

**Housing and Addiction: Designing for the 'Hard to House' in
Vancouver's Downtown Eastside**

by

Hassan Ali Sayed

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Architecture

at

Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia
March, 2012

© Copyright by Hassan Ali Sayed, 2012

DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE

The undersigned hereby certify that they have read and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance a thesis entitled "Housing and Addiction: Designing for the 'Hard to House' in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside" by Hassan Ali Sayed in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Architecture.

Dated: March 19, 2012

Supervisor: _____

Reader: _____

Reader: _____

DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

Date: March 19, 2012

AUTHOR: Hassan Ali Sayed

TITLE: Housing and Addiction: Designing for the 'Hard to House' in Vancouver's
Downtown Eastside

DEPARTMENT OR SCHOOL: School of Architecture

DEGREE: MArch CONVOCATION: May YEAR: 2012

Permission is herewith granted to Dalhousie University to circulate and to have copied for non-commercial purposes, at its discretion, the above title upon the request of individuals or institutions. I understand that my thesis will be electronically available to the public.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither the thesis nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission.

The author attests that permission has been obtained for the use of any copyrighted material appearing in the thesis (other than brief excerpts requiring only proper acknowledgment in scholarly writing), and that all such use is clearly acknowledged.

Signature of Author

DEDICATION

For Janice May Batisse

CONTENTS

Abstract	vii
Acknowledgements	viii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
The Neighbourhood.....	1
Externalities	5
Homelessness	7
Housing Policies: A Continuum Model.....	8
A Housing First Policy	10
Flexibility	12
CHAPTER 2: SITE	14
Public Space and Drug Trafficking	14
Zoning.....	16
Building Typology	17
Supportive Network	18
Housing Stock	19
Single Room Occupancy (SRO).....	19
Market Housing.....	20
Non-Market Housing.....	21
Special Needs Residential Facilities (SNRF)	22
CHAPTER 3: DESIGN.....	23
Program Development	23
Semi-Public Space	24
Semi-Private Space	30
Private Space	33
Volumetric Study	35
Building Design.....	36
Phase 2	50
CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION	59
APPENDIX 1 - THE VANCOUVER AGREEMENT.....	60
APPENDIX 2 - INSITE - A SUPERVISED INJECTION SITE	61

APPENDIX 3 - PRECEDENT STUDIES	62
REFERENCES	65

ABSTRACT

The Downtown Eastside of Vancouver is one of the city's oldest neighbourhoods and one of Canada's poorest. Once home to city hall and a bustling entertainment district, this neighbourhood has slowly been overtaken by an open drug market. With many individuals in this area without permanent residence, temporary shelters have become a refuge for the homeless.

As a response to the need for permanent housing in this area, this thesis explores the role of architecture in housing the homeless, specifically those who suffer from drug addiction. Building on precedents of mixed use affordable housing programs in Canada and the U.S., this project focuses on ways of facilitating services and activities that seek to improve the quality of life for the disenfranchised.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Christine Macy for all of her guidance and support throughout this thesis.

Thank you Grant Wanzel for taking the time to advise me throughout this process. I truly appreciate your efforts and have learned a great deal from the wisdom you've imparted.

Thank you Sarah Bonnemaïson and Emanuel Jannasch for your words of encouragement.

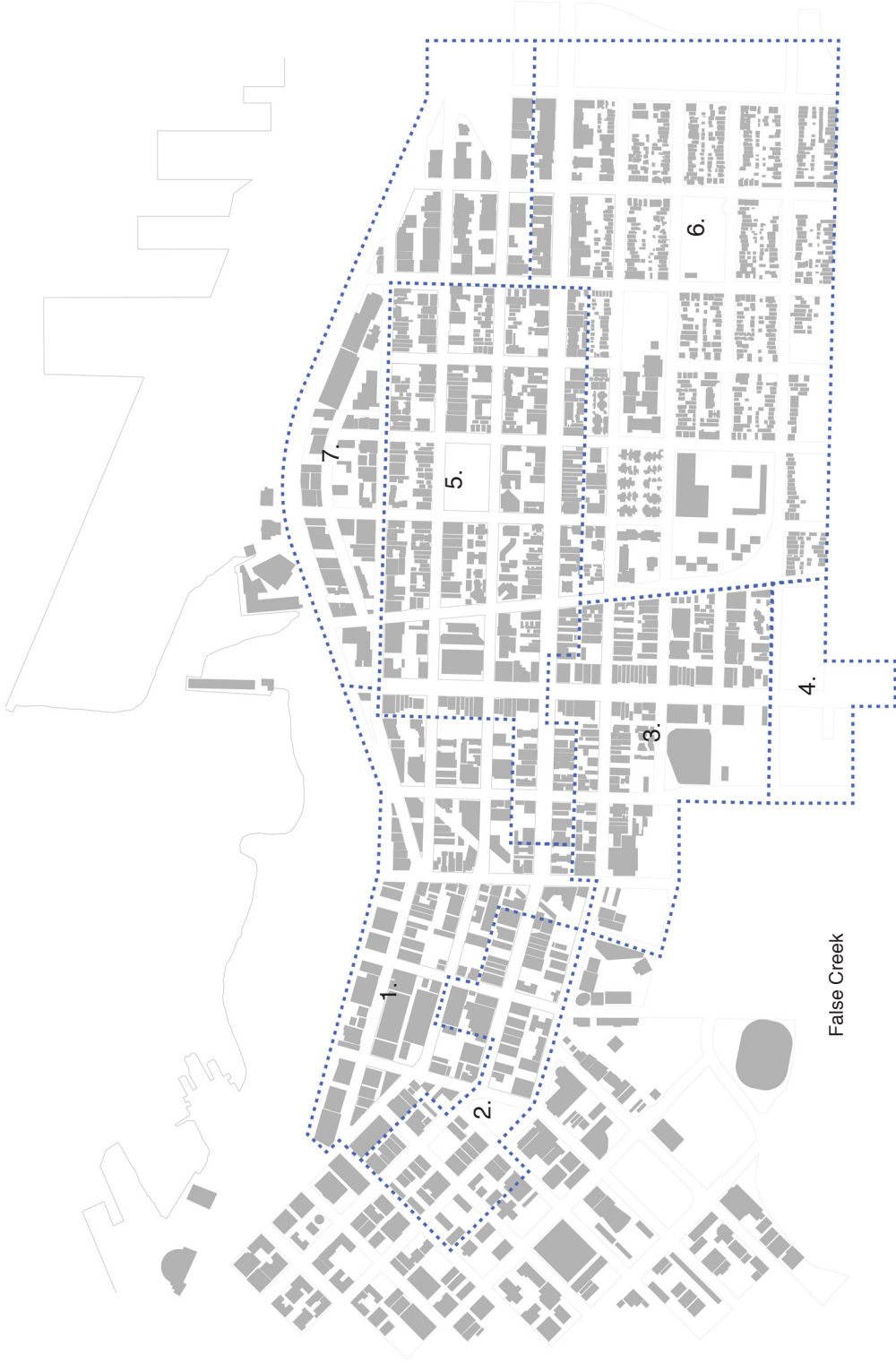
To my friends and family, thank you for all your support over these last few years.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The Neighbourhood

The Downtown Eastside (DTES) neighbourhood is comprised of several sub districts as diverse as the city itself. Straddling the border with the Downtown core to the west are Gastown, Victory Square, and Chinatown. To the south east of these districts are the residential areas of Thornton Park and Strathcona, largely made up of families and seniors. The Oppenheimer district marks the centre of this neighbourhood and the city's open drug market.





1. Gastown

2. Victory Square

3. Chinatown

4. Thornton Park

5. Oppenheimer

6. Strathcona

7. Industrial District

False Creek



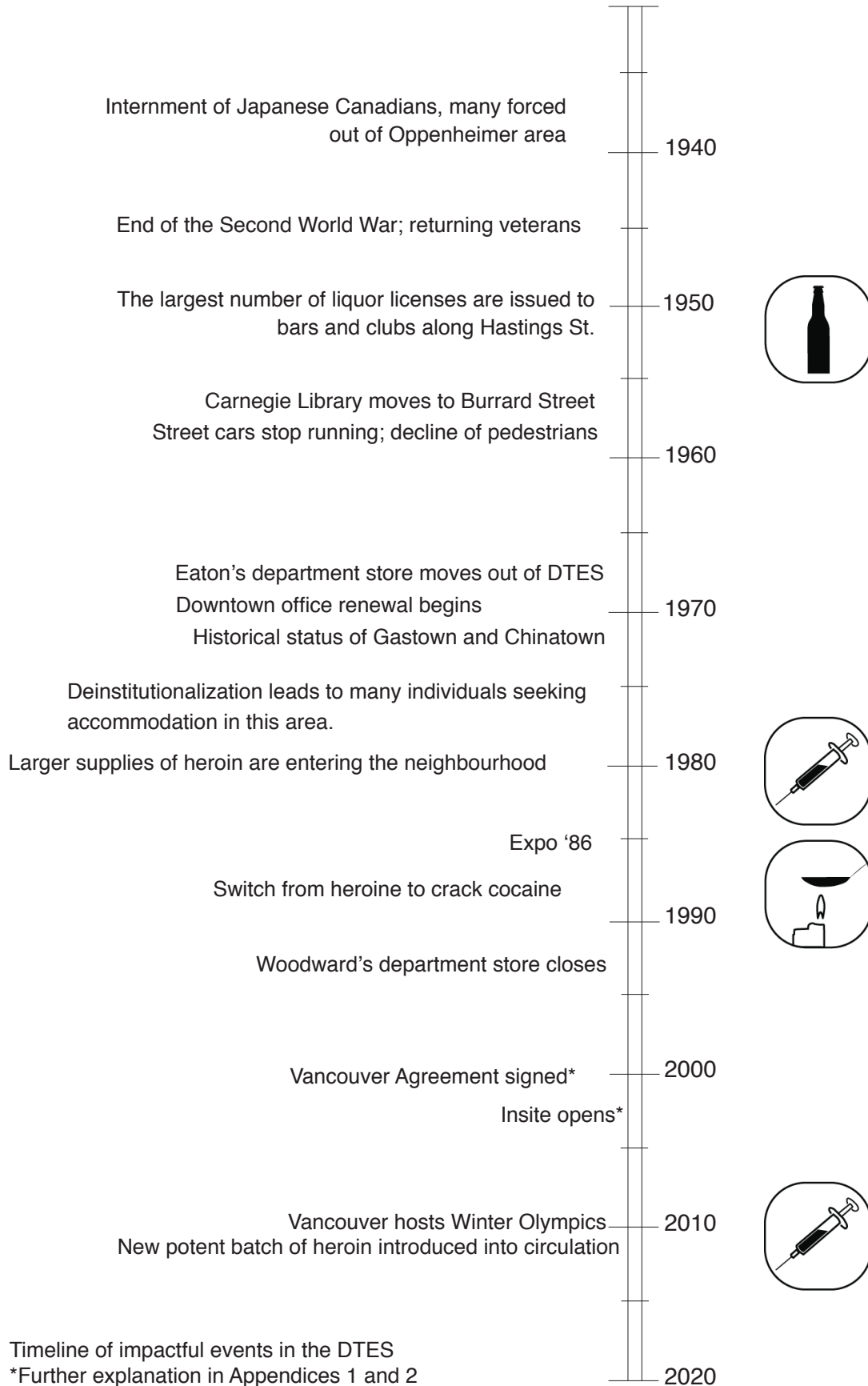
Vancouver's Downtown Eastside



Hastings and Carrall Streets, looking east, 1907. Atkin, "City Reflections."

The founding of these districts dates back to the mid 1860s, prior to the city's incorporation. The building of the Stamps Mill at this time, located at the bottom of Gore Avenue in what is now the industrial district, encouraged settlement in the surrounding areas. The term "Skid Road", referring to the Hastings Street corridor, dates back to this time when workers skid logs along the street to the mill.

With the arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1886, land speculation in Gastown grew and wealthier residents began to move out of the neighbourhood. In the years following, the Oppenheimer neighbourhood experienced an influx of migrant workers. The extension of the streetcar line into these districts and the expansion of commercial development in the early 20th century led to the erection of boarding houses and single room occupancy hotels (SROs). These building types are the primary accommodation for many single adults living in the Downtown Eastside.

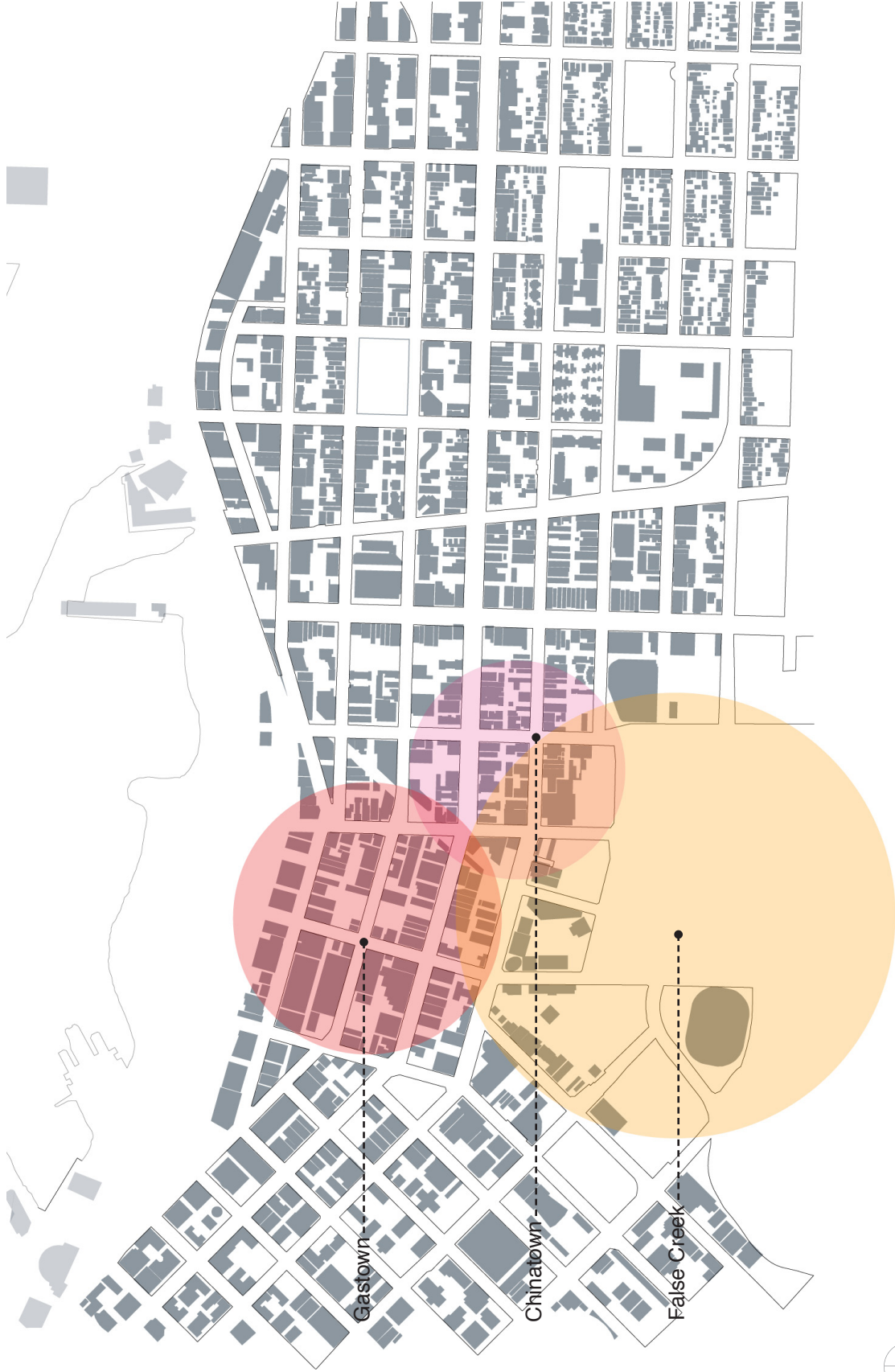


Externalities

The economic polarization and social degradation of the Downtown Eastside has resulted from decades of federal and provincial housing policy changes, in addition to singular events within the City of Vancouver.

One prominent event that shaped the present day neighbourhood was the historic designation given to the Gastown and Chinatown neighbourhoods in 1971. To initiate revitalization plans in these districts, the City of Vancouver designated them as historic landmarks in the city. This promoted capital investment, which led to the renovation of hotels in the area and increased the value of rental properties. As a result, many low-income residents were forced to find cheaper accommodation in other areas of the city.

The availability of affordable housing in the Downtown Eastside faced another setback in 1986, when Vancouver hosted a World Exposition. As the city prepared for an influx of tourists, landlords in the False Creek area began to renovate SRO hotels, displacing more low-income individuals.



Affected areas, Downtown Eastside, Vancouver



Homelessness in the DTES.
CBC, "Vancouver Church
Divided Over Homeless Shelter."

Homelessness

Homelessness is generally defined as a state of extreme poverty and a lack of housing stability.¹ Defining homelessness is an important first step in providing housing for this population. Without a precise definition, it is difficult to gauge the extent of homelessness in any given area and plan for the most appropriate course of action.² In their work *Canadian Cities*, Trudi Bunting and Pierre Filion articulate a conventional definition of what it means to be homeless. They break this group into absolute and relative homelessness; the former not having any home while the latter is living in insufficient housing.

A number of other definitions of homelessness expand on this basic definition through the inclusion of precarious living environments, i.e. those who are subjected to crowded dwellings or have insecure tenure.³

Defining what it means to be homeless is only one factor that must be addressed in designing affordable housing. Understanding the events that have led to this lifestyle is integral to a client-centered approach to housing and recovery and may be thought of

-
1. Emily Cohen, *Implementing a Paradigm Shift: Housing First But Not Housing Alone* (Master of Arts thesis, Tufts University, 2008), 12.
 2. Trudi Bunting and Pierre Filion, *Canadian Cities in Transition: Local Through Global Perspectives* (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2006), 419.
 3. Rae Bridgman, *StreetCities: Rehousing the Homeless* (Toronto: Broadview Press, 2006), 84.

as both individual and structural.⁴ The individual model places each person at the centre of the problem. Under this model it is assumed that there is sufficient housing, only it's not being utilized for reasons that include the inability to pay for rent or care for oneself. If this explanation is correct and the individual's disposition is what leads him or her to homelessness, moving into different accommodation will have little benefit.⁵ If on the other hand there are external, situational factors that contribute to these living conditions, providing permanent housing is integral to one's recovery.⁶ With respect to substance abusers, the effects of each can be interactive; one condition does not necessarily cause the other, but each can exacerbate problems associated with the other.⁷

Housing Policies: A Continuum Model

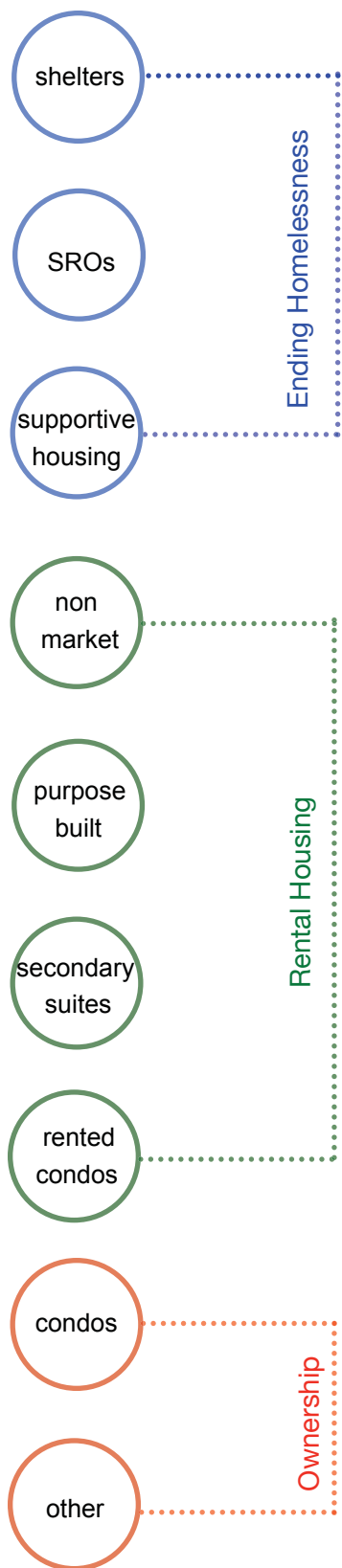
As a response to the need for affordable housing in the Downtown Eastside, a "continuum model" of housing has been implemented through organizations such as *Lookout Society* and *Raincity Housing*. This continuum housing model is integrated with a treatment plan to assist people that are hard

4. Bunting, *Canadian Cities in Transition*, 420.

5. Russell K. Schutt and Stephen M. Goldfinger, *Homelessness, Housing, and Mental Illness* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), 122.

6. Ibid, 122. See also Cohen, *Implementing a Paradigm Shift*, 24, and Kraus, *Homelessness and Harm Reduction*, 9.

7. Suzanne Zerger, *Substance Abuse Treatment: What Works for Homeless People?* (Washington, DC: National Health Council, 2002), 7.



Continuum of Housing Model. Adopted from the City of Vancouver’s Housing and Homeless Strategy, 2011.

to house. Its framework is built of several stages and milestones, each of which must be met in order to progress to the next phase. During this progression, residents move from short term accommodation (shelters and SROs) to more stable forms of housing (affordable rental housing).

The continuum model begins with basic overnight shelter accommodation. These shelters are found throughout the Downtown Eastside in single room occupancy hotels, community centres and churches. One organization that is successful in implementing this housing policy is the *Lookout Society*. This community group focuses on providing each individual with housing and access to a support network to help them regain stability in their lives.

One issue that has been discussed in much of the literature is how to clearly define what constitutes successful transitional housing. By its very nature, this type of housing acts as way station for people who are making the transition from sleeping outside or in precarious housing, to permanent residence.

In projects such as Street Cities in Toronto, these temporary shelters have actually ended up being transformed into homes.⁸

In *The Architecture of Affordable Housing*, Sam Davis takes a stand against this transitional model of housing and argues for permanent housing. Davis examines how transitional houses are taken possession of by their inhabitants while pointing

8. Bridgman, *Street Cities*, 185.



Strachan House, Toronto, ON. OMSSA, “Homes First Society’s Strachan House.”

to the failure of the continuum model of housing, which encourages transience. As people move from shelters, to transitional housing, to supportive facilities, their ability to form relationships with support workers becomes increasingly difficult. This, according to Davis, acts to reduce community cohesion.⁹ On the other hand, when stable housing is provided to people that are constantly moving through this continuum, relationships may develop between residents and support staff. In the Strachan house in Toronto these relationships form a small community that is organized into a township. Residents and staff form the governing body of the building and even hold weekly meetings in a central “town hall”. It is through this kind of internal organization that residents are able to take ownership over more than their individual dwellings.

A Housing First Policy

A founding principle of the “housing first” policy is the acceptance of permanent housing as integral to recovery. This policy is being adopted in cities throughout Canada and the United States, and has been implemented successfully by *Pathways* in New York, a non-profit organization that helps people with mental illness find permanent residence.

Under this policy, permanent residence is provided to those in need, regardless of circumstances and addiction. Given the multitude of issues that many

9. Sam Davis, *The Architecture of Affordable Housing* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 108.

of these people face, the implementation of such a policy requires a network of support in order to ensure its success. As John Turner has argued, the design of such housing should have “less to do with physical organization and much more with its location, its low cost, its form of tenancy, its security, and the freedom it offers to move in at short notice.”¹⁰ Pathways epitomizes this type of housing by providing immediate access to housing without any preconditions.¹¹ Through a “scattered site” approach, residents are given housing in neighbourhoods where they feel comfortable and are close to support services.

In *Homelessness, Housing and Harm Reduction*, Deborah Kraus advocates this housing policy with the integration of support services. Through her investigation of housing programs associated with substance abuse, she concludes that stable housing should be coupled with comprehensive and highly integrated client-centered services.¹² Kraus’ view is supported by the ideas put forth by Emily Cohen in *Implementing a Paradigm Shift*, which argues that housing is a basic right, not a privilege, and that treatment programs work best once the chaos of homelessness has ended.¹³ This integrated

10. Nabeel Hamdi, *Housing Without Houses: Participation, Flexibility, Enablement* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1991), 44.

11. Pathways to Housing, “Mission Statement.” Accessed March 4, 2012. <http://www.pathwaystohousing.org>.

12. Deborah Kraus, *Homelessness, Housing and Harm Reduction: Stable Housing for Homeless People with Substance Abuse Issues* (Ottawa: CMHC, 2006), vii.

13. Cohen, *Implementing a Paradigm Shift*, 2.



Princess Rooms, 215 Princess Ave. Raincity Housing, “Supported Housing.”

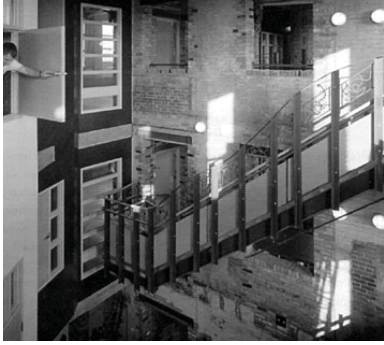
approach to ending homelessness has been adopted by non-profit organizations in the DTES such as *Raincity Housing* and the *Lookout Society*. These organizations provide housing to individuals with mental health and/or substance abuse issues that face chronic homelessness. For example, in the Princess Rooms project, on-site staff is available for the residents 24 hours a day, offering both medical and social services.

Flexibility

In designing housing for the homeless, a number of important considerations have to be addressed with respect to the needs of the various user groups. As the homeless are defined in a number of ways, the needs for this group cannot be met in any particular model. Affordable housing must therefore include, or make provisions for, the spatial requirements of each distinct group.¹⁴

Flexibility of space and program is critical in this process. In his book *Supports*, NJ. Habraken discusses the design of structures that are built with a degree of uncertainty. The outcome of this thinking are projects that easily adapt to the needs of their residents. In order to achieve this, Habraken proposes the implementation of mass production techniques in the construction process to harness the advantages of economies of scale to produce low cost housing; this is similar to the idea proposed by Moshe Safdie with Habitat '67 in Montréal, Québec.

14. Davis, *The Architecture of Affordable Housing*, 4.



Strachan House, Toronto, 1997.
Forrest Mechanical, "Strachan House."



Madrid Social Housing, Madrid, Spain, 2006.
Morphosis, "Madrid Housing."

John Turner is another housing theorist who has put forward ideas on flexibility and user enablement. In his writing, he places a greater importance on the utility of housing; what it actually does for its inhabitants, its location and security. While Turner's means of establishing this housing type differs from Habraken's, their underlying intentions are the same: to present a "theoretical basis on which to rethink housing as a flexible, dynamic, incremental activity."¹⁵

Illustrated in projects such as the Strachan House in Toronto, and Madrid Public Housing in Madrid, Spain, this flexibility is expressed in several ways. Unprogrammed spaces in Strachan House, which are emblematic of nooks found in Toronto's alleyways, are integrated with the building's circulation corridors and communal spaces and may serve as a space of activity for a group of residents. The Madrid Social Housing project also allows for flexible programming along the circulation path, by including generous patio spaces and entryways.

15. Hamdi, *Housing Without Houses*, 39.

CHAPTER 2: SITE

Public Space and Drug Trafficking

In Vancouver's Downtown Eastside most drug trafficking happens in the vicinity of Main and Hastings Streets. This open drug market spreads along Hastings and Cordova Streets and appears in smaller pockets around this area. The area east of Oppenheimer Park was selected as the location for this project, since it is removed from the highest concentration of drug trafficking in the neighbourhood, yet has many social and medical support services nearby.

Oppenheimer Park is the principle public space in this neighbourhood. Through city efforts, the park has undergone redevelopment to provide more amenities to the neighbourhood, including patio spaces and picnic tables, as well as a basketball court and horseshoe pitch.



Woodward's redevelopment



Pigeon Park



Drug trafficking



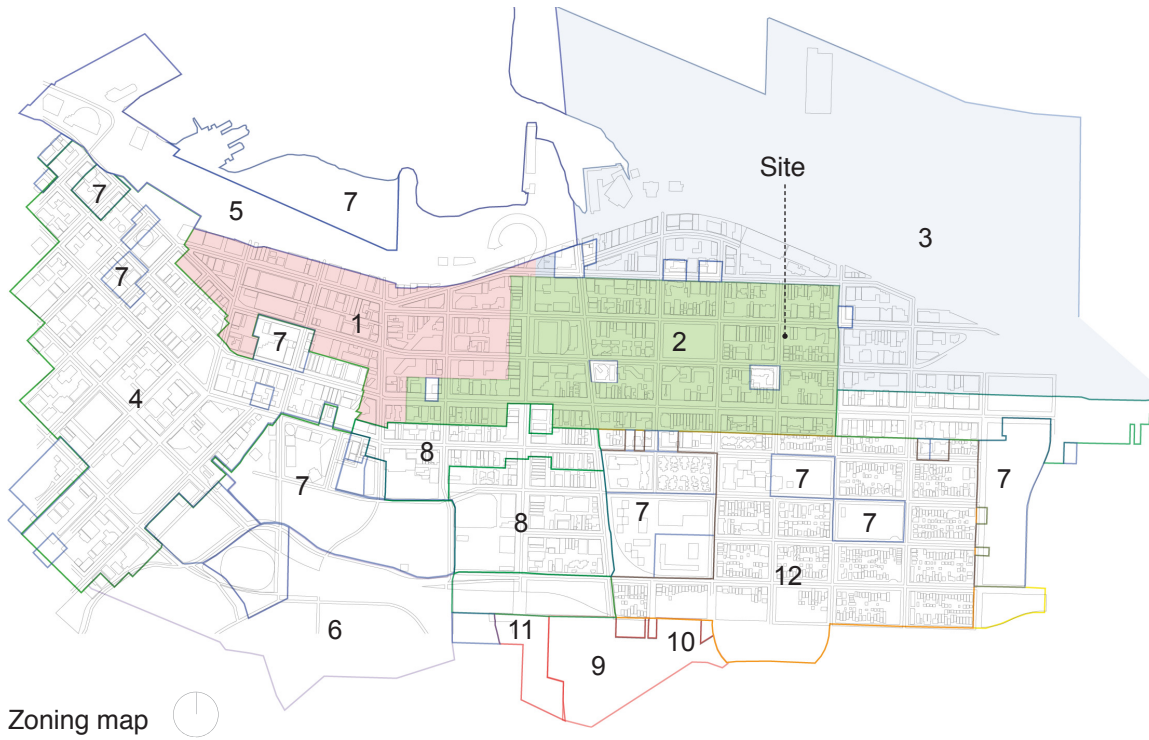
Oppenheimer Park



Site



Public spaces and drug trafficking. Campbell, "A Thousand Dreams."



Zoning map

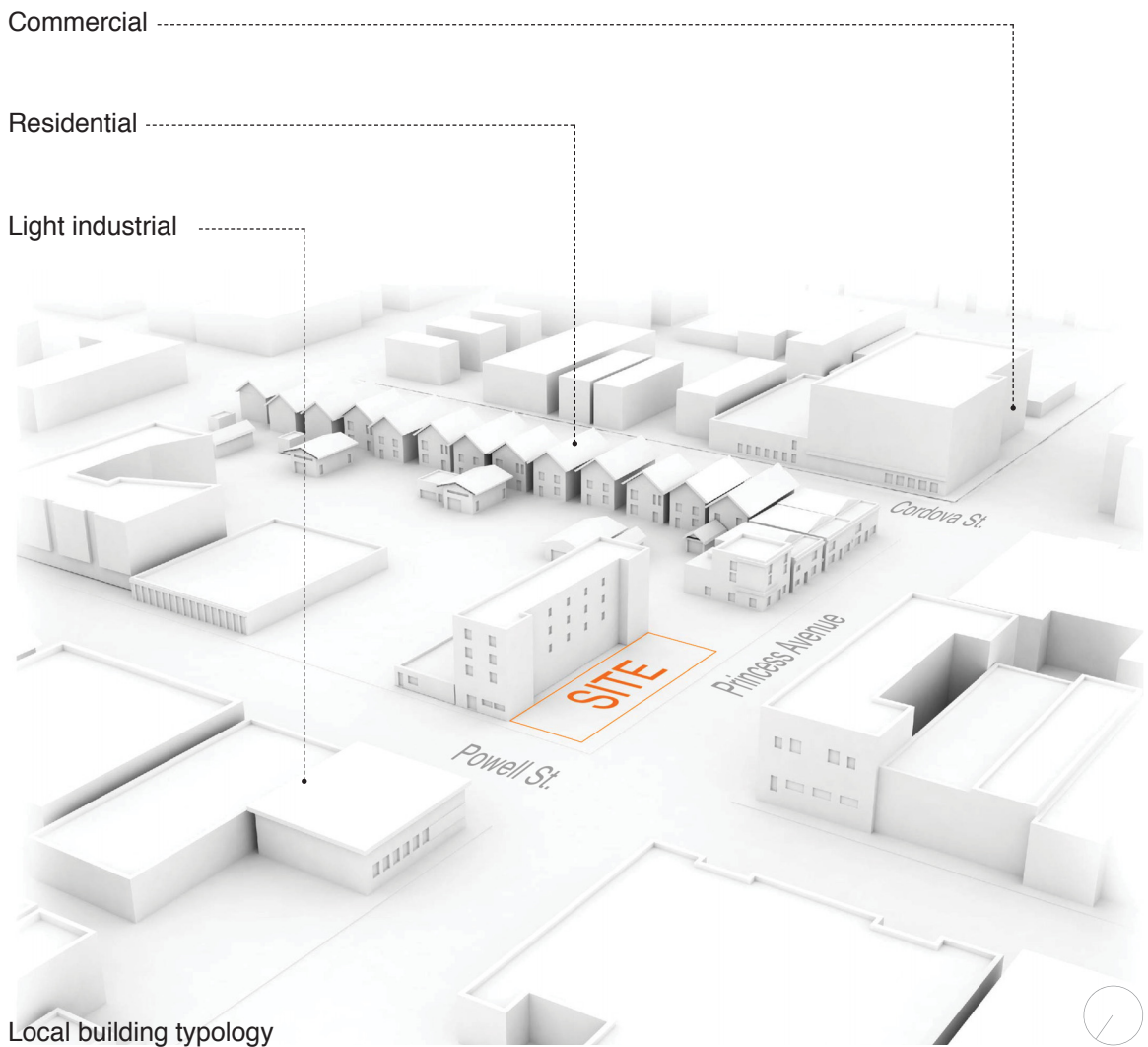
- 1. Historic Area District (Gastown)
- 2. Comprehensive Development District (Downtown Eastside/Oppenheimer)
- 3. Industrial District (M-2)
- 4. Comprehensive Development District (Downtown)
- 5. Comprehensive Development District (Central Waterfront)
- 6. Comprehensive Development District (False Creek - North Side)
- 7. Comprehensive Development District (CD-1)
- 8. Historic Area District (Chinatown)
- 9. Industrial District (I-3)
- 10. Industrial District (1-2)
- 11. Commercial District (East False Creek)
- 12. Two-family Dwelling District (Strathcona/Kiwassa)

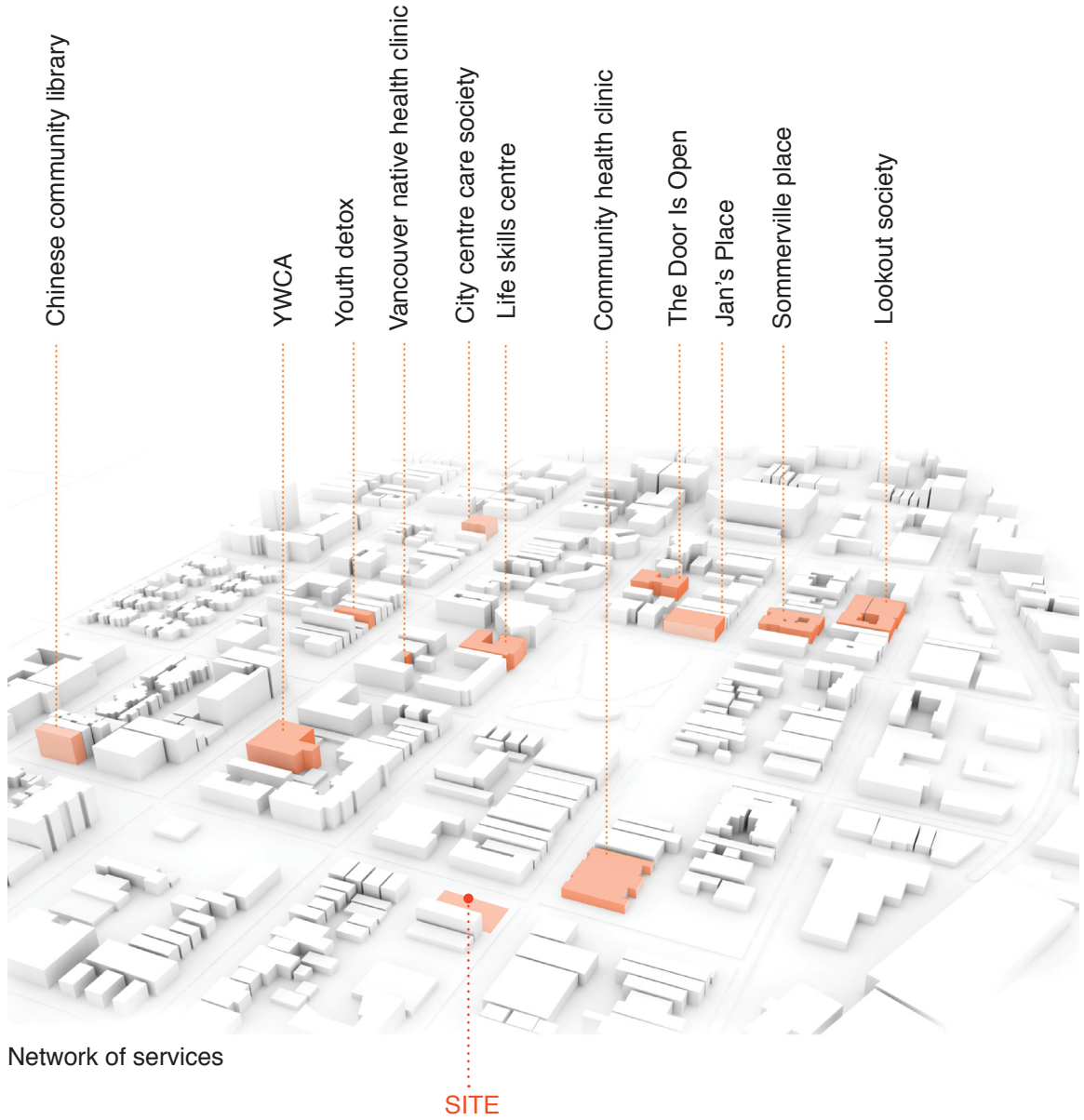
Zoning

City zoning indicates the project site falls into the Comprehensive Development District (Downtown Eastside / Oppenheimer). The city’s key objectives for development in this district are to maintain current housing stock and provide new affordable housing. Several projects in this area facilitate this type of housing and are integrated with on-site support services such as the Princess Rooms and Briget Moran Place, both operated by *RainCity Housing*.

Building Typology

The building typology in the neighbourhood presents a mixed variety of house and building types. This eclectic mix of typology and programme will be expressed on-site through the inclusion of dwellings and community space. Located on a residential block, this proposal will also adhere to the compositional make up of the collection of houses through articulating these dwellings on the facade.





Supportive Network

The Downtown Eastside has a substantial support network of medical and social services to help people in need find housing and care facilities. Included in this network are the Union Gospel Mission and BC Medical Health.

Housing Stock

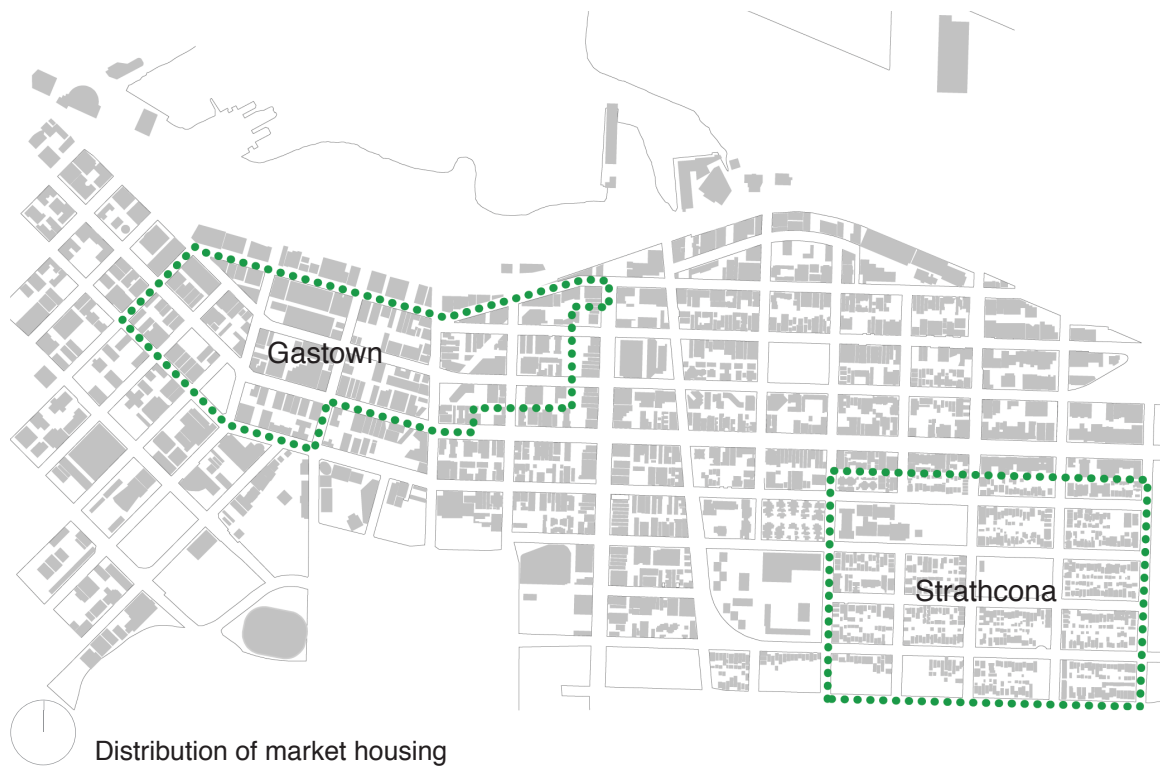
As one of the poorest neighbourhoods in Canada, the DTES faces gentrification and further polarization. Real estate prices in Vancouver are among the highest in the nation, which has effected the lives of many individuals through a change of tenure types in this neighbourhood. Today, the number of SRO units in the DTES has slowly decreased even though the number of non-family persons in this area continues to grow.¹⁶ Of these non-family persons, 50% live alone. In response to the changing housing stock, the City of Vancouver enacted the Single Room Accommodation (SRA) By-Law in 2003 to mitigate the loss of these units. Through such initiatives, these units are slowly being replaced with affordable housing.

Single Room Occupancy (SRO)

Single Room Occupancy units are classified as small single rooms, usually ten by ten feet in size, with no private bathroom.¹⁷ These rooms are typically rented by the month or week, and constitute the lowest cost housing available in the city through the private market. Single Room Occupancy units have been fundamental to the development of housing in the DTES.

16. City of Vancouver, "DTES Community Monitoring Report." Accessed February 15, 2012. <http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/planning/dtes/>.

17. City of Vancouver, "Changes in the SRO Stock in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside." Accessed February 13, 2012. <http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/housing/pdf/SROS7094.pdf>.



Market Housing

Market housing is defined as self-contained units that are available for sale or rent at market rates. Most market housing in the DTES is in the Gastown and Strathcona neighbourhoods as illustrated above.



Non-Market Housing

Non-market housing is provided for individuals and families that cannot afford market rates. Funding and administration is typically provided by senior levels of government with non-profit societies assisting with managerial duties.

The distribution of non-market housing in the DTES is primarily within the Strathcona, Oppenheimer and Gastown neighbourhoods.



Special Needs Residential Facilities (SNRF)

These facilities are funded by senior levels of government to accommodate persons with physical or mental health issues. The accommodation may be divided into single or shared rooms. In addition to providing shelter for this part of the population, these facilities also offer medical services and specialized support services to the residents.¹⁸

18. City of Vancouver, "Housing Plan for the Downtown Eastside." Released October 2005. <http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/housing/pdf/dtshousingplan.pdf>.

CHAPTER 3: DESIGN

Program Development

A place that makes people feel welcome, comfortable, and safe signals that someone cares about them and that they are worthy of this concern.¹⁹

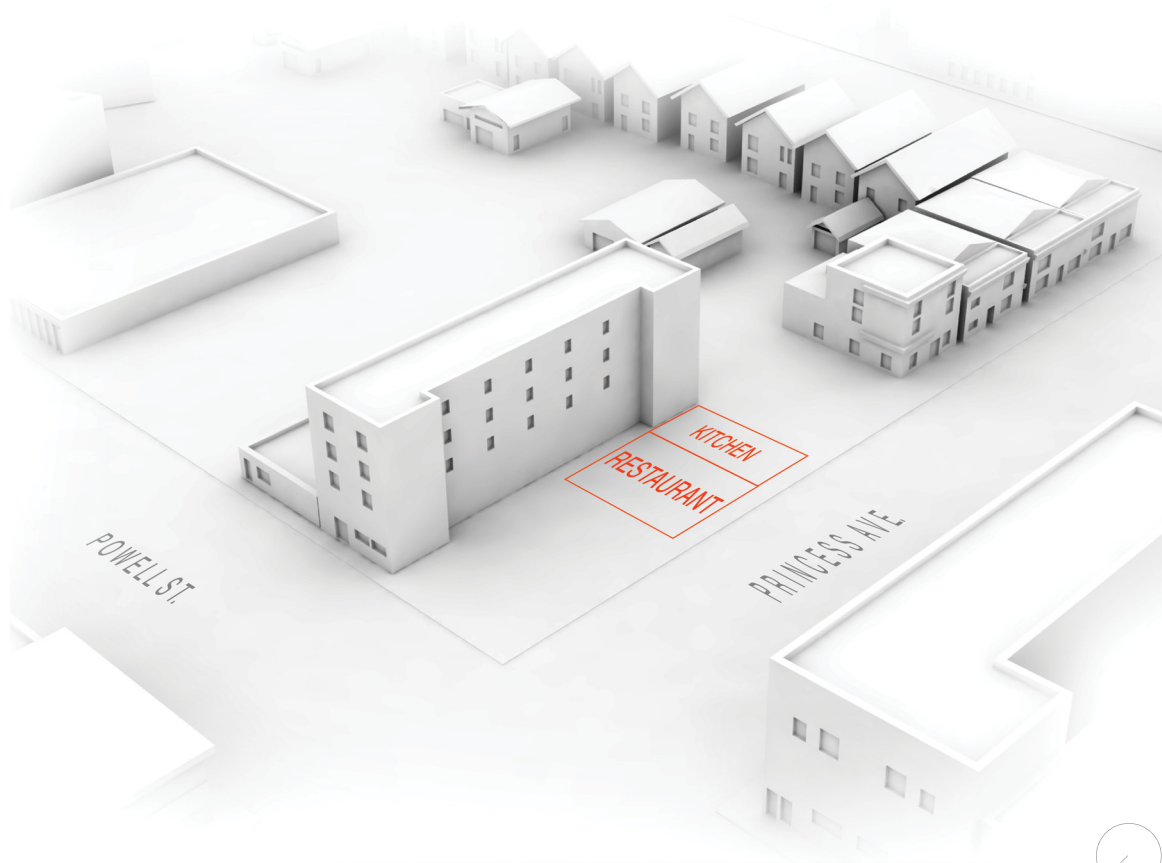
The connection between the building and its surrounding community is fundamental to the development of the program. This connection ensures that residents are not stigmatized and separated from the neighbourhood. A restaurant and training kitchen, roof garden, market, generous semi-public spaces and support infrastructure offer residents skills training and employment opportunities.

Design goals include resident security, the ability to appropriate and personalize space, and the provision of both semi-public and semi-private spaces as a means to encourage social interaction. Personal safety is a paramount concern for people used to living on the street and must be addressed on all scales of the complex.

19. Sam Davis, *Designing for the Homeless: Architecture That Works* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 21.

Semi-Public Space

The restaurant and training kitchen on the ground floor form a synergistic relationship by giving residents the opportunity to learn culinary skills while integrating with restaurant patrons. This will encourage socialization among residents while bringing the community into the building, creating a lively atmosphere made up of public and semi-public space.



Restaurant and kitchen location on site

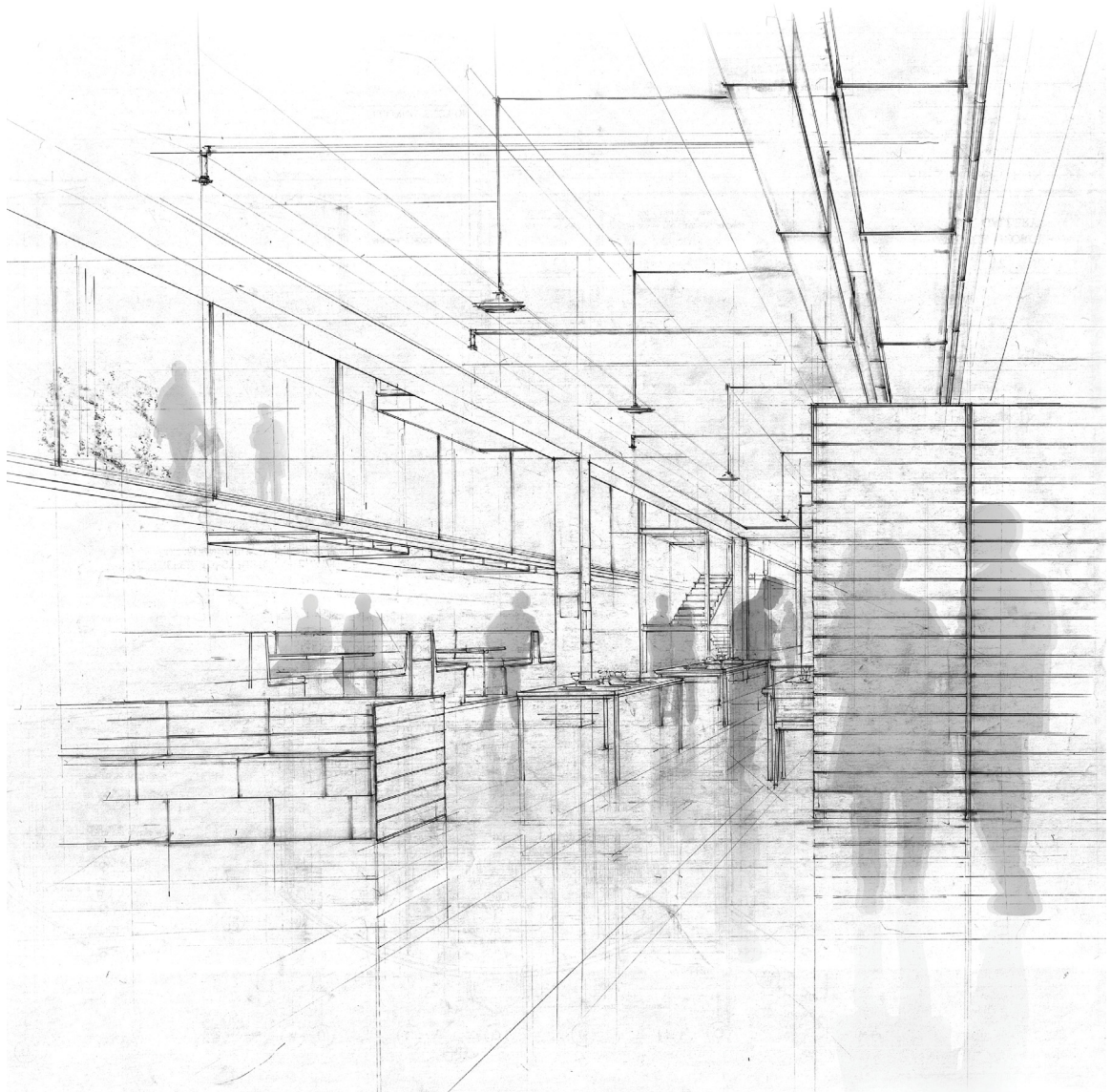




Kitchen

Restaurant

Section through restaurant + training kitchen



View from reception into the restaurant. Screening elements are used here to divide the dining area from the resident entry.



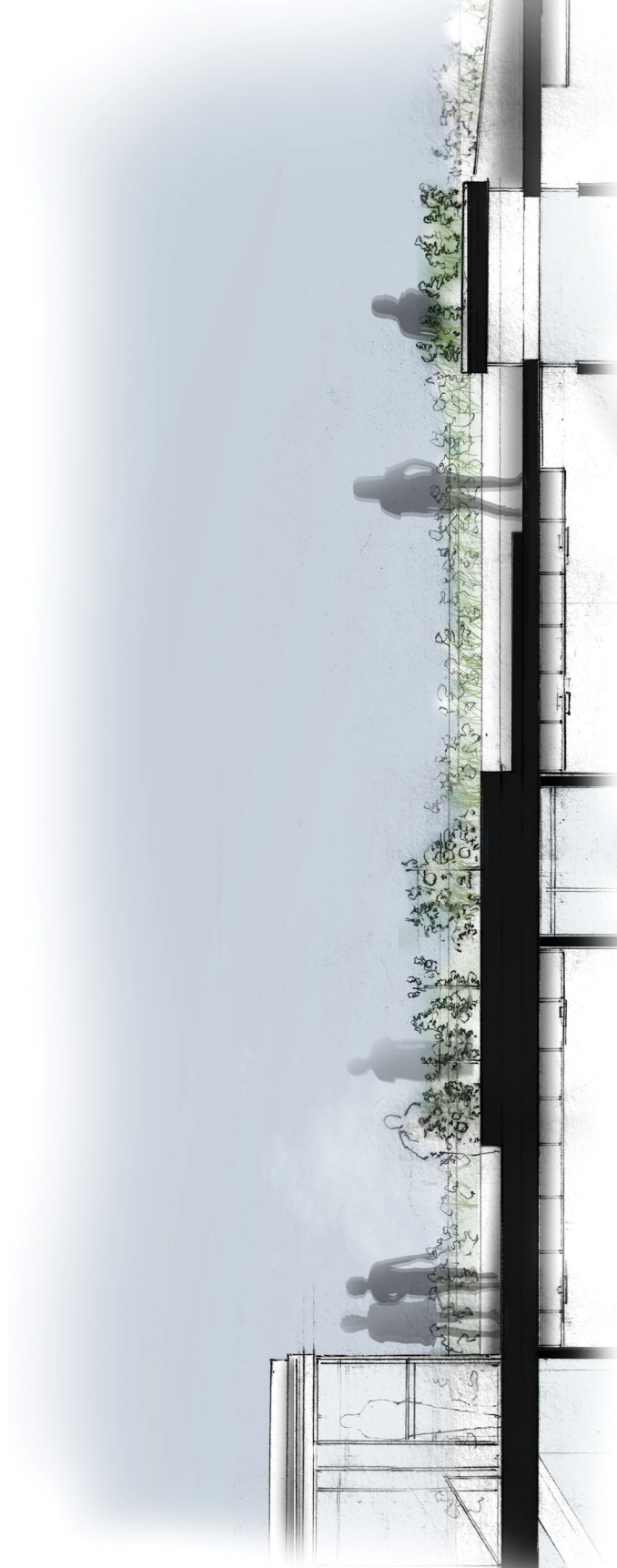
Community garden, 1015 East Hastings, Vancouver. Supported by SOLEfood, a local organization providing agriculture employment to inner-city residents. SOLEfood, "Vancouver is Awesome."

The skills training program established in the kitchen, is further extended to a roof garden and ground level market.

The community gardens that are beginning to emerge along the Hastings corridor and as far west as Gastown, offer community members an opportunity for informal socialization and exercise in cultivating working gardens. A similar working garden is proposed on this site for resident use. Produce from this garden is brought to the ground floor market to be distributed to the community.



Location of the market and garden on site



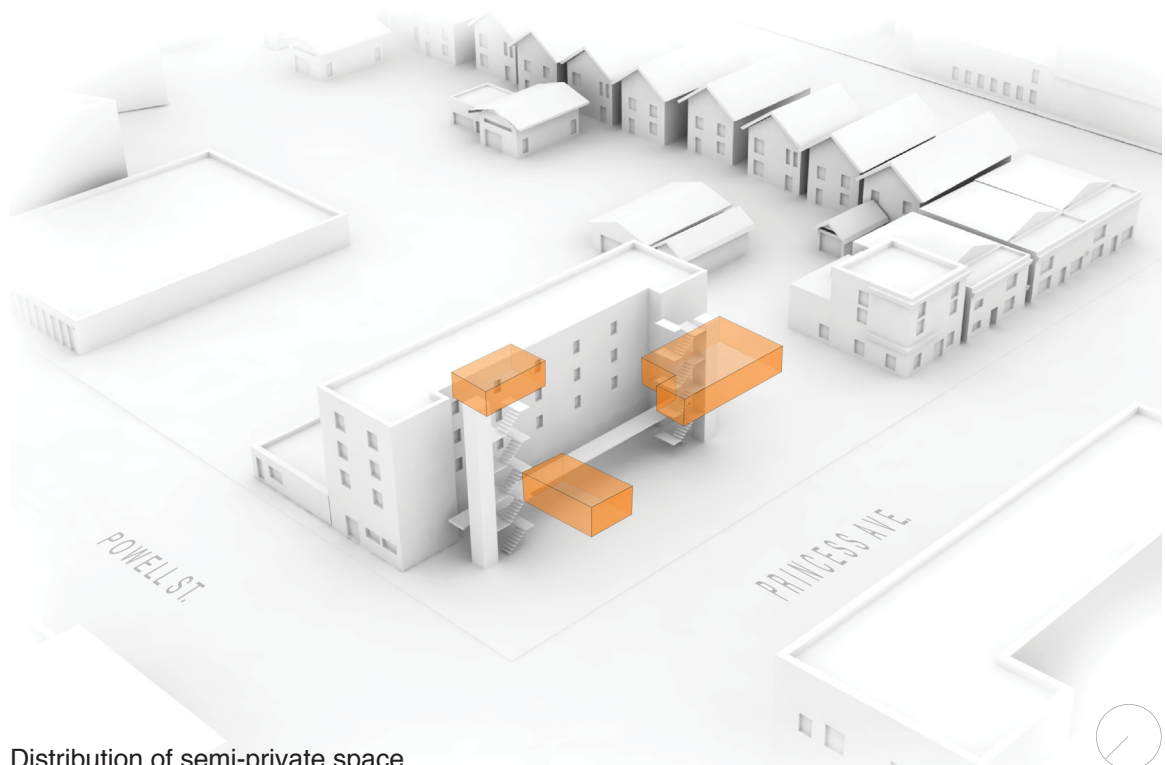
Roof garden, looking east



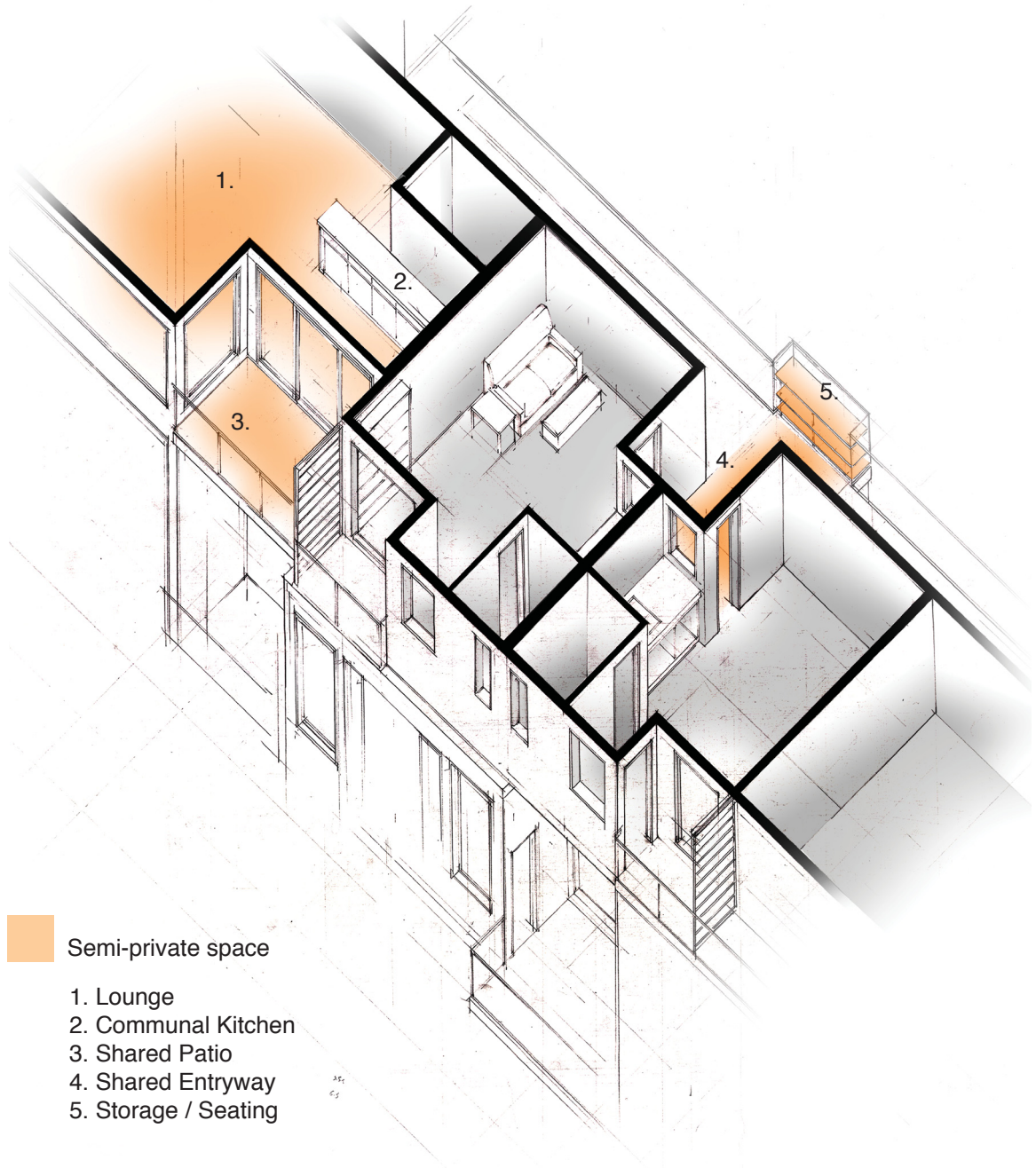
Market opening up to Powell St.

Semi-Private Space

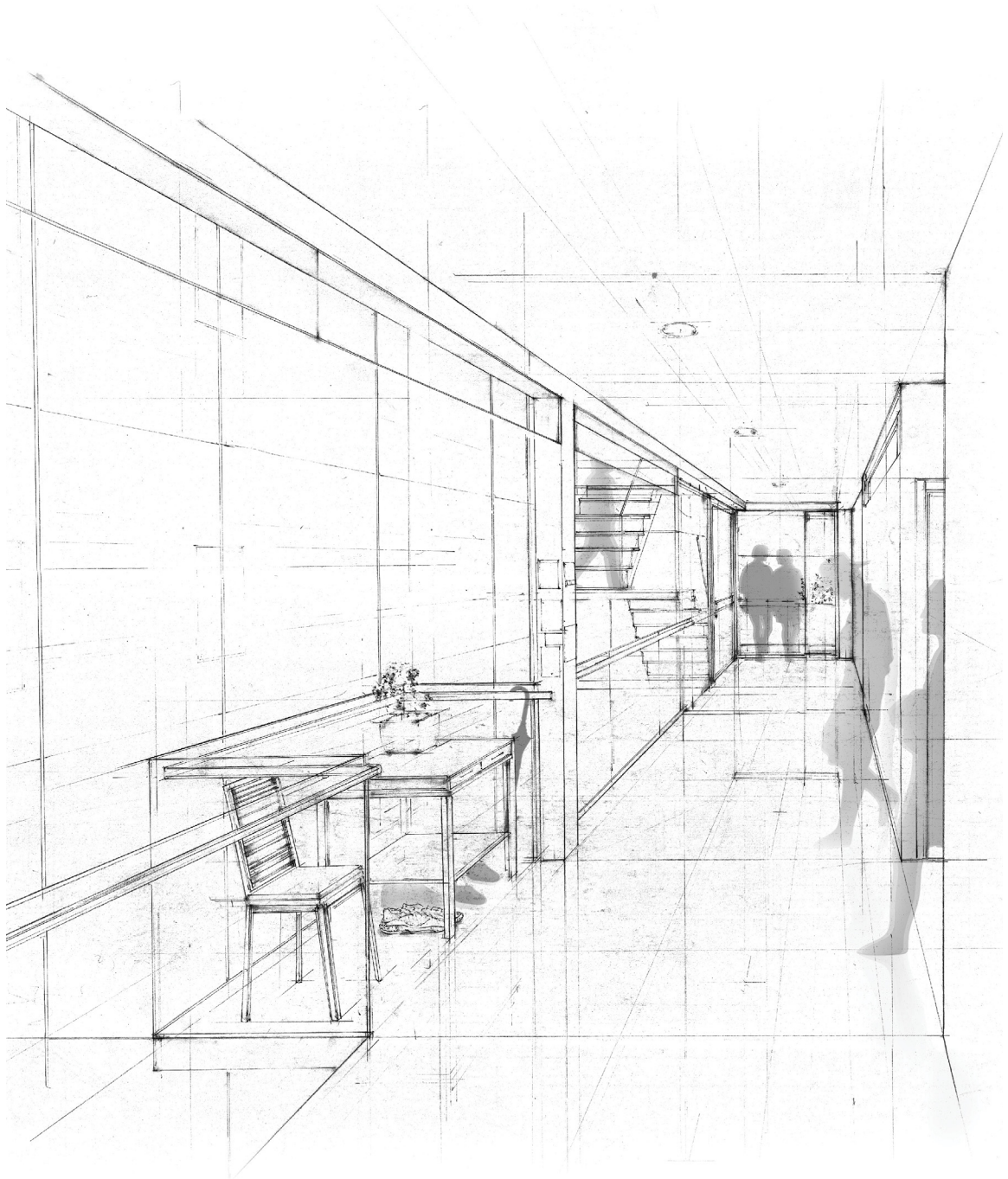
A series of communal spaces provide transitional zones from the semi-public ground floor to semi-private upper levels of the complex. An area equal to the footprint of one unit on each floor includes a lounge, communal kitchen and washroom. The proportions of these spaces are configured differently on each floor, creating a double height room in the space on the north side and an outdoor terrace in the southern room.



Distribution of semi-private space



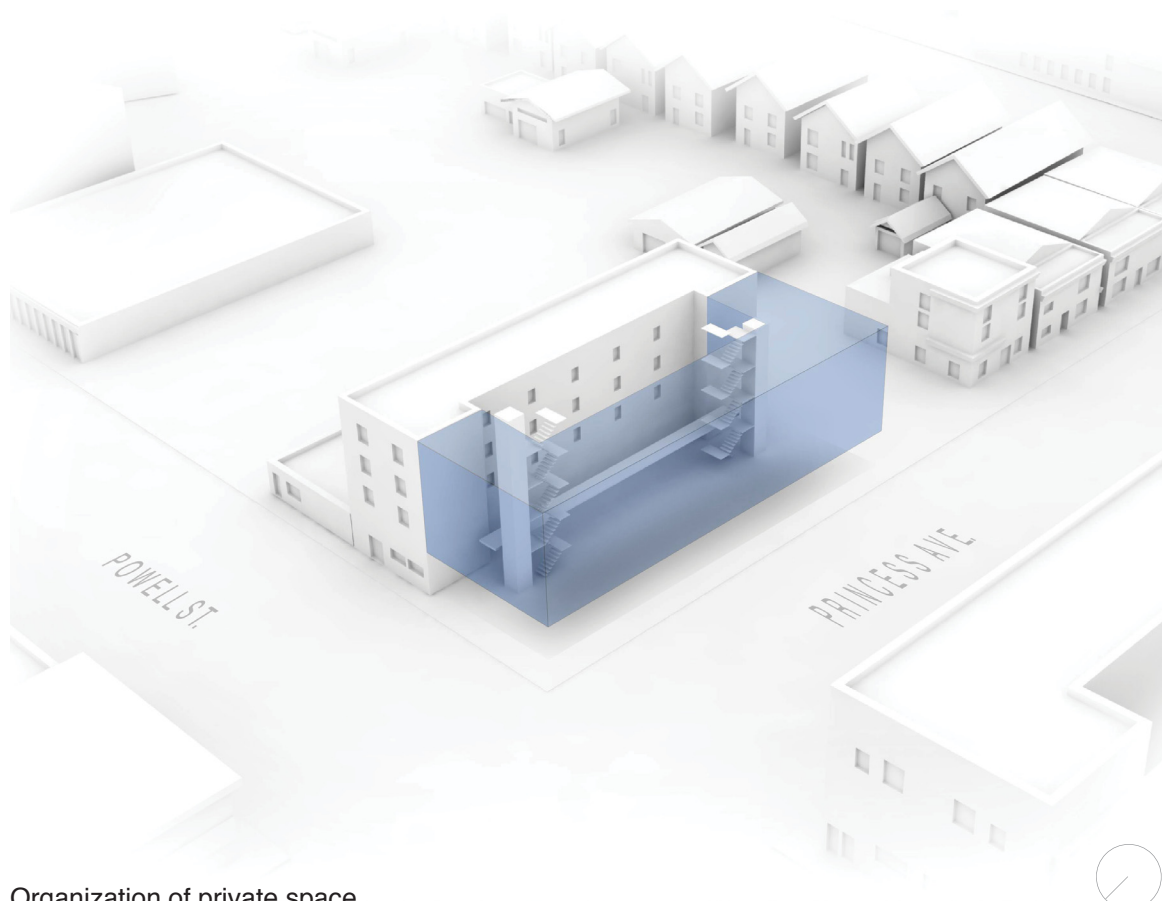
Axonometric drawing of the dwellings



This illustration depicts the entryway and projection into the atrium space. These unprogrammed areas may be appropriated by the residents in a variety of ways to suit their individual and collective needs.

Private Space

The organization of private space on the site follows much of the building typology within the neighbourhood. The dwellings wrap around the two circulation cores that are set in from the property lines to maximize exposure to daylight in the end units.



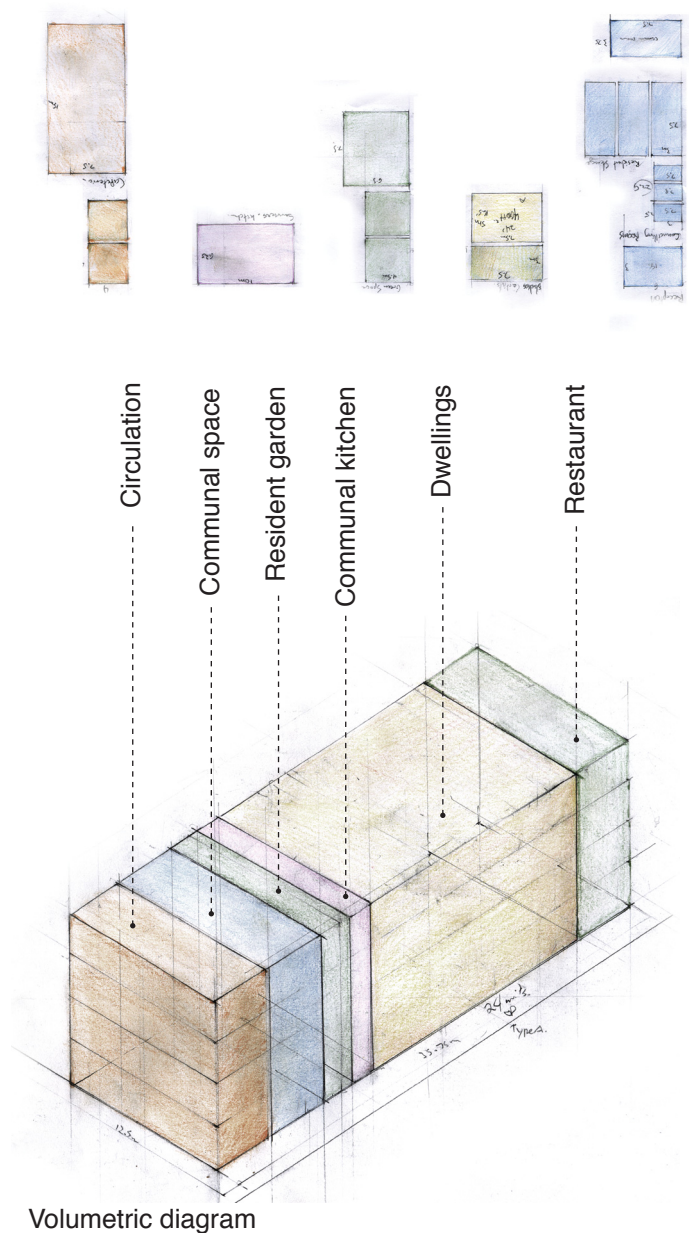
Organization of private space



Patio space which may be private or semi-private is distributed along the Princess Ave. facade, allowing residents to view the street activity.

Volumetric Study

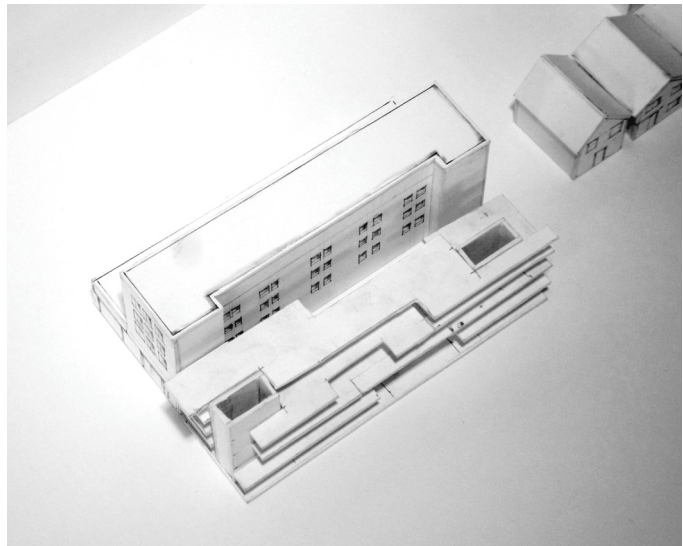
The collection of program elements in this project provide a basis for exploring the volumes that are needed on the site. Through the assignment of space to each program of the building, including the residential dwellings, training kitchen and restaurant, volumes may be created to begin massing studies on the site.



Volumetric diagram

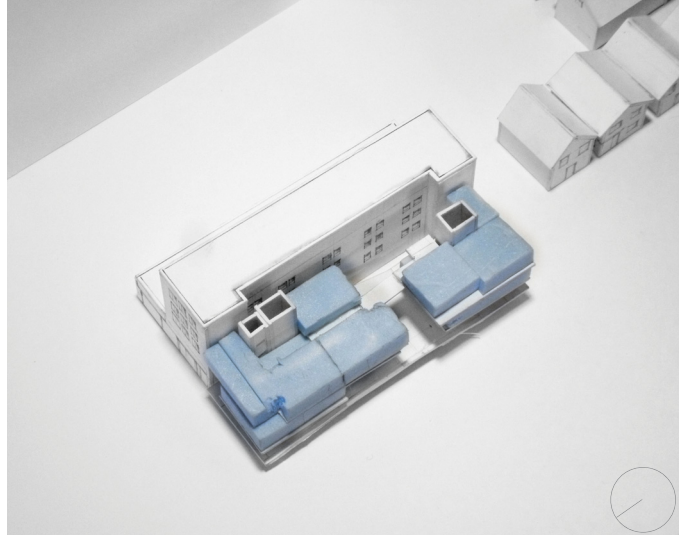
Building Design

The initial massing studies explored ways of articulating the building's three facades while keeping the largest possible separation from the adjacent building. The first massing model illustrates the building's cores and floor plates with several cuts made on the western facade to create terraces. The shifting plates creates an atrium on the eastern edge of the site, acting as a light well for the ground floor restaurant and second floor units.

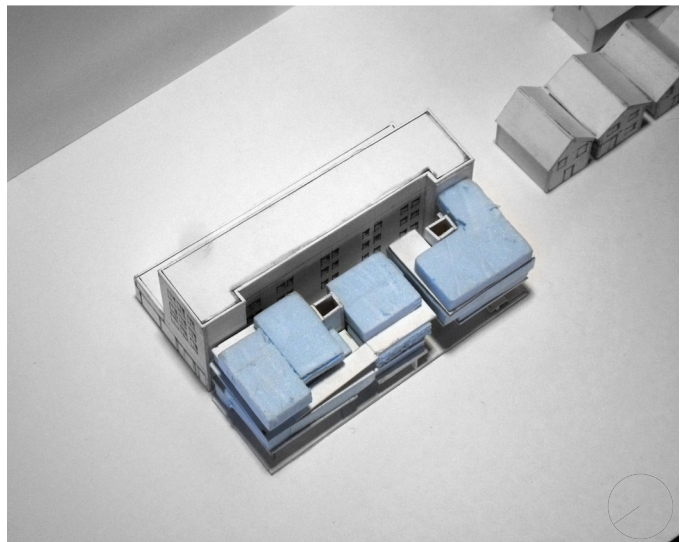


Massing model 1 - Shifting plates



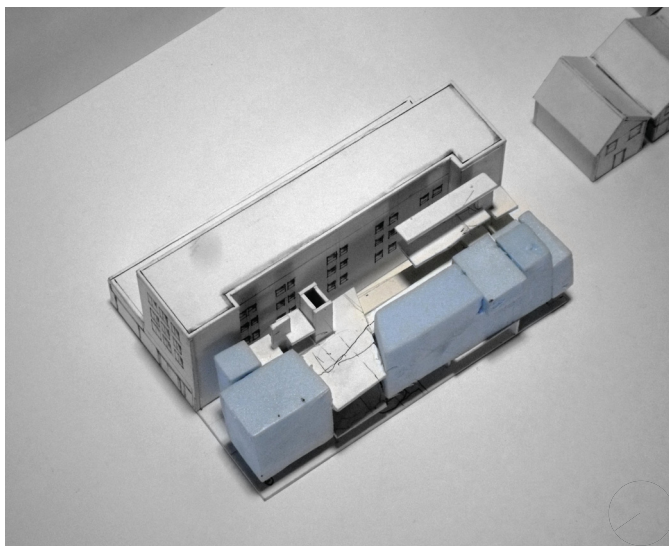


Massing model 2



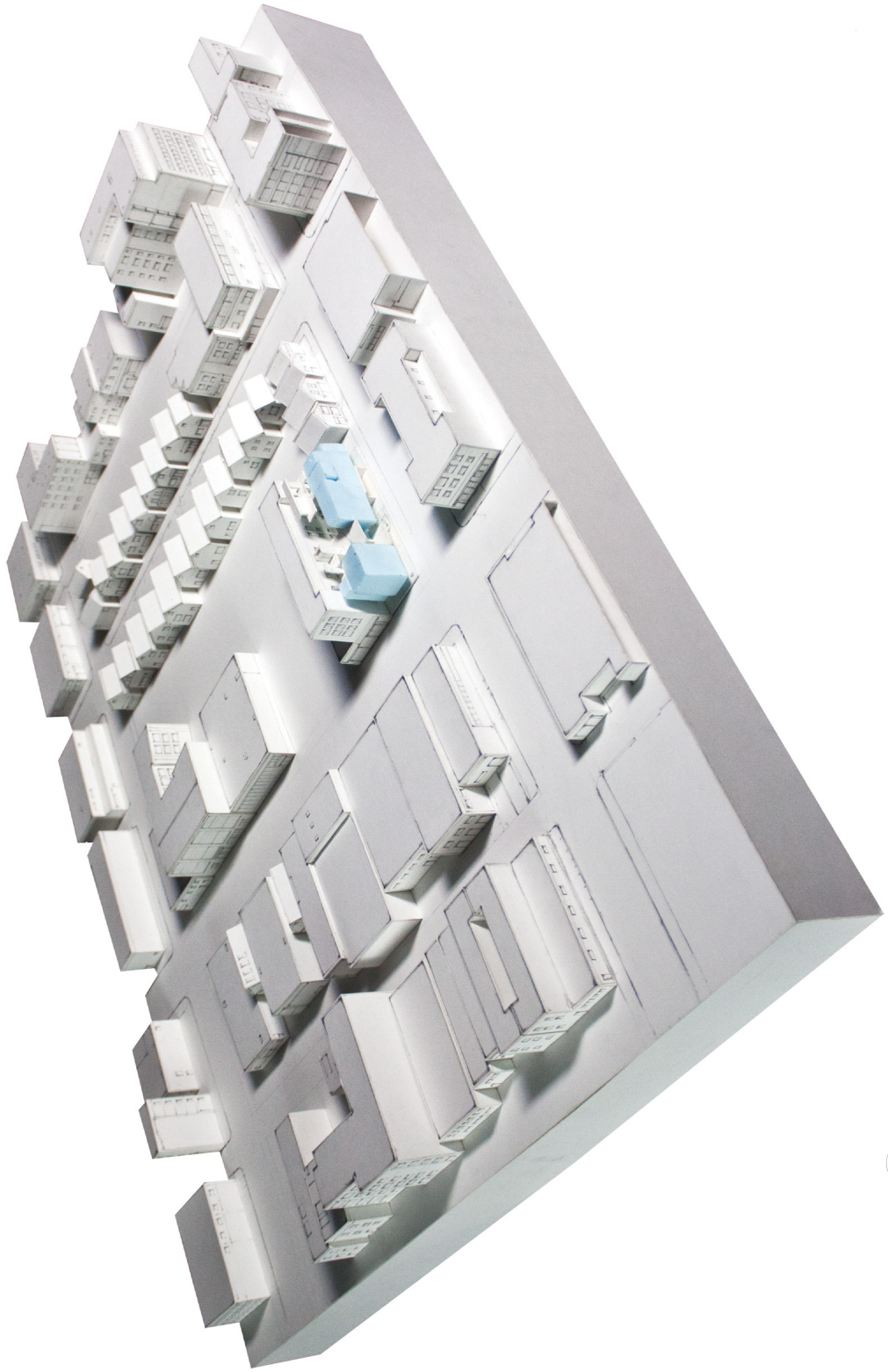
Massing model 3

In these studies the two circulation cores were pushed towards the centre of the lot to increase utilization of the perimeter, while the floor plates and units were pulled out to the lot lines.

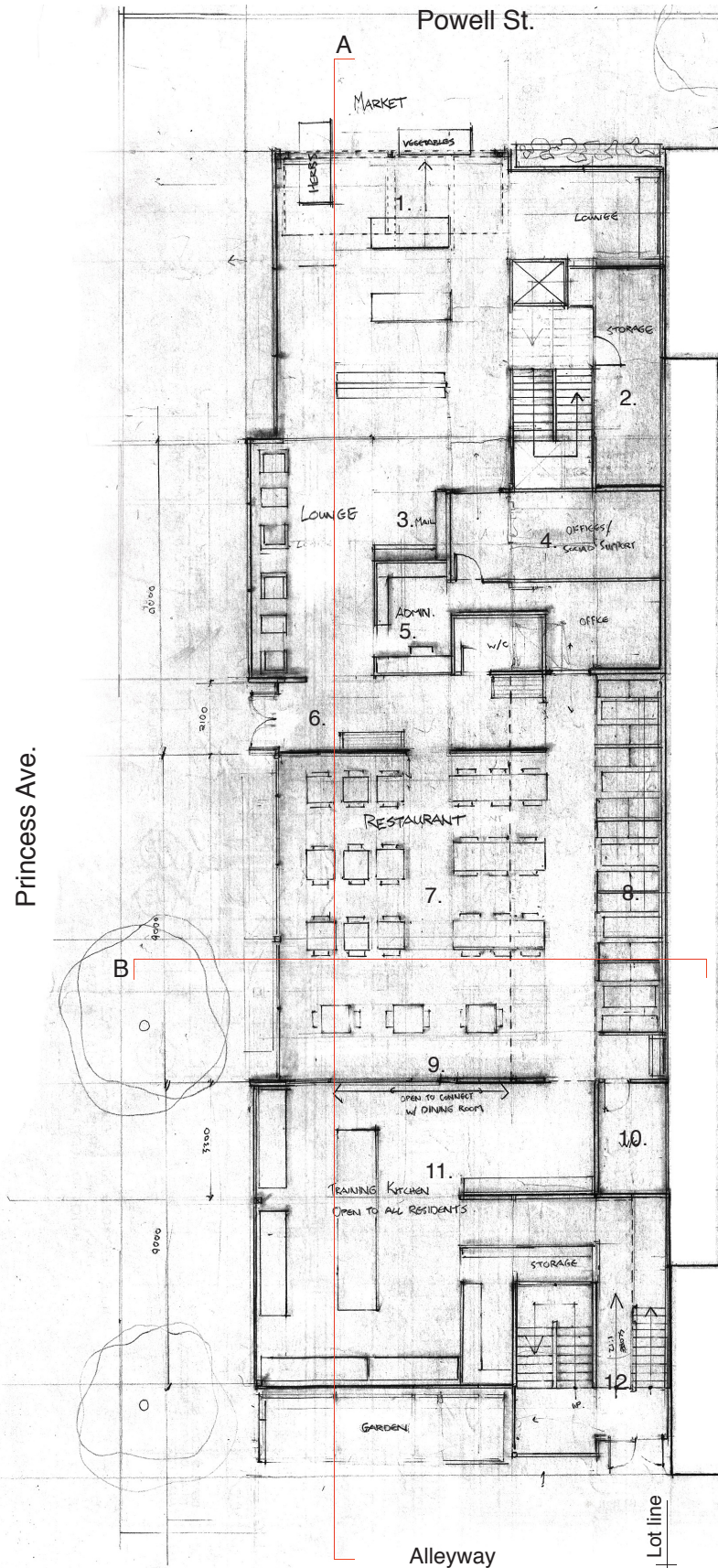


Massing model 4 - Semi-private space

The clusters of units in this massing study are broken up to allow for the integration of semi-private spaces in the building. The largest of these spaces is a communal lounge area for residents of the upper floors.



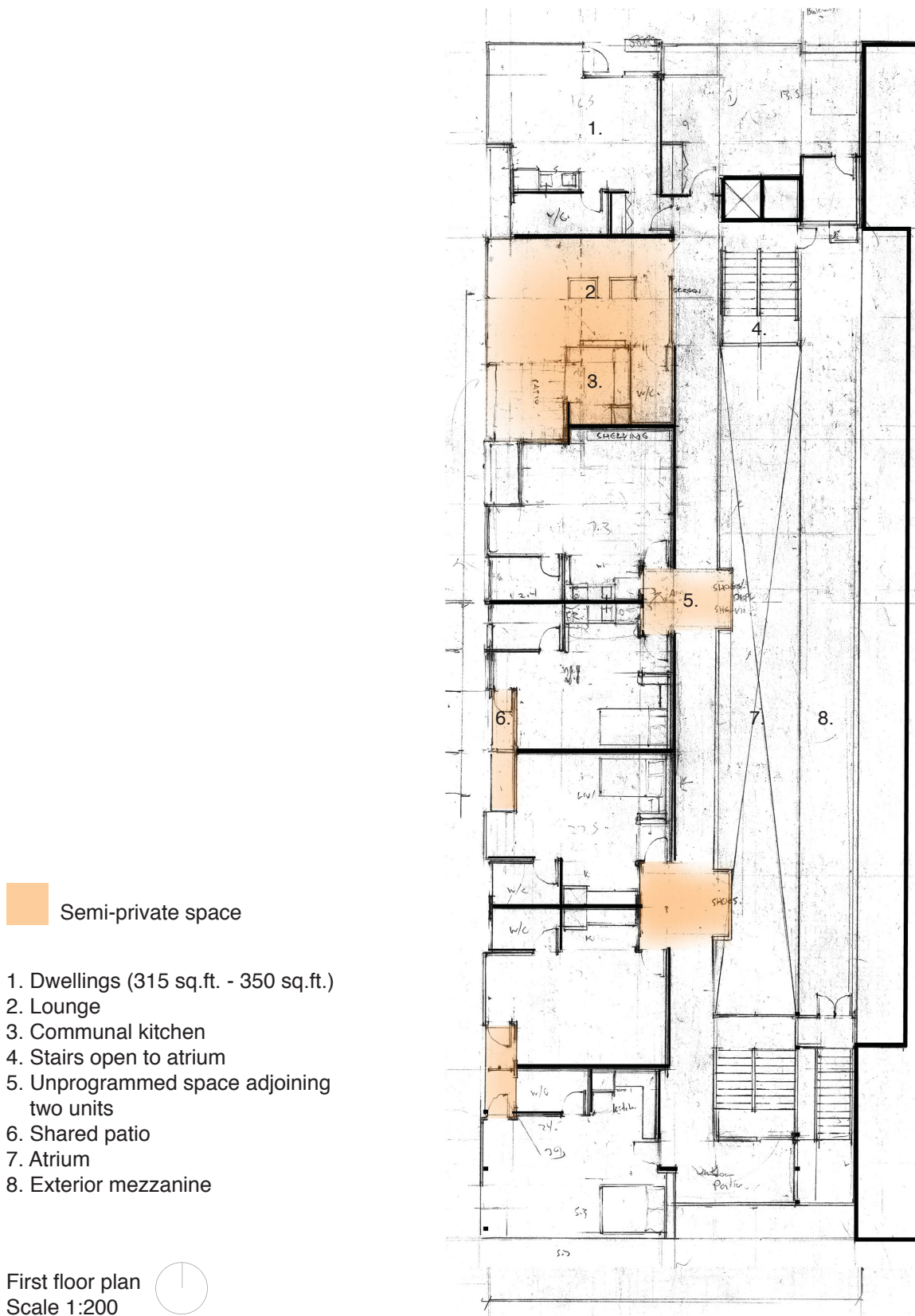
Massing model in context

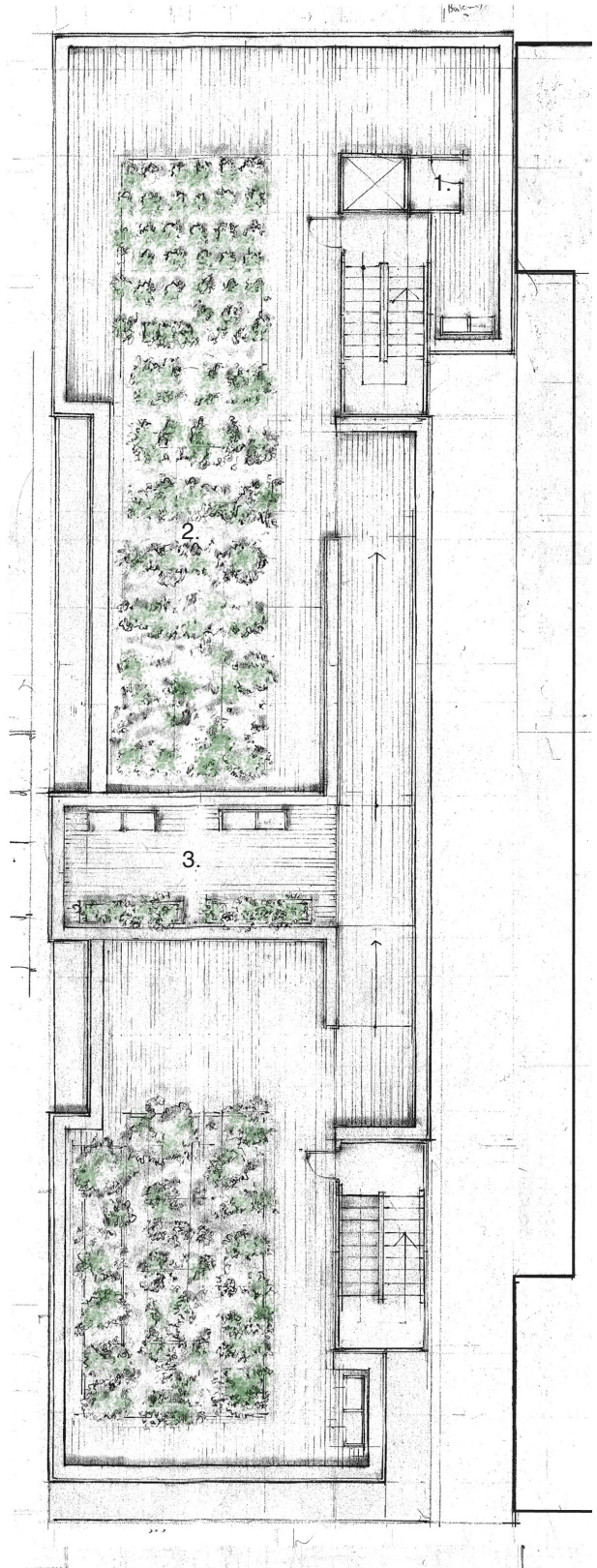


1. Produce market
2. Storage
3. Mail boxes
4. Administration
5. Reception
6. Main entry
7. Restaurant
8. Booth seating (under mezzanine)
9. Movable partition
10. Washroom
11. Training kitchen
12. Service entry for kitchen

Ground floor plan
Scale 1:200







- 1. Storage
- 2. Working gardens
- 3. Communal deck

Roof plan
Scale 1:200





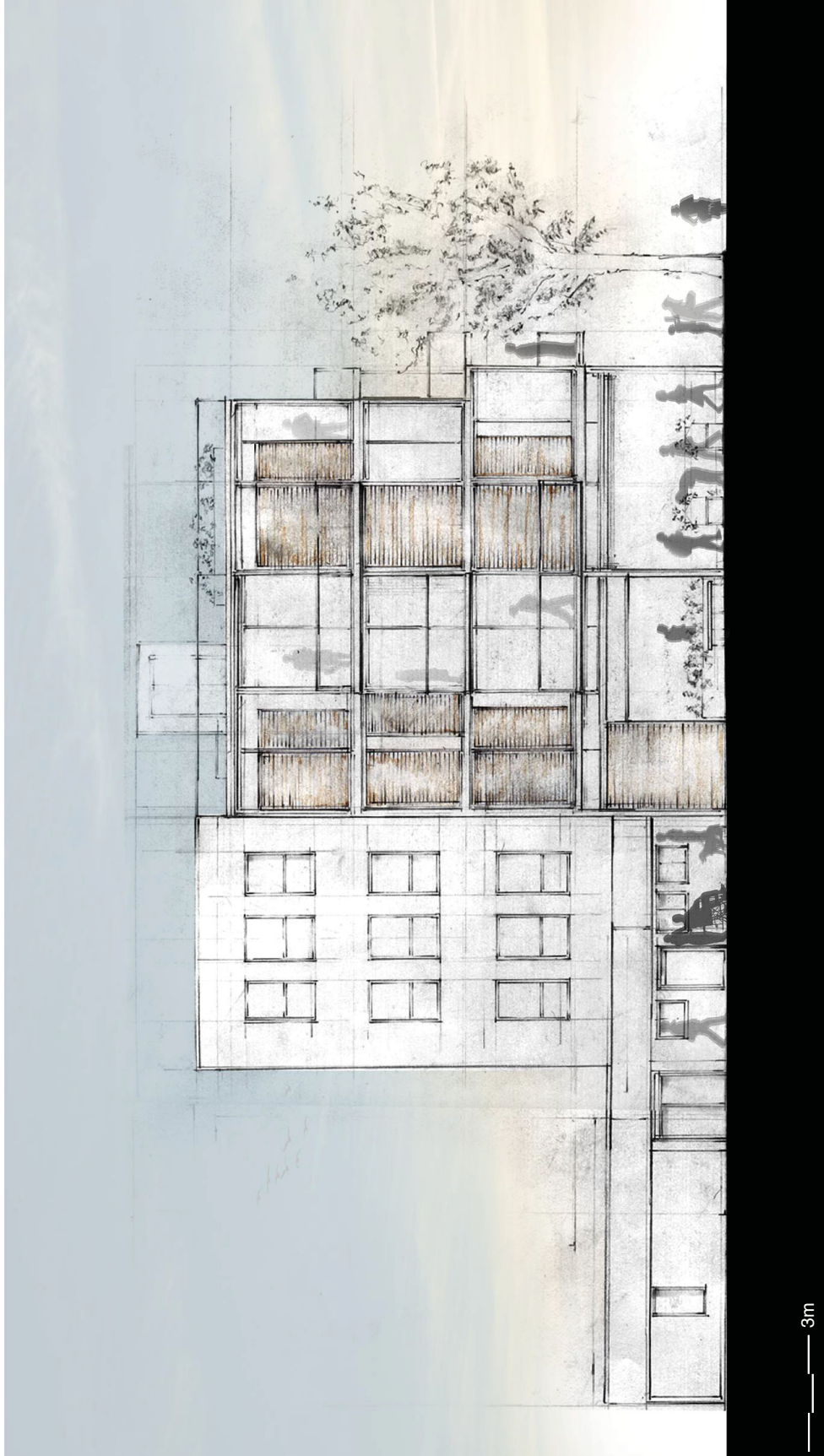
Section A, looking east



Section B in context, looking south



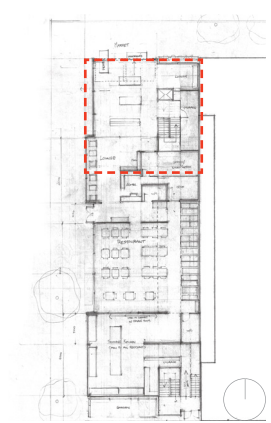
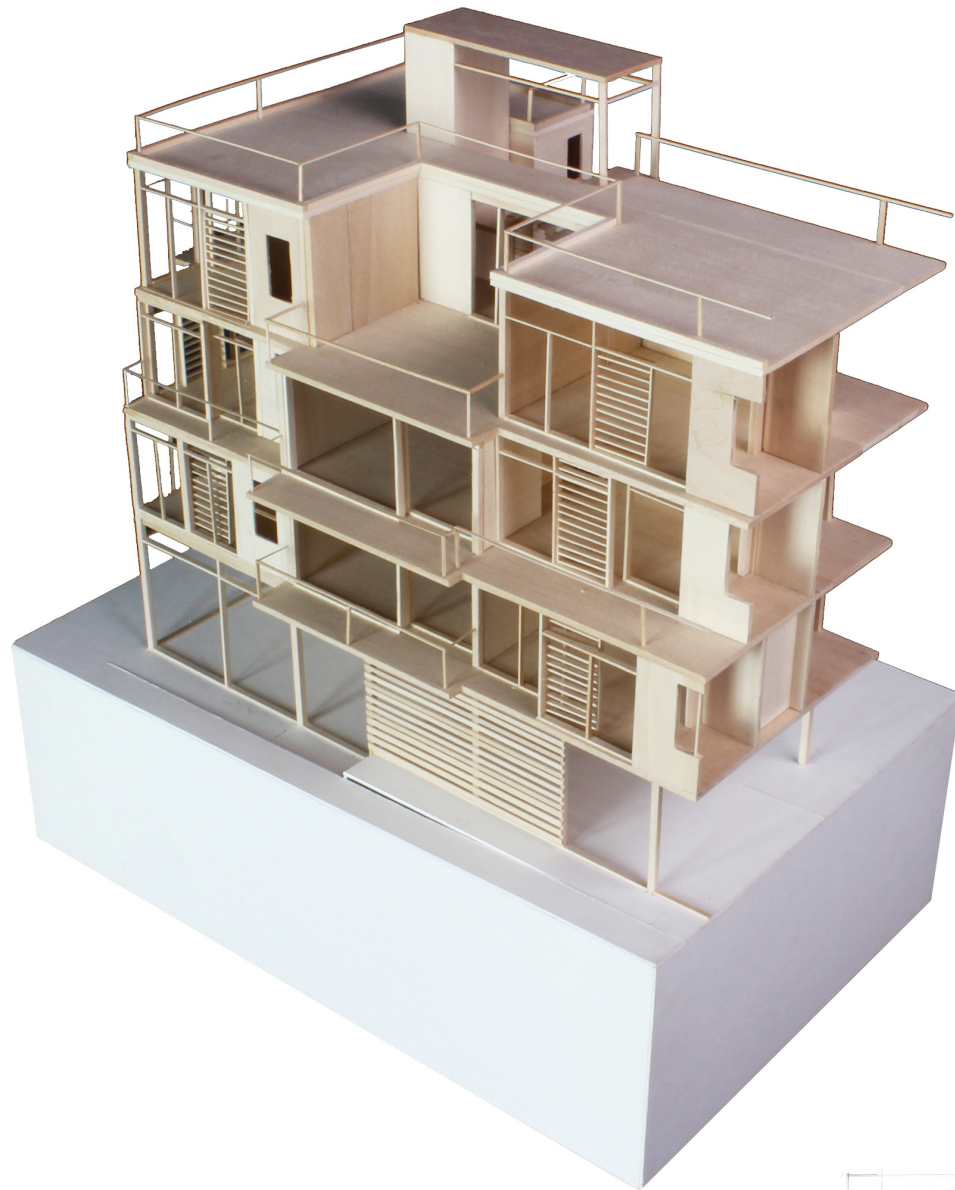
Section B, looking south



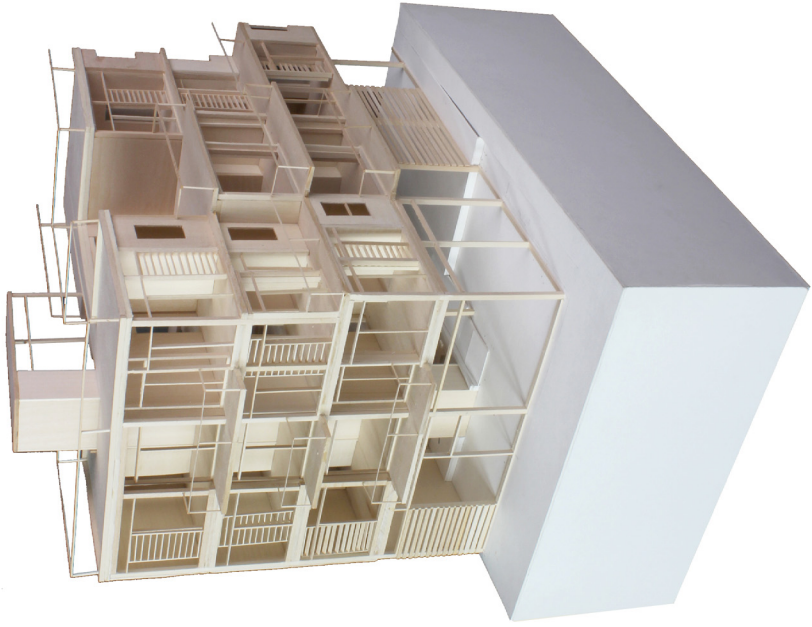
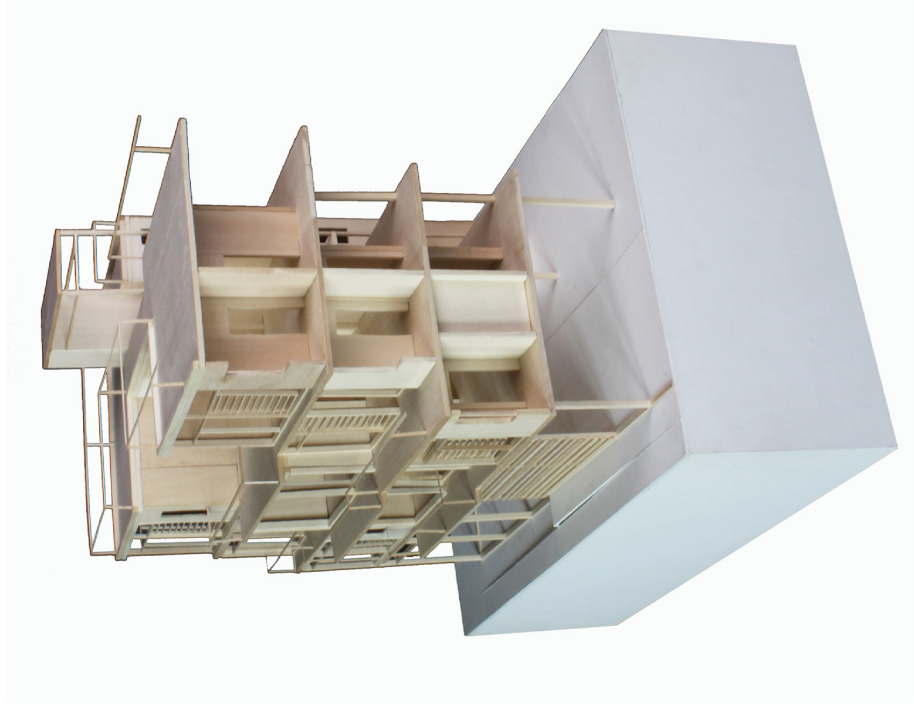
Illustrated in the north elevation, screening elements are used to give residents privacy within their individual dwellings.



West elevation



Sectional model



Sectional model

Phase 2

The second phase of this design explores a potential expansion of the project to the adjoining lot. The Drake Hotel, a former show lounge and bar, currently occupies this site. It has twenty-six single rooms over four stories.

In June 2011, the managing director of social development for the City of Vancouver recommended the issuance of a Single Room Accommodation Permit to the Drake Hotel. This permit is a prerequisite for the demolition permit of any Single Room Occupancy (SRO) building. Once this permit is approved, the 26 single rooms will be replaced with 146 self-contained non-market supportive housing units. As the owner of the site, the City of Vancouver plans to lease the property to *Raincity Housing*, a non-profit organization that provides housing and support services to people in need.

The second phase of this thesis proposal builds upon ideas generated in the first project, including the integration of semi-public spaces that members of the community may also inhabit.

Using a similar methodology, the extension is approached from the scale of the neighbourhood. Looking at how to integrate this building expansion with the community, focus is placed on the ground level conditions: the openings to the laneway, Powell Street and adjacent lots.



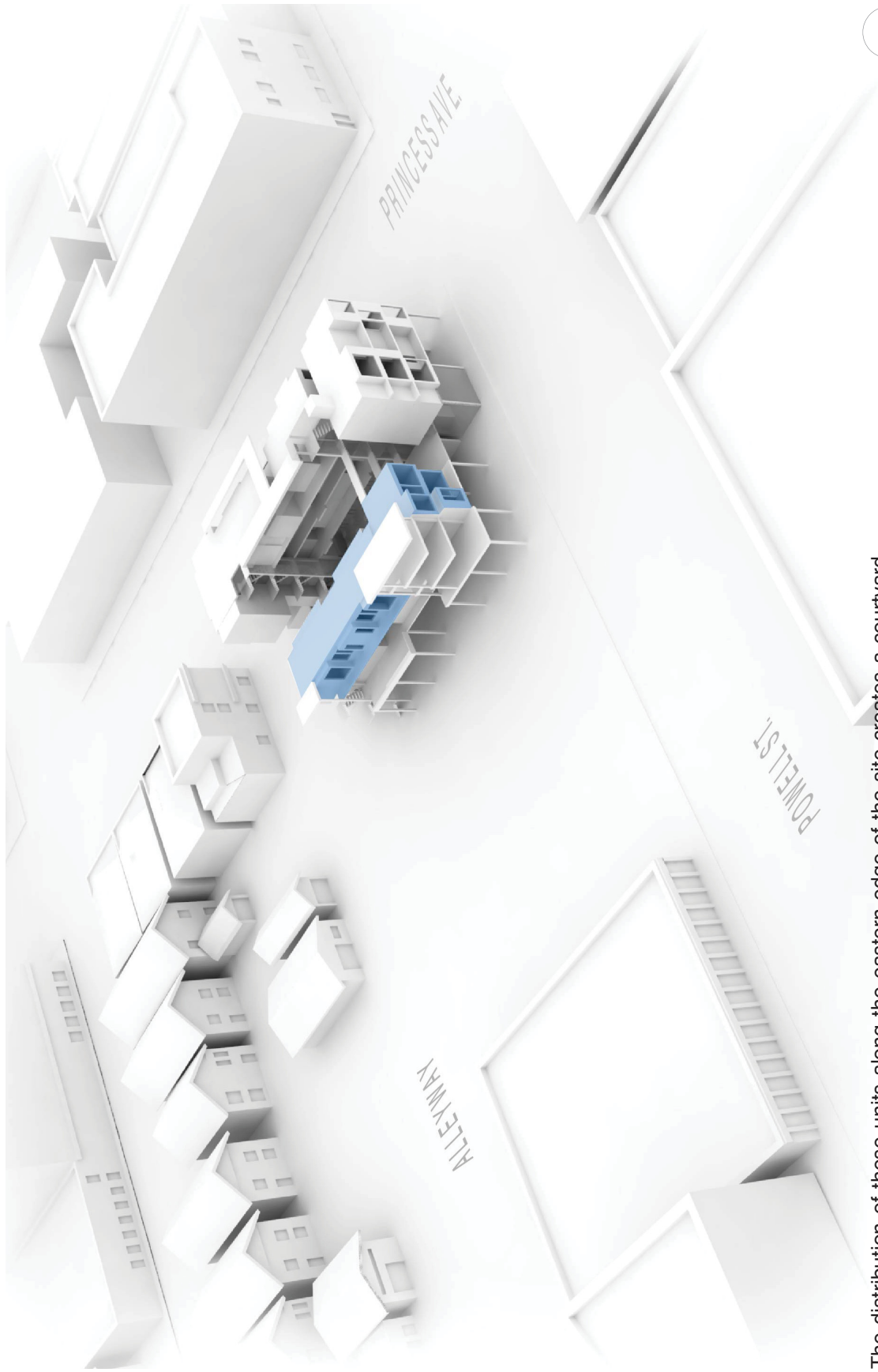
Project expansion



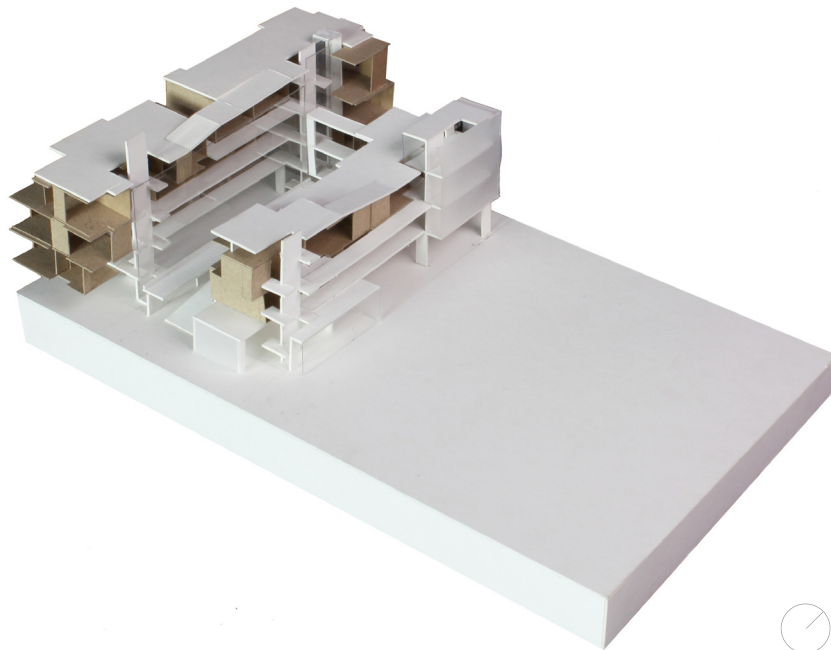
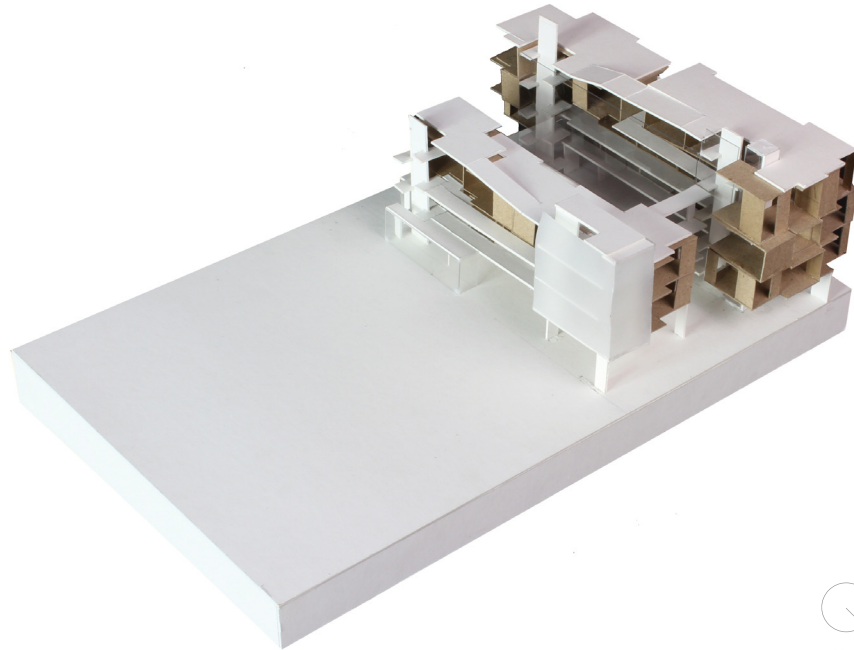
The adjacent lots are subdivided into community and residential space with dimensions that respond to the building fabric of the block.



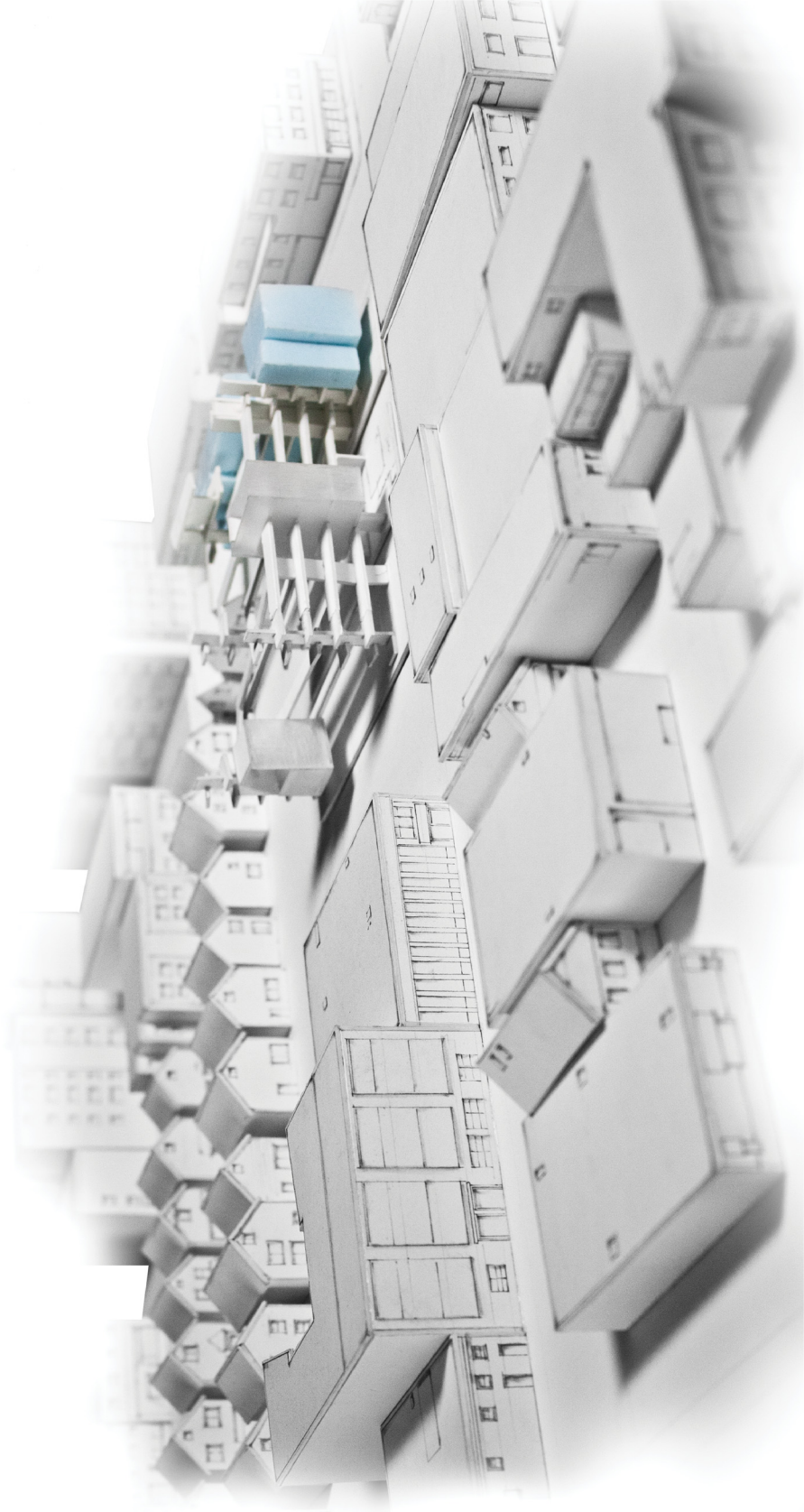
Extension of semi-private space to adjacent lot.



The distribution of these units along the eastern edge of the site creates a courtyard between the two buildings which may act as a zone of activity for families and children.

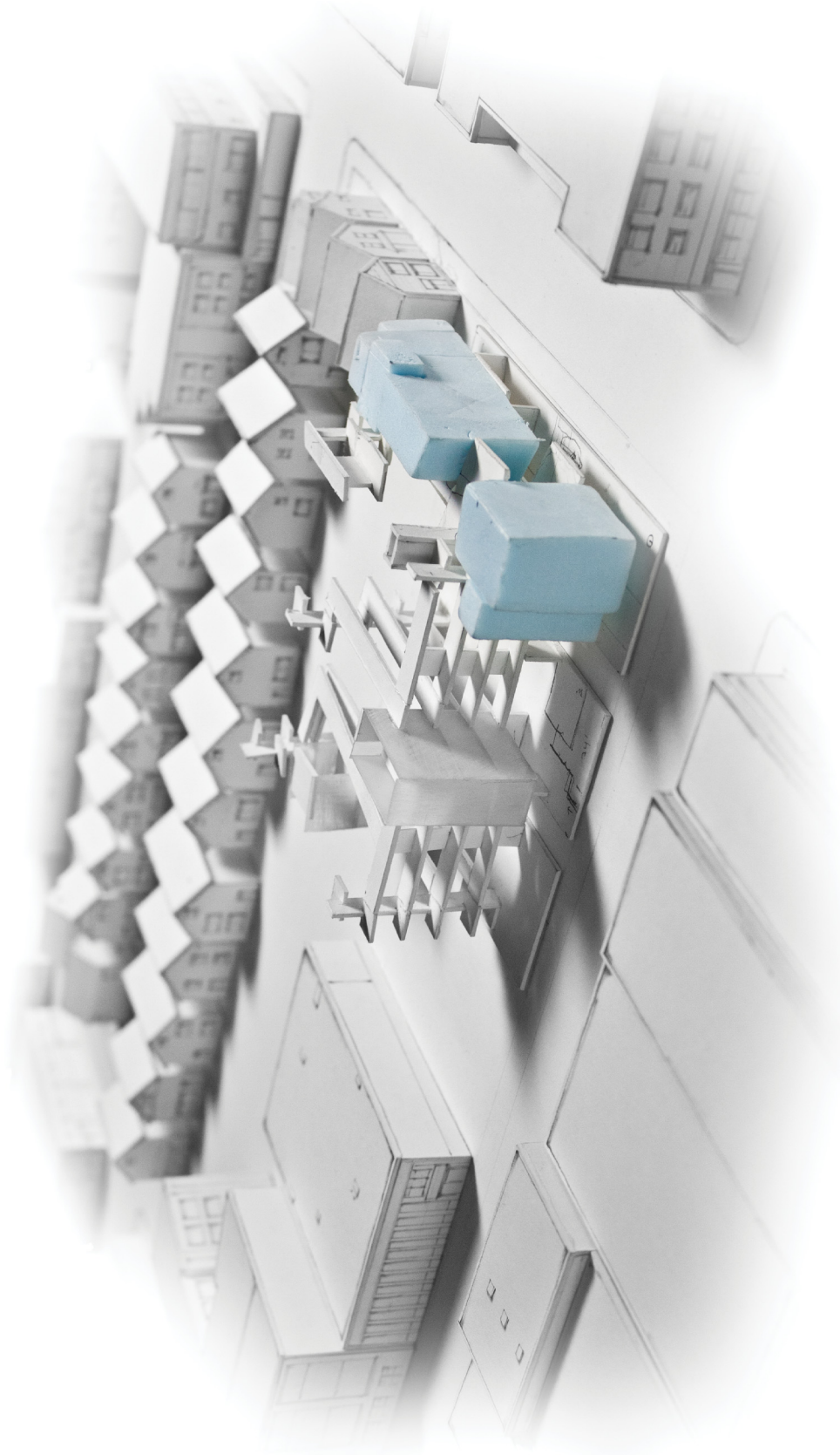


Study model of expansion



This massing model extends the circulation space and semi-private spaces to the adjacent lots.





Extension of circulation space



The expansion of the semi-public space at grade creates an opportunity to build on program elements such as the market, while integrating amenities suitable for the new resident groups. These may include a daycare, cafe and art gallery.

CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION

The objective of this thesis is to develop a model of affordable housing that provides dignity and opportunity to residents. Connection with the greater neighbourhood is fundamental to the development of the project. This connection is offered through the training kitchen and restaurant on the ground floor. The produce market on Powell Street extends this connection with the neighbourhood and is supported by a working roof garden that promotes socialization and physical exercise.

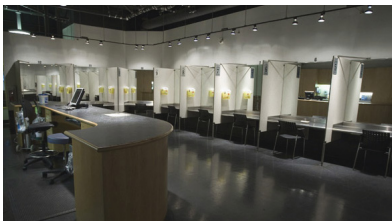
The philosophy of this project is to provide easily attainable dwellings to people in need. This attitude builds on a housing first policy which recognizes that preconditions for housing deter people who are using drugs and do not wish to enter rehabilitation. Organizations such as *Raincity Housing* demonstrate that implementation of this housing model can be a first step to recovery and stabilization in people's lives. This philosophy is expressed throughout the building by providing semi-public and semi-private spaces. These spaces give residents opportunities for informal gathering in the shared entryways, circulation corridors and common rooms.

APPENDIX 1 - THE VANCOUVER AGREEMENT

Signed on March 9, 2000

The Vancouver Agreement is a collective effort among the three levels of government and community groups to support local efforts to improve economic and social conditions in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. The agreement consists of four strategic initiatives to tackle the issues within the neighbourhood. These initiatives are *economic revitalization, safety and security, housing and health & quality of life*.

Since March of 2010 this agreement has no longer been in effect. Some of the programs initiated through this agreement have been passed along to different levels of government, including city efforts to increase affordable housing.



Safe injection room, Insite. Kusisto, “Vancouver’s safe injection site gets reprieve but still no salvation.”

APPENDIX 2 - INSITE - A SUPERVISED INJECTION SITE

This supervised injection site is located in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside and is operated by Vancouver Coastal Health. This facility was opened in 2003, and is based on a harm reduction model as a means to address drug use. Instead of promoting abstinence to the drug addicts in the neighbourhood, Insite offers users clean syringes, cookers and filters, as well access to medical and social services. With a staff of nurses on hand, this facility has been successful in intervening in over 1400 overdoses from 2004 to 2010.



APPENDIX 3 - PRECEDENT STUDIES

Pathways to Housing New York, New York, 1992

Founder: Dr. Sam Tsemberis

Mission Statement:

As originators of the Housing First model, Pathways to Housing seeks to transform individual lives by ending homelessness and supporting recovery for those with psychiatric disabilities. We believe housing is a basic human right, and aspire to change the practice of homeless services by:

- Providing immediate access to permanent independent apartments without preconditions
- Setting the standard for services driven by consumer choice that support recovery and community integration
- Conducting research to find innovative solutions and best practices for those who suffer from mental illness and homelessness

The Pathways to Housing Organization practices the housing first model through a “scattered housing” approach. This model gives clients a place to live as a first step to rehabilitation or recovery, after which the client may participate in supportive services if he or she chooses.



Strachan House, Toronto, ON. OMSSA, "Homes First Society's Strachan House."

Strachan House, Toronto, ON, 1997

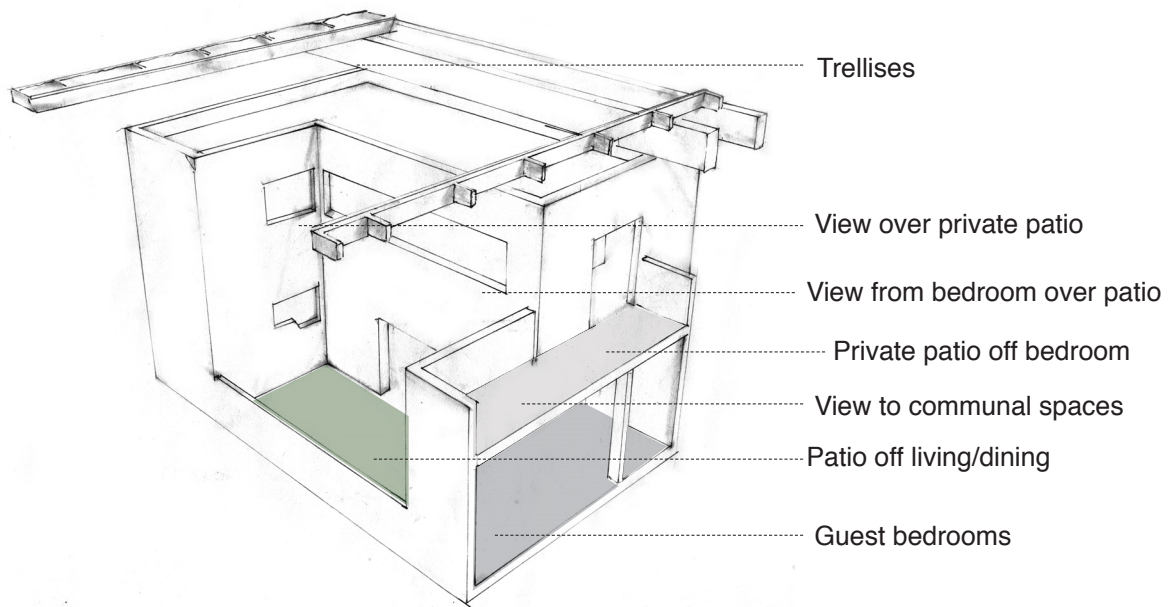
Type: Residential

Architect: Levitt Goodman Architects

Developer: Homes First Society

The Strachan House in Toronto opened its doors in 1997 to give people suffering from mental illness and / or substance abuse a place to call home. This project is built within a warehouse and is comprised of eleven different houses that form a central "street" in the building. At the end of this street is an atrium space that serves as the town hall where residents are given an opportunity to take part in weekly meetings.

The rough finishes of this project are intended to represent an urban aesthetic, and are highlighted with the addition of streetlights placed throughout. The feeling of a public street in a warehouse also extends to the integration of several unprogrammed spaces that are scattered throughout and left to the residents to appropriate.



Madrid Housing, Madrid, Spain, 2006

Type: Residential

Architect: Morphosis

Client: Empresa Municipal De La Viviende



(Top and bottom) Madrid Social Housing, Madrid, Spain, 2006. Morphosis, "Madrid Housing."

This social housing project in Madrid is an anomaly in the urban fabric; in contrast to the abundance of large glass towers in this area of Madrid, this project extends across the entire site to create a large plane of villas and communal spaces. As illustrated in the axonometric drawing above, these units include access to outdoor patios, both private and semi-private. These patios help to bring daylight into the lower living spaces. The communal spaces are capped with an extensive trellis system that provides shade and facilitates vegetative growth.

References

- Anglin, Roland V. *Promoting Sustainable Local and Community Economic Development*. New York: CRC Press, 2011.
- Atkin, John. "City Reflections." Accessed February 2012.
<http://www.johnatkin.com/harbeck/images.htm>.
- Bridgman, Rae. *Street Cities: Rehousing the Homeless*. Toronto: Broadview Press, 2006.
- Bunting, Trudi, and Pierre Filion. *Canadian Cities in Transition: Local Through Global Perspectives*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Campbell, Larry, Neil Boyd, and Lori Culbert. *A Thousand Dreams*. Vancouver: Grey Stone Books, 2009.
- CBC. "Vancouver Church Divided Over Homeless Shelter." Accessed March 5, 2012.
<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/story/2011/12/21/bc-first-united-divided.html>.
- City of Vancouver. "Downtown Eastside Community Monitoring Report." Accessed February 15, 2012. <http://vancouver.ca.commsvcs/planning/dtes>.
- . "Changes in the SRO Stock in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside." Accessed February 13, 2012. <http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/housing/pdf>.
- . "History of Vancouver." Accessed January 21, 2012.
<http://vancouver.ca/commsvc/planning/dtes/communityhistory.htm>.
- . "Housing and Homeless Strategy." Accessed February 7, 2012.
<http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/housing/pdf/Vancouver%20Housing%20and%20Homelessness%20Strategy.pdf>.
- . "Housing Plan for the Downtown Eastside." Released October 2005.
<http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/housing/pdf/dteshousingplan.pdf>.
- . "Zoning." Accessed January 15, 2012.
<http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/planning/zoning.htm>.
- Cohen, Emily C. *Implementing A Paradigm Shift: Housing First But Not Housing Alone*. Master of Arts thesis, Tufts University, 2008.
- Davis, Sam. *The Architecture of Affordable Housing*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.
- . *Designing for the Homeless: Architecture That Works*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.

- Forrest Mechanical Inc. "Strachan House." Accessed March 5, 2012.
<http://www.forrestmechanical.com/strachan-house-project.htm>
- Greenberg, Ken. *Walking Home: The Life and Lessons of a City Builder*.
Toronto: Random House Canada, 2011.
- Habraken, N.J. *Supports: An Alternative to Mass Housing*. Translated by B. Valkenburg.
London: Architectural Press, 1972.
- Hamdi, Nabeel. *Housing Without Houses: Participation, Flexibility, Enablement*.
New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1991.
- Heckman, Oliver. *Floor Plan Manual Housing*. Basel: Birkhauser, 2011.
- Hertzberger, Herman. *Lessons for Students in Architecture, Volume 1*. Rotterdam: 010
Publishers, 2005.
- Kraus, Deborah. *Homelessness, Housing and Harm Reduction: Stable Housing for
Homeless People with Substance Use Issues*. Ottawa: CMHC, 2006.
- Kusisto, Laura. "Vancouver's safe injection site gets reprieve but still no salvation."
This Magazine, July 3, 2009. Accessed February 24, 2012.
<http://this.org/blog/2009/07/03/vancouver-s-safe-injection-site-gets-reprieve-but-still-no-salvation/>.
- Morphosis. "Madrid Social Housing." Accessed January 15, 2012.
<http://morphopedia.com/projects/madrid-housing>
- Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA). "Homes First Society's
Strachan House." Accessed March 18, 2012. www.omssa.com/lib/db2file.asp?fileid=36276.
- Pathways to Housing. "Mission Statement." Accessed March 4, 2012.
<http://www.pathwaystohousing.org>.
- Raincity Housing. "Supported Housing." Accessed March 8, 2012.
<http://www.raincityhousing.org/what-we-do/supported-housing/>.
- Rosenthal, Rob. *Homeless in Paradise: A Map Of The Terrain*. Philadelphia, PA:
Temple University Press, 1994.
- Schumacher, E.F. *Small is Beautiful: A Study of Economics as if People Mattered*.
London: Blond and Briggs Ltd, 1973.
- Schutt, Russell K., and Stephen M. Goldfinger. *Homelessness, Housing, and
Mental Illness*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011.
- Smith, Heather A. *Planning, Policy and Polarisation in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside*.
Charlotte, NC: University of North Carolina, 2001.

Solefood. "Vancouver is Awesome." Accessed March 4, 2012.

Vancouver Coastal Health. "Supervised Injection Site." Accessed March 18, 2012.
<http://supervisedinjection.vch.ca/>.

Zerger, Suzanne. *Substance Abuse Treatment: What Works for Homeless People?*
Washington, DC: National Health Care for the Homeless Council, 2002.