

EVICTIION TO PLACEMENT

Applied Thesis Book

# EVICTIION TO PLACEMENT

Rethinking the current supportive housing systems for hidden homeless families

Fang-Min Liou

Master of Design

Interior Architecture in Adaptive Reuse

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Providence, RI 02903







# EVICTION TO PLACEMENT

Rethinking the current supportive housing systems for hidden homeless families

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree  
Master of Design in Interior Studies [Adaptive Reuse] in the Department of  
Interior Architecture of the Rhode Island School of Design

By  
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2023

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To my family,  
Mom, Dad, Evans, and Uncle Douglas,  
Thank you for all the insights and being the best support.



To my friends,  
Mabel, Michelle, and Yvonne  
Thank you for bringing me greatest confidence.

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# INTRODUCTION

Homelessness is a long-term and serious issue in the U.S., and the situation has become even worse due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With the economic downturn and increasing unemployment rates, even individuals with jobs are finding it challenging to afford basic housing expenses, resulting in a rise in transitional homelessness and evictions. It is disheartening to note that over half a million people experience homelessness on any given night in the United States (U.S. HUD, 2020).<sup>1</sup>

To assist individuals facing temporary homelessness and improve the urban environment, this intervention focuses on restructuring systems across three typologies to address economic and health needs. Firstly, spaces will be adapted to ensure privacy, providing residents with a dignified and positive experience that prepares them for independent housing. Secondly, reliable transportation and tailored educational programs will be incorporated to meet the specific requirements of families and children. Lastly, housing solutions will be integrated into existing communities, accompanied by enhancements to the surrounding public spaces. These designs not only exemplify the values of adaptive reuse by repurposing existing infrastructure but also strive to tackle social inequality, emphasizing the belief that everyone deserves a basic standard of living and should feel embraced by their city.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD Releases 2020 Annual Homeless Assessment Report Part 1, [https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2021-AHAR-Part-1.pdf\\_no\\_21\\_041](https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/2021-AHAR-Part-1.pdf_no_21_041), 2021



# ABSTRACT

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This thesis focuses on repurposing unoccupied office space into affordable housing systems tailored to meet the unique needs of homeless families. Families with children make up 36 percent of the homeless population overall and children's homelessness status is almost always "hidden." Architecture and design can play a vital role in addressing social inequity by creating improved living environments for the houseless community through adaptive reuse of underutilized space situated within dense urban areas with the greatest access to resources to support these families, evoke feelings of comfort, security, and hope.

The following thesis accommodates three basic needs of homeless families: community, residential, and workplace for onsite support systems. Open-plan building layouts are designed to foster social interaction, while communal spaces and onsite support systems within the building promote a sense of vertical micro-community, empowering homeless families to take their crucial first steps towards societal integration, elicit a feeling of comfort and tranquility. By modifications to the building facade and slabs, balconies and atriums offer ventilation, glimpses of nature, and connections to the vibrant streetscape. More than just architectural enhancements, this aims to tangibly transform these spaces into havens that exude warmth and belonging.

The underlying strategy aims to seize current economic and development challenges, such as office vacancies, and utilize them to benefit those most in need, the homeless families. This multifaceted approach addresses the urgent housing crisis, urban development, and health issues simultaneously – respecting existing infrastructure and retooling it for future life.



# RESEARCH



**Image**

George G. Bain, the image has no title, but it's categorized as an eviction, archive in Library of Congress and digitized, 1900s.

# BACKGROUND

## Eviction and Homelessness in the United States

Eviction refers to a pattern in which U.S. landlords evict residents. Landlords can initiate evictions for various reasons, such as non-payment of rent, lease violations, or when leases expire, following federal, state, and local regulations. Throughout history, eviction rates have shown a significant increase during periods of major social, political, or economic disruptions, including the Great Depression, the 2008 financial crisis, and the Covid-19 pandemic<sup>2</sup>.

Every year, millions of people are evicted in the United States.<sup>3</sup> Rising housing costs and a shortage of affordable housing have sparked a nationwide housing insecurity crisis<sup>4</sup>, making it increasingly difficult for people to access affordable housing. Taking the recent situation as an example, due to the health and safety impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the expected further increase in homelessness by the concomitant economic downturn, it is critical to research and address the needs of these evicted people becoming homeless.



**Image**

Michael Kienitz, Eviction in Milwaukee, WI, exhibit at the National Building Museum, 2013

<sup>3</sup> Richard Duckworth et al., "Corporate Landlords, Institutional Investors, and Displacement: Eviction Rates in Single-Family Rentals," Research Papers in Economics, November 30, 2016.

<sup>4</sup> Chester Hartman and David Robinson, "Evictions: The Hidden Housing Problem," Housing Policy Debate 14, no. 4 (January 2003): 461–501, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10511482.2003.9521483>.

<sup>5</sup> Richard Duckworth et al., "Corporate Landlords"

## 1870s

Growing industrialization in the 19th century gradually shifted the overall employment ecology from agriculture to manufacturing, which has *brought a great amount of migration to metropolitan* areas such as Boston, New York, DC and Philadelphia.<sup>6</sup> The *Industrial Revolution* brought about a shift from self-employed people who lived on farms or worked in skilled trades to wage workers who depended on wealthy employers.



## 1933

During the Great Depression, eviction rates increased significantly due to high unemployment rates. These evictions led to the Great Rent Strike War of 1932.<sup>7</sup> During the strike, which started in The Bronx, tenants withheld their rent while demanding decreases in rent and evictions.

## 1937

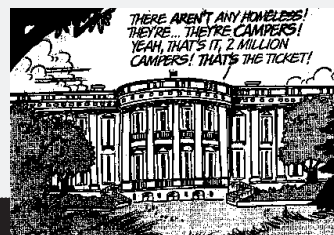
The Housing Act of 1937 (Wagner-Steagall Act) created the United States Housing Authority, a commission that helps implement slum clearance programs and build affordable housing.

## 1965

*Department of Housing and Urban Development* Act of 1965 creates HUD as *Cabinet-level agency* as a part of President Lyndon Johnson's "Great Society" initiative to develop and implement housing and urban policy. Major affordable housing and homelessness programs are administered under HUD's Office of Community Planning and Development.

## 1987

The passage of the *McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act* helped create emergency shelters and other support services in communities across the country. However, homelessness rates remain high.



## 2008

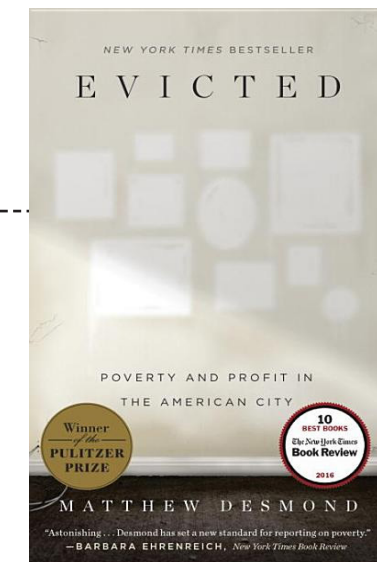
### *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City* by Matthew Desmond

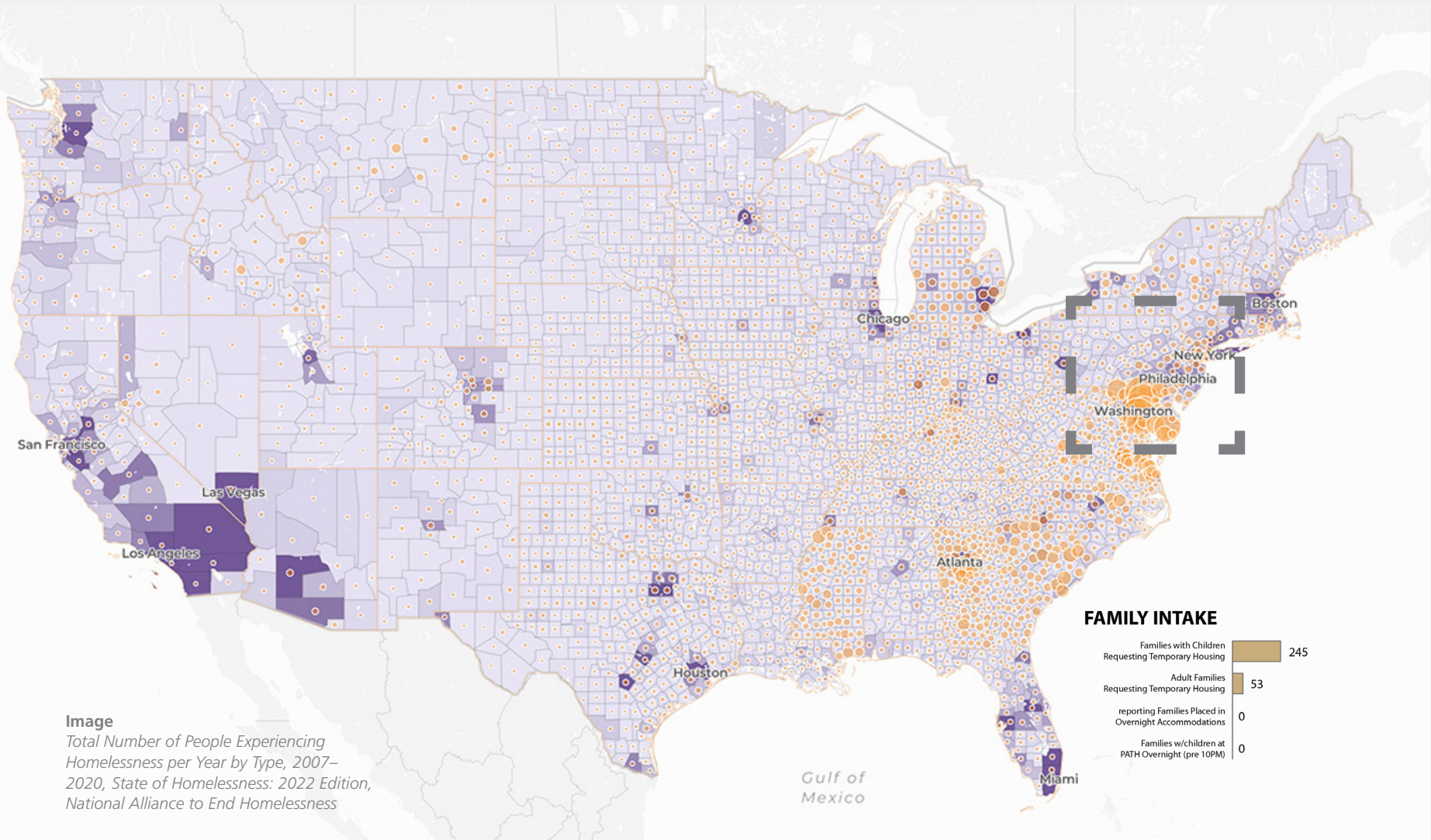
The book centers around the lives of eight families in Milwaukee, WI, a financially distressed city in the United States, as they struggle to pay rent and avoid eviction during the 2008 financial crisis. Within the months of living with the poor, Desmond saw people encountering despair and poverty and coexisting with violence; simultaneously, he also experienced the warmth, hope and hard work of people at the bottom of society - though unfortunately these were only faint rays of light against a backdrop of bleakness.

After reading the book, I came to realize that the wave of mass evictions following the economic crash was not merely a consequence but rather a contributing factor to the cycle of poverty. Having a stable and permanent place to call home is a fundamental prerequisite for a secure and fulfilled life. Without sustainable and permanent housing, supporting education, maintaining good health, pursuing employment, nurturing hope, and pursuing dreams become nearly impossible. Ultimately, no one desires to live without a home, and individuals facing poverty deserve to be free from stigma and treated with equal dignity.

<sup>6</sup> Chester Hartman and David Robinson, "Evictions: The Hidden Housing Problem," *Housing Policy Debate* 14, no. 4 (2003): pp. 461-501, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10511482.2003.9521483>.

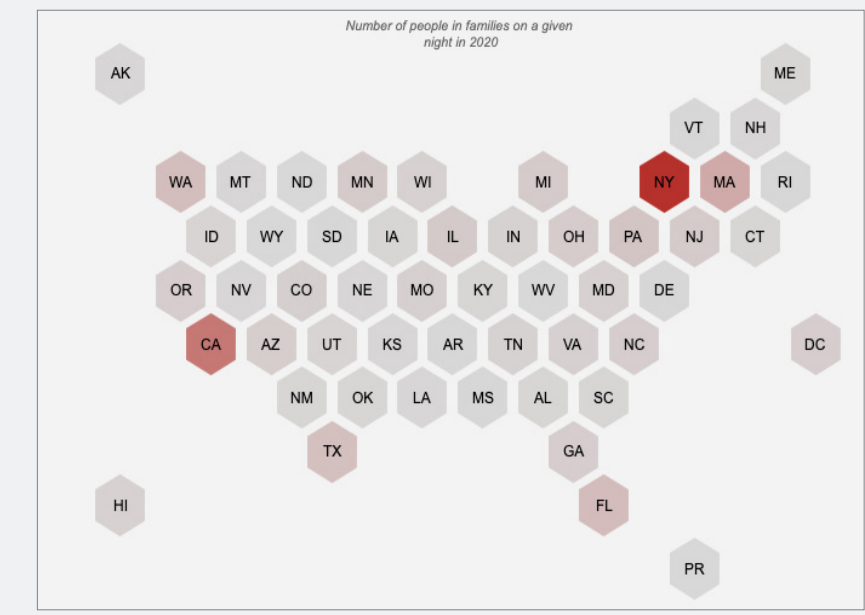
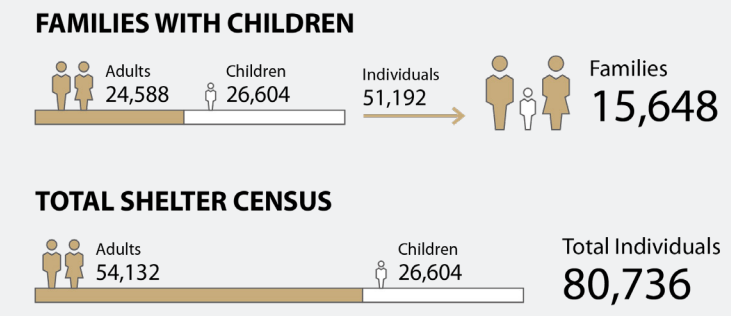
<sup>7</sup> Mark Naison, "Fighting evictions during the Great Depression, The Great Rent Strike War of 1932 in the Bronx," *International Socialist Review* Issue #81, 2016





**Image**  
 Total Number of People Experiencing Homelessness per Year by Type, 2007–2020, State of Homelessness: 2022 Edition, National Alliance to End Homelessness

## General Demographic



For decades, Northeastern America, particularly New York City, has been facing persistent issues of homelessness and housing insecurity.

What sets homelessness in New York City apart from other regions is the substantial presence of homeless families. This highlights the importance of implementing focused interventions and support systems that are specifically designed to address the unique circumstances faced by homeless families. Such interventions should aim to tackle challenges related to affordable housing, limited access to support services, and the well-being of children, among other pressing concerns.

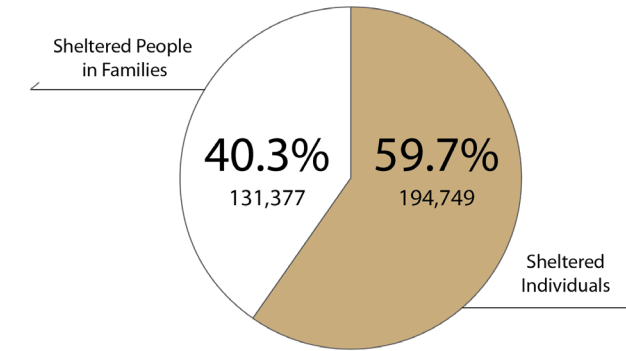
## User Group

Families experiencing homelessness are similar to other families that are also poor, but who have a home to live in. Both groups may face the challenge of insufficient income to cover housing expenses. In fact, it is often a sudden event or circumstance that destabilizes their already precarious situation—such as job loss, reduced work hours, conflicts with family members they are residing with, unexpected bills, or domestic violence—that drives them to seek assistance from homeless service programs. **Homeless families are usually headed by a single woman with limited education, are typically young, and have young children**<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> “Children and Families,” National Alliance to End Homelessness, March 31, 2021, <https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/who-experiences-homelessness/children-and-families/>.

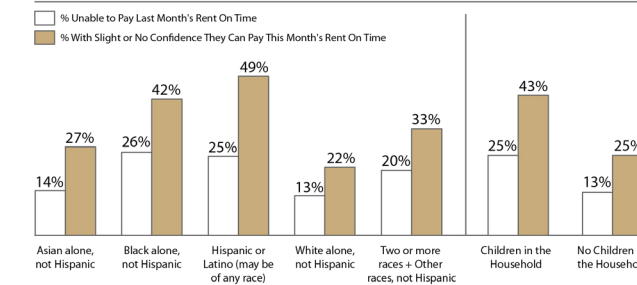
### EXHIBIT 1.2: Sheltered Population

By Household Type, 2021



### EVICTIION RISK DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTS BLACK AND LATINX RENTERS, AND RENTERS WITH CHILDREN

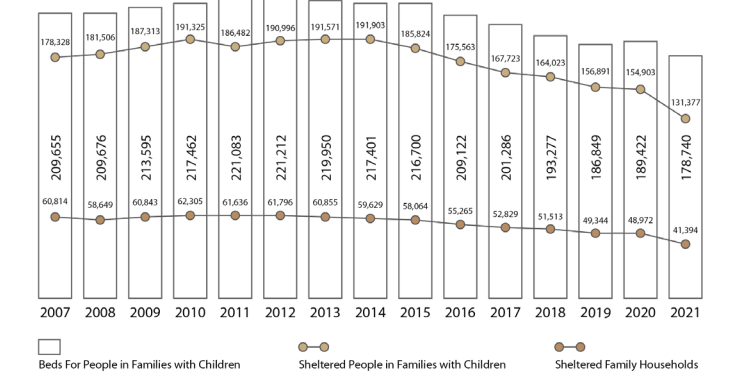
Housing Insecurity, by Hispanic Origin and Race



Source: Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey, Week 12 Tables 1b and 2b. The Census Bureau defines a household as housing insecure if they have slight or no confidence in their ability to pay next month's rent on time or did not pay this month's rent on time.

### EXHIBIT 3.1: PIT Estimates of Sheltered Homeless People in Families with Children and Beds for People in Families with Children

2007–2021



### EXHIBIT 3.2: Distribution of Emergency Shelter Beds for People in Families with Children

By Type, 2020-2021

	Emergency Shelter Beds				Distribution of Beds for Families 2020	Distribution of Beds for Families 2021
	2020	2021	Change	%Change	%	%
Total ES Beds	145,758	139,199	-6,559	-4.5%	100.0%	100.0%
Facility-based beds	129,798	119,359	-10,439	-8.0%	89.1%	85.7%
Other beds	7,588	7,992	404	5.3%	5.2%	5.7%
Voucher beds	8,732	11,848	3,476	41.5%	5.7%	8.5%

**QUESTION – How much space does a person need?**

Marco Giorgio Bevilacqua. *Alexander Klein and the Existenzminimum: A 'Scientific' Approach to Design Techniques.*

In the aftermath of the First World War, the urgent need for affordable housing<sup>10</sup> prompted architects to explore innovative ways to establish housing standards that would fulfill people's basic living needs while maintaining affordability and avoiding a sense of confinement.

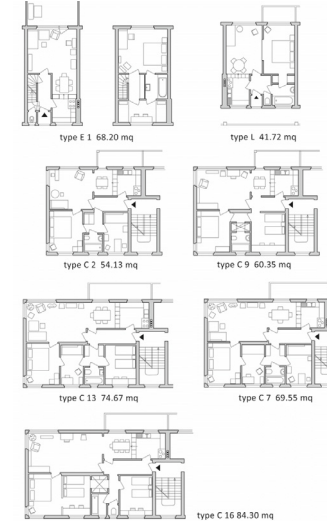
Although the analysis may be somewhat outdated, this research provides us with a foundational comprehension of how space can be effectively utilized within minimum standards. This journal delves into the intricate issues surrounding human habitation and even explores how external living conditions can influence human psychology. The reference points in this study revolve around subjective human needs rather than objective hygiene parameters.



**Images (Left)**

Berliner Mietskasernen. Exterior and interior views of tenement building development in the early years of the twentieth century

10 Marco Giorgio Bevilacqua, "Alexander Klein and the Existenzminimum: A 'Scientific' Approach to Design Techniques," *Nexus Network Journal* 13, no. 2 (June 8, 2011): 297–313, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00004-011-0080-6>.



**Image (Top)**

Plans of typological lodgings for the Gross-Siedlung of Bad Dürrenberg

**Image (Right)**

Method of the successive increments. Example of comparison and evaluation of several plan diagrams reduced to the same scale (1 living room, 1 bedroom for parents, 1 bedroom for children)

		DEPTH								
		8.50	8.89	9.28	9.67	10.06	10.45	10.84	11.23	11.62
WIDTH	7.70	1 65.5	2 68.38							
	8.20	3 69.3	4 72.88	5 74.38						
	8.70		6 75.38	7 80.38	8 83.68					
	9.20			9 85.18	10 88.88	11 92.38				
	9.70			12 93.38	13 97.18	14 100.38				
	10.20			15 102.38	16 105.88	17 109.88				
	10.70			18 112.88	19 116.88	20 120.88				
	11.20			21 121.38	22 125.88	23 129.38				
	11.70			24 129.88	25 134.88					

**QUESTION – How much space do people need to be happy / healthy in 21st century?**

“How Much Living Space Do You Need to Be Happy? Japan Survey Results.”

In 2014, Japan's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT) published detailed guidelines (in Japanese) on the minimum and recommended (ideal) amounts of living space a person should have in order to live a "healthy and culturally fulfilling life".

According to the guidelines, a single person living alone in a city center or suburb should have at least 25 square meters (269 square feet) of residential space.<sup>11</sup> The ideal space for a single person living in the city is much larger: 40 sqm (430.55 sq ft)<sup>12</sup>. If you live in the countryside, the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism has increased its guidance to 55 square meters (592 sq ft)<sup>13</sup> of generous space, more than double the minimum recommended size for urban residents.

According to this calculation method, a two-person family living in the city must have a living area of at least 30 square meters (322.9 sq ft), and the ideal is 55 square meters (592 sq ft)<sup>14</sup>. Ideally, a two-person family in the countryside has 75 square meters (807.2 sq ft) of space<sup>15</sup>.

11 “How Much Living Space Do You Need to Be Happy? Japan Survey Results,” Blog, August 5, 2018, <https://resources.realestate.co.jp/living/how-much-living-space-do-you-need-to-be-happy-japan-survey-results/>.

12 “How Much Living Space? Japan Survey Results,” August 5, 2018.

13 “How Much Living Space? Japan Survey Results,” August 5, 2018.

14 “How Much Living Space? Japan Survey Results,” August 5, 2018.

15 “How Much Living Space? Japan Survey Results,” August 5, 2018.



Images

UP - Noriko Hayashi for The New York Times, 2022

DOWN - Ryusei Takahashi for Japantimes , 2019

Residential Living Area Standard Guideliness Issued by Japan's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport & Tourism			
Source: 住生活基本計画における居住面積水準, MLIT			
	Overview		Calculation
Minimum recommended living area standards	Minimum living area standard needed to meet the minimum essentials for a healthy and cultural life.		<b>Single Person:</b> 25-sqm <b>For households with 2 or more people:</b> 10-sqm x Number of People + 10-sqm
Recommended (Ideal) residential living area standards	Recommended living area standard for leading a fulfilling life with various lifestyle activities.	Residing in a multi-family dwelling unit (apartment building) in a city center or suburb.	<b>Single Person:</b> 40-sqm <b>For households with 2 or more people:</b> 20-sqm x Number of People + 15-sqm
		Residing in a single-family dwelling outside a city center or suburb.	<b>Single Person:</b> 55-sqm <b>For households with 2 or more people:</b> 25-sqm x Number of People + 25-sqm

Residential Living Area Standard Guideliness Issued by Japan's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport & Tourism						
Source: 住生活基本計画における居住面積水準, MLIT						
	Overview	Recommended Living Area by Household Size (Unit: Square Meters)				
		One Person	Two People	Three People	Four People	
Minimum recommended living area standards	Minimum living area standard needed to meet the minimum essentials for a healthy and cultural life.	25	30 [35]	40 [35]	50 [45]	
Recommended (Ideal) residential living area standards	Recommended living area standard for leading a fulfilling life with various lifestyle activities.	Residing in a multi-family dwelling unit (apartment building) in a city center or suburb.	40	55 [55]	75 [65]	95 [85]
		Residing in a single-family dwelling outside a city center or suburb.	55	75 [75]	100 [87.5]	125 [112.5]

Notes: Numbers in brackets denote recommendation for households that include a child.



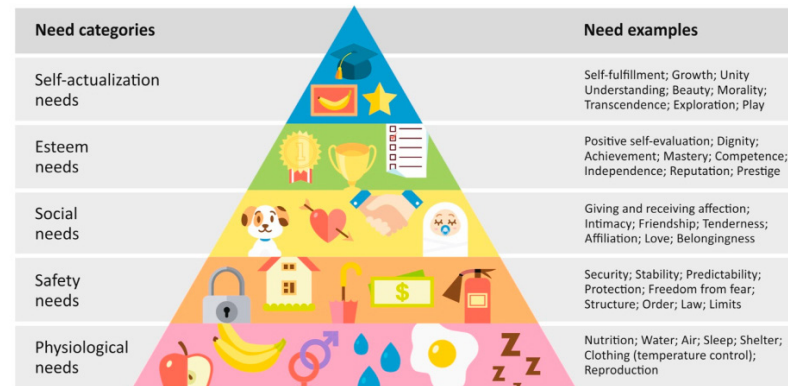
**QUESTION – How much space do people need to be happy / healthy in 21st century?**

*Clément Bellet, "Keeping up with the Joneses: Superstar houses and the US mortgage frenzy"*

The space required for happiness and well-being in the 21st century can vary depending on several factors, including personal preferences, cultural norms, and lifestyle choices. While the previous article focused on Japanese/Asian specifications, this chapter primarily centers on research conducted in Western countries. After consulting with an external advisor, it became evident that the research conducted in the United States in this area is insufficient. Therefore, I turned to the research conducted in Great Britain as a reference.

Reflecting on Maslow's Hierarchy of human needs, a suitable living environment stands as one of the fundamental physiological necessities. We cannot progress to fulfill higher-level psychological needs until we are adequately housed and nourished.

Clément Bellet's research provides valuable insights on wealth inequality and its visible manifestation in home size, which ultimately contributed to the mortgage boom leading up to the 2008 financial crisis. Bellet highlights that while the



size of homes in the US has increased since the 1940s, the relative level of happiness in housing has remained stagnant. Further analysis by Bellet reveals that smaller families tend to experience lower housing satisfaction when larger houses are built in close proximity to smaller ones.

In recent years, social scientists and urban planners have established minimum floor area standards across various contexts. For instance, the 2012 International Residential Code (IRC) stipulates that any dwelling should have at least one room measuring 120 square feet or larger, with other rooms being 70 square feet. However, it is worth noting that this minimum was revised in the 2015 version of the IRC, partly in response to advocacy from proponents of small houses. Additionally, the 2011 London Plan has developed an index of recommended minimum floor areas based on housing type and household size.

**Image (Left)**  
Pyramid representation of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs  
Maslow, A.H. Motivation and Personality, 3rd ed.; Longman: London, UK, 1987.

**Image (Right)**  
An index of suggested minimal floorspace based on housing type and family size.  
Johnson, Boris, ed. "London Plan 2011." London City Hall, November 11, 2022. <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/planning/london-plan/past-versions-and-alterations-london-plan/london-plan-2011>.

Property type	No. of Bedrooms	No. of People	Good Area (sq m)	Good Area (sq ft)
single storey flat or bungalow	studio	1	37	400
	1	2	50	540
	2	3	61	658
	2	4	70	755
	3	4	74	795
	3	5	86	925
	3	6	95	1020
two storey house or duplex flat	4	5	90	970
	4	6	99	1065
	2	4	83	895
	3	4	87	935
three storey house	3	5	100	1075
	4	5	107	1150
	3	5	102	1100
	4	5	108	1160
	4	6	113	1215



# **FORM OF HOUSING**

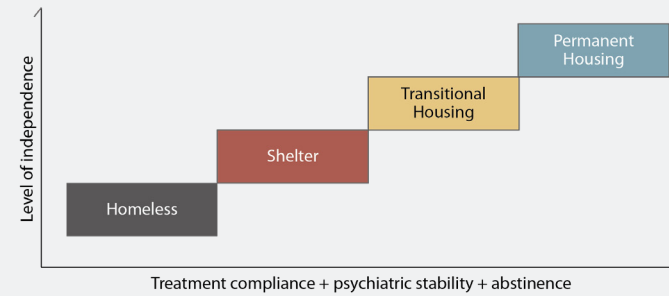
Housing supportive systems  
as architecture type

## Housing First - Design for on-going community engagement

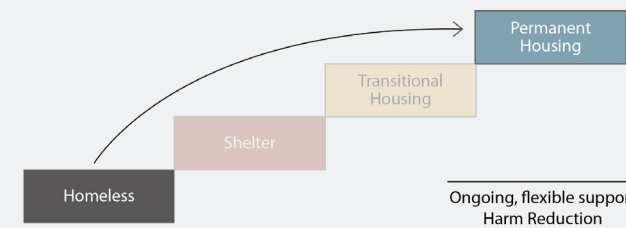
Initially, the housing support system consisted of three steps. However, the government is now actively promoting the Housing First approach, which prioritizes the concept of "living through healing." This approach recognizes the vital importance of providing stable housing as a fundamental basis for both the healing process and overall well-being. By offering individuals experiencing homelessness a safe and secure place to live, the Housing First approach acknowledges that they are more likely to overcome challenges and address their diverse needs effectively.

The Housing First approach is rooted in the understanding that having a stable home serves as a solid foundation for individuals to begin their journey towards healing and self-improvement. It acknowledges the crucial role of housing stability in enabling individuals to access essential resources and support services. By ensuring a secure living environment, individuals are better equipped to address issues such as healthcare, mental health, substance abuse, and more.

### Traditional system approach

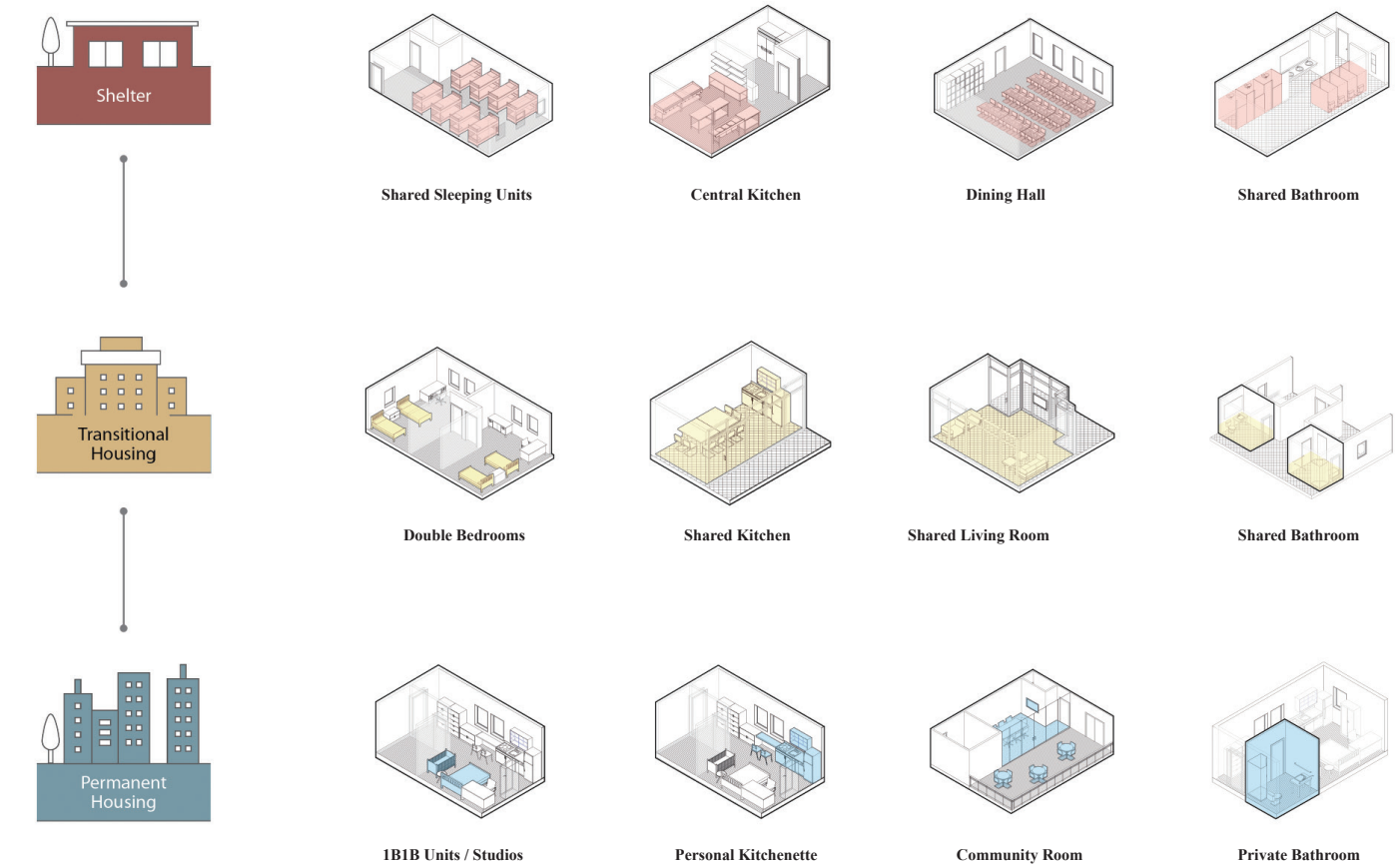


### Housing First approach



## The Housing Continuum - Living Programs Examples

### Analysis based on three case studies



# PRECEDENTS



# Case Study 1

## Stepping Stones, a house for all by Morris+Company

Morris + Company has transformed the abandoned York Road Metro station in north London into a multifunctional space that includes supportive housing for the homeless, co-working areas, and a hotel.

Named "Stepping Stone," the design concept combines temporary accommodation for individuals experiencing poverty with co-living and co-working spaces, catering specifically to young people who are starting their journey in the city. The ground floor features a charity shop that generates income for the program, showcasing the innovative and practical approach taken in this challenging project. By providing a visible and supportive environment, the hidden homeless will no longer remain unseen, instead finding support and integration within a thriving community full of opportunities.

**STEPPING STONES:** 'Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity. Among other things, living with dignity means having access to decent housing.' OXFORD

EMERGENCY HOSTEL RESIDENTS			CO-LIVING RESIDENTS		
<b>Abby Age 17</b> Abby is a 17-year-old young person who has experienced domestic violence and parental rejection due to sexual orientation. She was a good student but dropped out of school due to hardship. Her source of income and where to stay.	<b>Tom Age 18</b> Tom struggles with mental health issues which impact his education and his ability to find work. He has no family in the UK. She speaks little English and has no resources to get a job. She was offered free accommodation by a charity but has to give to help.	<b>Daria Age 18</b> Daria is an asylum seeker who has experienced significant trauma in her life and has no family in the UK. She speaks little English and has no resources to get a job. She was offered free accommodation by a charity but has to give to help.	<b>Mia Age 22</b> Mia recently moved to London for her career and is often out on her own, leaving her partner to manage the house. The central location is very convenient and she has a good job. She is looking for a place to live when she gets home.	<b>Mark Age 25</b> Mark is looking for a place to live. He has a mortgage, the car is being sold, and he is looking for a place to live. He is looking for a place to live. He is looking for a place to live.	<b>Amy Age 22</b> Amy is a freelance journalist. She is looking for a place to live. She is looking for a place to live. She is looking for a place to live.
<b>John Age 20</b> John is a student who has been offered a place to live. He is looking for a place to live. He is looking for a place to live.	<b>Bryan Age 19</b> Bryan is a student who has been offered a place to live. He is looking for a place to live. He is looking for a place to live.	<b>Grace Age 19</b> Grace is a student who has been offered a place to live. He is looking for a place to live. He is looking for a place to live.	<b>Sia Age 25</b> Sia is a student who has been offered a place to live. He is looking for a place to live. He is looking for a place to live.	<b>Miguel Age 29</b> Miguel is a student who has been offered a place to live. He is looking for a place to live. He is looking for a place to live.	<b>Jane, Age 28</b> Jane is a student who has been offered a place to live. He is looking for a place to live. He is looking for a place to live.

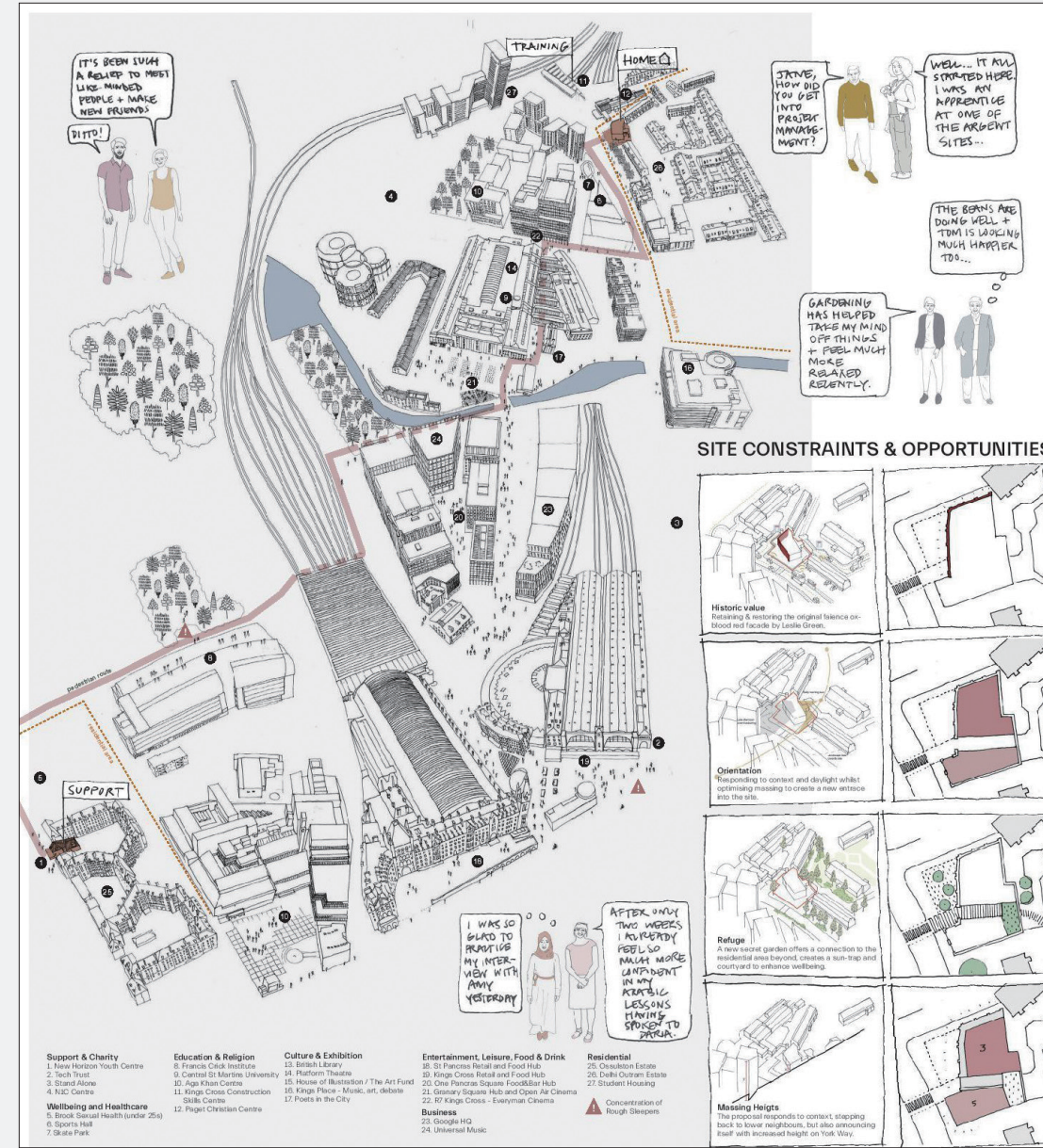
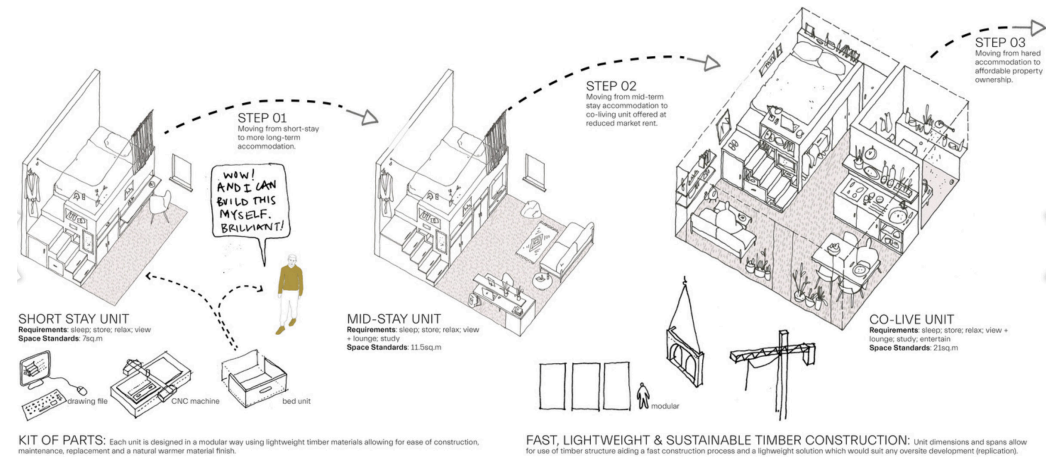
**UNIVERSAL DESIGN INGREDIENTS FOR DIGNIFIED, SHARED LIVING**

SAFETY COMMUNITY HOMEY SUPPORT PRIVACY AMENITY RANGE OF SPACES

**PROJECT BRIEF**

HOMELESS SHELTER	CO-LIVE	CO-WORK	CHARITY SHOP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16-21 Year olds</li> <li>Emergency accommodation</li> <li>Flexible spaces</li> <li>Storage</li> <li>Views</li> <li>Privacy</li> <li>Homey</li> <li>Support</li> <li>Community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>22-35 Year olds</li> <li>Unique model of accommodation</li> <li>Privacy</li> <li>Homey</li> <li>Networking</li> <li>Accessible</li> <li>Affordable</li> <li>Community</li> <li>Flexibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activation of ground floor</li> <li>Open 24h/day</li> <li>Privacy</li> <li>Accessible</li> <li>Affordable</li> <li>Community</li> <li>Flexibility</li> <li>Revenue</li> <li>Rental</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public face of the homeless shelter</li> <li>Activation of ground floor during the day</li> <li>Potential for training &amp; apprenticeships</li> <li>Volunteering</li> <li>Community</li> <li>Awareness</li> <li>Revenue</li> </ul>

Image  
Stepping Stones by Morris+Company





## Case Study 2

### Transitional Housing for the Homeless 1989, New York By Skidmore, Owings & Merrill

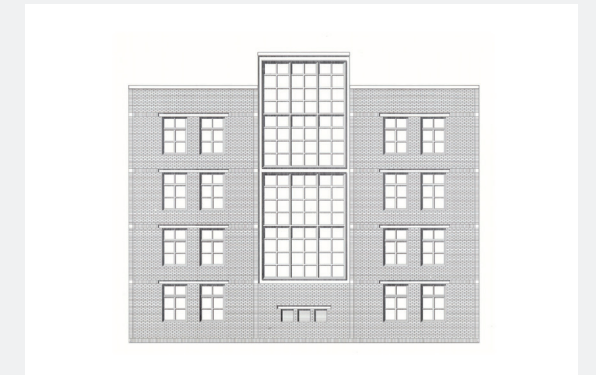
In response to a significant increase in homelessness during the mid-1980s, the city of New York implemented an innovative program involving prototype buildings. The city commissioned two types of facilities, one for single adults and the other for families with children.<sup>16</sup> This analysis will focus on the prototype developed for families with children.

The design of this prototype involved either selecting specific sites or adapting existing buildings, resulting in unique structures consisting of four or six stories. The architectural approach employed by SOM (Skidmore, Owings & Merrill) aimed to create a series of individual "houses," each comprising eight bedrooms arranged in pairs that share a toilet and shower room. These pairs are then clustered around a shared kitchen/dining room and a double-height living room.

By organizing residents into groups of eight, the social dynamics within the living space remain manageable and avoid the institutional feel commonly associated with assisted living environments. In terms of the building's layout, the house units are stacked with the double-height living spaces alternating "front to back." This arrangement allows the upper portion of each living room to slide up behind the kitchen on the floor above, benefiting from borrowed light through a band of glass blocks integrated into the kitchen.

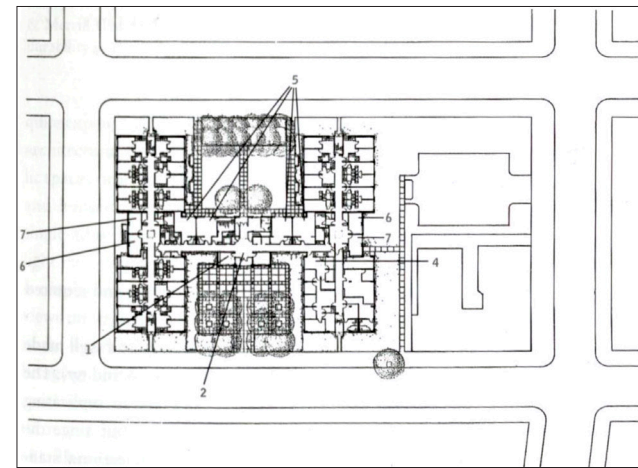
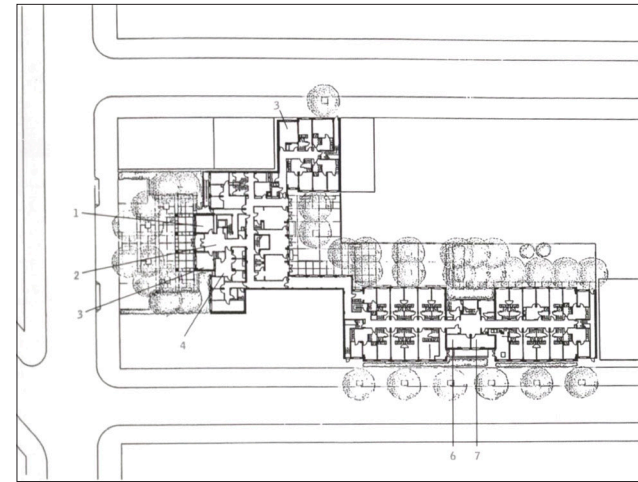
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<sup>16</sup> Sam Davis, "Transitional Housing for the Homeless 1989, New York, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill," in *Designing for the Homeless: Architecture That Works* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004), pp. 130-135.



#### Image

*Left* - transitional housing for the homeless, New York City, NY. By Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, 1989  
*Right* - facade of the transitional housing for the homeless, New York City, NY. By Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, 1989

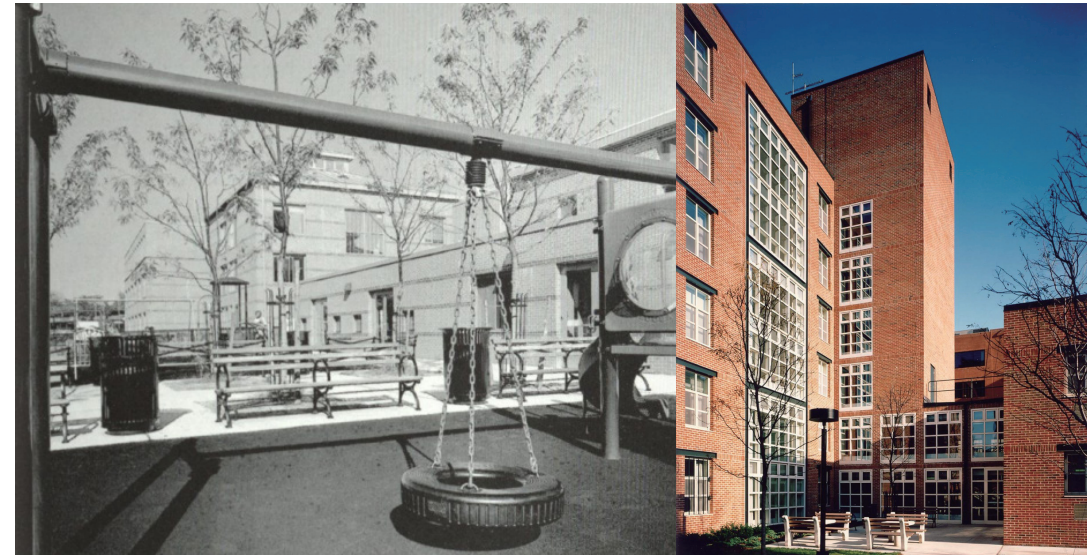
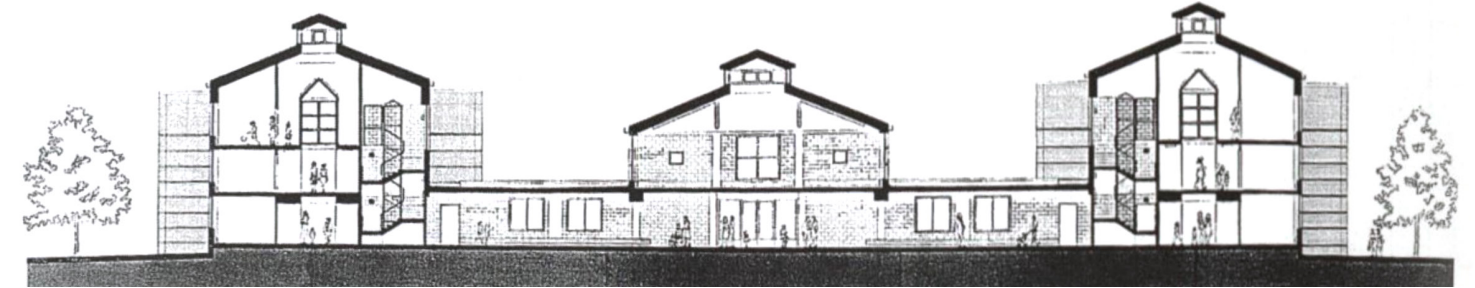


**Image**  
 Prototype plans for New York City's family transitional housings.

- KEY**
- |           |              |
|-----------|--------------|
| 1 Office  | 5 Childcare  |
| 2 Lobby   | 6 Quiet area |
| 3 Lounge  | 7 TV         |
| 4 Medical |              |



The prototype design developed for family transitional housing consists of two types of units: studios and double units. The double units feature a shared kitchen and dining space, accommodating two families. The intention behind this design is to facilitate single-parent families in sharing household responsibilities, including childcare, and fostering a strong sense of community.



**Image**  
*Up* - A section of a prototype of New York City's family transitional housings shows the entry pavilion (center) activity space on the second level.  
*Down* - Images for New York City's family transitional housings.





## Case Study 3

### La Casa Permanent Supportive Housing by Sudio 27 Architecture and Leo A Daly

This project is a government-operated permanent supportive housing facility specifically designed for the District of Columbia. Named "La Casa," it represents the first permanent supportive housing project initiated by the District's Department of Human Services. The facility comprises 40 single-occupancy units, covering a total area of 24,946 square feet, along with dedicated community and support spaces.

La Casa communal spaces are interspersed with offices where residents can seek substance abuse counseling, case management, and employment and housing placement assistance, among other services.

#### *Image (Left)*

Model photographs, La Casa Permanent Supportive Housing, 2013 image credit: Studio Twenty Seven Architecture

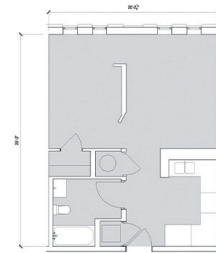
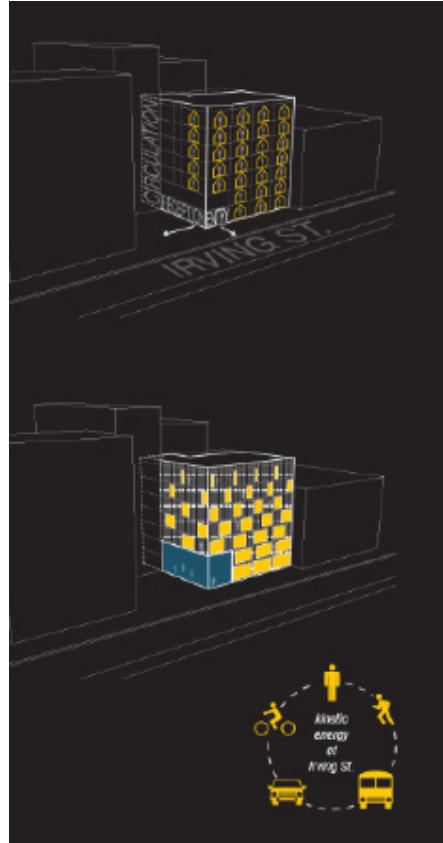
#### *Image (Right)*

Lobby as lantern, La Casa Permanent Supportive Housing, 2014. Anice Hoachlander, Hoachlander Davis Photography

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17 Burke, John K. "La Casa Permanent Supportive Housing," StudioTwentySevenArchitecture Site, 2015, <https://www.studio27arch.com/casestudy/fragment-07-la-casa-permanent-supportive-housing/>.





**ONE BEDROOM PROGRAM**  
*Erna's House, N Street Village*  
 APPROXIMATELY 510 SF

Erna's House is the first District-owned permanent supportive housing facility in DC. It was converted from a traditional apartment building, so the units have a bedroom separated from the living and dining area by a partition. Access to the HVAC and plumbing systems is within the unit.



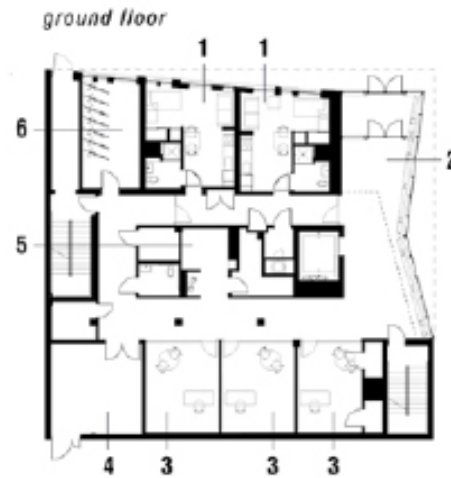
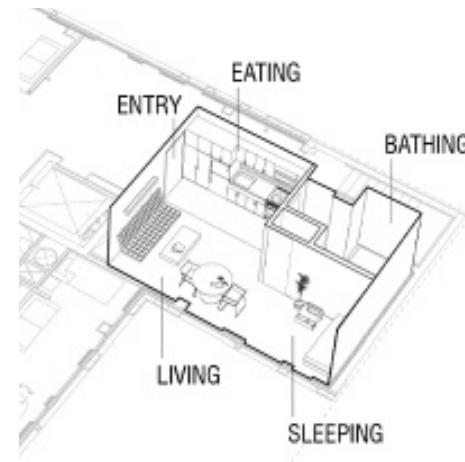
**EFFICIENCY UNIT PROGRAM**  
*La Casa*  
 APPROXIMATELY 350 SF

The studio configuration of the living units in La Casa retains the autonomy and individuality of a one-bedroom apartment while saving space. Access to mechanical systems is centralized.



**SINGLE ROOM OCCUPANCY PROGRAM**  
*As shown in the La Casa PUD Memorandum*  
 APPROXIMATELY 130 SF

La Casa was originally planned as a single room occupancy shelter, where the living units are for sleeping only. In typical SRO shelters, there is one multi-fixture bathroom per floor and kitchen/meal service on ground floor.



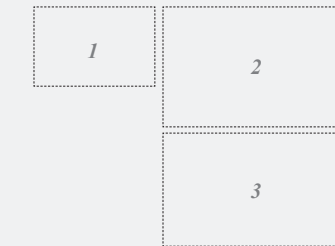
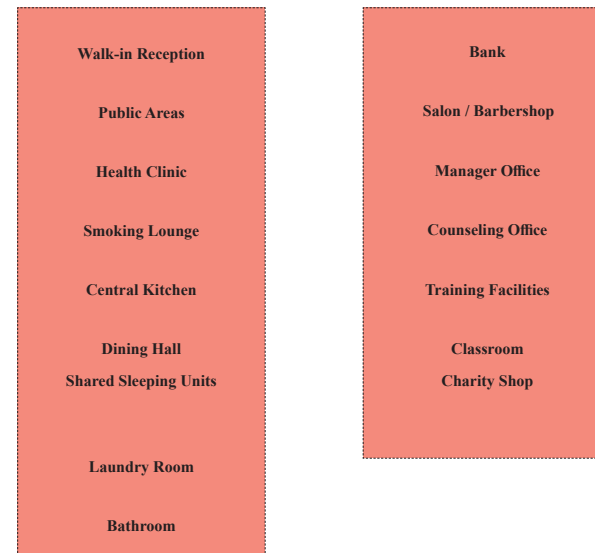
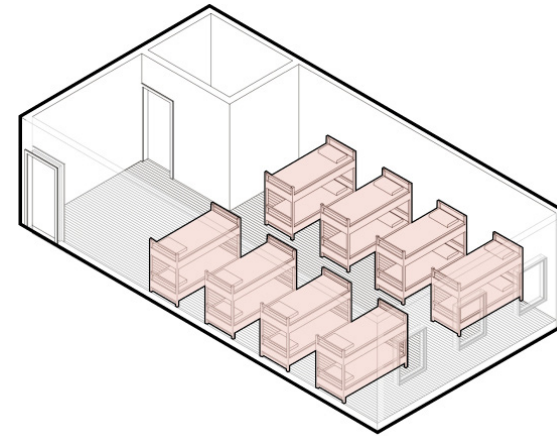
- 1 LIVING UNITS
- 2 LOBBY
- 3 SUPPORT STAFF OFFICES
- 4 LOADING
- 5 MAIL ROOM & STORAGE
- 6 BICYCLE STORAGE
- 7 COMMUNITY ROOM
- 8 COURTYARD

# STAGE 1

## Shelters

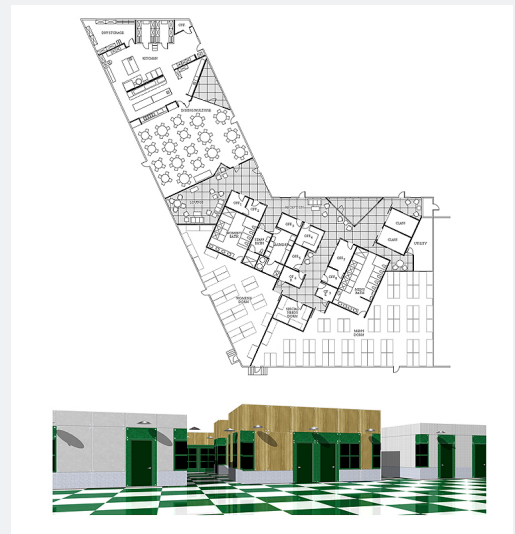
The shelter serves as the initial stage within the current supportive housing system, often being the first point of contact for individuals facing economic hardships and in need of various services. Typically, people stay in these shelters for a short duration, usually less than a few months. However, the process requires individuals to line up daily in order to secure a bed for the night, with the arrangement only being valid for a single day.

The primary objective of the shelter is to accommodate a significant number of residents using minimal space, which commonly results in the utilization of bunk beds as the prevailing living arrangement. Alongside providing a place to sleep, these facilities often offer social worker guidance and basic healthcare services to address fundamental needs. However, shelters frequently face criticism due to issues such as overcrowding, a lack of privacy, increased crime rates, health concerns, and negative effects on community property values. Furthermore, without effective access to alternative housing options, homeless individuals may find themselves trapped in the cycle of relying on shelter beds for an extended period.



### Image

- 1 - Nicolaus Czamecki/Metro, 112 Southamton St. in the South End, Boston, 2015
- 2 - a homeless shelter in San Diego run by the charity Alpha Project, Eros Hoagland for The New York Times, 2020
- 3 - Warehouse Renovation Shelter in Contra Costa County Concord, California, By Sam Davis Architects, 2004



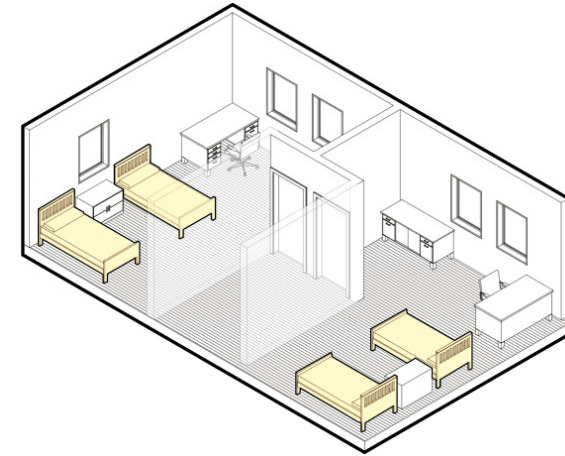
# STAGE 2

## Transitional Housings

Transitional housing programs are supportive housing programs that are temporary but designed to be an intermediate step between emergency shelter and permanent housing. Eligibility requirements and programming vary by program, but most programs offer structure, supervision, support, and life skills. Individuals may only be connected to Transitional Housing through the Coordinated Assessment and Housing Placement (CAHP). Transitional housing often comes with larger shared spaces or more private areas than the shelters. People at this stage usually have more time for job training, and get further physical or psychological treatment. Transitional housing typically allows evicted people to stay in for a few months to as long as two years before being vetted to move into the next stage.

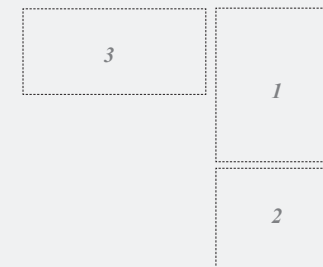
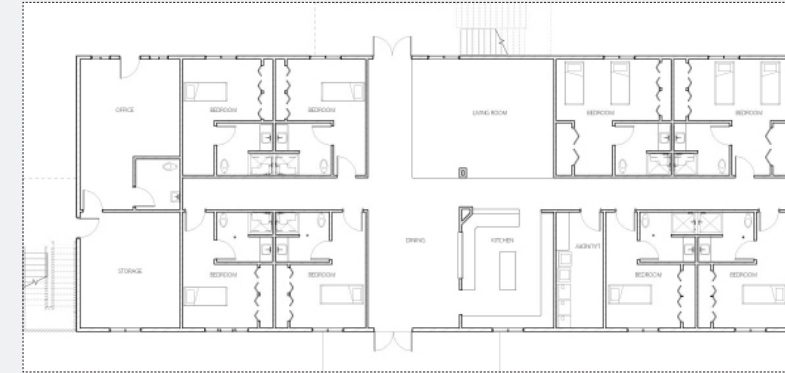
In recent years, the "housing first" model has been aggressively promoted in the latest HUD policy, meaning that many existing transitional housing proposals have little chance of success.<sup>18</sup> However, if people skip transitional housing and go directly to the permanent housing system, whether people can actively and effectively rehabilitate from eviction and homelessness is an issue that needs to be discussed.

<sup>18</sup> Lisa Halverstadt, "Federal Changes Push Nonprofits to Transition from Transitional Housing," Voice of San Diego, March 16, 2022, <https://voiceofsandiego.org/2015/12/09/federal-changes-push-nonprofits-to-transition-from-transitional-housing/>.



- Front Desk / Lobby
- Public Areas
- Health Clinic
- Smoking Lounge
- Shared Kitchen
- Dining

- Shared Sleeping Units
- Laundry Room
- Bathroom
- Shared Living Room
- Training Facilities
- Meeting Room
- Administrations



**Image**  
 1 - transitional housing, Crossroads Mission Avenue, NE  
 2 - a transitional housing, MICAH House, Council Bluffs, IA  
 3 - Serena's House, the Women's & Children's Alliance transitional housing for the homeless



# STAGE 3

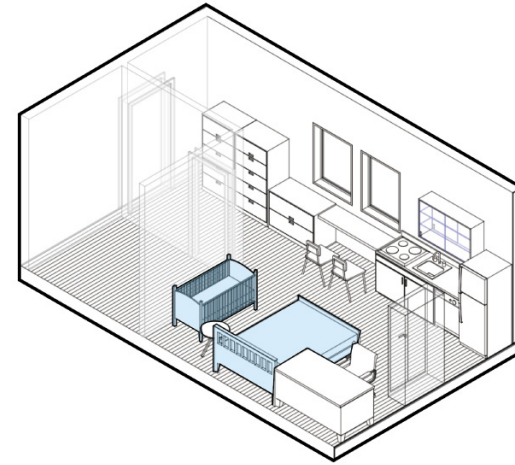
## Permanent Housings

Permanent housing encompasses housing arrangements intended to offer long-term or permanent residency for individuals or families. Its primary goal is to provide a stable and secure living environment, fostering the expectation that residents will remain in the housing for an extended duration.

The government has actively promoted the "housing first" model in recent years, with permanent housing serving as a central component. This model can take various forms, including rental apartments, cooperative housing, condominiums, or single-family homes. Often, it is accompanied by supportive services and on-site amenities such as cafeterias, community events, and regular check-ins by case managers. The emphasis is on cultivating a sense of home rather than an institutional environment, which is crucial for the success of supportive housing facilities.

Studies have shown that supportive housing not only addresses homelessness and increases housing stability<sup>19</sup>, but also improves mental and physical health. It also reduces public costs by reducing the use of publicly funded crisis services, such as shelters, psychiatric centers, and prisons.

<sup>19</sup> Tim Aubry et al., "Effectiveness of Permanent Supportive Housing and Income Assistance Interventions for Homeless Individuals in High-Income Countries: A Systematic Review," *The Lancet Public Health* 5, no. 6 (2020), [https://doi.org/10.1016/s2468-2667\(20\)30055-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/s2468-2667(20)30055-4).



- Front Desk / Lobby
- Public Areas
- Health Clinic
- Smoking Lounge
- Loading
- Community Room

- Living Units / Studios
- Administrations
- Support Staff Offices
- Mail Room
- Storage
- Courtyard
- Gym



### Image

*Up* - A permanent supportive housing unit at Roadway Apartments, developed and operated by Father Bill's & MainSpring in a former hotel in Brockton.

*Down* - A permanent supportive housing unit at Rebecca Johnson Apartments, East Garfield Park, Chicago, IL

### Images

La Casa Permanent Supportive Housing, Washington D.C., by Sudio 27 Architecture and Leo A Daly



## **THE SITE**

Location & Site Analysis

Site Plan

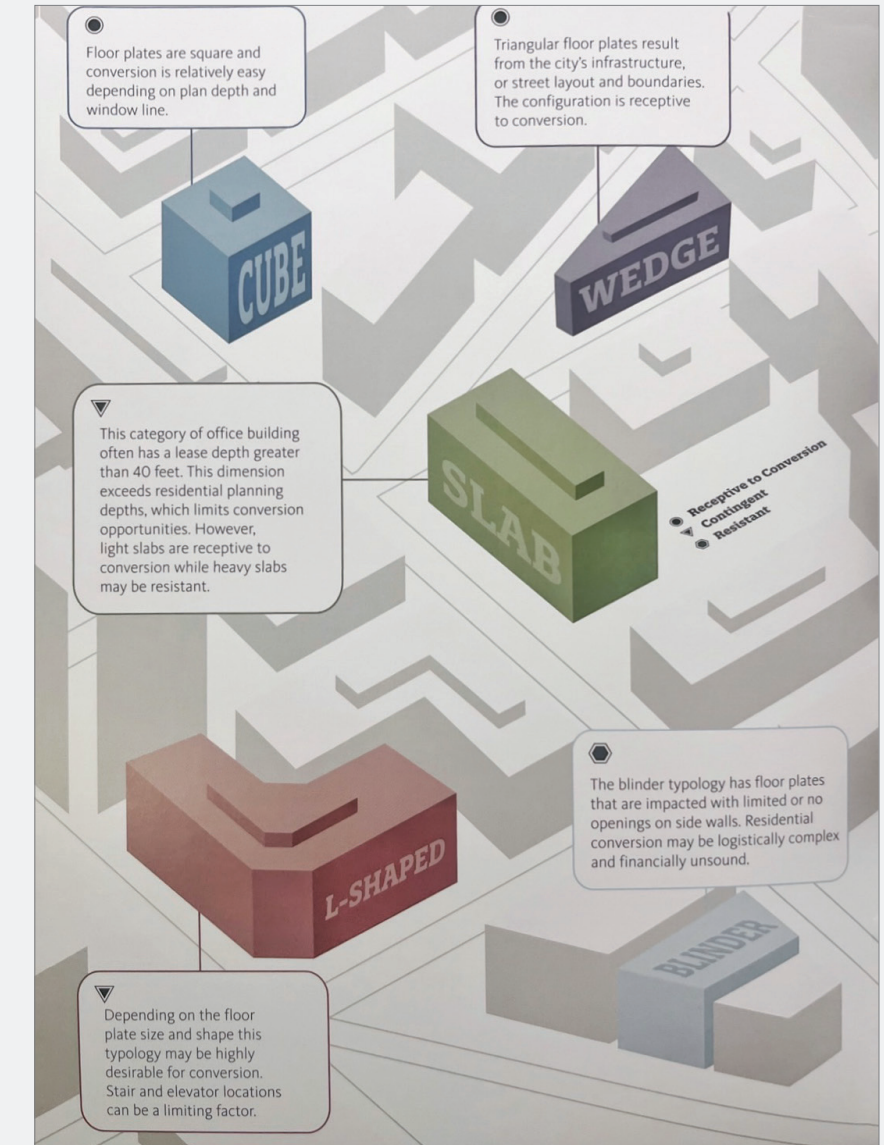
# Location & Site Analysis

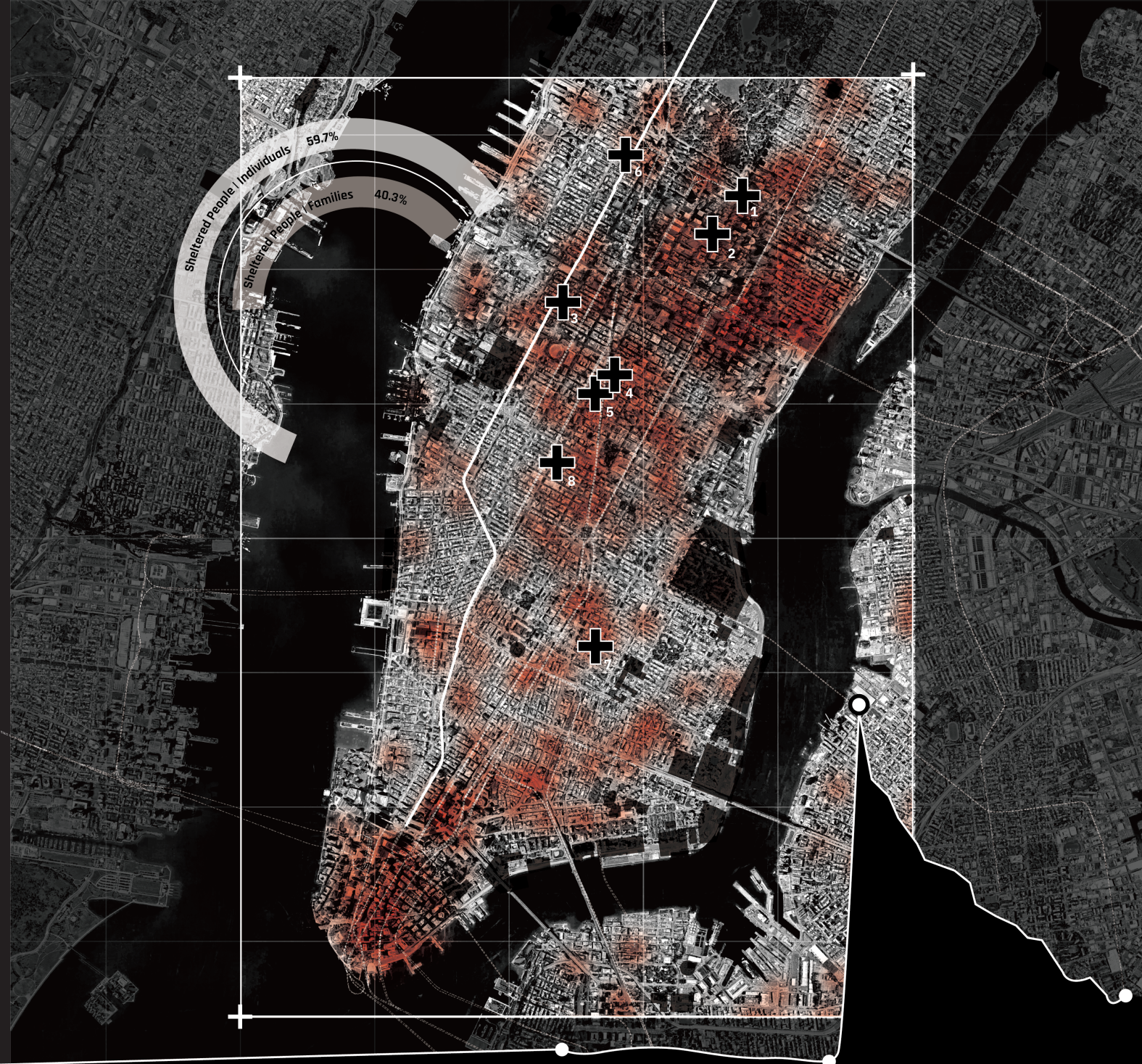
Converting underperforming office buildings for affordable housing use.

Researchers categorized each office property into five archetypes: wedge, cube, L-shaped, blinder, and slab. Once each office building was assigned to a specific archetype, the analysis proceeded to map the extent to which each prototype was suitable for residential conversion.

The findings indicate that wedge buildings and cube buildings are more conducive to conversion compared to other types. Cube buildings, with their square floor plates, offer relative ease of conversion based on plan depth and window arrangement. Wedge buildings, characterized by triangular floor plates shaped by the city's infrastructure, street layout, and boundaries, also exhibit a favorable configuration for conversion.

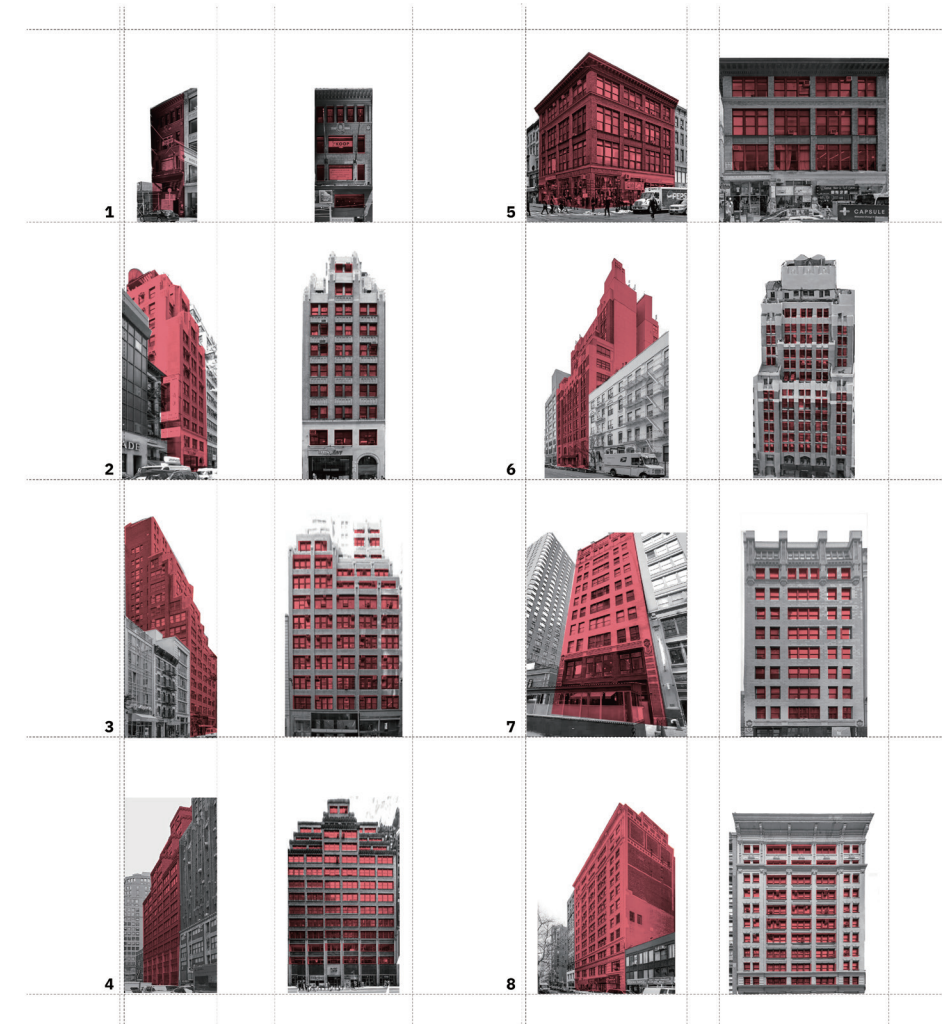
*Image*  
Christine Barber et al., "Converting Office Buildings for Residential Use," in Gensler Research Catalogue, vol. 3 (New York, NY: ORO Editions, 2020), pp. 28-31.





office vacancy rates 2023 new york

### Target – Class C Office Building



During the COVID-19 pandemic, office vacancy rates experienced a significant increase, peaking at 17.2% in the third quarter of 2021. Although companies are gradually calling employees back to the office, achieving full occupancy is unlikely.<sup>20</sup>

Office buildings are typically classified into three categories: Class A, Class B, and Class C. The standards for these classifications vary based on the market, and each category is defined in relation to the others. Building classification serves as a means to differentiate buildings and provide a framework for analyzing market data<sup>21</sup>. Class A buildings represent the newest and highest quality buildings in their market. Class B buildings are generally a little older, but still have good quality management and tenants. On the other hand, Class C buildings, the lowest classification, are older structures situated in less desirable areas. These buildings often require extensive renovations, have outdated architectural designs, and outdated infrastructure and technology. Class B and C buildings are often targeted for redevelopment opportunities.

<sup>20</sup> Angie Basiouny and Joseph Gyourko, “What’s Going to Happen to All Those Empty Office Buildings?,” Knowledge at Wharton (Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, February 28, 2022)

<sup>21</sup> Troy Golden, “Primer: Differentiating Class A, B, and C Office Space,” Area Development (Golden Group Real Estate, October 13, 2016)

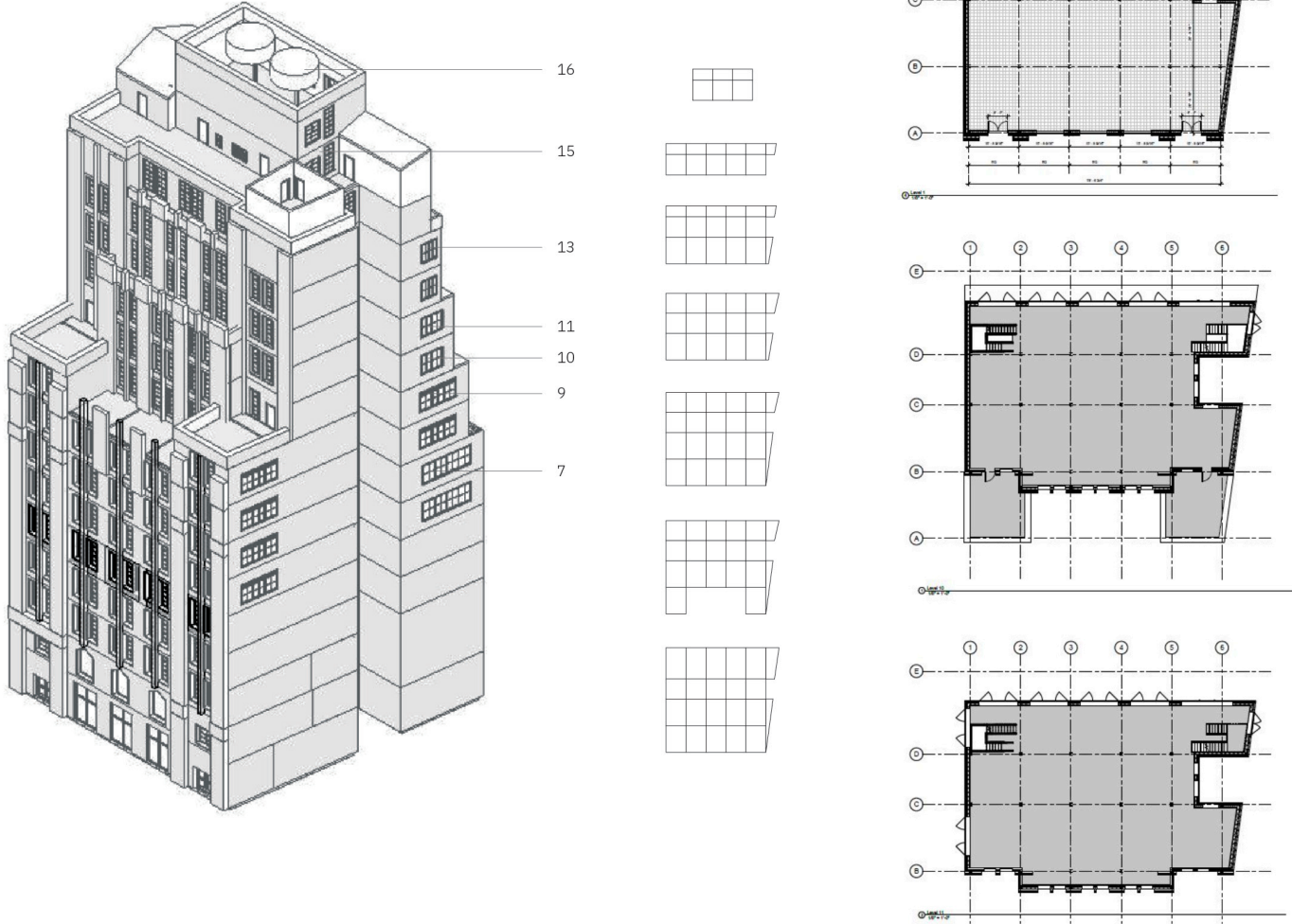


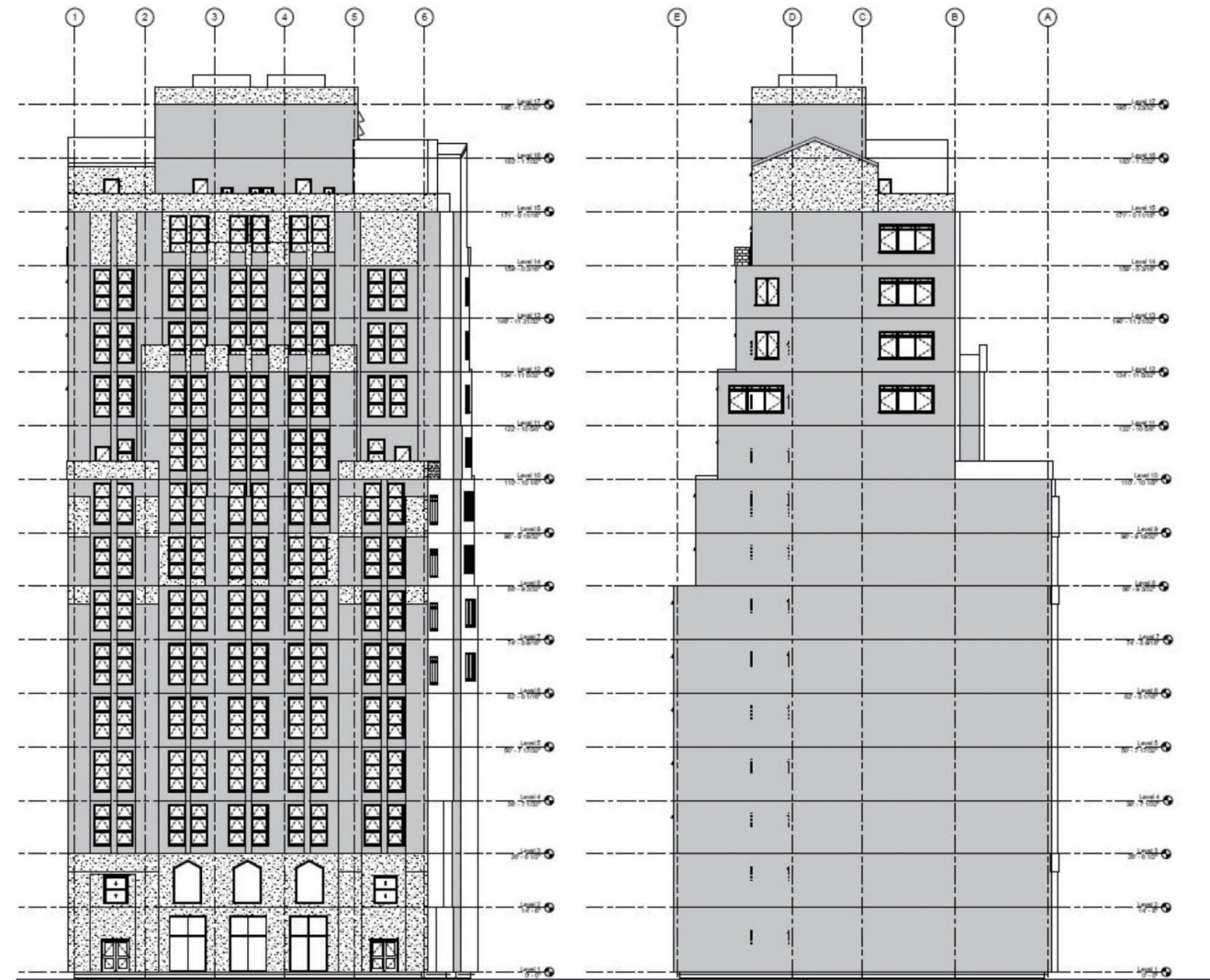
# Host Structure

333W 52nd St, New York

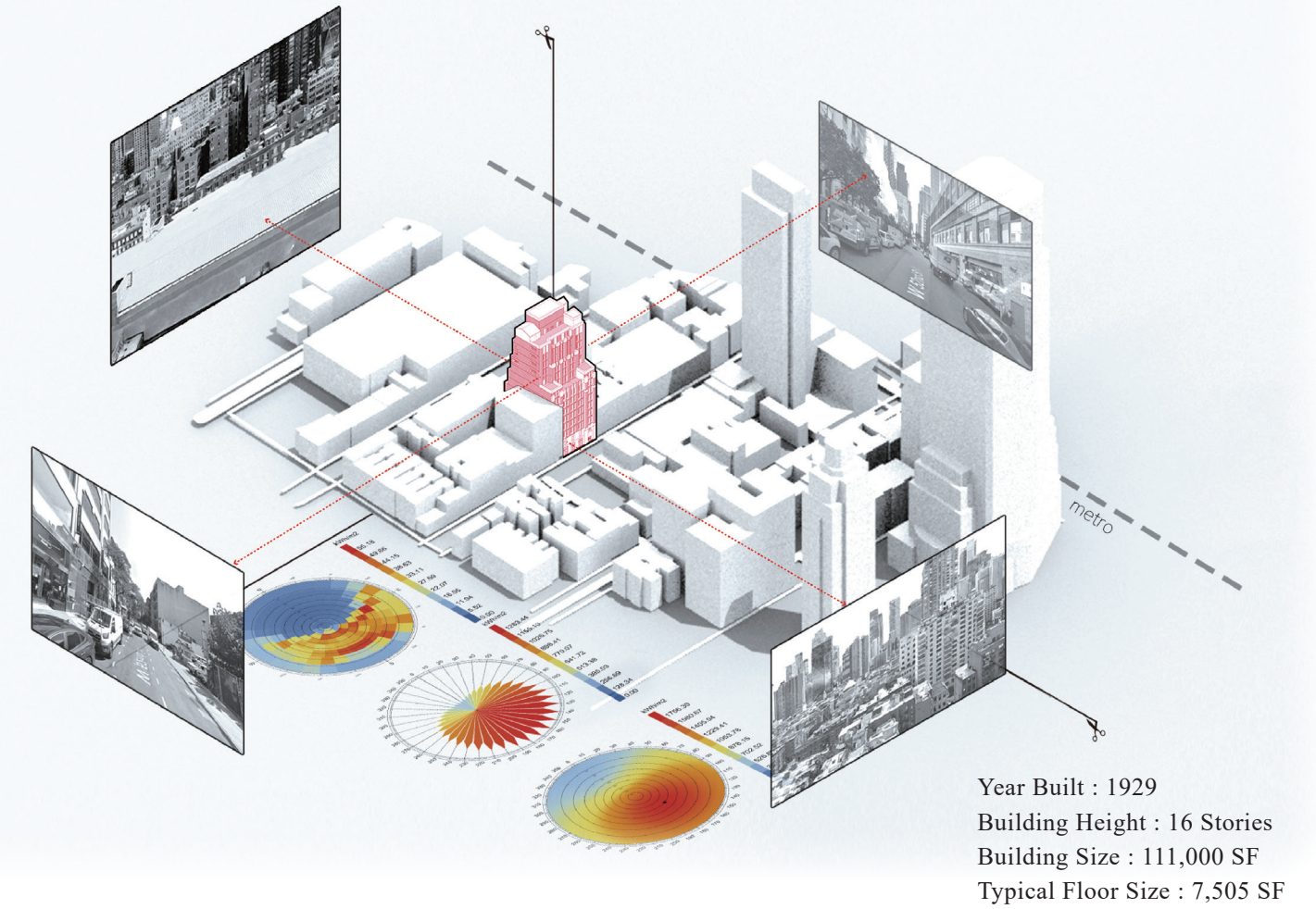
After careful consideration, I have chosen Building 6, situated at 333 W 52nd St, NY, between 8th and 9th Avenue, as the ideal host structure. This building is classified as an office building and was constructed in 1929. It stands at a height of 16 stories, with each typical floor spanning approximately 7,505 square feet in size. Also, most importantly, it is close to public transportation system.

## Site Plan





Mapping

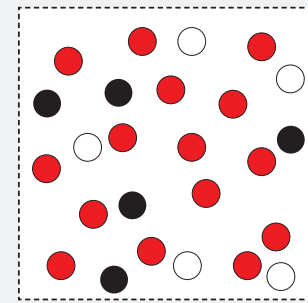
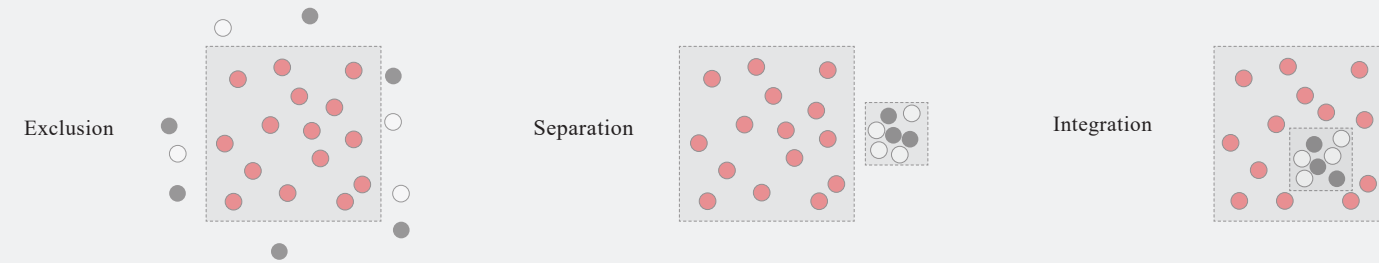


# Concept – Towards Inclusivity

Intervention Framework /  
Abstract Models



## Intervention Framework



Inclusion

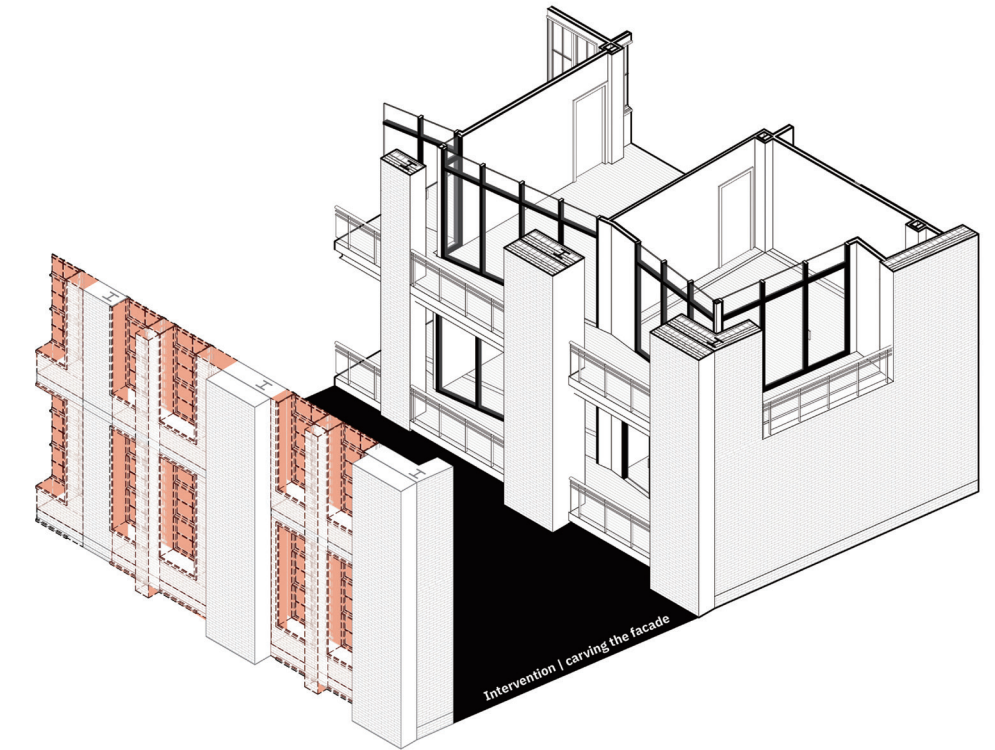
At the single site, the 60/40 separation between general residence and placement residence goes beyond mere integration; it embraces the concept of community inclusion. Additionally, there will be an additional 4% staff to support the residents.

The residents will be fully immersed in society, with the agency to choose how and with whom they interact. They will have opportunities to engage with mentors, peers, and the community at large, enabling them to develop independence on their own terms.

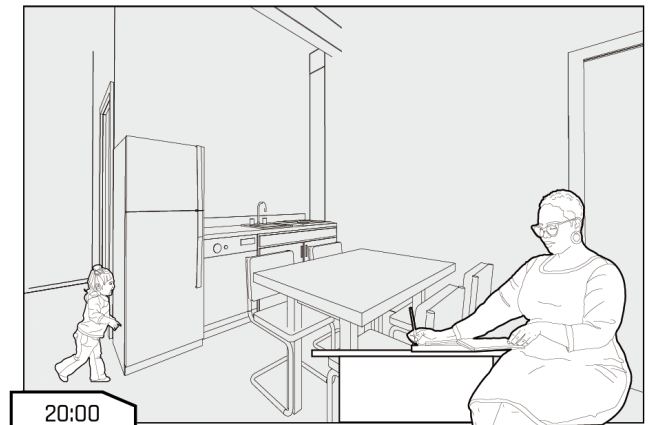
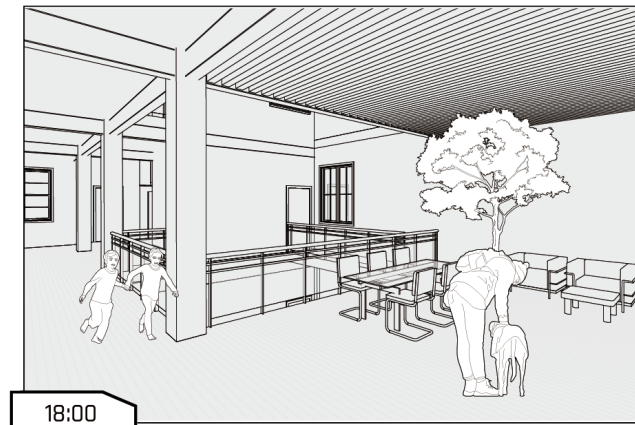
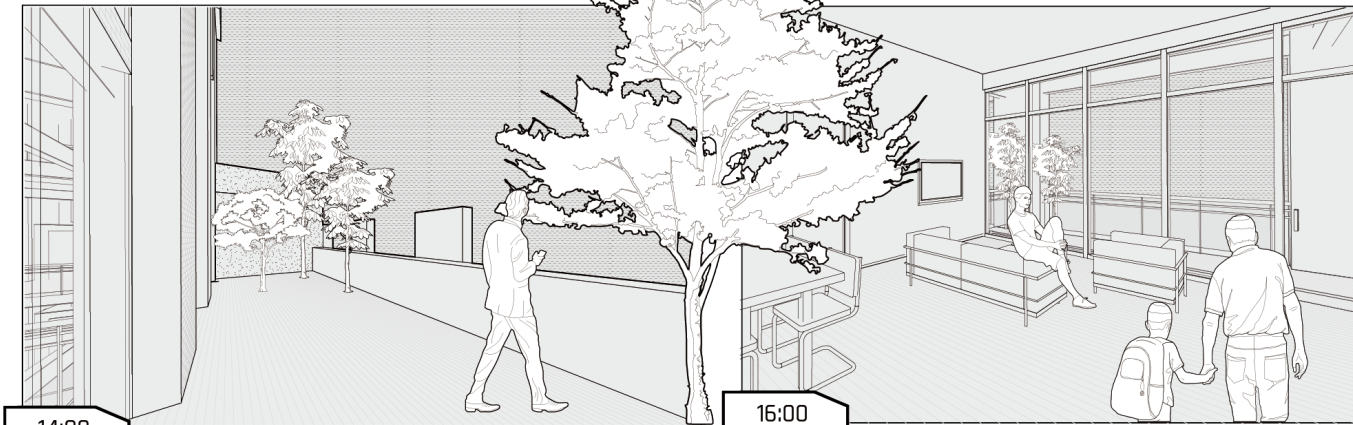
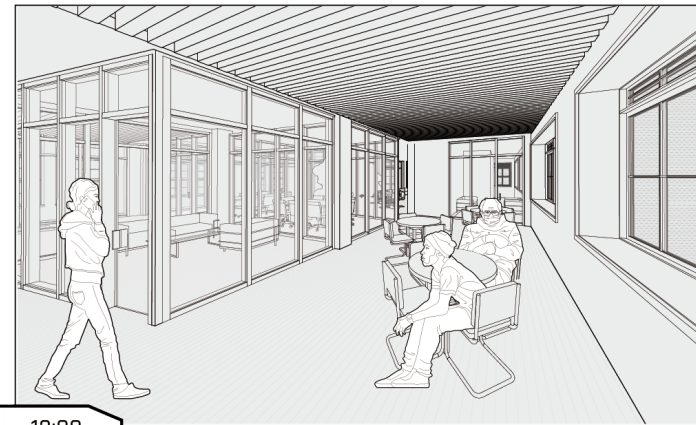
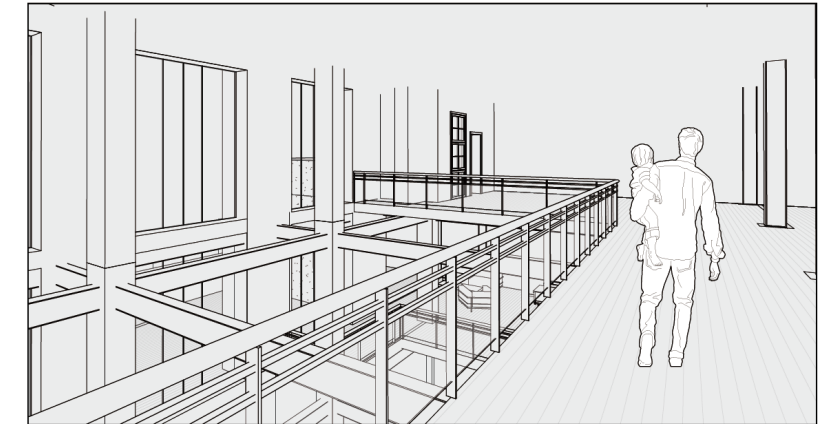
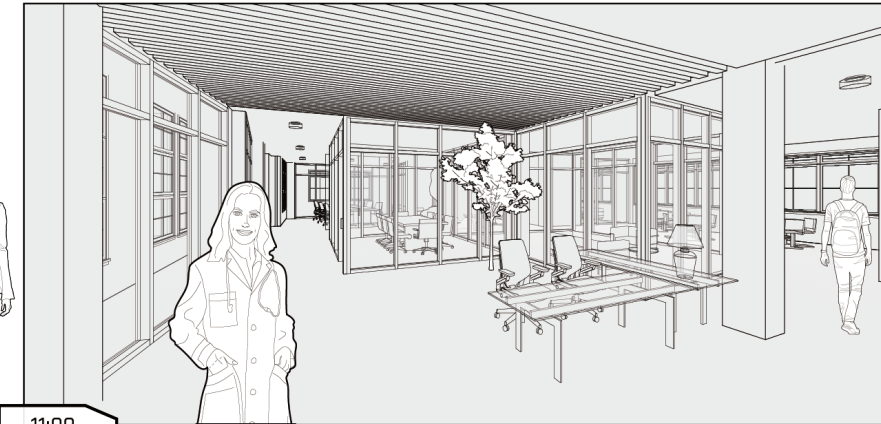
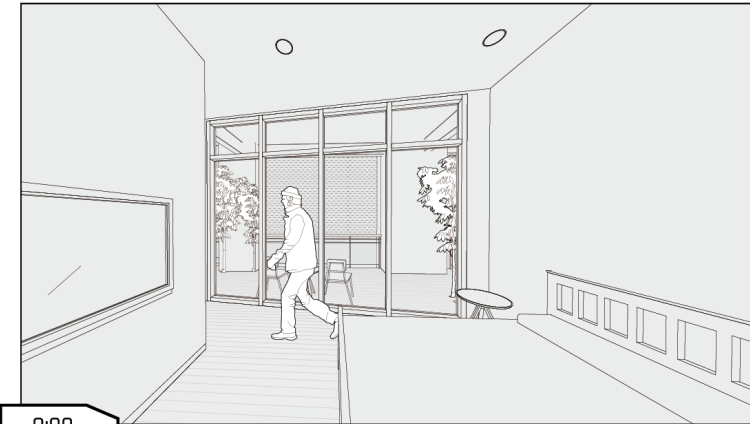
## Strategy and Demolitions

The building's facade and slab were strategically cut to create inserted balconies and atriums, serving multiple purposes such as enhancing ventilation, providing access to green spaces, offering expansive sky views, and creating a vibrant streetscape ambiance.

These interventions not only enhance the aesthetic appeal but also play a crucial role in attracting new residents and fostering vibrant neighborhoods.



**Building Narrative – Timeline**  
**Illustrating the rhythms of people's lives**



Collage – Reimagine the space



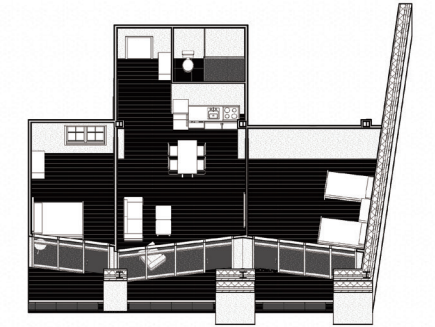
Units – How to stick with family and motivated to go to work?



Unit Type - 2B2B



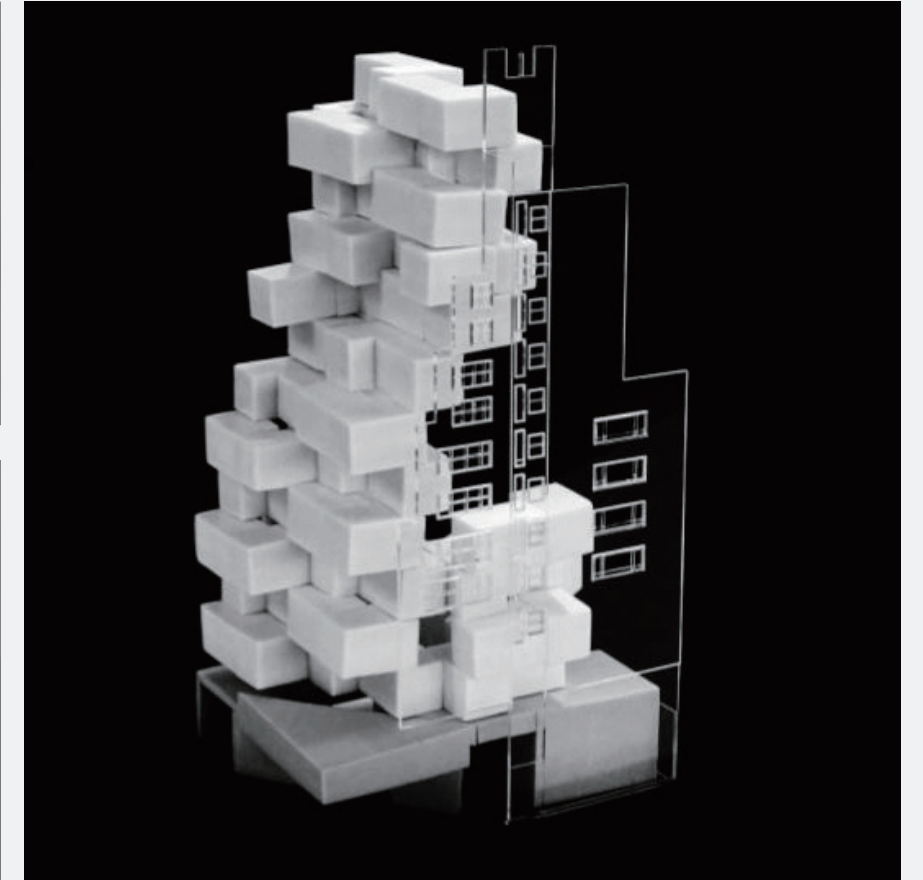
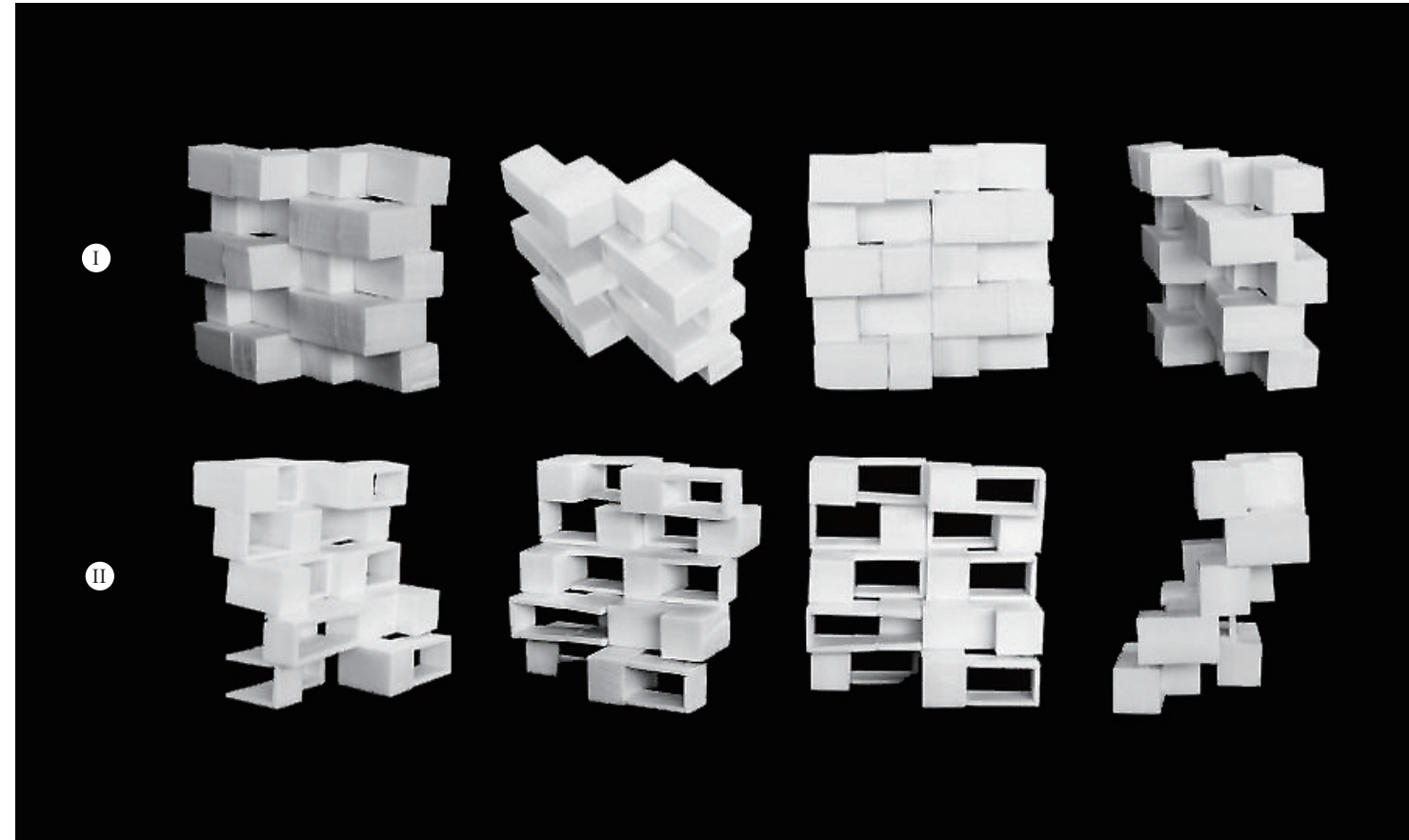
Unit Type - 1B1B



Unit Type - 2B1B

The residential units within the building were designed in accordance with the guidelines of the NYC Department of Homeless Services (DHS) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). We considered the concept of "How much space does a person need to be healthy and happy?" and developed three types of units: 2-bedroom, 1-bathroom apartments, 1-bedroom, 1-bathroom apartments, and 2-bedroom, 1-bathroom apartments. These units can accommodate additional bedrooms in the future, allowing for flexibility as families grow. through the possibility of expansion or subdivision of a bedroom.

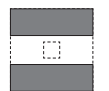
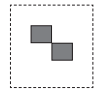
## Abstract Models



# Design Proposal

Plans / Sections

Details / Renderings



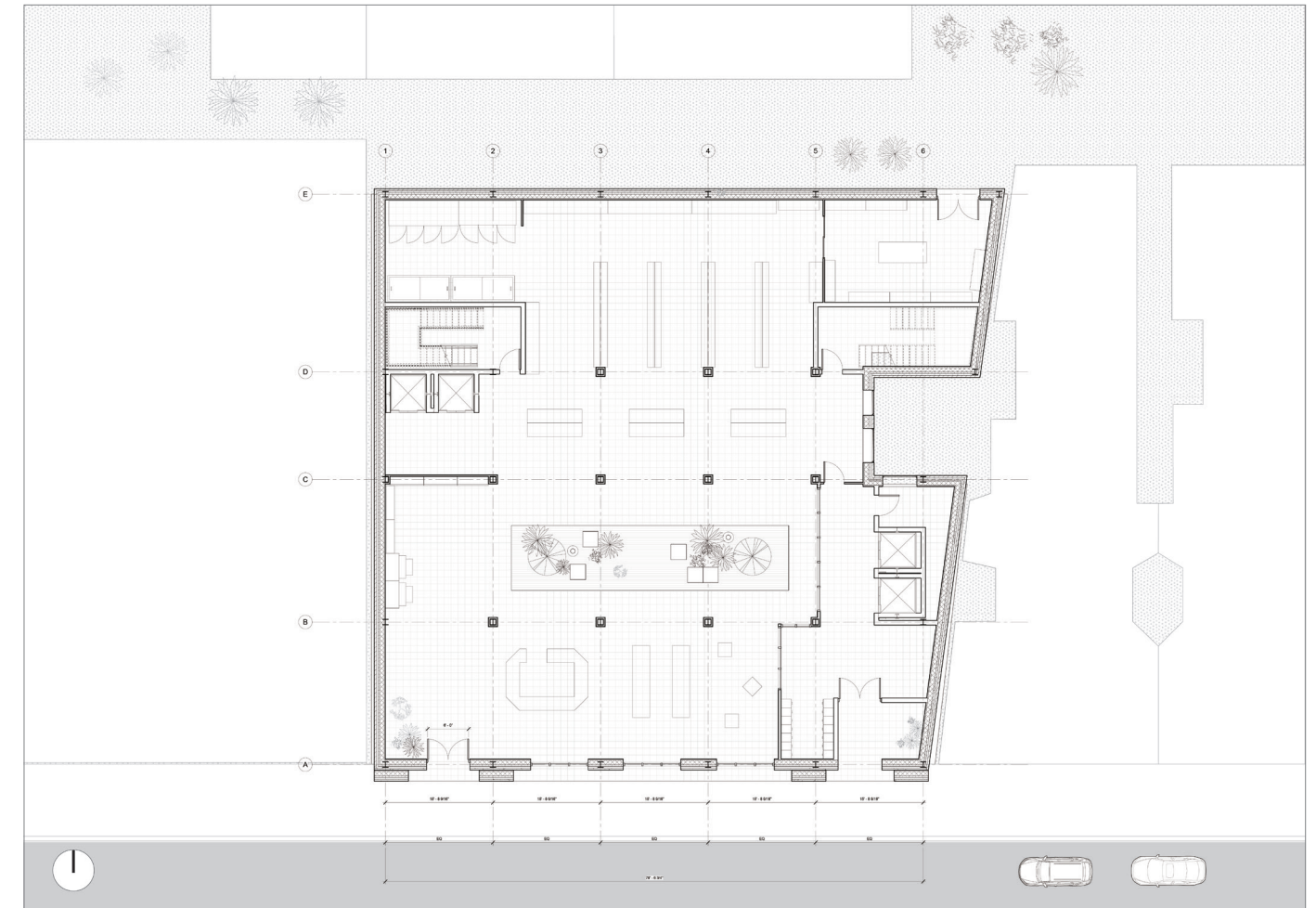


# Plans

## Ground Floor

The ground floor of the building is dedicated to the Charity Marketplace, an vibrant space that serves as a platform for community engagement and economic empowerment. It features a diverse range of stalls and vendors offering a variety of goods and services. The Charity Marketplace is designed to provide opportunities for residents to showcase and sell their products, while also attracting community members, fostering social interaction, and facilitating the integration of residents into the broader community.

The layout and design of the ground floor have been carefully curated to create a welcoming and inclusive environment, encouraging visitors to explore the offerings and contribute to the cause of ending homelessness.

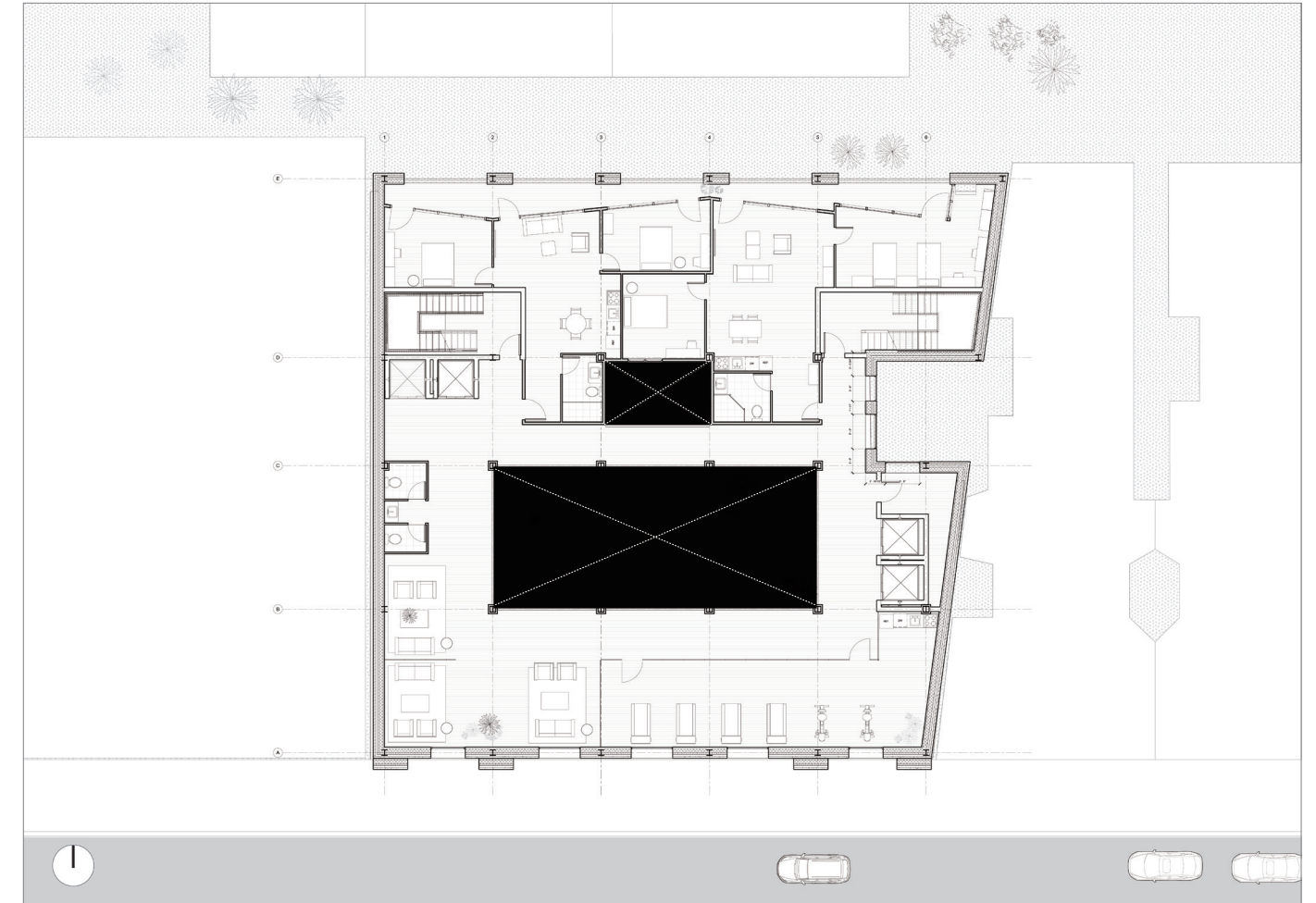




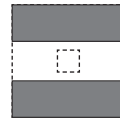
## Second Floor

The building offers an array of additional amenities designed to enhance the living experience for its residents. Among these amenities is a fully equipped gym, providing ample opportunities for physical fitness and overall well-being. In addition to the gym, the building features dedicated reading rooms. These peaceful spaces offer residents a serene environment to indulge in their love for books, engage in quiet relaxation, or focus on their studies. The reading rooms will be thoughtfully designed to provide comfort and tranquility, with cozy seating arrangements and well-stocked shelves filled with a variety of reading materials.

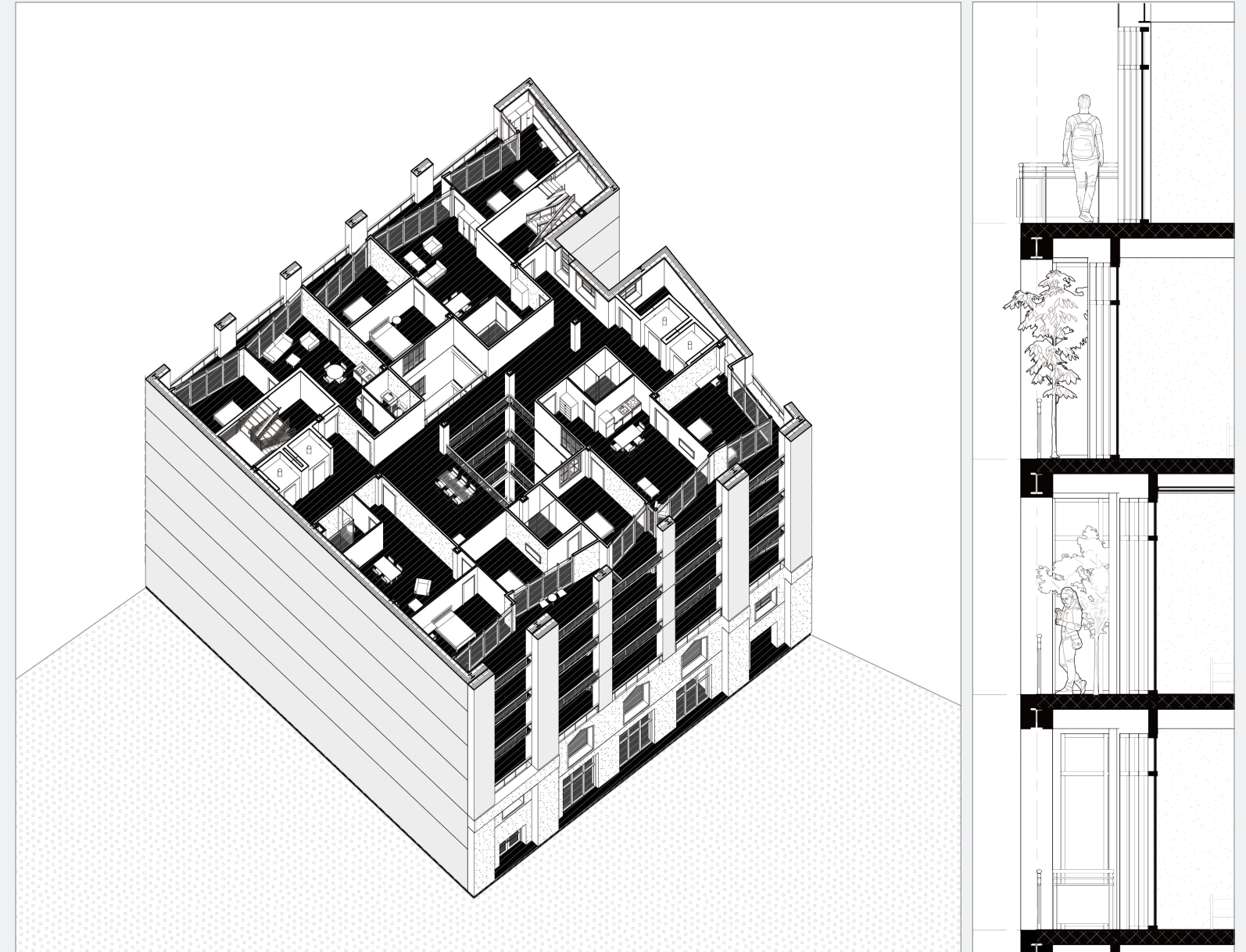
By providing these amenities, the building aims to promote a balanced and enriching lifestyle for its residents. Whether they choose to engage in physical exercise or immerse themselves in the world of literature, these amenities contribute to fostering a sense of well-being and fulfillment within the community.



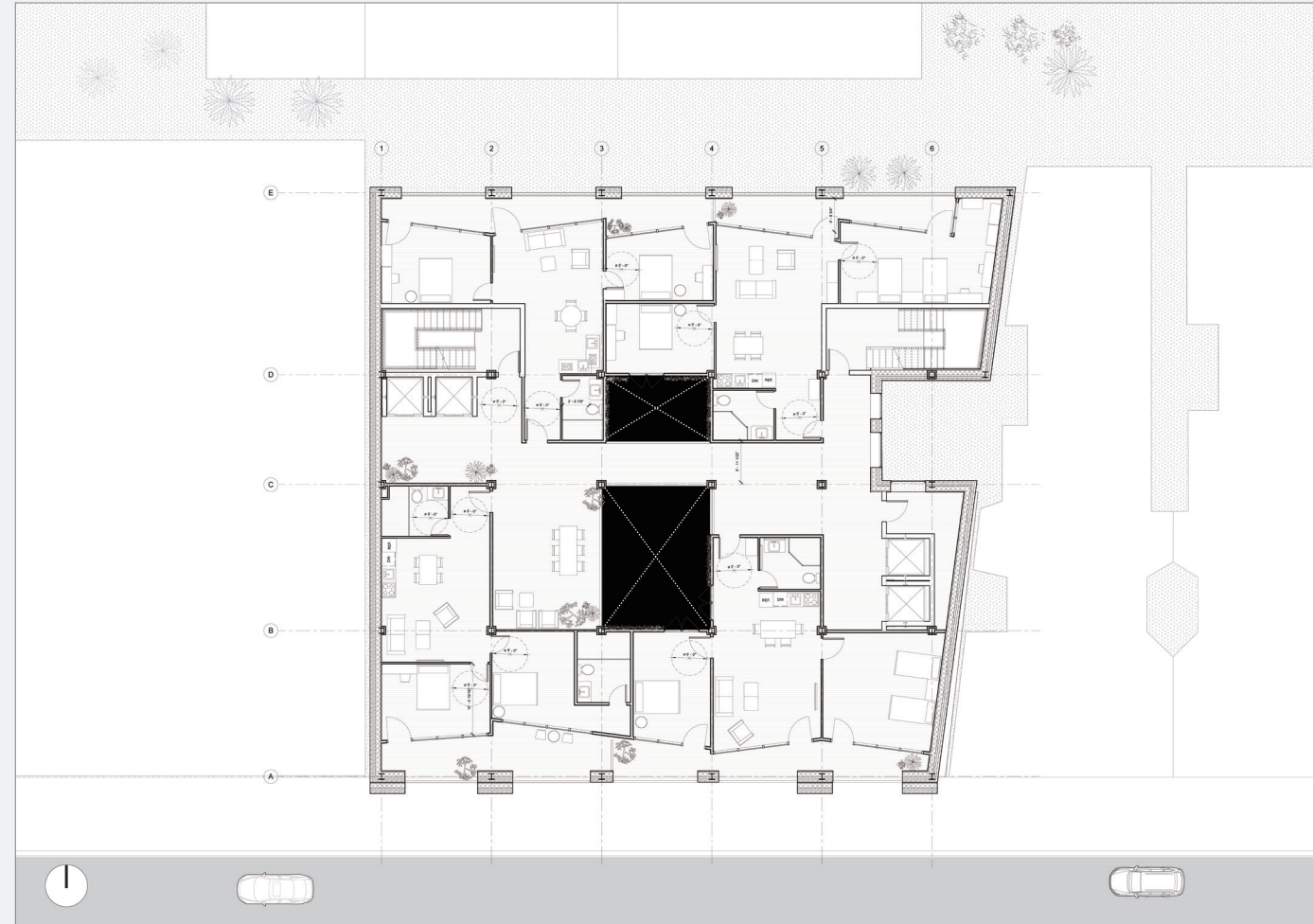
## Residential Areas



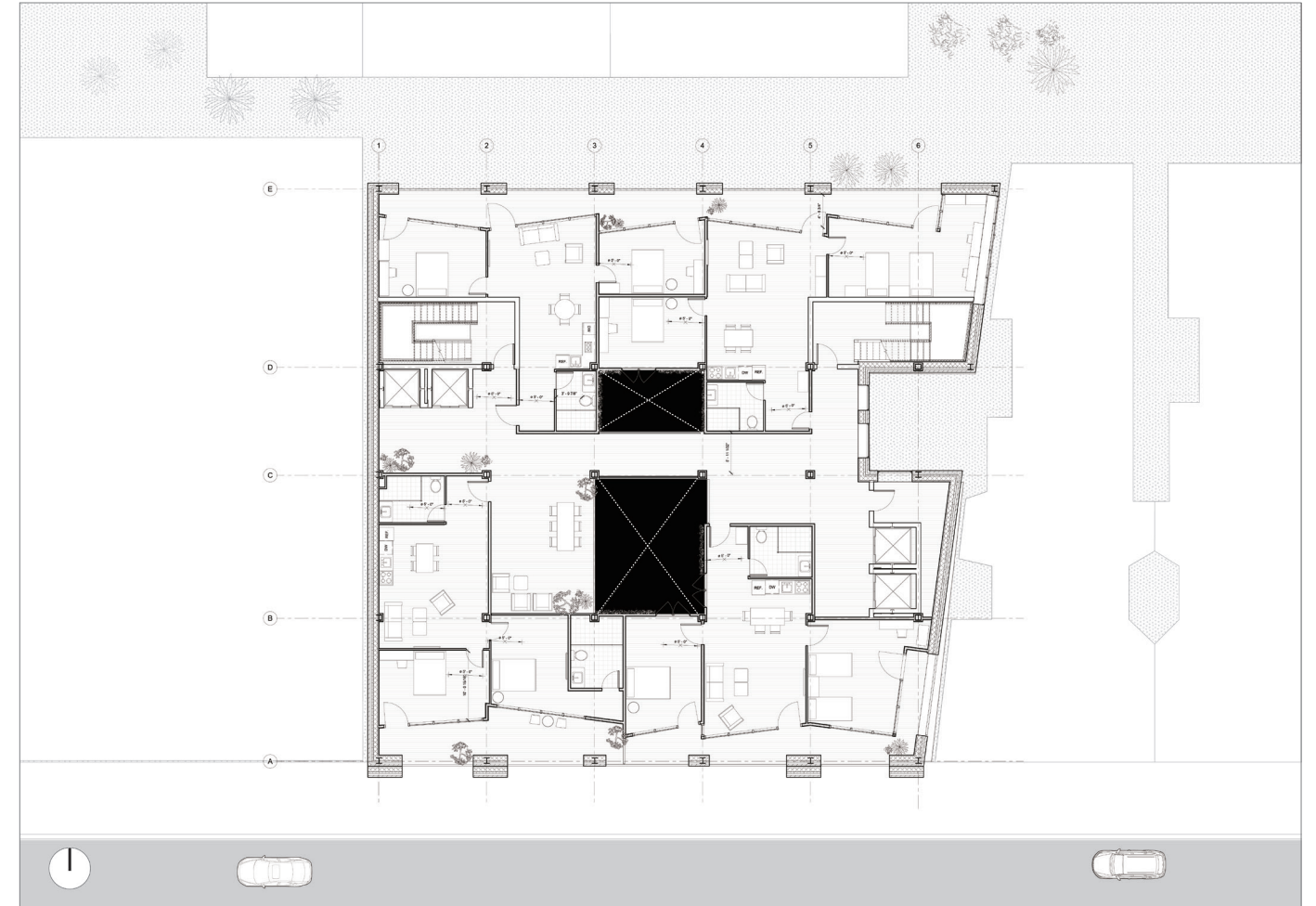
From the 3rd floor to the 8th floor, there will be a total of four residential units on each level. This layout ensures a manageable number of units while optimizing the efficient utilization of space in the building. In order to promote a strong sense of community and facilitate social interaction among residents, each floor will include a shared common open space. This area will serve as a gathering spot where residents can come together, engage in conversations, and build meaningful connections with their neighbors.



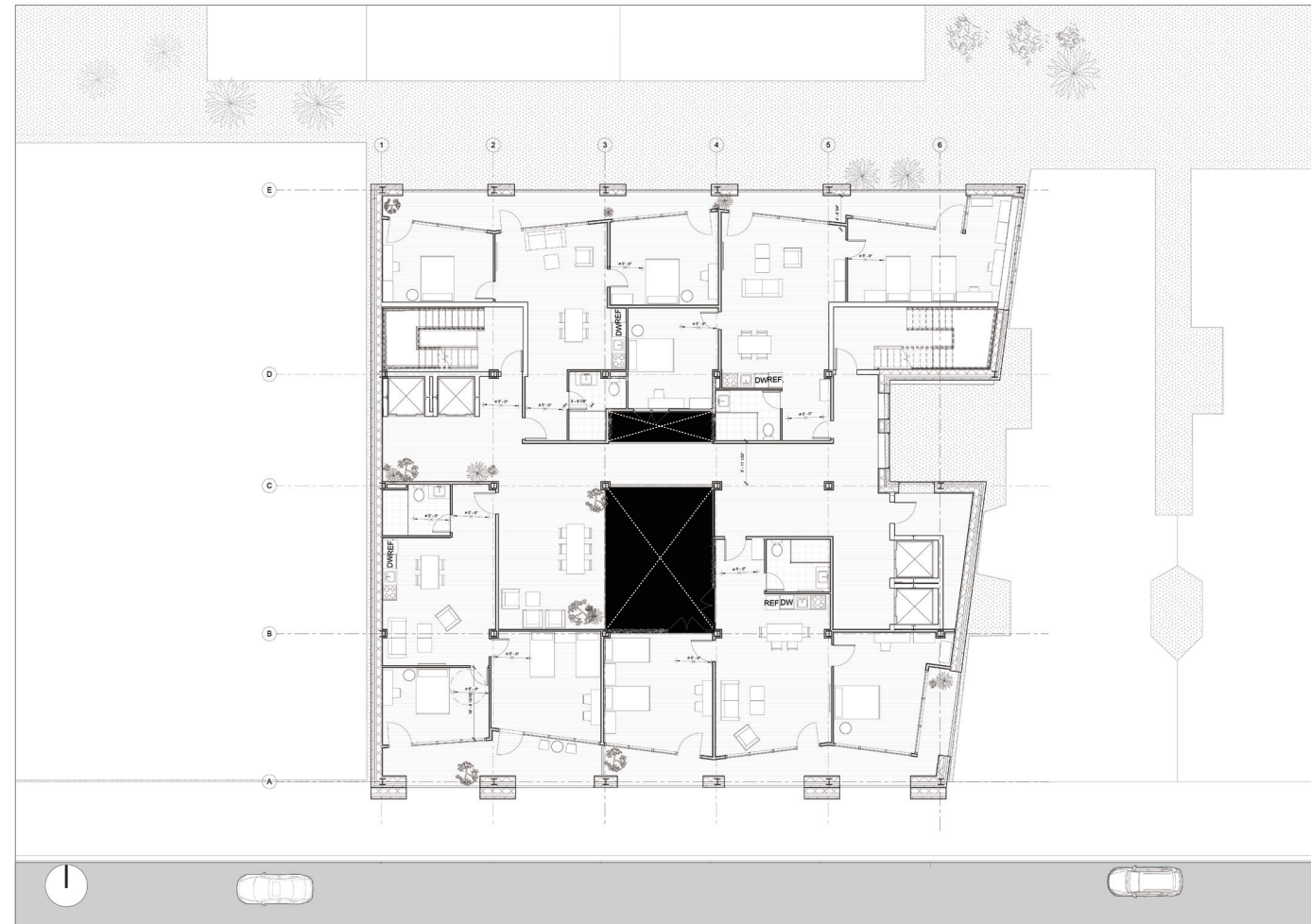
3rd & 4th Floor



5th & 6th Floor



7th and 8th Floor

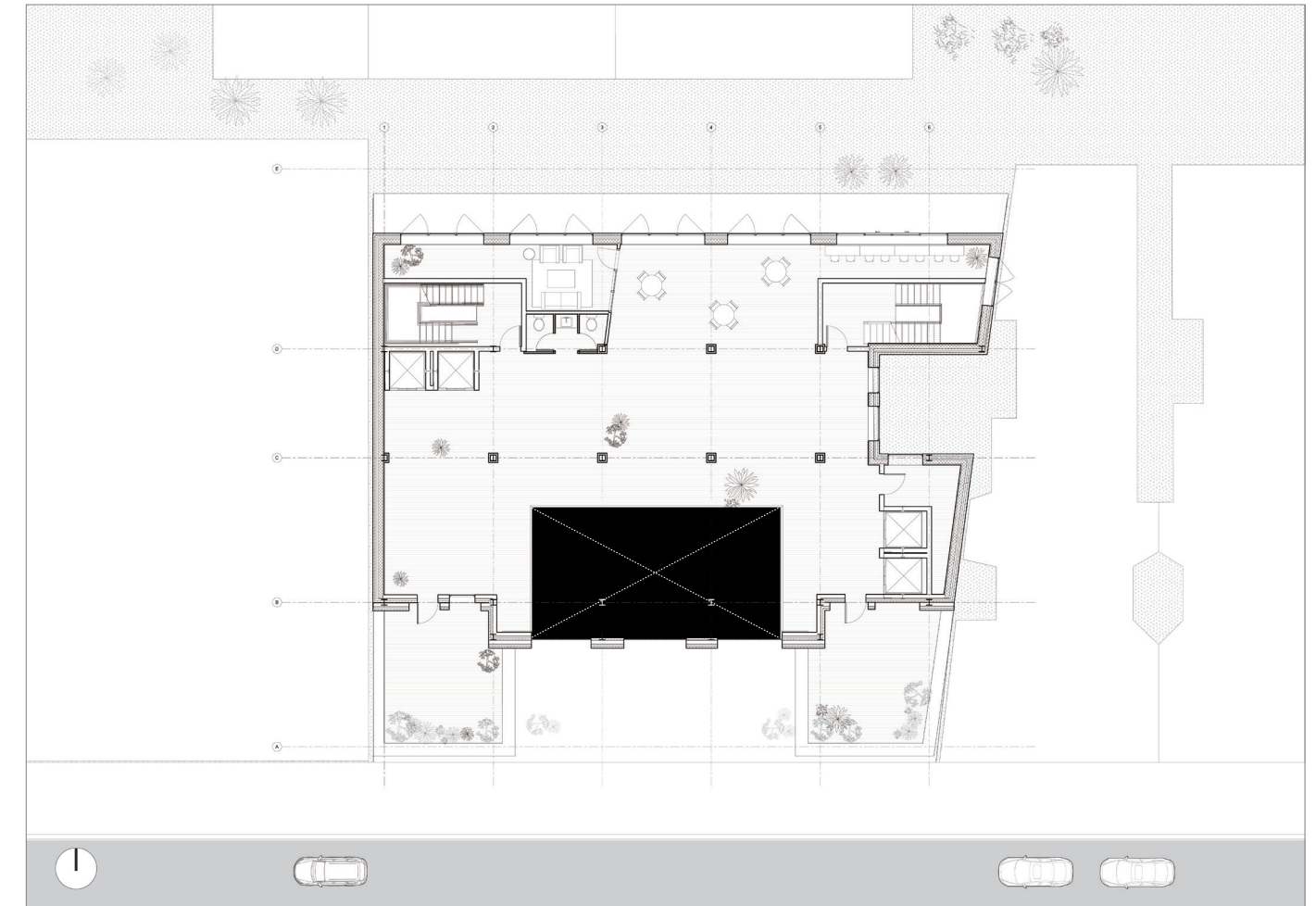


## Workplace – Rooftop Farm

The 9th and 10th floors of the building will house a rooftop farm, serving as a sustainable agricultural space specifically designed for cultivating vegetables. By utilizing the rooftop for agriculture, residents will have the opportunity to access nutritious, homegrown vegetables, enabling them to meet their dietary needs in a sustainable and affordable way.

The rooftop farm not only addresses the issue of limited access to fresh produce but also provides residents with a therapeutic and fulfilling activity. Engaging in farming on the rooftop fosters a connection with nature and offers a sense of accomplishment, further enhancing the well-being of the residents.

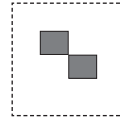
## 10th Floor







## Workplace – Onsite Support System



The 11th to 13th floors are dedicated to the onsite support system, which includes a workplace and healing clinic. These spaces play a crucial role in providing essential resources and a wide range of services for individuals in need.

The layout of the Healing Clinic differs from the residential areas within the building. Unlike the residential units that are stacked around the building with a shared space in the center core, the Healing Clinic is strategically designed with private cubicle conference rooms and clinic rooms positioned in the center. Open workspaces, on the other hand, are situated next to the windows. This intentional design allows for the maximum utilization of natural daylight, ensuring that the clinic area is well-lit and reducing the need for excessive energy consumption.

## 11th Floor

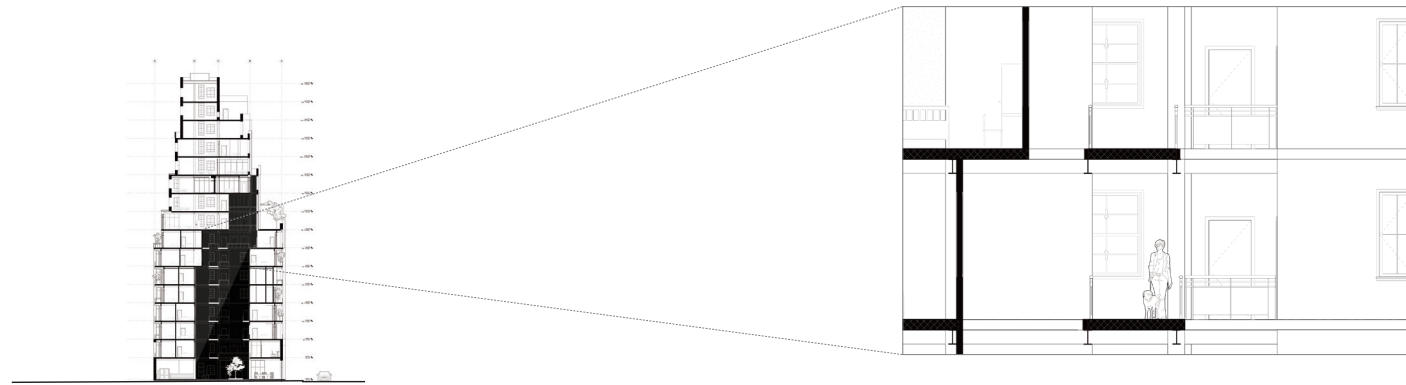


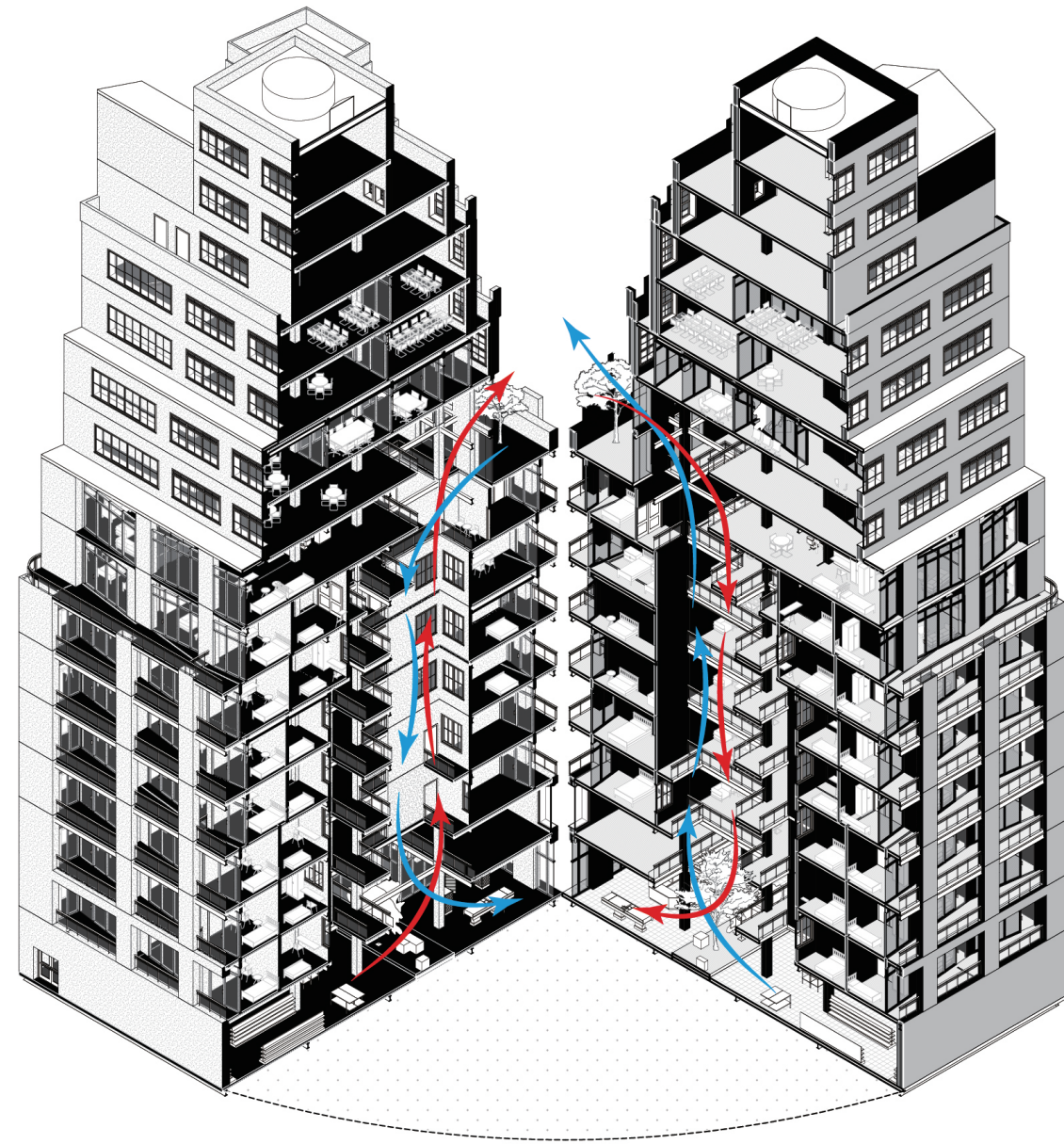
# Section

## Central Core / Atrium



## Atrium – Detailing





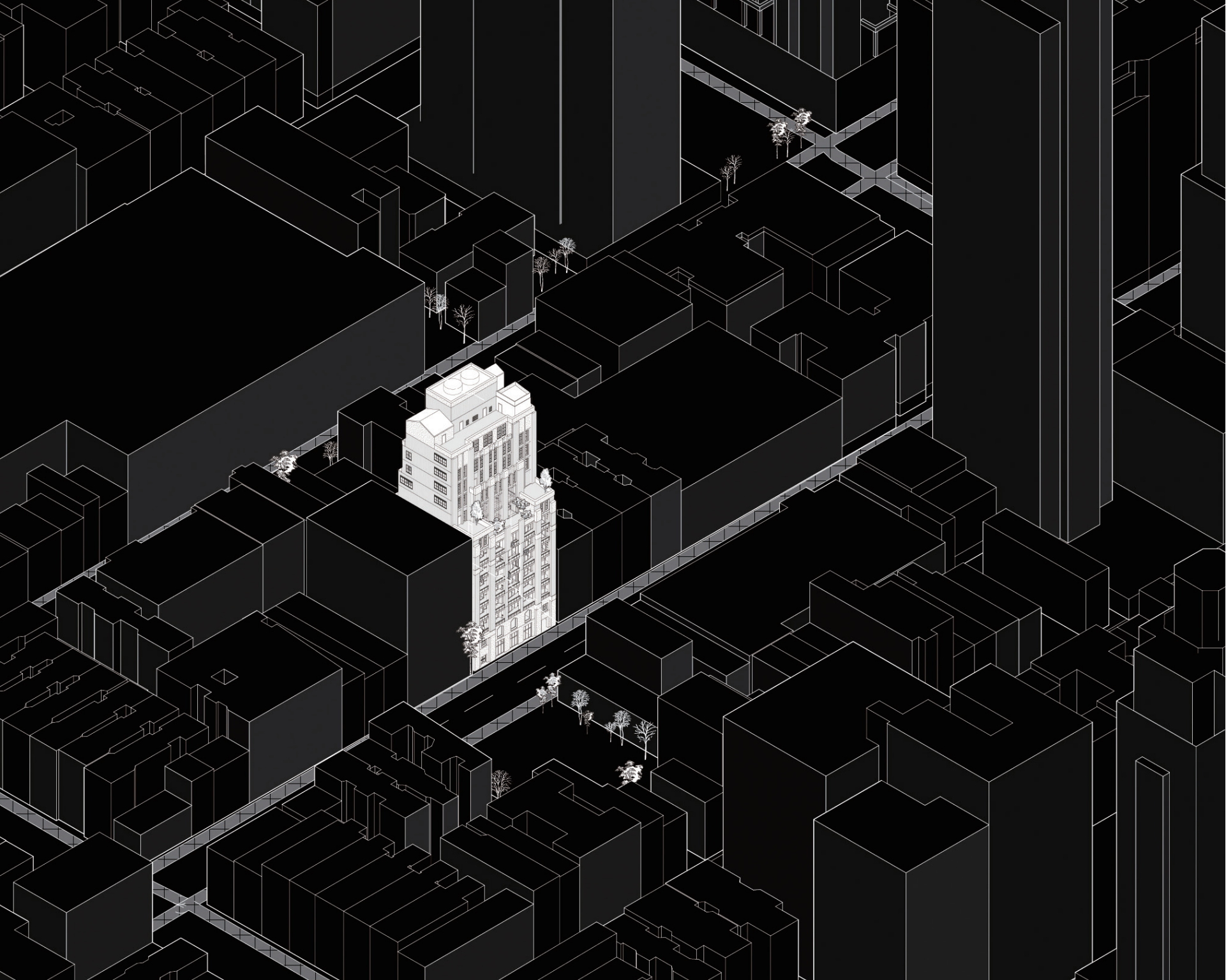
workplace and on-site support facilities

Residential

Community

# Physical Model





## CONCLUSION

This proposal addresses the pressing need for affordable housing while embracing the sustainable practice of adaptive reuse for office buildings. By repurposing existing structures and integrating vital amenities, communal spaces, and onsite services, we can establish vibrant vertical micro-communities and cultivate a sense of belonging for homeless families. Adaptive reuse not only celebrates existing infrastructure but also engages the public, ensuring that spaces are allocated to those who truly need them.

This project extends beyond a single building; it serves as a blueprint for future adaptive reuse initiatives throughout the city. Through the transformation of office buildings into secure and inviting homes, we can offer homeless families the stability and support required to rebuild their lives and flourish. This proposal calls upon stakeholders, government entities, and communities to come together and create a city where safe and affordable housing is accessible to all.

## **NOTES**

Specialist Advisor /

Bibliography /

Image Credits

# Specialist Advisor

## Carin Clary

Director of Homelessness and Housing for the Harvard Kennedy School of Government

Carin is the Director of Homelessness and Housing for the Government Performance Lab's national housing work. Prior to joining the GPL, Carin was the Assistant Deputy Commissioner for New York City's Human Resources Administration's (HRA) Office of Supportive and Affordable Housing. There, Carin directed NYC's largest referral and placement system for homeless households into a continuum of publicly supported housing, coordinating over 20,000 referrals annually. Carin also served on the NYC Continuum of Care Steering Committee for Coordinated Entry and Placement Services. She led the pilot and subsequent expansion of NYC's master leased housing program, expanding the City's stock of permanent affordable housing through new contracting mechanisms totaling over \$20M annually. Prior to HRA, Carin served as a Senior Advisor for the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services in the Bloomberg and de Blasio Administrations, serving as chief agency and policy liaison for the NYC Dept. of Homeless Services and Human Resources Administration, with a combined annual budget of over \$14B, serving over 3M New Yorkers per year. Outside of housing, Carin has also served in leadership capacities for criminal justice reform non-profits such as the Fortune Society and the Center for Court Innovation where she led workforce development operations.

Carin's dedicated her career to disrupting systems that are inequitable and is passionate about the power local government can have to lead innovation. She is currently based in New York, where she earned her BA in Individualized Study from New York University.



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