

Vagabond: Housing for the Mobile Adult

by

Gabriel Luis Gaviola

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APPROVED/APPROUVÉ

Thesis Examiners/Examineurs de thèse:

Kai Wood Mah
(Thesis Advisor / Directeur(trice) de thèse)

Dennis Castellan
(Thesis Second Reader / Deuxième lecteur(trice) de thèse)

Janna Levitt
(External Examiner / Examineur(trice) externe)

Approved for the Office of Graduate Studies
Approuvé pour le Bureau des études supérieures
Tammy Eger, PhD
Vice-President, Research (Office of Graduate Studies)
Vice-rectrice à la recherche (Bureau des études supérieures)

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ABSTRACT

Vagabond: Housing for the Mobile Adult deals with the precarious housing of the mobile adult. The mobile adult is a term coined by the author to describe the age group of 20-34 years old who are currently seeking social stability. That is to achieve the milestones of marriage, property ownership and income. However, the lack of job opportunities, affordable housing and high cost of living prolong their life goals.

This thesis addresses the current inaccessibility of housing in Toronto and suggest another way of providing opportunities for living in the city. Its theory revolves around Zygmunt Bauman's Liquid Life and Charles Jenck's Adhocism, exploring the themes of integration and alternative housing systems through ad-hoc means. This thesis explores three scales. The interior scale addresses the temporary state of mobile adults and their need for mobility. The architectural scale examines how the building scale can integrate the mobile adult into an existing neighbourhood and how architecture can function as a social platform. The third scale, the neighbourhood scale, explores urban infill as an opportunity for housing development.

Keywords:

Adhocism, Liquid Life, Personal Autonomy, Precariousness, Cost of Living, Young Adults, Integration, Rental Housing, Infill, Densification

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PREFACE

My friends and I worry about our future. Our whole lives followed this linear path of education, dictating our schedules, ideals, and career paths. Dejectedly, what awaits us as adults is a global housing crisis, inflation, debt, precarious job market and shortages unique to our present time.

Our generation is severely overlooked when it comes to social and economic issues. The perception of the current young generation is that we are unwilling to grow up. We are seen as helpless, lazy, and weak. The distinct and new issues experienced by young adults today are often dismissed. Young adults experience a sense of disfranchisement where the complaints and issues we have are discredited due to our inexperience and negative perception of our generation.

In our current time, small apartments, working part-time and having no savings is normalized. To be competitive, we must be more educated and trained due to the shift in economic needs. Most people believe that housing is a human right, but in today's markets, it is considered a luxury and an investment to own a home. My thesis is about the demographic of young adults struggling to achieve financial independence. I want to explore a solution fit for this demographic, creating a buffer and incubator that would enable them the agency to "grow up".

My interest in housing for young adults comes from the worries of my peers. The tone often becomes very self deprecating and pessimistic whenever we have conversations about our future. We send each other memes about the challenge of finding affordable housing and joke about not finding stable employment. The truth is that this all comes from a place of resentment. There is a significant cultural difference between the young adults today and the older generation. Anecdotally, this generation's online discourse and the viral memes created about this topic often come from this indignant perspective.

The precarious situation of young people is the product of extreme consumerism. The only incentive coming from this advanced capitalism is capital gain. The result of this is an ongoing housing crisis that is resulting in a major cultural shift, especially for young adults. This thesis revolves around using architecture to platform this demographic, granting them agency as they move through life and their careers. This thesis focuses on three main parts. First, a demographic study is performed to determine the target age group for optimal inclusivity. Second, a neighbourhood study is utilized to inform a new housing typology. Third, the emphasis on adhocism as the catalyst for innovation is studied.

My thesis proposes a different perspective in looking at housing scarcity in metropolitan areas. The current state of Toronto forces the mobile adults to face this lack of options in the city and high cost of living. This thesis will look at the existing situation of the city-individual relationship and find opportunities to help the mobile adult to achieve their goals.

INTRODUCTION

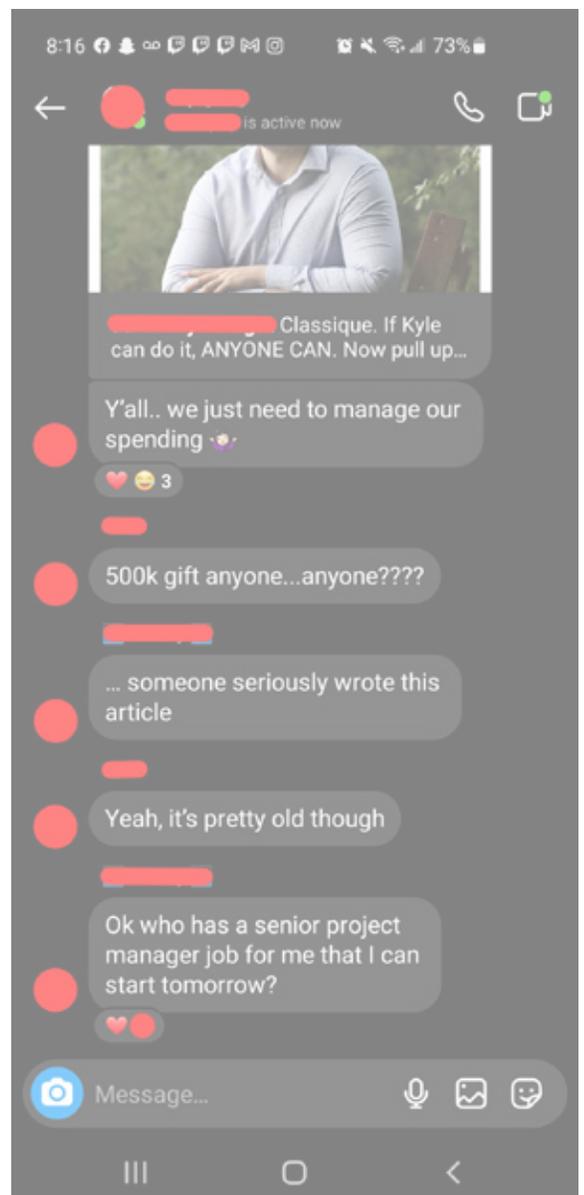


Figure 0.1: Meme sharing

WHO ARE THE MOBILE ADULTS?

The mobile adult is a term I coined to describe the age group of 20–34 year-olds seeking housing and economic stability. This class of young adults are struggling in the current economic landscape. The shared struggle of the demographic is due to the insecure job market, student debt, and high cost of living. The mobile adult is a generational phenomenon, describing the current situation of most young adults. This phenomenon is inclusive to anyone of this age bracket and this thesis deals with their precarious shared experience. In a study done by Pew Research Center, most Americans think that young adults should be financially independent by 22. However, only 24 percent of this young demographic are financially stable today, declining from 32 percent in the 1980s.¹ The mobile adults are a growing population experiencing financial turmoil and there are no current programs that are designed to support them. Pew Research Center have also found that 45 percent of adults ages 18 to 29 have received financial help from their parents. In comparison, 59 percent of parents say they support their adult children.² Parents often cover their adult children's groceries, tuition, and housing costs.³ The demographic's lack of financial independence has correlated to the delay of adulthood milestones such as marriage and home ownership. In the 1980's, 42 percent of young adults 18 to 29 were married compared to the 18 percent in 2018.⁴ There has also been an increase

1 Alicia Adamczyk, "Most Americans think young adults should be financially independent by 22 – but only 24% are," *CNBC-Earn*, October 26, 2019, <https://www.cnbc.com/2019/10/26/only-24percent-of-young-adults-are-financially-independent-by-22-per-pew.html>.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Amanda Barroso, Kim Parker and Richard Fry, "Majority of Americans Say Parents Are Doing Too Much for Their Young Adult Children," *Pew Research Center*, October 23, 2019, <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2019/10/23/majority-of-americans-say-parents-are-doing-too-much-for-their-young-adult-children/>.

of women not having children. The number of young women aged 18 to 29 that have not given birth rose from 57 percent to 70 percent from 1980 to 2018.⁵

Financial independence is important for the mobile adult as they are future participants in the job market and economy. However, the current barriers of instability and high cost of living have affected this demographic the most. Not only have they been affected culturally through delayed marriage and children, but also delayed financially. A 2017 Go Banking Rates Survey found that 67 percent of the mobile adult demographic have less than 1000 dollars in their savings and about 46 percent of the demographic has 0 dollars in savings.⁶ Mobile adults are the most affected when it comes to economic changes. In another study conducted by Pew Research Center, most young adults feel that finding a job, saving for the future, paying for college, and buying a home seem to be harder than it was compared to their parent's generation.⁷

The mobile adults are anyone in the age bracket of 21 to 34. This demographic shares the same experience of a fast-paced and evolving cultural and economic landscapes unique to this current generation. They are negatively affected by the current inflation, the housing crisis and precarious job market. These issues have culturally changed how mobile adults live, delaying adulthood milestones such as marriage, home ownership and bearing children.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Pew Research Center, "Chapter 3: How Today's Economy is Affecting Young Adults," *Report! Young, Underemployed and Optimistic*, February 9, 2012, <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2012/02/09/chapter-3-how-todays-economy-is-affecting-young-adults/>.



**KEEP
DISTANCE**



EMERGING ADULTHOOD

There is a perception that the mobile adult demographic seems resistant to “growing up”.⁸ A lot of their adulthood milestones are pushed later in life and financial independence has been lacking in the demographic. The optics around this delay have made some theorize about a new developmental stage to describe this phase.⁹ American Psychologist Jeffrey Arnett called it the “Emerging Adulthood” to describe the transitional period between teens and adulthood. Arnett describes the emerging adulthood phase with a lot of demographic diversity and instability, which he correlates to the emphasis of the intrinsic features of change and exploration experienced by mobile adults.¹⁰ This phase describes the current changes in the world and the mobile adult’s need to adapt. The economy has changed to a more knowledge-based system and current young adults need more education and training to obtain many entry-level jobs.¹¹

Arnett states that most mobile adults do not see themselves as entirely adults.¹² The societal expectation of financial independence is a standard that most of the demographic want to achieve to deem themselves an “adult”. In Arnett’s study, the mobile adult’s perception of themselves being an adult is pushed far later into their early thirties. Milestones of stable residence, completed schooling, stable career, and committed relationships are expectations that are being met later in life by the current generation. The

threshold of most mobile adults when it comes to living situations and jobs have lessened due to this knowledge-based economic shift. Mobile adults are more willing to move to farther locations to find opportunities.¹³ The amount of time for schooling and training correlated to the current needs of the job market are a large factor in prolonging this emerging adulthood phase. This thesis will explore these issues that gatekeep the mobile adult demographic and create a platform for them to grow, allowing them the agency to achieve these adulthood milestones.

A distinct issue of inflation that has slowly appeared throughout the last few decades. Specifically, the high cost of living has created an entry barrier for the inexperienced demographic of the mobile adult. Chapter one analyzes the statistics describing the target demographic and their issues. These statistics will provide a broad lens that illustrates the status quo and its relationship to housing in Toronto. It creates a base that enables an understanding of the main issues I want to address in this thesis, allowing for optimal inclusivity for the target age range. In chapter one, I first discuss the general movement of mobile adults to these large dense cities and their attraction to them. Chapter one starts with the anecdotal aspirations and housing issues of the demographic. These anecdotes include opinions on moving and priorities in their lives. Statistics then follow it to provide a better understanding of the problem. These statistics include migration patterns, polled ideals, current housing projects, rent, debt, and employment rates. Whether the mobile adult originates from the GTA or is a new immigrant, the consensus and issues remain consistent.

¹³ Josep Mestres Domenech and Adria Morron Salmeron, “Young adults in the 21st century, a different approach to life?” *CaixaBank Research | Economics and Markets: Labour market and demographics*, June 13, 2019, <https://www.caixabankresearch.com/en/economics-markets/labour-market-demographics/young-adults-21st-century-different-approach-life>.

⁸ Nancy E. Hill and Alexis Redding, “The Real Reason Young Adults Seem Slow to ‘Grow Up,’” *The Atlantic – Family*, April 28, 2021, <https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2021/04/real-reason-young-adults-seem-slow-grow/618733/>.

⁹ Jeffrey Jensen Arnett, “Emerging Adulthood: A Theory of Development From the Late Teens Through the Twenties,” *University of Maryland College Park (American Psychologist: 2000)*, 469. http://www.jeffreyarnett.com/ARNETT_Emerging_Adulthood_theory.pdf.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Hill and Redding, “The Real Reason Young Adults Seem Slow to ‘Grow Up.’”

¹² Arnett, “Emerging Adulthood: A Theory of Development From the Late Teens Through the Twenties,” 469.

CHAPTER 1:

THE STATUS
AND ALLURE
DOWNTOWN
MOBILE

QUO
OF THE
TO THE
ADULT

WESTERN
CITIES AND
THE NON-
LINEAR
HOUSING
PATHWAY OF
THE MOBILE
ADULT

The inflated housing market, decreased affordability, gentrification, and overpopulation constrain the mobile adult's options in housing. However, as stated in the "Navigating the field of housing: housing pathways for young people in Amsterdam," there isn't enough accessible information on how young people deal with these conditions and how it differs from social class.¹⁴ This article discusses the housing status in Amsterdam, but the information on the mobile adult's relationship towards the city is still relevant for most western cities.

One of the main things that most young people have in common is their precariousness post-graduation, which often comes from their lack of social, economic, and cultural capital. Their lack of experience and financial stability usually leaves them to find alternative housing pathways. Young people often choose to seek temporary and non-permanent housing arrangements because of the importance of living in these urban locations.¹⁵ They seek out situations that enable them to gain social, economic, and cultural capital to prepare them for more long-term engagements. Mobile adults move to large cities with employment opportunities, networking, recreation, and diversity. Immigrants of this demographic often see more representation in these cities due to the established ethnic communities that can cater to them.

In the context of Amsterdam, there are a few options for housing. One is the social-rental sector, which is accessible to low-income earners. The problem is that the average waitlist for said housing is about 11 years.¹⁶ In Toronto, co-op

housing has a general wait time of 4-7 years for a single unit.¹⁷ However, the wait will take longer for most as there is a priority list for people in more vulnerable situations, such as people with disabilities or domestic violence survivors. The second option is the private rental sector, generally run by small private housing institutions. It was generally affordable and accessible to most of the population previously. Still, no longer so because of the rapid increase in housing value before the 2008 global financial crisis.¹⁸ Another subsector is student housing, which only students registered at post-secondary institutions can access. Contracts are revoked six months after the tenant ends their career as a student. However, some people stay in student residences semi-illegally. In many cases, most people return to their parents' homes.

Most mobile adults would prefer to follow a linear housing pathway and stay in a more permanent space. Still, due to the precariousness of their situation, they often need to move to places with opportunities. The general inexperience that mobile adults possess forces them to live with uncertainty. Some respondents in the article mentioned above have shared their experiences of being excluded based on their income rather than their actual ability to afford rent. Additionally, some agencies have additional requirements asking the applicants for proof of permanent employment and some would discriminate against mobile adults for sharing with roommates.

14 Cody Hochstenbach and Willem R. Boterman, "Navigating the Field of Housing: Housing Pathways of Young People in Amsterdam," *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment* 30, no. 2 (2015): 257. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43907327>.

15 *Ibid.*, 259.

16 *Ibid.*, 259.

17 Yasmine Laasraoui, "Despite Long Waitlists, Co-ops Seen as a Solution to Toronto's Housing Crisis," *Torontoist*, April 26, 2017, <https://torontoist.com/2017/04/despite-long-waitlists-co-ops-seen-solution-torontos-housing-crisis/>

18 Cody Hochstenbach and Willem R. Boterman, "Navigating the Field of Housing: Housing Pathways of Young People in Amsterdam," *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment* 30, no. 2 (2015): 262.

Canada has been referred to as the land of immigrants because of the millions of newcomers that have settled and helped build what the country is today.¹⁹ In Canada's early stages, many Europeans settled in Canada due to its opportunities of expansion.²⁰ Today, most immigrants come from China, Philippines, and India and the majority of the population growth in Canada comes from immigration.²¹ Specifically, Toronto is the most populated city in Canada and is home to one of the most diverse communities in the country. Historically, Toronto has always been considered the city of opportunity, as in its early stages was the center of trails and rivers that connected Lake Ontario to Lake Huron.²² It was the center of business and transportation, allowing for many jobs and businesses to be accessed. Italian and Chinese immigrants came and worked on the railway, and they were also some of the early communities that adopted Toronto as their home in the 18th century. Today, there are large communities of South Asians, Caribbeans, Indians, and Europeans that create diversity in Toronto. This cultural diversity and business center we call Toronto was created by mobile adults of the past. These immigrants sought out opportunities for better living and have helped build Toronto as we know it today.

An example of a current thriving demographic is the Filipino community in Toronto. Back in the 1960s, a group of Filipino healthcare workers immigrated to Toronto to seek employment.²³ Currently, Toronto's Filipino community makes up 62 percent of Canada's total

19 Government of Canada, "Archived-Background-Facts in Canada's Immigration History," *Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada | Archives*, June 26, 2011, <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/archives/backgrounders-2011/facts-canada-immigration-history.html>.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid.

22 "A History of Toronto Immigration," *IMMIgroup*, February 19, 2021, <https://www.immigroup.com/topics/history-toronto-immigration/#:~:text=The%20community%20only%20numbered%20a,the%2080's%2C%20135%2C000%20Jews%20arrived.>

23 "A New Beginning: Filipino Heritage of Toronto," *Heritage Toronto*, 2020, <https://www.heritagetoronto.org/explore-learn/diversity-story-filipino-community/>.

Filipino population. Many Filipino migrants that came to Toronto were either individuals looking for work or small families, considered mobile adults. Most chose to live in St. James Town which had affordable high-rise housing.²⁴ In St James Town, the Filipinos created a community through a church called Our Lady of Lourdes and the Silayan Community Center.²⁵ The community center helped newcomers transition through social networks, legal issues, and social services. This also provided a platform for them to organize cultural celebrations to give a sense of home to the Filipino migrants.

Many immigrants move to Toronto for better opportunities for jobs and finding a place to start, to raise a family and own a home. These are the mobile adults that seek a better life for themselves and their families. Toronto is a place of jobs, community, settlement, and infrastructure. The main reason for population growth in Canada is the high number of immigrants moving in. There are programs such as the Express Entry system that allows accessibility to permanent residency.²⁶ Toronto also has six universities and four colleges that provides a way to access more careers for the mobile adult immigrants. In addition, there are distinct ethnic communities such as Little Tibet, Little Portugal, Chinatown and more that create a sense of familiarity to newcomers to the country. In Toronto, almost 50 percent of the population is foreign born, being the most significant reason for the city's population growth.²⁷ Even during the COVID outbreak, Toronto is still an attractive place to mobile adults around the world.

24 Ibid.

25 Ibid.

26 Canada Visa, "Immigrate to Canada with Express Entry | Calculate Your CRS Score," *Cohen Immigration Law*, May 10, 2022, https://www.canadavisa.com/express-entry.html?_ga=2.187820712.1685145570.1652924548-396268607.1652924548

27 "Census Profile, 2016 Census," *Statistics Canada*, 2016, <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CMACA&Code1=535&Geo2=PR&Code2=35&SearchText=Caledon+East&SearchType=Beginns&SearchPR=01&B1=Ethnic%20origin&TABID=1&type=0>

TORONTO - THE CITY OF OPPORTUNITY

THE RISING TREND OF YOUNG MIGRANTS AND HOUSING COSTS OF TORONTO

A significant housing shortage has occurred in large cities such as Toronto over the last decade. The largest demographic of people moving in is 15-34, especially immigrants and Ontario residents outside of the GTA.²⁸ The increasing population of mobile adults throughout the years can be seen in Figure 1.1. The increase of mobile adult population correlates with a UNICEF statistic that nearly 40 percent of young people on the move identify education and training as top priorities.²⁹ They state that most youth worldwide want to learn professional, tech and language skills to expand their opportunities. The study affirms the important role of mobile adults in the City of Toronto.

28 City of Toronto, "Housing Occupancy trends," 2016: 6-7, <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/data-research-maps/research-reports/planning-development/housing-occupancy-trends/>.

29 Christopher Tidey, "Nearly 40 per cent of young people on the move identify education and training as top priorities, according to new UNICEF poll," *UNICEF*, July 14, 2021, <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/nearly-40-cent-young-people-move-identify-education-and-training-top-priorities>.

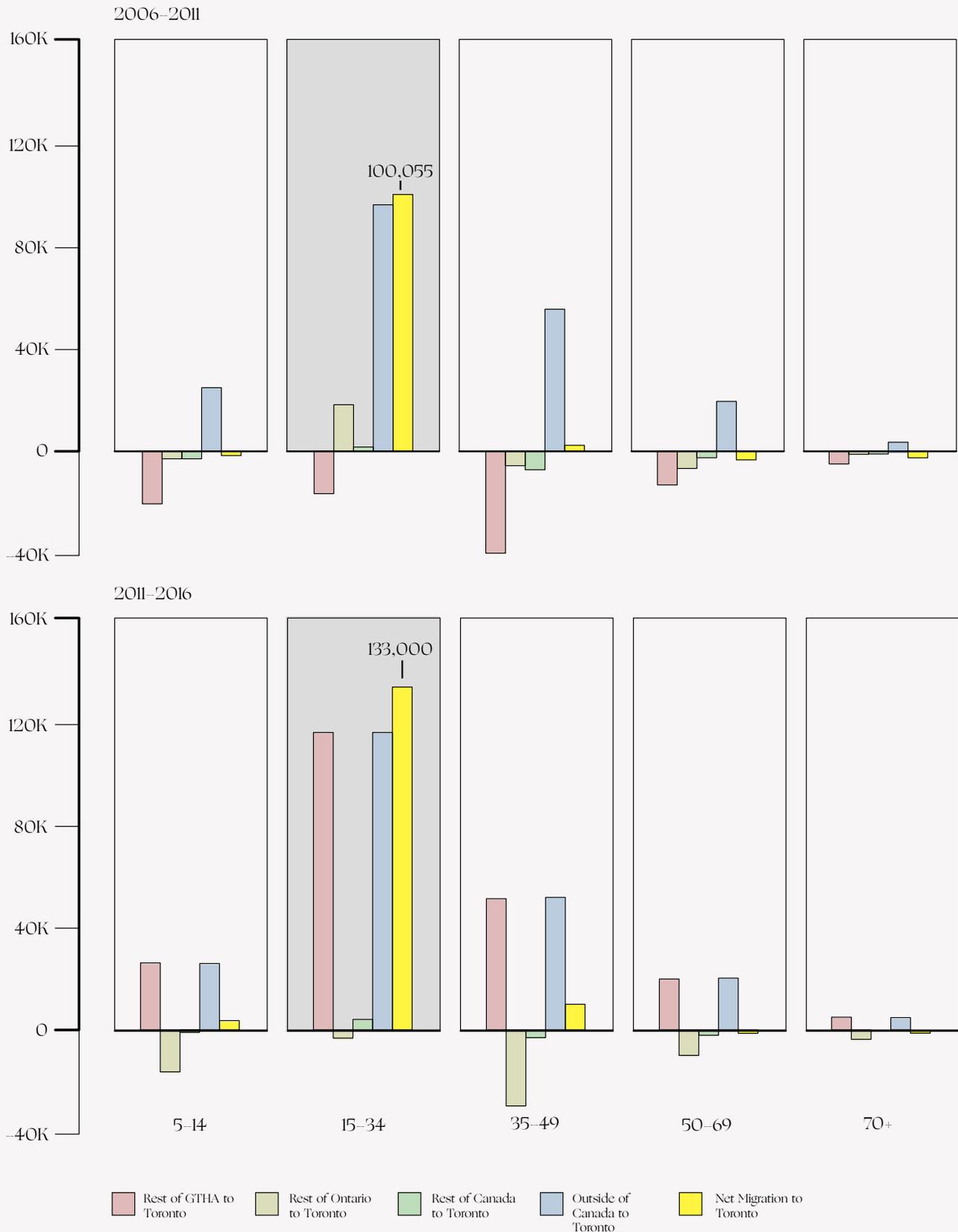


Figure 11: Net Migration by Age Group

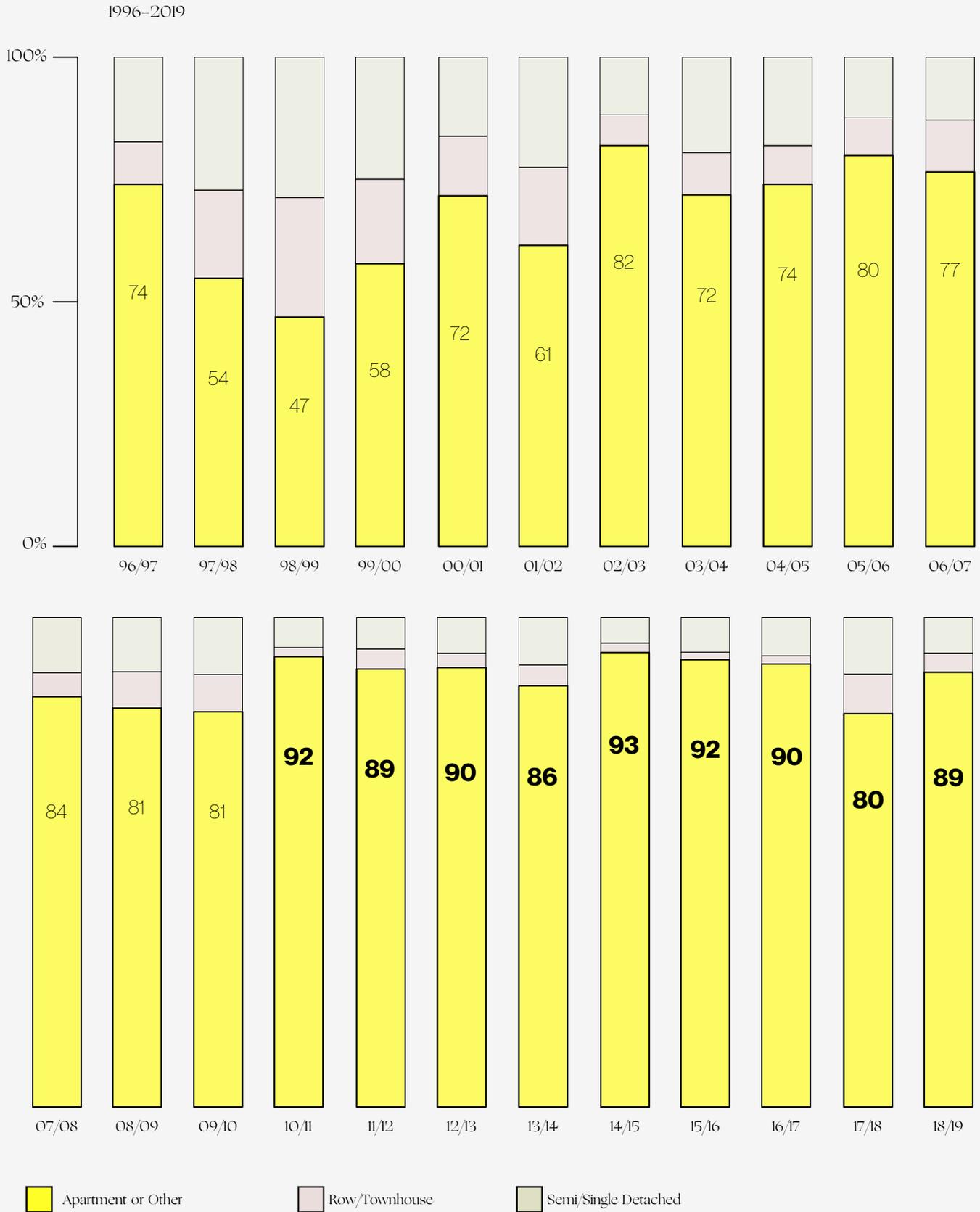
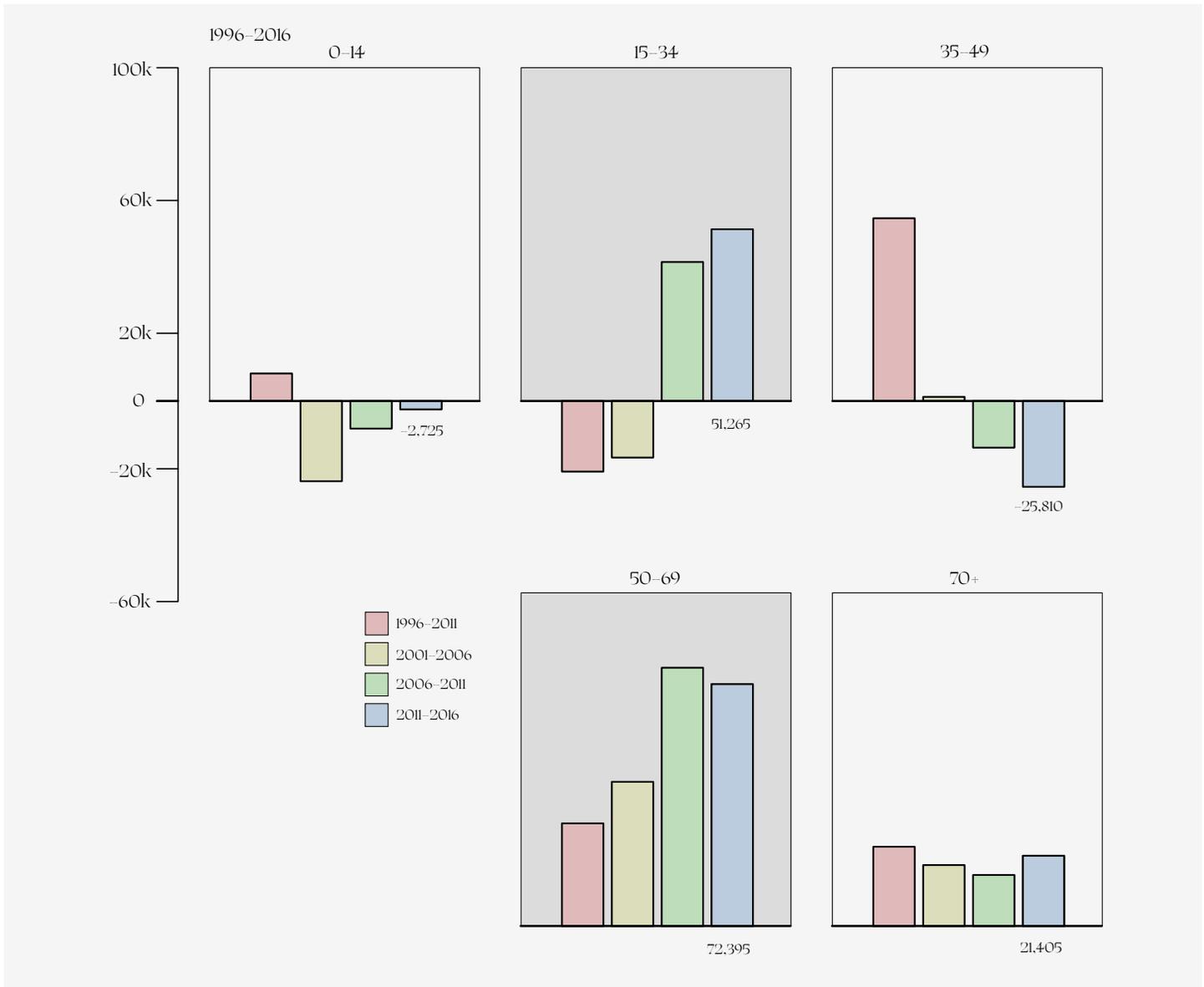


Figure 1.2: Proportion of Toronto Housing Completions by Dwelling Type



As a result of the increasing densification of Toronto, there has been a significant increase in mid-to high-rise apartments, representing 77 percent of the housing from 1996 to 2016. In the same study, almost 90 percent of the completed housing projects in Toronto have been apartments.³⁰ The trend of high-rise projects can be seen in Figure 1.2, where there has been a decrease in the average size of units in these mid-to high-rise buildings. Many proposed housing projects over twelve stories high have primarily catered to single-family housing, with one and two-bedroom units. The development of single apartment projects has continued to cater to the mobile adults and older couples. In correlation, families are moving out of Toronto. The age groups of 35-49 and 0-14 are

30 City of Toronto, "Housing Occupancy trends," 2016, 13.

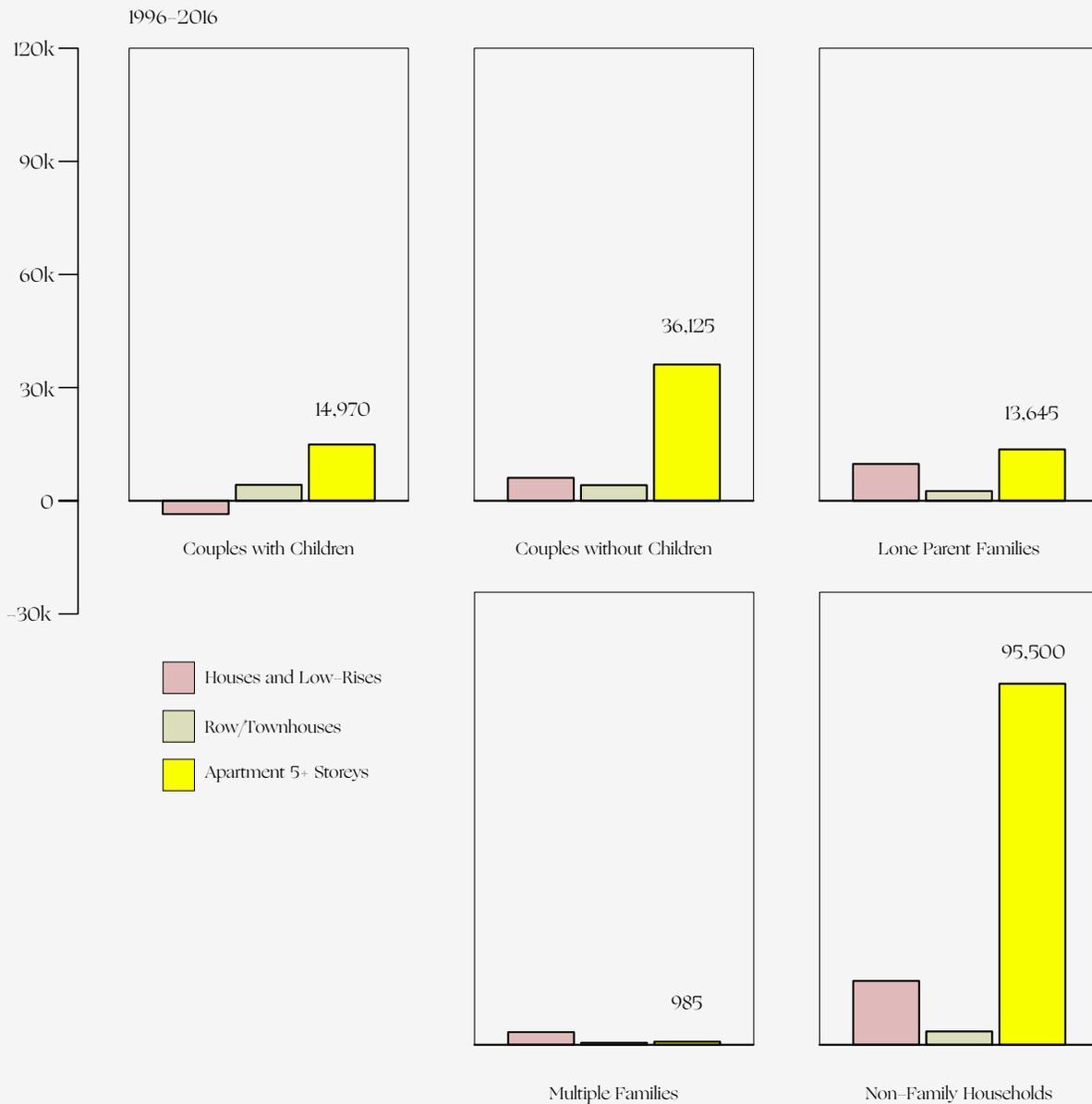
moving to the GTHA area, looking for a more suburban and family-oriented neighbourhood. However, the notable senior demographic has continued to rise in Toronto for the last couple of decades. This is due to the aging baby boomer generation which have kept many of the properties stagnant.³¹

Most of this younger demographic often live in five-storey rental apartments. Toronto has about a 45 percent rental sector in housing, specifically five-storey or higher apartments. In the last five years, the renter's household has increased about three times as fast as the number of owner's households between 2011 and 2016.³² Figure 1.5 shows that in the rental

31 City of Toronto, "Housing Occupancy trends," 2016, 18.

32 Ibid., 21.

Figure 1.3: Change in Population by Age Group



sector, almost 50 percent of tenants spend more than 30 percent of their income on household spending. Nearly 25 percent of renters spend more than 50 percent.³³ The competition over space has inflated the cost of living in Toronto. This comes from the city's attractive features of opportunities and experiences that have maximized the city's space. The scarcity of space and massive interest in Toronto has increased the cost of living to unaffordable heights.³⁴

³³ City of Toronto, "Housing Occupancy Trends," 2016, 50.
³⁴ Ibid., 51.

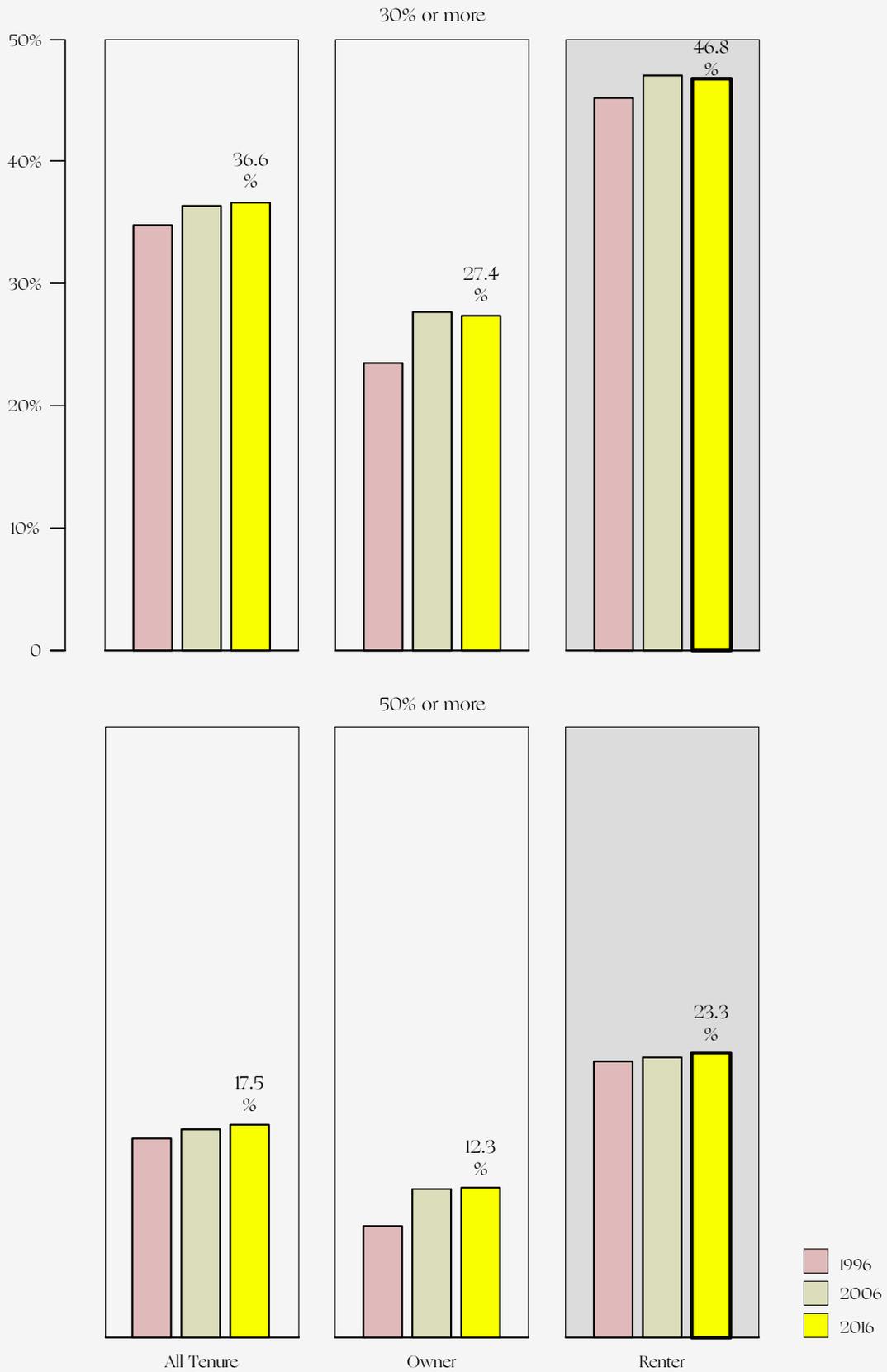


Figure 1.5: Proportion of Households Spending 30% and 50% or more of Household Income on Shelter Costs

Toronto offers the experiences and opportunities that mobile adults want in life. However, because of their lack of employment experience, mobile adults often need to take more risks and take jobs even when undesirable. With the expensive cost of living and lack of alternatives, there's nothing mobile adults can do but accept their circumstances. The innate lack of choice given to mobile adults have made the demographic mold their lifestyle to face the Emerging Adulthood phase. The threshold for work and housing has widened and essentially redefined and normalized smaller uncomfortable living situations for high costs. In Toronto, Non-family households are on the rise and have increased in every age group, especially young adults.³⁵ The 15 to 34 age range outnumbered family households by 150 percent. Toronto's study states a significant correlation between this ratio of non-family households and the cultural change in the mobile adult marriage patterns.³⁶ The lack of permanent arrangements such as property ownership and income stability has paralleled marriage delays. This overall emerging adulthood phase is maintained by the barrier of high cost.

³⁵ City of Toronto, "Housing Occupancy trends," 2016, 25.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 25.

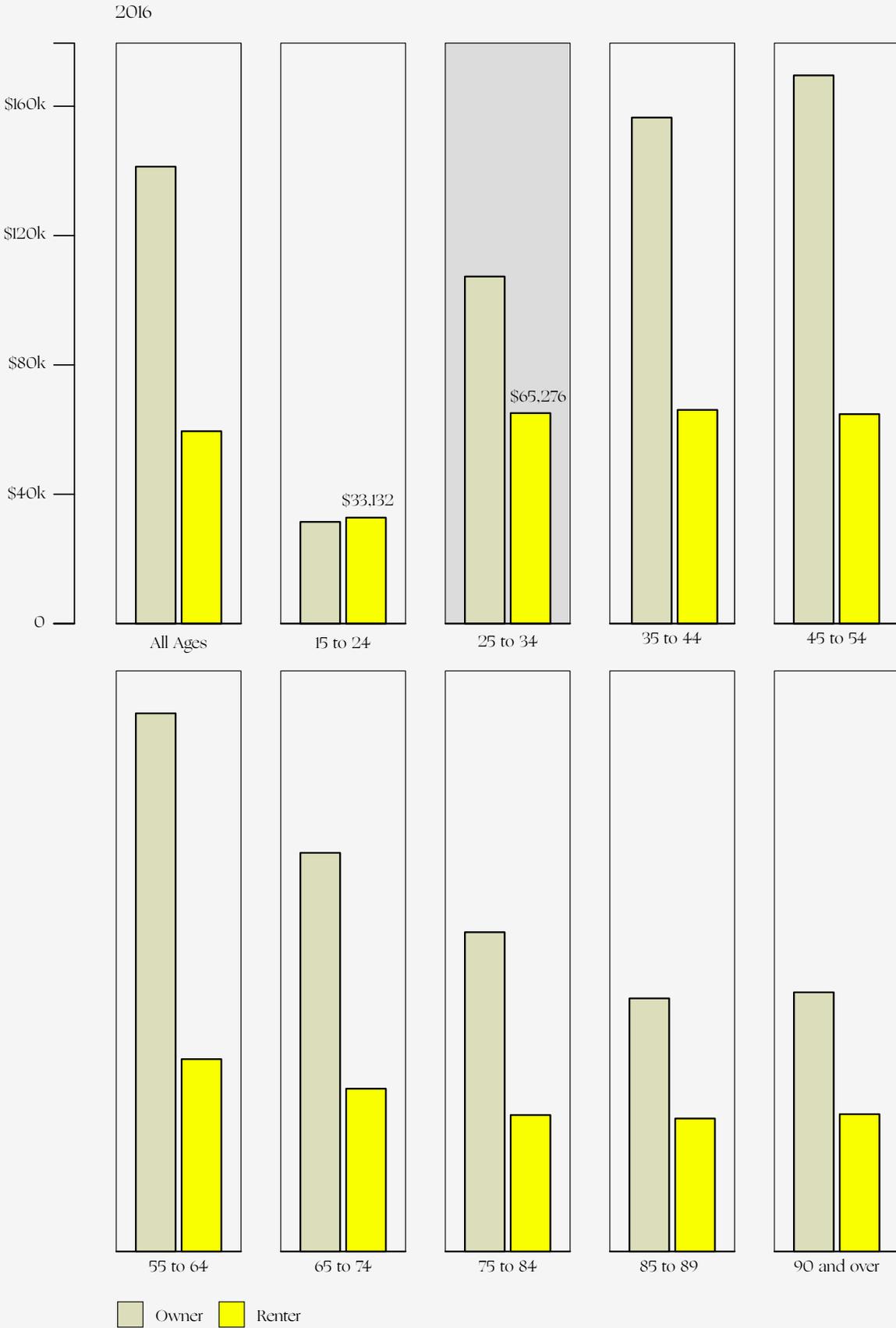


Figure 1.6: Average Household Income by Tenure and Age



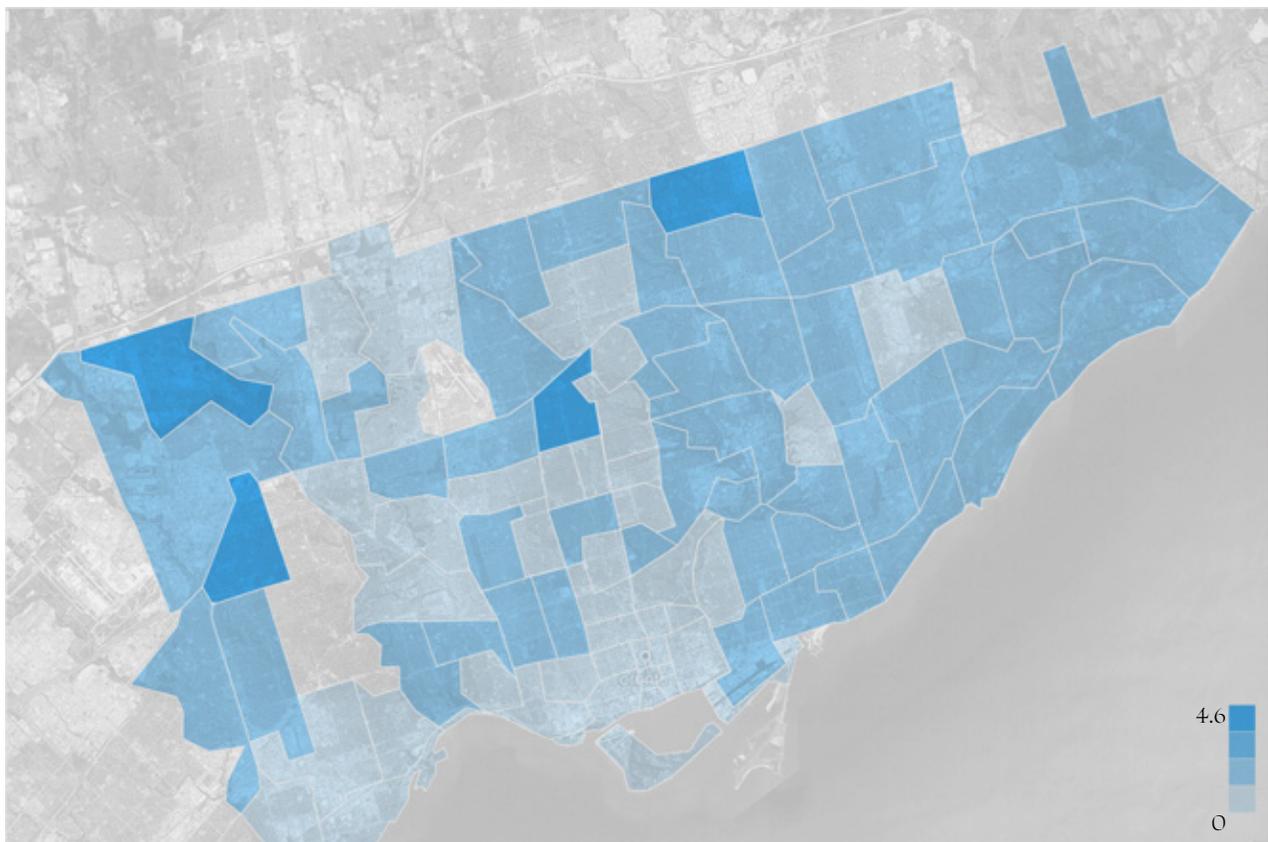
In Toronto's findings, the city has acknowledged the presence of the mobile adult demographic through their push to build high to mid-rise rental apartments in recent years. However, the competitiveness of housing in Toronto has inflated the cost of living unaffordable for the demographic. My thesis examines these issues through a different lens. There has been an active attempt to accommodate the migration of mobile adults by the city. However, these solutions do not address the issues of the high cost of living bound by the current housing market. Therefore, my thesis will look at the status quo of Toronto and finds the opportunities of affordable housing inside the densely built city.

HOUSING—META OF TORONTO

The cost of living depends on the location and what it offers. The attraction to Toronto for mobile adults stems from the large number of opportunities that the city holds. The need to stay in these cities comes from their journey in seeking their place in society. In the current housing market, the lack of options and competitive nature pushes the inflation of cost to these densely packed areas that mobile adults desire. A study done by Bullpen Consulting has mapped out the status of the rental housing market's current circumstances in Toronto. In Figure 2.1 to 2.3, Bullpen has taken each postal code's averages of cost

and space and diagrammed it in a gradient. Bullpen had presented the increase in housing costs and the decrease in square footage as it gets closer towards the south, which is downtown. The gradual price increase and the willingness of consumers to pay for downtown accessibility dictates the value of the city and its cost of living. Bullpen concludes that the most expensive and smallest apartments are centered around downtown and its associated areas.³⁷

³⁷ Bullpen Researching and Consulting, "Toronto's Rental Market in Maps," 2019, <https://www.bullpenconsulting.ca/2019/02/15/torontos-rental-market-in-maps/>.



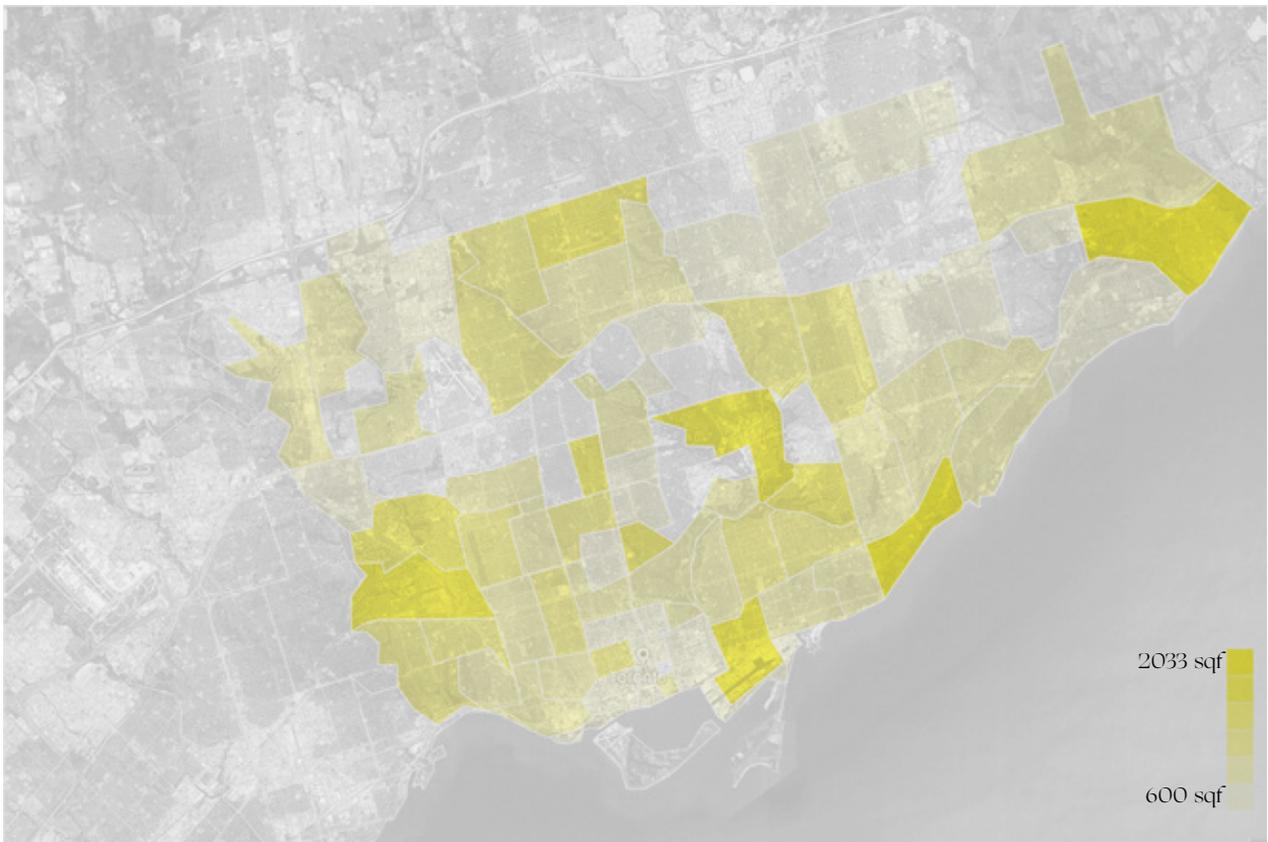
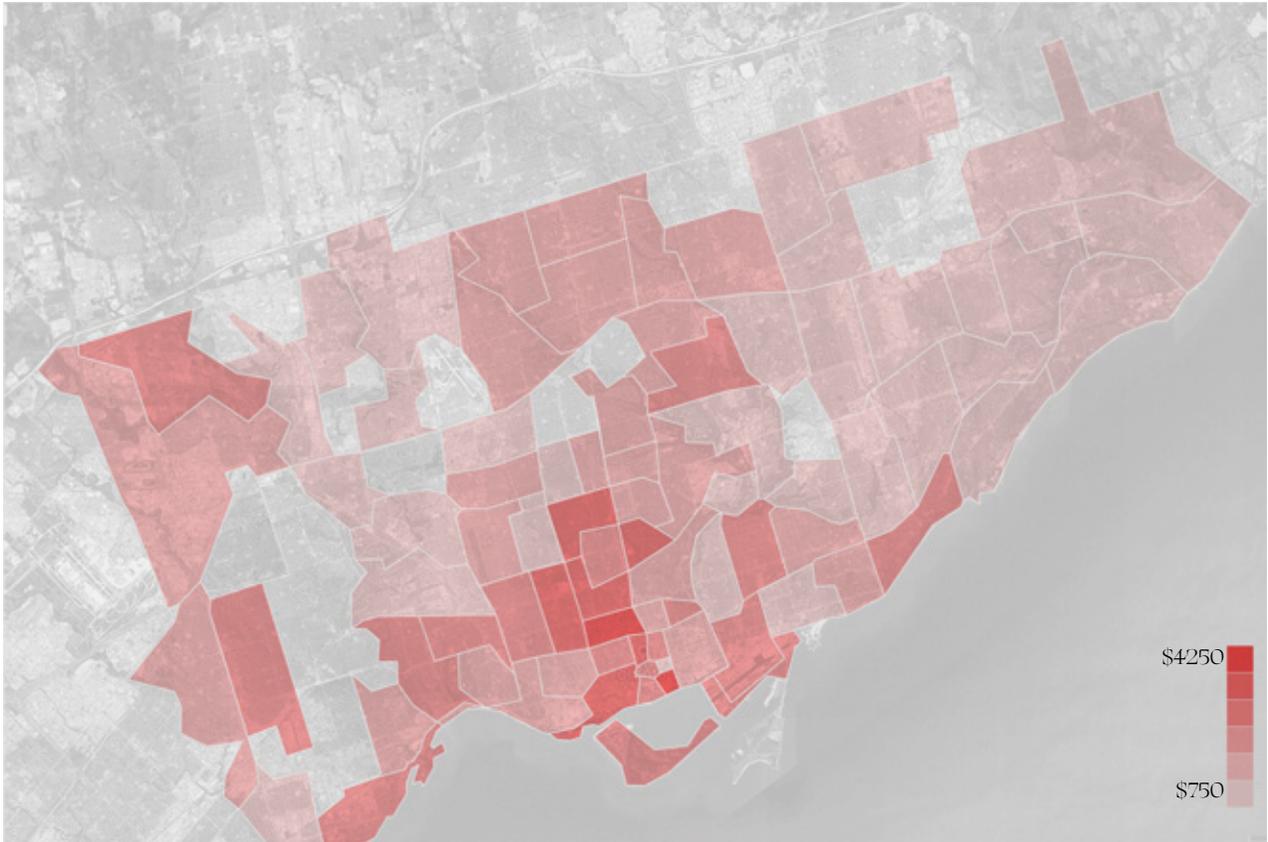


Figure 2.2: Average Asking Price for Apartments

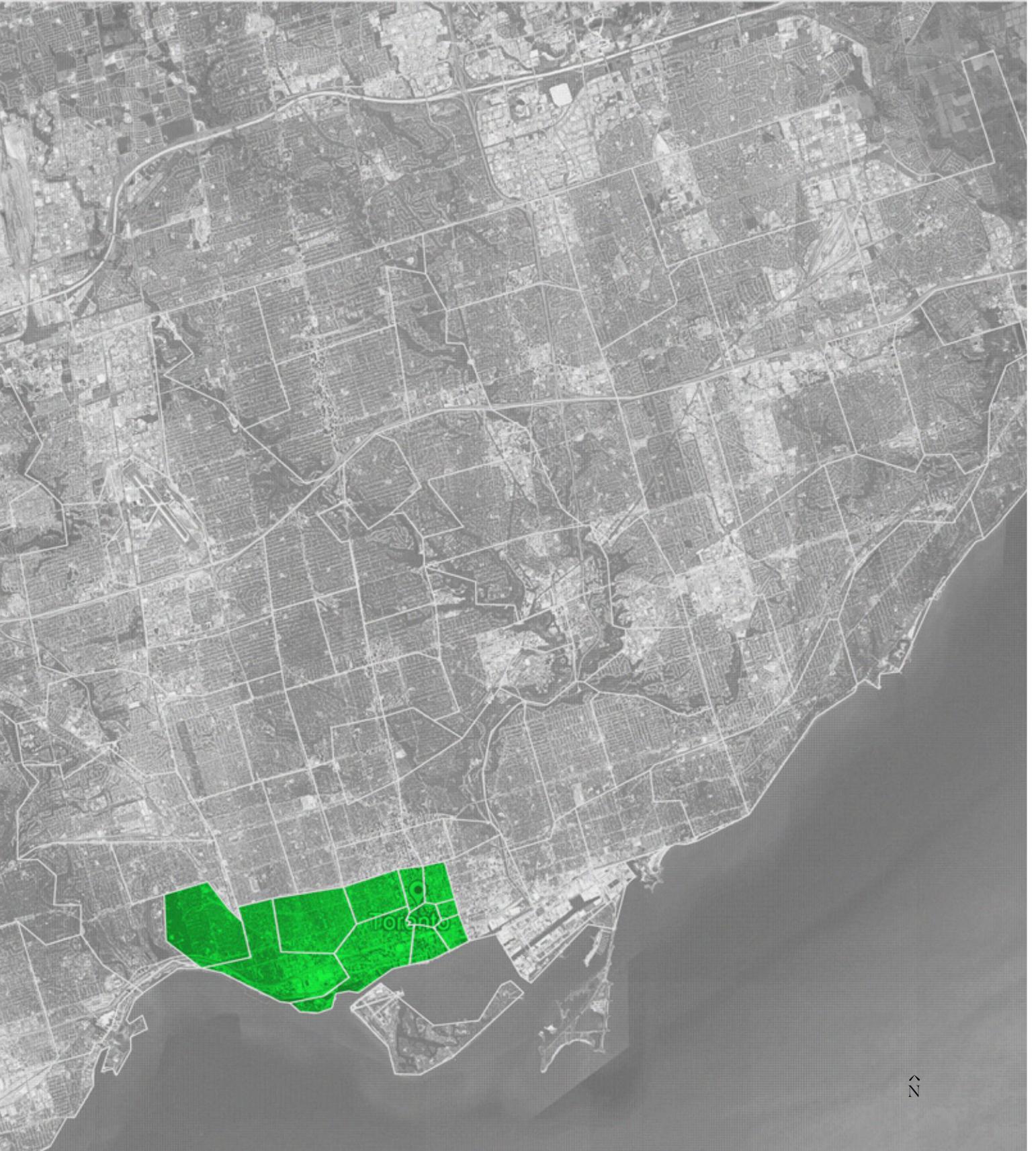
Figure 2.3: Average Square ft of Apartments

The site analysis of Bullpen Consulting confirms common knowledge that downtown is a center of culture, experience, and opportunities. This area hosts a diverse neighbourhood that mobile adults want to experience. For mobile migrants, the attraction to Toronto is the cultural communities that make them feel welcome and at home. For the overall interest of the mobile adult, the city has opportunities for work, large blocks of retail and commercial spaces, and the lively atmosphere. As seen in Figure 2.5, Toronto features cultural neighbourhoods such as Chinatown, Little Italy, Little Portugal, and Koreatown. Next is Kensington, the Fashion District and an Arts District encompassing OCAD and the Art Gallery of Ontario. Opportunities for the mobile adult include educational infrastructure at Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson University) and the University of Toronto to acquire critical skills. The downtown houses different scales of businesses, from large public infrastructures such as banks to small local shops. Diversity, opportunities, and activities attract the mobile adult demographic to Toronto. However, the cost of living is a significant factor in accessibility for the demographic.

The City of Toronto is a desirable location for many mobile adults. In the Bullpen Consulting study, the most expensive places to live are areas around the downtown core. It is the site with all the attractive features that mobile adults want. My thesis addresses this barrier of entry through a more detailed neighbourhood study in Chapter 3. The study creates a descriptive profile, utilizing the existing context of the neighbourhood to find a fit for the mobile adult - specifically, the neighbourhood study analyses building typology, demographics, and programs that support the demographic (i.e., services from legal or resources, community centers, institutions).



Figure 2.4: Location of Interest in Toronto



-  Downtown Yonge
-  Chinatown
-  Old Toronto
-  Fashion District
-  Art District
-  Queen Street West
-  Kensington



Queen Street West



Figure 2.5: Queen Street West Span

BARRIERS TO ENTRY-LEVEL HOUSING: DEBT AND JOB ————— MARKET

Adding to the high cost of living in Toronto, many mobile adults are also hindered by debt accumulated through investing in their education. A study by Statistics Canada shows the average student debt from 2000 to 2015.³⁸ This is the debt of graduates from colleges and universities and the percentages and average amounts the demographic still owed. The graph by Statistics Canada in Figure 3.1 showed that only 22 percent of graduates from 2000 to 2004 have paid off their student debt and the remaining alumni averaged \$17,000 still owing in 2015.³⁹ Over 75 percent of mobile adults who graduated in 2001-2004 still carry this debt a decade after their post-secondary education.⁴⁰ These numbers and percentages are similar to recent graduates.

There also exists the inherent precarious job market specifically for the demographic of the mobile adult. Youth employment has become more unstable since the late 1980s.⁴¹ This is due to the fluctuations in minimum wages, declines in unionization and types of jobs held by young Canadians.⁴² The employment percentage compared between men and women in the 1980s and 2019 has been slowly declining when it comes to the age range of 15-30. For men, the percentage declined from 80.8 percent to 73 percent and 77.1 percent to 67.3 percent for women.⁴³ The impact of COVID-19 has also triggered this increase in job losses. The pandemic has caused the rise in the demographic of NEETs (not employed, in education or training) by a couple of percentage points. This resulted in 14.4 percent of men and 13.4 percent of women being classified as NEETs during the school months of 2020.⁴⁴ The pay rate did increase during

that period, but this was due to the disappearance of low-wage jobs held mainly by young adults. In most economic crises, the demographic of mobile adults is always the first and most severely affected. This can be seen in the large spikes of unemployment for the 15 to 30 demographic. Figure 3.2 and 3.3 shows that during the COVID-19 pandemic and the 1980s recession, most entry-level positions disappeared, and the mobile adult demographic had a more extreme effect in comparison to the older working ages.

There is an inherent precariousness to the mobile adult's life in that their lack of long-term presence correlates to being disposable in the workforce. Currently, mobile adults are more likely to take more part-time work as there has been a decrease of people with full-time workers compared to the 1980s and 1990s.⁴⁵ A study done by Ipsos for the Canadian Employee Relocation Council (CERC) reveals that most Canadians are more willing to relocate for better opportunities than four years ago.⁴⁶ Canadians are more inclined to relocate, six points more for a full-time job with better incentives in a different city and five points more in another province. This is true for short-term contracts as well. The largest demographic most willing to relocate is the age group of 18 to 34.⁴⁷ The mobile adults are often forced to endure these situations to assimilate. However, there is an importance in building this generation as they are future participants in the economy and job market. In a study by America's Promise – The Alliance for Youth, it states that early work experience can have a powerful effect on young people's future earnings and job quality.⁴⁸ This early experience can also correlate to

38 Statistics Canada, "Student debt from all sources, by province of study and level of study," Data, November 5, 2019, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl/en/tv.action?pid=3710003601>.

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.

41 Rene Morissette, "Portrait of youth in Canada: Data Report | Chapter 2: Youth employment in Canada." *Statistics Canada*. July 26, 2021, 7. <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/catalogue/42280001202100100002>.

42 Ibid., 1.

43 Ibid., 7.

44 Ibid., 17.

45 Ibid., 10.

46 Hrobsky, Martin, "Majority of Canadian Workers Are Willing to Relocate Within Canada for Work, Appetite for Relocation Higher Compared to Four Years Ago," *News and Poll: Employment*. June 25, 2018, <https://www.ipsos.com/en-ca/news-polls/Canadian-Employee-Relocation-Council-Poll-June-25-2018>.

47 Ibid.

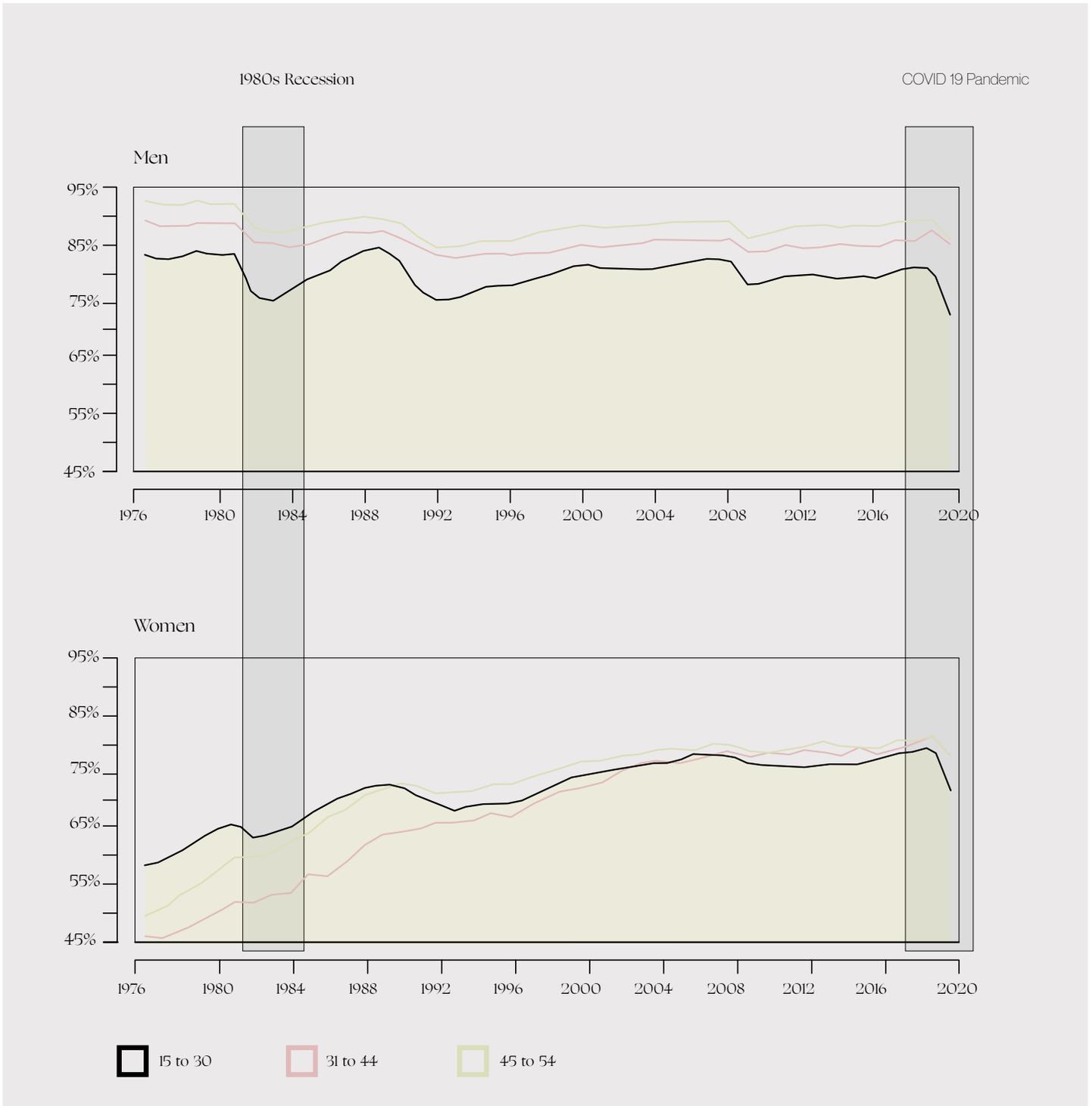
48 Nathaniel Cole and Omofehintola Akinrinade, "Why Investing in Jobs For Young People Can Boost Economic Recovery," *Forbes / Leadership*, July 8, 2020, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/gradsoffife/2020/07/08/why-investing-in-jobs-for-young-people-can-boost-economic-recovery/?sh=4c31aeb3d335>.

2000-2015

Level Of Study	Statistics	2000	2005	2010	2015
College	Percent				
	Percentage of graduates who owed debt to the source at graduation	40%	45%	43%	49%
	Percentage of graduates with large debt at graduation (\$25k or more)	14%	12%	16%	20%
	Dollars				
	Average debt owed to the source at graduation	\$12,700	\$13,600	\$14,900	\$15,300
	Percent				
	Percentage of graduates with debt who had paid it off at time of interview	20%	23%	36%	31%
	Dollars				
Average debt remaining at time of interview for those who still owed	\$10,600	\$11,800	\$12,300	\$13,500	

	2000	2005	2010	2015
Bachelor's	Percent			
	53%	54%	50%	54%
	33%	37%	41%	45%
	Dollars			
	\$20,500	\$22,800	\$26,300	\$28,000
	Percent			
	22%	28%	34%	34%
	Dollars			
\$17,100	\$20,400	\$19,800	\$24,000	

Figure 31: Student Debt in Canada



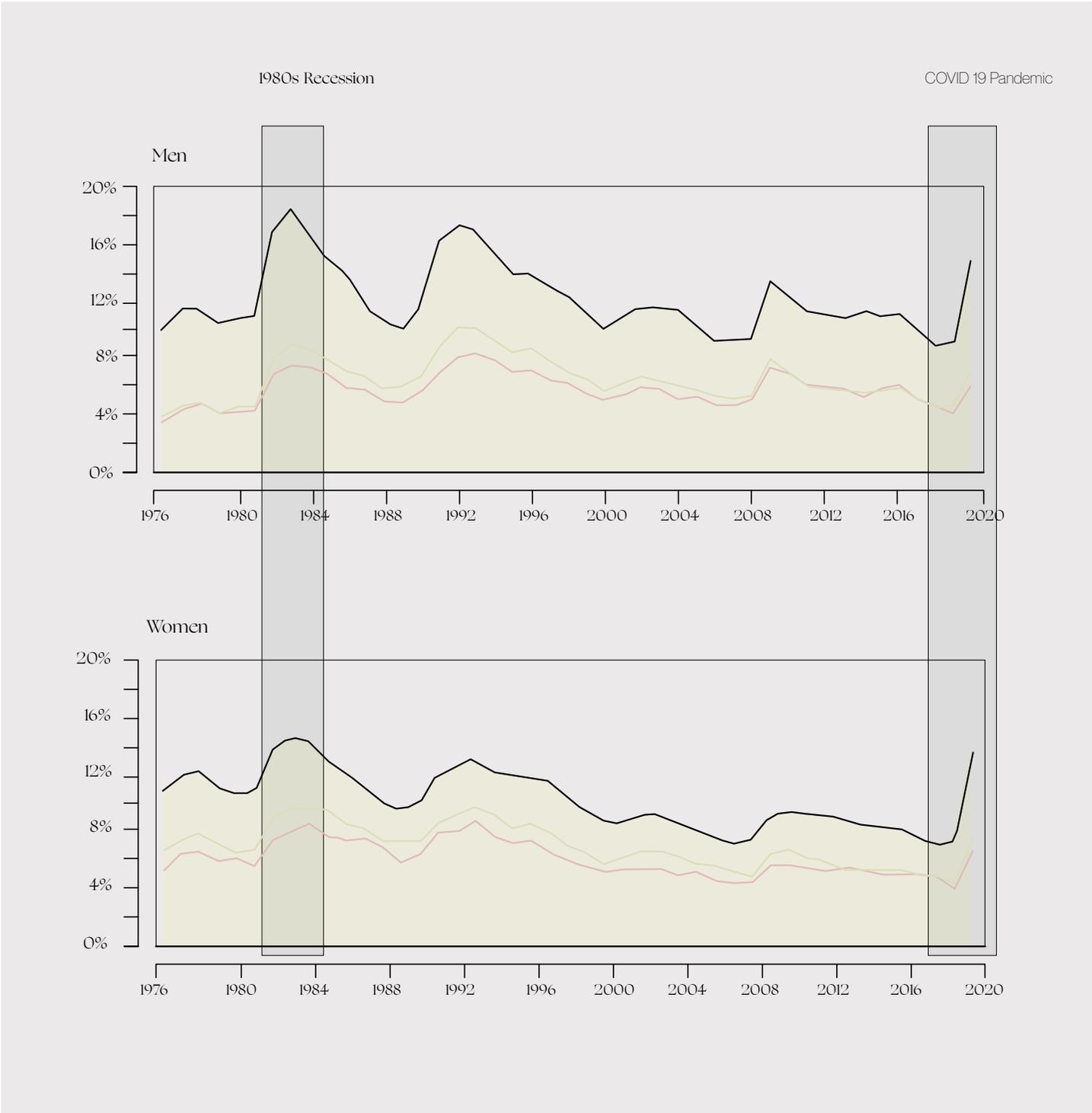


Figure 3.3: Unemployment Rate by Age Group, 1976 to 2020 (excluding full-time students)

A full time job in a city in another province where you would have to relocate from where you live now for a minimum of 2 years with a 10% raise and paid moving expenses by your employer

		Gender	
	Total	Male	Female
All things considered, I'd take the job	18%	19%	16%
I might be persuaded to take the job if the right conditions and incentives were in place	41%	43%	39%
I would not consider or take the job under any circumstance	41%	37%	45%
Willingness to move (Summary)	59%	63%	55%

Imagine if you had a job opportunity in the near future that would mean relocation. How willing would you take it based on the following:

Age			Education			
18-34	35-54	55+	<HS	HS	Post Sec	Univ Grad
28%	15%	7%		13%	17%	30%
48%	41%	29%	49%	40%	42%	39%
24%	45%	64%	51%	47%	41%	31%
76%	55%	36%	49%	53%	40%	69%

signs of crime reduction in the demographic. Creating more programs for training and jobs is important for the well being of mobile adults, but also future proofs the economy. Investing in the demographic will help tackle skill shortages that can help recover economic impacts such as COVID.⁴⁹ It will also prepare

49 Puninda Thind, George Patrick Richard Benson, Daniela Pico, Dominique Souris, Ana Gonzalez Guerrero, Rita Steele and Alyssa McDonald, "COVID-19: Why investing in youth will future-proof the economy," *World Economic Forum*, July 30, 2020, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/07/covid-19-why-investing-in-youth-will-future-proof-the-economy/>.

Canada for the evolving technological and economic demands.⁵⁰ Mobile adults have an integral part in helping economic recovery and allow for malleability in changing market trends.

50 *Ibid.*

The precariousness of the mobile adult has also been why an increasing amount of the demographic have started to move back to their parent's homes.⁵¹ In Canada, over one-third of young adults aged 20 to 34 live with their parents. There has been a slow increase but is starting to show a heightened trend from 2001 to 2016.⁵² In a study by Statistics Canada, there are proportionally fewer young adults with their own families compared to the past. The percentage of young adults with their own families has decreased from 49.1 percent to 41.9 percent from 2001 to 2016.⁵³ In other living arrangements, young adults have also started to live with roommates and other relatives to afford a space to call home. In these larger and denser cities, the percentage of young adults living with their parents is higher than the national average. The graph in Figure 3.6 shows the popular cities in Canada relative to the national average. In Toronto, 47.4 percent of young adults aged 20 to 34 live with their parents.⁵⁴ With the high cost of living, accruing debt, and precarious job market, it is arduous for the demographic to invest in their futures. The demographic is inherently forced to delay many of their adulthood milestones and enforce the trend of mobile adults marrying later, having no kids, and not owning a home. This Emerging Adulthood phase inevitably creates this perception of mobile adults refusing to grow up. However, the global shift in culture and economy has changed the way people live and the mobile adult demographic's inherent precariousness has deeply affected their growth.

51 Statistics Canada, "Young adults living with their parents in Canada in 2016," Census in Brief, August 2, 2017, <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/as-sa/98-200-x/2016008/98-200-x2016008-eng.cfm>.

52 Ibid.

53 Statistics Canada, "Young adults living with their parents in Canada in 2016," Census in Brief, August 2, 2017.

54 Ibid.

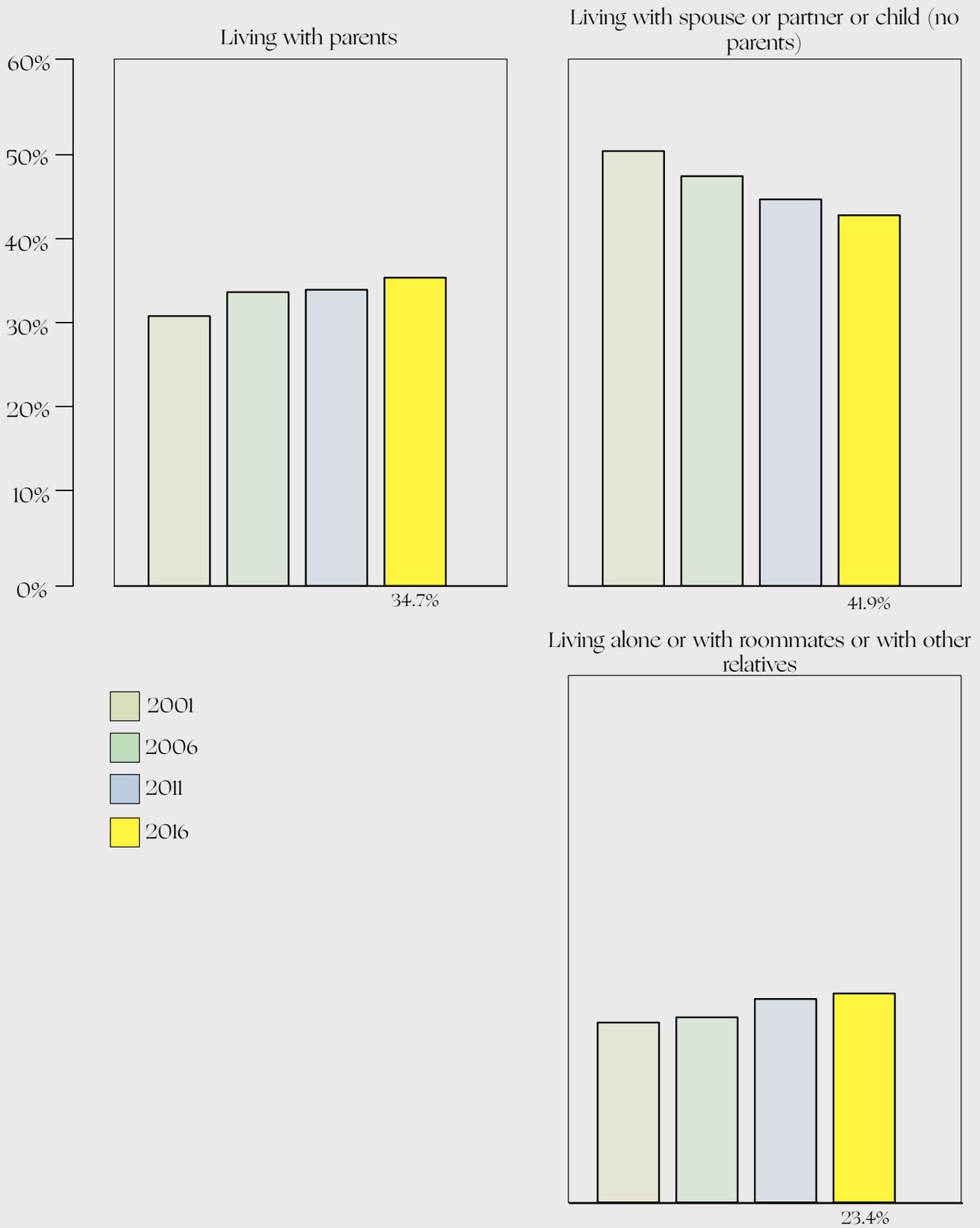
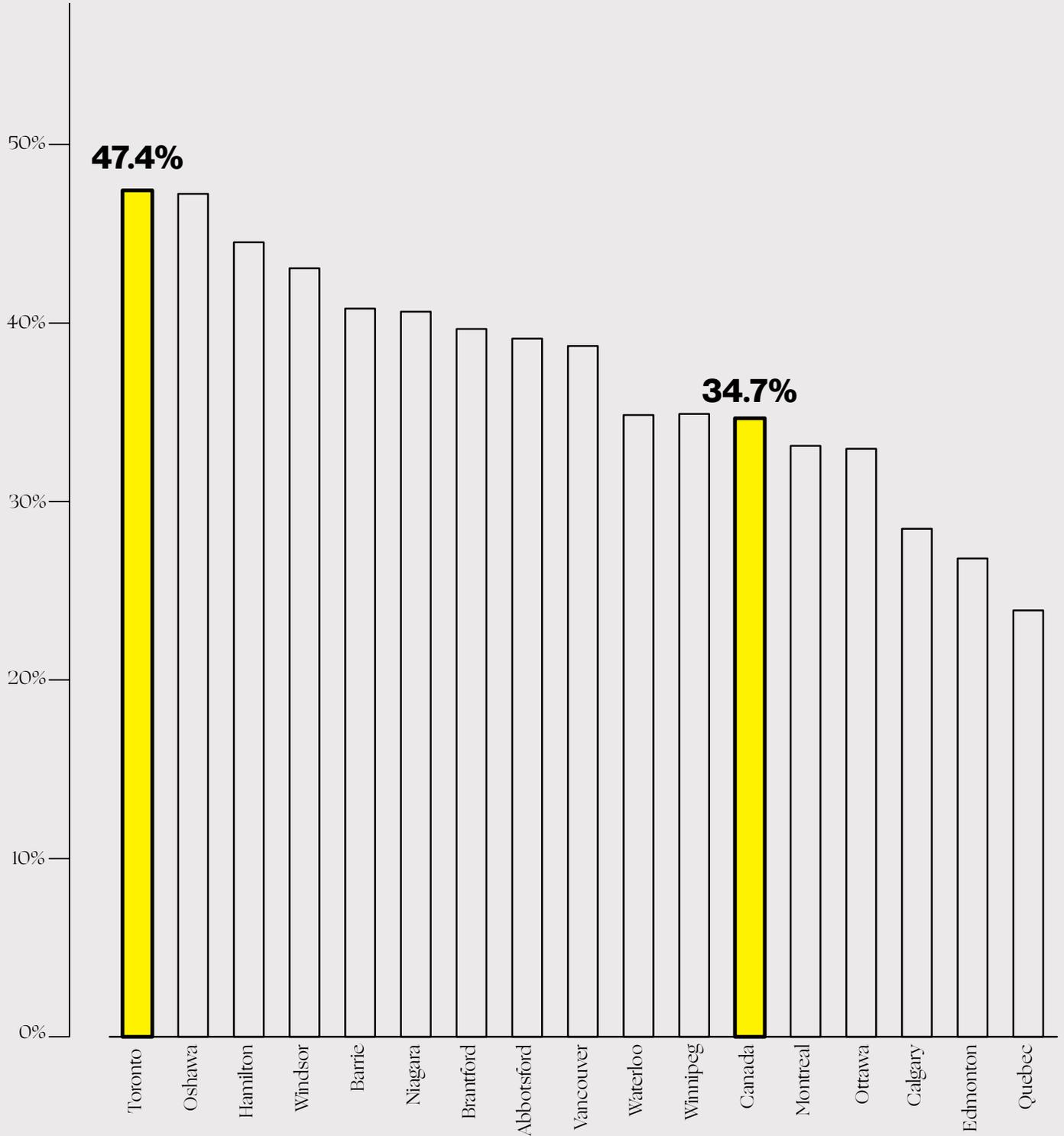


Figure 35: Living Arrangement of Young Adults 20 to 34





Besides the high cost of living in Toronto, the mobile adult demographic also deals with debt and instability of entry-level jobs. This makes it hard for many young people to save up - consequently, they are forced to keep their earnings liquid as there might be issues that might unexpectedly come. The lack of security and stable earnings make it hard for the demographic to justify living independently. My thesis proposes design strategies intended to reduce the cost of living for the mobile adult. This cost reduction includes looking into furniture and maximizing space to reflect the demographic's malleability. Chapter one details the status of the mobile adults and Toronto. This is done through an analysis of the relationship between the demographic and the city. The next chapter builds on this situation and describes the theoretical framework that dictates the design solution of this thesis.

CHAPTER 2:

ADHOCISM
ARCHITECTURE
AND PERSONA
AGENCY

THROUGH
MEANS

RAL

L



THE “LIQUID — LIFE” CRITIQUE OF THE HOUSING MARKET

The theoretical framework that this thesis centers around is the description of modern life as liquid. This comes from the work of Zygmunt Bauman, a philosopher and sociologist and his book *“The Liquid Life.”*⁵⁵ In his opening words, he states, *“In a liquid modern society, individual achievements cannot be solidified into lasting possessions because, in no time, assets turn into liabilities and abilities into disabilities.”*⁵⁶ He describes the current day as constant uncertainty and parallels consumption and planned obsolescence in modern culture.⁵⁷ In this thesis, “liquid life” is a valid descriptor of the mobile adult’s struggle for independence and the current Emerging Adulthood phase that most of them are going through.

Bauman refers to the individual as the consumer. He states an inherent need for a person to be described as an individual. However, the concept of individualism often tends to be a sense of integration towards societal norms. Bauman expands on this idea of the individual and its relationship with the community/population.⁵⁸ He describes this and says:

*“Dilemmas and quandaries which societies design for their members usually come complete with societally endorsed and recommended strategies and tools for their resolution. Consumerism is such a ‘how to’ response to the challenges posited by the society of individuals. The logic of consumerism is geared to the needs of men and women struggling to construct, preserve and refresh their individuality, and in particular to cope with the above mentioned aporia of individuality.”*⁵⁹

The “Liquid Life” states that this consumerist system is a juxtaposition of individuality, but also something that pushes mass consumption and production.⁶⁰

55 Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid life*, (Polity Cambridge,2005), 1.

56 *Ibid.*

57 *Ibid.*, 2.

58 *Ibid.*, 18.

59 *Ibid.*, 23-24.

60 *Ibid.*, 24.

Bauman then expands this thought onto a global scale of hybridization and globalization. This ease of accessibility through this shared information provides the comfort of mass production. Comfort and accessibility are traded for freedom and security. In Bauman’s perception, one needs to act through assimilation and substitution to achieve freedom and security.⁶¹ This describes the mobile adult in terms of their general aspirations. Intrinsically, this young adult demographic seeks out independence, wanting something on their own that they have built themselves. This describes their careers and their passions on an individual level. To achieve this independence, the mobile adult must integrate themselves into society. This would involve participation through economic and social means such as paying taxes, socializing and being a part of the overall community. This integration results in assimilation due to the societal expectations of what an adult should be. The mobile adult often assumes the high cost of living as there are no other alternatives. To integrate the mobile adult in Toronto, this thesis must address the experience of this emerging adulthood phase and why the demographic is struggling.

In this consumerist culture, the idea of long-term investments is a contradiction to itself.⁶² It creates a preference for instant consumption, instant gratification, and instant profit. The shorter time frame of consumption, the faster the cycle of replacement and profit.⁶³ This creates a narrative of consumer goods meant to assure us of security; things must be ready for immediate use, instant satisfaction and don’t need any training to be used by the user.⁶⁴ The inherent problem of the mobile adult is that the long-term investment such housing contradicts this transitional emerging adult phase. There is a lack of permanent engagements for the demographic, and they often

61 *Ibid.*, 29-30.

62 Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid life*, (Polity Cambridge,2005), 59.

63 *Ibid.*

64 *Ibid.*, 89.

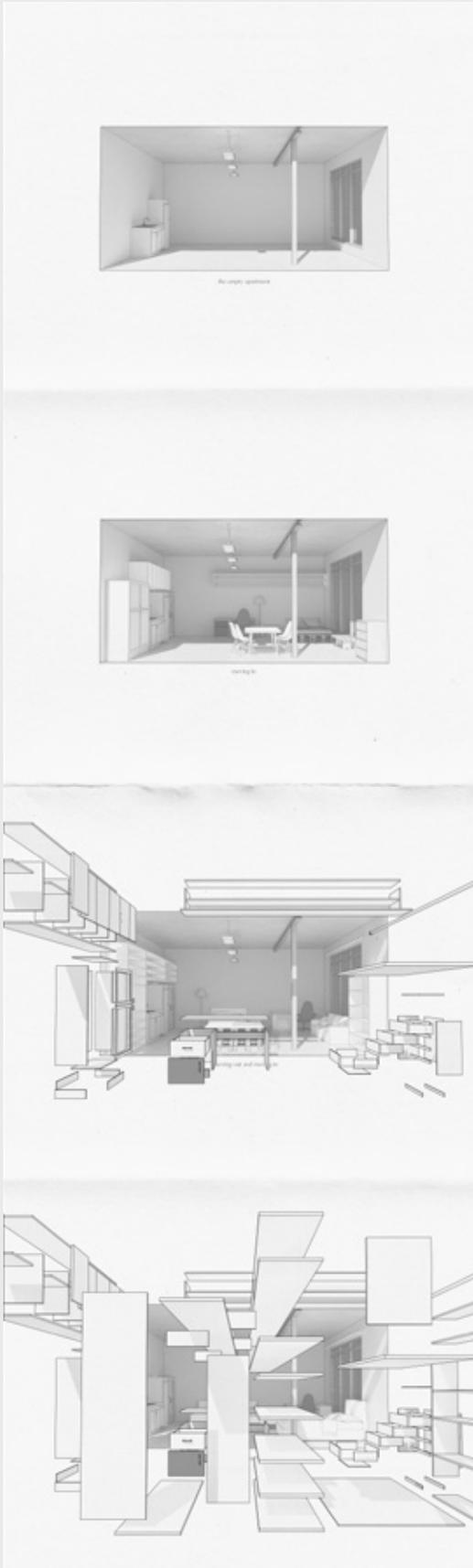


Figure 4.1: Temporary Apartment Objects Deconstruction Part I





Figure 4.2: TTC Travelling Mobile Adults

need to find semi-temporary living arrangements. The rental housing market commodifies properties inherently meant for the long term. This removes the power of ownership from the user, emphasizing the already temporary and liquid state of mobile adult. The demographic often keeps their assets liquid for when they become unemployed or other emergencies arise. The malleable nature of the mobile adult is the base of which my thesis will emphasize. This project addresses this issue and creates a smooth integration of the mobile adult to their adulthood goals. This starts with giving the demographic a platform for them to thrive.

This “Liquid Life” explains this generational difference between the current mobile adults and the previous generations. Liquid life describes the phenomena of a new phase of growing up for the mobile adult. The perception of stagnation is due to the economic factors that the previous generations have not experienced. Mobile Adults are expected to be more educated and trained, and this transitional gap to adulthood has been prolonged due to this global shift. In addition, the current issues of the housing crisis, the precariousness of the job market, compounding debt and the high cost of living have changed the perception of living for many mobile adults. Bauman presents this narrative through a controversial book called “The Mommy Myth” by Susan Douglas and Meredith Michaels. It is the idea of motherhood and how it undermines all women. Bauman observes that these long-term commitments of marriage and children are now perceived as burdens of cost. In a sense, human life now has a price tag like how most objects in this consumer world. In this liquid, fast flowing, and unpredictable market, culture evolves due to these consumer values that have deemed long-term commitments to be burdensome.⁶⁵

The “Liquid Life” describes the current status quo of the mobile adult. Liquid Life describes the mobile adult’s need to be malleable and to adapt to the existing issues that arise from this uncertain period of the demographic. This thesis proposes a platform intended to provide both a sense of stability and control for the demographic by creating spaces that would foster and allow personal agency through customization and empowerment. Another goal is to create a space that promotes a feeling of belonging and home, and an environment that allows community building and familiarity. Ultimately, platforming this demographic as individuals who can self-sustain and find security in the “Liquid Life”.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 108.

ADHOCISM: A RESPONSE TO LIQUID — LIFE

As a response to “Liquid Life”, “Adhocism” coined by Charles Jencks was something that fit the needs of the mobile adult’s situation.⁶⁶ It was first used as an architectural criticism in 1968, denoting the principle of action having speed or economy and purpose or utility. The idea of adhocism is to use an available system or deal with an existing situation in a new way to solve a problem quickly and efficiently. This directly responds to the liquid life’s expectations of instant consumption and gratification. It is a design philosophy of creating something from things within reach. In response to “Liquid Life”, adhocism creates an alternative to the standardization and limitation of our choices.⁶⁷ It purports breaking free from this system. To create an alternative living situation for the lifestyle of the mobile adult.

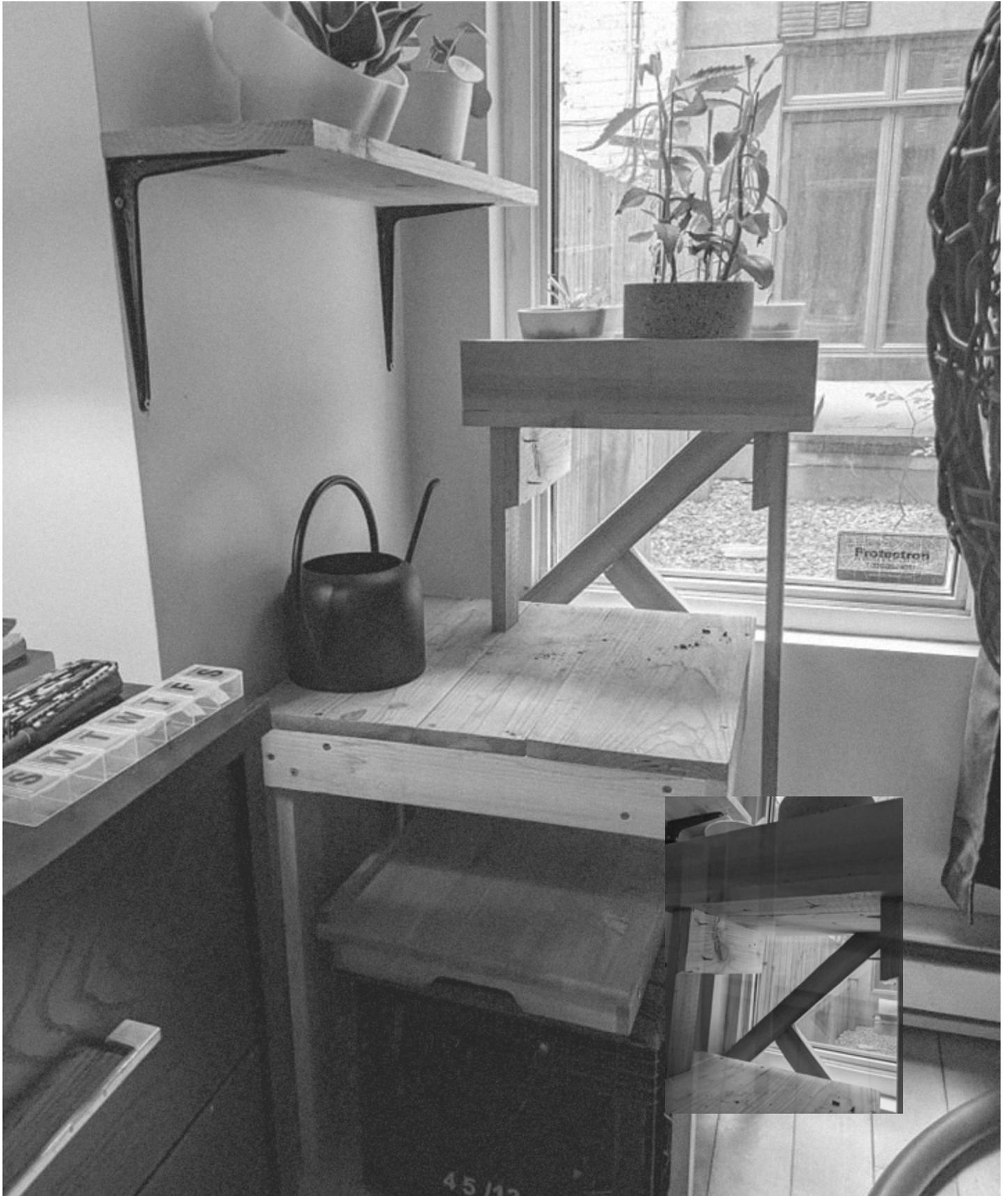
The value of adhocism to the mobile adult is the vagueness and urgency it has. Jencks says, “*Adhocism preserves the status quo, it sacrifices future goals for present expediency, and it tends to be confused, arbitrary, cute and complacent*”.⁶⁸ The transitional philosophy is based on the premise that the goal or destiny of the person cannot be specified in advance and the future is always subject to change. This parallels the indecisive nature of the mobile adult and their perception of themselves as not grown-up. The precariousness of this demographic often forces them to delay their adulthood milestones, where the material objects and permanence become a burden. The lack of stability of this young demographic adds on to the inherent delay of “growing up” stated in Arnett’s Emerging Adulthood study. The needs of the mobile adult are not supported in the current built environment and its approach to housing solutions. Adhocism is a response that plays with the rules of this “Liquid” lifestyle and adheres to the mobile adult’s malleability. It creates an alternative to these standardized objects to fit this temporary state of the mobile adult.

66 Charles Jencks and Nathan Silver, “Adhocism: The Case for Improvisation”, The MIT Press, 2013.

67 Ibid., 15.

68 Ibid., 36.





The Industrial Revolution stemmed from the need for standardization.⁶⁹ It created efficiency in production through repeatable forms so that they could be made economically feasible. The problem with this universal design in the housing market is that people need to conform to these homes which are indifferent to the user. Specific to the mobile adult demographic, the continuous creation of these five-plus storey apartments has created smaller living spaces that force people to live a certain way. These small living situations enforces the need to assimilate as it leverages the lack of options of the mobile adult. Architecturally, it has forgotten the demographic that it was made to cater to, which is the inexperience, the lack of capital, and the temporariness of the mobile adult. It is undermined by high cost, minimal, and static values that have been seen in many of these newer apartments.

The ad hoc way could be considered a counterculture. An example of this is the hippie movement and living off the waste of the majority.⁷⁰ This was a way of living that re-personalized the impersonal products of the industrial era and sought ways to find multi-purposes of objects. Examples of this were Le Corbusier's balconies at Marseille that served as tables, storage units, chairs, playhouse and so on. Adhocism plays around the idea of reappropriation, utility, and personalization. On the human scale, the thesis will look at how users can personalize their space through ad hoc reappropriation and utility. In this thesis, adhocism is used to respond to the status of apartments in Toronto, the issues of small scale living and the temporary state of rental apartments. It will be used as a design methodology. This approach includes upcycling and readapting common objects and recontextualizing them for personal benefit and use. In other programmatic elements, I will examine the ways that allow for learning experiences and helping the demographic in the future with the already existing situations of small-scale living.

69 Ibid., 56.

70 Ibid., 67.

Jenck's Adhocism isn't meant to be an anarchist solution. He says:

*"The next question then becomes; how can we acknowledge and satisfy all the multifarious forces in our environment without oversimplifying them? Obviously, there is no easy answer, but from a certain logical extreme one answer has always been clear: let each individual design his local environment within a larger ordering system."*⁷¹

On a larger scale, there is a problem with the housing system. The purpose of adhocism is to acknowledge the problems and work around them meaningfully. My demographic of mobile adults is stuck in a system that they are forced to assimilate into. In designing a home for them, the project must acknowledge the already existing issues and solutions given. On the architectural scale, this thesis will look at the urban strategies of infill design and using unconventional, or underutilized land have the potential to be a home. The mobile adult home will respond to the community and act as a platform and bridge for the demographic to integrate smoothly into the community, giving them a base and allowing them to grow. On this scale, a neighbourhood study will inform the programs that allow for the integration of the mobile adult.

Adhocism will act as a design methodology intended to support design thinking for both a new typology and architectural response. Its main intent is to present an alternative utility in the existing fabric to create solutions achieved by reappropriation, re-use or re-adapting concepts and objects at different scales. This thesis will focus on the scalability of housing for the mobile adult. In the micro scale, it is the details of living in the apartment, the furniture and customizability. Scaling up to the urban level, molding the direction of the building by using the existing context of the neighbourhood and finding a common ground for the mobile adult demographic.

71 Ibid., 81.

DIY // MAKER MOVEMENT

After World War II, there was a need for standardization and mass production due to the lack of time and resources.⁷² There is more time for participation and leisure in modern days, allowing people to solve problems through their own effort. In proposing strategies for mobile adult housing, there should be ways for the user to participate and use their own space to fit their own needs. This is to allow the mobile adult to express their own agency. Their need for affordable housing and lower cost of living must be addressed. Accordingly, the designed space becomes malleable, creating comfort in a compact standard of Toronto, by demonstrating that this approach to small space design can provide a desirable, comfortable and uplifting space of 'home'.

Adhocism for the mobile adult is a way to address affordability and express agency to use one's own space. It also makes the space accessible and easy to alter as it may only be a temporary space for the mobile adult. The goal is to call upon the temporariness of the user and reduce the cost and time investment suitable for the length of stay. Adhocism is used to address the situation of the mobile adult through the terms of the liquid life. These terms are the expectations and societal standards of instant consumption and gratification. On the human scale and user participation, the DIY/Maker Movement can be used in the pursuit of an alternative to the standardized objects that don't meet the demographic's needs and situation. The benefits of this movement are the replicability through open-source materials and the acquisition of valuable skills that reduce the cost of replacing assets in the home. For the younger demographic, there has been a trend of high schools and elementary schools creating makerspaces.⁷³ These spaces are often in libraries, museums, and other informal learning sites.⁷⁴ These maker spaces often create opportunities to look through the student's interests and learn how

to use tools safely. These informal spaces create a more inclusive environment that isn't intimidating to beginners.

In the rental apartment for the mobile adult, I propose a program that invokes this inclusive makerspace for the tenants to learn alternative, inexpensive and more sustainable ways to express their interests. In addition, acquiring new skills is beneficial to fixing and decorating their own space and future homes. As technologies become increasingly accessible, new tools have helped shape the Maker Movement significantly over the years. For example, 3D printers have emerged as new fabrication tools that allow accessibility in prototyping for the public.⁷⁵ This creates an alternative to mass production which gives power and agency to the user through small-scale fabrication.⁷⁶ The democratization of small-scale manufacturing allows for more innovation and customizability.⁷⁷

In the age of globalization of information through the internet, the DIY/Maker Movement has pressed on this open-source and ad hoc sensibility. This is the response to the timed obsolescence that large brands strategize and will address the existing problems mobile adults have. This temporary living situation of mobile adults is ad hoc-ed to present a learning experience that allows the mobile adult to utilize in the future, while also playing on the malleability of most of the demographic. People who are willing to pay the high cost of living and live in these smaller apartments should also be willing to learn new ways that would reduce their costs. To a degree, I am proposing an alternative way of living – another option for housing in the city for the mobile adult. However, I am specifically using the situation of the demographic and tailoring a response to the situation they have.

72 Jonathan Lukens, "DIY Infrastructure and the Scope of Design Practice," *Design Issues* 29, no. 3 (2013): 14–27, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24267086>.

73 Ryan A. Brown, and Allison Antink-Meyer, "Makerspaces in Informal Settings," *Educational Technology* 57, no. 2 (2017): 75–77, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44430529>.

74 *Ibid.*, 75.

75 Robert Shaw, Ferenc Dalnoki-Veress, Shea Cotton, Joshua Pollack, Masako Toki, Ruby Russell, Olivia Vassalotti, and Syed Gohar Altaf, "DIY COMMUNITIES, MANUFACTURING, AND 3D PRINTING," *Evaluating WMD Proliferation Risks at the Nexus of 3D Printing and Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Communities*, James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies (CNS), 2017. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep1753916>.

76 Ryan A. Brown, and Allison Antink-Meyer, "Makerspaces in Informal Settings," *Educational Technology* 57, no. 2 (2017), 84.

77 *Ibid.*, 86.

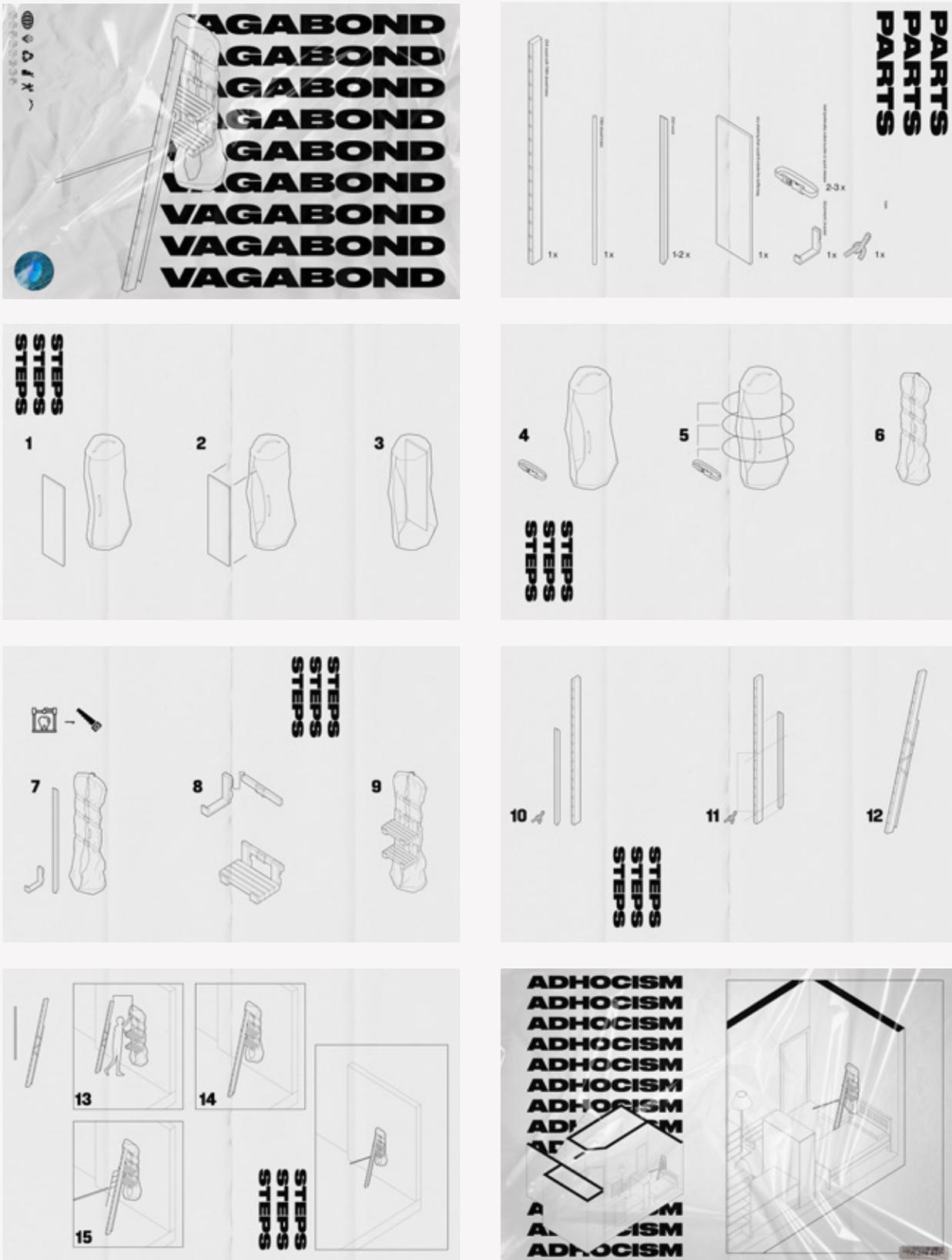


Figure 61: Vagabond DIY Instructional Manual





Figure 6.2: Vagabond Shelf 2021

INFILL ARCHITECTURE AND TORONTO'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING MARKET

Infill housing, as a form of urban typology, is the proposed urban opportunity I believe is essential to supporting my thesis. Infill development is the process of developing vacant or under-developed parcels inside areas that are already densely built.⁷⁸ In the context of Toronto, the use of infill is to develop these lots that are currently open or underutilized. Infill is a way to help promote land conservation through the reduction of greenfield development.⁷⁹ In this thesis, infill is used to respond to the density of Toronto and improve the neighbourhood while also referring to the reappropriation and multi-use aspect of adhocism. This thesis will use infill to maximize the space through creating housing while also respecting the cultural, social and recreational contexts that exist in this neighbourhood.⁸⁰ Another benefit in using these underutilized areas is that they are readily able to be integrated to the existing infrastructures of sewers, roads and public transit.⁸¹ Using these existing spaces inside the dense neighbourhood is a way to utilize the context itself, designing from things within reach. Infill development in the context of this thesis is used to improve the neighbourhood and integrate the mobile adult demographic. This intervention is a way to accommodate its site and allow the mobile adult project to “fit in”, alluding to the in-between-ness of this architectural moment. Infill architecture aims to

78 MRSC, “Infill Development,” January 6, 2022, <https://mrsc.org/Home/Explore-Topics/Planning/Development-Types-and-Land-Uses/In-fill-Development-Completing-the-Community-Fabric.aspx>.

79 Ibid.

80 Ibid.

81 Tyler Adams, Jonathan Rosenbloom, and Christopher Duerksen, “Encourage Infill Development,” *Sustainable Development Code: Chapter 3.2 Development Densities*, https://sustainablecitycode.org/brief/encourage-in-fill-development-2/#_edn6.

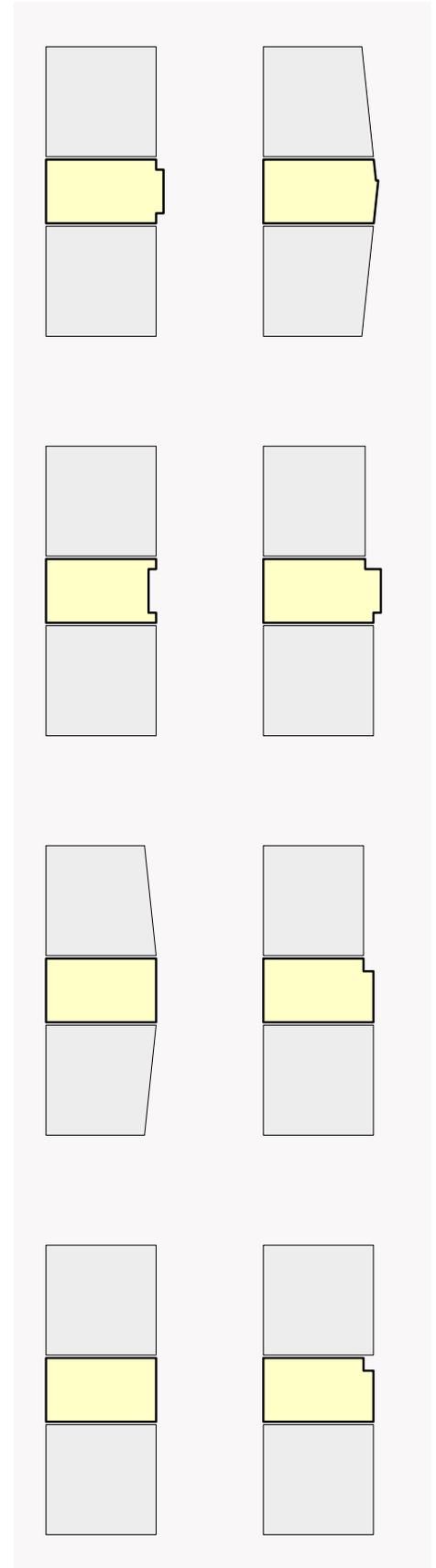


Figure 71: Infill Plan Interpolation

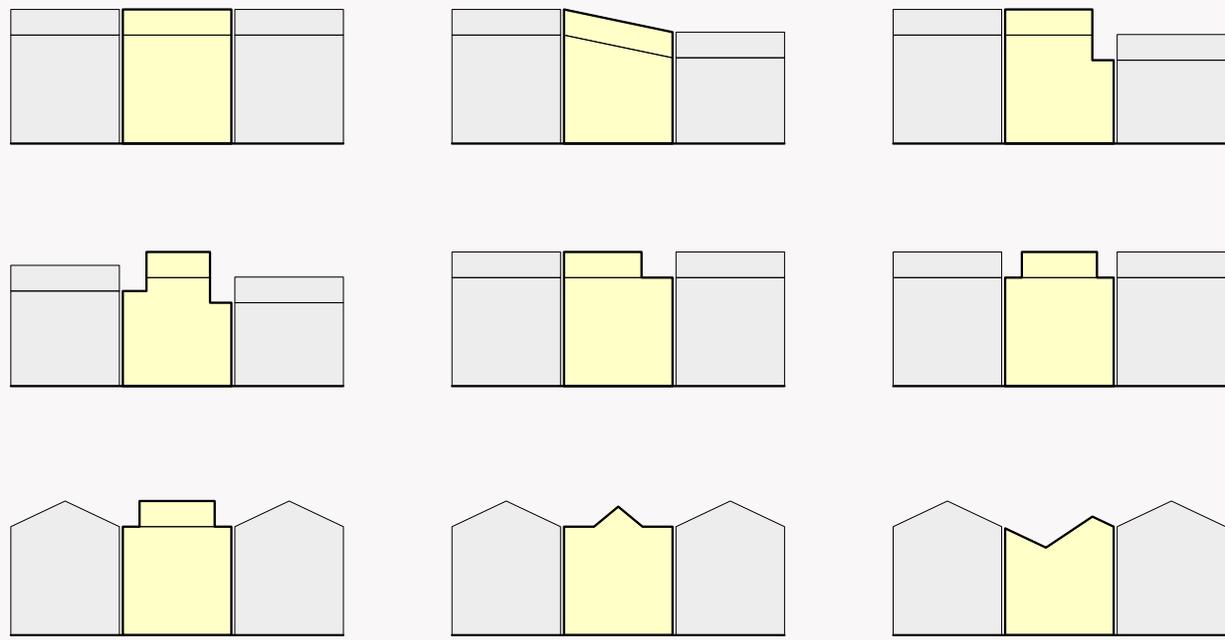
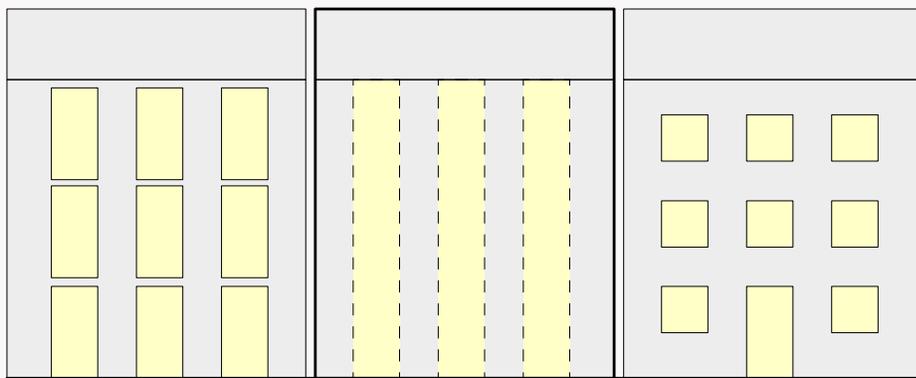
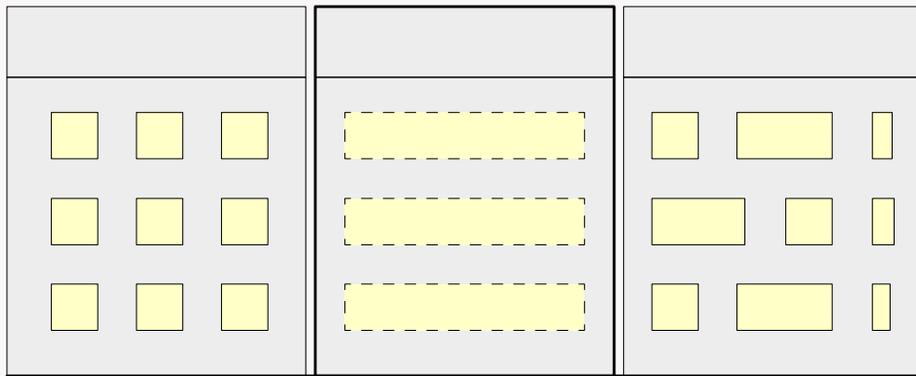


Figure 7.2: Infill Facade Interpolation
Figure 7.3: Infill Cornice Interpolation

reflect the immediate and current surroundings and integrate itself to this network.⁸² It interpolates many of the elements of the site to allow itself to remain in context.⁸³

Besides the visual facade of infill, it is also a response to the scale of urban design. The massing and scale of the project is important in creating respect towards the site it resides in by integrating itself as an equal – as a fit. Infill structures respond to the uses of the site. Infill should address how the community can benefit and interact with structure and become a colloquial part of the neighbourhood. Infill architecture requires a bond to the immediate space, and this is done through interpolating the context of the existing area.⁸⁴

Adhocism is a perspective and methodology used in this thesis to re-appropriate small in-between spaces in Toronto to create a home for the mobile adult. This home uses the context of its surroundings to inform the massing and scale so that it fits inside the neighbourhoods' setting. Inhabiting a site in Toronto requires sensitivity, as all its neighbourhoods have established cultures. Integrating the mobile adult requires mutual respect, which is done by creating a non-invasive design that doesn't take away from the neighbourhood's identity. Infill typology is a design direction that implies this respect through reflecting the site's context. At the urban scale, adhocism through infill responds to the community, the ingrained culture and daily life of the neighbourhood. Architecturally, adhocism and infill responds to the physical massing of the site, using the scale and recontextualizing these unconventional sites to fit the needs of both the neighbourhood and its mobile adult tenants. In the use of the building itself, adhocism is used to find moments of learning and malleability. Adhocism is used to create moments of multi-use in the homes of the mobile adult. Adhocism is used to maximize the apartment spaces through malleability and interpretation.

82 Alfirevic, Djordje & Simonovic Alfirevic, Sanja, *Infill Architecture: Design Approaches for In-Between Buildings and „Bond“ as Integrative Element* [Interpolacija u arhitekturi: Pristupi projektovanju interpoliranih objekata i „spona“ kao integrativni element]. *Arhitektura i urbanizam*. (2015), 24.

83 *Ibid.* 26

84 *Ibid.* 34,35,37



83a





In Toronto, alternative housing solutions have been centred on laneway housing and a small portion of infill design projects. The purpose of laneway housing was to create an attainable entry-level home for young professionals.⁸⁵ At the most fundamental level, laneway housing provided a new way of seeing urban opportunity in lost or abandoned spaces. It was also to create more space for multi-generational housing and, in direct correlation, invite diversity, accommodating a variety of people of different ages, incomes, and family types.⁸⁶ The most significant factor of why this is not happening as planned is the monetary incentive to use these alternative housing solutions in the short-term rental market.⁸⁷ Short-term rental platforms such as AirBNB have created ease in allowing people to rent out their properties without complex regulations. The loopholes that allow this have erased many of these affordable housing options for aspiring homeowners.

The current model for affordable housing in Toronto is generally meant for families, which does not reflect the age demographics prominent in Toronto. An example of this disregard for the general demographic of Toronto was three affordable housing projects on the University of Toronto Campus.⁸⁸ These were two laneway houses in the alley of Robarts Library, and the third project is an infill on Huron Street.⁸⁹ Often, small footprint housing is a surrogate to a suburban family lifestyle, which does not reflect the rising population of the mobile adult and aging seniors. The small number of projects nearing the campus were inherently designed for small families. In another project, Drew Mandel Architects created an infill project in midtown Toronto that was designed luxuriously.⁹⁰ In the same sentiment of these commodified alternative housing solutions, many infill or laneway housing projects often fetishize the small footprint and overtly appropriate this supposed affordable housing into an architectural design precedent for a lifestyle magazine.

85 Julia Mastroianni, "A guide to laneway housing in Toronto," *Now Toronto*, May 27, 2021, <https://nowtoronto.com/lifestyle/real-estate/a-guide-to-laneway-housing-in-toronto>.

86 *Ibid.*

87 *Ibid.*

88 Geoffrey Vendeville, "Beautifully designed and beautifully built: U of T unveils new laneway, infill housing," *U of T News*, January 19, 2021, <https://www.utoronto.ca/news/beautifully-designed-and-beautifully-built-u-t-unveils-new-laneway-infill-housing>.

89 *Ibid.*

90 Drew Mandel Architects, 83A Marlborough Avenue, <http://drewmandelarchitects.com/83a-marlborough>.

Infill design addresses the need for mobile adults. The current situation of affordable housing in Toronto does not reflect the demographic of the aging population and the increase of young migrants. One important precedent to refer to is the mini-mid-rise designed by Smart Density, where the intended purpose of affordable housing is addressed.⁹¹ It is a decentralized six- to eight-storey development that could provide units across the city without needing to make additional space. It was selected as the winner of the Shift Challenge Competition from the OAA.⁹² The direction of Smart Density aligns with the demographic's needs to integrate the mobile adult as it is a compact, affordable housing alternative meant for temporary living. For this thesis, I will be designing a "home" suitable for the mobile adult and the neighbourhood they reside in. Housing will be dictated by the demographic and focus on the surrounding neighbourhood based on the notion of adhocism. Infill is used in this thesis to reflect the values of the neighbourhood to integrate the mobile adult as part of the local lexicon. Infill provides an ad hoc use of unconventional spaces in between the densely built city and redefine it as a home and community signifier.

91 Smart Density, "Mini-Mid-Rise," <https://smartdensity.com/mini-mid-rise-torontos-main-street-infill/>

92 Laura Hanrahan, "The "mini mid-rise" could help solve Toronto's housing problem," *Daily Hive: Urbanized*, May 18, 2021. <https://dailyhive.com/toronto/mini-mid-rise-toronto-architects>.



Figure 7.6: Mini-Mid-Rise by Smart Density



HOW DOES ADHOCISM BECOME A CATALYST FOR INNOVATION?

This thesis intends to examine the current issue of mobile adults from a different perspective. Specifically, the existing affordable housing solutions lacking empathy, recognition, or action towards the demographic. In most cases, laneways and other alternatives are used for AirBNBs and create luxurious experiences meant for people that fetishize these alternative spaces. This thesis directly focuses on the mobile adult, the dominant demographic of Toronto that requires the most help. This different perspective is meant to adhere to the issues surrounding the space of Toronto and the demographic's precariousness. This thesis will leverage the malleability of the mobile adult. It recontextualize this transitional period into a growing experience through adhocism. Adhocism is used to look at a different perspective, emphasizing on the unconventional as a means of finding alternatives. In the case for this thesis, there is an emphasis in the DIY, Infill, and a neighbourhood study.

A neighbourhood study is performed to inform a new housing typology. For Toronto, this is required to address the housing crisis and find opportunities inside the densely built city. Adhocism in this thesis is used as design methodology to find an alternative solution that looks for opportunity in the urban environment. Traditionally conceived housing typologies have relied upon traditional urban space platforms for buildings-adhocism, together with infill thinking provides urban space opportunities for a new housing typology. Adhocism, like Jane Jacobs, provides a notion of how to find new meaning in the existing. Chapter 2 provides a description of Bauman's liquid life to the current relationship between mobile adult and city. It deals with the demographic's wants of agency and their role as a participant in the city's community, assimilating in the consumer meta. Adhocism is a response that fits this project, redefining the existing city to opportunities of growth and integration. Chapter 3 uses this theoretical framework and dictates the direction of the project at all scales. Adhocism will be used as a lens to find opportunities within the city context and funneling down to the exact site and structure.

CHAPTER 3:

ADHOC DESIGN
TORONTO'S —
NEIGHBOURHOOD

RESPONSE TO

OD

SITE ANALYSIS AND MAPPING DOWNTOWN

For the physical structure of this thesis, adhocism is intended to reappropriate the unwanted alleyways downtown. Infill development is used in this thesis to manifest the opportunities within unwanted, neglected and lost urban spaces and allow for this small footprint of slivers to be repurposed into a home. Chapter three provides a neighbourhood study that informs the creation of a new typology. With the main driver of Adhocism, the site analysis started in chapter one by discussing the attraction of Toronto is further expanded on this section. The key features of Toronto include the diverse communities, post-secondary education institutions, career opportunities, and social activities. Queen Street West shown on Figure 9.2, connects all these features. The street acts as a major urban center of Toronto. The street connects the surrounding neighbourhoods to the local interest inherited by the shops, businesses, and services inside the street.

Within the perspective of adhocism, there is potential for the local tourism of Queen Street West to facilitate a public platform for the mobile adults to integrate into Toronto. The civilian interest of the street and its shop-front culture would allow for opportunities regarding socialization, entrepreneurship, and economic participation. With a large local business presence in Queen Street West, there are opportunities for the mobile adult to participate. With spaces such as locally run art galleries, libraries and community centers, a public program in the mobile adult home would consist of a safe space specifically for this demographic to learn valuable skills. The neighbourhood study will be elaborated and focus on a specific neighbourhood, detailing the on unique features that identify the community.





Figure 9.2: Queen Street West Iso



Queen Street West

PARKDALE'S DEMOGRAPHIC



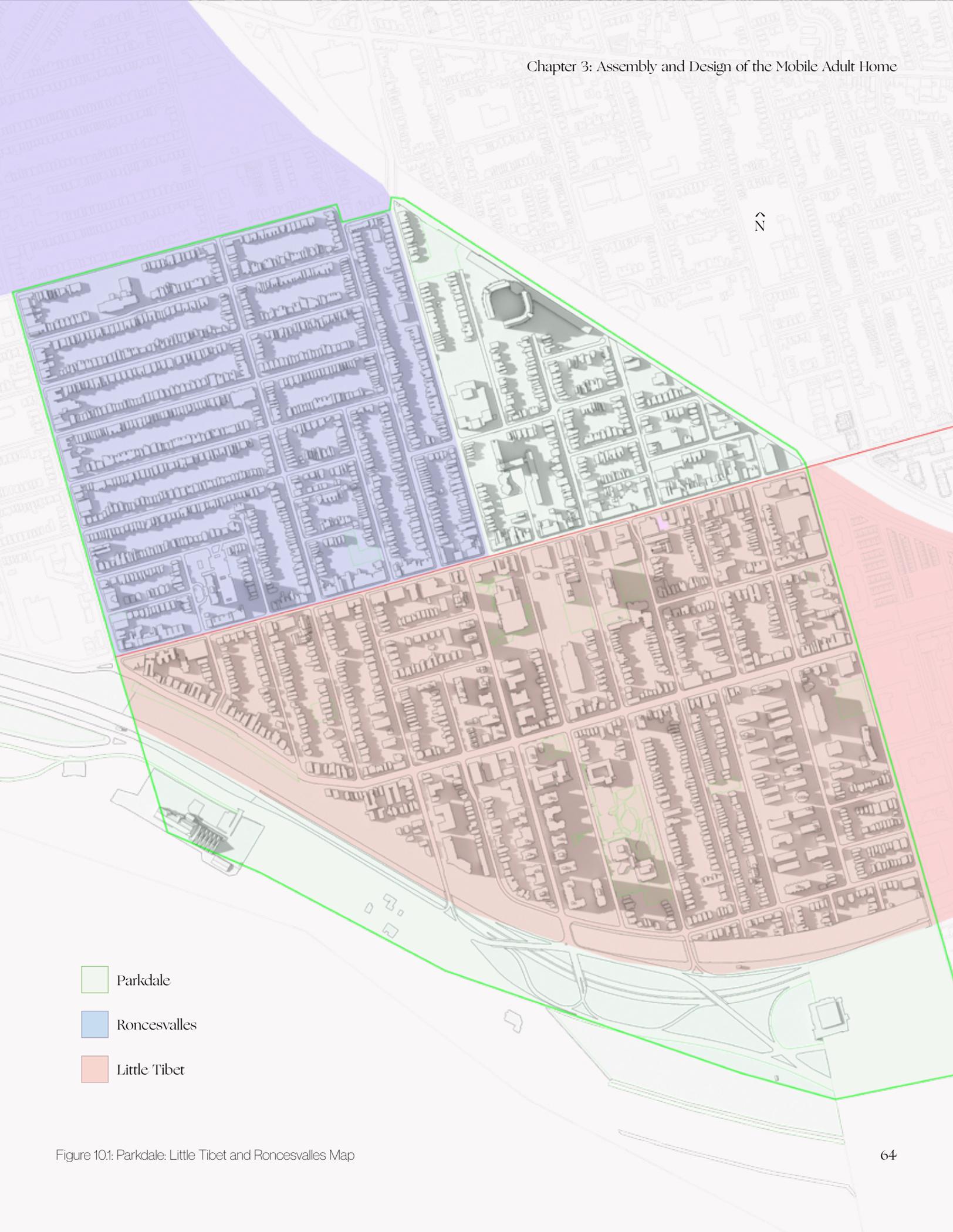
Parkdale

In looking for the best neighbourhood that would accommodate the mobile adult, I examined the context of each neighbourhood around the Queen Street West area. Eastward lies an excellent middle ground that benefits from being close to downtown action via a short commute while also far enough away that rental costs are lower on average. The neighbourhoods include Roncesvalles, Sunnyside, Parkdale, Liberty Village and King West Village. There are Little Tibet, Little Portugal, and Little Italy in more ethnic-centered communities. Figure 10.2 shows these communities and their relationship to Queen Street West. These communities have their own identity and history with the culture that shaped what it is today. Parkdale is a distinct neighbourhood with diverse experiences and people that suit the mobile adult's needs. Queen Street West splits Parkdale into two sections that can be seen in Figure 10.1. South of Queen Street West's border is fully overlapped fully by Little Tibet, while Roncesvalles predominantly overlap the north. These communities have rich histories that coincide with the immigrants that inhabited them. North Parkdale is primarily Polish and Catholic, while south Parkdale is predominantly Tibetan and Asian.⁹³ Tibetans started moving into Little Tibet only in 1996. About three thousand people have occupied this area.⁹⁴ Parkdale has historically been a place for mobile adults and immigrants with 86 percent of rental households.⁹⁵ Jameson and Tyndal Avenue were converted to zoning for apartments, with buildings dating from the 1950s and 1970s.

93 Paolo Loriggio, "At home' in Little Tibet," Toronto Star, May 15, 2008, https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2008/05/15/at_home_in_little_tibet.html.

94 Ibid.

95 City of Toronto, "South Parkdale," Neighbourhood profile, 2016, 3, <https://www.toronto.ca/ext/sdfa/Neighbourhood%20Profiles/pdf/2016/pdf1/cpa85.pdf>.



- Parkdale
- Roncesvalles
- Little Tiber

Figure 101: Parkdale: Little Tiber and Roncesvalles Map

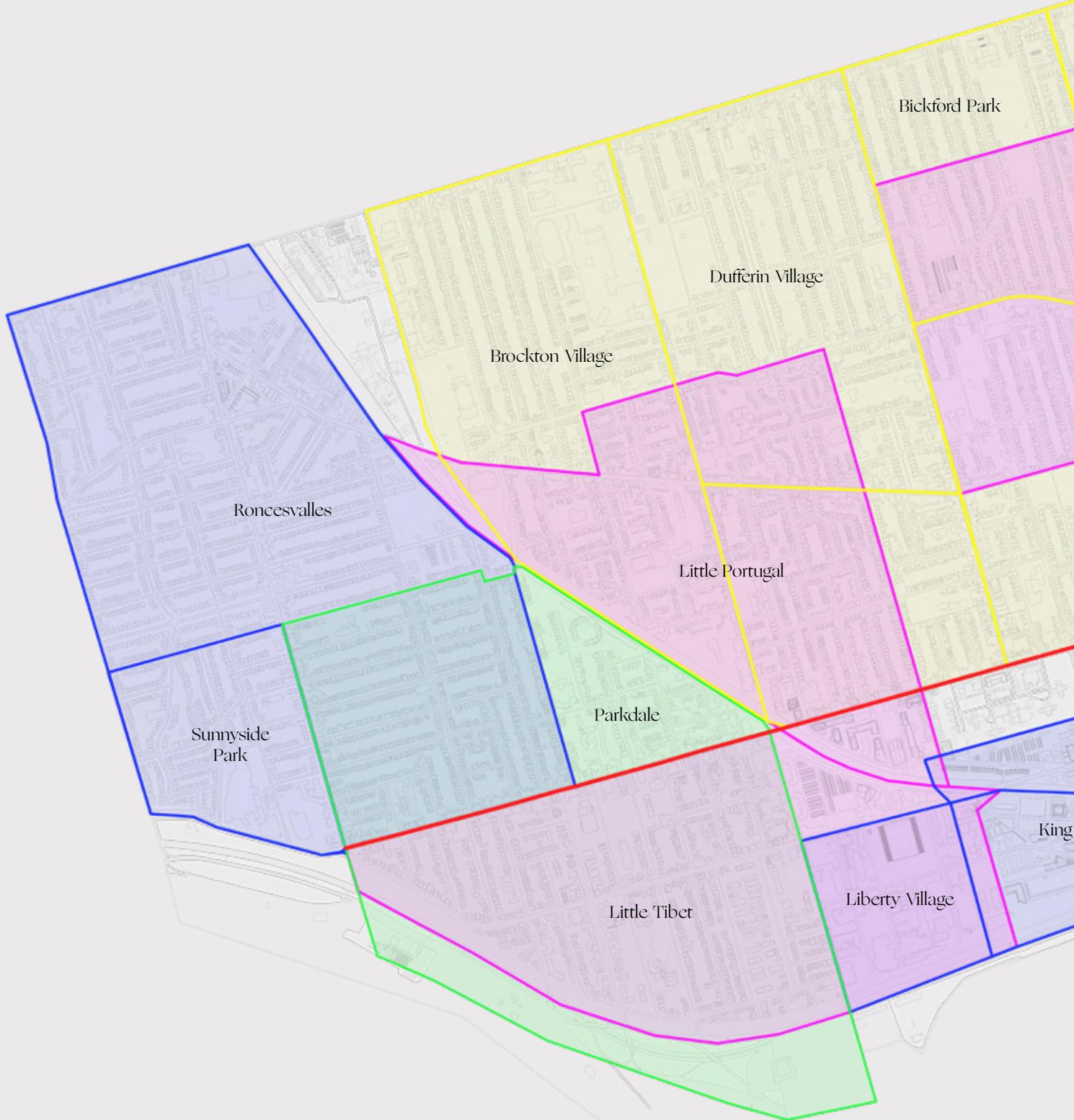


Figure 10.2: Queen Street West Neighbourhood Map



- Other Neighbourhoods
- Ethnic Neighbourhoods
- Neighbourhoods Near Parkdale
- Main Site of Interest

In recent decades, Parkdale has been very welcoming to new immigrants worldwide. There are some programs for new families. For instance, Parkdale Community Information Center provides government aid regarding citizenship, ESL programs and youth programs.⁹⁶ In the last few years, housing prices have caught up to the average in Toronto. They have also been a victim of the current housing crisis.⁹⁷ There has been an identity crisis in Parkdale with its lower-income rental spaces due to the city alluding to the replacement of these lower income households to middle class spaces. Drug trafficking, prostitution and illegal activity in these lower-income spaces run rampant. Conversations for gentrification and densification have been ongoing for over a decade. I believe these illegal activities come from the main issue of the precariousness of the mobile adult demographic and stem from desperation. As stated in chapter one, investing in training and jobs for the mobile adult would allow more opportunities for them to succeed. The mobile adults have a large role in society's future and investing in them would allow them a start and future proof the economy. This would mitigate the issues of crime and desperation related to the demographic's inherent precariousness. Gentrifying the community to fit a suburban family will not solve the problem. The lack of empathy towards this demographic will push them to other places and participate in the same illegal activities. The lack of attention will be perceived as forgotten and move the demographic to indignation.

96 Parkdale Community Information Center, "Programs and Services," PCIC, 2019, <https://web.archive.org/web/20111221035944/http://www.pcic.ca>.

97 Tom Slater, "Toronto's South Parkdale Neighbourhood: A Brief History of Development, Disinvestment and Gentrification," Center for Urban and Community Studies: Research Bulletin #28, (University of Bristol: May 2005), 3, <http://www.urbancentre.utoronto.ca/pdfs/researchbulletins/CUCS-RB-28-Slater-Parkd.pdf>.





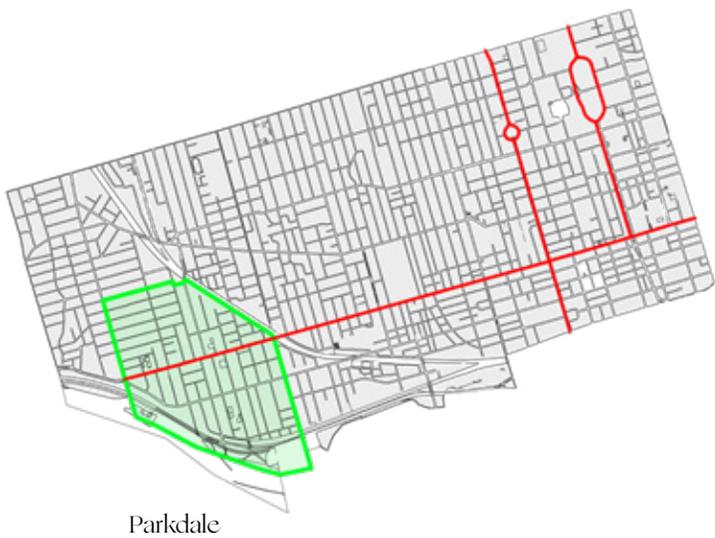
Commercial

Institution

Single Detached Residential

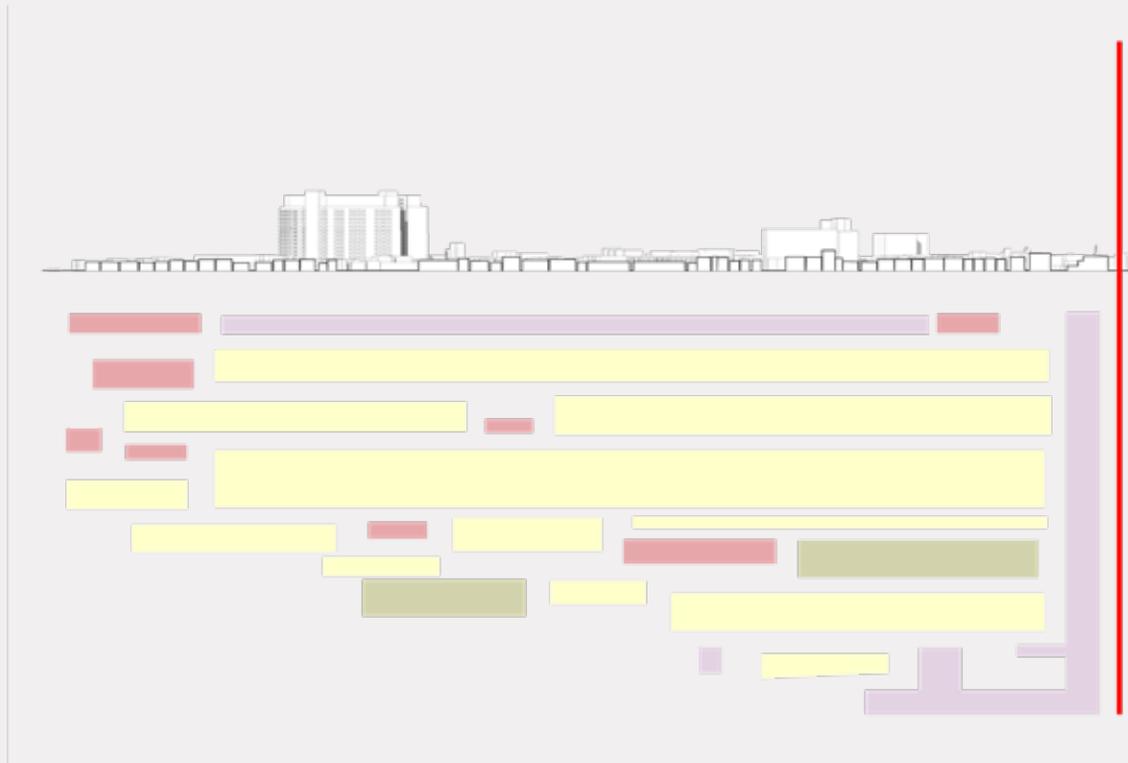
4 Storey or Below Residential

5+ Storey Residential



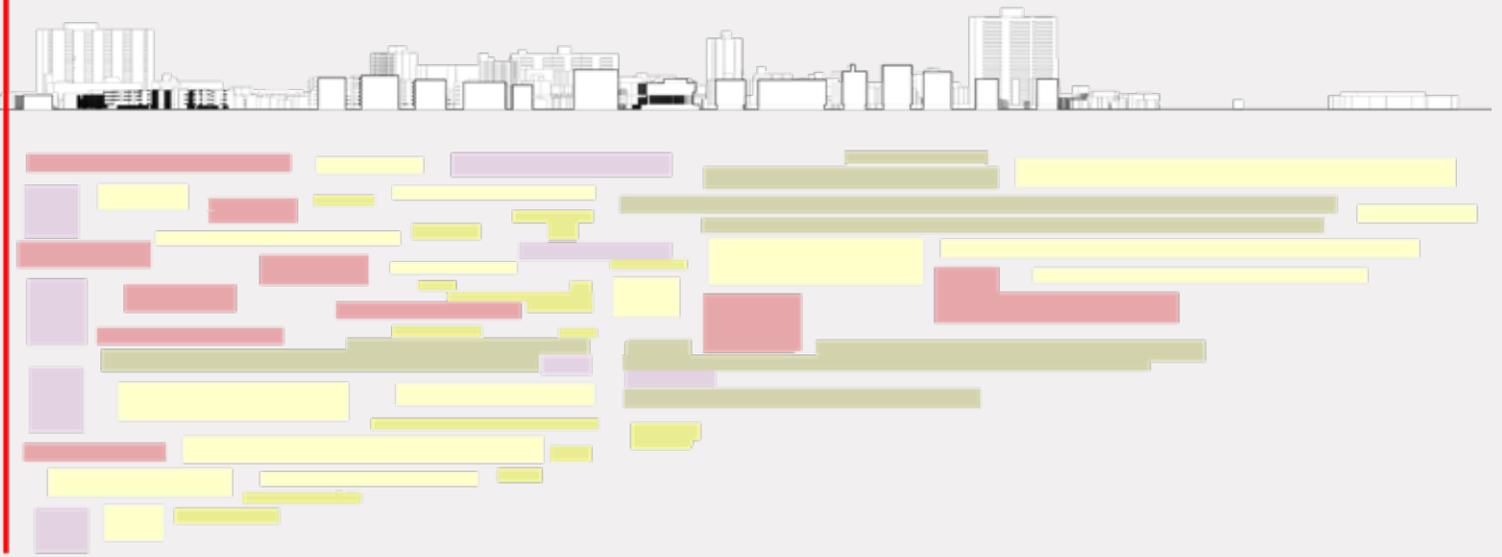
My urban study includes documenting the overall typology and program uses of buildings all over Parkdale. Figure 10.4 separates these structures into three categories: residential, commercial, and institutional. The commercial is depicted as purple, institutions are red, and residential in shades of yellow. The lightest shade of yellow are detached single family homes, the darker yellows are below five-storey apartments, and the five-plus storey apartments are yellow-brown. The blue lines depict laneways. Observing both north Parkdale/Roncesvalles and south Parkdale/Little Tibet, there was a noticeable difference in both neighbourhoods. In Figure 10.5, I interpolated this information into a north-to-south section of Parkdale which shows the difference in the community dynamics. The north side of Parkdale is homogenous in single-family detached homes, while the south hosts diverse housing and has a larger number of institutions and commercial buildings. It shows the huge difference in infrastructure, where south Parkdale accommodates a more precarious demographic, the mobile adult. Many five-plus storey apartment buildings and institutions that house many artists, youth and people in precarious situations.

Roncesvalles

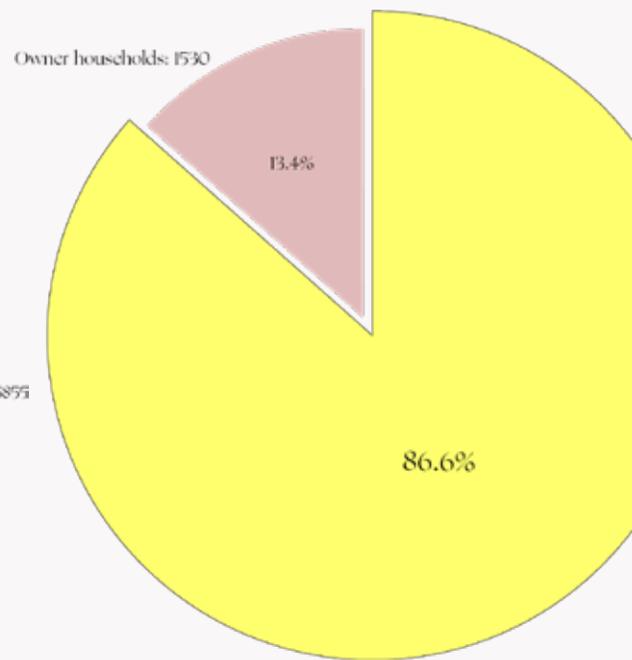
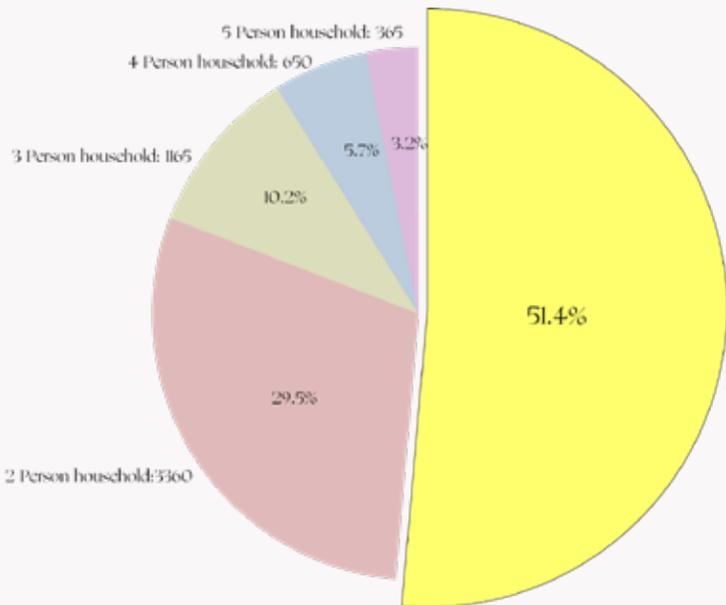
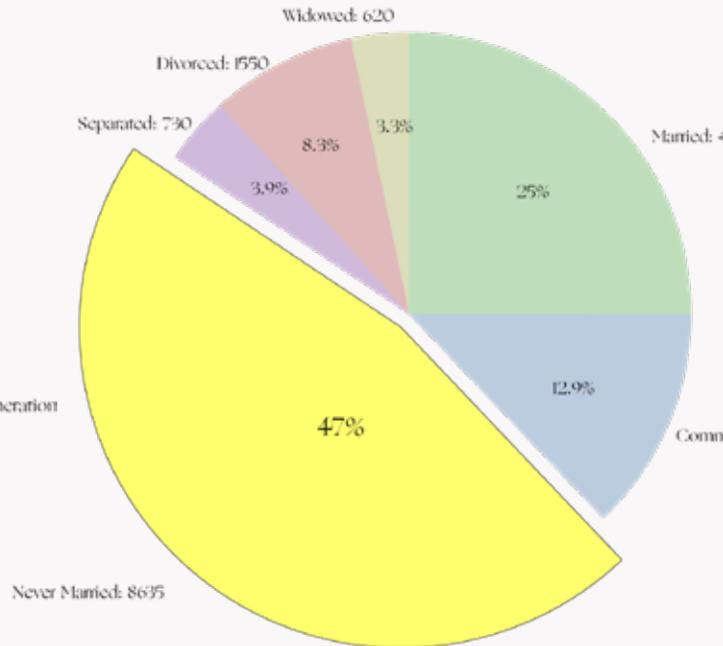
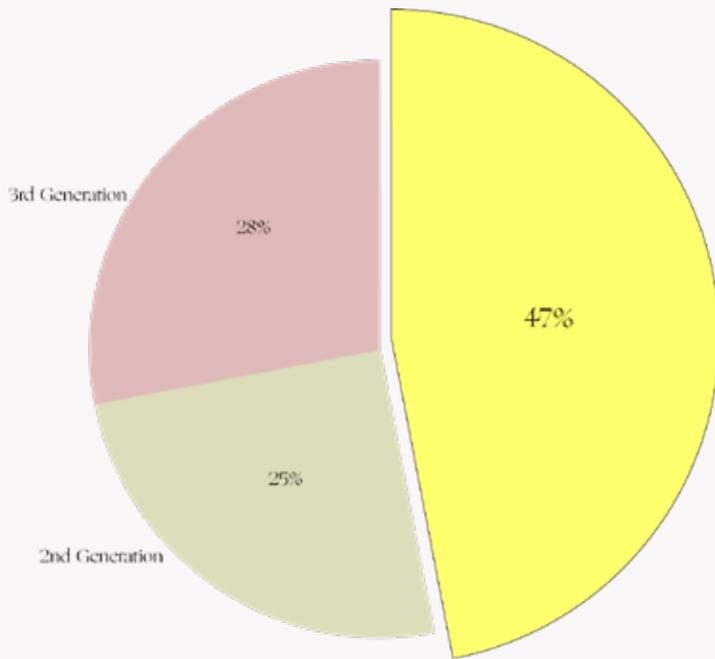


- Single Detached Residential
- 4 Storey or Below Residential
- 5+ Storey Residential
- Commercial
- Institution

Little Tibet



Queen Street West



Looking specifically at the demographics of south Parkdale and Little Tibet, 58 percent of the population are of the working age of 25-54. This means that a large portion of residents in the area are part of the mobile adult demographic. The percentage of single-person households is 51 percent and two-person households is 29 percent, showing a very low number of families residing here. This neighbourhood is dictated by the existing amenities that are more likely to benefit the younger demographic of mobile adults instead of families. Regarding the housing types, 86 percent of all living spaces are renter households in Parkdale, while Toronto's overall percentage is 47 percent. 63 percent of them live in five-plus storey apartments, accommodating the nature of mobile adults and their somewhat nomadic movement towards opportunities. Specific to people in south Parkdale, 46 percent of the population have never been married and 43 percent of the population are couples with no children. This illustrates that Parkdale is a prime hub for the mobile adult demographic. This demographic includes people in the early stages of adulthood, just starting out and living alone, with a partner or roommates. Of the immigrant population, 47 percent are first-generation, affirming the large demographic of the community to be mobile adults.

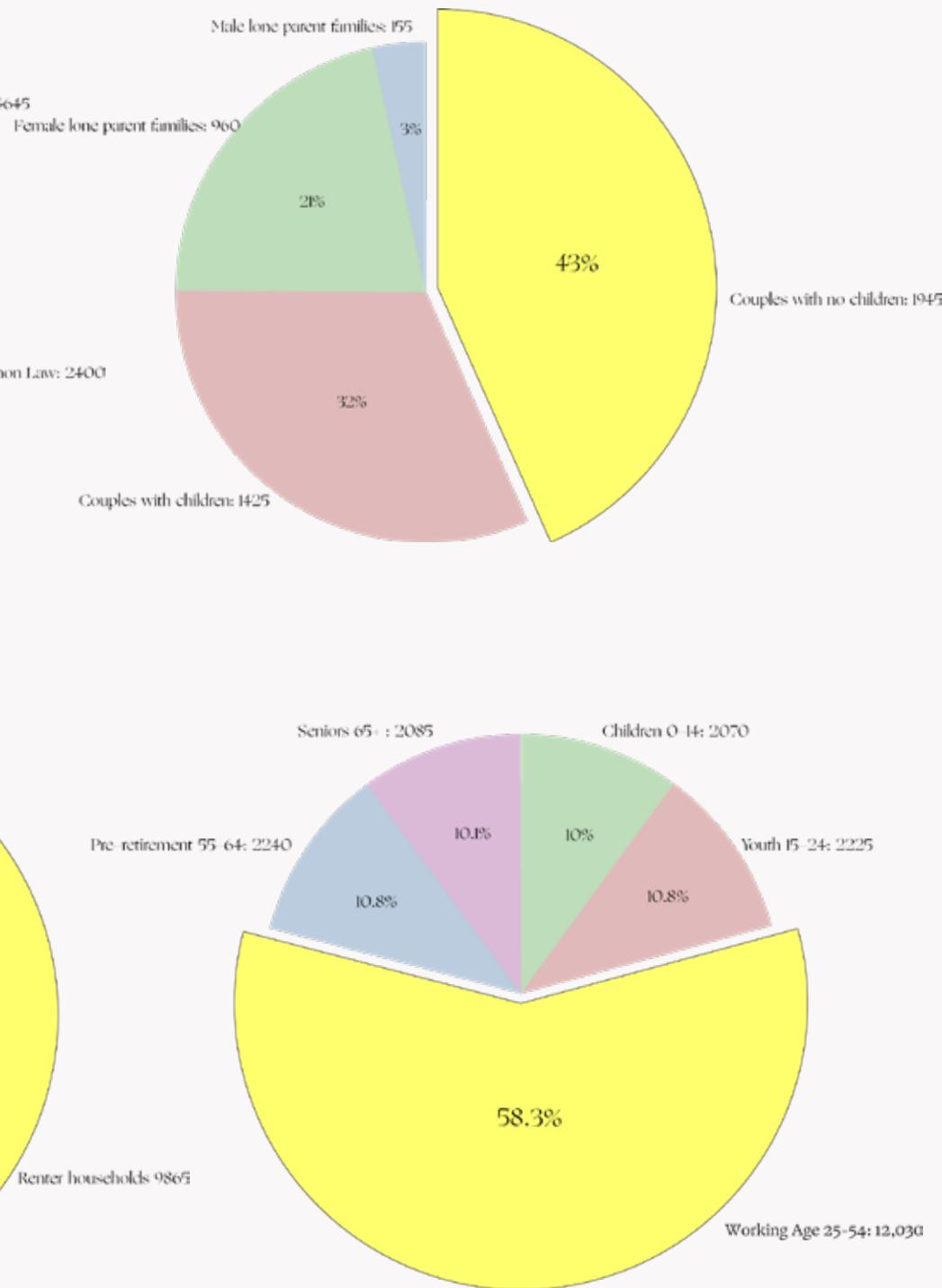


Figure 10.6: South Parkdale Statistics

SITE CRITERIA OF THE MOBILE ADULT HOME

Choosing a site in Parkdale and anywhere in Toronto is a daunting task. The direction this thesis will take is that of a decentralized infill housing design that focuses on unconventional spaces, finding the meaning of home for the mobile adult and utilizing and maximizing space through programs that will benefit the neighbourhood. In this thesis, I have established a 'funnel down approach' starting with the broad lens of Toronto and moving to the mobile adult and specific neighbourhood, citing its issues and its relationship to the young adult demographic. Picking a site requires finding the physical embodiment of this relationship between housing, the mobile adult and the city. This embodiment tries to find the overlooked aspects of the city and recontextualize it as a platform that provides housing and allows the mobile adult to thrive.

The mobile adult's experience should embody the positive attributes of the selected site, which is a transitional space that could be anywhere. The proposed structure should take on this space and recontextualize it as a place where the demographic can possess their own agency. This thesis provides a guideline for determining a successful platform for the mobile adult. Each guideline intends to find opportunities to express adhocism. It either looks at the existing urban context and respond to it or looks to the physical uses of spaces through public and private massing. These guidelines are meant to broadly look at opportunities and narrow them down to the physical massing of the building. These criteria are:

1. The in-between sliver of residential and public buildings
2. Ad hoc opportunities of in-between spaces
3. "Hole-in-the-wall" accessibility





THE IN-BETWEEN SLIVER OF RESIDENTIAL AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS

SITE CRITERIA #1:

These three criteria funnel down from urban site to architecture/built form. The first step is to find the opportunities for the demographic to thrive, which is the in-between sliver of residential and public buildings. This criterion aims to find specific areas that allow for a mixed-use building, catering to the public interest of Queen Street West and the neighbourhoods surrounding the street. The first criterion intends to find a sense of urban adhocism, finding opportunities existing in the neighbourhood that could facilitate support and integration for the mobile adult. For this thesis, adhocism on this criterion is focused on the traffic of Queen Street West and justifies a support infrastructure that would cater to the mobile adults and Parkdale. Many of the support programs in Parkdale are in publicly available areas. Art galleries in Parkdale utilize the traffic of Queen Street West to advertise the local artists. In this housing project, this criterion seeks moments that facilitate interaction between the tenant and community. It allows the building to be a signifier of community that would benefit the mobile adults and the surrounding neighbourhood. In Parkdale's building typology, there is a general abrupt change from residential and public buildings. These spaces are commonly laneways and side streets.

SITE CRITERIA #2:

The second criterion is the ad hoc opportunities of in-between spaces. Where the first criterion looks at the broad area, this next convention is finding the physical space that can hold this project. This criterion, I look at underutilized or unconventional spaces and find its ad hoc potential in reappropriating them into a mobile adult home. The goal is to find spaces that would typically be overlooked as a place for living. As established in the first criterion, this underutilized space would be reinvented as a space that would be a platform and house the mobile adult and benefit the neighbourhood. This criterion takes the slivers between residential and public and specifies site selection. In the context of Toronto, the density of structures would mainly allow for infill. In Parkdale, opportunities that would allow the public accessibility and residential discretion would be empty parcels, parking, and abandoned lots.



ADHOC OPPORTUNITIES OF UNCONVENTIONAL SPACES

Figure 11.3: Criteria 2 Example

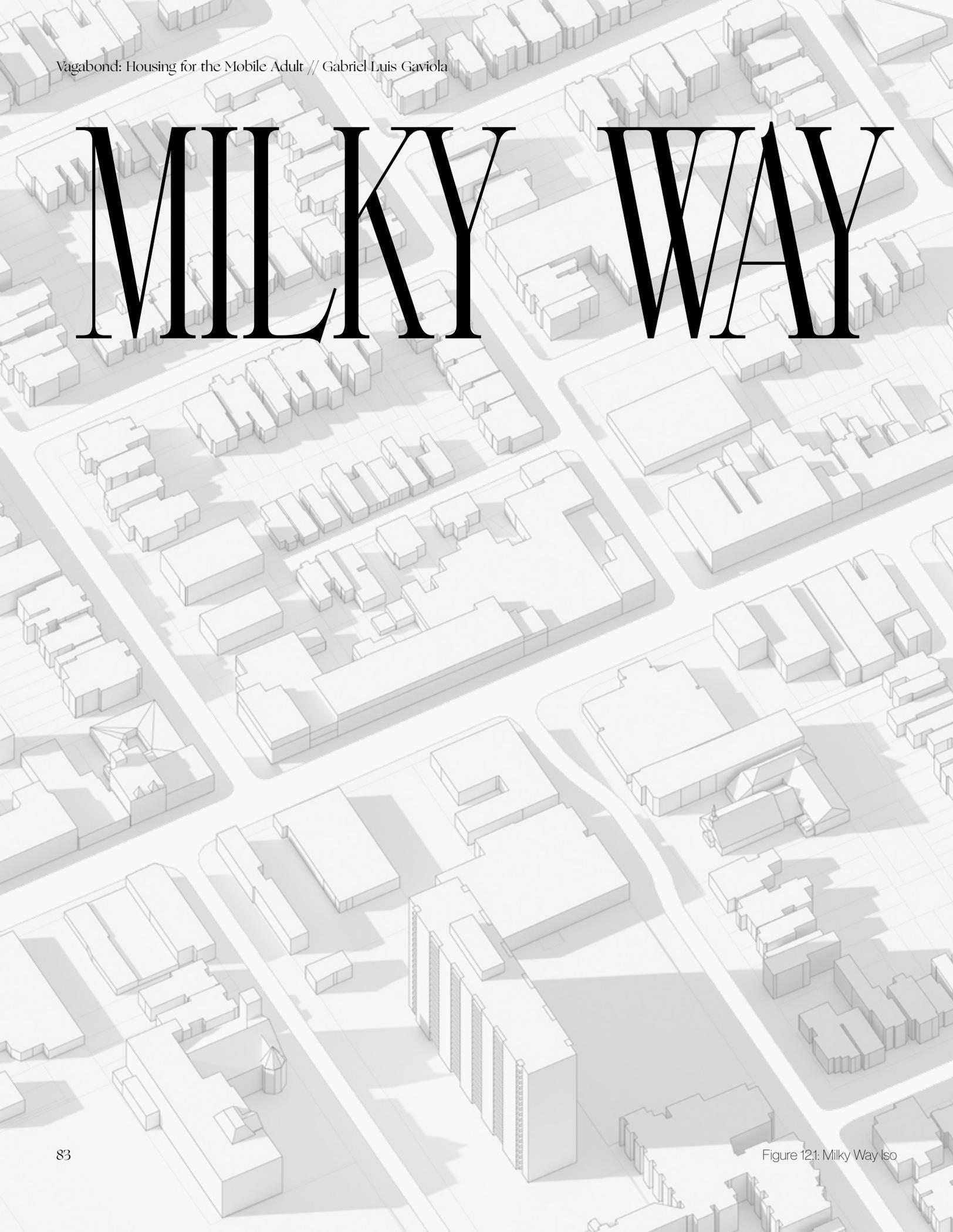


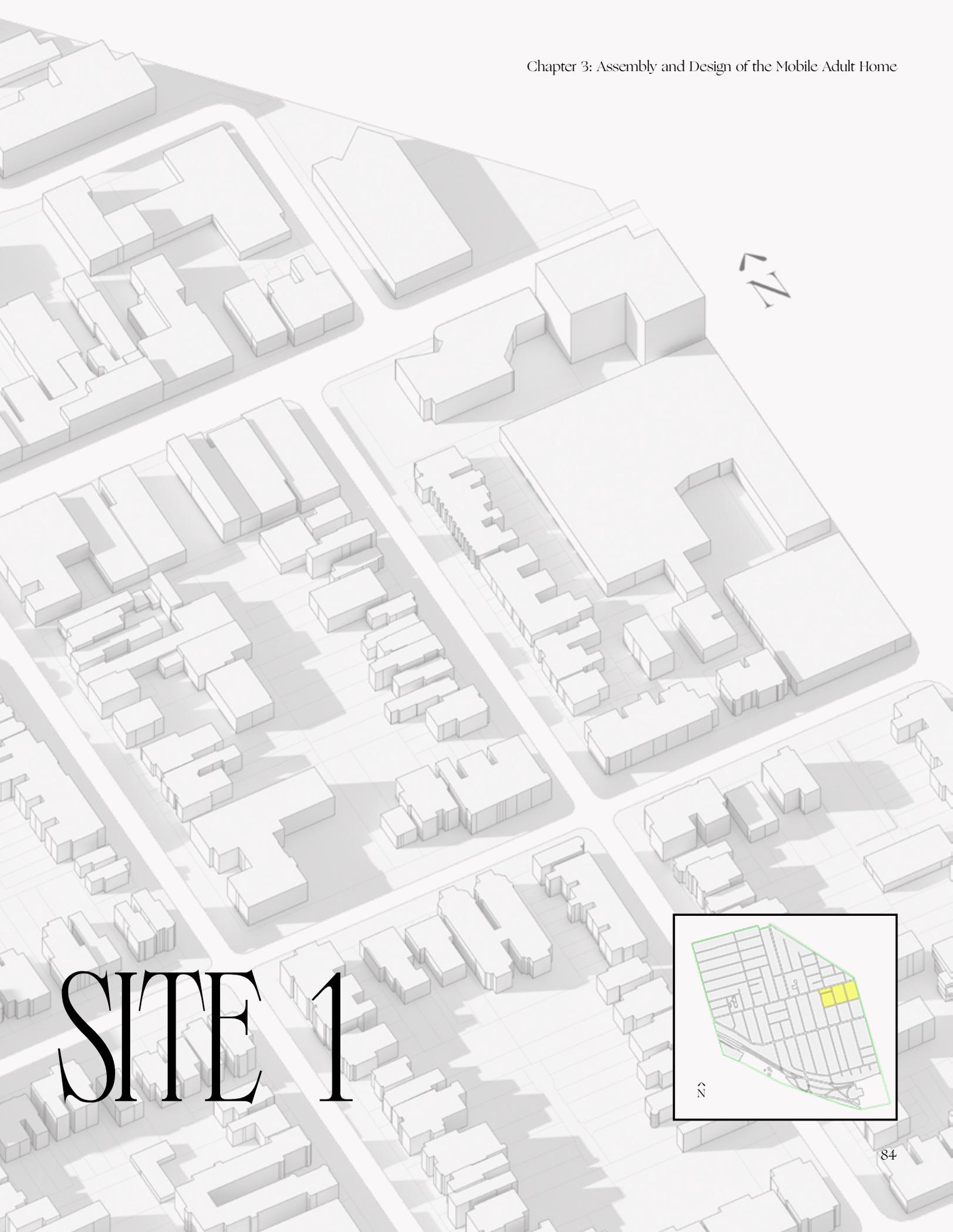
“HOLE-IN-THE-WALL” ACCESSIBILITY

SITE CRITERIA #3:

The last criterion is the guideline that will dictate the composition of the building placed on these unconventional spaces; this sense of “hole-in-the-wall” feel to the residential aspect of the structure. “Hole-in-the wall” generally describes a place that mainly locals know due to its relative “out of the way” distance from local tourism. The guideline intends to balance Queen Street West’s public interest and its tenants’ residential discretion. The adhoc lens for this last criterion responds to the existing site and the meta of the neighbourhood, finding opportunities with what already exists. This thesis integrates the mobile adult by respecting the public building uses and traffic of the neighbourhood. Again, the previous conventions are used to determine the balance of public and private. To expand on the building composition, the mass of the building will look at where the shops, restaurants, and stores are, and use their public traffic to create a natural invitation to the proposed building. The structure’s massing would dictate the entrances of these support programs, allowing a public invitation to those in Queen Street West. The apartments are positioned discretely, where tenants can live with security and comfort implied within a home. The idea is to provide a sense of privacy for tenants and allow for community integration for willing participants.

MILKY WAY





SITE 1



THE IN-BETWEEN SLIVER OF RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL/INSTITUTION

For the three criteria, many of the key points will remain consistently applied as the sites are similar and close to each other. I first investigated the borders of residential and public buildings.

The first criterion intends to zero in on a potential area. The aim is to find a site that can allow for a mixed-use building, a home for the mobile adult and a place for the community building inside the neighbourhood. The first criterion aims to find the in-between spaces of Queen Street West's local tourism and Parkdale's residential homes. The Milky Way is a potential site as it is precisely behind the shops and restaurants of Queen Street West. In the ad hoc lens, Milky Way has the potential to take advantage of Queen Street West's public attraction and use it for community integration. As seen in Figure 12.2, Milky Way is a lane currently being used as both access to the parking for these shops and also the homes of residents. The laneway acts as a transitional area that is used both by neighbours and business owners. Physically, Milky Way acts as this in-between border between residential and public buildings. This optimal site could balance both Queen Street West's civilian traffic and the homes' private discretion.



Figure 12.2: Public and Private Regions of Milky Way





ADHOC OPPORTUNITIES OF UNCONVENTIONAL SPACES

The second criterion of ad hoc opportunities for in-between spaces is to specify the potential plots of spaces inside the Milky Way. The densely built city is already filled mostly with buildings and houses. The remaining land is awkwardly split and abandoned, used as parking and to place garbage. Specific to the site of the Milky Way, there is an empty parcel that is currently being used awkwardly as an outdoor patio area and parking for a restaurant. There is also a parking lot beside the Parkdale Branch of the Toronto Library. These sites can be seen in Figure 12.3 and have potential as a home for the mobile adult demographic. Both sites can be reappropriated as an infill development that could balance public and private. The sites are immediately connected to the sidewalk of Queen Street West and the Milky Way laneway acts as a discrete option to access the private apartments.



Site 1



Site 2



Figure 12.3: Milky Way Building Programs

“HOLE-IN-THE-WALL” ACCESSIBILITY

In residing the sliver between these commercial/institutional and residential buildings, the balance between public accessibility and privacy is important for allowing a safe place for the mobile adult tenants while also being a signifier of public support. Therefore, the mobile adult home should allow for an open-secret element in the residential programming of the building. However, it also needs to express its neighbourhood presence to take advantage of the Queen Street West local tourism in its publicly available spaces. In Figure 12.4, the potential sites are portrayed with optimal building composition. As per criterion 2, the front side of the lot connecting to the Queen Street West sidewalk is an opportunity to invite the Queen Street West traffic to the public programming of the project. The Milky Way laneway acts as a back entrance that tenants use to access their apartments.

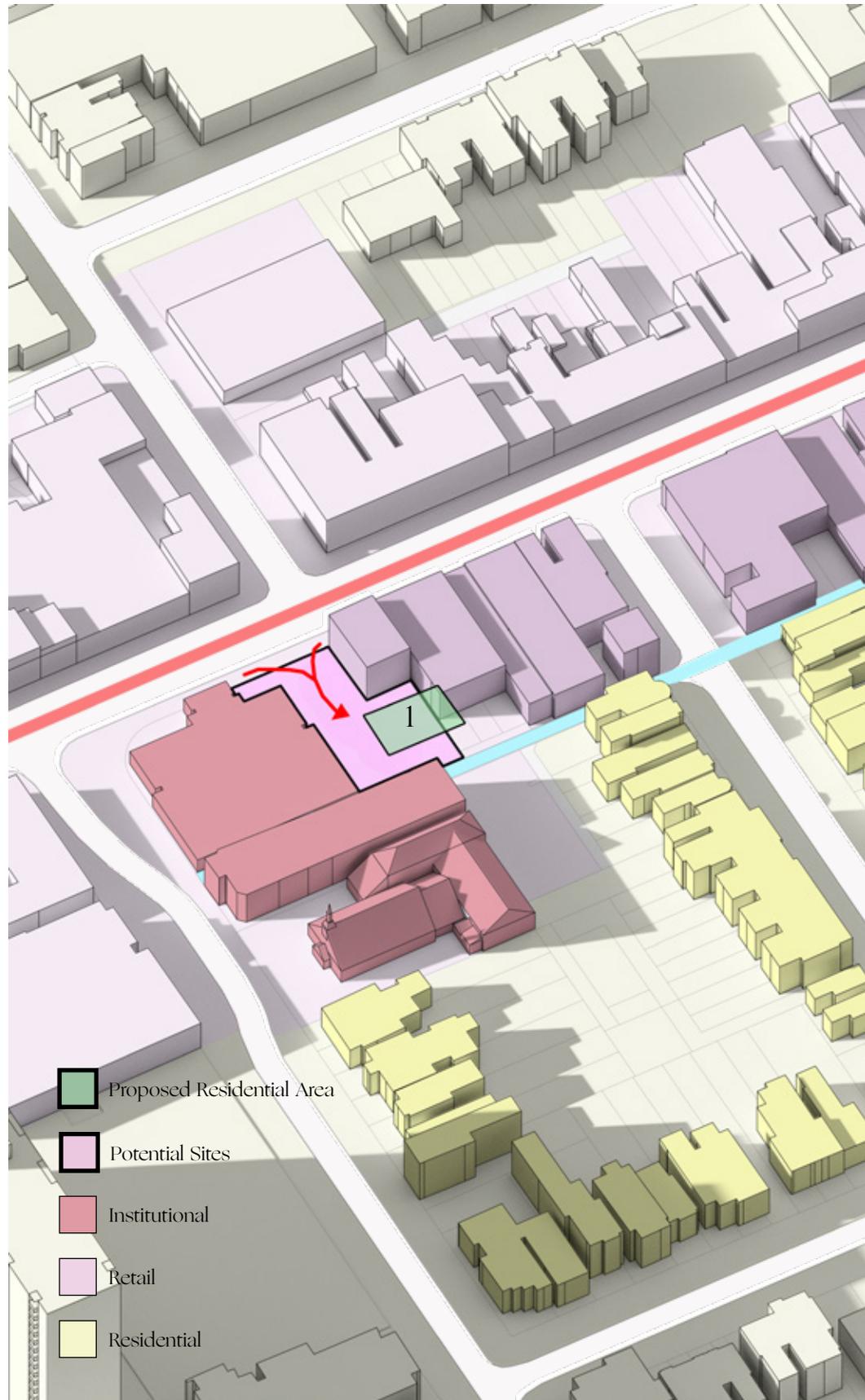


Figure 12.4: Milky Way “Hole-in-the-wall” accessibility





MILKY WAY PROTOTYPE MASSING

For site 1 in Figure 12.5, I wanted to focus on respecting the existing relationship of sidewalk and laneway. For the empty parcel, I thought about expanding the current patio context it had with the restaurant beside it. I decided to mass a public street mews that people would essentially be able to walk through, emphasizing the existing public outdoor use the empty parcel had. The programs directly in front of the sidewalk could be interior spaces that could potentially be used by the restaurant when the weather is uncomfortable. For site 2, the lot beside the public library, there exists a larger space to play with. With the massing, I wanted to give a step back for the public programming and allow the apartments to hide behind the lot behind the retail building.

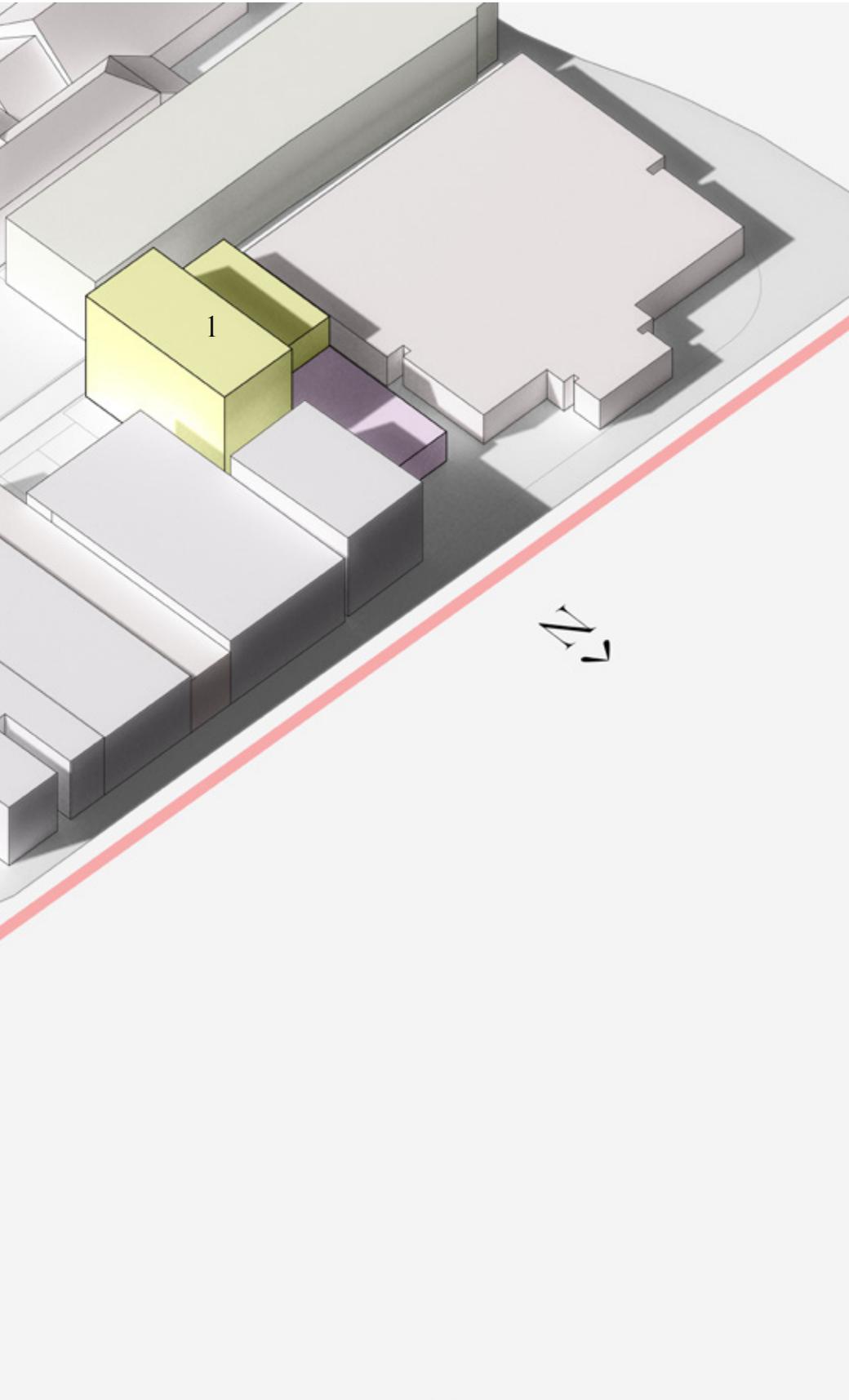
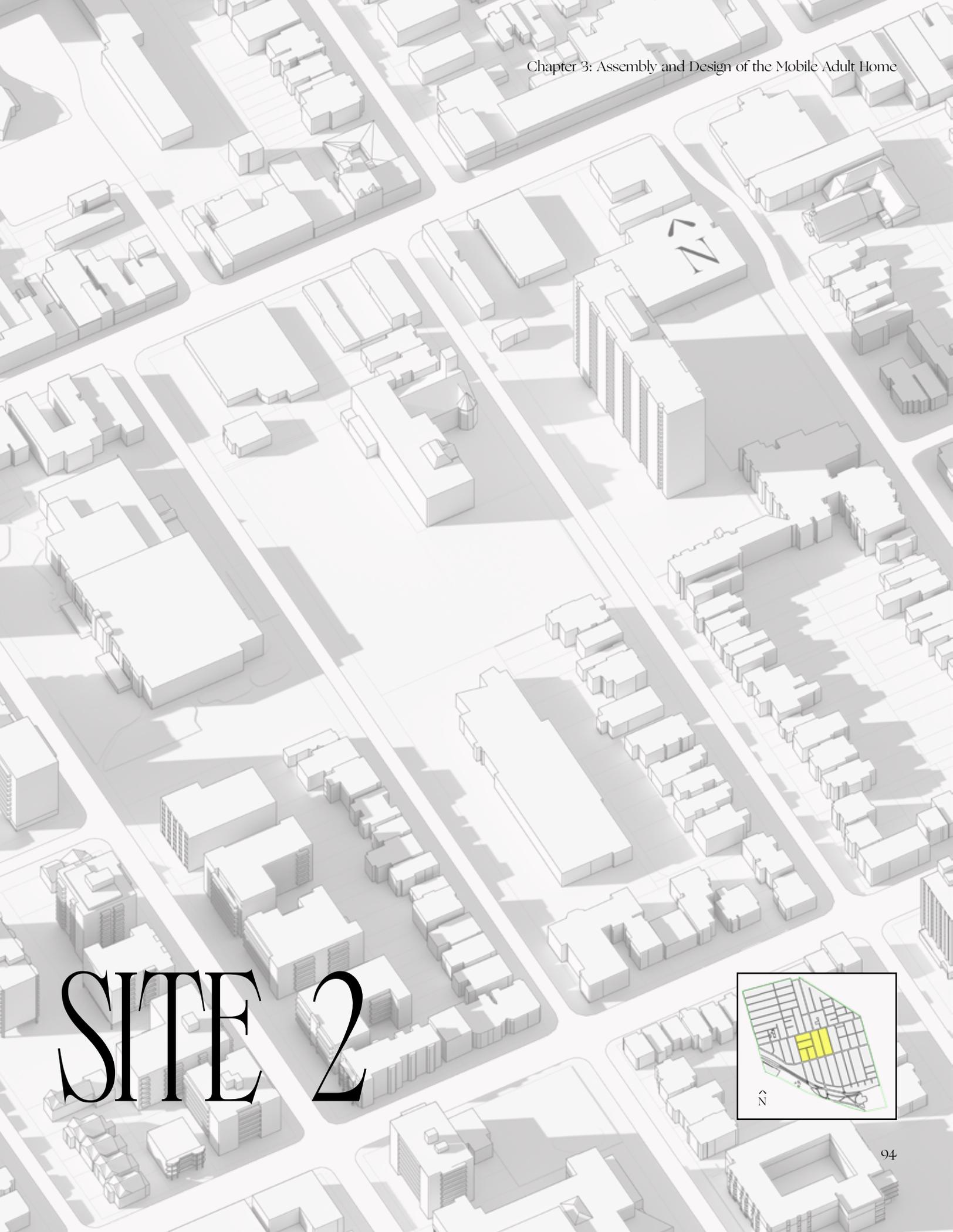


Figure 12.5: Milky Way Massing Prototypes

CLOSE AND JAMESON AVENUE



SITE 2

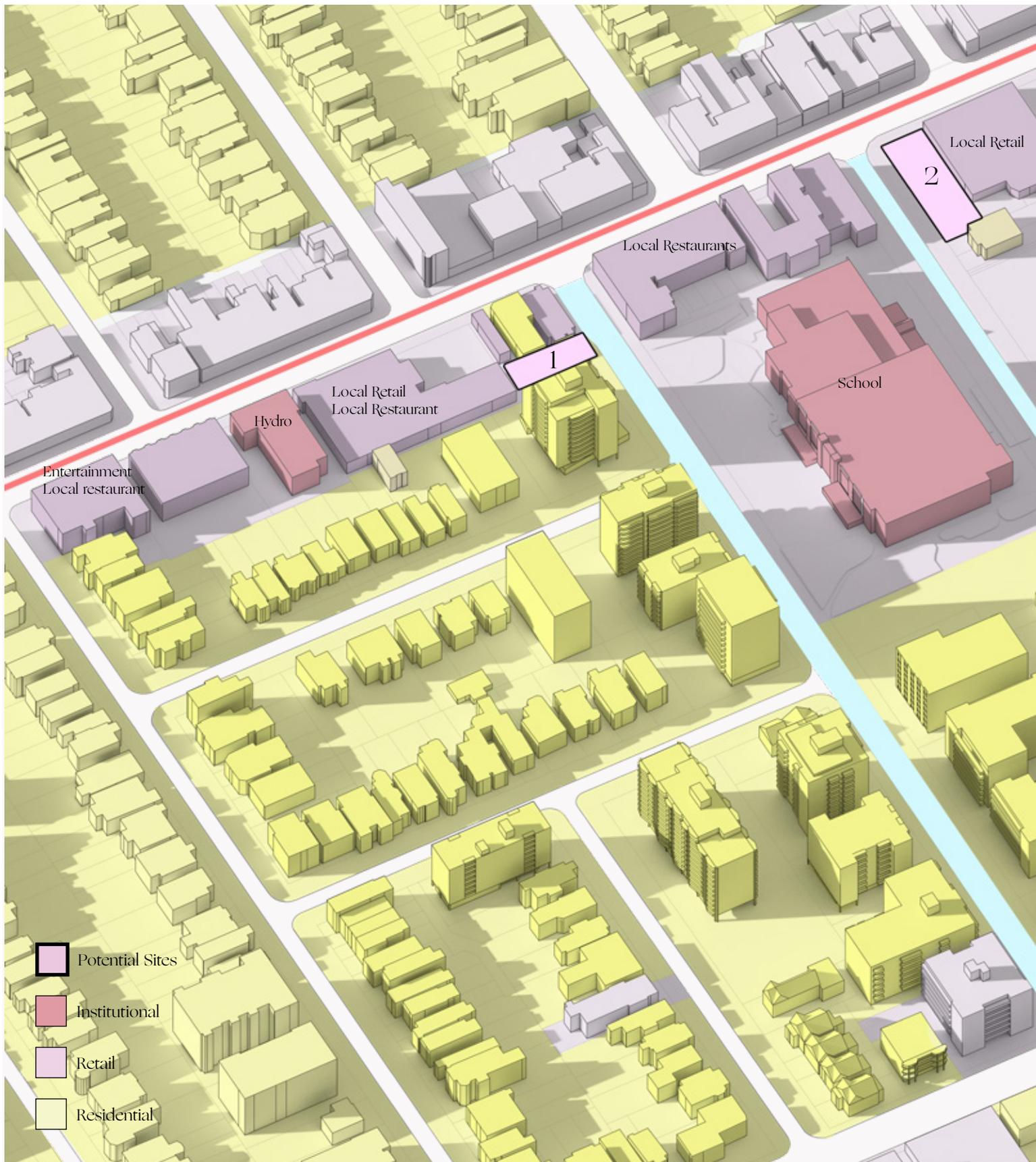


THE IN-BETWEEN SLIVER OF RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL/INSTITUTION

For Close and Jameson Avenue, the difference between this site and the Milky Way is the presence of public buildings extending further into the residential areas. There is a community center, a school and legal services on these streets. Close and Jameson Avenue act as an in-between sliver that holds residential and publicly accessible buildings. These public buildings allow for local circulation to push farther away from Queen Street West. Both Close and Jameson Avenue have residential spaces and public buildings which match the project's needs. In the ad hoc lens, the intent of picking this site is due to its potential of utilizing public interest and residential discretion. The mixed-use building that I want to propose would enable this balance of public and residential programming. As seen in Figure 12.7, a community center and school that caters to the early families that inhabit the local homes. However, I want to put a building in these streets that would cater to the dominant demographic of mobile adults in Parkdale. They would inhabit these rental apartments seen all over Parkdale and on Close and Jameson. This demographic can use more support programs specific to their needs.







ADHOC OPPORTUNITIES OF UNCONVENTIONAL SPACES

Expanding on the side streets of Close and Jameson Avenue, parking and empty lots would be an optimal site for the mobile adult home. This expansion is the adhoc opportunity of reappropriating these underutilized spaces. In Figure 12.8, one of the sites is an abandoned lot currently not in use. This corner lot acts as a buffer from Queen Street West and the homes of Parkdale residents. The corner lot is this transitional moment for a person walking in the sidewalk to see deeper into the residential blocks of Parkdale, creating an opportunity to introduce the mobile adult home's public programming. Another opportunity is a lot behind commercial stores, which workers are currently using for parking. However, if this lot is used for housing, workers can use the parking space at the strip mall in the same block. This lot is in-between a 5+ storey rental apartment and a retail store, which caters to both public and private programming.

Site 1



Site 2



Figure 12.8: Close and Jameson Building Programs

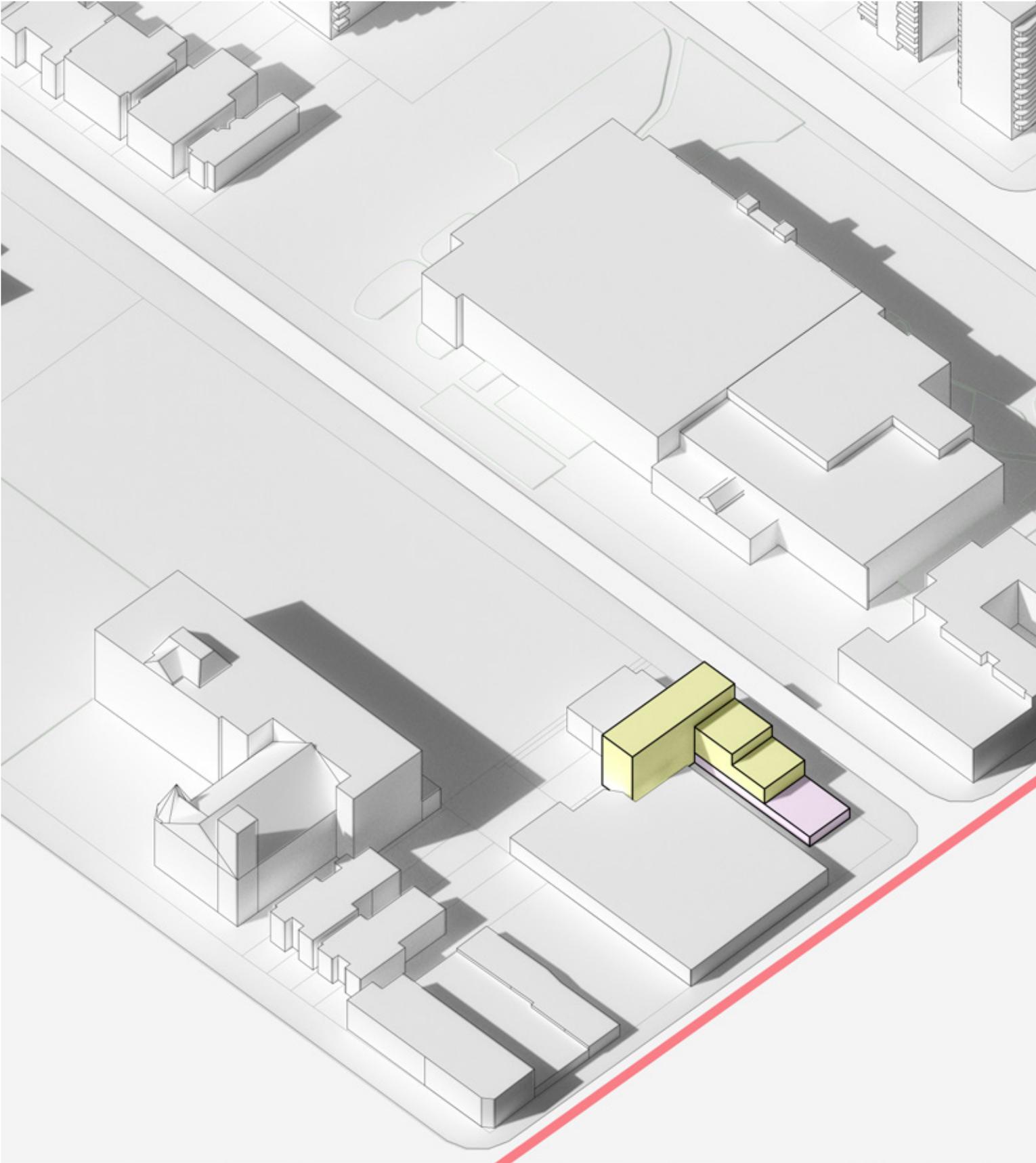
“HOLE-IN-THE-WALL” ACCESSIBILITY

For the third criteria, the “hole-in-the-wall” accessibility, these corner lots, and back parking contain the essence of balancing public and private. Figure 12.9, shows the corner lot would naturally invite civilian traffic as they pass by. Farther back into the corner lot, the site has a larger space that could be used to tuck in the apartments, taking advantage of the existing features of the abandoned lot and responding to it through the public and private massing. On the other site, the commercial building obscures the sightlines of the building, allowing the residential part of the building to be tucked in as well. This lot has a potential in creating a gradient from public to private. It lower building height of the commercial building and the 5+ storey rental apartment behind it. This would create a natural fit for the mixed-use building in between these two different building types.





Figure 12.9: Close and Jameson "Hole-in-the-wall" Accessibility



CLOSE AND JAMESON PROTOTYPE MASSING

For both the sites, I decided to take an approach of gradience. I decided to focus on activating the ground floor and putting the public programming by the sidewalk. Figure 12.10 shows where the apartment floors taper as it gets higher. This tapered building mass refers to the last paragraph where the 2 building types on-site are visually different in that the public retail front of queen street west is fairly low in height and right behind is a 5+ storey rental apartments.

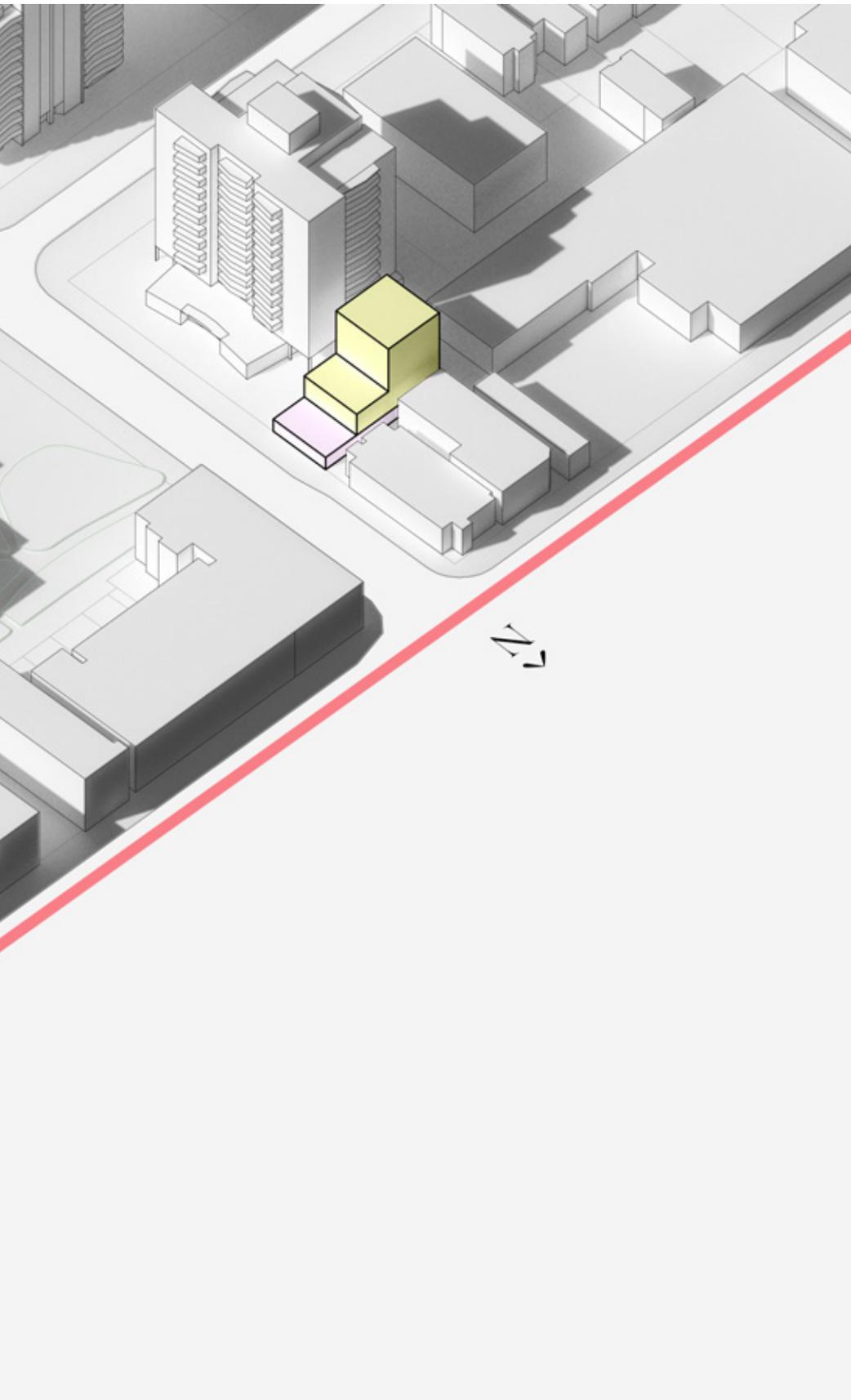
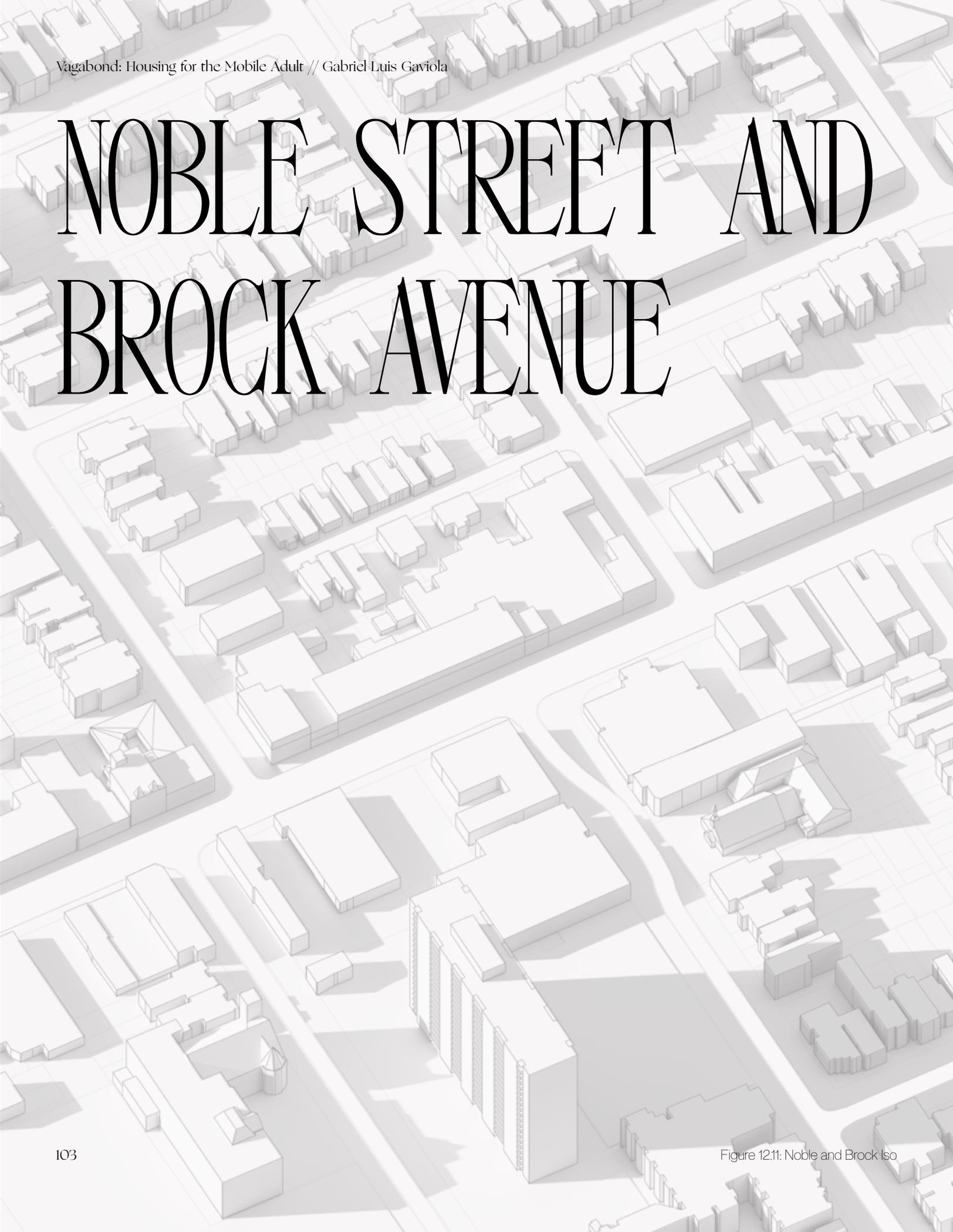


Figure 12.10: Close and Jameson Massing Prototype

NOBLE STREET AND BROCK AVENUE





SITE 3



THE IN-BETWEEN SLIVER OF RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL/INSTITUTION

The last site is different as this location is on the northern border of Queen Street West. I wanted to show that even if the location isn't specific to south Parkdale, the guidelines still work in preparing a successful site. The site of Noble Street and Brock Avenue echo the same elements in that there are many public buildings that bleed around the residential areas. For this specific site, these slivers are the side streets and laneways of Noble and Brock. These side streets and laneways are an optimal site that can host a building for the mobile adult as it can balance both public and residential. As seen in Figure 12.12, public buildings such as restaurants and bars cohabit with the neighbourhood's residential blocks. This situation allows an opportunity to fit in a project that does both to integrate the mobile adult.



Figure 12.12: Public and Private Regions of Noble and Brock





ADHOC OPPORTUNITIES OF UNCONVENTIONAL SPACES

The second criteria for finding unconventional spaces are the back lots currently being used by the retail buildings. Figure 12.13 shows that one of these lots is the abandoned parking and structure by Brock Avenue. There are opportunities of enveloping this abandoned building and repurposing it as another space for public programming. During this thesis, this abandoned building has been demolished and is currently an unfinished construction site that shows only the foundation and basement. The other sites are the back lots of the retail buildings along the laneway of Noble and Brock. There is also a large lot of land that is the block of Noble and Brock, and those spaces could be used to alleviate the lack of housing currently in Toronto.



Site 1



Site 2



Figure 12.13: Noble and Brock Building Programs

“HOLE-IN-THE-WALL” ACCESSIBILITY

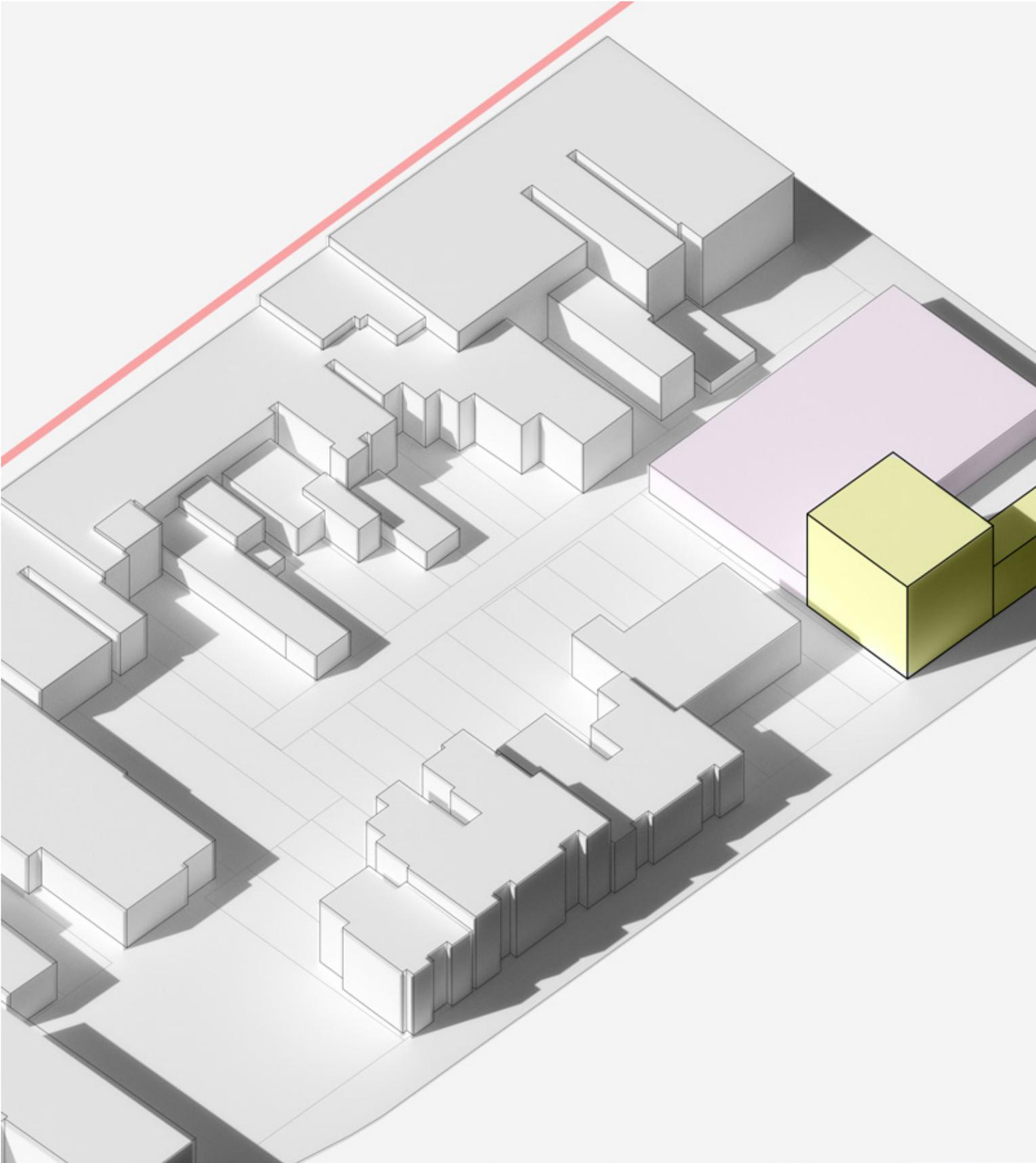
In the same case as Close and Jameson Avenue, there are numerous opportunities to allow the residential aspect of the building to be tucked in farther into the residential sectors. In Figure 12.14, this lot of Noble and Brock show a sense of cohabitation between the houses and retail stores. This location creates a fit for a mixed-use building intended for the mobile adult. In this area, the public buildings that bleed towards the residential sector allows opportunities for a suitable mobile adult home to reach deeper into the street. The other potential site that reflects this is the abandoned retail building by Brock Avenue. All the places mentioned reflect the public and private discretion, as shown in the Figure.



Figure 12.14: Noble and Brock “Hole-in-the-wall” accessibility



1
Back Alley/Laneway
Residential Discretion



NOBLE AND BROCK PROTOTYPE MASSING

The main site I wanted to focus on was the abandoned retail structure, as it had the opportunity to reuse an existing structure. My main goal for this massing was to figure out a way to build with the abandoned structure and the potential opportunities it could have. I decided to use the existing structure as the public programming and visually define the apartments as a new addition to the structure. With this new structure defining a different program, I wanted to explore options that would form a relationship with the abandoned retail structure and create the same private discretion that the other massing structures had. I decided to form a taller structure that is stepped back from the primary side street and provide a courtyard to develop this reciprocal relationship with the publicly accessible existing structure.

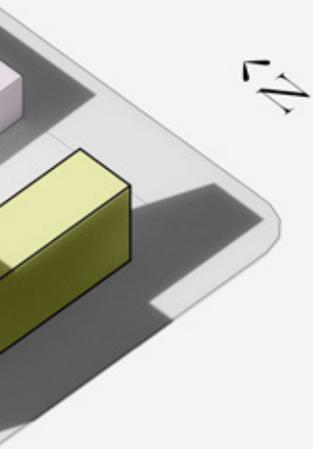


Figure 12.15: Noble and Brock Massing Prototype

Milky Way



Close and Jameson



Noble and Brock



SITE MASSING, PARCEL DIVISIONS AND DESIGN DIRECTION

The massing exploration of all three sites was directed at determining how to physically respond to these empty lots' physical potential. For these sites to be viable, laws must change to allow leeway in splitting up the lots. The problem with affordable housing solutions such as laneways and garden suites are that they need to share a lot and utilities. The tenants would have to share mail, electricity, and hydro. The benefit of this infill development is that it is easy to connect these structures to the city's existing infrastructure. However, there needs to be a sense of address autonomy that allows more lots and undocumented laneways to be used. In the housing crisis of Toronto, the goal should be to widen opportunities to build housing in the city would provide more housing for people. This also reflects the city's Main Street Intensification Guidelines, which promote taller buildings in order to alleviate the stress of the housing crisis. Most buildings in Queen Street West are two to three storeys high. The first floor being a storefront and the second and third being residential. However, the city has been wanting to reach a six-storey height limit to help with the housing crisis.⁹⁸ In

⁹⁸ Donovan Vincent, "The city wants a six-storey height limit for Queen Street West. Does that help or hinder development there?" *Toronto Star*, February 2, 2020, <https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2020/02/02/the-city-wants-a-six-storey-height-limit-for-queen-street-west-does-that-help-or-hinder-development-there.html>.

recent cases in 2021, there has been ongoing action in going even to nine storeys high.⁹⁹ In this Zoning By-law Amendment Application, the Director, Community Planning, Toronto, and East York have requested to receive a permit for a new eight storey mixed-use building with an overall height of 30.9 meters. This proposed building by the city will have a five-storey, 16.3 metre street wall and have a three-meter step back at the sixth, seventh, and eighth floor. It was clear that this project needed to balance both densification and the current skylines of Parkdale for the three sites. Note that this thesis is not focused on Toronto's legal planning and bylaws. It proposes a prototype that explores a different lens, using adhocism in thinking about housing in the city. Exploring outside the boundaries limiting the current rental housing in Toronto is essential.

For the building massing on these three sites, the intent was to taper off the higher it went or keep the tall sections of the building pushed back to maintain the height and aesthetics of the street. The general ideas of mass exploration in all sites were to respond to the existing context of its surroundings. The direction of infill development in this thesis was a way to integrate the mobile adult in a non-destructive intervention. In all instances of site exploration, the guidelines provided a linear conclusion of the response needed for each site. In Milky Way, the answer is to keep the relationship of the laneway and the Queen Street West sidewalk. I explored the side streets and their relationship with Queen Street West. This analysis of public and private enabled a sense of scale for the mobile adult home as it used adhocism as an urban tool to find opportunities inside Parkdale's relationship with Queen Street West. These instances of reflection involved the analysis of public versus private, the possibilities of mobile adult integration and how to redefine these spaces for the demographic. After, the design of the mobile adult home should reflect both the typology of its surroundings and the neighbourhood scale. The visual camouflage would allow this infill home to integrate itself as a part of the neighbourhood, referencing the concepts of the storefronts of Queen Street West, the materials such as brick as seen in the surrounding stores, the general building heights, and the public accessibility. Qualities that define the character of Queen Street West and how that would reflect the design of the mobile adult home.

⁹⁹ Toronto, "1521 Queen Street West – Zoning By-law Amendment Application -Request for Directions Report," *Community Planning, Toronto and East York*, February 5, 2021, <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/te/bg/rd/backgroundfile-163391.pdf>.



THE MILKY WAY PROTOTYPE

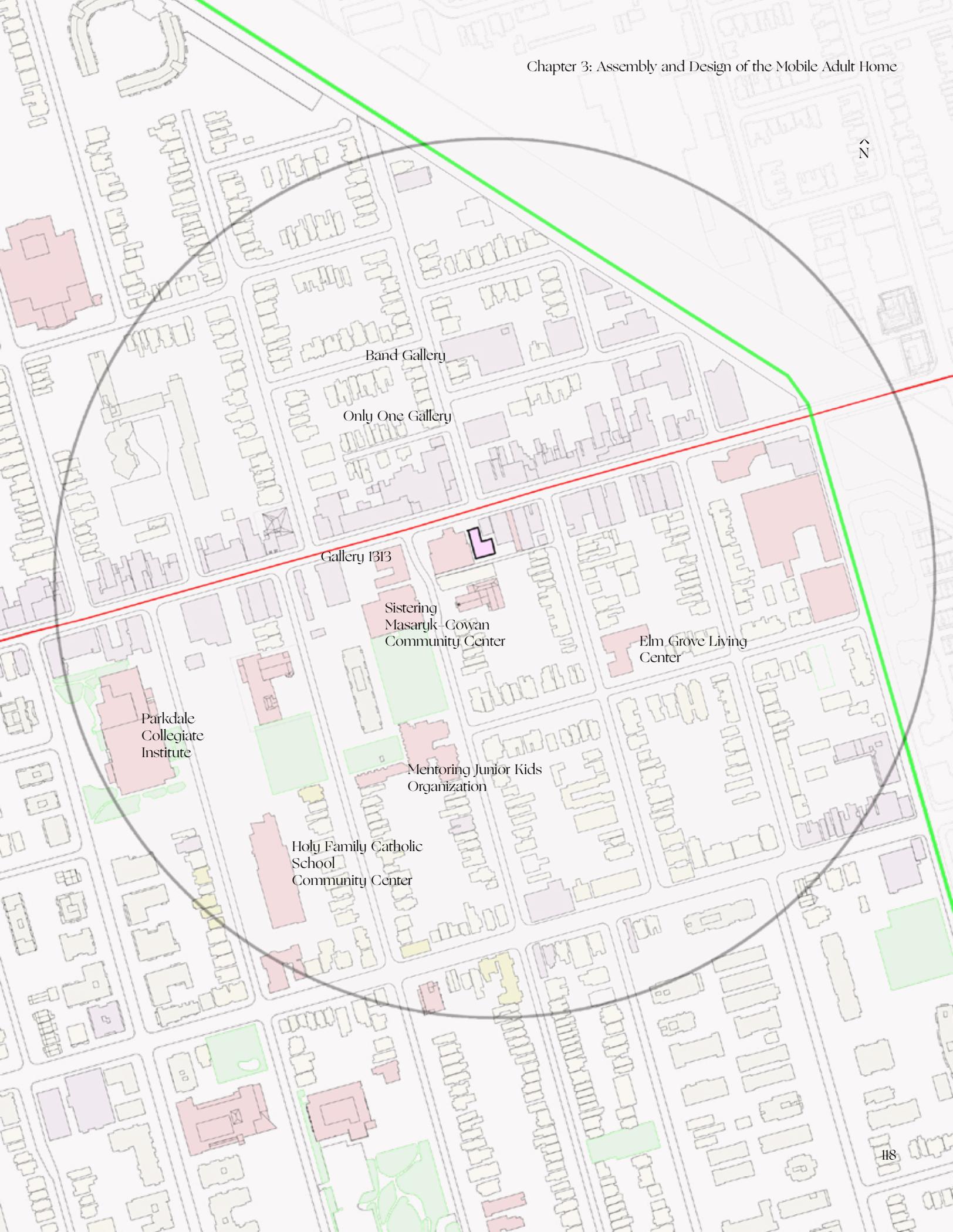




I chose the library parking lot by the Milky Way from all the sites proposed. The three sites discussed successful based on the three criteria. However, the Milky Way has the most potential in community building, diverse experiences, and residential discretion. There is an inherent feature of laneway and sidewalk relationship that I want to explore in this thesis. The Tibetan Community Garden surrounded by the homes is a very fruitful feature of community structure I want to expand on. The diversity of stores in the Milky Way block is a nice feature that would benefit many immigrant mobile adults that commonly live in the south side of Parkdale. Another major factor in choosing this Milky Way site is the public library as it is one of the learning centres in Parkdale and it is closest to Queen Street West. The support program I want to create for the mobile adults has similar goals as the library. This platform for the mobile adult should be a tool and resource hub for them. The proposed prototype

serves as an example of how a neighbourhood study should inform any new housing typology. As the needs of the site change, the floors and programs can change with them. This prototype is an example of what could be done to these sites. In the Milky Way Area, there are a diverse number of restaurants and shops. As seen in figure 14.1, the block has a variety of restaurants and businesses: a Vietnamese restaurant, a Hawaiian bar, a small Mosque, a West Indian grocery, dispensary, piercing parlor, real estate agency, and public library. My initial idea is to design a coffee shop that allows people from the restaurants to have dessert and people from the library to use as a supplementary space to read and work. The coffee shop can also provide employment for when a tenant gets laid off and is looking for new opportunities. This sentiment of support is something I want to portray in this home. It is a buffer for the mobile adult to face the instability they are experiencing.

The goal of the home support program is to act as an incubator for the mobile adults. Many services cater to more precarious demographics available in Parkdale. In Figure 14.2, a five-minute walking radius of the site includes notable programs of the Only One Gallery and Gallery 1313. These not-for-profit artist-run galleries support local artists and offer spaces for development and networking opportunities. Another incubator for creatives is the Band Gallery, which supports Black artists and functions as platforms for them. For the youth is the Masaryk-Cowan Community Center, a center for recreation, music and arts, entrepreneurship, and support programs. The Sistering- A Woman's Place supports trans and at-risk women who are unhoused or precariously housed. There is a nursing home called Elm Grove Living Center and Catholic churches, schools, and other community centers in the area.



Band Gallery

Only One Gallery

Gallery 1313

Sistering
Masaryk-Cowan
Community Center

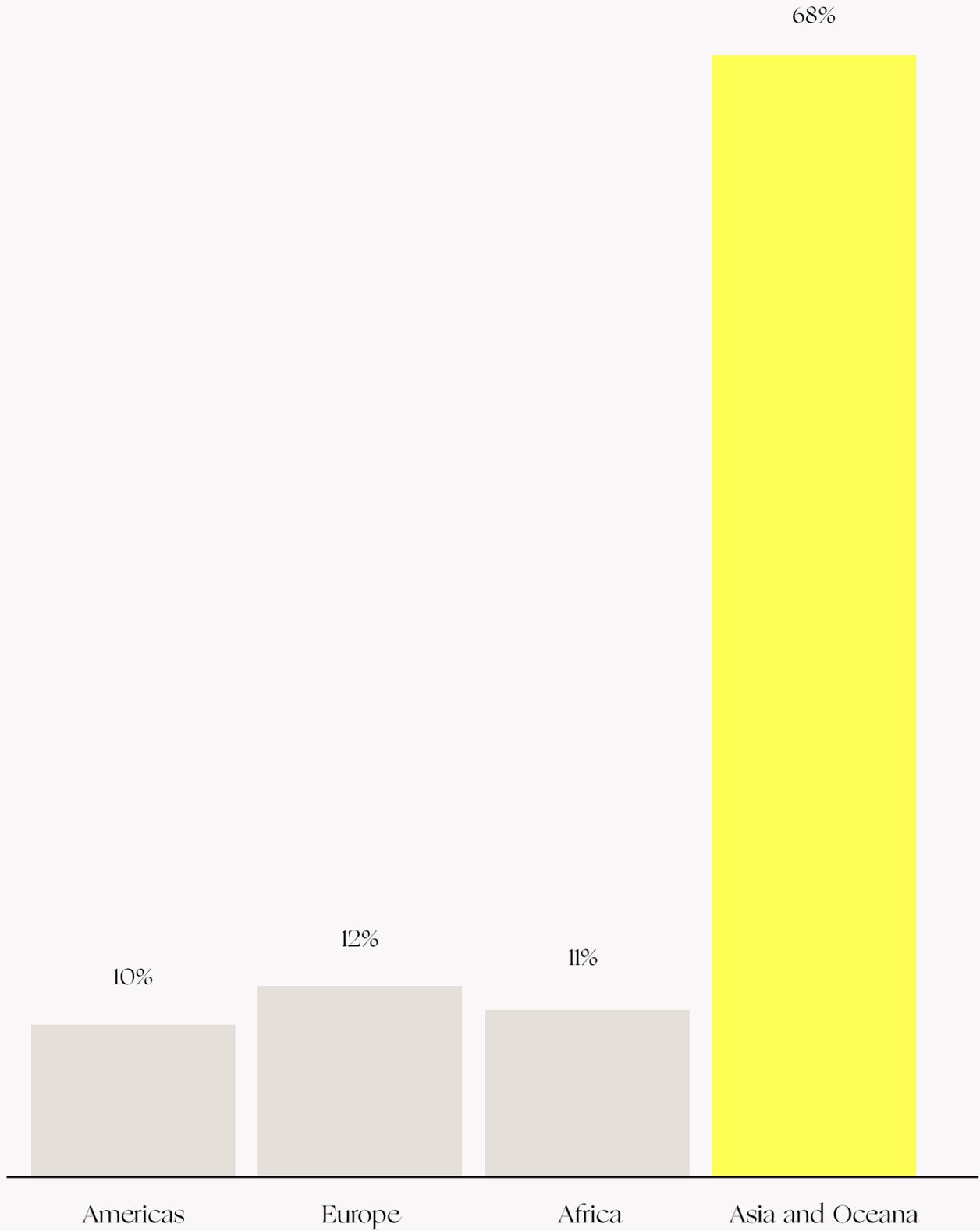
Elm Grove Living
Center

Parkdale
Collegiate
Institute

Mentoring Junior Kids
Organization

Holy Family Catholic
School
Community Center

Recent Immigrants



These institutions offer services to help people by providing them with space. However, there aren't enough services that enable mobile adults. In Parkdale, 68 percent of recent mobile adult immigrants are of Asia and Oceania descent, from India, Nepal, Philippines, and China. There are no supportive programs for young adults wanting to become independent adults. Many newcomers to Canada are very educated, however they lack experience in Canada. One of the major hurdles is translating their education and experience in Canada. Many immigrants would never find work in their field and could not apply their skills and knowledge in Canada. Employment can be highly regulated such as in the health sector. Professions such as medicine, nursing, and pharmacy need licences to practice. Many new Canadians must return to school, and if they are lucky there are equivalency programs and are allowed to get certified.¹⁰⁰ The lack of Canadian experience is another barrier preventing immigrants from finding employment. Many of my family friends and relatives found work by networking and asking around just to find contacts in companies.

¹⁰⁰ Government of Canada, "Educational credential Assessment (ECA) for Express Entry: Who needs one," *Immigration and Citizenship*, <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/immigrate-canada/express-entry/documents/education-assessed/who.html>.



THE VAGABOND



HOME





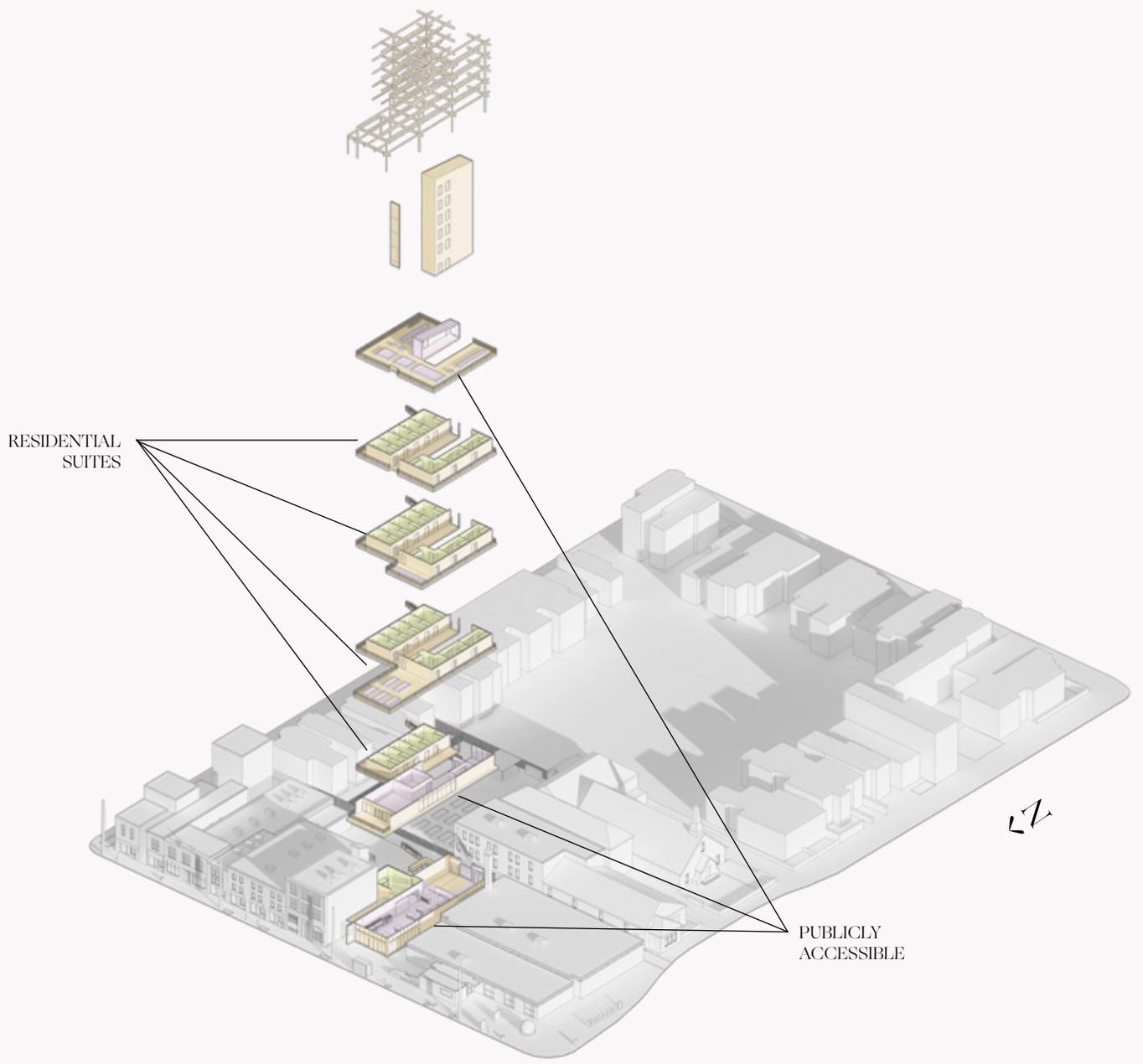
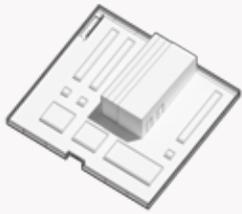


Figure 14.5: Vagabond Home Context Plan and Exploded Iso



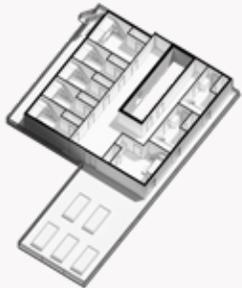
RESIDENCY ENTRANCE/MAIL
-26 sq m



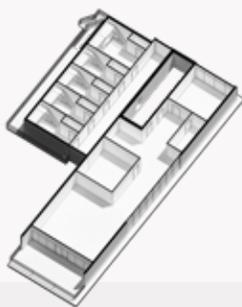
OUTDOOR WORKSHOP
-71 sq m



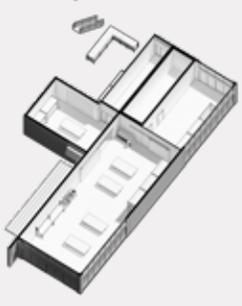
FURNITURE AND
MATERIAL DONATION
INVENTORY
-59 sq m



ELEVATOR



TENANT WORKSHOP
-51 sq m



PUBLIC WORKSHOP
-177 sq m



FIRST FLOOR

THE WORKSHOP

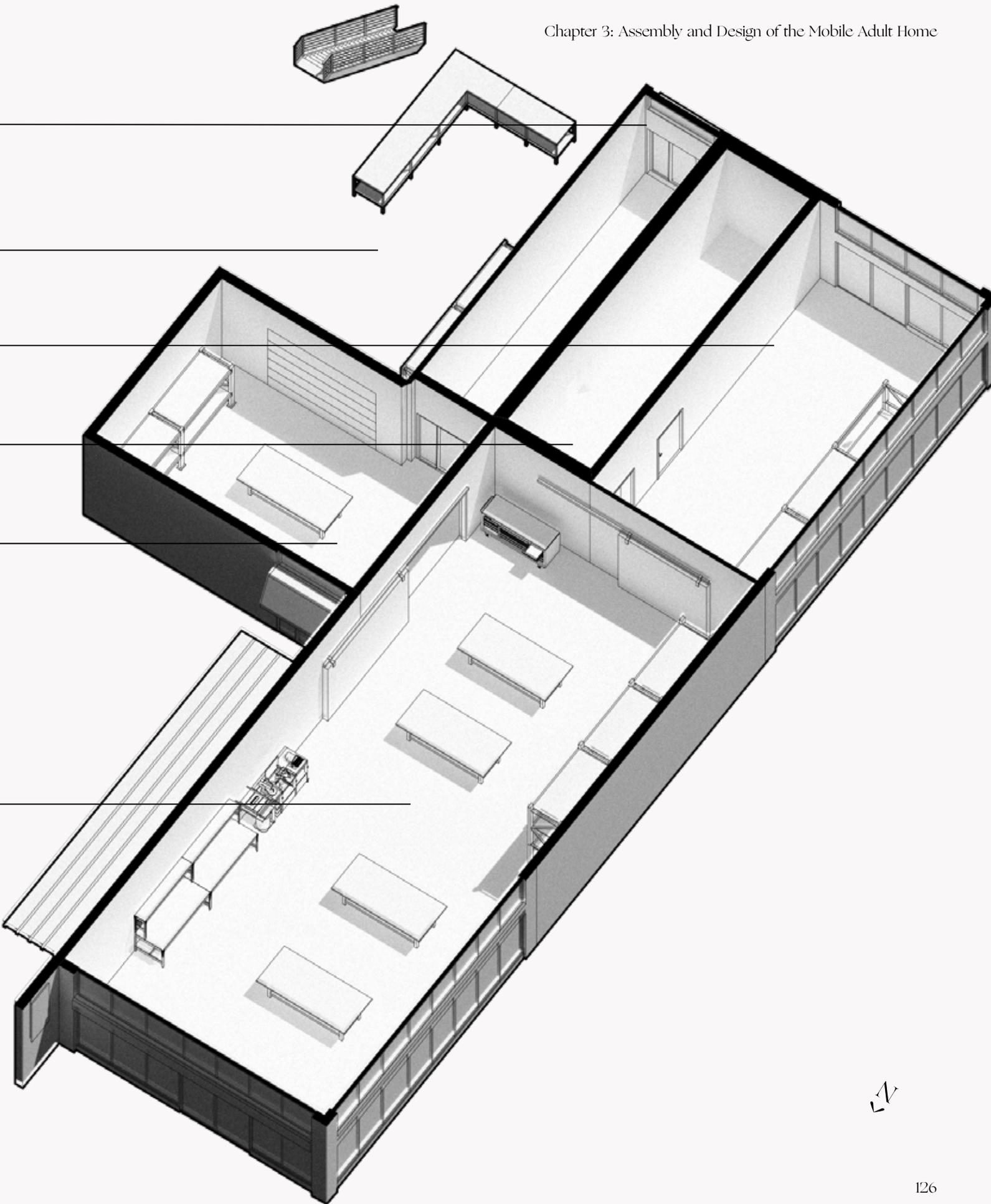
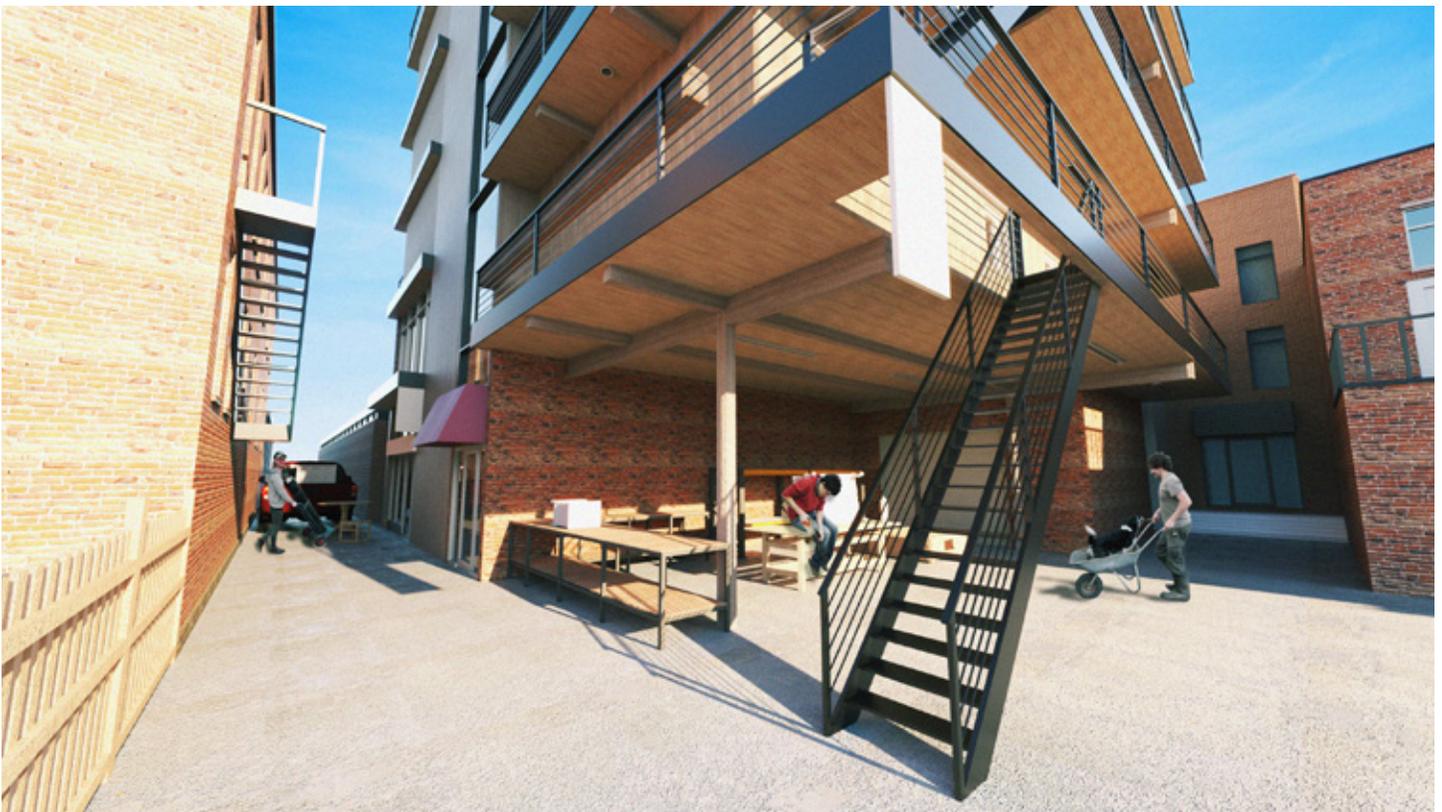






Figure 14.7: First Floor Workshop Render 1



The Vagabond home has a workshop that has two main purposes on the first floor. In Figure 14.7 to 14.9, these renders will show the workshop's vibrant atmosphere and practical uses. The first is to function as a place to learn basic hand tools, common household fixes, and small projects. For example, the residents learn basic plumbing and light carpentry, which help them get onto the DIY/Maker projects such as 3D printing hinges and connections for more complicated constructions such as tables and shelving. An important skill is to become more resourceful and be able to be self-reliant, having transferable skills in making and repair. I intend for the space to be a workshop for the residents and people in Parkdale to use. It is designed to be a resource, where people can go ask questions, find help, and use the fabrication technologies. The workshop remains open to the public throughout the week and has a dedicated schedule of classes, reflecting the learning and resources of the public library. The first floor of the Vagabond home acts as a more hands on learning experience for the mobile adult. There is an outdoor area in the lane where people can use to paint. Figure x.x shows this outdoor workshop activating the laneway, creating activity across from the residential



Figure 14.10: Vagabond Shelf 2021

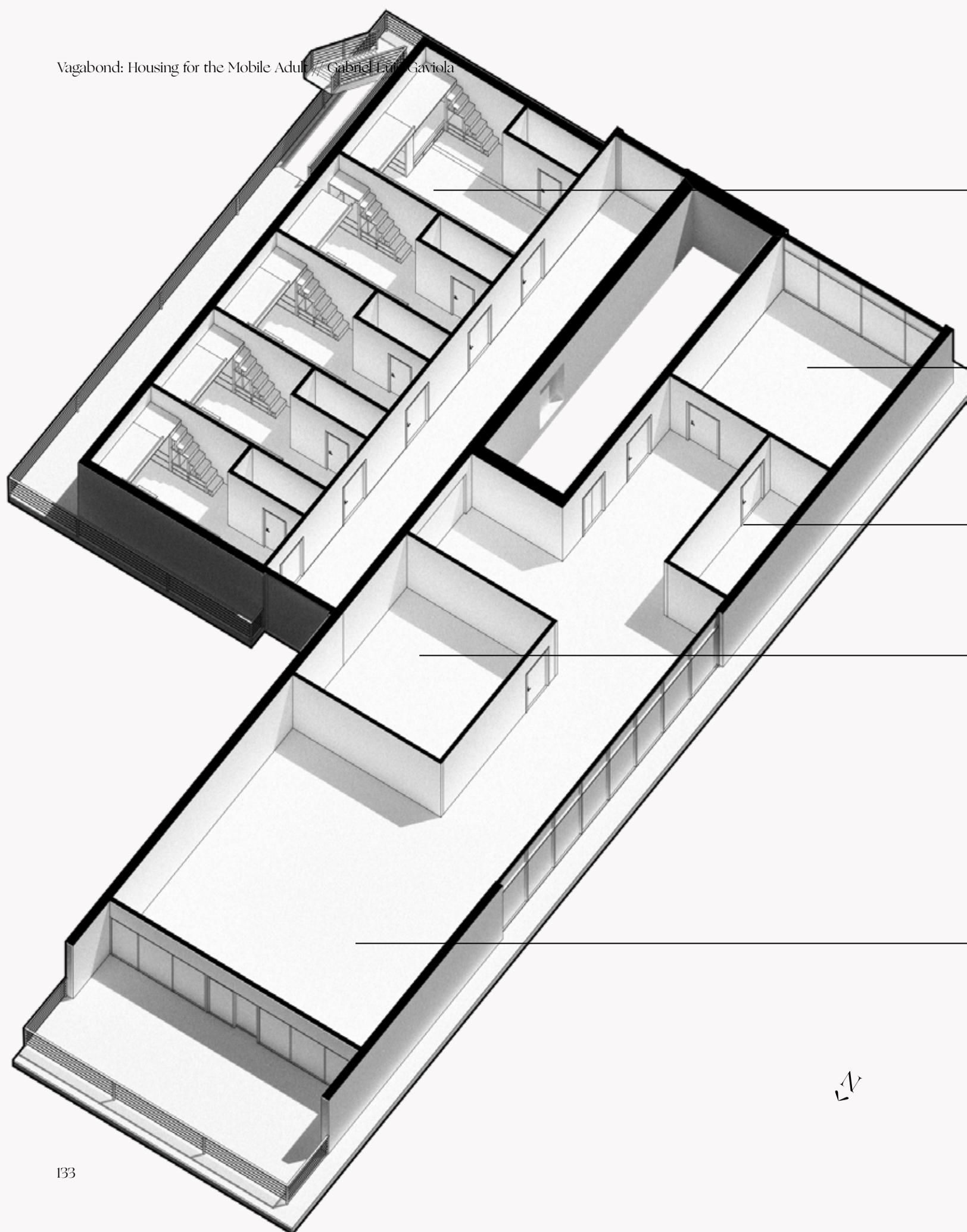


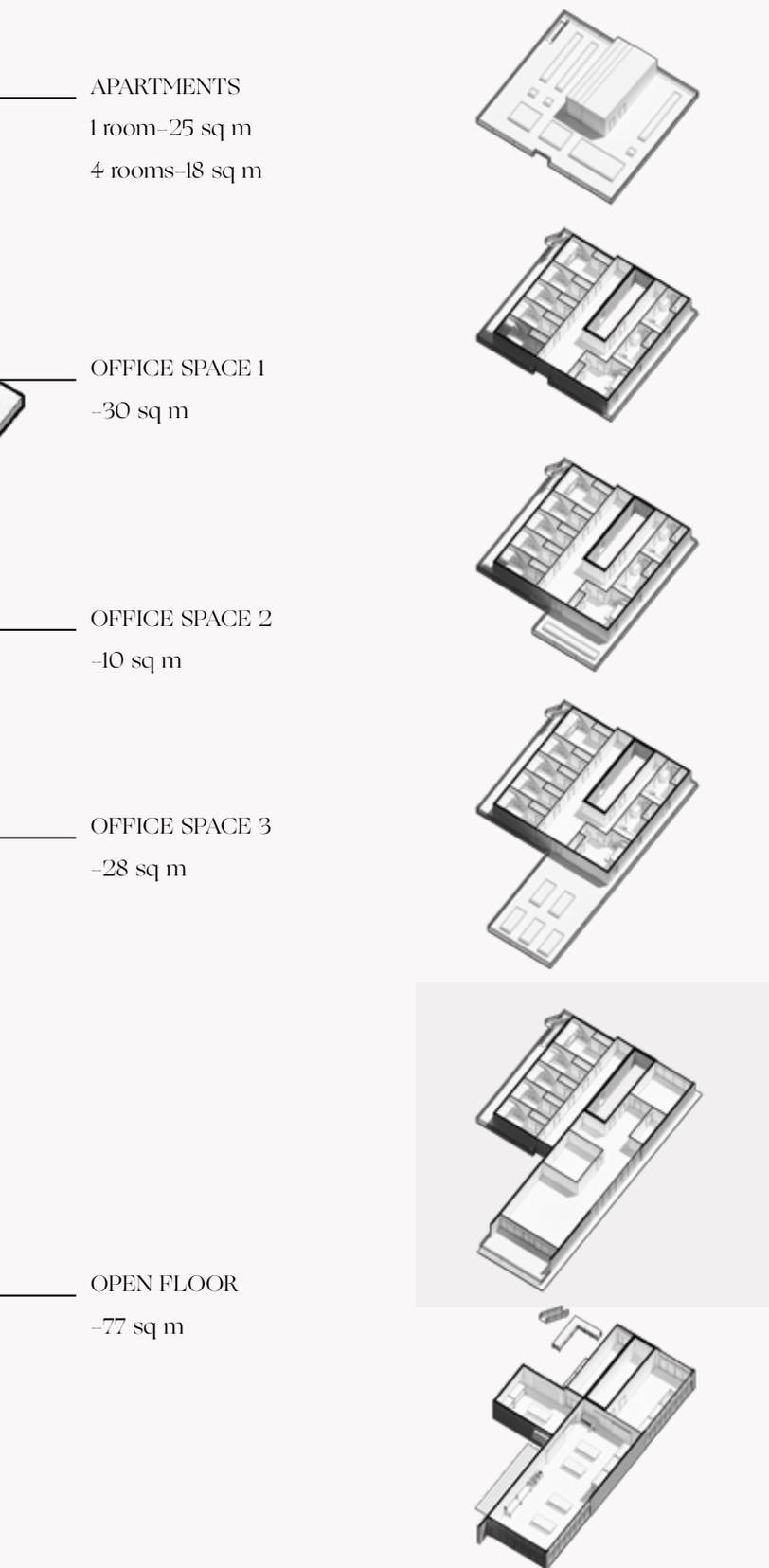
homes of the block. It is located across the community garden in the Milky Way. The outdoor workspace activates the existing laneway, maximizing its use beyond a space for trash bins and parking. Lastly, the workshop offers a circulation economy whereby used furniture can be donated and kept for people who want it. As 86.6 percent of the residences in Parkdale are rental, with a relatively younger working demographic, the circulation of used furniture is much needed. In the more direct way of adhocism, the workshop acts as a place for people to respond to the mobile adult's temporariness of rental living. It is to re-use and reappropriate the existing issues of Parkdale's demographic and use it as a way of sustainable and affordable living. This furniture economy allows for people to directly use second-hand furniture or use it for personal projects.





Figure 14.11: Workshop Section





SECOND FLOOR

THE INCUBATOR

Figure 14.12: Vagabond Home Second Floor



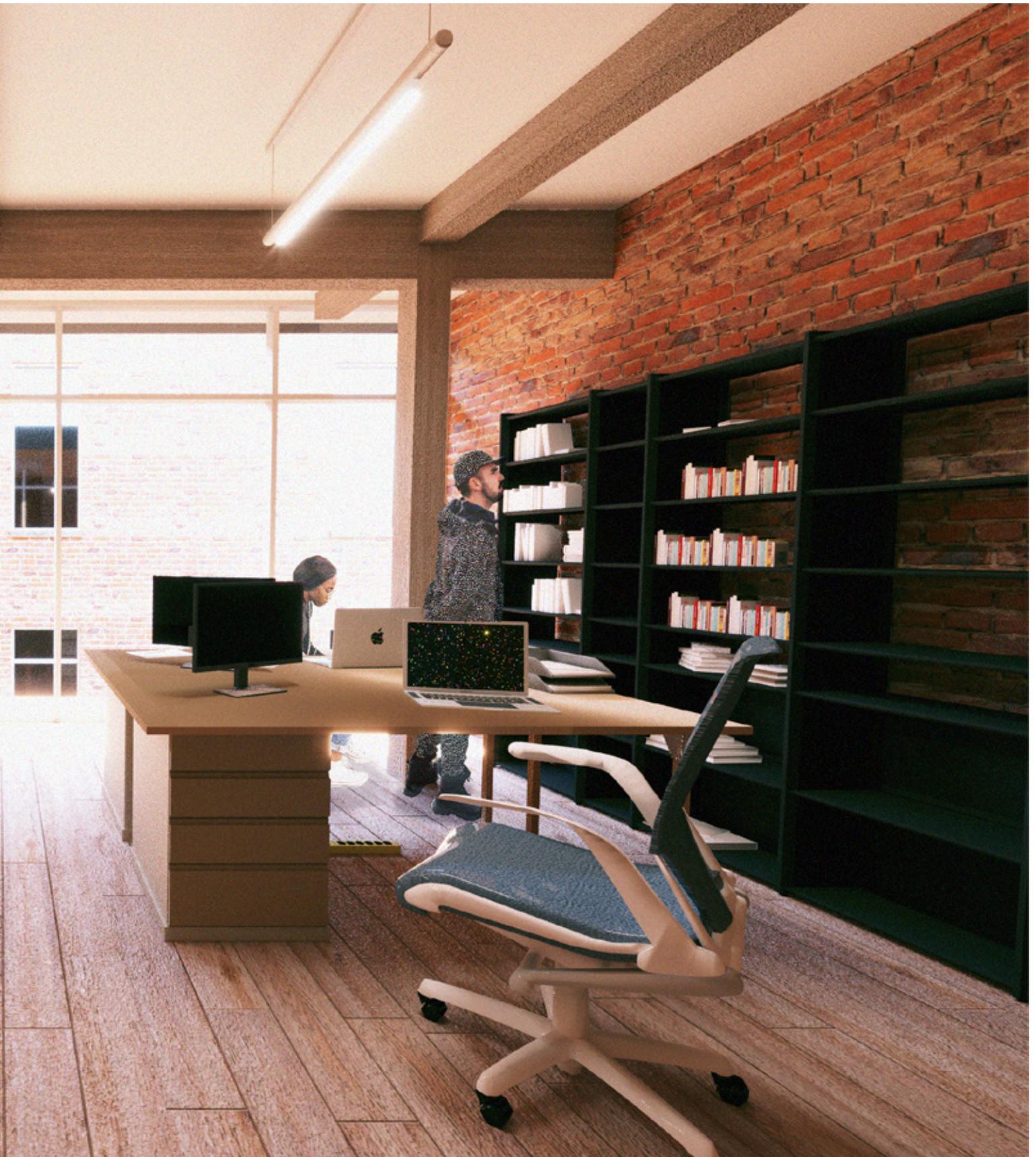


Figure 14.13: Second Floor Office Space

One of the mobile adult issues I want to specifically address is their lack of experience. This general problem that most mobile adults have are the reasons for their lack of options regarding independence. Due to the changing landscape of the economy, mobile adults are forced to stay longer in their transitional phase compared to previous generations. Mobile Adults are expected to be financially independent, but they are forced to stay longer on education and accept the current high cost of living. In addition, the precarious job market is also a barrier that most mobile adults must deal with. For this vagabond home, I want to create a space for them to tackle the mobile adult inexperience and their struggles in entering the job market.

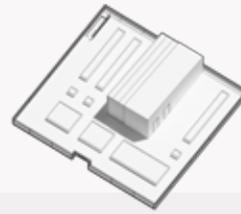
I created a platform on the second floor for entrepreneurial and business needs. One of the ways to integrate the mobile adult is to create a space for them to network and access opportunities. The second floor is dedicated to office spaces and has an open-floor plan. The tenants of the residential units use the office spaces on the same floor. The organisation works similarly as an art residency, where acceptance is through an application process. The rent of their apartment includes the cost of the office space, reducing some of the costs of small entrepreneurial ventures. To minimize the cost, Figure 14.13 shows the possibility of using the workshop to create desks. They can use the 3d printers to create connectors to some plywood to create a fast and cost-effective way to create a workspace. The open floor in Figure 14.14 is for entrepreneurial seminars, job fairs, and networking events. These programs are open to the public – another opportunity to meet people and network. Becoming familiar with one's community promotes social relationships that might grow into other referral opportunities. For small business owners or people wanting to start a business, the set up is perfect for product advertisement and promotion of services. In my experience as an immigrant, having a space where I can make connections is critical.



Figure 14.14: Second Floor Event Space



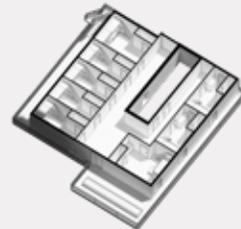
THIRD to FIFTH FLOOR



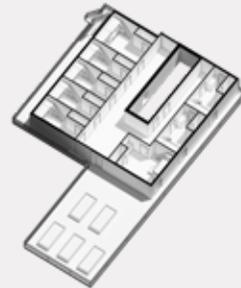
APARTMENT 2
-25 sq m



APARTMENT 1
-18 sq m



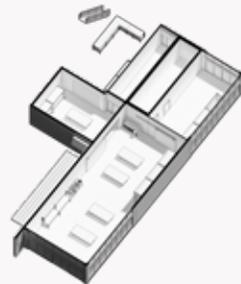
APARTMENT 4
-18 sq m



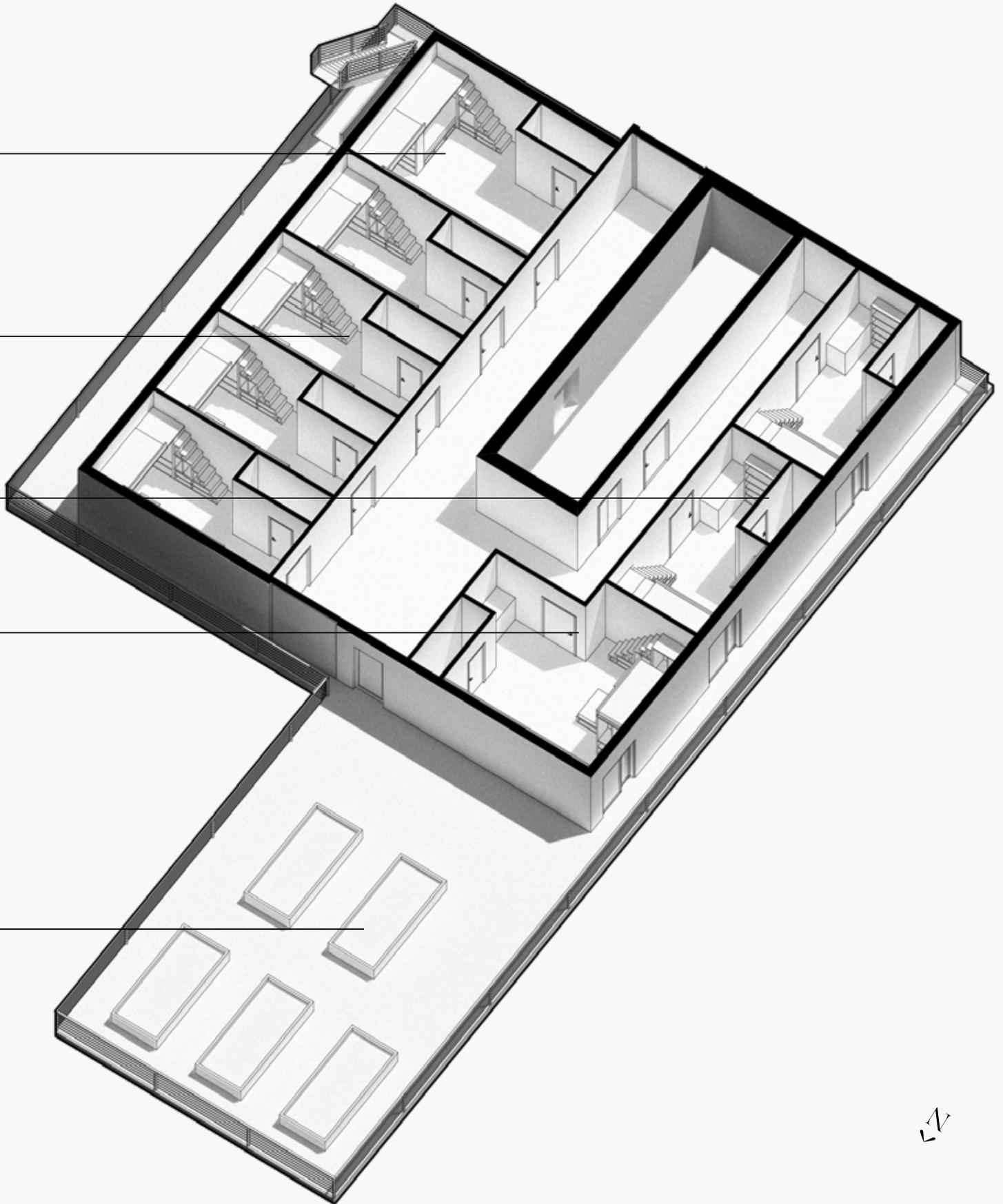
APARTMENT 3
-28 sq m



COMMUNITY GARDEN
-129 sq m



THE APARTMENTS



The apartments have four different types, all catering to one- or two-person households. They have a lease for a maximum of three years. I intend to create a transitional “buffer” for mobile adults, not solve Toronto’s housing crisis. I want to offer the demographic an alternative to the long waits of co-ops. During the period of stay at the Vagabond Home, the mobile adults can develop skills, adjust, and save money. As for rent, I am basing it on Toronto’s definition of affordability—that is 30 percent of the renter’s income (before taxes). My target renter has an annual income of \$32,000. The rent is approximately \$800. For the two person apartments, the total household income is \$74,000, so the rent is \$1600. There are 4 unique apartment compositions in the vagabond home, which can be seen in Figure 14.16. Two units are for single use and the other two are 2-person living situations.

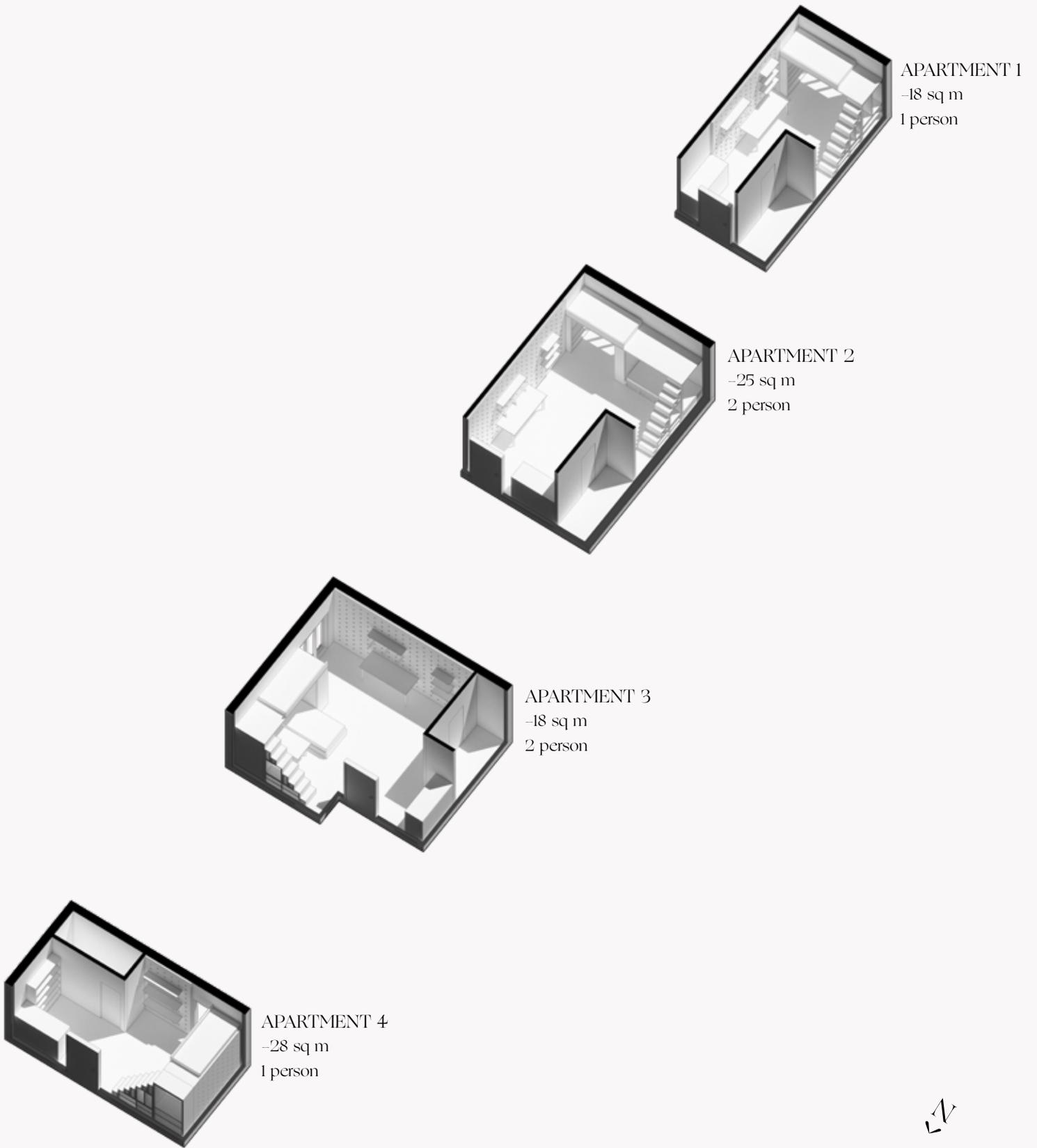


Figure 14.16: Vagabond Home Apartment Types





Figure 14.17: Vagabond Home Single Apartment Render 1





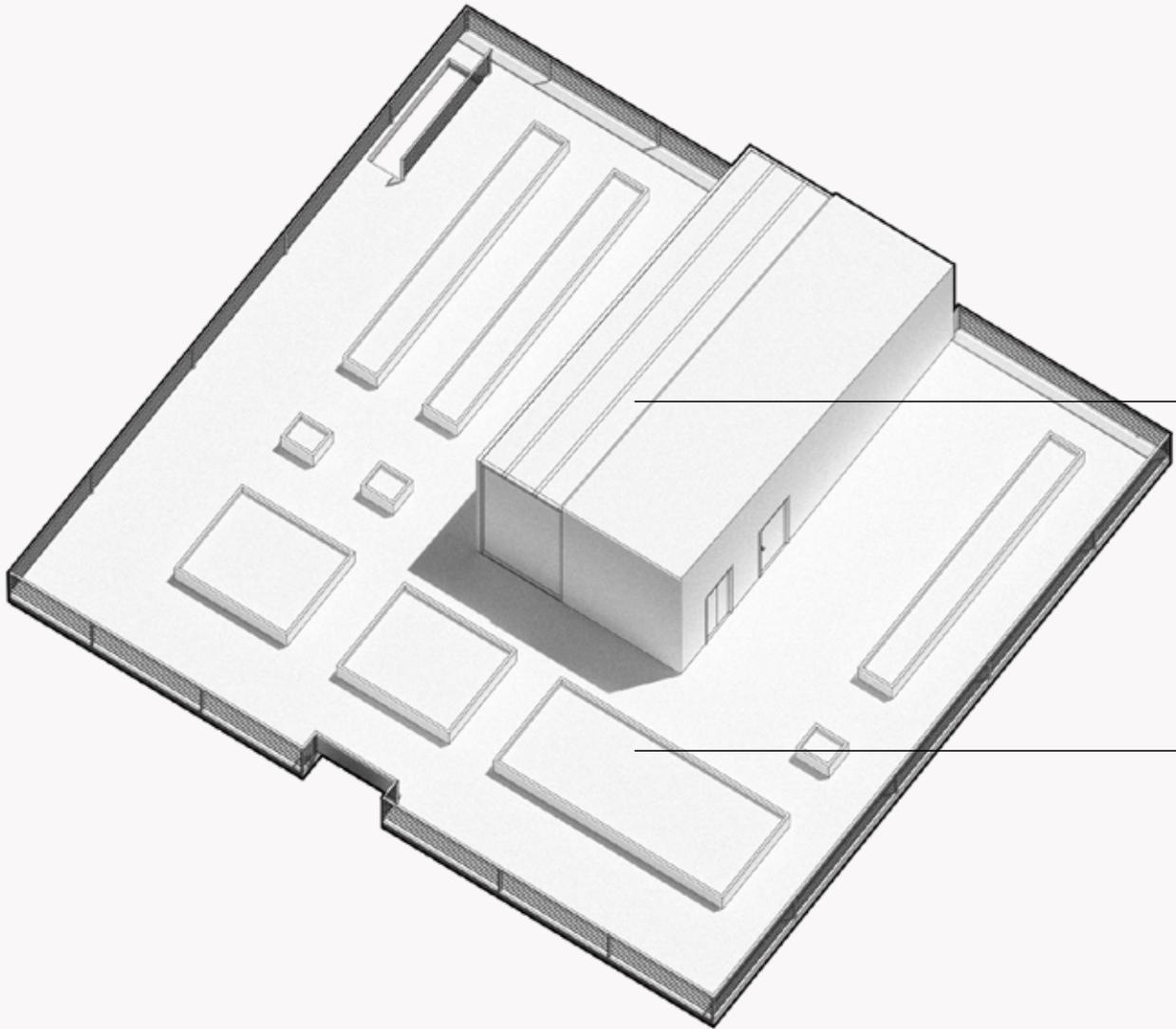
As for the apartments themselves, they are designed to reflect the flexibility of the mobile adult lifestyle. The apartments are designed to maximize a small space for the user. In the renders of Figure 14.17 to 14.19, I portray the minimal effort required of the user in inhabiting the space. For example, when the user needs a table, the large pegboard wall can be used with dowels and scrap wood from the workshop to create an office space. The shelving can be moved upwards so that it becomes a night table with the use of a desk lamp. When tenants have company, they could disassemble the table and create a larger, more spacious gathering space for hosting. These are examples of how this space could be used. Tenants can buy their own furniture or take from the communal furniture inventory if

Figure 14.20: Mobile Adults Working in a Coffee Shop

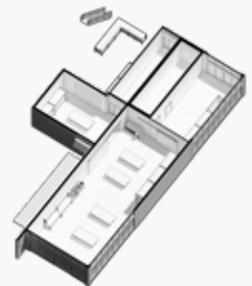
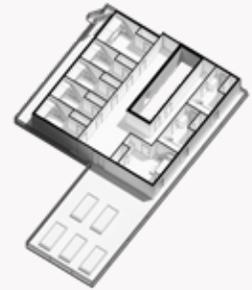
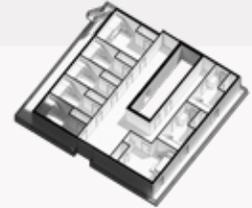
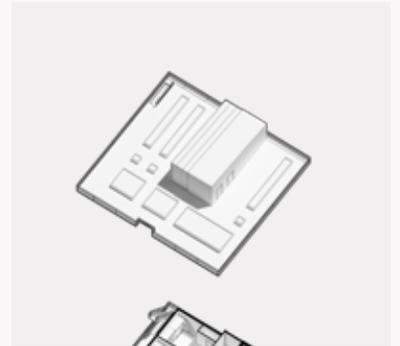




they choose to not participate in the workshop. The design of these apartments is meant to respond to the current normalization of living small in the big city. The design responds to the very limiting housing situations such as micro apartments. Through the adhoc lens, the existing context of small square spaces of apartments is used and maximized through DIY. Using the peg board and readaptation of second-hand furniture and materials is a way to customize the space meant to cater to the malleability and limited resources of the mobile adult. The Vagabond home is designed to promote individual agency. I want to give options to the inhabitants and let them choose how they want to arrange their living space. Depending on the needs of the user, the apartment is fluid.



ROOF



GREENHOUSE
-28 sq m

COMMUNITY GARDEN
-320 sq m

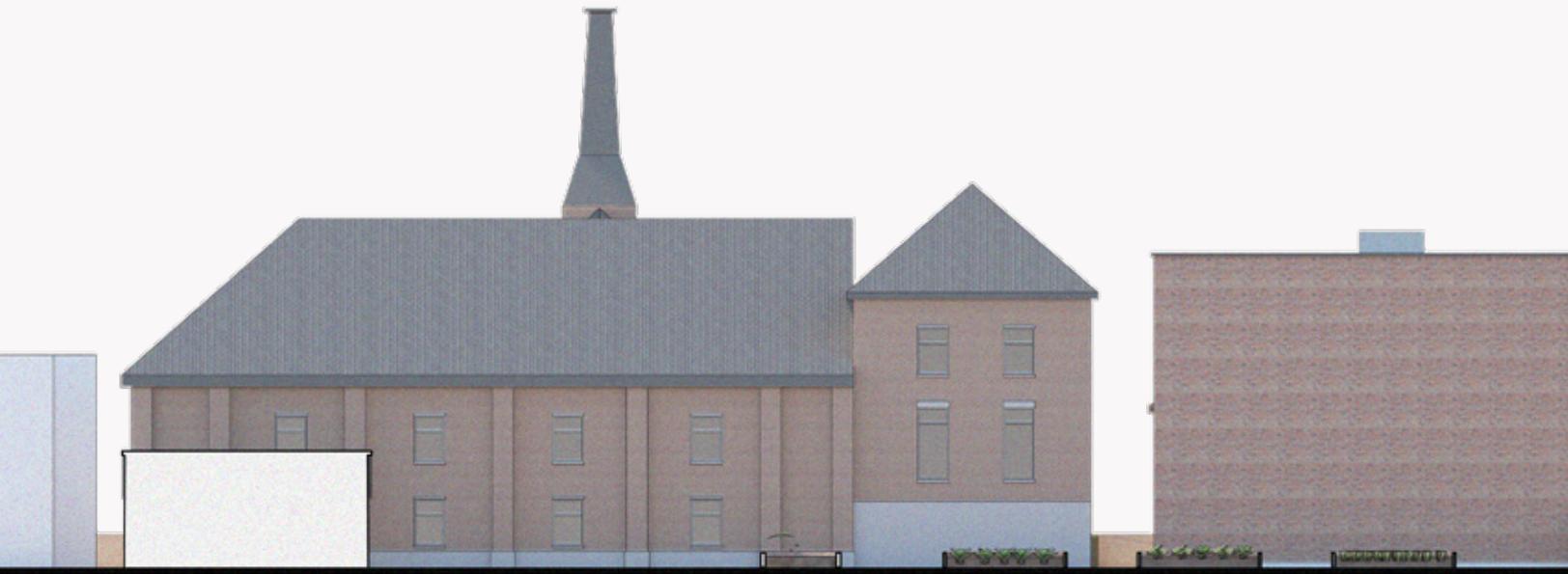
THE GARDEN





Figure 14.23: Vagabond Home Greenhouse

-  Apartments
-  Publicly Accessible Spaces



Church

Community Garden



Community building is an important part of mobile adult integration. The open space for job fairs is one aspect in this project to create community familiarity. In addition, I wanted to emphasize the active street level and laneway level. Specifically in Milky Way, there exists the open workshop adjacent to the community garden. I wanted to activate the laneway by redefining it as another communal space.

Vagabond Home



Figure 14.24: Vagabond Home East View Section

- Apartment
- Publicly Accessible Spaces



The feature of the local neighbourhood community garden is on the mid-block south of the laneway. The Tibetan Community mainly runs it. Through the ad hoc lens, I want to accentuate the existing features of the Milky Way to physically integrate the Vagabond home into the neighbourhood's ecosystem. For this site, I wanted to expand on the community garden and allow the mobile immigrants to benefit from this feature.

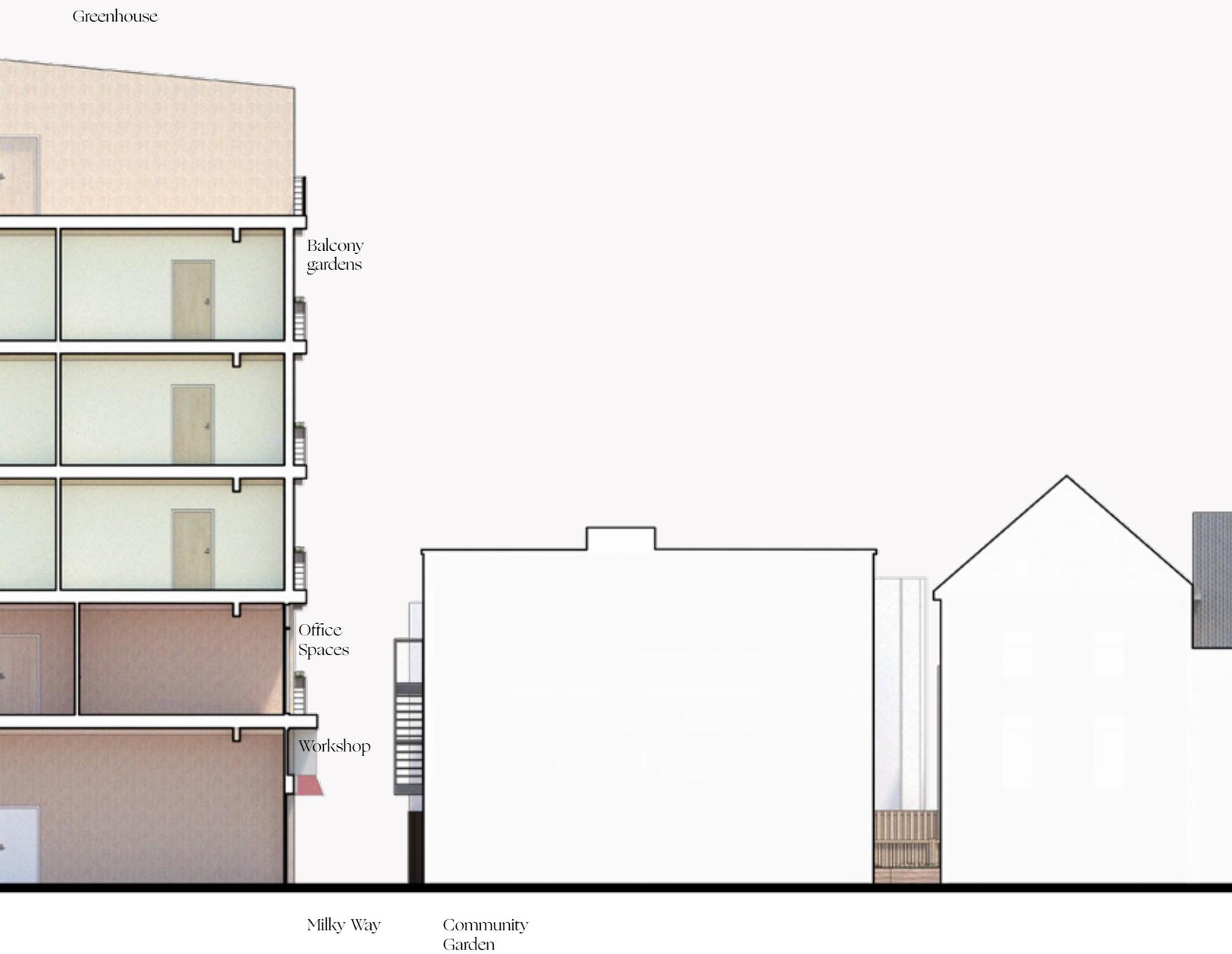
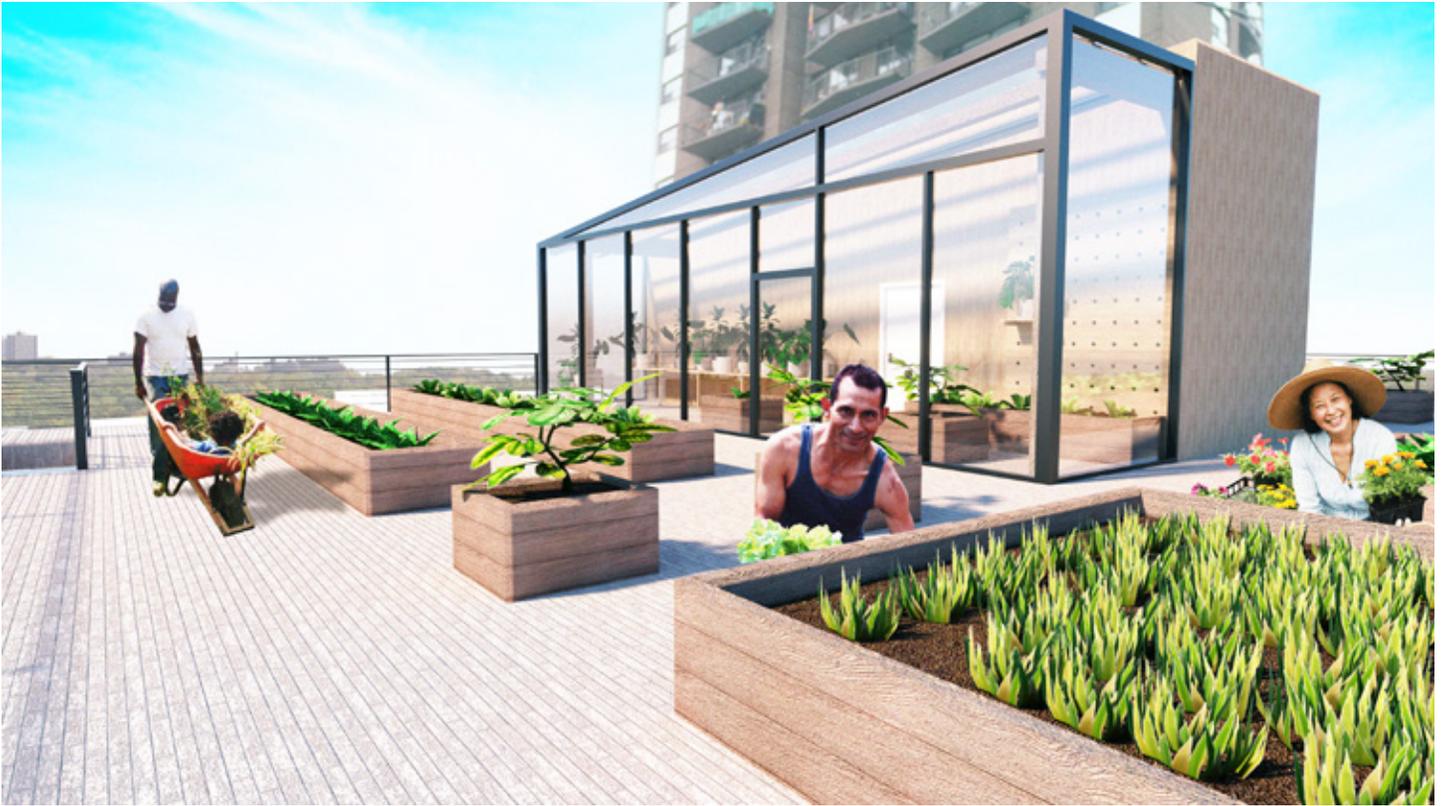


Figure 14.25: Vagabond Home West View Section





One of the goals of this project is to extend the community garden all the way to the roof of the Vagabond building. On each balcony, there are opportunities for tenants to grow small plants on the south side of each floor. The central community garden is accessible to the public through the balcony stairs. At the top is the principal community garden that tenants can use during spring and summer. The greenhouse is another main feature (Figure 14.23). Especially for immigrants, familiarity is essential in feeling welcomed. Seeing and interacting with people with similar lived experiences and growing food offers a feeling of the home. A greenhouse enables growing of popular southeast Asian ingredients such as Malunggay (moringa/drumstick tree) or mung beans to cook everyday meals. One of the more important aspects of being an immigrant is feeling at home and to do it with food.

Figure 14.28: Parkdale Community Garden

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN THE SIDEWALK AND LANEWAY

In this design of the Vagabond Home, its massing has created some alleyways that make a bridge between the Milky Way and Queen Street West. These two pathways have inherently created opportunities that allow for temporary stay. As a secondary purpose, these paths would be used as shelter during unpleasant weather. The demographic that lives in these spaces often take public transportation or walk to their destinations so using these spaces for temporary shelter when there is inclement weather is an added feature. There is also a bus stop directly in front of the Vagabond home, so the temporary shade and buffer would benefit the tenants and commuters. By activating the space of these laneways within the mass of my structure, I am also extending the qualitative and experiential dimensions of this public space system of the city. Adding places for people to sit down would create a safer space with the presence of people.



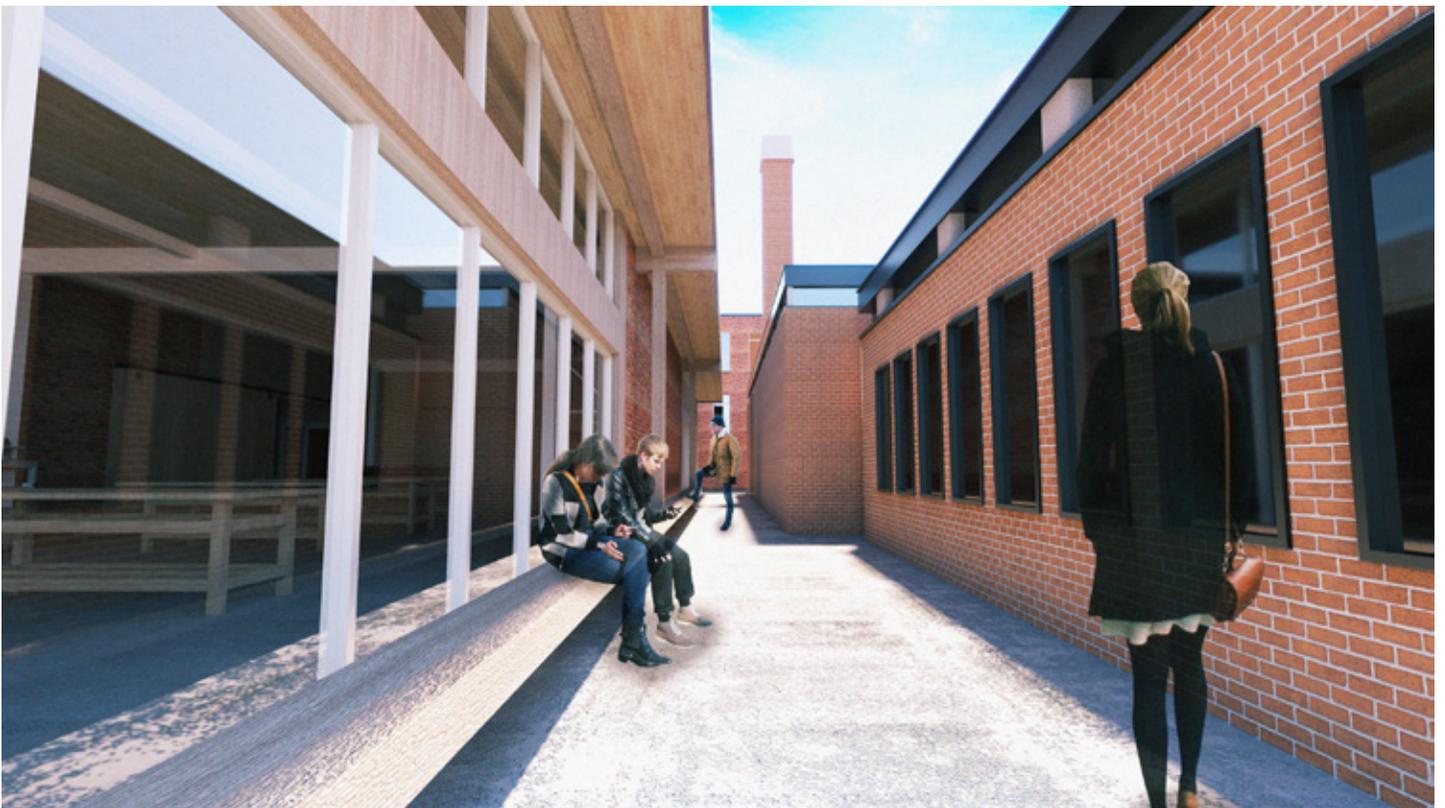


Figure 14.29: Apartment Entrance Render

Figure 14.30: Workshop Laneway Render

CONCLUSION

Housing for the Mobile Adult tackles the housing issues around young people. As the world changes, many lived experiences of mobile adults have shifted towards precariousness. Mobile adults today are experiencing a delay in adulthood milestones and are struggling to become independent. This young demographic is having problems economically, forcing them to marry and have kids later. The high cost of living has also stopped them from owning homes and has changed their lifestyle to fit into society. This delay in social development has been theorized as a new phase called the Emerging Adulthood], which correlates to the lack of financial independence. This thesis looks at the micro and macro scales of architectural design to understand the relationship between the mobile adult and Toronto and the context of the building structure that reflects the neighbourhood.

With this thesis, I address how we integrate the mobile adult into the City of Toronto. In addition, I use this thesis to look at the consumer city and how one might see it as an opportunity for design intervention. Finally, I have used this thesis to ask: How can we design an alternative affordable housing solution tailored to the temporary state of the mobile adult? In answering this question, I propose three essential parts that dictate housing design for mobile adults. The first part was a demographic

study that created a profile of the mobile adult. This study determined who this building is for and the experiences they have in common. This profile is used to tailor the project to the needs of the demographic and the amenities that can support them. The second part is a neighbourhood study that informs a new housing typology meant for the mobile adult. With the scarcity of space in Toronto, there is heavy importance placed on integration when it comes to the mobile adults. This part of the thesis acknowledges Toronto's neighbourhood ecosystem and the sensitivity needed to create an architectural intervention. The last part is the emphasis of adhocism as a catalyst for innovation. Throughout the thesis, adhocism is used as a lens, a unique perspective that dictates the direction of this thesis. The issue in Toronto is that it acknowledges the housing crisis, and that the solutions and the homes they have built do not reflect the housing options required by the demographic of the city. The mobile adults inhabiting this city are not represented in the affordable housing solutions. These solutions often become rentals for AirBNBs or designed specifically for family living. Adhocism is used as a way to find an alternative to the existing problems and solutions. This lens uses the malleability of the demographic to integrate and incubate themselves through this emerging adulthood phase.

Throughout the thesis, I use adhocism as a lens, a unique perspective that dictates the direction of this thesis. The issue in Toronto is that they acknowledge the housing crisis, but the solutions they have and the homes they have built do not reflect the demographic of the city. The mobile adults inhabiting Toronto is not represented in the affordable housing solutions, which often become rentals for AirBNBs or explicitly designed for families. Adhocism is used to find an alternative to the existing solutions. This lens uses the malleability of the mobile adult to integrate and incubate themselves through this emerging adulthood phase. The proposed Vagabond home addresses multiple topics, from urban to social issues. The mobile adult's precariousness, lack of work experience, capital and support are the key issues defining their shared experiences. This thesis also provides a novel design for a targeted group of people. The use of a neighbourhood study informs the creation of a new housing typology. Through the different perspective framed by the thesis, a project was created that detailed a new housing typology. In addition, the prototype of the vagabond home provides a critique of the city. A good city provides options through addressing social, economic and demographic challenges and changes. The evolution of the city should reflect the shifts in culture and demographic.

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