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# The Collective Object: Realizing Collective Space in an Era of Bigness

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# THE COLLECTIVE OBJECT:

## REALIZING COLLECTIVE SPACE IN AN ERA OF BIGNESS

This Thesis is Presented to the

Faculty of the Department of Architecture  
College of Architecture and Construction Management

by

Laura Melissa Sherman

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree

Bachelor of Architecture

Kennesaw State University  
Marietta, Georgia

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Thesis Collaborative 2016 - 2017  
Request for Approval

Kennesaw State University  
Department of Architecture

Full Name: **Laura Melissa Sherman**

Thesis Title: **The Collective Object:** Realizing Collective Space in an Era of Bigness

Thesis Summary: Architecture reacted to the Technological Revolution of the late 19th century with inspired proposals of optimistic expectation for the new era. The advancements of elevators, escalators and air conditioning meant a new era for the scale and scope of the built environment. However, society quickly realized the advantageous reality of this technology: their buildings no longer needed the cities which surrounded them. Endless interiors and “cities-within-cities” meant the choice to never again interact with the undesirables of the true city. A trend of self-interested architectures affected urban societies with a cultural shift towards the exclusion that their cities embodied. **This thesis proposes to revitalize the gathering potentials of the city through the design of a collective object in an era of architectural “bigness”.**

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Professor Elizabeth Martin

## Dedication

Gratitudes from the Author

*“How  
Did the rose  
Ever open its heart  
And give to this world  
All its  
Beauty?”*

*It felt the encouragement of light  
Against its  
Being,*

*Otherwise,  
We all remain  
Too  
Frightened.”*

- Hafiz

**This thesis is dedicated to:**

Ben Pinckney  
for your endless love and support,

Halima Mendoza,  
for your unconditional friendship,

& to my family: John, Esther, R.J. and Patrick Sherman  
for your encouragement and light.

## Acknowledgments

Gratitudes from the Author

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**Goldgeier Family**

for your scholarship, and even greater, the extension of your family's camaraderie. I am grateful for your involvement in my academic and personal growth.

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for your scholarships, which have allowed me the ability to pursue this degree without hindrance.

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## 1.1 OVERVIEW

Architecture reacted to the Technological Revolution of the late 19th century with inspired proposals of optimistic expectation for the new era. The advancements of elevators, escalators and air conditioning meant almost limitless potential for the scale and scope of the built environment. However, society quickly realized the advantageous reality of this technology: Their buildings no longer needed the cities which surrounded them.

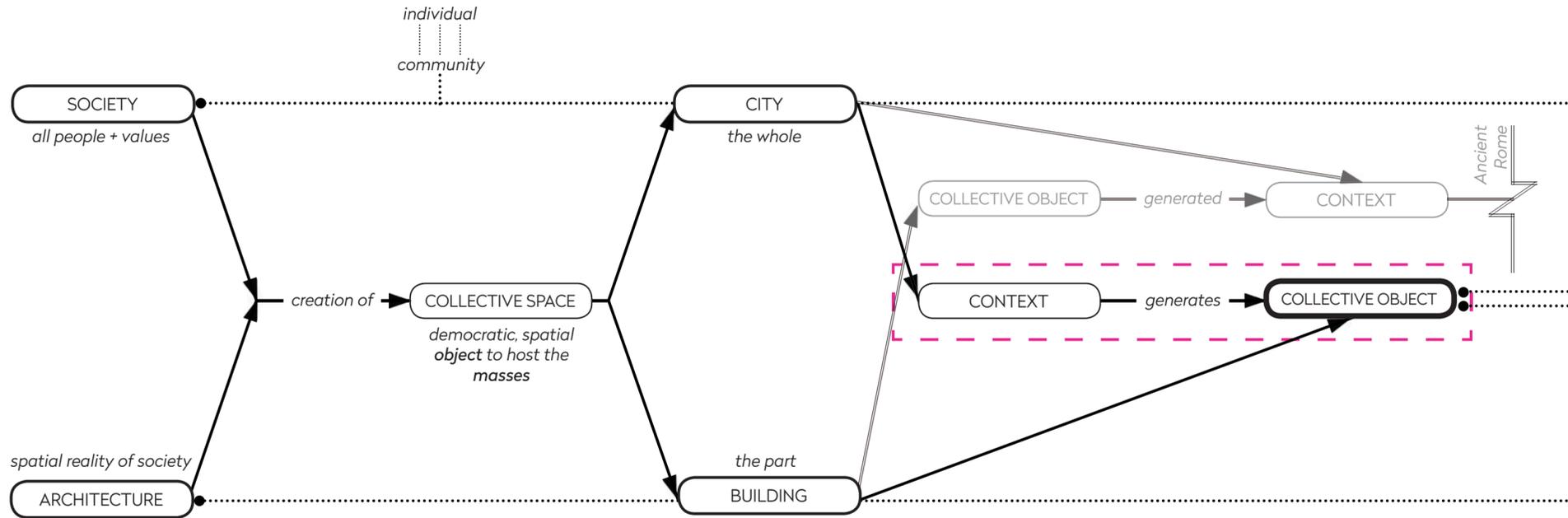
Endless interiors and “cities-within-cities” meant the possibility of a lifestyle where people could choose to never again interact with the undesirables of the true city.

**The built environment actively resisted the collective.**

A trend of self-interested architectures affected urban societies with a cultural shift towards the exclusion that their cities embodied. This phenomenon, termed “Bigness” by Rem Koolhaas, is also linked to his essay, “Atlanta”, where he critiqued John Portman’s network of sky bridges for producing this supremacist phenomenon and suggested Atlanta as “the real city at the end of the 20th century”.

By studying the evolution and devolution of the collective objects which once gathered the masses of society, this research seeks to understand how the loss of these spaces links to shifts in cultural values throughout history. This leads to an awareness of how “Bigness” affects a disposition of exclusion in contemporary culture. This thesis proposes to revitalize the gathering potentials of the city to create a culture of inclusion through the design of a new collective object in an era of architectural “bigness”.

**Flow Chart**  
Diagrammatic Representation of the Emergence of the Collective Object

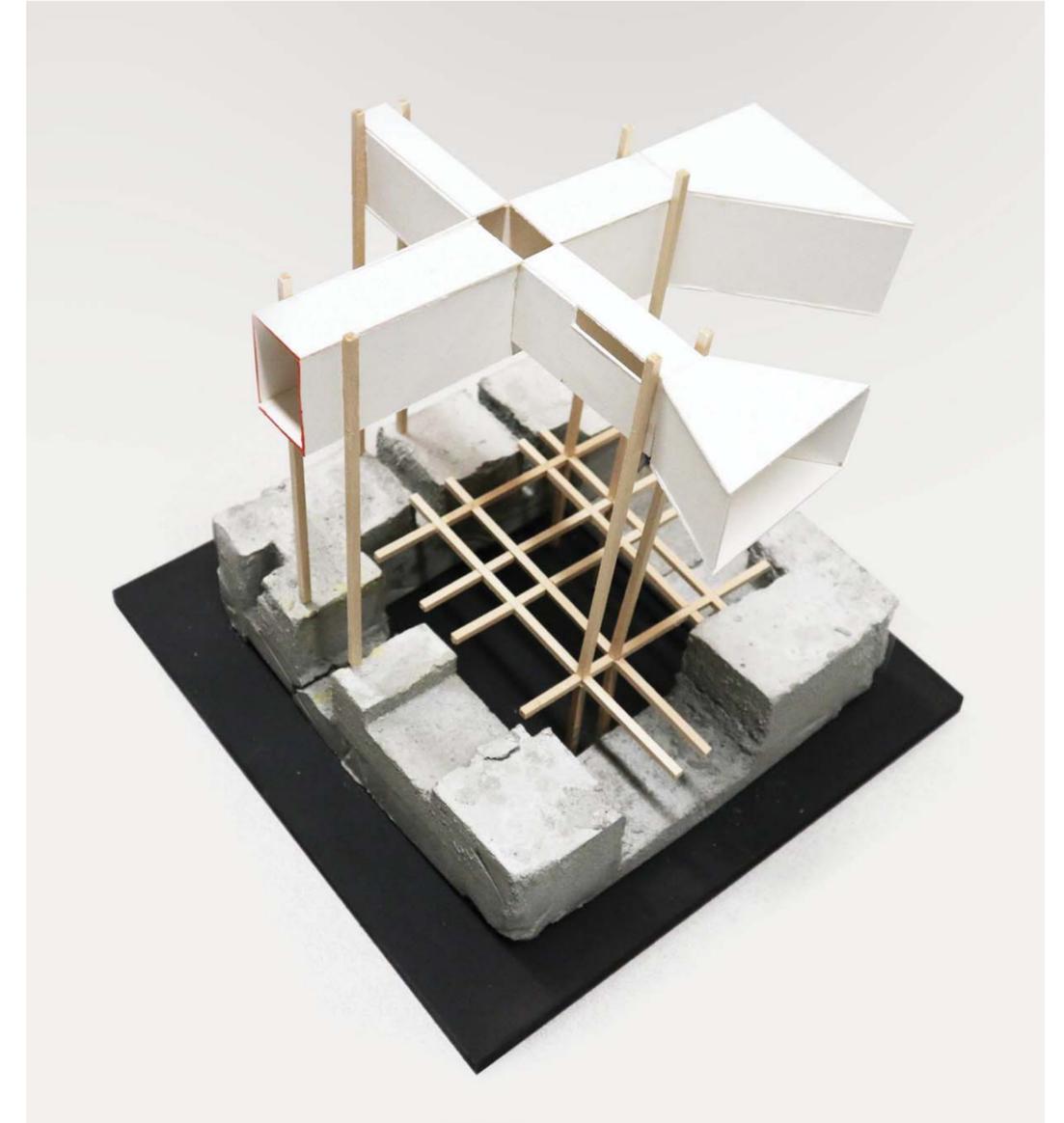


This flow chart depicts that collective space is a creation of society and architecture. It is defined as a democratic, spatial object for hosting the collective (hence, "collective object"). This flow chart proposes a flip in the generative qualities of collective space. Rather than the antiquated form of collective space forming the city, this proposal reverses the narrative. Here, the collective object will be formed by the existing city.

**Thesis Artifact**  
Sculpture Illustrating Thesis Concept

In this sculpture, concrete represents the resilience of the existing urban fabric as a framework. Wooden dowels read and pull out of the concrete voids and inform an entirely new object. The collective forms the part.

The sculpture translates out of the previously shown flow chart diagram. In a post-urban landscape, this is to be interpreted as the city forming its own collective object at points of urban discontinuity. The object is a "part" operating and gathering the "whole" of the city.



## 1.2 ABSTRACT

The contemporary metropolis is in a state of inversion. Its collective spaces have diminished due to the increasing privatization of urban life. Buildings independent of the surrounding city have demonstrated a trend of architecture acting as a tool for exclusion. Problematized by the theoretical projects of Rem Koolhaas and other 20th century architects, the condition exists as a reality today. This thesis intends to form a collective object in Atlanta by structuring a dialogue where the collective object is informed by its site context.

This research will first examine the current state of collective space and develop the case for its reestablishment. The contemporary American metropolis lacks significant space for civic life. The collective object was once the very nucleus of the ancient city. The potential to gather was the driving force of humanity's urbanization. The city has since lost this primordial origin indicated by ancient Greek and Roman city planning. Derived from the Greek agora, the nucleus of the Roman city was the forum: a collective object which was integral in the formation and functioning of ancient cities. This foundation for societal exchange was typically the first urban element designated in the founding of new cities.

However, the existence of the collective object has since diminished. Cities are now characterized by isolation within an urban fabric of growing density and diversity. Our populace has lost the object of its urbanization. The vital role of civic buildings during antiquity can be understood through the maps of Giambattista Nolli. In the 18th century, he captured the urban dialogue of Rome by mapping the dynamic relationship between civic buildings and the city. His contribution demonstrated the significance of the collective object as Rome deemed its public institutions no less infrastructural than streets.

Over time, the changing common values of western society diminished such public institutions. The power of buildings to act as collectors shifted to other typologies, like markets and churches. These new collective objects were far less democratic. The final truly democratic space of the public

library would also contend to survive in a changing world. The disintegration of the public sphere in the city was a theme for many 20th century philosophers and architects. Kenneth Frampton's "The Status of Man and the Status of His Objects" revealed concern that the loss of society's values attributed to "the effect of atomizing the public building". Rem Koolhaas's essay on "Bigness" discussed the opportunity for architecture to "reinvent the collective" because "the exterior of the city is no longer a collective theater... there's no collective 'it' left."

In Atlanta, a trend of pseudo-public mall interiors and sky-bridges demonstrated that architecture could be used as tool for exclusion. Instead, this thesis proposes architecture as a tool for inclusion. My research seeks to advocate for architecture's potential as collective object. Returning collective space to the urban context will ultimately restore the object of our urbanization and renew the city as a collective right.

## RESEARCH

## 2.1 BIGNESS : PROBLEM OF THE LARGE

“One hundred years ago, a generation of conceptual breakthroughs and supporting technologies unleashed an architectural BIG BANG.

By randomizing circulation, short circuiting distance, artificializing interiors, reducing mass, stretching dimensions, and accelerating construction, the elevator, electricity, air-conditioning, steel, and finally, the new infrastructures formed a cluster of mutations that induced **another species of architecture.**

The combined effects of these inventions were structures taller and deeper-BIGGER-than ever before conceived, with a parallel potential for the **reorganization of the social world** – a vastly richer programming.”

(Koolhaas, 1995)

“Bigness (or the problem of Large)” in S, M, L, XL  
Rem Koolhaas  
1995

This essay outlines five theorems which consider that beyond a certain scale, architecture acquires the properties of bigness. The distance between the core and envelope is ever increasing with the establishment of the elevator and other technological advancements. Through these advancements, scale, architectural composition, tradition, transparency and ethics break. The most radical break is that bigness is no longer part of any tissue. “It exists; at most, it coexists.” (Koolhaas, 1995)

Listing the property of “Bigness” as a sort of building species, Koolhaas states that beyond a certain scale, architecture embodies an ideological problem.

This new species of architecture is a result of technologies which resulted in the elevator, electricity and air-conditioning. It has a potential to reorganize the social world.

‘Bigness’ supports the inquiry of this thesis on the contemporary state of the interiorized city which inverts the condition presented by Giambattista Nolli on ancient Rome.

“The exterior of **the city** is no longer a **collective theater** where ‘it’ happens; there’s no collective ‘it’ left. The street has become residue...”

(Koolhaas, 1995)

“**Bigness** no longer needs the city: it competes with the city; it preempts the city; or better still, it is the city.”

(Koolhaas, 1995)

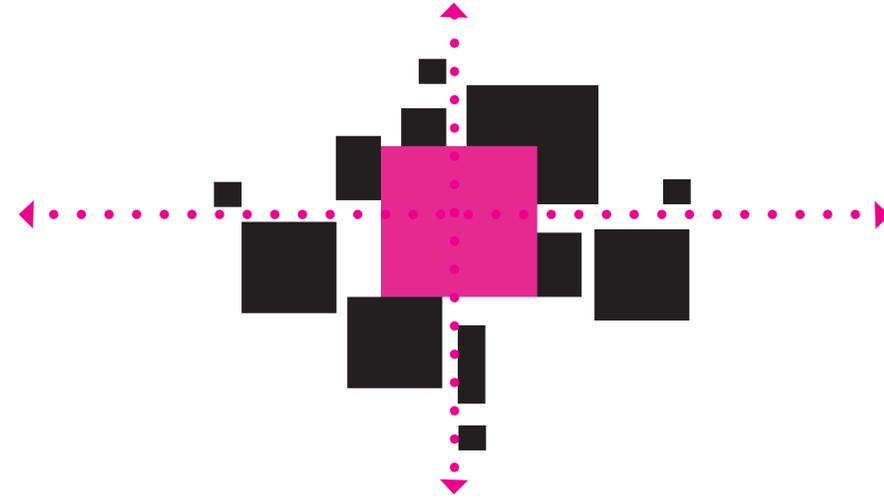
## 2.2 BEFORE BIGNESS

The following research serves as supporting evidence on the loss of a collective object through a brief historical analysis supporting a critical need for the reintroduction of a new urban center today.

To open the discussion on why the theorem of this thesis will mainly center about ancient Rome, Richard Sennett, a 20th century sociologist wrote, "Modern times are often compared to the years the Roman Empire went into decline: Just as moral rotteness is supposed to have sapped Rome's power to rule the West, it is said to have sapped the modern West's power to rule the globe. For all the silliness of this notion, it contains an element of truth. There is a rough parallel between the crisis of Roman society after the death of Augustus and present-day life; it concerns the balance of public and private life." (Sennett, 1996)

Using Sennett's *The Fall of Public Man* as an insertion point, the section of the text titled "Dead Public Space" begins to recognize "large-scale, high-density buildings" as a reason for the proliferation of dead and meaningless public space. In a critique of Gordon Bunshaft's Lever House, Sennett states, "No diversity of activity takes place on the ground floor; it is only a means of passage to the interior. The form of this International-type skyscraper is at odds with its function, for a miniature public square revived is declared in form, but the function destroys the nature of a public square, which is to intermix persons and diverse activities." (Sennett, 1996)

The primordial nucleus of the city has been phased out by a society which values consumption over community. The agora, which served as a collector to gather the masses and the forum as a platform for common discourse, was rendered obsolete. A societal fixation on commerce left little territory for places on which the city was founded. Places for community and democracy were reduced to a handful of building types, fragmented from the original foundation of an urban core.



**"We need to emphasize some parts and subordinate others, and the best way to do this in town design is to have definite centres. The effect of our public buildings is lost if they are scattered indiscriminately about in the town..."**

(Unwin, 1909)

### Greek Agora Classical Era

The Greek agora was centrally located in ancient Greek city-states. The meaning of 'agora' is "gathering place". It served a twin function of being a political and commercial space and later functioned as the city marketplace. The agora was significant to Athens. It is where philosophers like Socrates and Plato created their philosophical dialogues on life.

Its importance has echoed through time. It was a topic for Raymond Unwin's "Town Planning in Practice" where he stated "The Greek city is marked alike by the unpretentious character of its private dwelling-houses and the splendour of its public building and meeting-places. The great central feature of the town was the agora. (Mark, 2009)

"They seem to have been two kinds of agorae: 1) a great meeting place where the people assembled for public functions, and 2) other meeting places, usually smaller, where they met for traffic and trade. These two open spaces were surrounded with peristyles or colonnades, often of two storeys in height, forming shady walks and meeting places." (Unwin, 1909)

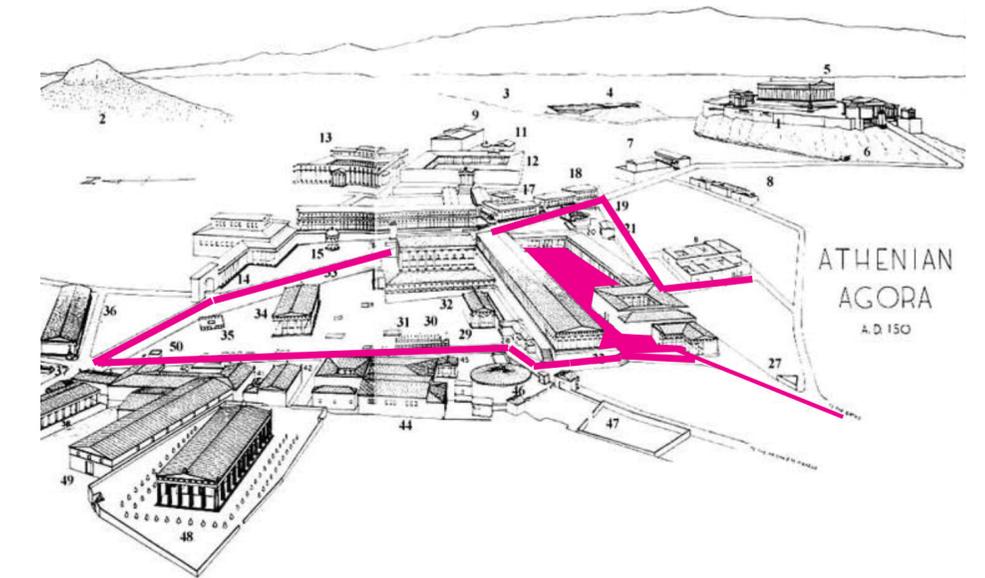
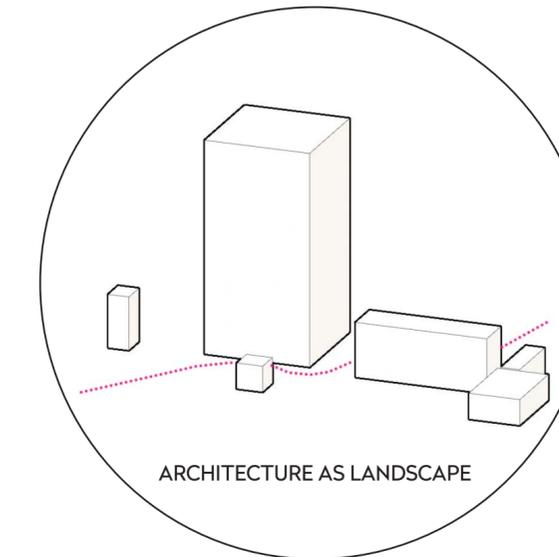
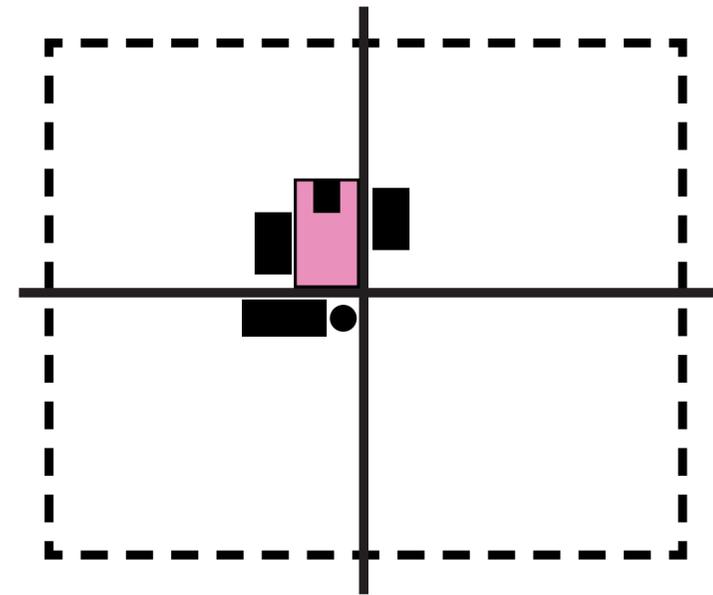
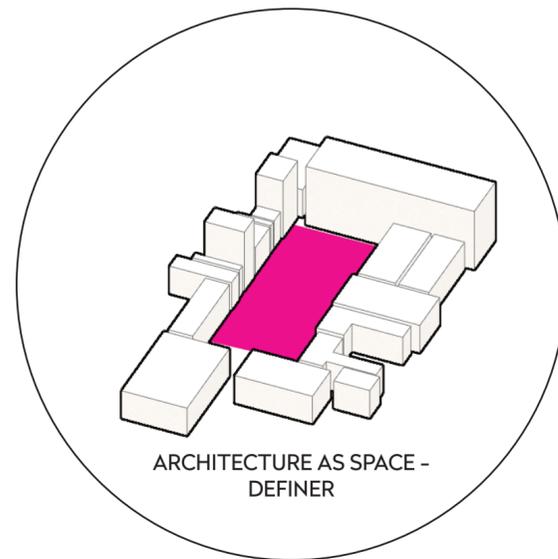


fig 2.2.1  
Athenian Agora

## Roman Forum

cir. 500 B.C.

The Roman forum followed the agora. It served the same functions preceded by the Greeks. This platform for public events was planned into the Roman city. The Pomerium (right figure) was planned with two principal streets (the Cardo and Decumanus) and the forum (orange) was positioned at the intersection of these axes of movement. Public buildings were made adjacent to the forum such as the basilica and other temples. (Trachtenberg, Hyman, 2003)



## Pope Sixtus V Plan for Rome

16th century

Pope Sixtus V brought about the Baroque order in Rome by reacting to the urban need for unity under the Church. At the time, the church was the collective object of a primarily Christian society. His plan for Rome used the Egyptian obelisks found in Rome and placed them at points in the city. This master plan generated an urban design which asserted the power of the Church. This concept illustrates the power of a point in space as a design force.

In *Design of Cities*, Edmund Bacon [fig 2.2.2] argued that this schema of spatial articulation was due to the discovery of perspective in the 15th century. He said it was "not manipulation of mass but as articulation of experience along an axis of movement through space."

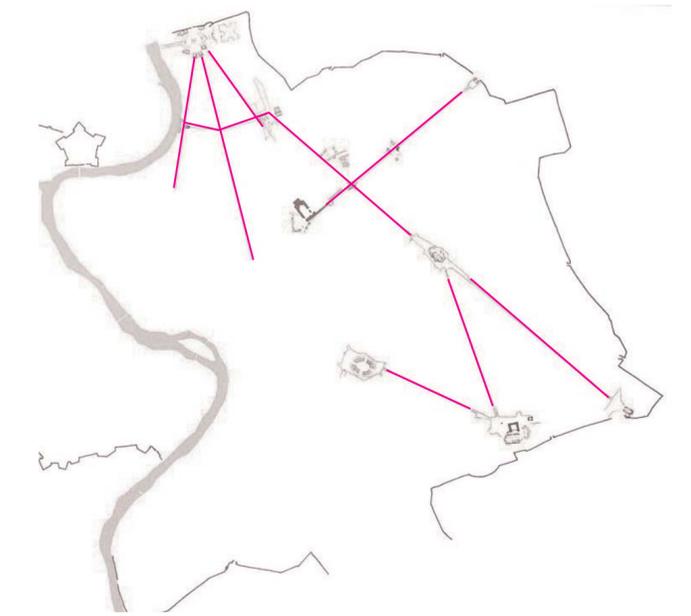
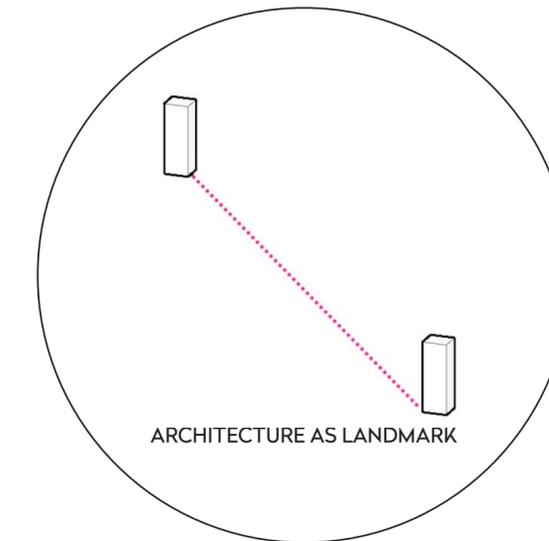


fig 2.2.2  
Pope Sixtus V Plan for Rome

## The Architecture of the Classical Interior

Steven W. Semes  
2004

The axis of vista and movement is explored and cataloged by Semes who states, "...classical design is a continuum operating at different scales: What is whole at one scale is a part at a larger scale. The room, the building, and the city share the same compositional process of formal articulation, distinguished only by their different scales and the particular tools that are proper to each." (Semes, 2004)

Semes elaborates on the 'enfilade', where the axis of vista is always in line with the axis of movement, "so that the enfilade beckons us to walk through the rooms along this line, even if other routes are available to us. In Rome, this composition was typical, only morphing for topography and context.

His work reveals a time in history where the role of architecture moved beyond a single object. Its influence pushed outward, blending into its context and in turn, being generated and informed by it.

An ensemble of rooms: a selection of plan types.

A. Axial links: Baths of Caracalla, Rome, third century.  
B. Radial axes: Hadrian's Villa, Tivoli, second century.  
C. Enfilade: Champs, by Bullet de Cham-blain, 1701-07.  
D. Non-axial enfilade: Palazzo Borghese, Rome, by Flaminio Ponzio, ca. 1610.  
E. Shifted axes: Hotel Matignon, Paris, 1720-24.  
F. Shifted axes: Heathcote, Ilkley, by Sir Edwin Lutyens, 1906.

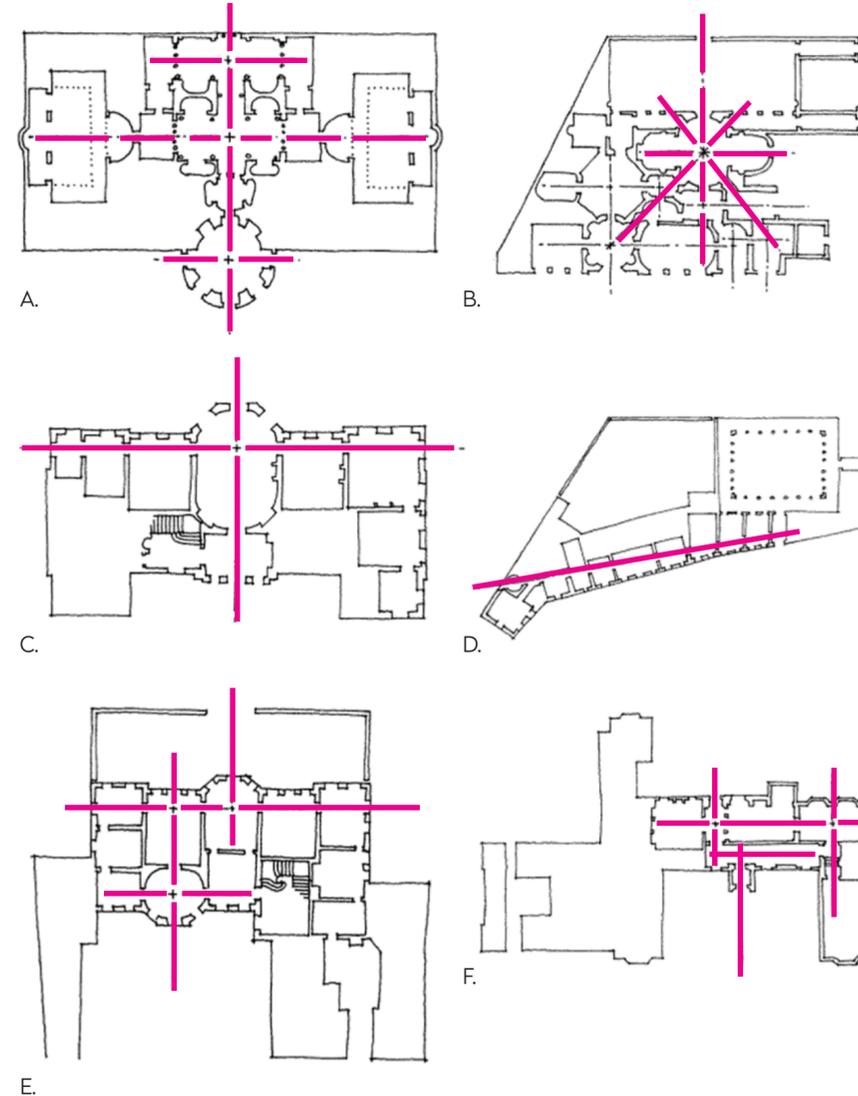


fig 2.2.3

## Map of Rome

Giambattista Nolli  
1748

The 18th century map of Rome (fig 2.2.4) created by Giambattista Nolli was the first map of its kind to make distinctions beyond traditional figure-ground representation. The indoor versus outdoor spatial variation is not the primary concern of Nolli's mapping strategy. The solid and private space frames and defines the void and public spaces. The map reveals an urban culture where streets and public institutions are of equal infrastructural importance. James Tice states that, "**The context conditions the building and the building in turn exerts an outward pressure on the city fabric.** The dialectical relationship between buildings and their context—a two way street—suggests a dynamic interplay between solid and void, figure and ground and the new and the old. **The evolution of the city and its formal and spatial structure, therefore, is seen, not as a static proposition, but rather as a dynamic, highly charged and even volatile discourse of competing pressures, issues, needs, and desires—both in urban and human terms.**"

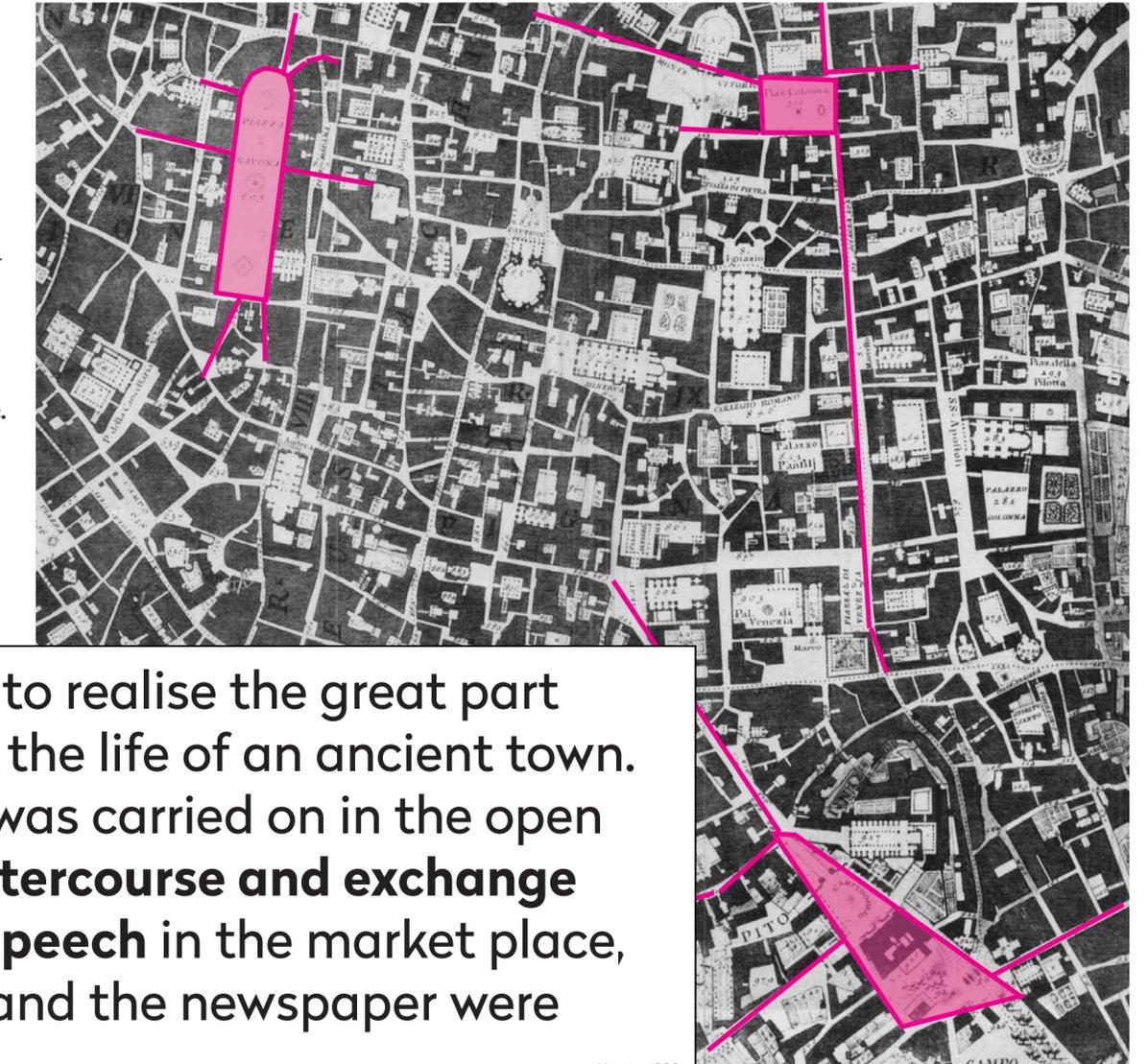


fig 2.2.4

"It is not easy for us today to realise the great part which the centre played in the life of an ancient town. So much more of that life was carried on in the open air, so much more of the **intercourse and exchange of ideas was effected by speech** in the market place, in the days when printing and the newspaper were unknown."

(Unwin, 1909)

"What is **whole** at one scale is **part** at a larger scale."

(Semes, 2004)

## 2.3 TIMELINE TO POST-URBAN

### The Emergent Non-Relationship of Architecture and Site

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

EMERGING THEORIES + PROJECTS

800 B.C. - 500 B.C.  
The Greek Agora emerges. Meaning "gathering place", it was a political and commercial space.

A.D. 450 - 1500  
Churches and cathedrals are defined gathering places. Society is unified under a singular entity of a combined church and state.  
(Middle Ages 1100 to 1453)

1600 - 1700  
Classical architecture is defined the axis. The room is not separate from the context of the city.  
(Enlightenment 1685-1815)

1800 - 1850  
Parks emerged as urban projects intended to be visibly isolated from the city for 'refreshment of mind and body'. (Glazer, Lilla, 2016)  
(Romanticism 1800 to 1850)

1850s-1900s  
The modern city is formed from new technologies. The car, elevator and air conditioner gave rise to mega-form architecture and highways, changing the city.

1920s -  
Autonomous architecture rises with the modern architecture movement. Utopian ideals take the forms of shopping malls, tabula-rasa cities and plans embracing the progress of technology.

TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION



fig 2.3.1

1924

Ville Radieuse (The Radiant City)  
Le Corbusier

Urban master plan aligned with the modernist ideals of progress which encouraged annihilation of tradition. The plan emerged from tabula rasa and introduced a utopian concept of zoning. Le Corbusier explained "The city of today is a he city of today is a dying thing because its planning is not in the proportion of geometrical one fourth. The result of a true geometrical lay-out is repetition, The result of repetition is a standard. The perfect form."

1972



fig 2.3.2

Exodus, or the voluntary prisoners of architecture  
Rem Koolhaas

Koolhaas's Architectural Association thesis defined the wall as a condition of freedom by self-imprisonment. The title is an allusion to Cold War West Berlin but it is used as a fictional scenario for the contemporary metropolis.

1973



fig 2.3.3

Centers for the urban environment: survival of the cities  
Victor Gruen

Known for the creation of the American shopping mall, Gruen, the author of this text would eventually lead to the term coined, "The Gruen Effect".

The text outlines a theoretical sketch of the shopping mall as a remedy for suburbia. He envisioned climate-controlled utopia with a grand center court made to mimic a town square. The exterior would be blank in contrast to a dazzling interior.

This would eventually lead to his creation of Southdale Mall, the first of the American shopping mall typology. The mall was so successful, many more spread rampantly across the globe.

1983



fig 2.3.4

Bernard Tschumi wins commission to design Parc de la Villette. His proposal insisted that there is no architecture without events, actions or activity. His work recognizes "that buildings respond to and intensify the activities that occur within them, and that events alter and creatively extend the structures that contain them. In other words, architecture is not defined by its "formal" container, but rather by its combinations of spaces, movements, and events."

1993

Bigness and the Problem of Large  
Rem Koolhaas

Subtitled "Species"  
Five theorems implying that beyond a certain scale, architecture acquires the properties of bigness. The distance between the core and envelope is ever increasing with the establishment of the elevator. Scale, architectural composition, tradition, transparency and ethics break. The most radical break is that bigness is no longer part of any tissue. "It exists; at most, it coexists."

1999

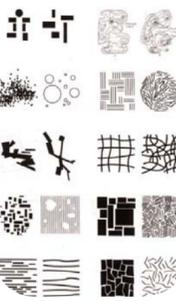


fig 2.3.5

Points + Lines: Diagrams and Projects for the City  
Stan Allen

Contextual tactics on architectural strategies of how to approach the city form a user manual which uses Allen's work as a point of departure.

2005

The Infrastructural Space of Appearance  
Neeraj Bhatia

This thesis connects architecture with the work of philosopher Hannah Arendt to argue that the built environment requires a "public space of appearance". Where this need was once met by the library, the less material-bound our media becomes, the greater this type of space is threatened.



fig 2.3.6

2007



fig 2.3.7

Without and Within: Essays on Territory and the Interior  
Mark Pimlott

Remarks concerning the endless interior which has become the pre-eminent architectural typology. Pimlott argues essays about the relationships of pivotal buildings to their surroundings. The nature of the North American built environment is revealed as territorial and permeated with utopian ideals. Here, he addresses a typology which addresses how the city resorted to the fake utopias of the mall and atrium.

2015

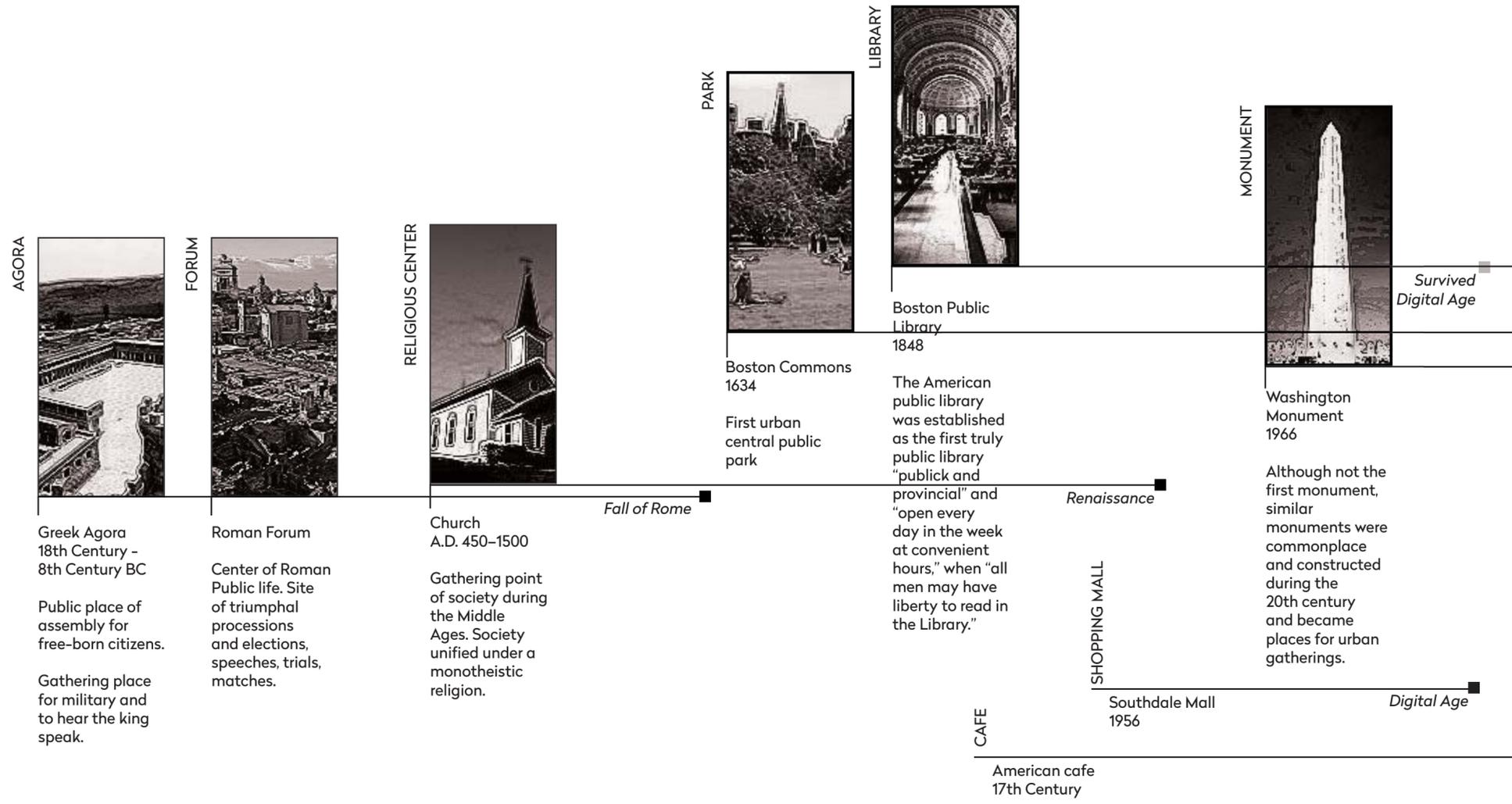
Niche Tactics: Generative Relationships Between Architecture and Site  
Caroline O'Donnell

Develops the analogy that architecture is to site what organism is to environment. This text investigates moments when architecture and urban site were productively intertwined. This suggests that attention to site creates a generative language for architecture.



fig 2.3.8

## 2.4 EVOLUTION AND DEVOLUTION OF THE COLLECTIVE OBJECT



**Interview**  
 Neeraj Bhatia  
 2017

RA, MS.Arch, B.Arch, B.E.S

Principal  
 THE OPEN WORKSHOP  
 San Francisco, CA

Assistant Professor  
 CALIFORNIA COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

Co-Director, URBAN WORKS AGENCY

**Q. Laura Sherman**

1. If public institutions like the library and communication at large are now becoming immaterial/digital, what program will they become? (Or will they eventually phase out?)
2. Is a dialogue between architecture and its site context especially important to the success of public architecture?
3. In what ways are infrastructures (public transit, highways) making cities better or worse?
4. Do we still need places like the ancient agora/forum to gather?
5. There is a condition in Atlanta caused by networks of "sky-bridges" which connect several high-rises in the downtown urban core. This allows people to move around the city without having to step outside of a building. Is there reason to be concerned that architecture has the ability to separate itself from the city around it?

**A. Neeraj Bhatia**

1. I am not concerned about the shift in the mediated forms — **I think the library is a cultural and political institution more than anything else. It acts as a space to bring people together and reaffirm democracy** — whether it is holding books, cds, or kindle stations — this role will always be there. I.e. **its role isn't merely pragmatically to hold stuff, but more importantly to reaffirm values of open access**
2. Yes of course, I think this is really important — particularly with civic buildings. But context isn't simply to replicate massing, materials, etc of a surroundings. I would advocate for a deeper understanding of context through understanding the socio-political and cultural context of the site and the people who will use the building
3. I think certain infrastructures are "more democratic" than others — i.e. a sidewalk anyone can use, a bike lane requires a modest investment, mass transit as well. But highways require a car and several people can afford those. **I think we need more infrastructure that touches more people.**
4. I really think we do in some sense. It is much more powerful and real to see people together than through mediated technology
5. **It depends if these bridges are open to everyone or just people in the offices. If they are exclusive then yes it disconnects itself, if they are publicly open (and any actions are allowed in them as you would find in the street) then it may not be a big problem.**

(N. Bhatia, personal communication, January 6, 2017)

## 2.5 LOSING THE CENTER : OPTIMISTIC BIGNESS OF THE 20TH CENTURY

After the Technological Revolution (or Second Industrial Revolution) of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the built environment embodied a scale of unfamiliar proportion. The uncharted territory presented itself to the architectural community and was met with great enthusiasm. Several projects surfaced showcasing theories on how the new era could sow the inventions of the past century.

The atmosphere of the subsequent ventures were boldly idealistic. Such ideas centered around literally rebuilding and reordering the cities of the world for maximizing density, short-circuiting travel, and harnessing the apparent limitlessness of industrialized standardization.

Often, these urbanist projects disregarded any true spatial center. The historical analysis revealed the importance of a true critical center for the masses to gather. This thesis proposes that the unfamiliar proportions of urban “bigness” contributed to society’s disassociation with city centers of antiquity.

This section explores and analyzes these projects for their individual manifestos. Extracting their innovations and criticisms will funnel into a solution for the urban issues of the 21st century.

“[Architecture] has become dispersed, diffused, distributed across many sites, and finally, virtually present across all sites, **until it has achieved complete command, complete interiority**, and with it, the fantasised condition of the natural.

This condition is not natural, of course, but acutely artificial: a projection, whose determinations and representations are workings of ideology. This projection does not meet the unknown, the other or the world, but supersedes them, **replacing them with its conditions and workings, with its illusions of transparency, naturalness and freedom.**”

(Pimlott, 2007)

**Ville Radiuese**  
Le Corbusier  
1924

Ville Radiuese is an urban master plan proposal for a tabula rasa site in one of the European cities. This radical proposal was aligned with the modernist ideals of progress which encouraged annihilation of tradition. (Merin, 2013)

The plan emerged from slated existing cities and introduced a utopian concept of zoning. Le Corbusier explained "The city of today is a dying thing because its planning is not in the proportion of geometrical one fourth. The result of a true geometrical lay-out is repetition, The result of repetition is a standard. The perfect form."

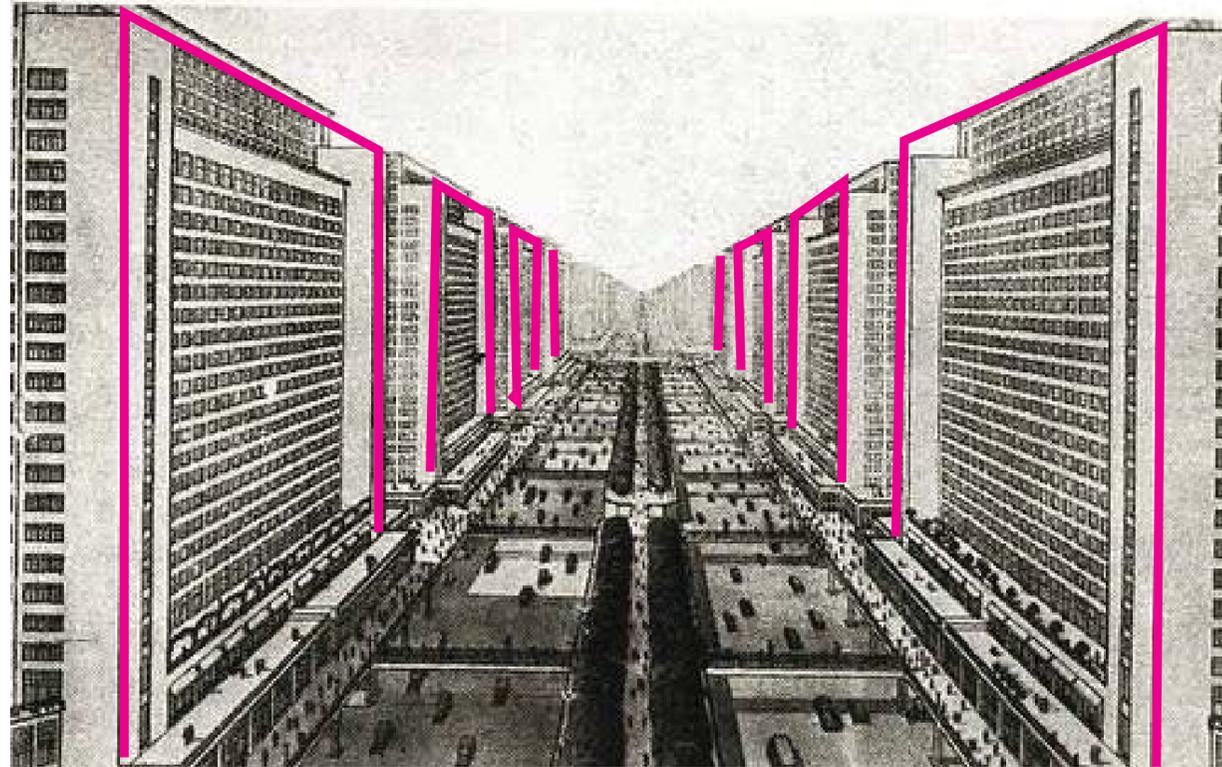


fig 25.1

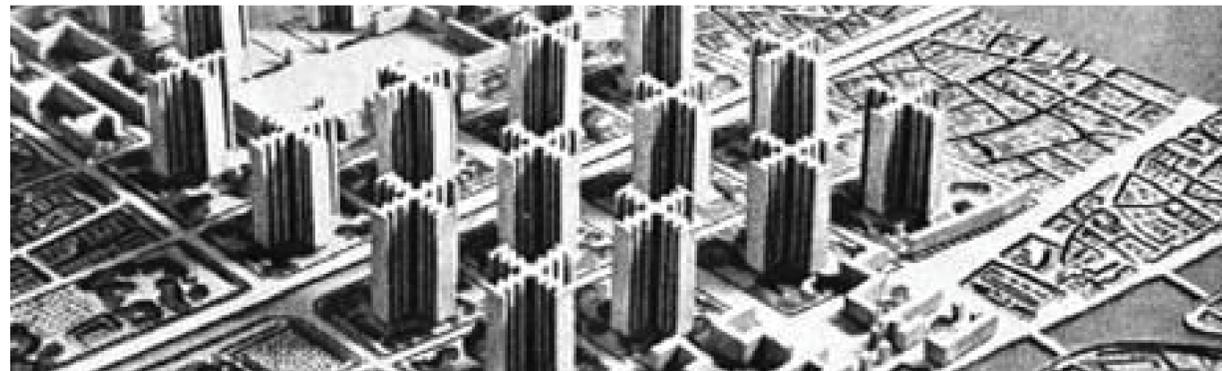


fig 25.2

Innovations	Criticisms
+ Embraces progress of modern industry	- Urban center is left undefined
+ Standardization and repetition allows for high accessibility	- Tabula rasa - built on the ground of demolished cities
+ Designed for equality and access to light and green space	- Zoning divides city into segregated districts

**Continuous Monument: An Architectural Model for Total Urbanization**  
Superstudio  
1969

These theoretical drawings by Superstudio are part of their book, *Superstudio: Life Without Objects* and use negative utopia with critical intent. The group intended to illustrate a conviction that a single architectural move across the world could "put cosmic order on earth." This was imagined as a near-future prediction.

Its pure form is reasoned to abandon all chaos of design and appear the only alternative to nature. Its purity is a byproduct of a "world rendered uniform by technology, culture, and all the other forms of imperialism." (Lang, 2003)

"The grid is fundamentally a symbol of fabrication – an artificial structure that holds its own determinacy and potentiality." (Lang, 2003)



fig 25.3



fig 25.4

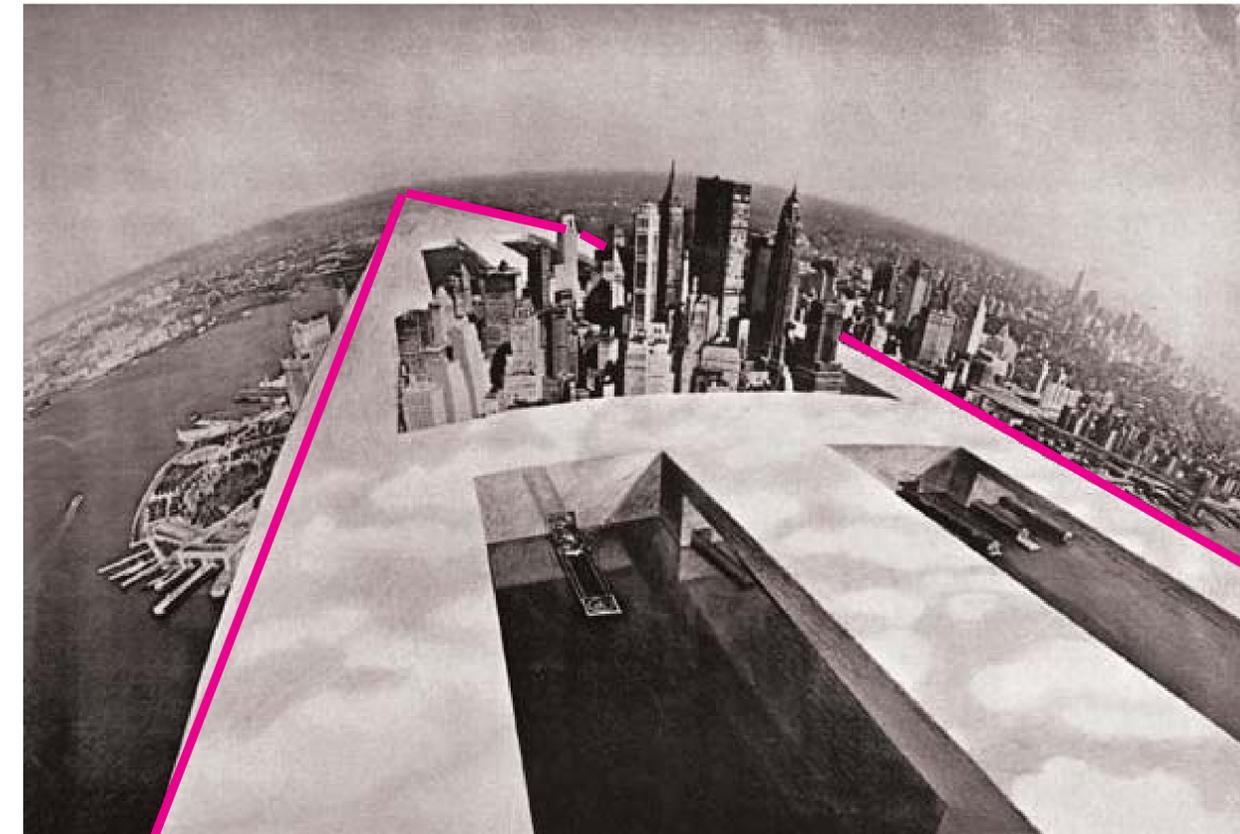


fig 25.5

Innovations	Criticisms
+ Embraces progress of modern industry	- Segregates inside and outside conditions
+ Gives order to built environment	- Does not allow for future change or alteration
+ Purity of the grid	- Design lacks details for human-scale potential interactions

**No-stop City**  
Archizoom  
1969

No-stop City is an unbuilt project of an infinitely extending interior grid. The interior is reimagined as a liberator to a society trapped in alienation. The City frees us with its blankness, its featurelessness, allowing us to be anyone anywhere. This was a method of progress defined by the very power which Archizoom critiqued.

The drawings show a continuous grid with short walls, interrupted only by natural features such as trees and mountains. The photographs illustrate the endless and featureless space in which humans live as campers in an artificial world decorated by bits of nature. (Artemel, 2013)

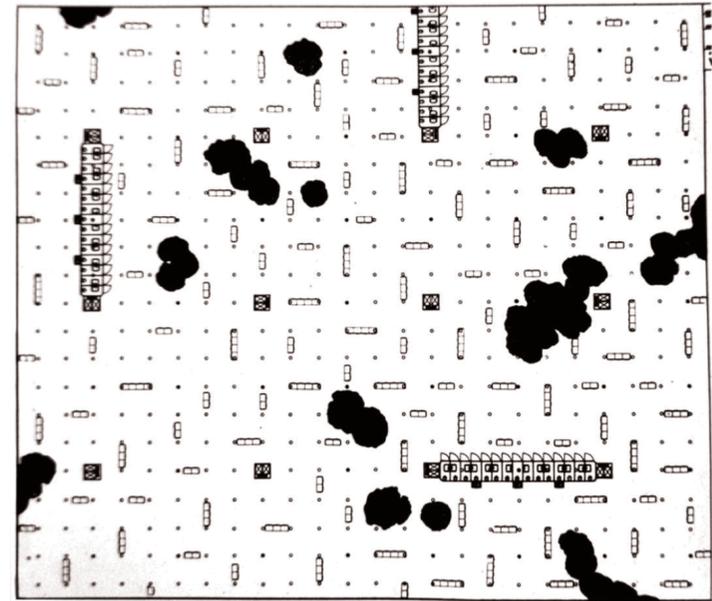


fig 2.5.6

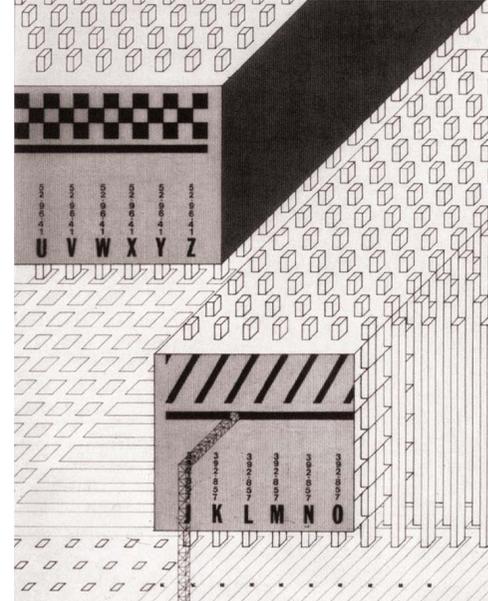


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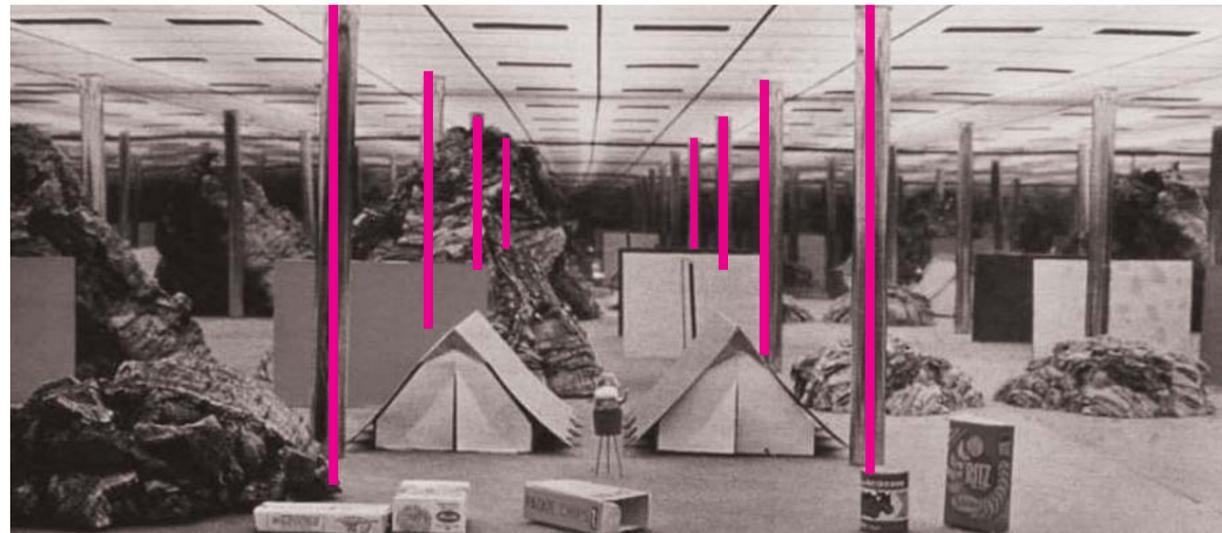


fig 2.5.8

Innovations	Criticisms
+ Embraces progress of modern industry	- Artificiality is part of design intent
+ Meant to solve urban alienations	- Lack of spatial hierarchy
+ Uses grid as ordering system for adaptations in use	- Repetition lacks intelligibility, Urban center is left undefined in use

**Competition for the New Administrative Center, Perugia**  
Mario Botta, Luigi Snozzi  
1971

This project proposes a megaform for an administrative center in Italy as documented by Kenneth Frampton in "Megaform as Urban Landscape" (1999). He describes Botta and Snozzi as Ticinese Neo-Rationalists.

A project for the Zurich terminus, the form retraces the line of the Sihl River. The project carries a parking garage which hovers above a rail line. The architecture is unique for a megaform, due to its high sensitivity and performativity to an existing site. By linking the rail and road infrastructure and acting as a palimpsest of a previously-existing topography, this project acts as its own manifesto for the potential of megaform buildings. (Frampton, 1999)

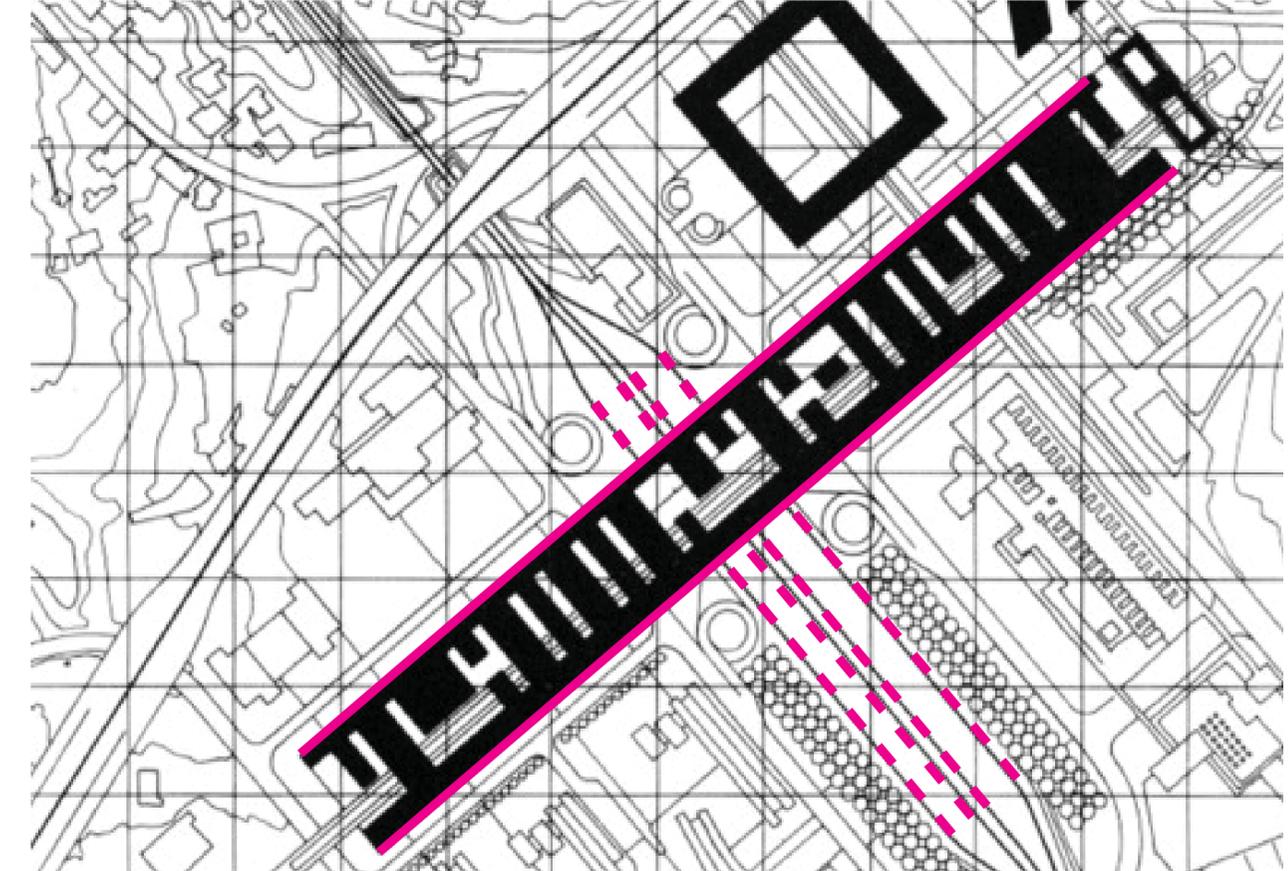


fig 2.5.9

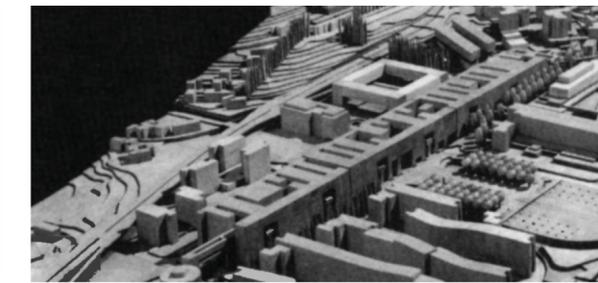


fig 2.5.10

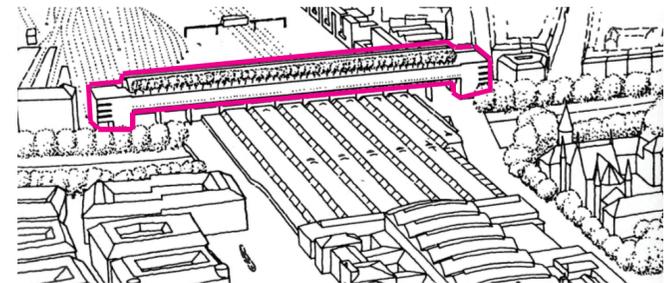


fig 2.5.11

Innovations	Criticisms
+ High sensitivity to context	- Lacks a defined spatial center
+ Architecture doubles as infrastructure	- Porosity lacks defined entry point
+ Establishes hierarchy to site	- Human-scale sensitivity is lacking

**Factory 798**  
Bernard Tschumi  
2004

Factory 798 is an architectural intervention which operates at an urban scale. The site of this project was occupied by an old manufacturing plant from the 1950s. The project contains the underpinnings of Tschumi's stance on urban transgression. For him, the intervention onto a site with existing systems is not one of destruction. Rather, the transgression he advocates for preserves the existing as a layer of juxtaposition.

The building is diagrammatically representative of a layer of progress floating above a layer of development. This is to create a dialogue between contrasting conditions.

Tschumi creates an architectural infrastructure which operates separately from the land below it. (Tschumi, 2004)

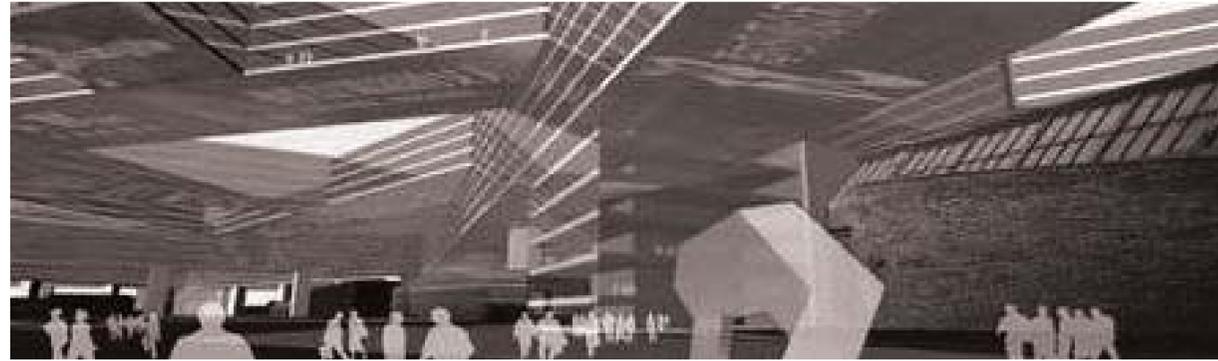


fig 2.5.12

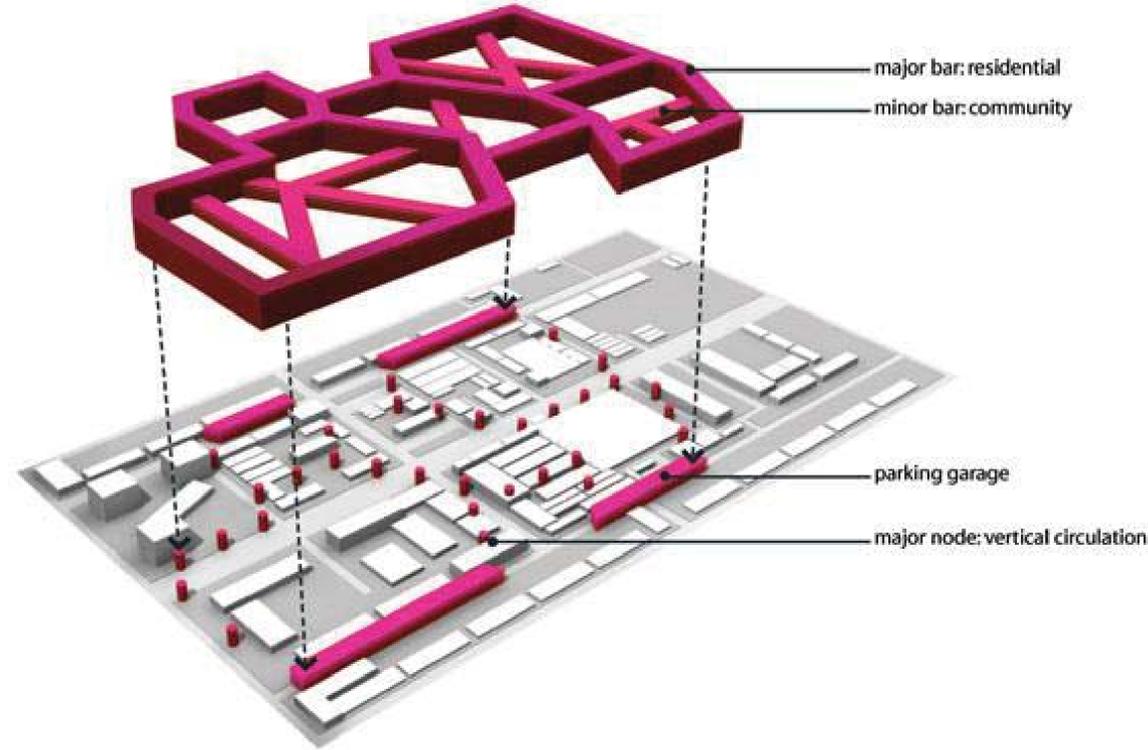


fig 2.5.13

Innovations	Criticisms
+ Preserves existing context	- Lacks relationship with ground
+ Juxtaposes new addition with existing construction	- Spatial order is not apparent
+ Adaptive reuse of obsolete historic program	- Urban center is left undefined

**In Grid We Trust**  
The Open Workshop  
2011

This proposal is for Manhattan's future where its characteristic street grid produces an "infrastructure of collective connection while subdividing (and connecting) a plurality of individual identities embodied within architecture and neighborhood districts."

The grid becomes a "unified collective structure" which connects New York's urban islands of the future. The grid became a frame for urban rooms and acted as a conduit for moving people and resources. (Bhatia, 2011)



fig 2.5.14

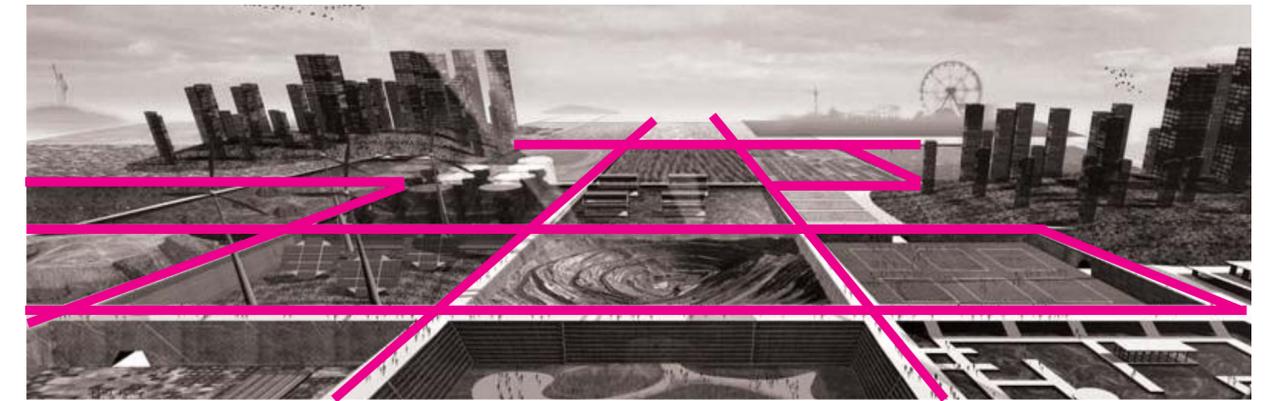


fig 2.5.15

Innovations	Criticisms
+ Embraces progress of modern industry	- Form is not affected by site context
+ Meant to solve urban alienations	- Lack of spatial hierarchy, Urban center is left undefined
+ Uses grid as ordering system	- Repetition lacks intelligibility

## 2.6 CONTENDING WITH THE SCALE OF THE CITY : PARC DE LA VILLETTE CASE STUDIES

Parc de la Villette was an international competition, 1982-83, to redesign an undeveloped plot of land from the national wholesale meat market in Paris, France. The site was a 125-acre expanse of massive proportion amidst a dense urban fabric. It presented the unique opportunity to design one of the last remaining blank slates in Paris.

The competition attracted several noteworthy architects among over 470 submissions. The entries illustrated their individual positions on architecture's role on the scale of the city.

Among them was, the winner, Bernard Tschumi, and Rem Koolhaas. The logic of the two proposals were totally contrasting and exposed their differences in design reason and urban theory.

These case studies provide insight on how two of the 20th century's most influential architects contended with the programming and design of urban surfaces rather than the enclosed objects of previous eras. In this way, the Parc de la Villette competition signaled a radical shift in architecture's scope of influence.

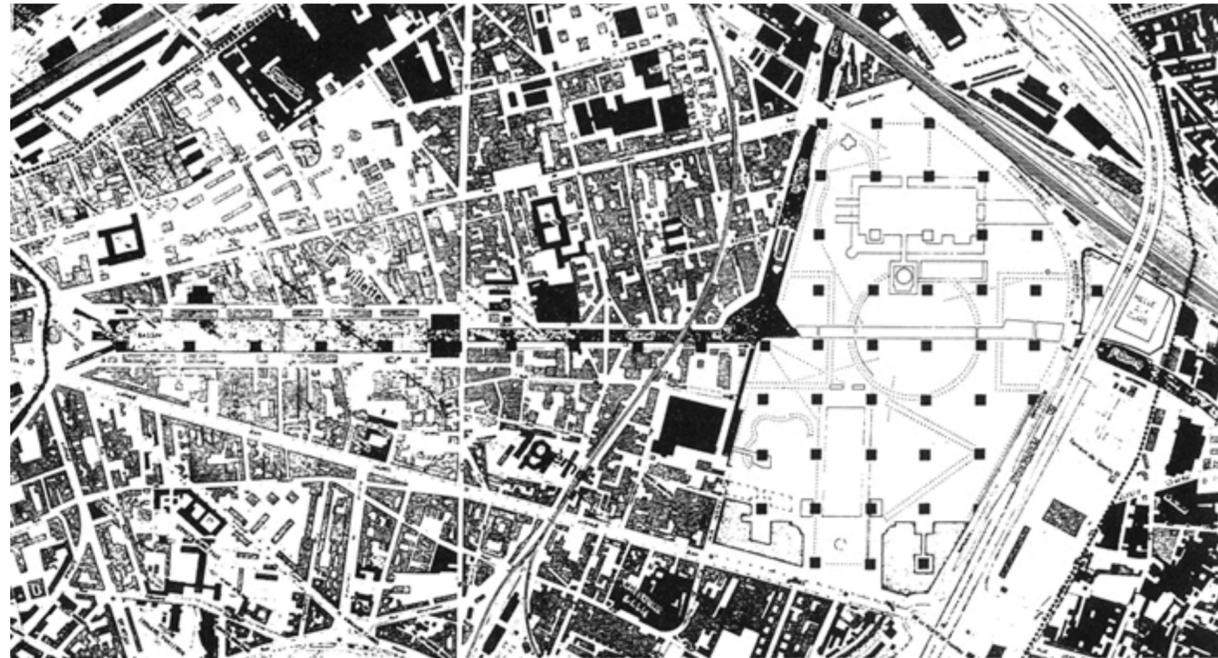


fig 2.6.1  
Site Plan of Tschumi's Parc de la Villette



fig 2.6.2  
Tschumi's completed Parc de la Villette in 2017



fig 2.6.3  
Slaughterhouse which existed before Parc de la Villette

**Parc de la Villette**  
 Rem Koolhaas, OMA  
 1983

OMA's submission closely ties with the goals of this thesis. Koolhaas's competition entry demonstrates a solution to his theories surrounding urban congestion by creating a social condenser. Similarly to Tschumi's entry, OMA also designs a representation of layers using strips, 'confetti', circulation and large objects.

The design of the park as a social condenser becomes a design problem in itself. The strips are meant to be a strategy to create maximum permeability between each programmatic band. (OMA, 1983)

- Layers:
- 1 Strips - Park and garden program
  - 2 Confetti/Points
  - 3 Access/Circulation
  - 4 Large Objects

OMA's plan is phased into five different stages. Their website describes the entry, "The program by the city of Paris was too large for the site, leaving no space for a park. The proposed project is not for a definitive park, but for a method that - combining programmatic instability with architectural specificity - will eventually generate a park."

Although both designs suggest an architecture of programmatic instability, it is Tschumi's approach which boldly claims that the architectural elements alone are capable of producing event, program, and action.

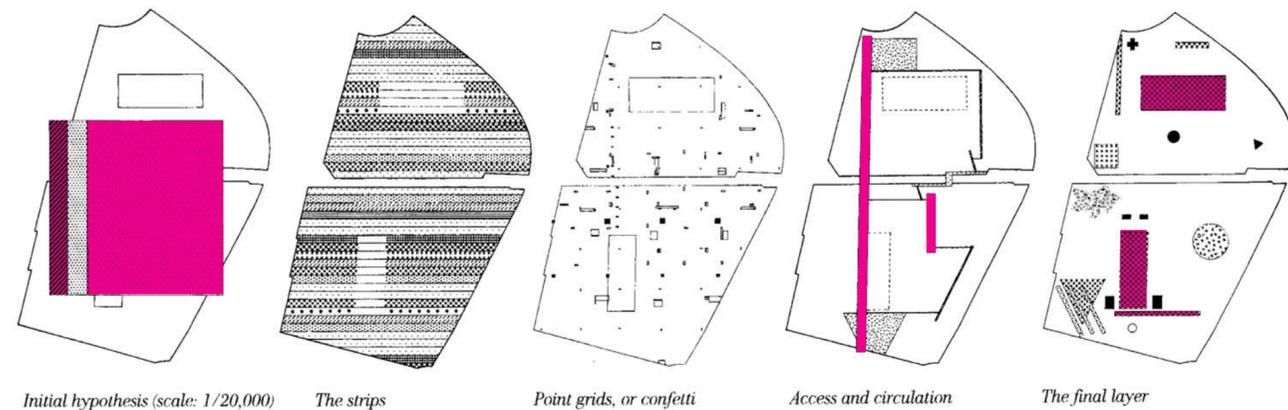


fig 26.4

**Parc de la Villette**  
 Bernard Tschumi  
 1983

Bernard Tschumi uses his theory on architecture and event to conceptualize his design entry for Parc de La Villette. Bernard Tschumi conceptualized that each individual would experience the park in a unique way. The intent of the design is to induce movement and exploration throughout the park. A layered architectural language of points, lines and surfaces. 35 points, which are defined as architectural 'follies' serve as an organizing element to the field. The individual body is to perceive these in relationship to one another in order to retain a sense of place. (Tschumi, 1983)

The interrupting and intersecting bodies of the three architectural languages illustrate the thesis of Tschumi's Manhattan Transcripts and Architecture and Disjunction.

- Layers:
- 1 Points - Follies
  - 2 Lines - Paths
  - 3 Surfaces - Areas

Tschumi's approach is summed up on his website, "La Villette could be conceived of as one of the largest buildings ever constructed - a discontinuous building but a single structure nevertheless, overlapping the site's existing features and articulating new activities. It opposes the landscape notion of Olmstead, widespread during the 19th century, that 'in the park, the city is not supposed to exist.'"

The radical idea of designing a social and cultural park contrasts the concept of the other submissions of using the idea of a traditional park at all, including OMA's. Tschumi's stance that architecture has the capacity to be a cultural/social generator is established especially through his "follies" which exist as empty objects accepting of any program.

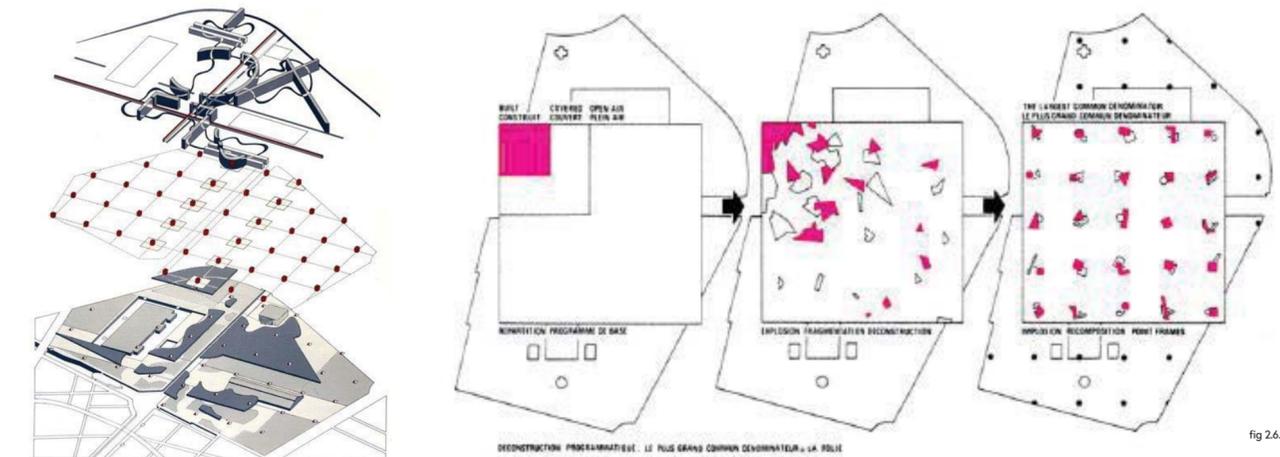


fig 26.5

## 2.7 THE COMMERCIAL OBJECT : EMERGENCE OF EXCLUSIVE ARCHITECTURE

The previous unbuilt projects are insights to the utopian visions brought by the possibilities offered by the Technological Revolution. However, there was an unexpected consequence of the Technological Revolution's collision with architecture. Its built reality embodied a character which defied its intentions.

Society came to realize that their buildings no longer depended on the cities which surround them. **Endless interiors and "cities-within-cities" meant the possibility of a lifestyle where people could choose to never again interact with the undesirables of the real city.**

Victor Gruen's text, *From Centers for the Urban Environment : Survival of the Cities* spearheaded this movement. He proposed, and eventually built, the first American shopping mall. Its intentions of creating a place outside of the office and home, to recreate and gather, were more innocent than its volatile results. (Gruen, 1973)

His vision for an architecture concerned primarily with the interior provided a place for the suburban populous to park, go inside, and stroll in a utopian, greenery-filled shopping hub. The exterior would be rendered blank, used only as a shell for the delights of the interior and a backdrop for a sea of parked cars. (Trufelman, 2015)

Southdale Mall was then built out of this concept in 1952. Windowless, its exterior was no longer the point. However, it proved his concept to be true. The masses of society flocked to these malls and commissions came from all over. Society then pronounced the endless interior as its new collective object.

However, this commercial collective object was unique. It would not gather the masses. One part of society would morph it from a mall: a singular object, into a series of objects, rather, a city of objects, networked and tunneled together using the real city as a carving block.

"I am often called the father of the shopping mall. I would like to take this opportunity to disclaim paternity once and for all. I refuse to pay alimony to those bastard developments. **They destroyed our cities.**"

(Gruen, 1978)



"Once, a city was divided in two parts. One part became the Good Half, the other part the Bad Half."

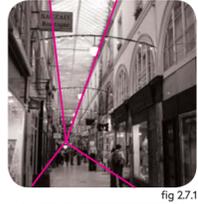
"As so often before in this history of mankind, **architecture was the guilty instrument of despair.** It is possible to imagine a mirror image of this terrifying architecture, a force as intense and devastating but used instead in the service of positive intentions.

Division, isolation, inequality, aggression, destruction... could be the ingredients of a new phenomenon: **architectural warfare against undesirable conditions...**"

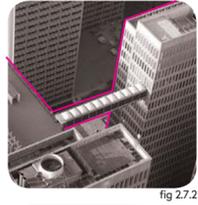
(Koolhaas, 1972)

Architecture of Exclusion  
Global Epidemic of Endless Interiors

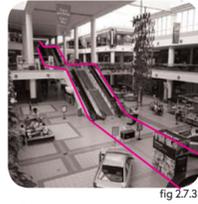
Parisian Arcade



Atlanta



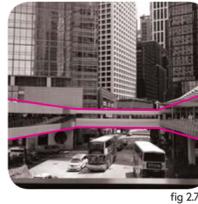
American Shopping Mall



Toronto PATH



Hong Kong



19th century

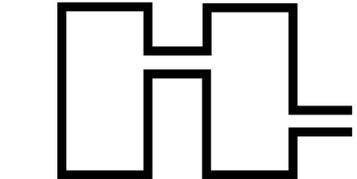
Walter Benjamin



Chaiseul

20th century

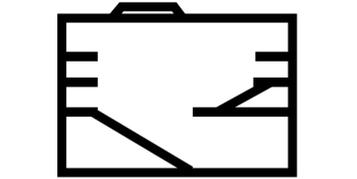
John Portman



Peachtree Hotel

20th century

Victor Gruen



Southdale Mall

20th century

City of Toronto



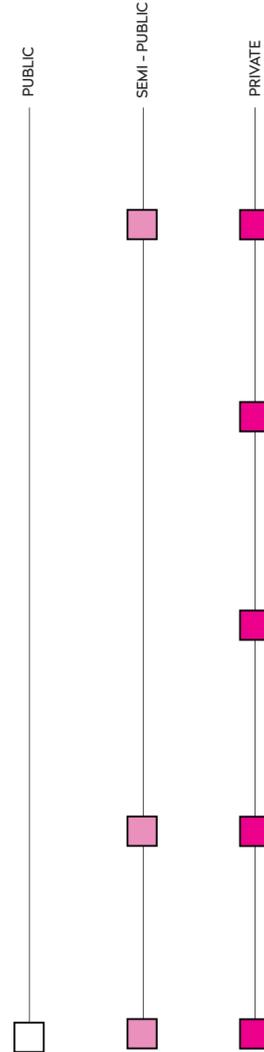
PATH

20th century

City of Hong Kong



Central Pier



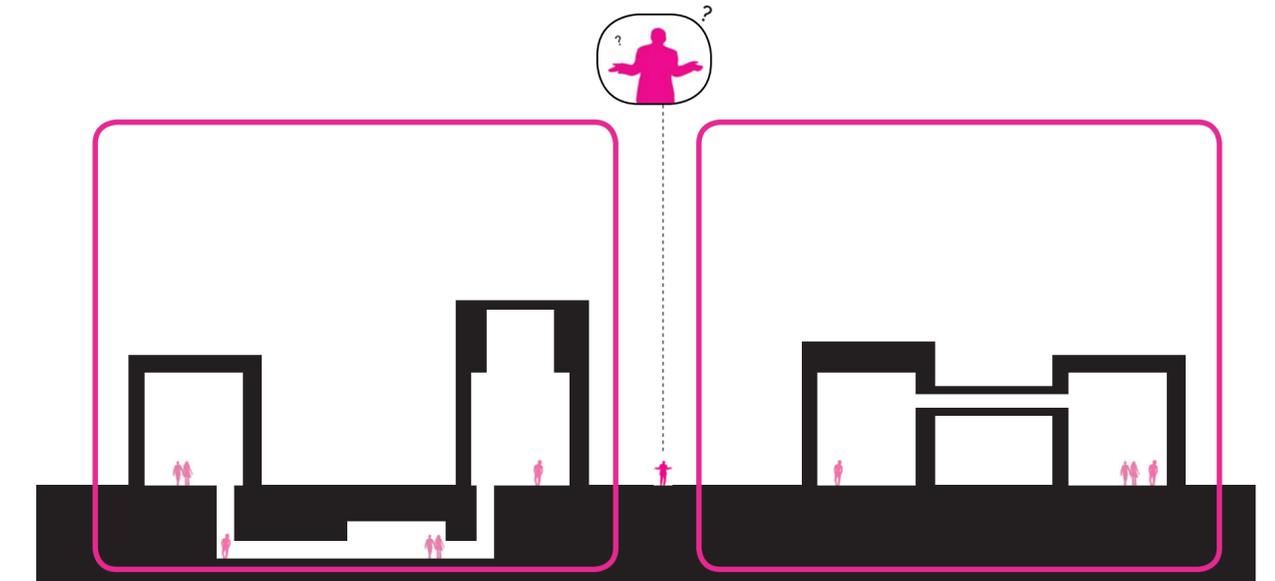
## 2.8 EXCLUSIVE ARCHITECTURE GENERATES EXCLUSIVE SOCIETY : PHILOSOPHERS OF THE 20TH CENTURY

A trend of self-interested and disparate architectures affected urban societies with a cultural shift. Where the potential to gather was once the driving force behind humanity's urbanization, new societal values began to take the opposite effect.

The urban public sphere saw severe disintegration. The real public was dilapidated: housed only by the shaky integrity of human infrastructure. Multitudes of atria and shopping plazas within utopian endless interiors held bastardized imitations of what once belonged to the collective masses. What was left on the exterior of the city, the voids (often misleadingly called parks and plazas) were fenced in, policed, and locked. They became paper stand-ins for the space required of a real democracy.

Several philosophers and architects of the 20th century reacted to this cultural shift with concern. Chief among them was Kenneth Frampton who wrote on "The Public Realm and the Human Artifice" which stated that "the public space of appearance could still serve not only to house the public realm, but also to represent its reality." (Frampton,

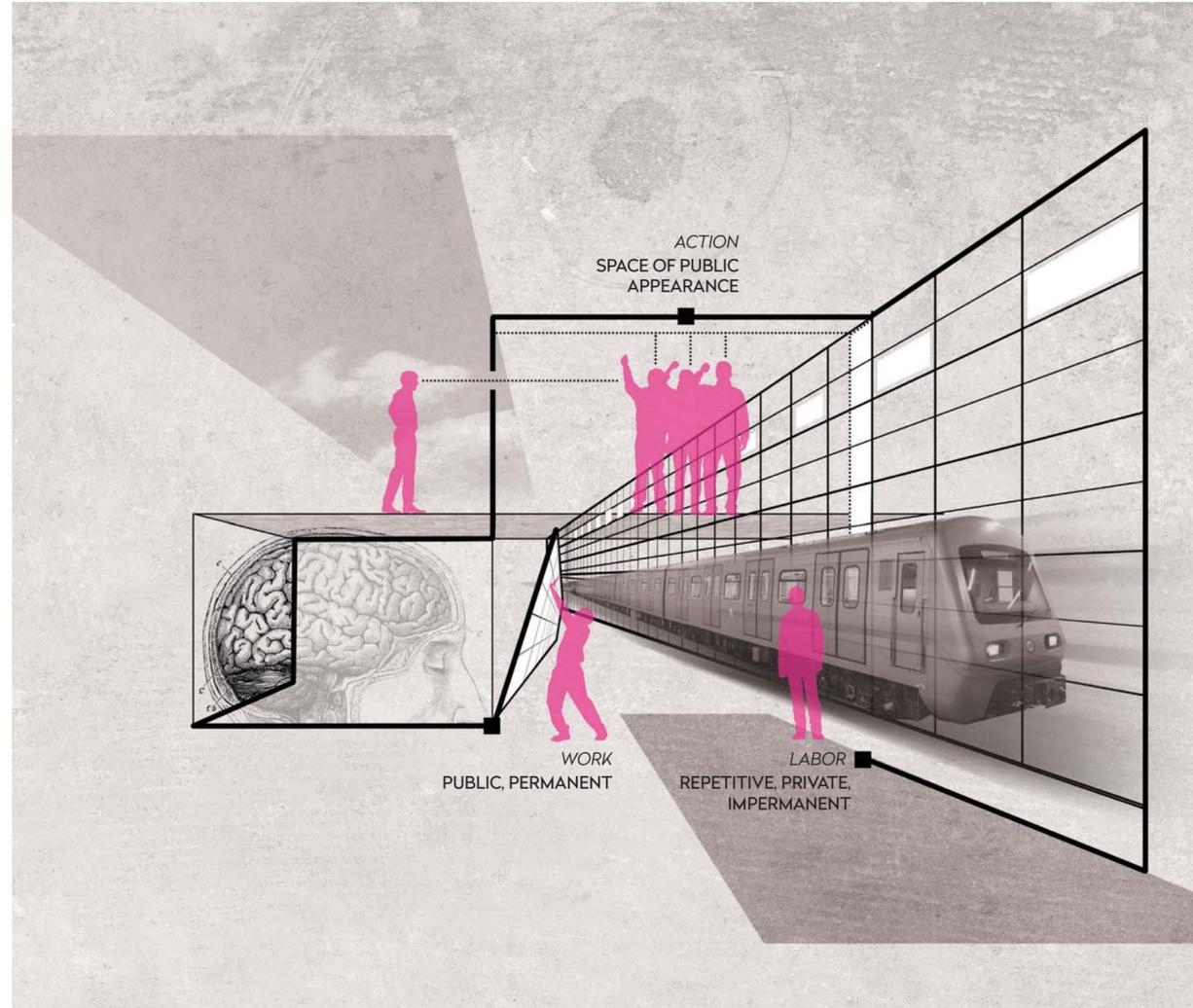
Frampton quotes the philosophical work of Hannah Arendt who writes, "Power preserves the public realm and the space of appearance, and as such it is also the lifeblood of the human artifice, which, unless it is the scene of action and speech, of the web of human affairs and relationships and the stories engendered by them, lacks its ultimate raison d'etre."



**The Status of Man and the Status of His Objects:**  
 A Reading on Hannah Arendt's The Human Condition  
 Kenneth Frampton

"Where in the 19th century the public institution was exploited as an occasion on which to reify the permanent values of the society, **the disintegration of such values in the 20th century has had the effect of atomizing the public building** into a network of abstract institutions. This dissipation of the agora reflects that mass society whose alienating force stems not from the number of people but from 'the fact that **the world between has lost its power to gather them together, to relate and to separate them.**'" (Frampton, 1982)

Kenneth Frampton's text correlates Arendt's observations of modern man to the discipline of architecture. Arendt problematized the decline of the public realm.



**The Status of Man and the Status of His Objects:**  
 A reading on Hannah Arendt's The Human Condition  
 Kenneth Frampton

Additionally, Arendt writes that power emerges from "Only where men live so close together that the potentialities for action are always present..." Frampton correlates this observation by stating Robert Venturi's assertion in Complexity and Contradiction is that "the Americans don't need piazzas, since they should be at home watching television." Frampton concludes that these absurd observations emphasize "**an urbanized populace who have paradoxically lost the object of their urbanization**".

The city which once depended on gathering as their source of power has discarded it as mere scaffolding to a new order characteristic of isolation. Frampton quotes Arendt in stating, "Without being talked about by men and without housing them, the world would not be a human artifice but a heap of unrelated things to which each isolated individual was at liberty to add one more object; without the human artifice to house them, human affairs would be as floating, as futile and vain as the wandering of nomadic tribes." (Frampton, 1982)

**"What makes mass society so difficult to bear is not the number of people involved, or at least not primarily, but the fact that the world between has lost its power to gather them together..."**

(Frampton, 1982)

**"...an urbanized populace who have paradoxically lost the object of their urbanization."**

(Frampton, 1982)

**"Exodus" in S, M, L, XL**  
 Rem Koolhaas  
 1972

The satire of Exodus is a tool to illustrate the inescapable effects of the architecture which defines our cities. The built environment is of greater importance to societal development than what is presented on the surface. The friction of architecture against the city fabric is damaging, transformative and problematic.

In a similar investigative representation to Tschumi, Koolhaas uses collage to create stills of his factual and fictional narrative. The familiarity of these collages further illustrates an intentional mirroring of contemporary culture. The actors in these scenes enjoy being the voluntary prisoners of architecture. The walls divide on an urban scale and are the device of mass exodus.

Koolhaas intensifies a condition of voluntary segregation where shelter comes in the form of walls. The walls divide London into a "good half" and "bad half" forming this new urban culture, suggesting that architecture has the ability to powerfully affect society and culture with the built environment and has perhaps already done so.

"...the population of the Good Half would have doubled, while the Bad Half would have turned into a ghost town." The project proposes architectural warfare against the undesirable." (Koolhaas, 1972)

Validation of:

- ① The impact of architecture on cultural values
- ② Damaging effects of exclusive architecture on the city



fig 2.8.1



fig 2.8.2



fig 2.8.3

**The Manhattan Transcripts, Architecture and Disjunction**  
 Bernard Tschumi  
 1994, 1998

Tschumi's diagrams serve as an architectural interpretation of Manhattan's reality. It is an attempt to visualize the relationship between the city and its people. The elements of The Park, The Street, The Tower, and The Block are hosts to a series of dramatic events which unfold as a narrative of intense and unlikely events. (Tschumi, 1994)

Photographs act as witnesses to urban events (or programs) and they are transcribed into diagrams which suggest the choreography of actors on a stage set. Tschumi asserts that events, intensified in the transcripts, are the origin of architecture.

The diagrams are an attempt to illustrate the relationship between objects and events. The theme surrounds a disjunction between use, form and social values.

In his later publication, "Architecture and Disjunction", Tschumi states, "the disjunction between space and event ... was characteristic of our contemporary condition." **Architecture, then, "could also export its findings into the production of culture."** (Tschumi, 1998)

Tschumi's assertion is that the event precedes the architecture. It is the assertion of this thesis that architecture is a production of culture, as Tschumi's Manhattan Transcripts illustrate, as well as a producer of culture, as Koolhaas's "Exodus" asserts.

Validation of:

- ① The impact of architecture on cultural values
- ② Architecture's ability to produce culture

**"There is no architecture without action, no architecture without event, no architecture without program."**

(Tschumi, 1994)

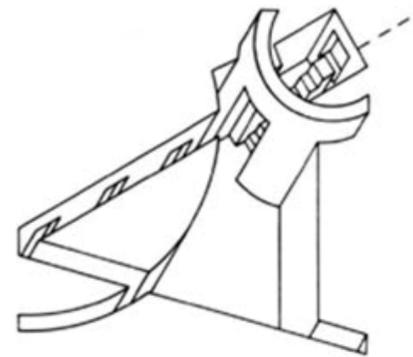
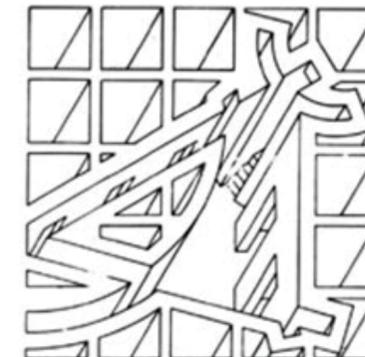
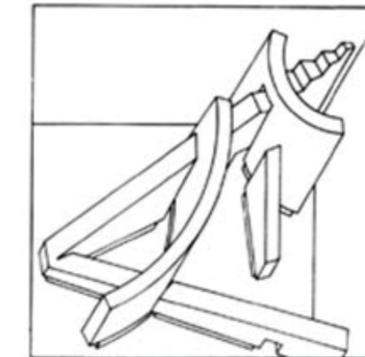


fig 2.8.4

DESIGN PROCESS : REGENERATING THE COLLECTIVE

### 3.1 INCLUSIVE ARCHITECTURE GENERATES INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

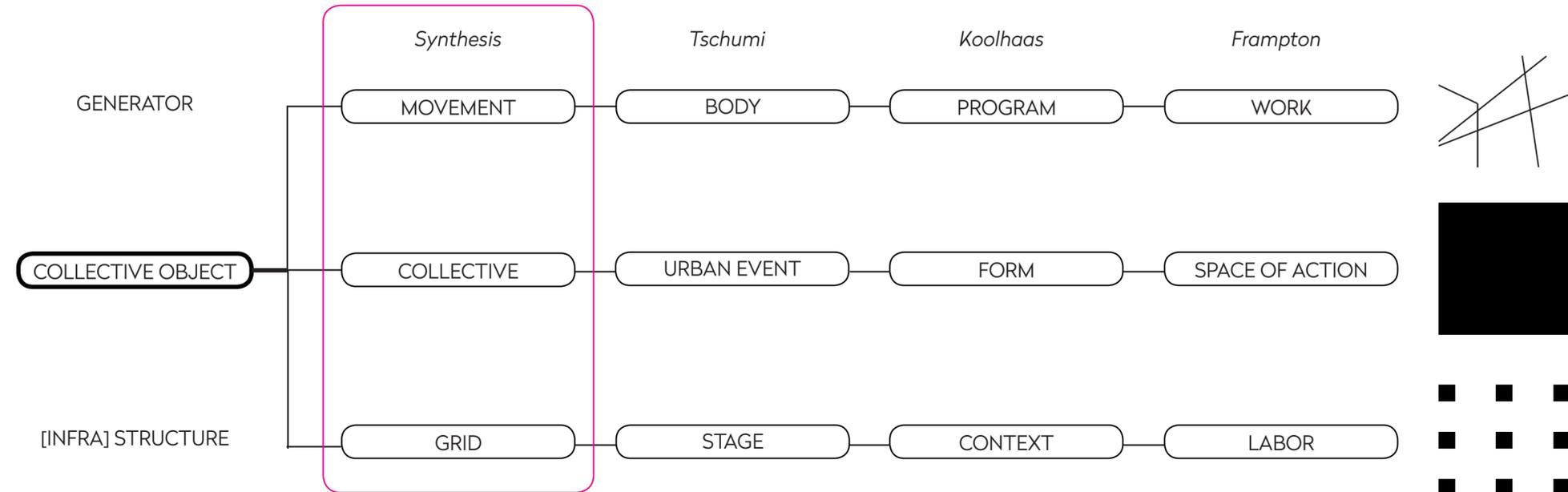
In order to revitalize the gathering potential of the city, this thesis proposes the design of a new collective object. Where Koolhaas and Tschumi establish a precedent for the built environment's negative effects on cultural production, there is substantial evidence that the reverse could also be true.

With the intention of providing a reality and permanence to the power of the masses amidst a city of privatization and separation, the design of a collective object draws on the historic power of urban centers, fueled by the new critical relevance of the current century.



**The City as Generator**  
The City Informs the Collective Object

The conclusions drawn from chapter two are summarized in the diagram below. The diagram shows a synthesis where architecture acts as a generator of culture and where infrastructure acts as a foundation. These concepts combine to inform the collective object.



**Points + Lines: Diagrams and Projects for the City**  
Stan Allen  
1999

The points addressed within Allen's book often overlap with Frampton's essay on the modern issues of the city.

However, Stan Allen attempts to offer solutions to the issues put forth. Allen asserts that architecture has an infrastructural dimension which it has the responsibility to take full advantage of. (Allen, 1999)

"As Robert Morris has put it, 'European art since Cubism has been a history of permuting relationships around the general premise that relationships should remain critical.' Perhaps a more radical shift is required. This is all the more urgent given that, under the pressure of technological or societal shifts, institutions are changing from within. As the social, political, and technical roles of those institutions

are called into question, **the corresponding typologies lost their special capacity to order and represent the space of these institutions.** In the case of the library or museum, what was once a place of certainty... has been eroded by the onrush of media, consumer culture, and telecommunications. **Architecture's capacity to represent and shelter that collective memory has in turn withered.** To design a library or a museum today is to contend with an entirely new set of expectations."

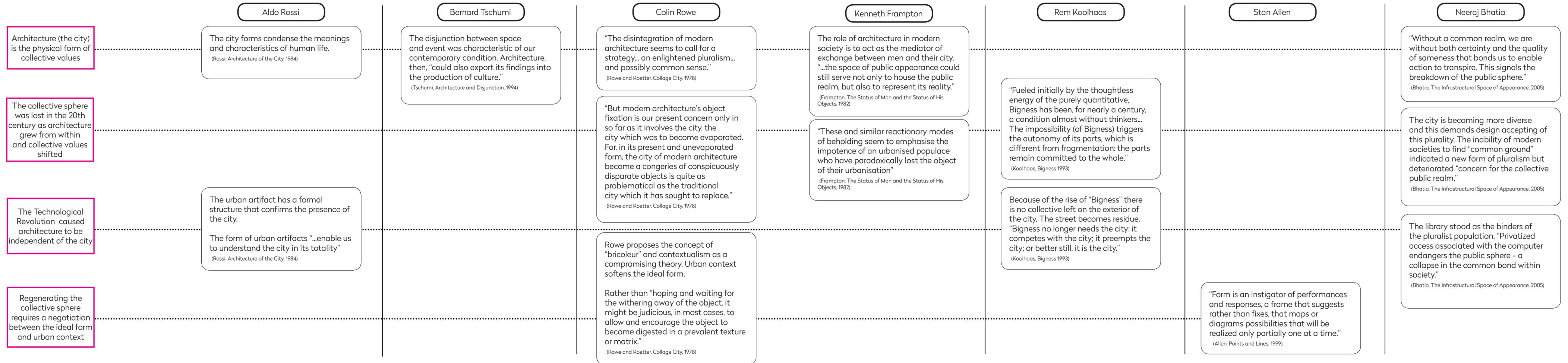
By forming the institution within a directed field condition connected to the city or landscape, a space is left for the tactical improvisations a future users. A loose fit is proposed between activity and enclosing envelope.

**More than a family configuration, the field condition implies an architecture that admits change, accident, and improvisation. It is an architecture not invested in durability, stability, and certainty, but an architecture that leaves space for the uncertainty of the real...**

**"The new institutions of the city will perhaps occur at moments of intensity, linked to the wider network of the urban field, and marked not by demarcating lines but by thickened surfaces."**

(Allen, 1999)

### 3.2 LITERARY RESEARCH SYNTHESIS MATRIX



### 3.3 SITE : REVISITING THE PROBLEM OF KOOLHAAS'S "ATLANTA" ESSAY

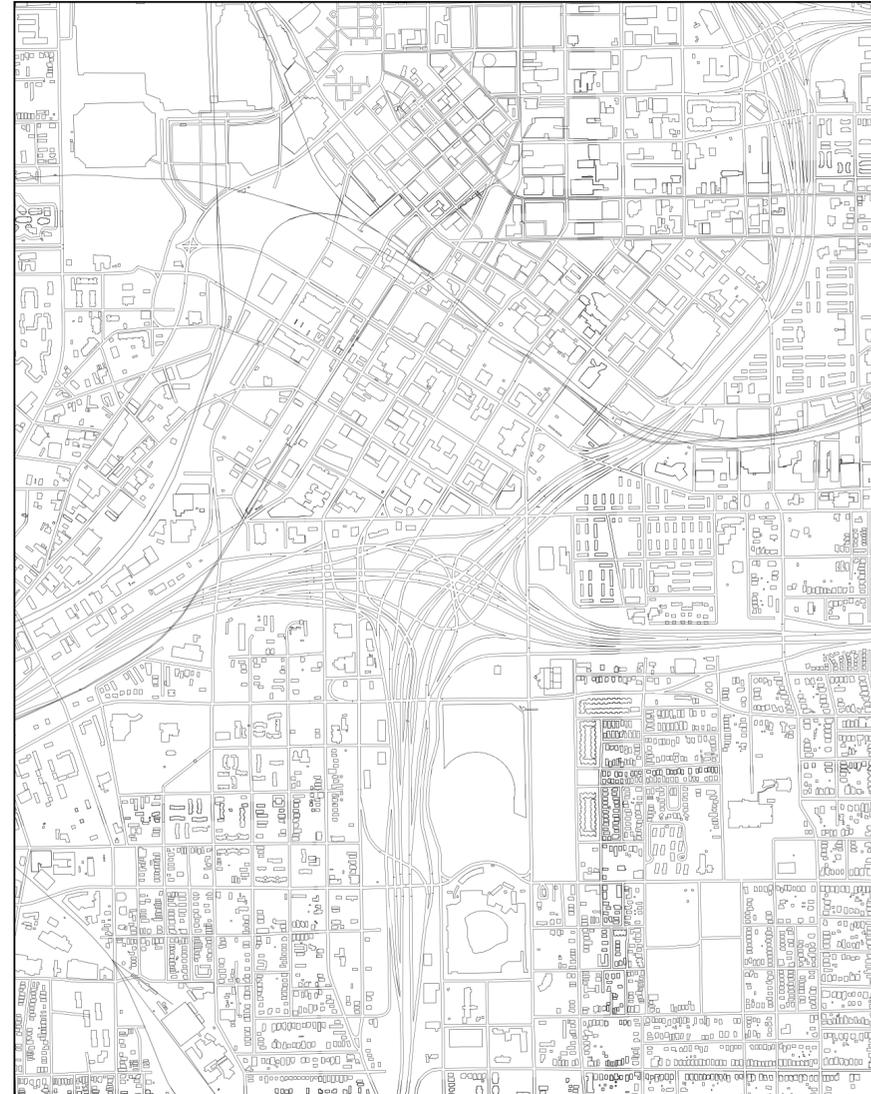
Atlanta has what Rem Koolhaas describes as “intensity without physical density” (1994). It embodies a certain formlessness and holds its foci on its periphery- if it is determined to have any foci at all. It is a posterchild for the problems of the contemporary city.

Koolhaas states that Atlanta was the exception during an era when urban downtown cores were in crisis (1994). He calls Atlanta’s recovery an “American Renaissance” where John Portman plays developer. The uninhibited architect-developer subsequently interiorized the urban core of Atlanta through a string of sky bridge connections between his own buildings. The interiorized city propagated globally with the invention of the atrium, an outside condition turned hermetically-perfect interior. This predominant architectural condition divorces its urban fabric.

A web of competing autonomous architectures define the new urban condition. The new urban condition is devoid of any relationship with its context. The societal conditions then grimly morphed to imitate its luxurious terms of exclusion. The city was atomized and its parts could now go anywhere. The rise of motopia and linked sprawl mirrored our own alienation as a populace. There was no need for the urban core. Its people could go anywhere. “Downtown has become anywhere.” (Koolhaas, 1994)

The United Nations published that by 2050, 66% percent of the world’s population will live in urban areas. Their projections reveal that urbanization combined with the overall growth of the world’s population could add another 2.5 billion people to urban populations by 2050. Atlanta is one of the fastest growing cities in the nation.

According to the Urban Institute, by 2030, it will see one of the highest population growths of 59% and simultaneously see shifts in racial majority. Robert Lang, from the University of Nevada, said the U.S. essentially had to “learn how to build cities a second time.” (United Nations, 2014)



“Atlanta: a reading” in Atlanta  
Rem Koolhaas  
1994

Koolhaas introduces his interest in Atlanta as an intuition that “the real city at the end of the 20th century could be found there.” He outlines a variety of symptoms which he observes about the city. The last of these reads, “Atlanta does not have the classical symptoms of a city; it is not dense; it is a sparse, thin carpet of habitation, a kind of supremacist composition of little fields. Its strongest contextual givens are vegetal and infrastructural: forest and roads. Atlanta is not a city; it is a landscape.” (Koolhaas, 1994)

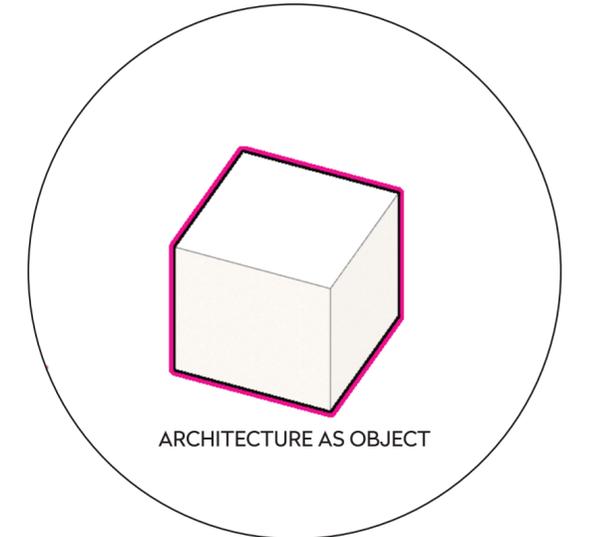
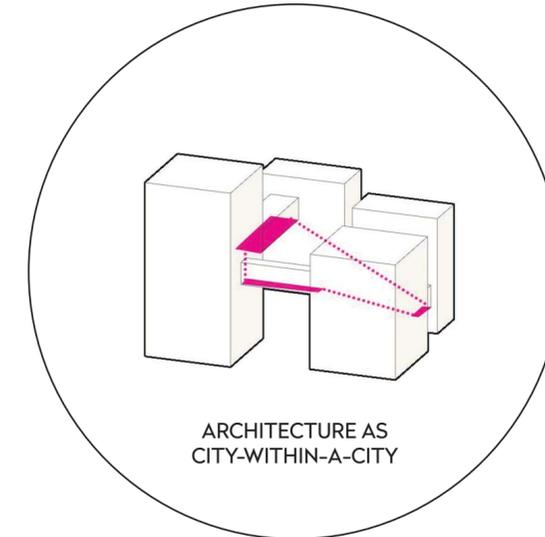
The observations go on to describe the nature of its sprawl due to its rapid growth, like “when a tree grows in five seconds.” The most revealing observation comes next when Koolhaas states, “No city illustrates this shift, its reasons and potentials, better than Atlanta. In fact, Atlanta shifted so quickly and so completely that the center/edge opposition is no longer the point.”

Koolhaas attributes a key development in Atlanta to John Portman: the rebirth of downtown. However, it was rebirth through creation of multiple clones of Portman’s own creation. These were not just clones, but clones connected by a spiderweb of bridges where one could essential walk through the entire city without actually stepping foot in the actual city. “Once you ventured into the system, there was almost no incentive to visit the rest of downtown, no way to escape.”

The atrium was another “(re)invention” paired with the sky bridge where it was made into “a hermetic interior, sealed against the real.”

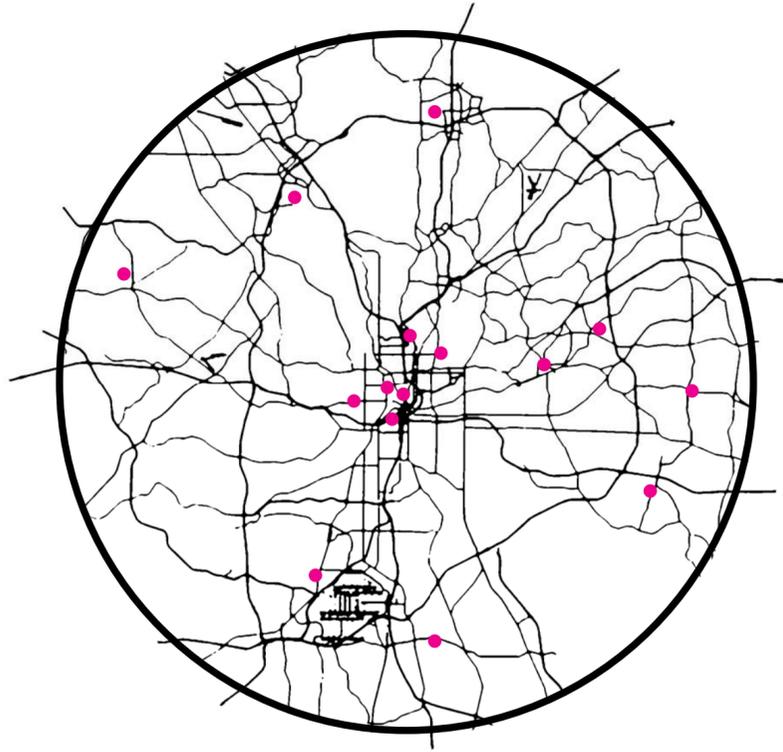
This criticism echoes Koolhaas’s 1972 thesis, “Exodus, or the voluntary prisoners of architecture” especially when he describes the downtown of Atlanta as voided panopticons inviting their own voluntary prisoners.

The essay concludes that downtown’s buildings became hostile and compete. “The more ambitious these autonomies, the more they undermine the real downtown- its messy conditions, its complexities, its irregularities, its densities, its ethnicities.” The creation of these symptoms caused the city to fragment- to sprawl.



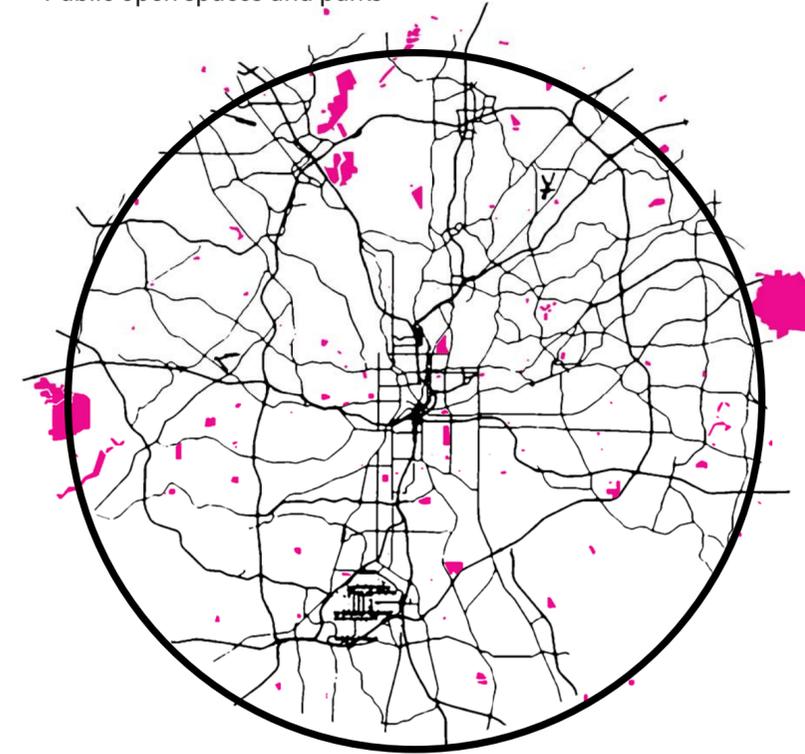
**“The more ambitious these autonomies, the more they undermine the real downtown- its messy conditions, its complexities, its irregularities, its densities, its ethnicities.”**  
(Koolhaas, 1995)

**Civic Program**  
Programs of Democracy



Each dot represents a building with public and democratic program. The majority of these points are libraries, as the last remaining vestiges of truly public architecture.

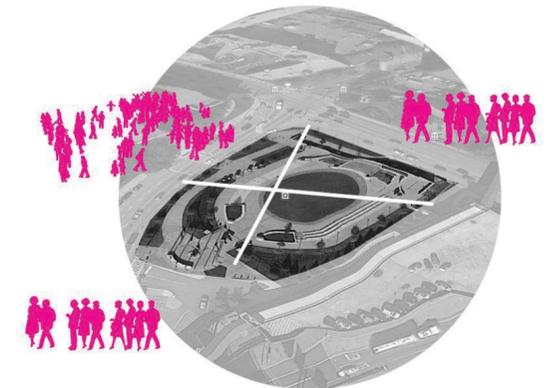
**Open/Green Space**  
Public open spaces and parks



This diagram is deceitful in that it does not regard how public these spaces truly are. With the rise of “privately-owned-public space”, what may be deemed as open space is often fenced-in and privately controlled.

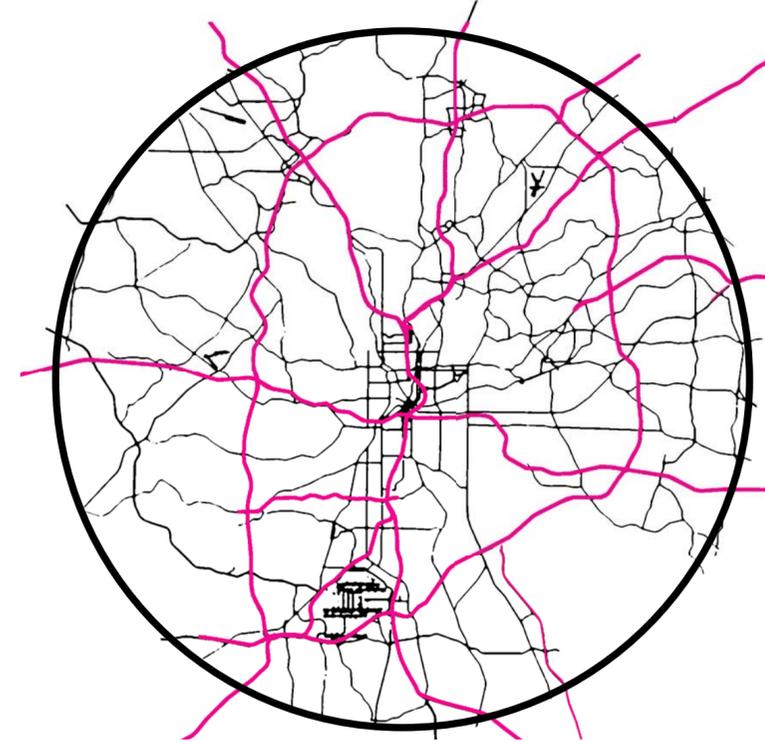


Atlanta Central Library as an example of a “collector object” to gather the masses and unify the city.

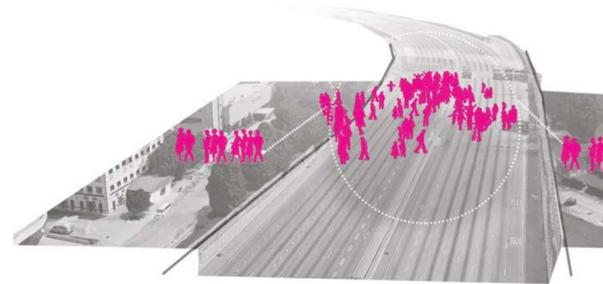


Privately-owned public spaces are not truly public. Access can be denied, which thereby denies people the right to public appearance.

**Macro Arteries**  
Global Connectors as Local Dividers

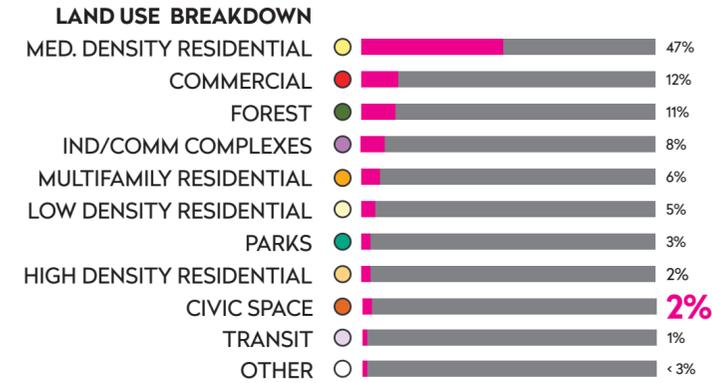
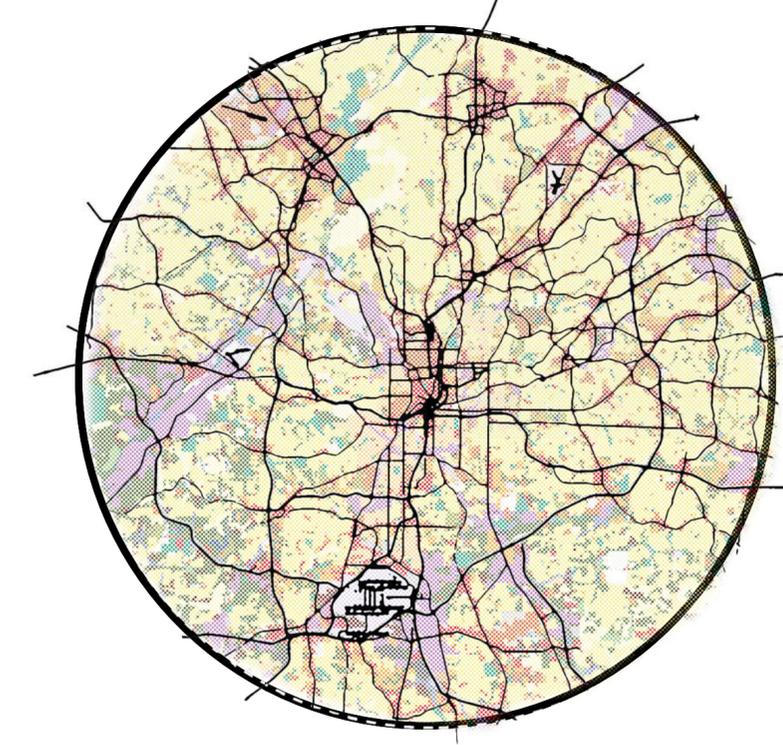


The highways displayed as arterial behave in the opposite manner. Although providing distal connections across the periphery of Atlanta, these macro arteries are analyzed as critical "fault lines" between fragmented pieces of the city.



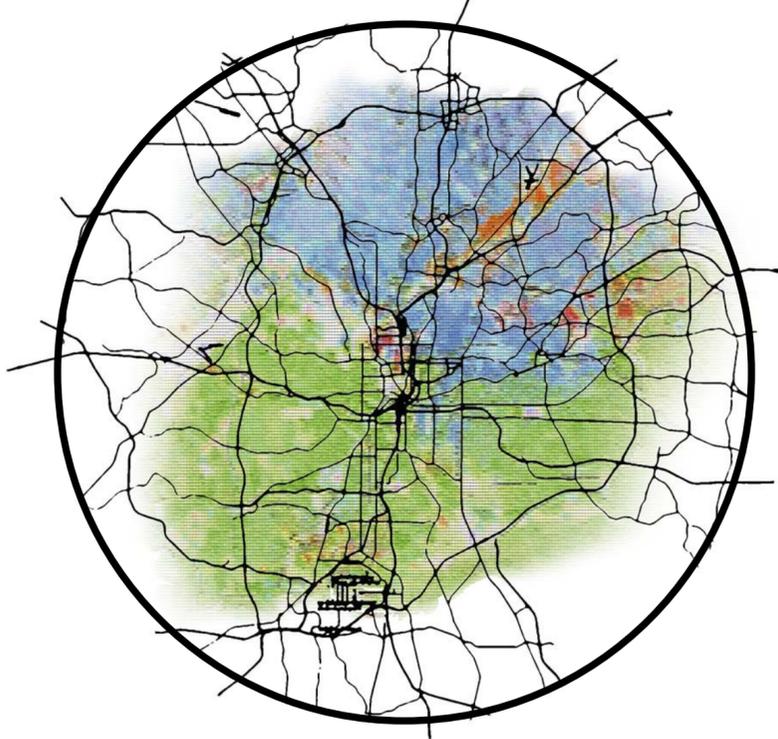
Highways which act as physical dividers also hold the potential to unify. Infrastructure acting as public right of way has the capability to become right of way for people, not only automobiles.

**Land Use Mapping**  
Programmed zoning of urban lands



This analysis reveals a programmatic deficiency for civic space in Atlanta. A closer look also shows that the civic spaces of the city exist within one region in the downtown core. This is where the capitol, government offices and political spaces are found.

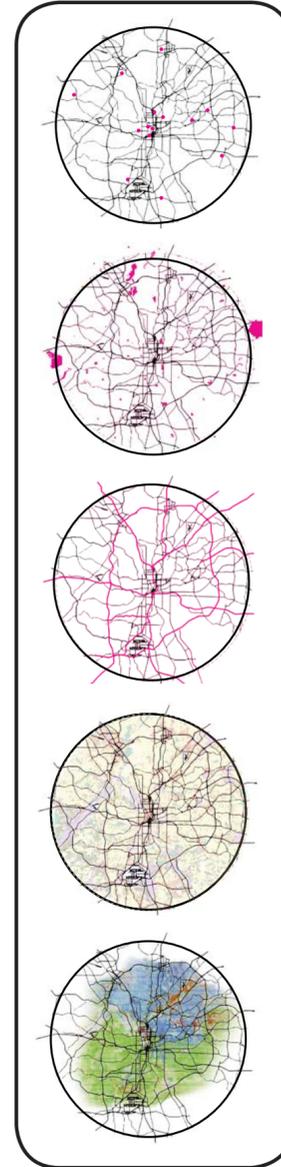
Racial Distribution  
Spatially - Generated Segregation



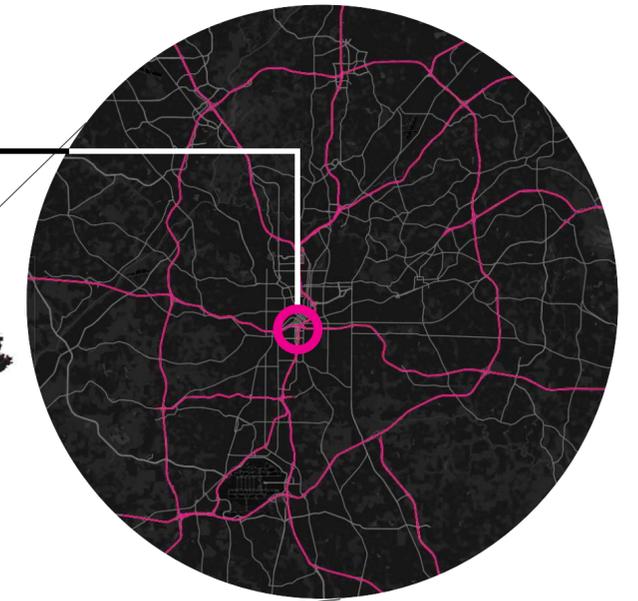
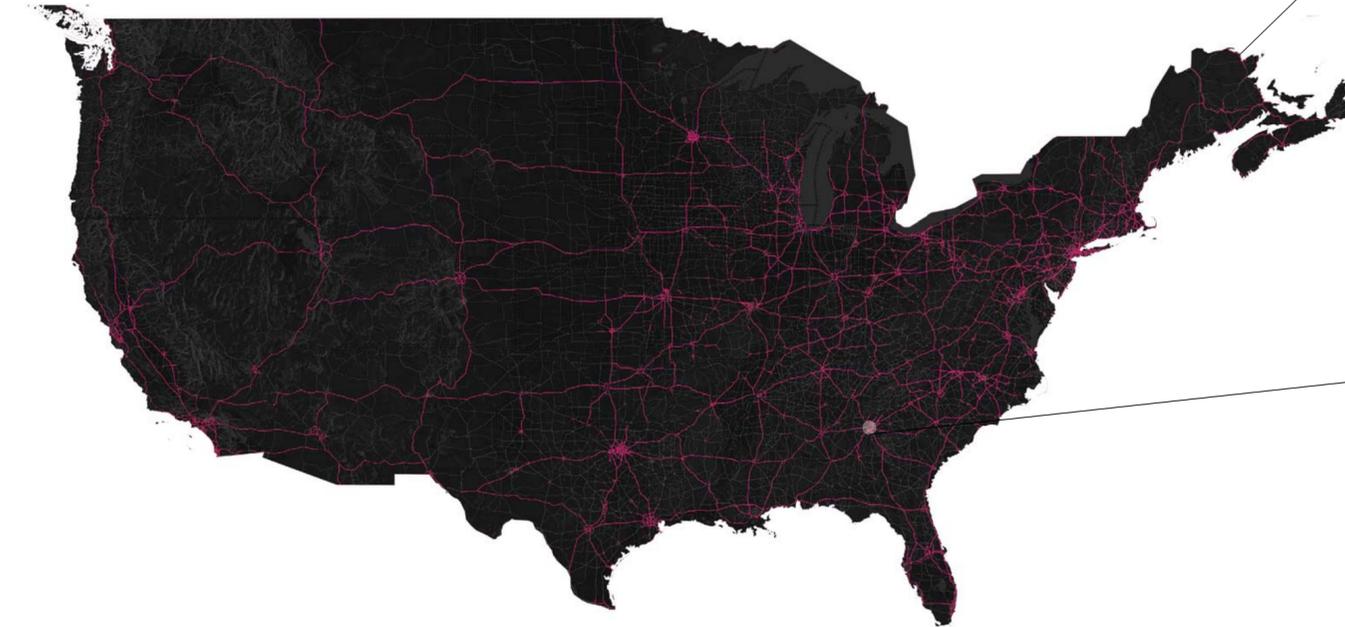
**RACE DISTRIBUTION**

BLACK		53.5%
WHITE		36.3%
HISPANIC		4.7%
ASIAN		3.6%
OTHER		0.3%

This diagram reveals a hard line of racial divide. The downtown core is analyzed to be the zone of convergence, making it a critical point for civic space.



SITE DERIVED FROM MACRO ANALYSIS / POINT OF CONVERGENCE



Atlanta, GA

“To secure that they (centres) shall be genuine centres where people will be likely to congregate, they must either be themselves the focal points of the main traffic lines...”

(Unwin, 1909)

## Projected Urban Growth

### The Urgency of Civic Space

In a future of increasingly dense and diverse cities (as supported by figure 3.3.1), it is paramount that civilization be prepared to support an infrastructure of democracy and civic inclusion in this changing reality. The urban fabric must make space for the collective. Blank voids exist separately from the metropolis. So much of city life now takes place within its architecture. The interior is the city. Architecture is the vessel of the city- and the city must demand space as a right of the collective.

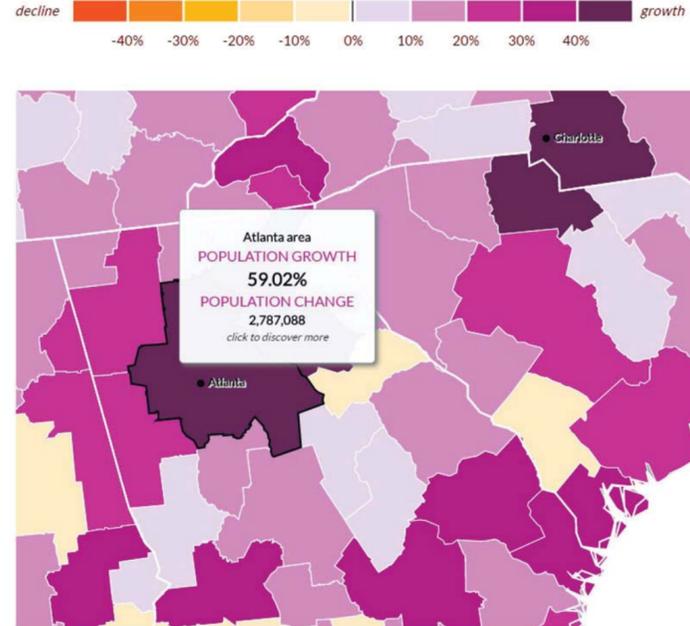
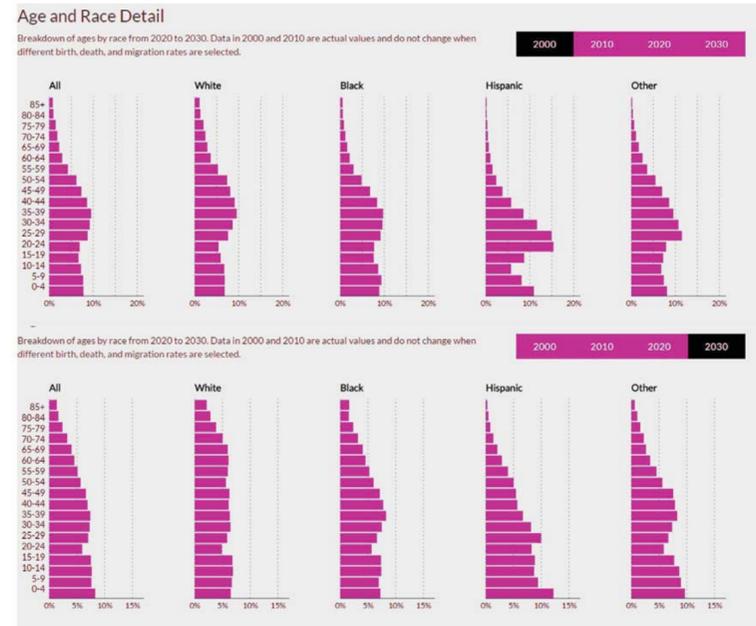


fig 3.3.1  
Data from Urban Institute (Urban Institute, 2015)

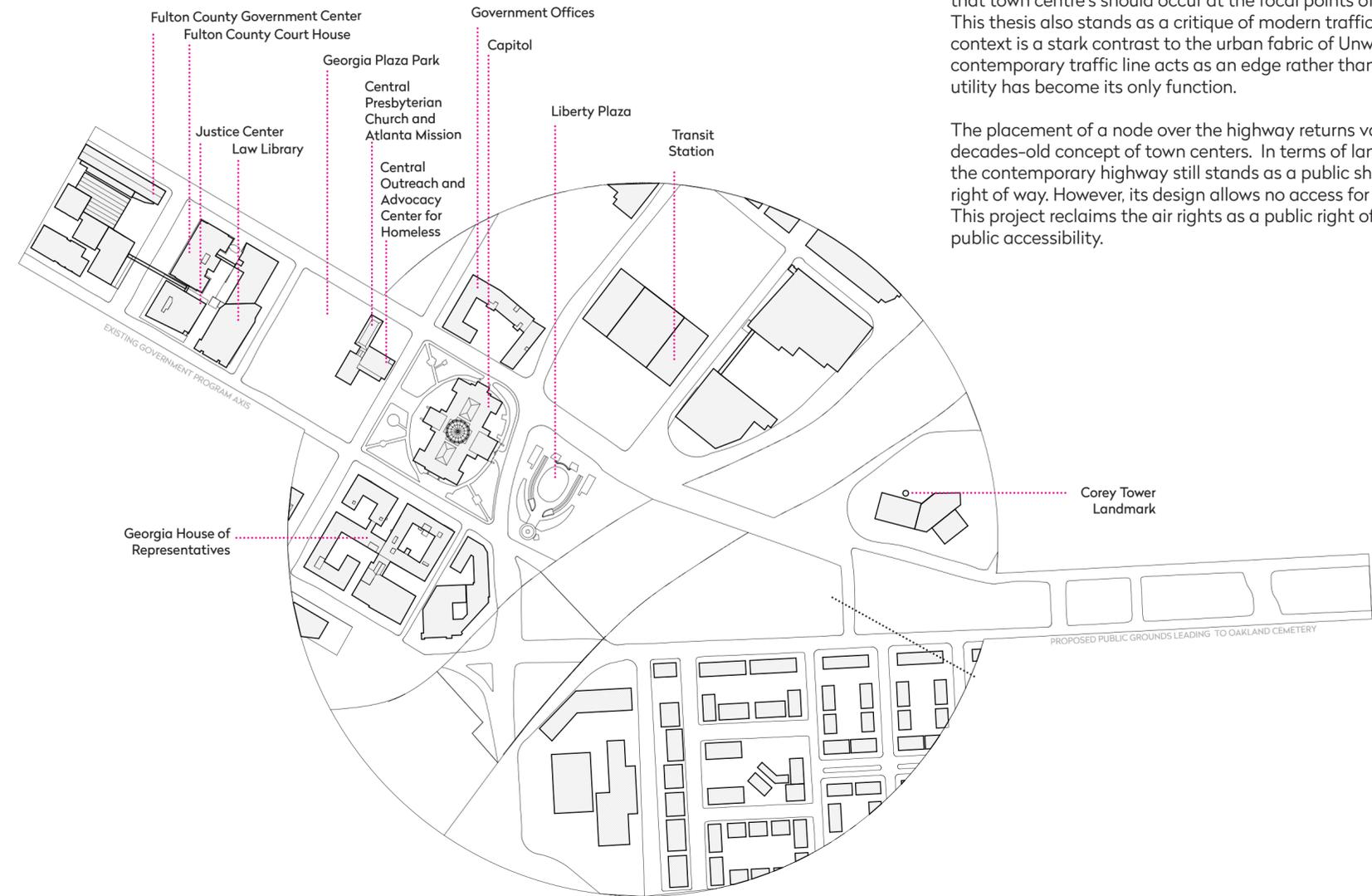
## Site Conditions

### Grounds for Implementing the Collective Object

The site for implementation is ideally set **within the urban core**. The characteristics of the urban core hold the issues this thesis aims to address. This includes transit as a primary method of inclusive placement and this includes diversity of populace and population growth as an issues when paired with urban isolation. The site may also be **adjacent to a existing community infrastructure** as a method of reinforcement or addition.

A site potential best aligns the conditions present within **Atlanta**. It is an exemplary testing ground as a means of repopulation of the urban core, of diversity, and an example of urban centers which do not presently encourage interaction.

Site Analysis  
Adjacencies



The selection of the Georgia Capitol site at the “point of convergence”, referenced in the last section, alludes to Raymond Unwin’s text stating that town centre’s should occur at the focal points of main traffic lines. This thesis also stands as a critique of modern traffic lines, where the context is a stark contrast to the urban fabric of Unwin’s 1909 text. The contemporary traffic line acts as an edge rather than a focal point. Its utility has become its only function.

The placement of a node over the highway returns validity to Unwin’s decades-old concept of town centers. In terms of land use and zoning, the contemporary highway still stands as a public shared space and right of way. However, its design allows no access for congregation. This project reclaims the air rights as a public right of way, designed for public accessibility.

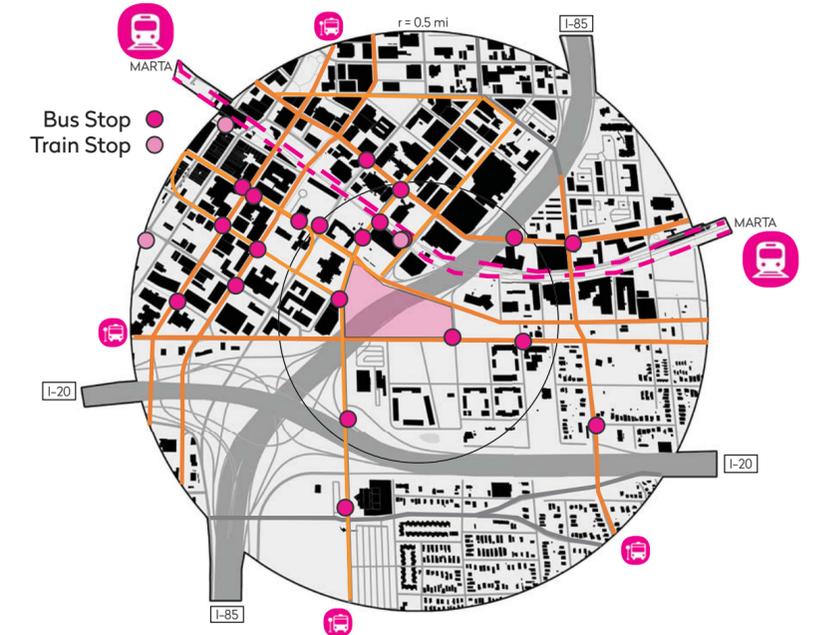
Site Analysis  
Local Information

BUILDING HEIGHTS

- < 30' ●
- 30 - 45' ●
- 45 - 75' ●
- 75 - 100' ●
- > 100' ●

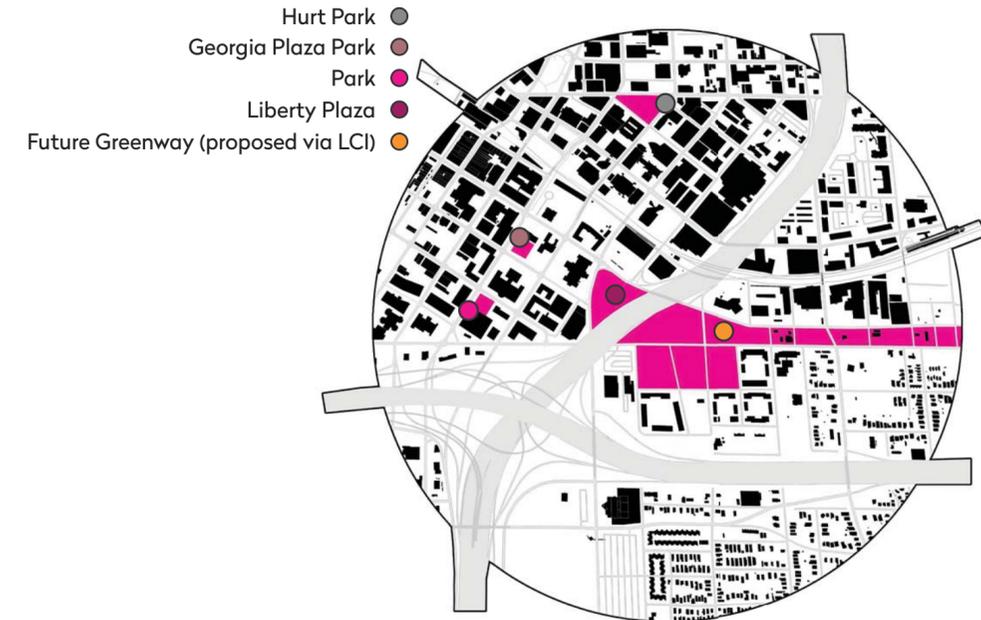


TRANSIT



Site Analysis  
Local Information

PARKS + PLAZAS



AMENITIES



Site Photographs  
Adjacent context and infrastructure



Catalog of Adjacent Sky Bridges  
Evidence of endless interior condition on site



Above rail line



Above Jesse Hill Jr. Dr.



Above Liberty Plaza



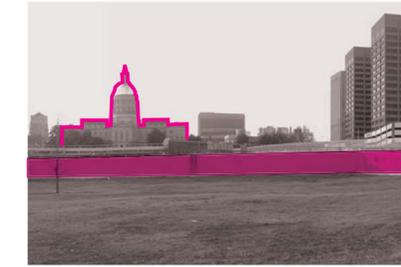
Above forecourts

Strategic Intensification of Collective  
Design moves generated by site

The network of sky bridges which frame the site lead to a network of multi-level parking decks. The odd array of tubes stem out from the Twin Towers State Building which houses a MARTA transit station.



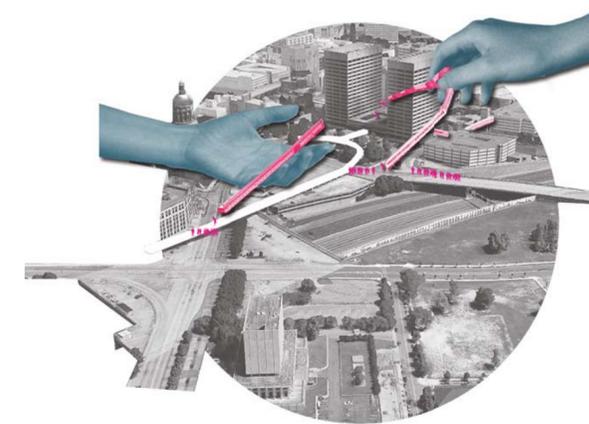
Elevated walkways (sky bridges)



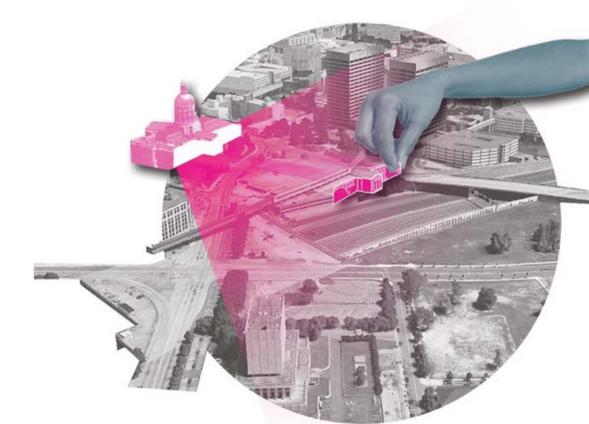
Walled highway before capitol building



Highway acting as a fault line



**SPILL**  
and remove sky bridges as tools for exclusion. Allow city life to intermingle.



**OPEN**  
dialogue with government centers through contextual relationships.

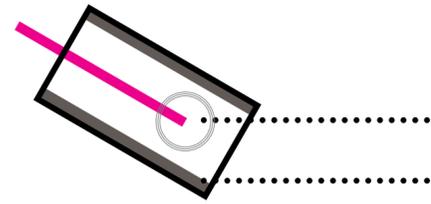


**CONNECT**  
disjointed urban islands by constructing activated spatial continuity.

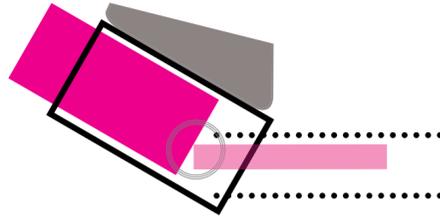
Early Design Process

Forms generated as a site response

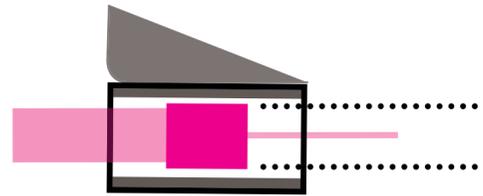
PARTI DEVELOPMENT



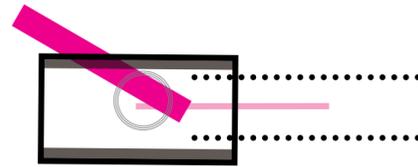
Initial response forms axis from capitol and creates node at point of shifting axis



MLK Jr. Drive is considered as an extension of ground.

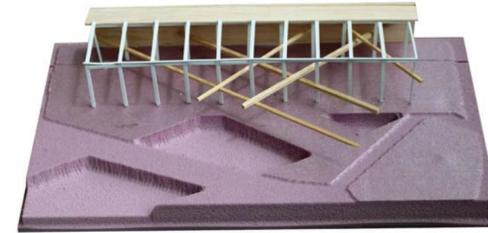


Axis is reconsidered to have greater hierarchy to proposed greenway versus the capitol.



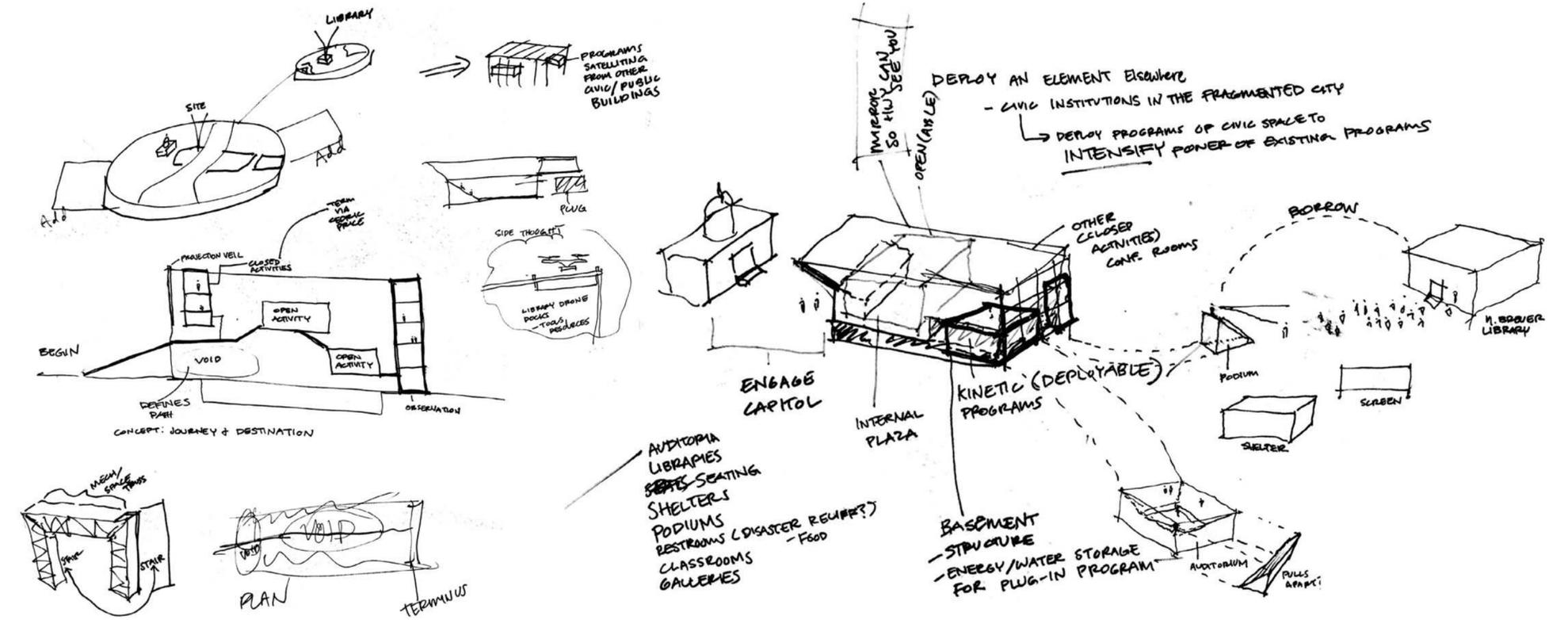
Final design incorporates both axis. The major axis as the greenway and minor axis as the capitol are hybridized.

PROCESS MODELS



Early Design Process

Process Sketches

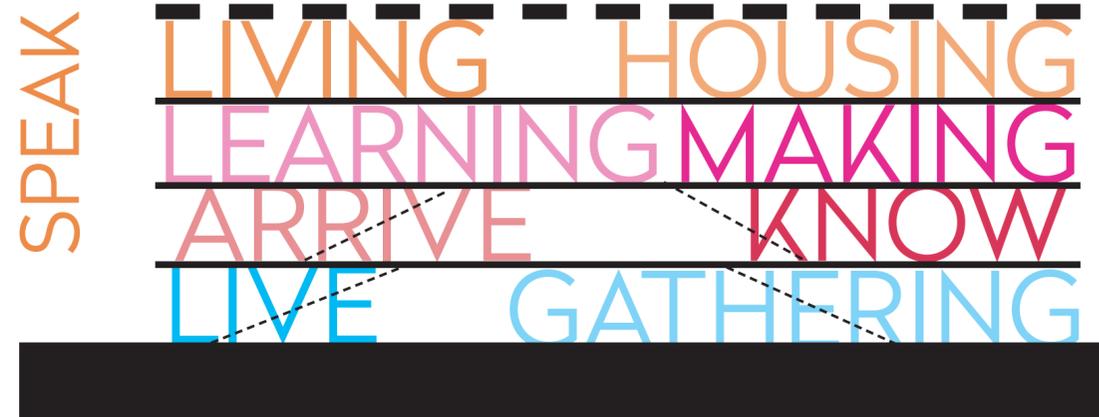


## DESIGN SYNTHESIS

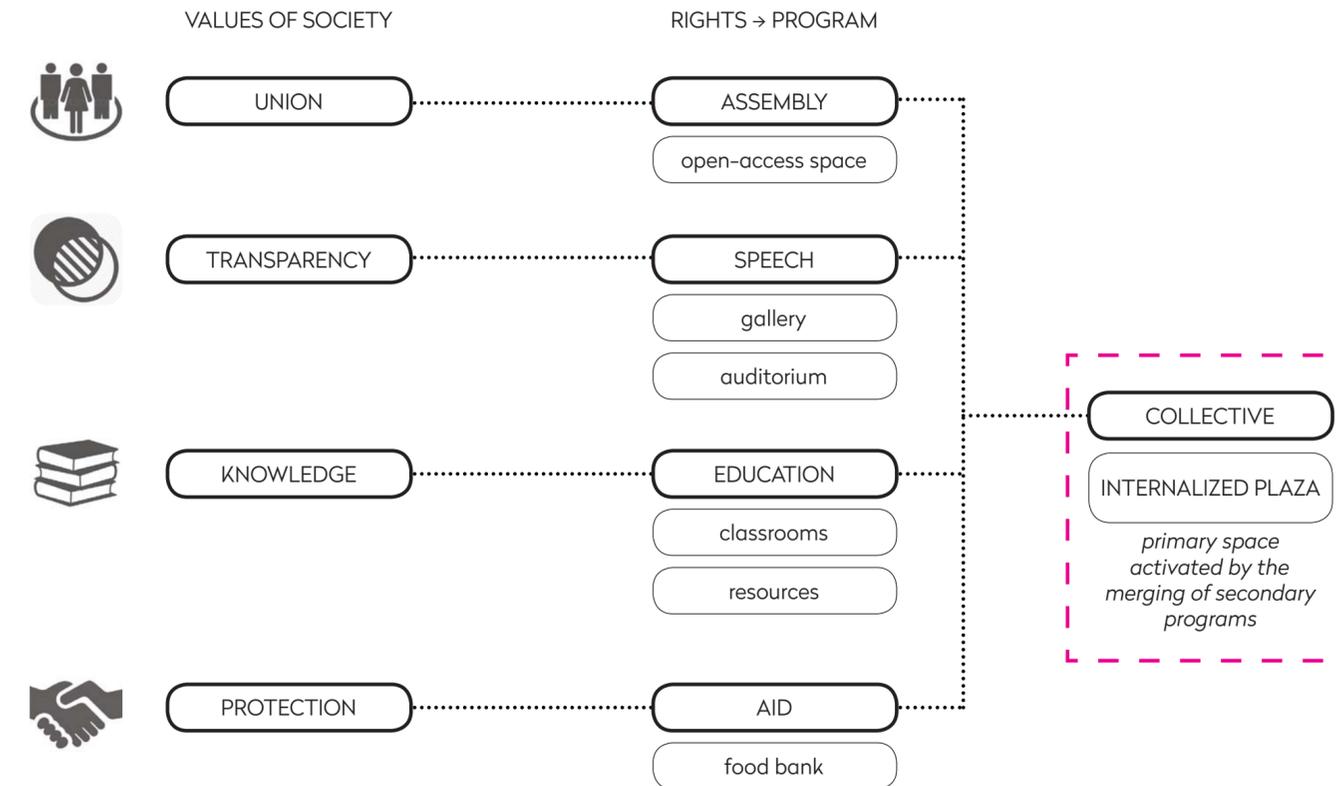
CHAPTER  
**04**

## 4.1 PRELIMINARY DOCUMENTATION

Varied programs centering around collective activity will be used to enforce the concepts presented by this thesis. A new quality of space can be derived from precedents of public institutions. Understanding that the activation of the collective object is an activation of an “in-between” condition, the precedent of the plaza becomes paramount where the collision and interaction of secondary programs are critical to the success of the proposed internalized plaza.



### Programming Translating Societal Values Into Space

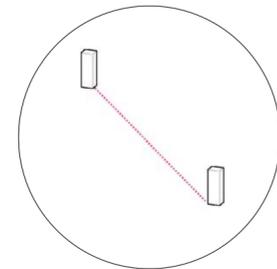


**Research Genealogy Incorporation**  
Feeding Research Into Final Design

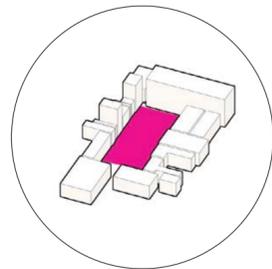
The challenges of the design process grappled with incorporating various formations of public space. The design iterations intended to find where these spatial arrangements were most appropriate to form environments of collectivism.

Where architecture as landmark and space-definer characterized collective objects throughout history, they must now find some updated relationship to an urban contemporary context where architecture as landscape, object, and city hold the most prevalent forms.

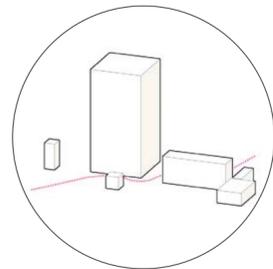
Architecture as landmark



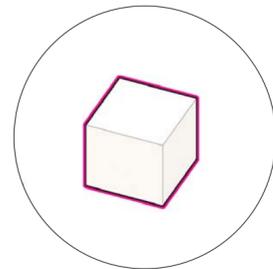
Architecture as space-definer



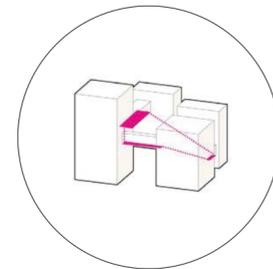
Architecture as landscape



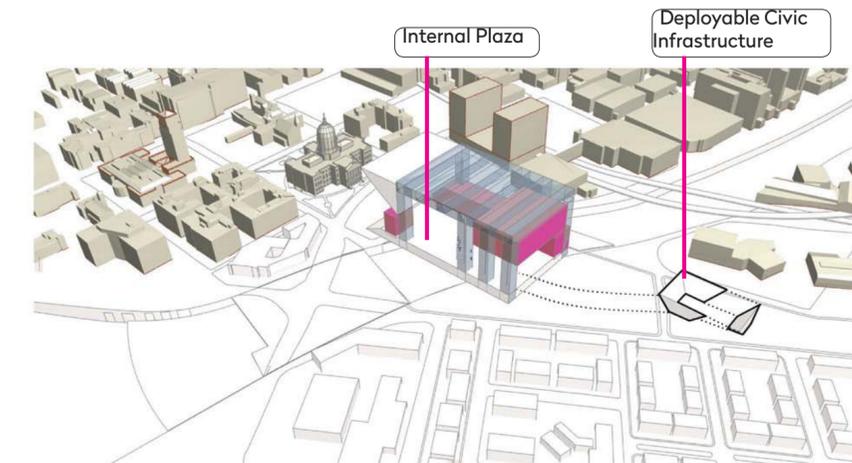
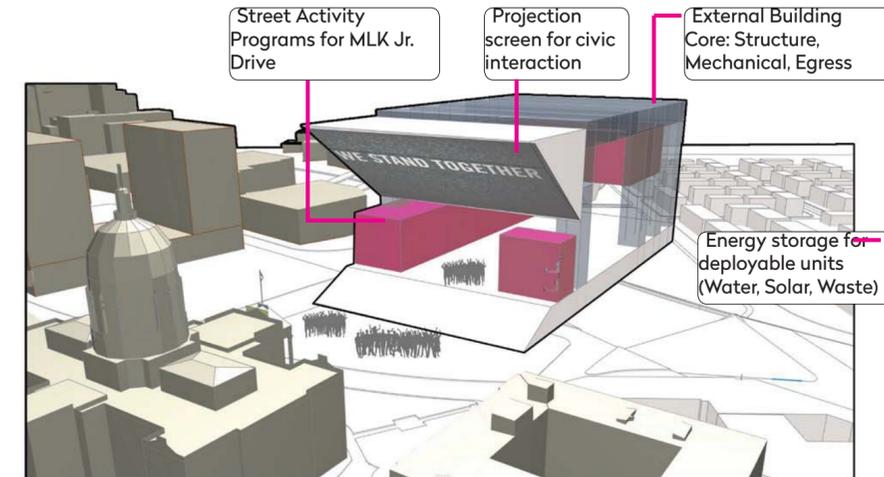
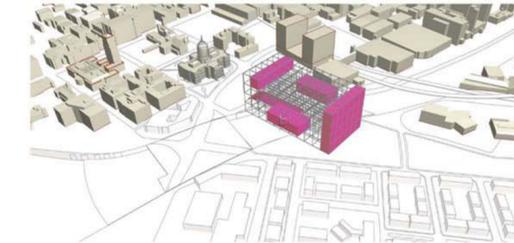
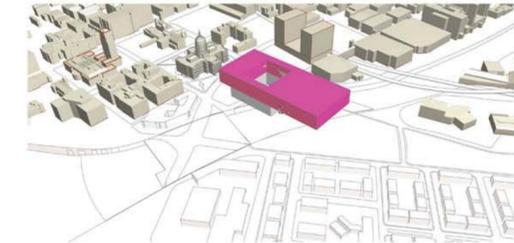
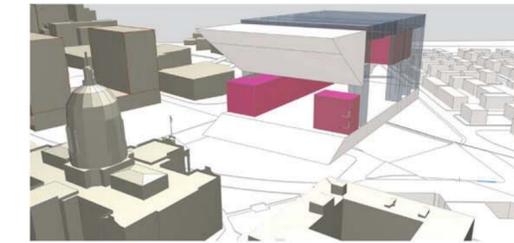
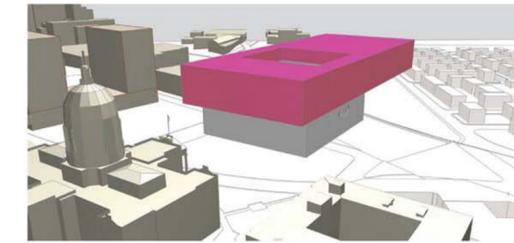
Architecture as object



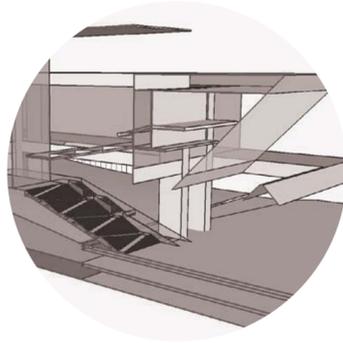
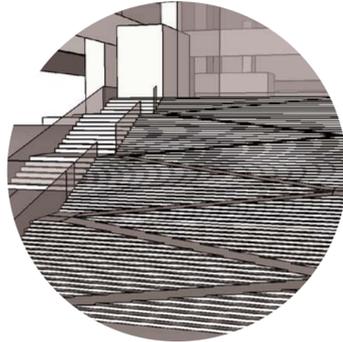
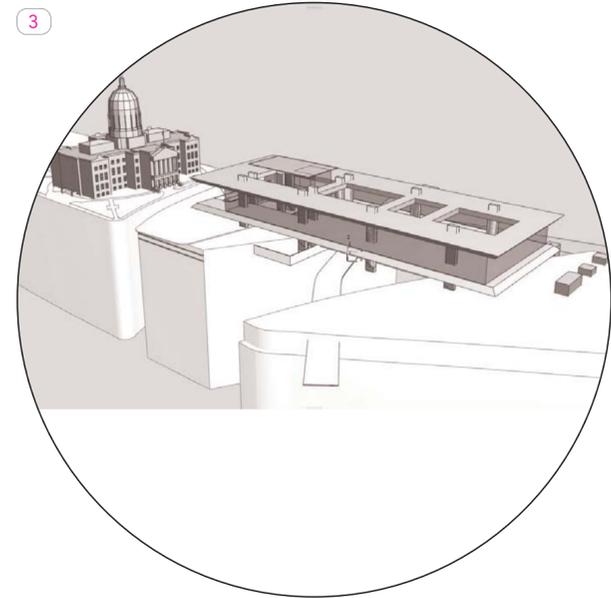
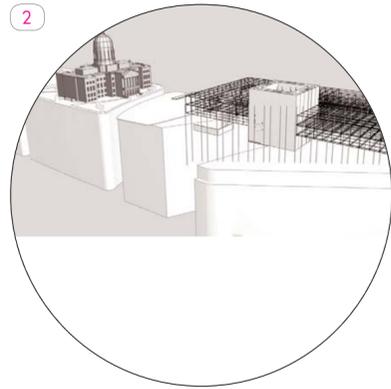
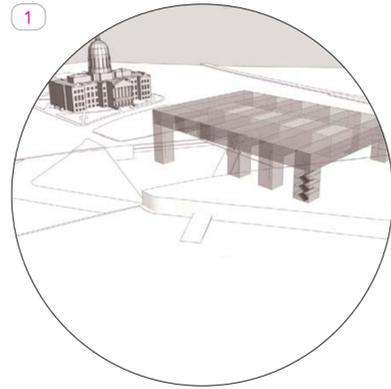
Architecture as city



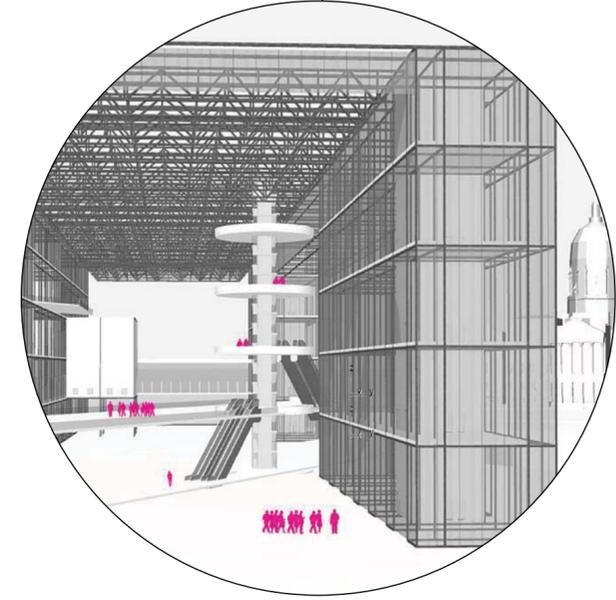
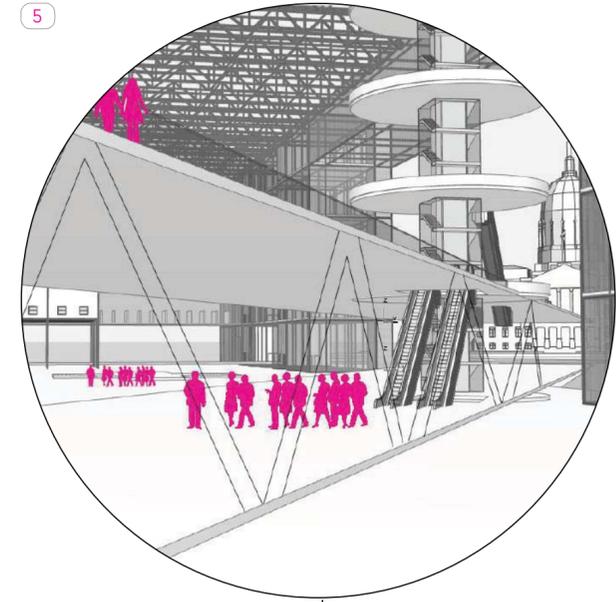
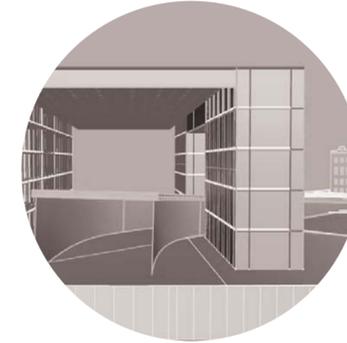
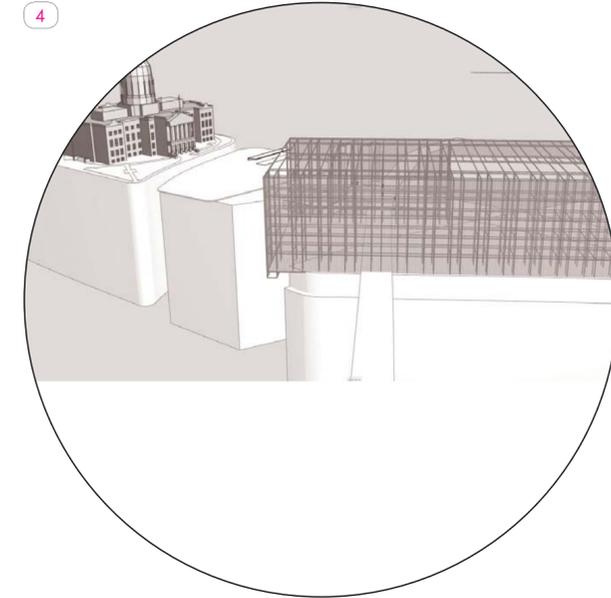
**Early Design Ideas**  
Form-Finding Process



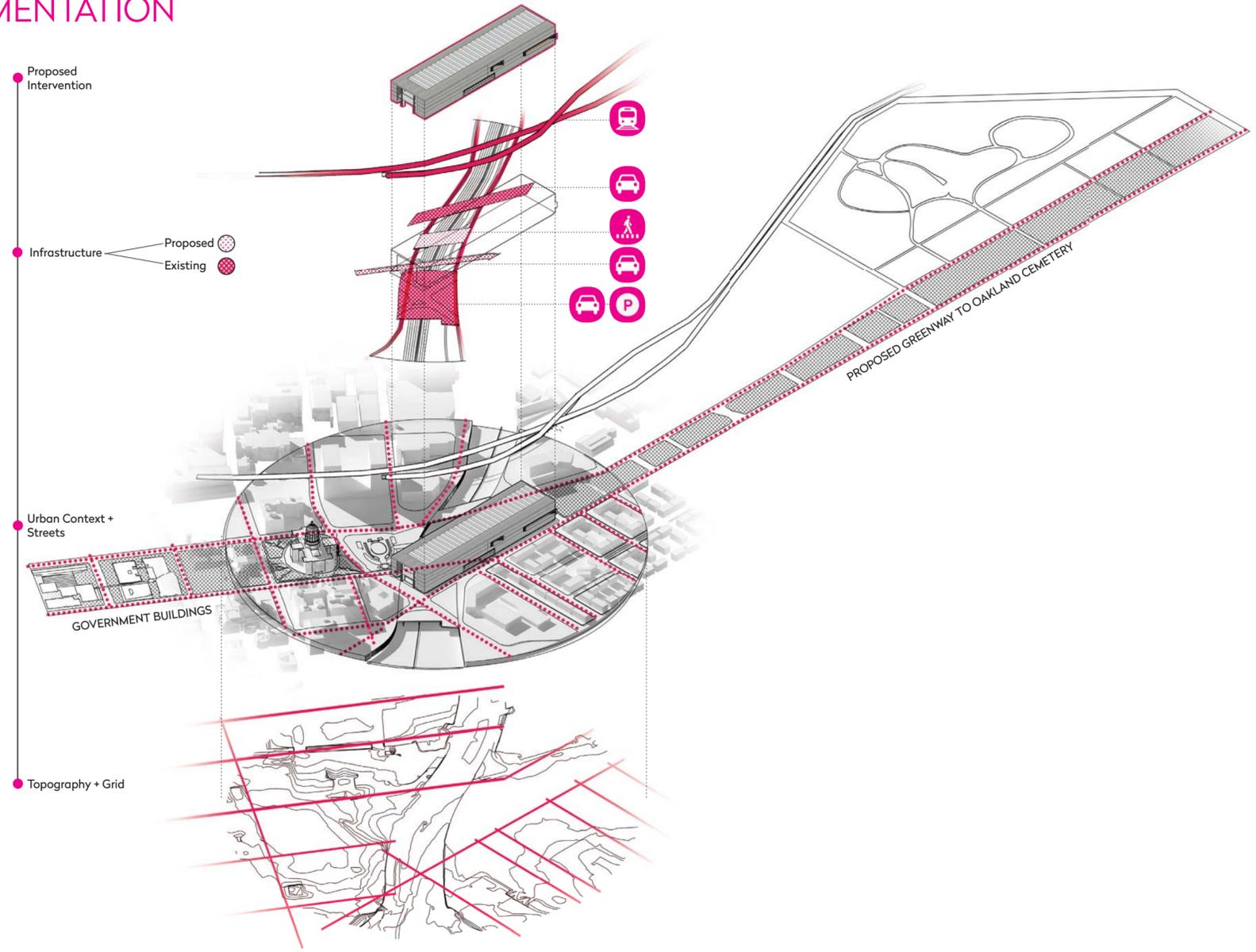
Preliminary Documentation  
Design Iterations



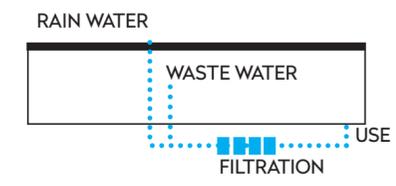
Preliminary Documentation  
Design Iterations (Continued)



## 4.2 FINAL DOCUMENTATION



## Exploded Axonometric Program and Circulation



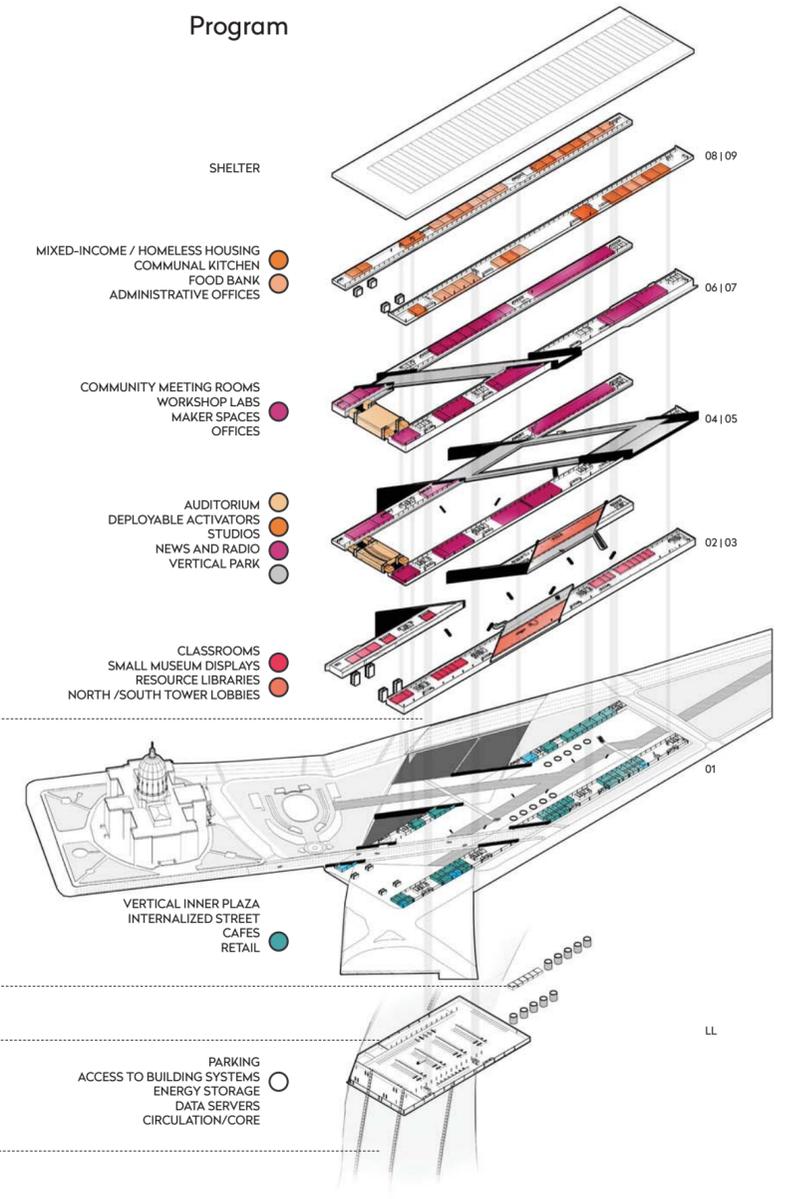
Elevator cores

The lowest level of the building functions as a "battery" to store energy, water and parking within the space of public refuge.

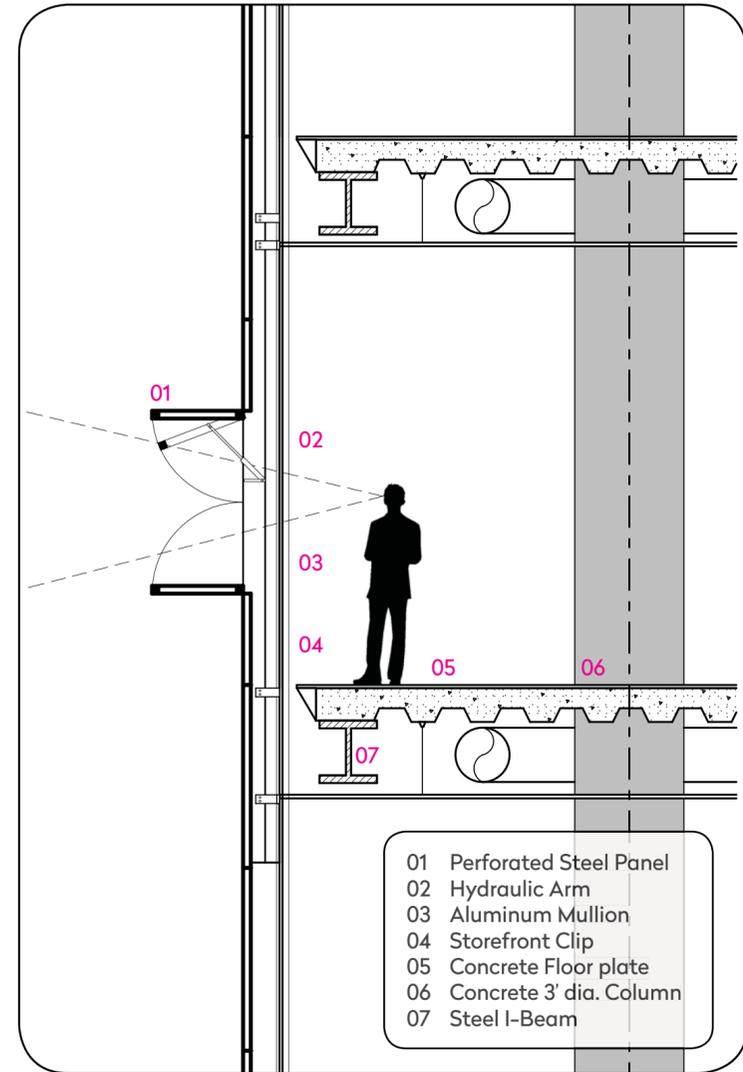
Parking Garage and building storage use the darkest area of the site. Wasted space between structure is used for automobiles.

I - 85

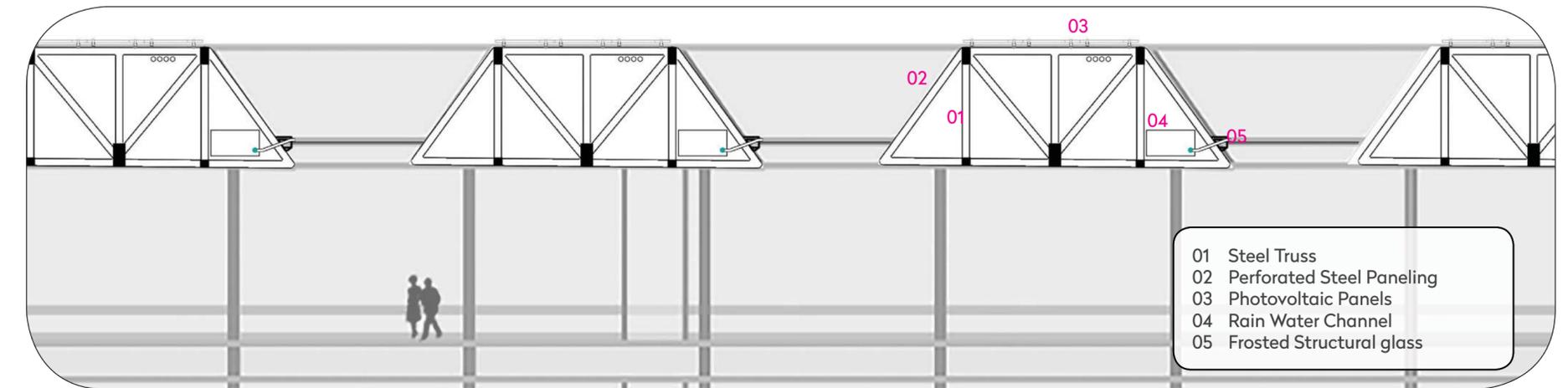
## Program



Wall Section Detail  
Operable Perforated Steel Panels



Roof Section Detail  
Structure and Systems of Daylighting Canopy

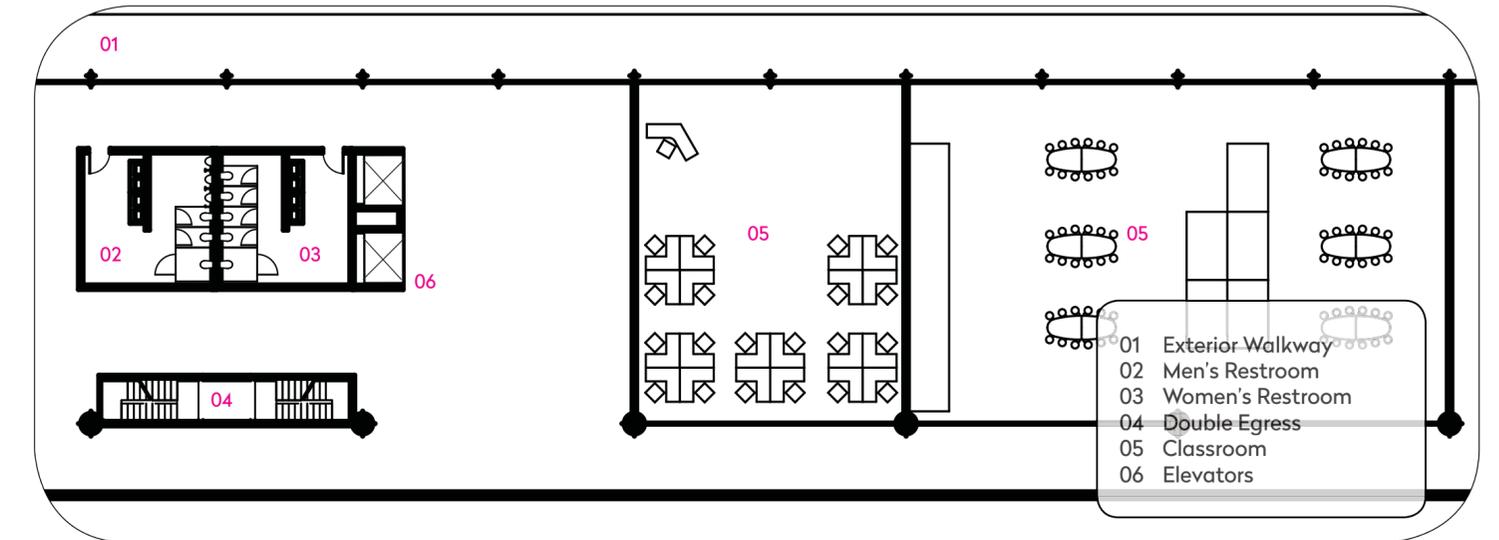


Floor Plans  
5th Floor Plan



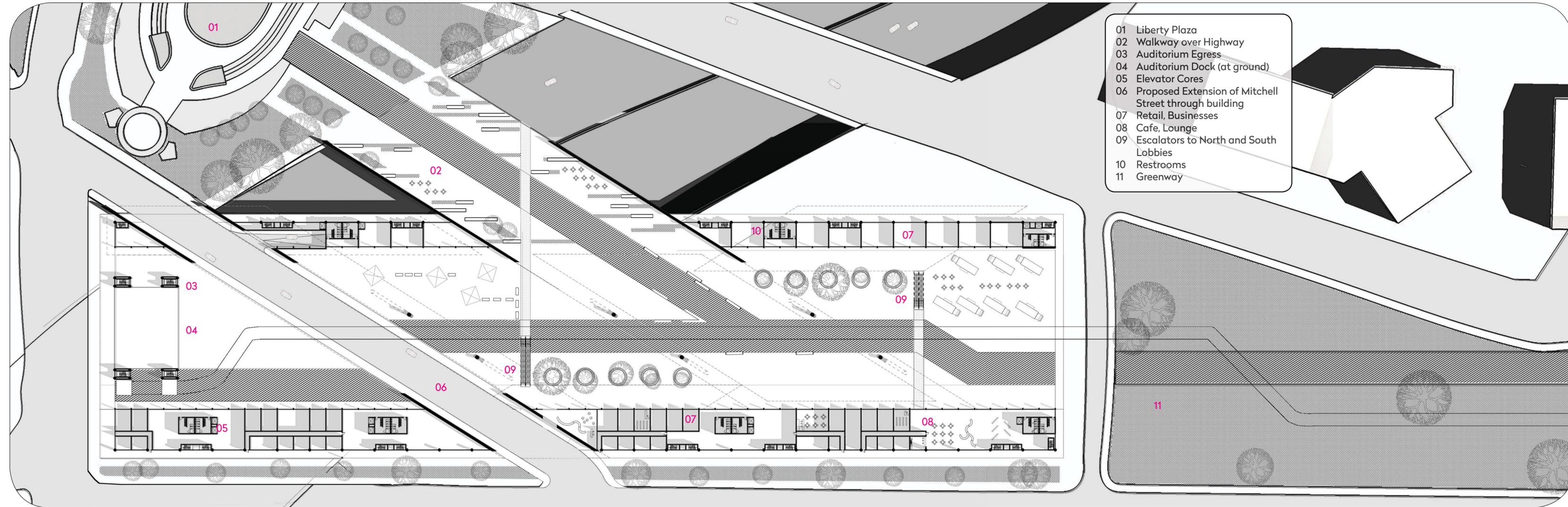
- 01 Elevator - auditorium
- 02 Deployable activators
- 03 Workspace
- 04 Restroom + Elevator
- 05 North Tower Lobby Below
- 06 South Tower Lobby Below
- 07 Resource Library
- 08 Classroom
- 09 Sloped Public Platform

5th Floor Plan Core Detail

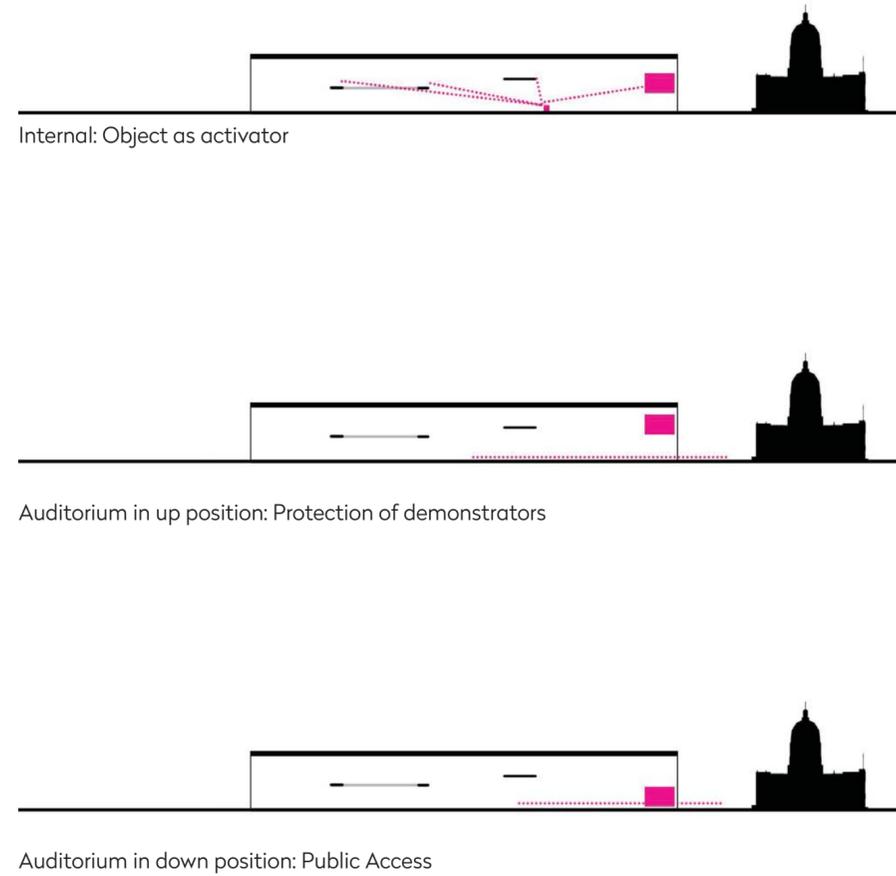
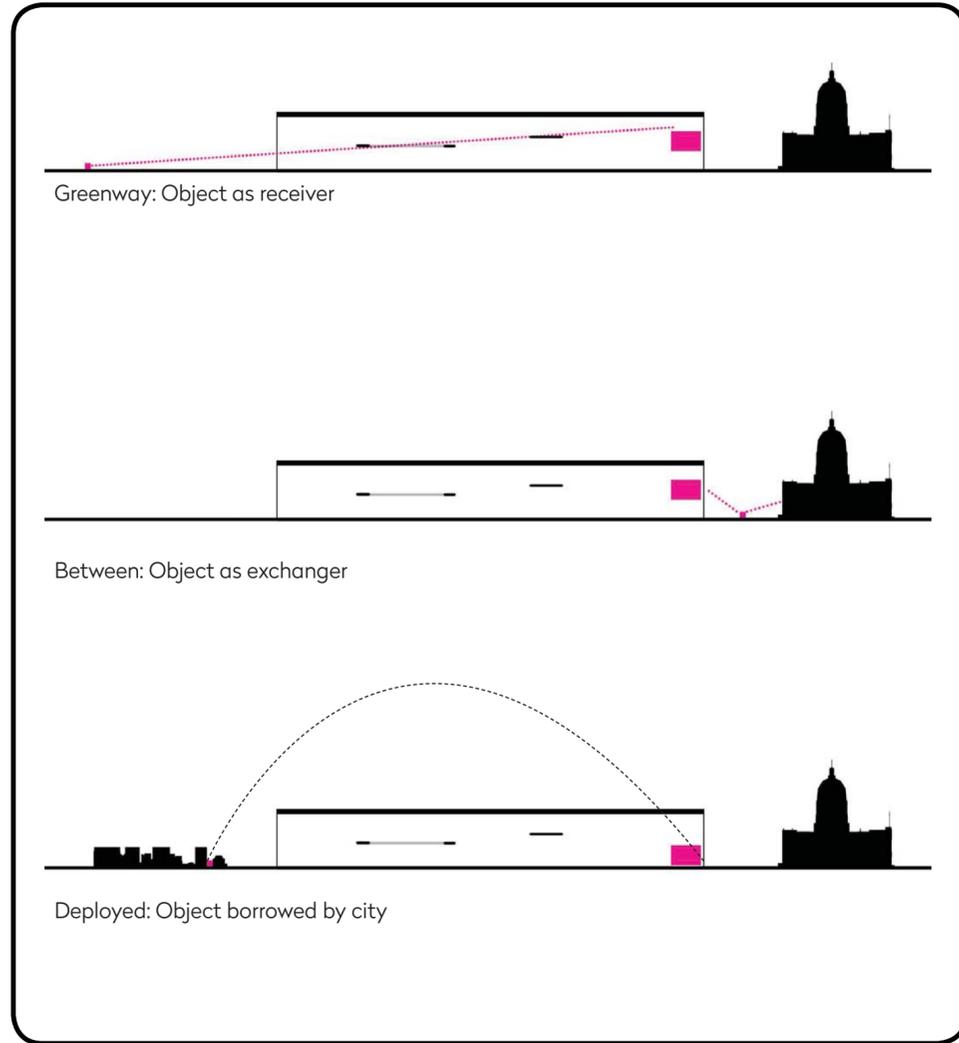


- 01 Exterior Walkway
- 02 Men's Restroom
- 03 Women's Restroom
- 04 Double Egress
- 05 Classroom
- 06 Elevators

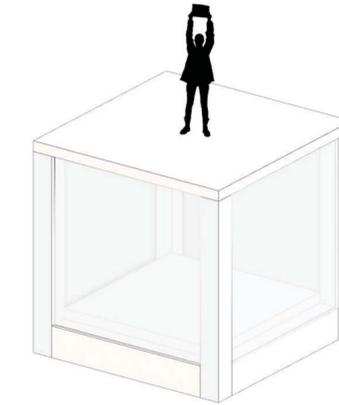
Floor Plans  
Ground Floor Plan



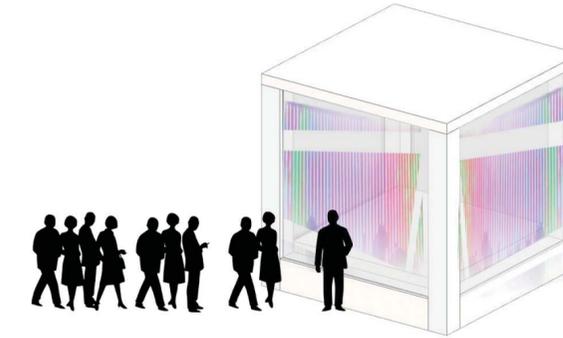
**Spatial Tensions of Elevator - Auditorium and Deployable Activators**  
 Object's Spatial Dialogues are Transformed via Kinetic Elements



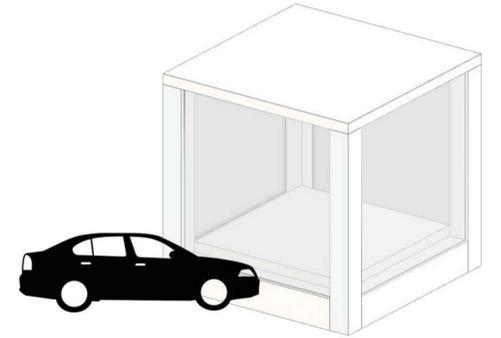
**Deployable Activator Functions**  
 "Follies" redefined as a tools for collective expression



Deployable Activator as podium



Deployable Activator as screen projection during event



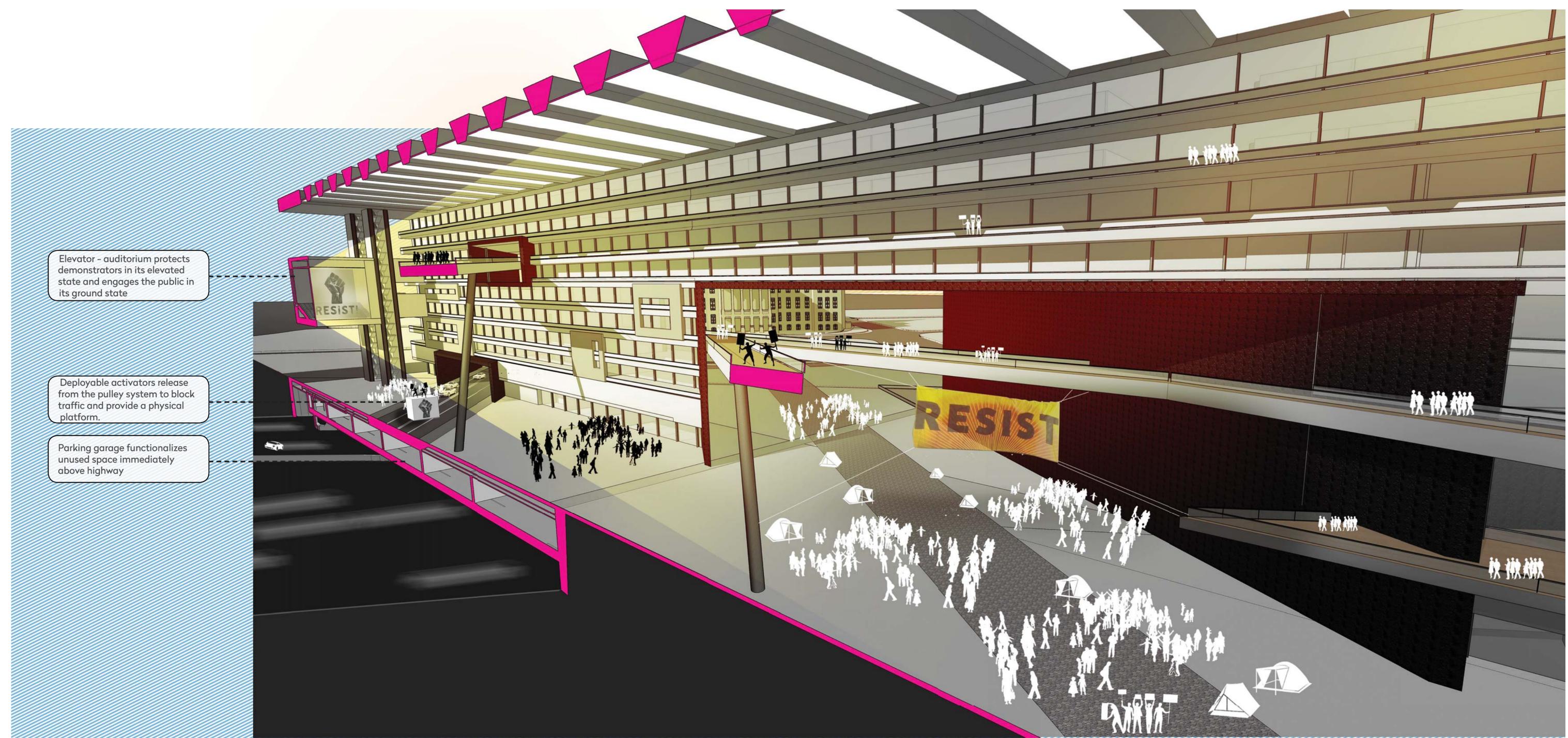
Deployable Activator as blockade during protest

## THE PROTEST

The building's functionality takes from its ability to protect and provide a platform for the people of the city. Its adjacency to the capitol and significance being the terminus of the proposed greenway gives ample voice and appearance when collective opposition is required.

**“The role of architecture in modern society is to act as the mediator of exchange between men and their city... the space of public appearance could still serve not only to house the public realm, but also to represent its reality.”**

(Frampton, 1982)



## THE EVENT

The object uses its porosity as a means of hosting event. This design was informed by Tschumi's observation that "There is no architecture without action, no architecture without event, no architecture without program."

"What makes mass society so difficult to bear is not the number of people involved, or at least not primarily, but **the fact that the world between has lost its power to gather them together...**"

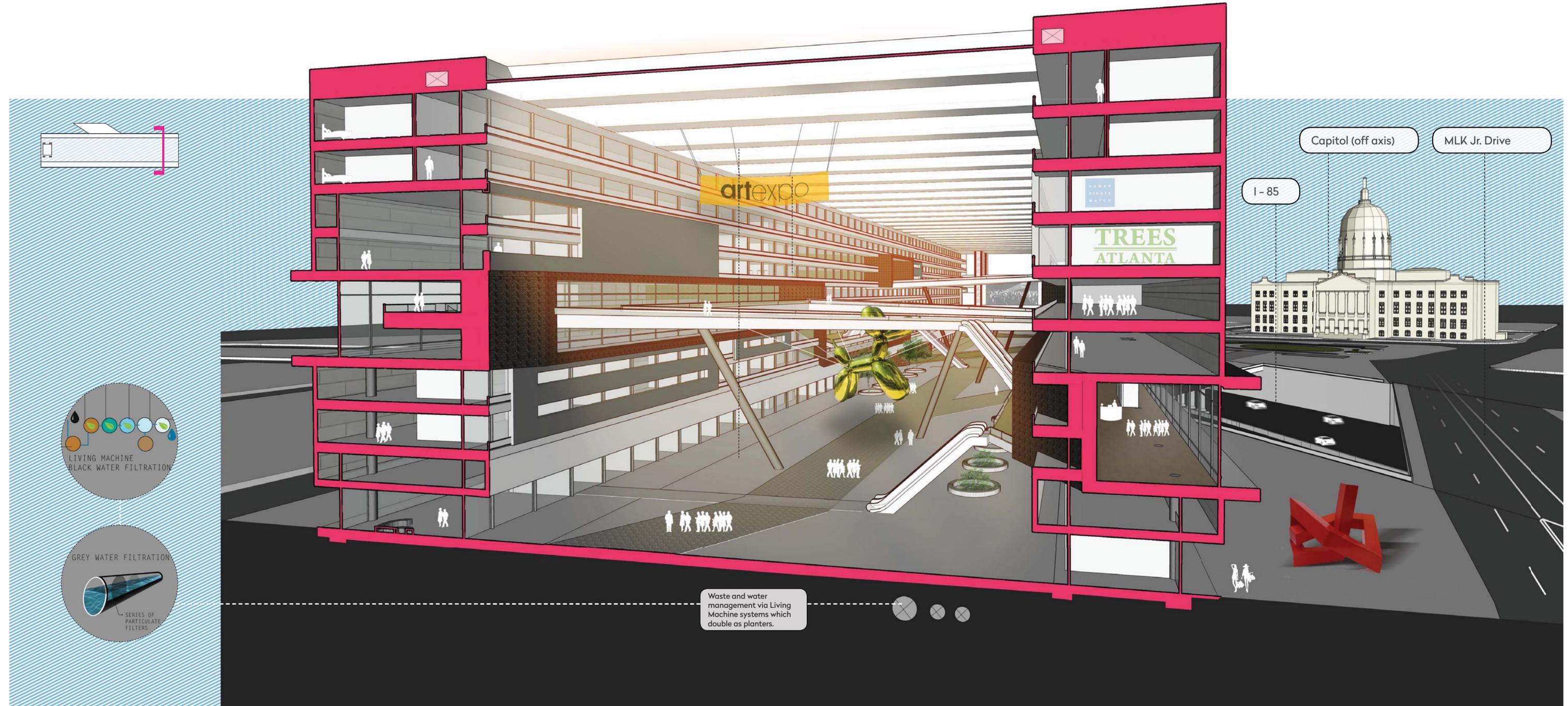
(Frampton, 1982)



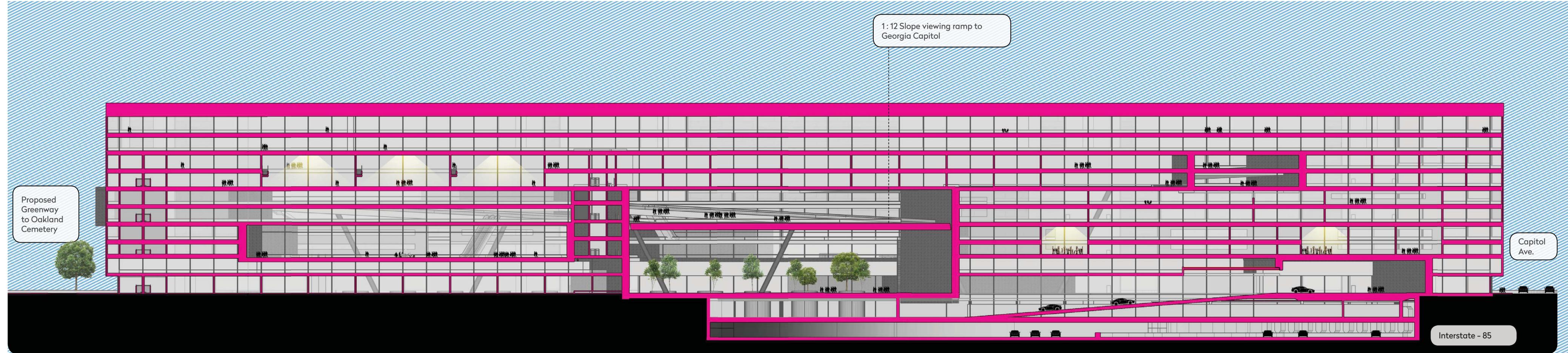
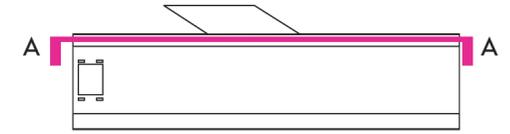
SECTION PERSPECTIVE OF THE EVERYDAY

This section depicts an art expo as an example of day-to-day life unfolding. Having continuous program to activate the collective object outside of the life of an urban event further protects its permanence and urban use.

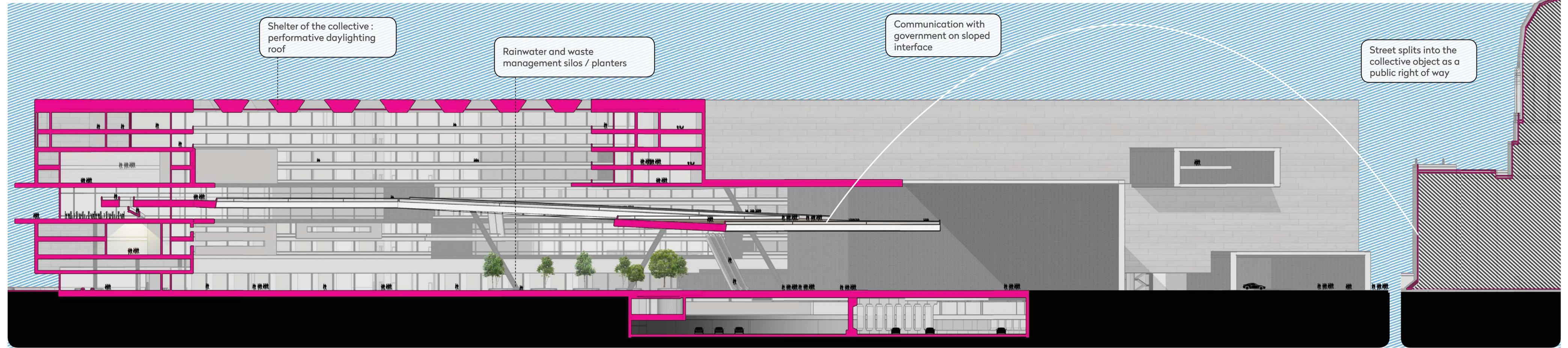
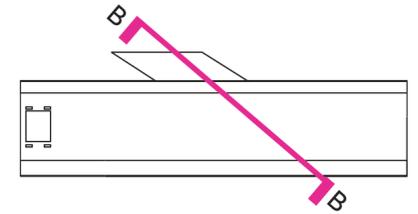
This is collective space in an era of “Bigness”. Its implementation should not deny the urban spatial reality and technology from which the issues of bigness stemmed. As bigness is able to hold larger capacities of people, the collective object becomes more critical as a truly public node amidst the masses. **It stands as a permanent frame of action, discourse and event.** The collective object is an opportunity to revitalize the gathering potentials of the city. Within a rapidly-growing urban fabric of exclusion, **we must work towards a culture of inclusion.**



South Section AA  
Section Cut Through "Thin" North Tower Revealing Spatial Hierarchy

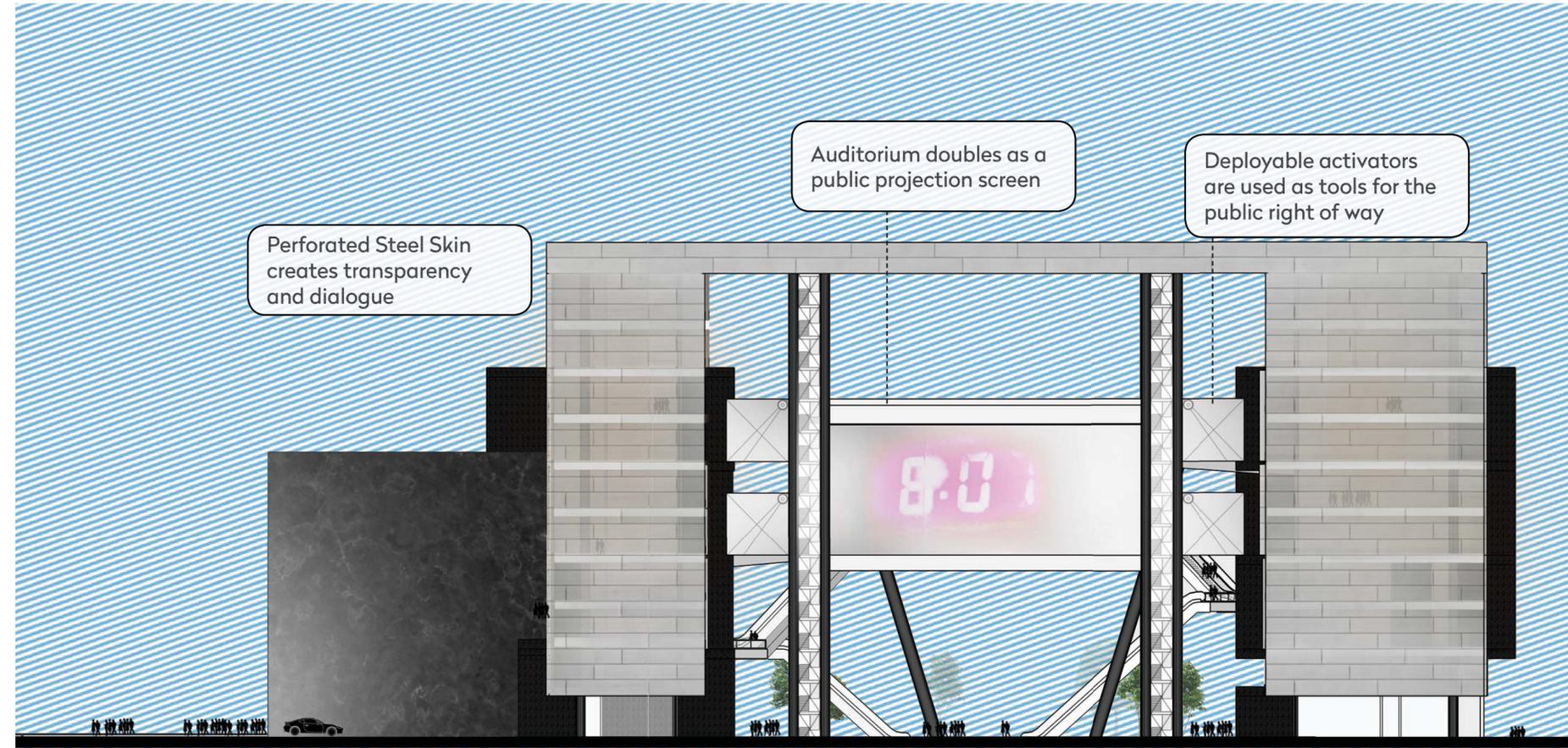


Diagonal West Section BB  
Section Cut Through Capitol - Oriented Axis as Significant Adjacency



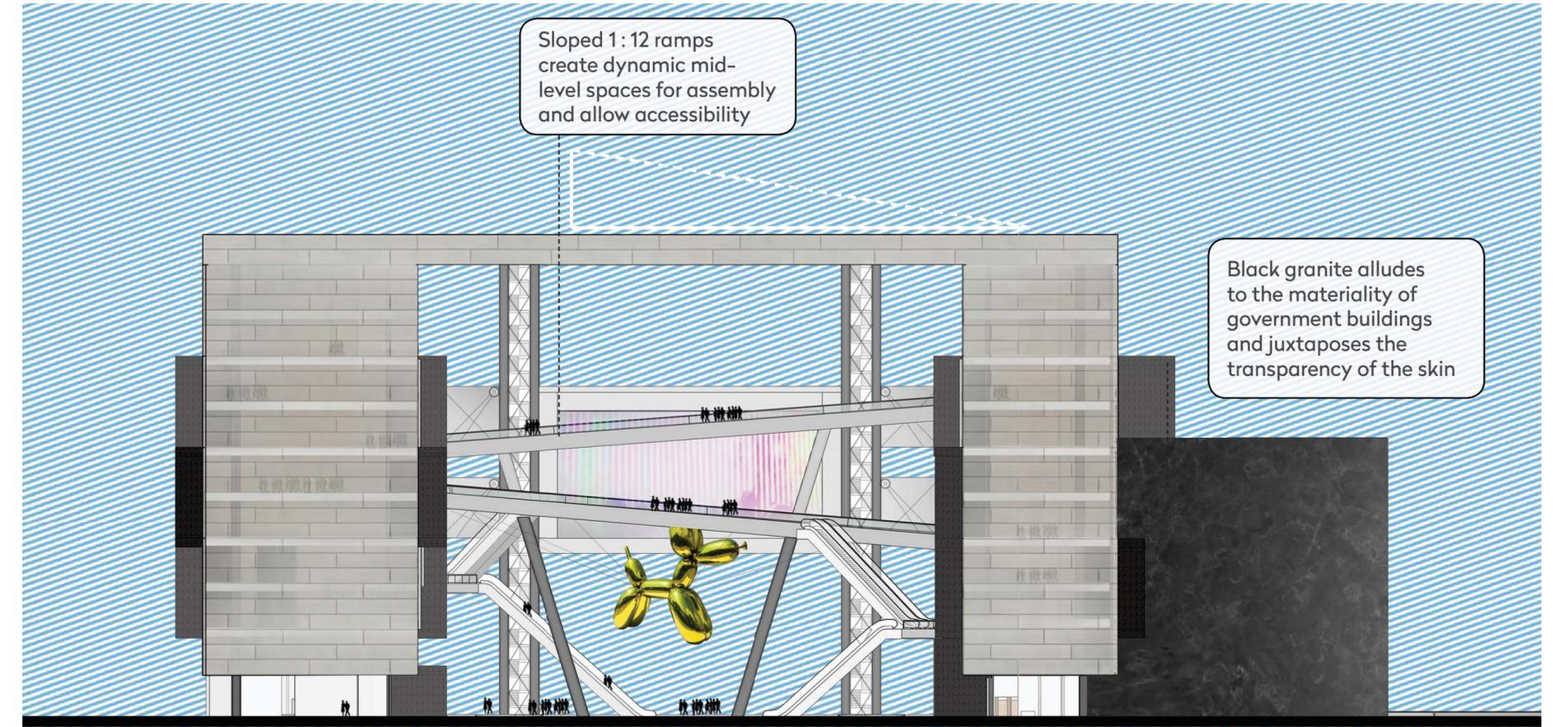
West Elevation

View of Hollow Collective Platform as Terminus of Greenway

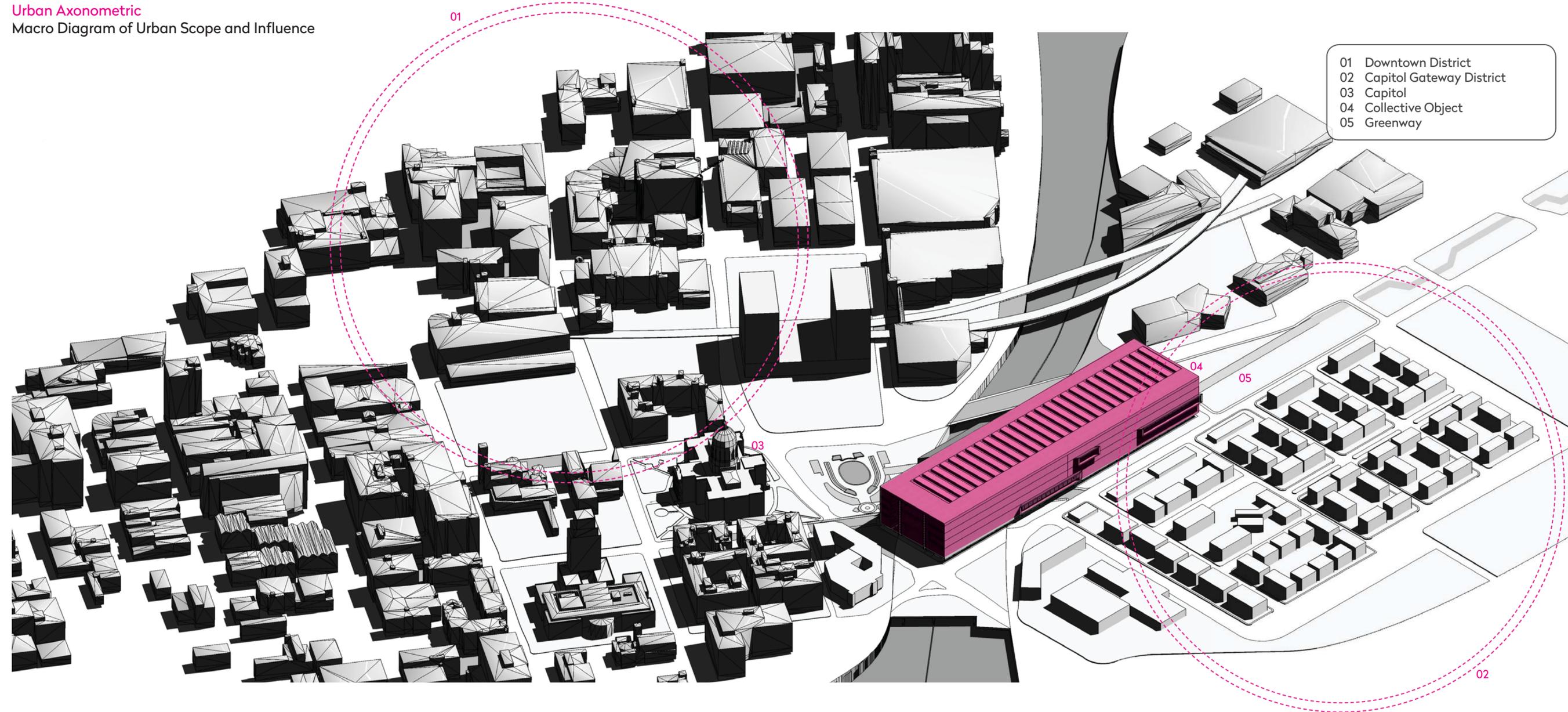


East Elevation

Drawing of Dynamic Mid-Level Ramped Surfaces



Urban Axonometric  
Macro Diagram of Urban Scope and Influence



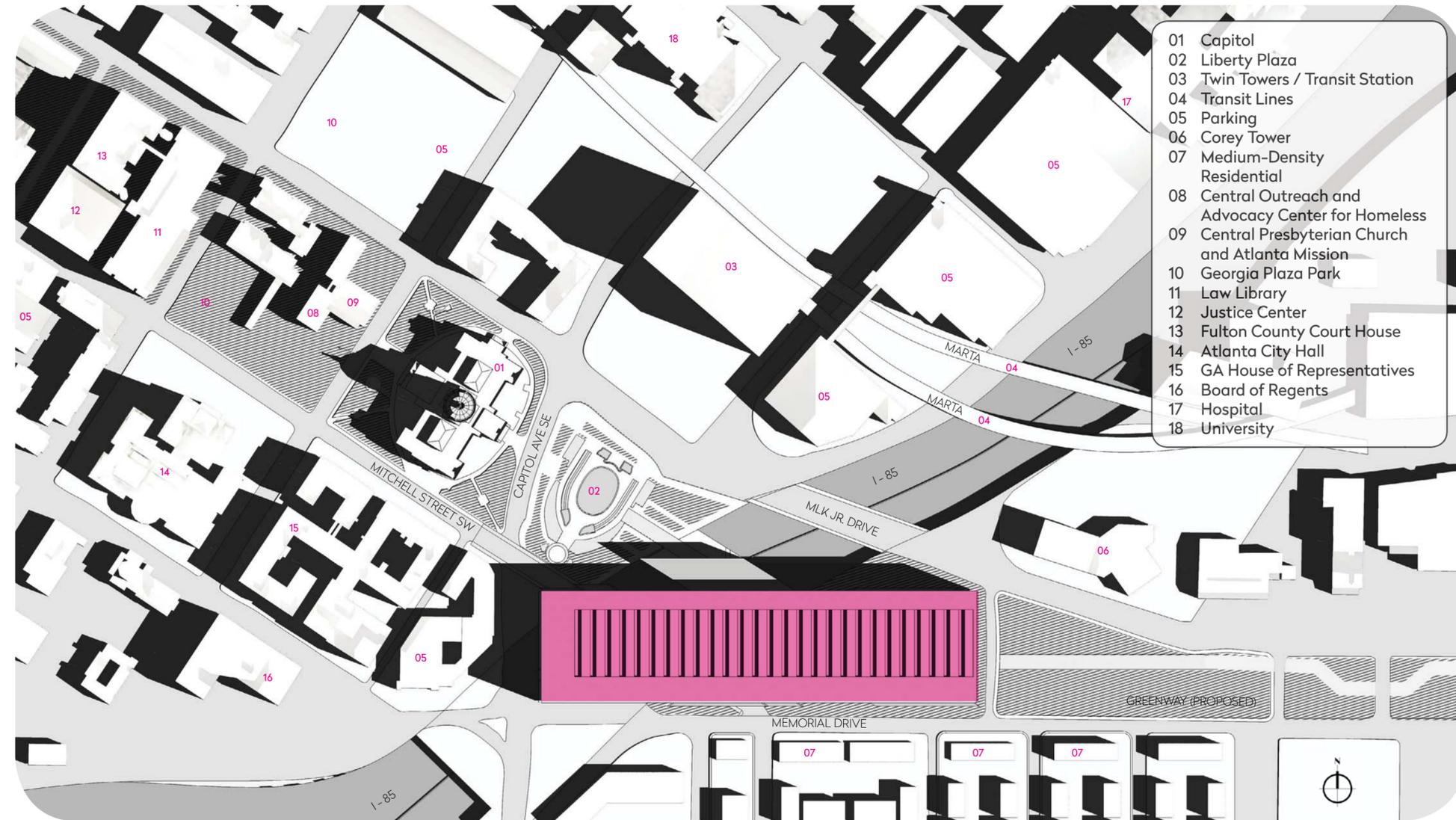
View from I - 85 South



View from Capitol Ave



Site Plan  
Context and Influence



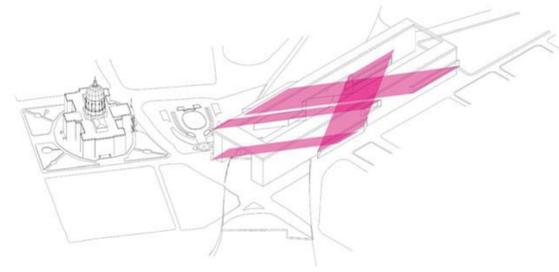
View from I - 85 North



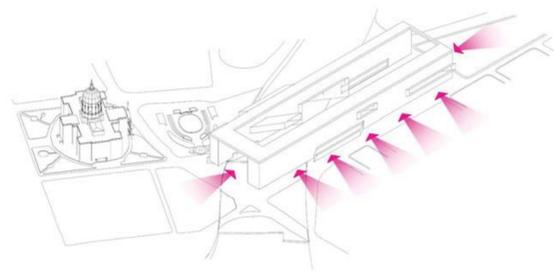
“As our cities become increasingly fragmented and pluralistic, **the complete separation of society is a fundamental threat to our public realm and the reality and certainty that it provides.**”

(Bhatia, 2007)

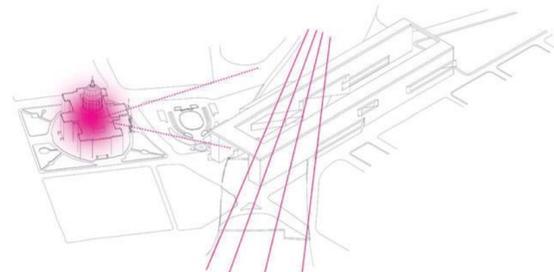
Design Diagrams  
Diagramming Gestural Design Moves



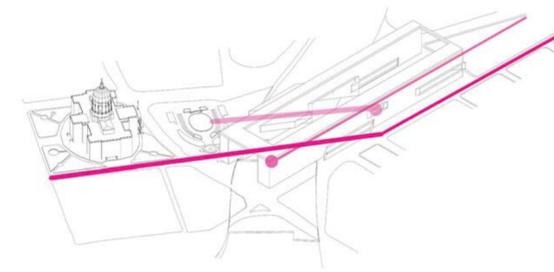
Cuts through volume provide access, views and interaction



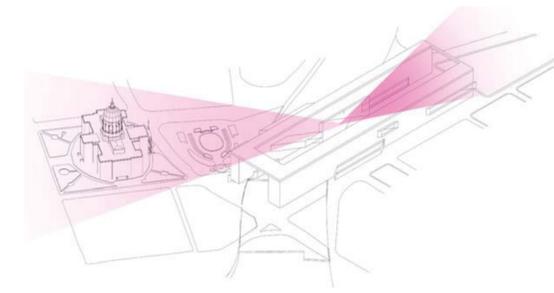
Ground Access with urban edges



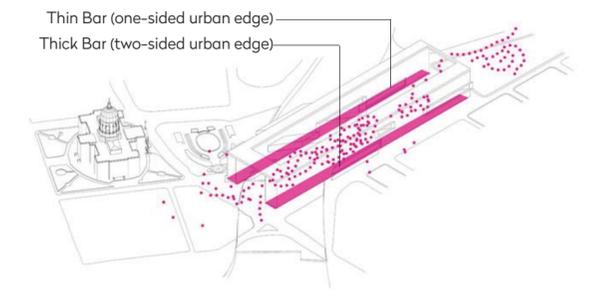
Disconnections in the urban field



Proposed access pathways to mend disconnection



Views frame capitol and greenway as major axis



Architecture as frame of collective space

Final Model  
Physical Model at 1:100 Scale



**“Without a common realm, we are without both certainty and the quality of sameness that bonds us to enable action to transpire. This signals the breakdown of the public sphere.”**

(Bhatia, 2007)

Final Model  
Physical Model at 1:100 Scale



## CRITICAL RESPONSE TO DESIGN THEOREM

CHAPTER  
**05**

## 5.1 REFLECTION

The solution of this thesis is presented in the form of an architectural proposal. In the process of coming to a design project as the best means of proposing a solution, there was a back-and-forth debate between an urban design proposal and a building proposal. **The end result seems to straddle somewhere in-between.**

Reflecting on the Parc de la Villette case studies, architects of the last century appear to have a growing claim on the territory of urban design. Perhaps we were entirely too slow coming into this realm and perhaps too much of architectural practice has not arrived at that conclusion yet.

When a building is placed among others, it is immediately transformed for better or for worse. If it is determined to be parasitic, symbiotic, or otherwise is entirely coded into its design. Its ability to be thoughtful of these qualities is the responsibility the profession of architecture.

Upon presentation of this thesis to a panel of jurors, I was asked if the collective object had already been determined by society, if our high demand and use of commercial spaces meant that our gathering object could be the commercial spaces I meant to critique.

However, I concluded, with the aid of Neeraj Bhatia's writings, that the places owned and operated by commercial interest can never be truly collective because they are not truly public. The cities of today have proven that. Even within the greatest urban densities, privatized spaces are at constant odds with the masses. **This is why at least some portion of our built environment must provide the public realm.** If the city is increasingly interiorized and the interior is increasingly privatized, at what point does the public realm become residue?

## 5.2 CONCLUSIONS

At some point, society must come to the realization that the very origin of humanity's urbanization began with one purpose: to gather. **Today's built environment has tunneled and contorted itself into competing entities which actively invest in their own separation.** Autonomy has become the prevailing urban typology.

This is as unsustainable as it is troublesome. With the world's population growing exponentially, our buildings are bigger, denser and invest to compete for the affections of those who can afford them.

The issue ultimately lies where although our cities are more capable of holding our individual quantities, they are less capable of hosting our collective society. Without a collective object, civilization has lost its physical reality. There is no real community. There is no mediator between man and society.

This project presents an opportunity to realize collective space in an era of "Bigness". It is first defined by the city and then defines the city. Instead of reformatting the urban design structure to solve an urban problem, I analyzed the formations of the cities from which ours were derived. There was a gap found in the approaches taken by many architects of this century. This thesis proposes a return to the collective object that once drove humanity's urbanization collaged with the urban condition of "Bigness" which defines the contemporary city. The intention is that this solution will restore the collective object to the masses.

## APPENDIX





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Figure 2.2.1 Athenian Agora. Planetizen. (n.d.). Retrieved April 30, 2017, from <http://www.planetizen.com/files/agora.jpg>

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Figure 2.2.3 Semes, S. W. (2004). *The Architecture of the Classical Interior*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Figure 2.2.4 Giambattista Nolli's Map of Rome. (n.d.). Retrieved April 30, 2017, from [http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/EART/maps/nolli\\_06.jpg](http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/EART/maps/nolli_06.jpg)

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Figure 2.5.1 AD Classics: *Ville Radieuse / Le Corbusier*. (2013, August 10). Retrieved April 30, 2017, from <http://www.archdaily.com/411878/>

Figure 2.5.2 Ibid

Figure 2.5.3 Lang, P., & Menking, W. (2003). *Superstudio: life without objects*. Milano: Skira.

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Figure 2.5.7 Ibid

Figure 2.5.8 Ibid

Figure 2.5.9 Frampton, K. (1998). *Megaform as urban landscape: 21-23 June 1998, ICC International Convention Center, Jerusalem, Israel*. Israel: Publisher not identified.

Figure 2.5.10 Ibid

Figure 2.5.11 Ibid

Figure 2.5.12 *Factory 798 Rendering*. (n.d.). Retrieved April 30, 2017, from <http://www.tschumi.com/projects/20/>

Figure 2.5.13 Ibid

Figure 2.5.14 *In Grid We Trust | The Open Workshop*. (n.d.). Retrieved April 30, 2017, from <http://architect.com/theopenworkshop/project/in-grid-we-trust>

Figure 2.5.15 Ibid

Figure 2.6.1 Tschumi's site plan of Parc de la Villette. (n.d.). Retrieved April 30, 2017, from <http://www.tschumi.com/media/files/01635.jpg>

Figure 2.6.2 *Accueil*. (n.d.). Retrieved April 30, 2017, from <http://www.villette.com/>

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- Figure 2.7.1 Parisian Arcade. (n.d.). Retrieved April 30, 2017, from [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/c5/Paris\\_-\\_Passage\\_de\\_Choiseul\\_04.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/c5/Paris_-_Passage_de_Choiseul_04.jpg)
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