

An Immigration Support Center

ISC

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Masters Project -Spring 2011  
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## Introduction

The ISC serves for cultural exchange between immigrants and their new country of residency whilst providing the ability to learn new skills necessary for personal growth and integration.

The proposal is about providing a setting where recently immigrated residents can learn skills useful to them to compete in the country's market. In the meantime the skills they inherit as part of their cultural identity can be used to help create a stable life for them. The ISC is intended to be a working organism of exchange for culture and ideas, and sustainably maintained by the people that occupy it. On a day by day basis, the hub will act as a "market", people of different cultures can provide services, teaching a foreign language, making or selling products. At the same time this setting will offer them opportunities to learn the language and habits of their new country of residency, and learn technological skills they might not have, in order to become competitive assets of the workforce.

This project is developed because it can be challenging to be far away from home for the first time or any time. People, of all ages immigrate in pursuit of economic progress and stability. In 2009 about 1,130,818 immigrants obtained permanent resident status. Of those 479,845 listed a coun-

try in America for previous residency, in that region about 164,067 listed Mexico as their country of previous residency. The statistics for illegal immigration to the United States are much harder to document since the entry goes unreported. However in 2009 it was estimated that illegal immigrants in the US estimated to be 11.1 million. (Pew Hispanic Research Center) In some cases a large portion of immigrants are uneducated, do not know English, and struggle to find a way to integrate. However it seems that as a host country we form part of the responsibility for successful integration. According to the New York University Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development:

"Support for integration cannot be based only upon providing services directly to immigrants learning about how to live in a new society; also needed are programs and activities to support native citizens as they learn about and accept their new neighbors, classmates, colleagues, and customers. Without their deliberate and thoughtful engagement, which may consist of adapting their own behaviors and expectations and examining their stereotypes about new arrivals, successful integration is not possible."

The Hub will act as a means to juxtapose events for people to experience varying aspects of cultural identities. Similar

to a market, the facility is to possess an internal urbanity that remains active at all times.

Exchange occurs as the users participate in the educational programs made available to them and use the facility as a gathering place. The educational component, offers opportunity to learn English, or other languages. Technology classes can help teach basic computer skills, necessary in today's market. In some cases history courses can be offered, to satisfy naturalization exam requirements.

The proposal does not intend to reinvent the identity of an immigrant but to strengthen it. In hopes that the spectrum of opportunity & success are widened, but not limited to agricultural labor, housekeeping, or janitorial employment.

The relationship of immigrant to host country is a codependent relationship of which both parties are equal parties in the successful integration of one to the other.

# Goals & Guiding Principles

## CULTURAL EXCHANGE

Promote cultural exchange between the immigrant and host country/city, for the advancement of both.

1. The exchange of ideas, goods and services is an important step in promoting cultural connectivity, particularly for new immigrants.
2. Cultural exchange is enabled through participant diversity. Settings should be able to support a variety cultures and activities.

## PERSONAL GROWTH

Support personal growth through the learning of skills that help the individual become an active participant in the work force, and community.

1. In addition to accommodating a range of collective cultural identities, the needs of individual participants must be supported.
2. Learning opportunities should be offered with as much diversity as the cultures and individuals they serve.

## IDENTITY

Provide for a diverse group of cultural identities and help reinforce the identity of the community.

1. The collective identity benefits from a relationship between immigrant identity and community identity, in which both are equal partners and one is not predominant over the other.
2. Opportunities to express ones personal identity should be offered so as to not loose this vital component of the larger diversified collective identity.
3. Accommodate for opportunities to learn about the host country, city, neighbourhood, as part of the codependent relationship of immigrant to host.
4. Supporting local identity characteristics promotes community involvement vital for the successful interaction of immigrant to host.

# Design Response

## CULTURAL EXCHANGE

Promote cultural exchange between the immigrant and host country/city, for the advancement of both.

1. Allow for gathering for a group or groups of people that can engage in the exchange of ideas, goods, or services.
2. To create a sense of internal urbanity, an interior form of street for the exchange of ideas.
3. Juxtapose program elements for the exchange of cultures and ideas.
4. Flexibility for spaces to grow or shrink based on need.

## PERSONAL GROWTH

Support personal growth through the learning of skills that help the individual become an active participant in the work force, and community.

1. Learning at different times, in traditional settings and un-traditional settings.
2. Individual and group learning spaces.
3. Offer flexibility for learning in a group or individually.

## IDENTITY

Provide for a diverse group of cultural identities and help re-inforce the identity of the community.

1. Diversified environmental quality, or different settings.
2. Engage the community around by introducing spaces that can be used by them.
3. Offer exhibit spaces for individual or group expression of cultural events/arts.

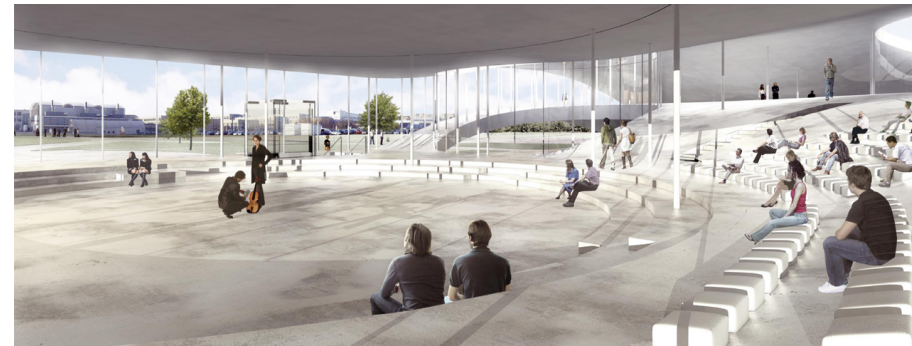
# Qualitative



Natural Lighting



Classroom Natural Lighting Shaft



Gathering Space - Rolex Learning Center



Interior to Exterior Access

## Lighting

Flexible lighting should be made available to allow for unexpected use of large common areas.

Lighting should be appropriate to create the best learning environment available.

Natural Lighting should be made available to classrooms, offices, and common areas.

## Environmental

Outdoor spaces should be made available.

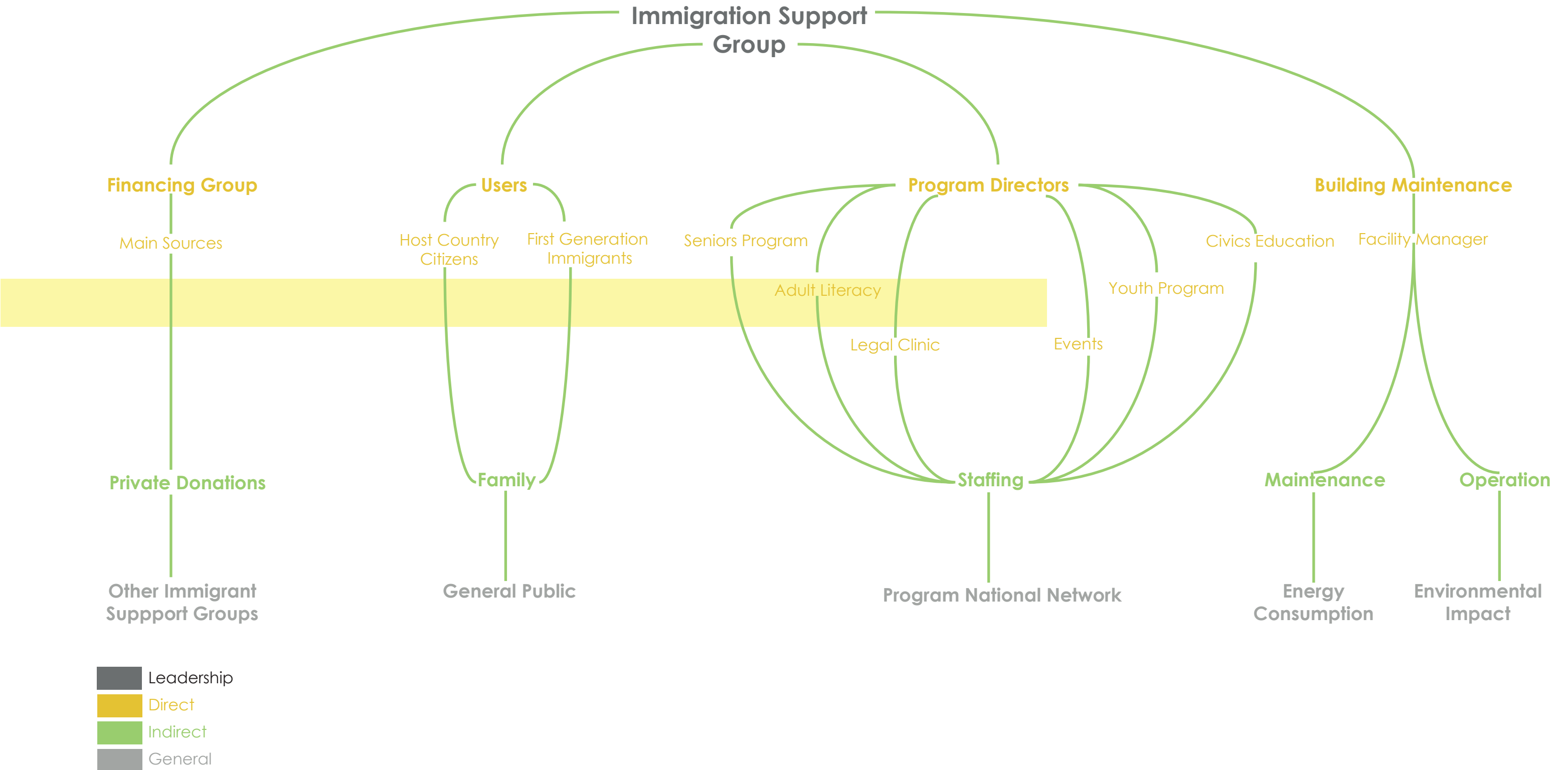
Sustainable materials and practices should form part of the Hubs design and everyday activities.

Outdoor and interior space should interact with one another as often as is possible.

Spaces that allow for flexibility and diversity of use.

# Stakeholders

Indirect, Direct, & General



## Program Requirements



# PROGRAM

## Quantitative Requirements

### Training / Educational

| Citizenship & Immigration Services | Qty. | Net S.F. | Total S.F. | sf/occupant | Occupant Load |
|------------------------------------|------|----------|------------|-------------|---------------|
| Classroom                          | 3    | 600      | 1800       | 20          | 90            |
| Total                              |      |          | 1800       |             | 90            |

### Alternative School

|           |   |     |      |    |     |
|-----------|---|-----|------|----|-----|
| Classroom | 9 | 600 | 5400 | 20 | 270 |
| Tutoring  | 2 | 400 | 800  | 20 | 40  |
| Total     |   |     | 6200 |    | 310 |

### Administration

#### Alternative School & Immigration Services

|                 |   |     |         |     |    |
|-----------------|---|-----|---------|-----|----|
| Office          | 4 | 150 | 600     | 150 | 4  |
| Staff Workspace | 1 | 500 | 500     | 100 | 5  |
| Meeting Room    | 1 | 300 | 300     | 25  | 12 |
| Total           |   |     | 1400 sf |     | 21 |

# PROGRAM

## Quantitative Requirements

### Common

|               | Qty. | Net S.F. | Total S.F. | sf/occupant | Occupant Load |
|---------------|------|----------|------------|-------------|---------------|
| Lecture Hall  | 1    | 1728     | 1728       | 5           | 100           |
| Resource Room | 1    | 600      | 600        | 24          | 25            |
| Total         |      |          | 2328 sf    |             | 125           |

### Service

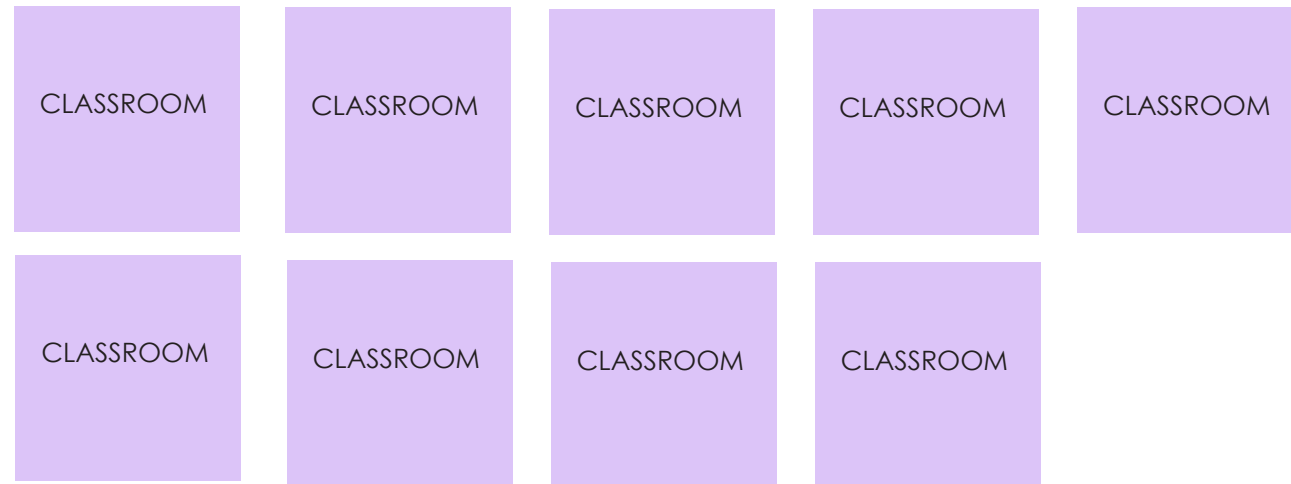
|                  |   |     |         |  |  |
|------------------|---|-----|---------|--|--|
| Male Restrooms   | 3 | 184 | 552     |  |  |
| Female Restrooms | 3 | 184 | 552     |  |  |
| Mechanical       | 1 | 600 | 600     |  |  |
| Kitchenette      | 1 | 600 | 600     |  |  |
| Total            |   |     | 2304 sf |  |  |

|                |   |      |           |  |  |
|----------------|---|------|-----------|--|--|
| *Outdoor Court | 1 | 2000 | 2000      |  |  |
| Total          |   |      | 2000 sf   |  |  |
| Building Total |   |      | 16,032 sf |  |  |

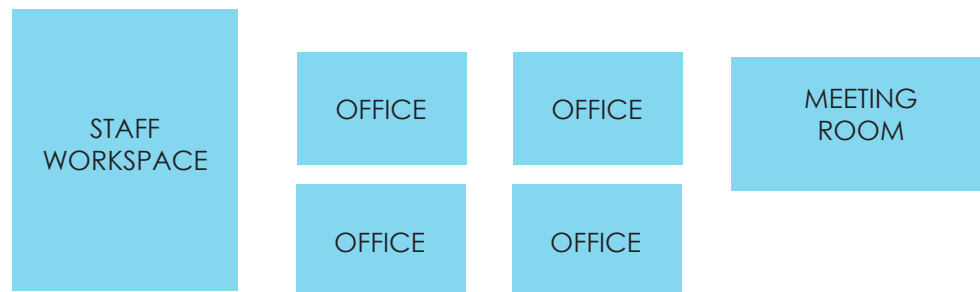
\*Dependent on final site selection and available space.

# PROGRAM

## Alternative School



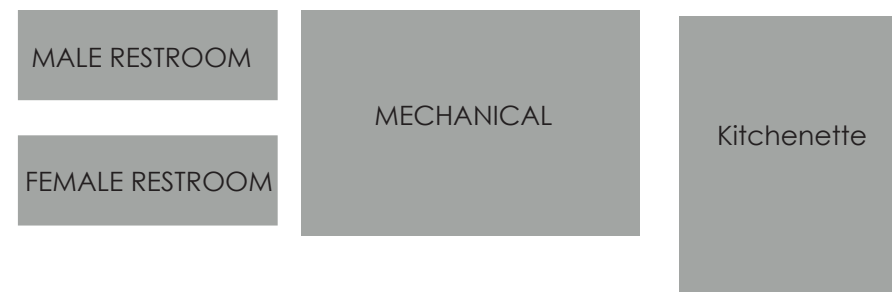
## Administrative



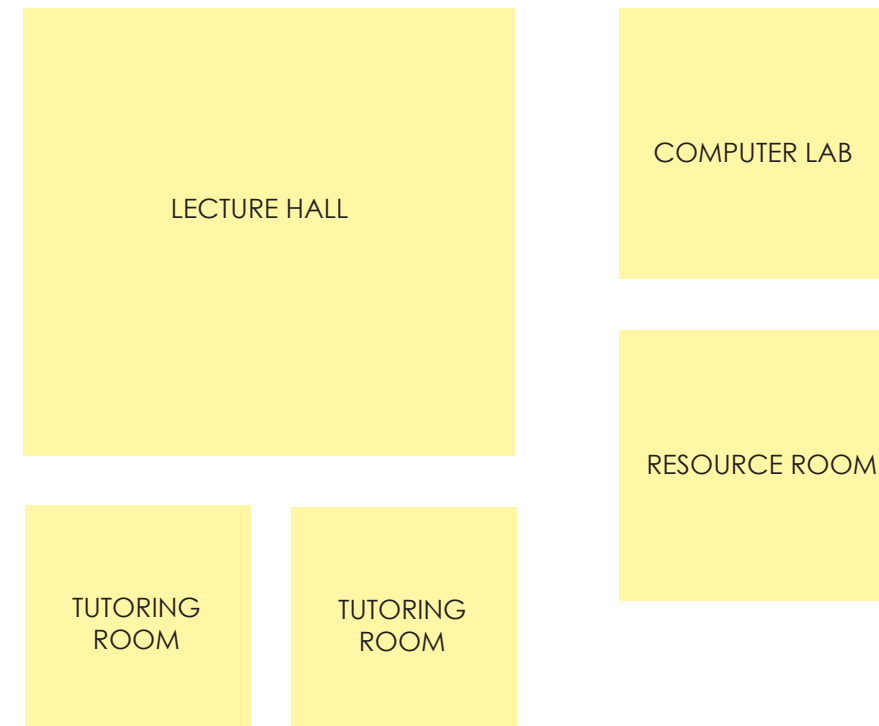
## Citizenship & Immigration Services



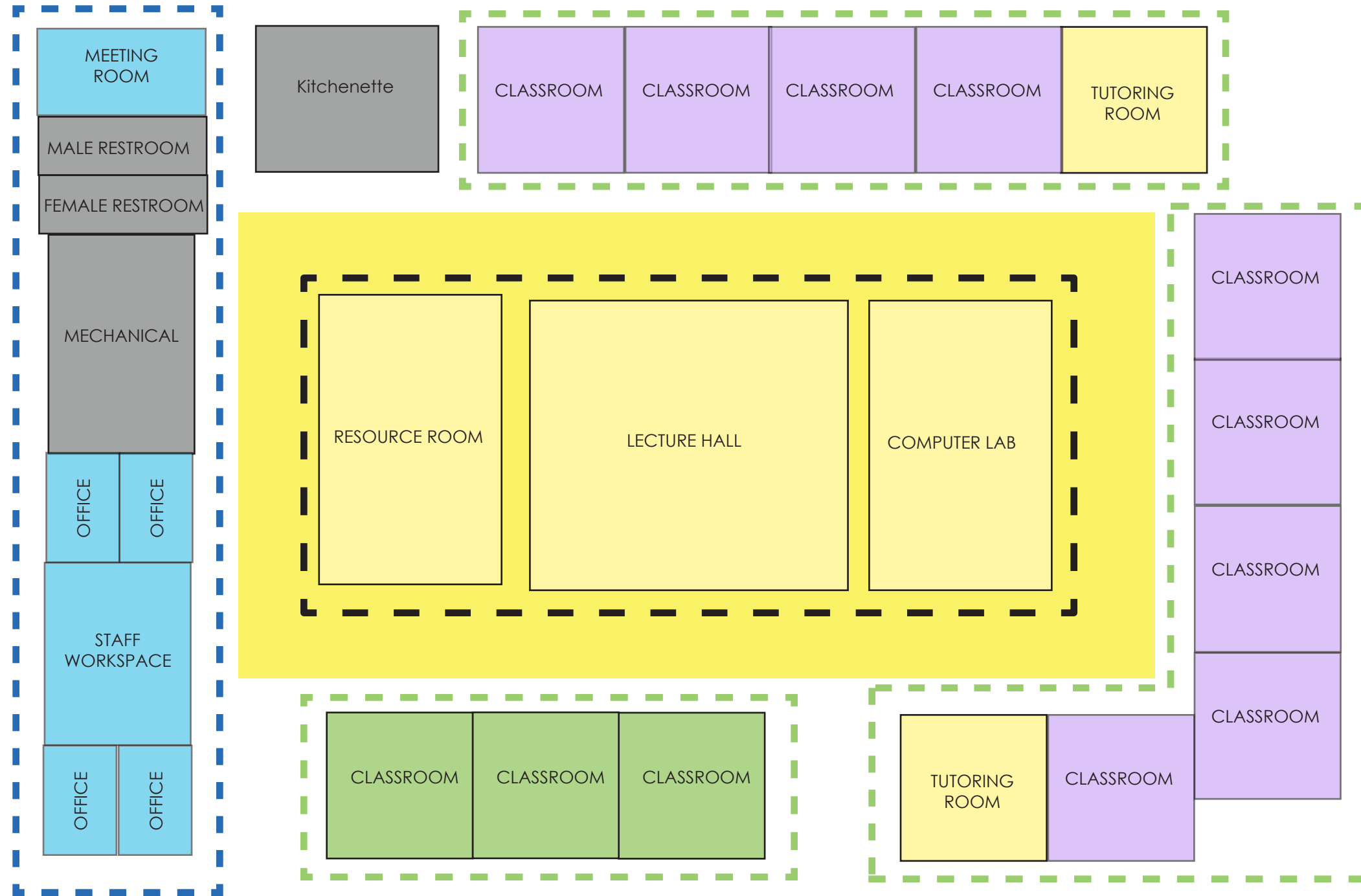
## Support



## Common



# PROGRAM



— — — — — Administrative

— — — — — Educational

— — — — — Common

## Site Location

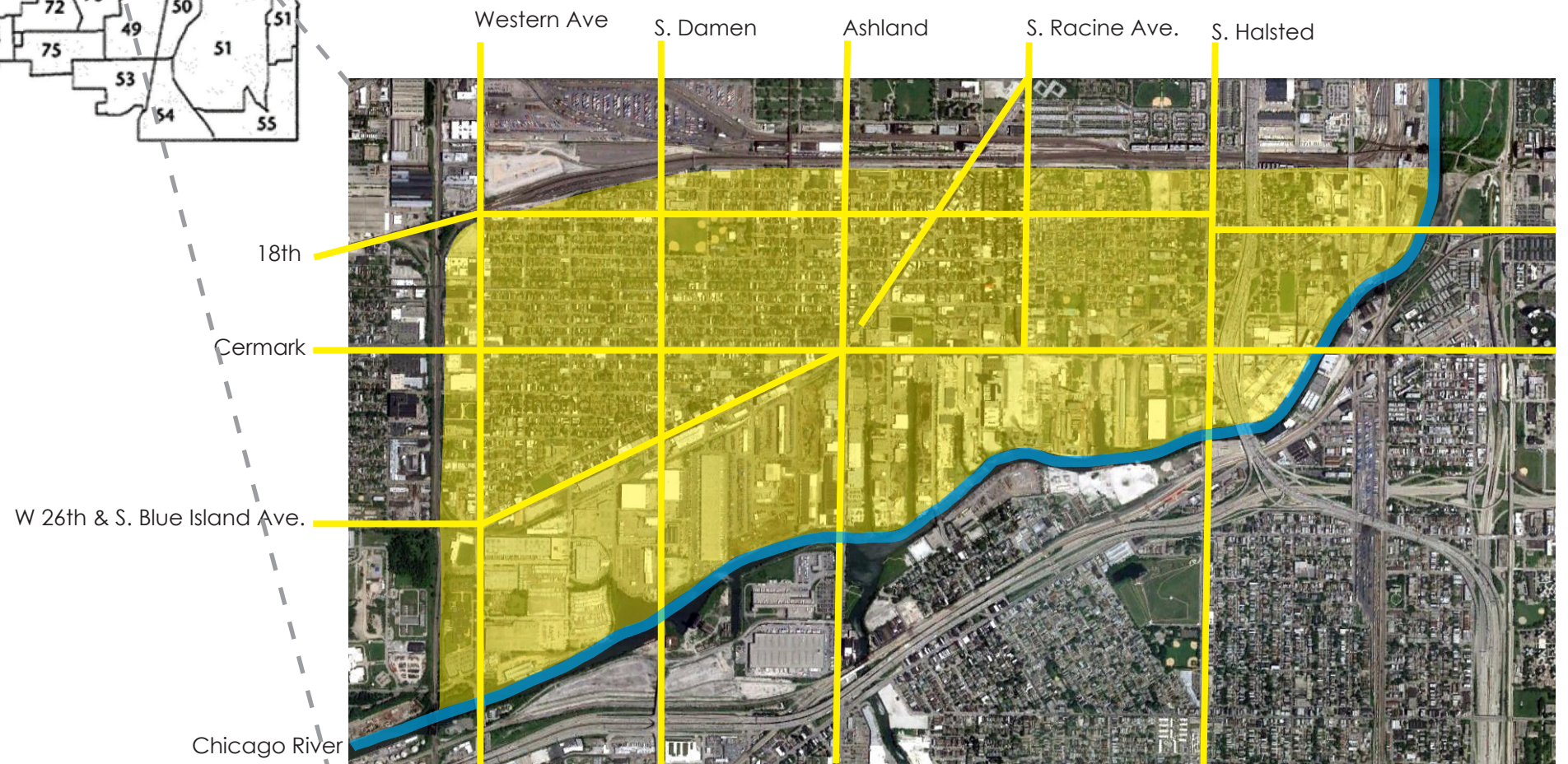
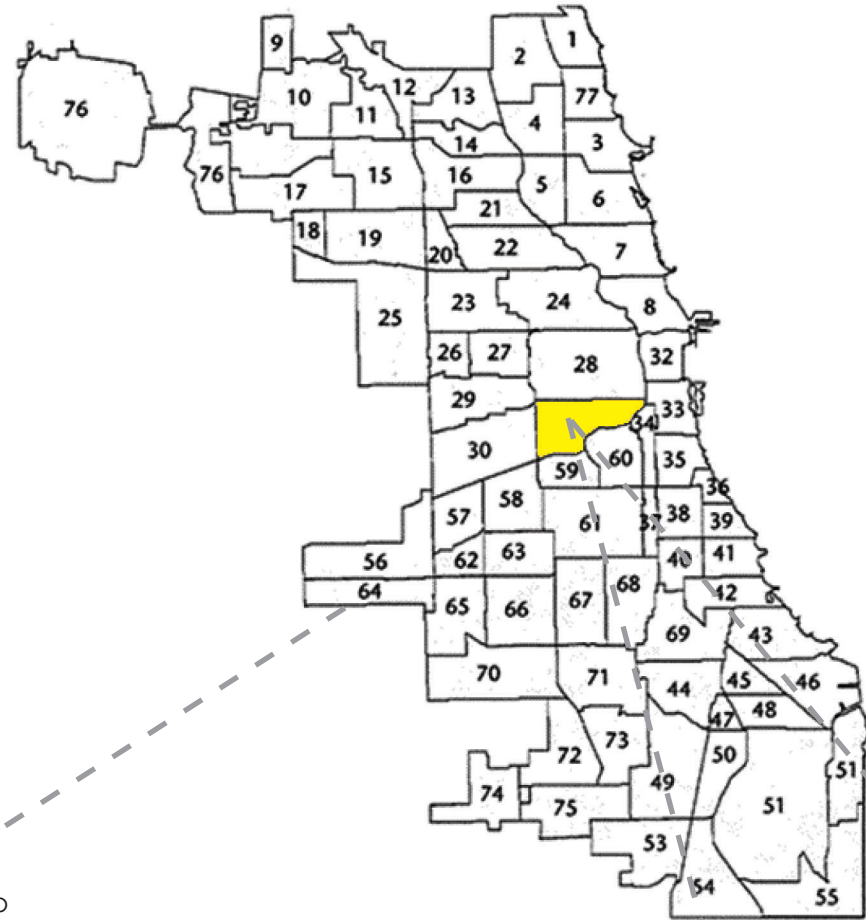
# Pilsen

City: Chicago, Illinois  
Cook County

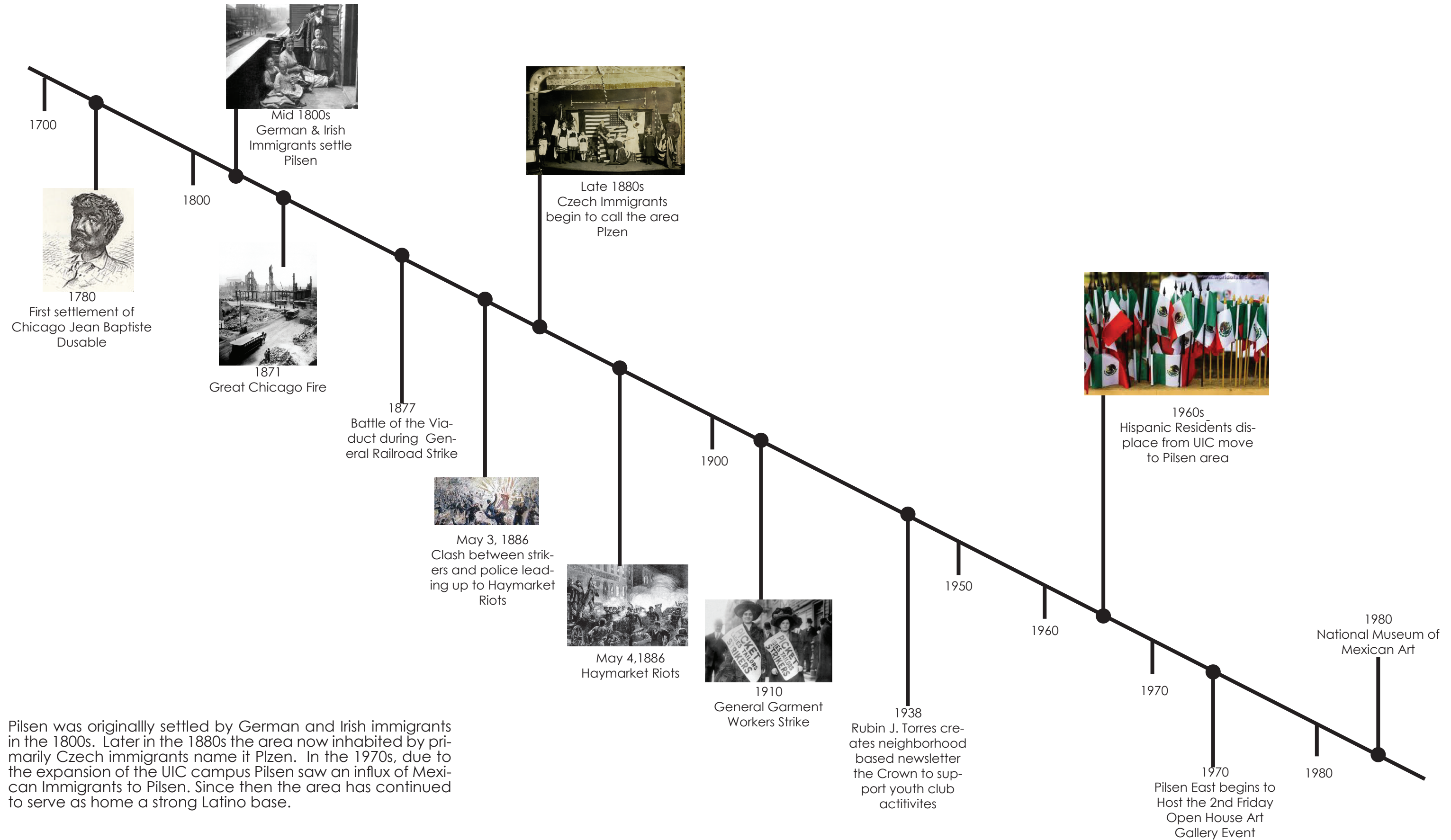
Community Area: 31

Coordinates: 41°51'N 87°39.6'W

Pilsen is part of the City of Chicago  
Tax Increment Financing districts as  
number 53.



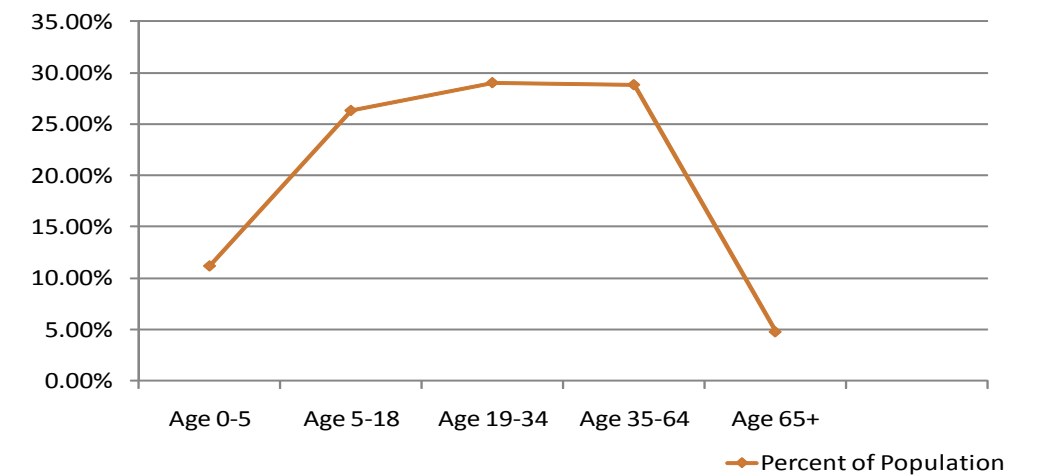
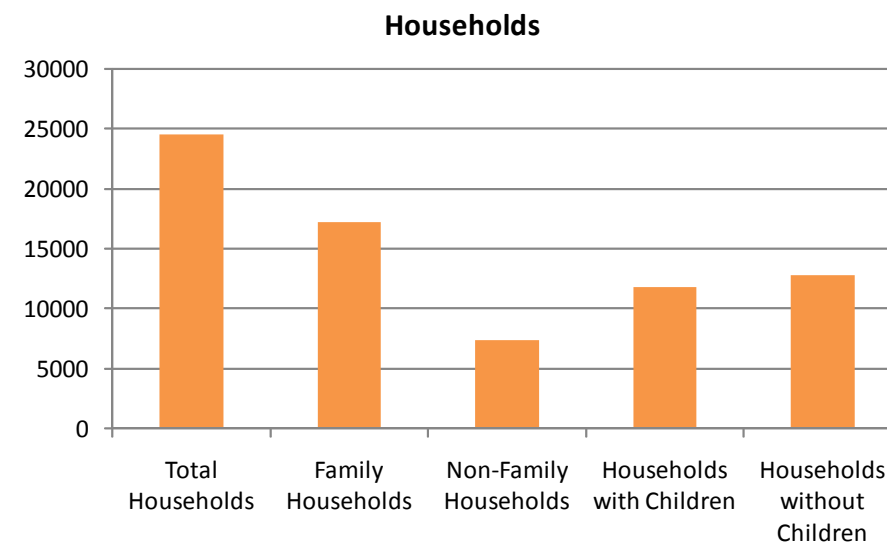
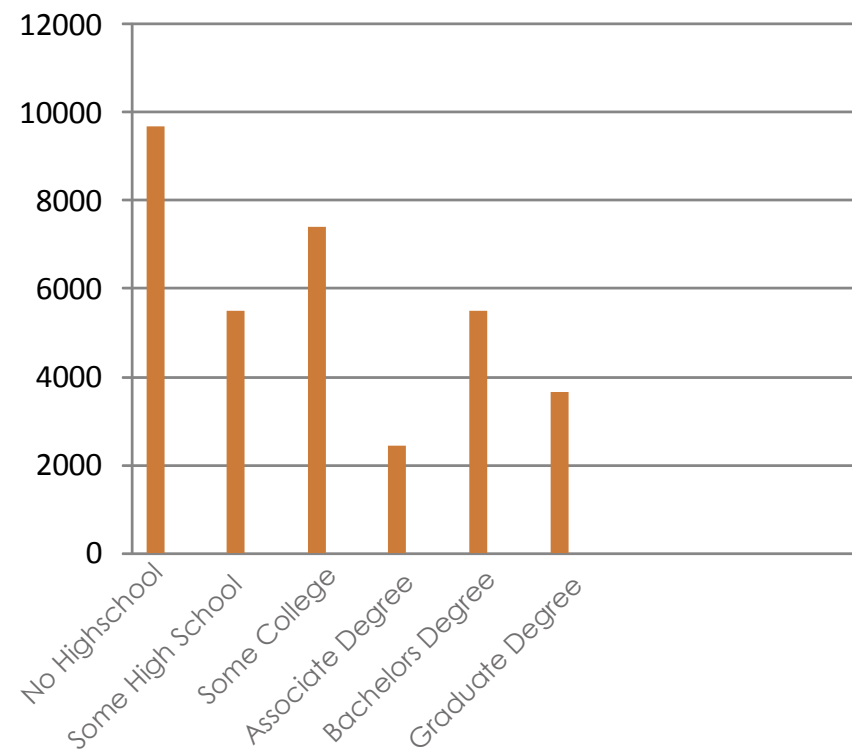
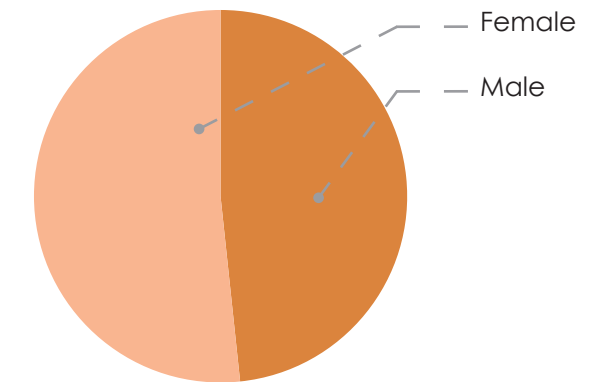
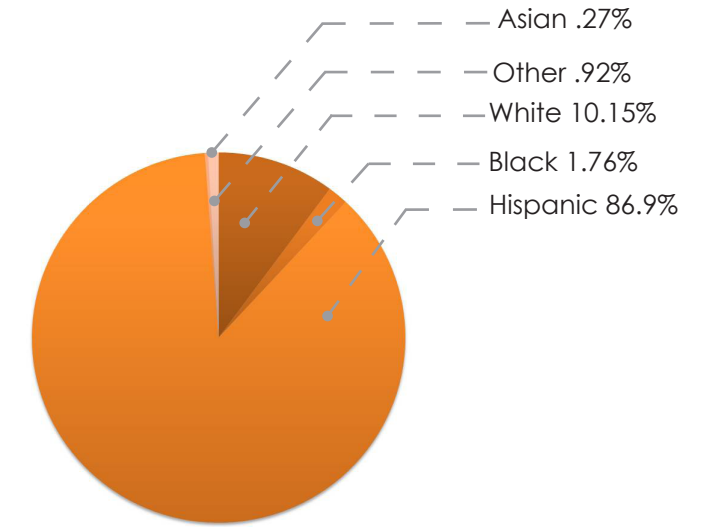
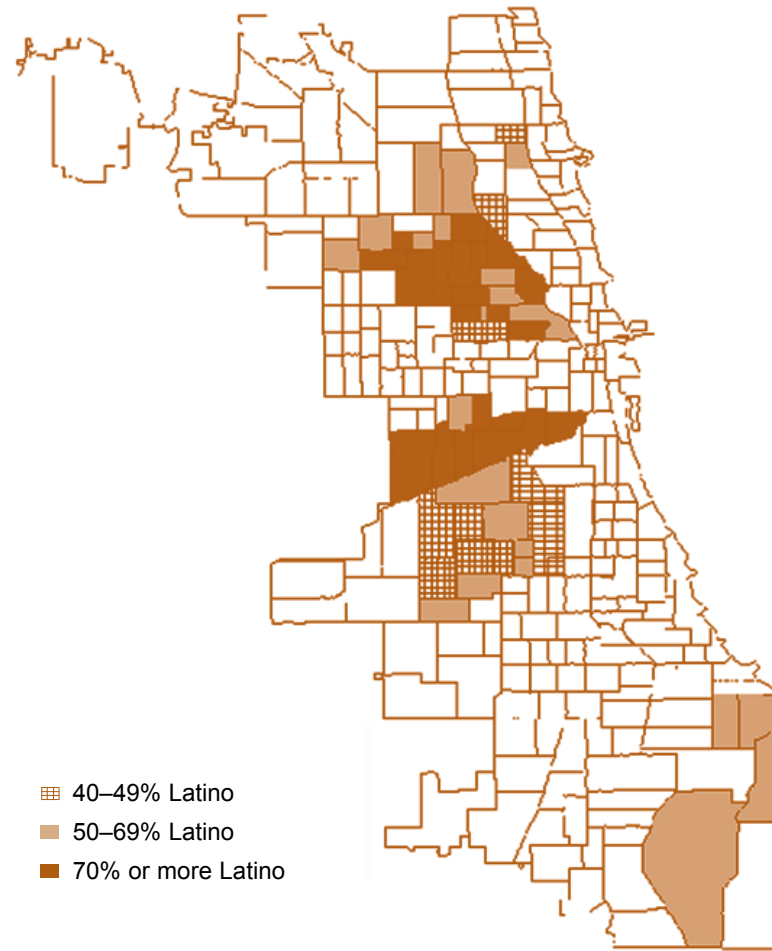
# Pilsen History



Pilsen was originally settled by German and Irish immigrants in the 1800s. Later in the 1880s the area now inhabited by primarily Czech immigrants name it Plzen. In the 1970s, due to the expansion of the UIC campus Pilsen saw an influx of Mexican Immigrants to Pilsen. Since then the area has continued to serve as home a strong Latino base.

# Pilsen Demographics

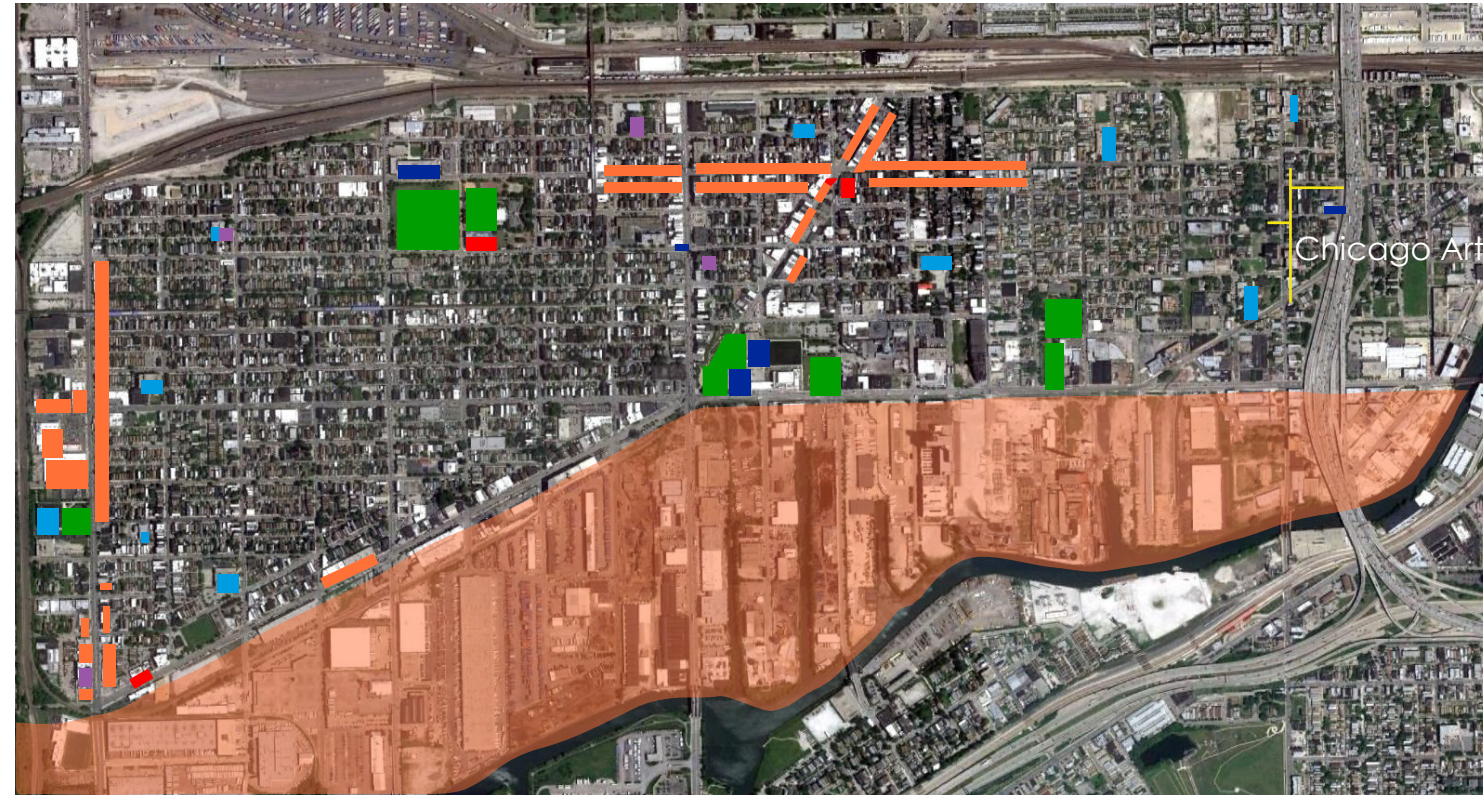
The neighborhood is 70% or more Latino, with 30% of its population between the age of 19-34. Most of the people in this area have no highschool education. Some adults have no education past the sixth grade, and struggle to read and write in their native language as well.





# Pilsen Area Program

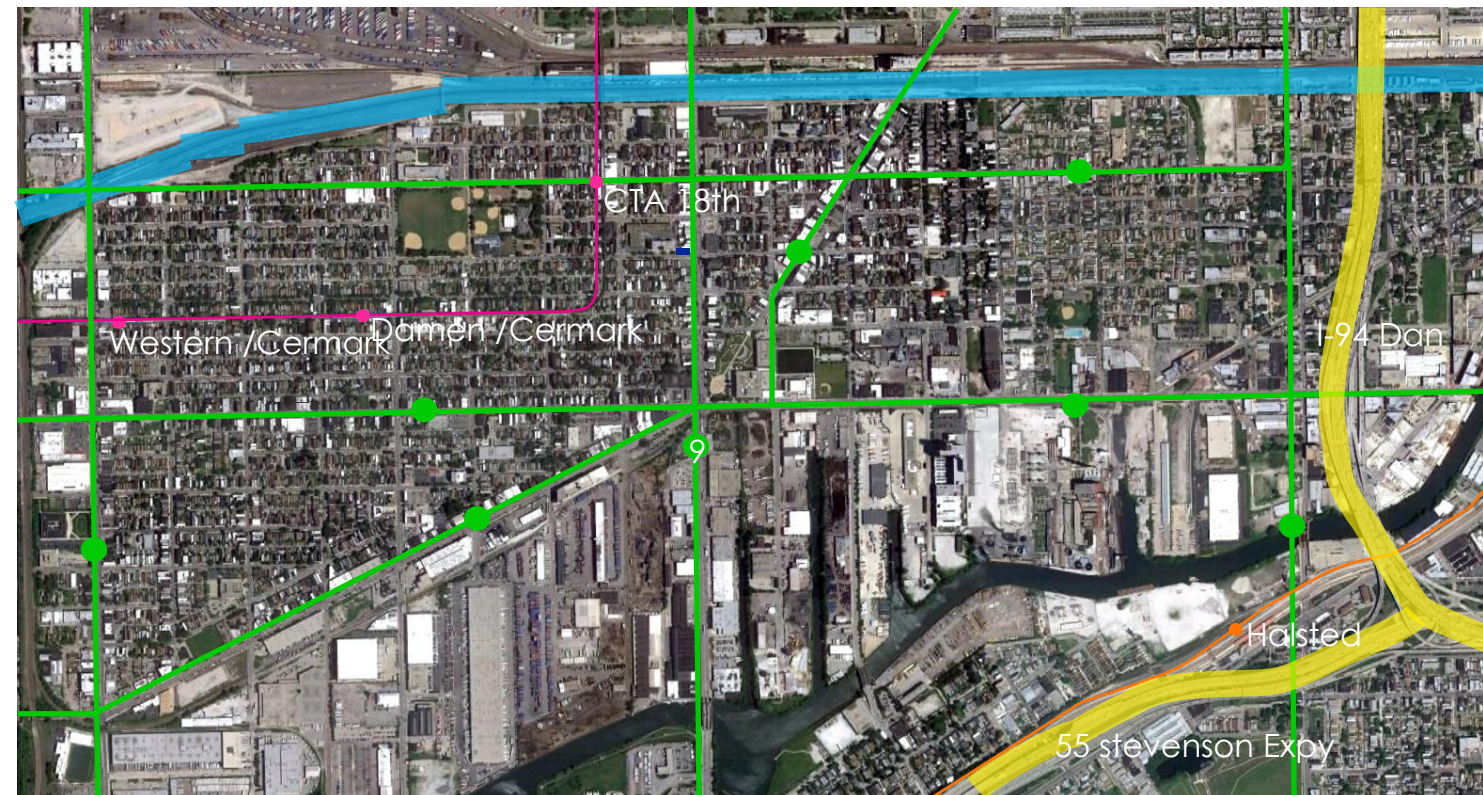
Pilsen is bound by a dense industry sector along the Chicago River to the south. Commercial activity centers along 18th street running east to west, and Ashland and Western running north to south.



- Outdoor Space
- Elementary/Middle
- High School
- Church
- Cultural/Civic
- Industry
- Commercial

# Pilsen Area Transportation

The CTA orange and pink line run to Pilsen. As well as various bus routes. Bus route 60 runs along S.Blue Island, to the project site.



- CTA PINK LINE
- METRA LINE
- CTA BUS ROUTES
- CTA ORANGE LINE
- INTERSTATE

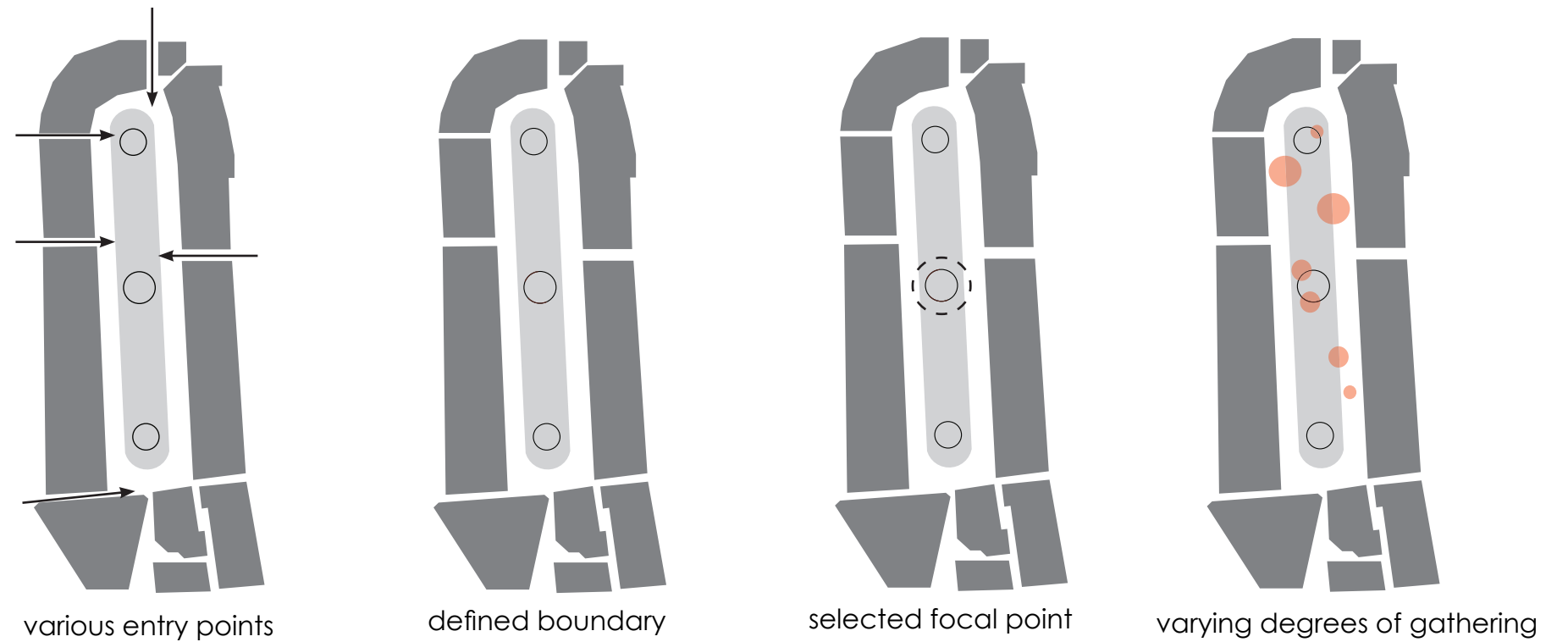
Design Idea

# Plaza Tradition



To understand plaza the Zocalo in Mexico City, and Piazza Navona in Rome, Italy were studied. The elements found to be repeated were various entry points, a boundary defined by the surrounding environment, and a focal point. All of which promote various degrees of gathering.

In a similar manner the interior common area of the center would like to arrange itself to promote the mixing of people and activities at its core.



# Plaza Activity

..for gathering, for exchange, for resources, a symbol of identity for a city.



raising national flag



lighting displays

vendors



people passing time



markets



large group presentation



6 AM

9 AM

NOON

3PM

6PM

9 PM

musicians playing



children playing



cultural presentations



protests

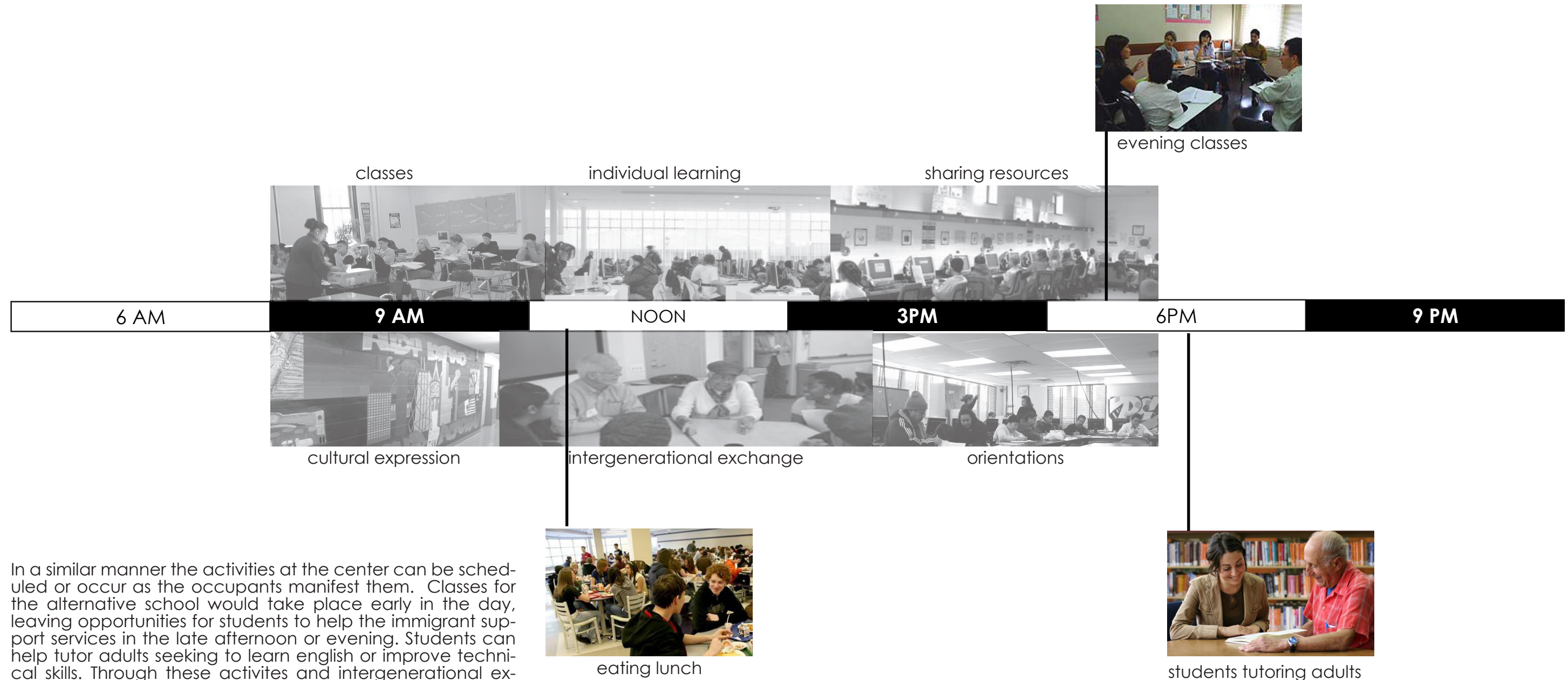


lowering of national flag

Public activity in a plaza can be both spontaneous or planned. Activities such as the raising of the national flag, or evening lighting spectacles only occur at specific points along a timeline. However more spontaneous activities such as street vendors, musicians performing, children playing, cultural presentations, political protests, and outdoor markets, all occur at different times.

# Daily Activity

..for gathering, for exchange, for resources, a symbol of identity for a city.

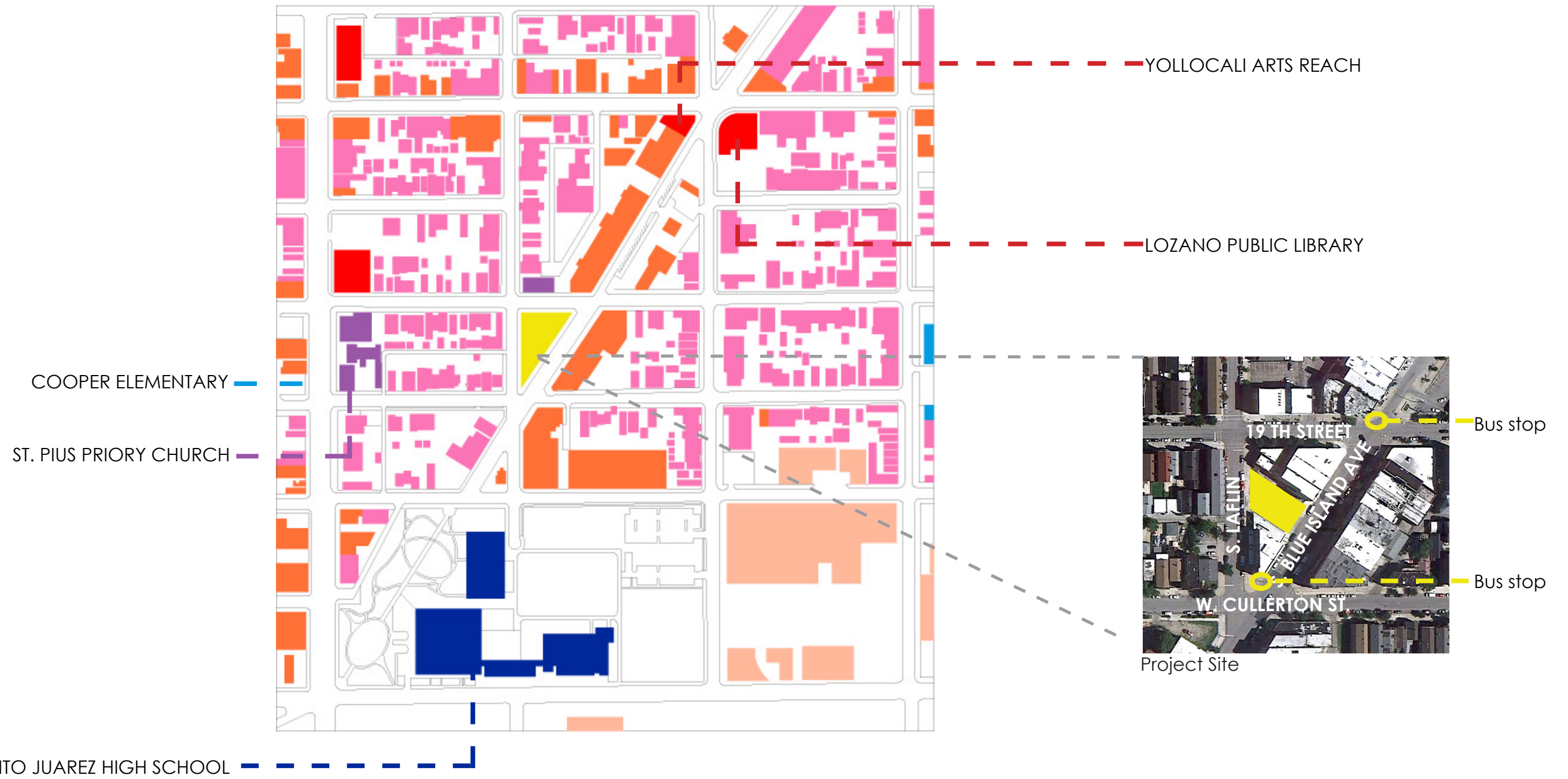


In a similar manner the activities at the center can be scheduled or occur as the occupants manifest them. Classes for the alternative school would take place early in the day, leaving opportunities for students to help the immigrant support services in the late afternoon or evening. Students can help tutor adults seeking to learn english or improve technical skills. Through these activities and intergenerational exchange is created which is beneficial to all parties involved. The youth at the center would benefit from learning from an adults life experiences and the lessons learned.

On the weekends or during after- hours the outdoor and indoor ground floor can be combined as one space that can be used for large assemblies and presentations (outdoor markets, cultural presentations, street fairs ect.)

## Design Proposal

# SITE CONTEXT



The site is located between 19th street and W. Cullerton along S. Blue Island Ave.

Located nearby are large community programs that drive people through the area, the Benito Juarez High School, the Yollocalli Arts Reach , and the Lozano Public Library. Blue Island Avenue is also an active commercial street in Pilsen. The location of the triangular site can be seen as the heart of the neighborhood. Easily accessible by car or public transportation with bus stops on site, and nearby.

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <span style="color: green;">■</span> Outdoor Space           | <span style="color: purple;">■</span> Church        | <span style="color: orange;">■</span> Commercial |
| <span style="color: blue;">■</span> Elementary/Middle School | <span style="color: red;">■</span> Cultural/Civic   | <span style="color: pink;">■</span> Residential  |
| <span style="color: darkblue;">■</span> High School          | <span style="color: lightorange;">■</span> Industry |  |

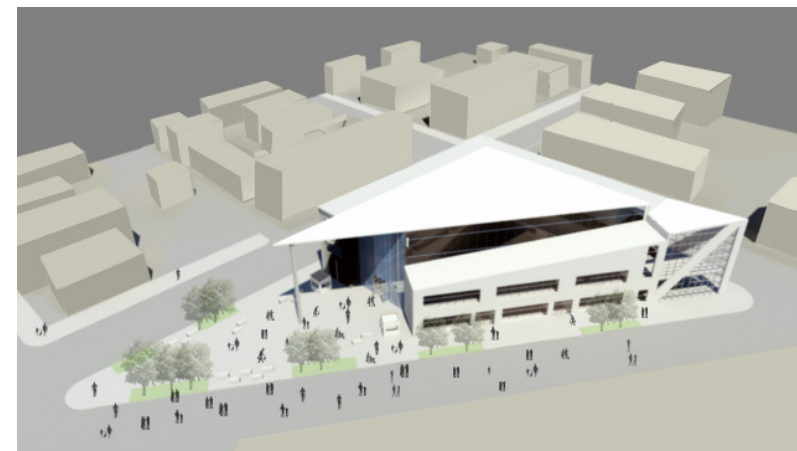
# Site Plan



The edge of the site along Blue Islan Ave, is most activated by the pedestrian traffic moving through from 18th street to Benito Juarez High School.

The location lends itself to entry points from all edges, and offers a prominent view of the city's skyline.

These key factors play into the design of the ground floor and interior spaces. Using the flex space to anchor the corner while taking advantage of the view offered, and the ground floor acting as plaza like space approachable from all sides.

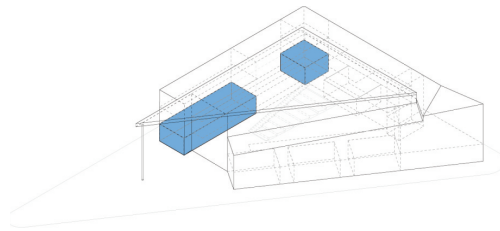


Aerial View

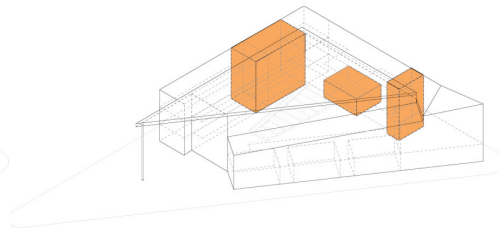
Site Plan



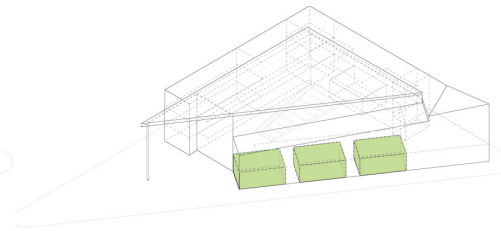
# Program Distribution & Floorplan



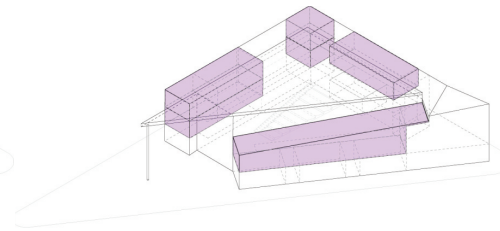
Administrative Ground Floor



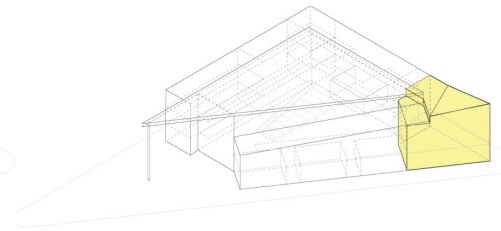
Support Spaces All Levels



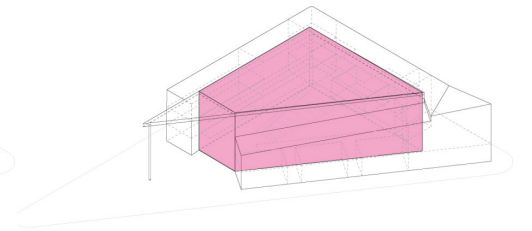
Immigration Services Ground Floor



Alternative School Upper Levels



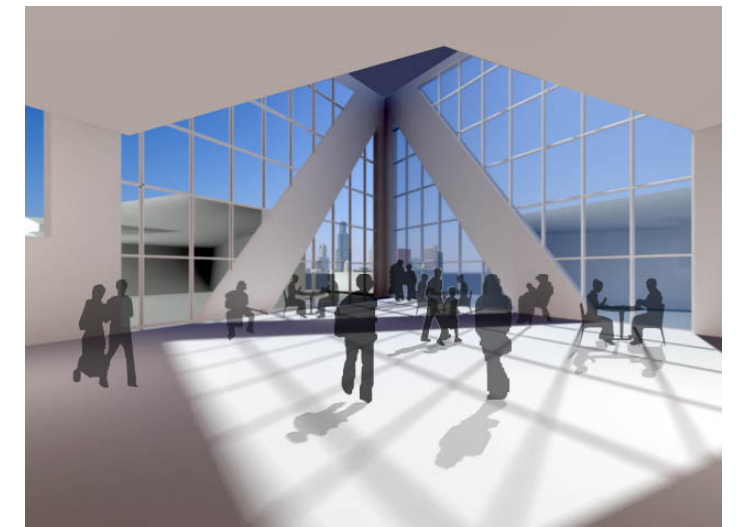
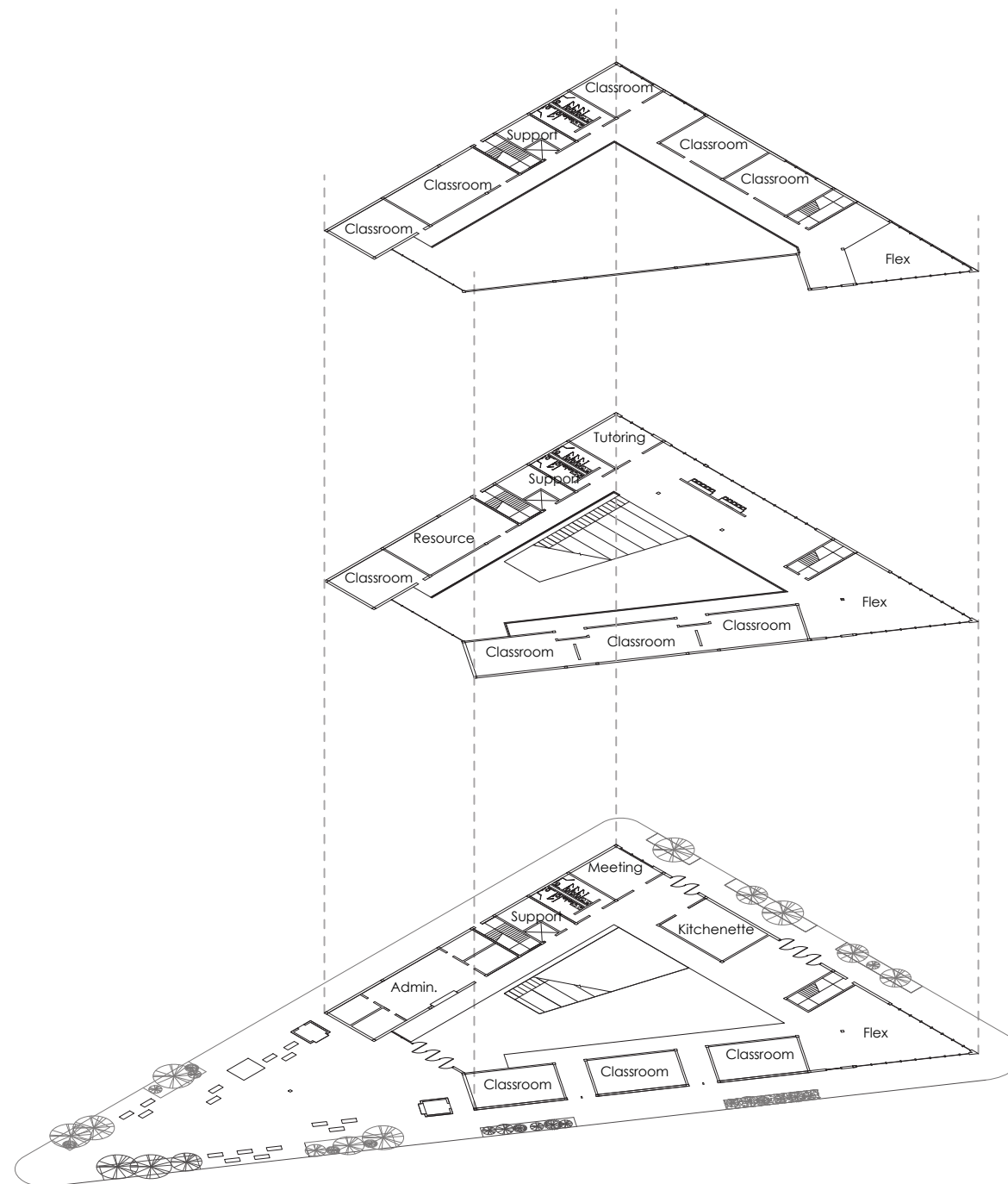
Flex Space All Levels



Center Common Core



Street View



Interior View Flex Space



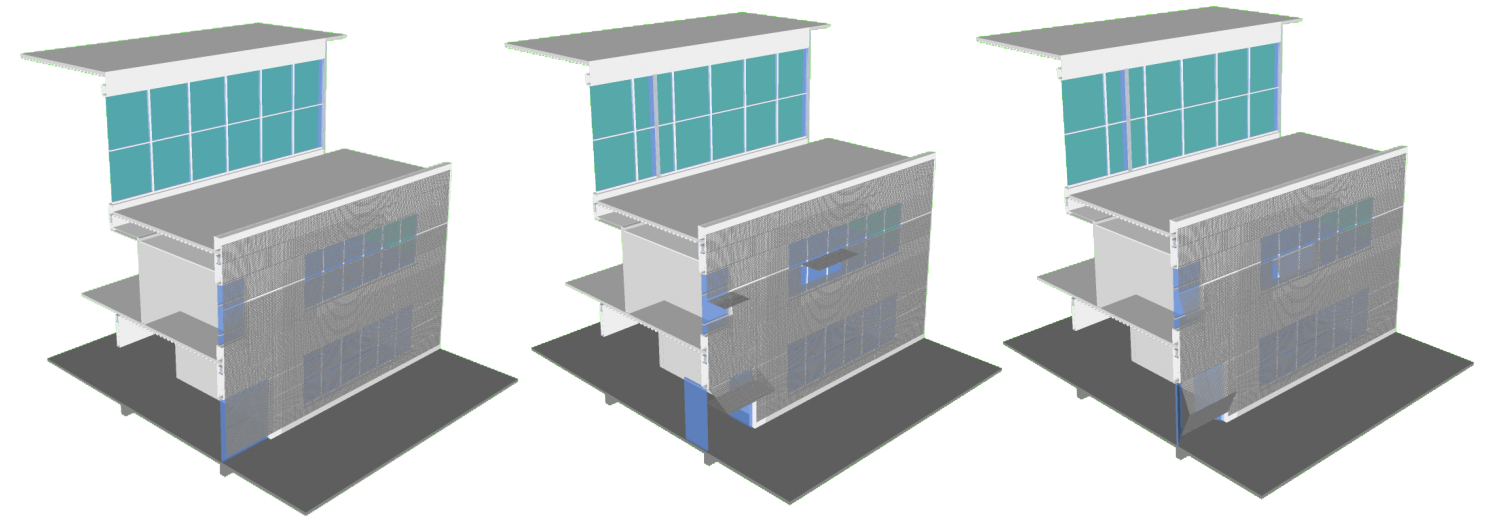
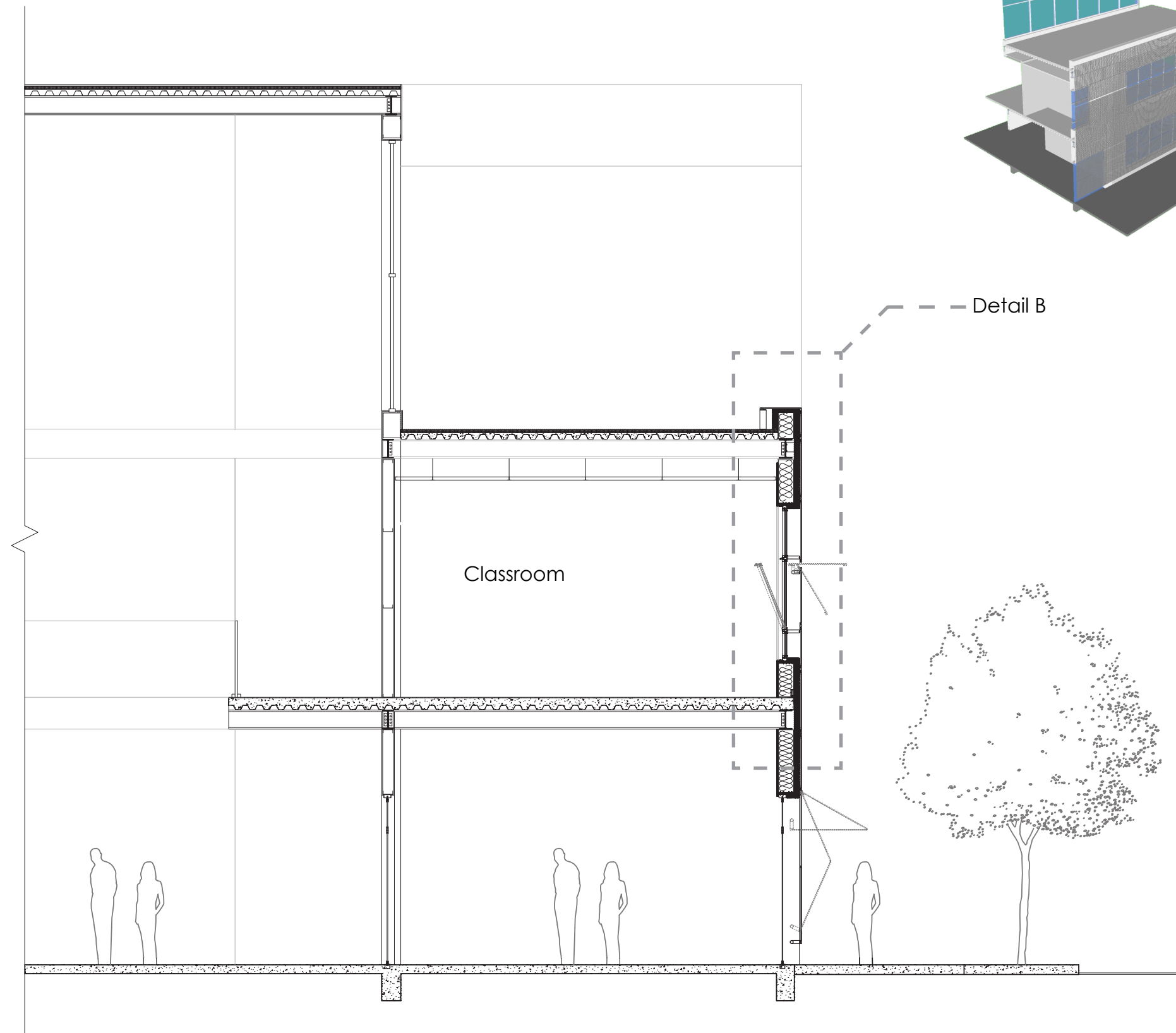
Interior View Core

The Center is a combination of two large programs:

Immigrant Support Services - Providing adult literacy, citizenship, english as a second language (ESL) and technical classes to the immigrant community it serves.

Alternative School - for youth ages 17-20 years seeking a High School Diploma or GED equivalent.

# Wall Section

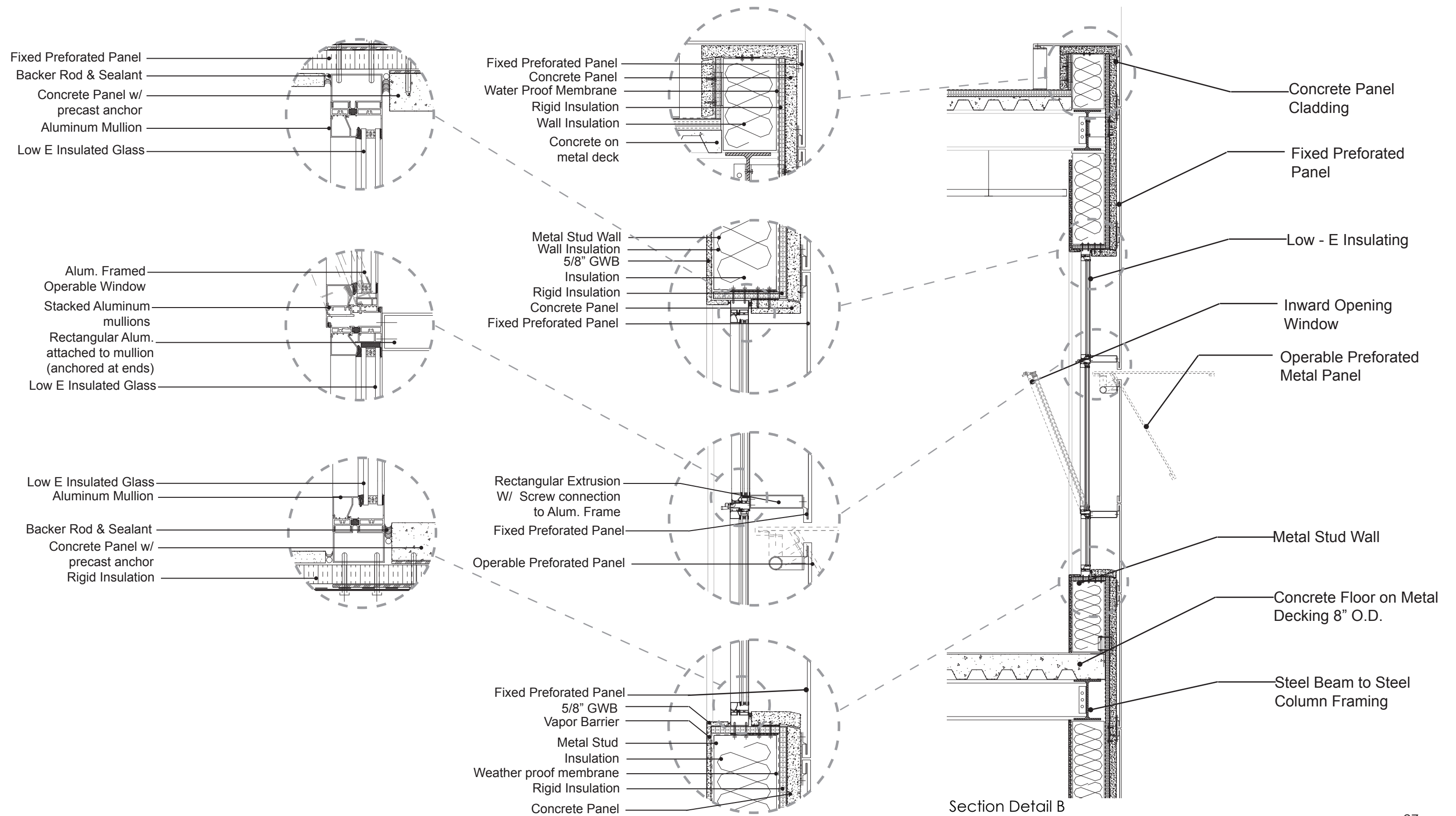


The facade transforms to open the building up for larger assemblies for weekend markets, street fairs, or smaller enclosed assemblies on a harsh winter day.

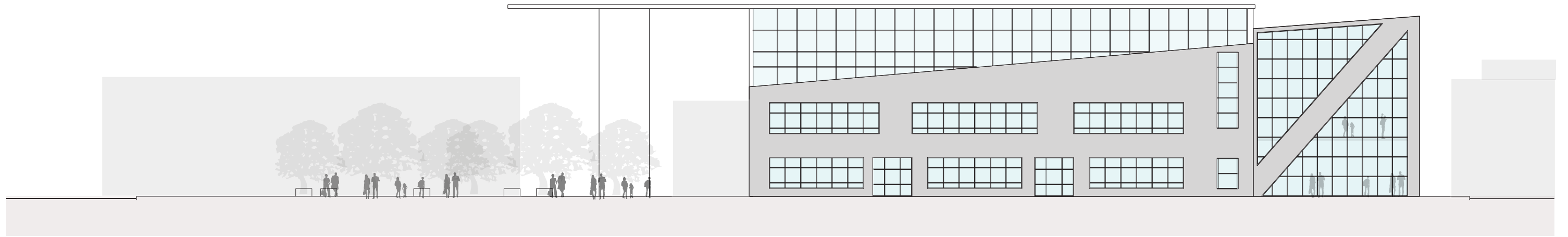
The outermost layer is of perforated metal panel. The perforations change in density along the facade.

The perforated panels swing upward to become awnings at various points along the face of the building. For classroom spaces a manually operated window can be opened inward. At ground level a set of glass doors open as the perforated panel lifts to create more entry points and open the ground floor to the street.

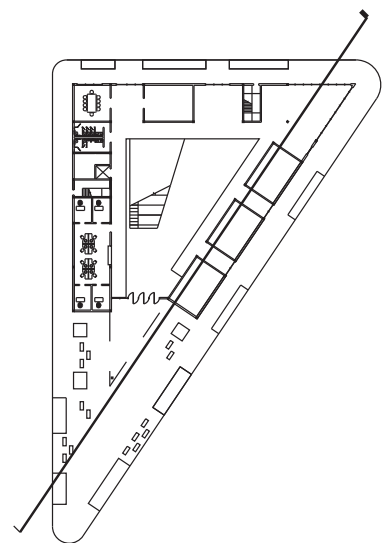
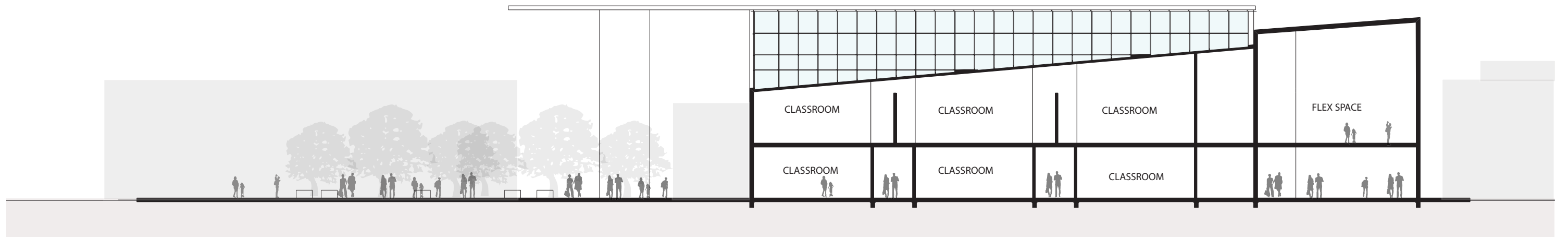
# Wall Section & Details



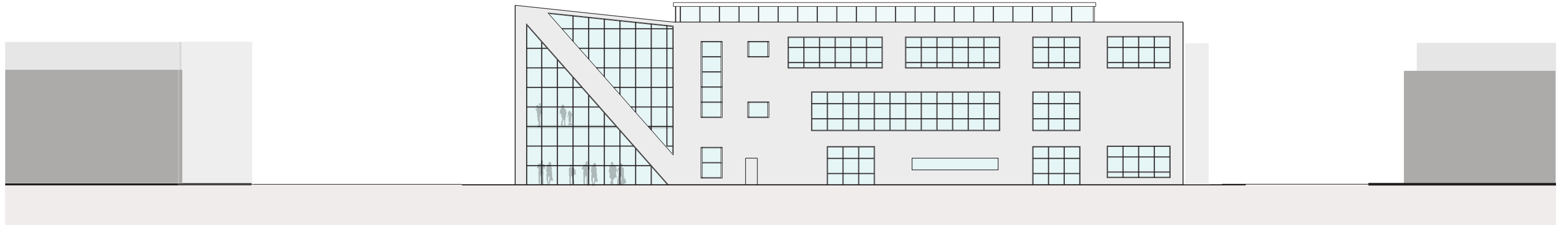
# Building Section & Elevations



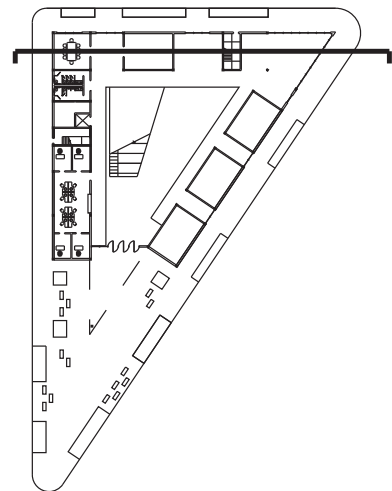
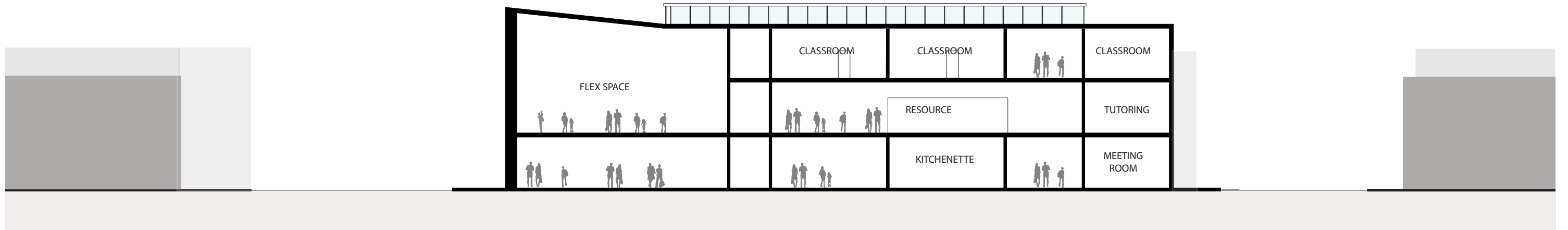
East Elevation



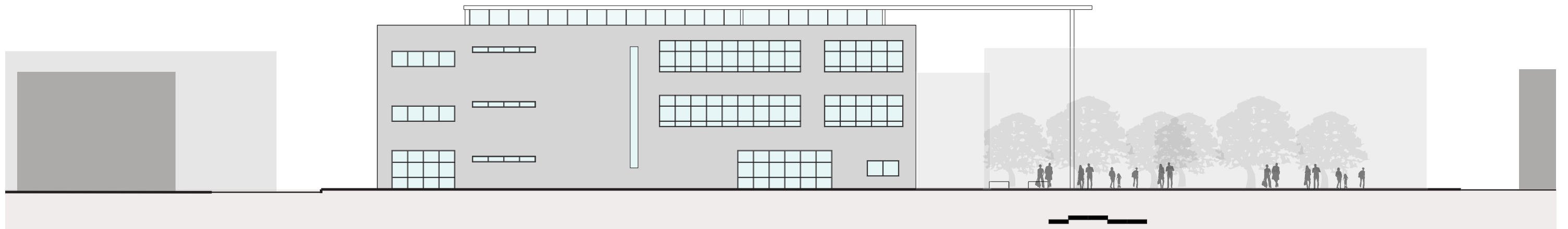
# Building Section & Elevations



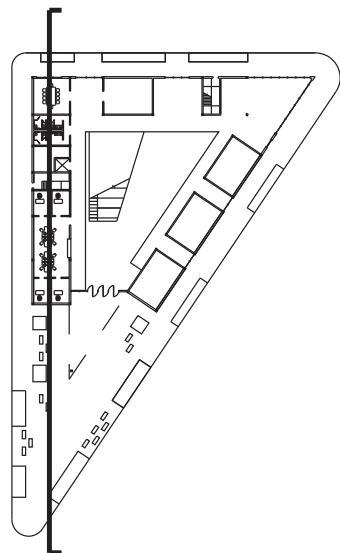
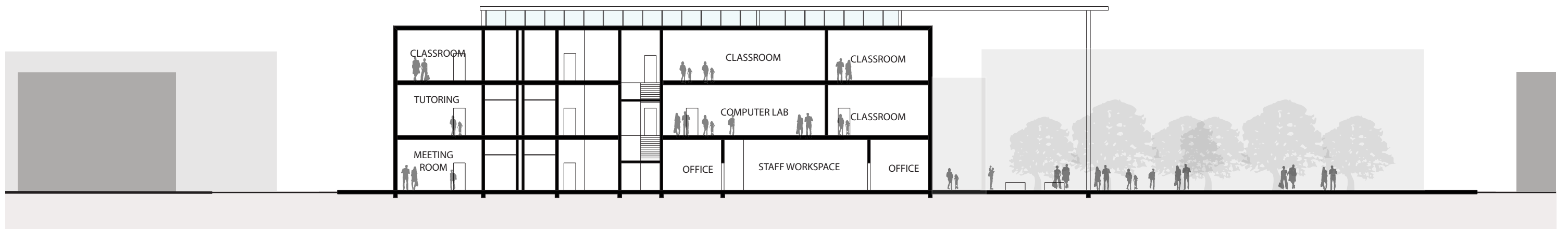
North Elevation



# Building Section & Elevations

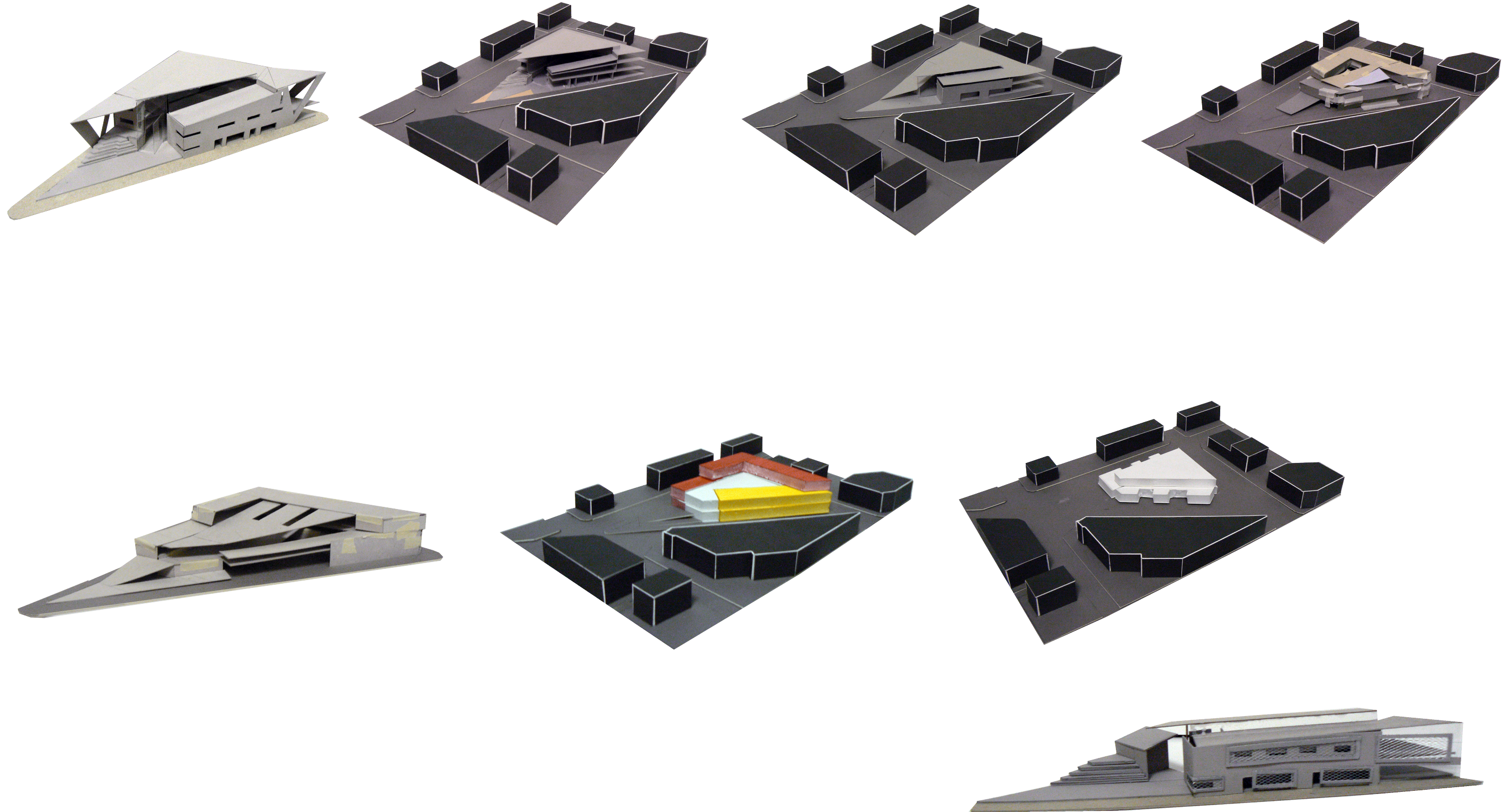


West Elevation



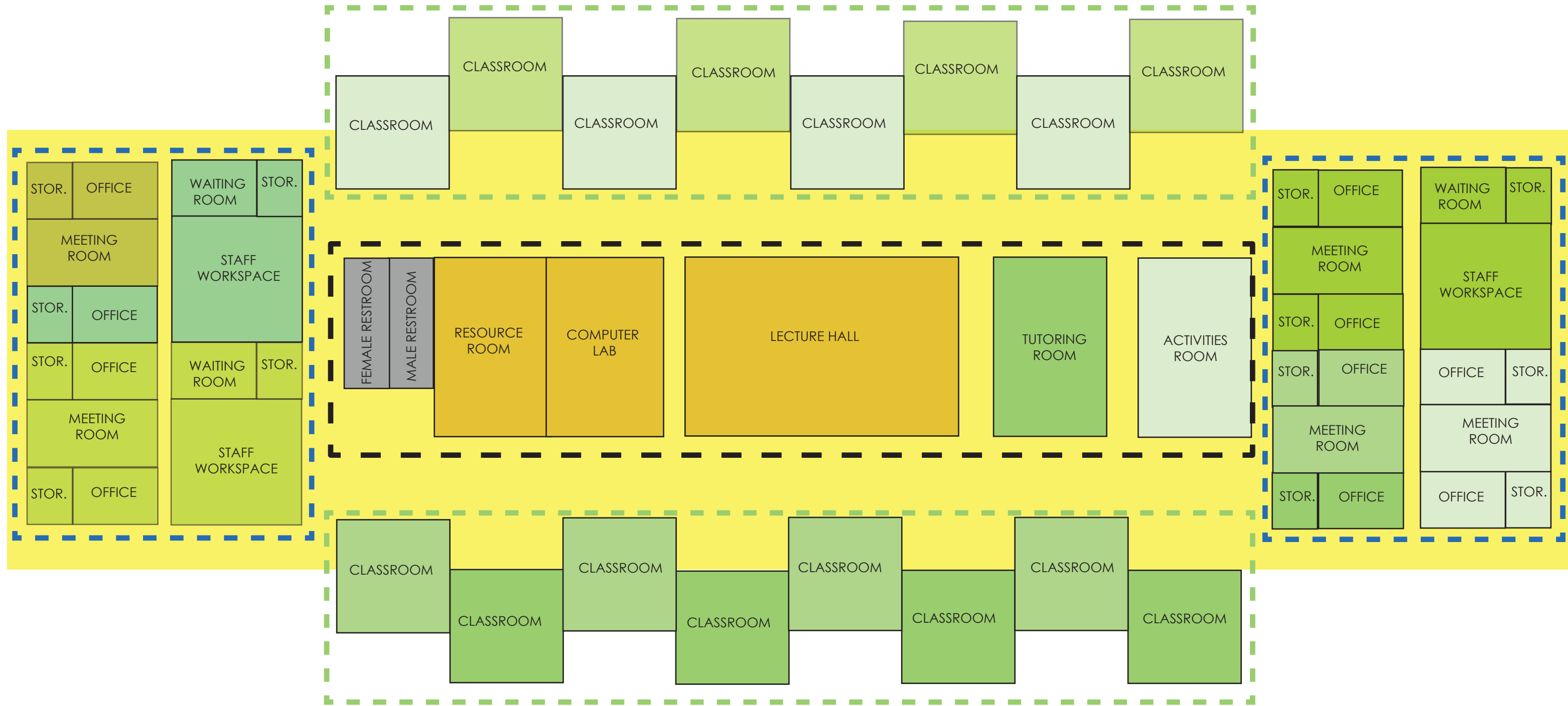
## Conceptual Process

# Process Models





# Program Schematic



- — — — — Administrative
- — — — — Educational
- — — — — Common

## Case Studies

# Case Study

## Hull House

Location: Chicago, IL

Founded in 1889

Founded by Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr.

Purpose:

“to provide social and educational opportunities for working class people (many of them recent European immigrants) in the surrounding neighborhood.”

Residents of Hull House were volunteers that helped in the maintenance of the facility. They worked and lived on site. Classes in literature, history, art, domestic activities (such as sewing), and other subjects.

Events such as concerts, lectures, and clubs for children and adults.

Hull House engaged in the community by aiding in the conception and implementation “of programs intended to enhance and improve the opportunities for success by the largely immigrant population”

Present day, the Jane Addams Hull House Association offer services for:

- Child Welfare & Foster Care
- Domestic Violence
- Education & Literacy
- Homeless Services
- Housing Services
- Senior Services
- Small Business Development
- Workforce Development
- Youth Services



Hull House in 1900's



Founder Jane Addams



Cooking Class at Hull House



Naturalization Class at Hull House



Music School at Hull House



Outdoor Art Class Session Hull House

# Case Study

## Hull House

1907, the converted 1856 mansion had expanded to a massive 13-building complex covering nearly a city block.

Complex buildings:

Gymnasium  
Theater  
Art gallery  
Music school,  
Boys' club  
Auditorium  
Cafeteria  
Cooperative residence for working women  
Kindergarten  
Nursery  
Libraries  
Post office  
Meeting and club rooms  
Art studios  
Kitchen  
Dining room  
Apartments for the residential staff

Hull House Clinic, 1930s

Residents of Hull house helped establish the city's first playground and bathhouse, campaigned to reform local ward politics, investigated housing, working, and sanitation issues. As well as support and campaign for new public schools. They helped build interest for branch libraries, and housing reform.

At the level of state government, Hull-House residents helped to initiate legislation protecting women and children, such as child labor laws. As well as helping to push occupational safety, health provisional, and protective laws for immigrants. Illinois mothers' pension law was also supported by Hull-House residents. The mothers pension law provides aid to families with children and no adult

male income. it was argued that a mother deserved a government pension in exchange for her service to the state through child rearing.

In terms of federal law residents of Hull-House advocated nationwide child labor laws, the establishment of a Children's Bureau, unemployment compensation, workers' compensation.

These issues formed part of the progressive era of the 1900's.

What remains relevant?

- A facility that did not limit its services to one type of people.
- A mission for the personal growth of facility users
- The active participation in issues concerning not just the immediate surrounding area
- Facility spaces that vary in function and serve to fulfill various personal needs (recreation, education, employment)



Singing Class at Hull House



Hull-House Playground 1895

# Case Study

## Lavezzorio Community Center

Location: Chicago, IL  
Completed in 2008

A community center that offers services for foster care families and neighborhood families in one building. Services are provided by SOS an international not-for-profit agency that works to train foster parents and reunite siblings.

The spaces are planned to “encourage a range of learning opportunities and social interaction” (ArchDaily) Aspects of the building serve a variety of purposes, the wide stair in the lobby can serve as classroom seating or an impromptu stage for performances. The community room serves three functions; classroom, exercise room and meeting space. Budget constraints meant working with materiality in a different way, concrete layered in bands to express its liquid nature.

Relevant aspects:

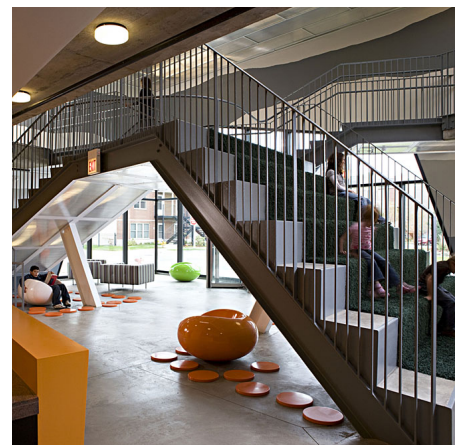
- Juxtaposing spaces so as to enhance opportunities for social interaction
- Use of material to enhance its natural qualities.



Exterior View



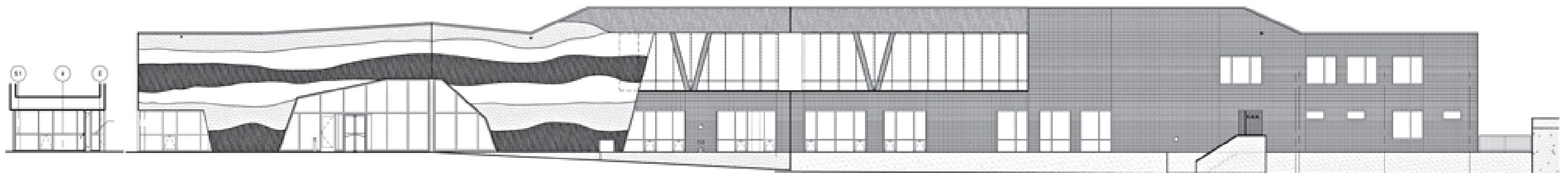
Lobby grand stair



Lobby

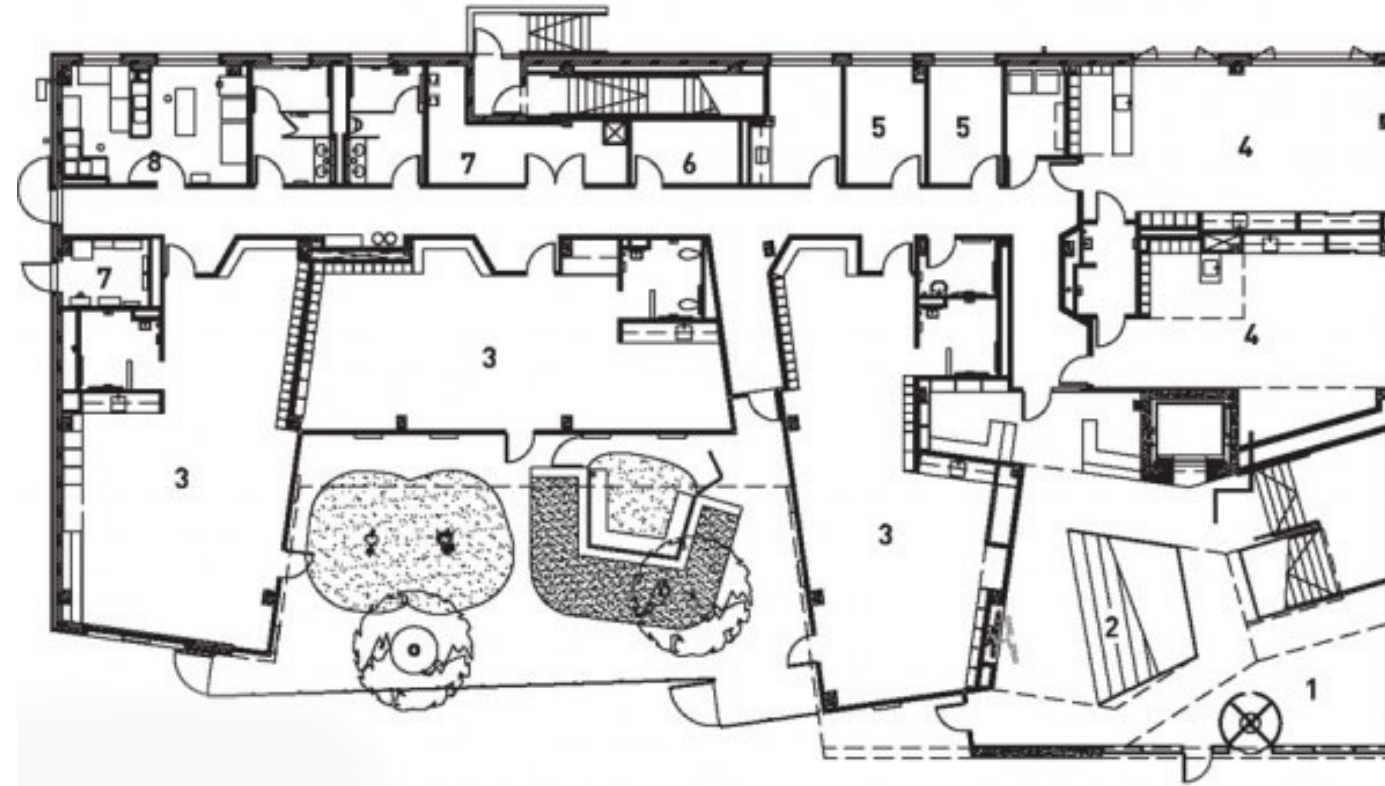


Day-care



# Case Study

## Lavezzorio Community Center

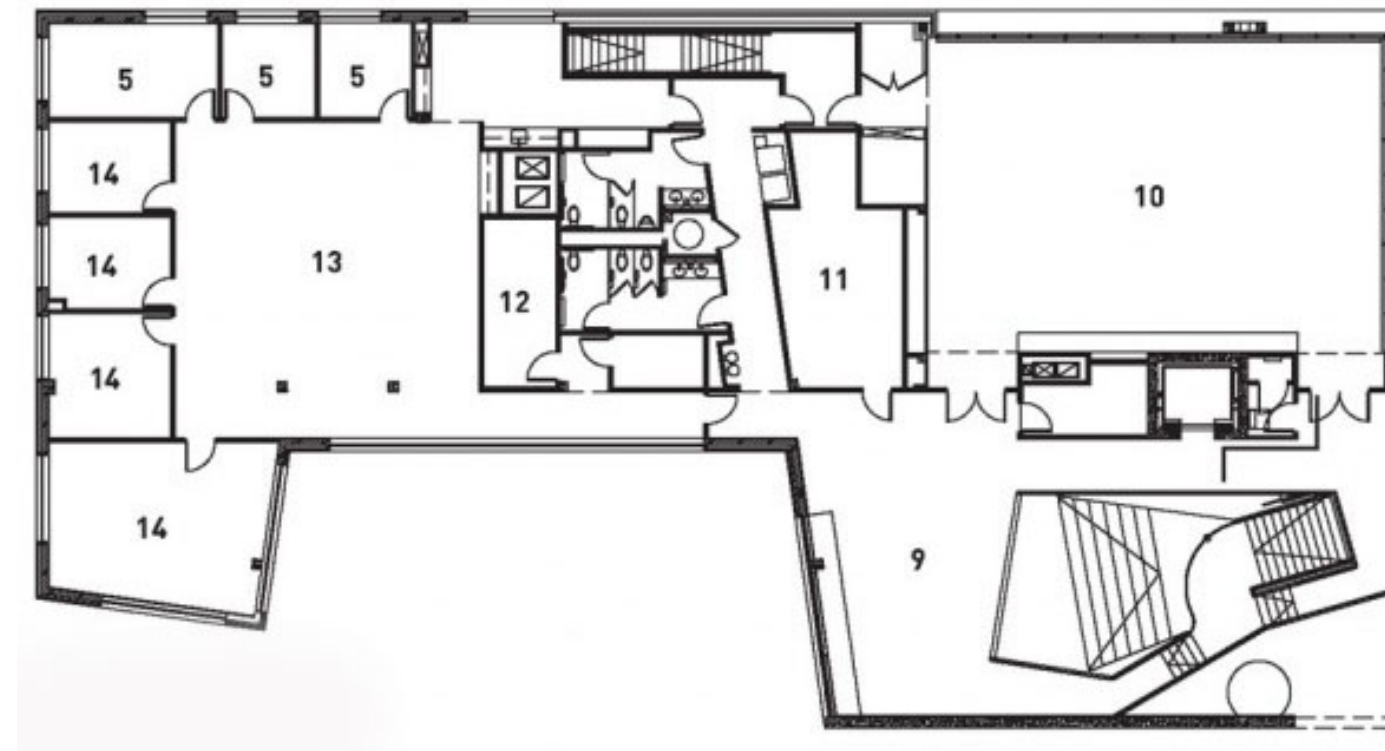


- 1. Lobby
- 2. Stepped Seating
- 3. Day-care Classroom
- 4. Infant Day-care classroom
- 5. Office
- 6. Sick Room
- 7. Mechanical
- 8. Food Preparation
- 9. Upper Lobby
- 10. Community Room
- 11. Game Room
- 12. Files
- 13. Caseworker Office
- 14. Counseling

First Floor



Site Plan



Second Floor

# Case Study

## Indo-American Center

Location: Chicago, IL  
[www.indoamerican.org](http://www.indoamerican.org)

The Indo-American Center provides services to immigrants from those who have recently arrived to those who have been in the U.S. for longer. Clients come from a variety of cultural regions including: South Asia, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, and the Maldives. The center's success has led to its present day plans to expand its facilities.

Current programs at the center include:  
 Citizenship and Immigration Services  
 Adult Literacy Program  
 Seniors' Program  
 Civics Education  
 Public Benefits Assistance  
 Youth Program  
 Computer Education

Relevant aspects:

- Program and Services offered that are relevant and support immigrant integration and personal growth.



Computer Student



Adult Literacy Class

## Community Centre Herstedlund

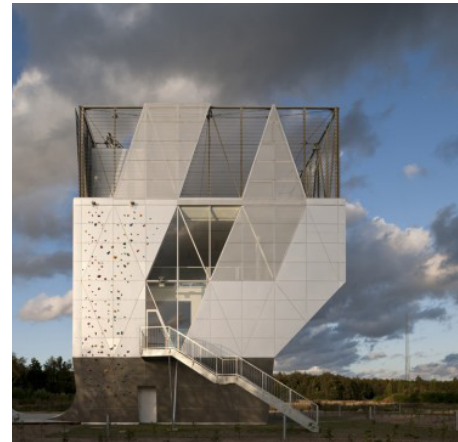
Location: Albertslund, Denmark  
 Completed 2009

Provides the framework, for joint activities for a residential area. The centre was intended to accommodate many different ages and interests over time. The building was designed to fit a limited site area. Mix use is emphasized with two entries, one on the ground floor and one on the first floor which is accessed via an outdoor staircase. The exterior surrounds the centre by common outdoor activities.

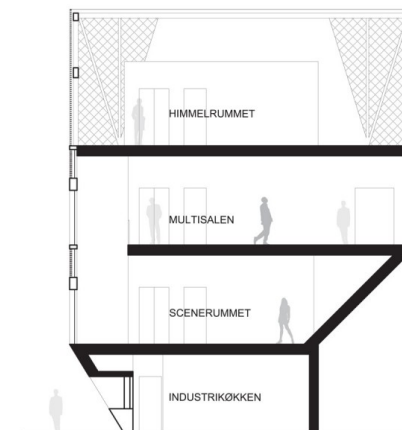
Program Spaces:  
 Skateboard park  
 Climbing wall  
 Performance Space  
 Multipurpose space  
 Roof Terrace  
 Kitchen  
 Indoor Basketball Court (half)

Relevant aspects:

- Sectional disposition of spaces to allow for accommodating program on a small site..



Herstedlund Centre - Exterior



## Alexandra Interpretation Centre

Designed by: Peter Rich Architects  
 Location: Johannesburg, South Africa

The centre celebrates Nelson Mandela in what was his first home, the township of Alexandra. It is one of the poorest urban areas in the country.

The centre serves as an exhibition space, a jazz archive (intended to highlight the musical history of the area), a library, training facilities, shops and restaurants. As well as generating two squares that are available for formal use, or informal use by the residents of Alexandra.

The training facilities are programmed for the training and skills development of the people to serve in the economic growth of the area.

Relevant aspects:

- Flexibility of spaces to be used as exhibition space/gathering space/ or for more formal uses.



Alexandra Interpretation - Interior View

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