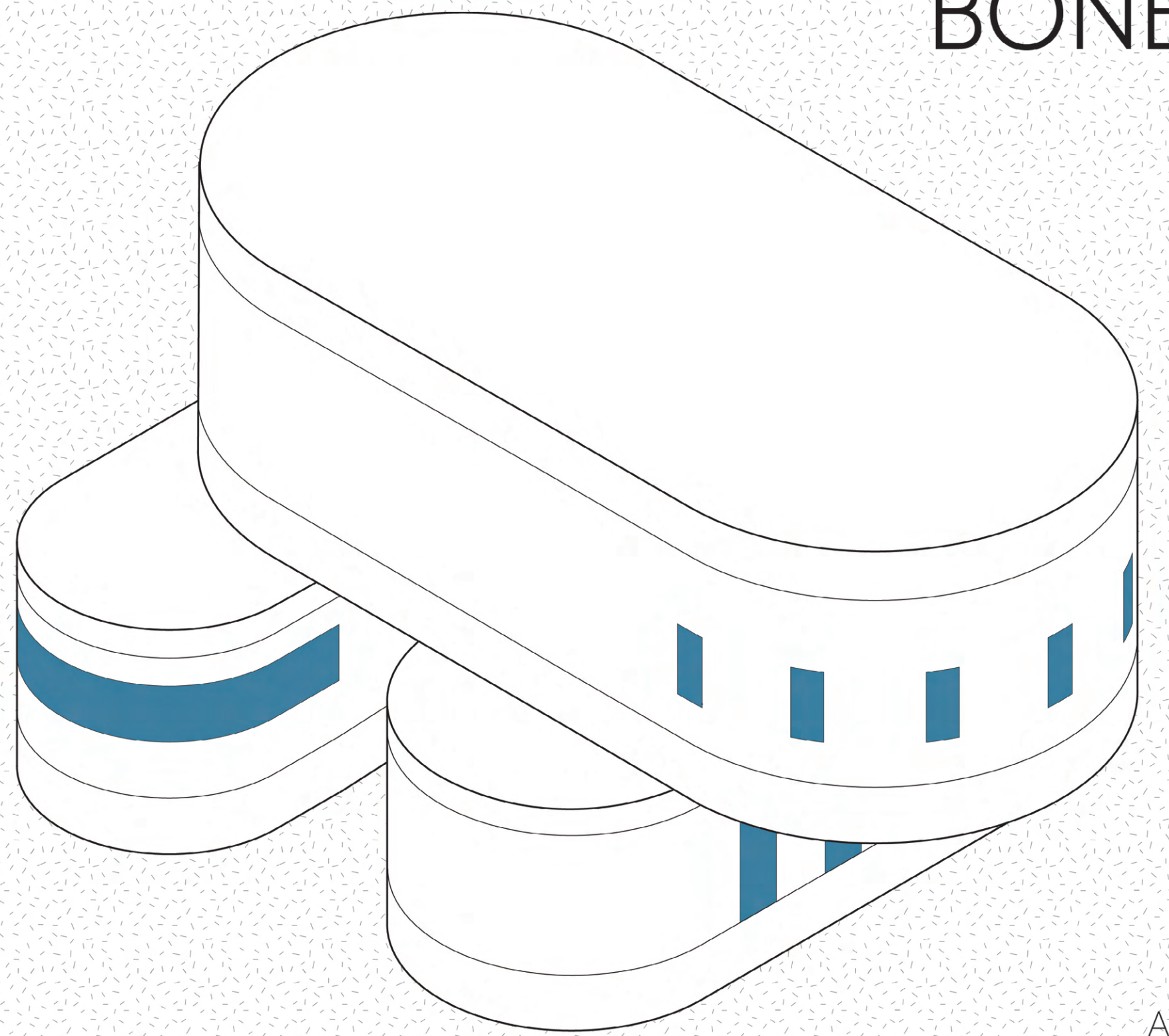


# GOOD BONES



ANNA  
CAIRNS

2023

ANNA CAIRNS

GOOD BONES

**Thank you** to my friends and family who have supported me throughout my journey into architecture. Thank you for encouraging me to choose this career and for having faith in me this whole time, even when it felt impossible. A special thank you to my parents, who have been trying to set me up for success my entire life. I could not be here today without your support.

I also want to thank the various faculty at Texas A&M who have helped me through final study. Some taught me years ago in class, some let me bother them during office hours, and some have given me guidance on this project. I appreciate all of you so much. Thank you for investing your time in me.

## Abstract

This project addresses the problems caused for the historic cemeteries of Galveston, Texas, by the effects of climate change. Instead of physically protecting the cemetery from high winds and flooding, this project argues that another important method of heritage conservation is to ensure the survival of the cemetery's historic and data in an archive.

The proposed archive is designed in a what I call a "futurism revival" style, which was chosen for its positive associations with ideas of the future, technology, and exploration. The architecture of the 1960s is influential to this project for its volumetric compositions, specifically long boxes that terminate in semicircles.

To interact with the street, the exhibition gallery and cafe are on the first floor. Around the back of the building is a drop-off point for archival materials. On the second floor, staff offices and a presentation space are accessible to the public. The top floor, the largest of the three, comprises library stacks and a reading room that faces the cemetery. This building is configured so that floodwaters will not damage the stacks and archival materials.

## COMMITTEE

Andrew Tripp

chair

Priya Jain

committee member

Rebecca Hankins

committee member

Brian Gibbs

studio professor

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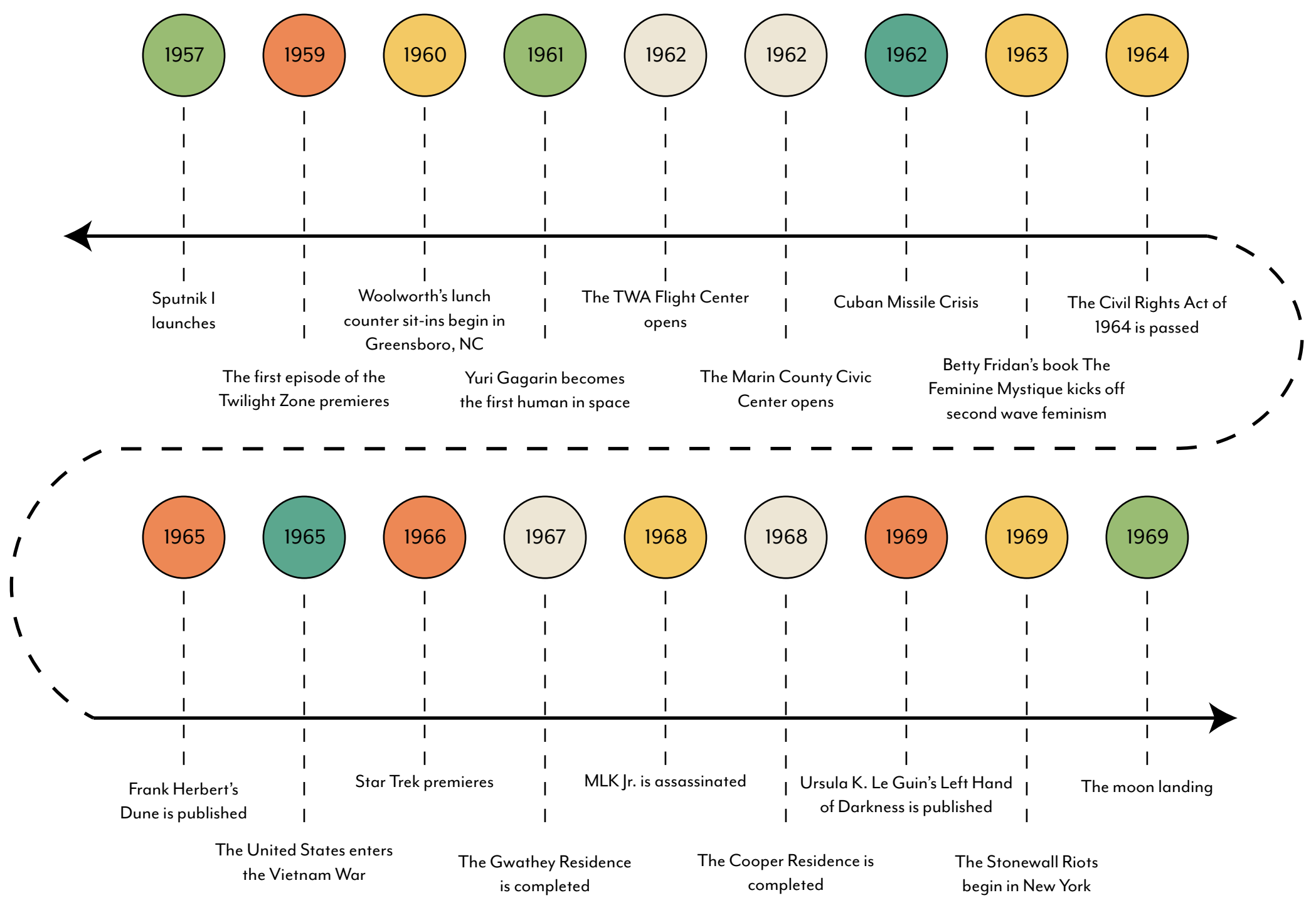
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**1**

# FUTURISM REVIVAL

# THEMATIC INFLUENCES

- SCIENCE FICTION
- SPACE RACE
- POLITICS
- ARCHITECTURE
- CIVIL RIGHTS



## Introduction

I approached this final study project not just as a studio project, but as a thesis. What could I contribute to the body of architectural knowledge? The idea I eventually landed on, this archive dedicated to Galveston's historic cemeteries, was the result of choosing to combine loosely related ideas (climate change, science fiction, cemeteries, archives, futurism, and more) into a cohesive project that deals with these topics in a new way.

For better or for worse, my time in graduate school has been shaped by the pandemic. In March 2020, I didn't know if I would be admitted to graduate school, and as a career change student, I knew I wouldn't be able to work in architecture unless I earned an architecture degree. While I waited to hear back from Texas A&M University, I applied for all sorts of jobs like feral cat catcher, retail associate, urban planner, neighborhood tutor, and more. Everything was completely scrambled: My personal life, my career, the pandemic, the isolation, the uncertainty. As so many people did, I turned to stories. For me, they were science fiction. I don't know if it was my environment, the pandemic, or some other combination of factors, but the ideas and tones from those mid-'60s works spoke to me so clearly. They felt hopeful, and it helped to surround myself with stories of people succeeding in difficult and strange environments. Stories set in different times, whether about the past or future, say more about the culture that created them than the one they're trying to depict.

This project makes the statement that, while things may feel dire in the face of climate change, the future is optimistic. The histories of ordinary people are worth preserving. In using the design language of the Space Age, this archive seeks to elevate the study and preservation of history to the act of exploration.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

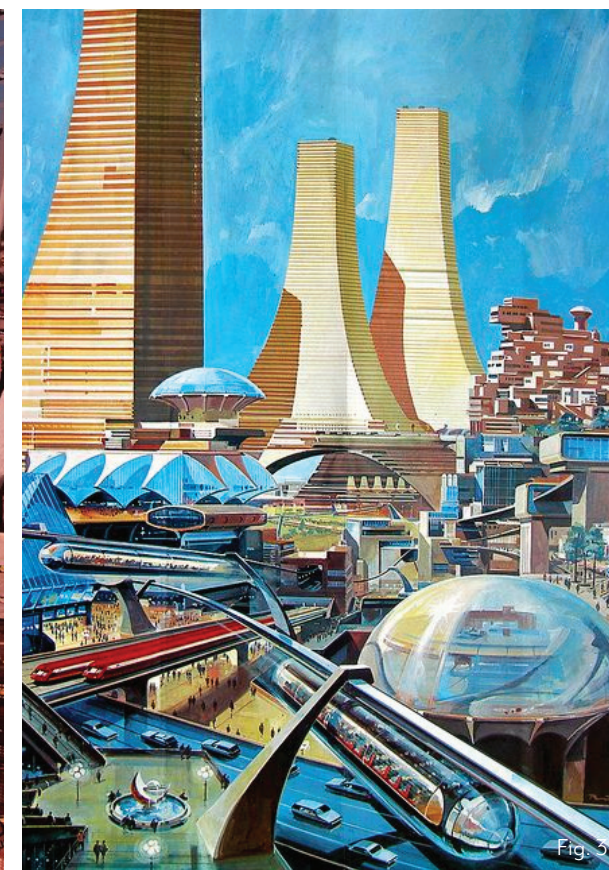


Fig. 3

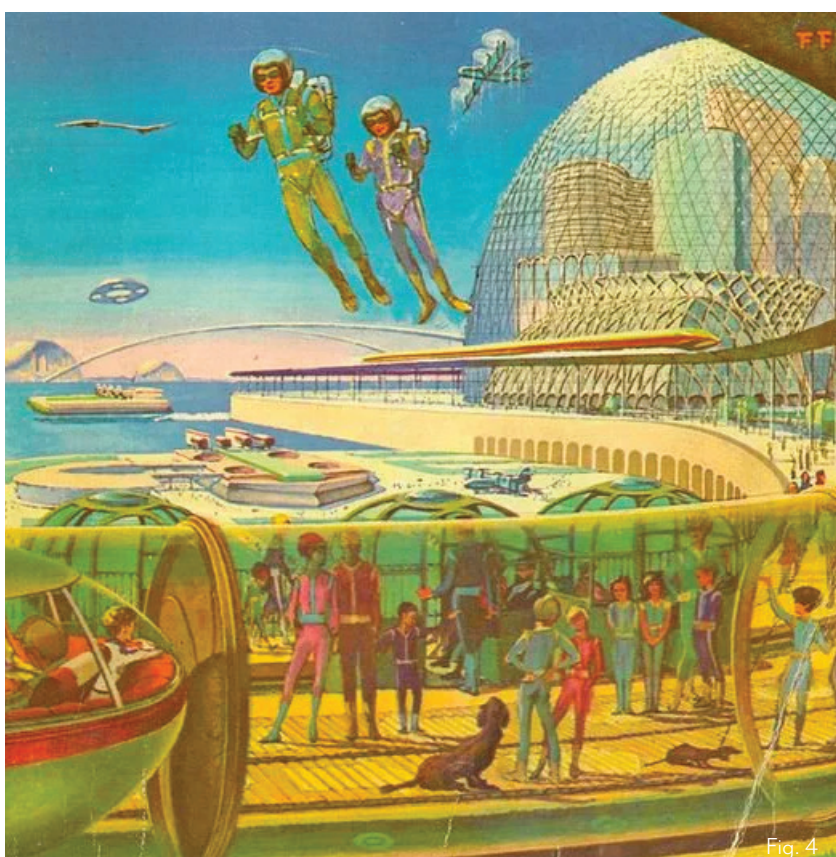


Fig. 4



Fig. 5

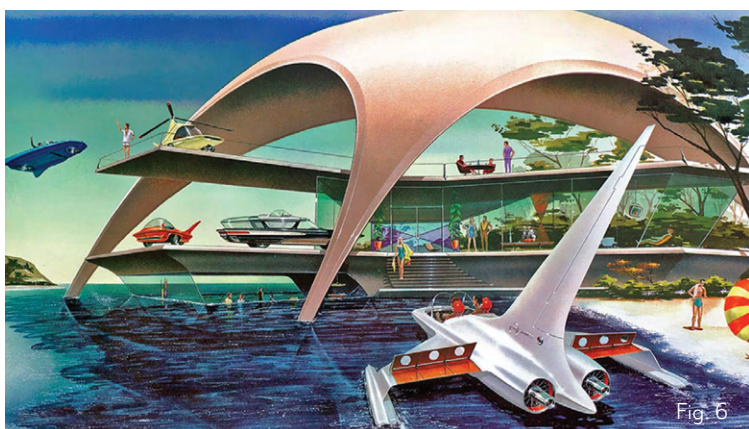


Fig. 6

Fig. 1 - Ralph McQuarrie  
 Fig. 2 - Jon Hrubesch  
 Fig. 3 - Klaus Bürgle  
 Fig. 4 - Fred Freeman  
 Fig. 5 - Klaus Bürgle  
 Fig. 6 - Jim Powers

## Retrofuturism (and Regular Futurism)

Science fiction is my favorite genre. Not because I love spaceships and aliens, but because it elevates themes in art. Science fiction lets authors take their central themes and physically make them a part of the world they're creating. Other genres certainly do this too, but science fiction takes it to the extreme. Another novel may use the setting of a cabin in the woods to depict isolation, but a sci-fi novel might use a spaceship on the edge of the galaxy or a submarine at the bottom of the ocean. When there is no default setting, the artist's choices carry more weight and allow the reader to assign more meaning to the art.

I find it extremely compelling that depictions of the future are frequently centered on the architecture. In any science fiction movie or television show, note the city and buildings. In *Gattaca* (1997), the Marin County Civic Center is the backdrop for a story about the future where everyone drives cars that would have been vintage even in 1997. The opening shots of *Blade Runner* (1982) immediately establish the dark, dystopian of Los Angeles in this version of the future. The cityscapes of *Metropolis* (1927) were surely visionary to viewers when it debuted. Notably, technology plays a comparatively small role in *Dune* (2021), and its low-tech brutalist architecture adds to the image of an inhospitable planet. *Star Trek: The Original Series* was my pandemic binge-watch show, and its alien landscapes and spaceship interiors effortlessly told the story of Gene Roddenberry's best hopes for humanity. If "a picture is worth a thousand words," architecture in visual mediums is a lightning-fast way to convey what type of future our story is set in.

The version of futurism that I am interested in reviving is the futurism of the 1960s in America. Italian futurism of the early 20th century deals more with themes of movement, industrialisation, and density. For the purposes of this project, I want to reference the themes of exploration, social equality, and optimism that I feel are more consistent with the 1960s.

In 2023, we are currently in the midst of nostalgia-driven media and consumerism. It feels like every movie in theaters is a remake or part of an existing creative property. Everyone is trying to capitalize on nostalgia these days, and retrofuturism is an older example of this type of advertising and art. Retrofuturism looks back to the excitement we felt about the future before it arrived. Sometimes this comes from advertisements trying to sell this vision of a better future, and sometimes it comes from artists trying to distill that feeling of anticipation.

Retrofuturist art, especially that of advertisements, must be viewed with a critical eye. They are products of their time, just as my building is a product of mine. The best takeaway from retrofuturist art and advertisements is the role we ascribe to architecture in our vision of the future.



Fig. 7  
Photograph by Joshua White

## Hollyhock House

Frank Lloyd Wright | Los Angeles, CA | 1921  
*Mayan Revival*

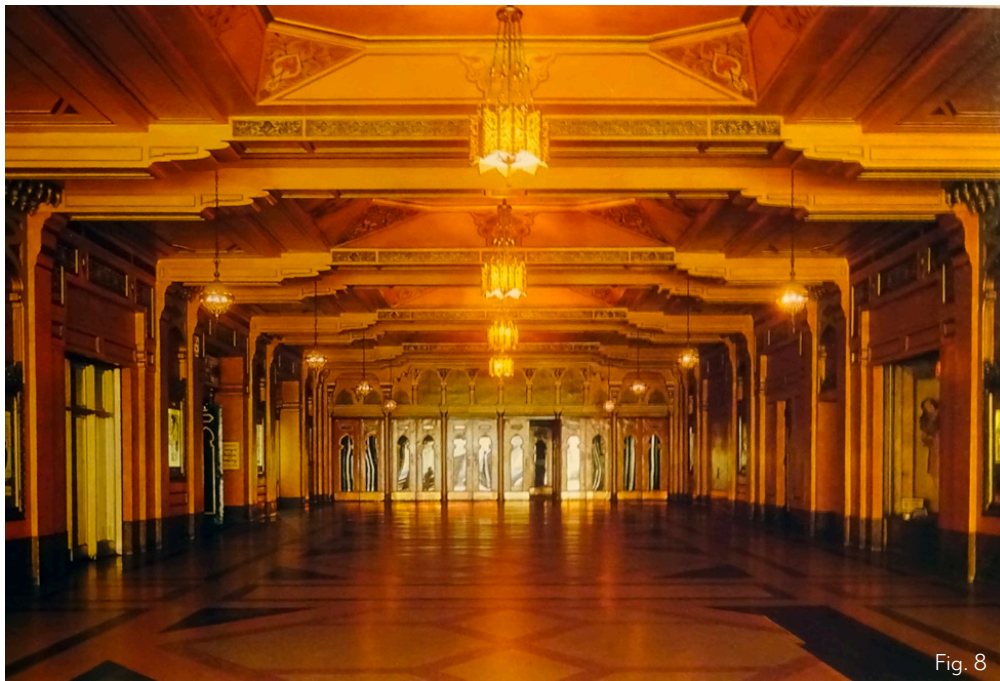


Fig. 8  
Photograph by Robert M. Craig

## Fox Theater

P. Thorton Marye, Richard W. Alger, Olivier J. Vinour | Atlanta, GA | 1929  
*Moorish Revival, Ancient Egyptian Revival*



Fig. 9  
Photograph by Patrick Semansky

## United States Supreme Court

Cass Gilbert | Washington, D.C. | 1935  
*Neoclassical*

## (The Case for) Futurism Revival

Revival styles deal in the currency of references. Art historians and archaeologists know that ancient Greek and Roman temples would have been painted in their period of significance, but we choose to keep government buildings unpainted because our associations are with the idea of ancient democracy, not the reality of it. References only have value when people understand them.

Architects learn from precedent, and sometimes that precedent is from a certain stylistic discipline. In the Hollyhock House, Frank Lloyd Wright took inspiration from the heavy, angled roofs of Mayan architecture. Decoration is present, but it is a more holistic reference to the past than we see in other forms of revivalism.

Sometimes, exoticism is the most important part of a revival style. The Fox Theater was chosen to represent revivalism through decoration. Different rooms at the Fox Theater are done in different styles that have very little to do with each other architecturally or aesthetically, but that works for this theater because the origin of that exoticism is irrelevant. This is common for theaters of the 1920s, which were frequently done in revival styles from cultures that were unfamiliar to Americans at the time.

The political reasons for choosing to build in a revival style are perhaps the most important to recognize. The United States Supreme Court Building was chosen to represent the ideological reasons for revivalism. Here, neoclassicism tries to establish a link between the origins of democracy, law, and the United States Supreme Court, therefore legitimizing the legal decisions made here. Neoclassicism is very commonly used throughout the US to imply power, and I would even argue that it has come to represent institutions as a whole.

For the purposes of my project, I propose the revival of 1960s futurist architecture. There are several parallels between the 1960s and the 2020s. In 2024, NASA's Artemis program will return men (and this time, women) to the moon. A new wave of civil rights protests, sparked by police brutality, has reignited momentum for social change and racial equality. In the 1960s, people were preoccupied with exploring new worlds and going off-planet. Now, though we are still engaging in space exploration, many people are increasingly focused on the condition of our own planet. Popular interest in technology is not just about the cosmos, but also about how we can improve life on Earth.



# Formal Precedents

## Bishop's Palace

Nicholas J. Clayton | Galveston, TX | 1892

First known as Gresham's Castle, this Galveston landmark was home to Josephine and Walter Gresham and their nine children until 1923. Being made of stone, it was one of the few buildings to survive the Storm of 1900. It is located on Avenue J, just a few streets down from my chosen site, and is one of the most prominent buildings on the island.

While this formal precedent is not from the 1960s, it is still relevant for its proximity to the site and its similarity to my other precedents. Although the level of detail and ornament is greater than the others, the formal composition is very similar. You can especially see this when comparing the floor plans of Bishop's Palace and the Gwathmey Residence, which is a pared-down execution of similar ideas.

I was also inspired by the volumes of this house, specifically the two cylindrical masses on the front. The spiral staircase is one of the home's most defining interior features. To me, it represents vertical movement in a way that the other towers at the front do not. While they are segmented by floors, the staircase stays open and is a truer expression of verticality.



Fig. 10 - Historic photograph, Storm of 1900 aftermath

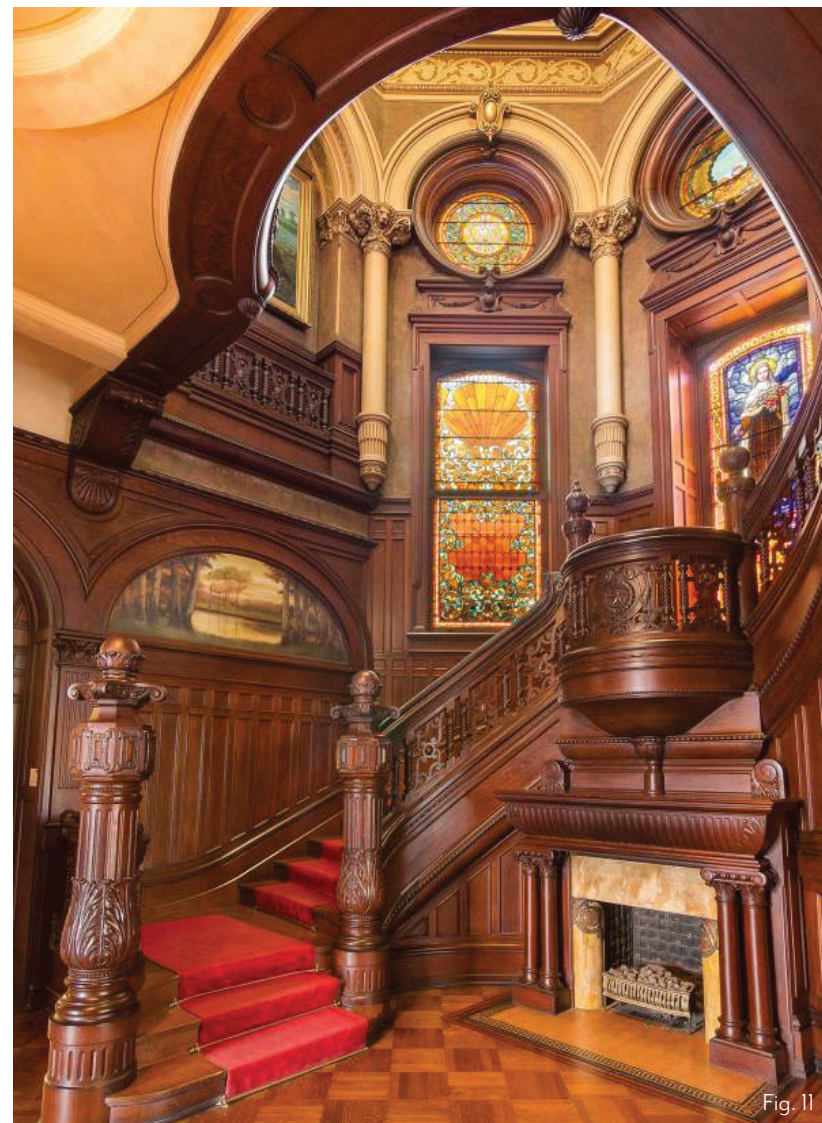


Fig. 11 - Bishop's Palace staircase

Fig. 12 - Bishop's Palace

Fig. 13 - Plans



Fig. 12

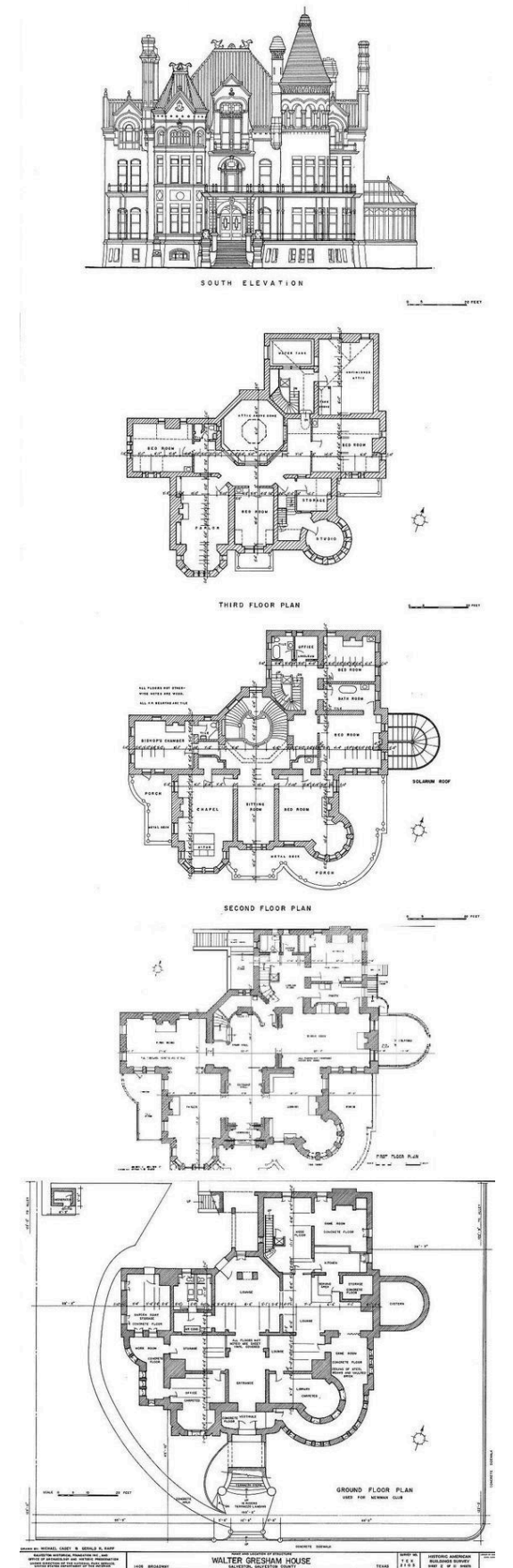


Fig. 13

## Formal Precedents

### Marin County Civic Center

Frank Lloyd Wright | San Rafael, CA | 1960

The Marin County Civic Center is made of two main wings hinged at the center which are further subdivided into two legs. Those two smaller legs are long rectangles that end in a semicircle. Circles and semicircles are the most prominent design element throughout the building.

The Marin County Civic Center is also a landmark building in the development of architecture in science fiction. It was the filming location for THX-1138 (1971) and Gattaca (1997), and it also served as the inspiration for Naboo in Star Wars: Episode I The Phantom Menace (1999). I love that a civic center, a place where people go for jury duty, to read books from the library, and to send mail from the post office, looks like this. It is such a joy to make beautiful public buildings like this a part of daily life.



Fig. 14



Fig. 16

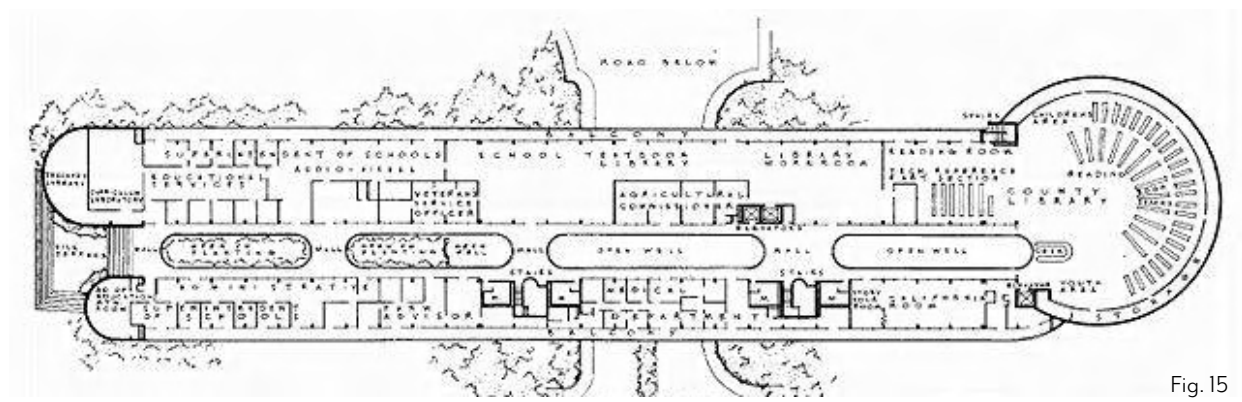


Fig. 15



Fig. 17

Fig. 14 - Exterior of the Marin County Civic Center

Fig. 15 - Floor plan, third floor

Fig. 16 - Atrium. Photographed by Marlena Sloss for the NYT

Fig. 17 - Aerial view

Fig. 18 - Courtroom in the Marin County Civic Center. Photographed by Andrew Pielage



Fig. 18

# Formal Precedents

## Gwathmey Residence

Charles Gwathmey | Amagansett, NY | 1967

This was Charles Gwathmey's first built project, done for his parents before he was officially licensed. I selected this project as an influence for its overall composition and clarity in plan. This was also the very first project I ever studied in an architectural studio, and I think about the lessons it imparted frequently. Its beauty lies in the form, not the detailing. The intersections of space are its defining characteristic.



Fig. 19

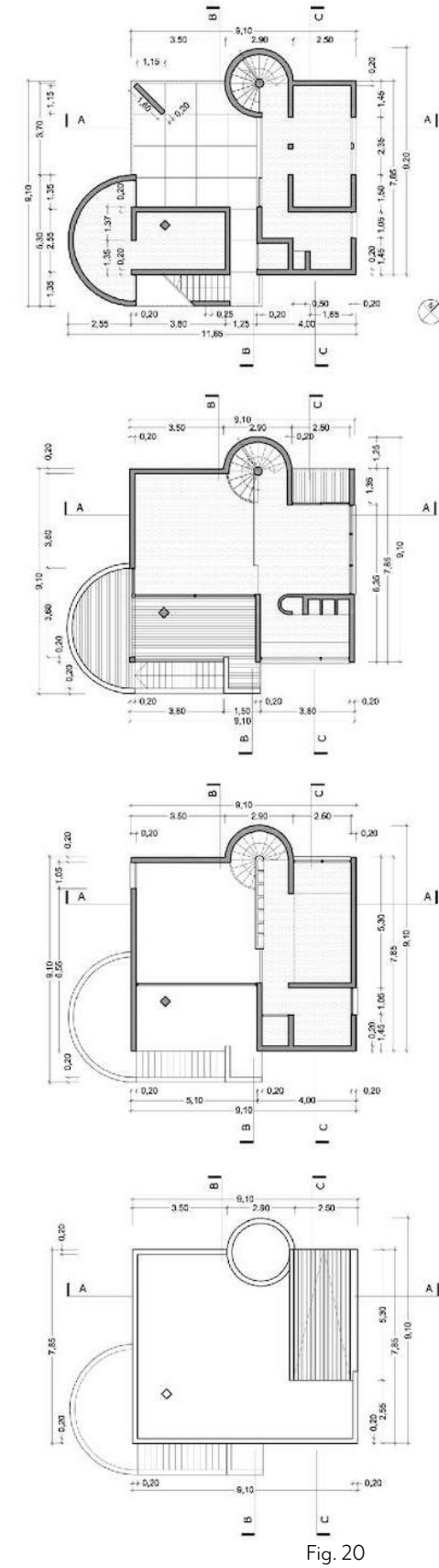


Fig. 20

Fig. 19 - Gwathmey Residence  
Fig. 20 - Plans  
Fig. 21 - Model by Guiliano C.

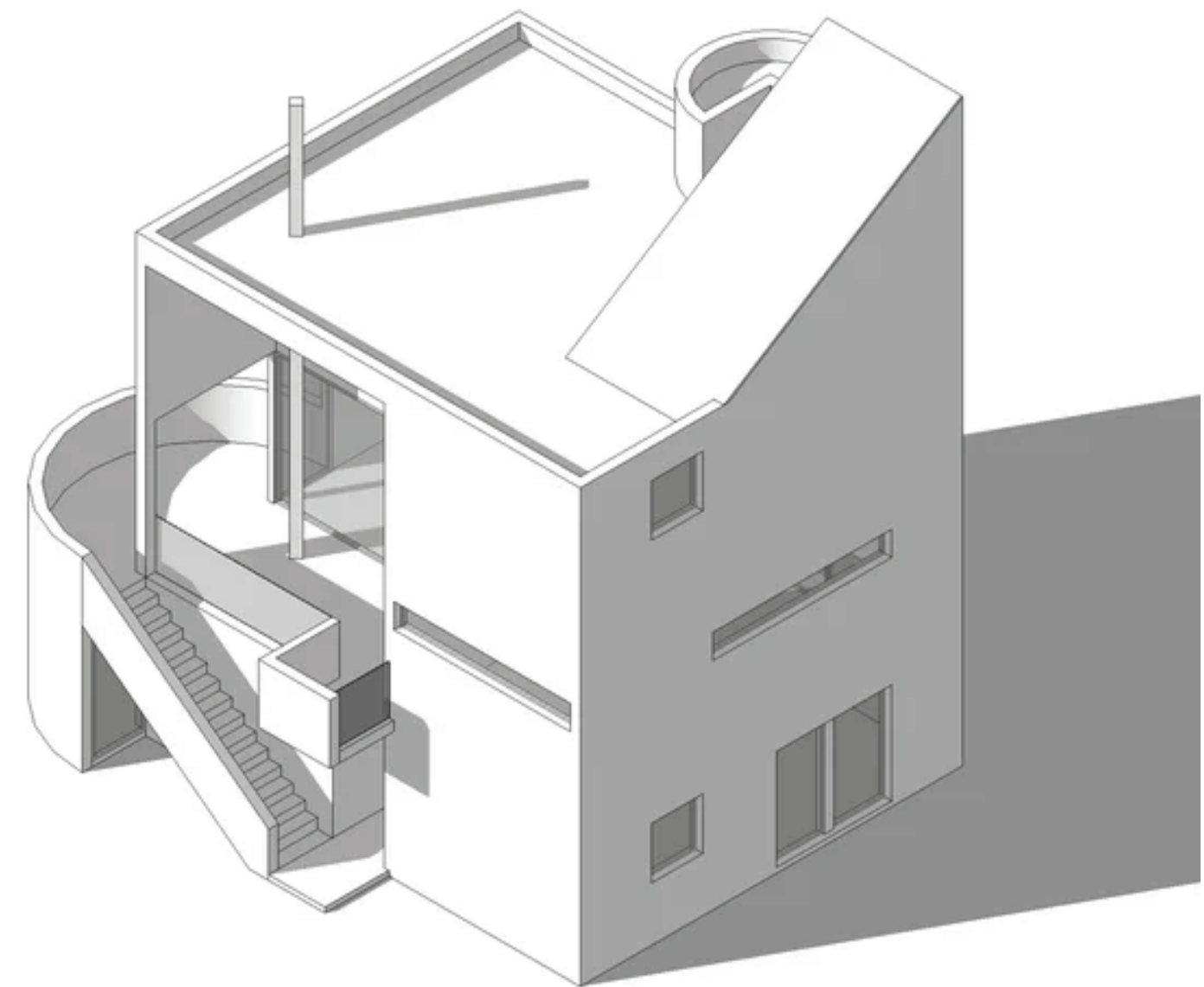


Fig. 21

# Formal Precedents

## Cooper Residence

Gwathmey Siegel Kaufman Architects | Orleans, MA | 1968

The Cooper Residence builds on the ideas and design from the Gwathmey Residence. The floor plan and volumetric composition of this project was very influential to me, and I particularly love how clear the design “rules” are here. The geometry is clearly defined, and there is a system for determining which areas terminate in semicircles and which are part of the orthogonal massing.

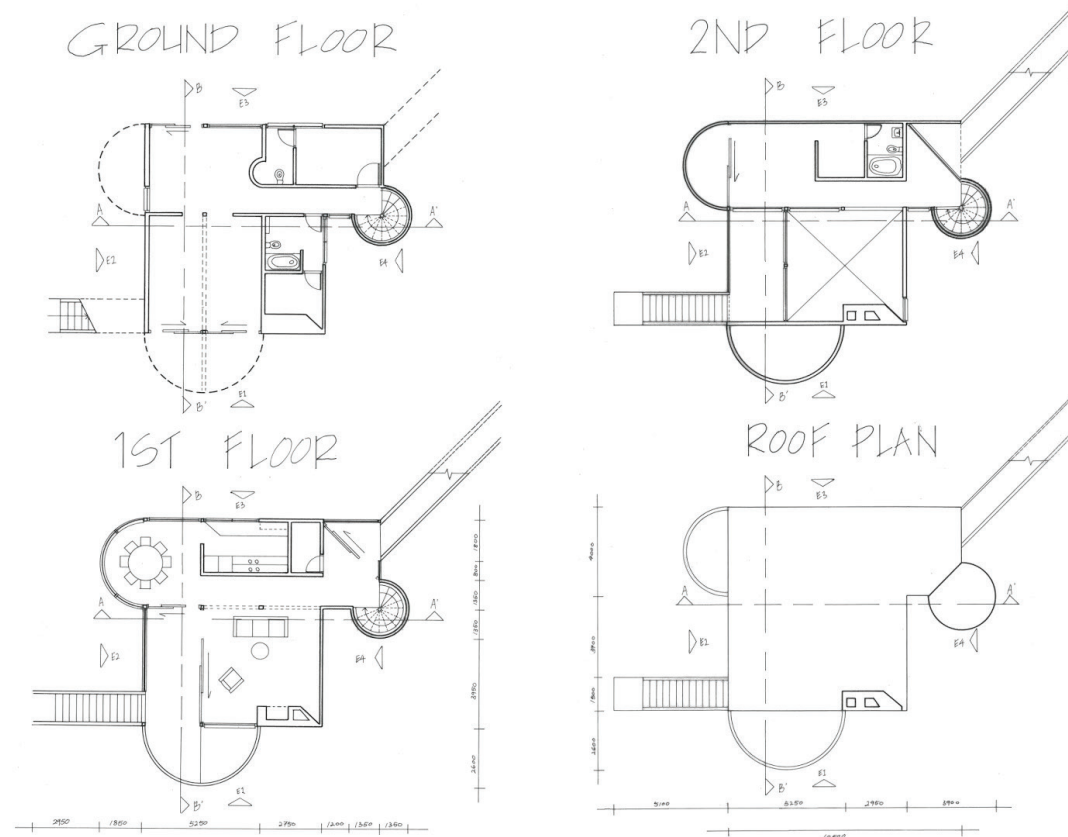


Fig. 22



Fig. 23



Fig. 24

Fig. 22 - Plans by Heng Rui Ying  
Fig. 23 - Cooper Residence  
Fig. 24 - Cooper Residence



Fig. 25



Fig. 27

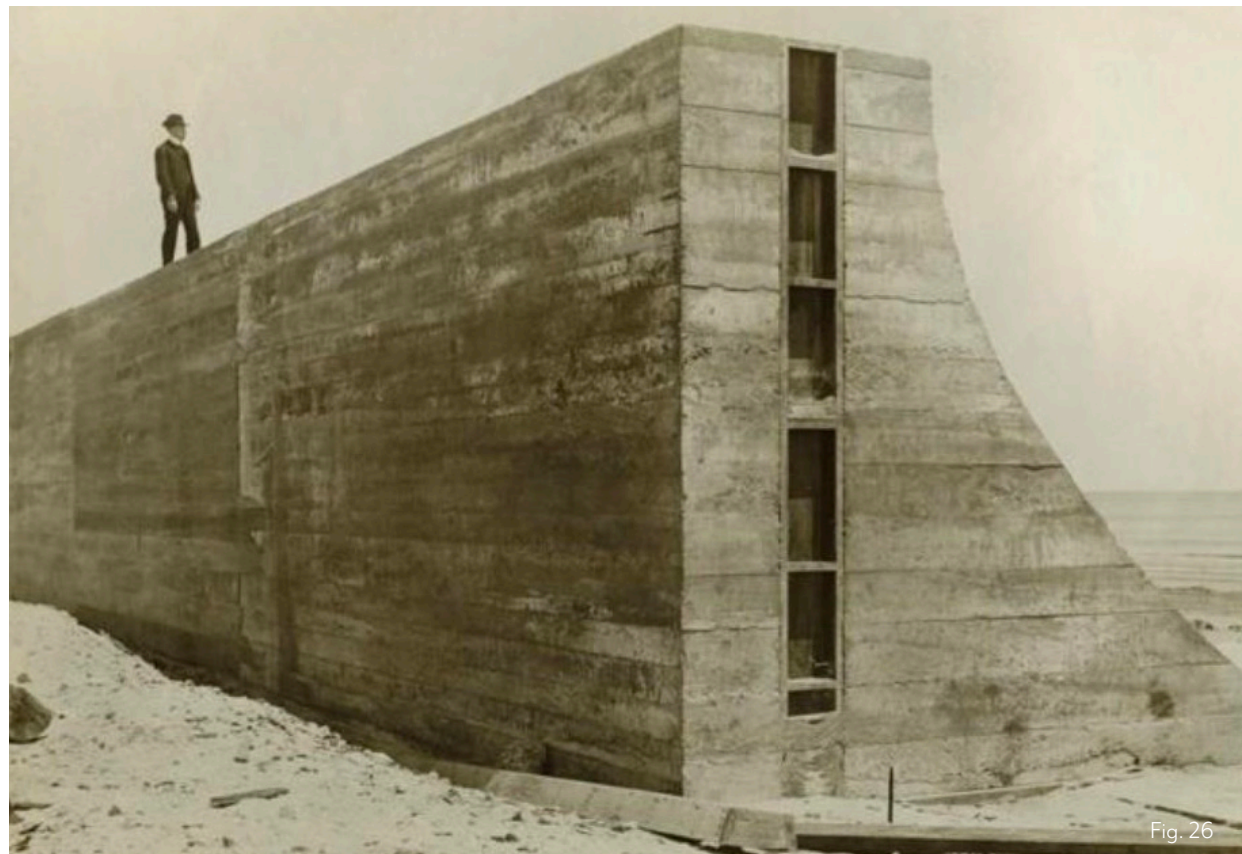


Fig. 26

Fig. 25 - Beach crowds prior to Storm of 1900

Fig. 26 - The Galveston seawall at time of installation

Fig. 27 - Posed group of workers during Storm of 1900 recovery

## Program Selection

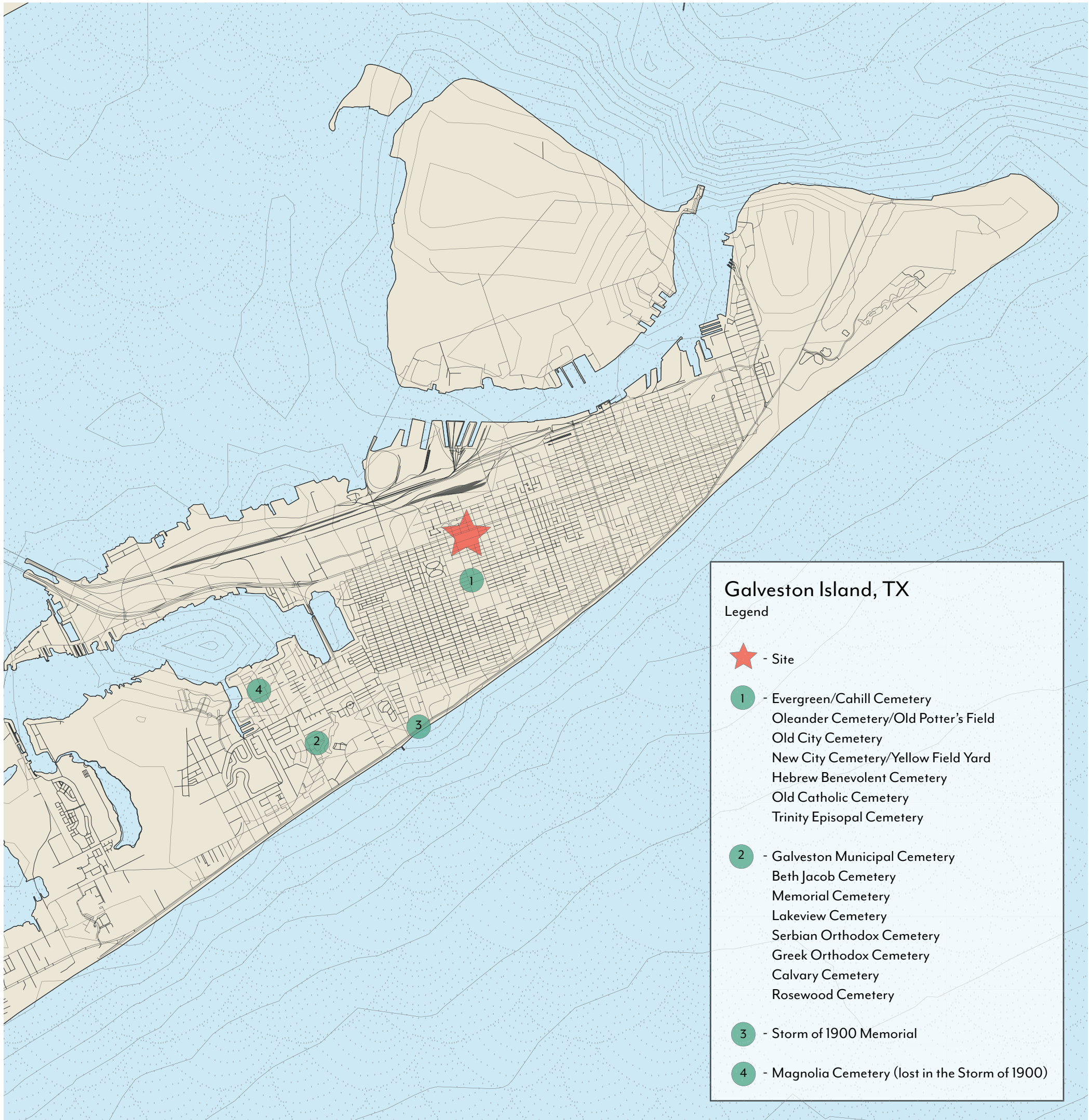
Although cemeteries may feel creepy or morbid to people today, they are important local cultural heritage sites. During my internship at a preservation-focused firm, I was surprised to discover how many times research brought me back to cemetery records. For ordinary people who lived decades or centuries ago, grave records are some of our best extant documentation. Cemeteries provide insight into settlement patterns, genealogy, and demographic information about the people buried there.

Cemeteries are enmeshed with the landscape, which makes them an ideal candidate for conversations related to environmental concerns like climate change. Archives symbolize permanence, and this typology fit perfectly with the idea of preserving a threatened resource like these historic cemeteries.

As important as these cemeteries are, their restoration may not rank highly on the islanders' list of priorities as they rebuild after a disaster. One possible solution to this dilemma is to proactively conserve the information housed in the cemeteries so that homes and businesses can be prioritized during rebuilding efforts.



**2** SITE





The site's location was chosen for its relationship to the existing cemetery. It is directly across the street and located on a symmetrical axis. One of Galveston's main thoroughfares runs between the cemetery and the archive, increasing visibility and looping people into their exchange.

It was also important to me that the selected site did not have anything currently built there. It felt antithetical to propose a preservation-minded project that required the demolition of another.

Fig. 28 - View from cemetery facing Avenue J  
 Fig. 29 - Seasonal tickseed bloom. Photograph by Sarah Rushton  
 Fig. 30 - The cemetery at dusk. Photograph by Troy Ezequiel



Fig. 28



Fig. 29



Fig. 30



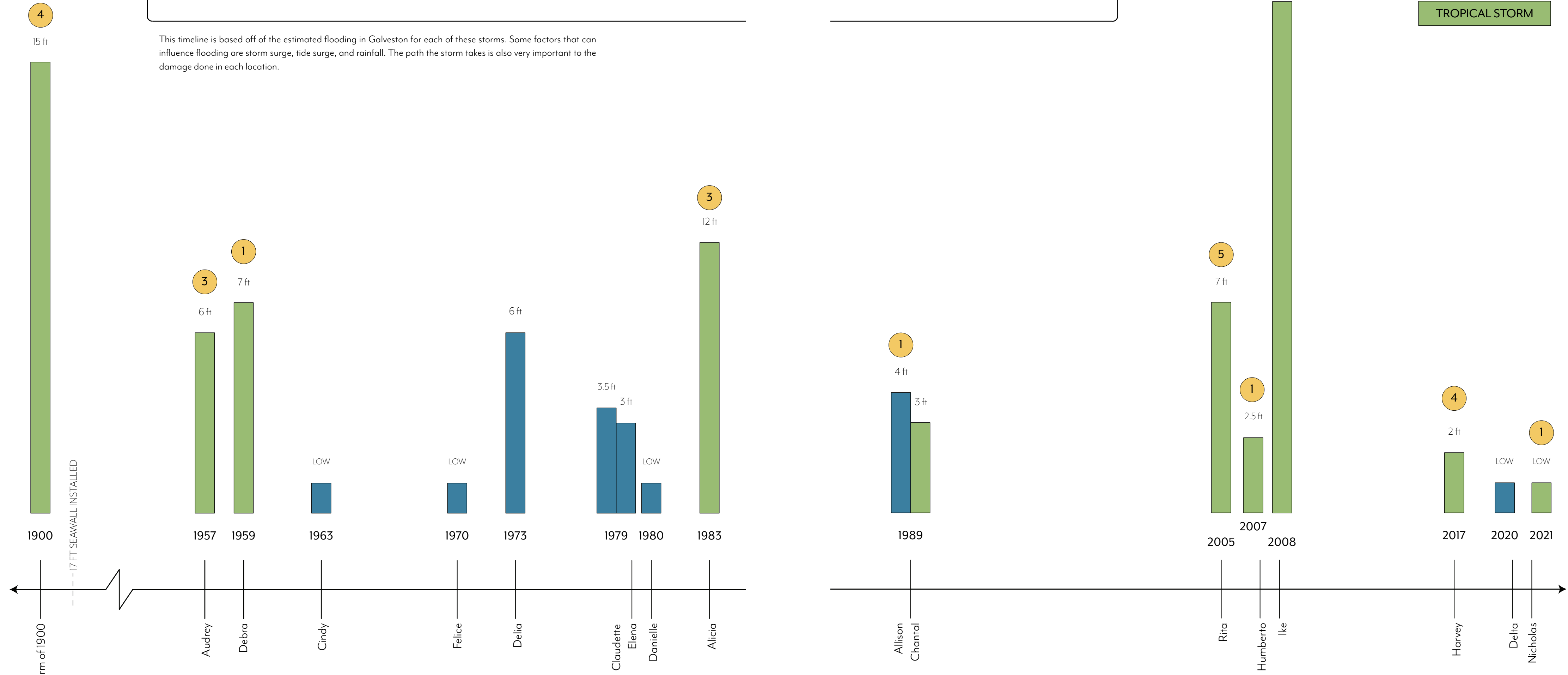


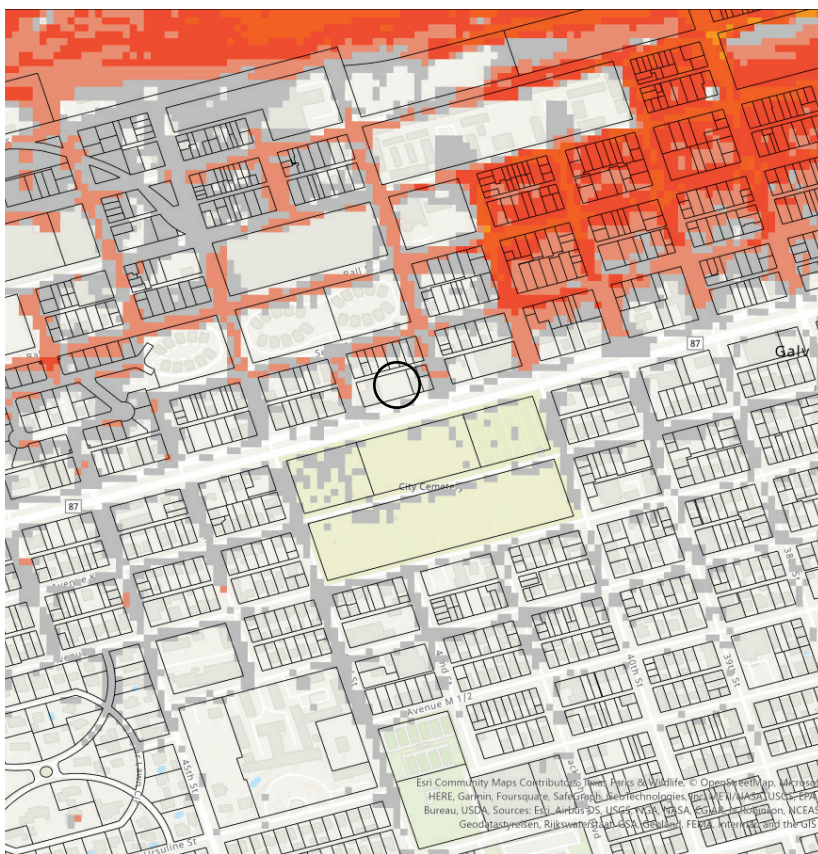
# HISTORIC FLOODING IN GALVESTON

This timeline is based off of the estimated flooding in Galveston for each of these storms. Some factors that can influence flooding are storm surge, tide surge, and rainfall. The path the storm takes is also very important to the damage done in each location.

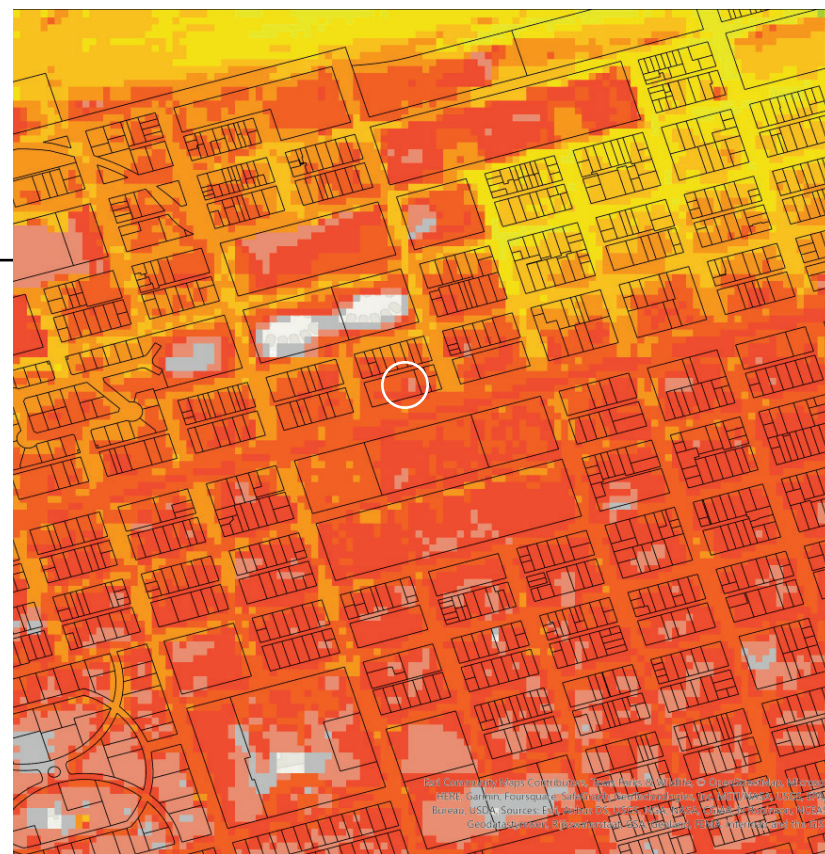
HURRICANE CAT.

TROPICAL STORM

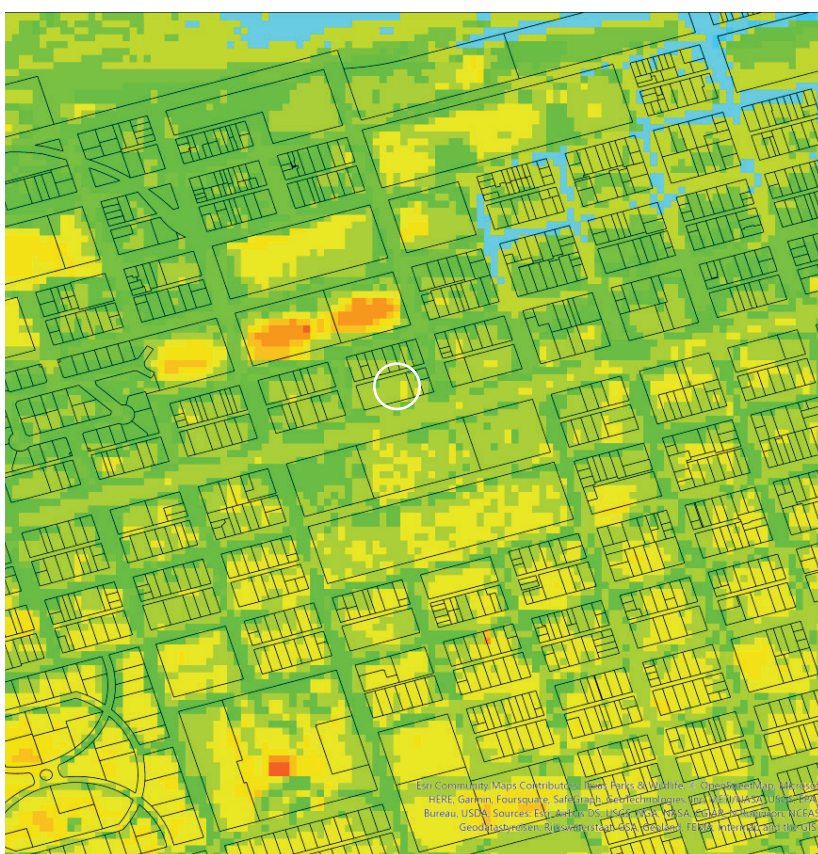




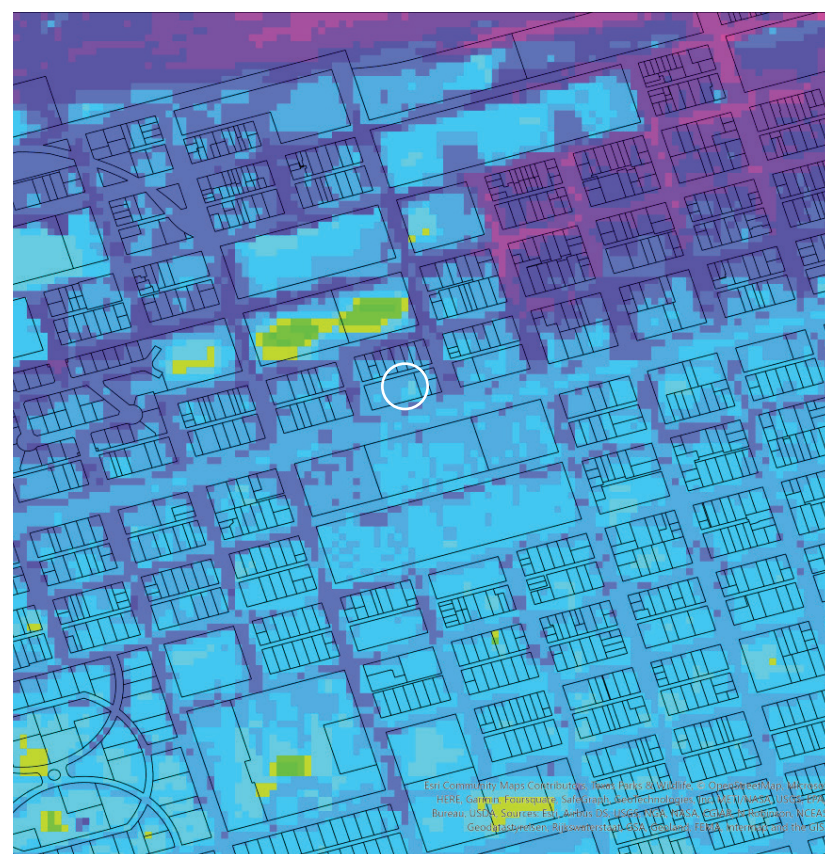
**CATEGORY 1**  
EXPECTED FLOODING 0-1 FT



**CATEGORY 2**  
EXPECTED FLOODING 2-4 FT

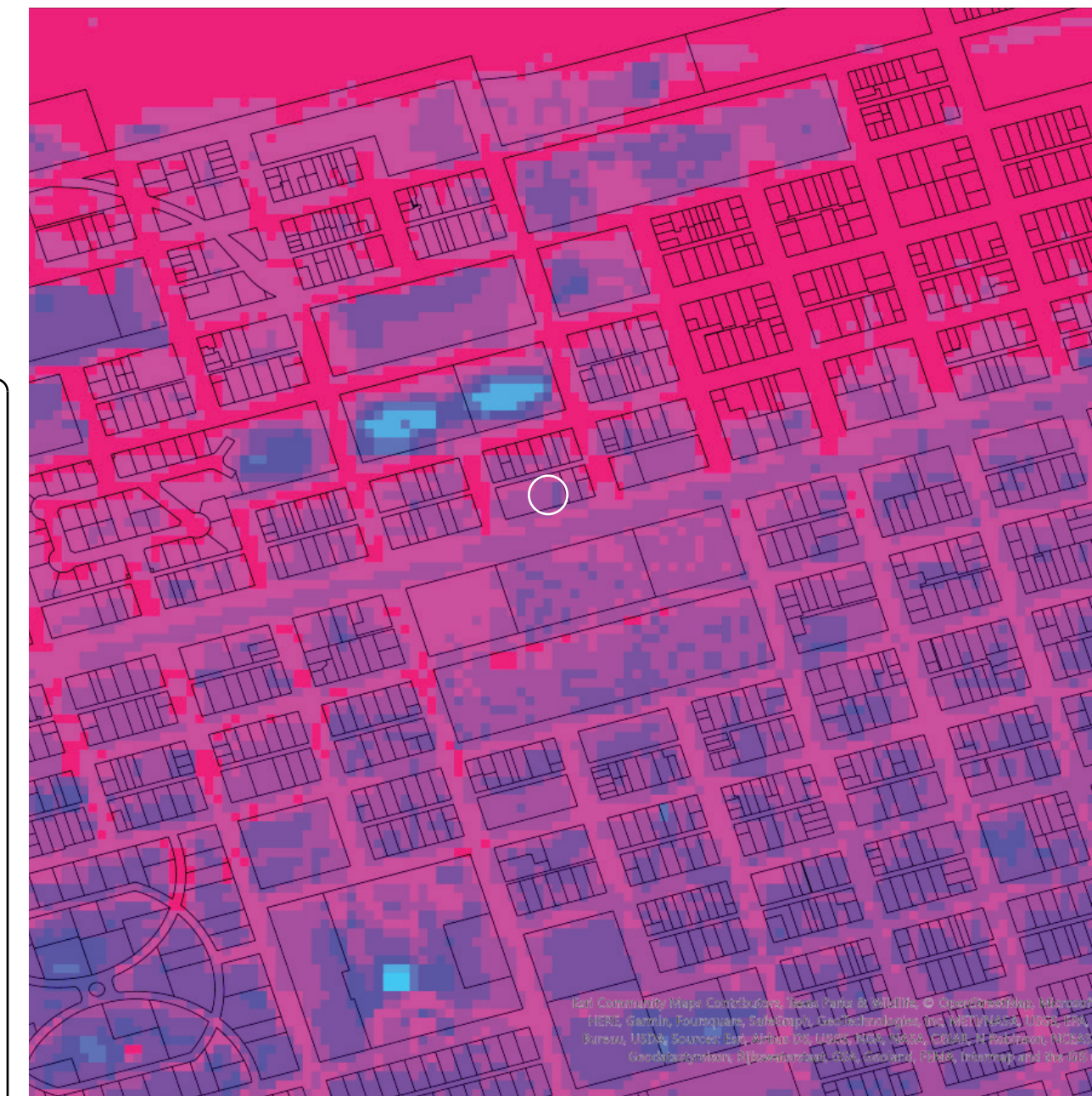


**CATEGORY 3**  
EXPECTED FLOODING 8-10 FT



**CATEGORY 4**  
EXPECTED FLOODING 13-15 FT

EXPECTED STORM SURGE



**CATEGORY 5**  
EXPECTED FLOODING 18-20 FT

- 00 to 01 foot above ground
- 01 to 02 feet above ground
- 02 to 03 feet above ground
- 03 to 04 feet above ground
- 04 to 05 feet above ground
- 05 to 06 feet above ground
- 06 to 07 feet above ground
- 07 to 08 feet above ground
- 08 to 09 feet above ground
- 09 to 10 feet above ground
- 10 to 11 feet above ground
- 11 to 12 feet above ground
- 12 to 13 feet above ground
- 13 to 14 feet above ground
- 14 to 15 feet above ground
- 15 to 16 feet above ground
- 16 to 17 feet above ground
- 17 to 18 feet above ground
- 18 to 19 feet above ground
- 19 to 20 feet above ground
- Greater than 20 feet above ground
- Levee Areas - Consult Local Officials for flood risk

Storm surge data obtained from NOAA

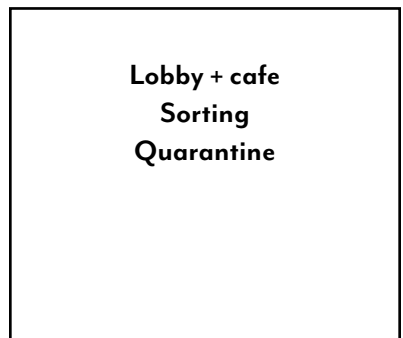
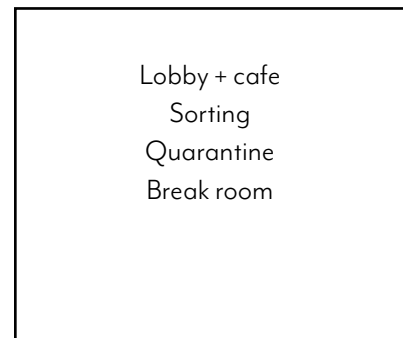
Parcel data obtained from the Galveston Central Appraisal District



Site

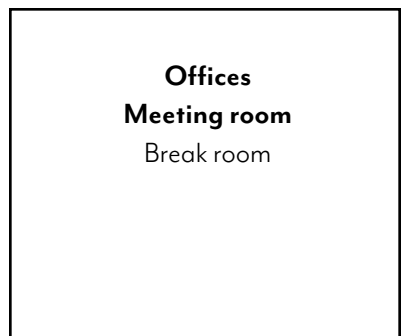
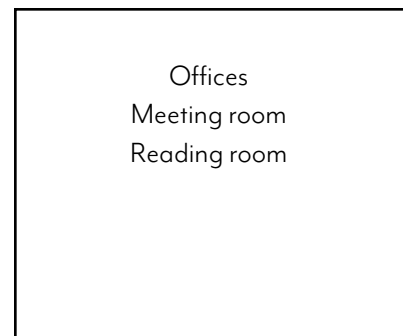
LOW PRIORITY

FIRST FLOOR



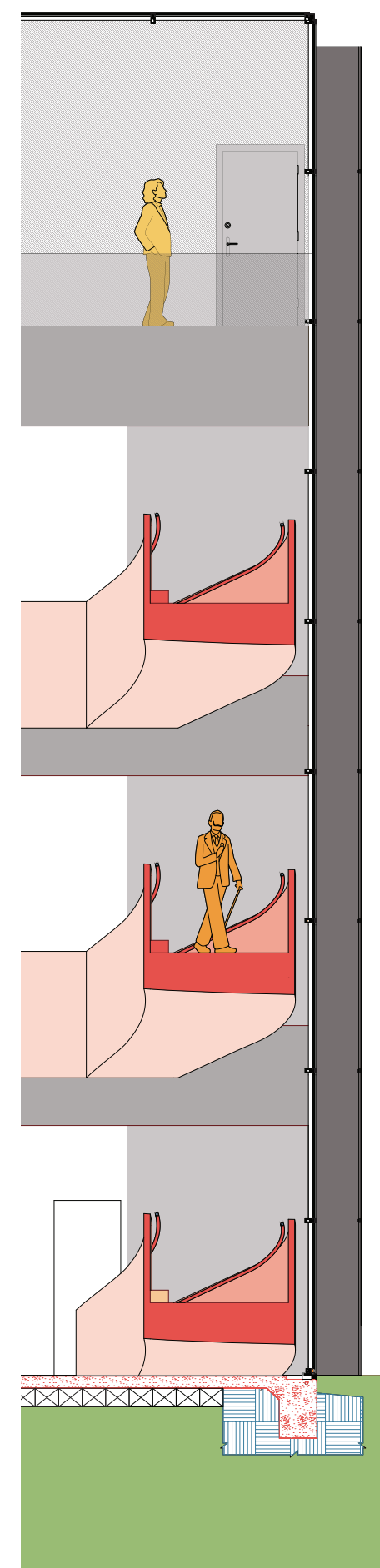
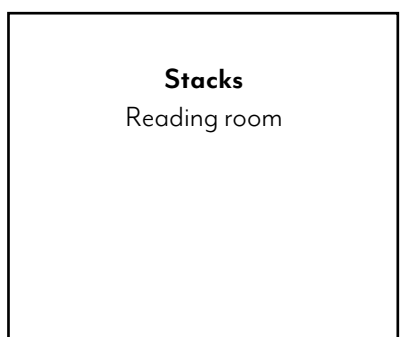
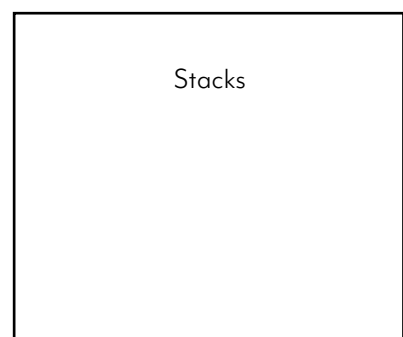
MEDIUM PRIORITY

SECOND FLOOR

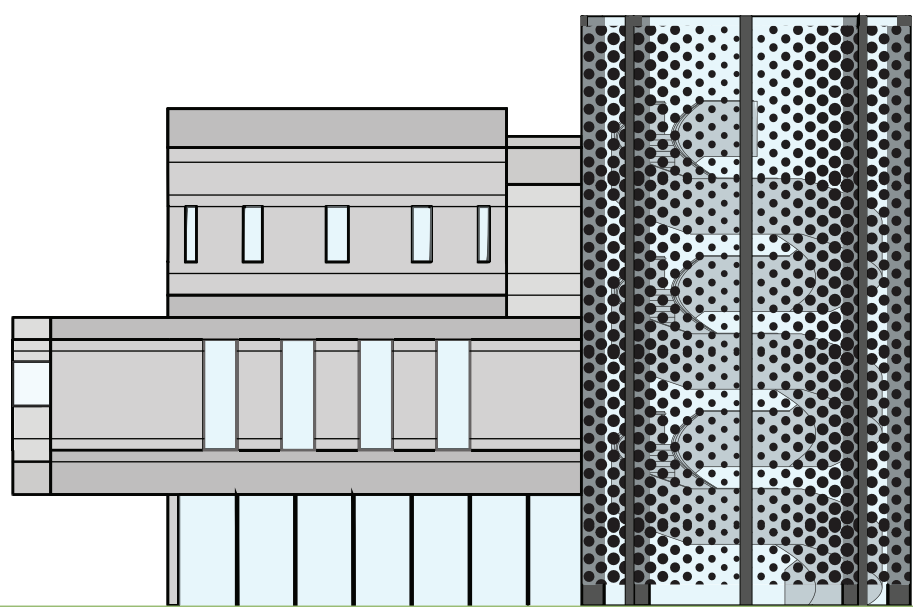


HIGH PRIORITY

THIRD FLOOR



- CATEGORY 5 (18-20 FT) [ ]
- CATEGORY 4 (13-15 FT) [ ]
- CATEGORY 3 (8-10 FT) [ ]
- CATEGORY 2 (2-4 FT) [ ]

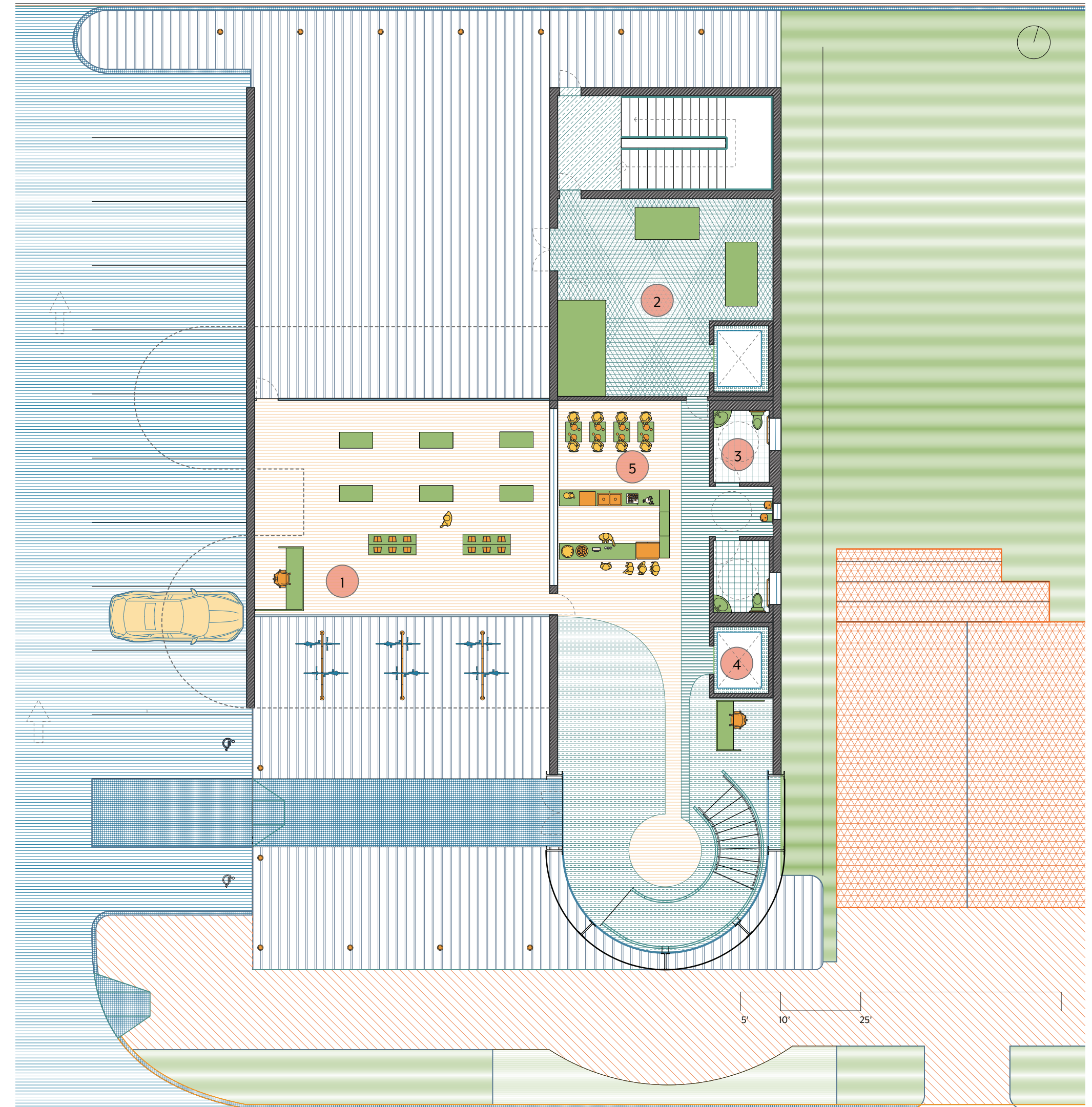
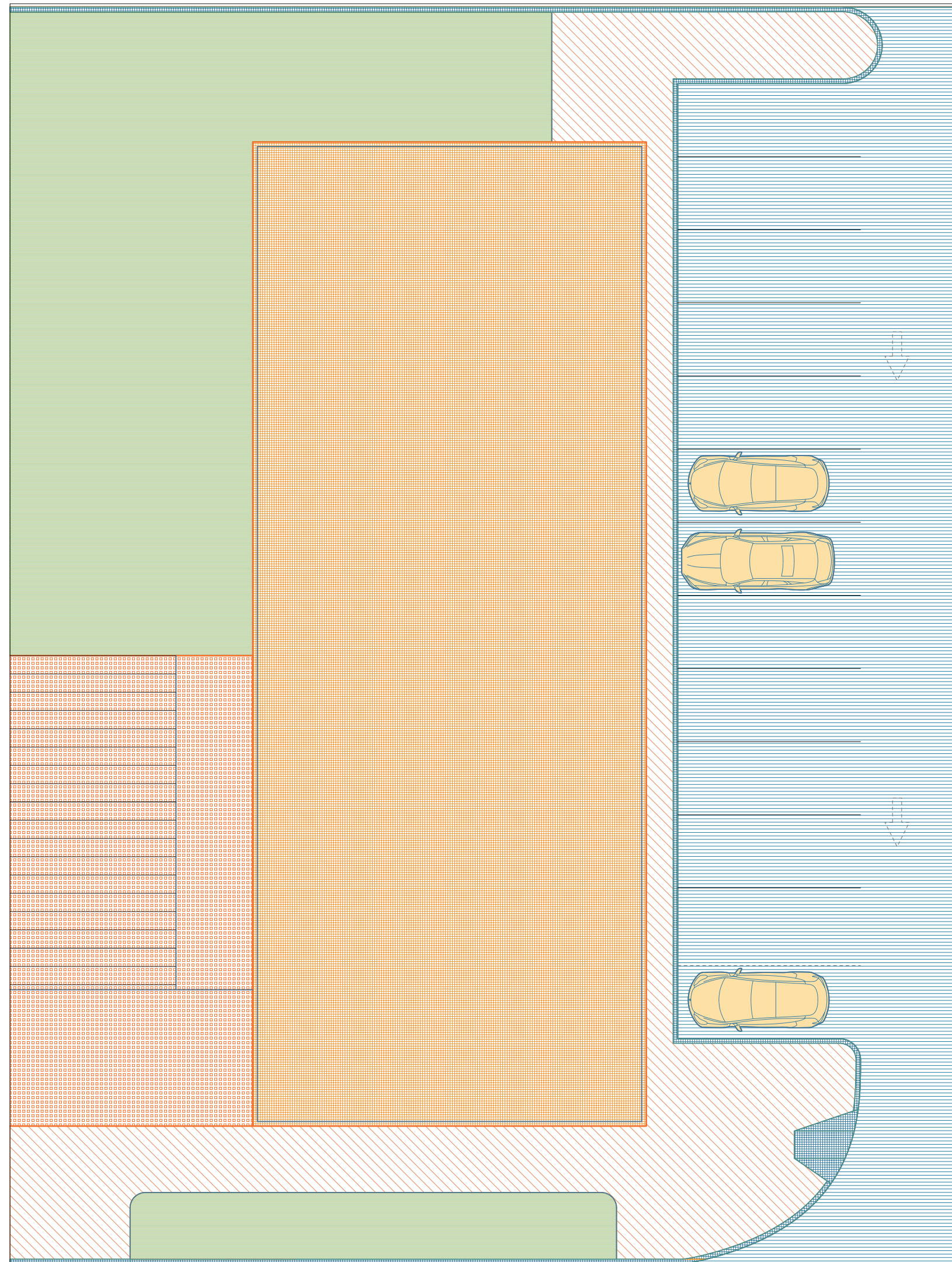




# 3 PLANS

# FIRST FLOOR

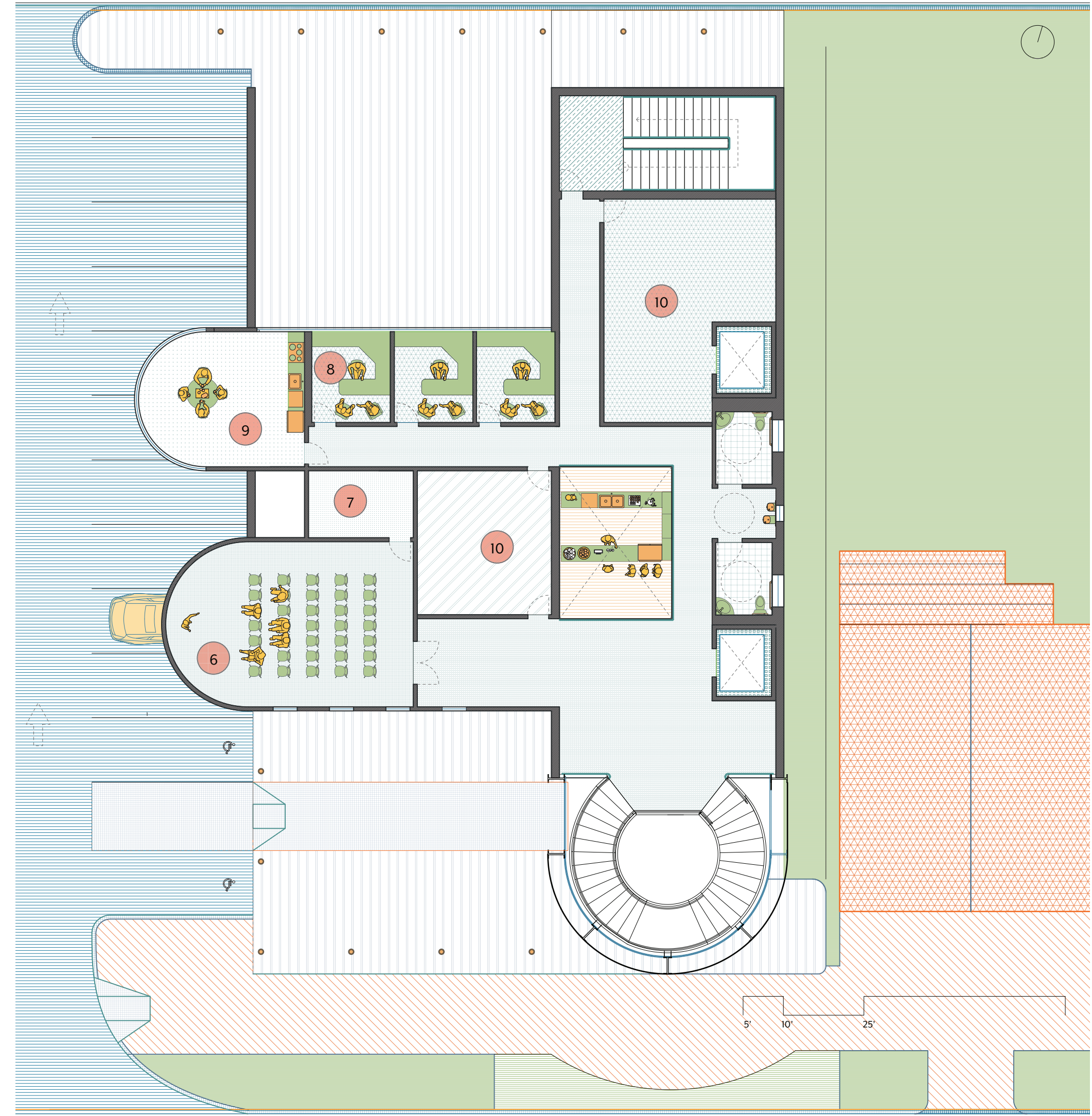
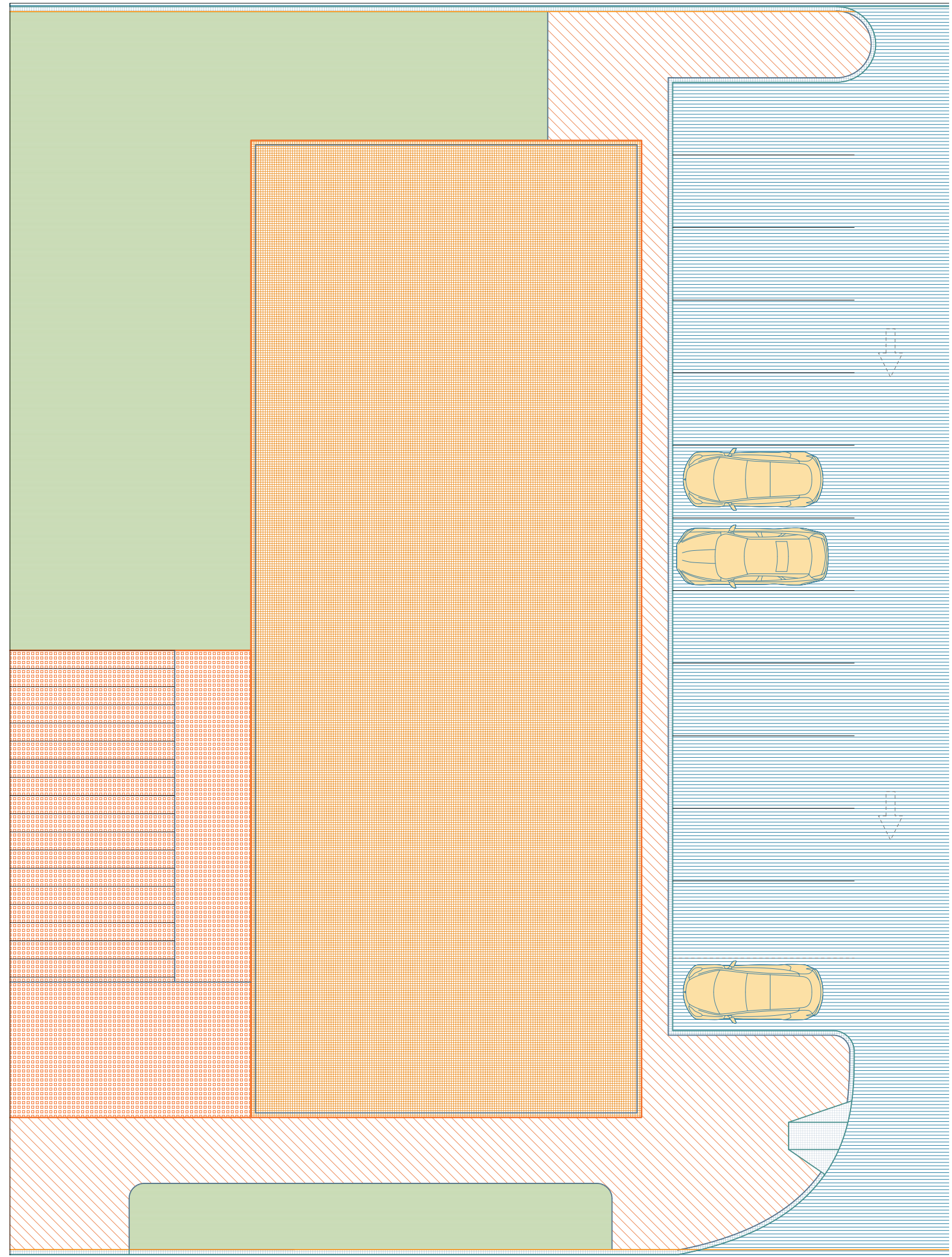
- 1 GALLERY
- 2 SORTING
- 3 BATHROOMS
- 4 ELEVATORS
- 5 CAFE
- 6 PRESENTATION ROOM
- 7 CHAIR STORAGE
- 8 OFFICES
- 9 STAFF BREAK ROOM
- 10 MECHANICAL ROOMS
- 11 STACKS
- 12 READING ROOM
- 13 DIGITIZING





# SECOND FLOOR

- 1 GALLERY
- 2 SORTING
- 3 BATHROOMS
- 4 ELEVATORS
- 5 CAFE
- 6 PRESENTATION ROOM
- 7 CHAIR STORAGE
- 8 OFFICES
- 9 STAFF BREAK ROOM
- 10 MECHANICAL ROOMS
- 11 STACKS
- 12 READING ROOM
- 13 DIGITIZING

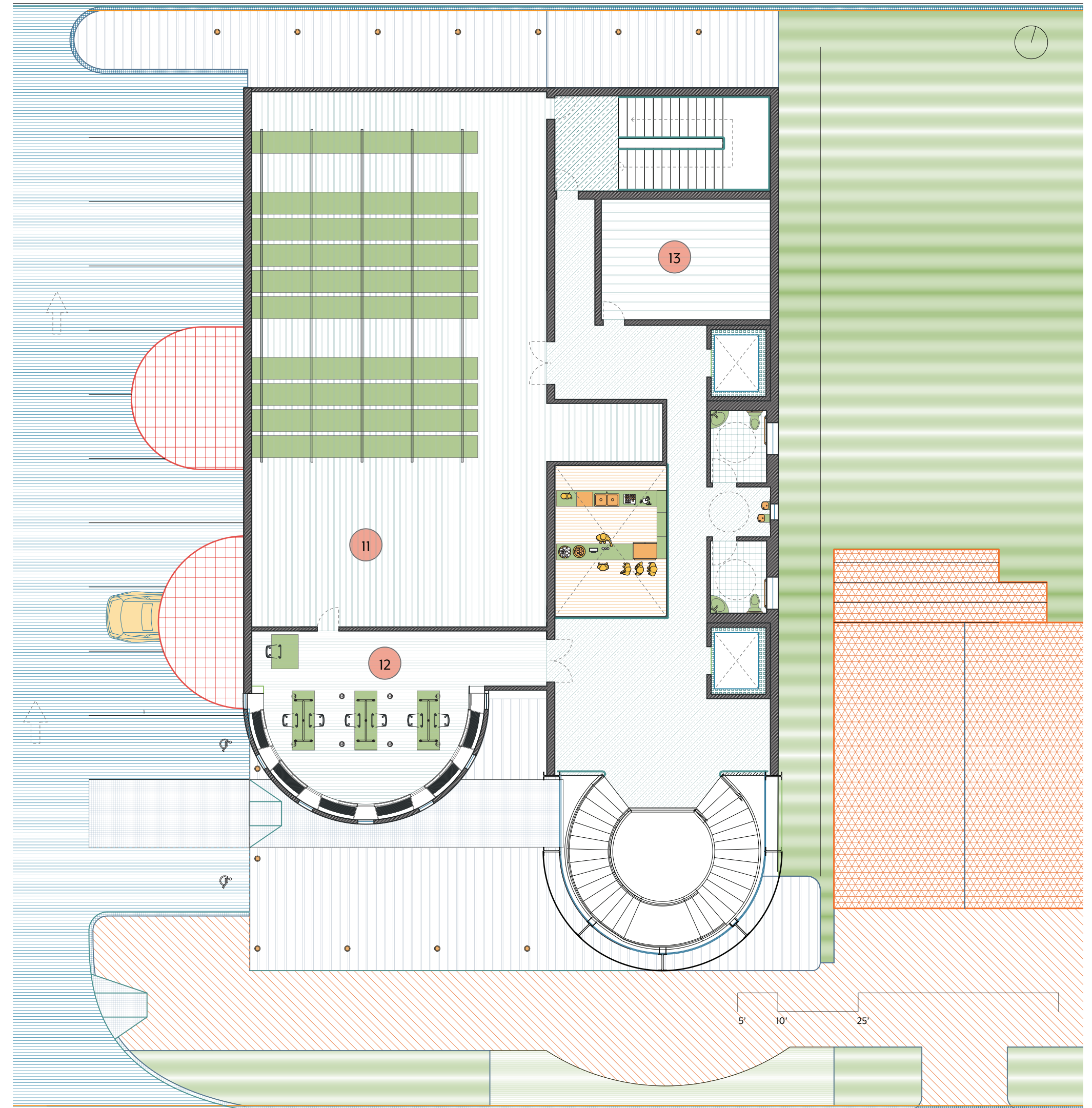
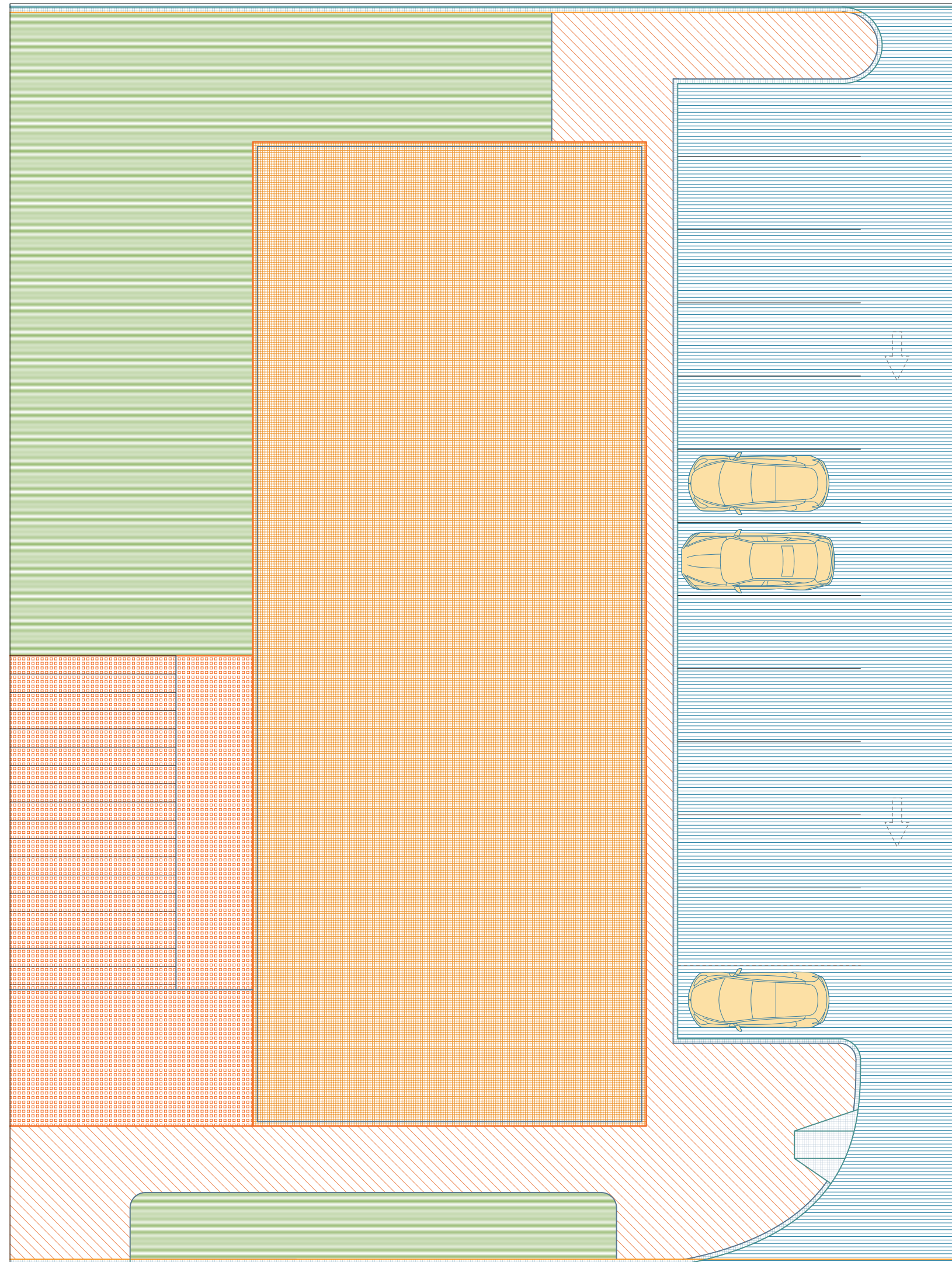






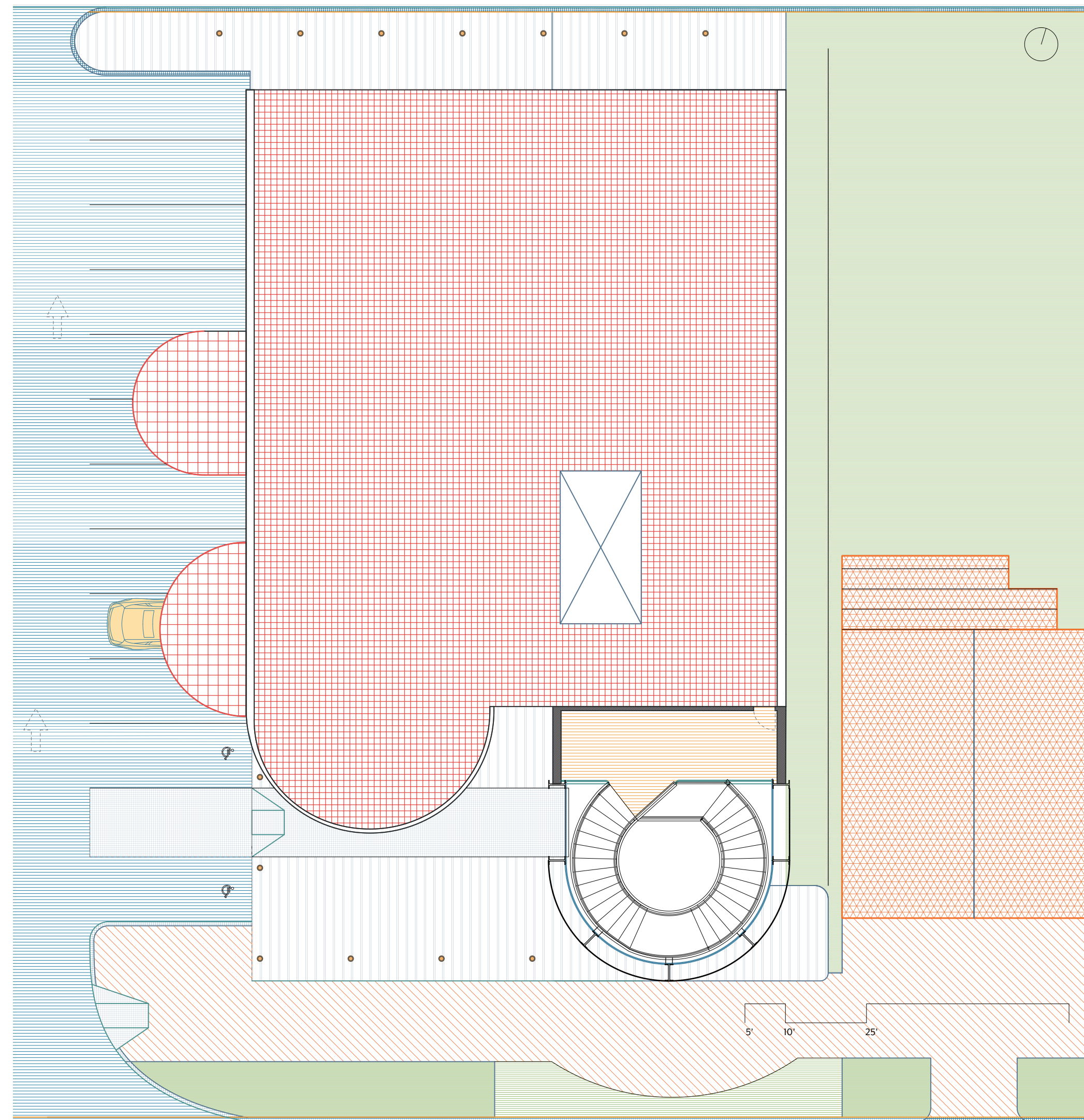
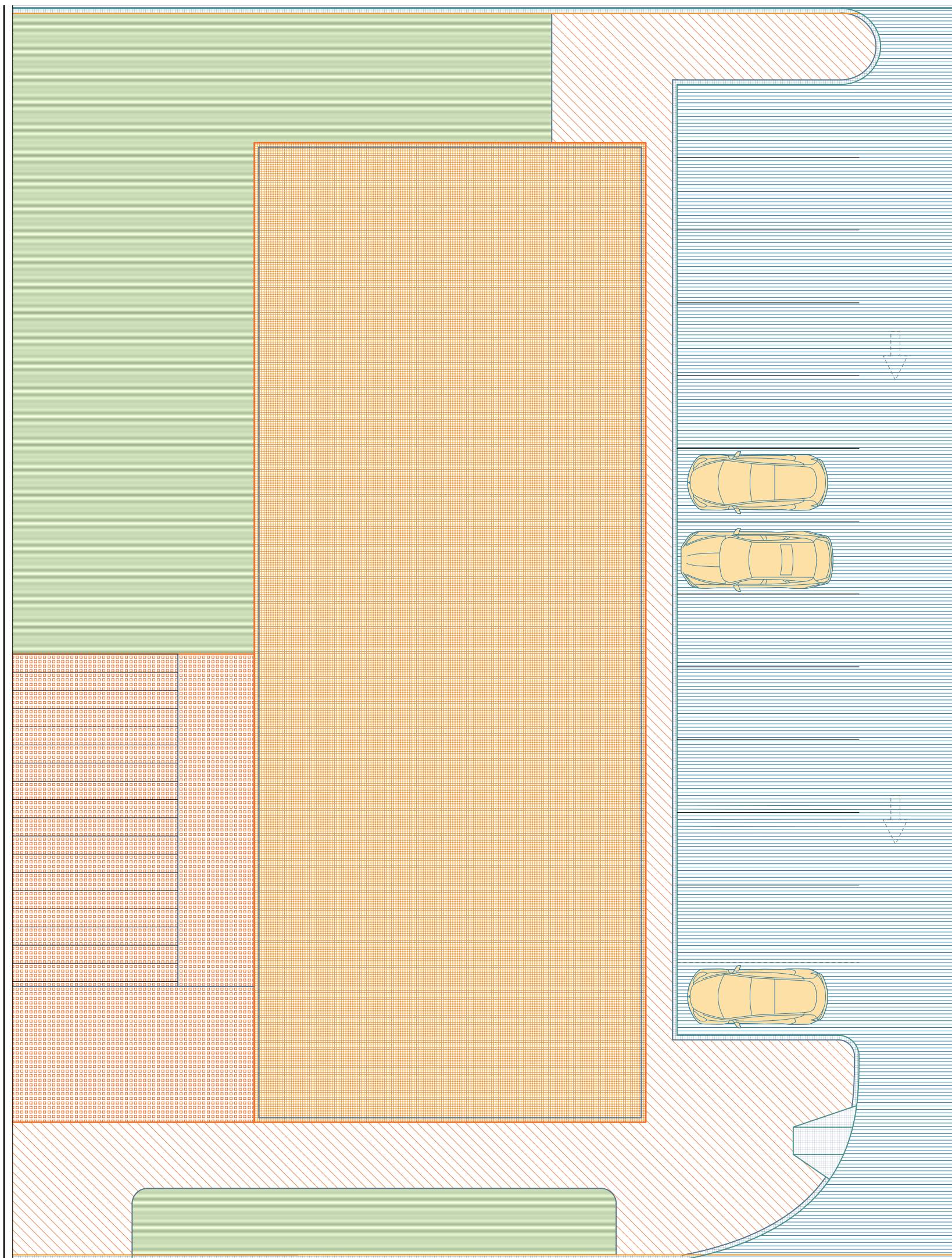
# THIRD FLOOR

- 1 GALLERY
- 2 SORTING
- 3 BATHROOMS
- 4 ELEVATORS
- 5 CAFE
- 6 PRESENTATION ROOM
- 7 CHAIR STORAGE
- 8 OFFICES
- 9 STAFF BREAK ROOM
- 10 MECHANICAL ROOMS
- 11 STACKS
- 12 READING ROOM
- 13 DIGITIZING





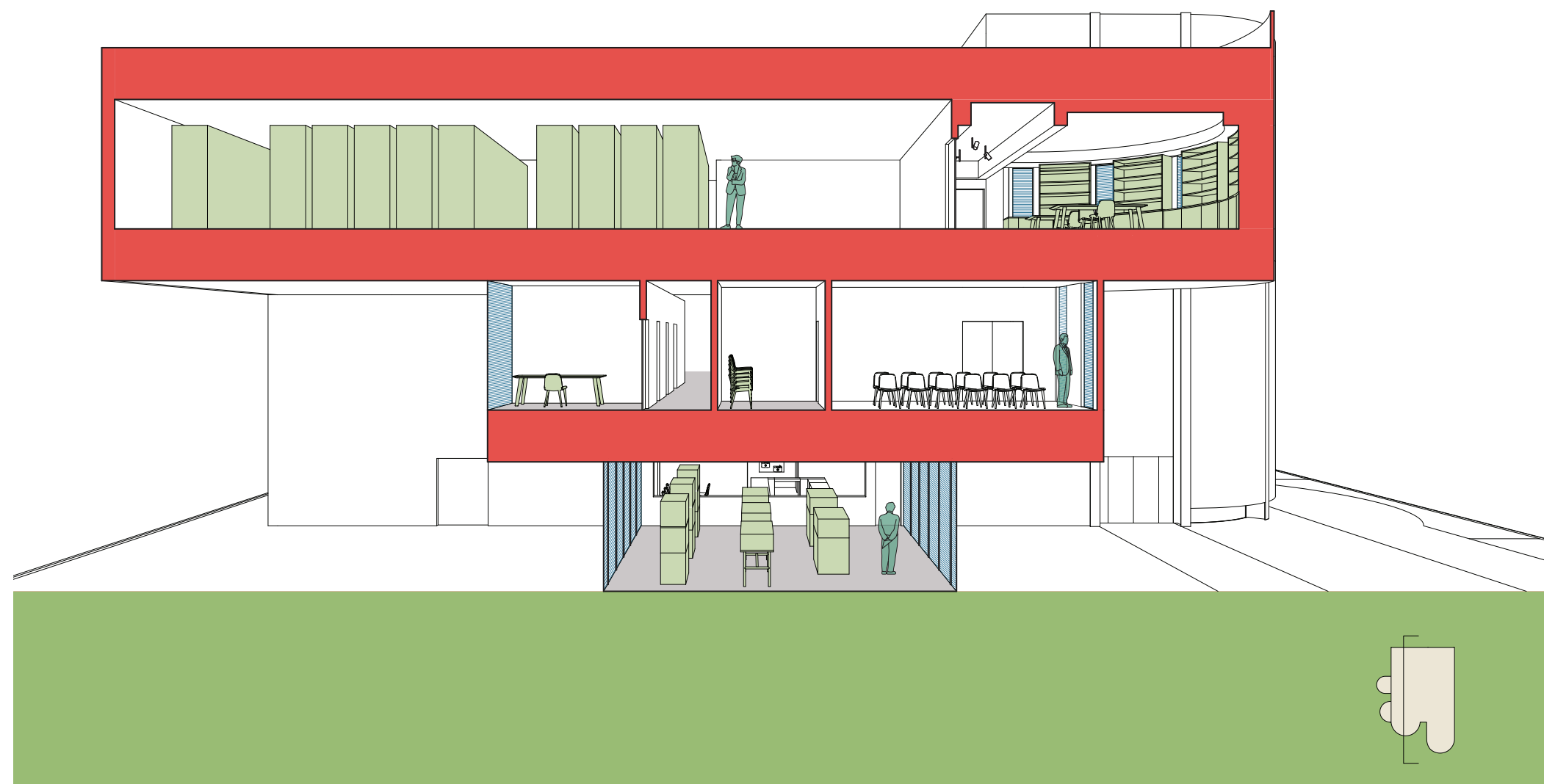
# ROOF



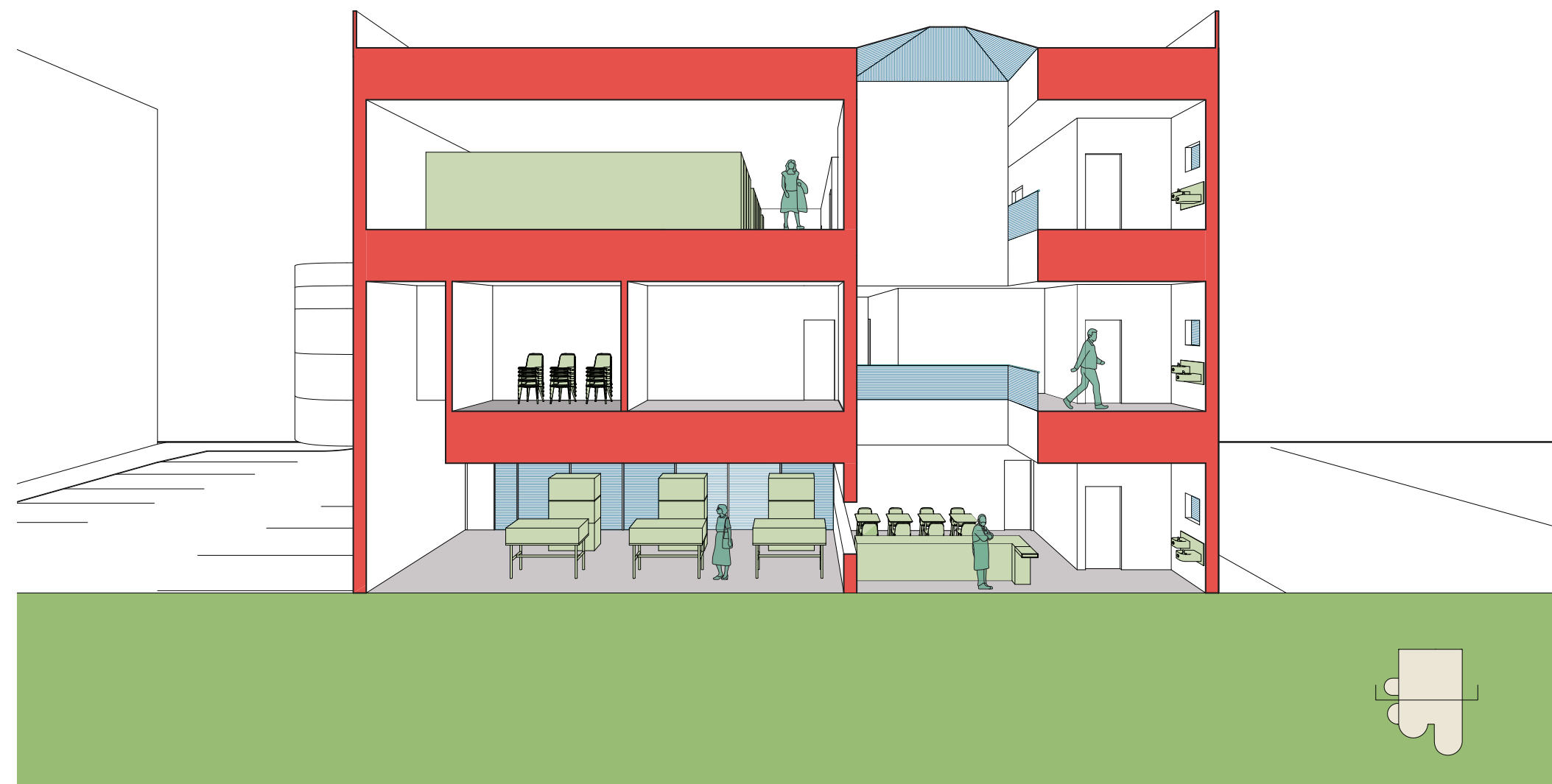


**4**

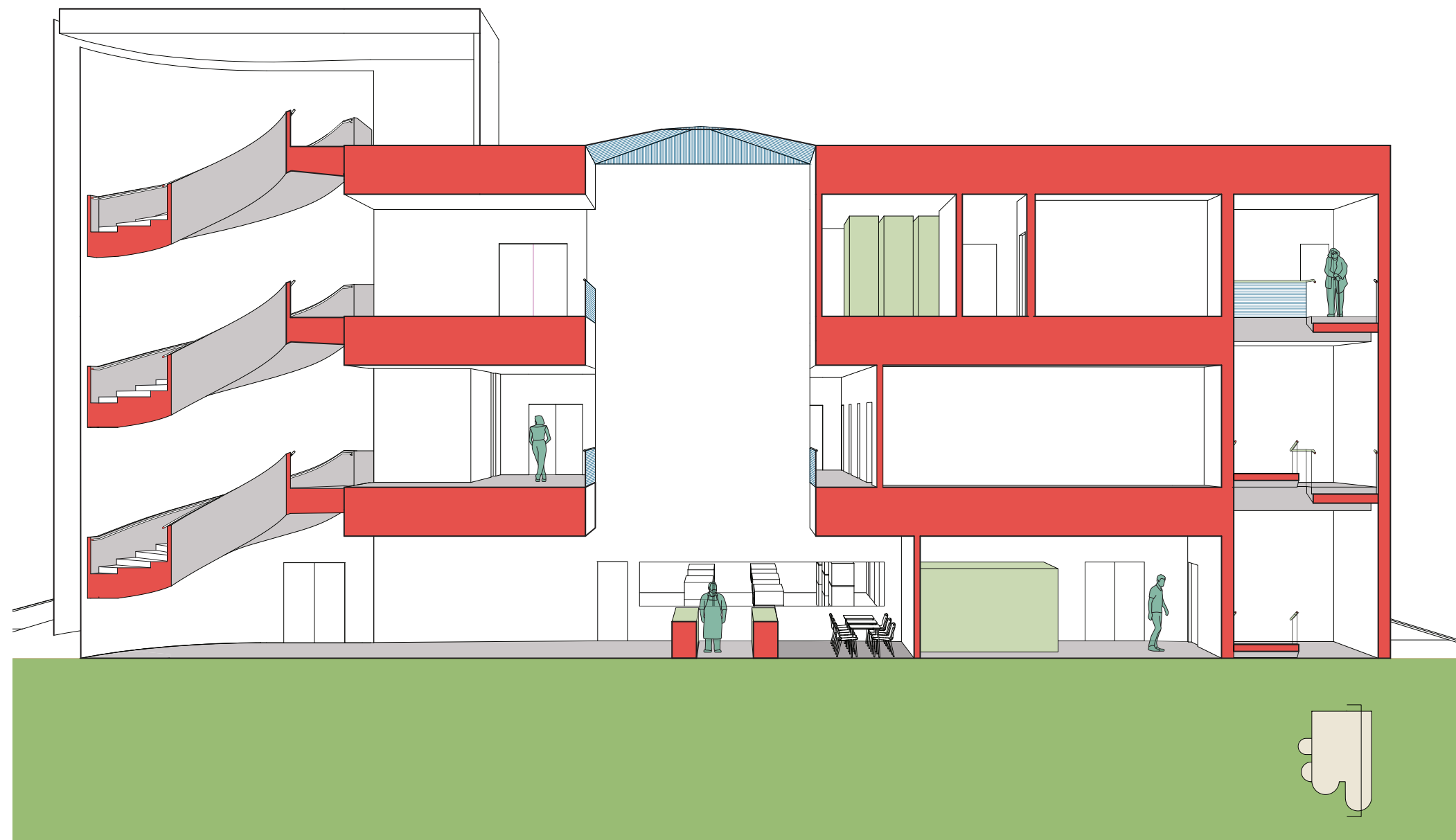
SECTIONS + ELEVATIONS



Informed by projected flooding data, the top floors of this building are larger than the bottom floors. The top floors are more than 20 feet above the ground, protecting delicate and irreplaceable items from potential storm surges.



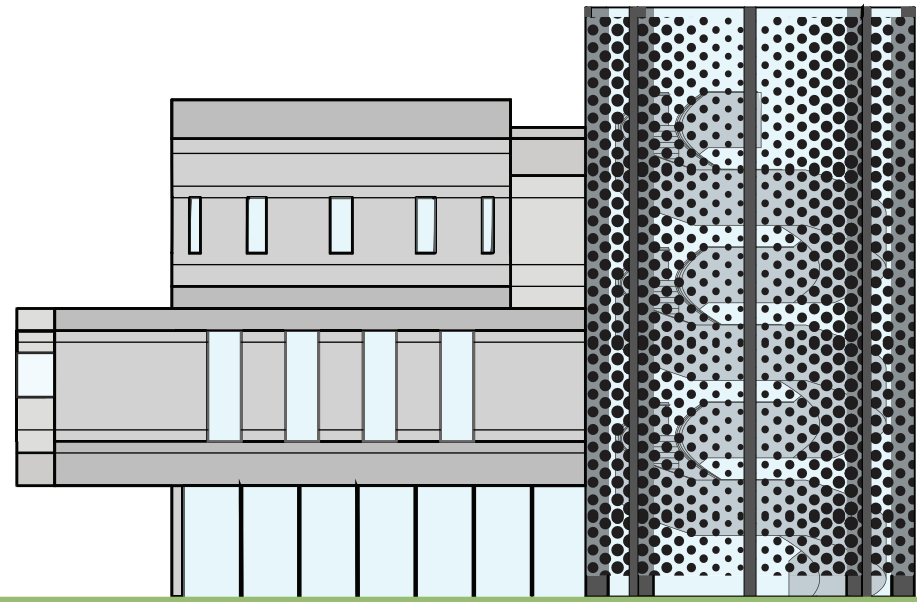
This building imagines an entirely new archive. It is not designed for any current museum collection, rather, it seeks to find and collect various artifacts related to Galveston's historic population. It may be populated with family documents that the family knows other people could learn from. I imagine it would mostly be paper, but the option remains for digital or other physical artifacts.



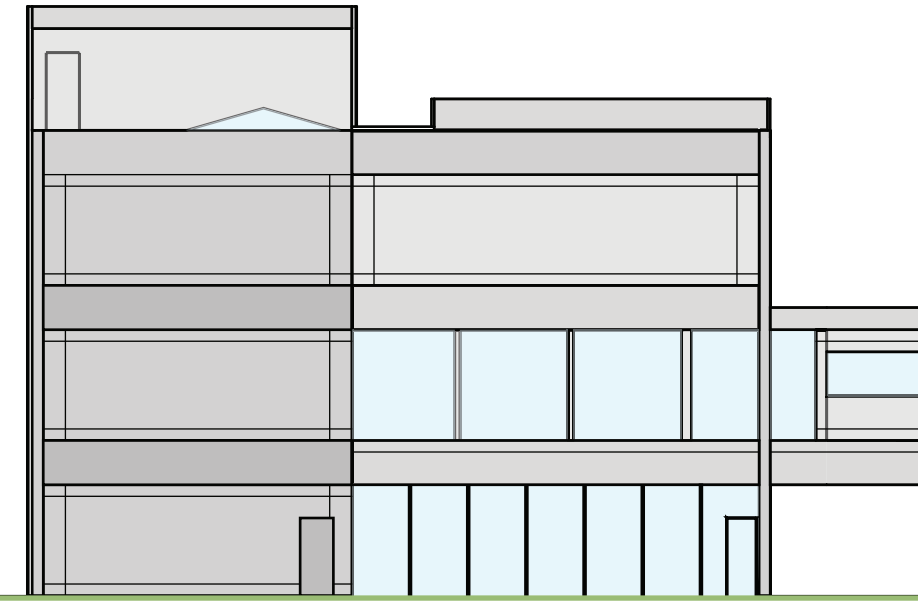
Finding the right balance between light and dark was one of the central challenges of this project, and it is resolved here by the large glass spiral staircase and the light well placed further back.



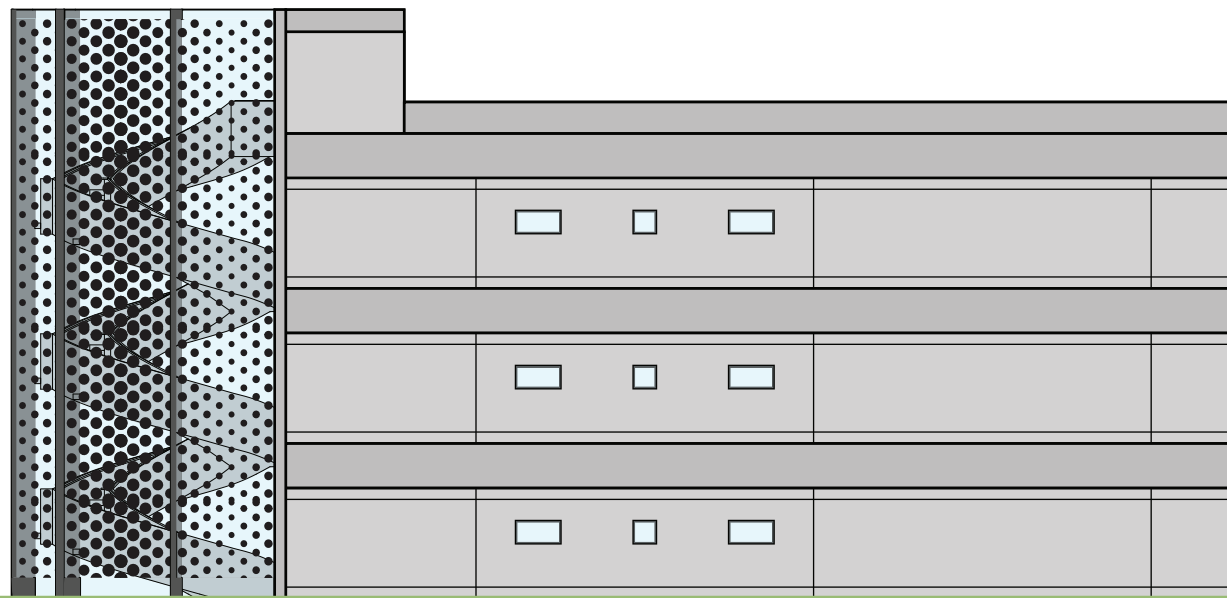




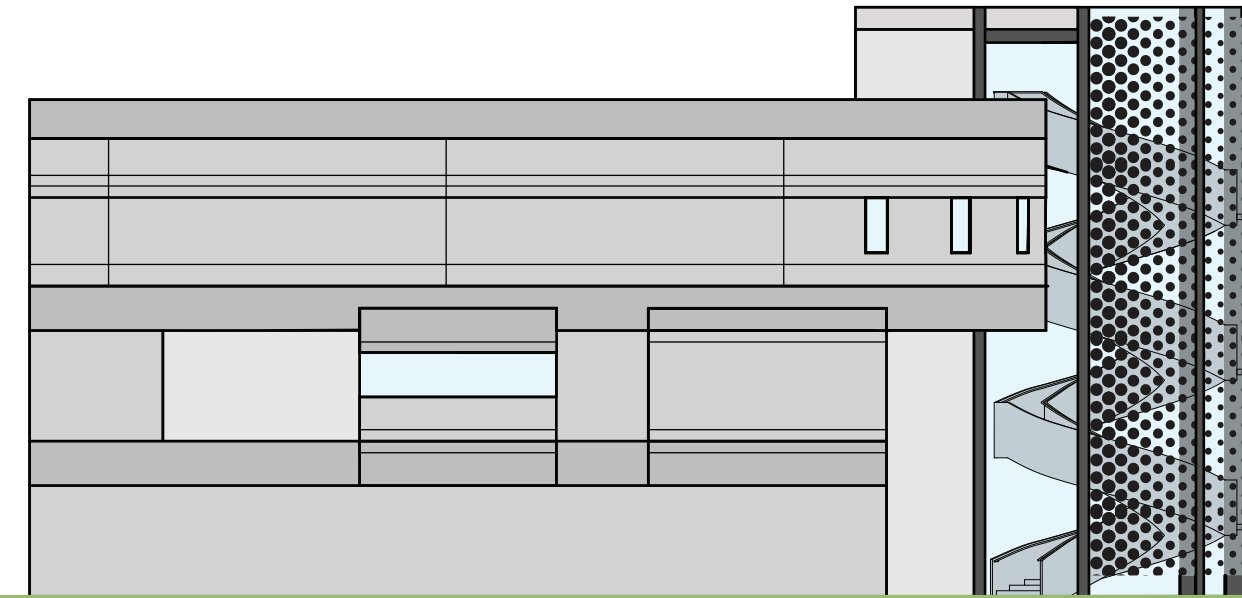
SOUTH ELEVATION



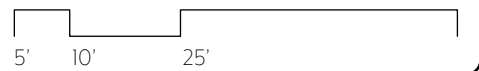
NORTH ELEVATION

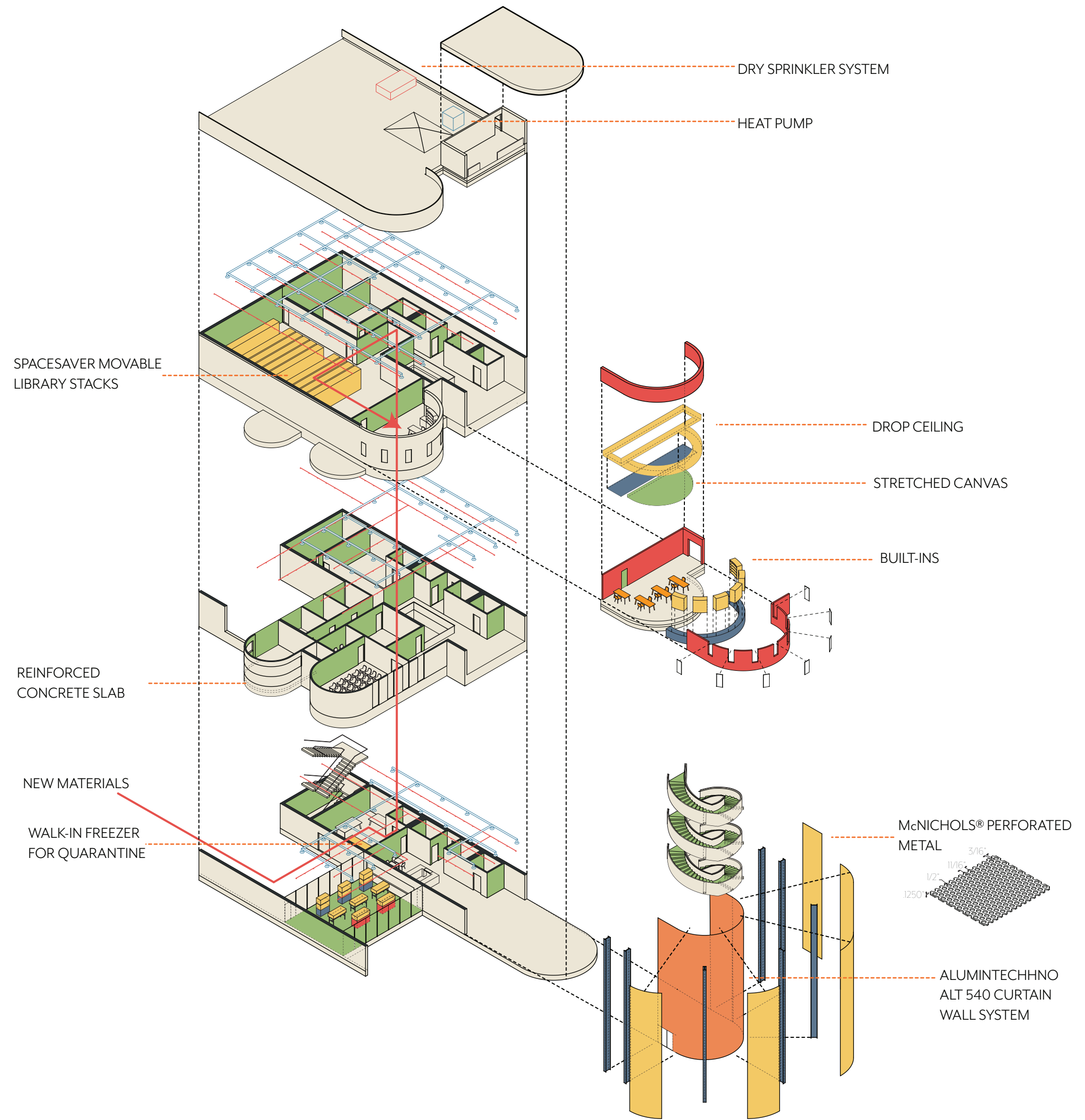
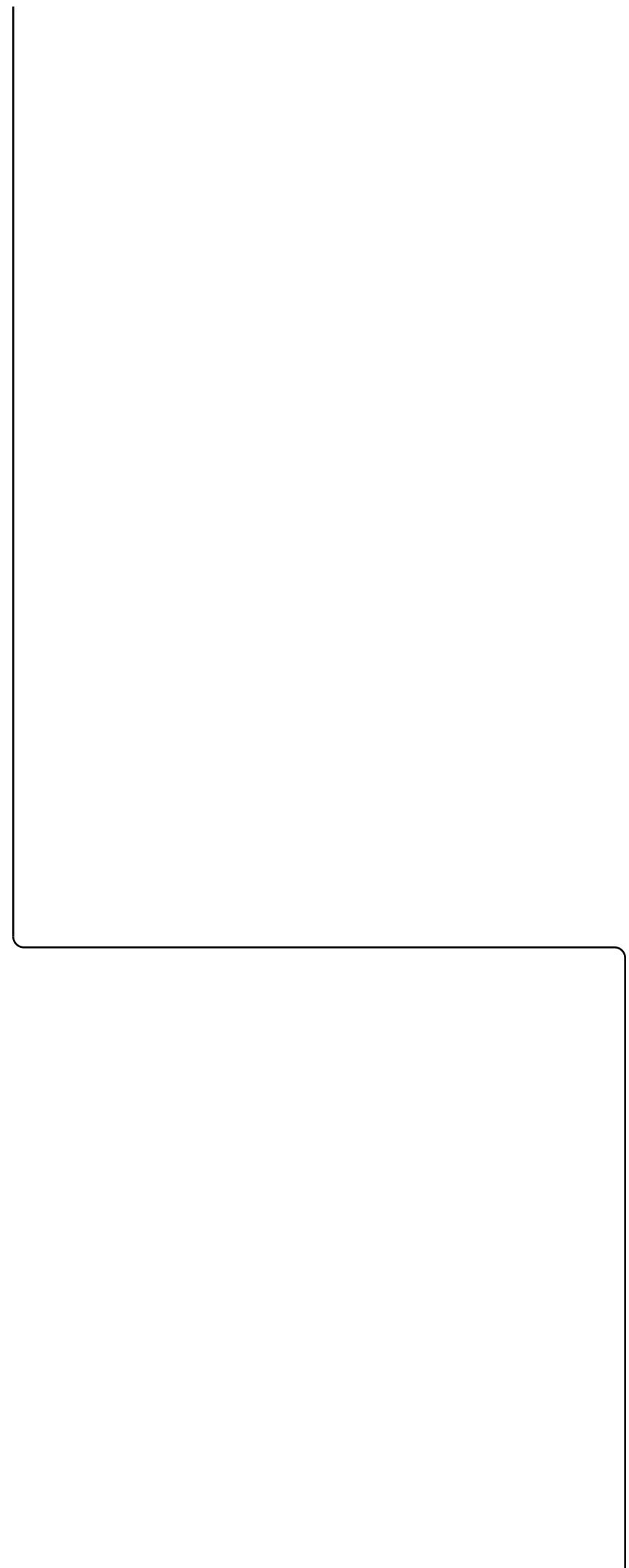


EAST ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION

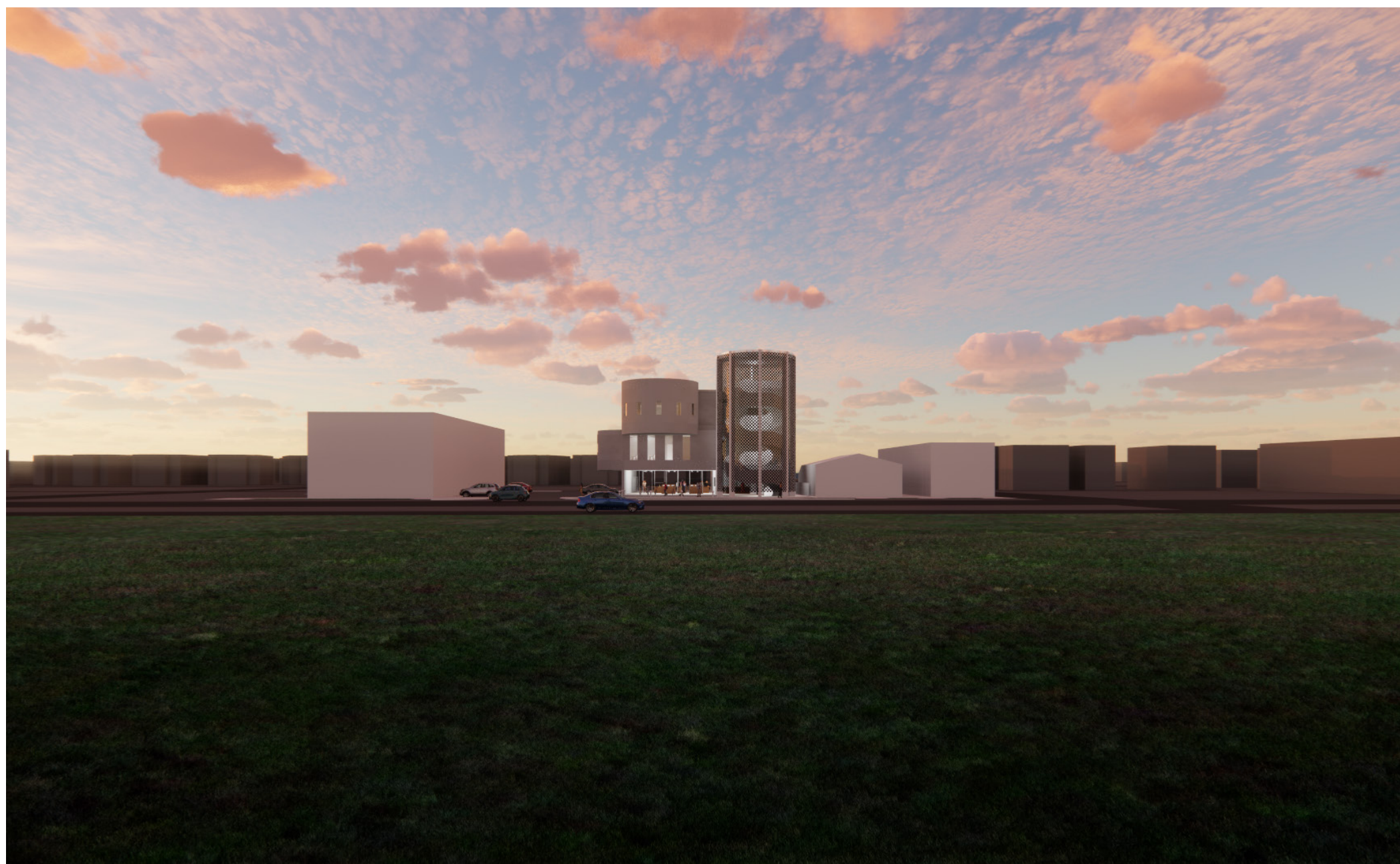






# 5 RENDERS







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