



2024

OSCAR AVILA

RECREATION2RECREATION

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STAGES

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2 PREPARATION

3 ACTION

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Committee

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Committee Member

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Committee Member

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CONTEMPLATION

The contemplation stage consists of thoughts regarding exercise and physical activity. At this point, the individual has not taken action, but they are considering it. Usually, advancement to the next stage requires a boost in confidence, such as the discovery of sources that can provide the individual with the necessary knowledge to begin their fitness journey. Similarly, with an architectural project, action is not within reach, but there is a sudden inspiration that arises due to certain factors that have potential to be improved.

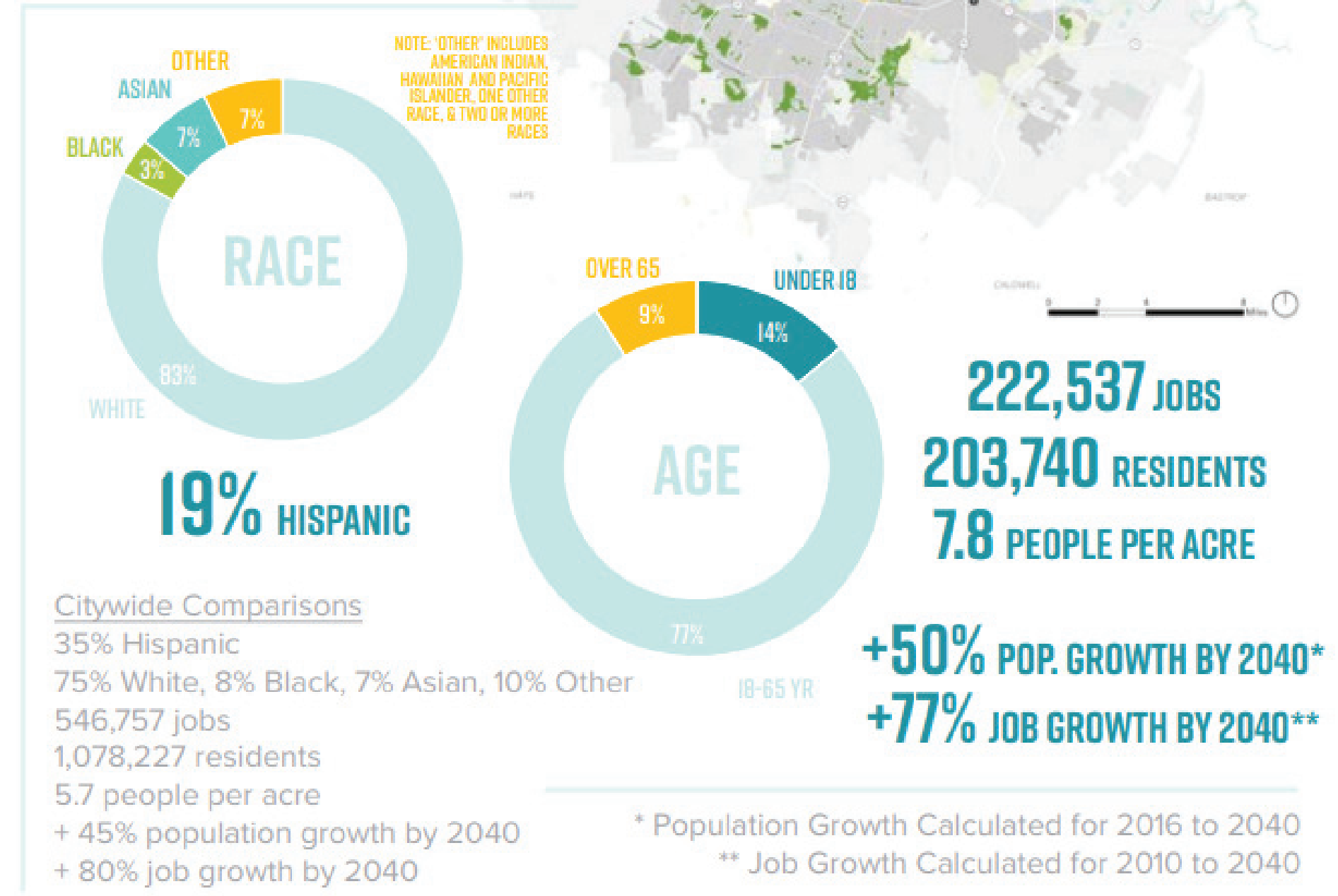
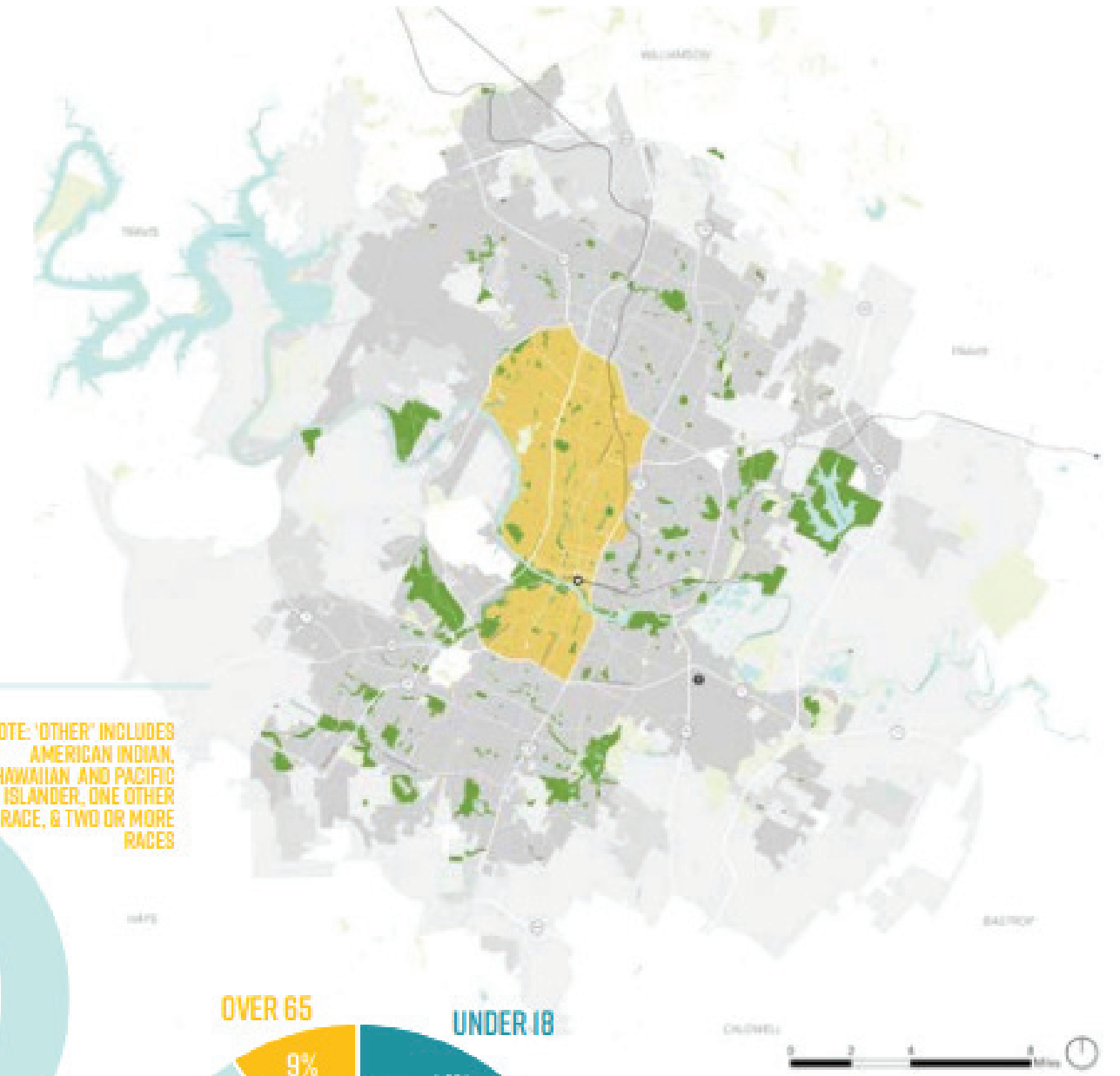
	Highest Ranked City	Highest Score	100 City Average	Austin
Recreational Facilities				
Ball diamonds/ 10,000 residents	St. Paul, MN	5.2	1.6	0.8
Basketball hoops/ 10,000 residents	Norfolk, VA	17.0	3.5	1.9
Playgrounds/ 10,000 residents	Madison, WI	6.9	2.6	1.7
Recreational centers/ 20,000 residents	Philadelphia, PA	2.4	0.8	0.5
Swimming pools/ 100,000 residents	Cleveland, OH	10.7	2.3	3.3
Tennis courts/ 10,000 residents	Norfolk, VA	6.0	1.8	1.0

	Highest Ranked City	Highest Score	100 City Average	Austin
Health Behaviors				
% exercising in the previous month	Arlington, VA	89.9	78.1	82.3
% meeting aerobic activity guidelines	St. Petersburg, FL	65.4	50.9	54.0
% meeting aerobic & strength activity guidelines	Anaheim, CA & Irvine, CA & Santa Ana, CA	31.0	23.7	23.9
% bicycling or walking to work	Boston, MA	13.7	3.4	2.4
% using public transportation to work	New York, NY	36.6	3.5	1.3

The Stimulus

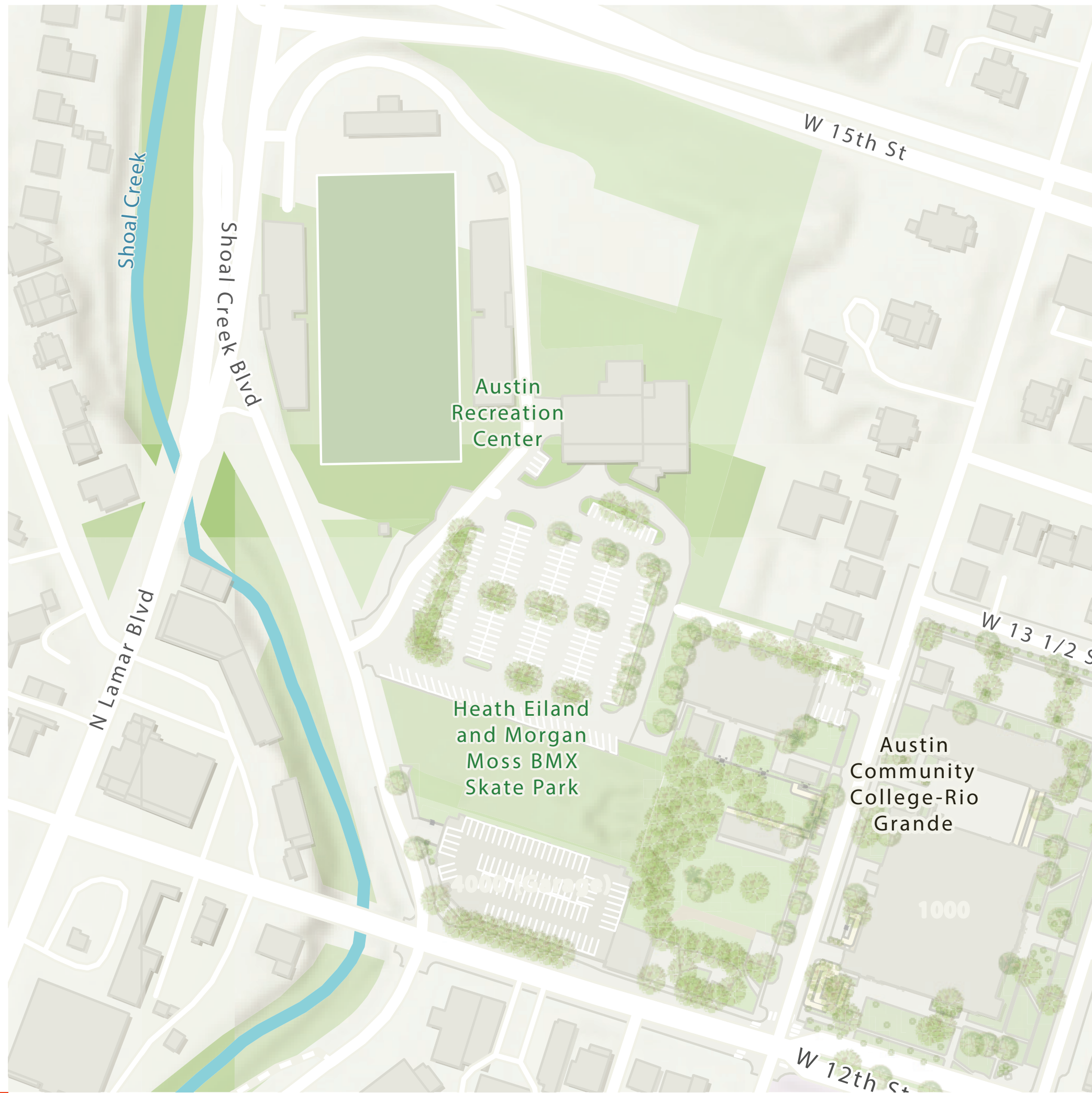
The stimulus is the moment in which the idea of exercise comes up in the individual's mind. It is something that encourages them to begin their journey towards taking action. In this instance, the stimulus is quite clear when looking at the statistics. The City of Austin, a progressive city that has been experiencing an astonishing rate of growth in recent years and will continue to do so, is only slightly above average in terms of health and fitness. Crucially, it is below average in all categories regarding recreational facilities and amenities, which is an issue when considering that the city will only keep growing and residents will be even more underserved. An intervention through a major recreational facility can act as a representation of Austin's progressive nature, and it can begin to alleviate the underserving of the growing population, while also acting as a catalyst for additional recreational facilities throughout the region.

- PARD Park-Deficient Area Layer**
 - More than 1/4 to 1/2 mile away from a PARD park
 - More than 1/4 to 1/2 mile away from a PARD park AND within Imagine Austin Growth Centers/Corridors
 - Creek Buffer - Greenbelt Priority
- Environmental Features**
 - Other Non-PARD Open Space
 - Waterways
- Urban Trails**
 - Existing Urban Trails
 - Proposed Urban Trails
- Combined Planning Area Parks**
 - Schools with recommended improvements
 - Parks with recommended improvements
 - Other PARD park (owned and/or maintained)
- Population Change 2017-2040**
 - Population Projected to More than Double
- Community Landmarks**
 - PARD Cultural Facility
 - Schools
- Transportation**
 - MetroRail Commuter Line (Existing/Under Construction)
 - Other (non-passenger) Rail Lines
- Imagine Austin Growth Framework**
 - Centers
 - Corridors
 - Downtown Austin
 - Airport



Current Statistics and Future Outlook

A major recreational facility to represent the city and serve all of its residents should naturally be located in the heart of Austin. Through the Austin Parks and Recreation's research and information contained in their long term "Our Parks, Our Future" plan, we can begin to see the statistics and potential within the area. Although it is the area with the highest population density, and also an area that will experience a fifty percent growth in population and a seventy percent growth in jobs by 2040, there is only one recreation center in this heart of Austin. This also happens to be the oldest recreation center in Austin, and it is now outdated and uninviting in terms of design, and small in terms of the growing population and the people it can serve. This was ultimately a major factor when moving forward and deciding the site location of the project.



The Site

The existing Austin Recreation Center is the oldest recreation center in the city, and it is a piece of an athletic complex that makes up the rest of the site. Adjacent to the existing recreation center is House Park, which is a 6,000 seat stadium used by the city's school district year-round for events such as football, soccer, and graduations. To the south of the site there is a BMX skate park that is also managed by the City of Austin, and to the east is the Shoal Creek Hike and Bike Trail. Overall, the site is already active and athletic in nature, but it also has a great amount of potential for improvement due to its outdated design and small size relative to the growing population. As seen in the following pages, it is also a historic site with multiple changes and additions throughout the years, so this seemed like the perfect site for another historic development. This is the inspiration for the project title, as this athletic complex is being recreated into another version of recreation that is more appropriate for the present day.



1928
The Austin Parks and Recreation Department is officially established.

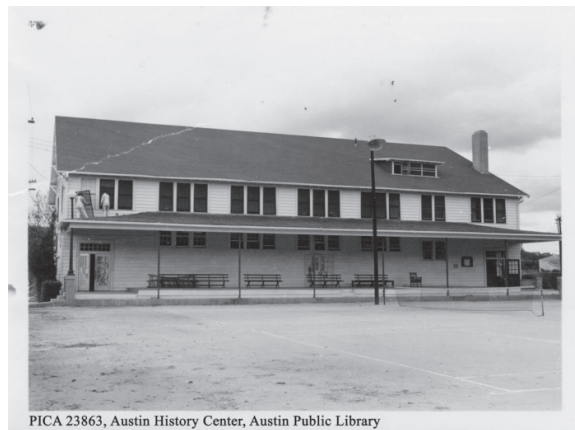


1981
The Austin Athletic Club, now called the Austin Recreation Center, is closed.



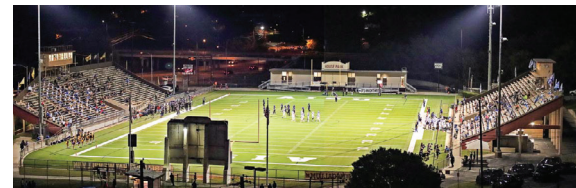
2011
The Heath Eiland and Morgan Moss BMX Skate Park is constructed across from the Austin Recreation Center at 1213 Shoal Creek Boulevard

1923
The first organized recreation center in the City of Austin, the Austin Athletic Club, is built.



PICA 23863, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library

1939
House Park Stadium, a 6,000 seat multipurpose venue, is constructed on the same site as the Austin Athletic Club.



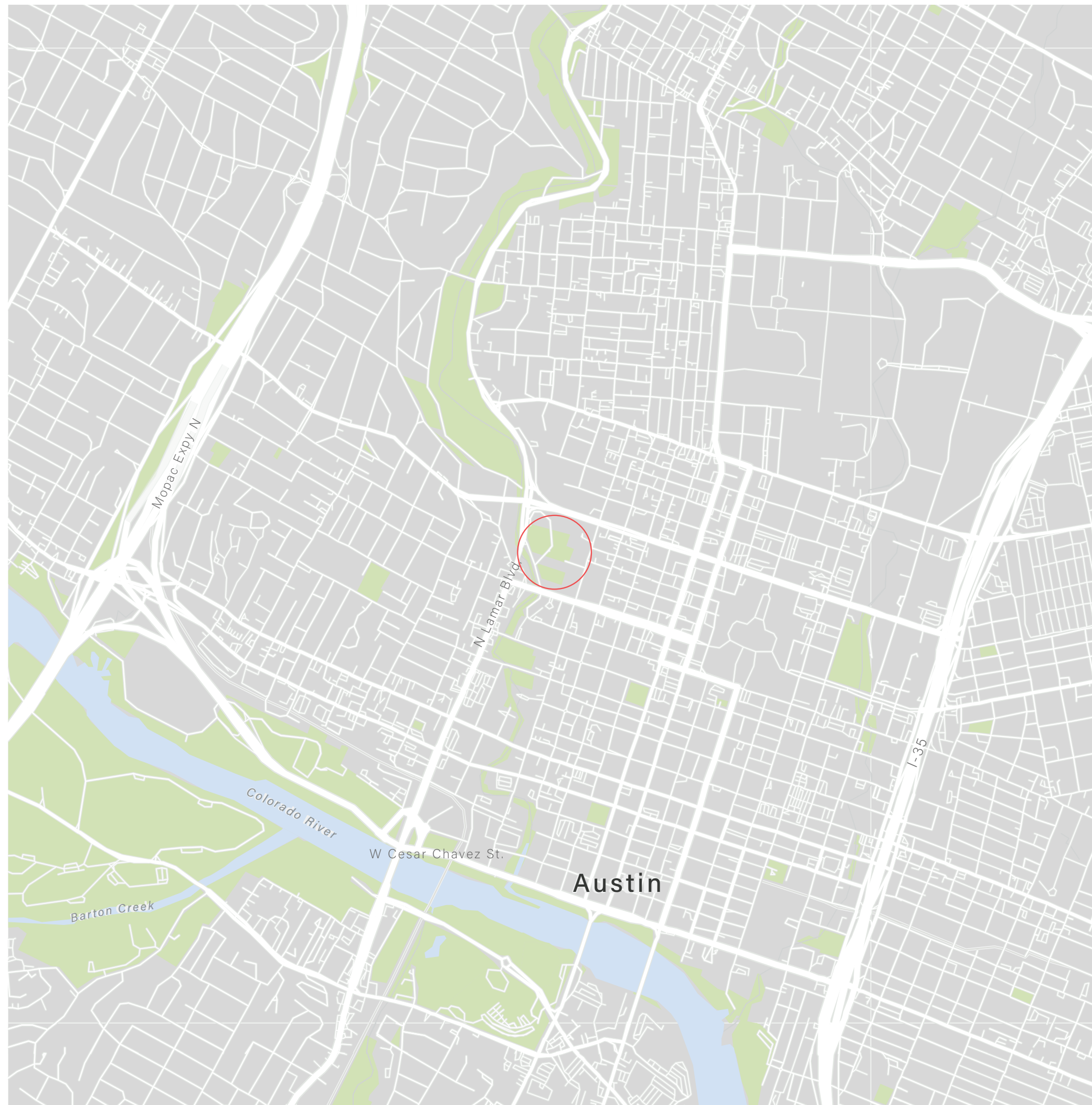
1986
The new Austin Recreation Center is constructed adjacent to House Park





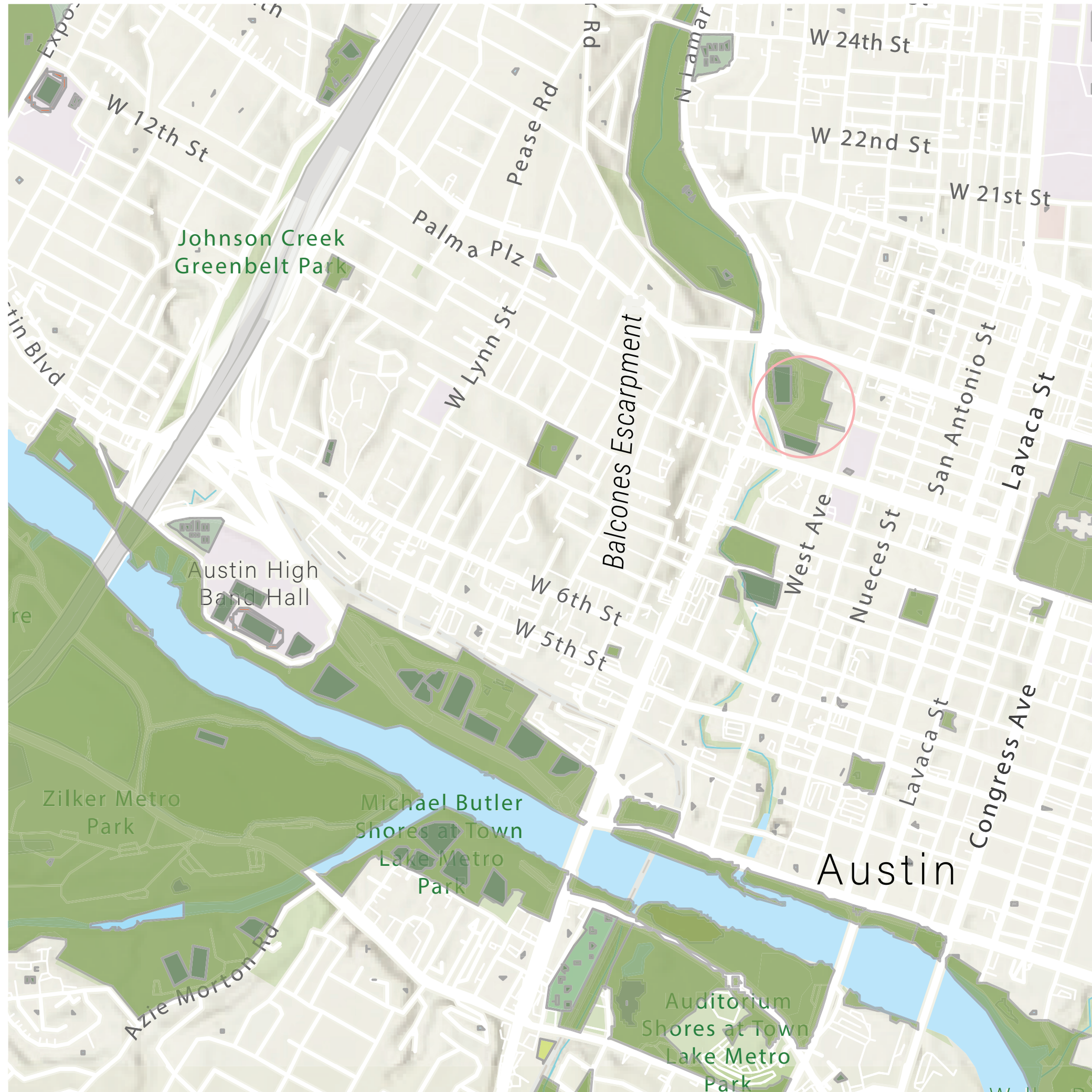
PREPARATION

Preparation is the stage in which the plan towards a change begins to form. This consists of the acquisition of clothes, equipment, and knowledge regarding the desired forms of physical activity that would allow the individual to proceed into the action stage safely and confidently. In architecture, this would be the equivalent of site analysis and the discovery of important possibilities and constraints for the projects that arise as a result of said analysis. With this project being located in the heart of Austin, and given that it is a recreational project, it was important to gather information on land use, parks and waterways, and view corridors.



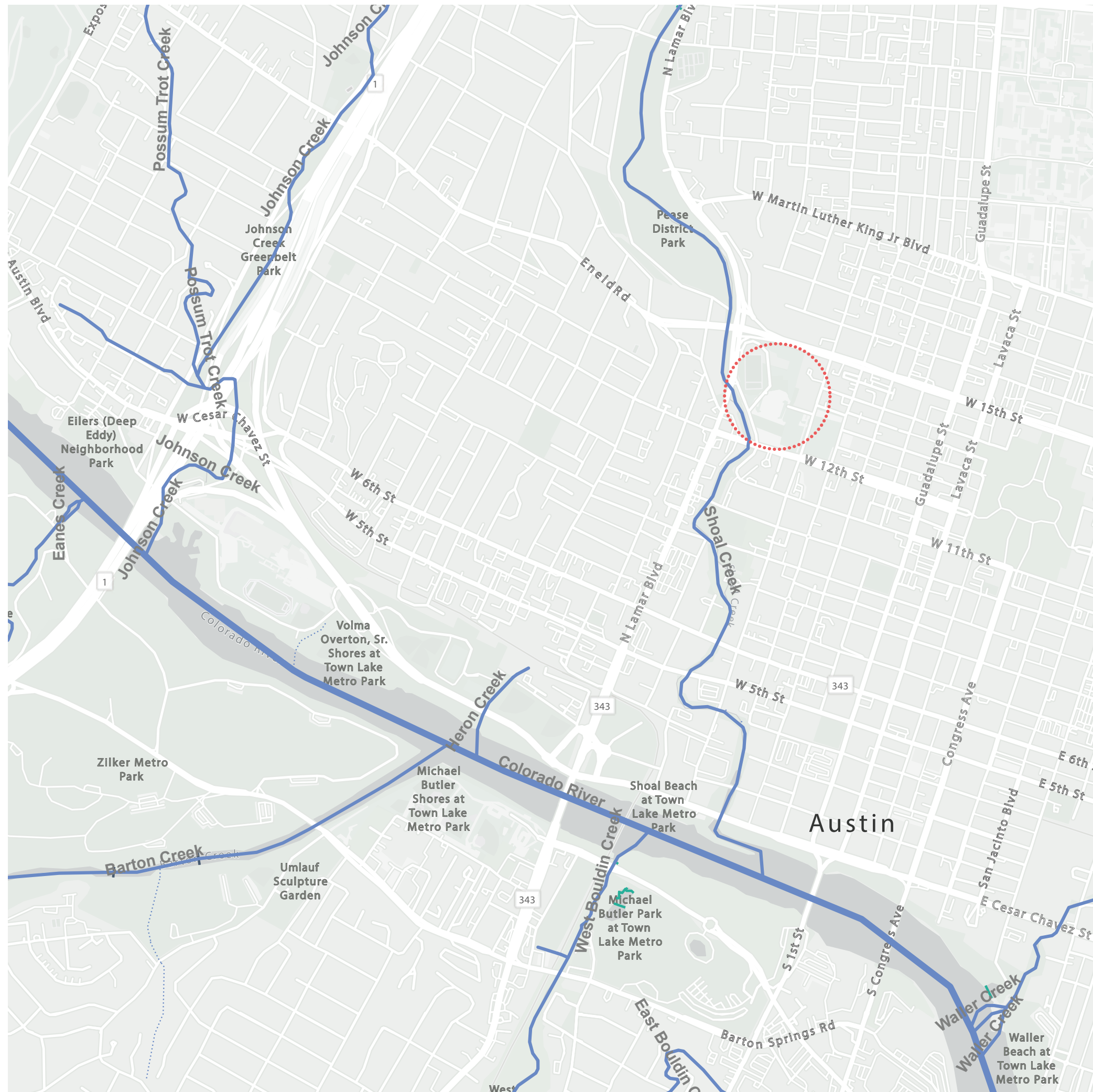
Site Location

The project site is located at 1301 Shoal Creek Boulevard. Situated just east of downtown, it is at the intersection of the commercial and residential sectors of central Austin, which provides a great opportunity in terms of attraction and accessibility for multiple areas. Due to this central location, the project is very well-connected when it comes to transportation. In terms of vehicular access, the project is adjacent to North Lamar Boulevard, which spans 23 miles from north to south Austin and therefore provides a direct access to the project for thousands of residents. For public transportation, there are two bus stops north of the site on 15th Street, and another two to the south on 12th Street. Similarly to Lamar Boulevard, 12th and 15th Street span from east to west and provide access in different directions, which is especially important for the residents that are located on the east side of I35.



Parks

The site is located less than one mile from the Colorado River, which is lined with parks and greenery and is a popular destination for physical activity and recreation in the city. Ranging from residents walking their dogs, to others running consistently along the river, there are many opportunities in terms of parks and outdoor activities along this corridor. Within this area is Zilker Park, which is undoubtedly the leading park in the city with activities such as dog walking, walking and running, pickup soccer matches, and even concerts. It is one of the anchors within the area that give it the possibility to convert into a major fitness hub for the entire city.



Waterways

As previously stated, the project site is located less than a mile from the Colorado River, which is the major waterway in Austin and is a gathering spot for various leisure and recreational activities. Besides the ones previously mentioned, there is also a lot of kayaking, concerts along the river, and sightseeing of the Austin skyline. Naturally, with such a large waterway, there are smaller ones that branch off of it. For this project in particular, Shoal Creek is the prominent waterway as it connects to the Colorado River and runs adjacent to the site. This is another important waterway for recreation as the Shoal Creek Trail that runs adjacent to it is the is 11 miles long and is also the longest hike and bike trail in Austin, which relates to the historic aspect that is already present in the current project site.



View Corridors

Due to the site's location, the Austin Capitol View Corridors were also taken into account. These corridors preserve views of the state capitol from multiple points around the city by restricting the construction of high-rise buildings. Although this project itself is not a high-rise building and would not have a problem in terms of restrictions, it was still important to note that it is located within this area of direct views to a historic and protected landmark. Sightseeing is a very powerful tool in terms of attraction to a place, and given that this is an area with plenty of it due to its proximity to downtown and the Colorado River, it was important to situate the building within these corridors in order to maximize the potential regarding its views of the surrounding context.



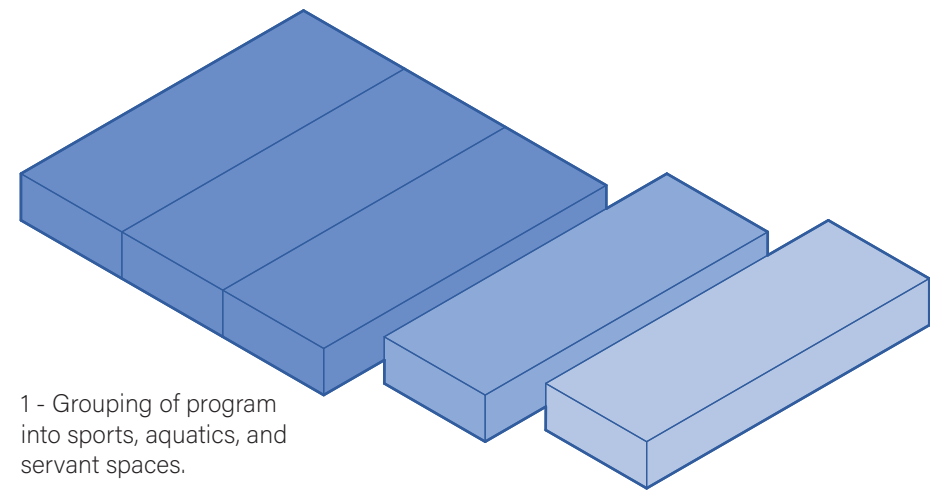
Land Use

The project is situated at the intersection of the commercial and residential side of Austin. To the east of the site is the downtown area and its rapidly-changing skyline, while to the west there is the residential area of central Austin. Being located at this major intersection is important not only in terms of visibility and transportation, it is also important in the sense that it sends a message that this is a facility to represent the greater Austin area. It is not hidden away in a neighborhood, or situated in a chaotic downtown district, but rather in the middle in which people from both areas can come together and feel welcome.

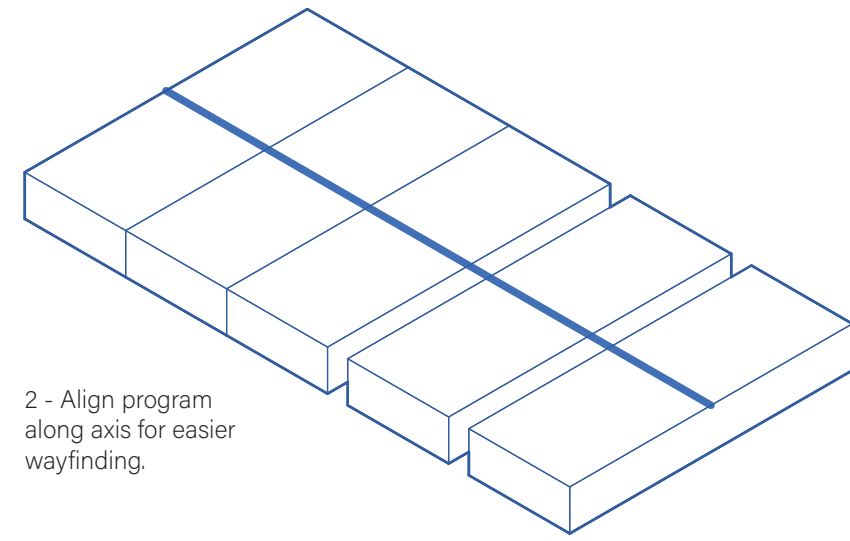


ACTION

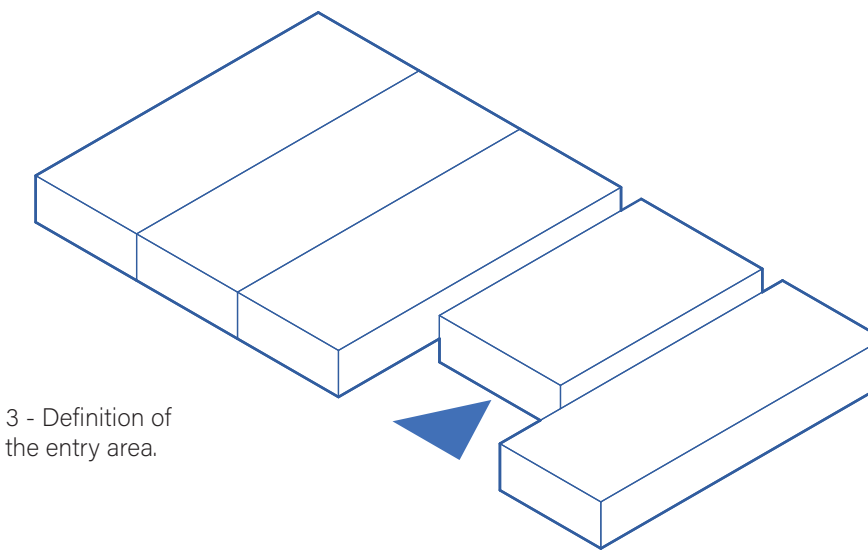
At this stage, the individual has acted on the plan that they have put together and the information that they have gathered. Physical activity has started, meaning that there is something that is both tangible and trackable. For this project, action means gathering the previous research and site analysis and moving onto the design stage in which lots of the heavy work occurs. All of the previous stages lead to this milestone in which everything is synthesized and the architectural project finally comes together into a physical manifestation.



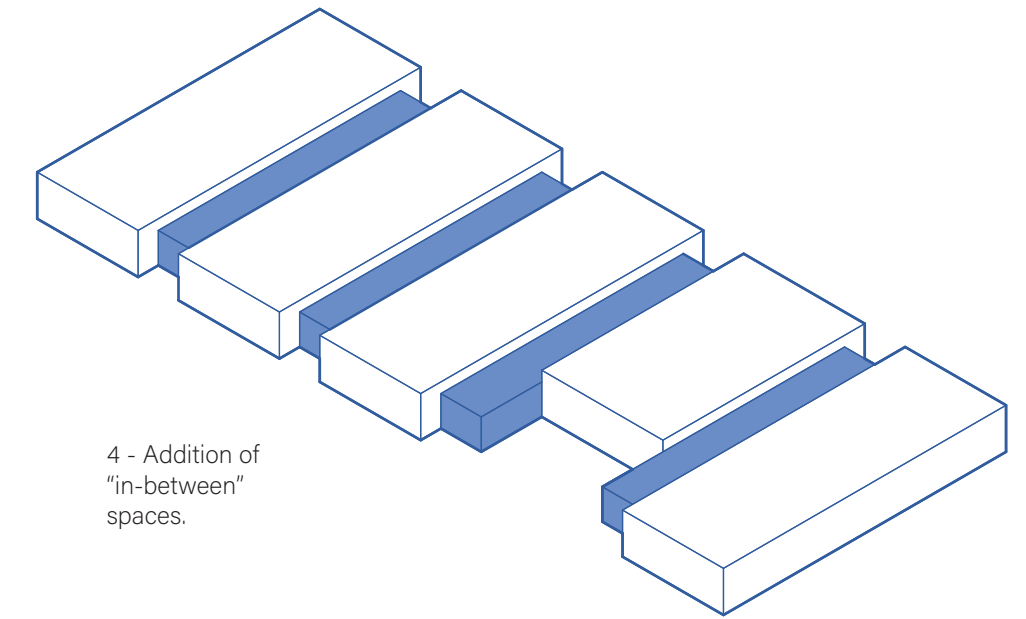
1 - Grouping of program into sports, aquatics, and servant spaces.



2 - Align program along axis for easier wayfinding.



3 - Definition of the entry area.



4 - Addition of "in-between" spaces.

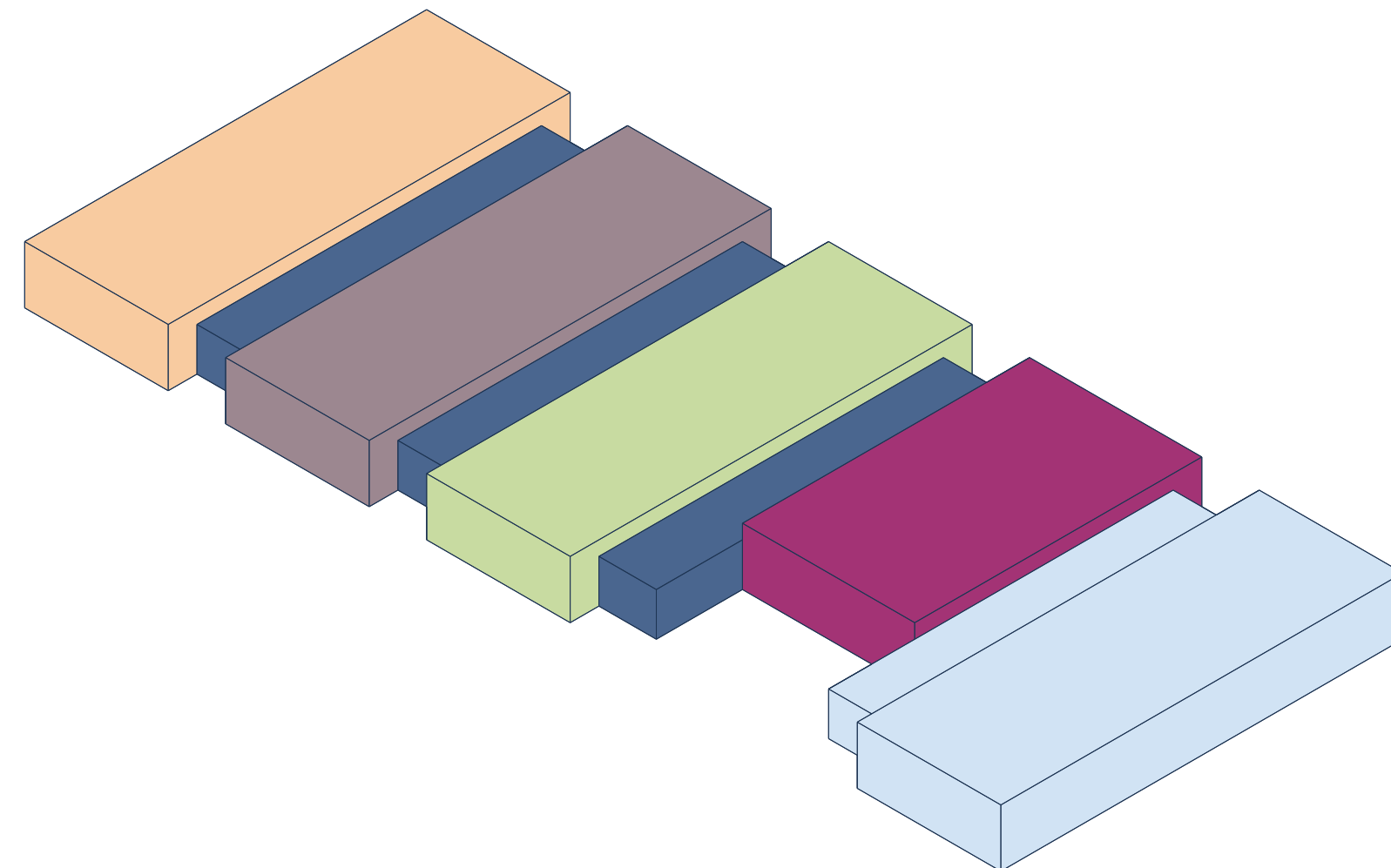
Parti Development

The Program

The development of the project circulated around the idea of an easy circulation throughout the facility along with interconnectivity of spaces. Rather than creating a cluster of spaces, the program was aligned along an axis in order to create a corridor that can lead the user to any major space within the building. Along this axis itself, the program is grouped into aquatics, gym and administration, and indoor sports courts. Separating these areas are the "in-between spaces" which contain the service cores for the building along with multipurpose rooms for activities such as racquetball, dance, cycling, rock climbing, and bag rooms.

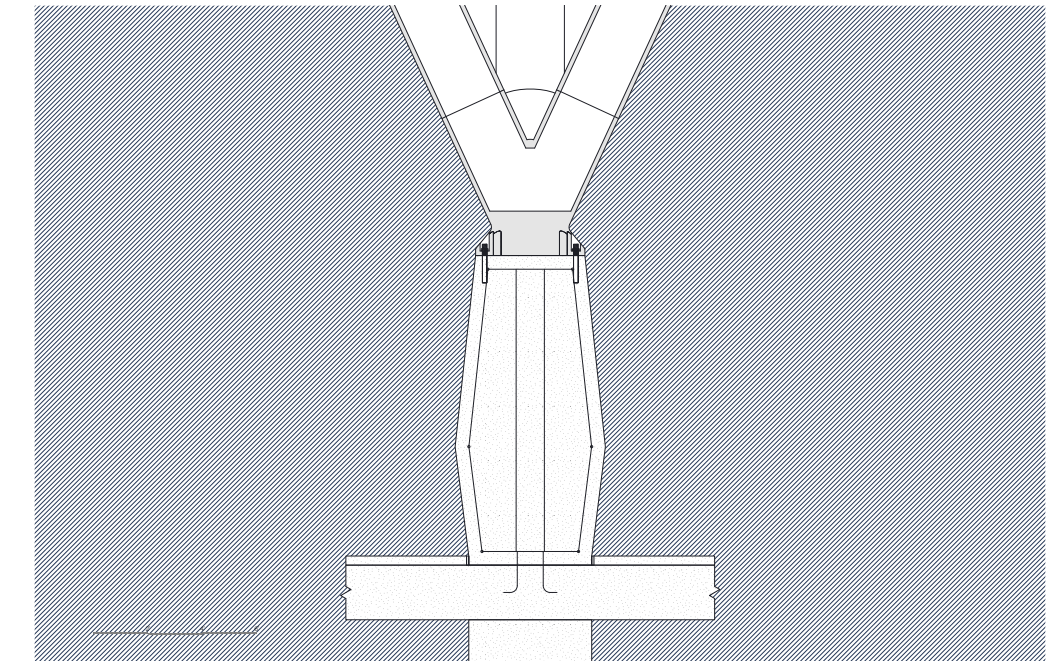
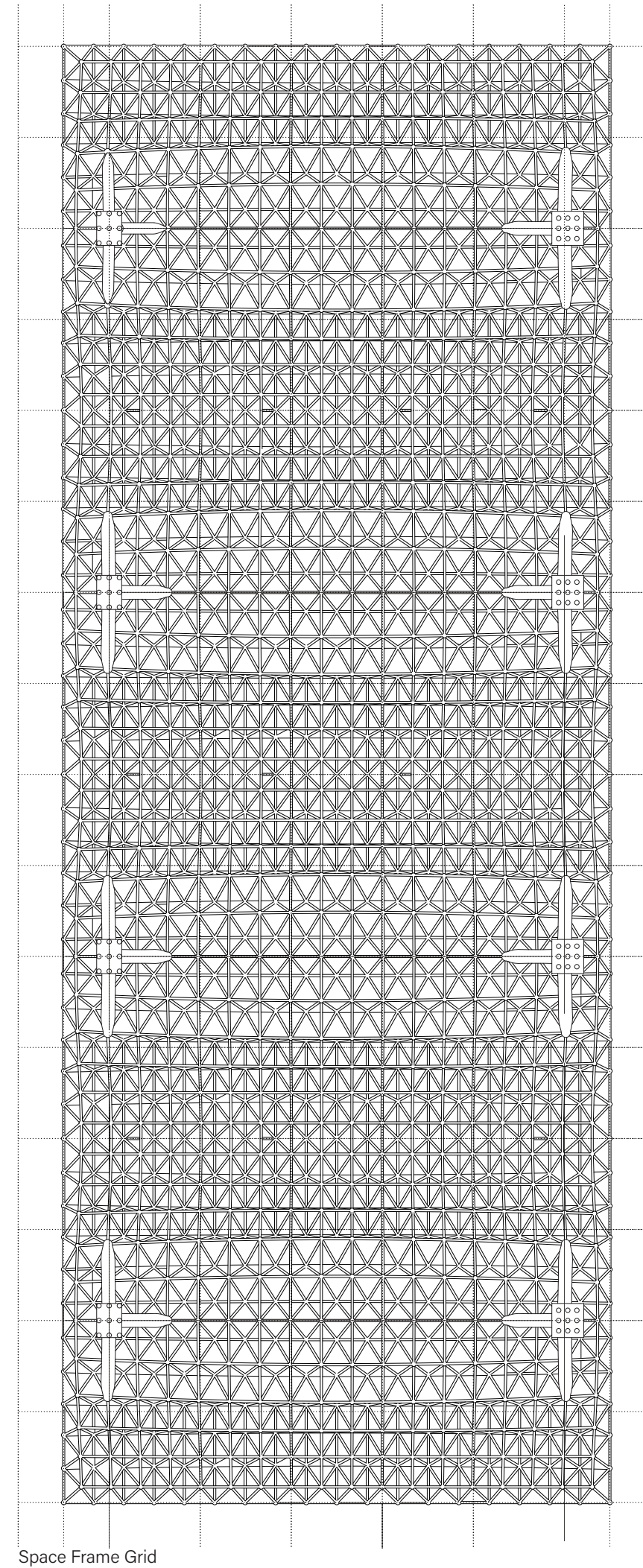
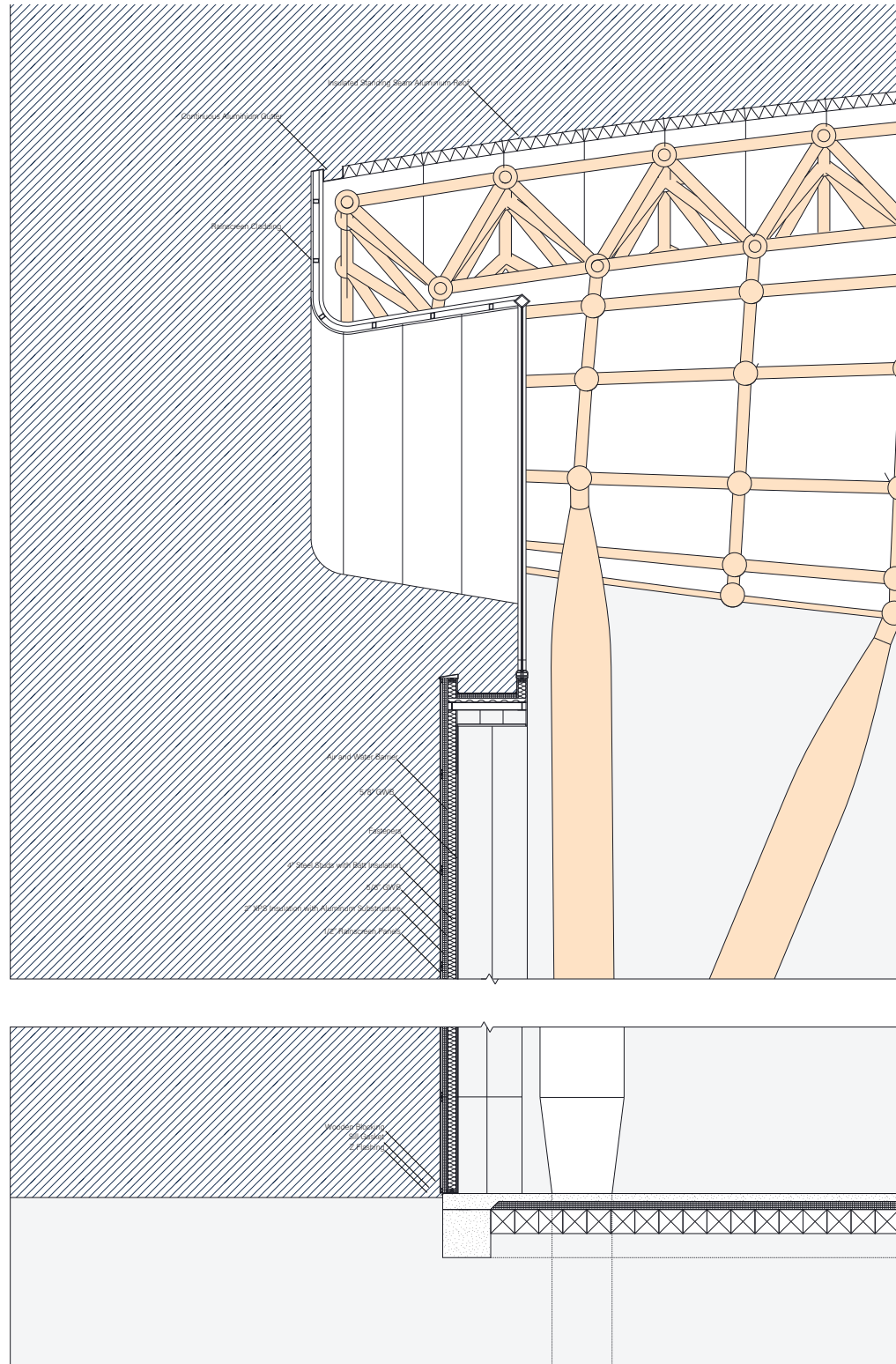
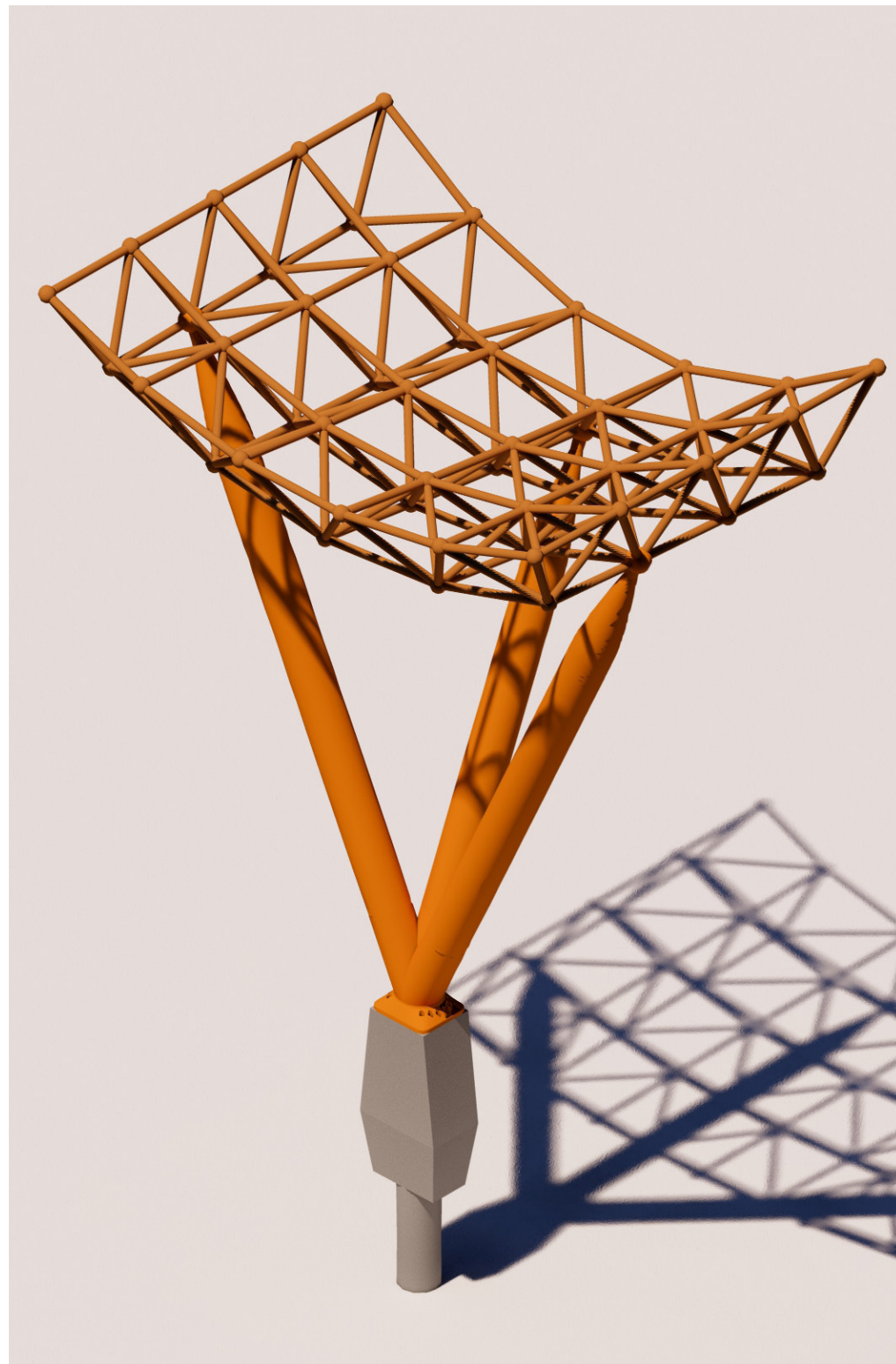


Site Conditions Removed

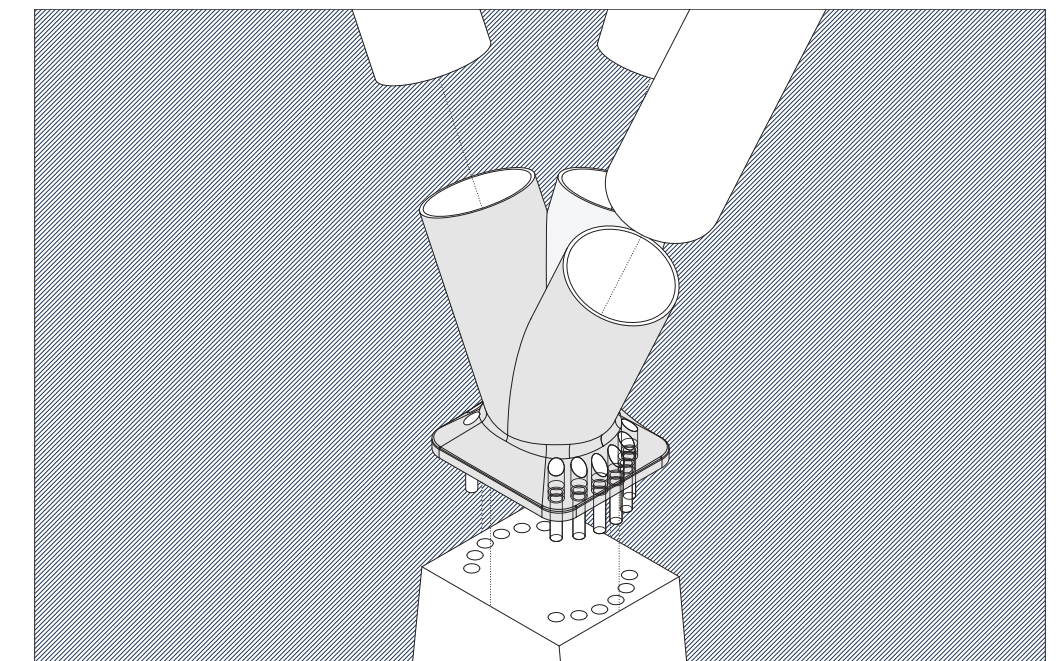


- Gym and Admin
- Aquatics
- Multipurpose Rooms
- Soccer
- Volleyball
- Basketball

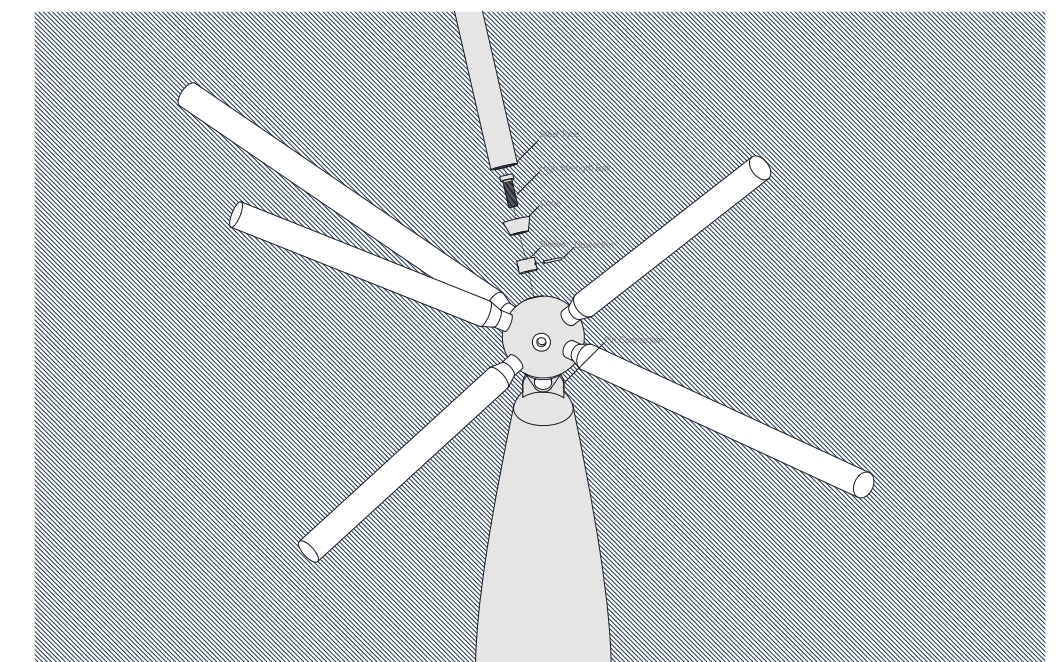
Program



Foundation Detail



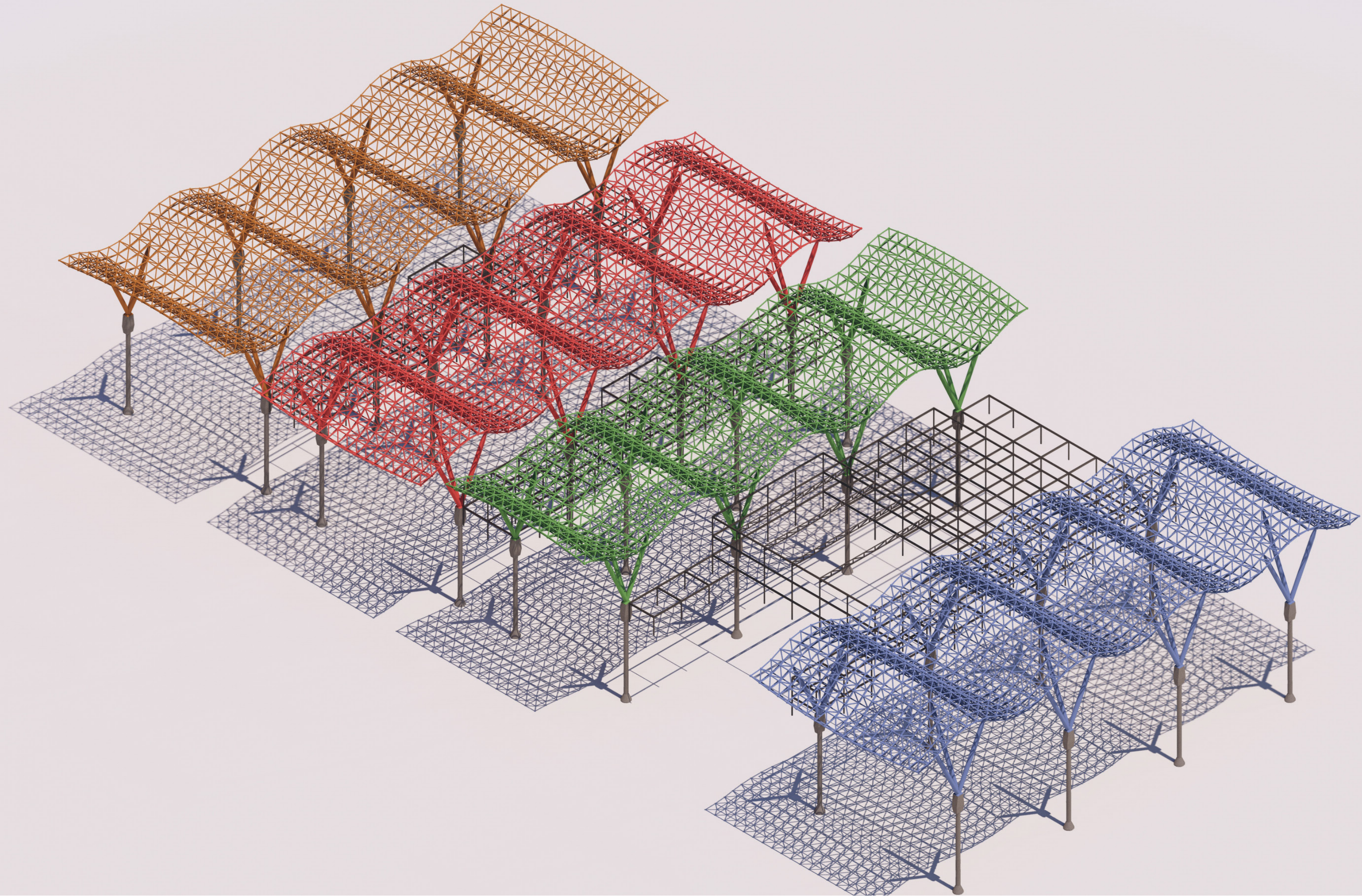
Custom Cast Steel Connection



Space Frame Connection

The Equipment

The major architectural feature of the project is the free-flowing roof that is a result of its space frame structure and prominent tree columns. Due to the large spans that are common in recreational facilities, along with the parametric form of the roof, this structural system was the clear option when moving forward with the design. The peaks and valleys of the roof act as a response to the interior program by creating higher points above the sports courts. Relating back to the topic of circulation and simplified wayfinding, the structure is left exposed and painted with a color to represent each major space: orange for basketball, red for volleyball, green for soccer, and blue for aquatics.



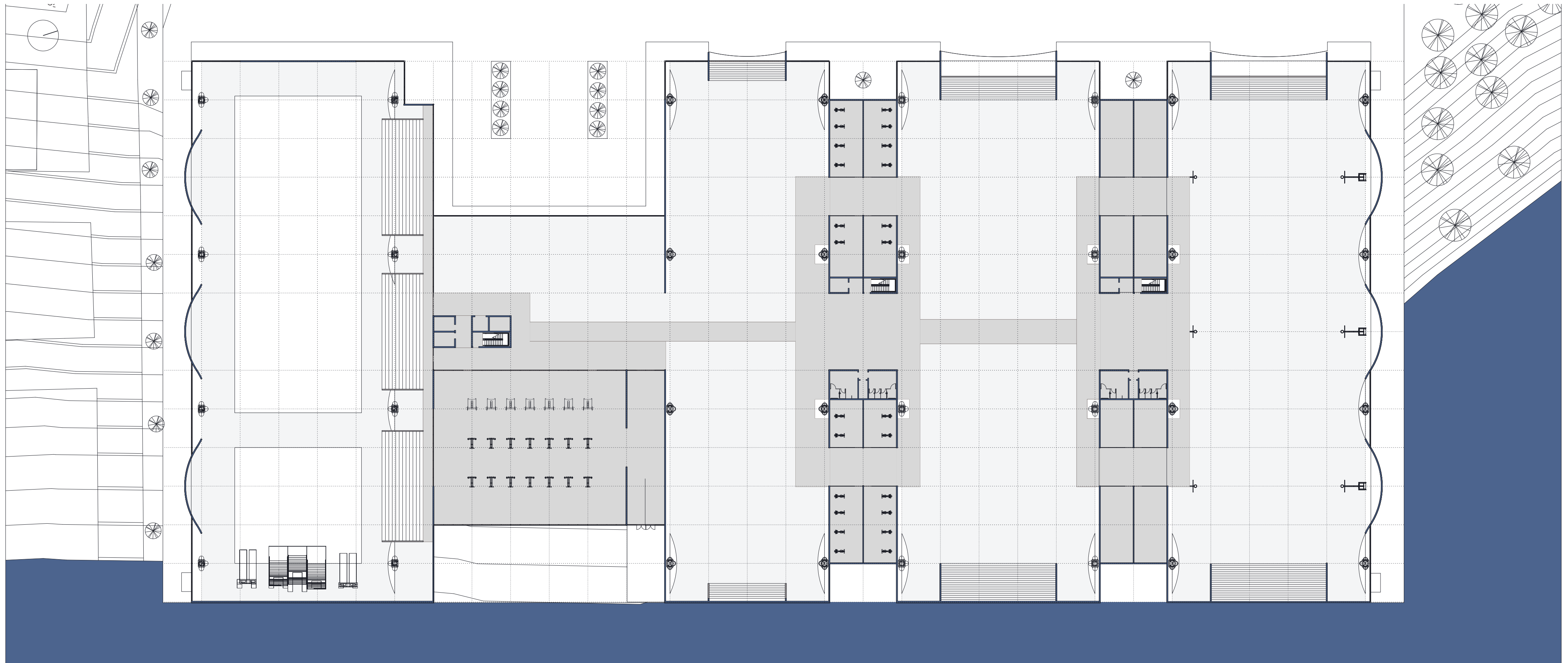


The Action

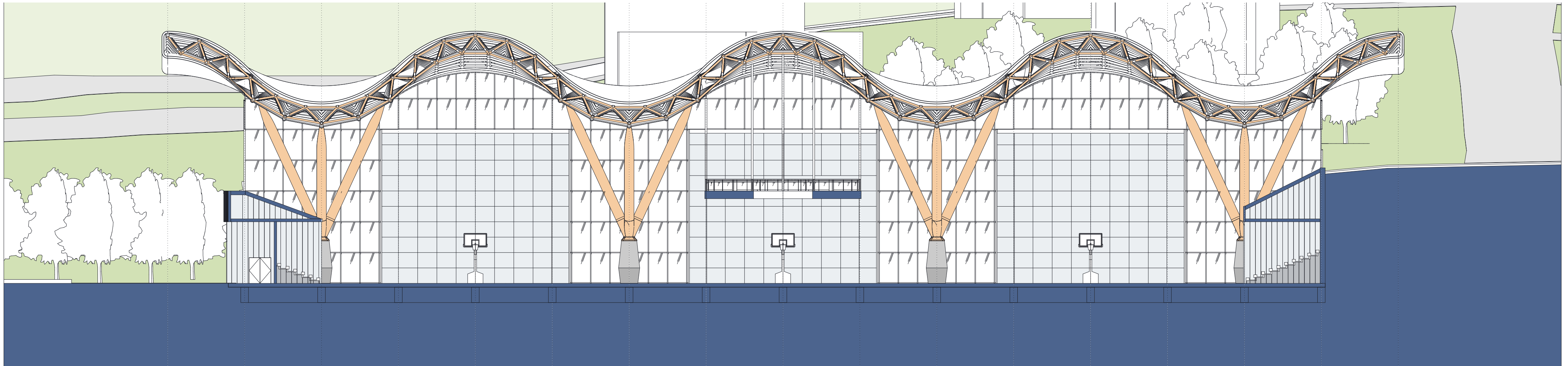
The building is located in the southeast corner of the site and opposite of the House Park Stadium in order to create a barrier between the two that avoids congestion whenever both facilities are in use. This area was then filled with outdoor amenities such as open play fields, outdoor gym equipment, a dog park, picnic pavilions, and a new skate park to replace the previous one. A new parking garage was also situated adjacent to House Park in addition to the surface parking in front of the recreation center. Similarly to the building itself, the site follows a 20x20 grid and contains strong horizontal paths that provide a direct connection to Shoal Creek, which is another important fitness amenity that provides access to other recreational areas within central Austin.



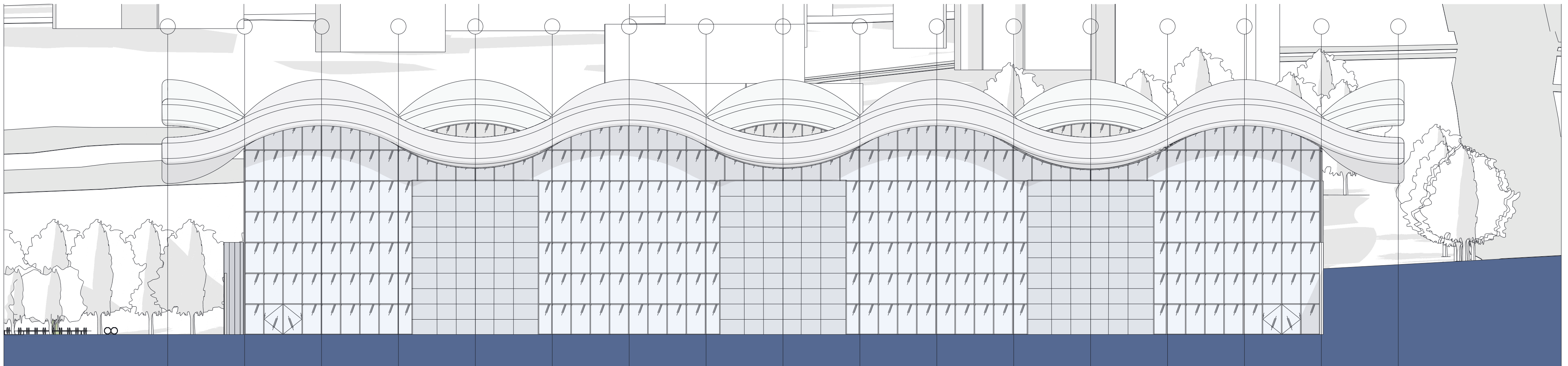
Level 1
As the user enters from the exterior axis, they enter the lobby and encounter an interior axis that is perpendicular to the former. Along this axis are the major spaces within the building, which are the aquatic center, indoor soccer courts, volleyball courts, and basketball courts. If visitors choose to do so, they may keep walking straight along the main entrance axis which will lead them directly to the locker rooms and service desk should they require preparation and additional information before their procession through the building.



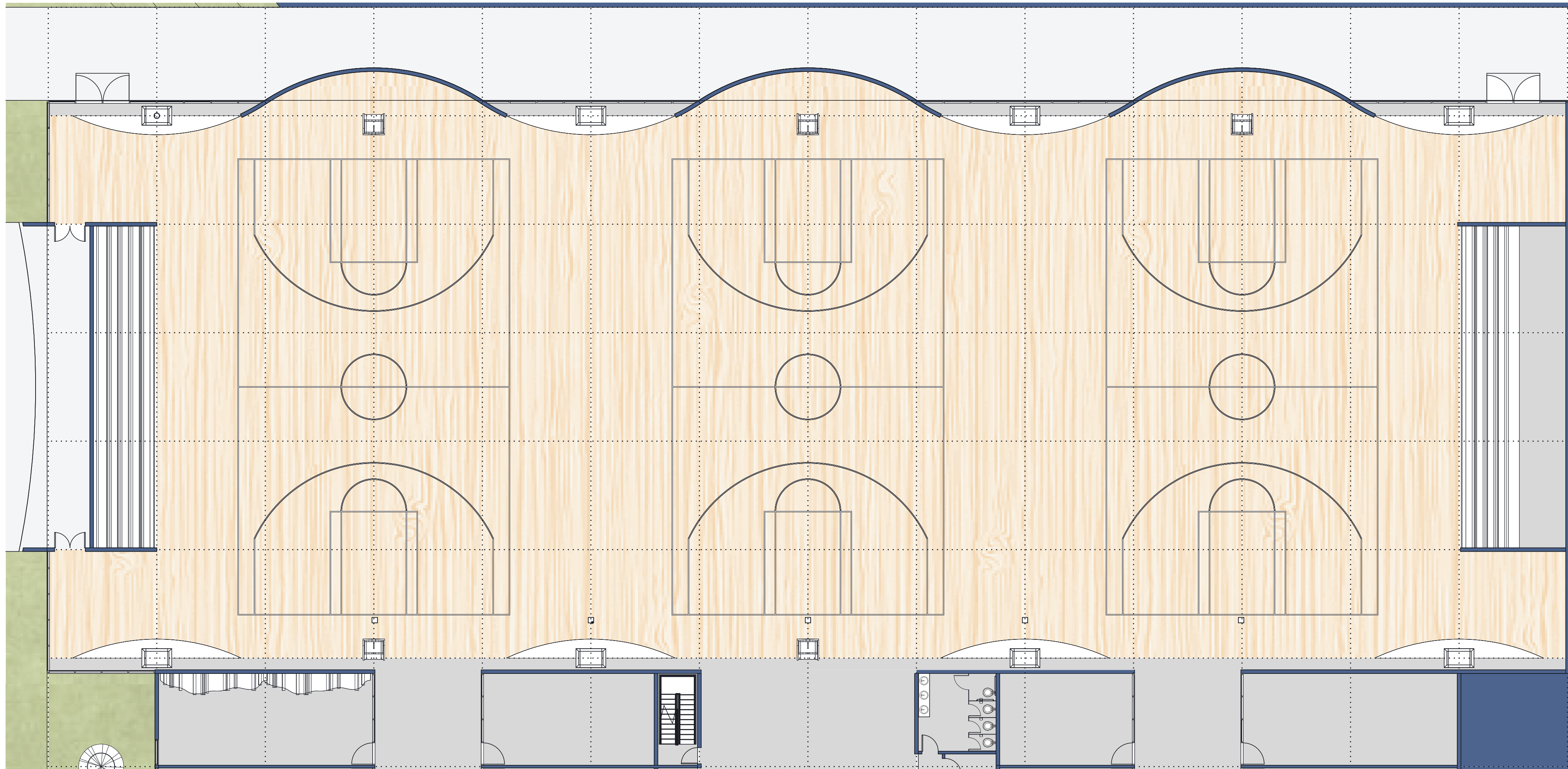
Level 2
The second level consists of multipurpose rooms and the gymnasium. Connecting all of these together are a series of walkways along the main circulation axis that also have an open view of the major spaces below. Just above this level is the suspended running track that also circulates along this axis and throughout the majority of the building.

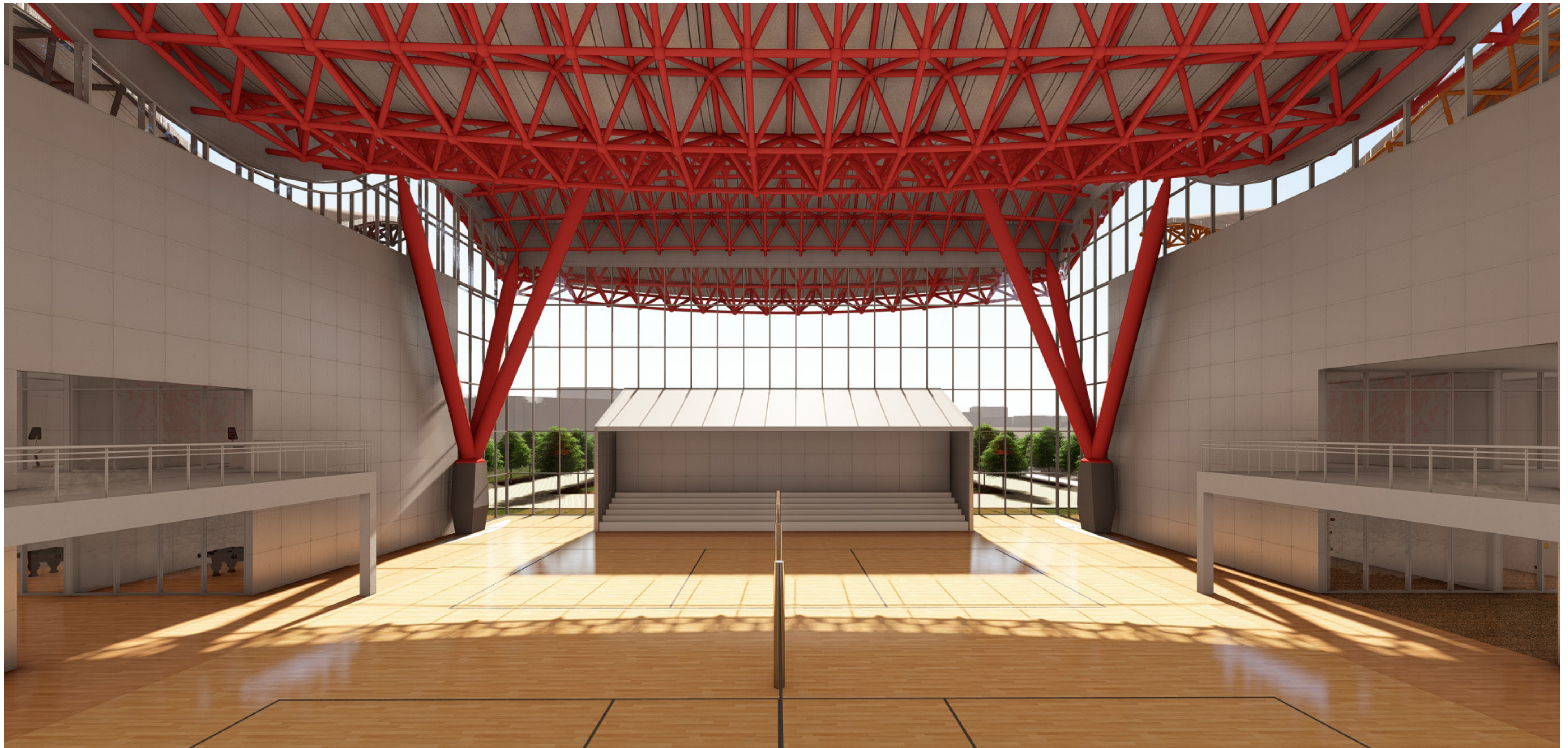


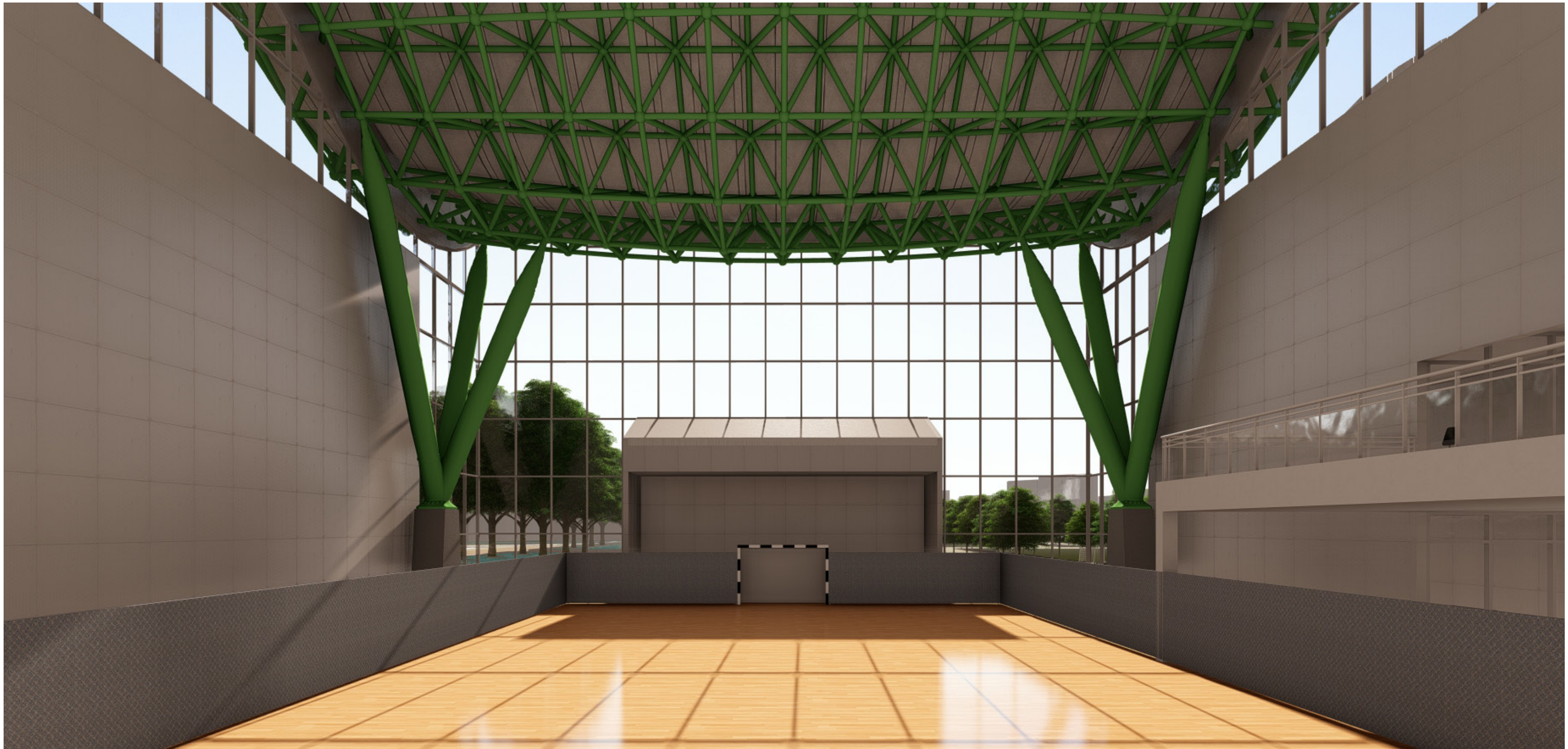
Section of Basketball Courts

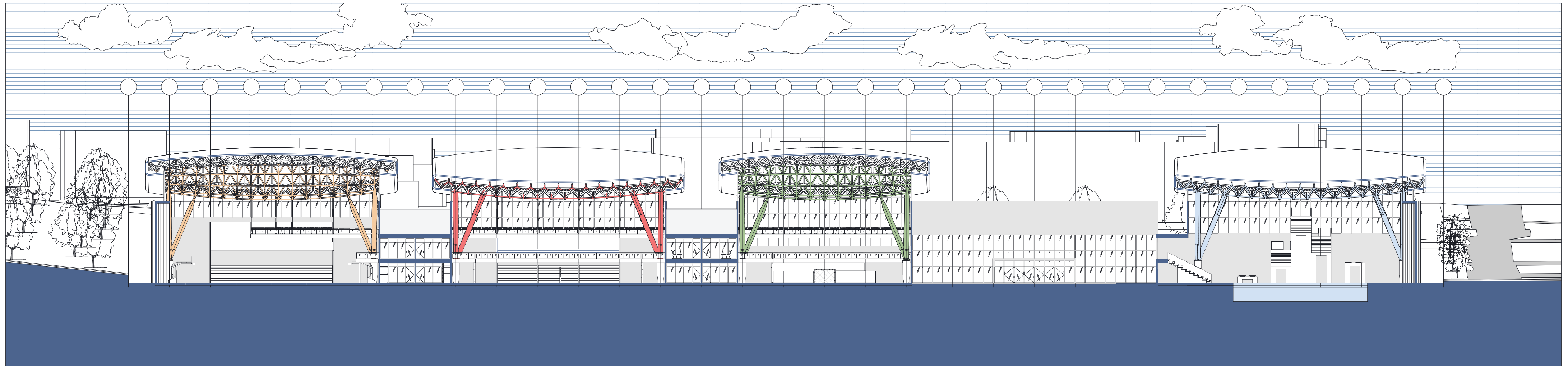




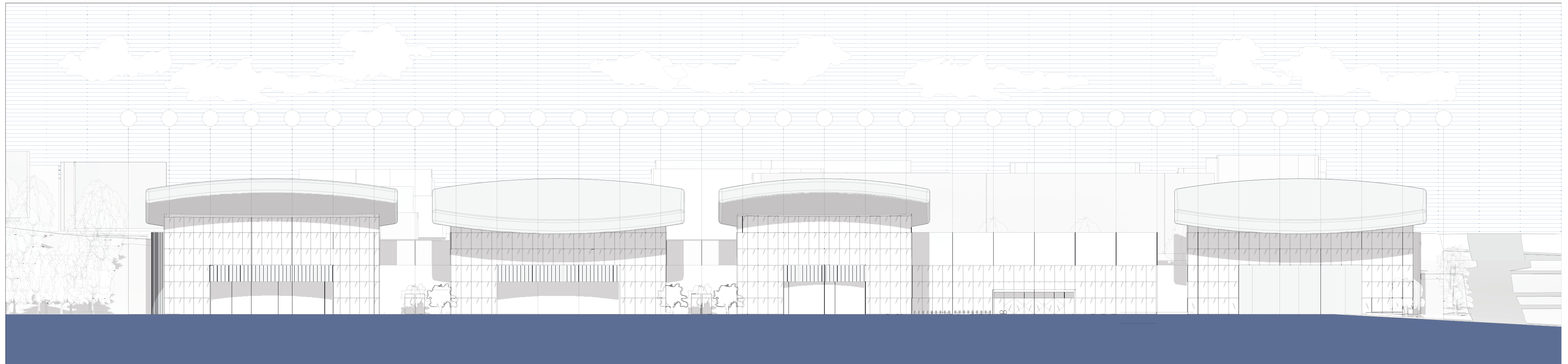




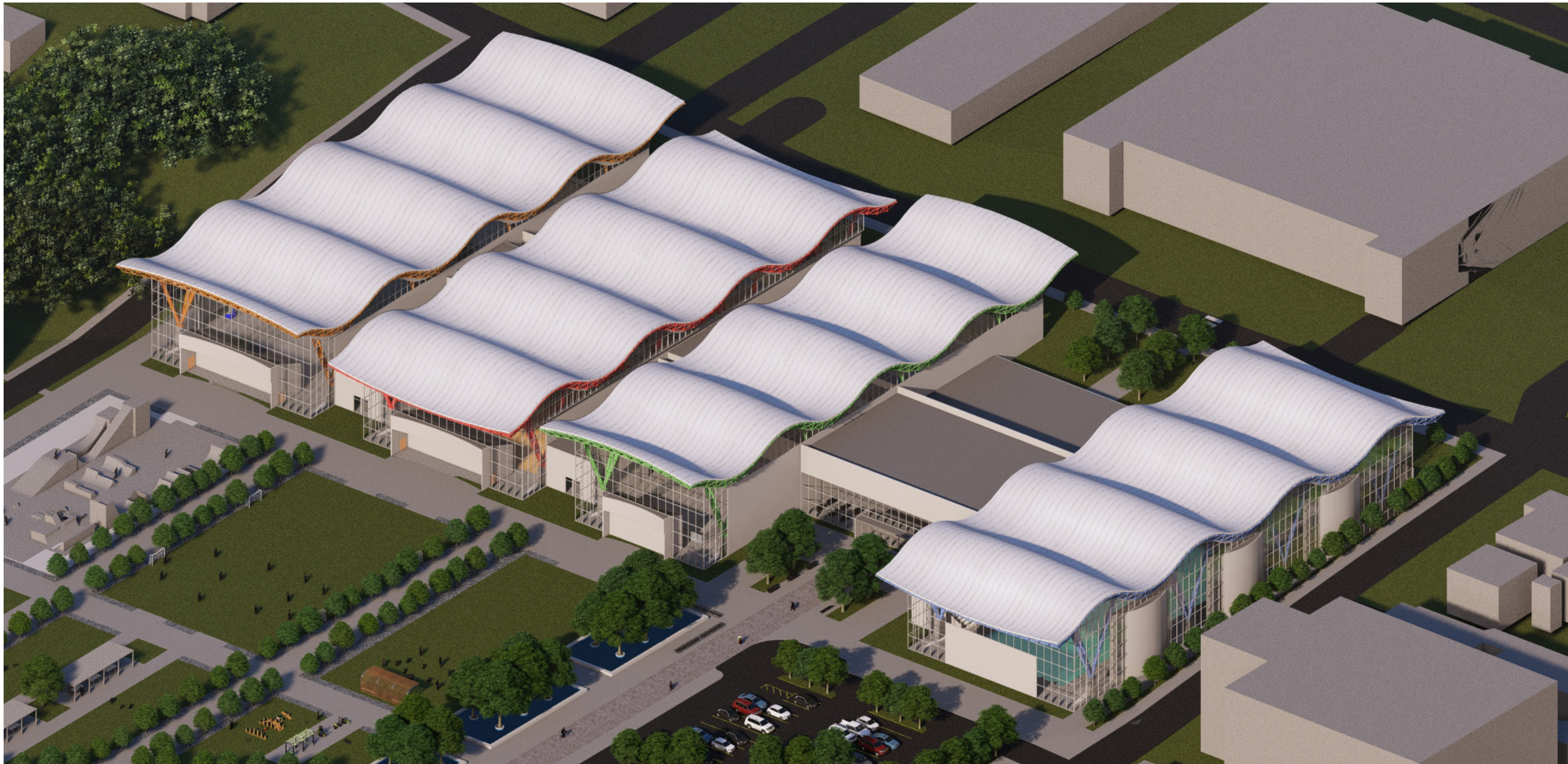




Long Section









MAINTENANCE

This final stage is the point where the individual has made physical activity a habit and no longer relies simply on willpower. They have developed the discipline necessary to consistently show up, and therefore exercise is almost a certainty in their future. In this instance, this can be interpreted as the future outlook due to the new programs and amenities provided by the project.



When thinking of a project of this scale, it is obvious that it will be in use for many decades in the future. This prolonged future use is crucial for the community as a whole as recreation centers provide not only the benefits of physical activity, but they also provide a place for people to gather and build a stronger sense of community with other residents. Recreation centers, along with the city's Parks and Recreation Department, also provide programs and classes for all ages, with this being especially important for the development of the youth. Ultimately, a project such as this one can place recreation and physical activity at the forefront of a city's daily life, and it can even inspire other cities to follow in the same steps and create prominent flagship recreational facilities for their community as a whole.

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Man sitting alone watching the beautiful sunset, kieferpix - stock.adobe.com

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