Architecture for All:
Democratization of the Profession as a Necessity

by

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To Kim, you know what you did.

But seriously, thank you, for everything. I would not be where I am today without your unwavering support and friendship, and I will never be able to thank you enough.

To Dakota, for being a voice of reason when needed and the limitless sarcasm the rest of the time.

And to Isaac, for believing in me before I did.

Contents

Abstract

The profession of architecture typically relies on a client-based system, in which clients with money for a building describe their needs to an architect. Architects thus serve only those with financial resources. While recently there has been a rise in not-for-profit architecture firms and organizations that provide amenities and services for others, many building needs are still not being addressed.

This thesis proposes a more democratized approach to the architectural practice that would support a socially sustainable future and would evolve the architect's role to include advocating for others. As a test case, it involves the design of housing for homeless people in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada.

Acknowledgements

Chapter 1: Introduction

Motivations

When I chose architecture as the profession I wanted to pursue, I did so because I believed that architecture could address inequalities that I had witnessed growing up – homelessness, poverty, lack of access to education, among so many others. I believed that the built environment formed these issues through inaccessible infrastructure and lack of affordable housing, and therefore I believed that the built environment could also prevent these issues from occurring and could provide solutions to instances in which these inequalities existed. This led to the belief that the architect would be in a position to use the built environment in order to help eradicate these widely spread issues and that it would be a significant focus of the profession. I slowly learned that this was not the case.

While there are many architects and designers who do complete pro-bono and public interest design projects, this type of work is not widely supported by the typical architectural practice nor by the required education of an architect. Bryan Bell, architect and founder of the Social Economic Environmental Design (SEED) Network, explains that the architectural profession tends to focus on "client-based work" – which refers to clients seeking out architects to fulfill their needs – but has the room and faces the necessity of evolving to "needs-based work" (Bell and Wakeford 2008, 15-16). This needs-based business model refers to architects seeking out "clients" who face social issues and working closely with them to address how architecture can be used to solve problems that they may be facing.

During my education I had the desire to learn how to address this type of work and this could be seen in the design projects that I've completed in my education. When I had to design a house for my first semester of architecture school, I developed an affordable housing solution. When I was tasked with a bathhouse several semesters later, I explored how the bathhouse could be adapted to support the homeless and included within the program a soup kitchen and laundromat to expand on the services the design provided. These considerations did not take me a second thought - all along I had believed that architecture could be used to address social inequalities and I saw no better way to prepare myself for this type of work than through my school work.

When I was framing my thesis topic I knew that, like my previous school projects, I wanted to address social

Architectural manifesto from 2016, demonstrating my thoughts of what architecture should be.

issues within my work. But I also wanted to think about the implications this would have within the real world – it did not make sense to me to frame a theoretical thesis addressing a topic such as homelessness or some other social inequality, and work with a specific community to develop a hypothetical design project with them that would never see the light of day. I wanted to undertake research that would affect my work as an architect after graduating.

This led to research surrounding the current architectural practice and the role of the architect in society. Currently the profession does not widely support the completion of public interest design projects, due to the architectural framework being centered around the "client-based work" approach previously mentioned. Bryan Bell has explained that this approach leads to 98% of the population not understanding what architects do and therefore not seeking out the assistance of an architect to support design projects that can positively impact and address inequalities (Bell 2004, 12-13). Further, he believes that it is "...the architect's task, not the public's, to present the reasons that design can help." (Bell 2004, 12-13).

This understanding has informed my thesis work to address the question of "How can the architectural practice evolve to become more accessible in order to combat social inequalities?".

I believe that we as architects are in a position to inform positive change. Why should we not have the civic responsibility of ensuring that everyone has equitable access to good design? Design that is meaningful and provides benefit to the communities that it serves. Design that not only provides shelter, but provides opportunities for growth,

safety, comfort, a feeling of ownership and belonging. Our lives are framed by the buildings we inhabit, and we become reflections of the environments we live in. One person's opportunities should not be limited by their access to clean drinking water or whether they have a home to sleep in.

I believe that it should also be our responsibility, as a profession, to address issues such as these.

Background

Architecture is a profession typically based within a client-based system – clients approach architects with a need/want for a building to be built, and they typically provide the money for the projects. Essentially architects only serve those financially able to seek out the aid of an architect, leaving the ones who may benefit the most from our work without the access to our services (Bell 2004, 12-13).

In order to successfully address the question of how to make architecture more accessible and transform it into a tool to address social inequalities, it is important to consider several facets of the profession. First, the architect's education.

Even though there has recently been a rise in non-for-profit architecture firms and organizations aiming their work at providing amenities and other needed services to address social inequalities through architecture, experience and knowledge within this sector of socially conscious work is typically gained through actively working with communities and through participating in collaborative communication. An architect's education provides few opportunities to gain this type of knowledge and doesn't prepare or encourage students to undertake an activist's approach in their career. Providing the education that would allow for architects to

tackle social inequalities actively and ably would lead not only to the integration of needs-based work into the architecture profession, it would also position the profession as a necessity within the call for achieving social sustainability.

Secondly, the framework of the architectural profession. In order to truly and successfully integrate needs-based work into the profession it would need to be supported by architectural organizations that outline expectations and licensure requirements of the profession. This could be achieved through the requirement of pro-bono hours committed to addressing social issues, which would open the profession to a wider commitment to these projects and would allow architects to engage in this work in addition to their typical projects.

Thirdly, if we treat required pro-bono hours as an entity of the profession, the question becomes, what do these hours encapsulate and what type of work is produced by these hours? In a typical architecture project, approximately only 10% of the cost of the project is the architect's fee (RAIC 2009, 4). The other 90% of the project consists of land costs, construction costs, consultant fees, among other necessary costs during design and construction. This leads to the idea that the pro-bono hours would have to be an integrated effort across disciplines and would require the involvement of stakeholders at some level of the project.

This dissertation will be examining how the democratization of the current architectural practice could occur with the aim being to support a socially sustainable future.

Chapter 2: Social Sustainability

In the past several decades, there has been an increased focus on how practices and developments could lead to a sustainable future. In 2016, the United Nations published a report, titled *The Sustainable Development Goals Report*, which outlines sustainable goals to be reached by 2030 and their progress to date, that the world officially began implementing that year (United Nations 2016, 2). These 17 sustainable development goals address concerns within environmental, social, and economic sectors.

The aim of these goals is to address and eliminate all forms of inequality everywhere, with the Sustainable Development Goals Report deeming that everyone deserves a basic standard of living. To achieve this, the goals outline inequalities and how they can be addressed, including but not limited to: poverty, hunger, equitable access to healthy lives, gender disparities, and discrimination.

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Goal 1 calls for an end to poverty in all its manifestations, including extreme poverty, over the next 15 years. All people everywhere, including the poorest and most vulnerable, should enjoy a basic standard of living and social protection benefits.

▶ The proportion of the global population living below the extreme poverty line dropped by half between 2002 and 2012, from 26 to 13 per cent. This translated to one in eight people worldwide living in extreme poverty in 2012. Poverty remains widespread in sub-Saharan Africa, where more than 40 per cent of people lived on less than 1.90 US dollars a day in 2012.

▶ In 2015, 10 per cent of the world's workers and their families were living on less than 1.90 US dollars per person per day, down from 28 per cent in 2000.

▶ Young people aged 15 to 24 are most likely to be among the working poor: 16 per cent of all employed youth were living below the poverty line in 2015, compared to 9 per cent of working adults.

▶ About one in five people received any type of social assistance or social protection benefits in low-income countries compared with two in three people in upper-middle-income countries.

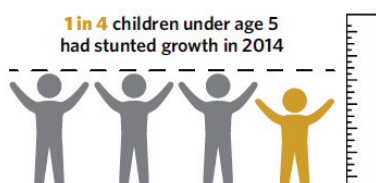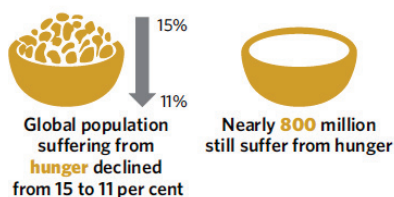**1 in 8** people lived in extreme poverty in 2012

Social assistance or social protection benefits

1 in 5 in low-income countries

2 in 3 in upper-middle-income countries

The Sustainable Development Goals, Goal 1 (United Nations 2016, 3)

Governments and organizations have signed agreements and implemented policies to mitigate the concerns of global warming and climate change that are outlined within these goals.
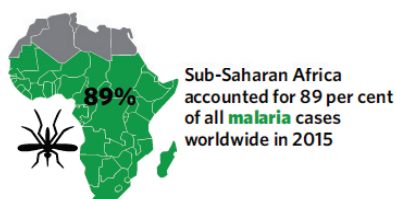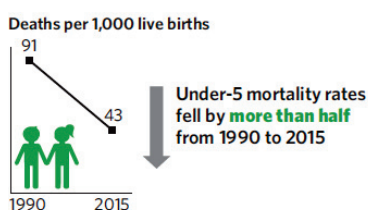
Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

15%

↓

11%

Global population suffering from hunger declined from 15 to 11 per cent

Nearly 800 million still suffer from hunger

Goal 2 seeks to end hunger and all forms of malnutrition and to achieve sustainable food production by 2030. It is premised on the idea that everyone should have access to sufficient nutritious food, which will require widespread promotion of sustainable agriculture, a doubling of agricultural productivity, increased investments and properly functioning food markets.

▶ The proportion of the population suffering from hunger declined globally from 15 per cent in 2000-2002 to 11 per cent in 2014-2016. However, nearly 800 million people worldwide still lack access to adequate food.

▶ More than half of the adult population in sub-Saharan Africa faced moderate or severe food insecurity in 2015; the level was severe for one-quarter of adults in the region.

1 in 4 children under age 5 had stunted growth in 2014

▶ One in four children under age 5 had stunted growth in 2014—an estimated 158.6 million children.

▶ The share of overweight children under age 5 increased by nearly 20 per cent between 2000 and 2014. Approximately 41 million children in this age group worldwide were overweight in 2014; almost half of them lived in Asia.

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Deaths per 1,000 live births

91

43

Under-5 mortality rates fell by more than half from 1990 to 2015

1990   2015

Goal 3 aims to ensure health and well-being for all at all ages by improving reproductive, maternal and child health; ending the epidemics of major communicable diseases; reducing non-communicable and environmental diseases; achieving universal health coverage; and ensuring access to safe, affordable and effective medicines and vaccines for all.

▶ Between 1990 and 2015, the global maternal mortality ratio declined by 44 per cent, and the mortality rate of children under age 5 fell by more than half. Still, an estimated 5.9 million children under 5 died in 2015, mostly from preventable causes.

▶ The incidence of HIV, malaria and tuberculosis declined globally between 2000 and 2015. However, in 2015, 2.1 million people became newly infected with HIV, and an estimated 214 million people contracted malaria. Almost half the world's population is at risk of malaria, but sub-Saharan Africa accounted for 89 per cent of all cases in 2015.

89%

Sub-Saharan Africa accounted for 89 per cent of all malaria cases worldwide in 2015

▶ Worldwide in 2015, approximately three in four women of reproductive age (15 to 49 years) who were married or in a union satisfied their need for family planning by using modern contraceptive methods.

▶ In 2012, almost two-thirds of deaths from non-communicable diseases in people under age 70 were attributed to cardiovascular diseases and cancer.

The Sustainable Development Goals, Goal 2 & 3 (United Nations 2016, 4)

Canada developed the Pan-Canadian Framework, a commitment for Canada to contribute to the development of a sustainable future through addressing climate change and growing a clean economy. The framework lays out policies and goals that are being coordinated within the federal, provincial, and territorial governments. A few examples of these goals and policies that provinces have committed to include: Alberta phasing out the use of coal and replacing it with renewable energy, New Brunswick introducing incentives to increase the use of electricity generating technologies, and Quebec committing to increasing the use of electric and hybrid cars (Canada. Environment and Climate Change Canada 2016, 11-17).

These are examples directly related to the economically and environmentally focused goals, and while they do provide opportunities for improvement within social sustainability, they do so indirectly and as a product of rather than an intent of itself. Environmental sustainability has been pushed to the forefront, as more people are understanding the effects this will have on future generations. Social sustainability is just as important to this future as environmental and economic sustainability and should be viewed as fully integrated issues. While addressing social concerns may prove to be more difficult than addressing environmental concerns due to the qualitative quality of them, there has been an increase in conversations surrounding the responsibility and opportunities for tackling social issues.

Important to these conversations, is understanding what the 2030 goals have set out to achieve in relation to social issues, including eradicating poverty, ending hunger and achieving food security, ensuring healthy living, ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education, achieving gender

equality, and reducing inequalities (United Nations 2016, 3-8). While these are only a few of the socially focused goals laid out by the United Nations, they are ambitious and often divided from environmental and economical sustainable advancements due to the simple fact that people living within

Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Goal 4 focuses on the acquisition of foundational and higher-order skills; greater and more equitable access to technical and vocational education and training and higher education; training throughout life; and the knowledge, skills and values needed to function well and contribute to society.

▶ In 2013, 59 million children of primary school age were out of school.

▶ Surveys from 63 low- and middle-income countries between 2008 and 2012 show that children from the poorest 20 per cent of households are more than four times as likely to be out of school as their richest peers.

▶ Data from 38 countries in developed regions show that, in the majority of these countries, 75 per cent or more of young people had at least minimum proficiency in reading and/or mathematics; the same was true for only 5 of the 22 developing countries with data.

▶ In 2013, there were still 757 million adults (aged 15 and over) unable to read and write, of whom two-thirds were women.

59 million children of primary school age were out of school in 2013

757 million adults were unable to read and write in 2013, **two-thirds were women**

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Goal 5 aims to empower women and girls to reach their full potential, which requires eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence against them, including harmful practices. It seeks to ensure that they have every opportunity for sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights; receive due recognition for their unpaid work; have full access to productive resources; and enjoy equal participation with men in political, economic and public life.

▶ Globally, the proportion of women aged 20 to 24 who reported that they were married before their eighteenth birthdays dropped from 32 per cent around 1990 to 26 per cent around 2015.

▶ In 30 countries where the practice of female genital mutilation is concentrated, more than a third of girls aged 15 to 19 have undergone the procedure.

▶ Based on time-use surveys conducted between 2000 and 2014 in 59 countries, women said they spend 19 per cent of their time each day on unpaid labour versus 8 per cent for men.

▶ The proportion of seats held by women in single or lower houses of parliament rose to 23 per cent in 2016—a rise of 6 percentage points over the last decade.
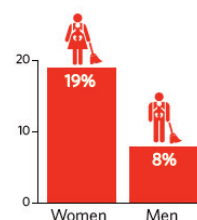
Time spent each day on **unpaid labour**

Women 19%
Men 8%
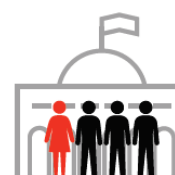
Women in parliament: **23 per cent** in 2016

The Sustainable Development Goals, Goal 4 & 5 (United Nations 2016, 5)

these communities do not have the money, and therefore the means, to make changes that can lead to a socially sustainable future as laid out by the United Nations. So how can we create change, when those who would benefit the most from this change, don't have the opportunities to do so?

The architecture profession has been evolving to demonstrate the opportunities our profession offers to create this change and address social issues within our work. Bryan Bell explains the importance and relevance of expanding the profession within *Expanding Architecture: Design as Activism*. Bell explains that the architectural practice currently only serves those financially able to pay the professional fees of an architect, but that good design has the potential to benefit those who are facing social issues (Bell and Wakeford 2008, 15). He explains that the architectural profession tends to focus on "client-based work" – which is the typical business model for architecture and refers to clients seeking out architects to fulfill their needs – but has the room and faces the necessity of evolving to "needs-based work" (Bell and Wakeford 2008, 15-16). This needs-based business model refers to architects seeking out clients (community groups or organizations) facing social issues and working closely with them to address how architecture can be used to solve problems that they may be facing.

Bell is not alone in believing that this is how the architecture profession should expand. There are many instances of architects utilizing the needs-based business model to complete work within communities where they saw a need that architecture could address. An important example of one such architect is Francis Kéré. Kéré grew up within

Burkina Faso, where there was limited access to resources, and the school he attended was 40 kilometres away in the next village (Lepik 2010, 33). His community raised money for him to attend university and gave him the chance to become an architect. Upon graduation Kéré began to raise money and worked with his community to design a school that served their needs. Not only did Kéré address their lack of access to education, but within the design of the building itself, Kéré addressed environmental sustainability as well by using clay as a building material – an easily accessible resource within Burkina Faso (Lepik 2010, 34-35).

Kéré is one of a multitude of architects seeking out these types of work. Andres Lepik worked with the Museum of Modern Art to compile a book showcasing eleven architectural projects completed within this realm of public-interest design. John Cary compiled a book showcasing forty projects completed by architecture firms donating their work in-kind. Architecture for Humanity published two books, *Design like you Give a Damn 1* and *Design like you Give a Damn 2*, that demonstrates just how important architecture is to addressing social problems. These are only a few of the examples that support Bell's outlook on the expanding profession, and his belief that public-interest design is becoming a distinct profession of its own – one that is focused on community-driven design and provides opportunities to those who are disadvantaged (Abendroth and Bell 2016, 1-3).

This distinct focus on public-interest design and community collaboration, in my opinion, is necessary in creating successful architecture. Architects seem to often forget for whom they are building for and the impact that our work can have in people's lives. They get caught up in a world

where the client seeks out the architect, and where they expect less from projects completed for people who can't afford these services (Cary and Public Architecture 2010, xi). But as Bell, Lepik, Cary, and many others demonstrate, this is changing. The profession is expanding to include this type of work as more and more architects realize the change that architecture can make to social issues, and the responsibility we have as professionals to do so.

Chapter 3: Addressing Social Sustainability within the Profession

Evolution of Practice

Currently, the architecture profession is centrally focused on a client-based system. This system requires clients to seek out architects to employ them to design their spaces. In *Good Deeds, Good Design: Community Service Through Architecture*, Bryan Bell explained that 98% of the general public does not understand what architect's do (2004, 12-13). He further explained how this limits the access to the benefits of good design within the built environment to only a select few, and how the role of the architect needs to be revaluated in order to serve this 98% (Bell 2004, 12-13).

This belief was the beginning point of understanding how the architectural profession needs to evolve to support the architect's role in a socially sustainable future as this thesis suggests. Bell's approach to providing access to good design for the other 98%, requires proposing that the architect seeks out the client and explains this as a necessity when the architect is approaching projects as a community service (Bell 2004, 22-23). This becomes a necessity to support the proposed evolution of practice, but the vast extents of what the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals set out to achieve needs to be further considered in the context of this thesis research.

In the Canadian context, in which the majority of this thesis research is based in, projects that address the sustainable development goals would likely require government support and funding in order to successfully respond to the issue they are addressing due them falling within the public sector

or social support programs that governments fund. As of 2018, the Canadian government was only responsible for approximately 26% of architectural projects (Statistics Canada 2020). While not directly related to the proposed evolution of the architectural practice, this number would need to increase, and government support should be expected within this evolution.

Bell speaks to the necessity of the architect to educate the general public, who may not understand the role of the architect and the benefits of good design within society, so that architecture can become more accessible to address inequalities (Bell 2004, 12-13). This evolution of the architectural practice would not only require the architect to fulfill this role to the general public, but as well as to government organizations that can financially support this future.

Required Pro-Bono Hours as Part of Licensure

To support the evolution of the architectural practice, I propose the inclusion of required pro-bono hours as part of the licensure of an architect. This shift would allow for the architect to participate in a project before its financial conception, which would directly support the proposed role

Type of client	Architectural services and landscape architectural services[5]			
	Canada (map)			
	2015	2016	2017	2018
	Percent			
Total sales to all clients	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Sales to businesses	54.0	54.5	56.1	56.6
Sales to individuals and households	9.0	8.8	8.6	9.2
Sales to governments, not-for-profit organizations and public institutions	33.0	32.0	31.5	30.5
Sales outside Canada (exports)	4.1	4.7	3.9	3.7

Architectural services, sales by type of client. (Statistics Canada 2020)

of the architect to seek out the client. This would allow for projects to be developed based on social need, specifically in response to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals set out by the United Nations.

Evolution of Education

If the above proposed changes to the practice are enacted, it would be necessary for an evolution of the architect's education to occur as well. Currently, the education of an architect is driven by the typical architectural practice which currently does focus on the client-based system. In this potential future, I believe it would be necessary to teach students how to identify inequalities that can be addressed by design, how to interact with communities through design charettes, and how this role might look within the profession.

I believe that it is only through an integrated approach which considers the above facets that the current architectural practice can successfully evolve to support a socially sustainable future.

As explained, the current profession and education would need to evolve to encourage and support a socially sustainable future, with the inclusion of pro-bono hours as a required part of licensure enabling a wider undertaking of this type of work.

Understanding how these parts might work together to support the proposed democratization of the profession, allows for current methodology to be reviewed considering not only the successful completion of socially focused projects but as well how a methodology could support the above proposed evolutions.

Chapter 4: Examination of Current Methodology

SEED Methodology

The SEED Methodology was created by Bryan Bell as a tool to support the completion of pro-bono and public interest design projects. The methodology is a nine step process where the steps are supposed to help you understand how to complete these types of projects for a successful outcome. The methodology is as pictured and promotes engagement of community to identify issues within their lives and within the community. This methodology also acts as an evaluator that can be used to provide a project with SEED certification.

Nine Steps of the SEED Process
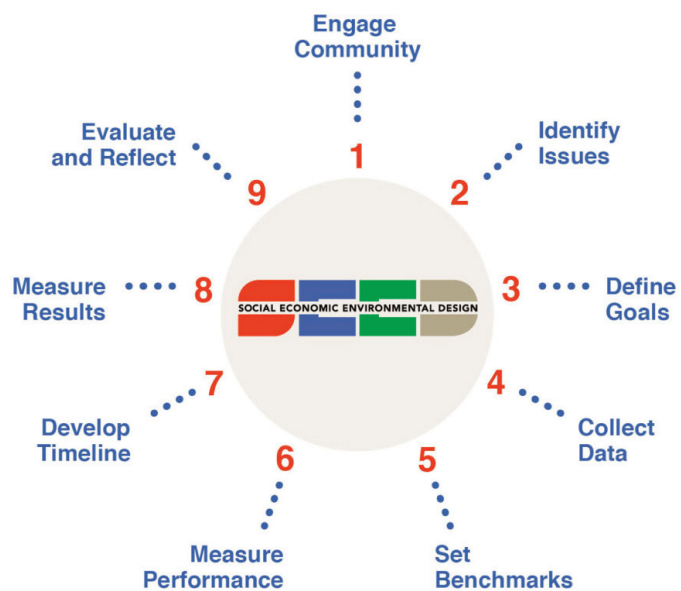
SEED Method. (SEED Network n.d.)

While the SEED method has had proven success in the United Stated States and encourages the undertaking and completion of socially focused projects, there is limits to the work that can be done following this work. The steps outlined eliminate the complexity that is the architectural process. It develops limited understanding of how to approach these projects in a profession that favours a client-based approach.

In order for the profession to embrace and support social sustainability through becoming involved with socially focused work, the complexity of what it means to be an architect needs to be included in this methodology. I believe that without balancing the current architectural practice within this method, there will not be a successful response to the issues that are facing the most vulnerable.

Examination of Case Studies

To understand how the current SEED method could adapt to support the complexities of the architectural profession, I identified several case studies that successfully addressed a community need while maintaining the complexity of architecture projects. These projects all demonstrate complex thinking, community involvement, and complete understanding of how architecture can be used to address social inequalities. Through examination of their processes, I was able to develop an understanding of how the SEED method could be expanded upon to support a socially sustainable future.

Gando Primary School

Diébédo Francis Kéré is a prominent architect in Germany. As a child, the small village that he grew up in did not have a primary school. Rather, Kéré and other children would have

to walk to a nearby village to attend an overcrowded school (Kéré 2016, 34). Once Kéré had graduated school, he was motivated to provide a solution to the inequitable access to education that children in his and surrounding villages had. In 2001 he started fundraising money in order to support the costs of construction of a primary school that would support the education of the community.

Throughout the design and construction of the school, Francis Kéré considered the impacts it would have on the community, keeping in mind the remote location and longevity of the structure within his design approach. He utilized local construction materials and methods, employing the local community to be involved within the building process.

Diébédo Francis Kéré, Front of Gando Primary School, Gando, Burkina Faso, 2001 (Kéré Architecture n.d.)

Classroom in Gando Primary School (Kéré Architecture n.d.)

Roof of Gando Primary School (Kéré Architecture n.d.)

Exterior of Gando Primary School (Kéré Architecture n.d.)

Korkor Community Library

The Korkor Community Library is a library in Ghana, Africa that was designed by Solterre Design, an architecture firm located in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Jennifer Corson, a principal at Solterre Design, explained to me that she had been planning a trip to Africa with her family when she had the idea that they could potentially help the community they were visiting in some way. She got in contact with a community contact of hers, explaining that she was an architect and would like to help during her trip. This conversation is the one that defined what the project would be; a library for a community without (Corson 2020).

Solterre Design, Korkor Community Library, Ghana, Africa, 2015 (Solterre Design n.d.)

In response to this, Solterre Design worked closely with her contact in the community to understand specific needs that the library would have to meet. While fundraising for the costs of construction and materials, the project began to find form. The library would be built off the grid, to eliminate operating costs of the building after project completion. This was achieved by the inclusion of solar panels to generate the necessary power for computers and lights within the building. The design also utilized natural ventilation by replacing typical windows with open metal frames that wouldn't comprise the security of the building (Corson 2020).

30,000 Canadian dollars was fund raised for this project, and in 2015 the construction began, and the library was built within a 12 week time frame. In that time, the local community was involved with the construction of the building. Corson explained that there is a taxation system within Ghana where citizens are required to participate in construction and implementation of community projects. She explained that this greatly lowered the costs of the construction and allowed for the project to come to fruition.

Interior of Korkor Community Library (Solterre Design n.d.)

Quinta Monroy Half-A-House

In 2001, 100 families in Iquique, Chile were being displaced from land that they had illegally inhabited for 30 years and were in need of homes. Elemental Architecture, a firm led by Alejandro Aravena, provided a response to this issue. They began with the belief that these families should be able to remain on the land they had be illegally inhabiting. This land was central to the city and Elemental Architecture was aware that if they were displaced, they would likely be pushed to the outskirts of the city (Elemental 2008).

Another consideration that drove the design was the fact that typical low-cost housing-imposed limits of the inhabitants. The spaces provided were often small and did not support

Elemental, Quinta Monroy, Iquique, Chile, 2003 (Elemental 2008)

room for growth for many individuals who needed it. Given that the firm had 7, 500 USD per unit, they made the decision to provide half-a-house. This was to support individuals and families to have room to grow as needed and when they become financially able to. The design was made so that all the structure was provided, and an open space was framed that could be added to easily in the future. This not only supports growth, but as well the capability for the community to address their specific needs.

Valley Hospice

Many members of the community in Wolfville, Nova Scotia did not have the resources to take care of their loved ones in the last days of their lives and knew that a hospice could

Elemental, Quinta Monroy with additions by residents, Iquique, Chile, 2003 (Elemental 2008)

provide them that. To respond to this, community members formed the Valley Hospice Foundation in 2000 and brought this need forward to the Nova Scotian Health Authority (NSHA), a government organization. In response to the call for a Hospice, the NSHA promised to own and operate the hospice if the foundation could fund raise the cost of construction.

Over the course of 20 years, the foundation worked tirelessly to raise 3.8 million dollars to cover to cost of construction and worked closely with Nycum + Associates, an architecture firm based in Halifax, Nova Scotia, to establish the extents of the project and understand what the construction costs would be. After many years of fundraising and advocating, construction for this project was completed last year.

Nycum + Associates, Valley Hospice, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, 2020 (Parkinson n.d.)

Exterior courtyard of Valley Hospice (Parkinson n.d.)

Interior gathering space of Valley Hospice (Parkinson n.d.)

Patient room interior of Valley Hospice (Parkinson n.d.)

Framing the New Method: Four Necessary Steps

After reviewing these case studies, I was able to start forming connections between the projects and their processes, which allowed me to examine and break down the current SEED method and to expand upon it. It was clear to me that the architectural process would have to be included within the new methodology as a sole entity to ensure that the complexities of architectural projects would not be lost per differing contexts. This allowed me to categorize the steps in the SEED method into differing parts and utilize the commonalities in the case studies to build upon them.

The first two steps begin with what I would identify as project conception. While the steps "Engage Community" and "Identify Issues" are important to the completion of successful public interest projects, they lack providing a specific understanding of what it means to engage in needs-based work versus typical client-based work. In order for the architecture profession to expand to include required pro-bono hours as part of licensure and to support a socially sustainable future, this part of the methodology needs to encapsulate what it means for an architect to seek out needs-based work; what it means for an architect to become an advocate.

To begin to frame this process, from architect to advocate, the successful case studies can be broken down into four necessary steps.

Identify a Need

First, all of the case studies begin by identifying a need. In Gando, the community did not have a primary school. The Ghana community needed a library. In Chile, 100 families

were being displaced from the land they illegally inhabited for 30 years and were in need of homes. In Wolfville, many community members did not have the resources to take care of loved ones in their last days of their lives and knew a hospice could provide them that.

By identifying a need, it was ensured that the architecture would directly address an issue facing a community. This drastically improved the outcomes of the projects and eliminated the risk of utilizing funds and resources for a project that may not provide supports to the community. As well, beginning by identifying a need ensure that discussions with the community would directly revolve around the specific need.

Identify Community Stakeholders

Secondly, all the projects engaged to some extent community members and community stakeholders. In Kéré's case, he was personally from the community and had experienced first-hand the need for a primary school. Solterre identified a community stakeholder to begin to understand a need that the community had and then worked with them to design the library. In the case of the Quinta Monroy Half a House, the community involvement may have come after the completion of the design, but Elemental Architecture considered them early on; allowing for the differing needs of the 100 families to be addressed through the half of the house that they had full control over. And for the Valley Hospice, the foundation was integral to the development of the design, including within the design meetings nurses and doctors that understood the needs of the community and the more specific operating requirements.

While identifying a need may become the step that is integral to the transition from architect to advocate, it is the engagement of community and community stakeholders that will keep projects on track to successfully address social issues within communities.

Consider Long-Term

Important to the considering the success of these projects is the long-term impact on the community. The Gando Primary School was built with local building techniques so that the community members could deal with the upkeep of the building. As well, both the school and the Korkor Community Library was built off the grid to eliminate the operating costs of the building.

Integral to the success of the Quinta Monroy Half a House was the consideration of future community growth. And the Hospice becomes a project for important consideration within a Canadian context. In order for the hospice to become a functioning project, it was necessary that the Nova Scotia Health Authority commit to the operating costs of the facility. Without that commitment, the project never could have come to fruition.

Consider Funding

Last was the consideration of funding for these projects. The Gando Primary School, Korkor Community Library, and the Valley Hospice completely fund raised the costs of construction for these projects through advocating for the need that faced the communities. In the terms of the Quinta Monroy Half-a-house, they had been approved for government subsidies for low-income housing.

These four steps become necessary in undertaking needs-based work so that the role of architect evolves into one of advocacy.

Chapter 5: Framing the New 3-Part Method

Once the four necessary steps of completing successful needs driven work were identified, it was possible to break down the current SEED Methodology to add and expand upon the current steps. The aim of this was to increase the scale of projects that can be completed following this method, and to further encourage the completion of needs driven work.

First, its necessary to understand that without including the architectural process within the method as a distinct step, the complexity of the projects that can attempt to follow the method is limited. Thus, this expansion on the SEED Method proposes the inclusion of the architectural process as a part on its own to support a wider variety of projects that can be completed. This consideration also allows this part to be interchangeable as context may demand.

Understanding this allowed for the current steps of the SEED method to be categorized into three parts to better support the successful completion of public interest projects as well as to provide insight into how this method could be integrated into the architectural practice.

Part 1: Become an Advocate

First, the architect would become the advocate. This would allow the architect to seek out needs-based work and frame necessary projects. This shift is meant to promote the inclusion of pro-bono projects within the current architectural practice and becomes the necessary evolution the practice must undergo to support a socially sustainable future.

[1]
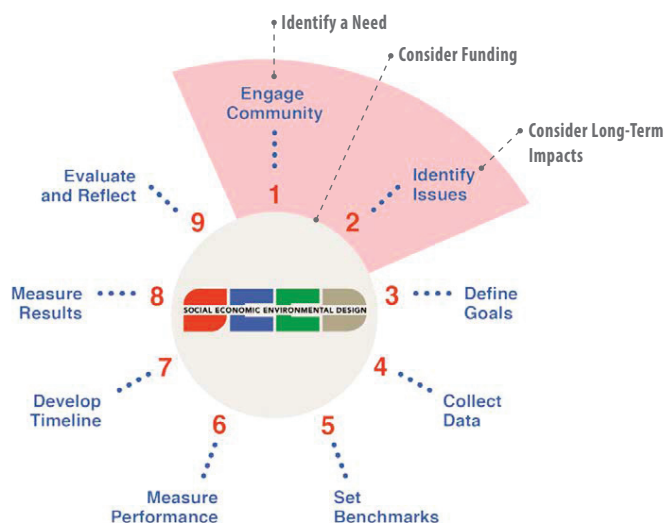
B E C O M E   A N   A D V O C A T E

I D E N T I F Y   A   N E E D

C O N S I D E R   F U N D I N G
Potential opportunities:
[1] Fundraising
[2] Government Subsidies
[3] Fundraising + Government Support
[4] Inclusion of Pro-Bono Services

C O N S I D E R   L O N G   T E R M   I M P A C T S

Part 1: Become an Advocate, including a diagram of how the original SEED Method by the SEED Network was expanded upon.

This part of the new method directly relates to the first two steps of the SEED Methodology; to engage community and identify issues. Building off these steps occurs through the inclusion of the four necessary steps as outlined in the previous chapter, in an attempt to clarify the process for more complex projects as well as to encourage architects to actively seek out work to undertake.

Identify a Need

To begin, a need should be identified. It is this step that becomes the crucial point at which the evolution of the current practice could occur. Currently, clients are the ones to seek out architects for the employment of their services. If the practice is to be democratized as this thesis suggest, it is this pursuit of actively seeking out and identifying needs that can be addressed with architecture that is necessary.

The inclusion of this step would allow for architects to undertake work that might have never been brought into fruition due to lack of funds or even publicity surrounding the community it affects. This step also allows for architects to address work that may have a personal importance to them.

An important consideration in this step is how these needs are identified. This could happen through contacting community groups or individuals and speaking with them about issues that they currently face. These needs could even be identified through publicity surrounding current social inequalities. Essential to this step is understanding that design can be used as a tool to address and potentially erase social issues, but that without clearly defining the need that should be addressed there is a chance at creating unnecessary projects.

Identify Community Stakeholders

Once the need is identified the architect should take time to meet with individuals within the community along with community stakeholders. This step is vital to develop a complete understanding of the need that was identified in the previous step and gives space for the community to share their ideas for how architecture could help them.

These conversations should aim to develop potential responses and should function to provide the architect with insight into the communities they work with. This is necessary to provide an appropriate architectural response that both addresses the need as well as functions successfully within the community.

While designated as a step of its own, these conversations should occur throughout the lifetime of the project and should continuously be revisited to promote success of the project within the community it will serve.

Frame Response to Need

For the projects following this method, it will be necessary to initiate conversations surrounding the identified need with those that would have an impact on approving funding for the project. These conversations could involve the community stakeholders that are mentioned in the previous step, or it may require proposing the project to government organizations or community groups.

Before these conversations can be had though, it would be essential to know how the need could be responded to. This is necessary so that conversations can be guided and everyone apart of the discussion would be able to develop an understanding of what the identified need is and how

architecture could be utilized to address it. The aim of these conversations would then be to discuss the possibility of bringing the concept of this project to life.

Consider Long-term Impacts

Considering the long-term impacts of social projects on communities becomes essential in the development of a socially sustainable future. These impacts could include promoting community growth and supporting community success, along with understanding how the project could be maintained for the duration of its lifetime to prevent the project from failing.

In this step it becomes essential to consider not only how the need identified can be immediately addressed, but how the response can promote future success as well.

Develop Response to Need

In tandem with the steps above, a proposal can be developed. This step directly supports the conversations that need to happen for the project to move from concept into reality. Important to this step is developing an in-depth response to the need identified which would directly inform conversations and assist in formulating the importance of the project to others not directly impacted by the issue at hand.

Consider Funding

While a distinct step, considering how to fund the project can happen in conjuncture with the steps above or as a process on its own. It may be necessary to develop the proposal as mentioned above before conversations of funding can

occur, or the proposal may require planning a response based on funds available for the project.
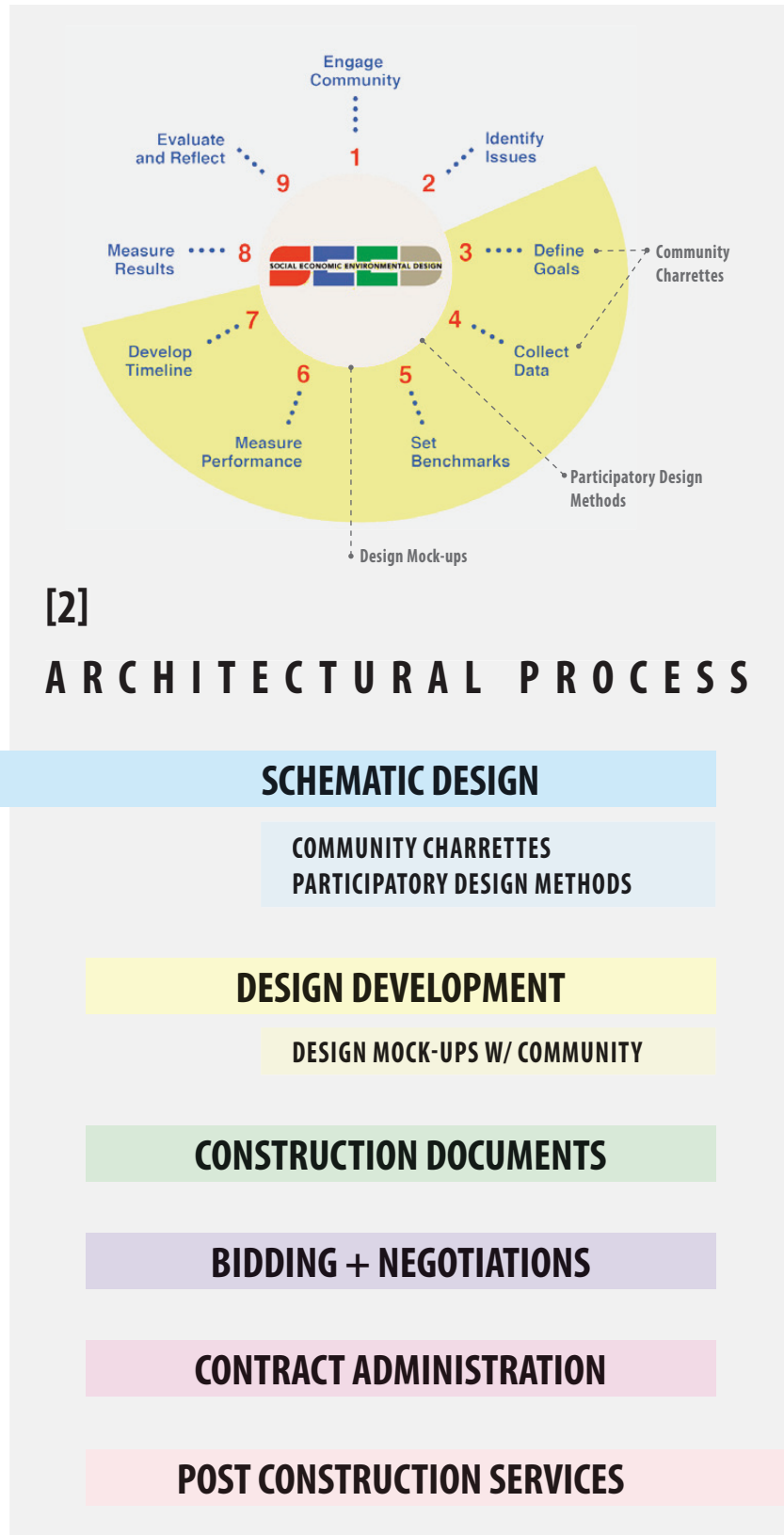
In this step, it would be necessary to not only consider costs of construction but the operating the costs of the building for the duration of its life. If possible, the inclusion of solar panels and other technologies could be considered within schematic planning to minimize or limit operating costs as well as environmental impacts of the building. Even with these considerations, government commitment to support the building throughout its life would likely be necessary.

Funding for needs-based work may include any combination of the following: fundraising, government subsidies, government support, and the inclusion of pro-bono services. These could be considered in both the construction phase of the projects as well as the operating costs of the project.

Part 2: Architectural Process

Once a project has been defined as outlined in part 1 and has successfully attained appropriate funding, the project would be able to move into the typical architectural process. An example of what this might look like is included in the methodology given the context in which this research project was completed in. Pictured are the steps a typical architecture project follows in Canada as outlined in the *Canadian Handbook of Practice for Architects*.

The process for completion of projects addressing social issues would be very similar to the completion of a typical project, with the beginning of the project using the proposal developed in part 1 to inform final design choices that are made which should now also consider the funding available. In the development of the project, as the design becomes

Engage
Community

Evaluate
and Reflect

Identify
Issues

9

1

2

Measure
Results

8

SOCIAL ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

3

Define
Goals

Community
Charrettes

7

4

Collect
Data

Develop
Timeline

6

5

Measure
Performance

Set
Benchmarks

Participatory Design
Methods

Design Mock-ups

[2]

ARCHITECTURAL PROCESS

SCHEMATIC DESIGN

COMMUNITY CHARRETTES
PARTICIPATORY DESIGN METHODS

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

DESIGN MOCK-UPS W/ COMMUNITY

CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS

BIDDING + NEGOTIATIONS

CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION

POST CONSTRUCTION SERVICES

Part 2: Architectural Process, including a diagram of how the original
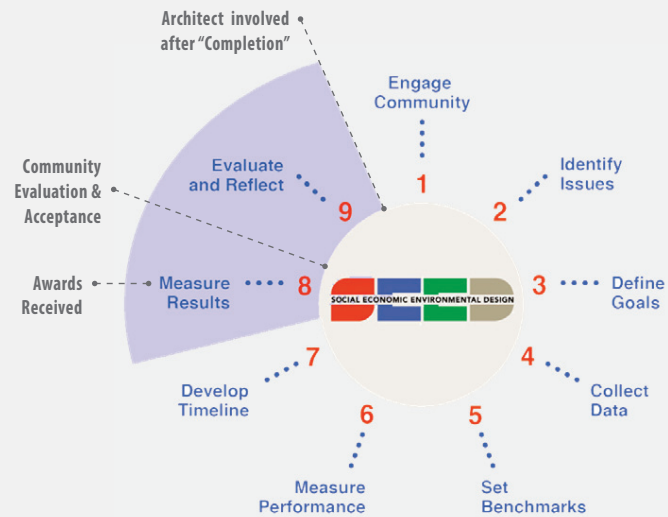SEED Method by the SEED Network was expanded upon.

more detailed and addresses what's possible versus what was proposed, there should be a commitment to achieve the underlying goal that the proposal addresses. The community should also be included throughout the entirety of the project, especially if there is a need to differ from the original proposal.

This part of the new method builds off steps three through seven of the SEED Method by the SEED Network. These are: define goals, collect data, set benchmarks, measure performance, and develop a timeline. Expanding on this included adding the steps, within the architectural process: community charettes, participatory design methods, and design mock-ups. This addition to the process is necessary to support the successful completion of these projects within the communities that they serve.

Part 3: Reflection

Reflection is included as its distinct own part of the methodology to ensure the success of projects completed using this method. The aim of this is to allow for architects to evaluate work that was completed and its impact on the community. This part also provides room to continuously build upon the method as needed to support a cycle of successfully completed needs-based work.

This part of the new method directly relates to steps eight and nine of the SEED Method: measure results, and evaluation and reflection. This part considers exactly what markers should be used to evaluate the success of projects and considers the potentiality of the architect's role after project completion.

Architect involved
after "Completion"

Engage
Community

Identify
Issues

Community
Evaluation &
Acceptance

Evaluate
and Reflect

9

1

2

Awards
Received

Measure
Results

8

SOCIAL ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

3

Define
Goals

7

4

Collect
Data

Develop
Timeline

6

5

Set
Benchmarks

Measure
Performance

[3]

R E F L E C T I O N

[1] Impact on Community
[2] Architects role after completion
[3] Acceptance of Project
[4] Awards Received

Part 3: Reflection, including a diagram of how the original SEED Method by the SEED Network was expanded upon.

Impact on Community

First and foremost is understanding what impact the project has had on the community it serves. This should include reviewing the original proposal intents against the outcome of the project to develop an understanding of whether the project is fulfilling its role as intended. This step acts as an opportunity to evaluate where intent was lost in translation to the final project, or even to develop an understand if original intents were misinformed throughout the process. These considerations are important so that for future projects the process can be corrected and refined to allow for the development of clarity surrounding how projects can be better informed.

Architect's Role after Completion

In tandem with evaluating the impact of the project on the community it serves, the architect should have a commitment to be involved with the project past completion. This role could include responding to issues that occur throughout the project's lifetime, including the changing needs of the community or typical warranties that would be reviewed within the construction administration phase of architectural projects.

Acceptance of Project

To further evaluate the success of the project it would be necessary to understand the acceptance of the project at multiple levels. First, is the project accepted by the community that it directly serves. Second, is the project accepted by the wider community or town in which the project is situated. And third, is the project accepted by the architectural community as a successful project. Looking at these differing levels of

acceptance allows for an understanding to be developed of the overall success of the project.
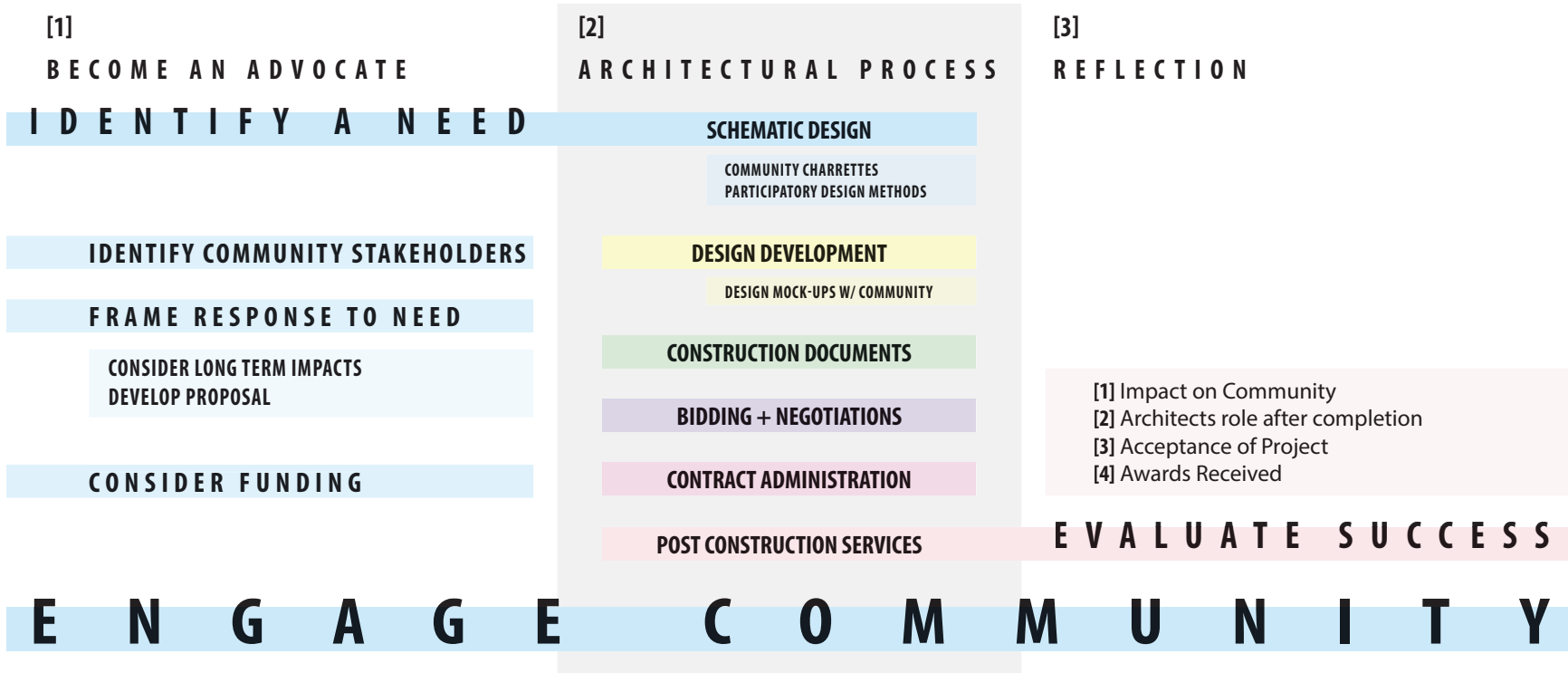
While the most important aspect of this review is the success of the project on the community it directly serves, taking a look at these differing levels will allow for projects following this method to consider integrating differing needs of conflicting communities within one project.

Awards Received

To further consider the success of projects within the architectural community, which would also act as a set of check and balances for future projects, would be to look at awards received by projects completed using this method. This step would further contribute to the continuous development of this method to support a cycle of successfully completed needs-based work.

Architecture for All: The Methodology

These steps become the complete proposed method as pictured. Expanding upon the SEED Methodology allows for the scale of projects that can follow the method to increase through supporting the complexity of the architectural process. This method also seeks to support a cycle of continuous learning and development to promote an increase of successful needs-based work undertaken within the architectural profession.

[1]

BECOME AN ADVOCATE

IDENTIFY A NEED

IDENTIFY COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

FRAME RESPONSE TO NEED

**CONSIDER LONG TERM IMPACTS
DEVELOP PROPOSAL**

CONSIDER FUNDING

[2]

ARCHITECTURAL PROCESS

SCHEMATIC DESIGN

**COMMUNITY CHARRETTES
PARTICIPATORY DESIGN METHODS**

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

DESIGN MOCK-UPS W/ COMMUNITY

CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS

BIDDING + NEGOTIATIONS

CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION

POST CONSTRUCTION SERVICES

[3]

REFLECTION

[1] Impact on Community
[2] Architects role after completion
[3] Acceptance of Project
[4] Awards Received

EVALUATE SUCCESS

ENGAGE COMMUNITY

Architecture for All: The complete methodology.

Chapter 6: Design Test, "Where is Home?"

To test the methodology that was presented in the previous chapter, it was important to understand the limitations of what could be examined within the confines of this thesis research. The methodology presented in the previous chapter includes the architectural process as a distinct part of the method. For the purposes of this research project, it is necessary to understand that the following design test is a review of part 1 of the methodology; becoming an advocate.

Identify A Need

To begin, a need was identified.

In Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada, the current homeless shelter does not meet the needs of the homeless population, even being deemed unfit for human inhabitation by Housing First Specialists (Berdusco 2016, 0:11:15). The needs of the homeless population came to my attention through a documentary that was made in 2016 and is titled *Where is Home? Documentary on Homelessness in Southern Alberta, Canada.* The documentary, published in 2016, included interviews with individuals who are a part of the homeless population, as well as individuals who work closely with these individuals and support programs in the Lethbridge area.

Current Homeless Shelter

To further understand the needs of the homeless population in Lethbridge and to begin to understand how architecture could address the issues identified in the documentary, the current shelter needed to be examined within its urban

context. The shelter is currently located in downtown Lethbridge, which is a necessity for the homeless community as it ensures the individuals are near necessary amenities and support services. As well, the downtown core provides public areas that support the individuals to gather and interact as a community (Kamaleddine 2021).

While the general location of the shelter within Lethbridge is ideal, the site itself is not. The shelter is currently hidden behind two major roadways and requires individuals to use a staircase to access the site. This ensures that the current shelter is not universally accessible and presents a safety risk to anyone needing the shelter. The location
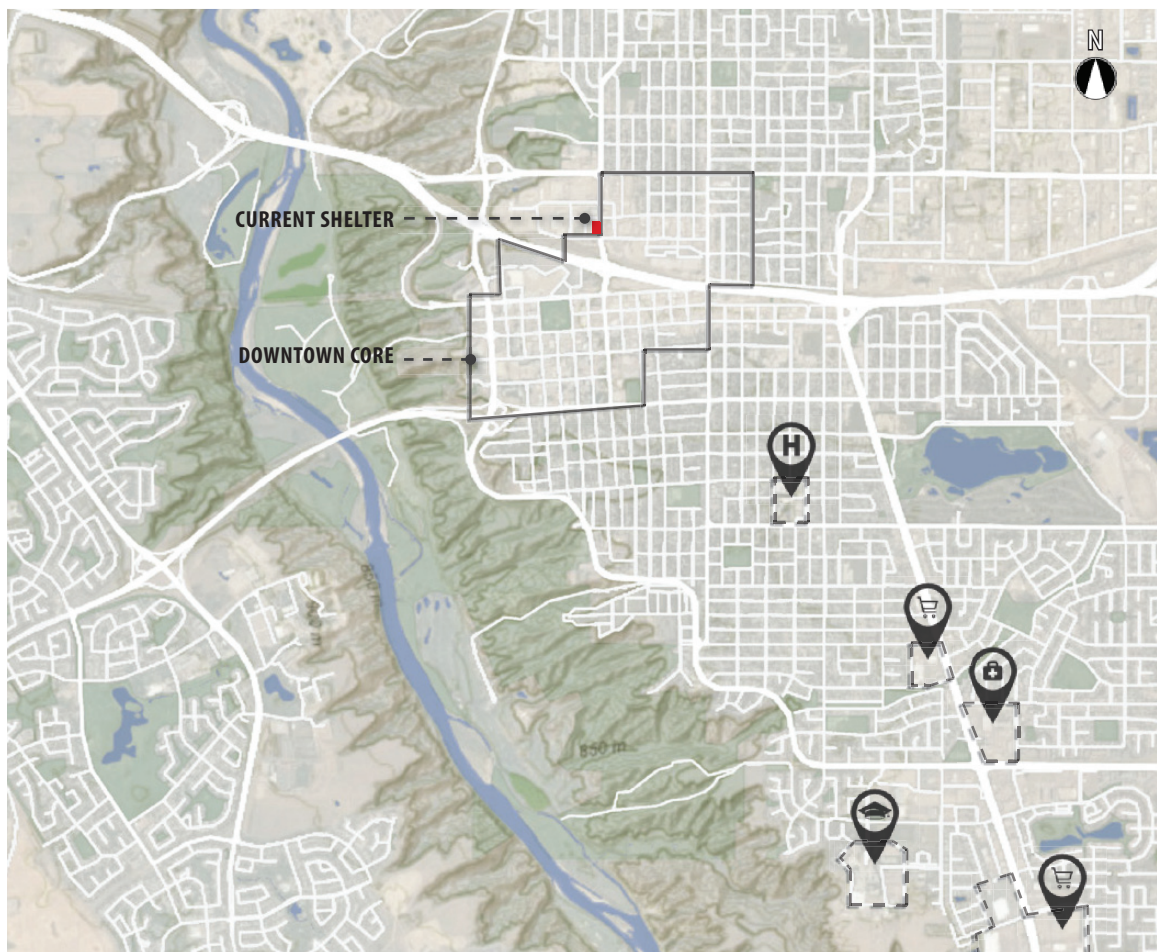
Map of Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada which demonstrates the current limits of the city that the homeless population inhabit. (base map from Esri Canada n.d.)

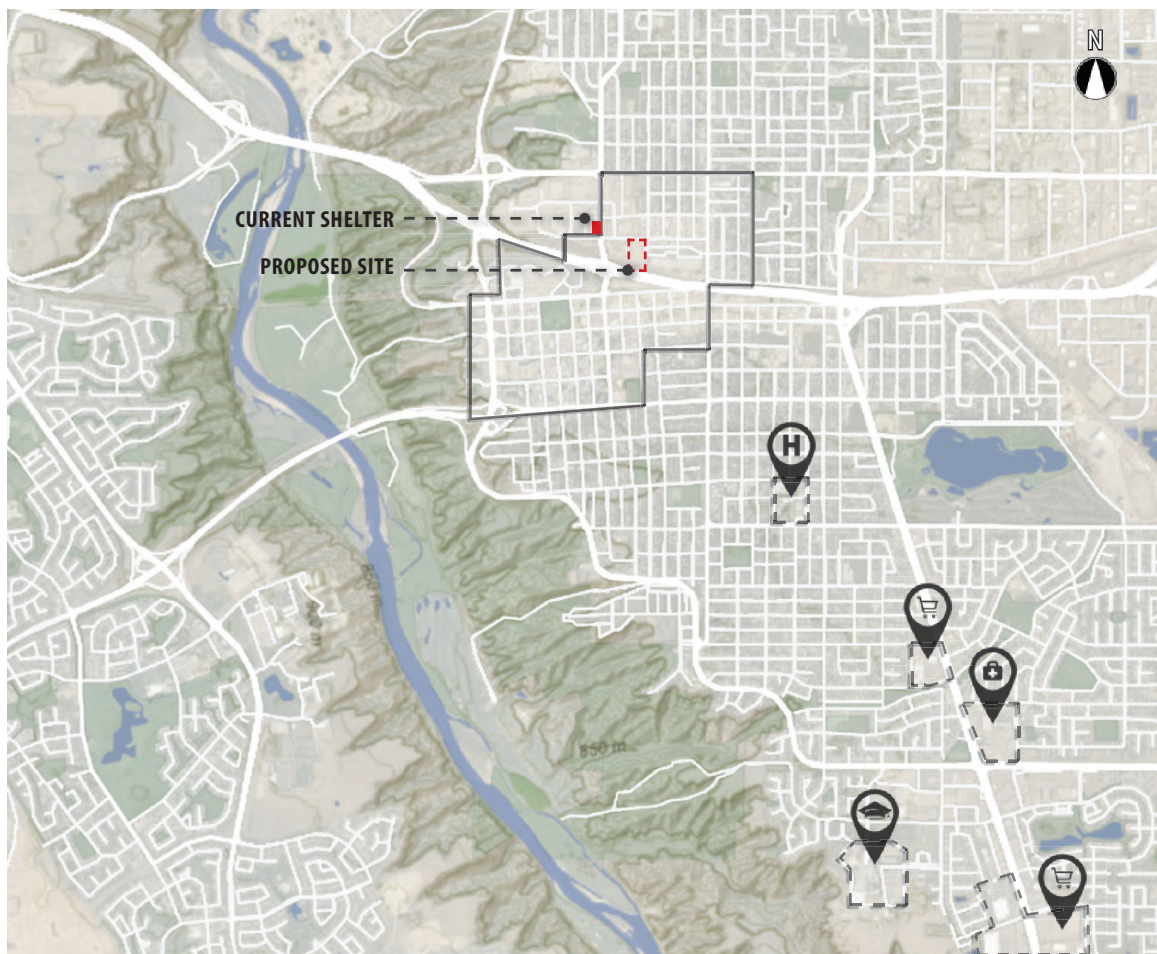Current homeless shelter site in Lethbridge, AB. (Google Maps 2019)

The current shelter in Lethbridge, AB is not universally accessible. (Google Maps 2019)

The current shelter in Lethbridge, AB is hidden behind two major roadways. (Google Maps 2019)

also attempts to hide the shelter from others in the city who have no use of it and is nestled in an area of town where the buildings are zoned for industrial use.

Knowing this, the first step to take in order of addressing the concerns and issues with the current shelter was to identify a new site to replace the old. Important to site selection was considering universal accessibility to address the issues with the current site as outlined, as well as choosing a location that was still within the downtown core of Lethbridge.

Map of Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada which calls out the location of the proposed site in relation to the current homeless shelter. (base map from Esri Canada n.d.)

Existing building on proposed site, perspective of east side.

Existing building on proposed site, wider perspective of east side from street.

Existing building on proposed site, perspective of north-west corner. (Google Maps 2019)

Proposed Site

Following the parameters as mentioned led to the choice of a new site only 400 meters from the old. This new site contains a building that was used as a grocery store until 2016, when the store migrated to a new location on the same property (Modney 2016). The building also shares the property with a mall, a fast-food restaurant, a clothing store, and other shopping establishments.

This site choice provides an opportunity for adaptive re-use of the existing building and would support a universally accessible shelter that also still lies within the downtown

Site map which calls out the location of the existing building that will be adapted for a new proposed shelter. (base map from Google Earth 2021)

Interior image of existing building on proposed site, demonstrating current conditions of building.

Interior image of southern most room of existing building.

Interior image of the north-east entrance of existing building.

core. These aspects of the site provide the opportunity to address issues of the current shelter location. The site also provides ample space to provide public spaces to support community interactions between the homeless community and community members who have recently become housed.

Identify Community Stakeholders

To support the successful completion of projects aimed at addressing the identified need, it was necessary to identify individuals and community groups that either are directly affected by the need identified or those that currently work closely with the community to address their needs. In this situation, this could include individuals who work with the current shelter or with community programs that support the homeless population in Lethbridge, Alberta.

Community

Important to the methodology presented is working closely with community members directly facing the need identified. Ideally, this would include hosting design charettes in which community members would have the opportunity to voice their opinions on the current situation that they are living in, as well to provide an opportunity to include them within the design process for a new shelter.

Due to Covid-19, I was unfortunately unable to connect directly with the homeless population in Lethbridge as they belong to a higher risk group of individuals due to not having the ability to easily isolate from each other and others at the shelter. Instead, I utilized information provided within the documentary along with statistics about the homeless

Image of pillow used by individuals who prefer to sleep under a bridge near the shelter. (Berdusco 2016, 0:13:38)
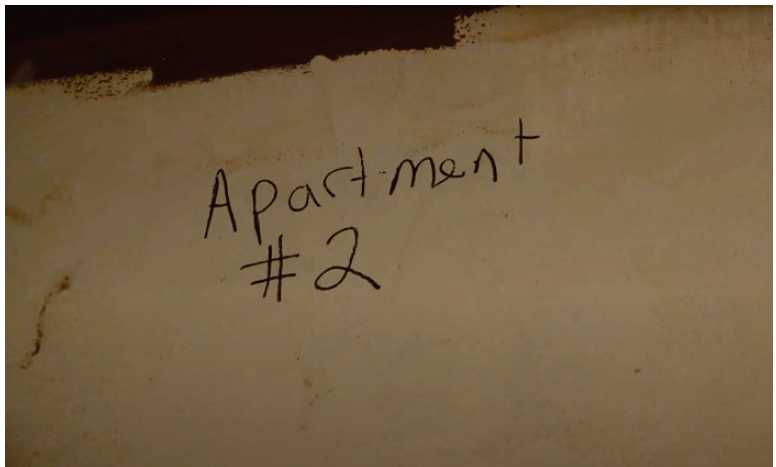
To create privacy, individuals would use cardboard as dividers to create apartments between the girders of the bridge. (Berdusco 2016, 0:13:30)

Police officers check on individual sleeping under the bridge and assist them to the shelter. (Berdusco 2016, 1:12:15)

population in Lethbridge to inform the design response to the identified need.

Through the interviews in the documentary, it was established that many homeless individuals find that the shelter is unsafe, as there is no privacy and very minimal enforcement of rules. One individual who relies on the shelter likened the shelter to a prison, but that the lack of rules and sense of security made it so that individuals could do as they pleased, even at the expense of comfort and safety of others (Berdusco 2016, 0:05:55). Because of this, many individuals would forgo staying at the shelter, preferring to sleep elsewhere, even if they were not protected from the elements. This includes finding shelter under a bridge near the shelter, where individuals would place cardboard between the girders to create makeshift apartments to give themselves a semblance of privacy. Constable Jonathan Blackwood, who was interviewed for the documentary, explained that they would commonly find groups of people camped under the bridge, as individuals found this to be safer than sleeping at the shelter.

Another important consideration in order to respond appropriately to the need, is to understand that the community members do not feel as if they belong in the city and are looking for a place to call home (Berdusco 2016, 0:32:50).

This information begins to inform how a new shelter can address current concerns of the homeless population, specifically looking at how the new shelter could provide safe and comfortable spaces that provides opportunities for community connections.

Consultants

In order to develop a more in-depth understanding of the homeless community in Lethbridge and the supports available to them, it was necessary to identify individuals that were involved with the community at an administrative level. Or in other words, individuals who do not face homelessness themselves but fulfill a role in which they work closely with homeless individuals or a role in which they provide supports to these individuals. These individuals that I contacted fulfilled roles as consultants for this thesis project, providing insight in to how the current homeless shelter and support programs within the city currently function.

Wally Czech, Housing First Specialist

The first consultant I contacted is Wally Czech, who was interviewed for the documentary in his role, at the time, as a Housing First Specialist for the City of Lethbridge. Czech explained that the basic idea behind the Housing First program in Lethbridge was developed from the understanding that when dealing with individuals who have lost their home it is most important to work to rehouse them as fast as possible. But while rehousing becomes the most important facet of rehabilitating homeless individuals, it is not the only consideration that must occur.

In the conversation with Czech, he explained the importance of providing support even once an individual is rehoused. These supports would include employment readiness services, addictions and counselling, and community classes in order to support long-term success of individuals and in the hopes of preventing individuals from losing their homes once again.
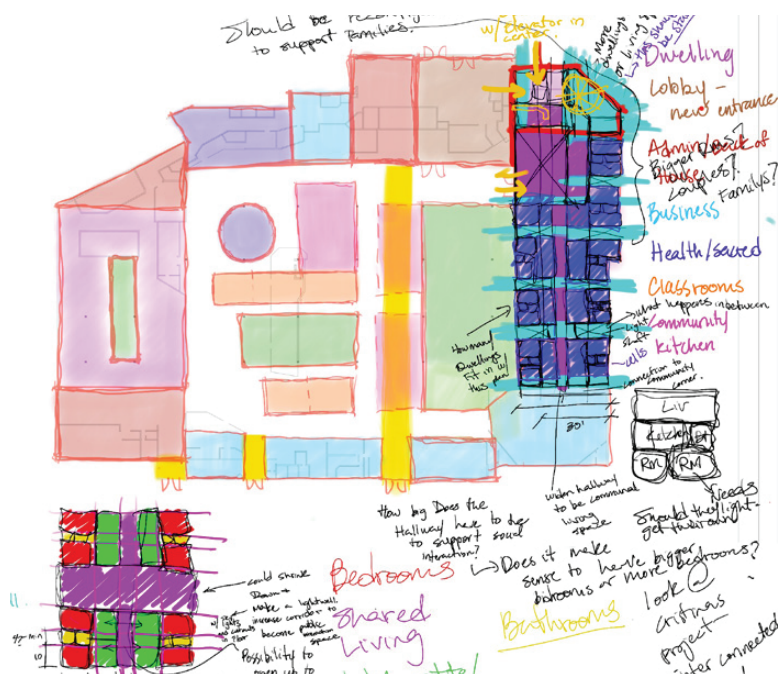
This sketch was developed after discussions with Wally Czech and demonstrated the initial programming approach based on the idea of Housing First.
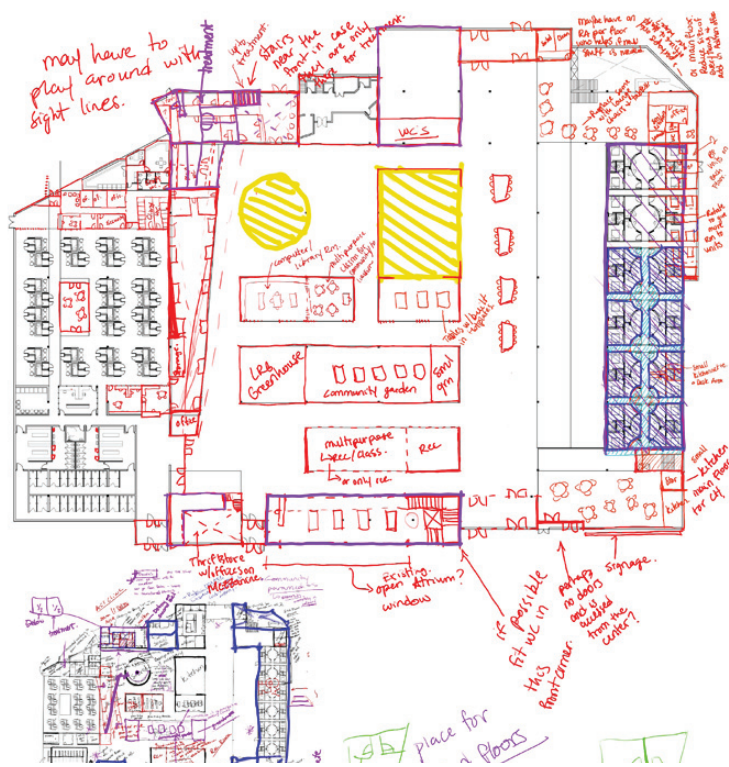
This sketch was developed during conversations with Kimberly Kamaleddine, in which she assisted in refining design decisions based on how the current homeless shelter functions and through considerations of community success.

Czech was also able to speak to the importance of community interaction for homeless individuals and those that have recently been rehoused. He explained that these individuals have created a community amongst themselves, as they often inhabit the same spaces during the day and have developed friendships through shared lived experiences.

He explained that these friendships and sense of community often negatively impacted individuals who become rehoused. Often, many individuals would invite multiple of their friends still without a home to live with them, which would cause problems with landlords and would once again lead to individuals losing their home.

As well, Czech spoke of a specific incident where an art class that was being hosted at the homeless shelter for homeless individuals had to be cancelled, due to an individual who had recently been rehoused had given up their home in order to still attend these classes and to be able to still see their friends regularly.

Through these conversations, it became clear that supporting and encouraging community interactions is necessary to consider when re-homing individuals, as community has become a focal point for many of these individuals who are looking for a place to belong.

Kimberly Kamaleddine, Support Service Worker

Kimberly Kamaleddine is a disability support service worker in Lethbridge, AB who works closely with the transient population to assist them with accessing community supports, including but not limited to transportation, medical appointments, community gardens, employment readiness services, and counselling. Through conversations with

Kamaleddine, it was established that while there are many supports available to address the needs of homeless individuals in Lethbridge, they are not easily accessible with both distance and lack of access to internet and telephones acting as barriers for individuals to access these services.

As well, Kamaleddine emphasized the importance of these supports working together to address concerns brought forth by homeless individuals. Currently, community groups and government programs in Lethbridge function singularly without integrating the services they offer, even though often these services go hand in hand and the integration of these services would benefit homeless individuals, who often have to rely on public transportation to access these services.

An example that Kamaleddine used was when individuals who face substance addictions seek out detox and treatment options. Typically, the individual would be required to first see a doctor before getting accepted into a treatment program, as well as potentially needing to attend addiction counselling at the same time. Furthermore, individuals may need further support after attending treatment to ensure success. While these amenities all directly relate and support the others, there is currently not a facility in Lethbridge that addresses all these needs in one building. Kamaleddine also explained that when individuals are accepted into these programs, they often lose their spot due to the inability of getting to the appointment; once again due to barriers including transportation, time management skills and means of communication.

Kamaleddine also was able to provide insight into how the current homeless shelter functions. All individuals are

given a blue mat to sleep on within one large room, with no privacy provided from each other nor from the security guards that occasionally check in. She also explained that another smaller room is used for individuals who struggle with substance abuse where they can be monitored for their safety.

These conversations with Kamaleddine allowed me to understand specific design requirements for a new shelter, along with a comprehensive understanding of how the current community support programs in Lethbridge could potentially be included as community stakeholders within the development of a new shelter through providing office spaces for community liaisons in order to provide the homeless population easier access to these supports.

Carter Ross, Support Service Worker

Carter Ross is also a support service worker in Lethbridge, AB, and similarly to Kimberly Kamaleddine, Ross works closely with the transient population to assist them with accessing community supports and government programs.

Ross spoke to me about a "Dress for Success" program that provides individuals with clothes that they may need to help them succeed in job interviews. This program functions similarly to a clothing drive, where clothes are collected through donations and provided to individuals in need, but focuses on clothing that can be deemed professional and allows individuals to borrow items of clothing when needed.

Currently this program does not currently exist in Lethbridge and through conversations with Ross and Kamaleddine, the benefits of including this program within the shelter became clear. This program could directly support the success of

individuals in combination with an employment readiness service.

Frame Response to Need

It was through these conversations with consultants and in combination of the information presented in the documentary, *Where is Home?*, that enabled me to understand potentially how architecture could be used to address the need identified. The current shelter in Lethbridge, likened to a prison, does not provide a safe haven to those in need nor does it provide a place that encourages and supports community gathering. The homeless community deserves a space that can provide them comfort, security, and above all; a place that they can call home.

Consider Long-Term Impacts

In order to consider the long-term impacts this project would have on the community, we need to look at how homeless individuals in Lethbridge could be rehabilitated back into housing by understanding the supports currently available and how these act in relation to each other. As discussed previously, support programs are typically isolated from each other even though an individual may require access to many of these to fully be supported.

Housing First

Understanding this brings us back to this idea of "Housing First" as discussed with Wally Czech. As mentioned, rehousing individuals as fast as possible is the most important aspect of rehabilitating individuals in the hopes that these individuals will not become lost in the system. And while the most important, without providing further support

to these individuals they would likely lose their homes once again.

Currently this housing first program, while working directly with the shelter and other community programs in Lethbridge to offer services and supports to the homeless community, has not had a hand in how the homeless shelter functions. The shelter currently exists to meet the bare minimum of human need, a shelter. In order to address the other needs of individuals, I began to ask the question; could the supports that homeless individuals need be provided within a singular space? Through conversations with Czech and Kamaleddine it became clear that homeless individuals need access to these supports in order to have a chance at success, but that the current programs do not function in a way where individuals have easy access to them.

Considering this within the design response would provide a place wherein individuals are directly provided support and encouragement, along with access to any programs they may need. Integrating this within the design response would directly support the long-term success of the community. It was this idea that began to form how to address the need identified, where is home?

Develop Proposal

Based on this idea of Housing First, the program for the design response was developed by identifying key points that should be included within a new shelter to promote the success of homeless individuals. These focal points were identified through both the conversations with consultants, and the demographics of the community it would serve.

Dwelling

The first programmatic element is of course dwelling, to fulfill the most basic need that a shelter caters to. But there were many considerations in the process of the inclusion of dwelling units.

The current shelter treats all users the same – all individuals are given a mat on which to sleep. This approach does not consider the differences between shelter users. In Lethbridge, 65% of those that use the shelter are chronically homeless. The definition of chronically homeless is; individuals that have been homeless for at least 180 cumulative days over the past year (7 Cities on Housing and Homelessness 2018). Czech explained that many of these individuals who are

Chronic Homelessness ▮ 65%

Episodic Homelessness ▮ 10%

Transitional ▮ 21%

Unknown ▮ 4%
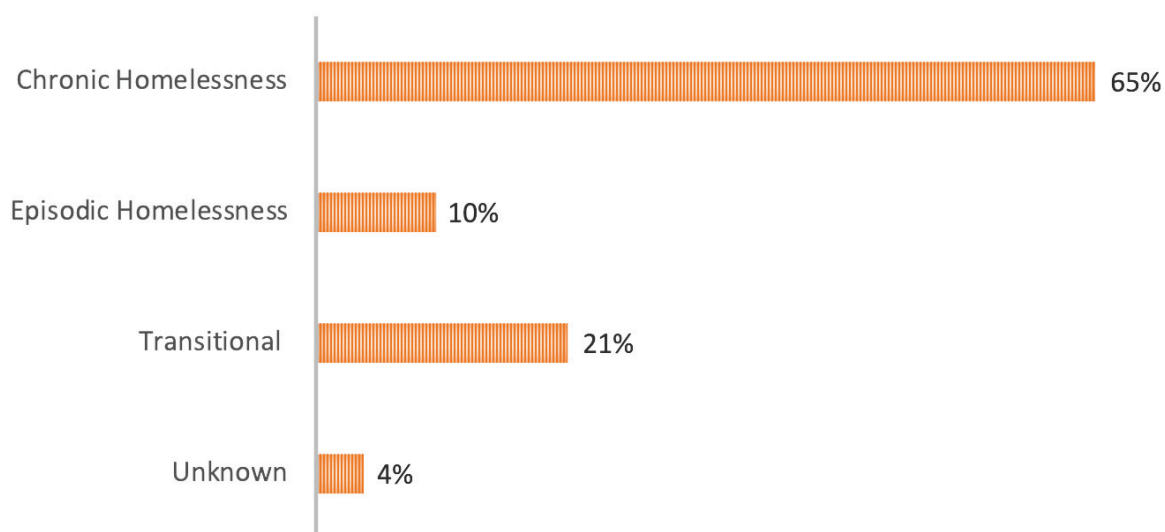
HOMELESSNESS HISTORY*
*Total No. of People Exp. Homelessness in 2018 = 223

C h r o n i c : have been homeless for at least 180 cumulative days over the past year

E p i s o d i c : homeless 3 or more times in the past year

T r a n s i t i o n a l : experiencing homelessness for a short time and infrequently

2018 Homelessness history in Lethbridge, Alberta. (7 Cities on Housing and Homelessness 2018)

considered chronically homeless in Lethbridge have been homeless for longer than a total of five years.

This information led to the decision to program two different areas of dwelling so that the differing needs of the homeless community could be address appropriately. The first area designated for dwelling has been designed as a capsule
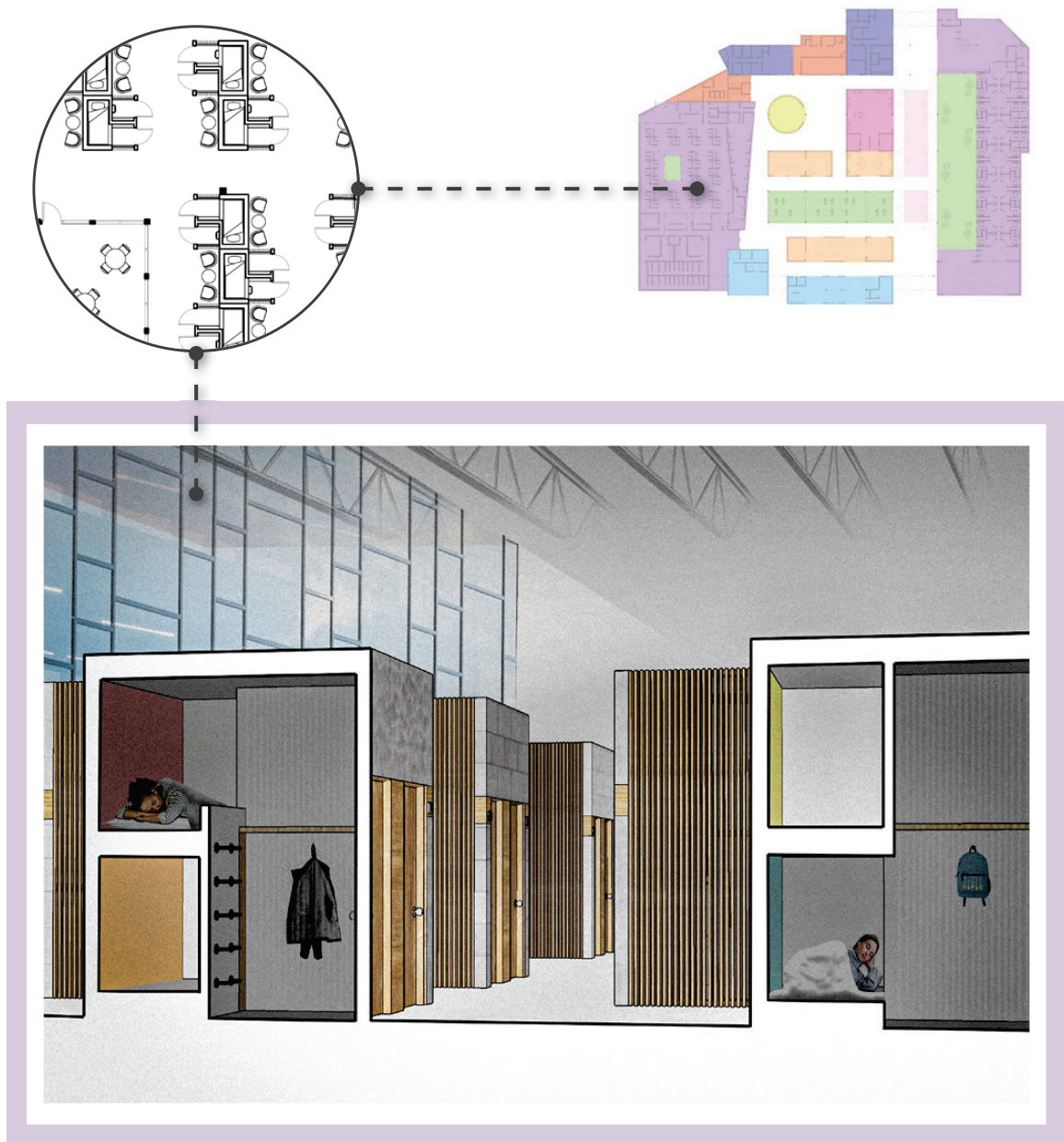
Dwelling: Render of the capsules intended for individuals facing homelessness episodically and transitionally. Call-out included to situate within the overall floor plan.

hotel. This approach is meant to provide privacy, safety, and comfort for the shelter users. This area would be designated for homeless individuals who are deemed episodically or transitionally homeless. Where episodically homeless means to be homeless three or more times in the past year, and transitionally homeless individuals are those that experience homelessness for a short time and infrequently (7 Cities on Housing and Homelessness 2018).

Included in this area is an intox area, which is a necessary space to include so that a safe space can be provided for individuals who struggle with substance abuse where they can be monitored throughout their stay to ensure their safety (Kamaleddine 2021).

This programmed area also includes offices and support spaces. Given that this area is for individuals who are either recently homeless or episodically homeless, these areas are meant to provide opportunities for individuals to check in with staff at the shelter. This is so that conversations can be started about why they are here or what's changed in their life for them to need the shelter. These conversations are meant to develop understanding about the supports individuals need sooner rather than later, in hopes of avoiding individuals becoming chronically homeless.
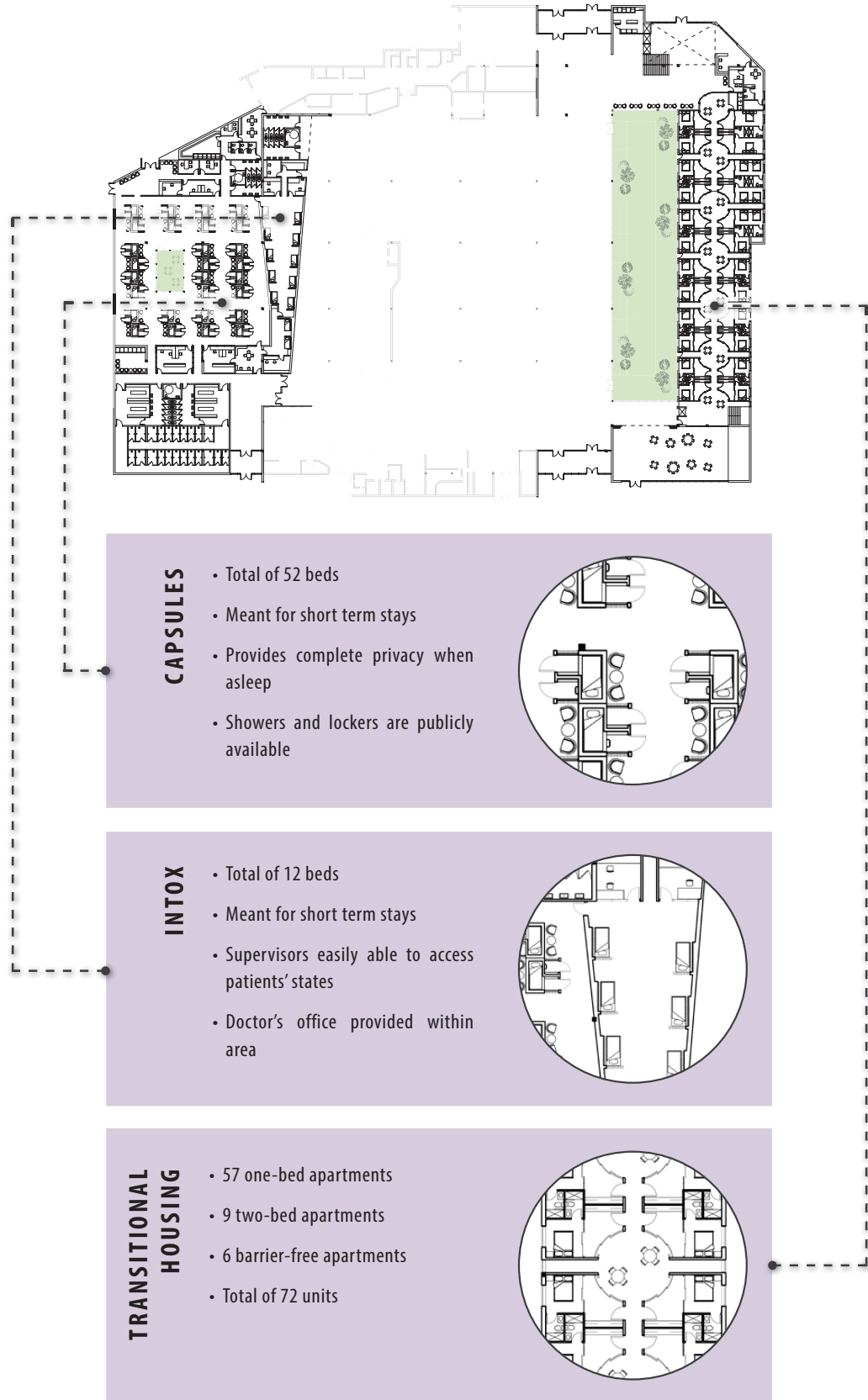
To support individuals who are chronically homeless, apartments are also included within the program to give individuals who have been homeless the longest an opportunity to feel ownership over the space they are given. These apartments would support community engagement, encouraging interaction with their neighbors and friends through the provision of a circular gathering room. Operable walls within the apartment would allow for individuals to open

their home for these interactions, providing the opportunity to adjust the space as they see fit in order to promote and encourage gatherings.
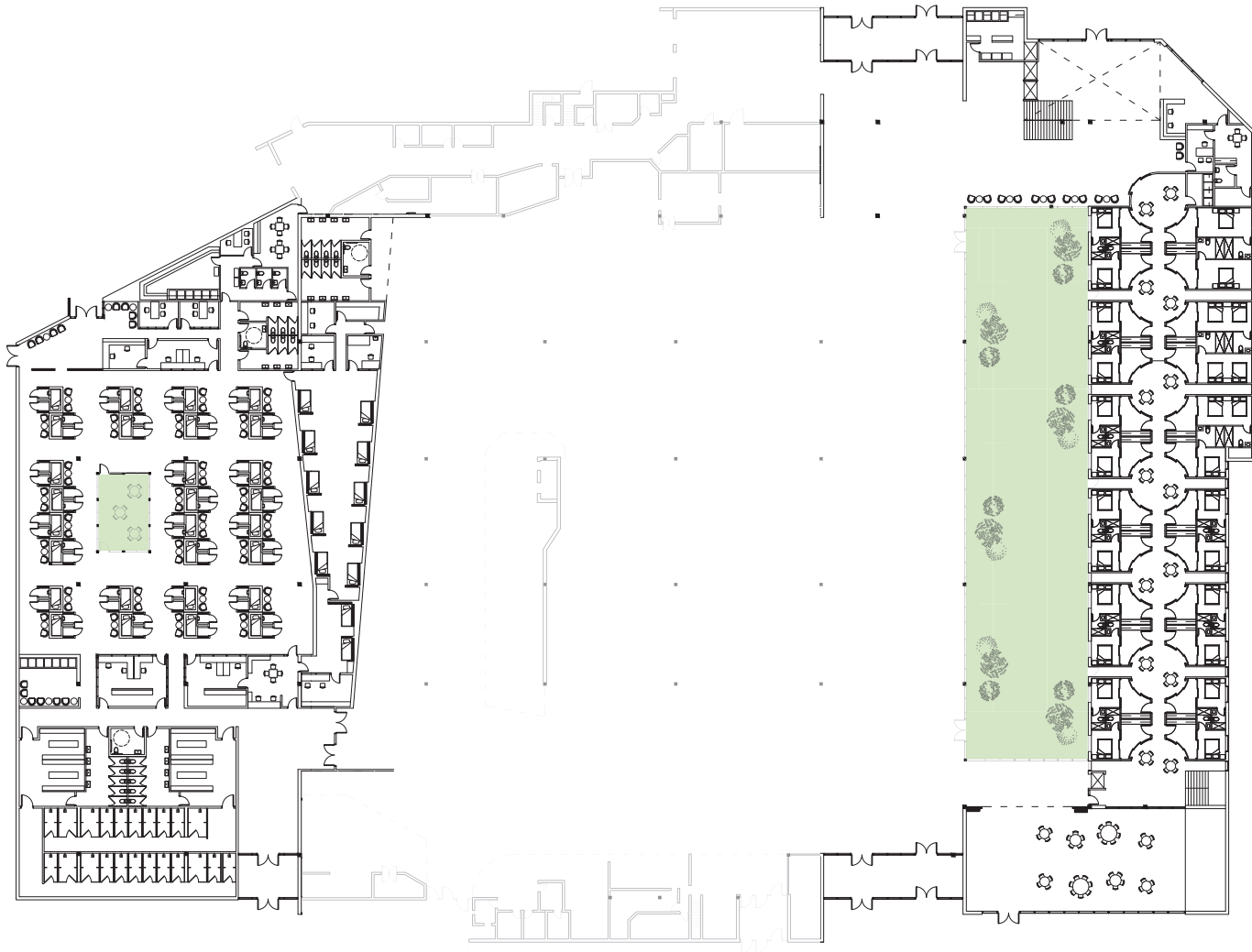
By distinctively programming two separate areas of dwelling in this way, it ensures that the differing needs of homeless individuals can be considered when developing a path to their continued success.
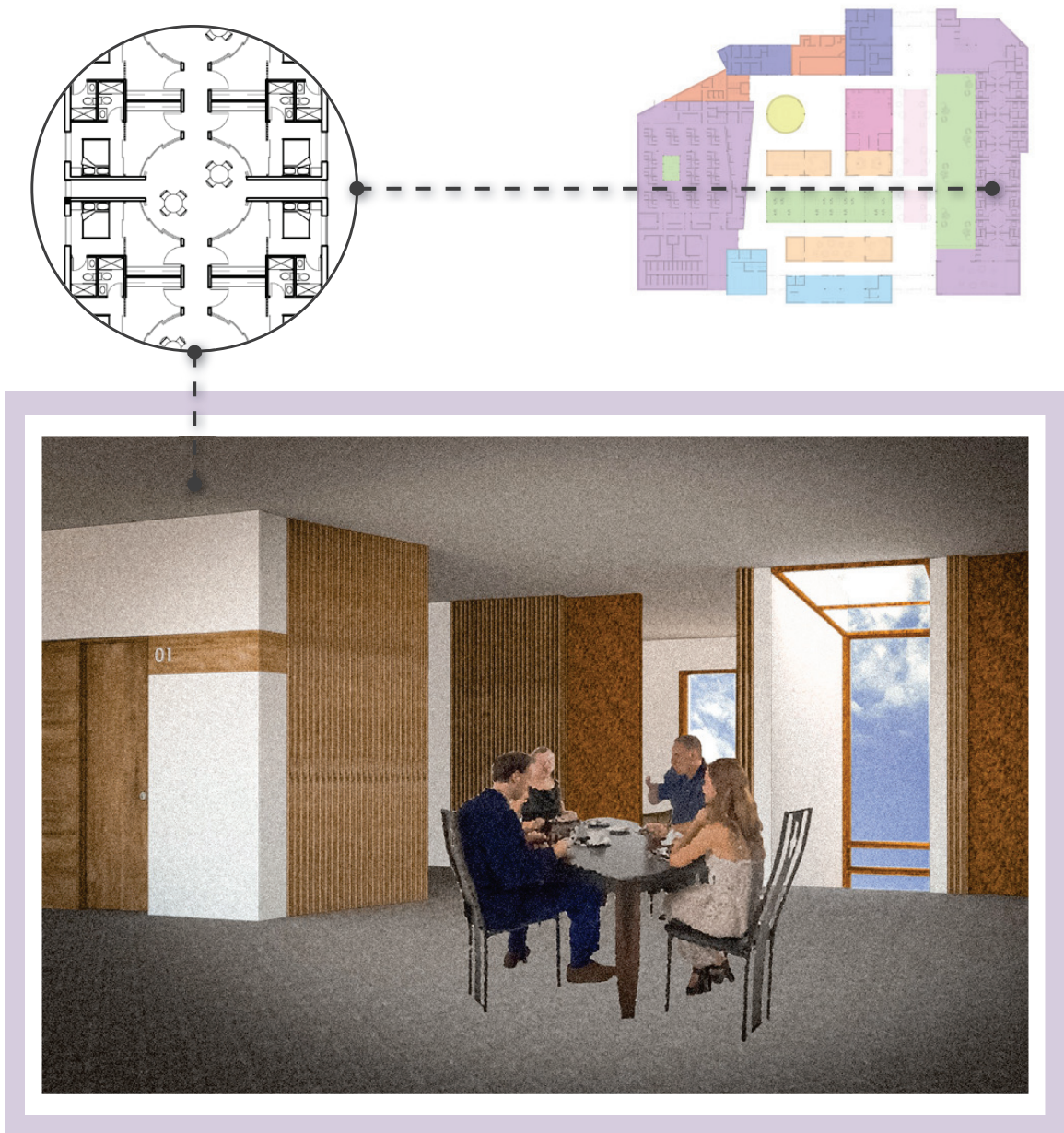
Dwelling: Render of the common room outside of the apartments intended for individuals facing chronic homelessness. Call-out included to situate within the overall floor plan.

CAPSULES

- Total of 52 beds
- Meant for short term stays
- Provides complete privacy when asleep
- Showers and lockers are publicly available

INTOX

- Total of 12 beds
- Meant for short term stays
- Supervisors easily able to access patients' states
- Doctor's office provided within area

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

- 57 one-bed apartments
- 9 two-bed apartments
- 6 barrier-free apartments
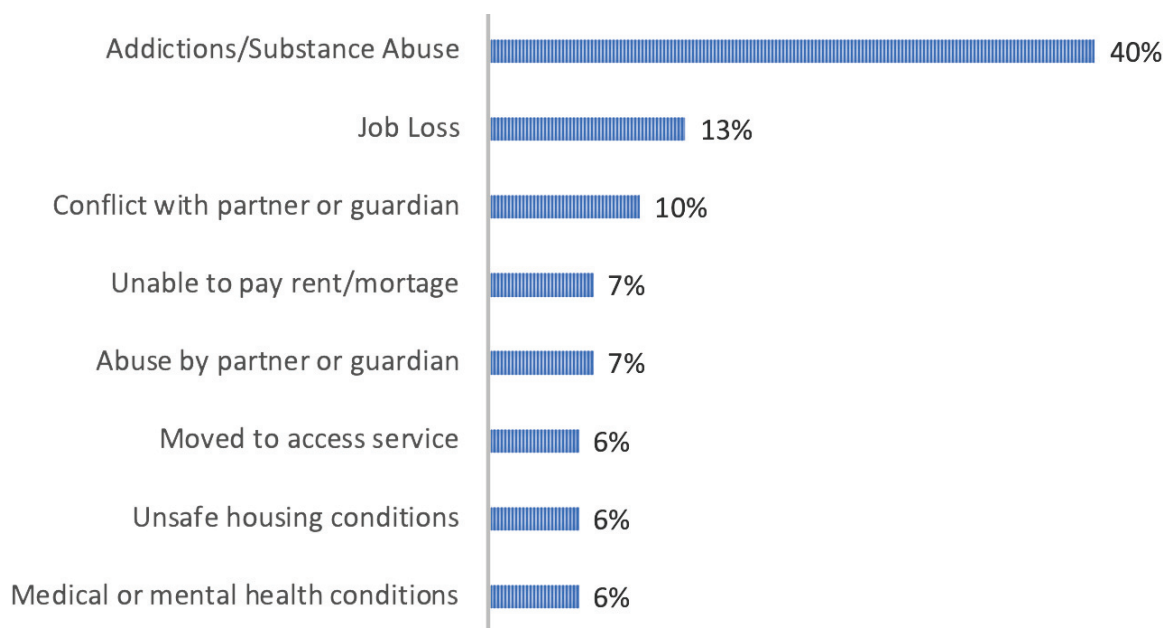- Total of 72 units

Dwelling: Detailed programmatic plan call-outs.

Dwelling: Overall plan, new design imposed on current floor plan of existing building. Green areas signify exterior ventilation shafts.

Healing

The programmatic element of healing was driven by the need to address addictions, mental or physical health problems, and past traumas that occur in a vast majority of the homeless population in Lethbridge, Alberta. The inclusion of this element is to promote long-term success of individuals through providing supports dedicated to helping individuals heal.
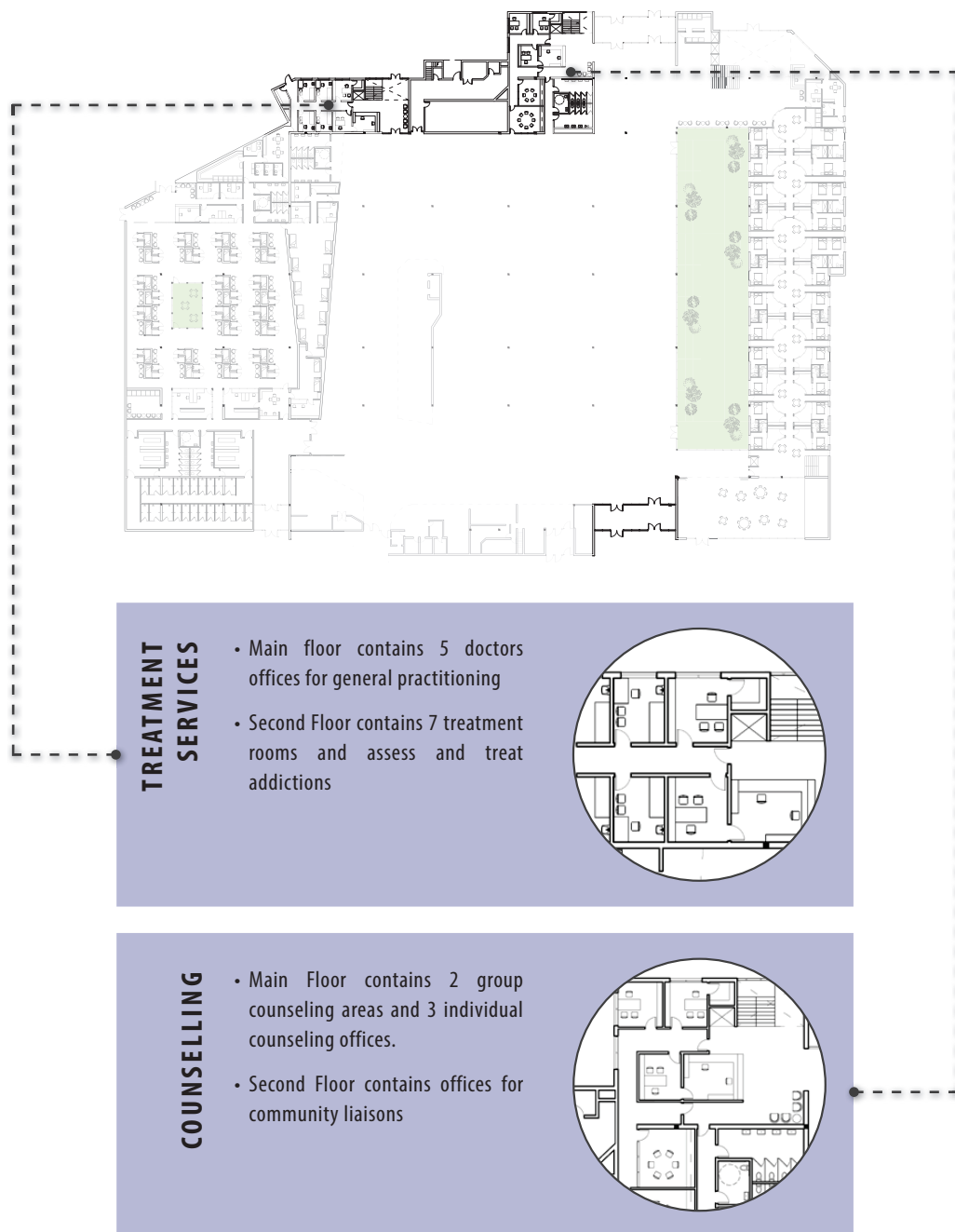
This is addressed within the program through the inclusion of areas dedicated to treatment services and counselling rooms. The treatment services provides both doctors' offices for general practitioners, along with rooms dedicated to treatment rooms where individuals can be assessed and treated for addictions. The areas dedicated to counselling provides spaces for both individual and group counselling sessions.

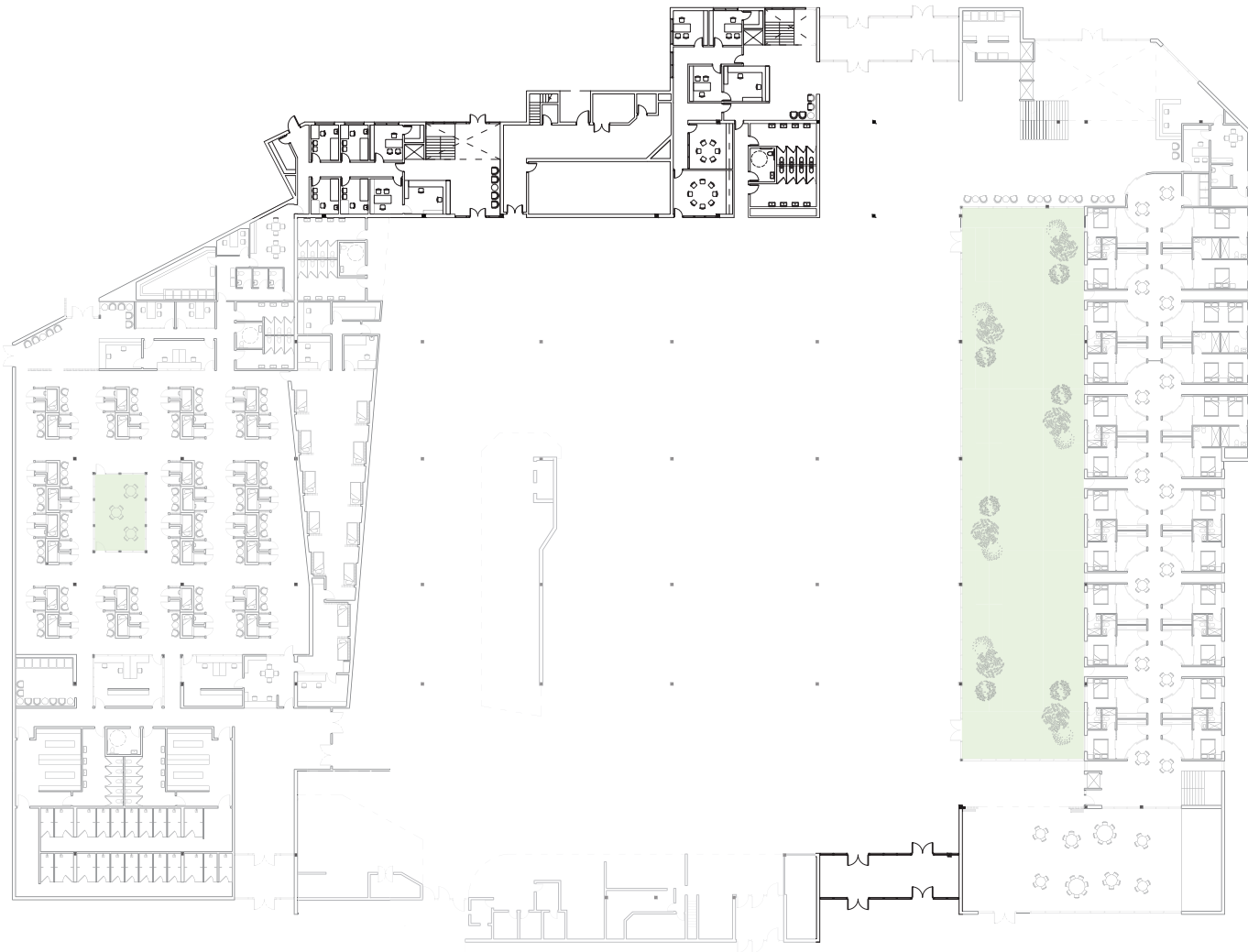|	
Addictions/Substance Abuse	40%
Job Loss	13%
Conflict with partner or guardian	10%
Unable to pay rent/mortage	7%
Abuse by partner or guardian	7%
Moved to access service	6%
Unsafe housing conditions	6%
Medical or mental health conditions	6%

REASON FOR LOSS OF HOME

Reasons why individuals lost their homes in Lethbridge, Alberta in 2018. (7 Cities on Housing and Homelessness 2018)

The inclusion of these programs directly within the shelter would ease access for community members and would act to support the future success of homeless individuals in Lethbridge.

TREATMENT SERVICES

- Main floor contains 5 doctors offices for general practitioning

- Second Floor contains 7 treatment rooms and assess and treat addictions

COUNSELLING

- Main Floor contains 2 group counseling areas and 3 individual counseling offices.

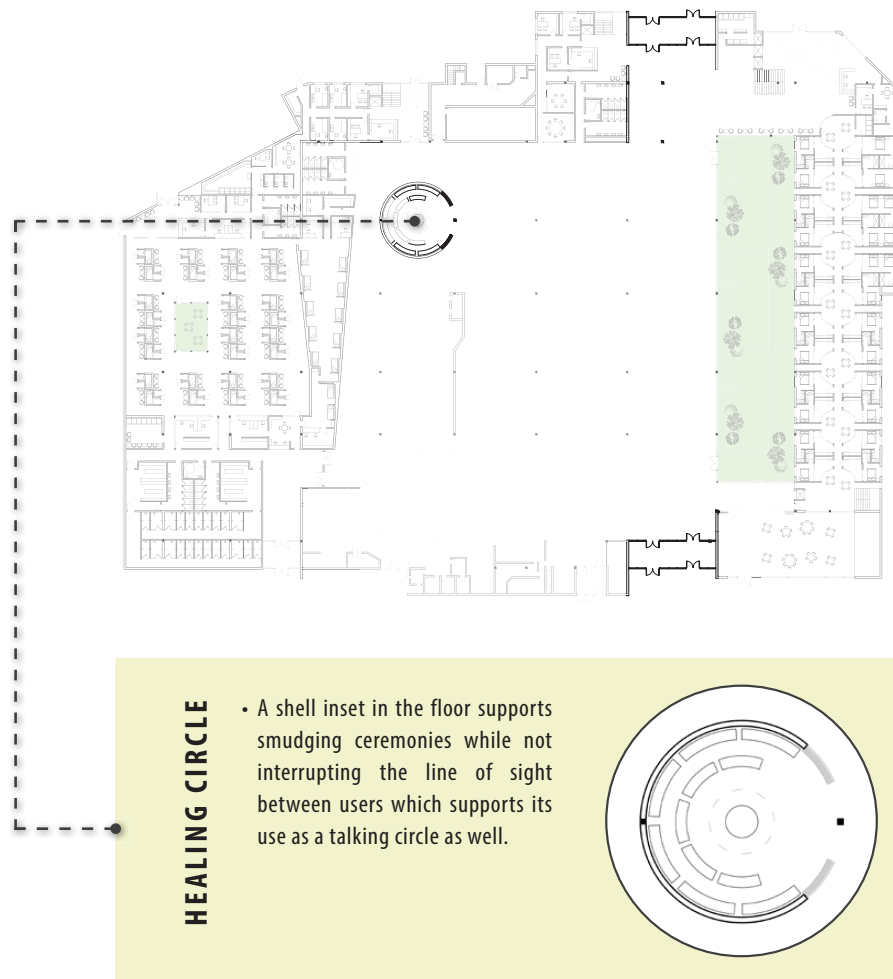- Second Floor contains offices for community liaisons

Healing: Detailed programmatic plan call-outs.

Healing: Overall plan, new design imposed on current floor plan of existing building. Green areas signify exterior ventilation shafts and function as community gardens.
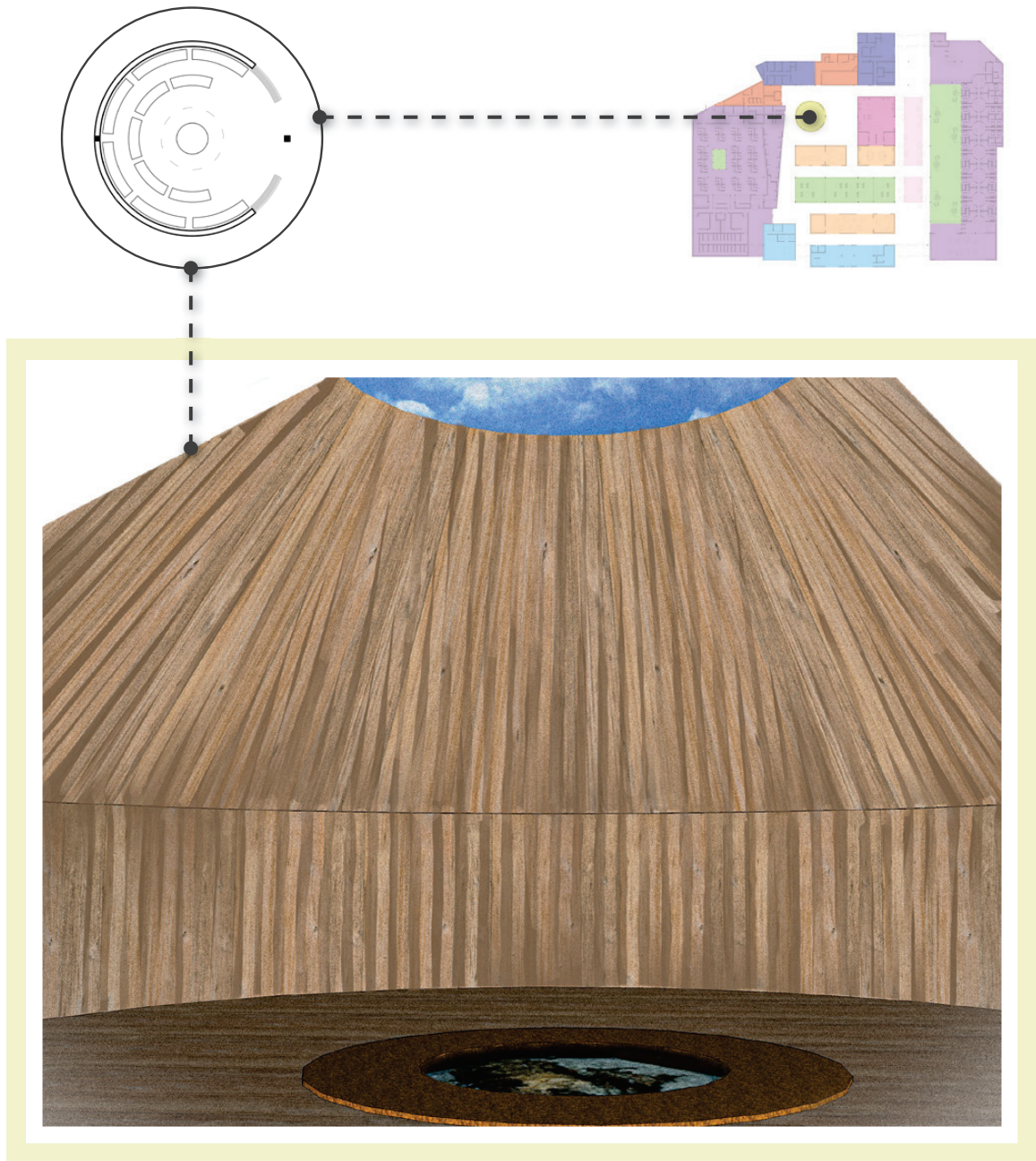
Culture

Within the *Where is Home?* documentary, Ronson Bruised Head spoke of the difficulties of being stranded from his home reservation and not having places within Lethbridge that focus and support indigenous culture. Given that approximately 73% of homeless people in Lethbridge self-identify as Indigenous, compared to the provincial percentage of approximately 25%, a focus of this project is to provide a place for these individuals to celebrate their culture (Homeless Hub 2018).

HEALING CIRCLE

• A shell inset in the floor supports smudging ceremonies while not interrupting the line of sight between users which supports its use as a talking circle as well.

Culture: Detailed programmatic plan call-outs.

To address this, a healing circle is included within the programming, where individuals can gather for a talking circle or to join in prayer. This would provide a space where individuals can be committed to helping each other in their healing. This becomes a central focus for many homeless individuals who are indigenous and who are distant from their home community.

Culture: Render of the healing circle. Call-out included to situate within the overall floor plan.
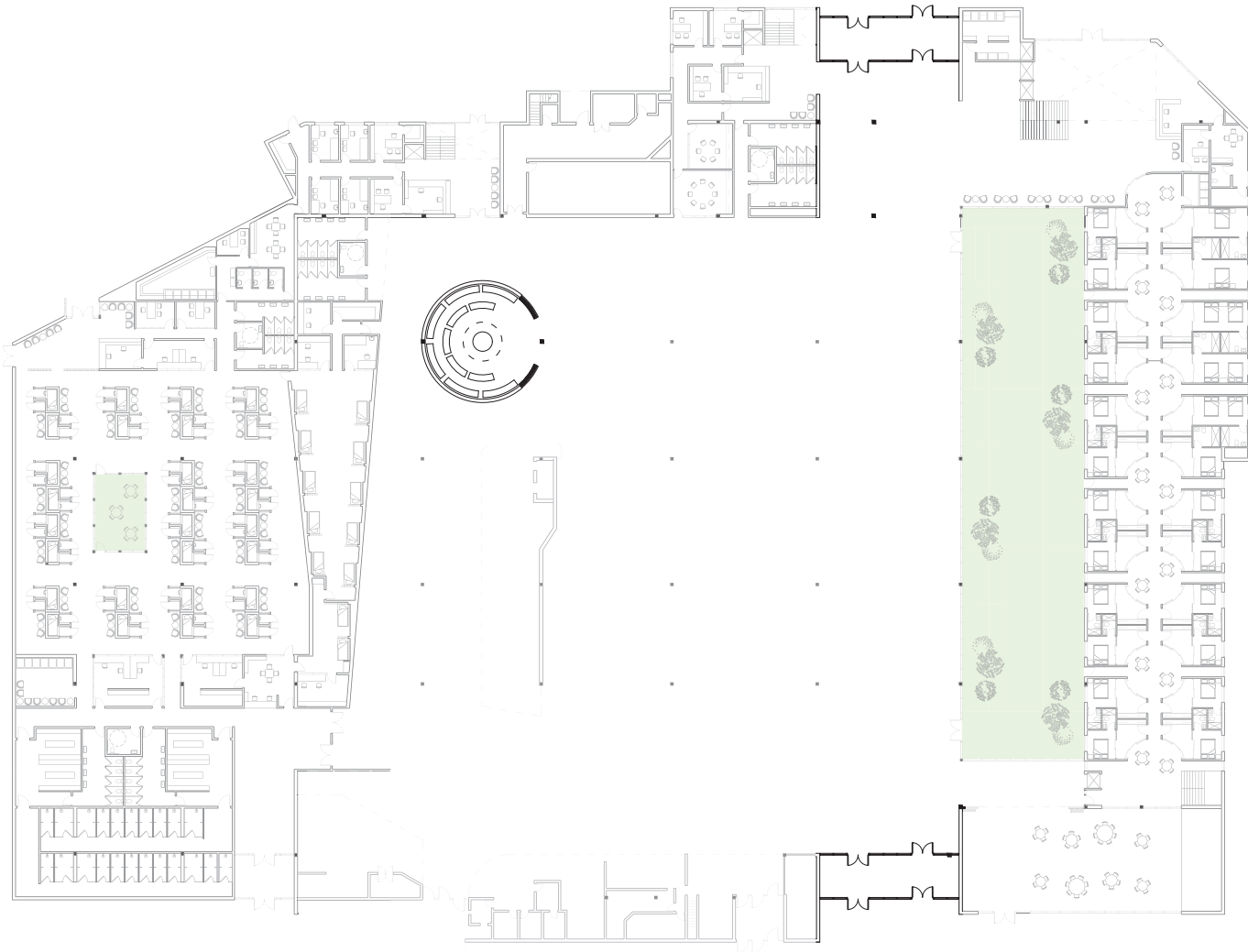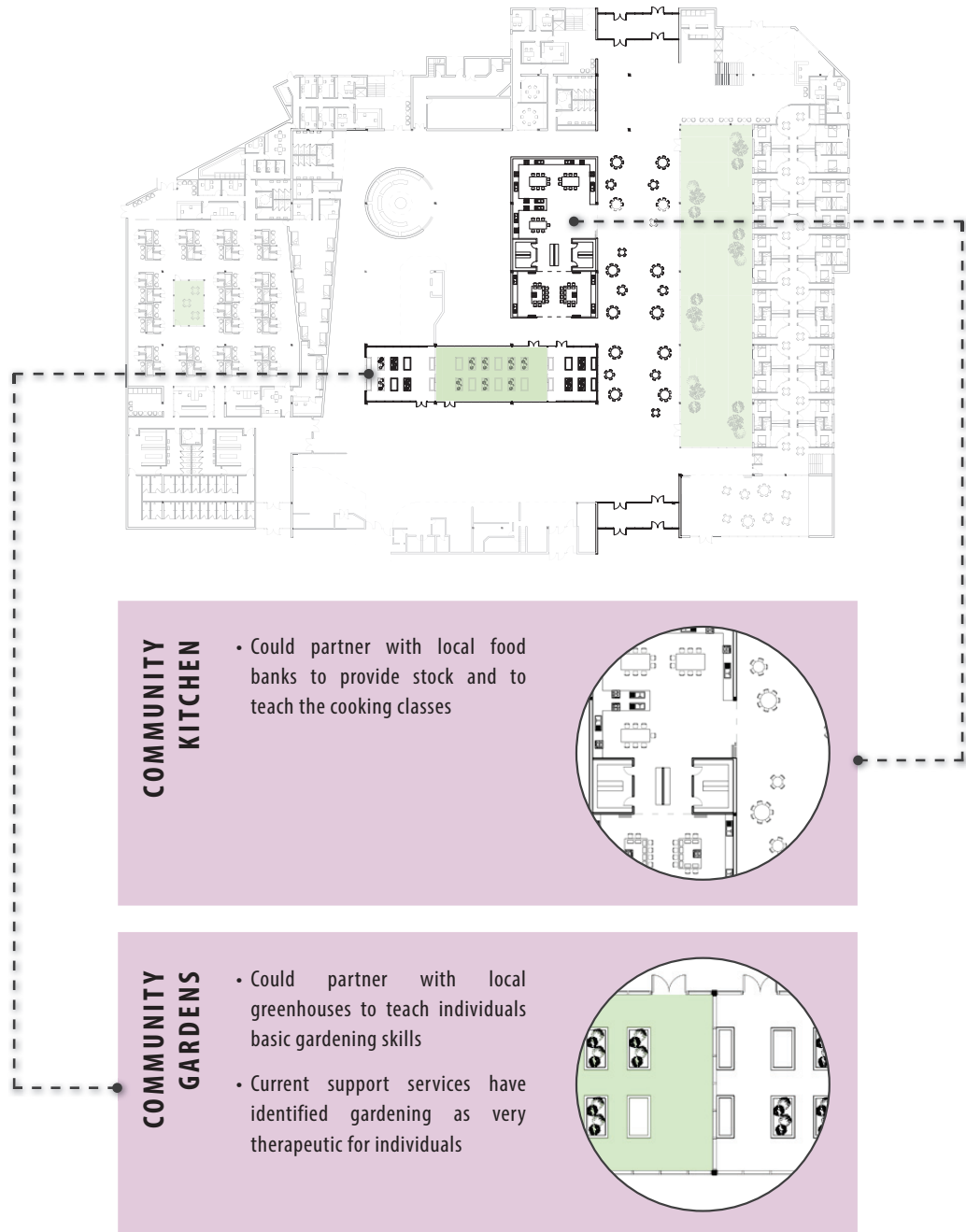
Culture: Overall plan, new design imposed on current floor plan of existing building. Green areas signify exterior ventilation shafts and function as community gardens.
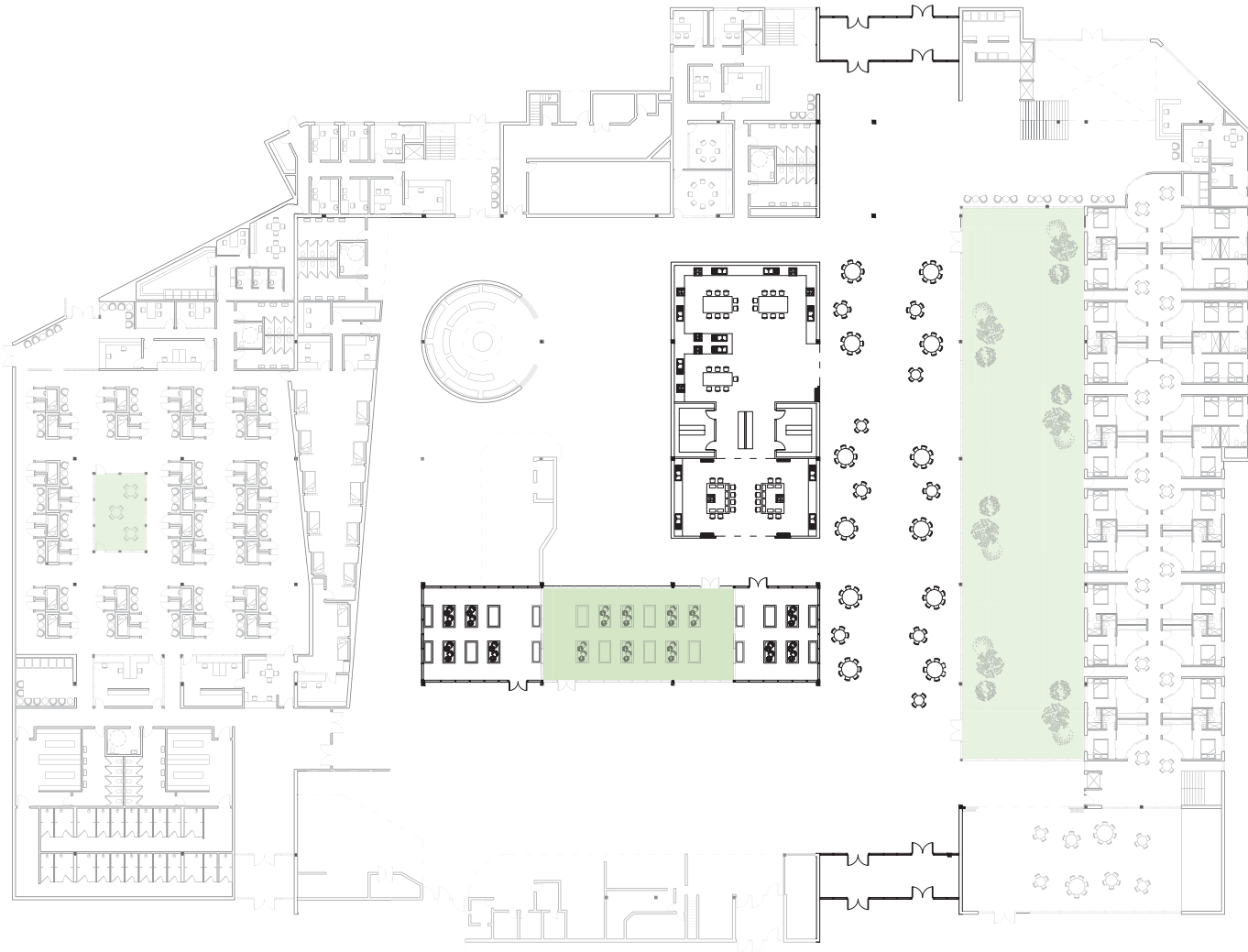
Food

The decision to include food as a guiding program was made to fulfill not only a basic human need, but to provide individuals with access to nutrition courses to support their continued health and wellness. This is achieved through the inclusion of a community kitchen along with areas dedicated to cooking classes, where individuals can gather to cook communal meals together.

Community gardens and greenhouses are also included within the focus of this programmatic heart. These areas would provide opportunities for individuals to learn basic gardening skills and would allow for food to be grown that could be used for cooking. Gardening can also function as a therapeutic activity for individuals to participate in (Kameleddine 2021).

COMMUNITY KITCHEN

- Could partner with local food banks to provide stock and to teach the cooking classes

COMMUNITY GARDENS

- Could partner with local greenhouses to teach individuals basic gardening skills
- Current support services have identified gardening as very therapeutic for individuals
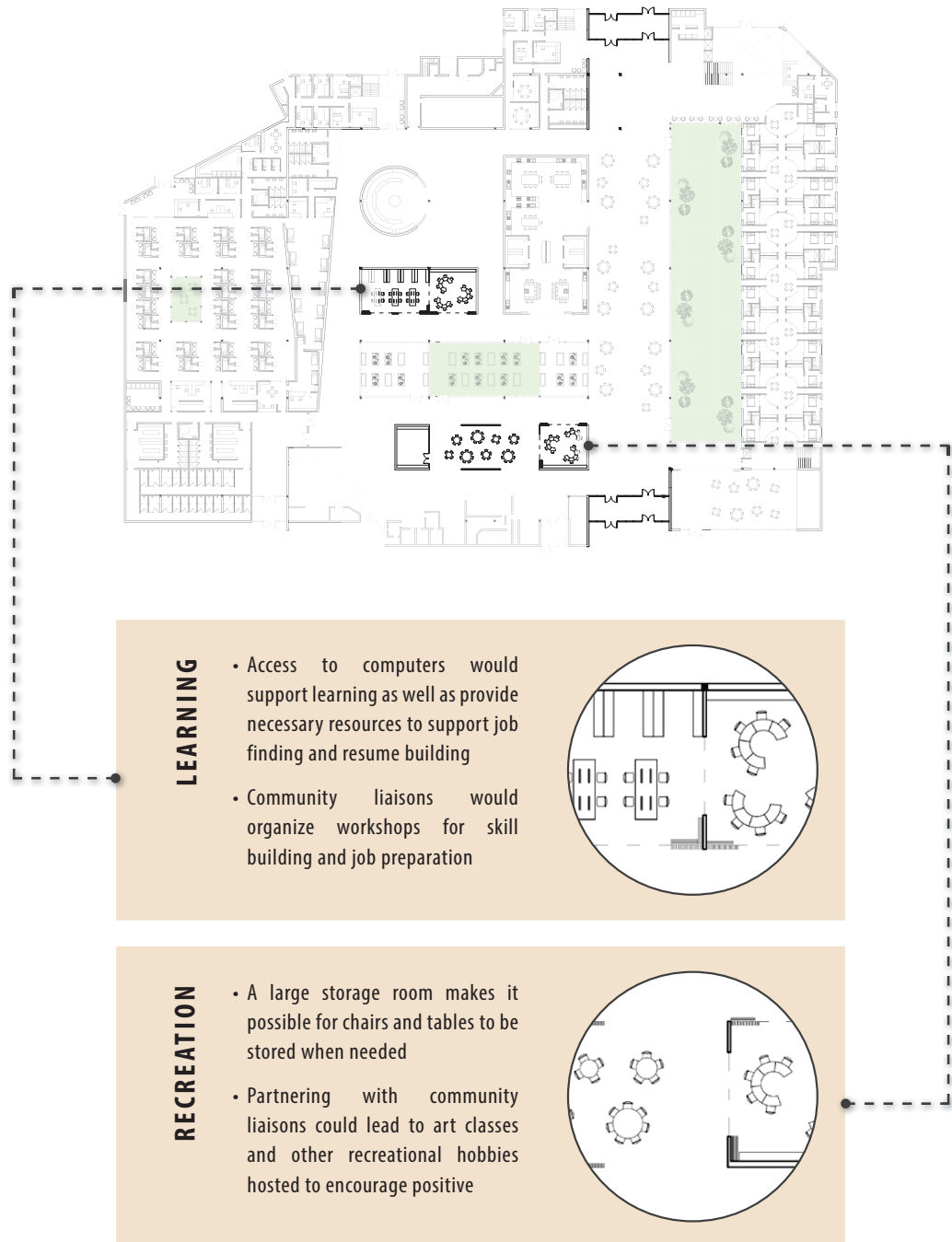
Food: Detailed programmatic plan call-outs.

Food: Overall plan, new design imposed on current floor plan of existing building. Green areas signify exterior ventilation shafts and function as community gardens.
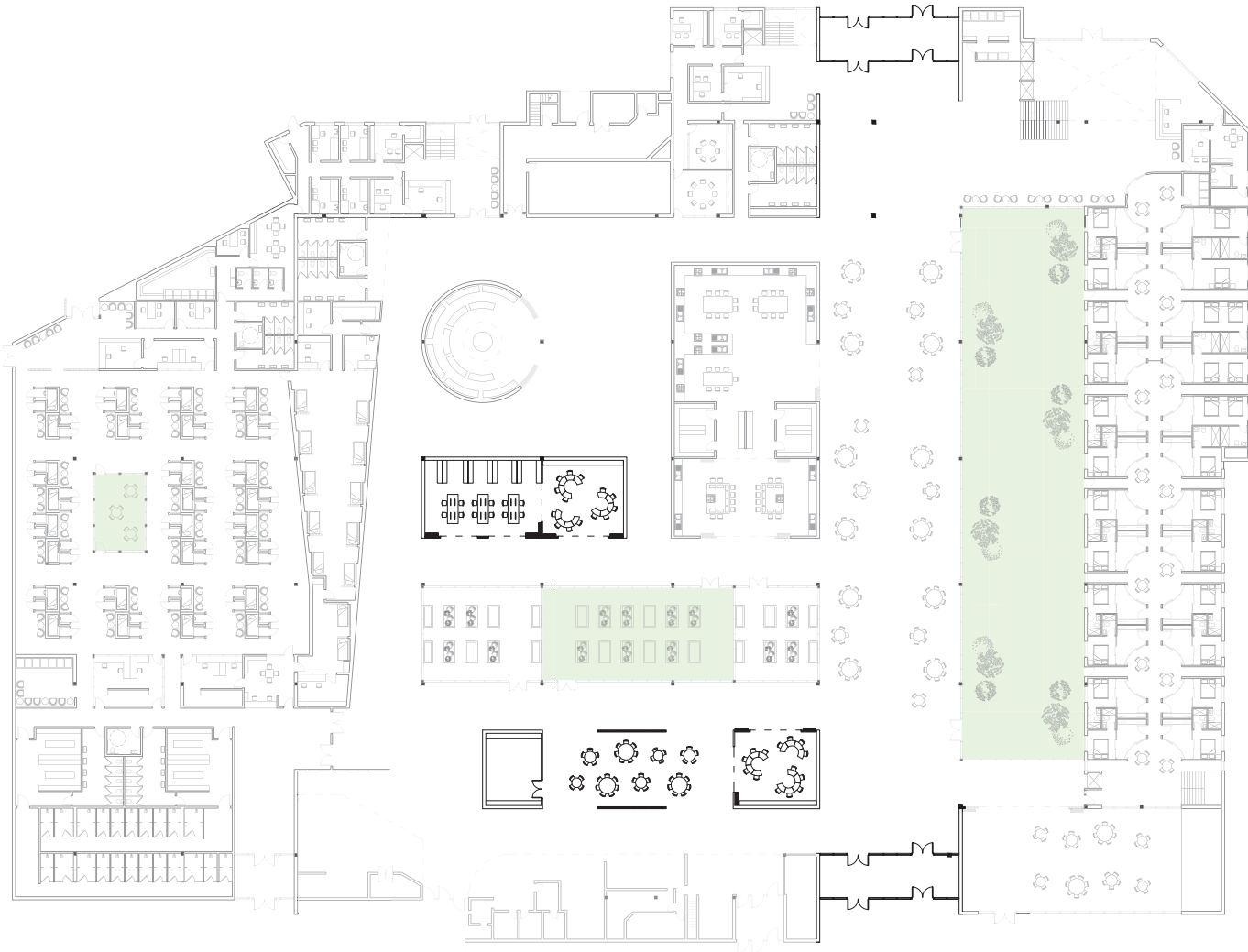
Education

To support future growth of the individuals using this shelter, another guiding programmatic element that was included is education. These programmed areas include multipurpose classrooms, a library, as well as larger multipurpose recreation areas to provide a place dedicated to play.

Within the library, access to the computers would support learning as well as provide necessary resources to support job finding and resume building. This could be further supported by the involvement of community liaisons to organize workshops for skill building and job preparations.

Within the recreation areas, an inclusion of a large storage room allows for easy storage of chairs and tables when needed to support any recreation events that are planned. Partnering with community liaisons could lead to hosting art classes and other recreational hobbies to encourage positive mental health.

LEARNING

- Access to computers would support learning as well as provide necessary resources to support job finding and resume building

- Community liaisons would organize workshops for skill building and job preparation

RECREATION

- A large storage room makes it possible for chairs and tables to be stored when needed

- Partnering with community liaisons could lead to art classes and other recreational hobbies hosted to encourage positive

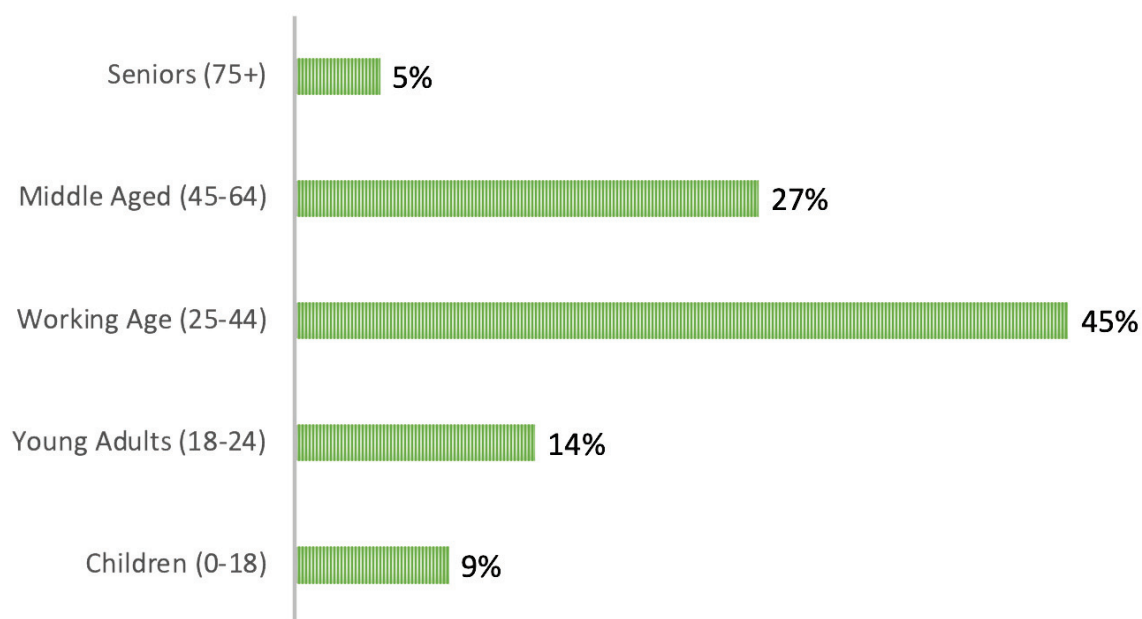Education: Detailed programmatic plan call-outs.

Education: Overall plan, new design imposed on current floor plan of existing building. Green areas signify exterior ventilation shafts and function as community gardens.

Business

Most homeless individuals in Lethbridge are of the working age, which informed how business as a guiding program could be included within the design to support future success of the community.
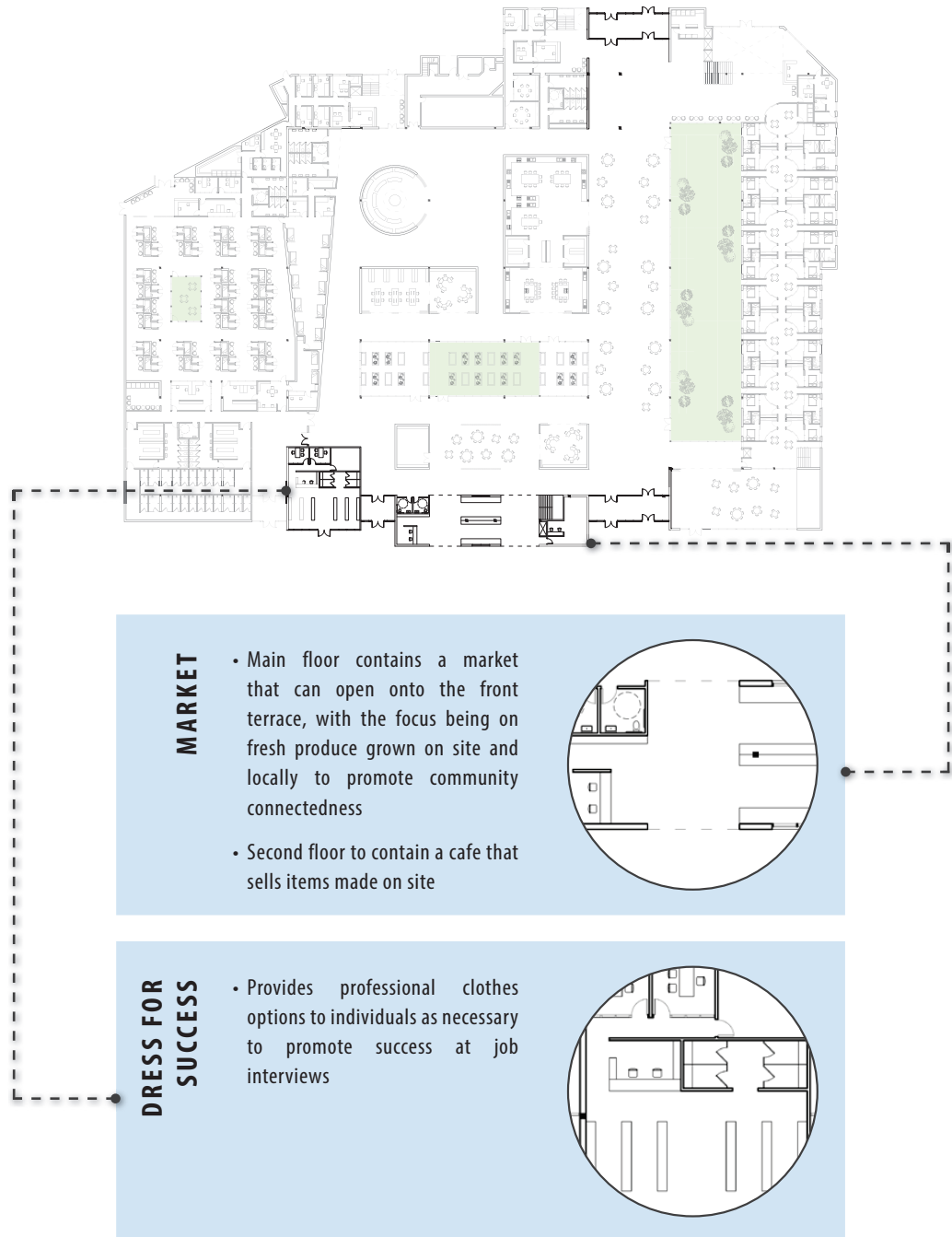
Included along the east façade of the building is both a market and a dedicated space for the Dress for Success program as discussed with Ross. The idea is that these areas could be managed by individuals who are homeless, to obtain skills needed for employment and to support the success for others in the community as well.

The market would provide an opportunity for the community to sell items that they prepare within the community kitchen. With the inclusion of space dedicated to future business ventures that could be developed by and managed by the community.

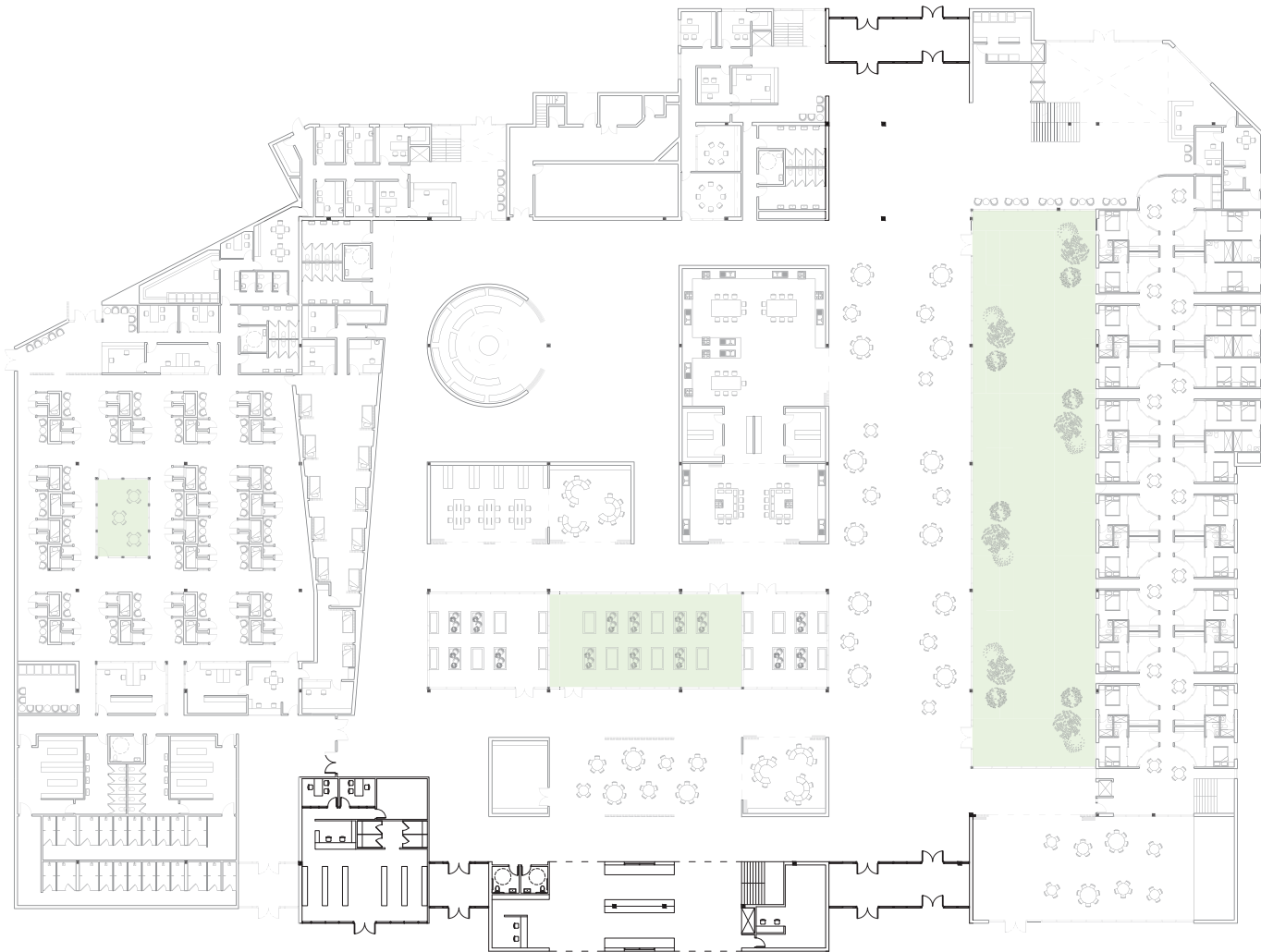| Age Group	Percentage
Seniors (75+)	5%
Middle Aged (45-64)	27%
Working Age (25-44)	45%
Young Adults (18-24)	14%
Children (0-18)	9%

AGE DISTRIBUTION

Age distribution of homeless population in Lethbridge, Alberta in 2018. (7 Cities on Housing and Homelessness 2018)

MARKET

- Main floor contains a market that can open onto the front terrace, with the focus being on fresh produce grown on site and locally to promote community connectedness

- Second floor to contain a cafe that sells items made on site

DRESS FOR SUCCESS

- Provides professional clothes options to individuals as necessary to promote success at job interviews

Business: Detailed programmatic plan call-outs.

Business: Overall plan. Green areas signify exterior ventilation shafts and function as community gardens.

Final Design

Through the development of this project, these programmatic elements have become the hearts of the new shelter, with every choice having been made to support the community this shelter would serve. These hearts have become focal points for community gathering and interaction, promoting not only the success of individuals who use the shelter but encouraging wider community interaction.

The aim of this design response was to provide a home to those without. This guiding factor led to a design that would provide necessary amenities within one building and that would support not only the goal of rehousing individuals, but of supporting the sense of community that these individuals share and will share long after they are rehoused. This proposal encourages that connection and creates a space where they will always be welcome, and which provides support for as long as they may need.

The design also dares to hope that one day homelessness will not exist, at which point the shelter would function much similar to what it will have been since its conception, as a community center that supports community growth and connection.
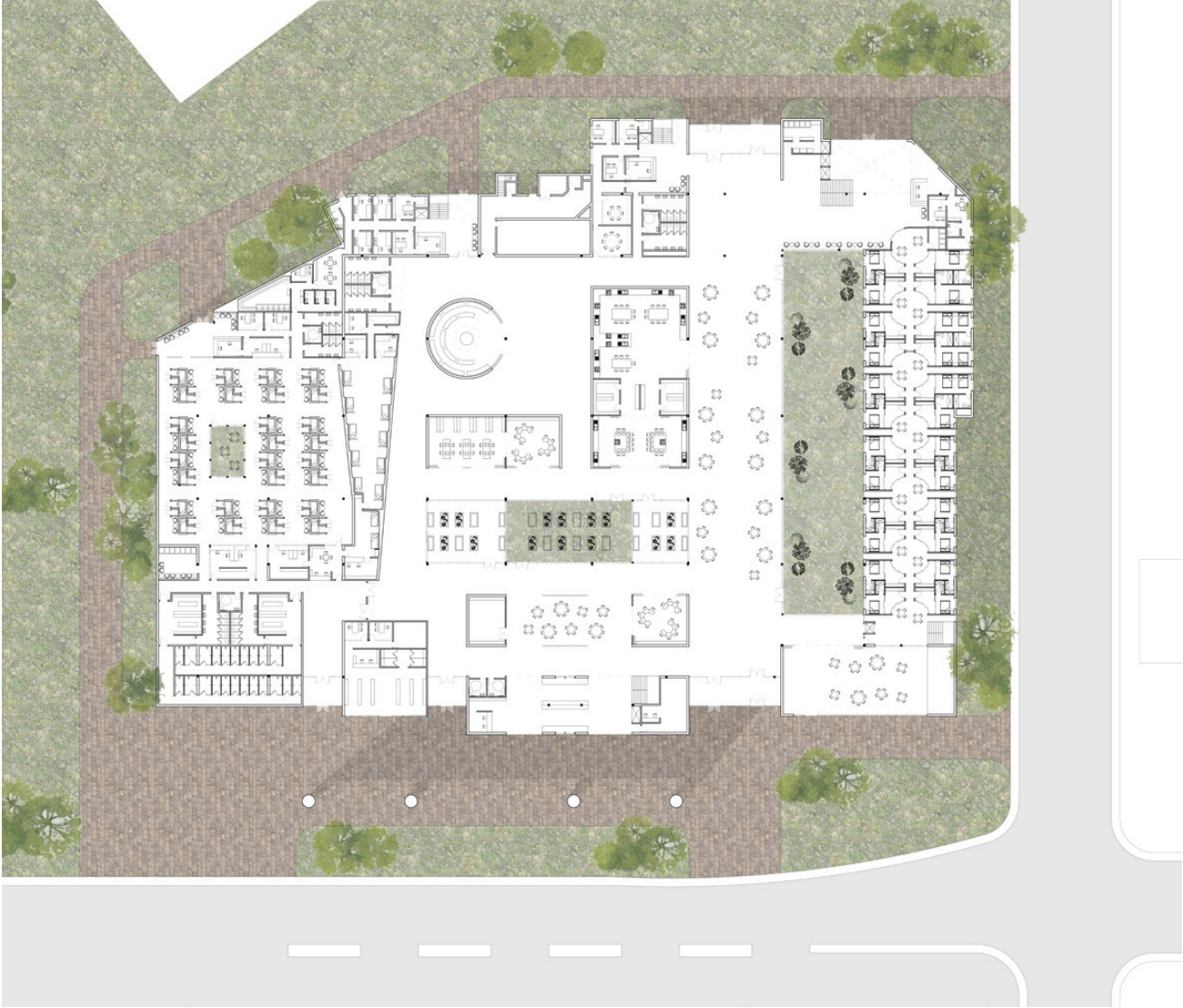
Proposed site plan.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to demonstrate the necessity of the architect's participation in the development of a socially sustainable future and how the role of the architect could evolve to support this hopeful future. Architects are in a position to impact how the built environment evolves through time and should have a responsibility in considering how architecture can be utilized to address social inequalities.

To achieve this, current methodology relating to the completion of socially focused design projects was examined and built upon. Through this process, an understanding was gained of how the architect could have a role in forming and developing projects based on need, and in turn have a hand in developing a socially sustainable future. This methodology also considers how these projects could be successfully completed so as to not negatively impact the communities that they serve.

Becoming the Advocate

This thesis reviews the steps of this method, in part, through a design test to demonstrate its effectualness and considerations to take when responding to needs within communities. This thesis presents a comprehensive design response to the need identified, acting as both an example for the methodology presented and an opportunity for discussions to occur surrounding the potential implementation of this design response so that the need identified can be addressed.

Directly, this project is an example of how architects can become advocates and use architecture as a tool to address social inequalities. There is much that must happen

for this evolution to be realized and implemented within the architectural profession, but it is a necessary pursuit for the profession to take if we dare to hope of a sustainable future.

Architecture should be for all, and I have hopes for a future where it is.

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