Field Guide to the Convivial Middle

Intended for renters, owners, and prospective developers, the *Field Guide to the Convivial Middle* is a guide to help us identify, preserve, and reflect on the vulnerable and undervalued typology of low-rise walk-up apartment buildings existing in numerous neighborhoods throughout the city. Rather than seeing these commercial residential buildings as sub-grade housing ripe for razing and assembly into larger parcels, this proposal redefines this typology as a network of middle grounds—one that cultivates community, enables densification, and sponsors a richer diversity of housing within the city.

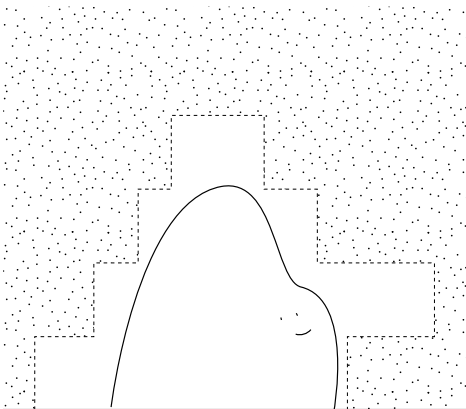Navigating through the limitations of existing buildings while highlighting their potential, Convivial Middle is centered around the disposition of both the renter and the overlooked architectural components. Taking species of spaces like corridors, balconies, and sheds and creating a series of middle spaces between public and private, permanent and impermanent, and specific and open, this proposal redefines spaces of rentalship to be rich and flexible environments made of the ordinary.

Proposed here is a prototype designed at the case study site in Toronto to establish and systemize strategies which privilege the renter's experience. It houses a variety of middle spaces ranging from flex spaces between units to generous corridors that act as the front porch, a commons in the sectional middle ground paring utility with amenity, and a porous ground level arcade creating an active urban form.

With a perfect balance of policy change, architecture of reciprocity, and mischief, we can use this retrofitting process as an opportunity to give autonomy of the built environment to renters, creating a new supply of housing using already existing buildings found throughout Toronto.

Species Guide

1. 778 Broadview Ave.
2. 812 & 814 Broadview Ave.
3. 818 Broadview Ave.
4. 846 & 850 Broadview Ave.
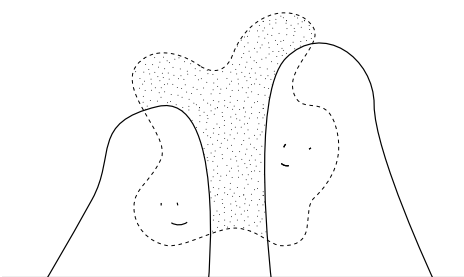5. 852 & 856 Broadview Ave.
6. 861 Broadview Ave.
7. 849 Broadview Ave.

Building Samples

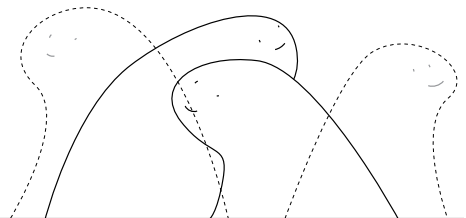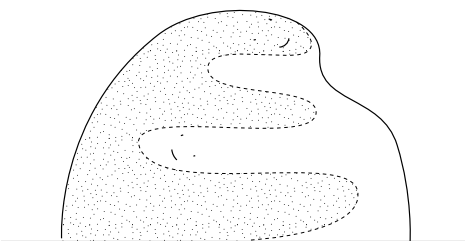|									
12 Vaughan Road	1384 Bathurst St.	1433 Bathurst St.	501 Mt. Pleasant Rd.	556 Mt. Pleasant Rd.	519 Oakwood Ave.	779 Pape Ave.	1383 Bayview Ave.	2045 Dufferin St.	
2045 Dufferin St.	2089 Dufferin St	2131 Dufferin St	778 Broadview Ave.	812 & 814 Broadview Ave.	849 Broadview Ave.	852 & 956 Broadview Ave.	861 Broadview Ave.	861 Broadview Ave.	

Qualitative Strategies

Cave, not nest[3]
Caves can be outfitted to meet a diversity of tenants' needs while nests are tailored and fixed. ie) wall types and coded poché, and flex spaces

Double the fun, minus the trouble
Couple utility with amenity, and code the space with dual function to benefit different players. ie) using commercial space to provide amenities and offset costs
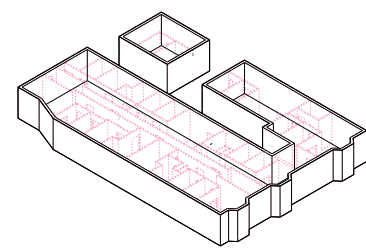
Better together & apart <3
Harness qualities of spaces that allow for both interaction and solitude. ie) various types of middles, like flex spaces and the commons.
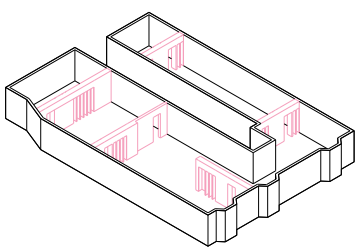
Membranes, not boundaries[4]
Membranes allow for heightened interaction through the porosity of the threshold building healthier cities. ie) arcade on ground level
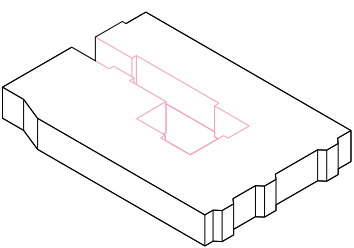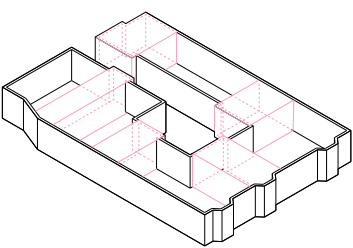
Tectonic Strategies

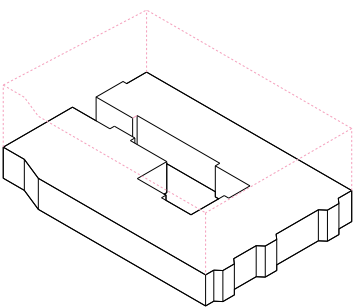**Clear the interior walls** to make more space without demolishing the building itself

Create new coded poché to assist tenants in subdividing and storing

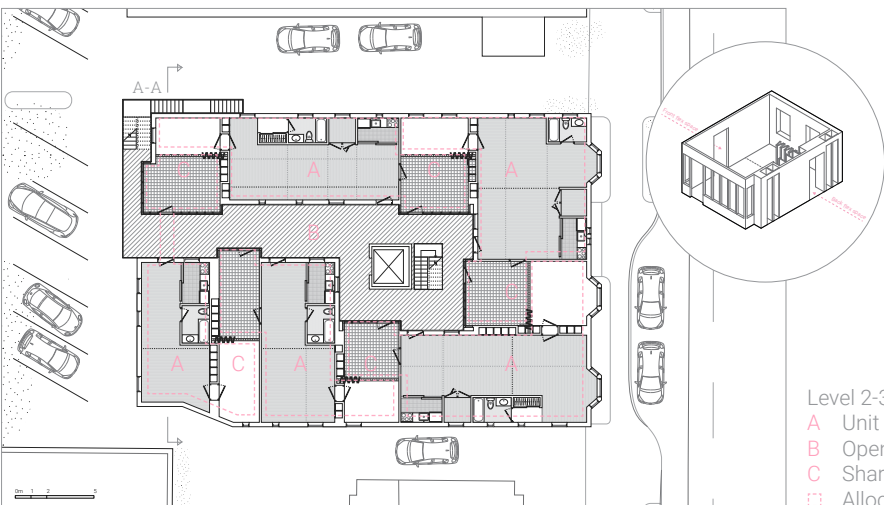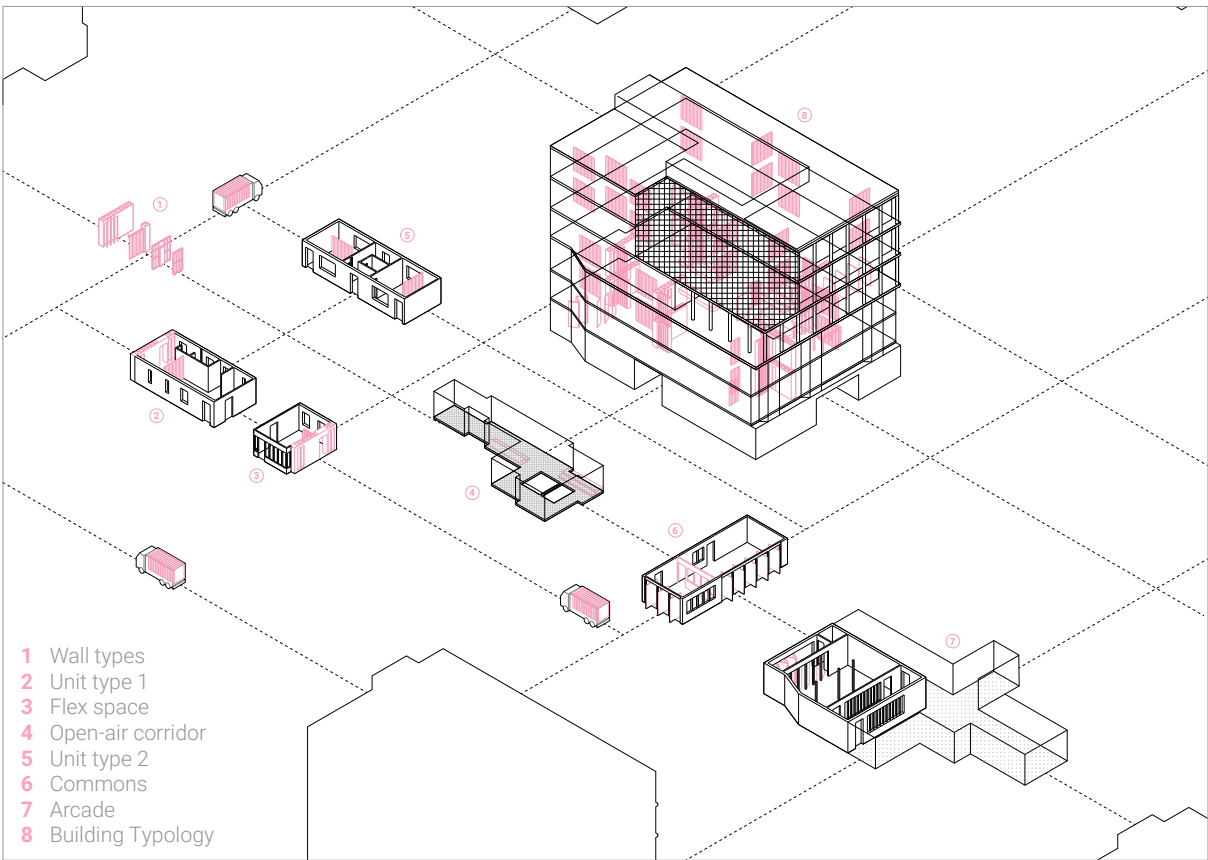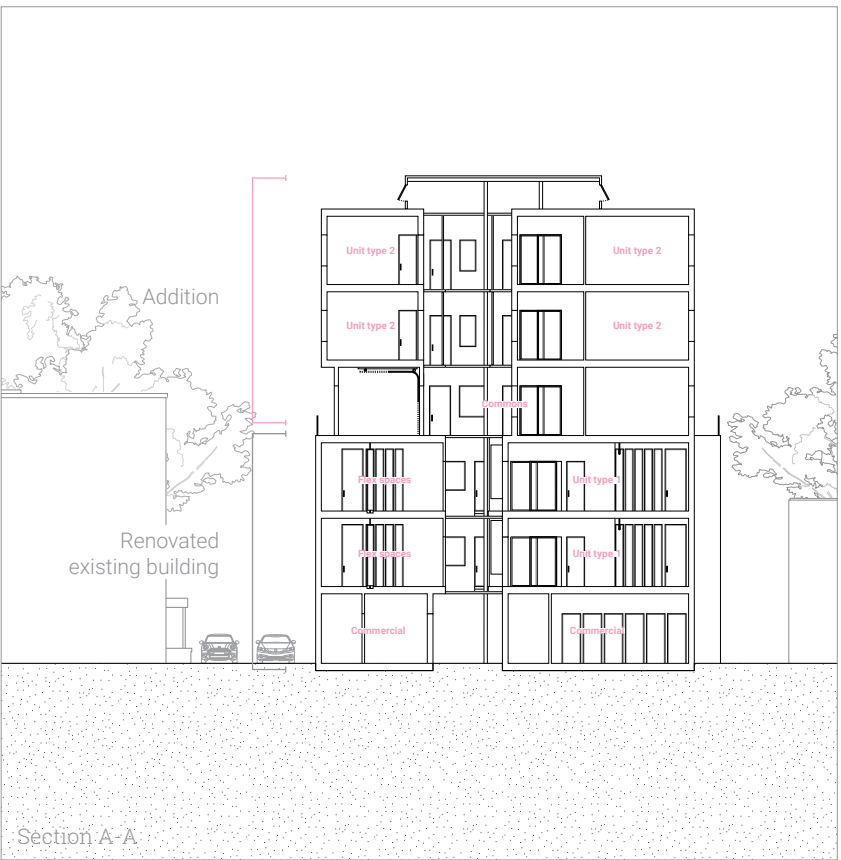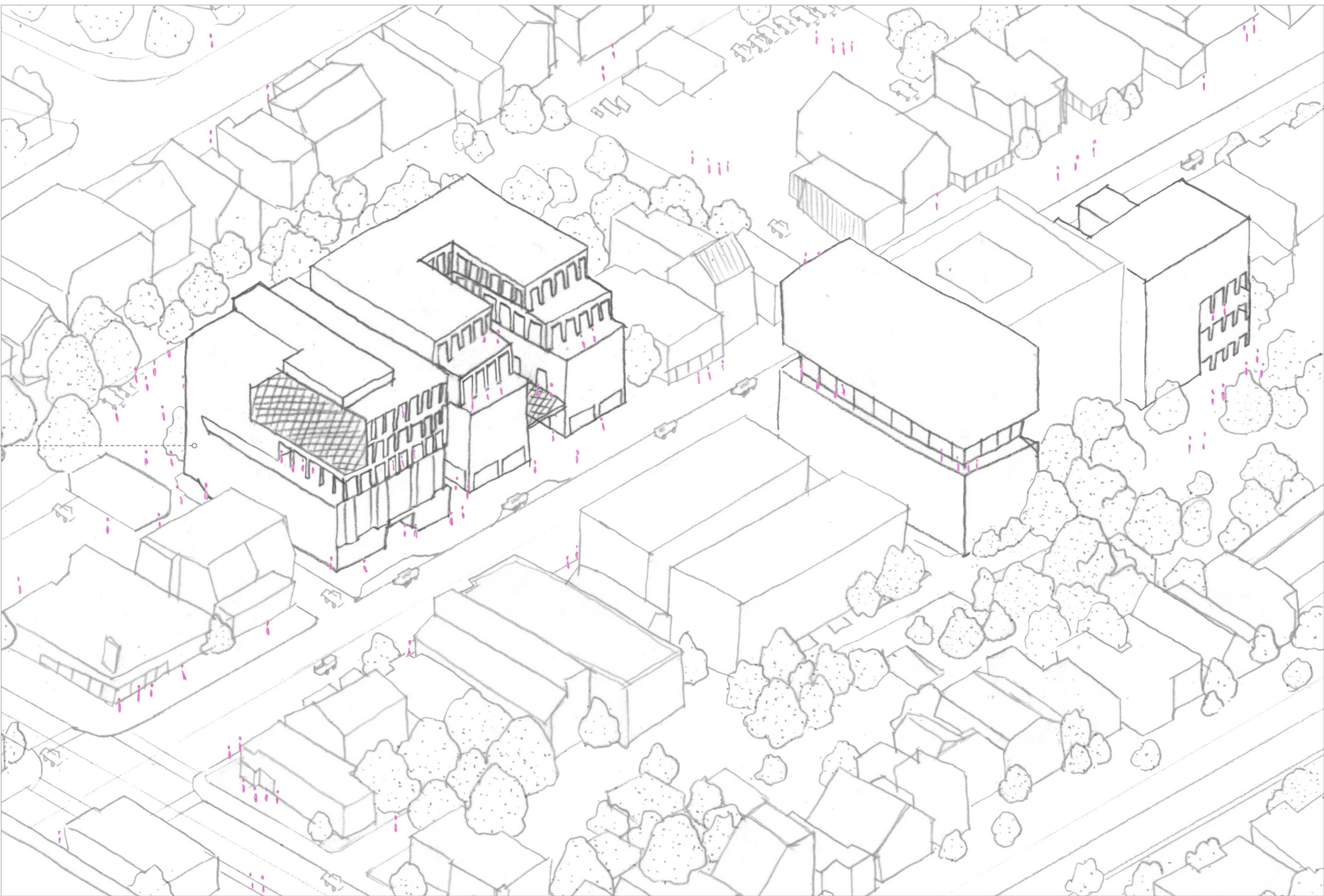**Reinvent through subtraction** to introduce critical elements like light

Introduce translucency between living units to encourage sharing, allowing for growth and de-growth of units

Densify through addition, not replacement, to meet housing demands without demolishing

[3] "Designboom Interview: Sou Fujimoto," *Designboom*, last modified October 30, 2008, https://www.designboom.com/ architecture/designboom-interview-sou-fujimoto/.
[4] Richard Sennett, "Resistance and Ambiguity." In *The Craftsman* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 227.

Addition

Renovated existing building

Section A-A

1. Wall types
2. Unit type 1
3. Flex space
4. Open-air corridor
5. Unit type 2
6. Commons
7. Arcade
8. Building Typology

Level 2-3
A. Unit type 1
B. Open-air corridor
C. Shared flex space
D. Allocation of unit