

# South Library & Service Centre — Te Kete Wānanga o Wai Mōkihi



## Concept Design



29<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2023

IGNITE



# DESIGN STATEMENT

## BACKGROUND

Located on the Ōpāwaho, Heathcote River, the South Library and Service Centre has been on the site for the last 20 years. Temporary strengthening has been carried out to lift the NBS level of the building after it sustained damage during the 2010 and 2011 earthquakes. Council are considering a new build to replace the facility. The new building will remain on the same site and follow a similar footprint to the existing building.

The existing foundation slab will remain in place, and an additional 500mm of a new raft slab will be added on top. The reuse of this component offers savings in cost, construction time and carbon emissions. A new raft slab provides resilience in future seismic events and raises the finished floor level which makes the new building less flood-prone.

## CONTEXT & CONNECTION

The primary focus of the design is to reconnect the building with the river that runs along the north side of the site and wraps around to the east. The original building was constructed to provide protection from solar gain by way of solid walls along the northern face, and subsequently the building was disconnected from the river corridor.

Since the construction of the current building, the landscape and community surrounding the facility have evolved. The new design considers how the community currently uses the space, including the weekly farmer's market.

In recent years the council has legally stopped Hunter Terrace which sits between the site and the river, allowing easier pedestrian and cycle connections across it. Part of the road is now used for the local farmer's market. Since the closure of Hunter Terrace, the traffic and pedestrians have been directed along the southern edge of the building. With the river to the north, and the flow of people to the south, the site acts like an island with the head at the southwest corner, the Colombo Street entrance.

## KEY MOVES & LAYERING

The design of the building can be understood in layers, the first being the existing slab, and the subtractions and minor additions to it. One of the big moves to reconnect to the river is the introduction of a courtyard on the north edge of the building. The courtyard cuts through and connects the entrance and foyer to the river corridor. As soon as someone enters the building from the main entrance on the southern edge, they are oriented toward the river, and can

see through to the landscape that surrounds it. Some minor additions to the slab were given to the flexible learning space on the north side, and the café to the east where it will have a strong individual identity, and a connection to the market.

An orthogonal matrix of walls and openings form the next layer and provide the building legibility and structure. The back-of-house spine along the southern edge, and the central foyer allow users to easily find where they need to go.

The next layer is the main roof plane to the north, east and west, which intentionally follows the flow of the river. The roof is kept low to provide a human-scale and cosy feel, and deep eaves on the north face protect the building from overheating in the summer months.

Emerging above the low roof plane, the final layer is four tall "pop-ups" which act as beacons and provide internal lightwells and a form of wayfinding. Each of the pop-ups sit above a key function of the building – the foyer/customer services, the learning & maker space, the flexible learning space, and the café. From outside of the building, these areas are very easy to locate, and within the building they bring soft natural light into an otherwise deep, dark floorplate. At night these pop-ups will emit a soft glow, illuminating the building and improving its visibility from Colombo Street.

## ARRANGEMENT

The new building follows a similar footprint to the existing and the parts of the facility positioning that work well have been retained. For example, the southern edge as the back of house and services block provides a strong and functional 'backbone' to the facility. This area is mostly private with a clerestory to bring in natural light from the southern facade, ideal for a working environment.

In the existing facility, four separate teams work from four disconnected office spaces. However, this will change to a more functional shared office space for all four teams (libraries, governance, learning and customer services).

Small meeting rooms, bookable by staff and the public, are tucked into the southern block, and open into the library collection areas. Medium-sized meeting rooms, bookable during and after opening hours, sit in the south-west corner adjacent to the large Community Meeting / Board room space. The two rooms are connected by an operable wall which can be moved aside to create one large space. The Community Meeting / Board room and medium-sized meeting rooms can be accessed through the western entrance for afterhours use.

The existing entry has been moved further east. This balances the building, bringing the foyer to the centre giving people equal



distances to travel to different corners of the building. This also brings the river connection to the centre of the building both figuratively and visually. Subtle ramps will bring people to the fully accessible entry, which will serve as the main entrance for all users, staff and customers alike.

All of the key areas have a connection to the landscape and river. The computer lab/makerspace in the northwest corner is visible from the foyer so the public can wander over and see the projects that are being laser cut and 3D printed inside. The community meeting space / Board room sits closest to Colombo Street and activates the south/west corner of the site. The flexible learning space can open up to the children's area for baby times as well as the courtyard for larger events. The connection between the café on the north-west corner, and the children's area on the north allows surveillance for parents over their kids and creates a sense of family/whanau space. The café is positioned for receiving the best sun for the time of day it's operational and provides a connection to the farmer's market on Sunday mornings. The café's location also gives it the ability to operate separately from the rest of the facility should this be a requirement in the future.

Based on feedback from the staff, community, and the initial public

survey, some of the areas have increased in size. For example, we know that physical books are particularly important to this community and so the book processing and returns room needs to be bigger than the existing, as South Library processes more books than any other library in Christchurch. The café space is more generous and provides more seating both indoors & out.

The book collection is spread throughout the facility. Loosely, from west to east the collection is: Young Adult (adjacent to the maker space), Adult (fiction, nonfiction, large print), Te Reo Maori, and then Children. The Te Reo Maori collection is a multigenerational space and will be where grandparents can educate and share stories with their mokopuna (grandchildren) and is close to the cafe. There are pockets of reading and study areas throughout and adjacent to the book collection. A separate space for quiet study is provided on the north edge and overlooks the landscape, river, and courtyard.

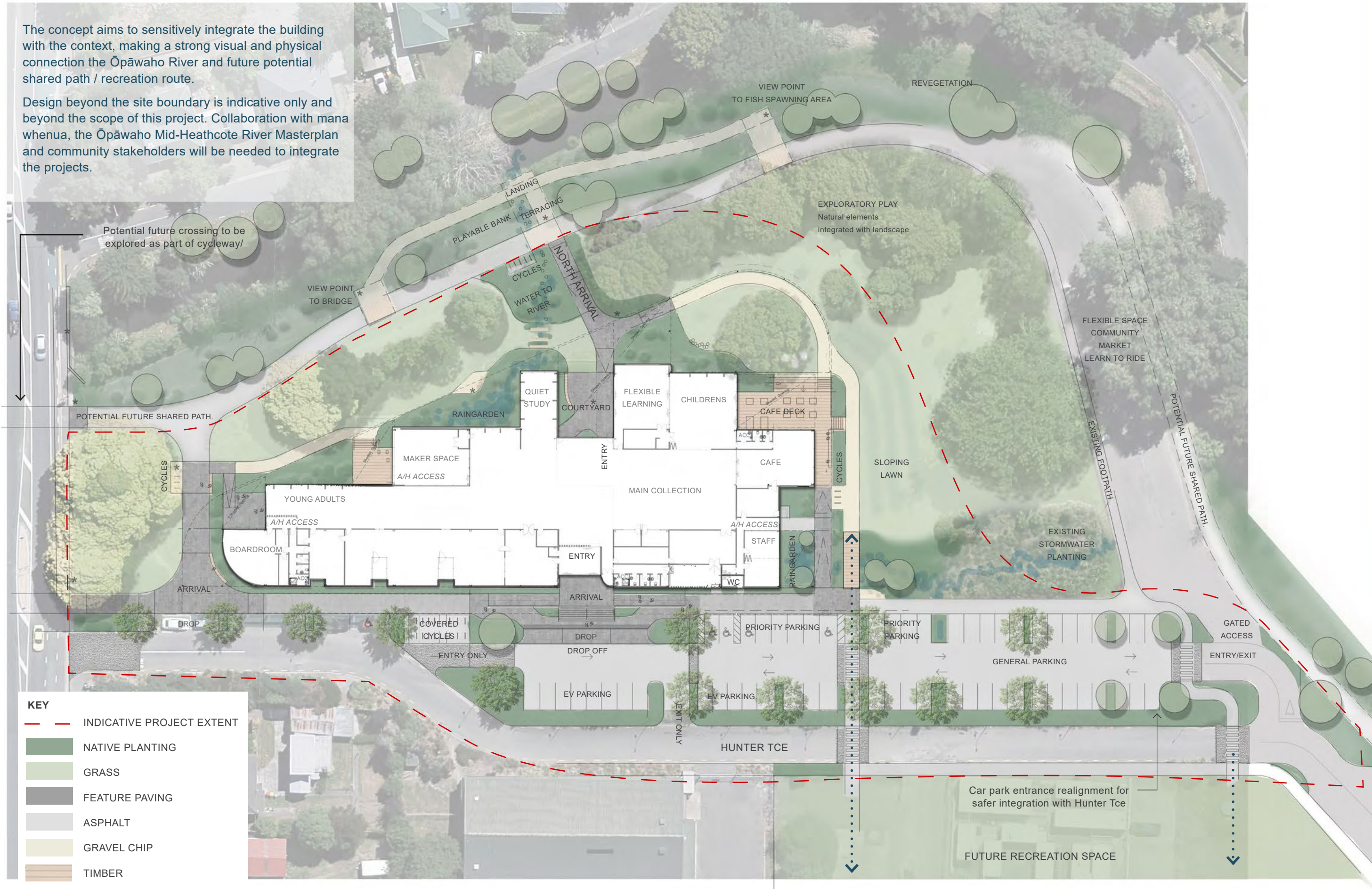
Overall, the feedback from the community told us that the existing facility is well loved, and therefore the design approach for this project has been to preserve the existing concepts that work well, and to re-design those that don't.



CONCEPT PLAN

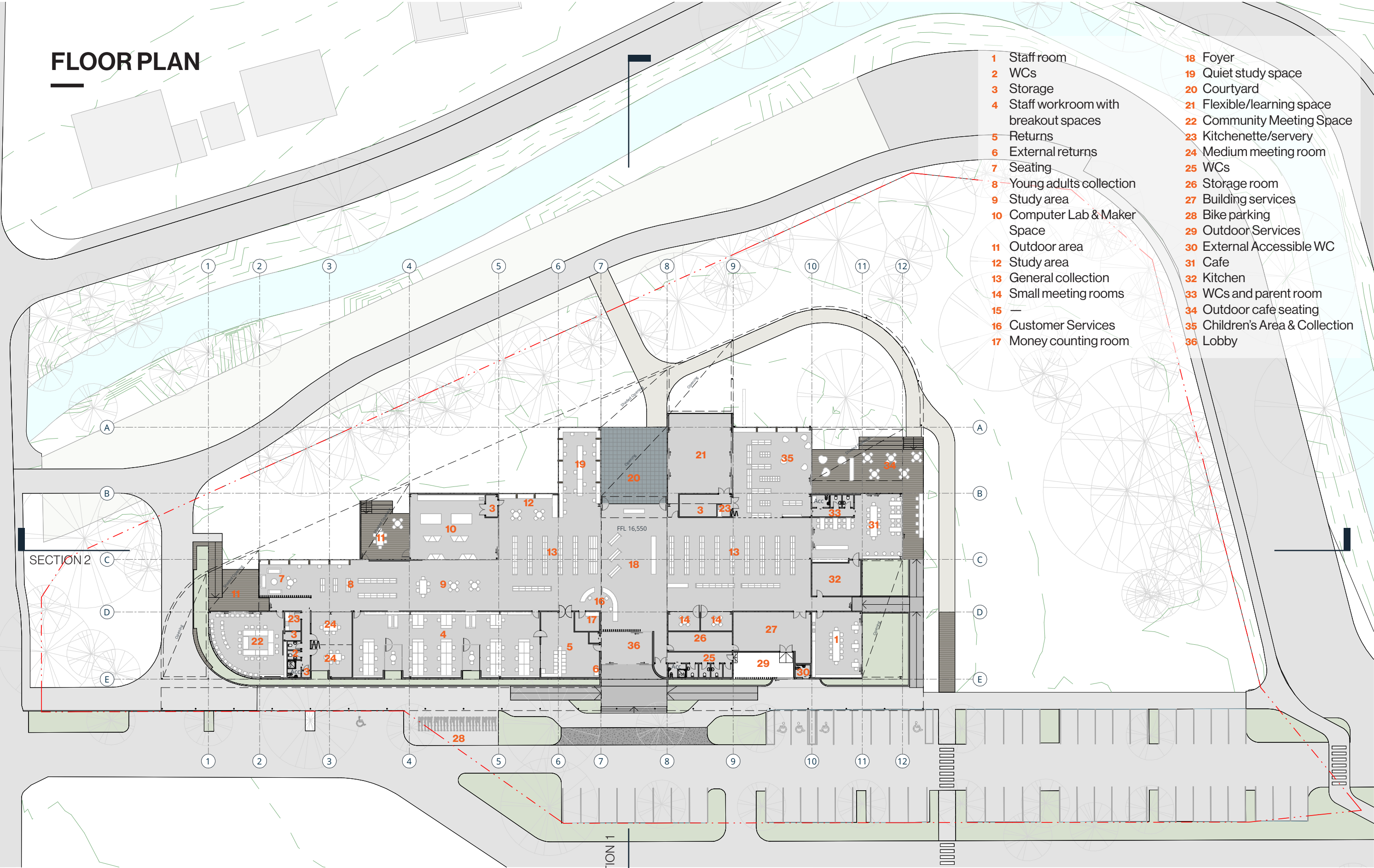
The concept aims to sensitively integrate the building with the context, making a strong visual and physical connection the Ōpāwaho River and future potential shared path / recreation route.

Design beyond the site boundary is indicative only and beyond the scope of this project. Collaboration with mana whenua, the Ōpāwaho Mid-Heathcote River Masterplan and community stakeholders will be needed to integrate the projects.





# FLOOR PLAN

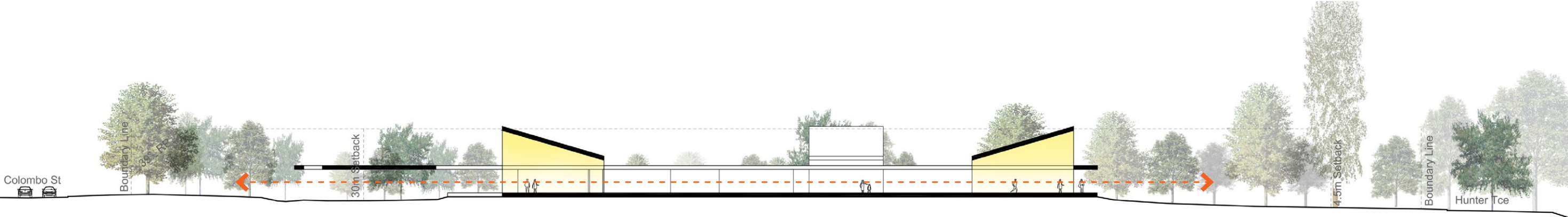


Landscape and car park indicative only. Refer to landscape plan, page 3.

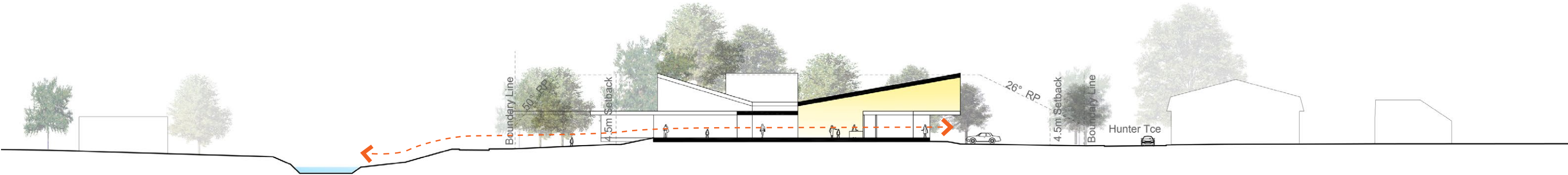




# CONCEPTUAL SECTIONS



SECTION 1



SECTION 2



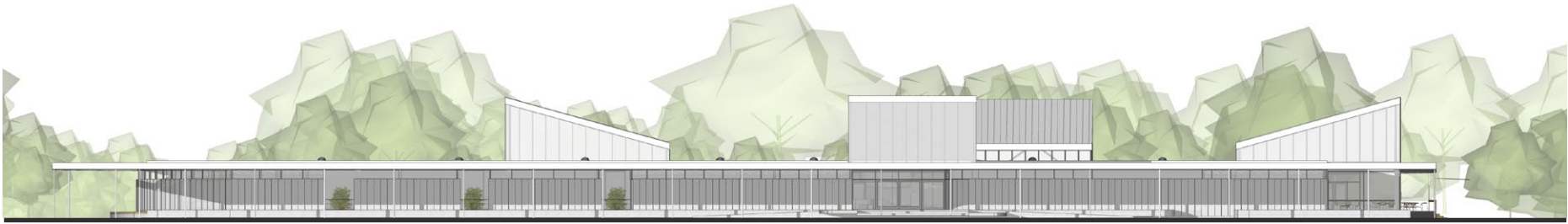
ELEVATIONS



NORTH ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION



RENDERED PERSPECTIVE | AERIAL VIEW





RENDERED PERSPECTIVE | NORTH-EAST VIEW FROM GREEN SPACE





**RENDERED PERSPECTIVE** | WEST VIEW FROM COLOMBO STREET



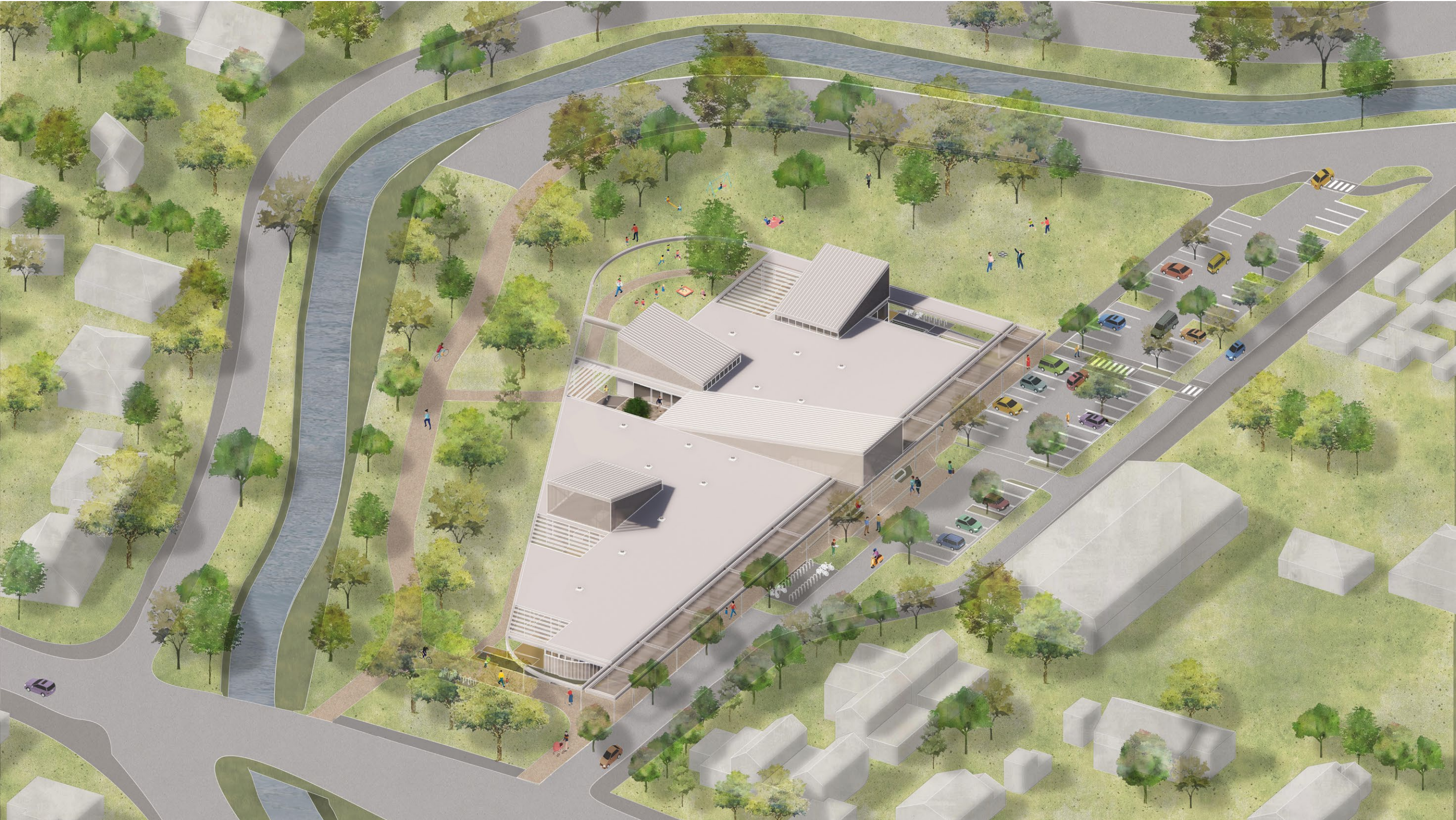


ARTISTIC VIEW OF FOYER & COURTYARD





ARTISTIC AERIAL VIEW OF ENTRY





ARTISTIC AERIAL VIEW | CALL-OUTS

