

2023 MERIT AWARD

Badr Echchihab

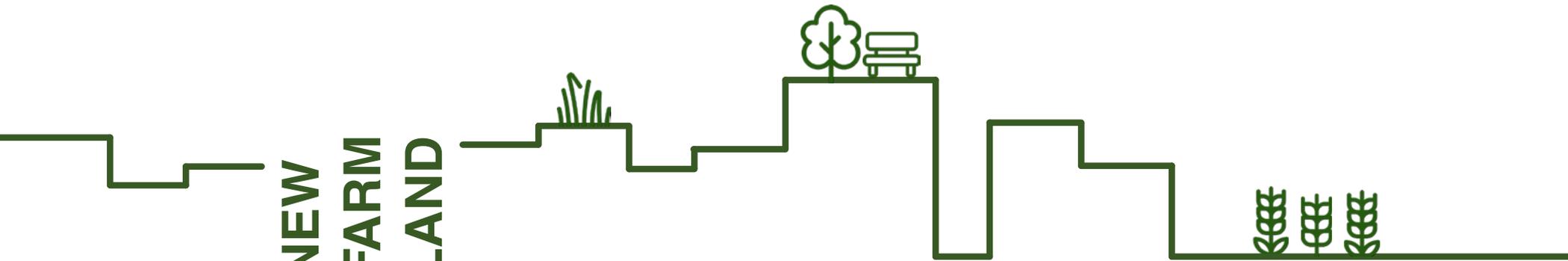
MCGILL UNIVERSITY

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LYCEUM

*A traveling fellowship in Architecture*

**NEW  
FARM  
LAND**



# Proposal

In the face of food insecurity in Baltimore's working class neighborhoods, this proposal responds to the long-ignored citizen demand for greater access to healthy food and quality living environments.

The site would take the form of a walkable neighborhood structured so that food production is integrated into the physical space and lives of residents: a true synthesis of the urban and the rural, and a conversion that has already borne fruit in other parts of the city with its twenty urban farms.

As organs of integration and urban renewal, farms and community gardens will be created on vacant lots. They will connect households with a healthy and inexpensive food supply to alleviate their financial stress.

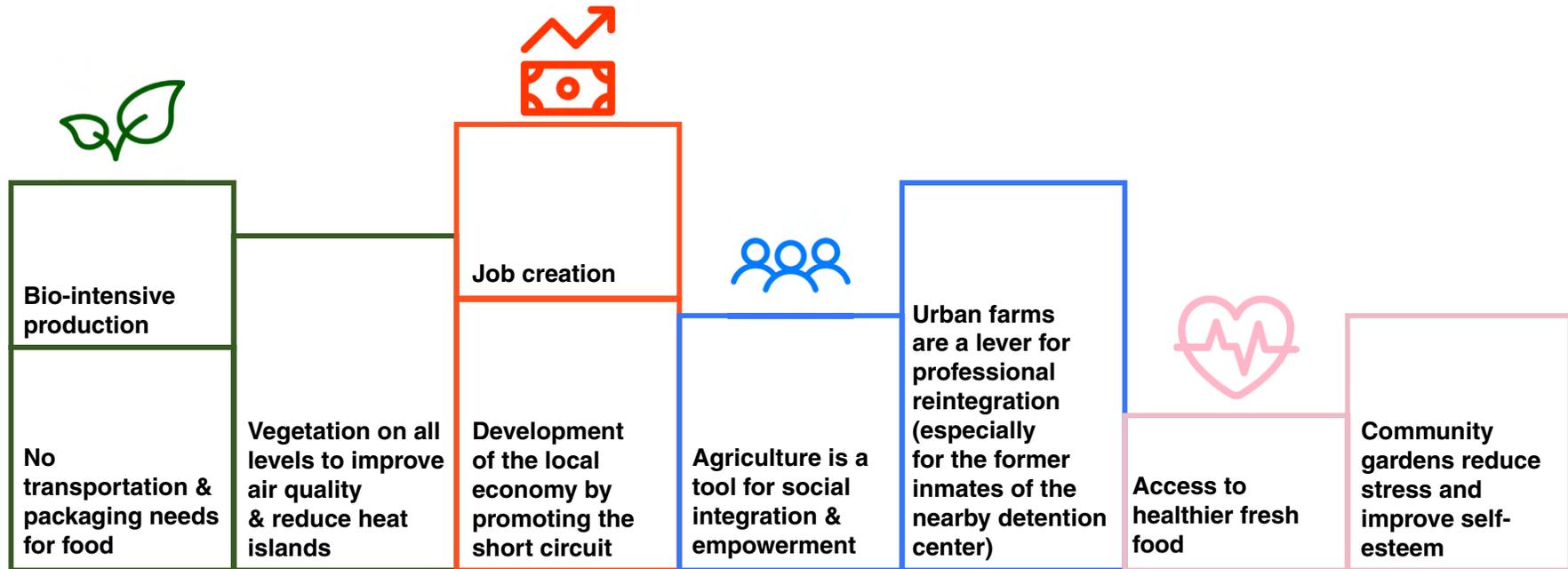
The proposal wishes to promote community life, a value lost since the decline of the mall. This implies creating a dense space that crosses functions, multiplies uses and overlays new practices in order to foster the dialogue between the inhabitants.

Thus, to make the most of the site's space, some of the rooftops in the renovated commercial and residential lane - carefully selected for their large area and flatness - are made accessible to provide generous amounts of public space for recreation and social interaction away from prying eyes.

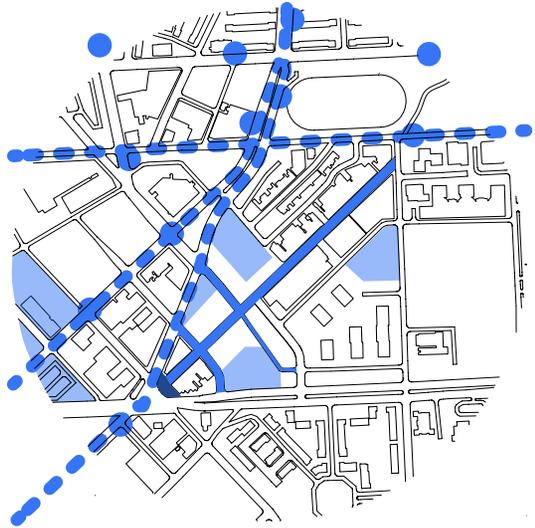
This promiscuity, coupled with the multitude of shared spaces and activities, fosters community solidarity, the emergence of a neighborhood spirit and an increased sense of civic responsibility.

These developments will best prepare the revival of the area, but they will not guarantee its success: it is also up to the residents to make it their own. Thus, a supportive local institutional environment is established, with cooperative offices and agricultural training facilities. The goal is to let Old town Mall build itself democratically instead of letting it evolve according to markets and political whims.

# Benefits



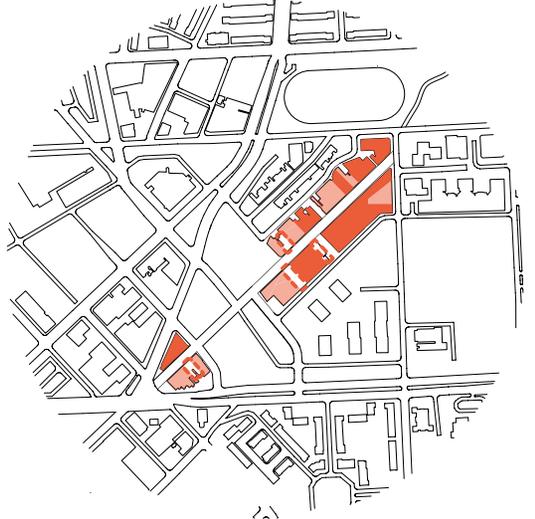
# Context



- Pedestrian
- Public parking lot
- Bus stop
- - - Bike path

The site is accessible by bus and bike, and is surrounded by large public parking lots, which is why the site will no longer contain any parking lots (with the exception of one)

## Circulation



- Occupied
- Abandoned
- Beyond reparation

Rather than building new and using more virgin material, the project will rehabilitate abandoned buildings. However, the most damaged buildings (with fallen roofs and unstable structures) will be demolished.

## Condition of buildings



- Supermarket / Grocery store
- Farmer market
- Food bank

## Food access

Residents of OTM and the surrounding area are among the 23% of Baltimoreans living in a food desert, i.e., without access to supermarkets offering healthy and affordable products. With no other choice, they often turn to the cheap options nearby, fast food, with a predictable effect on health indicators.

# Conceptualization

Above all, the project aims to foster good relations between its residents by sharing values of citizenship and respect for the environment, while ensuring Short food supply chains. The idea of a strong verticality between spaces was already envisaged, as evidenced by the staircases.

Renovated buildings



Farm fields



Community garden



# Plan

- Exterior Urban Farming
- Greenhouse
- Farmers' Market
- Used Rooftops (see Rooftop Typologies)
- Bicycle-Sharing Station

**P** Truck Parking Lot (commercial use only)

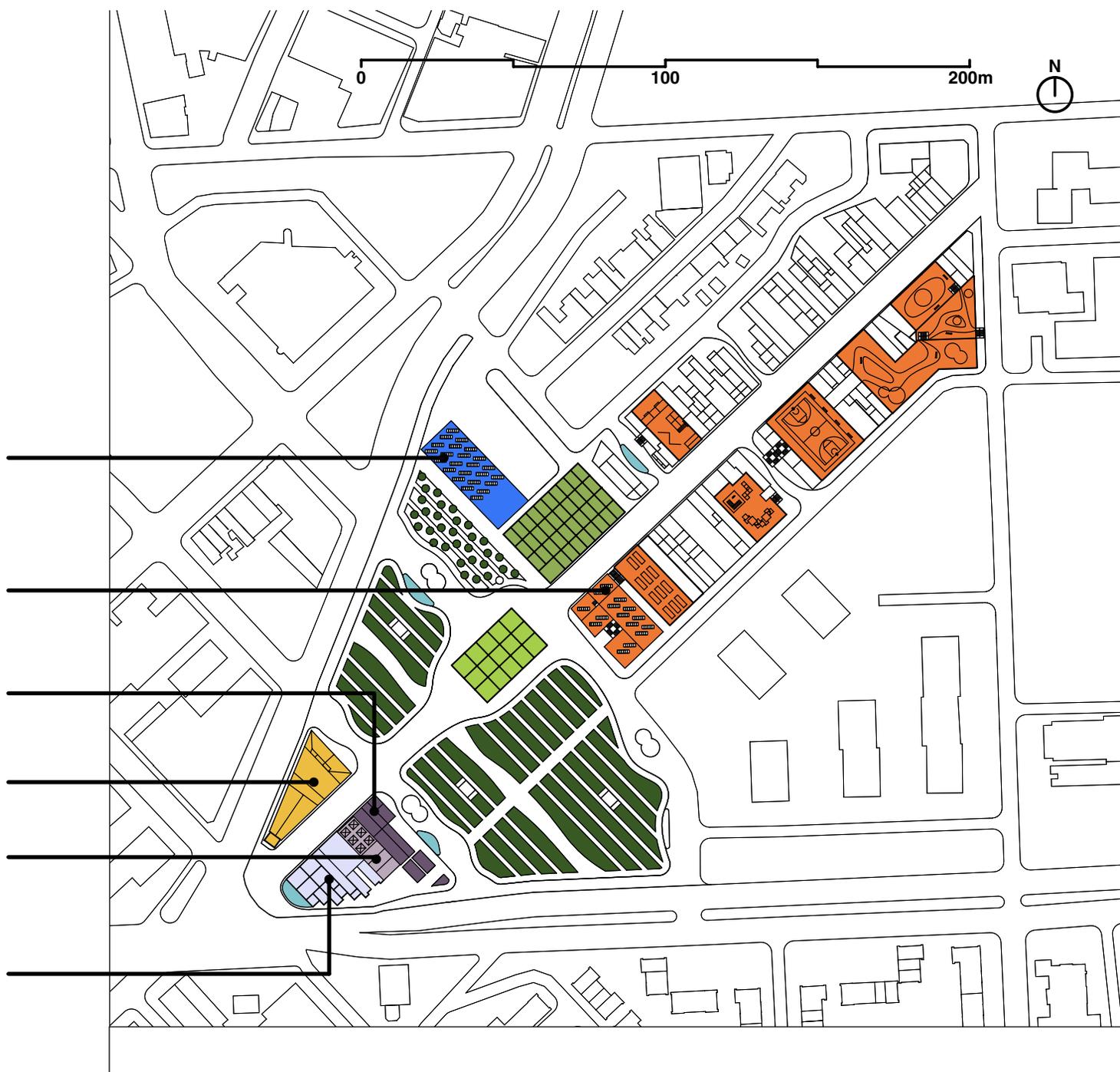
? Building whose function will be determined by the Neighborhood Association, according to their needs

 Agriculture Learning Center

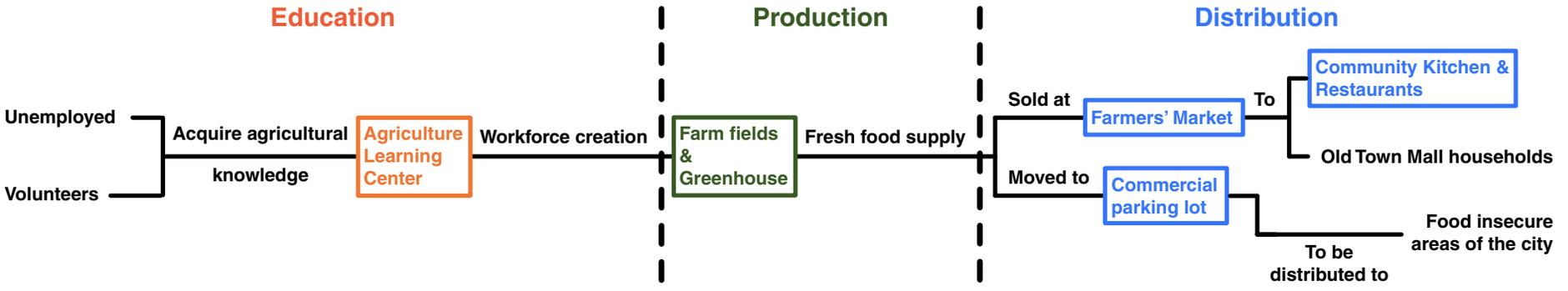
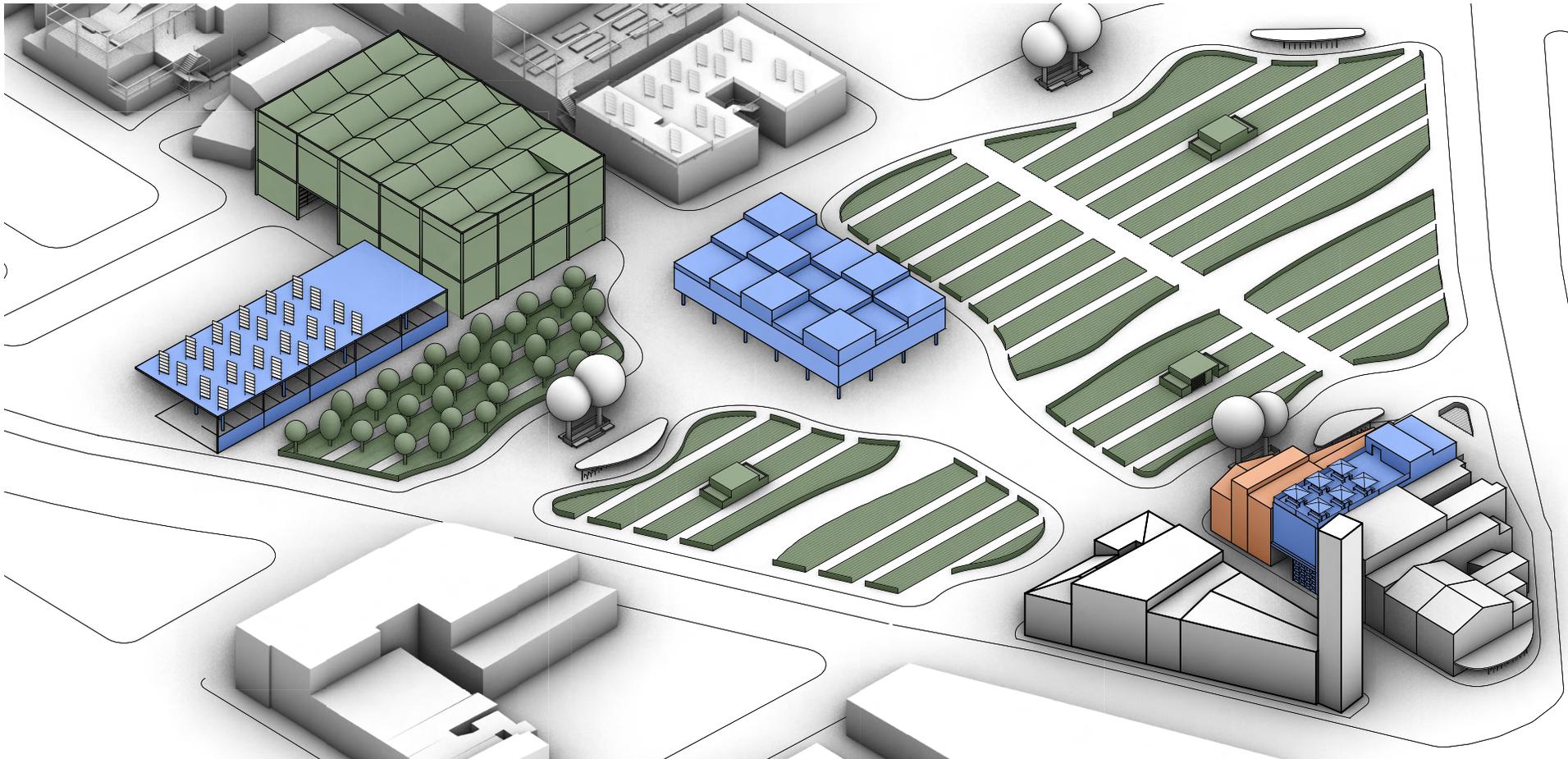
 Artistic Hub (exposition room & workshops)

 Community Kitchen & Restaurant

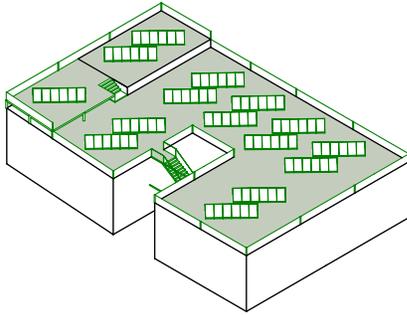
 Offices of the Farm Alliance of Baltimore & the Neighborhood Association



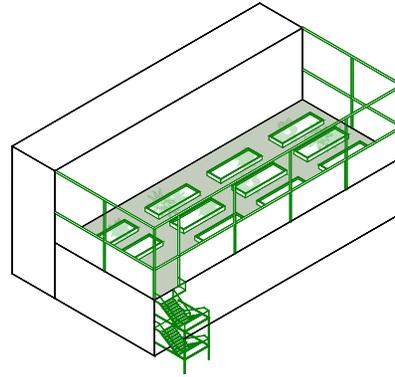
# Urban Farming



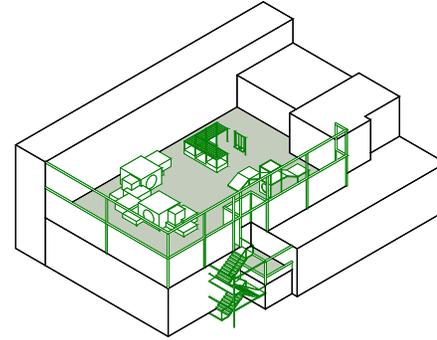
# Rooftop Typologies



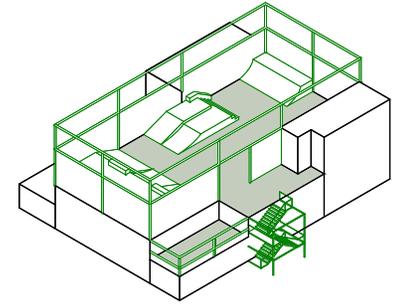
1 Solar Panels



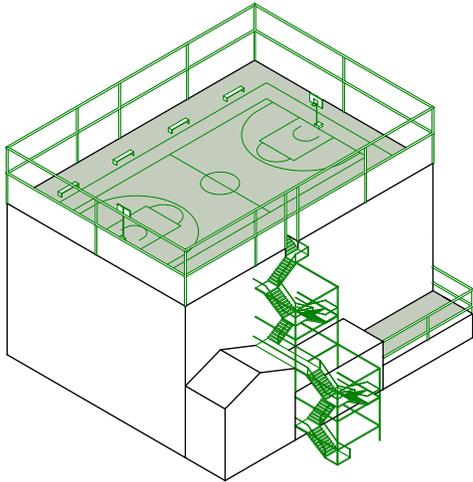
2 Community Garden



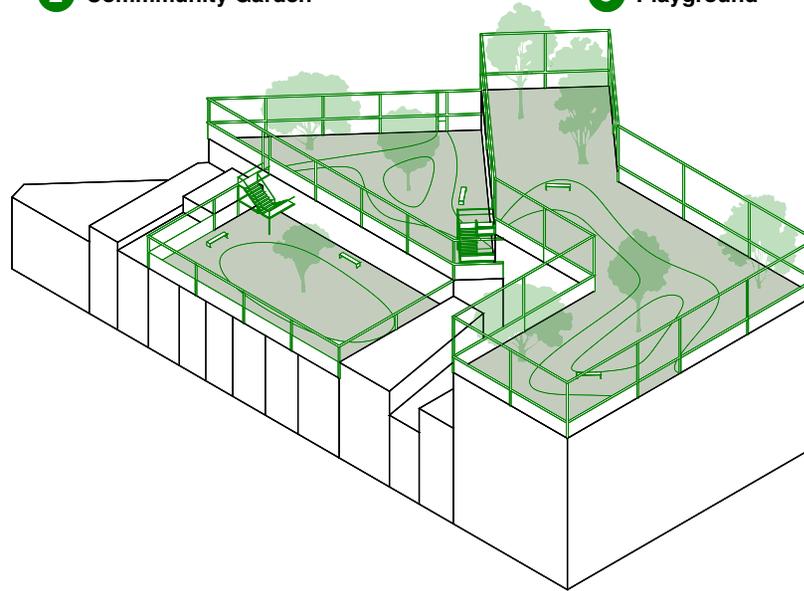
3 Playground



4 Skatepark

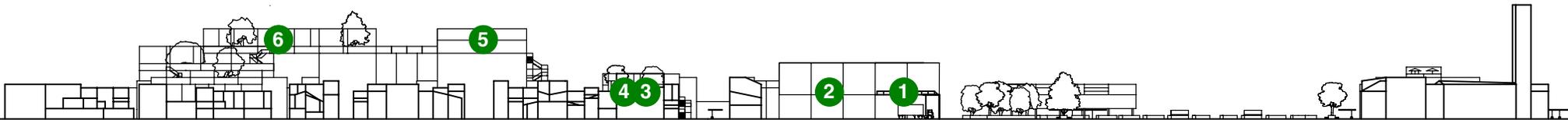


5 Sports & Recreation  
(e.g. basketball court)



6 Park

! This is just one proposal for the roof layout. The Neighborhood association will have the final say on what to put and where, so that everyone's needs are met in the vicinity (by, for example, placing a second community garden instead of a skatepark).



Longitudinal elevation

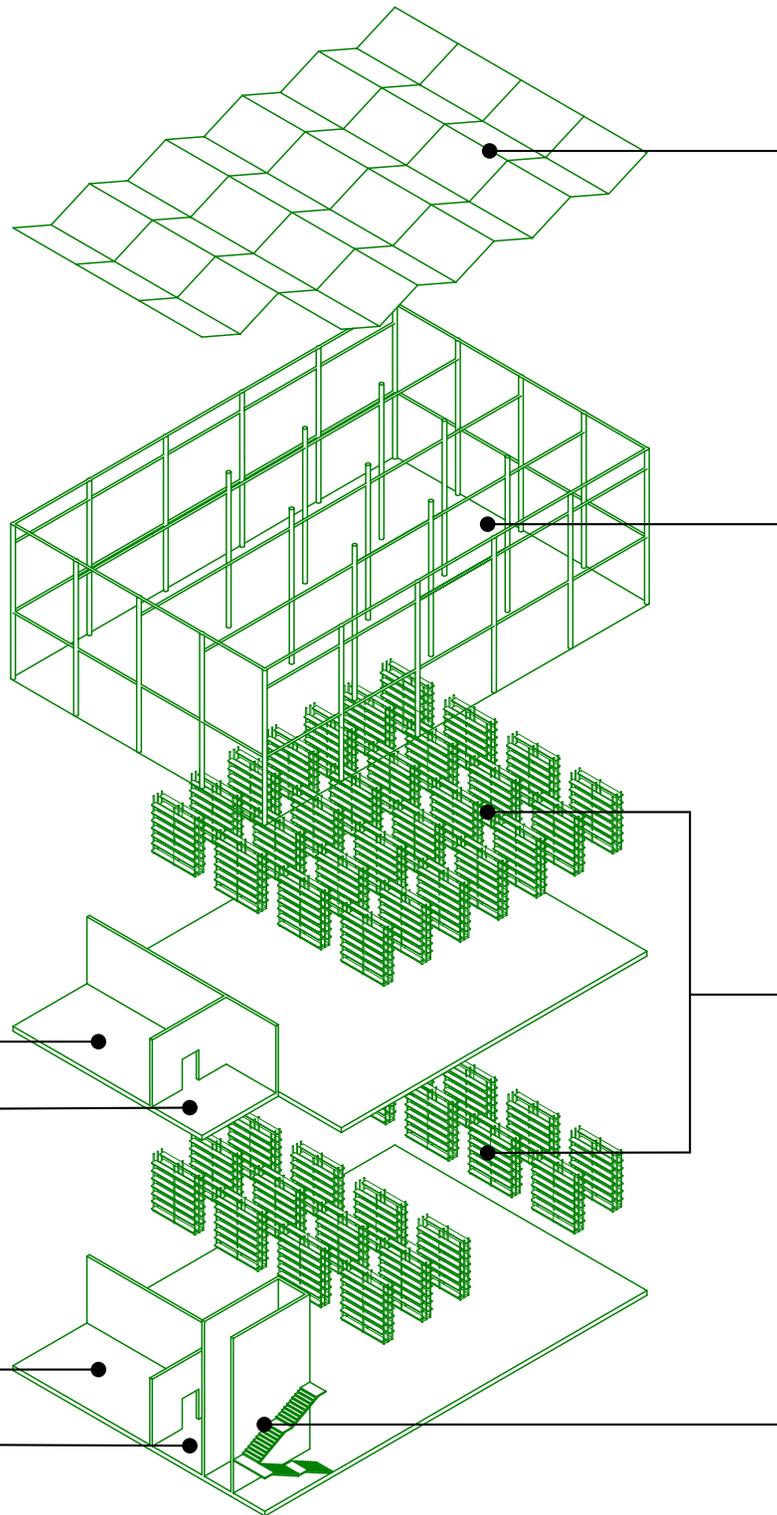
0

100

200m

# The greenhouse

Designed as a controlled bioclimatic environment - combining heat production systems, ventilation and lighting within high-performance thermal envelopes adapted to the plants - this greenhouse dedicated to vertical agriculture makes it possible to sow, plant, assist and optimize production without seasonal hazards, without losses, without soil and without a single ray of sunlight, all within a reduced surface area.



**Rainwater harvesting roof**  
The collected water goes down into an underground storage tank, ready to be pumped for irrigation

**Galvanised steel «grid» structure & polycarbonate cladding**

**Growing areas**

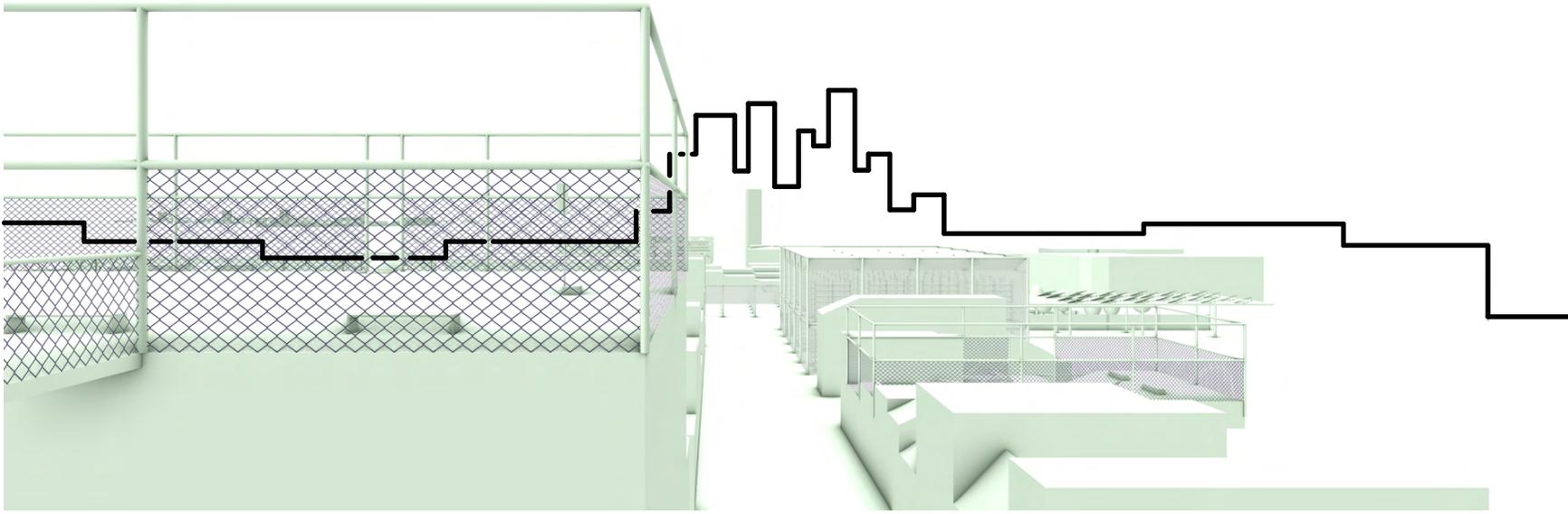
**Storage rooms & cleaning space**

**Technical room**  
Here, control panels monitor factors such as temperature, lighting and humidity to allow farmers to grow plants that would otherwise not be adapted to the climate and weather.

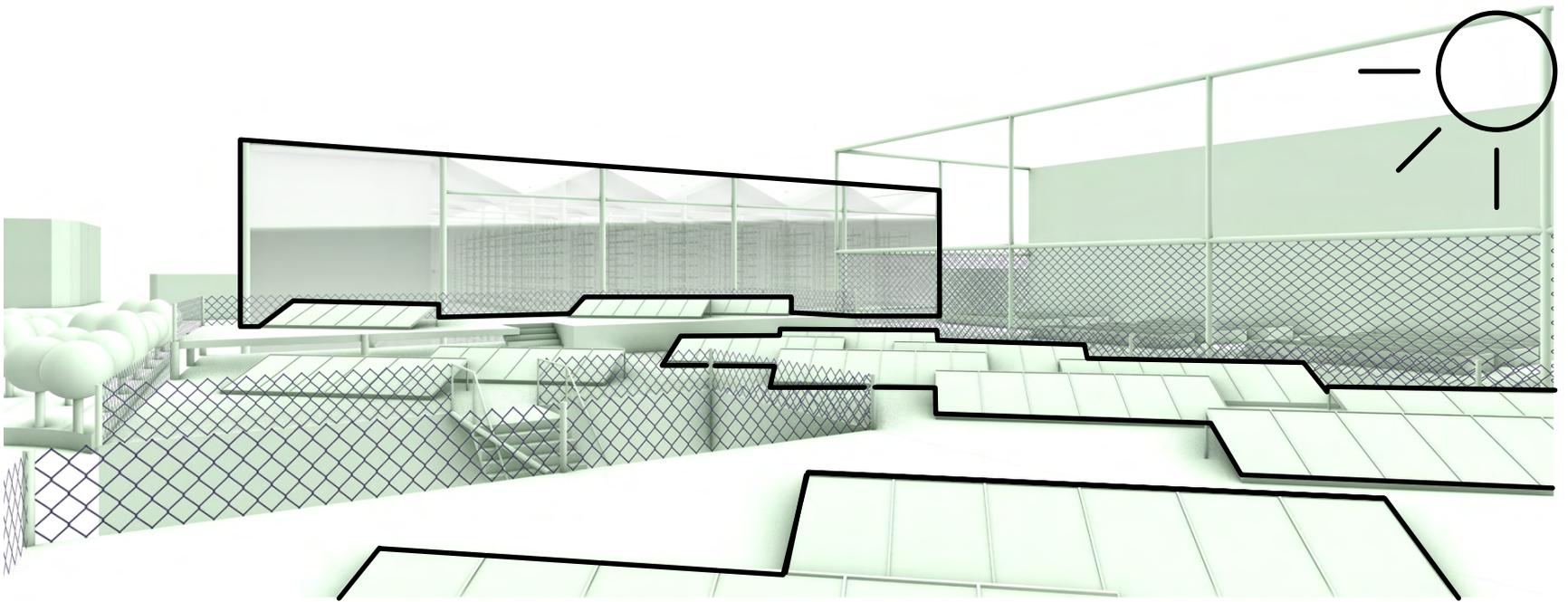
**Stairs & elevator**

# Perspectives

From the highest rooftops (like that of the basketball court), residents can enjoy a view of downtown Baltimore.



As vertical farming is very energy-intensive, solar panels on the roof adjacent to the community garden and above the parking lot supply the greenhouse with electricity.





**View from the roof of the Restaurant/Community Kitchen**

**The corten steel used on the Farmers' Market, in addition to being a sturdy, maintenance-free material, blends beautifully with the surrounding brickwork and magnifies the nearby vegetation, making the green of the plants appear more vibrant.**