

Calder Corner Store Public Realm Improvements

Edmonton Urban Design Awards: Urban Fragments

Evolution of Calder's Urban Character

1

Village of Calder – Railway Heritage

- The Village of Calder, originally known as the Village of West Edmonton, was established in 1910.
- The Village was primarily a railway town, with many employees of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway (GTPR) settling there.

2

Calder becomes part of Edmonton

- In 1917, Calder officially became part of the City of Edmonton.
- Shortly afterwards, in 1920, the Calder Community League was established, which continues to represent the community to this day.

3

Calder Neighbourhood Renewal

- In 2019, the City of Edmonton initiated a neighbourhood renewal for Calder, identifying the following gaps:
 - A missing East-West bike connection.
 - A lack of pedestrian routes connecting key destinations in and around the neighbourhood.
 - A lack of a community focal point.

4

Calder Urban Design Framework

- Establishment of new local bike routes to improve east-west and north-south connectivity.
- Renewal of all neighbourhood parks.
- Improvements adjacent to school sites.
- Strengthen local commercial.

5

Calder Community Hub Concept

- Establishment of a Community Hub area for the neighbourhood.
- The Community Hub would include two schools, a senior's complex, the Community League Building, and local commercial Main Street (Corner Store Area along 129 Avenue).

6

Main Street Façade Improvement

- Seven successful façade improvement projects with 50/50 cost sharing between the City and property owners.
- Variety of retail opportunities to meet local needs.

Guiding Principles of Public Realm Improvements

Accessibility

- Shared pathway along the south side of 129 Avenue.
- Bike parking adjacent to commercial businesses.
- Parking bays adjacent to the commercial frontage.
- Curb ramps at all intersections.

Placemaking

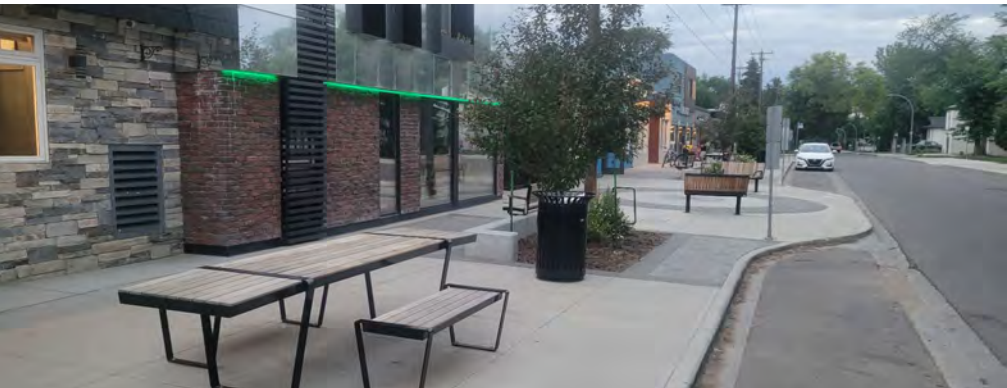
- Central plaza for small-scale gathering.
- Picnic tables adjacent to existing restaurant businesses.
- A variety of seating areas for people-watching.
- Patterned sidewalks.
- New trees with planting beds.
- Small gateway features to establish a sense of arrival.

Heritage Celebration & Community Involvement

- Celebration of the rail history of the area with a custom-designed plaque in the central plaza.
- A new plaque by the Edmonton Historical Board to explain the history of the commercial area.
- Opportunities for community-led art elements.



New Shared Pathway to Connect Destinations



Outdoor Picnic Tables Adjacent to Existing Restaurants



Custom Designed Central Plaza Plaque to Celebrate Rail History



Heritage Plaque

Corner Store Public Realm Improvements

1

 Gateway Features

2

 Central Plaza

3

 Planting Beds with Seating

4

 Picnic Tables

5

 Bicycle Parking

6

 Pedestrian Lighting

7

 Heritage Plaque

8

 Textured Crosswalks

9

 Opportunity for Street Block Parties

Facade Improvement Projects

Safety

- Small-scale trees below the existing powerlines.
- Inclusion of pedestrian-oriented lighting.
- Pedestrian-scaled exterior lighting on building façades implemented through the Façade Improvement Program.

Pedestrian Lighting

Winter Design

- Secondary electrical connections for tree lighting.
- Use of wooden furniture to add warmth.

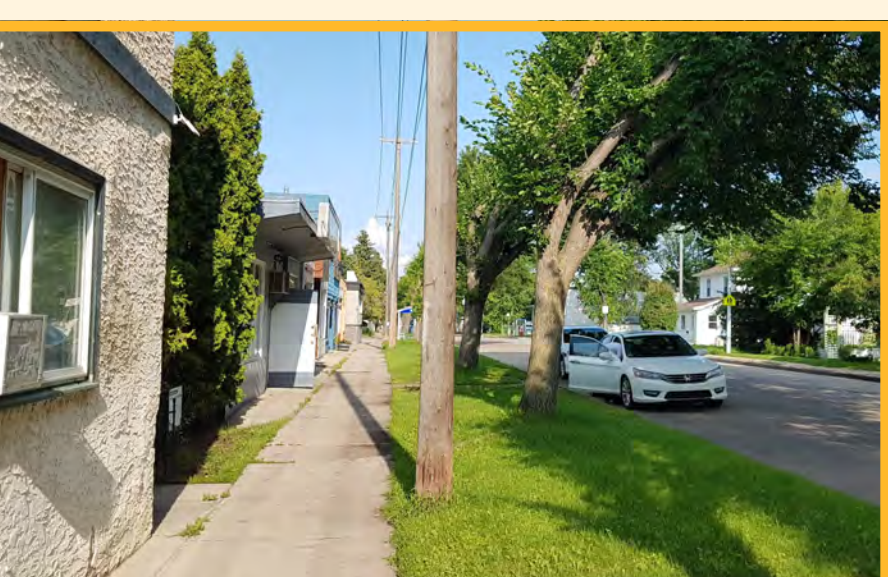
Wooden Furniture for Warmth

Opportunity for Festive Lights

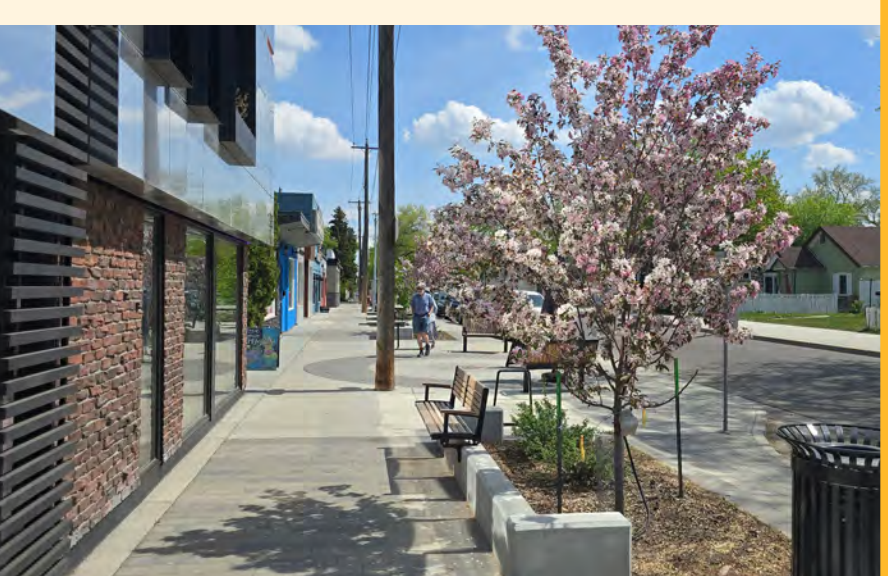
Key Outcomes

- The project demonstrates how the public and private sectors could work together to establish a strong sense of place by complementing each other.
- Corner-store public realm improvements funded through the City's Neighbourhood Renewal Program
- Seven façade improvement projects with 50/50% cost sharing between the City and property owners
- The public realm improvements and façade improvements collectively have helped to bring more foot traffic to the area and re-establish this key neighbourhood node as a true focal point for the neighbourhood and the surrounding area, and provide day-to-day amenities within walking distance.

Public Realm Changes



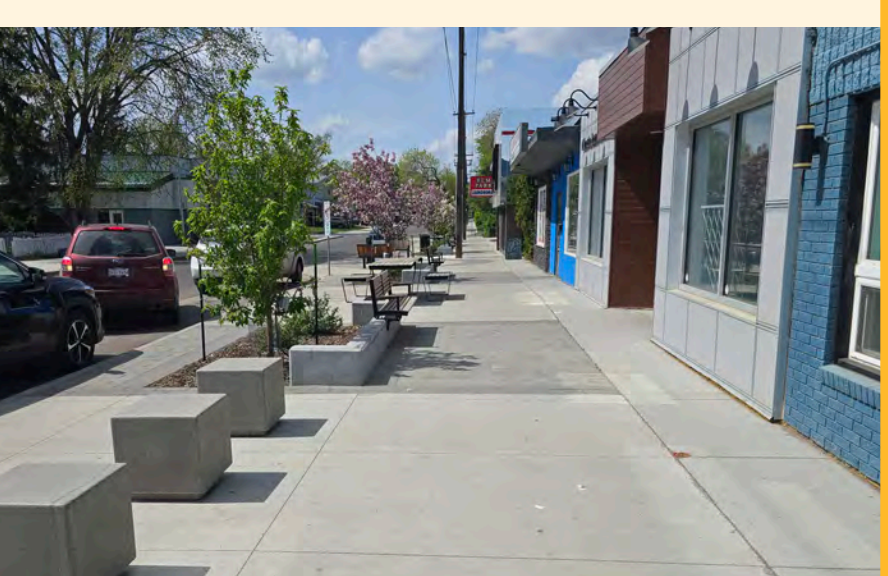
Before - Narrow Sidewalk



After - Wider Sidewalk with Pedestrian Zone & Seating



Before - No Seating



After - Wide Range of Seating Options



Before - Limited Sense of Place



After - Plaza with Seating & Gathering Areas

Project Outcomes



Central Plaza / Gathering Areas for Community Events



Seating at Regular Intervals Integrated with Planting Beds



Small-scale Gateways to Add a Sense of Arrival



Klondike Park Redevelopment

Located in the heart of the Edmonton Exhibition Lands, Explore Edmonton's initiative to expand open space for events and programming spurred a significant restoration project. The entire park site was designed as an LID feature, utilizing absorbent landscapes, native plant material, permeable hard surfacing and soil vaults.

The park was designed to direct and slow overland drainage through a series of absorbent landscapes and below boardwalk swales before it is captured by the soil vault matrix allowing time to return a portion of this stormwater to the natural hydrological cycle instead of directing it directly into the City's stormwater system.

The design team was able to transform the former hard surface dominated park space into a landscape that emulates and contributes to the natural hydrological cycle. The park successfully provides a sanctuary from the heat island of the surrounding event center parking, aided by the retention of 76% of the existing mature tree canopy.

Not being able to ignore the human influence of the surrounding built environment, Klondike Park embraces a novel landscape. The park embraces the native aspen parkland of the Edmonton area and the human influence of the urban landscape. The previous park space consisted only of introduced plant material species. Introducing over 600 more plants to the space, the majority of which are native trees, shrubs, and forbes, allowing for a highly diverse and resilient landscape that is suitable to the changing climate. The park facilitates a landscape that will self-organize and evolve over the coming years to best suit the microclimate of Edmonton.



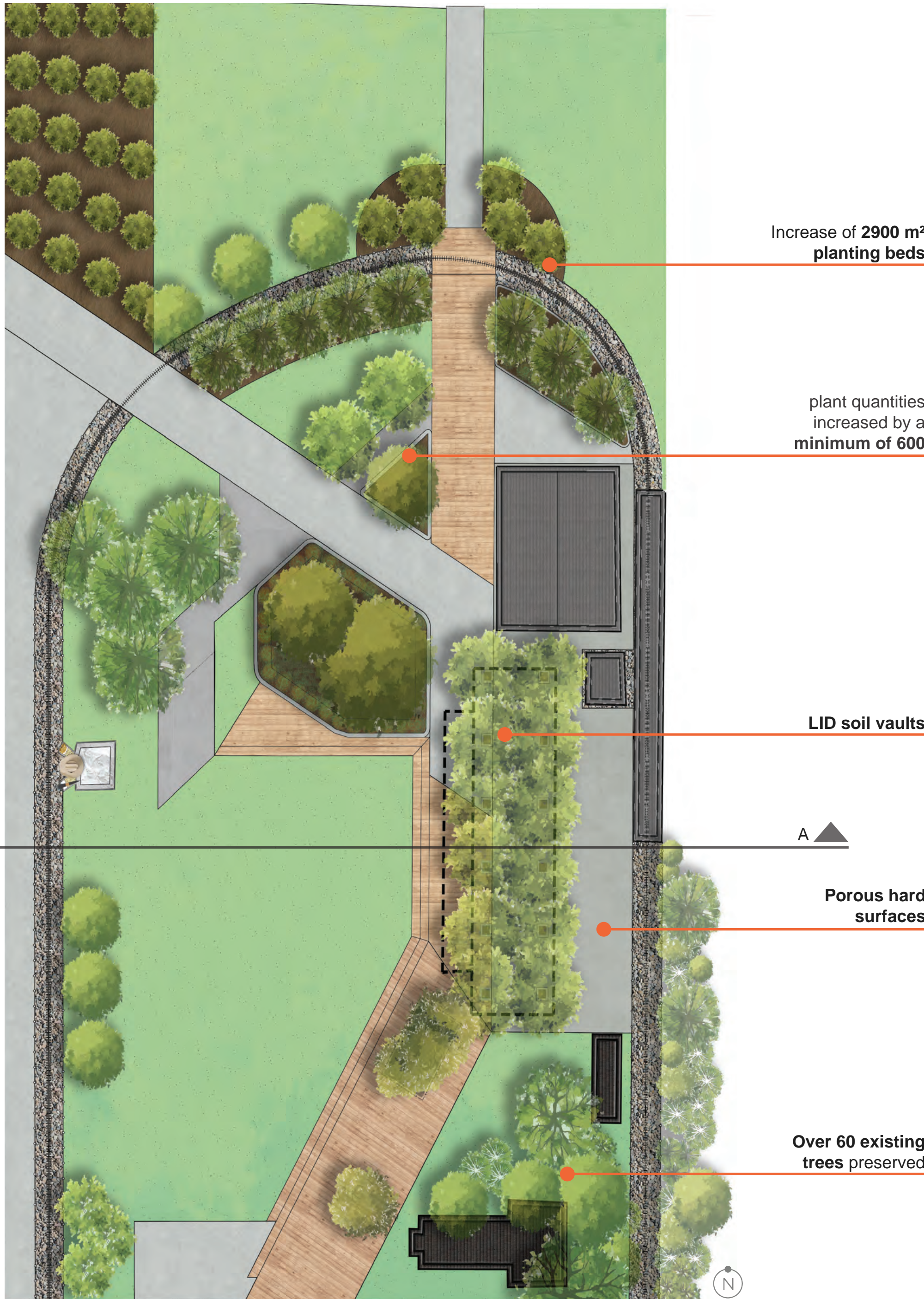
Soil vault matrixes beneath wooden and paver surfaces



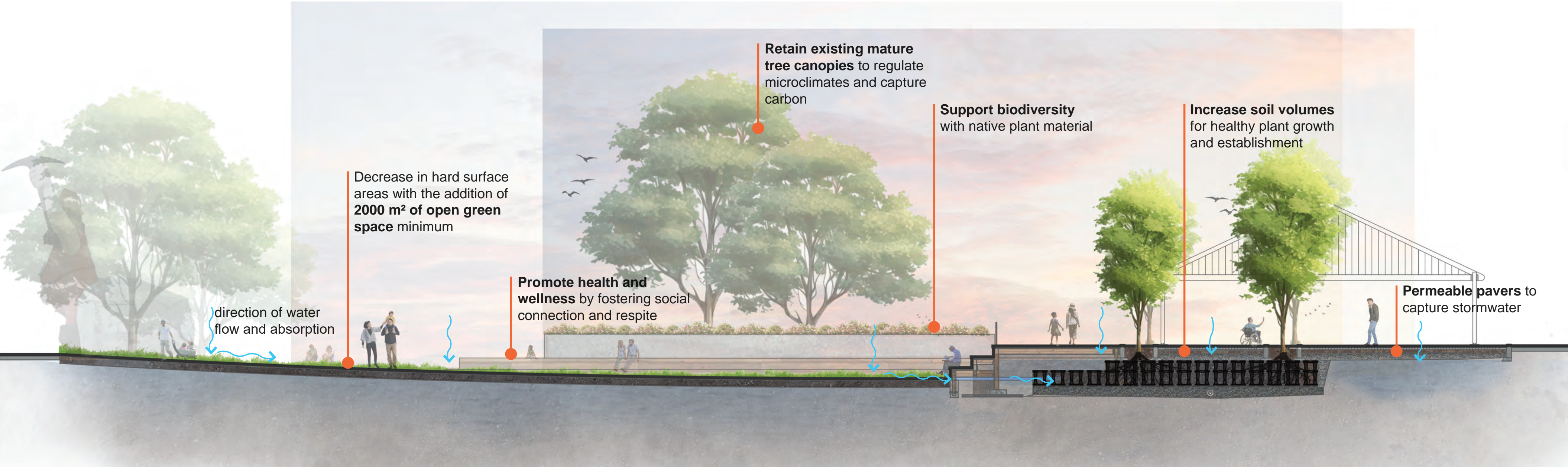
Addition of native species



76% of existing trees preserved



Layout Plan
Scale: N.T.S



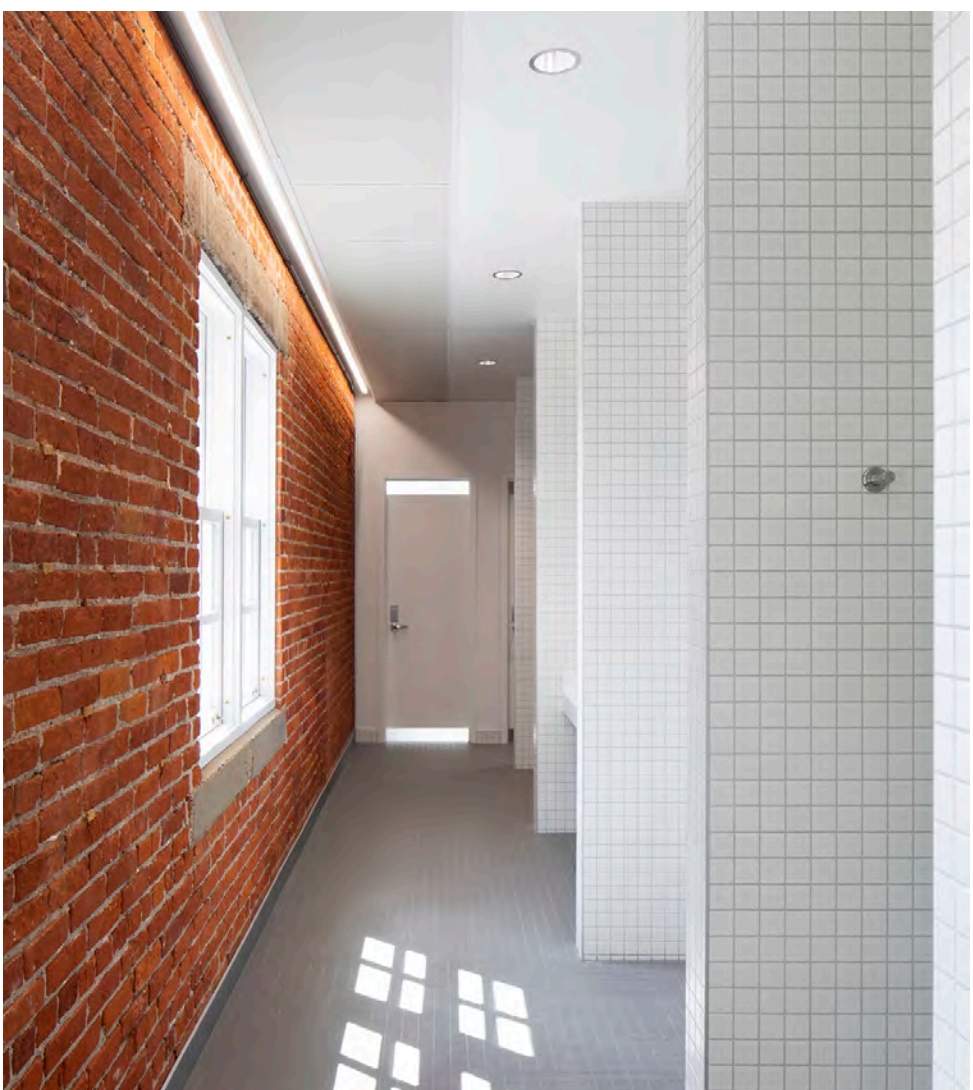
Section A - Klondike Park from edge to edge
Scale: N.T.S



Exterior heritage details preserved in the design.



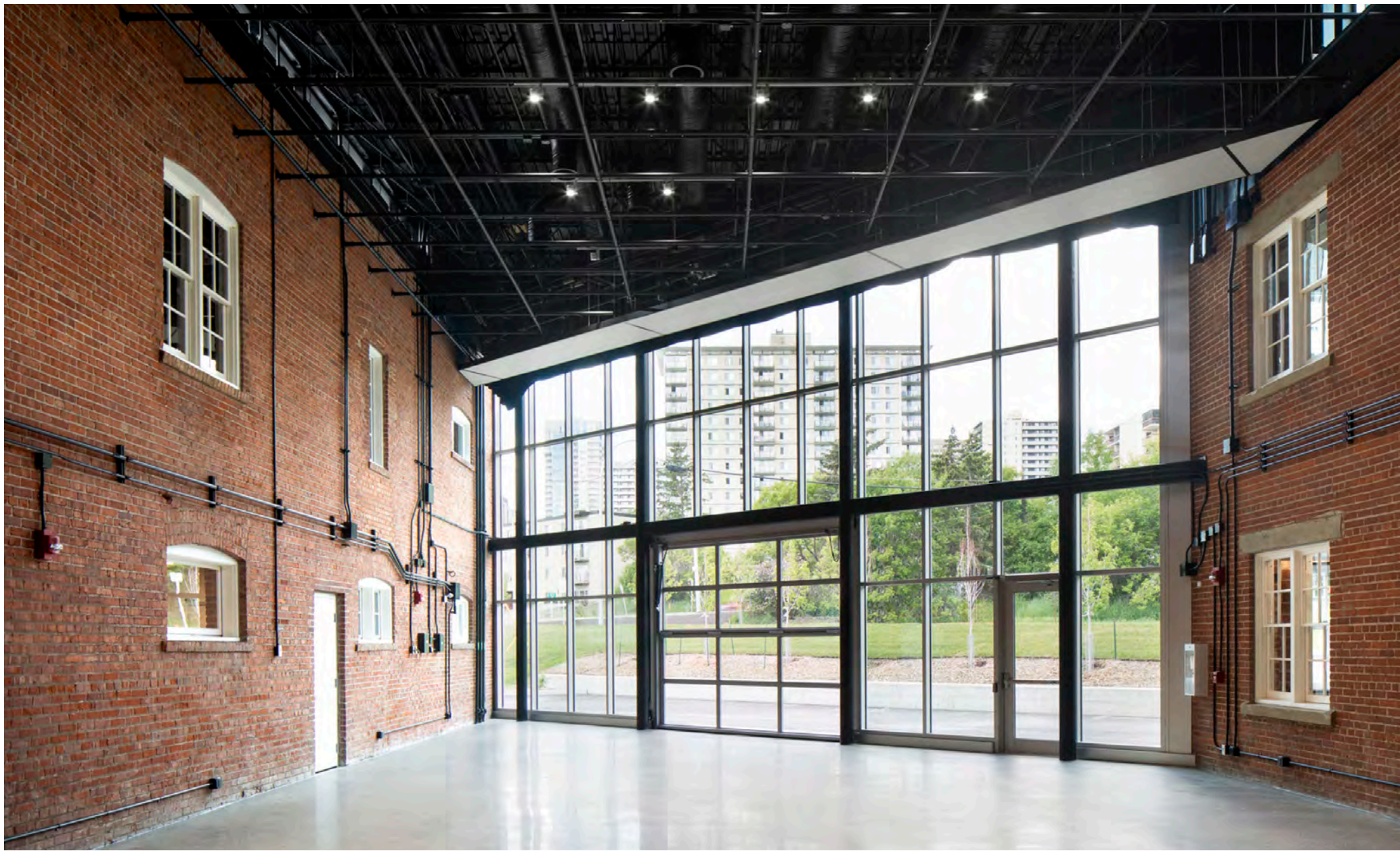
Interior heritage details preserved in the design.



Rendering of exterior plaza.



Studio space.



Interior courtyard that opens to the exterior plaza.



Plaza at night.



Ortona Armoury Rehabilitation

Heritage Projects - Revitalization & Conservation

The Ortona Armoury Rehabilitation is a comprehensive renewal of a municipally designated historic resource in Edmonton's Rosedale neighbourhood. Originally built in 1914 for the Hudson's Bay Company, the building has since served diverse roles—from industrial warehouse to naval base to its most enduring identity as a vibrant arts hub for the past 40 years.

Recognizing its cultural and architectural significance, the City of Edmonton acquired and designated the building as a historic resource in 2004. Its heritage value lies not only in its historical fabric but also in its deep connection to Edmonton's artistic community, which has long animated its spaces.

This rehabilitation project restores and reimagines the Armoury with architectural sensitivity and ambition. Core interventions include the restoration of historic windows, abatement of hazardous materials, improved energy performance and comprehensive upgrades to meet contemporary building codes. The project balances preservation with innovation, carefully distinguishing new interventions from the original structure while supporting long-term functionality.

Adaptive reuse is central to this project. The former courtyard is enclosed with a contemporary glazed infill, offering the occupants much-needed performance space and adaptability to fulfill their shifting program needs. In addition, this space offers a convivial meeting space for resident artists, fostering a coming together of cultural perspectives and a cross-pollination of worldviews to enhance the community's experience. The glazed infill improves the building's energy efficiency while also critically celebrating the heritage material culture.

The design delivered a restrained and legible material palette, a strategy to foreground the heritage material culture in the experience of the architecture. Where possible, original wood structure, flooring, and cladding were exposed and reconditioned as a key animator in the everyday use of the spaces. The original masonry was also highlighted similarly. New insertions were strategically designed with a different material and tectonic presence in order to make legible the interplay between existing and new.

The project thoughtfully integrates with the public realm through new landscaping, outdoor amenities, and pedestrian links. These elements support year-round programming and align with the City's River Crossing plan, contributing to Rosedale's future as a cultural and civic destination.



Top image: Exterior of building.
Bottom image: Site section.

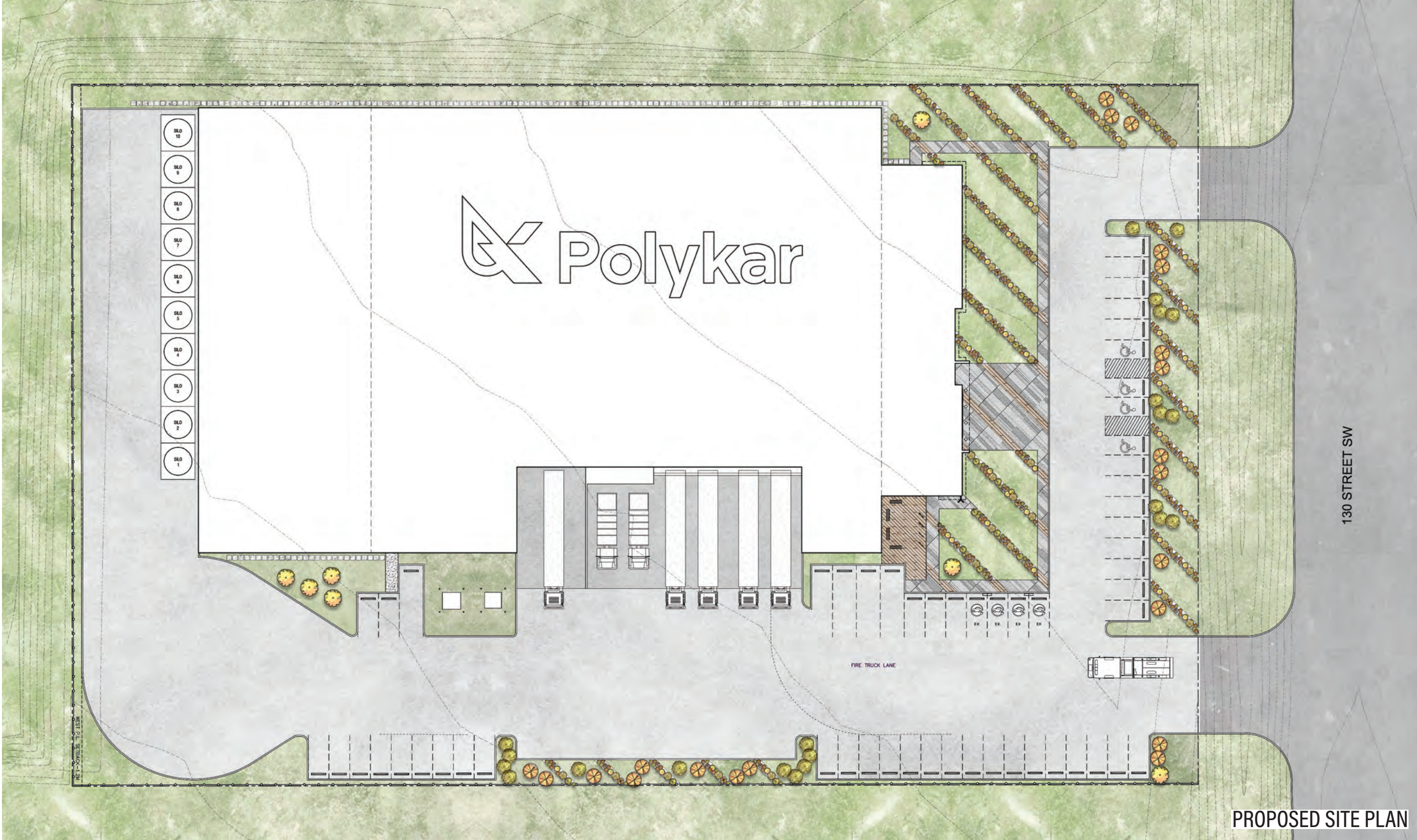
POLYKAR EDMONTON

Located in the Discovery Business Park area of south central Edmonton, Polykar's new manufacturing plant is approximately 55,000 sqft in gross area and prominently visibly from the QE2. As an industrial building which was one of the first to go up in this neighbourhood, the vision for the Polykar building was to introduce a high level of urban design through the landscape design and architecture within an industrial context.

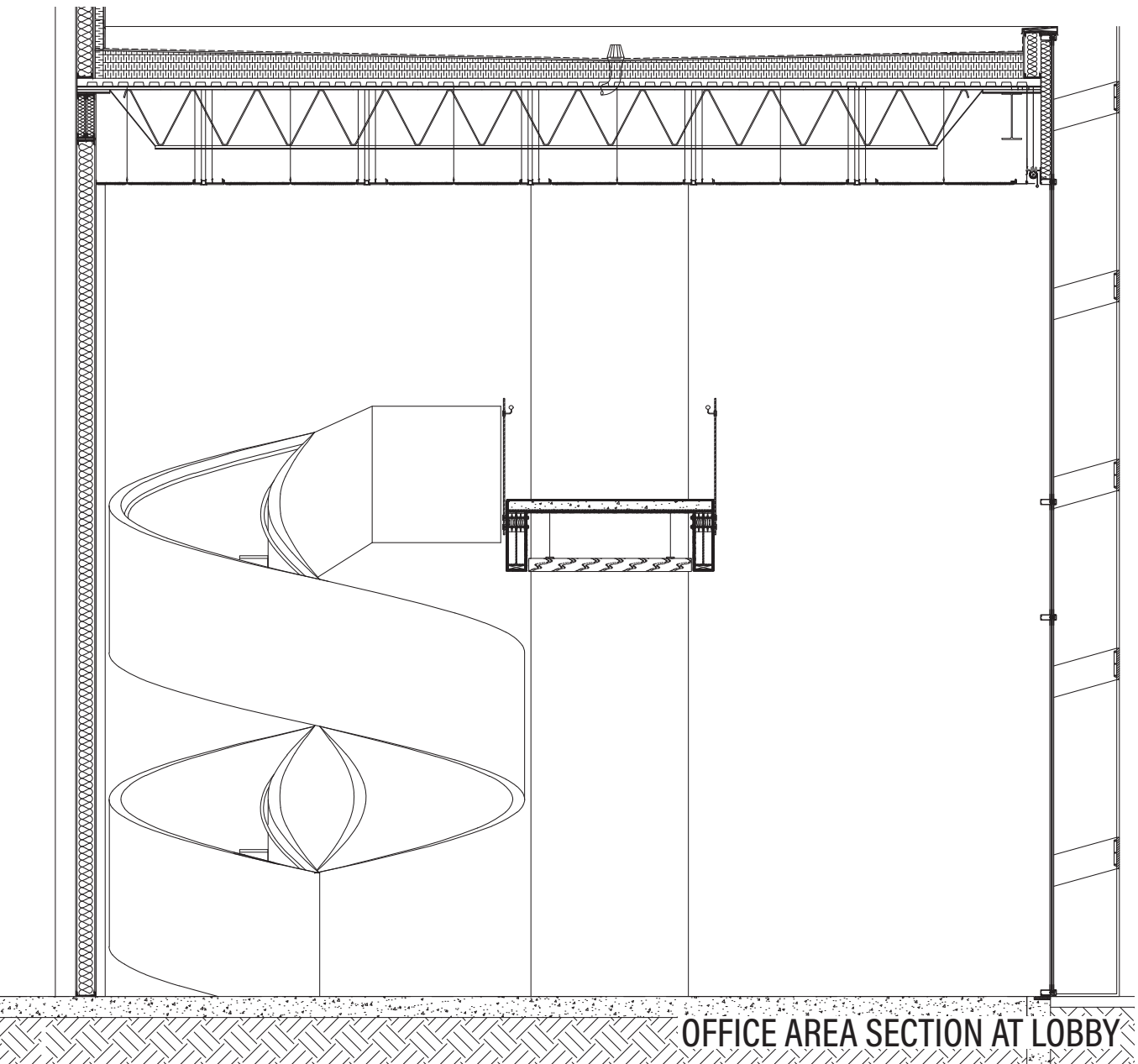
A significant majority of our cities with industrial areas suffer from a lack of commitment to high quality architecture and urban design consisting of massive buildings with poor interface with the public realm. Keeping in mind that while the majority of discussions regarding urban design are focused on urban and residential areas, this project aspires to steer the focus of urban design to include industrial areas which are also a significant portion of our City. Polykar's design breaks down the large scale of the manufacturing building with an office frontage design with a dynamic façade that is engaging and well articulated.

Inspired by the concept of the extrusion of plastic films which further get processed into bags and wrapping material, Polykar's design draws upon this concept through the use of large aluminum extrusions on the façade fixed to the elegant curtain wall in a diagonal fashion drawing the eye from one corner of the building to the other. Similarly, the directional gesture of these architectural elements which also function as shading devices are also echoed through the landscape design. Where the louvers extend to the ground, the planting beds for the native vegetation take shape in narrow bands and extend out towards the sidewalks further dividing the large grass areas in front of the building in the same design language as the building.

Further, the elegant entry feature draws the eye to the entrance and front plaza space to create a strong sense of legibility from the street. Adjacent to the entrance, the two storey lobby space features a spiral staircase as interior feature that can be seen from the pedestrian level.



PROPOSED SITE PLAN



OFFICE AREA SECTION AT LOBBY



SPIRAL STAIRS AT THE LOBBY



VIEW OF OFFICES FROM THE SOUTHEAST CORNER



VIEW OF OFFICES FROM THE NORTHEAST CORNER

LENDRUM HOUSING

CIVIDA MIXED-USE REDEVELOPMENT

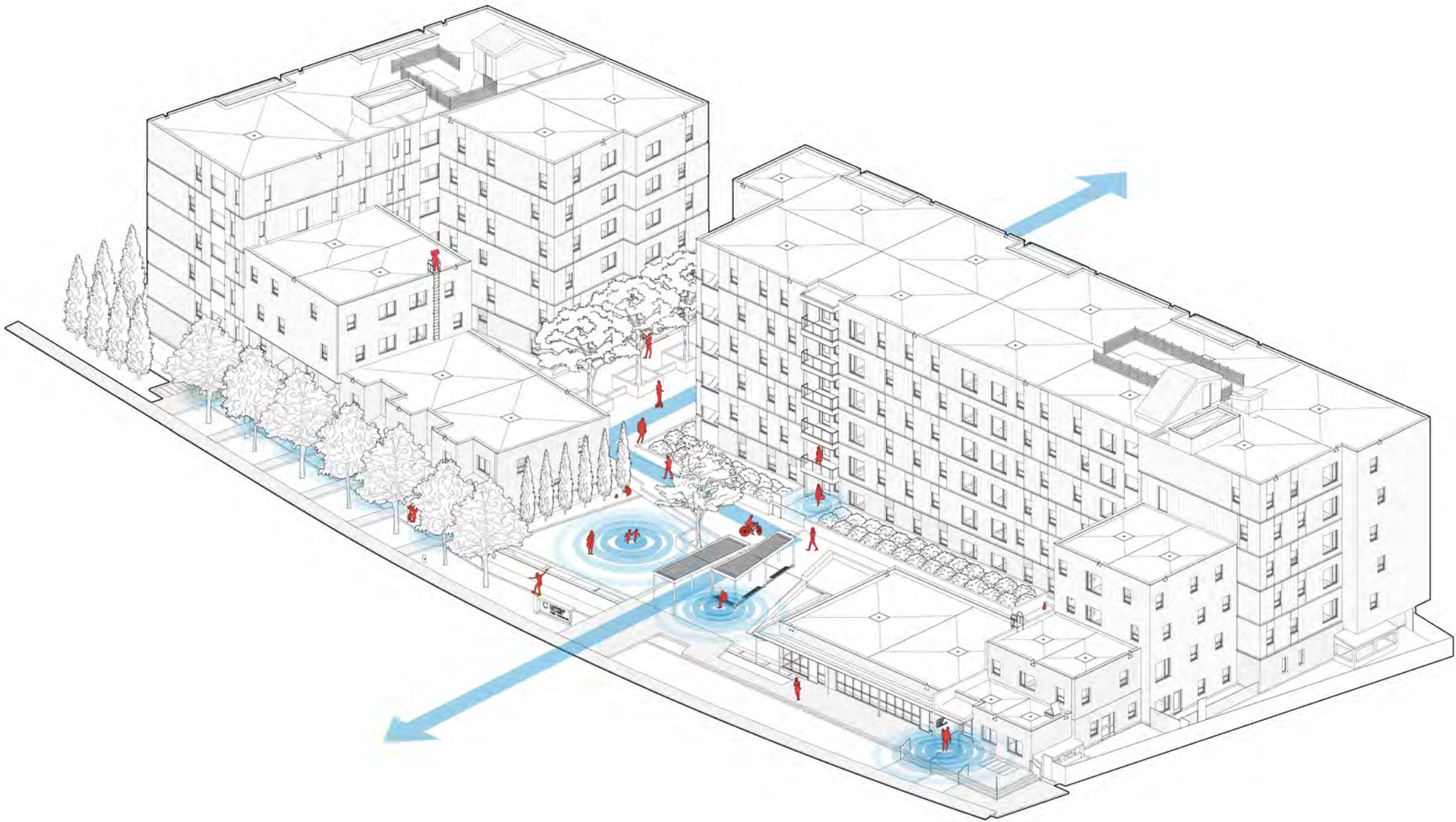
LOCATION
11420 60 AVE NW, EDMONTON, AB

COMPLETION
JULY 2023

CATEGORY
HOUSING INNOVATION

Situated in Lendrum one of Edmonton's mature communities, the project proposes the densification of an existing multi-family site, while minimizing its impact on the neighbourhood. By breaking the massing down into two separate buildings and stepping them from six, to four, to two stories, the Lendrum project mediates successfully between the University of Alberta South Campus Lands with the adjacent LRT line and the post-war bungalows of the neighbourhood to the south.

The project provides an unusual mixture of both apartment and town houses. A typically unit contains from 1 to up to 4 bedrooms, allowing for larger and intergenerational families to find spaces, that better suit their needs. As one of the goals of the project was to create a sense of stewardship, common interior and exterior spaces have been designed for both residents and the greater community. More specifically, the project provides a publicly accessible and barrier-free pathway for pedestrians to use as they access the local LRT station directly north of the site. This pathway allows for animation of the courtyard via commuters, who then can depend on the passive surveillance of the surrounding units.



▲ Urban Connection From Neighbourhood to LRT Station



▲ Mixed Use Entry

Furthermore, the incorporation of commercial space within the project assists with animating the site, providing local amenities for building residents and existing neighbours. The current proposed use of the space as a daycare, exemplifies how mixed use buildings can amplify a sense of community. The urban impact of parking is minimized through its accommodation almost entirely below grade, providing 100 automobile and 50 bicycle parking stalls.



▲ View of Commercial Space Within Context of Courtyard



▲ South Facing Courtyard



▲ Project Section



▲ North Elevation



▲ North Facade

Edmonton Valley Zoo Master Plan

The Edmonton Valley Zoo Master Plan outlines an ambitious vision for the zoo's growth over the next 15 years. Located in the North Saskatchewan River Valley, the 17.8-hectare zoo houses over 250 animals. The plan enhances animal habitats, improves visitor experiences, and creates immersive, educational environments. One transformational component reimagines the zoo entrance, strengthens its connection to the adjacent park system, and integrates an immersive interpretive wetland. The approach along Buena Vista Road will feature updated wayfinding signage and a large sculptural art element, building anticipation and excitement while serving as an iconic placemaking feature. A constructed wetland will screen the parking lot, functioning both as a storm-water management facility and a habitat for local species. An interpretive boardwalk will allow guests to observe wildlife and understand the relationship between the site, the River Valley ecosystem, and the Central Parkland Natural Subregion. The experience incorporates Indigenous art, stories, and language to share cultural and ecological connections to the land. From the boardwalk, a pedestrian path with wayfinding elements guides visitors through the parking area toward the main entry, with opportunities to learn about animals along the way. Trees and solar elements provide shade, creating a welcoming and comfortable arrival. The existing gravel lot will be replaced with a more efficient configuration, improving accessibility and supporting the zoo's future growth. The design accommodates school buses, large group events, and includes priority parking for caregivers, seniors, and individuals with mobility needs. The reconfigured lot will provide approximately 287 regular stalls, 51 compact stalls (including seven with EV chargers), 10 wheelchair-accessible stalls with transfer aisles, and space for 10 buses, oversized vehicles, and trailers. Balancing parking needs with environmental stewardship, the design incorporates nature-based and Low Impact Development (LID) strategies. Soil vaults and bio-swales improve water quality and reduce runoff into the wetland. An underground stormwater storage facility captures water from across the site, reducing flood risk for the zoo and downstream areas. This new arrival experience offers ecological restoration, cultural interpretation, improved accessibility, and enhanced visitor amenities—seamlessly connecting the parking area, wetland, and main zoo entrance into a unified, engaging gateway.



Zoo Parking Lot



UGO AND MISCHIEF OF COULD BE(S)

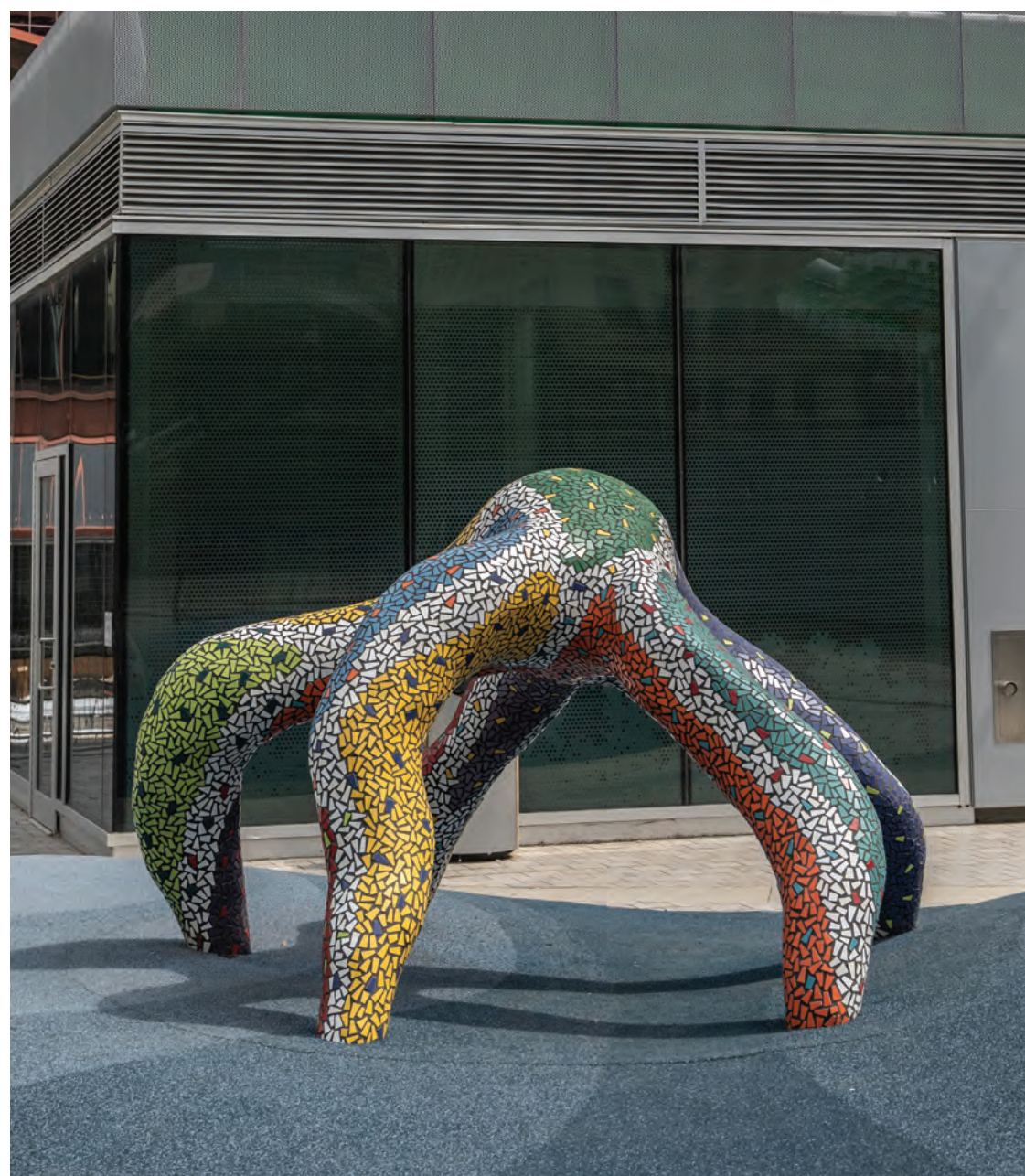
A *Mischief of Could-be(s)* and *UGO* are a pair of whimsical child-friendly public art pieces in two locations of the Civic Precinct. The first component of the project, *A Mischief of Could-be(s)*, was unveiled in 2023 and has been wildly successful in its aims to engage children – on busy days in the heart of downtown Edmonton, multiple children can be seen climbing, dangling, swinging and otherwise engaging with the artwork. *UGO* was installed behind the Stanley A. Milner Library in 2024 and has been similarly well received.

This pair are the first child-friendly public art projects in the City of Edmonton. They were created under the guidance of the Child-Friendly Initiative that is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Since the project's completion, child-friendly public artworks have become a priority for the City of Edmonton, and making multi-generational spaces is now part of the selection criteria for new public artworks.

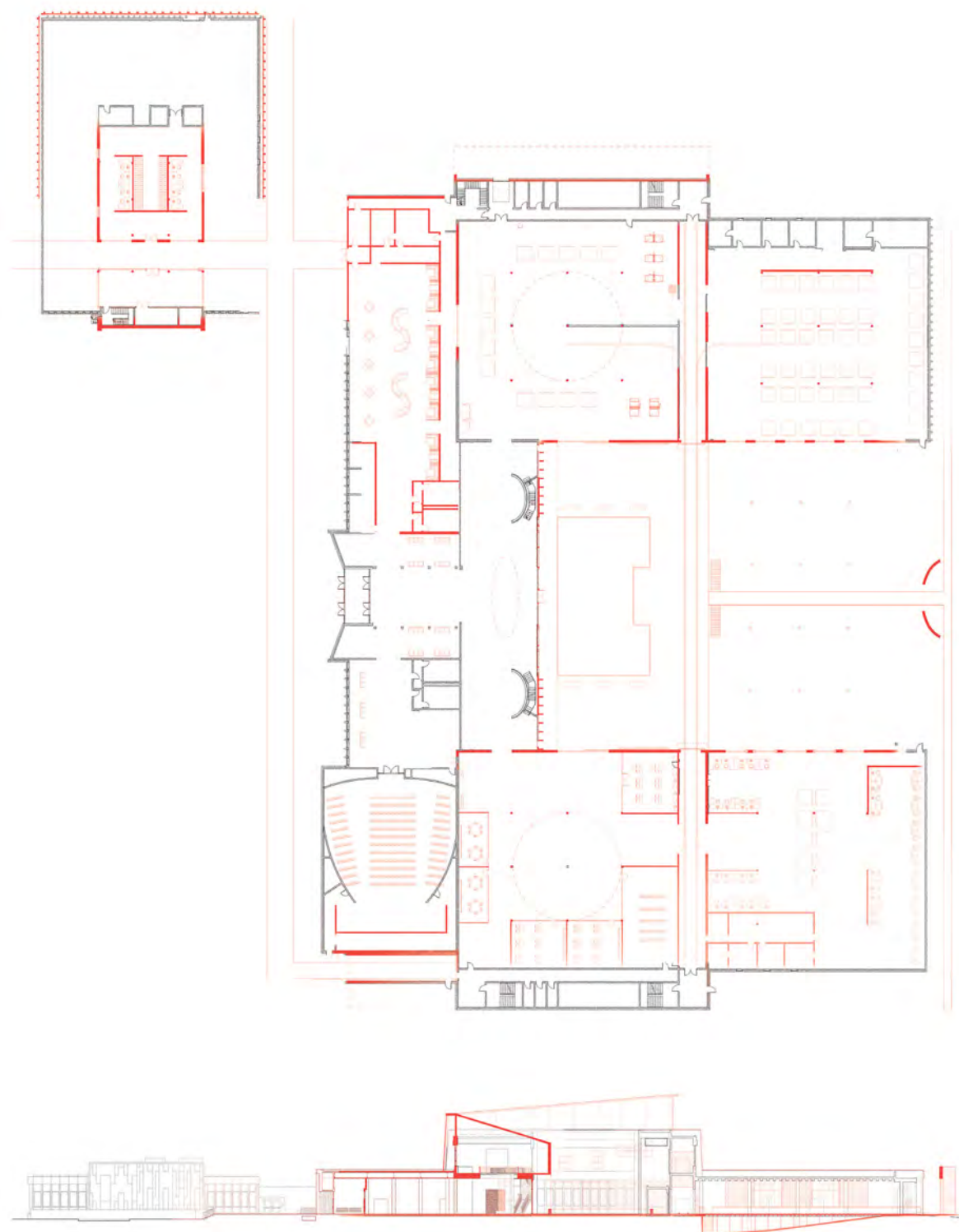
A Mischief of Could-be(s) consists of five standing sculptures, drawing inspiration from how children freely interpret and imagine the world through play. The tree-like quality suggests the idea of a magical forest, while the ambiguity of the gestural forms allows for other interpretations, such as tentacles or stalagmites. The whimsical shapes and colourful palette imbue the sculptures with a sense of wonder and play, making it engaging for art lovers of any age.

UGO presents a fantastic creature that seems to have come from a collage of children's imaginations. This unlikely and colourful creature features five weirdly articulated legs and a strong sense of movement. The organic form sparks curiosity in the viewer, encouraging active and imaginative play in a non-prescribed way and inviting multiple interpretations such as a hand, a cave, or a coral formation.

Said the artists about the artworks, "Although both installations can be experienced individually, they create a world of their own when connected. We wanted to make real the idea that the library is a portal of imagination, and through it, the children's own stories about the two sets of sculptures connect the two locations."



IMAGES: Clockwise (L - R): Fall view of *Mischief of Could Be(s)* in Churchill Square; children interacting with *Mischief of Could Be(s)* at the summer 2023 opening celebration; *UGO* nearby in Centennial Plaza in close proximity to the Stanley A. Milner Library.



Floor plan + building section.

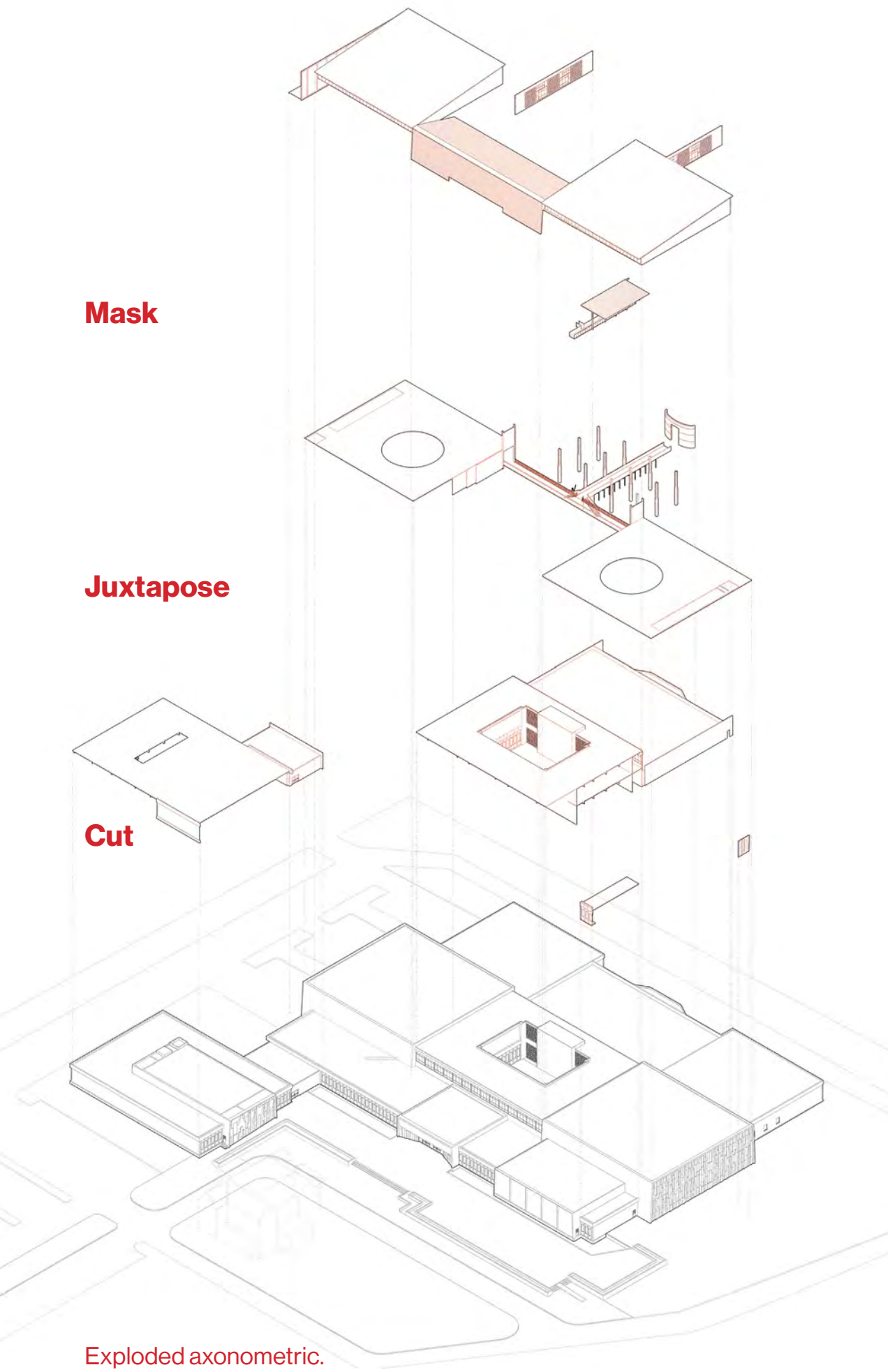
Regional Reuse

Regenerative Adaptations of the Former Royal Alberta Museum

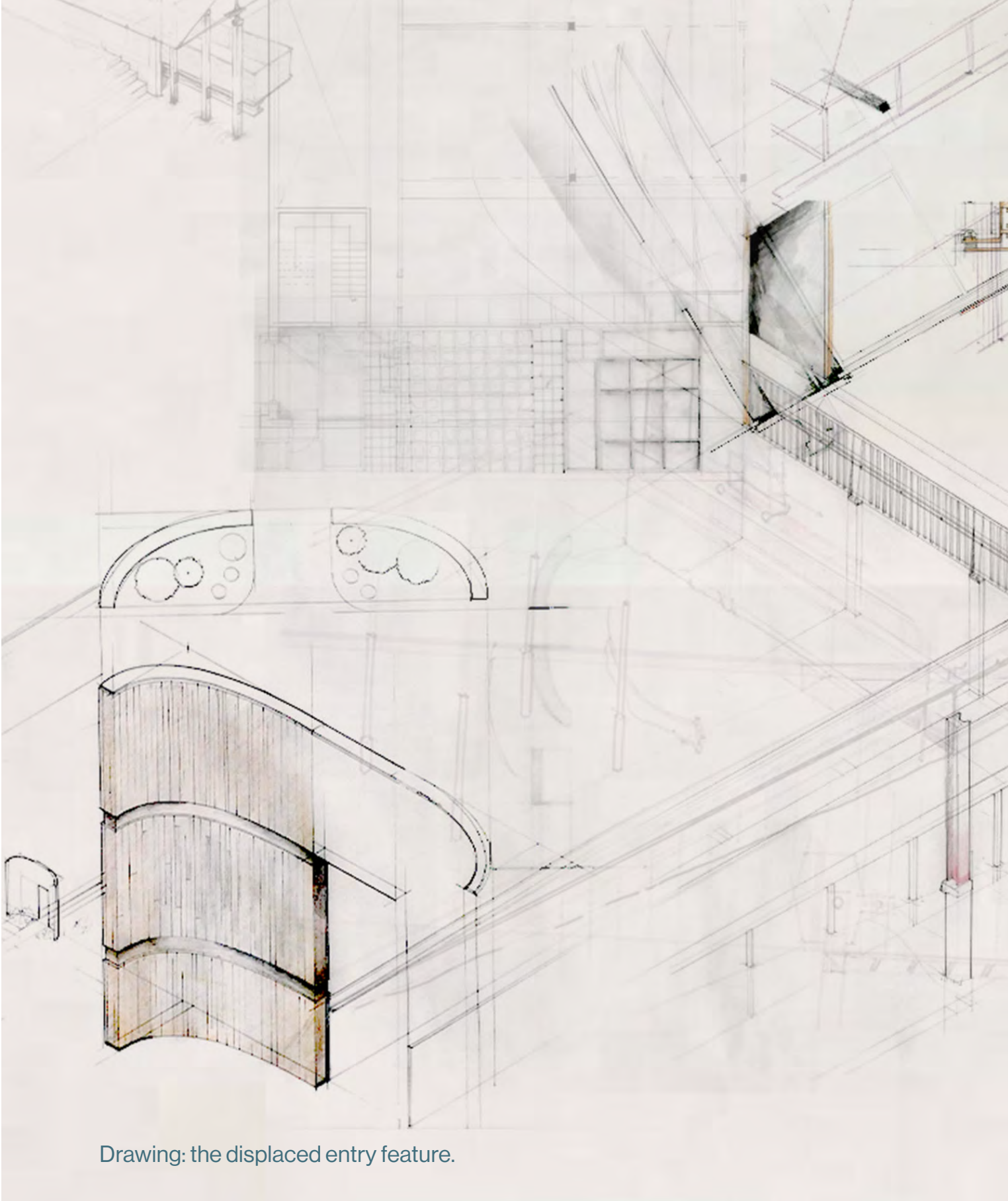
Regional Reuse demonstrates an approach to adaptive reuse in Edmonton using the site of the former Royal Alberta Museum. Since the museum was moved into a new facility in 2017, the building has been left vacant for nearly a decade. An important landmark for Edmonton architecture, the former museum signified a period of economic prosperity that drove numerous civic projects. The museum exemplified a modernist design ethos and helped foster a generation of architectural advocates in Edmonton.

The building continues to remain significant, having the potential to represent the consensus of Alberta's architectural interests. As an alternative to demolition and historic preservation, this project proposes a new program of an architecture institute that explores how the roles and practices of architects in Edmonton can celebrate ephemerality, pluralism, and a connection to a place. The project embraces the effects of time and weather on the built environment and studies the ingrained stories contained within the materials. The goals of the architectural institute are to create a place for the study of regenerative architecture and design, foster the next generation of designers, planners and architects, and create a hub within the community where discussion, support, and celebration can occur.

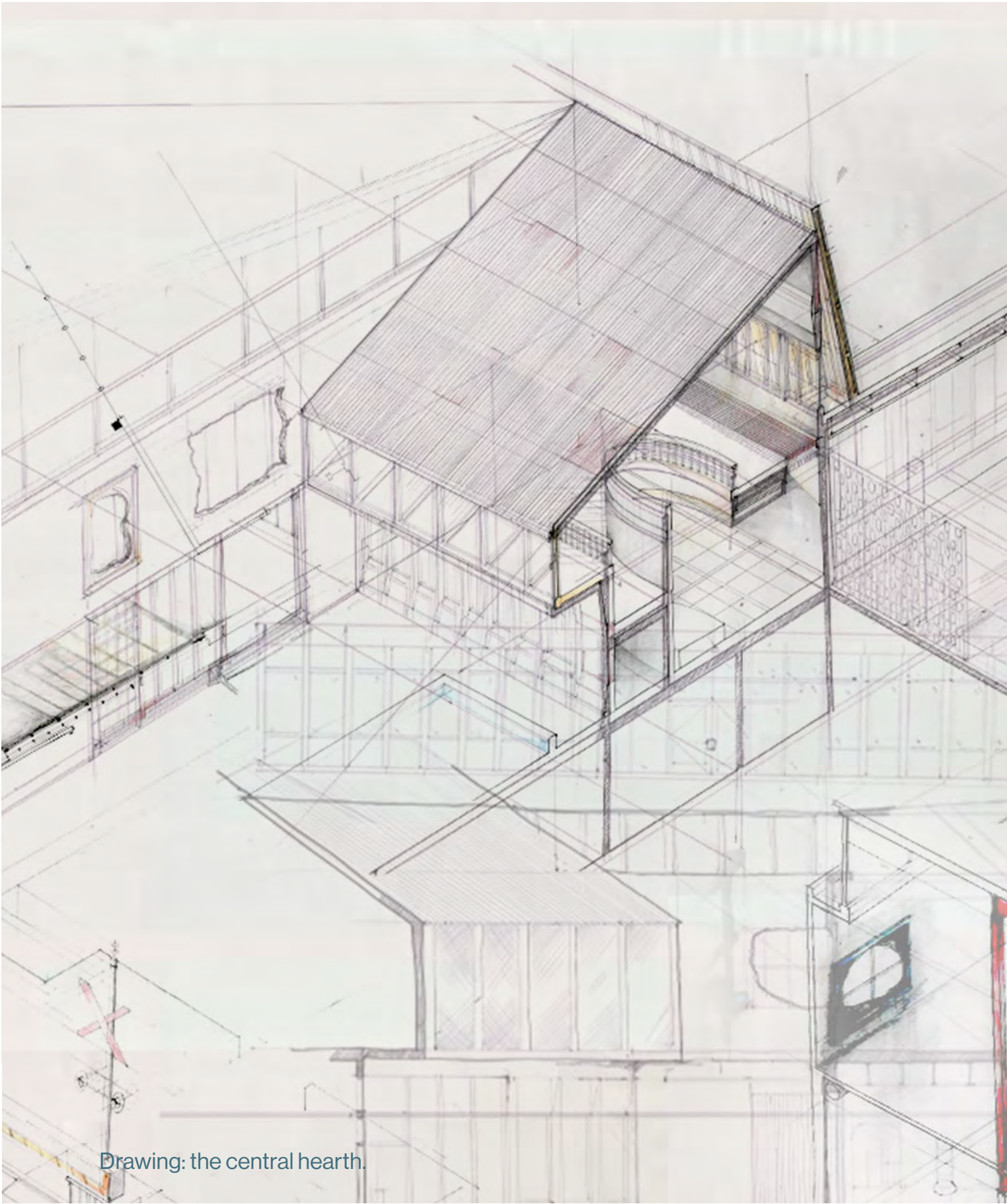
Regional Reuse uses a methodology of cutting, juxtaposition and masking the existing museum site with salvaged parts from local buildings slated for demolition. Informed by adaptive reuse and regionalism, the design imagines a new vernacular for Edmonton architecture based on regenerative building methods.



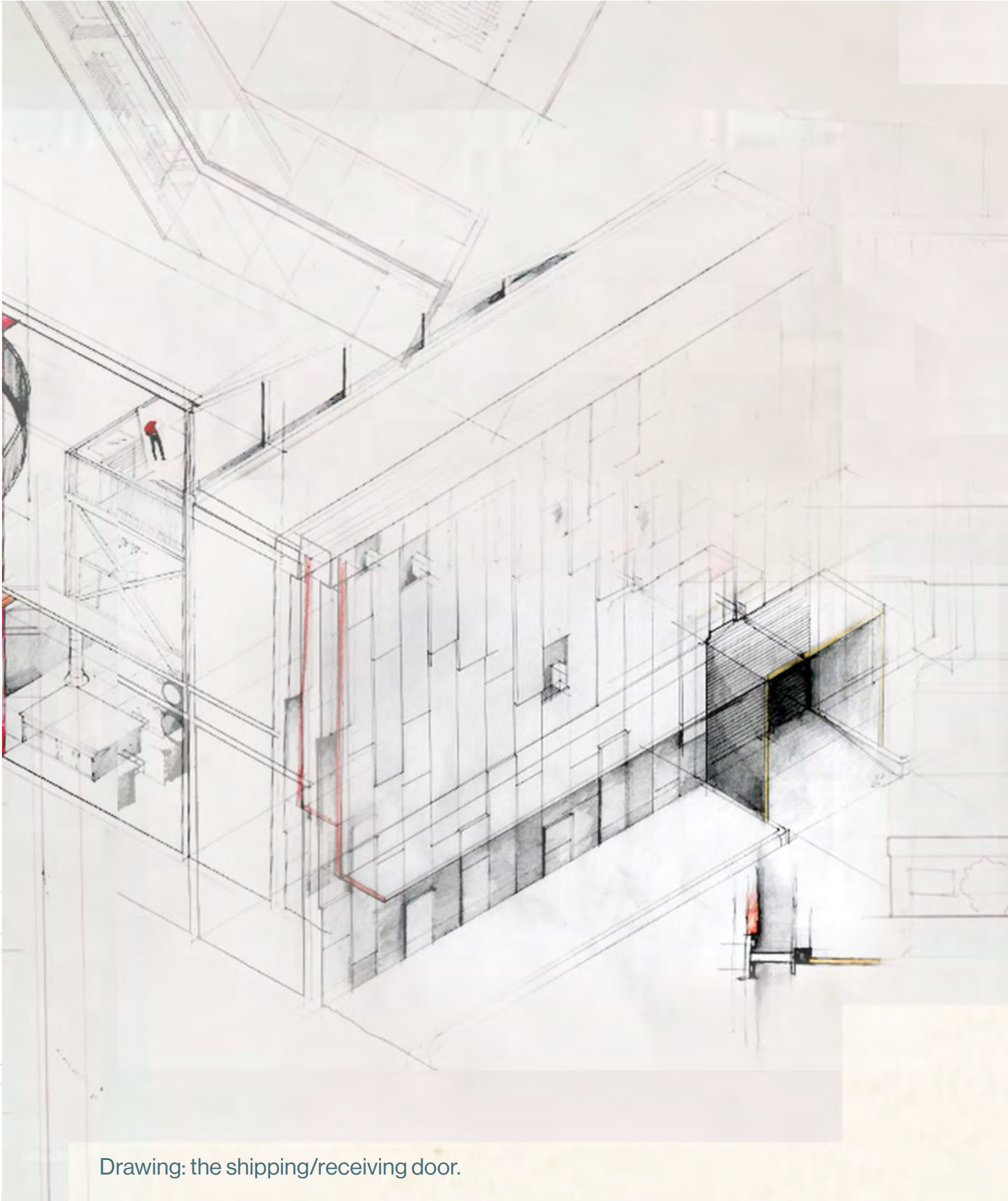
Exploded axonometric.



Drawing: the displaced entry feature.



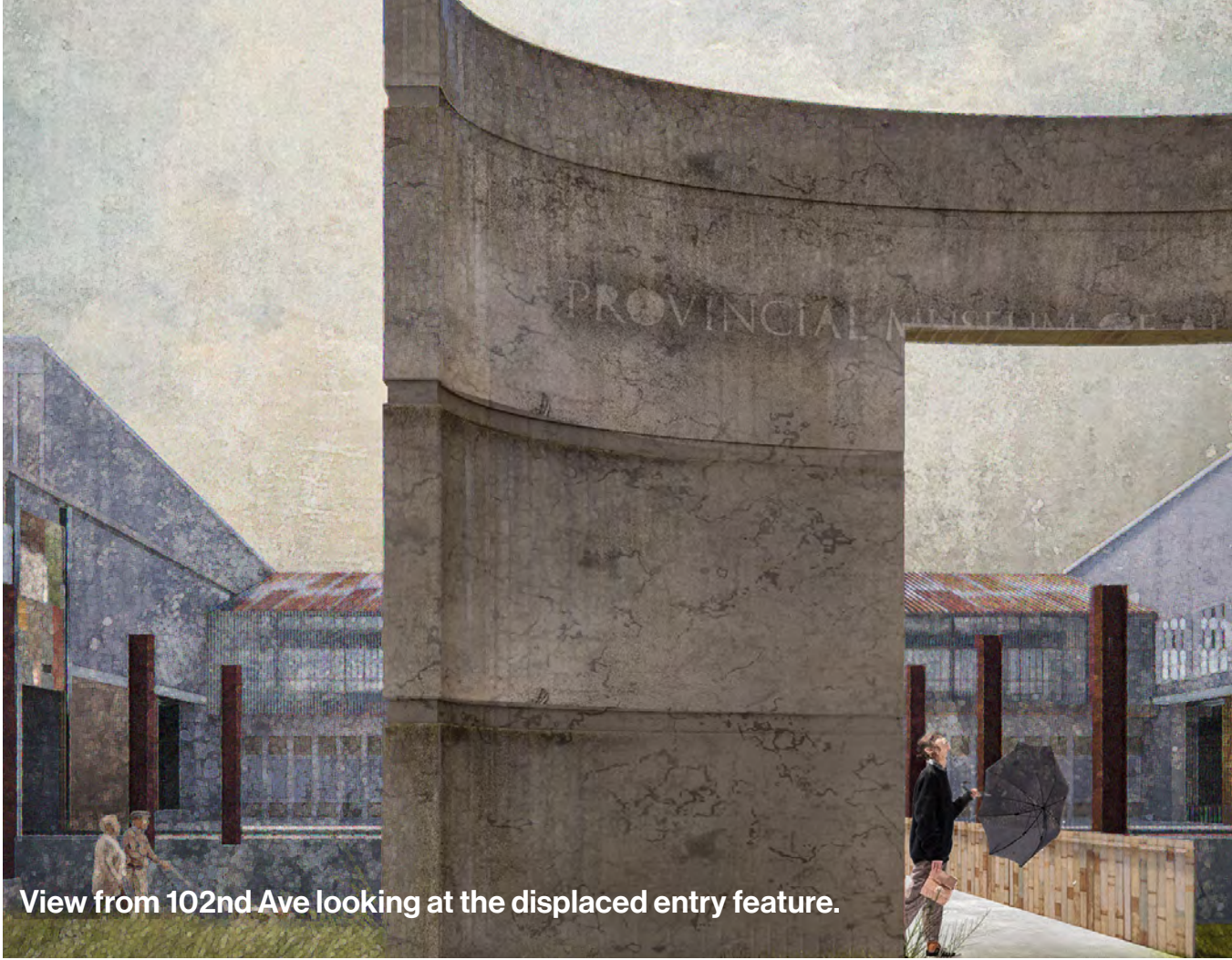
Drawing: the central hearth.



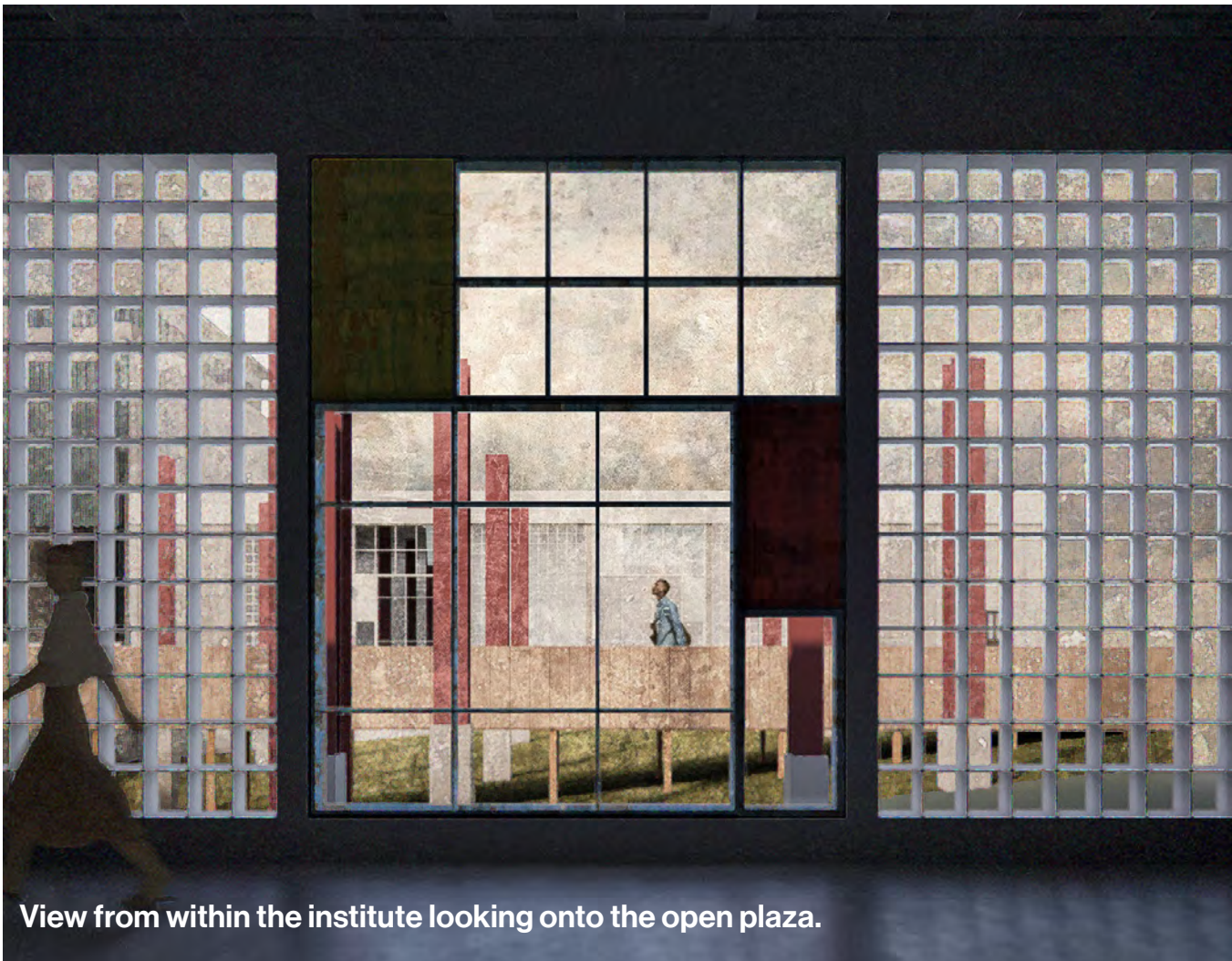
Drawing: the shipping/receiving door.



View from parking lot to main entry.



View from 102nd Ave looking at the displaced entry feature.



View from within the institute looking onto the open plaza.



View from within the central lobby connection



View from outside shipping/receiving doors