

A Room in the City: Housing Itinerant Lifestyles

by

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B.A. Architecture
University of California Berkeley, 2003

Submitted to the Department of Architecture
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

In a globalized world, people are becoming more transient, and the turnover in cities continues to increase. For the white-collar labor force, the difference between residing and staying is becoming less defined.

Hotel and apartment developers in Boston's Seaport District are specifically targeting this mobile sub-population. The Seaport's proximity to Logan Airport and the Financial District makes it an apt site for this group to temporarily land. Furthermore, they form a significant economic engine for a neighborhood that is largely underdeveloped. Using the Seaport as a site, the thesis argues that architecture has not yet adapted to transient lifestyles.

Developers have cultivated an entire lifestyle around the notion that hotel and home can be one in the same if accompanied by a standard set of amenities. The thesis takes this idea further; it proposes a model for circulation that integrates amenities with itinerant living space.

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situating transience

In a globalized world, people are becoming more transient, and the turnover in cities continues to increase. Peter Marcuse, Professor of Urban Studies at Columbia University, defines globalization as ‘the further strengthening and internationalization of capital using substantial advances in communications and transportation technology’¹. With the movement of capital comes the transplant of labor and, most pertinently, households. In a December 2006 news release on ‘Jobs and Labor Turnover’, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics reports, ‘there continues to be considerable churning in the labor market with large numbers of hires and separations every month’². For the white-collar labor force, the difference between residing and staying is becoming less defined. The thesis examines the way in which the changing idea of domesticity has adapted to this increasingly mobile lifestyle of the white-collar middle class, and it questions how architecture can support a peripatetic existence.

The 1990s introduced a class of workers just below the wealthy whose profile elucidates their transient existence. In *Bobos in Paradise*, David Brooks calls this group bourgeois bohemians and identifies them with shotgun labels: ‘It’s Dartmouth marries Berkeley, MBA weds PhD, Fulbright hitchhikes with Rhodes’³. In *The Global City*, Saskia Sassen describes their economic role as ‘ultimately a stratum of extremely hard-working people whose alliance to the system leads them to produce far more profit than they get back in their admittedly very high salaries and bonuses’⁴. She distinguishes this group from their 1950s and 60s traditional counterparts in that their jobs provide them with enough disposable income that their consumption grows more sophisticated: ‘The conjunction of excess earnings and the new cosmopolitan work culture creates a compelling space for new lifestyles and new kinds of economic activities; [...] The ideal residence is no longer a home in suburbia, but a converted former warehouse in ultra-urban downtown’⁵.

¹ Peter Marcuse, “Space in the Globalizing City,” in *The Global Cities Reader*, ed. Neil Brenner and Roger Kell (New York: Routledge, 2006), 362.

² Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Job Openings and Labor Turnover: December 2006,” <http://www.bls.gov/jlt/>.

³ David Brooks, *Bobos in Paradise: The New Upper Class and How They Got There* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001), 14.

⁴ Saskia Sassen, *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 335.

⁵ *Ibid.*

This itinerant lifestyle is reflected in the economic culture of design. Furniture retailers and designers have shifted their focus to accessible and disposable design. In 2002, the *New York Times* quoted IKEA's managing director, Josephine Rydberg Dumont: 'That old, traditional stuff is making us feel [...] that things can't change, that taking responsibility for your things is more important than taking responsibility for your life. It's O.K. to replace them, to get rid of them. We don't think we're going to live one way always.'⁶

Architecture has an extensive empirical history of adapting to changing societal values by responding with increased flexibility in living spaces. Modernism upended Victorian ideals of domesticity (and their associated emphases on public and private spaces and rooms with specific purposes), and, among the more successful endeavors, SoHo's 1950s loft conversion culture continues to permeate the housing market in cities. Hoteliers are noticing the trends towards loft living as well. In February of 2007, the *New York Times* published an article entitled 'Lower Priced Rooms, With Boutique Style'. The article introduced new brands like NYLO and Starwood's Aloft who are opening hotels featuring electronic amenities with 'loft-like accommodations'⁷. Developer Ian Schrager's luxury Manhattan condominiums designed by Herzog and de Meuron represent the real estate market's latest endeavors to combine home ownership with hotel amenity.

⁶ John Leland, "How the Disposable Sofa Conquered America." *New York Times*, December 1, 2002, Style section, Online edition.

⁷ Michelle Higgins, "Lower-Priced Rooms, With Boutique Style." *New York Times*, February 25, 2007, Travel section, Online edition.



Come A Little Bit Closer Bench, 2001

designer Nina Farkache

project *Me, Myself, and You*

'This bench creates a unique, almost unexplainable kind of atmosphere between people. The seats sliding across the marbles combined with the sound of rolling glass mean it's hard not to have fun and the experience unites you with your neighbour, even when you are not moving at all.'⁸



Chest of Drawers, 1993

designer Tejo Remy

'Remy's chest is a criticism on overproduction and consumerism that pervades the world. His deliberate improvisation is also a protest against the increasing complexity of the design profession. The chest has no fixed form; the drawers can be combined and exchanged at will. Each piece is unique, numbered and signed by Tejo Remy.'⁹



Matwalk, 2002

designer Paolo Ulian

project *Hotel Droog*

'Slippers are integrated into the mat, allowing you to walk comfortably and without slipping on dirty or wet floors. At the same time, Matwalk can be seen as a new way of wiping the bathroom floor.'¹⁰

⁸ Droog Design, <http://www.droogdesign.nl/>.

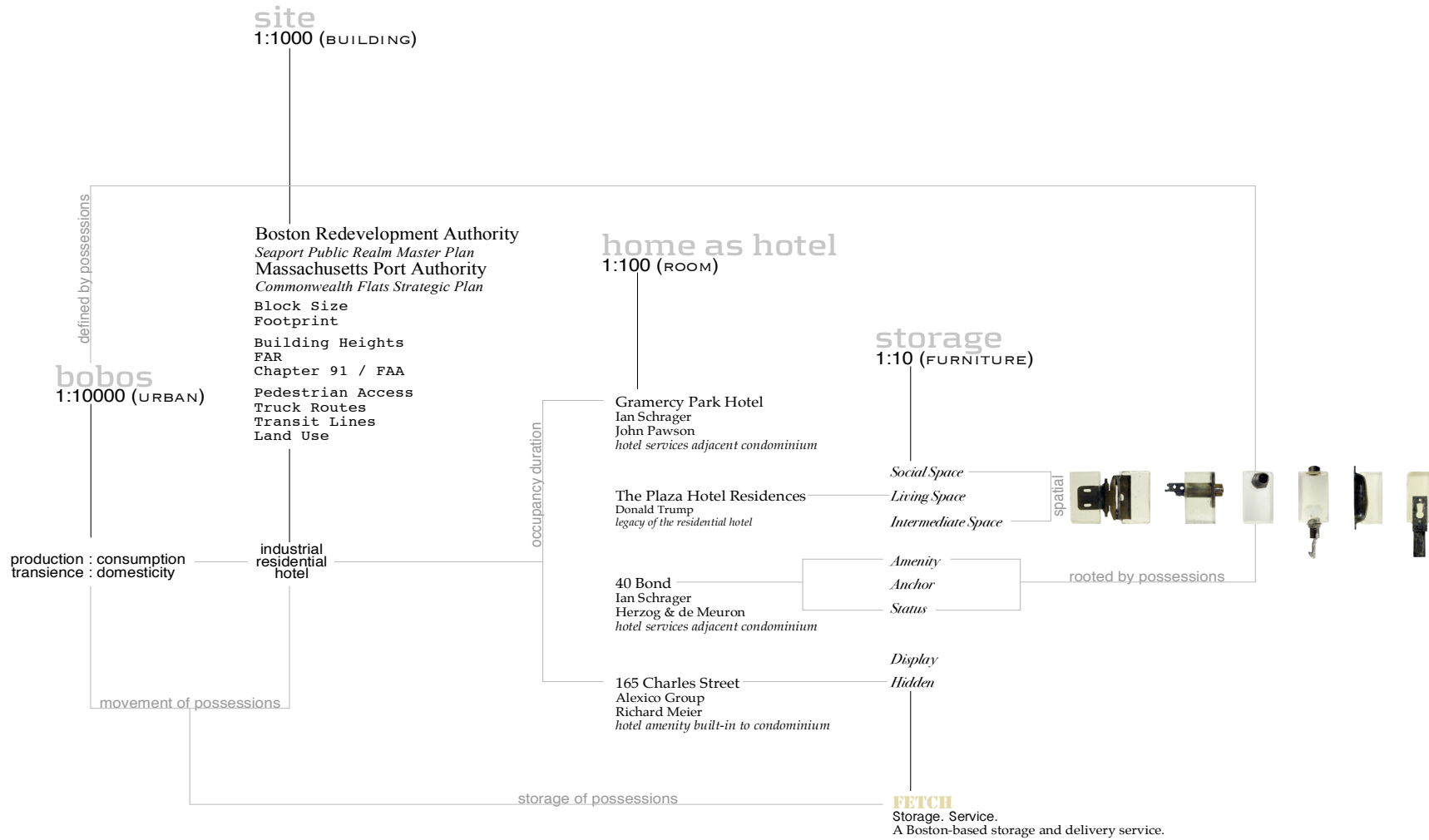
⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

Product design has responded to transient households, but the thesis argues that architecture has not yet confronted the emergence of a new domesticity that is epitomized by an itinerant lifestyle. Its attempts to address the transient population have not achieved the same kind of accessibility as fashion and household products. (Not everyone has chosen to live in a loft.)

The Boston Seaport's location (particularly its proximity to several key modes of transportation - Logan Airport, I-90, MBTA Silver Line - and the Financial District) and its underdeveloped properties make it a pivotal site for exploring modes of transient residence. Twenty billion dollar infrastructure improvements have dramatically transformed the district, and private developers are targeting its major properties.

The waterfront block bordered by Northern Avenue, New Congress Street, and D Street was developed in 2005. Currently, there are two high-rise buildings on abutting parcels that house the Park Lane Seaport luxury apartments with ground-floor retail. Adjacent to the residences is a parcel that holds a recently completed Marriott Renaissance Hotel. The decision to build a residential complex and hotel on this block indicates the direction in which the Seaport's development is headed. The thesis site is located on a dry dock between the World Trade Center pier and the Boston Marine Industrial Park. Once a vital berth for ship building and repair, it now holds a concert pavilion at its base and is otherwise unoccupied. The design for the site confronts the programs of hotel and residence that are prevalent in the Seaport. It questions why the two are defined exclusive of one another and suggests a scenario for hybridizing them.



four scales [of research]

The first section outlines the work conducted during the summer of 2007, which included site and precedent research and analysis and several preliminary studies towards the design.

The diagram to the left organizes the information collected into four columns, each identified as a numeric scale. The project juxtaposes several scales; the city connotes the urban scale, while the room is one way that people occupy the city. The project is represented at these two scales negotiated at the intermediate scale of the building.

The columns are identified quantitatively; the diagram represents the relationships that have emerged among them.



bobos [urban]

David Brooks' theories about bourgeois bohemians (Bobos) fall between Mencken's derogatory term '*boboisie*'¹¹ and Deirdre McCloskey's praises for capitalism in *The Bourgeois Virtues: Ethics for an Age of Commerce*. Brooks suggests that this group is the new engine of our economy, empowered and rising, but conflicted. They are attempting to reject the Wall Street lifestyle that pushed forward the generation before them, but love and need the perks that their new wealth provides. Brooks sums them up in this way: 'This is the cultural consequence of the information age'¹². It caters to 'highly educated folk who have one foot in the bohemian world of creativity and other foot in the bourgeois realm of ambition [...] or, to take the first two letters of each word, they are Bobos'¹³.

They are the new, rising consumers. Brooks gleefully notes that they wear 'knobby sweaters on the weekends, found at the perfect store, screened for sensitivity by sheep-rights activists'.¹⁴ They have given rise to a whole new culture of economic powers: NPR, AOL, Yahoo, Barnes and Noble, eBay and Google. They succeed in this new economy by being able to change. They move from job to job, bringing both bohemian creativity and bourgeois ambition to each new endeavor.

¹¹ Deirdre McCloskey, *The Bourgeois Virtues: Ethics for an Age of Commerce* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006), 69.

¹² Brooks 10.

¹³ Ibid 11.

¹⁴ Ibid.

This group can be defined in a number of ways, but the thesis focuses on a finite condition of transience that is characteristic of urban households that earn an income in the low six figures, that live in areas at or above a density of 100 people / acre, and that are headed by people between ages 25 and 35 years. It's clear that developers in the Seaport are actively targeting this group as potential residents, given the price point of apartment rental. The Park Lane Seaport Residences range from 490 sq. ft. studios (priced per month from \$1,750 to \$2,150) to 1100 sq. ft. three bedroom apartments (priced per month from \$4,530 to \$4,610).¹⁵ This population's income accounts for a consistent core of wealth in urban neighborhoods, and their presence is vital for the Seaport's livelihood.

Permanent transience is not just an indication of exploding global corporations and expedited job turnover. As a proposition for architecture, the thesis suggests that transience is symptomatic of the constant state of unrest, or the dissatisfaction with the familiar, that is characteristic of Brooks' Bobo population. In 'Boredom and Bedroom: The Suppression of the Habitual', Georges Teyssot speculates whether diseases can be tied to living spaces, such as the spatial disease of uncanniness (or *Unheimlichkeit*): 'the perturbing and uneasy feeling derived from habitual surroundings that suddenly appear too familiar'.¹⁶ Similarly, he identifies *ennui*, or boredom, as a malady of everyday architecture that is revealed in the 'interior rooms of domesticity' and is tied to the perception of time.¹⁷ He writes, 'the state of the eternal return, the immutable sameness in the seemingly new, the *semper idem*, can bring forth tedium'.¹⁸ For Bobos, their *semper idem* is permanent transience, the constant state of starting over. In this way, the challenge of the thesis design is to materialize a condition that is inherently immaterial, that is both disconnected from and shaped by its built surroundings.

¹⁵ Park Lane Seaport, <http://parklaneseaport.com>.

¹⁶ Georges Teyssot, "Boredom and Bedroom: The Suppression of the Habitual," *Assemblage* 30 (1996): 47.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.



The Man at the Window, 1876
Gustave Caillebotte



Interior (Woman at the Window), 1880
Gustave Caillebotte

‘The boredom supported by the repetitive work of industrial production corresponds to that of the new boulevards of Paris of the Second Empire and the Third Republic: “These big streets, these big quays, these big buildings, these big sewers, their physiognomy badly copied or poorly imagined ... They exhale boredom.” One thinks of the many paintings of Gustave Caillebotte, *Paris on a Rainy Day* of 1877 or the famous *Bridge of Europe* or *The Man at the Window* of 1876. To escape this *ennui*, this “disease of the soul,” present in the Parisian salons since the eighteenth century, one resorted to games and diversions: posing as a dandy and distracting oneself by immersion in the crowd.’¹⁸

¹⁹ Ibid.

The thesis focuses on the critical aspects of the Bobos' influence that should affect architecture. They are transient. Their jobs require frequent travel by plane. Their careers require moving their residence from city to city, often every 3-4 years. As they've moved, they've found that the services previously only available to the top of the earnings ladder are important to them. In addition, they want to acquire and keep the material trappings of success.





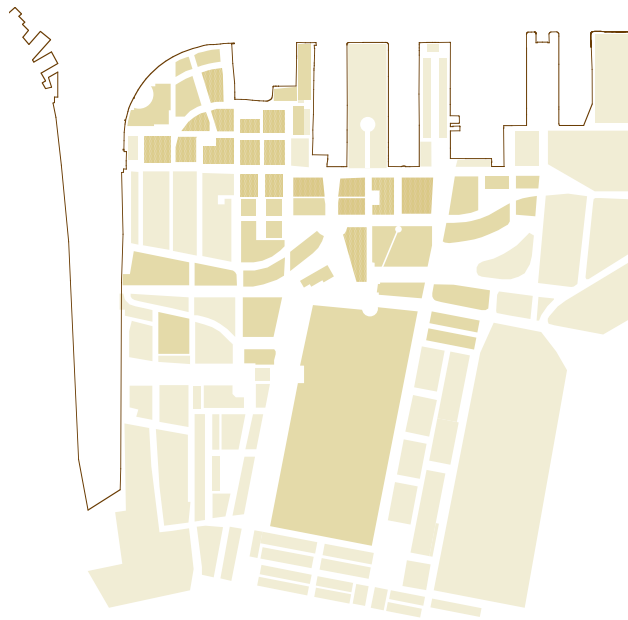
Boston Seaport: Relationship to Financial District and Logan Airport

site [building]

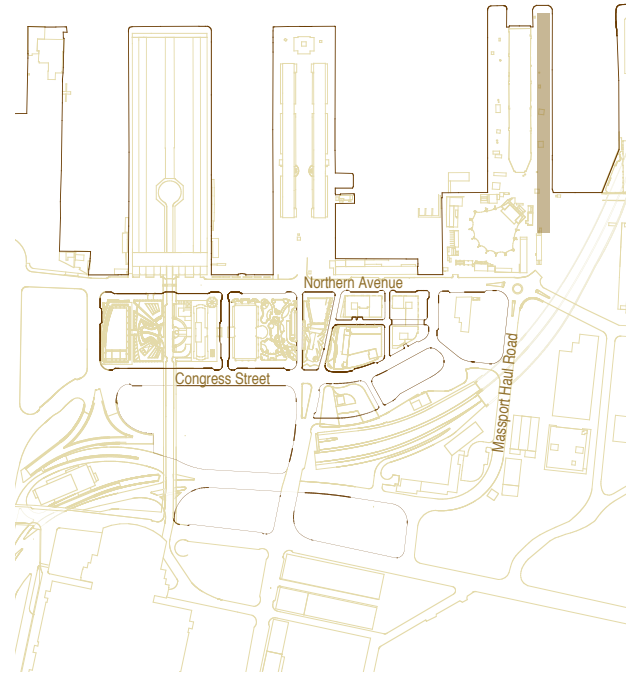
The Boston Seaport has certain innate characteristics that make it a natural landing point for Bobos. It occupies a unique space in an underdeveloped niche of the city that lies between the airport and the Financial District. The area is connected to both hubs via the MBTA Silver Line, and one reason to consider the presence of the Bobos especially is that they are most likely to regularly utilize both the airport and financial district. Furthermore, they are a significant economic asset to an area at the cusp of revitalization.

The Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport) and the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) have developed a master plan for the Seaport, envisioning a vibrant neighborhood adjacent to an industrial port. Up to this point, the master plan has envisioned that the neighborhood will serve two primary housing needs: the overnight needs of those who come to attend conventions in the area and those who will live and work in the financial centers of Boston. Embedded in these overlapping priorities is the economic consideration that the Seaport must maintain its industrial function and simultaneously introduce a thriving urban residential neighborhood. Negotiating between an efficient transportation system and a vibrant pedestrian environment is just one of the major issues that will affect the plan's success.²⁰

²⁰ Massachusetts Port Authority, *Commonwealth Flats Strategic Plan*, 2000, 3.



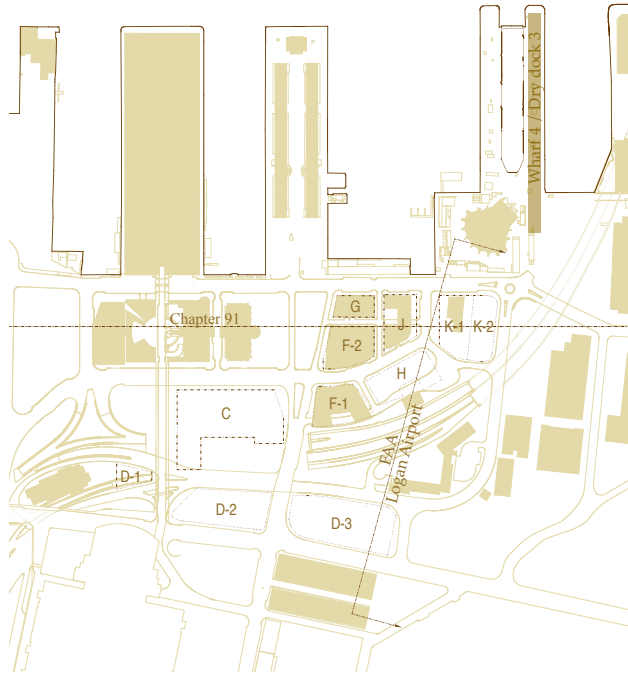
Proposed Blocks and Building Heights
Boston Redevelopment Authority Master Plan²¹



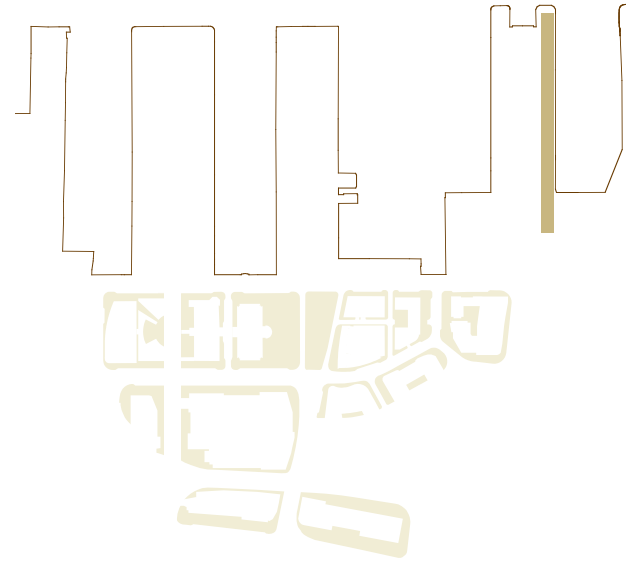
Commonwealth Flats Area
Massachusetts Port Authority²²

²¹ Drawing adapted from information in *The Seaport Public Realm Plan*. Boston Redevelopment Authority, *The Seaport Public Realm Plan*, February 1999, 58.

²² Drawing adapted from information in *Commonwealth Flats Strategic Plan*. Massachusetts Port Authority, *Commonwealth Flats Strategic Plan*, 15.



Existing Conditions
Massachusetts Port Authority²³



Proposed Block vs. Building Footprint
Massachusetts Port Authority²⁴

²³ Ibid 20.

²⁴ Ibid 34.

The thesis site is located on the pier identified as Wharf 4 / Dry dock 3 and is adjacent to one of Massport's non-maritime properties, historically identified as the Commonwealth Flats. Massport owns and controls almost 300 acres of marine terminals, development parcels, and other properties, entitling the state agency to plan and develop the South Boston Waterfront in addition to its responsibilities surrounding the Port of Boston and Logan International Airport.²⁵

Wharf 4 / Dry dock 3 is owned and managed by the Economic Development Industrial Corporation (EDIC), a city financial entity that owns the Boston Marine Industrial Park east of the site. The pier is a little over 200,000 square feet, and the thesis site covers 75,000 square feet of the expanse.

Currently, the Bank of America Concert Pavilion sits at the base of the pier; there have been a number of proposals for the berth, the most recent of which is Mayor Thomas Menino's proposal that the pier be the new site of the city hall.²⁶ Both current and possible future uses require that the site remain accessible to the public. The images that follow convey the vast difference between the 'public' face of the site (the side which faces the Financial District and strip of new development) and the 'private' side that faces the Boston Marine Industrial Park and Logan Airport.

²⁵ Massachusetts Port Authority, Commonwealth Flats Strategic Plan, 1.

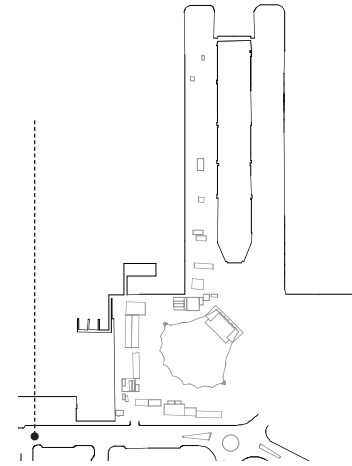
²⁶ Andrew Hargens, Senior Planner / Project Manager, Economic Planning and Development Department, Massachusetts Port Authority (phone interview, October 19, 2007).

* See page 21. Wharf 4 / Dry dock 3 is toned and identified in the third map on the preceding page.

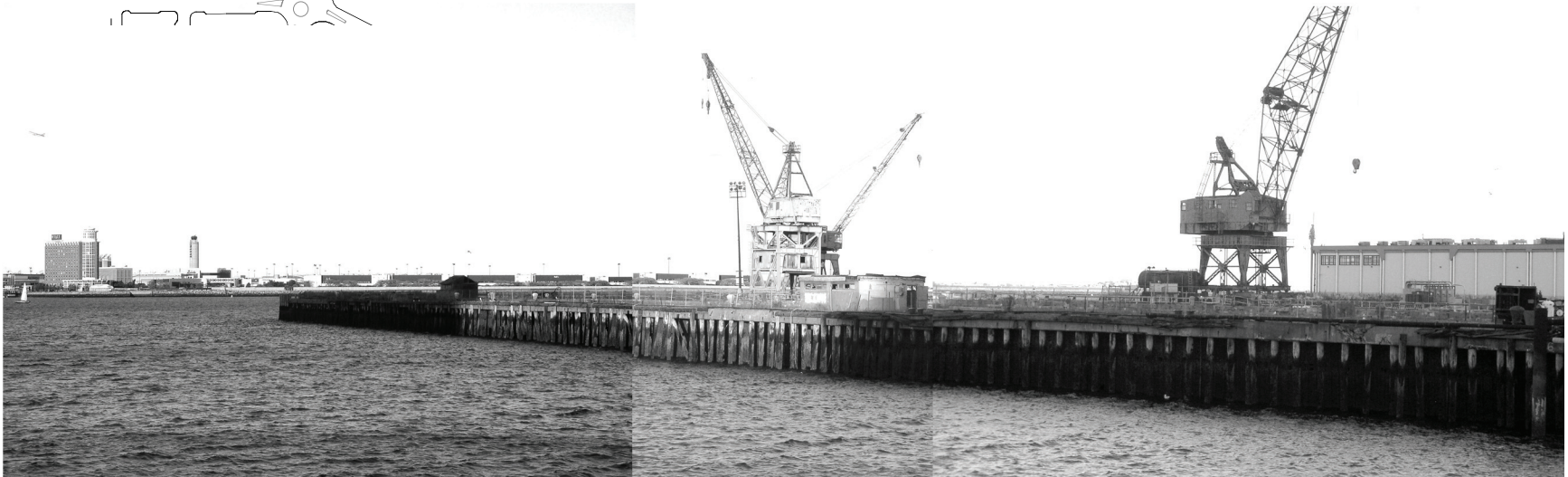
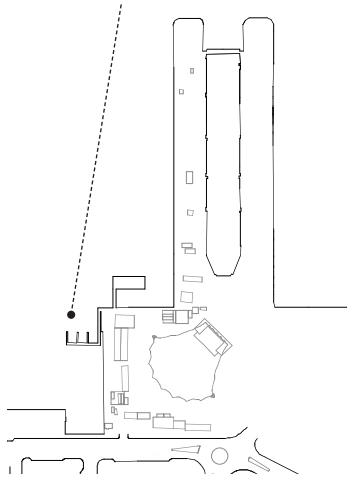
Under the guidelines of the master plan, several hotels, office buildings, and apartment towers have been built in the past few years. The strip along Northern Avenue, which runs parallel to the waterfront, includes the Seaport Hotel, the World Trade Towers East and West, the Park Lane Seaport Residences, the Marriott Renaissance Hotel, and the Manulife Headquarters. Because the majority of the property in the area is owned by either the city or the state, land parcels are developed under 99-year leases.

The Park Lane Seaport Residences are no exception; Fallon Development recently completed this apartment complex on Parcels G and J, along with a Marriott Renaissance Hotel on Parcel F-2. As in the cases of the other buildings along Northern Avenue, hotel and apartment units remain in separate buildings. The thesis proposes a model that integrates hotel and apartment units in one building.

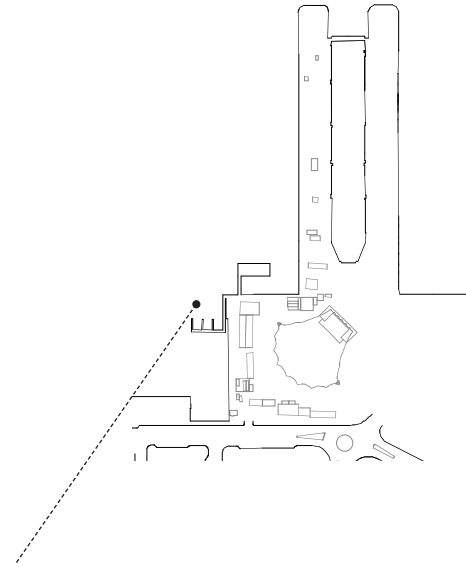




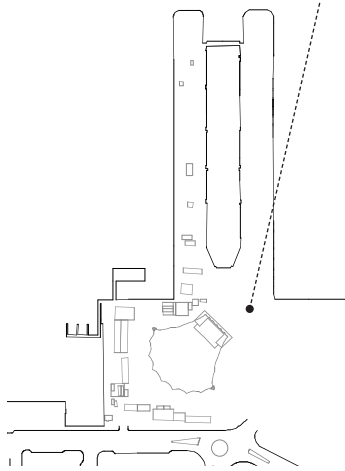
Northern Avenue and New Congress Street: View northeast, towards waterfront
(The concert pavilion is to the far right in the image.)



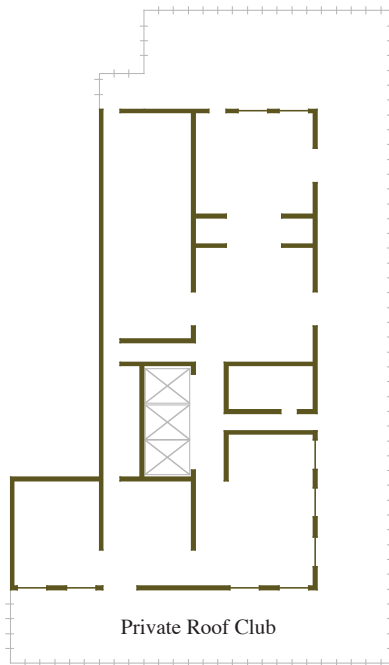
Wharf 4 / Dry dock 3: View northeast



[Public] side of site: View southwest towards strip of new development
(The Park Lane Seaport Residences are to the far left in the image.)



[Private] side of site: View northeast towards Boston Marine Industrial Park and Logan Airport



Gramercy Park Hotel: Private Roof Club
Ian Schrager's latest endeavor to service home with hotel amenity. Residents at both of his recently completed condominiums, 40 Bond and Gramercy Park North, enjoy exclusive use of all hotel services, including the Private Roof Club.

home as hotel [room]

There is an established history of society's upper class taking up residence in luxury hotels as a primary household, permanent second homes, or for extended stays. The recent debut of The Plaza's Private Residences and *Pied-a-terre* indicates that residence in luxury hotels still permeates contemporary lifestyles. This notion is underscored further by developers' aims to furnish condominium buildings with the luxuries of hotel amenities. Presumably, travel between households, between cities, between continents was not as seamless at the turn of the 20th century as it is today. Yet, these models of living prevail beyond the legacy of The Plaza Hotel of the 1930s. The two extremes of hotel living are the very elite and fictional vision typified by Eloise at the Plaza Hotel or the extended stay suite hotels. These extended stay hotels have spread across America, but unfortunately they are often mundane and are no more design oriented than the average suburban strip mall.

New York developers like Ian Schrager and André Balazs have offered an entire lifestyle around the notion that hotel and home can be one in the same if accompanied by a standard set of amenities (i.e. room service, concierge, spa services). They have programmatically integrated hotel amenity with living units; the thesis design architecturally integrates the two.

The following pages show a study in which the units and common space floors in a number of hotel and condominium buildings were documented. The buildings chosen fall under one of three categories: (1) Hudson²⁷, Gramercy Park Hotel²⁸, and 40 Bond²⁹ are all creations of Schrager based on images of lifestyle from the viewpoint of a boutique developer; (2) The Plaza Residences³⁰ represent the latest era of The Plaza Hotel, or the 'apartment hotel'³¹; (3) Orion³² is representative of a more corporate approach to urban living in which common spaces replace the personal services of hotel amenities (this condominium building is similar to the Boston Seaport's Park Lane Residences). The study organizes units in these buildings along a spectrum of occupancy length.

²⁷ Unit plans redrawn from Morgans Hotel Group website. Morgans Hotel Group, <http://www.morganshotelgroup.com>.

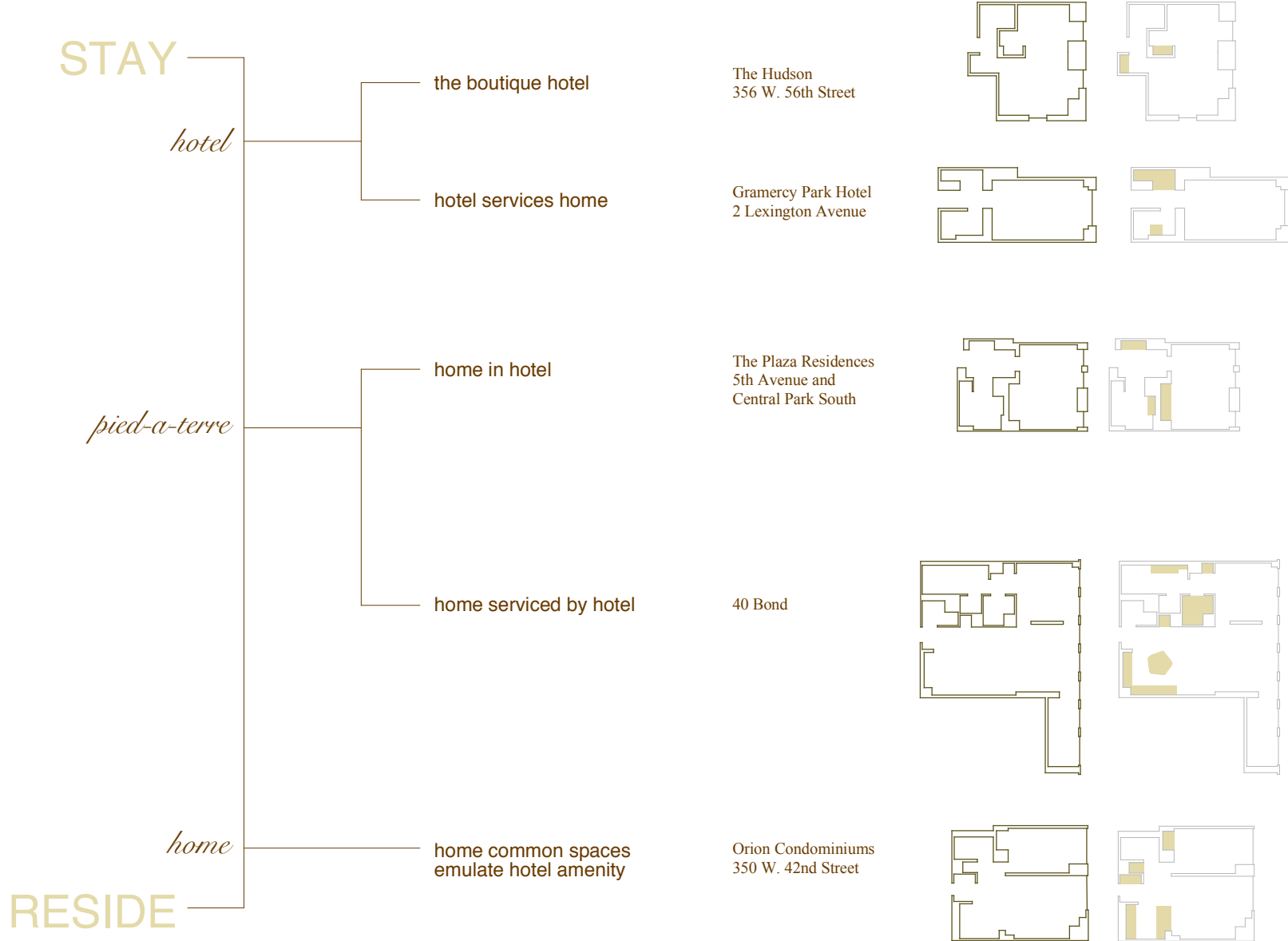
²⁸ Unit plans redrawn from Gramercy Park Hotel website. Gramercy Park Hotel, <http://gramercyparkhotel.com>.

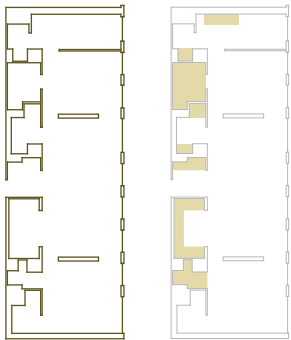
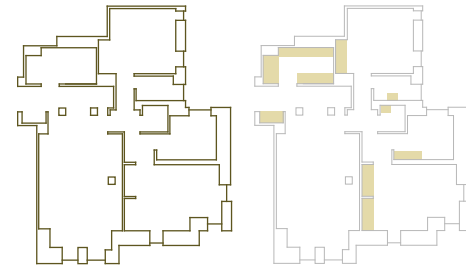
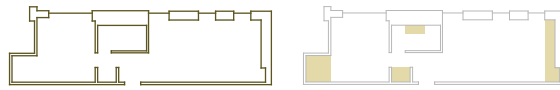
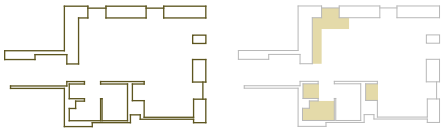
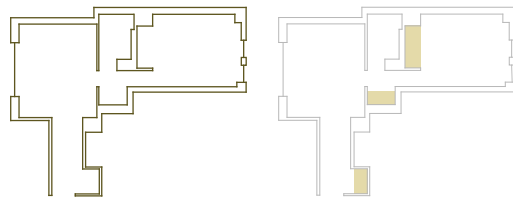
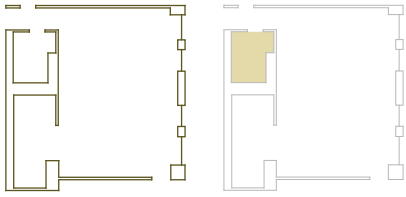
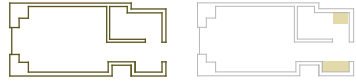
²⁹ Unit plans redrawn from 40 Bond website. 40 Bond, <http://www.40bond.com>.

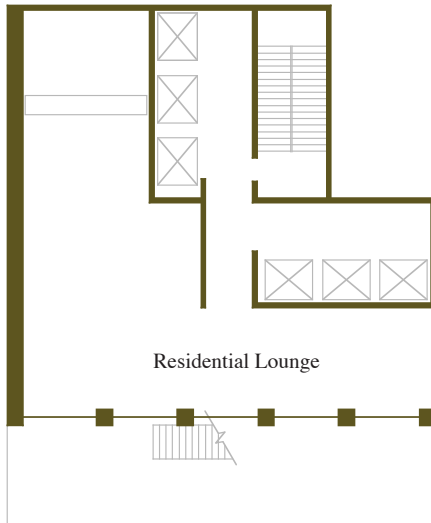
³⁰ Unit plans redrawn from The Plaza Residences website. The Plaza Residences, <http://www.theplazaresidences.com>.

³¹ Robert Stern et al., *New York 1900: Metropolitan Architecture and Urbanism 1890-1915* (New York: Rizzoli, 1983), 262.

³² Unit plan redrawn from brochure obtained at real estate showing. Corcoran Sunshine Marketing Group, *Orion*.







Orion Condominiums: Resident Lounge
Orion Condominiums were recently developed by Extell Development and cater to exactly the Bobos income bracket and socioeconomic class. Orion is one of many examples of condo complexes that boast a number of amenities, including a residential lounge, media room, and pool / fitness center.

The image in the center was taken during a weekday; the image above is from the NY Times article mentioned in the text. Spaces like the residential lounge in this building may be used at certain times of the day (in this case, residents get together for breakfast here), but for a substantial amount of time, entire floors of common spaces are unused and unoccupied.

In a recent *New York Times* article, entitled 'A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood', Stephanie Rosenbloom describes this recent trend in urban living. The cinema, lounge, and Starbucks do not merely exist alongside residences; developers are introducing a more fluid interface between these types of uses and apartment units that boasts the added benefit of remaining entirely exclusive to residents. Rosenbloom describes this phenomenon as 'a way of life for those who can afford it':

'They came in sweatshirts and fuzzy slippers, suits and oxfords, seeking chocolate muffins and Cheerios. Some grabbed a yogurt and left. Others lingered. In the room high above the Hudson River, they relished the food, the vistas, and one another's company for as long as they could stretch a NY minute. So began another morning at Orion, a 60-story condominium on West 42 Street with a glass body and a Club Med soul, where residents in everything from pajamas and pin-stripes can enjoy a taste of camaraderie with their free (yes, free) daily breakfast, Starbucks coffee included.'³³

³³ Stephanie Rosenbloom, "A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood." *New York Times*, April 29, 2007, Real Estate section, Online edition.

Rosenbloom's article suggests that, for the Bobos, living in a hotel isn't such a bad idea. The overwhelming influx of condominiums like Orion in New York City represent an alternative housing idea that caters to the Bobo lifestyle and budget. Rosenbloom quotes André Balazs who says, 'you can think of the entire building as your home.'³⁴ Like Orion, the Park Lane Seaport Residences have made programmatic propositions for common spaces. In addition to the lobby, the ground floor of Parcel J houses a kitchen and lounge with a fifty-person capacity available to residents to reserve for entertaining. The complex has relocated the 'home office' to a more collective setting of a business center and conference room adjacent to the kitchen and lounge.

In both Orion and the Park Lane Seaport Residences, as well as other buildings that were studied, the common spaces are contained to their own floor. These spaces, like the residential lounge in Orion*, may be used at certain times of the day, but for a substantial amount of time, entire floors of common spaces are unused and unoccupied. The public and private relationships in the building are such that no individual resident is likely to consider the whole building his or her home. The Park Lane Seaport Residences and Orion are not necessarily bad places to live. However, they do offer an opportunity to architecturally explore this idea that developers are marketing to Bobos.

³⁴ Ibid.

* See image on page 32.

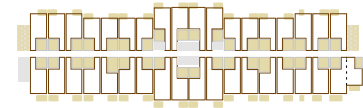
The study shown on the following pages illustrates the monotonous, albeit efficient, layouts of current hotel models.³⁵ In the end, the proposition for integrating hotel and apartment units was driven by circulation, so this typological study served as a reference.

³⁵ Plans redrawn from: Walter A. Rutes, et al., *Hotel Design, Planning, and Development: From Raffles to E Walk and beyond* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001).

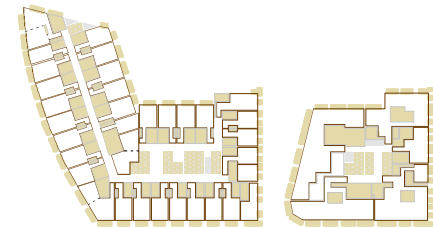
TYPE



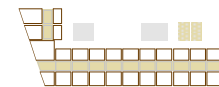
W Hotel, San Francisco
Downtown boutique business and tourist hotel
Variation of rectangular tower **type layout**



Courtyard by Marriott Prototype
Roadside mid to upscale hotel / motel
Variation of double-loaded slab **type layout**

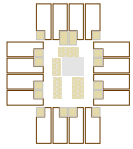


The Ritz-Carlton Battery Park, New York
Integrated condominium and hotel tower
Long-term residential accommodations; tourist, business hotel
Variation of offset tower and double-loaded slab, 5 vs. 20 units
(centralized utilities, circulation, separate entrance at ground floor) **type use layout**

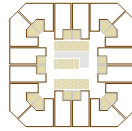


Embassy Suites Hotel, Battery Park City, New York
Community all-suite hotel
Short-term residential living accommodations
Variation of single-loaded slab **type use layout**

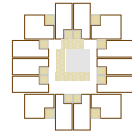
TYOLOGY



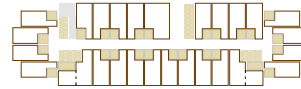
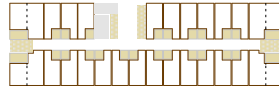
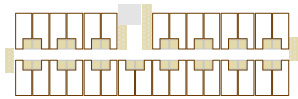
Rectangular Tower
Cross Plan
(Reduces core, increases perimeter)



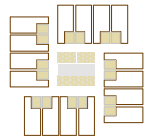
Square Plan
(Radial circulation)



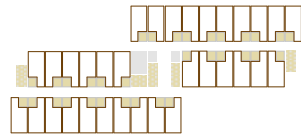
Square Plan
(Minimal circulation,
maximizes corner access to light, air)



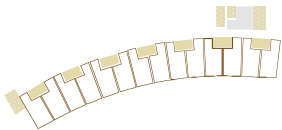
Double-loaded slab
(Paired bathrooms and distributed clusters of elevator, stair, and service)



Rectangular Tower
Offset Plan
(Paired bathrooms, extended corridor)



Double-loaded Slab
Off-set Plan
(Central cluster of elevator, service)



Single-loaded slab



Picture Out of Doors, 1996
Kate Ericson and Mel Ziegler³⁶

³⁶ Teyssot 58.

storage [furniture]

Apartment storage space is inherently tied to transience. In a recent *New York Times* article, entitled 'The \$38,500 Closet', Vivian Toy observes, 'developers of new buildings tout basement storage units as an amenity almost on par with a gym or a doorman. Wire-mesh storage cages now routinely sell for \$30,000 to \$40,000, and enclosed storage rooms can sell for twice as much.'³⁷ The transient Bobo is no stranger to the Park Avenue storage cage culture. The storage unit has become just as much prime real estate as the apartment unit. The basement storage cage has evolved into a status symbol; the quality of storage space, the amount, and the contents distinguish households. Haphazard displays of personal possessions and a portal into private lives, basement storage spaces are sometimes the only collective space in apartment buildings aside from the entrance. In many of the condominiums in New York that were documented, storage took on a number of conditions that are identified in the previous research diagram'.

In the same *Assemblage* piece discussed previously, Georges Teyssot describes a project by Kate Ericson and Mel Ziegler that was intended to 'expose and make public the most private parts of a home'³⁸. In *Picture Out of Doors*, Ericson and Ziegler removed all doors to rooms and places of storage to reveal their contents. Teyssot describes this somewhat cathartic process as a 'disruption of the habitual'³⁹. As an antidote to the transient Bobos' *semper idem* ", the thesis seeks to devise its own 'disruption of the habitual' in luxuriating the banal storage unit to the point that it architecturally represents the amenity that it has become. To expose and subvert the alienated lifestyle that can be a consequence of transience, the thesis uses storage space as a mode through which occupants must fully engage with their temporary places of residence.

³⁷ Vivian S. Toy, "The \$38,500 Closet." *New York Times*, November 12, 2006, Real Estate section, Online edition.

³⁸ Teyssot 57.

³⁹ Ibid.

* See page 12.

** See page 15.

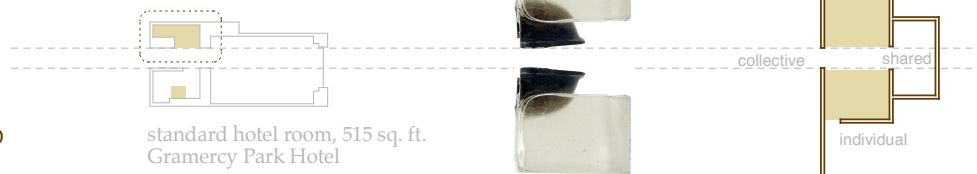
time
conditon
program

1 WEEK stay
STORAGE AS PARTITION
RATIO OF STORAGE TO LIVING UNIT: 1:5
SQUARE FOOTAGE: 400 SQ. FT.
CONTENT OF STORAGE: PERSONAL



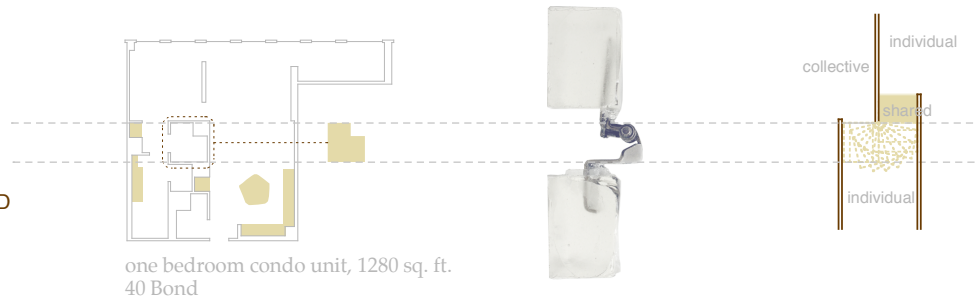
time
conditon
program

1 MONTH stay
STORAGE AS ENTRY
RATIO OF STORAGE TO LIVING UNIT: 1:4
SQUARE FOOTAGE: 1500 SQ. FT.
CONTENT OF STORAGE: SM HOUSEHOLD



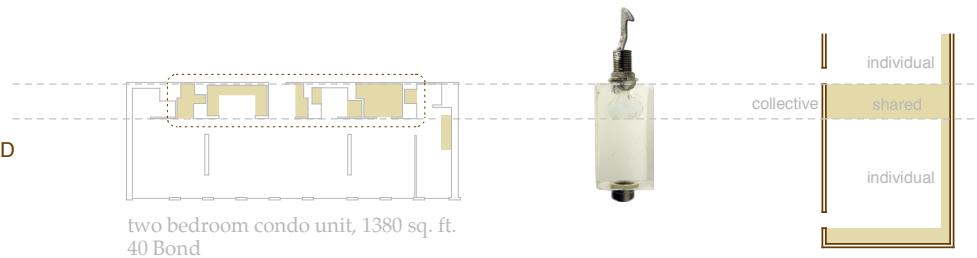
time
conditon
program

1-3 YEARS stay
STORAGE AS SEPARATE SPACE
RATIO OF STORAGE TO LIVING UNIT: 1:4
SQUARE FOOTAGE: 1000 SQ. FT.
CONTENT OF STORAGE: MID HOUSEHOLD



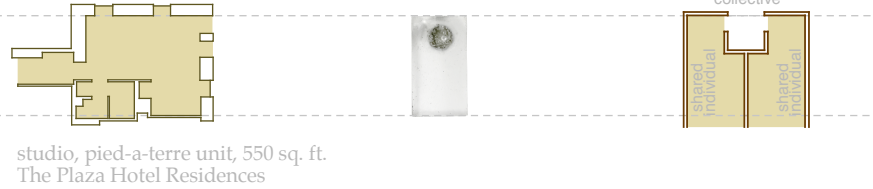
time
conditon
program

INDEFINITE, INTERMITTENT stay
STORAGE AS ENCLOSURE
RATIO OF STORAGE TO LIVING UNIT: 1:3
SQUARE FOOTAGE: 800 SQ. FT.
CONTENT OF STORAGE: LRG HOUSEHOLD



time
conditon
program

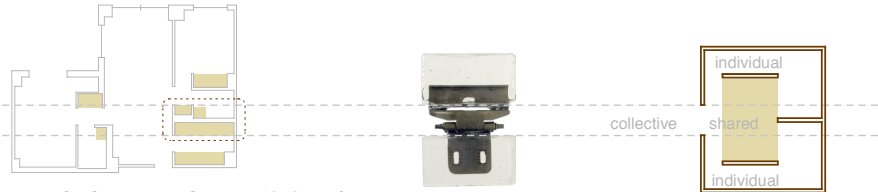
1 WEEK / INDEFINITE stay
STORAGE AS LIVING SPACE FOR OTHERS
RATIO OF STORAGE TO LIVING UNIT: 1:1
SQUARE FOOTAGE: 800 SQ. FT.
CONTENT OF STORAGE: LRG HOUSEHOLD



studio, pied-a-terre unit, 550 sq. ft.
The Plaza Hotel Residences

time
conditon
program

1 MONTH stay
STORAGE AS CONNECTOR
RATIO OF STORAGE TO LIVING UNIT: 1:4
SQUARE FOOTAGE: 500 SQ. FT.
CONTENT OF STORAGE: SM HOUSEHOLD



two bedroom condo unit, 1270 sq. ft.
212 East 47

time
conditon
program

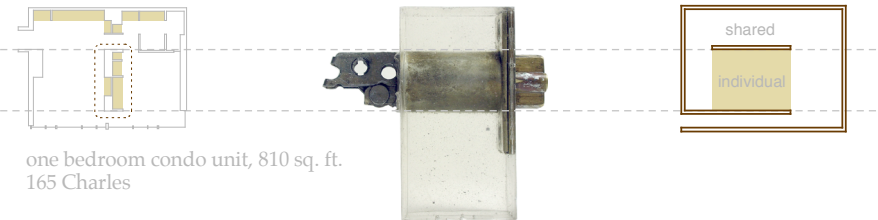
1-3 YEARS stay
STORAGE AS SEPARATOR
RATIO OF STORAGE TO LIVING UNIT: 1:3
SQUARE FOOTAGE: 1000 SQ. FT.
CONTENT OF STORAGE: LRG HOUSEHOLD



studio condo unit, 530 sq. ft.
165 Charles

time
conditon
program

INDEFINITE, INTERMITTENT stay
STORAGE AS CORE
RATIO OF STORAGE TO LIVING UNIT: 1:3
SQUARE FOOTAGE: 800 SQ. FT.
CONTENT OF STORAGE: LRG HOUSEHOLD

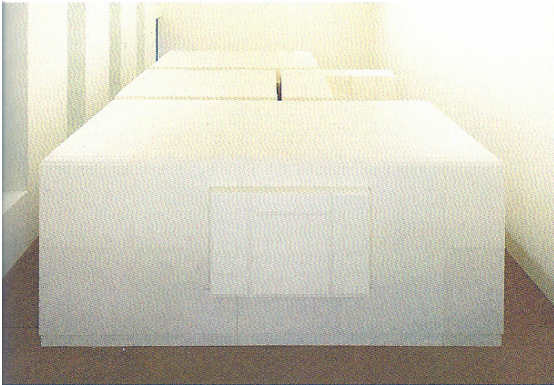


one bedroom condo unit, 810 sq. ft.
165 Charles

The previous pages document a study in which found objects were cast in resin. All of them are conventionally associated with storage: cabinet pulls, hinges, and keyholes. As objects, they are handheld, but the intention behind the casting was to distort their scale to the point that they could be read as spatial. The block of resin represents one living unit, and the objects were cast into them to propose various conditions of storage. In the diagrams, these conditions correspond to occupancy lengths of units. Using the units documented in the hotel / condominium precedent study as a reference, these conditions of storage were then diagrammed as possible configurations of individual, shared, and collective spaces.

Hybridizing hotel and residential uses relies on a spectrum of occupancy lengths that imply alternative forms of ownership and use of both individual and collective areas. Transience minimizes the difference between residential (long-term) and hotel (short-term) units. The individual unit may become less private, and the collective spaces may be increasingly designed for formerly private uses. In the eventual building design, the inclusion of storage articulates the spatial delineation between individual units and their associated collective spaces.

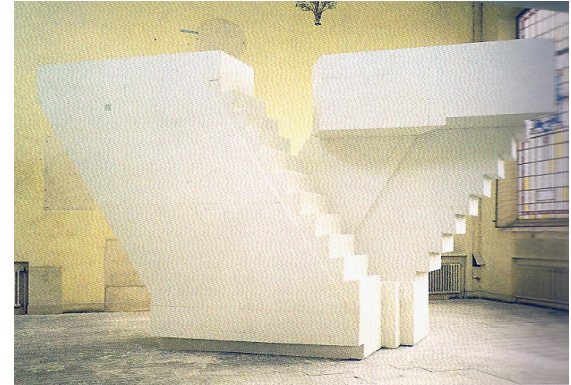




Untitled (Apartment), 2001
Rachel Whiteread⁴⁰



Untitled (Rooms), 2001
Rachel Whiteread⁴¹



Untitled (Stairs), 2001
Rachel Whiteread⁴²

⁴⁰ Eckhard Schneider, *Rachel Whiteread Walls, Doors, Floors, and Stairs* (Kunsthau Bregenz, 2005), 111.

⁴¹ Ibid.

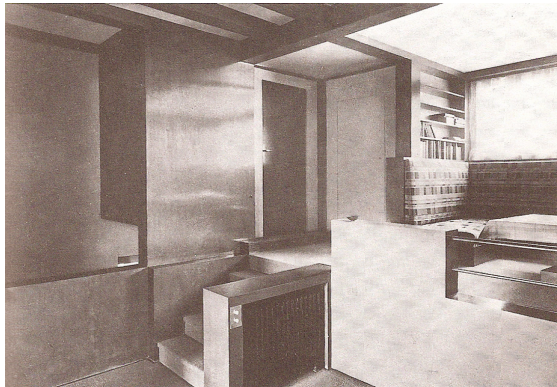
⁴² Ibid 110.

threshold [process]

The research methods discussed in the previous pages set up a theoretical basis to describe transience. This section documents the initial schematic studies that architecturally articulate urban transience. Transient lifestyles were characterized in the preceding pages as tenuous products of consumer culture, vacillating between familiar and novel surroundings. This idea of mobility is one that is fluid and malleable and, like the Bobos, remains in a constant state of flux. Threshold is a term that is theoretically embedded in these notions of lifestyle and mobility, and it served as a point of departure to physically investigate them as an architectural proposition.

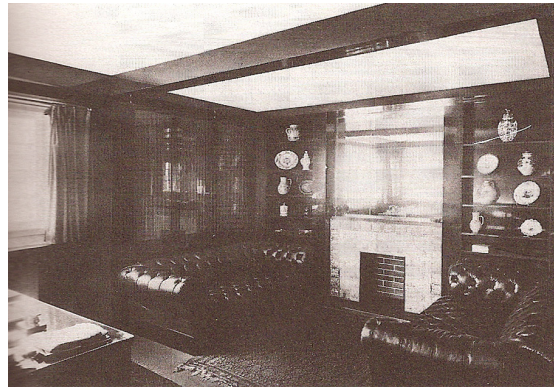
In Rachel Whiteread's *House*, Doreen Massey defines social spaces as those 'less tangible spaces we construct out of social interaction', and she discusses these spaces relative to their material place – the kitchen, the living room, or the back wall.⁴³ Whiteread's work serves as a precedent, because it suggests a method for physically constructing a temporal phenomenon. Her casts intensify the threshold or edge.

⁴³ Doreen Massey, "Space-time and the Politics of Location," in *House*, ed. Rachel Whiteread (London: Phaidon Press Ltd., 1995), 36.



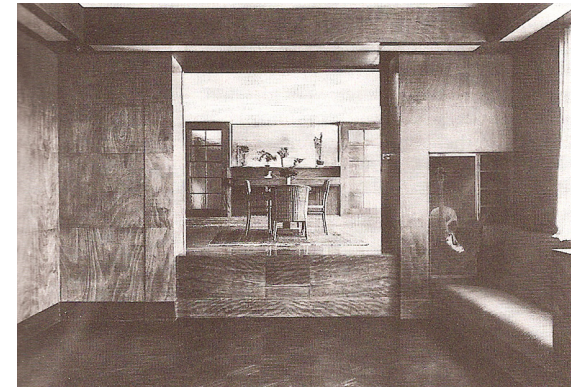
Moller House, Vienna, 1928
Adolf Loos
Living Room

'The raised alcove of the Moller house and the Zimmer der Dame of the Müller house, on the other hand, not only overlook the social spaces but are exactly positioned at the end of the sequence, on the threshold of private, the secret, the upper rooms.'⁴⁴



Muller House, Prague, 1930
Adolf Loos
Library

'In [the libraries], the leather sofas, the desks, the chimney, the mirrors, represent a "public space" within the house – the office and the club invading the interior. But it is an invasion which is confined to an enclosed room – a space which belongs to the sequence of social spaces within the house, yet does not engage with them.'⁴⁵



Moller House, Vienna, 1928
Adolf Loos
View from Music Room into Dining Room

'In the center of the threshold are steps that can be let down. [...] The strategy of physical separation and visual connection, of 'framing', is repeated in many other Loos interiors.'⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Beatriz Colomina, "The Split Wall: Domestic Voyeurism" in *Sexuality and Space*, ed. Beatriz Colomina (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992), 77.

⁴⁵ Ibid 81.

⁴⁶ Ibid 87.

Adolf Loos' treatment of thresholds in his architecture also serves as a reference for these studies. Beatriz Colomina, in commenting on Loos' theories establishes that these divisions are not only boundaries, but have innumerable points of transition and merging:

'The suggestion that the exterior is merely a mask which clads some preexisting interior is misleading, for the interior and exterior are constructed simultaneously. [...] The interior is not simply the space which is enclosed by facades. A multiplicity of boundaries is established, and the tension between inside and outside resides in the walls that divide them [...]. To address the interior is to address the splitting of the wall.'⁴⁷

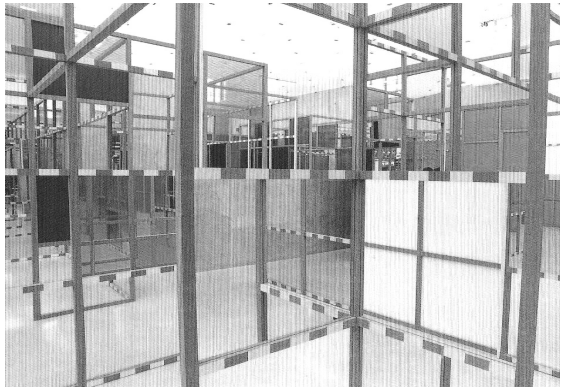
As Colomina suggests, the transition between interior and exterior space is richer than the thickness of the building's skin. In *Minimal Architecture*, Philip Ursprung's concept of 'trans-minimal architecture' addresses this interior/exterior transition. He describes the disjunction between 'the expansion of the art object into its surrounding space achieved by Minimal Art' and architecture's inability 'to work inwards, towards the interior'.⁴⁸ He is specifically interested in these complex boundary conditions:

'Therefore the operative logic of minimalist art (the reflection of external space on the surface of the object) must, in an architecture in sympathy with such art, transform into a transition of the architectural boundary between external and internal space. In order to establish this transitional quality it is highly likely that architecture must depart from the formal canon it extracted from Minimal Art and instead search for architectural processes suited to achieving this aim.'⁴⁹

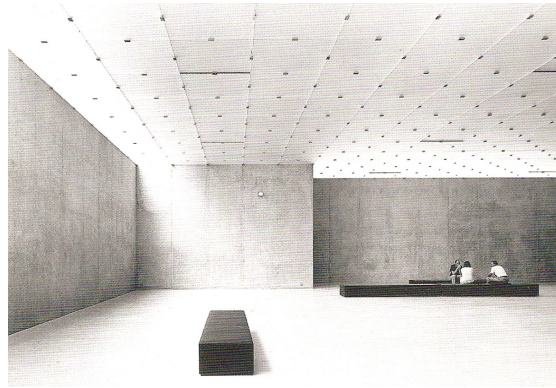
⁴⁷ Ibid 94.

⁴⁸ Philip Ursprung et al., *Minimal Architecture* (New York: Prestel Verlag, 2003), 25.

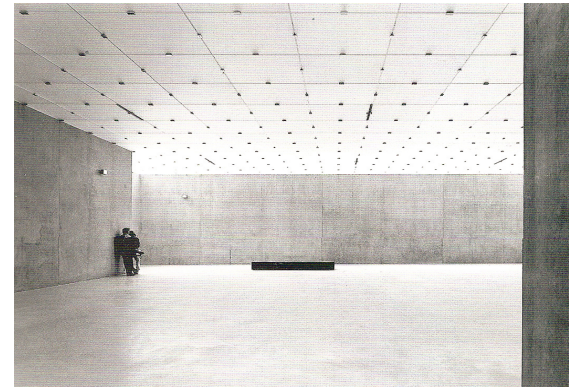
⁴⁹ Ibid.



Organized Colors: Vertical Punctuations, 2001
Daniel Buren⁵⁰



Kunsthau Bregenz, 1997
Peter Zumthor⁵¹



Kunsthau Bregenz, 1997
Peter Zumthor⁵²

⁵⁰ Guy Lelong, *Daniel Buren*, trans. David Radzinowicz (Paris: Flammarion, 2002), 175.

⁵¹ *Peter Zumthor: Kunsthau Bregenz* (New York: Distributed Art Publishers, 1999), 86.

⁵² *Ibid.*

Daniel Buren's installation, *Organized Colors: Vertical Punctuations*, in Peter Zumthor's Kunsthhaus, Bregenz, reconstitutes the layered assembly of the building's enclosure to the interior; Zumthor has distributed the light from the facade across each floor plate, and Buren builds a grid of translucent colored glass panels to extend the light from the ceiling to the ground on each floor.

These examples of layered boundaries direct a way of making the material and tectonic transitions between individual and collective space. In his book *Court and Garden*, Michael Dennis discusses the transition between public and private spaces in the 17th century Baroque hôtel type. He describes mezzanines, or *entresols*⁵³, as spaces that optimally negotiated between individual and collective use, introducing a space that was neither public nor private.

All of these precedents describe an architectural theme of visual connection coupled with physical separation. In the conceptual models and drawings that follow, this specific theme as well as the general theme of threshold are pushed to generate a scheme for the building. In both the process models and the final design, these themes drive the placement of units, the circulation in the building, and the relationship of storage to living space.

Each of the process models in this section began with the idea that the building would have two sides. The material dictated the two original systems: the striated section of the wood vs. the sinuous path of its grain in plan. The nature of each side and the manner in which the two collide was investigated in the first three models, which remain largely abstract. The two schematic models clarify these ideas as a proposal for integrating short-term (1 week) and long-term (1-3 years) living units.

⁵³ Michael Dennis, *Court and Garden: From the French Hôtel to the City of Modern Architecture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1986).



Process Model
Casting Resin, Wood



Process Model

Casting Resin, Wood

The wood was ripped parallel to the grain, and stacked. Some layers were shaped according to the undulations in the grain. The pieces were then placed and cast in resin.

From one side to the other, the faces transition from striated and stacked to a surface with articulated protrusions (built into the form work for the cast).



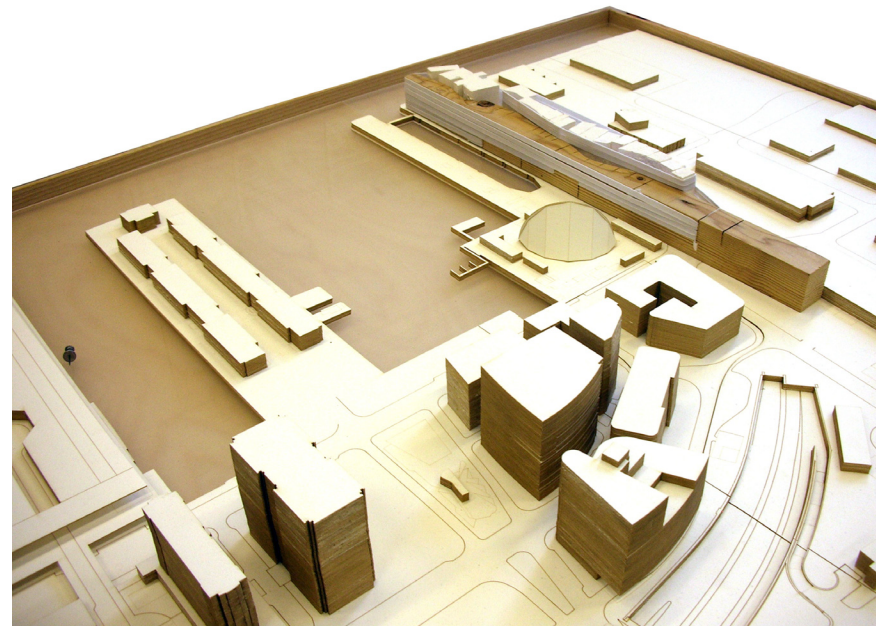
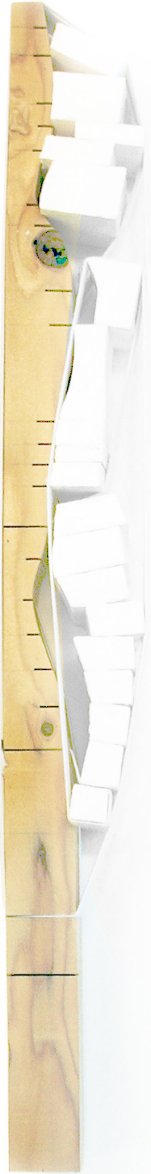
Process Model
Elastic, Wood



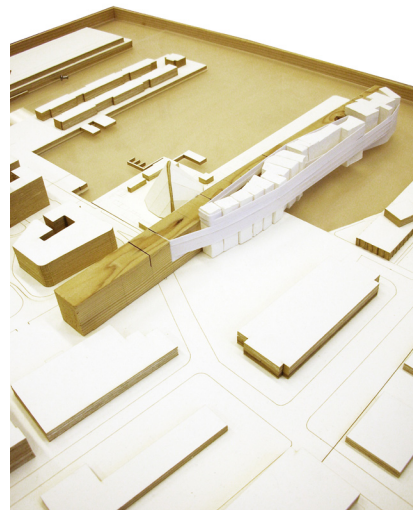
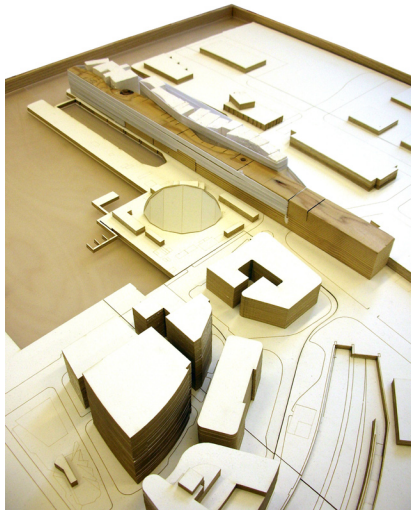
Process Model

Elastic, Wood

Elastic was anchored and wrapped around the wood; it intensifies the initial placement and shapes (cut along grain undulation) of the wood pieces in plan and the striations of the grain in elevation.



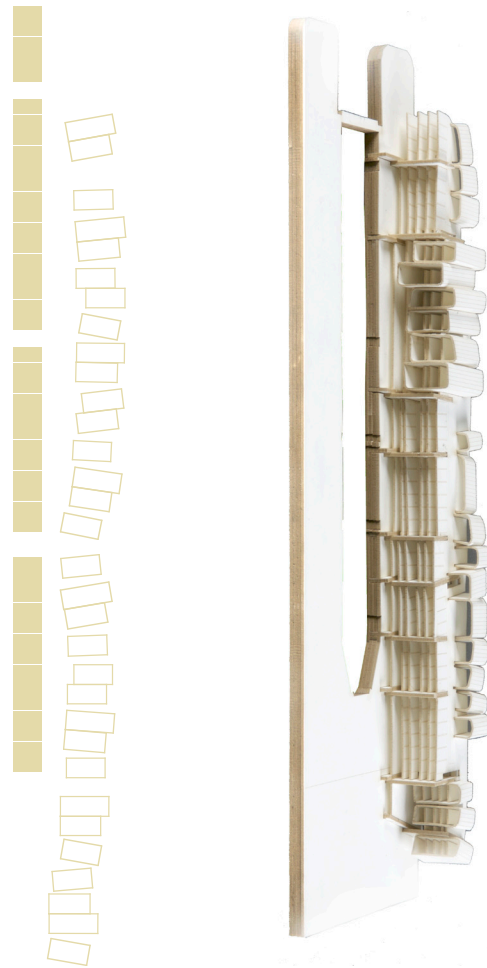
Process Model
Elastic, Wood, Foam



Process Model
Elastic, Wood, Foam

The elastic assumes a functional role in collecting and holding the foam pieces to the block of wood. The model was placed in the site model, and suggests that the building might promote a larger urban agenda.

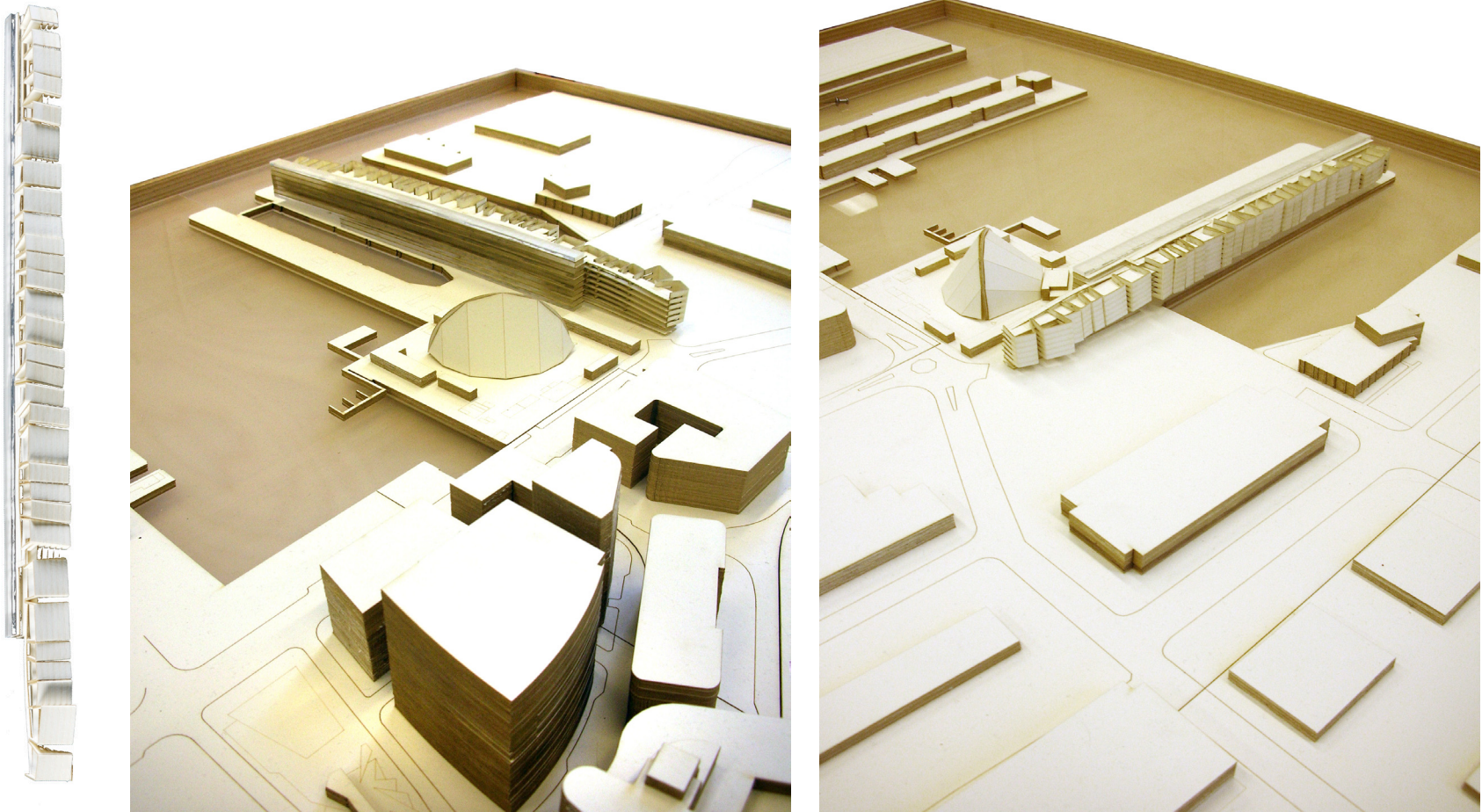
This model was the most generative for moving towards the schematic stage. The diagram that emerged was a homogenous 'public' (facing downtown) hotel side of the building that supported the vertically-articulated 'private' apartment side.



Schematic Model

Scale: 1:1000, Museum Board

This model represents the first attempt to resolve the abstract ideas from the previous models into a scheme. It was a test of whether the long-term units could move from side-to-side along the length of the building. This idea was also investigated in plan, but the eventual conclusion was that the initial diagram (shown at far left) lost its clarity.



Schematic Model

Scale: 1:1000, Plexiglas, Museum Board

The two sides of the building remain disparate yet are tied to the same system. The short-term units are homogenous and stacked. They face the Financial District, and that they are read as solid and permanent is significant formally, structurally, and programmatically. The long-term units are vertically articulated and cantilever over the water.

circulation [proposal]

The final design contains 230 short-term units and 110 long-term units. The circulation space is designed to keep the unit types physically separate, while allowing for their adjacency to be visually perceived. This decision stems from earlier studies about threshold; furthermore, it is based on the assumption that residents want to maintain some claim to the space immediately surrounding their units and that hotel guests want to maintain some level of anonymity.

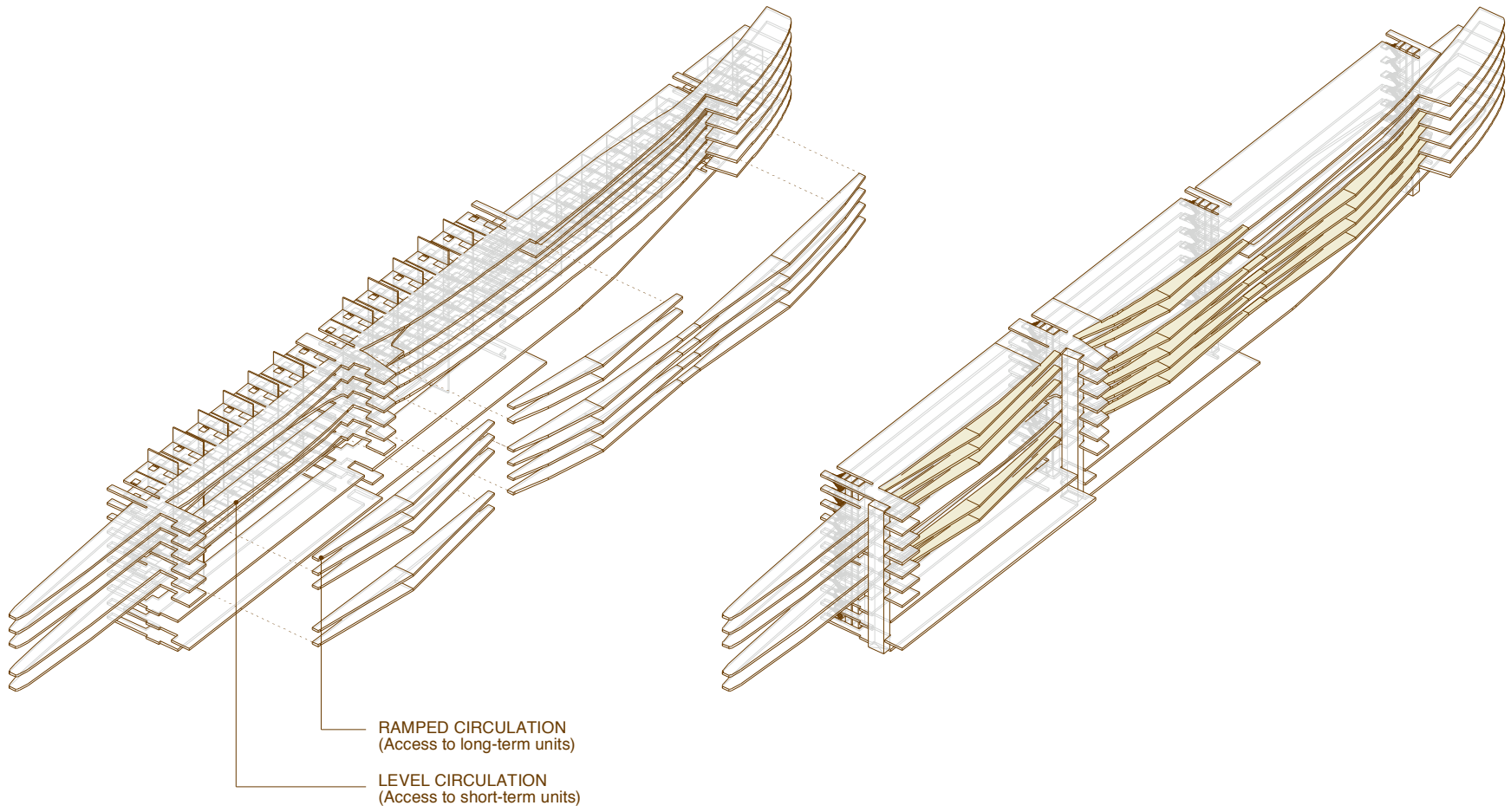
In this way, the proposition for housing itinerant lifestyle uses circulation as a vehicle that creates a tenuous and fluctuating relationship between the short-term hotel guest and the long-term resident. Thus far, the project has gone to great lengths to distinguish the two sides, but the circulation space negotiates their connection. Ultimately, both the hypothetical hotel guest and the transient resident are one in the same: Bobos.

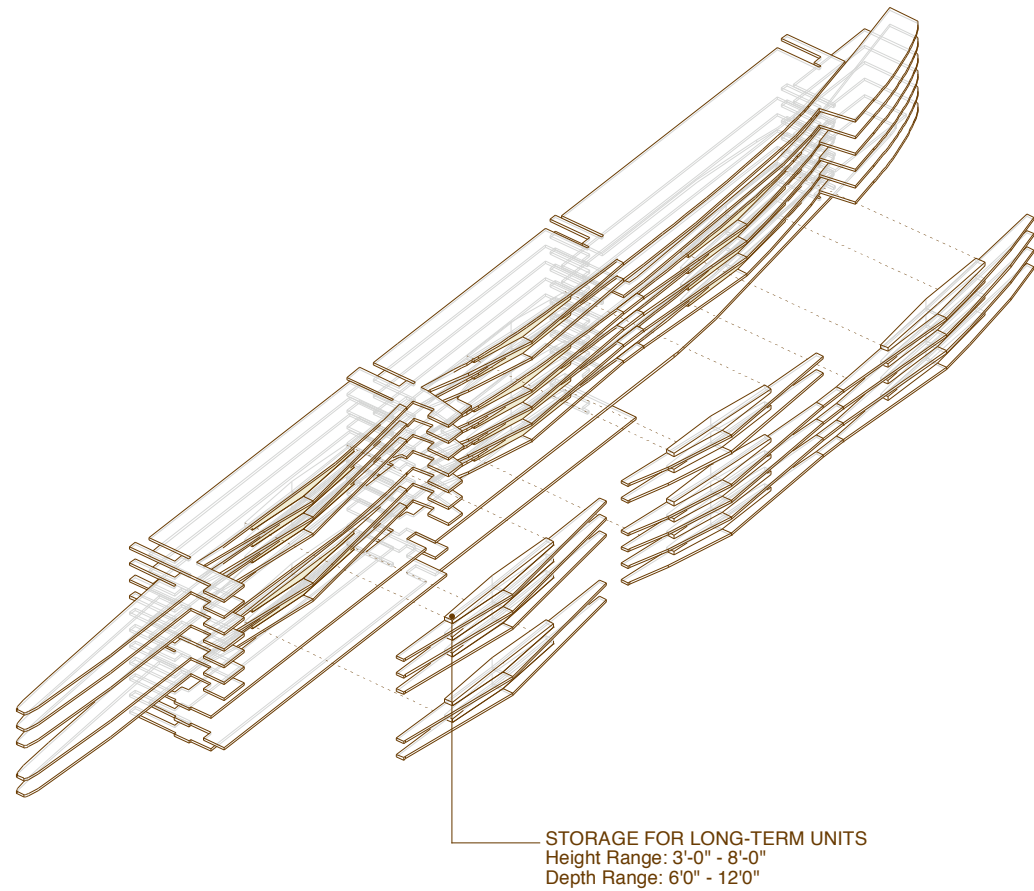
The beginning of the thesis devoted significant attention to describing the Bobo population. Although they form the core of wealth in many neighborhoods and their lifestyle can be construed as humorous and glamorous, this thesis argues a subtle point about them: that the Bobos need and want a sense of community to temporarily ground them. Perhaps a more cynical perspective is that they exist to see and be seen. Regardless, given the dearth of amenities in the neighborhood and the number of units in buildings like the Park Lane Seaport Residences, there is an opportunity for residential buildings in the Seaport to generate a [neighborhood] of their own. In other words, the economic success of this building ultimately depends on the vitality of its common spaces and circulation corridors.

Developers of both the Park Lane Seaport Residences and Orion - as well as many other residential buildings - have identified this population as their ideal clientele. Previously, the thesis pointed out that common spaces in these buildings are contained to their own floors and that the circulation is a double-loaded corridor*. The final design proposes an alternative that fluidly integrates common spaces and circulation with living units and their associated storage spaces.

The subsequent pages document the final design work. They illustrate how circulation operates in the building and how the initial ideas expand - conceptually and physically - in both plan and section to include storage and amenities.

* See page 35 for typological study of existing circulation models.

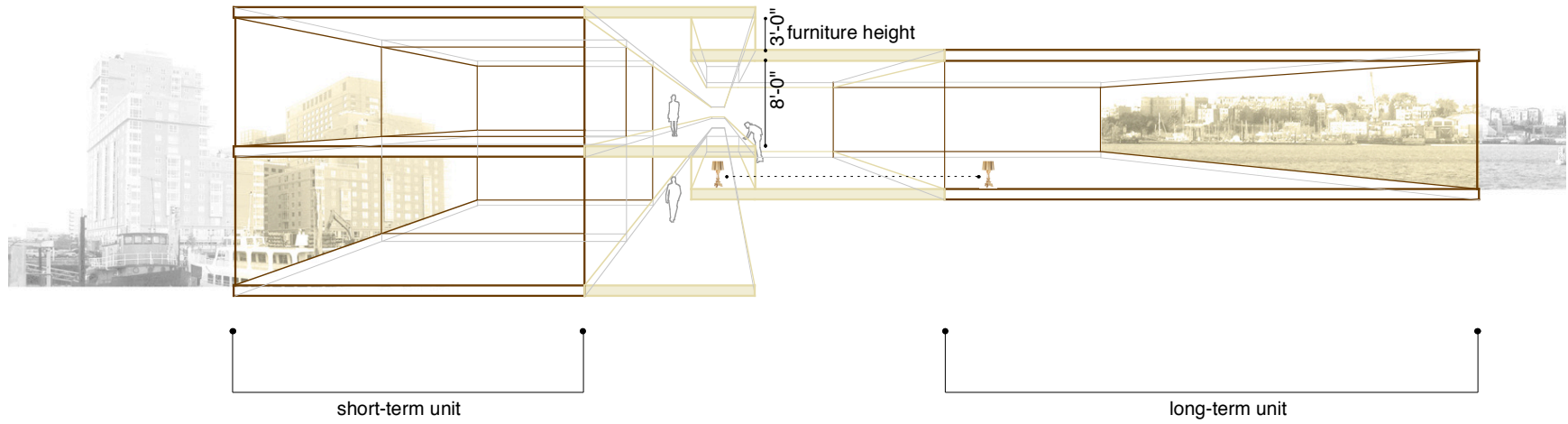


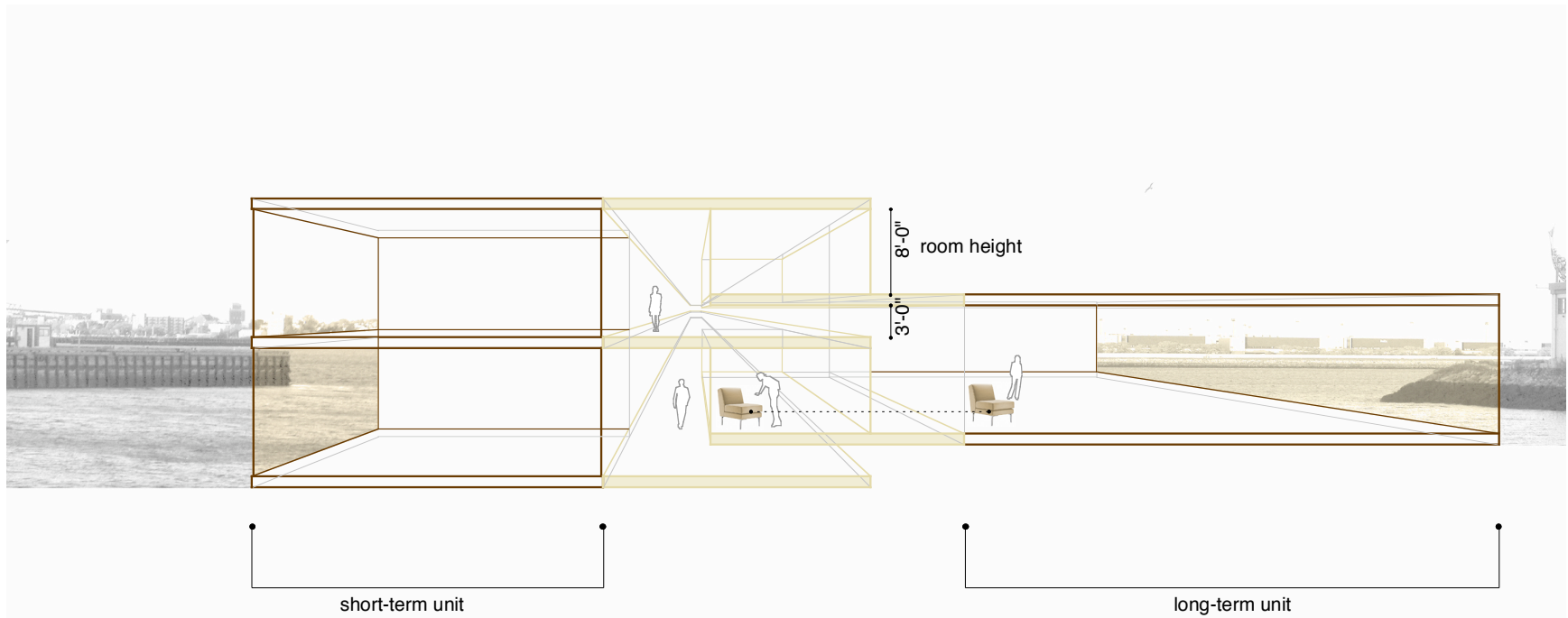


Circulation and Storage Diagrams

Axonometric Drawing

There are four points of vertical circulation that may be used to access all units in the building. At these points, the level (short-term) circulation converges with the ramped (long-term) circulation. At all other points between the vertical circulation cores, the circulation corridors for the two types of units are offset. The offset in height ranges from 0' to 8'.

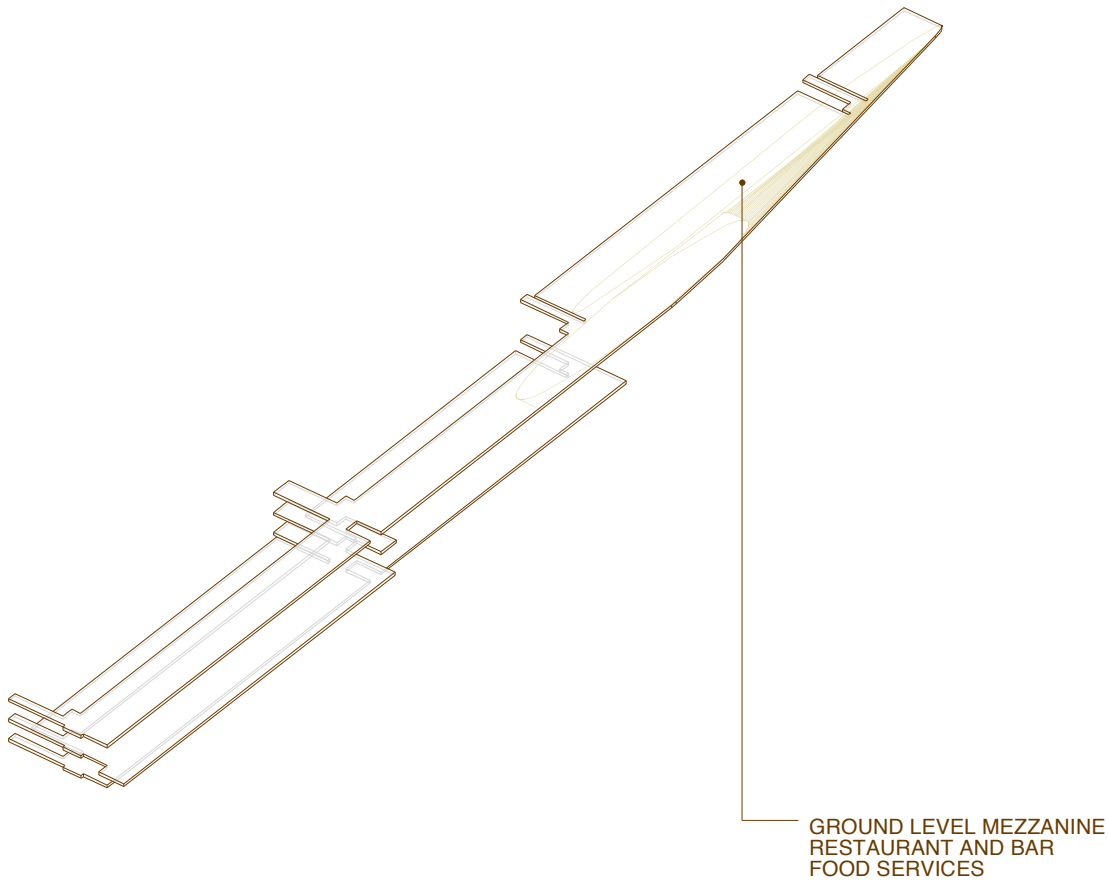




Circulation and Storage Diagrams Perspectival Sections

The split of the circulation space in section that separates the units also contains storage space for long-term units. The depth of storage space varies relative to its height. The height ranges from a furniture dimension of 3' to a room dimension of 8'. The depth ranges from 6' (where height is 3') to 12' (where height is 8'). These storage spaces serve as an infrastructural compo-

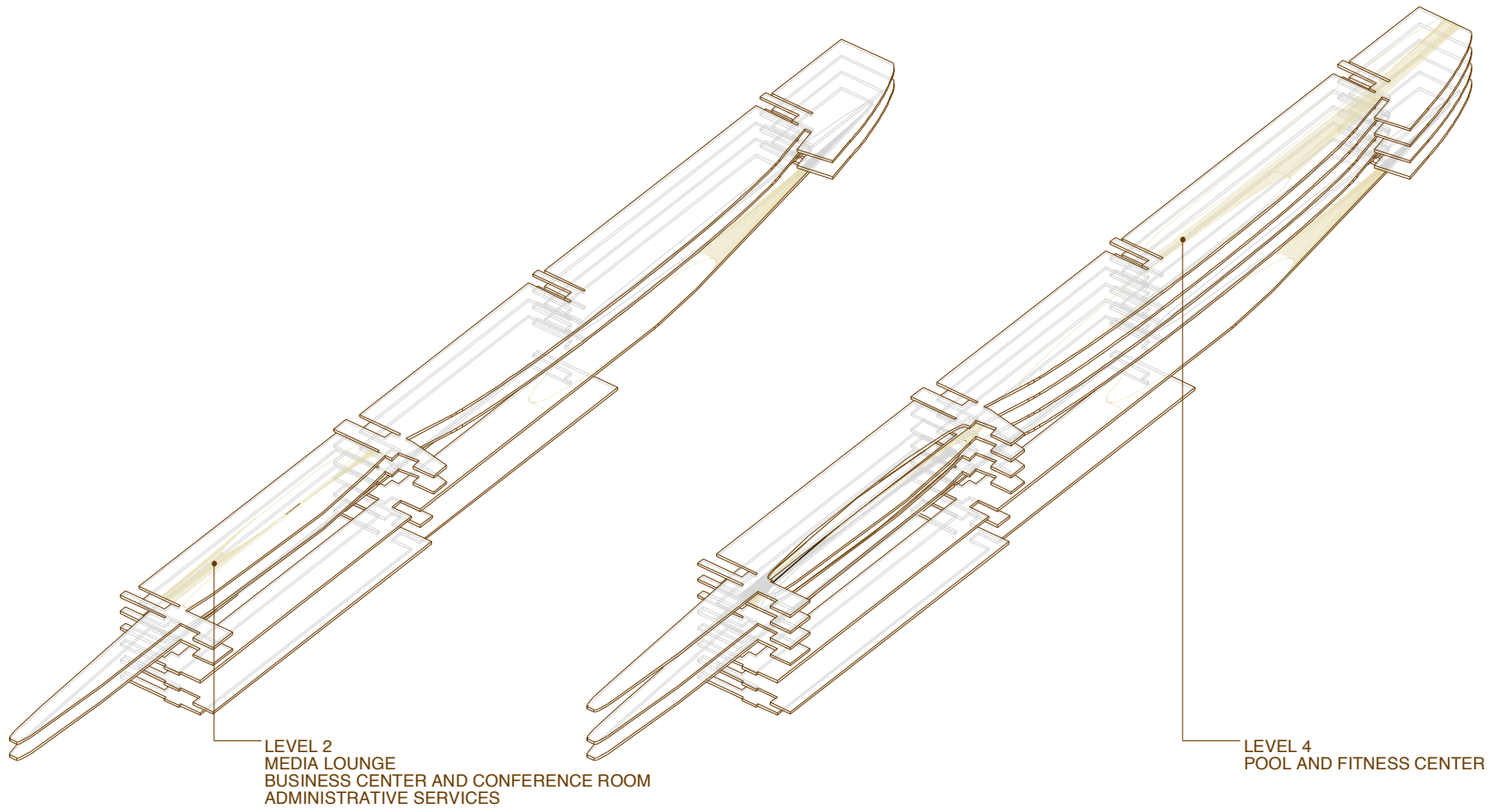
nent of the building. As shown in the diagrammatic perspectives, occupants on each side are kept physically separate because of the height difference of the circulation. At the same time, visual access is unobstructed, and it changes relative to the offset height and presence of storage space. The diagrams above show that change.



Locations of Common Spaces

Axonometric Drawings

The circulation core also widens in plan to accommodate common spaces. The building provides all of the amenities found in traditional hotels – pool and fitness center, business center, restaurant and bar. While the ballroom and restaurant remain on the ground floor, the other amenities are distributed within the upper levels and bring light and views into the circulation space.



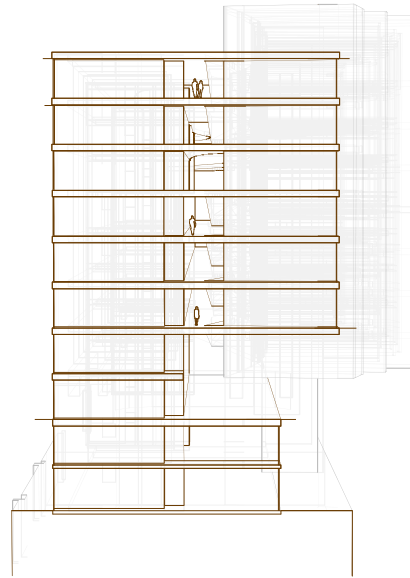
Amenity Floors Plans

Floors with major amenities (pool and fitness center, business center, restaurant and bar) are shown at the left. These amenities are coplanar with the hotel unit floors. Each of the larger common spaces has a smaller mezzanine associated with it. The residential library sits one floor above and overlooks the larger space of the business center. There is a similar relationship between

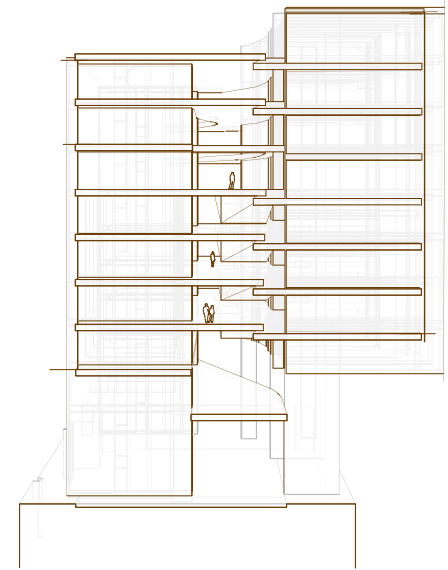
the pool and an upper level that contains a personal training alcove for long-term residents. (See the interior perspectives on pages 74-77.) In conjunction with the circulation core, these common spaces provide areas where people occupying the building at different lengths of time come together, while the privacy of the units is maintained.

I circulation [proposal] I

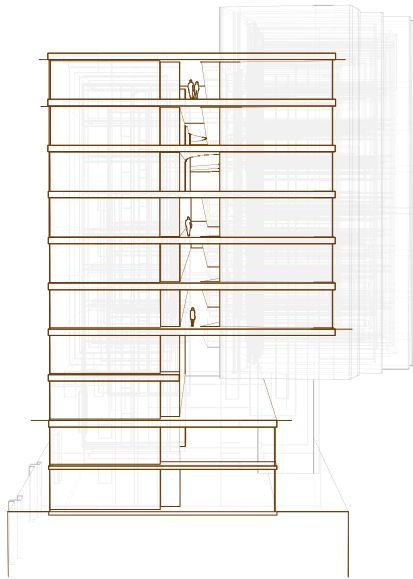




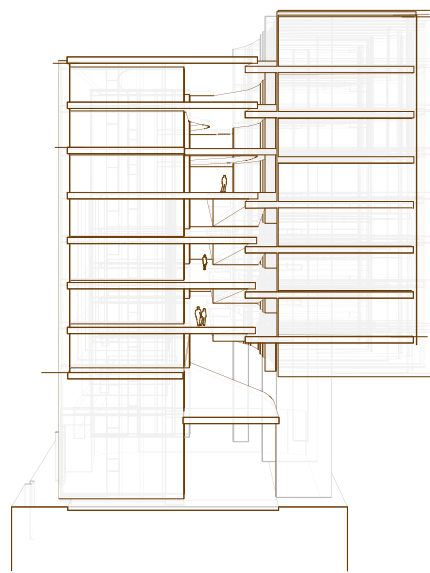
Section 01
Residential Townhouses



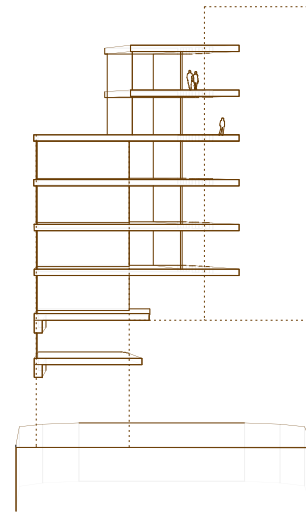
Section 02
Business Center



Section 03
Vertical Circulation



Section 04
Fitness Center



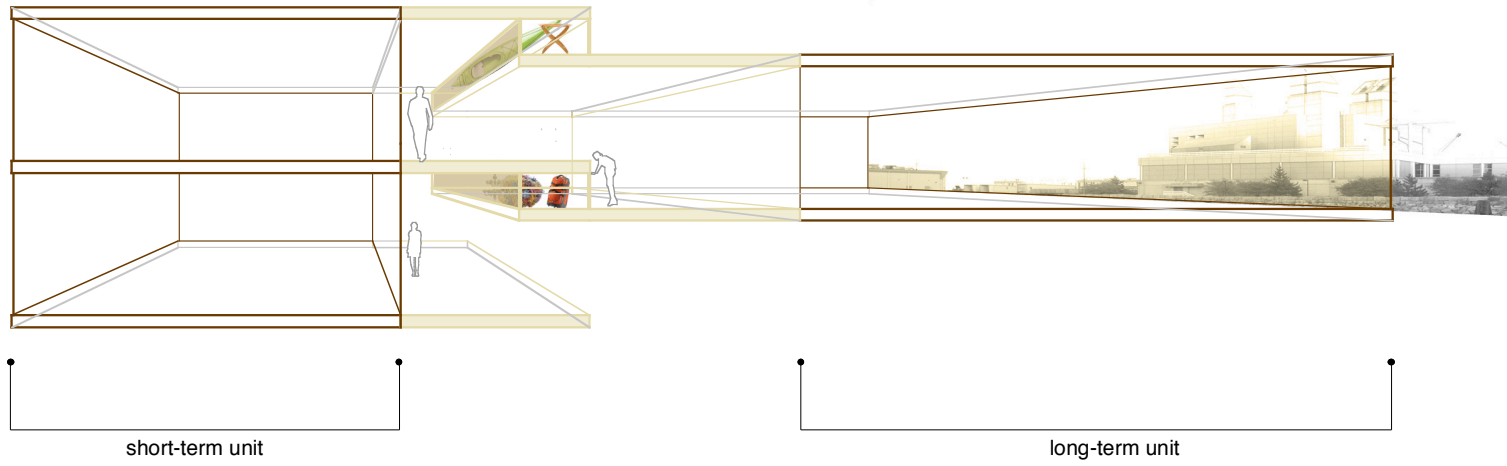
Section 05
Terrace Cafe

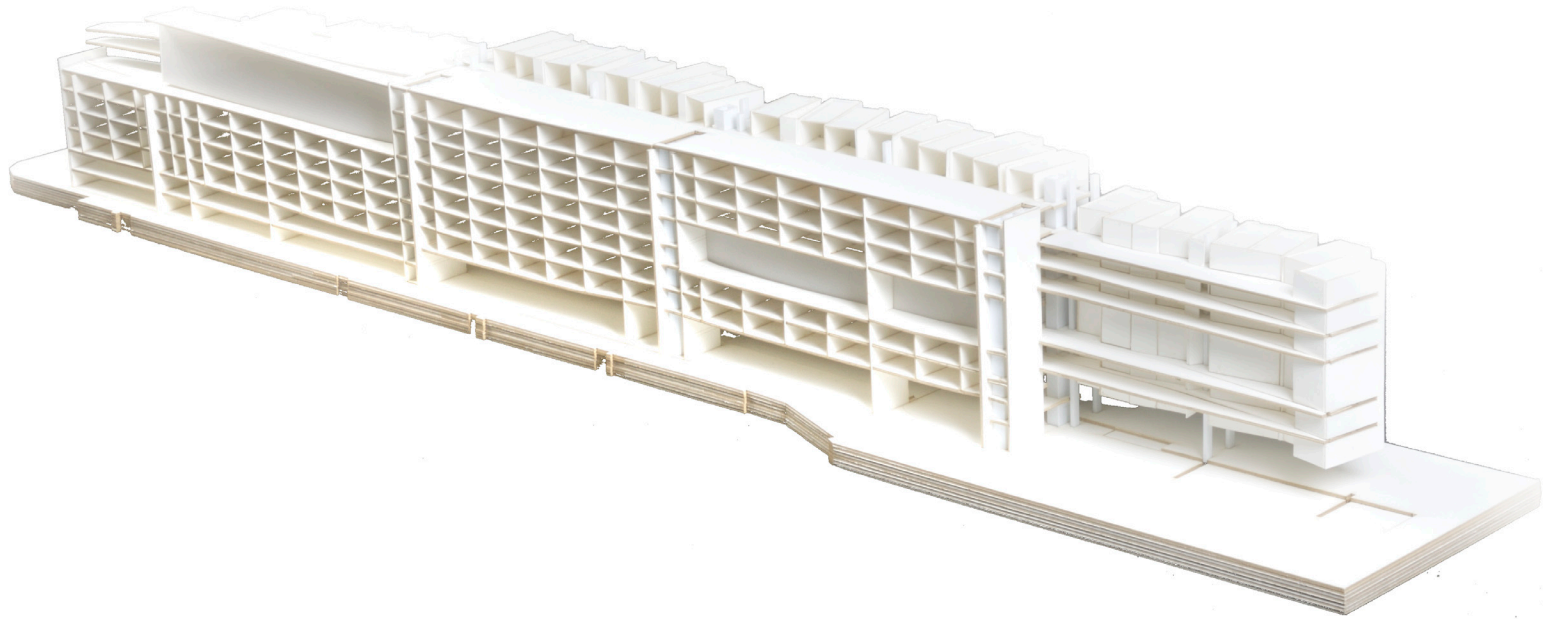
Progressive Sectional Changes Perspectival Sections

The building sections show the various conditions of the offset floors along the length of the building. Each section cuts through a common space that can be referenced in the plans on the previous page. As shown in Sections 02 and 04, the storage spaces for the long-term units dip to the eye level of short-term occupants.

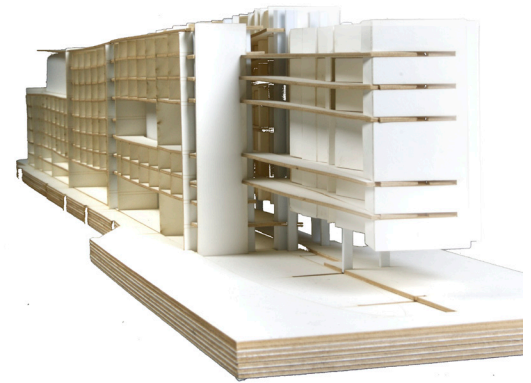
Circulation and Storage Diagram

The notion that storage is a portal into people's private lives and that, in some ways, people can be defined by their possessions stems from the existing paradigm of the Park Avenue storage cage culture. One of the primary intentions behind the design's configuration of storage and circulation is to exploit this idea - to force a direct relationship between people and the items they most want to hide. The diagram on the opposite page shows this idea.





Final Model
Scale: 1-0' = 1/32", Museum Board
[building]



Interior Perspectives

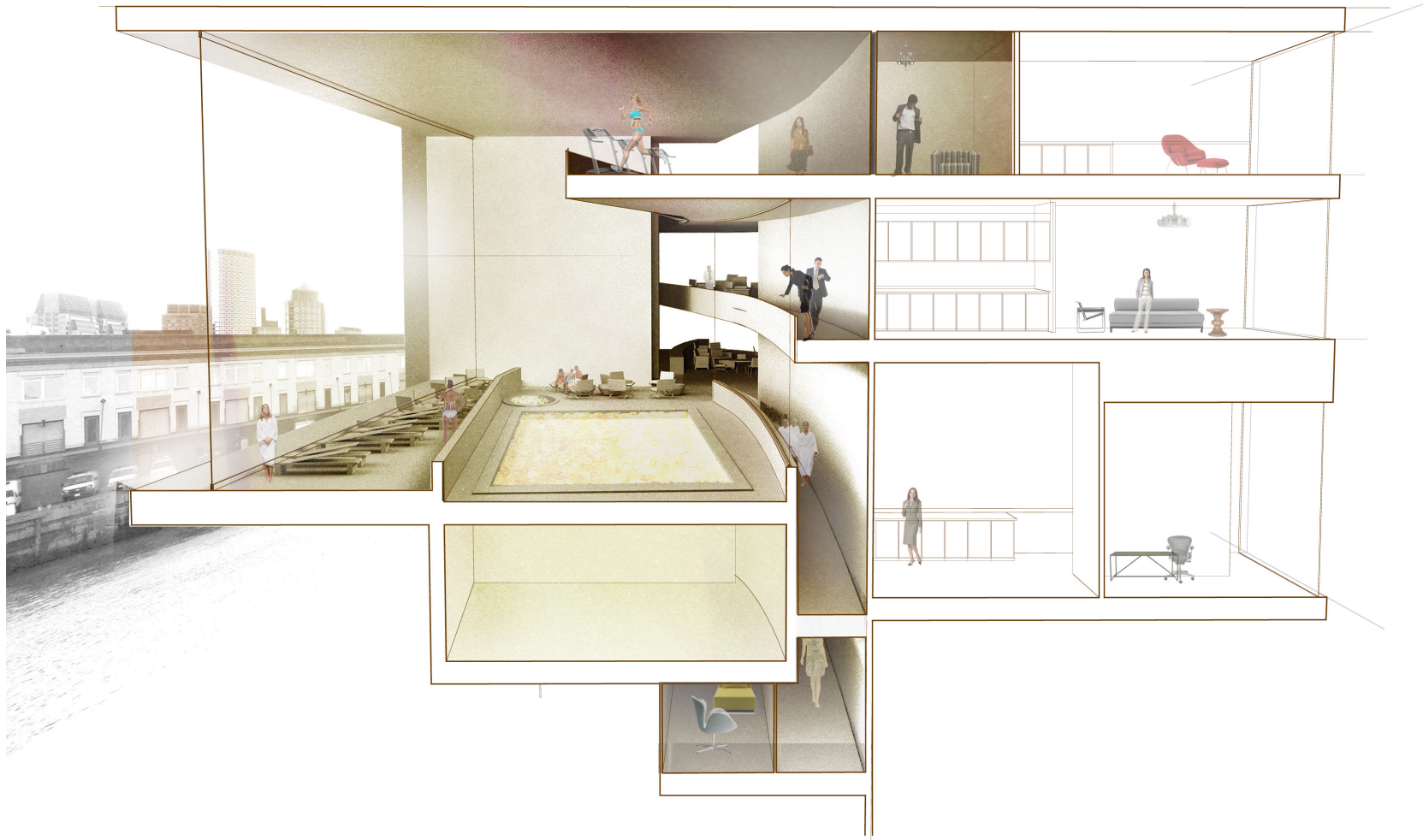
[room]

The perspective drawings show the relationship between common spaces, circulation, storage, and units. Ultimately, the circulation was intended to serve as a mechanism to integrate individual and collective space to the point that the amenities could become extensions of the unit. The perspectives on pages 76 and 77 suggest this idea, as the residential library overlooks the business

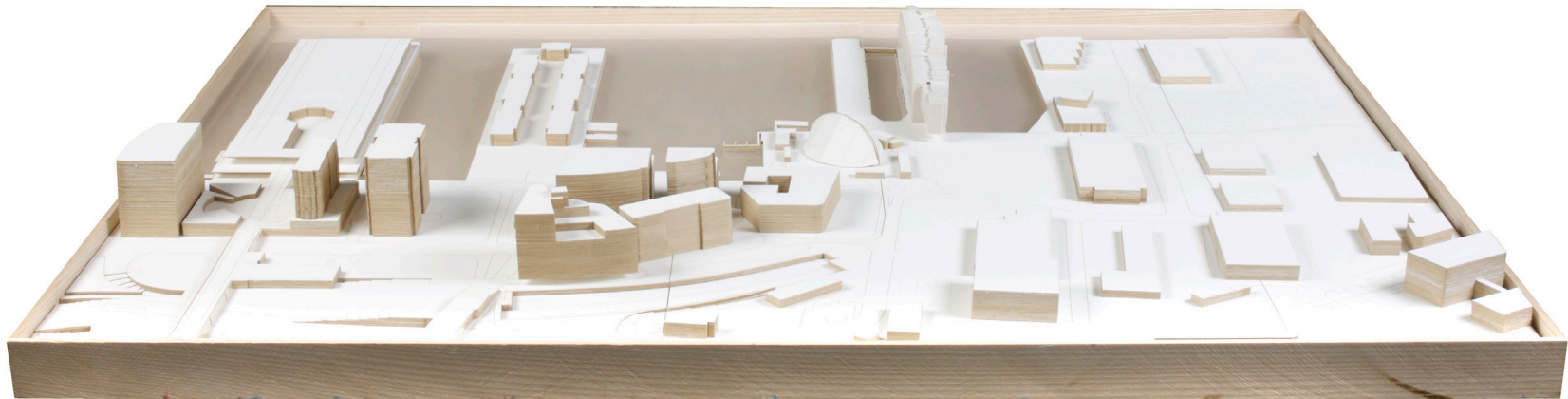
center, accesses the view to the Financial District, and encroaches into one of the four units it abuts. The intention was that this more direct relationship between unit and common space could drive the configuration of the units themselves. In short, the building allows the lifestyle it houses to co-exist with the city.



I circulation [proposal] I







Final Model
Scale: 1:1000, 3D Print
[city]



conclusions

The thesis begins with a question that is both architecturally relevant and representative of current societal living trends: how can architecture adapt to transient lifestyles? There are a number of conclusions that have emerged from the way this question has been resolved.

Urban transience is a product of contemporary culture, and the lifestyle of the Bobos is a portal into the mechanics of itinerant living. Lifestyle and architecture are irrevocably linked; aspects of the human condition can be tied to spaces people use. Developers have noticed and have cleverly capitalized upon the programmatic and cosmetic amenities that attract this lifestyle. To push this notion further, the thesis speculates that housing this lifestyle may demand a set of spatial relationships. In response, it has proposed an architectural model that is driven by circulation.

The typological study of hotel layouts illustrates the efficiency of the double-loaded corridor. Many buildings have resorted to this organization, including the Park Lane Seaport Residences and Orion Condominiums. The thesis design offers a variation of the double-loaded corridor that provides an alternative relationship between the two sides of living units. It simultaneously exploits its inherent efficiency by inserting common spaces in plan and packing storage within the section.

Architecture must address storage. It is no longer a mundane facet of living that should be ignored, because people - beyond just the Bobos - collect and keep material pieces of their lives. Storage has already inherited a space in product and furniture design, but the thesis embeds it in architecture. Storage is a spatial and infrastructural component of the building; as a further exploration, the storage infrastructure could have assumed a more robust structural integrity in the design.



There are several issues that remain unresolved. Defining an agency - and a subsequent use for the building - was one of the first tasks of the project. The building design presupposes the very specific population of the Bobos. Although they are not the only group who would benefit from this model, the thesis only argues for the building as a vehicle to house their lifestyle. The Bobos are an icon of new economic growth and thus are a useful tool to consider this architecture of urban transience.

The thesis emphasizes the significance of consumptive culture in architecture, but the building does not address issues of sustainable design. Had the infrastructure of storage provided structural (and perhaps material) efficiency in the building, it may have been an appropriate starting point for green design as well.

The idea of the offset circulation and embedded storage may be construed as impractical; if the model cannot be put to practical use, the storage spaces could have a rhetorical potential to indicate mobility within the building. In other words, people's movement could be monitored by the presence or absence of their possessions.

Despite these shortfalls, the project has presented a novel approach to a problem that has reared its head in contemporary society and, locally, in the Boston Seaport. The problem of urban transience is one that should be considered as city planners overlay a dense urban fabric onto an industrial port. From a more general perspective, the thesis has also produced a number of secondary questions about architecture's potential to change with the times.

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