

# Sacred **G r o u n d** ?

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\*'Isle of the Dead' - Arnold Böcklin

## ABSTRACT

Sacred space often evokes a broadened sense of awareness, it employs an experience of emotion, sensation, and memory that transcends the spatial. Sacred space is used here as a loose term to describe the relationship of the human to the built and un-built environment. Landscape as the common sense of the term, referring to the physical articulation of vegetation, as well as a broadened understanding with regard to the city as a complex landscape of many parts. These concepts have been fused to begin a further understanding for the treatment of cemetery as sacred urban landscape.

When one thinks of the cemetery, it is often an ambiguous space embedded with uncomfortable realities of death. The cemetery may be understood as an endpoint of life's existence, "a final resting place". However, these landscapes exist amongst the enduring city which is very much alive, thus recording life's end becomes restricted, often awkward in the landscape. The tension of the cemetery amongst an organic, evolving, consistently fluid city can create static presence.

It is the aim of this thesis to illustrate an awareness of the cemetery in relation to a lifetime continuum: a living landscape, while sensitive to remembrance and the psychological necessity for grief. An architecture that is the suggestion to an urban landscape as much for the living as it is for the dying (dead?)



'Man's first architecturally important intrusion into his environment - dominated by magical forces - was the definition and enclosure of a domain, the temenos, and by this very act of definition the domain obtained a special relationship to these forces. Here they should dwell or be kept out. This domain fixed the emotionally insecure limits between the ego and the outer world.'

- G. Bandmann, N. Schultz. 1971

"Promisedland"  
Robert and Shana Parkeharrison

## THESIS PAPER

"The threshold is the limit, the boundary, the frontier that distinguishes and exposes two worlds-and at the same time the paradoxical place where those worlds communicate, where passage from the profane to the sacred world becomes possible."

-Mircea Eliade (The Sacred and The Profane, page 25)

Sacred spaces and places have existed amongst environments throughout history. Although they have not always been associated with the present day 'world religions', they have provided space for the 'orientation of man about the cosmos'. From Stonehenge in 3000 BCE to the Mortuary Temple of Queen Hatsheput in 1500 BCE and through the Parthenon, and Pantheon, the examples become many. Such spaces are created with the culture of the living prevalent in their constructions. These structures become landscapes to provide an orientation and

civilization. Giving reference to the people and their collective understanding of that which is sacred. Arnold Berleant discusses sacred as place. He writes, 'Sacred places offer a guide to what gives 'place' its special quality and force. Of course the world is mostly made up of less than sacred places. But their leading features - the full perceptual engagement of a perceiver with a location that possesses identity and coherence in a seamless unity of experience - lie at the center of place.'

## SACRED INFORMING DIRECTION

It was the initial investigation into sacred spaces that led to question what typology would be explored. Through a series of understandings and associated meanings, a breakdown of these spaces presented a series of investigative paths. With attention to landscape being most prevalent, the research began to look into cemetery as sacred landscape, thus beginning to explore mortality and placing this landscape into a specific urban condition. It is the cemetery as sacred landscape that grew from other investigations into how the culture is manifest in these sites. Through specific marking of ground, the cemetery becomes in tension with the growing 'civic' system. Often bringing with it the discomfort of mortal existence. The tension of an ever growing celebration of life and accomplishment is interrupted by death marking the landscape. However, there is room to understand these more fully and to address a psychological need for grief in



NonUniversal

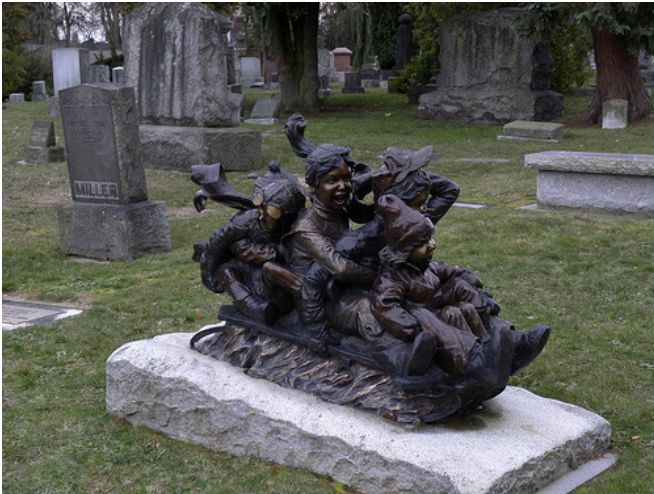


existing through time



Journey to





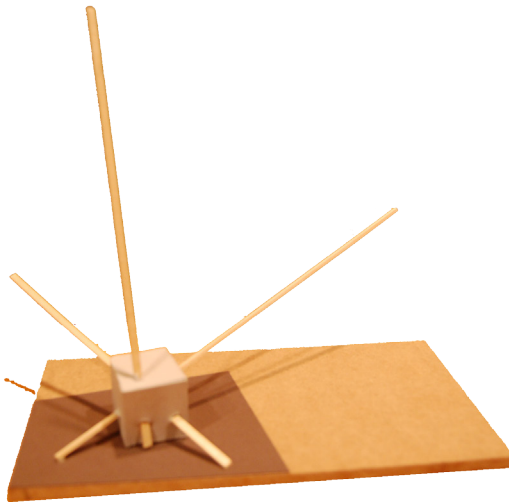
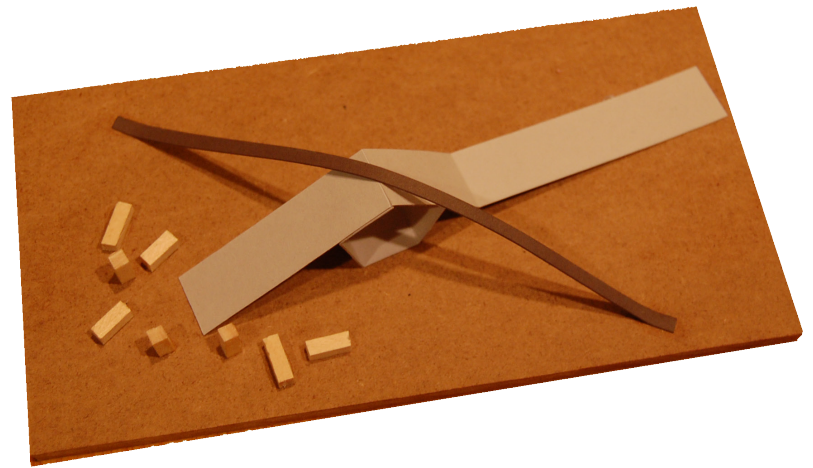
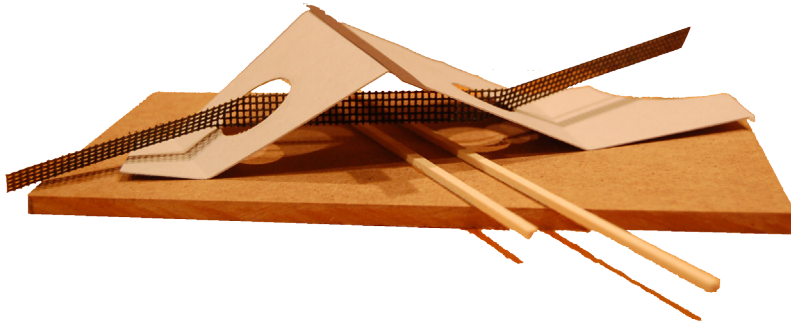
memorial in Cemetery near Everett, WA  
\*photo credit: Cmfish01 (Flickr.com)

culture.

## CEMETERY AS SACRED LANDSCAPE

Lewis Mumford writes of the 'sanctuary and ceremonial space' as being the anchor for the nomadic way of life. Giving reason for establishment and repeated visitation to a common site. This is a phenomena that seems distant to the current understanding of the cemetery as ceremonial space. It may no longer be the necessary means of gathering, however, the existence of such space still brings a collective cultural identity and psychological need for grief experiences.

The word cemetery is rooted in Greek and refers to a sleeping place. In Christian belief structures, the cemetery is the place where the body sleeps, in anticipation of the resurrection. In Christian tradition, the cemetery had long been associated with specific religious order and would often accompany these structures in settlements. With the church becoming the association/gateway and intermediary ground to which the body would attain the afterlife. As the culture of American settlements began to change, the democratization of these spaces became more common as the pastoral picturesque scene was preferred to that of churchyard settlements. When the cemetery was offered beyond the churchyard, the concern for landscape became more clear. As in Catholic and Calvinist tradition, visitation and landscape were not of primary concern, these sites were for the



conceptual models. iterations of occupied ground

gathering of dead to be resurrected. It was not until the separation from the churchyard that specificity to the treatment of landscape was primary to the experience of visitation. The importance of the tree as symbolism to the cycle of life and the living vegetation was seen to offer peace to the decay and discomfort of experienced grief. The stone as marker became a contrast to the vegetation and serenity of the designed landscape. This offered identity and organization to the visitation practice, and the memorialization of loved ones. Bringing together a culture not so much by singular event, but by a common circumstance of life/death.

#### **AMERICAN TREATMENT OF CEMETERY**

During this period of picturesque, park-like movement of visitation, the American cemetery began to change and become articulated. Mt. Auburn outside of Boston, MA, is considered one of the first extra urban cemeteries in America. With the intention of being both “commemorative landscape as well as experimental landscape”. This meaning that the treatment of the dead would be such that the monuments were fit into a rolling ground and the vegetation would become the experiment. With a growing interest in horticulture and the development of plant species, it was a way for the visitor to experience something beyond headstones as well as be the area for an ongoing study in horticulture. The design intent was also such that the light stone tombs would be contrast by lush greenery and dark green foliage. Burial plots were intended to be situated such that the privacy of the individual became

important. This led to elaborate burial plots and the designation through fencing, mausoleum structures etc. to be integrated into the cemetery landscape. With the advent of these spaces as 'parks' in or near the city, the treatment of cemetery transformed. There became an alternate use to these spaces. The articulation of ground within or near the city allowed for these to be used as public parks and cultural gathering places. As the development of structure and the pressing industry developed these spaces were viewed as opportunities of civic instruction and use. Both referring to the history of place and the collective of culture around parklike settings. The need for open greenery was such that it allowed for an alternate understanding of death spaces. The park movement would later arise out of this implementation and the pressing issue of moving these spaces to rural locations became more common.

This was the case in San Francisco as the conflict between death and politics arose over where bodies would be buried. To date, it is no longer allowed for the dead to be buried in San Francisco and has subsequently developed nearby Colma, CA into a 75 % cemetery villlage. The exuming of bodies and reinternment happens on occasion as more anonymous dead are found in the area. The erasure of the dead may be one extreme while directly affected Colma has seen the development of the other. Both actions create their own tensions. It is the suggestion to this problem that this thesis attempts to discuss. And to search for and hypothesize in how we may treat these spaces as an integrated form of cultural remembrance.

## DETROIT CEMETERY LANDSCAPES

Within the city of Detroit exists 11 cemetery plots. These range in size from 45 acres to near 200 acres as is the case with Woodmere on Detroit's west side. Each of these conditions are treated in similar ways. The landscape is dominant with tombstones used as marking in the ground. The pastoral character of these sites must be mentioned. Giving much attention to lawn and the implementation of natural features, the representation of the dead is grounded in this intended tranquil space. One of the most well known, Elmwood Cemetery. A historic landscape in the city of Detroit, Elmwood was conceived as a site to take advantage of natural elements and to integrate landscape in the practice of burial plots. The proximity of Elmwood to the city center and the character of the site is explained in more detail in the precedent study portion and located on page 22. With the recent opening of new burial in Elmwood, all the sites in Detroit remain active in burying the Dead.

### **Intentions in the design: challenging current practice**

The intention of this thesis is to address the cemetery landscape as a living space within the City of Detroit. This suggests that the grieving process may happen in this context and presents a counterpoint to the suburban pastoral cemetery.

For the design of this project, the grieving process is understood in an acceptance and transformation of experiences on the part of

the visitor. This will be an underpinning for the approach to handling the landscape within the city environment. The experience of the visitor is understood as happening in transitional periods, immediate grieving, individual space(quiet space) for privacy, the common visitor who has accepted loss.

The assumption that these sites require acreage for the remembrance of the dead could imply its own constraints and limitations within the city. The handling of this through architecture and landscape will look to propose another attitude to the cemetery as space within the City of Detroit.

The design of the site should engage the living- through various interactions **placement, program mating**(i.e. Procession, spiritual- nondenominational- space). Where is the line between civic space and sacred space? Is there a line?

Balancing memorial with experience, through reinterpreting what the headstone is intended to do(ie national police memorial or the treatment through grouped memorial) marking of ground for organization of plot. What is really meant in the marking of ground? Is there a way to represent culture through the understanding of the site as holding the body. ( ie Ground Zero).

The balance of both architecture as the structure and landscape as natural or constructed space becomes important, giving alternative suggestions to the headstone as grave marker. The treatment of this element brings additional questions of plot and ownership in the cemetery. As illustrated in the example of San





\*Woodmere Cemetery era. 1912

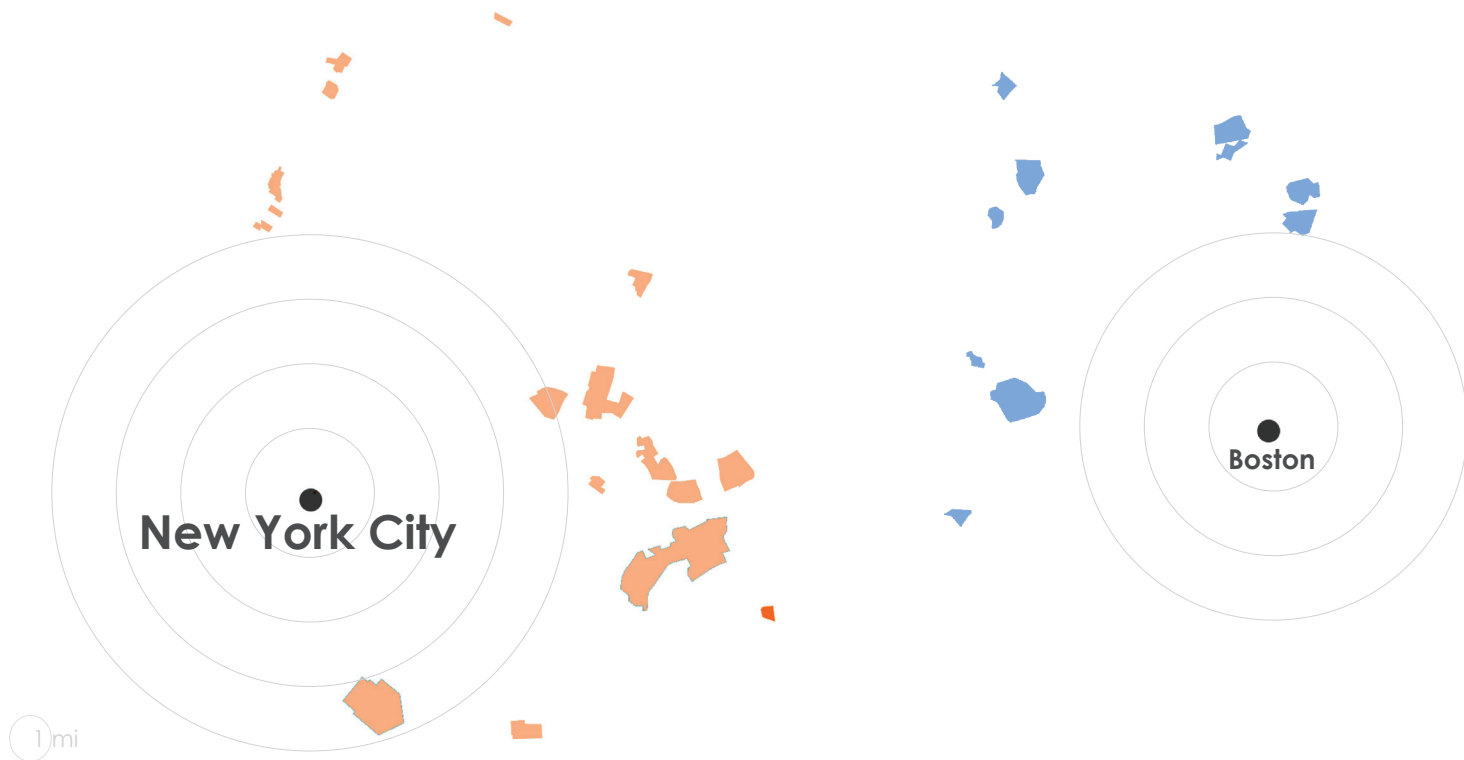
Francisco, it may seem easy enough to remove death from the city altogether, however, it is the question of this thesis to test interaction with the cemetery in the city of Detroit.

**Landscape** - landscape will not be understood as 'natural' but as an articulation and manipulation of the ground plane. This differs from the picturesque park like intentions of current/previous cemeteries.

**Architecture** - becomes the treatment of interior/exterior spaces to experiment with passage of the body and suggest threshold. The threshold becomes the dynamic design element of this site in the city.

**The Sacred** - The sacred is present through individual interactions and space placement in the site.

This thesis will look to test, through architecture/landscape, a cemetery in the City of Detroit. Interactions will be addressed based on the visitors need of private and public space. Working through these foundations, it is the hope that further suggestions may be made for the treatment of cemetery in the City of Detroit.



\*comparative study of cemetery proximity to city center.  
C. Gillen





## ENDNOTES

### Page 3

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### Page 3

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### Page 3, Page 4, Page 5

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### Page 8

Bottum, Joseph. Death and Politics. First Things, June/July 2007. (page 17)

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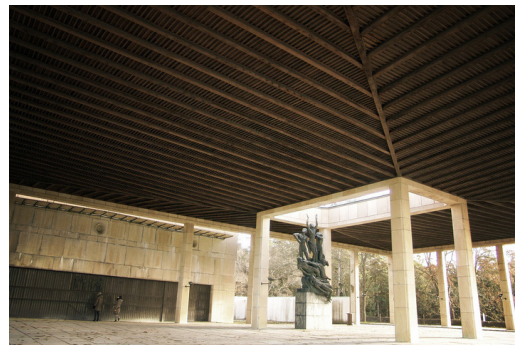
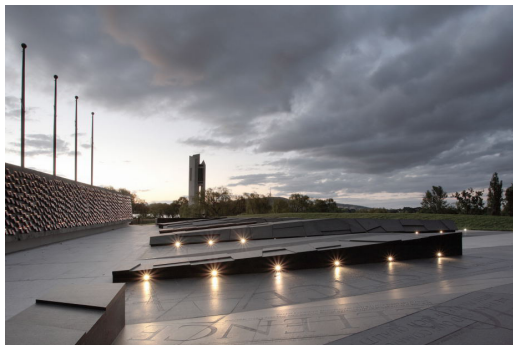
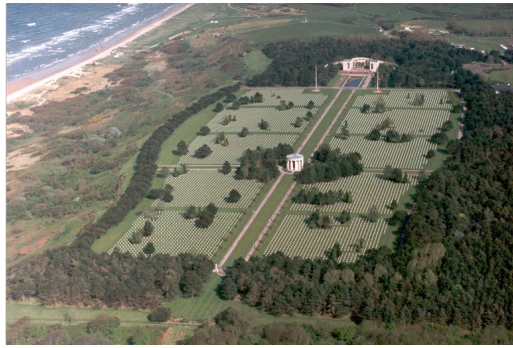
***Rules and Regulations. Woodmere Cemetery Association*** with historical sketch. Detroit, Michigan era. 1895

Kostof, Spiro. ***A History of Architecture: Settings and Rituals***. 2010

Schultz, Norberg Christian. ***Meaning in Western Architecture***

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[www.elmwoodhistoriccemmetery.org](http://www.elmwoodhistoriccemmetery.org), (2010)



## PRECEDENT STUDIES

Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial  
Normandy, France

Elmwood Cemetery  
Detroit, Michigan

National Police Memorial  
Canberra, Australia

Woodland Cemetery  
Stockholm, Sweden

# Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial

Normandy, France  
American Battle Monuments Commission



The Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial in France is located on the site of the temporary American St. Laurent Cemetery, established by the U.S. First Army on June 8, 1944 and the first American cemetery on European soil in World War II. The cemetery site, at the north end of its ½ mile access road, covers 172.5 acres and contains the graves of 9,387 military dead, most of whom lost their lives in the D-Day landings and ensuing operations. On the Walls of the Missing in a semicircular garden on the east side of the memorial are inscribed 1,557 names. Rosettes mark the names of those since recovered and identified.

The memorial consists of a semicircular colonnade with a loggia at each end containing large maps and narratives of the military operations; at the center is the bronze statue, "Spirit of American Youth." An orientation table overlooking the beach depicts the landings in Normandy. Facing west at the memorial, one sees in the foreground the reflecting pool; beyond is the burial area with a circular chapel and, at the far end, granite statues representing the U.S. and France.

-American Battle Monuments Commission





Anthony Atkielski

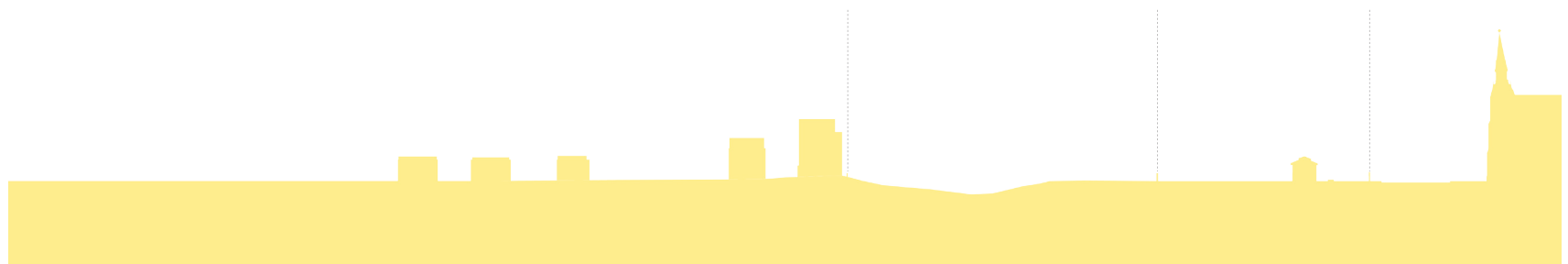
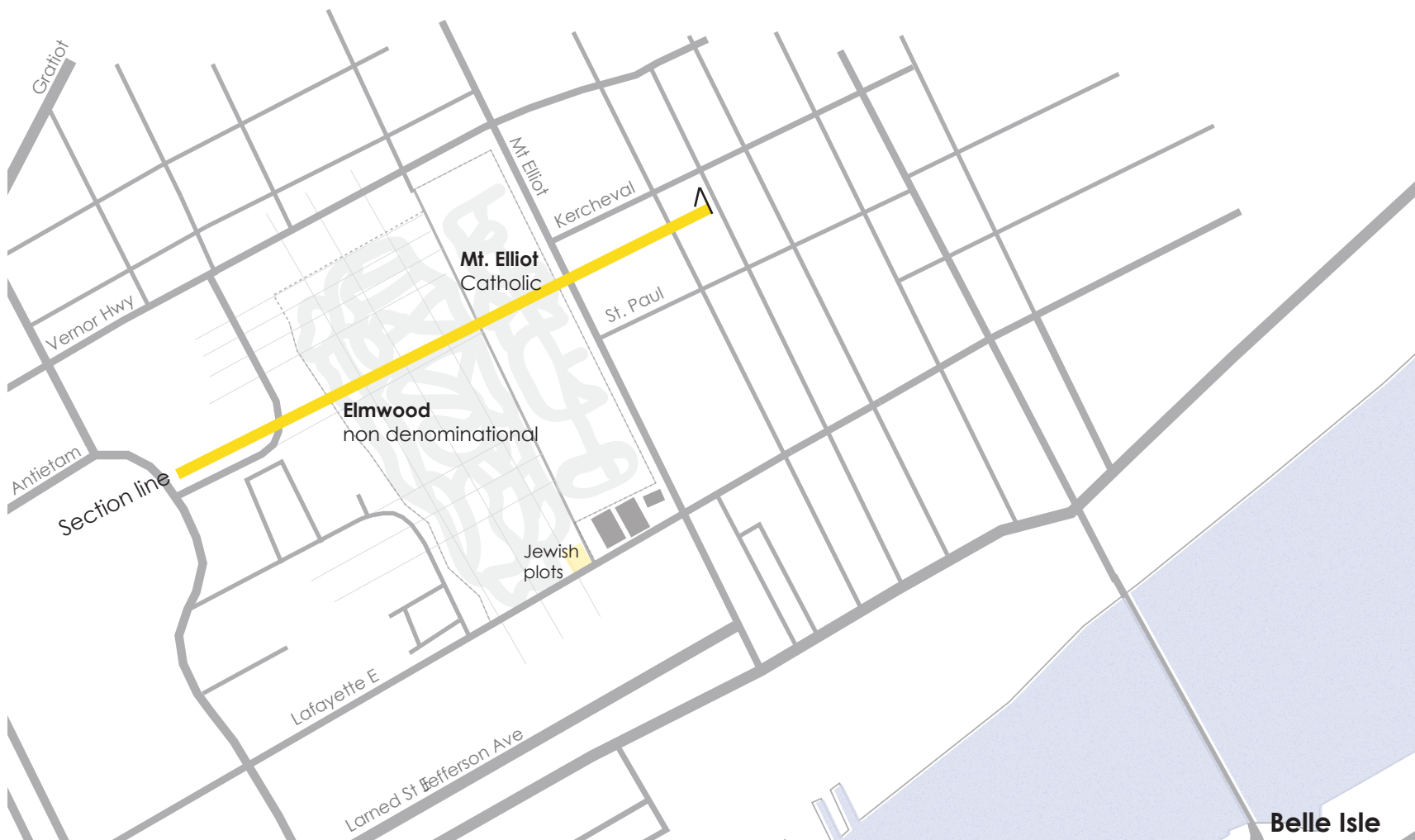
## Elmwood Cemetery

Detroit, Michigan  
Frederick Law Olmsted, Mt Auburn, Cambridge Mass.

Elmwood cemetery is located within 2 miles of Detroit's city center. Established in 1842, Elmwood cemetery has expanded to its current size of approximately 85 acres. The once rural location has since been surrounded by the expanded housing and neighborhoods of Detroit. Elmwood sought to establish the cemetery as modeled after Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge Massachusetts. This brought on ideas of Frederick Law Olmsted and the pastoral landscape within the urban environment. The contrast of the site to surrounding city is somewhat refreshing in that the natural topography has been maintained and integrated into the cemetery structure. With many physical characteristics to mention, Elmwood also brings cultural significance. Elmwood was the first fully integrated cemetery in the state of Michigan and has remained to present day. This diversification within the landscape has attributed to an equality of representation and cultural acceptance.







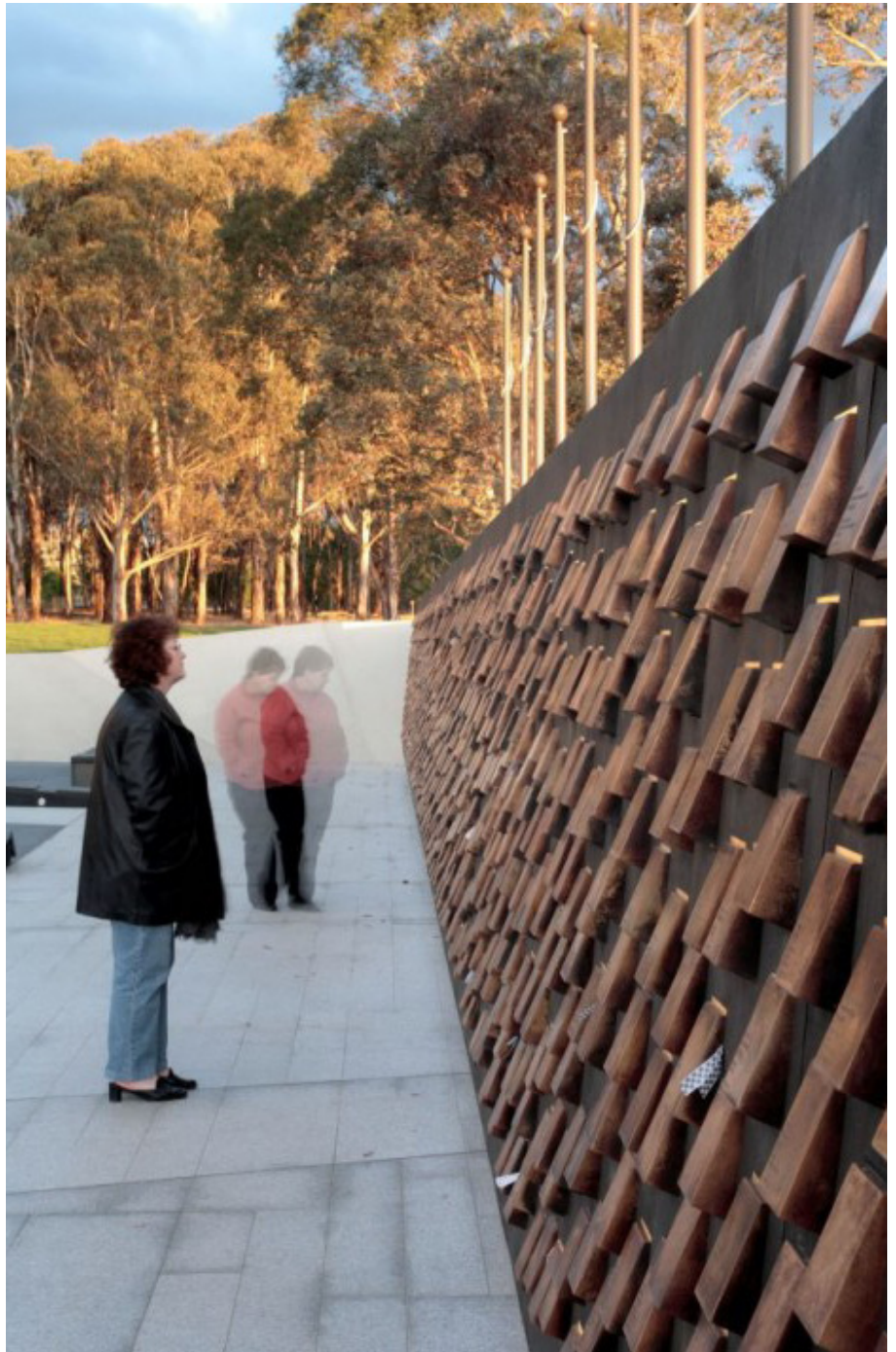
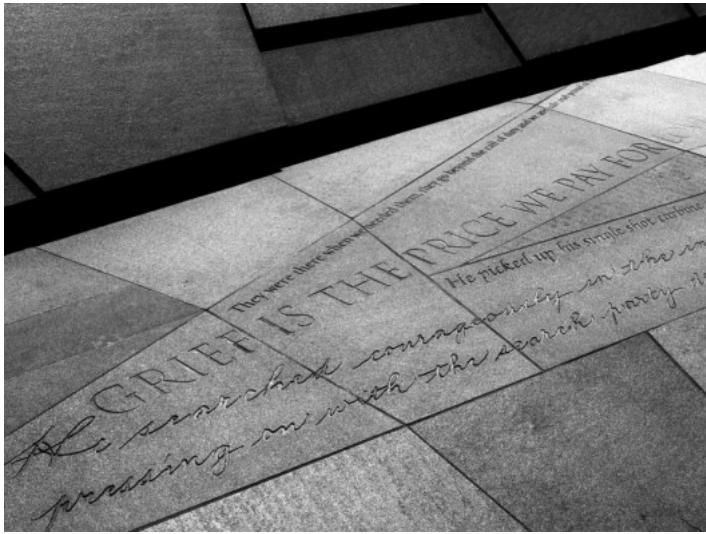
## National Police Memorial

Canberra, Australia  
Bureau^Proberts Architects



The National Police Memorial in Canberra, Australia is a designed memorial with intent to give a sensitive detail to personalized memoria. The project integrates personal messages and quotes to represent the national police men/woman who have been killed. While there is a level of individuality to the memorial, a constant collective is always present with the treatment of the gold markers. open to memorial and public interaction, the site differs from the cemetery plots as it is completely manipulated ground. The landscape of the memorial is constructed and organized by its design elements and is placed in the contrasting natural landscape. While internments are not part of this project, the influence is the handling of public memorial and personalization of individuals memory.

photo credits: Roger D'Souza Photography and Emma Riley Photography



## **‘Skogskyrkogården’ Woodland Cemetery**

Gunnar Asplund & Sigurd Lewerentz

Woodland Cemetery has been used as a study of architectural space relating to cemetery. The cemetery does not exist amongst an urban environment but the architecture of such space was of interest. Representation and arrangement of the gravesites and placement of building against the landscape are areas which have been used as inspiration in handling cemetery.



photo: "pesarussa"





photo: Ken McCown

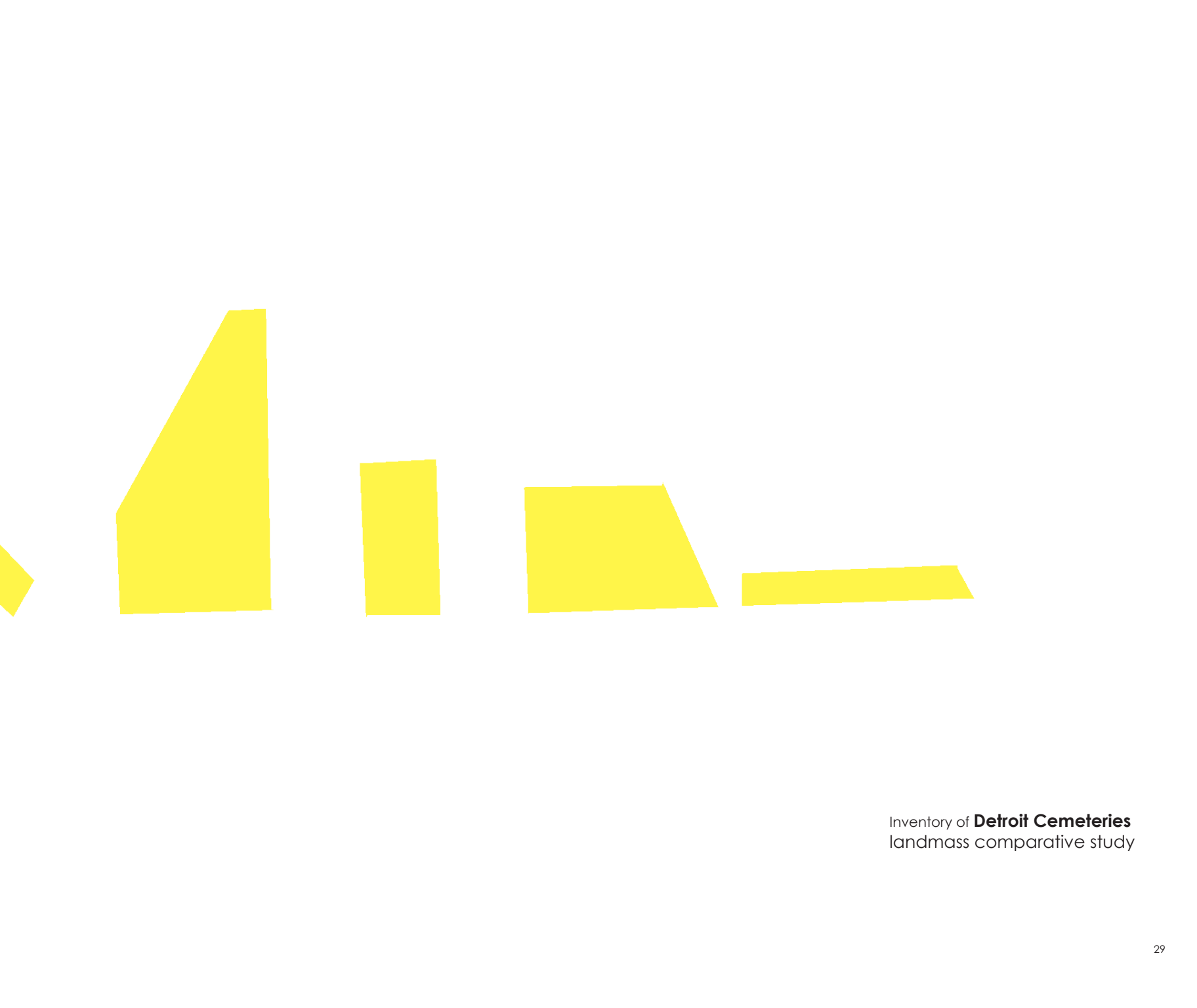


INSEARCH

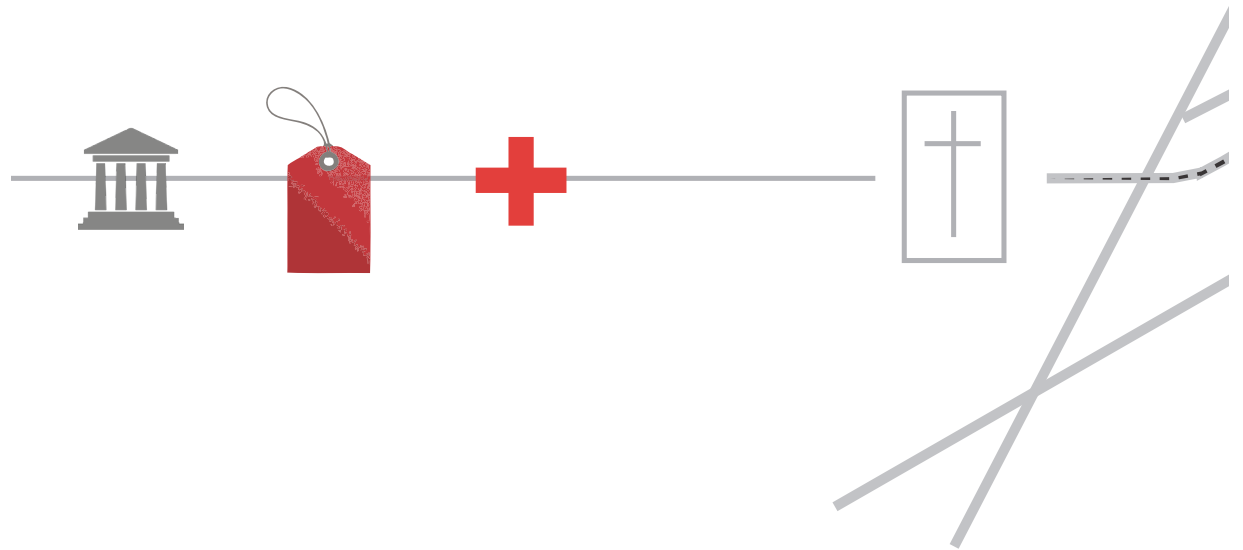
unraveling cemetery







Inventory of **Detroit Cemeteries**  
landmass comparative study



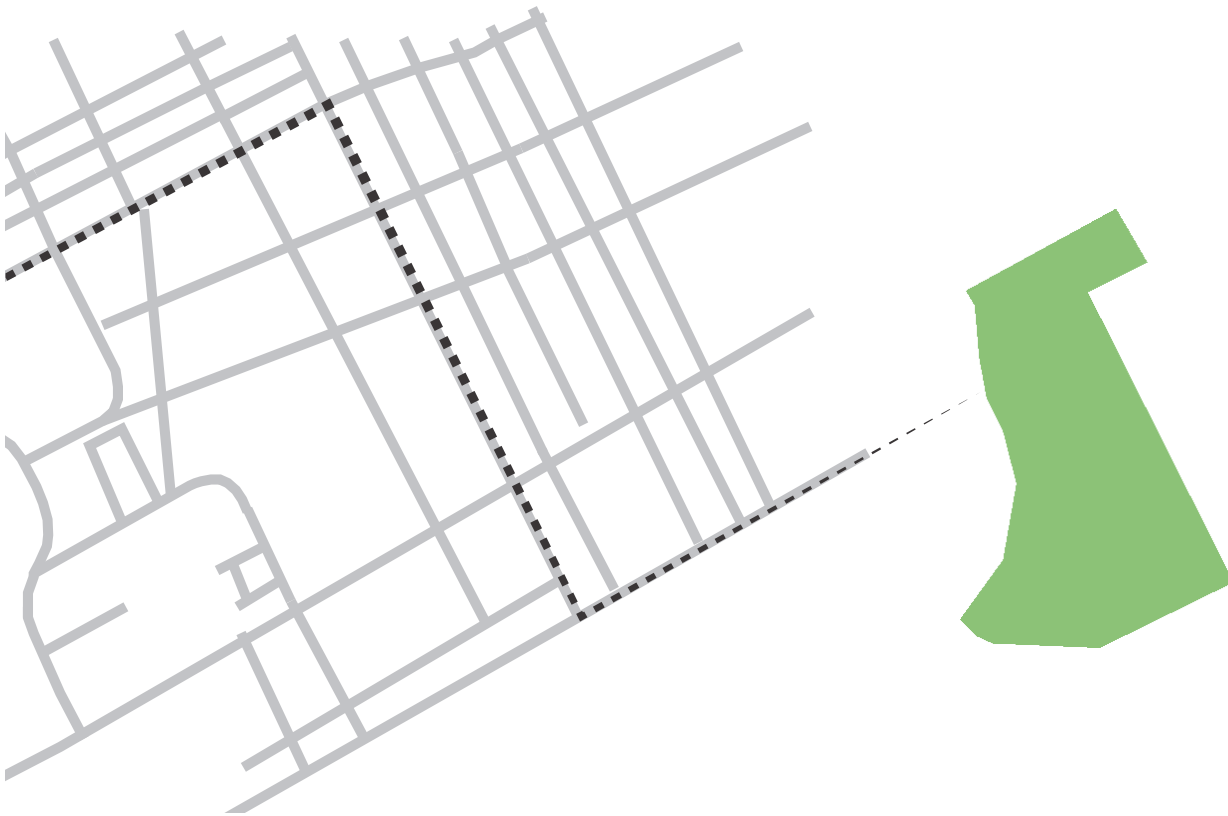
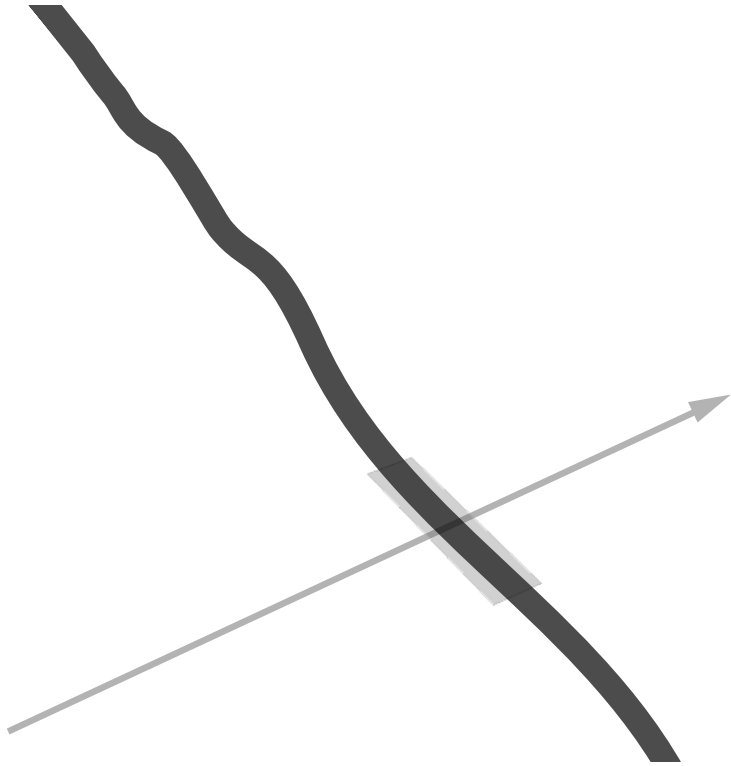
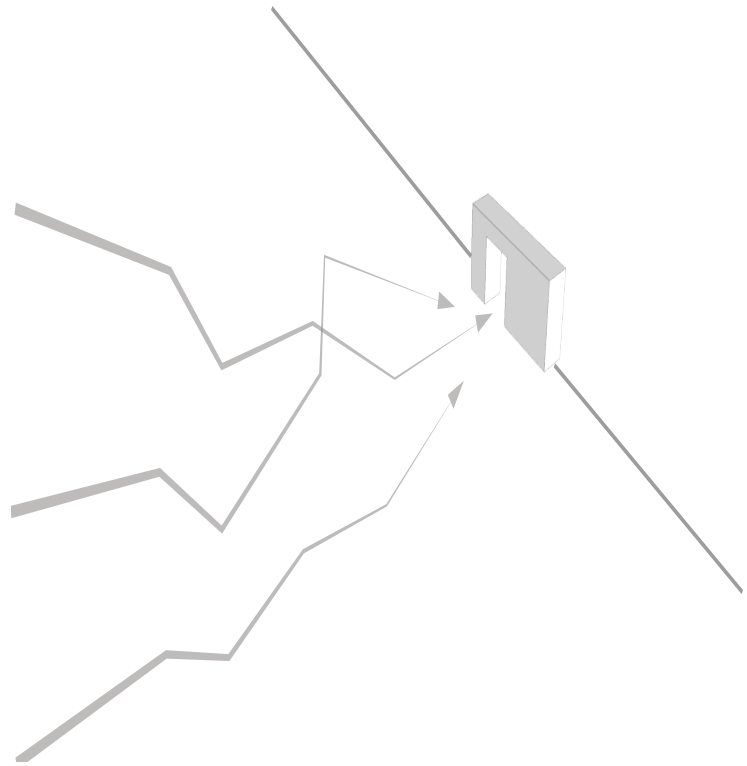


Diagram to represent the procession of the body through the city.

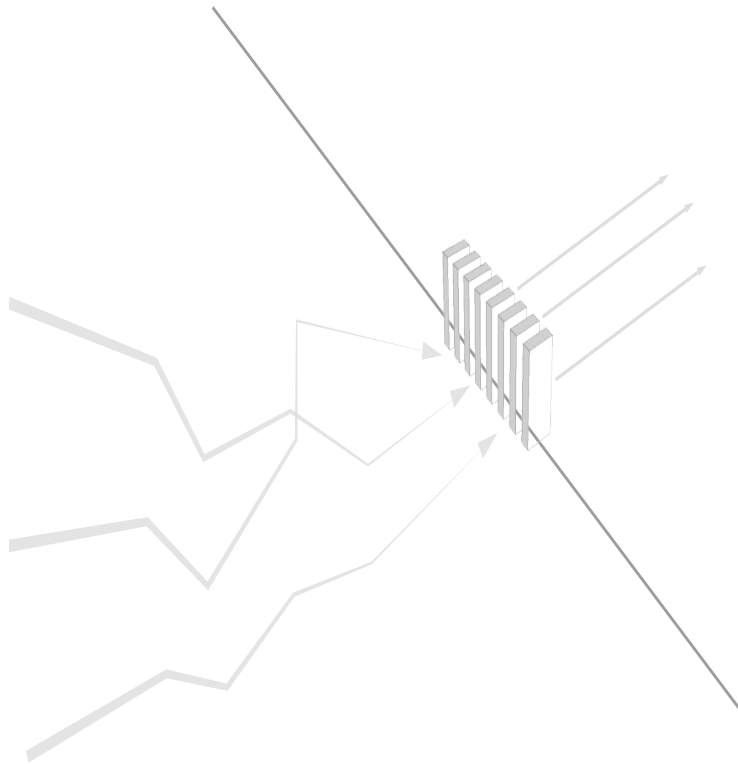


line as demarcation

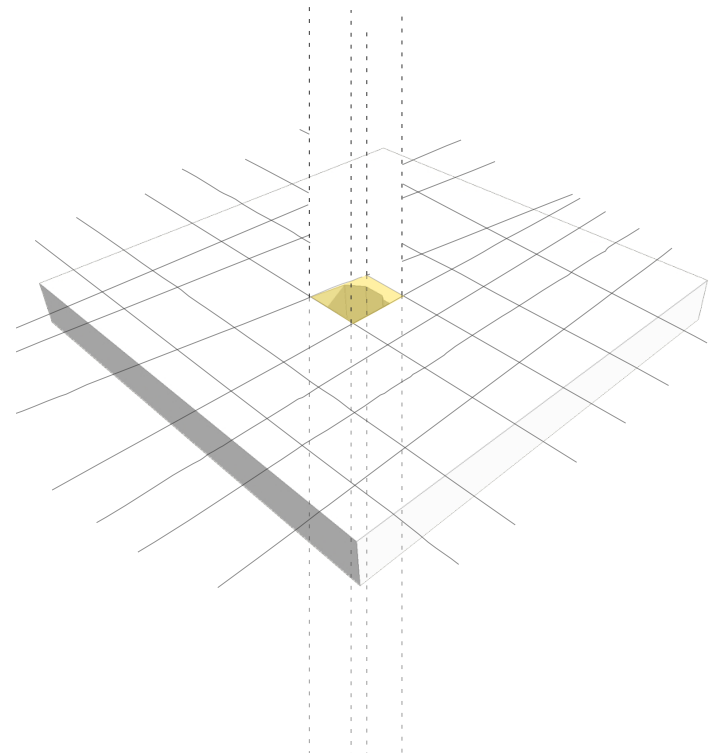


portal as demarcation - entry

A series of graphics were developed to explore the nature of threshold. These were used to evaluate design elements and to develop a language for handling this in the design.



segmented demarcation as entry



conceptualizing parcel and plot









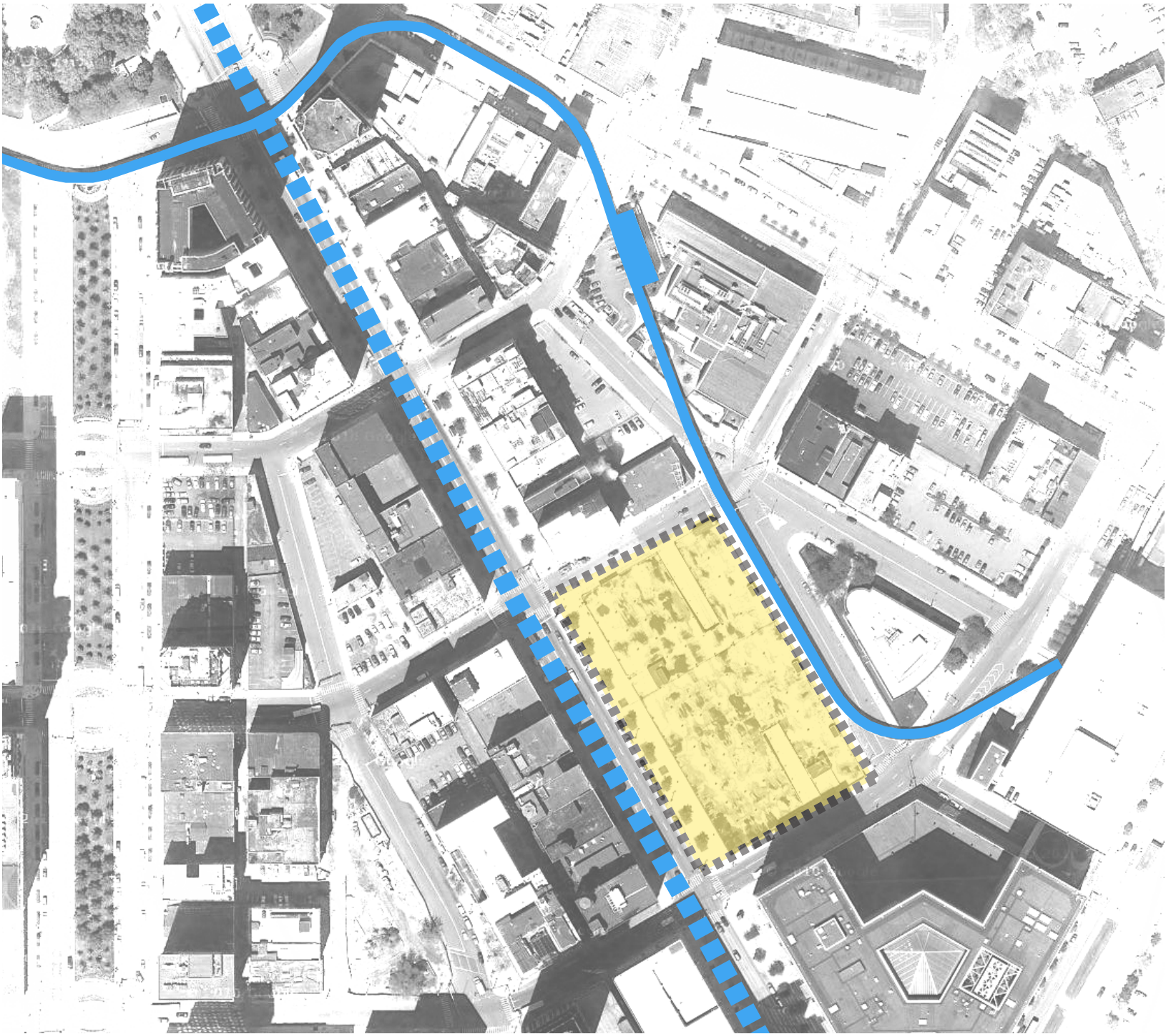
SITE INVESTIGATION  
DETROIT, MICHIGAN







Initial site explorations were narrowed to 3 varied conditions within the city of Detroit. Each site was explored for the history, understanding of ground, and proximity to the city core. The following pages illustrate the immediate context of the sites. The yellow fill represents the extents of the site, the dotted blue line represents the influence of vehicle traffic. The solid blue line when present is tracing the path of the people mover. The evaluation was presented at a benchmark presentation and critiqued for their unique conditions. A decision was then made to develop one of these sites into the site of the cemetery.



## **SITE ONE**

### FORMER HUDSONS DEPARTMENT STORE

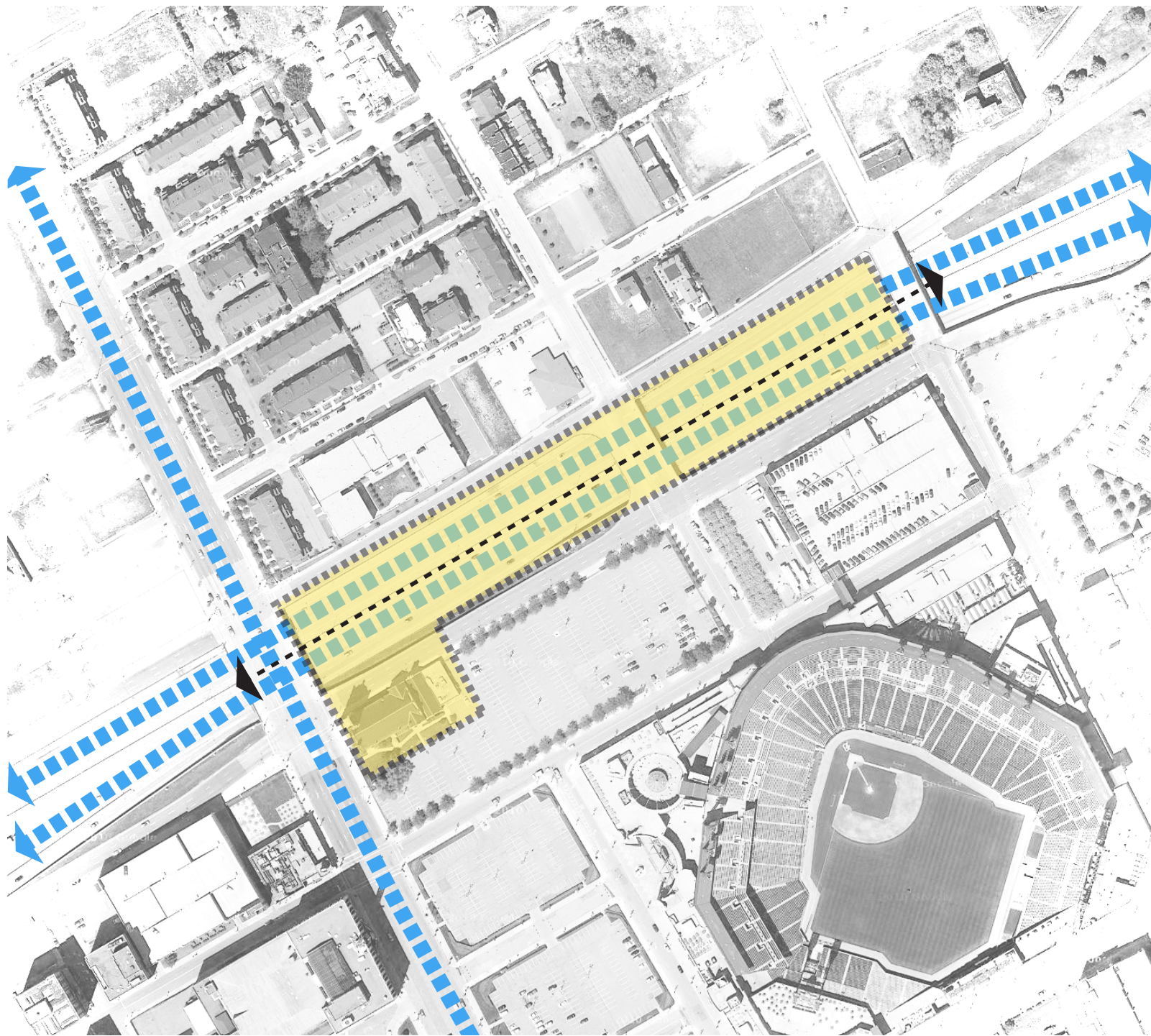
This site packed a lot of substance which was sought in posing the thesis question. It questions current practice of burial while immediately suggesting spatial relationships to the cemetery through a dense context. Representative of many sub narratives for the city of Detroit, the space has been used as a parking garage since the fall of the Hudson's Department Store in 1997.

## **SITE TWO**

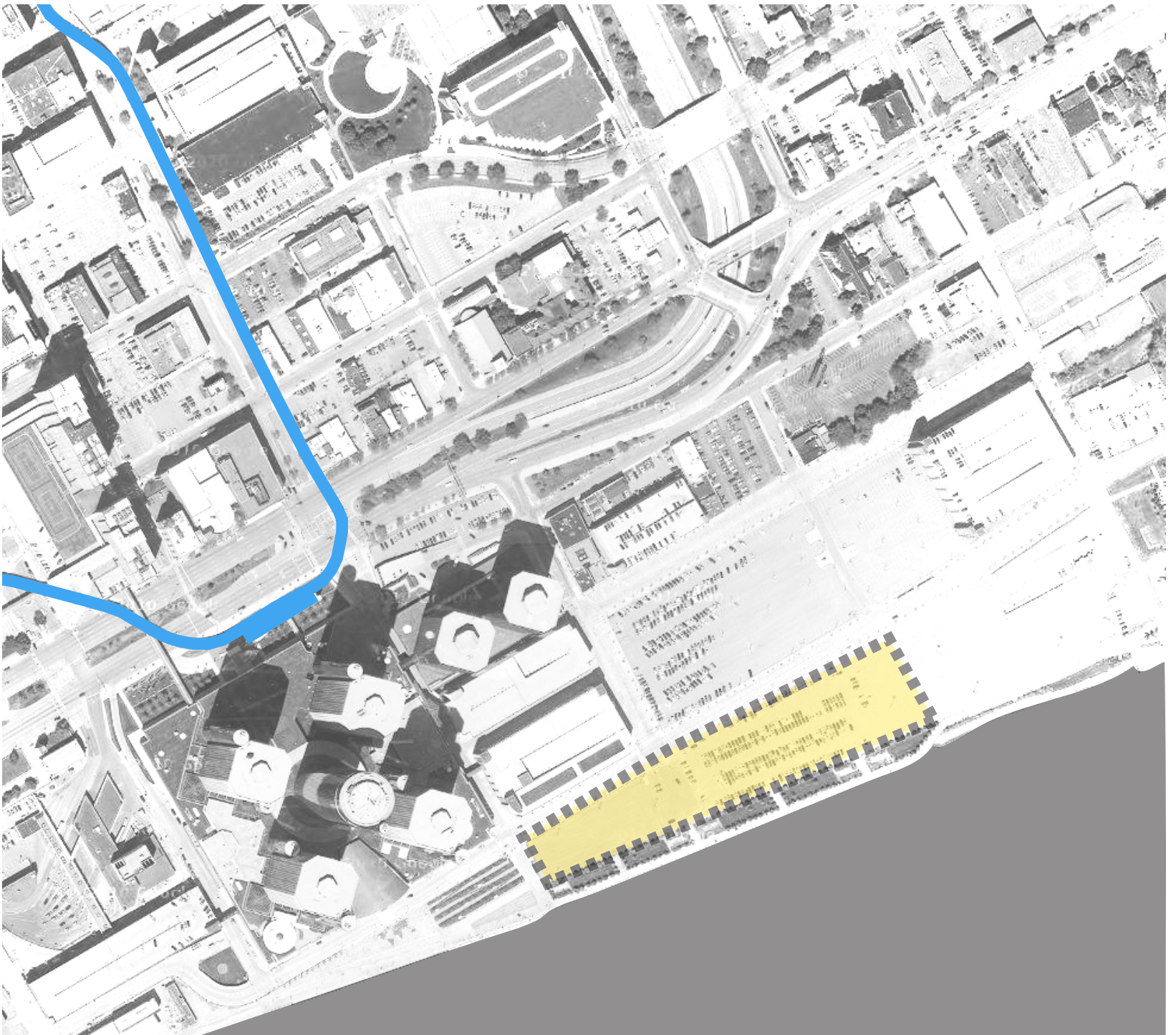
### INFRASTRUCTURE - FLOATING GROUND

The interest in this site was to question the nature of burial and ground alltogether. Presented as a hypothetical scenario and speaking directly to the built environment which exists in the city of Detroit, the potential of the site allowed for dramatic reconseptions of interment space.









## **SITE THREE**

### RIVERFRONT

The riverfront site presented the opportunity to engage the city through a meshing of the natural river with the built city structure. The potential of the site to exist as deeply tied to all facets of its context.





Present condition of the site. 2011



The Hudson's Department Store (right of image).  
image courtesy of Walter P. Reuther Library -  
Wayne State University.

## **SITE SELECTION**

The site chosen to further this exploration was site 1. Chosen for its placement within the city, the supporting history of the site and the spectacular erasure of an architecture replaced by a parking structure. Perceptual cues were used to develop a design strategy and are illustrated in the following pages.





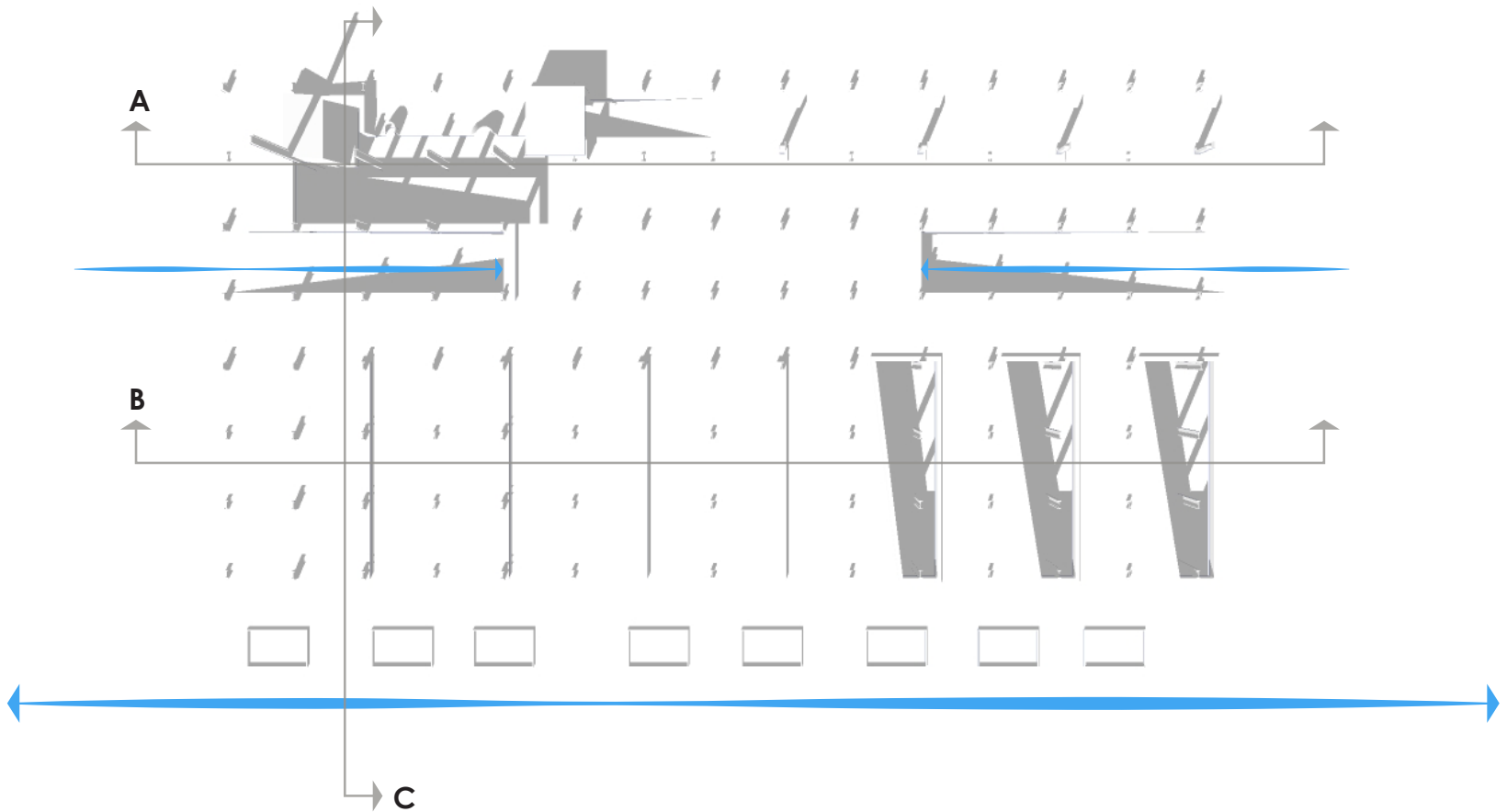


## SITE PERCEPTIONS







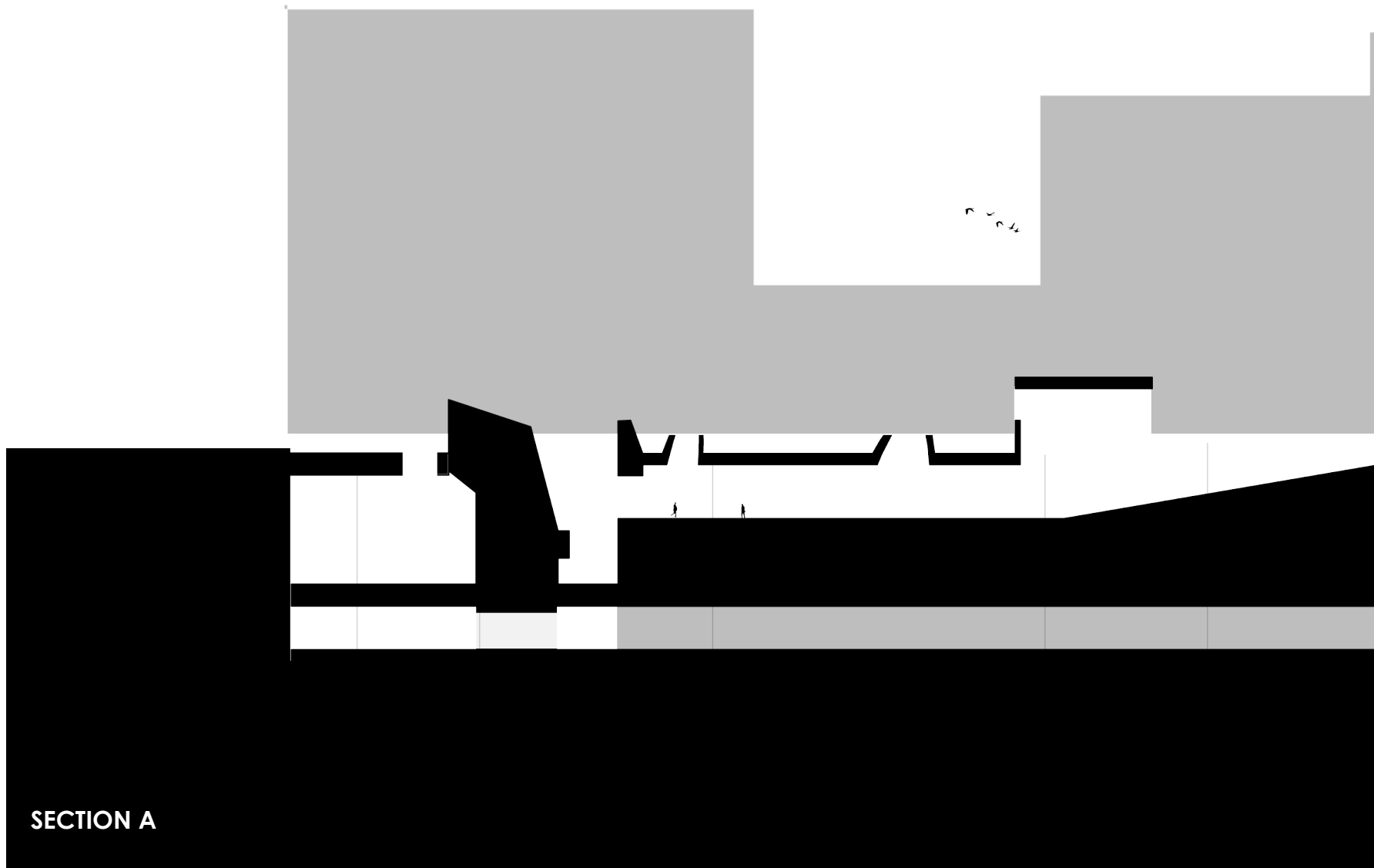


The graphic above is the initial thought of plaza articulation. Openings in the city surface begin to communicate what is happening below. sections were generated from this initial scheme and are included on the following spread.



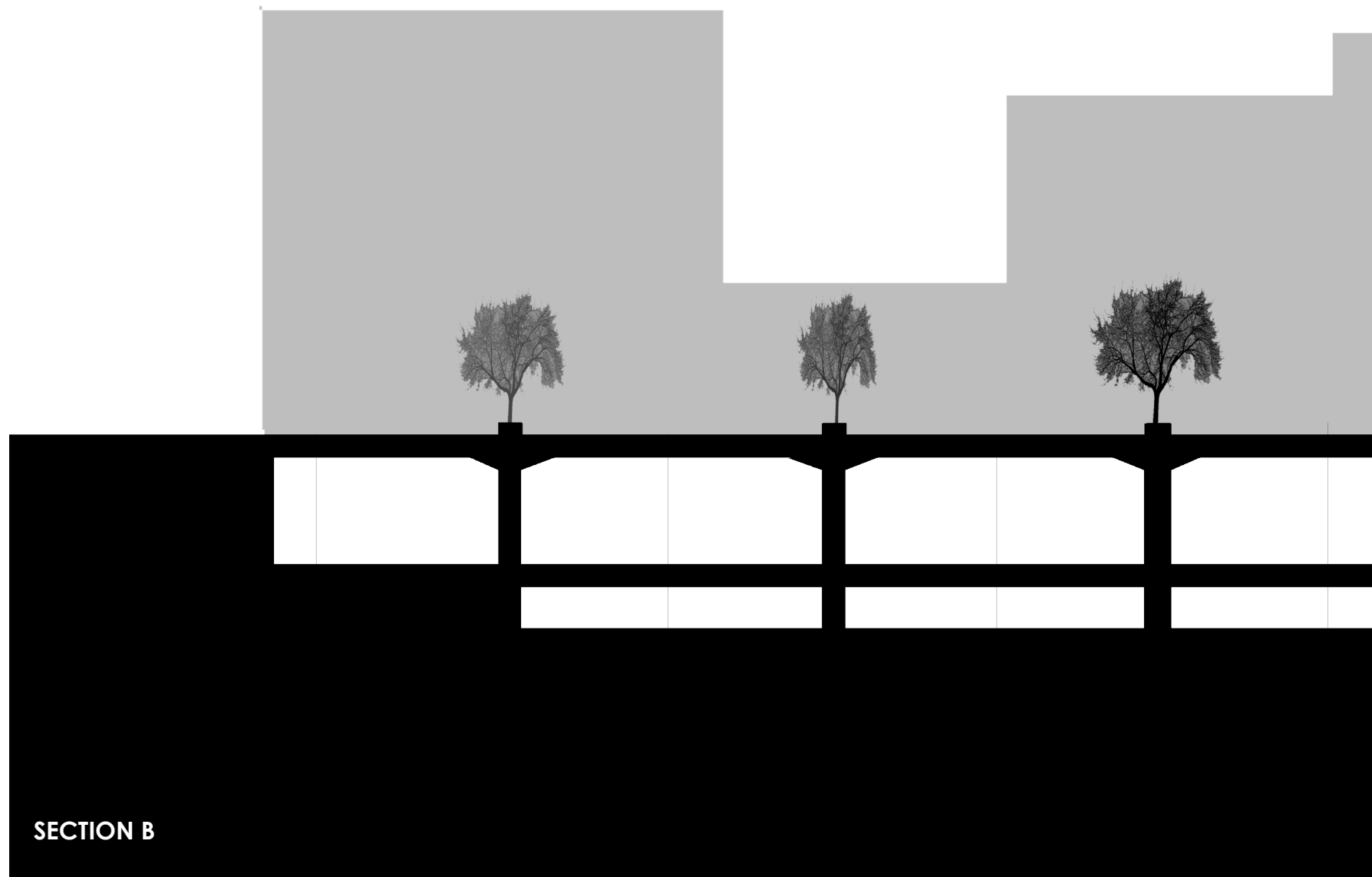
## PRELIMINARY DESIGN

The approach to negotiate the existence of a sacred ground amidst the urban fabric was a prevailing design question. Given the location of the site, schemes were designed to develop the city surface as a plaza free to exist without expected cemetery markings (tomstones). The development of the "city floor" sought to blur the threshold of that which is sacred and that which is profane.



SECTION A

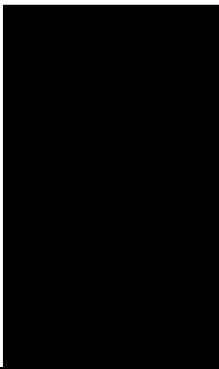




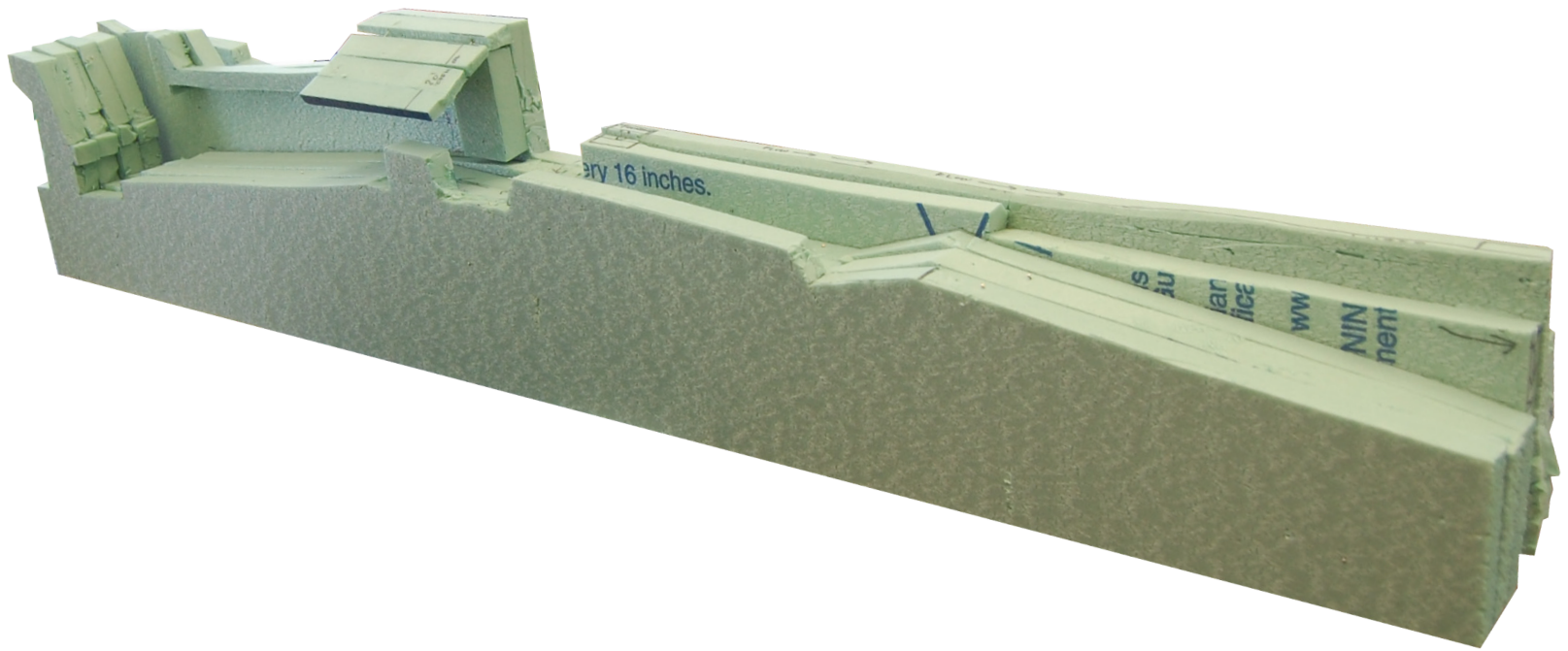




SECTION C



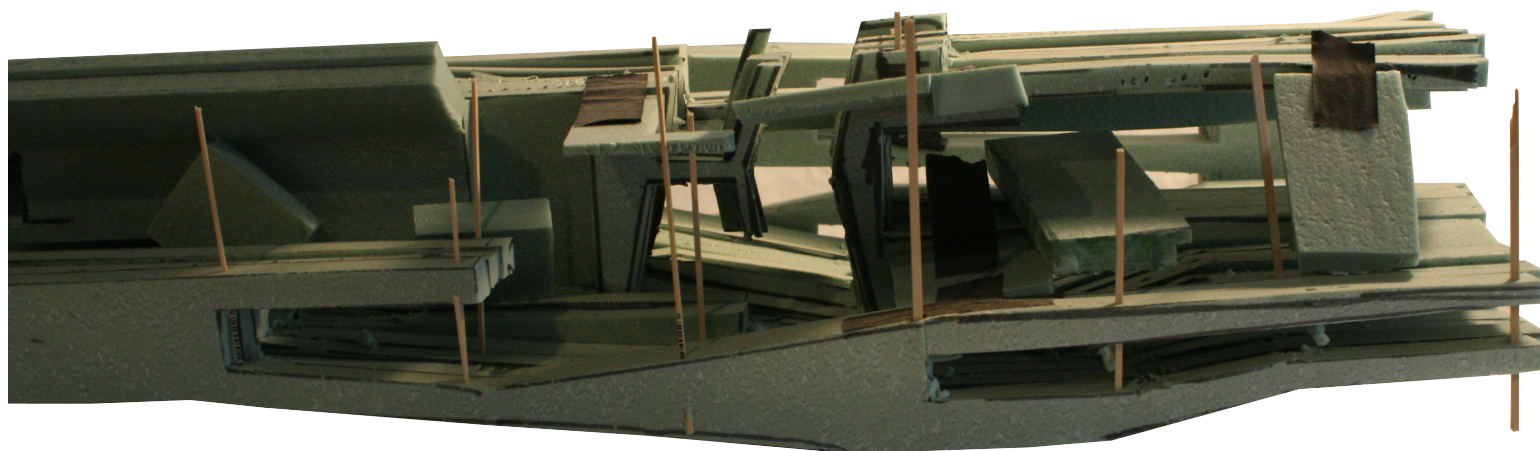
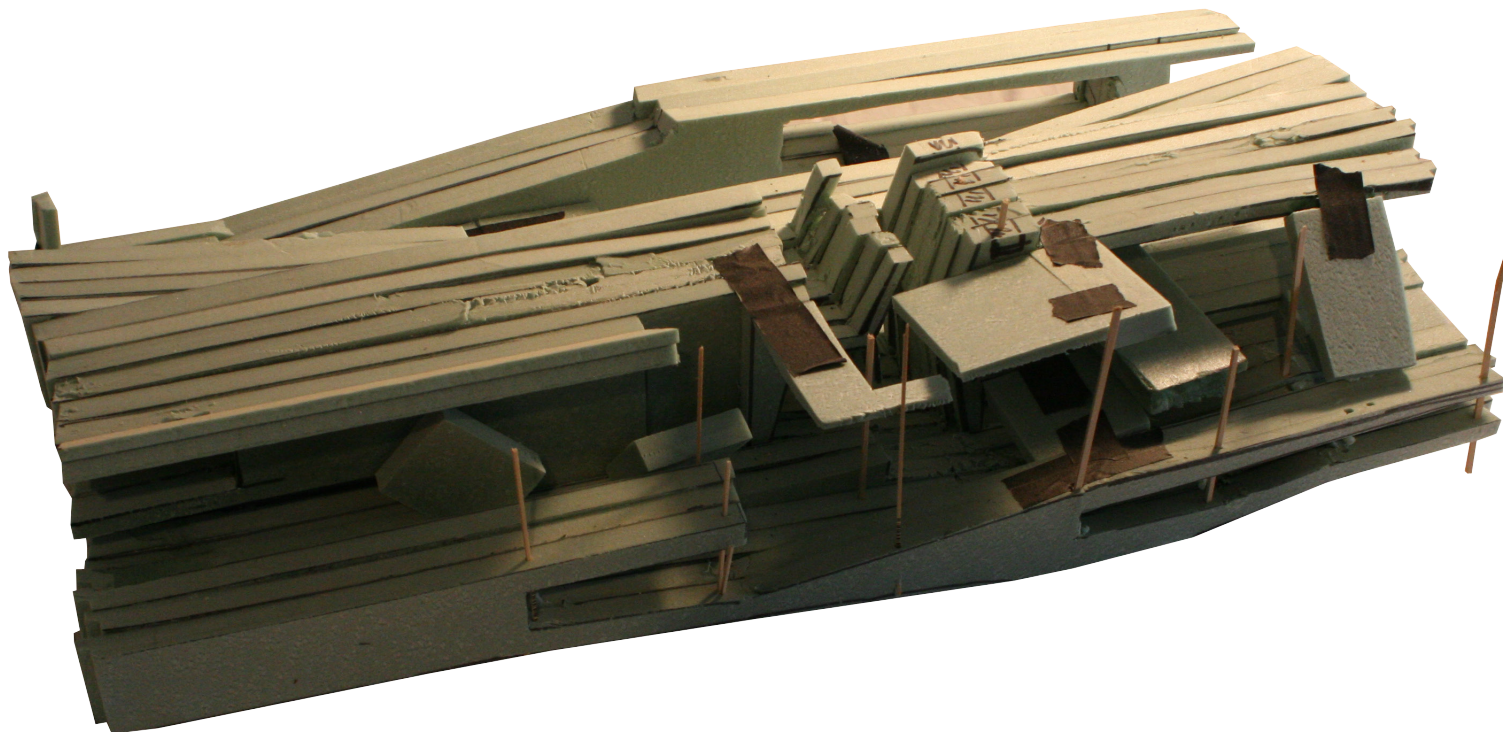




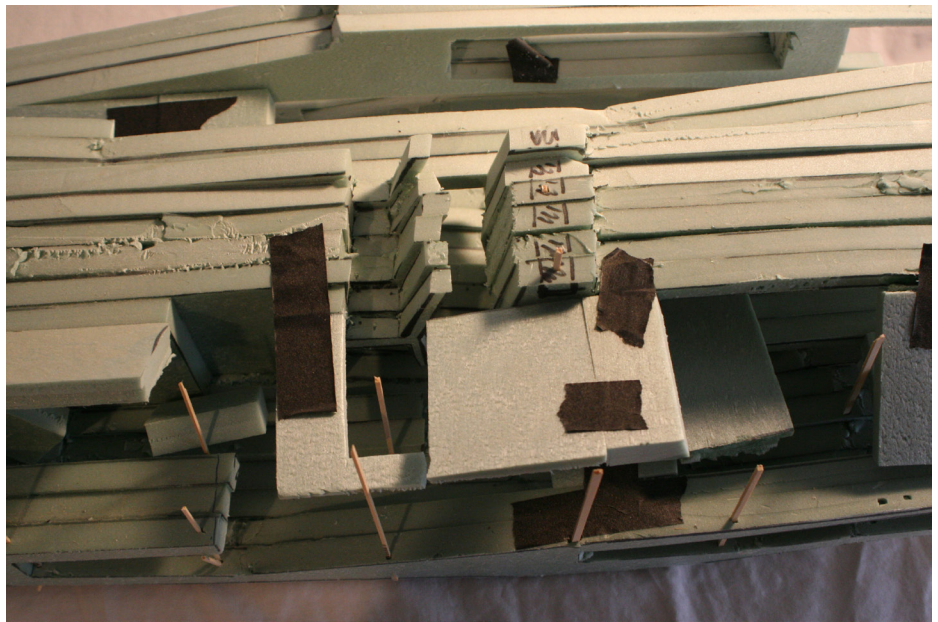
Preliminary foam study model of chapel and landscape



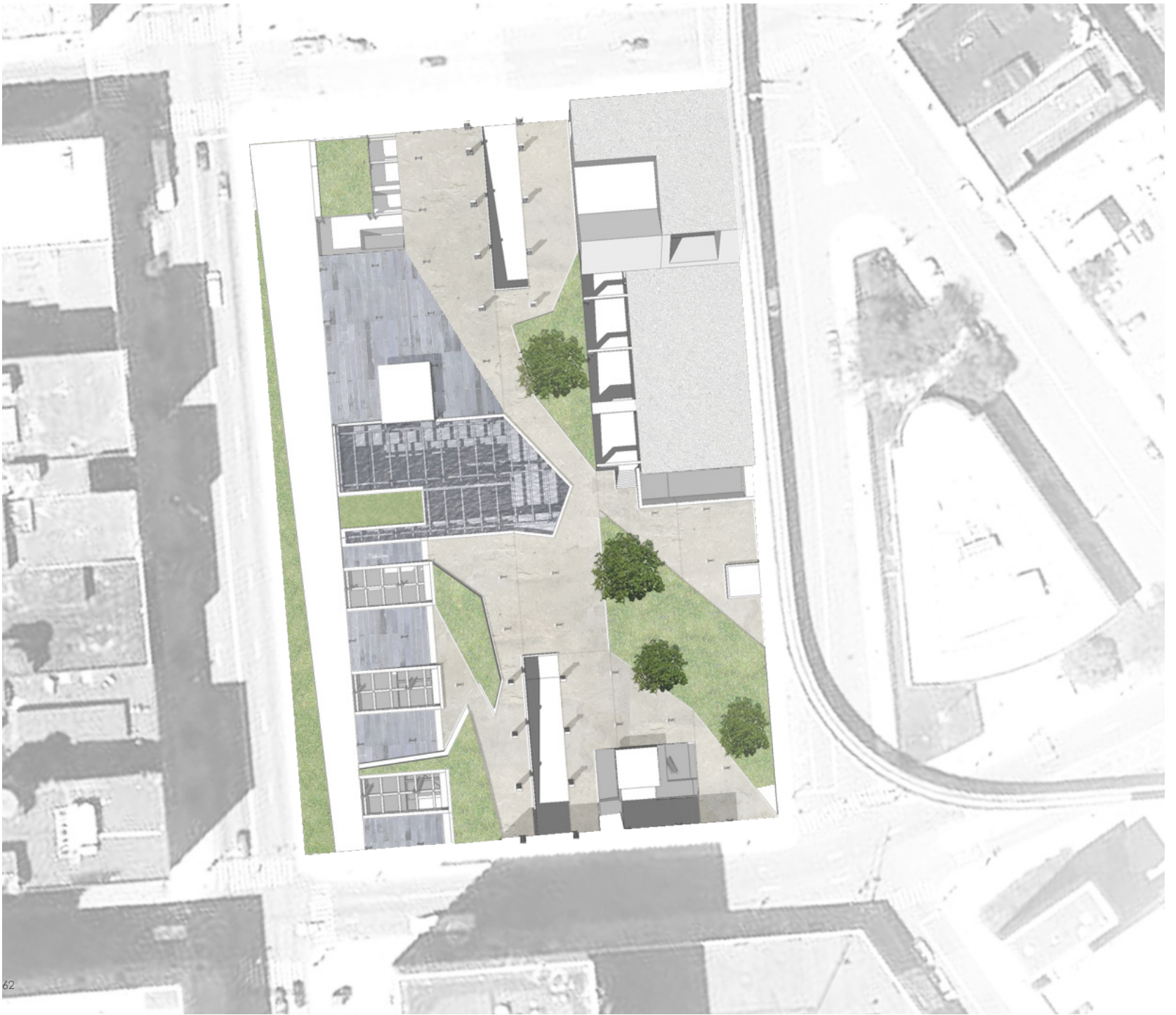
model to study proportion and spatial relationship to the existing steel columns.





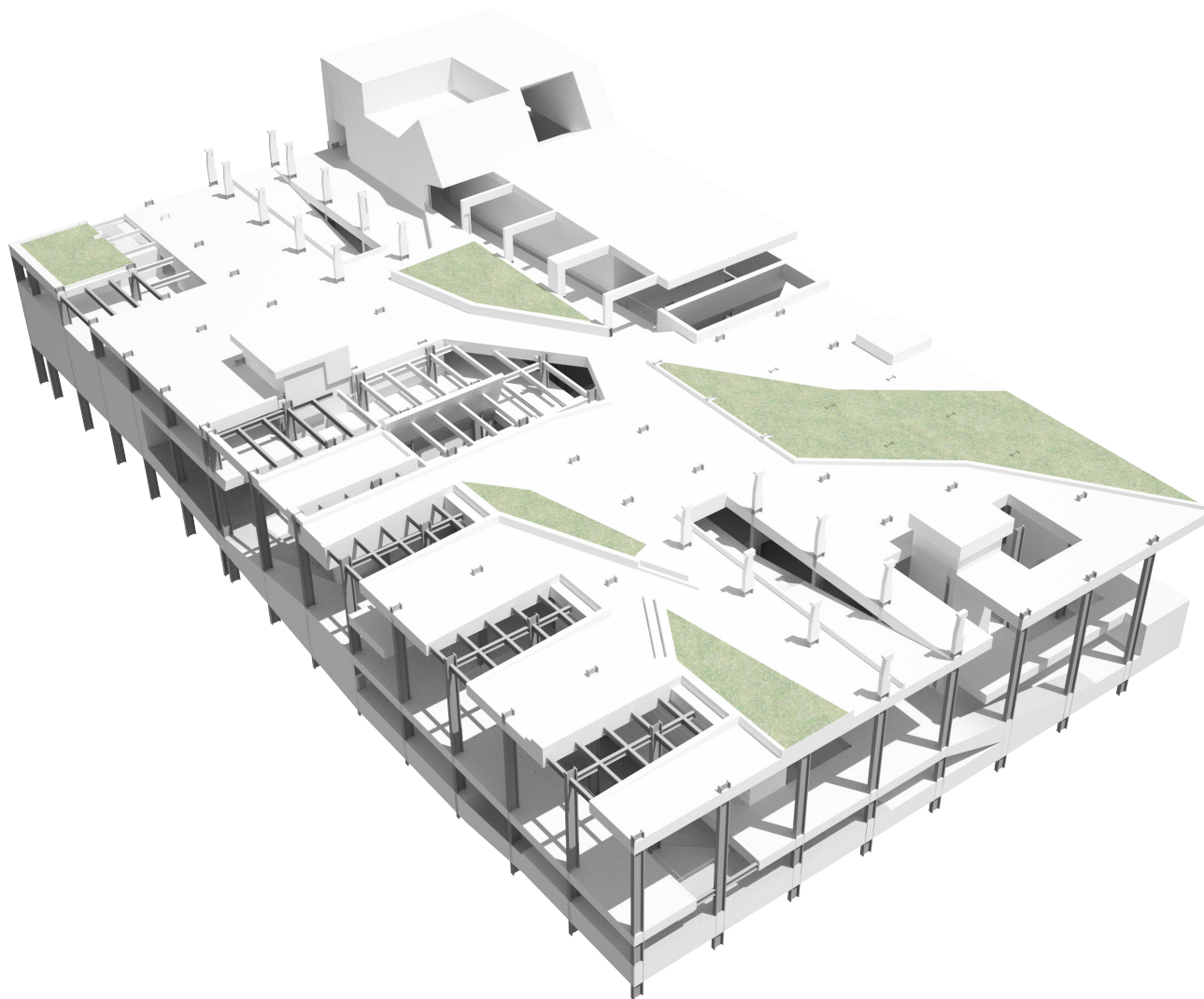


A foam model was used to test the organization of spaces. The model provided for continual adaptations and progression of carved spaces.

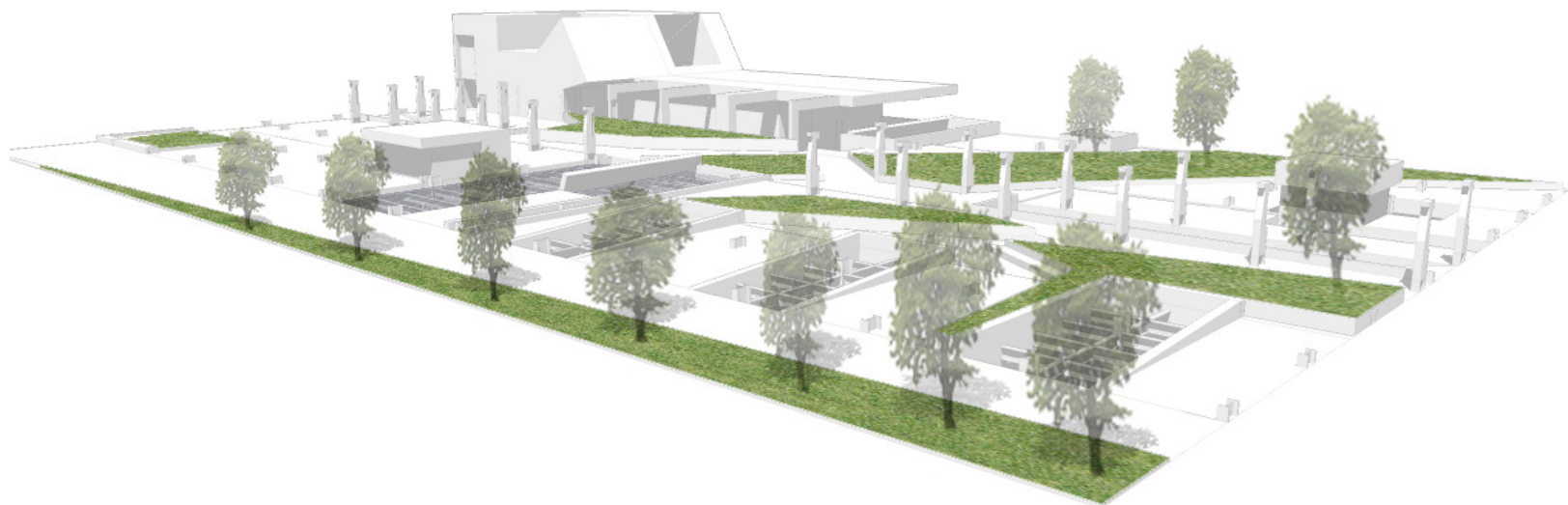


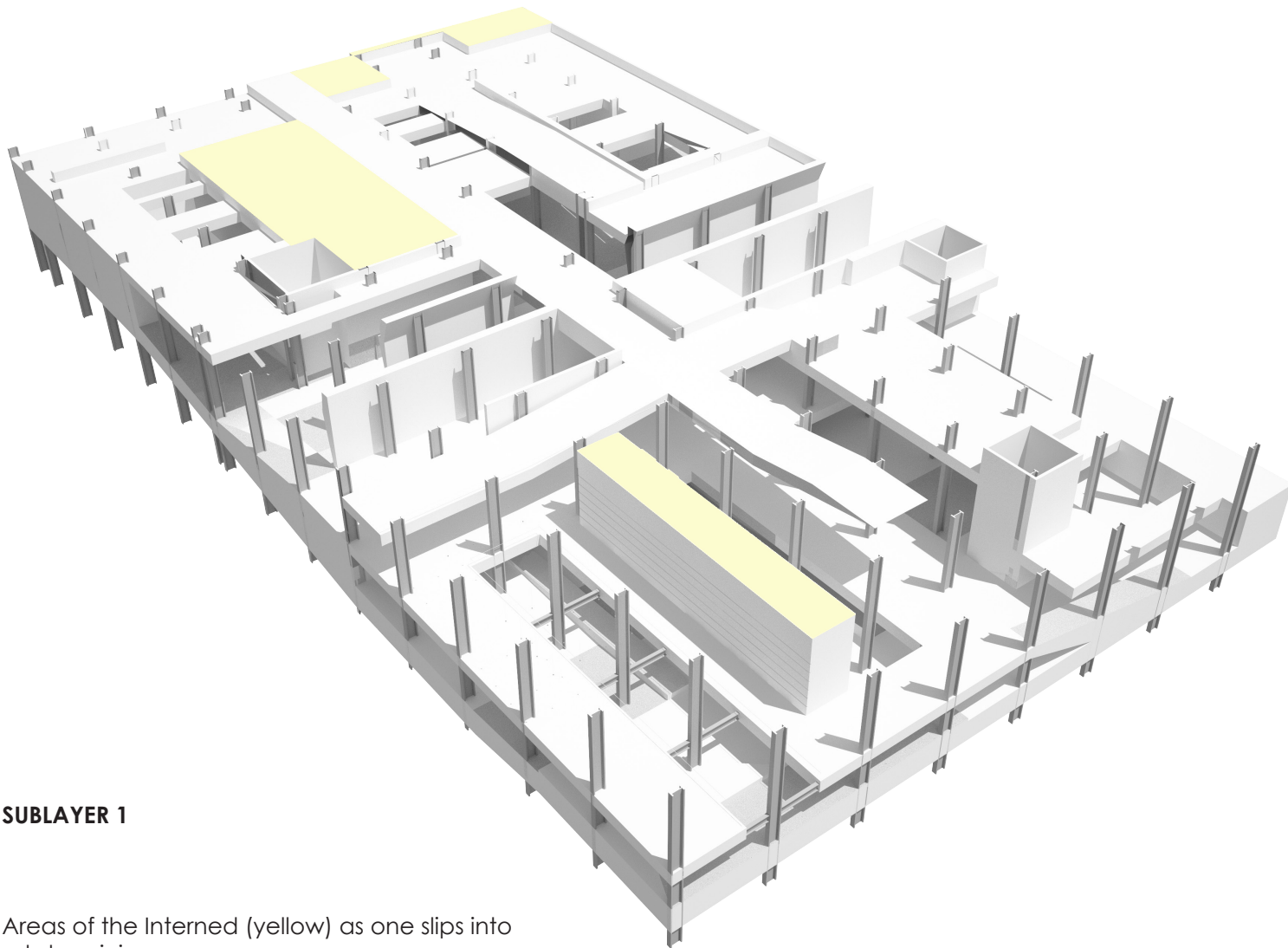


## FINAL DESIGN STRATEGY



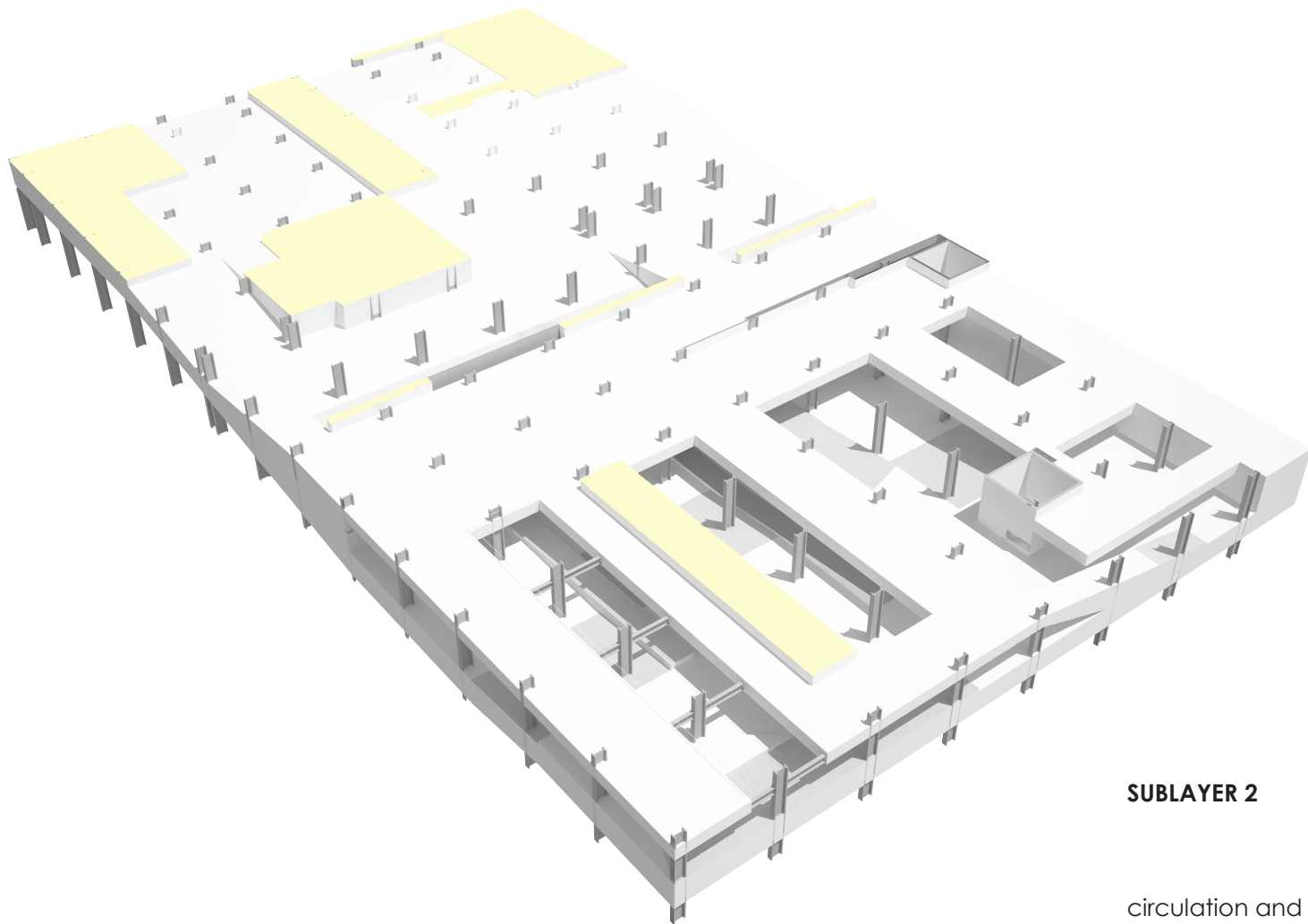
The following pages illustrate the proposed areas of internment and the relationship to public interaction.





**SUBLAYER 1**

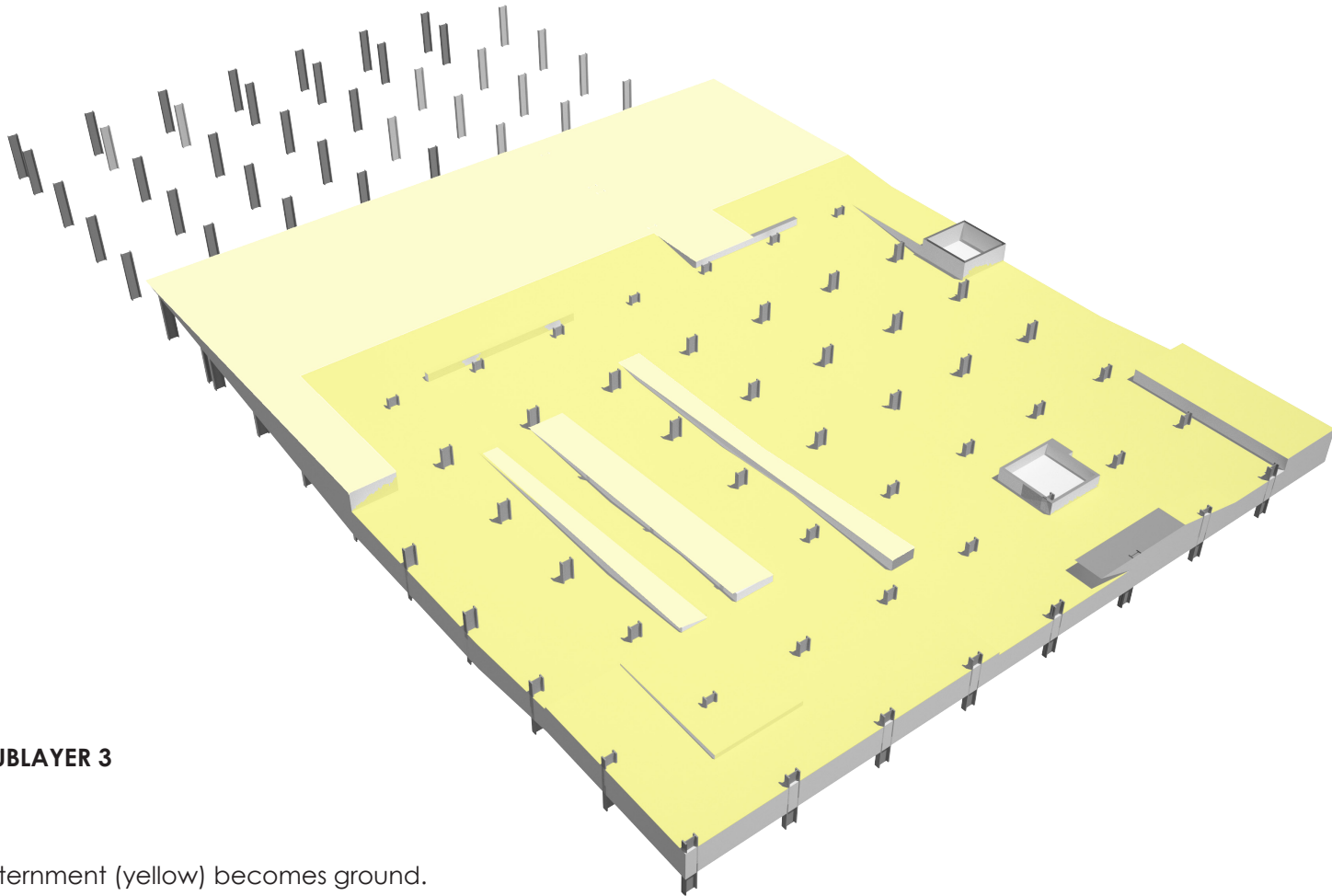
Areas of the Interned (yellow) as one slips into sub terrainian spaces.



## SUBLAYER 2

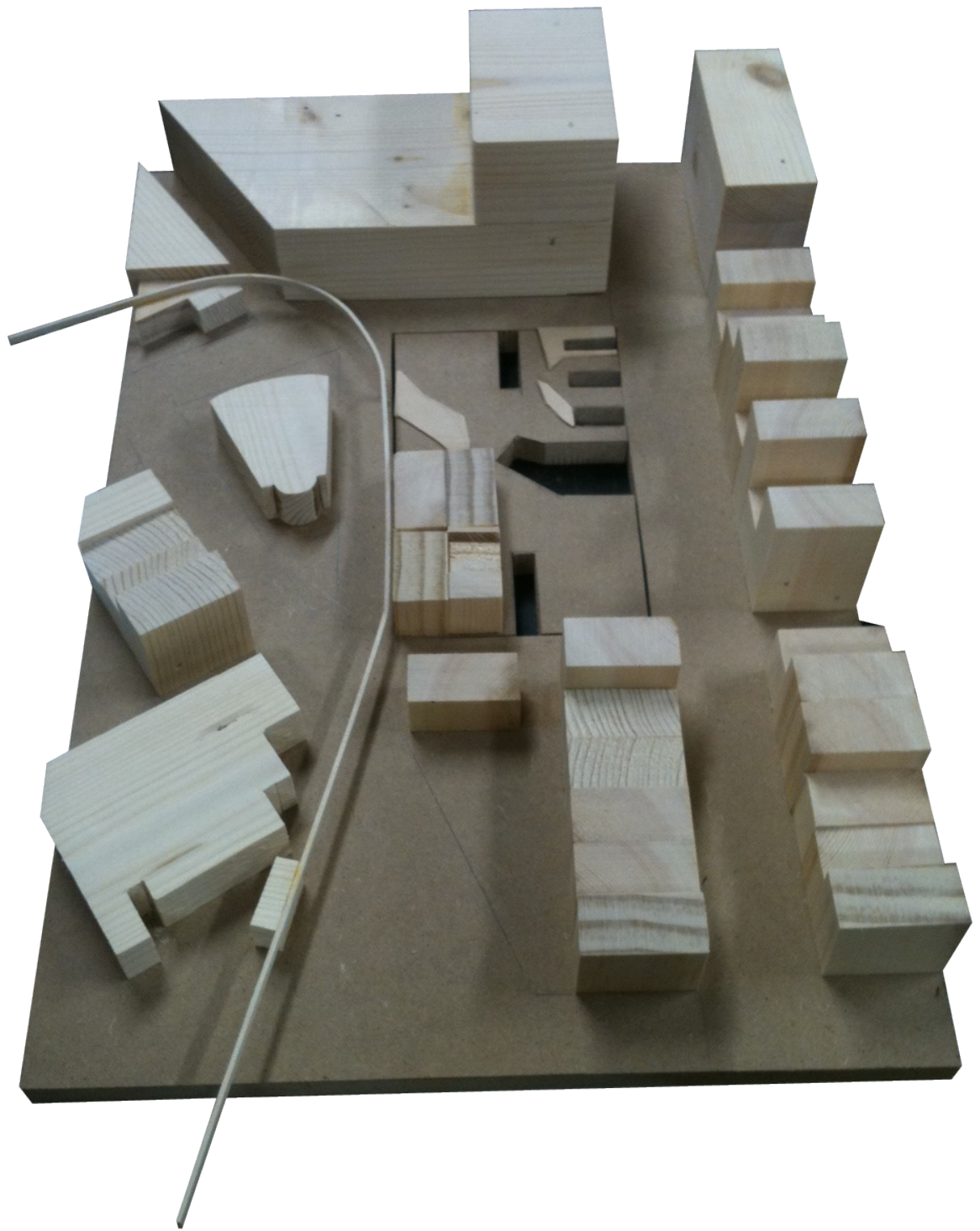
circulation and the interned  
(internment in yellow)





**SUBLAYER 3**

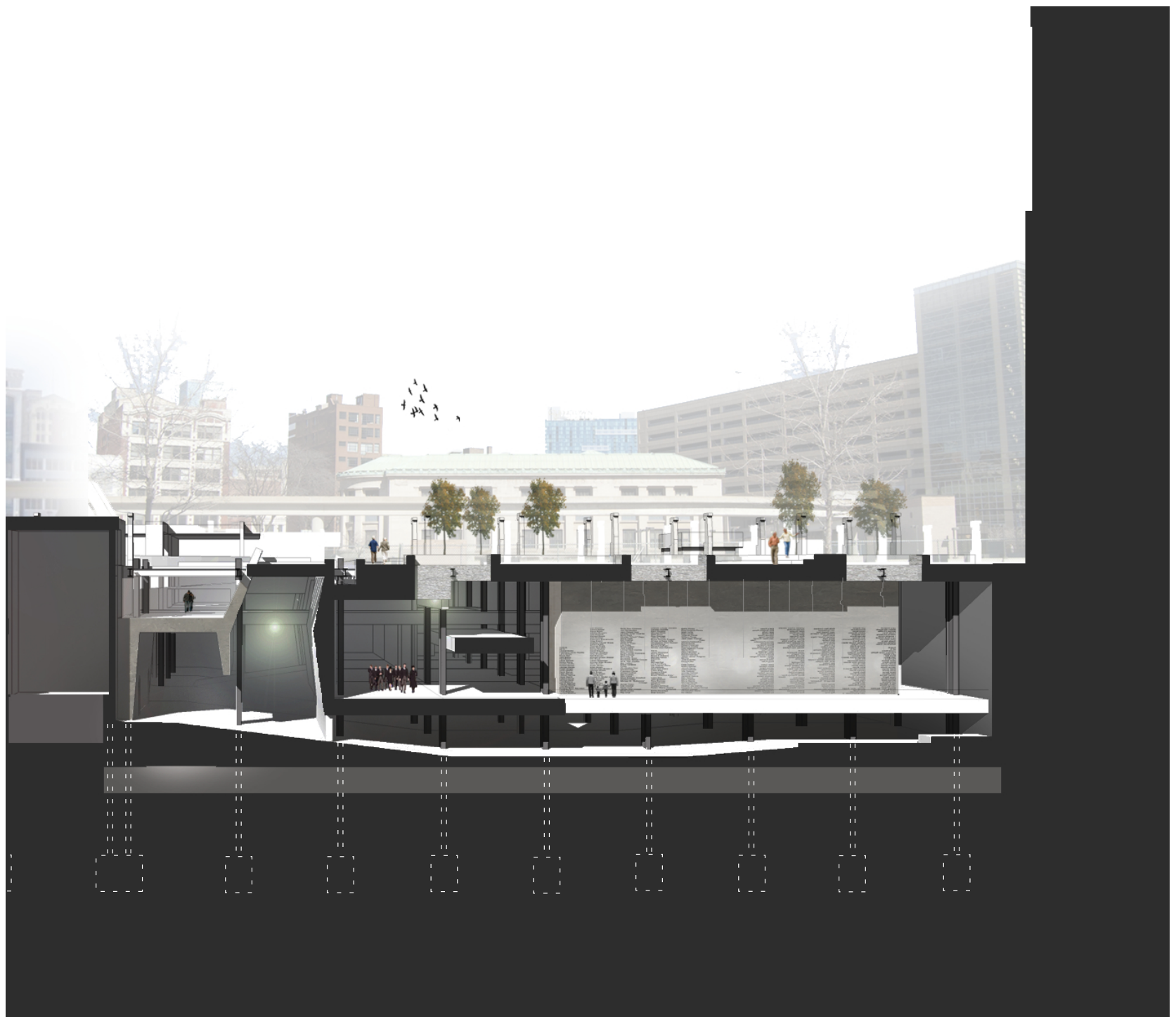
Internment (yellow) becomes ground.



## PERSPECTIVE SECTION

+20' from Woodward  
through gathering wall













at left: The removal of the city plane to create skylit areas below. The result is a large gathering space conceived as a break in the interment vessels.

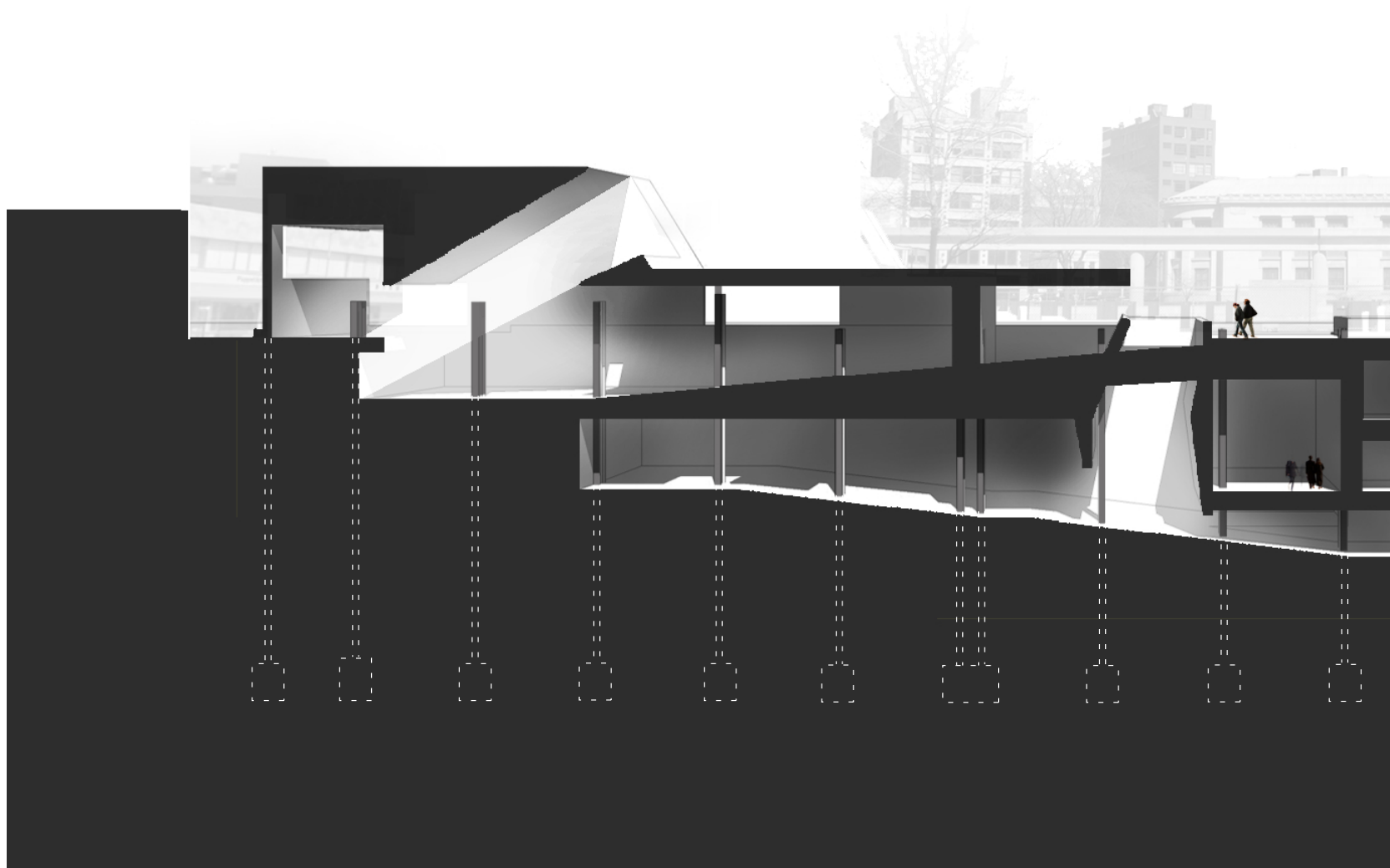
at right: The rhythm of the skylights along the steel structure is meant to retain a sense of balance in this space. The memory of those interned is represented on the wall. The lighting in the space is handled by the skylights as well as hung light globes.









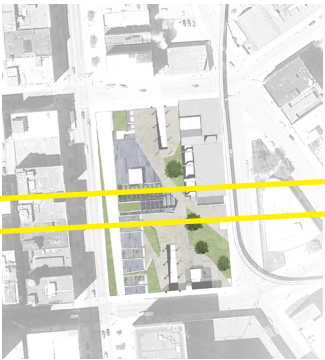




**PERSPECTIVE SECTION**

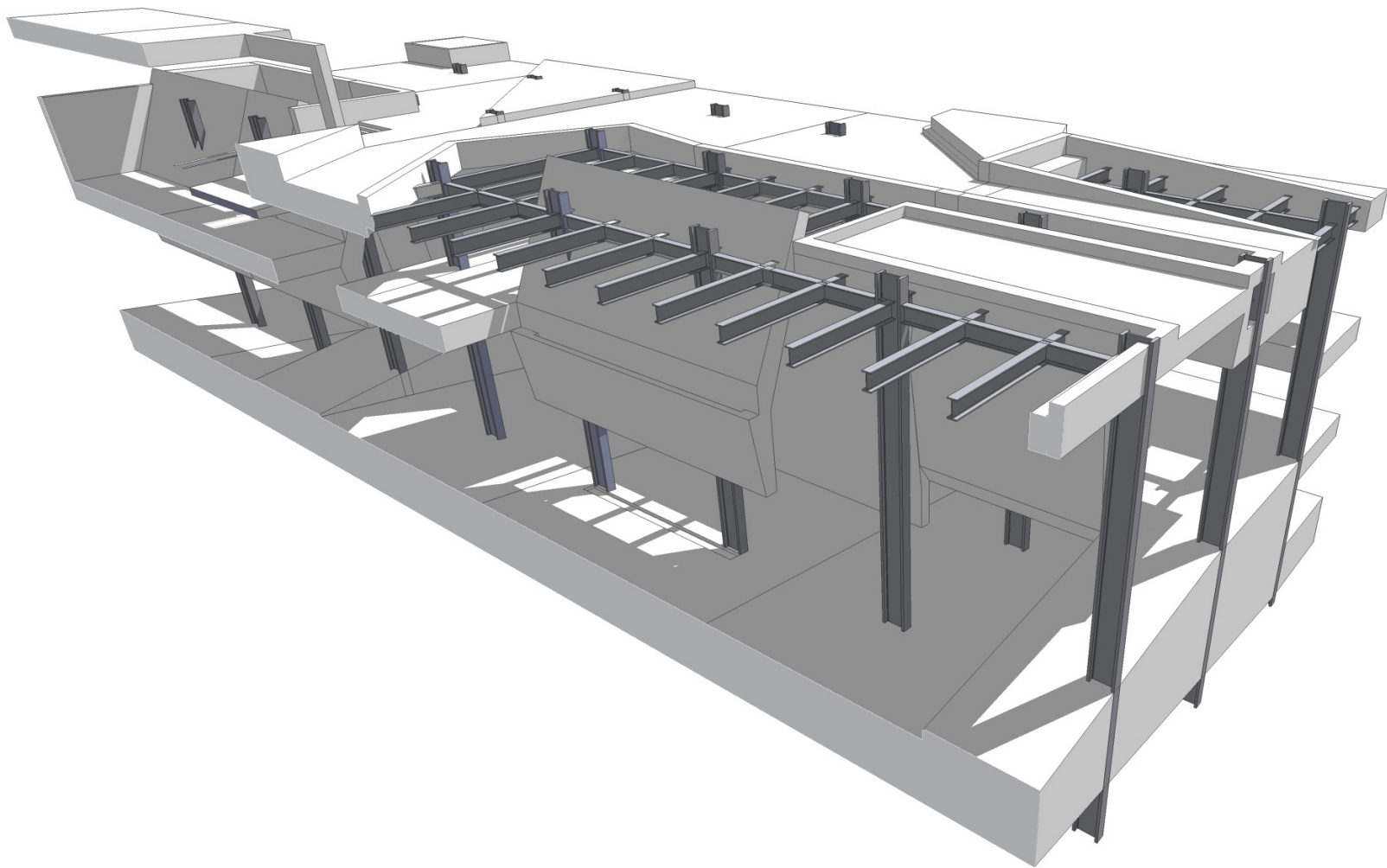
+160' from Woodward  
through chapel space





## GROUPED SECTION MODEL

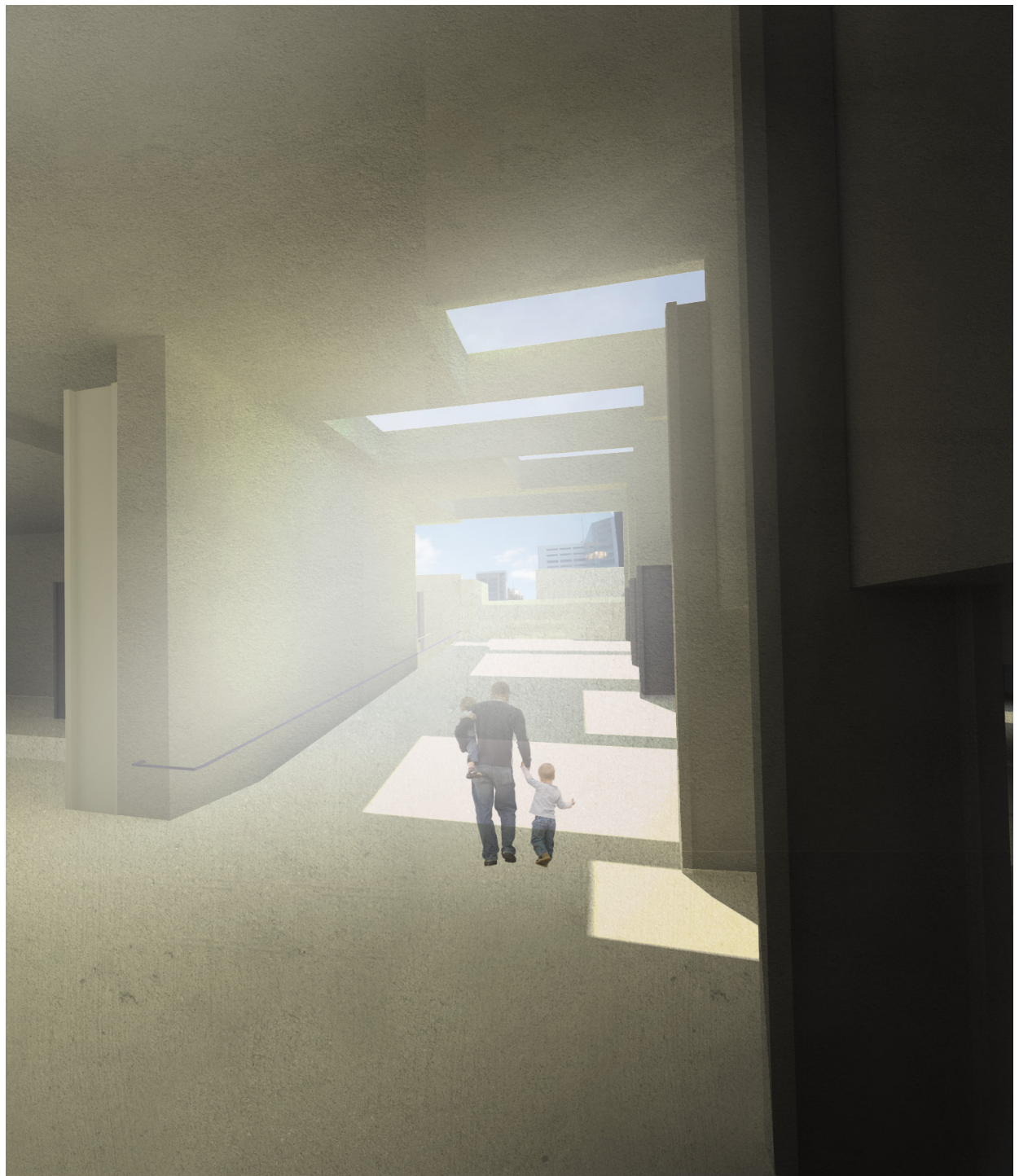
section model cut through the plaza skylight and fountain. The steel structure remains and the design elements are integrated within.







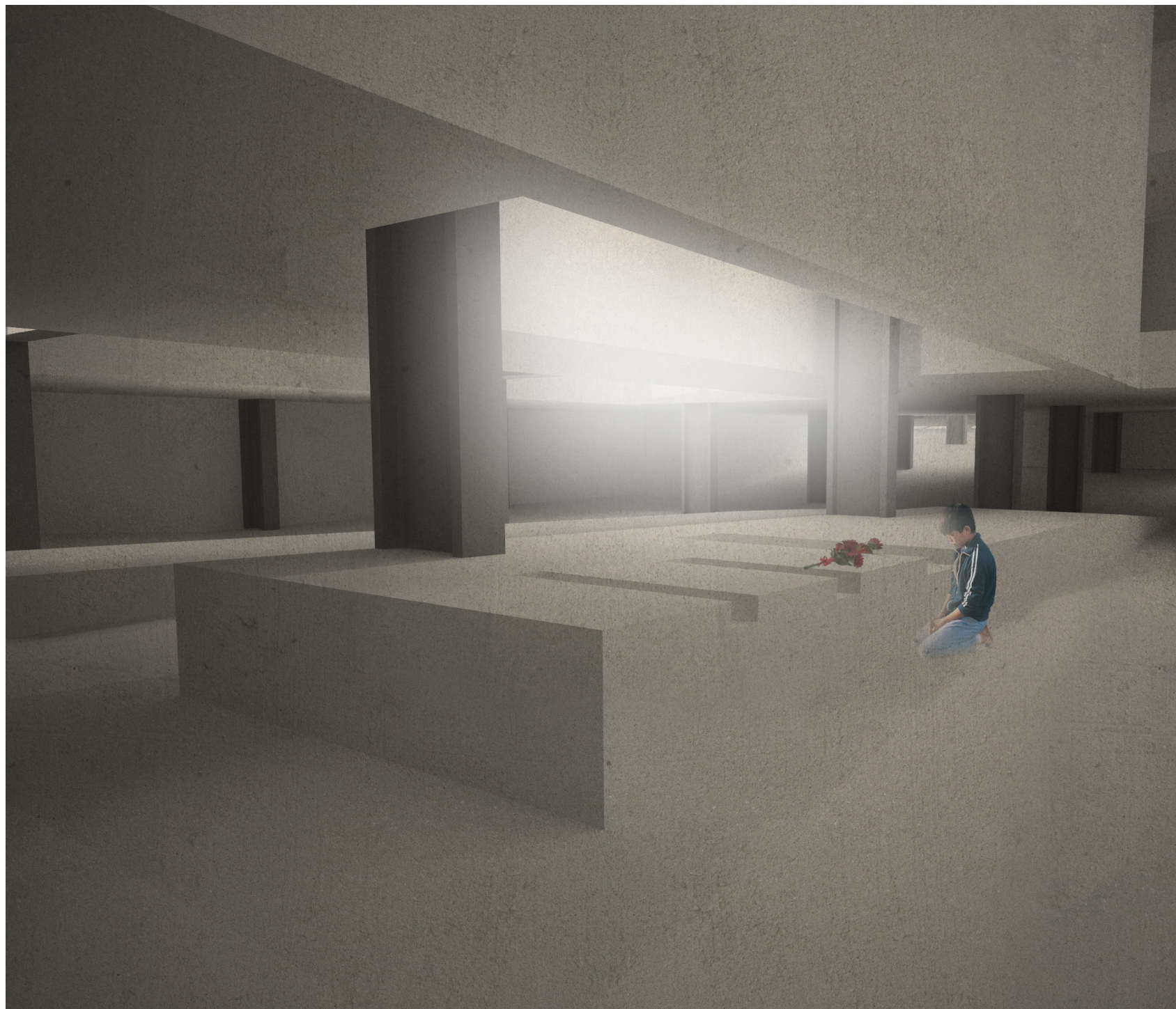
The chapel is designed for focused light to gather at the area of the body's arrival. When the funeral act is not performed, this space is intended for spiritual reflection and meditation.



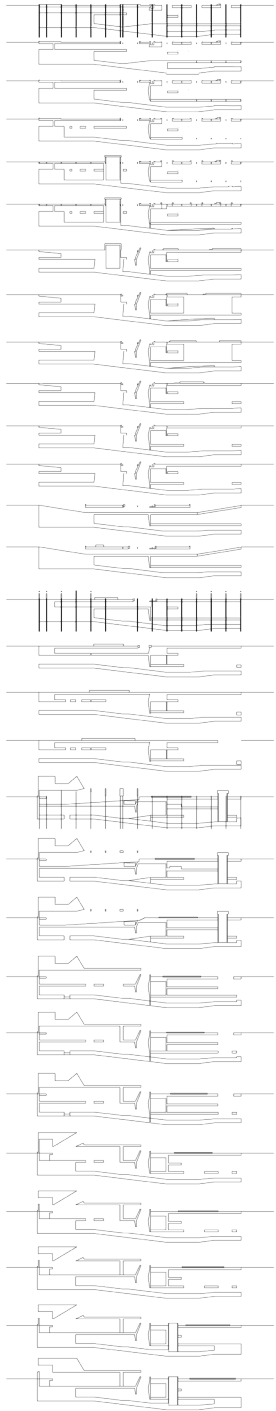


The representation of those interned begins to undulate in the lowest level of the cemetery. This undulation provides for alternative spatial experiences to those interned.



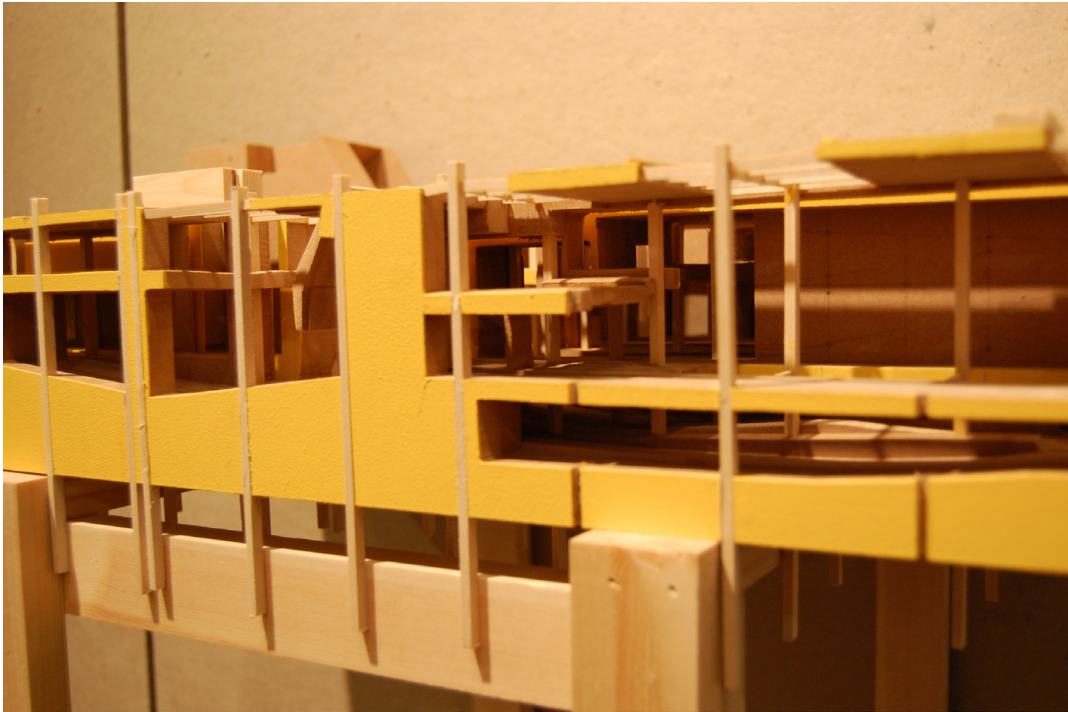


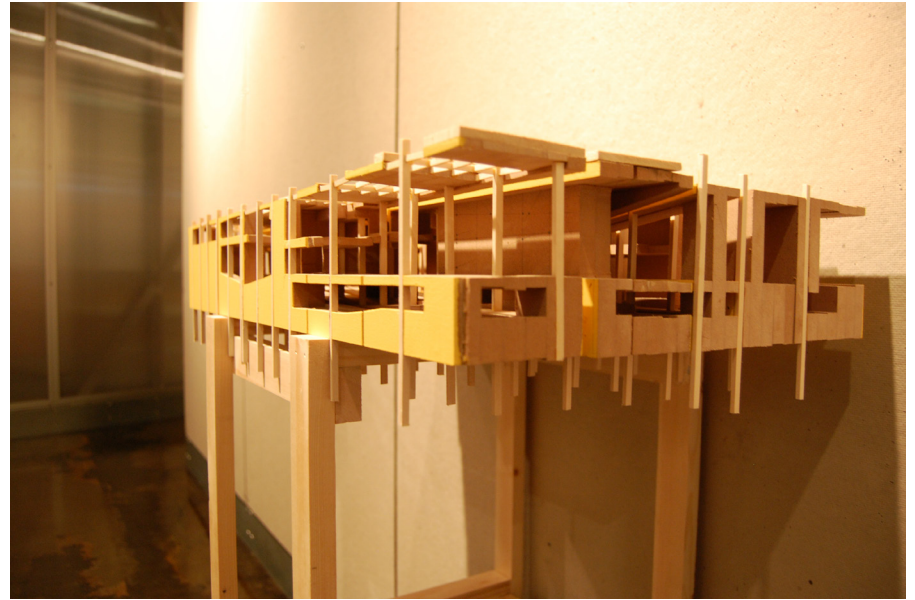
The physical model was developed by cutting a series of sections at 8' intervals. The CAD sections were printed and used as base drawings. As the construction of the model proceeded, alterations were sketched to develop shifts in ground and further articulation of spaces. The result was a series of 30 section cuts grouped together to enhance the understanding of space.















## CRITICAL NARRATIVE

DIRECTED STUDY WITH GILBERT SUNGHERA

EXTRACTING DESIGN INFLUENCE FROM RUDOLF SCHWARZ

Rudolf Schwarz's writing, "The Church Incarnate: The Sacred Function of Christian Architecture" is an exploration into the organization of worship space. Written in 1930's Germany, Schwarz is writing with the intention to understand how one experiences sacred space in modern times. This is intended to be a departure from the approach of the time and thus to present a shift in the understanding of sacred space. Schwarz experiments with different arrangements in gathering, movement, and sensory perceptions of worship space. He presents six plans which culminate into a seventh plan, "The Cathedral of All Time".

The First Plan:

*Sacred Inwardness: The Ring*

The Second Plan:

*Sacred Parting: The Open Ring*

The Third Plan:

*Sacred Parting: The Chalice of Light*

The Fourth Plan:

*Sacred Journey: The Way*

The Fifth Plan:

*Sacred Cast: The Dark Chalice*

*The Sixth Plan:*

*The Dome of Light*

**The Seventh Plan:**

*The Cathedral of All Times: The Whole*

“His friend Mies van der Rohe praised him as a great architect and in particular as a *thinking* architect, as “the great German church builder” and “one of the most profound thinkers of our time.” Schwarz was a leading figure in architectural modernism in the 1920s, in the years after World War II he reemerged as one of the leaders in the reconstruction of Germany.”<sup>1</sup> Schwarz's writings<sup>2</sup> have also offered inspiration to Rafael Moneo when designing the Los Angeles Cathedral, and is often mentioned in the design of spiritual spaces.

Schwarz's writing will be used here as the foundation of a further investigation for what it means to build sacred space. In the case of this writing, it will be used to understand the specific typology: cemetery as sacred space. Sacred is the term being used as the presence of something greater than oneself. This can be ineffable and is not tangible, however the orchestration of architecture is often used to create space for this meditation. Cemetery is used here to understand the implications of sacred space as landscape. This can be found in varied examples that range from Indian Burial Mounds to Ancient Pyramids and include

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<sup>1</sup> paraphrased from (page 231) “Theology in Stone: Church Architecture From Byzantium to Berkley” by Richard Kieckhefer.

<sup>2</sup> Rudolf Schwarz also authored memoirs on Church Architecture titled *Church Building: World before the Threshold*



churchyard cemeteries.

The exploration of this typology will take place in the city of Detroit. The history of Detroit is of great length, and commentary of such has been exhausted, however the intervention of cemetery in a city like Detroit may need to be clarified. With a population decline of record pace, the city itself is sometimes referenced as a dieing city. This metaphor is used as background to how cemetery may be addressed in a unique city condition. The following design is not intended necessarily as a solution or proposal but rather an allegory for a further investigation into the way an urban environment intersects the sacred landscape. The approach; use Schwarz's writing to supplement a question. What is sacred landscape in an urban environment?. It is through the investigation of space, that a further understanding of the sacred is sought. Here, his 4<sup>th</sup> plan will be used in detail. This is the "Sacred Journey: The Way".

Schwarz writes of this plan,

*"The plan was "way" and up to the final threshold it hid what was to occur at its end. Here, this emerges out of its reserve, frightfully becoming form. The moment of transition, of despair and of surrender- the end of the journey and also the readiness of heaven - all this becomes visible. This whole plan is transition, and if we grasp it profoundly it means death - the good death, the dark sacrament which men receive from the Lord's hand" <sup>3</sup>*

This passage has guided the development and investigation. Interpreted as a plan with mystery and a series of passage/threshold moments, the 4<sup>th</sup> plan is used to set a baseline. As Schwarz writes, transition becomes the main theme of this typology of space. In applying this to cemetery, transition of thresholds amidst an urban environment is complex. The “Plan” for this cemetery begins with the street level experience. Existing as an urban plaza, the ground is broken by fragmented areas of vegetation. Contrasted by the hard-scape, these spaces begin to create an awareness for path and the suggestion for movement through the landscape. The intention is for this to be the beginning to direct the movement of one to experience levels of intimacy and awareness. The journey continues based on the individuals desire to experience varied levels of intimacy with the cemetery. Space has been carved below the surface as to suggest a gradient of interactions. Moving below the plaza, one slips into subterranean levels of circulation and interment. The form appears as one enters the ground. Through a series of movements, one is constantly slipping in and out of naturally lit spaces and massing of interment space. The connection to sky begins to orient the traveler. Passing through the first level of engagement, one is furthering their level of intimacy.

The public engagement becomes contrasted by the experience of the funeral procession. The procession of the funeral is a series of moments experienced on a very intimate and personal level. Beginning in the place of worship-offsite, the act of the funeral

is performed observing religious ritual requirements. It is the site of the cemetery where the funeral culminates the act of offering and where anticipation is greatest. This happens through a series of precise movements and varied experiences. Similar to Schwarz, there are points in the design which are anticipatory. The spaces which emerge are designed in such a way as to give time for pause, and contemplation. This becomes important in the meandering space of the cemetery. This happens most directly in the accompanying chapel. Upon arrival of the funeral procession, one enters the chapel space by initially slipping below the plaza surface and into the sub city layer. Through a series of turns and movements one enters the chapel. The use of fragmented paths upon entering the chapel is meant to be a mental break from ones everyday experience. As an effort to become more aware of your presence in the space and to begin the spiritual meditation. Experiencing the varied scale and materiality of the space to come. Before entering the chapel, the body is placed first. In a space which is back dropped by structure, an opening in the ceiling offers a blanket of light. Further transitional spaces are designed to mediate the further progression to the site of internment. Through a series of focused lights and openings to allow 'true'<sup>4</sup> light to cast luminance into the various spaces traveled.

“The individual members are “located” in exact relation to each other and it is this feeling of location which is a metamorphosed feeling of space. This feeling is experienced

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<sup>4</sup> This is a term used by Rudolf Schwarz when writing of the qualities of light in “Foundations” of ‘The Church Incarnate’

by the strange exactitude of measurements. We know the feeling of desolation which overcomes us when we go through the streets of a city which is built according to a right angled plan but which has no center: much room yet no space"<sup>5</sup>

To respond to the site as cemetery, it may be important to mention the existing grid work of structural steel columns. This has been left as a dialogue to the history of the site. The grid of columns were stubbed out of a reconstructed parking structure after the Hudson's Department Store was imploded in spectacular fashion. This given condition is relatable to the act of anticipation<sup>6</sup>, but will be used to understand the dynamics of the space. Using Schwarz's passage to understand this "exactitude" created by the columns, it seemed appropriate to maintain them as an element in the design. The desolation created by such measurement and exactitude<sup>7</sup> presented need for a dynamic to exist in the architecture intervention. While a completely fluid design of the space is of equal disorientation, the symbiotic relationship of the column to carved space is hope for balance in the design.

The design of this space has been repeatedly questioned and has never been meant as an endgame solution. It has been the process of using a previous work as the means for exploration and furthering the experimentation for sacred space. While the conclusion of this idea is left open, the experience has been invaluable.

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5 This passage comes from "The Church Incarnate "

6 the anticipation meant here is in the way the site was reconstructed to host new growth. The site has remained this way for over a decade.

7 reference Schwarz passage on "lattice" as framework for gathering

## Conclusion

The design of this space has been repeatedly questioned and has never been meant as an endgame solution. It has been the process of using a previous work (Rudolf Schwarz) as the means for exploration and furthering an understanding of sacred space. The cemetery may remain a disorienting landscape pushed to the suburban fringe, however, this thesis sought to suggest an alternative to this process. While elements of this design remain unresolved, the experience has been invaluable.

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UDM SOA Faculty





