

***DISRUPTING PRIVATIZATION:  
ENHANCING SOCIO-CULTURAL INTERACTION***

by

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
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**To 媽媽 爸爸**

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# DISRUPTING PRIVATIZATION

## : ENHANCING SOCIO-CULTURAL INTERACTION

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As a product of rapid urbanization, residential developments are continuously proliferating in both density and scale. Driven by a capitalistic regime, Toronto's current high-density residential design is becoming homogenous in spatial planning and generating undistinctive spaces. With the existing programmatic configuration are internally and privately focused, these spaces lack the opportunity for community development and diverse recreational amenities, transforming the dwelling to another urban *Junkspace* (non-place). By creating hybridized spaces that bridge private and public zones, this thesis proposes to generate spontaneous social activities and interactions within interstitial spaces. The new composed areas provide a dynamic living environment with direct access to shared recreational activities, integrated outdoor spaces, and creative community spaces, attracting an influx of users from the surrounding neighbourhood. Using strategies of shifting narratives, interstitial spaces, ambiguous voids, and integrated landscapes, the hybrid spaces reinvents the traditional monotony spaces and explores urban pluralism on both community and building level.

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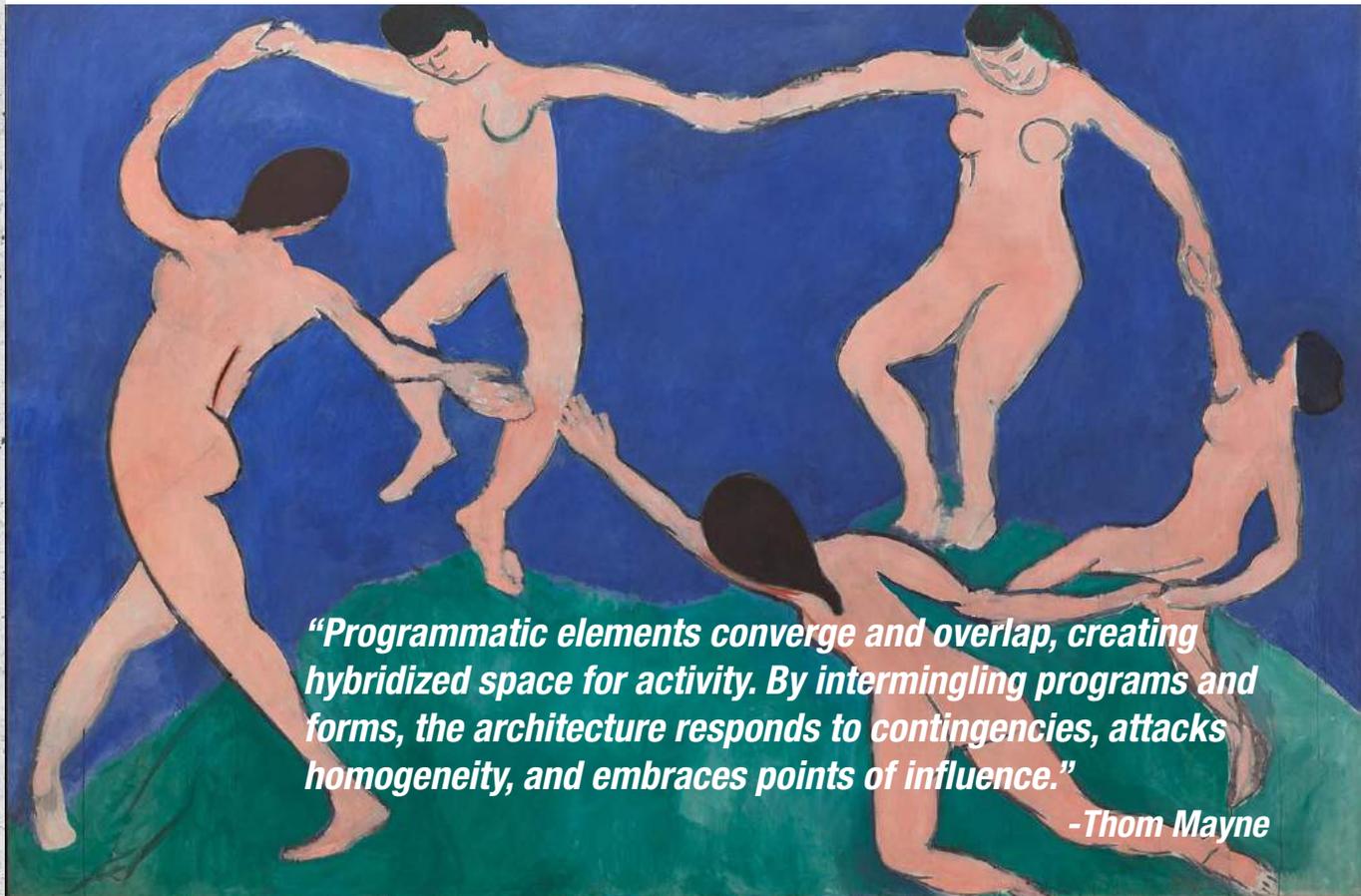
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## THESIS STATEMENT

As a response to Toronto's rapid urbanization and condominium growth over the past decade, it is evident that residential design is becoming increasingly homogeneous and carelessly neglects community interconnection. To conquer the disintegration of public space, mono-programmatic and repetitive environments, an introduction to hybridized programs is necessary to enhance social interaction and generate continuous activity. Using spontaneous strategies to encourage urban pluralism and diversification of spatial qualities, this programmatic model can act as a catalyst for developing an exciting and healthy environment.

Figure 1.1: Dance - Henri Matisse

# 0.1 INTRODUCTION

With urbanization being a continuously growing global phenomenon fuelled by a capitalistic regime, metropolises across the world are progressively becoming saturated by residential developments. In order to meet the high demand for residential units, designers turn to a rapid approach to architecture favouring a typology that appears as pre-packed lunch boxes with standardized programming and homogeneous characteristics. With maximization of units, time, and profits acting as the driving forces for these buildings, it is increasingly evident that this framework neglects community interconnection and surrounding urban context. As architecture is often the reflection of societal actions and lifestyles, to conquer a continuous path of solitary and repetitive routines, alternative design approaches with a hedonistic goal in mind can improve the quality of built environments, thus manipulating spaces for better human interaction.

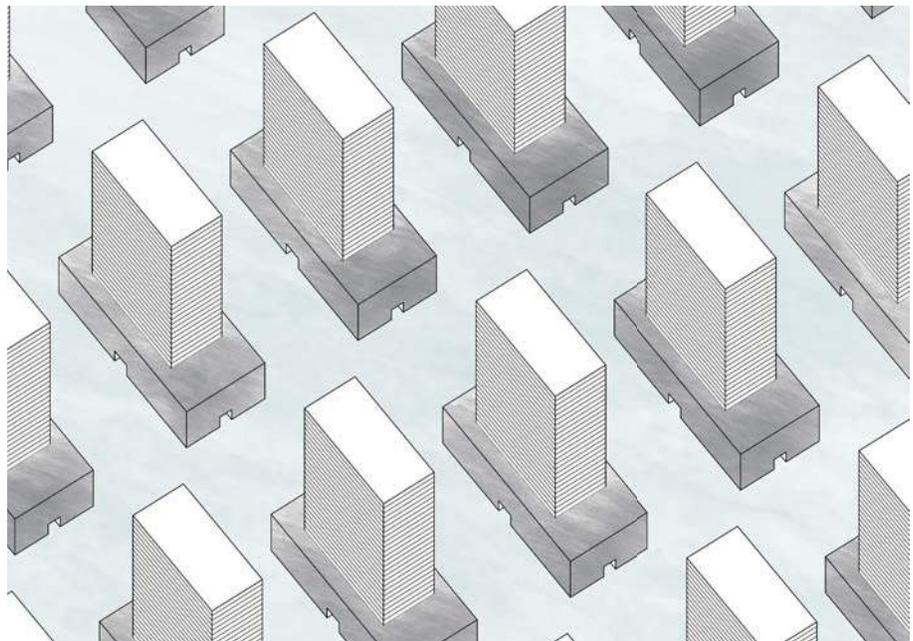
Accompanying the residential expansion, the current infrastructure in many North American cities is becoming static and inefficient to accommodate the needs of the growing population. Ironically, the existing design model is subconsciously desocializing individuals, as they are discouraged from engaging with these spaces due to over congestion and issues with proximity and convenience. The services and amenities for these residences are increasingly privatized and mundane, further reducing social interaction within a community. To progress from the current design model and meet the contemporary needs, the design approach should anticipate the radical changing in the spatial organization and programmatic requirements, challenging the existing normative design methodologies. Whether this approach is to intertwine the public and the private or generating intrinsic atmospheres, an insertion of interstitial fabric in homogeneous programs can enhance both the social interaction and circulation within a community. Perhaps in this critique and intervention, programmatic cross-pollination and hybridizing community spaces are necessary to create social encounters and strengthen bonds between collective individuals.

# 0.1 INTRODUCTION

Focusing on bridging public and private relations, the multi-layering of programmatic functions will require high inclusivity of a wide range of demographics. By manipulating the concept of hybridization, it treats the built form as objects for combining, mixing and generating interstitial zones for places of opportunity. Treating existing built form and programmatic arrangements as objects, a spontaneous insertion of new functions can further support the residential environment. To start, architecture as objects treats individual components as a whole, as opposed to smaller parts. This spatial tolerance of diverse programs within a site renegotiates the traditional definitive notion of public and private. The origin of the word interstitial is derived from the term, interstice, which in Latin is a combination of "between" and "to stand" forming "stand between." Perhaps, in architectural conditions, this suggests a space between subjects, a momentary zone, or even an undefined space. Through many interpretations by architects and architectural theorists, this term is repeatedly treated as the foundation of intervention and design strategy to intensify or improve the user's experience. However, this concept is often overlooked in residential typologies, specifically in the Greater Toronto Area as feasibility and maximizing density drives the volume and articulation of spaces. In between zones of communities and building, programs can be utilized as public spaces for the inhabitants. With the ambition to change the dynamics of homogeneous residential developments in the city of Toronto this thesis explores the ability to amalgamate different social programs within a site by accepting pluralism in urban spaces and embracing the programmatic hybridity of architecture.

Although this methodology was previously explored on alternative urban typologies, such as museums, libraries, institutional buildings and recreation centres, by utilizing interstitial zones in the mixed-use residential developments, it aims to invite individuals from different communities to engage in this space. To start by analyzing the current effects of urban environments, one of the most predominant elements of urban interaction is the street condition. It is in these conditions where people traverse through the streets

in their daily routines, continuously shifting through volumes of autonomous programs and unique ever-changing environments. It is suggested in both theories from Steven Holl, Peter Eisenman, and Bernard Tschumi that in this process, the natural curiosity of individuals subconsciously allows them to learn and react to spontaneous social occurrences consistently. As the concept of manipulating interstitial zones and relationships was previously investigated, Thom Mayne from Morphosis believed that "As one moves through space, multiple activities are seen and experienced at once, stimulating the mind. The most interesting spaces are those hard-to-define, in-between areas...the building is a locus of activity where human patterns interweave, causing 'the disintegration of rigidity through meshing'" (Mayne, 2008). Social Interaction within a residential community extends beyond just hearing and seeing each other. It offers opportunities to share resources and bring liveliness to the dwelling environment.



**Figure 1.2:** The City of Disconnected Residences

The intent of this thesis is to critique the existing residential developments in Toronto and investigate alternative methods of living collectively by renegotiating public and private relationships. This thesis will first analyze and define the notion of social interaction in an urban context, then look at the development of public space in conjunction with residential communities. Subsequently, this thesis will provide a critical analysis of the condominium typology in the Toronto landscape and the privatization of amenity spaces. With the supported hypothesis that plurality and multiplicity can transform lifeless homogenous spaces into places of activity, the suggestion of the hybrid typology can act as a vessel for providing the necessary changes to improve the quality of a community. Through this intervention, the thesis project aims to incubate social activity and prevent existing residential urban space further becoming *Junkspace*, a residue space that is repetitive in experiences where users are not cognitive of their community (Koolhaas R. , 2002).

***“The contemporary city like the contemporary airport, all the same?...What if this seemingly accidental and usually regretted, homogenization were an intentional process, a conscious movement away from difference toward similarity?”***

***– Rem Koolhaas (1995)***

1. Koolhaas, R. (2002). *Junkspace*. October Vol 100.
2. Mayne, T. (2008). *Morphosis Buildings & Projects*. New York: Rizzoli .



**CHAPTER 1:  
GENERATING CONTEMPORARY  
SOCIAL INTERACTION**

# 1.0 SOCIAL INTERACTION

## 1.1 Interaction and Activities

Urban density is a phenomenon that has changed the way people interact with one another, affecting the daily lives of urban dwellers. From this concentration of people, the scarcity of personal spaces redefined areas of activity and introduced shared public space for interaction. These zones between structures provided a catalyst for lively experiences and invited people of the community to engage with one another. To understand the importance of social interaction, first, we must define the concept of activity within a neighbourhood. These activities can generally be defined by three categories: Necessary Activities, Optional Activities, and Social Activities. On a day-to-day basis, necessary activities are more or less compulsory, whether it is going to school, commuting to work, shopping, waiting for transit etc. Majority of these tasks are associated with walking and traversing through urban space, passing by people and information consciously and subconsciously. On the other hand, optional activities are those that are participated if one wishes to do so and if



**Figure 1.3 (TL):** Necessary Activities such as commuting to work.

**Figure 1.4 (TR):** Transit Space



**Figure 1.5 (BL):** Optional Activities - Trinity Bellwoods Park



**Figure 1.6 (BR):** Ideal outdoor conditions

# 1.0 SOCIAL INTERACTION

the time and environment is ideal. Optional activities include leisure activities such as taking a walk and sitting in public spaces and relaxing. This type of activity usually occurs only when exterior conditions are favourable, and the weather and place invite them. When designing public spaces and community space, optional activities is critical since recreational activities are more pleasant to pursue when the conditions and climate are optimal. Only strictly necessary activities occur when urban areas are poor in quality and neglected. However, if the space is well designed and orchestrated, then a wide range of optional activities will occur since the environment invites individuals to slow down their daily lives and take a moment to enjoy the urban conditions (Gehl, 2011).

## 1.2 Social Activities

As a combination of necessary and optional, social activities are those often involving more than one person. This type of activity depends on the presence of others in public space, which includes children at play, greetings and conversations, communal activities, and passive contacts such as simple as hearing and seeing other people. Unlike optional activities which as restricted by the exterior conditions, social activities can occur in different types of places: in homes, private outdoor spaces, gardens, balconies, public spaces and buildings, at work etc. Social activities can also be considered as 'resultant' activities because in most instances they emerge from activities related to the other two, developed in the same space and context (Gehl, 2011). Uniquely, social activities can occur spontaneously, as a direct result of the flow of people and being in the same space. This notion implies that the character of social activities is indirectly a result of the quality of space and the amount of comfort for the users. For instance, in enclosed neighbourhoods, residential streets, near schools and places of work, social interaction is limited based on common interests or backgrounds. However, social activities in public spaces can be more comprehensive as greetings and conversations arise from common interests and the shared experience. In an urban environment such

# 1.0 SOCIAL INTERACTION

as city streets and city centres, social activities are often more superficial, with the majority of the interaction being passive contacts, nonetheless seeing and hearing people can be appealing as some individuals find it exciting and safe.



Figure 1.7 (L): Toronto Taste of Danforth

Figure 1.8 (R): Luminato Festival of Lights

Figure 1.9 (B): Toronto Sign in Nathan Philips Square

## 1.3 Designing Spaces of Interaction

Although the built form and physical framework do not have a direct influence on the quality, content and intensity of social contacts, architects, designers, and planners can foster the possibilities for meeting, seeing, and hearing people. When designing public spaces, the presence of other people, activities, events, inspiration, and stimulation are the most significant aspects of creating quality spaces, where the three types of activities are finely

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interwoven. In an urban environment, functional, recreational, and social activities intertwine in unique combinations, especially in meaningful and attractive communal spaces and residential areas. Public spaces encourage contact between people; they provide an area for a different intensity of interaction (ranging from high intensity, those who are in close relations, to low intensity, passive contacts from seeing and hearing) (Gehl, 2011). Low-intensity contact between individuals is also a situation that other forms of contact can grow due to its unpredictable manner. However, if public space is not designed attractively and carefully, this intensity of interaction is the initial type to disappear. When creating a hedonistic community, it is critical to accommodate space for all intensity of interaction since it strengthens the relationship between individuals in a community.

**Figure 1.10 (TL):** Underpass Park: using leftover space below elevated highway bridge



**Figure 1.11 (TR):** Tianjin Binhai Library in Shanghai by MVRDV



**Figure 1.12 (BL):** HTO Park by Janet Rosenberg + Associates Landscape Architects, Claude Cormier Architects, HPA



**Figure 1.13 (BR):** Regent Park Aquatic Centre by MJMA



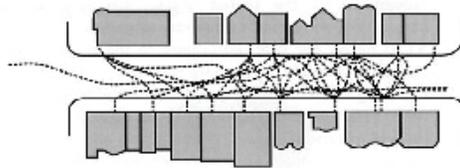
# 1.0 SOCIAL INTERACTION

The diminishing public space has a common concern for industrialized and post-industrialized cities as living environments are becoming increasingly lifeless due to residential areas becoming significantly privatized, segregation of various city functions, and reliance on the automobiles (Gehl, 2011). This is visibly evident in Toronto as severe congestions form on major central arteries and the growing amount of pseudo-public spaces in invisible gated communities. Ultimately, people are attracted to lively places with human activity, but city planning in North America followed the trend of devaluing sidewalk space for resting and public zones for leisure.

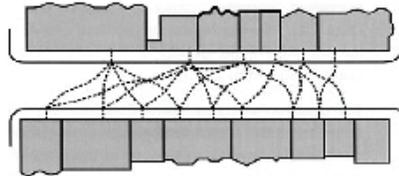


Figure 1.14 (L): Pseudo Public Space- Rose Garden at Four Seasons Hotel and Residence

**Light Traffic**  
3.0 friends per person  
6.3 acquaintances



**Moderate Traffic**  
1.3 friends per person  
4.1 acquaintances



**Heavy Traffic**  
0.9 friends per person  
3.1 acquaintances

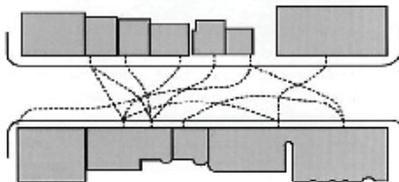


Figure 1.15 (L): Pedestrian Study of San Francisco from "The Environmental Quality of City Streets"



***“Social activities and their interweaving to form a communal fabric have received considerably less attention”***

***– Jan Gehl***

# 1.0 SOCIAL INTERACTION

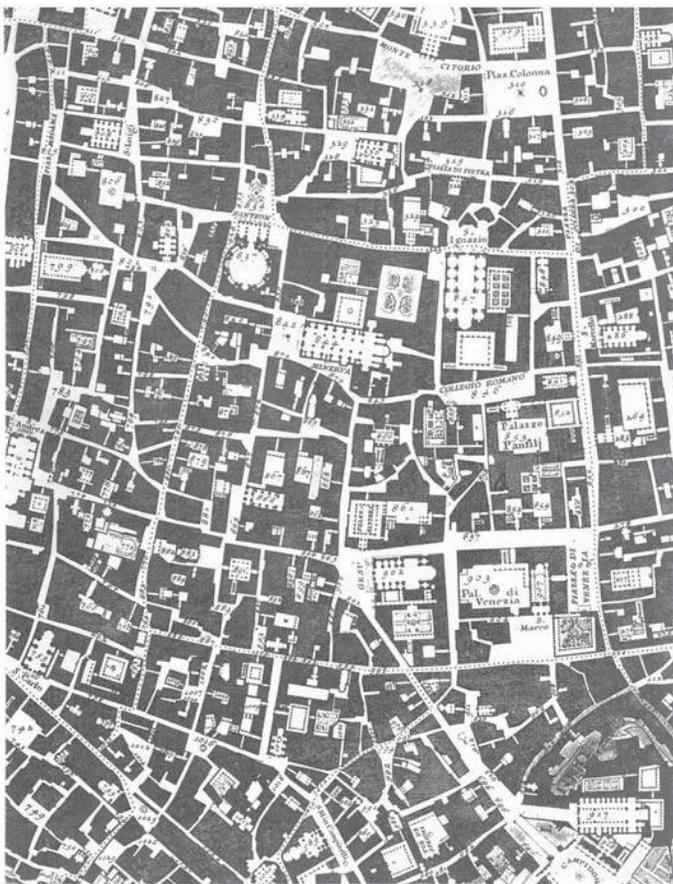
To improve the quality of daily and social activities in cities, urban planners and designers need to understand the positive effects of pedestrian streets and traffic-free zones. Studies have shown (University of Melbourne and Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology 1978) that there is a direct correlation between street quality to street activity. This analysis explored the relationship between pedestrian focused streets and heavy traffic streets in San Francisco. The results indicated that low traffic and pedestrian based street environments exponentially generated more activity and interaction than heavy traffic areas. The high frequency of vehicles restricts people from comfortably using the public streets as a place for engagement since safety and pollution are crucial factors for activities. Consequently, to design comfortable and inhabitable space for the public, the pedestrian use will be the primary focus to create social spaces.

## 1.4 History of the Public Realm

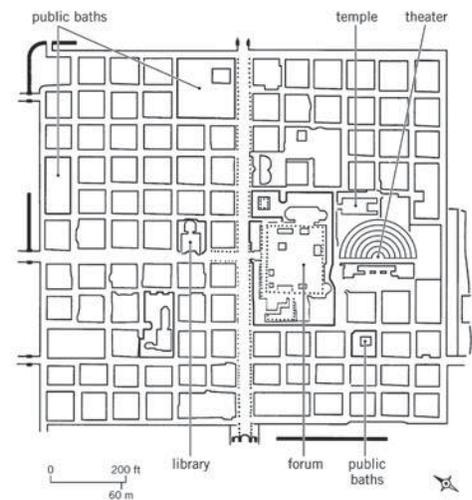
To develop social spaces for the 21st century, we must understand the origin of urban planning and its relation to the public realm before reinterpreting space for the 21st century. Emphasizing the emergence of public space, it dates back to the Middle Ages of 500AD, when cities were not planned in the true sense but grew out of a necessity of space. During these times, cities did not develop based on singular plans but evolved over hundreds of years and sculpted to the needs of the community (Gehl, 2011). Continuous adaptation and adjustments of the city formed life in between buildings in urban spaces and formed town centres, plazas, church squares and open space. Historically, town planning was military driven during the Roman and Greek era, and the current notion of the urban plan was not fully realized until the Renaissance. Although during the Middle Ages, these public spaces were enclosed spatial design by residential buildings, they were carefully oriented for natural light and consideration to climate. Since the Renaissance, urban planning has radically changed twice. The first being the focus on aesthetics as a primary driver for city planning. This paradigm shift transformed the views of urban planning

# 1.0 SOCIAL INTERACTION

from a sporadic development to a greater degree a work of art, conceived, perceived, and executed as a whole.



**Figure 1.16 (L):** Figure ground map of Rome by Giambattista Nolli showing the public space and urban voids



**Figure 1.17 (L):** Traditional Roman City plan with public spaces disrupting the grid plan.

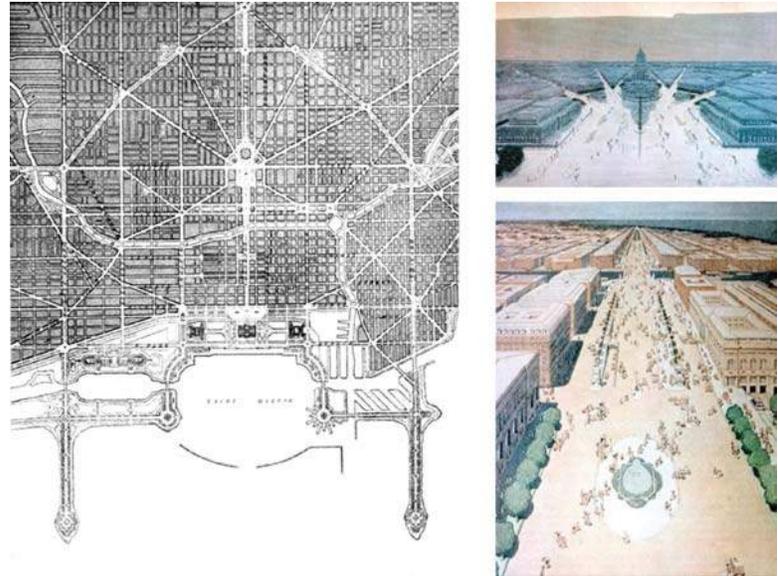
# 1.0 SOCIAL INTERACTION

Dating back to the introduction of Haussmann's grand scheme of renovating Paris in the 1850's, the plan reimagined urban streets with exaggerated avenues and wide open spaces between dense streets. With the new bisecting streets opening spaces, it created opportunities in the city plan for monumental plazas and parks spanning blocks (Gehl, 2010). This appreciation of aesthetics and planning theology eventually influenced North American city planning with the City Beautiful Movement in the 1890's. Further developing the Haussmann's urban design methodologies, the movement encouraged social order and promoted civic virtue and moral in urban populations. Aesthetically, the movement borrowed ideas from the Beaux-Arts and neoclassical architecture, developing master plans that treat urban space with a singular aesthetic, order and harmony. Consequently, this methodology developed urban landscapes that overwhelmed the human scale and neglected the spaces away from the city nodes.



**Figure 1.18 (L):** Public Space and Avenues in the Renovation of Paris

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**Figure 1.19 (L):** City Beautiful Movement, Plans and Avenues

Evolving from pure aesthetics and exaggeration of scale, the modernist zeitgeist began to influence urban design, shifting towards a functional and ridged direction. Rooted in efficiency, industrialization, and automobiles, the modernist planning responds to urban high urban density with the compartmentalization of programs and emphasis on infrastructure. During the modernist era, the focus of urban planning and architecture further departed its objectives from human interaction and qualities public spaces required. These dominant planning ideologies specifically put a low priority on public spaces, pedestrianism and the role of the city as a meeting place for residents. With the average North American city articulated for vehicular transport, issues such as spatial limitations, physical obstacles, noise, pollution, the risk of accidents arose from modernist master planning (Gehl, 2010). In the advent of functionalism, streets and squares were declared unwanted and instead, roads, paths, and grass lawns replaced them. As a result, the traditional sense of public space became residue and leftover space since it is no longer mandatory. Another significant element driving modernist planning is economics and feasibility. This resulted in market-driven developments that

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not only reduced the opportunities for pedestrians as a form of transport but also placed the social and cultural functions of urban space under siege (Gehl, 2010).

In Jane Jacobs's critique of modernist urban environments, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, she indicates the dramatic increase of car traffic and modernism planning ideologies. The vehicular impact on urbanism separates the uses of the city and emphasizes free-standing individual buildings would put an end to urban space and city life, resulting in lifeless cities devoid of people (Jacobs, 1961). Jacobs feared that buildings in urban spaces are no longer built as conglomerations or collective minds but as individual facades. Therefore, the life in between buildings were radically reduced, and buildings designs were focused internally. This individualization created homogenous building organizations and capitalized on a repetitive experience. Evidently, given the example of St. Louis' Pruitt-Igoe and Toronto's Regent Park, mono-functional spaces with high density can lead to urban decay and the creation of dangerous zones if these shared spaces are not well designed and well invested.



**Figure 1.20:** Plan Voisin Proposal by Le Corbusier



**Figure 1.21:** Pruitt Igoe

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## 1.5 Public Space and Human Behaviour

When designing public space in an urban environment, it is critical for the design to be an extension of its users. In contemporary society, human behaviour is becoming more difficult to project when society focuses on the individual with technology and devices creating social barriers (Nielsen & Jensen, 2010). With media services connecting and broadcasting across the world, in a sense the planet is shrinking and differences in the way we perceive it are diminishing. This new wave of globalization is generating evident advantages in the aspect of democratization. However, it also entails a risk of losing what is unique to a particular city, society, and culture. Present day technology is changing human behaviour and culture by making it possible for people to interact with others in increasingly complex networks and encourage individuals to reappraise their roles in a global society through sharing data. Nonetheless, if this development also diminishes regional values, then collective society may lose the ability to create a framework of self-image in relation to their origin. Danish architect, Kim Herforth Nielsen suggests that, "Human beings use other people and their surroundings as a mirror. What we see as our reflection defines *how we perceive ourselves* and *how we perceive ourselves* and *how we differ from others*. Our allegiance to groups, society in general, and places is also reflected." (Nielsen & Jensen, 2010) As a result, human behaviour and spatial surroundings create a unique dialogue through an endless feedback loop. If city centres and neighbourhoods have homogenous urban masses without much lively variation between buildings, then the life between buildings will react in the same manner. Conversely, by introducing new public shared spaces to a muted area, its behaviour contributes actively to the interplay with the surrounding community.

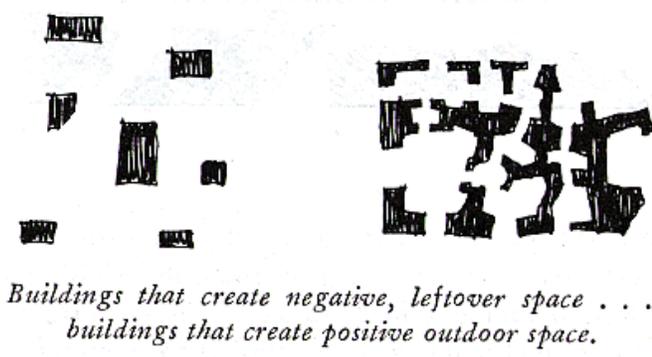
Public Space and public activity can be established in five types of spaces of recognition, which includes parks, recreational space, streets, commercial, and semi-private spaces (Tonnelat, 2010). To develop accessible, welcoming, and functional public spaces, it cannot be treated as leftover space

# 1.0 SOCIAL INTERACTION

in a relation to existing structures. Architect and design theorist, Christopher Alexander, defined this space as a Positive Outdoor Space (Alexander, 1977). Alexander defined outdoor spaces that are 'left over' between buildings will, in general, not be used or functional. This negative residue space typically not designed or articulated to specific users whereas positive space is distinct and definite in shape. When positive space is crafted with the same intent as an interior room, it is important as the buildings, which surrounds it. Another method of separating the two types of space is through their degree of enclosure and convexity. Positive spaces are partly enclosed to the extent that space seems bounded, whereas negative spaces are poorly defined, and users cannot define where the boundaries area or where it begins and ends.

***“Give each one some degree of enclosure; surround each space with wings of buildings, trees, hedges, fences, arcades, and trellised walks, until it becomes an entity with a positive quality and does not spill out indefinitely around corners”***

***– Christopher Alexander (Alexander, 1977)***



**Figure 1.22 (L):** Negative Undefined Outdoor Space

**Figure 1.23 (R):** Positive Defined Outdoor Space

**Figure 1.24 (B):** Positive vs Negative Outdoor Space - A Pattern Language

# 1.0 SOCIAL INTERACTION

## 1.6 Interaction of scale: the human as Spatial Object

Aside from crafting spaces, physical objects, barriers, and defining programs as spatial interventions, the human itself is to be considered a spatial object, especially in an urban environment. In an urban environment, which space is shared collectively amongst a broad demographic, to coexist the individual often recognize other bodies as another dynamics of space (Nielsen & Jensen, 2010). This is evident in public transit, work environments, institutions, events, and especially in public spaces. People learn from one another, generating a collective relationship, whether through body movement, hearing, and talking. When sharing the same experience, individuals develop a new intimacy with the 'other.' This intimacy can be described as being in a space consciously developing relations, exchanges, distributions and understanding an individual and their surroundings as it transforms.

To help understand the human as another dynamic in space, the human sense is a prerequisite for dimensioning all forms of exterior and interior space. In *The Hidden Dimension*, by anthropologist Edward T. Hall, it depicted that the most important senses for human contacts and experience the outside world is through sight, hearing, and smell. These senses define a range of perception called *the social field of vision* (Hall, 1966). Although people can perceive and see others at the distance of 500 meters to one kilometre, it is within 100 meters that people can begin to observe details. Between the 70 to 100 meter ranges, one can begin to identify another's gender, approximate age, and the activity they are conducting. When approaching closer in the 20 to 30 meter distance, a person physical details and moods are able to be recognized, which within this range meeting begins to become relevant in a social context (Gehl, 2011). For instance, in typical theatre design, the furthest audience seat is located approximately a maximum of 30 to 35 meters away, in order for the audience to depict the emotion and actions of the performers. At even closer distances in the social field, the intensity of the interaction becomes increasingly distinct. Normal conversations often take place within the 1 to 3 meter distance as all

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the human sense can be engaged with the other. Hall describes this distance of interplay between the intensity of engagement as a number of *social distances* (Hall, 1966). Within the social distance, comfortable exchanges are common and ordinary conversations can begin amongst friends, acquaintances, neighbours, strangers etc. As a result, the relationship between the intensity and distance is critical for spatial design when the perception of architectural dimensions can dictate the intimacy and presence of its users.

To design spaces in relation to the relevant human dimension is first to define the primary method of access, which then defines the proximity and orientation of the built interventions. Distance and scale of structures can quickly differentiate whether if it is an automobile city or a pedestrian city since pedestrian cities offer zones for slowness, resulting in individuals to pause and interact. In summary, when designing and planning spaces for contact, five different means are used to promote contact: less walls, shorter distances, lower speeds, less levels, orientation towards each other. On the other hand, to create isolation and prevent contact walls, long distances, high speeds, multiple levels, and orientation away from others are implemented.

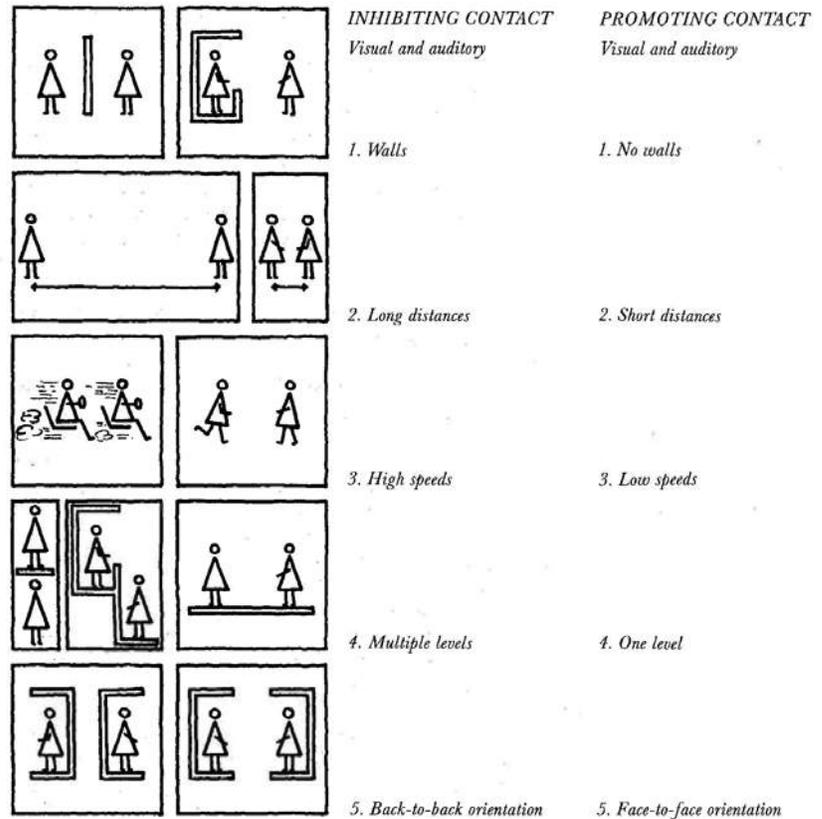
***“Many people no longer see themselves as ‘urban dwellers’, but instead see themselves as belonging to a particular neighbourhood. Despite so many examples in the past, many new urban developments still seem empty and soulless”***

***– Kim Herforth Nielsen***



Figure 1.25 (L): Social field of Vision

# 1.0 SOCIAL INTERACTION



**Figure 1.26 (L):** Sense and Communication: Strategies for Contact

On an urban planning scale, the usual radius of action for the average individual on foot is limited to 400 to 500 meters per excursion. In addition, when recognizing others in space, the possibilities for seeing other people and courses of events are limited to a distance between 20 meters to 100 meters, which varies based on what is seen and the level of concentration used (Gehl, 2011). When buildings are scarce and spread out, amenities also become spread out; resulting activities never get a chance to grow. However, in unique circumstances of dense urban areas that lack life and activities, such as urban slums, it can be a directly related to the lack of quality and space for social contact.

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## 1.7 Spatial Qualities for Social Interaction

After establishing the distance and intensity for interaction, specific design strategies are often used for designing spaces for social contact. A traditional approach that traces back to European cities for designing healthy engaging public spaces is articulating buildings, structures, and amenities around or along public zones. By intentionally organizing programs adjacent to public space, it provides additional accessibility and breathing space for the cluster of buildings. Whether the public space is small or large, natural daylighting is critical to generating a welcoming environment. Natural light can provide a sense of safety and comfort for individuals to pause and slow down. In European cities, the strategy of creating small spaces within large ones is highly efficient for incubating social contact. By offering, multiple microzones within public space encourage individuals to pause, socialize, and recognize the surroundings. For instance, in the busy streets of Barcelona such as the Rambla, rows of trees introduce pockets of intimate space and a relatable scale in the wide landscape. These trees suggest pavilion space and create an attractive pedestrian space.

Another critical design strategy is utilizing sightlines and visual access in public spaces. When activities that are typically difficult to be seen, the possibilities for interaction are greatly reduced. As a result, by dispersing programs and events on multiple definitive levels, it creates a problematic general access and becomes significantly less noticeable. Urbanist, Willian H Whyte, stated in his studies from New York City, "If people do not see a space, they will not use it... unless there is a compelling reason, an open space should never be sunk. With two or three notable exceptions, sunken plazas are dead spaces" (Whyte, 1980). Evidently, meaningful contact with the ground level is only possible from a limited height threshold on a multilevel building. Within the five-storey threshold, there is still a visual connection with the ground plane and visually able to recognize the details of the activity. Furthermore, under the three storey height threshold, the contact with the ground drastically increases as both sound and sight are able to be used for communication (Gehl, 2011).



**Figure 1.27 :** Copenhagen streets with pockets of social space

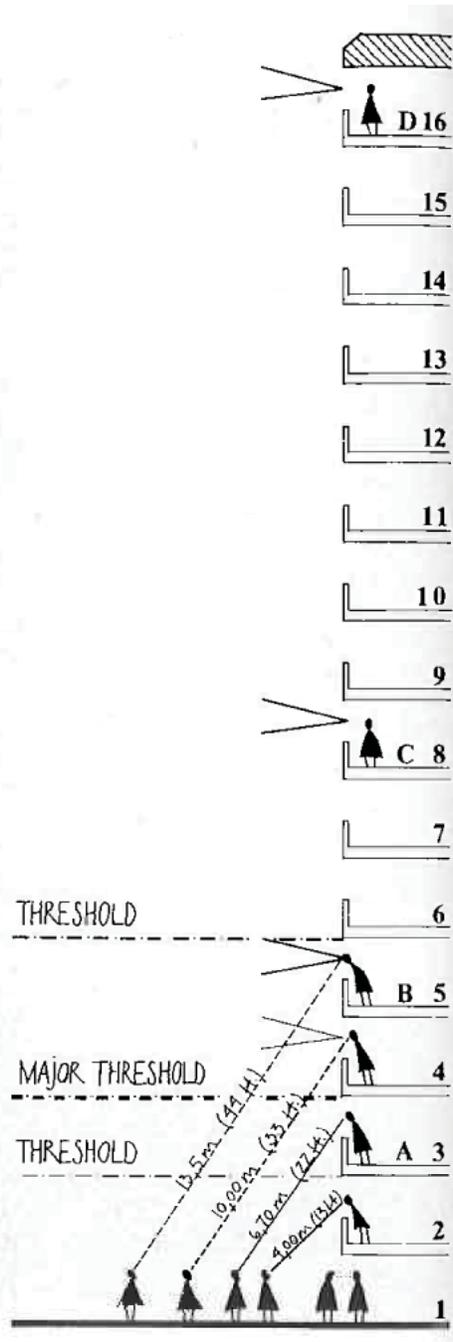


**Figure 1.28 :** La Rambla Barcelona

# 1.0 SOCIAL INTERACTION

***“Man is born a social creature. We seem to be inspired with good ideas and learn better in the company of others. We spend our school years studying and absorbing knowledge with out peers.”***

***– Jan Gehl***

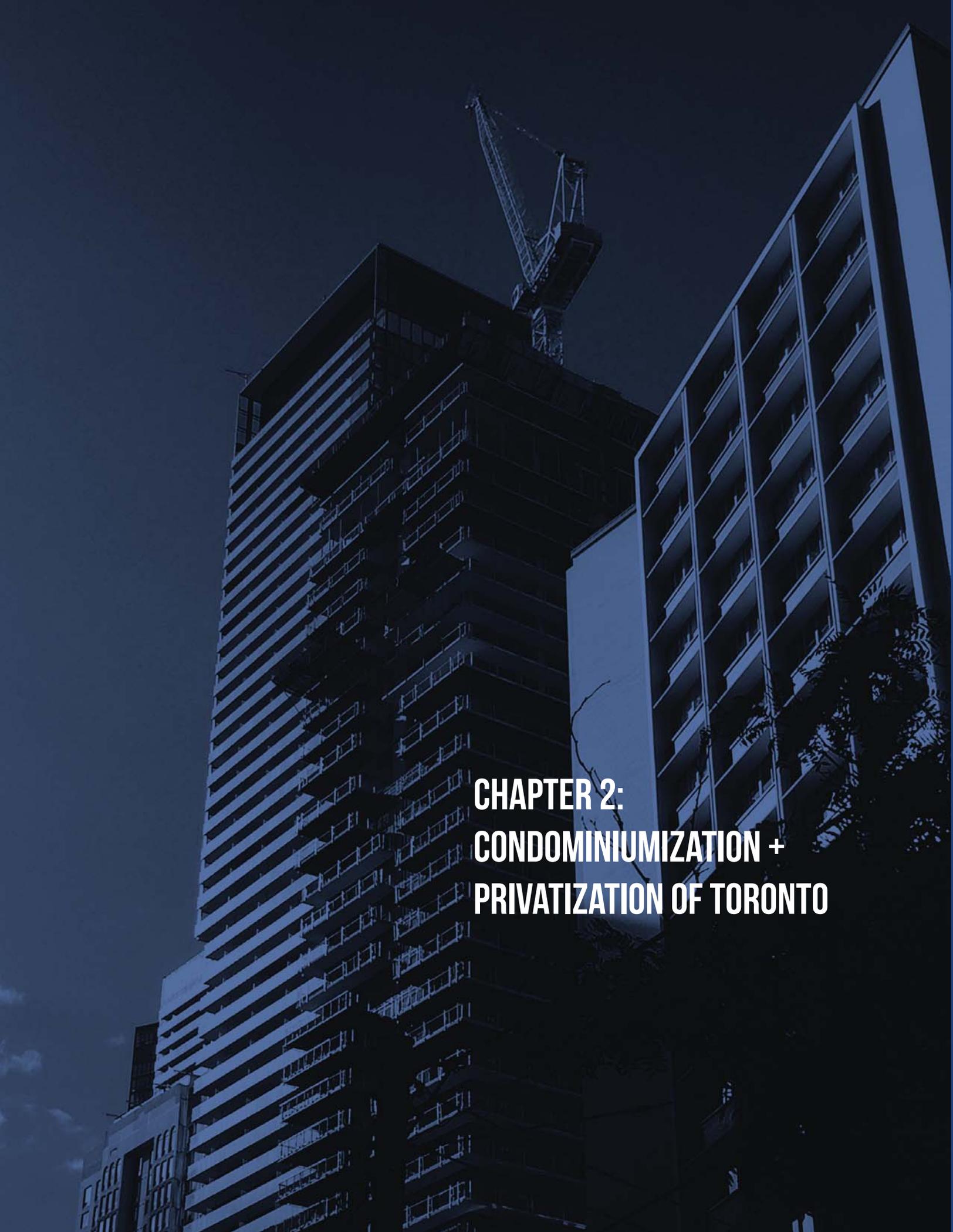


**Figure 1.29 :** Building height threshold for interaction with the street

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**CHAPTER 2:  
CONDOMINIUMIZATION +  
PRIVATIZATION OF TORONTO**

# 2.0 CONDOMINIUMIZATION OF TORONTO

## 2.1 Toronto Condominium Market

Over the past decade, Toronto has been going through tremendous transformations, shifting from industrial brownfields and vacant lots to its current condominium rise and sprawl. With the exponential growth of residential developments in the downtown core, Toronto is becoming one of the densest cities in North America. Opposed to the other high-density metropolises such as New York and Hong Kong, Toronto's developments focus solely on residential architecting, growing exponentially in sheer numbers of new towers within the decade, leading to Toronto having more towers (ranging from 12-40 stories) than any North American city. Fueled by the high demand for individuals seeking to live within the city as well as foreign investors purchasing units, these buildings are continuously increasing in size, volume, and height, let alone the speed in which these buildings are being constructed is a notable phenomenon. On the other hand, this rapid construction neglects



**Figure 2.1:**  
Toronto Condominium Skyline

## 2.0 CONDOMINIUMIZATION OF TORONTO

the quality of design, construction and an effort to create unique architectural spaces for the users. With the developer's perspective focusing on market returns and profits, the result is the residences suffering in homogeneous and static programs. In addition, the rapid growth of residential developments has been privatizing public space and reducing the shared areas for social interactions within both existing and developing communities. With the city's acceptance of privately owned public space (POPS), developers have been exploiting the definition of public space and created lifeless areas for meeting building guidelines. Furthermore, amenity and recreation programs are widely undervalued in traditional condominium developments, as they usually do not profit from them, resulting in private and poorly designed zones within a residence. In order to reconcile the interaction these developments deserve, critical changes will be required in regards to form, building guidelines, and appropriation of space.

Although the Ontario government has been inflicting new regulations and introducing a 15% foreign buyers tax in an effort to control the Toronto housing market, buyers are continuing to purchase property and units. This emergence of foreign investors shifting their focus from the west coast is primarily a result of Canada's stable and safe banking system, as well as the growth in population in Toronto over the past decade (Reuters, 2014). During the first half of 2017, over 21,900 units sold and 104,060 preconstruction units were bought (Explosive First Half for GTA New Condo Market, 2017). This drastic increase in demand of units encourages developers to continue to build apartment condominiums, as well as increase the verticality of residential towers within the downtown core. Several issues emerge for dweller from this urban trend including a drastic increase in rent, built quality of the condominiums, and the accessibility to the city.



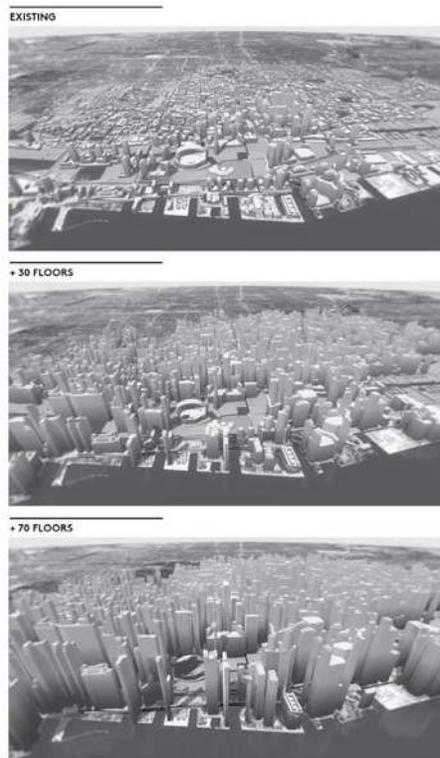
**Figure 2.2:**  
POPS in City Place



**Figure 2.3:**  
The Icboat Terrace in City Place

## 2.0 CONDOMINIUMIZATION OF TORONTO

Several neighbourhoods spanning across the harbour from the East Bayfront to Liberty Village have an imbalance of social amenities and dwelling spaces, generating mundane urban conditions, hence a severe disconnect between its users and its community. Paradoxically, this aggressive spike in housing development and high demand to move into the downtown core have drastically increasing the construction and land costs, resulting in unobtainable and unaffordable residential units. Despite the constant construction of condominium towers and complex across the city, the high demand has made owning a home in the city too difficult. Consequently, the majority of the dwellers in Toronto are renters who cannot afford to buy their own property in the city. The increasing rent over the last five years has created temporary dwellers that are in a cycle for looking for less costly areas to live



**Figure 2.4:**  
Toronto Dooms Day- Rise and Sprawl

## 2.0 CONDOMINIUMIZATION OF TORONTO



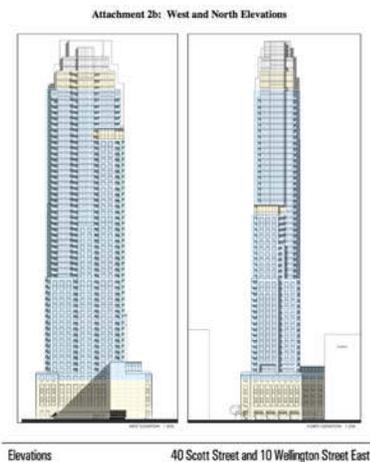
**Figure 2.5 :**  
Areas of transformations

(Martin, 2017). As a result, the majority of these tenants disregard the quality of amenities and public spaces around them since they will most likely relocate in a few years. On the other hand, condominium owners suffer from poorly built space when developers compromise quality with speed. This results in owners dealing with water leaks and failing façade systems. In fear of lowering asset values of their property as they try to offload their property, owners are reluctant to demand changes (Reuters, 2014). Evidently, poorly built condominiums are still constructed continuously in clusters over the downtown core, creating congestions along the main arteries of the city.

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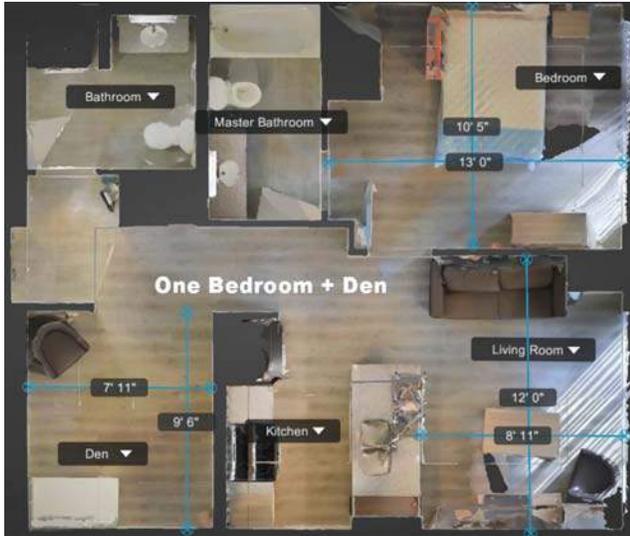
## 2.2 Condominium Form

In a marketplace where developers interests trump design excellence, the typical condominium form had become stale and generated a “new pressure-cooked vernacular, based on a limited set of building typologies, materials, forms and colour-schemes” (Ibelings, 2016). Traditionally, the notion of vernacular is developed over periods of time, passing on knowledge, skills, conventions and habits, from generation to generation. However, the Toronto condominium high-rise vernacular has been conceived over a single generation. In a city where form follows finance, the paradigm becomes driven by returns on investments while at the cost of the level of architecture and complexity. This market system is unequivocal when the Condominium Act, composed by Alvin Rosenberg, enables developers to make more profit by selling units individually as private homes, opposed to selling the projects as a whole (Ibelings, 2016). As a result, the condominium built form became homogenous in their circulation, structure, and program, creating critical issues in connection to the surrounding urban context. The typical residential condominium form in Toronto is comprised of a centralized core surrounded by stacking repetitive floors and units, threaded by internalized corridors. Traditionally, concrete shear walls and columns spaced six to nine meters structurally reinforce these buildings and have a standardized eight to ten feet spacing between floor slabs. Under these restrictions, condominiums generally house units ranging from single bachelor to three bedrooms. However, in recent trends, three bedrooms and two bedrooms with den units are diminishing as these are more catered to family living, which is more difficult to sell. Despite the contrary, developers encourage smaller one bedroom-plus den units since it enables owners on a tight budget to rent out the den, avoiding the building code requirements that every bedroom must have a window and offers the second tenant their individual bathroom (Ibelings, 2016).



**Figure 2.6:**  
Typical Condominium Configuration

## 2.0 CONDOMINIUMIZATION OF TORONTO



**Figure 2.7 (T):** Typical One bedroom + Den unit

**Figure 2.8 (R):** Typical rooftop patio in Condos

**Figure 2.9 (L):** Typical Fitness room in Condos

On the discourse of programs and functions, amenities and shared spaces in condominiums typically allocated on grade level or upper levels facing a specific view of the city. In most situations, the amenity spaces include programs for fitness, gatherings, and entertainment. However, these fitness rooms are typically deserted since they are not spatially designed for a variety of equipment and residents often have fitness memberships for commercial gyms. Similarly, gathering and entertainment amenities usually require private booking and operate with restricted hours. Some instances, the grade level is used for commercial retail and small rental offices, yet the lack of activity on the grade level leaves these retailers unsuccessful. In an effort to improve the street condition and quality of interaction, several developments embrace the

## 2.0 CONDOMINIUMIZATION OF TORONTO

mixed-use typology. Following the trend of global metropolises such as New York City and Hong Kong, Toronto has been experimenting with expanding their building heights from the traditional 12-40 stories to the high-density tower of 50-80 stories. Aside from creating a city icon, one of the many reasons for this expansion is to allow more people to live closer to the central urban area and public transit.

Nevertheless, based on observation of these residential towers in Toronto, designers and developers do not thoroughly consider the way people interact with space especially with accessibility, quality of spaces, and circulation. For instance, the infamous Aura residential towers have the intentions of bringing a mega point-tower in proximity to the Dundas Square and College Park area for closer access to entertainment, commercial, and restaurants. Conversely, by locating the building close to external amenities, the internal amenity spaces are severely suffering from poorly designed subterranean commercial units and high vacancy. Furthermore, the building overall lacks the sense of community with the only connecting elements are the large retail stores, elevators and privatized lobbies. As a result, in this case, the absence of exterior space and connectivity to the street level of the tower has narrowed down the demographics of its inhabitants to young bachelors and couples with no intent for family development and university students renting the units. Another example sharing many similar problems is the L Tower, designed by Daniel Libeskind Architects. Deemed as an architectural failure, the project not only suffered from the disconnection with the public realm but also funding from external public and the private sector. With significant budget reductions from the two Canadian opera companies leaving the collaboration, the project eliminated the entire commercial amenity component as well as the public park space, resulting in another repetitive stacking residential tower. These examples demonstrate that it is necessary to establish a strong and healthy connection to the street level. It is evident that not only the design and private sectors' responsibility to be involved with generating social interaction but also the public sector as well.

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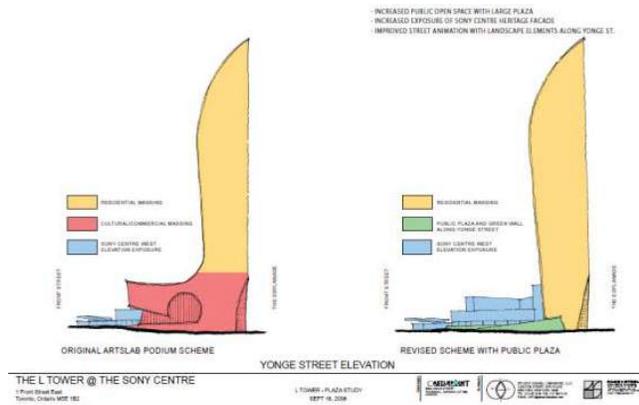


Figure 2.10 (TL): Shops at Aura

Figure 2.11 (TR): Aura Tower Render

Figure 2.12 (BL): L-Tower Proposal vs Reality

Figure 2.13 (BR): L-Tower Crane Complications

Although architects and developers favour the mixed-use typology, the success of this approach can only reach a certain extent. Currently, projects that utilize this arrangement of spaces are usually a combination of luxury residential with luxury hotels, which caters to a specific demographic. A critical issue of residential design in the city of Toronto is its social image, lack of identity, and marketing to the public. During pre-construction and schematic design, deceptive renderings often portray specific users with a healthy, wealthy and good-looking lifestyle using collective spaces such as lobbies and rooftop patios that often resemble boutique hotels. On the contrary, the

## 2.0 CONDOMINIUMIZATION OF TORONTO

marketing imagery from these proposals and advertisements rarely addresses or mentions the actual architecture of the spaces. Typically, condominiums are solely marketed for their location opposed to the quality of the spaces, which dwellers are paying for. It almost appears the architecture is not marketed as the unique selling point but primarily for its iconic location (Ibelings, 2016). On the other hand, the architectural design for residential design is often mediocre and does not contain any marketing value. The tragic reality is that it is possible to market and sell condominiums without quality architecture, resulting in the lack of necessity to invest in quality design. In Toronto, the condominium tower and its architectural design are usually viewed as separate entities. The condominium tower follows the typical vernacular form and the architectural design obedient to the branding. As a result, according to architectural critic, Hans Ibelings, the hierarchy for planning and designing residential towers that have emerged: "First comes the spread-sheet, which subsequently determines the building structure, and then comes the packaging and the advertising" (Ibelings, 2016).

With the Greater Toronto Area spread across multiple suburban communities, suburban values are seemingly affecting the design decisions of the downtown core, as well as the way space is being used. Specifically, the Toronto condominium typology obeys a similar logic as suburban housing developments with the replicated 'cookie-cutter' design strategies, homogenizing the living experience. Although, it appears there is an incoherent comparison between regions, fundamentally there is a relationship between the two, each informing the other in regards to lifestyles and decision-making (Ibelings, 2016). In one perspective, the suburbs are just a continuation of the urban, where the suburbs develop another formula for handling density with vast space provided. On the other hand, many condominium dwellers have a suburban background since Canada is heavily suburban country. Consequently, many of these new urban dwellers have not been accustomed to the city and its ways. Furthermore, condominiums have developed a role in making it possible for suburban dwellers to transition into the urban environment by retaining the

## 2.0 CONDOMINIUMIZATION OF TORONTO

values and ideal living characteristics of the suburbs (Ibelings, 2016). With a hassle-free, prepackaged home experience, much like the newer homes in the suburbs, condominiums have in return become an extension of suburbia. As a result, evidence of this can be found in the typical condominium form, which consists of a big-box grocery store and suburban restaurant chains at the base while the suburban backyard now located as a rooftop garden.

### 2.3 Building Guidelines

The second aspect that will critically reshape the way condominium developments are designed, is through changing the design guidelines and re-examining the Toronto building zoning. With little regulation, the current Tall Building Design Guidelines is primarily a set of non-legally binding recommendations encouraging a certain constancy in building design. As a result, these guidelines come down to the negotiating skills of the developers. However, it is often their goal to see how high they can build and how far they can stretch and bend the rules with the city and the Ontario municipal government. (Ibelings, 2016) In an urban environment where profit-driven entities dominate building regulations, design practices become compliant to their design requests since they withheld the most significant stakes and incentive for every project. Evidently, to propose a new approach for a developing a hedonistic community, a renegotiation with developers regarding the programmatic requirements in the guideline is necessary.

The current tall-building guideline went through several evolutions throughout the past two decades since the demand for being closer downtown became a norm for business and dwelling. The tall building guidelines first reiterated in 2006 by the Toronto City Council with the implementation of Official Plan policy consulted with HOK architects for a citywide "Design Criteria" and Urban Strategies in/ Hariri Pontarini Architects for the "Downtown Guidelines" (Tall Building Guidelines , 2013 ). Often tall buildings are defined as buildings

## 2.0 CONDOMINIUMIZATION OF TORONTO

with a height that is greater than the width of the adjacent street. Although the building height may vary across the city in response to the local context and building use, classic tall buildings in Toronto consists of three integrated components: Base Building, Middle, and Top (Tall building guidelines, 2013). The top typically is used for mechanical space, signage, and amenity space, which should be designed in distinction to the general massing and form of the building. By principle, the middle tower component is designed in consideration of views, privacy, wind, and natural light for the programs within and have an articulation that is conscious of the surrounding public realm (streets, parks, public and private open spaces, existing and future neighbouring buildings). Lastly, the building base houses a critical role in connecting the building to the

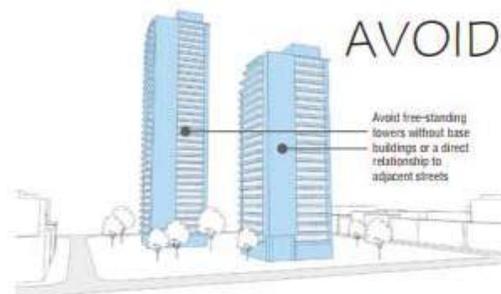


Figure 1: Free-standing towers disrupt the pedestrian-oriented scale, character, and vitality of the street.

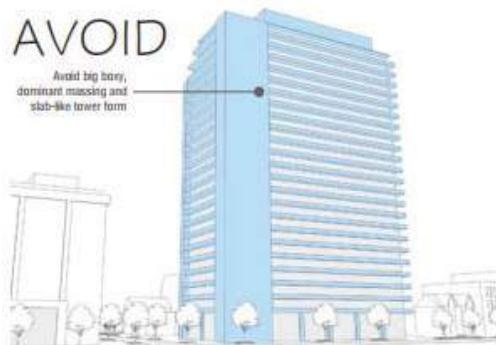


Figure 2: Large, elongated floor plates cast long shadows and create an inappropriate scale at street level.

**Figure 2.14:**  
Forms to Avoid  
Image Source:  
Tall building design guidelines 2013

## 2.0 CONDOMINIUMIZATION OF TORONTO

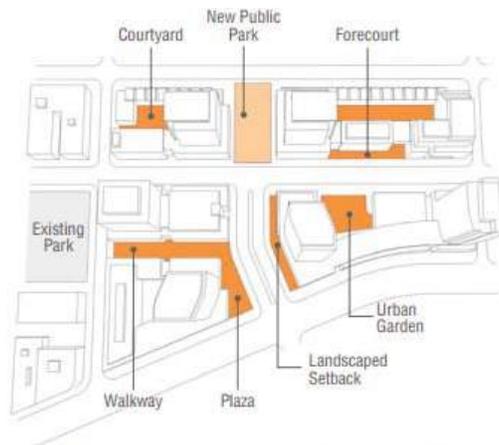


Figure 1: Tall building sites offer a broad range of publically accessible open space opportunities.

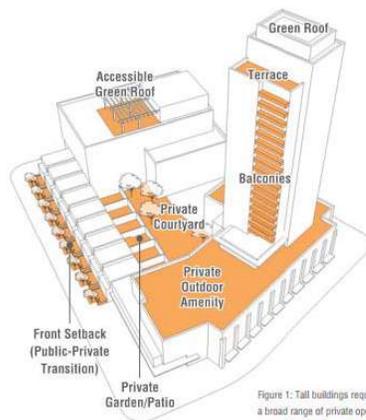


Figure 1: Tall buildings require a broad range of private open spaces to meet the needs of building occupants.

Figure 2.15 (TL): Tall building guidelines on open public space

Figure 2.16 (TR): Communal space of a condo

grade level. The base articulates entrances and contributes significantly to the attractiveness and safety of the public realm. Furthermore, the ideally the base of these buildings should define and support the surrounding streets, parks and public space in consideration of scale and grade condition.

Despite the fact that the guidelines intentions are to design tall buildings that minimize negative effects on the context, inevitably these tall buildings create intimidating street conditions and internalized spaces. For instance, the guidelines suggest to avoid free-standing towers without bases or a direct relationship to the street and to avoid big boxy dominant massing with slab-like floor plates, yet the majority of the new construction of residential buildings fall into this category. According to the guidelines, it is only implemented during design reviews and “approval of all new and current tall building development in Toronto” (Tall Building Guidelines, 2013 ). Under the site organization component 2.4 and 2.5, it acknowledges the importance of quality internalized shared spaces and publicly accessible open spaces. However, developments are often meet minimum set back restrictions and build up to the property line on grade, neglecting the quality of the interstitial

## 2.0 CONDOMINIUMIZATION OF TORONTO

spaces between buildings. In order to reinvent these spaces, a reduction in scale is necessary to create more welcoming zones without minimized shading and the intimidation of large masses.

### 2.4 Mid-Rise v High-Rise

In comparison to tall buildings in Toronto, designers and developers have not fully explored and experimented with the Mid-Rise residential typology. According to the city of Toronto, Mid-rises is defined as a building between 4 to 12 stories in height while *Emporis*, a real estate data company, provides the boundaries of below 36 meters in height. Based on the Toronto Performance Standards for Mid-Rise Buildings, one of the main intent for implementing this scale is to develop a relationship with the avenues and wider roads. In regards to the effects of the building, the guidelines suggest the protection of the public realm by limiting vehicular access from the Avenue and encourage shared access. Nonetheless, designers and developers often face difficult developing these projects submits to an as-of-right zoning strategy. These restrictions from the guidelines imply a strict following of city zoning, hindering the flexibility for designers to create unique forms. However, the guidelines suggest exception can be warranted to projects and designs that strive for excellence, stating, "It is the responsibility of the designer/ developer/ builder to demonstrate to the City where this exception exists and it is at the discretion of the City to support or not support a justification" (Performance Standards for Mid-Rise Buildings, 2010). Despite the requirements for high-rise developments to include public space within their site, developers often propose to share the public space with neighbouring developments to conserve feasible space within their own lots. This reduces the outdoor public space for each individual development and results in poorly developed parkettes.

Currently, the majority of the existing mid-rises in Toronto follow this guideline strictly and remain along critical avenues since tall residential buildings are not permitted in consideration of the neighbouring context of the

# 2.0 CONDOMINIUMIZATION OF TORONTO

street. In comparison to tall residential buildings, mid-rises provide a direct street connection with the scale articulated for human interaction. As a result, in an effort to enhance community social interaction, the mid-rise typology is encouraged to be built beyond main avenues and expand to smaller streets as well for density. This notion of utilizing mid-rise buildings across the city as a primary residential typology is commonly found in European cities as the scale engages the street conditions and provide a sense of unity amongst the city fabric. For instance, mid-rise residential communities are evident in the downtown core of major European cities like Rotterdam, Copenhagen, and Amsterdam. For Toronto to adopt these design urban design principles, local designers and developers are encouraged to push the boundaries of design guidelines.

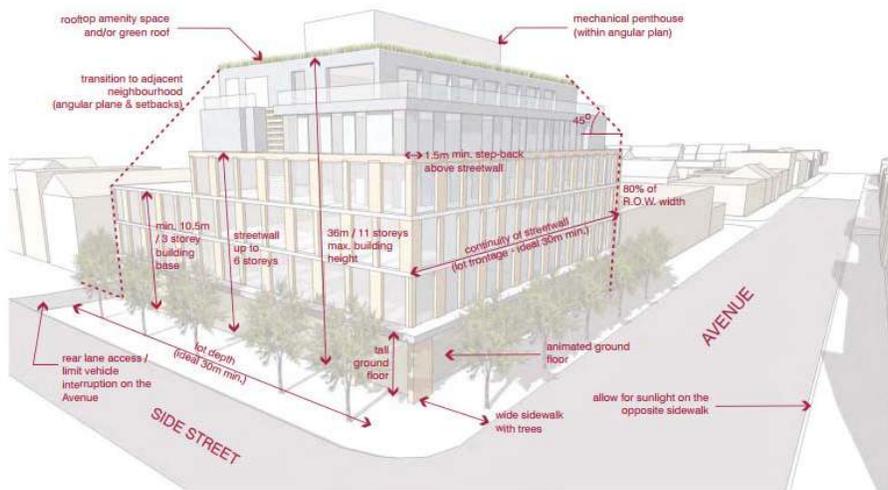


Figure 2.17:  
Typical mid-rise design standard

## 2.0 CONDOMINIUMIZATION OF TORONTO



**Figure 2.18 (T):** Silodam in Amsterdam by MVRDV



**Figure 2.19 (B):** 8 House in Copenhagen by BIG



**Figure 2.20 (R):** Timerhuis in Rotterdam by OMA

### 2.5 Rapid Growth and Consequences

Looking at this phenomenon on a larger planning scale, there are primarily three major entities involved in the rapid growth of condominium communities, the Toronto municipal government, the developers, and the users. Although the architects play a significant role in the proposal, design strategies and the final product, the primary decision of executing a project at a specific location is beyond the authority of the designers. Toronto's condominium boom is a product and response to of the Post-World War II era with the city planning adopting the modernist regime. Large, freestanding residential towers began to be erected closer to the downtown core with neighbourhoods such as St. Jamestown becoming mono-programmed for dwellings. The critique of the condominium boom can date back to the feud between Jane Jacobs and Robert Moses, with democratic history against the individual agency. During this time, Jacobs realized the issue was not with modernism, but the private

## 2.0 CONDOMINIUMIZATION OF TORONTO

and government entities making the decisions from a top-down approach (Ibelings, 2016). Fast-forward 50 years, the current condominium boom is a by-product of government-sponsored urban renewal programs and the complex urban real estate markets.

Traditionally, government intervention and policy was a force that dictates the direction of urban development, whereas in the recent decades, policies are hardly guiding the way for developer-driven urbanization. Today, the approval process has become more blurred, and the negotiation of building proposals depends on the relationship among different entities (Ibelings, 2016). With the municipal government focused on revenue, increasing density and global publicity, the ambitions for a quality city has been blindsided by economic growth. Since the 1990's, Toronto's streetscape transformation can be credit back to former mayor Barbara Hall, when she made changes that enriched the city by billions of dollars. Hall revitalized decaying parts of the downtown core by simply removing outdated zoning regulations and replacing them with new regulations on mix-use programs. Despite the fact, this plan was initially focused on King Street, and the approach became a template for developing other parts of the core. Ultimately, this free rein given to developments has indirectly lead to the condominium sprawl across the city. Currently, one of the major focuses of the city is redeveloping post-industrial sites across the downtown area, started with central Harbourfront neighbourhood, then Liberty Village in the west end, and now the Eastbay-Front. When both the city and developers are not conscious of the programs they are compartmentalizing in these neighbourhoods, the result is poor design communities with little to none activities within them.

With the continuation of the condominium growth, privatization has taken a significant toll on integrating public spaces. Large, unbroken residential areas with uniform residential typologies containing a polarized demographic of society can segregate and reduce contact with the surrounding context. By surrendering government regulations, zoning, and policies, constructing

## 2.0 CONDOMINIUMIZATION OF TORONTO

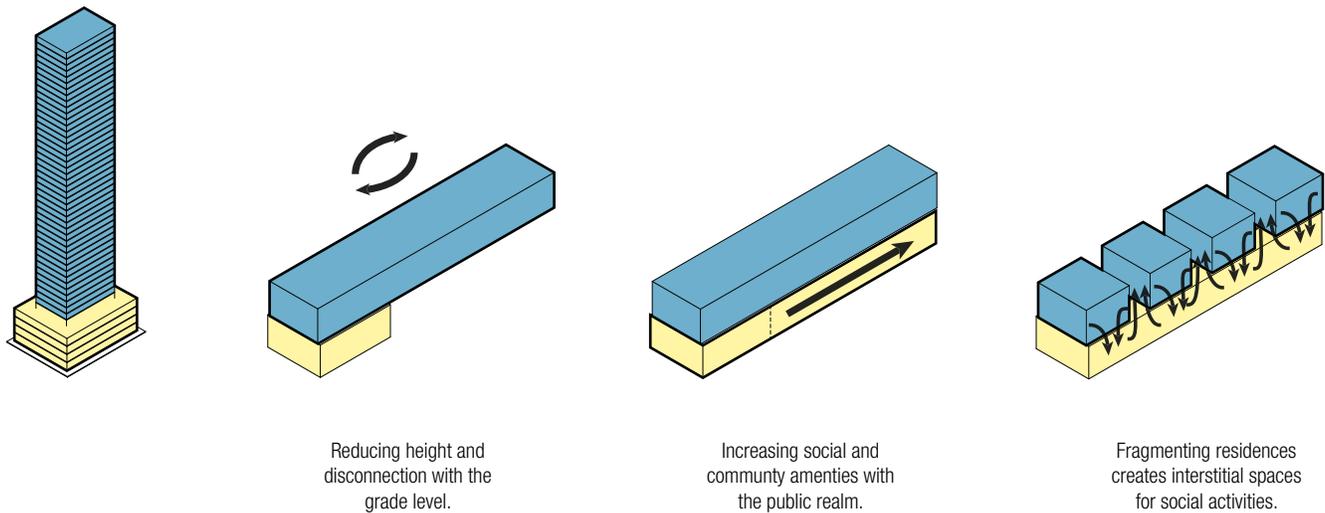
residential buildings has become a race for developers at making a capital gain. Without critical planning and evaluating what is best for the community, essential non-feasible amenities and programming are overlooked and neglected. Influenced by exclusivity and prestige, current design strategies close in programs on the street level oppose to opening up for street connection. By removing a democratic intent on the streets, public squares, and communal programs, streets became depopulated, dull, and more dangerous.

Looking at the future of the condominium boom of Toronto, the internalized mono-programmatic typology hints at the risk of desaturation of the downtown core. Since the attraction of residing in the Toronto core is driven economically, potential recessions and economic turmoil in the next decades can cause the downtown area to be no longer affordable. With the continuous growing numbers of condominium towers in the Toronto core as predicted for the next decade, these urban masses are Toronto's equivalent of Haussmann's Parisian apartment buildings. However, the critical difference between the two lies in the versatility of the form in the urban fabric and unique localized qualities of the apartments. The Parisian apartments are defined by a distinct scale, materials, and connection with the rest of the city making it instantly recognizable, whereas the Toronto condominium is architecture without qualities.

In order to improve the design and interaction aspects of the Toronto condominium form, these buildings will require an integration of diverse programs that are specified by the location is necessary to develop localized culture. Condominium communities need to develop extrovert spaces for bridging the disconnect between privatized spaces to collective spaces. The has become over saturated with the singular podium tower typology and requires zones for rest, leisure, and desaturation of intimidating streetscapes, a breathing space between buildings. As a result, a renegotiation between the public and the private is necessary for reinserting well designed and quality public spaces since it is currently diminishing. Facing these economic pressures

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from the private sector, Toronto municipal government need to encourage developers to build lower with more quality and complexity. As suggested by Danish architect, Jan Gehl, the urban environment is a collective space that requires an architecture that connects to the human scale and public spaces that generate excitement for the community. Designers and planners need to acknowledge the consequences of privatizing space with condominiums and begin to think of the future of the city.



**Figure 2.21:**  
Reduction of scale of private and semi-private programs

## 2.0 CONDOMINIUMIZATION OF TORONTO

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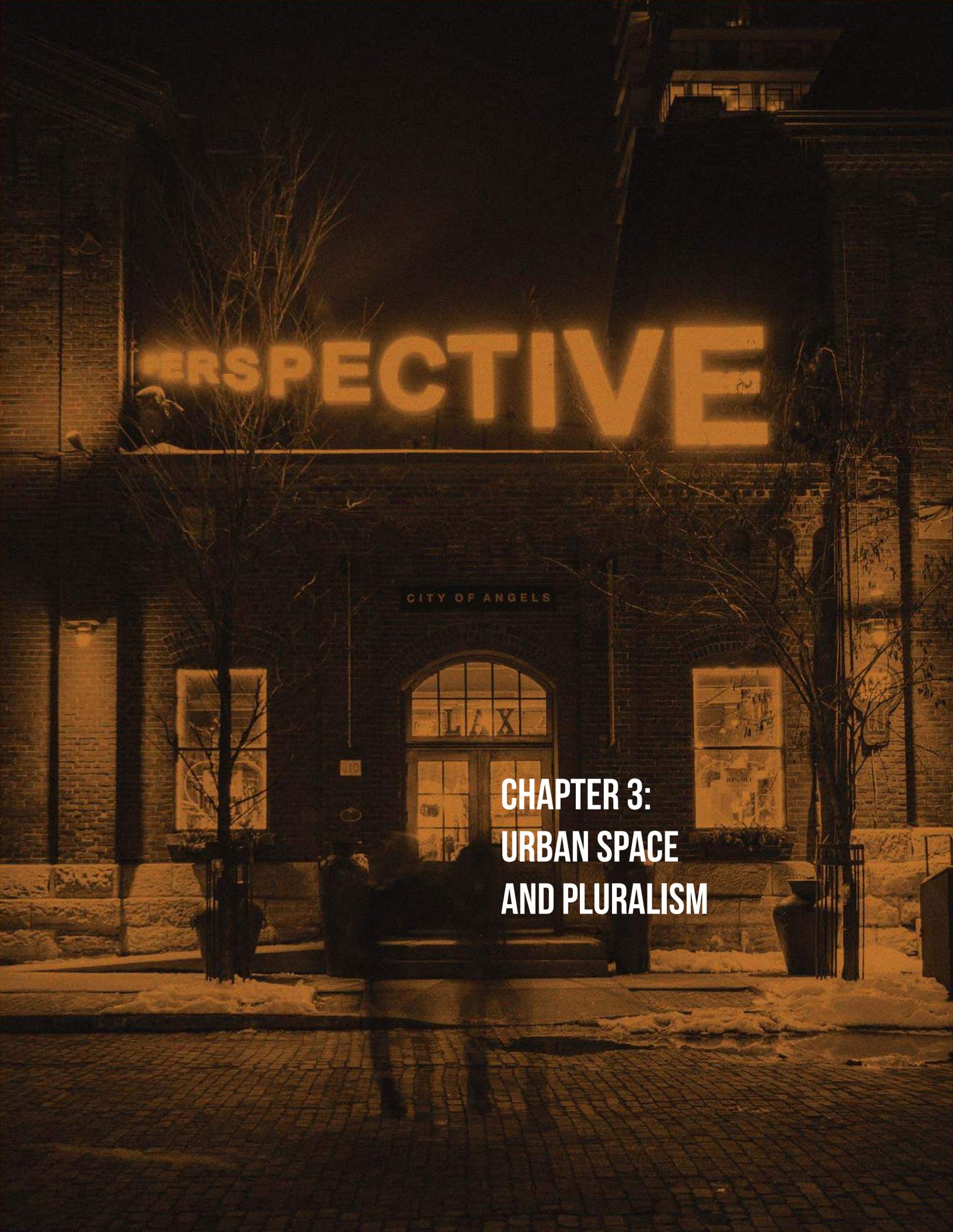


# PERSPECTIVE

CITY OF ANGELS

LAX

## CHAPTER 3: URBAN SPACE AND PLURALISM





### 3.0 URBAN SPACE AND PLURALISM

development growth, community spaces and public space is correspondingly diminishing. From this notion, comes an investigation on condensing the concept of pluralism on a scale of a community and perhaps use this idea to enhance social interaction within a structure or a series of structures.

To start, the concept of pluralism defined by planning Professor Stefano Moroni, as “the idea that there are multiple, legitimate concepts of the good among individuals and group who coexist with each other within society.” The critical assumption in this statement is that pluralism is conclusively good in the aspect of collective thinking. As a result, this leads to the argument that pluralism does not presuppose egoism, atomism and skepticism. The multiplicity of interests and lifestyles is a matter of the diversity of individuals and groups’ ideas of what is a good life. In this sense, a collective environment uses a democratic non-selfish approach to engage each other



Figure 3.2: Toronto parody culture map

## 3.0 URBAN SPACE AND PLURALISM

and plan spaces. To develop a sensible and inclusive community, the concept of pluralism will need to be a primary driver for deciding the appropriate program and arrangement of space. In *Space, Place and Politics*, by Cecilia Lippai and David Weberman, one of the three defining factors of space is intersubjective space. It explores the idea that “we experience space as something that is not only the medium in which my body, movements, and actions take place but also the medium in which other bodies move about and undertake actions.” This implies that we experience space as having others in it and the controlling factor is the ownership of space dictating what can and cannot be experienced (Weberman, 2016).

Broken by the intensity of globalization and capitalism, the current urban space has become too lenient with the capitalist regime, without the necessary regulation of ownership in space. As stated by Winston Churchill, “we shape our buildings, therefore they shape us,” by this notion it is critical for architecture to shape our communities since they will influence the lifestyles of the people who interact with space. Undoubtedly, to create a healthy influx of social interaction in a collective space, it will require the attraction of high diversity of individuals with a variety of culturally and community-driven programs (Fernandez-Galiano, 2016). Traditionally in an urban context, the concept of pluralism of space is originated to subjugate segregation and discrimination against social groups by encouraging the tolerance of cohabiting place in the city. However, throughout the years this concept has extended to address any polarized demographic and provides a democratic voice to any community.

# 3.0 URBAN SPACE AND PLURALISM

## 3.2 Ownership of space:

From the last chapter, the importance of public space is acknowledged as a benefiting factor when it addresses social interaction. To conquer the imbalance of public and private space, we must first define the three types of spaces in a community: public space, semi-public space, and private space. With public spaces having the highest range access, these are not privately owned spaces and are typically opened to all. Secondly, semi-private spaces are often privately owned, sometimes with special access but often opened to all. Lastly, private spaces are entirely privately owned with restricted access to the majority (Moroni, 2016). To redefine private spaces, we must first realize there are three primary categories: Simple Private Space, Complex Private Space, and Privately Owned Collective Spaces. Simple and Complex private spaces focus on the individual user and restricted uses respectively, for instance, individual homes are considered simple private space and exclusive clubs are complex. On the other hand, Privately Owned Collective Spaces are more ambiguous with its access and ownership. These privately owned collective spaces are accessible to the general public under certain regulations and conduct. Some examples of this category of private spaces include shopping centres, cinemas, restaurants, and hotels. Although these types of private spaces can generate

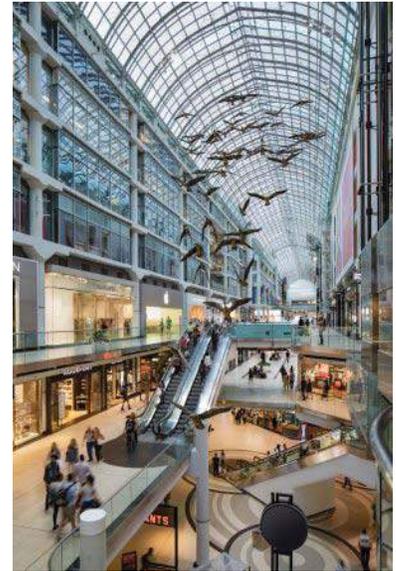


**Figure 3.3 (L):** Public Space  
**Figure 3.4 (C):** Semi-Public Space  
**Figure 3.5 (R):** Private Space

## 3.0 URBAN SPACE AND PLURALISM

high levels of social interactions, they often lack diversity in users and culture (Moroni, 2016). In the current Toronto urban environment, the initial intent for high-level of freedom to build and variety was to generate activity and high density for economic prosperity. However, the underlying truth is that since the beginning of the condominium boom, Toronto has succumbed to capitalist persuasion, resulting in mass privatization of space and the diminishment of shared space.

Although pluralism in urban spaces is ideally preferable, it is not always transparent how it can be promoted. This is evident especially in privately owned spaces where the contractual freedom and right of exclusion are in constant conflict. To understand this condition, two ethical perspectives are proposed: Priority to Certain Forms of Freedom and The Priority of Pluralism (Moroni, 2016). The first perspective, Priority to Certain Forms of Freedom, promotes the concept that right to exclude others is recognized as a fundamental aspect of property rights. However, this concept does not deny pluralism but assigns it after certain individual's freedom. Contractual freedom and right of exclusion are always considered permanent, making all cases identical. On the other hand, the second perspective, The Priority of Pluralism, accepts pluralism to be an intrinsic and basic value, making it possible to limit certain types of rights, notably contractual freedom and the right of exclusion from private properties. In this perspective, "the attempt to muddy the distinction... between the public sphere and the private property essentially means curtailing rights to private property in favour of other rights such as free speech" (Moroni, 2016). When proposing a complex built environment that integrates public and private ownership, both perspectives are necessary to provide a harmonious agreement of space.



**Figure 3.6:**  
Semi Public Programs such as shopping centres

# 3.0 URBAN SPACE AND PLURALISM

## 3.3 Pluralism in a community:

Plurality on a community scale is evident through a diverse series of individual programs arranged in a collective manner. When a city has a mixture of cultures and demographics, a pluralistic community is a response to the variety culture inhabiting the area, creating an incubator for neighbouring communities. In these developments, the element of assortment allows for multiple activities simultaneously occurring throughout the year. Toronto has a series of successful examples of pluralistic communities such as the Harbourfront Centre community, the Distillery District, and the Market Square community. These three instances demonstrate the coexistence of multiple distinct programs operating individually in a semi-public to public manner.

Beginning with the most public development along Toronto lakeshore, the Harbourfront Centre is a non-profit organization curated to deliver art, culture, education and recreation to the waterfront community. Composed of an art centre, park space, outdoor amphitheatre, ice rink, art gallery, and a series of performing arts theatres accompanied by several restaurants and retail, the Harbourfront Centre is a space to stimulate one's creativity and offer a place for exchange. By simultaneously providing a series of events and activities, a mixed demographic of individuals ranging from children to creative



**Figure 3.7 (T):** Summer festivals  
**Figure 3.8 (B):** Winter skating  
**Figure 3.9 (R):** Power Plant contemporary art gallery

## 3.0 URBAN SPACE AND PLURALISM

and professionals, the collection of buildings forms a mutually semi-public and public space for the local private residences.

Similarly, the Distillery District is a retrofitted heritage complex offering semi-public and public space for leisure, creativity and cultural events. The series of industrial buildings form pedestrian-focused area housing a diverse range of programs ranging from restaurants, boutiques, and art galleries. Although these series of programs are commercially driven, one of their main successes comes from the public events such as music festivals and seasonal markets. The coexistence of different types of functions attract a wide range of demographics from tourists to locals, the Distillery embraced pluralism and evolved from a historical site to a cultural destination. Although the Distillery is located on the east side of the city on, the outskirts of the downtown core due to its industrial background, the dynamic variety of programs and events is the primary attraction for social interaction.



**Figure 3.10 (L):**  
Toronto Distillery District

**Figure 3.11 (R):**  
Distillery District Annual Christmas Market

## 3.0 URBAN SPACE AND PLURALISM



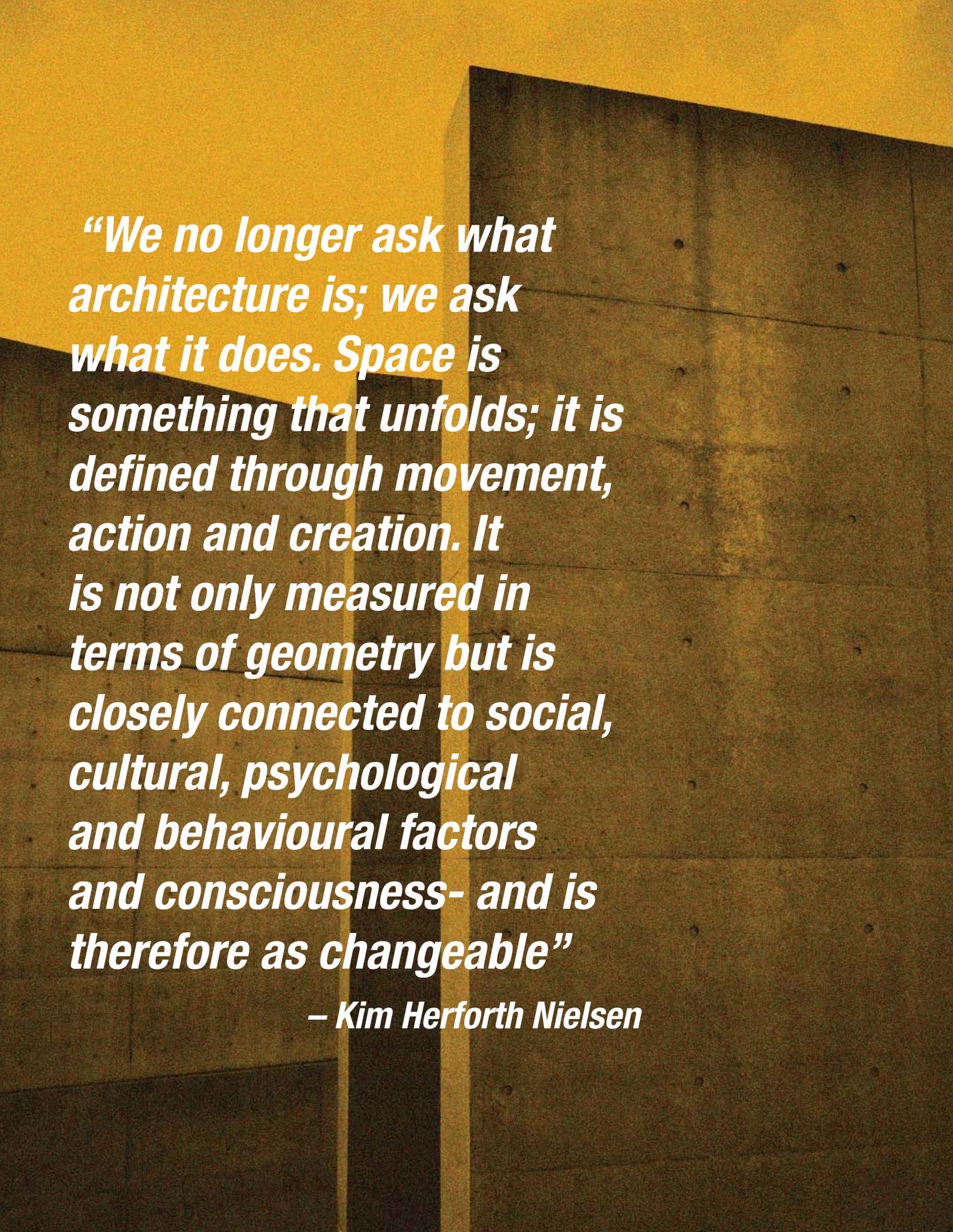
**Figure 3.12 (T):**  
Market Square mixed-use mid-rise

**Figure 3.13 (B):**  
Rainbow Cinema on ground level

Opposed to the Harbourfront Centre and the Distillery District, where the residences became a secondary function, the Market Square community offers another type of pluralistic community. Comprised of a condominium complex, supermarkets, cinema, schools, restaurants and other amenities, this community utilizes fragmented semi-public to attract users. With the Toronto St. Lawrence market in the proximity, the complex is not only mixed-use in nature, but it shares resources with neighbouring mono-programmatic spaces, in one aspect a micro-mosaic of functions. By collectively grouping different programs and sharing resources, the Market Square can attract visiting individuals with mixed interests and symbiotically provide for the local residences. To achieve this level of diversity and coexistence, the ownership of these amenities comes from a series of different owners and entities, operating individually. Furthermore, this unique residential complex remains connected to the community by the moderation in building scale and connection with the grade context reduces intimidation and unfamiliarity.

### 3.4 Pluralism in architecture:

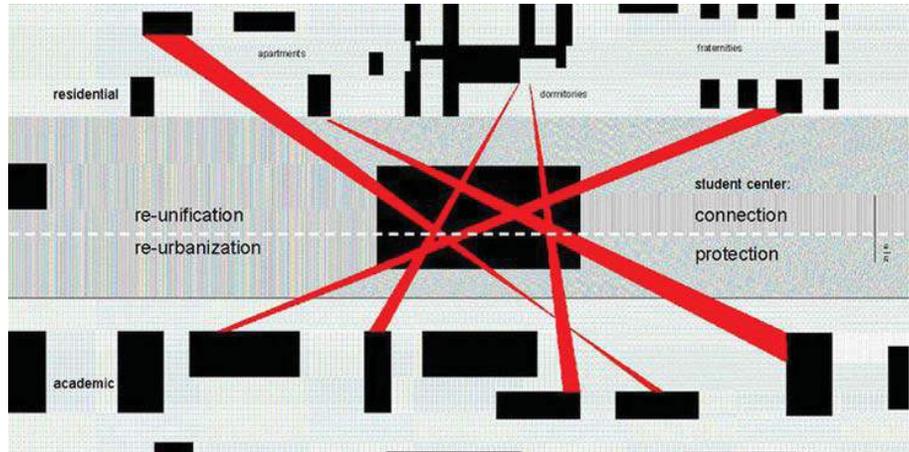
Aside from developing communities that embody pluralism and the layering of interests, the pluralistic design approach can also be manifested into an architectural design in regards to form, the organization of spaces, and design strategies. According to Spanish architect and theorist, Luis Fernandez-Galiano, "Architecture can build pluralism, providing plural spaces – places that promote diversity and create a common ground for our living together" (Fernandez-Galiano, 2016), and in this notion, the objective of a pluralistic architecture is to gather people to experience collective activities and encourage social dialogue. These pluralistic strategies are often found in institutional campus buildings, cultural and art buildings, as well as in public spaces. For instance, private institutions often house a diverse demographic of faculty members, students, and visitor. To provide spaces to service this mix of individuals, spaces such as snack bars, recreational lounges, computer and study centres, dining and meeting rooms are used to generate another level



***“We no longer ask what architecture is; we ask what it does. Space is something that unfolds; it is defined through movement, action and creation. It is not only measured in terms of geometry but is closely connected to social, cultural, psychological and behavioural factors and consciousness- and is therefore as changeable”***

***– Kim Herforth Nielsen***

## 3.0 URBAN SPACE AND PLURALISM



**Figure 3.14 (T):** McCormick Tribune Centre concept

**Figure 3.15 (L):** Pockets of work zones

**Figure 3.16 (R):** Reclaiming infrastructure space



of interaction. Occupied by a board mix of backgrounds, it becomes critical to provide a social environment that fosters unbiased exchanges while managing the traffic flow of its users. One of the examples that harness pluralism in the design is the McCormick Tribune Campus Centre in Illinois Institute of Technology, designed by OMA.

The project focuses its spatial arrangement according to the flow of people passing each other towards their different destinations on campus (Horwitz, 2005 ). Situated in the heart of the campus below a transit station, the project takes back infrastructure space that is dedicated to transit and incorporates the beauty of its congestion into the building. This process of “reclaiming derelict space” (Horwitz, 2005 ) can reintegrate space what is once

## 3.0 URBAN SPACE AND PLURALISM

sacrificed for infrastructure back into the city as functional space. Internally, by threading traffic through architecture and urban infrastructure through cultural heritage, OMA pairs context and circumstances with place and tradition by filtering the complex environment of the urban campus. As a result, the centre becomes a vital node for social and spatial circulation of people, ideas and culture.

Although public space is typically open access for anyone to use, this does not mean space has to be poorly designed, oversimplified, and lacking culture. The complexity of space is not defined by its typology or categorization, but can integrate elements and characteristics of other architectural forms. By creating public space with the unique qualities and atmospheres of private spaces, a new multilayer of space is introduced to the public, sharing knowledge and culture. An example that encapsulates this is the Garden of Fine Arts, designed by Tadao Ando. Situated adjacent to the botanical gardens in Kyoto, Japan, the open-air gallery reinvents the traditional stroll garden with shifting levels and volumetric elements. The garden displays reproductions of fine art masterpieces to the public while providing architectural qualities of the traditional art gallery. By elongating the experience with long ramping paths, it slows down the circulation flow of visitors and allows them to contemplate and enjoy the art pieces in the serene outdoor space. This project is an oasis



**Figure 3.17 (T):** Elevated walkways connecting art pieces



**Figure 3.18 (T):** Overlapping the historic city with contemporary forms

## 3.0 URBAN SPACE AND PLURALISM

in the ancient city that introduces a combination of European fine art culture and contemporary Japanese minimalism to the public. By creating a pluralistic public space such as the Garden, "it opens up the possibility of an endless number of different type of spaces that are different not because of the way they are categorized but because of their singularity" (Nielsen & Jensen, 2010).

### 3.5 Concept of tolerance:

Under the ideas of spatial pluralism, the concept of tolerance informs what demographic and culture should be mixed within a space. Building on the previous notion of anti-discriminatory space, tolerance focuses on the harmony in differences as opposed to blind acceptance. As stated by UNESCO's Declaration of Principles on Tolerance, it is defined as "respect, acceptance, and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human. It is fostered by knowledge, openness, communication, and freedom of thought, conscience and belief." Interpreting this definition, the Toronto urban environment has a high-level of tolerance considering the adaptability of individuals in a multicultural space, as well as cross-pollinating of culture. According to *Oxford English Dictionary*, culture is defined as "the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively" or a more traditional understanding as "The customs, civilization, and achievements of a particular time or people" (Moroni, 2016). Regardless of which form or interpretation, in which 'culture' is used, it is often manifested in forms of public representation. Culture and pluralism are two closely woven concepts involving the collective public mind as it a form of expression.

Although the ideology of pluralism is to improve the quality of people, it is often confronted with three problems: the commercialization of cultural products, the transience of their meaning, and access to public space. In a consumption-based society, the economic value of cultural activates, and

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products are the primary consideration in their evaluation (Madanipour, 2016). With the promotion of these cultural activities and products commercialized, these products in an urban space blur the boundaries of advertising and cultural expression by using size, colour and technology to dominate the space, transforming some public space into a place for conveying commercial messages. An example of this commercialization is the Maple Leaf Square in Toronto during a critical sports game. Although the high volume of fans creates an intense social interaction, space then becomes restricted and regulated from the general public.

The second issue is the role and importance of cultural products in society. It is evident that when representations were scarcer, the role of cultural products and impact is much more significant. For instance, a single piece of artwork could have a social impact on society. However, in the context of proliferation and mass production of cultural products, consumers treat them as disposable items like any other, devaluing the experience and impact. This creates a visual culture in the public and private realm where cultural experiences become short-lived. These transient experiences of the world can fill the place of physical exchange but simultaneously change as quickly and frequently as the images can be produced. Consequently, “the multiplicity and transience of representations reduce their value as human endeavours and transform them into a mere symbolic currency in social relations” (Madanipour, 2016). In a society connected digitally, to create something culturally tangible and beyond the visual is to provide a unique transient experience through events that are in constant fluctuation.

By exploring the concept of tolerance in the public realm, it is evident that the role of public space in a pluralist life would be, “a constituent part of public culture; its social and spatial infrastructure enables the construction and display of meaning in the public domain” (Madanipour, 2016). These factors indicate that public space has the capacity to support facilitate the presentation and reception of cultural products, support the cultivation and improvement of



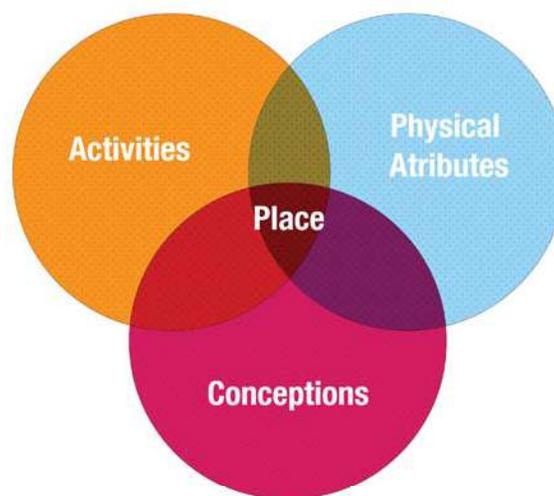
**Figure 3.19 :** Maple Leaf Square- tolerance of public functions within a mixed-space of live, work, and entertainment

## 3.0 URBAN SPACE AND PLURALISM

society, and enrich life hedonistically. Public space can contribute to pluralism and tolerance by facilitating the development of institutional and cultural infrastructures, sociability and coexistence.

### 3.6 Spatial Identity and Social Agonism

Before implementing a pluralistic intent upon a specific location, it is critical to understand what makes a space unique and meaning to create a place. The concept of place is often associated with the idea of experiential space since experiential space is based on the body, which is also moving from place to place. To begin, the notion of place is different with space, as place have identity, reason, and an awe, which contains specific atmospheres (Tuan, 1977). In *Space and Place*, by geographer, Yi-Fu Tuan, he once compared the two as, place is security and space is freedom, and that we are attached to one and long for the other (Tuan, 1977). Culture is an element developed by human beings that can transform a space by providing an identity that strongly influences human behaviour and values. Although differences often define individuals, it is the shared traits that transcended cultural particularities and reflect on the collective human condition.



**Figure 3.20 :** Relationship between Space, Events, and Place

## 3.0 URBAN SPACE AND PLURALISM

Since a place is often definitive, space is a more abstract concept than a place. Space can be treated as a movement, whereas place pauses individuals, allowing the possibility for a location to be transformed into place. Tuan defines experience as, "a passive sense of smell, taste, and touch, to active visual perception and the indirect mode of symbolization" (Tuan, 1977), which emphasizes on the human body as the defining factor of spatial atmospheres. Conclusively, experiences are directed to the external world, "to experience is to learn; it means acting on the given and creating out of the given" (Tuan, 1977). In comparison, space can be experienced by simply as having room to move, by shifting from one place to another, one can acquire a sense of direction and familiarity. Movements within a space are often directed towards or repulsed by, objects and places, hence space can be experienced relative to the location of objects or places. When acquiring spatial information, visual perception is not the only the basis for understanding projective geometry, since individuals can embody feelings, imagine, and think in tangible materials. As a result, a place is considered a type of object, after all, place and object defines space by giving it geometric personality.

In the instance of collective spaces, a neighbourhood is initially a confusion of images to the new residents. The process of learning a neighbourhood is exploratory and requires the identification of significant localities, such as architectural landmarks and specific programs in the area. When residing in a place for a long duration of time, it enables the individual to know a place intimately and develop a specific attachment. Temporally, an object and place develop a concrete reality when the mind recognizes the experience and activates all the familiar senses, remembering the local significance of the place. Fundamentally, when thinking of spatial identity, objective reference points in space such as landmarks and cardinal positions can provide a sense of familiarity for the human body.



**Figure 3.21 :** Corktown Commons becomes a place when hosting events and activities, making the park a destination

## 3.0 URBAN SPACE AND PLURALISM

In an urban setting, space and spaciousness are often muddled to be the same concept. Although both addresses the volume of people in a defined area, space is often associated with density and spaciousness is connected to crowding. It is unequivocal that ample of space is not always spacious and high density does not necessarily mean crowded. For instance, when a location is deficient in excitement and human interaction, high density can contribute to crime and danger. On the other hand, large city squares such as Toronto's Dundas Square or New York's Time Square may have ample amount of space, the concentration of people reduces spaciousness since it is a destination for gathering and access to idiosyncratic events. Respectively, spaciousness is correlated with the sense of being free, and freedom implies having the power and enough room in which to act. In the 21st century, tools and machines have enlarged the human sense of space and spaciousness with the introduction of devices and social media. These tools extend the reach of humans by digitally creating and sharing events at particular locations. Whether it is a political protest, commercial events, or for leisure, the virtual realm is increasingly merging with the physical. With the effects of apps, digital tools, and mass sharing, spatial landmarks can also be created virtually.

Whether physical or digital, these factors contribute to a spatial awareness of a specific location. Spatial awareness is often achieved through active participation and spatial consciousness of one's surroundings (Tuan, 1977). Designers create architectural space as a concentration of an



**Figure 3.22** : Pokemon Go App: Mobile Virtual Game



**Figure 3.23** : Pokemon Go attracting people to a specific area

## 3.0 URBAN SPACE AND PLURALISM

articulated experience. Hence the built environment has the power to define and refine sensibility. Architectural design generates spatial consciousness with both internal and external zones, whether one is traversing through complex programs or lured into a space by its imagery and spatial presence. For instance, external places like urban plazas or unique parks are crafted with the capacity to support events activities, which attracts people to engage even though they did not have the initial intent to join. However, when architectural space becomes homogenous and repetitive, it begins to lose its ability to activate spatial consciousness and dulls the awareness of its users.

Sharing a place on an urban scale becomes increasingly difficult when there are multiple external factors pressuring the movement of people and dispersing culture. Specifically with Toronto, being the most culturally diverse city in the world, University of Toronto's sociologist, David Hulchanski, indicated, "over the past two generations, wealthy and the poor neighbourhoods have become increasingly concentrated and isolated from one another, producing a social geography that offers a ground-level rebuke to the redemptive rhetoric extolling the virtues of diversity" (Lorinc & Pitter, 2016). In 2014, a study by the European Union defined the concept of hyper-diversity as, an intense diversification of the population in socio-economic, social and ethical terms, but also with respect to lifestyles, attitudes, and activities (Lorinc & Pitter, 2016). This concept enables individuals and communities to move beyond the oversimplifications of diversity and identity politics and explore more deeply in the coexistence of space. Ultimately, hyper-diversity is derived from the political theory of social agonism, which emphasizes the positive aspects of certain forms of political conflict. This approaches social pluralism with a democratic perspective of improving the quality of life through social acceptance of all demographics.

Historically, Toronto utilized the tower in the park schematic, famously explore by Le Corbusier, for articulating low to mid-income housing, yet their built form creates critical obstacles. This system of program arrange

## 3.0 URBAN SPACE AND PLURALISM

became dysfunctional when they are typically located at such distances from employment zones of the city, preventing vibrant economic and social networks from prospering. In response to these issues, the Toronto's "Tower Renewal" zoning category was implemented in 2013 with the intention to allow variances that permit apartment developers. The Tower Renewal to increase density between the form of low-rise housing, commercial and retail construction with loose zoning restrictions (Lorinc & Pitter, 2016). Although the intent was to bring life to the interstitial space between apartment towers, it is still unclear whether the private-sector developers are responding to this opportunity by investing into their developments. Nonetheless, this effort to increase diversity, economic prosperity, and social interaction of communities by utilizing space in between residences is a precedent for improving local identity and neighbourhood contact.

**Figure 3.24 (L):** St. Jamestown, compartmentalizing marginalized individuals into a community



**Figure 3.25 (R):** Regent Park, concentration of homogeneous low-income social housing



# 3.0 URBAN SPACE AND PLURALISM

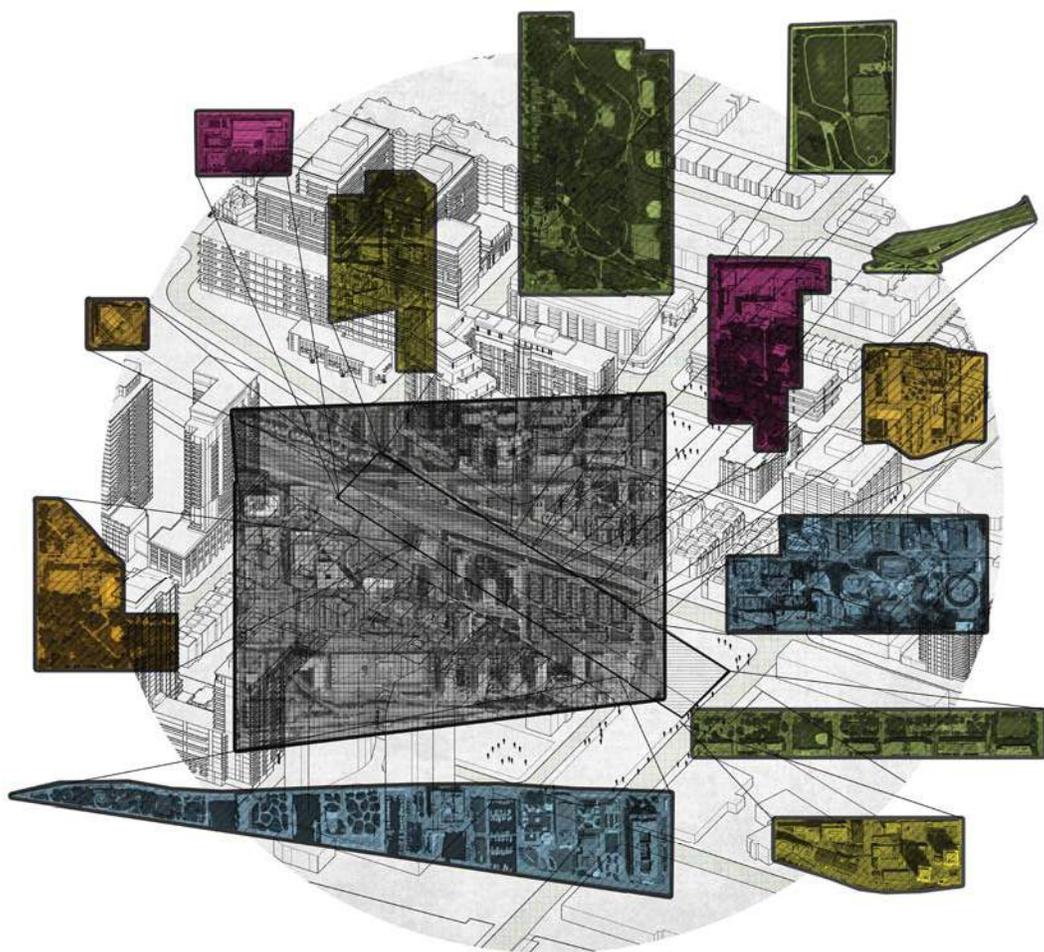


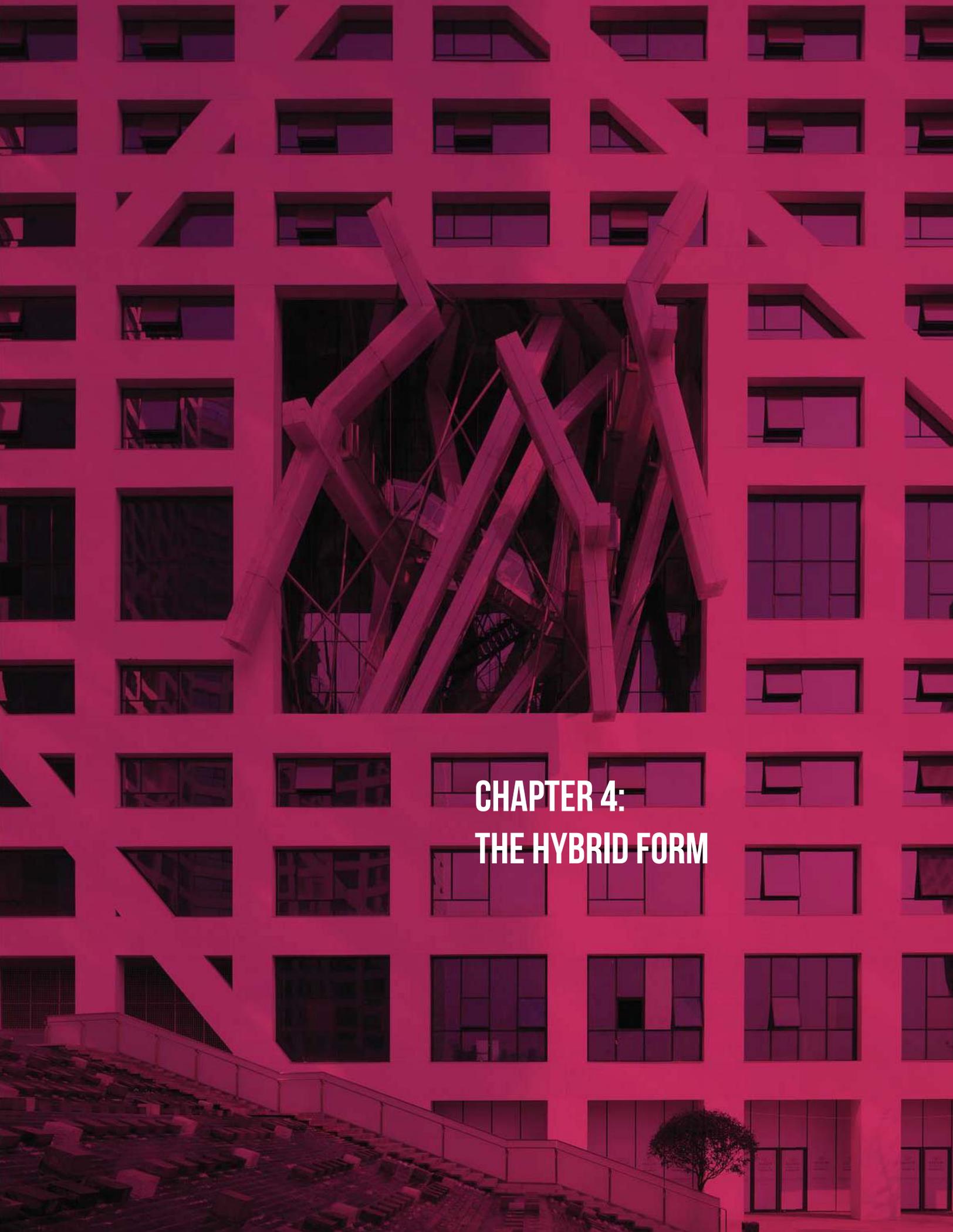
Figure 3.26:  
Elements of a collective neighbourhood

- Elements:
- Community + Recreation
  - Outdoor Park Space
  - Art + Culture
  - Entertainment
  - Market Place + Mixed-Use

## 3.0 URBAN SPACE AND PLURALISM

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**CHAPTER 4:  
THE HYBRID FORM**

# 4.0 THE HYBRID FORM

## 4.1 Defining the Hybrid

To engage an architectural form with a high level of plurality and challenge the homogeneity of capital driven city, the approach will require undefined ownership or perhaps multiple ownership. The programmatic response to reintroducing the public realm in Toronto is to design a framework for collective programs that operate independently but sharing the resources. In order to benefit the diversity of users, a Hybrid form will be suggested as an appropriate strategy. By definition, the hybrid in a biological sense is, "*an offspring of two animals or plant of different races, breeds, varieties, species, or genre*" (Webster 2016), which looks at the concept of a new species, neither a replication of its parents but an adapting its traits. In an architectural design context, the collection of programs generates a new form entirely and operates independently, only adapting traits from its singular origins. The second and third definition, "*2) A person whose background is a blend of two diverse cultures or traditions. 3) Something heterogeneous in origin or composition*" (Webster, 2016) extends the idea of pluralism, in the aspect of individuality. By developing a combination of programs, the individually bring spatial characteristics and attract a variety of users. When addressing a built form, the underlying notion of hybridity in architecture is a "concentration of many social activities within an architectural form from distend and warp a pure building type" (Mozas & Holl, 2014). Hybridity in architecture is essentially a transformation from homogenous to heterogeneous in regards to using and can be an incubator for generating social interaction.

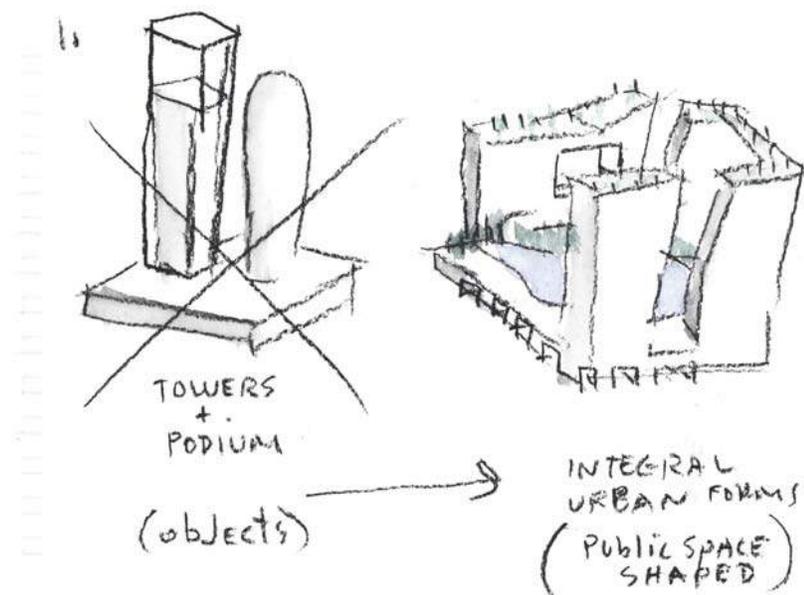
With density growing in cities, building techniques and strategies begins to evolve and have affected the mixing of functions, in some situations they layer on top of one another and in other they amalgamate. During the beginning of the Japanese metabolism movement in architecture, the concept of the collective program was introduced by the architect, Fumihiko Maki, in 1965. Maki's analysis of the collective form revealed four contemporary urban characteristics of our society: "1) coexistence and conflict of amazingly heterogeneous institutions

***"A Hybrid architecture synthesized as a special strategy for generating positive economic, physical and social effects"***

**– Steven Holl**

## 4.0 THE HYBRID FORM

and individuals, 2) unprecedented rapid and extensive transformations in the physical structure of society, 3) rapid communication methods, and 4) technology progress and its impact upon regional culture." (Maki, 1964) These characteristics further separate contemporary city planning with Renaissance and historic planning methods by factoring the element of time. With rapid change and growth, the understanding of urban space will force city planning to shift its focus from "master planning" to "master program" (Maki, 1964). According to Maki, he conceived the idea that "cities today tend to be visually and physically confused. They are monotonous patterns of static elements. They lack visual and physical character consonant with the functions and technology that compose them" (Maki, 1964). Although this critique was speculated in the 1960's, evidence of this claim exists in contemporary cities. Reflecting on the current Toronto urban environment, the city's allowance for rapid privatization lead to the rise of monotonous typologies, especially in the residential sector where the prediction of necessary space becomes static.



**Figure 4.1 :**  
Collective hybrid forms vs monotonous forms

# 4.0 THE HYBRID FORM

## 4.2 Three Paradigms of Collective Forms:

Maki defined the collective form as composed groups of buildings and quasi-building that represent segments of the city. It is critical to understand that collective forms are not derived from a collection of unrelated buildings, but of buildings that have reasons to be composed together. As a result, Maki identified three paradigms of collective form: Compositional Form, Megastructure/ Mega Form, and Group Form (Maki, 1964). Each approach re-examines existing architecture and provides a new meaning of sharing spaces. The compositional form is often found in past and present, as these forms determine space separately, resulting in individually articulated buildings. This architectural approach groups buildings functionally, visually, and perhaps spatially but on a static two-dimensional plane. Most commonly found in urban complexes, educational campuses, and government centres like the Rockefeller Centre, Chandigarh Government Centre, and Brasilia.



Figure 4.2: Compositional Form - Rockefeller Centre



Figure 4.3:  
Three Paradigms of Collective Forms:  
Compositional Form (L), MegaForm (C),  
Group Form (R)

## 4.0 THE HYBRID FORM



**Figure 4.4:**  
Megaform - Tokyo Bay Master Plan by  
Kenzo Tange

Opposed to the individuality of the compositional form, the Mega Form is usually comprised of a large frame housing the functions of a city, or a component of the city. The notion of a large frame implies of either a literal structure or a construct binding the concentration of functions, essentially “the suggestion that many and diverse functions may beneficially concentrated in one place” (Maki, 1964). During the Japanese metabolism movement, architect Kenzo Tange conceptualized a Mega Form as a structure that allows high levels of flexibility and reacts to urban changes. At the time, this concept of shifting to new equilibriums based on unpredictable changes depended on independent systems that can expand and contract with the least disturbance using mechanism. These speculative proposals resulted in great promises for three specific fields: Environmental Engineering, Multifunctional Structures, and Infrastructure as public investment. Focusing on physical structures, environmental engineering develops possibilities for innovative structures of buildings and large-scale climate control. Secondly, multifunctional structures exploited the potential of multifunctionalism of programs, creating designs that serve more than one specific purpose. Lastly, infrastructure as public investment explores the idea of extending the use of megastructures as a strategy to create a public space. Although the concept of the megastructure is to increase diversity and flexibility in the architecture of the contemporary city, there are several critical issues for accommodating this idea of change. With limited technology and limitations of impractical materiality, maintaining this equilibrium as stated by Tange had become too costly and uneconomical. However, there are elements and characteristics such as benefits from the multiplicity of program and integration of public space from the megastructure can inform contemporary designs.

The strategy of group form emerges from a system of generative elements in space, which is commonly used in historical examples of town development (Maki, 1964). This approach of collective form utilizes spatial and massing qualities to develop a specific characteristic indicating patterns of organization. Although this methodology derives from a certain level

## 4.0 THE HYBRID FORM

homogeneity of materials, construction methods, and physical expression, its specificity and localization create unique elements from town to town. A unique aspect of the group form is the notion of linkage and connectivity between individual components. By having systematic linkage, it implies that there is an element of growth and expansion for the future collective forms, whether through a physically connected link, implying link, built-in link etc. (Maki, 1964). In continuation, the analysis focuses on the idea of using links as a secondary system of giving meaning and uses to space, an extension of the ground plane, creating unity from diversity. On a large scale, the linkage is ultimately the glue that holds a city together. In operational terms, "linking is assembling patterns of experience in cities" (Maki, 1964) and there are several basic linking operations such as, to mediate, to define, to repeat, to make a sequential path, and to select. Maki defines these five methods of linking of operations as: (Maki, 1964)

- 1) To mediate: To connect with intermediate elements or imply connection by spaces that demonstrate the cohesion of masses around them.
- 2) To define: To surround a site with a wall or any other physical barrier and thus set it off from its environs.
- 3) To repeat: To link by introducing one common factor in each of the dispersed parts of a design or existing situation.
- 4) To make a sequential path: To arrange buildings or parts of multi-use buildings in a sequence of useful activity
- 5) To select: To establish unity in advance of the design process by choice of site.



**Figure 4.5:** Group Form - Japanese Linear Village

# 4.0 THE HYBRID FORM

## 4.3 Hybridity

Although these methodologies and strategies of collective forms were investigated and proposed in the mid-century, the decay of the Japanese metabolism movement was primarily a result of the inefficiency of technology, scarcity of materials, and economic support for the intended flexibility to adapt. However, many of these principles were not disregarded and evolving into a new form of contemporary architecture to adjust to the pressures of dense cities. As a result, the hybrid form emerged from the foundations of collective forms and theory behind coexistence between diverse programs. To reinstate social interaction in an urban state which pure building types have dominated, a combined function building is suggested to concentrate multiple activities simultaneously. In Pamphlet Architecture issue 11, *Hybrid Buildings*, Joseph Fenton, considered one of the originators of realizing this concept, suggests that growing urban densities the hybrid type was a response to the urban pressures of escalating property values and the constraints of the urban context (Mozas & Holl, 2014). Hybrid buildings developed most rapidly in the 20th century as urban programs expanded and sprawled across the city. Fuelled by suburbanization, this scattering of communal programs has dissipated local specialty and draining city centres of activity. In response, hybrid buildings are undeniably the by-product of modernity and progress, since it is inherently connected to modern construction techniques (the development of the elevator, steel frame, and concrete) (Holl & Fenton, 2011). Hybrid buildings drastically emerged when dense cities began to accept the inevitability of overlapping programs and the disproportionate increase of property value.

Historically, hybrid architecture has never been catalogued, remaining hidden from chronological, formal, and stylistic investigations. Before being fully realized as a model for stimulating and revitalizing North American cities, this typology is a synergy of a complex relationship between form, function, technology, urban context, and society. This strategy of multiple functions

## 4.0 THE HYBRID FORM

within a single built form has been repeated throughout history with houses over stores, apartments above bridges and the Roman bath. However, contemporary hybrids differ from traditional multifunction buildings by its scale and form. Constrained by the dimensions of the city block within an orthogonal grid, horizontal movement is restricted, forcing city fabric to expand vertically. The hybrid building emerged in the 19th century city when people are “unable to occupy these vast new volumes with an individual usage, functions were combined” (Holl & Fenton, 2011). Within a relatively short duration of time, hybrid buildings enveloped many urban institutions including dwellings, offices, theatres, museums, courthouses, factories, bridges, and terminals. Entering the 20th century hybrid buildings has hibernated from society as a result of the great depression. This typology was further disregarded during the Athens Charter in the Congress International d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) IV, where it advocated the separation of living, work, and recreational spaces. Today, these modernist planning concepts have been re-evaluated, and urban zoning favoured the mixed-use as density growth higher.

Programmatically, Hybrid architecture can be identified into two significant categories, a thematic program and a disparate program. Both of these program combinations rely on the interaction between the program components, yet they differ fundamentally based on relationship. To start, thematic programs often bind and cultivate together, with each program dependent on one another and encourage interaction of elements. For instance, a civic hybrid may merge the programs of a city hall, courthouse, and jail together since each function connects with the other. Common typologies such as hospitals and universities are influenced by thematic hybrids by categorizing programs that correspond and support each other. In contrast, disparate programs allow each component to coexist mutually, but often in an unstable alliance, emphasizing the fragmentation and almost schizophrenic relationship (Holl & Fenton, 2011). An example would be combining a religious space with commercial functions to benefit from the same site. The Chicago Temple Building is a skyscraper that dedicates the upper levels as a religious



Figure 4.6: Chicago Temple Building

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**Figure 4.7:** John Hancock Center

sanctuary and the lower levels as rental offices to generate income. Disparate programs typically focus on a mutual economic advantage. A more common example in recent time is the combination of offices, athletic clubs, and hotels, which takes advantage of convenience and transportation access. Another method of achieving the disparate hybrid is by economically constructing the largest volumetric mass allowed by the zoning and filling with a mixture of independent programs. The John Hancock Center in Chicago by SOM, combines stores, parking garage, restaurants, apartments and offices by stacking on top of one another.

Throughout the development of hybrid buildings over the past century, it has adopted a rich architectural expression that deeply infiltrated in the urban environment. In these spontaneous combinations of programs, the configuration of the form often expresses or represses the building functions. Whether functions are stacked vertically, grafted horizontally, or internally engulfed within one another, these combinations are often a reaction to its site conditions. Urban hybrids are typically bounded by its site restrictions, where stacking programs is a common approach to maximize space efficiency.

Both expressive and repressive programs in a hybrid form refer to the communication of the building components through its external condition. Expressive hybrids can arise out of a direct mixture of single function building types, hence producing a functional expression. For instance, the Toronto-Dominion Centre by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, is an office tower complex that clearly grafted on top of the existing Toronto stock exchange building, allowing the individual identity of the old stock exchange to coexist. Another common methodology is expressing a shift or a combination of programs through a change in plan and section, causing an expressive massing and elevation. A classic precedent is the Downtown Athletic Club in Manhattan, which the reduction of floor size and setbacks in the massing separate the transitioning programs from large fitness floors to the smaller hotel levels.

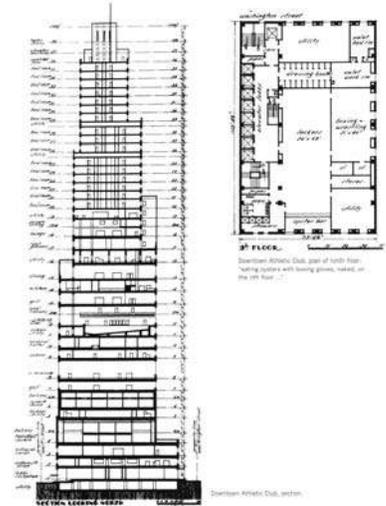


**Figure 4.8:** Old Stock Exchange in TD Center

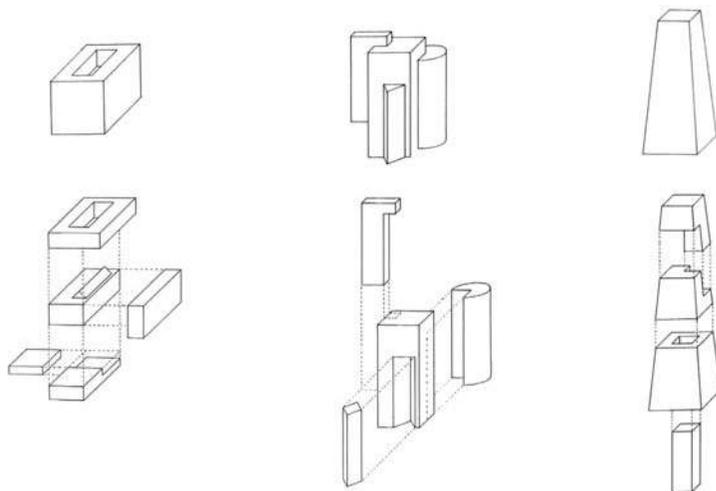
# 4.0 THE HYBRID FORM

In comparison, repressive hybrids favour the surrounding context in regards to the existing urban fabric. This type of hybrid gives no indications of the program separation on the exterior massing, obeying surrounding expressions. For instance, the functions of the Willis Tower in Chicago has a monolithic form encasing offices, convention halls, parking, exhibition halls, commercial retail, hotels, clubs, warehouse, and light manufacturing, within one single envelope (Holl & Fenton, Pamphlet architecture 11-20, 2011).

With these different combinations of building functions, empirical analyses of 20th century hybrids have identified three main categories of hybrid forms: Fabric, Graft, and Monolith. Opposed to Fabric and Monoliths, the Graft form is best identified by its clear expression of building functions. When welding several programs together, each function maintains their distinct form and can be identified by the shift in plan and section. In both Fabric and Monolith hybrids, the building programmatic functions are embedded within a continuous building envelope, whether it respects the urban context or contrasts on a monumental scale.



**Figure 4.9:** Downtown Athletic Club New York - Changing programs with each set back



**Figure 4.10:** Three Traditional Hybrid Forms: Fabric Hybrids (L), Graft Hybrids (C), Monolith Hybrids (R)

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## 4.4 Characteristics of Contemporary Hybrids

Entering the 21st century, hybrid architecture continued to develop more distinct characteristics and further differentiating itself from similar typologies. Hybrids began to develop new internal conditions, warped programs that emerged a concentration of many social activities. These contemporary hybrids exceed beyond manipulating internal space but also can shape public space by introducing Urban Porosity to areas lacking pedestrian oriented urban space (Mozas & Holl, 2014). New public spaces formed by hybrids often consists of living, working, recreation and cultural facilities to create an influx of people and interaction. With these complex programs combined, the new pedestrian sector can reduce the need for an automobile or public transit to transfer across the city. As a result, large contemporary hybrid buildings are able to spawn localized social condensers for new communities.

Unlike historical hybrid buildings from the early 20th century, Hybrids today in metropolitan environments transcend building sections from standard slab-by-slab separation into unprecedented dynamic sectional movement. With new potentials, in *This is Hybrid*, Holl suggests that Hybrid Buildings have the potential to be “21st century cities as incubators, public space formation, programmatic juxtapositions, living/working/recreating and cultural social condensers, dynamics of section, super green architecture, and freedom of new concepts” (Mozas & Holl, 2014). However, hybrid buildings are often mistaken as any combination of standard programs. For instance, suburban shopping centres began to accumulate several leisure activities into a single complex, as a method for adding attractive elements to shopping. As referenced by Fenton, hybrid buildings are a response to urban pressures of escalating land values and the restrictions of the city fabric. On the contrary, suburban shopping centres are not constrained by the rigidity of the urban grid or imposed by economic pressures. Typologically, in suburban malls interlinking does not exist or evidence showing the grafting of activities. Despite these different combinations of building functions, mixed-use and social condensers are often misinterpreted as hybrid buildings.

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**Figure 4.11:** Porous Hybrids allows public space to take place in any combination of programs



**Figure 4.12:** Sliced Porosity Block - Steven Holl

Hybrid buildings have a distinctive personality that celebrates complexity, diversity, and the variety of contrasting programs. Without previous frameworks, each Hybrid building is a new combination of its own, rethinking urbanity beyond the conventional high rise and taking on multiple representations. This framework provides a new magnitude of programs when the singular use has become insufficient. With cities today, such as Toronto, struggling with the imbalance of the public realm, a built environment that shares its programmatic uses and bridges the public realm with the private is becoming increasingly relevant for the future of urban culture. The role of hybridized buildings in the 21st century is to generate an architectural place that creates an impact on both a community and urban scale, opposed to a single enclosed neighbourhood or typology.

Through the analysis and design of modern hybrids, Holl further defined this typology with several key points. First, by addressing sociability, hybrid architecture is a fusion of the private and public realms. Experientially, it adapts from the intimacy from private life and the sociability of public life,

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allowing both to prosper from each other. This means hybrid building has the capacity and permeability to allow private program extend its accessibility throughout the 24 hour day since activities are not restricted to private or public rhythms.

Typologically, modern hybrid building rejects are considered unclassified based on its principles, the purpose is to amalgamate multiple typologies and a series of programs are merged together. Consequently, hybrid architecture is a direct response to the modern ideology of advocating the compartmentalization and separation of uses. In other words, hybrid buildings are an ambiguous typology or even considered an anti-type.

In contrast to traditional projects under the reign of a singular entity, hybrid buildings are beyond the point of mixing programs. The hybridization of building functions includes the integration of different entities and ownership such as public and private partnerships. In complex economic markets like Toronto, public-private partnerships (P3s) are beneficial for the city when meeting demands such as providing infrastructure to support the growing density. More specifically, P3s can benefit the city by creating quality public spaces. As a result, hybrids are essentially a collaboration among many entities and levels of ownership, construction, structure and management.

Opposed to mixed-use, the hybrid is interconnected symbiotically to maximize diversity in its function. The notion of a sectional juxtaposition of building programs allows for internal cross-pollination of spontaneous activities, unlike traditional mixed-use building that stack programs on top of one another. In dense environments, this mixing of users generates mutual interaction, such as culturally and socially. In an urban setting, interconnection can improve the quality of life in polarized communities.

Since hybrid architecture is undefined by typology but rather a combination of function, the scale of hybrids often embody the characteristics of super-buildings and megastructures, as described by Holl, "a city within a

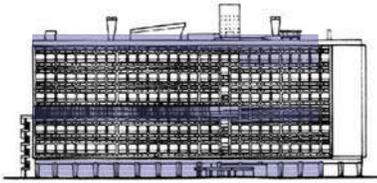
## 4.0 THE HYBRID FORM

city" (Mozas & Holl, 2014). Vertical growing hybrids are connected through superimpositions, and horizontal hybrids use on-floor additions to link programs. On a city scale, hybrid architecture engages an urban discourse by being a reactive strategy to the grid, urban landmarks, and the surrounding public realm. Some hybrids consist of a series of mono-functional buildings assembled around common ground, reflecting the identity of the city. On this scale, hybrids have extended beyond the territory of architecture and affecting the realm urban planning.

### 4.5 Hybrid Buildings vs Social Condensers

Although hybrid buildings define multifunctional architecture created by different combinations of programs, the Social Condenser is often mistaken to be the building type. Unlike the hybrids, which emerged a century ago under the pressure of increasing urban density, social condensers were established during the constructivist movement. The social condenser was a response to the lack of land availability and the critical demand in housing during the Soviet Union regime. Focusing primarily on housing, social condensers were primarily state funded projects that prioritized the influx of people and as well the inclusivity of mixed demographics. This functional way of thinking created a mixed-used typology that concentrated developing communities internally within a structure opposed to opening up and encouraging the contact among strangers like the hybrid. As hybrids as often combinations of contrasting programs, condensers selectively merge programs that mutually benefit the inhabitants from within, resulting in the sharing of private domestic functions such as common kitchens, canteens, laundrettes, or child care. In addition, hybrids often establish social interaction outside of the domestic area, whereas the condensers enter the private realm up to the living units. As a result, social condensers differs from hybrids as are typically exclusive in use and services only the residences within the dwellings, isolated from public access. Despite, both typologies shared many similarities in the social aspect, the ownership and initiatives of hybrids invite different entities to collaborate, whereas condensers are primarily owned by a single entity.

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**Figure 4.13:** Areas of communal functions.

A prime example of a social condenser is Le Corbusier's Unite d'Habitation in Marseille, France. Developed during the modernist era, this project was considered a prototype for housing over 1000 inhabitants as well as shared programs such as small shops, offices, park playground, canteen, youth clubs, health clinics, kindergarden, gymnasium, and roof top garden. This concept of an all-inclusive building housed internal streets connecting these programs, embodying a micro city within a single apartment building. In one aspect, Corbusier's concept was to create a self-sufficient and 'complete' building that can operate alone without the support of the urban context (Mozas & Holl, 2014). Although they did not continue to replicate this framework for more housing projects in Marseille, elements of the social condenser often appear in student housing projects and residential complexes in dense cities.



**Figure 4.14:** Internal Streets.



**Figure 4.15:** Restaurant and Cafe on the 7th floor.

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## 4.6 Architectural Precedents

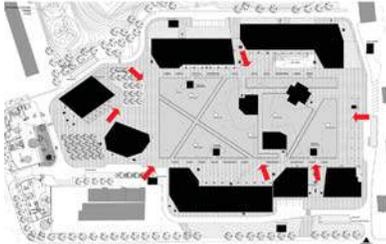


Figure 4.16: Three levels of public space

### Linked Hybrid by Steven Holl

By treating the building as a porous urban space for developing community engagement, the Linked Hybrid by Steven Holl embodies the very essence of interactive relations between its residences and visitors. With a distinct combination of programs, the dwelling complex consisting of eight midrise towers can be accessed on three levels: The ground, the subterranean, and the above ground. The success of this hybrid building lies in its ability to extract autonomous urban functions from its context and integrate them within the complex, honouring the concept of “open city within a city” (Holl & Woods, Steven Holl: architecture spoken, 2007). This method of hybridizing programs distorts the defined public and private spaces by inserting commercial, recreational, and educational spaces throughout the three levels. In relation to

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**Figure 4.17:** Access points from all directions of the site



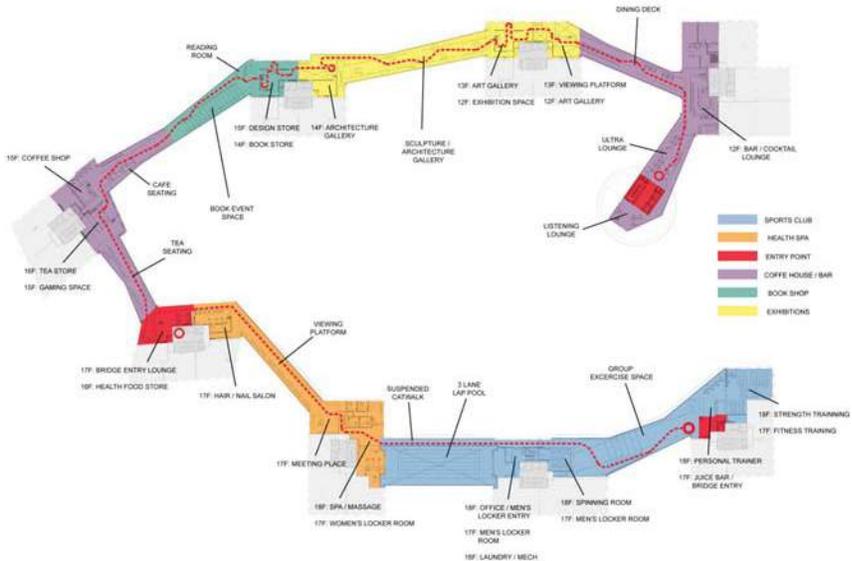
**Figure 4.18:** Sky bridge amenities



**Figure 4.19:** Theatre Space

the urban context, the Linked Hybrid situates on the borders of the old city wall of Beijing, with multiple sightlines from the elevated garden levels overlooking the Forbidden City.

Focusing on the experience of the body passing through hybridize spaces, the towers are arranged according to movement, timing, and sequence of its users, which spawns a sporadic city-like relationship. Whether it is to utilize the ground plane, the elevated, and the underground, the interstitial space between the towers is treated as opportunities for socio-cultural interaction. By opening the site with multiple points of entry in every direction, it captivates the public realm and invites visitors to share the experiences with the immediate residences. The continuous circulation of the sky bridge is used as public space connecting the eight towers, providing amenity and commercial spaces for dynamic moments of intensifying social interaction. Culturally, the complex is a response to traditional Chinese Feng-Shui principles of vertical living, by offering a distinct local landmark to the neighbourhood, which is typically lacking in mass housing in China.



**Figure 4.20:** Sky bridge linking all 8 mid-rise structures.

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Although this complex uses verticality as a spatial strategy for increasing interaction, it may develop difficulty for pedestrians to fully access the elevated bridges. Since the project is located away from the city centre, it is challenging to encourage visitors to casually access the upper amenities without the necessary density. Furthermore, lacking government involvement, the diverse programs may eventually generate a gated community considering multiple internal programs area privately owned. Despite the fact, this project embodies great principles in urban porosity and diversity in functions, elevating public amenities is still a barrier for interaction in the Toronto urban landscape. Since the lack of space and population has not reached to the level of congested metropolises such as Tokyo, Hong Kong, and New York, it is not embedded in Canadian culture to publically use multilevel amenities beyond the height threshold established in the first chapter.

### West Village by Jiakun Architects

Designed to rejuvenate heavily residential areas of the city, Chengdu, with cultural and recreational activities, West Village is a mid-rise hybrid complex over taking an entire city block. Being inserted into a high-density neighbourhood, the complex integrates the concept of local collective community space by simultaneously connecting public, semi-public, and private spaces with sports and leisure activities, cultural and artistic events, and creative industries. The complex is a contemporary area to accommodate the diverse urban lifestyles of the surrounding communities. With the ambition to build a closer and healthier network dwellers, the project synthesizes collective memory, local identity, and social inclusion into a megastructure that embraces the pedestrian realm. Maximizing the site conditions, interior programs area pushed to the perimeter creating a generous public sports arena in the courtyard that opens up to public users, delineating from the traditional Chengdu lifestyle of being "Self sufficient yet open minded" (Jiakun, 2016).



Figure 4.21: Public park space on ground level.



Figure 4.22: Continuous ramp connecting the roof and the ground level for recreation.

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**Figure 4.23:** West Village hybrid complex in the centre of a dense housing



**Figure 4.24:** Outdoor community activities

Using three continuous corridors, two exterior and one interior, the complex seemingly does not have a back against a private space, allowing every building program to be visible to the public. With the structure under the five-storey height threshold, it utilizes exterior connecting balconies to thread autonomous programs together and connects to the street level. Furthermore, by recognizing the difficulty for recreational amenities to be fully functional on the roof level, the complex uses a winding ramp to connect users from the ground level to the 1.6-kilometer running and cycling track on the roof.

The West Village is both a monolithic and fabric hybrid, yet its height provides a direct pedestrian connection with the street level. Its design strategies ensure a high social tolerance that offers multiple means of accessibility, encouraging cyclists and visitors through public transit to access the space. It is evident that spatial arrangement values connectivity of space on a human scale and aims to improve the quality of life for the local residences. However, the challenges of using these design strategies for a community hybrid is the city of Toronto is the lack of open space in dense residential neighbourhoods. To insert a hybrid complex of this size and scale will require a large plot of

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land surrounded by an established community. Without any free city blocks, a proposal of this scale will likely to develop in post-industrial site when they become redeveloped for dwellings.



Figure 4.25: Informal theatre space for events and lectures.



Figure 4.26: Community soccer arena.

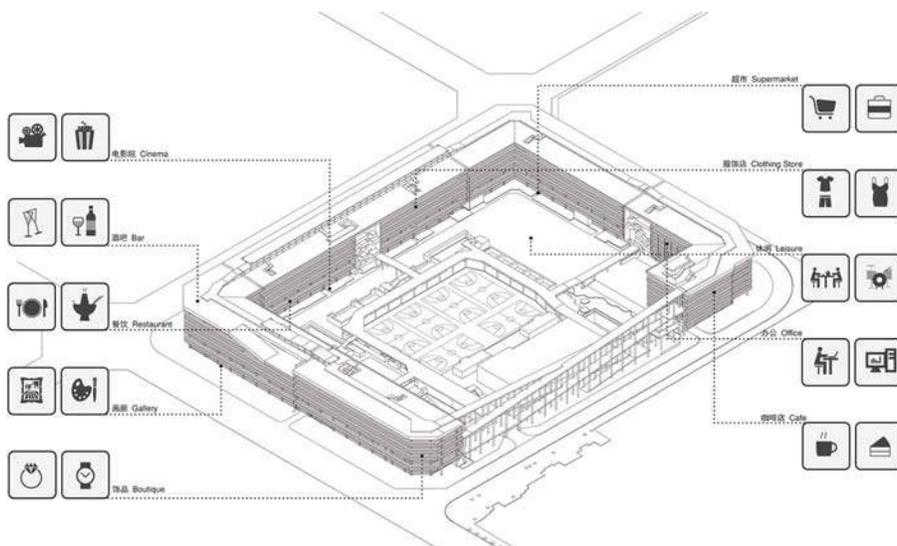


Figure 4.27: West Village program diagram.

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Figure 4.28: DAC/BLOX proposal render.

### DAC & BLOX by OMA



Figure 4.29: Stacking terraces looking out to the harbour.

Situated next to the Copenhagen harbour on top of a busy street, the DAC & BLOX the outcome of collaboration, monumentality, simplicity, and hybridity. The ambition for the project is to offer a new “meeting point” by transforming an underused harbour environment by introducing culture, excitement, and new public realm to the neighbourhood (Loon, 2018). With the lack of connectivity from the water to the city, the complex acts as a spontaneous transition that interrupts existing infrastructure. The building is an amalgamation of public, semi-public, and private spaces, consisting of offices, commercial retail, cultural centre, residential units, research centre, playgrounds, and a public square. Embracing the graft hybrid, the project takes on an undefinable typology and form that consist of autonomous building programs taking on individual forms. Breaking the traditional model of a stacked section, each program block is inherently stacked and shifted forming a program 'heap', creating an unexpected and unpredictable program pairing.



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**Figure 4.33:** Stjordal Cultural Centre from the adjacent park space.

### **Cultural Center of Stjordal by Reiulf Ramstad Architects, Lusparken Architects, JSTA**

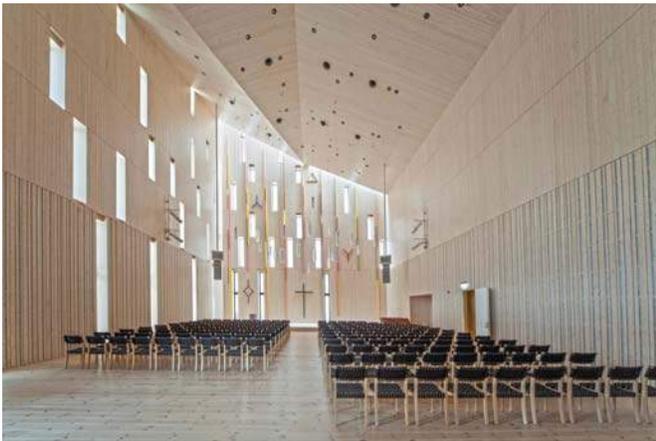
Located in the Norwegian town, Stjordal, the cultural centre is both a cultural, educational, and religious node for the surrounding town. The project invites people of all demographics who are interested in culture on way or another to intertwine with one another and further develop their interests and skills. By hybridizing a community library, work offices, performance space, exhibition space, youth centre, and church, the cultural centre is a meeting place for the community to experience events and exchange knowledge. By bringing together these distinctive programs, local residences are given opportunities to get to know each other and develop a local identity together.



**Figure 4.34:** Library Space in the Cultural Centre

## 4.0 THE HYBRID FORM

Prioritizing culture, this hybrid values public amenities and recognizes the necessary functions a community need to develop into a socially active neighbourhood. As a platform for a broad spectrum of cultural concepts, such as art, dance, music, film, and mixed media, the centre expands its tolerance of its users and minimizes restrictions that limit local users. In a complex city like Toronto, diverse cultural programs can help to open up internalized communities and invite locals to learn from one another, thus sharing knowledge and interests that bring people together.



**Figure 4.35:** Church space within the Cultural Centre



**Figure 4.36:** Void spaces between major programs allowing for natural light.

## 4.0 THE HYBRID FORM

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**CHAPTER 5:  
PROJECT PROPOSAL**

# PROJECT OVERVIEW

## **Privatization:**

Condominium/ Mid-rise communities developing stale homogeneous areas without neighbourhood culture and public amenities

## **Urban Pluralism:**

To promote social agglomeration and multiplicity of functions within a bounded space

## **Community Growth:**

Generating bonds, familiarity with neighbours and sharing spaces.

## **Social Interaction:**

Interacting with new people and bringing excitement to a region.

## **Localized Identity:**

Creating local culture for place making and regional specialty

**Community  
Recreation +  
Education:**

Programs primarily developed for internalized residents

**Public Spaces +  
Semi-Public Spaces:**

Programs that attract both internal and external individuals. Local residents and visitors.

**Semi-Public Spaces  
generating similar  
interests:**

Utilizing Arts, Cultural, Creative works to trigger both active/passive participation and interactive work environments

**Hybrid  
Architecture:**

To create a multipurpose and multiprogram space for meeting, work, leisure, events and activities all year long, distinguishable and safe.

**A Socio-Cultural Hub.**

**Community:**

- Community events spaces
- Public Park
- Education: rooms for courses and classes for the local demographic ie { cooking, child care etc}
- Daycare
- Outdoor Skating (Winter) Cafe / public work station space

**Cultural:**

- Local outdoor events (Seasonal activities)
- Collaborative co-working studios spaces
- Spaces for hosting public events ie{ art and food festivals
- Informal theatre spaces
- Maker Space

**Arts:**

- Local free contemporary art gallery. Bring back the creativity and intended culture for the neighbourhood
- Art classes for the local demographic as well as visitors of the area.
- Rentable Art Studios
- Woodworking

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

## 5.1 Project Description

The thesis project proposed is a critique of existing residential developments and its effects on public space in an urban context with the ambition of creating social interaction using a hybrid building accompanied by a public park that can provide communities with the necessary community, recreational, social, and cultural amenities. Diversification of users can remove the secular gated atmosphere, creating a "city within a city" without letting density and isolation to create architectural tragedies like the Pruitt-Igoe and Kowloon Walled City. By introducing a variety of programs to a disassociated site, the ideal project is to unravel the effects of carelessly developed introverted communities and produce a new living model for future progression in Toronto.

The proposed design combines the cultural, educational and communal functions with shared spaces and recreational infrastructures, in an open system enabling dialogue and exchange of ideas and views between, the public, local residents, creatives, tourists and educators. By eliminating social and physical barriers, the centre embodies the negotiation of the public and the private entities, hoping to open introverted neighbourhoods to the city. This new influx of art, culture, and leisure generates a new node for the community, celebrating the interests that manifest the local identity.

The socio-cultural centre and public park define the eastern edge of the high-density residential development zone, which links the community of polarized demographic to the rest of the diverse city. As a new focal point of the neighbourhood, this space offers public and semi-public zones for socializing, sharing creative ideas and generate life in the neighbourhood by offering space for active events. By being adjacent to a mixed variety of housing and the proposed linear park, the centre being a meeting point of the west end of downtown Toronto, breaking the homogeneous urban context which privatized careless planned residential communities have created.

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

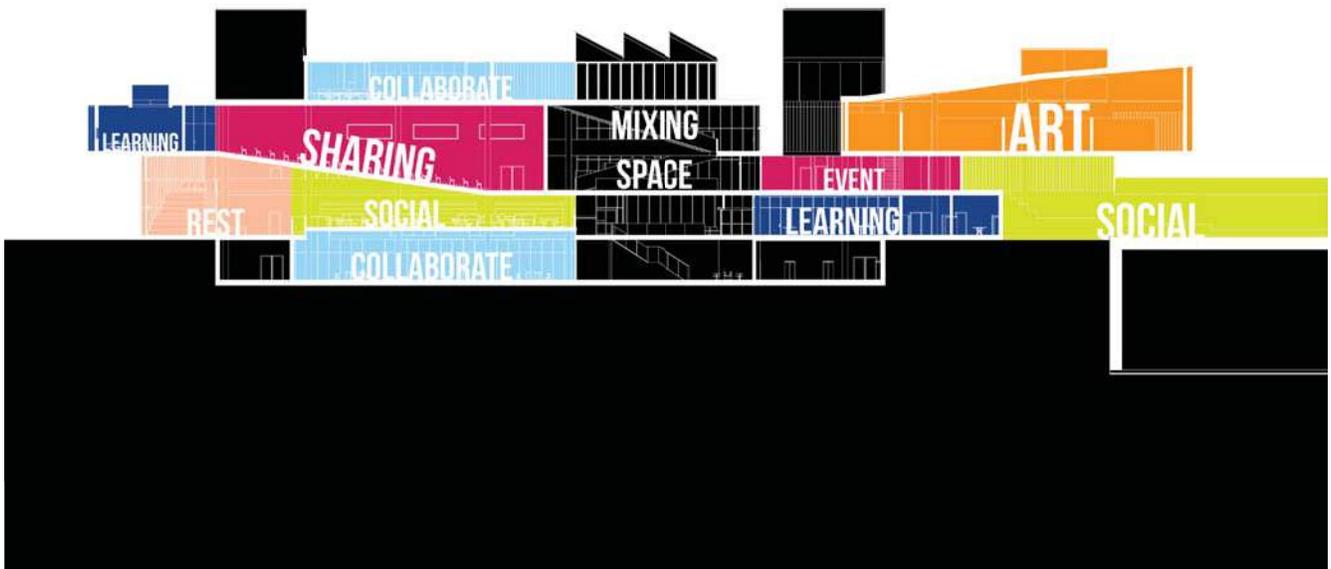
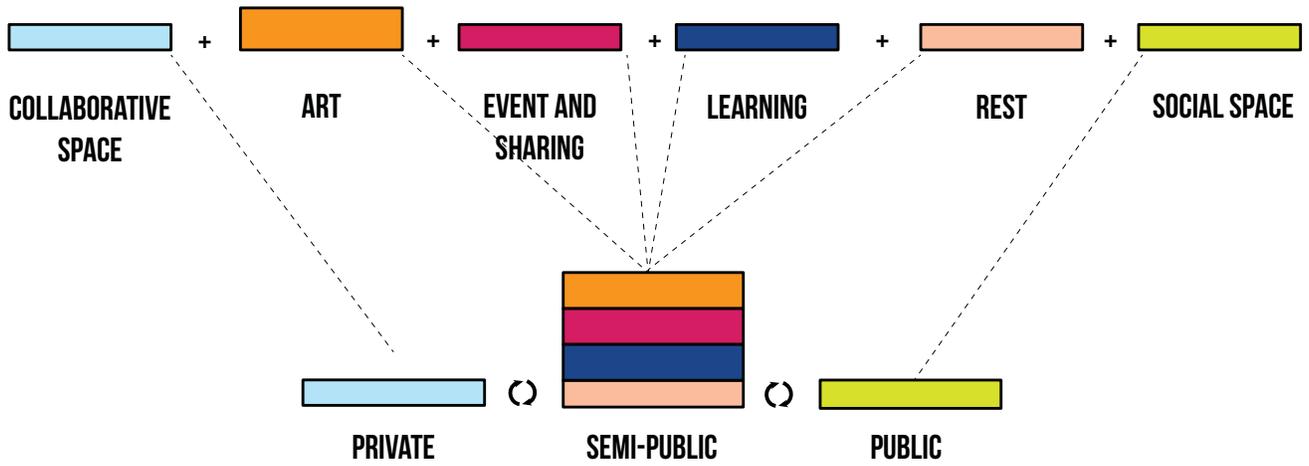


Figure 5.1:  
Program Design Approach

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

## 5.2 Site Analysis

The site proposed for this intervention is on the Strachan Avenue Overpass adjacent to the King West Liberty Village neighbourhood and at the intersection of Liberty Street and Strachan Avenue. This is a unique condition since it is a physical connection of the central residential zone in the neighbourhood to the Queen West and Trinity Bellwoods community. The geographic area of the King Wes Liberty Village is triangular shaped development enclosed by transit rails from the immediate north and south of the neighbourhood. Bisected by the rail lines, the two primary access routes for both pedestrians and vehicles are through Strachan Avenue and Atlantic Avenue, generating severe daily congestion for transit and drivers. Creating an urban island condition, this neighbourhood is separated from the main King Street west transit lines and relies on either TTC buses or walking to King Street. As a result, the site selection is driven by problematic conditions created densifying zones that are not efficiently supported infrastructure and amenities.



**Figure 5.2:**  
Steel structure above the Go Transity Line



**Figure 5.3:**  
Railway corridor north of King Liberty Village

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



**Figure 5.4:**  
The lack of diversity of program on existing site. Red indicating residential, Blue representing commercial, Green indicating public green space, and Yellow is the proposed site.

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



**Figure 5.5:**  
The lack of diversity of program on existing site. Red indicating residential, Blue representing commercial, Green indicating public green space, and Yellow is the proposed site.

## 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

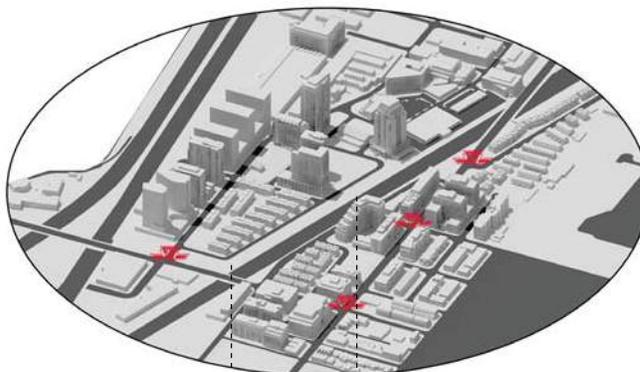


**Figure 5.6:**  
Top: Cyclist heatmap tracked by Strva  
Bottom: Pedestrian heatmap indicating  
circulation flow.

**Figure 5.7:**  
The proposed site is located at the busiest  
corner of the King Liberty Village, next to the  
central artery of the community.

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

Site Massing + Transit



Site Circulation



Outdoor Green Space

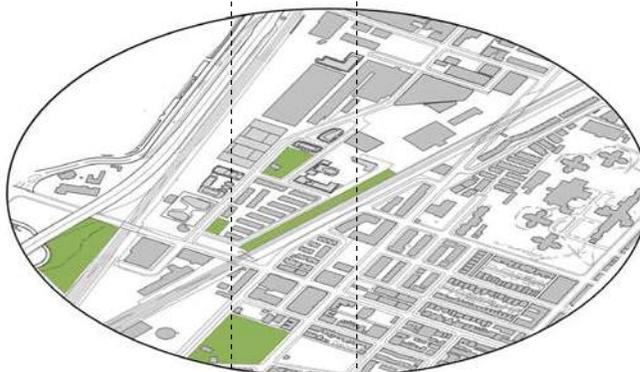


Figure Ground + Site location

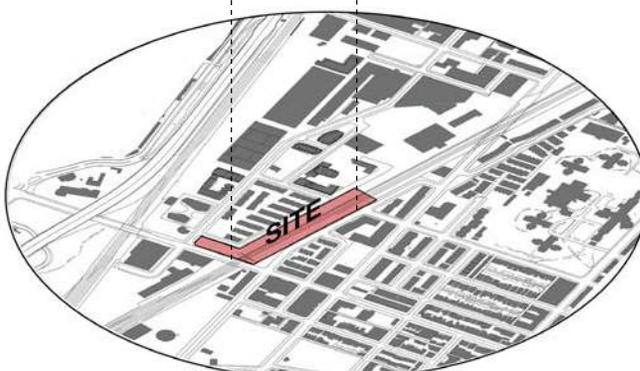


Figure 5.8:  
Site Elements

## 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

Currently, the site has an existing concrete structure creating a crevasse for the train lines operating with GO transit and Pearson Airport Express trains running frequently. Above the structure lies a horizontal steel truss for lateral support spanning the entire length of the concrete base. The support structure spans approximately 100 meters east of Strachan Avenue and continues for approximately 300 meters west. On the site of the socio-cultural centre, it is under construction for a 29-storey condominium tower designed by IBI Group Architects and developed by CentreCourt Developments. The condominium offers 481 new units and predicted to be complete for 2020.



**Figure 5.9:**  
Zen King West developing on the  
immediate site (L)

**Figure 5.10:**  
Zen construction site 2018 (R)

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



Surrounding the site is primarily residential buildings ranging from low-rises to high-rises. The immediate west of the socio-cultural centre is a four storey townhouse community, consisting of 12 rows of townhouses, which is also the only row housing in the King-Liberty Village. Directly south of the site is the Liberty Central by the Lake development, which are two 27-storey condominiums, developed by CanAlfa. East of the site on the other side of Strachan Avenue, is the Garrison Point Development. Currently, under construction, the complex consists of five condominium towers ranging from 28- 39 storeys tall. Developed by Diamond Corp, Cityzen Development Group and Fernbook Homes, the complex is designed by Hariri Pontarini Architects and Urban Strategies Inc. for urban planning. Within the immediate King-West Village, including the future projects that are currently under construction, there are 20 condominium towers within a square kilometre, deeming this area the second densest neighbourhood in Toronto.

**Figure 5.11:** Indicating the different typologies and height variations immediate to the site.

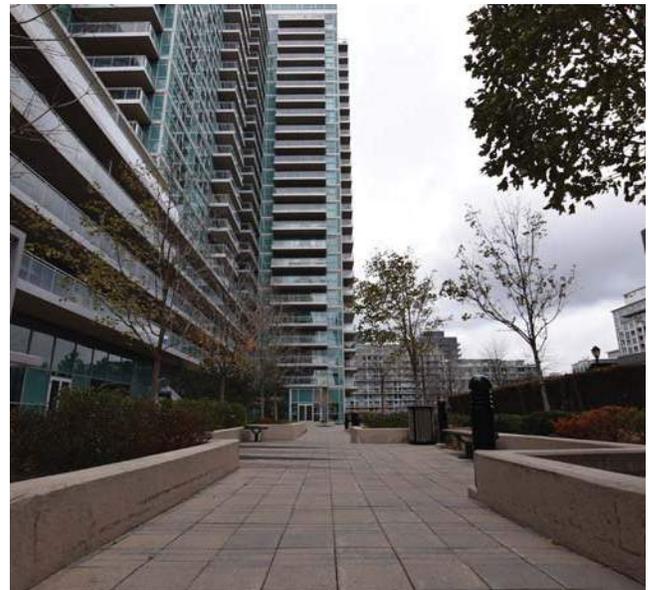
Orange: High-rise  
Green: Mid-rise  
Pink: Townhouse

## 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

As described in chapter 2, these condominium towers follow the typical configuration of a podium and a tower. These towers all have internalized recreation amenities such as fitness rooms and swimming pools located on the podium levels, followed by an extrusion of residential units above. Built up to the property line, the majority of these condominiums barricade its residences from the pedestrian street, reducing any connection to the sidewalk or community. With the contrasting scale and height between the townhouses and the condominiums, the street became intimidating with the heavy massing of the towers and their private property signs all along the pedestrian walkways. Evidently, the street conditions in the King Liberty Village only serves the purposes of dog walking and access to the city, lacking identity and nodes for gathering.



**Figure 5.12:**  
Side walk conditions along Liberty St. (L)



**Figure 5.13:**  
Privatized outdoor space (R)

## 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

With the heavy saturation of condominiums in this neighbourhood, the public park spaces that support the area are often considered residue spaces that are left over in between housing developments. Adjacent to the proposed socio-cultural centre is Gateway Park, which is essentially a 1200 square meter open field with several trees acting as a barrier separating the townhouses with Liberty Street. Without any programmed functions, this serves only as a space for dog walkers and daily commuters passing through. At the centre of King Liberty Village area is the Liberty Village Park. Surrounded by condominiums, the park offers a small playground for children, a poorly maintained open field, an abandoned historic structure, and a bike share station. The park severely lacks resting zones and quality amenities articulated to the residences. Since condominiums on the south and west engulfs the park, it is in constant shadow throughout the majority of the day, creating an unpleasant space for long duration of resting and leisure. Lastly, directly south of the railway corridor, adjacent to the proposed site for the new intervention, is Bill Johnston Park. Pressured by the railway restrictions, the park extruded long and narrow along Western Battery road. Lined with trees on the north side, the park essentially is a barrier separating the transit line and the residential complexes. Aside from the narrow off-leash dog area, the park critically lack open space, programmed public amenities, and spatial characteristics of quality public space. Looking at the defining factors of these parks, all three are primary examples of spaces that are left over from the housing developments, resulting in bare minimum amenities, maintenance, and function.



**Figure 5.14:**  
Gateway Park

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



**Figure 5.15:**  
Bill Johnston Park



**Figure 5.16:**  
Liberty Village Park

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

According to the census data provided by the municipal government, the King-Liberty Village situates in the Niagara neighbourhood sector of Toronto. Based on this report by Statistics Canada, the area has approximately 31,180 residences and an even number of male and females. With the identity of being a 'millennial' concentrated neighbourhood, the age group in the area solely range from 25-40, with only a small percentage of children and seniors (Niagara: Preliminary Neighbourhood Census Profile , 2016 ). Between 2001 and 2016 the millennials population has grown over three times, with 47% of the percent never married and a quarter of the population married (Niagara: Preliminary Neighbourhood Census Profile , 2016 ). Since the condominium boom in 2008, this neighbourhood has gone through drastic gentrification, which traditionally describes the movement of the middle-class into working class areas, evidently shifting out the working class. The highest average household annual income in the neighbourhood ranges from \$60k to \$79k followed by \$80k to \$125k (Niagara: Preliminary Neighbourhood Census Profile , 2016 ). Financially, the residents in this neighbourhood have a higher income than the city averages, identifying the area as a middle-class community.

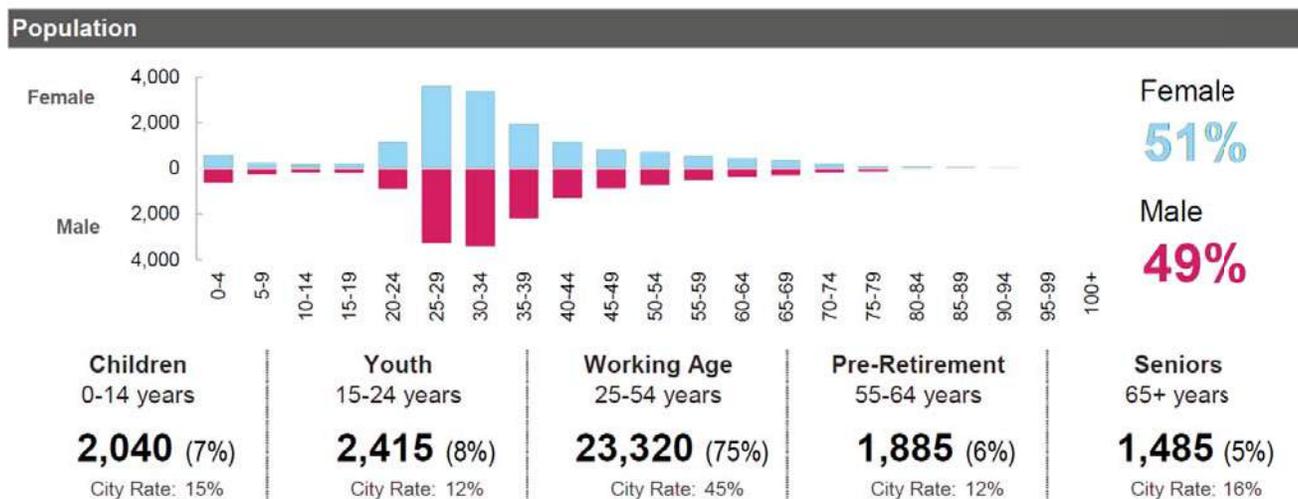
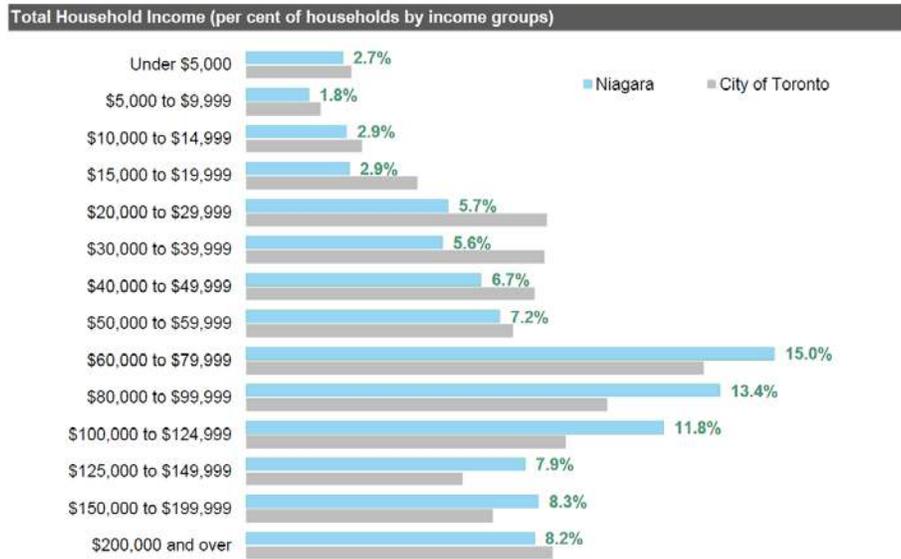


Figure 5.17: Niagara neighbourhood population

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



**Figure 5.18:**  
Neighbourhood Total Household Income

Age	2001	2006	2011	2016	Trend
0-4	535	555	725	1,190	↑
5-9	415	390	350	510	↑
10-14	360	350	285	340	↓
15-19	370	380	365	385	↑
20-24	735	850	1,400	2,030	↑
25-29	1,845	2,475	4,120	6,865	↑
30-34	1,935	2,830	4,505	6,780	↑
35-39	1,375	1,895	2,800	4,125	↑
40-44	1,035	1,245	1,725	2,450	↑
45-49	800	975	1,275	1,685	↑
50-54	645	805	980	1,415	↑
55-59	425	610	805	1,065	↑
60-64	300	430	620	820	↑
65-69	255	285	420	635	↑
70-74	175	225	255	380	↑
75-79	150	130	205	240	↑
80-84	65	95	105	135	↑
85-89	35	40	35	70	↑
90-94	10	10	10	20	↑
95-99	0	0	5	5	↑
100+	0	0	0	0	→

**Figure 5.19:**  
Neighbourhood demographic fluctuation (2001-2016)



LIB

Figure 5.20:  
False Liberty

ERTY

FREEDOM



# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

## 5.3 History and Context

The history of the neighbourhood must be explored to understand the relationship between the city of Toronto and developers as well as the effects of the condominium boom and privatization. Dating back to its industrial past in the mid 19th century, the city of Toronto decided to lay railway tracks across the community, cutting it off from the rest of the urban fabric, cancelling the plans of turning the neighbourhood into residential developments. In return, the neighbourhood houses several institutions including the Toronto Central Prison and the Andrew Mercer Reformatory for Women. With its proximity to railway tracks leading into the core of the city, it attracted many industrial companies to the area joining including the famously known Inglis Company, manufacturing machinery, munition, and later electric appliances. From the success of the Inglis Company, the industrialization further expanded in the early 20th century opening furniture and toy factories. By the late 1970s, the manufacturing began to slow down as the transportation slowly shifted from the railway to roads. Furthermore, the demand for large manufacturing facilities and offshore manufacturing had lead to the eventual closing of these factories in 1991. Without the industrial activity in Liberty Village, the neighbourhood was left to abandonment until it was picked up again in 2001 as a business improvement area (BIA) by the city.

W



**Figure 5.21:**  
Liberty Street 1915  
Image Source: Toronto City Archive

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



**Figure 5.22:**  
Ariel View of King West and Liberty Village  
in 1920



**Figure 5.23:**  
Toronto Central Prison Yard, 1926

## 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

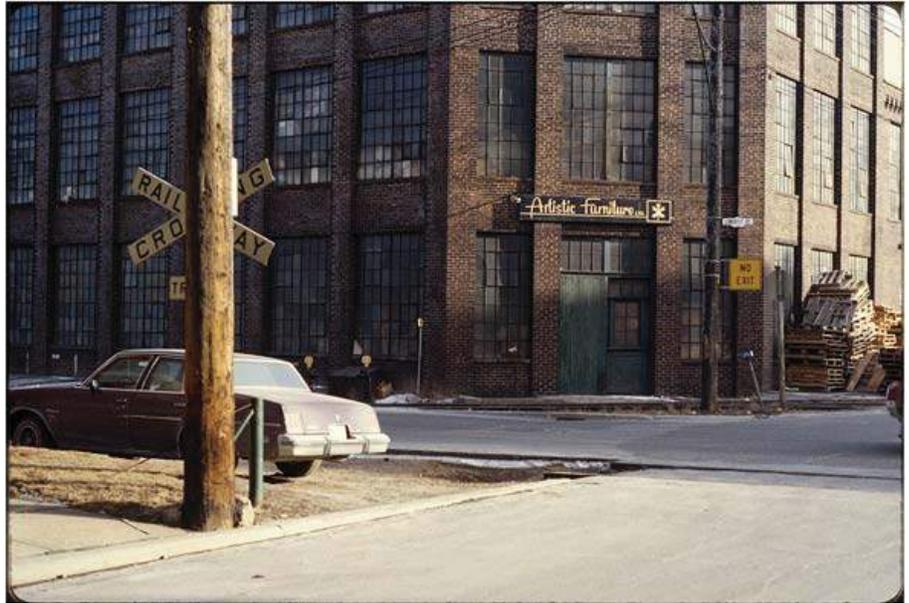


**Figure 5.24:**  
Munition workers outside of Inglis factory,  
1940s



**Figure 5.25:**  
Toronto Central Prison Chapel 1953,  
currently remains in the center of Liberty  
Village Park

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



**Figure 5.26:**  
Liberty Street and furniture factory late  
1970s



**Figure 5.27:**  
Decaying factories: Irwin Toy Factory, 1990s

## 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

As a post-industrial site, the city of Toronto has decided to rejuvenate the neighbourhood by introducing new condominiums/ lofts, office spaces, park space, commercial retail, and restaurants to bring life to the deserted area. Urban planning often represents state intervention in the land development process, but heavily influenced by many private entities (Adams, 1994). In the province of Ontario, legal powers come from provincial legislation within the Ontario Planning Act. During these early planning discussions, a comprehensive plan was developed to outline a supportive legislative and operational framework that mediates public and private involvement to establish the inclusion of neighbourhood elements such as diversity, public transit, and public spaces (Calthrope & Fulton, 2001).

Prior to the residential developments in KLV BIA, gentrification began when small organizations began to inhabit old factory spaces, starting with Artscape, an organization seeking for affordable spaces for artists. This further attracted small start-ups, tech companies, and media firms to move into the neighbourhood. The sudden economic growth drew in larger companies to reside in the area as well. Since the Liberty Village commercial area was built upon public-private partnerships, this generated pressure for housing developments in the King Liberty Village section for the workers in the area (Hilburt, 2010).

Once the post-industrial land was purchased, private companies, Toronto Land Partnership and CanAlfa Group, assembled the KLV area into 45 acres of developable space. Supported by the municipal government, the land was repurposed and rezoned for residential developments since they would benefit significantly from the property taxes. The neighbourhood transformed from industrial to residential, commercial, and institutional mixed-use. However, lacking the necessary resources for major infrastructure rehabilitation and renovation, the city required external planning and involvement. In 2004, IBI Group developed a master plan that accommodates new zoning and subdivides the KLV lot into smaller blocks and phases (Figure). When the



**Figure 5.28:**  
Post-Industrial site beginning to transform  
(2006)

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



Figure 5.29:  
Liberty Village Master Plan by IBI (2004)

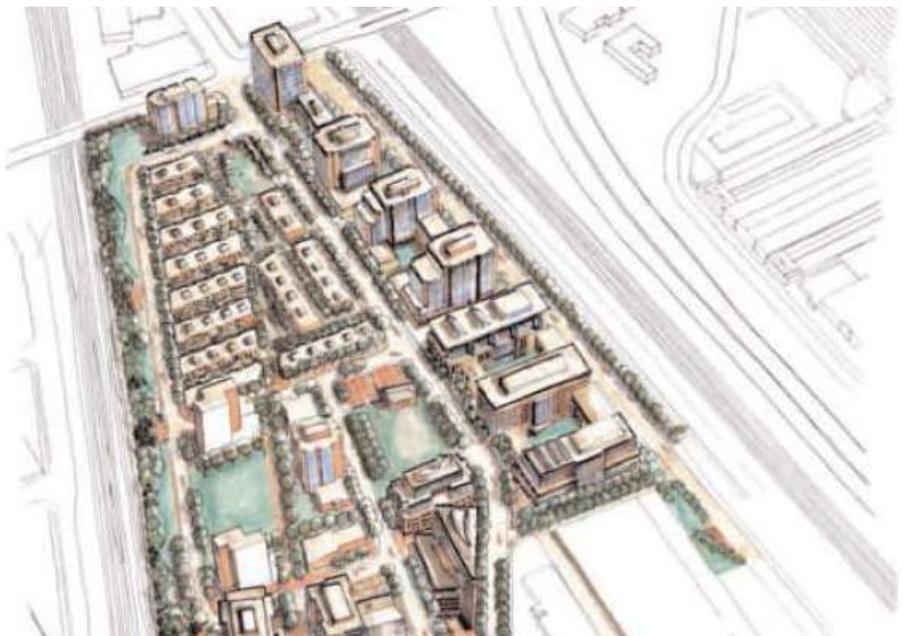


Figure 5.30:  
Original mid-rise proposal in the master plan

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

municipal government do not have enough resources and funding to intervene with the redevelopment, the city allowed developers to implement the most feasible design/master plan, creating an opportunity to realize the city's goal of generating profit. Evidently, this leads to the city's leniency for allowing and approving elements of the new developments, such as increasing in massing and height allowance (Hilburt, 2010).

Critical issues of the site were not resolved in the master plan such as public transit access to accommodate the new density. Transportation became one of the primary limitations of integrating this post-industrial development back to the rest of the city. Despite the effort was made to reconnect the area with bus routes and the Exhibition GO transit line, the inconvenience and infrequency created congestion for the residences. Although it would be beneficial for an additional GO transit line for the area north of Liberty Village, there are no plans to establish this even though it was initially proposed in the master plan. Furthermore, as described in 5.2, the current park and outdoor space environment within the BIA is lifeless and not sufficient for the volume of residences in the area. Unfortunately, the city parks department deemed the neighbourhood sufficient due to its proximity to the Trinity-Bellwoods Park.



**Figure 5.31: (L)**  
Rail corridor restricting urban circulation

**Figure 5.32: (R)**  
Heavy traffic at the intersection of Strachan Ave and Liberty St

## 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

After construction of the initial townhouses followed by the construction of the early condominiums, there has been little to none community involvement in the future planning. The lack of involvement could be due to the young demographic in the area, who has no interests and involvement in future planning, which worked in the developers' favour. Traditionally, industrial rezoning favours the developers, a unique scenario that maintains the original high density but changes the land use. The site benefited developers since there is more flexibility in density on previous industrially zoned sites and allowed more freedom and less required setbacks. In addition, any setback requirements for the condominium towers force the density allowance to translate into taller towers than the mid-rises proposed in the initial plan. Today in the midst of the condominium boom, the intent of creating an "intimate live work village" seemed to be lost in the direct translation of density into height, lacking critical resources in making the neighbourhood welcoming. With the continuing developments, the city has not consistently devoted the resources necessary to comprehensively plan the neighbourhood effectively, allowing economic pressures to force it into a situation of reactive planning.



**Figure 5.33:**  
Garrison Point , The Future of Liberty Village



**Figure 5.34:**  
Garrison Point , The Future of Liberty Village

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

Since the extensive planning and construction of the King-Liberty Village area, the western side of the neighbourhood continued to increase restaurants, commercial retail, and offices. The occupation of the residences in the KLV is primarily in management (finance and administration), arts, culture, recreation, and sports, commuting to the inner core of the city (Niagara: Preliminary Neighbourhood Census Profile, 2016 ). In retrospect, planners realized the need for a diverse range of housing and access to public transit since the majority of the residences relies on public transit and cycling more than personal vehicles. The intensification of density in the area has generated transit congestion since the King Streetcar line is the primary mode of transit. Currently, there have been plans to construct a pedestrian bridge over rail corridor, yet it does not connect enough points over the Georgetown/ Milton corridor with cyclists deeming it inefficient due to its elevation.



**Figure 5.35:**  
Proposed pedestrian bridge connecting Douro St and Western Battery Rd

***“Resist whatever seems inevitable.***

***Resist people who seem invincible...***

***Resist the idea that you need a client to make architecture...***

***Resist the foregone conclusion that They have already won...***

***Resist believing that there can be architecture without architects...***

***Resist any idea that equates architecture and ownership...”***

***– Lebbeus Woods***

## 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

### 5.4 Zoning

The entire Liberty Village neighbourhood is under the regulations of the former zoning by-laws No. 438-86, passed in 1986. With the community not harmonized with the current New City of Toronto By-laws last updated in 2013, there is a lot of flexibility for developers to increase height, typology, and boundaries for their property. The site for the Socio-cultural Centre, 19 Western Battery Rd, is zoned for 80,575 square meters of residential mixed-use, with ground level of the podium as commercial retail facing Strachan Avenue. The increase of height was approved in 2010 going from 20 storeys in the original plan to 29 storeys, to accommodate the density, as well as no significant setback for the site (Toronto City Planning, 2010).



**Figure 5.36:** Liberty Village neighbourhood zoning is harmonized with the 2013 bylaws, and remain under the Bylaw 438-86 (navy blue) established in 1986.

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

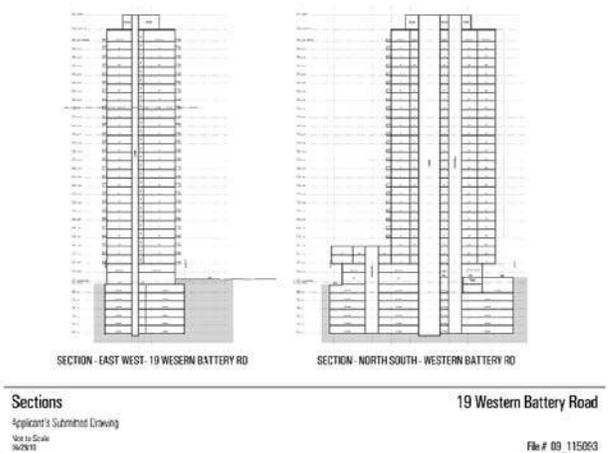
As for new Socio-cultural Centre, the design proposes a 5-storey height limitation to keep the building under the height threshold for ground level connection. In addition, it proposes the site to be rezoned from residential to mixed-use community functions. With its proximity to the townhouse community that is already adjacent to condominium towers along the south and west, this design suggests the reduction in height and scale to deduce the overcasting shadows from the massing. The current site is zoned for the Zen Condominium, a 29-storey condominium with a four-storey podium for commercial recreation. The proposal desaturates the volume of dwellings along Strachan Avenue to increase the diversity of programs in the KLV.

The proposed park on top of the rail deck is currently zoned as Utility and Transportation. According to the City of Toronto Zoning By-law 569-2013, the space above the rail deck permits the usage for market gardens, parks, public utilities, and recreation (City of Toronto, 2013). By transforming the rail deck into functional space, it can better serve the community as well as providing open space for the high-density.

**Figure 5.37: (L)**  
Zen condominium render



**Figure 5.38: (R)**  
19 Western Battery Road Zoning sections.



# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



**Figure 5.39:**  
Site Master Plan of the proposed Liberty Raildeck Park and the Socio-Cultural Centre.

## 5.5 Design Process

To establish an appropriate program for this site, the investigation began with analyzing the insufficiencies of the neighbourhood, and the elements that are missing which create a holistic community. Looking at the immediate site, fully utilized open park space is a critical concern for these residences as the existing community is provided with three dysfunctional parks: Liberty Village Park, Gateway Park, and Bill Johnston Park. Aside from these three designated public space, other open areas are primarily private and introverted for the adjacent residents. It is evident that the three parks were not

## 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



**Figure 5.40:**  
North View of the Socio-Cultural Centre

fully developed under the original design guidelines proposed in 2004. (King Liberty Village Urban Design Guidelines, 2013) Aside from the Liberty Village Park which offers a playground for children, the primary use of the other two parks is residue buffer space for housing and main roads. As a result, one of the primary functions of the hybrid design is to reintroduce a contemporary outdoor park space for the neighbourhood that is articulated to the needs of the residents.

## 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



**Figure 5.41:**  
Site Axonometric

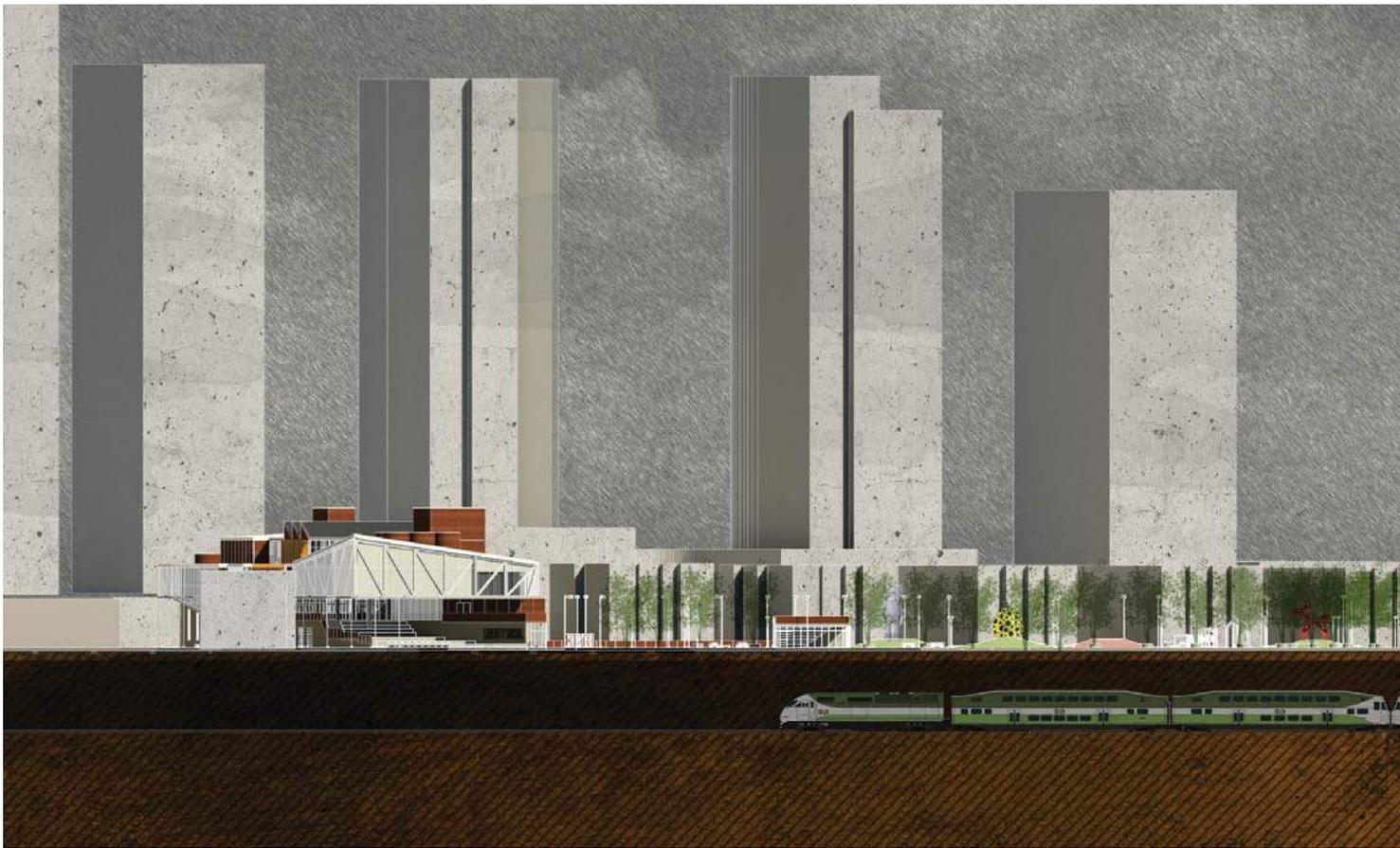
Another critical component of the project is the collaboration between entities. Derived from the criticism and shortcomings of the proposed Rail Deck Park, this hybrid design and park will require a collaborative effort from the public sector as well as the private sector (Pagilaro, 2017). To construct a project integrated with infrastructure, it will require negotiation with private sector, as they own the space above the active railway lines. As for the Socio-cultural Centre, it will be a combined effort between the Toronto municipal government,

## 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

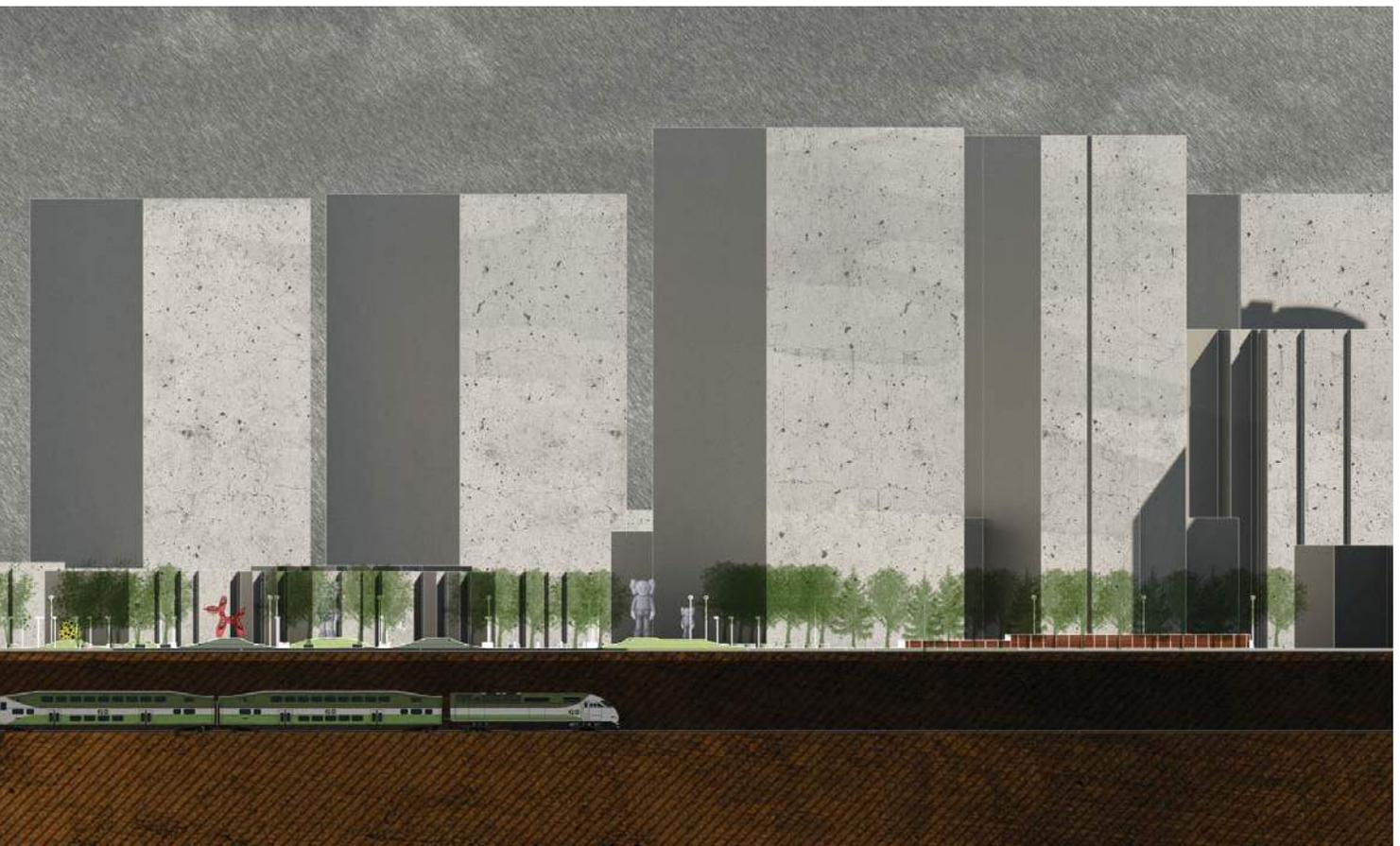


**Figure 5.42:**  
View of Socio-Cultural Centre & Park from  
Strachan Ave and Wellington St W

non-profit art organizations, local businesses, private organizations, bank organizations, and Toronto Parks and Recreation. By allowing these entities to integrate and work together in the project, this concept not only brings residences closer to the public and semi-public space, but also reinvents the traditional community amenities. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Nolli's cartographic study of Italy has identified internalized public space within the city that is used to distort the definitive boundaries of private zones in the city.



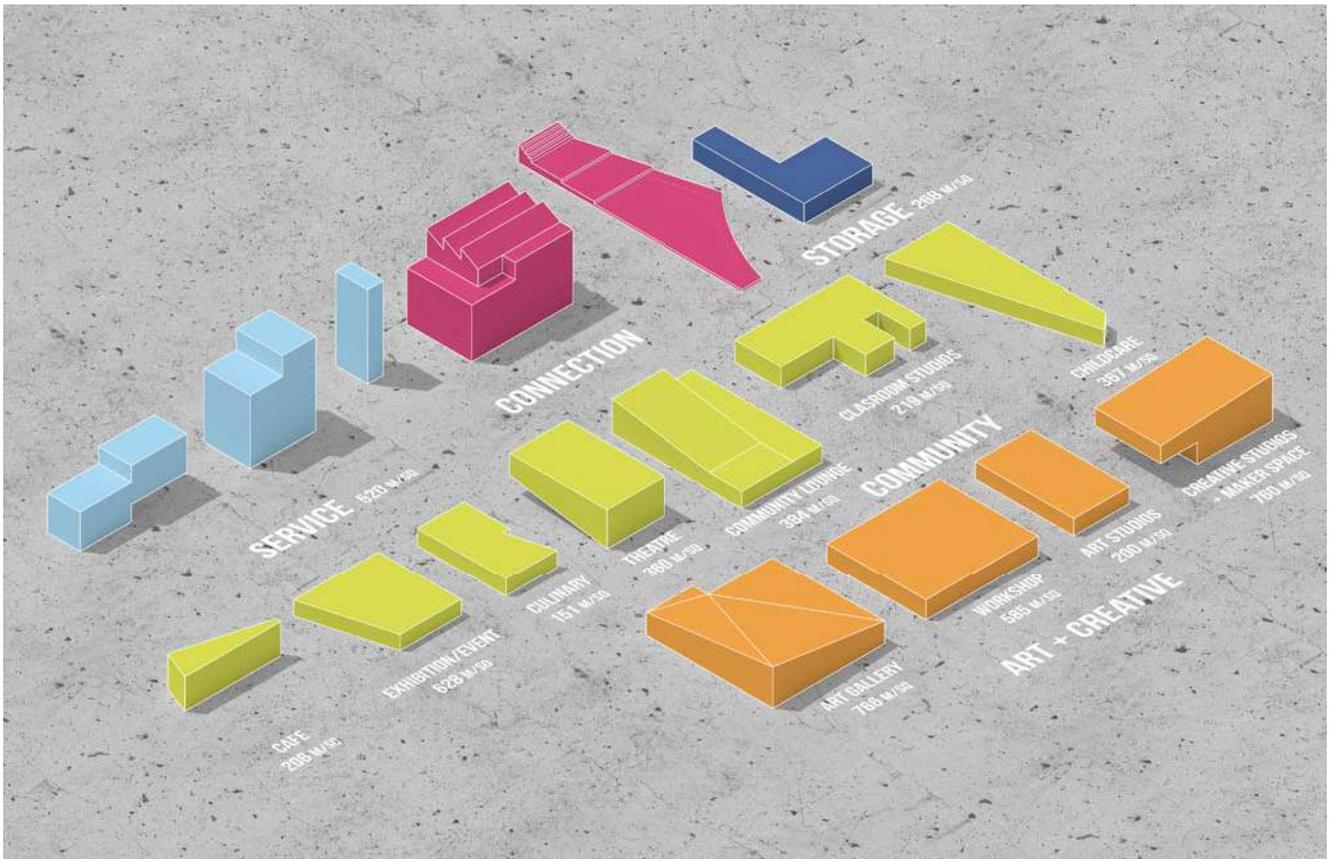
**Figure 5.43:**  
Site Section



## 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

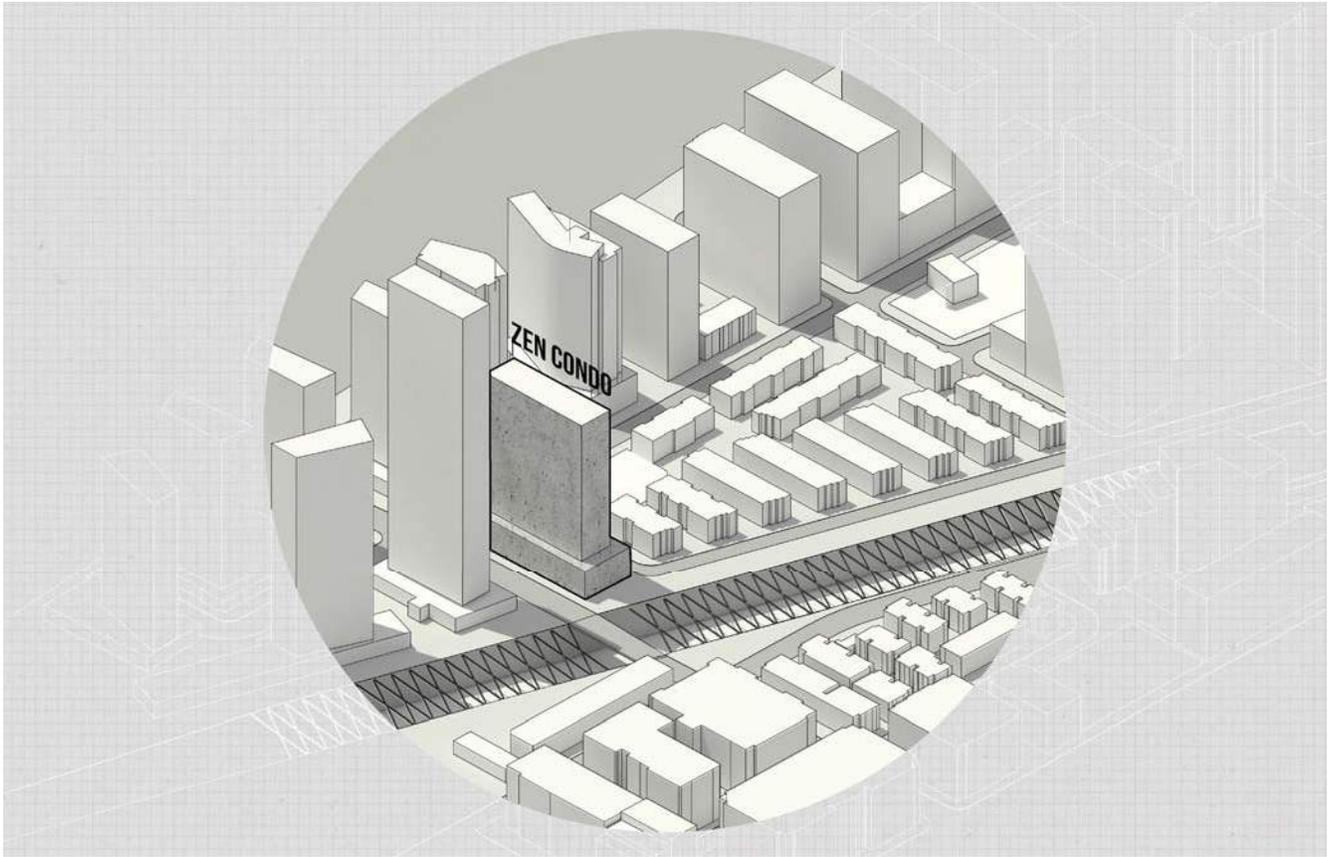
The design process of the centre began with understanding the connectivity to the surrounding neighbourhood environment as well as the street qualities. To have a direct connection with the street, the organization of the programs prioritizes the pure public programs on the grade level and gradually shifting to semi-public and private programs on the upper levels. This organization attempts to expand the repertoire of spatial typologies in which users can interact with each other. An essential aspect of the design is to bring the public realm into the core of the hybridized space. By creating a direct connection to the proposed park, the building is an extension of the park, and the park is an extension of the building. These two conditions that typically contrast and complement each other are now bonded together, neither dominating the other.

In this hybrid design, each individual program can act independently and simultaneously complement one another. The grafting form of the building is delineated from the unrestricted internal program and events. As defined by Bernard Tschumi, "architecture is not what spaces is but what happens in them, the movement of the body in space" (Tschumi B. , 2012). This concept depicts the relationship between spaces, movement, and events as they inform each other and manifests architecture. Events within a space can only occur when the users activate it, as movement suggests the sequencing of events. Movement can be either predetermined or free, or a combination of both according to the connections between each building program. In this proposed design, multiple access points from public space to semi-public space allows for freedom of exploration, unrestricted movement, and triggering engagement between users who are there for different events. Described by Tschumi, "technologies are no longer instruments of mediation but instead form, in conditions free communication, the network of new public space that escape control, a non-space that may be taken to define a social space in a permanent transformation, exceeding any traditional architectural programs" (Tschumi B. a., 2014).



**Figure 5.44:**  
Socio-Cultural Centre Programs and  
Categorizes

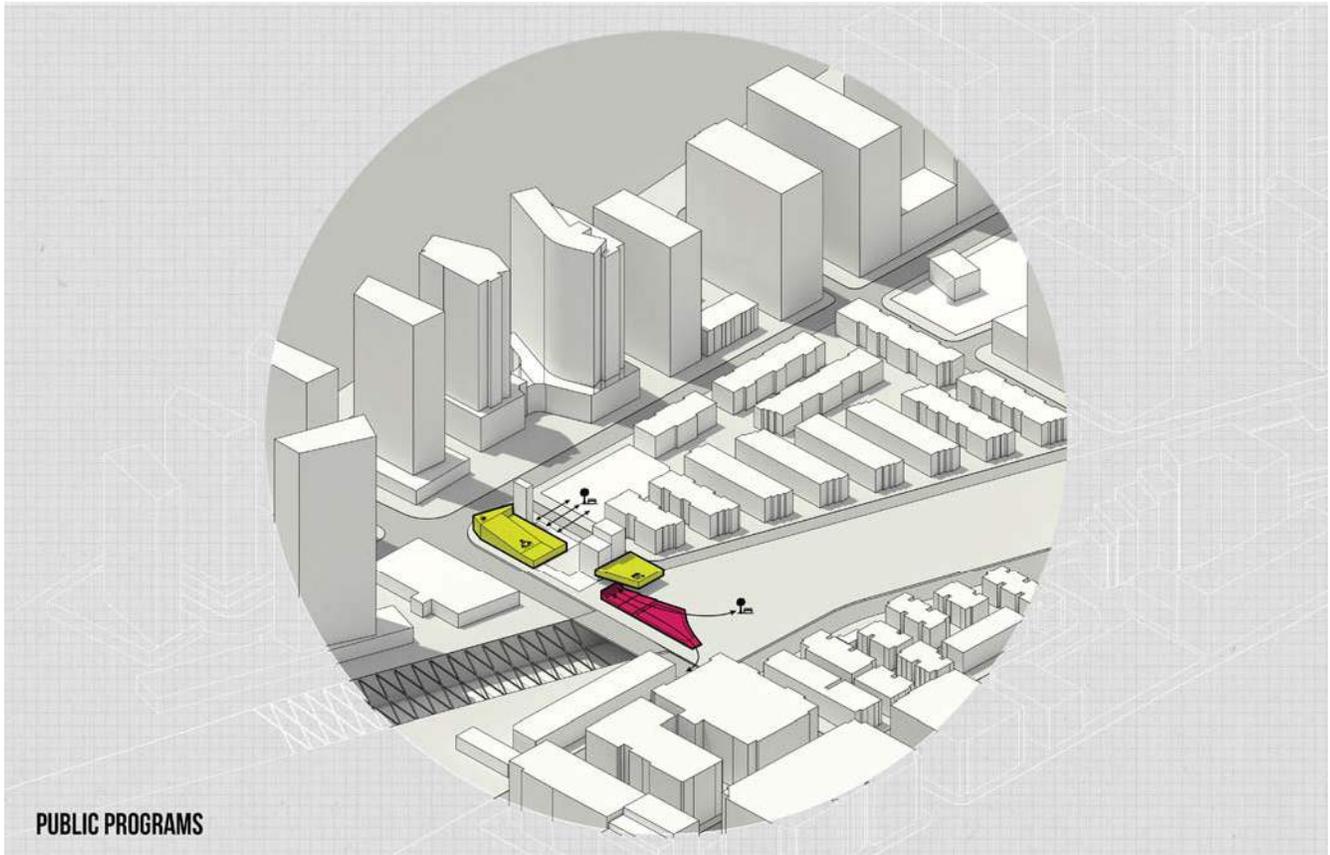
## 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



**Figure 5.45:**  
Current Site Conditions and Restrictions

To connect these spontaneous events and programs, the internal spaces demand a clear and free circulation with high levels of transparency and accessibility. With multiple points of entry from every direction, major internal axes are used to connect the circulation towards the central atrium space. Connecting the residential community directly west of the site, allows

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**Figure 5.46:**  
Composition: Introducing Public Spaces

users to access public transit on Strachan Ave. By organizing the building with the most public programs on the grade level and gradually shifting vertically to more private workspaces, active programs have a closer relationship to the street, whereas productive work programs are more isolated yet connected by the central atrium space.

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**Figure 5.47:**  
Composition: Semi-Public Spaces

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**Figure 5.48:**  
Composition: Private Spaces

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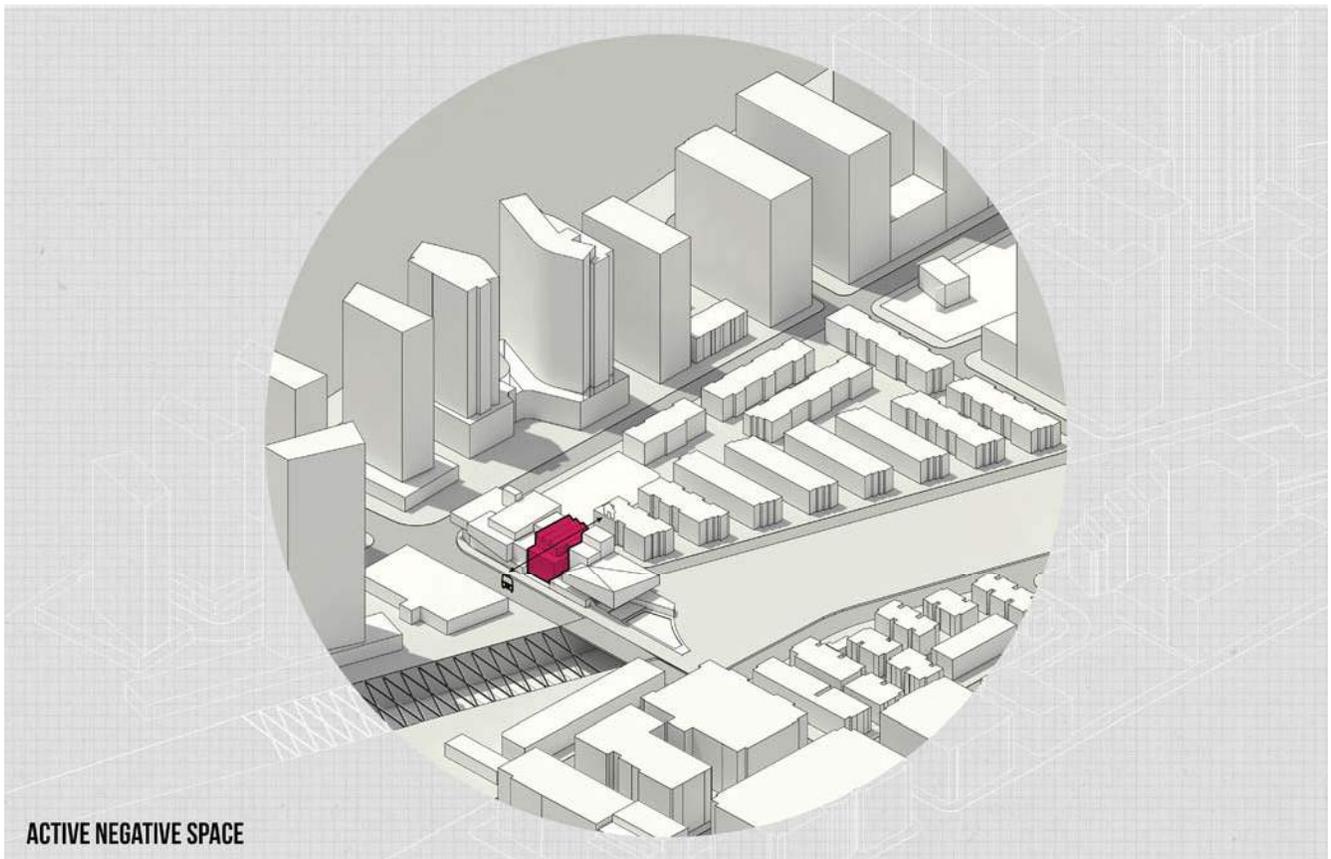
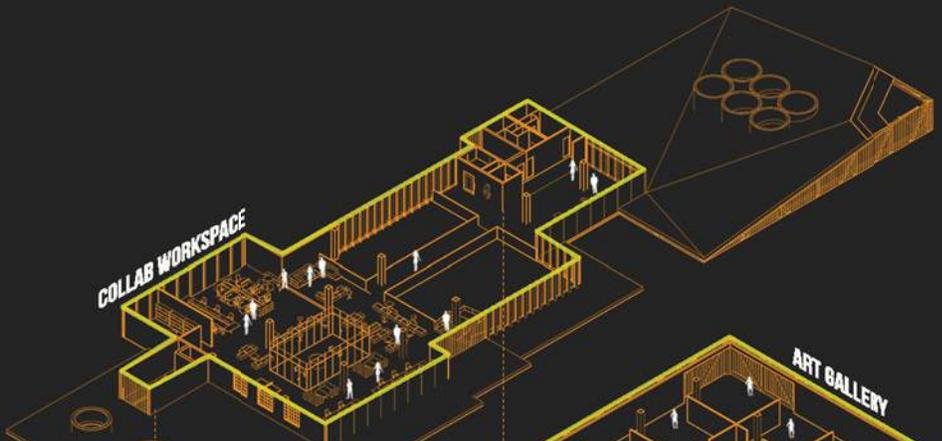


Figure 5.49:  
Composition Void Space

LEVEL 4



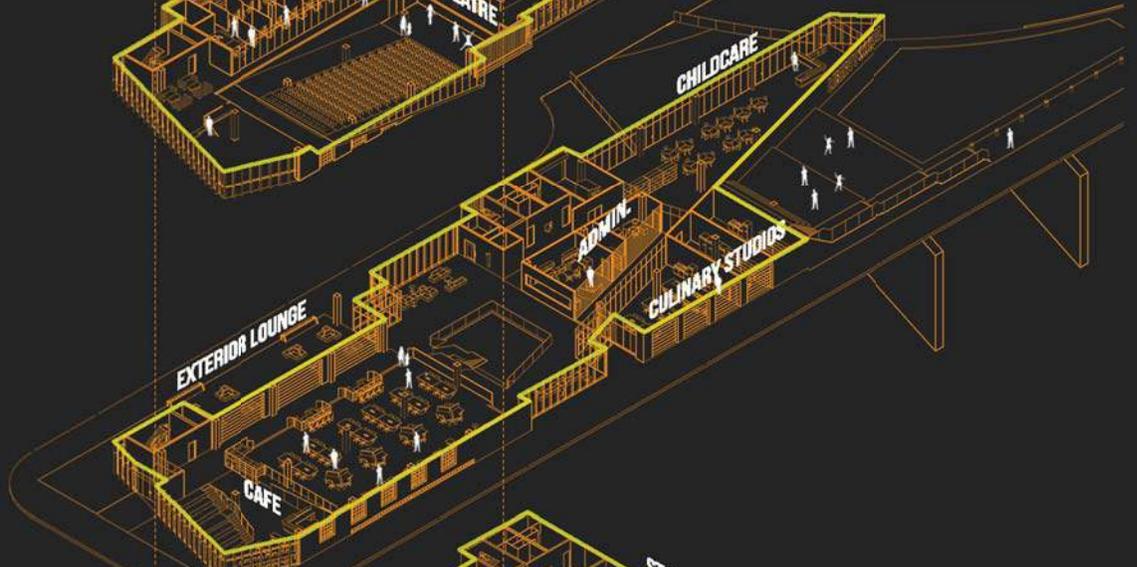
LEVEL 3



LEVEL 2



GROUND



BASEMENT

Figure 5.50: Floor and Program Axonometric

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Adapting a crucial principle of hybrid buildings, the form and structure of the Socio-Cultural Centre allow programs to be free of geometrical restrictions and freely express the programmatic shifts from the exterior. Like grafted hybrid buildings, program dominates the form, acting independently generating a compilation of entities within a site. This configuration suggests the building does not adopt any formal typologies, but becomes autonomous community programs mutating into a single entity. With programs having multiple connections and distributed from the central atrium, this arrangement is a catalyst for activity, making social interactions unpredictable and engagements occur unexpectedly.

Situated on the site once belonged to the Inglis Factory, the urban landscape of King Liberty Village has transformed entirely with the introduction of new typologies, masses, building heights and programs. To reconnect the homogenous community to its historical roots, it is appropriate to approach the design by referencing the past typologies, scale, and materiality. Since the design aims to introduce a factory incubator for activity, the building embodies the aesthetics of historic Toronto factories with its scale, form, and materials by amalgamating industrial characteristics with brick facades, rectilinear forms, and monolithic weathering steel panels. Furthermore, silo and saw-tooth forms are adapted for skylights to bring natural light to specific spaces, while evoking memories of Liberty Village factories. A perforated corten steel building skin is used to provide shading from the east and west, as well as to protect the building from the exterior elements.



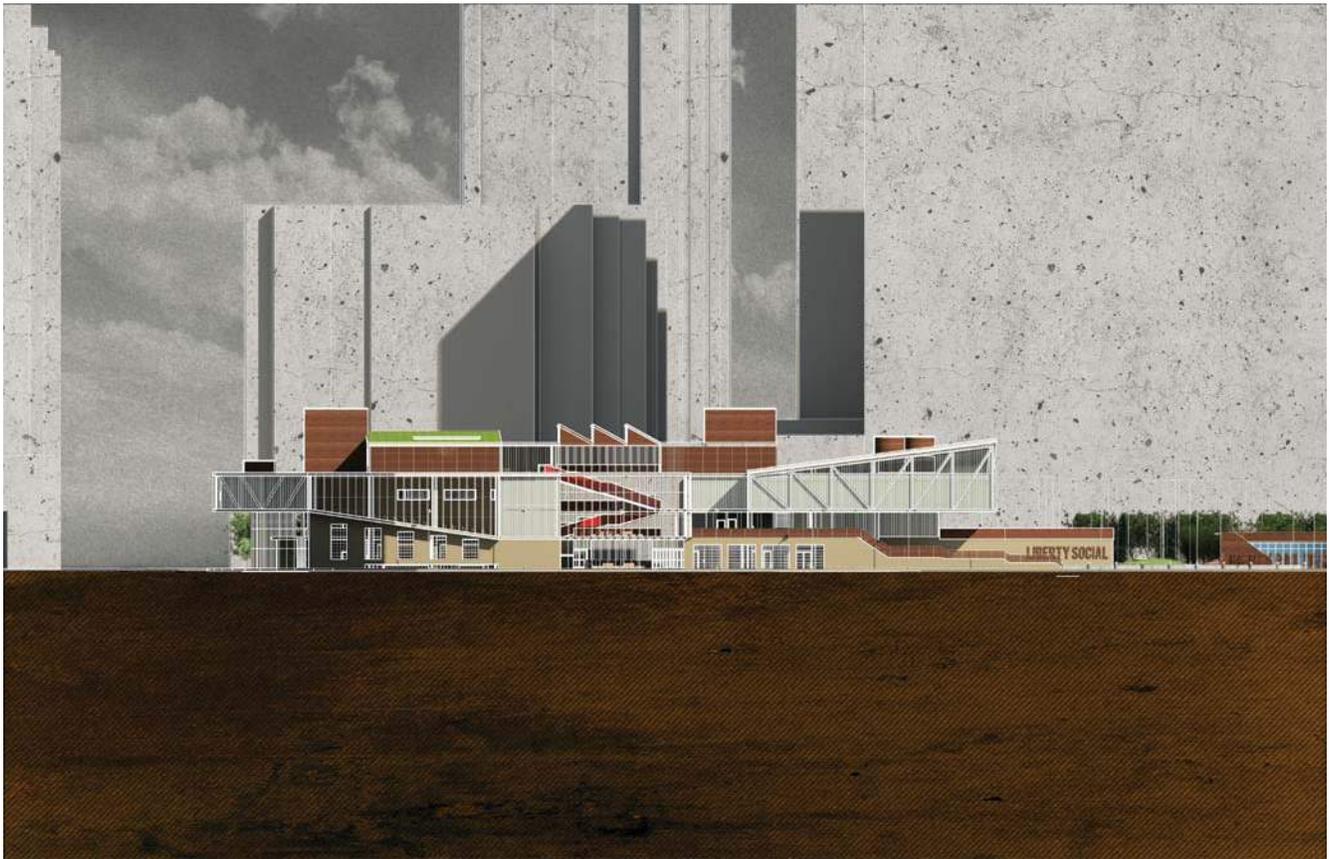
**Figure 5.51:**  
Material Composition.

## 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



**Figure 5.52:**  
West Elevation

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



**Figure 5.53:**  
East Elevation

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



**Figure 5.54:**  
North Elevation

## 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



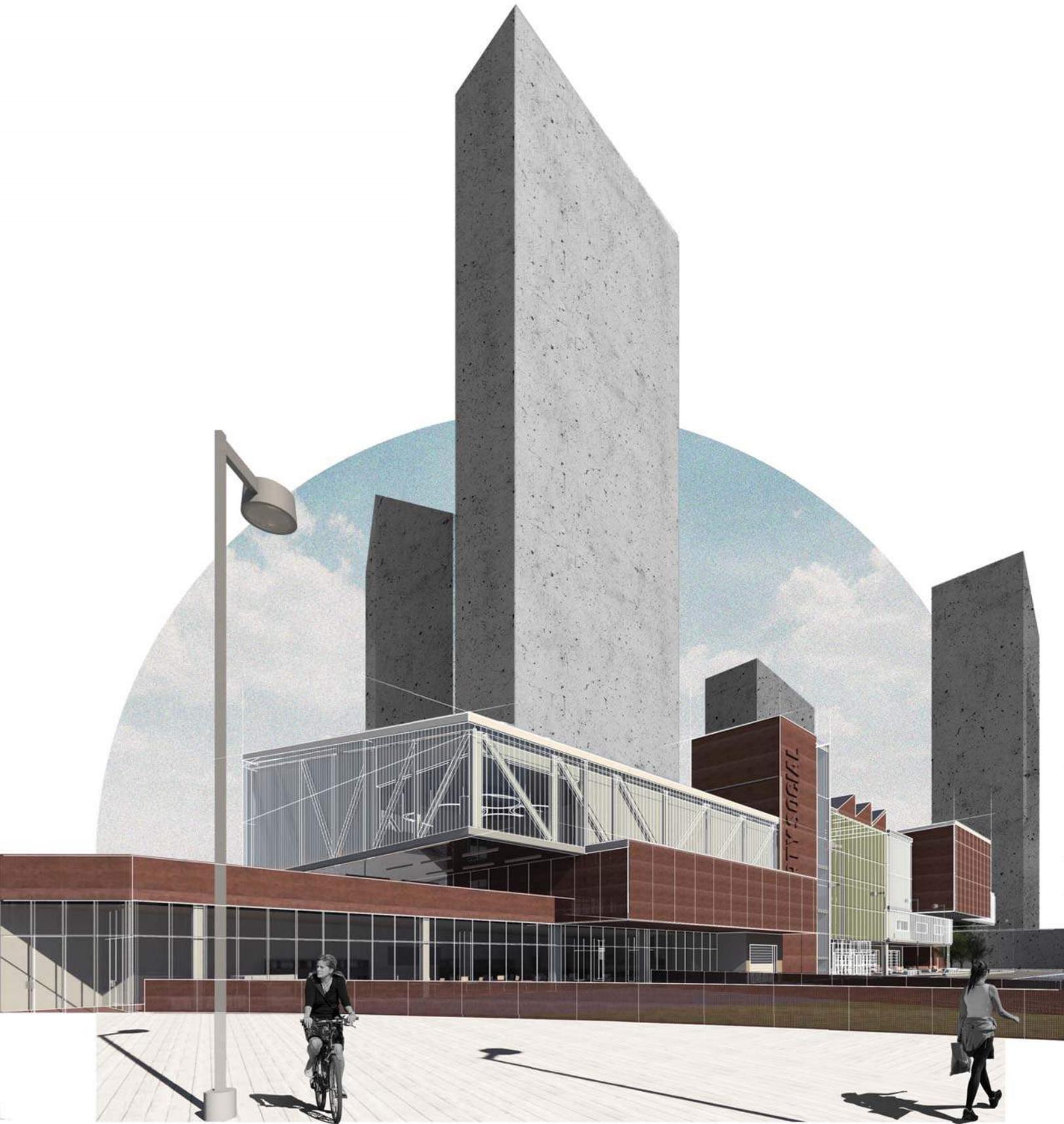
**Figure 5.55:**  
South Elevation

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To reflect on the constant change of the demographic, the design embraces the concept of tolerance through its contrasting shift in materials, generating a dialogue between the past and the contemporary. In creative art spaces, the design uses a semi-translucent channel glass rain-screen system wall for illuminating contemporary programs, generating a hybridized aesthetic that contrasts the past and the present. The lantern-like appearance at night from the channel glass and perforated corten steel skin provides illuminance for the park and intersection, creating a safer space and defines the residential community with a local icon.



**Figure 5.56:**  
Night View I.



**Figure 5.57:**  
View from the park.



Figure 5.58:  
Night view II



# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

## 5.6 Design Strategies

### Rail Deck Park: Reclaiming infrastructural zones

Currently, the downtown area contains 121 parks consisting of 247 acres in total. Within this summation, 75 percent of the parks are less than 1.2 acres, which are categorized as a "parkette". These parkettes provides a limited variety of recreation and community programming (Backgrounder: Rail Deck Park, 2016). With most of Downtown Toronto falling within the City's lowest parkland provision rate at less than 1 acre per 1000 people, open public space is becoming increasingly scarce. Understanding this critical issue, the municipal government has been making an effort to purchase new parkland in the competitive real estate market. As a result, the city has been investigating alternative methods of reclaiming derelict generated from transit infrastructure.



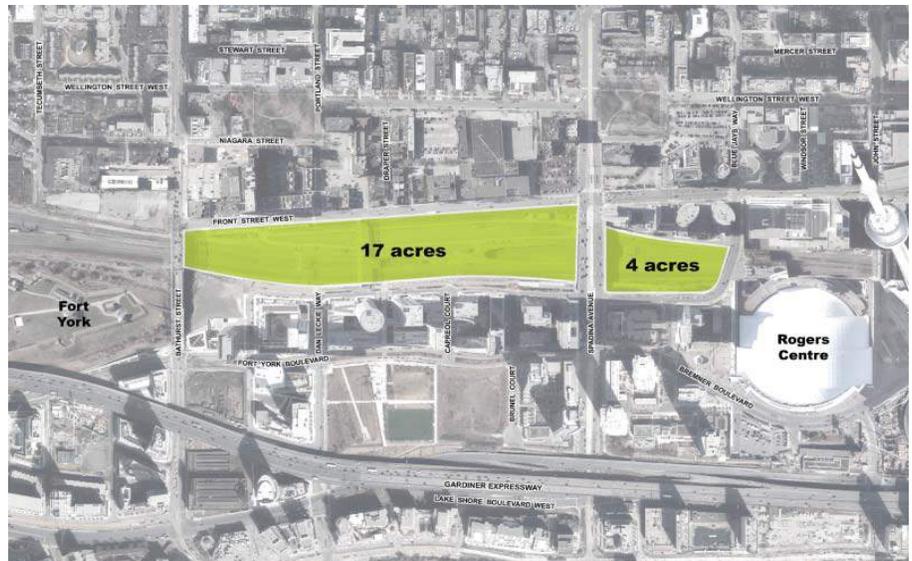
**Figure 5.59:**  
All the green space within the GTA, with blue indicating the Liberty Village neighbourhood.

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

In the recent year, Toronto has been exploring the concept of reclaiming transit space, since the rail line bisects major communities in the downtown core. In the fall of 2016, the Toronto City Council endorsed a proposal to transform the unused air space between Blue Jays Way and Bathurst Street for spaces of gathering, recreation, culture, and celebration. (Rail Deck Park Overview, 2016) Using the rail deck park as an example, the rail corridor in Liberty Village is unique space for exploration and reclaiming open public space. The park intends to bridge and connect the bisected neighbourhood King Liberty Village with the Queen Street West neighbourhood directly north of the site. The park carpets over the existing framework with a grid dividing tiled spaces for different public functions, like the urban grid. The programs in the park include: pavilion and performance space, picnic, splash pad, playground, flower and tree gardens, local agriculture, recreational courts, bike stations, and an extended dog park continuing from the existing space in Bill Johnston Park. In addition,



**Figure 5.60:**  
Concept rendering of Toronto Raildeck Park.



**Figure 5.61:**  
Proposed location of Toronto Raildeck Park.

## 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

as a continuation of the art facilities inside the centre, there are ten elevated spaces along the park for public sculptures. Similar to the ArtZuid initiative in Amsterdam, which is an international sculpture walk along an open-air free art route (Figure), the sculptures will be renewed regularly as a way to promote local and international artists.

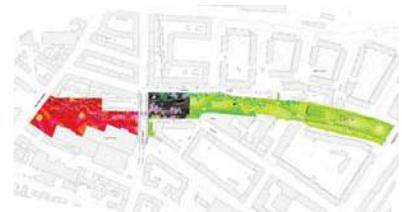
The circulation of the park introduces a pedestrian and bike path weaving through the linear park. In addition, wide spacious paths carving out of the grid is for extending the connection of Shaw Street, Crawford Street, and Strachan Avenue. For the aesthetic decisions of the design, the park itself becomes a hybrid of architecture, landscape, and art. With the intent to celebrate diversity and reintroduce playfulness to the neighbourhood, the park utilizes a variety of colourful elements and artificial landscapes to differentiate functions. Drawing elements from projects like the Superkilen in Copenhagen, a linear park that utilizes the interstitial space between housing developments for transient activities and cultural recognition, the Liberty Rail Deck Park proposes a high level of tolerance for diverse activities. Unlike the current proposals of bridges over the rail corridor, the rail deck removes physical barriers and offers the freedom of multiple point access. With the spontaneous collage of activities, the park intends to draw residents from around the city and those visiting the city to experience the unique park. Like the proposed Toronto Rail Deck Park, the initial advancement will be to have Toronto Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw amendments to provide necessary support and resources for the park, as well as defending the space against private developments. With the area of three acres, the Liberty Rail Deck Park is significantly smaller in comparison to the 21 acres proposed Rail Deck Park in Toronto and can act as an affordable prototype to the ambitious mega park.



**Figure 5.62:**  
ArtZuid Public Sculpture



**Figure 5.63: (L)**  
Red cultural diversity area.



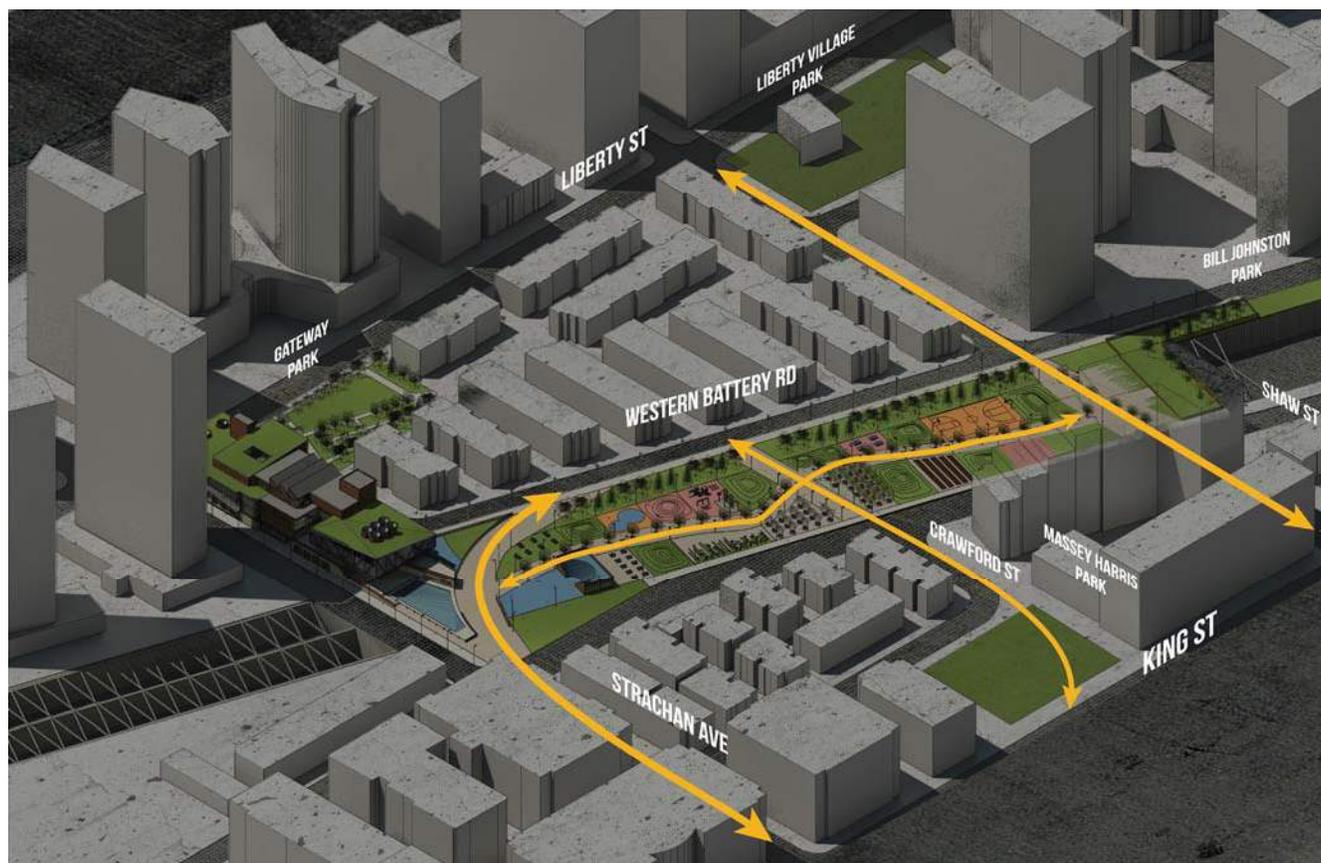
**Figure 5.64:**  
Master Plan

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



**Figure 5.65:**  
Liberty Raildeck Park- Program

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



**Figure 5.66:**  
Liberty Raildeck Park- Site Circulation



**Figure 5.67:**  
Liberty Raildeck Park- Boardwalk

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

In recent years, the design strategy of reclaiming infrastructural space has been critically dissected and implemented in multiple urban landscapes. These strategies vary from building on rail yards and abandoned rail tracks to over automotive highways. For instance, both the Chicago *Millennium Park* and the Manhattan *Hudson Yards* reclaims urban infrastructural zones in a grand scale, redeveloping underuse valuable space into exciting functional parks serving the city. Over the past decade, Millennium Park became an international icon owing its success through its fully programmed spaces, collaboration with artists, architects, and landscape designers attracting both local and international visitors. Dedicated to recreation, interactive art, landscaping and performance arts, the park maximizes its capacity to generate social activities. Similarly, the Hudson Yards shares the strategy of carpeting over 28 acres of a functioning rail yard. However, as opposed to using the fully public approach of the Millennium Park, the Hudson Yards is entirely privately developed, constructing a mixed use of residential, hospitality, offices, commercial and park space. Although the site is shrouded in private developments, the dedicated park space invites the public to engage with its interactive folly, designed by Heatherwick Studios. Both of these instances utilize the primary methodology of entirely programming the open space to a variety of activities, whether through recreation, pavilions, and art, bringing life to revitalized urban space.



**Figure 5.68:**  
The Vessel: park pavilion by Heatherwick Studios



**Figure 5.69:**  
Hudson Yards under construction



**Figure 5.70:**  
Millennium Park

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

## Social Lounge

A major component of the building programming is the social lounge space located on the ground level of the socio-cultural centre. Essentially, the space operates with high flexibility offering the community an open space to learn, study, relax, and meet. In one aspect, the space acts as a public study lounge similar to a library reading and study spaces, and another as a social lounge for community activities, gathering and resting. Internally, the lounge is organized in three flexible zones: a reading and resting areas, a private study pods, and hot desks for open work. In addition, the space offers public computer access for those individuals who are on-the-go. The open layout and flexibility create a free and casual co-working environment for the local community, encouraging residences to leave their condominiums and used the shared spaces. The social lounge is an ideal space for the local demographic by articulating working and leisure areas to young professionals, whether they are working towards a dissertation and acquiring new skills.



**Figure 5.71:**  
Walkway connecting the indoor and outdoor lounge.



Figure 5.72:  
Social Lounge



## 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

With the centre having shared ownership, this component will be an extension of the Toronto Public Library for its management and operations. Spatially, the lounge is filled with natural light with large industrial inspire windows along Strachan Ave, double height glazing on the south with vertical louvres, and operable glazed garage doors on the west. Adjacent to the social lounge area is a café space operated by local businesses. Provided with seating benches and large seating steps that connects the second level artist studios, the café is critical to social bonding within the building and the community. With the proximity to the Strachan Ave and Liberty Street bus transit station, the café intersects the major circulation of the community as well as interwoven into the daily routine of the inhabitants. The double height ceilings by the cafe and the garage doors create an airy environment filled with fresh air that connects to the exterior. Directly outside of the garage doors is an outdoor lounge space bridging the sidewalk condition to the lounge space, with the intent to bring the community into the building lounge space. The outdoor space acts as a public community patio for resting and leisure, as well as occasionally hosting small public events. Combined the café and lounge space offers over 6300 square feet of public space for the community.



Figure 5.73:  
Cafe



**Figure 5.74:**  
Outdoor Lounge Space

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

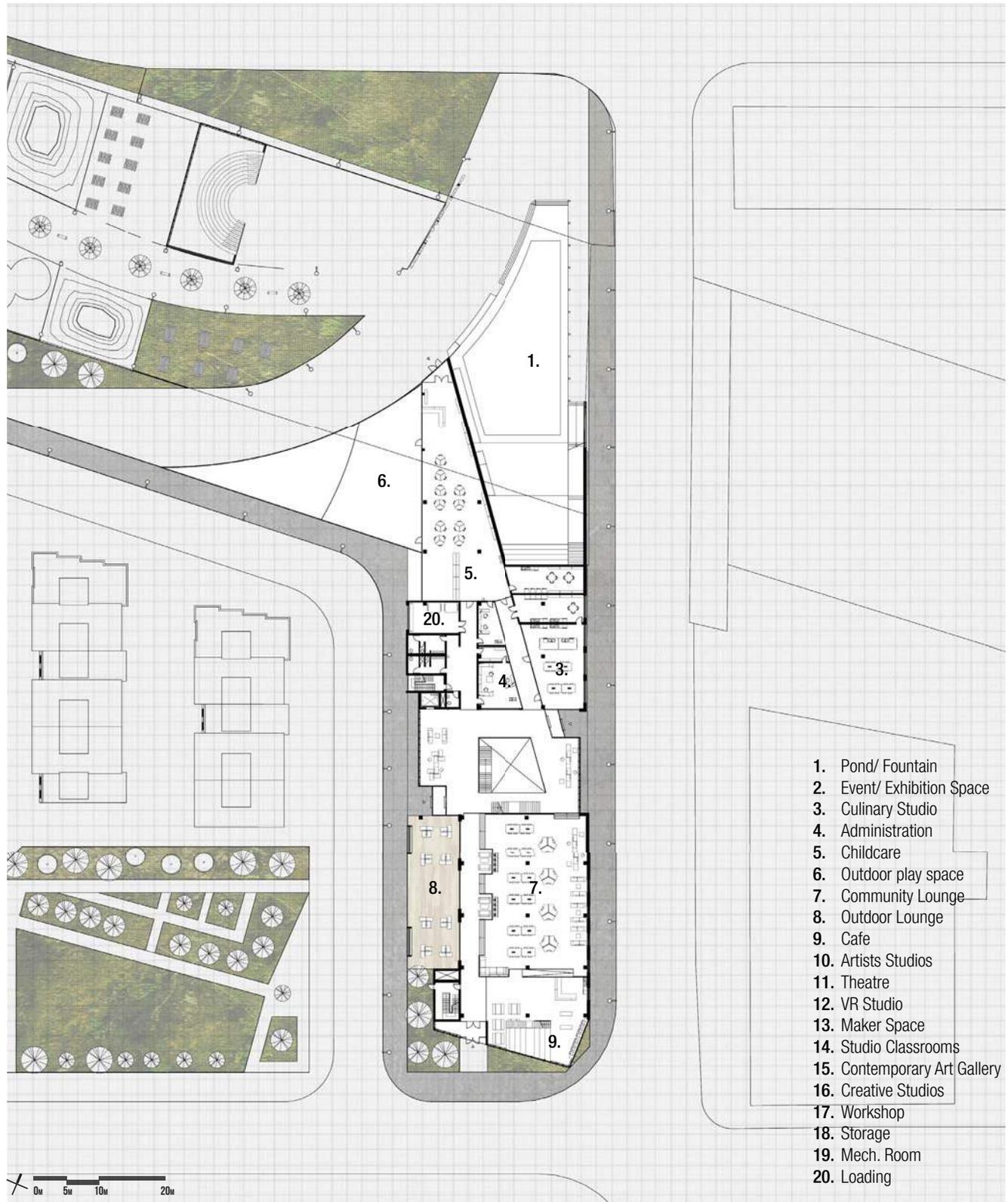


Figure 5.75:  
Ground Level Plan

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

## **Exhibition / Event Space**

As a multi-purpose space in the Socio-Cultural Centre, the exhibition and event space is a flexible environment, which is open to the community. Located on the second floor adjacent to the north entrance of the centre, the space is intended to serve as an exhibit area and a venue for community events. Limited time exhibits and specialty galleries are welcome to utilize this open space as an exclusive secondary area from the extensive gallery above. As an extension of the third level art gallery, the exhibition and event space has a direct stairway connecting the two spaces. Other times space acts as a community venue for accommodating both public and private events at reservation. This versatile space benefits the community by hosting networking events and festivals to bring residences together. With its proximity to the Liberty Raildeck Park and an exterior terrace protruding out into the park, the event space has a visual connection from the Strachan Ave street level inviting residents to engage with the events occurring within the building

Similar to the façade treatment with the creative studio space, the north and west facade of the exhibition and event space is wrapped in perforated weathered steel, offering natural light into the space while dispersing direct sunlight. The east façade utilize large rotating glass panels that open the space into the north entrance, further connecting the interior space with the public seating steps and outdoor exhibit platforms. This allows events to weave between interior and exterior connecting the public realm into the building, blurring the boundaries between public and private space. With over 6700 square feet of interior exhibition and event space, this space is an inviting venue for housing events that will foster social interaction within the residential community.



**Figure 5.76:**  
Flexible Event Space

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

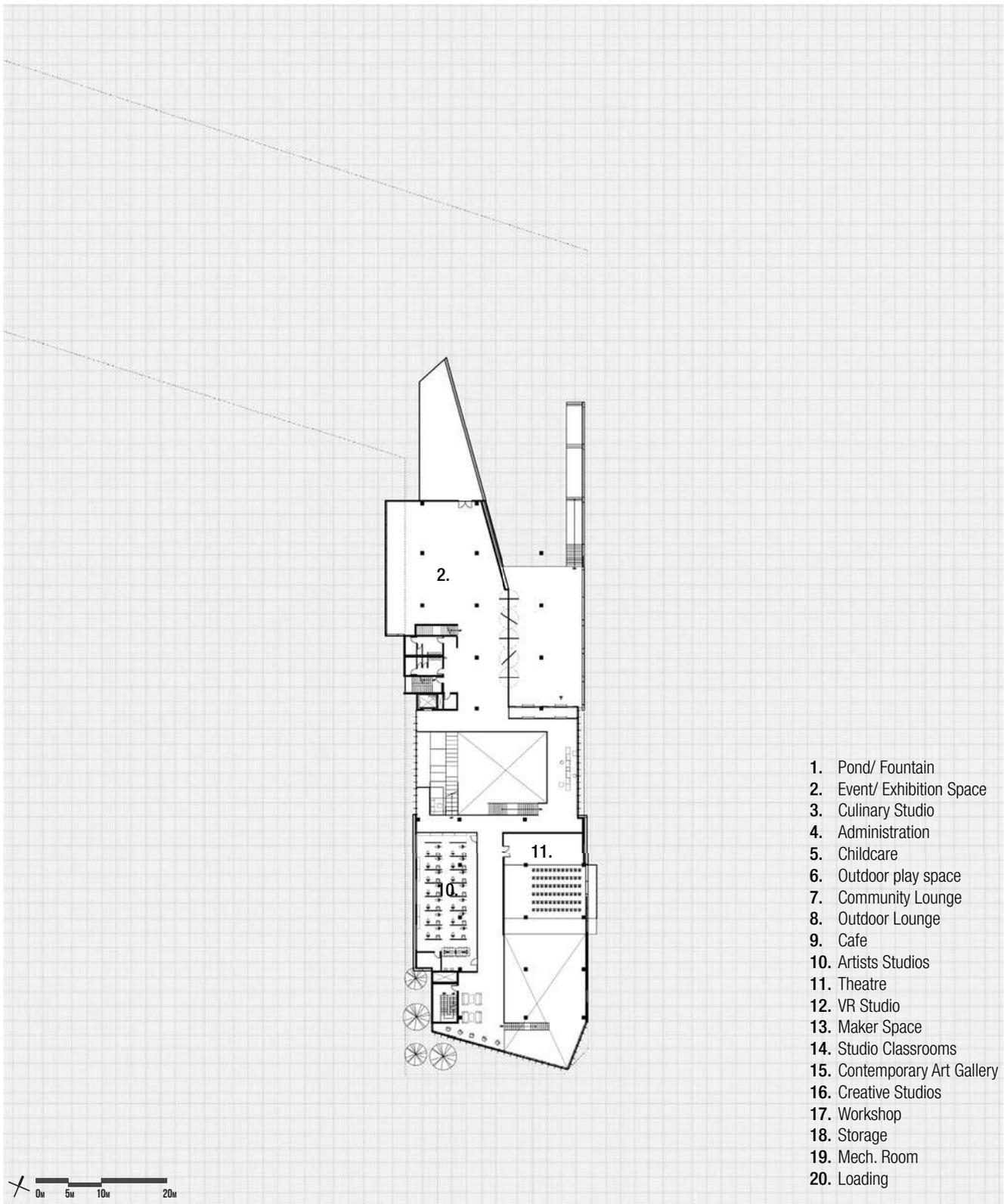


Figure 5.77:  
Second Level Plan

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

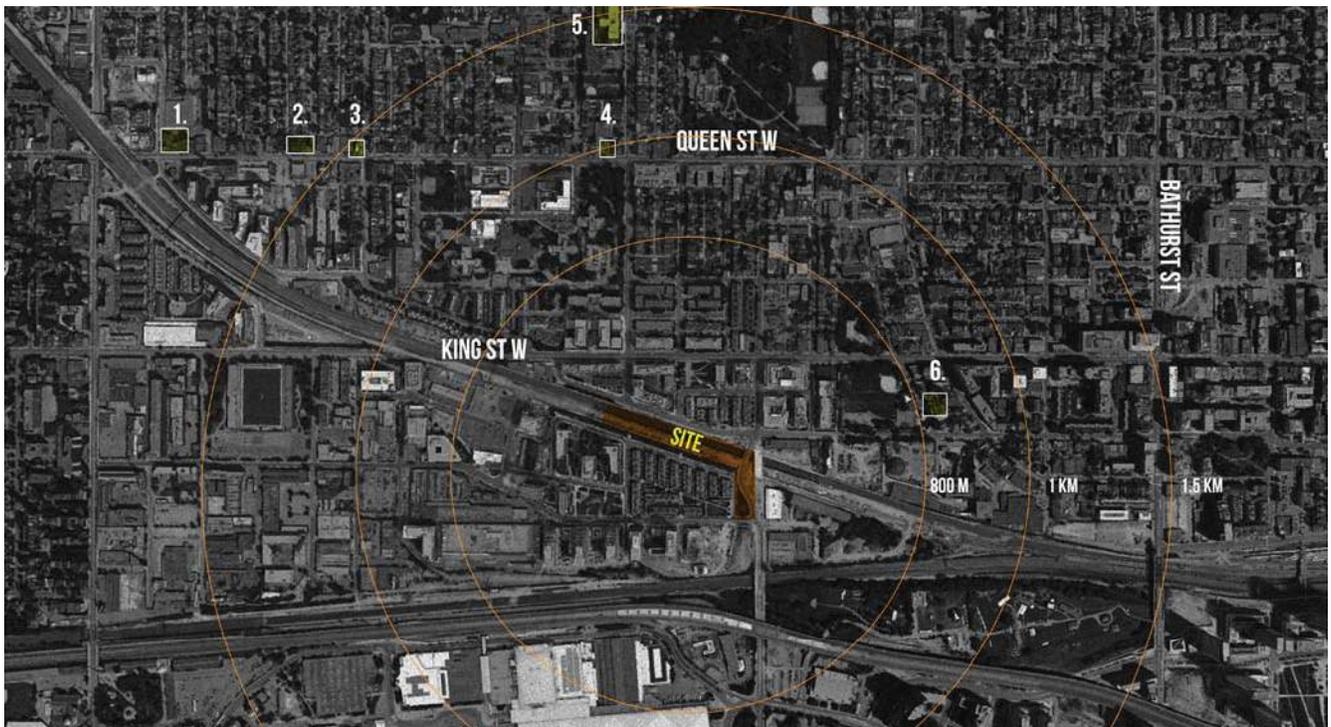
## Art Space

To reintroduce the local art culture that originated in the community, a critical building function is the free contemporary art gallery as well as art studios for local artists. Since the relocation of the Museum of Contemporary Art from the Queen West neighbourhood, large art facilities has been reduced to small independent galleries and pop-up galleries at boutique hotels. The proposed art gallery and sculpture park intend to return public art to the neighbourhood. With over 8100 square feet of flexible gallery space, local and international artists are able to utilize the double height space and film room to display their latest projects. As a free space, the gallery nurtures contemporary art and cultural practices that provoke dialogue between local residences and visitors. This type of program can stimulate creative thinking and create new

**Figure 5.78:**

Art Programs + Public Galleries surrounding the neighbourhood.

- 1) The Gladestone Hotel Gallery
- 2) The Drake Hotel Gallery
- 3) Craft Ontario Gallery
- 4) Edward Day Gallery
- 5) Artscape Youngplace
- 6) Walnut Studios



## 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



**Figure 5.79:**  
Gallery Space I

perspectives for the young demographic in the neighbourhood, as well as becoming an attraction by exhibiting unique local art. With the gallery open to the public, it becomes an escape from urban life into a space of discussion and appreciation. In collaboration with non-profit art organizations, such as the Canada Council for arts and Ontario Art Council, the ownership of the space remains public in its essence to bring art to the local community. With flexible walls, high ceilings, natural light from the skylights, the ambient space can house a variety of art from sculptures to film. In addition, the gallery spaces offer a vantage point viewing down the Liberty Raildeck Park.



Figure 5.80:  
Gallery Space II



# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



**Figure 5.81: (T)**  
Walnut Studio: Artist rental space I

**Figure 5.82: (B)**  
Walnut Studio: Artist rental space II

**Figure 5.83: (L)**  
Rental Artist Studios

On the second level of the Socio-Cultural hub, affordable rental studio spaces are offered for a wide range of local artists, including painters, sculptors, fashion designers, jewellery makers, photographers, and installation artists. Provided with flexible dividers, collaborative tables and storage, the cooperative studio spaces encourage individuals to create, collaborate, and inspire one another to express creativity. By generating a multi-disciplinary environment, the studio space opens opportunities for sharing and inspiration. With successful local precedents such as *Artscape Youngplace* and *Walnut Studios*, both cooperative studios spaces for local artists, this unique program in the centre is critical for supporting local art culture, as well as providing opportunities for the art community to flourish.



**Figure 5.84:**  
*Artscape Youngplace*

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

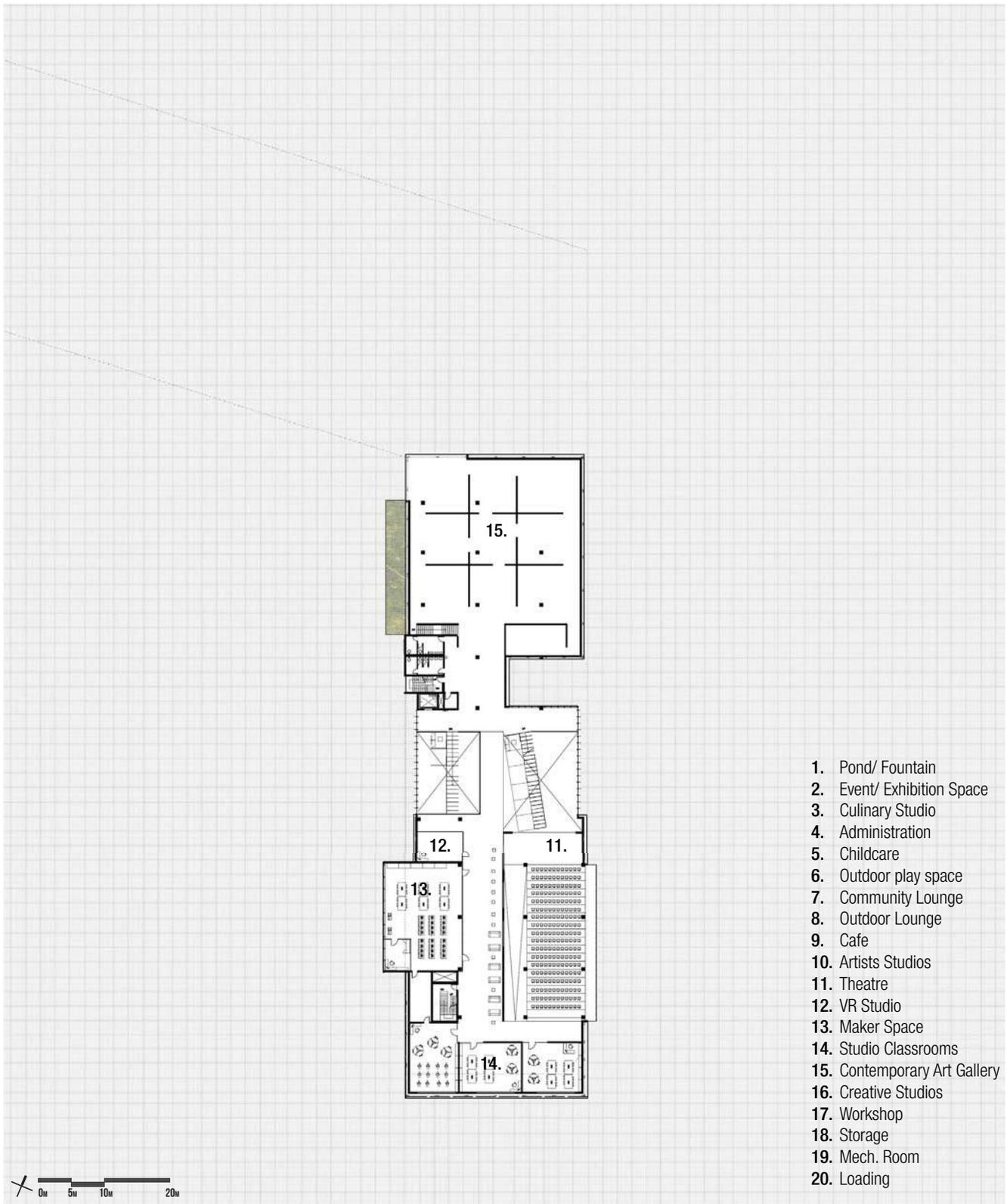
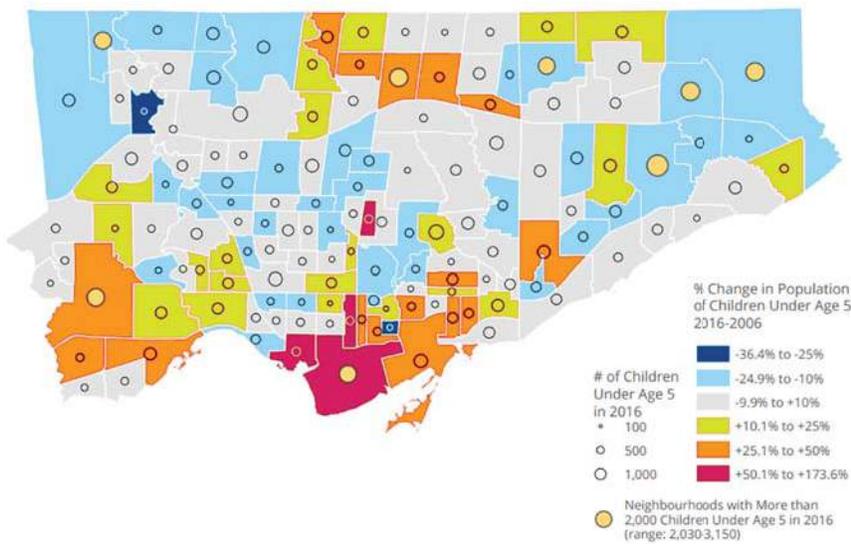


Figure 5.85:  
Third Level Plan

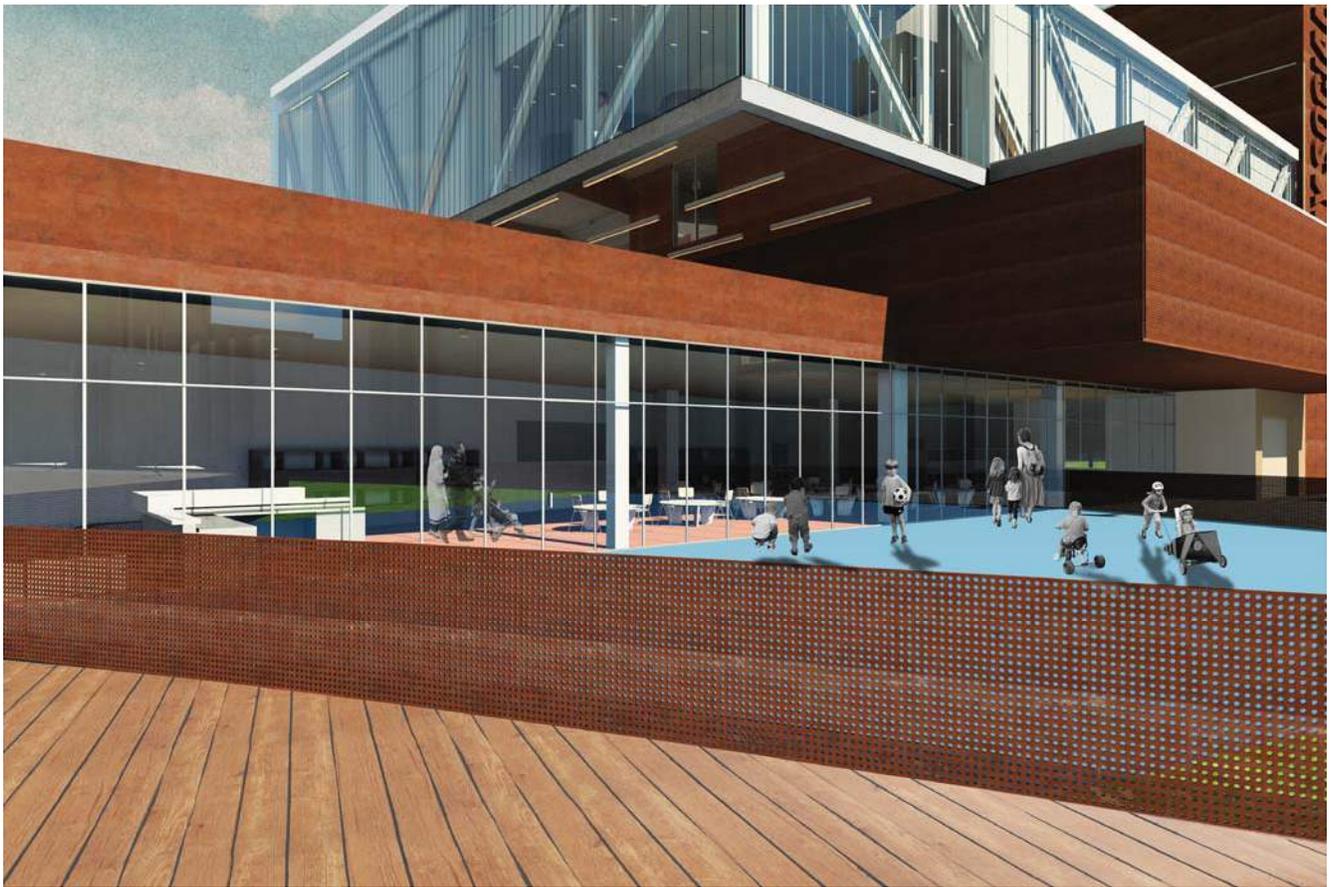
# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

## Childcare

Although in 2016, only 21% of the community were couples with children, there has been a drastic increase in the population of families with children in the Liberty Village neighbourhood, tripling the original population (Desta & Wilson, 2017). With the gradual increase of married and living common-law couples in the neighbourhood, there has been a steady population increase between the ages of zero to four years old. According to the *Toronto's Licensed Child Care Growth Strategy 2017-2026* report, there is a shortage in licensed child care centres in the city core. The report claims that in February 2017, there are only enough child care centres to support 31% of the children under the age of four. It has also identified the critical issue for the insufficiency is directly related to the affordability and public funding, with 67% of the funding from the province of Ontario, 20% from the City of Toronto, and 13% from parent fees from families. The current goal for the city is to increase the licensed child care services to support as high as 50% of the children under the age of four by 2026, which translates to 30,000 additional licensed spaces.



**Figure 5.86:** Change in Toronto's Children's Population (Under the age of 5) Over Past 10 Years by Neighbourhood: 2006- 2016



**Figure 5.87:**  
Childcare

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

One of the significant financial strategies of increasing the amount of child care centres is by providing more grants to lower-income families, operating grants, and fee subsidies. By 2026, the ideal goal is lower childcare fees by 25-40% and increase the number of facilities to provide the children of the city they services they need (Toronto's Licensed Child Care Growth Strategy 2017-2026, 2017).

Since the closure of the Children's Discovery Centre at the intersection of Strachan Ave and Liberty St E, the nearest Childcare centre to King Liberty Village is the Queen Street Child Care Centre, a 20-minute walk from the core residential area. By proposing a Child Care Centre within the Socio-Cultural Centre to support the local families, it would make childcare easily accessible for parents during their daily routines. With the centre becoming a convenient one-stop location, parents are able to pick-up their children and return home minutes away.

With the proposed 3950 square feet child care centre as a component of the park, the centre is located adjacent to the east park entrance. In proximity to the park, the Child Care is encouraged to utilize the park facilities, such as the amphitheatre, splash pad, and playground. The Childcare space is provided with a separate entrance directly from the park for ease of access as well as a connection to the Socio-Cultural Centre. Furthermore, the childcare space is provided with their own outdoor play space which adds another element to the park.



**Figure 5.88:**  
The Children's Discovery Centre is now a construction office for Garrison Point Development.

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## Learning



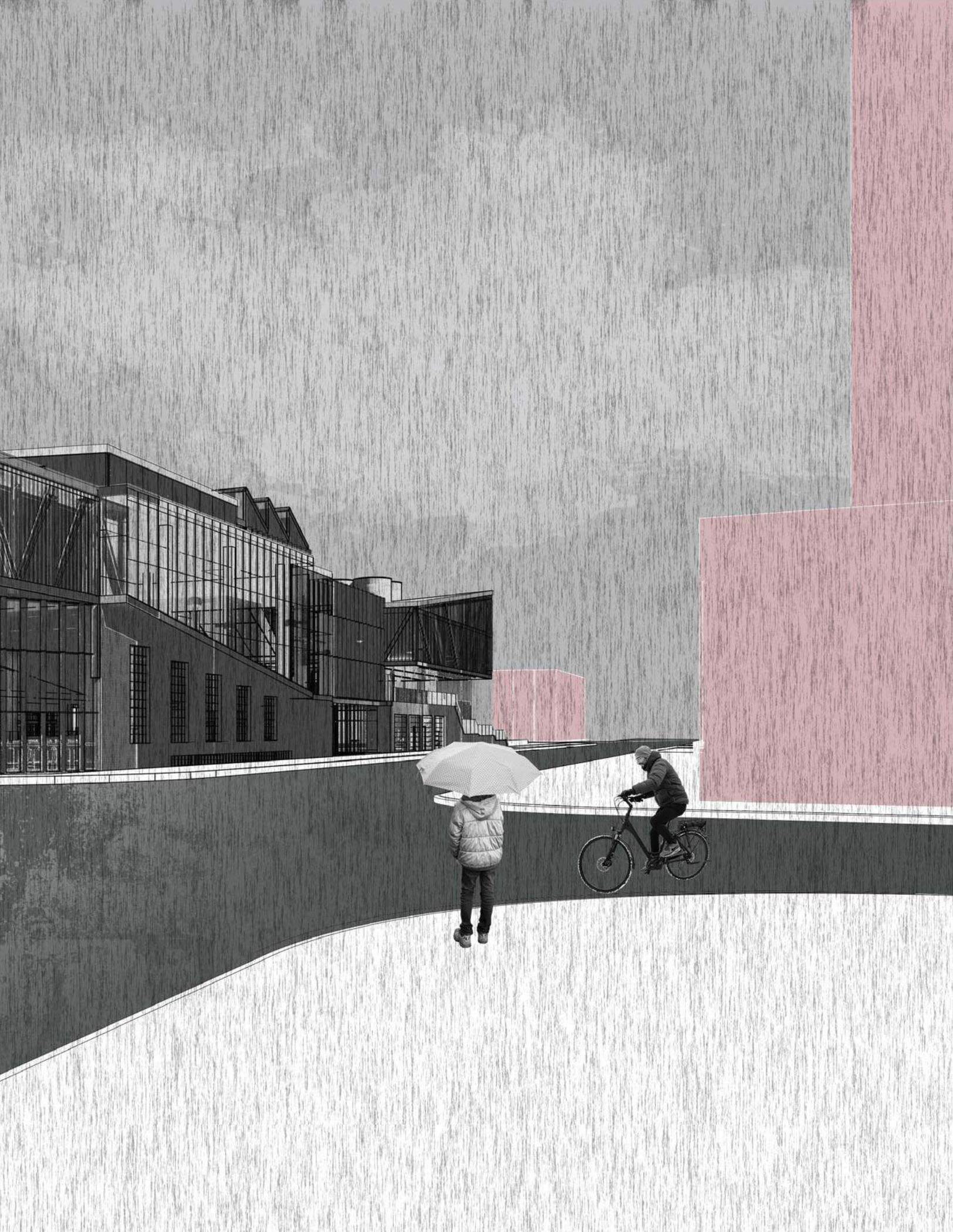
**Figure 5.89:**  
Courses offered to the public by Fort York Library

Another major aspect of building a hedonistic community is through public education. By offering classrooms and learning studios for the public, the millennial demographic in the surrounding neighbourhood is able to share, and acquire new skills and knowledge from one another. It is critical for a young community to have access to learn new skills and to adapt to the fast-paced post-education life. Extending one's knowledge and skills can help transition the age 25-35 demographic into family building and mature professionals. The studios provide spaces for weekly courses, ranging from parenting, digital, language, financial, to arts and crafts. With over 2300 square feet, the classrooms have flexible seating and tables for any arrangement and types of courses. Aside from the natural light from the rectilinear horizontal windows, each classroom has a cylindrical silo-like skylight for additional natural light, providing a brightly lit environment.

With the growing popularity of food culture in Toronto over the past decade, with boutique restaurants, food pop-ups, cultural specialties, and fine dining, individuals are also becoming more interested in the process of cooking. In addition to the learning studios on the third level, a culinary studio is located on the ground level adjacent to Strachan Ave. From daily dining, home cook meals, to fine dining and baking, the studio provides a space for individuals at any skill level to indulge in their cooking interests. With food often portrayed as an international language across age and cultures, the culinary studio offers weekly courses for cooking, allowing the local community to collectively heighten their passion for food and dining, evidently bringing the community together to interact. With 1600 square feet of cooking space, on the ground level, the studios have operable garage windows opening up to the sidewalk of Strachan Avenue. By extending this connection to the street, the culinary studio can host occasional food events and invite the public to partake in group activities.



Figure 5.90:  
South view from Strachan Ave



# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

## Creative Studios

Since the urban renewal and gentrification of Liberty Village, the initial urban planning intent for the increase in residential buildings is to provide housing to accommodate the new influx of office spaces. Instead of creating office campus environment, the King Liberty Village became a highly saturated housing community, pushing the development of working studios along King Street. In response to this situation, the socio-cultural hub offers co-working creative spaces for local young professionals who operate independently. The creative studio space is a productive environment allowing individuals to rent working stations at an affordable price. With the current trend of satellite offices and start-up companies, the creative studios aim to build an office community which encourage skill sharing and collaboration between companies, targeting small creative, entrepreneurial individuals and remote part-time works. An example of this type of program office space is *WeWork* studios in Toronto, which are rentable office spaces for companies ranging from one person to a thousand. The proposed studio space offers a wide range of working environments from dedicated desks, hot desks, and meeting spaces.

Spatially, the creative studio is one of the more private spaces, located on the fourth level of the socio-cultural hub. Both the east and west glazed façade utilizes a weathered steel perforated screen to allow for natural light while cutting off unwanted glare. With an open plan, the studio hot-desks and lounge meeting space are flexible to move, while the centre of the studio lays an exterior light well courtyard for natural light, fresh air and rest.

To blur the boundaries and usage between the private creative studios between the semi-public spaces is the Makerspace, located on the third floor of the centre. This space intends to provide a shared high-tech to low-tech learning, making, and exploring space for the community. This space is open to any range of users, from kids to adults, and entrepreneurs, for accessing 3D printers, laser cutters, CNC machines, soldering tools, and computer lab. The



**Figure 5.91:**  
Collaborative Studio Space

## 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

makerspace is fully accessible to the creative studio users as well as the public through courses and under supervision. Weekly public courses are offered for learning digital tools as well as scheduled uses of machines. This space provides the utilities for young professionals, start-ups, and entrepreneurs to accelerate their businesses through prototyping and manifesting products. Furthermore, a specialized virtual reality room is located adjacent to the makerspace dedicated to creating an immersive digital experience. This room offers open space for users to experiment with new virtual reality programs and projects. Together with the creative studio, makerspace, and virtual reality room, offers over 8100 square feet of creative collaborative space that aims encourage idea sharing and digital discovery.



**Figure 5.92:**  
Wework Toronto.



**Figure 5.93:**  
Fort York Library Makerspace.

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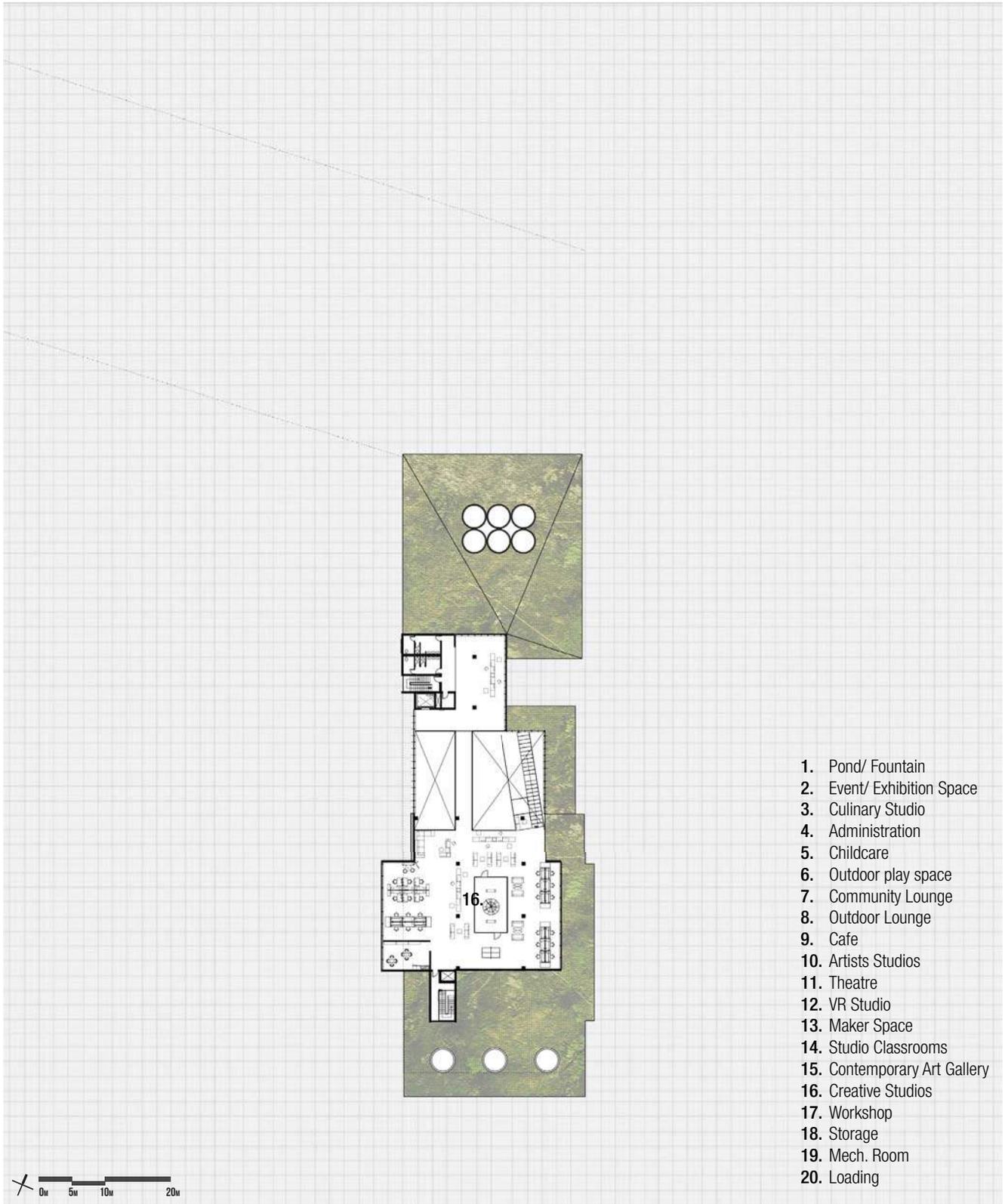


Figure 5.94:  
Fourth Level Plan

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

## Woodshop

Similar to the art spaces on the second of the Socio-Cultural hub, a woodshop open to artisans is located in the basement level. The facility provides a 6300 square feet professional wood shop for the community, offering a space for furniture making, woodworking and handcrafting. With artists and artisans accessible to the shop, classes are offered to the public for woodworking and crafting. The classes create opportunities for the public work alongside with experienced professionals using high-quality equipment and learning contemporary and traditional techniques.

Like other community workshops in gentrifying areas such as the Junction Workshop and the *Unplugged Workshop* in Leslieville, the local woodshop encourages individuals to acquire new skills, collaborate with experts, as well as provide creative spaces for residents who are restricted by the limited amenities within their homes. Spatially, long windows are located along the ceiling perimeter of the woodshop providing natural lighting as well as views connecting the sidewalk level on Strachan Ave and the atrium. Views from these public areas encourage wonderers and visitors to observe the activities below and encourage people to engage with the variety of activities offered in the centre.



Figure 5.95:  
Junction Workshop



Figure 5.96:  
Unplugged Workshop



**Figure 5.97:**  
Workshop Space

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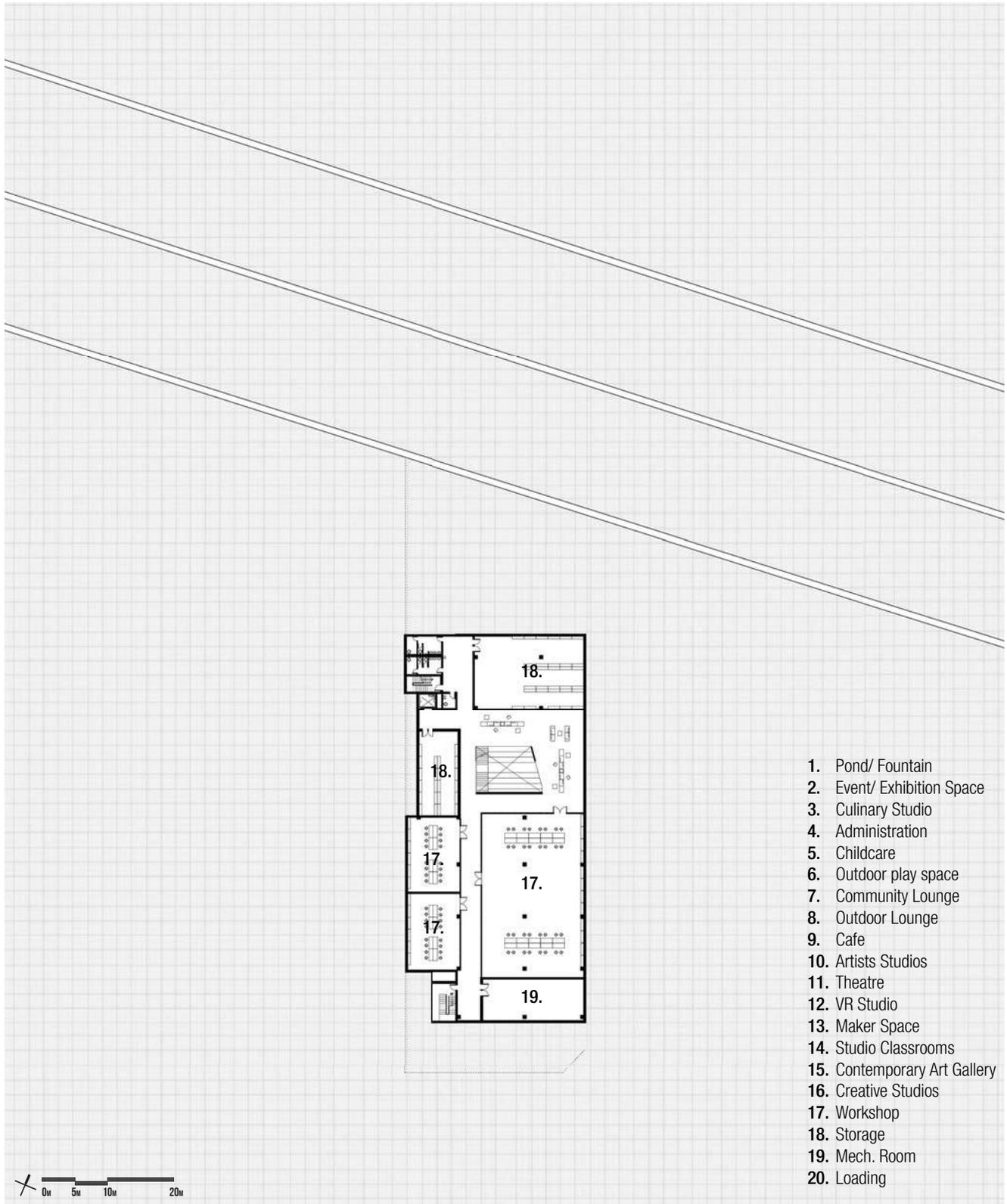


Figure 5.98:  
Basement Plan

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

## Void space and sensory connectivity

### Case Study:



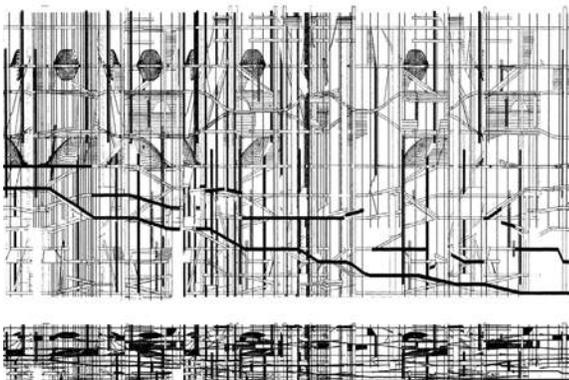
**Figure 5.99:**  
OMA- Tres Grande Bibliotheque

The removal of space or 'nothingness' can be utilized by public architecture to enhance social interaction within a defined building. The strategy of using void space is commonly investigated by Dutch architect, Rem Koolhaas, in the two libraries designed by OMA. In Peter Eisenman's analysis, *Strategies of the Void*, it exploits the success of void spaces as an opportunity for continuity through vertical spaces (Eisenman P. a., 2008). Similarly to residential development, the libraries proposed by OMA also face the challenges of a dense urban site, forcing the project to expand vertically while housing a variety of autonomous environments. The two unrealized library competitions, Jussieu Libraries (1992) and Tres Grande Bibliotheque (1989), establishes a new form of architecture by reinventing the relationship between the subject and object of architecture. Although these two projects were only proposals, in the design process of these projects, they had to develop the ability to generate iconic moments in the building, directly translating the complexity of spaces from simple diagrams to creating forms. With the intent of these iconic forms to alter the notion of "contiguous discontinuity" of homogeneous spaces, the libraries focused on generating social interaction by utilizing the absence of space, transparencies, and circulation (Eisenman P. a., 2008).

The two libraries were both designed to be dictated by the notion of conceptualizing the energy and latent force between the layers of the levels and programming into a solidified void space. However, each project interprets this method differently. By objectifying the negative space, both libraries undermine the hierarchy between programmed spaces and the residual interstitial areas. Instead of using walls of a building to govern the interaction, the projects use the carved out spaces out of the walls and floor slabs to generate curiosity, unbounded by any pragmatic structures. Opposed to using walls to define programmatic zones, the negative space separates the accessible connection

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while allowing users to visually and acoustically engage across programs. In the case of the Jussieu Libraries, the building section reveals continuous ramped floors connecting all the levels with only trapped voids as interior volumes. Although the voids provide a unique and distinctive experience for identifying spaces, the continuous ramping floors work paradoxically with the floor plates no longer disconnected and isolated. As a result, the project attempted to achieve a continuous fabric from the street level to the roof, bridging the exterior and interior. On the other hand, the Tres Grand Bibliotheque engages the use of void space differently by using unique void space throughout the building to connect segregated spaces and individual programs. These dynamic forms throughout the building encourage people to interact and explore spaces. Subsequently, both these libraries reinterpret intestinal spaces by translating them to void spaces and embedding them within generic programmed spaces. Although the two libraries were not built, their elements and strategies for spatial planning were later realized in the development of the Seattle Public Library (2004) as they were mutated into a new design strategy. Ideas from these past proposals can inform the way residential buildings coincide with community amenity spaces. By manipulating circulation and void space, the design can divert visitors and residences to multiple zones of the building and depart from the traditional stacked floor plate design. These strategies can generate a dynamic relationship between residences and visitors from the



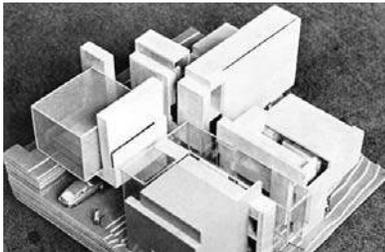
**Figure 5.100:**  
Jussieu - OMA

## 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

public by reinterpreting the boundaries of rigid programs and amalgamate public-private areas.

### Atrium Void Space

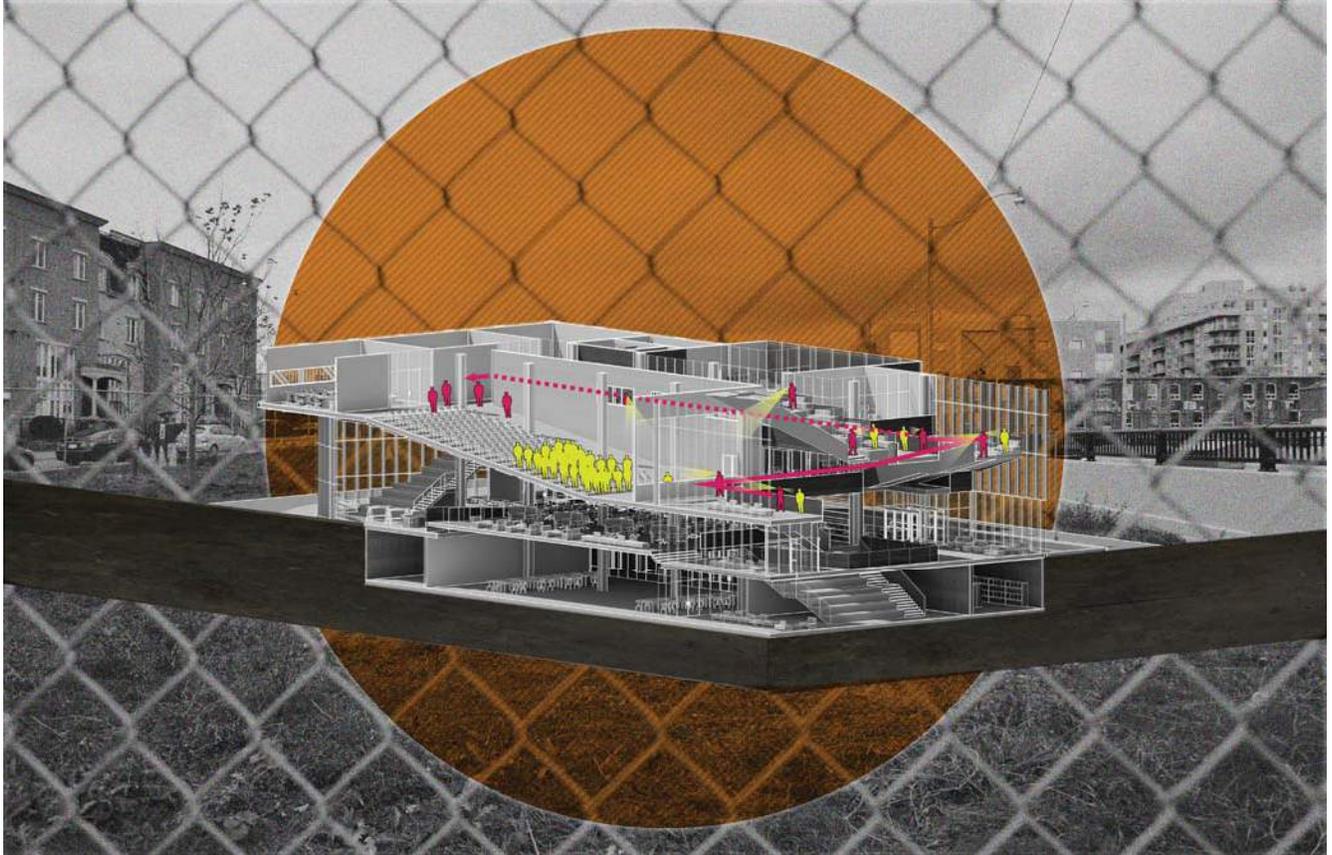
From analyzing the two iconic usages of void space in the case study, the Socio-Cultural Centre utilizes this strategy to create the link between these autonomous community programs. As Eisenman described his House X proposal, "At the heart there is nothing", referencing the residential programs are held together by a void space, the atrium space within the centre is a vertical and lateral connection, stringing the floors together as well as increasing accessibility on the grade level (Eisenman P. a., 2003). Within this negative space, the stairs, bridges, and internal balconies enhance visual connectivity by allowing building users and visitors to observe the spontaneous events occurring throughout the building. Since the void becomes a distribution point, the open plan becomes an open section, where users are free to explore the public and semi-public programs within the building. For instance, users who are moving through the atrium space may become interested in a community meeting within the informal theatre space where they are encouraged to join the event through the rear of the theatre without disturbing the presentation.



**Figure 5.101:**  
House 10 -Peter Eisenman

With the diverse demographic using the building, the atrium space becomes a mixing chamber for activity. In one aspect, the atrium is a fast pace circulatory space for people moving through, while the working pods along the stairs allow the users to rest, work, and socialize, generating an active space beyond circulation. On the ground level, seating steps open into the basement level, offering another resting and meeting space with the intention to increase social interaction between the artists, designers, visitors, and local residences. With large glazed used on the east and west facade of the atrium, colourful louvres are used to provide shading for the people using the work pods, as well as bringing a playful element to the atrium. Furthermore, leading up the

## 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



**Figure 5.102:**

Active Void Space: creating visual connection between programs

atrium are stairs with bright red railings, creating a sense of direction and a visual connection between the levels. On the fourth level, the ceiling of the atrium space uses a saw-tooth skylight to bring diffused natural light from the top level to the active areas along the stairs. The utility and service cores are wrapped in weathered steel, bringing elements from the exterior cladding into the atrium of the building. The atrium is a critical component of the building,

## 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL

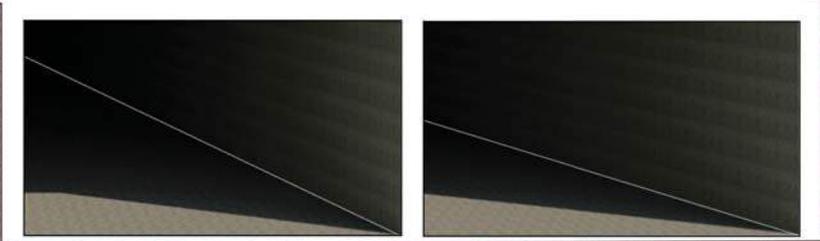
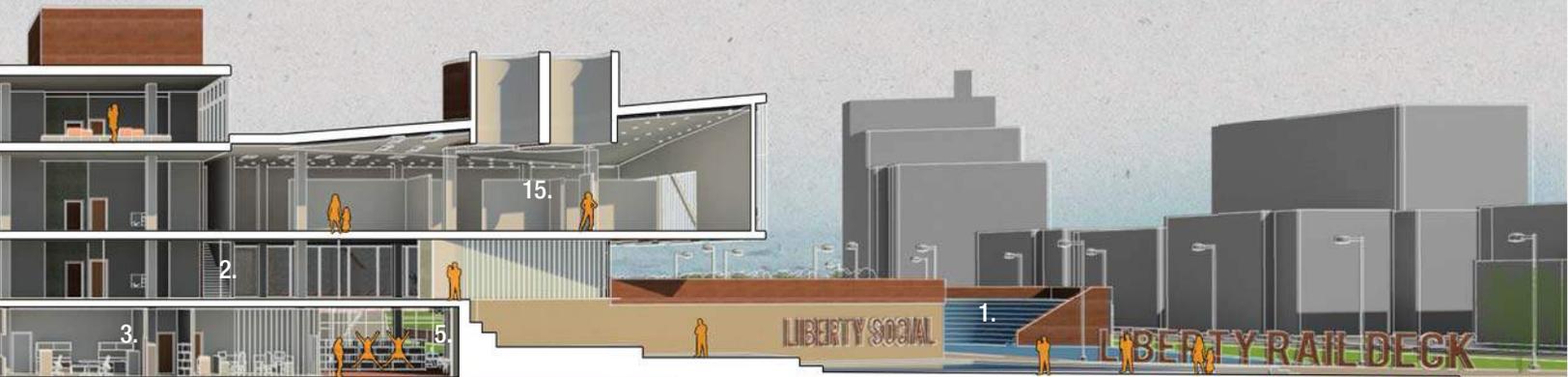


**Figure 5.103:**  
Ground level -Atrium

as it activates the cross-pollination of programs and stimulates collaborative actions. As the theorist, Albena Yaneva, describes, void atrium space has the capacity to “celebrate the interrelation of various arts and designs disciplines... as there are no clear distinctions between working, having a coffee”, evidently the atrium is the social heart of the building (Yaneva, 2017).



Figure 5.104:  
Section A-1



- |                            |                              |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Pond/ Fountain          | 11. Theatre                  |
| 2. Event/ Exhibition Space | 12. VR Studio                |
| 3. Culinary Studio         | 13. Maker Space              |
| 4. Administration          | 14. Studio Classrooms        |
| 5. Childcare               | 15. Contemporary Art Gallery |
| 6. Outdoor play space      | 16. Creative Studios         |
| 7. Community Lounge        | 17. Workshop                 |
| 8. Outdoor Lounge          | 18. Storage                  |
| 9. Cafe                    | 19. Mech. Room               |
| 10. Artists Studios        | 20. Loading                  |

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



Figure 5.105:  
Section B-1

# 5.0 PROJECT PROPOSAL



**Figure 5.106:**  
Section B-2

- |                            |                              |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Pond/ Fountain          | 11. Theatre                  |
| 2. Event/ Exhibition Space | 12. VR Studio                |
| 3. Culinary Studio         | 13. Maker Space              |
| 4. Administration          | 14. Studio Classrooms        |
| 5. Childcare               | 15. Contemporary Art Gallery |
| 6. Outdoor play space      | 16. Creative Studios         |
| 7. Community Lounge        | 17. Workshop                 |
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| 9. Cafe                    | 19. Mech. Room               |
| 10. Artists Studios        | 20. Loading                  |



Figure 5.107:  
Makerspace and Theatre



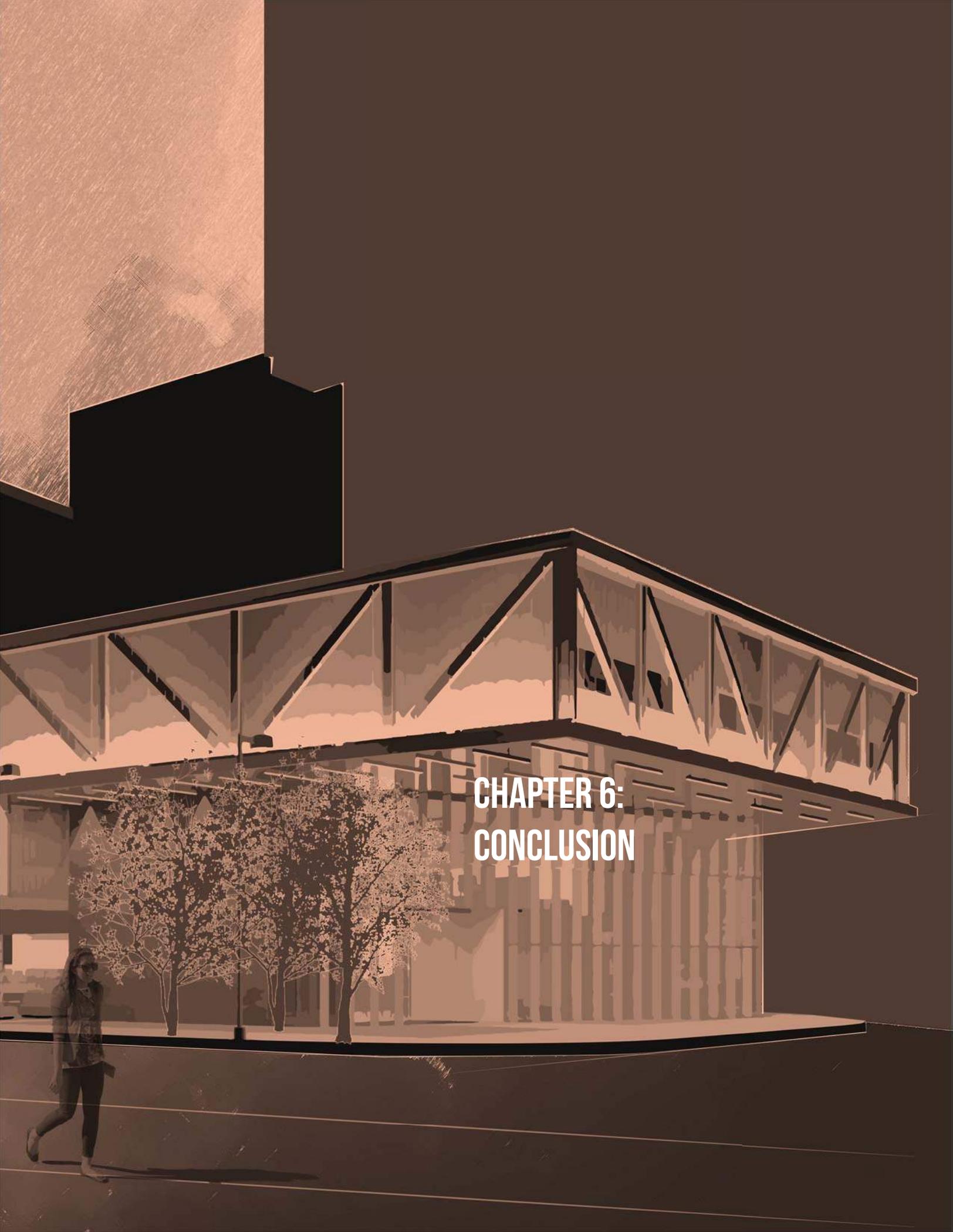


**Figure 5.108:**  
Atrium - Third Level

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An architectural rendering of a modern building with a prominent glass facade. The building features a dark, angular upper section and a lower section with a glass curtain wall. The glass reflects the sky and surrounding environment. In the foreground, a person is walking on a sidewalk, and there are several trees. The overall scene is set against a dark, textured background.

**CHAPTER 6:  
CONCLUSION**

# 6.0 CONCLUSION

## 6.0 Conclusion

The intention of the thesis is to first disclose the effects of rapid privatizing residential developments in the city of Toronto, critiquing the issues and consequences when urban planner and architects become compliant to building homogenous introverted communities. While the second intent is to find value in public spaces and social interaction within densely populated neighbourhoods by redefining open space and the traditional community cultural centre. The thesis proposes a new park condition that is interwoven with a hybrid structure, bringing life, culture, and identity to the public realm. Since the relentless beginnings of the condominium boom in downtown Toronto, it has a synergetic contribution to the gentrification of many neighbourhoods, displacing localized culture and identity. The proposed hybrid Socio-Cultural Centre integrates the cultural, educational, communal, and recreational elements of a neighbourhood into a single condenser, manifesting a catalyst for social activity, urban pluralism, and community engagement. Recognizing the diminished value of the street condition and importance of grade level connectivity, Liberty Raildeck Park, reclaims the interstitial space above the transit infrastructure, by removing physical boundaries that limit accessibility and circulation. In return, the proposed park inserts a variety of programs ranging from art, leisure, and recreation, with the aim to generate an abundance of interaction between dwellers and visitors.

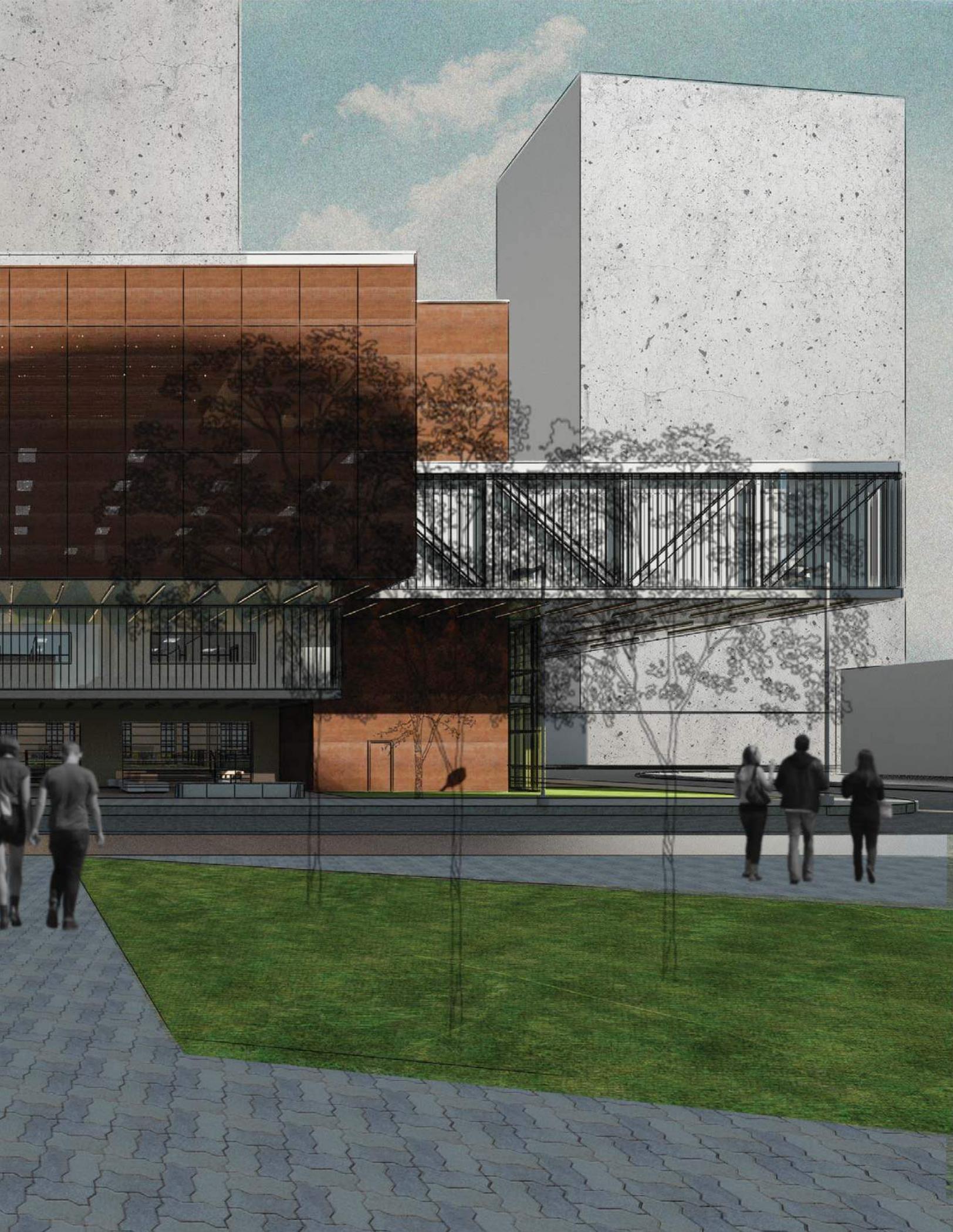
The thesis intervention challenges the existing urban plan and a financially driven regime that dictates the city, with hybridizes spaces containing multiple ownerships, suggesting the private, semi-public, and public entities to collaborate. In this case, forming architecture that blurs the lines between the public and private, treating people as spatial objects opposed to subjected users. These proposed autonomous programs in the community contextualize tangible and physical relationships and create opportunities where social activities can occur. Although this proposal engages the issues of a single neighbourhood, this concept of hybridizing spaces between residential

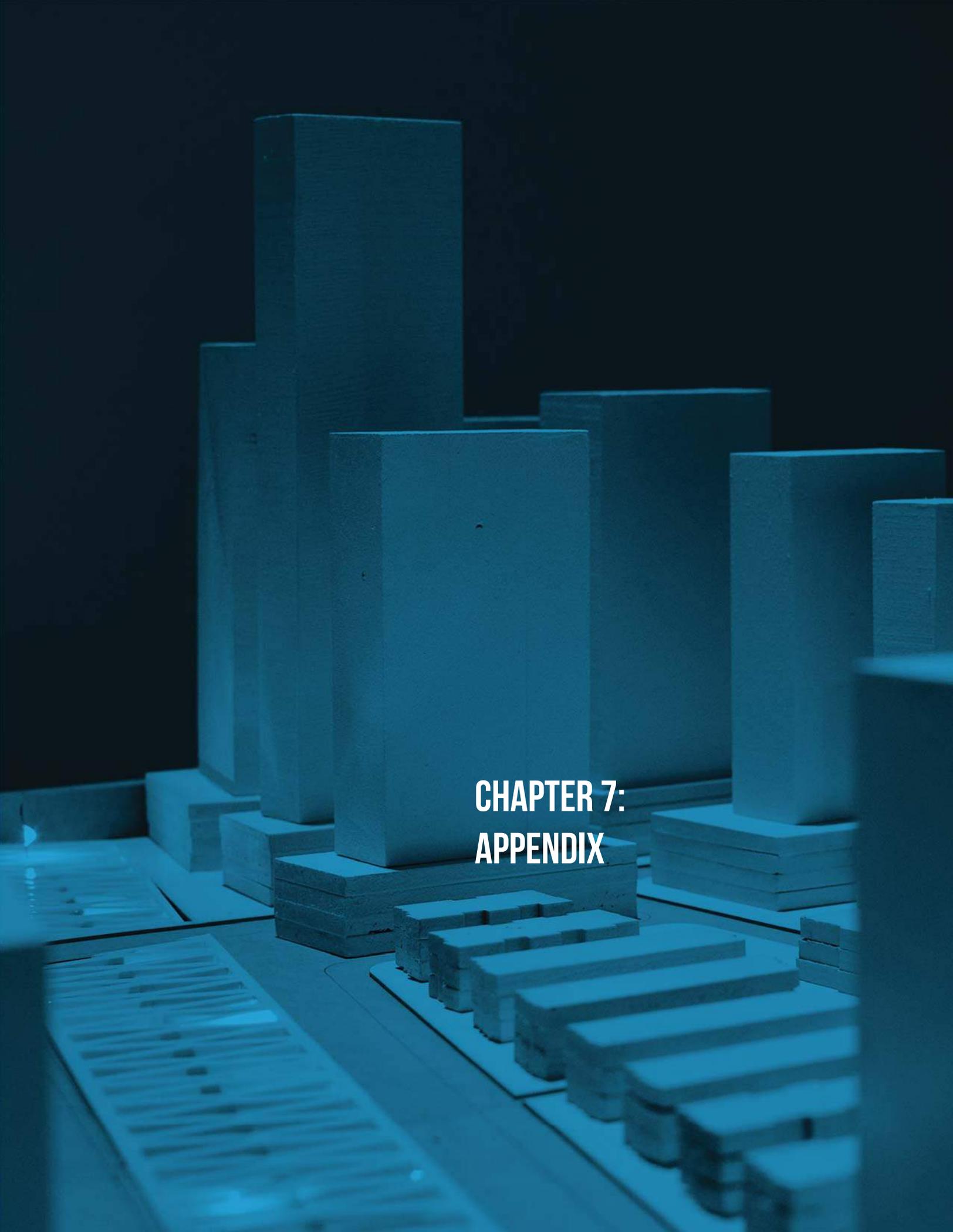
## 6.0 CONCLUSION

developments for public space is critical for improving the quality of life in the city, offering a desaturation of private buildings. The Liberty Raildeck Park and the Socio-Cultural Centre encourage architects to rethink the types of program they are inserting into a single site, and think about the broader urban context. With multiple major urban sites undergoing redevelopment across Toronto, such as the East Bayfront, Lower Don Lands, and Port Lands, it is a critical time for planners, architects, and developers to speculate what type of community they envision before diving into construction. Whether the outcome will be another lifeless neighbourhood or a lively heterogeneous community, it is up to the role of the architect to seek value in healthy civic life.

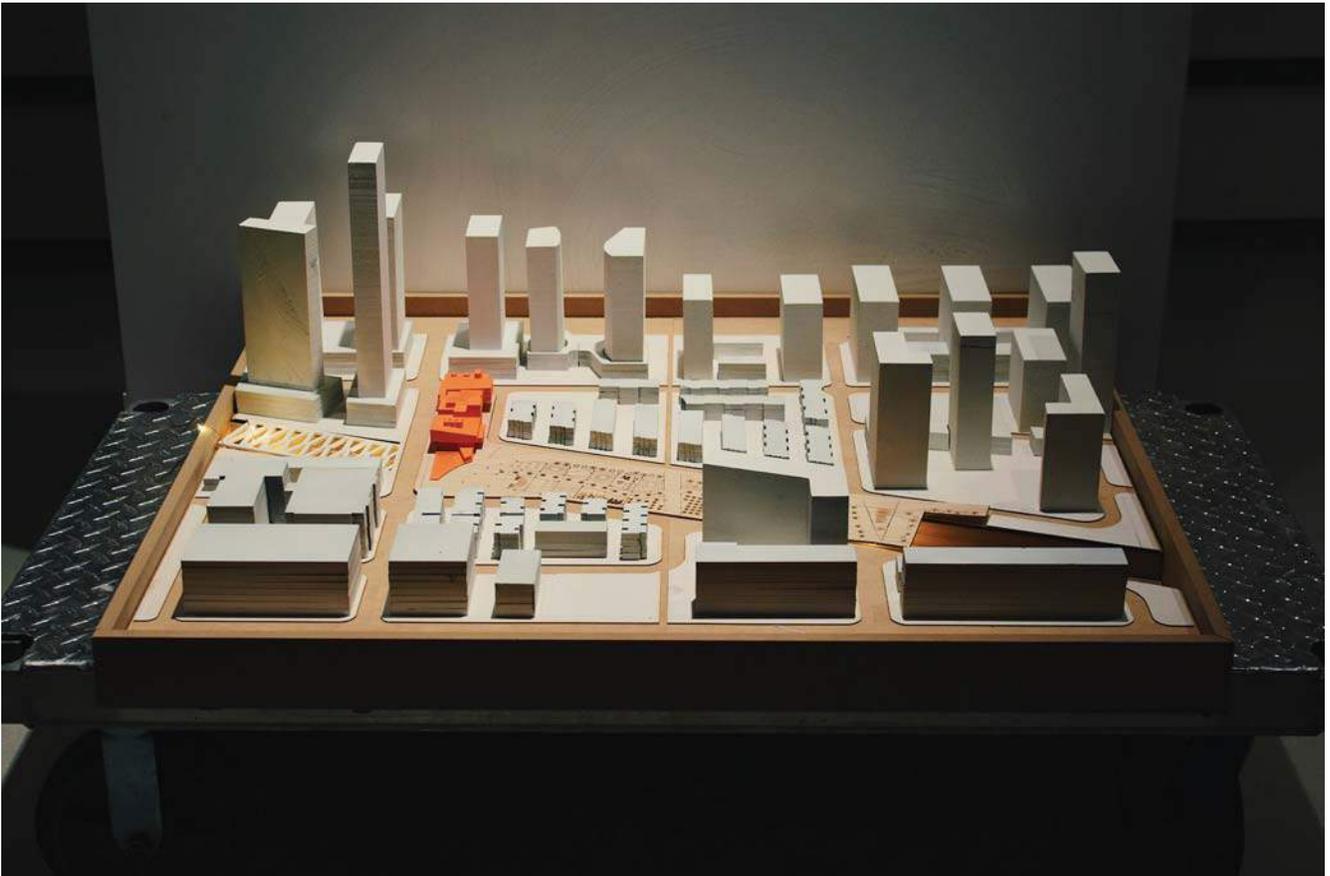


Figure 6.1:  
View from Gateway Park



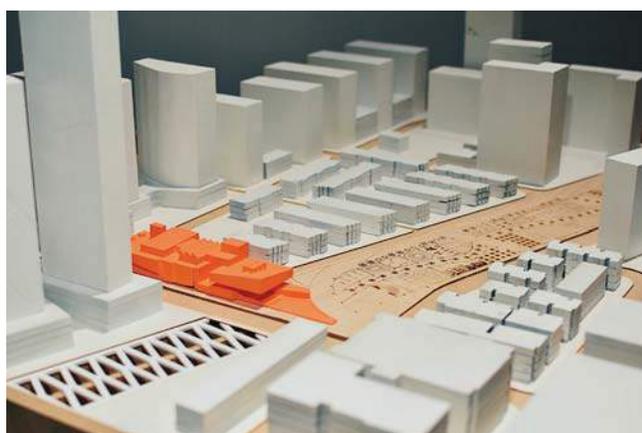


**CHAPTER 7:  
APPENDIX**



**Figure A.1:**  
1:600 Site Model

# 7.0 APPENDIX





# 7.0 APPENDIX

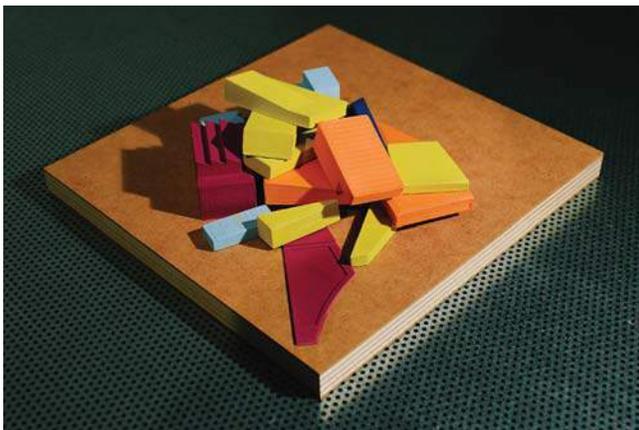
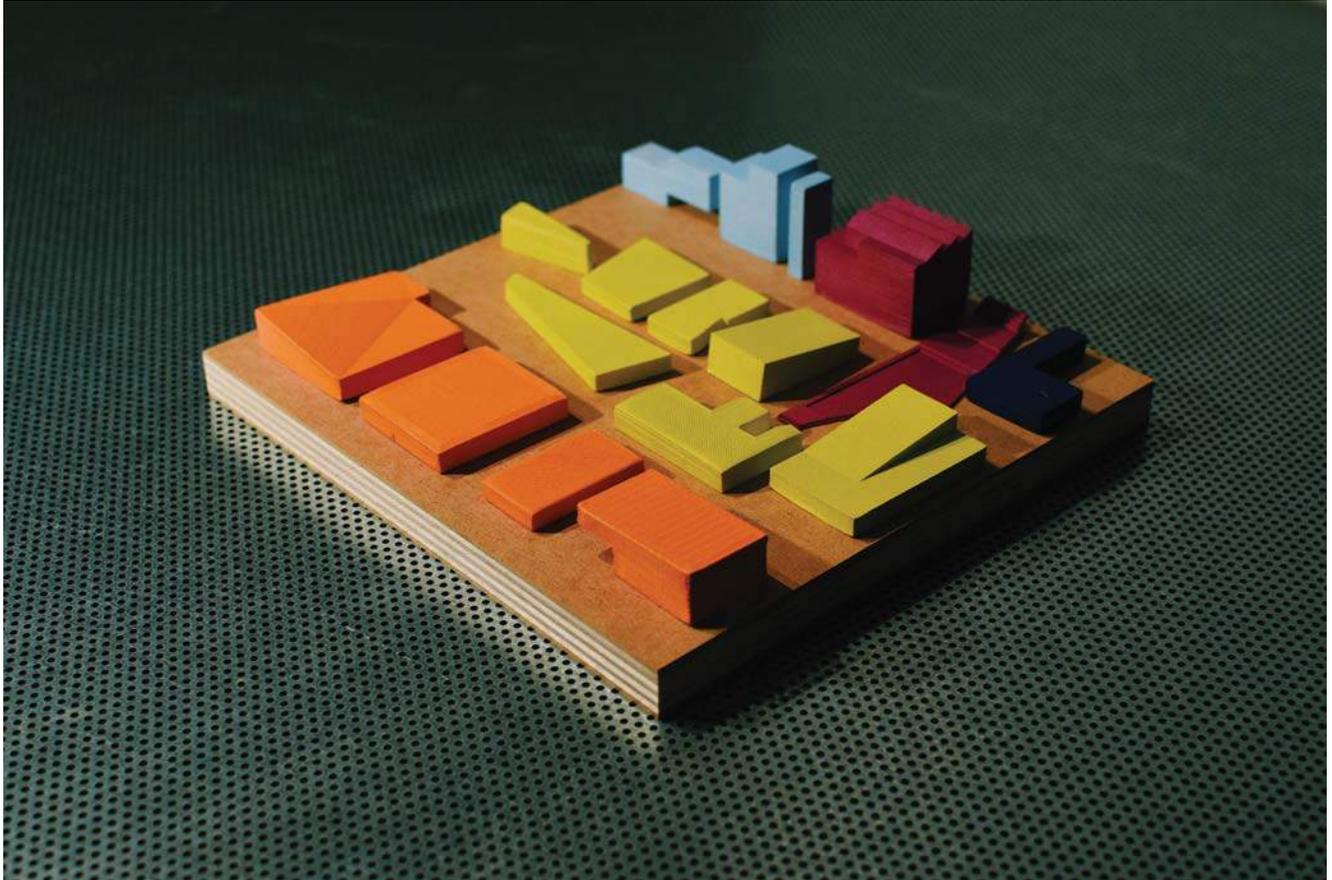
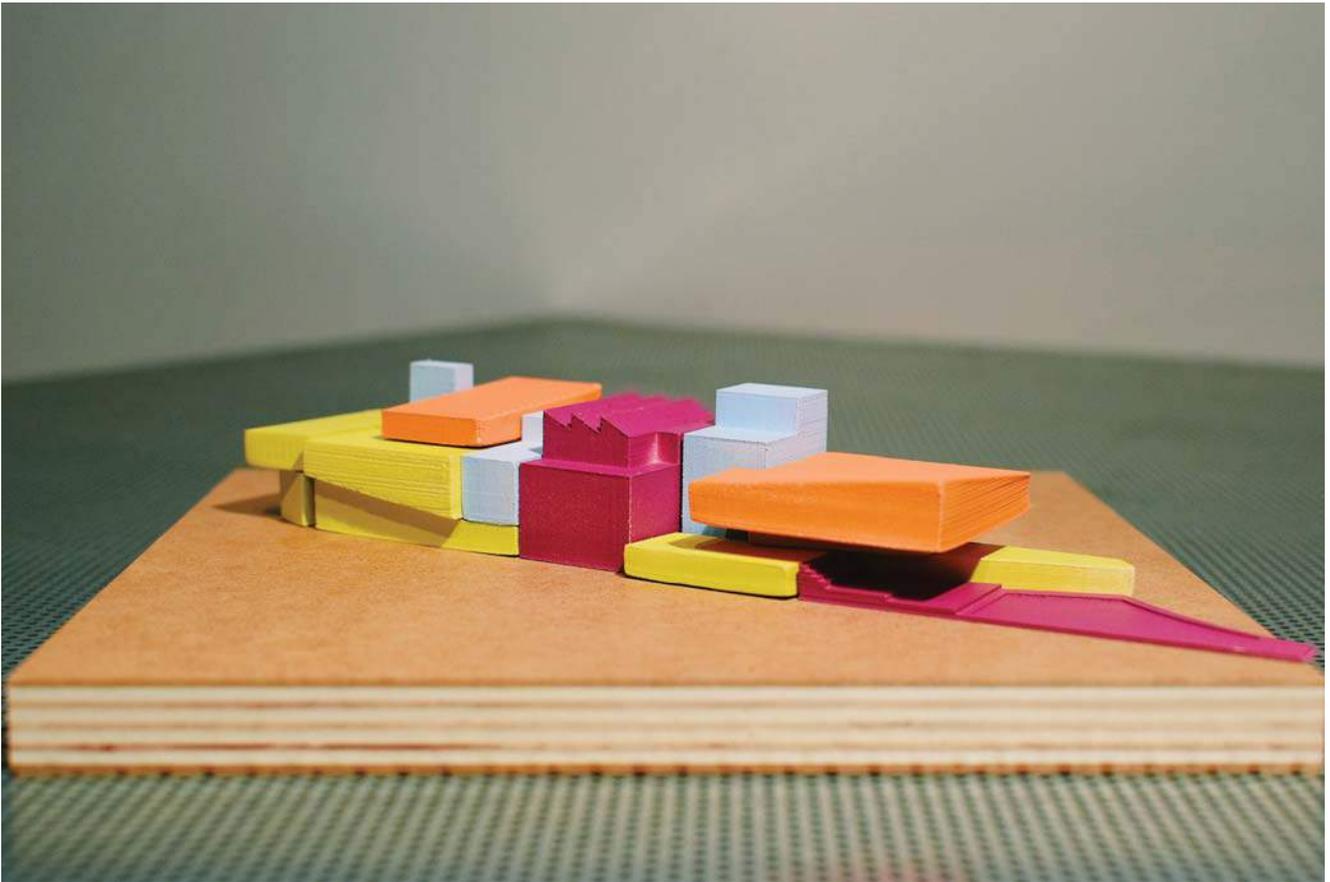
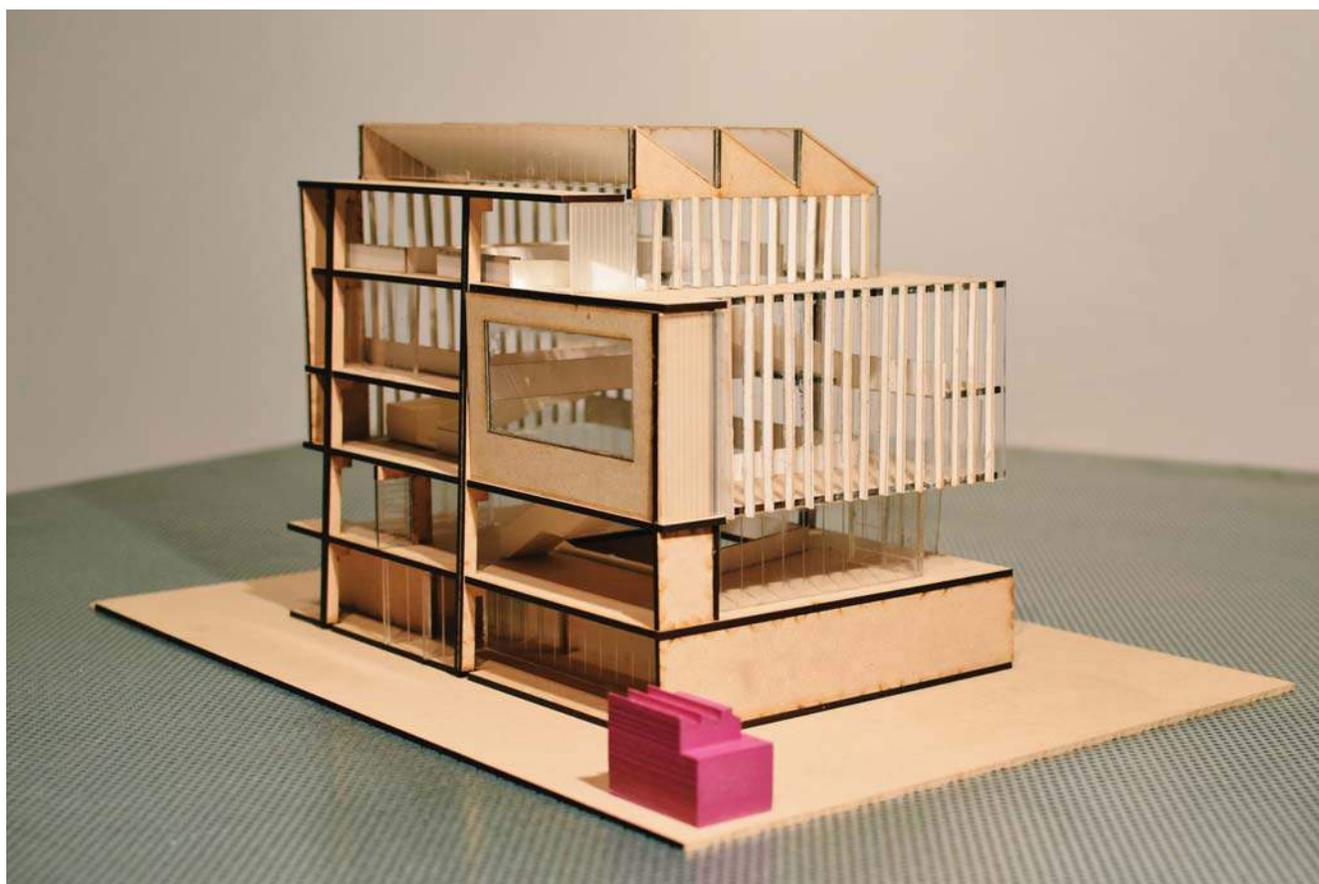


Figure A.2:  
1:500 Concept Model

## 7.0 APPENDIX



## 7.0 APPENDIX

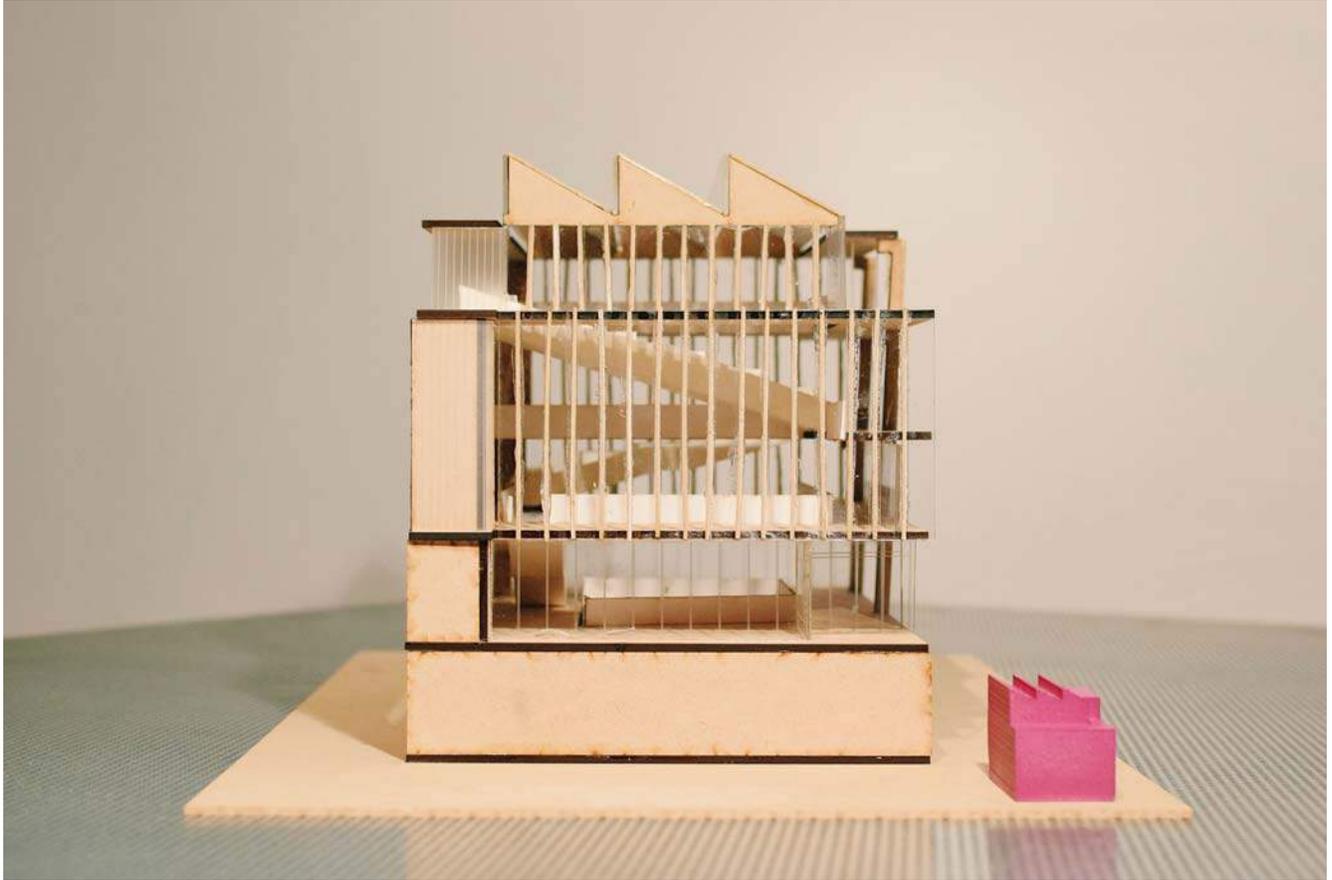


**Figure A.3:**  
1:100 Sectional Model of Atrium

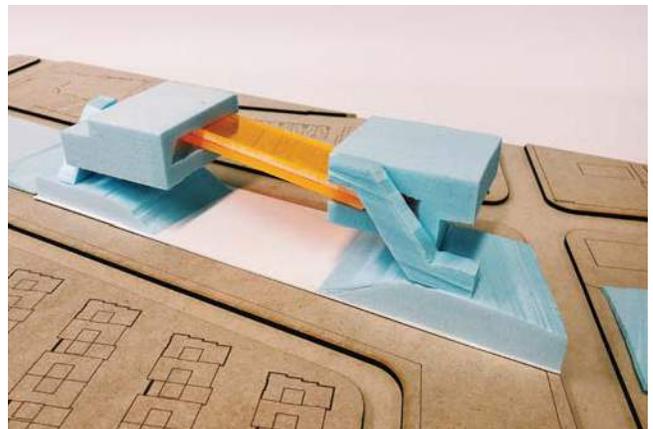
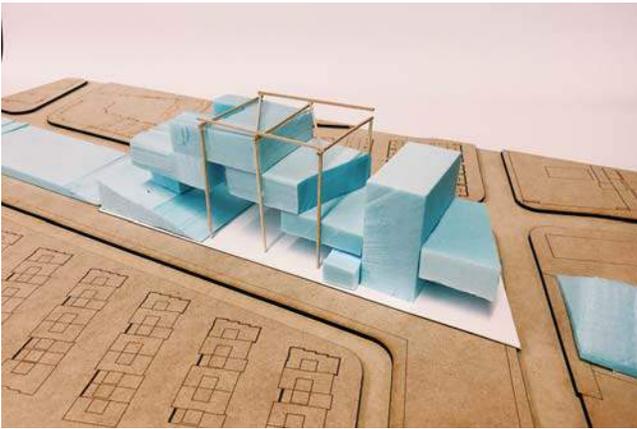
## 7.0 APPENDIX



# 7.0 APPENDIX



# 7.0 APPENDIX



**Figure A.4:**  
1:600 Experimental Massing Models.

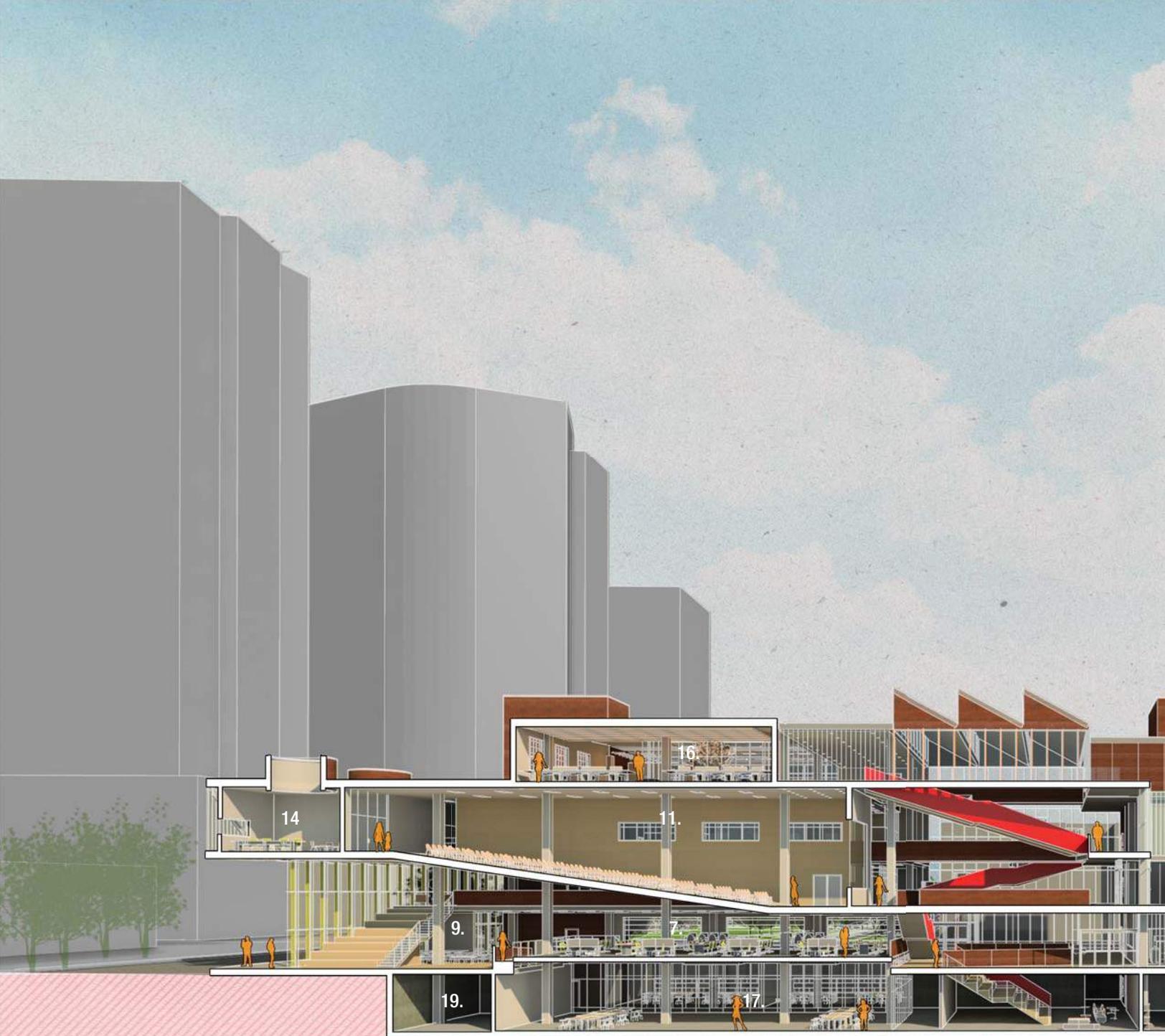
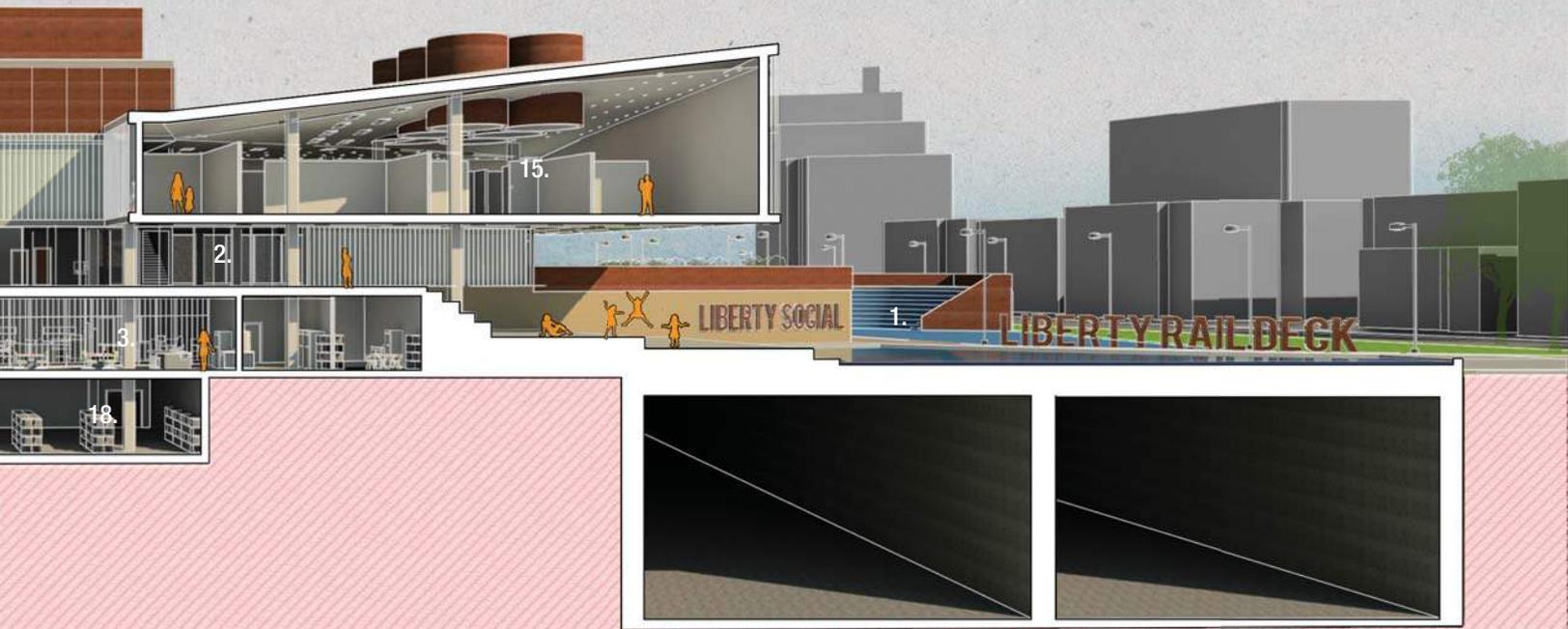


Figure A.5:  
Section A-2



- |                            |                              |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Pond/ Fountain          | 11. Theatre                  |
| 2. Event/ Exhibition Space | 12. VR Studio                |
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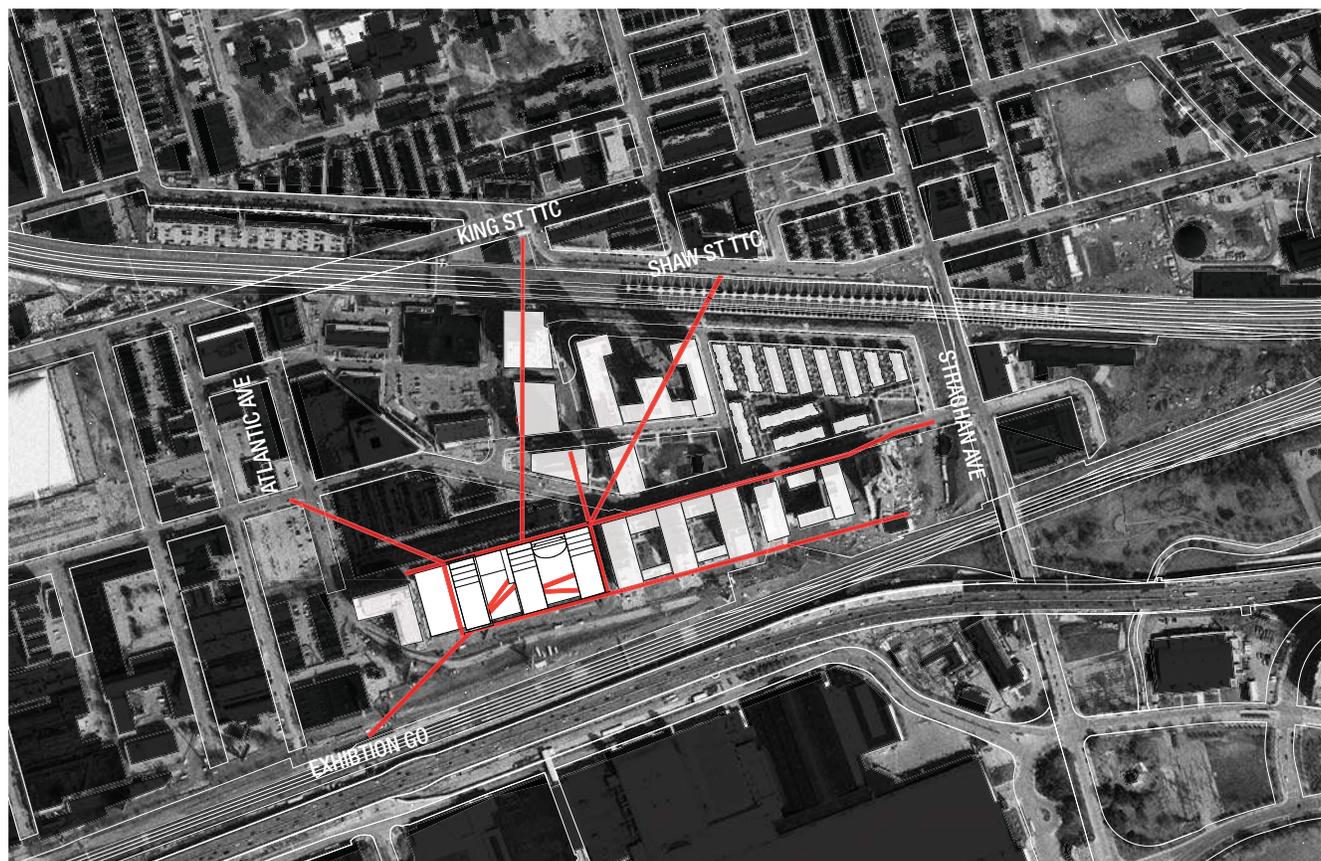
# 7.0 APPENDIX



**Figure A.6:**  
Pressures of Privatization.

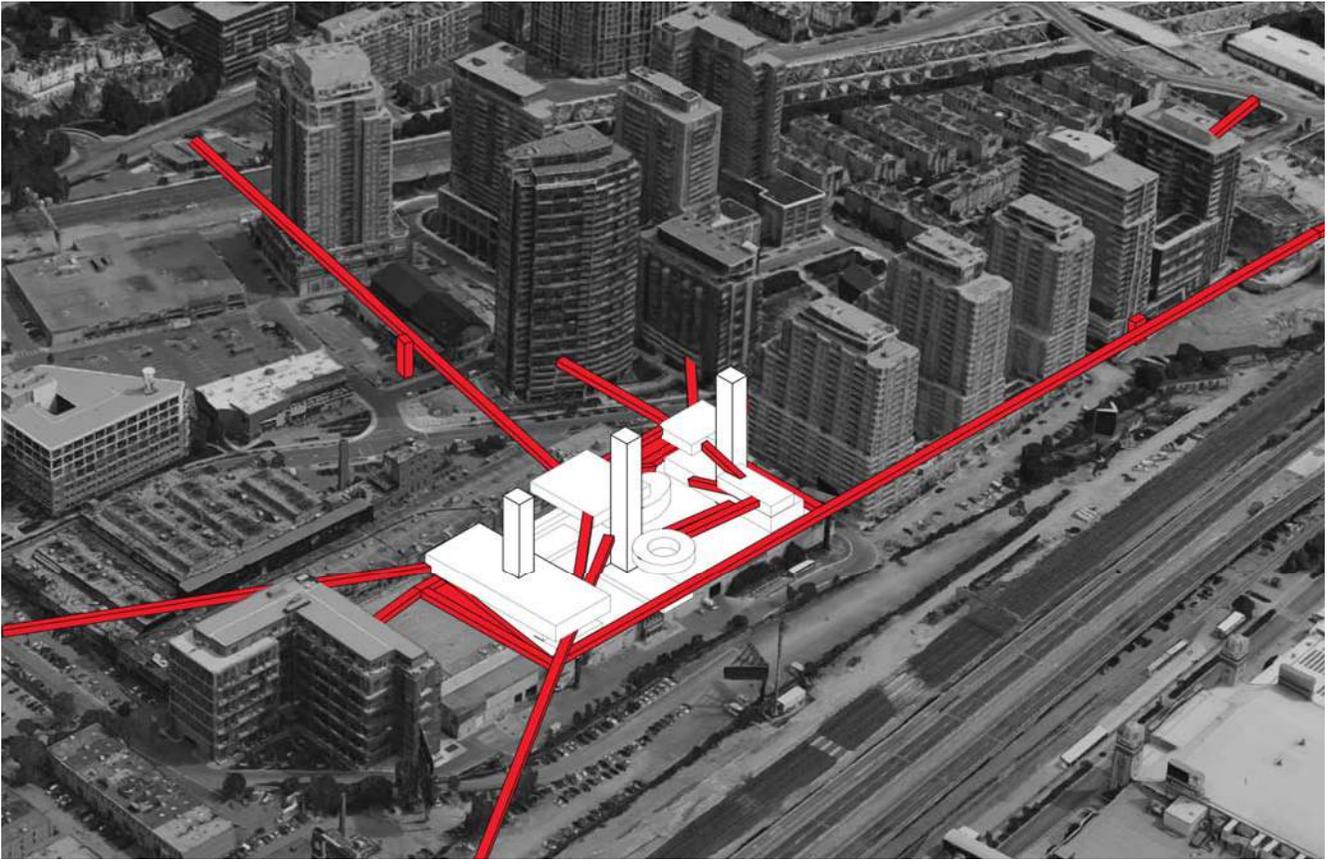


# 7.0 APPENDIX



**Figure A.8:**  
Community Reconnection through Interstitial  
Insertion.

# 7.0 APPENDIX



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