

Introduction

Manchester is a mix-use, light industrial district in south-east Calgary that has been highlighted as an area for potential re-urbanization. Given the large area, proximate location and the potential for greater harmony in integrated use, this region provides a unique opportunity for the city of Calgary. We will consider a variety of contexts in our approach to provide a design for conversion of this industrial zone into an efficient, vibrant and desirable live/work community.

Our plan for the community will involve a series of specific gestures as well as more general planning to allow for phasing into the area and ensure minimal strain upon the environment. Each gesture will take into consideration the economics, transportation, culture, ecology, and sense of place for the urban participants. The design will also utilize innovative concepts from around the world so as to not only bring the community of Manchester to the forefront in the city of Calgary, but to also put forth our own point of reference as a benchmark for future developments.

Current Context

A moment on the ground in Manchester is characterized by dingy, harsh, and often noisy surroundings. Concrete is pervasive and unyielding, making the immenseness of Manchester all the more looming. It is a highly fragmented landscape and disorientating with any attempt to navigate through its disconnected avenues. In spite of its location within the greater Calgary area, Manchester feels isolated and underutilized. Yet, for all its ugliness, there is ample opportunity and potential. Bordered longitudinally by the two major thoroughfares of Blackfoot and McLeod Trails, there is a ready stream of humanity to tap into as participants to the area. The proximity to the Bow and Elbow rivers begs for green corridors and ecological connection. Although inefficient in its layout, the “wasted” spaces provide ample entry points for intervention and seeds of change. Manchester is not a depressed area in the classic sense of most redevelopment projects. The region provides important products to the city, and is an integral segment within the greater economic corridor of Calgary’s east end. In spite of the many challenges, Manchester has ample assets that would allow for a positive and exciting transformation.

Vision Statement

“To transform the Manchester District from a low intensity, energy intensive, auto-dependent commercial area into a responsive and resilient mixed use district focused on localized production in the wake of a post-carbon economy. Instead of moving towards deindustrialization we are questioning the merits of an inevitable shift to professional services and instead creatively thinking about how local production can co-exist with the city.”

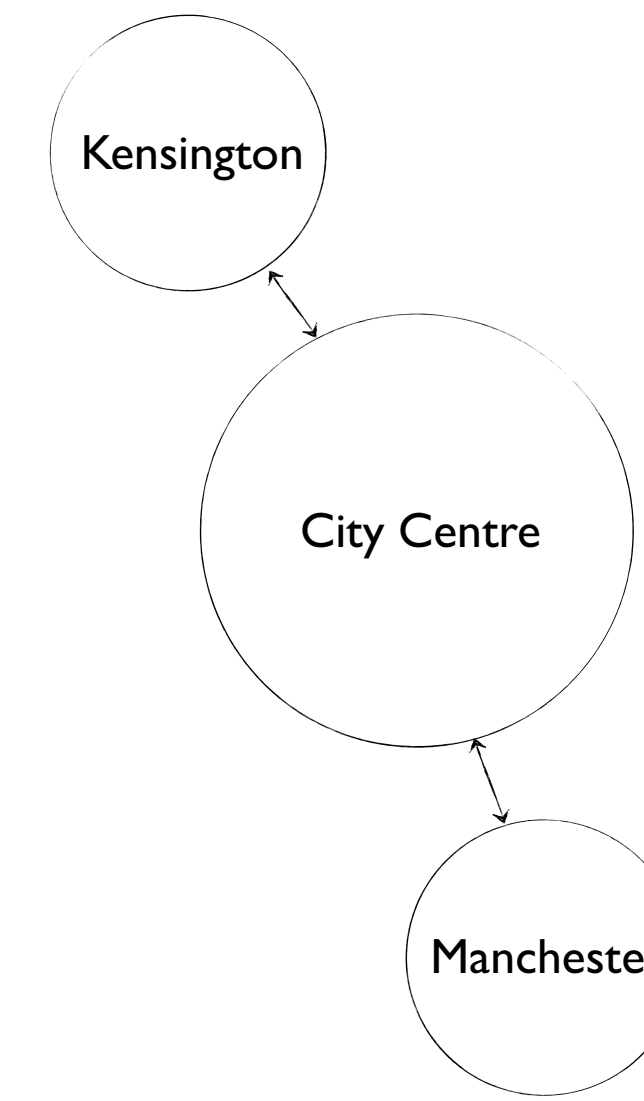
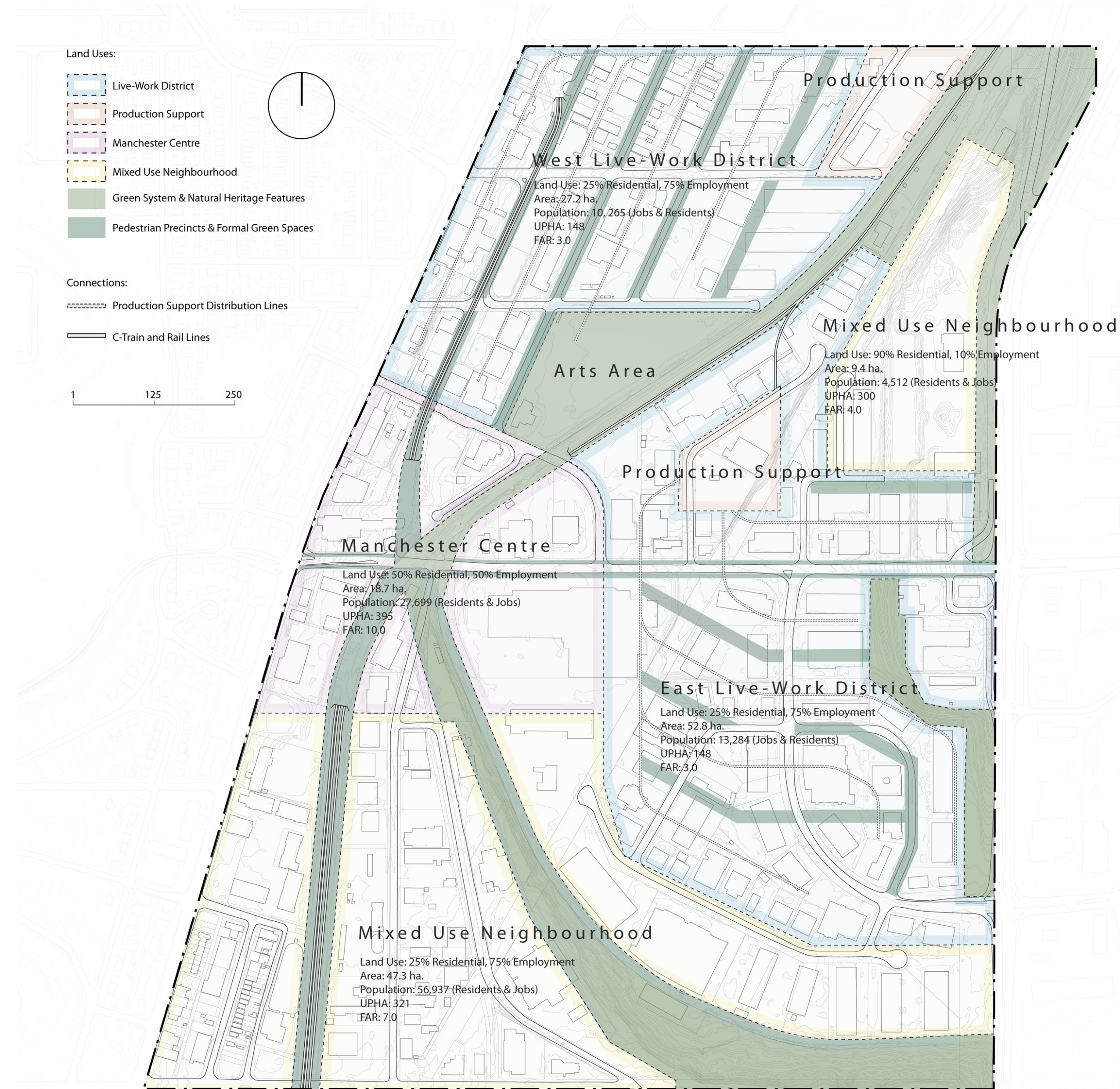
Key Goals

- Environmental sustainability; green space is an amenity that should be designed to also provide ecological function. Development should encourage and support efficient and sensitive use of natural resources, while protecting or enhancing natural systems.
- Social sustainability; a mixed-use area should enhance social interactions by fostering an environment that supports a diversity of life-styles and cultural inhabitants. Diverse demographics allow for a strong socio-economic population.
- Economic sustainability; seize upon the assets of the area, accentuate the industrial character, and promote both local production and consumption of goods. Supporting eco-industrial growth and remaining permeable to live/work, production, and commercial endeavours ensures resiliency into the future
- Urban sustainability; allowing for efficient automobile travel while deemphasizing its necessity will help to design streetscapes around the pedestrian and allow for the creation of aesthetic, vibrant and functional public space. Providing for transportation needs throughout the area is essential towards invigorating the urban character.

Assets	Issues	Opportunities	Constraints
Proximity to City Centre, Bow and Elbow Rivers	Fragmented by infrastructure and topography	‘waste’ spaces make possible connections, public realm, green systems	Economic activities of the area suggests working with what we have
Ample Space to accommodate new uses and activities	Isolated by high traffic ‘highways’, few connections into Manchester	Existing nodes within manchester suggest starting points for intervention	If we rip up existing infrastructure we should probably have a justification for it
Relatively affordable compared to the City Centre	Harsh concrete landscape, few green spaces, noisy	Confluence of transit and rails hints at a potential LRT location	
	Disorienting lack of landmark structures, illegible layout		
	Immense structures, wide streets		

Manchester North

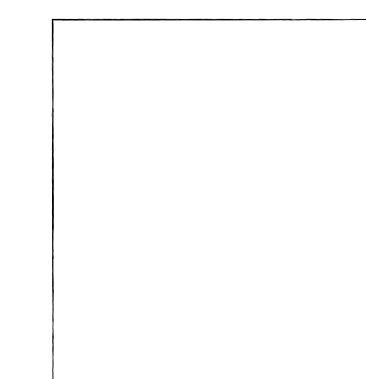
Systems / Master Plan



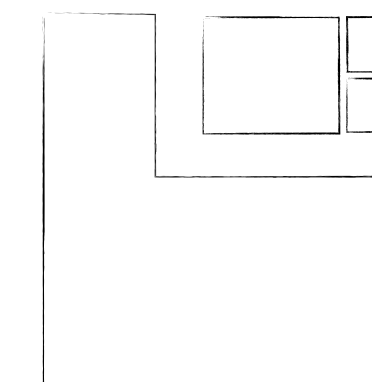
A higher density mixed-use neighborhood, with accessible park space and bike paths.

Manchester's relationship to City Centre, in parallel to Kensington's relationship to City Centre.

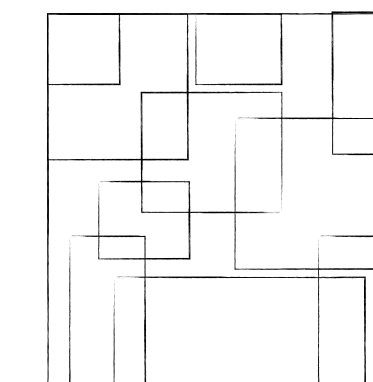
The intended approach for creating a mixed-use environment, with overlapping uses and zones.



Current



Status quo



Goal

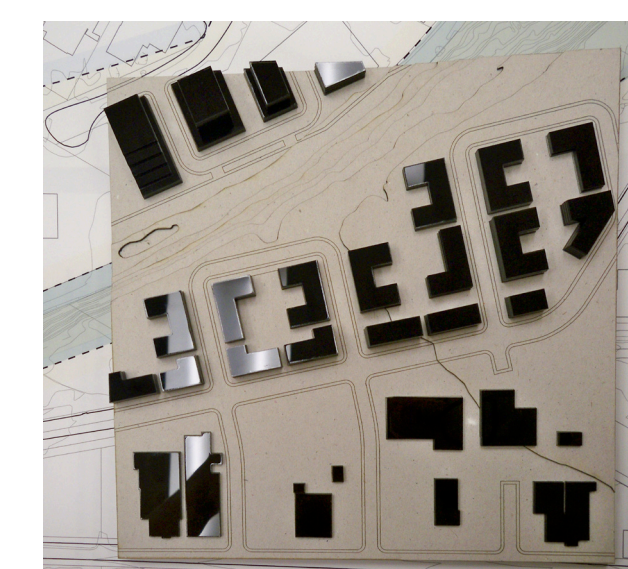
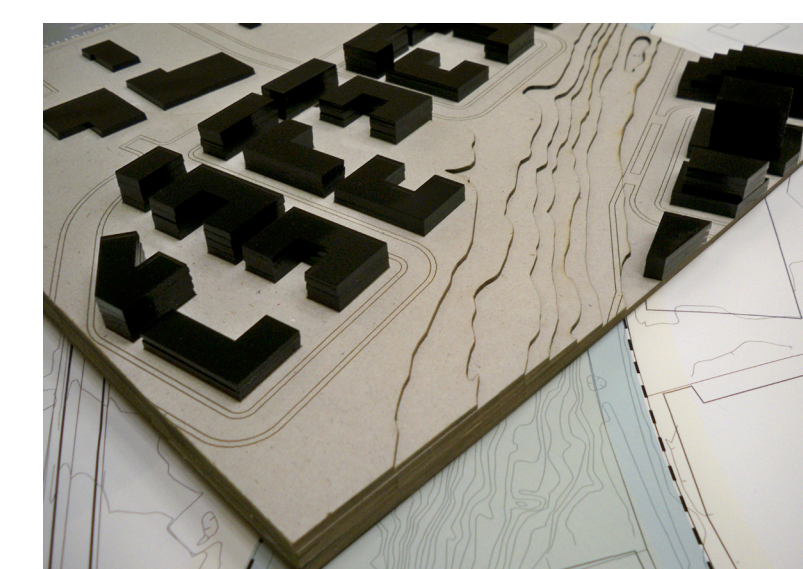


Pedestrian-oriented boulevard along 42 Ave SE.

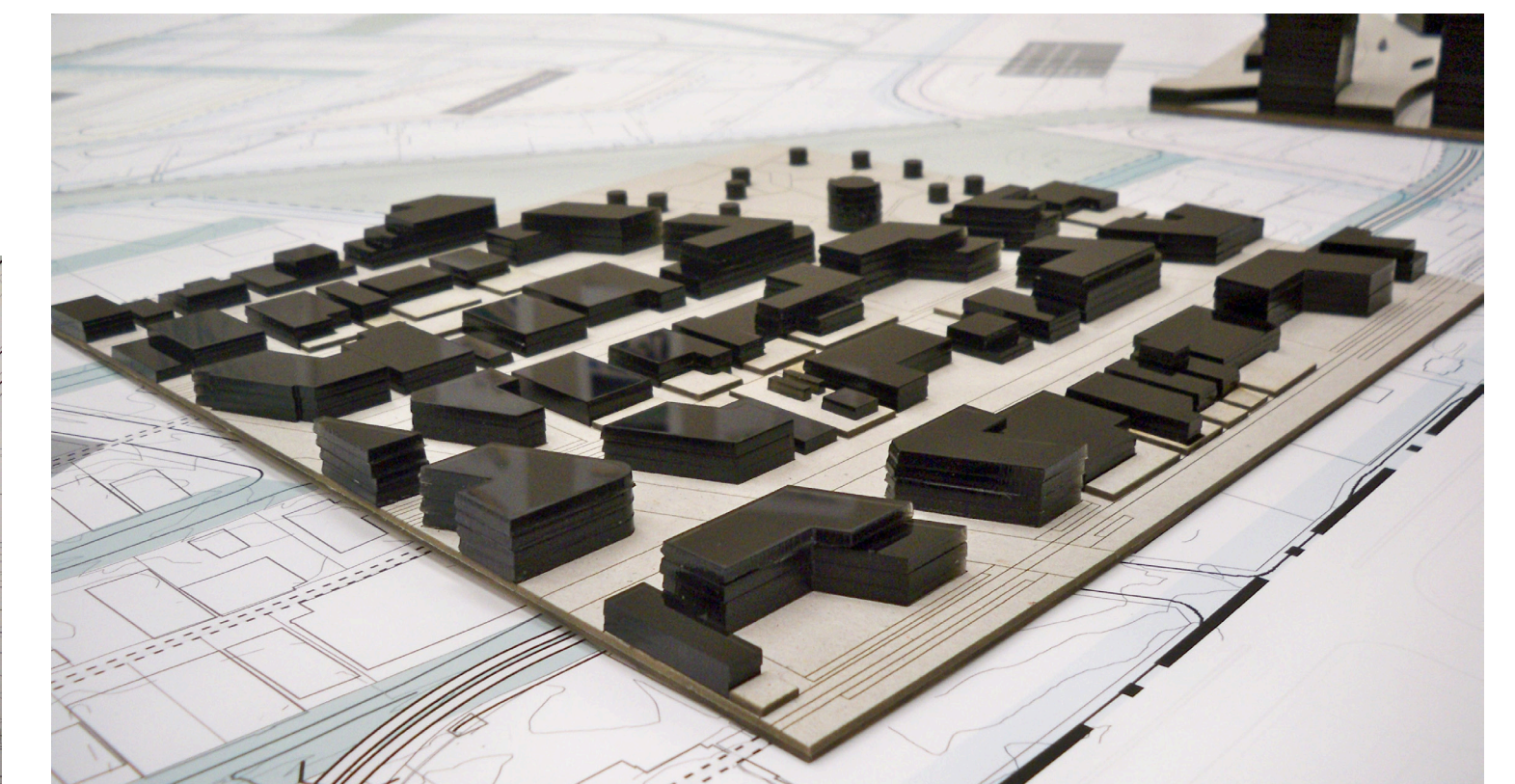
Focused Interventions

We focus and provide vivid details on three main nodes. These nodes provide a level of clarity that should instill a basis for the establishment of each node and how each will serve as catalysts of progress to the region as a whole. These nodes are introduced here, and will be covered in depth in proceeding sections.

- **Transportation Hub;** situated at the intersection of 42nd Avenue SW and McLeod Trail, the Hub provides an entrance and a focal point in Manchester for commercial, pedestrian, green space and transportation.
- **Distribution Center;** a centralized industrial distribution center will be organized. This center allows for businesses to centralize and share their needs for logistical management, shipping, storage, and parking.
- **Arts Village;** in place of what is currently the city impound lot, the Arts Village will provide ecological goods and services as a major center of bio-retention, while providing a creative and inspiring venue for studio and live spaces for local and visiting artists.

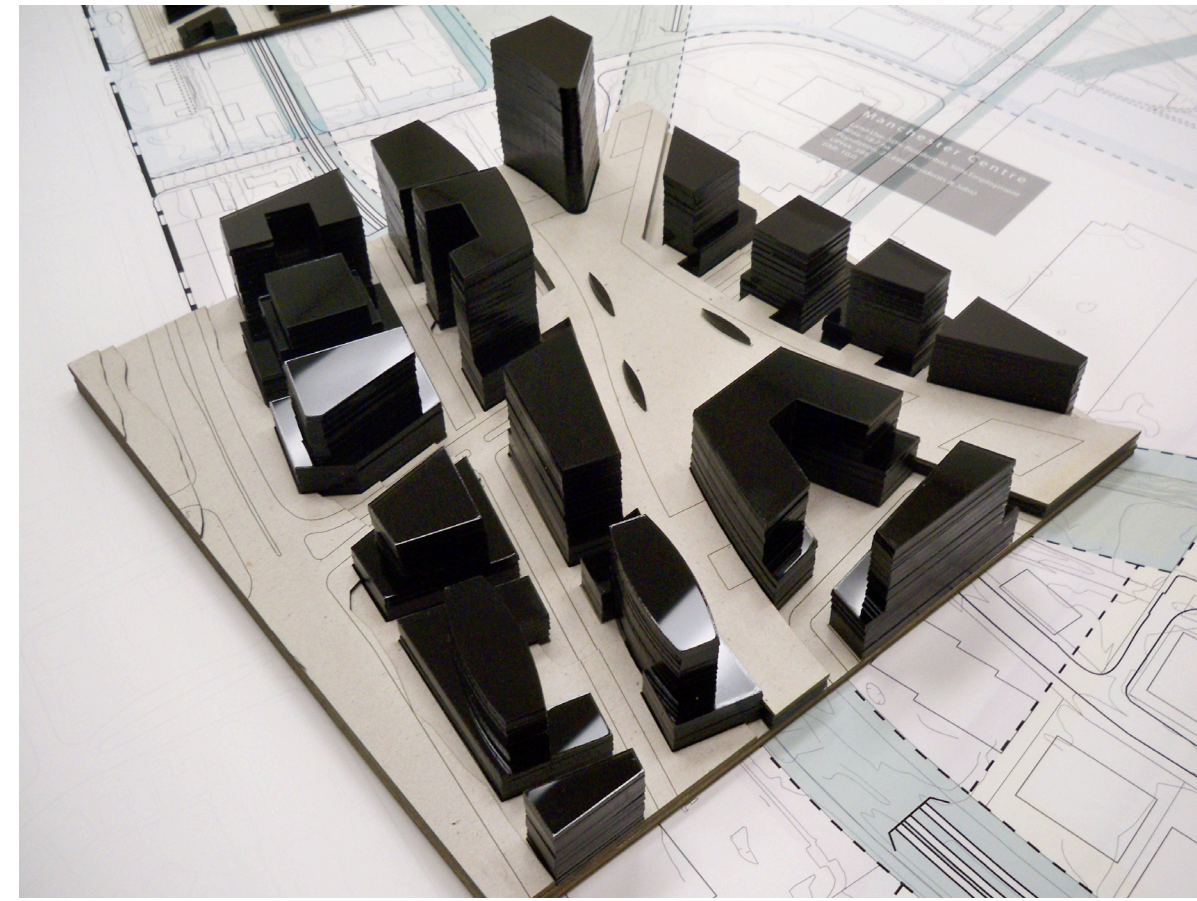


Model views of a mixed use neighborhood.



Manchester North

Transportation Hub



Site model photos of Transportation Hub.

Transportation Nexus

We propose creating a new station, grand in scheme, which connects not only LRT passengers to the area, but is a central hub for cyclists, pedestrians, commuter CPR lines, and automobiles. This hub will not only define the crossroads for travel through the region, but will identify an exciting neighbourhood and destination within Manchester; Manchester Centre.

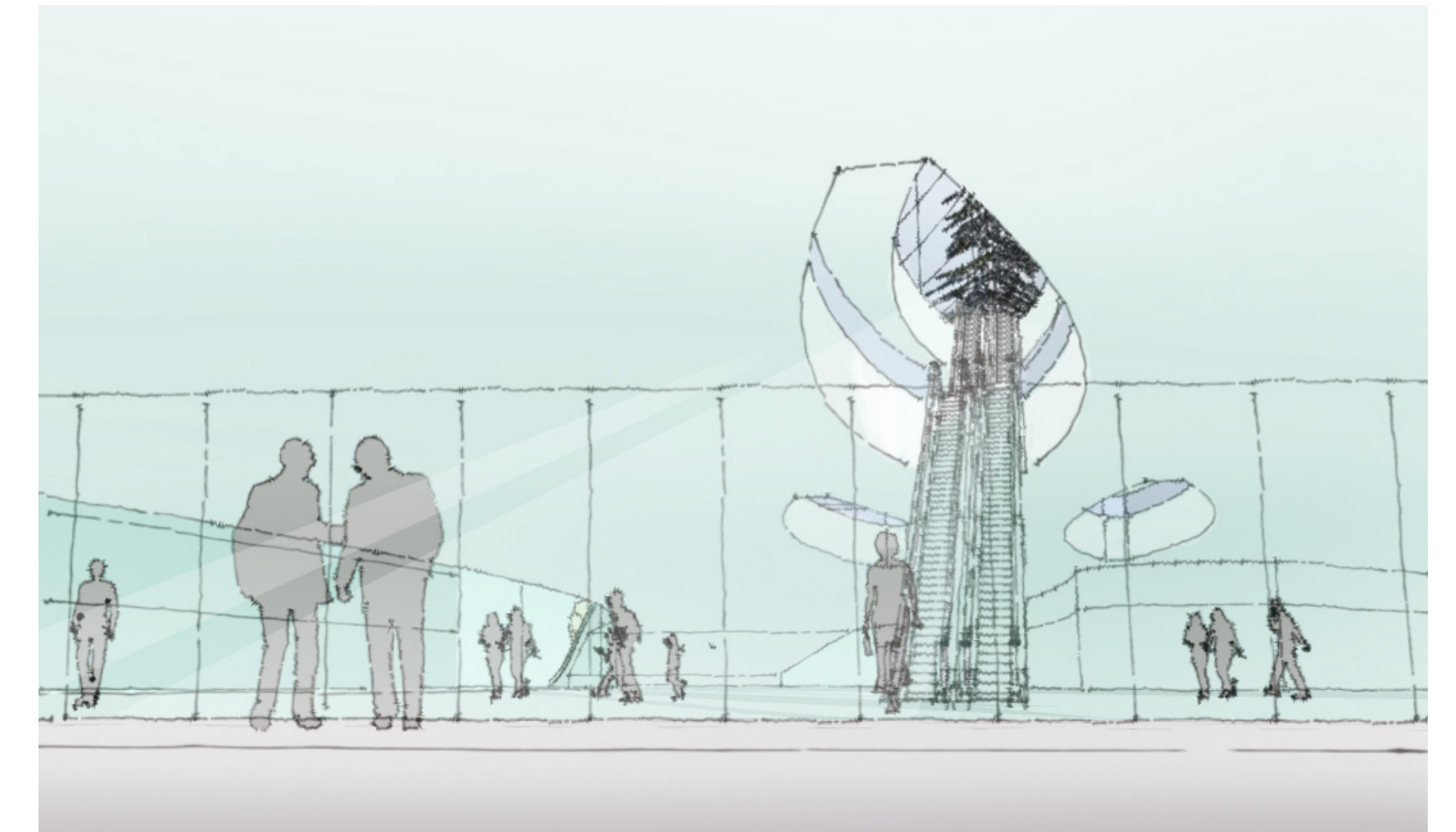
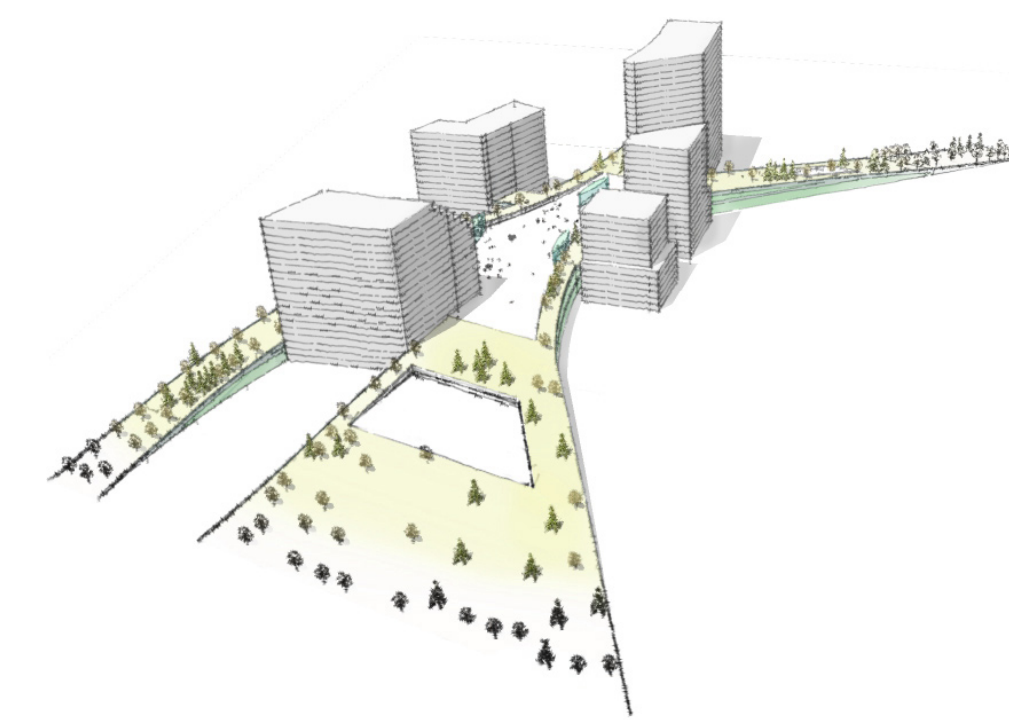
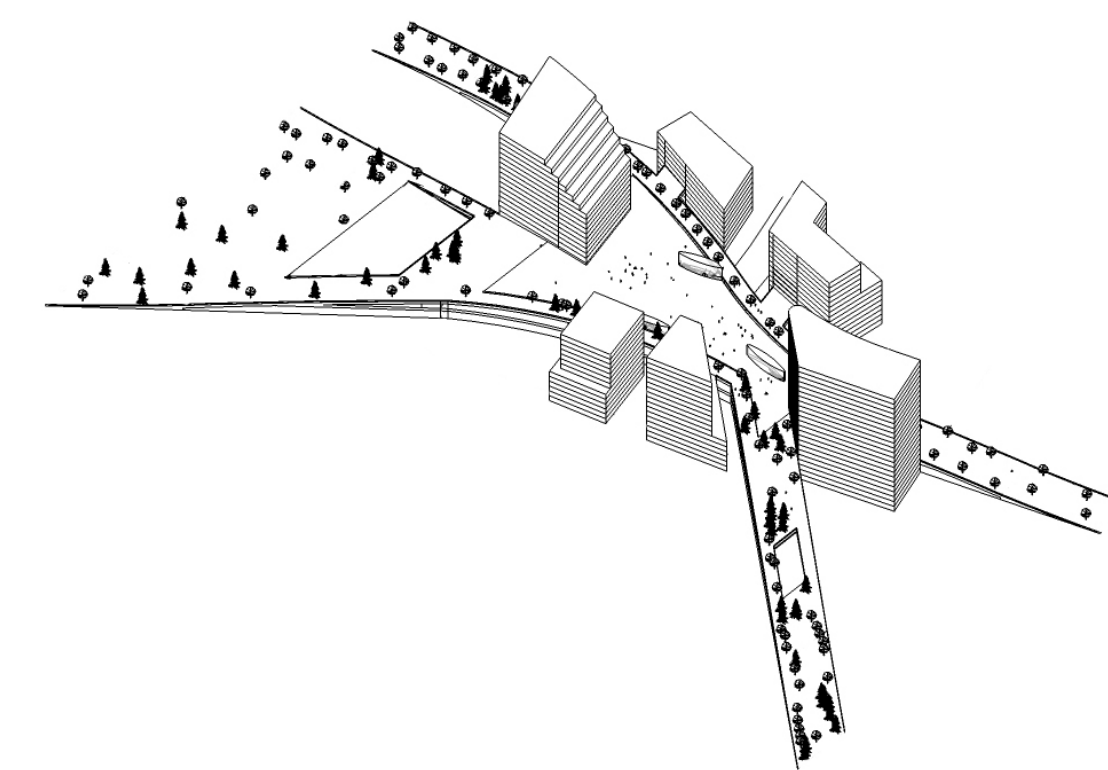
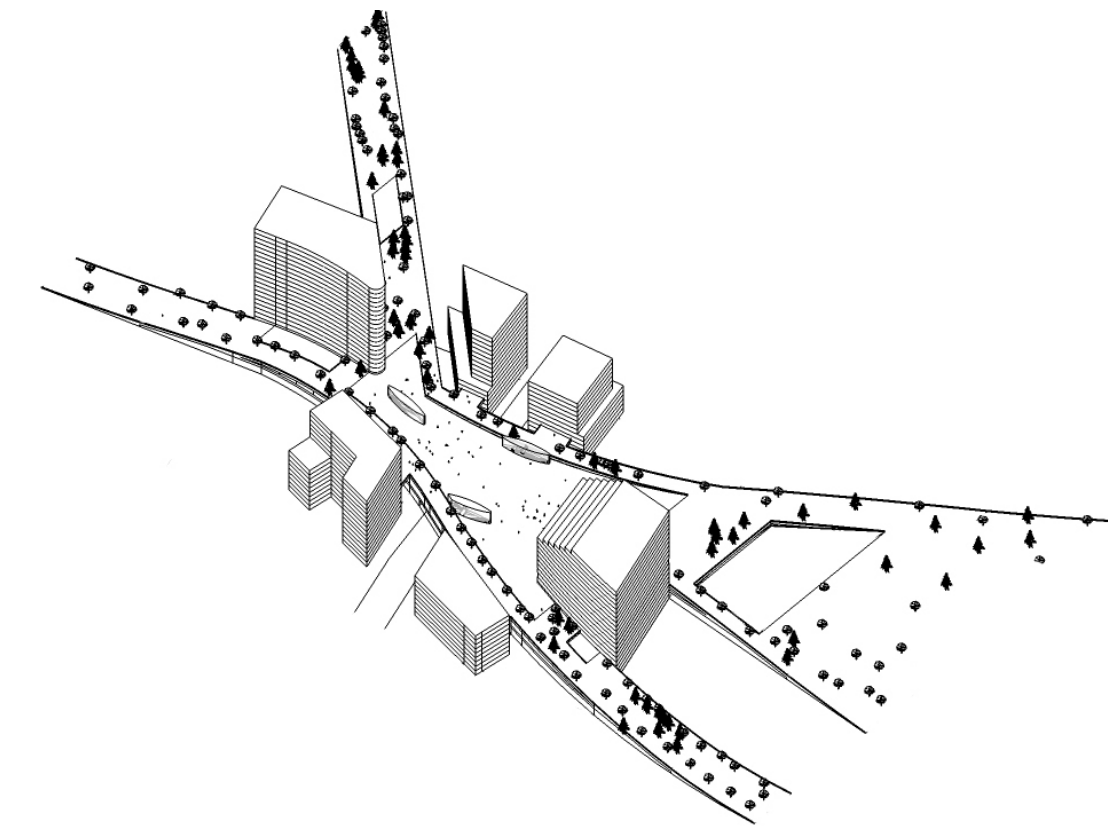
The Concept

The LRT station will be moved to the corner of McLeod Trail and 42nd Avenue NW. This new station will serve as an architectural centerpiece that connects the spokes of Manchester. The bold greenbelt that winds through Manchester arrives at the station and rises. On the ground, a pedestrian, cyclist or skateboarder will find themselves cresting a gentle hill, arriving at the apex, 17 metres above 42nd Avenue, then an easy slope descending on the other side as the park space expands towards the Arts Node. From the street, the centre spans 42nd Avenue, composing a grand entrance into Manchester. An east or west bound automobile would find itself at grade, passing underneath the glass canopy of the hub. LRT and CPR commuter lines arrive at the transit station underground, and passengers emerge within the structure to shop or continue their journeys. Nestled within the sinuous green arms of the hub centre, 5-10 story buildings intertwine business, residential and commercial function with the green gesture of the park.



Experiential vignette showing the hub in the background.

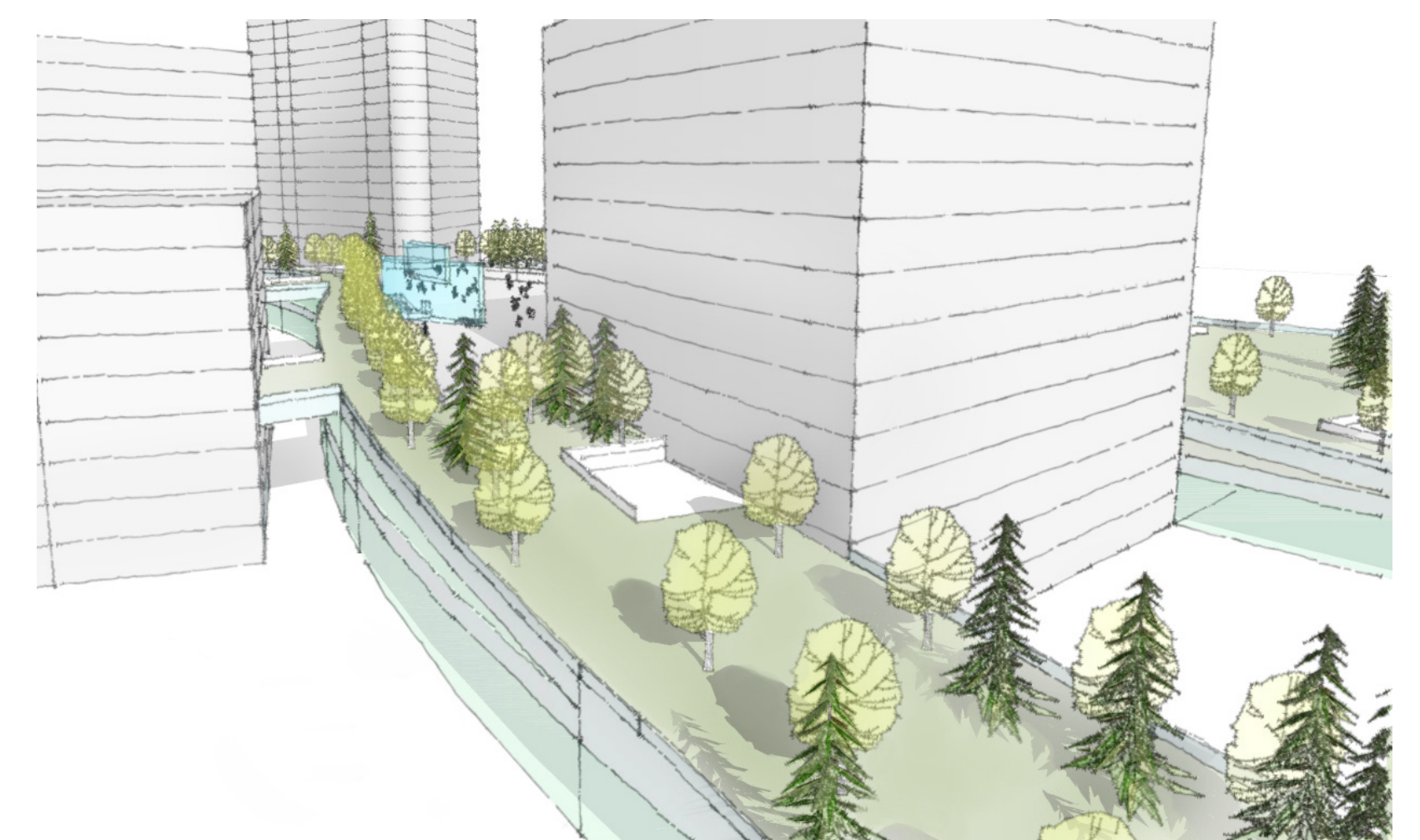
Thumbnail views of buildings and density surrounding the hub.



Experiential view of the hub - A view from inside the hub looking up at the escalator skylight.



Experiential view of the hub - A view on top of the hub.



Experiential view of the hub - A view of the connections between the hub and the surrounding buildings.

Production Support Centers

Centralized distribution

Most businesses, particularly the light industrial firms within Manchester, all require storage and parking space, means (such as trucks) to ship and distribute goods, as well as means to get rid of wastes; all in addition to manufacturing and work space. In Manchester's proposed eco-industrial sites, we present a more concentrated infrastructure where businesses share these logistical managements.

The Concept

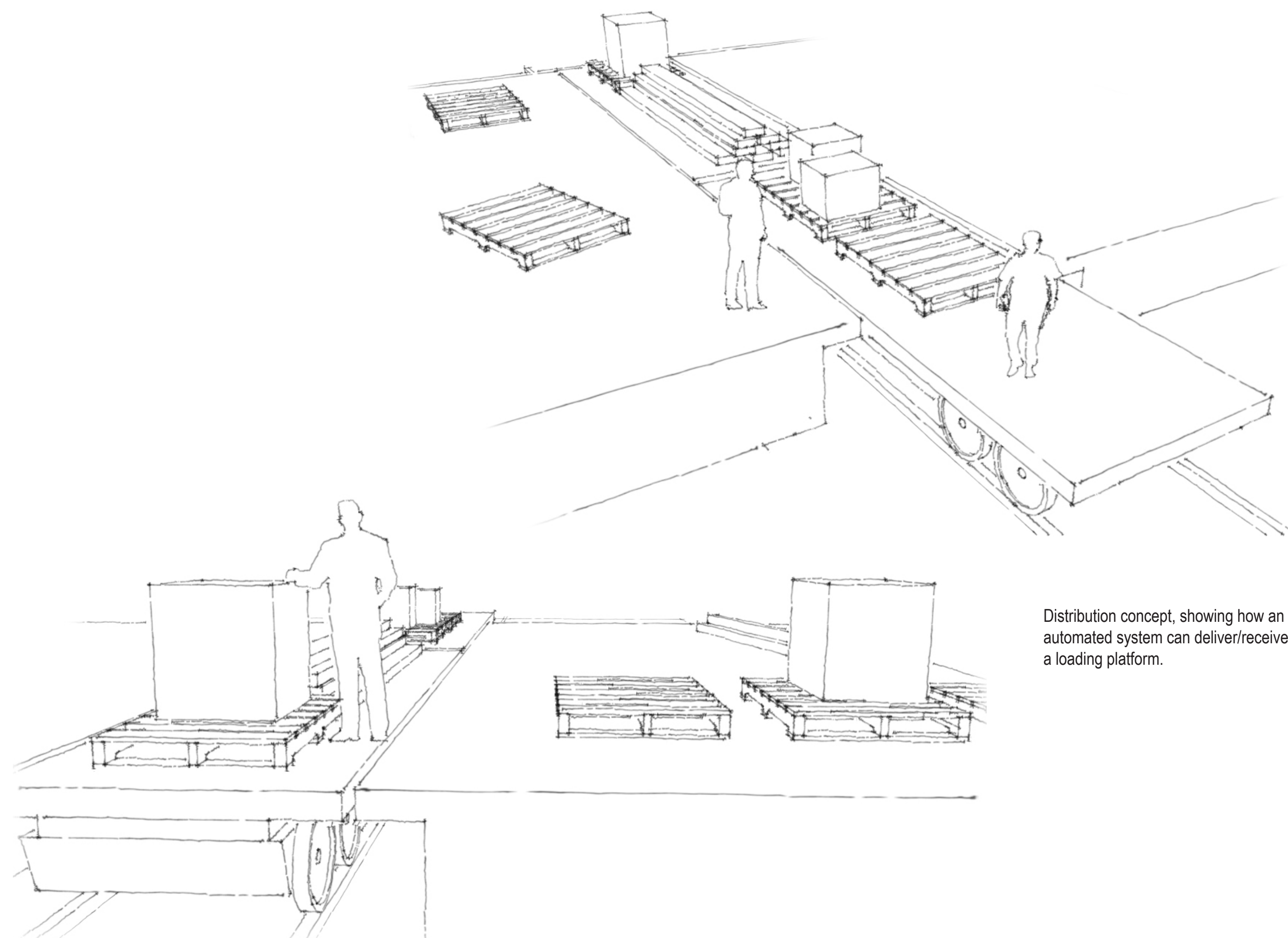
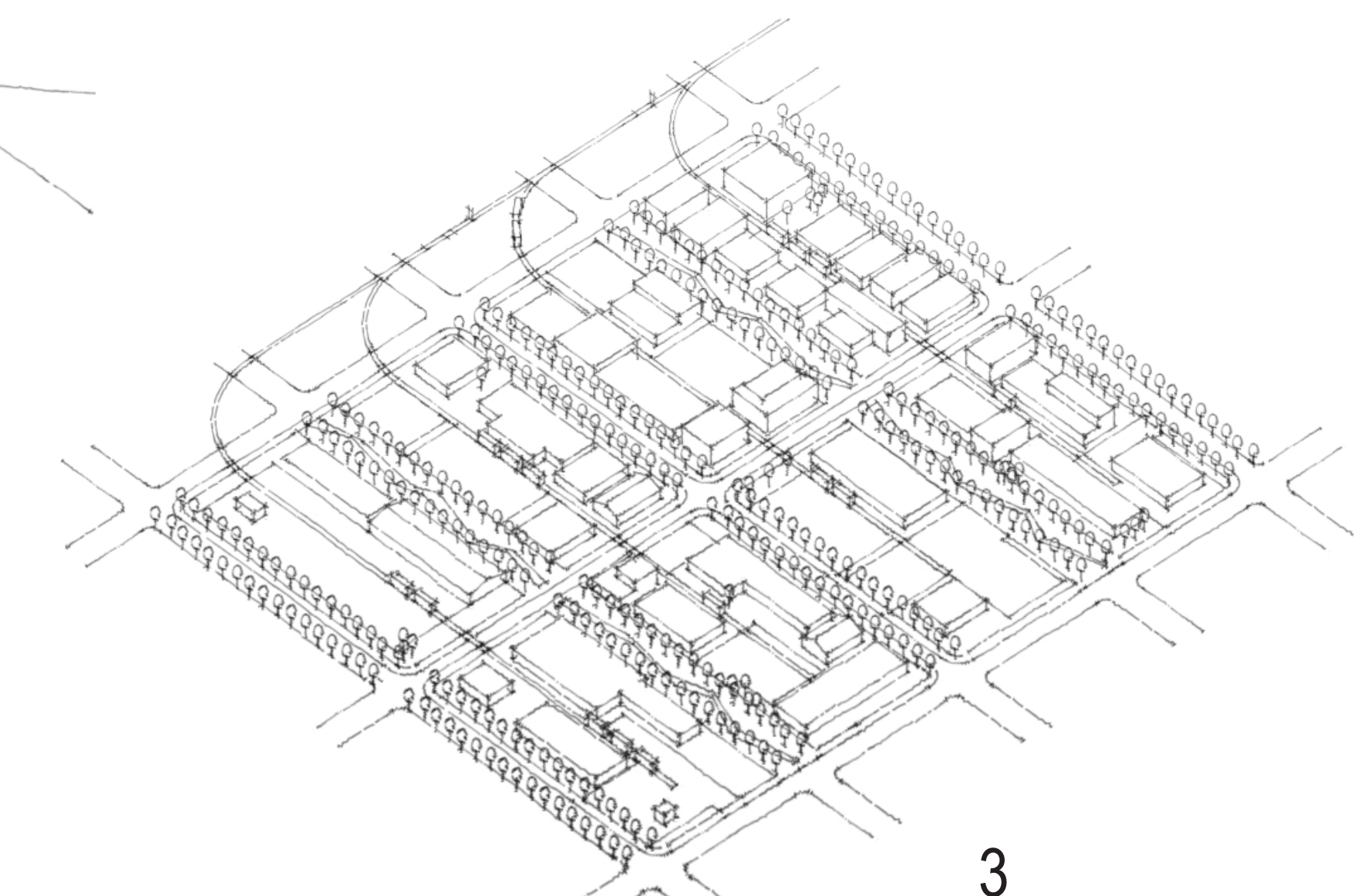
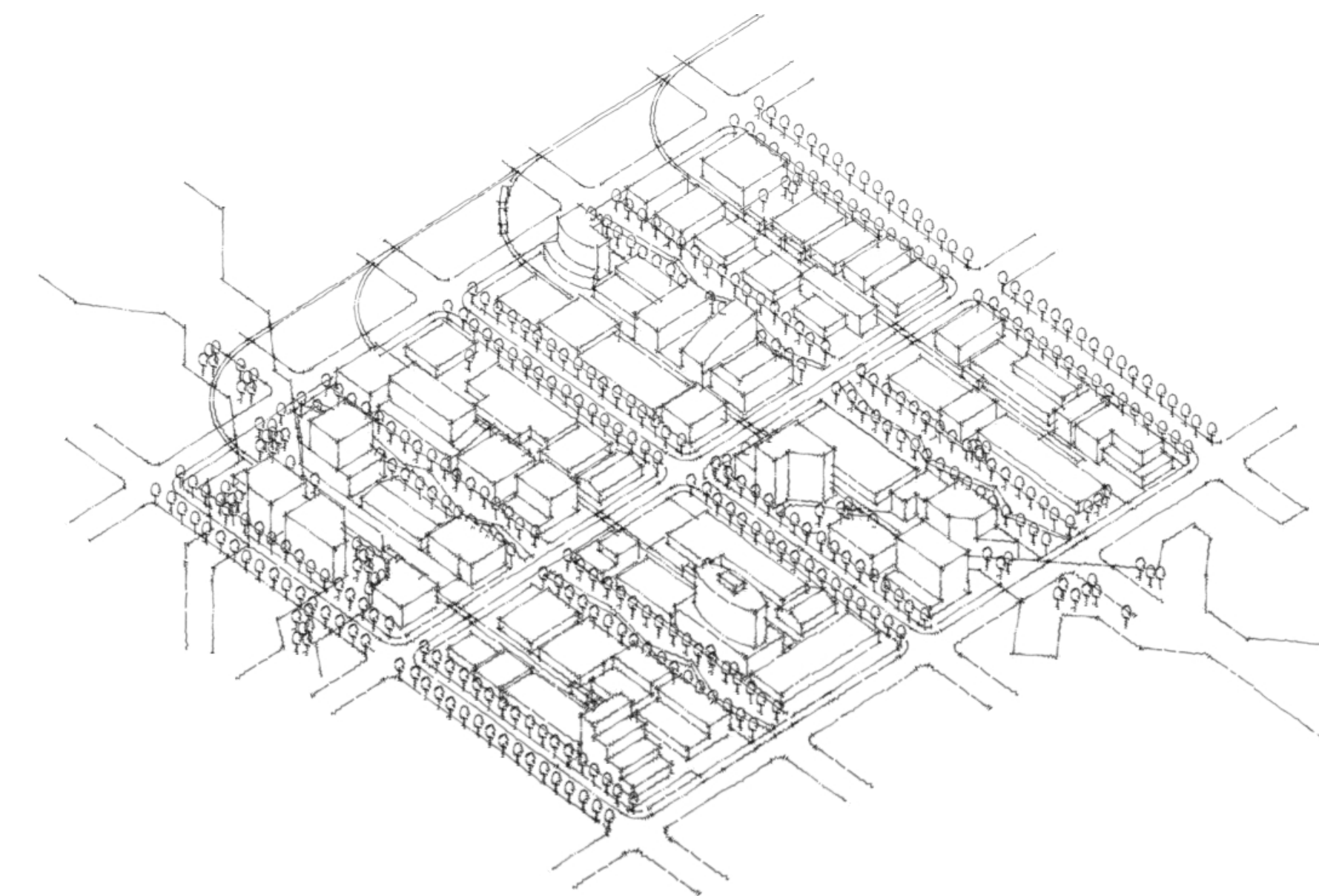
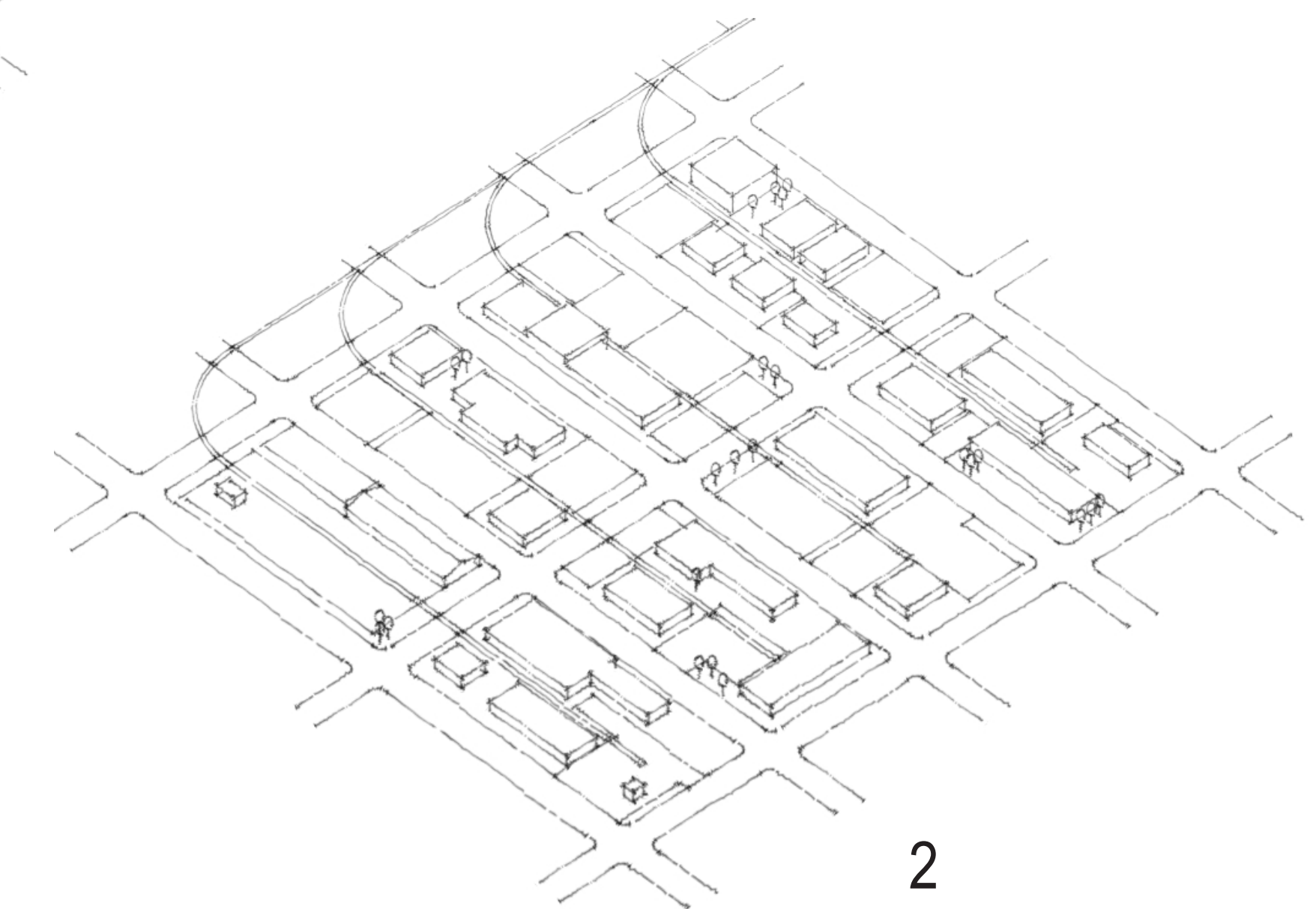
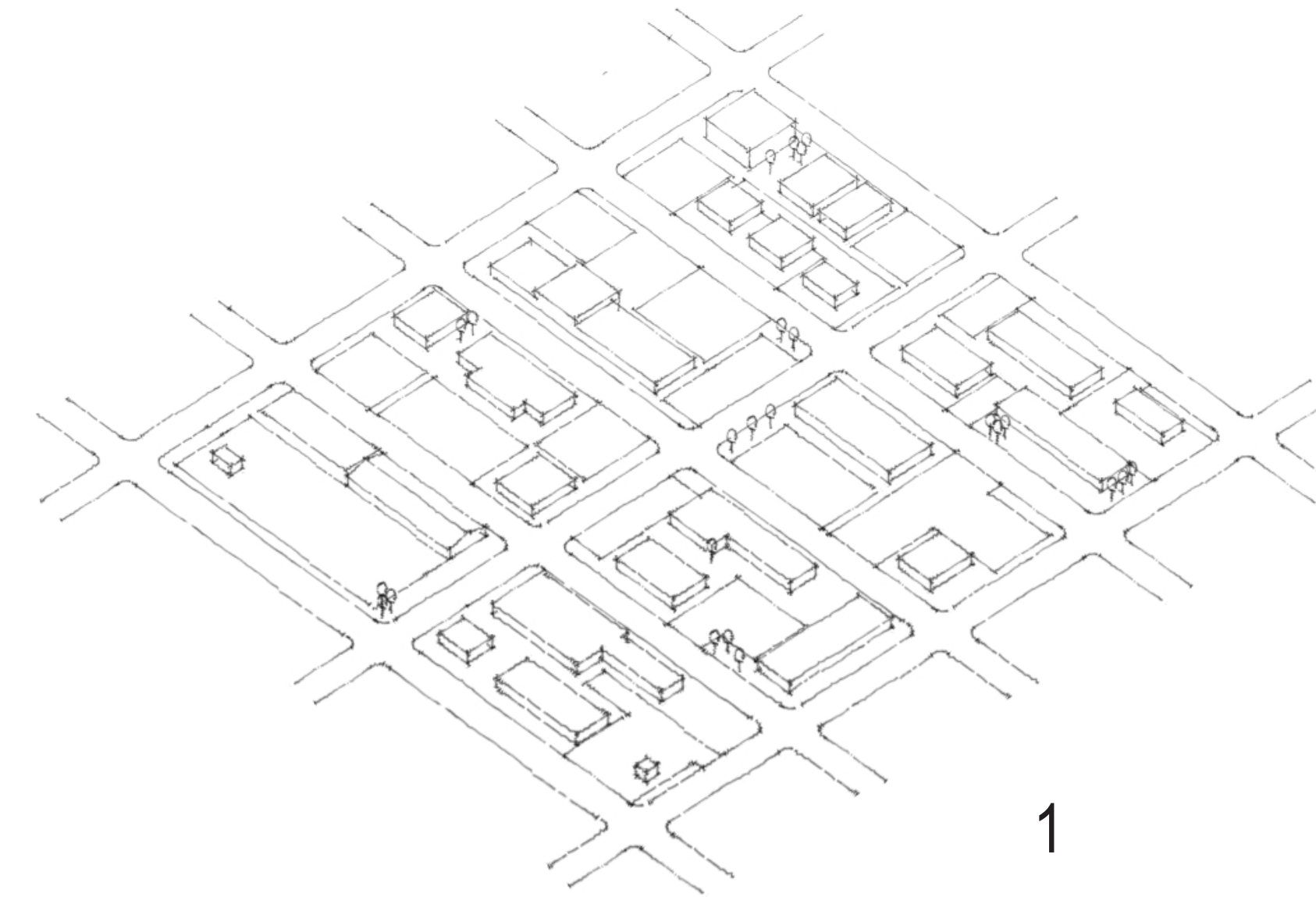
We propose initiating the first reorganization of manufacturing infrastructure in the northwest quadrant of the study area. A universal movement system for goods would link up individual businesses, creating a neighbourhood of production. This neighbourhood would by default create a cooperative within the greater community to share in an efficient model of resource use, reducing waste and pollution and consumption of materials, energy and water, while increasing profit margins and improving environmental quality.

Additionally, by centralizing and providing a common space for multiple businesses, this leaves the existing support services as redundant. These redundancies can be reclaimed for other purposes, such as residential, commercial, or green space.

The Benefits

To the business that buys into such a centralized distribution service there is potential to lower investment costs, reduce risks, and share knowledge with surrounding partners. The change to the streetscape makes a more inviting environment that positively increases consumer and client exposure. For the community and residents, this centralized system serves to reduce noise, produce less traffic, less pollution, and allows for more aesthetic surroundings for public spaces and increased socio-urban value.

Production Support Centers will evolve the neighborhood over time.



Distribution concept, showing how an automated system can deliver/receive goods off a loading platform.

Manchester North

Arts Center

Arts Village

Calgary's art scene is alive and well, but lacks a major hub of influence. For the artists themselves, areas of work and creation are typically separate from venues for display. The typical artist may work in one location, vend their trade in another, and live yet in a third scene. In most cases artists must also travel to additional locations throughout the city to find supplies and materials. In Manchester, Calgary has the opportunity to create a space and facility to deliberate an arts scene, and foster an artist-centric community with live/work/gallery space and ready access to materials.

The Concept

The goal is to create a main building for display that is also synergistic to the artists' work area and residence, and ultimately to attract artists from a global arts community with the provisions for an inspired and productive stay, long or short term, within the Arts Village.

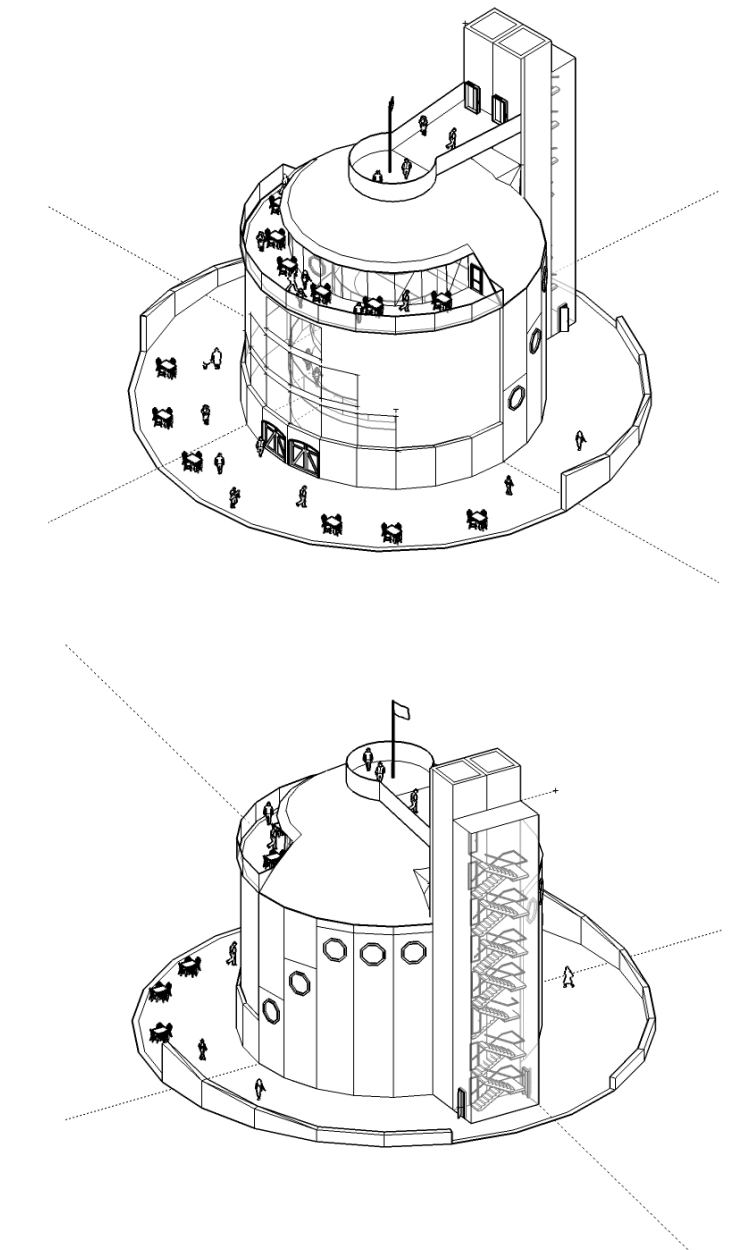
The Theme

Calgary's heritage is rooted in western values, ranching and farming, a legacy of prosperity through nurturing the land. The Arts Silo is the most prominent structure, designed around the concept of a grain silo; it evokes the excitement of harvest, the comfort of productivity, and the wholesomeness of reaping what you've sown. Scattered about the Arts Silo, the concept envisions Artist Pods, constructions that keep with the silo theme, but on a more personal scale, providing a work/live environment for artists, while also allowing unobtrusive space for public viewing.

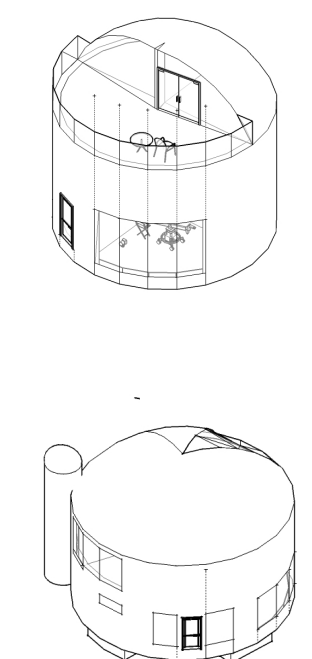
The Scene

This productive and organic Arts Village will be complimented in its surroundings by a literally organic and ecologically functioning wetland system. This wetland will provide a small refuge for wildlife, with many seasonal and migratory birds stopping through. More importantly, the wetland serves as a large scale system for bio-filtration and water purification. While not the lowest point in Manchester North, the area does provide a basin for natural water flow from throughout over half of the study area, including significant runoff from the McLeod Trail ridge.

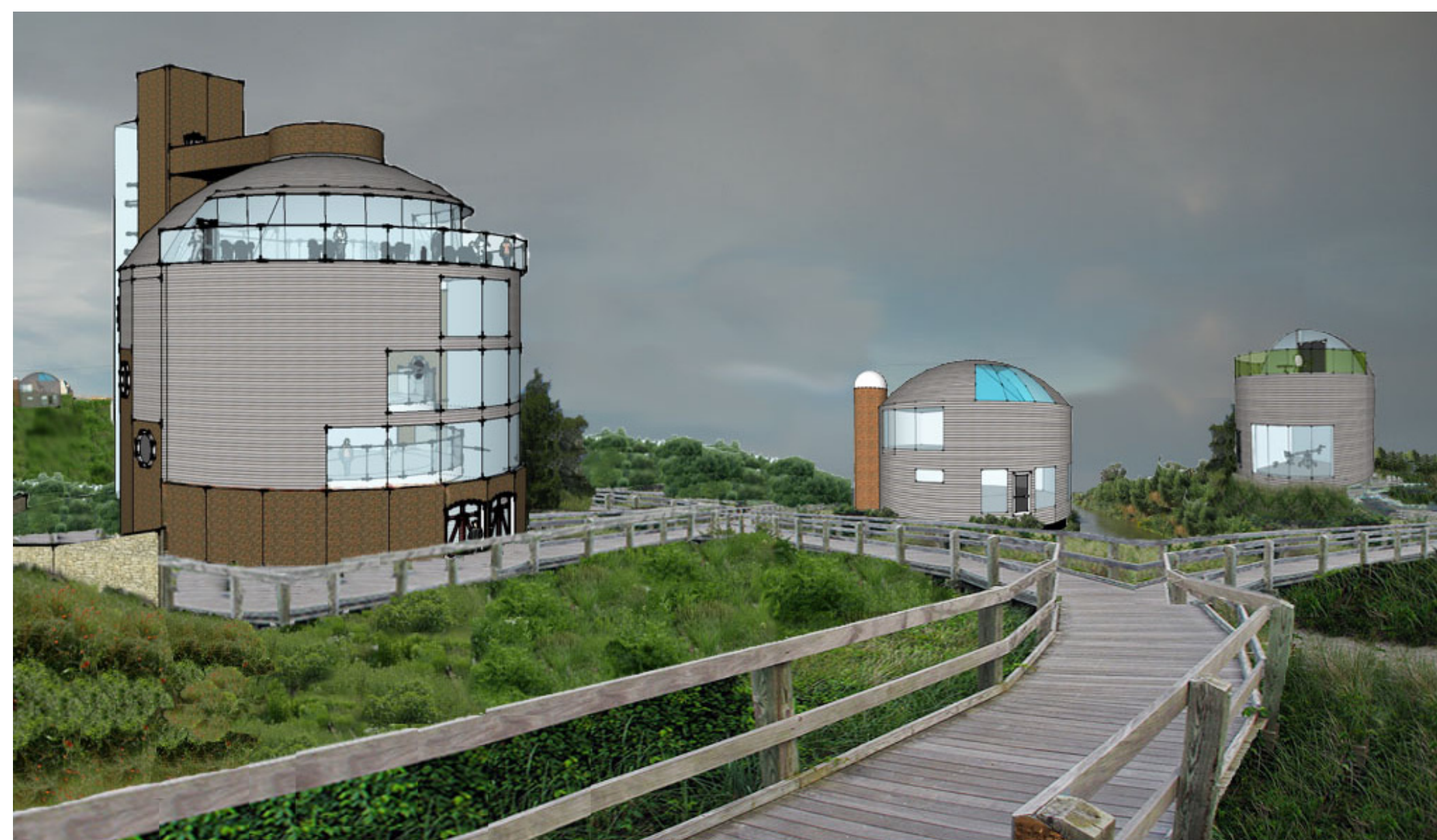
The balance and harmony cultivated between designed artistic beauty and natural beauty will provide function for the dynamic setting of the Arts Village.



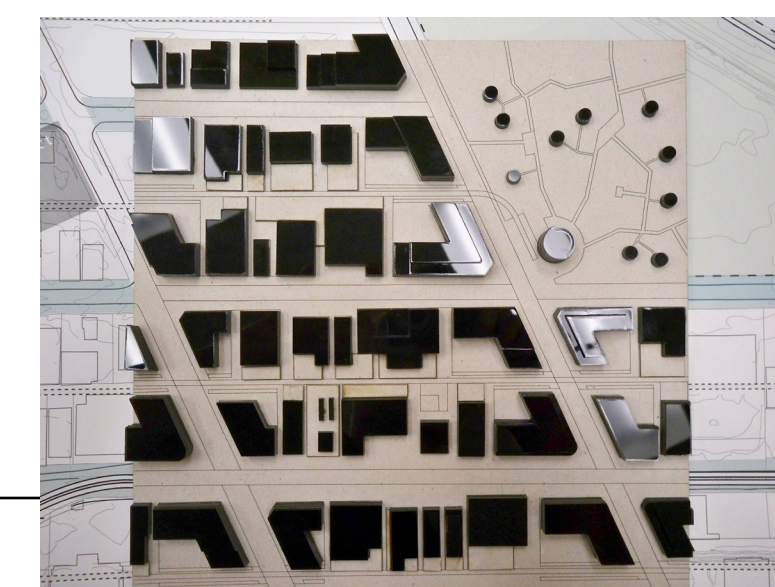
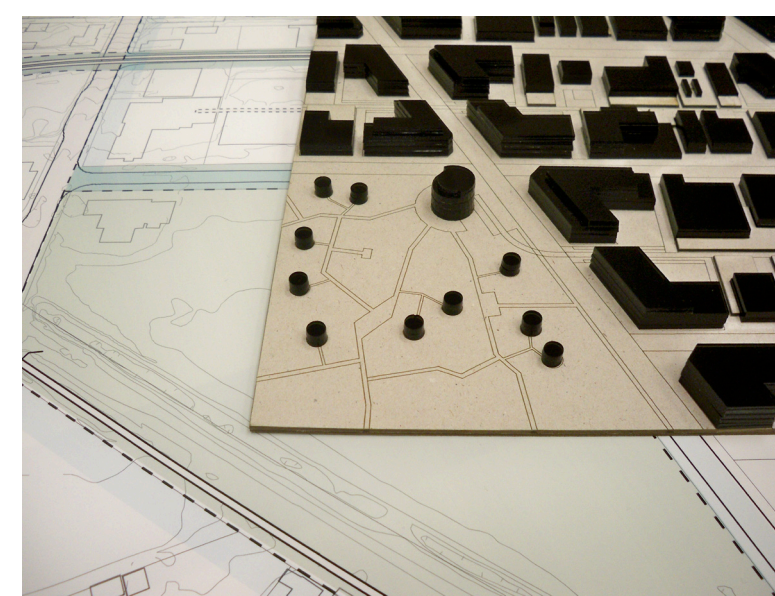
Views of the Arts Silo



Concept axonometric sketches of the Arts Village structures.



Vignette view of the Arts Village in the marsh setting.



Model views of the Arts Center in relation to the surrounding buildings.



Vignette views of the Artist Pods.