

urban attachment |



urban attachment |

|0.00| content



I see architecture not as Gropius did, as a moral venture, as truth, but as invention, in the same way that poetry or music or painting is invention."

-Michael Graves

urban attachment |

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“

I don't think of form as a kind of architecture. The architecture is the result of the forming. It is the kinesthetic and visual sense of position and wholeness that puts the thing into the realm of art.”

-Roy Lichtenstein

The Composition of a city is the direct product of ideas and habits that have been invented, reformed and re imagined over the course of a city's existence. The size of a city is often limited to the amount of people that reside within its limits, or the corporations that use a city as their economic hub. As time progresses, the form and identity of the city changes with fluctuating ideas regarding political agendas, economic trends and social viewpoints. These ideas are manifested within each individual person as a result of experience, education and spatial awareness. How can architecture begin to place importance on the most crucial aspects of a city in order to promote a significant identity?

In a most literal sense, architecture is able to directly shape our environment. It can bring forth an identity or brand to a city. Today, the importance of architecture in the city has become less about the context and more about the form of the building. The lines have been blurred regarding the relationship between concepts and context. How can urban architecture begin to once again create meaningful experiences through aesthetics and context?

The significance of an identity to any city is crucial to its success and cultural diversity. Through the collaboration of designers, scholars and city planners, an architecture can be created that will act as identifying agent to the most important aspects of the individual city. This architecture's significance will not be placed on its permanence, but instead on its ability to identify, evaluate, and accentuate the urban spaces that give a city its identity.

This thesis does not attempt to solve an urban problem for an individual city; rather, this thesis attempts to investigate the role that design, innovation, and culture play in the shaping of cities, and through this examination, explore the opportunities to use these attributes as a catalyst for future development in any city. The importance of an identity to a city is crucial to its success and cultural diversity. Through these investigations, the city can begin to establish itself as an economic hub with a distinctive culture and a true sense of place. How can architecture position these collaborators in a way to inspire and enhance their way of thinking to re invent the identity of the city?

This thesis attempts to investigate the role that design, innovation and culture play in the shaping of cities, and through this examination, explore the opportunities to use these attributes as a catalyst for the development of any urban context.

Introduction |

The composition of any city is the direct product of ideas and habits that have been invented, reformed, and re imagined over the course of a city's existence. The physical size of the city is often limited by zoning restrictions or physical barriers that prevent its growth. In an economic sense, the size of the city is limited to the number of corporations that use that particular city as their center for operations. As time progresses, the form and identity of the city changes with fluctuating ideas regarding political agendas, economic trends and social viewpoints. These ideas are manifested within each individual person as a result of experience, education and spatial awareness. "Everybody experiences far more than he understands. Yet it is experience, rather than understanding, that influences behavior." The idea that it is experience that influences our behavior more than understanding of a concept suggests that it is possible to shape the way that people think and feel about city form. In the past, city plans and the design of urban spaces has been a very two-dimensional approach. Roadways are designed so that the least amount of congestion is present during peak traffic hours. Pedestrian spaces are designed to provide an area for people to exercise and relax. The heights of buildings are often dictated in the initial urban plan of cities.

re imagine |

How can cities be re imagined? The identity of the city is formed through certain attributes of the city. If an urban center has a rich history in visual arts, the city may be seen as a cultural hub for artistic expression. The same idea is present for any field of study or corporations that

leave their mark on the culture. This presence of an identity leaves no two cities the same, but is inherently one of the most important attributes to maintain a city's population, and the economic drivers that enable a city to operate. A city with a strong urban identity and cultural diversity has an allure that encourages people to reside in the city and attracts people to move into the city. This is the goal of any city, to attract visitors and residents, while maintaining strong cultural value and identity. The understanding that all cities are inherently different, with different values and cultural strengths, gives urban designers and city planners the opportunity to create a system that can be universally applied to any city. The system will not impose any cultural aesthetics or urban planning that the city does not need or want, instead, the system will strengthen the identity that has been formed over many years, and promote growth in the areas that can support it. By utilizing collaboration between aspiring professionals and an identifying architecture, an enhanced urban identity can be established. "Today, more than ever, architecture's capacity to provoke aesthetic experiences is key to establishing cultural, economic, and social frameworks that suit our new routines and lifestyles."

temporary |

As new buildings are constructed within a city, it can be assumed that the new building that is being constructed will keep its place in the city form for many years to come. What if we challenge that idea? Some of the most powerful cultural identifiers can in fact be temporary in nature. Installation art that takes place on a condemned building is doomed for destruction, but in its brief lifespan it tends to evoke more emotion than a sculptural piece that has a permanent home. In many ways, simply drawing attention to the blighted spaces in an urban setting will spur some sort of political action to enhance a space that may have been previously overlooked. As the temporary nature of art installations may be examined and seen as controversial or contextually blind, their importance lies in their ability to create a visual experience that transcends to a cognitive analysis. In the same way, architecture can begin to evoke the same ideas from the viewer. Architecture that is temporary becomes a form of sculpture, a temporary spectacle that is meant to draw attention to a certain urban condition that may otherwise be overlooked. "The most important challenge in architecture today is the concomitant development of a humanistic culture and an imaginative focus that embraces both psychology and emotion to reconnect with people in inspired ways." The ability of architecture to connect with the people that view it rather than paying strict attention to the aesthetics of its context, allows the form to become a more meaningful, temporary work of art. In the entirety of an urban context, a temporary architecture can be seen as a minute detail that would affect only a district or region

|Direct Quotation: Page 47:
Klingmann, Anna. Brandscapes:
Architecture in the Experience
Economy. Cambridge, MA: MIT,
2007. Print. |

|Direct Quotation: Page 185:
Klingmann, Anna. Brandscapes:
Architecture in the Experience
Economy. Cambridge, MA: MIT,
2007. Print. |

of a city. As a series of architectural installations that attach themselves throughout the city, this temporary architecture attains higher aesthetic and cultural value. This network can then become an identifier for the urban context, and an expression for the program contained within it. The network formed becomes symbiotic with the existing infrastructure. This temporary and parasitic architecture becomes an extension of the building that is acting as its host. "The success of the parasite has nothing to do with its life span." Parasite can promote or invoke changes by being physically present one day, and removed the next.

Parasitism |

The biological definition of parasite defines "an organism living in, with, or on another organism." Parasitic architecture latches on the host building and the systems of the host building are then extended into that "parasite," which is quite literally deriving nutrients at the owner's expense. Is an architectural parasite actually harming its host building? "The analogy between architecture and architectural parasites is limited: Architecture is creative, it will always produce something and can therefore not just merely be at the expense of the host. The biological host is, both literally and metaphorically the carrier of the parasite. Comparable carriers exist in architecture too, namely the systems of the city." In this sense, parasitic architecture is actually symbiotic in nature, which involves two organisms living closely together, but one organism is not harming the other organism. This relationship is then able to bring a positive change to the context, it becomes more than an attachment to the urban form, it becomes a part of it. If the parasite is "widely supported by the society it will in fact change the systems of the city. The parasite brings society and urban structures closer." By pulling the urban structures closer, this architecture has the ability to transform the way society moves through and views the city. The urban form becomes inherently different. "It's the idea that a building—a work of architecture—could directly catalyze a transformation, so that the society that finishes building something is not the same society that set out to build it in the first place. The building changes them." The unique opportunity inherent with architecture that attaches to an existing building is in the idea that that new architecture can shed a new light on the existing context, and bring a new meaning to the area. In establishing a system of architectural interventions that is both temporary and symbiotic in nature, a new identifying element can be brought into the urban setting, regardless of the urban density that exists or even the economic structure.

|Pit, Merel, Karel Stellar, and Gerjan Streng. "Parasitic Architecture." Gerjan Streng. N.p., 2007. Web. 20 Sept. 2012. <<http://www.gerjanstreng.eu/>>. |

|"Parasite About Our Definitions: All Forms of a Word (noun, Verb, Etc.) Are Now Displayed on One Page." Merriam-Webster. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 13 Dec. 2012. |

|Pit, Merel, Karel Stellar, and Gerjan Streng. "Parasitic Architecture." Gerjan Streng. N.p., 2007. Web. 20 Sept. 2012. <<http://www.gerjanstreng.eu/>>. |

| Pit, Merel, Karel Stellar, and Gerjan Streng. "Parasitic Architecture." Gerjan Streng. N.p., 2007. Web. 20 Sept. 2012. <<http://www.gerjanstreng.eu/>>. |

| Geoff Manaugh, "Without Walls: interview with Lebbeus; 2007, <http://bldgblog.blogspot.com/2007/10/without-walls-interview-with-lebbeus.html> |

The context chosen for this thesis is the city of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Grand Rapids is associated with the negative stigma of a “rustbelt economy” and of course that Michigan is in an industrial decline. Grand Rapids however has been able to establish itself in the past 50 years as diverse economic base to transition itself in a 21st century market. Grand Rapids as previously known as “Furniture City,” and to an extent, it still is. It is still home to some of the largest furniture design and manufacturing companies in the country, these corporations being Steelcase, Herman Miller and Haworth. Despite its prominence in furniture design and manufacturing, Grand Rapids has been able to establish economic diversity that has allowed the city to grow with multiple industries. Amway Global, Meijer, and Spartan stores are retailers and product manufacturers. Wolverine Worldwide manufactures and designs footwear. These are just a few of the major economic players in the city of Grand Rapids that have major impacts on the local economy but also in the business, political and cultural landscapes. These companies are much of the reason that the philanthropic efforts of individuals in Grand Rapids have been responsible for the recent boom in investment into the medical field and also the cultural enrichment of the city. The Devos Family, which is a co founder of Amway Global, has put large investments back into the city in order to spur economic growth. The Devos family is also responsible for the origin of Artprize, an open art competition that brings 350,000 visitors to the city in a span of two weeks annually. Peter Wege and Fred Meijer, who are associated with Steelcase and Meijer stores respectively, are also responsible for large investments to enrich the culture of the city and promote a more sustainable, vibrant urban condition. The private investments that are present in the city of Grand Rapids have paved the way for its growth an establishment as a cultural hub for the surrounding areas. Despite all of these efforts, there are still potentials for growth and enhancement in the future. Even with all of these major industries calling Grand Rapids home, the city still maintains an unemployment rate of 9.4% and the city’s population has steadily decreased since the turn of the century. By no means is Grand Rapids in desperate need of economic revitalization, but it is a city with a perfect opportunity and supportive investors to establish a fellowship program that will attempt to grow and enhance the city and its many cultural attributes.

redevelopment fellows |

When a city is in a time for revitalization and re structuring, drastic measures are often taken to rebuild the urban identity. In New Orleans in 2007, the Rockefeller Foundation established a Redevelopment Fellowship program that recruited talented

redevelopment professionals from around the country to work to rebuild the devastation in New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. In the same way, the City of Detroit plays host to an Urban Revitalization Fellowship program that will attempt to bring young professionals to the city in hopes that they will lead the revitalization and economic redevelopment of Detroit. These programs, although they seem drastic in nature, have a necessity inherent in their formation. These programs are instrumental in the revitalization of these cities, but also in the cultivation of young professionals in the urban environment. The issue with these programs is that they are rarely used in any situation other than a time that calls for drastic measures. What if these fellowships are used to promote growth and cultivate the identity of a city, rather than only attempt save a city from economic failure? A fellowship program that highlights a city’s strength and revitalizes the city’s weaknesses while creating an urban identity for the future would be a catalyst for urban growth and cultural diversification. The young professionals that are recruited and selected for a fellowship program for growth would be able to focus on a specific aspect or area of the city that is a current cultural identifier. In the city of Grand Rapids, the fellows would be charged with analyzing and collaborating on 10 different elements:

1. Waterfront re.development
2. Visual arts
3. Infrastructure
4. Neighborhood re.development
5. Transit
6. Land use
7. Urban living
8. Historic conservation
9. Adaptive re.use
10. Performing arts

These ten elements are carefully selected for the individual city so that the fellows program can be universally utilized. These categories can be modified and adapted for changing areas of focus, and expanded if the city is much larger in both population and land mass. The idea of this fellowship is to establish itself as both an individually and universally driven focus based on the growth and enhancement of urban identities.

site |

The architecture that will be created will house the fellows in a community setting. In its implementation, the architecture will be attached to the former Rowe Hotel building. The historic building was opened in 1923, as lavish hotel with 300 guest rooms and a ballroom that could hold 600 people. The building became a retirement home in 1963. In 2001, the building announced it’s closing and shut its doors. The building has lay vacant since it’s closing.

The attachment that will house the fellows will become an identifying element for both the fellowship and draw attention to the former Rowe Hotel. The fellows will reside in dorm style housing units that will be attached to the west side of the building. An office space where the fellows will work and collaborate together will be located on the north side of the building, and an assembly and gallery space will be attached to the roof. Each of these implementations will be connected via circulation placed atop the pediment of the building. Once constructed, the architecture will draw attention to the building and its importance to the urban fabric, thus spurring development as a result. The re development of the former hotel is not meant to be a "one and then the other" idea. As the fellowship begins, the re use of the building has already begun and may continue throughout the building as the fellowship continues. The architectural attachment will be seen as a foreign object to the city, but the materiality and gestures in form are meant to respect the existing facades of the building. This placement directly into an urban core yet a clear distinction between the new and old, the fellow is able to view the city with a neutral eye, in hope that the attachment will become viewed as less of an intrusion, and a new architecture will form. The idea of the attachment being detrimental to the host building and the context in which it is placed will begin to dissolve. By creating this identity, the entire city becomes aware of the urban importance of the program and this awareness will promote and execute urban growth at a faster pace.

future implementation |

In the future, the materiality of the architecture may be able to change in order to create a new identifier for buildings that are in need of re use. The construction of these attachments will be a quick process to generate the sense of "surprise" that a structure attached to an existing building may bring. As advertising uses controversial adds to promote a product or service, the attachments to vacant and blighted buildings will draw a controversial attention that will in turn spur this development. The structures will be a form of advertisement and awareness for adaptive re use. Each architectural form will be attached to an individual building and structure in a different way specific to its context. The form will be constructed with the use of prefabricated panels and a lightweight structure to insure the ease of installation and transportation, as well as limit the stress of the existing building. The architecture will tie into the mechanical systems of the host, utilizing any infrastructural needs. Upon removal the attachment will be moved to another location with the current city, or moved to a location in a new city to implement the goals of adaptive re use in a different context.

This thesis begins to explore the role that a temporary architecture can play in the growth of a city. Through the collaboration with educators, politicians and local business, the fellowship program will be able to utilize the placement of the architecture to establish and maintain a vibrant urban identity. It is important for the architect to be aware of the cultural and physical implications of the urban attachment, and how this attachment can potentially change the form of the city.

|2.00| context



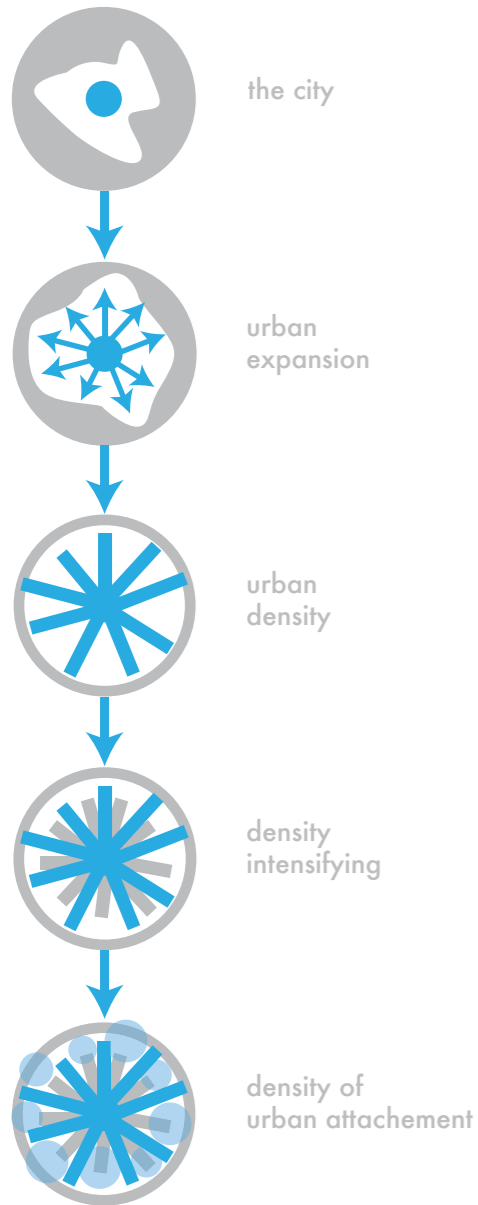
Architecture cannot be understood without some knowledge of the society it serves."

-Sir Hugh Maxwell Casson

city selection

below:

a diagram displaying the density of a city over time, along with the possibilities for new density with urban attachment.



above: 1950's photographs of the Grand Rapids cityscape.

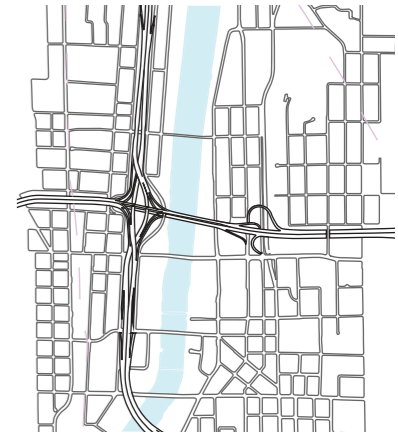
2.01

The selection for a city in was based on finding a place that is working to project a brand or self image that is drastically different than the city's image 50 years ago.

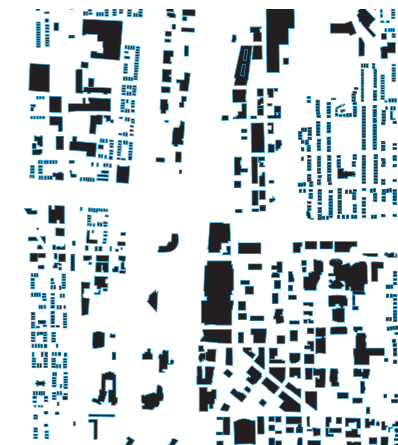
The radical transformation of the American Rustbelt as it relates the the deindustrialized condition of many cities allowed for a narrow scope to select a city for urban growth.

This condition allows for the deindustrialized city to re define its image and re imagine a brand for the city. As industry has moved out of the city, strategies and innovations for a re configuration have become a necessity for the success of the corporations that call the city their home.

A strong philanthropic base was also a very strong criteria for the selection of a city for this project. The intention of this project is not to fix a dying city, but to enhance a city that has been in a state of cultural redefinition.



city infrastructure



city figure ground

below: a 1950 aerial perspective photograph taken from the McKay Tower. At the time, this was the tallest building in the city.



grand rapids, mi, usa 2.01

The city of Grand Rapids has gone through many of the typical hardships of the American Rustbelt cities. To the left is a photograph taken in the 1950s that shows the previous scale of the city.

The picture is taken from the heart of the city but one can see the proximity of industry to the riverfront. The images on the left show Grand Rapids today, with multiple high rises and an urban center based on the arts. Although the streetscape of Grand Rapids has changed, many of the historical buildings that were present in the 1950s are still standing today.

The attention the city pays to the preservation of sites that are historical is a critical attribute for the progress of the city. The people of Grand Rapids embrace the trials and tribulations that the city has undergone in order to lead us to today.



figure 4

city perspective

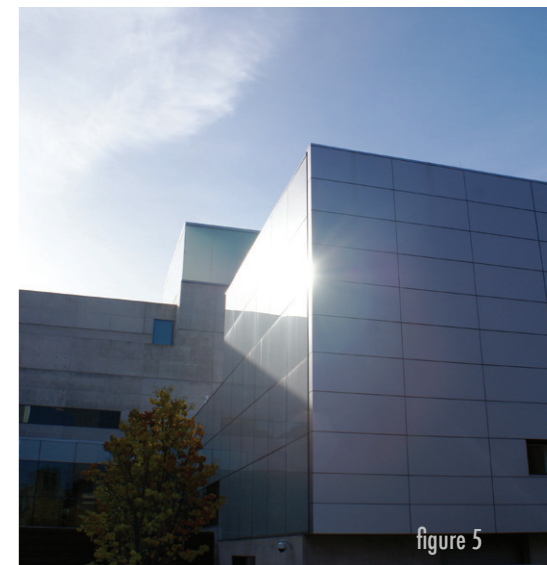
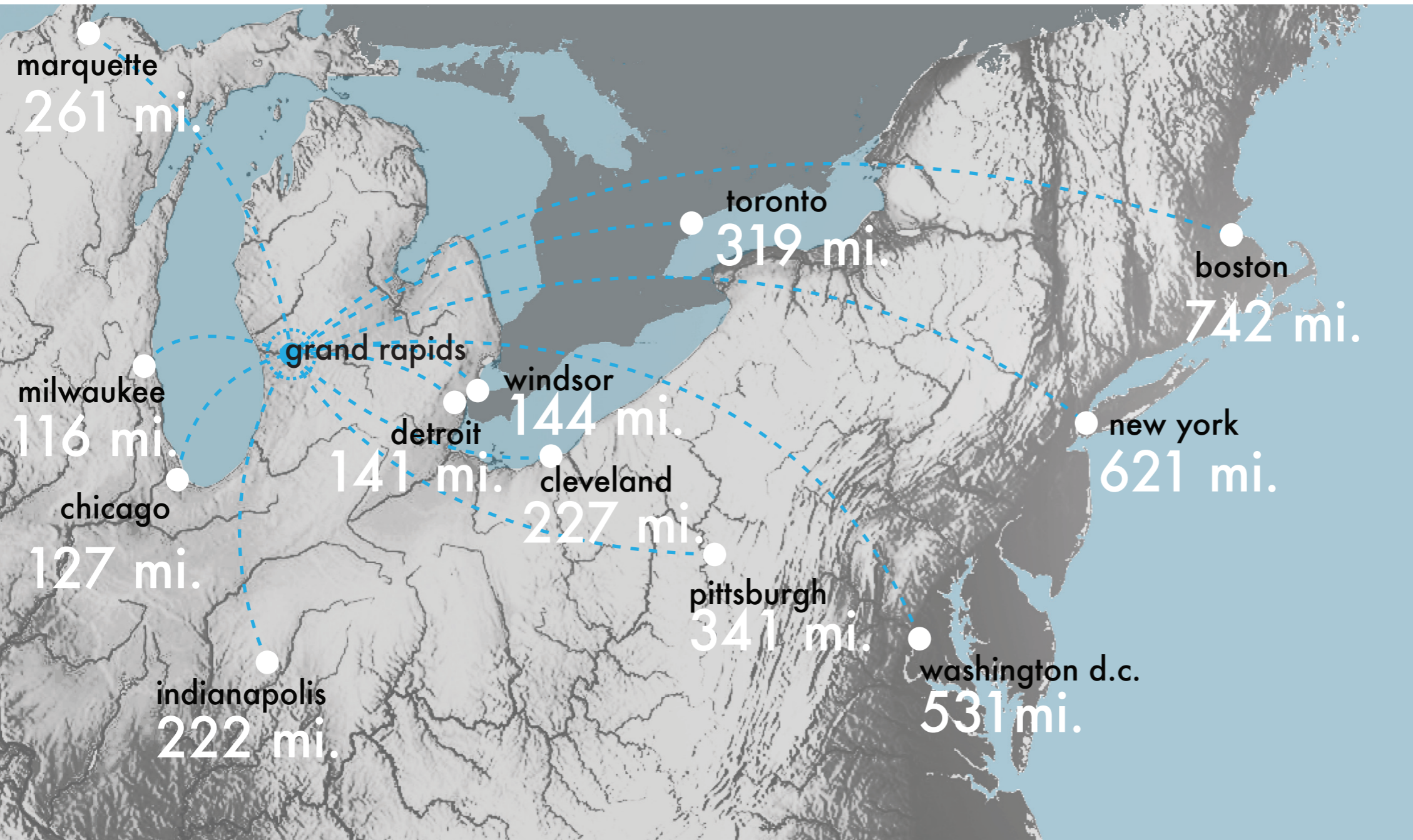


figure 5

grand rapids art museum

city location

national
2.02



left: a map showing the distances to other important cities in this region of the country. Grand Rapids can be seen at the heart of the midwest.

city location

below: A map showing the distances to other important cities in Michigan.



state 2.02

The state of Michigan is surrounded by coastline and beautiful sand dunes and beaches. In any city in the state, a person is only a few hours away from a national forest or a state park. There are many cities in Michigan that are tourist destinations for out of state visitors. Traverse City and Mackinaw Island are just a couple of the places that are important to Michigan's tourist attractions. Grand Rapids is located just a half hour's drive from the coast of Lake Michigan.

Frederick Meijer Gardens is a sculpture park that is located 15 minutes from downtown Grand Rapids. Nearly all of the art and sculptures are the personal collection of Fredrick Meijer. There is also a botanical garden on site, as well as an amphitheater and a bronze statue of Davinci's Horse.

La Grande Vitesse is located in the city of Grand Rapids. It is placed in Calder Plaza which is vacant for most of the year, aside from festivals and events that utilize the space.



figure 6

grand haven pier



figure 7

fredrick meijer gardens



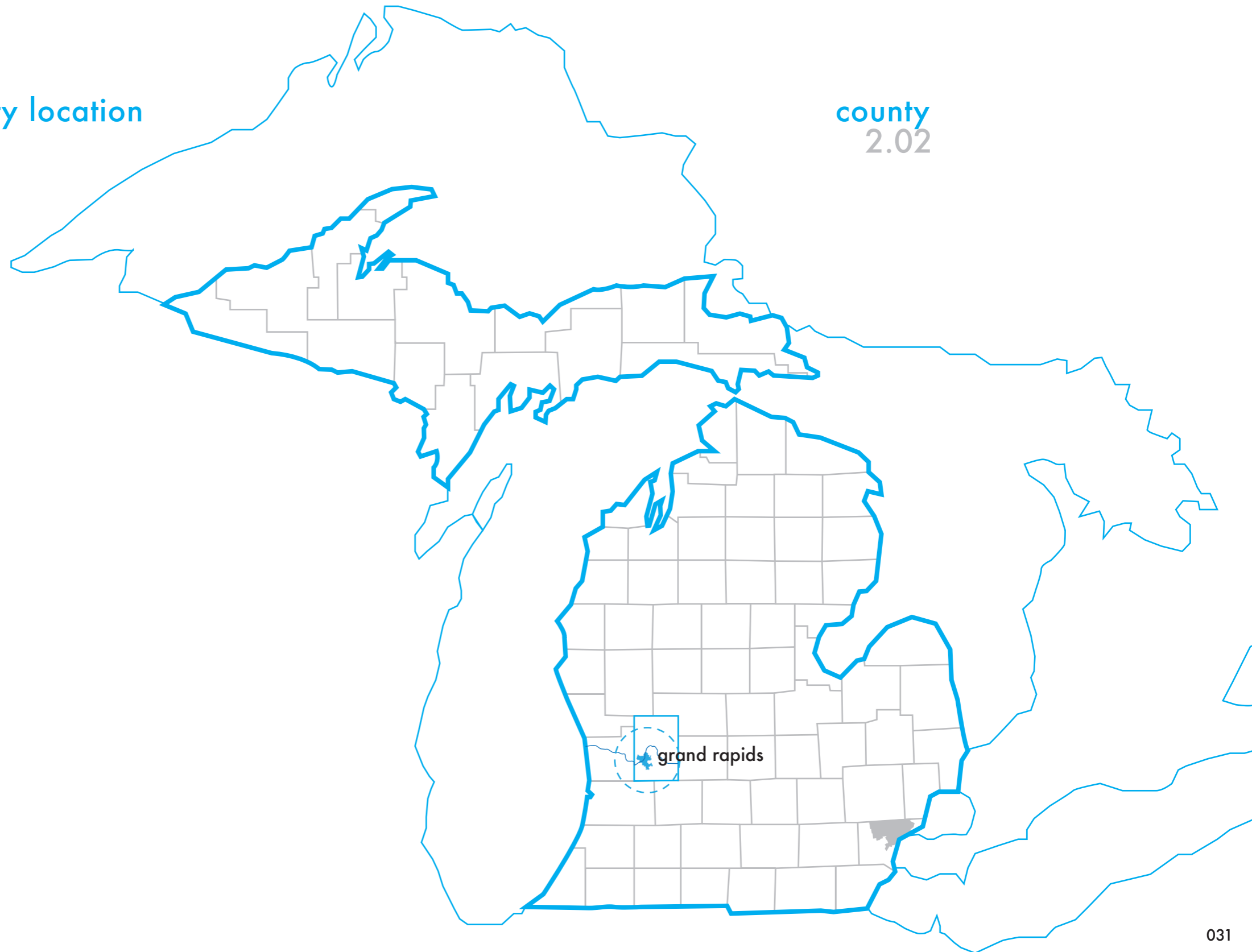
figure 8

la grande vitesse

city location

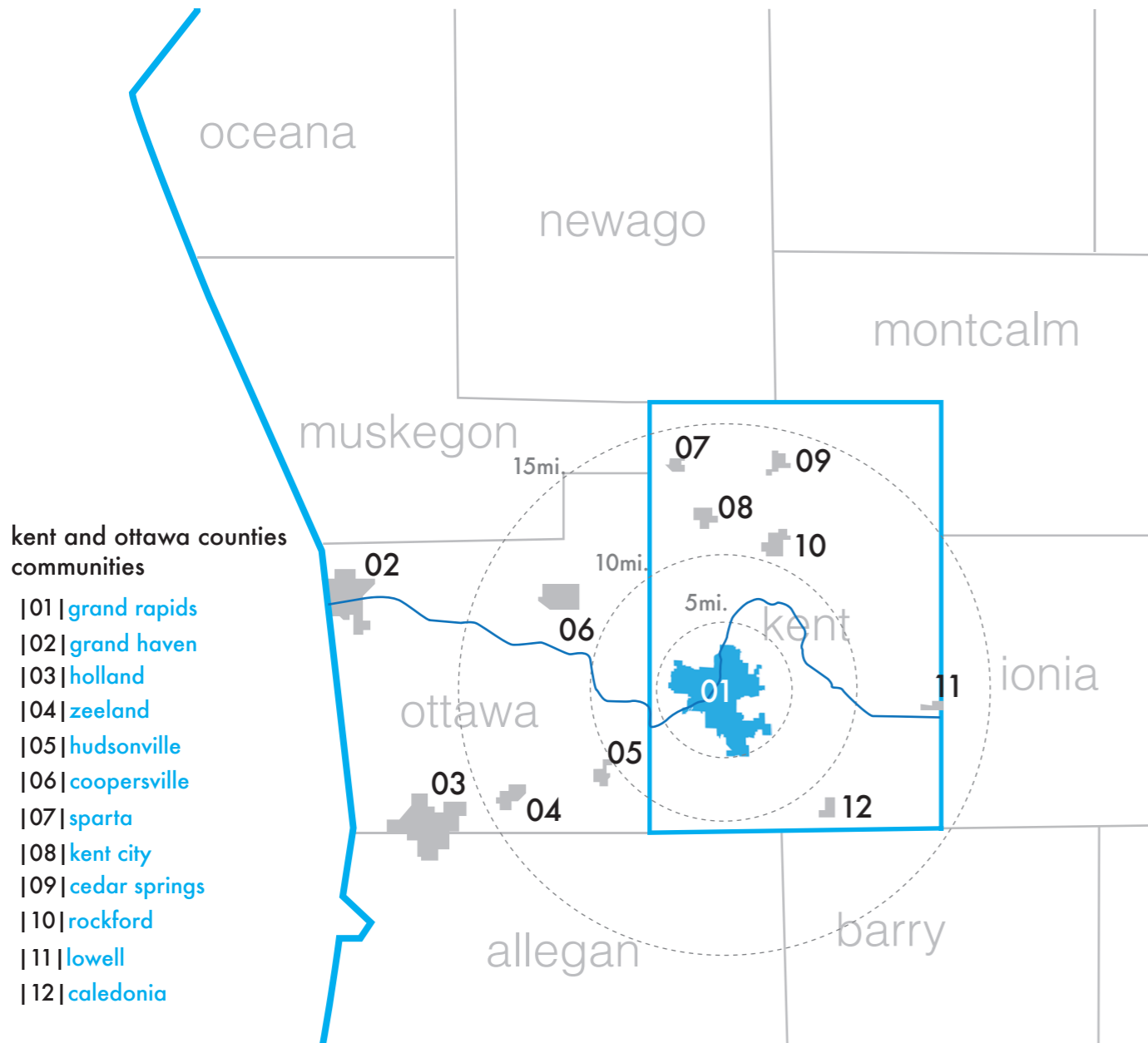
county
2.02

right: a map showing the county lines in the state of michigan. Grand Rapids resides in Kent County. The lighter blue line indicates the 5 Great Lakes that surround Michigan.



city location

local 2.02



kent and ottawa counties communities

- |01| grand rapids
- |02| grand haven
- |03| holland
- |04| zeeland
- |05| hudsonville
- |06| coopersville
- |07| sparta
- |08| kent city
- |09| cedar springs
- |10| rockford
- |11| lowell
- |12| caledonia

notable business

- meijer**
growing regional retailer
- wolverine world wide**
footwear and apparel
- amway global**
personal products manufacturing
- steelcase**
office furniture manufacturing
- herman miller**
office furniture manufacturing
- haworth**
office furniture manufacturing

philanthropy

- peter wege**
heir to steelcase founder
- rich devos**
co-founder of amway global
- dick devos**
entrepreneurial businessman
- jay van andel**
co-founder of amway global
- fred meijer**
founder of meijer retail stores

development

- the city of grand rapids**
- the state of michigan**
- grand rapids metropolitan council**
regional government authority
- the right place**
west michigan economic development
- design west michigan**
economic development with a focus in design

higher education

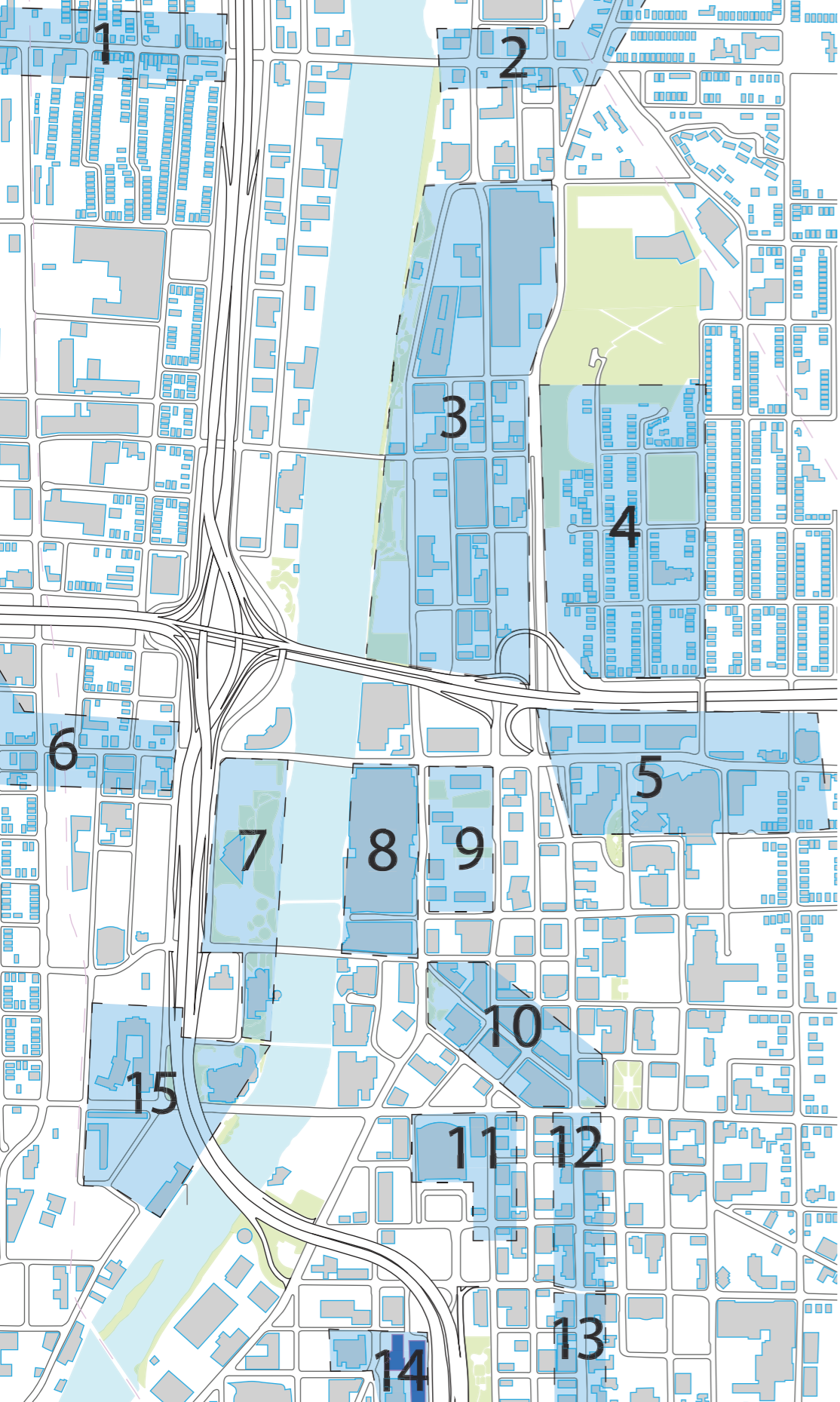
- aquinas college**
liberal arts college, catholic affiliation
- grand rapids community college**
- grand valley university**
- kendall college of art and design**
visual arts college
- michigan state medical school**
medical school

left: a list of important and influential individuals, organizations and institutions that are key to the economic and cultural growth of Grand Rapids. Each of these institutions is located locally and in close proximity to the city proper.

Grand Rapids



a night perspective of the skyline of Grand Rapids taken from the Bridge St. Bridge.

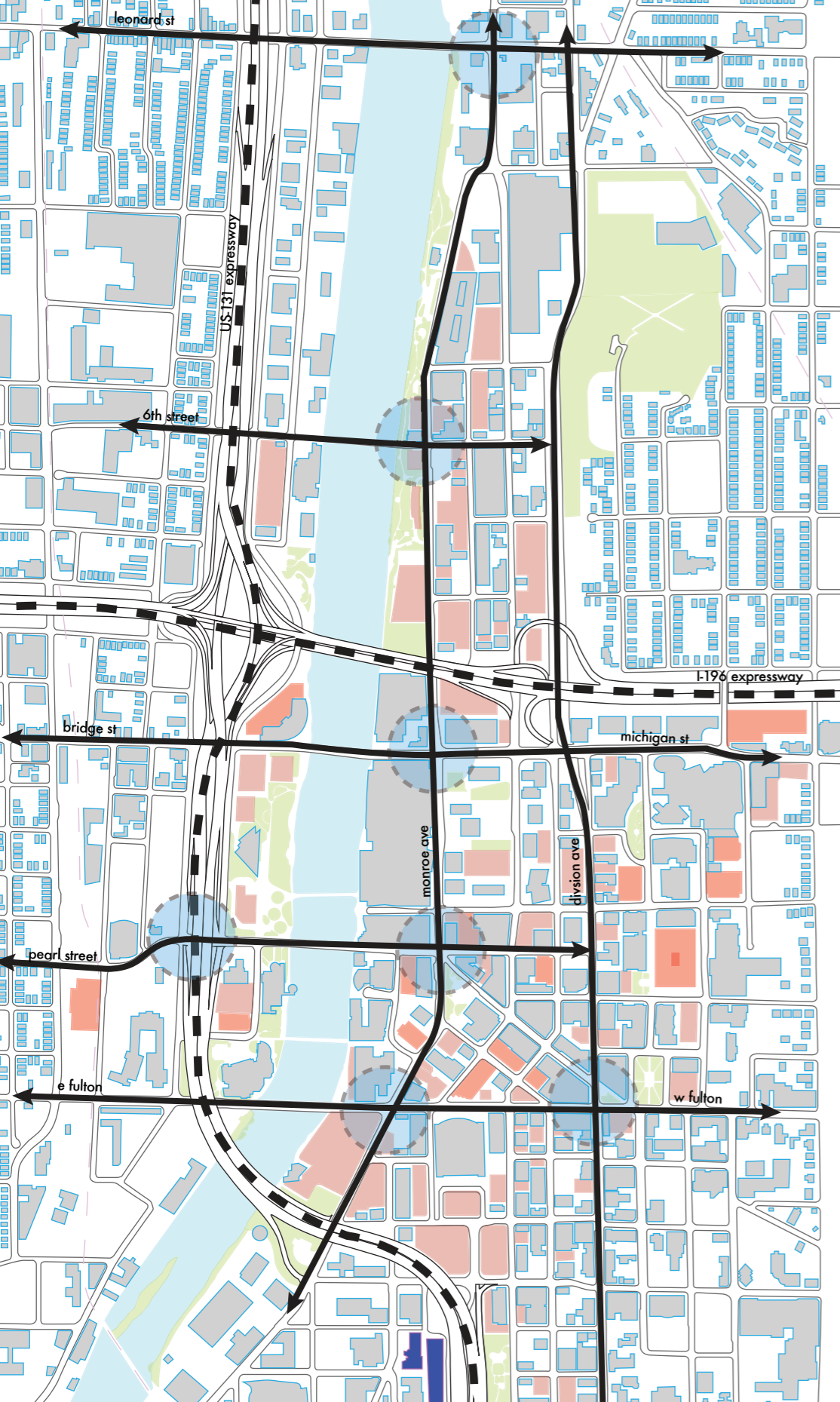


identity areas 2.02

The identity areas of grand rapids are important business districts or cultural centers that are know for specific attributes. Each area provides a different value to the city and should be looked at as a prime location for focusing on urban renewal and enhancement.

 identity areas






- 1 west leonard business district
- 2 plainfield business district
- 3 monroe north
- 4 belnap lookout
- 5 michigan street medical mile
- 6 stockbridge business district
- 7 ah-nab-awen park
- 8 devos place/amway grand plaza hotel
- 9 calder plaza
- 10 monroe center
- 11 van andel arena/ionia street
- 12 north division
- 13 south division
- 14 grand rapids central station/ grandville street
- 15 grand valley state university



automobile access

2.02

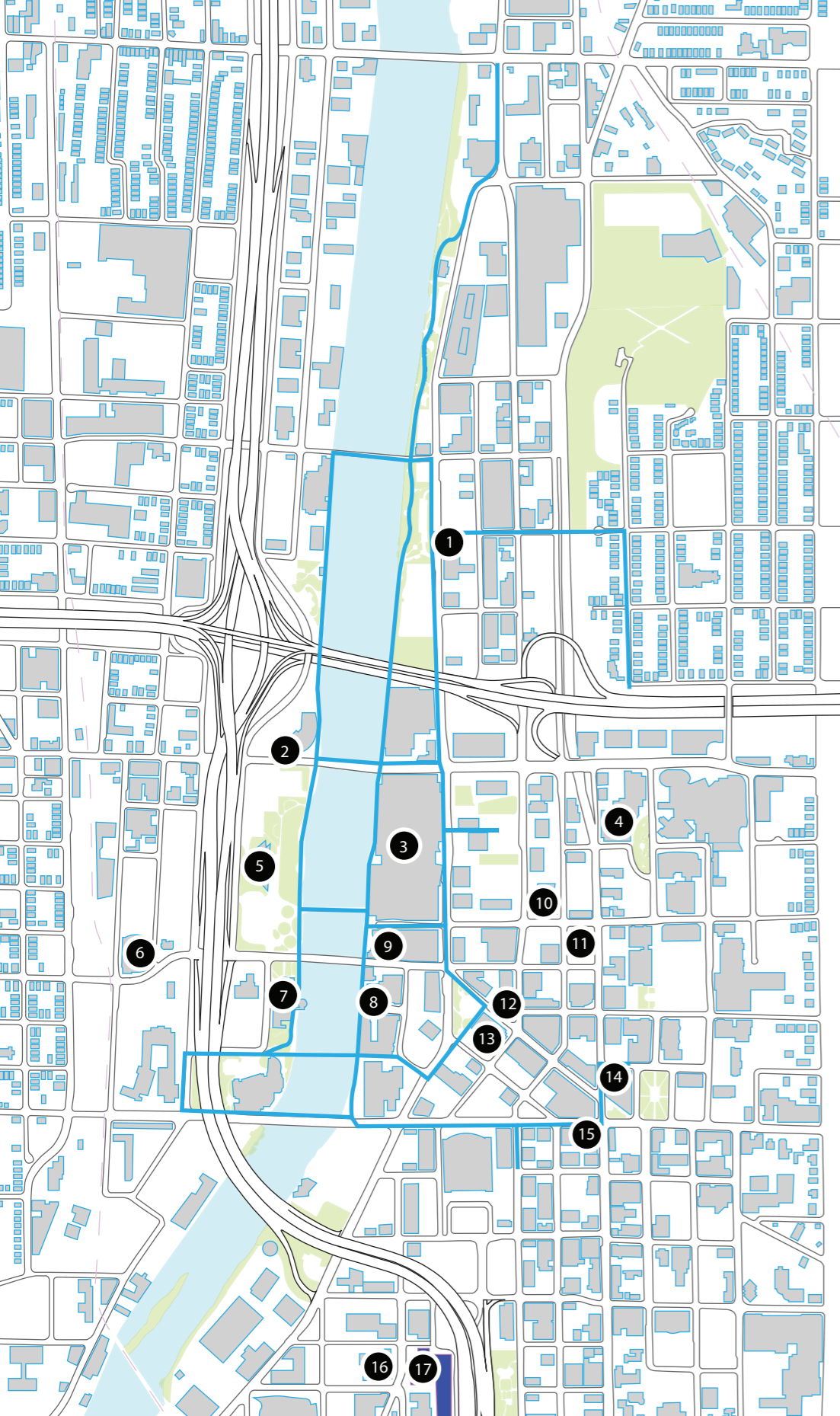
The automobile access in grand rapids is crucial for both positive and negative reasons. The positive is easy access to any city amenity and simple arterial connections between roads that promote wayfinding. The negatives are simply that the city is contained by major highways. The importance of taking advantage of the main arterial roadways is one of the priorities in enhancing the city. The urban fabric should be challenged to transform with new ideas in infrastructure.

-  crucial connection
-  highway
-  main road
-  surface parking
-  parking structure



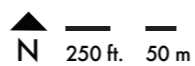
pedestrian connection 2.02

The pedestrian pathways in the city provide important connections and walking routes to notable businesses and buildings in the downtown area. These pedestrian paths provide crucial access to areas that may not and should not be accessible by car. Grand Rapids is a small enough area that the entire city is walk-able, and because of this, local business can thrive due to pedestrian traffic.



— pedestrian walk

- 1 brass works building
- 2 riverhouse condos
- 3 devos performance hall
- 4 van andel institute
- 5 gerald r. ford presidential museum
- 6 david d. hunting ymca
- 7 grand rapids public museum
- 8 jw marriott hotel
- 9 amway grand plaza hotel
- 10 kent county courthouse
- 11 kendall college of art and design
- 12 ledyard historical block
- 13 grand rapids art museum
- 14 grand rapids civic theatre
- 15 urban institute of contemporary art
- 16 founder's brewing company
- 17 the rapid central transit station



|3.00| concept

“

At a certain point, I just put the building and the art impulse together. I decided that building was a legitimate way to make sculpture.”

-Martin Puryear

urban revitalization fellows

purpose 3.01

The purpose of the Urban Revitalization Fellowship is to highlight the strengths and weaknesses in a city in order to create an urban identity to re-imagine the weaknesses and enhance the strengths of the city. This program is intended to become a catalyst for urban growth and cultural diversification.

The individuals that are recruited and selected for the fellowship would be able to focus on a certain aspect or area of the city that could be defined as a current cultural identifier.

Each fellow would be charged with analyzing and studying a different element of the city, but he/she will have the opportunity to network and collaborate with the other fellows. This collaboration will promote a well-rounded approach to ideas and proposals for enhancing the city.



|4.00| precedents

inspiration

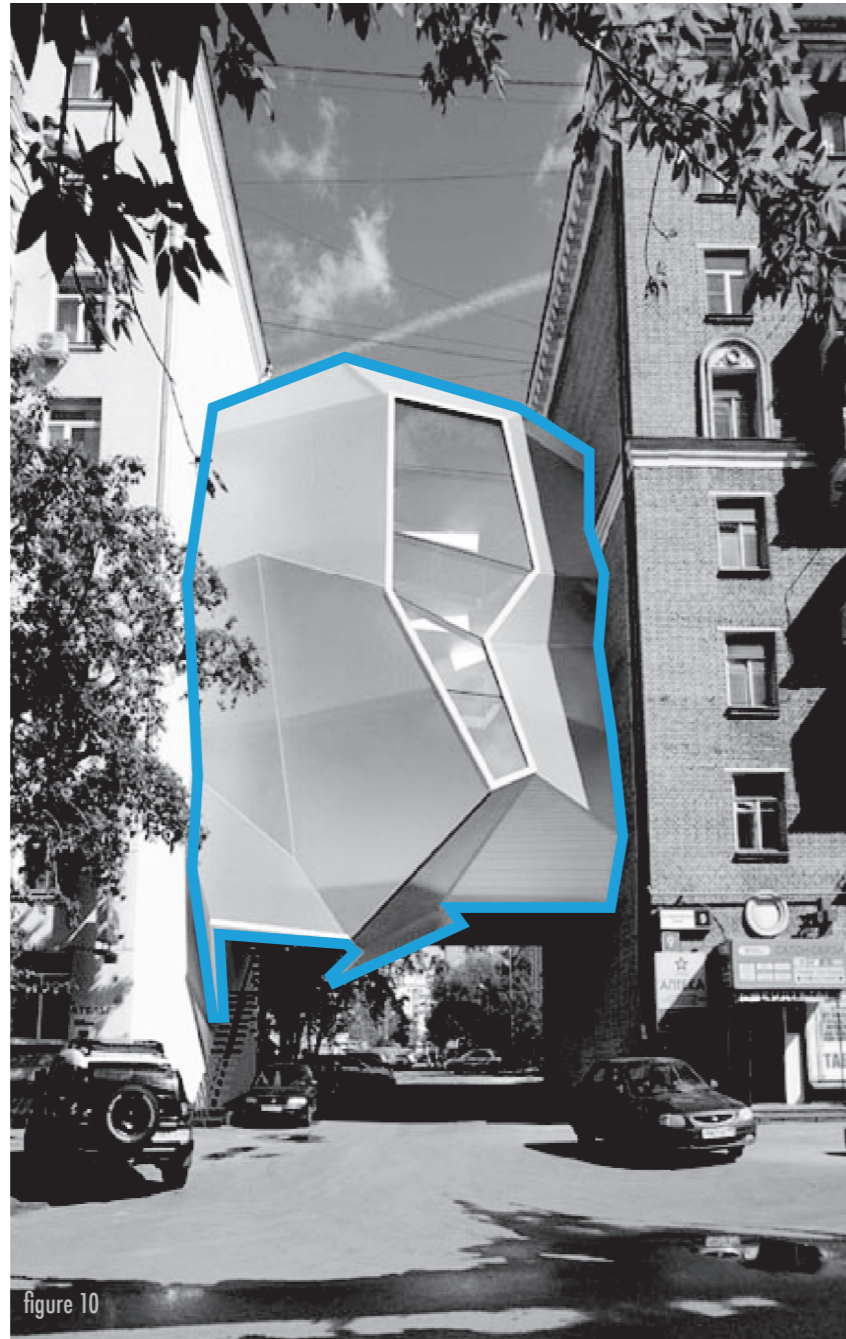
The precedent projects that inspired this thesis stem from the idea of individual attachments to marginalized space. For the program of the Urban Revitalization Fellowship, each of the attachments will be part of a network throughout the city.

Each precedent takes on a form that contrasts the host building and draws attention to the architecture. This innovative type of architecture can act as a billboard, an extension of space, or a way to reimagine density in an urban context.

Architecture that uses an existing building as the site begins to challenge what we think we know about the built environment, and challenges us to think in a much different manner.

parasite office (2011)

Moscow, Russia
architect : Za Bor Architects
project area: 230 sqm



right:
a rendering of the office parasite in its location between two multi-story residential buildings. The facade is a complete contrast to the traditional urban landscape in Moscow.

figure 10

precedent 4.01

In May of 2011, Za Bor Architects presented a new and radical idea of inhabiting space at the architecture biennale in Moscow, Russia (ARCH Moscow). The aim of the design was to create a practical business space in an underutilized yet plausible location.

Moscow is the largest city in Europe and with a continuously growing economy. The economy in Moscow is an ideal environment for the design culture because of the rapid growth. This growth leaves a shortage of unique and creative office spaces for designers, galleries, and other programs closely tied to art.

Za Bor Architects presented this project with the intention that this space would become the new design studio for Za Bor Architects.

The building is situated between two multi-story buildings and is suspended above the ground to provide access to the courtyard space directly behind it. The structure is a single unit clamped between the two blank facades of the adjacent buildings.



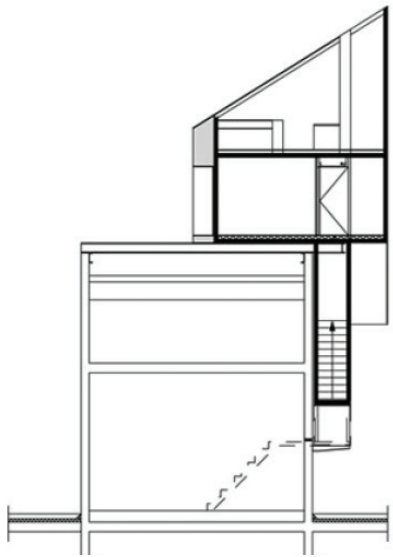
above: exterior night rendering of the illuminated polycarbonate shell.

below: interior rendering of the typical office space inside the Parasite office.



parasite las palmas (2001)

Wilhelminakade, Rotterdam
architect : Korteknie Stuhlmacher



above: a section of the parasitic structure as it attaches to the host structure.

right: Parasite Las Palmas became a three dimensional logo for its host building in 2001. The large spaces on the interior of the host building were temporarily used for exhibitions for Rotterdam's year as European cultural capital in 2001.

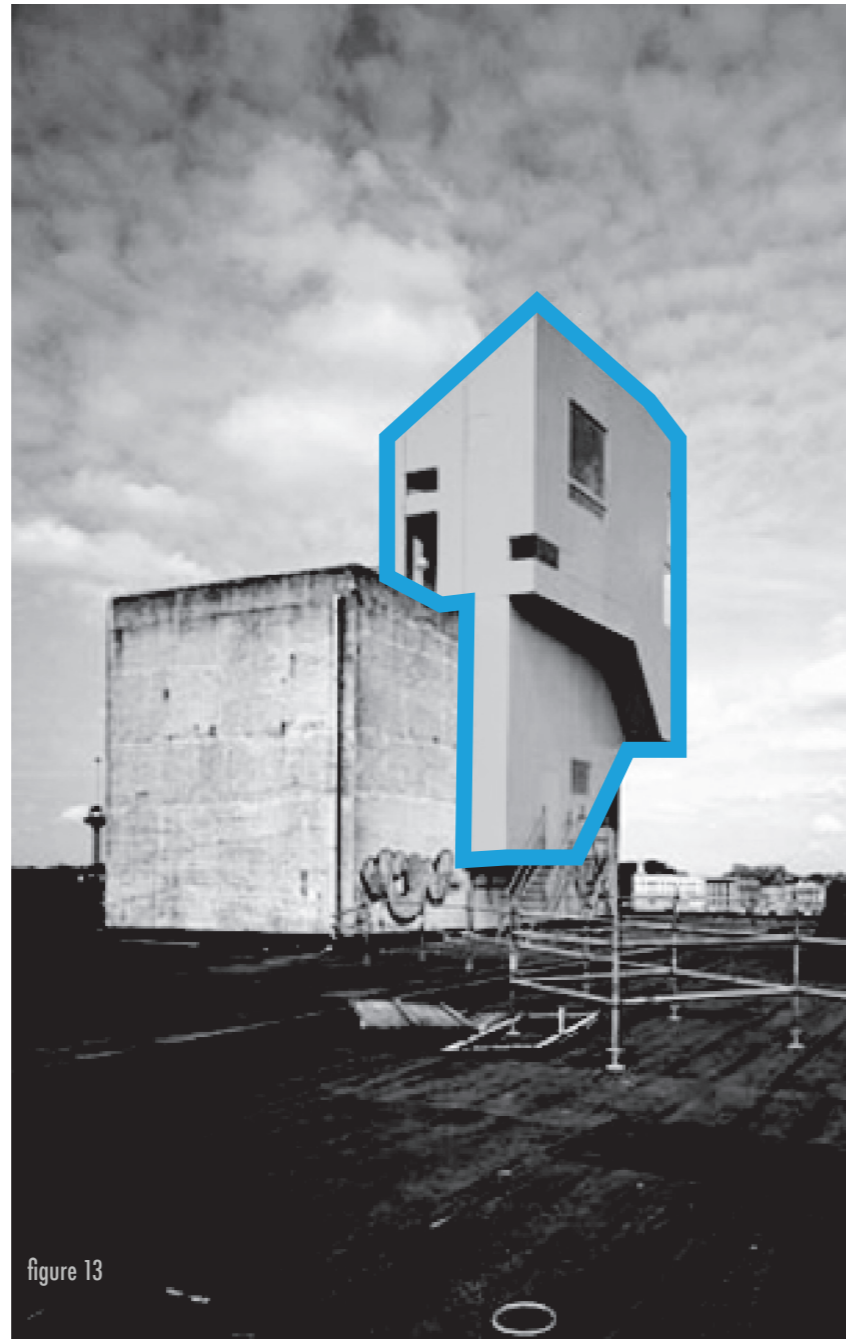


figure 13

precedent 4.02

The Las Palmas Parasite was developed to combine the ideas of prefabricated technology and the unique aspects of custom design. The parasite was attached to the existing elevator shaft of the host building. This caused limitations because of the weight that could be supported.

All of the elements of the parasite were prefabricated and made of laminated timber panels of European softwood. The parasite took only a few days to assemble. This was the first time this building system was used in the Netherlands.

The location of the parasite, at the top of a building in Rotterdam's harbour, framed one of a kind views.

The parasite remained attached to the elevator shaft of the Las Palmas building until 2005.



figure 14

above & below: interior views of the parasite after construction. The parasite showcases unique views of Rotterdam in all directions.



figure 15

prefab parasite (conceptual)

architect : Lara Calder Architects

below: a conceptual demonstration of how the Prefab Parasite would attach itself to urban voids and marginalized spaces in the city-scape.

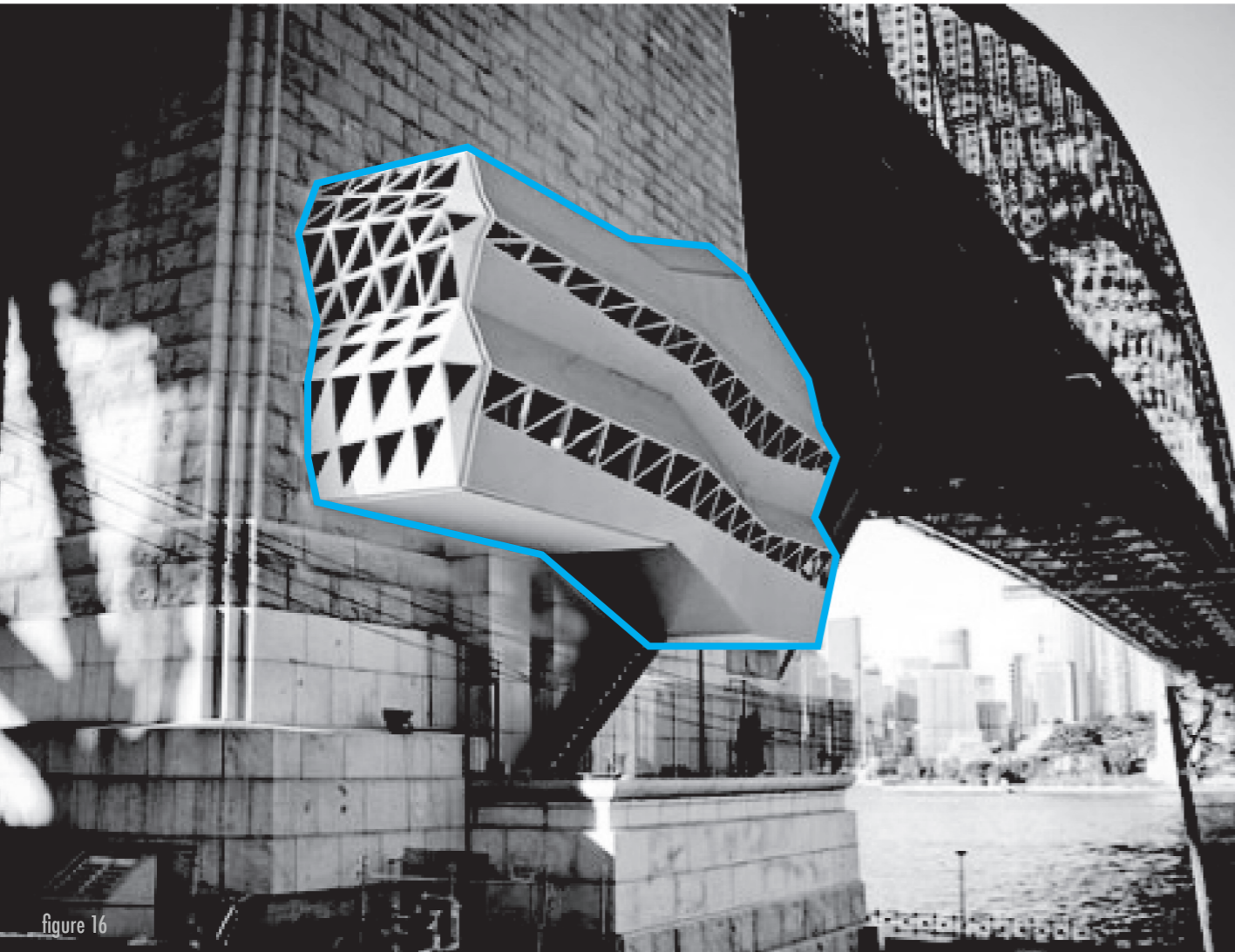


figure 16

precedent 4.03

The Prefab Parasite was created with the intention of filling in and using the spaces in urban landscapes that generally are underutilized. In an attempt to promote sustainable densification the structure would only be attached to a blank facade or an unused urban space.

The design of the Prefab Parasite is parametric. The building shape and footprint can change according to orientation. Although the footprint can change, it will only use an area of 36 sq m. The structural components were designed using a computerized structural modeling system. The fabrication and construction of the parasite would rely mostly on digital methods.



figure 17



above: renderings showing the different implementations the Prefab Parasite can accomplish within many different contexts.

below: a section of the parasite showing spatial relationships in a human scale.



figure 19

nomiya restaurant (2009)

architect : Pascal Grasso

right:
an exterior view of the restaurant and the Eiffel Tower in the background.

below:
an exterior view of the restaurant that shows the simple materiality of perforated metal panels and glass.

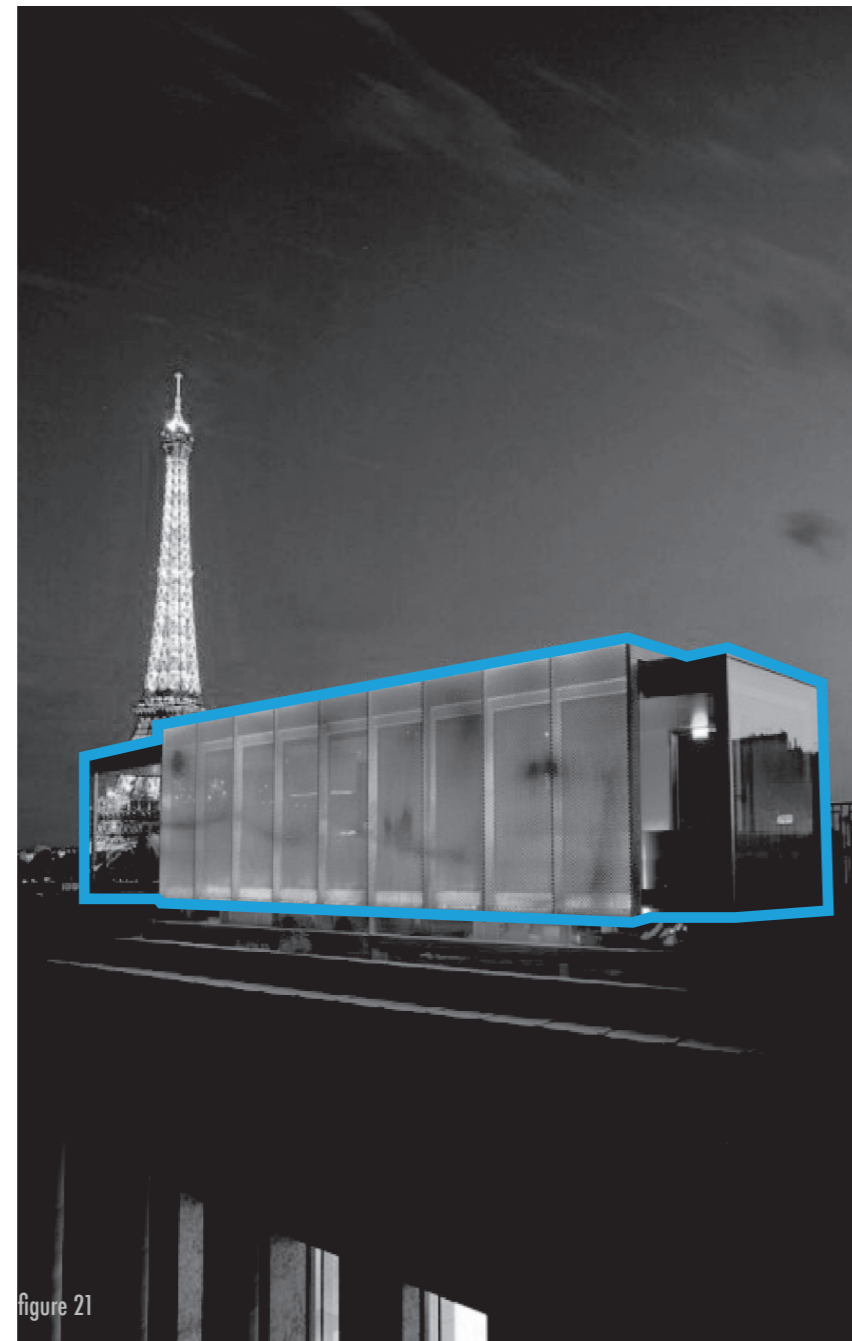


figure 21

precedent 4.04

This temporary, transportable Japanese restaurant was installed on the roof of Le Palais de Tokyo museum in Paris. The restaurant offers seating for twelve people and panoramic views over the Seine and the Eiffel tower.

The structure is enclosed in a glass box and the cooking area is covered by a translucent perforated metal screen. The enclosed spaces is 18 m long, 4 m wide and weighs 22 tons.

The perforations on the metallic skin are modeled after a drawing of aurora borealis. LED lighting was placed on the interior facade to change color to give the real effect of aurora borealis.



figure 22



figure 23

above: interior views of the restaurant showcasing the 360 degree views of Paris and simple elegance of the family style dining the architecture offers.

artprize (2008 - 2012)

2011

international art competition
winners decided by a public vote

19 day event

1,582 artists
36 countries represented

164 venues
322,000 visitors

economic impact

2011
added \$15.4 million to the economy
created 200 jobs



056



precedent 4.05

Artprize is an international art competition that takes place in Grand Rapids, MI. Since its first year, Artprize has continued to grow. The competition brings more people into the city every year as well as continuing to generate millions of dollars for the local economy. This competition is also subject to a public vote. The people that view the art are the people that ultimately decide the winner of a \$250,000 prize.

As a one of a kind art competition, Artprize is able to entice people from all demographics and walks of life to be active within the city. This type of movement of people was unpredictable at the beginning of the competition but has grown every year.

By understanding how events like this shape the way people move through a city, designers can begin to design to evoke and inspire the average person.



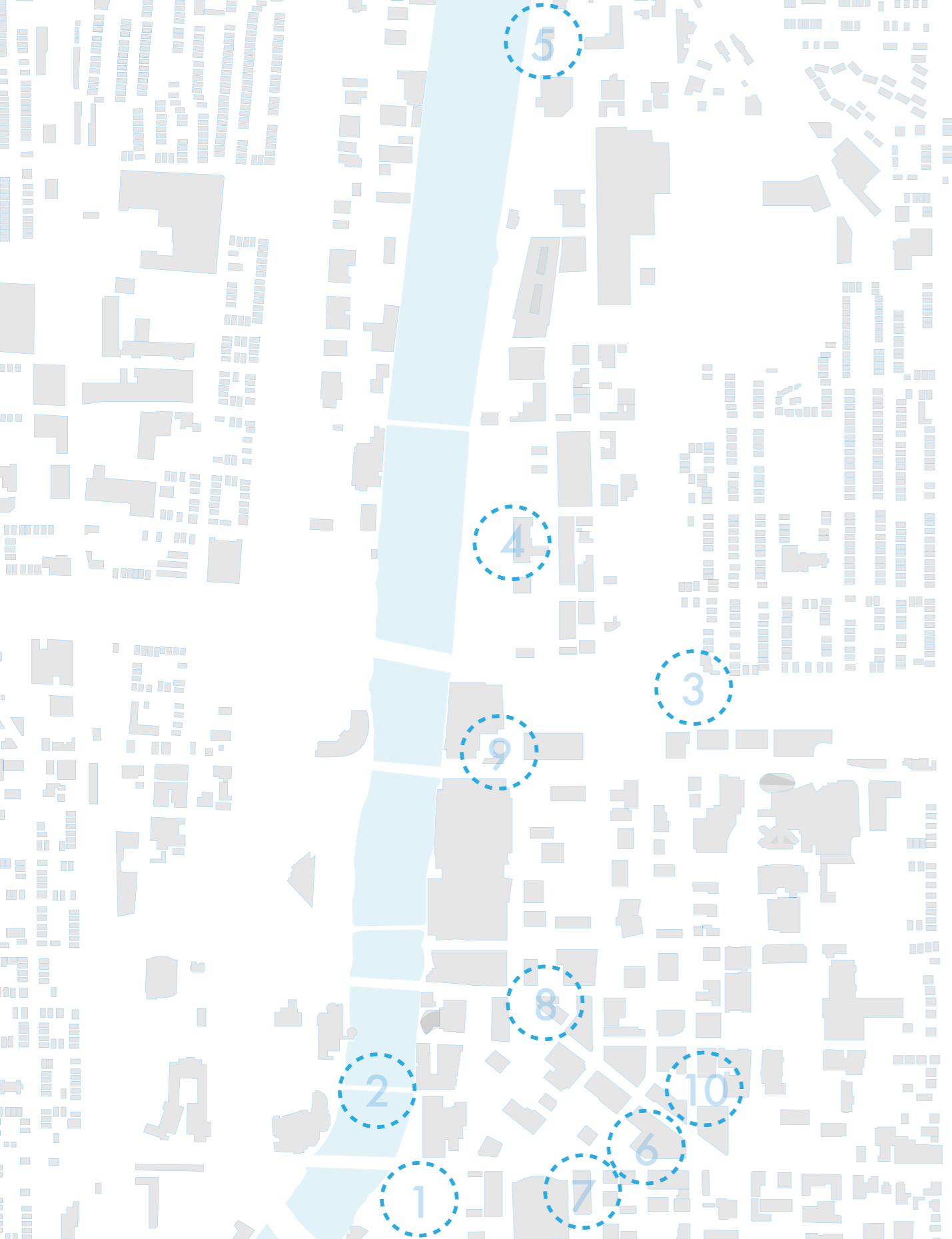
057

|5.00| proposed sites



Places draw us to them for reasons beyond the feelings derived from the five senses...some deeper recognition is at work, felt through an unextinguishable animal sensibility."

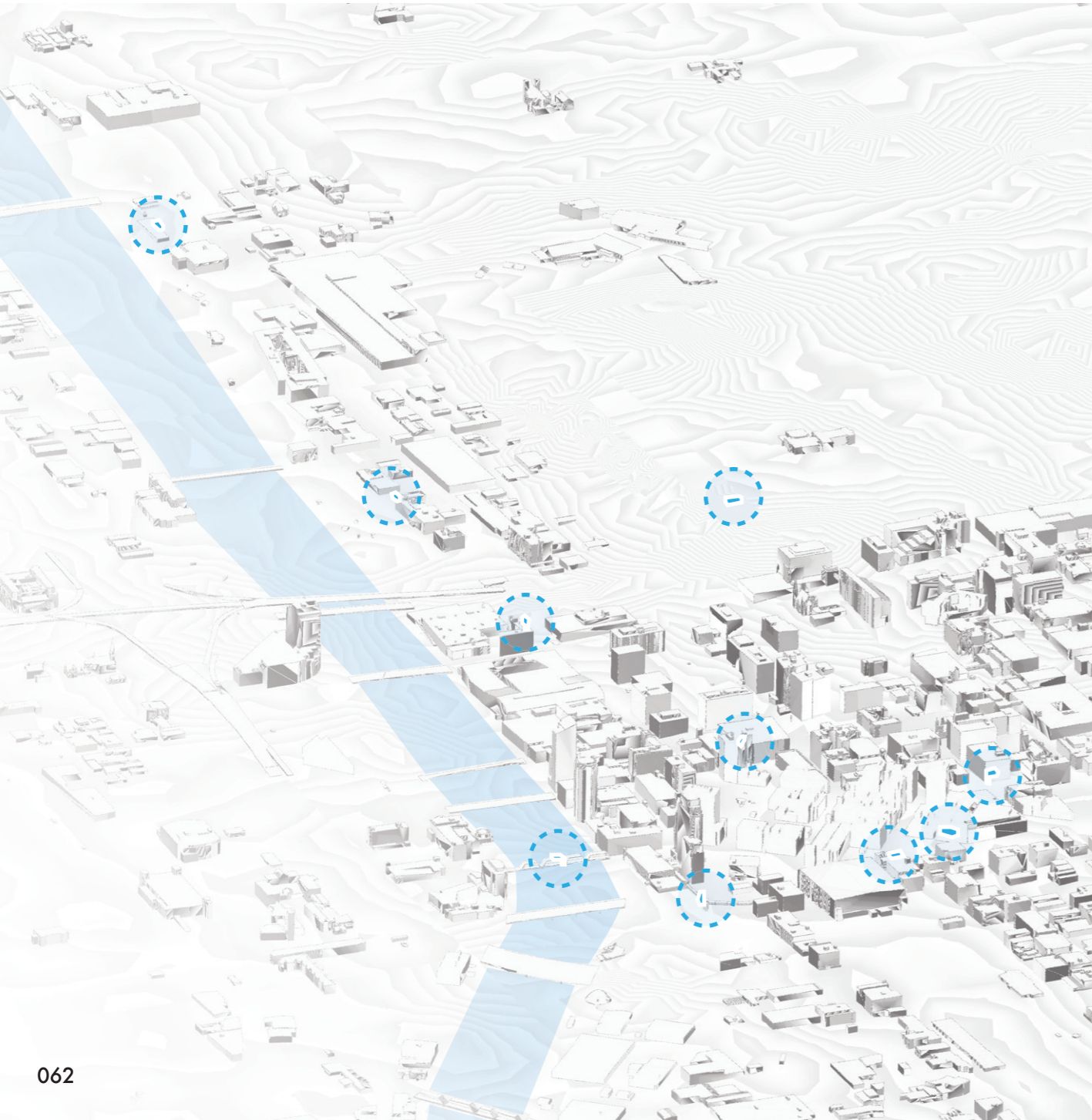
-Peter & Alison Smithson



site locations 5.01

- ① waterfront re.development
- ② visual arts
- ③ infrastructure
- ④ neighborhood re.development
- ⑤ transit
- ⑥ land use
- ⑦ urban living
- ⑧ historic conservation
- ⑨ adaptive re.use
- ⑩ performing arts

site locations 5.01



Initial site locations were chosen due a rigorous analysis of the city and it's systems. The sites are placed strategically throughout the city in order to provide the best opportunity for a fellow to propose new ideas for an individual system.

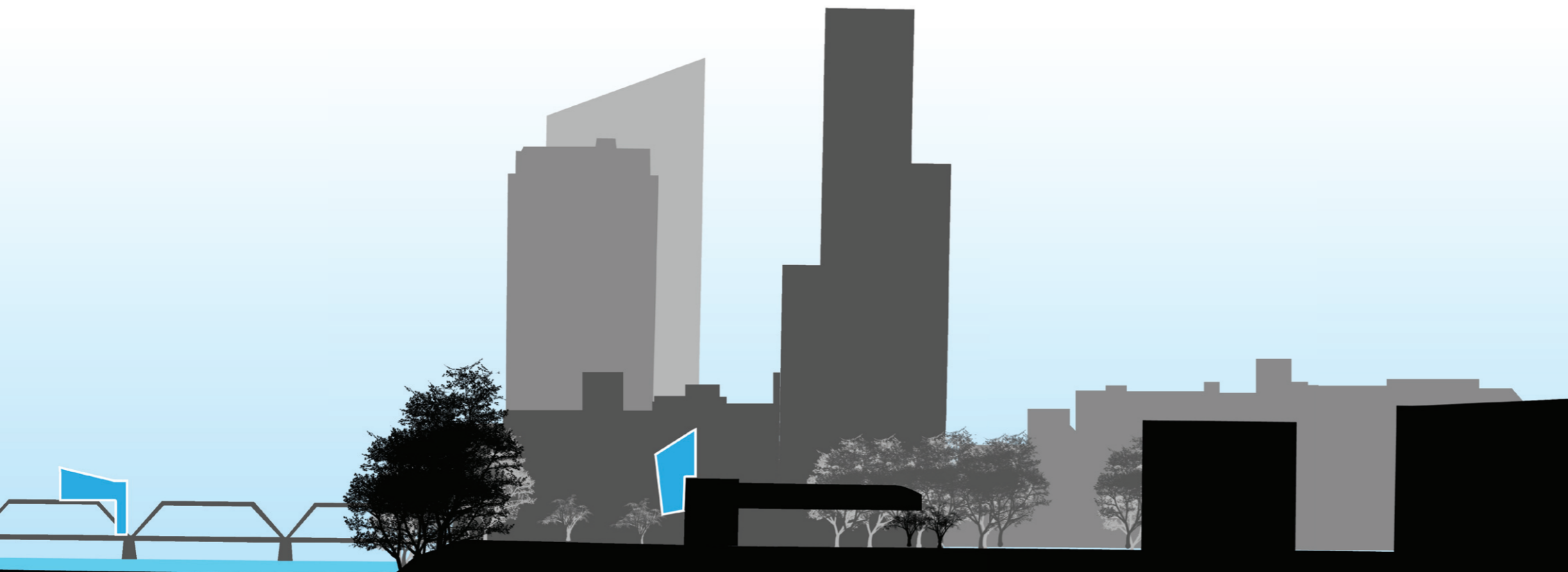
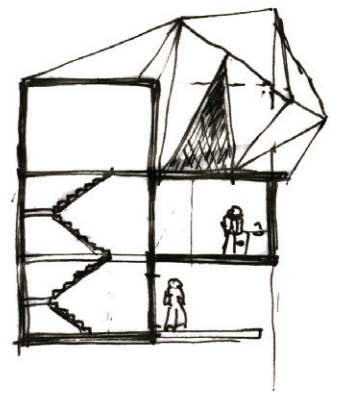
The aerial perspective to the left displays the network of attachments that would be placed throughout the city. Many of the sites can be seen from any location in the city, which would provide a brand and icon for the fellowship.

This literal and visual network that represents a holistic collaboration will provide the starting point for reimagining the city.



waterfront re.development 5.01

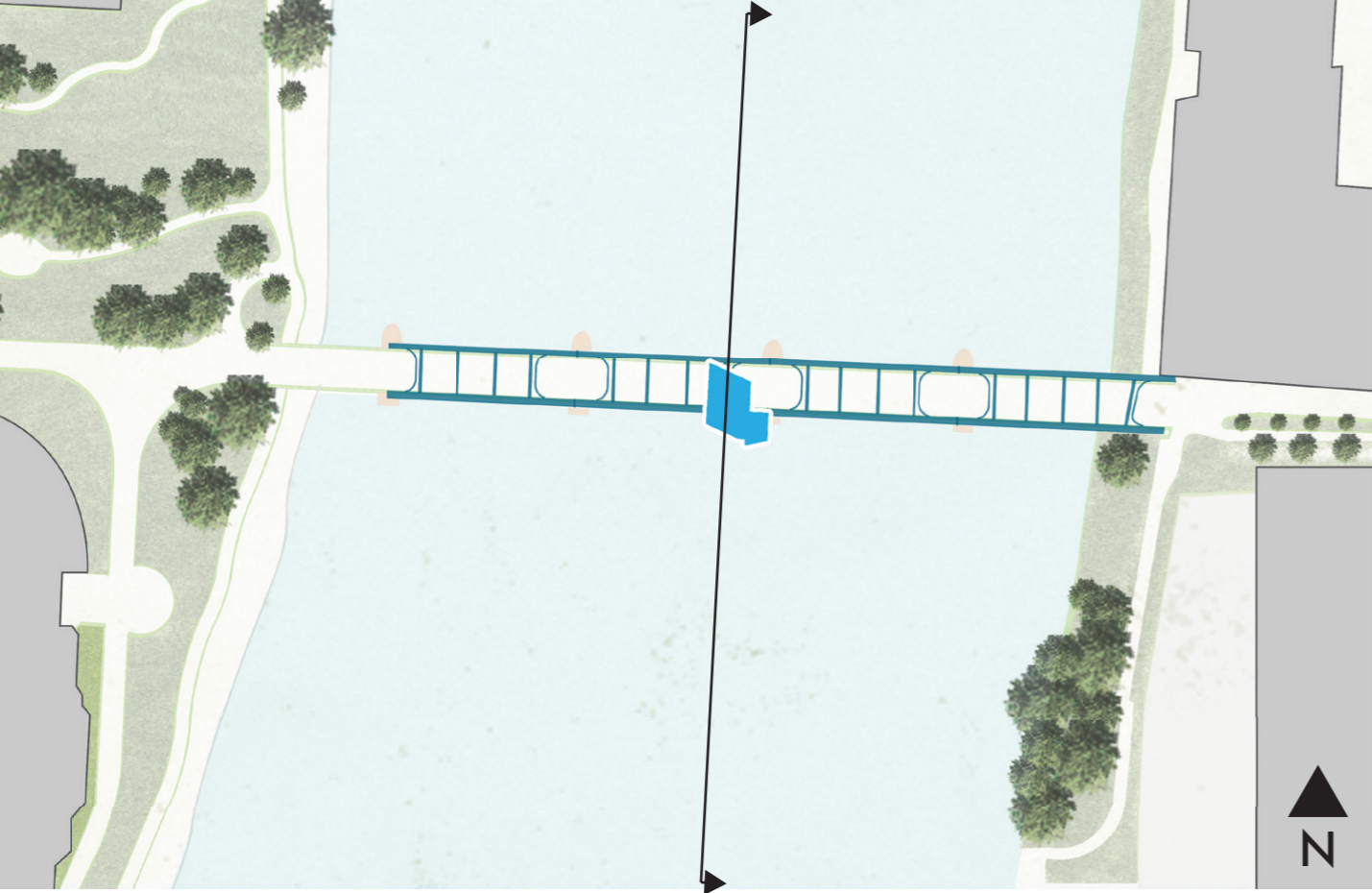
The waterfront re.development attachment is located on a vertical circulation building that services the Van Andel Arena and Devos Place skywalk. The surrounding site is currently a parking lot that is adjacent to the Grand River. The site is located in close proximity to the Plaza Towers, Charley's Crab, the B.O.B., and Van Andel Arena. The fellow will study and re imagine the waterfront to create a solution for the under utilized space.



above: bird's eye perspective of the attachment to the vertical circulation tower of the Devos-Van Andel skywalk.

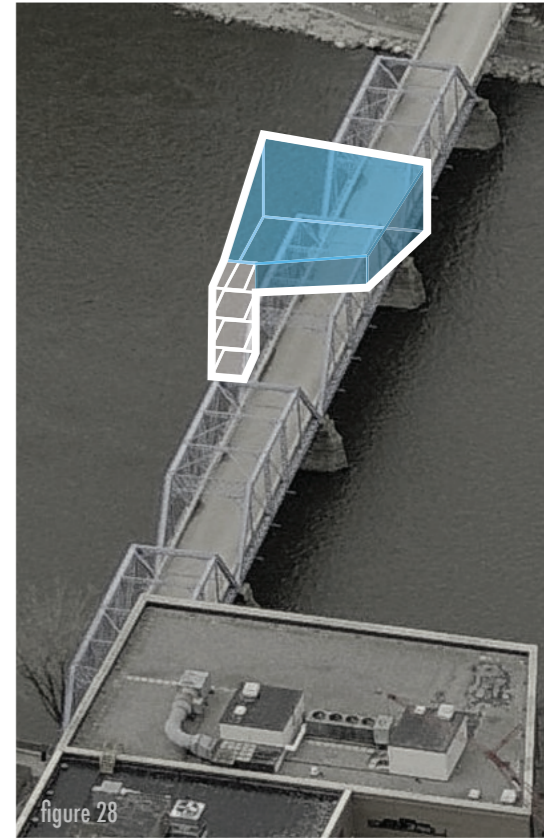
left top: a site plan showing how the attachment would insert itself into the existing context.

left bottom: a section cut through the site that displays the proximity of the river and other important aspects of the city.



visual arts 5.01

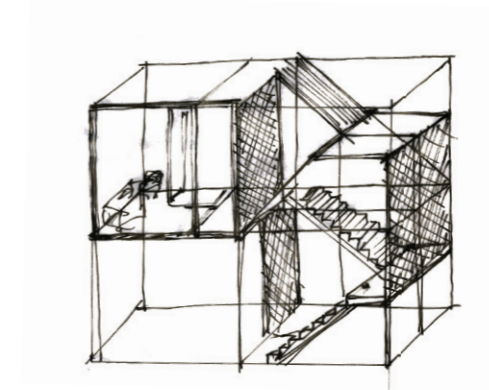
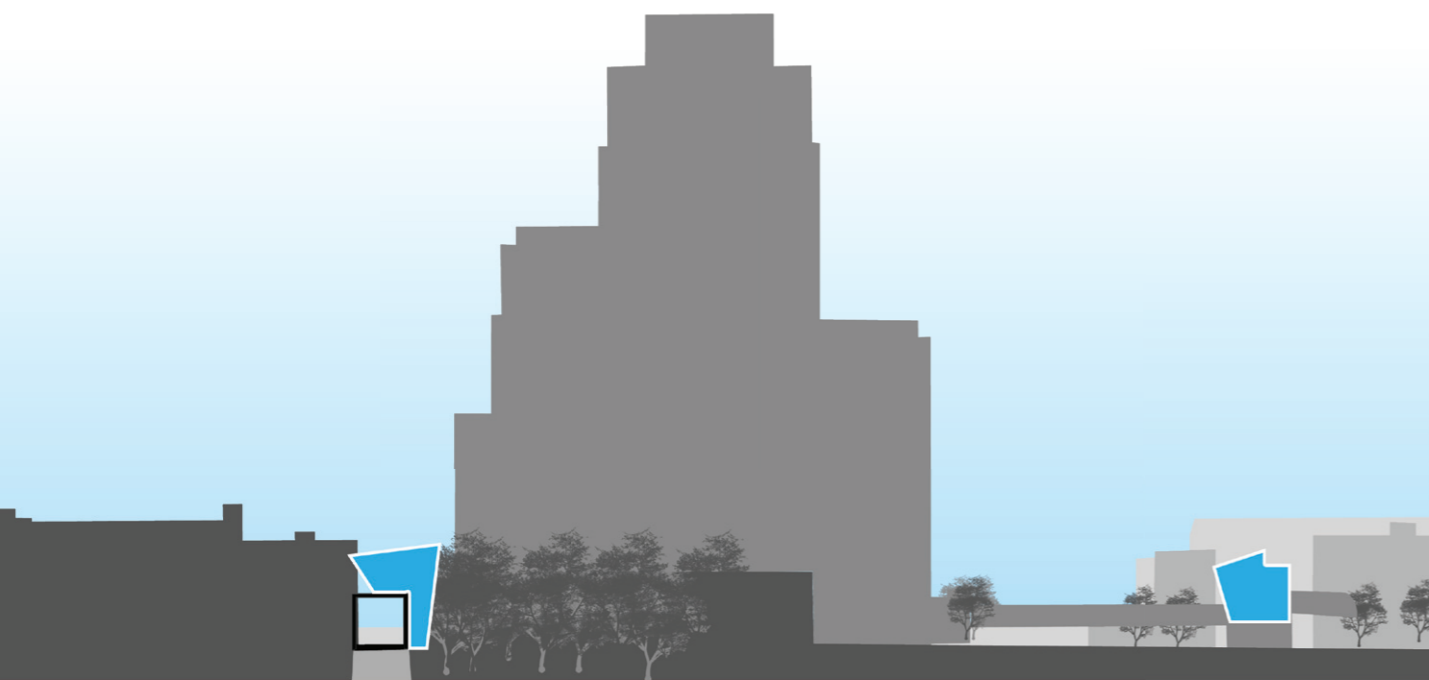
The visual arts attachment is located on the Blue Footbridge that crosses the Grand River. The site has pedestrian connections to the Grand Rapids Art Museum, Grand Valley State University, The Grand Rapids Public Museum and the Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts. Grand Rapids has a rich development of the arts, but the visual arts can be enhanced and re imagined. The fellow with analyze the current importance of the visual arts in Grand Rapids, and work to bring new forms of creativity to the city.

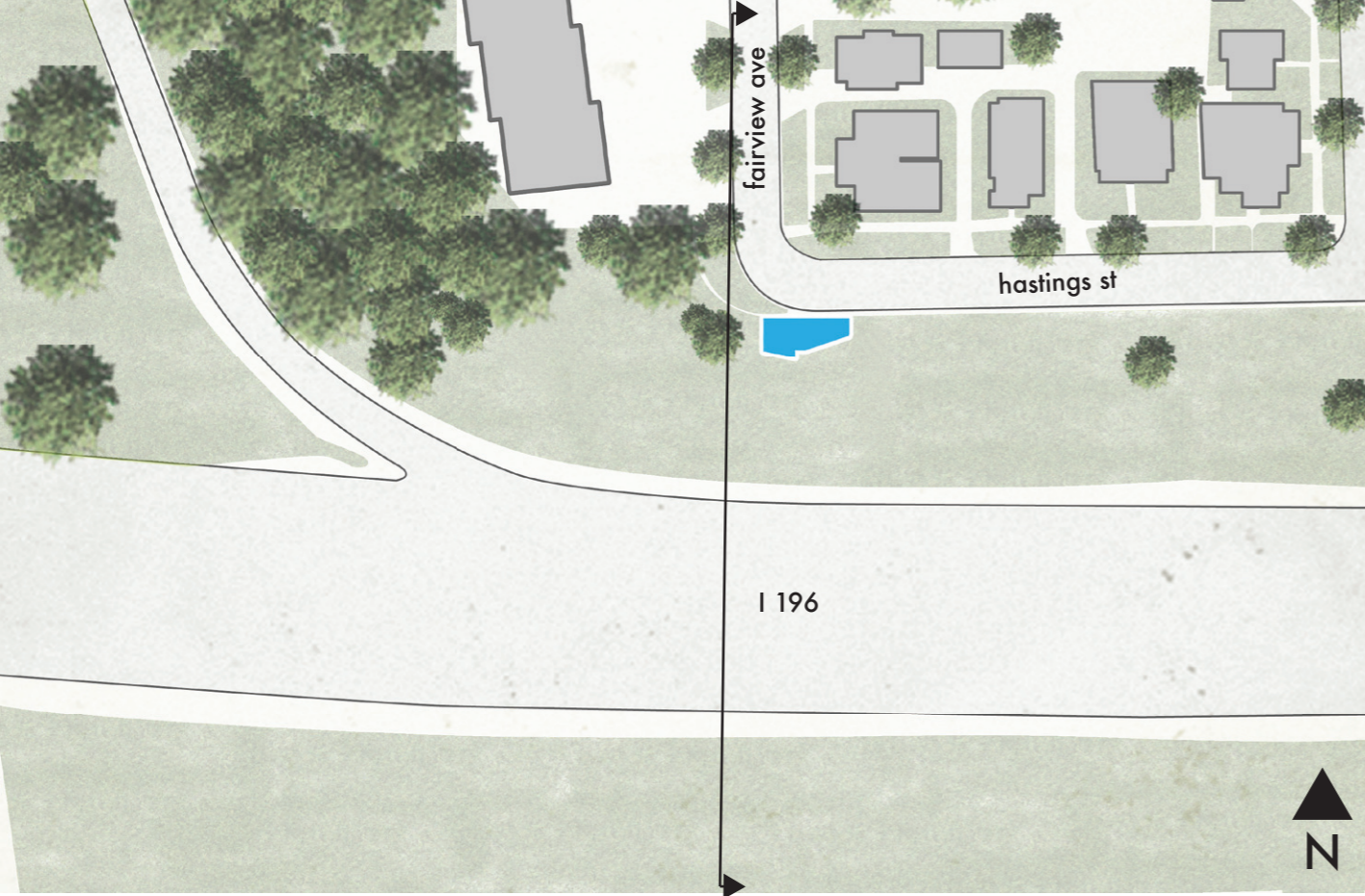


above: bird's eye perspective of the attachment to the blue pedestrian bridge that crosses the Grand River.

left top: a site plan showing how the attachment would insert itself into the existing context.

left bottom: a section cut through the site that displays the attachment's relationship to the river and the bridge.





infrastructure 5.01

The infrastructure analysis attachment is located on a retaining wall that separates a the Belknap lookout neighborhood from the I 196 freeway. The site is located directly across from the Michigan St. Medical Mile. The freeways that run through Grand Rapids have become a barrier to the growth of the city. The fellow will examine how the freeways act as a barrier and present a solution to connect the city on either side of the freeways to create a more unified city.

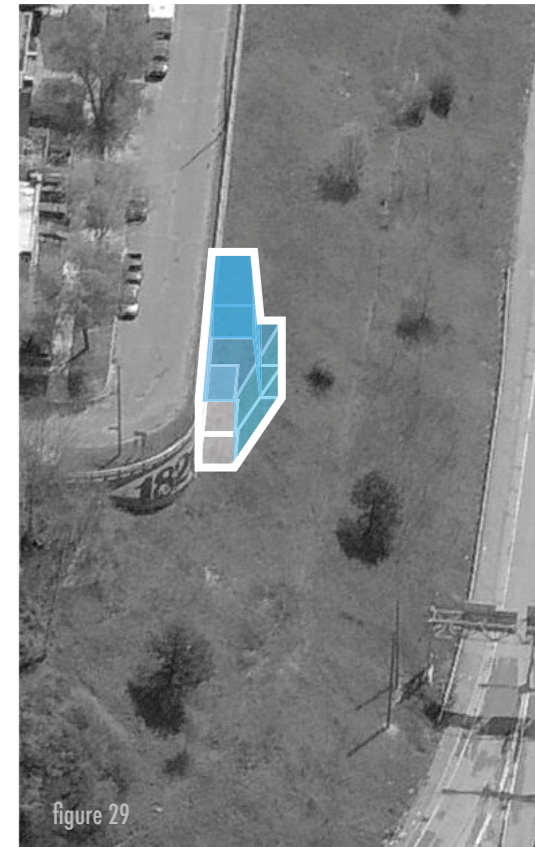
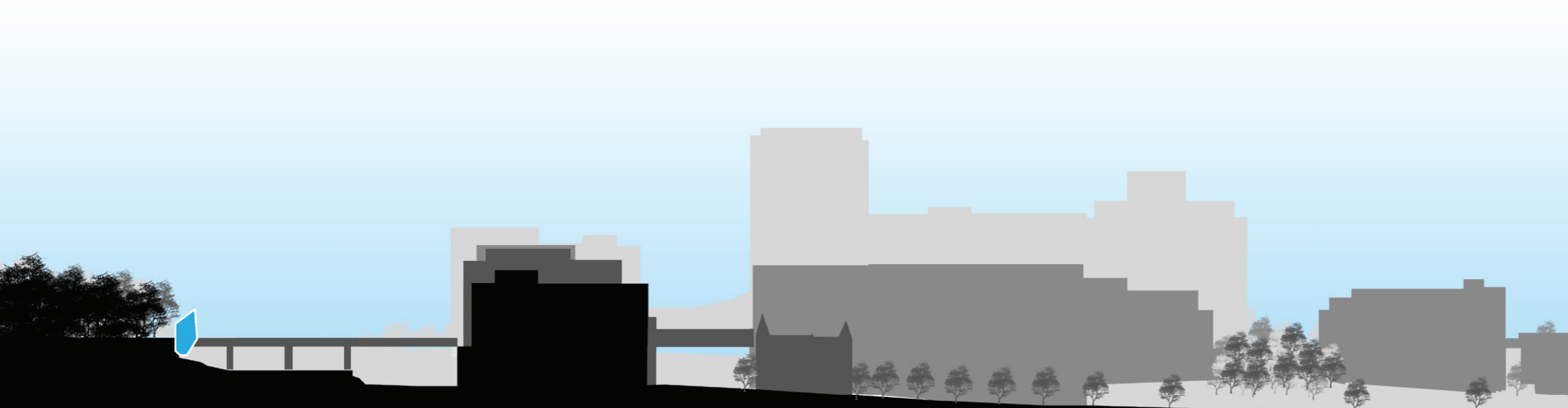


figure 29

above: bird's eye perspective of the attachment to retaining wall that overlooks I 196 and the "medical mile"

left top: a site plan showing how the attachment would insert itself into the existing context

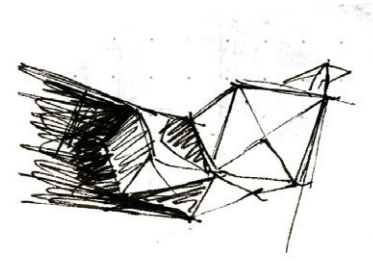
left bottom: a section cut through the site that displays the proximity the Belknap neighborhood and the expressway.





neighborhood re. development 5.01

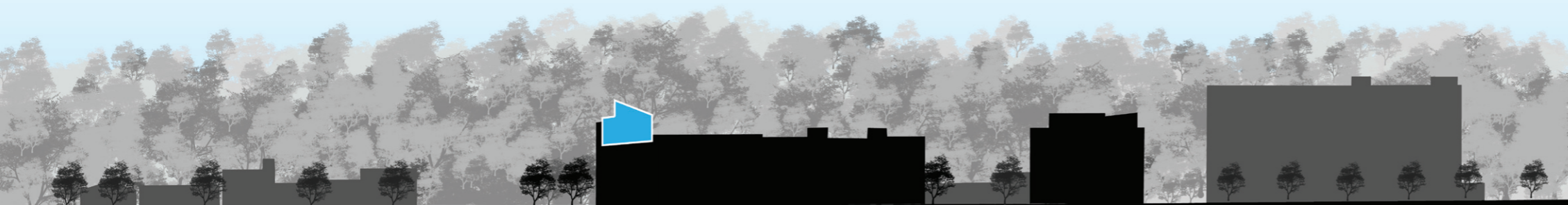
The neighborhood re.development attachment is located on the Brass Works Building in the Monroe North district of Grand Rapids. The area is currently used for industrial purposes. The area in between the host building and the Grand River is the 6th Street Bridge Park. The fellow will study the current use of the Monroe North district and propose a new use for the neighborhood to utilize this essential part of the city.

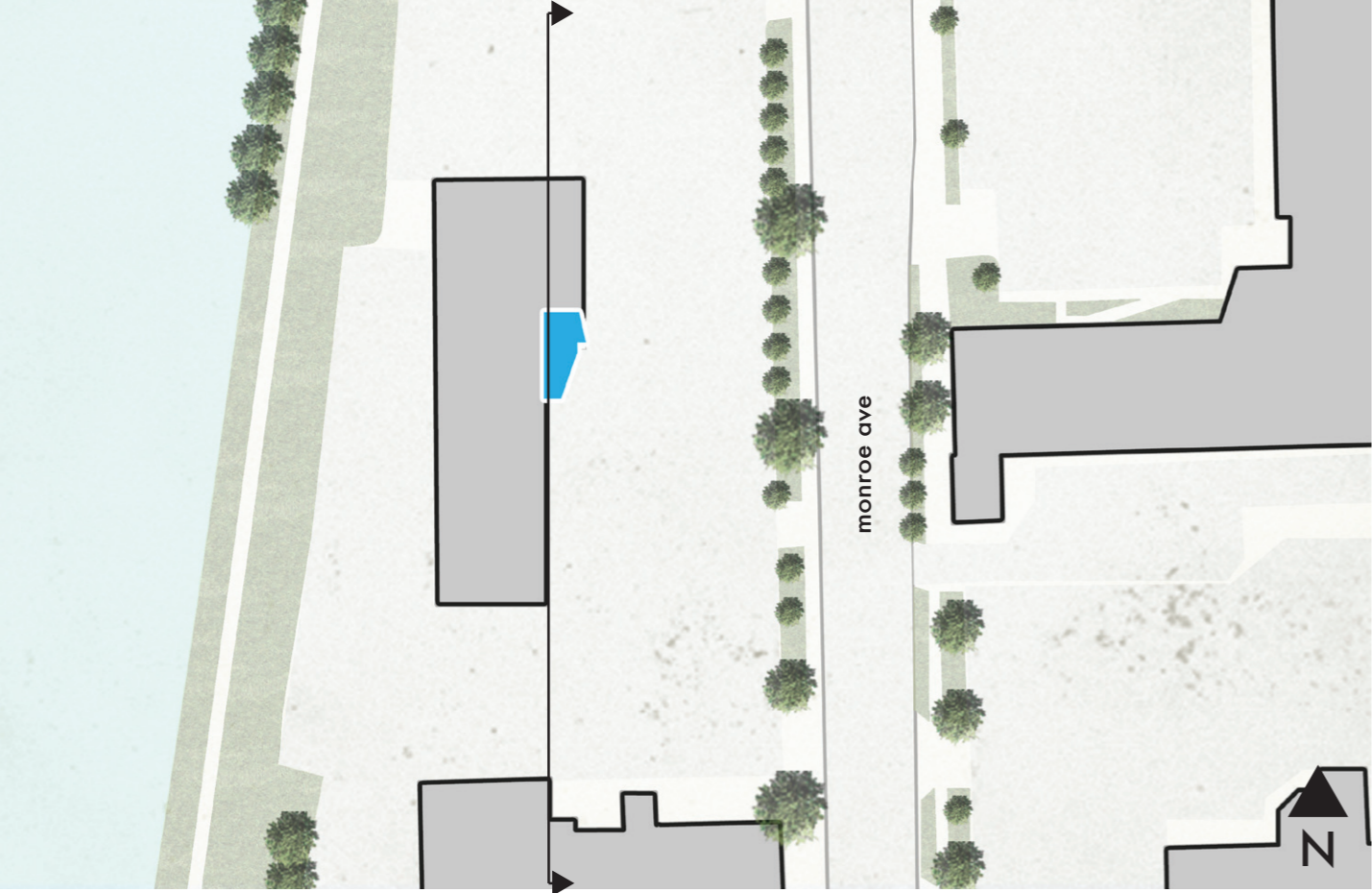


above: bird's eye perspective of the attachment on the north west corner of the Brass Works building.

left top: a site plan showing how the attachment would insert itself into the existing context.

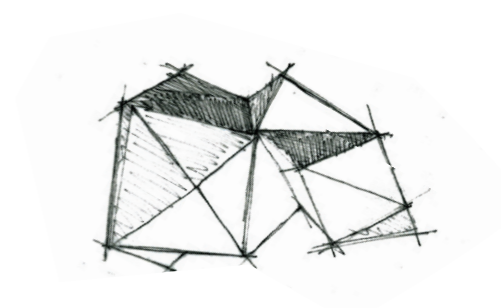
left bottom: a section cut through the site that displays the scale of the neighborhood and the sites proximity to topographical changes.





transit
5.01

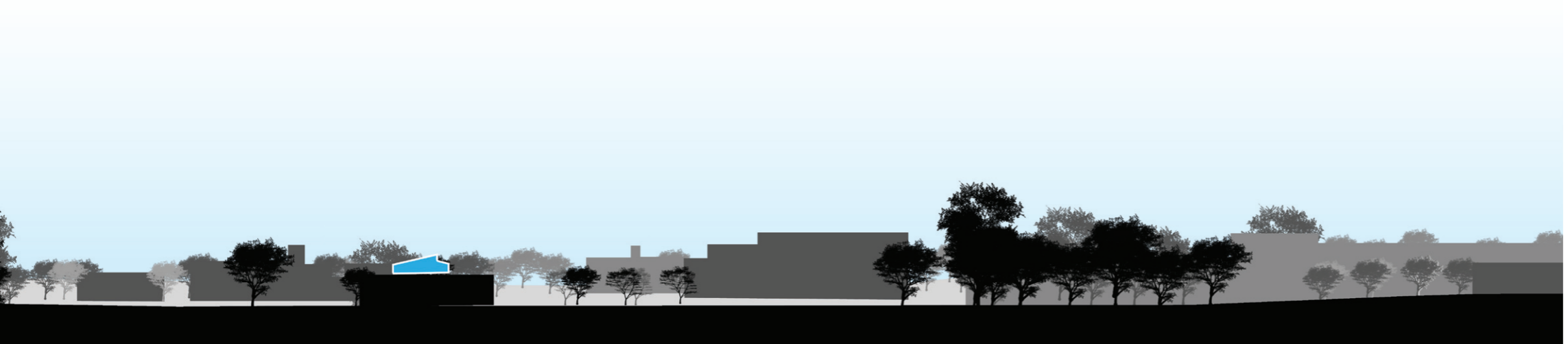
The transit attachment is located just south of Leonard Street and just west of Monroe Avenue. The business districts that are adjacent to the site are West Leonard and the Plainfield business district. The current transit center is located at the south end of Grand Rapids and there few bus lines the run directly from the city to these neighborhoods. The fellow will analyze the current structure of the mass transit system to propose a possible secondary transit hub that will house a lite rail that will run down Monroe Avenue from Leonard Street all the way to the current transit center.

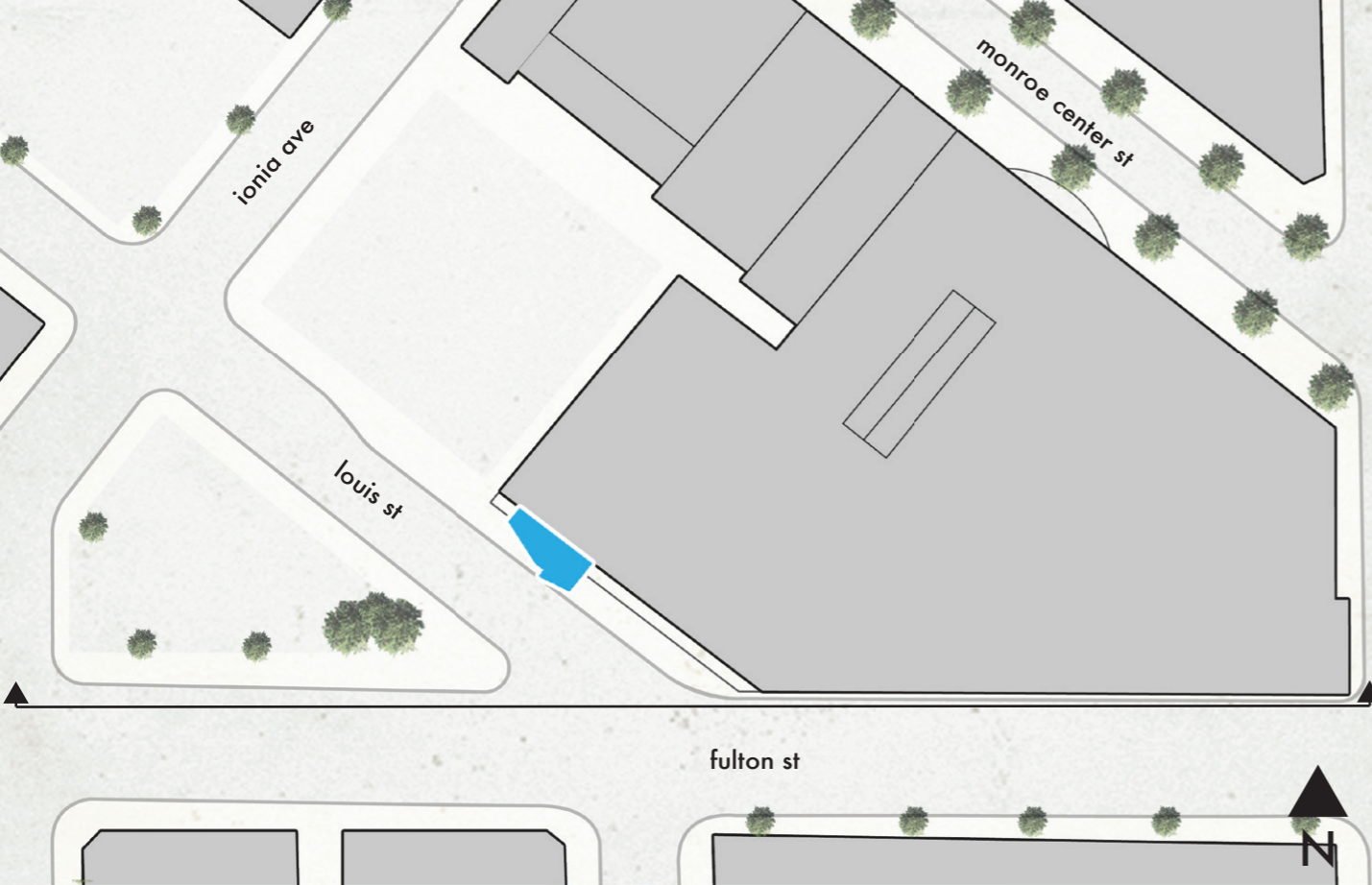


above: bird's eye perspective of the attachment on a current industrial building

left top: a site plan showing how the attachment would insert itself into the existing context

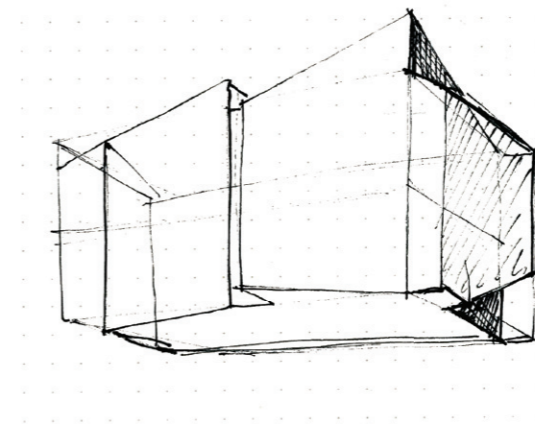
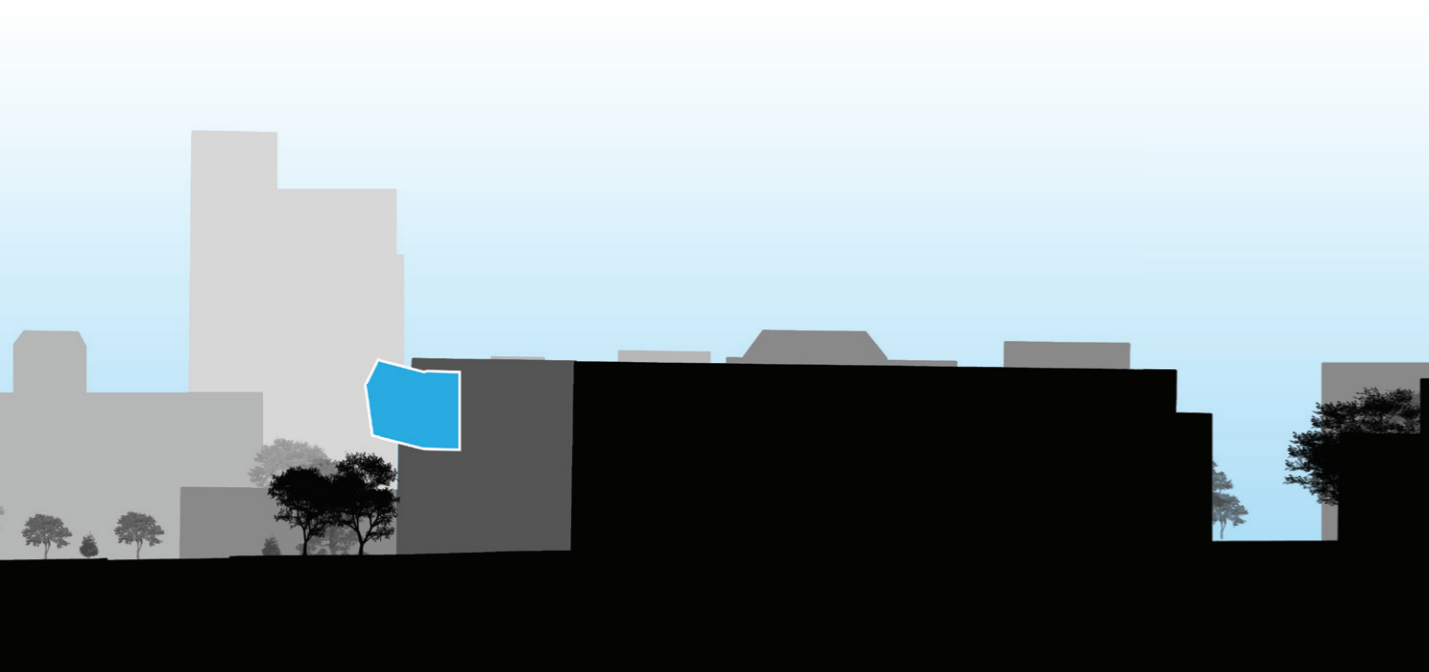
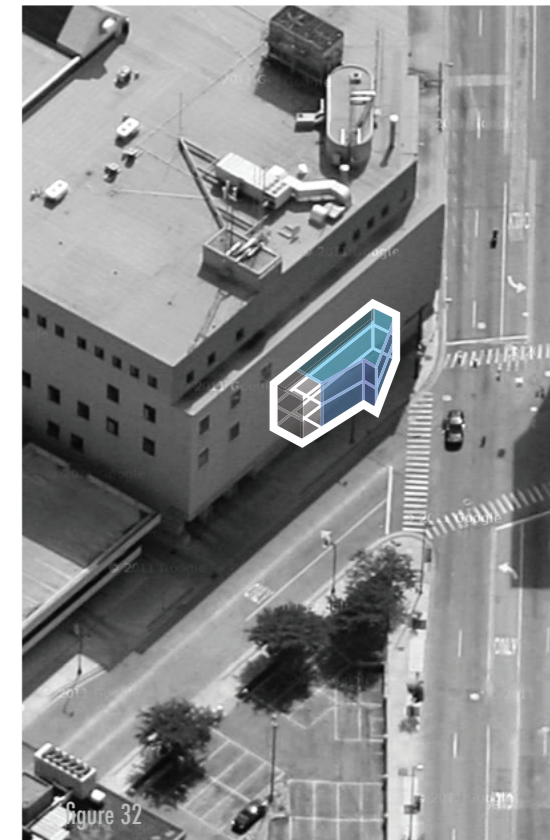
left bottom: a section cut through the site that displays the scale of the current buildings and the density of the neighborhood





land use 5.03

The land use attachment is located on the southwest facade of the building that houses the Grand Rapids Police Department. The site is located directly across from the UICA and has close proximity to the Van Andel Arena. The site location is above a triangular plaza that is being used as a parking lot. The fellow will analyze the land use of Grand Rapids in relation to parking and under utilized spaces to propose new ideas to enhance and densify the areas that house surface parking or unsightly marginalized spaces.



above: bird's eye perspective of the attachment on a current blank facade of the grand rapids police department

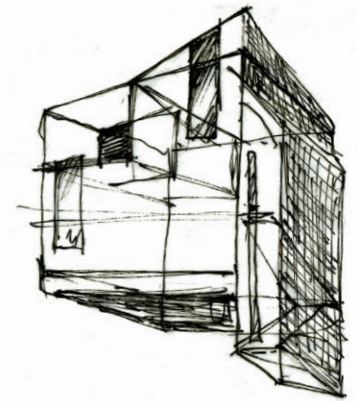
left top: a site plan showing how the attachment would insert itself into the existing context

left bottom: a section cut through the site that displays the scale of the existing buildings the opportunities to utilize open space in the city



urban living
5.03

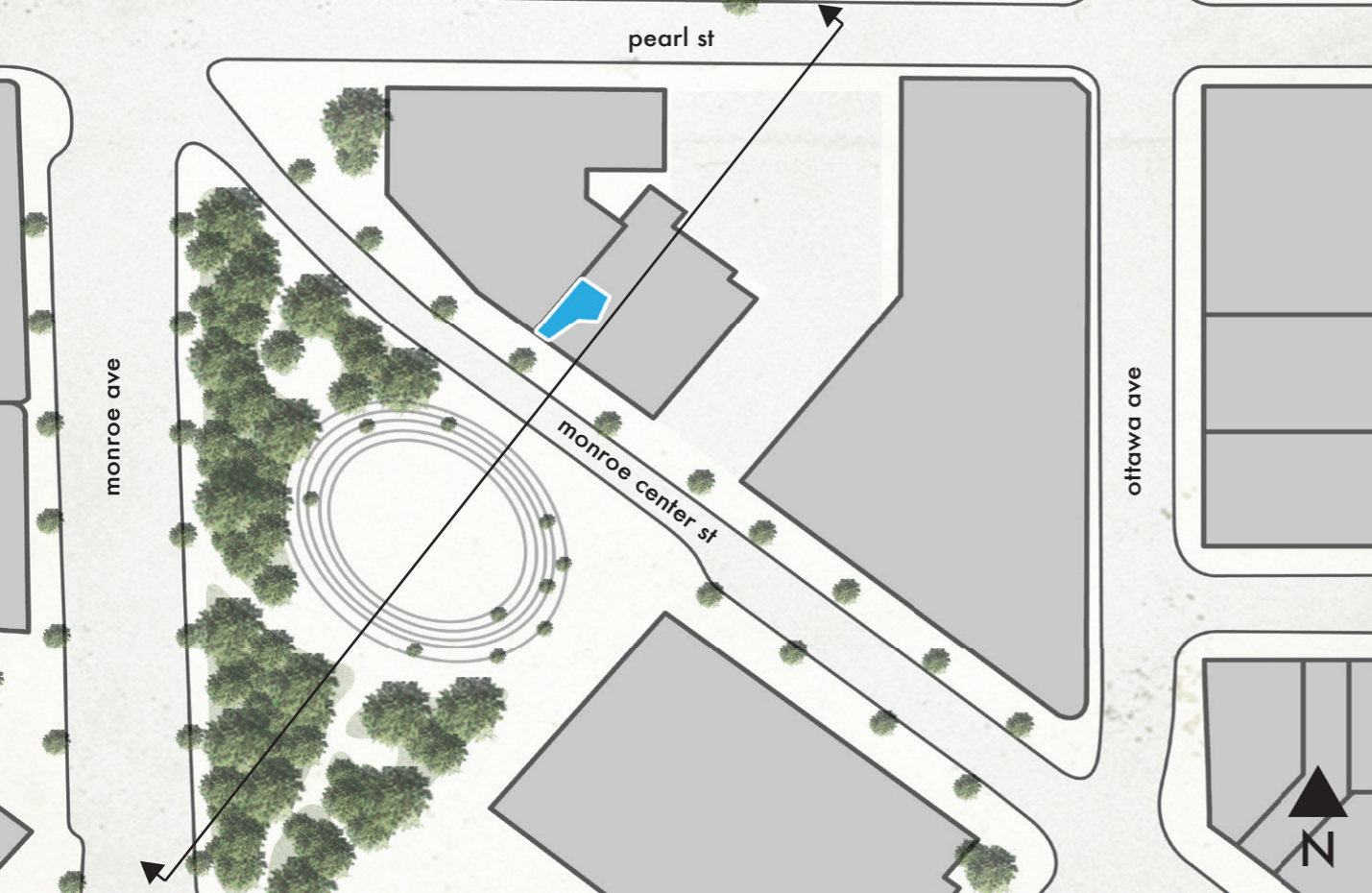
The urban living attachment is suspended above J Gardellas tavern and is between two other multi story buildings. The site has close proximity to The Van Andel Arena and is located in the central bar district of Grand Rapids on Ionia Street. The fellow will study the importance of this area to the residents of Grand Rapids and present ideas to enhance the commercial and retail aspects of the city by living and working in the most popular area for afternoon and evening activity.



above: bird's eye perspective of the attachment inserted above J Gardellas Tavern

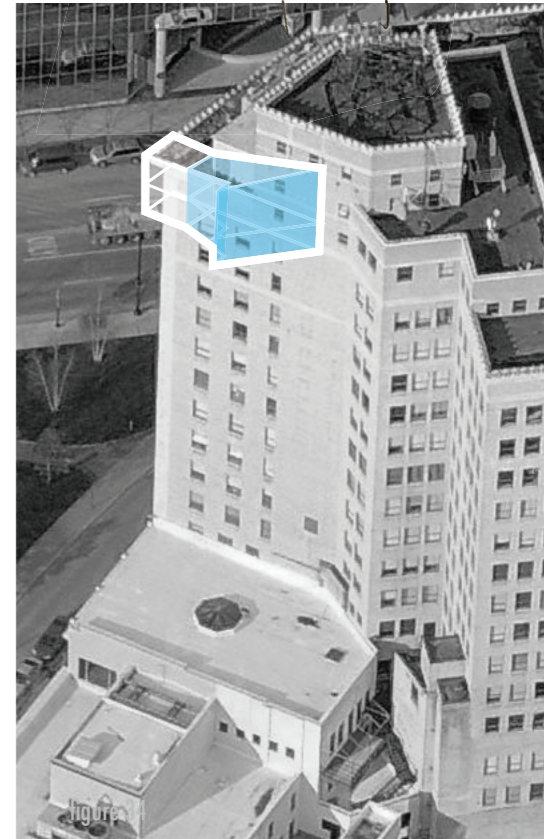
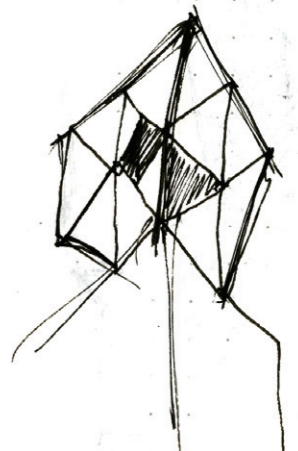
left top: a site plan showing how the attachment would insert itself into the existing context

left bottom: a section cut through the site that displays the scale of the existing buildings and the density of the of the bar district



historic conservation 5.03

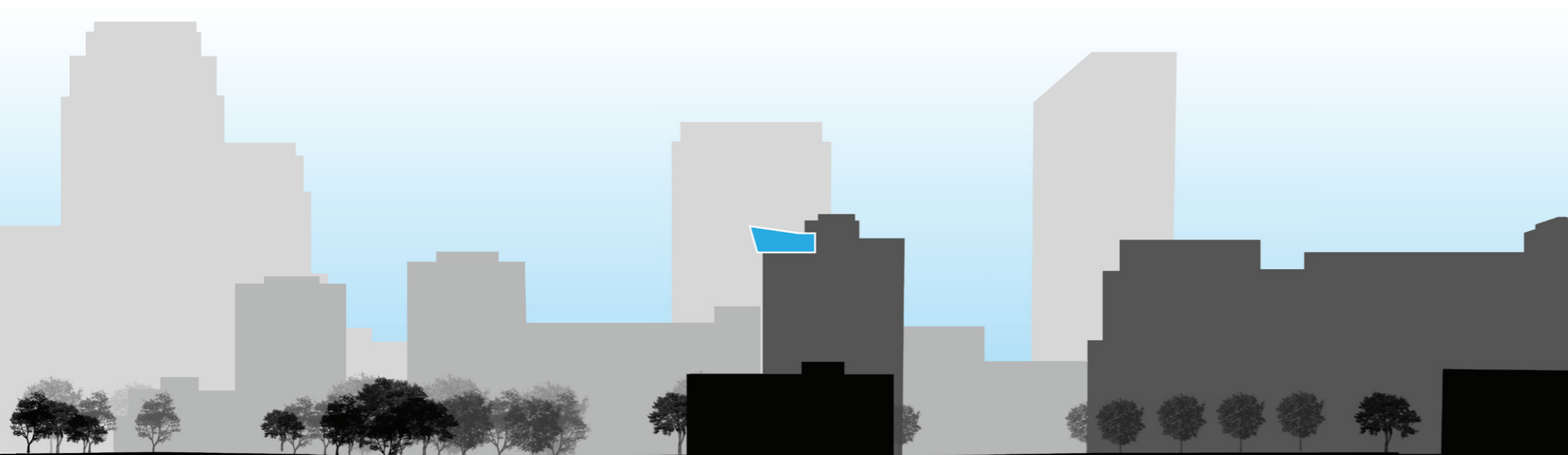
The historic conservation attachment is attached to the McKay Tower. The McKay tower was built in 1890 and for some time was the tallest building in Grand Rapids. The parasite overlooks the historic Ledyard building, the Grand Rapids Art Museum, and other historic buildings the area. The site is at the heart of the city center. The fellow will study the importance and current uses of the historic buildings in Grand Rapids to promote and enhance their function throughout the city.



above: bird's eye perspective of the attachment to the top of the McKay Tower

left top: a site plan showing how the attachment would insert itself into the existing context

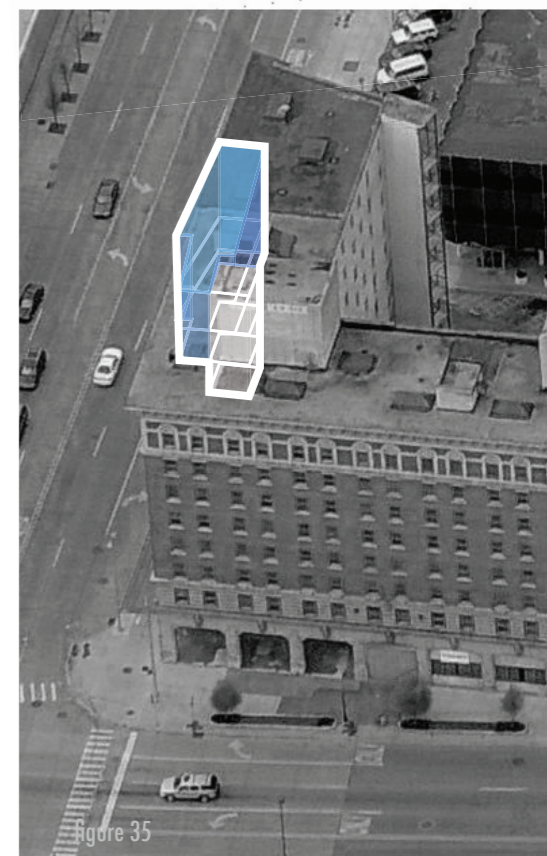
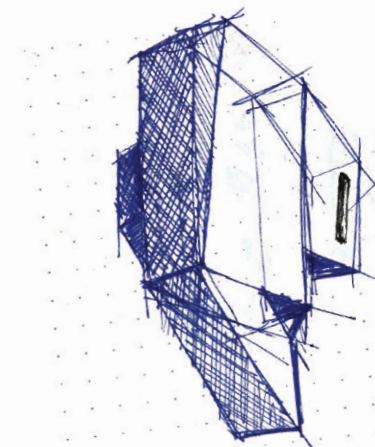
left bottom: a section cut through the site that displays the scale of the existing buildings as well as the unobstructed views of Rosa Parks Circle





adaptive re.use 5.03

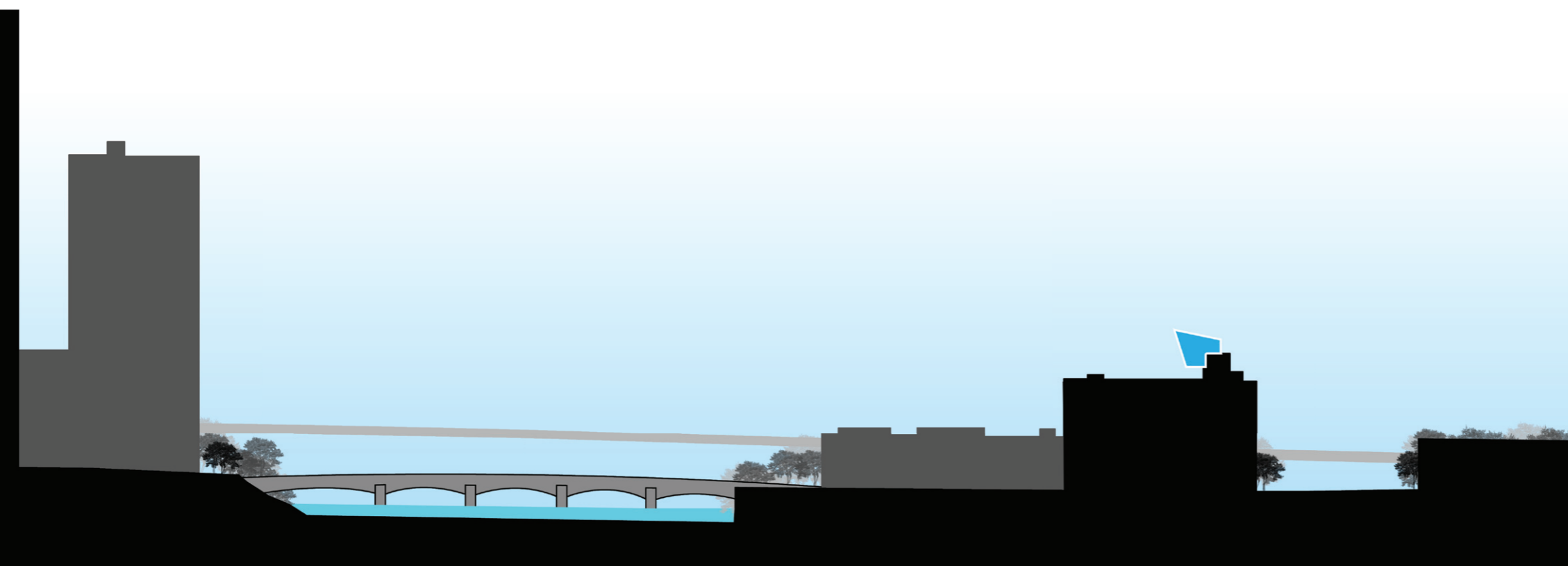
The adaptive re.use attachment is attached protruding core of the former Rowe Hotel. The building is currently vacant but is located at an essential intersection of the city. The adjacent buildings are Devos Place, the United States Postal Service, and Michigan State University medical school. The fellow will examine the importance of this building to the area and propose a new function that will provide connections to the surrounding context and to the rest of the city.

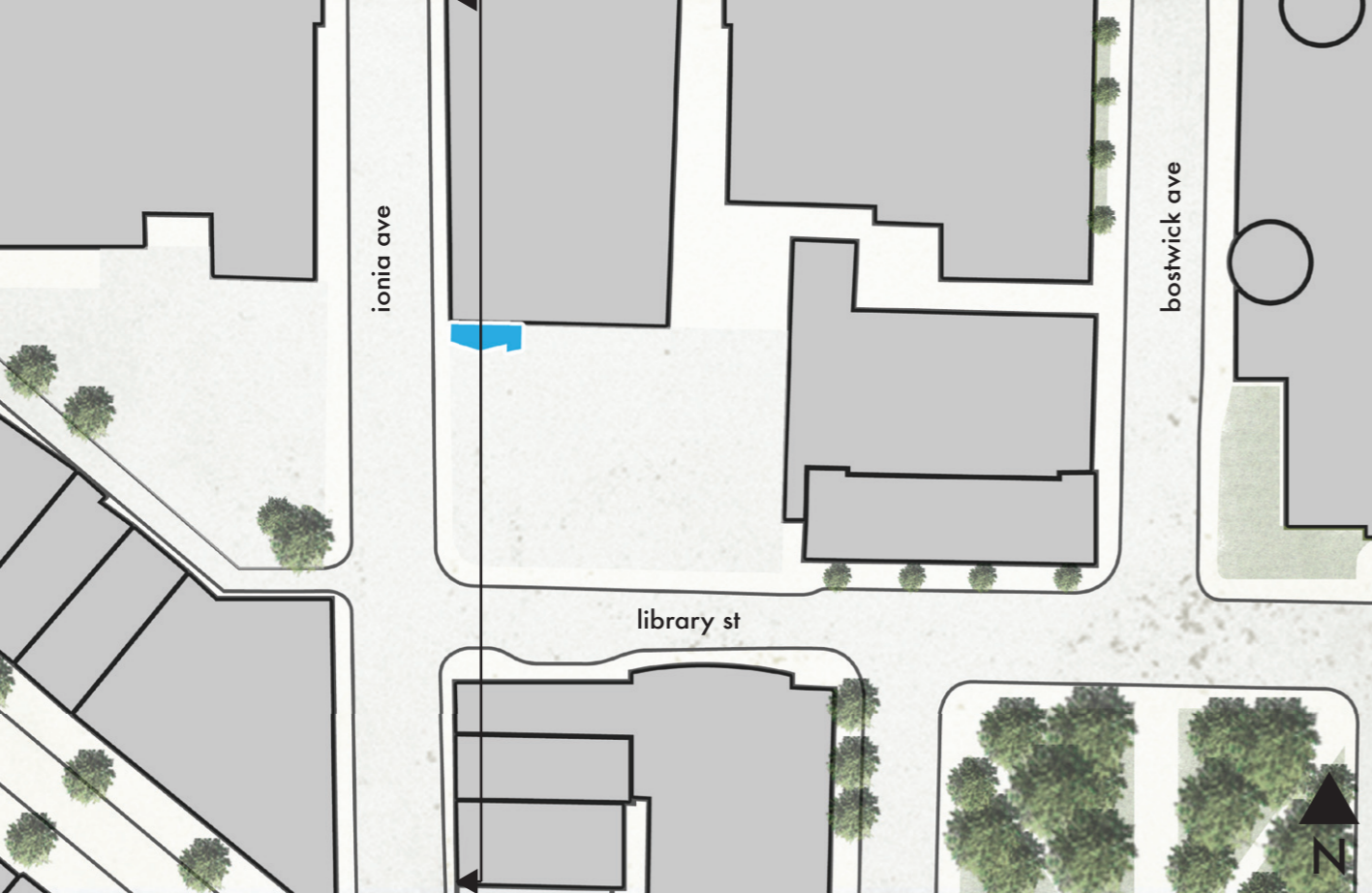


above: bird's eye perspective of the attachment to the top of the McKay Tower

left top: a site plan showing how the attachment would insert itself into the existing context

left bottom: a section cut through the site that displays the scale of the existing building to the attachment as well as the site's proximity to the Grand River





performing arts 5.03

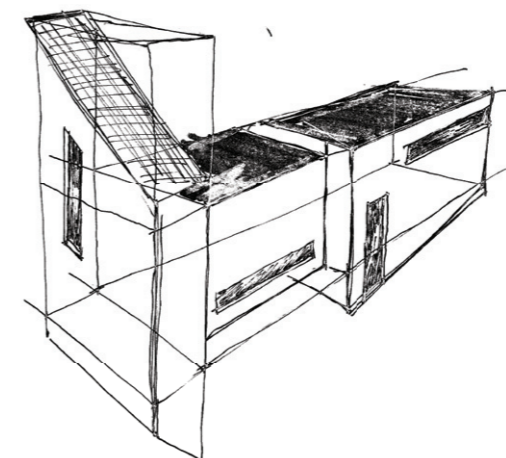
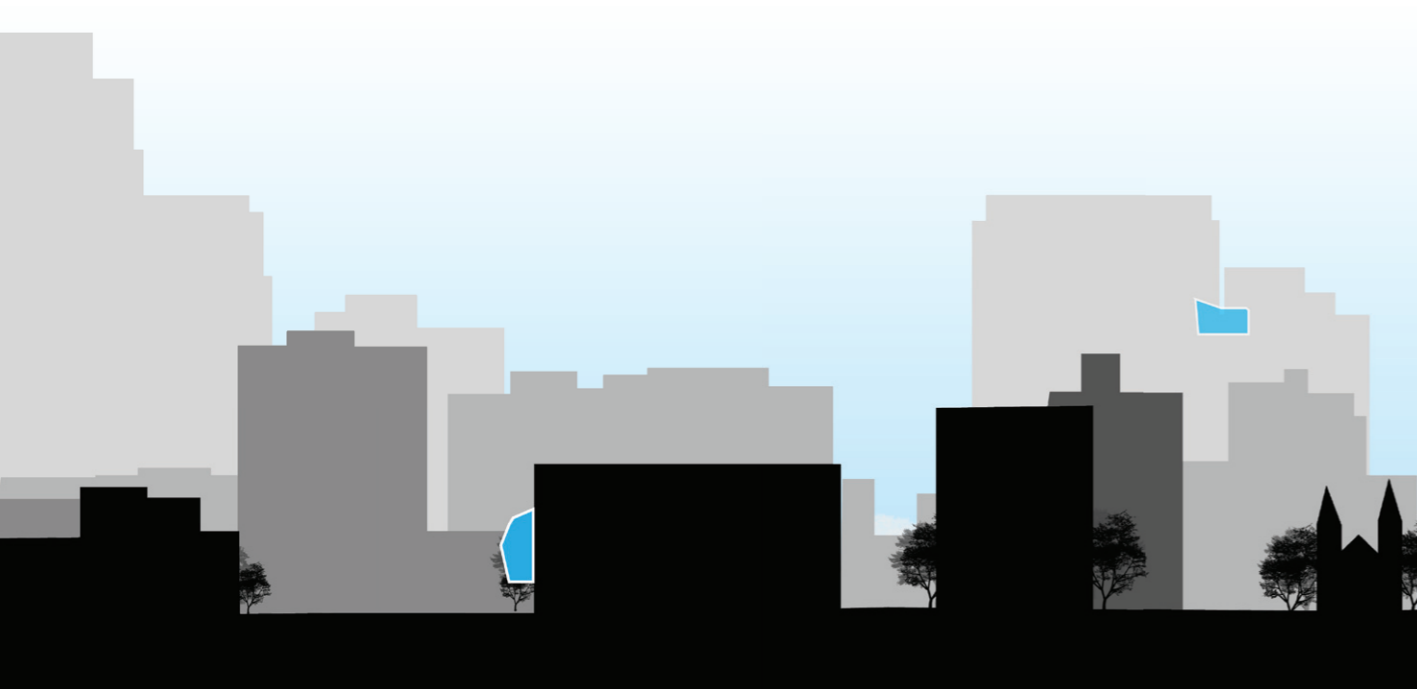
The performing arts attachment is attached to the Keeler Building and is located directly across from the Civic Theatre. The site has close proximity to the Grand Rapids Public Library and Kendall College of Art and Design. The Civic Theatre is the second largest community theatre in the country and it is Michigan's oldest community theatre. The fellow will study the community involvement with the performing arts to enrich the current program and propose growth in the future. This includes the possibility of proposing that the area be reimagined to include a variety of uses and attractions.



above: bird's eye perspective of the attachment to the blank facade of an existing building

left top: a site plan showing how the attachment would insert itself into the existing context

left bottom: a section cut through the site that displays the scale of the rest of the city in comparison to the attachment



|6.00| selected sites

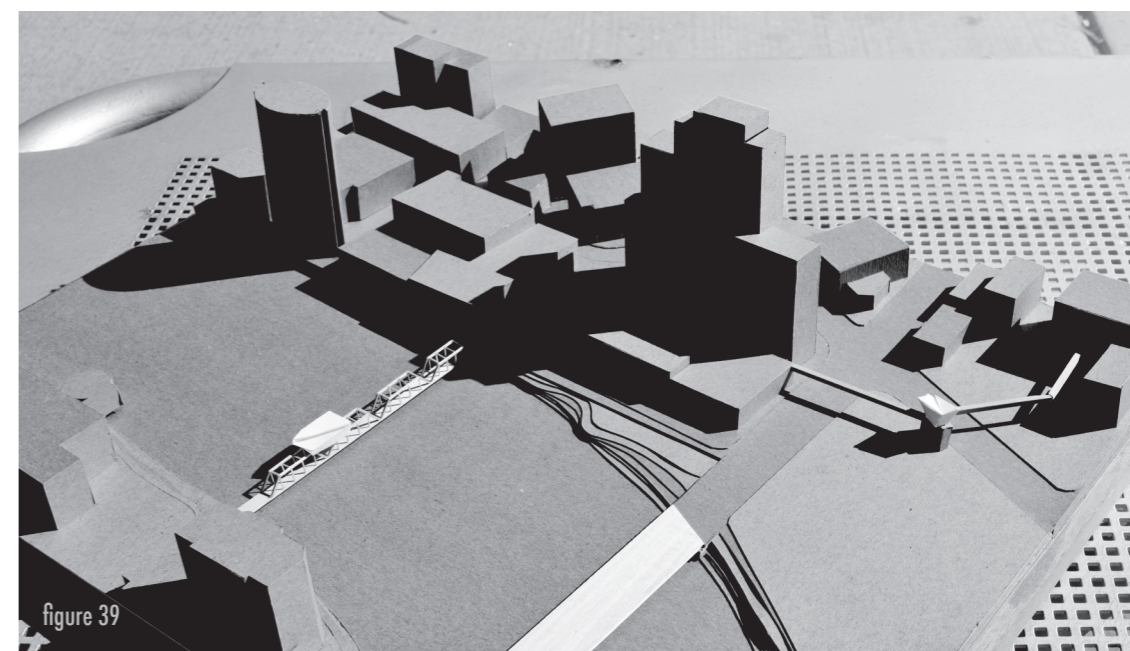
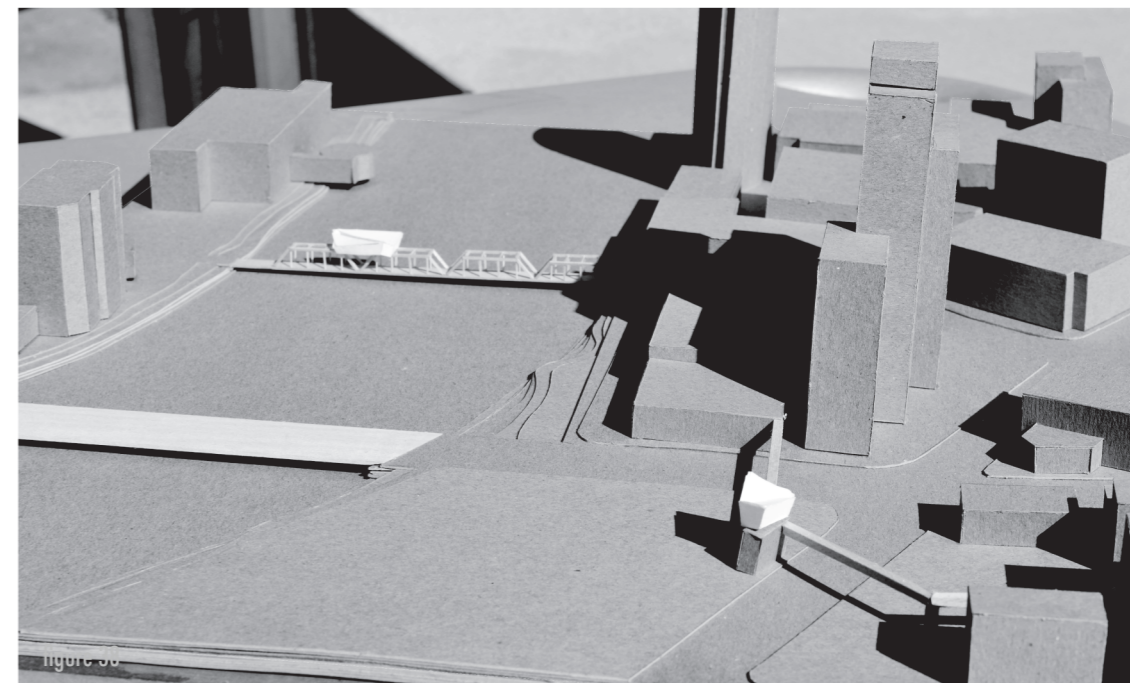
① waterfront re.development

② visual arts

③ adaptive re.use



waterfront re.development
visual arts



waterfront re.development 6.01

The waterfront re.development site is addressing a parking lot that has extensive river frontage. The attachment building that would be utilized is a two story vertical circulation tower that placed in the northeast corner of the existing parking lot. The circulation tower connects the Van Andel Arena and Devos place by skywalk access.

Notable site considerations are the Plaza towers to the north, which is both a hotel and condos. To the east is an electrical substation.(1) The opposing corner to the northeast is a building called the B.O.B.(2), which is a nightlife destination for many young people in Grand Rapids.

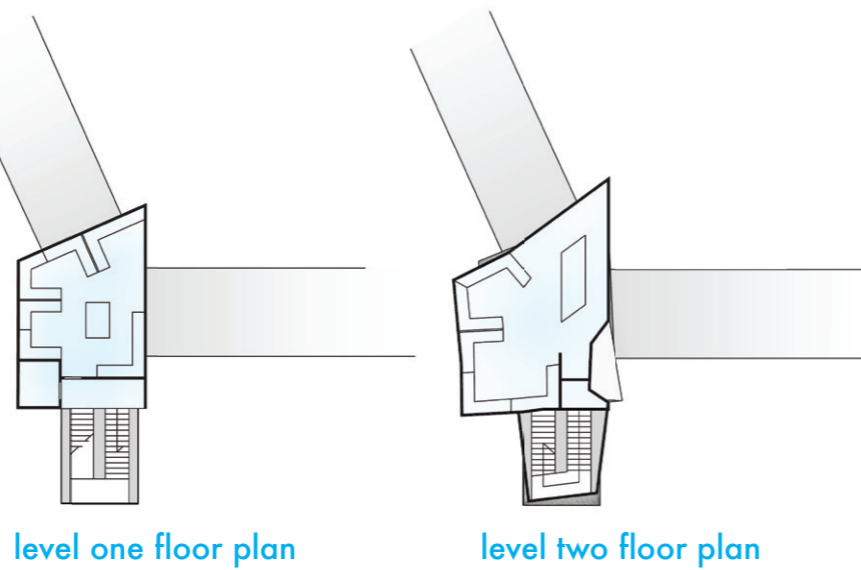
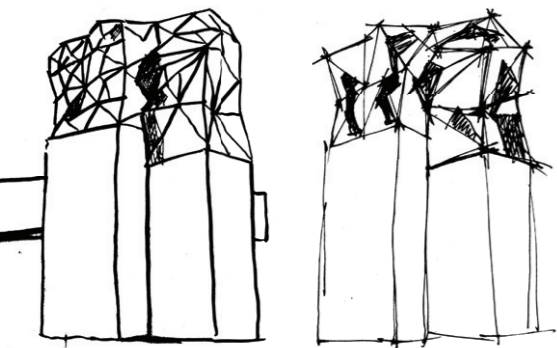




site perspective from Monroe st.

program:

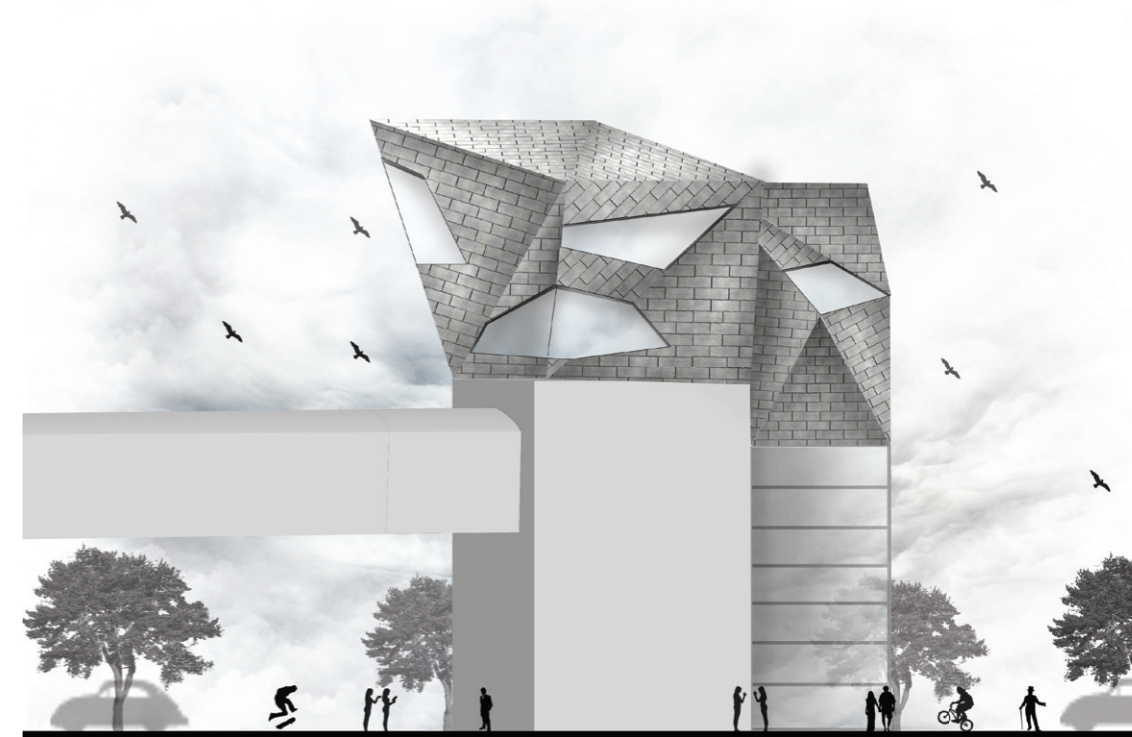
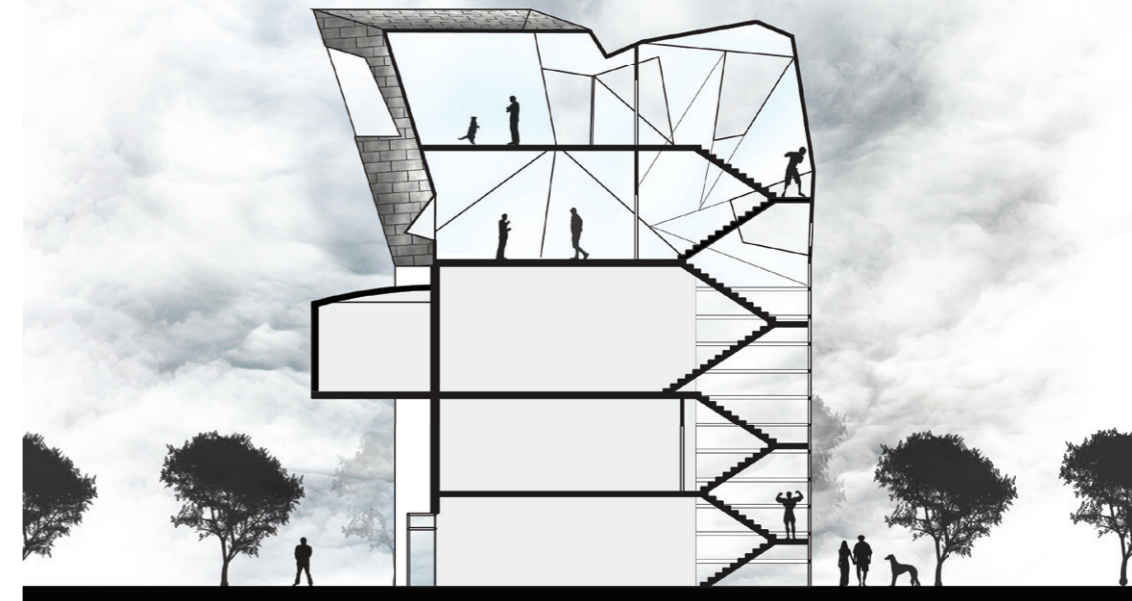
the program that would be implemented in this attachment is an office and collaboration space for the revitalization fellows. There is individual workspace as well as group meeting and collaboration spaces.



below top: a section cut through the attachment showing the movement of people through the space

below bottom: an elevation of the architectural massing showing fenestration and metal cladding as materiality

architectural massing
6.01



visual arts 6.02

The Visual Arts site is addressing a pedestrian walking bridge that spans the Grand River. The structure to be attached to is a truss bridge that was built in 1892 and was originally used in a railway system. The bridge connects the Grand Rapids Public Museum to the city center.

Notable site considerations are the Plaza towers to the southeast, which is both a hotel and condos. (1) To the north is the J.W. Marriott Hotel as well as the Amway Grand Plaza which is farther north. (2)

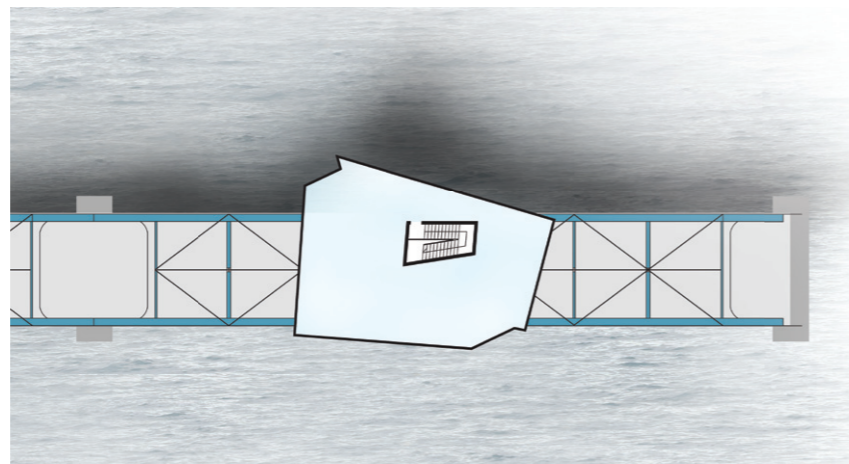




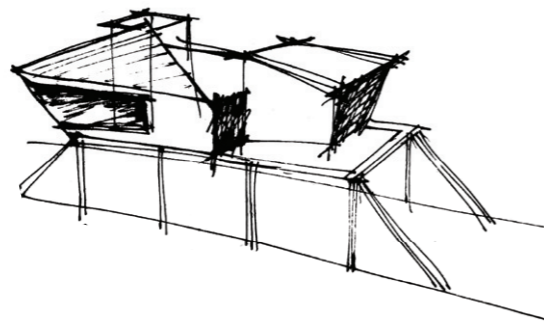
site perspective from the west side of the bridge

program:

the program that would be implemented in this attachment is an assembly space and exhibition space for the fellows to hold community meetings and display their research and proposals for the city



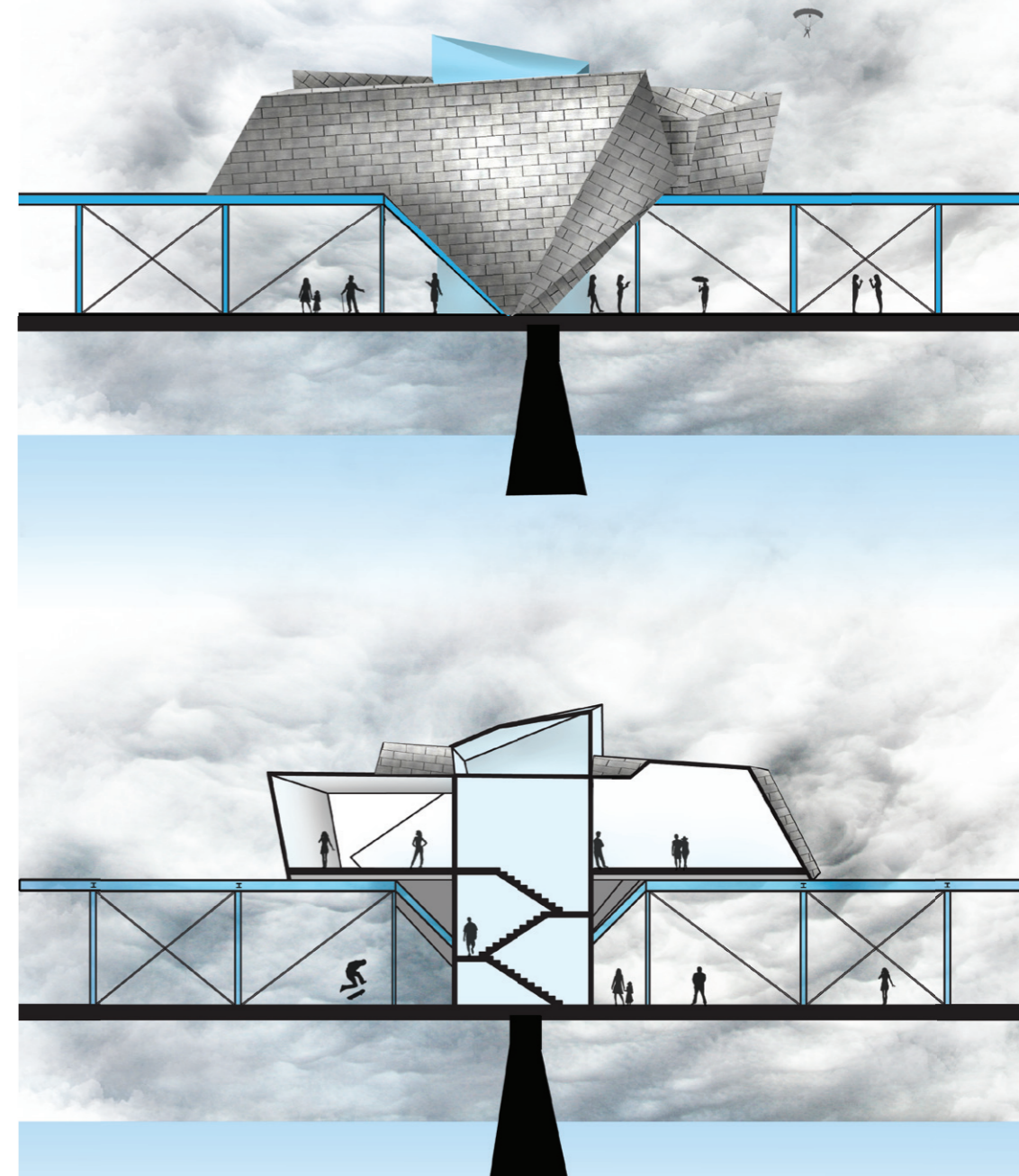
floor plan



architectural massing
6.02

below top: north elevation showing the way the attachment "fills in" the diagonals of the trusses

below bottom: section showing the vertical circulation and the open interior of the assembly and gallery space



adaptive re.use

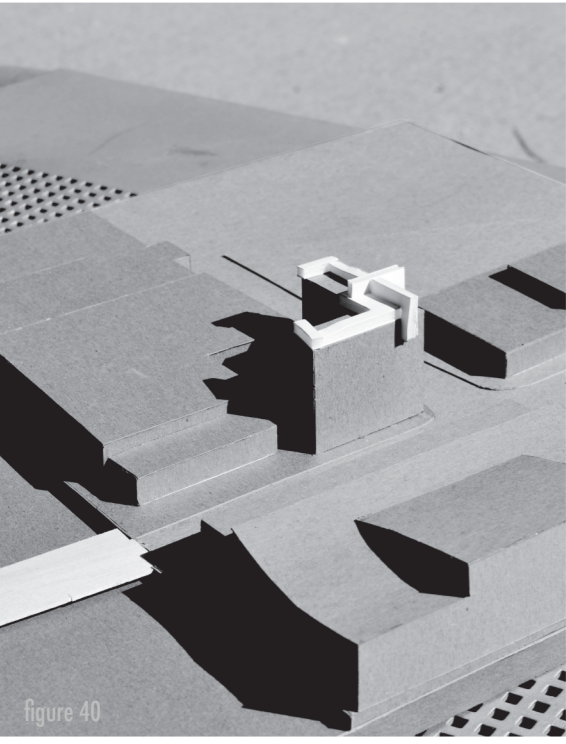


figure 40

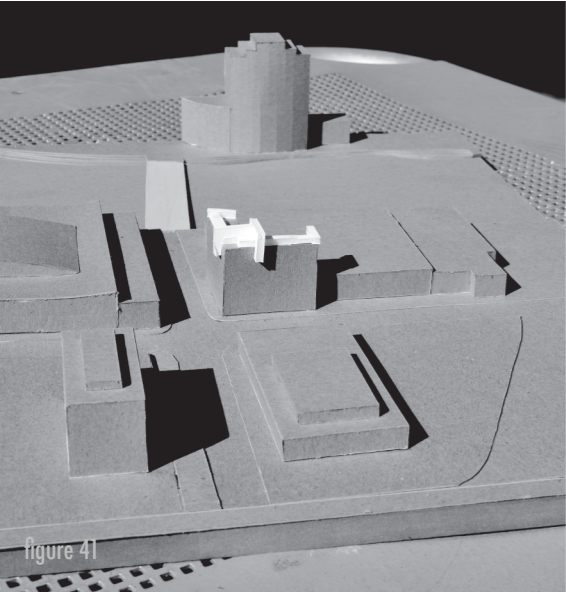


figure 41

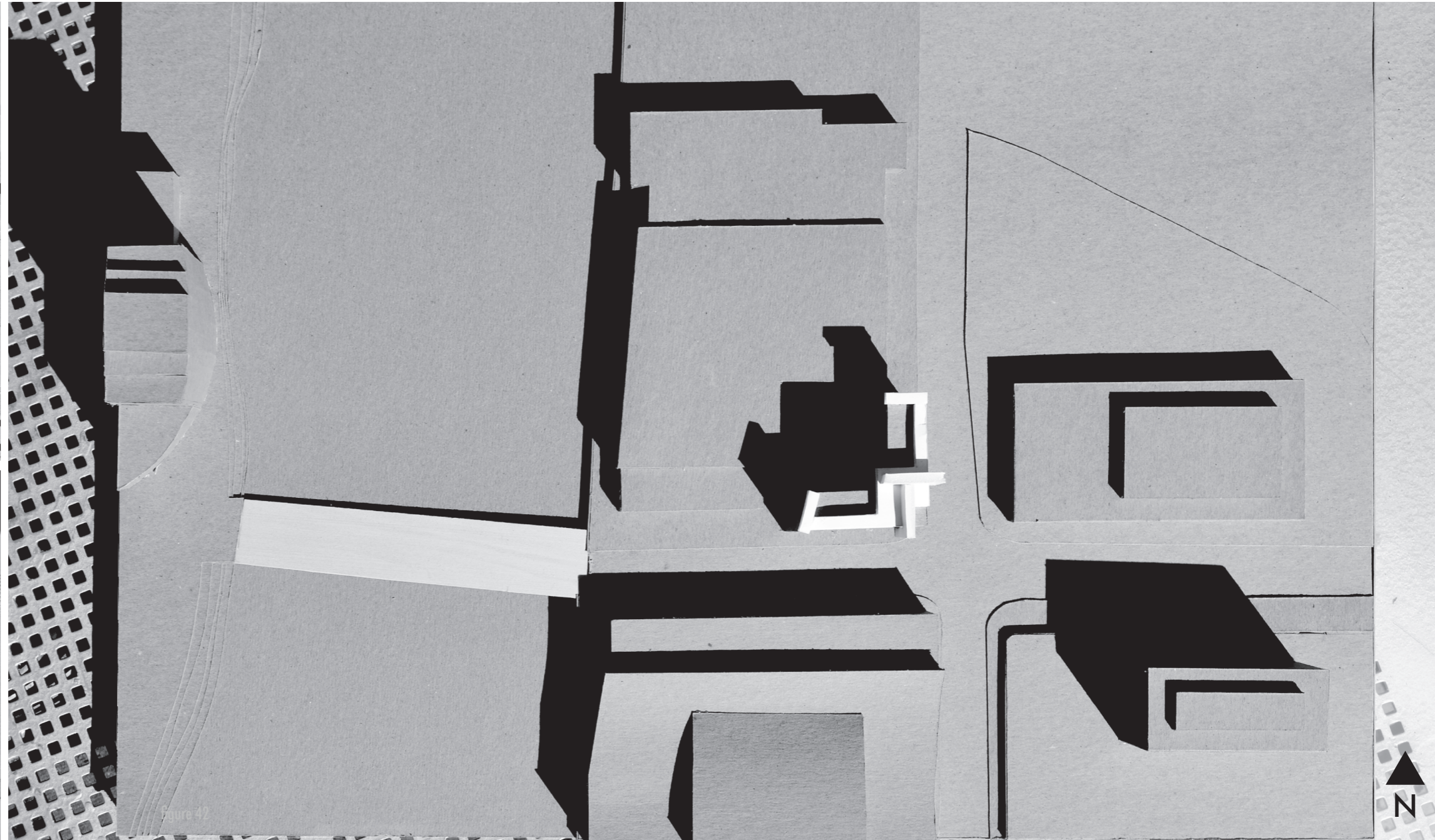


figure 42





adaptive re.use 6.03

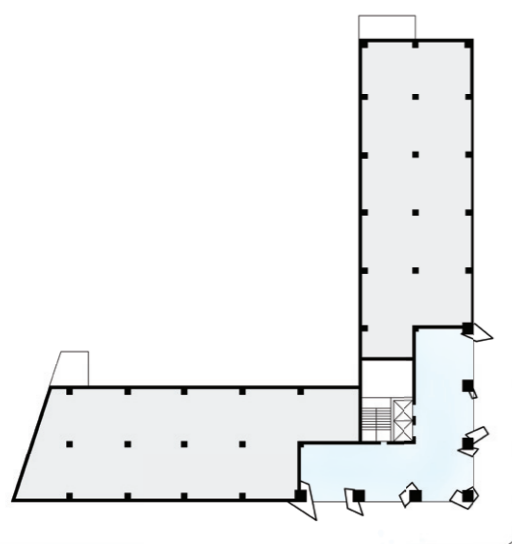
The adaptive re.use site is addressing a vacant existing building immediately off the river. The attachment building that would be utilized is a nine story reinforced concrete building. The previous uses of the building include a luxury hotel and a retirement home.

Notable site considerations is the Devos Place convention center directly to the south. To the west is the United States Post office. Located to the southeast is the Calder Plaza as well as Alexander Calder's La Grande Vitesse.

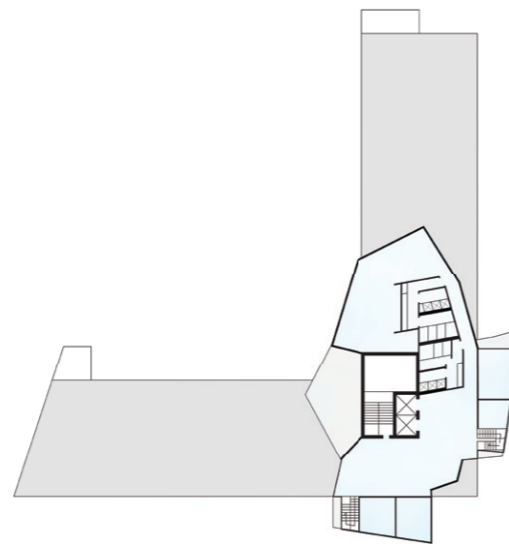




site perspective from monroe ave

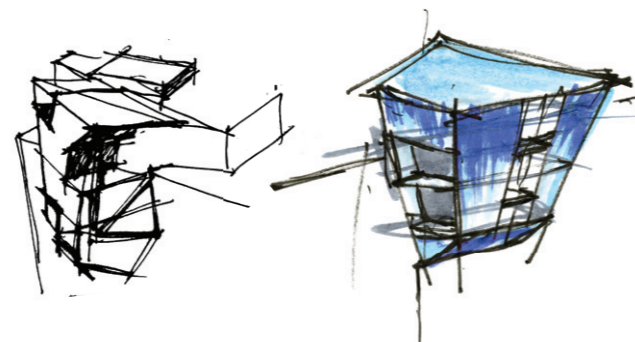


ground floor plan

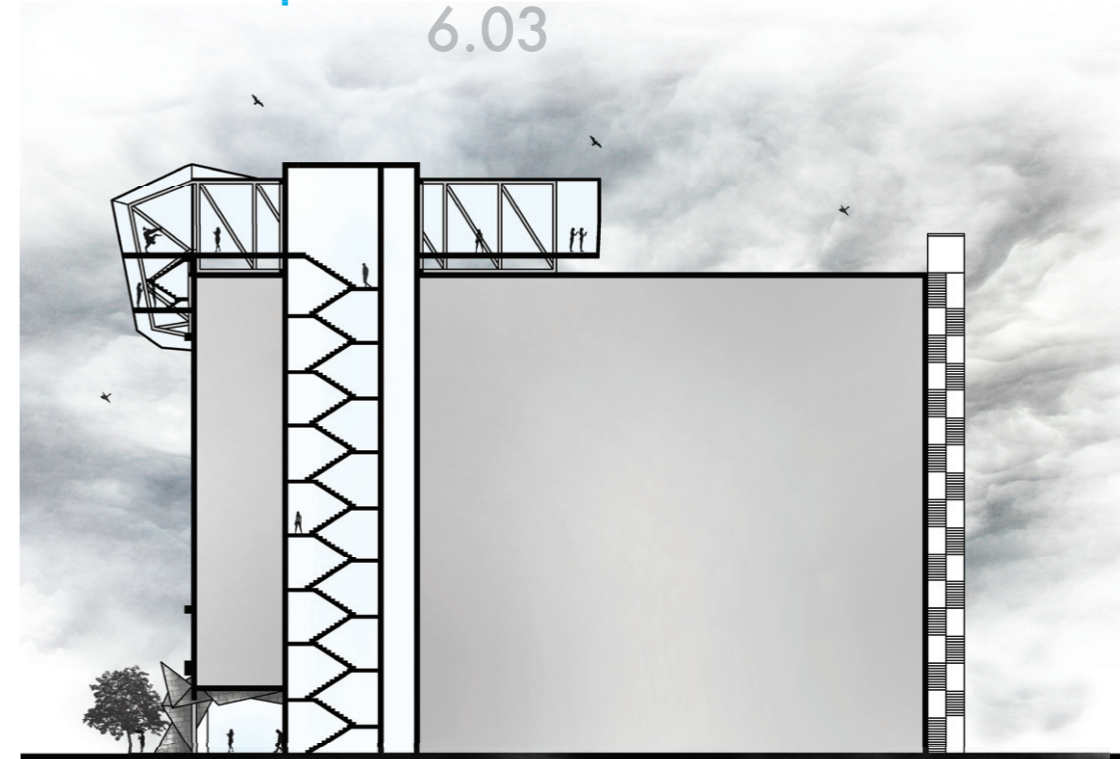


roof level floor plan

program:
 the program that would be implemented in this attachment is a dormitory space for the fellows to hold live in a community setting. community lounge spaces and a community kitchen would allow for this living style

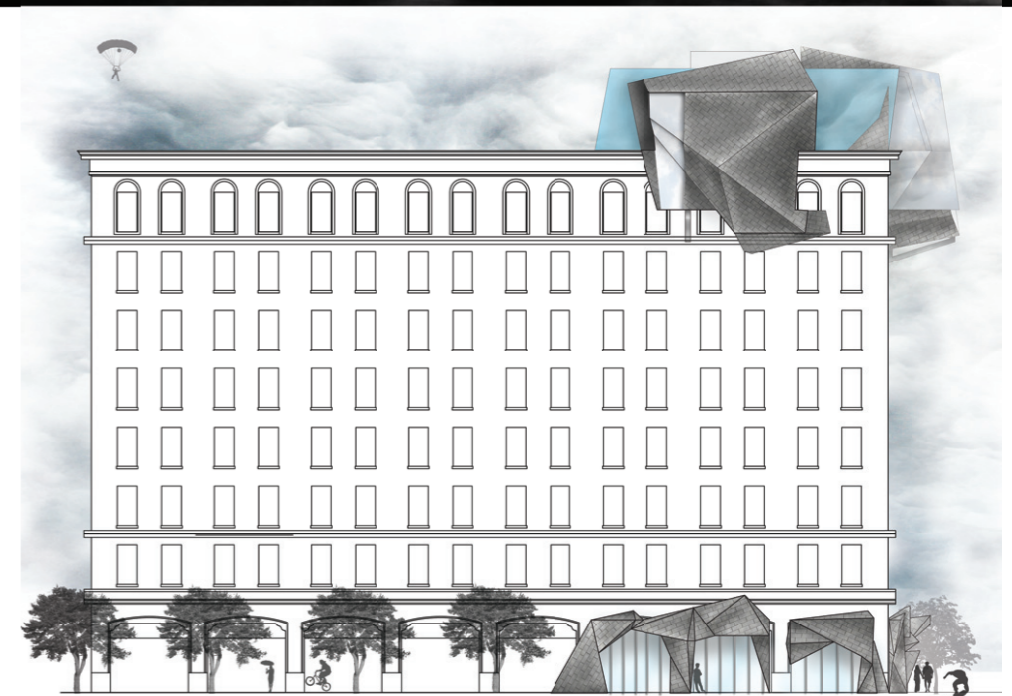


adaptive re.use
 6.03



below top: section cut showing the structural concepts that the form would utilize for attachment

below bottom: south elevation showing the contrast in architectonics between the existing building and the metal clad attachment



|7.00| final design

adaptive re.use

proposal

The proposal resulting from my research has many facets with one main goal: to promote growth and the continued development of Grand Rapids.

The intent of this design is to showcase the Urban revitalization Fellowship program by creating a recognizable brand with architectural forms.

This architecture will house all of the necessary functions of the fellowship as well as public space to raise awareness for the importance of growth in the city.

Upon implementation, this architecture will become a catalyst for the redevelopment for the northern part of the city, and provide the connection needed for continued growth.

The resulting program includes space for the fellows to live and work, as well as display their ideas and projections for a better city.

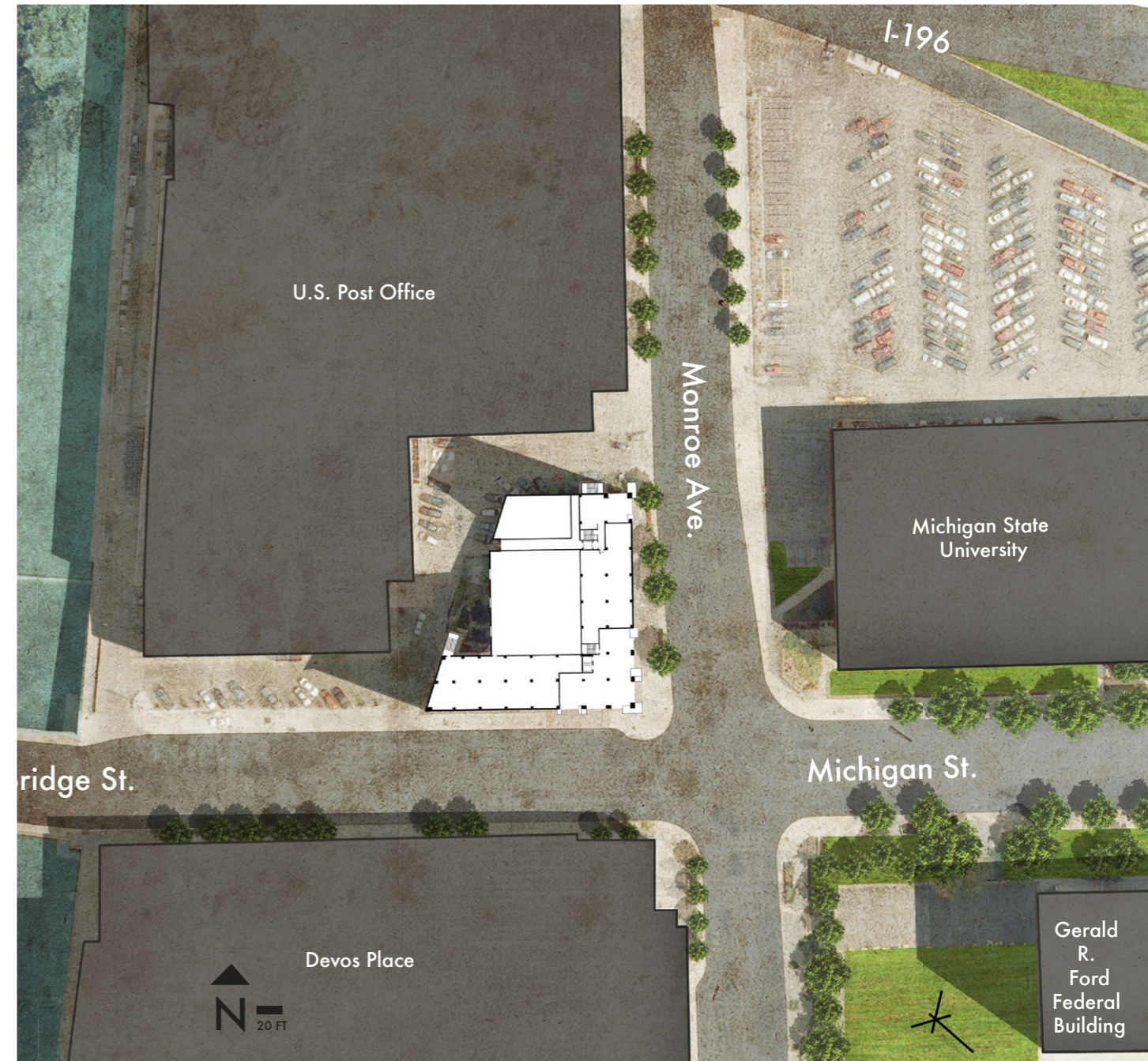
site plan

The former Rowe Hotel building is located on the corner of Michigan St. and Monroe Ave. The site is north of the city center and directly east of the Grand River. Monroe Ave. and Michigan St. are major arterial roads and form a crucial point of intersection.

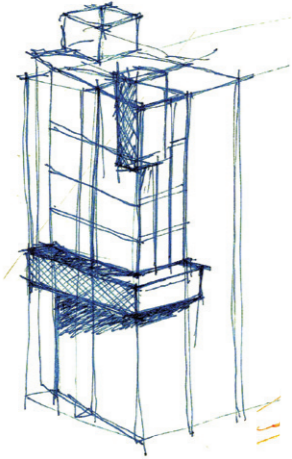
North of the site and I 196 is the Monroe North District, which is currently under redevelopment. This site becomes an important point of connection for the City Center and Monroe North District.

By redeveloping the only vacant building in the area, there would be new opportunities to develop other open land and continue to strengthen the connection to the Monroe North District. This area can become a center for student housing, retail and a dynamic urban living hub.

adaptive re.use 7.01

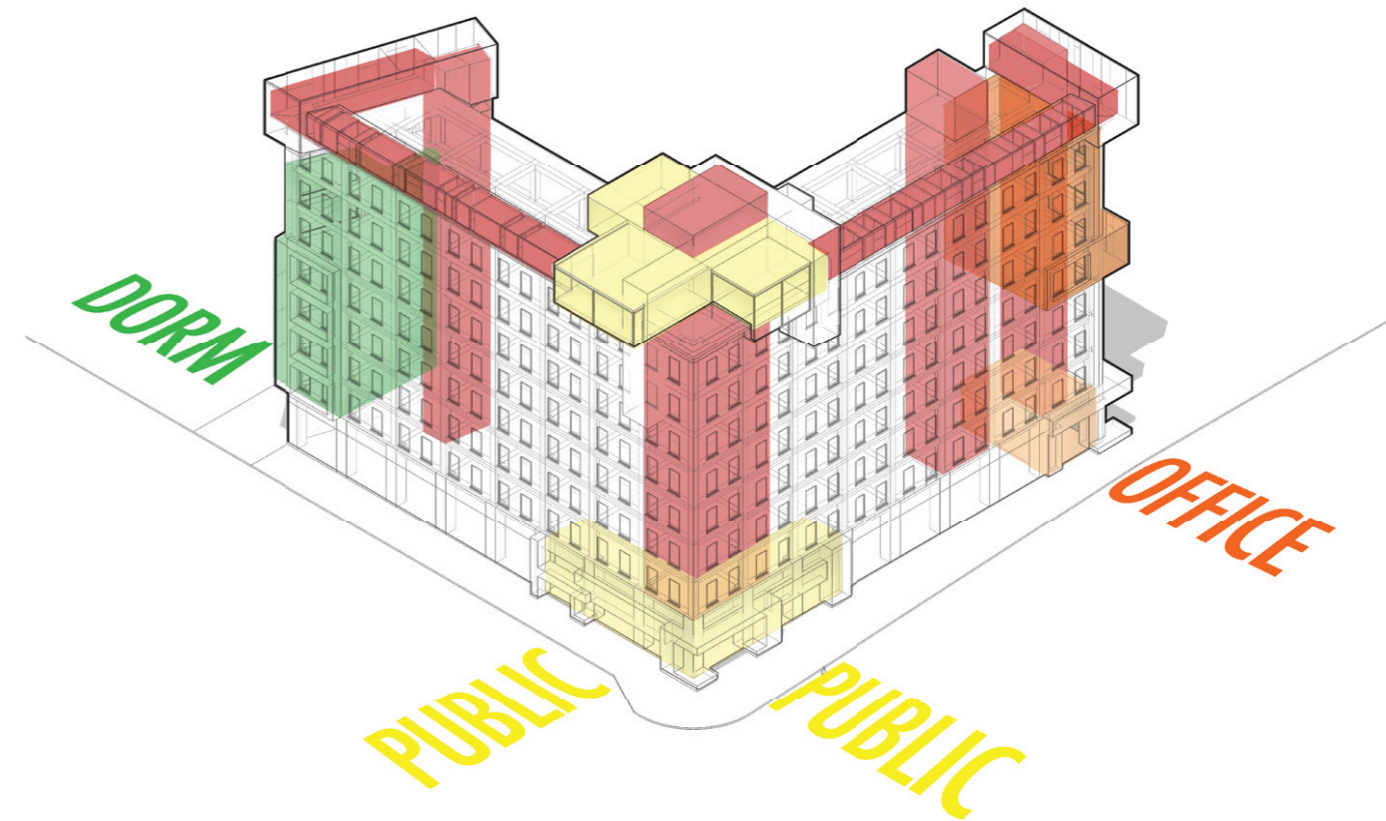
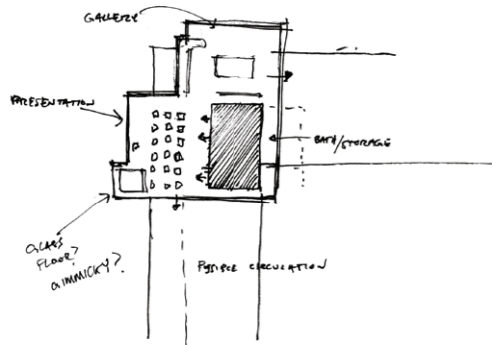
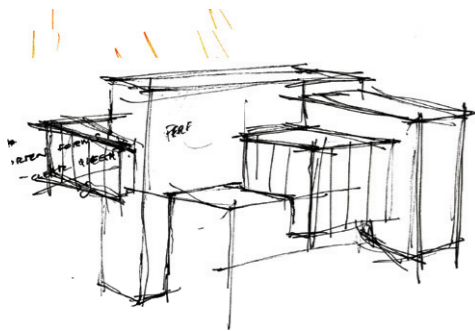


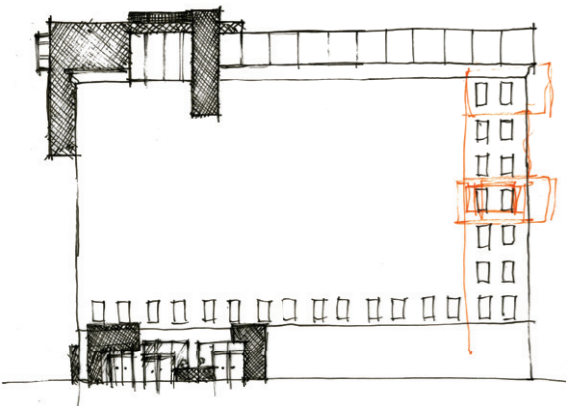
circulation



The circulation diagram to the right displays the use of the existing vertical circulation in the building. The dorm would utilize the existing exterior stair by enclosing the structure in glass. The public spaces would use the entrance loggia at the corner of Michigan St. and Monroe Ave. to connect to the main circulation core in the building. The office space would utilize the freight elevator as well as the adjacent staircase.

By using the existing circulation, the attachment is not creating unnecessary interventions and modes of circulation. Because this implementation is connected by the fellows, all three of the separate programs will be connected by circulation.

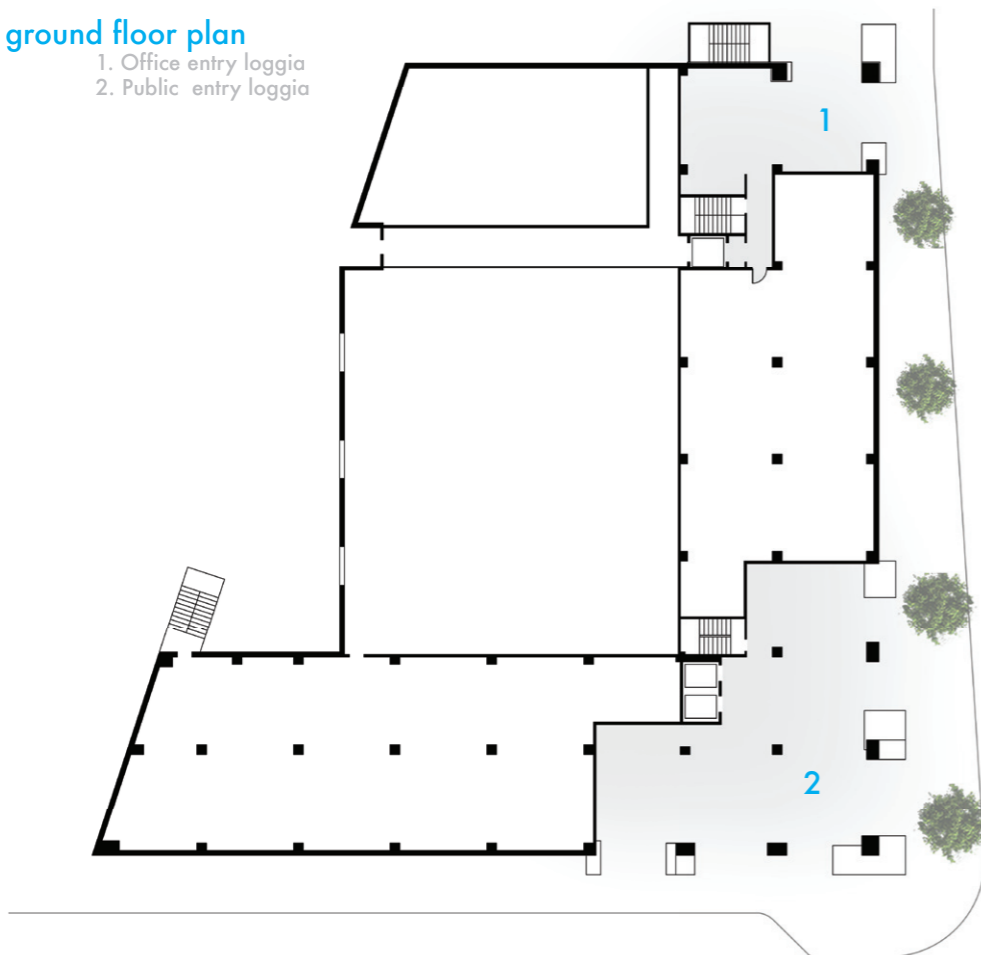




floor plans

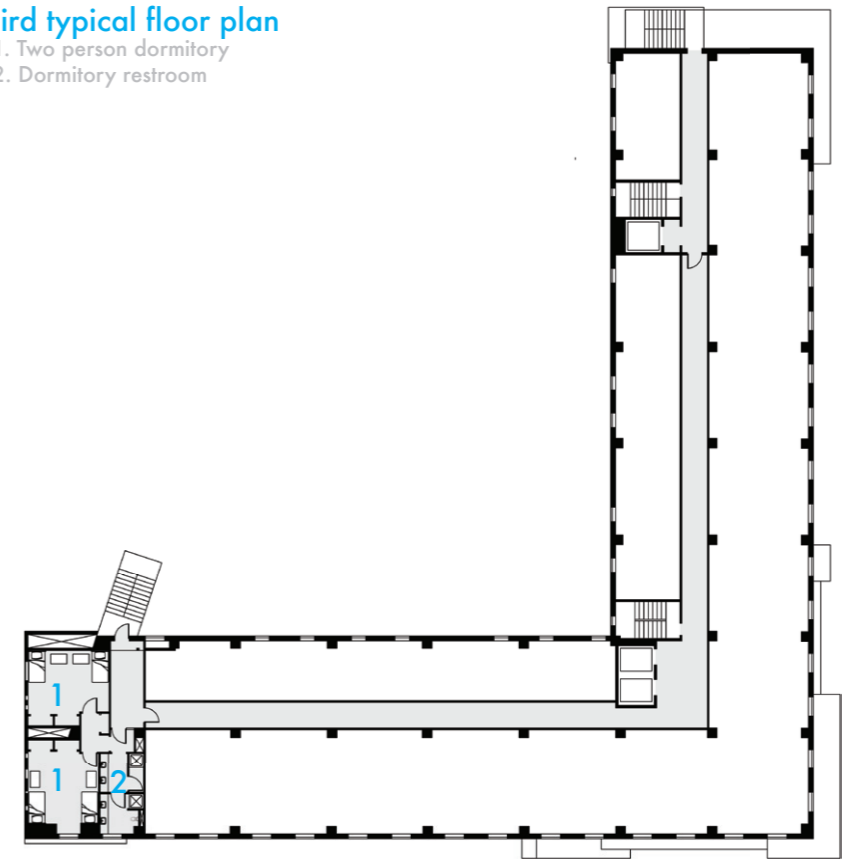
ground floor plan

1. Office entry loggia
2. Public entry loggia



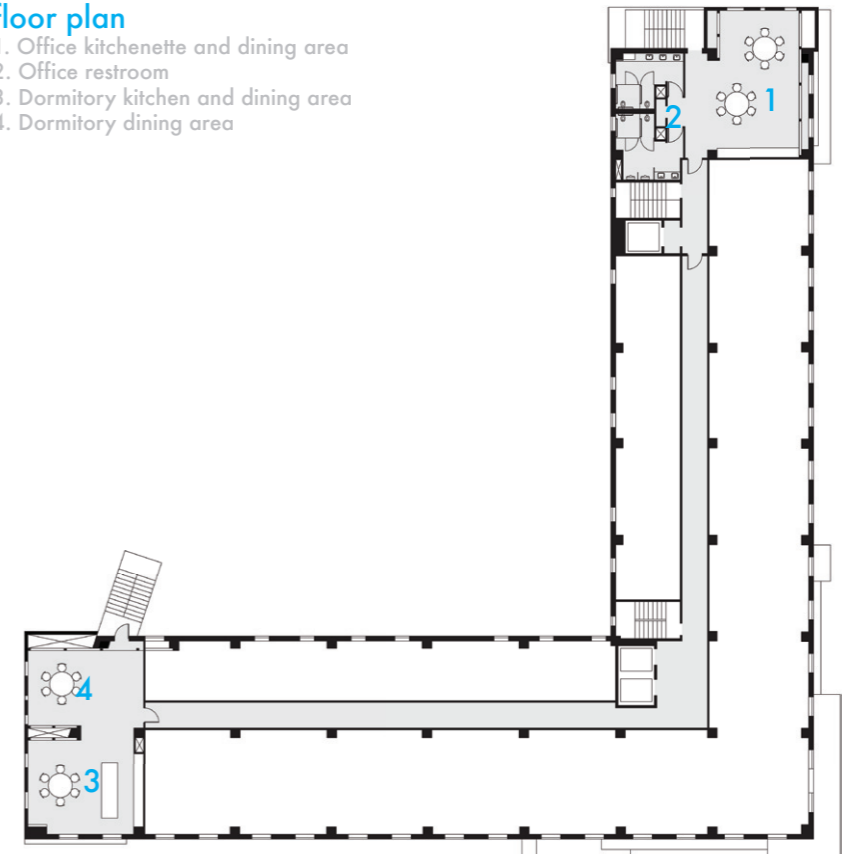
first - third typical floor plan

1. Two person dormitory
2. Dormitory restroom



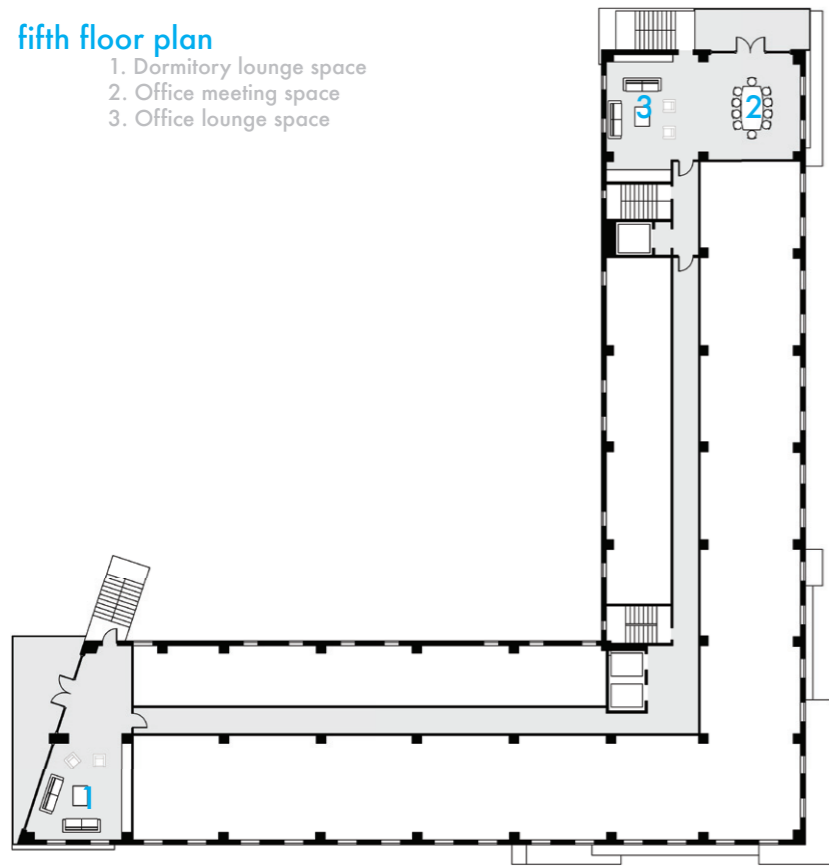
fourth floor plan

1. Office kitchenette and dining area
2. Office restroom
3. Dormitory kitchen and dining area
4. Dormitory dining area



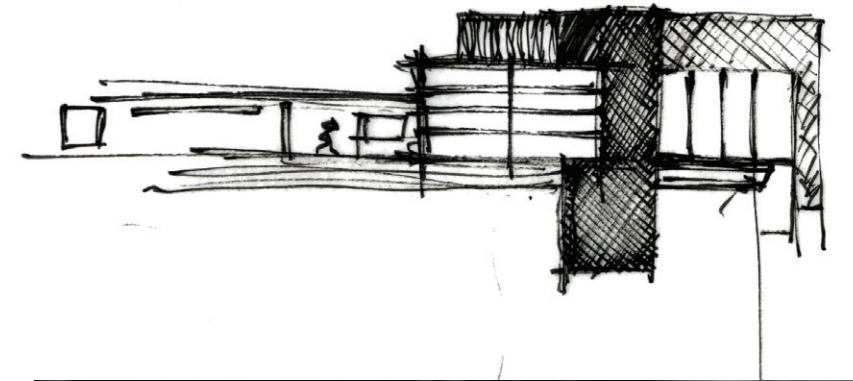
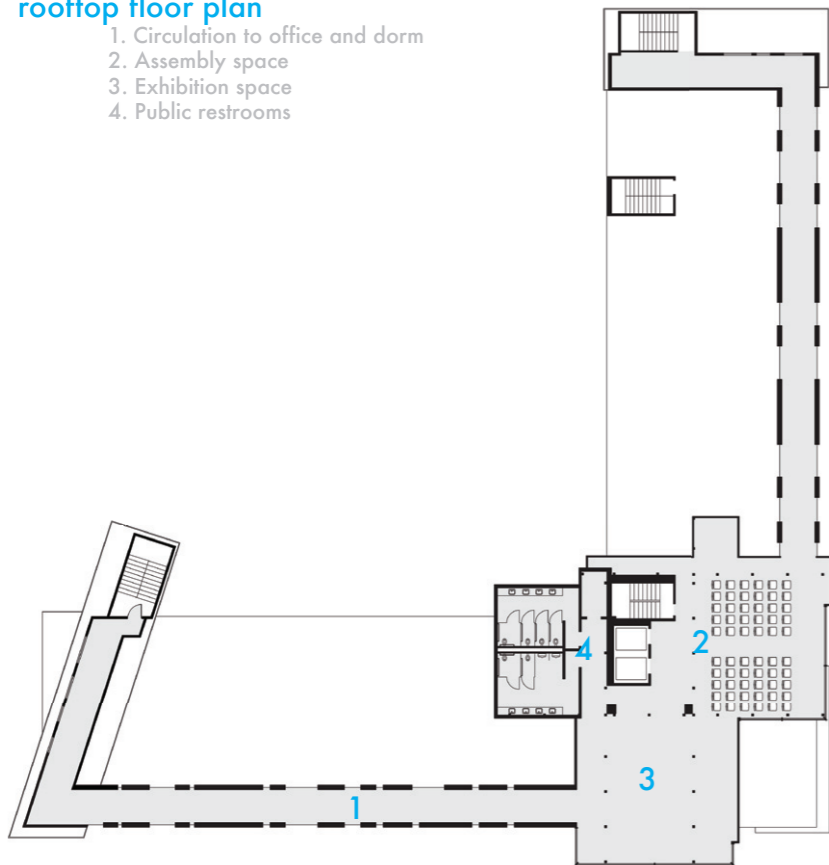
fifth floor plan

- 1. Dormitory lounge space
- 2. Office meeting space
- 3. Office lounge space



rooftop floor plan

- 1. Circulation to office and dorm
- 2. Assembly space
- 3. Exhibition space
- 4. Public restrooms



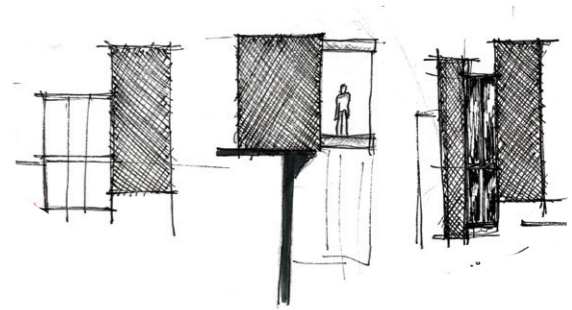


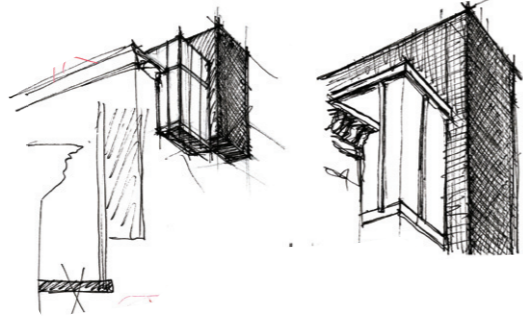
above: Section showing the organization of the dormitory space through the utilization of the building's existing structural bay



above: Section showing the organization of the office space and how the vertical organization unifies the space

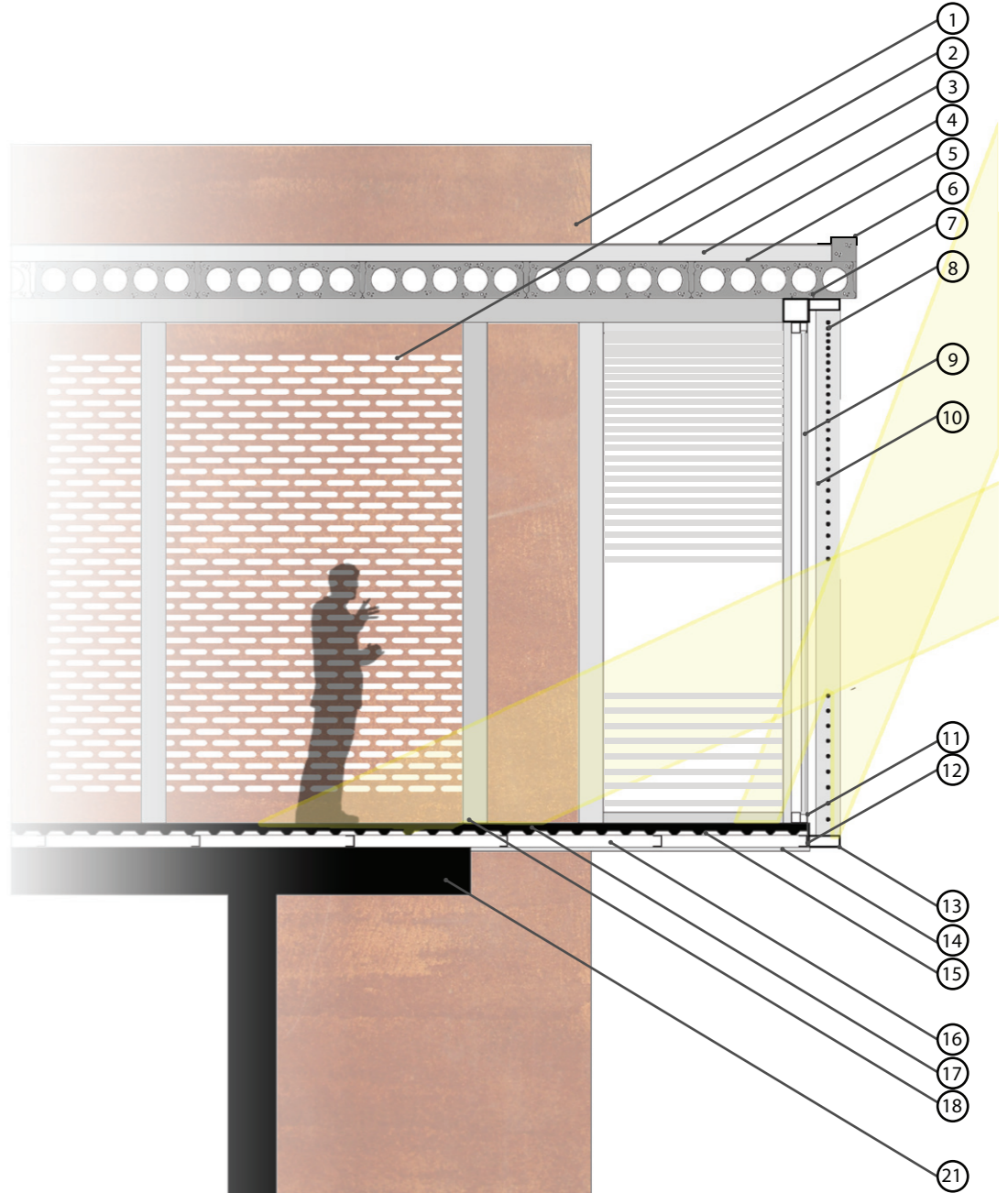
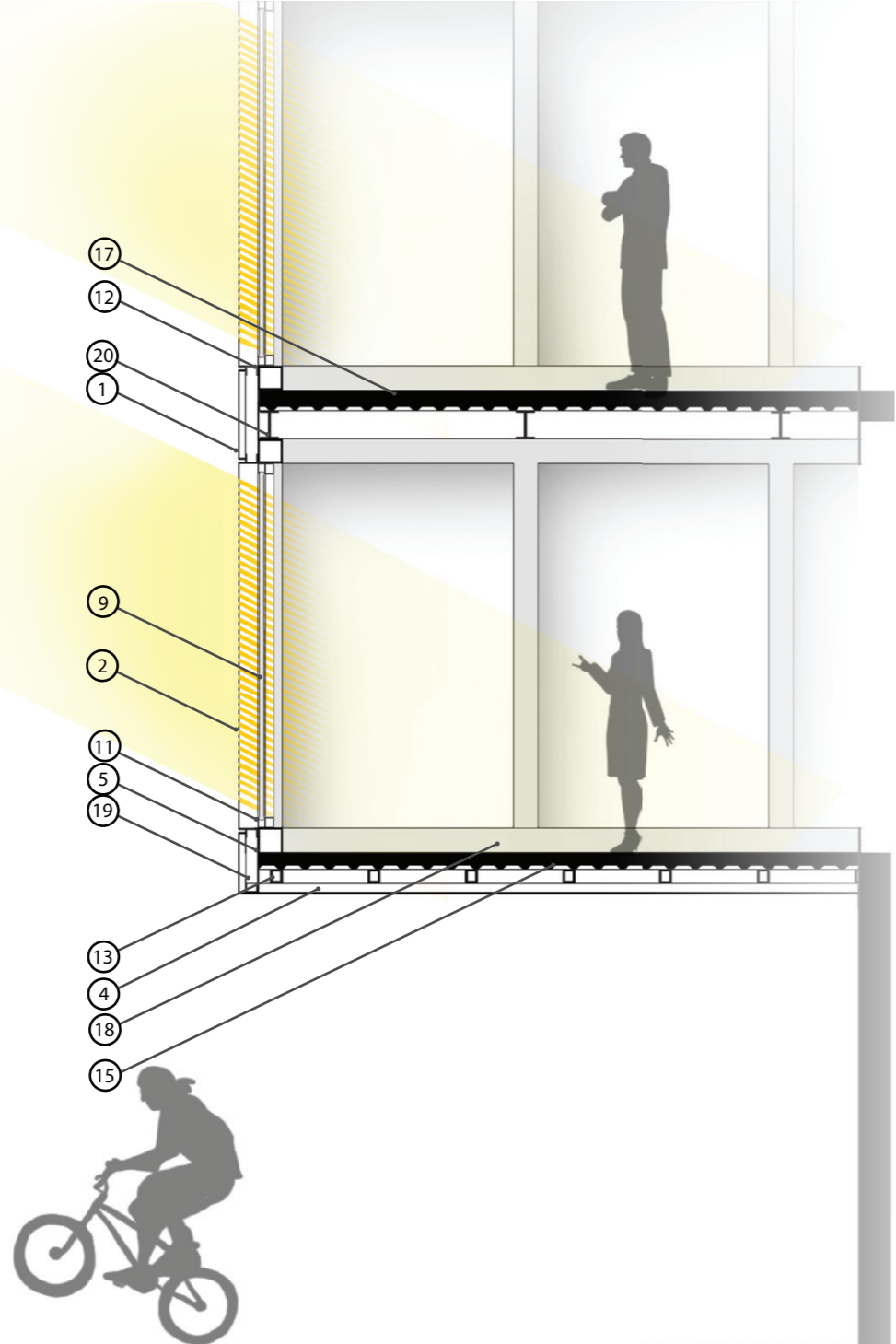
below: site section showing the context of the river, surrounding buildings and the Medical Mile





detail sections

- 1. insulated corten cladding
- 2. perforated corten cladding
- 3. roofing membrane
- 4. rigid insulation
- 5. vapor barrier
- 6. flashing
- 7. hollow core precast concrete slabs
- 8. glazed ceramic tubes
- 9. glazing
- 10. aluminum strut
- 11. mullion system
- 12. steel channel
- 13. steel tube
- 14. white finish face material
- 15. metal decking
- 16. spray insulation
- 17. poured concrete
- 18. supporting truss
- 19. 2" air cavity
- 20. support i beam
- 21. existing building



below: East Elevation showing the scale of bridgewater place in the background and the building's immediate proximity to the post office



below: South Elevation displaying the composition of the corten forms on the facade and their proportional relationship to the original architecture



below: North Elevation showing the office space and how the implementation reacts to the sides of the building that do not face the street

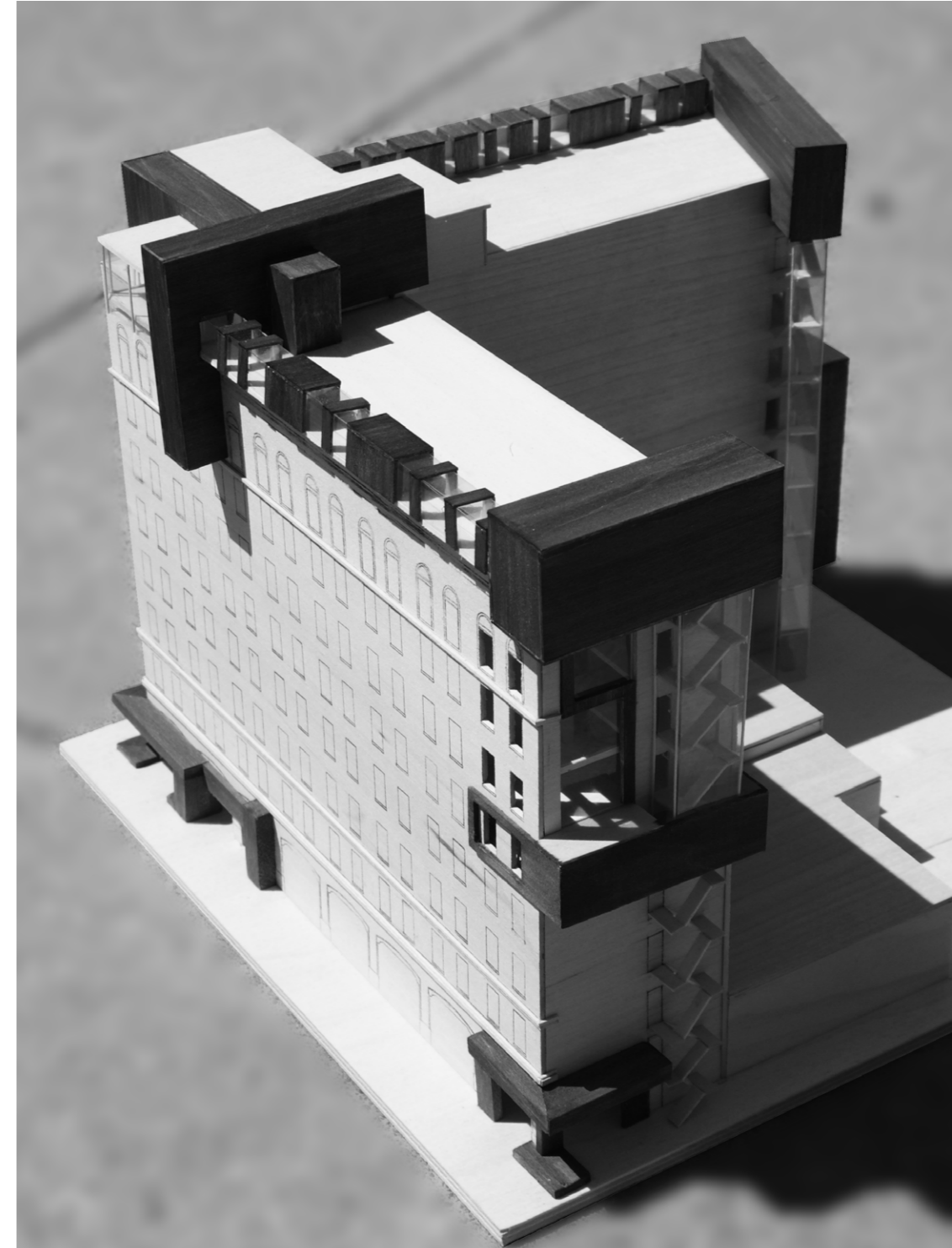


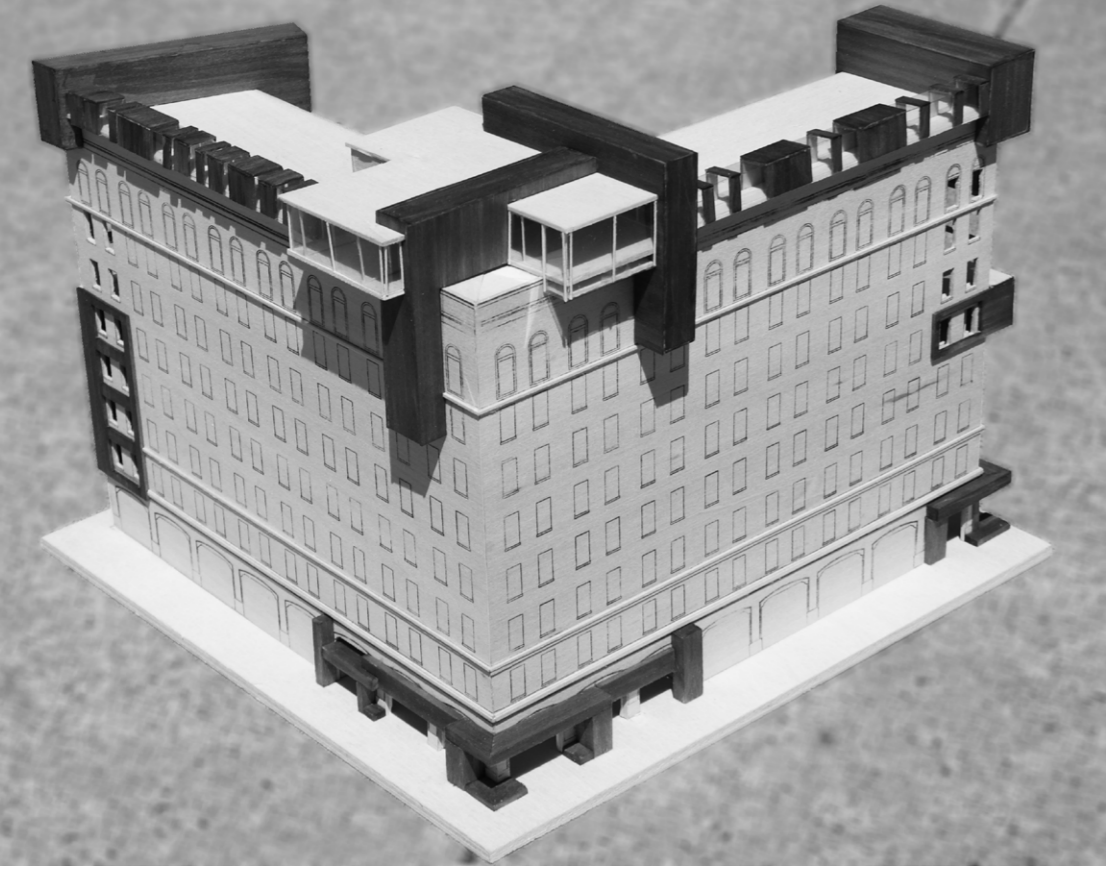
bottom: West Elevation showing the dormitory side of the structure and the glass enclosed circulation that will service this side of the building















| 8.00 | conclusion

the future

This thesis began as an attempt to understand architecture beyond designing a functional building. As an aspiring designer, I believe that architecture can have a profound influence on the way people move through and react to the urban streetscape.

The profession of architecture needs to be at the forefront of designing to inspire a movement, create an icon, or define a city. Architecture that is able to place a spotlight on the importance of place will drastically transform the immediate context.

For the future, we must begin to see architecture as a means of creating a vision or idea to inspire people years into the future. The conclusion of this thesis is only the beginning of my explorations into the power of architecture in an urban context and the opportunities that it reveals. At the end of these two semesters, my explorations have led me to answers to many of my original questions, but have also forced me to ask new questions that I will continue to seek answers to long after the completion of this thesis project.

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| 16 - 19 | Lara Calder Architects

| 20 - 23 | Nicolas Dorval-Bory.

| 24 - 26 | Peter James Vereecke

| 27 - 36 | Bing Maps

| 37 - 57 | Peter James Vereecke