

**ENCOURAGING COMMUNITY INTERACTION AND ACTIVATING URBAN LIFE:  
AN ALTERNATIVE HOTEL DESIGN FOR TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY TRAVELLERS**

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A practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies at the University  
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MASTER OF INTERIOR DESIGN

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## ABSTRACT

This practicum project looks at the hospitality industry as a regenerative catalyst of positive impact for the guest, the local community and, more broadly, the city. In doing so, it examines how the future of hospitality is evolving alongside the changing demands and values of twenty-first-century travellers. Within this framework and leveraging an understanding of the importance of place in architecture and interior design, this practicum project proposes an adaptive reuse of the Travellers Building at the heart of Winnipeg's downtown and historic Exchange District. Concerned with fostering connections through an interdisciplinary hotel experience, this project explores how interior design can encourage community interaction and activate urban life, primarily through placemaking strategies. As a result, this project not only looks at the hotel as an inclusive gathering place and a hub for both travellers and neighbours but as an active and outward agent promoting downtown vibrancy and liveability.



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## CHAPTER 1—INTRODUCTION

## INTRODUCTION

The future of hospitality is evolving. As a manifestation of culture and influencer of experience, thinking about design in the hospitality sector is more important now than ever before. In Western societies, cities and residents are faced with a variety of issues that have arisen as a consequence of rapid urbanization, place homogenization and technological proliferation. These influences have altered the way we live, work, and travel. As a result, reconsidering how culture and experience factor into hospitality identity may be key in its evolution to meet the demands and values of a changing demographic and ensure its continued success. With this in mind, the purpose of this Master of Interior Design practicum project is to experiment with hospitality design in a way that addresses and offers a productive means to engage with issues of heritage, identity, community, and urban renewal. In doing so, this project articulates methods and techniques of adapting existing buildings to create meaningful dialogue between old and new and, ultimately, proposes the design of a hotel integrated with hybrid programmes to encourage community interaction and activate urban life.

Places offering hospitality services have been in evidence since early civilization and, time and time again, have responded to consumer demands. From Ancient Rome, where private residences were designed with additional rooms to host travellers on government business; to the early inn, where newly developed trade and transportation networks increased travel and the need for basic accommodation; to the grand hotel, where grandeur and architectural ostentation provided suitable venues for socializing rituals; to the hotel of today, where contemporary trends and innovation are often balanced with holistic treatments for user ease and comfort.<sup>1</sup> Hospitality is continuously evolving to meet consumer demands, and it is from this perspective, this practicum project has been researched, written, and designed.

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<sup>1</sup> David Collins, *New Hotel: Architecture and Design* (London: Conran Octopus Limited a part of Octopus Publishing Group, 2001), 13-14.

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR SITE AND BUILDING SELECTION

The building selected for this project is the Travellers Building at 283 Bannatyne Avenue in Winnipeg's downtown and historic Exchange District. A more detailed analysis of the site and building can be found in the following chapter; however, it is important to establish that the site was chosen for its historical significance, entertainment, and urban cultural diversions.

Designated as a National Historic Site in the late 1990s, the Exchange District is ideal for experimentation with adaptive reuse. Many of the area's industrial brick buildings and warehouses are now home to local restaurants, art galleries, architectural firms, and retail establishments, meaning that the neighbourhood is in transition and favourable to commercial and residential development. The Exchange District also plays host to numerous arts and culture events throughout the year, attracting an extensive community of culturally orientated travellers and neighbours. With the recent interest in the revitalization of Winnipeg's downtown, the introduction of a hotel such as the one proposed in this project would be a positive contribution to the neighbourhood, engaging guests and enlivening the street with constant activity.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This project explores how interior design can offer a productive means to engage with some of the challenges contemporary Western societies face. Specifically, ones of heritage, identity, community, and urban renewal. With that said, the following questions were used to guide the research and design process:

- i. How can interior design provide inhabitants with a greater sense of identity and place through strategies of adaptive reuse?
- ii. In what ways can interior design, specifically through programming and interior spatial relationships and configurations, foster a sense of community?

- iii. Regarding interior design's role within the hospitality sector, what changes can be made to better accommodate twenty-first-century travellers and neighbours?

## RESEARCH METHODS

The preceding questions were investigated using the following research methods:

- **Literature Review**—identifies the roles that architecture, design, individuals, and communities play in fostering a sense of place. Of particular interest are literary works that provide valuable insights into adaptive reuse and placemaking strategies. The information gathered in the literature review guides the design precedent analysis and drives the programmatic decisions of the design.
- **Visual Essay**—is a series of photographs that convey the Exchange District's history, architecture, and character, offering a more tangible understanding of the site. This essay is included in Chapter 2—Site and Building Analysis.
- **Design Precedent Analysis**—examines three hospitality projects that address some of the theoretical concepts explored in the literature review. More specifically, these examples make use of one or both of the following: adaptive reuse and placemaking strategies. Ultimately, they serve to demonstrate how the design of a hotel integrated with hybrid programmes can strengthen communities from within and beyond the confines of a building.

## PROJECT BENEFITS

As is apparent in the literature review and design precedent analysis, twenty-first-century travellers are interested in and searching for authentic, local experiences and accommodation. Despite this, hotel chains, whose primary virtues are sameness and consistency, continue to dominate the hospitality industry. However, hypothetical projects such as this one demonstrate that designers are thinking about more progressive typologies

that can help organizations adjust and assist in generating long-term success. This project responds to the demands and values of a changing demographic and, in doing so, challenges established ideas to address contemporary issues within the hospitality industry.

### KEY TERMS

*Authentic*—In this project, this term is often used to describe an experience or a place, i.e. *authentic experiences, authentic places*. Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines authentic as being “true to one’s own personality, spirit, or character: is sincere” and “not false or imitation: real, actual.”<sup>2</sup>

*Community*—A general term used to describe a group of people with shared interests, values, and goals.

*Connection*—A term that refers to the meaningful relationships one has with family, friends, and acquaintances or broader groups and communities. Connection is a basic human necessity and, without it, can lead to feelings of loneliness, isolation, or other health consequences.

### CHAPTER SUMMARIES

- **Chapter 1—Introduction** outlines this project’s research and design goals. It introduces the key concepts and ideas explored in the following chapters, identifies the site and building selection, highlights the project benefits and, finally, defines the key terms.
- **Chapter 2—Site and Building Analysis** begins with a summary of Winnipeg’s history and its influence on the site selection process. The site analysis also includes a visual essay—an exercise used to develop a better understanding of the site and its surroundings. This essay is followed by an architectural and experiential analysis of the Travellers Building itself.

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<sup>2</sup> “Definition of Authentic,” Merriam-Webster Dictionary, accessed June 17, 2021, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/authentic>.

- **Chapter 3—Literature Review** comprises four main sections. The first articulates methods and techniques of adapting existing buildings and interior spaces to create meaningful dialogue between old and new. The second section builds on the discussion in the first by examining why historic buildings matter to those who inhabit them. The third explores the roots and evolution of place and placemaking. Lastly, the fourth section responds to the negative social connotations and cultural stigma surrounding travellers and tourists and explains why it is necessary to call for less rigid definitions.
- **Chapter 4—Design Precedent Analysis** looks at three hospitality projects: Hotel Schani Wien, designed by Archisphere; Eaton Workshop, Washington, DC, designed by Gachot Studios and Parts and Labor Design; and The Hoxton, Southwark, designed by Ennismore. These precedents were selected because they respond to the demands and values of twenty-first-century travellers and neighbours and reflect this project's aesthetic intent to provide a vibrant and lively space that is emissive of its surrounding environment.
- **Chapter 5—Design Programme** includes the user profiles and a series of graphics that depict the functional, programmatic, and spatial requirements of this design project.
- **Chapter 6—Design Proposal** brings together all of the research and information gathered in the preceding chapters into the design of the Travellers Building. This chapter includes floor plans, renderings, elevations, sections, and furniture, fixtures, and material selections.
- **Chapter 7—Conclusion** reflects on the design of the Travellers Building in relation to the research and, in doing so, revisits the research questions. In addition, this chapter also outlines opportunities for further exploration.

## CHAPTER 2—SITE AND BUILDING ANALYSIS

## INTRODUCTION

While the information gathered in the literature review and design precedent analysis informed much of the design of the Travellers Building, the selection of a typology was motivated by some of the challenges faced by contemporary Western societies; specifically, the erosion of cultural identity and local heritage that have come as a consequence of rapid urbanization and place homogenization. Designated as a National Historic Site and regarded as Winnipeg's best-preserved neighbourhood, the Exchange District still houses a lively community despite the adjacent encroachment of contemporary commercial developments. As most twenty-first-century travellers are searching for authentic experiences based on local culture, the Exchange District would be ideal for this project.

This chapter begins with an overview of Winnipeg's history and its influence on the selection of a site. A more detailed analysis of the site follows with information on its history, architecture, and demographics. Accompanying this information is a series of photographs that document the character of the building and its surroundings. Lastly, this chapter concludes with an architectural and experiential analysis of the Travellers Building itself.

## SITE ANALYSIS

Perhaps one of North America's most architecturally interesting cities, Winnipeg has the most extensive collection of heritage buildings on the continent, both a particular and an unforeseen benefit to slow growth.<sup>3</sup> Attributed to its geographical location near the longitudinal centre of Canada, the city became the focus of the transcontinental railways' western expansion. Following the Canadian Pacific Railway's completion in the late 1880s, Winnipeg experienced years of growth and prosperity that was otherwise unparalleled in Canadian urban development, making it the wholesale, administrative, and financial centre of

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<sup>3</sup> Karen Gardiner, "Why Design Lovers Should Visit Winnipeg," *Architectural Digest*, last modified January 30, 2020, <https://www.architecturaldigest.com/story/why-design-lovers-should-visit-winnipeg>.

the West.<sup>4</sup> However, during World War I and the subsequent Great Depression, the city's economy declined. Following World War II, conditions began to improve, but growth was much slower than before. As a result, Winnipeg did not have the funds to update its turn of the century industrial brick buildings and warehouses, so they have been preserved within the Exchange District, now a National Historic Site.<sup>5</sup>

The Exchange District, which comprises approximately 150 buildings, mainly in the Beaux-Arts- and Chicago School-style, was designated a National Historic Site in 1997.<sup>6</sup> A commemorative plaque located within the neighbourhood acknowledges this designation:

This remarkable group of commercial buildings vividly illustrates Winnipeg's transformation between 1878 and 1913 from a modest pioneer settlement to Western Canada's largest metropolitan centre. The district's banks, warehouses, and early skyscrapers recall the city's dominance in the fields of finance, manufacturing, wholesale distribution and the international grain trade. Designed by a number of well known architects, these buildings reflect an approach to architecture that was innovative, stylish and functional. The First World War and the Great Depression contributed to the end of Winnipeg's spectacular boom era. Through the efforts of dedicated citizens since the 1970s, the Exchange District has been preserved as a distinctive legacy of a formative period in Canada's economic development.<sup>7</sup>

As is noted in the preceding inscription, significant efforts have been made to preserve the Exchange District's architectural and historical value. In 1988, the Downtown Winnipeg Zoning By-Law No. 4800/88 was established, proposing that any alterations made to existing buildings and streetscapes or new construction within the area must adhere to the guidelines under the 'Historic Winnipeg' design designation.<sup>8</sup> Since this designation requires a review of any proposed changes, it ensures that the neighbourhood's architecture and character remain

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<sup>4</sup> Alan Artibise and Elaine Young, "Winnipeg," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, last modified March 13, 2019, <https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/winnipeg>.

<sup>5</sup> Gardiner, "Why Design Lovers Should Visit Winnipeg."

<sup>6</sup> "The Exchange District National Historic Site of Canada Commemorative Integrity Statement," City of Winnipeg, last modified January 10, 2001, <https://www.winnipeg.ca/ppd/Documents/Heritage/ExchangeDistrict/Exchange-District-Commemorative-Integrity-Statement-2001.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> "Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada." *The Exchange District*. Inscription. Winnipeg, Manitoba. Viewed December 8, 2020.

<sup>8</sup> "The Exchange District National Historic Site of Canada Commemorative Integrity Statement."

intact. With this in mind, the Exchange District is suitable for an adaptive reuse project that does not alter the building's exterior.

Characterized by its industrial brick buildings and warehouses, narrow angled streets, and cobblestone paths, the Exchange District feels like a step back in time—a clear indication that preservation efforts have been successful. Today, these buildings and warehouses are home to local restaurants, art galleries, architectural firms, and retail establishments. The Exchange District also plays host to numerous arts and culture events throughout the year, some exclusive to the city. They include but are not limited to TD Winnipeg International Jazz Festival, Winnipeg Fringe Theatre Festival, Architecture+Design Film Festival Winnipeg and Culture Days Manitoba with Nuit Blanche. There are also several recognized works of architecture and institutions close by, including the Winnipeg Art Gallery, Canada Life Centre (formerly known as Bell MTS Place), and the Forks, at the confluence of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. These places provide Winnipeg with a sense of identity, and the Exchange District can be understood and conveyed through its thematic connections with these landmarks.

Since its founding in 2007, Winnipeg-based firm 5468796 Architecture has led a wave of contemporary architecture in the city. A number of the firm's projects explore how architecture and interior design can help drive the revitalization of Winnipeg's downtown in a manner that fosters community and liveability. OMS Stage (also known as The Cube), an open-air performance venue at the heart of the Exchange District in Old Market Square, is one such project. Host to performers during many of the city's festivals, OMS Stage comprises 20,000 aluminum pieces strung together to form a flexible mesh curtain that strongly contrasts the Exchange District's industrial brick buildings and warehouses.<sup>9</sup> Thus, bringing people together in a compelling and inspiring setting. Some of the firm's other projects that encourage community interaction and activate urban life are the adaptive reuse

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<sup>9</sup> "OMS Stage," 5468796 Architecture, accessed December 14, 2020, <https://www.5468796.ca/#oms>; Gardiner, "Why Design Lovers Should Visit Winnipeg."

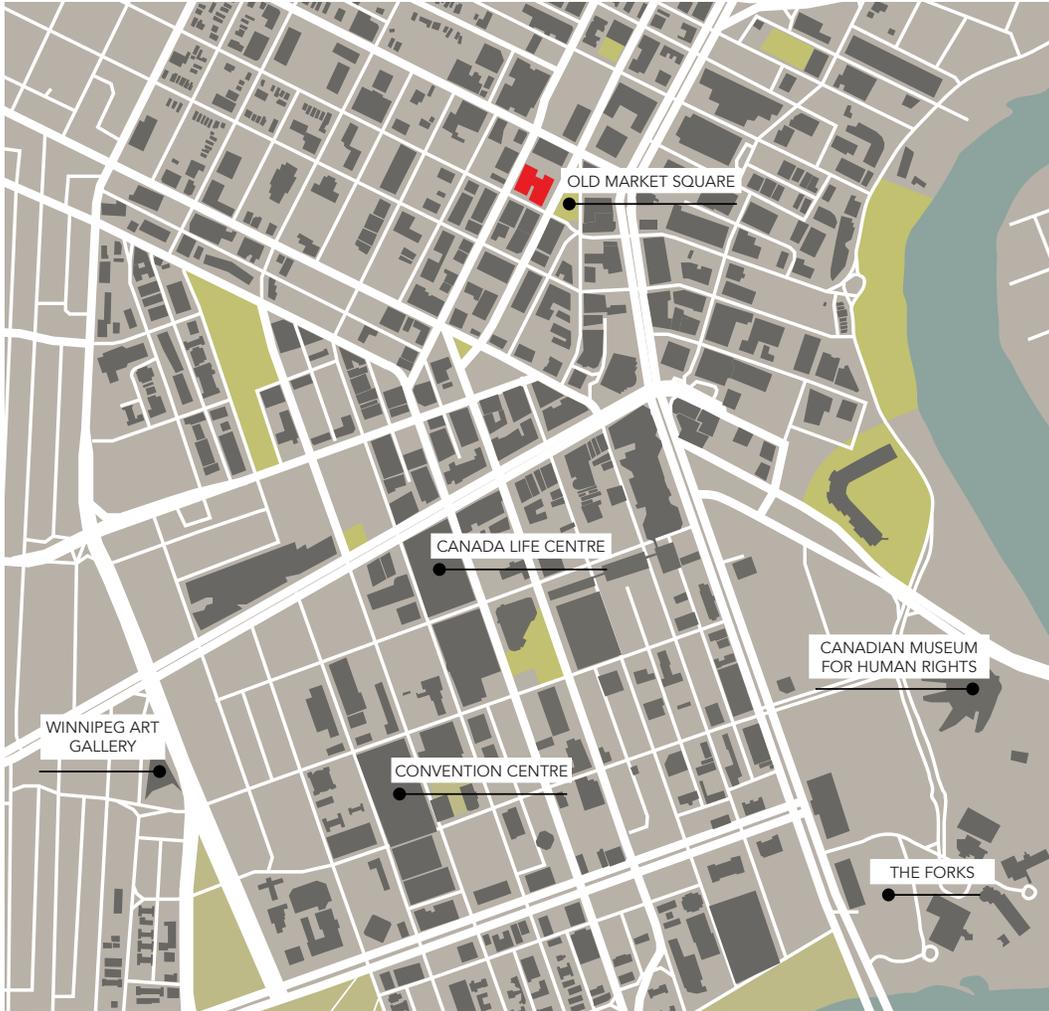
of the James Avenue Pumping Station into a mixed-use commercial and residential space and Warehouse 1885, an apartment building in the Exchange District with contemporary conveniences.

According to Statistics Canada's 2016 Census, Winnipeg's downtown is in the midst of a decade-plus growth trend with a population of 66,850 or a 1.6% increase since 2011.<sup>10</sup> In addition, the Exchange District itself has a population of 630 or a 41.6% increase since 2011.<sup>11</sup> The growing interest in Winnipeg's downtown reflects the revitalization efforts made by the city to promote downtown vibrancy and liveability and provide residents with a stronger sense of identity and place. It is also worth mentioning here that the downtown population is characterized as relatively young and affluent. With this in mind, it is reasonable to assume that the Travellers Building, as envisioned in this project, would align with neighbours' interests, demands, and values.

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<sup>10</sup> Statistics Canada, "2016 Census Data—Downtown Community Area," City of Winnipeg, last modified July 24, 2019, <https://winnipeg.ca/census/2016/Community%20Area/Downtown%20Community%20Area/Downtown%20Community%20Area.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> Statistics Canada, "2016 Census Data—Exchange District," City of Winnipeg, last modified January 24, 2019, <https://www.winnipeg.ca/Census/2016/Community%20Areas/Downtown%20Neighbourhood%20Cluster/Neighbourhoods/Downtown%20East/Downtown%20East%20Neighbourhoods/Exchange%20District/Exchange%20District.pdf>.



**FIGURE 1**—Site Map of the Travellers Building and landmarks close by (NTS)

## VISUAL ESSAY

The succeeding photographs (Figures 2-9) are intended to showcase the Exchange District's urban landscape. These images convey the architecture, history, and character of the neighbourhood—one that is currently in transition and favourable to commercial and residential development.



**FIGURE 2**—View of the Exchange District looking southwest from the Albert Street Parkade



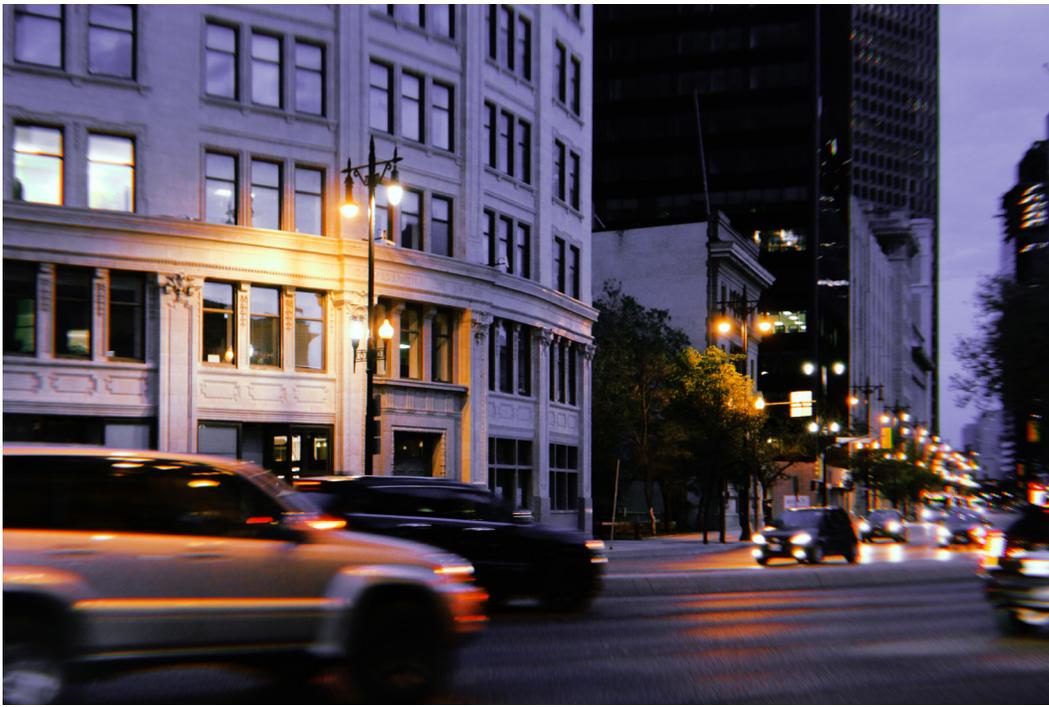
FIGURE 3—View looking south on Albert Street



FIGURE 4—The Travellers Building



FIGURE 5—OMS Stage in Old Market Square



**FIGURE 6**—View looking south on Main Street at William Avenue



FIGURE 7—Artspace Building on Arthur Street



**FIGURE 8**—View of Main Street and Portage Avenue looking east from the Albert Street Parkade

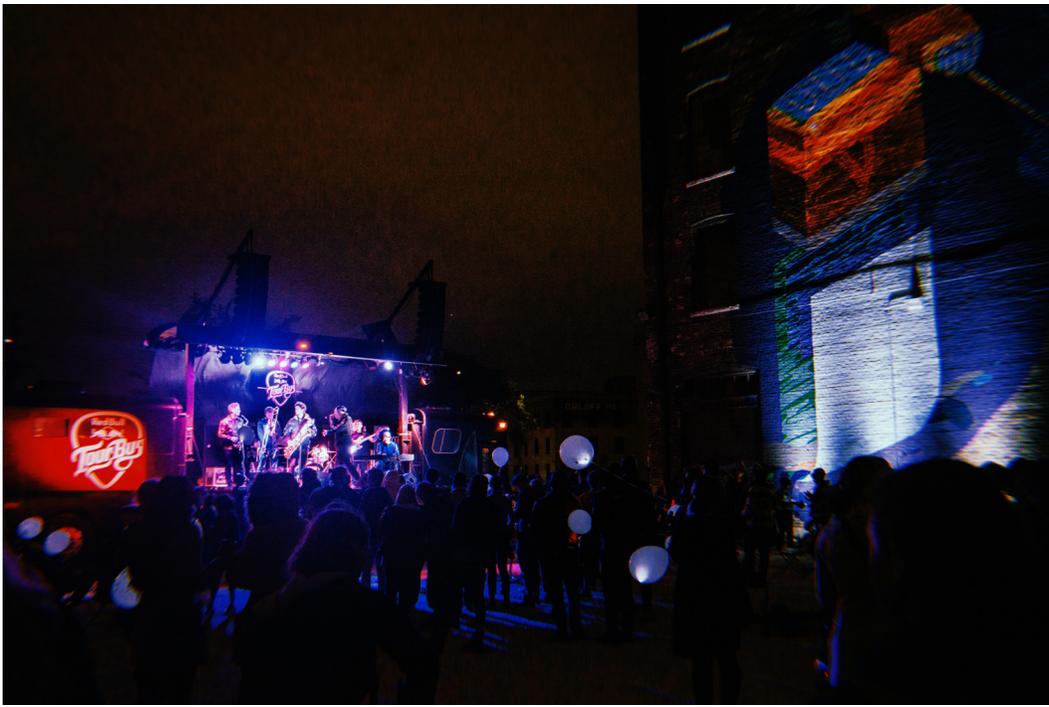


FIGURE 9—Nuit Blanche, 2017

## BUILDING ANALYSIS

### Architecture and Design

The Travellers Building was designed by architects Frank Darling and John A. Pearson in the Neo-Classical style. Key architectural qualities that the building shares with this style include symmetrical main façades, minimal decoration, and flat rooflines.<sup>12</sup> Looking at the floor plans included in the original drawing set by Darling and Pearson and comparing them to the Travellers Building itself, slight modifications were made to the placement of some of the exterior doors and windows. That said, an archival photograph included in the City's Historical Buildings and Resources Committee report (Figure 10) shows that the building's exterior has been relatively well-preserved and untouched, with the exception of the addition and removal of various awnings.

In comparison, there have been several modifications made to the building's interior over the years. As a result, it is unclear whether all aspects of Darling and Pearson's original interior design were built as indicated or not. Based on a site visit, however, the current state of the interior is in excellent condition. Although a site visit to all six-storeys was not possible, it is fair to assume that the other storeys are also in excellent condition.

Due to its historical designation, discussed in greater detail in the next paragraph, the proposed design will revitalize the building in a manner that respects both the exterior and interior architecture. This approach will also help preserve its history and character, allowing guests to gather in a space that is more emissive of Winnipeg.

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<sup>12</sup> M. Peterson, "283 Bannatyne Avenue—Travellers Building," City of Winnipeg—Historical Buildings and Resources Committee, last modified May 2019, <https://www.winnipeg.ca/ppd/Documents/Heritage/ListHistoricalResources/Bannatyne-283-long.pdf>.



FIGURE 10—Archival photograph of the Travellers Building

## Historical Designation

Winnipeg City Council listed the Travellers Building as a Grade II Municipally Designated Site in 1979. This designation places constraints on modifications made to the building's entire exterior and interior marble and cast iron staircase, open cage elevator, and ornamental wooden fireplace.<sup>13</sup> The Travellers Building is also protected under the City of Winnipeg's Historical Resources By-Law No. 55/2014.<sup>14</sup> As such, any proposed changes to the building's exterior and aforementioned interior elements are subject to a review by the City's Historical Buildings and Resources Committee and the issuing of a Heritage Permit.

## History

The Travellers Building opened in 1906 and served as the headquarters for the North West Commercial Travellers' Association of Canada (NWCTA).<sup>15</sup> The NWCTA, which was, at the time, comprised of more than 2,000 travelling sales representatives, situated itself in Winnipeg's growing downtown to be near amenities and resources. During this time, the Travellers Building also played host to other businesses, including brokerage firms and insurance companies. It is said that these businesses occupied the first four storeys while the NWCTA occupied the top two storeys exclusively.<sup>16</sup>

In 1945, the NWCTA sold the Travellers Building and relocated to 291 Garry Street, a few blocks away. Subsequently, the federal government made alterations to the building's interior to accommodate the Unemployment Insurance Commission's and the Department of National Health and Welfare's offices, where the government services resided until 1961.<sup>17</sup> The building then remained vacant for fifteen years until it was purchased and redeveloped as a shopping centre. While this programme was, ultimately, unsuccessful, the adaptive reuse of

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<sup>13</sup> "List of Historical Resources," City of Winnipeg, last modified June 21, 2021, <https://winnipeg.ca/ppd/Heritage/ListHistoricalResources.stm>.

<sup>14</sup> "Historical Buildings and Resources Committee," City of Winnipeg, last modified August 30, 2017, <https://winnipeg.ca/ppd/Heritage/HistoricalBuildingsAndResourcesCommittee.stm>.

<sup>15</sup> Peterson, "283 Bannatyne Avenue—Travellers Building."

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> "1979—The Year Past—Report of the City of Winnipeg Historical Buildings Committee," City of Winnipeg, accessed December 26, 2020, <https://winnipeg.ca/ppd/Documents/Heritage/YearPast/The-Year-Past-1979.pdf>.

the Travellers Building from an abandoned office space into a shopping centre was one of the first for the neighbourhood. As a result, it garnered considerable attention for the Exchange District and prompted government investments, such as the Core Area Initiative (CAI).<sup>18</sup>

Organized in 1981, the CAI was one of Canada's most significant urban regeneration efforts and funded a refurbishment of the Travellers Building in 1985. Updates to the building included interior renovations, new elevators, mechanical systems and windows, and a cleaning of the brick exterior.<sup>19</sup> Over the last decade-plus, the building has operated as a mixed-use commercial and residential space with offices, restaurants, and condominiums.

#### Experiential

The Travellers Building is located at the heart of Winnipeg's downtown and historic Exchange District across from Old Market Square. Taking advantage of its corner location, the building's main level is comprised of sizeable windows that transpose the exterior and interior character. These windows also bring abundant natural light into the space, creating a pleasant and inspiring interior environment. In addition, the building's high ceilings impart a spacious quality to the interior that is enhanced by the natural light. Lastly, the building's open floor plans allow for flexible and adaptable space, making it easy to accommodate the wants, needs, and expectations of a changing demographic.

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<sup>18</sup> Peterson, "283 Bannatyne Avenue—Travellers Building."

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.



**FIGURE 11**—Interior view of the Travellers Building's first floor

## CONCLUSION

The Exchange District, a neighbourhood with historical significance, entertainment, and urban cultural diversions, is ideal for this project that responds to the demands and values of twenty-first-century travellers searching for authentic, local experiences. In addition, the area is currently in transition and favourable to commercial and residential development, meaning that the introduction of a hotel integrated with hybrid programmes would be a positive contribution to the neighbourhood, promoting downtown vibrancy and liveability.

The Travellers Building itself is a suitable size for the proposed typology, and its architectural and experiential qualities make it agreeable for work, rest, and meals. It is also well-situated within the city and the Exchange District to serve as an inclusive gathering place and a hub emissive of Winnipeg.



## CHAPTER 3—LITERATURE REVIEW

## INTRODUCTION

By drawing on research and theory from various fields, the literature review identifies the roles that architecture, design, individuals, and communities play in fostering a sense of place. As it has been established, one of the goals of this project is to demonstrate how interior design can offer a productive means to engage with issues of heritage, identity, community, and urban renewal. With that said, the literature reviewed in the first two sections of this chapter serves to demonstrate how strategies of adaptive reuse can assist in addressing some of these challenges. More specifically, the first section articulates methods and techniques of adapting existing buildings and interior spaces to create meaningful dialogue between old and new, and the second section examines why historic buildings matter to those who inhabit them. The third section looks into the history, theory, and evolution of place and placemaking. Of particular interest are how spaces, specifically ones of convergence, become meaningful to users. Lastly, the fourth section challenges the negative social connotations and cultural stigma surrounding travellers and tourists and explains why calling for less rigid definitions is necessary.

## ADAPTING EXISTING BUILDINGS FOR REUSE

“Adaptive reuse has existed since time immemorial. The reuse of caves as domicile and animal pelts as clothing are early instances of man’s resourcefulness,” states architect Liliane Wong.<sup>20</sup> This same resourcefulness is evident in today’s built environment when architects and designers facilitate equitable adaptation to structures that can no longer accommodate their intended purpose or use.<sup>21</sup> Between an increased interest in resource conservation and an appreciation for historic buildings, there are now, more than ever, concerted efforts to

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<sup>20</sup> Liliane Wong, *Adaptive Reuse: Extending the Lives of Buildings* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2016), 6.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

preserve such buildings rather than to demolish them and build anew. Today, renovations and conversions of existing structures account for 50-70% of projects worldwide.<sup>22</sup>

In her book *Adaptive Reuse: Extending the Lives of Buildings*, Liliane Wong draws interesting and unexpected comparisons between hermit crabs and host buildings. Hermit crabs, decapod crustaceans with soft abdomens requiring protection, occupy discarded hard-shell objects for fortification and dwelling.<sup>23</sup> Because hermit crabs seek new shells to live in after outgrowing their old ones, they learn to adapt to their new and often flawed surroundings. Similarly, in the built environment, when a host building—described as “a structure that receives a new use for a defined or undefined period of time”—is given a new purpose, it requires similar adaptation to an imperfect host structure.<sup>24</sup>

In all their manifest forms, host buildings provide the conditions into which new life might be introduced. Their ability to sustain such use, however, depends on several factors, including but not limited to:

**Placement in Context**<sup>25</sup>—refers to and considers a building’s immediate surroundings, including its adjacent tenants, views, access to transportation services and proximity to amenities, resources, attractions, and institutions.

**Existing Condition**—considers a building’s physical appearance, quality, working order, structural load capacity, and other existing factors that determine the extent to which changes must be made for the building to become both habitable and suitable for a given use.

**Spatial Fit**<sup>26</sup>—refers to the compatibility and appropriateness between the size and shape of an existing host structure and the new spatial requirements set forth by a given programme. With that said, however, often, the choice of building requires a

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<sup>22</sup> Johannes Cramer and Stefan Breitling, *Architecture in Existing Fabric: Planning, Design, Building* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2007), PDF E-book.

<sup>23</sup> Wong, *Adaptive Reuse*, 104.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

creative intent and vision that, with certain design and built interventions, can make it suitable or not. In other words, a building might not be suitable in its existing form but could become so after any type of renovation, addition, subtraction, or subversion. **Previous Function**—will have influenced many details within the shell of a building, including its interior spatial relationships and configurations, circulation paths, spans, and location and placement of windows, doors, and structural and mechanical systems and capacities.

Holistically understanding a building's architectural and experiential qualities, such as those listed above, can help determine its potential for reuse. That said, architects and designers should not overlook a building because of its perceptible shortcomings. Where there are shortcomings, innovation and architectural design strategies, some discussed in greater detail in the following paragraphs, can be implemented to overcome limitations and unlock new potential. When considered and applied together, these factors and strategies can make for a successful adaptive reuse project.

In their seminal text *Re-readings: Interior Architecture and the Design Principles of Remodelling Existing Buildings*, authors Graeme Brooker and Sally Stone outline three architectural design strategies for adaptive reuse: intervention, insertion, and installation.<sup>27</sup> Listed as individual methods and based upon the extent of integration between old and new, there are many ways they influence and inspire one another, offering design solutions for architects and designers alike. The three strategies are defined as follows:

**Intervention**—is “a procedure that activates the potential or repressed meaning of a specific place.”<sup>28</sup> In this regard, a host building is like a narrative, a story to be retold, and through this process, an architect or designer's interpretation of the space will inspire its redesign. The building is eventually “stripped back” (anything considered

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<sup>27</sup> Graeme Brooker and Sally Stone, *Re-readings: Interior Architecture and the Design Principles of Remodelling Existing Buildings* (London: RIBA Enterprises Ltd, 2004), 79.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*, 81.

unnecessary is removed), and the new elements designed to fit within the confines of the building are introduced.<sup>29</sup> More often than not, these elements will have a design language different from their host; however, one of the keys to a successful intervention is preserving the building's existing atmosphere and character. In doing so, the integration and affinity between old and new can bring life and vitality to both, creating a stronger sense of place.

**Insertion**—is “a practice that establishes an intense relationship between the original building and the remodelling and yet allows the character of each to exist in a strong and independent manner.”<sup>30</sup> As the name suggests, insertion introduces one or more elements into, between, beside, around, or even underneath an existing structure.<sup>31</sup> While these elements are distinguishable from and rarely alter their hosts, qualities such as their scale, proportions, dimensions, materials, and design language are derived from them.

**Installation**—is “the placement of a series or group of related elements within the context of an existing building.”<sup>32</sup> Installation is very much about the relationship between an existing building and the new elements; however, there is often little to no affinity between the two. As such, installations are typically more transient and experiential than permanent architecture and can be removed without any lasting impact on the integrity of a building. That said, installation is regarded as a “useful remodelling strategy.”<sup>33</sup>

Brooker and Stone, in their same publication, *Re-readings*, write that “the most successful building reuse projects are produced when a firm understanding of the original building is combined with a sympathetic remodelling. The existing context, structure, spaces,

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<sup>29</sup> Graeme Brooker and Sally Stone, *Re-readings 2: Interior Architecture and the Design Principles of Remodelling Existing Buildings* (London: RIBA Publishing, 2018), 71.

<sup>30</sup> Brooker and Stone, *Re-readings*, 102.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, 127.

<sup>33</sup> Brooker and Stone, *Re-readings 2*, 98.

function and history can offer many significant conceptual opportunities and an appreciation and interpretation of these can provide the inspiration for the redesign.”<sup>34</sup> By definition, adaptive reuse is characterized by the qualities of an existing host structure and the physical evidence of a previous inhabitant or inhabitants that come with it. In this sense, a host building is like a palimpsest, in which traces of writing are slightly perceptible within an old manuscript thrown away for reuse.<sup>35</sup> In architect Rodolfo Machado’s appropriately titled *Old Buildings as Palimpsest*, he writes:

Remodelling is a process of providing a balance between the past and the future. In the process of remodelling the past takes on a greater significance because it, itself, is the material to be altered and reshaped. The past provides the already written, the marked ‘canvas’ on which each successive remodelling will find its own place. Thus the past becomes a ‘package of sense’, of built up meaning to be accepted (maintained), transformed or suppressed (refused).<sup>36</sup>

According to Brooker, Stone, and Machado, a successful adaptive reuse project requires a sympathetic remodelling in which the past coinhabits the present space. This relationship between old and new is important for several reasons, one being that it allows users to feel like they are part of a continuum, connected to the past, present, and future which, ultimately, creates a stronger connection between them, the building and the city at large—a key goal for this project.

As discussed in Chapter 2—Site and Building Analysis, the exterior of the Travellers Building is protected under local heritage by-laws. As such, only one change has been proposed for the building’s shell. The renovation presents the opportunity to remove an existing window on the main level and replace it with two doors that access an exterior patio; this will help strengthen the connection between the interior and the street. The designation also places considerations on modifications made to selected interior elements. In respecting the building’s historical and cultural value and acknowledging Brooker, Stone, and Machado’s

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<sup>34</sup> Brooker and Stone, *Re-readings*, 20.

<sup>35</sup> Wong, *Adaptive Reuse*, 136.

<sup>36</sup> Rodolfo Machado, “Old Buildings as Palimpsest,” *Progressive Architecture*, November 1976. In Brooker and Stone, *Re-readings*, 19.

research and theory on what makes an adaptive reuse project successful, the designer has chosen to preserve these character-defining interior elements.

As established, one of the goals of this project is to create meaningful dialogue between old and new in a manner that strengthens the connection between guests, the building and, more broadly, the city. While all three of Brooker and Stone's strategies for adaptive reuse are relevant to this project, the primary method used in the redesign of the Travellers Building is intervention. Maintaining the building's exterior and selected interior elements ensures that its atmosphere and character remain intact, as well as an important part of Winnipeg's history, ultimately creating a stronger sense of place. With that said, the new elements introduced into the space will demonstrate a respect for the independent existence of their host and, also, provide twenty-first-century travellers and neighbours with the amenities and resources needed to foster connections and, subsequently, enjoy their stay.

### HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND THE CITY

In his book titled *Why Old Places Matter: How Historic Places Affect Our Identity and Well-Being*, author and preservationist Thompson M. Mayes explores the reasons why historic places matter so deeply to those who inhabit them. In doing so, his book comprises a series of essays relating to historic preservation and discerns critical points made by scholars from a vast number of disciplines, including cultural geography, phenomenology, and architecture.<sup>37</sup> Mayes' findings show that historic places are essential to who we are as individuals and as a society, primarily stemming from their ability to embody continuity, memory, identity, community, and architecture—all of which will be explored in greater detail in the following paragraphs.

In a rapidly fluctuating urban environment, historic places provide inhabitants with a sense of continuity and stability. In the seminal text *With Heritage So Rich*, the notion of

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<sup>37</sup> Thompson M. Mayes, *Why Old Places Matter: How Historic Places Affect Our Identity and Well-Being* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018), xx.

continuity is encapsulated in the phrase “sense of orientation,” as preservation offers “a sense of orientation to our society, using structures and objects of the past to establish values of time and place.”<sup>38</sup> Further, architect Juhani Pallasmaa writes in his *Encounters 1: Architectural Essays* that:

We have a mental need to experience that we are rooted in the continuity of time. We do not only inhabit space, we also dwell in time ... Architecture enables us to see and understand the slow processes of history and to participate in time cycles that surpass the scope of an individual life.<sup>39</sup>

The idea that we dwell in time is apparent in the way we recount stories and experiences about places that hold meaning to us, our friends, family, and others. These stories and experiences make us feel like we are part of a continuum, connected to people of the past, the present, and the future, which, in turn, creates a stronger sense of place, subsequently adding more value to our lives. Architectural critic Paul Goldberger says about preservation,

Perhaps the most important thing to say about preservation when it is really working as it should is that it uses the past not to make us nostalgic, but to make us feel that we live in a better present, a present that has a broad reach and a great, sweeping arc, and that is not narrowly defined, but broadly defined by its connections to other eras, and its ability to embrace them in a larger, cumulative whole. Successful preservation makes time a continuum, not a series of disjointed, disconnected eras.<sup>40</sup>

As stated in the preceding quotation, historic places help situate us in the “great, sweeping arc” of time. They aid in contributing to a better understanding of our past, give meaning to our present, and enhance our ability to envision our future, ultimately contributing to a greater sense of continuity and stability.<sup>41</sup>

Historic places also embody individual and collective memory, which, like continuity, can help situate us in time. Art critic John Ruskin said it best in his “The Lamp of Memory”

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<sup>38</sup> Special Committee on Historic Preservation United States Conference of Mayors, *With Heritage So Rich* (Washington, DC: Preservation Books, 1999). In Mayes, *Why Old Places Matter*, 1.

<sup>39</sup> Juhani Pallasmaa, *Encounters 1: Architectural Essays*, ed. Peter MacKeith (Helsinki: Rakennustieto Oy Publishing, 2012), 309, 312. In Mayes, *Why Old Places Matter*, 2.

<sup>40</sup> Paul Goldberger, “Preservation Is Not Just about the Past” (speech, Salt Lake City, April 26, 2007). In Mayes, *Why Old Places Matter*, 4.

<sup>41</sup> Mayes, *Why Old Places Matter*, 4-5.

about architecture, “We may live without her, and worship without her, but we cannot remember without her.”<sup>42</sup> Indeed, maintaining place is fundamental in creating and maintaining individual memory (personal memories) and collective memory (shared cultural memories). Said memories are helpful in defining who we are as individuals and as a society, providing us with a stronger sense of identity and place. While memories can, in fact, outlast places—on a more personal note, I can still remember the smell of Sunday night dinner at my grandfather’s house in Winnipeg, Manitoba, despite the house being gone for several years now—memories, both individual and collective, are more precise and less fleeting when these places remain standing.

Just like individual and collective memory, historic places embody our individual and collective identity. Norwegian architect Åshild Lappegard Hauge summarizes an important key finding as “aspects of identity derived from places we belong to arise because places have symbols that have meaning and significance to us ... places are not only contexts or backdrops, but also an integral part of identity.”<sup>43</sup> Both historic buildings and places hold meaning and significance, providing us with a stronger sense of identity. For several years, scholars in geography, philosophy, phenomenology, and architecture, among other fields, have provided insights and attempted to define “place attachment” and “place identity”—the relationship between a person, their identity, and a place.<sup>44</sup> While there is no one consensus, many agree that “place is inextricably linked with the development and maintenance of continuity of self.”<sup>45</sup> The places that aid in forming our identity are tangible, supporting our past, present, and future. With that said, their continued existence is essential, as they serve as reference points, helping us measure, maintain, and refresh our identity over time. Based

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<sup>42</sup> John Ruskin, “The Lamp of Memory,” in *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (New York: Dover Publications, 1989), 178. In Mayes, *Why Old Places Matter*, 7.

<sup>43</sup> Åshild L. Hauge, “Identity and Place: A Critical Comparison of Three Identity Theories,” *Architectural Science Review*, March 2007, 6, 10. In Mayes, *Why Old Places Matter*, 16-17.

<sup>44</sup> Mayes, *Why Old Places Matter*, 16.

<sup>45</sup> Clare L. Twigger-Ross and David L. Uzzell, “Place and Identity Processes,” *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 16 (1996). In Mayes, *Why Old Places Matter*, 16.

on the preceding information, it is clear that the relationship between historic places and our identity is both complex and multifaceted. As such, it will be explored in greater detail in the following section of this chapter, Place and Placemaking.

As stated, historic places embody continuity, memory, and identity, all of which contribute to a stronger sense of community. The following is a summation from an interview between Thompson M. Mayes and editor-in-chief of *Preservation* magazine Dennis Hockman: “Old places foster community, from a shared sense of place, to the storytelling that happens in old neighbourhoods, to the way people meet and gather on common ground.”<sup>46</sup> Indeed, those who live in more established communities tend to share more common space, experiences, and memories, as well as a shared sense of what that place means to them. This is often because historic places have more prominent streets, parks, and buildings serving as community landmarks, encouraging such interactions and gatherings. As a result, these historic settings, where people, place, and time come together, help establish a greater sense of community.<sup>47</sup>

Finally, there are a number of reasons why people admire historic buildings: for their art, craftsmanship, history, and ability to evoke emotion or response, to name a few. For thousands of years, people have acknowledged and valued the art and experience of architecture, and many turn to historic buildings and places for inspiration. As such, these places are essential to our cultural heritage.<sup>48</sup> The phrase “cultural heritage” is abstract; however, it ultimately means that we, as individuals and as a society, do not only value historic buildings for their cultural importance but also for their ability to provide our lives with greater meaning. As Juhani Pallasmaa writes, “the significance of architecture is not in its form, but in its capacity to reveal deeper layers of existence.”<sup>49</sup> In other words, architecture,

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<sup>46</sup> Dennis Hockman, interview by Thompson M. Mayes, *Why Old Places Matter: How Historic Places Affect Our Identity and Well-Being*, (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018), 93.

<sup>47</sup> Mayes, *Why Old Places Matter*, 100.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, 49.

<sup>49</sup> Pallasmaa, *Encounters 1*, 317. In Mayes, *Why Old Places Matter*, 53.

with cultural and historical significance, can give our lives meaning by revealing the more profound layers of our existence—helping us become more aware of our past and present while enhancing our ability to envision the possibilities of our future.

Given that this practicum project proposes an adaptive reuse of the Travellers Building at the heart of Winnipeg's downtown and historic Exchange District, a description that also lends itself to the building, it is necessary to understand why historic places matter so deeply to those who inhabit them. Based on the preceding paragraphs, based on much of Mayes' own research and theory, it is clear that these places embody continuity, memory, identity, community, and architecture, all of which contribute to a greater sense of place and a better understanding of who we are as individuals and as a society. Because one of the central aims of this project is to provide twenty-first-century travellers and neighbours with a space that is emissive of Winnipeg, the preservation of the historic Travellers Building will ensure that an important part of the city's history remains intact, and a thoughtful redesign of the interior will create meaningful dialogue between old and new. The relationship between old and new is important because it allows guests to feel like they are part of a continuum, connected to people of the past, present, and future, which, ultimately, helps situate them and provide them with a stronger sense of place in the context of Winnipeg—something they, ultimately, seek.

### PLACE AND PLACEMAKING

This section considers a selection of literature concerned with place and placemaking. As envisioned in this project, the Travellers Building strives to provide travellers and neighbours with a space that is emissive of Winnipeg in which amicable exchanges and meaningful relationships centred on shared cultural values and experiences can develop. From a design perspective, this is emphasized in the programming phase of the design process, where the interior spatial relationships and the building's connection to the street and the broader community are examined.

At the outset of this discussion, it is necessary to acknowledge that *placemaking* is dependant on a theoretical understanding of *place*, and *place* has various meanings depending on the context in which it appears. *Place* is contested within geography, phenomenology, philosophy, and architecture, among many other disciplines, and, as a result, a summary of each discipline's processes and definitions will aid in revealing their contributions to *place* and serve as important reference points in the redesign of the Travellers Building.

In regional geography, place is used to differentiate one particular region from another.<sup>50</sup> In other words, place is a physical setting confined to a limited space, such as a park or neighbourhood, where the implication is that place is not contingent on human occupation or experience. In human geography, however, the French tradition of *la géographie humaine* focused on *genres de vie* (ways of life) and *pays* (regional differentiation).<sup>51</sup> While the term place was not central to this tradition, the emphasis on the relationship between people and their surrounding environments inspired humanistic geographers, who looked at place as a way of being in the world.

In humanistic geography, place is defined by human experiences in geographical locations. For example, in Jonathan Raban's travelogue *Passage to Juneau: A Sea and Its Meanings*, he interestingly intertwines his boating excursion along the Pacific Coast from Seattle to Juneau with Captain George Vancouver's in 1792. As Raban notes, Vancouver's journal detailed the movements of local canoeists—instead of travelling in a direct line of passage, they took longer and more complex routes that, to Vancouver, seemed nonsensical. However, their movements made complete sense as they read and navigated the sea as a series of places associated with particular safeties and dangers.<sup>52</sup> Although this example demonstrates slight naivety, it shows that human experiences in geographical locations can give us a more comprehensive understanding of place. With that said, it is still necessary to

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<sup>50</sup> Tim Cresswell, *Place: A Short Introduction* (Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 16.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid*, 17.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid*.

turn to alternative disciplines within the social sciences, specifically phenomenology and philosophy, to adequately address place with reference to social consciousness.

Philosopher Martin Heidegger's contributions to a phenomenology of architecture, a supposition that understands architecture in concrete, existential terms, have been influential in understanding the relationships between place and social consciousness. For example, his seminal work *Building Dwelling Thinking* examines the psychic implications of architecture rather than the pragmatic and the requisite connection between *building* (place) and *dwelling* (how we are).

In *Building Dwelling Thinking*, Heidegger investigates the nature of and relationships between *building* and *dwelling*. Following his thoughts on *building* and *dwelling* as they relate to one another and human experience, he proposes looking at building not in pragmatic terms but rather as an entity to which he claims everything that *is* belongs.<sup>53</sup> Here, he argues that building has dwelling as its goal and that there is an emotional state of being that is also attached to dwelling.

Turning to the nature of language to help substantiate his claims, Heidegger makes reference to the Old English and High German word for building: *buan*, meaning *to dwell*.<sup>54</sup> In addition, the German expression *ich bin, du bist* where *bin* belongs to the old word for *to build*: *bauen*, translates into *I dwell, you dwell*.<sup>55</sup> With this, he writes: "The way in which you are and I am, the manner in which we humans *are* on the earth, is *Buan*, dwelling. To be a human being means ... to dwell."<sup>56</sup> Here, Heidegger hints at how dwelling, in the existential sense of the word, is an extension of ourselves; how we *dwell* is how we are. As such, and it is worth mentioning here, dwelling is not limited to the home domain, nor is it necessarily stationary, as often construed.

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<sup>53</sup> Martin Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," in *Poetry, Language, Thought* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 143.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, 144.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*, 145.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*.

In his subsequent passage, Heidegger asks: “In what way does building belong to dwelling?”<sup>57</sup> With this question, he encourages us not to think of building as a construction technique or as art, but instead to inquire—“what is a built thing?”<sup>58</sup> The answer to this, he says, will reveal what building is as understood by way of dwelling. Using the idea of a bridge as an example, a *building* that both visualizes and gathers the surrounding landscape, he writes:

The bridge swings over the stream “with ease and power.” It does not just connect banks that are already there. The banks emerge as banks only as the bridge crosses the stream ... With the banks, the bridge brings to the stream the one and the other expanse of the landscape lying behind them. It brings stream and bank and land into each other’s neighborhood. The bridge *gathers* the earth as landscape around the stream ... Gathering or assembly, by an ancient word of our language, is called “thing.” The bridge is a thing ... To be sure, the bridge is a thing of its *own* kind; for it gathers ... in *such* a way that it allows a *site* for it. But only something *that is itself a location* can make space for a site. The location is not already there before the bridge is. Before the bridge stands, there are of course many spots along the stream that can be occupied by something. One of them proves to be a location, and does so *because of the bridge*. Thus the bridge does not first come to a location to stand in it; rather, a location comes into existence only by virtue of the bridge.<sup>59</sup>

Based on the preceding passage, it is clear that the landscape gets its value from the bridge.<sup>60</sup> The bridge *gathers* the surrounding landscape and, in doing so, becomes a *location* that we might also call a *place*. This is ultimately what Heidegger and his successor, Norwegian architect and architectural theorist, Christian Norberg-Schulz argue is the existential purpose of *building* (architecture and, in this case, interior design)—to make a *site* become a *place*, or, in other words, to uncover the potential meaning in a given environment.

Owing to Heidegger *dwelling*, Norberg-Schulz writes in his own seminal book *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture*:

“dwelling”, in an existential sense, is the purpose of architecture. Man dwells when he can orientate himself within and identify himself with an environment, or, in short,

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid, 149.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid, 149-150.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 150-152.

<sup>60</sup> Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture* (Rizzoli International Publications, 1980), 18.

when he experiences the environment as meaningful. Dwelling therefore implies something more than “shelter”. It implies that the spaces where life occurs are *places*, in the true sense of the word. A place is a space which has a distinct character. Since ancient times the *genius loci*, or “spirit of place”, has been recognized as the concrete reality man has to face and come to terms with in his daily life.<sup>61</sup>

In the existential sense of the word, it is clear that *place* is more than just an abstract location; it is an integral part of our existence. According to Norberg-Schulz, *place* is a “totality made up of concrete things having material substance, shape, texture and colour. Together these things determine an “environmental character”, which is the essence of place.”<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, he states: “When we visit a foreign city, we are usually struck by its particular character, which becomes an important part of the experience ... In general we have to emphasize that *all places have character*, and that character is the basic mode in which the world is “given”.”<sup>63</sup> Indeed, the character of a place is what makes it unique, and once we understand this, we can fully grasp and appreciate the idea of the *genius loci* or “spirit of place.” In this regard, the purpose of architecture and interior design is to visualize the *genius loci*, and the role of the architect or interior designer is to create meaningful and authentic *places* that allow people to  *dwell*.

While Heidegger and Norberg-Schulz’s theories on place are integral to this practicum project and the ways in which they will be implemented in the redesign of the Travellers Building will be explored in greater detail in the following paragraphs, it is necessary to acknowledge that Western societies have brought about a negative severance between building and dwelling. Today, the erosion of cultural identity and local heritage has come as a consequence of rapid urbanization and place homogenization. With that said, it has been argued that more of our lives are taking place in spaces that could be anywhere: fast-food restaurants, shopping malls, airports, and hotels all more or less look, smell, feel,

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid, 6, 8.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, 14.

and sound the same and, as a result, the meaning that provides us with a sense of *place* has and is diminishing.<sup>64</sup>

In his book *Place and Placelessness*, geographer Edward Relph explores the notion of place erosion and how many people are finding it increasingly difficult to connect both in and to the world.<sup>65</sup> Drawing a distinction between the experience of insiderness and outsiderness regarding the relationship between human experience and place, Relph writes: “To be inside a place is to belong to it and to identify with it, and the more profoundly inside you are the stronger is this identity with the place ... From the outside you look upon a place as a traveller might look upon a town from a distance.”<sup>66</sup> In addition, and drawing on Heidegger’s theories of *dwelling*, one of Relph’s key terms is *authenticity*—he writes: “As a form of existence authenticity consists of a complete awareness and acceptance of responsibility for your own existence.”<sup>67</sup> Here, it is understood that an existential insider has an authentic attitude towards place. Conversely, an inauthentic attitude towards place “is essentially no sense of place, for it involves no awareness of the deep and symbolic significances of places and no appreciation of their identities.”<sup>68</sup>

With Relph’s definition of *authenticity* in mind, contemporary trends in the hospitality industry indicate that people, in general, are seeking meaningful and authentic relationships and experiences and are, therefore, becoming active participants instead of passive observers of urbanization and homogenization. For example, David Rockwell, founder of architecture and design firm Rockwell Group says:

More and more, travelers value experience and community over opulence and material possessions ... Hotel brands are shifting away from homogenization and uniformity, and are making individual properties more local and personalized. It’s partly a reflection of the physical isolation associated with social media and partly an

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<sup>64</sup> Cresswell, *Place*, 43.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid*, 43–44.

<sup>66</sup> Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion Limited, 1976), 49.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid*, 78.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid*, 82.

acknowledgement of a basic human need. And at its core, hospitality requires a human touch.<sup>69</sup>

Similarly, Andrew Zobler, founder of Sydell Group, a company that creates and manages hotels rooted in their location and architecture, says: “Travel will continue to become more and more about immersion in the destination and things unique to that destination, including food and design ... The best hotels will be unique and special and ... will take more of a view to attract a core audience than try to appeal to everyone.”<sup>70</sup> Indeed, current trends in the hospitality sector indicate that twenty-first-century travellers are interested in and searching for authentic, local experiences and accommodation, helping them become more immersed in their destination—contributing to a better understanding of *place*.

It is important to note that place, in this project, exists as a physical setting and as a meaningful location. At the heart of the city’s downtown and historic Exchange District, the Travellers Building serves as the physical setting and, through adaptive reuse and placemaking strategies, also serves as a *location* that *gathers* the surrounding landscape, thus embodying the genius loci or “spirit of place.” The Exchange District is home to the most extensive collection of heritage buildings on the continent, housing a lively community despite the adjacent encroachment of contemporary commercial developments. With many local restaurants, art galleries, architectural firms, retail establishments, and internationally acclaimed arts and culture events occurring throughout the year (discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2—Site and Building Analysis), drawing cultural-minded people from the city and abroad helps create an authentic, compelling, and inspiring downtown experience. With that said, a sympathetic remodelling of the Travellers Building where the past coinhabits the present space and where design strategies, like the inclusion and organization of shared

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<sup>69</sup> Laura Itzkowitz, “The Design of Travel and Hospitality in the Year 2039,” *Architectural Digest*, last modified October 1, 2018, <https://www.architecturaldigest.com/story/future-of-design-travel-and-hospitality>.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

spaces and the addition of an exterior patio, help strengthen the connection between guests, the local community and, more broadly, the city.

As it has been established in the preceding paragraphs, the hospitality industry and, more specifically, hospitality design, have been influenced by the varying consequences of rapid urbanization and place homogenization. In addition, however, it is necessary to acknowledge that technological proliferation in contemporary Western societies has also impacted the hospitality sector.

The future of hospitality is evolving and is, in part, due to the global and systemic digital revolution that has altered the way we live, work, and travel. Wireless zones and wireless cellular networks that have untethered the internet from the desktop computer, combined with devices that have become smaller, more mobile, and more powerful, have made the internet readily available from almost anywhere.<sup>71</sup> As such and, in general, whether we do or do not take the contemporary digital world for granted, we have come to expect or even demand the opportunities it offers.

As technology evolves, so does the hospitality industry. Today, checking into hotel rooms with iPads, using fingerprints as room keys, receiving room service delivered by robots and, more generally, integrating flexible working space are only a few ways that demonstrate how the hospitality industry is embracing change in the contemporary digital and technological world.<sup>72</sup> In a 2018 article written for *Architectural Digest* titled “The Design of Travel and Hospitality in the Year 2039,” author Laura Itzkowitz interviewed CEOs of hotel groups, tour operators, and travel advisors to gain some insight into what the future of hospitality might hold. Two recurring themes were “the need for human connection, (and) the value of intangible experiences.”<sup>73</sup> Many who Itzkowitz interviewed believed that technology would not replace human connection but would, instead, create a stronger desire

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<sup>71</sup> Darius Sollohub, *Millennials in Architecture: Generations, Disruption, and the Legacy of a Profession* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2019), 5.

<sup>72</sup> Itzkowitz, “The Design of Travel and Hospitality in the Year 2039.”

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

for people to connect in the real world.<sup>74</sup> Matthew Upchurch, who is, at the time of this writing, the CEO of Virtuoso—a global network of travel agencies, says: “As technology becomes more ubiquitous and sophisticated, it is also driving a craving for empathy and belonging, driven by true connection.”<sup>75</sup> Similarly, Katherine Lo, founder of Eaton Workshop—a “purpose-driven” company that reimagines the hotel as an inclusive gathering place and a hub (that is included in Chapter 4—Design Precedent Analysis), states that:

The hospitality design of yesteryear prized material luxury over everything else. Today’s hospitality design has moved away from the material towards seeking the experiential ... Tomorrow’s hospitality design may be a reaction to the physical disconnectedness of virtual friendships and tech proliferation. The beauty of hospitality is that despite tech trends, hospitality will always mean welcoming real people to physical spaces.<sup>76</sup>

This “craving for empathy and belonging” and “physical disconnectedness” that Upchurch and Lo acknowledge comes, in part, from digital and technological advancements that have allowed for remote work. While working remotely does have benefits, including little to no commute, flexible working hours, and a typically healthier work-life balance, the experience can be isolating. As part of a cover story in *Harvard Business Review*, former Surgeon General of the United States, Vivek Murthy, states that there is a growing “loneliness epidemic” due to the increasing amount of remote work.<sup>77</sup> This epidemic, he says, relates not only to a social problem but also a health problem “associated with a reduction in lifespan similar to that caused by smoking 15 cigarettes a day and even greater than that associated with obesity.”<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, Murthy says: “we live in the most technologically connected age in the history of civilization, yet rates of loneliness have doubled since the

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Steve King, “Coworking Is Not About Workspace—It’s About Feeling Less Lonely,” *Harvard Business Review*, last modified December 28, 2017, <https://hbr.org/2017/12/coworking-is-not-about-workspace-its-about-feeling-less-lonely>.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

1980s.”<sup>79</sup> Yet, if we look back, there is little in our human evolutionary past that has prepared us for life in contemporary society.

Going back millions of years to our Paleolithic ancestors in the Stone Age, early humans bound together in large groups between twenty-five and one hundred people for protection—gathering plants and hunting wild animals.<sup>80</sup> Of course, the chances of getting food were much higher when the bands worked, foraged, and hunted cooperatively—and instances of these cooperative efforts have continued throughout recorded history.<sup>81</sup> For example, in ancient Mesopotamia, Babylonian farmers relied heavily on each other, sharing equipment, building barns, and harvesting crops.<sup>82</sup> Today, anthropologists believe that this mutualism (people helping each other) and reciprocity (I do this for you now, you do this for me later) are intrinsic human behaviours that are, essentially, at the core of our existence.<sup>83</sup>

Looking back at our human ancestors, it is clear that belonging to a community is as basic a human necessity as acquiring food or shelter. Unfortunately, digital and technological advancements have negated our intrinsic human behaviours and have contributed to the growing “loneliness epidemic.” However, in recent years, there has been an increased interest in fostering connections through shared experiences in real life. This has notably exposed and intensified the phenomenon of Collaborative Consumption, also known as the Sharing Economy—in which traditional methods of sharing, lending, trading, and renting are being reinvented into more appealing forms of collaboration and community.<sup>84</sup>

The coworking industry, a successful Collaborative Consumption business model, has seen considerable growth in recent years. Coworking spaces give self-starters the freedom

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<sup>79</sup> Jena McGregor, “This former surgeon general says there’s a ‘loneliness epidemic’ and work is partly to blame,” *The Washington Post*, last modified October 4, 2017, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/on-leadership/wp/2017/10/04/this-former-surgeon-general-says-theres-a-loneliness-epidemic-and-work-is-partly-to-blame/>.

<sup>80</sup> Rachel Botsman and Roo Rogers, *What’s Mine Is Yours: The Rise of Collaborative Consumption* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2010), 68.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 68–69.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, xv.

they desire without the negative effects that come from working remotely; they also provide the advantages of a physical working space. In other words, coworking offices were born out of real need. Many research studies and surveys conclude that coworking spaces reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation onset by remote work.<sup>85</sup> In the same *Harvard Business Review* magazine, key findings from a survey of coworking members show:

- 87% of respondents report that they meet other members for social reasons
- 79% said coworking has expanded their social networks
- 83% report that they are less lonely since joining a coworking space
- 89% report that they are happier since joining a coworking space<sup>86</sup>

In addition, members typically describe their experiences not in pragmatic terms but rather with emotional expressions, such as “hubs of interactions” or “(places) of mutual interests.”<sup>87</sup>

From a design perspective, findings in the literature review demonstrate that in coworking offices, the inclusion and organization of shared spaces increase the opportunities for connection and collaboration among members. Unlike traditional offices, coworking spaces consist of members from a vast number of disciplines, companies, and ventures. For this reason, spaces that facilitate community building through the sharing of work and resources, such as shared workspaces, meeting and event spaces, seminar and conference rooms, and restaurants, bars, and lounges, are integral to their success. Further, events and activities hosted by coworking offices connect members with similar interests, creating a stronger sense of community from within that can extend beyond the confines of a building.

The coworking industry serves as a seminal example of how interior design and the built environment can shape our social experiences and opportunities for connections. Because one of the goals for this practicum project is to encourage community interaction and activate urban life, integrating a coworking space with restaurants, bars, and lounges, is key.

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<sup>85</sup> King, “Coworking Is Not About Workspace.”

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Botsman and Rogers, *What's Mine Is Yours*, 169.

At the conclusion of this section, it is necessary to return to Heidegger and Norberg-Schulz's analyses of place, which identifies a set of elements that aid in uncovering the potential meaning in a given environment. From a design standpoint, this is established in the programming phase of the design process, where the interior spatial relationships and the building's connection to the street and the broader community are examined. The Exchange District was chosen as the site for this project for its historical significance, entertainment, and urban cultural diversions. Further, the proposed programme and design for the Travellers Building itself focus largely on the organization of activities and people in space to foster a sense of community. That said, the programming strengthens the building's connection to the street, transposing the exterior and interior character, helping make the site more meaningful.

## TRAVEL AND TOURISM

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in Manitoba as a tourism destination. In 2018, the influential travel guide *Lonely Planet* published their annual "Best in Travel" and listed Manitoba as one of the top ten regions to visit in 2019 alongside Normandy, France; Piedmont, Italy; and the Scottish Highlands.<sup>88</sup> This prestigious designation, combined with Travel Manitoba's promotional advertising campaign, helped the province attract an extensive community of culturally-orientated travellers and tourists.

Tourism is a practice with considerable cultural and economic importance.<sup>89</sup> Despite its prevalence, however, literary critic Jonathan Culler argues in his *The Semiotics of Tourism* that there are two types of visitor—the *active* traveller, who searches for authentic experiences based on local culture, and the *passive* tourist who, in short, does not. Former Librarian of the United States Congress, Daniel Boorstin, writes that "the tourist seldom likes the authentic product of a foreign culture. He prefers his own provincial expectations. The French

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<sup>88</sup> Travel Manitoba, *Manitoba: Canada's Heart Beats—2018/2019 Annual Report*, (Winnipeg, Manitoba, 2019), [https://assets.simpleviewinc.com/simpleview/image/upload/v1/clients/manitoba/2018\\_19\\_ANNUAL\\_REPORT\\_TMB\\_FNL\\_LR\\_e0e8a304-e117-4b37-a59f-19acb981e102](https://assets.simpleviewinc.com/simpleview/image/upload/v1/clients/manitoba/2018_19_ANNUAL_REPORT_TMB_FNL_LR_e0e8a304-e117-4b37-a59f-19acb981e102).

<sup>89</sup> Jonathan Culler, "The Semiotics of Tourism," in *Framing the Sign: Criticism and Its Institutions* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1990).

chanteuse singing English with a French accent seems more charmingly French than one who simply sings in French.”<sup>90</sup> This thinking raises several questions regarding the tourists’ motives specifically and, as such, is used as a jumping-off point for Culler, who delves into why tourism requires a semiotic approach.

For clarity, semiotics is “a general philosophical theory of signs and symbols that deals especially with their function in both artificially constructed and natural languages and comprises syntactics, semantics, and pragmatics.”<sup>91</sup> In other words, semiotics seeks to help understand how meaning is created and communicated. Much of what we do is determined by long-standing cultural messages and conventions that are, ultimately, dependent on how we interpret them. As such, we need to understand the context in which a sign is communicated to fully understand its meaning and respond appropriately. Semiotics, therefore, aids in ensuring that the meaning of a sign is properly communicated, helping us better understand our surrounding environments.

Roland Barthes, who is regarded as the founder of a semiotics concerning cultural criticism, writes in his *Elements of Semiology*, “dès qu’il y a société, tout usage est converti en signe de cet usage” [once society exists, every usage is converted into a sign of this usage].<sup>92</sup> For example, as demonstrated in the text, a fur coat that one wears is a sign of its category—it signifies a fur coat as one wears it.<sup>93</sup> However, Barthes argues that society generally tends to overlook this function and, instead, will perceive the coat as an article of clothing worn for warmth.<sup>94</sup> He claims this is the *alibi* or the imagined function of an object. Referring to this theory, Culler notes that tourists are not interested in a society’s alibi; instead, they read everything as a sign of itself. Therefore, tourists search for signs of standard cultural

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<sup>90</sup> Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America* (New York: Atheneum, 1967), 106. In Culler, “The Semiotics of Tourism.”

<sup>91</sup> “Definition of Semiotics,” Merriam-Webster Dictionary, accessed February 10, 2022, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/semiotics>.

<sup>92</sup> Roland Barthes, *Elements of Semiology* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), 41. In Culler, “The Semiotics of Tourism.”

<sup>93</sup> Culler, “The Semiotics of Tourism.”

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

practices, unaware of their underlying meaning, and maybe naive to a local's explanation that a traditional English pub is simply a convenient place to meet friends for food and drink.<sup>95</sup>

Conversely, travellers are romanticized in much of the literature reviewed by Culler. In comparing travellers and tourists, Boorstin writes, "the traveller was active; he went strenuously in search of people, of adventure, of experience. The tourist is passive; he expects interesting things to happen to him. He expects everything to be done to him and for him."<sup>96</sup> Based on the preceding quote, it is perhaps easier to envision a traveller searching for adventure, finding themselves lost on a backroad, fortunate enough to meet a local who invites them in for food and drink before sending them back on their way, for example. Though this scenario is both enticing and hypothetical, it is unfair to assume that something like this can only happen to an *active* traveller and not a *passive* tourist. It could be argued that tourists, as defined by Boorstin, also search for authentic experiences based on local culture. This is apparent in advertisements and travel guides that write "just off the beaten track," which describes a fishing village five miles away from the hotel with a cosy restaurant frequented by locals, as another example.<sup>97</sup>

With that said, much of the literature reviewed by Culler seems both ill-defined and misleading. Given the negative social connotations and cultural stigma surrounding tourists, however, it is understood why someone would be hesitant to label themselves as such; it is much more likely that someone would consider themselves a traveller. However, based on the literature reviewed here, travellers and tourists share many similarities of experiences and characteristics that call for less-rigid definitions.

Whether someone considers themselves a traveller or a tourist (for the purposes of this project, the term traveller has been used throughout, as it best describes twenty-first-century visitors' intentions), the Travellers Building will serve as an inclusive gathering place

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Boorstin, *The Image*, 85. In Culler, "The Semiotics of Tourism."

<sup>97</sup> Culler, "The Semiotics of Tourism."

and a hub that is, at the same time, emissive of Winnipeg. To establish a stronger sense of community from within and beyond the confines of the building, the negative social connotations and cultural stigma surrounding tourists and, perhaps even to some extent, travellers must dissolve. As such, this project offers travellers and neighbours a space on neutral ground where amicable exchanges and meaningful relationships centred on shared cultural values and experiences can develop. Such a project ultimately aims to break down signs and labels in order to re-establish a social plain upon which open and honest exchanges can occur.

Finally, it would be remiss in providing an overview of travellers and tourists without addressing the varied relationships between them and local residents or, as referred to in this project, neighbours. Tourism development has several causes and consequences regarding social, economic, and environmental impacts on a destination, and often negative socio-cultural impacts can lead to irritation within a host community. As such, many studies on tourism development focus on local residents' perceptions and attitudes towards tourists and travellers.

The Index of Tourist Irritation, also referred to as the Irridex, is a significant contribution to theoretical models in tourism development. Developed by George Doxey, the Irridex catalogues local residents' responses to tourism into four categories: Euphoria, Apathy, Irritation, and Antagonism.<sup>98</sup> Doxey notes that as tourism development increases, so do local residents' feelings of irritation and antagonism. Such feelings, however, are influenced mainly by the level of incompatibility between residents and travellers/tourists. Because this project provides twenty-first-century travellers and neighbours with the amenities and resources needed to foster connections through work, rest, and meals, it can be deduced that they share similar core values and interests, making them somewhat compatible. As such, it can

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<sup>98</sup> G. Doxey, "A Causation Theory of Visitor-Resident Irritants: Methodology and Research Inferences," in *The Impact of Tourism: Sixth Annual Conference Proceedings* (San Diego, CA 1975).

be assumed that local residents' perceptions and attitudes towards travellers and tourists to Winnipeg's downtown would be more positive and welcoming—allowing for the inclusive gathering place and hub that is proposed within the Travellers Building.

## CONCLUSION

First and foremost, this analysis established that twenty-first-century travellers are interested in and searching for authentic, local experiences. By drawing on scholarly and literary works from various fields, this chapter also identifies the roles that architecture, design, individuals, and communities play in fostering a sense of place. From a design perspective specifically, this is presented through strategies of adaptive reuse, interior spatial relationships and the building's connection to the street and the broader community that transpose the exterior and interior character, strengthening the connection between guests and their surrounding environment, thus creating a stronger sense of place. Much of the discourse here is rooted in Heidegger and Norberg-Schulz's analyses of place, which emphasizes these relationships. As such, the proposed programme and design of the Travellers Building focuses on the organization of activities and people in space so that the building can serve as an inclusive gathering place and a hub that is, at the same time, emissive of Winnipeg.

## CHAPTER 4—DESIGN PRECEDENT ANALYSIS



## INTRODUCTION

The following design precedent analysis examines three hospitality projects, each dedicated to cultivating transformative change within their doors and in their surrounding environments and communities. The following examples were selected because they complement the key ideas explored in the literature review and reflect the aesthetic intent of this project, which proposes an inclusive gathering place and a hub emissive of its surrounding environment. The precedents analysed are Hotel Schani Wien, Eaton Workshop, and The Hoxton.

## HOTEL SCHANI WIEN

Location: Vienna, Austria

Year Built: 2015

Designer: Archisphere

Hotel Schani Wien is a six-storey hotel located in Vienna's Favoriten district. The hotel, which accommodates 270 people, features a multi-functional lobby with coworking space, a lounge, and a gallery that plays host to exhibitions and events throughout the year, all with access to a central bar and garden. The organization of these spaces facilitates community building through the sharing of work and resources, further encouraging community interaction and activating urban life. Additional amenities within the hotel include a conference and seminar room and a bar, patio, and garden on the building's rooftop.

Hotel Schani Wien is the first coworking hotel in Europe and, as with the Travellers Building, this project responds to the demands and values of twenty-first-century travellers. Three years before its completion, Hotel Schani Wien partnered with German research Institute Fraunhofer IAO.<sup>99</sup> Through their partnership, the hotel utilized findings from a "FutureHotel" guest survey, with questions centred around guests' values, interests, and goals, in their design concept. One recurring theme was the optimization of booking procedures and, as such, Hotel Schani Wien introduced individual room selection, mobile check-in and check-out, smartphone room keys and, more generally, a multi-functional lobby with coworking space and a lounge to reduce wait time and avoid lines.

While expecting, or even demanding, that hotels incorporate digital and technological advancements in their design, twenty-first-century travellers are also interested in and searching for authentic, local experiences, as found in the Place and Placemaking section of Chapter 3—Literature Review. With that being said, Hotel Schani Wien's digital avant-garde is well-balanced by Viennese comfort, tradition, and atmosphere, with strong

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<sup>99</sup> "Philosophy & Sustainability," Hotel Schani Wien, accessed March 13, 2022, <https://www.hotelschani.com/en/philosophy/>.

connections to the region and history. For instance, the building's façade is an architectural interpretation of German-Austrian furniture designer Michael Thonet's rattan pattern he developed for his bentwood chairs—a key part in the now iconic piece of furniture used in Viennese coffeehouses.<sup>100</sup> The same motif is used in many design elements in the interior, as well as certain materials and finishes that further relate to the location. Lastly, Hotel Schani Wien's programming and interior spatial relationships, as previously mentioned, also pay homage to Viennese coffeehouse culture, as both the hotel and the coffeehouse serve as gathering places where individuals can meet for food and drink, business and leisure, and, ideally, well-versed conversation.

The relevance of Hotel Schani Wien to this project lies in its programming and interior spatial relationships as well as its connection to the region and history through the use of motifs and materials. First, the role of shared space in facilitating community building and strengthening relationships is acknowledged. The proposed design of the Travellers Building, therefore, incorporates similar programme elements, with coworking space and a restaurant, bar, and lounge on the main floor, and meeting and event space and conference and seminar rooms on the building's sixth floor and rooftop. Second, the architect's arrangement of these spaces in Hotel Schani Wien allows business and leisure to happen together or alongside each other. This balance between public and semi-public space accommodates different guests' needs and desires while, at the same time, encouraging community interaction and activating urban life. Lastly, the selection of materials and finishes for the proposed design was also influenced, in part, by Hotel Schani Wien; however, this will be addressed in greater detail in Chapter 6—Design Proposal.

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<sup>100</sup> "Hotel Schani Vienna," Archisphere, accessed March 13, 2022, <https://www.archisphere.at/projects/hotel-schani-vienna-architecture/>.



FIGURE 12—Exterior view of Hotel Schani Wien



**FIGURE 13**—Guests centred around the multi-functional lobby



**FIGURE 14**—View of the bar on the building's rooftop



**FIGURE 15**—View of the conference and seminar room on the building's rooftop

## EATON WORKSHOP

Location: Washington, DC

Year Built: 2018

Designer: Gachot Studios; Parts and Labor Design

Eaton Workshop, founded by Katherine Lo, is a “mission-driven global hospitality company dedicated to shaping a better world based on values of inclusivity and equity, providing a platform that holds space for belonging, expression, and collective change.”<sup>101</sup> As described, this foundational mission aids in guiding all six of Eaton Workshop’s enterprises: Hotel, House, Wellness, Culture, Media, and Impact. These parts work together, building a community with a shared ethos centred on knowledge, ideas, art, culture, and leisure. It is important to note here that for the purposes of this project, only Eaton Workshop’s Hotel and House enterprises will be analysed. Lastly, at the time of this writing, Eaton Workshop has two locations: the first, in downtown Washington, DC, and the second, in Hong Kong’s Jordan neighbourhood.

Analysing Eaton Workshop’s location in downtown Washington, DC, its Hotel enterprise features 209 rooms with five overarching themes in order to accommodate guests’ wants, needs, and desires. The Artist Studio is described as “an atelier for our artists in residence and offers a 4.5 x 12.5ft. wall canvas for explorations in drawing and painting.”<sup>102</sup> The Cabin and The Study serve as sanctuaries for travellers and neighbours, offering holistic healing elements such as Himalayan salt lamps, environmentally conscious bath amenities, and healthy food and drink choices. The Pied-a-Terre Suite, as the name suggests, is a more spacious version of The Cabin and The Study with a cosy sitting area. Lastly, The Residence Junior Suite is located at the iconic corner of 12th Street and K Street and has a cosy sitting area, a dining room that hosts up to six people, and inspiring views of the city.<sup>103</sup> In addition,

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<sup>101</sup> Eaton Workshop, accessed March 20, 2022, <https://www.eatonworkshop.com/>.

<sup>102</sup> “Rooms,” Eaton Workshop, accessed March 21, 2022, <https://www.eatonworkshop.com/hotel/dc/rooms>.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

every room has hardwood floors, a flat-screen television compatible with all devices, certified organic beds, and a curated selection of vinyl, literature, and artwork, providing a more home-like feel.

In terms of food and drink, facilitating successful community interaction within the confines of a building may result from a wide range of options. With that being said, Eaton Workshop plays host to spots Wild Days, Allegory, Michele's, and Baker's Daughter. Wild Days is a music venue located on the building's rooftop, host to live music and DJ sets with indoor and outdoor space, a bar, and a taco stand. Allegory is a cocktail bar in Eaton Workshop's library, also host to special performances and DJ sets, providing an authentic and elevated drinking experience. Michele's is an upscale New American restaurant located on the building's main floor. Lastly, Baker's Daughter is a specialised café and market, offering tea and coffee, baked goods, prepared food, and gourmet grocery items.<sup>104</sup> Eaton Workshop's varied food and drink selection aids in accommodating guests' preferences while, at the same time, adding to Washington's already varied dining landscape.

Eaton Workshop's House enterprise serves as an inclusive gathering and coworking space, providing self-starters and creatives with the amenities, resources, tools, and community needed to enact positive change within and beyond the building's confines. Beyond offering varied seating arrangements and communal spaces, members also receive many benefits as an incentive, including access to a theatre and screening room—host to curated events and panel discussions; a radio station that can be used for promoting both radio talk and live or recorded music; wellness programming with scheduled classes, traditional and new-age practices, and a spa; art, culture, and event space, including a library and conference rooms; sustainable cuisine and curated drinks; and, finally, preferred rates on hotel rooms.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> "Food & Drink," Eaton Workshop, accessed March 21, 2022, <https://www.eatonworkshop.com/hotel/dc/food-and-drink>.

<sup>105</sup> "House—Benefits," Eaton Workshop, accessed March 23, 2022, <https://www.eatonworkshop.com/house/dc/benefits>.

It is clear that gatherings inspire those at Eaton Workshop and, as such, this precedent serves as a seminal example of how the inclusion of activities and people in space can encourage community interaction and activate urban life. The inclusion of varied amenities, resources, tools, and culinary experiences accommodate guests' needs and expectations while, at the same time, providing a space where guests can participate and engage in amicable exchanges and foster meaningful relationships centred on shared cultural values and experiences.

While the Travellers Building itself is approximately 42,000 square feet, its mission as a regenerative catalyst of positive impact for the guest, the local community and, more broadly, the city, is shared in the mission of Eaton Workshop, albeit being on a more intimate scale, as Eaton Workshop is approximately 175,000 square feet. With that said, the Travellers Building cannot accommodate the same amenities and resources; however, the programme and design elements that make Eaton Workshop an incubator for knowledge and ideas and art and culture have been implemented in the design of the Travellers Building—including coworking space, meeting and event space, food and drink selection that, ultimately, adds to Winnipeg's already authentic dining landscape, and hotel rooms that provide a more home-like feel through the use of materials, finishes, and details. Lastly, part of what makes Eaton Workshop successful, aside from its inclusion and organization of activities, is its location and proximity to many of the city's landmarks, providing further inspiration for travellers and neighbours alike. As such, the selection of a site for this project was, in part, inspired by Eaton Workshop.



FIGURE 16—Interior of one of Eaton Workshop’s hotel bedrooms



FIGURE 17—Interior of one of Eaton Workshop’s restaurants



FIGURE 18—Eaton Workshop House



FIGURE 19—Study

## THE HOXTON

Location: London, United Kingdom

Year Built: 2006

Designer: Ennismore

The Hoxton is a series of open-house hotels “inspired by the diversity and originality of the streets and scenes that surround [them].”<sup>106</sup> In other words, The Hoxton is a hotel chain (with locations across Europe and the United States at the time of this writing); yet, their properties serve as individual reflections of their surrounding environments and neighbourhoods. Their design team works with local artists and creatives, influencing their interiors and creating experiences based on local culture and tradition while, at the same time, supporting their local communities.

Analysing The Hoxton, Southwark specifically, the hotel chain’s third property in London, their design team channelled an industrial aesthetic, paying homage to both Southwark’s past as a major trading spot for hops—one of the key ingredients in beer—during the late nineteenth century and, more generally, the tanneries and factories that once populated the area.<sup>107</sup> With that said, concrete ceilings, exposed brick walls, marble surfaces, brass fixtures, and industrial Crittall-style windows appear in The Hoxton, Southwark’s 192 bedrooms, and restaurants, Albie, an all-day neighbourhood and lobby spot; Seabird, a raw bar featuring sea-to-table offerings and a curated selection of cocktails—located on the building’s fourteenth floor and rooftop; and the Mezzanine Bar, located one level up from the lobby with tea, coffee, and assorted drinks and cocktails.

In addition, The Hoxton, Southwark also hosts Working From\_, a coworking space that takes over six of the building’s floors and includes varied workspaces; meeting and event spaces; conference and seminar rooms; communal areas; libraries; phone booths; day beds integrated with Apple TVs; help-yourself pantries with tea, coffee, and assorted snacks; access

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<sup>106</sup> The Hoxton, accessed March 27, 2022, <https://thehoxton.com>.

<sup>107</sup> “The Hoxton, Southwark hotel is informed by the area’s lost industrial landscape,” Dezeen, last modified November 6, 2019, <https://www.dezeen.com/2019/11/06/the-hoxton-southwark-hotel-interiors-ennismore/>.

to the building's twelfth-floor café and Winter Garden, a dining spot with abundant natural light and greenery; an outside terrace; a rooftop wellness studio offering programmed classes; desk-side food delivery from their restaurants and bars; and locker and bicycle storage.<sup>108</sup> These spaces, amenities, resources, and tools aid in helping guests connect, collaborate, and foster meaningful relationships both within and beyond the confines of the building.

One of the key programming and design features within The Hoxton, Southwark, however, is The Apartment, a series of six event rooms arranged around a central dining area. Individually these rooms can be used for meetings and private dinners or collectively hired out for large-scale parties and events—for travellers and neighbours alike.<sup>109</sup> The Apartment comprises the Living Room, Dining Room, Library, Study, Conservatory, and Den; each is tailored to accommodate meetings, presentations, and gatherings of varying sizes, and each is equipped with a television, Wi-Fi, and printing access.

It would be remiss to look at The Apartment and not acknowledge that the inclusion and organization of spaces offer an ideal spot for local business teams. With that said, The Apartment serves as a place where travellers and neighbours can come together, increasing their chances for meaningful interactions through the sharing of work and resources. Since one of the primary goals of this practicum project is to encourage community interaction and activate urban life, The Apartment has been borrowed as a model in the programming and design of the Travellers Building; however, this will be addressed in more detail in the following Chapter 5—Design Programme and Chapter 6—Design Proposal. The relevance of this design precedent, then, lies in its inclusion and organization of shared spaces that aid in fostering connections between travellers and neighbours alike.

---

<sup>108</sup> "The Hoxton."

<sup>109</sup> "The Hoxton, Southwark hotel is informed by the area's lost industrial landscape."



FIGURE 20—The Hoxton, Southwark's Albie Restaurant



FIGURE 21—Working From\_ Coworking



**FIGURE 22**—Room from *The Apartment*



**FIGURE 23**—Interior of one of The Hoxton, Southwark's hotel bedrooms

## CONCLUSION

The design precedents analysed in this chapter provide insight into the strategies employed by other designers charged with the task of designing hospitality projects centred around community building and interaction. Selected primarily for the distinctive approaches to the inclusion and organization of shared spaces, these precedents also serve as seminal examples of how the use of materials, finishes, and details can facilitate strong connections to the region and history. Distinct from one another but albeit with similar missions, each of these projects influences the programming and design of the Travellers Building, helping it serve as an inclusive gathering place and a hub for travellers and neighbours alike, which it, ultimately, strives to be.

## CHAPTER 5—DESIGN PROGRAMME

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter looks at key considerations that have informed the design programme of the Travellers Building. The first subsection, User Profile, identifies the primary, secondary, and tertiary users of the space and what their needs are. The second subsection, Functional Requirements, summarizes the square footage, furniture, fixtures, and equipment, colour and material requirements, and desired atmosphere of each space. Lastly, in the third subsection, Zoning Studies, this design project's programmatic and spatial requirements are presented in a series of graphics that depict how the key spaces in the Travellers Building will relate to one another as a whole.

## USER PROFILE

### Primary Users

The primary users of the Travellers Building will be travellers, neighbours, and front-of-house employees. Travellers and neighbours will utilize the space for work, rest, and meals. They require both private and shared workspace, opportunities for connection through the inclusion and organization of activities and sharing of resources, retreat space, and, more generally, they will have expectations for cleanliness and wayfinding. While travellers will be the category of users spending time in both the building's private spaces (hotel rooms—located on the second to fifth floors) and public spaces, it is the building's more shared spaces on the main floor, such as the coworking space and the restaurant, bar, and lounge that were designed with these users and neighbours in mind. The front-of-house employees will have to undertake many responsibilities, including greeting and assisting guests and managing operations. The back-of-house employees will also be charged with many tasks and will be responsible for the organization and cleanliness of all spaces, preparing food and drink, washing dishes, and general maintenance. These user groups will require a safe work environment, retreat space, clearances for movement and traffic,

and proper adjacencies for hotel functions. While front- and back-of-house employees are included in the user profile, the spaces they require, such as private offices, custodial and service rooms, and retreat space, will be located in the building's basement, which is not in the scope of this design project and, therefore, not included in the design programme.

#### Secondary Users

The secondary users of the space will be, more generally, local business teams. Accordingly, the meeting and event spaces and conference and seminar rooms on the building's main floor and sixth floor and rooftop have been designed with this user group in mind. Borrowing the model of The Apartment from The Hoxton, Southwark (as described in Chapter 4—Design Precedent Analysis), these spaces have been programmed and designed to accommodate meetings, presentations, and gatherings of varying sizes and can be used individually or collectively hired out. The meeting and event spaces and conference and seminar rooms on the building's sixth floor and rooftop specifically offer greater flexibility as well as inspiring views of the city. Finally, the restaurants and bars proposed within the Travellers Building provide catering services to meet guests' needs, wants, and expectations for any and all occasions.

#### Tertiary Users

The tertiary users will be lecturers, guest speakers, health and wellness instructors, and couriers. Lecturers, guest speakers, and health and wellness instructors will visit the Travellers Building to attend and host events and programs. These will typically occur in the building's shared spaces on the main floor and sixth floor and rooftop. Lastly, cleanliness, wayfinding, and clearances for movement, traffic, and deliveries are important, especially for couriers, and have been considered in the proposed programme and design.

## FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Space	Square Footage	Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment
Reception	900 ft <sup>2</sup>	Storm entrance, walk-off mats, horizontal surfaces, task seating, lounge seating, storage
Coworking	1900 ft <sup>2</sup>	Large horizontal work surfaces, task seating, lounge seating, storage
Meeting and Event Spaces	1100 ft <sup>2</sup>	Large horizontal work surfaces, task seating, lounge seating, storage, electronics
Conference and Seminar Rooms	1000 ft <sup>2</sup>	Large horizontal work surfaces, task seating, lounge seating, storage, electronics
Lounge	1200 ft <sup>2</sup>	Horizontal surfaces, lounge seating, storage
Restaurant and Bar	1500 ft <sup>2</sup>	Counter space, shelving, under-counter refrigerator, sink, dishware, horizontal surfaces, task seating, lounge seating
Kitchen	300 ft <sup>2</sup>	Counter space, shelving, walk-in refrigerator and freezer, oven, sink, microwave, food and drink machines, dishware and serveware

## Colour and Material Requirements

## Desired Atmosphere

---

Durable and easily cleanable surfaces, neutral colours

Accessible, bright, welcoming, clean

---

Durable surfaces, warm colours, neutral materials with some accents, hardwood or concrete flooring

Open plan, bright, well lit, clean and organized, access to outdoor views

---

Durable surfaces, light and neutral colours, hardwood or concrete flooring

Open plan, bright, well lit, clean and organized, access to outdoor views, acoustic and visual separation from entrance, flexible

---

Durable surfaces, light and neutral colours, hardwood or concrete flooring

Bright, well lit, clean and organized, access to outdoor views, acoustic and visual separation from entrance, flexible

---

Durable and easily cleanable surfaces, warm colours, neutral materials with some accents, hardwood flooring

Open plan, access to outdoor views, flexible

---

Durable and easily cleanable surfaces, dark and warm colours, neutral materials with some accents, hardwood flooring

Open plan, varied lighting, clean, access to outdoor views

---

Durable and easily cleanable surfaces, light and neutral colours, concrete flooring

Open plan, bright, well lit, clean and organized, efficient

Space	Square Footage	Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment
Hotel Rooms	12000 <sup>2</sup>	Horizontal surfaces, side seating, bed, water closet, shower, sink, storage
Wellness Studio	900 ft <sup>2</sup>	Workout machines, exercise equipment, mats, storage
Washrooms	400 ft <sup>2</sup>	Water closet, sink, soap dispenser, hand dryer, towel dispenser, grab bars, mirrors, trash bin
Custodial and Storage Rooms	700 ft <sup>2</sup>	Vertical and horizontal storage, shelving units, cleaning supplies, sink, floor drain
Mechanical Room	200 ft <sup>2</sup>	HVAC, water heater tank, electric panel
Delivery and Loading Dock	100 ft <sup>2</sup>	Storage, shelving
Circulation	12000 ft <sup>2</sup>	Clearly marked entrances and exits, wayfinding, signage

## Colour and Material Requirements

## Desired Atmosphere

---

Durable and easily cleanable surfaces, warm colours, neutral materials, hardwood flooring

Accessible, bright, welcoming, clean, access to outdoor views, acoustic and visual separation

---

Durable and easily cleanable surfaces, neutral colours and materials, rubber flooring

Open plan, varied lighting, clean and organized, access to outdoor views

---

Durable and easily cleanable surfaces, antibacterial paints and finishes, tile flooring

Accessible, bright, clean, private, acoustic and visual separation from all other spaces

---

Durable and easily cleanable surfaces, antibacterial paints and finishes, concrete flooring

Open plan, well lit, clean and organized, private, visual separation from other spaces

---

Durable surfaces, white walls, concrete flooring

Well lit, organized, secure

---

Durable surfaces, concrete flooring

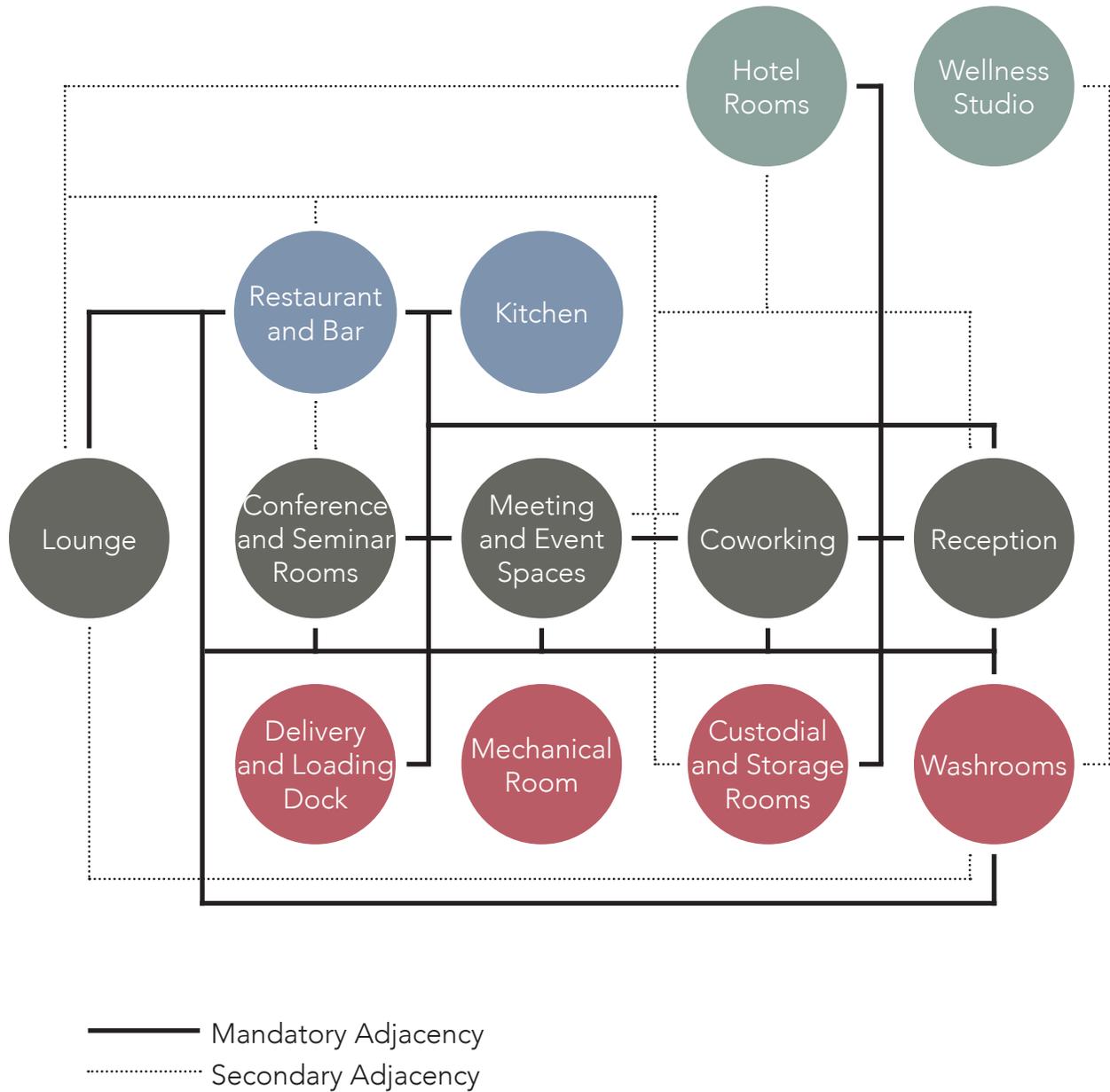
Accessible, clean and organized, visual separation

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Durable surfaces

Open, accessible, clean and organized

# ZONING STUDIES



**FIGURE 24**—Mandatory and Secondary Spatial Relationships

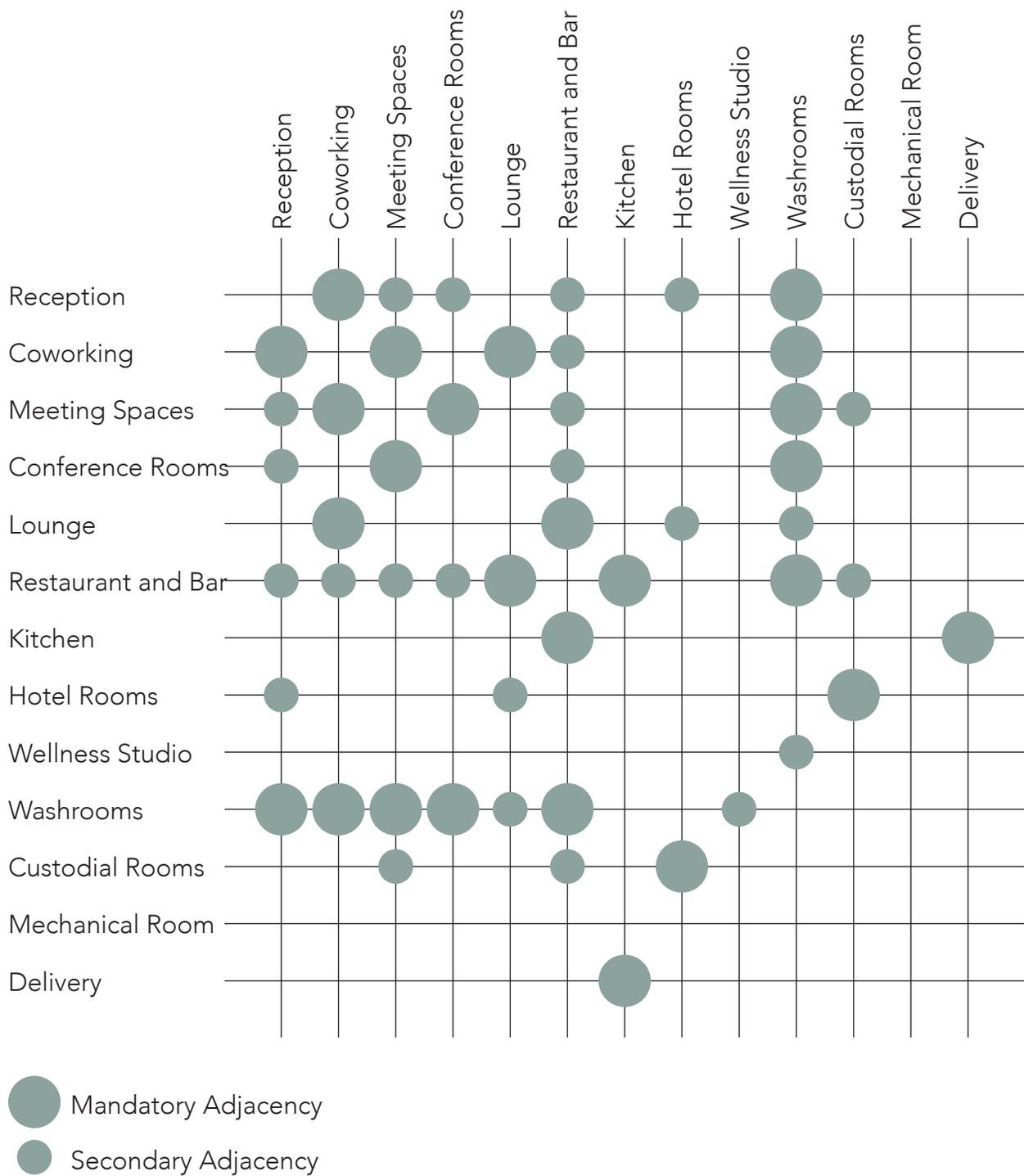


FIGURE 25—Mandatory and Secondary Adjacency Matrix



## CHAPTER 6—DESIGN PROPOSAL

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the proposed design for the Travellers Building at the heart of Winnipeg's downtown and historic Exchange District. The design process began with a look at how interior design can offer a productive means to engage with issues of heritage, identity, community, and urban renewal through the adaptive reuse of the Travellers Building as a hospitality project centred around its shared spaces. That said, the design is rooted in the discourse and ideas explored within the literature review, which focused on adaptive reuse and placemaking strategies to address some of these challenges. In addition, the design precedent analysis looked at three hospitality projects that focused on the organization of activities and people in space to foster meaningful relationships centred on shared cultural values and experiences. The drawings, renderings, and text on the following pages help summarize the information gathered in both the literature review and design precedent analysis, presenting a model of hospitality design that is integrated with hybrid programmes to encourage community interaction and activate urban life and one that is, at the same time, emissive of its surrounding environment.

## DESIGN PROPOSAL

As it has been established, the Travellers Building is listed as a Grade II Municipally Designated Site, meaning that there are constraints placed on modifications made to the building's exterior and character-defining interior elements, including its marble and cast iron staircase and open cage elevator. In respecting the building's historical and cultural value and acknowledging some of the aspects that contribute to making an adaptive reuse project successful (as explored in the Adapting Existing Buildings for Reuse section of Chapter 3—Literature Review), only one change has been proposed for the building's shell. The renovation presents the opportunity to replace an existing window on the main level with two doors accessing an exterior patio. The designer has also chosen to preserve the interior

marble and cast iron staircase and open cage elevator. As such, the organization of spaces in the proposed design follows the original layout of the building.

In proposing a design that acknowledges the building's history, the existing and exposed brick interior walls have also been preserved. In addition, the use of local materials (inspired by Hotel Schani Wien in Chapter 4—Design Precedent Analysis), such as Tyndall stone, copper, elm, and charred cedar, assist in connecting the space to its home in Manitoba while also providing guests with a greater sense of place.

As it has also been established earlier in this document, the Travellers Building strives to serve as an inclusive gathering place and a hub for travellers and neighbours where amicable exchanges and meaningful relationships can develop. With that said, the design of the building's shared spaces is most important. The Travellers Building's principal shared spaces—coworking spaces, restaurants, bars, and lounges—are located on the first floor, strengthening the connection between the interior and the street, and on the sixth floor and rooftop, providing inspiring views of the city. The building's private spaces—hotel bedrooms and private work areas—are located on the second to fifth floors.

## FIRST FLOOR

First and foremost, the Travellers Building's principal shared spaces are concentrated on the first floor. The hotel reception occupies the space closest to the entrance, where guests can check-in and gather around a double-sided, central fireplace—a way of encouraging warmth and connection and also serving as an escape from Winnipeg's notably harsh winters. The dedicated coworking and meeting space feature a variety of workspace options that allow for user mobility; however, because the intention is to encourage community interaction, private workspace has been limited. It is also worth mentioning here that the meeting room and informal work area are inspired by The Apartment in The Hoxton, Southwark (as described in Chapter 4—Design Precedent Analysis), albeit on a more intimate scale. That said, they can still be used individually or collectively hired out for meetings, dinners, parties, and events. The restaurant, bar, and lounge encourages guests to socialize, especially those seated at the communal dining table. In addition, the exterior patio helps strengthen the connection between the interior and the surrounding environment. Ultimately, this floor aims to combine workplace and hospitality design while being inspired by an elevated lounge experience. Guests have the option to order from a curated selection of drinks, cocktails, and cuisine (with fresh, local ingredients) to wherever they are seated.



**FIGURE 26**—The Travellers Building’s reception features a double-sided, central fireplace as well as local materials and a neutral colour palette, pairing references to the region and history

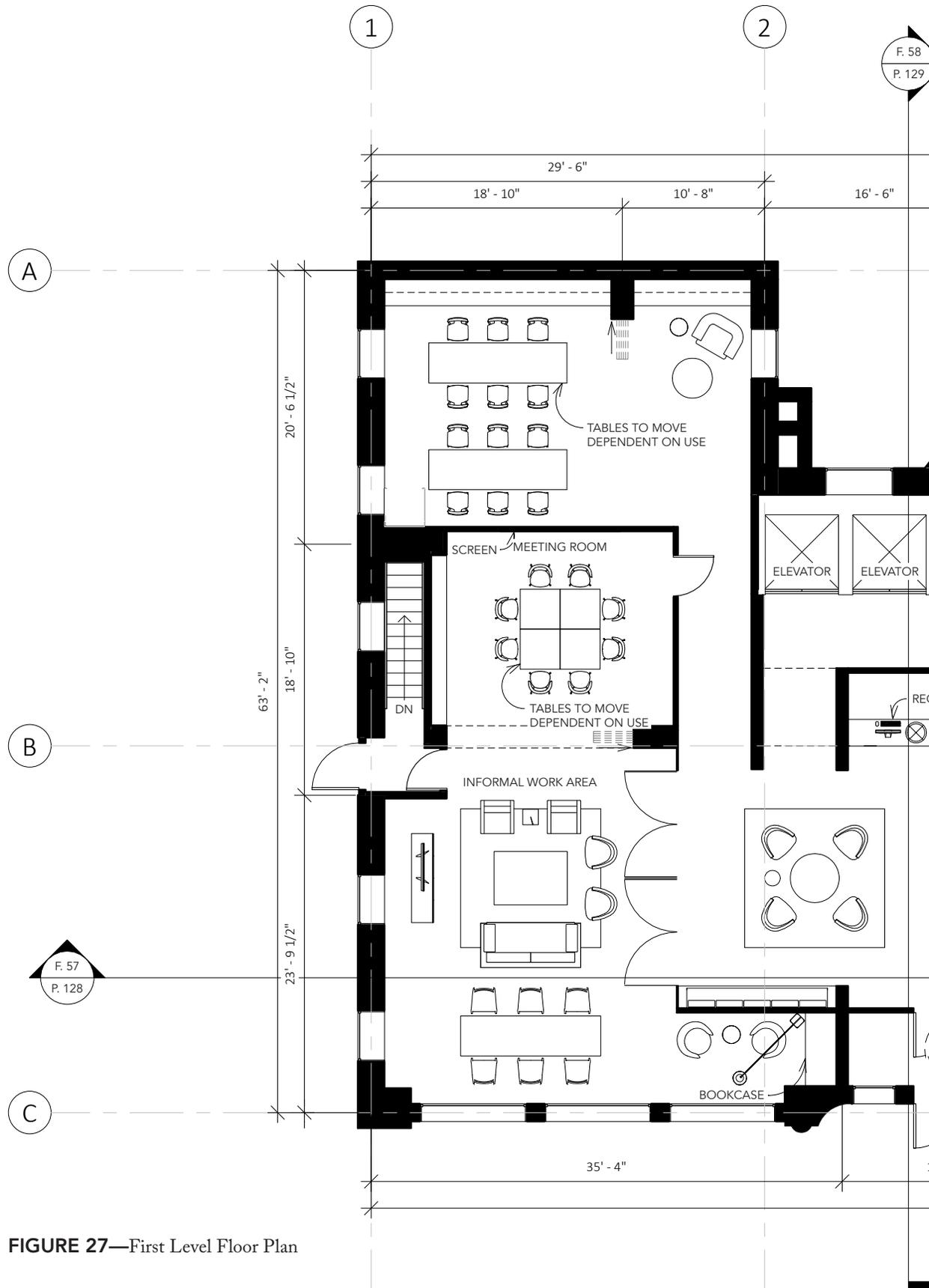
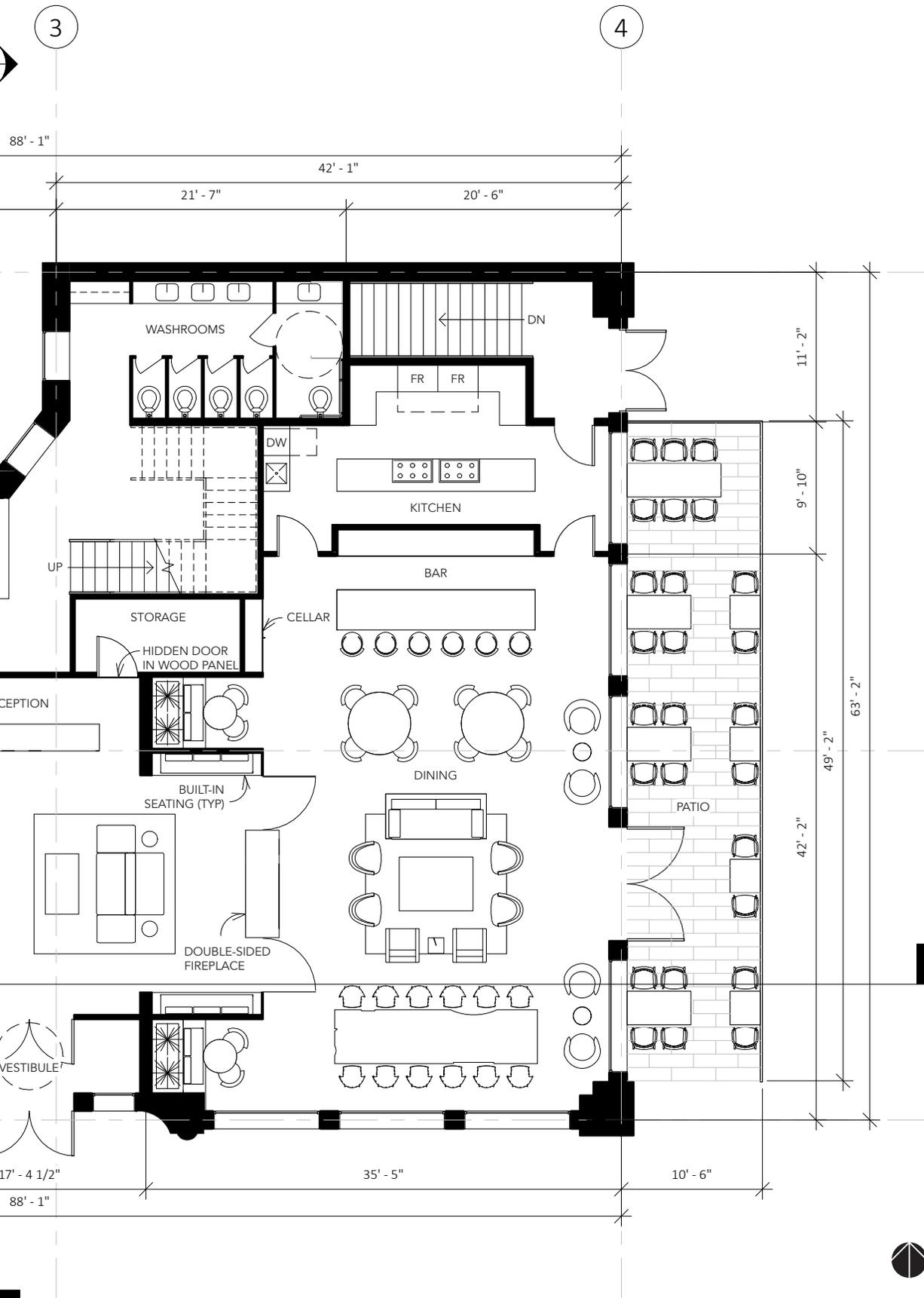


FIGURE 27—First Level Floor Plan



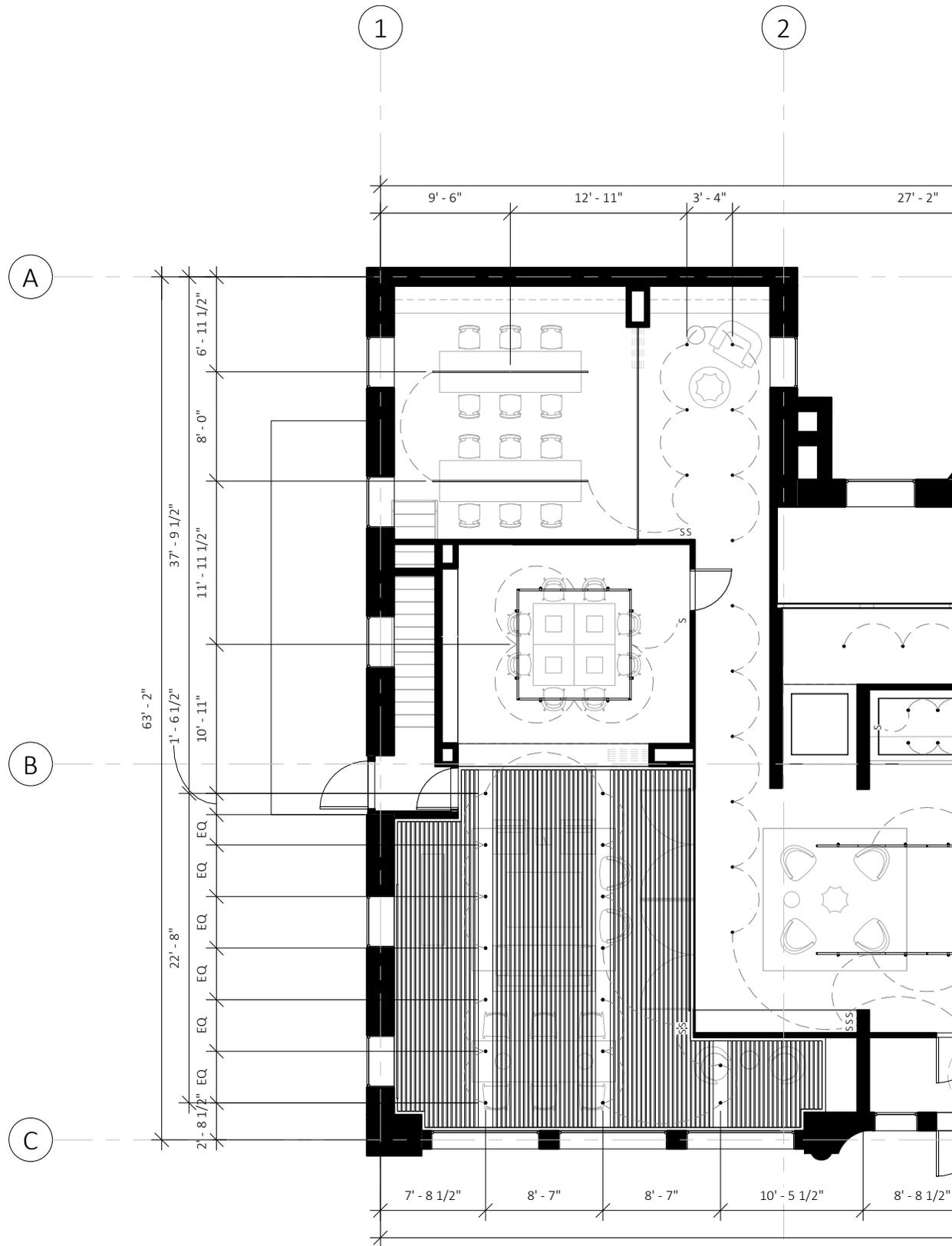
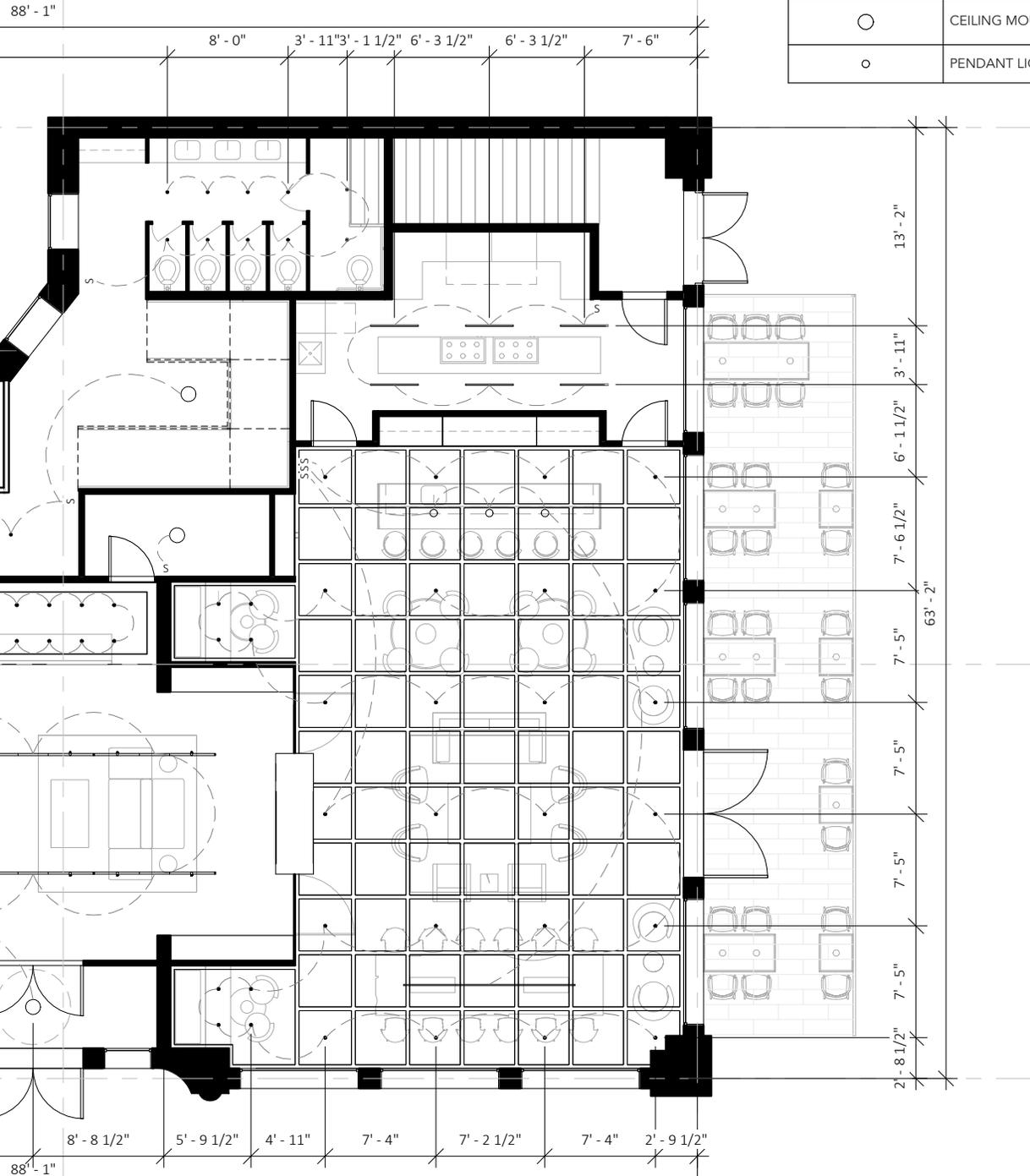


FIGURE 28—First Level Reflected Ceiling Plan

3

4

LIGHT FIXTURE LEGEND	
	LED STRIP LIGHT
	RECESSED DOWNLIGHT
	TRACK LIGHT (CONCEALED IN COVE)
	CEILING MOUNT LIGHT
	PENDANT LIGHT





**FIGURE 29**—Reception facing the meeting room and informal work area



**FIGURE 30**—The Travellers Building’s restaurant, bar, and lounge with views looking out onto Old Market Square



FIGURE 31—Restaurant, bar, and lounge



**FIGURE 32**—The Travellers Building’s meeting room and informal work area—inspired by findings from the design precedent analysis, these rooms can be used individually or collectively hired out for parties and events



**FIGURE 33**—Informal work area facing the meeting room



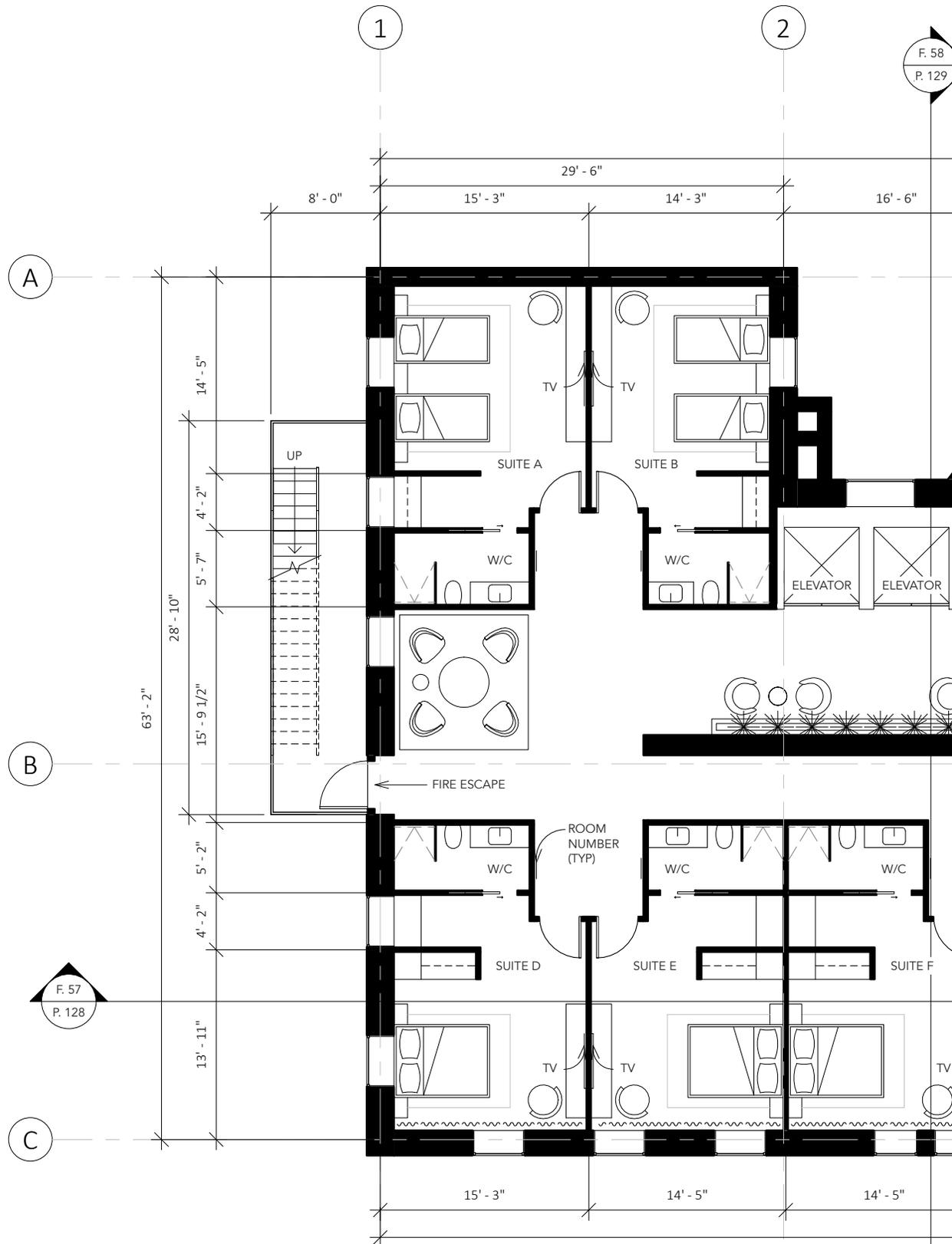
**FIGURE 34**—Meeting room facing the informal work area with views looking out onto Bannatyne Avenue

## SECOND-FIFTH FLOORS

The hotel bedrooms and private work areas are located on the Travellers Building's second to fifth floors. The bedrooms take a minimalist, pared-back approach to encourage guests to utilize the shared spaces on the first floor and on the sixth floor and rooftop. With that said, however, they still provide the amenities and resources needed to enjoy a comfortable stay—including but not limited to hardwood floors, a flat-screen television compatible with all devices, all-natural pillowtop beds, and a collection of literature, providing a more home-like feel, much like the hotel bedrooms found in Eaton Workshop (described in greater detail in Chapter 4—Design Precedent Analysis). As seen in Figure 36, suites A and B have two twin-size beds; suite C serves as the primary suite with a king-size bed and views overlooking Old Market Square; and, lastly, suites D to I feature queen-size beds with views overlooking Bannatyne Avenue. In addition, local artwork for sale is displayed on the wall closest to the marble and cast iron staircase and open cage elevator to support local artists and further immerse guests in Winnipeg's cultural scene—a collaboration of creatives and local culture. Finally, the private work areas allow guests the opportunity to work in a more quiet setting; however, the design of these spaces still encourages communication and interaction.



**FIGURE 35**—Corridor facing the local artwork display, and leading towards the hotel bedrooms and private work area



**FIGURE 36**—Second-Fifth Level Floor Plan

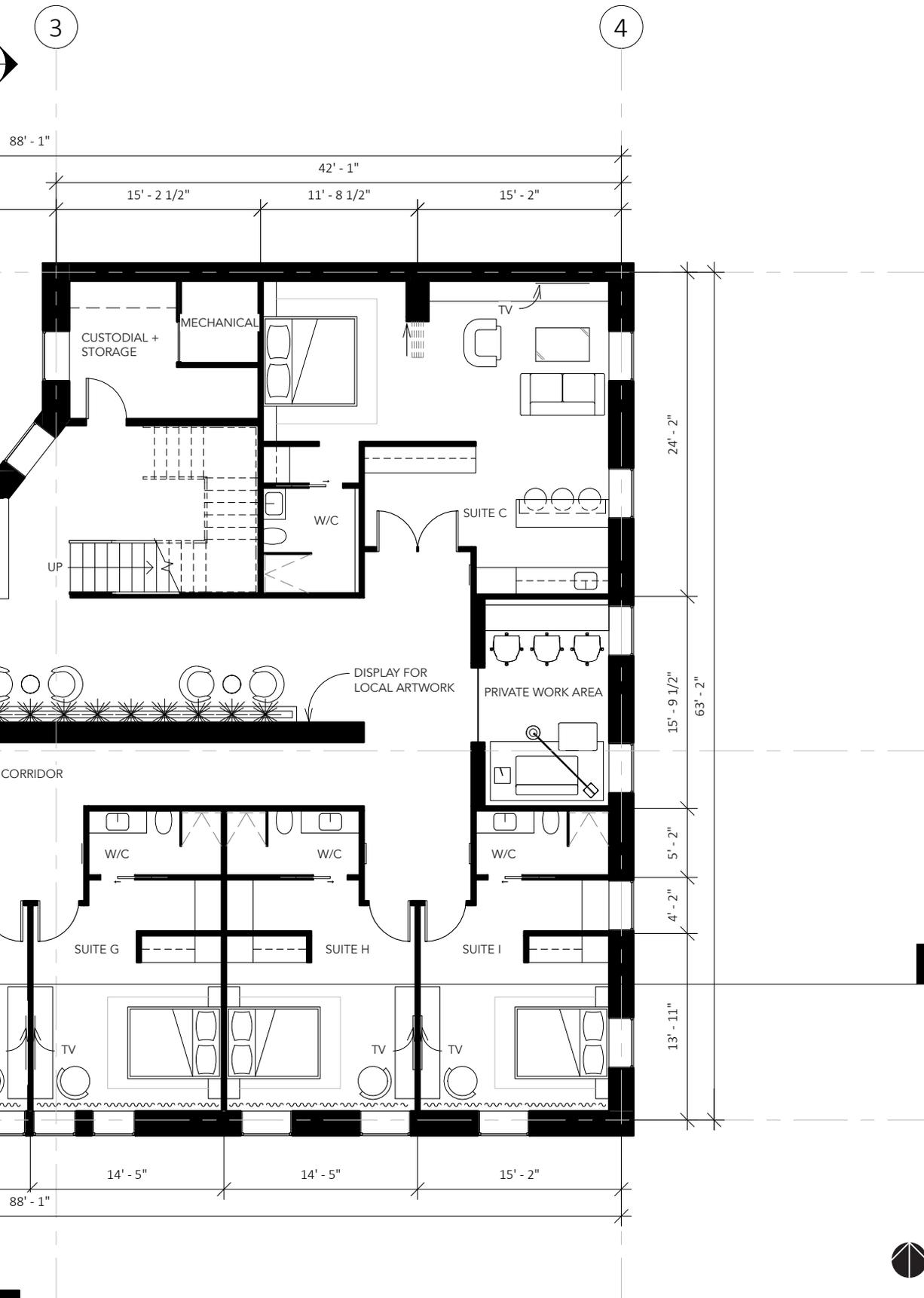


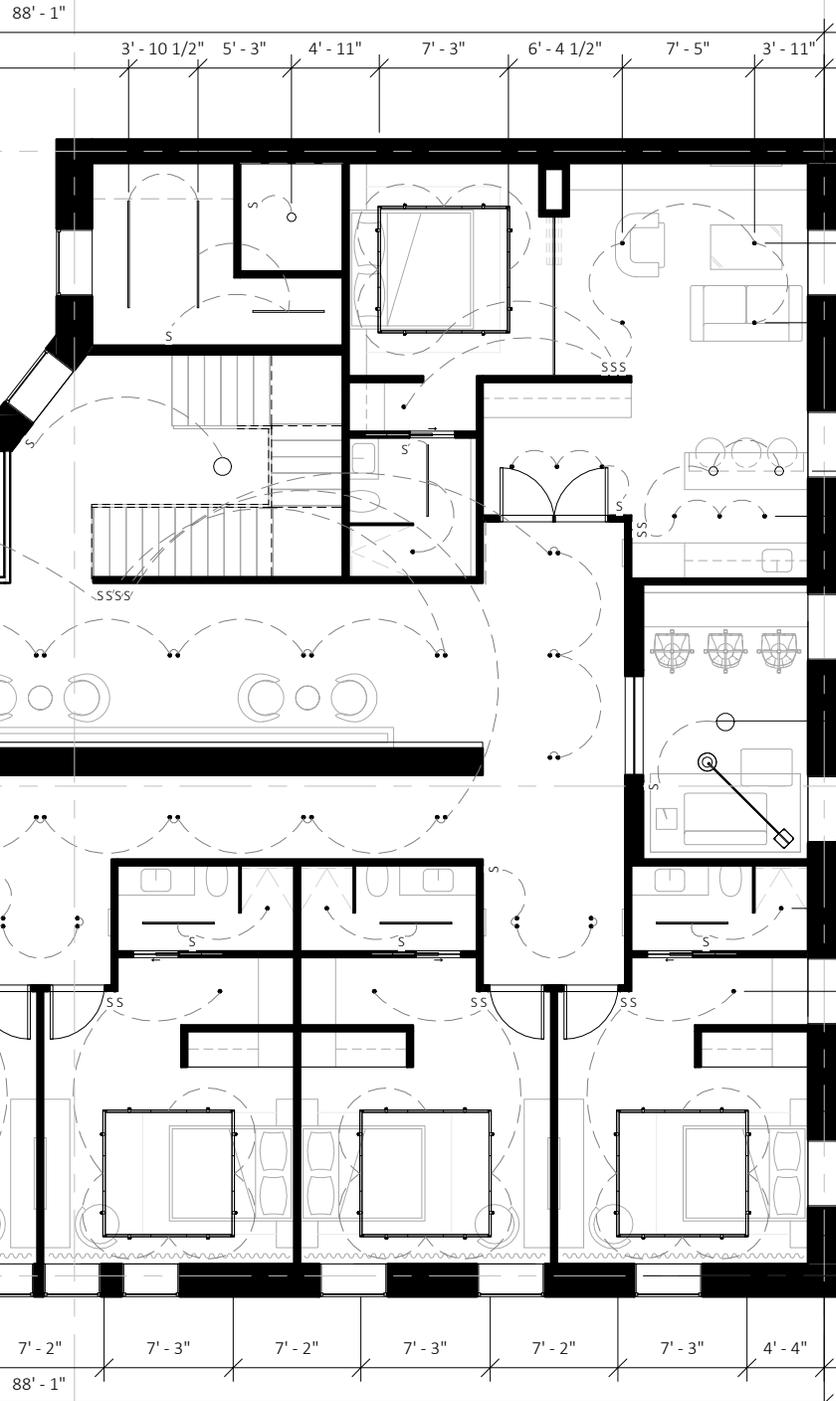


FIGURE 37—Second-Fifth Level Reflected Ceiling Plan

3

4

LIGHT FIXTURE LEGEND	
	LED STRIP LIGHT
	RECESSED DOWNLIGHT
	TRACK LIGHT (CONCEALED IN COVE)
	CEILING MOUNT LIGHT
	PENDANT LIGHT





**FIGURE 38**—Corridor leading towards the private work area



FIGURE 39—Private work area



**FIGURE 40**—Typical hotel bedroom—featuring hardwood floors, a flat-screen television compatible with all devices, all-natural pillowtop beds, and a collection of literature



FIGURE 41—Typical hotel bedroom—bed and seating area



FIGURE 42—Typical hotel bedroom—entrance and flat-screen television

## SIXTH FLOOR

Much like the programming and design for the first floor, the Travellers Building's shared spaces are also concentrated on the sixth floor and rooftop. Borrowing the model of The Apartment from The Hoxton, Southwark (Chapter 4—Design Precedent Analysis), the meeting rooms are designed for business teams looking for a company retreat space or a location for team training and bonding. Again, similar to the first floor, however, on a larger scale, these rooms can be used individually or collectively hired out. When business teams are not using them, they serve as coworking spaces for travellers and neighbours, featuring a variety of workspace options that allow for user mobility and flexibility. Together, the restaurant, bar, and lounge encourage guests to socialize, while the seating concentrated around the perimeter of the building offers inspiring views of the city for guests dining and/or working. This arrangement also encourages communication and interaction. A wellness studio makes up the rest of this floor, offering programmed classes and holistic treatments for user ease and comfort. Similar to the main level, this floor aims to combine workplace and hospitality design—inspired by an elevated lounge experience. Guests have the option to order from a curated selection of drinks, cocktails, and cuisine to wherever they are seated. Finally, the restaurants and bars in the Travellers Building provide catering services to meet guests' needs, wants, and expectations for any and all occasions.



**FIGURE 43**—The Travellers Building’s restaurant, bar, and lounge with views overlooking Old Market Square

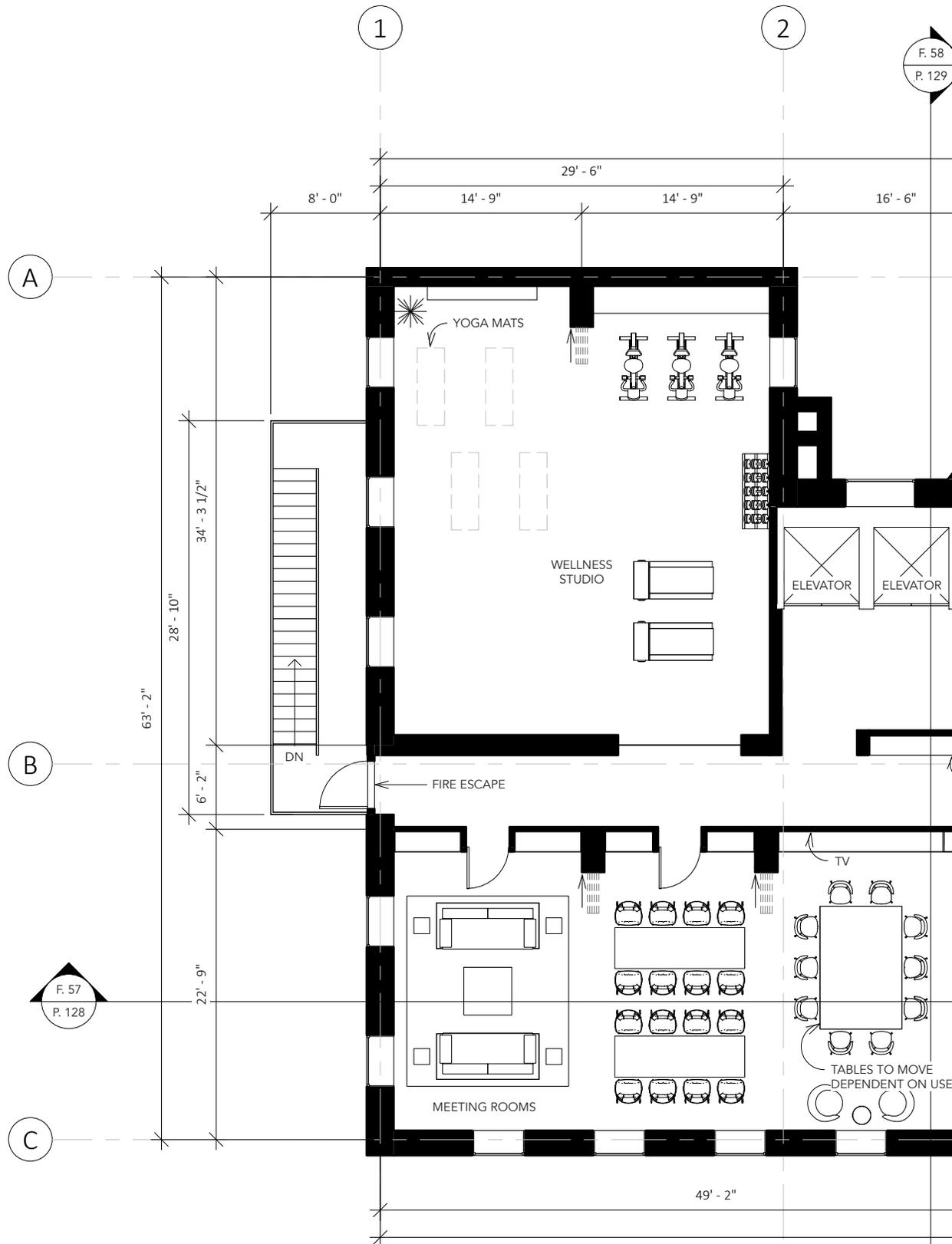
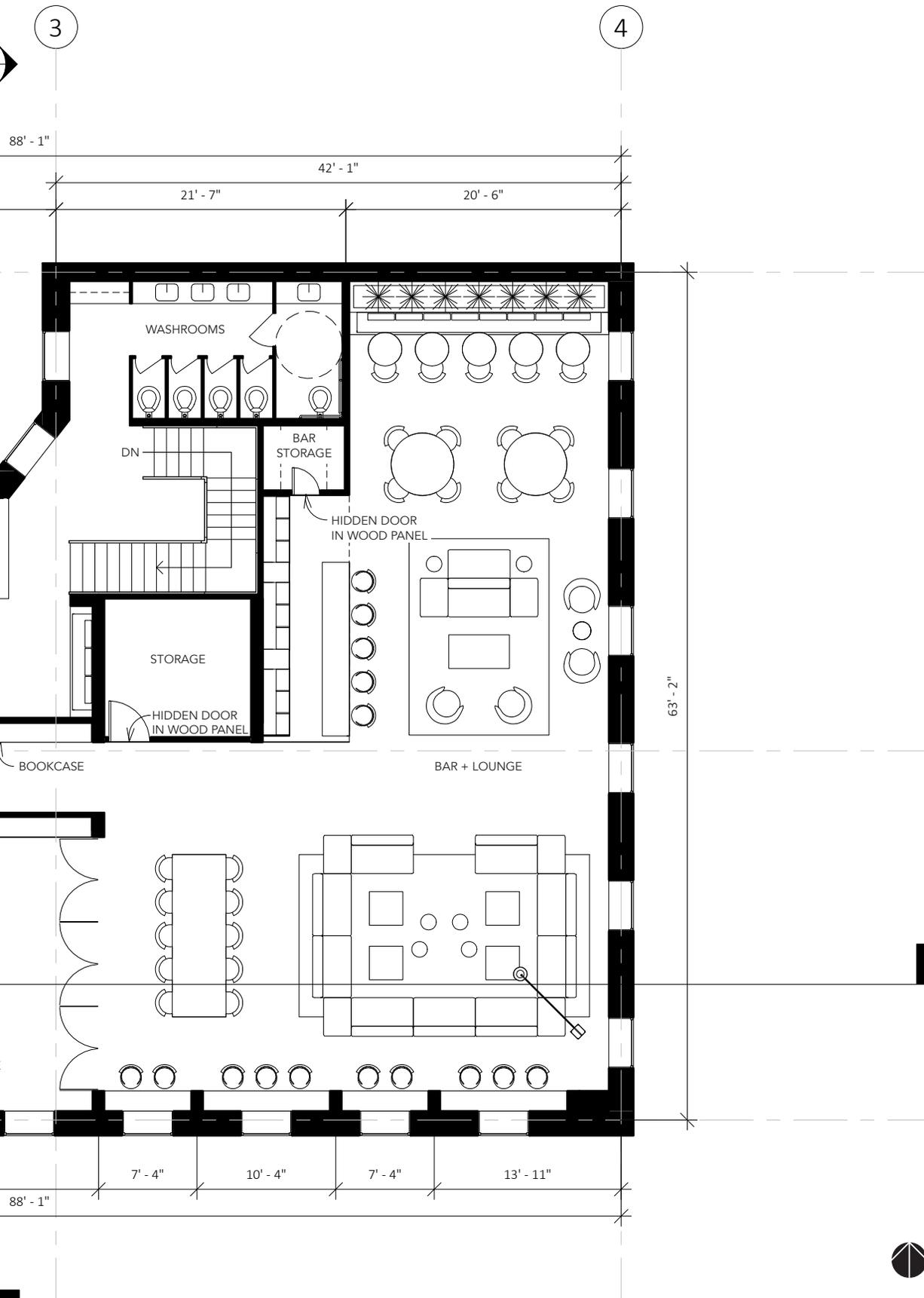
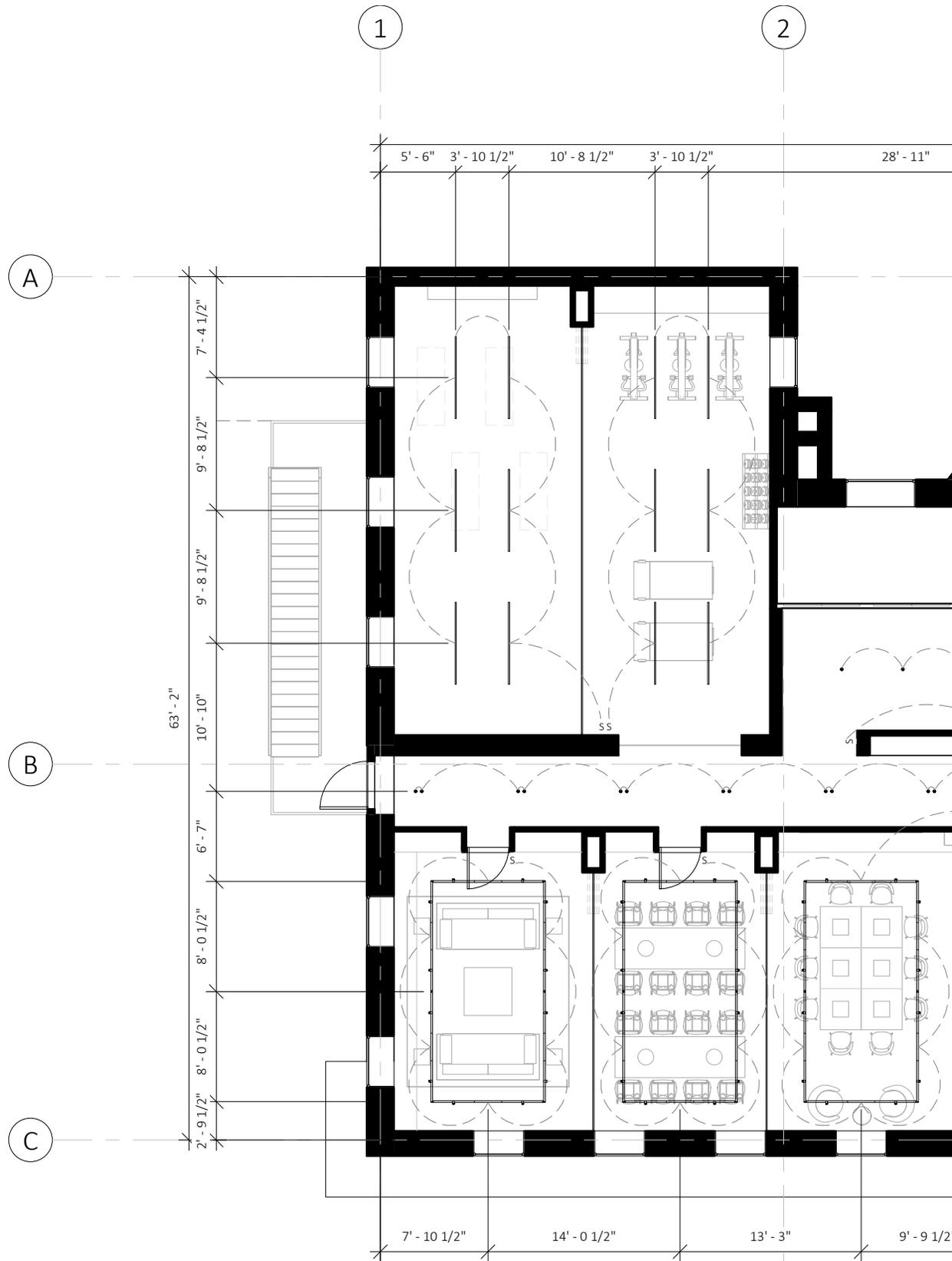


FIGURE 44—Sixth Level Floor Plan



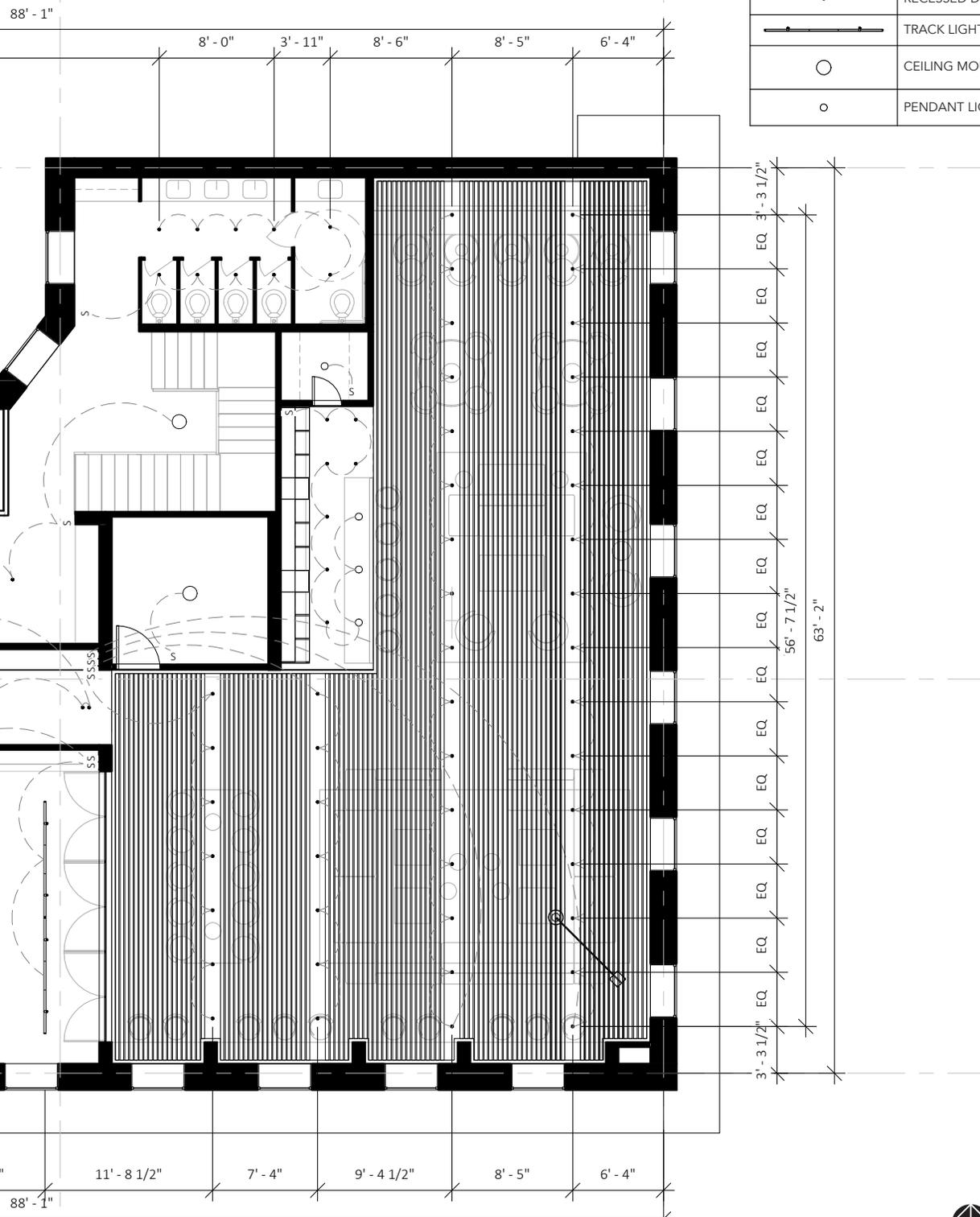


**FIGURE 45**—Sixth Level Reflected Ceiling Plan

3

4

LIGHT FIXTURE LEGEND	
	LED STRIP LIGHT
	RECESSED DOWNLIGHT
	TRACK LIGHT (CONCEALED IN COVE)
	CEILING MOUNT LIGHT
	PENDANT LIGHT





**FIGURE 46**—The restaurant, bar, and lounge feature local materials and a neutral colour palette, bringing out a warm and exclusive feel



FIGURE 47—Restaurant, bar, and lounge



FIGURE 48—Bar

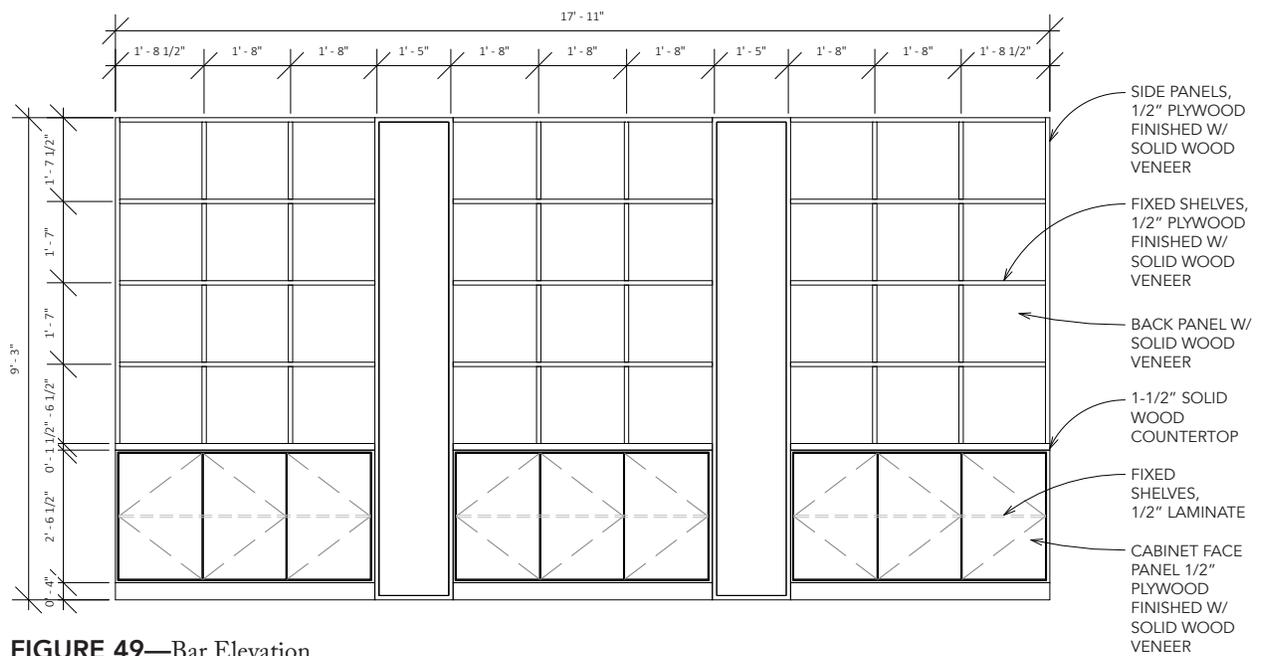


FIGURE 49—Bar Elevation

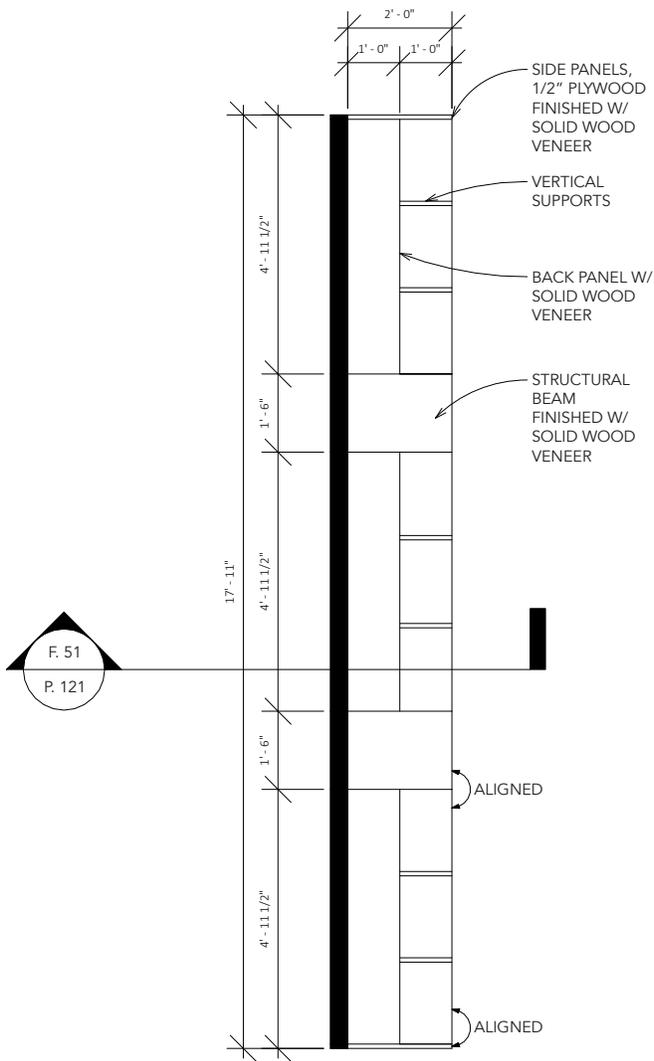


FIGURE 50—Bar Plan

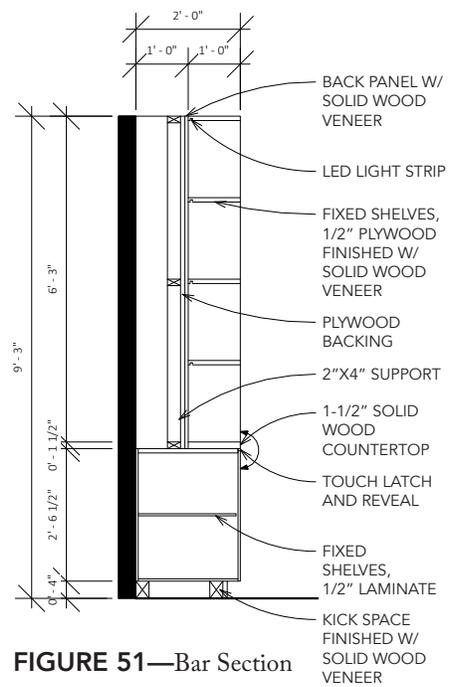


FIGURE 51—Bar Section



FIGURE 52—Bar Detail



FIGURE 53—Lounge overlooking Old Market Square



FIGURE 54—Work desk facing towards the meeting rooms and bookcase

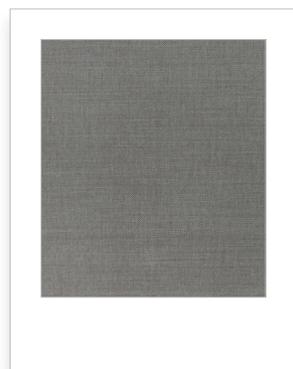
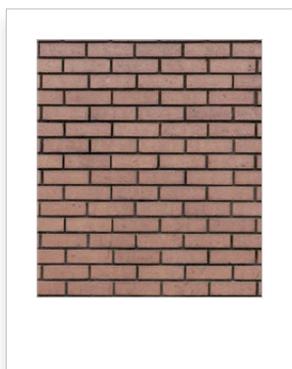
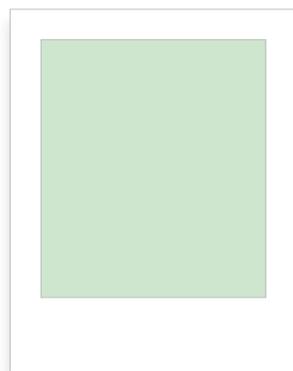
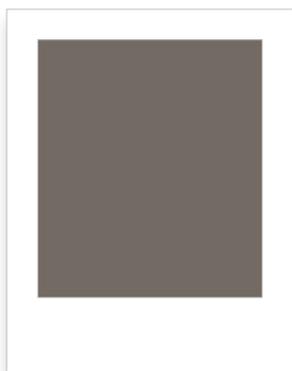
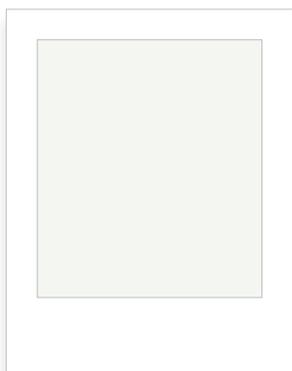


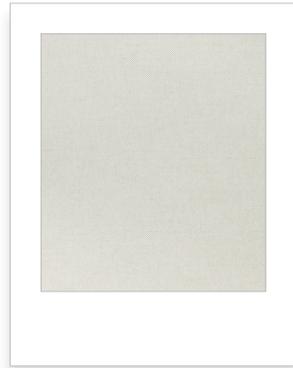
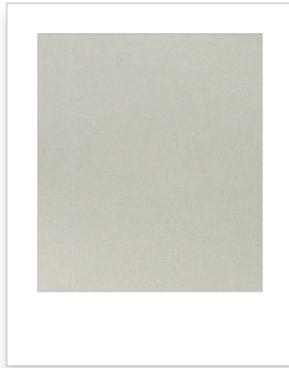
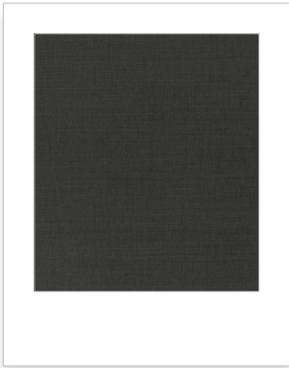
FIGURE 55—Meeting Rooms



FIGURE 56—Meeting Room Detail

## Selected Materials





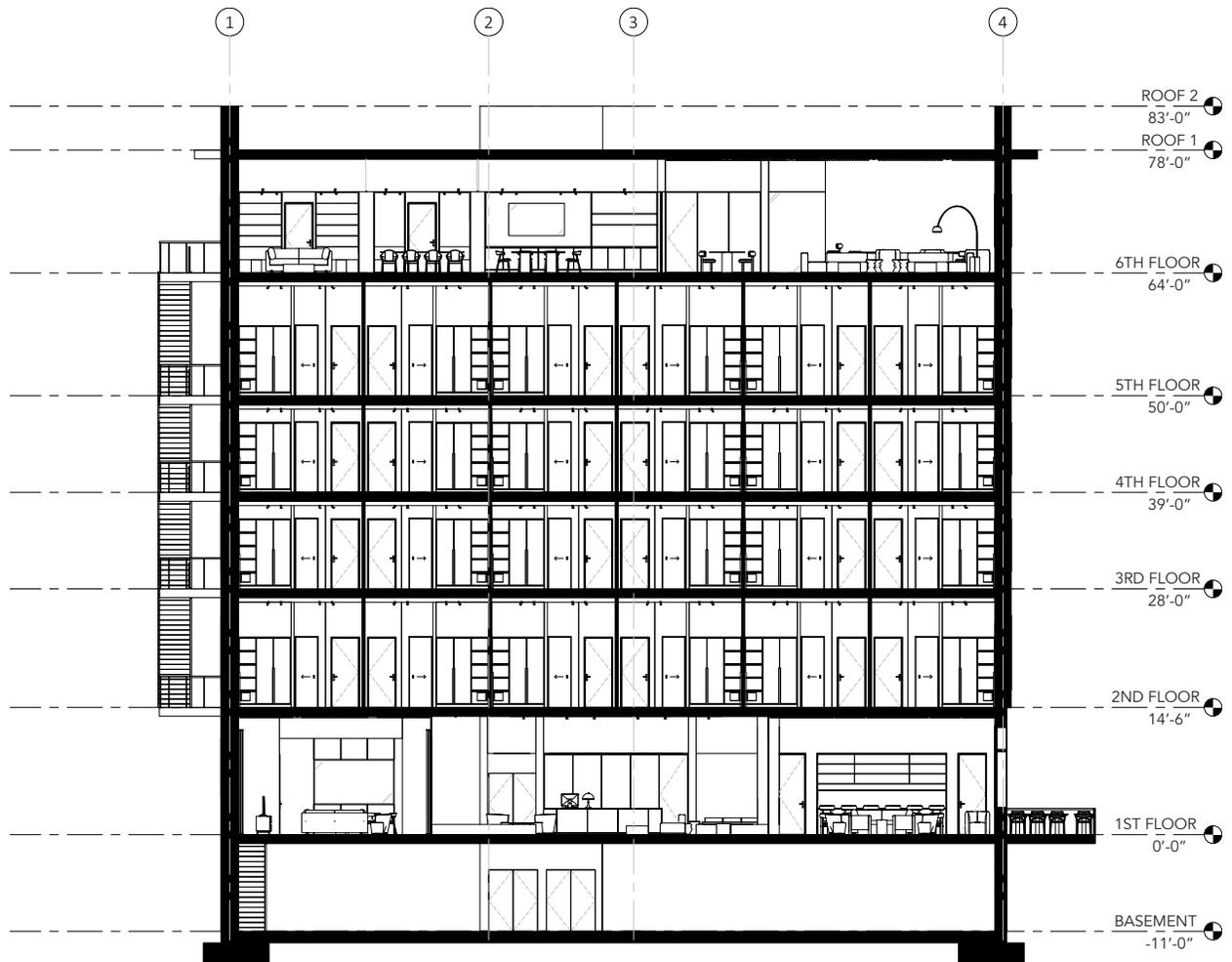


FIGURE 57—Longitudinal section of the Travellers Building

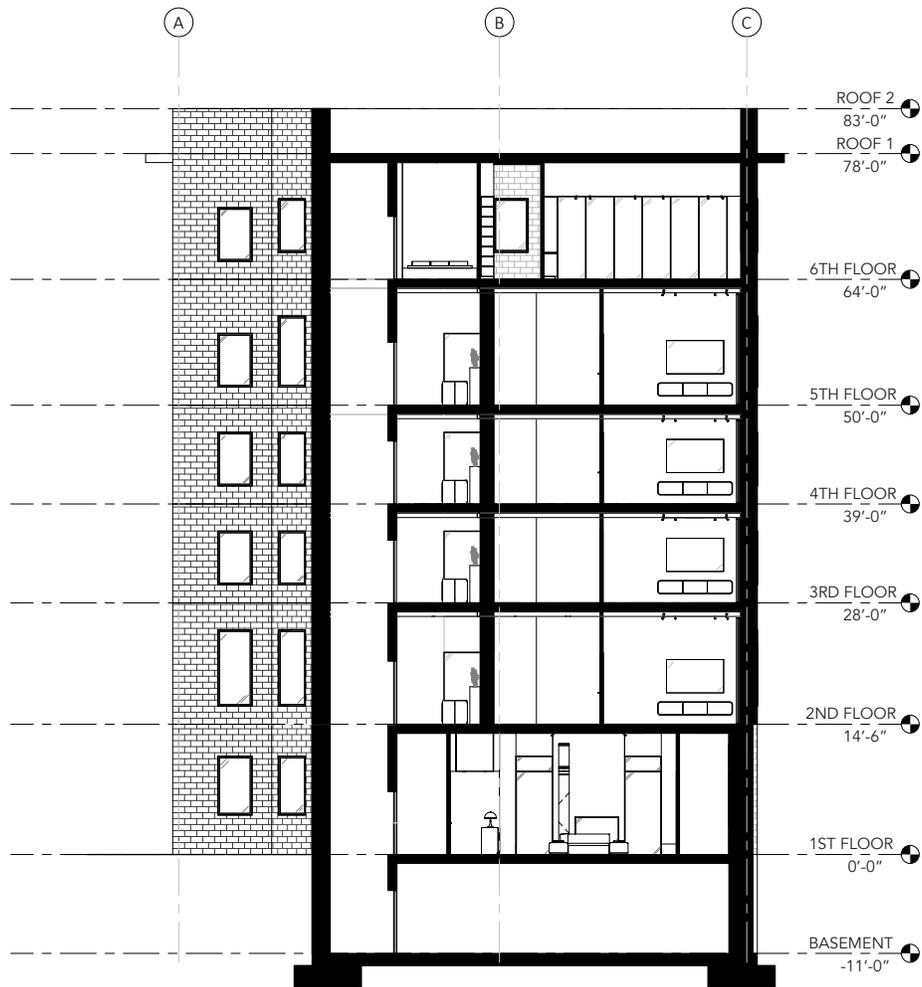


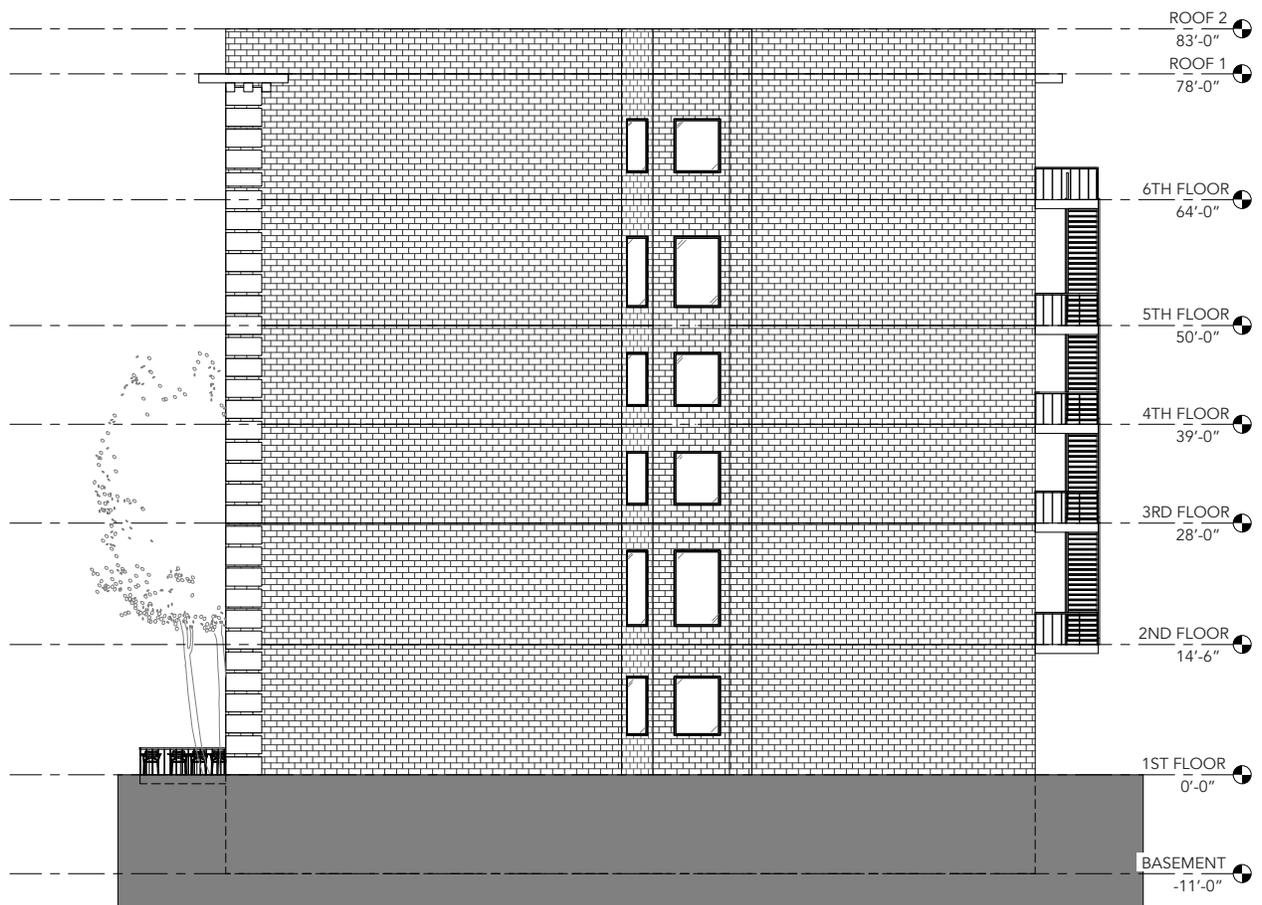
FIGURE 58—Transverse section of the Travellers Building



**FIGURE 59**—South elevation of the Travellers Building



FIGURE 60—East elevation of the Travellers Building



**FIGURE 61**—North elevation of the Travellers Building

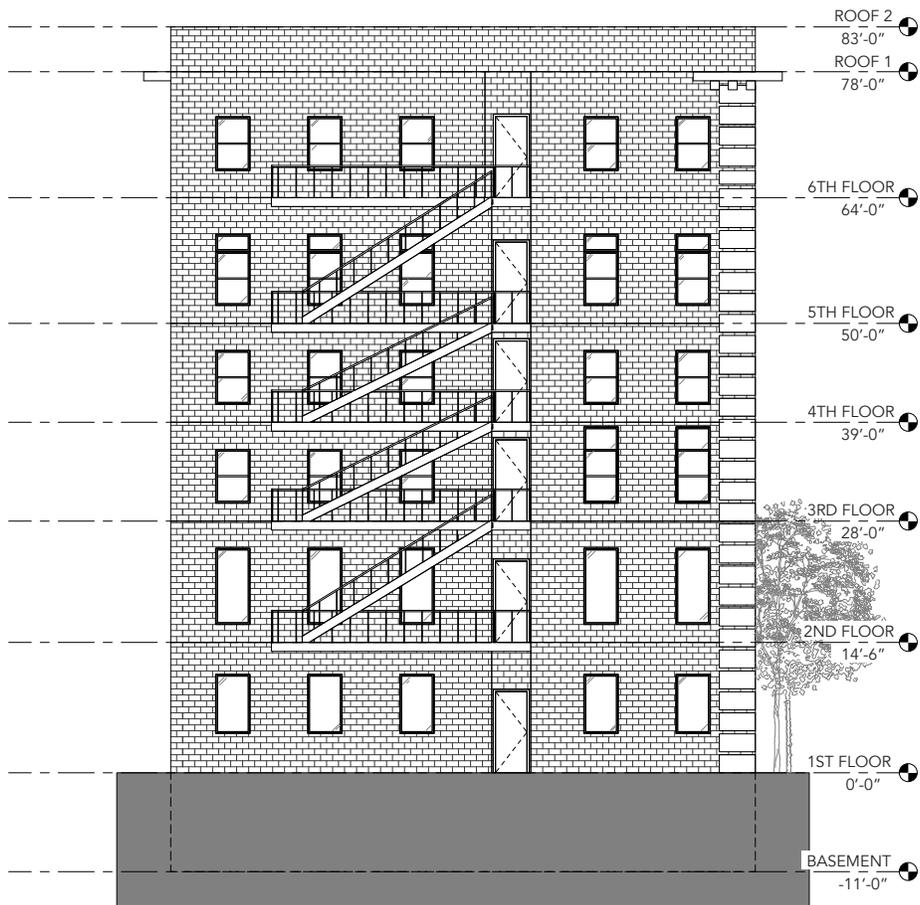


FIGURE 62—West elevation of the Travellers Building

## CONCLUSION

The design of the Travellers Building synthesizes the information gathered in the preceding chapters to present a model of hospitality design that offers a productive means to engage with some of the challenges contemporary Western societies face. Influenced by findings from the literature review and design precedent analysis, the proposed design articulates methods and techniques of adapting existing buildings and interior spaces to create meaningful dialogue between old and new while encouraging community interaction and activating urban life through the use of placemaking strategies—with the inclusion of shared spaces, including coworking spaces, restaurants, bars, and lounges. Further, because these spaces are available to local business teams, they increase the chances for interaction among travellers and neighbours—a key goal for this practicum project.

Minimal aesthetics and materiality have been translated and applied to the interior of the Travellers Building, bringing out a warm and exclusive feel through tactile surfaces, natural materials, and matte finishes. In addition, the colour palette and selection of materials pairs references to the Prairies, creating strong connections to the region and history—another goal for this project in order to meet the demands and values of twenty-first-century travellers and neighbours.

## CHAPTER 7—CONCLUSION

As stated earlier in this document, the future of hospitality is evolving. Contemporary Western societies are faced with a variety of issues that have arisen as a consequence of rapid urbanization, place homogenization, and technological proliferation, all of which have altered the way we live, work, and travel and have had profound effects on the hospitality industry. That said, the purpose of this Master of Interior Design practicum project was to look at how interior design can address and offer a productive means to engage with issues of heritage, identity, community, and urban renewal through the adaptive reuse of a heritage building as a hospitality project centred around its shared spaces. The proposed design for the Travellers Building is rooted in discourse and theory from various fields and, as a result, is a product of an interdisciplinary approach to interior design practice. For this reason, it is necessary to return to the research questions listed in Chapter 1—Introduction to reflect on the research and design process. They are as follows:

- i. *How can interior design provide inhabitants with a greater sense of identity and place through strategies of adaptive reuse?*

As discussed in Chapter 3—Literature Review, there are several architectural strategies for adaptive reuse; however, to provide inhabitants with a greater sense of identity and place, articulating methods and techniques of adapting existing buildings and interior spaces to create meaningful dialogue between old and new is most relevant. The relationship between old and new is significant because it allows guests to feel like they are part of a continuum, connected to people of the past, present, and future—providing them with a greater sense of identity and place. Mayes’ research on why historic places are essential to who we are as individuals and as a society indicates that it is from their ability to embody continuity, memory, identity, community, and architecture. Bearing this in mind, a sympathetic remodelling where the past coinhabits the present space seems to be the most appropriate strategy here. In proposing a design that also acknowledges the building’s

region and history, the entire exterior and character-defining interior elements, including the marble and cast iron staircase, open cage elevator, and exposed brick interior walls, have been preserved. Further, the physical evidence of previous inhabitants is perceptible in the abovementioned elements, further connecting guests to the space. Ultimately, the weaving of old and new sees the Travellers Building bind together time and purpose, providing inhabitants with a greater sense of identity and place.

- ii. *In what ways can interior design, specifically through programming and interior spatial relationships and configurations, foster a sense of community?*

Research related to this question focused primarily on place and placemaking strategies. Of particular interest was the phenomenon of Collaborative Consumption, also known as the Sharing Economy and, within that, coworking spaces—a successful Collaborative Consumption business model. The coworking industry serves as a seminal example of how interior design and the built environment can shape our social experiences and opportunities for connections, focusing on the organization of activities and people in space. From a design perspective, the utility of amenities, resources, and shared spaces—including varied workspaces, meeting and event spaces, conference and seminar rooms, and restaurants, bars, and lounges can help foster a sense of community from within and beyond the confines of a building. In addition, the interior spatial relationships, configurations, and placements of said spaces, especially around the perimeter of a building, can help strengthen the connection between the interior and the street. As such, for guests visiting the Travellers Building, research suggests that the inclusion and organization of shared spaces facilitate community building, strengthening the connection between guests, the local community and, more broadly, the city

- iii. *Regarding interior design's role within the hospitality sector, what changes can be made to better accommodate twenty-first-century travellers and neighbours?*

First and foremost, it is necessary to acknowledge that hotel chains, whose primary virtues are sameness and consistency, currently dominate the hospitality industry. That said, in the course of the research and design process, it was important to recognize that twenty-first-century travellers and neighbours are interested in and searching for two key factors: authentic, local experiences and accommodation and the ability to interact with other guests and like-minded individuals during their stay. As a result, and as this research question implies, the programme and design for the Travellers Building is rooted in a theoretical understanding of place. Heidegger and Norberg-Schulz's research and theory suggest that spaces become meaningful when we can properly orientate or identify ourselves within an environment. That said, the integration and utilization of local materials and a neutral colour palette in the Travellers Building's interior pairs references to the Prairies, connecting the space to its home in Manitoba while, at the same time, providing guests with a greater sense of place. Furthermore, the inclusion and organization of shared spaces, extending beyond a hotel reception and restaurant, accessible to both travellers and neighbours alike, encourages community interaction and activates urban life, allowing guests the opportunity to connect and interact through the sharing of work and resources. Overall, this project responds to the demands and values of a changing demographic, primarily through adaptive reuse and placemaking strategies, and, in doing so, challenges more established ideas to address contemporary issues within the hospitality industry.

The research and design outcomes of this practicum project raise new questions and areas of research. Among them is how this project could be undertaken with a more in-depth look at how the materials and design elements used could be translated and applied in an alternative manner to further connect guests to their surrounding environment and, simultaneously, provide them with a greater sense of place. Such a study would entail delving

deeper into the significance and limitations of colours, materials, design elements, and trends. This approach would broaden the research and design outcomes for a better understanding of whether this is a model of hospitality design that could be successfully adapted to other cities—especially considering that a hotel integrated with hybrid programmes to encourage community interaction and activate urban life and one that is, at the same time, emissive of its surrounding environment, is a relatively new typology. This potential future direction is necessary to understand if the hospitality industry could serve as a regenerative catalyst of positive impact for the guest, the local community and, more broadly, the city, wherever that city may be.



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