From ~~For~~ To With

Towards an Allographic Approach in Architecture

by
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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis including any required final revisions as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis will be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

Although transformations to buildings are inevitable, architecture often aims to achieve idealized, finalized artifacts that refute the passage of time. This professional bias towards temporality – or the problem of permanence – creates and perpetuates non-reciprocal relationships between architects, users, and the built environment that often results in the exploitation and alienation of the people the discipline attempts to serve. By examining architecture's failure to account for diverse temporalities, this research sheds light on the ways in which architects overlook their potential to cultivate meaningful social interactions with the built environment. The architect's role, therefore, needs to be redefined as a translator of collective desires and needs, as a designer of structures that promote agency and empower individuals to engage with their environments. This paradigm shift implies an inquiry into the architect's conventional design apparatus and the expansion of its scope to include tools that embrace temporality and contingency as key variables.

The thesis proposes a shift in focus from the production of artifacts to the design of architectural scores inspired by allographic arts. Allographic thinking shifts the emphasis from end product to process; forcing a renegotiation of author-designer / performer-user relationships, focusing on affordances and obstacles, favoring user agency, and embracing contingency.

The context of the Habitations Jeanne-Mance, a post-war social housing in Montréal, acts as a case study for an exploration of the disciplinary problems of permanence, alienation, and non-reciprocity, as well as the testing ground for a speculative design intervention that integrates allographic thinking into architecture to create a system that promotes user participation, indeterminacy, and reciprocal relationships between residents and their built environment.

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Joëlle, Xavier, my partners in crime, thank you for the late nights, invaluable advice, and, at times, harsh but necessary critiques. I cannot wait to grow as a designer with such stimulating and brilliant collaborators.

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Introduction

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Throughout its rich history, architecture has – and still aspires to – produce static, idealized buildings designed to endure as timeless artifacts, seemingly immune to the transformative forces of time and contingency. This aspiration, rooted in Roman Antiquity and Renaissance thought, persists through modern, post-modern, and contemporary architectural practice, reflecting an enduring disciplinary emphasis on permanence and control. However, this focus on producing finalized objects often neglects the dynamic temporalities—design, construction, use, and maintenance—that shape the life of a project. In prioritizing authorship and aesthetic autonomy, architects frequently erase the lived realities of place-making, creating asymmetrical relationships that marginalize the contributions of users and communities in shaping their environments.

In this thesis, I argue that architecture's pursuit of permanence contributes to user alienation and perpetuates non-reciprocal relationships between designers, users, and the built environment. A paradigm shift is necessary to reimagine architecture as a collaborative process in which architects design *with* communities rather than *for* them. Recognizing the integral role of informal practices in shaping space, architects must embrace temporality and contingency as key design variables, fostering spaces that empower users to co-create their environments over time. This approach reframes the architect as a mediator of collective needs and desires, shifting the discipline toward more equitable and participatory practices.

I propose a design methodology grounded in Nelson Goodman's distinction between autographic and allographic arts as an alternative to conventional architectural practices. Unlike autographic works, which prioritize fixed, authored objects, allographic works focus on processes and frameworks that allow for reinterpretation and adaptation. Drawing inspiration from artistic models that mediate author-performer relationships, prioritize user input, and embrace indeterminacy, I propose an allographic approach to architecture. This methodology shifts the focus from static, finalized artifacts to architectural "scores"—flexible systems designed to be reinterpreted and adapted by users to meet their evolving needs. Doing so disrupts the traditional hierarchy between architect and user, fostering a practice rooted in collaboration, agency, and adaptability.

This thesis turns to the Habitations Jeanne-Mance in Montréal, Québec's first and largest social housing project, to illustrate the problems of

permanence and linear architectural thinking. Conceived to combat housing precarity and improve conditions for marginalized communities, the project displaced local residents, erased community histories, and imposed paternalistic governance structures. Despite these challenges, the Habitations Jeanne-Mance evolved into a space of solidarity and community action, revealing the transformative potential of reciprocity and mutual aid in resisting alienation and fostering meaningful connections. The thesis concludes with a practical application of an allographic architectural model to the specific context of the Habitations, exploring the framework's potential to create spaces that encourage participation, sociability, and incremental change.

The first chapter, **From – The Architectural Erasure of Time and Other Disciplinary Problems**, offers a historical analysis of architecture's enduring strive towards permanence from the Renaissance to contemporary times. It critiques how the discipline, in its efforts to resist time and contingency, prioritizes the creation of static artifacts that alienate users and undermine their agency. This preoccupation with autonomy and aesthetics has perpetuated extractive dynamics between architects and other stakeholders, enabling designers to maintain authorial control while disregarding users' lived experiences and evolving needs. I argue for an integration of temporality in architectural thinking as an alternative model that has the potential to generate meaningful connections between users, stakeholders, and the built environment.

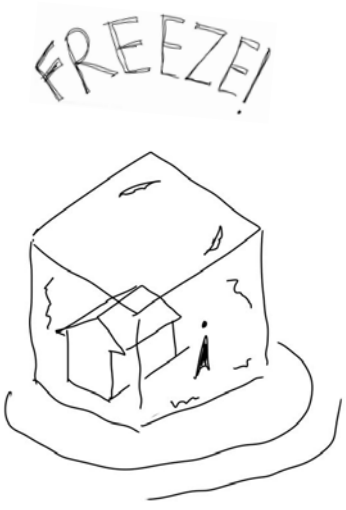
In **For – A Brief History of the Habitations Jeanne-Mance,** I explore the development of the Habitations Jeanne-Mance, Québec's first social housing complex in downtown Montréal. With over 700 units, this project is among Canada's earliest large-scale social housing efforts, intended to improve the living conditions of the residents of Quartier Saint-Louis. While the project aimed to uplift marginalized communities, it perpetuated violent practices against those it sought to help. The initiative involved demolishing a significant portion of the urban fabric, displacing thousands of families, and excluding residents from participating in the redevelopment of their neighborhoods. The site's early administration introduced paternalistic and alienating dynamics, further marginalizing its occupants. Nevertheless, the Habitations Jeanne-Mance eventually became a vibrant center of community engagement and solidarity, demonstrating the power of mutual aid and reciprocity in resisting oppressive power structures.

The third chapter, **To(wards) – An Allographic Approach in Architecture**, expands on the theoretical problems discussed in Chapter 1 and critiques the architectural apparatus – its methods, tools, and practices – which emphasize aesthetic, permanence, and the primacy of the author to the detriment of user agency and contingency. I advocate for a redefinition of the architect's role as an ethical agent and the necessary expansion of design methodologies to better account for time and relationality within the discipline. Drawing from artistic sources that mediate author-performer relationships, integrate indeterminacy, and account for user input, an allographic model is proposed as an alternative. Allographic design processes focus on creating a *score,* or an intermediary system, that users then mobilize. This shifts focus from creating formal artifacts to designing frameworks and structures that promote appropriation, agency, and reciprocity.

In the final chapter, **With – Implementing Allographic Methods**, I apply the theoretical and disciplinary arguments from Chapters 1 and 3 to the specific context of the *Habitations Jeanne-Mance*. I propose a speculative intervention that applies an allographic framework to the development of spaces of sociability that foster sociability, incrementality, and user agency. This system is structured around three layers: structure – physical and material components; infrastructure – organizational model and typological catalog; and super-structure – user-driven events and processes. Inspired by Actor-Network Theory, the proposal emphasizes the interconnectedness of humans, non-humans, and the built environment, using flexible design typologies and governance models to encourage community participation. By integrating temporal thinking, the project aims to create meaningful connections between residents, their spaces, and broader urban networks, redefining the architect's role as a facilitator of collective agency and social transformation.

In this thesis, I offer a critique of contemporary architectural practices that tend to over-emphasize permanence, autonomy, and the primacy of authorship while downplaying the importance of people in shaping the built environment. Its scope covers theoretical, professional, and disciplinary concerns and attempts to identify alternative frameworks and methods that favor user participation, agency, and reciprocal relationships. This thesis acts as a plea for architects and designers to shift their thinking around what architecture is and what it has the potential

to do. By integrating time and user agency, a new realm of architectural production opens up to designers, fostering more just and equitable relationships and promoting reciprocity between architects, users, and the built environment.


FREEZE!

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The Exclusion of Time from Architecture and Other Disciplinary Problems

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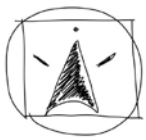
From – The Exclusion of Time and Other Disciplinary Problems

Architecture has an unhealthy obsession with permanence. Its history abounds with powerful temples that defy time, with white, pristine skins untouched by the elements and monuments to the discipline's everlasting influence. But the fact is that buildings do change; sometimes through dramatic, climactic events that upheave their function overnight, sometimes through the slow, continued action of everyday use. No matter the magnitude and means used to initiate change – whether through the swing of a wrecking ball or the cosmetic application of flowery wallpaper – no building remains untouched by its users who adopt it as a creative extension of their identities. An old townhouse may gain a new bay window perfect for its cat to sunbathe; an apartment may see its balcony converted into a winter garden for the amateur botanist to plant their seedlings during winter; a bathroom may be enlarged to accommodate two teenagers' simultaneous make-up routines. The life of a building is marked by cycles of maintenance and neglect, addition and subtraction, conservation and reconstruction, admiration and indifference, which leave traces of the passage of time on its body. Architects, however, often persist in ignoring how their architectures transform, ignoring these changes and instead promoting static, frozen designs removed from time and deprived of the agencies of their users. The temporalities of architecture extend far beyond the control of the architect and hide potentials for human integration and connection throughout a building's design, construction, use, maintenance, and eventual deconstruction.

Permanence in Architecture

vitruvius

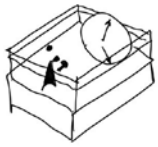
The emphasis on the endurance of architecture can be traced back to the foundations of Western architectural theory, as articulated in Vitruvius' treatise *De Architectura*.[1] In Book I, Vitruvius reflects on the fundamental qualities of good architecture that he conceptualizes as a triad of virtues: *venustas*, *utilitas*, and *firmitas*. Good architecture must balance these qualities to ensure the making of a harmonious, elegant building that is appropriate to its function and endures through time.



Venustas, or beauty, refers to the aesthetic appearance of a building and its harmonious, pleasing appeal. It is achieved through principles

1. Vitruvius, *The Ten Books on Architecture*, trans. Morris Hicky Morgan (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press; Oxford University Press, 1914).

of composition that Vitruvius defines as order, arrangement, eurythmy, symmetry, propriety, and economy. These guidelines ensure the making of a good, elegant architecture, a harmonious composition of parts within a greater, coherent whole.[2.] This notion of harmony promotes an understanding of architecture as a mostly visual discipline, one that places exaggerated emphasis on aesthetics and form. Realizing harmony relies on achieving an idealized solution, a perfected building that best suits its function. It is implied that architecture has an ideal state – a frozen moment in time – where it is perfect. It is that moment, that pure timeless form, that architects should design, unhindered by the nits and grits of everyday life. They thus cannot help but effectively refute time and envision their buildings as ever-enduring objects, unaffected by change. *Utilitas* refers to the appropriate reflection of function in form; to the organized arrangement of pieces that "present no hindrance to use."[3.] In the modern period, utility evolved into functionalism, in which function dictates form. Lastly, and most interesting in discussing permanence in architecture, is *firmitas* or durability. For Vitruvius, durability is closely linked to the structural integrity of a building, claiming that it "is assured when foundations are carried down to the solid ground and materials wisely and liberally selected."[4.] The argument seems to make sense; the architect needs to ensure that the buildings they design will not collapse; however, the value came to be understood as one of perennity, allowing buildings to traverse time unscathed to express strength and longevity. This is evident in Palladio's reinterpretation of the triad in *I quattro libri dell'architettura*.[5.] When translating *firmitas* into Italian, Palladio chooses *perpetuità*, or perpetuity, over a more literal translation, thus cementing the understanding of *firmitas* as perennial endurance through time.[6.] The architect must not only design idealized, aestheticized buildings but must also ensure that this state remains through time.



time in the renaissance and the middle ages

During the Renaissance, time came to be understood as an adversary to be subjugated and overcome.[7.] In the medieval era, time was thought of spiritually, and its passage was accepted as an inevitable part of life. Time and its effects were pre-determined by divine will and accomplished

2. Vitruvius.
3. Vitruvius, 17.
4. Vitruvius, 17.
5. Andrea Palladio, *The Four Books on Architecture*, trans. Richard Schofield, 1st ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997).
6. Palladio.
7. Ricardo J. Quinones, *The Renaissance Discovery of Time* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972).

irrepressible destinies. As European city-states transitioned towards the Renaissance, this acceptance of change slowly vanished, and time became an antagonistic figure that needed to be defeated. In everyday life, this has translated into increased importance for the mechanical recording of time with the advent of mechanical clocks and scheduling.[8.] In a broader cultural context, the desire to evade time required new tools to ensure that an individual's memory could transcend their own death. Fame and progeny acquired an increased status as ways to escape being forgotten and endure in collective memory.[9.] In this context, architecture became a means of registering the material traces of one's impact on the world, testifying to the power of its sponsors, and speaking to the genius of its designers. Legacy became a leading force of architecture, as buildings became symbols of status and symbols for bourgeois elites.[10.]



The search for permanence continued in the 17th century when Enlightenment thinkers began classifying and dissecting the world into increasingly smaller, more distinct parts. René Descartes promoted an understanding of the world through binary entities – nature and culture, body and mind, space and time – that fractured the perceived wholeness of human experience.[11.] This cleavage ultimately favored the dominance of one over the other, the supremacy of man over nature; of reason over emotion.[12.] Technology and technique, therefore, became instruments through which domination could be exerted, as they became architecture. It became a tool in stabilizing, controlling, and subjugating the enemies of reason, the greatest being time and its passage.

modernity and permanence

The emergence of modern avant-gardes at the beginning of the twentieth century seemed to spell the end of architecture's obsession with permanence as movement and industry became key parts of a search to redefine the discipline's aesthetics and values.[13.] De Stijl Neoplasticians

8. Julius Thomas Fraser, *Time: The Familiar Stranger* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1987), http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb36633426c.
9. Quinones, *The Renaissance Discovery of Time*.
10. Fraser, *Time*.
11. Fraser.
12. Feminist and eco-feminist scholarships have explored the implications of binary thinking on superimposed systems of oppression. Foundational texts on the topic include Nancy Jay, "Gender and Dichotomy," *Feminist Studies* 7, no. 1 (1981): 38, https://doi.org/10.2307/3177669, and Genevieve Lloyd, *The Man of Reason : "Male" and "Female" in Western Philosophy - University of Waterloo*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).
13. For a comprehensive understanding of modern architectural avant-gardes, see Alan Colquhoun, *Modern architecture*, Oxford history of art (Oxford ; Oxford University Press, 2002), http://catdir.loc.gov/catdir/enhancements/fy0614/2002510839-t.html; Kenneth Frampton, *Modern architecture: a critical history*, Fifth edition, World of art (New York, New

attempted to dissolve the object and abolish figure-ground relationships, Futurists embraced movement and chaos as critical values, and Soviet Constructivists like Vladimir Tatlin even proposed kinetic architectures, but most integrations of movement – both in its literal and metaphorical interpretations – remained circumscribed to the realm of aesthetics.[14] Movement was aestheticized and, thus, immobilized. In the rare instances where movement was indeed embraced, it was neither change nor agency that was promoted but rather a very controlled, deliberate motion under the careful guidance of the architect. The very idea of movement was to be directed by the architects themselves.

le corbusier

The transition to modernity reaffirmed the architect's supremacy in shaping their design, an authority analogous to that of the artist and their work. In introducing the collective work *Architectureproduction*, Beatriz Colomina speaks of the modernist cult of the image and its influential role in expulsing time from architecture.[15] Ironically, despite most of these movements' focus on the future, the emergence of photography and other instruments of reproduction contributed to turning architecture into a commodity that could be consumed through representation. Following the development of reproduction techniques such as lithography and the printing press, photography reduced architecture's tri-dimensionality – four-dimensionality, even, when considering the significance of time in experiencing space – to a representational space that presents highly idealized, pristine images that ended up substituting the very object they aimed to portray. In photographing his Villa Stein, Le Corbusier carefully crafted the image of the house to appeal to the modern values he was promoting [fig. 1.1]. This idealized representation only admitted one use for the space: that which the architect carefully designed for the users. However, this depiction is artificial and negates the agencies of the Villa's users in shaping their environments and how they wish to live their lives. Before modernity, the "audience" of architecture was its user. With photography, the illustrated magazine, and tourism, architecture's reception began to occur also through an additional social form of consumption."[16]



post-modernity and autonomy

York: Thames & Hudson Inc., 2020).
14. Jeremy Till, *Architecture depends* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2009); Colquhoun, *Modern architecture*; Frampton, *Modern architecture*.
15. Beatriz Colomina, "Introduction: On Architecture, Production and Reproduction," in *Architectureproduction*, ed. Joan Ockman (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1988), 7–23.
16. Colomina, 9.



fig. 1.1: view of the kitchen, villa stein, garches, le corbusier (1928). the scene's composition evokes the still-lives of 18th-century Dutch painters.

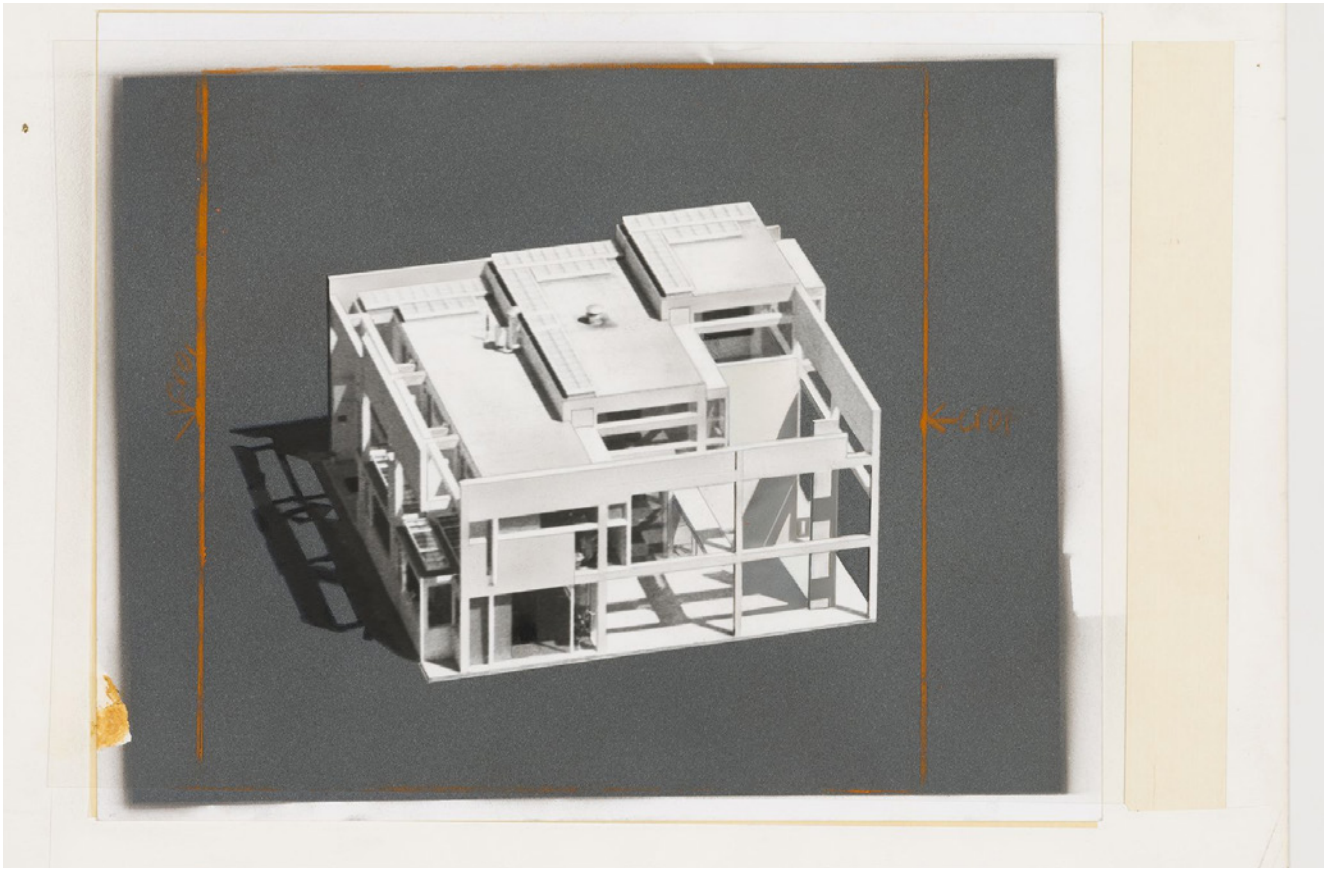


fig. 1.2: model for falk house (house II), peter eisenman (1972). the aerial photograph underwent successive alterations to erase the project's context and rectify the imperfections of its skin.

post-modernity and autonomy

In the postmodern era, the primacy of the image and the autonomy of architecture from outside influences became even more entrenched within the architectural discipline. Postmodernists, adopting a critical posture towards modernity, aimed to distance themselves from its social revendication and retreated to the realm of aesthetic formalism.[17.]

peter eisenmann

The iterative experimentations of Peter Eisenmann, namely, testify to this yearning for autonomy and abstraction. In his houses, Eisenman developed a design process based on imposing a series of successive physical transformations onto an object that becomes architecture. These modifications are a-contextual and occur in the undifferentiated abstracted space of paper and cardboard, far from the imperatives of use and time. For Eisenman, architecture is an object that escapes the everyday and should remain independent from it, an approach that is revealed in the wrongly labeled "Model for Falk House (House II)" that is, in fact, an aerial photograph of House II [fig. 1.2]. The picture, snapped by Randall Korman between 1972 and 1973, featured the newly completed House II against a generic background, a backdrop of sorts, where the house's shadow falls. Although the picture should feature the building in its physical site, manipulations in post-production "collectively isolated the house from its context, scale, and materiality."[18.] House II is represented as an isolated model, an abstracted object that evades contingency from exterior forces and negates the passage of time. Architecture thus becomes a self-isolated, self-perpetuating discipline that protects itself from contaminants and illnesses.[19.] When time is addressed, architects adopt a defiant posture against it, allowing it to run its course only partly, controlled as the material aging.[20.]

The search for permanence in architecture manifests differently across ideologies and periods of the discipline's development. Still, the fact is that it remains deeply entrenched within the structure of the profession. According to Jeremy Till, this obsession with idealized form and aesthetics transcends architectural history.[21.] It permeates even the most radical of its avant-gardes that cannot "escape the conservative systems that they attempt to criticize, because in the end both are framed by the same value

17. Till, *Architecture depends*.
18. Sarah Hearne, "Model for Falk House (House II)," in *Architecture Itself and Other Postmodernization Effects*, ed. Sylvia Lavin (Montréal; Leipzig: Canadian Centre for Architecture; Spector Books, 2020), 250–51.
19. Susan Sontag, *Illness as metaphor* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1988).
20. Till, *Architecture depends*.
21. Till.

system, namely that of the production of form and taste."[22] Till aligns himself with Marxist critical theory, more specifically with the ideological criticism of architectural theorist Manfredo Tafuri.[23] In *Architecture and Utopia*, Tafuri argues that capitalism renders all aesthetic innovation useless for social production. Any utopian attempt towards structural change is ultimately recuperated by the system it attempts to reform. Architecture is therefore "obliged to return to *pure architecture,* to form without utopia; in the best cases, to sublime uselessness."[24]

Although much work has been done to challenge and redefine architecture's fundamental values since Vitruvius first outlined his triad of virtues, contemporary architectural production still focuses on autonomous outputs that satisfy the constraints of style and aesthetics. In contemporary times, we cannot escape the contemporary triad of function, tectonics, and aesthetics.[25] Architects must integrate temporality as a key design variable to effectively account for contingent agencies and indeterminacy.

Implications of Permanence: Architectural Alienation

Architecture's tendency towards autonomy and permanence often leads to a sense of alienation in users who – faced with static, constraining structure, are unable to engage in meaningful social interactions or lead fulfilling creative lives. Alienation, as a concept, draws from a rich theoretical heritage, particularly within the Hegelian and Marxist traditions. Broadly, it identifies a distinct kind of psychological or social *mal être* that arises from the separation between a Self and an Other that belong together.[26] The constitutive elements of the definition are a subject, an object, and the severed relation between them. The disconnect between subject and object must be problematic for alienation to occur, but the nature of the separation varies among authors and their epistemic framework.[27]

While the earliest uses of the term referenced estrangement from God, legal transfer of ownership, or mental illness, Hegel redefined alienation as an analytical tool to describe feeling lost within a world that should feel

22. Till, 15.
23. Manfredo Tafuri, "Architecture and Utopia," MIT Press, accessed March 25, 2024, https://mitpress.mit.edu/9780262700207/architecture-and-utopia/.
24. Tafuri, ix.
25. Till, *Architecture depends*.
26. Edward N. Zalta and Uri Nodelman, eds., "Alienation," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Winter 2022 (Metaphysics Research Lab, Stanford University, 2022).
27. Zalta and Nodelman.

marxist alienation

like "home."[28] Perhaps most significant, however, is Marx's contribution to the topic, which reframed alienation as a sense of dispossession and helplessness resulting from separating property from labor. Under capitalist systems, value is extracted from the labor of the working class and appropriated by the capitalists: "from the instant (the worker) steps into the workshop, the use-value of his labour-power and therefore also its use, which is labour, belongs to the capitalist."[29] This forced divorce between the worker and the object that should be theirs but is not is what produces alienation. Alienation, therefore, results from exploitation.



Subsequent materialist authors and theorists have expanded Marx's definition to the built environment; transposing alienation from its initial labor-product dyad to describe the ways in which users might feel estranged from their environment. Space has predominantly been conceptualized – both in and outside the architectural discipline – as a passive, neutral backdrop against which everyday actions unfold. This cartesian reading presents space as an unbounded expanse – or field – in which every location exists simultaneously. These geometrical, locatable points are equivalent and promote a democratic, non-hierarchized understanding of space. This space, however, is generic; it is abstracted and separated from the space of the everyday. Real space is not a passive realm but rather a deeply political and social one intertwined with the social norms, values, and ideologies that produce it. In the influential book *La production de l'espace*, Henri Lefebvre argues that physical space is indissociable from the mental and political spaces that precede it.[30] Space acts as a tool through which a regime's ideals are enacted, effectively crystallizing ideologies into a material form. In contemporary neo-liberal societies, space serves as an instrument of control and commodification that impedes the capacity of individuals to engage with their environments purposefully. Space is no longer passive but plays an active role in reproducing conditioned acceptable behaviors. Architecture – as a practice of organizing and regulating space – is central to shaping these power dynamics. It acts as a technical tool – an interface – through which values and ideologies are enforced unto individuals.[31] It is an

28. Zalta and Nodelman.
29. Karl Marx, *Capital Volume I*, trans. Ben Fowkes, vol. I (London: Penguin Books, 1982), 292 cited by David Harvey in *A Companion to Marx's Capital* (London; New York: Verso, 2010), 120.
30. Henri Lefebvre, *La production de l'espace*, 4. éd, Ethnosociologie (Paris: Anthropos, 2000), http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb370983677.
31. Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et punir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1993).

instrumental hinge that bridges the distance between macroscopic socio-political ideals and microscopic bodies.[32.]

Any architecture, then, operates in what Leatherbarrow describes as *active passivity* to both resist and allow behaviors that occur within its bounds.[33.] Architecture concurrently sets obstacles limiting unwanted actions and provides tools encouraging prescribed ones. In the context of housing, the limitations prescribed by conventional spatial practice often hinder an individual's ability to act freely within their spaces and fully engage with their environments. In *In Defense of Housing,* David Madden and Peter Marcuse analyze housing tendencies in the wake of the 2008 housing crisis and argue that it is not an anomaly to be remedied through technocratic solutions but one that must be fixed through radical reforms to the capitalist system that generated it.[34.] The housing crisis – and its consequent housing alienation – emerges from a fundamental tension between housing as a home – that shelters and provides a site for social reproduction – and housing as a commodity that congeals wealth, generates capital, is exchanged easily.[35.] These two functions are consistent with the dialectic between use-value and exchange-value; the realization of one necessarily impedes the other. In this context, the increased commodification of housing negatively affects the capacity of users to enjoy their dwelling's use value: "under hyper-commodification, all of the material and legal structures of housing – buildings, land, labor, property rights – are turned into commodities. In the process, the capacity of a building to function as a home becomes secondary. What matters is how a building functions in circuits of economic accumulation."[36.]

david madden + peter marcuse

Although housing alienation, in Madden and Marcuse's framework, emerges from commodified housing, its oppressive functions transcend market logic and exist independently from its commodification.[37.] Housing creates relationships of power that inextricably link it to conflicts over resources, autonomy, and agency.[38.] In neo-liberal societies, housing is

32. *Architectures of Time toward a Theory of the Event in Modernist Culture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001).
33. David Leatherbarrow, *Building Time : Architecture, Event, and Experience*, vol. First edition (London [England]: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2021), https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=2623204&lang=fr&site=ehost-live.
34. David J. Madden and Peter Marcuse, *In Defense of Housing: The Politics of Crisis* (London: Verso, 2016).
35. Madden and Marcuse, 11.
36. Madden and Marcuse, 25.
37. Madden and Marcuse, 69.
38. Madden and Marcuse, 68.



entangled in a tension between providing a sense of home and acting as a repository of capital.[39] Its primary function is no longer to construct a sense of belonging for its inhabitants but rather to store and maximize economic value. Its architecture prioritizes short-term, aesthetic solutions that appeal to buyers while neglecting the actual capacity of these buildings to become homes. Such commodification of housing leads to the alienation of its users whose homes fail to meet their needs and aspirations, interferes with their sense of belonging, and threatens ontological security.[40]

Madden and Marcuse demonstrate, however, the limitations of a reductive right to housing framework insofar as to protect individuals from the effects of housing commodification effectively. Laws and statutes protect the right to housing in many nations worldwide. However, its mere formulation is insufficient to guarantee access to housing as it is inoperable and often creates friction against other legal protections, such as property rights.[41] Therefore, the authors advocate for a radical right to housing, drawing on Lefebvre's notion of the right to the city. This interpretation guarantees a right to a reformed state and to transform the *status quo*.[42] Madden and Marcuse call for "non-reformist reforms," a concept developed by André Gorz, that improve current conditions while allowing for an improved future to be imagined.[43]

If architecture erects barriers in the users' search for belonging and authenticity, it can also define affordances that empower individuals to do so. Here, architects must act to ensure that they do not contribute to the alienation of individuals but also facilitate user-led transformations and change.

39. Bernard Stiegler, Daniel Ross, and France. Ministère de la culture., *For a new critique of political economy*, English edition (Cambridge, UK ; Polity, 2010).
40. Surprisingly, Madden and Marcuse introduce the concept of ontological security within their discussion of alienation, which is more consistent with the phenomenological tradition than it is with the Marxist framework they seem to be using. *In Defense of Housing*, 46.
41. Madden and Marcuse, 201.
42. Madden and Marcuse, 204.
43. Madden and Marcuse, 206.

Reciprocal Relations in Architecture

As I have attempted to argue, architecture as a discipline often fails to acknowledge – and consequently manage – time as an integral variable of design work, which leads to a disciplinary retreat to the realm of static, idealized representation isolated from the contingent actions of stakeholders. This erasure of time from architecture – and the parallel erasure of the contingent agencies that shape it – establishes non-reciprocal relationships between architects and users. The architect is elevated to an authorial status, positioned to be able to design *for* and not *with* other architectural actors. While they are preoccupied with conceiving a formal output – and in attempting to ensure that it is realized – architects forget to explore the potential of the project's temporalities – design, construction, use, maintenance, deconstruction – in promoting community involvement and relationality. Through this process, a relational asymmetry develops between the architect and their users, with the professional expert asserting their authorial primacy over their "work" and devaluing the input of the users they design for. This asymmetry is further exacerbated in contexts where clients and users differ. As the initiator of the project, the client has agency over the design, construction, maintenance, and use of the spaces being designed, while users might be forgotten or ignored.

reciprocity

In this research, I adopt a definition of reciprocity as a quality of interdependence, action, or influence that depends on mutual interactions between various actors.[44] Reciprocal relationships are inherently two-sided; the involved parties both give and receive, invest and benefit, and collaborate in the creation of a shared project. My understanding of reciprocity—and non-reciprocity—draws on extractivist scholarship, which highlights the unidirectional nature of relationships between professionals and their beneficiaries.

architectural extractivism

Architecture – in its dual identity as discipline and industry – is extractive. The essential role of materials, the primary building blocks of architecture, in the construction process makes the discipline reliant on extractive activities and landscapes. Architecture, by its very nature, also participates in organizing and perpetuating extraction systems at local and global levels. From mining raw materials – lumber, concrete, steel – to

44. "Definition of Reciprocity," December 8, 2024, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reciprocity.

the economic and social impacts of construction, the built environment—whether it serves to benefit or oppress—relies on extractive processes at multiple levels.[45.] Victoria Kiechel, a practicing architect and professor of political science, asserts that "construction involves destruction," both at the local scale of the site and its context and at the scale of the extractive landscapes from which materials originate.[46.] These impacts range from local economies, neighborhoods, and workers to environmental depletion and violence thousands of kilometers away.



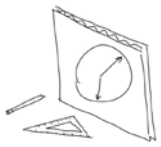
In recent years, extractivism as a theoretical framework has now expanded "beyond simply being a way of (ab)using the earth, as it is also a way of acting, and being – in and within the world. It arises from a specific kind of thinking (i.e., a mentality) and thus constitutes a way of positioning oneself in the spaces, relations, and surroundings one is in." Extractivism is now widely used as an ontology able to represent and describe relationships of exploitation and depletion outside its initial realm of material exhaustion. It describes a particular way of thinking that maximizes benefits through unequal, often violent, processes and radically alters natural, environmental, and social relations between actors. This conceptual displacement of extractivist scholarship away – or beyond – sites of resource extraction reveals significant potential in identifying extractive practices outside the material realm. In architecture, it may provide insight into not only the processes that frame material sourcing, mobilization, and disposal but into the human relations between architects and other stakeholders. Non-reciprocity, a key part of extractivist discourse, may well be applied to the uneven relationship between architects and the people they design *for* instead of *with*. It is this non-reciprocal aspect of extractivist scholarship that I aim to mobilize to understand the practices of contemporary architecture. In the current professional context, architects often forget to engage meaningfully with the beneficiaries of their expertise and fail to acknowledge the need for users to engage in reciprocal relationships with other actors, with one another, and with their built environment.

45. Vicky Kiechel, "Extraction and the Built Environment: Violence and Other Social Consequences of Construction," in *Our Extractive Age: Expressions of Violence and Resistance*, ed. Judith Shapiro and John-Andrew McNeish (Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2021), 115, https://www.routledge.com/Our-Extractive-Age-Expressions-of-Violence-and-Resistance/Shapiro-McNeish/p/book/9780367650520.
46. Kiechel, 115.

Even as it strives to create beneficial or sustainable spaces, architecture's capacity to perpetuate alienation remains undeniable. Non-reciprocity emerges as a defining feature of mainstream architectural processes, which often operate unilaterally and sever critical relationships between users, communities, and the built environment. These processes prioritize the architect's authority and the client's goals while overlooking the voices and needs of end users, thereby failing to foster mutual engagement or co-creation. This relational asymmetry is embedded in the structure of design, construction, and maintenance itself, as architects design *for* users rather than *with* them, leaving little room for reciprocal exchange.

This lack of reciprocity not only weakens the relational ties between users and their environment but also perpetuates alienation by treating users as passive recipients rather than active participants. It disrupts the potential for users to engage meaningfully with one another, their surroundings, and the processes that shape their spaces. By focusing on the non-reciprocal nature of contemporary architectural practices, we can better understand how these one-sided relationships replicate broader power differentials and exclude the very stakeholders whose agency and participation are vital for building spaces that foster connection and belonging.

Cardboard Temporality: The Time-Space of Design



The processes by which most architecture is designed, constructed, and maintained often exclude the very communities that the buildings are meant to serve, perpetuating a system that disregards the agency and inputs of key stakeholders. Let us first consider the *crux* – or at least what architects would like to believe is the most critical part – of architecture: the design process. The linear, step-by-step approach to architectural design is fundamentally non-reciprocal. In its conventional form, the design process is a one-way flow: the client approaches the architect with a set of needs, desires, and constraints, essentially, a collection of inputs that become the foundation for the design. From there, in a highly structured and professional environment, the architect engages in a solitary act of creativity to produce a solution: the project. This sequence of events is often obfuscated from outside influence, reinforcing the architect's primary position as the author of a work rather than an actor within its development.

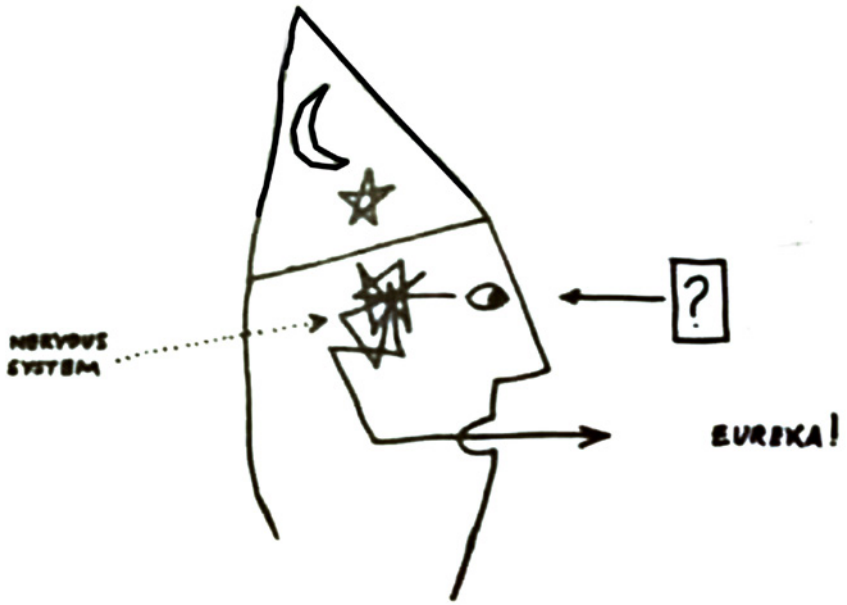


fig. 1.3: designer as magician, john christopher jones in design methods in architecture, reproduced from jean-pierre chupin (2022).

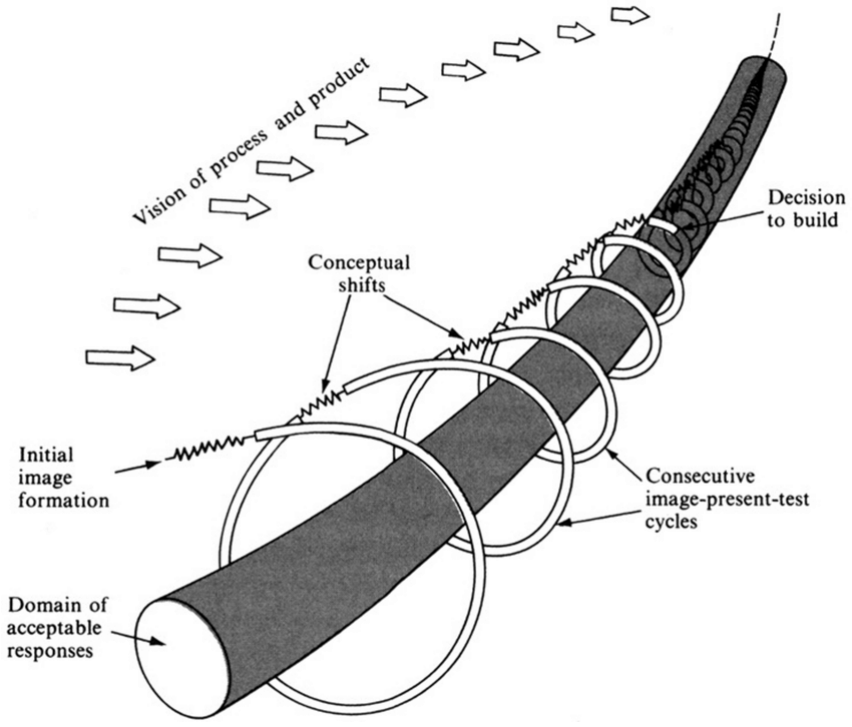


fig. 1.4: design development spiral, John Zeisel (1981).

I have outlined earlier that the erasure of time from architecture – as well as the consequent retreat of designers to the realm of aesthetics and the professionalization of the discipline – has led to increasingly limited opportunities for the discipline to harbor meaningful relations between architects and the contingent desires, knowledge, and actions of other stakeholders. Reyner Banham touches on this in "A Black Box," an editorial piece published in 1996.[47] In it, Banham criticizes the positioning of the architect as an expert who operates in a "black box," removed from the ordinary concerns of non-experts. The professionalization of the architect removed them from the web of actions and expertise in which they are entrenched, raising them to an authorial status above the fray. In this model, architectural design is akin to visiting any other professional. Just as a patient may approach a doctor with a set of symptoms, the client presents an initial problem – the commission – and the architect solves it.

design thinking

In the first chapter of his book *Analogical Thinking in Architecture*, Jean-Pierre Chupin looks at the various models and representations of design processes that developed with the emergence of the field that would come to be known as design thinking.[48] One of the models described, and perhaps the most representative of the linear, opaque approach to design I have been describing, is John Christopher Jones's figure of the designer as magician [fig. 1.3].[49] Jones' illustration of the magician, a disheveled figure wearing a magician's hat, internalizes the problem, processes it, and – like a sudden stroke of genius marked with a powerful *Eureka!* – produces a solution.[50] This moment of insight, seemingly a unique revelation, materializes through an almost mystical process. While this model is undoubtedly caricatured, it highlights how design processes often overlook their collaborative potential and, more importantly, the experiences of users and stakeholders. This erasure of contingent actions and voices is generalized across models, even among the most exhaustive and representationally nuanced. For example, John Zeisel's model aims to realize an "image" that, present from the outset, represents an ideal to be achieved [fig. 1.4].[51]

47. Reyner Banham, "A Black Box: The Secret Profession of Architecture," in *A critic writes: essays by Reyner Banham*, ed. Mary Banham, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 292–300, https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=42106.
48. Jean-Pierre Chupin, *Analogical Thinking in Architecture: Connecting Design and Theory in the Built Environment*, 1st ed, (London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2023).
49. John Chris Jones, *Design Methods* (John Wiley & Sons, 1992).
50. Chupin, *Analogical Thinking in Architecture*.
51. Chupin. This deterministic or essentialist vision exists independently of both the

While these traditional architectural models emphasize the designer's autonomy, alternative models seek to reposition users, community stakeholders, and clients as active participants in the design process. Participatory design, action-based research, and design partnerships aim to create more reciprocal relationships by involving those affected by the design in the decision-making process. However, these models remain marginal in mainstream architectural practice, often relegated to niche projects or specific social agendas rather than integrated into the broader field.

Despite these alternative approaches, the professionalized, expert-driven model still dominates. The design process remains linear, one-directional, and closed off from the influence of the communities it is meant to serve. This lack of reciprocal engagement is not only a problem of procedure but a fundamental issue of power and equity as it "cuts through patterns of human cooperation and social activity."[52] In this context, the architect becomes both the creator and the controller of space, while the voices and needs of those who occupy the spaces are relegated to the periphery.

On-site: The Invisible Space-Time of Construction



While the design process is often considered the core of architectural practice, it remains a small part of the realization and greater lifecycle of buildings. The construction process and post-occupancy of the built environment constitute essential timelines within the project's development and, as such, require further examination. In conventional architectural practice, construction is often viewed as an inconvenient temporality between a project's final design and completion. Although architects remain involved in that stage, their contributions are limited to realizing execution drawings and ensuring that the construction workers realize the formal output of their design, a matter of monitoring and surveillance that engages few creative qualities. Construction time is a minor nuisance, a necessary evil that realizes the projected vision of the architect. This positioning of construction as an inconvenience is cemented by its externalities on nearby communities that surround the construction site: noise, dust, and road closures are a few consequences

designer's actions and of the contributions of others; it is akin to Aristotelian concepts of potentiality and actuality, see Aristotle, "Metaphysics," trans. W. D. Ross, The Internet Classics Online, 350AD, https://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/metaphysics.1.i.html.
52. Sandro Mezzadra and Brett Neilson, "On the Multiple Frontiers of Extraction: Excavating Contemporary Capitalism," *Cultural Studies* 31, no. 2–3 (May 4, 2017): 194, https://doi.org/10.1080/09502386.2017.1303425.

that exasperate local populations. It is not surprising, therefore, that design disciplines, governments, and public procurement are increasingly interested in construction mitigation strategies aiming to reduce the disruptions associated with building activities.[53.]

Overlooking construction time as a non-temporality of the architectural project contributes to its impacts on local communities, ultimately refusing to engage in reciprocal relationships with the immediate environment it aims to transform. Construction operates unilaterally – it builds on, rather than within, existing social contexts and fails to generate any meaningful interactions with its human and non-human neighbors. In that way, again, the profession engages in violent, non-reciprocal processes. The act of building becomes distinct from the people that surround it and will eventually inhabit its output. The standard, normative construction model, focusing on professional expertise and the division of labor, leaves little room for community involvement. Yet, it raises questions as to what alternatives could look like.

barn-raising

Pre-modern and non-Western building traditions offer insight into reciprocal construction practices that foster relationality – connecting individuals with their communities and the places they inhabit. *Barnraising* – a process grounded in collective effort, voluntary aid, and the synchronized labor of a collectivity – provides a compelling example of participatory and socially constitutive construction tradition.[54.] Rooted in pre-industrial rural North America, where resources and skilled labor were scarce, it originates from medieval England and continental Europe.[55.] Growing up in rural Québec, I was immersed in the stories of how churches, houses, and especially barns used to spring up over the landscape. When a family needed a new barn, it would plan the whole construction process from obtaining and transforming resources to the actual building, calling on the help of neighbors and fellow community members. Lumber was typically sourced locally, often from the owner's property, where trees would be felled. The raw wood would then be

53. The City of Montreal launched an architecture competition aiming to mitigate the impacts of major infrastructure refections on one of its most commercial arteries in 2016. See, Marc-Antoine Fournier and Jean-Pierre Chupin, "When the Construction Site Turns Into a Forbidden Party," *Canadian Competitions Catalogue*, 2021, https://www.ccc.umontreal.ca/editorial.php?lang=en&eId=1058.
54. Alison B. Hirsch, "Urban Barnraising: Collective Rituals to Promote Communitas," *Landscape Journal: Design, Planning, and Management of the Land* 34, no. 2 (2015): 113–26.
55. Patricia Fraile-Garrido and Ines Martin-Robles, "From Barn Raising to Community Empowerment: The Legacy of Karl Linn and John Turner," *Ciudades*, May 20, 2024, 3, https://doi.org/10.24197/ciudades.27.2024.1-21.



fig. 1.5: barn-raising near Thamesford, Ontario (unknown date).



fig. 1.6: volunteers and locals erect a merry-go-round made of a recycled cable reel, center of environmental design archive, university of california, berkeley, karl linn collection.

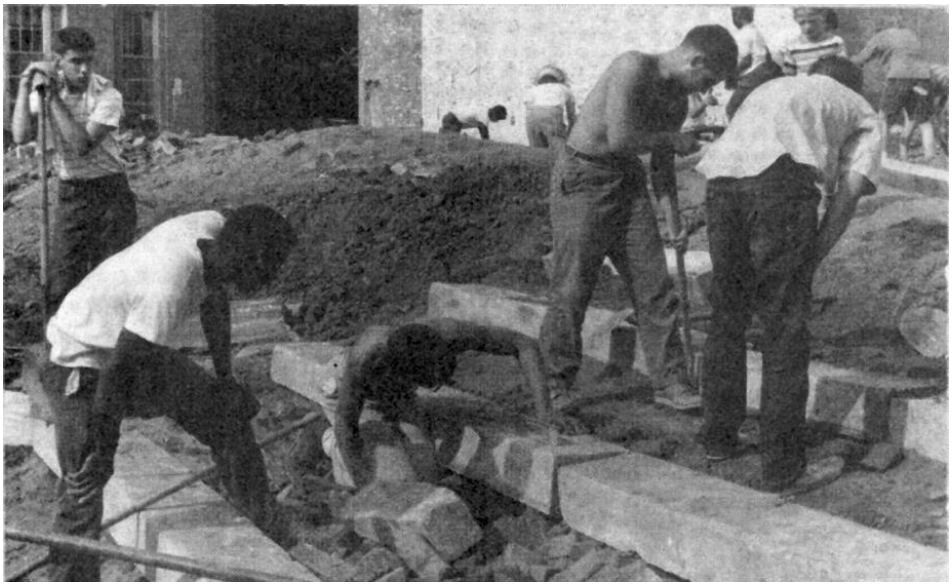


fig. 1.7: urban barn-raising, volunteers working on the commons, center of environmental design archive, university of california, berkeley, karl linn collection, from Linn, (1990).

taken to a local mill and processed into beams, joists, and columns. This transaction often did not involve monetary exchanges, particularly in poorer communities; instead, it became a favor to be repaid at a later date.[56] With materials secured, the construction process could begin. The owners would organize the build, mobilizing the help of neighbors who would lend their labor and expertise. As Hirsch notes, *barnraising* became a ritualistic form of construction, linking communities together through the shared experience of building and working together [fig. 1.5].[57] *Barnraising*, in this way, leveraged local networks of labor, knowledge, and solidarity, reinforcing social bonds and creating communal bonds, promoting mutual support and social exchange. *Barnraising* relates to other non-industrial building traditions like that portrayed by Menna Agha in her article "Emotional Capital and Other Ontologies of the Architect" and calls into question and challenges the concept of the architect as the sole builder.[58]

karl linn

The potential of building practices in creating relations of support between individuals was taken up in the mid-twentieth century by urban designer and professor Karl Linn, who revitalized *barnraising* as a participatory design model in marginalized urban communities [fig. 1.6-1.7]. Linn believed that many of the modern public spaces that seemed to be failing did so because they lacked the active participation of the communities they served.[59] His solution was to purposefully involve community residents in designing and constructing their own open spaces. His projects focused on transforming vacant lots in underserved neighborhoods into parks or playgrounds through communal efforts and labor and embracing material reuse. Linn's approach was grounded in the belief that the building process could be – and was – at least as important as its outcome; he championed process over result.[60]



Linn's approach reimagined construction as an open-ended, participatory process rather than a final product. He believed public spaces should never be finished but rather evolve through continuous input from the people who use them. This model of open-ended design contrasts

56. I have to thank Xavier Labrecque St-Jean, who relayed the stories inherited from his grandmother Suzanne, for this insight into the economy of solidarity of *barnraising*.
57. Hirsch, "Urban Barnraising: Collective Rituals to Promote Communitas."
58. Menna Agha, "Emotional Capital and Other Ontologies of the Architect," *Architectural Histories* 8, no. 1 (December 18, 2020), https://doi.org/10.5334/ah.381.
59. Karl Linn, *Building Commons and Community* (New Village Press, 2007), 14.
60. Hirsch, "Urban Barnraising: Collective Rituals to Promote Communitas"; Fraile-Garrido and Martin-Robles, "From Barn Raising to Community Empowerment."

sharply with traditional architecture, which often focuses on control, finality, and top-down authority. Linn's work emphasized collaboration and community involvement, where building itself became a means of empowerment, fostering ownership, agency, and social connection. His *urban barnraising* demonstrated that the construction process could be more than just a phase—it could be a catalyst for communal growth and shared experiences.

Brooms and Mops: Ignored Carescapes and Their Creative Potential



hilary sample

Just as the construction process can be reimagined as a communal and relational act, so too can the time-space of maintenance be seen as a mere technical responsibility but as a vital, participatory temporality that continues to shape the relationships between people, place, and environment over time. For the most part, contemporary architects have treated maintenance with indifference, downplaying the importance of labor in the endurance of the buildings they design. Maintenance has long been treated as a distinct problem – one external to architecture – that only arises once the work of designers is done and their buildings are completed. In *Maintenance Architecture*, Hilary Sample looks at the role of maintenance in the built environment and argues that it is instrumental in preserving and re-producing the idealized vision of the architect throughout a building's life.[61.] I have talked about how the discipline of architecture tends to freeze the buildings it conceives of as idealized, momentary pockets and positions them as authorial works rather than the dynamic entities they are. For Sample, maintenance is but a way to realign the actual, deteriorating state of the built environment with its abstract image. Even though the role of maintenance, therefore, is essential to the endurance of the architect's vision, the profession often ignores it. Maintenance has, since the postmodern era, been the topic of attention more within the arts than within the design disciplines, with the work of Mierle Laderman Ukeles, Gordon Matta-Clark, Job Koelewijn, or Inigo Maglano-Ovalle raising attention to the practices, choreographies, and aesthetics of maintenance.[62.] Maintenance remains insufficiently studied within architectural discourse, except in specialized and technical contexts like preservation, material science, development, policy, insurance laws, and building codes.[63.]

61. Hilary Sample, *Maintenance Architecture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2016), http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/mcgill/detail.action?docID=4768015.
62. Sample, 9.
63. Sample, 7.

sophie bowlby

In large-scale projects, salaried workers – or carers – perform maintenance under highly formalized structures that are non-reciprocal while users engage in cleaning. Under the framework proposed by Sophie Bowlby in her article "Recognizing the time-space dimensions of care," cleaning is distinct from maintenance; the former belongs to the domestic realm, is realized at small scales, and constitutes reproductive labor, while maintenance requires formal organization and skilled work.[64.] The realms of cleaning – assumed by residents – and maintaining – by workers – rarely overlap and present few opportunities for connection between the two groups and between inhabitants and their built environment. Moreover, it compartmentalizes knowledge of how to care for buildings, ascribing responsibility only to paid workers. Could maintenance present opportunities beyond the mere re-production of images and architectural ideals? Could it accomplish more than merely reasserting a building's aspiration towards *stasis?* Instead, I propose that the maintenance processes present untapped opportunities for establishing reciprocal relationships between users and their built environment. In "Recognizing the time-space dimensions of care," Sophie Bowlby proposes to reconceptualize care practices as *carescapes*, metaphorical temporal and spatial *locus* of care processes, to be navigated and negotiated by the cared subject.[65.] What happens when the subject who is cared for is a building? How can the modalities of maintenance be re-negotiated to harbor significant relationships between users, workers, and the built environment?

Building Elegy: Possible Rituals of Deconstruction



Among the various temporalities overlooked by architects in the design process, a building's end of life is perhaps the most neglected. If architecture is meant to endure in the face of change, its demolition represents failure. As a result, demolition and deconstruction remain at the margins of architectural thinking and practices.

Demolition is inherently violent, severing the connections between a building and its environment. It discards not just physical components but often the social, cultural, and material histories it has shaped over time, destroying the relationships the building has fostered. Local communities are frequently

64. Sophie Bowlby, "Recognising the Time-Space Dimensions of Care: Caringscapes and Carescapes," *Environment and Planning* 44 (2012): 2101–18.
65. Bowlby, 2110.

excluded from the decisions leading to demolition, as well as from its process itself. Moreover, demolition often comes as the preamble of redevelopment and revitalization, which can further ostracize the surrounding communities. This exclusion reveals the unilateral nature of demolition and the impacts it has on local residents who must contend with the loss of shared space and upheaval.

In recent years, the construction industry has seen an increased interest in rethinking buildings' end-of-lives – not as a final, destructive act but as an opportunity to develop ecologically conscious practices and divert building materials from the wasteland. This shift, initiated by environmental imperatives and the increasing need for circularity in the built environment, is progressively leading to a reconceptualization of demolition – as a unilateral, destructive practice – towards deconstruction – a field for potential material ecologies and economies. The idea of buildings as spaces of flux and flows of resources that can be reused, repurposed, and recontextualized opens up the potential of buildings' end-of-life beyond a mere fatality. In Europe, a pioneer on the question, deconstruction and material reuse initiatives have already proliferated. Organizations such as RotorDC, a Brussels-based cooperative, have pioneered deconstruction techniques that focus on salvaging building materials for reuse.[66.] Rotor DC has developed systems that minimize waste and emphasize the reuse of valuable construction materials, including finishing materials, which would traditionally be discarded.[67.] By dismantling buildings, Rotor DC gives new life to materials and reduces the environmental impact of traditional demolition. Similarly, online platforms like Opalis and Salvo aim to facilitate the use of reused materials in construction and renovation projects.[68.] Locally, similar efforts have emerged, with research initiatives like the *Centre d'études et de recherches intersectorielles en économie circulaire* (CERIEC) and local revalorization companies such as RÉCO and Brique Recyc exploring circularity frameworks.[69.] This work speaks to a growing recognition that the end of a building's life does not have to signify its obliteration but can become a space for transformation and revaluation.

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66. *Lionel Devlieger - Rotor/Ghent University* (University of Waterloo, Cambridge ON, 2024), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-mhQYaEmxPM.
67. Rotor Deconstruction, "About Us," Rotor Deconstruction, accessed November 26, 2024, https://rotordc.com/aboutus-1.
68. "Opalis," accessed April 20, 2024, https://opalis.eu/fr; "Salvo," accessed April 20, 2024, https://www.salvoweb.com/.
69. CERIEC, ÉTS Montréal, accessed November 26, 2024, https://www.etsmtl.ca/recherche-innovation/laboratoire-et-chaires/ceriec; RÉCO, RÉCO, accessed November 26, 2024, https://recocentre.ca/; Brique Recyc, accessed November 26, 2024, https://www.briquerecyc.com/.

But perhaps even more radical is the potential to reimagine deconstruction as a communal, participatory act. What if building demolition was a collaborative process involving local residents? Could deconstruction become an opportunity to engage the community in reclaiming materials and contributing to a new vision for the site? Such a model is not unprecedented. Communities have always had a relationship with the materials that make up their built environment, whether through informal scavenging or more structured practices of reuse.[70] A culture of revalorization could be revived, where the neighborhood residents participate not just in the destruction but in creating new futures for materials and spaces. This could transform demolition into a form of regeneration—one that ties communities to their environment.

The emergence of deconstruction as a site for material economies offers a broader rethinking of architectural temporality. Rather than treating a building's end as a moment of closure, we might see it as part of an ongoing cycle where materials are re-mobilized. This opens up a potential for new forms of architecture that acknowledge and embrace time as a cyclical, reciprocal flow rather than a linear progression toward stasis or finality. It is here that the full temporal potential of architecture can be realized—where buildings are not just objects in time but contributors to a network of ongoing relations between people, places, and things.

The architectural profession's traditional focus on static, idealized representations of buildings has led to a non-reciprocal relationship between architects, users, and communities. The linear, expert-driven design process often overlooks the temporalities of architecture—design, construction, maintenance, and deconstruction—that could foster meaningful collaboration and engagement with the people and environments they impact. By embracing a more participatory, relational approach, architecture can shift from a model of extraction to one of reciprocity, where communities are actively involved in shaping their built environments throughout the lifecycle of a building. This reconceptualization opens up new possibilities for creating spaces that are not only sustainable but also deeply connected to the people who inhabit them, fostering a continuous dialogue between architecture, community, and the environment.

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70. Michaël Ghyoot et al., *Déconstruction et réemploi: Comment faire circuler les éléments de construction*, Architecture (Lausanne: EPFL Press, 2018), https://www.epflpress.org/produit/872/9782889152391/deconstruction-et-reemploi.



fig. 2.1: aerial view of the habitations jeanne-mance, fonds armour landry, BAnQ, armour landry (c. 1965)

from

for

A Brief History of Development at the
Habitations Jeanne-Mance

to

with

Habitations Jeanne-Mance: Stages of Development

In the previous chapter, I looked at the problem of stasis – or permanence – in architecture and its corollary consequences on the profession. While attempting to produce artifacts – isolated from both the grasp of time and that of its contingent agencies – architecture fails to purposefully engage the people that it supposedly designs for, establishing unilateral relations between the designer and their beneficiaries. Architecture was framed as a professional discipline that perpetuates non-reciprocal contracts between architects and users, between users and their built environment, and between users themselves. This chapter attempts to transfer the theoretical explorations of temporality and reciprocity elaborated earlier and ground its abstract argument within a real context and temporality.

The Habitations Jeanne-Mance (HJM), developed in Montréal during the post-war period, is one of Canada's canonical social housing projects [fig. 2.1]. With more than 700 units, the scheme saw the redevelopment of a significant portion of the city's downtown core along urban renewal processes. Second to Toronto's Regent Park, the Habitations were one of the earliest examples of large-scale housing provision by the municipal, provincial, and federal governments to benefit marginalized local communities. The project's mythical aura and legacy ensured that a vast body of archives and documentation survived and allow for an analysis of the scheme's development and maintenance over the past 60 years. Although the motivations behind the project were laudable and aimed to raise the standards of living of thousands of the city's poorest residents, its development operated in a way that renders clear the impact of architectural thinking on local communities. The quasi-integral demolition of the site and the subsequent displacement of thousands of families imposed violence upon the supposed beneficiaries of architectural betterment, while the design, administration, and maintenance processes over the site's life infantilized the residents and established alienating dynamics. Despite displacement, violence, and oppression, a strong sense of community engagement and networks of solidarity developed at the HJM. These provide insight into the value of mutual aid and reciprocity as a model for architectural development.

Early Urban Development

indigenous occupation

The site now home to the Habitations Jeanne-Mance is situated on unceded Indigenous lands. The land known as Tiohtià:ke / Montréal has been a trading and gathering place for Indigenous people since times immemorial. The Kanien'kehà:ka (Mohawk) and the Haudenausonee Nations are the rightful custodians of the lands and waters addressed in this chapter. However, much of its history is the result of settler colonial development.

french colony

The initial colonial occupation of the site began in the 17th century when the newly formed French colonial administration divided the island among *seigneurs*. This *seigneurial* system, rooted in European feudalism, segmented the land into self-governing regions, or *seigneuries*, managed by the *seigneur*. Colonial settlers were allocated plots of land within *seigneuries* to cultivate for the seigneur's benefit. It is important to note that this land was never ceded by the Indigenous peoples who inhabited it. The practice of settler colonialism operated on the principle of *terra nullius*, which assumed that colonial powers could freely take unclaimed and undeveloped land.[1] However, the European concept of land ownership clashed with the Indigenous worldview, which operated as careful stewardship of the land. This notion of *terra nullius* served as a justification for dispossession and the establishment of colonial settlements across North America. The French administration laid the land in long, rectangular strips perpendicular to the river. Initial development was slow and scattered but quickly intensified as more settlers arrived.[2]

Following the English conquest of Nouvelle-France in 1760 and the administrative changes enacted by the Proclamation royale in 1763, the city of Montréal, previously confined within its fortifications, began to expand [fig. 2.2]. New neighborhoods emerged beyond the original city limits as an increasing number of settlers moved in. The American War of Independence (1776-1783) brought a significant influx of British loyalists to Montréal, while efforts to assimilate the French population encouraged thousands of Anglo-Saxon immigrants to dilute the dominance of French speakers in the province.[3] What was once rural land transformed rapidly

1. Legal Information Institute, "Terra Nullius," LII / Legal Information Institute, accessed November 4, 2024, https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/terra_nullius.
2. Legal Information Institute. For a more nuanced reading of property development, see Allan Greer, *Property and Dispossession: Natives, Empires and Land in Early Modern North America* (Cambridge; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2018).
3. Pascal Hudon, "Essai sur la reconstruction du vide : l'exemple du Faubourg Saint-

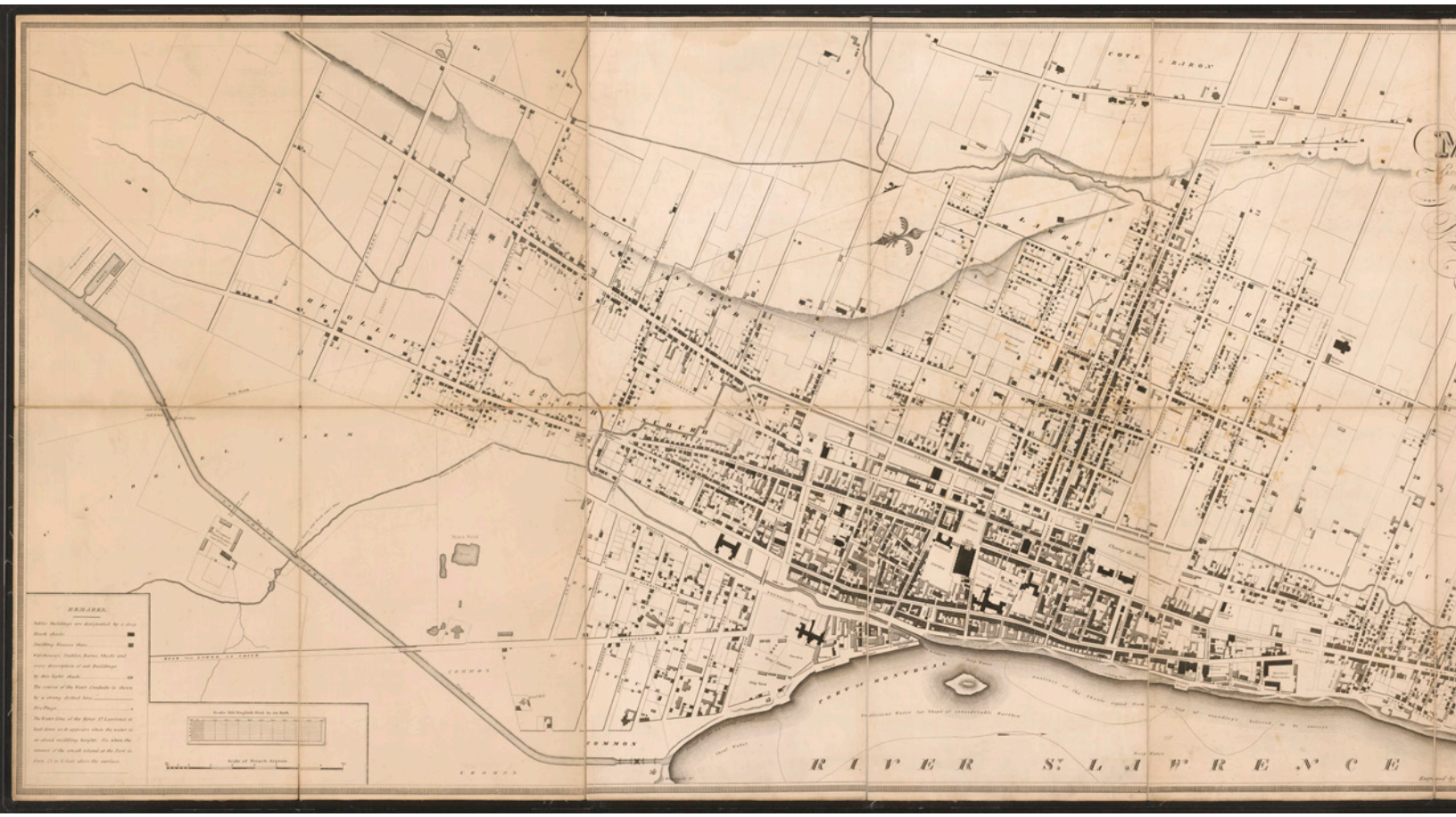


fig. 2.2: map of the city and suburbs of montreal, john adams, royl mily surveyor and draftsman (1825).



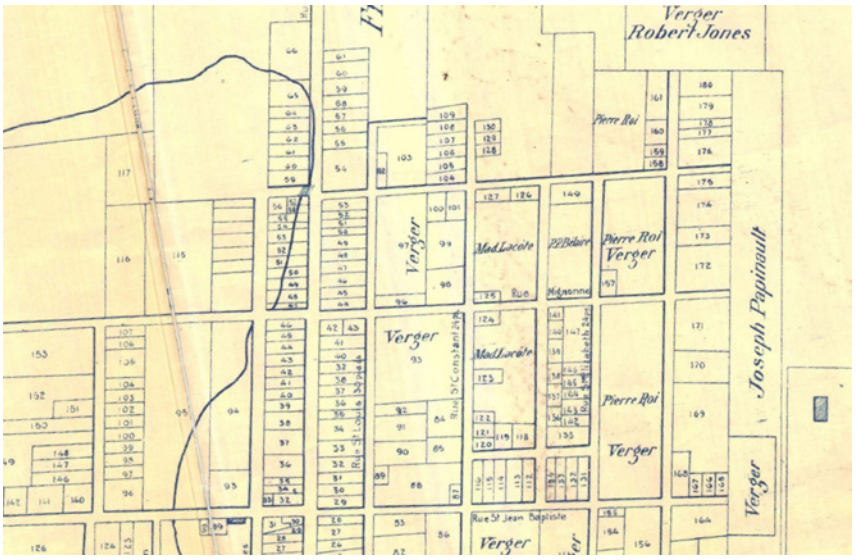


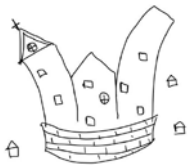
fig. 2.3: plan de la ville et cité de montréal, Louis Charland (1801), hand drawn map, copied by par Elzéar Courval (1919).

into urban space, with previous seigneurs and landowners subdividing and selling their properties [fig. 2.3].

The neighborhood's rapid development in the 19th century was interrupted by the great fire of 1852, which destroyed a great part of the city. Most buildings were reconstructed using non-flammable materials such as brick, stone, and concrete. Although the fire caused significant damage, there were no changes to the road network or lot subdivisions [fig. 2.4].[4.]

early urban boroughs

At the turn of the twentieth century, the neighborhood was home to a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural community made up of an emerging francophone petite bourgeoisie – centered around St-Hubert, St-Denis, and de la Gauchetière streets of workers – on Berger, St-Christophe, and de Bullion; and recent immigrants – on St-Laurent.[5.] While most earlier immigrants came from the English Commonwealth between 1880 and 1929, a second wave of immigrants from China and Eastern Europe, particularly Jewish families, began to settle in the area.[6.] As a result, one in five children identified as Czechoslovakian at this time.[7.] The presence of a francophone *bourgeoisie*, along with the neighborhood's proximity to the old city, fostered the establishment of important institutions such as Université Laval, the predecessor to Université de Montréal, *Hautes Études Commerciales*, and the Polytechnic School.[8.]



Quartier Saint-Louis: A Neighbourhood Made Problematic

housing crisis

By the 1930s, the Quartier Saint-Louis had developed into an urban and diverse neighborhood, however, it faced pressing social issues resulting from the Great Depression [fig. 2.5]. As a consequence of the economic crisis, housing development came to a halt, resulting in a dire shortage of rental units, dramatic rent increases, and widespread overcrowding.[9.] In a city where nearly 85% of the population were tenants, the housing crisis was bound to have severe consequences.[10.] The neighborhood's inhabitants –

Laurent" (Thesis, Montréal, Université du Québec à Montréal, 2006), 27, https://archipel.uqam.ca/3488/.
4. Hudon, 27.
5. Hudon, 28.
6. Corporation d'habitation Jeanne-Mance, "Corporation d'habitations Jeanne-Mance - CHJM," Corporation d'habitations Jeanne-Mance, accessed October 13, 2024, https://www.chjm.ca/.
7. Corporation d'habitation Jeanne-Mance.
8. Hudon, "Essai sur la reconstruction du vide," 28.
9. Marc-Henri Choko, *Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance : un projet social au centre-ville* (Montréal: Éditions Saint-Martin, 1995), 16.
10. Choko, 16.

most of them industrial workers – were hardly hit by increasing living costs and housing unavailability. Many families resorted to living in cramped, poorly lit, poorly ventilated, and cold spaces that lacked access to modern utilities such as hot water, electricity, and plumbing.[11.] An anecdotal but telling example of the desperation that many endured are the squatters' movements that developed at the time; the most notable being the *Ligue des vétérans sans logis* whichs with the help of the *Parti ouvrier progressiste,* successfully established informal communities downtown from 1946 to 1947.[12.] By 1944, the *Département de la Reconstruction,* a sub-organization of the provincial Division de l'habitation, estimated a shortfall of 16,400 housing units*,* a figure projected to rise to 50,000 within five years if the situation endured.[13.] The organization, therefore, anticipated the need for 11,000 low-rent units within that horizon.[14.]



Regardless of widespread calls for an institutional intervention to alleviate the crisis, the provincial government remained uninvolved. The *Commission Gingras,* specially constituted by Québec Premier Maurice Duplessis in 1952, concluded that "housing, like food and clothing, is the problem of society itself and of those who make it up. It is not, and should not be, the direct problem of government unless that government is in a socialist or collectivist state."[15.]

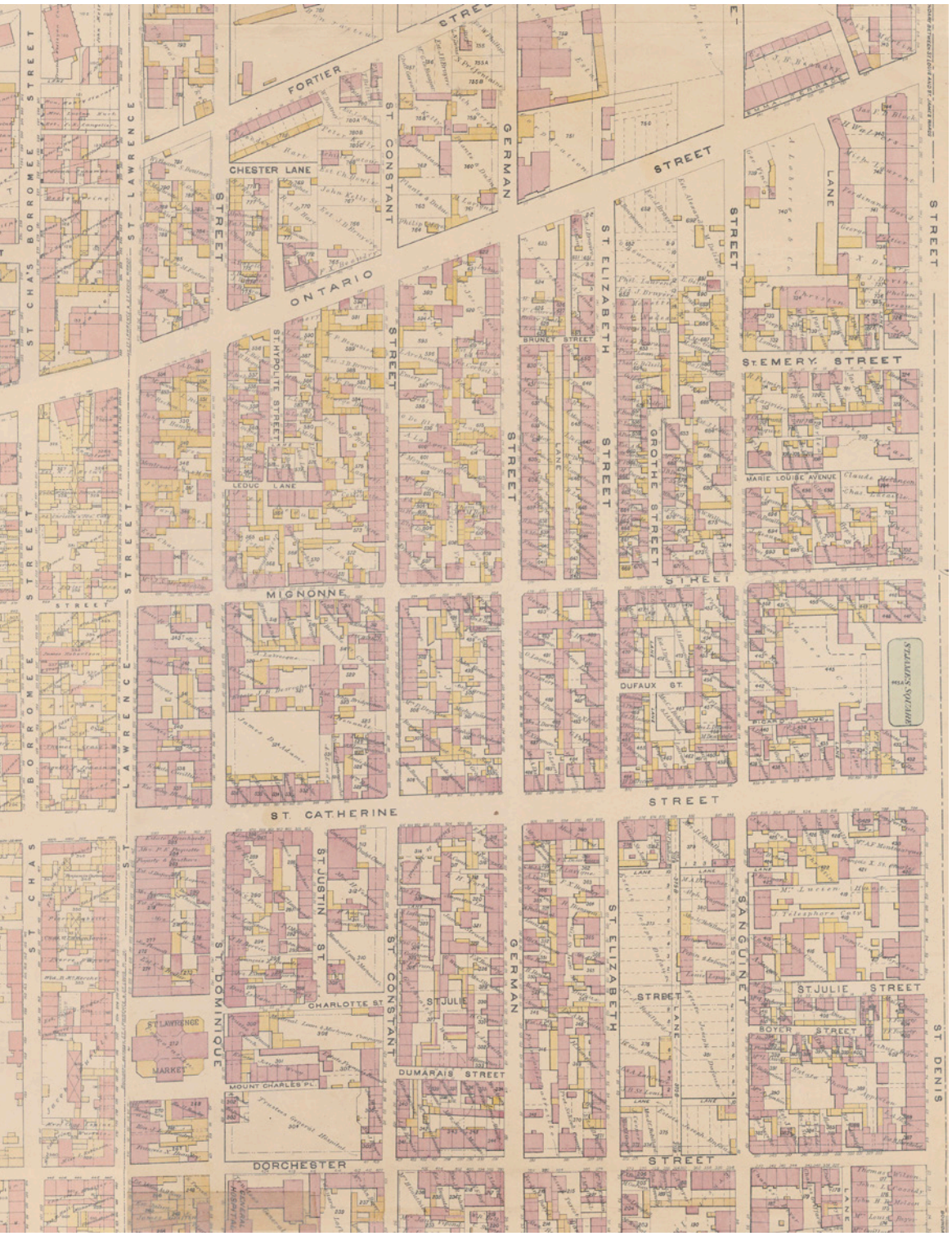
red light district

Quartier Saint-Louis' residential function was juxtaposed, throughout the first half of the twentieth, with that of Montreal's Red Light district, which spanned an area comprised of Dorchester Boulevard, Sherbrooke Street, de Bleury Street, and Saint-Denis Street.[16.] The quartier Saint-Louis lied at the epicenter of the entertainment district, right at the confluence of Sainte-Catherine (*St. Kitts*) and Saint-Laurent (*La Main*). The district was characterized by a mix of entertainment venues – cabarets, bars, clubs,

11. Martin Drouin, "De la démolition des taudis à la sauvegarde du patrimoine bâti (Montréal, 1954-1973)," *Urban History Review / Revue d'histoire urbaine* 41, no. 1 (2012): 22–36, https://doi.org/10.7202/1013762ar, 24.
12. Choko, *Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance,* 29.
13. Choko, *Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance,* 29.
14. Choko, 29.
15. Translated from Choko, 30. The original French passage reads : « le logement, comme la nourriture et le vêtement, est le problème de la société elle-même et de ceux qui la composent. Il n'est pas et ne doit pas être le problème direct du gouvernement, à moins qu'il ne s'agisse d'un gouvernement dans un État socialiste ou collectiviste. »
16. The term Red Light was first used to refer to sex work neighborhoods in 1879 by the American Public Health Association, but its use had become mainstream in Montreal at the beginning of the century. Philippe Guillaume, "A Heuristic Archive: Jean-Paul Gill's Red Light Photographs," in *Photogenic Montreal: Activisms and Archives in a Post-Industrial City*, ed. Martha Langford and Johanne Sloan (Montreal: McGill-queen's University Press, 2021), 174–98, https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uqam/detail.action?docID=6845298.



fig. 2.4: fire insurance plan, montréal, charles e. goad (1880).


FORTIER
CHESTER LANE
ST CONSTANT
GERMAN
STREET
ONTARIO
ST ELIZABETH
BRUNET STREET
LANE
ST EMERY STREET
MARIE LOUISE AVENUE
GROTHE STREET
ST HYPOLITE STREET
LEDUC LANE
MIGNONNE
DUFAUX ST.
ST CATHERINE
ST JUSTIN
ST DOMINIQUE
CHARLOTTE ST
ST JULIE
DUMARAIS STREET
MOUNT CHARLES PL.
DORCHESTER
SANGUINET
BOYER
ST JULIE STREET
ST LAWRENCE MARKET
ST LAWRENCE BOULEVARD
ST CHAS BORROMEE STREET
ST DENIS

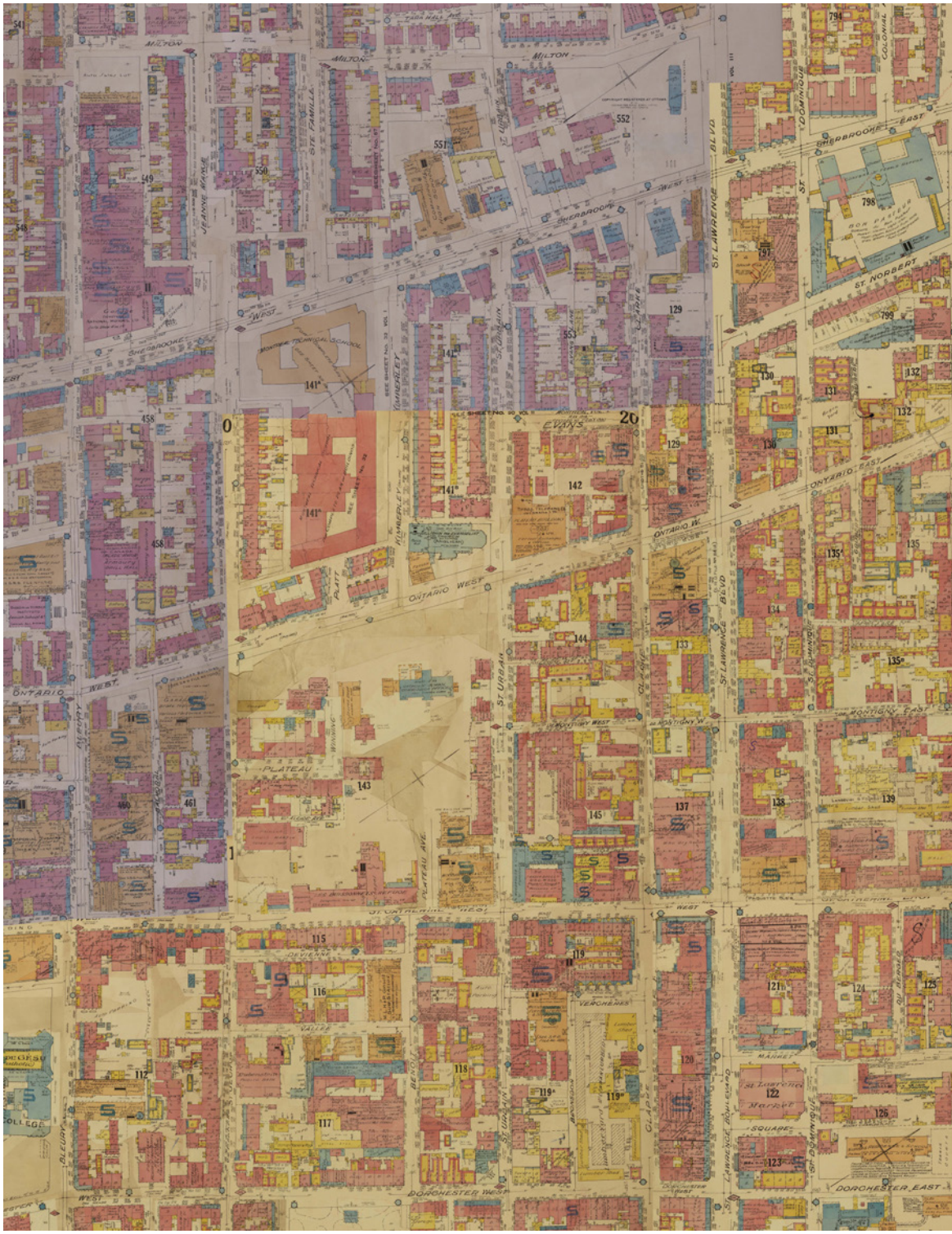
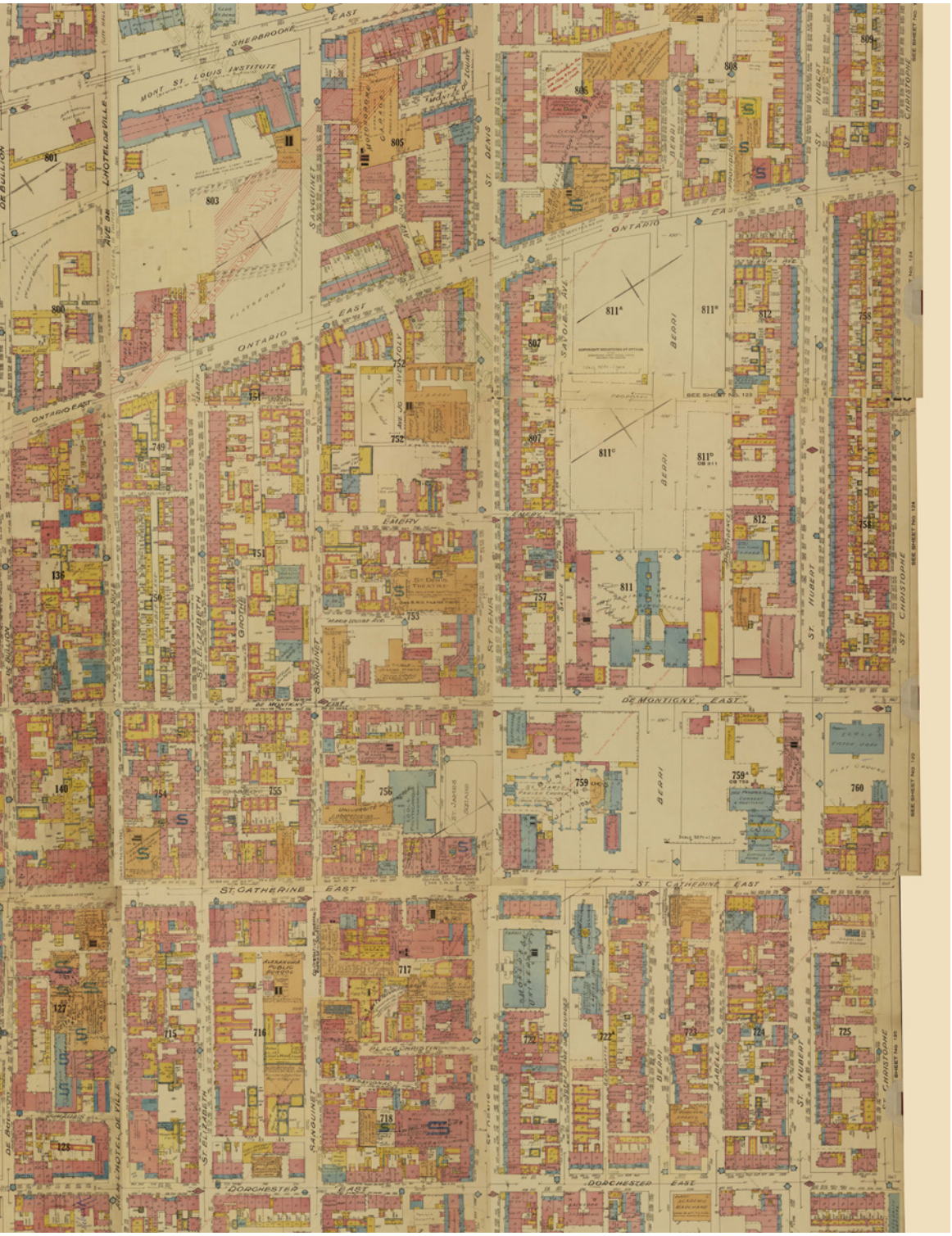


fig. 2.5: fire insurance plan, montréal, (1939-1944).


SHERBROOKE EAST
MONT ST. LOUIS INSTITUTE
DE BULLION
AVE DE L'HOTEL DE VILLE
SANGUINET
ST. DENIS
ONTARIO EAST
ONTARIO
ST. ELIZABETH
EMERY
DE MONTIGNY EAST
ST. CATHERINE EAST
DORCHESTER EAST
BERRI
ST. HUBERT
ST. CHRISTOPHE
SAVOIE AVE
PLACE CHRISTIN
ST. JAMES
801
803
805
806
807
808
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811A
811B
811C
811D
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140

brothels, illegal gambling establishments, or *barbotes*.[17] Its strategic proximity to downtown and the port and a lack of strict municipal regulations created an environment ripe for nightlife and illicit activities.[18] With the establishment of the American prohibition in 1920, Montreal's Red Light quickly became a prime destination for American tourism and organized crime investment.[19] The situation quickly fueled the growth of entertainment, sex work, and gambling sectors in the neighborhood.

Between 1920 and 1960, the area became synonymous with nightlife, home to an impressive number of cabarets that often headlined famous artists like local jazz musicians Oscar Peterson and Oliver Jones and international rising stars like Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Jr., Ella Fitzgerald, Édith Piaf, and Charles Aznavour.[20] In the 1920s, the district became known as a hub for sex work. The city estimated that 300 brothels and approximately 2000 sex workers operated within the neighborhood at this time. Sex workers were often visible on the sidewalks or from windows, rattling shut louvers to indicate their availability.[21] Illegal gambling thrived as well, with *barbotes* serving as speakeasies where patrons could enjoy illicit games and draft taps despite laws prohibiting alcohol sales on weekends.[22] Organized crime took root in the district, resulting in frequent arrests and violent altercations.[23] At that time, arrest rates in the area were six times higher than the city average.[24]



Although appointed officials saw the Red Light as a moral blight, cohabitation between illicit activities and the residents' day-to-day lives seemed relatively harmonious. Robert Petrelli, a former resident of the neighborhood, paints a picture of harmonious coexistence; his mom would redirect patrons to nearby *barbotes* when they would ring their bell by mistake, sex workers became *aunties* that would babysit the children, gambling venues would provide work for young teenagers: the neighborhood was a little village.[25]

The authorities maintained a lax attitude toward the district for many years,

17. Paul-André Linteau, "Le Red Light," in *Quartiers Disparus. Red Light, Faubourg à m'lasse, Goose Village*, ed. Catherine Charlebois and Paul-André Linteau (Les éditions Cardinal, 2014), 48.
18. Hudon, "Essai sur la reconstruction du vide," 28.
19. Histoire Canada, "L'âge d'or du Red Light montréalais - Histoire Canada," Histoire Canada, accessed November 4, 2024, https://www.histoirecanada.ca/consulter/politique-et-droit/l-age-d-or-du-red-light-montrealais/transcription-textuelle-de-la-video-l-age-d-or.
20. Richard Burnett, "Montréal's Historic Red-Light District," Tourisme Montréal, October 6, 2023, https://www.mtl.org/en/experience/history-red-light-district.
21. Linteau, "Le Red Light."
22. Linteau, 82.
23. Linteau, 92.
24. Linteau, 48.
25. Linteau, "Le Red Light."

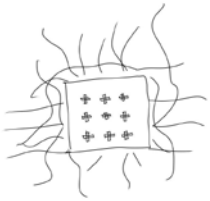
with politicians, doctors, and those connected to the trade advocating for a tolerant approach despite reformist calls from religious leaders and feminist organizations for the closure of *disorderly* establishments.[26] However, in 1944, rising pressures from the Canadian Army regarding increasing sexually transmitted infections among soldiers prompted a crackdown on brothels.[27] At that time, thousands of soldiers were stationed in the city, many of whom visited these establishments. A report from 1944 revealed that most of the sexually transmitted infection cases among soldiers could be traced back to the Red Light.[28] Meanwhile, a morality campaign in the 1950s led to the closure of numerous gambling houses, with a strong focus on organized crime in the area. Pax Plante, the head of the morality squad, was dismissed in 1948 for his fervor and later exposed the corruption he had encountered in a series of articles published in *Le Devoir*.[29] This heightened public awareness resulted in establishing the Caron Inquiry in 1950 to investigate commercialized vice in the district.[30] These events slowly chipped away at the Red Light district, leaving it mostly derelict at the end of the 1950s.

Urban Renewal as a Panacea[31]

ville contemporaine

The rhetoric of urban renewal first appeared in Canadian public discourse during the 1930s when imperatives of economic development and modernization became the primary drivers of urban transformation. Urban renewal, as an ideology, has its roots in the urbanistic principles and aesthetic precepts of the Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne (CIAM), led by Le Corbusier. In 1922, Le Corbusier was commissioned by the Salon d'Automne to present a project to its upcoming Salon des arts décoratifs.[32] Although the direction of the *Salon* had wished the architect to design a sculpture or a piece of furniture, Le Corbusier instead chose to feature a speculative project for a city of three million inhabitants named Ville Contemporaine.[33] The proposed scheme attempted to define a vision

26. Andrée Lévesque, "Éteindre le Red Light : les réformateurs et la prostitution à Montréal entre 1865 et 1925," *Urban History Review / Revue d'histoire urbaine* 17, no. 3 (1989): 191–201, https://doi.org/10.7202/1017631ar.
27. Linteau, "Le Red Light," 68.
28. Linteau, "Le Red Light."
29. Burnett, "Montréal's Historic Red-Light District."
30. Burnett.
31. For an exploration of metaphors of illness and remedy, see Susan Sontag, *Illness as metaphor* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1988).
32. Le Corbusier, "Guiding Principles of Town Planning," in *Programs and Manifestoes on 20th Century Architecture*, ed. Ulrich Conrads, trans. Michael Bullock (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1970), 91.
33. Le Corbusier 1887-1965. et al., *Oeuvre complète.*, 5e ed (Zurich: Editions Girsberger,



for the modern city in drastic break with urban developments of the past; 24 high-rise buildings housed commercial and business functions, long housing bars or immeubles à redents would house 600,000 inhabitants while dense garden cities would provide housing for a remaining two million inhabitants [fig. 2.6]. Its principles were simple: to the overcrowded, tortuous fabric of the old city, Le Corbusier would substitute an orthogonal, rational grid of segregated functions over a free, continuous park. Doing so would allow for a decongestion of city centers, an increase in density, an increase in circulation, and an increase in green spaces.[34] More radical than the scheme itself, however, was perhaps the reformist approach it promoted to tackling obsolete urban forms – whatever Le Corbusier deemed them to be. For the Ville Contemporaine was not envisioned as an a-spatial, decontextualized speculation but rather as the blueprint for a reform of Paris' downtown core. The scheme would rip through the fabric of the city, destroying historical neighborhoods to establish a new urban model, one appropriate to modern life. Only then could an adequate, hygienic, and truly modern city could be established on the ruins of its predecessor.

ciam

Although the Ville Contemporaine set the principles of urban renewal – or the belief that social change could be effected through urban transformation – those tenets would only be enshrined and diffused on a large scale by the Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne. The CIAM were established in 1928 as international gatherings of modern architects – although most of which were and would remain European for several years – to discuss formal and technical strategies towards collectivist social transformation; promote these principles to potential clients, patrons, and public procurement; and constitute a unified, purified vision of modern architecture.[35] The first CIAM, held in La Sarraz, discussed principles of urban planning that were present in Le Corbusier's Ville Contemporaine: the problems of premodern cities, the separation of functions, the organization of traffic, and legislation.[36] The discussions would lead to the adoption of the La Sarraz declaration which stated that "urbanization cannot be conditioned by the claims of a pre-existent

1953), 34.
34. Le Corbusier 1887-1965. et al., 37.
35. Eric Mumford, *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism, 1928–1960* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2002), 12, https://mitpress.mit.edu/9780262632638/the-ciam-discourse-on-urbanism-19281960/.
36. Le Corbusier, "Guiding Principles of Town Planning," 110.

aestheticism: its essence is of a functional order"[37] and pleaded for unified, collective land development.[38] This call for coherent development instigated through collective land economy, as opposed to a "chaotic division of land, resulting from sales, speculations, (and) inheritances"[39] would become a key principle of urban renewal. Governments, and more specifically municipal bodies, would be positioned as the stewards of reformative urbanism in the face of disordered, organic urban developments. This would be instrumental in legitimizing the intervention of state authorities upon large territories in the pursuit of reform, order, and progress.

athens charter

Over the next decade, CIAM would be held regularly to discuss architectural and urbanistic questions. The Athens Charter, adopted at the fifth congress in 1941, would formalize shared principles developed over the years, effectively solidifying a unified Modernist approach to urban planning. The Athens Charter critiqued the state of historical cities, framing them as chaotic, unhygienic and unfit to meet the "primordial biological and psychological needs of their inhabitants."[40] The city no longer served its primary function: to shelter human beings and shelter them well. The unregulated growth of cities and the adverse effects of industrialization would pose problems that could no longer be addressed by traditional urbanism. According to the Charter, modern urban transformations had to be conducted with precision and control to correct the problems of the city. It emphasized that urban planning should not be driven by *ad hoc* development, but should instead be approached systematically, with a clear, unified vision. Urban planning thus would become the antidote to the cancerous traditional city, one that could transform it, opening up a new creative field for architects and urban designers.[41]

At the heart of the Athens Charter was the prioritization of housing at the cornerstone of urban renewal. CIAM members believed that new, efficient housing was the key to improving the living conditions of city dwellers.[42] High-density housing and well-planned environments would allow for more equitable access to sunlight, fresh air, and green spaces; effectively

37. Le Corbusier, 110.
38. Le Corbusier, 111.
39. Mumford, *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism, 1928–1960*, 25.
40. CIAM, "Charter of Athens: Tenets," in *Programs and Manifestoes on 20th Century Architecture*, ed. Ulrich Conrads, trans. Michael Bullock (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1970), 137.
41. CIAM, 139.
42. CIAM, 139.

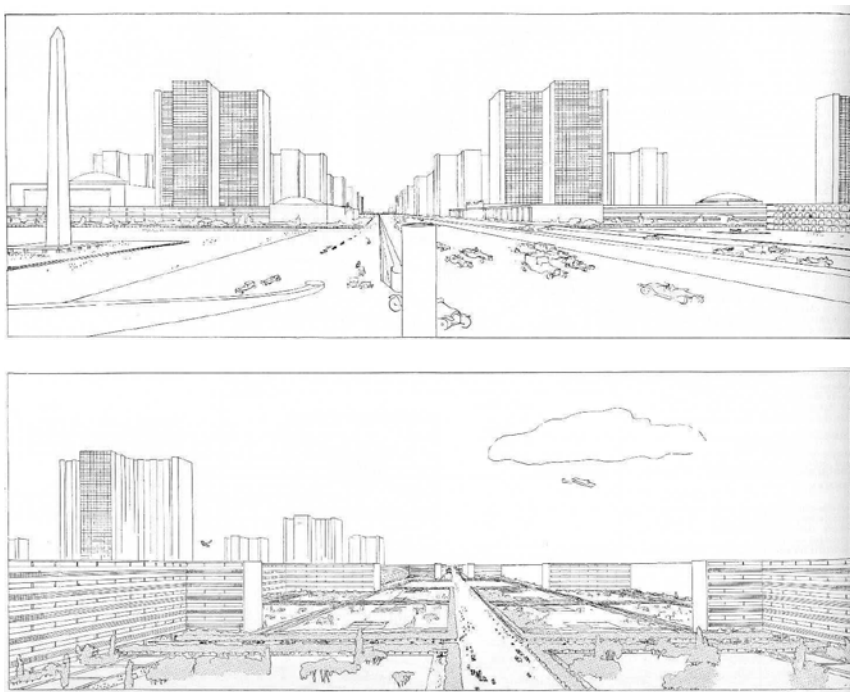


fig. 2.6: perspectival drawings, ville contemporaine, Le Corbusier (1922). oeuvres complètes vol. 1, p. 36.

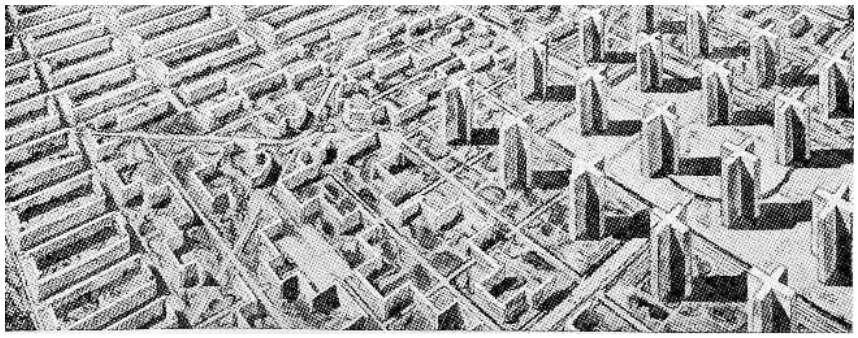


fig. 2.6: model photograph, ville contemporaine, Le Corbusier (1922). oeuvres complètes vol. 1, p. 37.

eliminating the overcrowded, unsanitary conditions of industrial cities.

The belief in the transformative power of architecture – in its capacity to effect change and reform everyday life – is inherently modern and is not limited to the principles of CIAM. What the Charter achieved, however, was to provide a coherent set of principles and an outlet to promote them. The influence it had on worldwide post-war urbanism is undeniable, shaping international urban renewal efforts. The principles championed by Le Corbusier and the CIAM had a lasting impact in shaping urban policy, particularly in enabling reformist governments to undertake drastic urban developments in the name of economic progress and humanitarian pursuits. These very principles would form the foundation of urban renewal rhetoric in Montréal in the 1960s and 1970s; one based on *tabula rasa*, hygienism, and economic development.



Urban Renewal in Montréal

quiet revolution

The post-war years were a period of profound social, political, and ideological transformations in the province of Québec which came to be known as the Quiet Revolution. Marked by the rise of nationalism and a push towards the secularization of public services, these years witnessed the provincial government take a more active role in the economy; therefore forming the basis of what would become Québec's welfare state. This led to significant changes in the structure of the education system, healthcare, and social services.

Urban renewal, an ideology rooted in modernist architecture, would come to be closely aligned with the political and ideological transformations that the province of Québec would be undergoing throughout the post-war period. In Québec, and specifically in the city of Montréal, urban renewal would become a tool to accelerate the transition from a ruro-traditional catholic society into a modern metropolis, and it would soon become a means of transforming the city in the service of a new French-speaking city and its rising *petite bourgeoisie* [fig. 2.7].[43] This period was marked by a significant ideological shift among Québec's intellectuals, who were motivated by a desire to "catch up"[44] with the economic and technological

43. Pierson Nettling, "Tenant Activism and the Demise of Urban Renewal: Tenants, Governance, and the Struggle for Recognition at Habitations Jeanne-Mance in Montreal," *Journal of Urban History* 48, no. 3 (September 4, 2022): 527.
44. In the original French, *théorie du rattrapage.* Marcel Rioux, "Sur l'évolution des idéologies au Québec," in *La culture comme refus de l'économisme : Écrits de Marcel Rioux*, ed. Jacques Hamel, Julien Forgues Lecavalier, and Marcel Fournier, PUM-Corpus

advancements seen in the rest of Canada and other developed nations. This ideology facilitated a transition from a traditional society, focused on cultural preservation, to a techno-industrial society looking toward the future. The result was a rapid push towards state technocracy and a degree of Americanization, as Quebec sought to modernize and elevate its status.[45.]

marcel rioux

In *Sur l'évolution des idéologies au Québec,* sociologist Marcel Rioux traces a typology of dominant political ideologies in the province of Québec, and looks at the paradigm shift that is to be credited with operating a transition from a traditional, rural, catholic society to a modern, industrial, and secular one.[46.] By ideology, Rioux means a project of existence that is proposed to a society by one of its sub-groups, and which aims to encompass the identity of that very society.[47.] In a complex, multi-vocal society, the conflict of ideologies reflects the conflict of subgroups struggling to have their theory accepted by the majority and, ultimately, to rule that society.[48.] Until World War II, the dominant ideology that guided socio-cultural and political practices in the province was an ideology of conservation: conservation of traditional values, of lifestyles, and more importantly of language. As an isolated cultural and linguistic minority within a broader anglophone North America, Québecois groups of interest sought to solidify Québec's identity as a monolithic, singular voice. Led by efforts from the catholic clergy, who administered much of social services in the province, Québec was gradually forged as a Francophone, catholic, rural, and traditional nation.[49.]

The post-war conjecture, however, saw major societal changes; Québec was increasingly becoming more urbanized, and its once mainly agricultural population was becoming industrialized. The industrial development of Québec, led by its metropolis Montréal, was amongst the fastest out of Western economies and quickly positioned it as a leading hub in North America.[50.] The ideology of conservation which had been the prevalent paradigm until now was now under attack, with various groups

(Montréal: Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 2000), 349–79, https://doi.org/10.4000/books.pum.22010.
45. Jean-Claude Marsan, "Montréal: Repenser l'aménagement," in *Montréal et Son Aménagement: Vivre La Ville*, ed. Lucie K. Morriset, Collection de La Chaire de Recherche Du Canada En Patrimoine Urbain (Montréal: Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2012), 228.
46. Rioux, "Sur l'évolution des idéologies au Québec."
47. Rioux, §20.
48. Rioux, §20
49. Rioux, §32.
50. Rioux, §35.

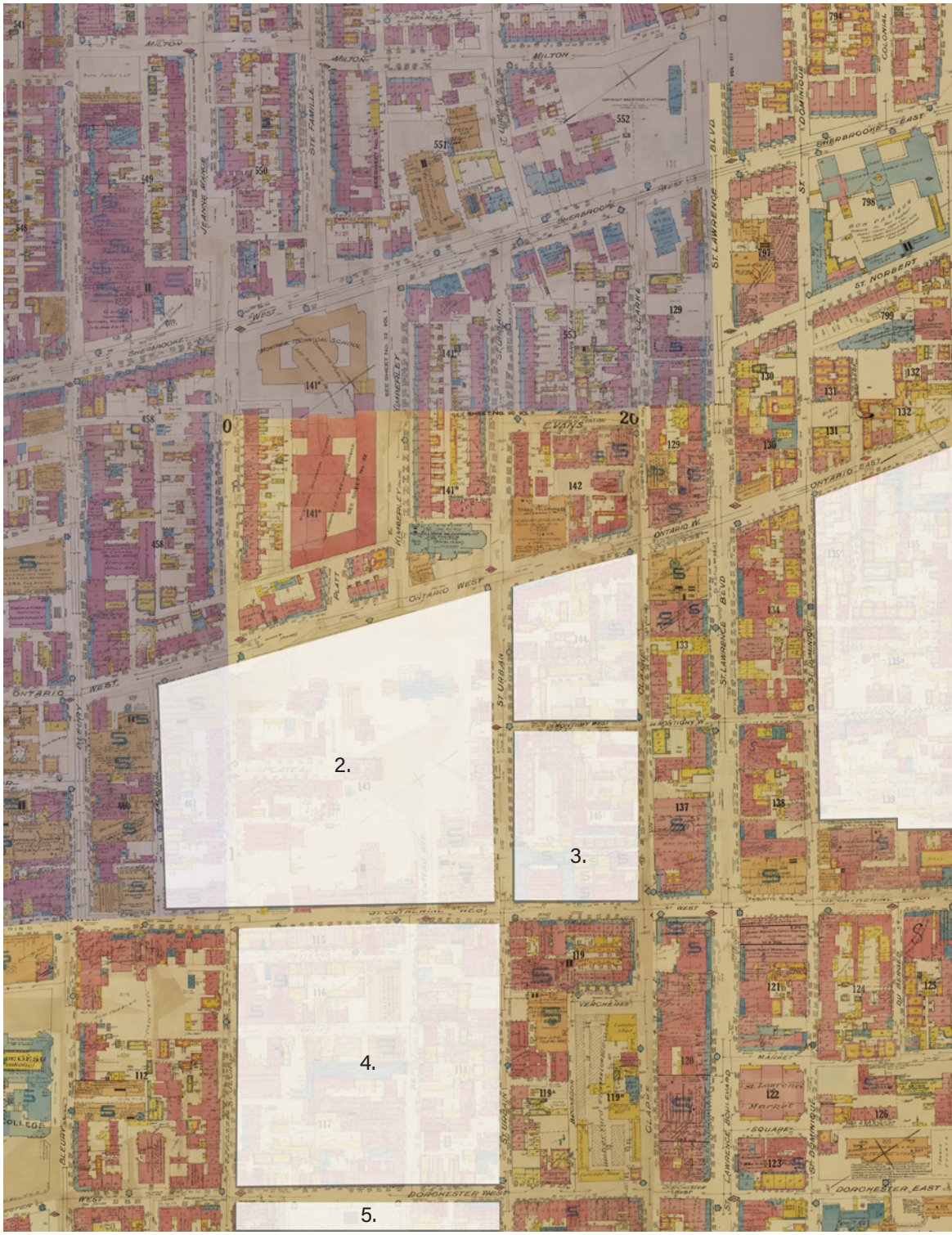
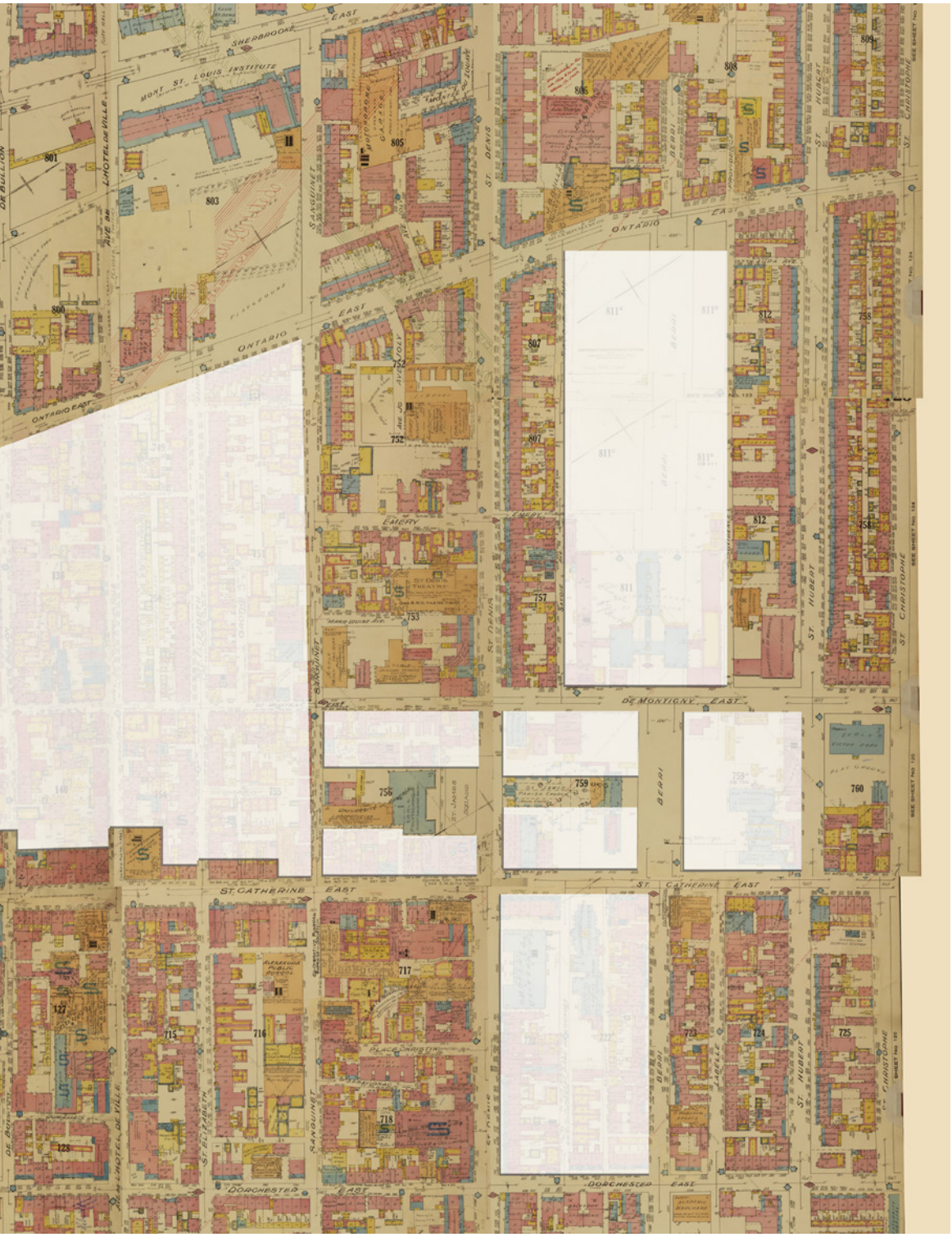


fig. 2.7: demolished urban fabric overlaid with the Fire Insurance Plan, Montréal, (1939-1944).



1. *future habitations jeanne-mance (demolished 1957-1960)*
2. *future place des arts (demolished in 1956)*
3. *future hydro-québec headquarters (demolished c. 1960)*
4. *future complexe desjardins (demolished c. 1972)*
5. *future complexe guy-favreau (demolished in 1977)*
6. *future hubert aquin and judith jasmin pavilions (uqàm) (demolished in 1972)*
7. *future ja de sève pavilion (demolition date unknown)*
8. *future uqàm pavilions (demolition date unknown)*
9. *future lengthening of berri street (demolished c. 1954)*
10. *future place émilie gamelin (demolished 1962)*

of interests – union leaders, intellectuals, journalists, artists, students, and professionals – began to argue that Québec needed to become a modern society. Rioux coins this new ideology that of "catching up". In the absence of much consensus about the orientations that a new nation should adopt amongst such different stakeholders, the ideology of catch-up emerged as negativist reversal of what had come before. This new coalition criticized the groups it deemed responsible for the tardiness that Québec had accumulated in its development; the catholic clergy – which had until now administered education, healthcare, and social services – and the Duplessis administration whose 24-year reign over the province was based on rural, *ultramontain*, and catholic values.[51] What objective the ideological opposition had in common, however, was to close the gap between Québec culture – its ideas, values, symbols, attitudes – and Québec society – technology, economy, urbanization, industrialization. This gap between Québec culture and society produced a similar gap between Québec and other North American societies. In Québec, therefore, those who opposed the regime in the 1945-1960 period were participating not only in an ideology of contestation but in an ideology of catch-up.[52] The American and Canadian federal models– as the closest both geographically and politically – became aspirational models of liberal democracies.[53]

jean-claude marsan

In this liminal context between two paradigms – one old, one new – urban renewal became a tool to do away with the outdated, fabric of the city and unlock its potential in enabling modernity to take its hold. For Jean-Claude Marsan, academic and professor of urban planning, this reconfiguration of the city was made necessary by the growth tendencies of a new modern society. The success of an urban agglomeration was no longer measured only by the vitality of its activities – be they social, cultural, or political – but by the true measure of its economic and population growth.[54] Economic activities and returns had to constantly increase in order to be viable, or profitable; a trend that had to be mirrored by an ever-expanding demography. Faced with these demands, the city of the 19th century appeared unable to sustain immediate, let alone permanent growth. Streets were not wide enough to allow for smooth automobile circulation, mixed-use neighborhoods created conflicts between quiet

51. Rioux, §42.
52. Rioux, §42.
53. Rioux, §42.
54. Marsan, "Montréal: Repenser l'aménagement," 228.

residential lives and the bustling industrial activity, building density was too high, and open space was insufficient: examples abound of how the "old" city impeded development that was necessary to its vitality.[55] The solution therefore seemed evident, techno-scientific methods – such as the hygienist principles promoted by the CIAM – would be the source of all further progress and reform; reconstructing a rational, efficient city on the ruins of its past. And rationalist architecture would provide both the means of razing the obsolete remains and of erecting its successor.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, urban renewal projects proliferated across the city [fig. 2.8-2.15]. Major streets were widened (then-Dorchester, now René-Lévesque boulevard, de Maisonneuve, Viger); new highways tore apart the urban fabric (Highway 40, Highway 15, Ville-Marie Highway [fig. 2.12]); new civic institutions were established on existing neighbourhoods (the Place des Arts destroyed an extensive portion of the Red Light district [fig. 2.8]; almost half of Chinatown was razed to make room for the Palais des congrès [fig. 2.13] and the Guy Favreau complex [fig. 2.10]; Radio-Canada was built on the ruins on the *faubourg à m'lasse* [fig. 2.9]); iconic office buildings sprung throughout the downtown area (Place Ville-Marie [fig.2.14], complexe Desjardins [fig. 2.11], tour de la bourse). Many other speculative projects were halted by citizen groups and organizations (Cité des ondes, Cité Concordia [fig. 2.15], highway through downtown).

Urban renewal occurred in Montréal as an instrumental extension in realizing a newfound ideology of national identification and determination; one that was based on the emancipation of a francophone society through technology and industry. As Henri Lefebvre argued in *La production de l'espace*, no new semiotic system – or representational space – may be constituted without changes to the physical space that sustains and represents it.[56] A new national identity, in order to be realized, therefore had to inscribe itself onto its spaces of representation; urban renewal was one of the ways in which it intended to do so. But beyond its reformative and projective aims, urban renewal strived to restore, or rather instore, a sense of moral order that would suit the new image that it set out to establish. Therefore, for Drouin, the destruction associated with urban renewal was mostly justified through a wrongful association between the



55. Drouin, "De la démolition des taudis à la sauvegarde du patrimoine bâti (Montréal, 1954-1973)."
56. Henri Lefebvre, *La production de l'espace*, 4. éd, Ethnosociologie (Paris: Anthropos, 2000), http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb370983677.



*fig. 2.8: place des arts under construction, salle en chantier, archives nationales à montréal, fonds La Presse (*06M_P833, S4, D1560_0011_1*), René Picard (1962.)*



fig. 2.9: construction de la tour radio-canada, archives de la ville de Montréal, 1970.



fig. 2.13: palais des congrès under construction, Le Devoir, (1983).



fig. 2.12: construction du tunnel Ville-Marie, BAnQ Vieux-Montréal, P244,D8182_012*, studio O. Allard photographes incorporée, (1972).*



fig. 2.10: complexe Guy-Favreau under construction, seen from rue De La Gauchetière, Sauvons Montréal series, Brian Merrett (n.d.)



fig. 2.11: complexe Desjardins en construction, canadian centre for architecture, Montréal, fonds Jean Ouellet, ARCH203837, (1975).



fig. 2.14: construction of the place Ville-Marie, Montreal Gazette, (1961).



fig. 2.15: cité Concordia, original scheme, (1962).

age of the built environment and its obsolescence.[57.]

urban renewal and quartier saint-louis

In the specific case of the Quartier Saint-Louis, the target of the Dozois plan, urban renovation became a humanitarian enterprise capable of rectifying the living conditions of its residents. In the 1950s, before any redevelopments had started, the neighborhood's poor conditions contributed to the development of an image of *taudis* or *slums*, as defined as housing units whose conditions have drastically deteriorated and are no longer fit for adequate living. Most dwellings in the area were of inadequate size, poorly lit, badly ventilated, insufficiently heated – especially during the wintertime – humid, and could not be upgraded to modern standards of comfort.[58.] Moreover, a significant proportion of households experienced overcrowding and resorted to subletting spare rooms to tenants or other families. As such, not only was urban renewal a means to prepare the city for its modern course, but it also had the potential to cure social blight and better the living conditions of the working class. This commitment to hygiene and health in spatial planning again resonates with Le Corbusier's urban projects, the realized ensembles of his colleagues, and with the more local hygienist discourse surrounding crime and carceral architecture.[59.]

The aesthetic and morphological inability of the existing fabric of the neighborhood to provide adequate shelter to its inhabitants mirrored, for its critics, the moral degradation of the neighborhood. Portrayed as the site of rampant criminality and illicit activities, the Quartier Saint-Louis' depravity could only be cured through physical, material intervention. This association between spatial and moral order meant that by ordering the urban chaos of the borough, antisocial behaviors would be eradicated. The aesthetic-moral conflation is evident in the discourse entertained by then-mayor Jean Drapeau when talking about slum clearance: "We need to prevent the rapid degradation of old sectors (of the city), destroy slums and replace them with healthy housing, in short, to re-build a harmonious and pretty city on the site of past ugliness."[60.] Here we can see the evident

57. Drouin, "De la démolition des taudis à la sauvegarde du patrimoine bâti (Montréal, 1954-1973)," 23.
58. Drouin, 24.
59. Martin Dufresne, "Ville et Prison: Discours d'hygiénistes Réformateurs à Montréal Au Cours de La Deuxième Moitié Du XIXe Siècle," *Criminologie* 28, no. 2 (1995): 109–30.
60. Jean Drapeau as cited in Drouin, "De la démolition des taudis à la sauvegarde du patrimoine bâti (Montréal, 1954-1973)," 24. The original reads : « il faut prévenir la dégradation rapide des vieux secteurs, démolir les taudis pour les remplacer par des habitations saines, bref reconstruire une ville coquette et harmonieuse sur l'emplacement d'anciennes laideurs. »



fig. 2.16: municipal documentation constructed an image of Quartier Saint-Louis as dangerous and derelict, pictures from Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance, Choko (1995).



fig. 2.17: the streets of Quartier Saint-Louis appear far from derelict, pictures from Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance, Choko (1995).

photographic representation



confusion between the realm of physical well-being (*healthy housing*) and that of aesthetic purity (*harmonious and pretty city on the site of past ugliness*). Visual language and representations of the neighborhood, whether through photography, discourse, or so-called documentation, were instrumental in constructing an image of Quartier Saint-Louis as derelict.[61] The Dozois report featured an extensive selection of photographs that claimed to represent the conditions within the neighborhood although they deliberated framed its worst aspects only. Pictures of scrappy backyards filled with dilapidated staircases and sheds, with dangerous balconies hovering over un-scaped bare-ground soil abound within the report whereas the elegant, clean, and impeccable front facades of these same buildings were omitted [fig. 2.16-2.17].[62] In "A Heuristic Archive: Jean-Paul Gill's Red Light Photographs", Philippe Guillaume describes the methodology used in documenting the neighbourhood as heavily biased towards its depiction as a *slum*, qualifying the photographs of *mug shots* of houses.[63] The photos were made to outline the decay of the area, "to visually legitimize its demolition."[64]

This dissonance between an externally constructed narrative on the neighbourhood and the perception of its residents is exacerbated when compared to their testimonials. In an archival effort undergone in the early 2010s, the Centre d'histoire de Montréal conducted interviews with former residents to document the living conditions of the neighbourhood.[65] Most of them relate speak of their childhoods as pleasant and normal. Robert Petrelli, for instance, does not remember his house being a *slum* but rather a comfortable, well-heated dwelling, and his neighbourhood as a place of childlike exploration and wonder.[66] He mentions the huge trees that grew within alleys and backyards in which he and his friends built treehouses. The neighbourhood is depicted and perceived as a bubbling, active village with all the necessities readily available.

Whether they be framed as ideological, techno-industrial, or humanitarian endeavors, urban renewal practices operate on an extractive, paternalist model of development that ignores the contexts it seeks to reinvent and puts aside the communities that it claims to help.

61. Drouin, 24.
62. Guillaume, "A Heuristic Archive: Jean-Paul Gill's Red Light Photographs."
63. Guillaume.
64. Guillaume, 184.
65. Linteau, "Le Red Light."
66. Linteau, 59–60.

Saving Quartier Saint-Louis: the Plan Dozois

The movement to eradicate slums in Canada gained momentum in the early 1930s, reflecting growing concerns about urban living conditions. At its 1934 congress, the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC) adopted a resolution calling for the Dominion's intervention to fund the demolition of these deteriorating neighborhoods.[67] By 1935, the Ganong committee, alongside English capitalists, advocated for the establishment of social housing complexes across Canada. Percy Nobbs, speaking at the committee, emphasized the limitations of private capital in providing affordable housing, arguing that "the private capitalist builds a house that deteriorates significantly within twenty years; he creates slums."[68] The committee ultimately determined that the city required 25,000 new housing units, recommended capping rents at 20% of family income, and favored the creation of a dedicated housing organization to oversee these initiatives.[69] However, the motivations behind this push were not solely altruistic; housing was recognized as an essential industrial resource critical to productivity.[70]

Unlike in the United States where social housing has long been tied to welfare state initiatives, Canadian social housing only emerged at the beginning of the twentieth century. Although various laws were passed in the 1930s, none significantly impacted housing redevelopment until the 1944 National Housing Act.[71] This legislation introduced federal subsidies for municipalities to acquire and clear dilapidated areas, provided they were resold to private developers for moderate-rent housing.[72] This marked the first acknowledgment of a government role in the demolition-and-reconstruction approach to urban renewal. In 1949, the federal government responded to pressure from community stakeholders and politicians to broaden the subsidy program to include public housing projects. Both provincial and municipal governments were then permitted to acquire lots for social housing development, although political inclinations tended to favor private developers.[73] These measures positioned various levels of government as essential players in redeveloping central neighborhoods.[74]



67. Choko, *Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance*, 20.
68. As cited in Choko, 25. The original French passage reads: "C'est bien simple: le capital privé est incapable de procurer des logements à bon marché. Le capitaliste privé construit une maison qui se détériore seulement en vingt; il crée les taudis. »
69. Choko, 26.
70. Choko, 27.
71. Choko, 25.
72. Choko, 21.
73. Choko, 21.
74. Choko, 22.

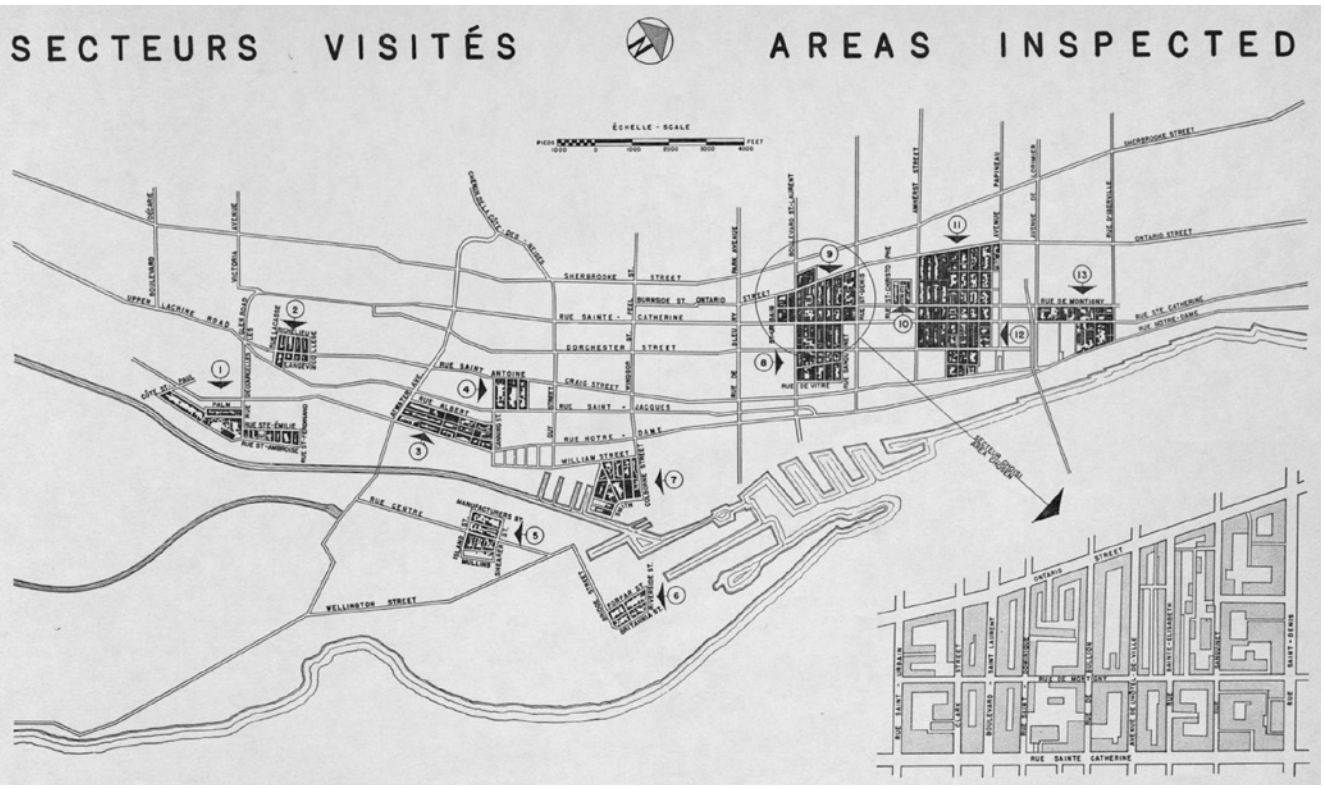


fig. 2.18: map of city "slums", Dozois commission, archives de la Ville de Montréal, XCD00_P7691-005A, (1951).

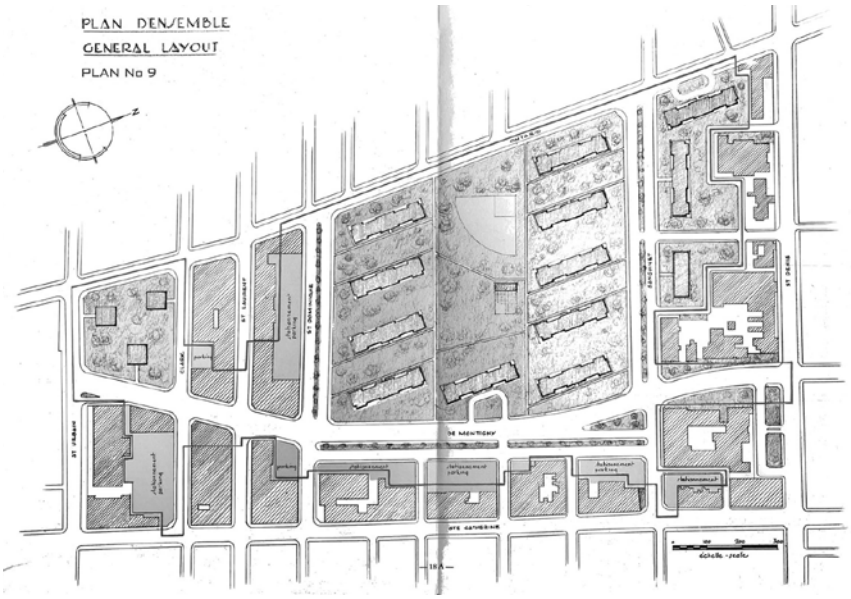


fig. 2.19: general layout, initial Dozois plan, (1951).

commission dozois

In 1952, following popular pressures from community groups and the approval of a 1.5 million dollar loan to eliminate insalubrious housing, a committee was constituted to assess "in objective terms" the metropolitan problem of degraded housing – or slums – and to demonstrate the economic viability of realizing a social housing scheme in the city.[75.] Presided by Paul Dozois, a member of the city's executive committee and representative of the Chamber of Commerce, the committee is constituted of municipal representatives – the mayor Camilien Houde and his executive president J. Omer Asselin – municipal counselors, union representatives, community actors, one representative from the archdiocese, one architect, the director of the Montreal Board of Trade and three representatives from municipal services.[76.] The committee originally examined 13 potential dilapidated sites in the city, but the choice eventually fell on the Quartier Saint-Louis due to its privileged location at the edge of downtown and conditions resembling that of Regent Park development in Toronto [fig. 2.18].[77.]

plan dozois

The committee's report, published on September 17, 1954, and approved by the municipal council on October 4, highlighted issues such as excessive density, insufficient sunlight, poor air circulation, and mixed-use conflicts contributing to delinquency.[78.] The first proposed plan was meant as a visual demonstration of the envisioned scope and siting of the project [fig. 2.19]. A vast expanse is cleared from St-Laurent to St-Denis between Ontario and Ste-Catherine, whose frontage is maintained. The scheme presents thirteen eight-story housing bars laid out in a perfect North-South orientation, contrasting Montreal's grid. Three twelve story towers were planned on the West section of the site. Even though the report's findings had resonated favorably with the press and the general public until then, the "vertical promiscuity"[79.] of the Dozois plan was decried by catholics – who deemed that the scheme went against traditional familial values – and anglophone modernist architects, like Percy Nobbs, who argued that high-rises went against Montreal's urban essence.[80.] Nobbs, like many other architects and designers, subscribed to the "each their

75. Corporation d'habitation Jeanne-Mance, "Corporation d'habitations Jeanne-Mance - CHJM."
76. Choko, *Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance*, 31.
77. Choko, 32.
78. Paul Dozois, "Projet de rénovation d'une zone d'habitat défectueux et de construction d'habitation à loyer modique - Plan Dozois" (Montréal: Cité de Montréal, 1954).
79. Jean Drapeau and Pierre Des Marais, "Main Arguments against Field-Dozois Plan" (Civic Action League, 1957), 10.
80. Choko, *Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance*.

door" philosophy inherited from Montreal's typological development. Montreal's urban boom, which lasted from the late 19th to the midcentury period, was instrumental in establishing the (tri-) plex as the base unit of urbanity; one where every dwelling had direct access to the street from its front door.[81] The plan also set aside non-traditional living arrangements. A significant portion of Quartier Saint-Louis' inhabitants either lived para-familial households as some of them either rented out spare rooms or split costs with other families.[82]

In October 1954, the Houde administration—which had initiated the Dozois commission—lost the municipal elections and was replaced as mayor by Jean Drapeau. This newfound administration, seconded by Pierre DesMarais as president of the executive committee, did not share the same enthusiasm its predecessors had had towards social housing, jeopardizing the project. Although Drapeau did condone urban renewal as a necessary tool for the city's modernization – which he would heavily make use of throughout his time as mayor – but disagreed as to the function that should replace Quartier Saint-Louis. The administration was not as opposed to the architectural scheme as it was to the notion of housing itself on site.[83] For Drapeau, the downtown core should be set aside – and even cleared – for industrial, commercial, and business functions.[84]

plan field-dozois

Despite this opposition, on June 21st, in the absence of Drapeau, the executive committee approves the plan.[85] As a result, the Field-Dozois committee is constituted to solve the financial and programmatic questions before design and construction can begin.[86] The initially studied site was reduced in size, with its western portion amputated at St-Dominique, therefore abandoning developments on boulevard Saint-Laurent itself. The southern section of the site was set aside for high-rise towers, while the northern area was designated for lower four to six story buildings. The updated plan was published in March 1956, receiving support from the provincial government which pledged 1 million dollars

81. Montréal's plex typology emerged from British terraced houses, popularized in downtown city developments around the 18th century. For a thorough discussion of the typology, see Réjean Legault, "Architecture et forme urbaine : l'exemple du triplex à Montréal de 1870 à 1914," *Urban History Review / Revue d'histoire urbaine* 18, no. 1 (1989): 1–10, https://doi.org/10.7202/1017820ar.
82. Choko, *Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance*, 38.
83. Choko, 38.
84. Drapeau and Des Marais, "Main Arguments against Field-Dozois Plan," 10.
85. Choko, *Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance*, 42.
86. Choko, 42.

to the construction.[87] Duplessis' government who had, until then, been rebarbative to any state intervention into housing, had changed course with Paul Dozois joining its candidates in 1954 and constituting the *Office municipal de l'habitation salubre* in 1957.[88] Demolition started in June of 1957, a few months after the approval of the plan and the creation of the *Office.*

mayoral opposition

Although the Field-Dozois plan was already on the way, Drapeau and DesMarais continued to vigorously oppose the project; reasserting that the site was not suited for housing, all the while resorting to ableist and classist rhetoric. In a pamphlet entitled *Main Arguments against the Field-Dozois Plan*, Desmarais asserts that the project is

> "anti-social and unmoral from many points of view, chief of which are undoubtedly: the creation of a human agglomeration made up only of economically weak people under the management of a bureaucracy ; the ruination of ambition for the father of a family who will suffer eviction if he increases his income – an intolerable condition in a society which is neither communist nor totalitarian ; complete ignorance of what a home means and of the social value of a dwelling ; the continuation of promiscuity, which is the most outstanding aspect of a slum problem, by encouraging the crowding of 800 families in the dead centre of a large city, at a stone's throw from the business district and the harbour."[89]

cité des ondes

For both men, not only was social housing not meant to be developed in central neighborhoods, but social housing itself was framed as a threat to Québécois identity, and economic prosperity. Even as the demolitions went on, Drapeau remained opposed to the residential function of the site, advocating instead for its transformation into a business sector. He envisioned a *Cité des ondes*, which would accommodate Radio-Canada, various radio and television stations, a natural science museum, a planetarium, commercial buildings, and six residential towers as an alternative to Dozois plan [fig. 2.20].[90] Drapeau was ultimately defeated in the elections in October 1957, paving the way for its successor, Sarto Fournier, to proceed with the approved Field-Dozois plan.[91] The *Cité des ondes* would eventually be concretized in a subsequent Drapeau mandate, but not on site. Similar *slum* clearing arguments would be used then to justify the demolition of the *faubourg à m'lasse*, a few blocks away.

87. Choko, *Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance*.
88. Choko, 50–51.
89. Drapeau and Des Marais, "Main Arguments against Field-Dozois Plan," 6.
90. Choko, *Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance*.
91. Choko.

final scheme

The final scheme for the Habitations was elaborated by Rother, Bland, and Trudeau while the Greenspoon, Freedlander and Dunne designed the buildings themselves with the input of Jacques and Morin, architectural consultants. The site was divided into two parts along the then de Montigny boulevard – now renamed de Maisonneuve – into a southern and a northern section [fig. 2.21]. Five autonomous ensembles would be organized around an equal number of towers, 3 of them north of de Maisonneuve, 2 south. The five towers would house senior residents and mostly featured one-bedroom apartments while larger units would be distributed into lower horizontal bars between 2 and three storeys high. Two and three-bedroom units would be located within multiplex buildings, while rows of townhouses would host five and six-bedroom units; along with a private yard [fig. 2.22]. The objective of breaking up the site and the units into several ensembles was to create varied, lively spaces that allowed residents to pursue and accrue their cultural activities.[92.] Two central parks were developed along a central north-south axis, gathering sports equipment.

community centre

From the first stages of the project development, there was an initial desire to build a community center on-site that would guarantee services and social spaces to the Habitations' inhabitants. John W. McConnell, owner of the St. Lawrence Sugar Company and the Montreal *Star*, had pledged funds towards that enterprise, leading to the city drawing up initial function requirements for the site.[93.] Inspired by Pointe-Claire's Stewart Hall, recently renovated at the time, the city estimated that a 25,000 square foot center would be necessary to cater to the residents' needs. The project, however, was abandoned for reasons unknown. John W. McConnell would eventually provide the funding to build the current park pavilion on-site, but a larger-scale community installation would never be realized.[94.]

At around 70 m^2 per unit on average, the Habitations Jeanne-Mance (HJM) featured far smaller unit size than Regent Park South's 93 m^2.[95.] Even with far higher expropriation costs than were initially anticipated – from 2 to 7 million dollars – construction costs were still overall below budget, which allowed tower units to feature balconies.[96.] At an average cost of $

92. Choko, 72.
93. Choko, 82.
94. Choko, 82.
95. Choko, 72.
96. Choko, 76.



fig. 2.20: jean drapeau presents his vision for a cité des ondes to then journalist rené lévesque, still frame from l'expropriation selon jean drapeau, archives de Radio-Canada, (1957).

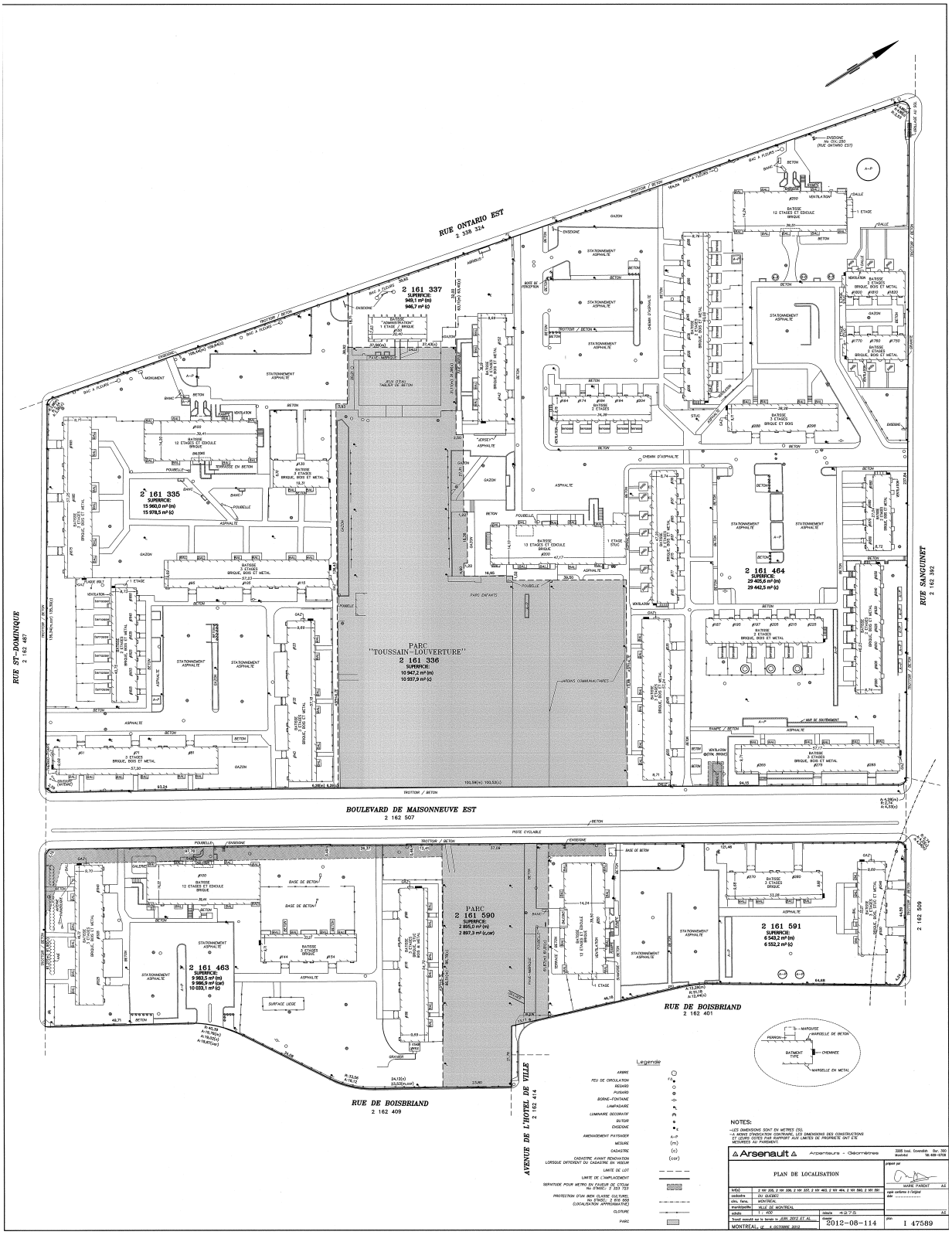


fig. 2.21: realized Field-Dozois plan, rother, bland, and trudeau, (1957).

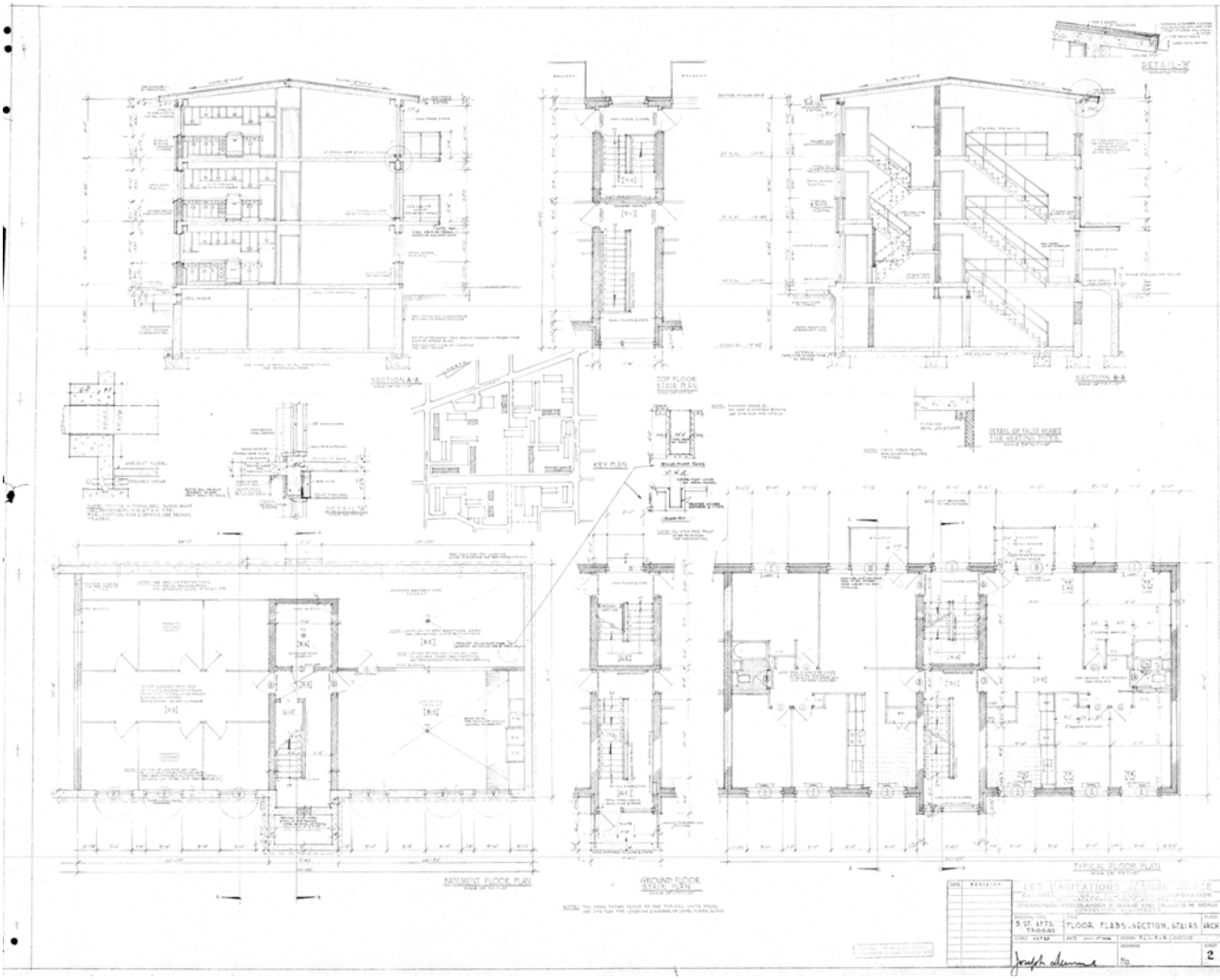


fig. 2.22: typical plex building plan, greespoon, freedlander, and dunne, (1957).

13,522 per unit, and $ 189/m^2, the complex costs significantly less to build than its Ontarian predecessor.[97] Even considering that hundreds of the families that previously lived in the neighbourhood had expressed interest in moving into the HJM once completed, only 20% eventually did so [fig. 2.23].[98] Several did not want to wait, some eventually found housing elsewhere, and some moved to the suburbs. As a result, in 1960, 200 one-bedroom apartments were still unoccupied although it would not take long until they were. In 1961, there already was an extensive waitlist to move into the complex.

Although the inspiration behind the initial urban renewal scheme was firmly indebted to the hygienist language of Le Corbusier and the first CIAMs, the actual buildings on-site are reminiscent of the later conventions and the closer attention they paid to the creation of collective structures of socialization.[99] The design integrated high-rise housing towers with lower horizontal blocks, arranged in a loose orthogonal grid. Those bars are positioned along the site's periphery – helping frame its limits – as well as within the complex itself, where they form spaces that read as semi-enclosed courtyards. These voids primarily serve as parking areas for residents, with a few transformed into green spaces. The intention was to create semi-private, sheltered areas conducive to social interaction, a principle influenced by the ideas of Team X.[100] The towers, which punctuate the site and contrast with the predominantly horizontal bars, are arranged in what seems like an arbitrary pattern, though they exhibit compositional relationships to neoplastic principles of dis/equilibrium and asymmetry.[101] This tension between rigidity and looseness was also promoted by the Bauhaus and Le Corbusier himself, most notably in the form of the *trace régulateur.* While the initial design had veered away from the city's alignment to adopt a true cardinal orientation, the final grid was adjusted to align with the surrounding streets and buildings. At the heart of the *Habitations*, Toussaint-Louverture park acted as a green corridor, slicing through the site along a north-south axis, with sports fields and a small

97. Choko, 80.
98. Choko, 80.
99. The work of local modernist designers and architects has most probably been a major inspiration in the development of the scheme, beyond the earlier examples of Le Corbusier and fellow CIAM members. For the sake of the present discussion, however, I find it best to focus on canonical architectural discourse.
100. For a deeper analysis of Team X housing projects, see Bruno Fayolle-Lussac and Rémi Papillault, eds., *Le Team X et le logement à grande échelle en Europe : Un retour critique des pratiques vers la théorie*, Politiques urbaines (Pessac: Maison des Sciences de l'Homme d'Aquitaine, 2008), https://books.openedition.org/msha/10198.
101. See the work of Piet Mondrian, Sophie Taeuber-Arp, Jean Arp, Theo von Doesburg.



fig. 2.23: ne pleure pas ma fille, Habitations Jeanne, Mance, Montréal, archives de La Presse, BAnQ, rené bernard (1959).



fig. 2.24: jean drapeau, lucien sulanier, and roland savignac visit the construction sitel, archives de La Presse, BAnQ, paul henri talbot, (1960).

park pavilion. The central tower, located along this green path, originally provided a covered passage through its structure, therefore freeing up space beneath for pedestrians to go through – a direct reference to Le Corbusier's fifth principle of the *pilotis*, which aimed to liberate the ground for recreation and sports. The buildings themselves remained mostly conservative. The horizontal bars housed walk-up apartments and townhouses destined for families, whereas the towers mostly provided one and two-bedroom apartments for senior citizens. Gable roofs were used for the lower buildings as a more traditional feature within a modern plan.

A History of Oppression and Solidarity at the Habitations [fig. 2.24]



Even though the intentions behind the construction of the Habitations Jeanne-Mance were humanitarian in nature, the project ended up infantilizing and ostracizing the very individuals it set out to help. The first years of the site's management and occupation were marked by a profound paternalism towards residents, who were seen as second-class citizens in need of reform and re-education.[102] Families began moving into the newly constructed units in October 1959, when the newly constituted Corporation des Habitations Jeanne-Mance (CHJM) was entrusted with managing the site and its buildings. This move was consistent with the National Housing Act which delegated governance of social housing projects to appointed, local officials.[103] This approach, dictated from the top-down, imposed a unilateral, paternal governance on-site; one that would rapidly create tensions between the administrators and residents.

comité des locataires

In 1966, five years after the first tenants had moved into the HJM, the *Comité des locataires* was founded as a means of raising awareness of the inhumane mistreatments they were obliged to endure under the housing administration. Soon after its formation, the committee published a *communiqué* that detailed the abusive behaviours of the staff and administration as well as the punitive clauses of their rental contract. The tenants denounced surveillance and monitoring practices: household searches were frequent, income monitoring was enforced at least once a year, 9 pm curfews were in place for children, and harmless behaviours such as public drinking, sunbathing, and even stepping on the complex's

102. Choko, *Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance*, 87.
103. Nettling, "Tenant Activism and the Demise of Urban Renewal," 524.

expansive lawns were prohibited.[104] The administrator, Léopold Rogers, was criticized for his draconian measures and rampant corruption; even going as far as colluding with local priests to gain access to privileged information told under confession.[105] If tenants were to disobey, they were threatened with eviction. Napoléon Saint-André, the tenant organizer in charge of the *Comité*, was notably evicted from HJM following the publication of its *communiqué*. There is even an account of a tenant getting evicted for out of wedlock pregnancy.[106]

It is not surprising, therefore, that some residents compared their living conditions to that of prisoners – a few who would express this sentiment, like Gérard Dufort, tenant and former convict, were well acquainted with carceral environments.[107] To fight back against the oppressive actions of their landlord, tenants turned to community and political organizing, all the while building strong movements for social rights within the Montreal Left.[108] The Front d'Action Politique (FRAP) and Montreal Citizens' Movement, the municipal party who would succeed Jean Drapeau's administration, would both spring from tenant activism at HJM.[109] Relentless action on the part of tenants shifted public perception of the administration's practice, prompting even those public figures who had once supported it to condemn its actions. The success in rallying public opinion around the situation of tenants, however, was a double-edged sword as it ultimately contributed in framing HJM and – by extension – social housing as a failure in the collective mind: "for design-focused planners, as most prominently framed by Montreal-born architect Oscar Newman, their non-tenant and increasingly middle-class voices led to locally framing housing within anti-HJM imaginary in the following decades."[110] Seeing the poor living conditions of HJM tenants solidified elitist and traditionalist hostility to social housing and furthered the myth that private ownership was the only relevant model of housing development in Canada.[111] The private, suburban, single-family home would become the prevalent model of housing development in the city throughout the 20th century. What the media failed to recognize was that the so-called failure of the Plan Dozois was not due to its architecture, nor was it due to its

front d'action politique

104. Nettling, 526; Choko, *Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance*, 87.
105. Nettling, "Tenant Activism and the Demise of Urban Renewal," 526.
106. Nettling, "Tenant Activism and the Demise of Urban Renewal."
107. Nettling, 527.
108. Nettling, 525.
109. Nettling, 529.
110. Nettling, 529.
111. Nettling, 534.

planning, but to the abusive and paternalist practices of administrators who failed to recognize the humanity of the site's residents, instead choosing to treat them like children. Tenant activism, therefore, shone a light on the untenable conditions they endured while simultaneously discrediting social housing as a model of life.

hellyer report

In the 1969 Hellyer Report, which effectively halted urban renewal efforts in the country, we can read that social housing was not a successful example of neither public dialogue nor participatory democracy.[112] However, the strength of tenant mobilization and the creation of networks of community support on-site would seem to prove otherwise. Between 1958 and 1979, social services were administered by a multitude of diverse actors and organizations. Founded in 1958, the *Association Sociale Sportive Jeann-Mance*, today known as GoJeunesse, organized cultural and sports activities for children and teenagers. In 1967, four nuns from the Petites Soeurs de l'Assomption congregation moved into one of the towers and contributed in setting up home nursing care programs, a Renter's Association, and a job committee. In addition, single mothers had access to cooking and sewing classes, a medical clinic, and a daycare service. The Comité logement also organized the creation of a community clinic – later absorbed into the CLSC provincial network – that provided first-hand medical services to the local population.

From the 1970s onward, a spirit of community participation was progressively brought into the neighborhood. A newly appointed administration entertained better relations with its residents, tenant protections were improved – including the adoption of the provincial standardized lease agreement – and a permanent concertation table was set up.[113] Challenges in resident-administration relations persisted, however, as conflicts frequently arose as to the administration of services and the agency individuals and community organizations could truly exert. In the 1980s, in a climate of increasing neo-liberalization, most of the consultative *fora* and community activities were outsourced to external actors who would now administer services *to* rather than *with* the local population.[114] The four nuns, residents and service providers, were threatened of eviction while the Renters' Association remained unrecognized by the administration.

112. Nettling, "Tenant Activism and the Demise of Urban Renewal."
113. Nettling, 89–90.
114. Choko, *Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance*, 89.

Post-modern Transformations: the Quartier des Spectacles

At the beginning of the 2000s, the public perception of the Habitations Jeanne-Mance has not been favourable. Years of neglect and stories have forged the site's reputation as unsafe and crime ridden. In 2006, an article published in *L'Actualité* speaks of a "troubling ghetto of poverty" where "homeless people spend their days and nights,"[115] while in 2011, Saint-Jacques opens his article in *La Presse* with a sensationalist enumeration: "drugs, prostitution, criminality, poverty, asphalt: The Habitations Jeanne-Mance, at the heart of Quartier latin, are not exactly characteristic of urban quality of life."[116] Outdoor spaces have become closed off, and the residential scheme has turned into a no-man's land, reinforcing the isolation and stigmatisation of its occupants.[117]

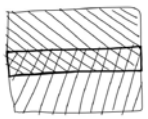
quartier des spectacles

Victim to similar trends, the whole neighborhood is grappling with safety and economic challenges; the Place des Arts district and the Quartier Latin have known better days; commercial units are vacant; and brownfields inherited from the urban renewal enterprises of the 1970s remain undeveloped. In this context, the city undertook redevelopment efforts to revitalize the district and position it as an entertainment destination branded as the *Quartier des spectacles* [fig. 2.25]. The ambitious move towards culture and art-led renewal of the downtown neighborhood was consistent with the global post-industrial revitalization of central districts such as London's O2, Toronto's Entertainment district, Cologne's Ring, or perhaps the most canonic example of culture-led redevelopment, the Guggenheim Bilbao. Culture-led economic development is now a staple of contemporary capitalism and, by extension, of contemporary urbanism.[118] The reliance on arts and culture as driving forces of revitalization echoes some of the modernist projects from the Drapeau era – emphasis on achieving economic growth, a consumer-based economy based on tourism, and centralization of civic equipment – but it established a new paradigm of urban valorization, that

115. Cited by Antonin Margier and Guillaume Ethier, "Urban Spectacularisation and Social Housing: An Asymmetrical Relation ? The Habitations Jeanne-Mance in Montreal's Quartier Des Spectacles," *Urban Research & Practice* 16, no. 1 (January 1, 2023): 1–24, https://doi.org/10.1080/17535069.2021.1938196, 8.
116. In the original text : « drogue, prostitution, criminalité, pauvreté, bitume… Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance, au cœur du Quartier latin, ne sont pas exactement emblématiques de la qualité de vie urbaine. ». Sylvie Saint-Jacques, "La nouvelle vie des Habitations Jeanne-Mance," *La Presse*, July 25, 2011, sec. Grand Montréal, https://www.lapresse.ca/actualites/grand-montreal/201107/25/01-4420689-la-nouvelle-vie-des-habitations-jeanne-mance.php.
117. Margier and Ethier, "Urban Spectacularisation and Social Housing," 8.
118. Margier and Ethier, 3–4.

of spectacularization. Spectacularization refers to a strategy that aims to increase real estate values, and economic returns, by focusing on public art and cultural activities that beautify, and package it as a consumption product.[119] In doing so, cities promote a globalized lifestyle associated to the upper middle class, and mobilizes public art as a way to re-code the inner city as a zone reserved to artistic practices and its audience.[120] This programmatic – and symbolic – shift effectively expulses residual and contingent practices and identities from the neighbourhood. The HJM site, seen as an enclave within this newfound artistic entity, would need to integrate into an image that negated it. As such, there was a push for the HJM to assimilate into the Quartier des spectacles; by opening up the site both spatially and socially, by improving vegetation cover on-site, and by engaging in public art.[121]

identity threshold



In *Urban Spectacularisation and Social Housing,* Margier and Ethier explore the conceptual border between the identities, and territories, of the HJM and the Quartier des spectacles.[122] Drawing on Escallier's definition of the border, the authors conceptualize a metaphorical flexible threshold that "conjures up a particular structuration of the urbanized space, indicating a way of understanding the construct."[123] Expanding the understanding of the border beyond material signifiers allows to account for the distance between physical limits and socially constructed ones. This notion of the flexible border, or threshold, between the space of HJM residents and that of the city is an important one. The morphology of the site – a heterotopic enclave within the city – may seem to cut it off from its surroundings, but it rather modulates and regulates the modalities of use of its spaces and controls movement in and out. Fences, courtyards, paths, and vegetation are positioned carefully to hierarchize space, defining public, semi-public, and private zones seamlessly. While the Toussaint park is opened to the public and bustles with activity, the semi-private enclosures or courtyards it opens onto are peaceful and calm.

Albeit flexible, a border does exist between the space of the HJM and that of the neighbourhood, defining both realms. On one side, the Quartier des spectacles proponents would wish to abolish this frontier, viewing the site as offering resources to be mobilized in the construction of its branding. Such a push is reminiscent of extractive ideologies; the HJM's communal

119. Maria Gravari-Barbas, *Starchitecture(s)* (Paris: Harmattan, 2015).
120. Margier and Ethier, "Urban Spectacularisation and Social Housing," 3.
121. Margier and Ethier, 3.
122. Margier and Ethier.
123. Margier and Ethier, 4.

spaces are seen as opportunities to be exploited in a search for economic growth without much consideration as to what its residents would gain in return. During the 2000s, *Just for Laughs* festival set up stages in Toussaint park, eliciting complaints and creating conflicts with HJM residents.[124] However, it seems like residents now have a more positive perception on the neighbourhood's cultural offerings – local nightlife and open-air events do not seem to disturb for example – but this positive assessment is conditional on the maintenance of a distinction between the HJM and its surroundings: "while it suits the residents to open up the site to the outside to some extent, there is a consensus among both residents and housing managers on the need to preserve the site's tranquility and too avoid becoming just another QDS address."[125]

Tensions between external drives towards the marketization of HJM and its internal residential and social imperatives make it a contested territory that operates at the intersection of conflicting interactions. The juxtaposition of functions and aspirations must endure for it to become a shared space, while retaining its primary aim of providing services and tranquility to its residents.

When the Dozois Commission began its evaluation of so-called dilapidated areas of the city of Montréal, it failed to recognize the neighborhoods it was studying as processual, mutating entities that sustained vast networks of solidarity. In posing the *slum* problem, the group flattened the immense complexity of dynamics and flows that made up these neighborhoods to a simplified, abstract situation that could be remedied by an equally simple answer. The failure to frame Quartier Saint-Louis as a temporal phenomenon led to the drastic rupture of the *tabula rasa*, that ripped through its fabric – both material and social. This halting point of arrested development imposed violence on the residents it displaced and substituted idealized aesthetic order – in the form of modernist principles – to the organicity of the existing system. In doing so, it effectively removed time from the equation, choosing instead to introduce frozen harmony that would cure the unhygienic dis-order of the *slum*. But order could not be restored solely through aesthetic means. Governance and administration practices of the following decades furthered a unilateral vision of well-being that had to be guaranteed by the welfare state; even as it encroached on the capacity of residents to act, to feel secure, and

124. Margier and Ethier, 13.
125. Margier and Ethier, 17.

to form meaningful relationships with one another. In spite of this, strong networks of solidarity and mutual recognition emerged onsite, creating a rich context where activism and self-help initiatives flourished for decades. It is at the intersection of these conflicting dynamics – the top-down, ideal, orderly, unilateral and the solidary, mutual, and contingent – that the site evolved and became what it is today.

The key question moving forward is how to strengthen the strong existing relationships that exist at the *Habitations* and leverage them as a way to promote reciprocity between users, between workers and users, and between users and their built environment. Shifting our understanding of architectural projection as one that is *temporal* rather than merely spatial can restore a sense of agency, reciprocity and participation onsite. Integrating time into architecture means acknowledging the capacity of spaces and people to change together, fostering conditions that allow for mutual support, empowerment and a more inclusive, responsive built environment.



fig. 2.25: aerial view of the place des festivals, montréal, (2023).



fig. 2.26: "from the window of the dilapidated house she'll soon be leaving behind, this young woman looks out on the three-storey house in the Dozois sector where she'll find a clean, suitable home in a few weeks' time," que leur réserve l'avenir? Les Habitations Jeanne-Mance, Montréal, archives de La Presse, BAnQ, rené bernard (1959).

The Habitations Today

Neighborhood Context

The Quartier des spectacles and the Quartier Latin have both undergone dramatic changes in the past twenty years, which have profoundly transformed the perception of the neighborhood. These changes, however, have outlined conflicting trends: as the downtown core undergoes significant revitalization, gentrification tends to leave behind marginalized communities. The designation of the Quartier des spectacles as a cultural district and the development of its masterplan in the early 2010s led to significant revitalization within the neighbourhood. The past two decades have seen major public and private investments in both the surrounding Quartier Latin and in the Quartier des spectacles itself. Key urban renovations – the Place des Festivals [fig. 2.29], the Parterre, the Place des Arts plinth, and the Esplanade Tranquille [fig. 2.28], namely – have turned former brownfields inherited from Drapeau era demolitions into public spaces able to host large entertainment events. This moves cemented Montréal's festive identity and provided the necessary infrastructure for its many festivals to unfold [fig. 2.30-2.35].

The district's revitalization has transformed it into a dynamic, year-round cultural destination catering to both Montrealers and tourists. Important investments in urban planning were also accompanied by significant institutional endorsements in the neighbourhood with several new and long-established institutions moving into the neighbourhood. The recent construction of Ilôt Balmoral [fig. 2.27], home to the National Film Board and the School of Digital Arts, Animation and Design (NAD), and of Édifice Wilder, dedicated to dance and home to the Grands Ballets Canadiens, on the Place des Festivals are revealing of this revitalization while established institutions like the Cinémathèque,[126.] the Saint-Denis theater,[127.] the Contemporary Arts Museum (MAC)[128.] and the Théâtre du Nouveau Monde[129.] have or are still undergoing major renovations.

126. Jean Siag, "Québec Allonge 5,9 Millions Pour Soutenir La Cinémathèque," *La Presse*, June 18, 2024, https://www.lapresse.ca/cinema/2024-06-18/quebec-allonge-5-9-millions-pour-soutenir-la-cinematheque.php.
127. Josée Lapointe, "Le Théâtre St-Denis 2 transformé en salle multifonctionnelle," *La Presse*, January 28, 2021, sec. Théâtre, https://www.lapresse.ca/arts/theatre/2021-01-28/le-theatre-st-denis-2-transforme-en-salle-multifonctionnelle.php.
128. MAC Montréal, "Le Musée d'art contemporain poursuit son projet de transformation architecturale," MAC Montréal, accessed November 5, 2024, https://macm.org/communiques/le-musee-dart-contemporain-poursuit-son-projet-de-transformation-architecturale/.
129. Jean Siag, "Travaux d'agrandissement: L'inauguration du TNM prévue à la fin de



fig. 2.27: ilôt balmoral, provencher+roy (2020)



fig. 2.28: esplanade tranquille, les architectes fabg (2021)

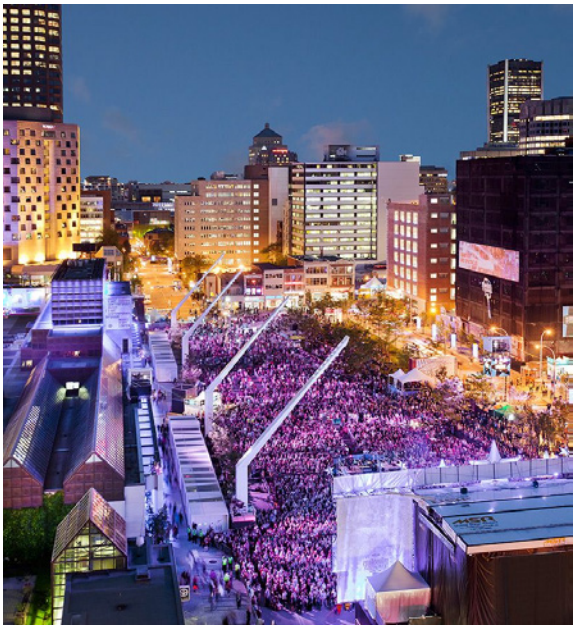


fig. 2.29: place des festival, daoust, lestage, lizotte, stecker, (2003)

1. habitations jeanne-mance

2. national library (BAnQ)

3. université du québec à montréal (UQÀM)

4. université du québec à montréal, campus des sciences

5. complexe desjardins

6. place des festivals

7. esplanade clark

8. ilôt balmoral

9. édifice wilder

10. esplanade tranquille

11. st-denis theatre

12. complexe guy-favreau

13. MTELUS

14. société des arts technologiques (SAT)

15. monument national

16. new world theatre (TNM)

17. bus terminus

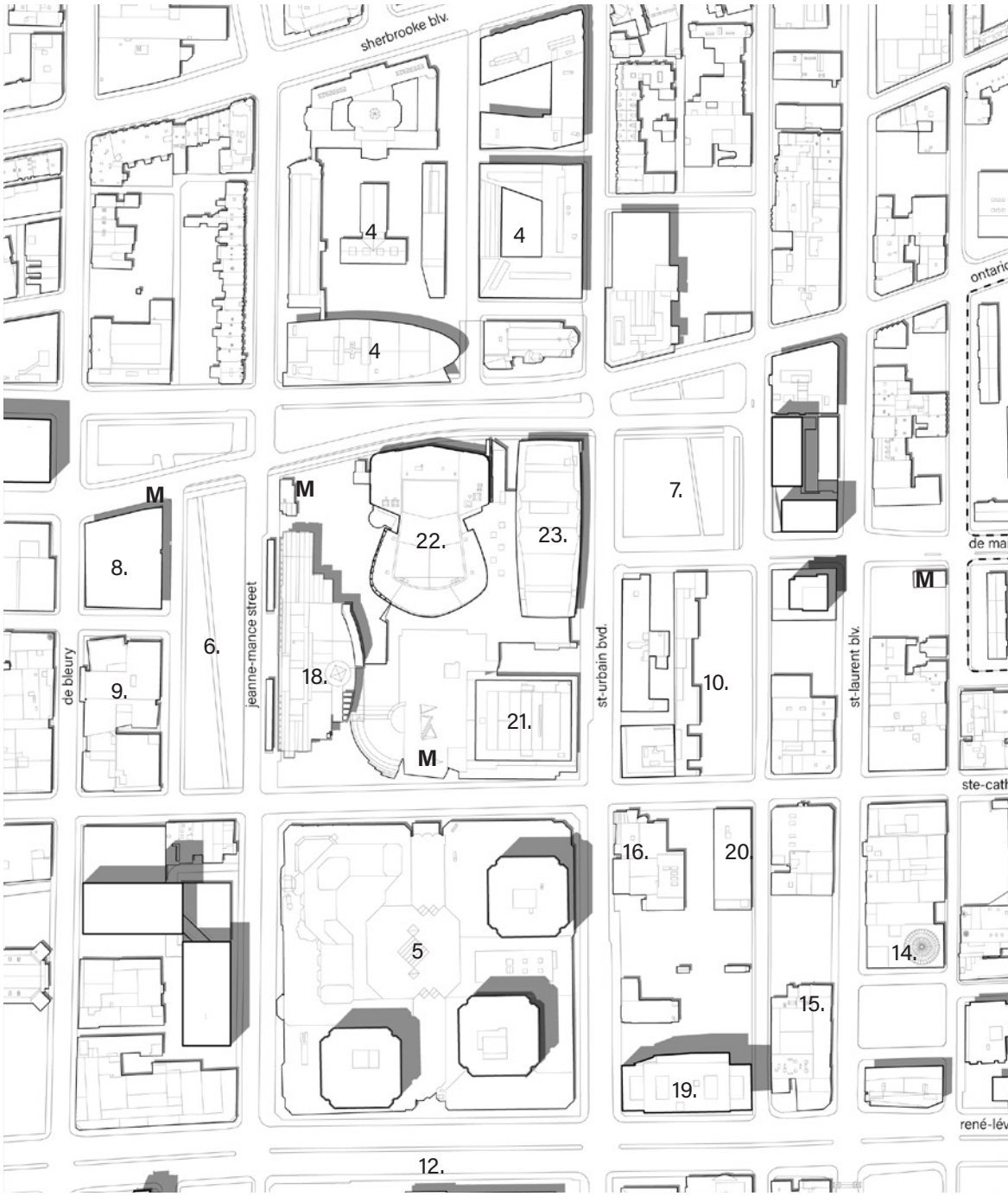
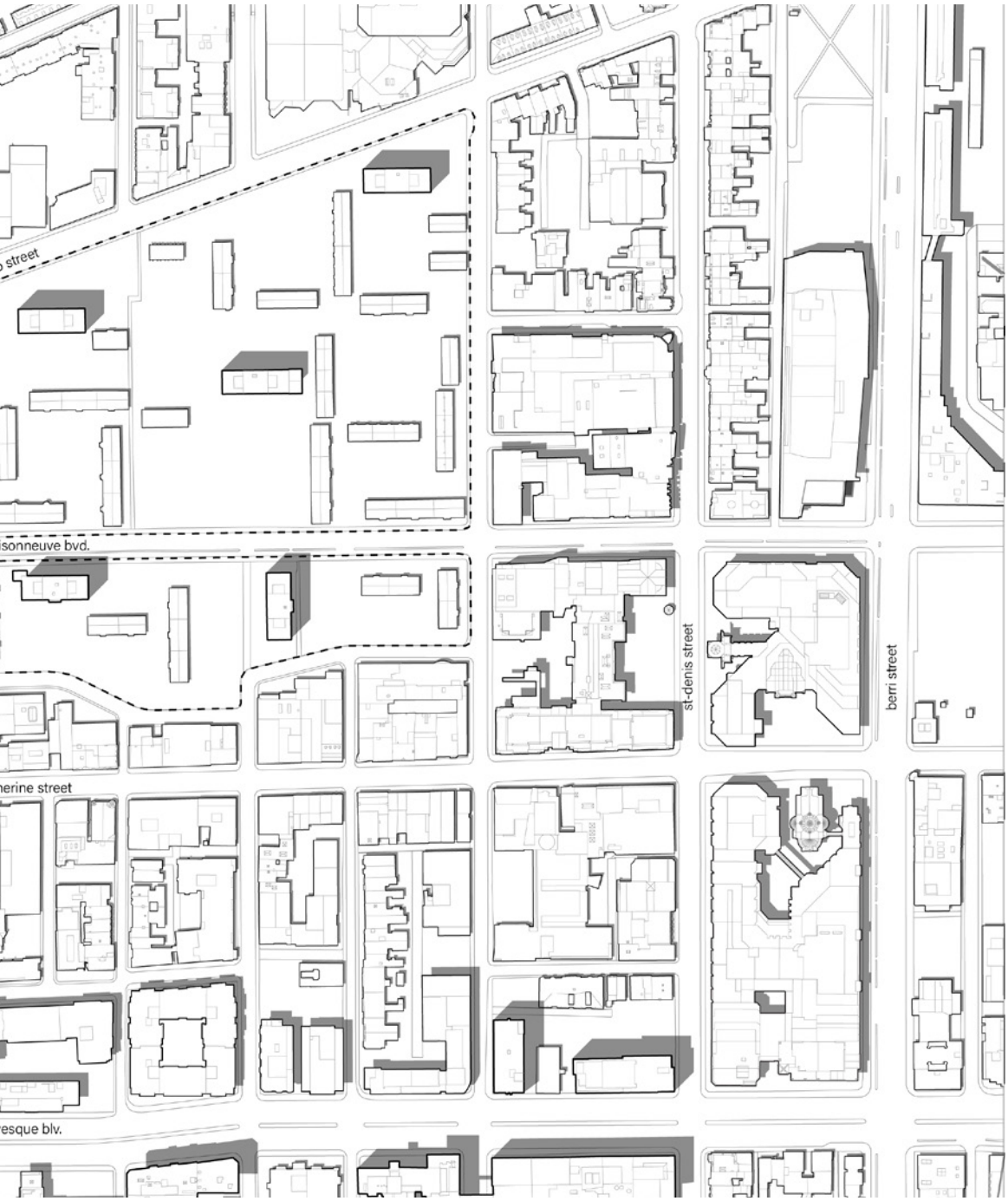


fig. 2.30: quartier des spectacles, plan.



18. montréal contemporary art museum (MACM)

19. hydro-québec

20. maison du développement durable

21. jean duceppe theatre

22. wilfrid laurier concert hall

23. montréal symphony house

24. cactus

M. *métro station*

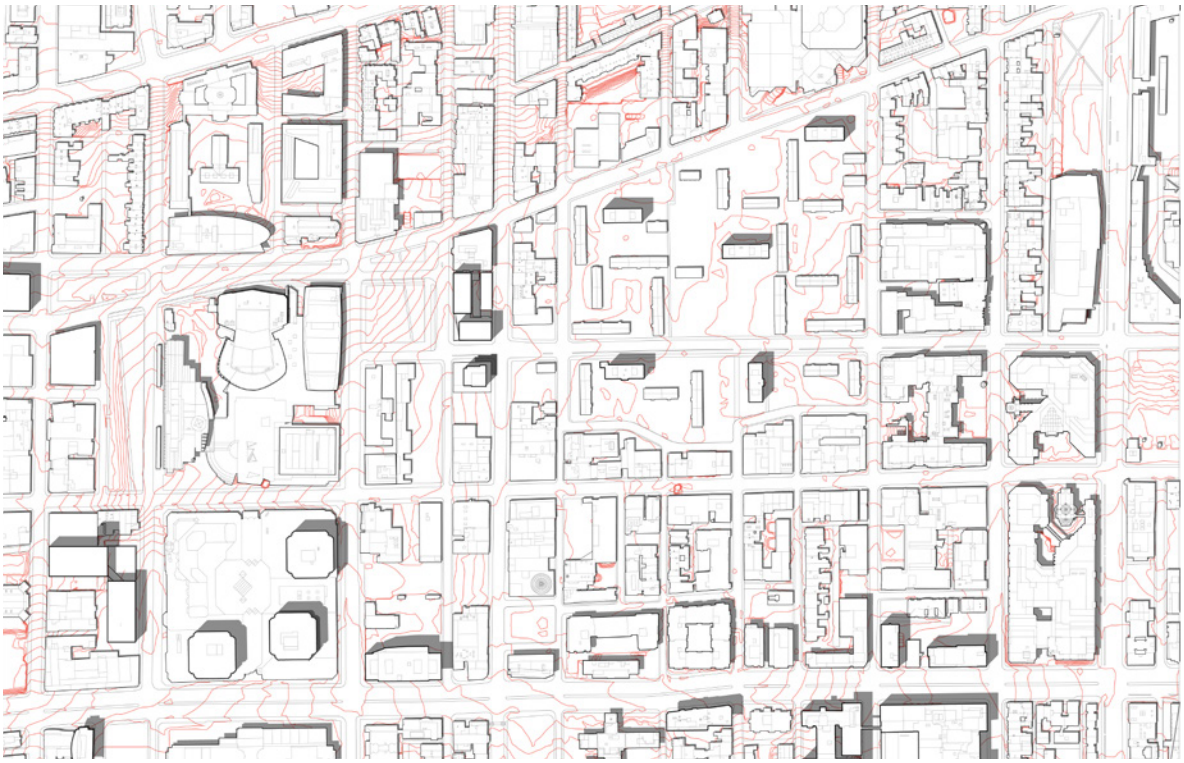


fig. 2.31: topography.

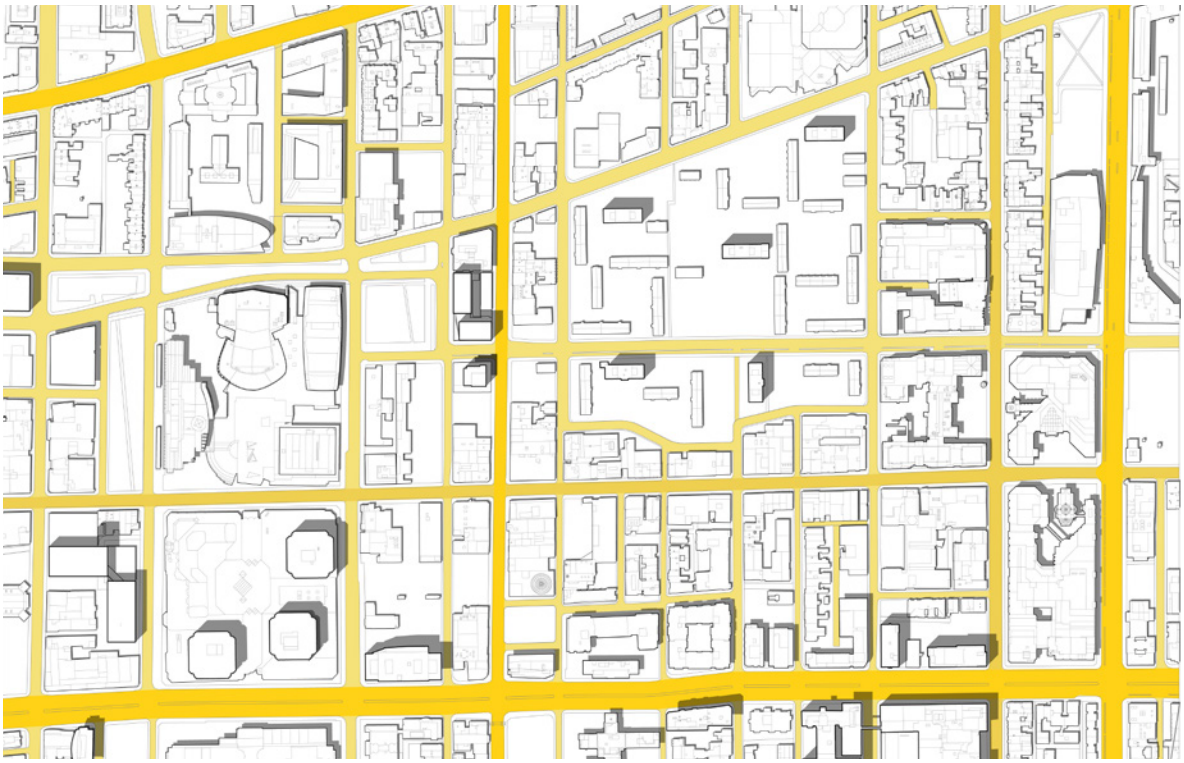


fig. 2.33: circulation and main arteries.

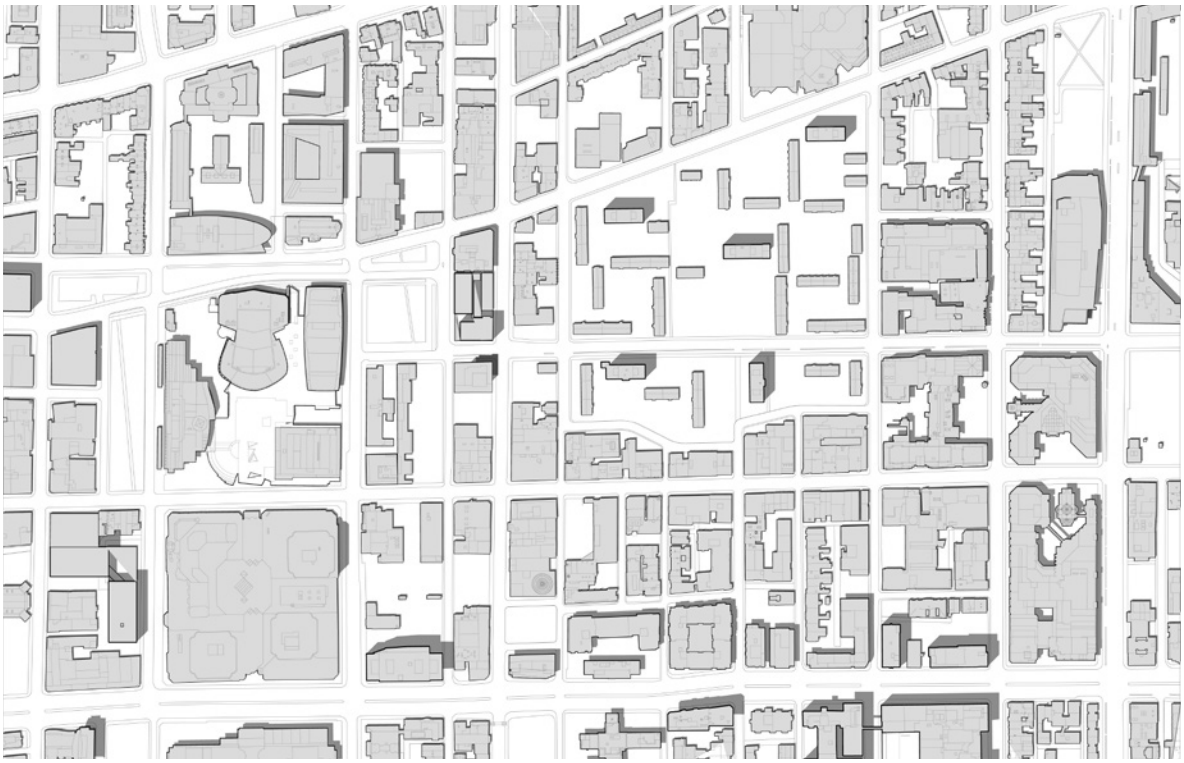


fig. 2.32: massing plan.

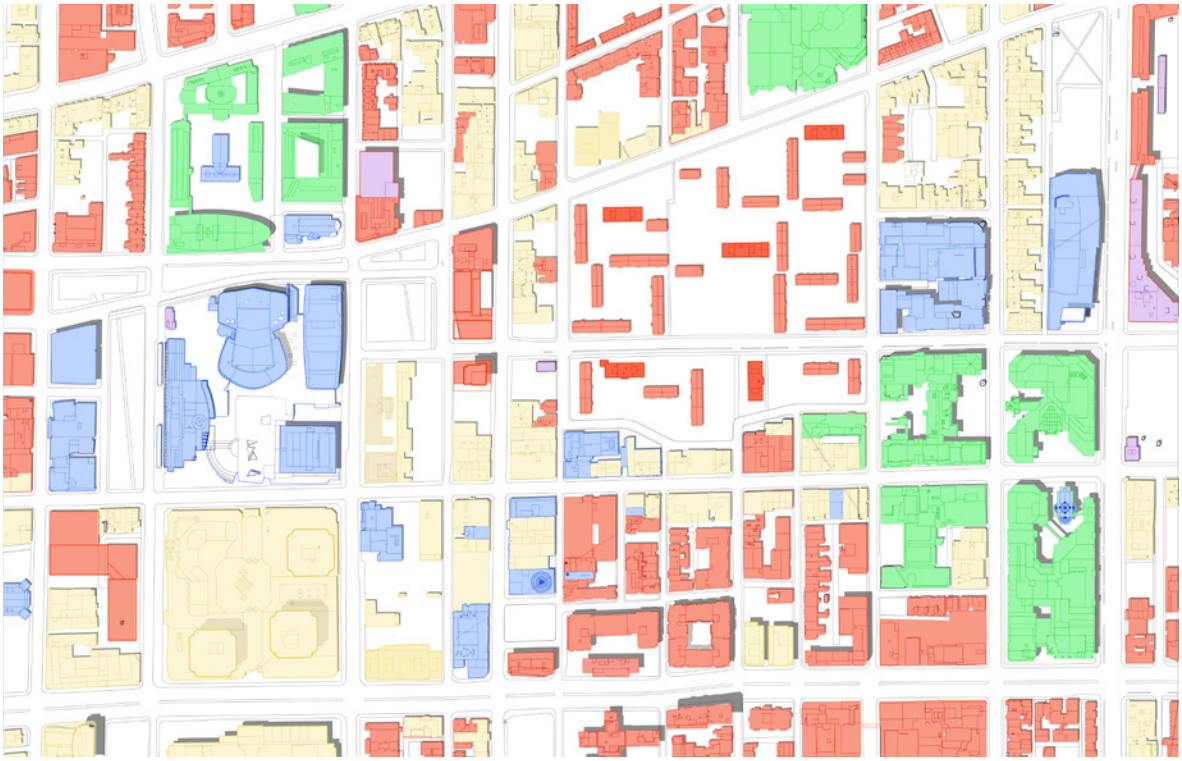


fig. 2.34: neighbourhood functions. *residential* *cultural* *commercial* *education*



fig. 2.35: maestria is set to be montréal's tallest residential building, lemay (2025)

real estate development

The Quartier des spectacles' transformation has not gone unnoticed in real estate development, as luxury condominium buildings have spurred throughout the neighbourhood. Projects like ELI Condos, Laurent & Clark, Le Concorde, Le Peterson, and Myriade Apartments have taken advantage of this momentum and sell a vibrant lifestyle at "the heart of a major cultural metropolis."[130] Located alongside the Place des festivals, Maestria tower, will become Montréal's highest residential building, boasting incredible views over the city and a privileged vantage upon festivals from its floating viewing deck [fig. 2.35].[131] These new projects have contributed to the return of housing in the neighbourhood, albeit in a different form than before the grand transformations of the 1960s, attracting higher-income residents and speculative investment. This shift is part of a broader trend of gentrification in the city's central neighbourhoods that has pushed up property values and driven out lower-income residents and long-established businesses.

homelessness

Despite the significant changes undergone in the past decades, the Quartier des spectacles still grapples with pressing social challenges. Although the area has long been associated with homelessness, the situation was aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which precarized already marginalized communities. Since then, the neighbourhood has witnessed a marked increase in homelessness, addiction, and visible poverty. The struggles of marginalized communities, already vulnerable before the pandemic, have been exacerbated by economic downturns, the housing crisis, and the decrease in social services. The prevalence of homelessness and substance abuse in the area is manifest when walking the streets, but it is also exemplified by the presence of resources catered to these populations. Cactus, a supervised injection site, has been operating since 1989, and several shelters border the neighbourhood.[132] Homelessness and drug abuse in the area have attracted significant media coverage in recent years, documenting the tensions that emerged from the cohabitation of homeless and higher-income populations. Thomas

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l'automne," *La Presse*, September 17, 2024, sec. Théâtre, https://www.lapresse.ca/arts/theatre/2024-09-17/travaux-d-agrandissement/l-inauguration-du-tnm-prevue-a-la-fin-de-l-automne.php.

130. "Condo in Quartier Des Spectacles - Montreal," Laurent & Clark, accessed November 5, 2024, https://laurent-clark.com/en/cultural-life.

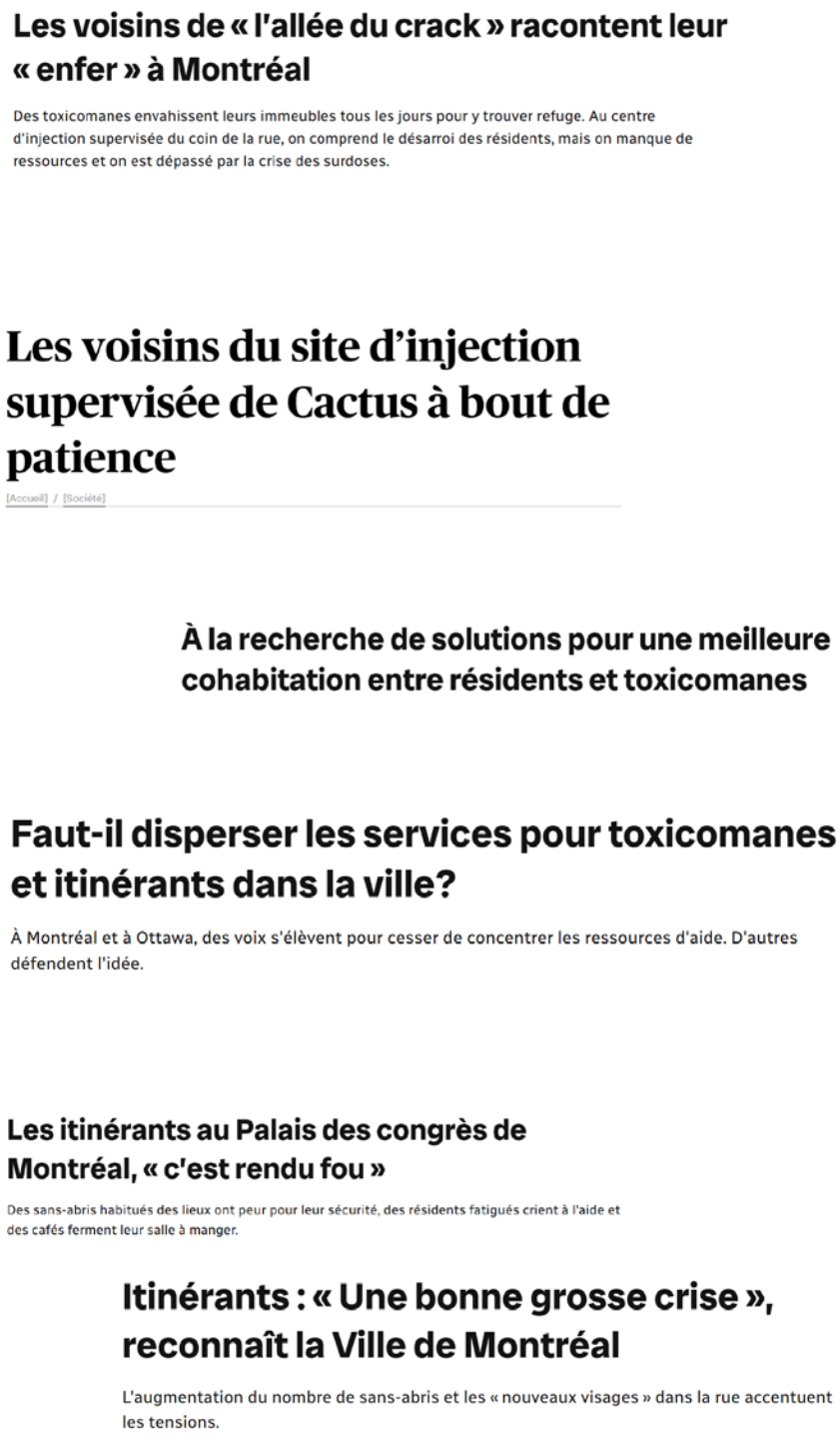
131. "Maestria Condominiums: condos neufs à vendre au centre-ville de Montréal," Maestria Condominiums, accessed November 5, 2024, https://www.maestriacondos.com/.

132. "CACTUS Montréal - Organisme communautaire en réduction des méfaits et prévention des ITSS," CACTUS Montréal, accessed November 5, 2024, https://cactusmontreal.org/.

Gerbert, a journalist for Radio-Canada, has contributed to depicting and – some would argue – sensationalizing the frictions between those populations in a series of articles he published. The most notable of these articles "Les voisins de 'l'allée du crack' racontent leur 'enfer' à Montréal" [The neighbors of "crack alley" tell their "hell" stories of living in Montreal] has consecrated the term *crack alley* and outlined the insecurity of residents faced with drug users who frequently break into their building, urinate and defecate in the alley, and create disturbances during the night.[133] The rise in homelessness and drug addiction has become a visible and contentious issue, further complicating the narrative of the area's revitalization. While the district has been promoted as a thriving cultural hub, the reality for many residents, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds, is far more difficult [fig. 2.36].

The symmetrical trends of gentrification and increased social distress have led to growing tensions between new residents, long-time community members, and marginalized populations. The proliferation of luxury housing has led to a demographic shift that has changed the neighborhood's social makeup. As property values rise and new businesses cater to wealthier consumers, the existing social fabric—composed of lower-income residents, artists, and those relying on social services—has been increasingly pushed to the margins. These tensions have manifested in direct conflicts between marginalized communities and institutions in the neighborhood. A particularly illustrative example is the recent move by the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) to install ID scanners for access to its restrooms.[134] This measure, intended to address issues of safety and cleanliness in the public spaces around the campus, has been perceived by some as a symbol of growing exclusion in an area that is supposed to be a public, communal space. The act of requiring identification to use public restrooms represents a shift towards more surveillance and control, reflecting the widening divide between the residents who feel at home in the neighborhood and those who find themselves increasingly displaced or criminalized.

133. Thomas Gerbet, "Les voisins de « l'allée du crack » racontent leur « enfer » à Montréal," Radio-Canada (Radio-Canada.ca, July 6, 2023), https://ici.radio-canada.ca/nouvelle/1993699/allee-crack-drogue-cactus-montreal-itinerance.
134. Malika Alaoui, "Une carte étudiante exigée pour accéder à des toilettes de l'UQAM," *Montréal Campus* (blog), October 26, 2022, https://montrealcampus.ca/2022/10/26/une-carte-etudiante-exigee-pour-acceder-a-des-toilettes-de-luqam/.



Les voisins de « l'allée du crack » racontent leur « enfer » à Montréal

Des toxicomanes envahissent leurs immeubles tous les jours pour y trouver refuge. Au centre d'injection supervisée du coin de la rue, on comprend le désarroi des résidents, mais on manque de ressources et on est dépassé par la crise des surdoses.

Les voisins du site d'injection supervisée de Cactus à bout de patience

[Accueil] / [Société]

À la recherche de solutions pour une meilleure cohabitation entre résidents et toxicomanes

Faut-il disperser les services pour toxicomanes et itinérants dans la ville?

À Montréal et à Ottawa, des voix s'élèvent pour cesser de concentrer les ressources d'aide. D'autres défendent l'idée.

Les itinérants au Palais des congrès de Montréal, « c'est rendu fou »

Des sans-abris habitués des lieux ont peur pour leur sécurité, des résidents fatigués crient à l'aide et des cafés ferment leur salle à manger.

Itinérants : « Une bonne grosse crise », reconnaît la Ville de Montréal

L'augmentation du nombre de sans-abris et les « nouveaux visages » dans la rue accentuent les tensions.

fig. 2.36: recent media coverage of homelessness downtown reveals a difficult cohabitation with residents, various media (2020-2024)



fig. 2.37: aerial view of the habitations jeanne-mance, plan stratégique de la chjm 2020-2025 (2019)

Site

Today, the site of the Habitations Jeanne-Mance is home to 1,700 tenants from 75 different ethnicities who live across a dozen different buildings [fig. 2.37]. Five towers provide 528 units for elderly individuals, 210 one and two-bedroom units are spread across fourteen plex buildings, and families inhabit 50 townhouses. Green spaces make up 32% of the site, parking space 15%, and built surfaces only 18%. Since 2004, an extensive renovation program has been undertaken to modernize the 788 units. This program should be completed in 2024.[135.]

Governance

The Corporation d'Habitations Jeanne-Mance operates along a standard governance structure made up from a board of directors – composed of four members appointed by the city, and three residents – counseled by four committees: the development committee, vision of the future committee, sustainability committee, audit committee, and the living together committee.[136.] In addition to tenant representation on the board, residents can also participate in the *Comité consultatif des résident.es* (CCR), founded in 2022 and officialised in 2023. Its mission is to promote resident participation to social activities, favor associative life, and represent questions of common interest.[137.]

Socio-demographic Profile

The current socio-demographic conditions of the Habitations reveal interesting trends that must be addressed to gain a better understanding of the social dynamics at play, notably, a diverse population – both in age and in cultural background – reveals tensions between different resident groups.[138.] The community has witnessed a notable decline in population, around 13% between 2016 and 2021, with a total of 1,082 residents. The demographic profile reveals a significant proportion of adults and older individuals which respectively make up 58.3% and 34.5% of the population. This age gap between older, often single, residents and newly

135. Corporation d'habitation Jeanne-Mance, "Corporation d'habitations Jeanne-Mance - CHJM."
136. Corporation d'habitation Jeanne-Mance.
137. Corporation d'habitation Jeanne-Mance.
138.The data presented in this section were taken from the Government of Canada's 2021 population census. Statistics Canada, "Table Profile 4620060.00 Census of Population 2021," Statistics Canada, 2021, https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2021/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E.

established families reveals tensions between the two groups, as outlined in Longtin's 2011 documentary *The Downtown Project*.[139] When visiting a long-time resident in one of the complexes' towers, it doesn't take long before she expresses her discontentment towards the children on-site, which she accuses of being noisy, and of not respecting the privacy of older occupants. She then goes on to claim, with a racist undertone, that this was not a problem when most of the families were Québécois.[140] This tension between younger and older populations is also exacerbated by the ethnic divide; the older population tends to be composed of Québécois.es whereas families are for the most part recent immigrants.

This divide is apparent when looking at the linguistic diversity on-site, with the largest groups being native French (290), Bengali (245), Spanish (130), and Chinese (both Mandarin and Cantonese) (95). The knowledge of official languages also reveals a potential for miscommunications between individuals who do not share a *lingua franca*: 320 residents speak French only, 210 English only, and 430 speak both while an impressive 125 residents are not fluent in either idiom. Religious affiliations support the same conclusions: 355 residents identify as Muslim, 205 as Christian, and 85 as Hindu, while 250 reported no religious affiliation. Immigrants make up more than half of the population, the majority of which have immigrated between 1980 and 2010. In addition, 340 residents are second-generation immigrants.

The economic profile, as would be expected from a social housing project, is well below federal and provincial averages with a median household income of $23,400. All of the residents qualify as living in low-income situations, highlighting economic vulnerabilities within the community. The employment rate shows 340 individuals in the labor force, with an employment rate of 26.2% and a high unemployment rate of 23.5%. The educational background is again very diverse; about a third of residents have no qualifications (345), 265 obtained a secondary school diploma or equivalent, 370 have postsecondary qualifications, with 110 holding a bachelor's degree and 25 having a master's degree. It is important to keep in mind, however, that the proportion of residents who do not hold a high school diploma might be biased, as it includes current secondary education students who are older than 15.

139. *The Downtown Project*, Documentary (National Film Board of Canada, 2011), https://www.nfb.ca/film/the downtow project/.
140. *The Downtown Project,* 20:34.

The social makeup of the HJM population highlights the diversity of the community, characterized by different groups – the most notable of which being elderly, French-speaking residents, and immigrant families – and significant economic challenges. To conceptualize the Habitations as one unified community, therefore, would be a mistake; its population is diverse and multi-faceted. This diversity can sometimes lead to conflicts between individuals and groups in the cohabitation of the site. Understanding these dynamics is therefore crucial in assessing the site and its challenges.

Community Organizations

The Habitations Jeanne-Mance have long had a rich diversity of community-led initiatives that animate the site and establish networks of solidarity between households [fig. 2.38]. **Go Jeunesse** – initially founded as the Association des Loisirs et des Sports St-Jacques – has become a structuring support for community engagement in the neighborhood, boasting 1,822 members in 2023.[141] Located on the ground floor of one of the residential towers onsite, it provides educational and sports services to residents. One of the key initiatives of Go Jeunesse is the Edugo Program, which offers personalized support, pedagogical assistance, and tutoring for students. On average, between 7 and 38 users benefit from this program daily, depending on monthly needs, demonstrating its vital role in the community. Go Jeunesse also emphasizes sports as a means of engagement and empowerment. The organization features three basketball teams for different age groups (11-14, 14-17, and girls), alongside soccer and volleyball programs. The Élève-Athlète initiative focuses on school retention through sports, where coaches assist students with their homework. On Saturdays, 297 children utilize sports facilities at CÉGEP du Vieux-Montréal for soccer and basketball. In addition, Go Jeunesse hosts seasonal activities such as Go les vacances, which includes programs during spring break (serving 76 children), ice rink supervision from January to March, park oversight during the summer, and a summer camp attended by 156 children—21% of whom come from HJM. The organization also organizes a variety of events throughout the year, including sports tournaments, cabin weekends, strawberry and apple picking days, perseverance days, parasport days, and holiday celebrations.[142]

141. Go Jeunesse, "Rapport annuel 2023" (Montréal: Go Jeunesse, 2024), https://www.calameo.com/read/00739575316eda7a0b8ec.
142. Go Jeunesse; Go Jeunesse, "Plan Stratégique 2022-2024" (Montréal: Go Jeunesse), accessed October 13, 2024, https://www.calameo.com/read/00739575308e8339c01bd; "Accueil - Go Jeunesse," accessed October 13, 2024, https://gojeunesse.org/.

Encouraged by the development of the *Quartier des spectacles,* the CHJM has engaged in **community art initiatives** to foster community involvement. Projects like *Spirale des possibles*, led by Laurence Petit, engaged 19 volunteer residents over two summers, focusing on encouraging people to take ownership of their environment through collaborative efforts.[143.] Similarly, the Nurture vs Nature project with MU involved street marking activities designed to mobilize residents and enhance their sense of belonging.[144.]

The **Centre d'entraide et de ralliement familial** (CERF) was founded at the initiative of a single-mother, resident of the HJM, in 1995 to provide services to downtown families in need by creating a place of belonging, maintaining a spirit of mutual support, promoting social and cultural development, and fostering collaboration with other organizations.[145.] It provides tutoring services for children and financial support for the purchase of school materials; it distributes monthly food baskets, organizes food markets, and distributes emergency food deliveries; and provides administrative support for annual tax filings.

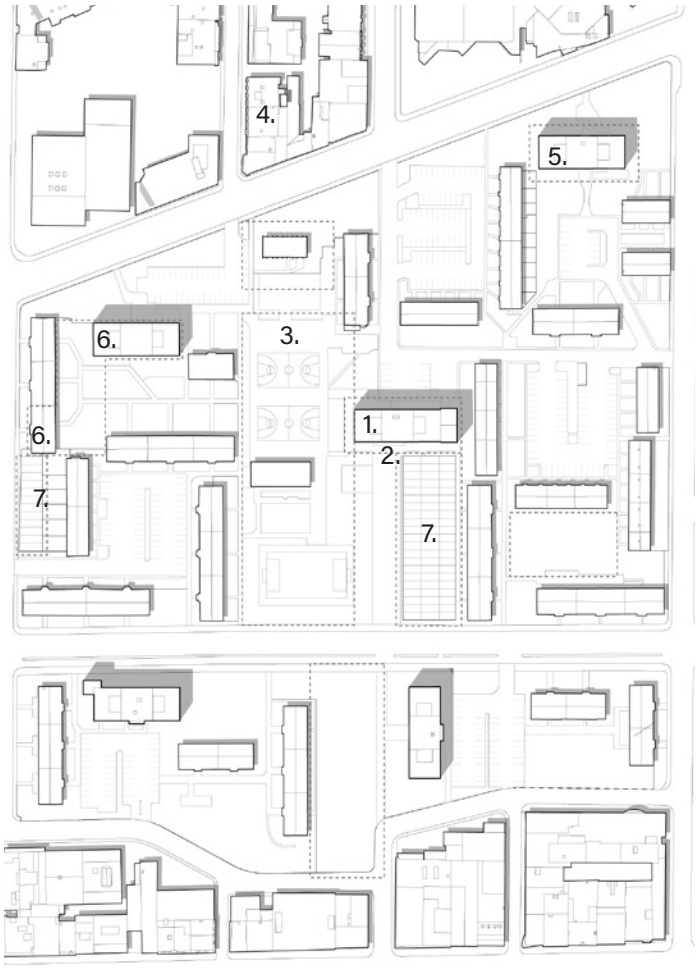
The **Famille pour l'entraide et l'éducation des jeunes et des adultes** (FEEJAD) is non-profit organization working at the HJM that supports newcomers and immigrant residents in their integration within their new milieu. It was founded in 2005 by Perpétue Mukarugwiza, a resident of the housing complex, to address the various challenges that visible minorities and immigrants face. It provides a wide range of activities, mainly geered towards children and teenagers, that promote social integration through education, skills development, francization, schooling, employability and cultural and intergenerational exchanges.[146.]

The **Centre de la petite enfance (CPE) Fleur de Macadam** is a non-profit public daycare corporation subsidized by the provincial government. It offers daycare services to a hundred children from the ages of 0 to 5 over two buildings.[147.]

The **Jeanne-Mance community gardens**, located at the heart of the HJM, provides 55 gardening plots to the community, while the **Faubourg Saint-Laurent community gardens**, on Saint-Dominique, feature a dozen more.

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143. Margier and Ethier, "Urban Spectacularisation and Social Housing," 19.
144. MU, "Nurture vs Nature," MU, 2018, https://mumtl.org/projets/nurture-vs-nature-roadsworth-2018/.
145. "Centre d'entraide et de Ralliement Familial," accessed November 5, 2024, http://www.cerf-montreal.org/p/qui-sommes-nous.html.
146. "FEEJAD – Innovation Sociale Pour Le Développement Du Capital Humain," accessed November 5, 2024, https://www.feejad.com/.
147. "Fleur de Macadam," accessed November 5, 2024, https://www.cpefleurdemacadam.ca/p/accueil 17.html.



1. Go Jeunesse

2. Spirale des possibles

3. Nurture v. Nature

4. CERF

5. FEEJAD

6. CPE Fleur de Macadam

7. Community gardens

fig. 2.38: location of community organizations on-site



from

for

Interlude

Transcribing Development at the Habitations Jeanne-Mance

to

with

Interlude – Notating Development at the Habitations Jeanne-Mance

As part of building a temporal understanding of dynamics at play in the development of the Habitations Jeanne-Mance (HJM), I have undertaken a process-based transcription of its historical evolution. Transcription, here, is understood as a creative practice that allows one to gain insight into the structural workings of the site and helps identify potential shortcomings to inform the creation of an alternative model in the future. This approach is consistent with art practices and creative methodologies of late Romantic and modern composers such as Ferruccio Busoni, whose music often made "it impossible to draw a line between transcription and original idea."[1] More than a mere copying exercise, transcription reveals unforeseen patterns and trends in the original subject being re-presented. The complex language of the notation aims to represent conceptual ideas, and it is by no means precise nor exact, but rather outlines general trends and allows for a periodization of the Habitations' lifecycle.

The transcription covers a period from the mid-1930s to the present day, tracing the project's pre-history, its initial development, ongoing operation, and current situation. Time is represented along the horizontal axis, while the vertical axis encompasses variables such as stakeholders (users, clients, lenders, architects, construction workers, maintenance workers, and the community), key events, functions, building components, and materials involved in the site's evolution. Sociopolitical events have frequently influenced the programs on-site and have been catalysts for significant transformations. As a result, it is possible to identify critical periods in the site's history: pre-urban renewal (1), initial construction (2), early use (3), replacement, improvement, and modernization (4), and the speculative proposal explored in Chapter 4.

The pre-urban renewal phase was characterized by organic, uncoordinated development, as no central authority governed the site or its growth. This is depicted by a series of uncoordinated, directional arrows in the building components section of the graph, following no unified pattern. The demolition required for the realization of the HJM scheme began in early 1956, marking a dramatic shift from the organic, aggregated development to a more structured, unified system. The construction of the various

1. Antony Beaumont, "Busoni, Ferruccio," Grove Music Online, accessed November 28, 2024, https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/display/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000004438.

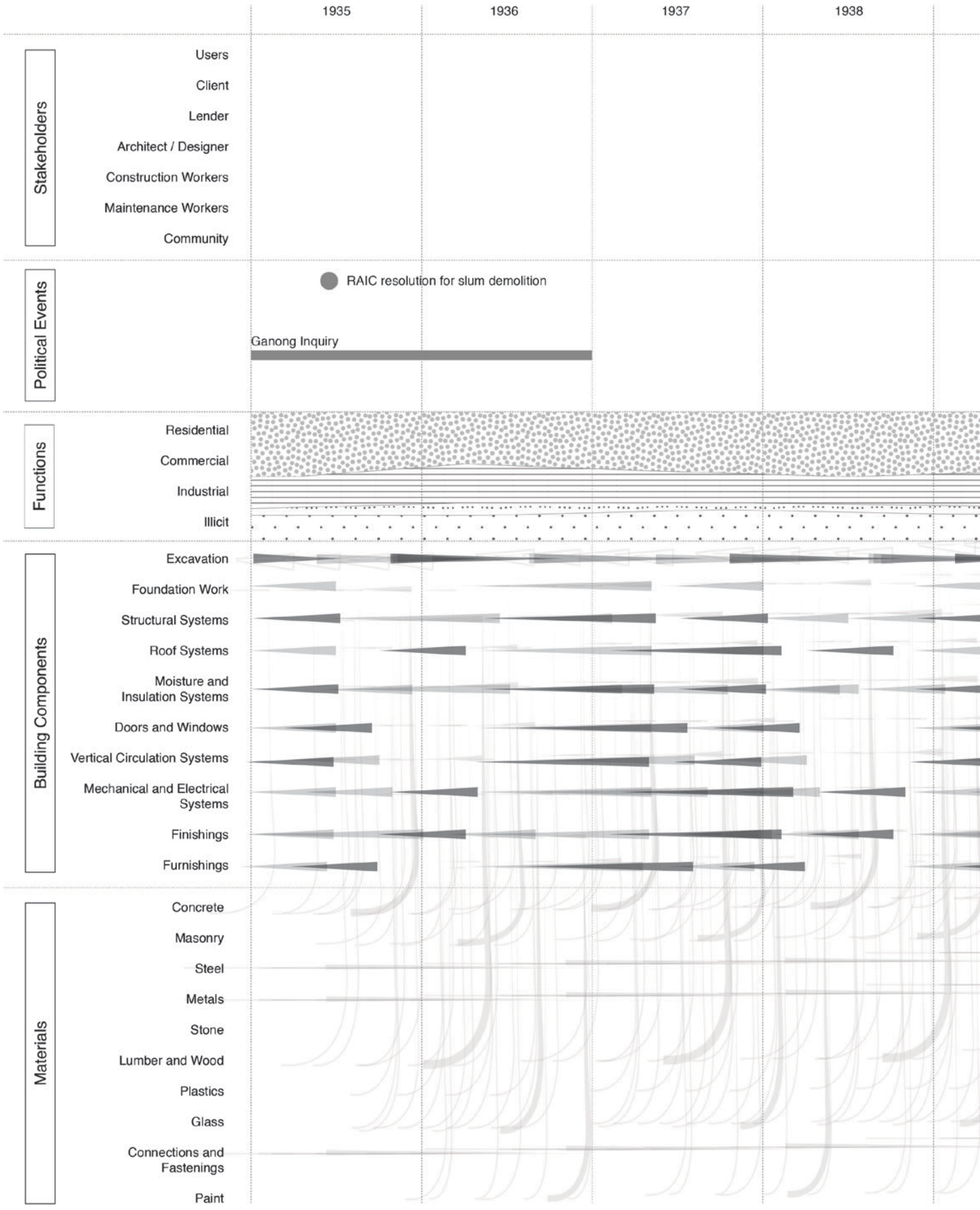
typologies is represented by the orange and blue clusters, spanning from 1957 to the scheme's completion in 1960. The subsequent period remains relatively uneventful, with daily life on-site and routine maintenance of the buildings being the primary activities.

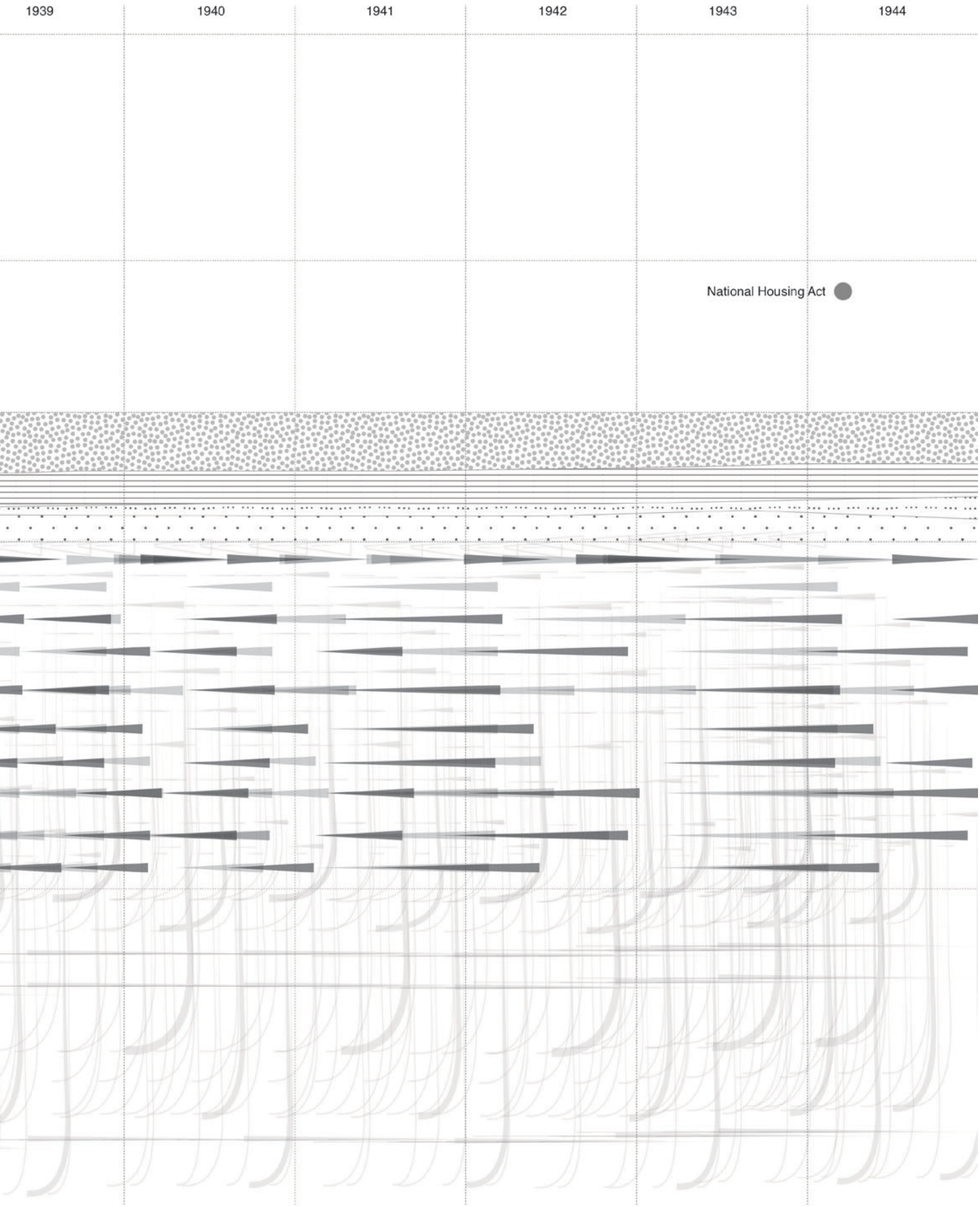
Starting in the early 2000s, a significant replacement, improvement, and modernization program was initiated by the HJM Corporation, represented as a continuous series of fluctuating waves from 2003 to 2024. The final period—discussed in more detail in Chapter 4—marks a shift in development models. In this speculative phase, development is no longer driven by external forces or events but emerges from the desires and needs of the residents themselves. Events in this phase become opportunities for all stakeholders to engage with one another and the built environment, contributing to its ongoing evolution.

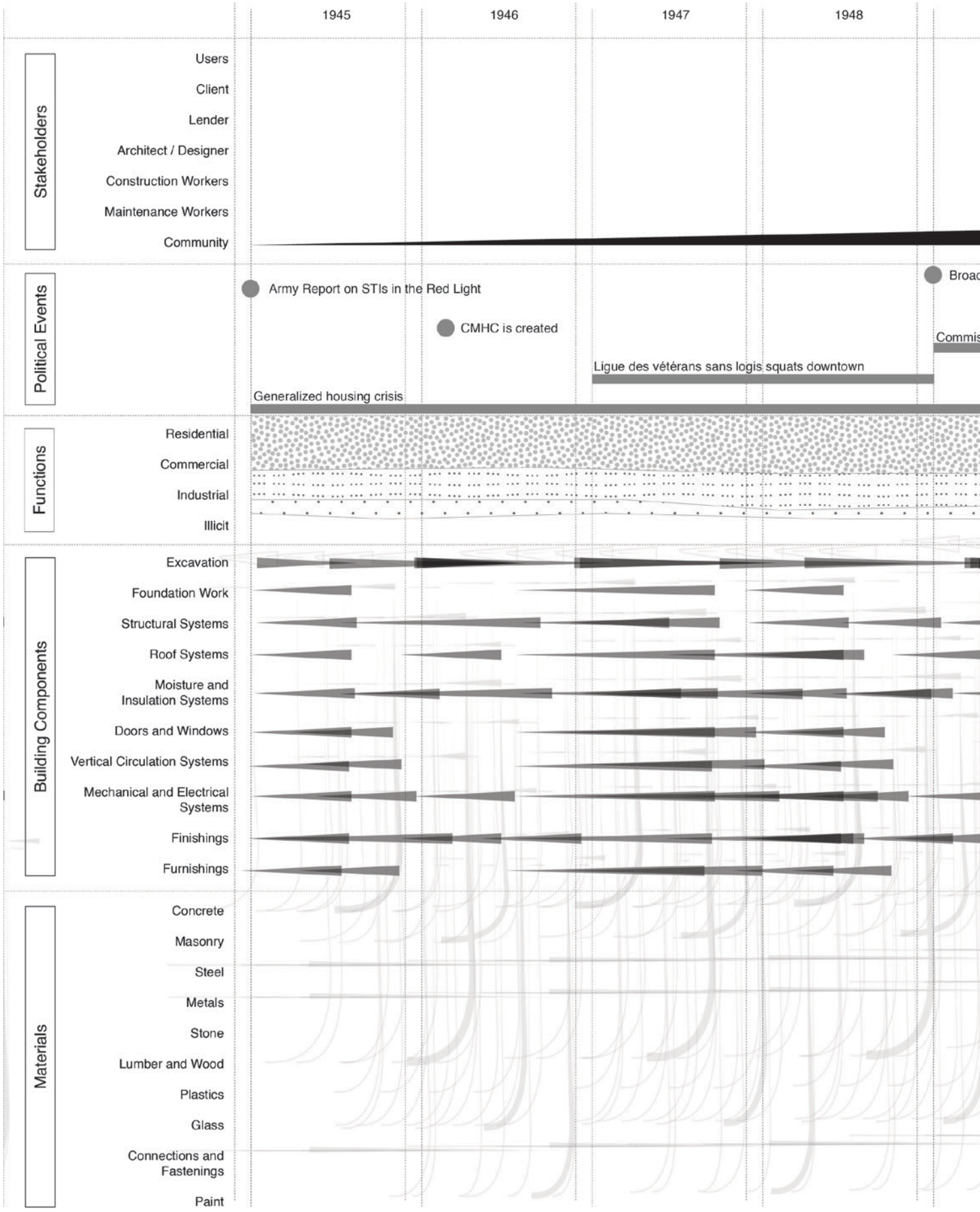
pictorial convention

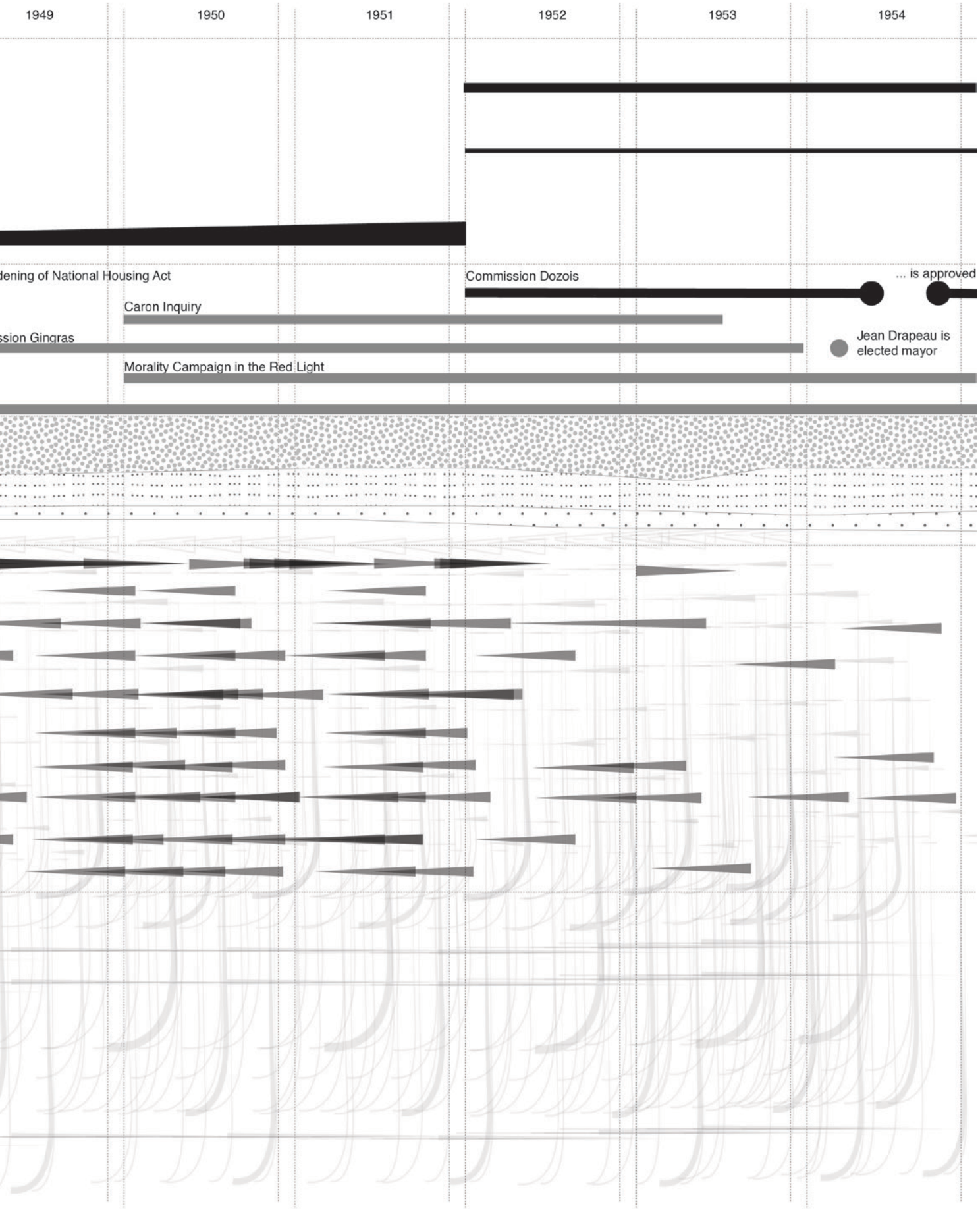
In the transcription, triangular arrows represent linear flows and processes. Opening arrows (<) indicate implementation and increasing intensity while closing arrows (>) symbolize demolition, deconstruction, and a decrease in intensity. Vertical stems link material flows to these linear processes; materials are mobilized (J) or removed from the site ( ). Dotted lines depict occasional or discontinuous presences, while solid lines indicate continuous or stable presence.

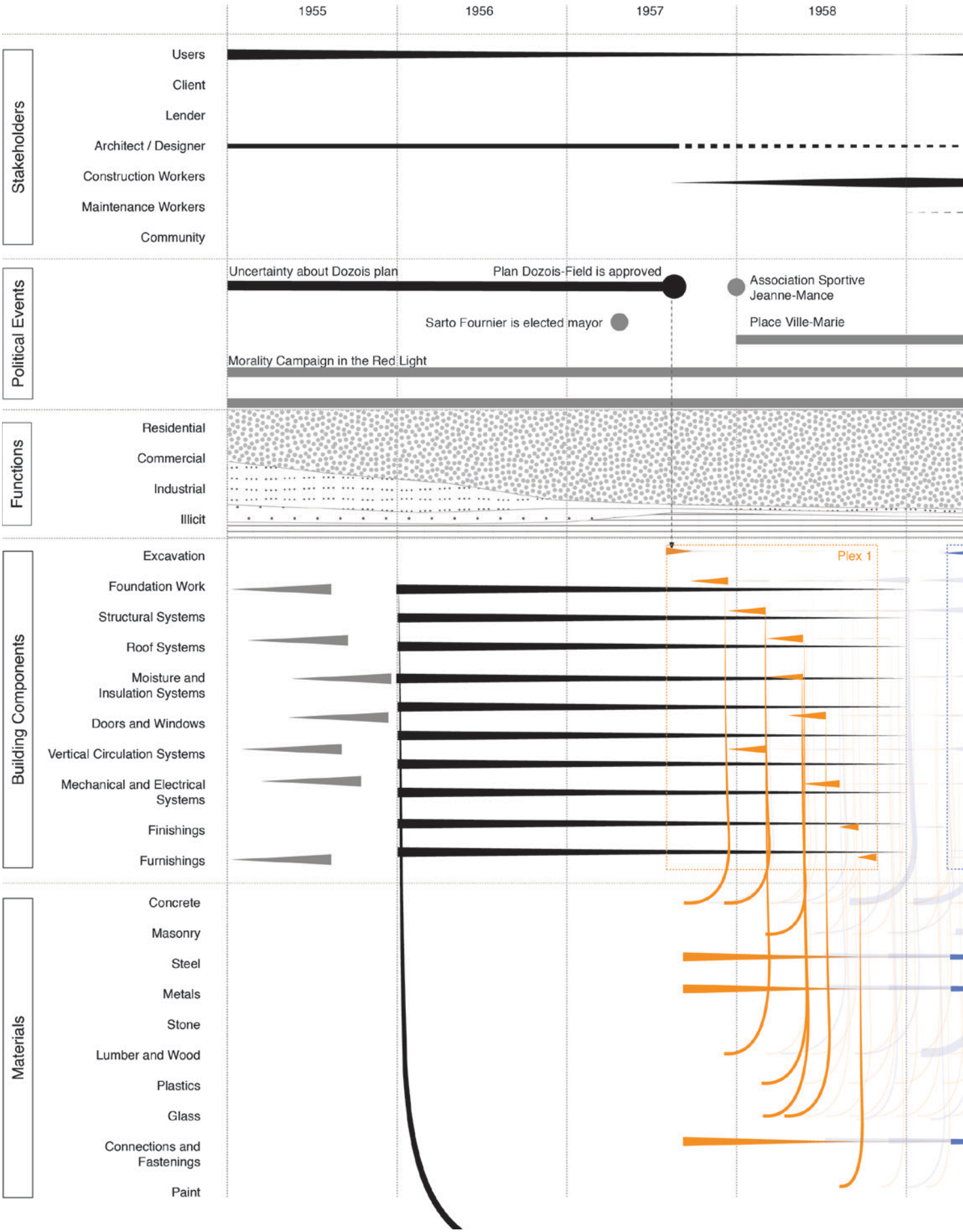
fig. i.1: next page, notating development at the habitations jeanne-mance.

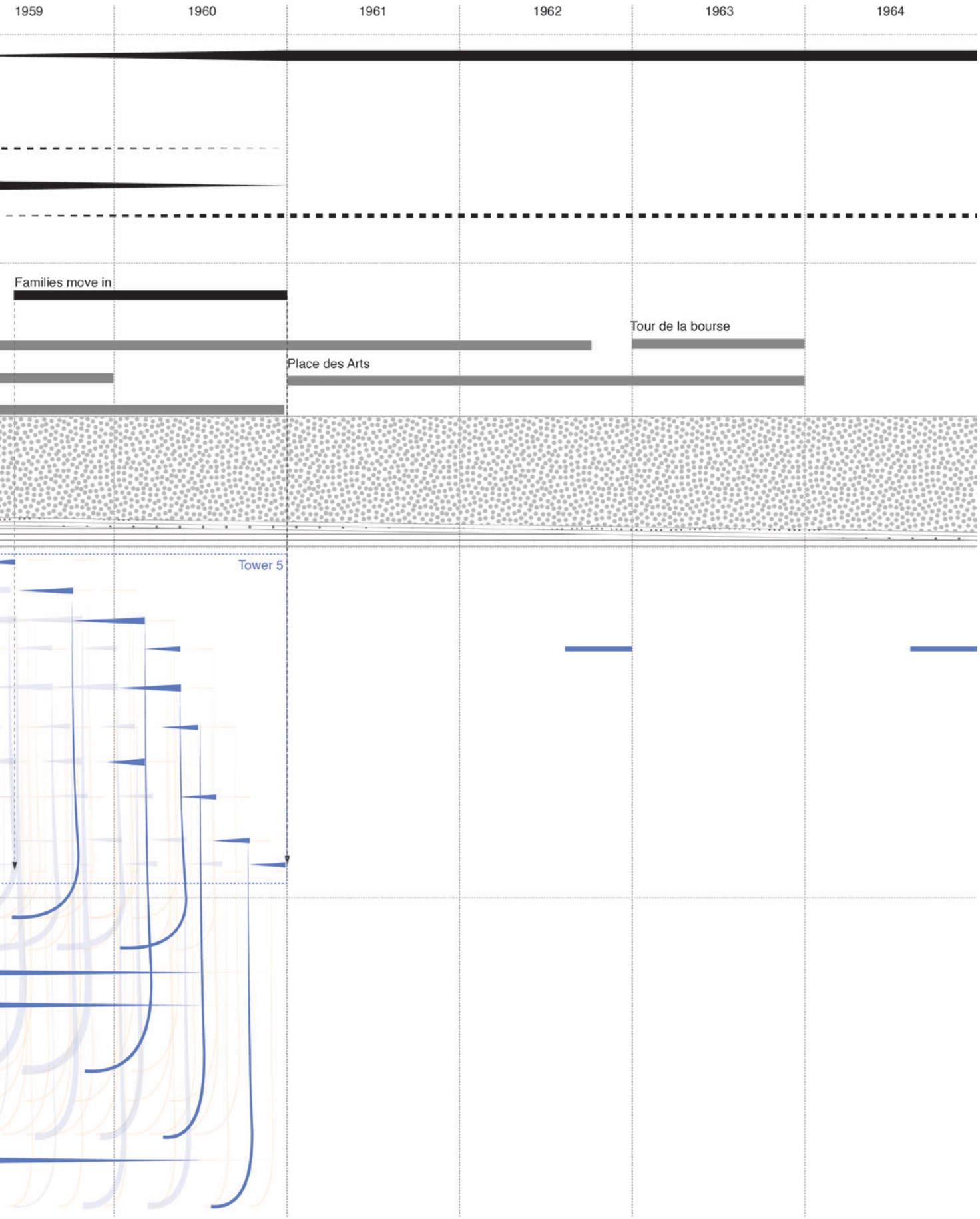

1935
1936
1937
1938
Stakeholders
Users
Client
Lender
Architect / Designer
Construction Workers
Maintenance Workers
Community
Political Events
RAIC resolution for slum demolition
Ganong Inquiry
Functions
Residential
Commercial
Industrial
Illicit
Building Components
Excavation
Foundation Work
Structural Systems
Roof Systems
Moisture and Insulation Systems
Doors and Windows
Vertical Circulation Systems
Mechanical and Electrical Systems
Finishings
Furnishings
Materials
Concrete
Masonry
Steel
Metals
Stone
Lumber and Wood
Plastics
Glass
Connections and Fastenings
Paint

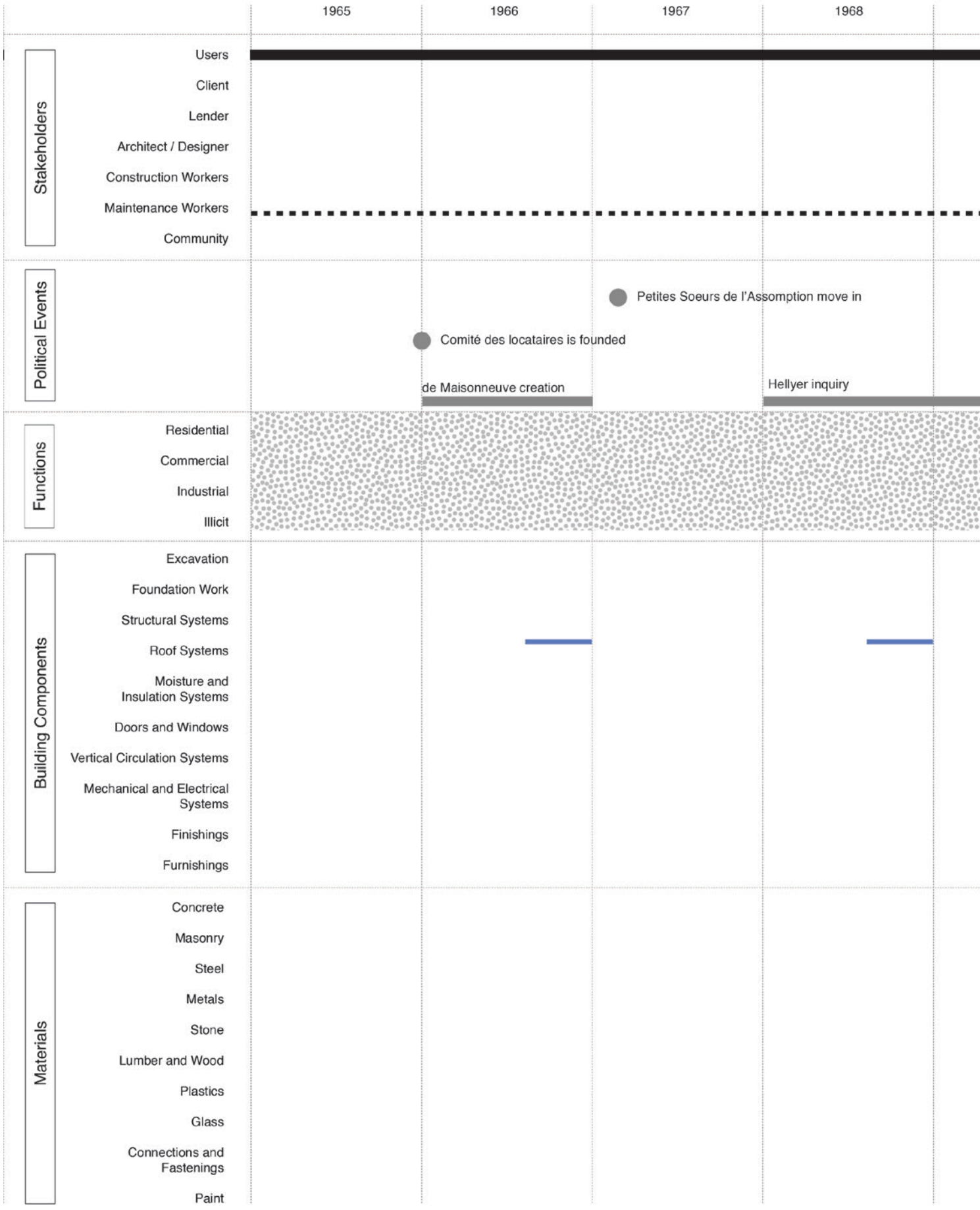

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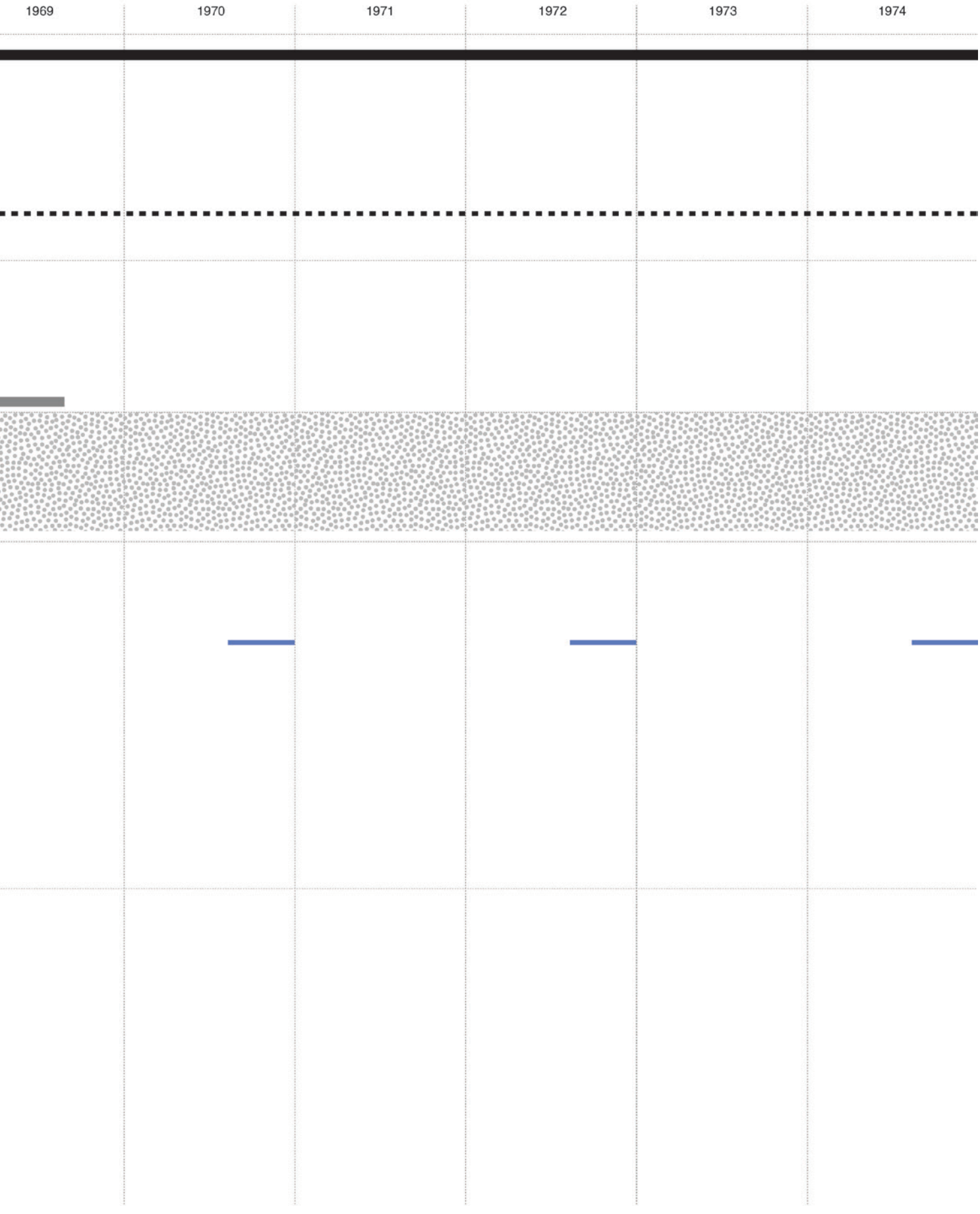

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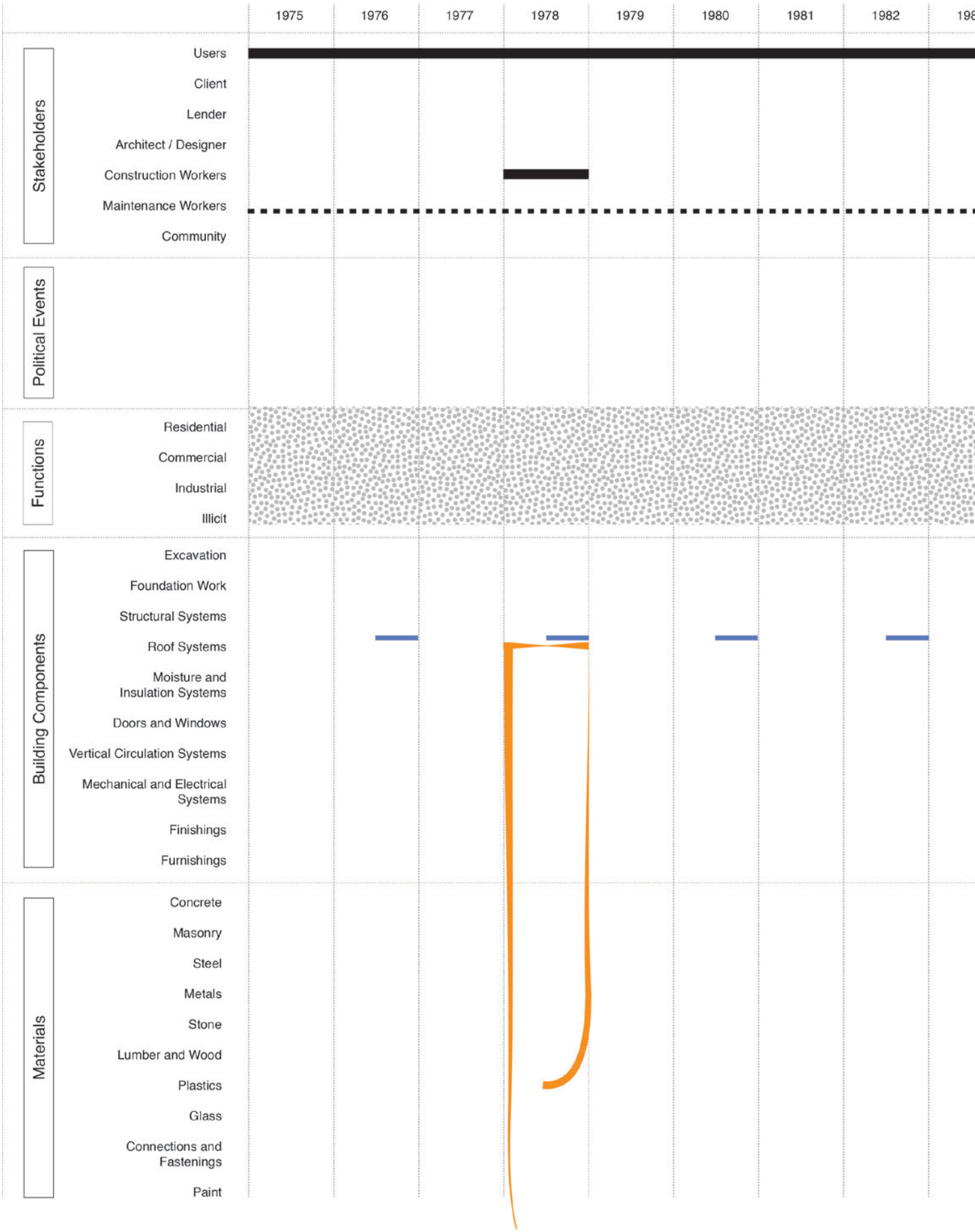

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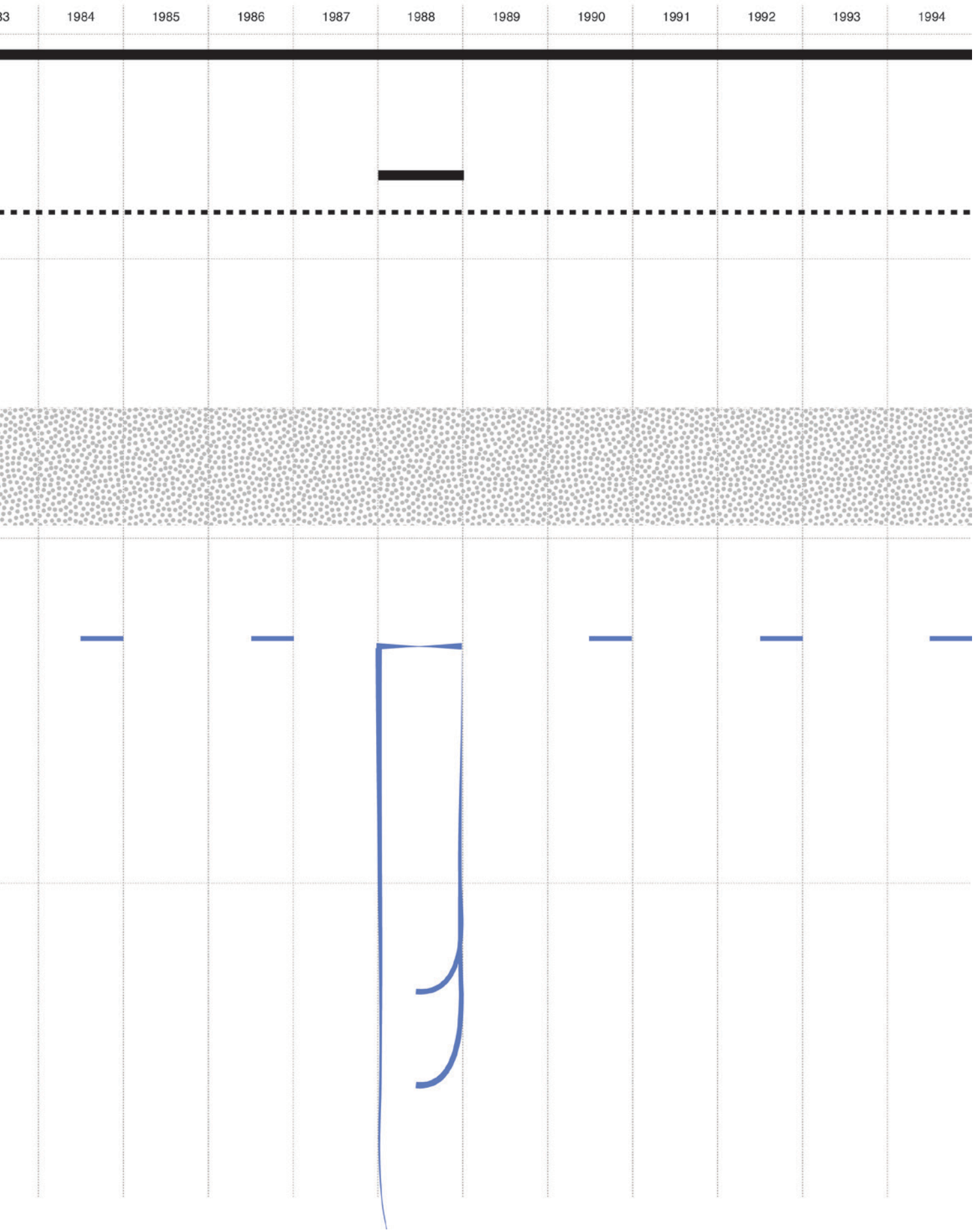

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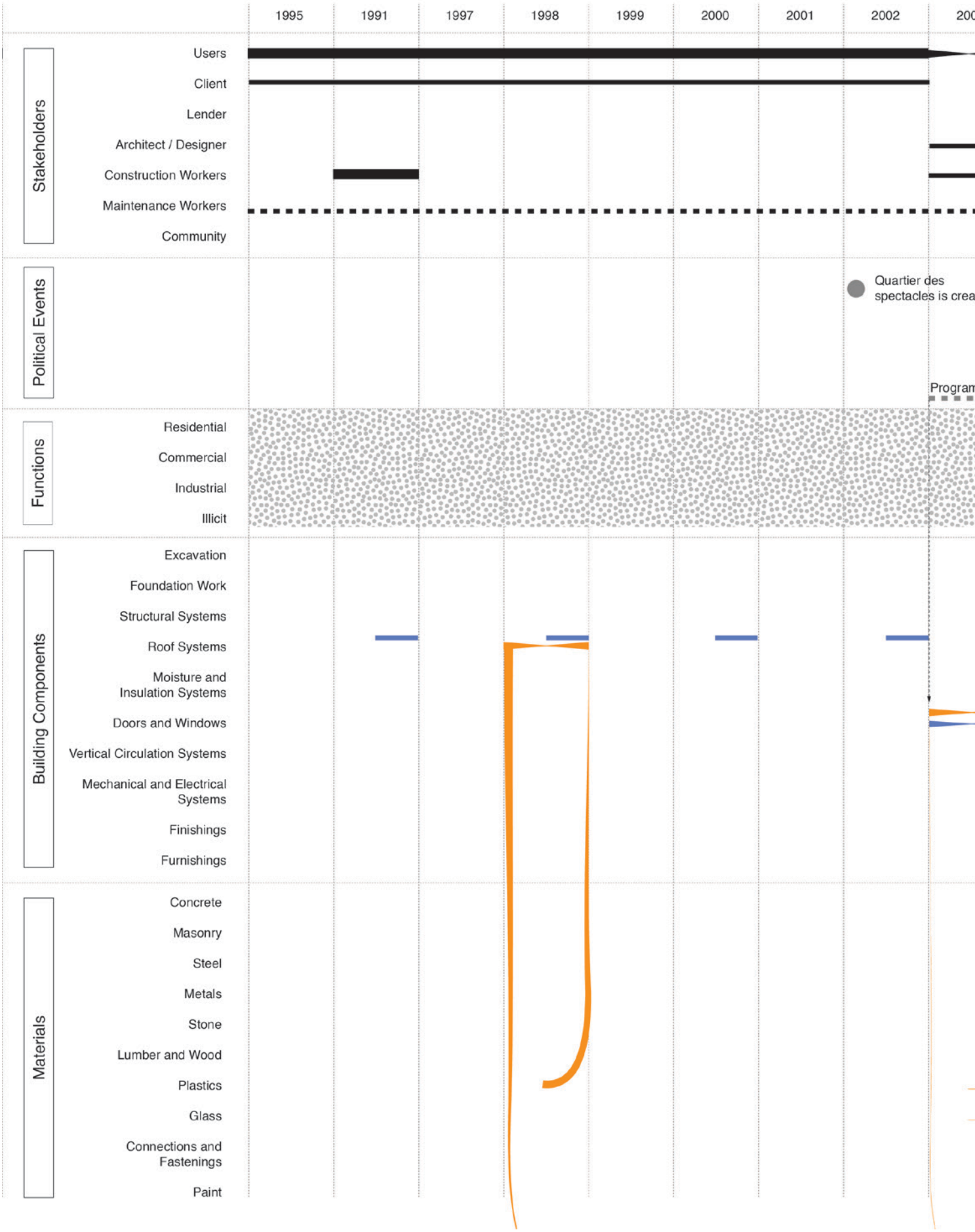

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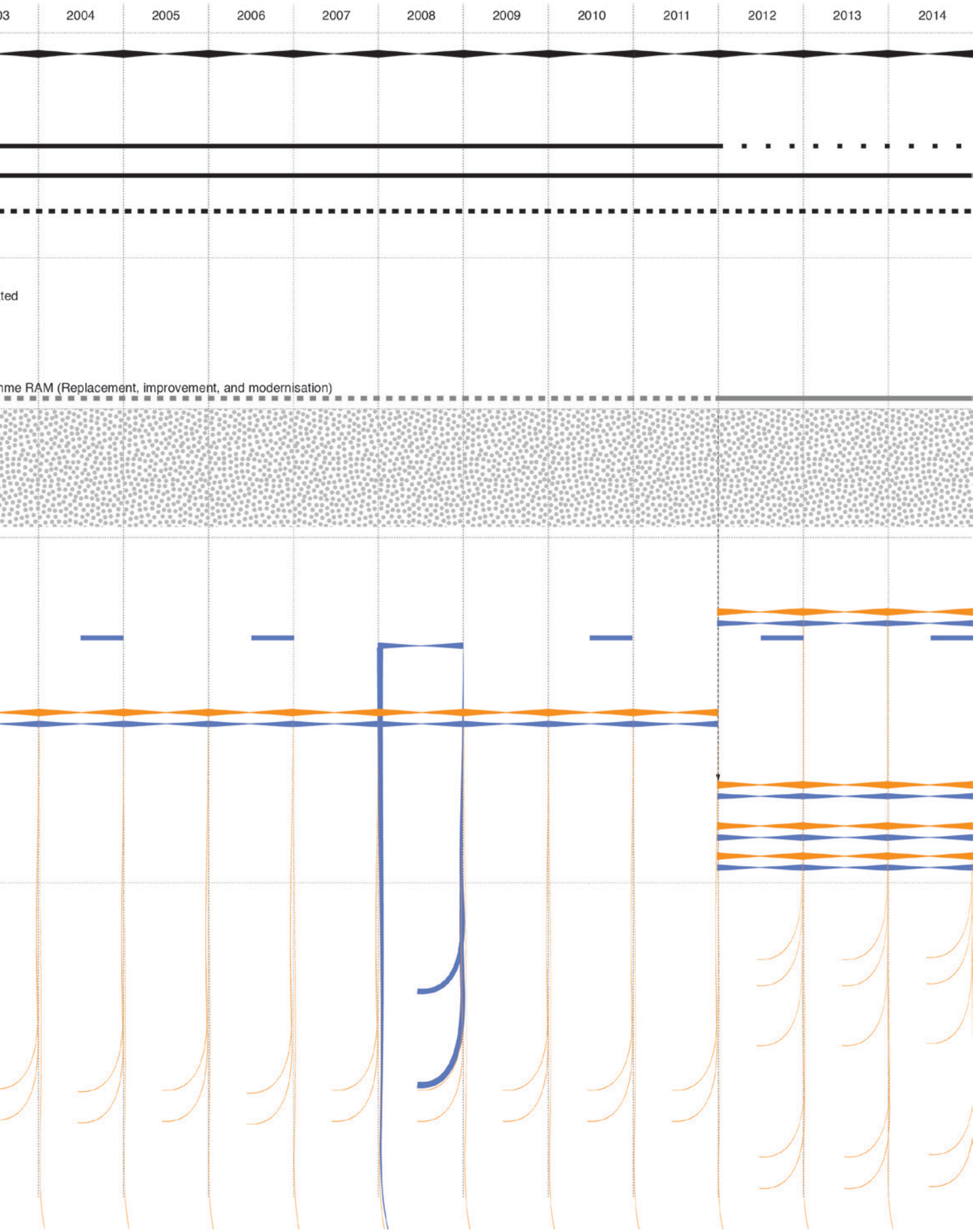

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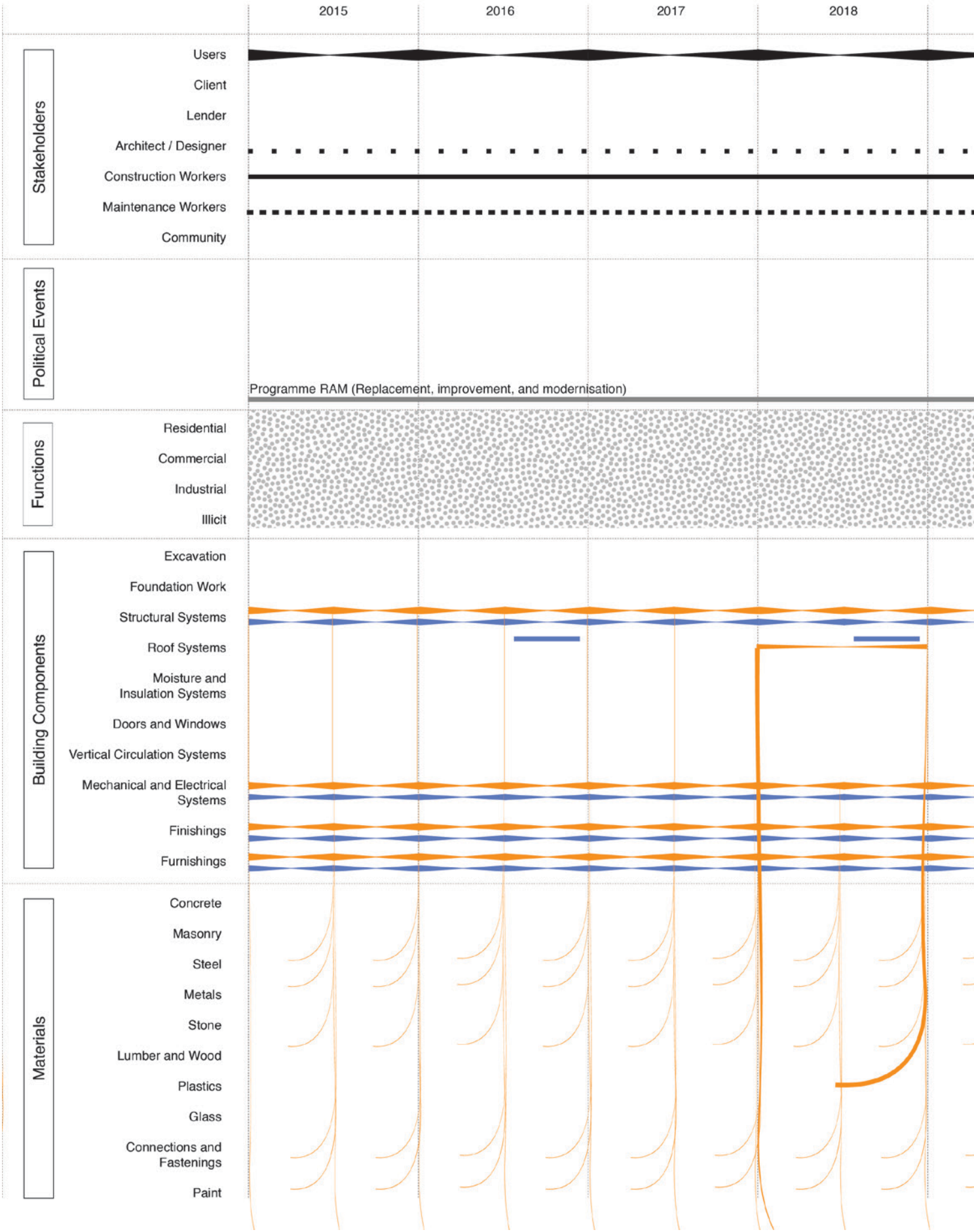

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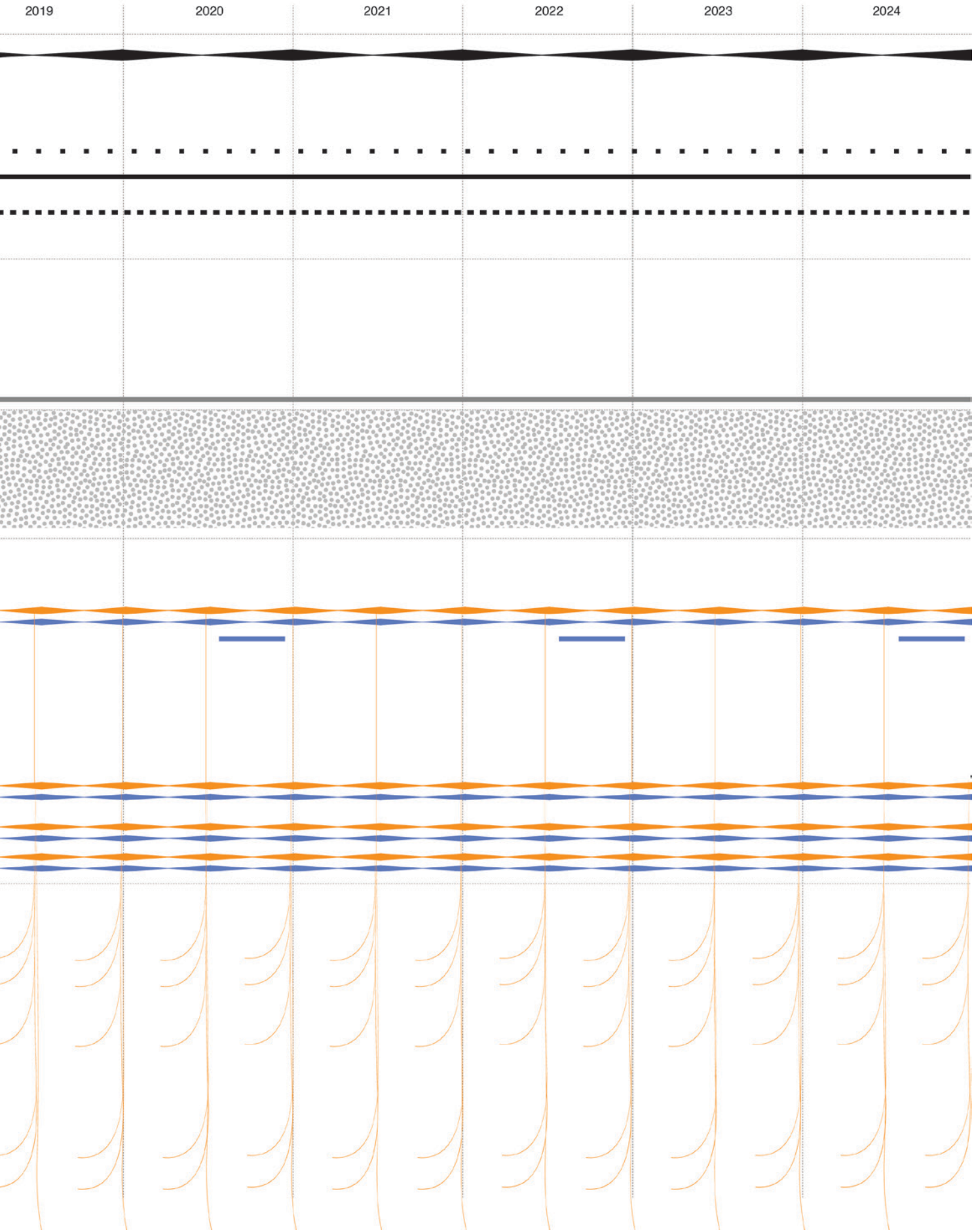

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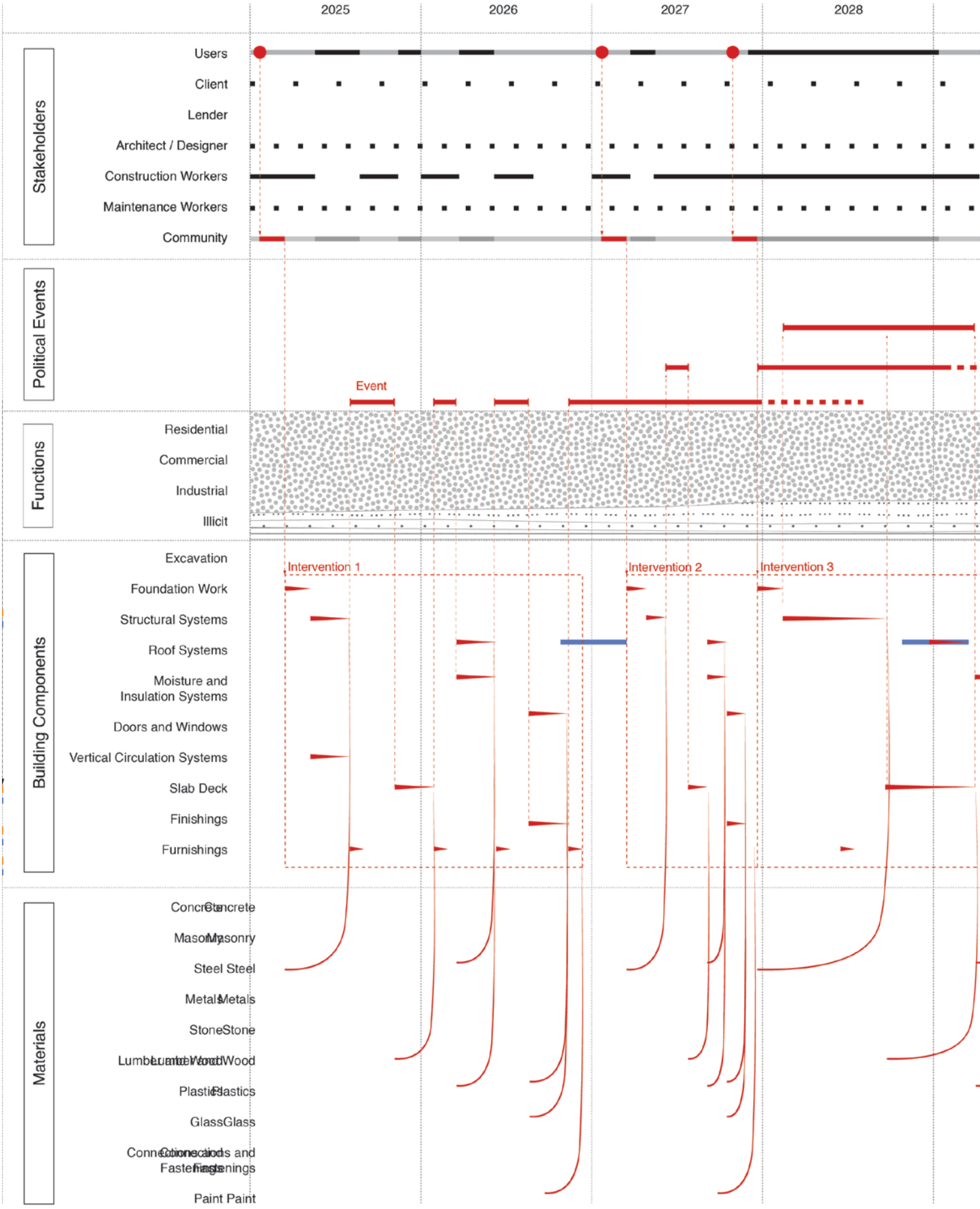

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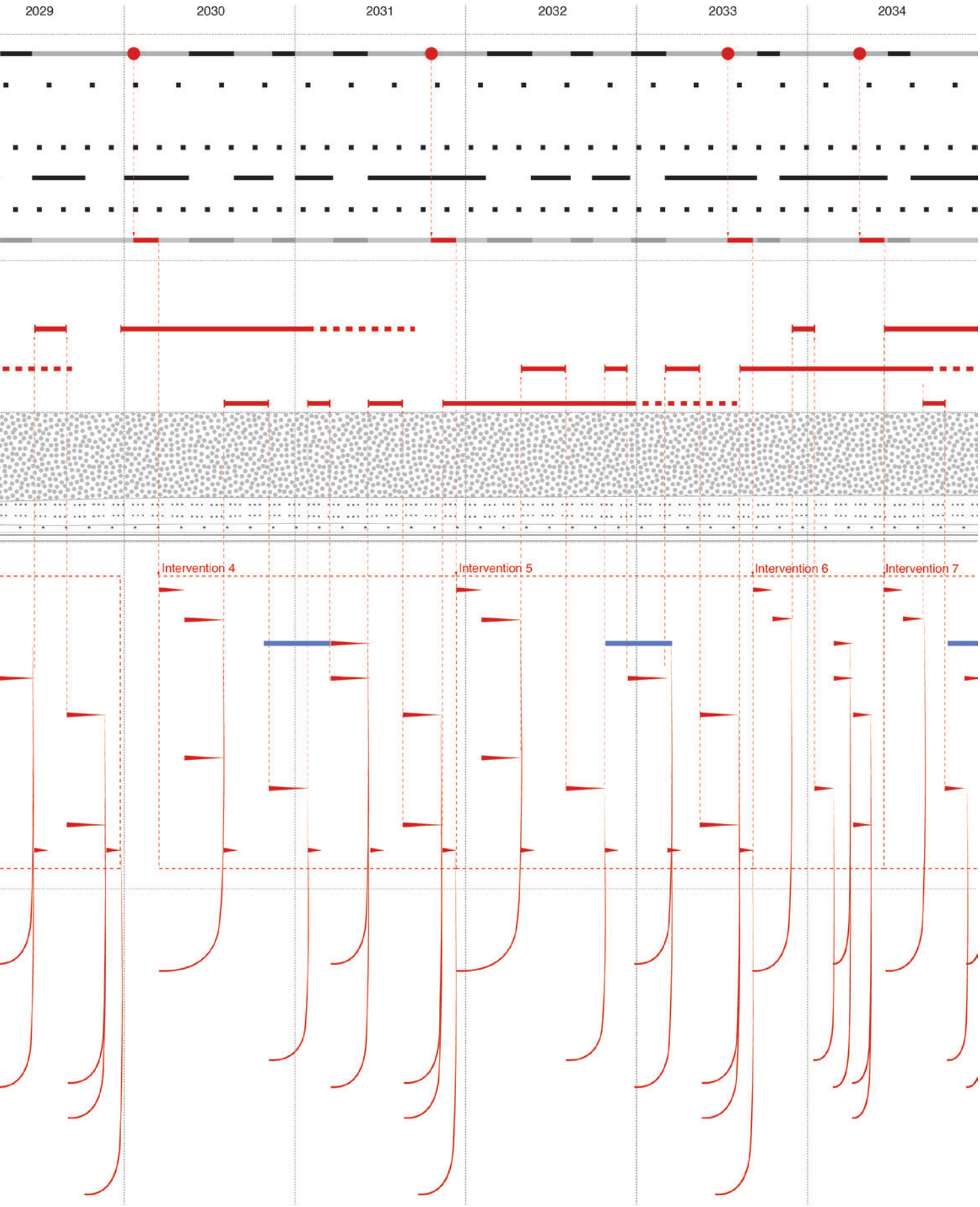

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An Allographic Approach in Architecture

to(wards)

with

I have outlined, up until now, that the reticence of architects to address change and contingency often leads to the alienation of users who, when faced with a static built environment, are unable to engage in meaningful social interactions and lead fulfilling creative lives. To address this, we must broaden our understanding of the architect as a form-giver to the architect as an orchestrator, who designs structures – understood both metaphorically and literally - that allow and facilitate user appropriation through time. This shift in thinking does not negate the agency of the architect, nor does it downplay the importance of their production, but it provides new avenues for creative thinking outside of the traditional functional, tectonic, and aesthetic architectural considerations.

The Role of the Architect

defining architecture



Defining architecture proves to be a challenging task as it seems to describe multiple, at times contradictory, activities. In recent years, the word architecture has spread to about every professional sphere; we speak of network architecture, web architecture, and financial architecture. But what do we mean when we use the term? One of the most common definitions of architecture is the action of structuring space, often through the construction of buildings. Using this definition, it is easy to realize why the notion migrated away from the spatial into a-spatial disciplines: its principal aim is to organize and order components within a greater whole.[1] Architecture understood as a noun rather than an action, can refer to buildings taken as isolated objects. One concurrent and perhaps even more prevalent definition is that architecture is the "art or practice of designing and constructing buildings."[2] It is this definition that I choose to engage with within the scope of this thesis for its capacity to frame architecture as a set of practices, therefore shifting focus from product to process. It is the act of making, generating, and defining space which qualifies as architecture, not the output of the process. Recent scholarship has even extended the label of architect to those who provide the necessary emotional capital for construction to occur.[3] Architecture is, therefore, polysemic; it sustains multiple interpretations. It is, in turn, a practice, a discipline, or a collection of artifacts.

1. This vision is consistent with that of Vitruvius, as argued earlier.
2. Centre national de ressources textuelles et lexicales, "Architecture," Dictionnary, CNRTL, accessed December 9, 2023, https://www.cnrtl.fr/definition/architecture.
3. Menna Agha, "Emotional Capital and Other Ontologies of the Architect," *Architectural Histories* 8, no. 1 (December 18, 2020), https://doi.org/10.5334/ah.381.

With the rise of professional organizations in architecture, the understanding of the term progressively narrowed to become the unique prerogative of the profession. Architecture became the practice of the expert, the arcane exercise of the privileged, competent specialist capable of defining and acting within the current aesthetic taste.[4] The legitimacy of the architect accrued as they became the sole actor capable of shaping space. Such a narrowing of the discipline restricted its practices to that of the architect; that is to say, mostly drawing.[5] The alignment of the act of drawing and the act of building had the consequence of conflating actual space with representational space, therefore insulating design from external interferences from its context.[6] On paper, architecture can be carefully crafted away from the contingencies of everyday life, of its stakeholders, and the actual life of the building beyond construction. Time is evacuated from the design process as the architect effectively designs for one ideal moment in the building's lifespan, a perfect instant that exists only in the vacuum of representational space. As such, the architect focuses on the static properties of the objects they design: the technical, the visual, and the atemporal.[7]

role of the architect

A redefinition of the role becomes essential for incorporating time and user agency as crucial elements within the design process. Architects must step out of their ivory towers, away from the abstracted spaces they work in, and reintegrate the real, lived, and dynamic world of architecture. They need to become ethical agents that design not only beautiful buildings but also frameworks that enable their users to engage in the (co)construction of the spaces they inhabit. Consistent with Levinas' conception of ethics, Jeremy Till argues that the architect's responsibility lies in satisfying the needs of the sponsor and the client and serving the Other.[8] This Other is purposefully ambiguous as it refers not to one monolithic entity but to a multivocal, multifaceted ensemble encompassing all of a building's

4. Reyner Banham, "A Black Box: The Secret Profession of Architecture," in *A critic writes: essays by Reyner Banham*, ed. Mary Banham, 1 online resource (xv, 351 pages, 20 unnumbered pages of plates) : illustrations vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 292–300, https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=42106.
5. Banham.
6. David Leatherbarrow, *Building Time : Architecture, Event, and Experience*, vol. First edition (London [England]: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2021), https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=2623204&lang=fr&site=ehost-live.
7. Nishat Awan, Tatjana Schneider, and Jeremy Till, *Spatial agency: other ways of doing architecture* (Abingdon, Oxon England ; Routledge, 2011).
8. Till, *Architecture depends*. For Emmanuel Levinas' original work see *Totality and Infinity: an Essay on Exteriority*, Martinus Nijhoff Philosophy Texts 1 (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 1979).

roberto mangabeira unger

stakeholders. The responsibility of the architect, therefore, must be expanded to include what is best for the Other, a complex challenge but one that is essential to the architectural profession. The architect needs to adopt a compassionate posture toward the various project stakeholders and articulate their inputs within a comprehensive design that integrates the voices and opinions of all. In the words of Roberto Mangabeira Unger:

> "the architect at their best must make forms enabling people as individuals and as groups to express themselves by changing their situations. In this manner, [they] become like the lover for whom the fulfillment of the beloved's life plan is part of [their] own life project. [They] liv[e] out [their] transformative vocation by assisting someone else's. Then, we can forgive [them their] signature on [their] buildings. We can forgive [them] because [they] mak[e] pieces of stone serve hearts of flesh."[9.]

nishat awan + tatjanna schneider + jeremy till

In this research, I attempt to promote a conception of the architect as a social, ethical actor who aims to empower others and grant them agency rather than a mere professional concerned with the definition of architectural artifacts. I adopt Nishat Awan, Tatjana Schneider, and Jeremy Till's definition of agency as the "ability of the individual to act independently from the constraining structures of society."[10.] This emphasis on agency in the built environment comes from a rich tradition of the French word appropriation in architectural thinking and education, in which users take possession of the spaces they inhabit to express their individuality.[11.] Appropriation, in this sense, is understood as a practice of belonging, of taking part in the processes of place-making, rather than as an act of dispossession. Through their use, individuals transform their spaces and make them their own. It becomes a way of expressing liberty.
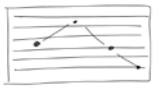
Architects need to make room for appropriation in their designs and act as agents "who effect(t) change through the empowerment of others, allowing them to engage in their spatial environments in ways previously unknown or unavailable to them, opening new freedoms and potentials as a result of reconfigured social space."[12.] The focus of architecture as a profession, therefore, needs to shift from conceiving and refining buildings

9. Roberto Mangabeira Unger, *The religion of the future* (Cambridge, Massachusetts ; Harvard University Press, 2014), https://www.degruyter.com/openurl?genre=book&isbn=9780674416253.
10. Awan, Schneider, and Till, *Spatial agency*.
11. Lisa Findley, *Building change: architecture, politics and cultural agency* (London ; Routledge, 2005).
12. Awan, Schneider, and Till, *Spatial agency,* 32.

as commodities to the creation and consolidation of social relationships.[13] Spatial agency disturbs the realms of professional organizations and argues for the increased importance of the user and other stakeholders as co-creators of buildings. The postures and methods used to achieve agency are varied: certain organizations will adopt a reactionary stance as they seek to upset the status quo, others will work within the system and push toward change, while some will work to alleviate inequalities through design.[14] In all cases, a constant remains: the architect needs to design with adaptability, flexibility, and change.

redefining the role of the architect

From professional experts, architects must become mediators that coordinate the needs and desires of the various stakeholders against the imperatives of site, economy, and rationality. They are seen as translators of the common good who interpret, prioritize, and make sense of the various conflicting interests of the client, the user, and the community;[15] facilitators of the right of users to claim agency over their own spaces;[16] And designers of conditions of change rather than built form itself, conditions that promote engagement, participation, adaptation, and interaction.[17] It is impossible to predict the transformations a building will undergo beyond its completion; therefore, we must embrace indeterminacy and instead aim to organize and mediate future change rather than freezing buildings into an idealized state. The designer's output moves from a set of drawings to the creation of frameworks: from a static work of authorship to a dynamic score.



score

The score, as found in music, offers a powerful model through which to reinterpret the role of the architect. The score is a "system of symbols which can convey, guide, or control the interactions between elements such as space, time, rhythm, people, and their activities and the combinations which result from them."[18] By using the score as an analogical model for architectural function, we can ensure that the significance of a work lies not in its physical

13. Awan, Schneider, and Till.
14. Awan, Schneider, and Till, categorize the various practices that spatial actors can engage in to promote agency. Examples include the expansion of design brief, design initiatives, taking ownership of spaces, making things visible, creating network of support, sharing knowledge, and subverting and opposing.
15. Till, *Architecture depends*.
16. Alison B. Hirsch, "Urban Barnraising: Collective Rituals to Promote Communitas," *Landscape Journal: Design, Planning, and Management of the Land* 34, no. 2 (2015): 116.
17. Dorian Resener, " T : Exploring the Creative Agency of Time in Architecture" (thesis, Toronto Metropolitan University, 2013), https://doi.org/10.32920/ryerson.14648268.v1.
18. Galia Hanoch-Roe, "Musical Space and Architectural Time: Open Scoring versus Linear Processes," *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 34, no. 2 (2003): 87.\\uc0\\u8221{} {\\i{}International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music} 34, no. 2 (2003

manifestation but in the very diversity it generates and the range of scenarios the model sustains. The work's function changes from an object to being read into a process constructed collectively in partnership with users.[19.]

The Architectural Apparatus

"As creators we are always surprised by events that we cannot control, but that we make happen, which are consequences. Just as a robotician cannot fully master a robot, architects are unable to master their buildings, we cannot *make* them fully, but we can 'make them do something."[20.]

abraham maslow

Integrating change and user-agency within architecture requires a redefinition of the role of the architect as the designer of social and material frameworks. This shift cannot, however, simply be operated based on values themselves and it requires a further investigation into the tools and methods of the architect. Pragmatist approaches to design underscore the importance of instruments in addressing specific design challenges and supporting construction, cooperation, and conception.[21.] A great part of design is understanding how to mobilize existing methodologies, applying them to new contexts, and developing new tools when the existing ones are unable to address new challenges. These methodologies are not only tools, but they constitute a key part of design itself as they set the parameters of what is possible to achieve; defining affordances and constraints in the conceptual process.[22.] The realm of the creative is not only defined by internal – cerebral – determinants but at the intersection between cognitive and environmental processes. In his 1966 book *The Psychology of Science*, Abraham Maslow uses this common saying to illustrate the limitations that tools impose upon their users: "to a man with a hammer everything looks like a nail."[23.] Not only does the hammer only allow a specific action – that of nailing – but it also molds our approach to the problem itself. By defining the realm of what is possible, tools condition creative thinking and define the parameters through which

19. This intermedial analogy between architect and composer is not without precedents with Karl Linn describing himself as a choreographer of collective forms of performance. Hirsch, "Urban Barnraising: Collective Rituals to Promote Communitas," 121.
20. Albena Yaneva, *Latour for Architects*, Routledge, Thinkers for Architects 18 (London, New York, 2022), 78.
21. Dalsgaard P., "Instruments of Inquiry: Understanding the Nature and Role of Tools in Design," *International Journal of Design* 11, no. 1 (2017): 21–33.
22. On the question of instruments, see Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972); Henri Lefebvre, *La production de l'espace*, 4. éd, Ethnosociologie (Paris: Anthropos, 2000), http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb370983677.
23. Dalsgaard P., "Instruments of Inquiry."

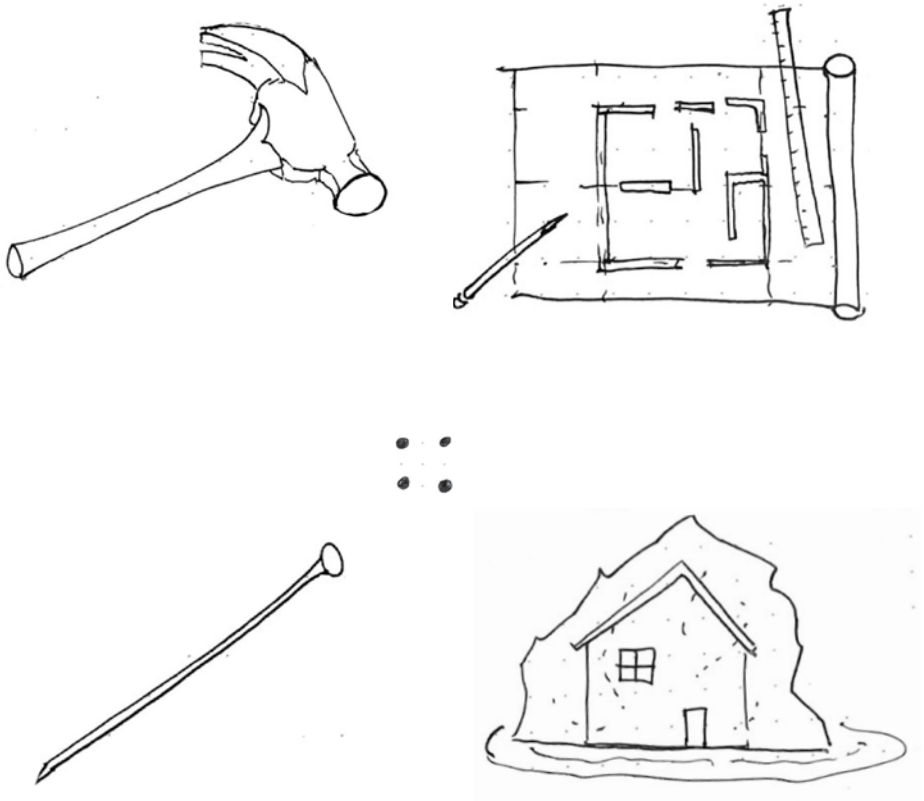


fig. 3.1: if a man with a hammer sees every problem as a nail, an architect with a ruler and a pen sees every building as a frozen object.

designers reflect. If the man with a hammer sees everything as a nail, architects and their tools see every design problem as an aesthetic, static one [fig. 3.1].

The conventional design apparatus – orthographic projections, perspectival renderings, and tridimensional modeling to name a few – fail to represent time, movement, feelings, and senses, restricting the designer to work within an a-temporal, depersonalized space of abstraction that does not portray the complexity of the discipline.[24] The architectural toolkit focuses on visual perception and the creation of aestheticized order, in a way consistent with the profession's long-standing obsession with permanence.[25] As such, static aesthetics are overrepresented and steer the focus of architects toward form to the detriment of social relationships. Architects "fail to see, let alone analyze or capitalize upon, the informal aspects of urban life because they lack a professional vocabulary," and I would add, appropriate tools, "for describing them."[26] To operate this shift, I believe that we must expand the design apparatus of the architect to include tools that integrate time, improvisation, and indeterminacy. In that way, I align myself with Kwinter in arguing that by moving away from the object, "a new field of relations open up to the designer."[27] In developing new design methodologies we can reveal new opportunities and areas of interventions for architects to investigate.

mid-century avant-gardes

It is important, however, to consider notable exceptions to the argument that architects – and the tools they mobilize – always negate time and contingency. During the 1960s and 1970s, several architects and avant-garde groups began integrating time, change, and user agency into their design thinking, reflecting a shift towards more flexible, adaptable environments. Cedric Price – one of the foremost figures of this trend – was influenced by information theory and cybernetics for their potential to generate a new architecture of adaptability, virtuality, and temporary; rather than formal artifacts.[28] In his speculative, quasi-fantastical projects –

cedric price

24. Galia Hanoch-Roe, "Musical Space and Architectural Time: Open Scoring versus Linear Processes," International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music 34, no. 2 (2003): 145–60.
25. Beatriz Colomina, "Introduction: On Architecture, Production and Reproduction," in *Architectureproduction*, ed. Joan Ockman (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1988), 7–23.
26. Nishat Awan, Tatjana Schneider, and Jeremy Till, *Spatial agency: other ways of doing architecture* (Abingdon, Oxon England ; Routledge, 2011), 28.
27. *Architectures of Time toward a Theory of the Event in Modernist Culture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001).
28. Spatial Agency, "Cedric Price," Spatial Agency, accessed November 26, 2024, https://www.spatialagency.net/database/price; "From Agit-Prop to Free Space: The

often termed *paper architectures* – Price redefined the role of the architect from form-giver to a designer of potential – of the field of human possibility. Price's designs, such as the demountable house for an archaeologist and the adaptable stock pen that doubles as a picnic site and playground, were based on a systems-thinking approach, treating architecture as a dynamic set of parameters rather than a fixed image. His most famous project, the *Fun Palace* (1960-1961), designed in collaboration with Joan Littlewood, envisioned a theatre where the audience would become participants, turning space into an ever-changing, interactive environment limited only by the imagination of its users [fig. 3.2].[29] It is interesting to note, however, that although Price's ideas pushed architecture beyond its traditional static apparatus, his language remained deeply committed to aesthetics and style: "it is often said (...) that Price's work was without stylistic preoccupations. I would argue that Price's work was highly stylized. This I would suggest is borne out by how stable Price's aesthetic was over four decades."[30] This critique of style is one that can readily apply to much of the avant-gardes from that very era and extends to groups like Archigram and Archizoom.

constant nieuwenhuys

Similarly, Constant Nieuwenhuys's *New Babylon* exemplifies the newly found focus of mid-century architects in indeterminacy and agency [fig. 3.3]. *New Babylon* envisioned a city where work was abolished, and leisure and creativity were the structural activities of daily life.[31] Drawing inspiration from nomadic lifestyles and gypsy camps, the project was designed as a dynamic, adaptable environment controlled by its citizens and constantly reshaped through play and interaction. The project emphasized spatial agency and complete freedom; every aspect of the urban environment could be reconfigured freely, allowing inhabitants to explore new possibilities in their daily existence.

Architecture of Cedric Price - University of Waterloo," accessed November 26, 2024, https://ocul-wtl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?docid=cdi_crossref_primary_10_1080_13602360903119926&context=PC&vid=01OCUL_WTL:WTL_DEFAULT&lang=en&search_scope=OCULDiscoveryNetwork&adaptor=Primo%20Central&tab=OCULDiscoveryNetwork&query=any,contains,From%20Agit-Prop%20to%20Free%20Space:%20The%20Architecture%20of%20Cedric%20Price&offset=0.

29. Ana Bonet Miro, *Architecture, Media, Archives: The Fun Palace of Joan Littlewood and Cedric Price as a Cultural Project* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2024), https://www.ribabooks.com/architecture-media-archives-the-fun-palace-of-joan-littlewood-and-cedric-price-as-a-cultural-project_9781350345362; Spatial Agency, "Cedric Price."

30. David Spiller, "From AgitProp to Free Space: The Architecture of Cedric Price | Request PDF," *The Journal of Architecture* 14, no. 4 (August 2009): 539, https://doi.org/10.1080/13602360903119926.\\uc0\\u8221{} {\\i{}The Journal of Architecture} 14, no. 4 (August 2009

31. Mercedes Pineda, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, and Gemeente Museum Den Haag, eds., *Constant: New Babylon* (Madrid: Publications Department of MNCARS, 2015).

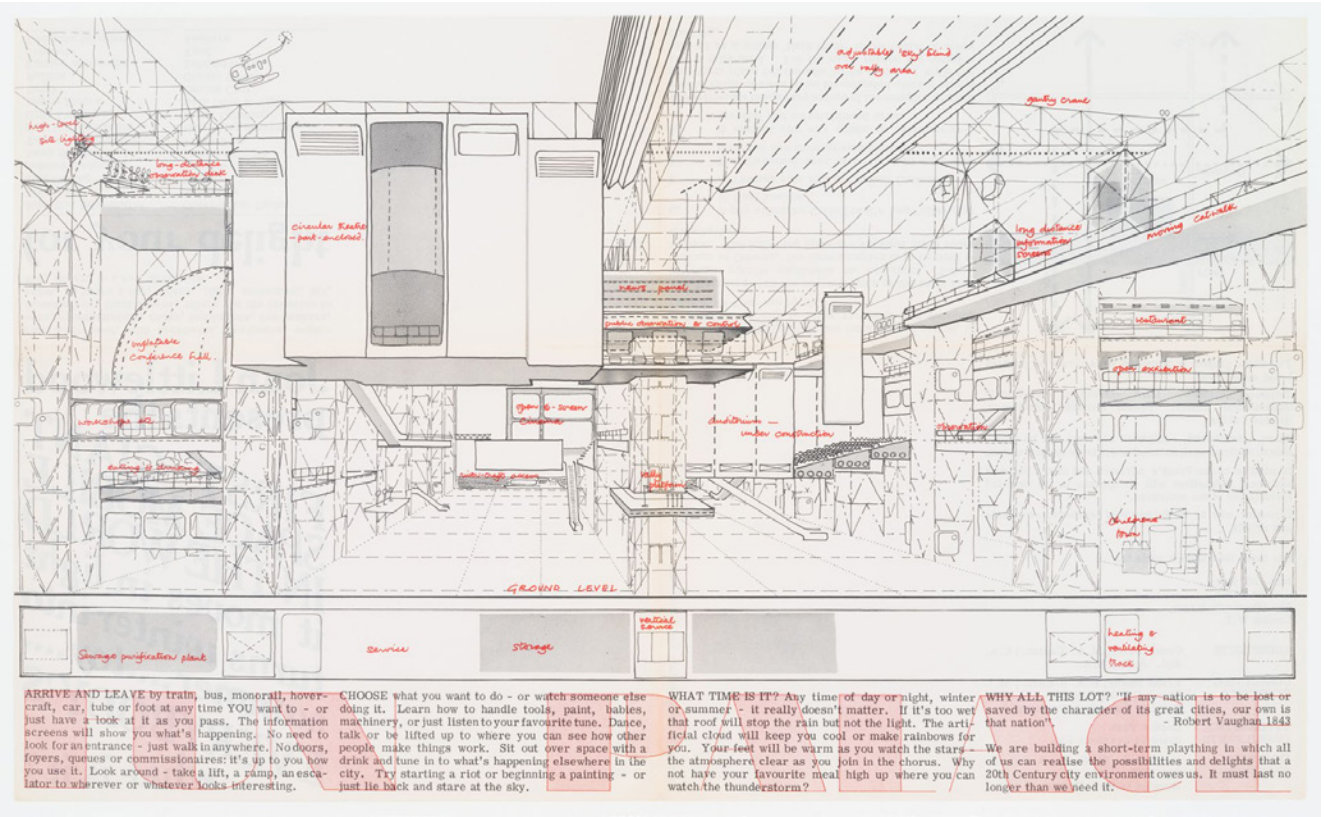


fig. 3.2: fun palace promotional brochure, canadian centre for architecture, cedric price fund, DR1995:0188L525L001:023, cedric price and joan littlewood (1964).

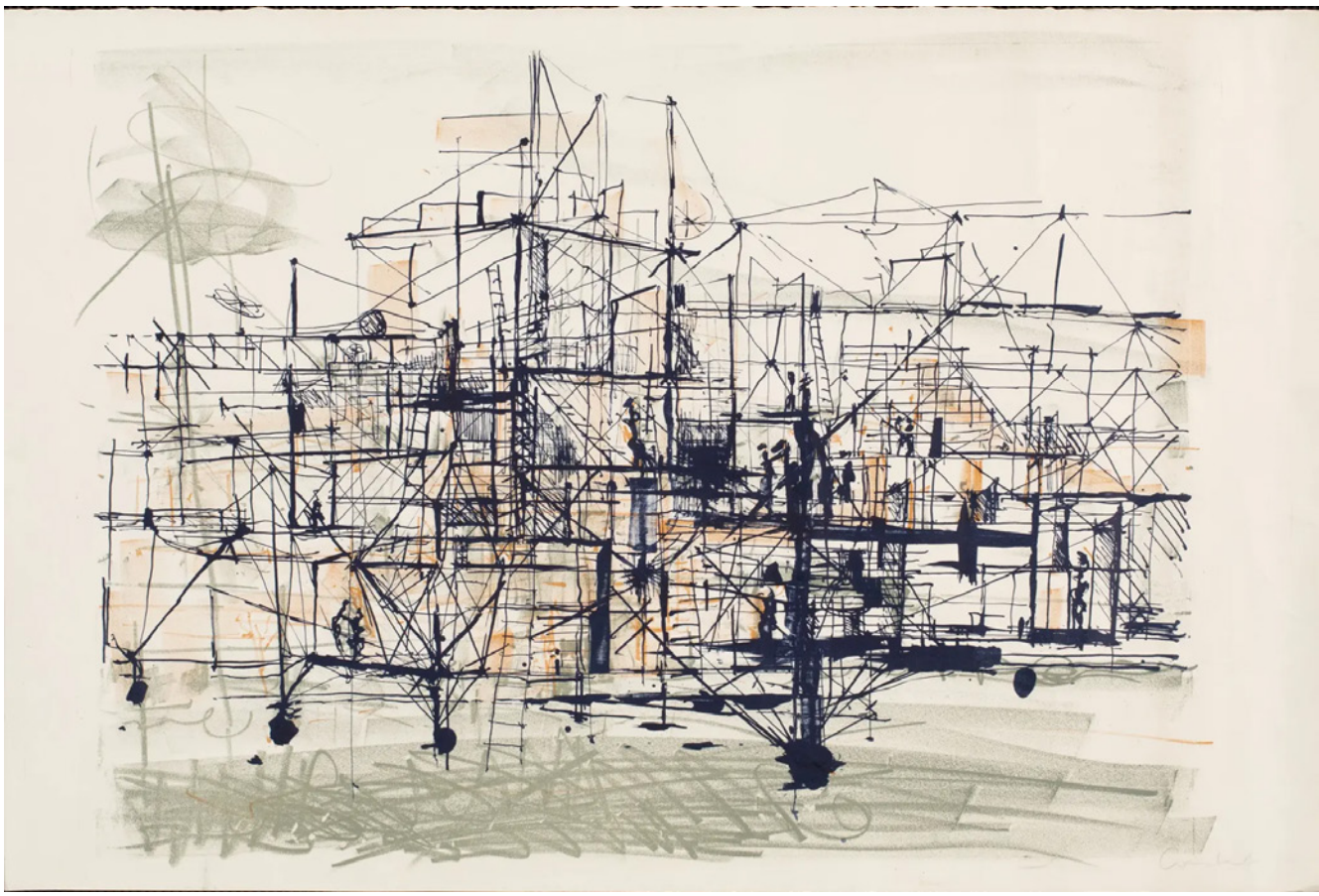
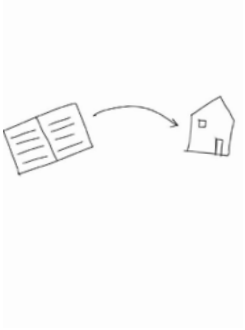


fig. 3.3: new babylon, lithography, collection het nieuwe instituut, archive academie van bouwkunst amsterdam (abam), constant niewenhuys (1961).

An Intermedial Approach



Architecture does not occur in a vacuum, but rather exists at the intersection of the concurring actions of various actors and disciplinary fields. Throughout its history, architecture has mobilized and been influenced by extra-architectural sources to reinvent itself. Cross-pollination from visual arts, namely, is frequent as architects attempt to leverage inspiration away from the realms of their field. Several well-known examples come to mind such as the influence of Cubism in the practice of Le Corbusier, himself a painter. Le Corbusier's interest in Cubism led to the development of his famous architectural promenade, and the spatial ambiguity that Rowe and Slutzky came to theorize as phenomenal transparency.[32] Several other influential architects also borrowed from arts as varied as music (Steven Holl, Louis Kahn), cinema (Bernard Tschumi), sculpture (Frank Gehry), theatre (Aldof Loos), and literature (John Hedjuk).

intermediality

In *Form and Meaning in Avant-Garde Collage and Montage*, Magda Dragu proposes a theory of artistic transfer that relies on intermediality, which she defines as "the transformations, transpositions, and adaptations of techniques across media, as well as their combination and fusion."[33] The intermedial transfer involves at least two media; one acts as a source from which techniques may be taken out of, the other as the target of the operation in which these principles may be grafted. The operation acts in a way that is analogous to an organ transplant; the organ is harvested from its host and transferred into a new body, where it assimilates into its new context. The transferred organ retains its integrity, but through a new set of relations, it acquires new meaning. The influence is mutual; the borrowed technique influences its new milieu while this milieu in turn modifies the nature of the technique. The level of assimilation between a technique and its new context is defined, according to Dragu, by the nature of the contents transferred across media. She distinguishes between medium-specific techniques – which are not easily transposed – and non-medium-specific techniques which integrate seamlessly into new media. The fugue, for example, is a complex polyphonic structure developed in the musical world over centuries. Its use in other media can be done effectively, but its specificity makes it difficult to separate

32. Colin Rowe and Robert Slutzky, "Transparency: Literal and Phenomenal," *Perspecta* 8 (1963): 45–54, https://doi.org/10.2307/1566901.
33. Magda Dragu, *Form and meaning in avant-garde collage and montage*, Routledge research in art history (New York, NY: Routledge, 2020), xviii.

from its original context. Paul Klee's Fugue in Red (1921), namely, requires that the audience be familiar with the fugal structure to understand the transfer, in other words, it remains foreign to the new piece (fig. 2.1). Collage, however, although it originated in visual arts, can be understood in any media, regardless of the audience's knowledge of art history. Its integration is seamless.

iannis xenakis + le corbusier

Although numerous instances of intermedial transfers have occurred throughout architectural history, few question the basis on which they operate. These translations remained aesthetic, as they were reinterpreted into the visually dominated language of the architect.[34.] When designing the facades of the Couvent Saint-Marie-de-la- Tourette (1957-1960), Iannis Xenakis, architect, composer, and close collaborator of Le Corbusier, referred to musical proportions to devise a series of undulating glass panes [fig. 3.4].[35.] Rather than looking at musical techniques to transfer to architectural design, Xenakis aestheticized rhythms and musical intervals as ideals of proportion and beauty. It is not the techniques of music composition that interested Xenakis, but rather its ideals and foundational principles – the enharmonic series. La Tourette is representative of how architects mobilize artistic sources in their work, using them as compositional objects rather than truly instrumentalizing them.

kevin lynch + bernard tschumi

A few examples of intermedial transfers that go beyond the aesthetic appeal of extra-architectural sources exist, but they tend to rely on movement and notational systems. Kevin Lynch[36.] and Bernard Tschumi,[37.] namely, both developed notational systems that could register human movement and choreographies throughout the city. Both architects attributed strong importance to events and movements, which could only be accounted for when the proper tools were developed to analyze and design for them. In the same vein, landscape architect Buck recently built upon the knowledge developed by Lynch and Tschumi as they devised

34.Galia Hanoch-Roe, "Musical Space and Architectural Time: Open Scoring versus Linear Processes," International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music 34, no. 2 (2003): 145–60.
35. Marko Slavíček and Anja Kostanjsak, "The Musicality of the Undulating Glass Panes in the Convent of La Tourette," *Conference Proceedings*, accessed December 11, 2023, https://www.academia.edu/24703111/The_Musicality_of_the_Undulating_Glass_Panes_in_the_Convent_of_La_Tourette.
36. Donald Appleyard, John Randolph Myer, and Kevin Lynch, *The view from the road* (Cambridge: Published for the Joint Center for Urban Studies of the M.I.T. and Harvard University by the M.I.T. Press, M.I.T., 1964).
37. Bernard Tschumi, "Manhattan Transcripts," *ANY: Architecture New York*, no. 5 (1994): 48–49.



fig. 3.4: the rhythm of the mullions at the Couvent Saint-Marie-de-la-Tourette (1957-1960) is inspired by musical proportions. Iannis Xenakis.

notational methods that combined architectural and musical materials.[38] The resulting tools were used to transcribe existing urban and suburban contexts in a system that integrated video. Similarly, Hanoch-Roe argued for the development of architecture scores that could organize sensual experiences into a coherent choreography [fig. 3.5].[39]

Auto- and Allo-graphic Media

nelson goodman

In the 1960s, philosopher and art historian Nelson Goodman proposed a categorization of the arts in two main categories: the autographic arts – fundamentally spatial and formative – and allographic arts – or performative, expressive, and temporal [fig. 3.6].[40] For Goodman, the distinction between both groups lies not in the nature of the medium itself, but in the artifact's production. Autographic arts, from the Greek root auto- or self, are inextricably linked with the modes of their production. An autographic work can only exist in one genuine, legitimate manifestation, that might or might not be reproduced. A painting, no matter the number of times it is reproduced and the faithfulness of its reproduction, will always remain the only authentic version of the work. Lithographs, etchings, and prints belong within this category, but Goodman views their output as copies rather than real works in and of themselves.

Allographic works, from the Greek root allo- or other, different, are independent from the history of their production as their essence lies not in a physical object, but in their very performance. Arts such as music, dance, and theater belong to this category as they rely on interpreters to exist. The scores and annotations that make the performance possible are not the work itself but merely a communication tool that makes the work possible. The quality of the work is temporary, fleeting, and temporal. Literature and cinema also qualify as allographic as they exist only in the performance of their audience. In other words, whereas theatre, for example, relies on a third party to convey the author's words to an audience, literature is interpreted by the reader themselves: the audience and performer are the same.

38. David Nicholas Buck, *A Musicology for Landscape*, Design Research in Architecture (Taylor & Francis Group, 2017), https://www-taylorfrancis-com.proxy3.library.mcgill.ca/pdfviewer/.
39. Galia Hanoch-Roe, "Musical Space and Architectural Time: Open Scoring versus Linear Processes," International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music 34, no. 2 (2003): 145–60.
40. Nelson Goodman, *Languages of art: an approach to a theory of symbols.*, 2d ed (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1976), http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb352325315.

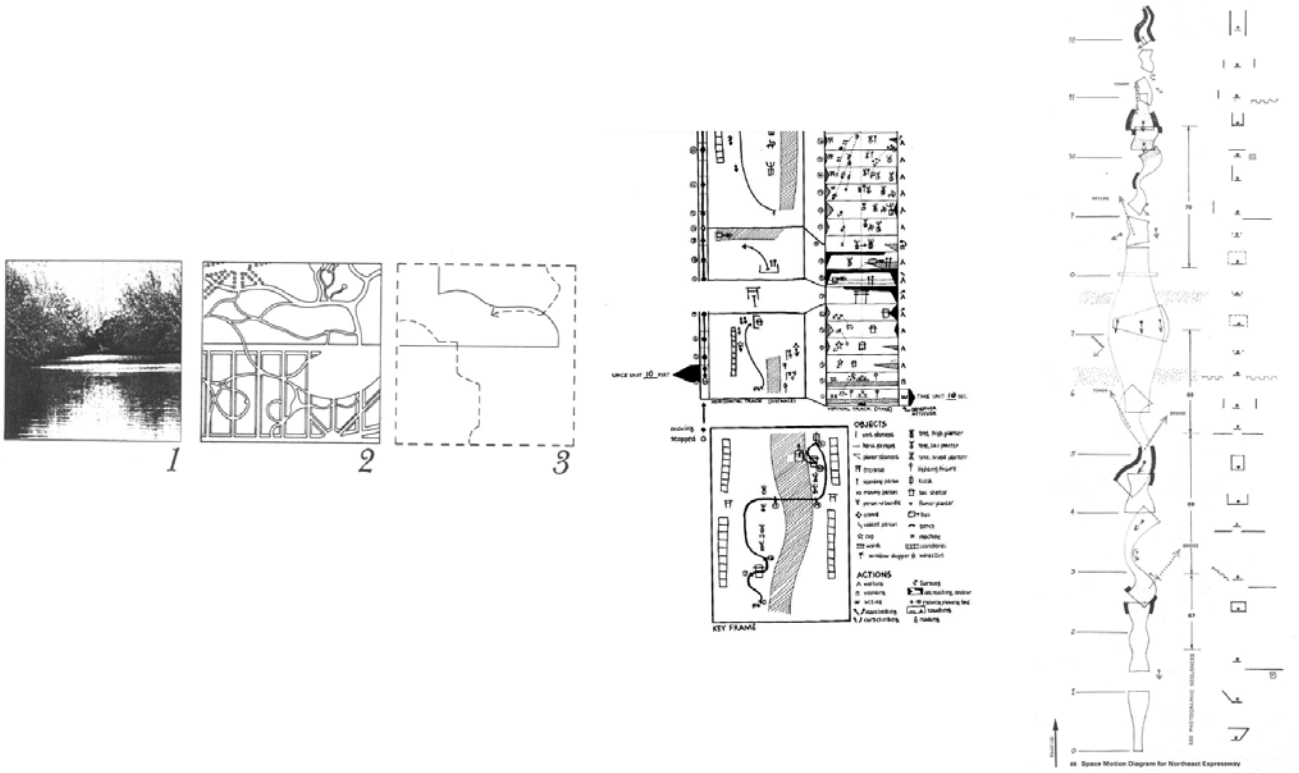


fig. 3.5: examples of spatial scoring. left: manhattan transcripts, bernard tschumi (1976-1981); center: notations, lawrence halprin (1971); right: the view from the road, kevin lynch, donald appleyard, john r. myer (1965).

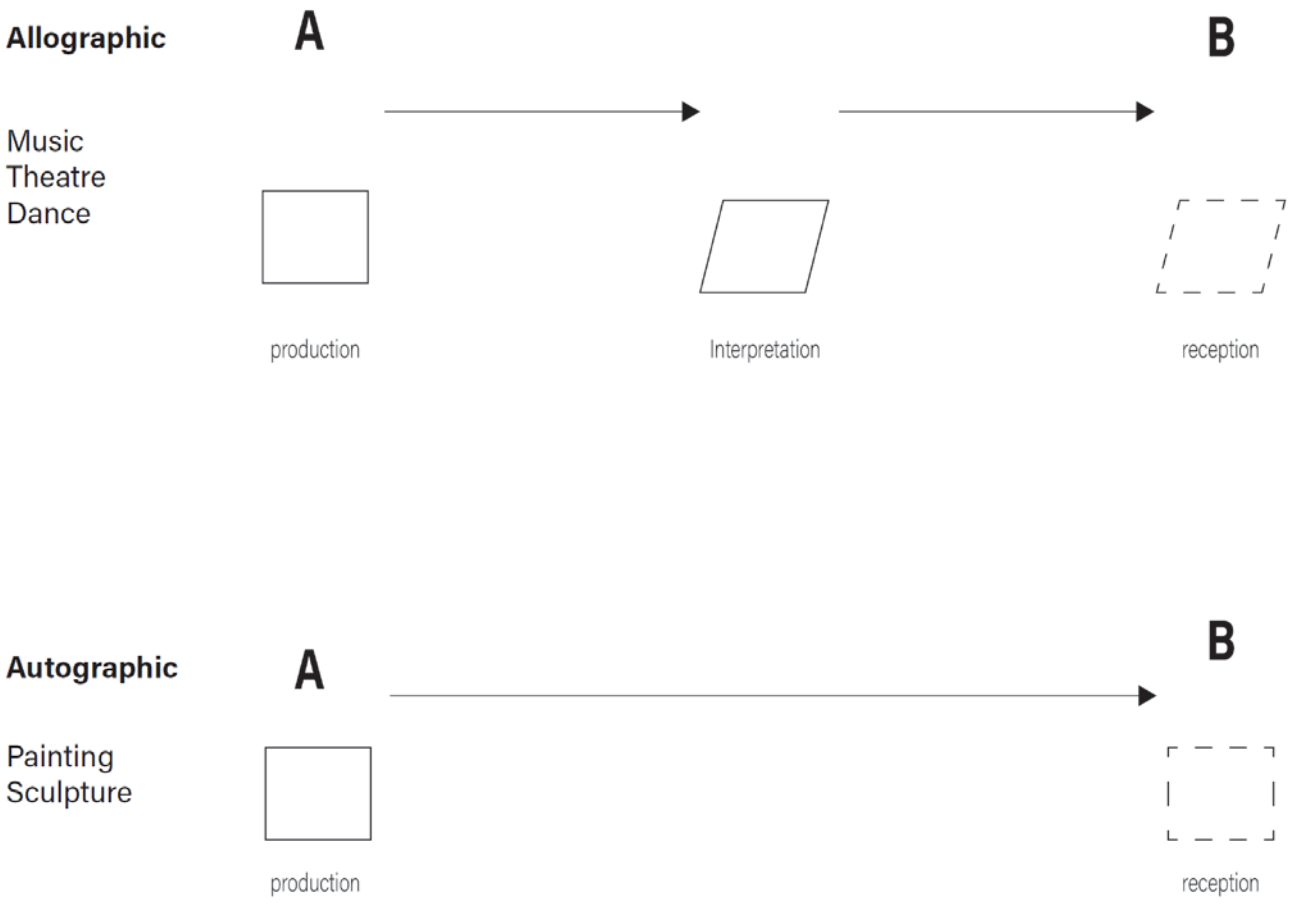


fig. 3.6: allographic and autographic models: a comparison. in allographic models, a work goes through an additional intermediary before reaching the audience. this added stage modifies the artwork's sense.

By their very nature, allographic arts incorporate change, leave room for interpretation, and imply a negotiation between a work's author(s) and its performer(s), incidentally all goals that I aim to pursue within this research. To gain a better understanding of the ways in which these principles are achieved within artistic media, I propose to take a closer look at musical traditions, notations, and experiments as a microcosm of larger allographic trends. My position as a classically trained musician will allow for a deeper exploration of these themes within the scope of the discipline.

allographic models in music

Throughout music history, the responsibility of the creation of artworks has long been shared between the composer and the performer, blurring any real definition of authorship. For centuries, composers and performers overlapped closely and loosely with one another, often forming one single, undifferentiated subject. Unable to notate all elements of a performance, composers have historically had different attitudes toward the degree of detail and precision they offered performers.[41] The agency of performers and their ability to bend, embellish, and improvise the source materials was integral within the classical period. Baroque musicians would often be provided with incomplete notation – or *basso continuo* – to be performed along agreed performance standards, and baroque and Classical vocalists would add – often extensive – embellishments to the melodies.[42] This collaborative dynamic began to erode at the end of the Classical period when the musical idiom was rigidified and the figure of the composer as an artistic hero emerged, solidifying the hierarchical relationship of the author over the performer. Personalities such as Beethoven and Wagner were instrumental in this paradigm shift, where the will of the composer gained primacy over the experience of the performer. Therefore, the production of musical artworks has always implied a conscious negotiation of responsibilities between composer and performer.

In the second part of the twentieth century, composers began to experiment with the limits of notation as a way to escape the constraints of common practice, as they began "to realize that a notation may make assumptions, in its forms and its uses, about the nature of the musical game, and the

41. Howard Mayer Brown et al., "Performing Practice," Grove Music Online, 2001, https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/display/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000040272.
42. Mayer Brown et al.

relationships between players of the game, that may be inappropriate to the new activities which they envisage."[43] As some composers strove to create increasingly detailed, precise, and specific music that left no room for the performer, an antagonistic movement promoted participation between performers, improvisation, and indeterminacy as key parts of a new contemporary language.[44] This withdrawal from over-specificity was seen, in turn, as a way to democratize the authoritarian relationship between composer and interpret,[45] to establish metaphysical connections between performers and their environment,[46] and to reflect the chaotic organization of the universe.[47] Inspired by "archaic," non-Western, and non-classical performance practices, these composers relinquished control over their final work and invited performers to (co)construct the product alongside them, treating them as equals.

christian wolff

Christian Wolff's *Exercises*, a set of pieces composed over several decades, is a key example of the musical experimentations that aimed to develop an egalitarian approach to music-making [fig. 3.7]. From 1973 to 2018, Wolff engaged in experimental music that foregrounded and redefined notions of democracy and agency in art, in the form of "skeletal, indeterminate notation (...) with little by way of instructions and indications for performance. Consequently, players negotiate(d) a way of working with the score and with each other, making decisions prior to, and during, the moment of performance."[48] These new dynamics of performance promoted a horizontal power distribution that negated the role of the composer, and his score, as authority figures. The players, rather than merely interpreting the text, have to come to an agreement about how they will perform it, deciding together and/or delegating leadership.[49] The score acts as a conversation 'before the fact': "it sets out limits, possibilities, rules, and choices. Inasmuch as the composer could be said to be embodying a power relationship towards the performers,



43. Cole, 2.
44. Cole.
45. Robert Adlington and Esteban Buch, *Finding democracy in music*, Musical cultures of the twentieth century (London ; Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2021).
46. Martha Mockus, *Sounding out: Pauline Oliveros and lesbian musicality*, 1 online resource (ix, 208 pages) : illustrations vols. (New York: Routledge, 2008), http://site.ebrary.com/id/10205594.
47. John Cage et al., *The anarchy of silence: John Cage and experimental art* (Barcelona: Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, 2009).
48. Robert Adlington et al., eds., "Getting Exercised: Ensemble Relations in Christian Wolff's Exercises," in *Finding democracy in music*, Musical cultures of the twentieth century (London ; Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2021), 101.Musical cultures of the twentieth century (London\\uc0\\u8239{}; Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2021
49. Payne and Thomas.

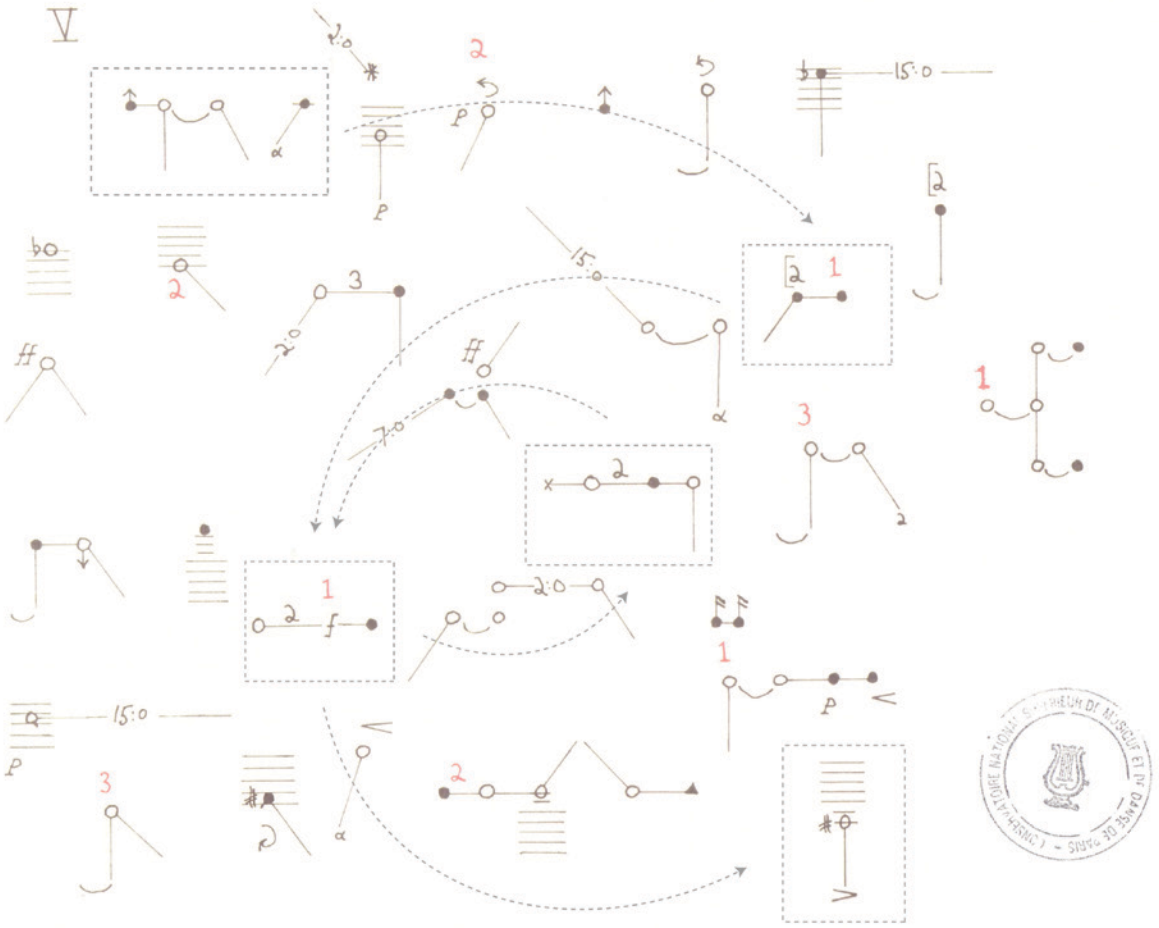


fig. 3.7: exercise 5 from exercises: for any number of instruments, christian wolff (1974). annotations by the author.

he does so merely by setting out these limits."[50.] Wolff aimed to redefine the relationship between composer and performer, effectively shifting focus from a set aesthetic outcome to a malleable structure to be defined collectively. This conceptual displacement offers valuable insight into the ways in which we as architects might be able to better embrace contingency, favor user agency, and allow for change while still retaining a creative role within architectural production. This role, however, has to be redefined as a structural enterprise if it is to succeed in transcending our deeply entrenched aesthetic considerations.

Architecture: From Autographic to Allographic

The ambiguous nature of architecture – whose inclusion as an art form is even contested[51.] – made its classification difficult for Goodman. Architecture is considered an allographic media, albeit a transitional, liminal one. The deciding factor ends up lying in the production of the architect. The plans, drawings, and various construction documents that the architect produces act like scores that are then followed by workers – the performers – in order to produce a building – the artwork. Multiple architectures produced from the same drawing set are, according to Goodman, different, equally valid instances of a single work. Although Goodman's categorization embraces the allographic nature of architecture, his discussion still constrains the discipline to the production of fixed, static artifacts. It, therefore, does not evade my criticism of architecture as being mostly concerned with the creation of physical markers, but merely adds builders as aesthetic actors within the production of these artifacts. Although there is a performance, its outcome is still frozen in an idealized state, unable to evolve past the initial construction phase.

More often than not, I would argue that architects practice their discipline as if it were autographic. Their production focuses on the creation of a self-standing, independent work of art regardless of the processes that lead to its erection, an emphasis that relies mostly on function, tectonics, and aesthetics. The professional lens invalidates the subsequent transformations that occur within a building's life and frames them as contingencies to the initial purity of the architect's intent. These contaminants or adverse reactions need to be reintegrated within

50. Christian Wolff, cited by Payne and Thomas, 105.
51. Stephen Davies, "Is Architecture an Art?," in *Philosophical Perspectives on Art*, ed. Stephen Davies (Oxford University Press, 2007), 129-146.

the continuum of architectural practices and fully embraced if we are to recognize their contribution to the (re)shaping of our built environment.

bernard rudofsky

Recent scholarship has begun to expand the definition of architecture as the process of building artifacts towards a reconceptualization that accounts for the agencies of users and the dynamic nature of buildings. An interest in what came to be defined as "informal" architecture began to emerge in the twentieth century to document the building practices of populations that had been ignored by the canon until then. Bernard Rudofsky's book and subsequent exhibition *Architecture without Architects* act as a prefiguration of this renewed interest in the cultural ways of crafting the built environment, practices that occurred outside the scope of the profession.[52.] The scholarship on "informal" architecture contributed to extending the definition of the architect to people and communities whose contributions to the built environment were – and still often go unrecognized today. Recognizing that non-professionals engage in architectural activities helps us to understand buildings as processes, shaped by and transformed by their users throughout their lifespan. Today, the "informal" is even questioned as scholars begin to integrate it within the extended continuum of architectural practices, abolishing the distinction between the formal realm of architects and that of untrained individuals. In a recent interview published in the *Journal of Architectural Education* (JAE), Menna Agha speaks of the exclusionary dynamics that the in/formal label perpetuates.[53.] The informal is conceptualized in opposition to the formal, establishing a false hierarchy between practices that are seen as valuable and informed from those that are essentially popular and inferior. In an effort to broaden the definition of architectural production, Agha expands its ontology beyond physical and intellectual efforts to include emotional labor and the leveraging of emotional capital in the service of building practices.[54.]

menna agha

jane hutton

Similarly, recent scholarship has outlined the dynamic nature of architecture as a process, a state of perpetual becoming and redefining at the intersection of material, political, and social practices. In her book *Reciprocal Landscapes,* Jane Hutton looks at the material flows that shaped

52. Bernard Rudofsky, *Architecture Without Architects: A Short Introduction to Non-Pedigreed Architecture* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1964).
53. Ersela Kripa, Francesco Marullo, and Stephen Mueller, "In Conversation with Menna Agha," *Journal of Architectural Education* 77, no. 2 (July 3, 2023): 373–75, https://doi.org/10.1080/10464883.2023.2233384.
54. Agha, "Emotional Capital and Other Ontologies of the Architect."

New York City, examining the territorial entanglements of urban form to the provenance of its materials.[55] Studying the movement of materials in and out of the city contributes to framing it as a site of change where fluxes intersect temporarily to generate architectural forms. These forms are not eternal, but merely a stage within the larger material and social temporalities that generate them. Processes of construction, renovation, and deconstruction are all part of the architectural discussion.

The recent interest in ecological flows and the extended set of architectural practices both contribute to the expansion of what we think of as architecture – whether socially or materially – and conceptualize the built environment as an ongoing process constituted through the aggregated actions of individuals and the communities that inhabit it. Integrating a process-based understanding of architecture within the discipline requires a shift in focus that allows for a closer consideration and integration of agencies within the built environment. I believe that reconceptualizing architecture and its production as an allographic medium might operate an interesting methodological displacement in the design discipline, which would carve out space for users to appropriate and tailor their spaces to their specific needs.

stan allen

In "Mapping the Unmappable: On Notation," Stan Allen expands Goodman's analysis of architectural drawings as score to outline the potential role that notation might play in addressing the complex conditions of contemporary architectural production.[56] Allen critiques a narrow understanding of architectural drawing – as either technical tools or artworks themselves – and advocates for a more radical use of notation in architecture.The capacity of drawings to abstract reality might enable designers to assert authorial control over their work, but it also has the potential to account for the contingencies of a building's realization and acknowledge the fluid and dynamic nature of architectural outcomes.[57] Allen's proposal to radicalize architectural notation invites architects to adopt more fluid and experimental methods that account for time, change, and the collective agencies involved in the built environment. By shifting away from static artifacts toward directed indeterminacy, notation becomes a mediator that engages program, event, and time, enabling

55. Jane Hutton, *Reciprocal Landscapes: Stories of Material Movements* (London: Routledge, 2019), https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315737102.
56.Stan Allen, "Mapping the Unmappable: On Notation," in Practice: Architecture, Technique and Representation, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2009), 30–45.
57.Allen, 32–33.

architecture to embrace its performative and contingent potential.

Allen's argument signals a significant shift in architectural thinking—from the production of static objects to the performance of space.[58] In this framework, architecture is no longer understood as a fixed outcome but as an ongoing negotiation shaped by social, political, and material forces. By relinquishing some degree of control, architects open up possibilities for a more inclusive and responsive design process, where users and other agents actively participate in shaping their environment.[59] It is Allen's call to action – to focus architectural production on the creation of notations and scores rather than on the design of artifacts – that I aim to follow in proposing an allographic methodological framework to architecture.

In this allographic framework, architects act as the initiators, the primary definers of structural conditions in service to the population they practice for. Much like Christian Wolff's *Exercises*, I believe that architects can set out physical, social, and political limits that define the realm of possibilities and choices open to users, constraining the unwanted and allowing positive change within the structures they design. In doing so, the architect remains a relevant, creative actor within the design process, but their authority is diminished and renegotiated in conversation with users. A new realm of possibilities opens to the designer, expanding aesthetic considerations to structural thinking about architectural systems and governance. An allographic architectural model relies not only on drawings that convey intentions to material laborers but also develops a range of architectural and non-architectural structures that set out the possibilities achieved, performed, and realized by its users.

58.Allen, 39.
59.Allen, 39–40.

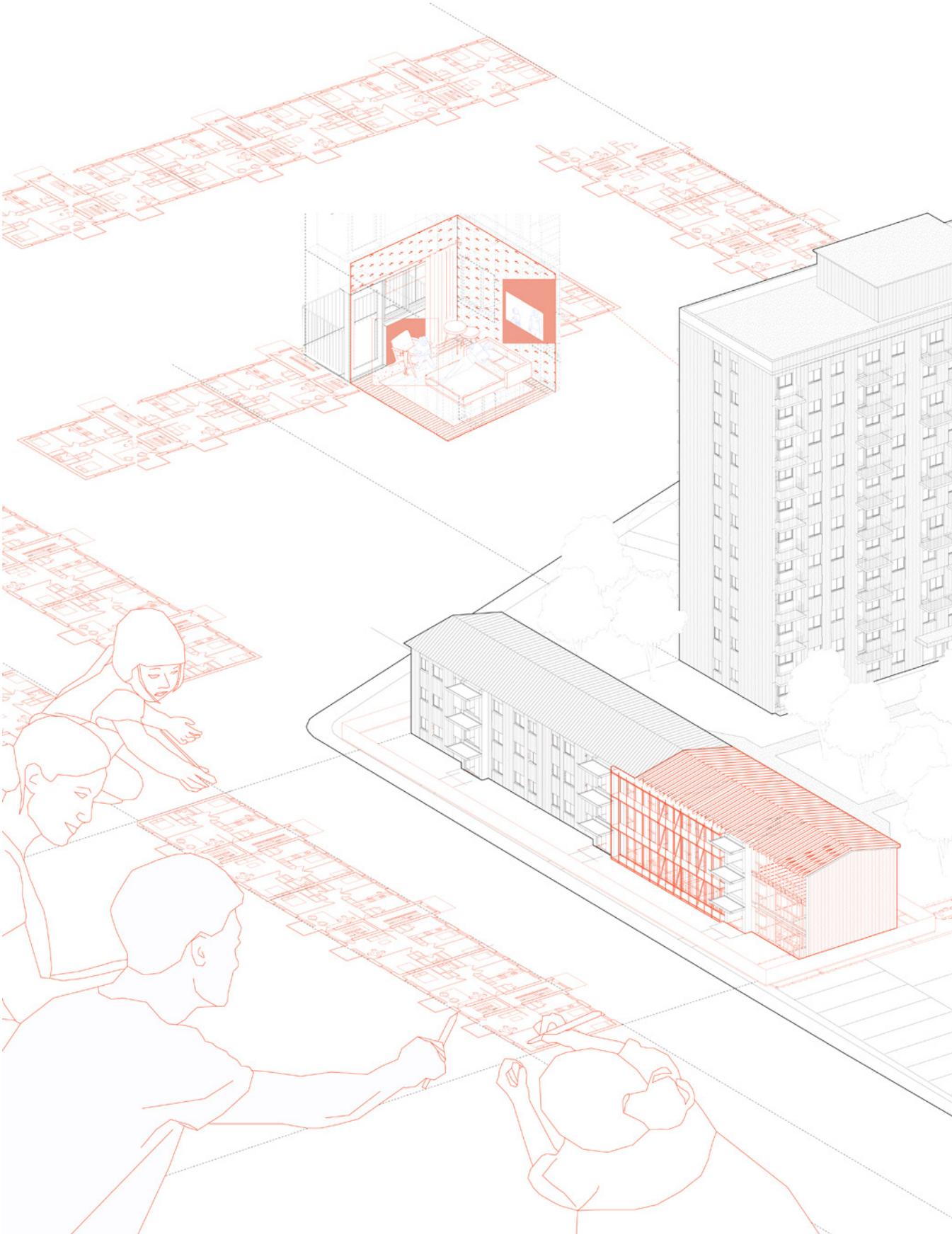
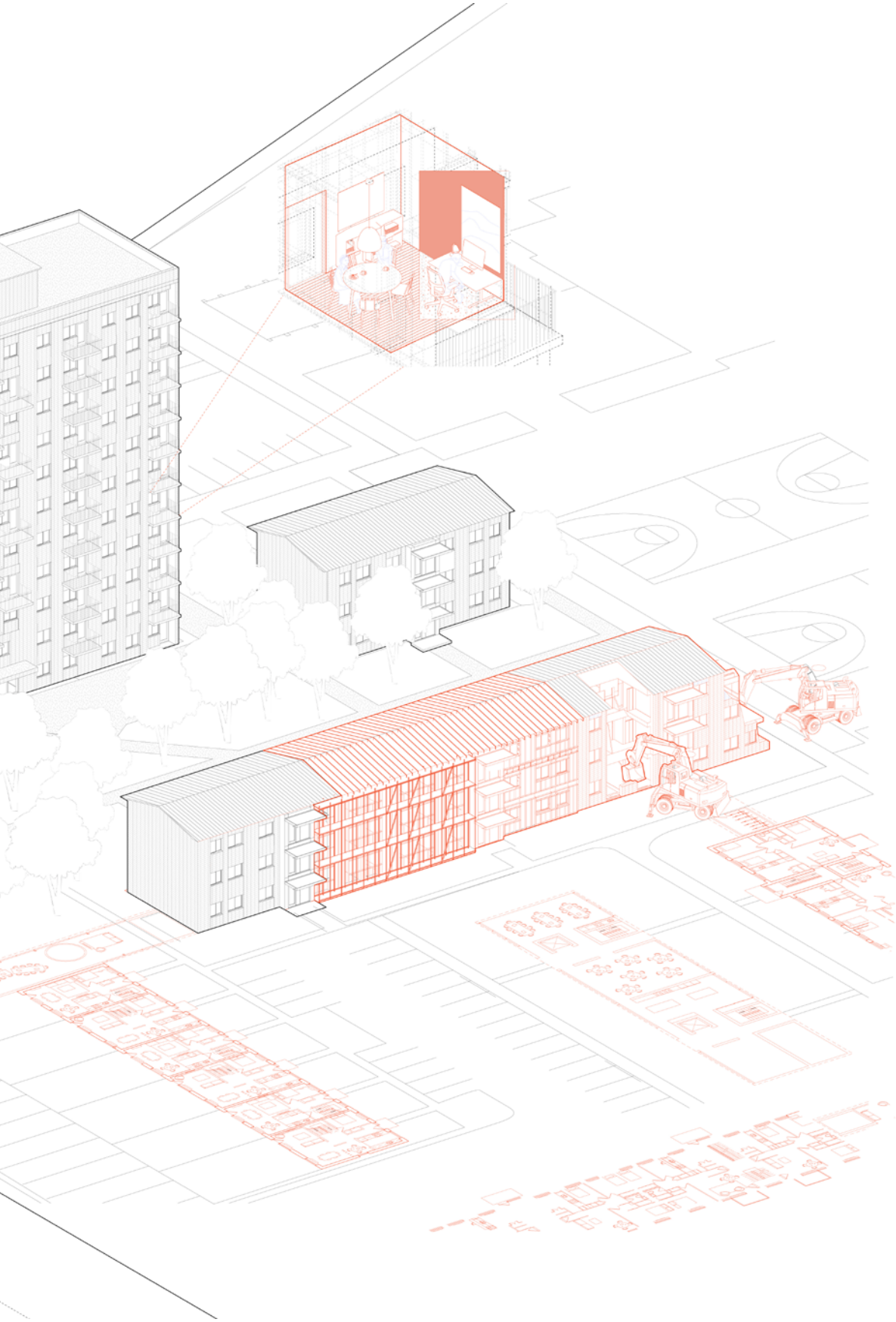


fig. 3.8: in an allographic model to architecture, the site is seen as a dynamic entity.



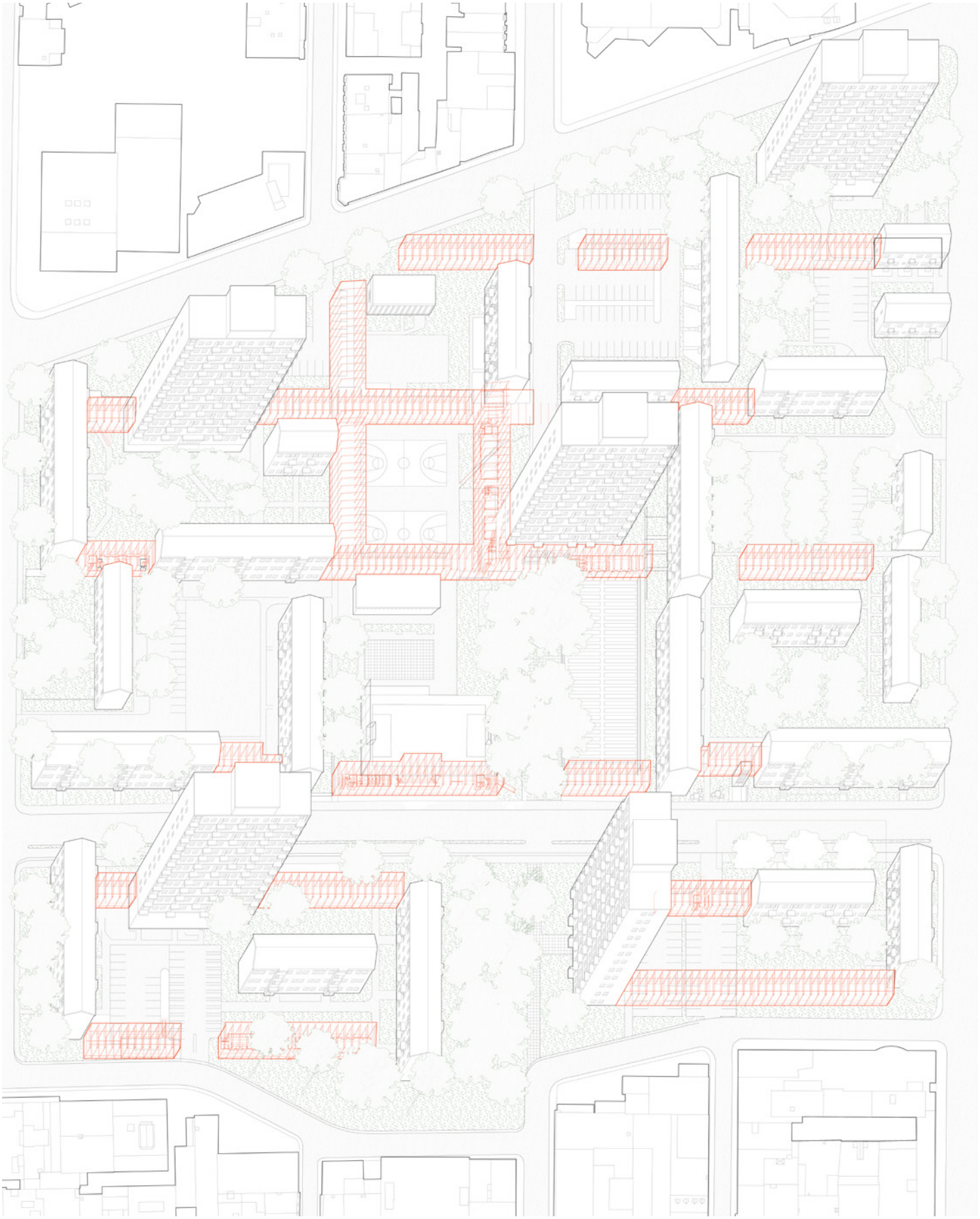


fig. 4.1: site axonometric, habitations jeanne-mance.

from

for

Implementing Time at the Habitations Jeanne-Mance

to

with

Until now, I have outlined the contours of what I call the problem of permanence and its associated challenges, particularly regarding time and change. The tendency of designers and architects to create autonomous artifacts often leads to non-reciprocal dynamics between architects and users, neglecting the temporalities of buildings that could foster meaningful interactions between humans, non-humans, and the built environment. These issues became apparent in the historical analysis of the Habitations Jeanne-Mance scheme, where oppressive and extractive practices created tensions between administrators and the very people they intended to serve.

In discussing design methodologies, I proposed potential avenues for repositioning time as a central factor in architecture, drawing inspiration from extra-architectural sources. I suggested the figure of the score – a mediating device – as a focus for architectural practice, shifting the focus from creating artifacts toward systemic thinking that values user agency and encourages the development of meaningful interactions between individuals and their built environment. This serves as the foundation for this speculative project, which aims to develop a process of construction that incorporates temporal thinking in constructing and designing spaces for sociability on-site. While promoting an allographic model for architectural production might function as a purely theoretical exercise, I believe there is value in testing its implications against a specific context to truly assess the potential such a shift represents. As part of this thesis, I aim to develop a design project centered around allography as a methodological framework that renegotiates professional contracts between architects and their beneficiaries, a project that can generate spaces of sociability in the context of social housing complexes. I then provide examples of how the system could be implemented on the site of the Habitations Jeanne-Mance through seven interventions.

The objectives of this project operate at two scales: I am interested in creating a framework that enhances sociability and relationality in the context of social housing (1) and that expands the definition of architecture as a profession to better accomplish the former (2). As such, I am interested in both the realm of the professional and disciplinary as well as the more concrete space of urban, formal, and typological intervention

Design Objectives

1. **Establish a collective system** (of support, sociability, services) that provides space for community-building.

2. **Negotiate the boundaries** of the site and community through design.

3. **Participate and engage in the definition of collectivity.**

4. **Devise governance strategies** that prioritize user agency.

Disciplinary Objectives

5. **Expand the production of the architect** beyond formal, aesthetic, and technical practices towards a more holistic role as coordinator of collective and individual agencies;

6. **Devise tools and methodologies** in addressing, designing, representing, building, and managing the built environment that counter the unilaterality of the profession towards a practice of reciprocity;

7. **Implement a temporal approach** to the process of architectural design to favor individual and collective agencies.

A Structure for Sociability and Reciprocity

The project takes the Habitations Jeanne-Mance as its locus, introduced in **Chapter 2**. It aims to introduce public and semi-public spaces for residents to engage in social and self-help activities administered by the users themselves. The intervention takes the form of an allographic score, or system that allows for incremental development over time as needs and desires from the community emerge and develop. Therefore, the system sets the parameters for what is and is not possible while delegating decisions about the site's developments to its users [fig. 4.1].

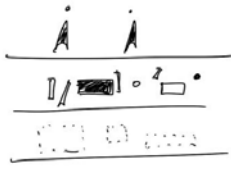


actor-network theory

In his influential book *Reassembling the Social*, Bruno Latour introduces Actor-Network Theory (ANT) as a performative framework for conceptualizing social realities as a thick, intermingled web of human and non–human actors.[1] Latour teaches social scientists that to analyze a social condition, it is necessary not only to look to unveil hidden structures of omniscient power nor to investigate social practices but

1. Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*, First Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

to trace the network of individual agencies in relationship to the objects and material conditions that frame them.[2.] In doing so, Latour proposes an interobjective, as opposed to an intersubjective, system of relations in which humans are embedded. Objects are not passive entities distinct from human action but part of it. Objects and tools are agents in and of themselves that shape human action and define its limits; "they allow, afford, encourage, authorize, suggest, influence, block, render possible, forbid, and so on."[3.] The actor is thus never alone in acting; their agency is part of an "imbroglio where the question of who or what is carry(ing) out the action is indeterminate."[4.] An action is indissociable from the material conditions that allow and condition it; the distinction between the social and the physical is confused, and its limit is blurred.



ANT gains particular relevance in the context of this research as it can account for how the physical, social, and political conditions of the site, in turn, constrain and facilitate the capacity of its users to enact change. By analyzing the physical determinants of the buildings, it becomes possible to read the affordances they provide and discourage. A concrete party wall limits the capacity of a family to expand its dwelling. Still, it might also allow it to conduct its activities privately, away from a neighbor's indiscrete ear. By integrating objects within the continuum of human action, it is possible to analyze the site's complex network of relations: "there is no built content on one side, and, at a cosmic distance, a social context, on the other. We rather witness how a design project can codify the elements that contextualize it, triggering contextual mutations. In this sense, it resembles more a complex ecology than it does a static object."[5.]

Therefore, the system I am proposing includes a set of objects, tools, and typologies to be mobilized to realize user-led needs and desires. Understood through a Latourian lens, this web of elements sets the realm of what is possible and impossible, similar to how the musical score defines what can and cannot be done. It comprises three parts: the infrastructure, the structure, and the superstructure [fig. 4.2].

infra-structure

2. Albena Yaneva, *Latour for Architects*, Routledge, Thinkers for Architects 18 (London, New York, 2022).
3. Yaneva, 67.
4. Yaneva, 68.
5. Bruno Latour and Albena Yaneva, «Give Me a Gun and I Will Make All Buildings Move»: An ANT s View of Architecture, *Ardeth. A Magazine on the Power of the Project*, no. 1 (October 1, 2017): 111.

infra-structure

The infrastructure encompasses the immaterial elements – organizational, managerial, or typological – that allow the system to function. This section includes the governance structure proposed to frame and support the harmonious development of interventions over time and a collection of potential spatial typologies that correspond to programs that might be developed. This spatial catalog borrows from the universe of typological thinking, defining a typology as the formal and spatial materialization of program. For a typology to be defined, there must be an accordance between formal language and the uses that its materiality allows for. Typological thinking has a rich tradition from Beaux-Arts academicism (Jean-Nicholas Louis-Durand) to Italian rationalism (Aldo Rossi) to the more recent borrowing of the method by Christopher Alexander in *A Pattern Language*.[6.]

structure

The structural part of the system encompasses the material and physical components that allow the system to function. They can be defined as two-fold: the first group includes the constructive system – the structure, services, and service cores – while the second group presents syntactic elements that allow programs and activities to run smoothly. This second group includes circulation devices, walls, partitions, doors, windows, and other smaller-scale elements that ensure spatial organization and accessibility.

super-structure

Last, **the suprastructure defines process-based events and practices** that actively involve people in the architectural evolution of the site and its interventions. The speculative project's superstructural component aims to reintegrate the concept of time into architectural processes by fostering interactions between users, workers, and their surroundings. The supra-structural is where reciprocity occurs, involving users in the development and maintenance of their built environment, aiming to foster a sense of community and create significant relationships between them.

To reiterate, the infrastructure sets out the realm of what is possible, the governance model to be followed, and the possibilities to be developed. The structural part gathers the material component of the system, which allows for programs and uses to be sustained physically through access,

6. Jean-Nicholas-Louis Durand, *Recueil et Parallèle Des Édifices de Tout Genre Anciens et Modernes, Remarquables Par Leur Beauté, Par Leur Grandeur, Ou Par Leur Singularité, et Dessinés Sur Une Même Échelle.*, ed. D. Avanzo (Paris, 1839); Aldo Rossi, *The Architecture of the City*, trans. Diane Ghirardo and Joan Ockman (MIT Press, 1984), https://mitpress.mit.edu/9780262680431/the-architecture-of-the-city/; Christopher Alexander, *A Pattern Language: Towns, Buildings, Construction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977).

enclosure, ventilation, circulation, heating, plumbing, electricity, and cooling. Last, the suprastructure describes potential events that enrich development processes on-site and leverage building temporalities such as design, construction, maintenance, and deconstruction as timescapes for developing ongoing reciprocal relationships between users and their environments.

This is where an allographic architectural framework might be most influential. The model aims to set out the parameters of individual and collective appropriation, anticipate the potential contingencies and conflicts that might arise from community-led governance, and mediate them through architectural and political solutions. In defining the conditions of sociability, architects might encourage the development of social relationships while still ensuring that users retain their own individualities and personal agencies. An allographic model promotes democratic ideals of collaboration and decision-making. In describing the approach of Christian Wolff's Exercises, pianist John Tilbury "argues that the music-making generated by the scores is 'collaborative, self-consciously giving and taking, non-judgemental, respectful, attentive, sharing, cherishing the quotidian, where individuality, not individualism is nurtured."

An Allographic Score



The allographic model I propose aims to integrate time, agency, and participation into the design process. At its core, this approach views architecture as a temporal and participatory process, moving beyond static, predetermined outcomes. The framework operates through two key stages: the score – or the parameters set out through design – and its interpretation by residents and other stakeholders. This methodology shifts the architect's role from sole author to mediator, enabling users and stakeholders to shape their environment collaboratively. Structural components—such as the steel exoskeleton, service decks, and vertical cores—are conceptualized as a physical and metaphorical stage that supports this temporal process, providing both physical and conceptual frameworks for engagement [fig. 4.3].

The score represents the fixed components of the system that establish the foundational infrastructure and governance structures of the proposal. These include the galvanized steel exoskeleton, service decks, vertical

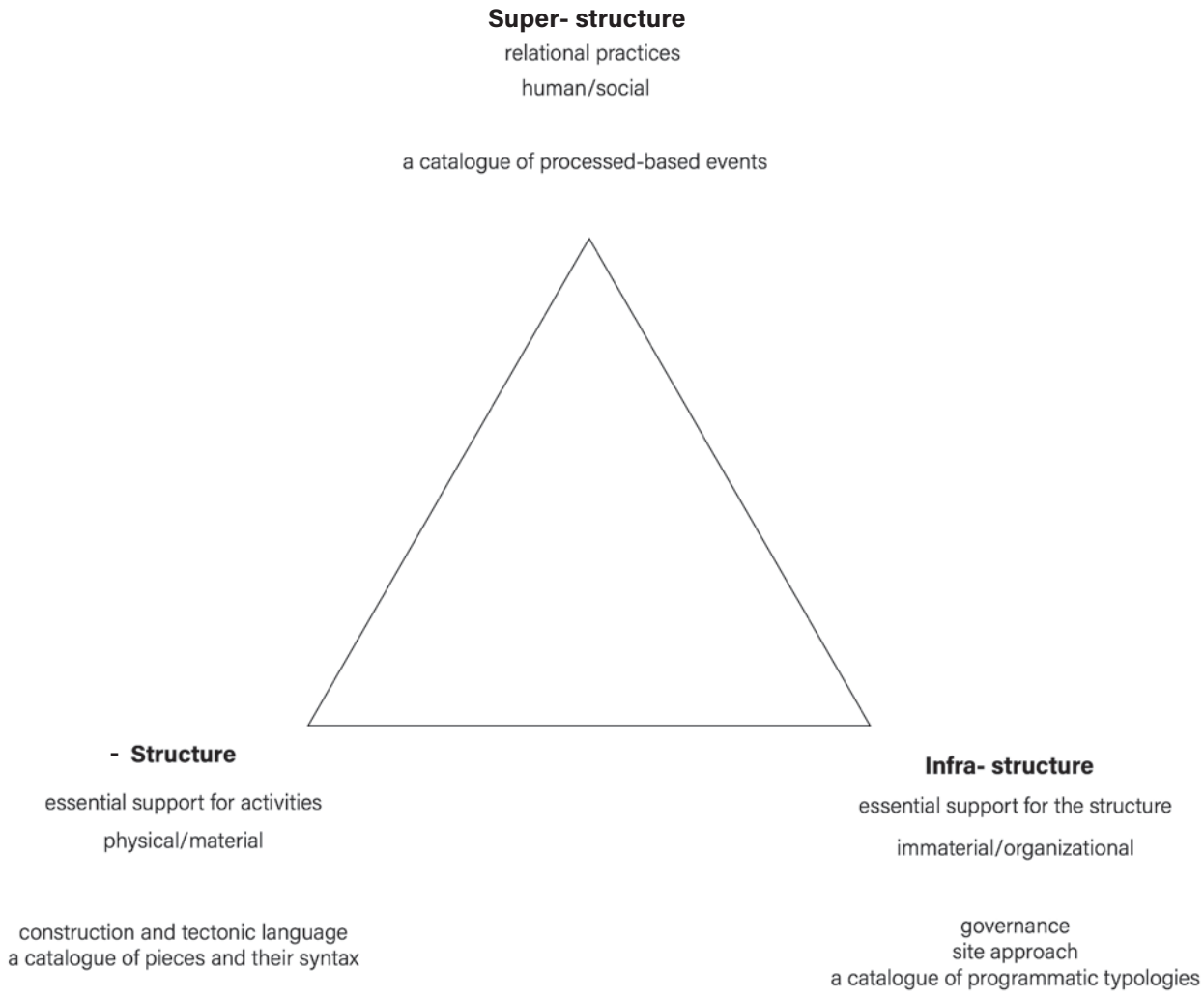


fig. 4.2: parts of the proposed allographic -structure.

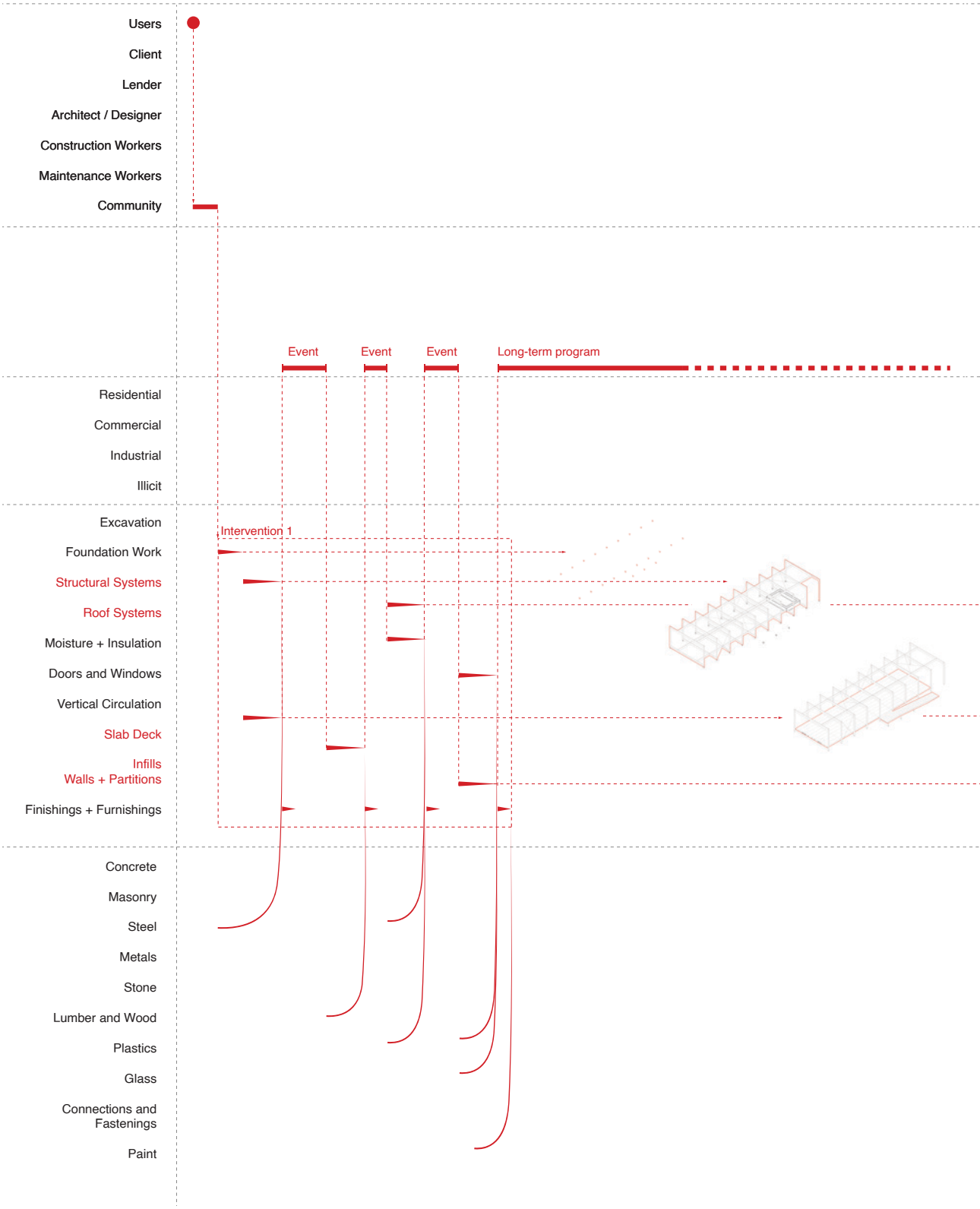


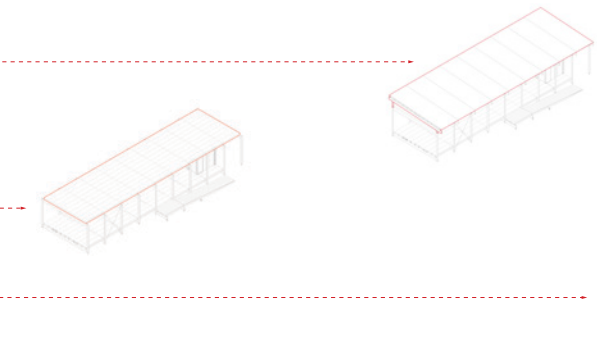
fig. 4.3: under the structure, development is undertaken incrementally to maximize user agency and reciprocity. typology is chosen that answers the need presented by the users (infra-structure). construction is then carried ou for stakeholders to engage with their built environment.

need arises

proposal is discussed

a typology is chosen

events are planned



typology is built

materials are mobilized

infra-structure

super-structure

-structure

first, ideas and needs arise from users which are then discussed at the comité d'aménagement. a programmatic
ut using the -structural components. last, events are planned before, during and after construction as opportunities

cores, and the catalog of programmatic typologies, all of which define the system's structural and organizational framework. Acting as both physical infrastructure and conceptual guidelines, the score is designed to balance stability and flexibility. It provides the essential groundwork that allows for future interpretation while ensuring structural integrity and safety. In addition to physical elements, the score encompasses governance protocols that define the rights, responsibilities, and roles of all stakeholders. These protocols are crucial for creating an equitable foundation where participants can negotiate and collaborate effectively. By setting up clear guidelines and a supportive infrastructure, the score provides a starting point for interpretation and performance while remaining open to adaptation and reconfiguration over time.

The interpretation occurs once the score has been established. This stage invites stakeholders—residents, community organizations, and other users—to engage with the structural components as an active platform for shaping their spaces. Interpretation begins as residents decide how to use and adapt the catalog of programmatic typologies, generating ideas for spatial arrangements, community activities, and infill configurations. Residents may allocate spaces for educational programs, leisure activities, or communal gatherings, tailoring these spaces to meet their needs and cultural contexts. Performance emerges as these ideas are realized through the physical and social activation of the built environment. The structural components, such as service decks and partitions, facilitate adaptation and reconfiguration, enabling residents to modify spaces over time with little professional intervention. These elements provide a system that accommodates changes in programmatic needs, fostering a co-creative process between stakeholders and their environment. The built environment becomes a living stage where events, activities, and everyday interactions continually reshape and redefine the architecture.

By combining interpretation and performance, this approach transforms architecture into an iterative process rather than a fixed product. Residents not only participate in the spatial and programmatic design of their spaces but also actively contribute to their evolution over time. This allographic model challenges conventional architectural practices that emphasize permanence and top-down control. By conceptualizing structural components as stages and integrating user agency into the interpretation and performance phases, the framework bridges stability

and adaptability, autonomy, and collaboration. Through this approach, architecture becomes a dynamic and participatory process, enabling users to build meaningful relationships with their environment while responding to their evolving needs.

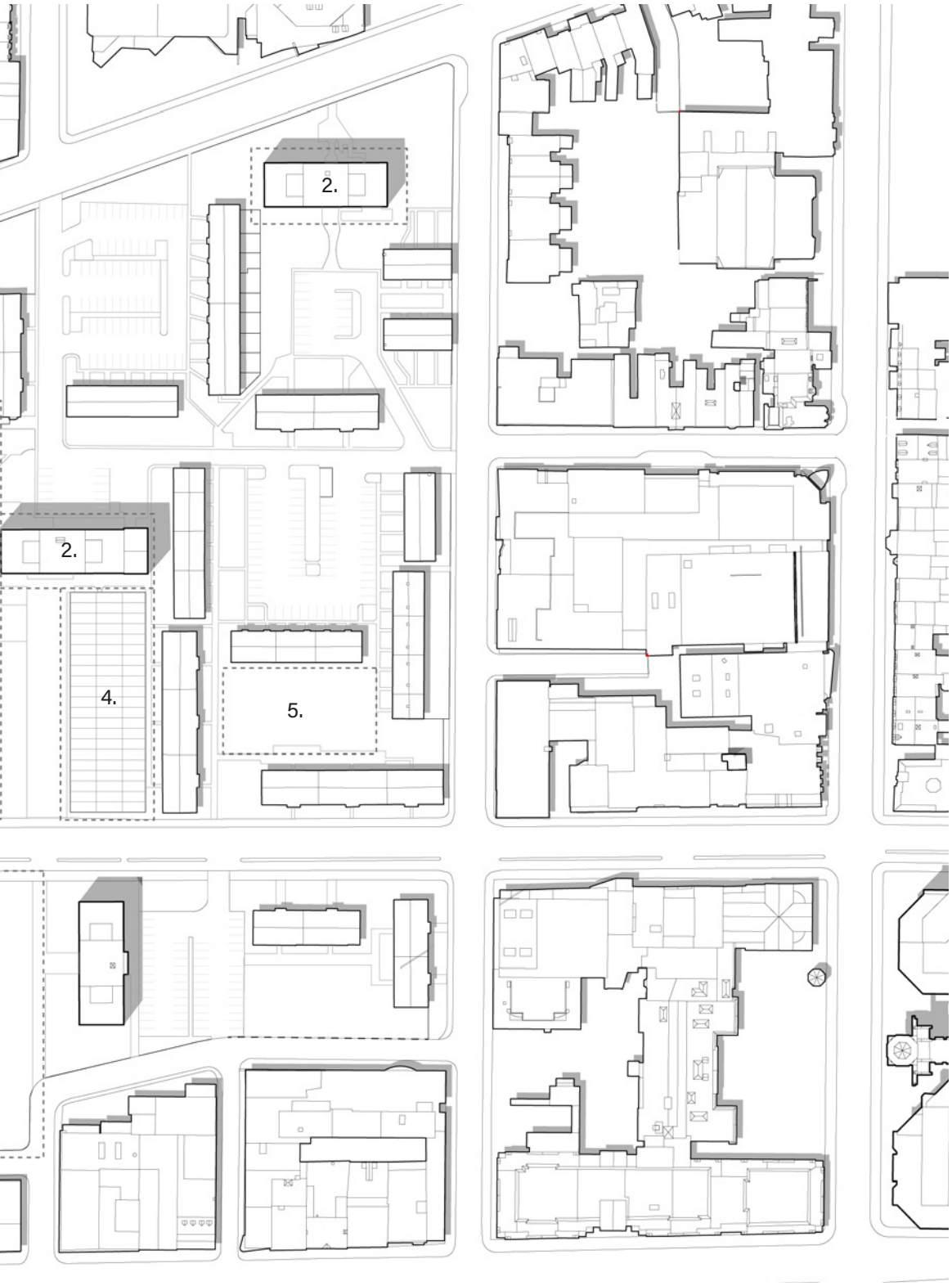
Program

The project seeks to establish a collective infrastructure – of support, sociability, and services – that provides metaphorical and literal space for relational encounters and community building. In the context section of this work, I outlined the historical absence of social space and collective equipment — infrastructure destined to local communities — in and around the Habitations Jeanne-Mance. This lack of space means residents often leave the neighborhood to access quality public spaces. When John W. McConnell's philanthropic initiative to build a community center on-site failed shortly after the development's opening, the opportunity for significant public infrastructure on the site was lost. Of the estimated 25,000 square feet of common space initially planned, only a small portion was realized, including the Toussaint-Louverture Park pavilion—managed by the city—and a few community rooms scattered across the towers. The park itself, an ample green space in the city's downtown, serves as a prime area for social events with sporting fields and playgrounds, but the lack of interior space remains an issue. In recent years, significant public investments have been made in nearby areas like Quartier des Spectacles and Quartier Latin. Still, these projects primarily serve external visitors, focusing on event spaces, commercial streets, and cultural infrastructure. Where social space has been developed for downtown residents, it has mostly been part of private high-rise projects. Consequently, much of the social infrastructure downtown is privatized and inaccessible to the residents of the Habitations.

Several programmatic clusters already exist on-site and in the surrounding area, which inspired my research and thinking about the potential programs that could be developed. Community organizations such as Go Jeunesse, the Centre d'entraide et de ralliement familial (CERF), the Famille pour l'entraide et l'éducation des jeunes et des adultes (FEEJAD), and local daycare facilities provide sports and educational services, while the two community gardens are part of the food economy. These non-profits and mutual aid organizations highlight the community's vitality but also point to the spatial needs they may face [fig. 4.4].



fig. 4.4: in addition to housing, several existing programmatic clusters can be found on-site.



1. *administration*
2. *education*
3. *early childhood education*
4. *gardening and food production*
5. *peace and quiet*
6. *sports*

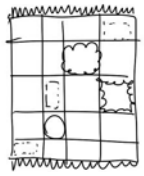
The speculative interventions envisioned for the site, therefore, aim to address the need for more public space resulting from decades of neglect toward downtown residents while offering opportunities for existing organizations to expand and strengthen their services. The demographics of the Habitations include groups like teenagers and seniors, who often struggle to find spaces to socialize and form meaningful relationships. Teenagers face the challenge of balancing a growing need for autonomy with a desire to connect with friends, yet they need more appropriate spaces. Seniors, on the other hand, often experience isolation. The goal of developing public infrastructure on-site is to create a diverse living environment where services and opportunities for connection are easily accessible. This might include spaces for young residents to gather and socialize at night, or spaces for elderly residents to meet outside their homes. This approach is inspired by ambient ecosystems thinking, which suggests that quality housing depends on more than just the home.[7.] Housing must be understood as part of a broader ecosystem, including services, public spaces, mobility networks, biodiversity, and metabolic flows, constituting a proper living environment. In North America, the ambient ecosystem is often hindered by the commodification and privatization of its components, which undermines the ability of the network to support rich living situations. In the case of the Habitations Jeanne-Mance, the critical missing element is the need for more opportunities for residents to connect and build solidarity outside of their homes, which is why providing such spaces is a central focus of this project.

The introduction of spaces for sociability within the Habitations represents more than a response to the lack of shared spaces – it challenges the stark modernist divisions between housing and other urban functions. Modernist housing projects often prioritized rigid zoning and self-contained residential areas – as described in **Chapter 2** – isolating living spaces from the communal and commercial activities necessary to foster relational life. By introducing programs such as community services, shared interior spaces, and maximizing opportunities for social interaction, this project reimagines the boundaries of the housing unit itself, creating a living ecosystem. The small-scale "skirt" of communal functions establishes distinct programming within the site; a grid that meshes in with the existing housing typologies.

7.. Architects Against Housing Alienation, "We Demand Ambient Ecosystems Commons," AAHA, accessed November 22, 2024, https://aaha.ca/.

Site Approach

The proposed infrastructure of sociability I propose is deployed on-site as a series of long bars – or strips – that weave through the existing fabric and house programmatic typologies throughout [fig. 4.5]. These bars, in turn, integrate within the existing buildings – creating porches for towers or using residual space – and act as a counterpoint to its morphological grain – generating new limits, establishing thresholds, and consolidating open spaces. In that way, the bars reinforce the existing hierarchies of the site, better qualifying the public, semi-private, and private realms. Clear limits are necessary to determine which spaces are accessible to whom, as they help reinforce a feeling of safety in residents.[1] This interpenetration between the space of the HJM and that of its surrounding neighborhood has been a contentious topic in the past, as is demonstrated by the omnipresence of borders and limits onsite; it, therefore, is appropriate to leverage new buildings and interventions as a way to establish clear thresholds that manage access to the site without resourcing to auxiliary equipment such as fences. Although the strips act as limits, they do not restrict access entirely but rather negotiate it; they are thick thresholds that encourage or discourage passage. Visible exterior circulation invites passersby to enter the site and the spaces that they give access to, whereas interior circulation creates a harsher demarcation to be crossed. In that way, bars act as inhabited, programmed thresholds that are either solely accessible to residents or allow the general public to use them.



The approach superimposes the proposed infrastructure on the orthogonal grid of the site; it is, therefore, consistent with *matt-building* and other grid-weaving approaches inherited from post-war modernists like Aldo van Eyck and Japanese metabolists – which incidentally had a considerable influence in the formation of Montréal's modern language.[2] These modes of formal organization developed in parallel with the rationalized space planning that guided the development of the *Habitations*, although they adopted a radically opposed stance as to

1. Clearly demarcated limits help residents feel safer in their homes, and in their communities. This principle comes from a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design approach. Although the framework has its flaws, namely that it frames safety as a matter of crime-reduction rather than an internally defined feeling, some of its principles remain highly relevant to the design of housing developments. See, BC Housing, "Design Guidelines and Construction Standards" (BC Housing, 2019).
2. On the topic, see Reyner Banham, "Megacity Montreal," in *Megastructure: Urban Futures of the Recent Past* (New York: Monacelli Press, 2020), 232, https://aabookshop.net/?wpsc-product=megastructure.

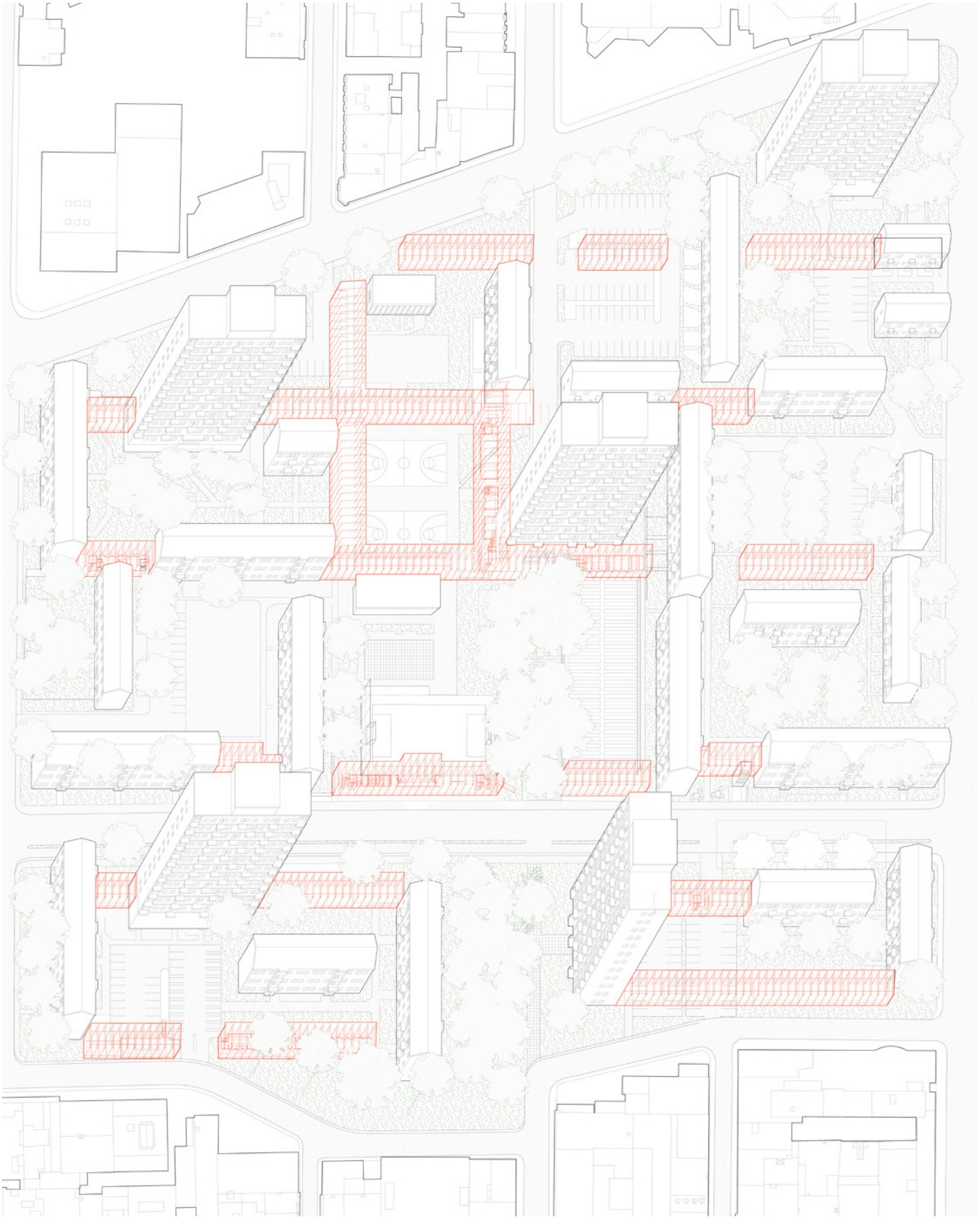
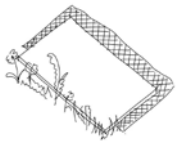


fig. 4.5: general site axonometric.

to the disintegration of functions within space planning and the city. While rationalist models pushed towards increased differentiation of functions, exemplified in the *Habitations*' sole function as housing, *matt-building* integrated functions as distinct grids that were then weaved together to create dense and complex multifunctional milieux.

The morphology of the strips is borrowed from the aesthetic language of the existing plex and townhouse buildings. However, their scale differentiates them as a distinct spatial network that intersects with housing. Such a distinction ensures the legibility of functions and periods of development across the site, making clear that although the ensembles are intertwined, they serve different purposes. While the plex and townhouses are two to three stories high, most bars are envisioned as low, single-level buildings. Strips can sometimes extend to higher floors, but these remain exceptions throughout. Aside from proportions, however, the new interventions distinguish themselves in opposition to existing buildings; their roofs are single-sloped, their structure exposed, their surfaces concave and irregular, and their volumes lifted off the ground, whereas the former have gabled roofs, load-bearing walls, flat envelopes, and heavy masses firmly anchored to the ground [fig. 4.6].

The foundation system uses punctual steel posts, or stilts, to protect the site's vegetal ecosystem. This system lessens the impact of construction on the ground and sub-ground strata, where shrubs and trees put down their roots, limiting the risks of damaging the site's biodiversity. This also allows for maximization of on-site residual space without compromising its green spaces' richness. Therefore, the steel posts are less invasive than a full concrete foundation.



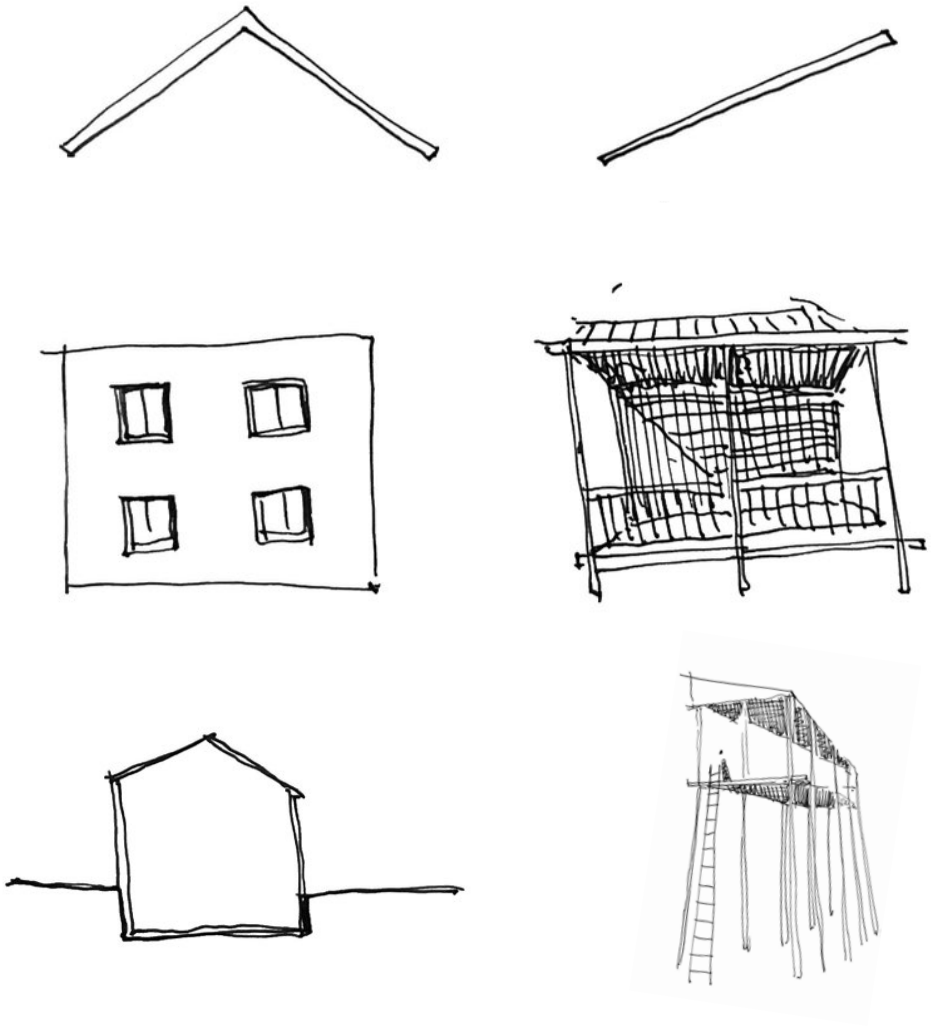


fig. 4.6: left: existing buildings on-site are anchored; their facades flat; and their roofs gabled. right: new interventions are lifted; concave; and single-sloped.

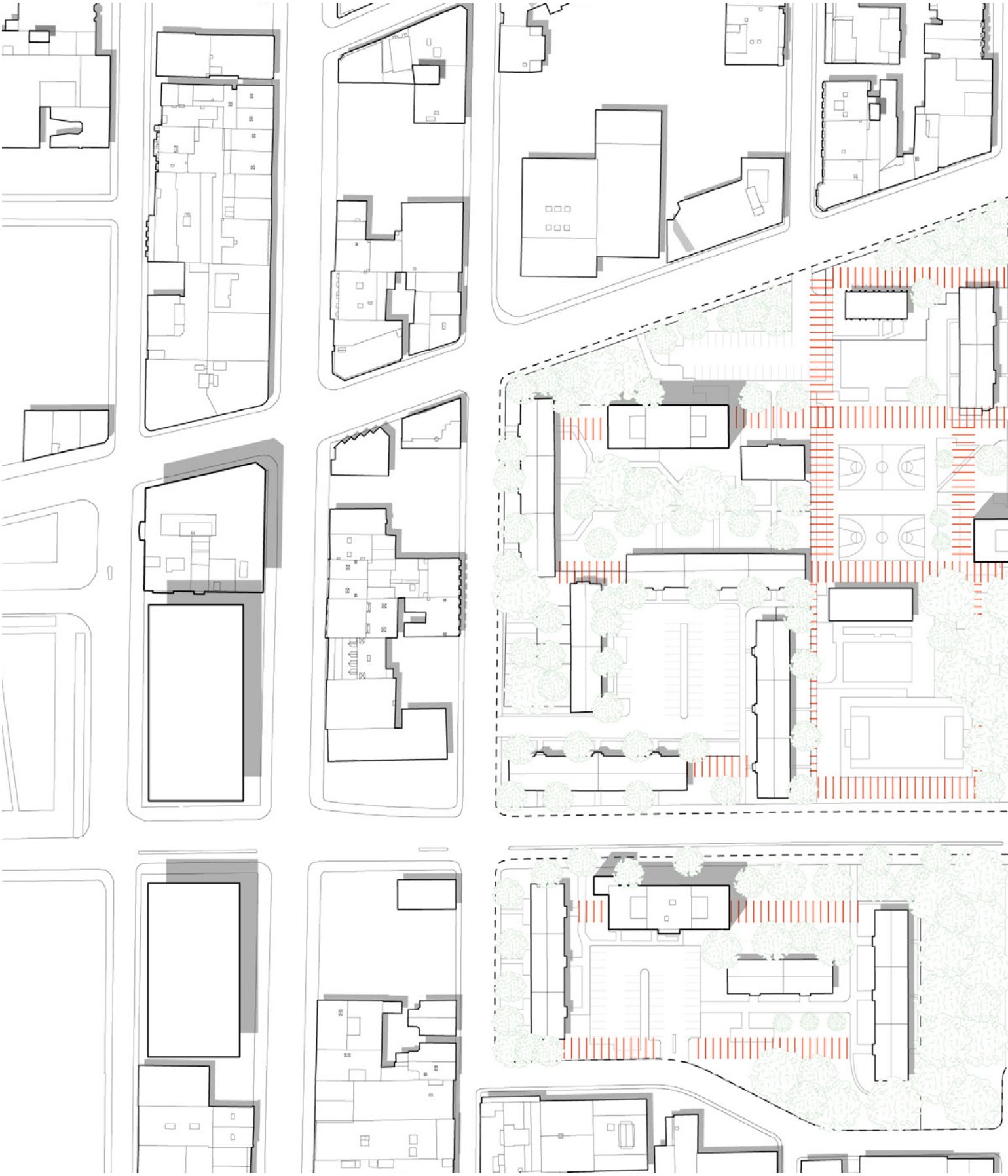


fig. 4.7: interventions weave a thick matt with existing buildings.

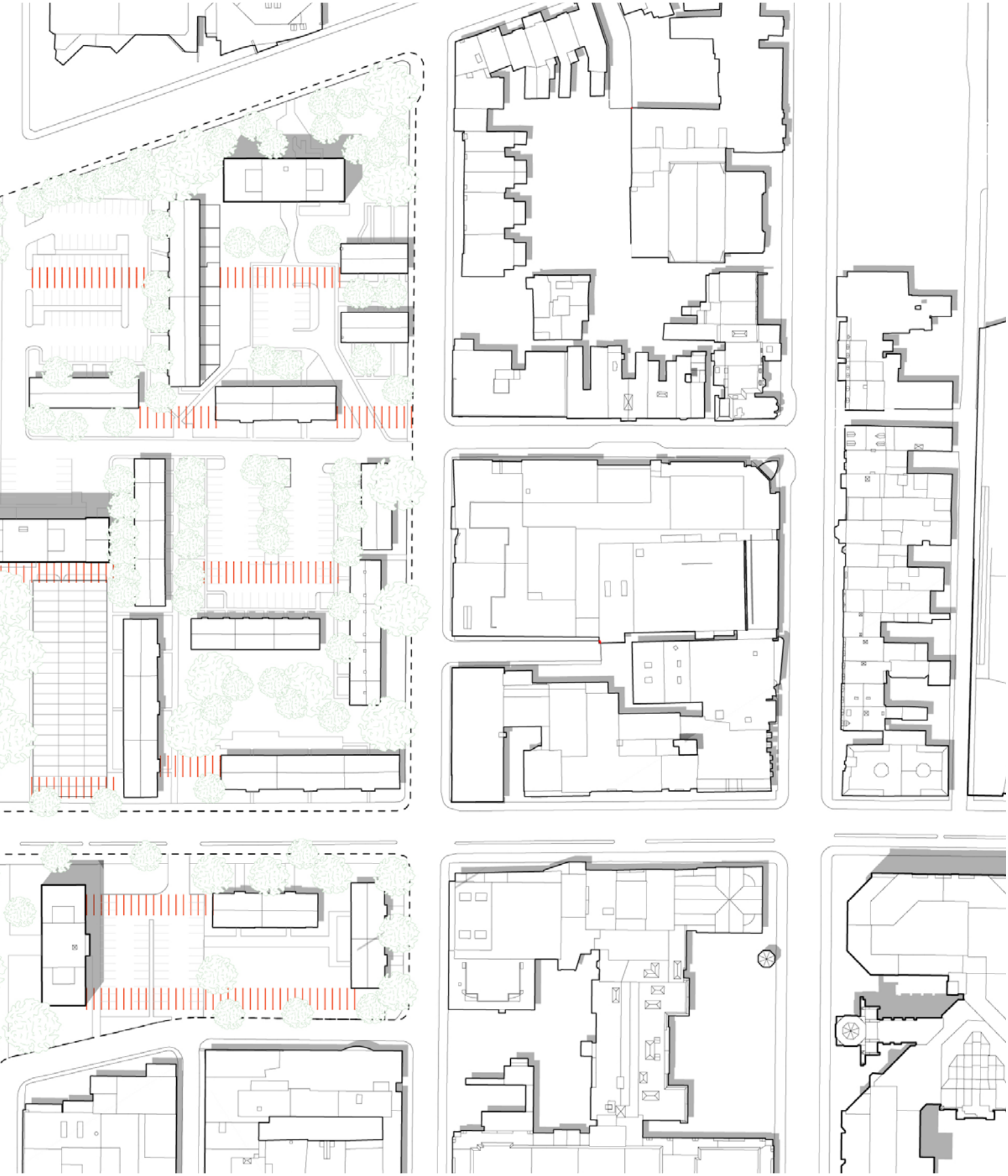




fig. 4.8: the interventions' low height contrasts existing scales. site section along a west-east axis.

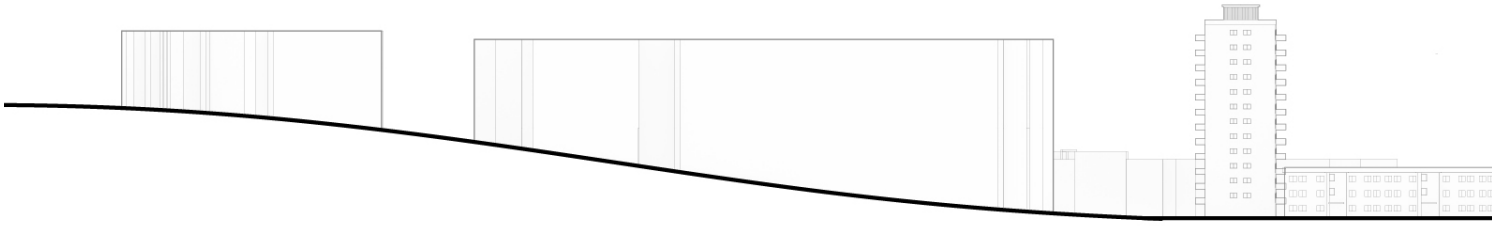
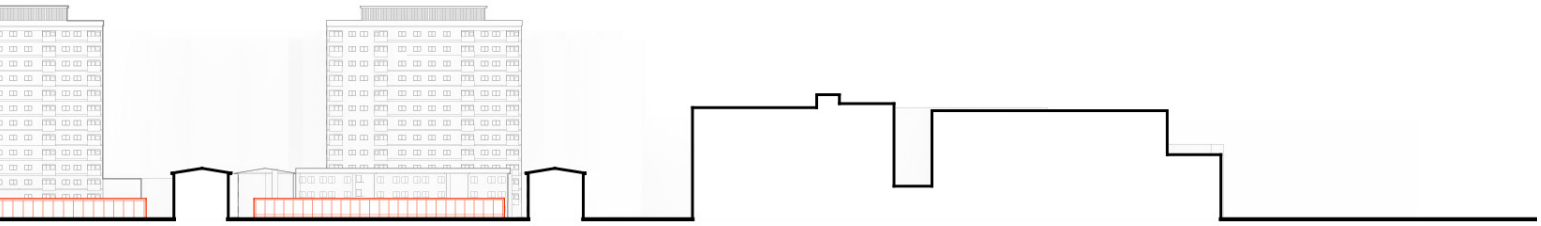
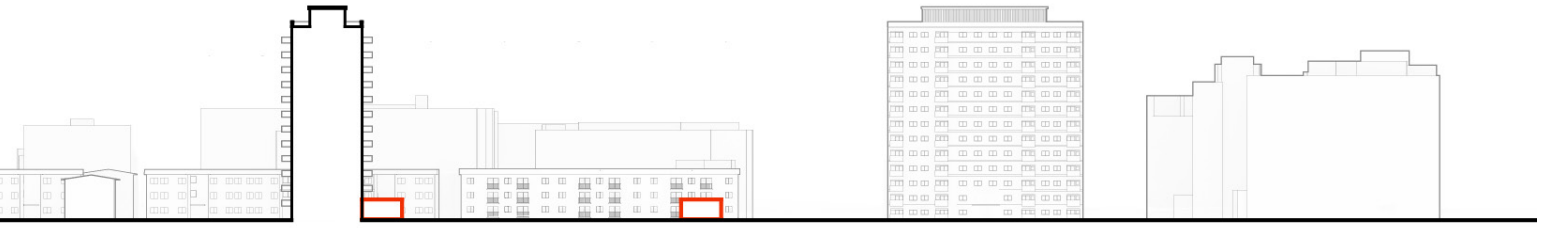
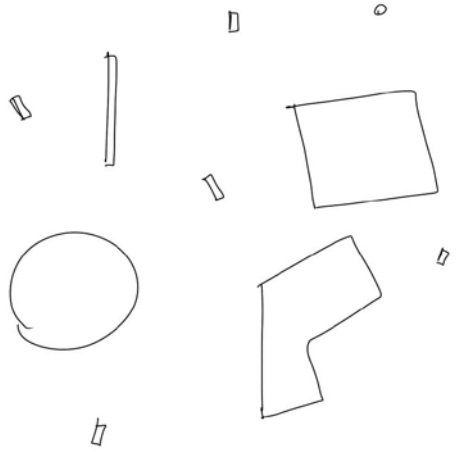


fig. 4.9: the côte sherbrooke overlooks the site to the north. site section along a north-south axis.







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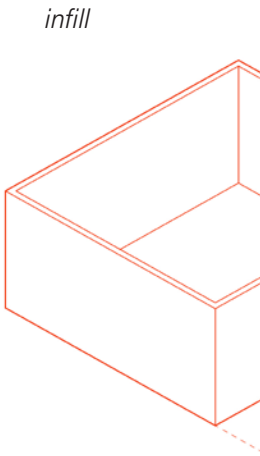
Structure
Material Components

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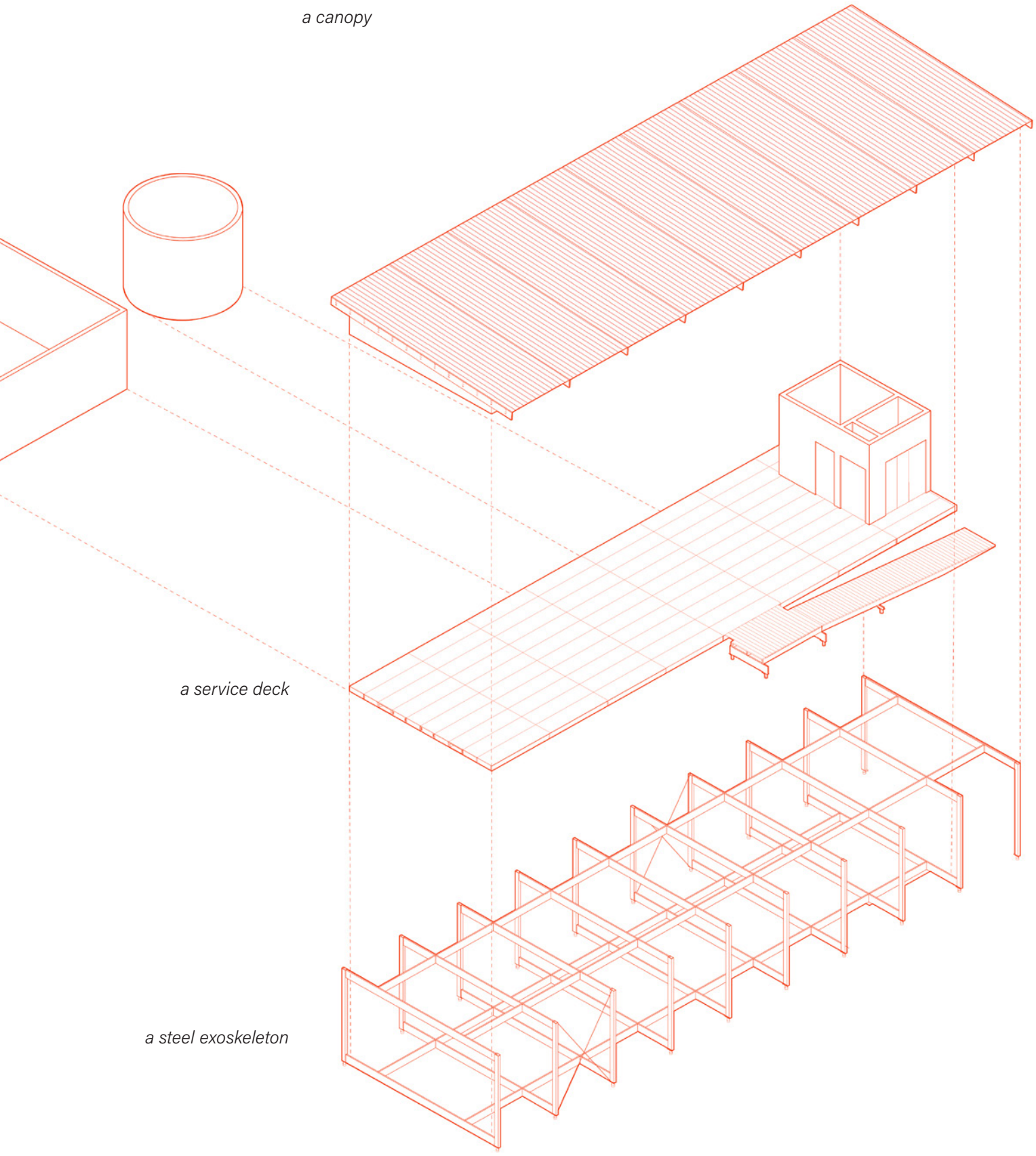
Construction and Tectonic Language

The system's structural language consists of a galvanized steel exoskeleton (1) that supports wooden service decks (2), all sheltered by a canopy (3) [fig. 4.10-4.11]. The steel framework is composed of 8-meter-long spans, with columns spaced 2.4 meters apart along the length of the structure. These columns rest on steel stilts, or foundation posts, supporting beams that span the 8-meter distance. Intermediate beams stabilize the system, providing cross-bracing against horizontal forces. Vertical service cores connect to the ground-level city grid, supplying utilities such as HVAC systems, water heaters, and electrical panels to the upper floors [fig. 4.12-4.13]. From these cores, services are distributed across the service decks, which also function as floor slabs. Designed for flexibility, the system is plug-and-play, allowing easy adaptation of services and equipment to meet changing programmatic needs. A galvanized steel and wood joist canopy extends above the bars, protecting them from the elements. The use of steel and wood is not innocuous, as it anticipates potential disassembly of the structures and easy replacement of individual components. Revertible assemblies and connections between components of different natures aim to facilitate maintenance over time and eventual deconstruction.



Given that the installation of the steel framework requires specialized expertise, it is envisioned that skilled workers would assemble the exoskeleton. This does not mean, however, that the input of residents and other stakeholders is dismissed altogether, as process-based activities may held during the construction to create relationships between users and laborers working on-site. The system's structural components – including the galvanized steel skeleton, service decks, canopies, and service cores – serve as a stage to be filled by resident-led programming and activities. Infill spaces and partitions could be constructed using various materials, depending on availability and cost, following straightforward assemblies that residents could be taught. While residents might not undertake construction independently, gaining basic construction knowledge would allow them to participate in the installation and disassembly of infill elements over time [fig. 4.14-4.18].

fig. 4.10: the structure is made up of layers: a steel frame, a service deck, roof, and infills.


a canopy
a service deck
a steel exoskeleton

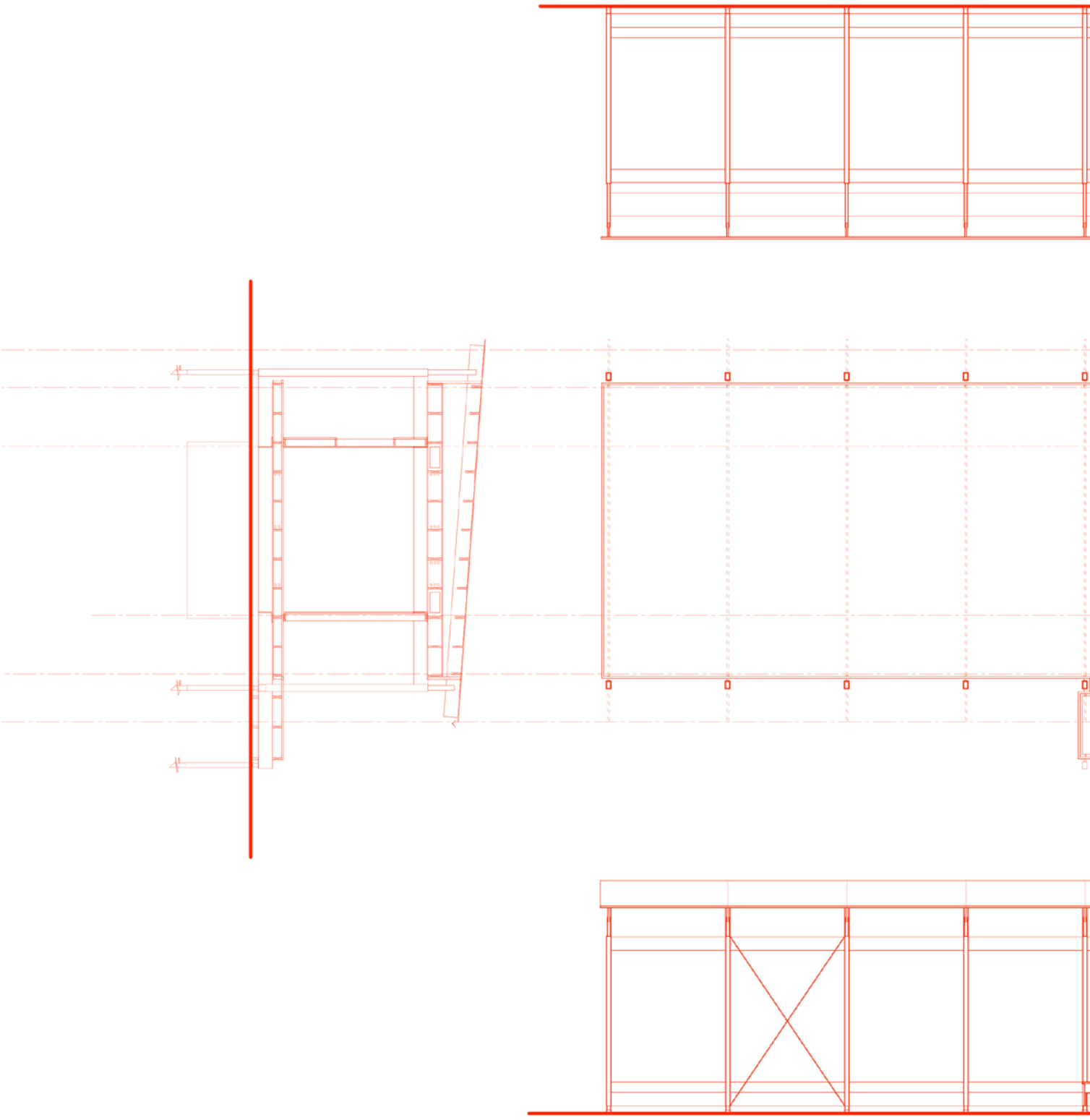
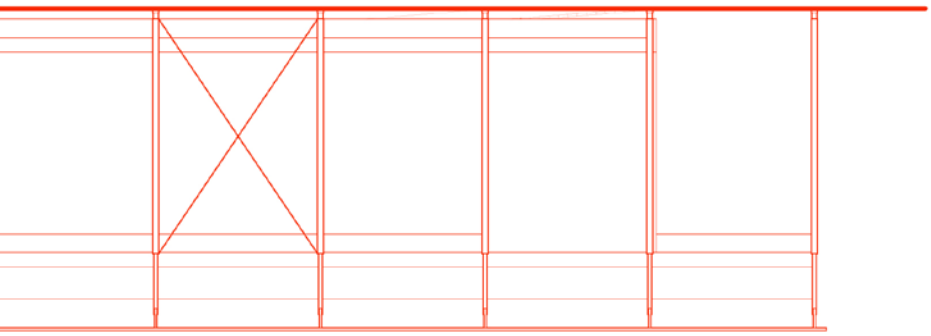
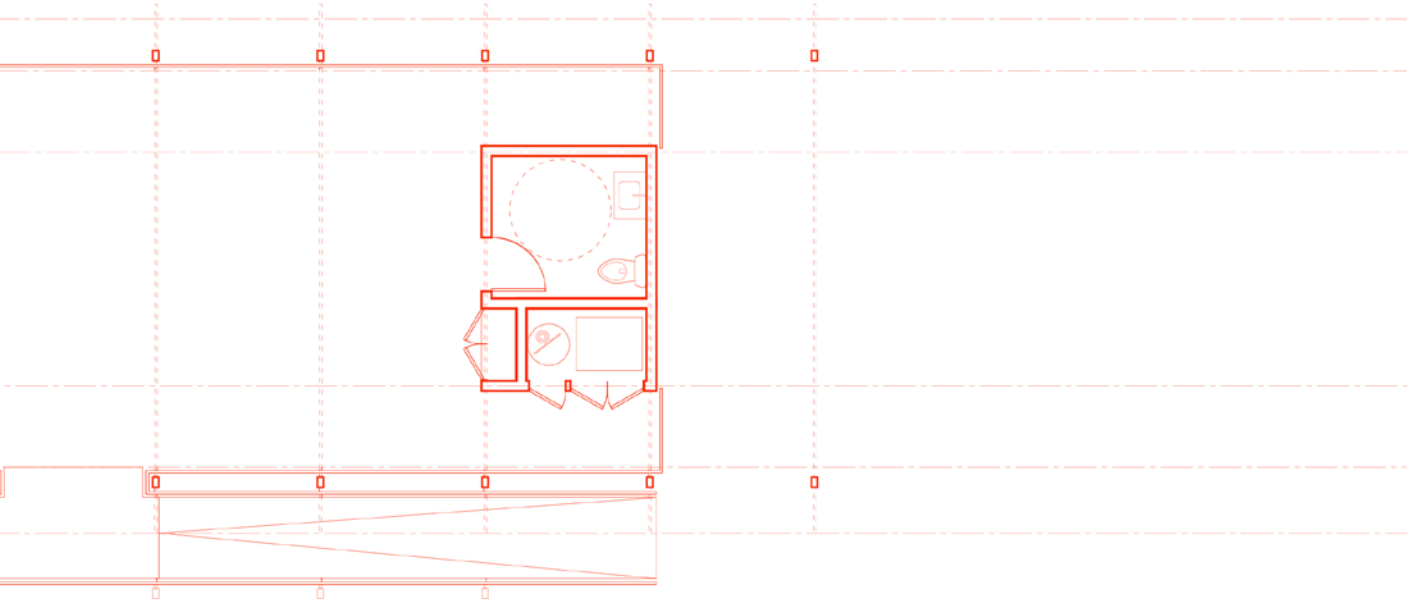
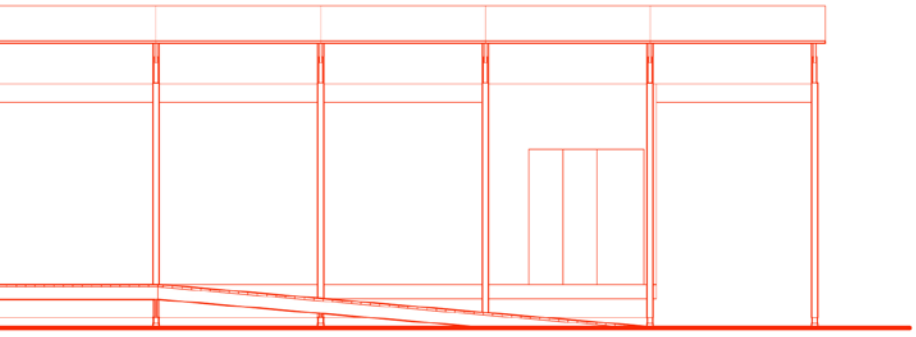


fig. 4.11: -structure, base drawings.







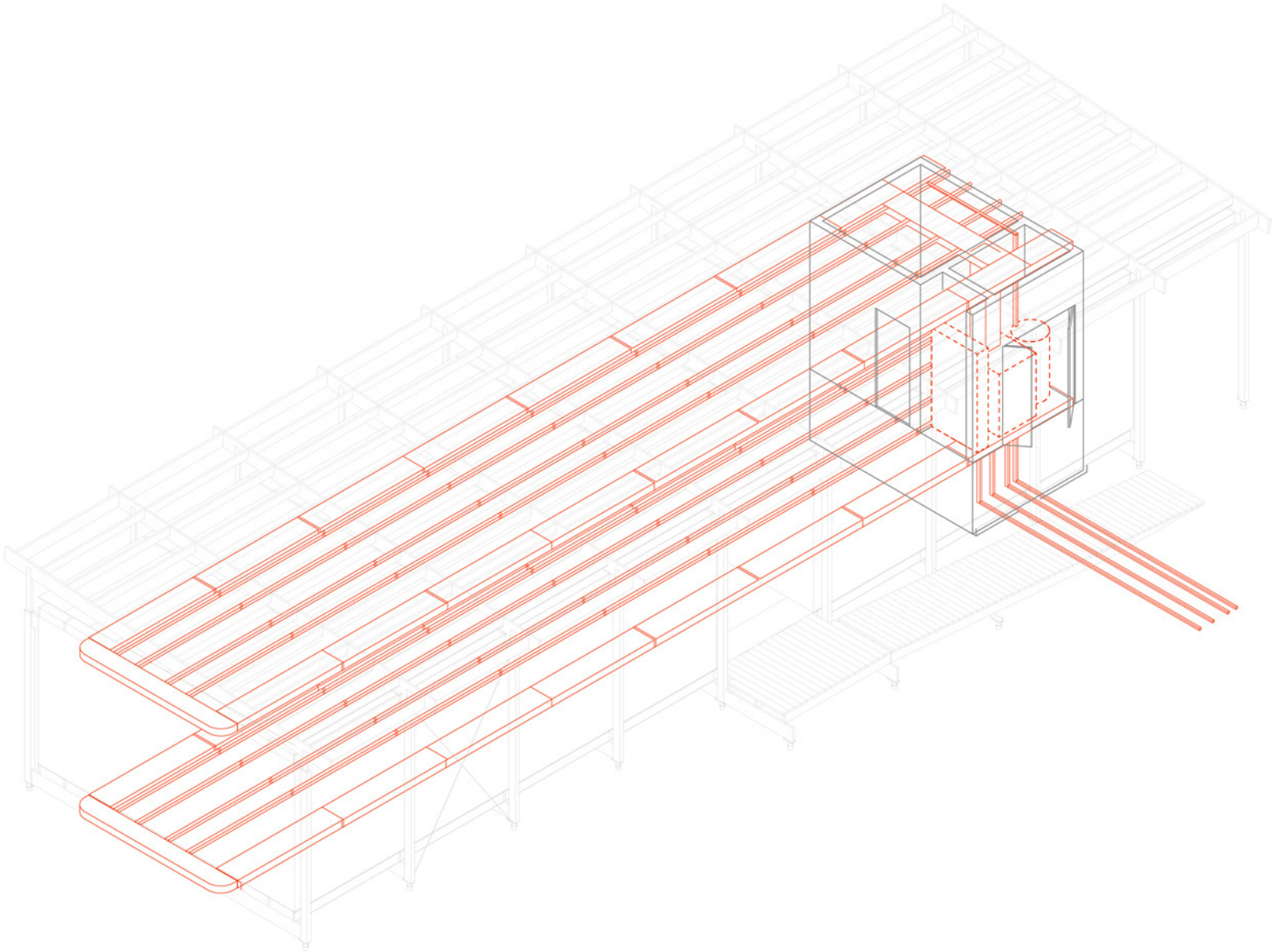


fig. 4.12: ventilation, heating, cooling, and electrical equipment is sheltered in vertical cores that connect to the city grid at underground level. services then travel horizontally through service decks. infill spaces plug into the horizontal decks.

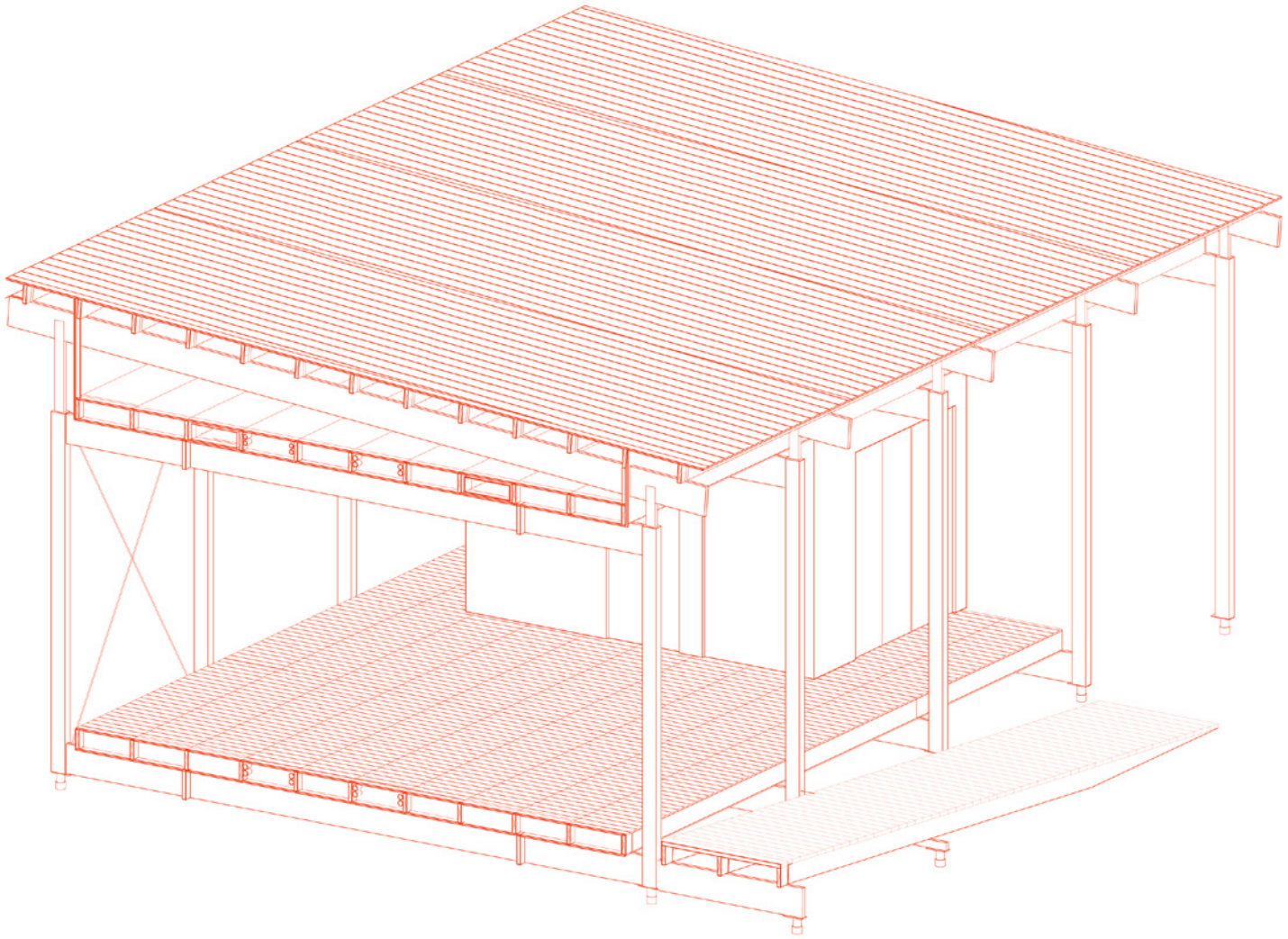


fig. 4.13: two horizontal service decks carry services across the bar.
axonometric fragment.

The above-mentioned system provides a clear conceptual framework that suits the needs at play but remains schematic. It would require further refinement to address its implementation's specific technical, functional, and material challenges. A detailed look at the smaller scale of assemblies and connections would be necessary to realize its potential as a built structure.



fig. 4.14: construction steps. the exoskeleton is put up by competent workers.



fig. 4.15: construction steps. residents can use the exoskeleton in its barest form.



fig. 4.16: construction steps. service decks are built by construction workers in collaboration with residents.



fig. 4.17: construction steps. construction workers set up the canopy.

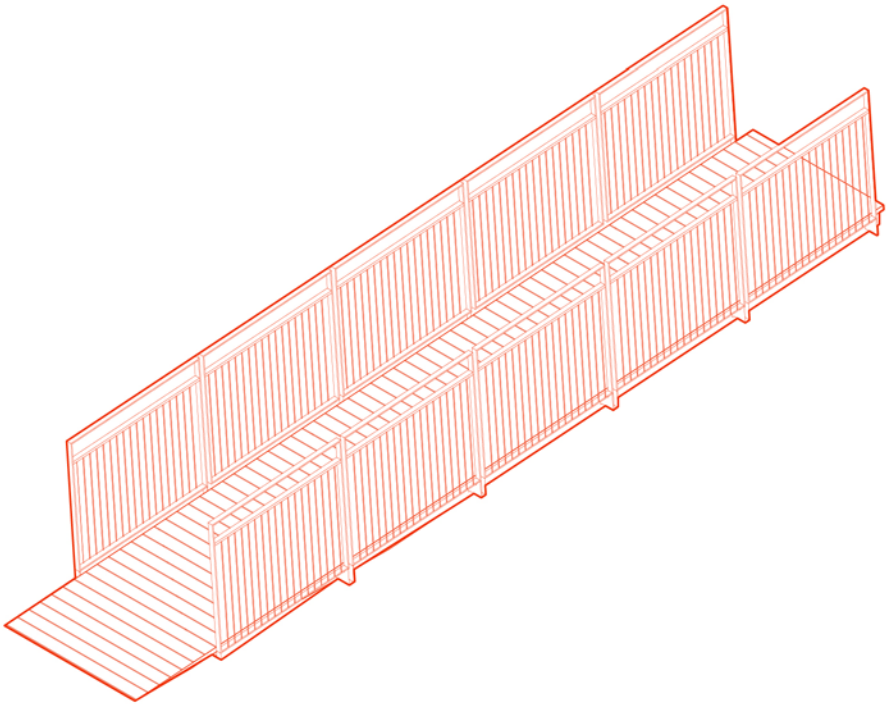


fig. 4.18: construction steps. residents, aided by construction workers and project managers, can participate in the construction of infill programmed spaces.

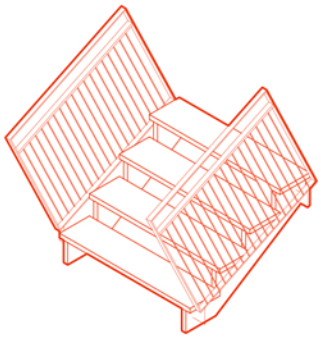
A Catalogue of Pieces and their Syntax

Similar to the programmatic typological catalog developed above, an inventory of the system's physical components is devised. This includes circulation devices [fig. 4.19-4.23], apertures, walls, partitions, and doors [fig. 4.24-4.25], all elements necessary to ensure that programs function correctly. These elements include essential services such as ventilation, heating and cooling, plumbing, and electrical networks. Components like walls and partitions are intentionally designed to remain materially ambiguous, allowing the system to adapt and integrate found or salvaged materials using a straightforward, conventional construction language. Most walls would likely be constructed from dimensional wood studs, with cladding materials chosen based on the specific context and the availability of resources.

Circulation Devices (C)



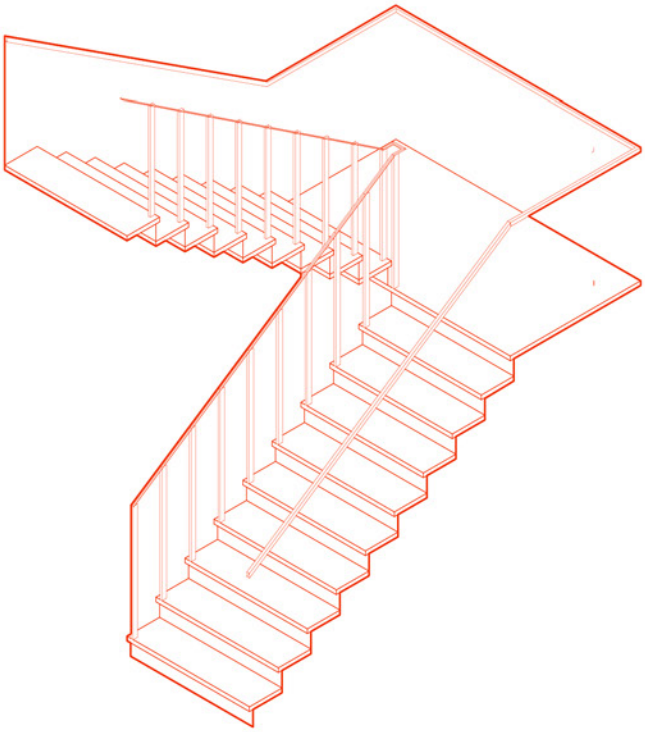
C01*: ramp*
width should be no less than 1220mm
slope ratio no more than 1:12



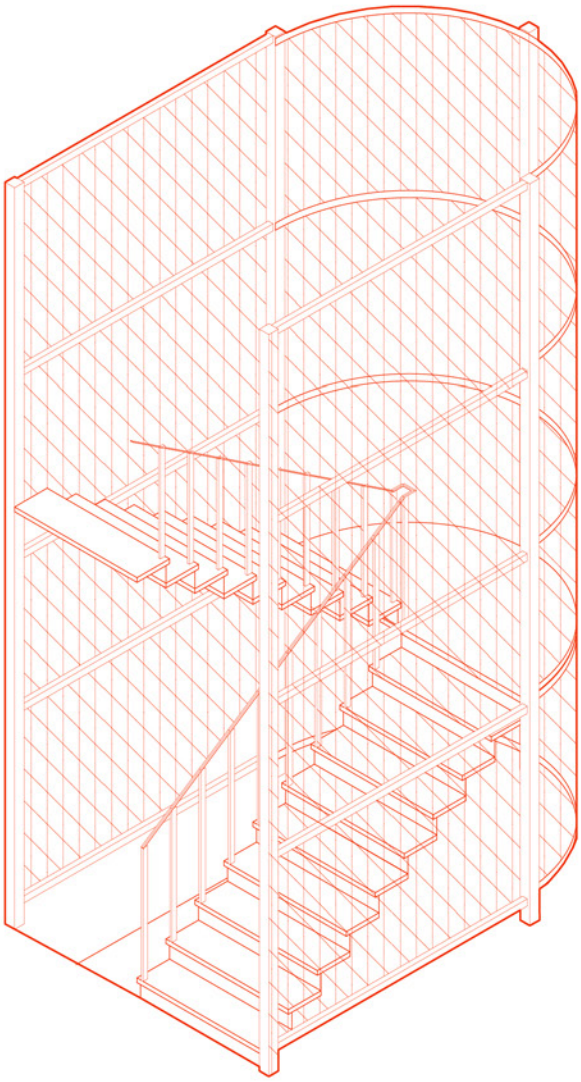
C02*: access stair*
width should be no less than 1220mm

fig. 4.19: a catalogue of pieces, circulation devices.

Circulation Devices (C)

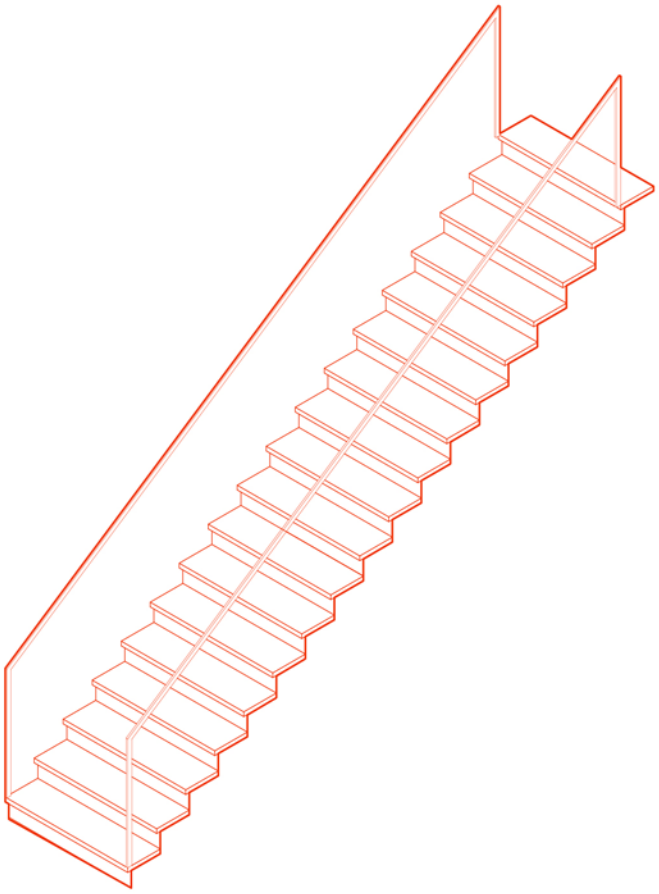


C03*: interior staircase*
each flight should be 1220mm wide

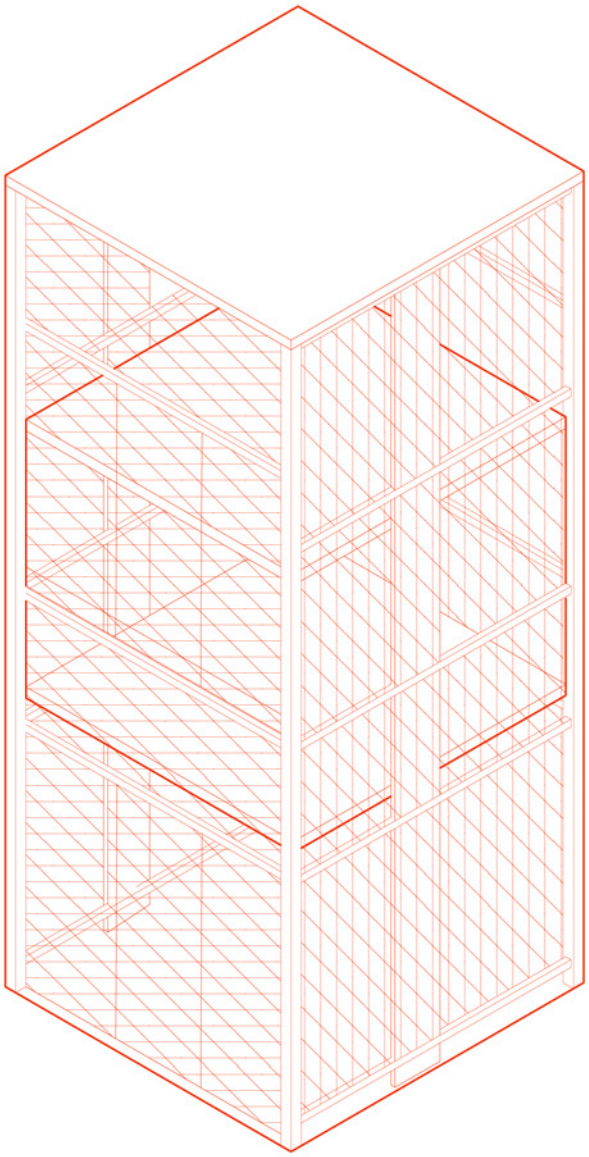


C04*: exterior staircase*
each flight should be 1220mm wide

fig. 4.20: a catalogue of pieces, circulation devices.

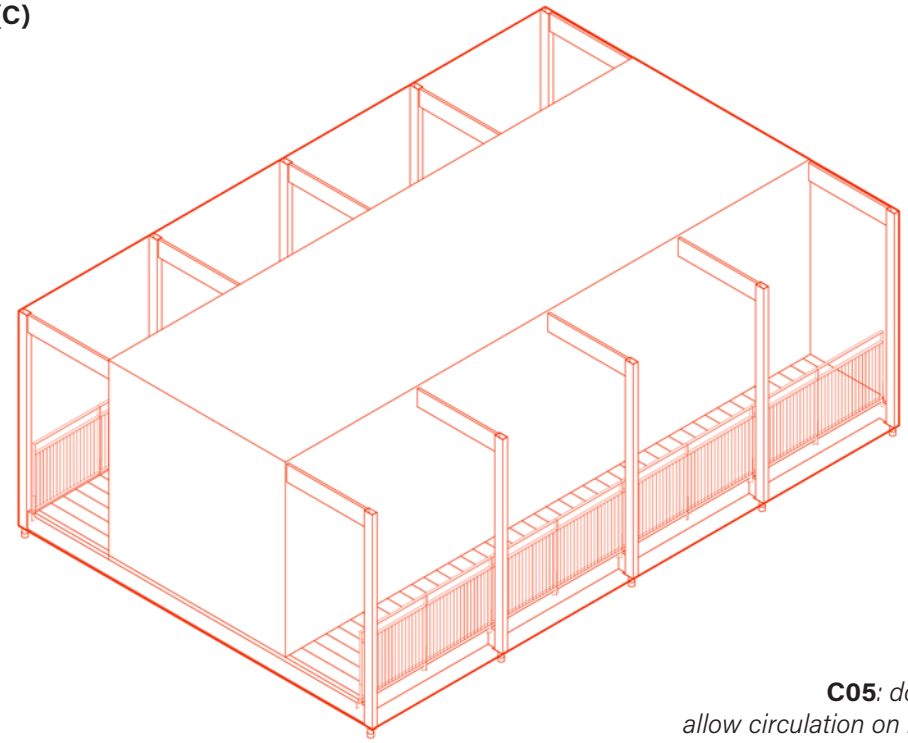


C05: *straight staircase*
each flight should be 1220mm wide

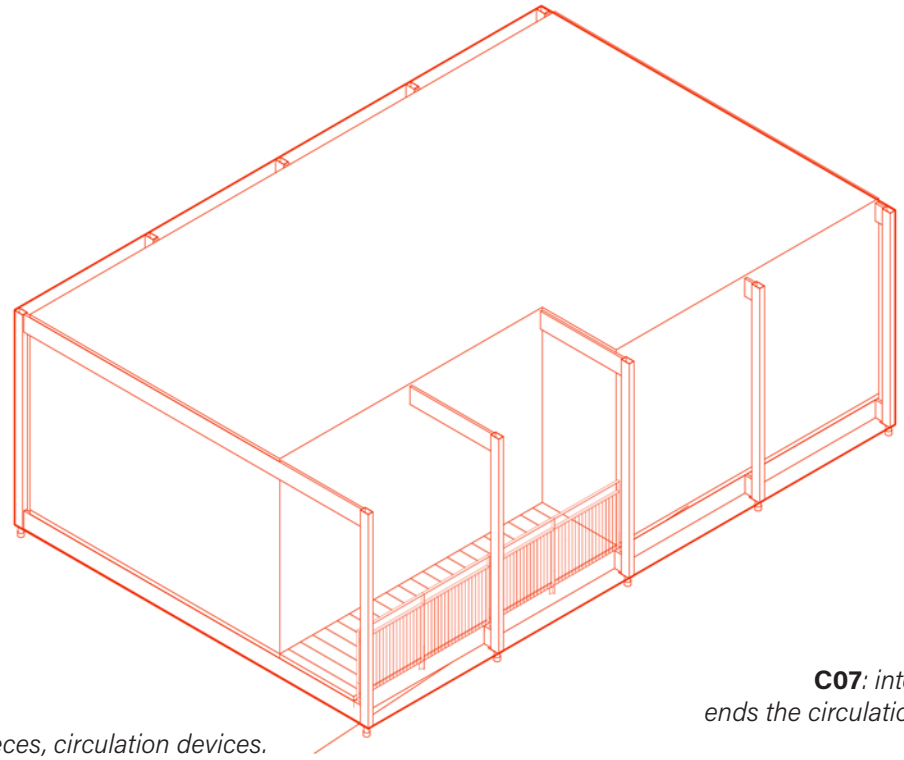


C06: *rudimentary lift*

Circulation Devices (C)

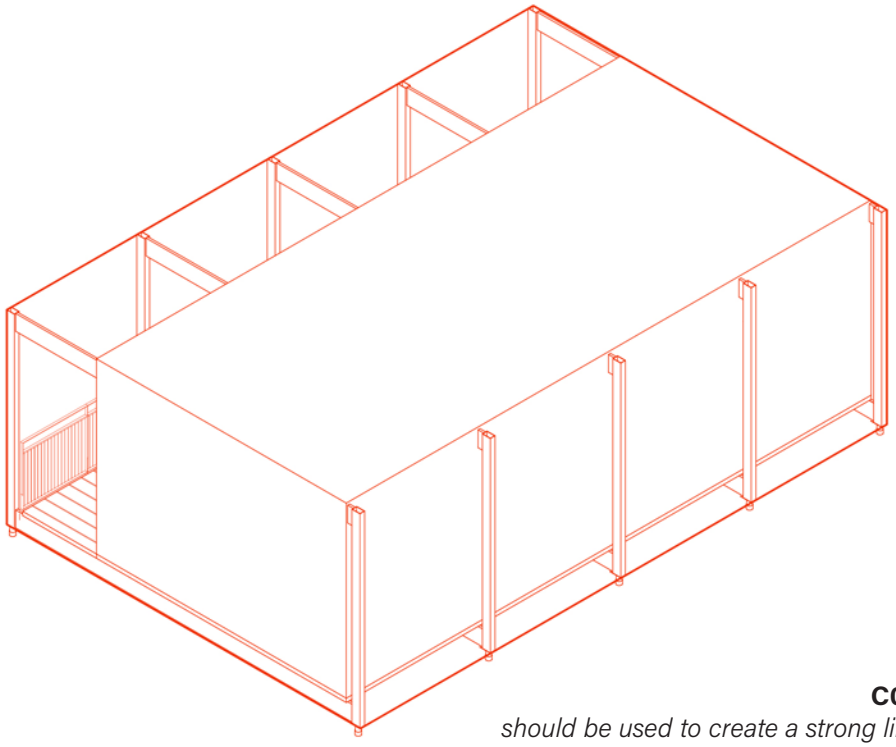


C05*: double-side walkways allow circulation on both sides of the bar*

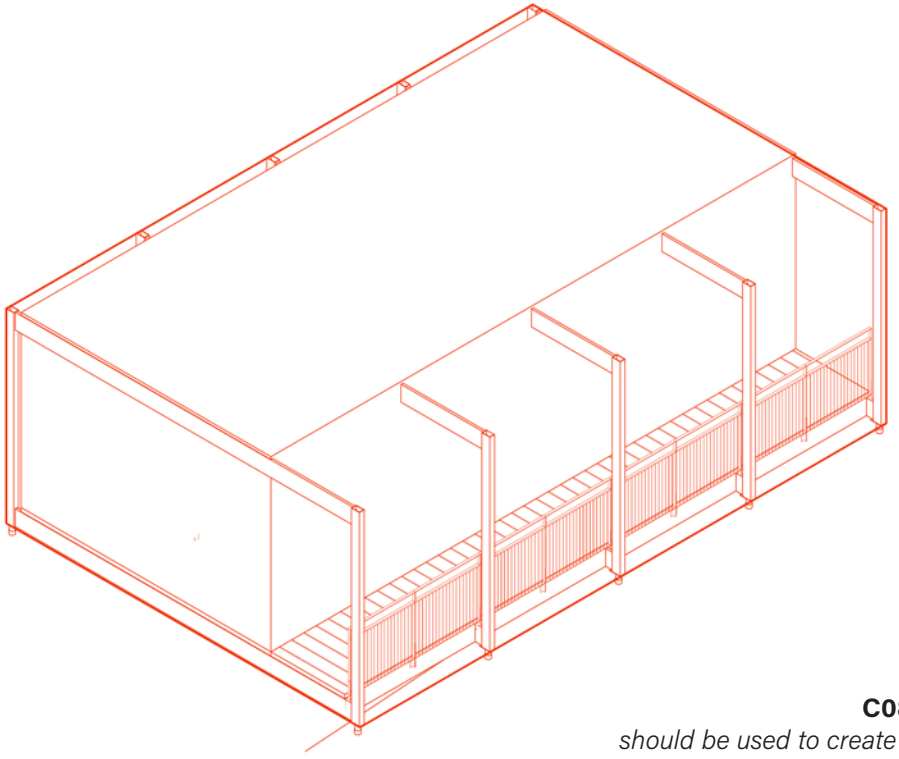


C07*: interrupted walkway ends the circulation, creating a limit*

fig. 4.21: a catalogue of pieces, circulation devices.

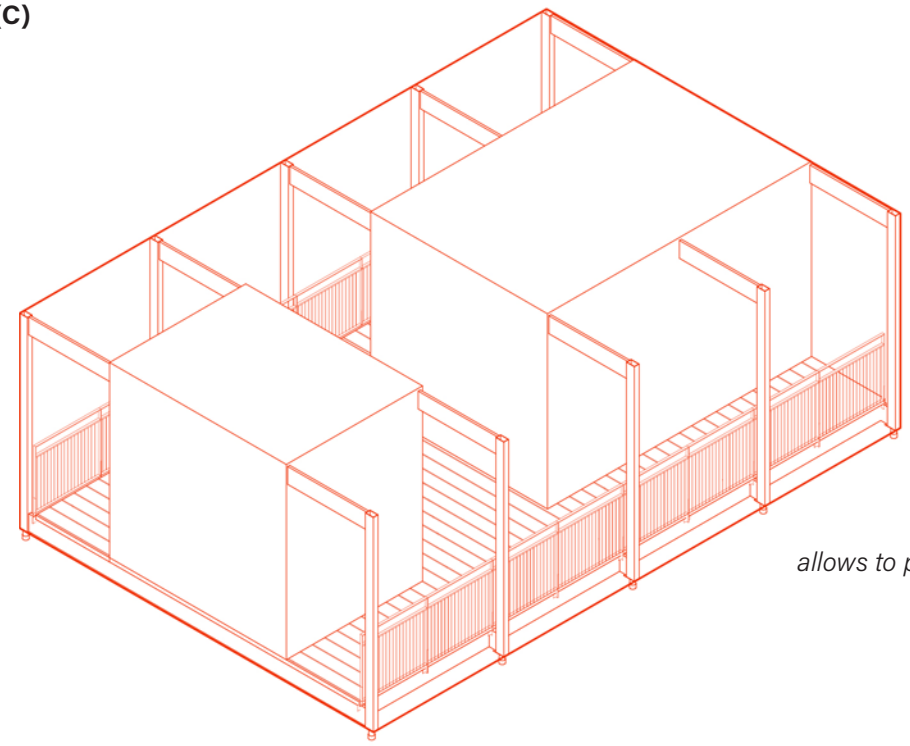


C06*: interior walkway should be used to create a strong limit with the outside*

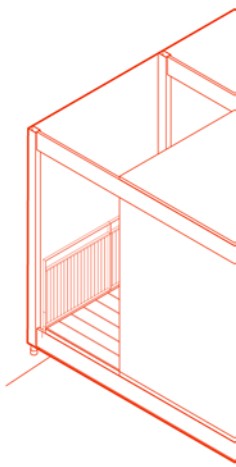


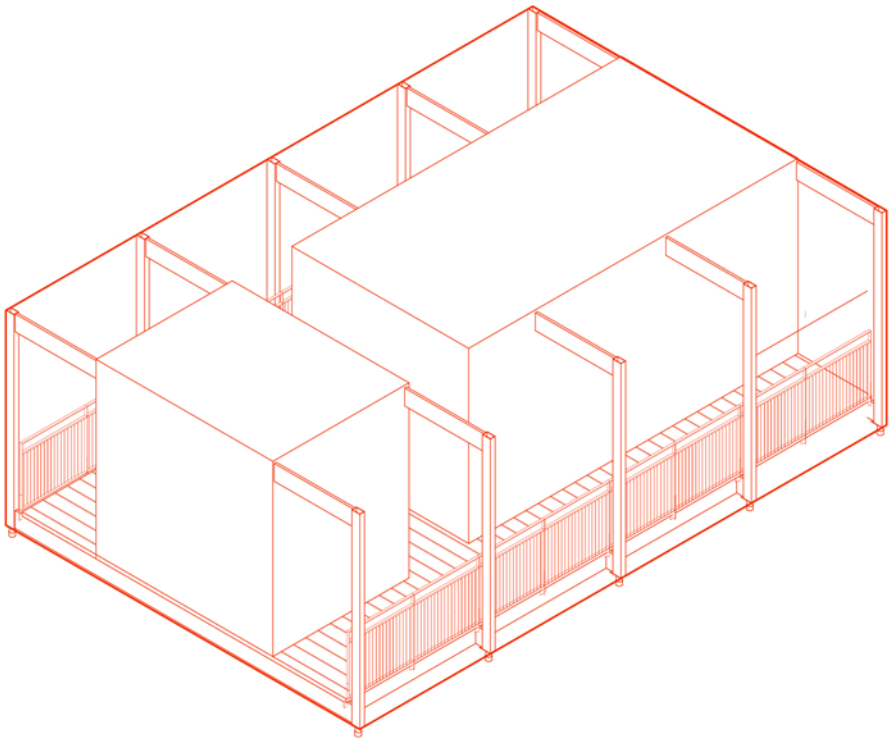
C08*: exterior walkway should be used to create a public peripheral circulation along the edge*

Circulation Devices (C)



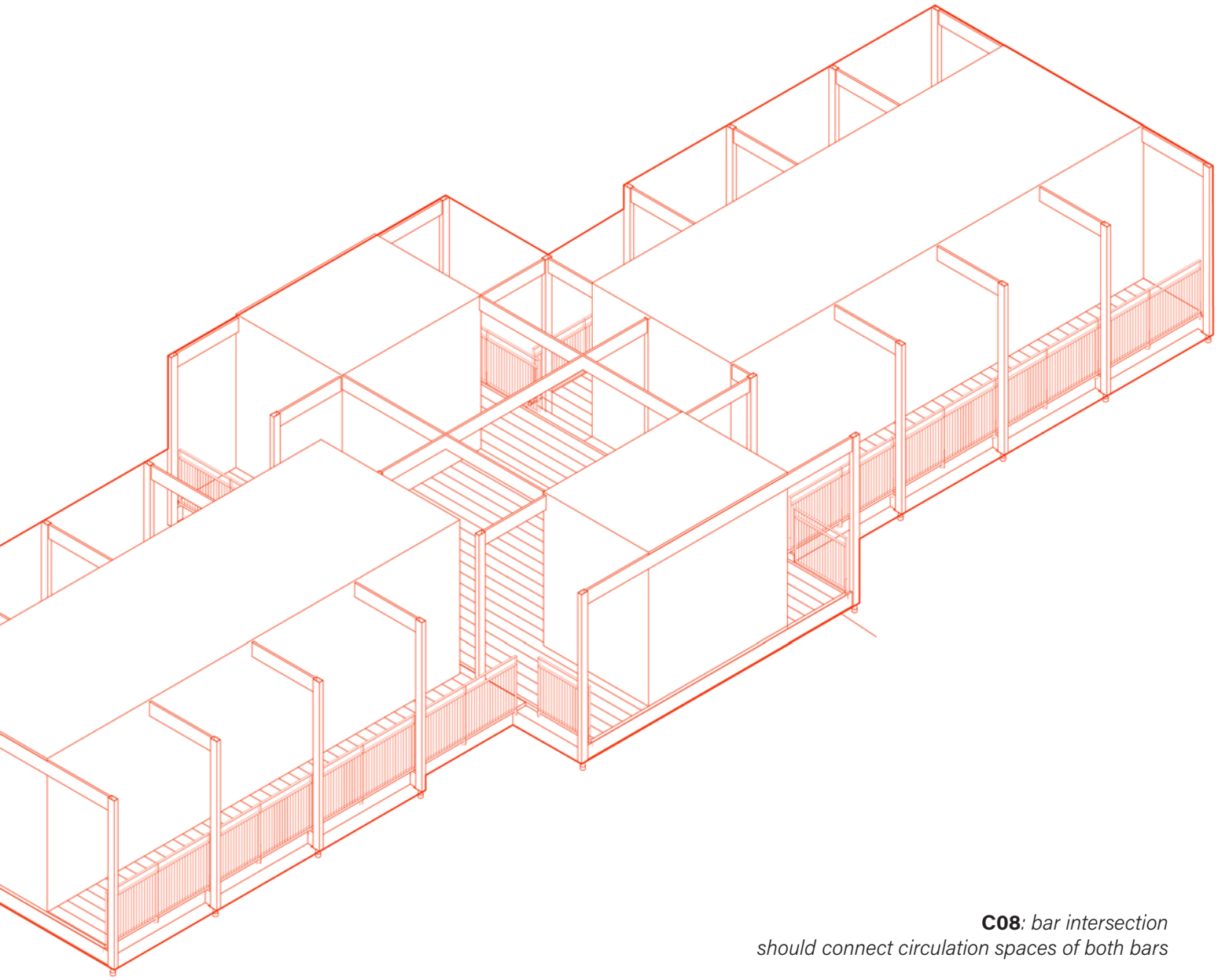
C09*: large passage*
allows to pass through the bar





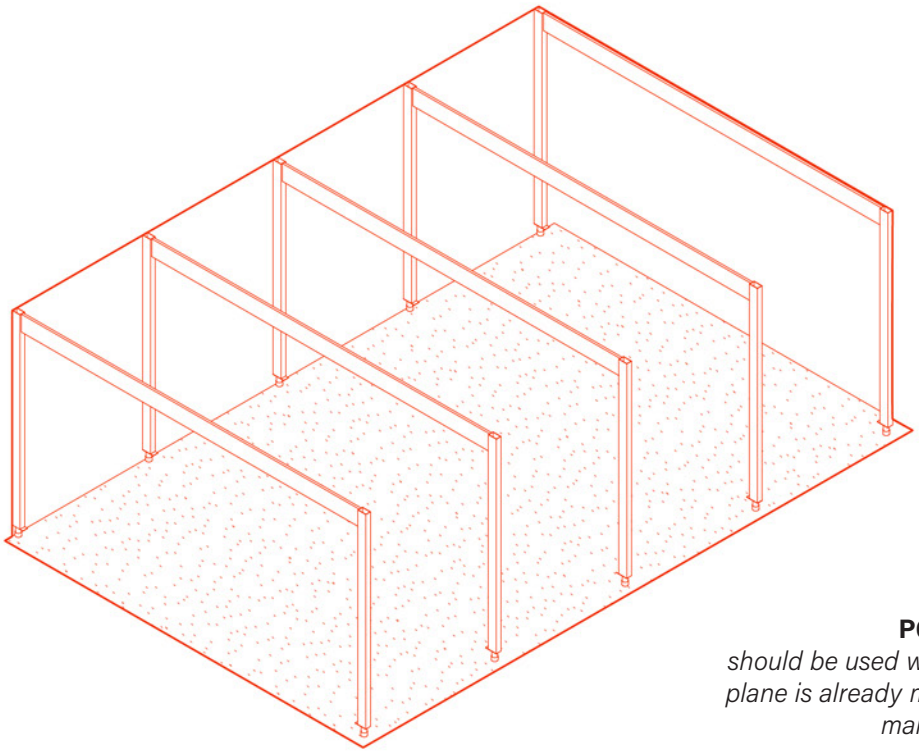
C07*: small passage*
allows to pass through the bar

fig. 4.22: a catalogue of pieces, circulation devices.

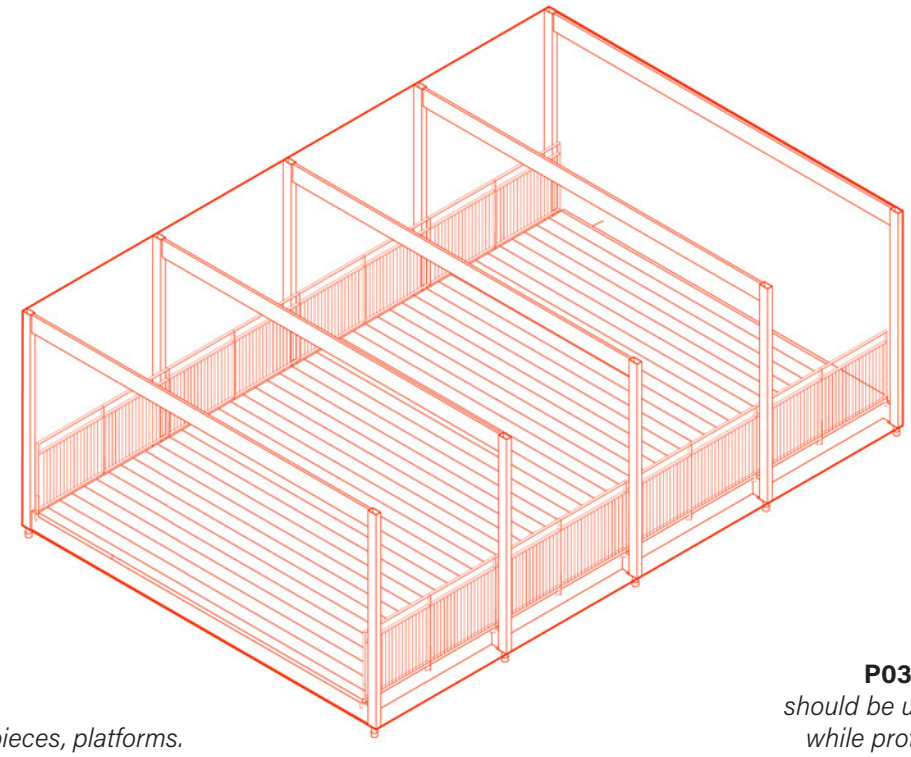


C08: *bar intersection should connect circulation spaces of both bars*

Circulation Devices (C)

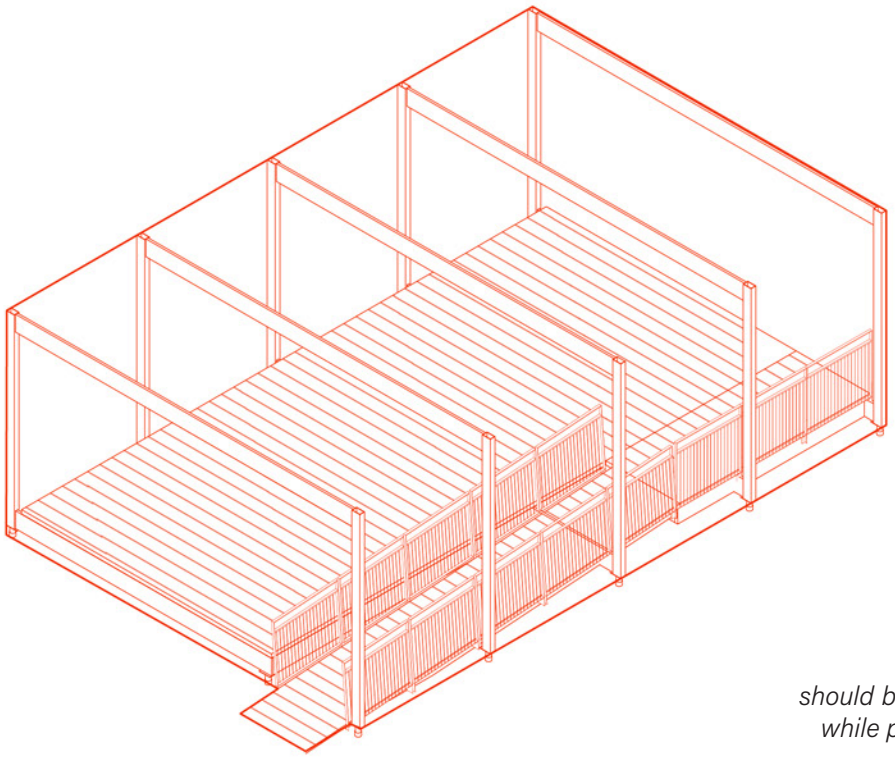


P01*: concrete slab should be used where the ground plane is already mineral and/or to maintain street level*

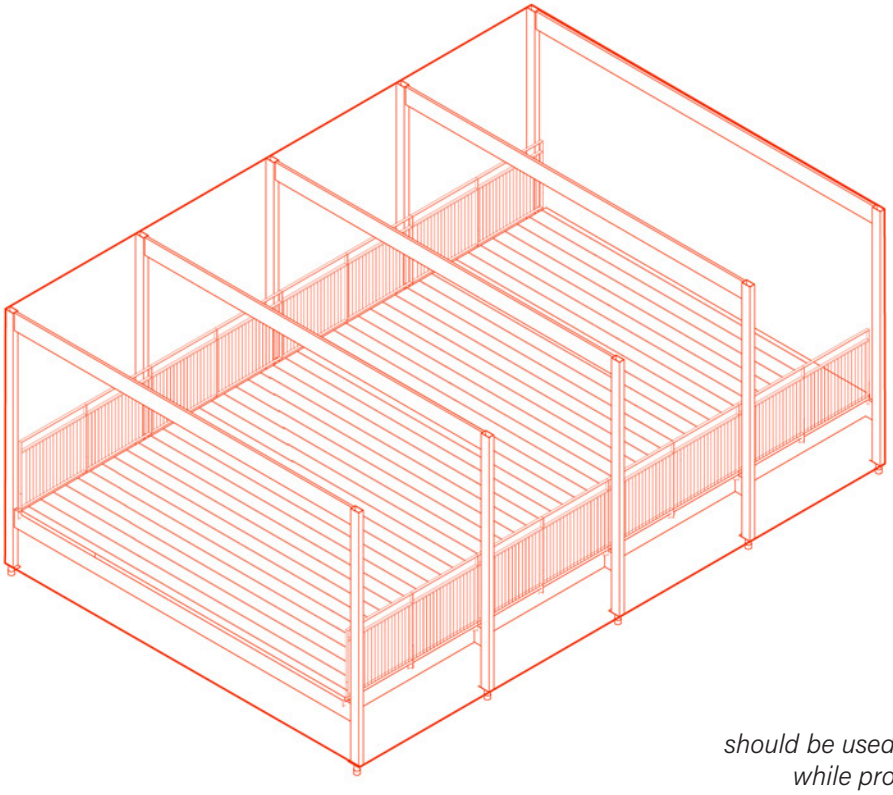


P03*: medium platform should be used to limit height while protecting the ground*

fig. 4.23: a catalogue of pieces, platforms.

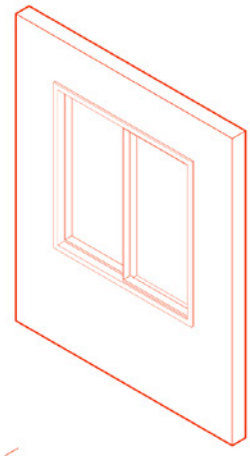


P02*: low platform should be used to limit height while protecting the ground*

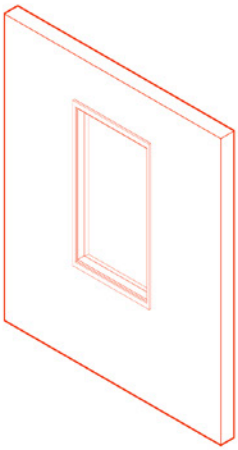


P04*: high platform should be used to increase height while protecting the ground*

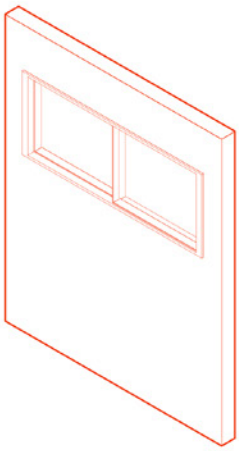
Windows, Doors, Partitions



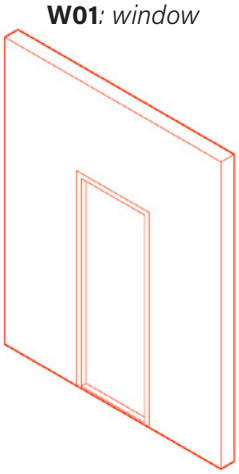
W01*: window*



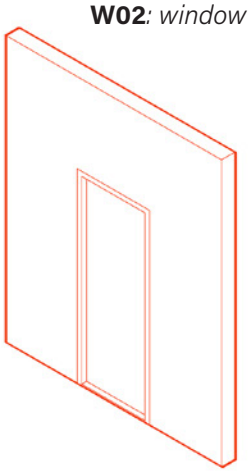
W02*: window*



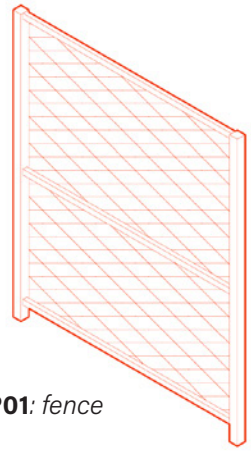
W03*: window*



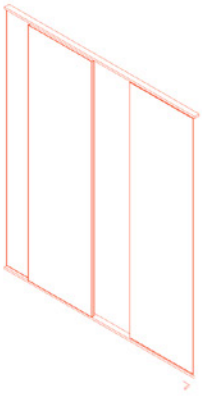
D01*: door*



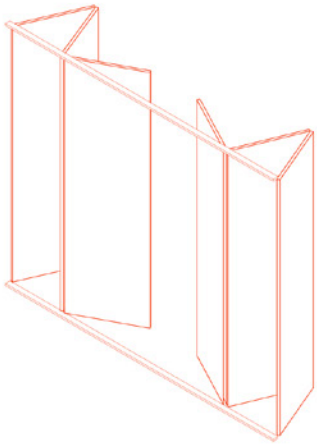
D02: *door*



P01*: fence*



P02*: sliding panels*



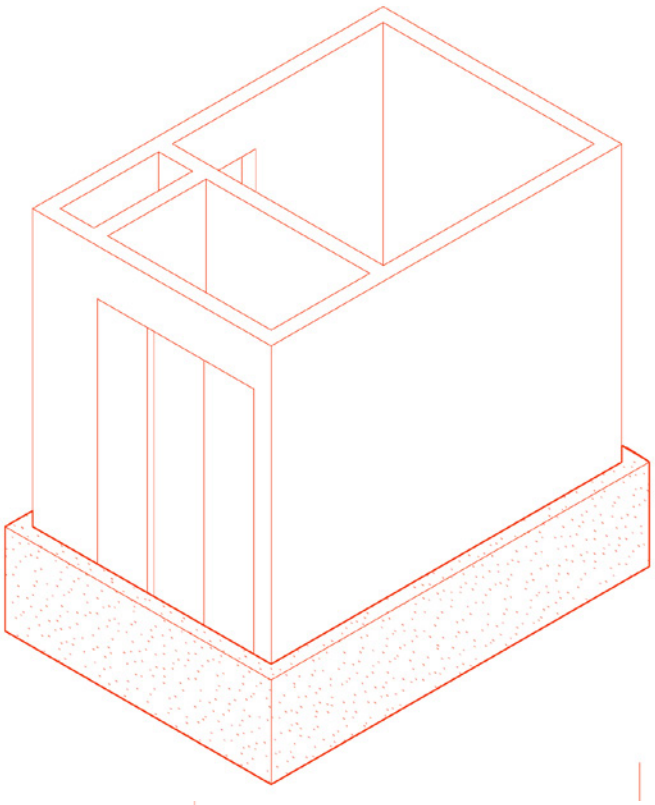
P02: *sliding panels*



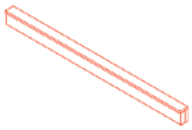
P02*: guardrail*

fig. 4.24: a catalogue of pieces, windows, doors and partitions..

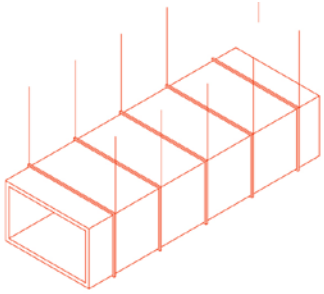
Services (S)



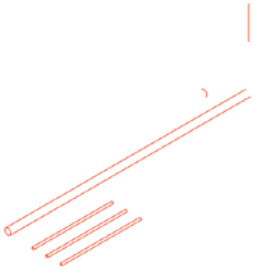
S00: *underground services connection*



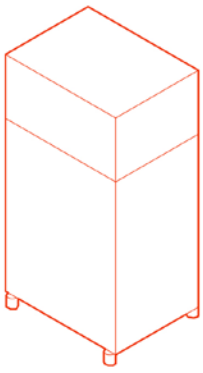
S01*: electrical plinth*



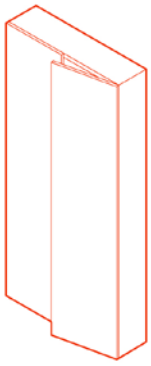
S02: *air duct*



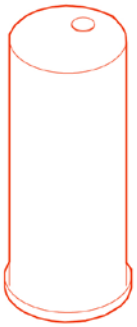
S03*: plumbing piping*



S04*: hvac central unit*

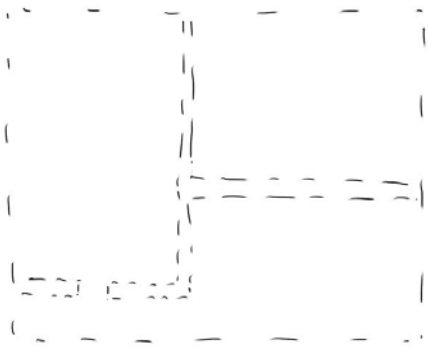


S05: *electrical panel*



S06*: water heater*

fig. 4.25: a catalogue of pieces, services.



from

for

Infrastructure

Immaterial Support and Scheme Management

to

with

Governance

The existing governance model combines various committees and full-time employees who manage day-to-day operations. These include the governing committees, which advise the board of directors on planning decisions and future developments, as well as employees overseeing operations (Direction des opérations), customer service and human resources (Direction des services à la clientèle et des ressources humaines), and major projects (Direction des projets majeurs) [fig. 4.26].

Under the proposed allographic model, residents' spatial and programmatic needs would be discussed at the Comité d'aménagement, where design typologies and programs would be selected based on residents' desires [fig. 4.27].[1] This shift would require increased resident participation within the committee, which currently consists of experts and administrators. Integrating the *Comité consultatif des résident.es* (CCR) into the *Comité d'aménagement* could further ensure that residents have the agency to influence and control the development of the social infrastructure. The committee would then collaborate with the *Direction des projets majeurs* and the *Comité développement durable* to determine the best site placement, construction methods, and timelines for the infrastructure.

Project managers would work alongside residents and the *Comité d'aménagement* to organize process-oriented events during various phases of the project—design, construction, maintenance, and deconstruction—creating opportunities for residents to engage with each other and the development process itself. These events would help foster a sense of reciprocity between residents and the spaces they inhabit. Two project managers are currently employed by the CHJM and carry out traditional architectural and construction management tasks. Under the proposed system, I propose that their role be redefined as coordinators of the construction of structural components (or stages) and resident-led interventions. The management and maintenance of the system would be negotiated and implemented jointly by the *Comité d'aménagement* and the *Direction des opérations*, always in partnership, of course, with residents. Residents would engage in decision-making processes with those two committees to determine the typological elements to be built.

1. The use of conditional verb tenses like *could* and *would* is voluntary. These speak to the indeterminacy of the system. While conditions and structures are envisioned from the beginning, their modalities are left to be determined and administered by the users themselves.

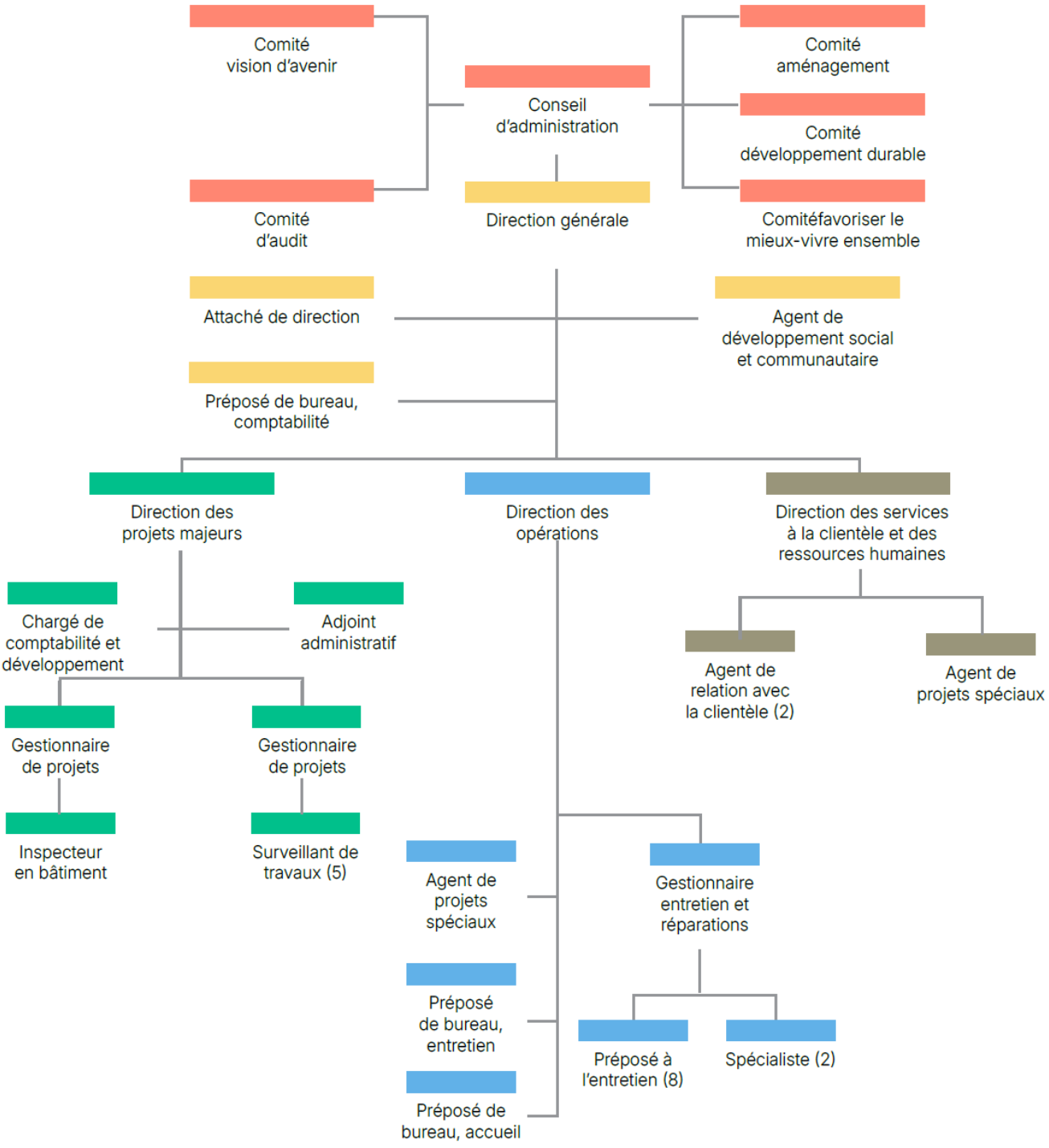


fig. 4.26: current chjm governance is ensured by the board and gravitating committees (orange) while general management (yellow) oversees major projects (green), opoerations (blue), and human resources (grey).

Funding for these developments would likely come from a discretionary budget allocated to the *Comité d'aménagement*, potentially annually, ensuring that the committee has the financial autonomy to undertake projects. The bulk of the Corporation des Habitations Jeanne-Mance's (CHJM) budget comes from federal subsidies allocated by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and the city of Montreal.[1] Therefore, it is conceivable that this discretionary budget would be drawn from both federal and municipal funds. For the city, this financial contribution would help cover the development, administration, and maintenance of neighborhood infrastructure, similar to the funding allocated for parks, public libraries, and pools.

1. Corporation d'habitation Jeanne-Mance, "Rapport Annuel 2023," 2024, https://www.chjm.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/chjm_rapportannuel_2022-V-finale.pdf.

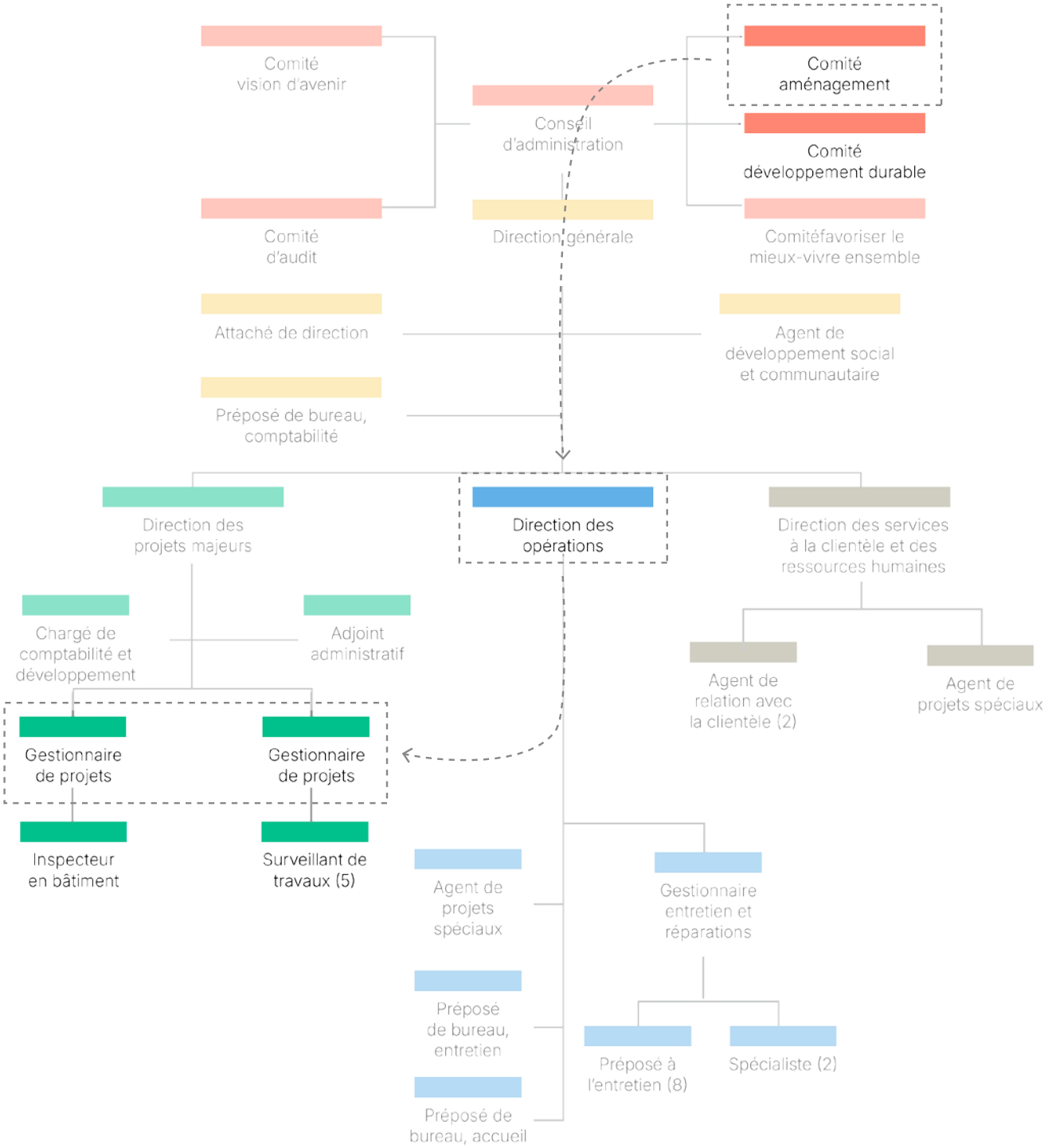
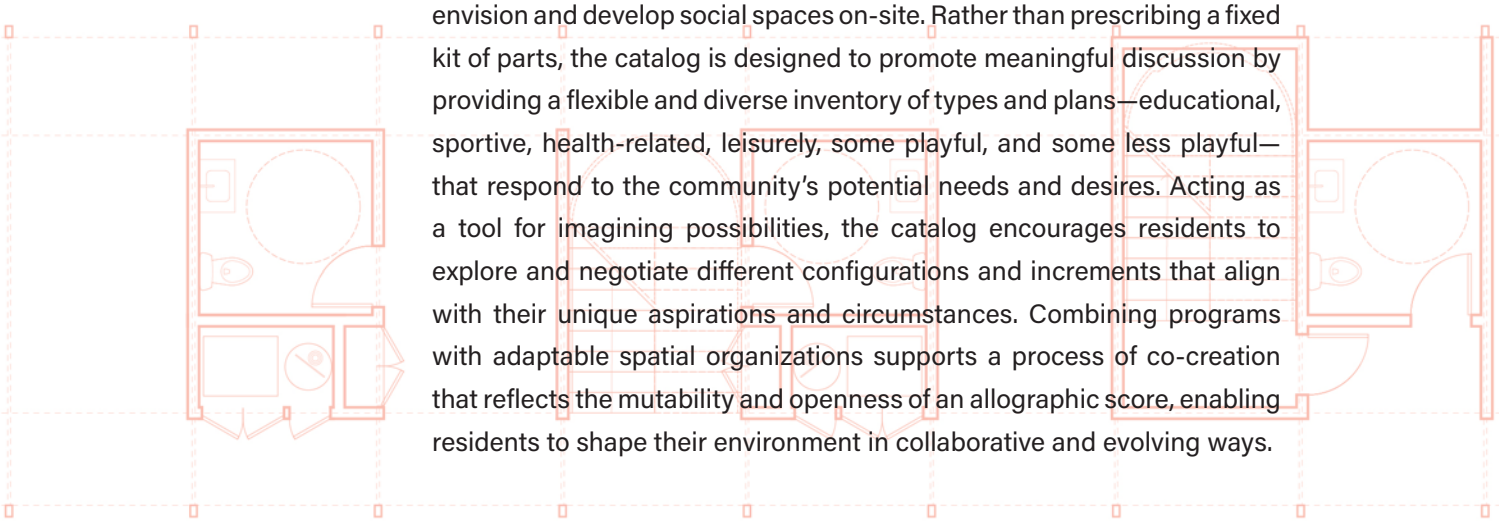


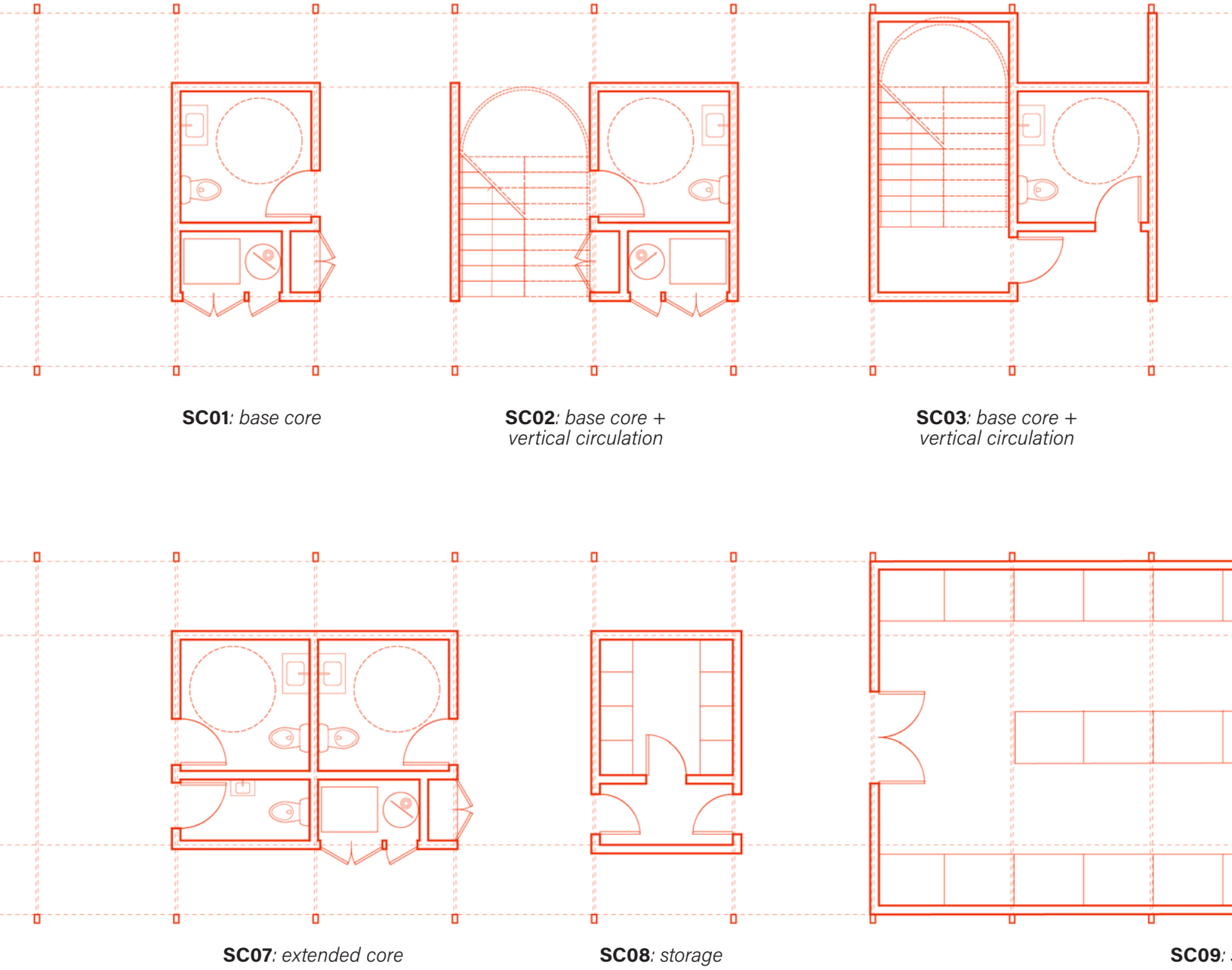
fig. 4.27: proposed model. new design interventions are discussed by the comité d'aménagement which communicates its decisions to the direction of operations. project managers oversee the construction and maintenance process in collaboration with residents.

A Catalogue of Programmatic Typologies

The catalog of programmatic typologies serves as both an idea generator and a structuring device for participatory community planning [fig. 4.28-4.35]. It features spatial arrangements and typologies that residents can use to envision and develop social spaces on-site. Rather than prescribing a fixed kit of parts, the catalog is designed to promote meaningful discussion by providing a flexible and diverse inventory of types and plans—educational, sportive, health-related, leisurely, some playful, and some less playful—that respond to the community's potential needs and desires. Acting as a tool for imagining possibilities, the catalog encourages residents to explore and negotiate different configurations and increments that align with their unique aspirations and circumstances. Combining programs with adaptable spatial organizations supports a process of co-creation that reflects the mutability and openness of an allographic score, enabling residents to shape their environment in collaborative and evolving ways.



Service Cores, Storage, Support Spaces (SC)



SC01*: base core*

SC02*: base core + vertical circulation*

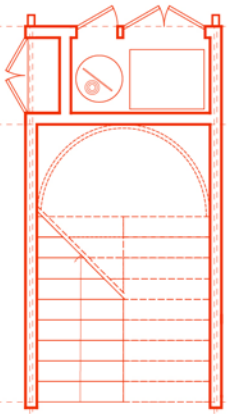
SC03*: base core + vertical circulation*

SC07*: extended core*

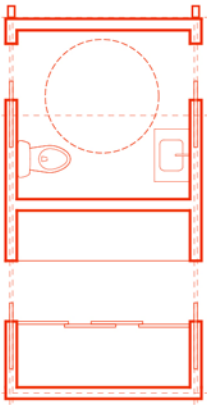
SC08*: storage*

SC09*:*

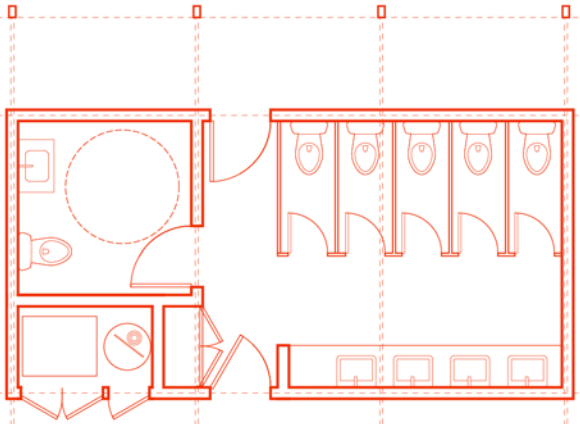
fig. 4.28: a catalogue of programmatic typologies. service cores, storage and support spaces.



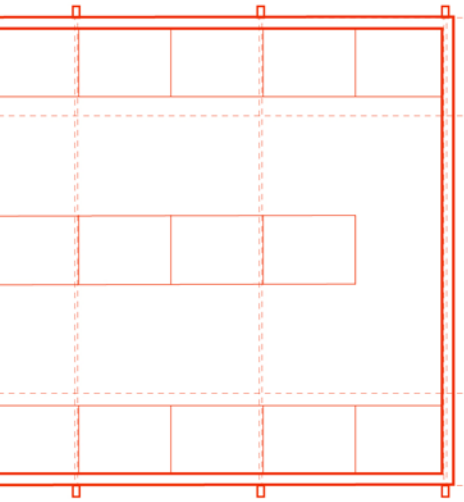
SC04: *base core + vertical circulation*



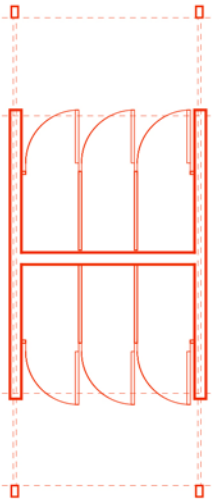
SC05: *restroom + storage*



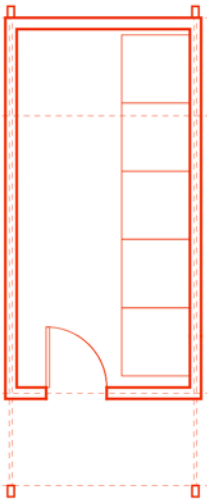
SC06: *public restrooms*



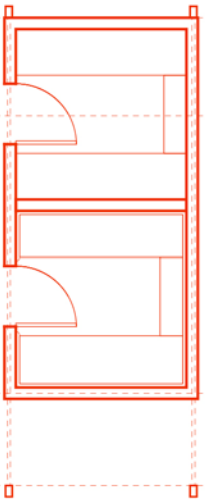
storage



SC10: *exterior storage*

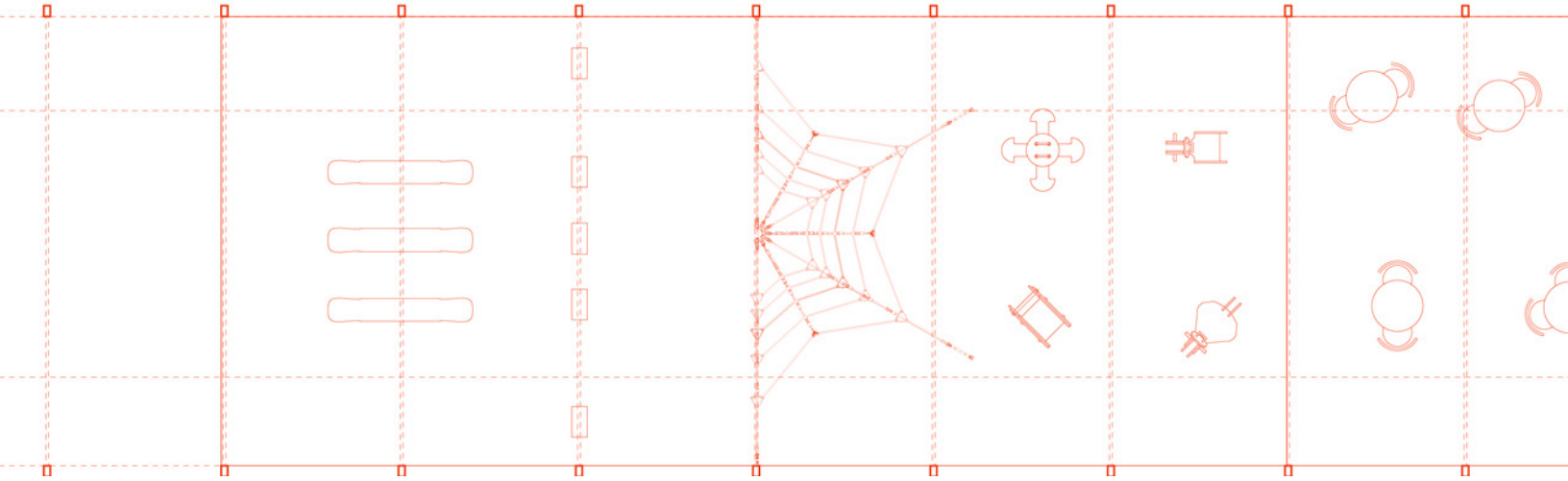


SC11: *laundry room*

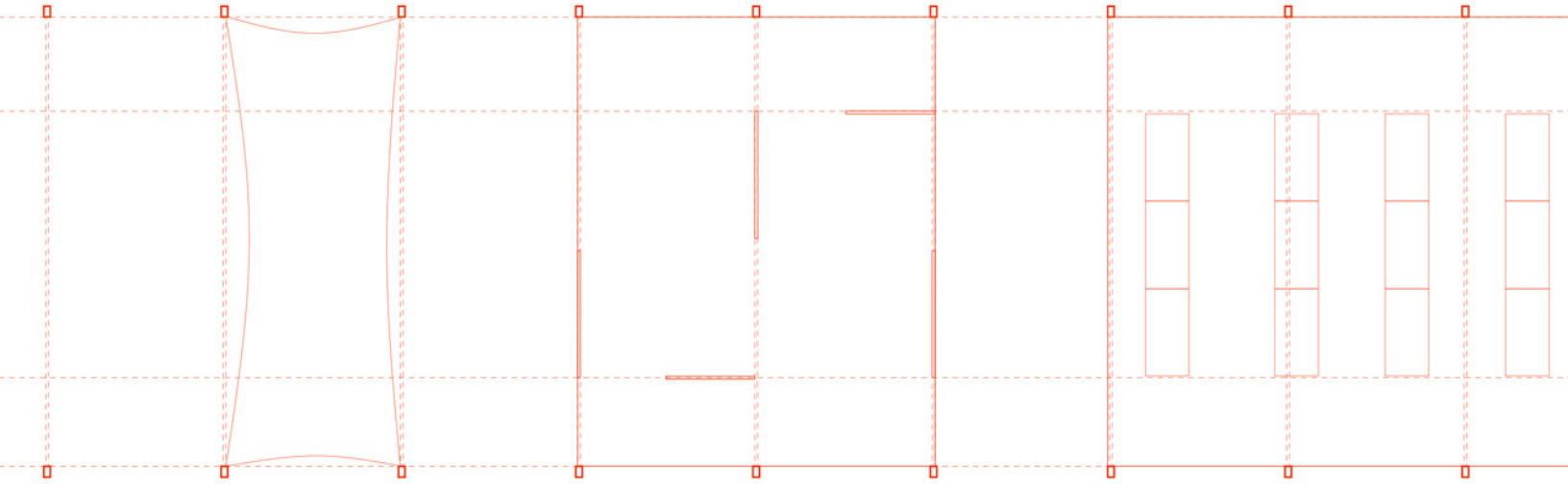


SC12: *closet*

Exterior Spaces (EX)



EX01: *exterior playground*

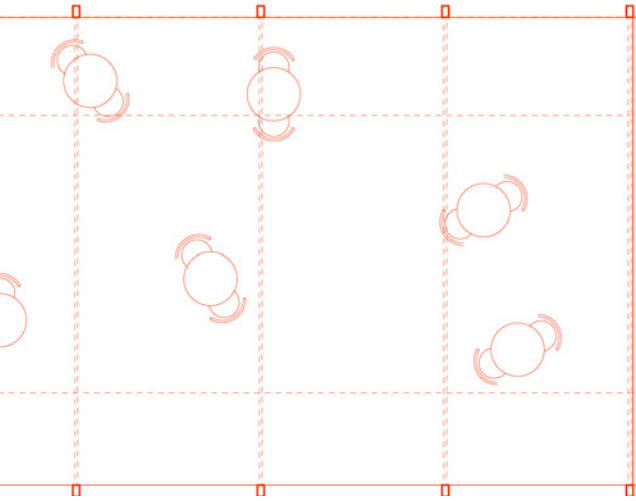


EX05: *sunshades + hammocks*

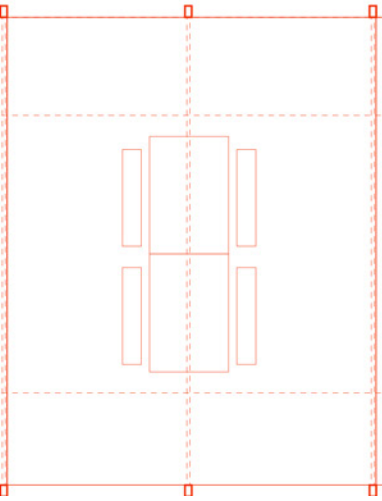
EX06: *temporary exhibition*

EX07: *flea marke*

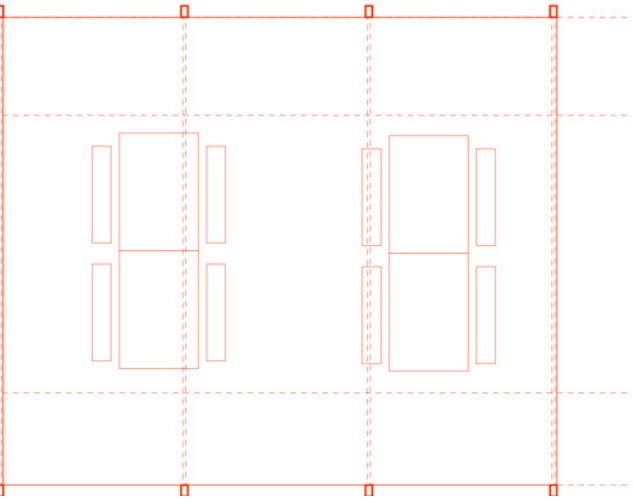
fig. 4.29: a catalogue of programmatic typologies. exterior spaces.



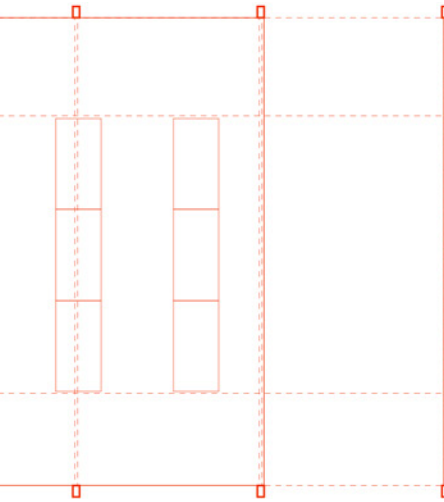
EX02*: patio*



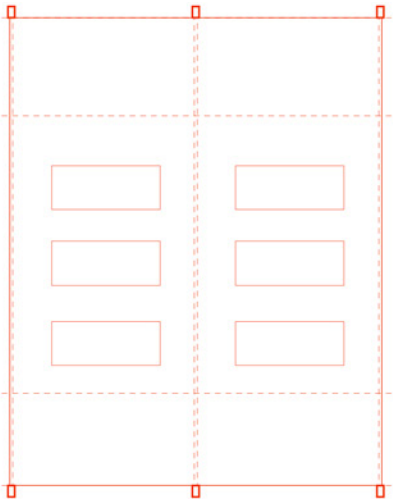
EX03*: terrace (S)*



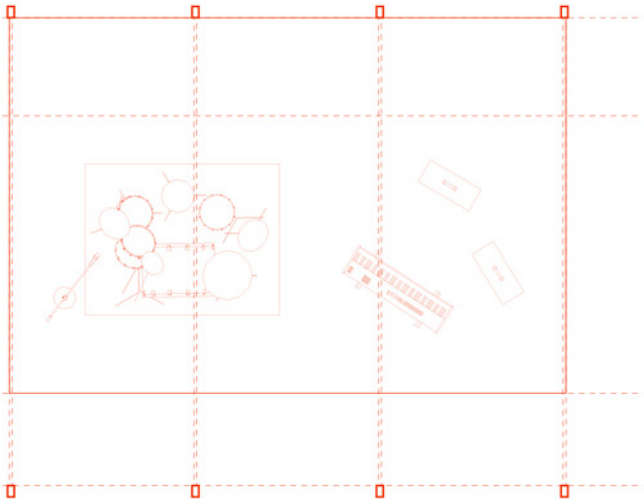
EX04*: terrace (L)*



t

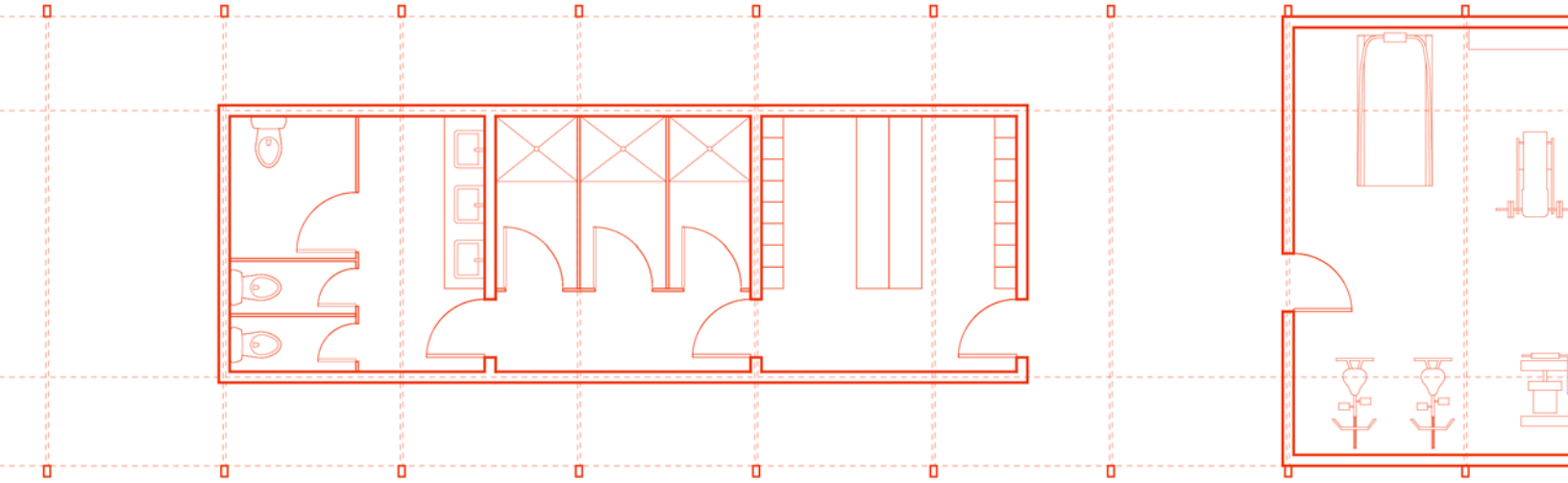


EX08*: yoga class*

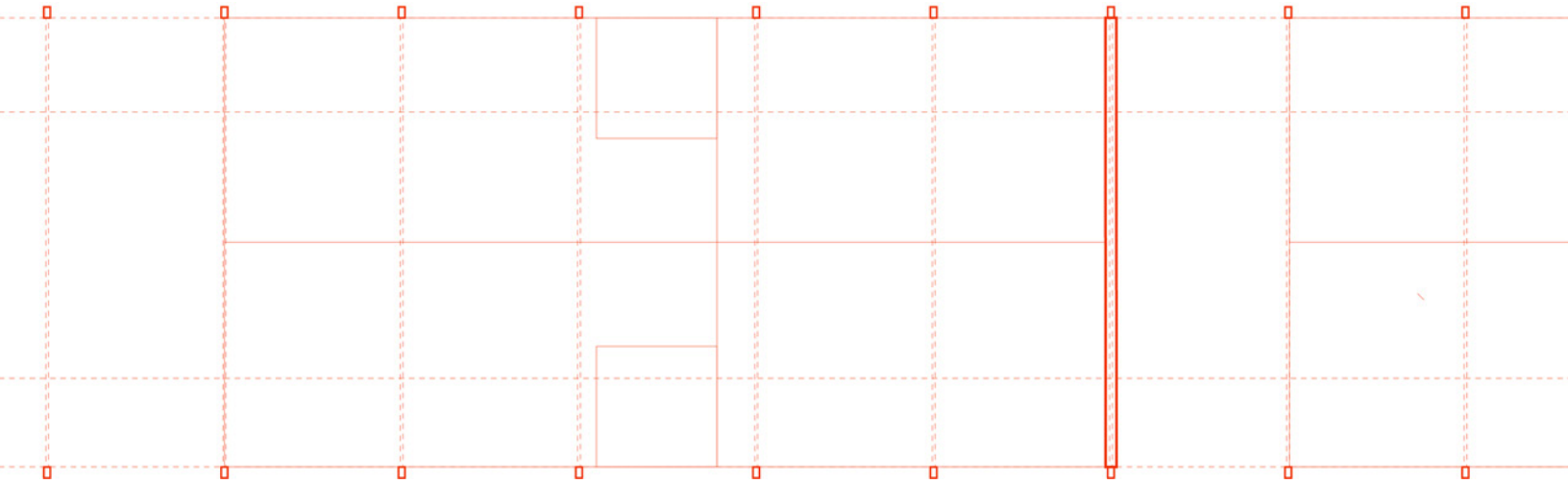


EX09*: exterior stage*

Sports Spaces (SS)

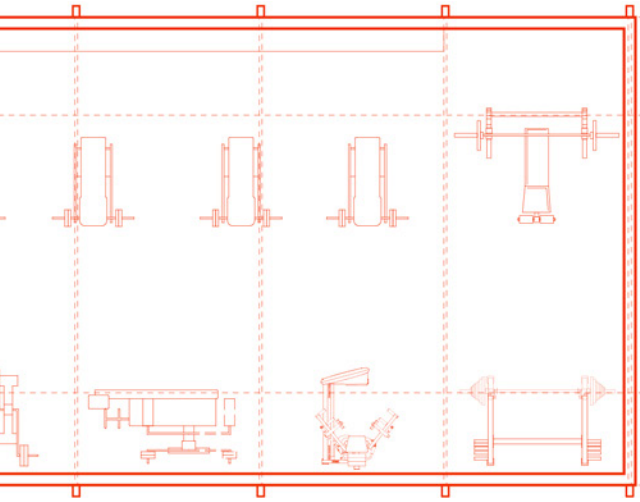


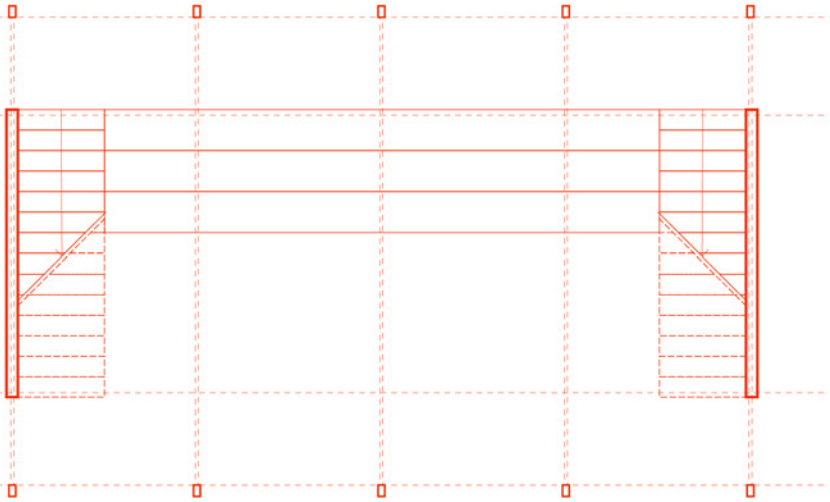
SS01*: changing rooms*



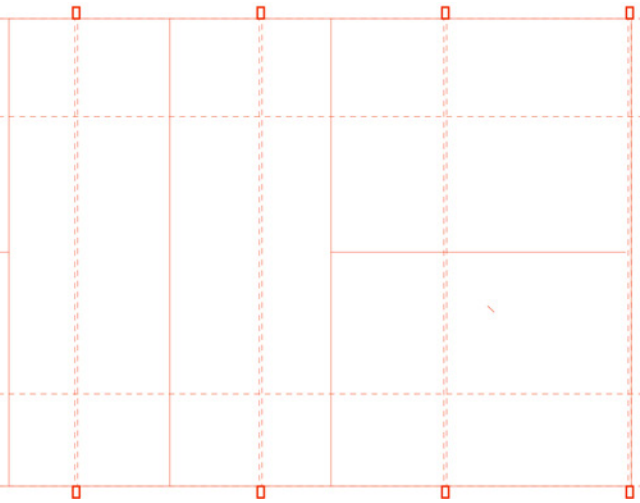
SS03*: squash field*

fig. 4.30: a catalogue of programmatic typologies. sports spaces.

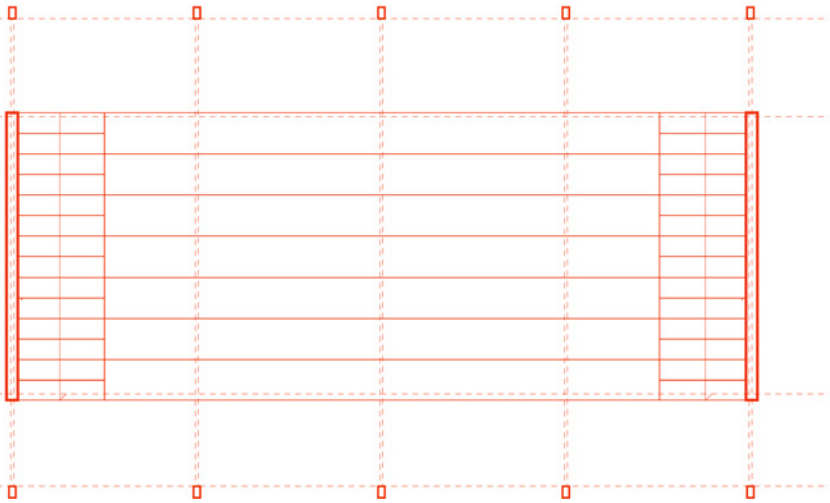




SS02: *gym*

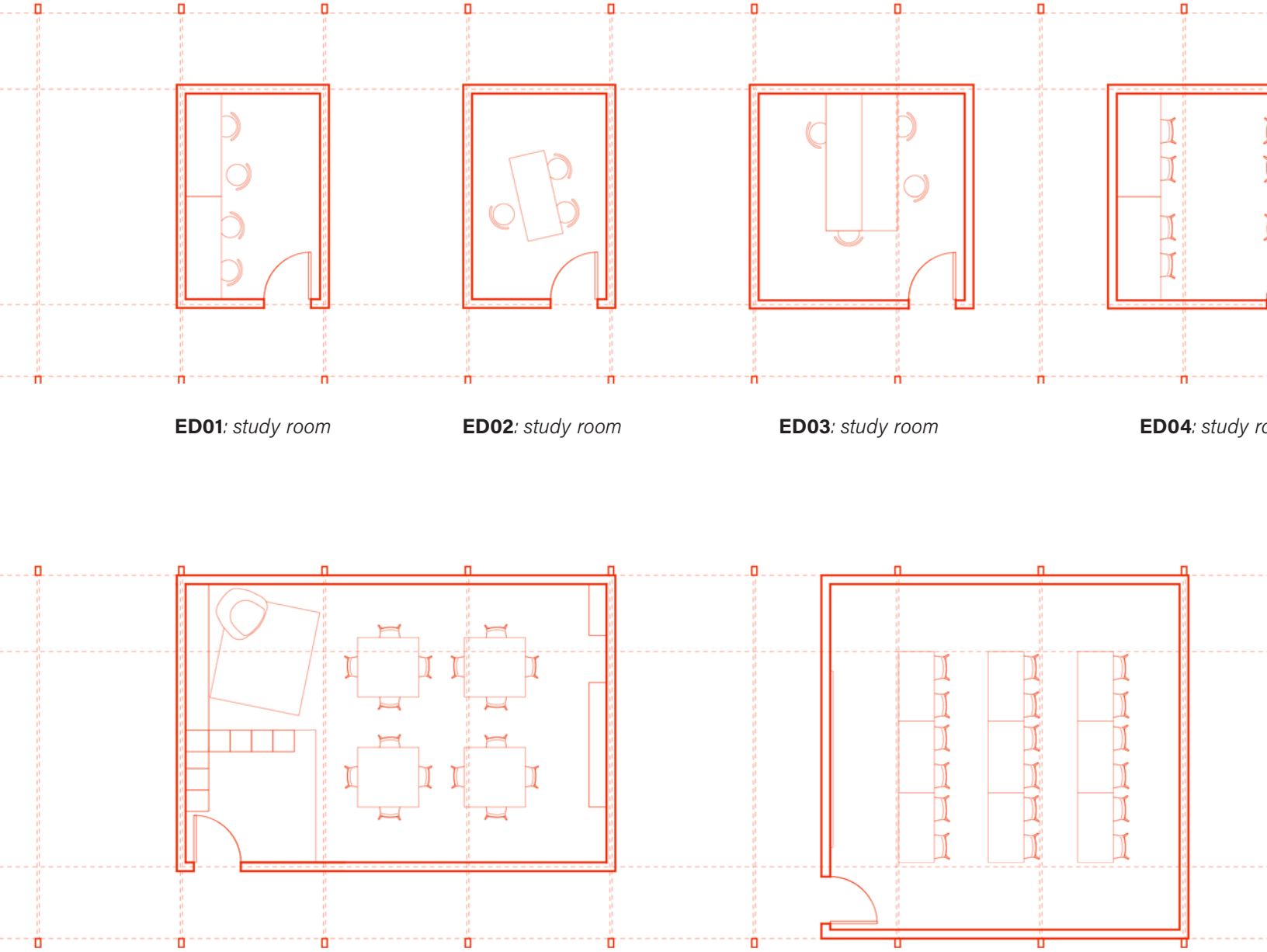


SS04: *pickleball field*



SS05: *bleachers*

Educational Spaces (ED)



ED01: *study room*

ED02: *study room*

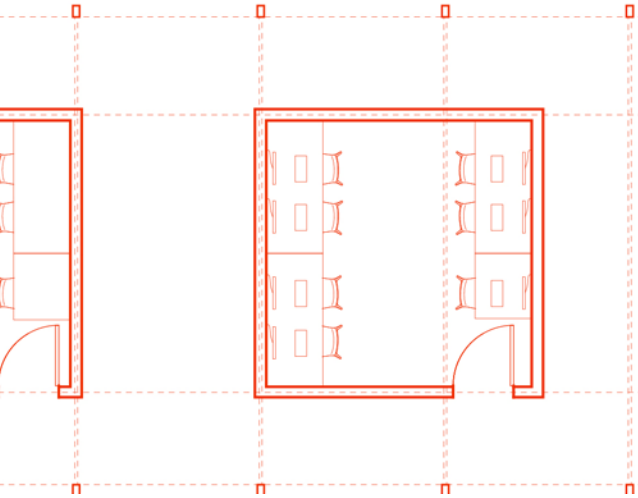
ED03: *study room*

ED04: *study ro*

ED08: *daycare classroom*

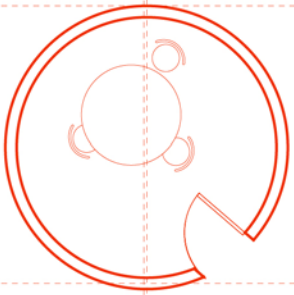
ED09: *classroom (M)*

fig. 4.31: a catalogue of programmatic typologies. educational spaces.

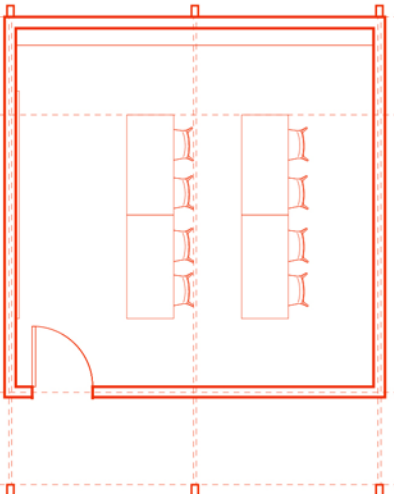


oom

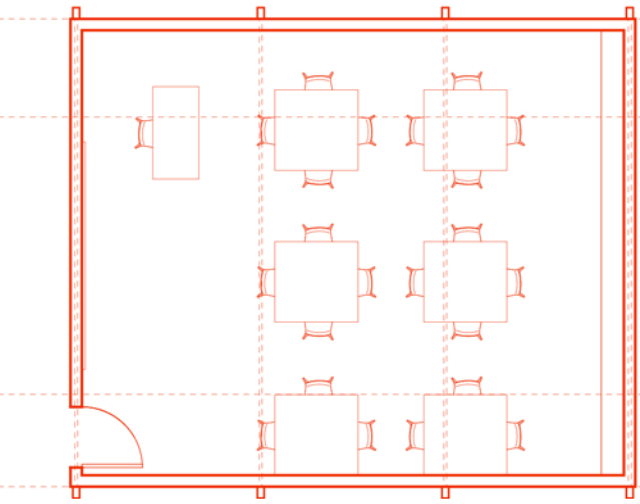
ED05*: computer room*



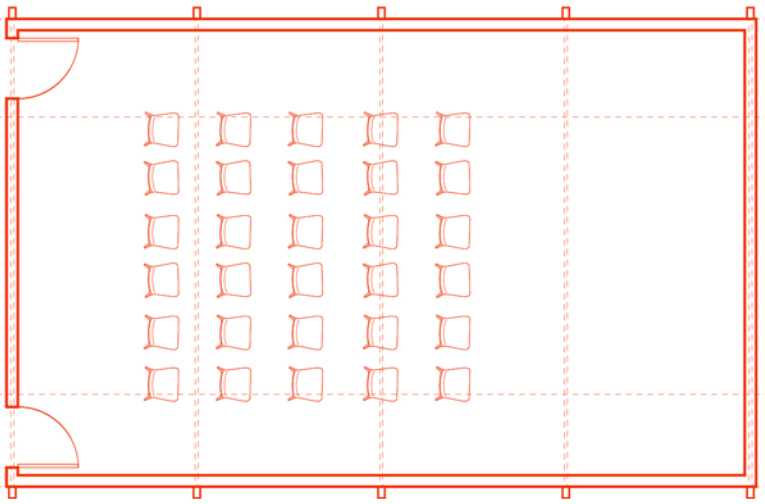
ED06*: study room*



ED07*: classroom (S)*

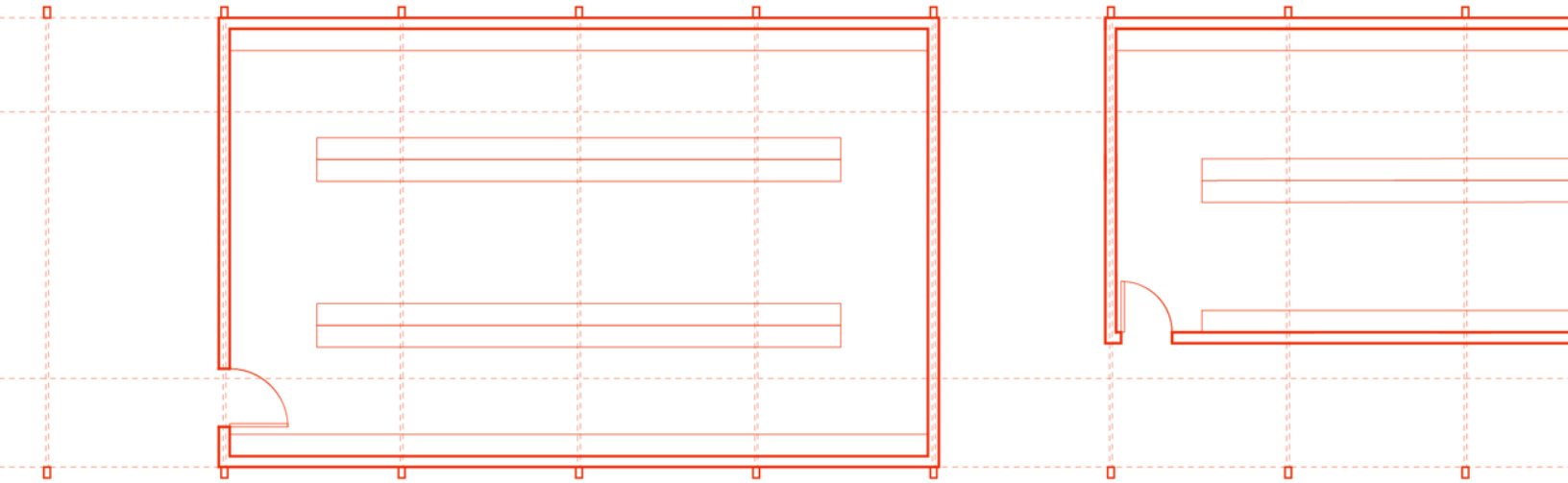


ED10*: classroom (L)*



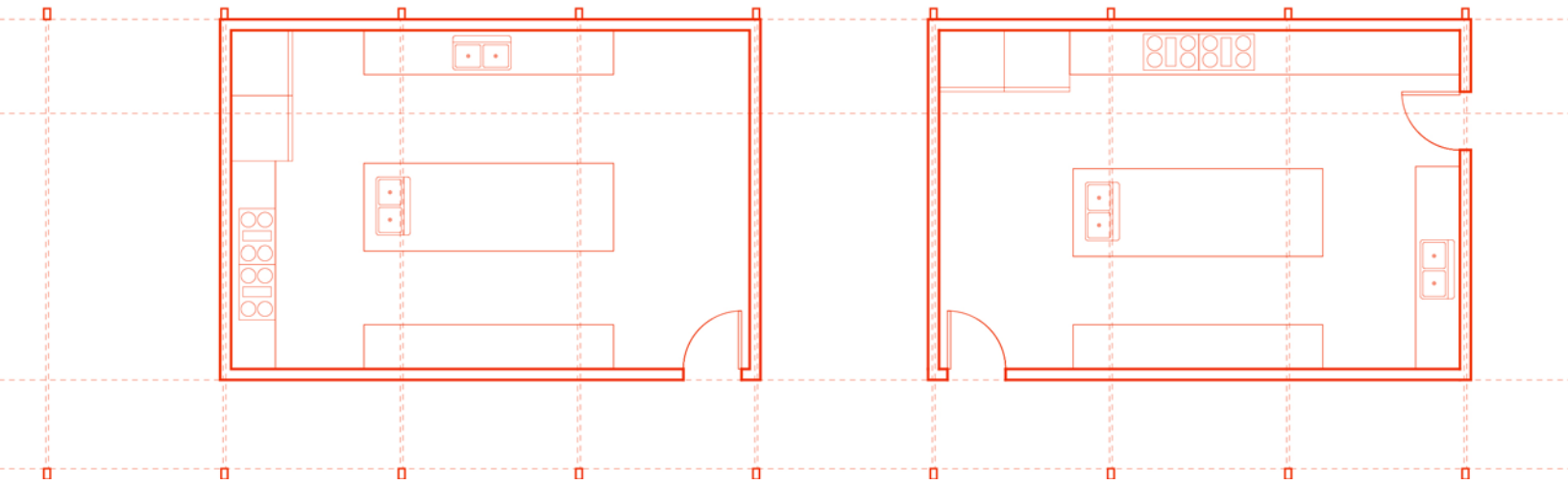
ED11*: event space*

Educational Spaces (ED)



ED12: *library*

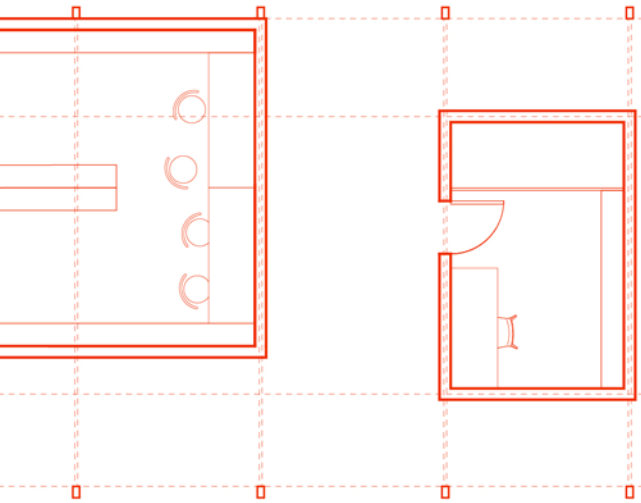
ED13: *library*



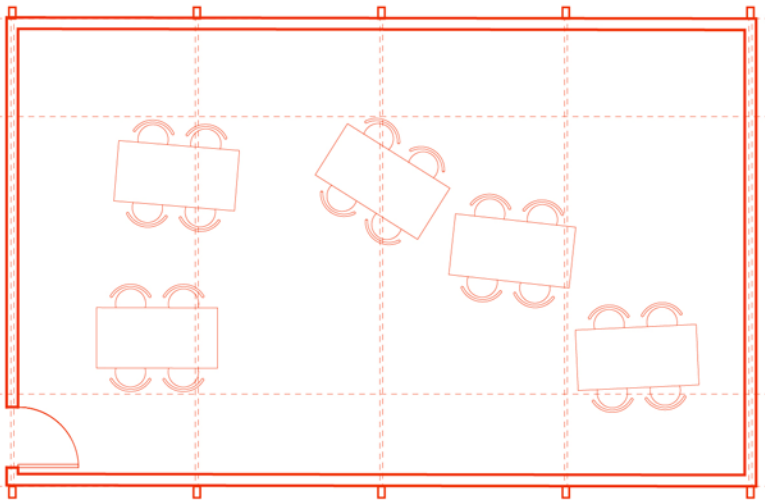
ED16: *community kitchen*

ED17: *community kitchen*

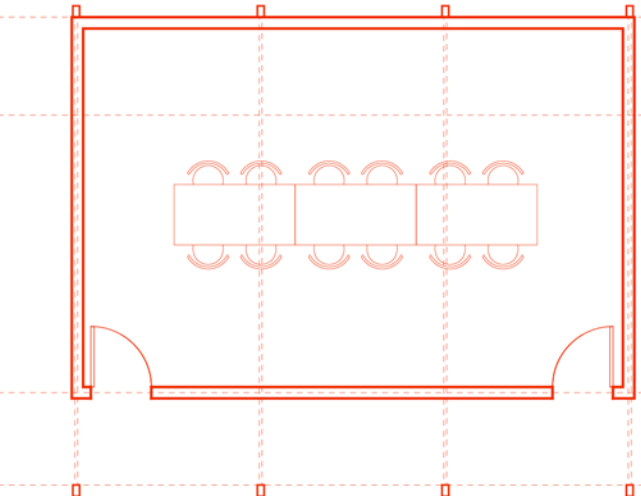
fig. 4.32: a catalogue of programmatic typologies. educational and cooking spaces.



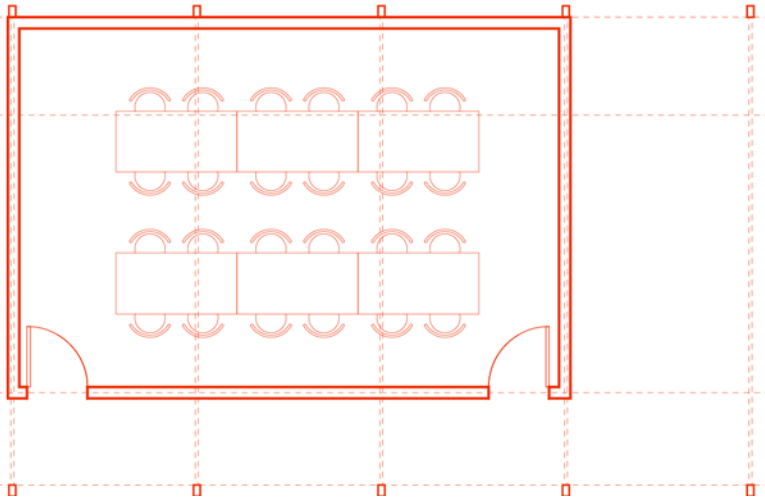
ED14*: office*



ED15*: multipurpose room*

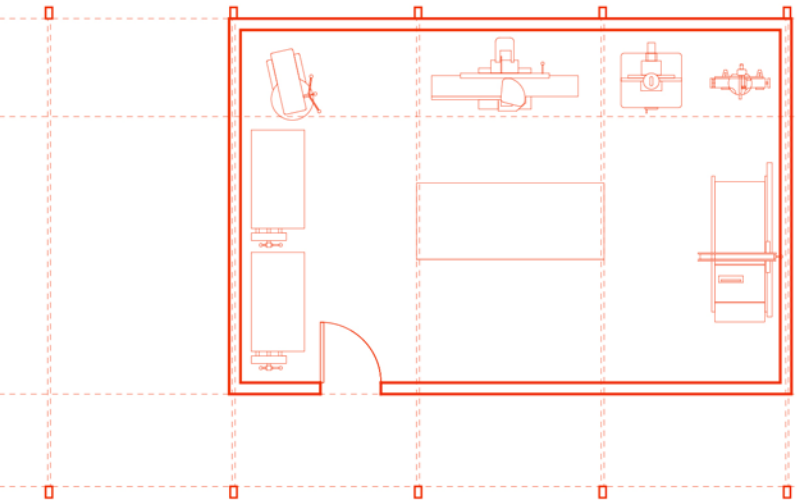


ED18*: community dining room*

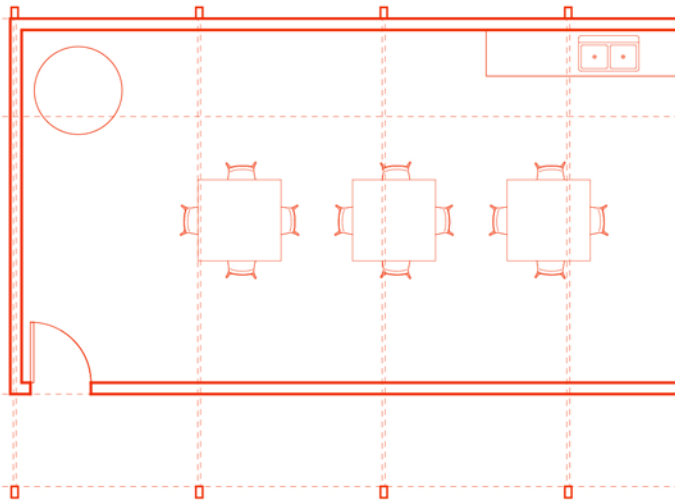


ED19*: community dining room*

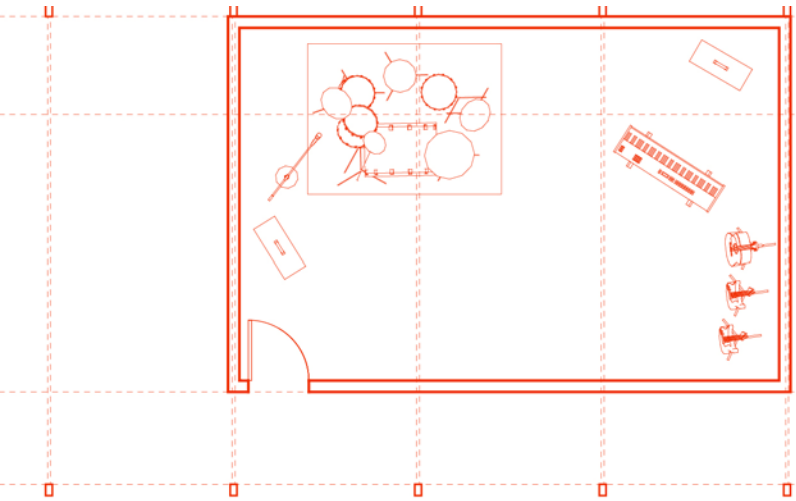
Making Spaces (MK)



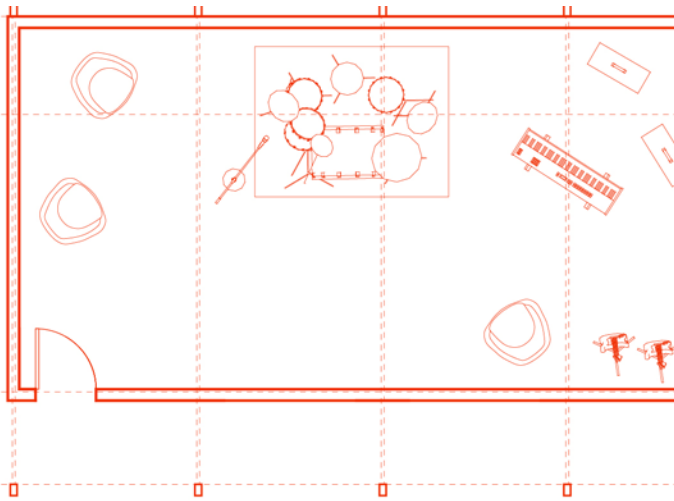
MK01*: wood workshop*



MK02*: pottery workshop*

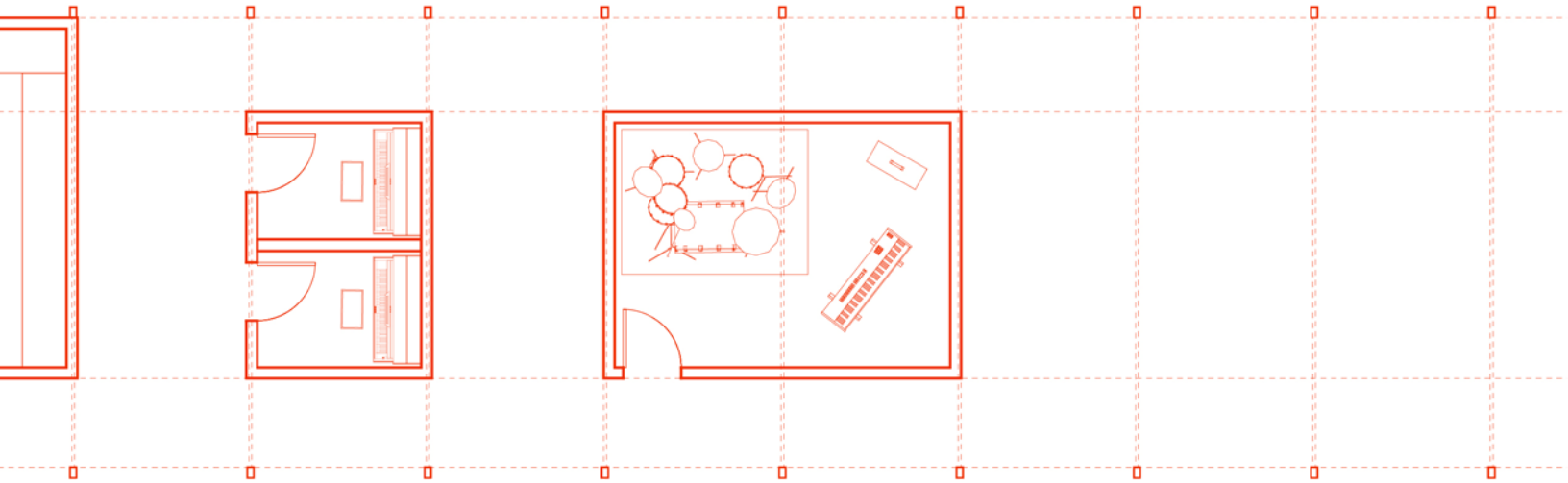


MK05*: music room (M)*



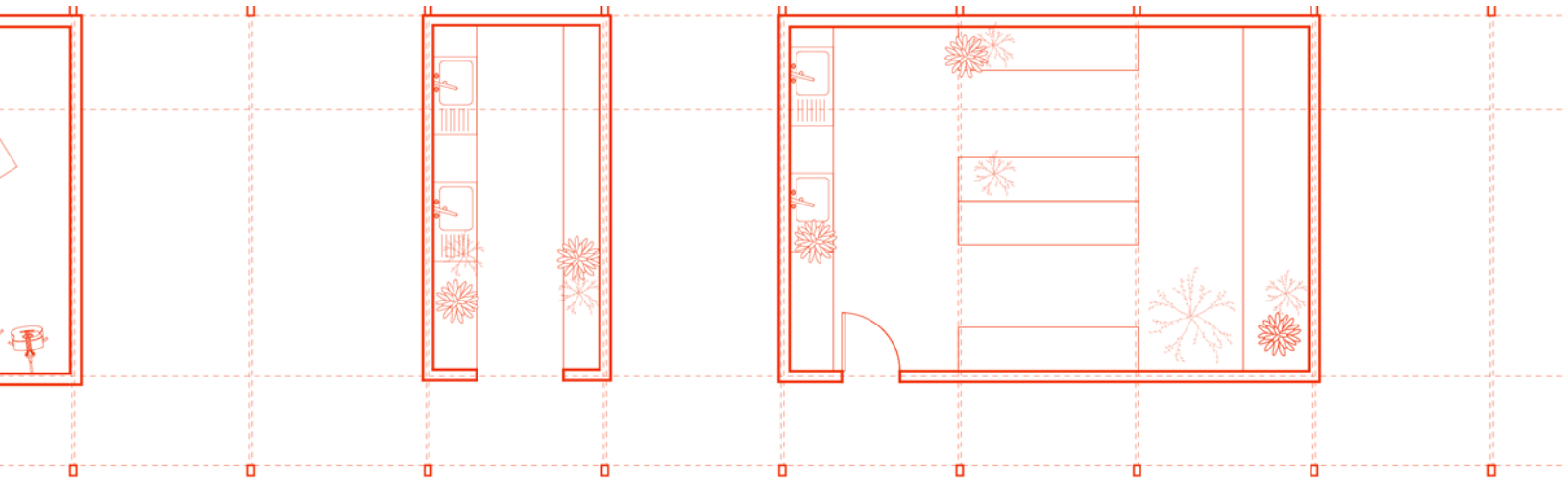
MK06*: music room (L)*

fig. 4.33: a catalogue of programmatic typologies. community making spaces.



MK03*: piano cubicles*

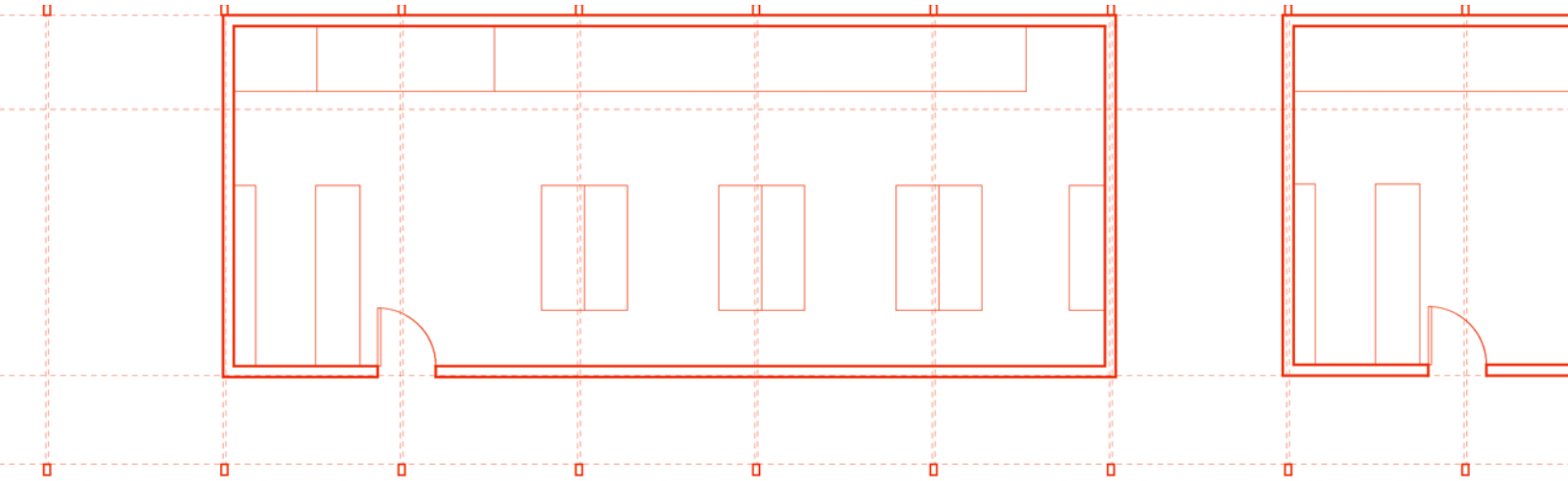
MK04*: music room (S)*



MK07*: gardening room (S)*

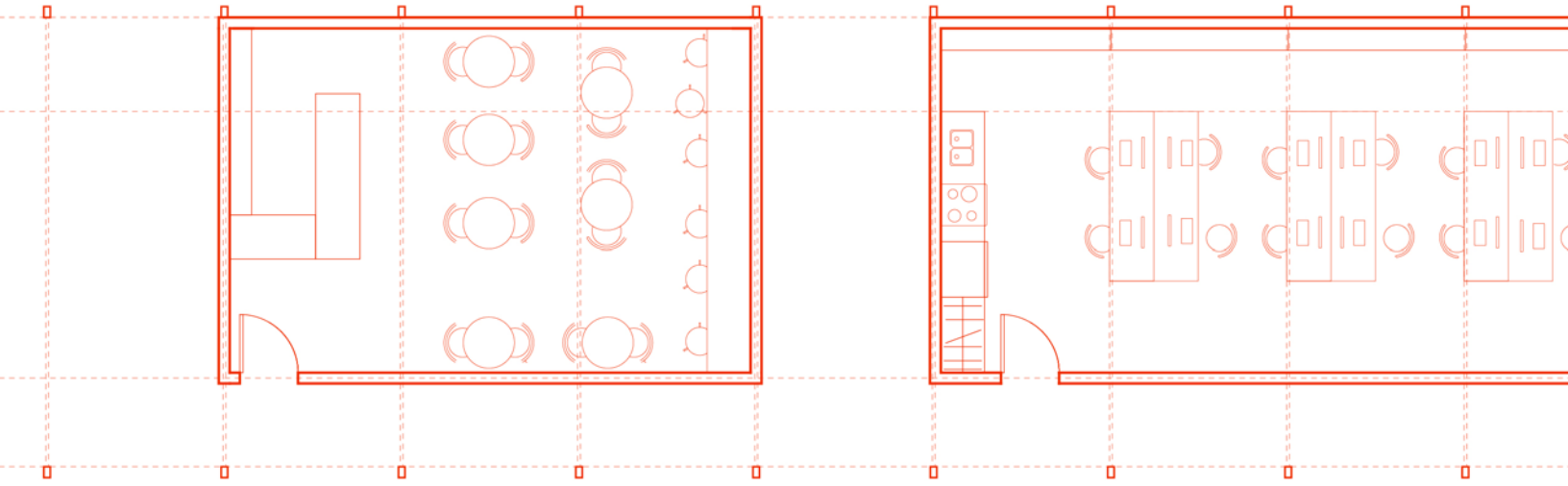
MK08*: gardening room (L)*

Commercial and Office Spaces (CO)



CO01: *commercial space*

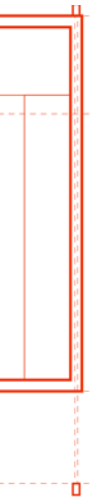
CO02: *commercial spa*



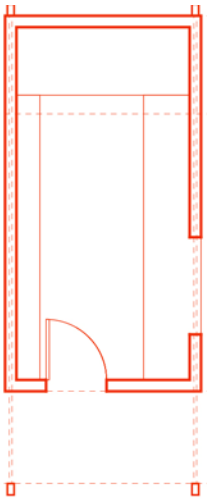
CO05: *café*

CO06: *office*

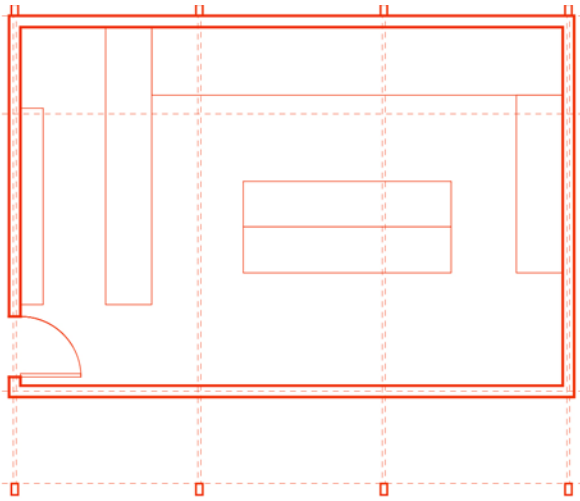
fig. 4.34: a catalogue of programmatic typologies. commercial and office spaces.



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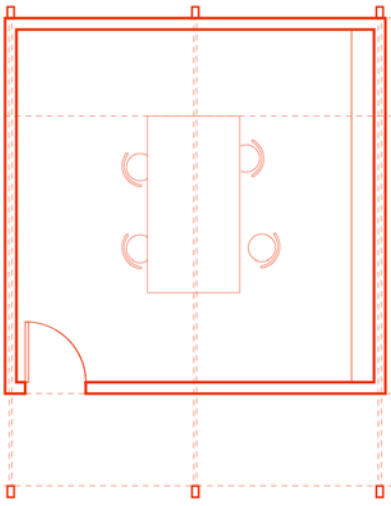


CO03*: café counter*

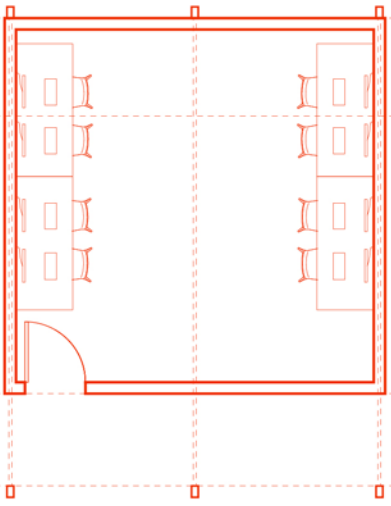


CO04*: commercial space*



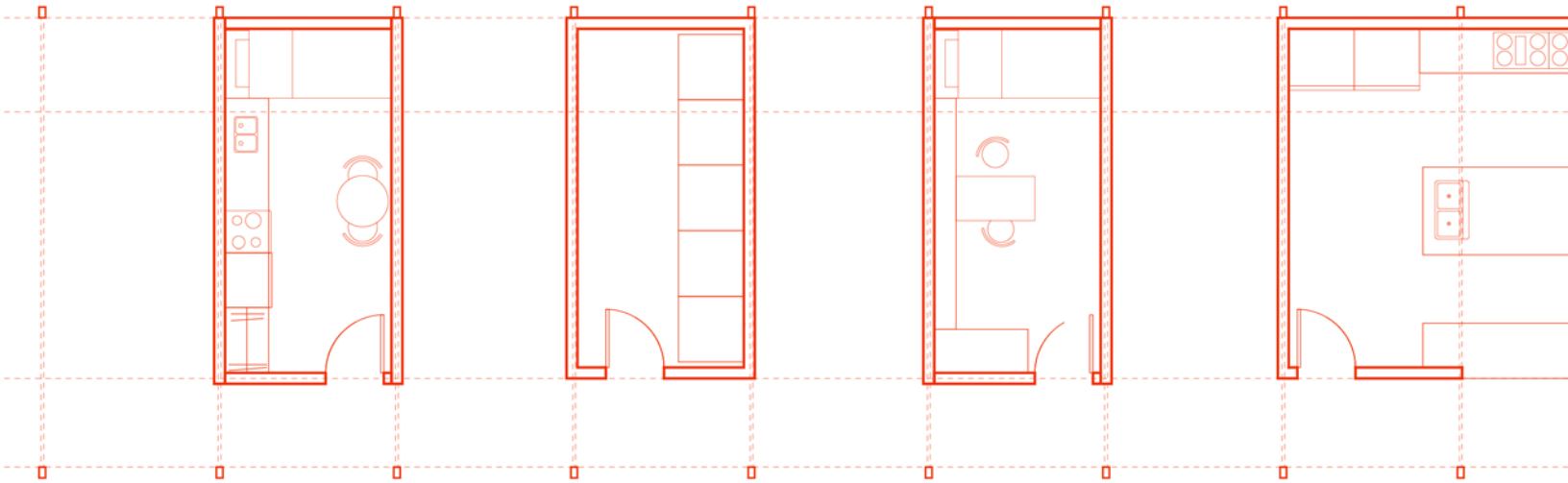


CO07*: meeting room*



CO08*: coworking space*

Healthcare Spaces (HS)



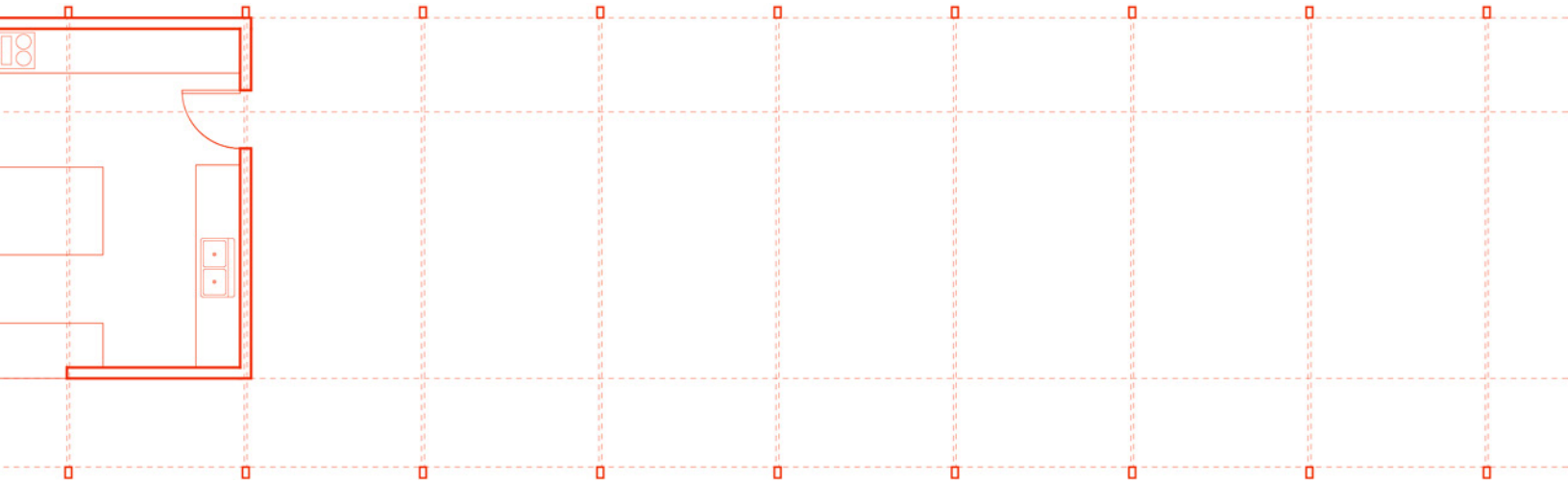
HS01*: micro apartment*

HS02*: laundry room*

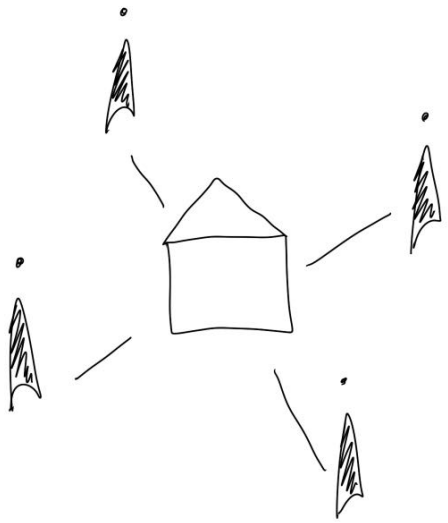
HS03*: physician office*

HS04*: food*
kitche

fig. 4.35: a catalogue of programmatic typologies. healthcare spaces.



solidarity
en



from

for

Superstructure

A Temporal Framework for Reciprocal Relationships

to

with

One of the main critiques of the architectural profession – and widespread architectural thinking – that I formulated is that it tends to ignore the potential of a project's various temporalities – design, construction, maintenance, and deconstruction – in establishing reciprocal relationships between users and their built environment. The superstructural component of the speculative project aims to restore temporal thinking within the scope of architectural production and practices by creating opportunities for users to interact with one another, with workers, and with their environment. The hypothesis is that organizing events that include residents during the various architectural stages of a project might create room for them to learn from and contribute to forming their own environment. Therefore, process-based events are developed to leverage these temporalities better and offer options for residents to engage not only with the programs that the structure sustains but also with the processes of becoming these spaces. Process-based events promote a model where architects design with them instead of simply designing for users. Whereas spatial typologies (developed earlier) are an association of program to formal organization, process-based events accompany the development of buildings themselves [fig. 4.37-4.39].

This idea directly comes from the examples of reciprocal building practices mentioned earlier. Pre-modern and non-Western building traditions, such as barn-raising, offer valuable insights into reciprocal construction practices that foster relationality between individuals, communities, and the places they inhabit. These traditions, grounded in collective effort, voluntary aid, and the synchronized labor of a community, emphasize the importance of participation in the construction process. This participatory approach to building, revived by urban designer Karl Linn in the mid-twentieth century, promotes communal involvement in creating and transforming public spaces. By emphasizing process over the final product, these practices encourage social bonds, mutual support, and agency, which can serve as models for contemporary architectural projects that seek to integrate time and community engagement into their development stages.

Process-based events are presented as a typological catalog that is readily available and accessible for residents to take charge of. It also outlines event types and typologies associated with the various temporalities of structural development. Participatory activities in the design period –

such as community brainstorms, fora, workshops, charrettes, and model-making – aim to foster a sense of agency and involve residents in shaping the spaces they will inhabit. During construction, teaching activities might help residents better understand the constructive and tectonic systems mobilized in the project's development, whereas crafting events could immerse users directly within the field of material practices. Such an example of community crafting comes from the work of the London-based studio Assemble, which regularly involves users in the building. For the Cinolereum project, a team of a hundred volunteers was mobilized to realize low-stake construction and crafting, notably reclaimed wood seats for the theatre [fig. 4.36].[8] These practices are also consistent with past events on-site; artists held community workshops where residents could contribute to the realization of painted and ceramic murals.[9] Maintenance, assumed mainly by the corporation's operations staff, could be negotiated in collaboration with users to put in place large *corvées* or establish informal surveillance networks to monitor the complex's public spaces. Finally, deconstruction activities could establish a culture of material reuse and scavenging through revalorization workshops or lessons in circularity.

Process-based thinking about the quality of human relationships and exchanges in housing is consistent with a diverse economies approach to understanding social relations. Diverse economies understand "the economy as diverse and heterogeneous (rather than monolithic) and mutable rather than fixed in form (...) (E)mpowering and supporting these differences can promote ethical and solidaristic modes of interdependence and help mitigate some of the key challenges of our time (such as environmental destruction and increasing inequality)."[10] This framework comes from a recognition that materialist critiques of capitalist and extractive organizations are insufficient in tracing paths to go beyond the current systems of production and exchange; instead, we should look at alternative relational practices that already exist within the cracks of the system and leverage these as opportunities for more equitable and just relationships between humans, non-humans, and their

8. Assemble, "The Cineroleum," Assemble, 2010, https://assemblestudio.co.uk.
9. See **The Habitations Today**.
10. J. K. Gibson-Graham and Kelly Dombroski, "Introduction to The Handbook of Diverse Economies: Inventory as Ethical Intervention," in *The Handbook of Diverse Economies* (Cheltenham, UNITED KINGDOM: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2020), 9, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uqam/detail.action?docID=6124246.

environment.[11] Diverse economic thinking promotes the development of networks of ethical interdependence, where relationality between individuals is encouraged to eventually form community economies outside capitalist paradigms.[12] Redefinitions of the social contracts that govern labor, transactions, and property are necessary to achieve emergent post-capitalist systems of solidarity. Collectively performed reciprocal labor, in that way, establishes habits and rituals that shelter mutual reliance and individual prosperity.[13] Process-based events, therefore, are envisioned as opportunities for residents to start engaging in non-hierarchical practices and activities toward the administration, development, and maintenance of their built environment. The hypothesis is that offering the possibility for users to engage with the architecture around them can result in more meaningful human and environmental relationships. This approach challenges traditional architectural practices and encourages the creation of spaces where collective agency, mutual care, and sustainable practices can emerge organically, fostering a more profound sense of ownership and responsibility among residents.

11. Gibson-Graham and Dombroski, 6.
12. Gibson-Graham and Dombroski, 3.
13. Katherine Gibson, "Collectively Performed Reciprocal Labour: Reading for Possibility," in *The Handbook of Diverse Economies*, ed. J. K. Gibson-Graham and Kelly Dombroski (Cheltenham, UNITED KINGDOM: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2020), 173, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/uqam/detail.action?docID=6124246.

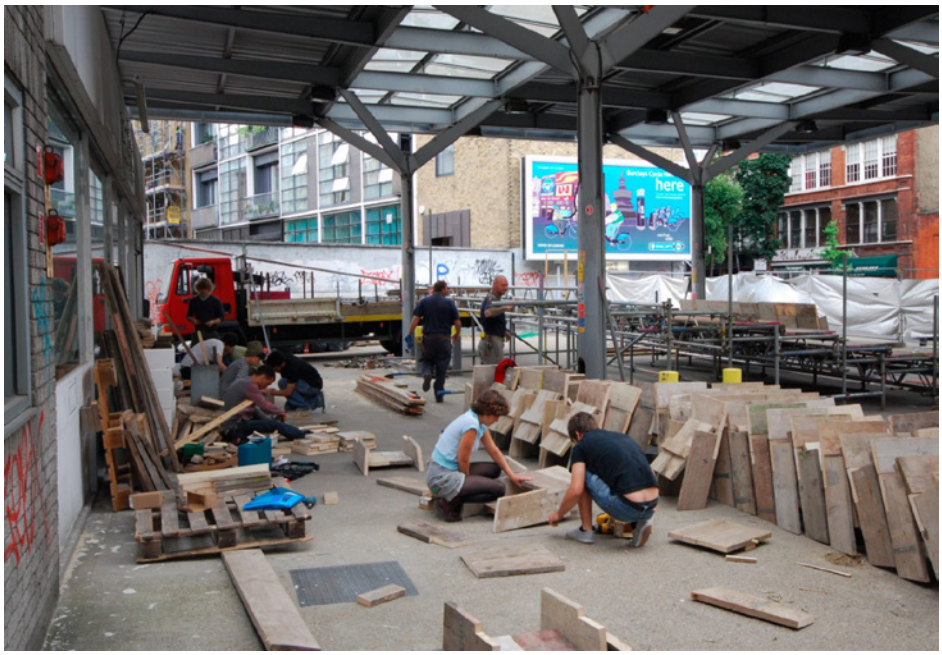
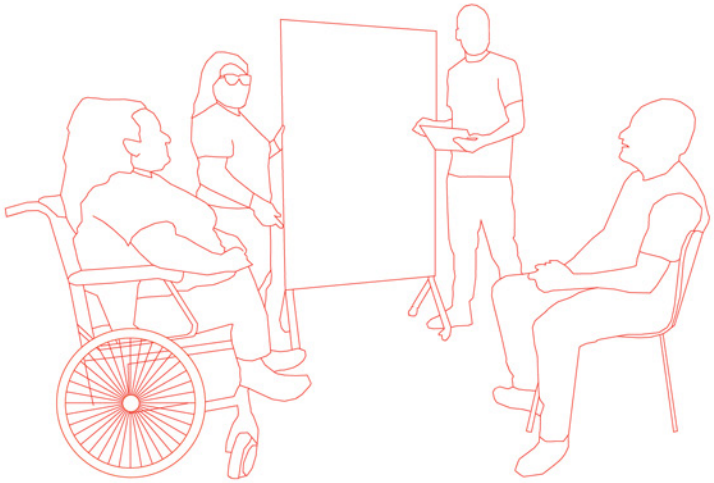


fig. 4.36: volunteers build cinema benches out of reclaimed wood, Cineroleum, the cineroleum, assemble (2010)

Designing + Planning

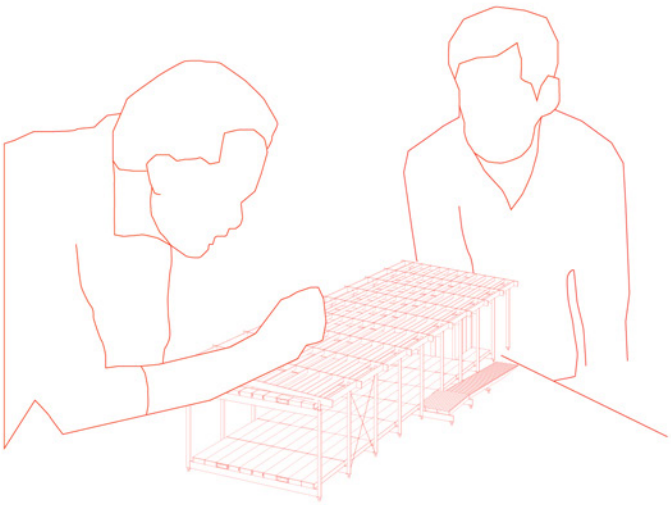


PBE01*: community co-design session*

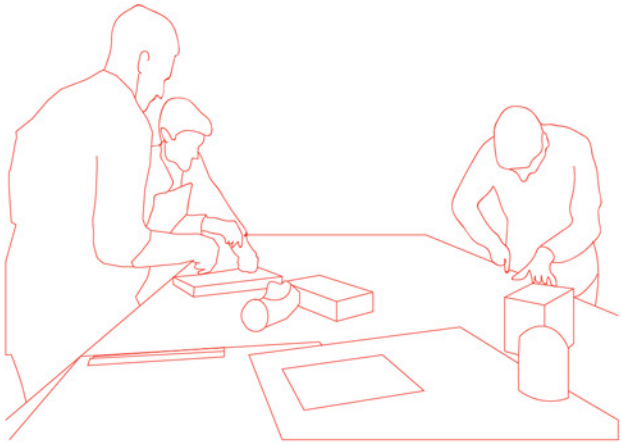


PBE04*: programming workshop*

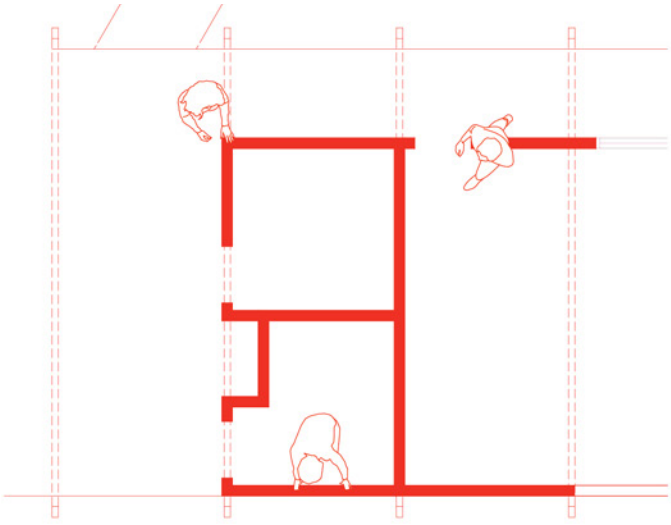
fig. 4.37: a catalogue of process-based events, designing and planning.



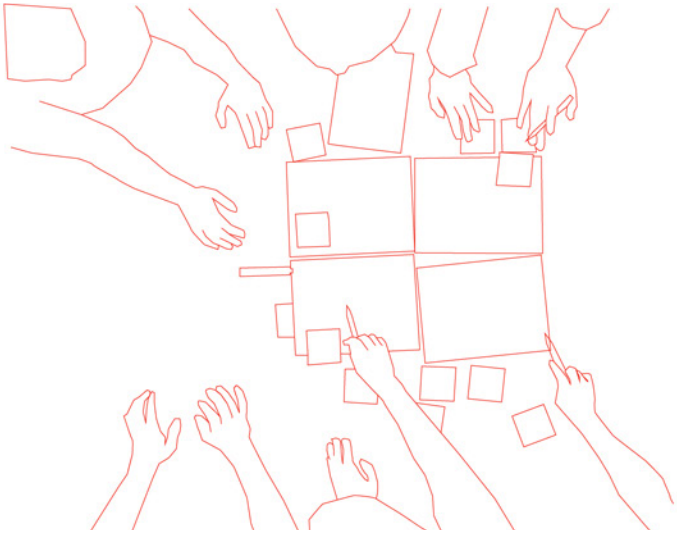
PBE02*: model making*



PBE03*: design charrettes*



PBE05*: at scale plans making*



PBE06*: post-it annotation sessions*

Learning



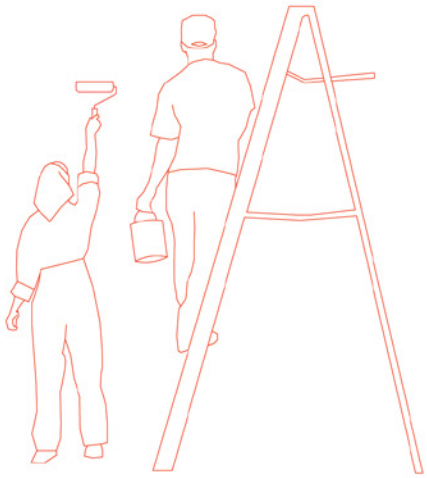
PBE07*: teaching off-site*



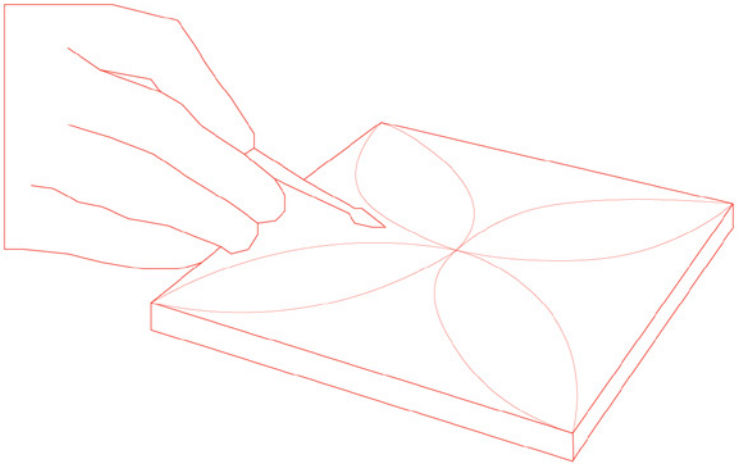
PBE10*: teaching on-site*

fig. 4.38: a catalogue of process-based events, learning.

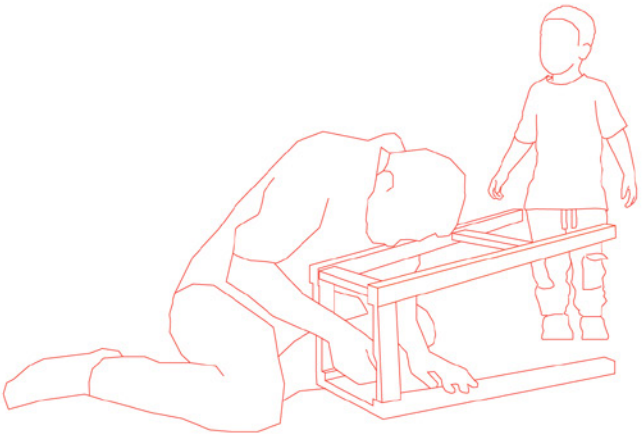
Crafting



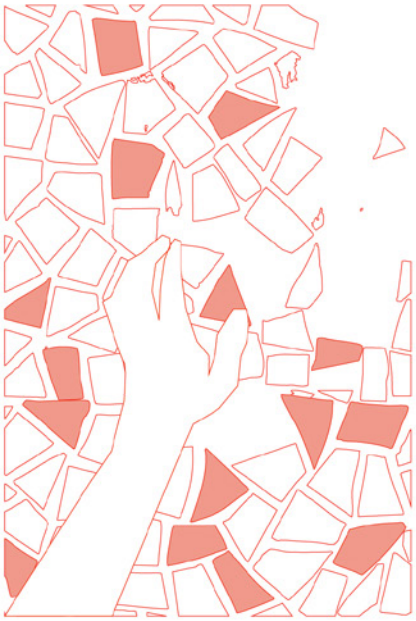
PBE08: *painting murals*



PBE09: *tile crafting*



PBE11: *furniture workshop*



PBE12: *mosaic crafting*

fig. 4.31: a catalogue of process-based events, crafting.

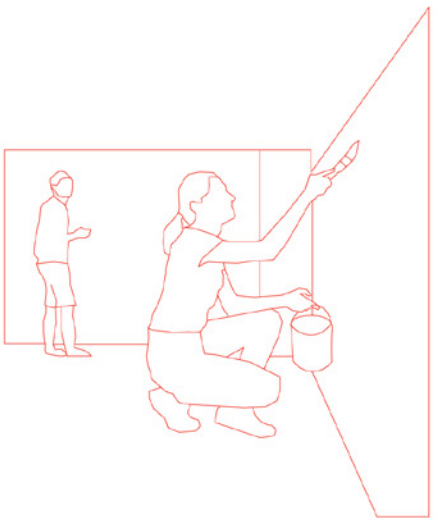
Maintaining



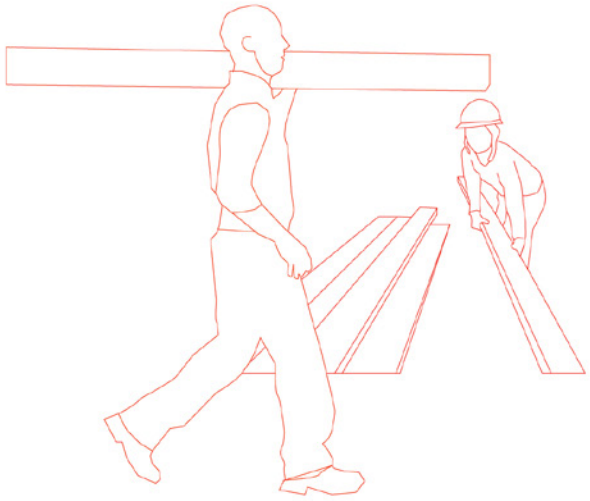
PBE13*: cleaning corvée*



PBE14*: public space monitoring*

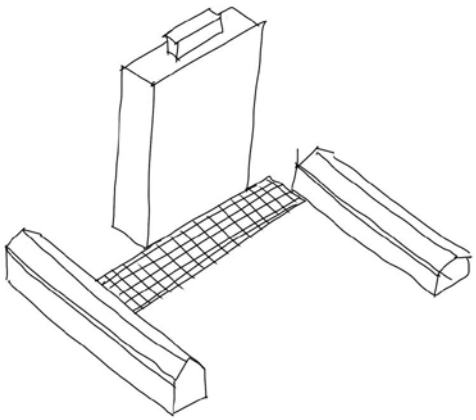


PBE15*: maintaining*



PBE16*: materials scavenging*

fig. 4.39: a catalogue of process-based events, maintaining.



from

for

Implementing the System: Design Possibilities

to

I have outlined the different elements that constitute the allographic system I am proposing, but its practical application remains to be demonstrated. This section will showcase the system's versatility by presenting seven design interventions, each varying in program, scale, integration conditions, and accessibility, to highlight its range of possibilities.

with



fig. 4.40: walkways allow circulation along the bar.

i1: Sports Field Auxiliary Spaces

This intervention houses support spaces for the Toussaint-Louverture soccer field, encompassing changing rooms, washrooms, showers, and bleachers. The building is established at the site's periphery, on de Maisonneuve Boulevard, and acts as a limit between the park and the street. It allows for interior and exterior circulation.

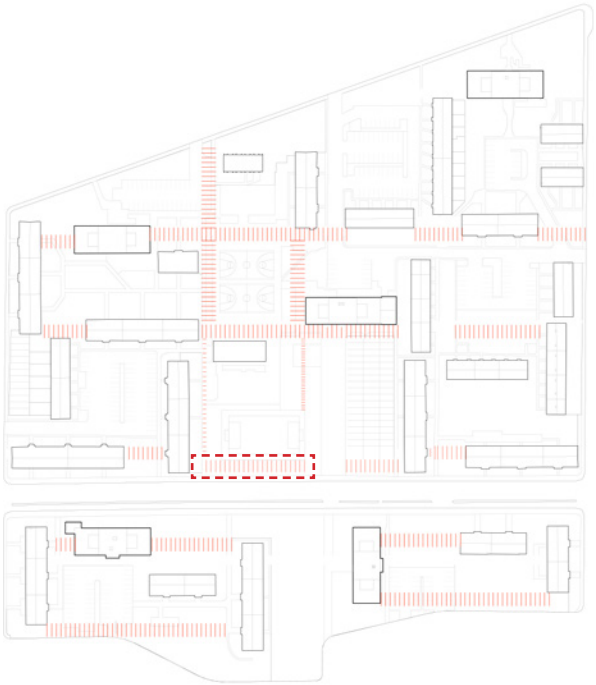


fig. 4.41: i1 location plan.

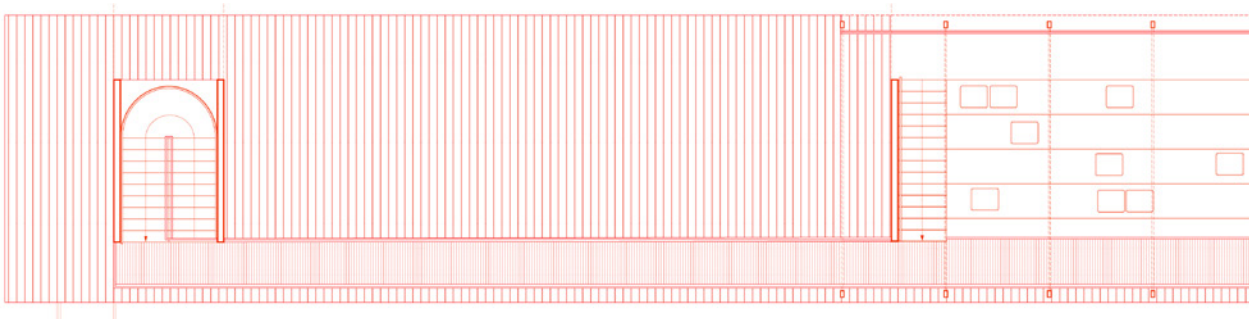


fig. 4.42: i1 intervention, first floor plan.

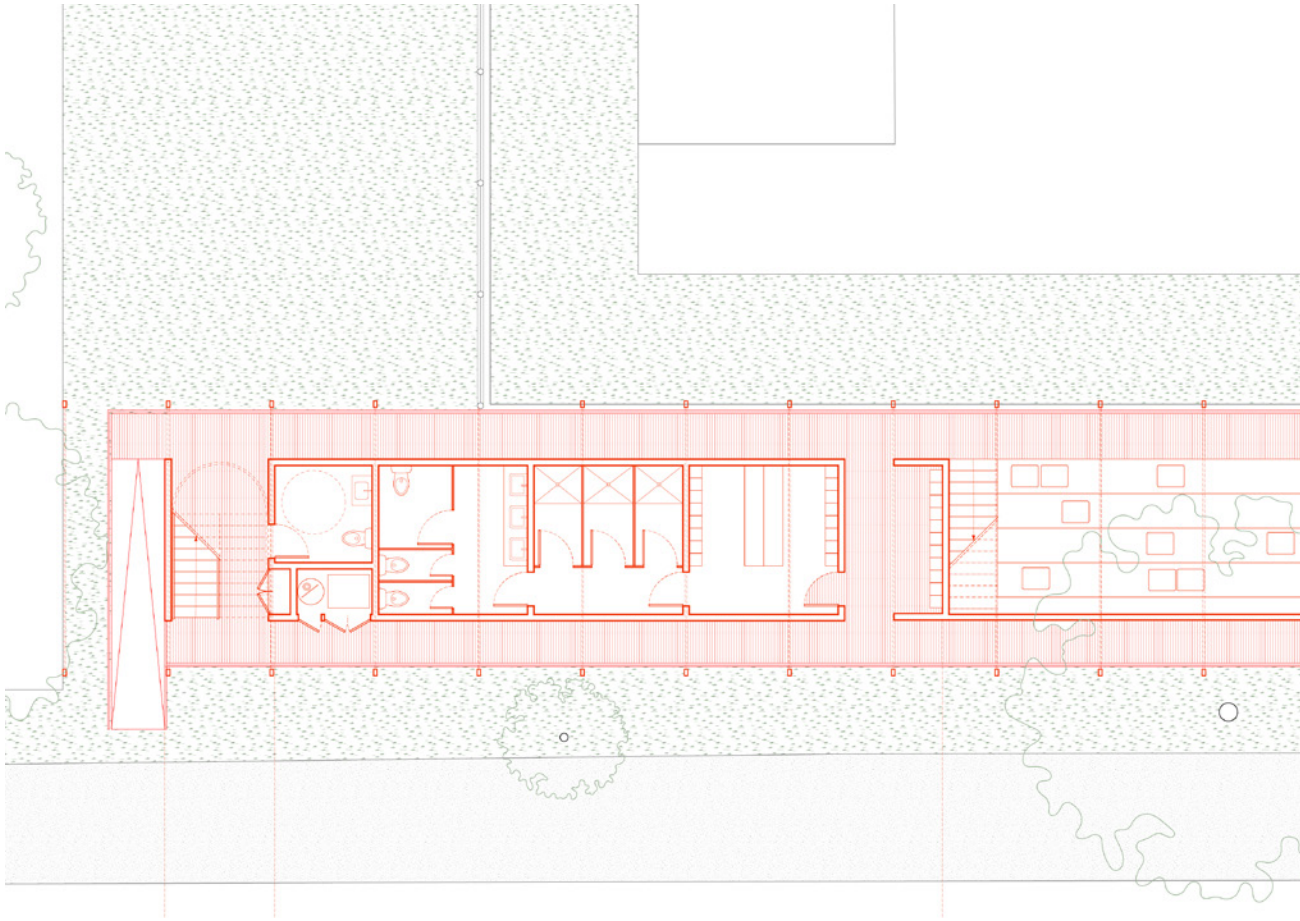
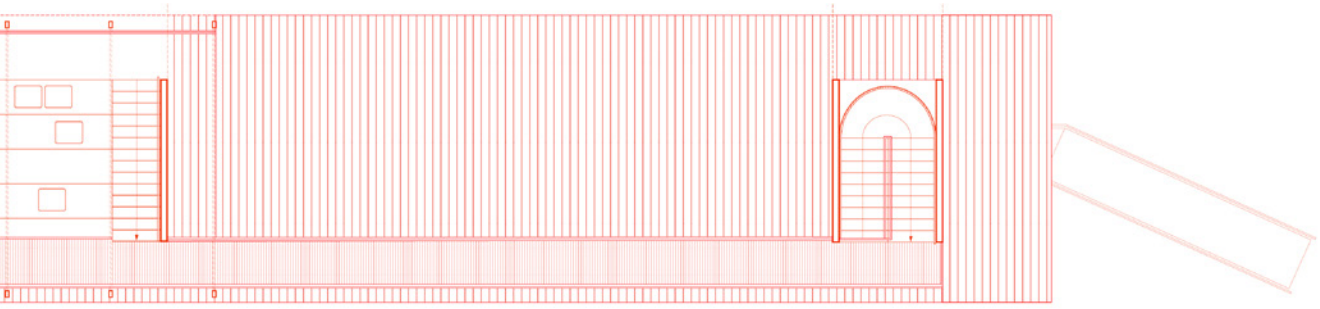


fig. 4.43: i1 intervention, ground floor plan.



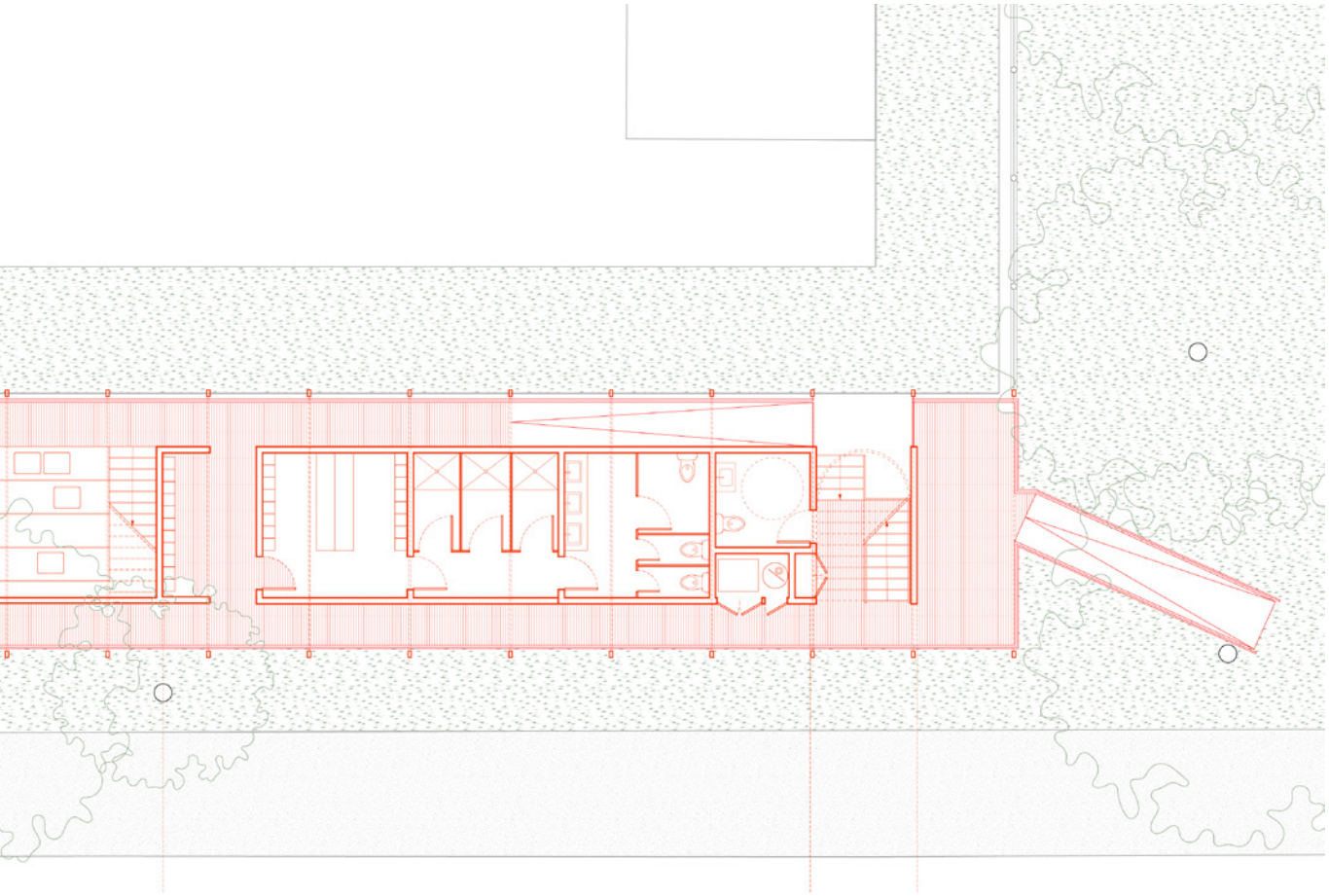




fig. 4.44: i1 intervention, oblique axonometric.

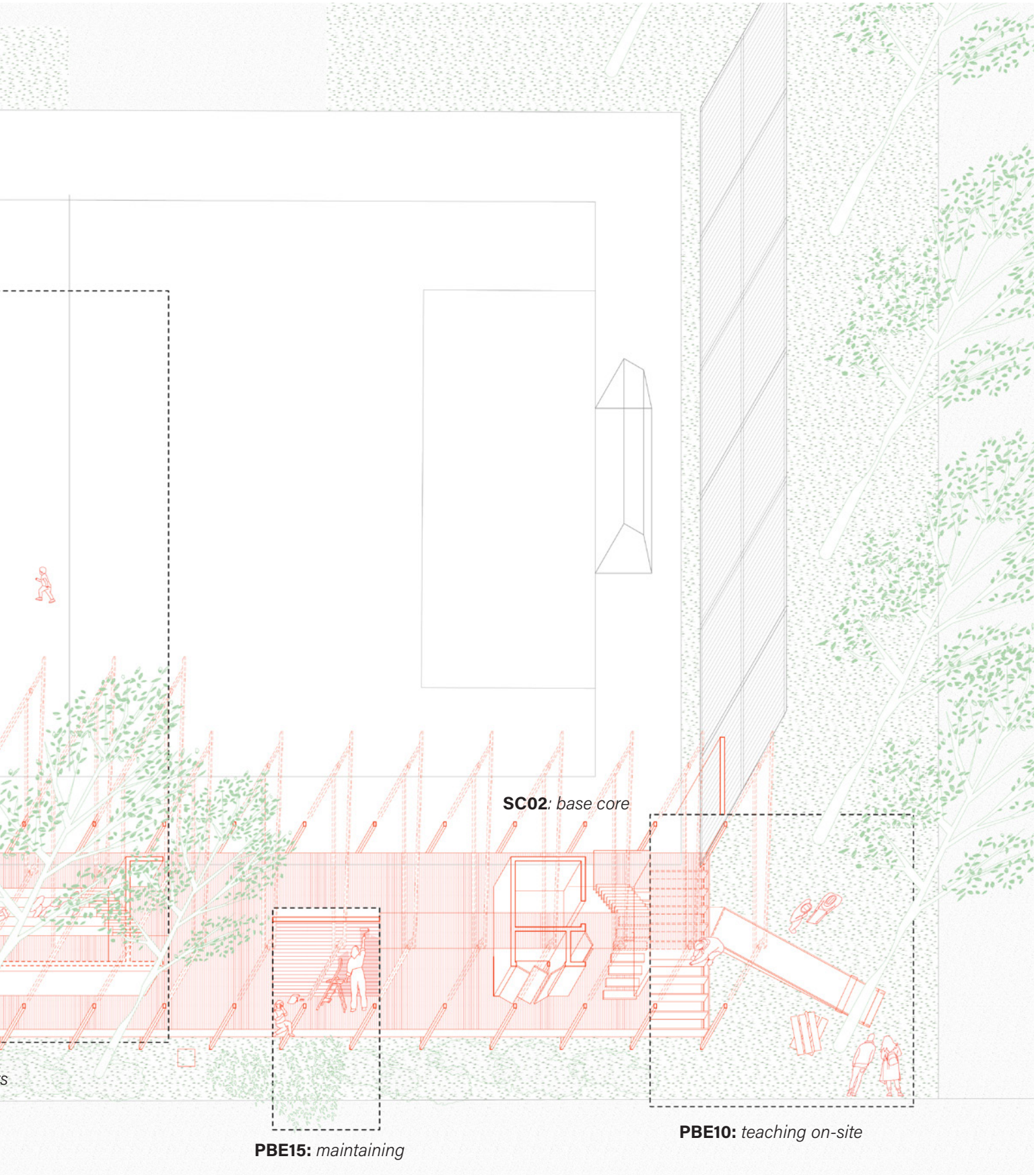

SC02: *base core*
PBE15: *maintaining*
PBE10: *teaching on-site*



fig. 4.45: the bar acts as threshold between inside and outside.

i2: Classes and Educational Spaces

The classes and educational stripe establish a threshold between the park and Émery Alley that services the interior of the site. It houses classes, study rooms, a small community library, and multipurpose spaces over two floors along a north-south orientation. The position of the bar within the site allows for a higher elevation of two floors, which also allows the building to connect to existing access to the spaces occupied by the Go Jeunesse non-profit. As such, it will enable the corporation's programming to expand and connect to the new intervention. Egress access to the adjacent tower is maintained.

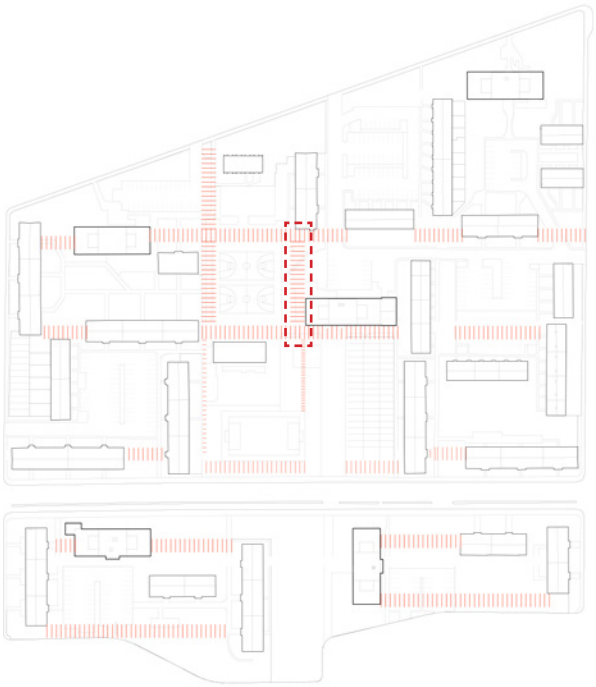


fig. 4.46: i2 location plan.

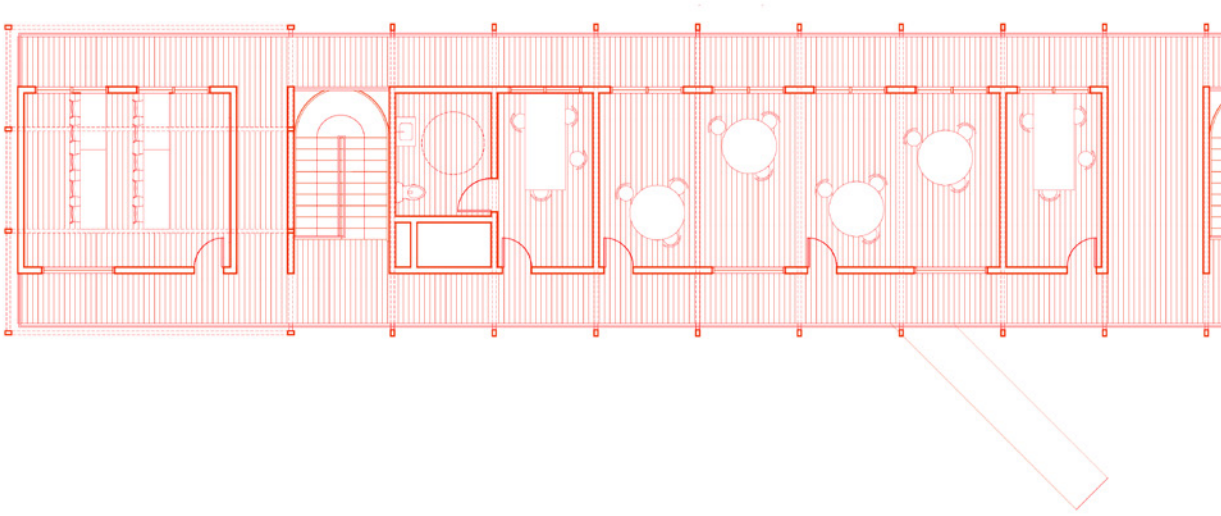


fig. 4.47: i2 intervention, first floor plan.

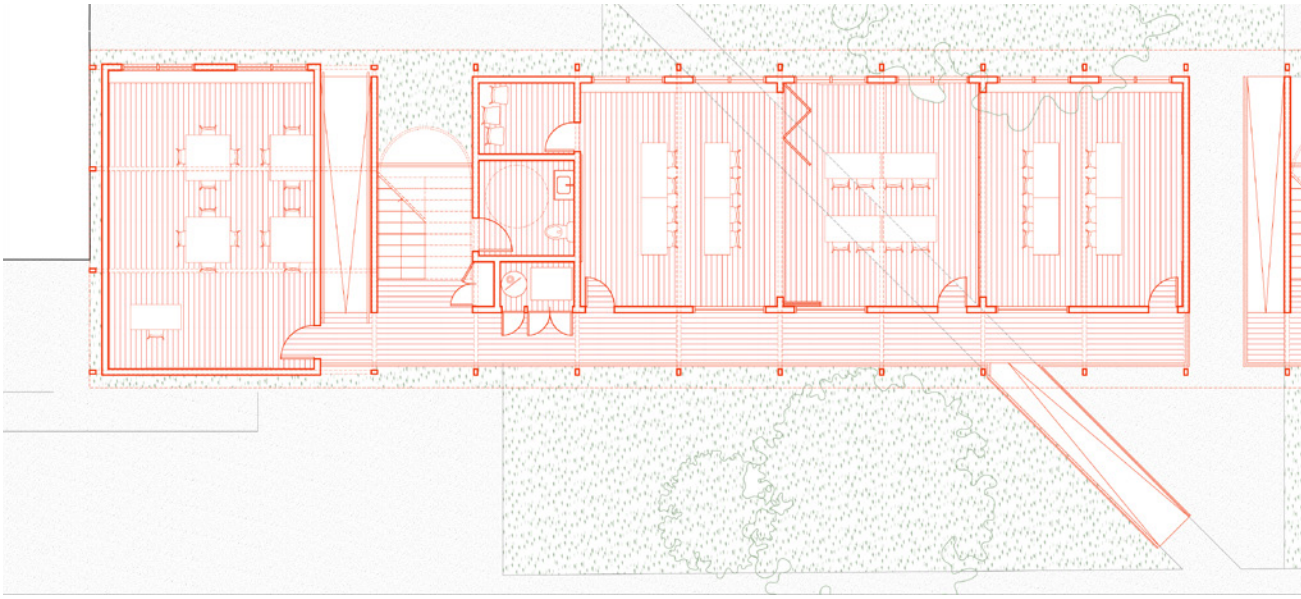
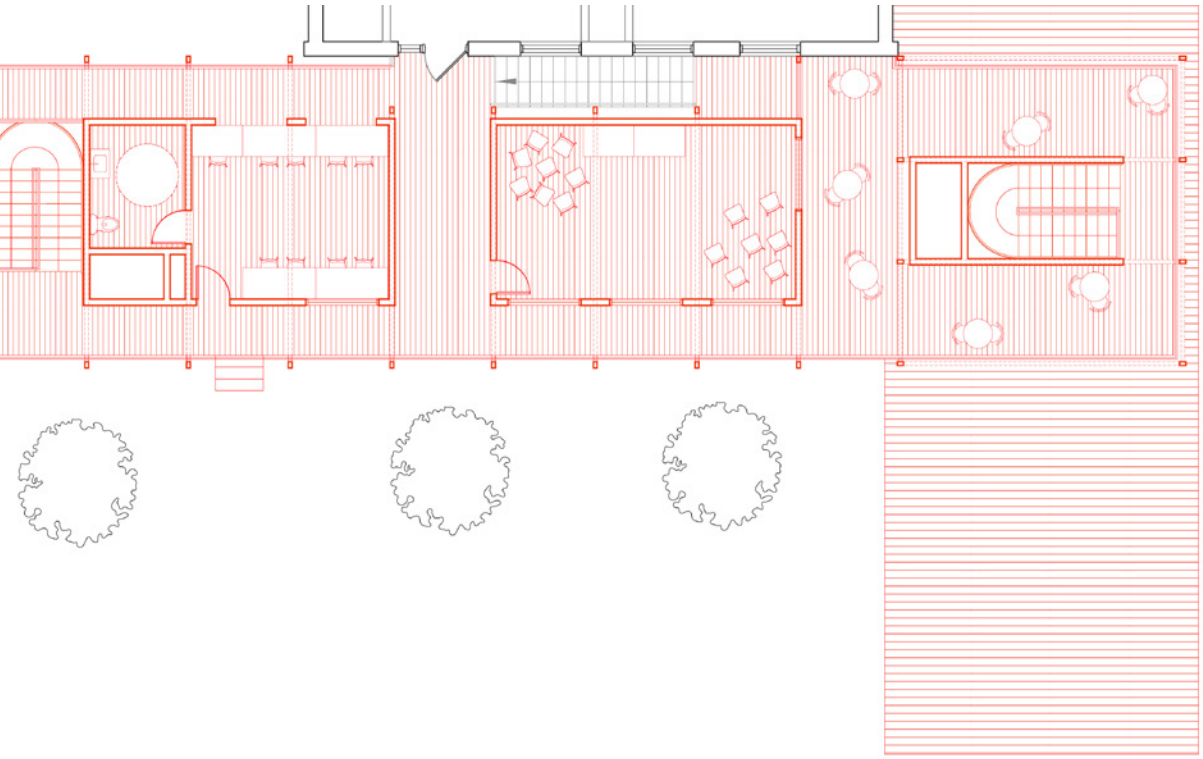


fig. 4.48: i2 intervention, ground floor plan.



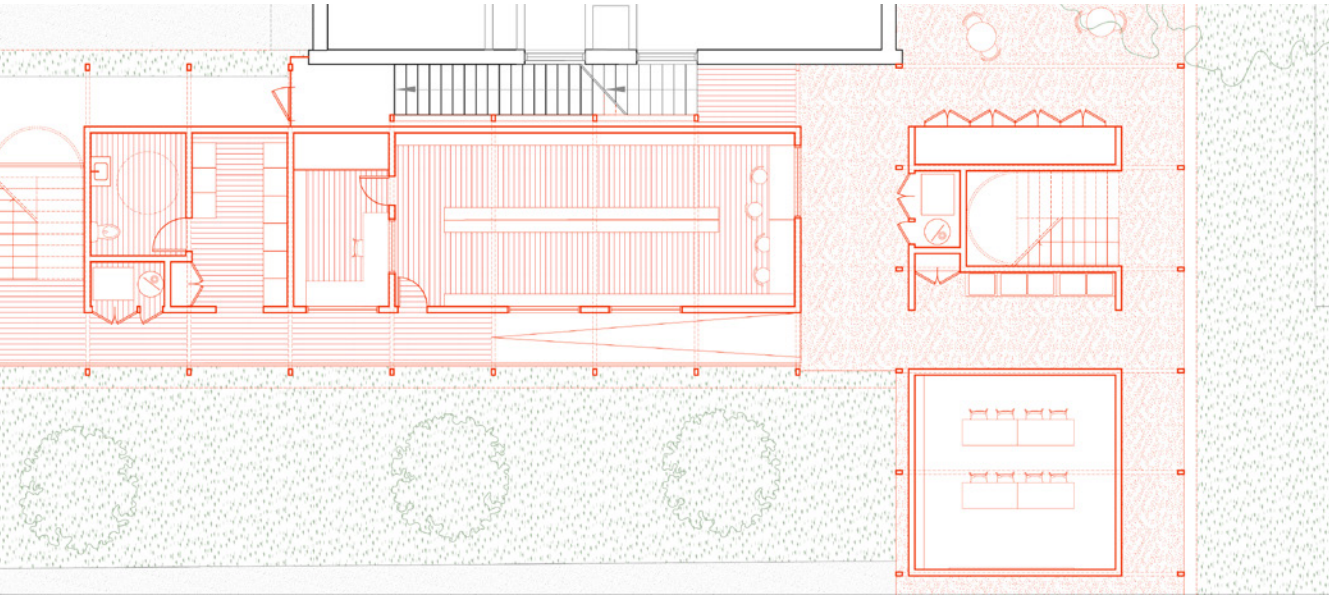




fig. 4.49: i2 intervention, oblique axonometric.

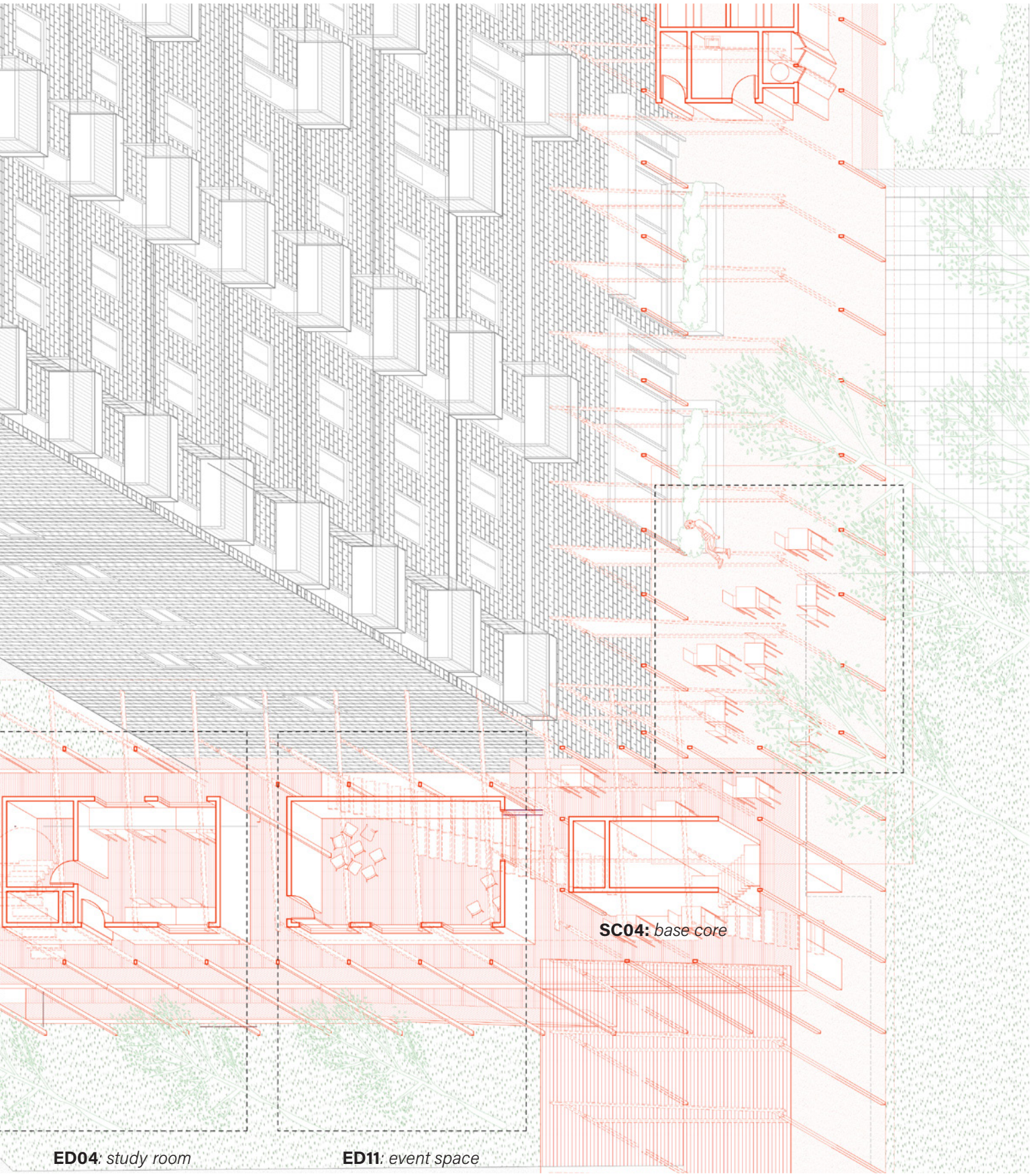

SC04: *base core*
ED04: *study room*
ED11: *event space*



fig. 4.50: perpendicular bars frame and complement the existing sports field





fig. 4.51: interventions can create porches when anchored to existing buildings.

i3: Porch Space

This building serves as an entrance porch to the central residential tower of the scheme. It includes a covered terrace, providing an exterior space for residents between the building and the surrounding park. In the eastern section, a shared kitchen and dining area are designed to connect with the existing community gardens, reinforcing the site's focus on food production. Unlike most other buildings, this structure is not elevated on stilts, as the tower is accessible at street level. The surrounding vegetation here is not threatened, as this part of the site is already paved.

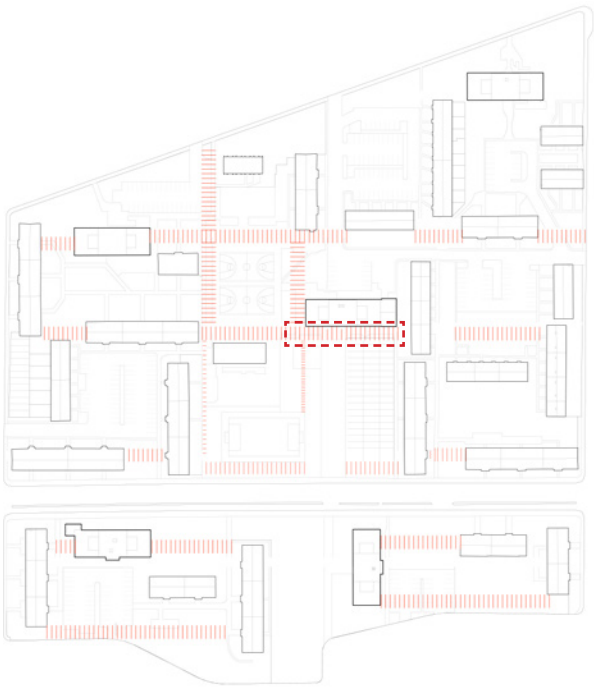


fig. 4.52: i3 location plan.

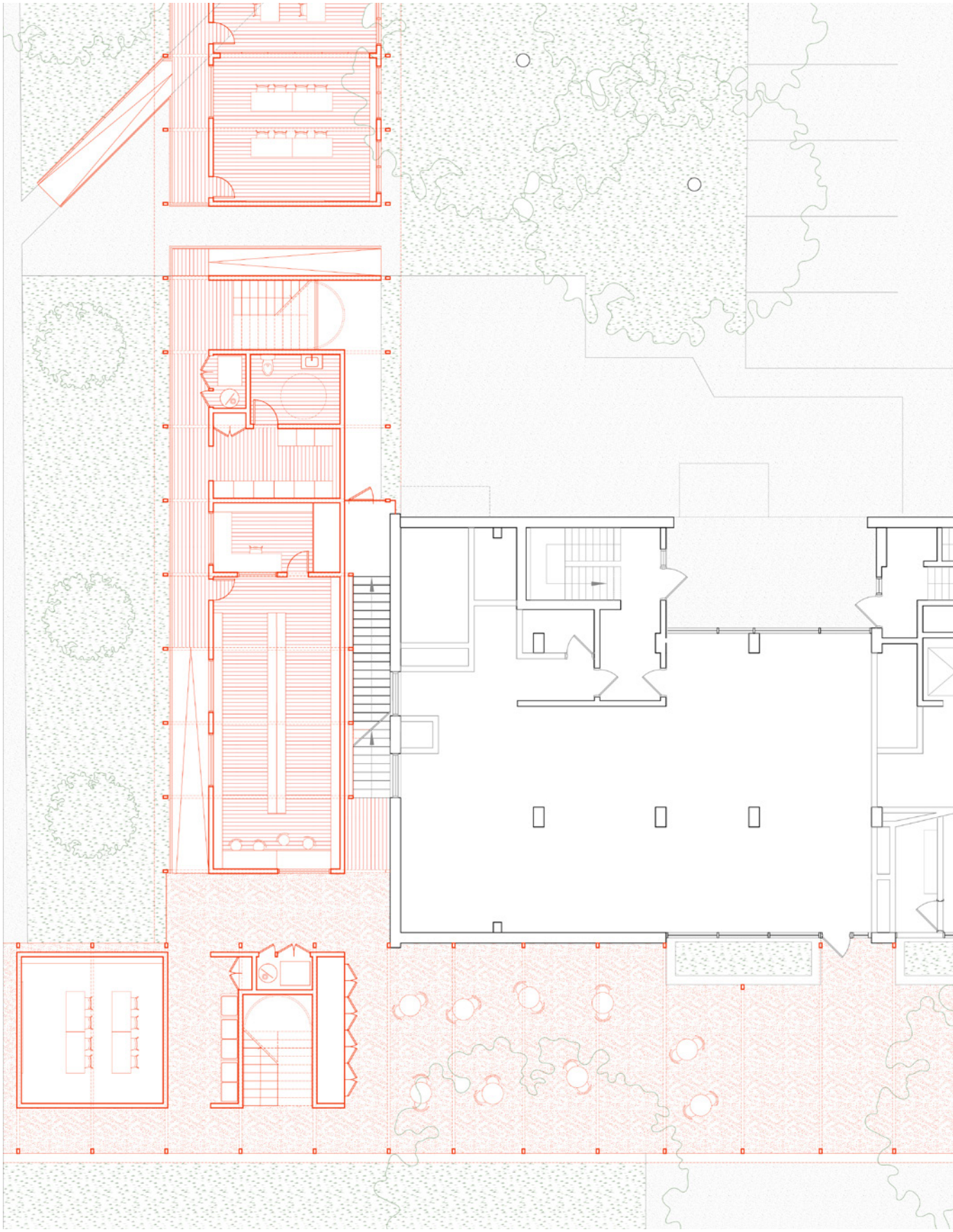
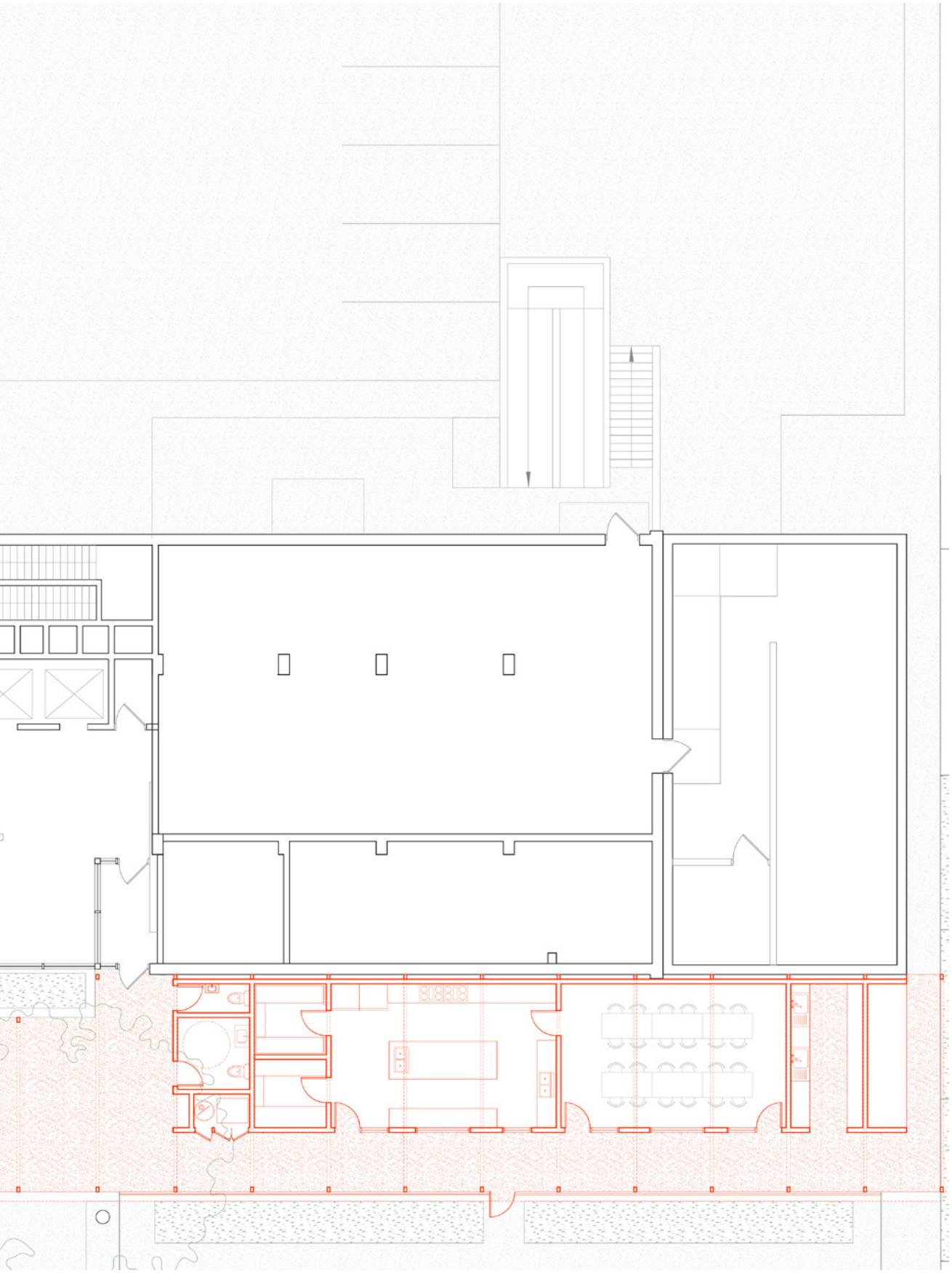


fig. 4.53: i3 intervention, ground floor plan.



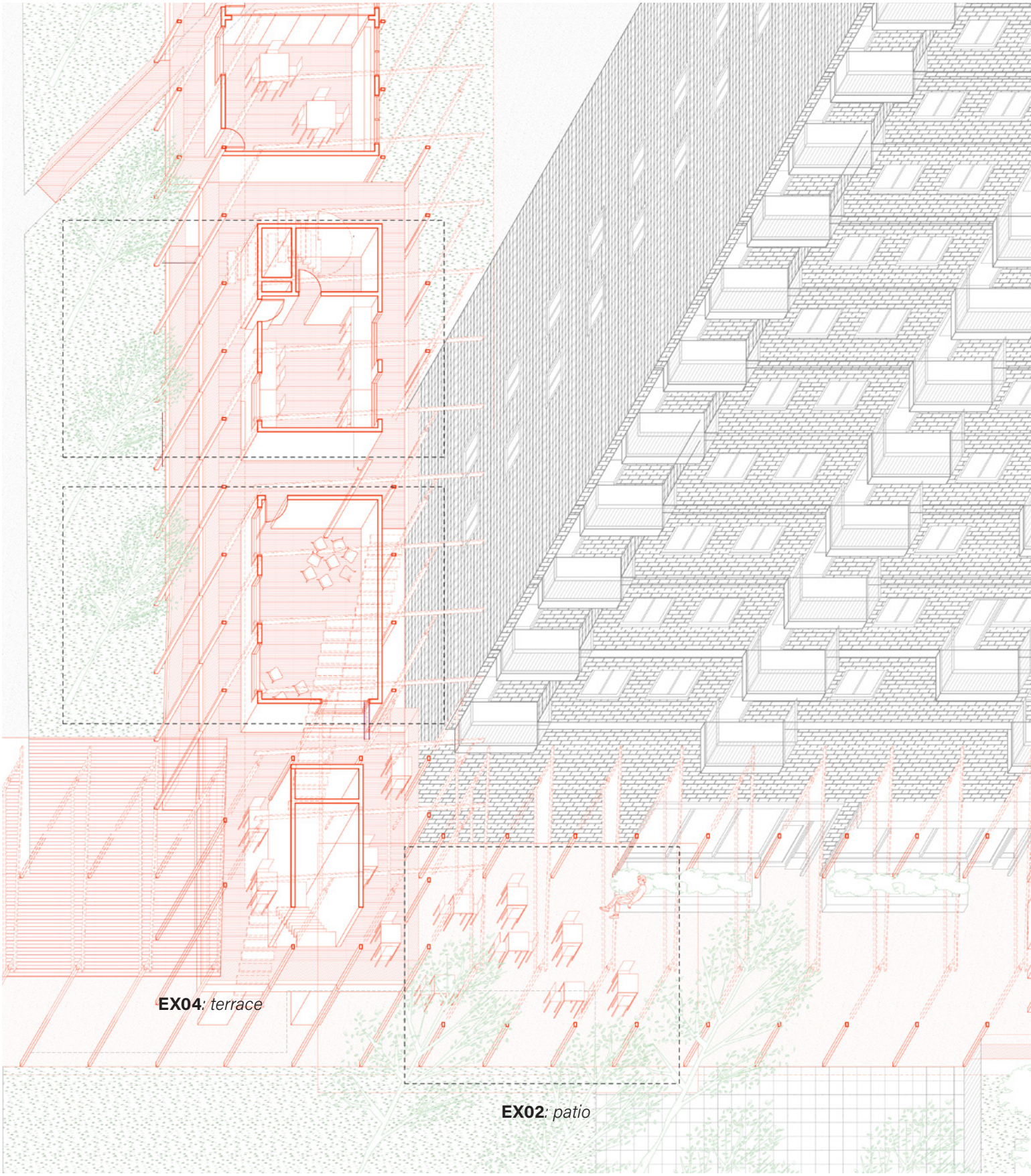


fig. 4.54: i3 intervention, oblique axonometric.

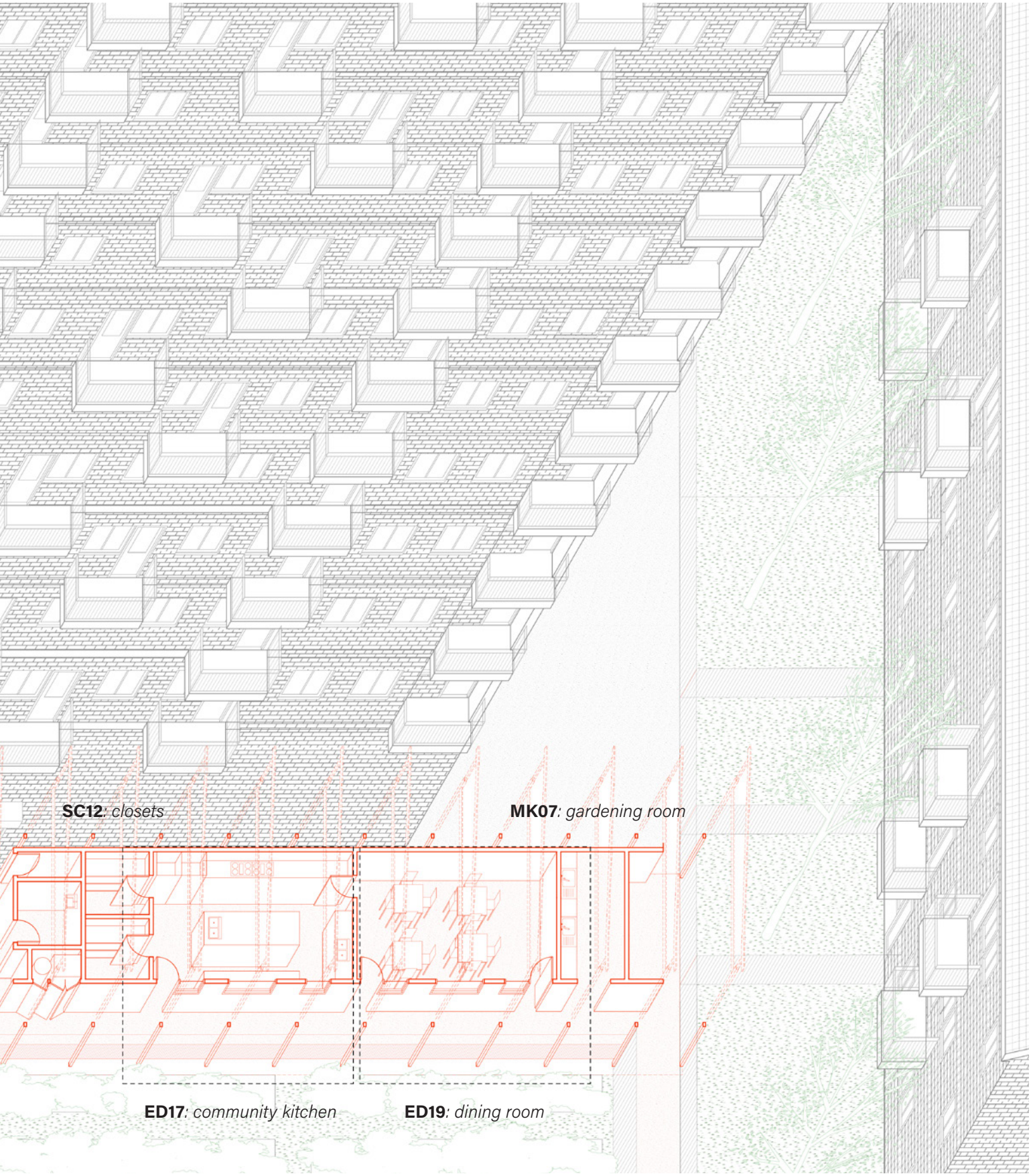

SC12: *closets*
MK07: *gardening room*
ED17: *community kitchen*
ED19: *dining room*



fig. 4.55 interventions mark the periphery of the site.

i4: Commercial Space

This intervention defines the boundary between de Boisbriand Street and the residential development, addressing a gap where the existing built environment fails to separate the site from its surroundings. The open space, which includes parking, is directly connected to the street, contributing to a disjointed urban fabric. The program combines various uses, including open outdoor spaces for residents, community areas, and commercial spaces. Circulation is designed to provide easy access to the commercial areas from the street, while residential spaces are positioned toward the back of the building. The commercial aspect is emphasized due to the proximity to Sainte-Catherine Street, a key commercial hub in the city.

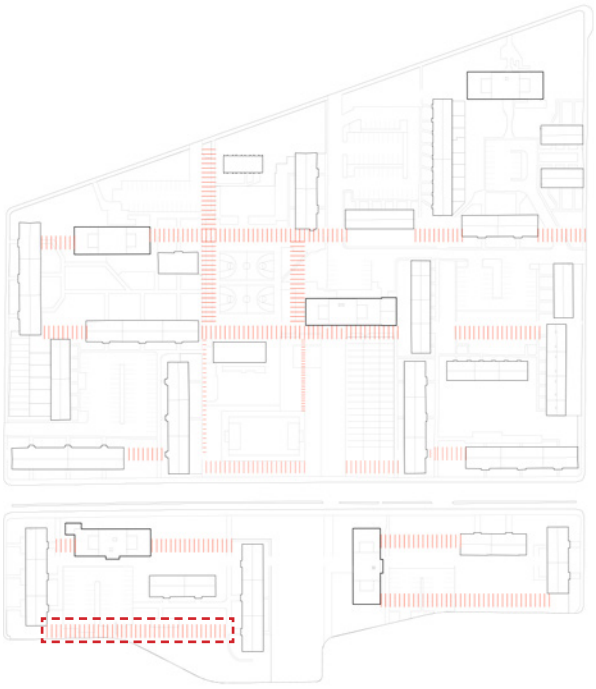


fig. 4.56: i4 location plan.

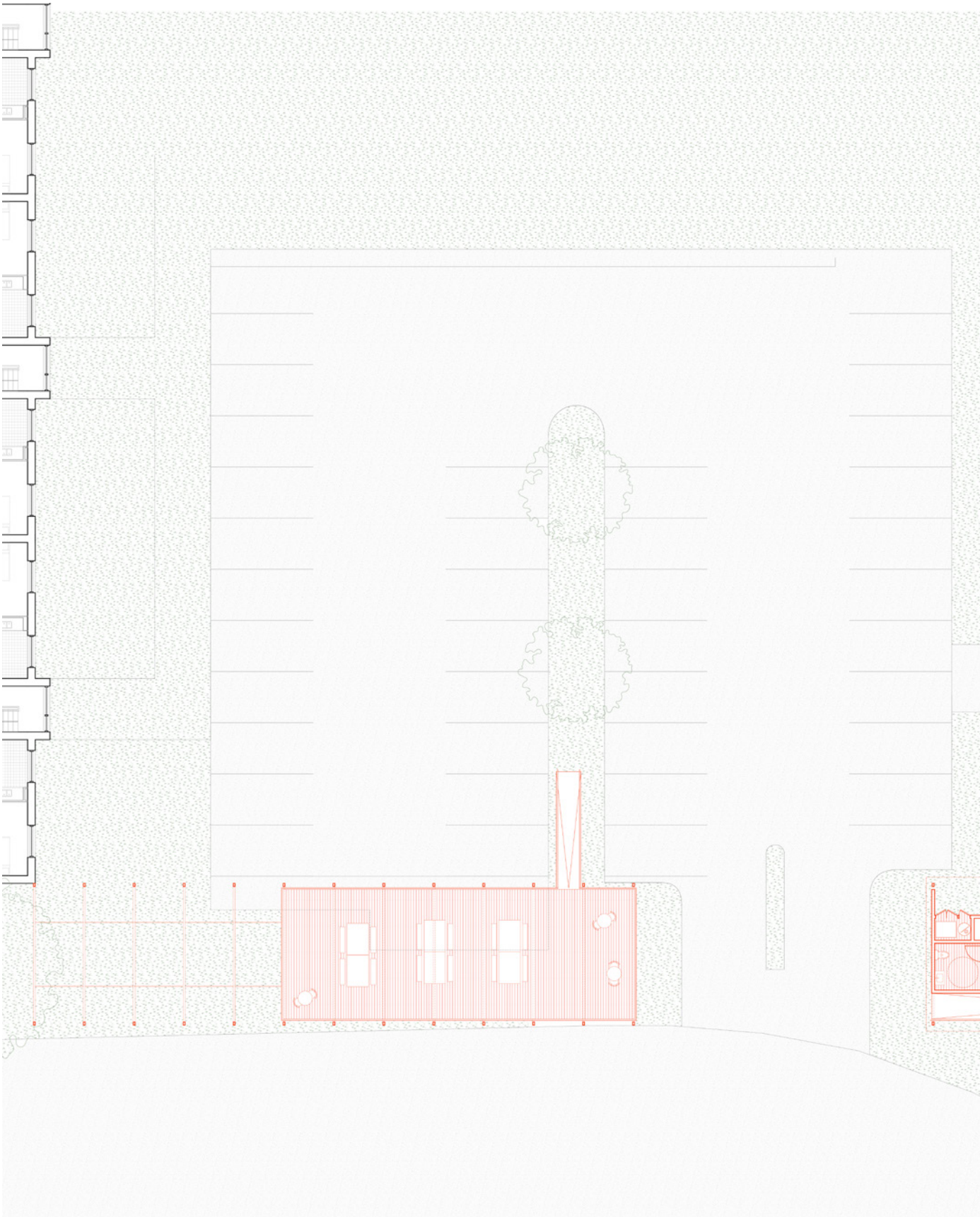
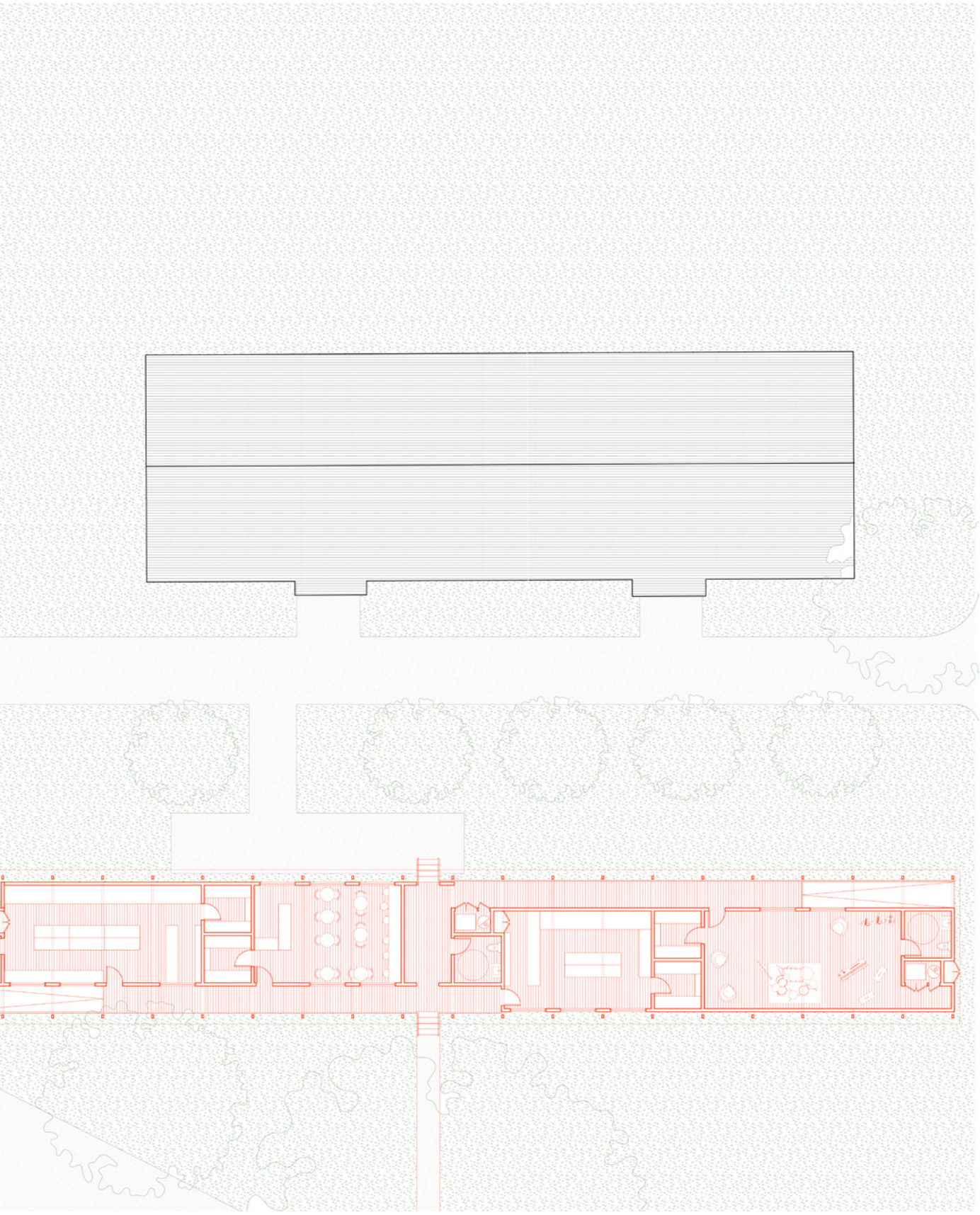


fig. 4.57: i4 intervention, ground floor plan.



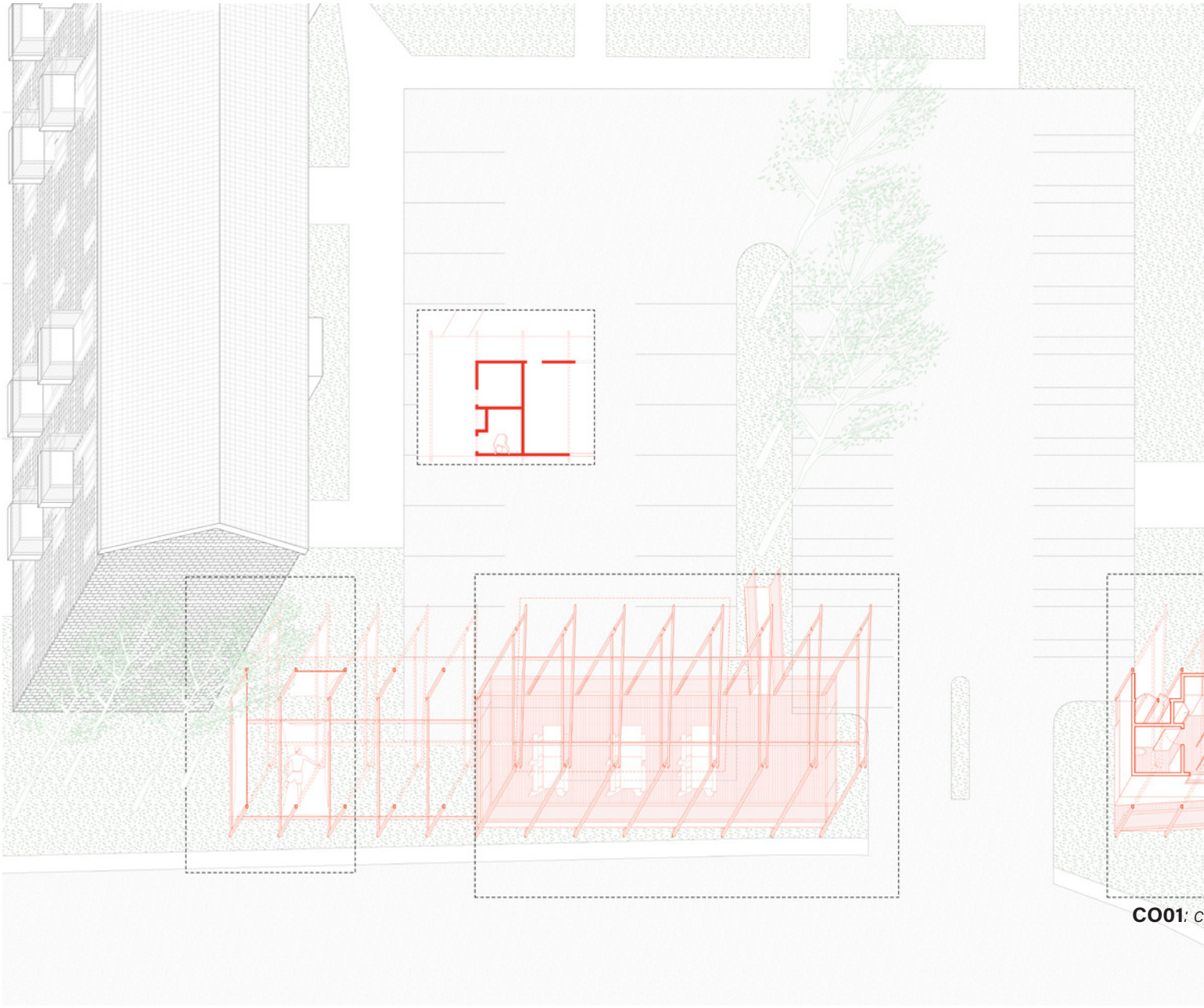
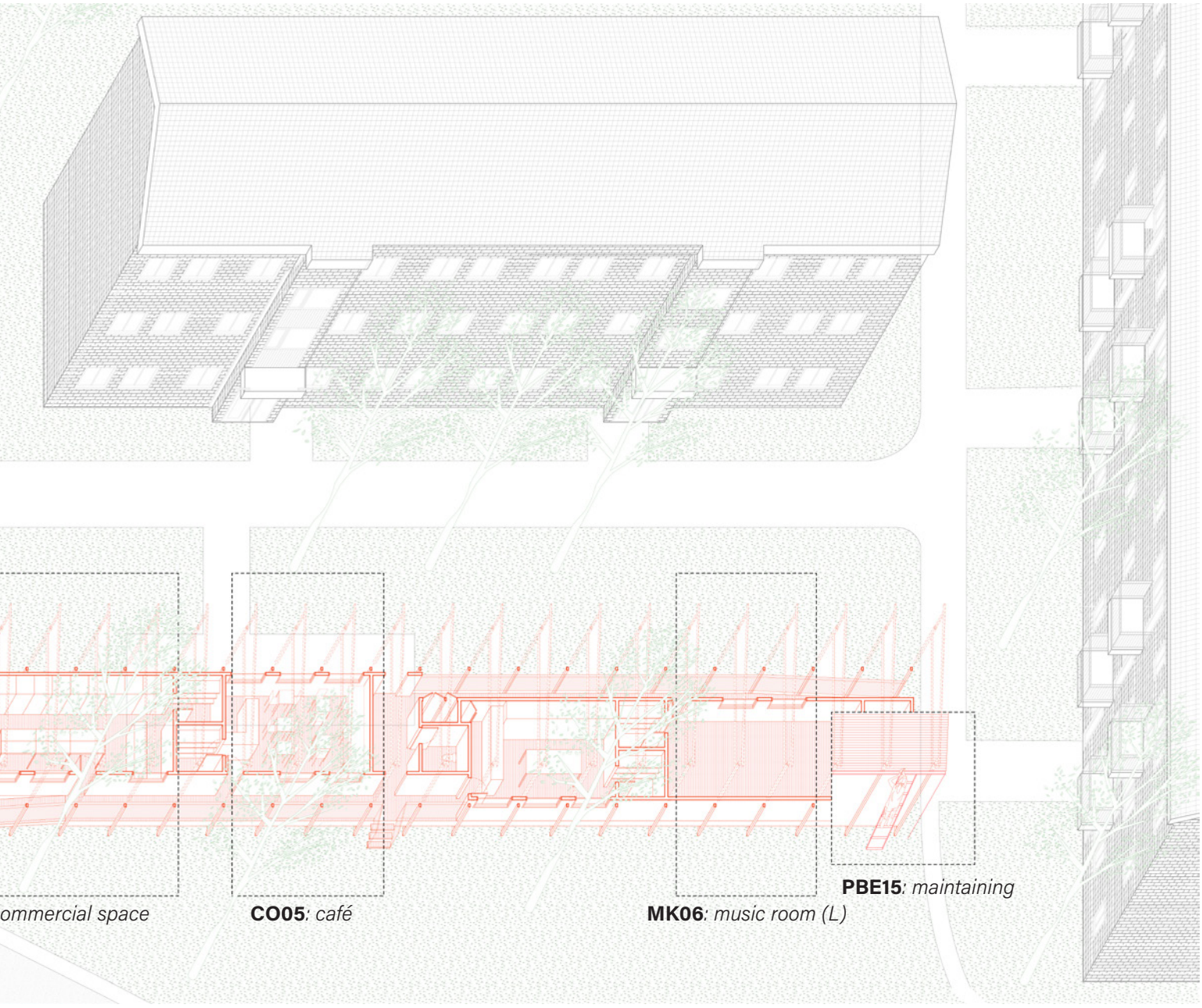


fig. 4.58: i4 intervention, oblique axonometric.


ommercial space
CO05: *café*
MK06: *music room (L)*
PBE15: *maintaining*

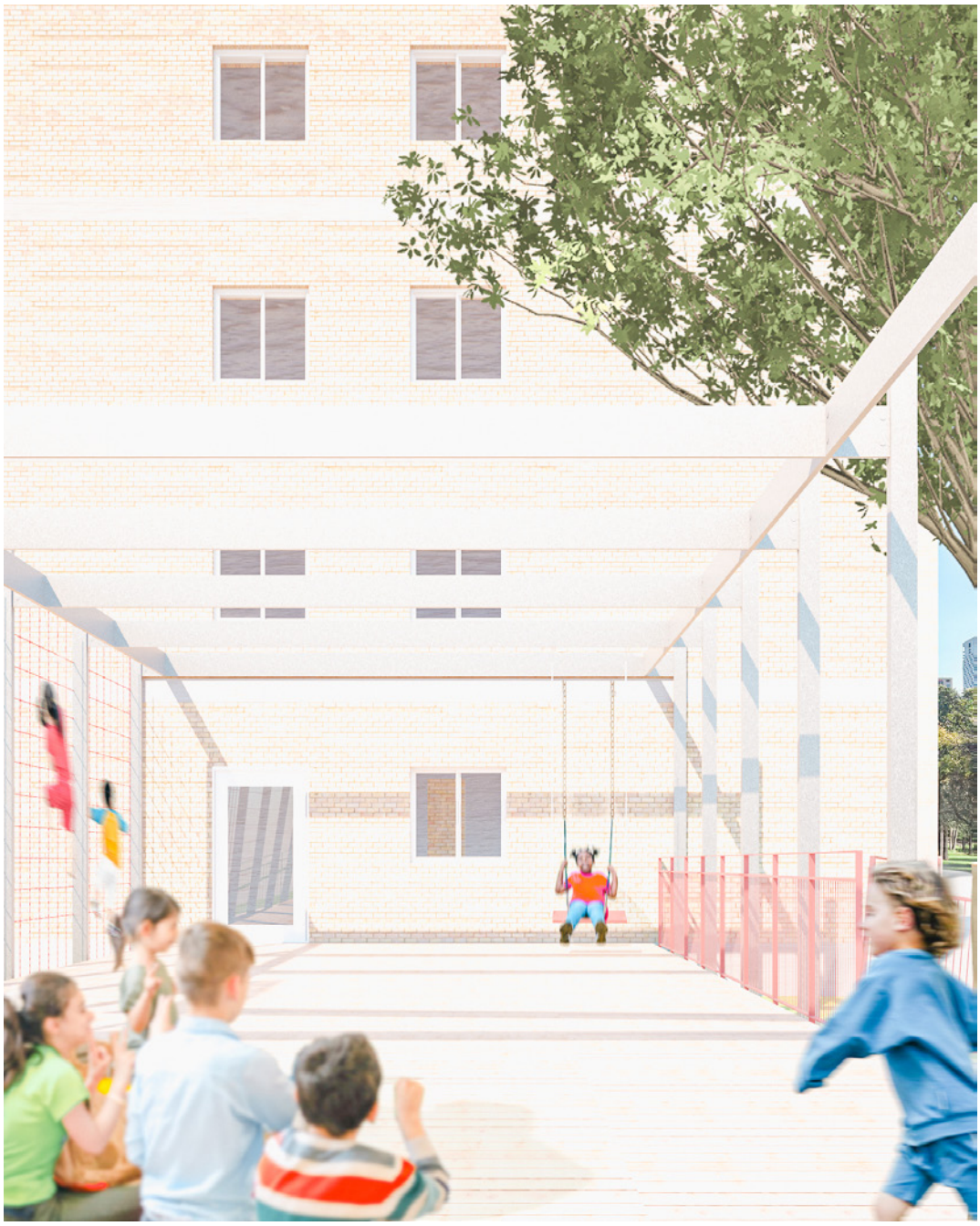


fig. 4.59: interventions may become playstructures.

i5: Daycare Extension

Two existing daycare facilities operate on-site: one on the ground floor of the northwesternmost tower and one from a few transformed units in the adjacent plex building. This intervention, therefore, aims to provide additional playground space and classes to these organizations. It exploits residual space between existing buildings as opportunities to further the existing programming of the daycare centers.

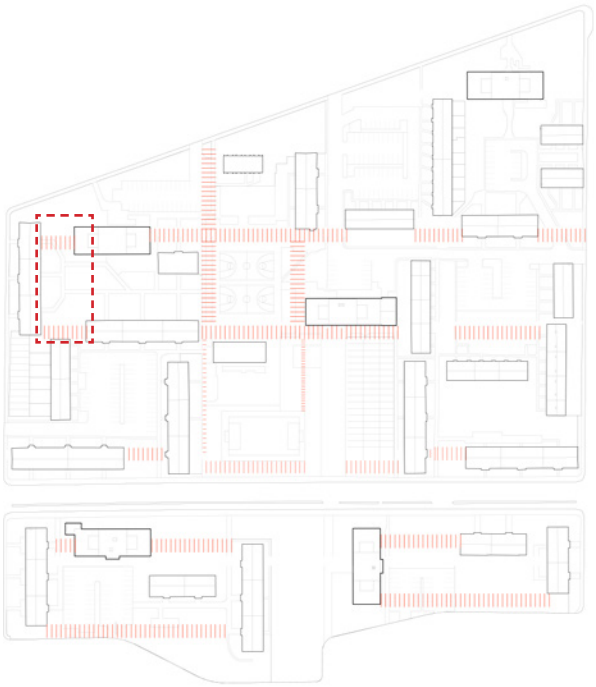


fig. 4.60: i5 location plan.

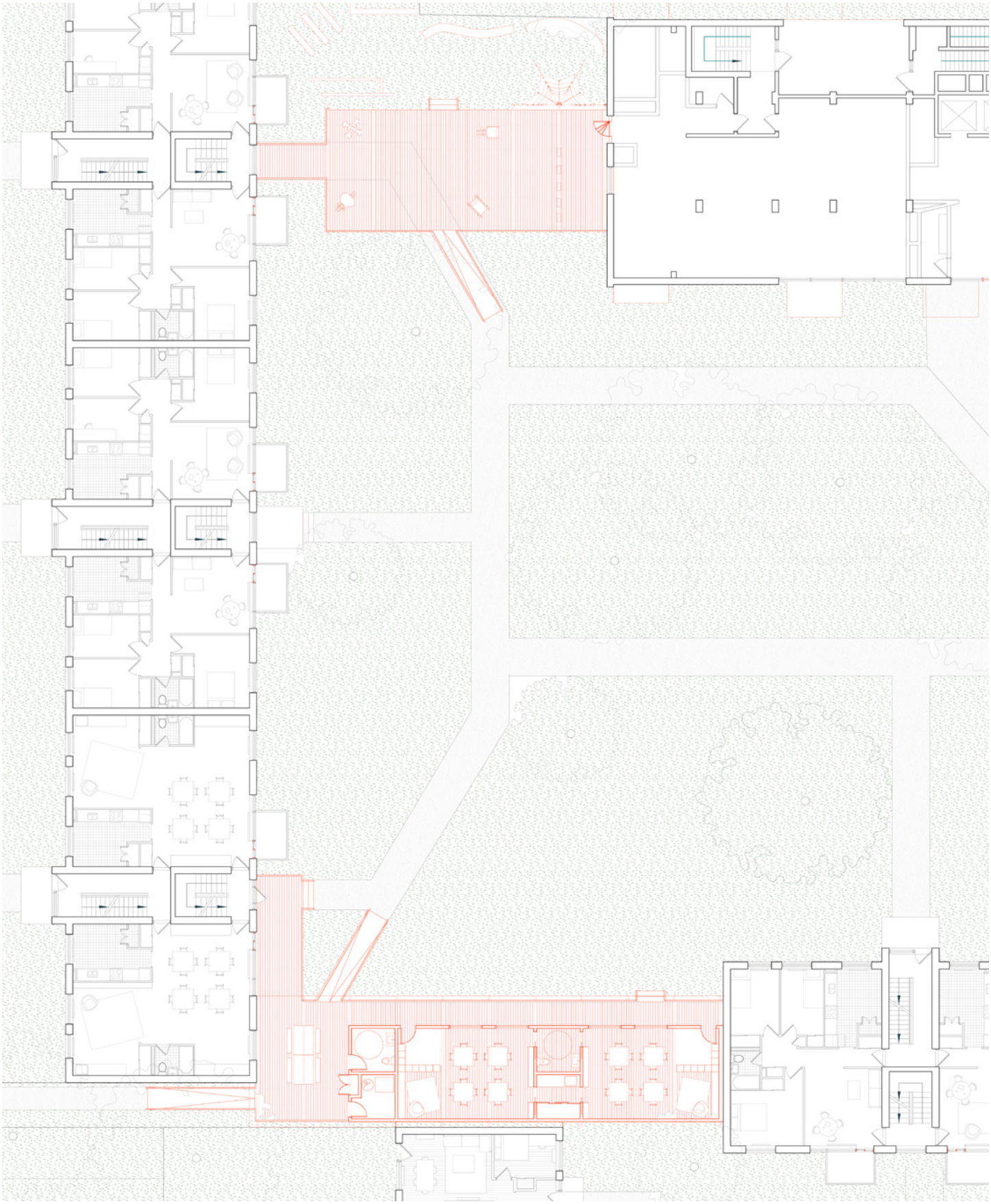


fig. 4.61: i5 intervention, ground floor plan.

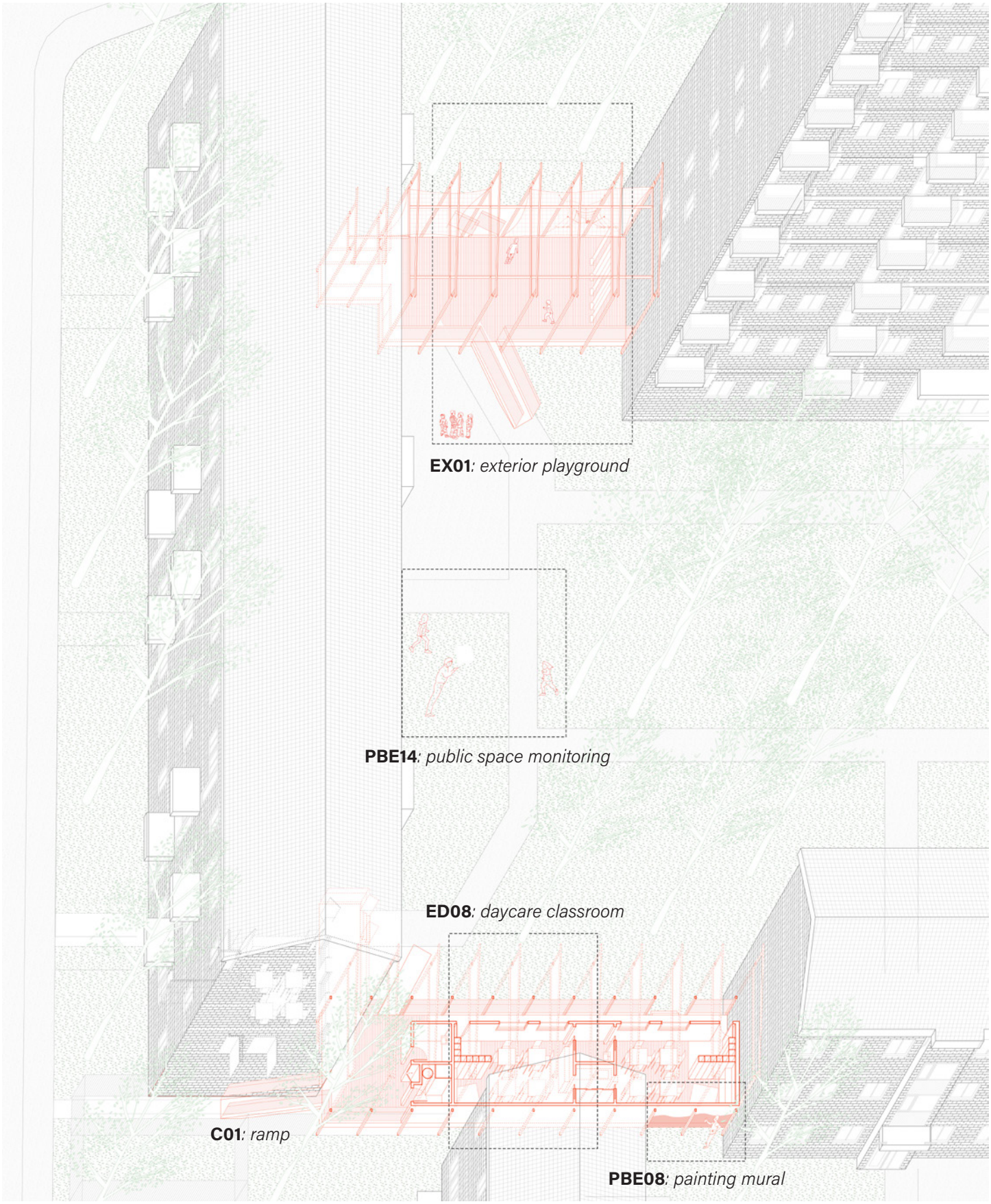


fig. 4.62: i5 intervention, oblique axonometric.



fig. 4.63: small-scale sporting fields can be accommodated within the bar.

i6: Small-scale Sports Fields

This intervention, located along de Maisonneuve Boulevard, provides a terrace to nearby residents and houses two pickleball courts. Again, it forms a limit between outside and inside the site.

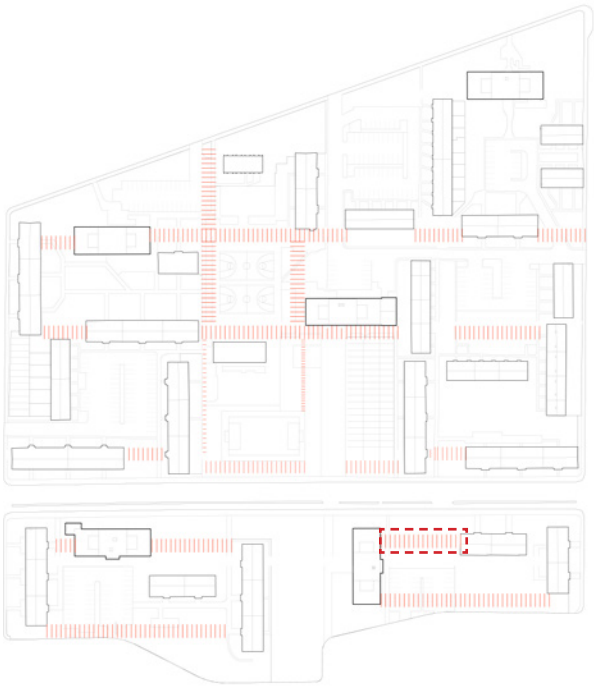


fig. 4.64: i6 location plan.

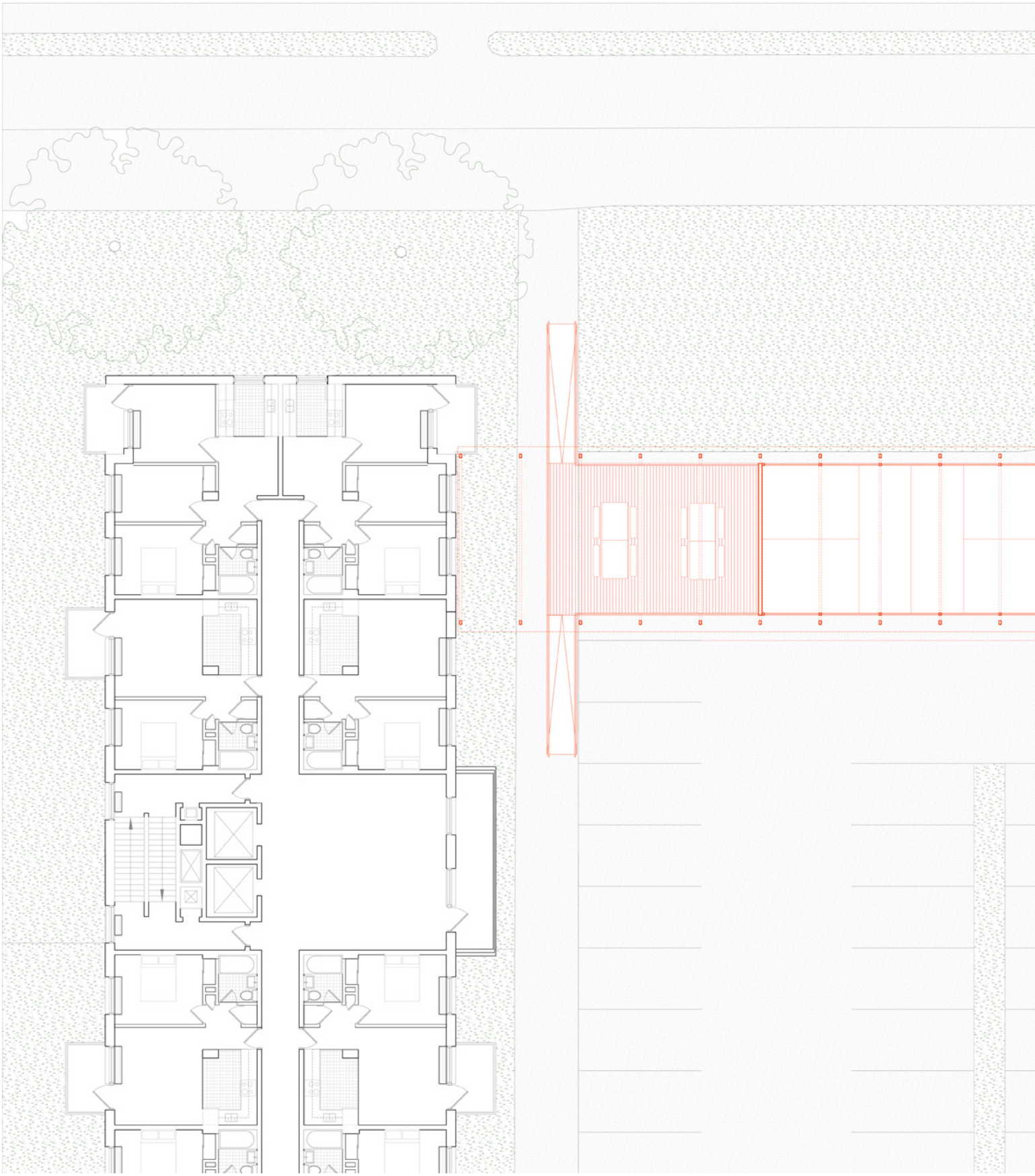
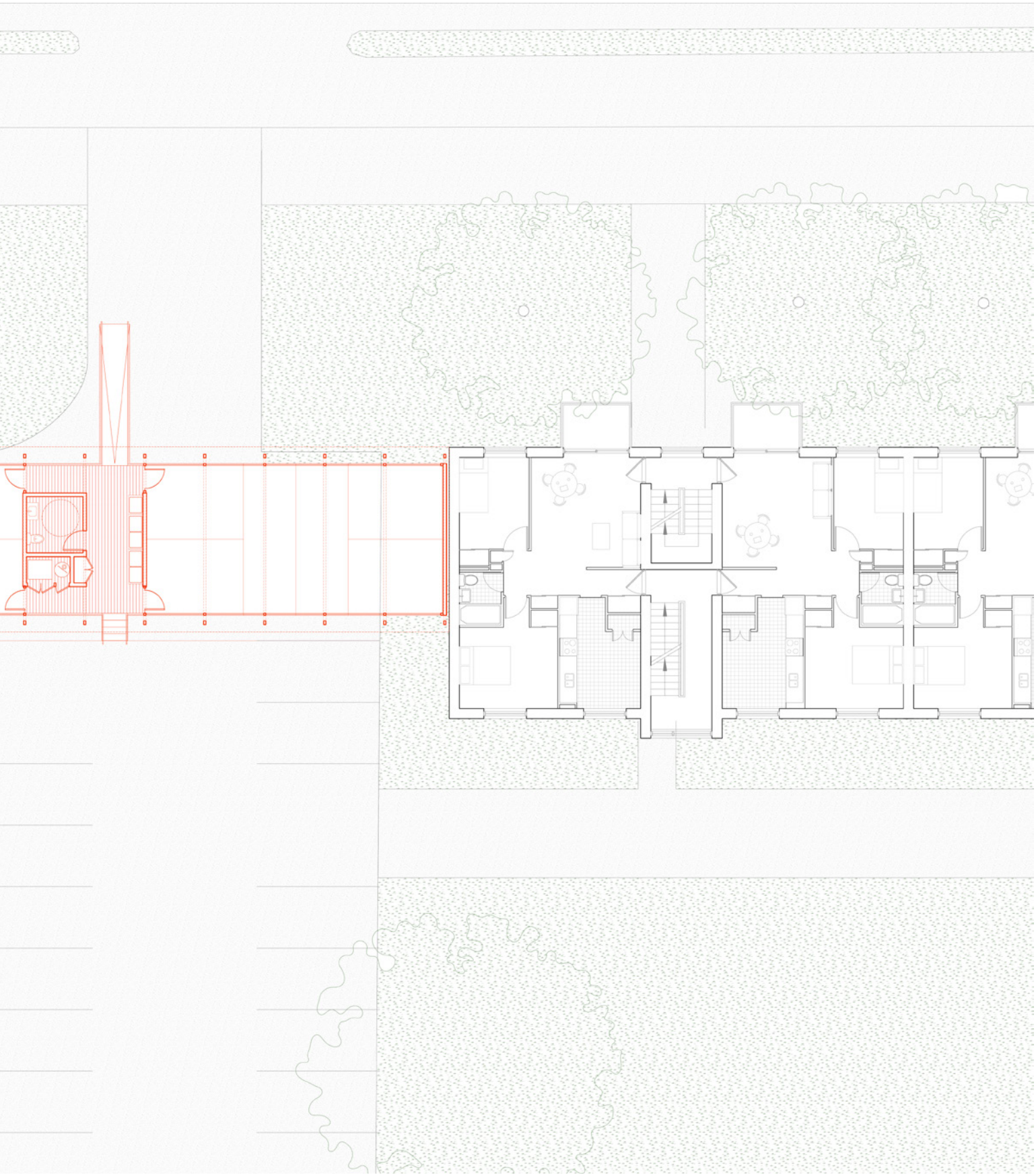


fig. 4.65: i6 intervention, ground floor plan.



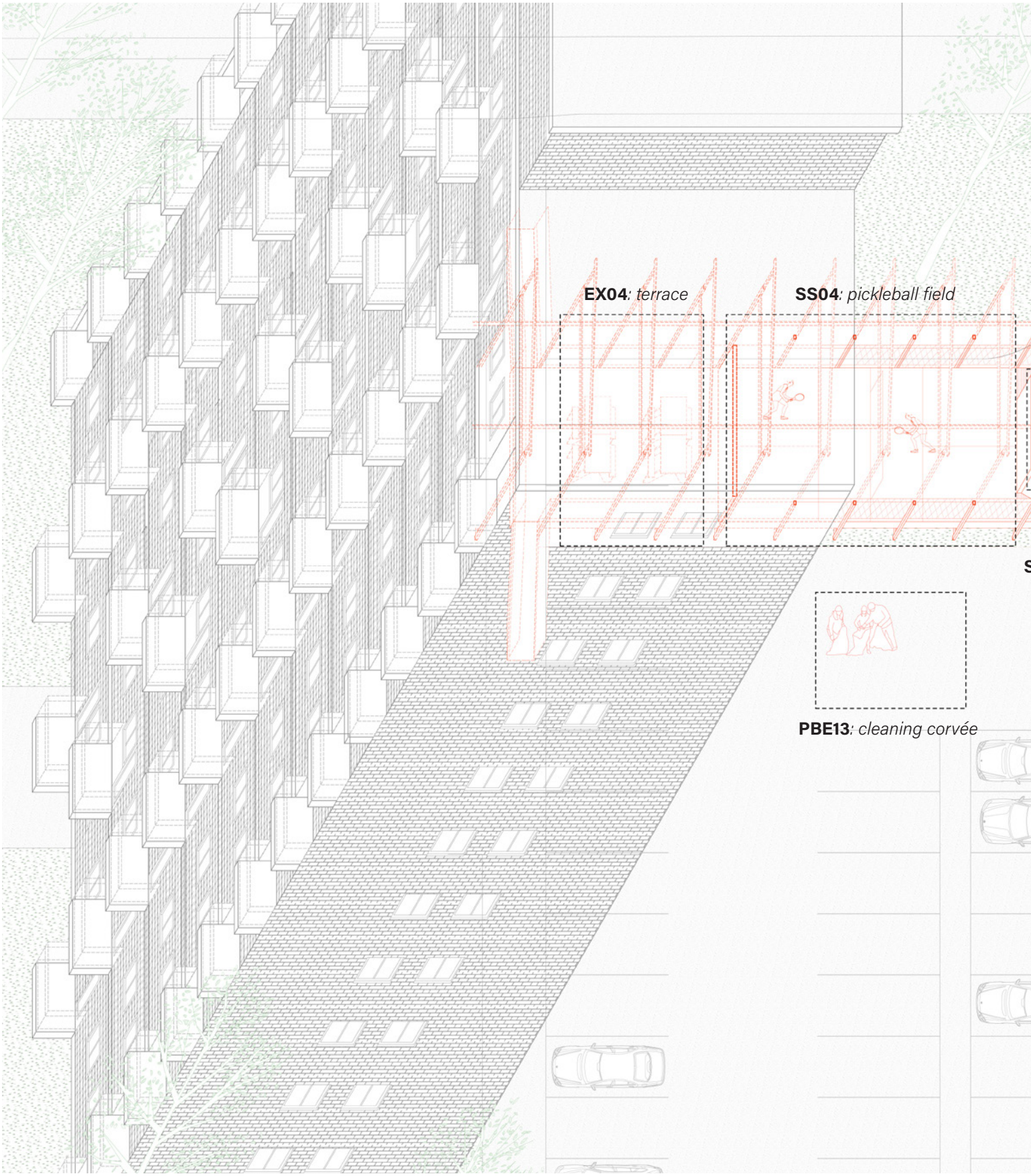


fig. 4.66: i6 intervention, oblique axonometric.


SC01: base core
P01: fence



fig. 4.67: interior spaces accommodate a multitude of uses.

I7: Small-scale Community Space

This community space is meant to provide services to neighboring residents at a smaller scale than other developed interventions. A multipurpose space is an auxiliary space to the orchard using residual space.

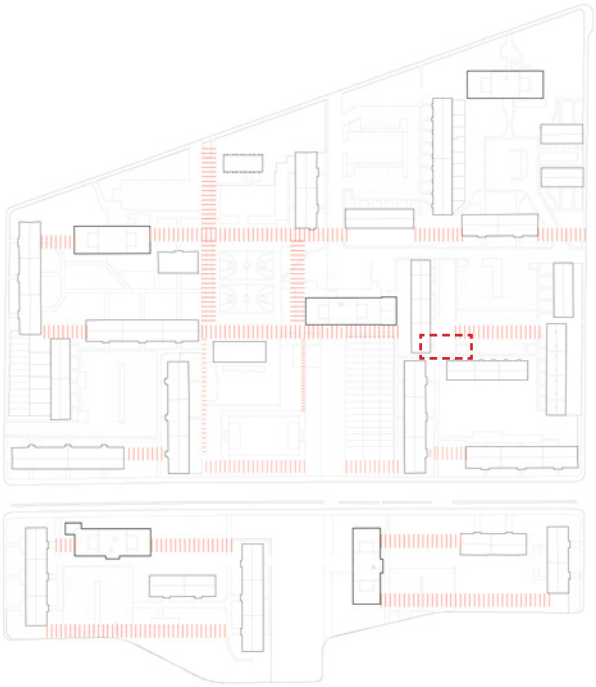


fig. 4.68: i7 location plan.

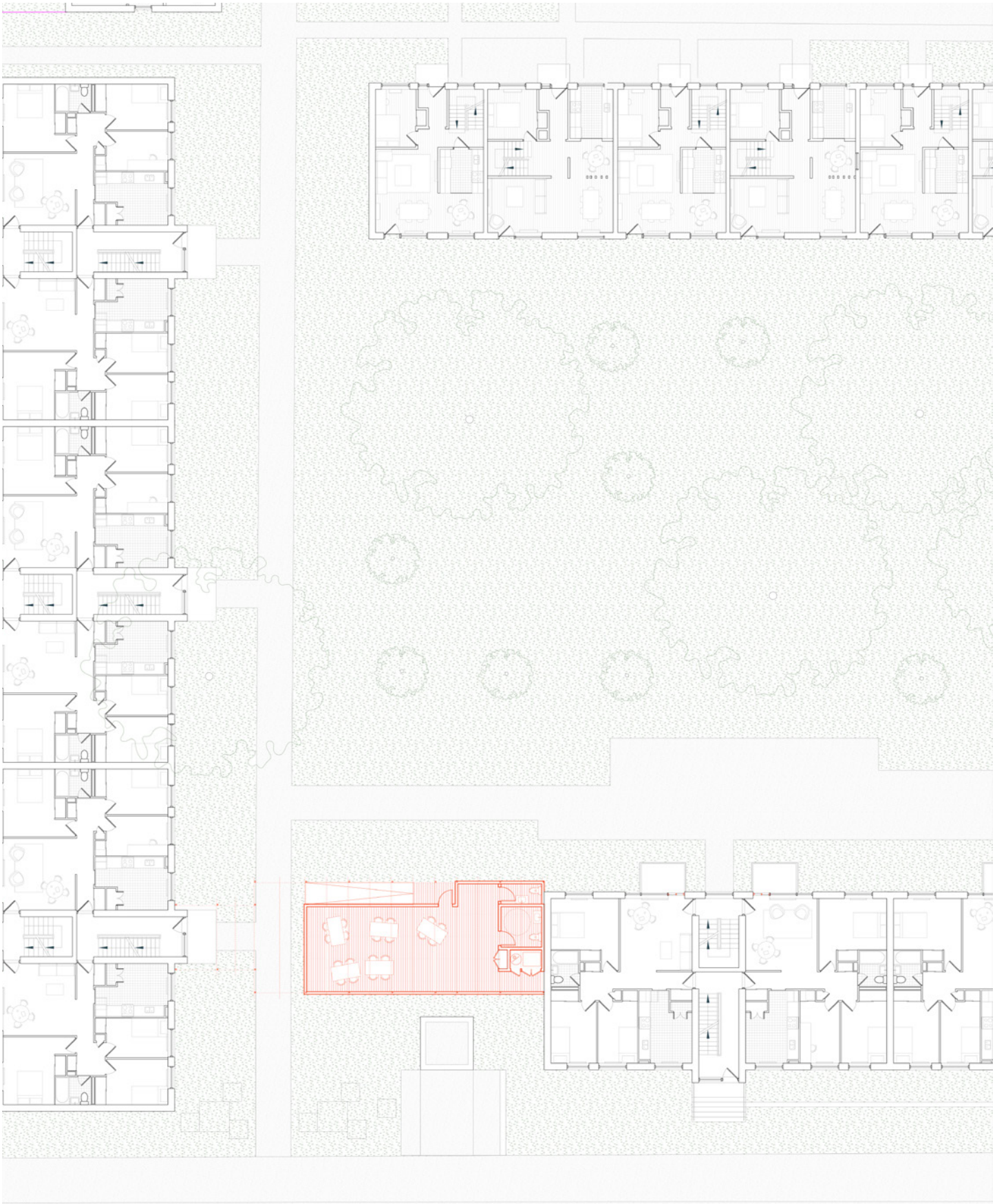


fig. 4.69: i7 intervention, ground floor plan.

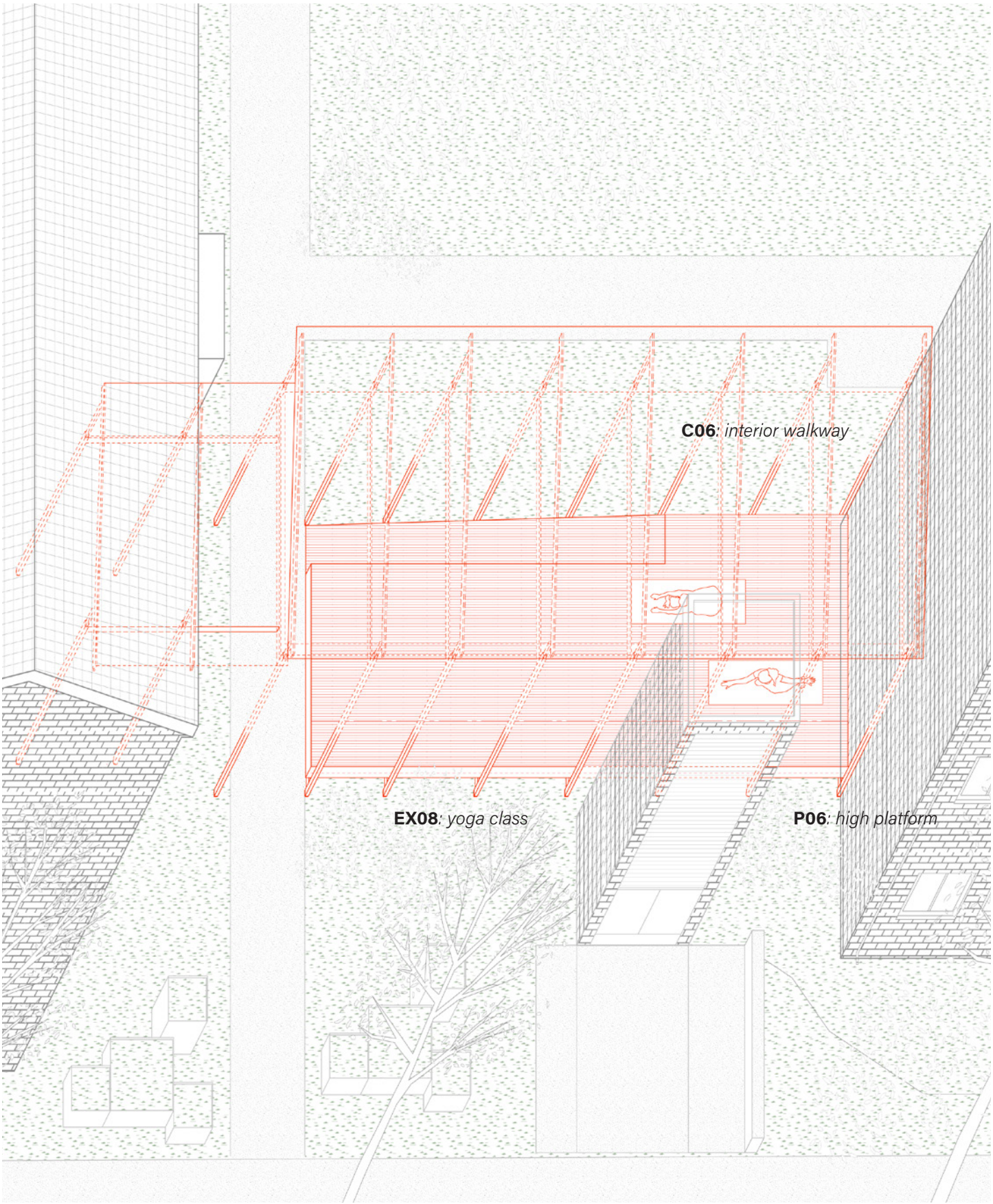
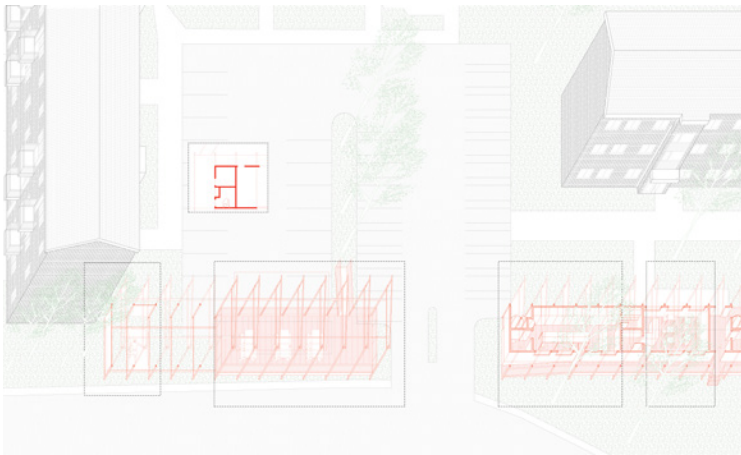


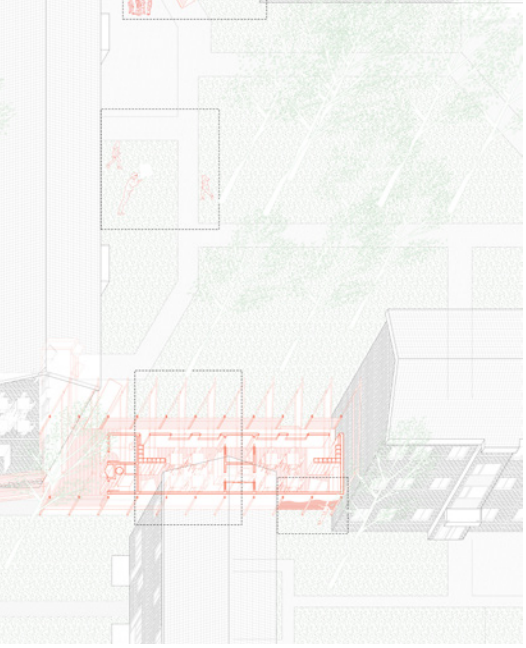
fig. 4.70: i7 intervention, oblique axonometric.

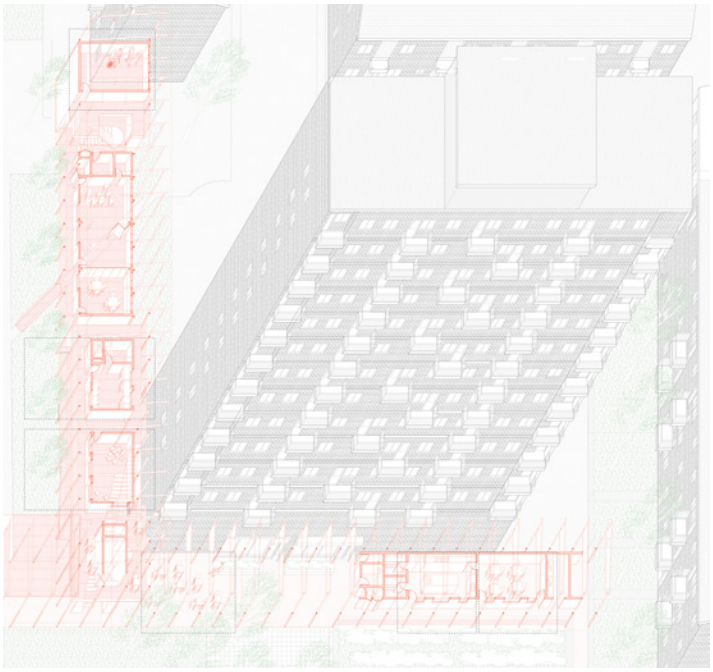
The proposed allographic model, or system for revitalizing the HJM site, integrated the site's physical and social dimensions, aiming to create a built infrastructure that reflects and nurtures relationships between residents, their built environment, and their broader surroundings. Using strategic spatial thresholds, the project negotiates public and private boundaries, offering flexibility and accessibility while maintaining a sense of security and ownership for the community.

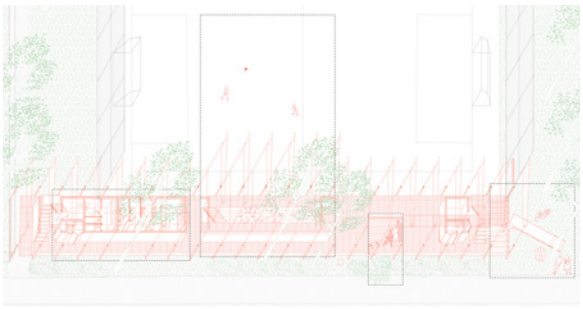
The typological approach and processed-based events ensure that residents actively shape and maintain their environment. By encouraging participation across the various project temporalities – from design to construction, maintenance, and eventual deconstruction – the proposal aims to foster a deeper sense of agency, collective responsibility, and solidarity among its inhabitants. This participatory approach challenges traditional architectural paradigms and promotes the development of meaningful social and ecological networks of care and reciprocity.

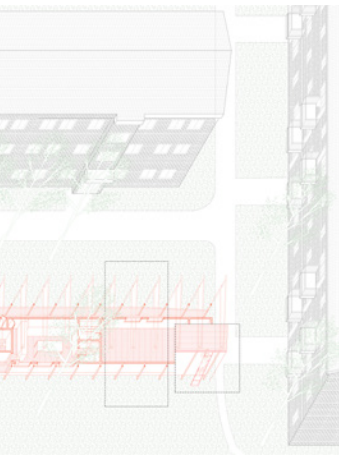
The system's application across a series of varied interventions—from sports facilities and educational spaces to small-scale commercial areas and community hubs—demonstrates the flexibility and potential of the design, showing how it can integrate seamlessly into the existing urban fabric while enhancing the quality of life for residents. Ultimately, this project envisions a space where architectural design and social interaction are mutually reinforcing, creating an environment that is functional and nurtures community networks of solidarity and collective agency.











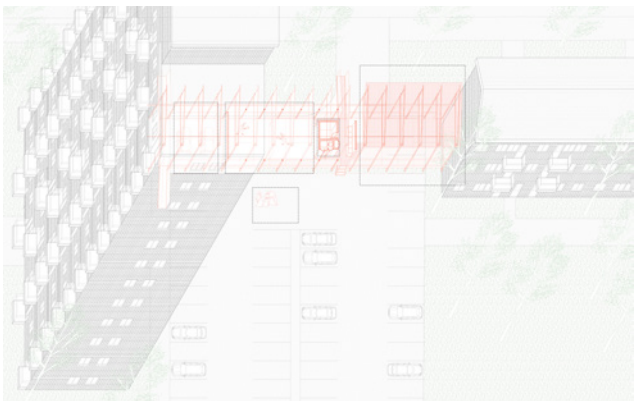


fig. 4.71: assemblage of interventions.

from

for

Conclusion

to

with

In this thesis, I explored the critical issue of time-erasure in architecture – or the problem of permanence – and the profound impacts it leaves on the relationships between architects, users, and the built environment. Neglecting time as a key variable of design has resulted in an architectural profession that perpetuates non-reciprocal dynamics that leave users alienated, constrained, and unable to form meaningful relationships with the spaces they inhabit. Through the case study of Habitations Jeanne-Mance, I have illustrated how these disciplinary problems—time-erasure, dispossession, and alienation—are not only historically rooted but also persist in contemporary architectural practice.

The thesis drew upon insights from art theory to propose a shift in architectural methodologies, using the figure of the score as a framework for integrating time, agency, and participation into design practices. The score repositions the architect as an intermediary who coordinates, rather than dictates, the design process, allowing stakeholders—especially residents—to shape and engage with their environment in a meaningful way.

The design intervention developed in this thesis, though speculative, demonstrates how common spaces can be strategically integrated into the built environment to promote communal activities and meet the diverse needs of residents. By emphasizing the role of space in facilitating meaningful social interactions and fostering a sense of agency, this project underscores the potential for architecture to not only create functional spaces but also to empower communities and facilitate continuous, adaptive engagement with the built environment.

Throughout this thesis, I have navigated a broad and multifaceted theoretical landscape, addressing long-standing personal questions as to the nature of architectural practice. This work lies at the intersection of varied interests – in design thinking, extractivism, reciprocity, and the adverse consequences of the profession – and of long-held beliefs in the transformative potential of architecture in imagining worlds and systems beyond the status quo. I might, in that way, be a utopian, and cynics might criticize my infatuation with Lefebvre and Harvey, but it is nonetheless with optimism that I chose to approach the deeply rooted problems of the profession. At the heart of this work lies a critique of architecture's tendency to erase time- an omission that not only diminishes the potential for meaningful social interactions but also perpetuates oppressive, non-

reciprocal relationships between architects and users. By exploring the score as a methodological tool, I have proposed an allographic approach to architecture that envisions a more collaborative, adaptive, and time-sensitive framework for design. While the design intervention presented here in the context of Habitations Jeanne-Mance serves as a speculative exercise, its aim is not merely to propose a specific architectural solution but to outline a broader conceptual shift—one that moves away from static, top-down design toward a more reciprocal and participatory practice.

An allographic shift in architectural thinking has the potential to radically transform how we design and engage with the built environment. By reimagining architectural production through the lens of the score, architects can shift their role from solitary authors to facilitators of participatory, adaptive design processes. This approach embraces temporality, contingency, and collaboration, positioning architecture as a fluid, dynamic system rather than a static artifact. Inspired by practices in music and performance, the score allows architects to define structural frameworks while leaving space for users to interpret, adapt, and co-create within those boundaries. This methodology acknowledges the lived realities of construction, use, and maintenance, fostering reciprocal relationships between architects, users, and the environment. By embedding time and agency into the design process, an allographic model moves beyond architecture's historic fixation on permanence and control, creating opportunities for meaningful social interactions, user empowerment, and adaptive urban systems. Such a shift can serve as a catalyst for reshaping architecture's role in addressing contemporary challenges, from ecological sustainability to social justice.

The scope of this thesis has been ambitious: attempting to synthesize insights from art theory, architectural practice, and materialist critical theory within a theoretical assemblage that would present an original understanding of the relationships between architects, users, and the built environment. At times, connecting such diverse ideas felt like trying to tie countless threads into a coherent whole; a mass of theoretical scholarship, disciplinary critiques, and optimistic insights. I can only hope that a few interesting conclusions emerge from this process. This thesis should be apprehended as a critical essay on architectural practices and potential avenues for further investigation. The work presented here is a modest contribution to an effervescent field of discourse, and I hope it can

inspire future research into the potential of reciprocal, time-aware, and community-driven architectural practices. While it may only scratch the surface of a much larger body of work, I trust that it provides a valuable starting point for starting to rethink the role of architecture in fostering inclusive and meaningful relationships between people and their built environment.

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Bibliography

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