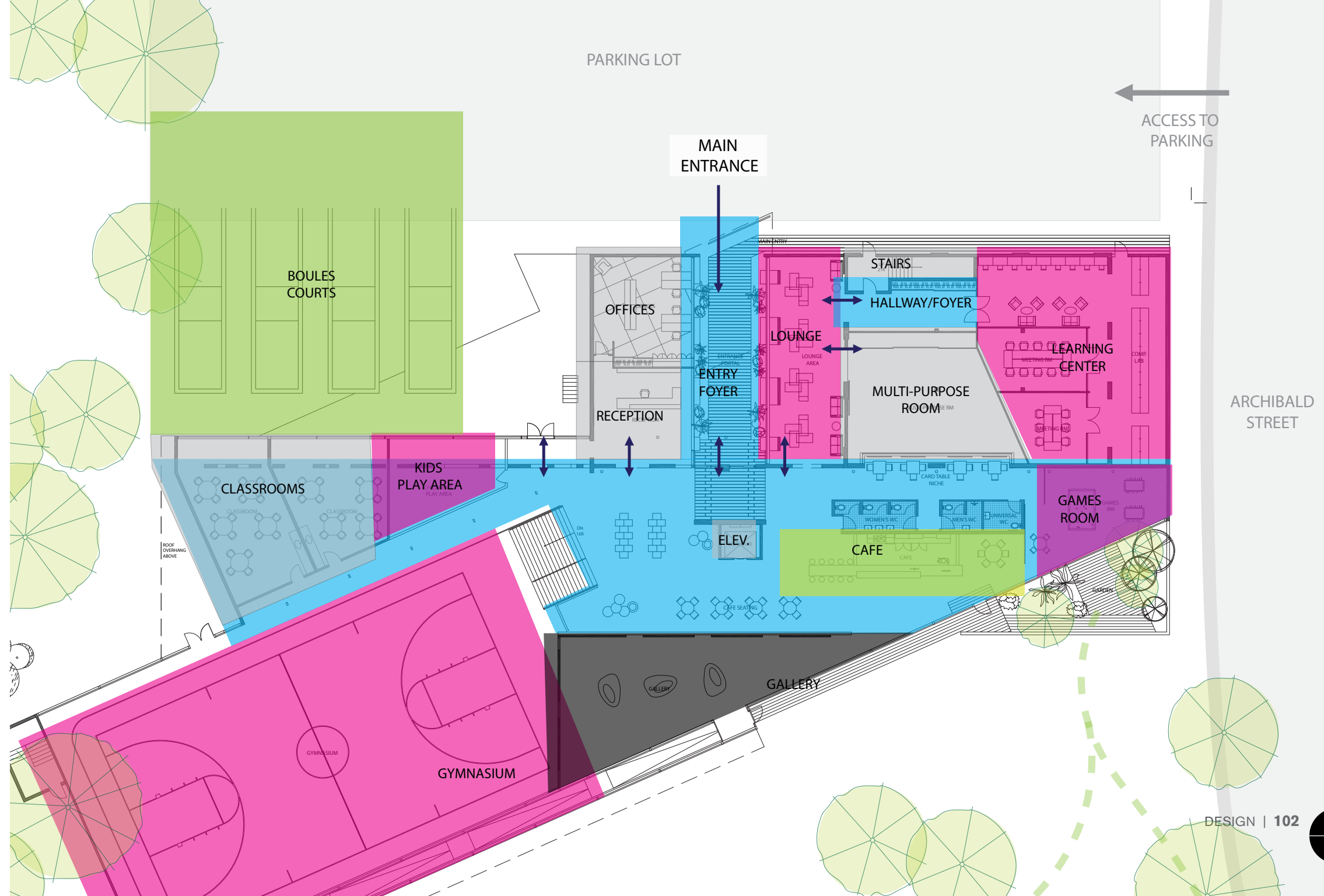
FIGURE 47 - SPACE PLAN DIAGRAM ▶
NOT TO SCALE

5.3.3 EXTERIOR DEVELOPMENT
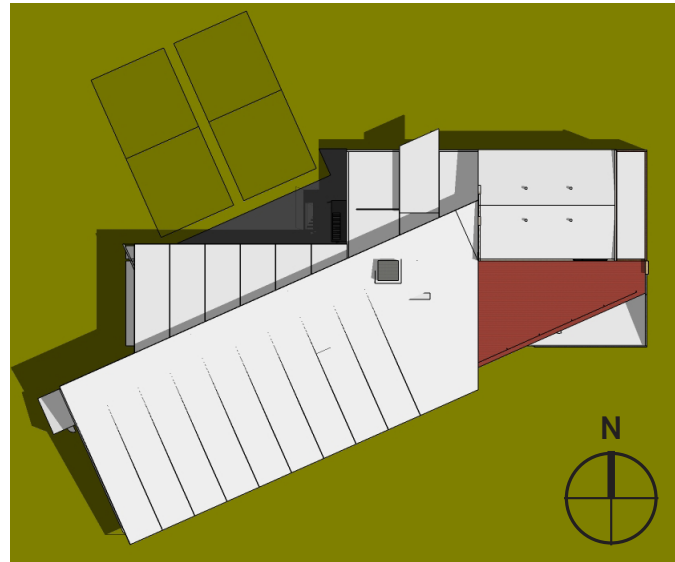
▲ FIGURE 48 - EXTERIOR PLAN
NOT TO SCALE

The design intervention makes use of the building's expansive 2.2 acre site. From the South approach on Archibald street, the building is engaging, interactive, and transparent, opening up to the landscape adjacent. From the north approach, the building is more restrained, regular, and institutional, which is congruent with the existing industrial context of Archibald Street.

▲ FIGURE 49 - PERSPECTIVE, SOUTH FACADE
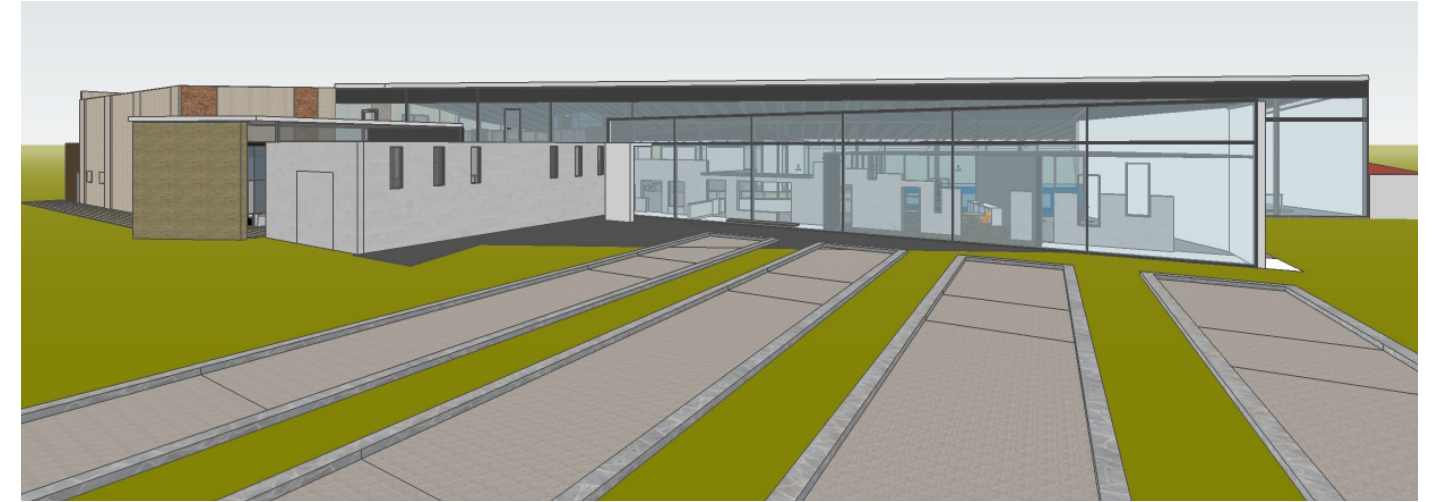
▲ FIGURE 50 - PERSPECTIVE, NORTH FACADE

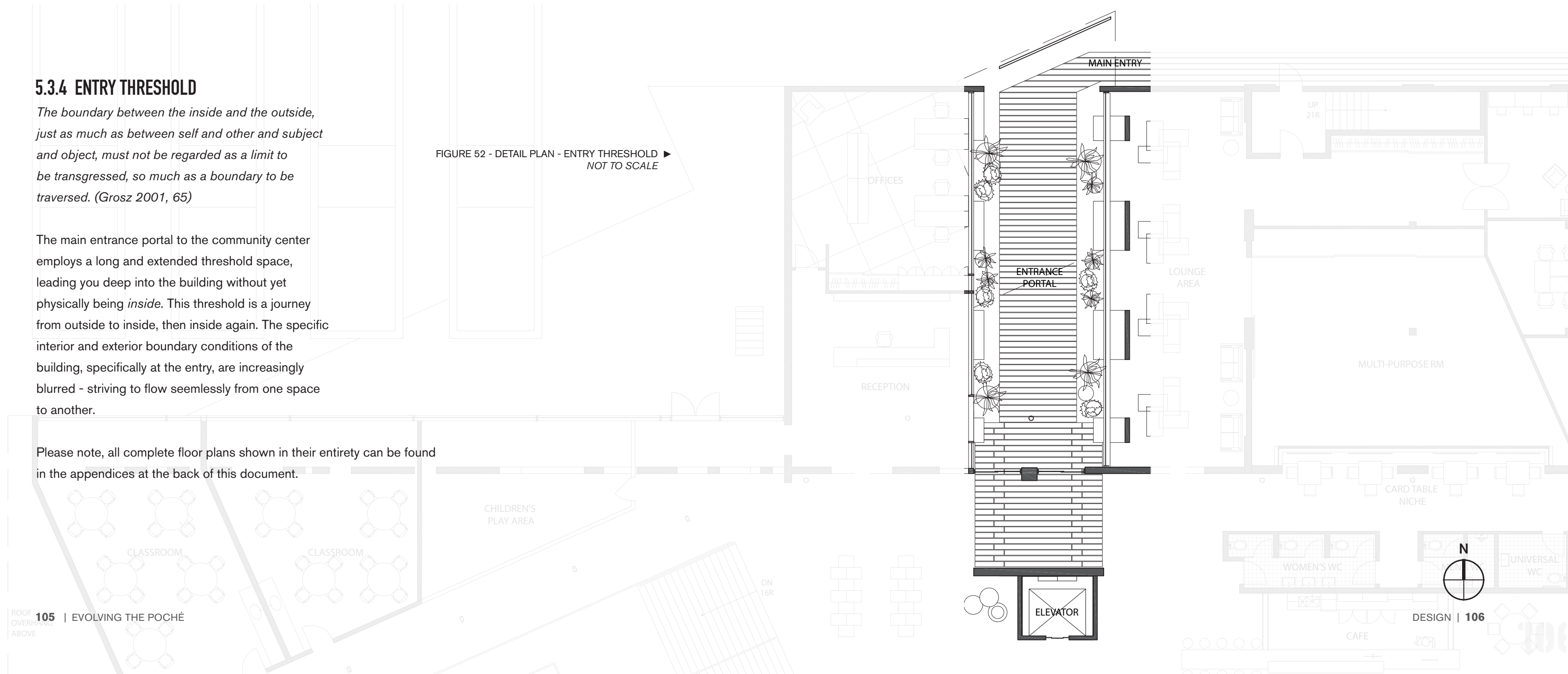▶ FIGURE 51 - PERSPECTIVE, MAIN ENTRY

5.3.4 ENTRY THRESHOLD

*The boundary between the inside and the outside,
just as much as between self and other and subject
and object, must not be regarded as a limit to
be transgressed, so much as a boundary to be
traversed. (Grosz 2001, 65)*

The main entrance portal to the community center
employs a long and extended threshold space,
leading you deep into the building without yet
physically being *inside*. This threshold is a journey
from outside to inside, then inside again. The specific
interior and exterior boundary conditions of the
building, specifically at the entry, are increasingly
blurred - striving to flow seemlessly from one space
to another.

Please note, all complete floor plans shown in their entirety can be found
in the appendices at the back of this document.

FIGURE 52 - DETAIL PLAN - ENTRY THRESHOLD ▶
NOT TO SCALE

MAIN ENTRY

OFFICES

ENTRANCE
PORTAL

LOUNGE
AREA

RECEPTION

MULTI-PURPOSE RM

CHILDREN'S
PLAY AREA

CARD TABLE
NICHE

CLASSROOM

CLASSROOM

DN
16R

WOMEN'S WC

UNIVERSAL
WC

N

ELEVATOR

CAFE

UP
21R

ROOF
OVERHANG
ABOVE

The entrance portal also enables an exterior connection from the adjoining interior spaces, which includes the office area, reception, and lounge space to the right. Operable windows along the facades allow users to open up the inside to the experiences of the outside, further enhanced with the diverse plantings along the edges. Because this space is partially conditioned and mostly protected from the elements, this environment can be enjoyed even throughout the long Winnipeg winter months. Opening up and extending this entry space allows the office spaces and reception area as well as the lounge area to have a greater connection to the exterior than the existing building envelope could have provided for.

The the bottom part of the entry facades, along the sides, protrude out a specified points along the wall. This provides casual seating along the entrance portal. These protrusions also enter into the lounge area adjacent. Both surfaces finished with a 1" finished timber plywood to give a seamless appearance from inside to outside of the glazing. In the lounge area this becomes a private window seat.

The glazing wall has panels of a more translucent tinted glass installed sporadically along the facade. This provides for a dynamic, changing face as you move through the entry, it also provides additional privacy.

▲ FIGURE 53 - ENTRY THRESHOLD PERSPECTIVE

SECTION X-X
Scale: 1/8"=1'
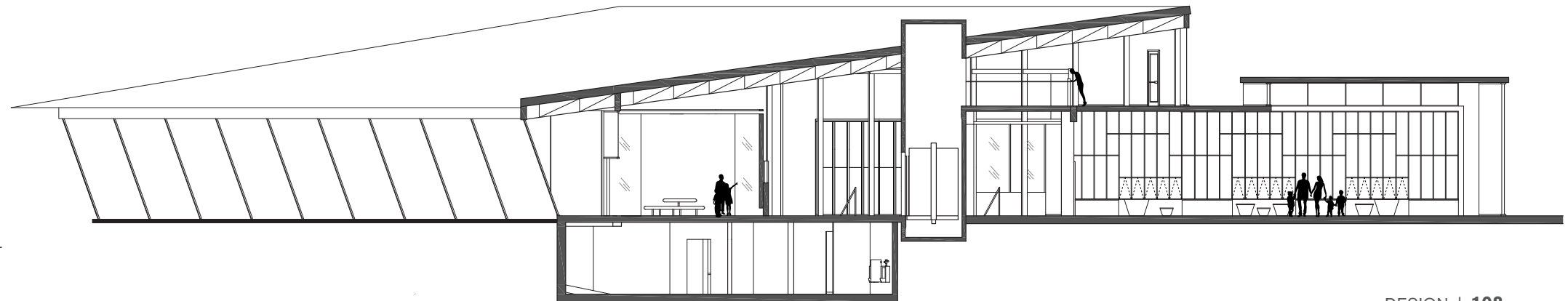
5.3.5 THE PRINCIPAL POCHÉ

Porosity filters throughout most aspects of the city and life – private and public co-mingle effortlessly and the interstices of architecture become the stage for these performances.
(Benjamin 1986, 167, 171)

At the center of movement and process in this community center is the principal *poché*. It is a re-presentation of the building's existing facades, which reveals its patchwork history. As described in Chapter 3 Site Analysis, the entire structure is essentially a single building built in 1901 with multiple additions added to it over time. This section cut East-West through the structure, visually displays the building's varied history up until this most recent

intervention as a community center.

At the *poché*, new structure merges with old, existing voids are utilized as doorways, niches, and thresholds, while new voids are cut to reveal the landscape beyond.

Movement and processes are facilitated at this *poché* condition. From right to left in this drawing, the wall stands as solid and rigid then becomes increasingly more porous and broken down to provide multiple entry and exit points.

Porosity enables movement and process to occur at the wall, elevating it to the status of *poché*, which facilitates interaction and movement. This interweaving of movement creates an activated space, such as the cafe in Naples Benjamin wrote of, where "life is unable to sit down and stagnate" (Benjamin 1986,172.)
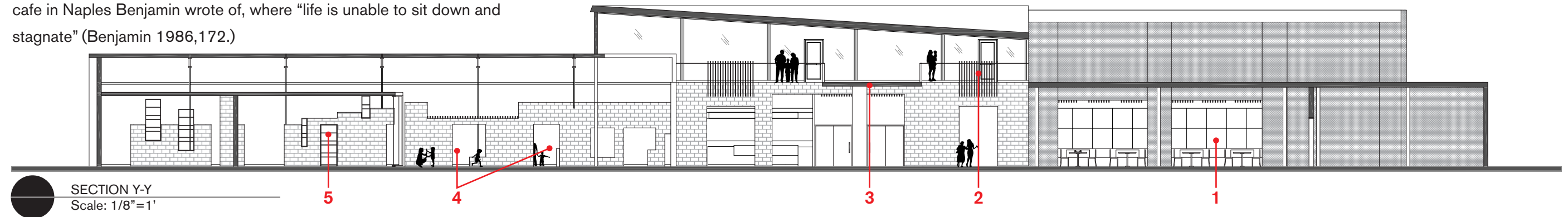
There are a number of points along this wall that are designed to afford opportunities for lingering, occupying, and experiencing the *poché* (labeled below):

Number 1 - is an intimate place of lingering. This space inside the *poché* is an extended protrusion of the wall that provides a recessed area where a series of card tables and chairs are located. It becomes an engaging place to sit for a game of chess, backgammon, checkers, poker, or solitaire.

Number 2 - A custom railing is designed to allow users to be aware of the interstitial points along the wall at which you are actually on top of the *poché*. Above doorway openings on the main floor, the timber slat railing mounted to the face of the wall emphasizes the void penetrations below. Mounting them to the face of the wall creates a subtle interstitial space above that further engages users with the *poché*.

SECTION Y-Y
Scale: 1/8"=1'

Number 3 - is a horizontal extension of the *poché*, acting as a ceiling plane for the main entrance point into the building on the main floor, and also a boardwalk on the second floor taking the user from the lift elevator over to the second storey.

Number 4 - is a series of void cuts that provides the porosity used to interweave activity. Multiple entry and exit points allow the user to interact with the wall at their discretion. The voids also create restricted and intentional viewpoints out to the landscape.

Number 5 - custom shelving occupies parts of the *poché* in the classroom areas. Timber shelving units are fitted into voids to provide an intimate level of interaction with the *poché*. As well as providing shelving for display and storage purposes, the voids

also frame viewpoints out to the exterior landscape.

Above all, the principal *poché* and its intentionally designed additions, protrusions, and subtractions set the stage and facilitate the activity and movement within the building. Access to most spaces of this community center happens around, above, or through this section of the building.
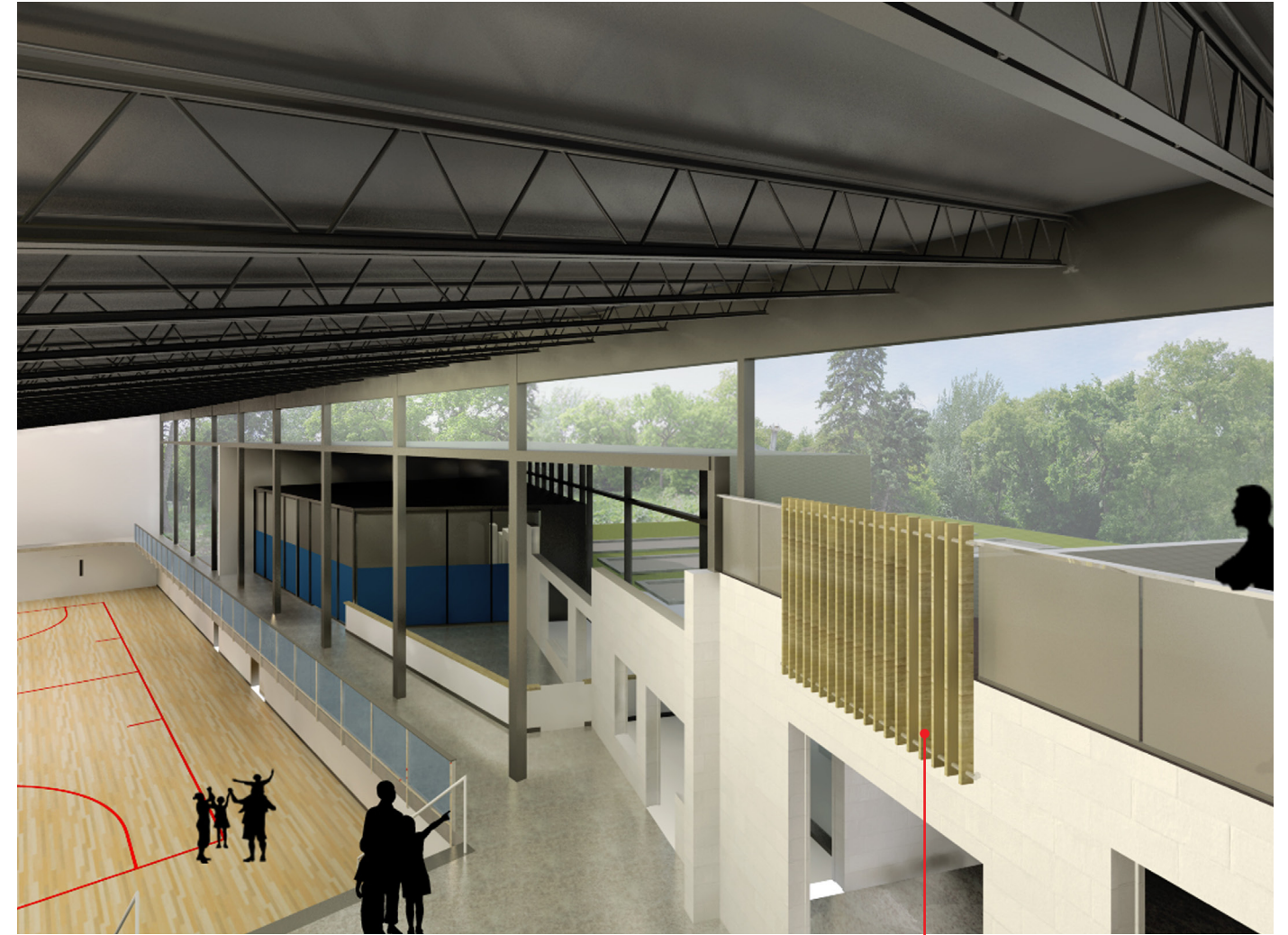

FIGURE 54 - LOOKING TOWARDS ▶
MAIN ENTRANCEPERSPECTIVE

▼ FIGURE 55 - GAMES TABLE NICHE PERSPECTIVE

1

▼ FIGURE 56 - OVERLOOKING GYMNASIUM PERSPECTIVE

2

5.3.6 THE SECONDARY POCHÉ

The secondary *poché* is a remnant of the existing structure, exposing the memory, time and history of the building.

This particular *poché* intersects with the newly constructed facade and provides spatial delineation for the programmatic use of the building.
As new structure overlaps the existing cut structure, a dynamic interplay of interior and exterior spaces ensues.

The tension between new and existing becomes apparent at the area directly across from the cafe counter. The *poché* respectfully recedes to allow the new facade to continue through, creating an exterior garden space on the right, and delineates an interior gallery space to the left.

This particular *poché* is where the concepts of memory, trace and void become apparent. A void remains where the *poché* is cut to allow the new structure to continue through. This void facilitates contemplation. It is apparent that the wall used to exist there but now does not - how tall did it used to be? Where did it begin and end? Why was it cut? When was it cut? It points, like an index, to a moment in time related to the history of the building, but leaving out any specific details to allow the viewer to interpret it however they wish.

This methodology derives from Doris Salcedo's work, as discussed in Chapter 2 Literature Review. Her memory sculptures do not explain in detail a specific moment in time or story, she accounts for a certain degree of ambiguity in her work, primarily in the form of a void or trace, which enables the viewer or spectator to complete the story by using their own imagination or associations with the work.

It is not important to remember this building specifically for what it once was - its use, construction method, or tenants, it is significant however to bring awareness to the history and fabric of the city. For every infill project within a city, there is typically a demolition of an existing building that precedes it.
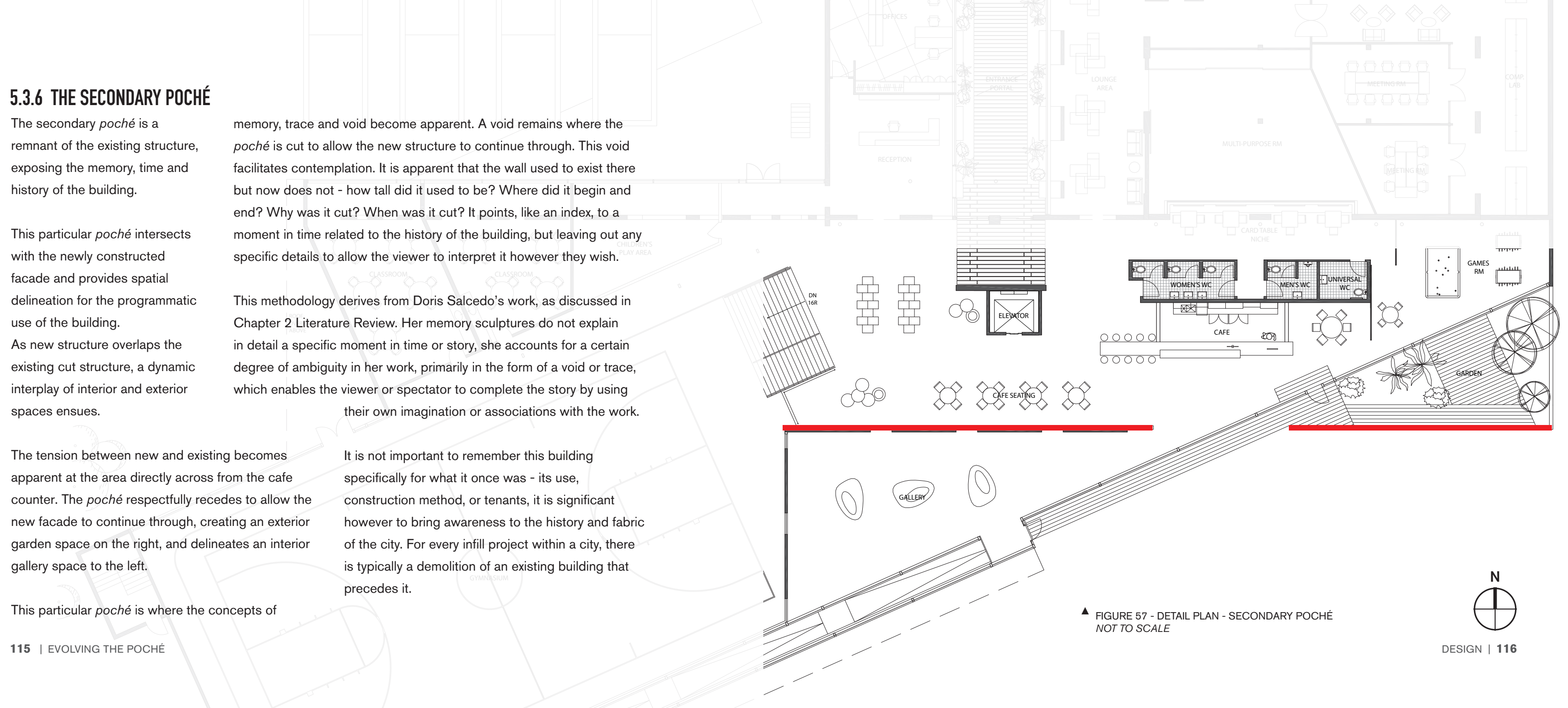
▲ FIGURE 57 - DETAIL PLAN - SECONDARY POCHÉ
NOT TO SCALE

N

This perspective shows the interplay between new building and existing building with the intersection of the new fully-glazed facade and the de-constructed *poché*.

As shown in this image, what was once interior space is now an exterior garden space and cushioning interstitial area for the building's new interior. Consequently, what was once considered exterior space from the footprint of the existing building, is now enclosed with a transparent facade to become apart of the building's new interior space.
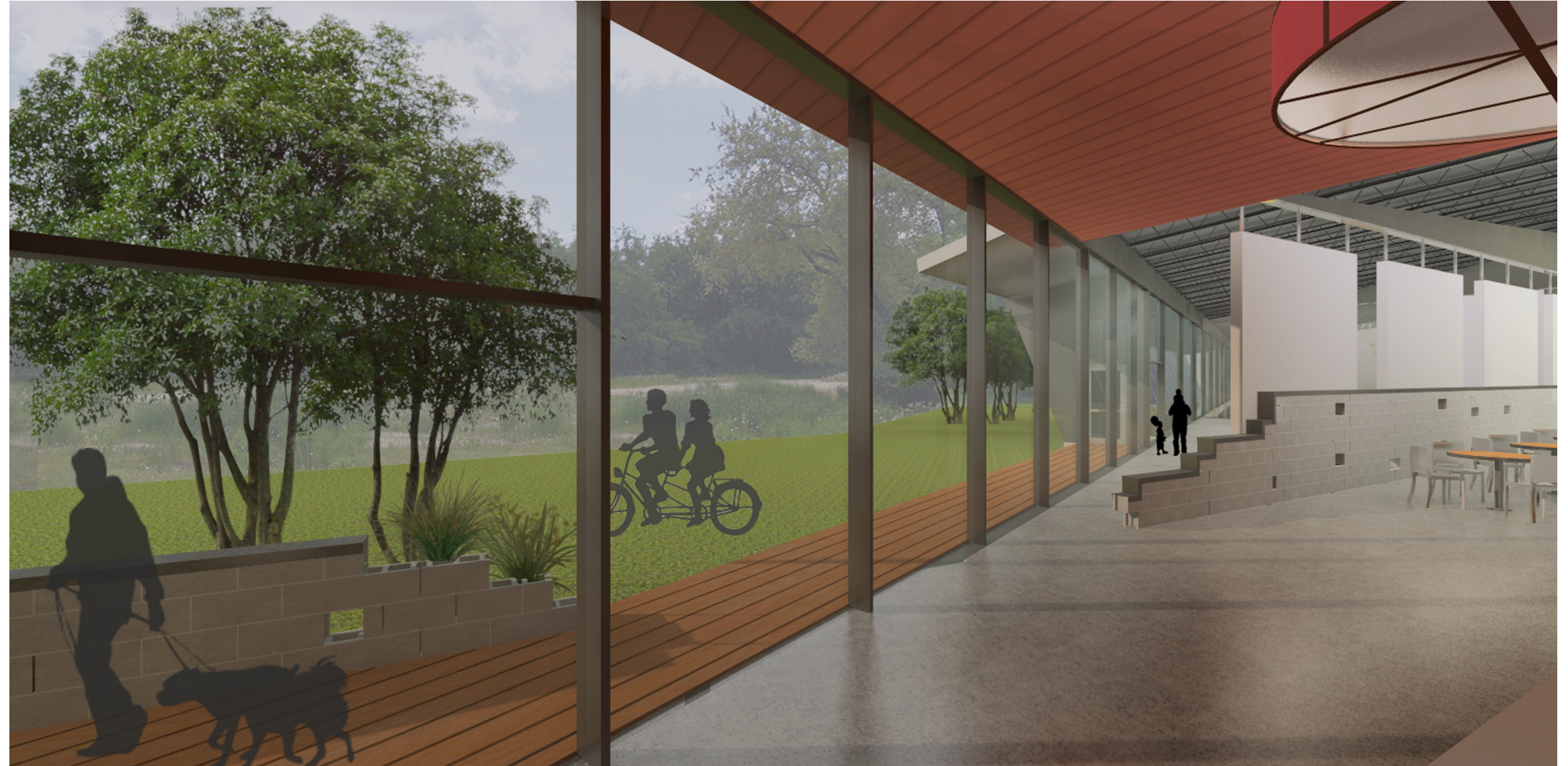

FIGURE 58 - SECONDARY *POCHÉ* PERSPECTIVE ▲

5.3.7 THE CAFE BLOCK + HALLWAY + GAMES ROOM

As mentioned previously, a series of card tables occupy a protrusion in the principal *poché*. The extrusion is enabled by mounting a new structure to the existing wall face. The new construction provides a mirrored face on one side for the multi-purpose room, and an intimate and acoustically treated surface area for the card tables area. This area is a quiet and intimate gathering space for playing card games, chess, checkers, backgammon, or other board games.

The hallway area adjacent to the *poché* leads to a games room. This is where a pool table, 2 foosball tables and a bar-height seating arrangement look out into the protected garden space outdoors. This quiet, naturally-lit room is also connected to the adjacent cafe area.

The WC's form a block, which becomes the back anchoring device for the cafe. A long and extended counter-top serves as the service area for the cafe where orders are taken and

coffee is prepared and served. It is also increased further beyond the service area to provide seating. This counter-top is oriented towards the south fully-glazed facade to take advantage of its exposure to the outdoor landscape and ample daylighting.
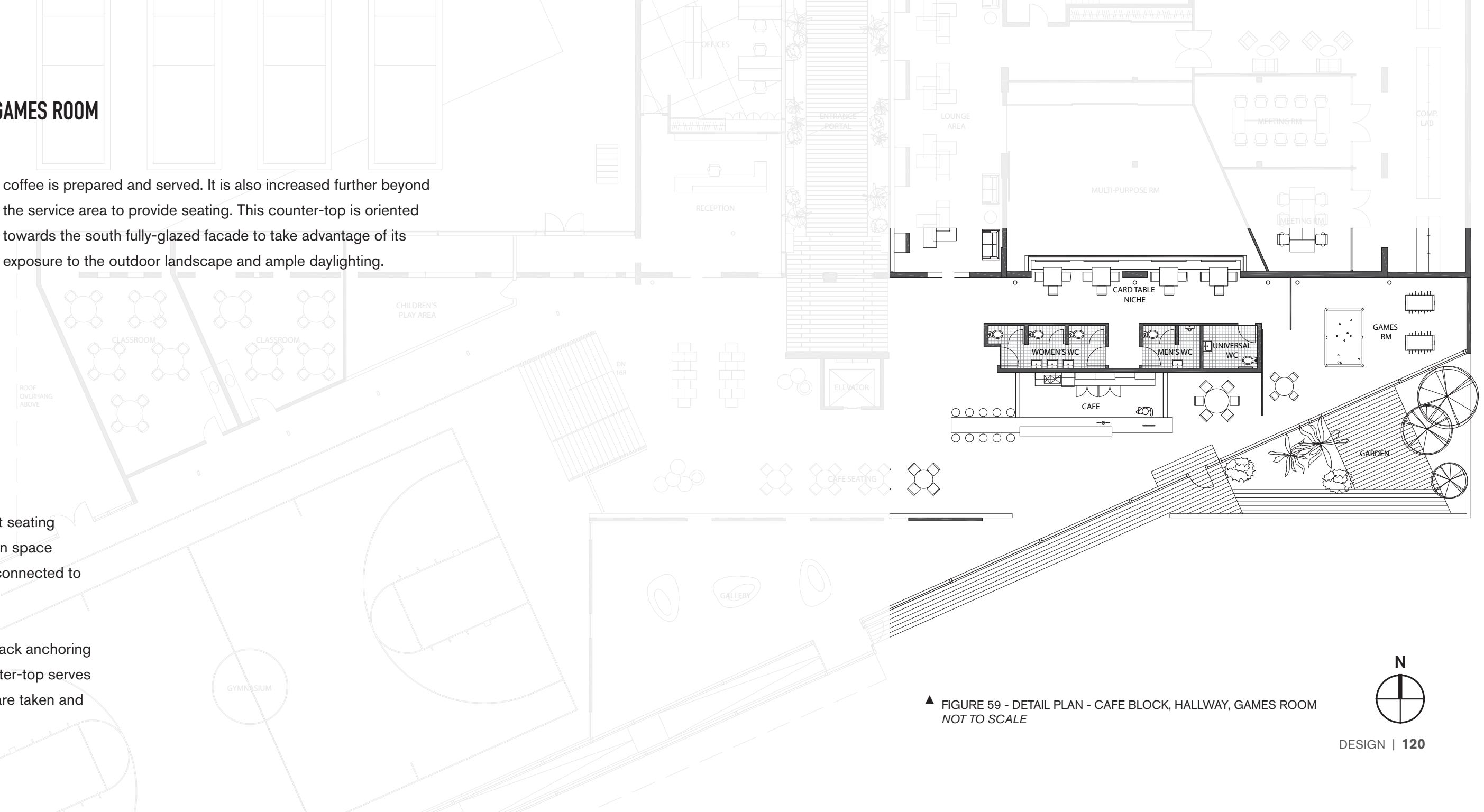
▲ FIGURE 59 - DETAIL PLAN - CAFE BLOCK, HALLWAY, GAMES ROOM
NOT TO SCALE

5.3.7.1 GAMES TABLE NICHE
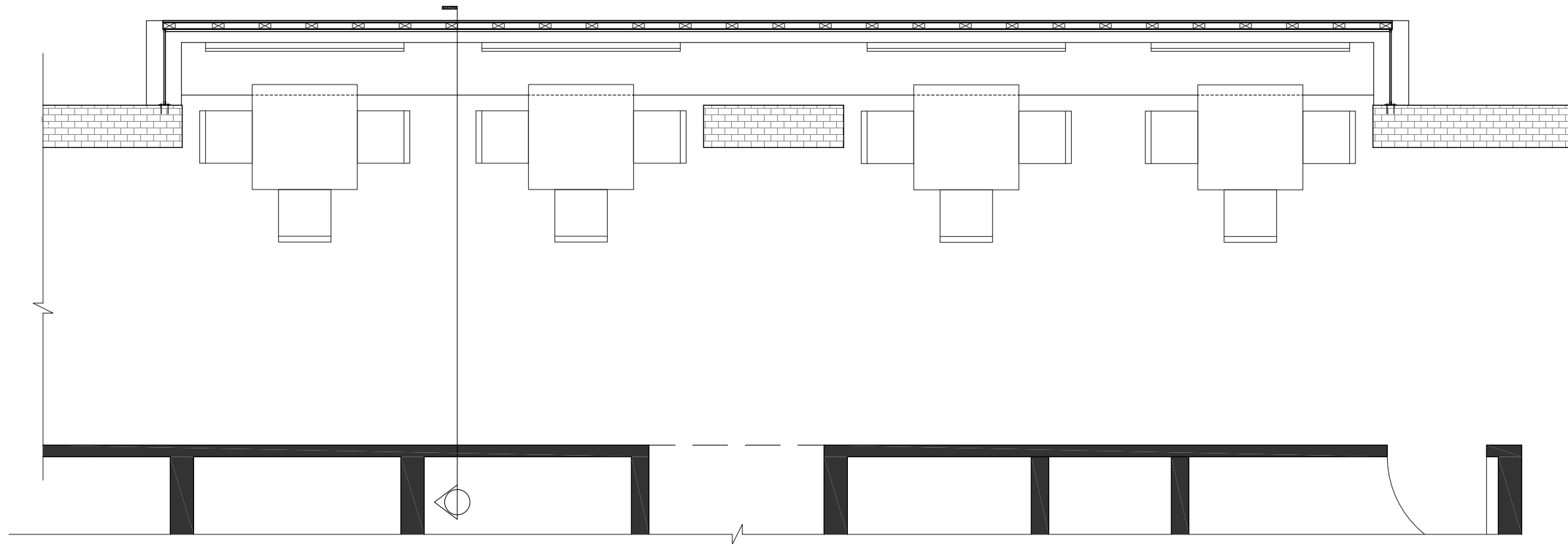
⬤ ENLARGED PLAN - GAMES TABLE HALLWAY
Scale: 1/4"=1'

▲ FIGURE 60 - GAMES TABLE NICHE HALLWAY PERSPECTIVE

ELEVATION - HALLWAY SIDE
Scale: 1/4"=1'

1X4" TIMBER SLATS

BRICK WALL
(EXISTING STRUCTURE)

BRICK WALL
(EXISTING STRUCTURE)

3'4" X 3'4" UPHOLSTERED PANELS,
MAHARAM BITMAP (001 POLAR)

3'4" X 3'4" UPHOLSTERED PANELS,
MAHARAM BITMAP (001 POLAR)

EMECO HUDSON CHAIR,
BRUSHED ALUMINUM FINISH

UPHOLSTERED SEAT BACKS,
MAHARAM ANAGRAM (003 ELECTRIC)

WOOD LAMINATE FINISH

FINISH FLOOR
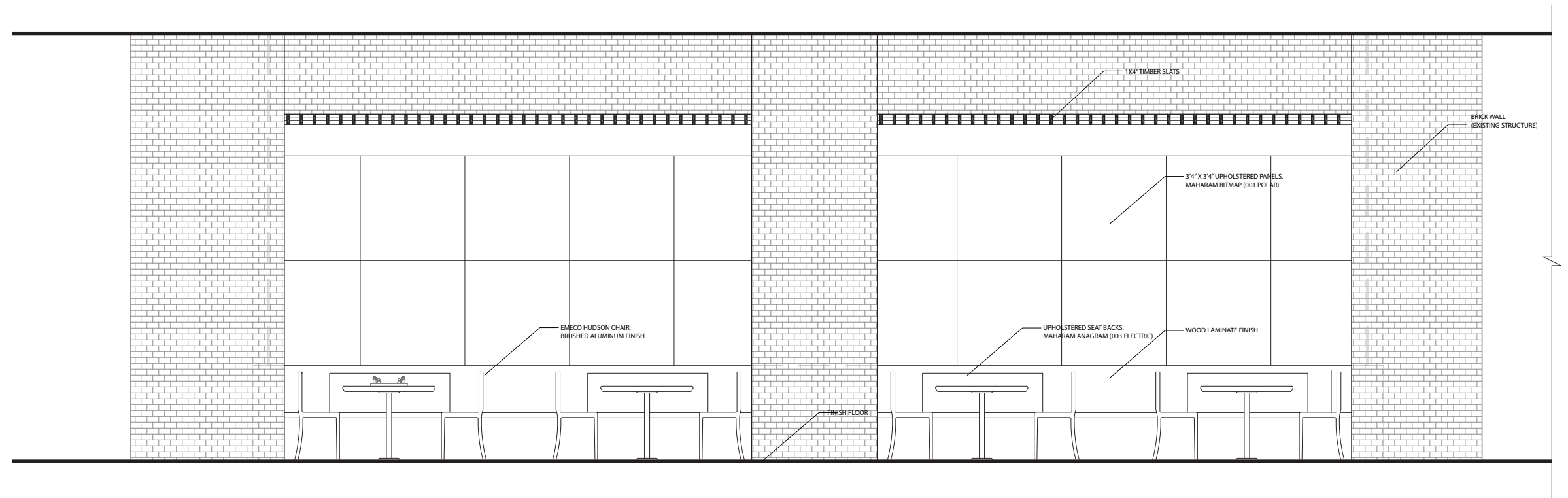
ELEVATION - MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM SIDE
Scale: 1/4"=1'

ALUMINUM CHANNEL

1/2" TEMPERED GLASS,
MIRRORED FINISH

BRICK WALL
(EXISTING STRUCTURE)

BRICK WALL
(EXISTING STRUCTURE)

FINISH FLOOR
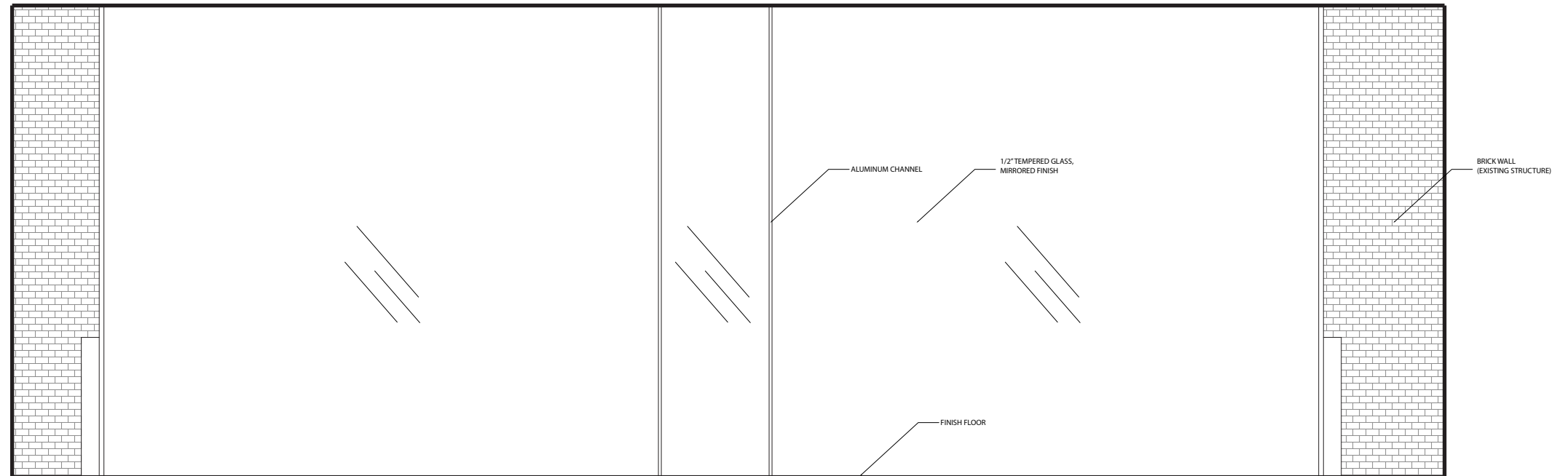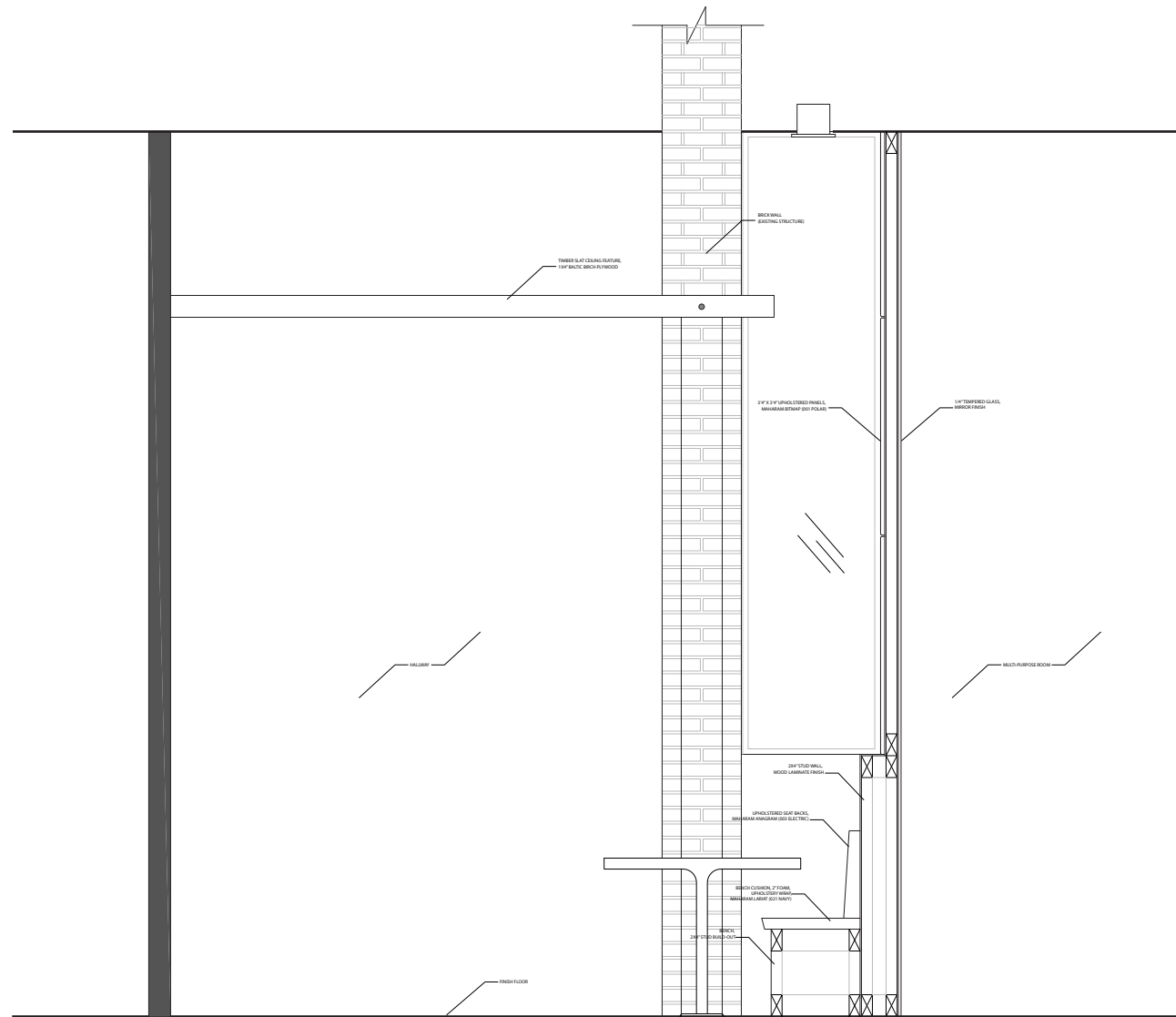
SECTION
Scale: 3/8"=1'

▲ FIGURE 61 - GAMES TABLE NICHE PERSPECTIVE

5.3.7.2 CAFE

Windows along the back wall of the cafe allow natural daylight to filter into the WC rooms behind.

These windows are placed offset each other on each side of this block, which provides a visual breakdown of the space enclosed within. The windows are offset on each side of the block so that the view through becomes unpredictable as you move around it.
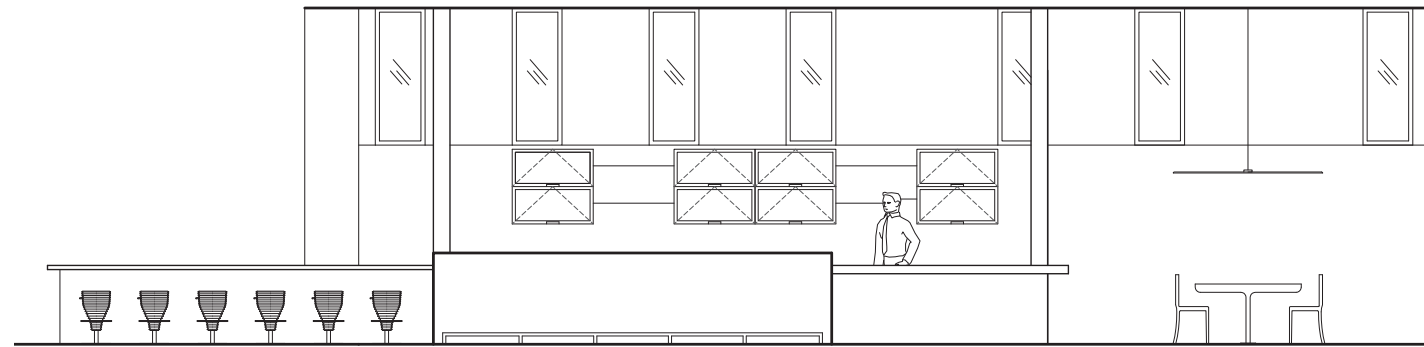
LOUNGE ELEVATION
Scale: 1/8"=1'

FIGURE 62 -CAFE PERSPECTIVE ▶

5.3.7.3 WC HALLWAY

This spacious hallway leads to the games room at the end.
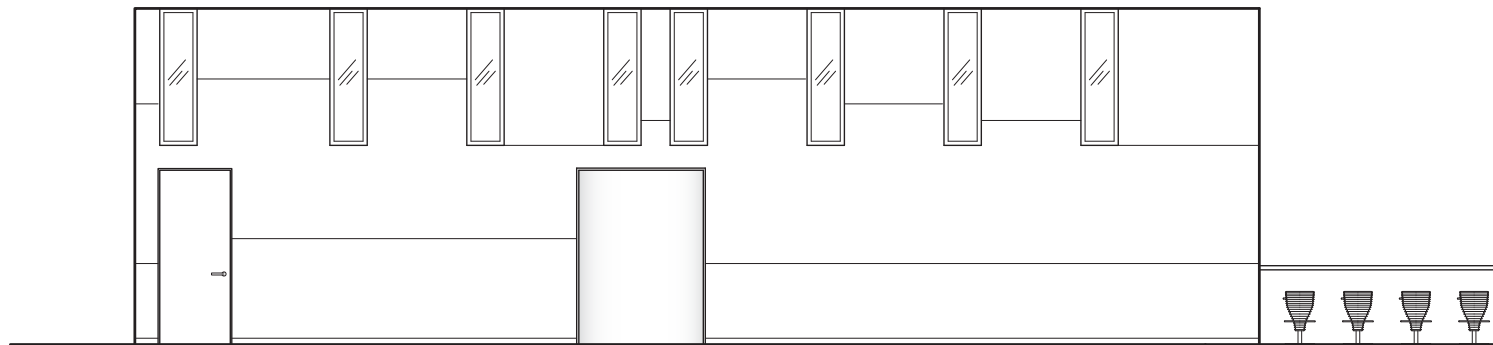From left to right in the perspective image is the games table *poché* space, the WC block, and cafe area.
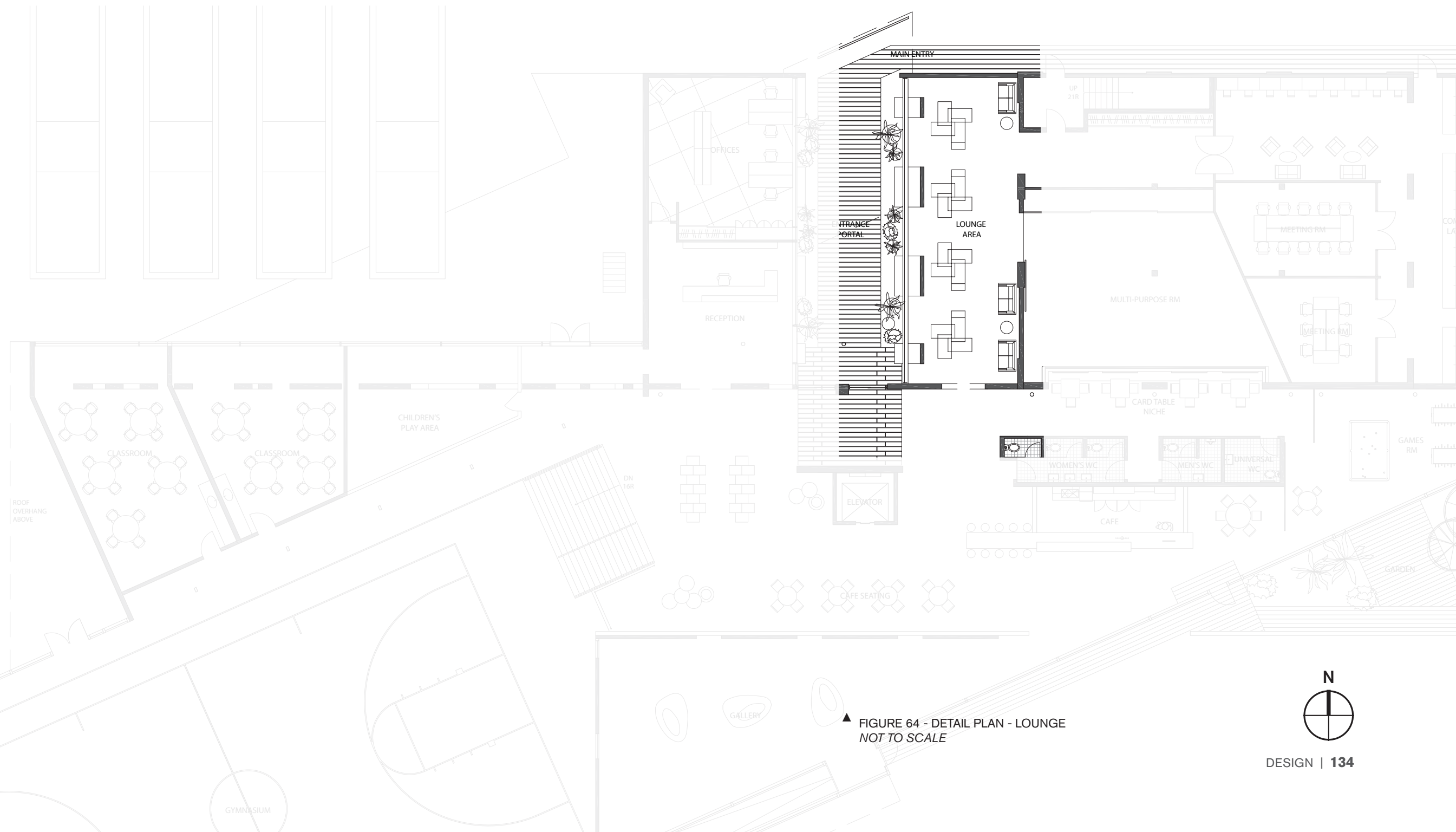
WC ELEVATION
Scale: 1/8"=1'

FIGURE 63 - GAMES TABLE HALLWAY PERSPECTIVE ▶

5.3.8 THE LOUNGE

The lounge area also serves as an access way to the multi-purpose room and computer lab/language learning center. Outfitted with a 360 degree seating configuration and with integrated electrical touchdown points, it enables users to use this space for studying, working, reading, or watching television.

The long facade to the left faces the entrance threshold, allowing for natural views and daylight to infiltrate the space. The facade's glazing starts 1ft above the finished floor, with a built-out masonry wall that sits below. This part of the wall extends from inside to outside providing a ledge that can be used for sitting along, and putting books or objects on. This design consideration allows the wall to become an interactive part of the spatial environment as opposed to a mere surface condition.

FIGURE 64 - DETAIL PLAN - LOUNGE
NOT TO SCALE

N

The build-outs along the wall create an intimate window seat for those looking for more privacy and greater connection to the outdoor space.
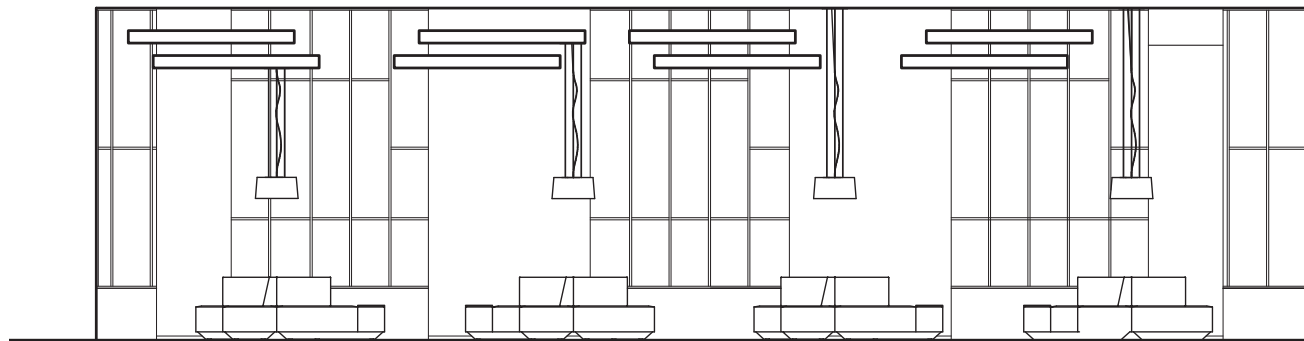
LOUNGE ELEVATION
Scale: 1/8"=1'

FIGURE 65 - LOUNGE PERSPECTIVE ▶

5.3.9 GALLERY SPACE

The walls surrounding this gallery space
provide visual permeability to the adjoining
interior and exterior spaces. The open
entry point into the gallery also allows for
an unobstructed flow of circulation into
and out of this space.

Although designated as a gallery space,
this area can also be utilized for various
classes such as yoga, Tai Chi, or pilates.
As this space has high ceilings and a big
open expanse with multiple view points
into and out of the building, it proves to
be one of the most interesting spaces
within the building. Once inside the
gallery space, you can see out into the gymnasium below,
into the lobby area and cafe, and a long surface of glazing
also provides views out to the exterior landscape.
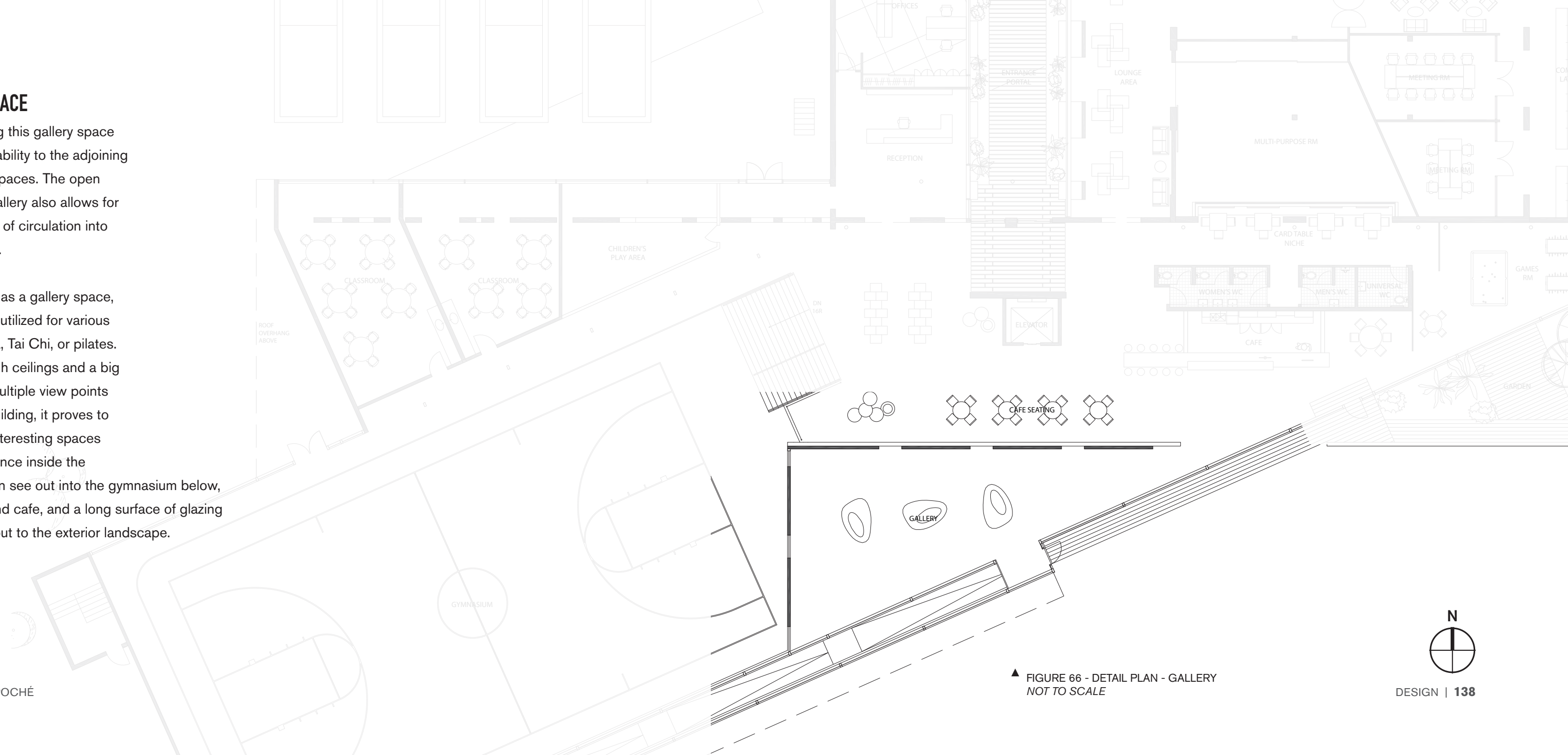
FIGURE 66 - DETAIL PLAN - GALLERY
NOT TO SCALE

N

The secondary *poché* defines the parameters of this gallery space, as seen from this perspective from the view of the cafe and lobby area. Newly constructed walls, 12' wide by 12' high are suspended from the ceiling to further define and enclose this area but leaving enough permeability as to not fully obstruct views outside from spaces further inside the building. These gallery walls serve as backdrops for artworks and exhibitions. The walls are designed to hang just in front of the secondary *poché*, not attached directly, so as to provide a juxtaposition of the new and existing construction.
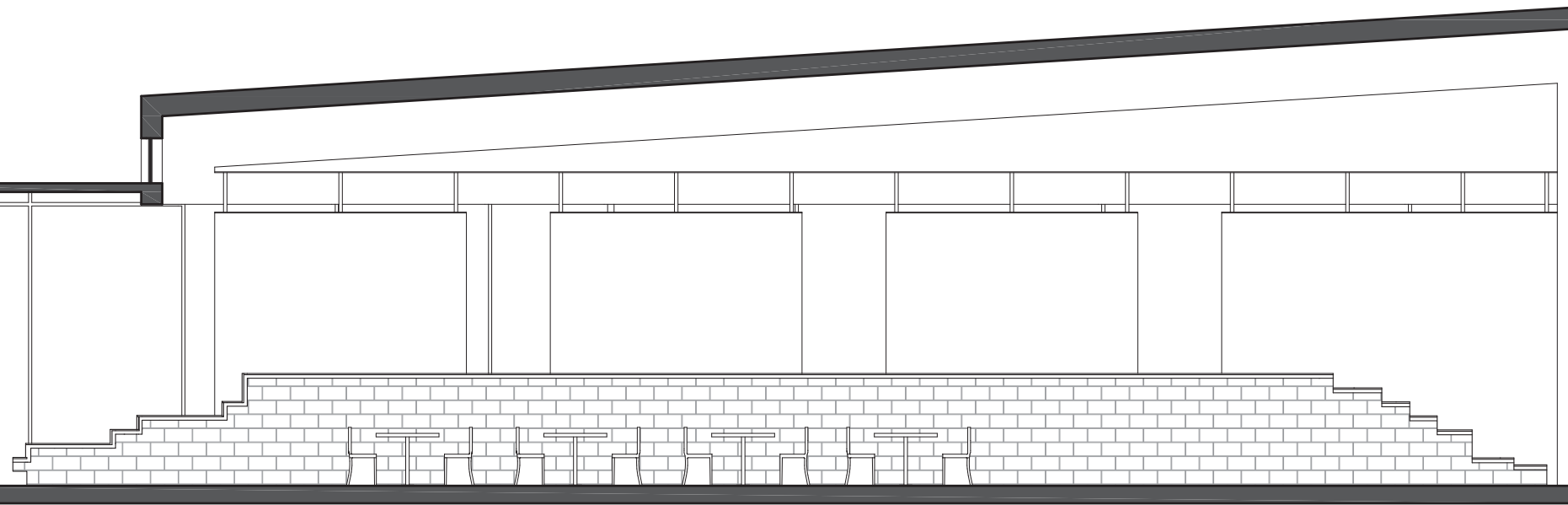
GALLERY WALL ELEVATION
Scale: 1/8"=1'

Along the exterior door located within the gallery space there is a small area of threshold, which looks out over the ramp that descends down to the gymnasium. At that particular point you are essentially in a position to experience all three aspects of the built environment. From Chapter 2, Meisenheimer explains that the built environment has three distinct zones that can be experienced. These include: the space outside of the building-covering (exterior space), the interior space, and the body of the building (Meisenheimer 2011, 626).

Here in this particular spot, you are inside the building-body, which straddles the interior and exterior spaces.

As well, you are physically on the first floor but experiencing the sights and sounds of the floor below, while at the same time looking out to the exterior landscape and the deeper interior spaces.

The sloping facade seen on the left side of the perspective further enhances this interior and exterior experience. Not only does it provide a roof overhang to protect from a harsh southern exposure, it further extends one zone into the other.

▲ FIGURE 68 - GALLERY AND ADJACENT EXTERIOR PERSPECTIVE

5.3.10 CLASSROOMS

The classroom area is located overlooking the gymnasium. With a number of unfixed tables and chairs situated inside. Various classes from art workshops to evening educational sessions can be conducted here. Within the classroom setting remnants of the principal *poché* remain, establishing a "coat-pocket interstitial space" beyond the main classroom setting. Within the large void cuts of the *poché*, a series of shelving units are constructed to fit inside. This creates a point of departure for further interacting with the *poché*, providing shelving and display space for the various classes that take place here.

The shelves are to be constructed of Baltic birch plywood with exposed edging. A recessed reveal detail is used at the point of attachment to the *poché* to emphasize the inherent dichotomy between the disparate materials. See detail drawings on following pages for more information.

FIGURE 69 - DETAIL PLAN - CLASSROOMS
NOT TO SCALE

▲ FIGURE 70 - CLASSROOM PERSPECTIVE

5.3.10.1 POCHÉ SHELVING DETAILS
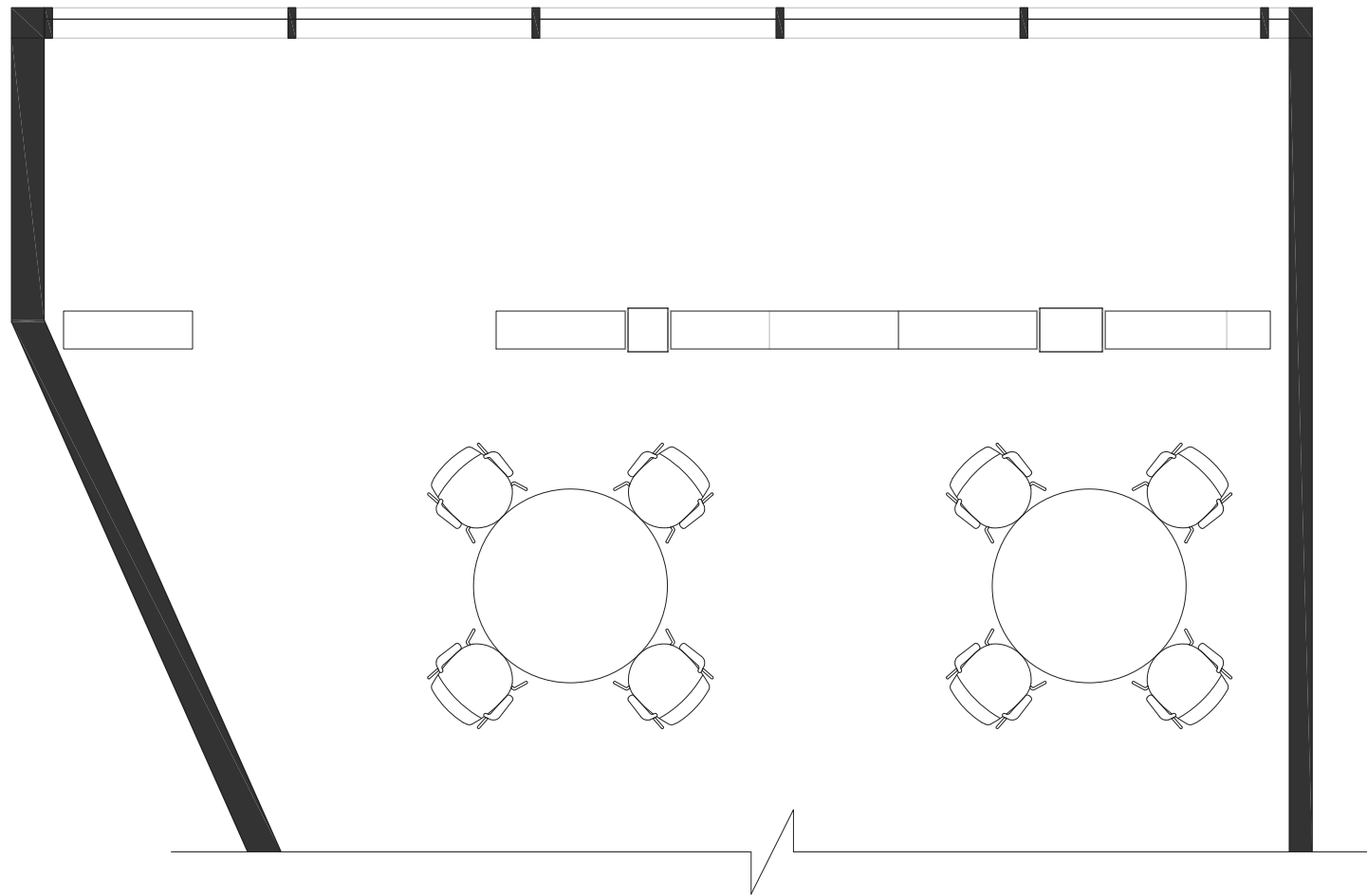
ENLARGED PLAN - CLASSROOM
Scale: 1/4"=1'

ELEVATION
Scale: 1/4"=1'

3/4" FILLER PIECE, PAINTED BLACK,
RECESSED 1/2" FROM WALL SURFACE

CMU WALL (EXISTING STRUCTURE)

ROUTERED GROOVE,
TO RECEIVE 3/4" SHELVES

3/4" BALTIC BIRCH PLY,
RAW EDGE,
CLEAR FINISH

1-1/2" BALTIC BIRCH PLY,
RAW EDGE,
CLEAR FINISH

2" FILLER PIECE,
RECESSED 1-1/4" FROM FACE

FINISH FLOOR

SECTION
Scale: 3/4"=1'

CAULKING, BLACK

1/2" FILLER PIECE,
PAINTED BLACK

1-1/2" BALTIC BIRCH PLY,
EXPOSED EDGING,
CLEAR FINISH

CMU WALL (EXISTING STRUCTURE)

DETAIL PLAN
Scale: 1-1/2"=1'

5.3.11 GYMNASIUM

STORAGE

EVENT PREP
ROOM

UP
16R

GYMNASIUM

MEN'S WC

CHANGE

WOMEN'S WC

JANITOR

CHANGE

RAMP UP
1:12
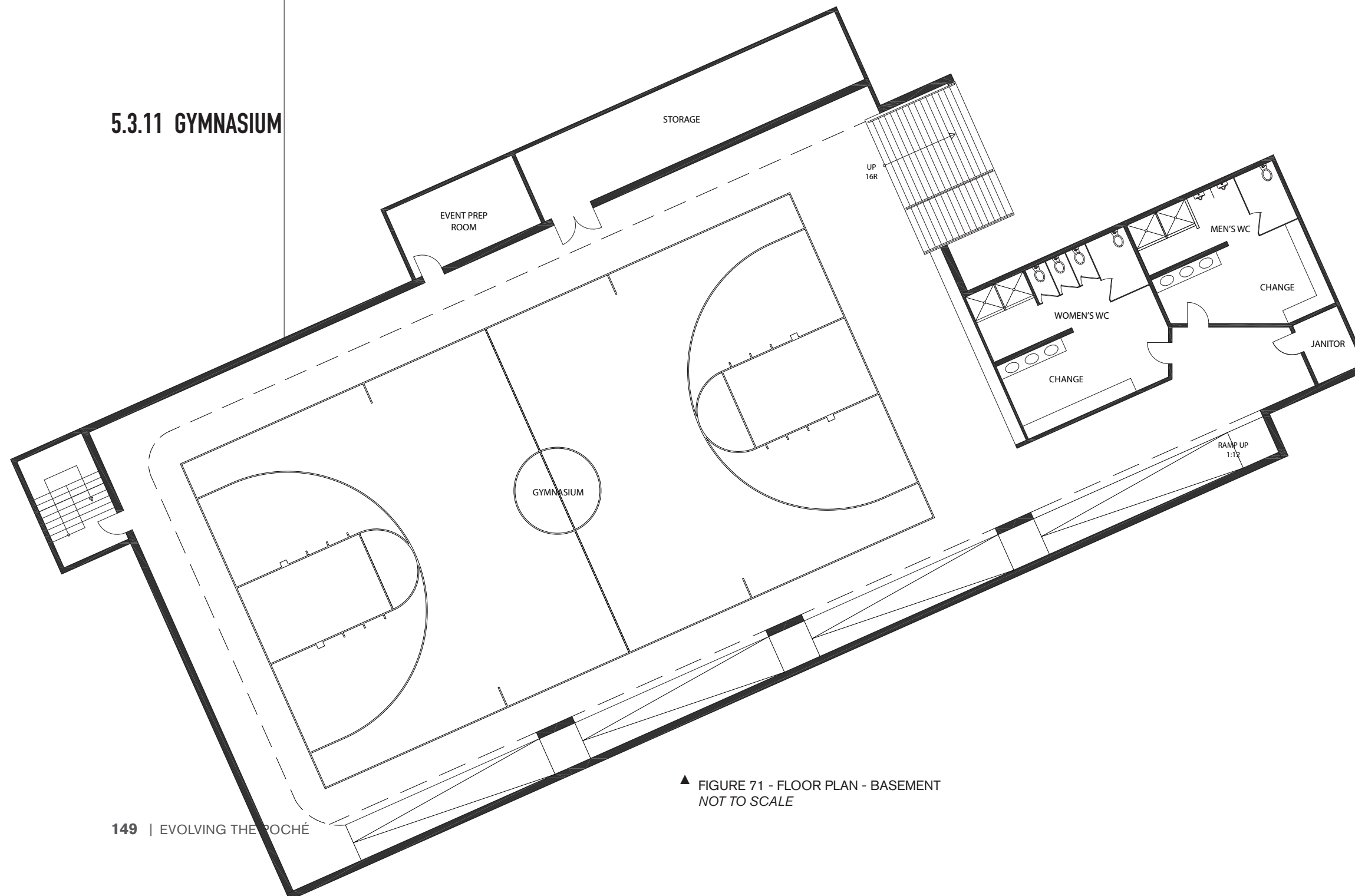
▲ FIGURE 71 - FLOOR PLAN - BASEMENT
NOT TO SCALE

The gymnasium is located 10' below grade with many of the first floor spaces surrounding and overlooking it.

There are 2 ways to get down to the gym space - the main stairway or the ramp. These two methods not only provide universal access to the below grade area, it also provides two very differing experiences to access the gym. The ramp as opposed to the stairs provides more of a journeyed experience that also circumnavigates the gym prior to actually entering it. This is an example of one of the "interiors of the second order" that Meisenheimer wrote about and which is discussed in Chapter 2. This ramp provides a cushioned area for the principal interior space that is the gym.

Other interiors of the second order lining the gymnasium include a storage area for sporting equipment, a food preparation room (used when the gym is rented out for various social events), as well as male and female change areas.

N

▲ FIGURE 72 - GYM PERSPECTIVE

While the stairs provide quick and easy access to the gym, it also serves as a functioning component in the greater gym as well. The staircase is divided into 2 sections - one part for uninhibited vertical circulation in and out of the gym, the other becomes an extension of the stair treads designed specifically for casual spectator seating.

Underneath the ramp, smaller niche spaces are created. These types of additional spaces around a gym are important for number of reasons. Often when sports teams have games on a given night, there are a few different time slots for games, timed back-to-back. Teams come early to warm-up and practice before their game begins and wait for the current game to finish. These types of spaces like that underneath the ramp, allows team-members to store their bags and equipment out of the way as to not disturb any games that are going on at the moment. It can also provide small breakout areas for groups of people to sit and mingle.

SECTION A-A
Scale: 1/8"=1'
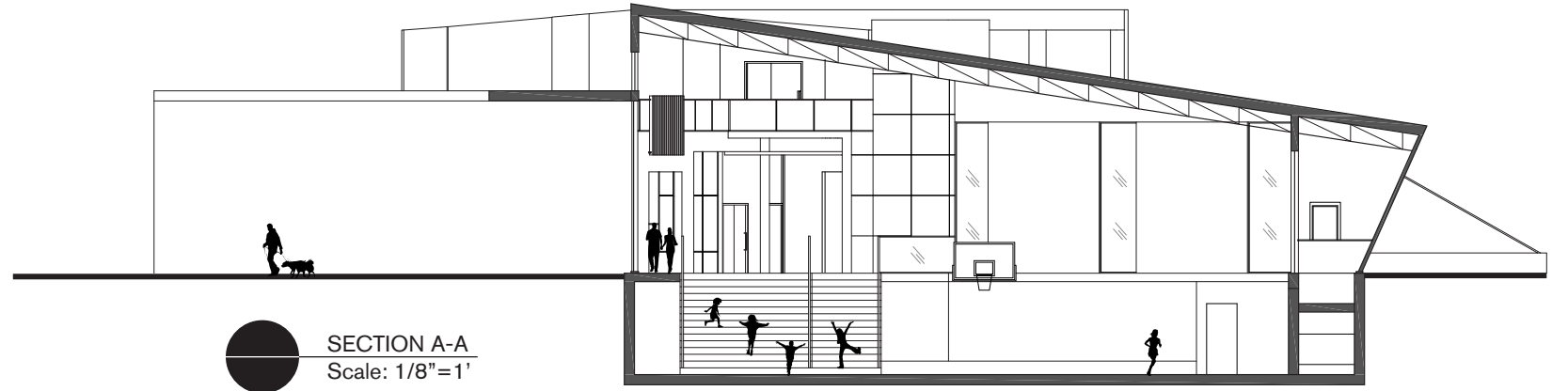
5.3.12 FLOOR TWO

Main access to the second floor is through the lift elevator. The elevator opens up onto a platform that leads over the principal *poché* below and onto what was previously the roof of the existing building. This area is designated as the second floor lobby, which leads to the multi-purpose hall - a 2,000 sqft. space provided for the members of the community to rent out for social events.

When occupying the second floor lobby space, you are essentially ontop of the principal *poché* overlooking the majority of the main floor spaces and gymnasium.

▼ FIGURE 73 - OVERLOOKING GYM PERSPECTIVE

OPEN TO BELOW

KITCHEN

DN 21R

WOMENS WC

MENS WC

UNIVERSAL WC

MULTI-PURPOSE HALL

EMERG. STAIR

LOBBY

ELEVATOR
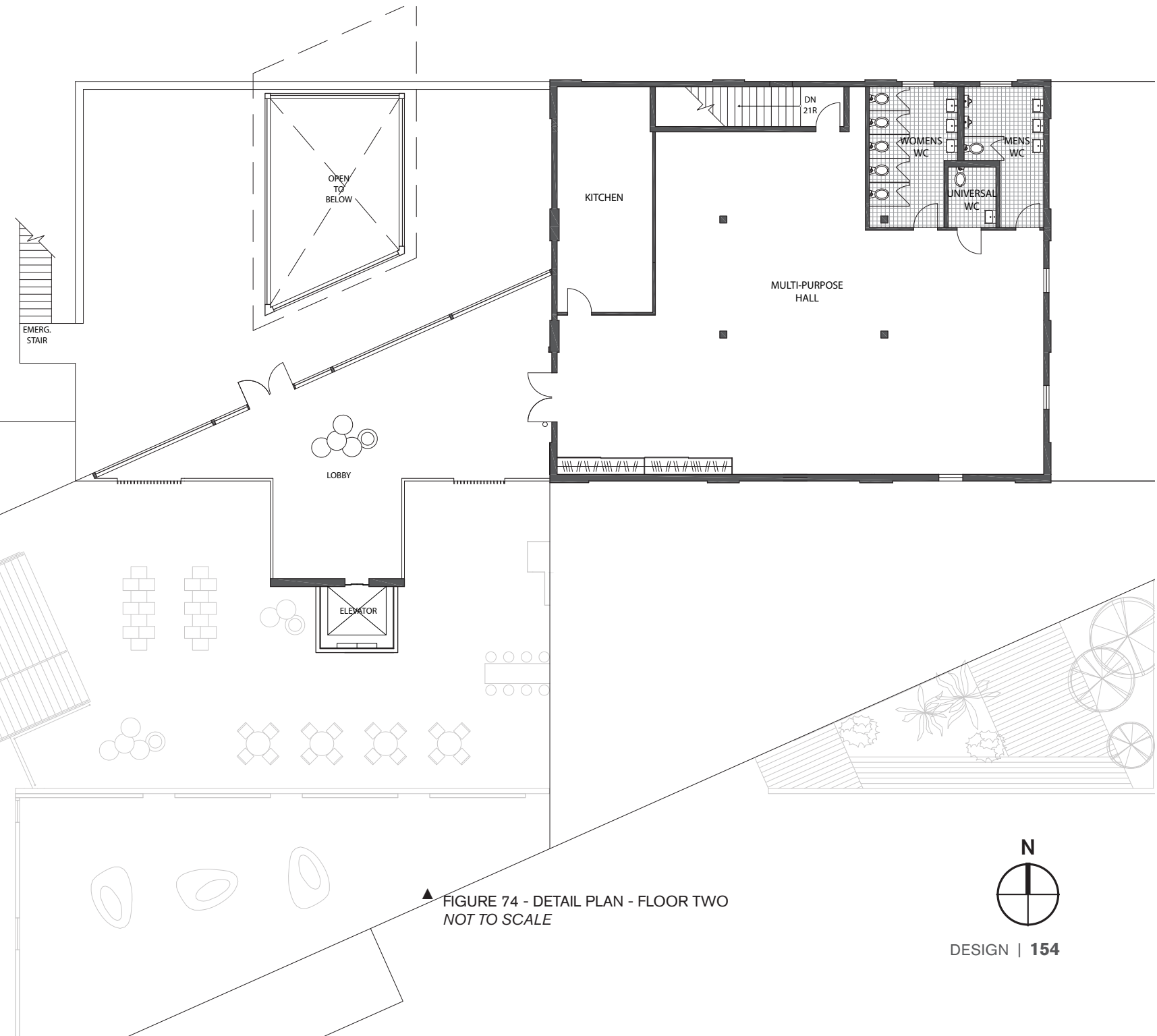
▲ FIGURE 74 - DETAIL PLAN - FLOOR TWO
NOT TO SCALE

N

5.4 OUTCOMES

The use of *poché* for this design intervention has yielded a multitude of opportunities for utilizing and occupying the wall. The evolution of the principal *poché* includes intimate gathering spaces situated within the wall for lingering. Its increasing porosity throughout the main floor allows for multiple entry and exit points, which provides freedom of movement, as well as acting as a device for framing the landscape beyond the interior spaces.

Threshold proved to be a prominent concept and design element that filtered throughout this intervention - from moments just between interior and exterior, to the treatment of entry conditions into the washrooms or other spaces. I often refer back to Borden for inspiration when he describes a boundary as a "thick-edge." The most articulated and significant transition point in this design is that of the main entry. The extended threshold space brings the exterior environment deep into the interior building space, establishing a partially conditioned environment that can be utilized more comfortably year-round than just exterior space.

In terms of the adaptive reuse approach to the design, the cutting, overlapping, and layering of new and existing structure proved to be a slight challenge during the initial planning stages. Coordinating and merging different geometries and roof planes took some extra finessing to resolve. However, in the end it delivered a number of interesting, quirky, but useful and experiential spaces; such as the main floor gallery that overlooks the gymnasium below. Adaptive reuse projects bear a significant number of challenges in and of themselves, such as the decision-making process associated with either preserving, restoring, or attaching onto the existing. However, the richness and quality that is produced in the end would be difficult to compare with only new construction.

FIGURE 75 - SECONDARY *POCHÉ* PERSPECTIVE ▲

CONCLUSION

The evolution of wall into *poché* ignites multiple reinterpretations of what designers and most users of buildings in general consider to be static and normative. Matta-Clark became a significant precedent for this project, as his work often reverts perspectives on what is considered normal and everyday. He abstracts elements of architecture by cutting voids into the walls, ceilings and floors of a building. He then presents that scene to his viewers by way of a two-dimensional photograph. This creates an image of three-dimensional spaces that are flattened into artistic abstractions. My approach to this project could be considered quite opposite, but yet complimentary and undoubtedly inspired by Matta-Clark's process. My focus for this project has been on the normative subject of walls - one of the most rudimentary and generic instances of a boundary condition. This stems from an uneasiness I have with the additive process that interior design practice often heavily relies upon, which is discussed in Chapter 2. As Matta-Clark questions, "why hang things on a wall when the wall itself is so much more a challenging medium?" (Diserens

2003, 188). Is there a need to focus so heavily on adding objects to the space when the bounding walls can be a more significant subject of manipulation?

Many experiential and interactive qualities can arise through consideration of the wall as a designed element within interior space. From user interacting with architecture, a unique relationship ensues between the two. The kind of relationship that Meisenheimer had criticized early modernist architects for trying to dissolve. When the boundary conditions of the building thin out to become a mere "membrane between air-conditioned and non-air-conditioned space" he says, it "leaves no room for any recesses, projections, cavities or "coat-pockets of the building-body" (Meisenheimer 2011, 627). Niches such as deep jambs, staggered thresholds and window seats, he describes, bring needed subtleties and nuances to the building, and help to transition from outside to inside (Meisenheimer 2011, 628). These subtleties and nuances that happen at

boundary conditions, create opportunities for interaction between user and architecture. They also become the stage to facilitate human interaction. As Meisenheimer states; the border-area is "the most eloquent backdrop of the architectonic stage" (Meisenheimer 2011, 627).

One of the objectives for this project was to expand my knowledge and understanding of interior design practice. This in-depth process of researching the *poché* and its alternate understandings as wall, boundary, and threshold, have helped me to further understand the basic tools of the interior design profession. By researching and striving for new perspectives on the wall condition, I have come to realize even the most normative of objects are only banal if you see them as such.

The research questions that were set forth towards the beginning of this practicum were used to help guide and limit the scope of the project. In reflection of those questions restated in Table 3, this project has actively addressed them through the culmination of the design intervention and background research associated with the literary investigation and analysis portion of this document. In terms of project limitations, the first question spawns a concern associated with design practice in the real world. The reusing and revitalization of a derelict building is more straightforward to attempt and accomplish in such a theoretical project such as this one. Detailed methods of attaching to, and building around or on top of an existing structure would have many more challenges and tribulations in real world practice. Structural engineering calculations and obtaining exceedingly accurate as-built measurements of the existing building would need to be accounted for, however those detailed considerations were beyond the scope for this particular project.

Suggestions for Further Research

This project, with its initial intentions and listed parameters, has attempted to make a contribution to the overall understanding of what makes interior design practice distinctive from other design practices. Other studies on the subject of what makes interior design unique - and those that would subsequently contribute to the furthering of the profession's identity - would be a needed and useful direction of research.

In regards to this project's focus on the wall or *poché* specifically, I believe there are a multitude of other directions that can be taken to further re-examine their typical understandings. This particular project involved adapting and manipulating an existing wall type that had a combination of different materialities, including structural brick and concrete masonry block. A further opportunity for evolving the *poché* can be looked at using new construction. This process may yield a more *carte-blanche* approach. Instead of deconstructing the wall, a study in new construction with an in-depth modelling investigation of a specific wall type or construction could be undertaken.

Closing Remarks

Re-examining such a banal but significant tool of interior design practice and evolving it into the experiential *poché* can afford unique characteristics, which contributes to forming the overall identity of the practice. Rather than relying on a process of adding materials, furniture, graphics, or accessories to become the main focus of the space, the wall or *poché* is now the sculptural tool that can be used to manipulate space and interact with users.

TABLE 3 - RESEARCH QUESTIONS

	Research Questions
1.	How can I reinstate a derelict building and revitalize its meaning and purpose within the community without resorting to a complete demolition?
2.	How can I further explore and utilize such a trivial and banal aspect of the built environment, the wall, in order to further my understanding and perspective of interior design as a whole?
3.	How is it possible to design a wall so that it is further utilized within a spatial environment as opposed to a mere background presence?

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APPENDIX A – MATERIALS

FIGURE 76 - EXISTING PAINTED BRICK WALL

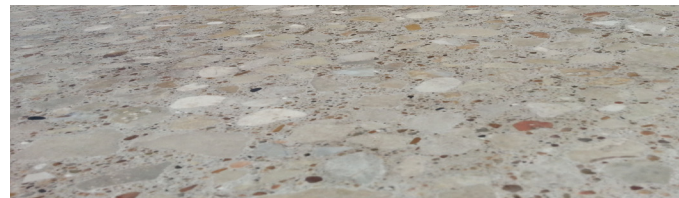FIGURE 77 - EXISTING CONCRETE MASONRY UNIT WALL
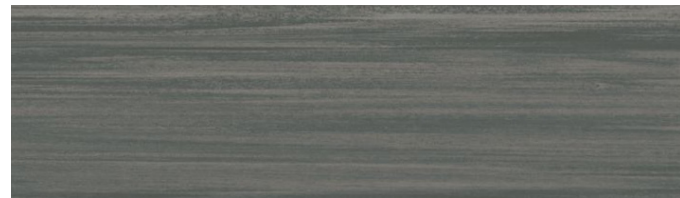

FIGURE 78 - FLOORING - POLISHED CONCRETE

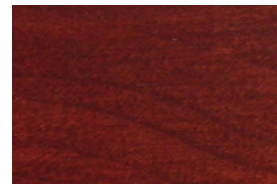FIGURE 79 - FLOORING - BIO-BASED TILE

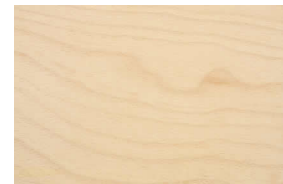FIGURE 80 - WOOD - CHERRY FINISH

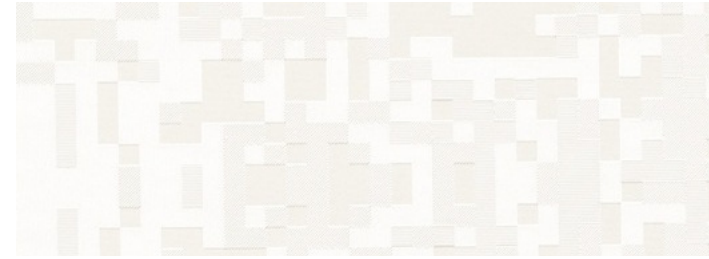FIGURE 81 - BALTIC BIRCH

FIGURE 82 - UPHOLSTERED WALL PANELS

FIGURE 83 - SOLID SURFACE COUNTER
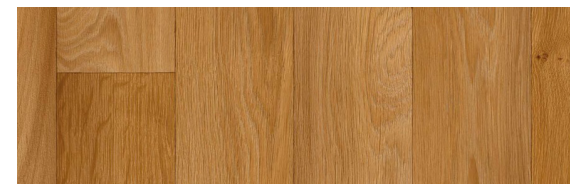

FIGURE 84 - MOSAIC TILE

FIGURE 85 - WOOD

FIGURE 86 - UPHOLSTERY FABRICS

FIGURE 87 - TRANSLUCENT GLAZING PANELS

APPENDIX B – PROGRAMMING
USER GROUPS

TABLE 4 USER GROUPS IN DETAIL

USER GROUP	DESCRIPTION	AGE RANGE	ACTIVITIES IN BUILDING		TIME OF DAY	DURATION OF STAY	VALUES / CONCERNS
PRIMARY	CHILDREN/YOUTH	5-18 YRS	ARRIVING TO AND FROM SCHEDULED ACTIVITY, MINGLING PRIOR AND POST ACTIVITY, CONSUMING FOOD AND BEVERAGES, ATTENDING ACTIVITY, CHANGING CLOTHES, SHOWERING, WASHING UP, WAITING TO BE PICKED UP FROM GUARDIAN		EVENINGS + WKNDS	1-5 HRS/VISIT, ONCE OR TWICE PER WEEK	SOCIALIZING WITH FRIENDS, ENJOYING THEMSELVES
	FULL-TIME STAFF MEMBERS	22-65	OFFICE DUTIES, COMPUTER WORK, TELEPHONE, CONSUMING FOOD AND BEVERAGES		DAYTIME - TYPICALLY BETWEEN 8-5PM	8 HRS/DAY, 5 DAYS/WEEK	GETTING WORK DONE
	ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITY-GOERS (INCLUDING SENIORS, PRESCHOOLERS AND ADULTS)	60-90, 3-5, AND 25-60	ARRIVING TO AND DEPARTING FROM SCHEDULED ACTIVITY, MINGLING PRIOR AND POST ACTIVITY, ATTENDING ACTIVITY, CHANGING CLOTHES		EVENINGS + WKNDS	1-2 HRS./VISIT	LEARNING/GAINING NEW SKILL, GETTING EXERCISE
	INSTRUCTORS/COACHES	21-45	TEACHING COURSES, INTERACTING WITH STUDENTS, STAFF, PARENTS, ATTENDING ACTIVITY			1-5 HRS/VISIT	SAFETY OF STUDENTS, QUALITY OF ENVIRONMENT FOR TEACHING IN
	GENERAL PUBLIC	ANY	USING COMPUTER, READING, WRITING, TALKING, LISTENING, LEARNING, SOCIALIZING, CONSUMING FOOD + BEVERAGES		DAY, EVENING, WEEKEND	1-5 HRS	SAFE, COMFORTABLE ATMOSPHERE, ABILITY TO NAVIGATE EASILY
SECONDARY	PARENTS	25-50	SPECTATING, SOCIALIZING WITH OTHER PARENTS			1-4 HRS/ VISIT	CHILDREN'S SAFETY, KEEPING BUSY/OCCUPIED WHILE WAITING FOR CHILDREN TO FINISH ACTIVITY. VISIBILITY, ABILITY TO NAVIGATE BUILDING
TERTIARY	JANITORIAL STAFF	30+	MAINTAINING BUILDING'S CLEANLINESS, LOOKING AFTER SITE AND GROUNDS				
	PART-TIME EMPLOYEES	18-35					
PERIPHERAL	SPECIAL EVENT GUESTS	VARIES			EVENINGS + WKNDS		ABILITY TO NAVIGATE BUILDING EASILY
	SPECIAL EVENT SUPPORT STAFF	VARIES			EVENINGS + WKNDS		ABILITY TO NAVIGATE BUILDING EASILY, EASE OF LOADING/UNLOADING.

APPENDIX B – PROGRAMMING

SPATIAL REQUIREMENTS

TABLE 5 - SPATIAL REQUIREMENTS

ZONE	OVERALL AREA REQUIRED	SPATIAL CONCEPT DESIRED	FF+E REQUIREMENTS		QUANTITY	ADDITIONAL NOTES
GYMNASIUM	MIN. 66X100' (WITH HEIGHT OF AT LEAST 20')	- VISUALLY OPEN, BUT ENCLOSED PHYSICALLY TO NOT LET BALLS ROLL TOO FAR AWAY	BASKETBALL NETS (RETRACTABLE)		6	
		- VISUAL CONNECTION WITH FOYER.	BENCHES		4 TO 6	
		- PLACE OF ACTION, ACTIVITY, AND ENERGY	VOLLEYBALL NETS + POLES		2-3 SETS	
			BADMINTON NETS + POLES		4 SETS	
			SPECTATOR SEATING (FIXED AND NON)			
			FLEXIBLE PARTITION TO DIVIDE GYM IN HALF		1	
CHANGEROOMS (1 MALE, 1 FEMALE)	2,500 SQFT	- PRIVATE	SHORT-TERM SEATING		FOR 9-12 PEOPLE	- ADJACENT TO GYMNASIUM
		- ADJACENT TO GYMNASIUM	WC'S		3 FOR EACH	
			LAVATORIES		3 FOR EACH	
			LOCKERS		10-12	
BOULES COURTS (X4)	12X80' (X4)	- VISUALLY ACCESSIBLE FROM INSIDE BUILDING, AN OPEN, FREE ENVIRONMENT	SPECTATOR SEATING (FIXED OR NON)		10 PEOPLE	
MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM (USED FOR DANCE, YOGA, ETC.)	1,500-2,000 SQFT	- INTERESTING SPACE IN AND OF ITSELF (SO LOOKS PURPOSEFUL WHEN NOT IN USE)	10% STORAGE ROOM FOR MATS, WEIGHTS, POLES, AND OTHER EQUIPMENT.		1	- NEEDS DIMMABLE LIGHTS, SOUND PROOFING, AND POTENTIAL FOR FULL PRIVACY
		- INVITING, COMFORTABLE, INVIGORATING				
		- OPEN, UNOBSTRUCTED FLOOR PLAN				
COMPUTER LAB/ LANGUAGE LEARNING CENTER	1,200-1,500 SQFT	- INVITING, COMFORTABLE, AND STIMULATING	HORIZONTAL WORK SURFACES		FOR 20 PEOPLE	
			COMPUTERS		15	
			NON FIXED SEATS		20	
			SOFT SEATING/CONVERSATION AREA		FOR 8-10 PEOPLE	
			AUDIO VISUAL EQUIPMENT		/	
			OVERHEAD PROJECTOR+SCREEN		/	

TABLE 5 (CONT.) SPATIAL REQUIREMENTS

ZONE	OVERALL AREA REQUIRED	SPATIAL CONCEPT DESIRED	FF+E REQUIREMENTS		QUANTITY	ADDITIONAL NOTES
CAFÉ / EATERY	1,700 SQFT	- INVITING, CASUAL, COMFORTABLE, VISUALLY STIMULATING	NON FIXED CHAIRS		FOR APPROX. 30 PEOPLE	
		EASILY ACCESSIBLE FROM MAIN ENTRANCE	FIXED AND NON FIXED TABLES		TO ACCOMMODATE UP TO 30 PEOPLE	
			FOOD PRESENTATION AREA			
			ATTACHED KITCHEN		1	
			CASHIER STAND			
LOUNGE	800 SQFT.	- COMFORTABLE, CASUAL, SOCIAL	FLEXIBLE SOFT SEATING		FOR APPROX. 20 PEOPLE	- CENTRAL LOCATION WHERE PEOPLE CAN GATHER
			NON FIXED TABLES			
CLASSROOMS (X2)	400 SQFT. EACH	- EASILY ACCESSIBLE LOCATION	NON FIXED TABLES+CHAIRS		FOR APPROX. 16 PEOPLE	- CENTRAL LOCATION WHERE PEOPLE CAN GATHER
			CABINETRY STORAGE		15 LINEAL FT.	
			SINK		1	
MANAGERIAL OFFICES (X4)	40 SQFT. EACH	- QUIET, PRIVATE, AND ENCLOSED	COMPUTER		1 FOR EACH	
		- VISUAL CONNECTION WITH PUBLIC SPACES	WORKSTATION, TASK CHAIR		1 FOR EACH	
GALLERY	1,100 SQFT.	- OPEN AND ACCESSIBLE, SOCIAL, MULTI-USE	BENCH		3	
MULTI-PURPOSE HALL	2,000 SQFT.	- LOCKABLE WHEN NOT IN USE	FOLDABLE CHAIRS AND TABLES		TO ACCOMMODATE APPROX. 200 PEOPLE	
GAMES ROOM	1,000 SQFT.	- DESTINATION POINT	POOL TABLE (4.5'X9')		1	
			FOOSBALL TABLE (30"X56")		2	
RECEPTION	500 SQFT.	- OPEN AND VISIBLE FROM MAIN ENTRANCE	WORK SURFACE, COMPUTER, TASK CHAIR		1 OF EACH	

APPENDIX C – BUILDING CODE REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements are set forth by the National Building Code of Canada 2010 Volume 2 edition, and the information excerpted relates to the particular occupancy classification of this project.
According to Table 3.1.2.1. the community center classifies as a

Group A Division 2 - Assembly Occupancy.

3.1.17.1. Occupant Load

TABLE 6 - OCCUPANT LOAD

Type of Use of Floor Area or Part Thereof	Area per person, m²
Assembly Uses	
space with non-fixed seats	0.75
space with non-fixed seats and tables	0.95
standing space	0.40
stadia and grandstands	0.60
bowling alleys, pool and billiard rooms	9.30
classrooms	1.85
reading or writing rooms or lounges	1.85
dining, beverage and cafeteria space	1.20
Business and personal services uses	
offices	9.30

3.3.1.5 Egress Doorways

Where 2 egress doorways are required they shall be place at a distance from one another equal to or greater than one third of the max overall diagonal dimension of the area to be served.

3.4.2.1. Minimum Number of Exits

Except as permitted by Sentences (2) to (4), every floor area intended for occupancy shall be served by at least 2 exits.

3.4.2.3. Distance Between Exits

The least distance between 2 exits from a floor area shall be one half the maximum diagonal dimension of the floor area, but need not be more than 9m for a floor area having a public corridor, or one half the maximum diagonal dimension of the floor area, but not less than 9m for all other floor areas.

3.4.2.5. Location of Exits

If more than one exit is required from a floor area, the exits shall be located so that the travel distance to at least one exit shall be not more than 45m in a floor area that contains an occupancy other than a high-hazard industrial occupancy, provided it is sprinklered throughout.
Exits shall be located and arranged so that they are clearly visible or their locations are clearly indicated and they are accessible at all times.

3.3.1.5. Egress Doorways

1.) Except for dwelling units, a minimum of 2 egress doorways located so that one doorway could provide egress from the room or suite as required by Article 3.3.1.3. if the other doorway becomes inaccessible to the occupants due to a fire which originates in the room or suite, shall be provided for every room and every suite

   a) intended for an occupant load more than 60,

   d) in a floor area that is sprinkled throughout and does not contain a high-hazard industrial occupancy and i) the travel distance to an egress doorway is more than 25m, or ii) the area of the room or suite is more than the value in Table 7.

2.) Where 2 egress doorways are required by Sentence (1), they shall be placed at a distance from one another equal to or greater than one third of the maximum overall diagonal dimension of the area to be served, measured as the shortest distance that smoke

TABLE 7 - MAXIMUM AREA FOR ROOM OR SUITE

Occupancy of Room or Suite	Maximum Area of Room or Suite, m²
Group A	200

TABLE 8 - Minimum Widths of Exit Corridors, Passageways, Ramps, Stairs, and Doorways in Group A, Group B, Division 1, and Groups C, D, E, and F Occupancies

Occupancy Classification	Exit Corridors and Passageways, mm	Ramps, mm	Stairs, mm	Doorways, mm
Group A, Group B, Division 1, Group C, Group D, Group E, Group F	1100	1100	900	800

would have to travel between the nearest required egerss doors.

3.7.2.2. Water Closets

Water closets shall be provided for each sex assuming that the occupant load is equally divided between males and femals, unless the proportion of each sex expected in the building can be determined with reasonable accuracy.

If a single universal toilet room is provided in accordance with the requirements of Section 3.8., the total number of persons in the building used to determine the number of water closets to be provided, is permitted to be reduced by 10 before applying Sentences 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14.

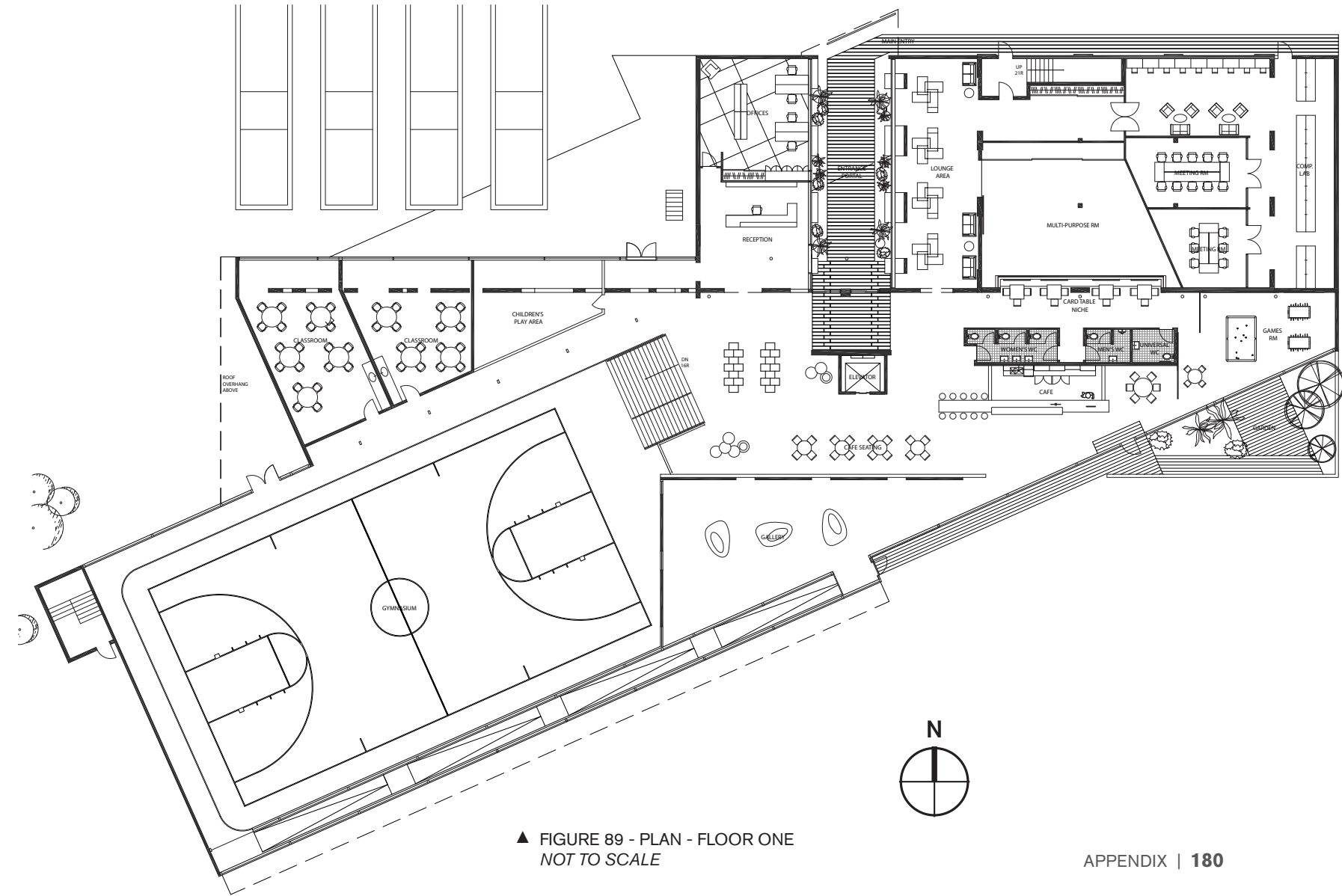Water closets for an Assembly Occupancy are as follows,

TABLE 9 - MINIMUM NUMBER OF WATER CLOSETS BASED ON OCCUPANCY LOAD

Number of Persons of Each Sex	Minimum Number of Water Closets
51-75	2 Male, 3 Female
76-100	2 Male, 4 Female
101-125	3 Male, 5 Female

APPENDIX D – FLOOR PLANS
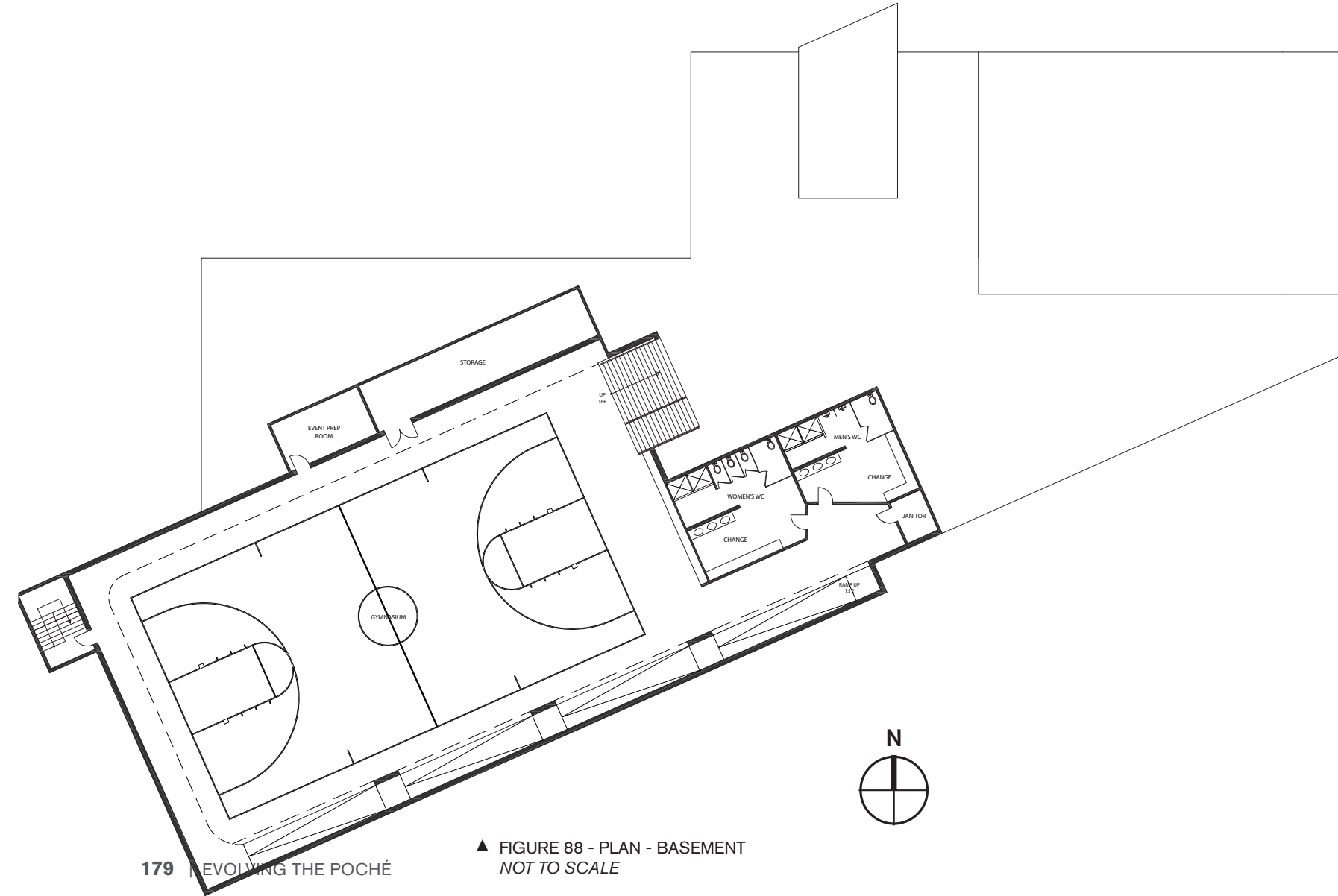
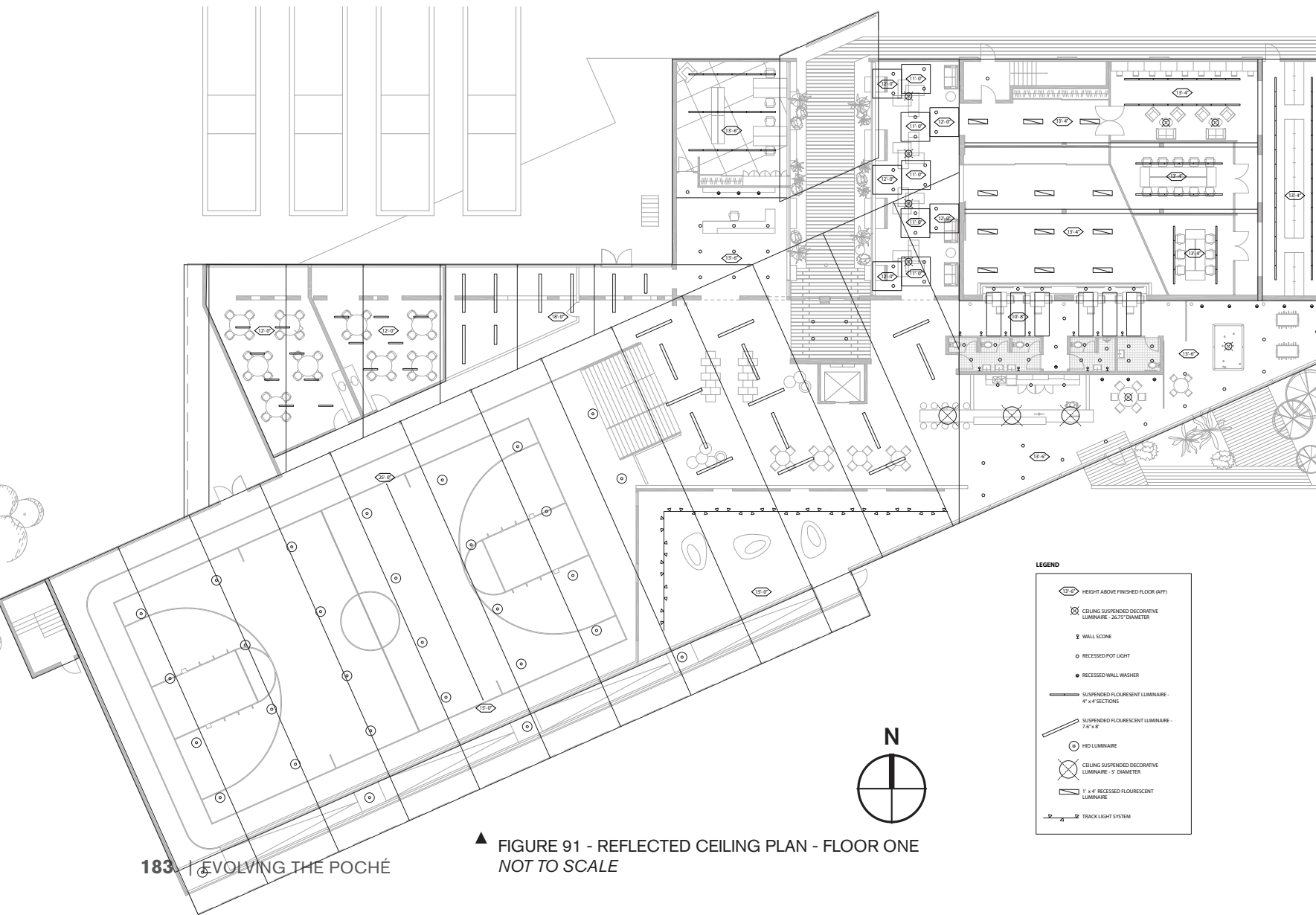▲ FIGURE 88 - PLAN - BASEMENT
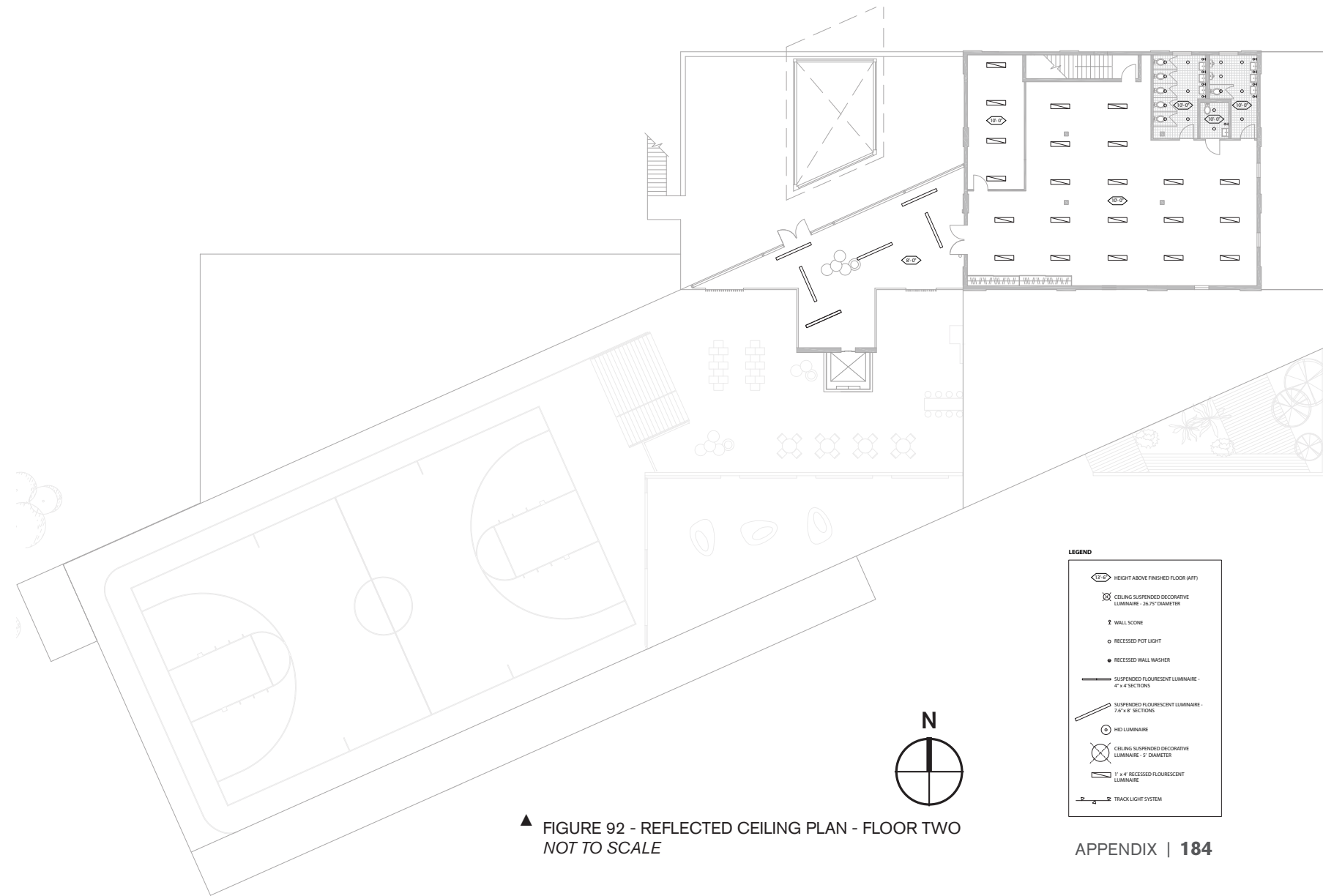*NOT TO SCALE*

▲ FIGURE 89 - PLAN - FLOOR ONE
NOT TO SCALE

KITCHEN

MULTI-PURPOSE
HALL

LOBBY

EMERG
STAIR

N
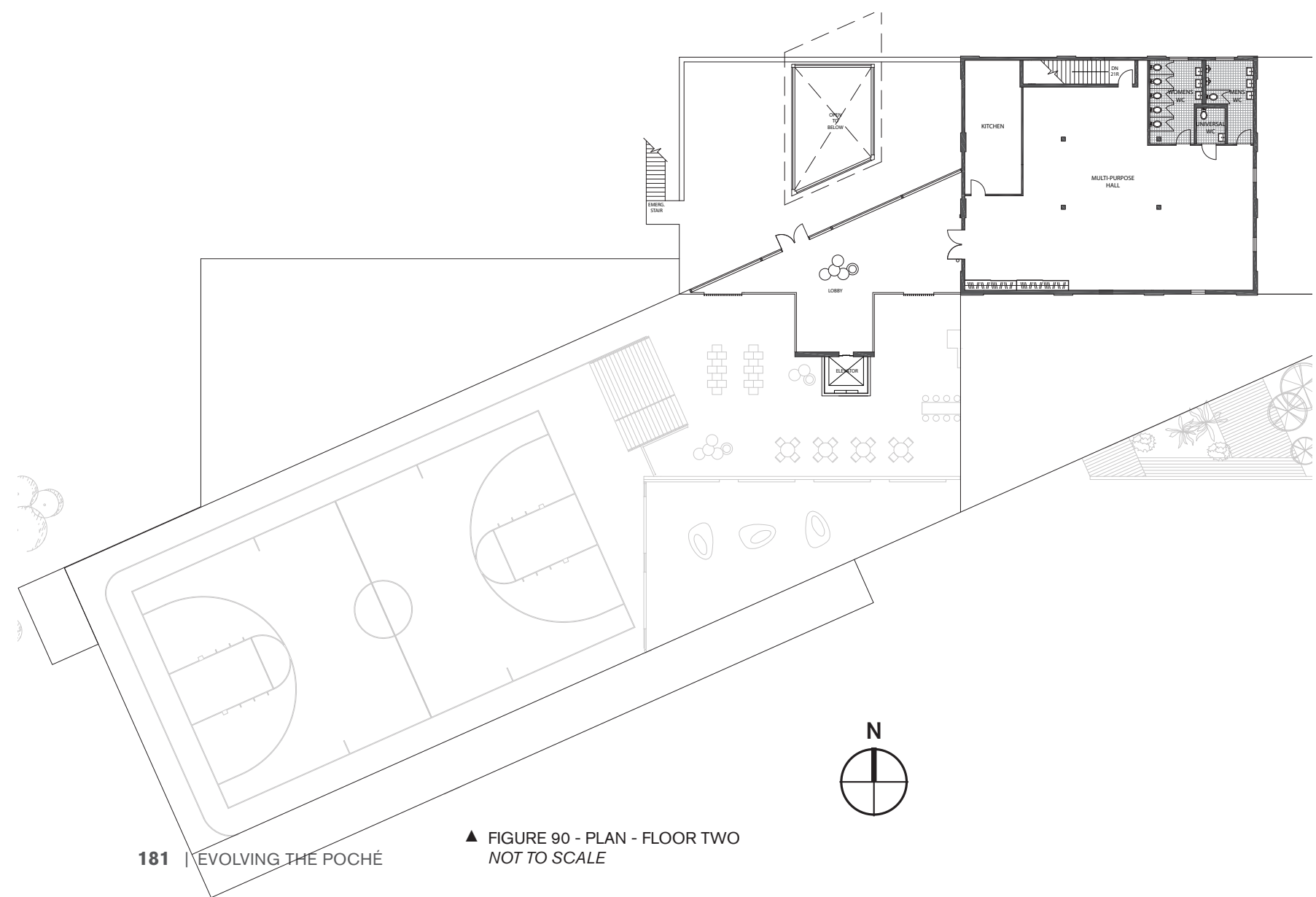
▲ FIGURE 90 - PLAN - FLOOR TWO
NOT TO SCALE

APPENDIX E – LIGHTING PLANS

LEGEND

12'-0"	HEIGHT ABOVE FINISHED FLOOR (AFF)
⊠	CEILING SUSPENDED DECORATIVE LUMINAIRE - 26.75" DIAMETER
⊥	WALL SCONCE
○	RECESSED POT LIGHT
●	RECESSED WALL WASHER
—	SUSPENDED FLOURESCENT LUMINAIRE - 4' x 4' SECTIONS
⟋	SUSPENDED FLOURESCENT LUMINAIRE - 7.6' x 8'
○	HID LUMINAIRE
⊗	CEILING SUSPENDED DECORATIVE LUMINAIRE - 5' DIAMETER
▭	1' x 4' RECESSED FLOURESCENT LUMINAIRE
▭	TRACK LIGHT SYSTEM

▲ FIGURE 91 - REFLECTED CEILING PLAN - FLOOR ONE
NOT TO SCALE

▲ FIGURE 92 - REFLECTED CEILING PLAN - FLOOR TWO
NOT TO SCALE