

**4 ECOLOGIES**  
*of* **HOUSTON**





## BANHAM'S EYE

*“One can most properly begin by learning the local language; and the language of design, architecture, and urbanism in Los Angeles is the language of movement. Mobility outweighs monumentality there to a unique degree... and the city will never be fully understood by those who cannot move fluently through its diffuse urban texture, cannot go with the flow of its unprecedented life.”*

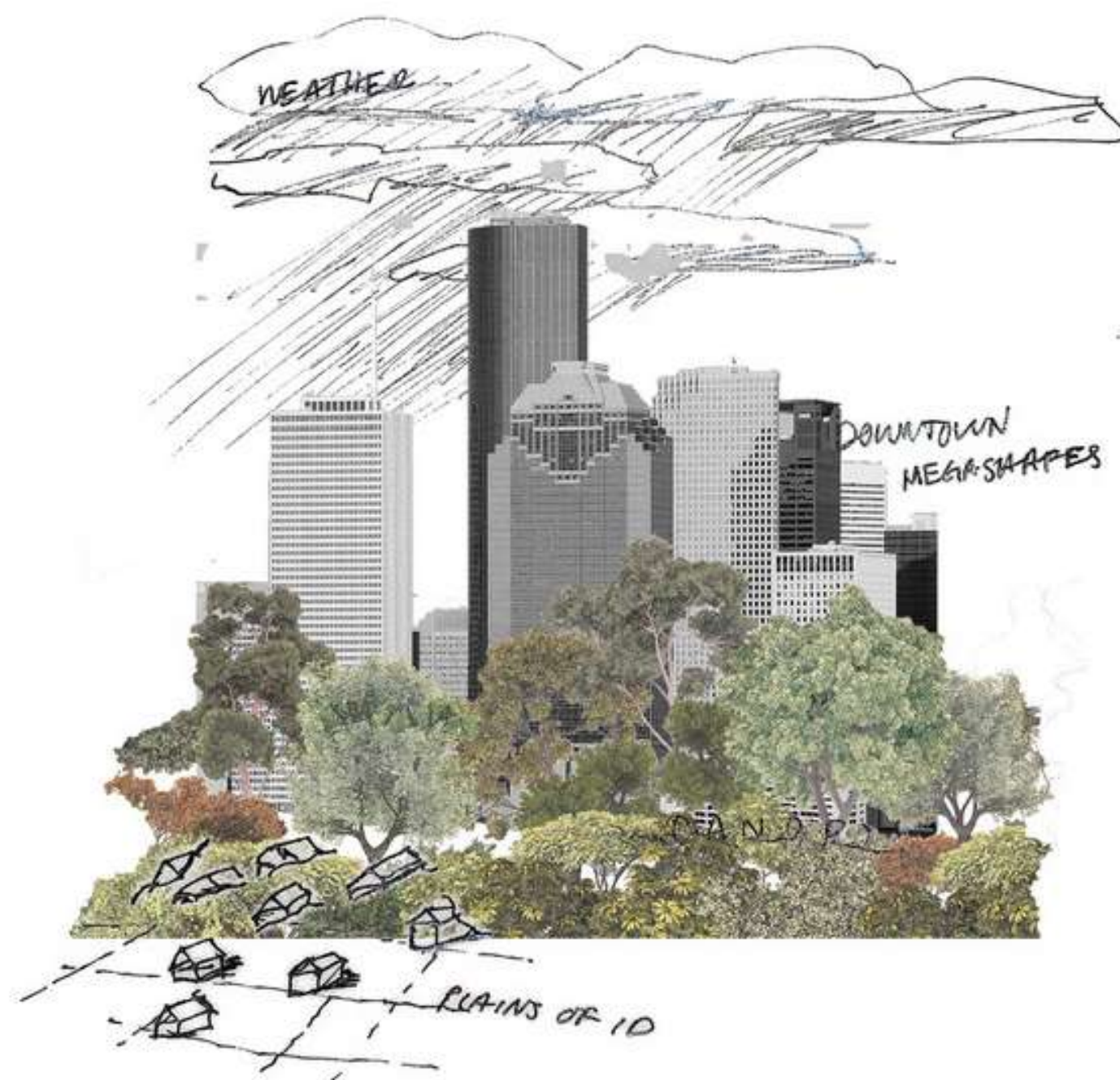
Reyner Banham

*Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies*



In the 1970s, Reyner Banham constructed the four ecologies of Los Angeles as a way to explore the city's architectural characteristics. When describing Los Angeles, Banham could have described Houston 50 years into the future as both cities share a vehicular-dominant lifestyle. However, as of 2021, Houston is to undergo transportation changes with the NHHIP's proposal to merge I-45 and 59. The “kinetic experience” Houston and LA share will drastically change (Banham 72). Without the romance of a vehicular-dominant ecology, Houston must establish what its own four ecologies are. The purpose of this thesis is to study the new four ecologies of Houston and reveal their presence within one site: Bayou Place, a mass forced to become a void through the changing cityscape.





FLOOD PLAINS OF ID + MEGASHAPES + CANOPY + WEATHER



SILVER STREET



## HOUSTON'S ECOLOGIES

*“Houston is the most unexamined of big American cities. Like the edges of civilization on medieval maps of the earth, there the unnameable begins.”*

Edward DimeTndberg, OMA&NZ





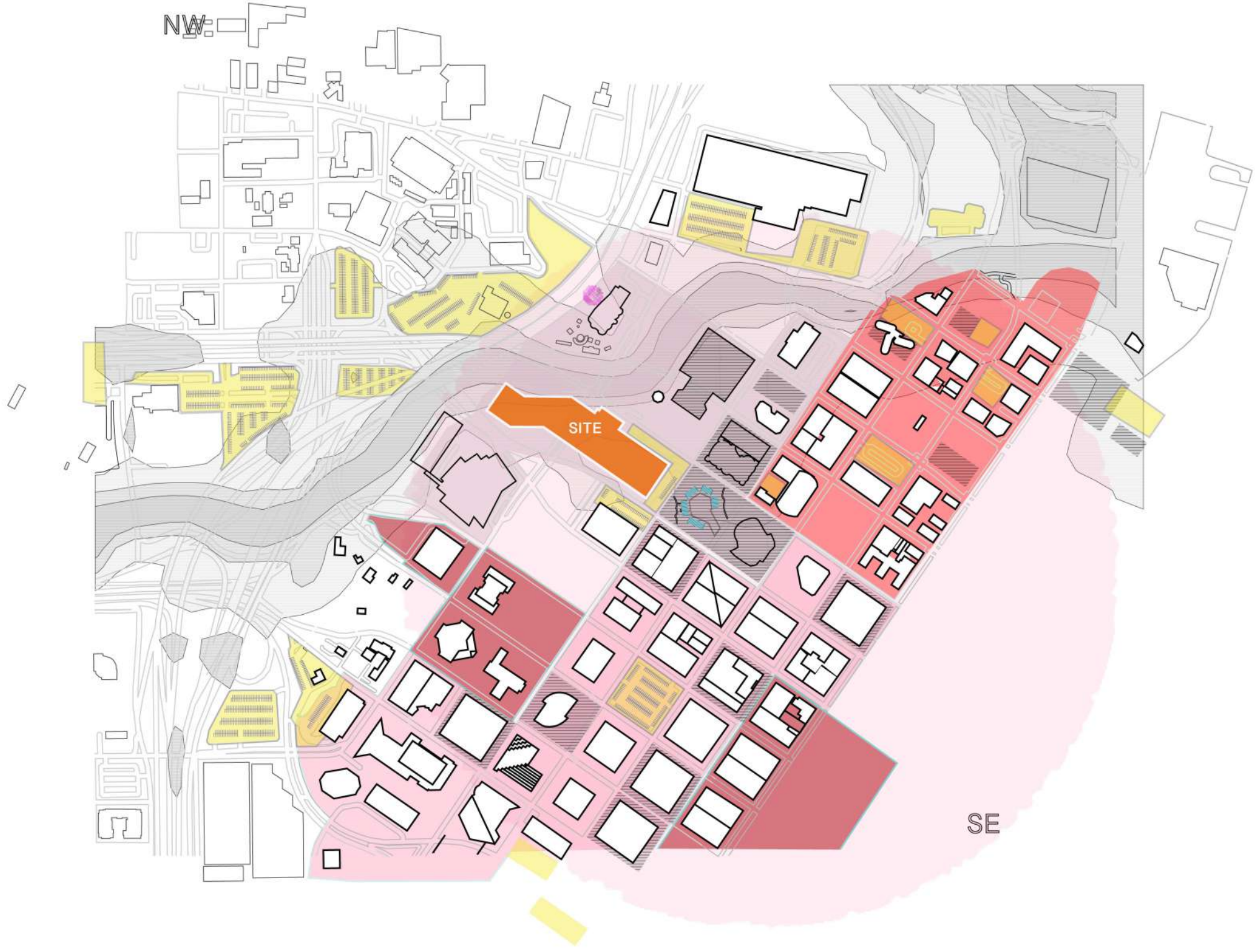
**ANTI-CAR?**

*“The denizens of the free have become its product, users transformed into victims. Commuter on a subway train passively submit to the indignities of underground life, while drivers on the freeway enact the very form of the network. No longer kibitzers, they are performers in the theater of mobility.”*

Lars Lerup, *One Million Acres & No Zoning*



MEGASHAPES



1951

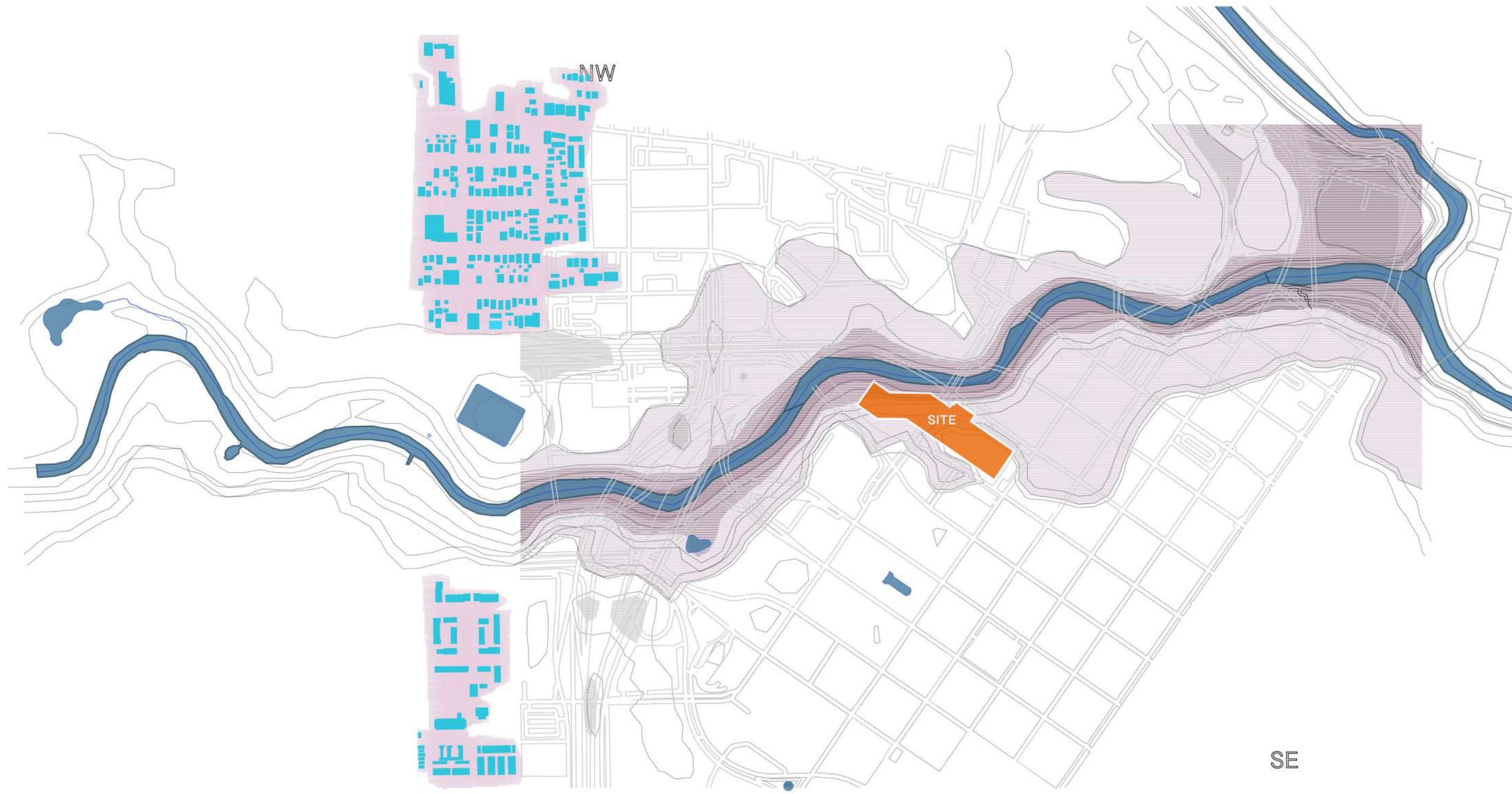


1970



2021





**FLOOD PLAINS OF ID  
& WEATHER**

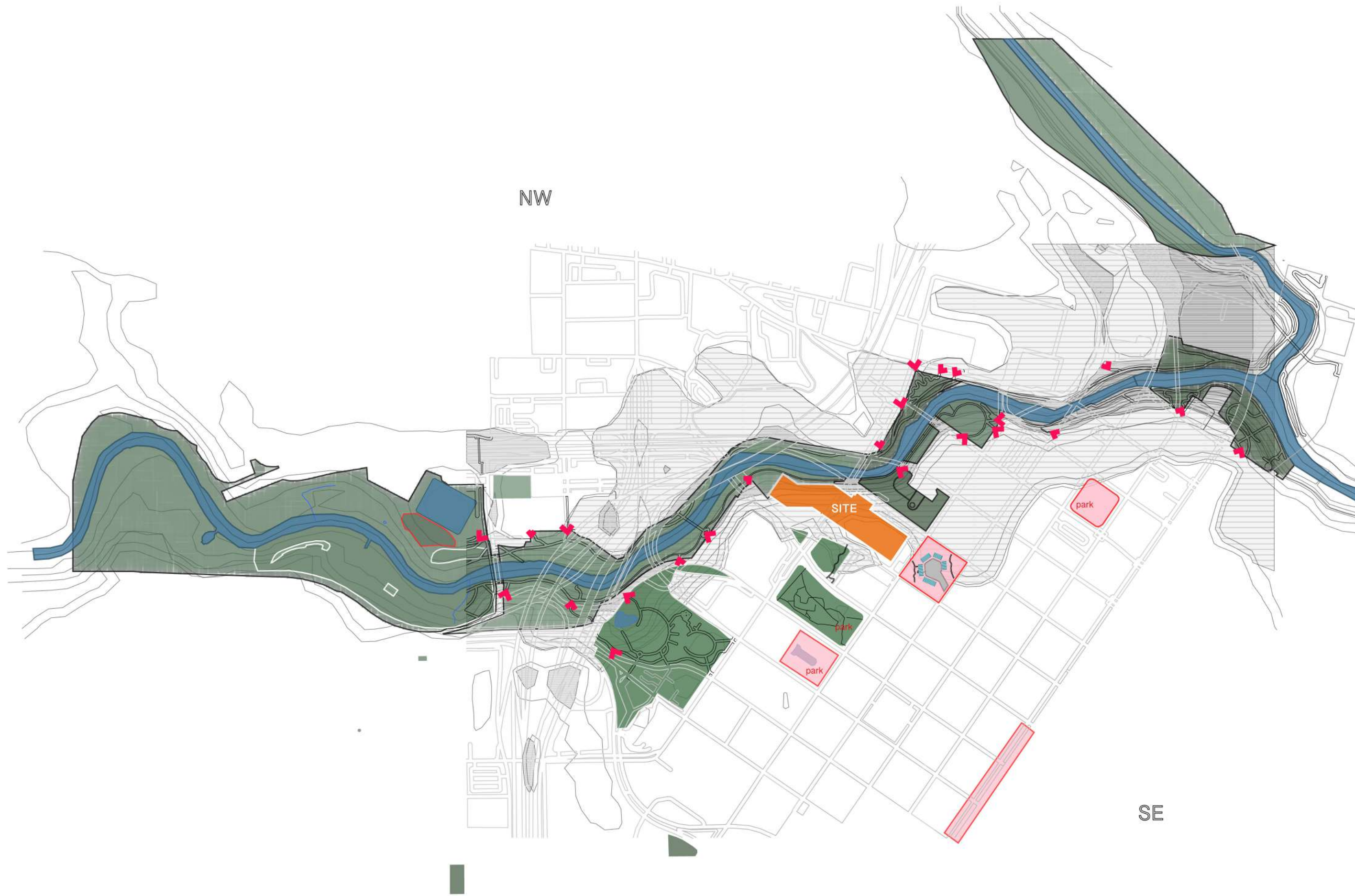


*Hurricane Harvey, 2017*



*Houston's flood of 1935*





## CANOPY



*“Although a diffuse megashape must be imagined and constructed in the minds of denizens, the pillard roominess of the zoohectic canopy in Houston promises a beyond.”*

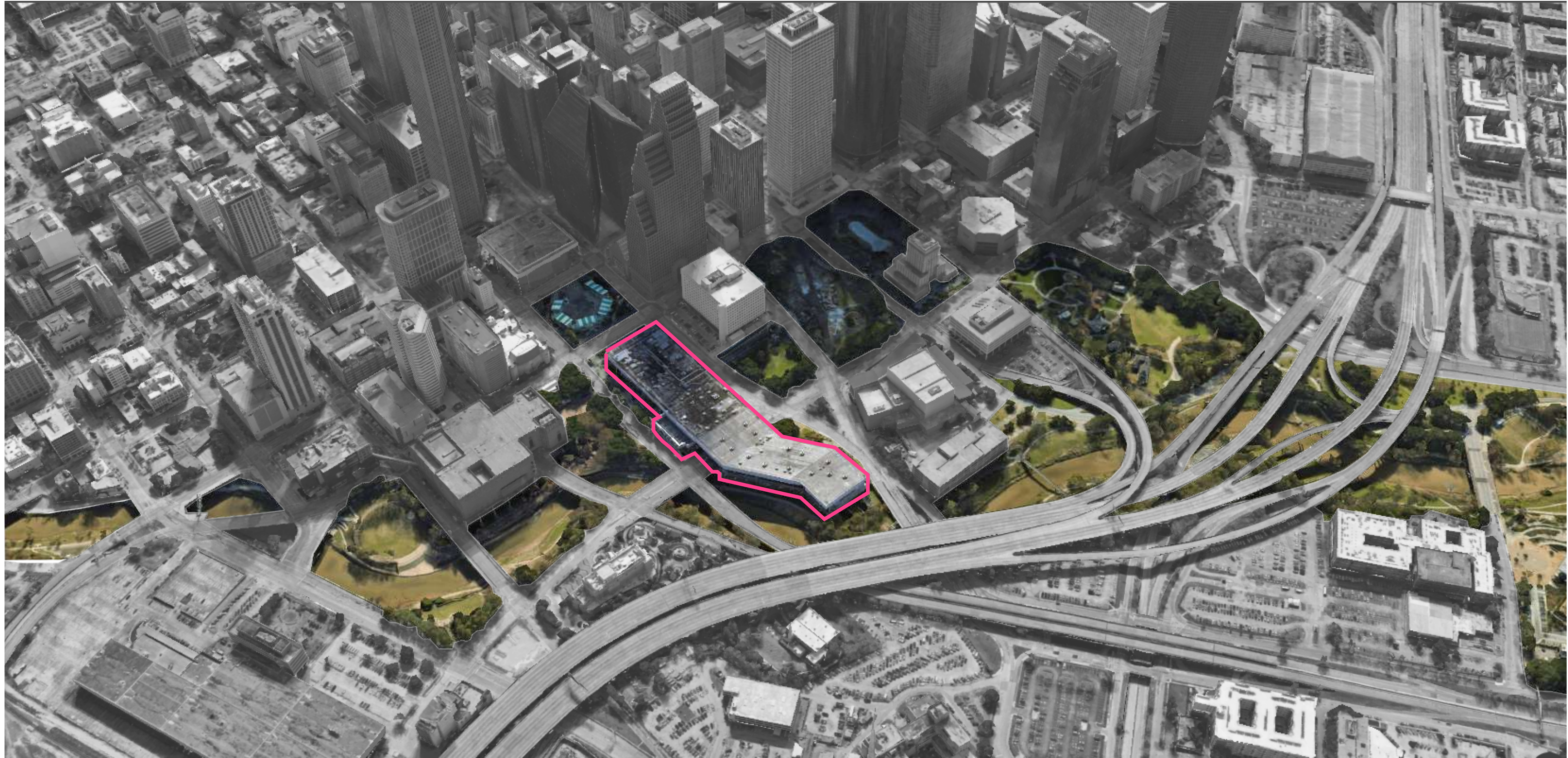
Lars Lerup, *One Million Acres & No Zoning*

The third ecology is both natural and foreign. The pine trees Houston is known for are human-made relics that changed natural ventilation’s efficacy across the moist plains. In *One Million Acres & No Zoning*, Lars Lerup disapproves of this intervention:

The complex risk in manipulating the prairie: the canopy which appears perfectly natural is almost as artificial as the technology that replaces a cool breeze (Lerup 141).

Now an identifier of wealthier neighborhoods, the broad trees stretch towards each other, commonly meeting in the middle of a path. The natural arch encases the passerby, creating an interior room in the middle of the flat Houstonian landscape. Much like Central Park, Buffalo bayou utilizes this canopy to create space between humans and the city.







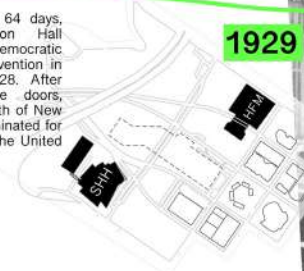






1928

Built in only 64 days, Sam Houston Hall hosted the Democratic National Convention in June of 1928. After leaving these doors, Alfred E. Smith of New York was nominated for President of the United States.



1929

A block away from Sam Houston Hall (present day Wortham Theater), the Houston Farmer's Market gained a permanent site. Instead of only hosting farmers every Saturday at Market Square, HF was open to sell goods all week from 4 am to 8 pm.



1937  
The Coliseum & Music Hall replaces the Sam Houston Hall.



DEMOL  
SAM HOUSTON COLISEUM

NOTABLE EVENTS

- 1956 ELVIS PRESLEY
- 1963 JFK'S LAST SPEECH
- 1965 THE BEATLES
- 1967 JAMES BROWN
- 1968 CREAM (BAND)
- 1970 JIMI HENDRIX
- 1971 IKE & TINA TURNER
- 1977 THE FIRST NATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE
- 1984 OZZY OSBOURNE
- 1993 THE BLACK CROWES



1959

1961



1970



ALBERT THOMAS CONVENTION CENTER



1971

WORTHAM THEATER & GEORGE R. BROWN



1987

1987 was the year of change for the Albert Thomas Convention Center. George R. Brown grasped the east end of downtown while the Wortham Theater took the luxury of the arts across the street. Both of these buildings made ATC obsolete.



1988

Mayor Kathryn J. Whittemore realized that only municipal action could stop the engulfing wave of glass high rises overtaking Houston's civic district. Determined to maintain the Arts intact within the loop, Whittemore recommended the Albert Thomas Center be converted to a "festival market."

1997

After \$60 million joint venture proposal, 60% the old convention center was gutted and reconfigured to accommodate the seven entertainment tenants the project had attracted. On New Year's Eve 1997, Bayou Place was opened to the public.

2003



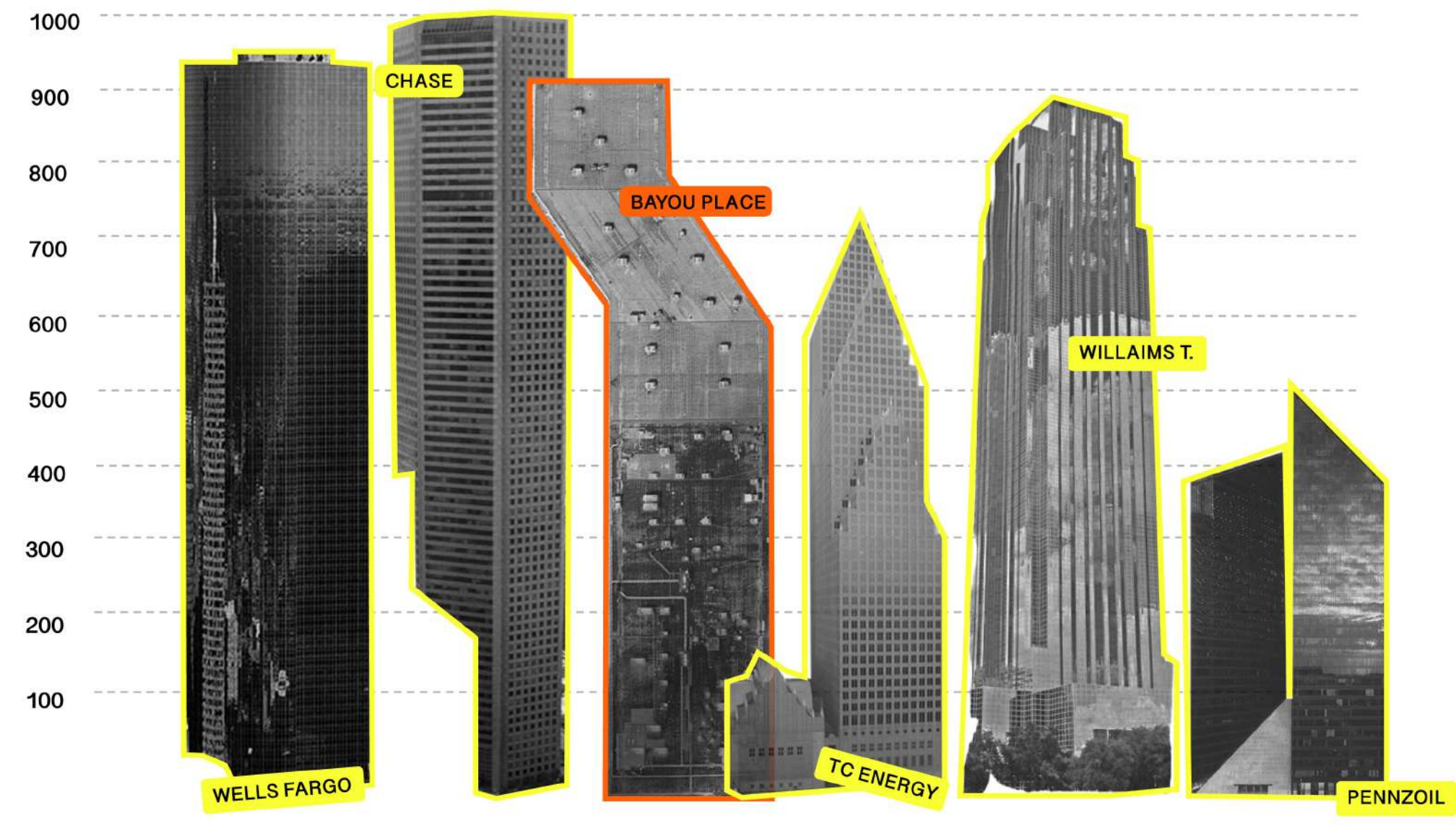
HOBBY CENTER

Hobby Center replaces the historical Sam Houston Coliseum.

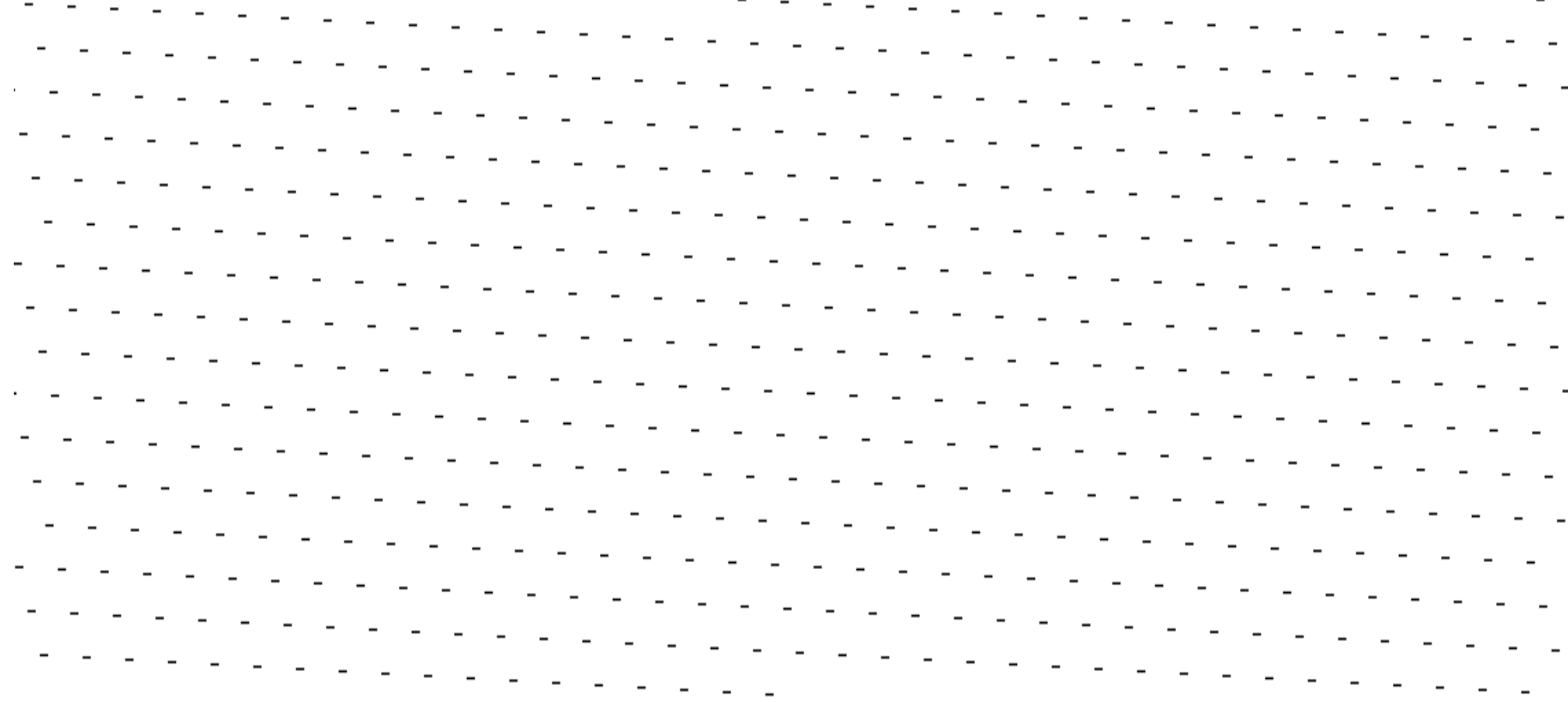
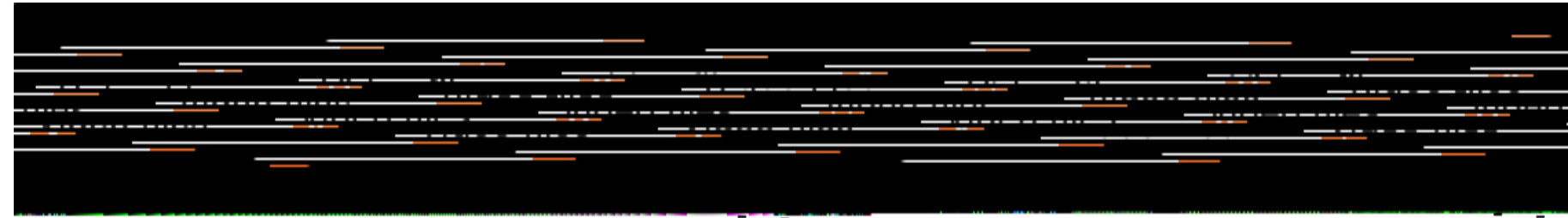




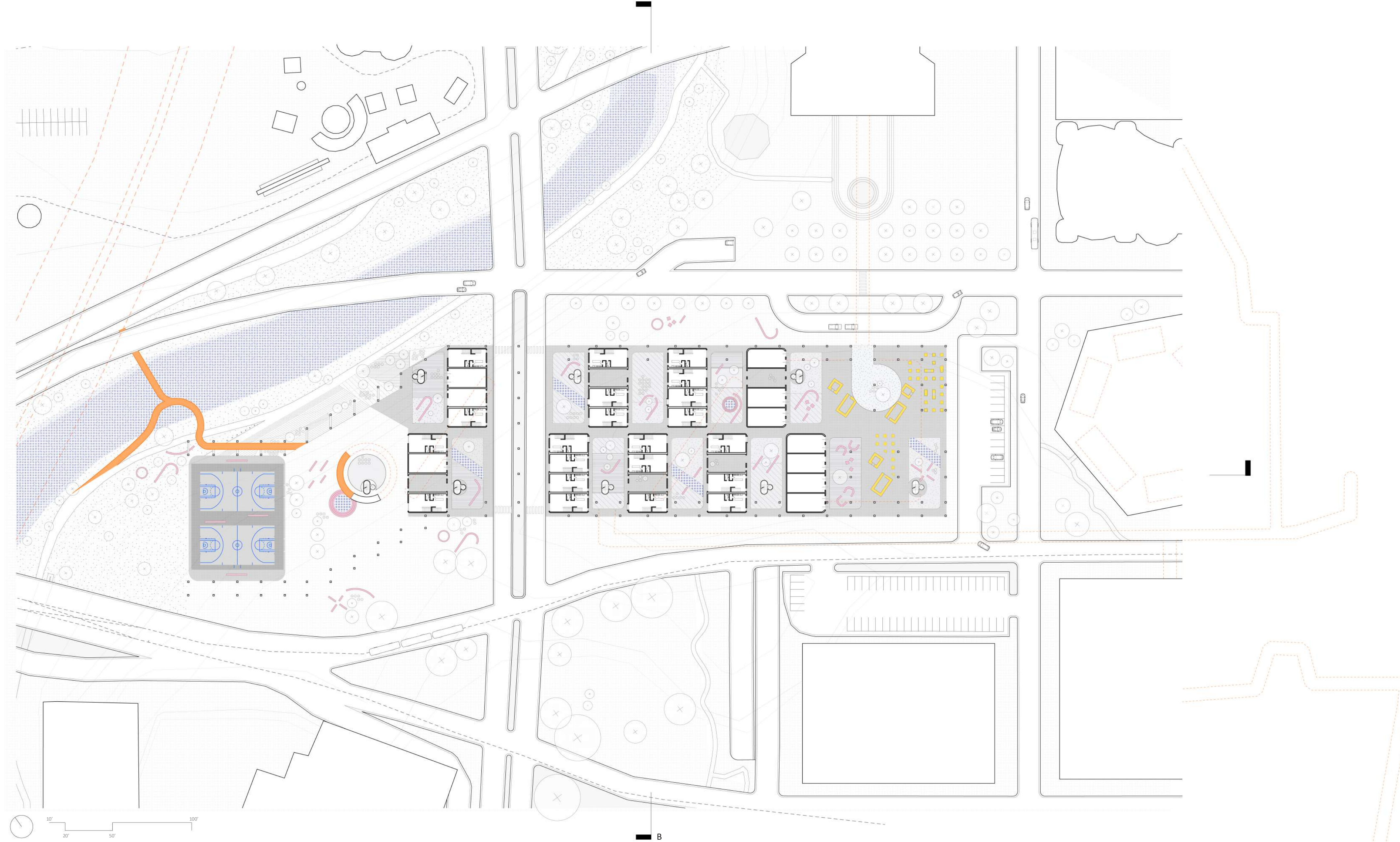






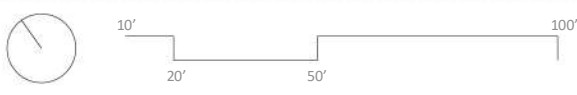




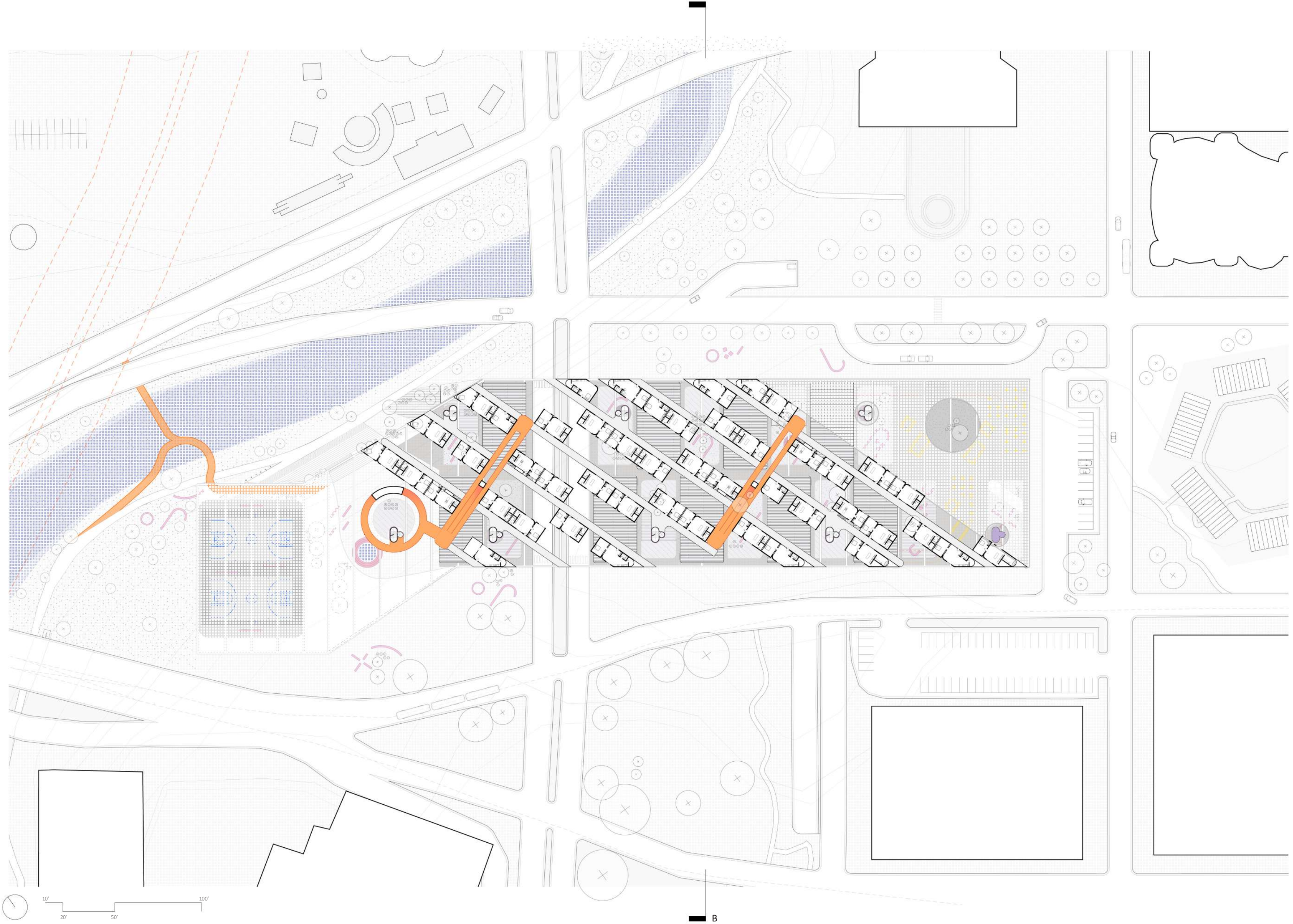


A

B

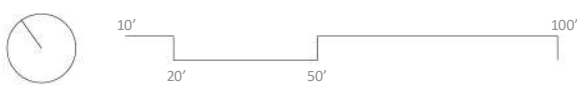






A

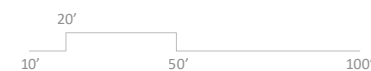
B







**LONG SECTION A**

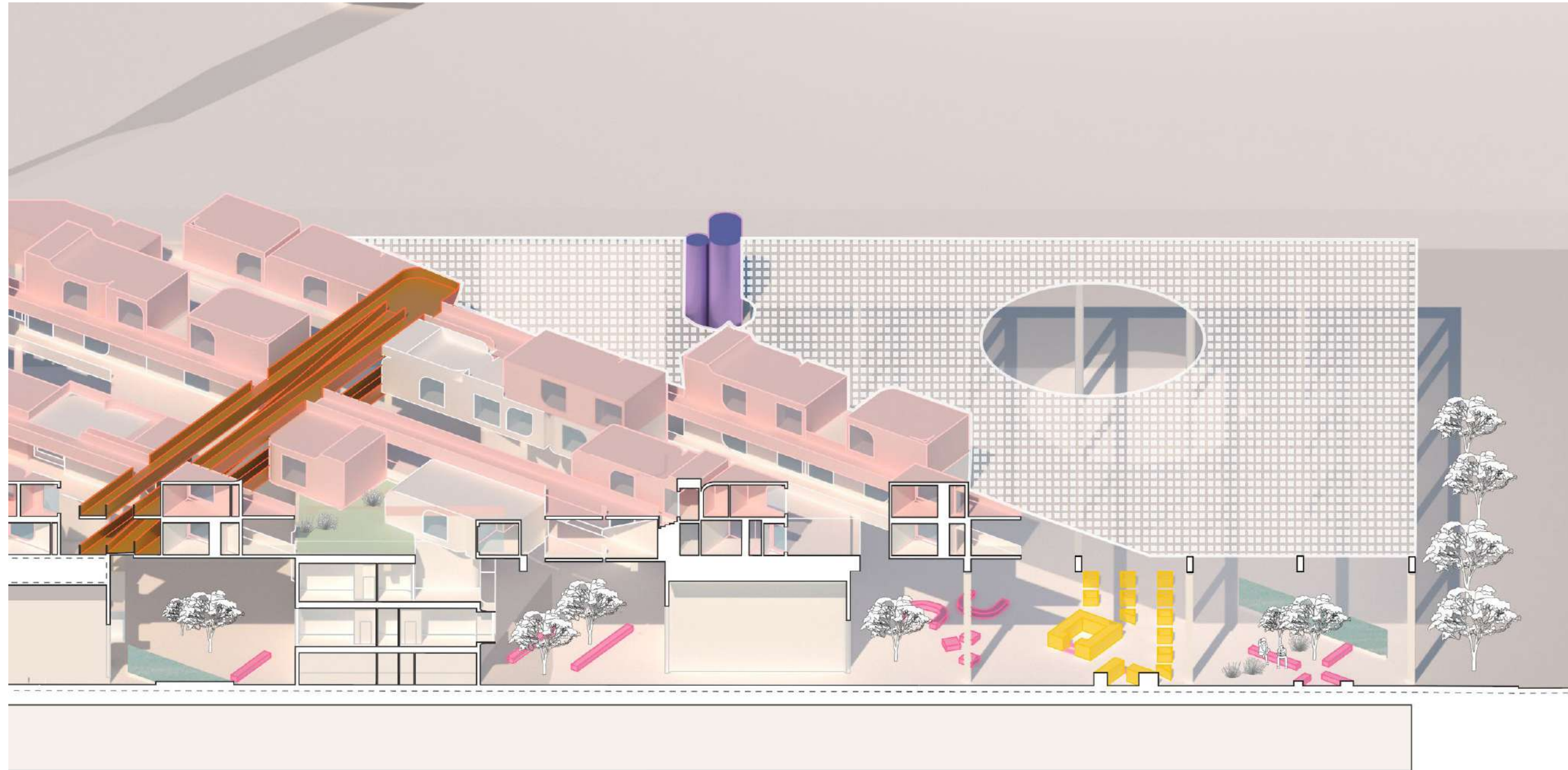






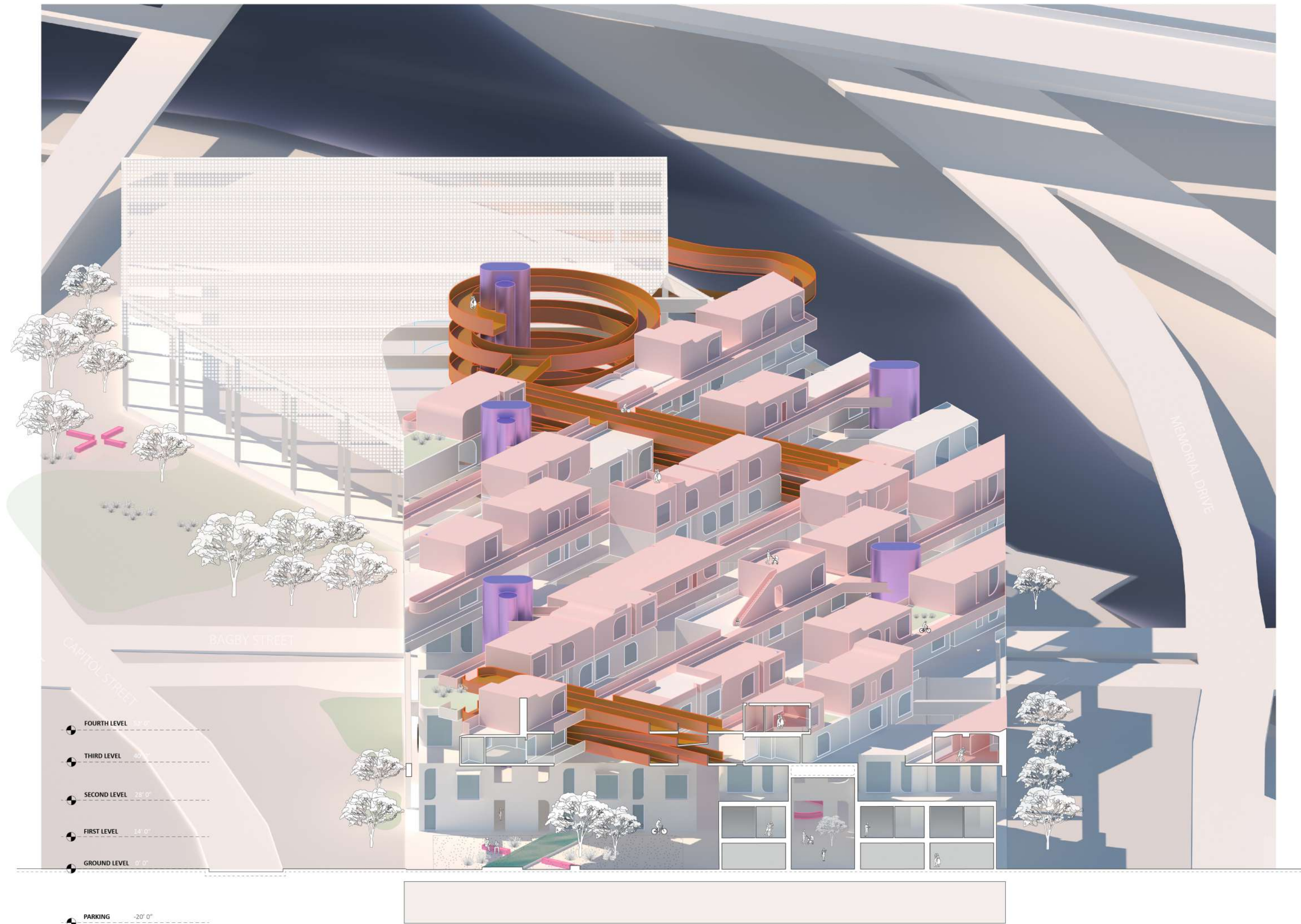
LONG SECTION A.1





LONG SECTION A.2





**SHORT SECTION B**

