

to dwell: moratorium on **homeless**



"michael" by matt collamer

Current homelessness **solutions** are not addressing the problem properly, and are instead exacerbating the issue at hand. "We must address homelessness as a **housing problem** and a **violation of fundamental rights**, both solvable, and not as an **inevitable social problem resulting from personal issues (Feantsa)**"

possible cycle:



repeat

causes & effects-opinion based

REJECTION

PROFIT MARGINS

UNSAFE

THEY DID THIS TO THEMSELVES

ISOLATION

UNEMPLOYMENT

LACK OF SUPPORT

DRUG ADDICTS

LOST CAUSES

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

GOVERNMENT BREAKDOWN

PTSD

DEHUMANIZING

MONEY

GREED

NOT IN MY BACKYARD

SOCIAL STIGMA

LACK OF AVAILABLE URBAN SPACE

MENTAL ILLNESS

LAZINESS

EDUCATION FAILURE

JOB SECURITY

LACK OF PRIVACY



architectural issues

city planning and **restrictions**

good design vs **cheap** construction

designing independently from actual **community needs**

design not based around the **human condition**

minimization of the ground plane

statement of intent:

previous research minimizes the role of the unhoused themselves, therefore skewing the results in the favor of those who hold the power. this thesis utilizes data from the national low income housing coalition, organizations such as picture the homeless, and input from the unhoused themselves to dissect what the unhoused actually need in a home and how solutions could be beneficial to them. despite earlier assumptions, a solution that excludes its users in conception will never be utilized by those meant to inhabit it.

current shelters are also often stand alone. leading to the facility going unchecked and not being able to provide all of the necessary support. partnering with non-profits allows the shelter to provide more assistance as well as being held accountable. in addition to this, partnering with non-profits to offer more services creates a community support system.

lagos,nigeria

who?

- 24.4 million homeless people live in nigeria
- 13% of the nation's overall population
- 70% of people in lagos reside in "informal settlements"

why?

- force evictions in the past 15 years of over 1 million people
- forced removals largely target the nation's poor, including the 60% living in absolute poverty
- ten years after boko haram's uprising in 2009, over 2 million are still displaced from their homes

how?

- government officials in lagos typically give no warning before forcibly removing residents by threat of violence
- area boys are gangs of children and teenagers who the government employs to assist in demolitions
- 8.6 million orphaned children in nigeria many of whom live in places such as bridges, railway stations and markets

new york c

who?

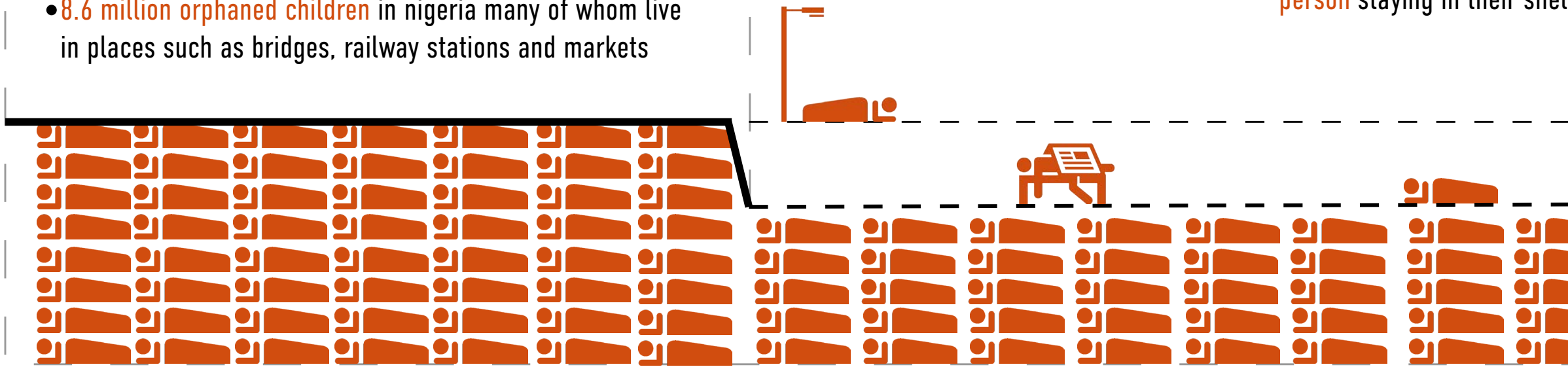
- 57,016 homeless people live in new york city
- ~14% of the nation's overall population
- highest levels of homelessness in the nation

why?

- lack of affordable housing: rent has risen by ~60% since 2000
- unemployment rate of 12.1% in the past month
- 1 in 4 extremely low income households receive it

how?

- 75% of all extremely low income households spend half their income on rent
- private shelter owners can charge more than \$100 per person staying in their shelter



city, united states

live in nyc

all homeless population

homelessness since the great depression

wages have risen by ~5% while

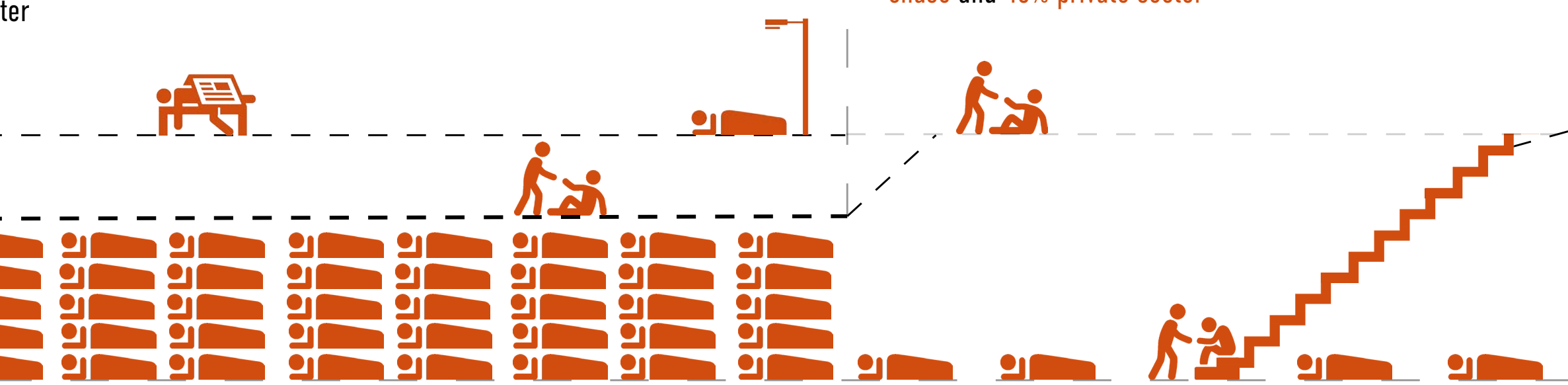
since the 1960s

% actually decreased to 11.4%

families who need assistance

some families pay more than

be paid ~\$3500 a month per
renter



helsinki, finland

who?

- 18,000 homeless people in 1987
- less than 6,600 homeless people by 2017
- helsinki holds more than 50% of finland's homeless population

why?

- street sleepers endure deadly winter temperatures as low as -7°C (19°F)
- helsinki owns 70% of the land within city limits
- the cost savings for the society are at least 15,000 Euros per one person per one year

how?

- housing first initiative aimed to reverse the old standard of getting one's life in order before having a house
- housing mix= 25% social housing, 30% subsidized purchase and 45% private sector

new york city, united states: system overview

New York City must, **by court order, provide temporary shelter to any eligible person**, and to comply, the city spends about **\$1.8 billion a year on shelters, apartments, hotel rooms and programs**. It is a vital service for people in need, and it is a costly one. The city does not make it easy to qualify for shelter, and the housing market does not make it easy to emerge from the system.

They begin in the building on **East 151st Street**, the city intake center known as **P.A.T.H.**, or **Prevention Assistance and Temporary Housing**, with the application and the gauntlet of interviews. Then, **temporary placement in shelter for up to 10 days while the city determines whether an applicant is indeed homeless**.

The **city's surge in homelessness can be traced to 2011**, when the state cut funding to a key rental assistance program. By 2012, the overall homeless population had jumped by 11 percent to about 57,000 people, and by 2013, **the number was about 64,000**, according to an annual count overseen by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

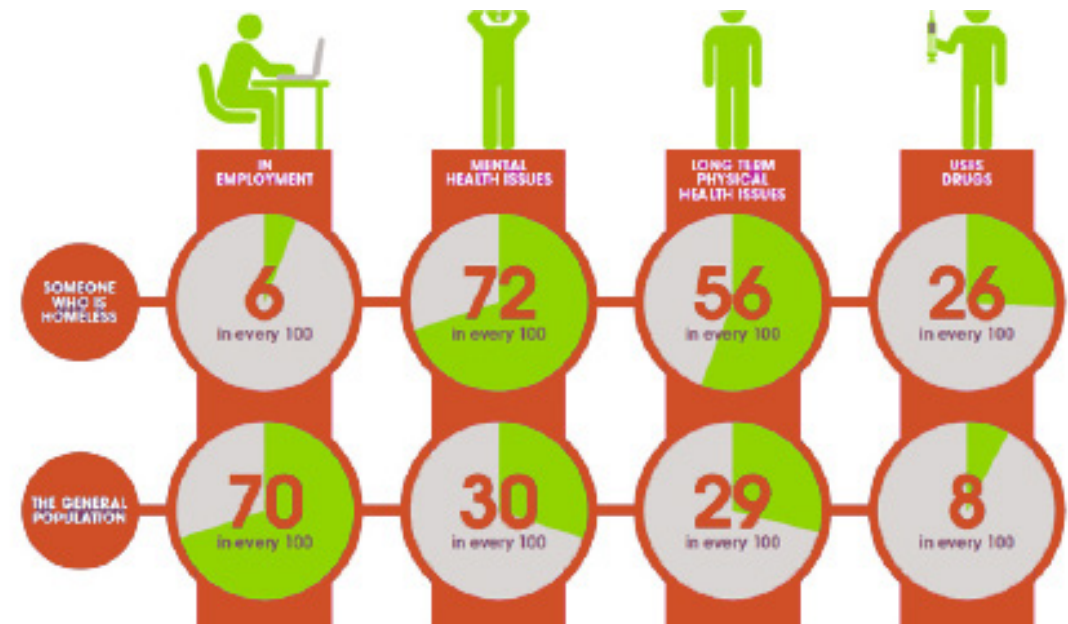
Since Mayor Bill de Blasio took office in 2014, the number has continued to creep up to a **current estimate of 77,000 people**. The record number has come even as the city has diverted tens of thousands of people from homelessness by pouring millions of dollars into new rental assistance programs and legal assistance to fight evictions. The programs cannot keep pace with runaway rents, stagnant wages and vanishing affordable housing. About **100 families go to P.A.T.H. each day**.

In hopes of ending the use of private apartments and hotel rooms as stop-gaps, the **Department of Homeless Services is expanding its shelter system under a plan to open 90 facilities over five years**.

Many **landlords shun homeless people who have the city's new rental assistance vouchers** because they were left in a lurch after the state abandoned its rental assistance program, called Advantage, in 2011.



Cecilia Grant, a current caseworker who was once homeless herself said, **"For example, when I was in the shelter, the city and agencies paid \$3,500 a month for a bed I could not sleep in. It's a crime"** (Picture the Homeless 2020).



helsinki, finland: system overview

Finland has set itself a target: **Nobody should have to live on the streets – every citizen should have a residence.**

Finland's Housing First is based on **co-operation between the state, city councils and third sector organizations**. The Finnish model has four principles. Firstly, that **permanent housing enables people to live independently**. Secondly, that **people can choose how to engage with services**, and completely giving up intoxicants is not required – instead, the **approach is one of harm reduction that respects the person's autonomy**. Thirdly, **staff meet clients as equals and aim to build trust and empower them**. The fourth principle is to **support people's integration into their community and helping them build strong networks**.

Homeless people get a flat – without any preconditions. Social workers help them with applications for social benefits and are available for counseling in general. In such a new, secure situation, it is **easier for those affected to find a job and take care of their physical and mental health**.

NGOs, non-government organizations, such as the “Y-Foundation” that provide housing for people in need. They **take care of the construction themselves, buy flats on the private housing market and renovate existing flats**. The apartments have one to two rooms. In addition to that, former emergency shelters have been converted into apartments in order to offer long-term housing.

The result is impressive: **4 out of 5 homeless people** will be able to **keep their flat for a long time** with “Housing First” and lead a more stable life.

In the last 10 years, the “Housing First” program provided **4,600 homes** in Finland. While **in 2017** there were still about **1,900 people living on the streets**, the program could reduce this number to less than **1000 long-term homeless by 2019** – **but there were enough places for them in emergency shelters**

In the **past 10 years**, **270 million euros** were spent on the **construction, purchase and renovation of housing** as part of the “Housing First” program. However, Juha Kaakinen points out, this is far less than the cost of homelessness itself. Because **when people are in emergency situations, emergencies are more frequent**: Assaults, injuries, breakdowns. The police, health care and justice systems are more often called upon to step in – and this also costs money.

In comparison, “Housing First” is cheaper than accepting homelessness: **Now, the state spends 15,000 euros less per year per homeless person than before**.



case study: väinölä, a supported housing unit in espoo, finland

vilja pursiainen run by y-foundation

Finland's approach ultimately comes down to values, said Juha Kaakinen, an architect of the housing first approach and CEO of the nonprofit Y-Foundation. "The Finnish attitude is that we have to help people who are in the most difficult position, whatever the reason they have become homeless," he said. "We understand very well that the main reasons behind homelessness are structural reasons."



The housing in Finland is a mix of designated standard apartments sprinkled through the community, and supported housing: apartment blocks with on-site services, built or renovated specifically for chronically homeless people.

This is Väinölä, a small development built in 2014, which is home to 35 formerly homeless people in 33 apartments.

Eight nurses work on shifts to ensure someone is available 24 hours a day, and a work activity coach and coordinator organize work for those who can and want to do it. This could be anything from cooking meals to packing reflectors and it earns residents €2 (\$2.30) a day.

Teams of residents also collect trash locally. "The neighborhood loves it because they think this area is now cleaner than ever," said Jarkko Jyräsalo, who runs Väinölä. "Sometimes housing units like this have problems with their neighbors, but we don't."



Formerly homeless residents have a rental contract just like anyone else. They pay rent from their own pockets or through the benefits afforded by Finland's relatively generous welfare state.

case study: väinölä, a supported housing unit in espoo, finland



Meet Thomas Salmi. Finland's housing first approach has changed his life. He has ambitions, he wants to retrain as a pipefitter. He **still drinks but only on the weekends**. He **still struggles with mental health problems, but far less severely and far less often than he used to**, and he said he **no longer has suicidal thoughts**.

"My apartment is kind of a sanctuary ... Before I lost my home I didn't understand how much it meant, and when I lost it, within those three years, I kind of understand the little things in life make you happy," he said. "I mean if I have dinner little things, like if I have bread in my fridge later. Normal things."

There are those who balk at the idea of people getting free housing when they are seen as having made bad choices. There are accusations that allowing people to continue using alcohol and drugs normalizes the behavior. "But no we don't," said Alkila of HDI. **"Drugs are here, all these things are here, and we are just trying. It's a human dignity question, you have to have a place to stay."**

There are also **criticisms from some of the formerly homeless people who benefit from the policy**. Jyri-Pekka Pursiainen is one of them. A divorce and sudden unemployment knocked him off balance, and he found himself on the streets. For the **last two years**, he has lived in a **studio apartment in a supported housing block in Helsinki, carved out of a former retirement home**.

"The place I am living now, you can't call it home ... The whole building is moldy, it's in really bad shape. People get sick there," he said. He was told the apartment would be short term. But nearly two years down the line, he is still there with no clue when he might move on. He wants **somewhere safe where his three children can visit him**.

Still, Pursiainen admits his situation is better now than when he was homeless. He has his own place, and he lives in the center of Helsinki paying a monthly rent of €331 (\$379), less than a third of what a standard studio apartment would ordinarily cost there.



case study: project renewal new providence women's shelter

217 e 45th st, new york, ny 10017



7 ON YOUR SIDE INVESTIGATION

Woman suffers medical condition at New York City shelter, dies after getting stuck in elevator



Monday, March 25, 2019



This is Project Renewal New Providence Women's Shelter, a building bought by Project Renewal in the 90's, which houses 130 homeless people on 6 floors.

December 22, 2011

New allegations against agency running women's shelter Residents say they are being kept from permanent housing

case study: project renewal new providence women's shelter



Eileen Mathers

1 review · 3 photos

★★★★★ 2 years ago

I was in New Providence Shelter in 2012 after my roommate and I were in a car accident. She was killed and I sustaining a traumatic brain injury, a back injury, and PTSD. I personally found the case workers to be NONCOMPLIANT WITH HUD STANDARDS, passive aggressive, dismissive, and ineffectual. I had a very short intake, after which I was completely ignored. The housing process was never initiated. This is a stark contrast to Project Renewal mission of empowering individuals to "renew" ones life. I felt trapped in this shelter



Shanice Ocasio

1 review

★★★★★ 2 years ago

I've been here for 10 days havent even been able to finish intake since Spuill literally gave me a 10am appointment which I've been waiting since 9:30 and she didnt not show up till 10:30 left got breakfast didnt return till 11 ish then told me i missed my appiontment and would have to wait yet again because shes busy. Staff refuses to allow me to speak to Sarah the director of the facility. This place is the most dirty, unprofessional, corrupt facility to end up in. We're homeless not hopeless stop treating us like criminals in a pysch ward smh the staff is disgustingly rude



Les Pat

4 reviews

★★★★★ 7 months ago

I didn't wanna really give no stars but I had to in order to comment I was there back in 2016 i wasn't there very long. I helped myself get my apartment I basically just slept, ate, and showered there that's it. I moved out February 2016 and I was so happy. The city really needs to look into and investigate that shelter based on these reviews and SHUT THAT PLACE DOWN. IF I HAD A CHOICE OF GRAND CENTRAL STATION AND NEW PROVIDENCE SHELTER, ID PREFER TO SLEEP IN GRAND CENTRAL STATION.



1



Mary Brooklyn

2 reviews

★★★★★ a year ago

I would wish this place to hell with a negative to infinity clause in hell if I could. With sadness I can only give them a "Big Nasty Review"



Jamie Colon

15 reviews · 2 photos

★★★★★ a year ago

Id rather be in the streets than being in here. Awful people, horrible service...just inhuman.

"just inhuman"

"wish this place to hell with a negative to in infinity clause in hell"

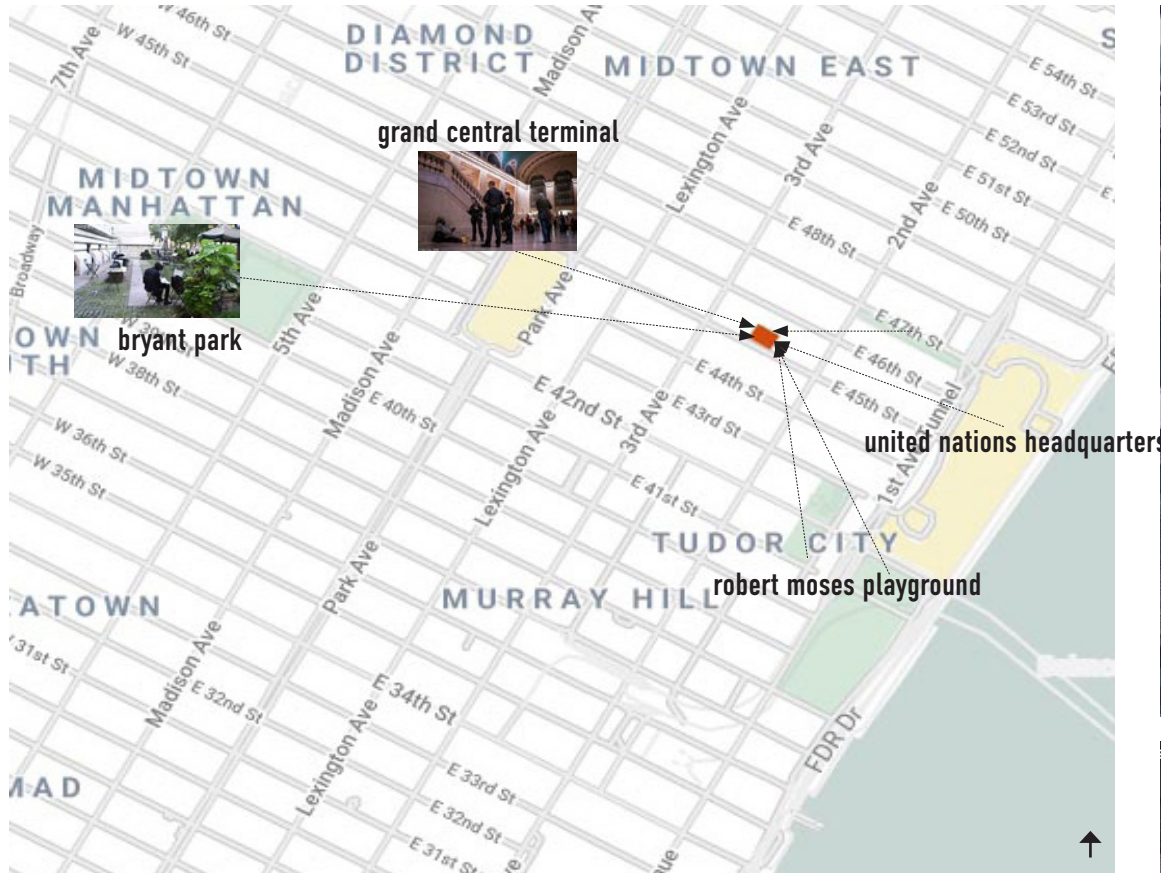
"NONCOMPLIANT WITH HUD STANDARDS, passive aggressive, dismissive"

"dirty, unprofessional, corrupt facility to end up in. We're homeless not hopeless stop treating us like criminals in a psych ward"

"ID PREFER TO SLEEP IN GRAND CENTRAL STATION"

project site: project renewal new providence women's shelter

217 e 45th st, new york, ny 10017

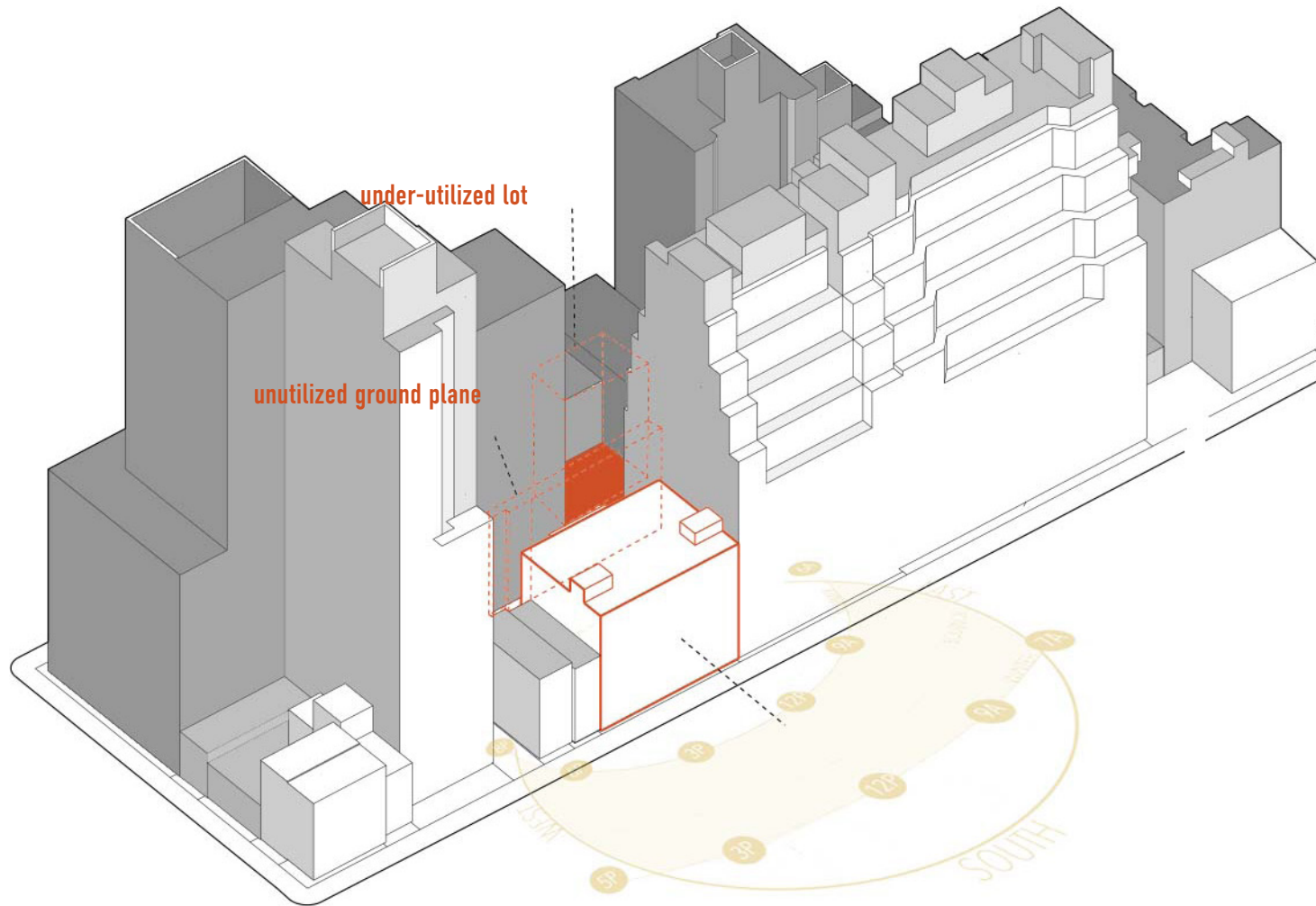


site features: nearby to east river, bryant park, grand central terminal, united nations headquarters, vast education and work opportunities

existing structure: 6 story apartment building where often people can be found sleeping in the general area instead of the space technically allotted for them



existing conditions



project parameters

cost: \$45 million~around \$14 million per building, ~\$17 million left

limits: finding partner lot either across the street or next door

issues: project renewal is extremely close to united nations head quarters

challenges: renovating current building; zoning as the site is in a special district

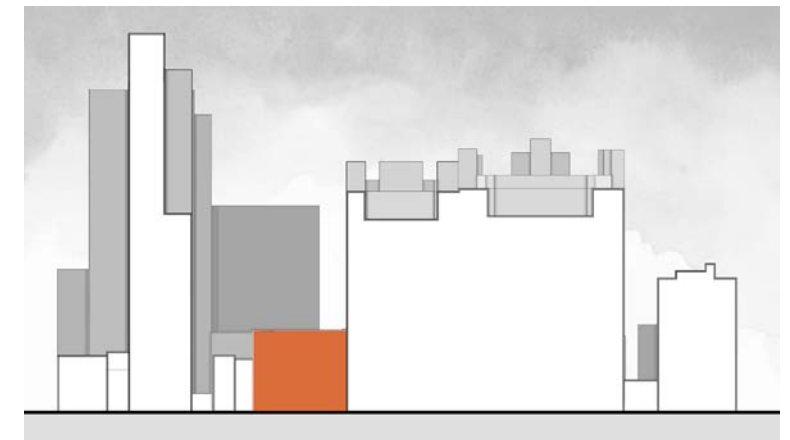
height: 72ft

square footage: 30,050 sq.ft.

floors: 6

occupancy limits: 382

current ase: 19%



model proposal

Helsinki system works because the onus isn't on one organization. Introduce a version of this system in NYC.

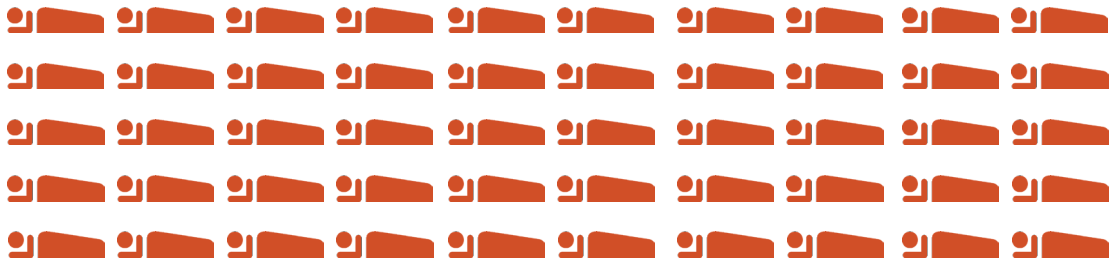
Steps:

- **NY State, NYC government, and third-party organizations** (non-profits and non-government organizations) use their budgets to **buy available lands to hold both a shelter and a partner facility**
 - This allows each organization to amass a vast amount of wealth to operate, as wealth comes from owning property, ex. Trinity Church
 - **Introduction of partner facilities for two major reasons: accountability & creating a stable community that addresses the needs of those living in the shelter**
 - Eliminates need to work with landlords + private shelter owners
- **Eliminate interview intake process that requires proving you have no where to stay**
 - This allows people to be turned away and invalidates what they are going through
- **House people first, then help them address their own issues**
 - Give their autonomy back
- **Partner facility holds non-profits that address different needs: childcare, job training, clothing, etc.**
- **Introduce a “street” level for those who choose to live transiently or do not need a semi-permanent place to stay**
 - Partner facility also holds communal showers, laundromat, etc.
- **No limit on how long a person can stay in the shelter, but there is a rental contract, at a fraction of average NYC rent**
 - Can use welfare/social security, their own money, or money earned through work organized by a non-profit, non-government, or NYC organization

model proposal: the numbers

how many people+buildings?

this renovated shelter at 32,050 sq.ft. can house 50 people
partner non-profit facility at 16,638 sq.ft. can help ~150 people a day



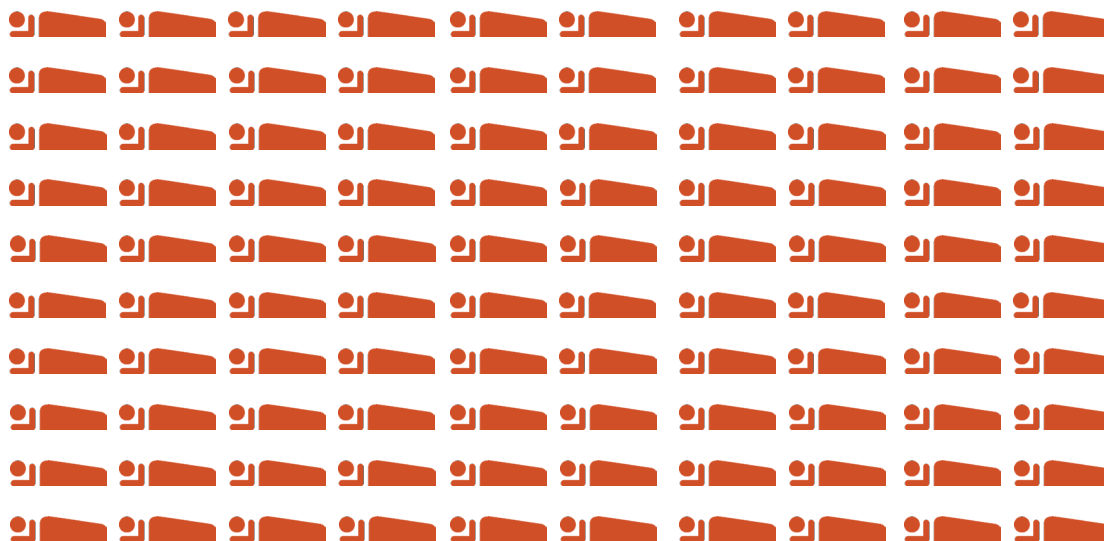
at this size, NYC would need anywhere from ~1000 to ~1760 facilities to house the 50,000 to 90,000 people in need

BUT

median size of a building in NYC is ~64,000 to ~100,000 sq.ft.

MEANING

one facility of average size could house from 100-150 people



at this size, NYC would need anywhere from ~500 to to house the 50,000 to 90,000 people in need

how much would it cost?



current shelter valued at \$6,472,350 market value is \$14,383,000



partner facility valued at \$1,945,350 market value is \$4,323,000

non-profit currently running the shelter has a budget of \$45,000,000

NYC department of homelessness has a projected budget of \$2,100,000,000

median price per square foot is can range anywhere from ~ \$775 to ~\$1800 in Manhattan



taking the average square footage of 82,000 and multiplying it by the average price per square foot of \$1,287.50 leads to one facility at optimal size costing \$105,575,000.

costs upfront are high but each year spending is growing exponentially as shown by the difference between projected and actual spending

NYC department is spending around \$30,000 per person and growing
Helsinki was able to reduce spending by 15,000 euros per person

Table 1: Total Homeless Services Spending, by Function, Fiscal Years 2014 and 2018 (dollars in millions)

	FY2014	FY2018	Growth Between FY2014 and FY2018	
			Amount	Percent
Shelters				
DHS Shelters	\$886.13	\$1,883.17	\$997.04	113%
Non-DHS Shelters	\$148.07	\$256.64	\$108.57	73%
Prevention and Rehousing				
Prevention	\$98.00	\$309.05	\$211.05	215%
Rehousing	\$60.82	\$338.09	\$277.27	456%
Other				
Street Homelessness	\$39.83	\$114.23	\$74.41	187%
Administration	\$77.30	\$96.26	\$18.96	25%
Total	\$1,310.14	\$2,997.44	\$1,687.30	129%

Note: Fiscal Year 2014 figures are planned figures as of the Fiscal Year 2015 Adopted Budget.
Source: CBC staff analysis of data from the City of New York, Mayor's Office of Management and Budget, Adopted Budget Fiscal Year 2015 Supporting Schedule (June 2014), and Executive Budget Fiscal Year 2019 Supporting Schedule (April 2018).

to dwell: moratorium on ~~homeless~~



using the unspoken rules of homelessness and day-to-day life
stories to inform the program

when do you need an address?

to open a bank account
to register to vote
to get a driver's license
to register kids for school
to get a passport
to receive emergency services
to collect social security/unemployment
to ensure the security of the future
to have a safe place to call home

hearth

tent

asylum

spot

crash pad

home

homestead

co-op

safe space

digs

dwelling

shanty

security

residence

hideout

abode

place

nest

habitat

living quarters

shelter

pad

three main patron types:

transient:

- need somewhere to sleep for a couple of nights
- needs a place to shower
- possibly turned down permanent housing

single:

- looking for place to live while they raise money to get their own place
- looking for a job
- needs access to showers, laundry, haircuts, new clothes
- privacy

family:

- a place to live while they raise money to get their own place
- needs access to showers, laundry, haircuts, new clothes, childcare
- privacy

a day in the life of:

Peter Malvan



morning:

- clock that starts as soon as he wakes up because he needs to leave before the store and other business open
- breakfast at churches and synagogues & uses it to socialize but COVID changed it
- starbucks to charge his phone and order coffee

afternoon:

- rec center to shower, put on cologne, and lotion
- sometimes goes to East Harlem to his storage units, 2 5x5 units where he keeps his possessions

night:

- looks for a few pieces of cardboard on Fifth Ave, puts his sleeping bag on top of it, sleeps in his pants and shirt but uses his jackets as a pillow
- a venti Starbucks cup for restroom breaks during the night

Moustafa



morning:

- Works on repairs to raise money to eventually buy another mechanic shop
- Gets food at bodegas

night:

- Sleeps in van with microwave but not until midnight when the owner of the lot goes to sleep
- Showers with a hose in the lot

backstory:

- 48yr old mechanic
- Lost shop and home in 2014 after owner raised rent
- Lives in community of homeless mechanics who live out of their vehicles
- Makes \$600 in a good week doing repairs in the lot, makes nothing in the winter
- Left shelter because he needed his own place to live

Tristan, Norma, and Wilbert



morning:

- Eat cereal with milk bought an hour earlier in a single room at a shelter
- 10 stop ride on the 6 train and then 5 stop ride on BX-49
- Spend entire morning making sure Wilbert gets to school

afternoon:

- Travel back to shelter
- Attempt to secure room for the night
- Travel to pick up Wilbert from school

backstory:

- Travelling to and from school takes most of day
- Rest of day is spent attempting to secure place to sleep
- No time for parents to find jobs

unspoken rules of homelessness

and how they translate into program

“once you find people to trust, stick with them”	→	family units: 9,936 sq.ft.
“be slow to trust those you don’t know”	→	sro’s: 3,784 sq.ft
“get as much sleep as possible, lying awake wonder- ing about tomorrow wont help you”	→	semi- permanent housing: 13,720 sq.ft
“find a place to shower”	→	public showers: 2,156 sq.ft.
“be wary of getting trapped in the system”	→	job and GED training: 2,156 sq.ft.
“be careful”	→	increased amount of transparency

program:

renovated shelter:

street architecture:

communal kitchen:

family units:

sro’s:

common areas:

circulation cores:

partner non-profit facility:

laundromat:

communal showers:

beauty salon:

clothing store:

childcare:

library+computer lab:

recreation:

square footage:

32,050 sq.ft

6,747 sq.ft

6,184 sq.ft

4,876 sq.ft

6,572 sq.ft

2,636 sq.ft

1,410 sq.ft

16,638 sq.ft

2,453 sq.ft

2,453 sq.ft

1,065 sq.ft

1,065 sq.ft

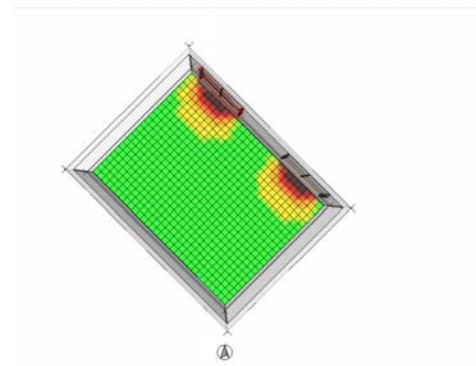
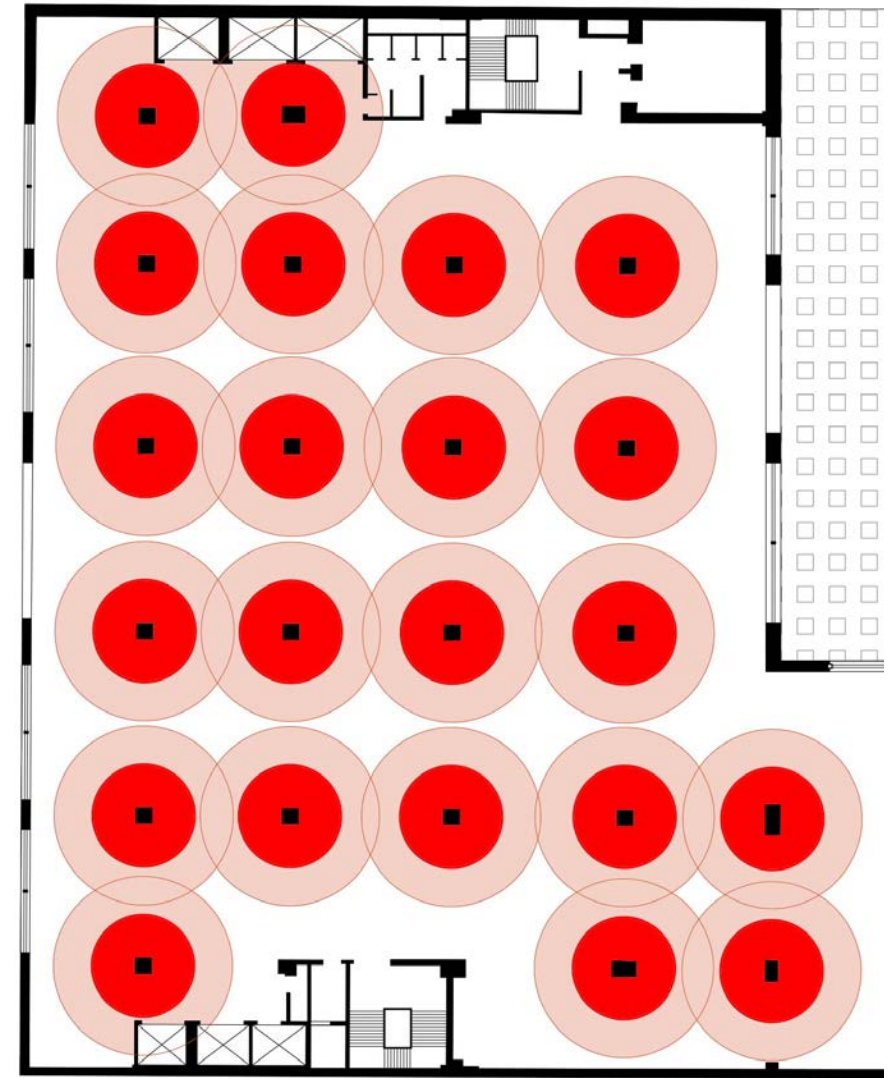
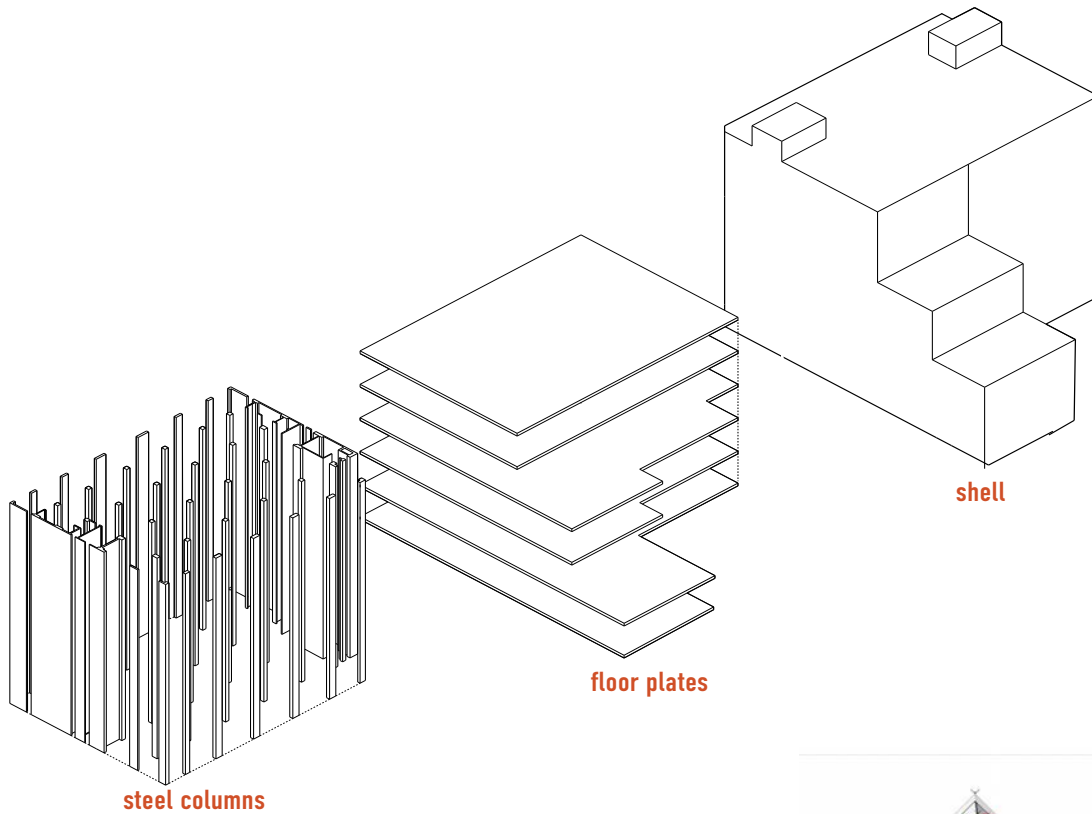
2,453 sq.ft

2,453 sq.ft

2,453 sq.ft

structure system:

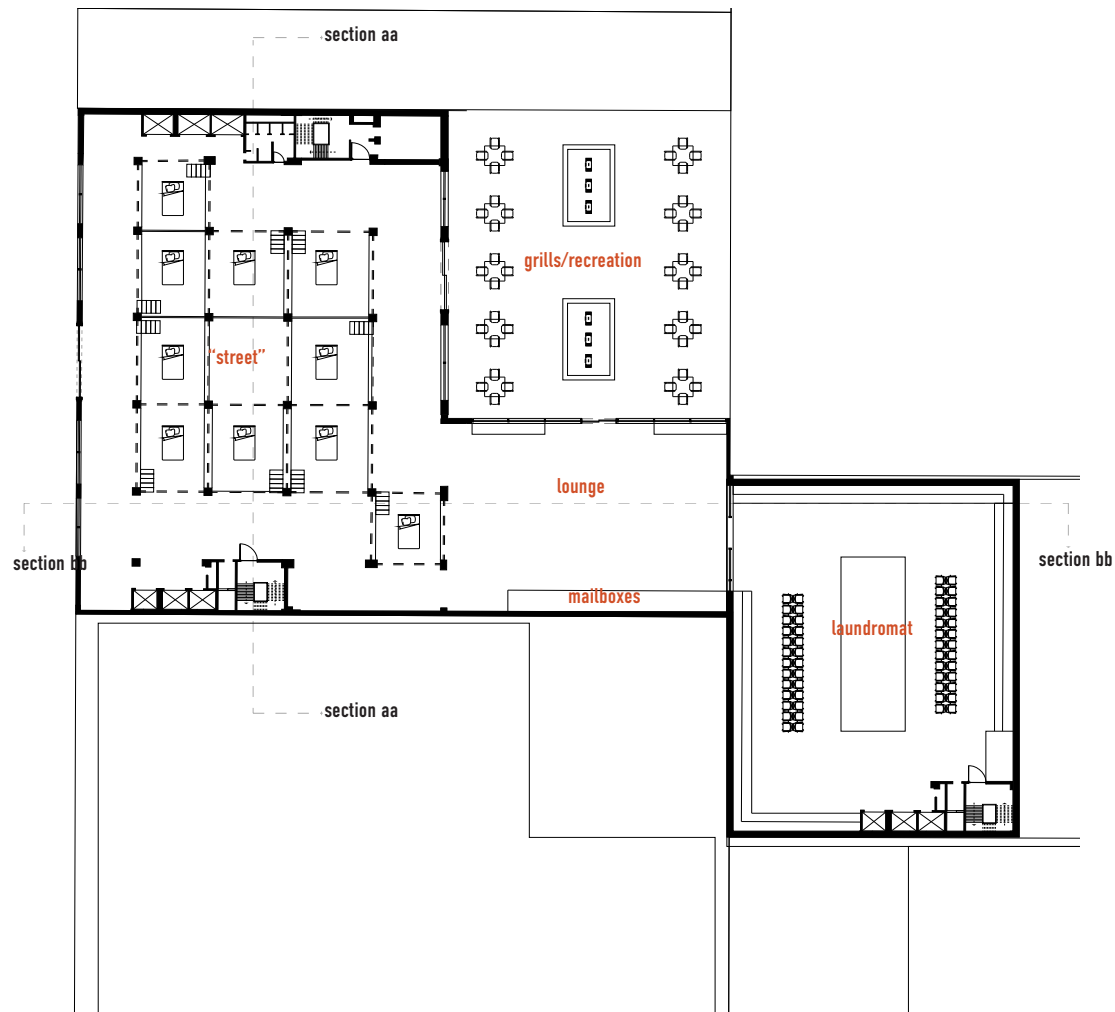
- grid dimensions~10'x13'
- steel columns radiate heat:
- meaning the coldest areas are the centers of the pallets
 - used as a space dividing tool



first floor plan

“street” architecture:

- uses grid to support pallets
- pallets support beds/living spaces
- space for personal belongings under the pallet
 - each pallet has assigned mailbox
- sound-dampening curtains used for privacy



second floor plan

communal kitchens and showers:

- anyone can use kitchen or showers
- kitchen and showers stocked by non-profit
- each stall has toilet, shower, and vanity
- layout allows for individual privacy but is open enough for overall safety



family units, beauty salon, and clothing:

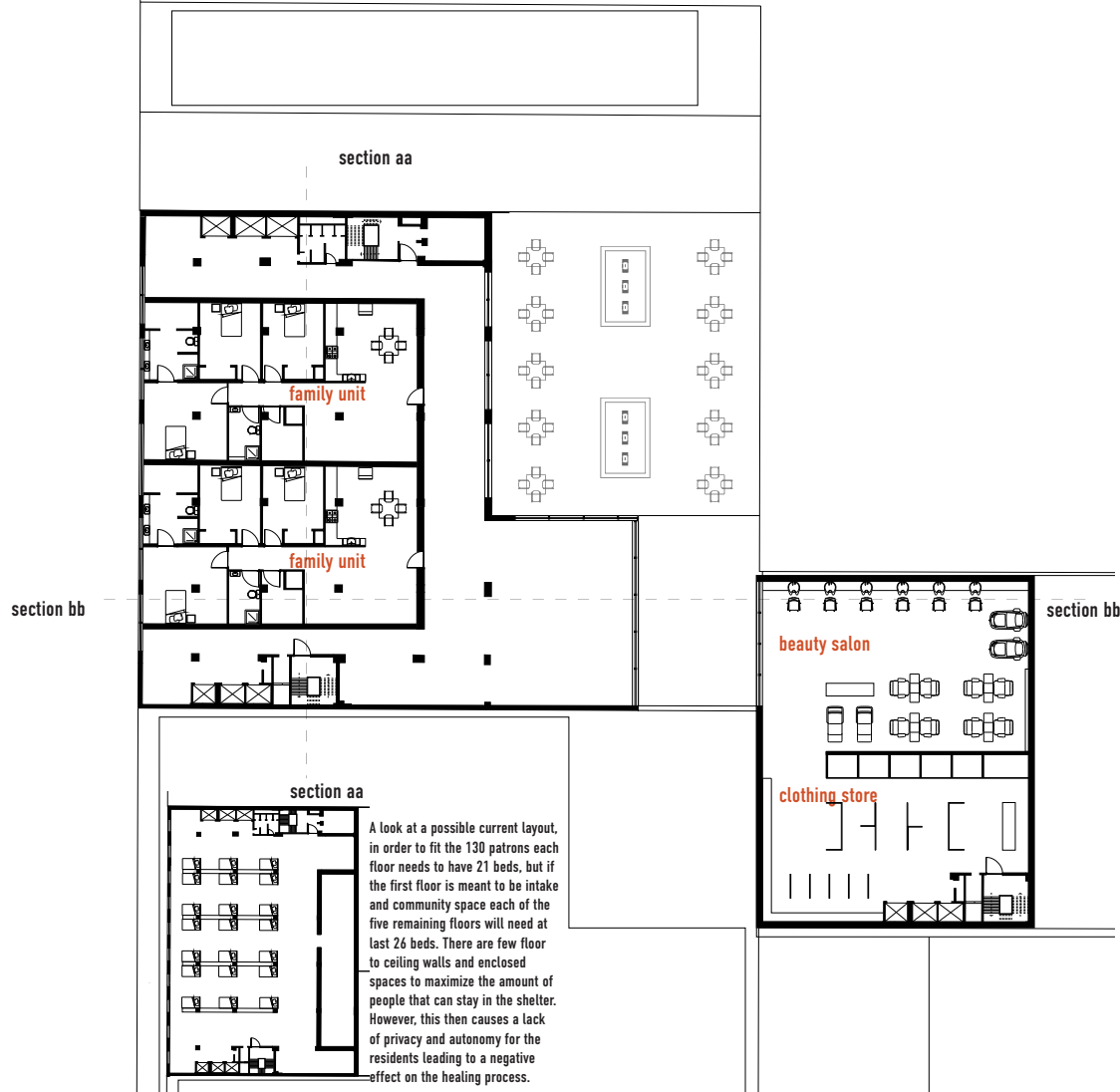
- family units can house group of 4

allow for found families to stay together instead of being separated

- beauty salon gives haircuts, manicures, pedicures, etc
- clothing store assists with finding clothing for not only for inter-views but for everyday as well

both the salon and store train residents to work there or in that field

third floor plan



family units and childcare:

fourth floor plan

- family unit floors also have common space to encourage interaction between families
- childcare is run by non-profit that runs daycares, after school activities, and homeschooling
- having in-facility childcare allows parents to spend time looking for jobs or whatever they need to get back on their feet

- being on the fourth floor also helps with safety
- children also return to a sense of normalcy



sro's, library, and computer labs:

fifth floor plan

- single room occupancy rooms allows for privacy and encourages autonomy
- common spaces on each floor encourage engaging with those on your floor
- library and computer labs run by non-profit that supplies computers to undeserved communities
- computer labs allow for residents to use the internet for whatever they need, ie. homework and job searching



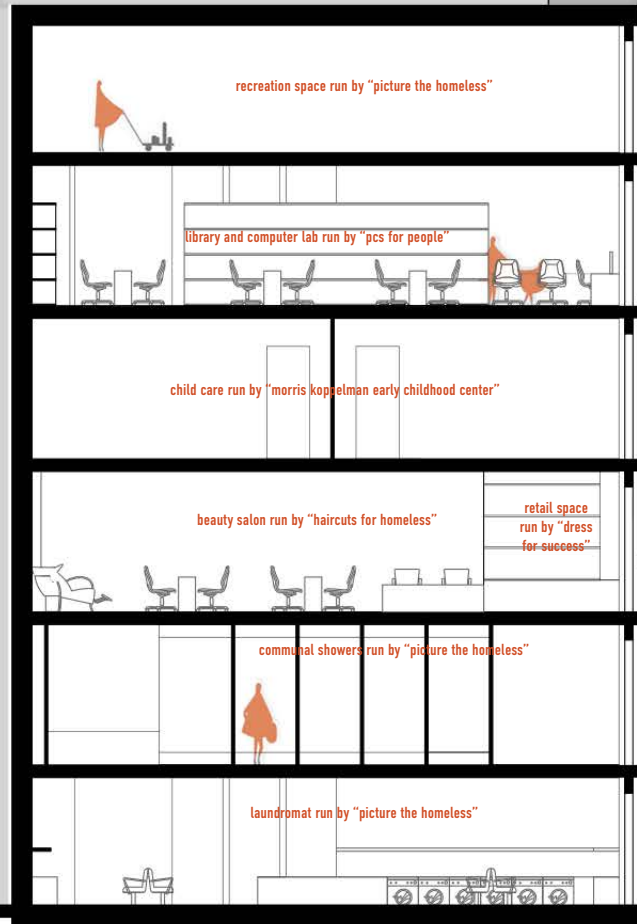
sro's and recreation:

sixth floor plan

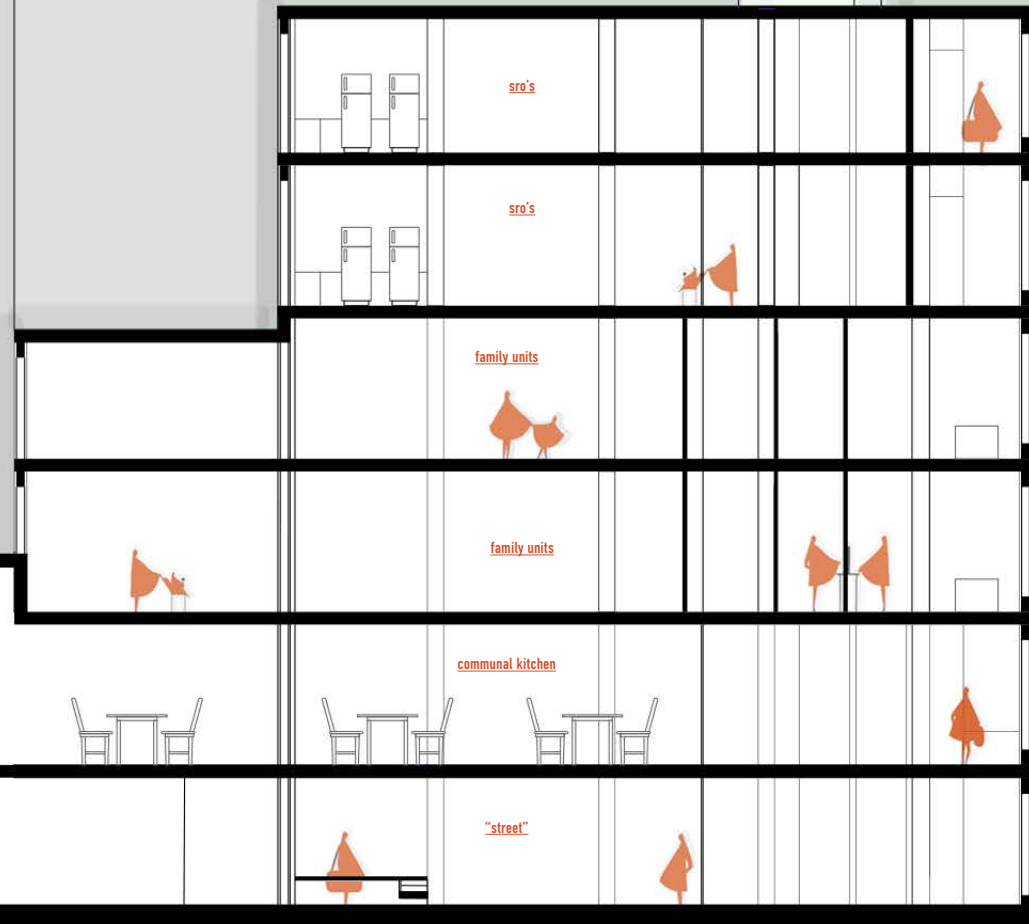
- recreation is extremely important to promote healing
- space is needed to have fun and re-coup after living on the street
- this space also encourages community bonding



“picture the homeless” facility



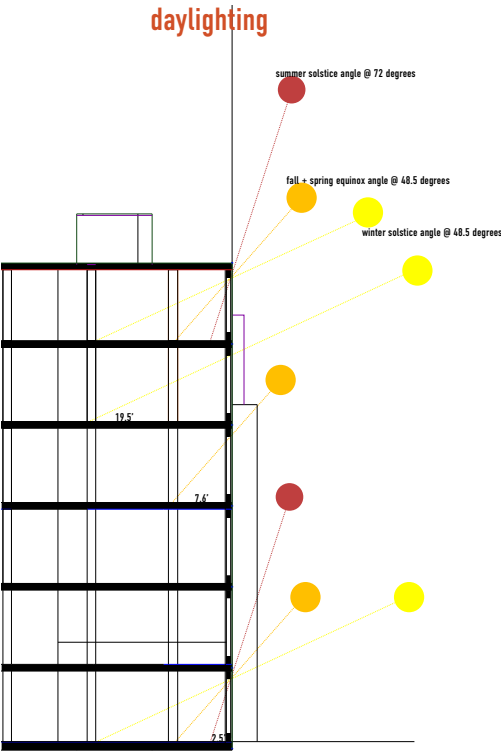
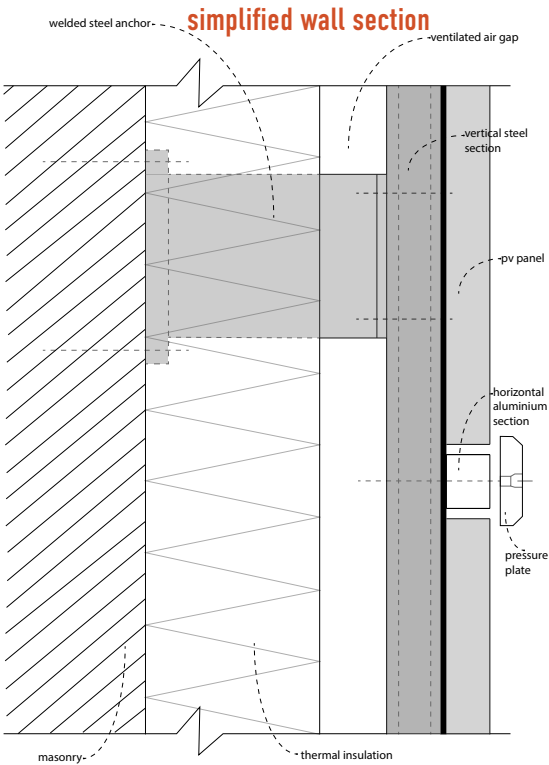
renovated shelter



section bb



section aa



renders of the street



A floor dedicated solely to **transients, people who don't need or want a semi-permanent place to stay**. 10 beds are placed on raised platforms, each with its **own unique address**. Each platform also has its own storage space underneath. Residents can decorate their space however they like. This **affords a level of autonomy often absent of the standard shelter, promoting individuality and in turn, healing**. At night, **sound absorbing curtains are put up for privacy**.

social spaces



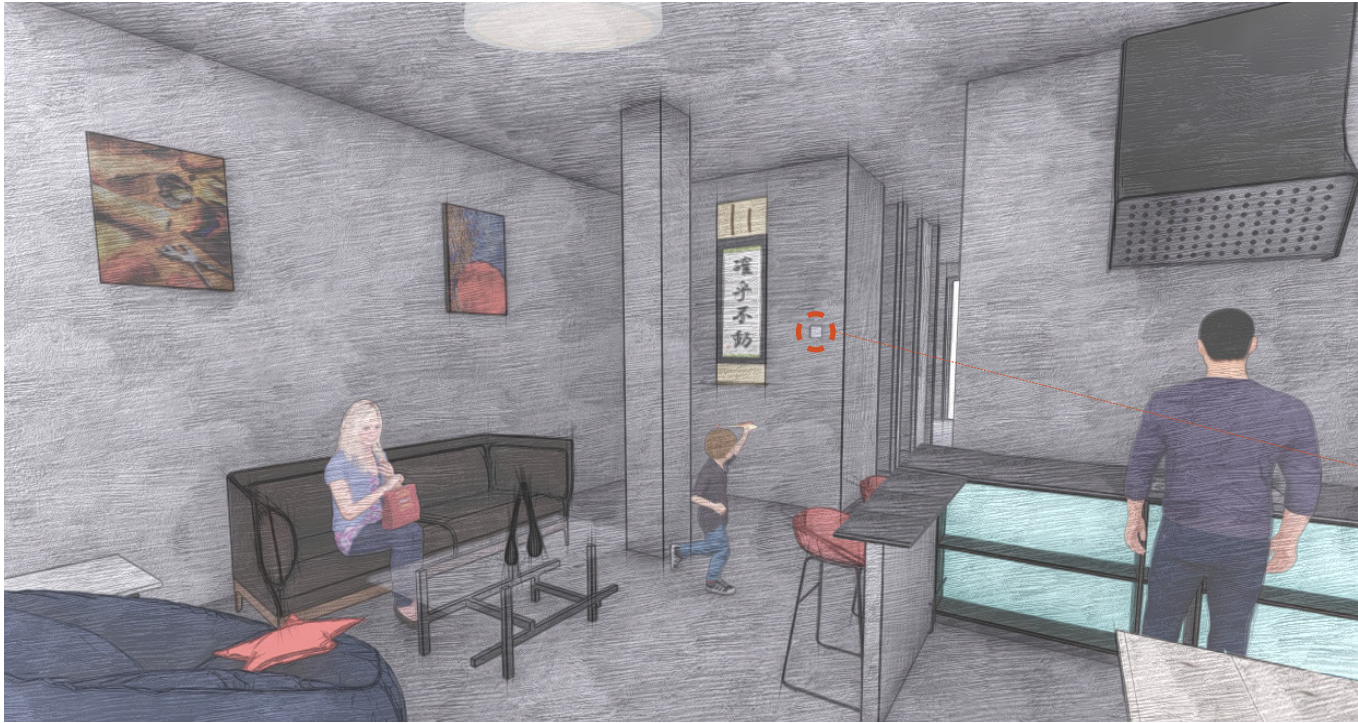
Top Left-Common area on the family floors
& Bottom Left-Back Patio:

The common area of the family floors is meant **purely for socialization**, not only for kids but for the parents. The back patio is meant for the entire community, to hold events, interact, and importantly, heal as a group. **Social skills can be stunted by living on the street and by offering a non-confrontational or forced way to socialize, residents can reintegrate at their own comfort level.**

Top Right: Street floor lobby area:

The lobby holds the **mailboxes for the entire building**. One of the most important pieces to having an address.

a look at the third floor



family units:

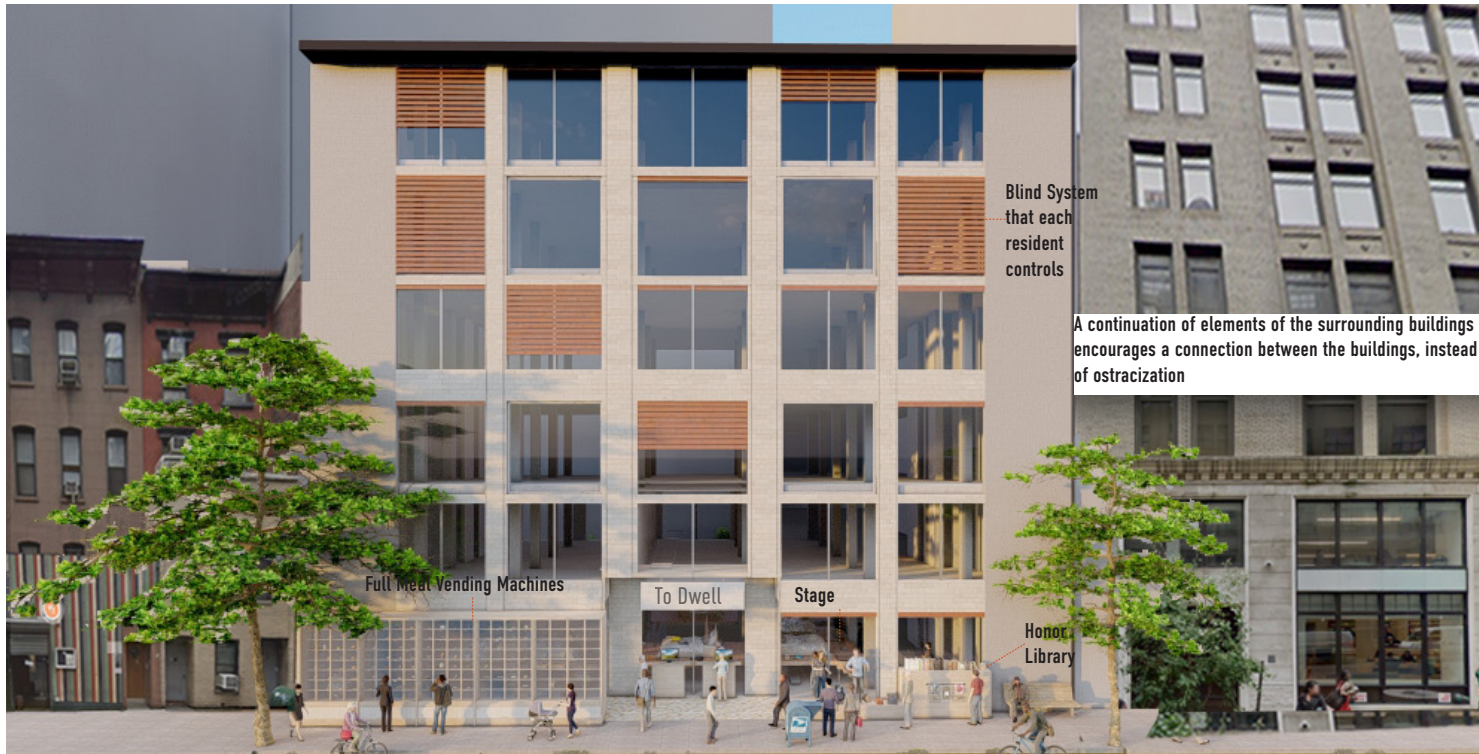
The family units can house a **family of four, not only “standard” families but new found families.** Each unit is outfitted with one and a half bathrooms, three bedrooms, a living room, and a kitchen. There is freedom in decoration and arrangement to encourage autonomy. To further support autonomy, **each apartment is outfitted with a system to control the shading system of their windows.** This allows residents to either interact with the community or to close themselves off.



beauty salon:

The beauty salon is in the partner facility on the third floor. **Not only a place to get a haircut, this is also a place to relax, for self-care, and to socialize.** When living on the street, such opportunities can be hard to come by. **Giving residents an opportunities to feel like themselves again is essential to healing.** Beyond this, residents can also be trained by the charity running the salon, leading to job opportunities.

elevation studies



In order to fully reintegrate the home with the community, the **street wall must be engaged.**

Other members of the **community must feel as though residents are adding to community and not only taking.** To do this a market where people walking by could **grab lunch, two computer stands, a raised area for performances, and a small book exchange** have all been added to the street wall.

These additions **not only encourage community interaction but also help to destigmatize shelter living.**



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