

EMBRACING VERTICAL URBANISM

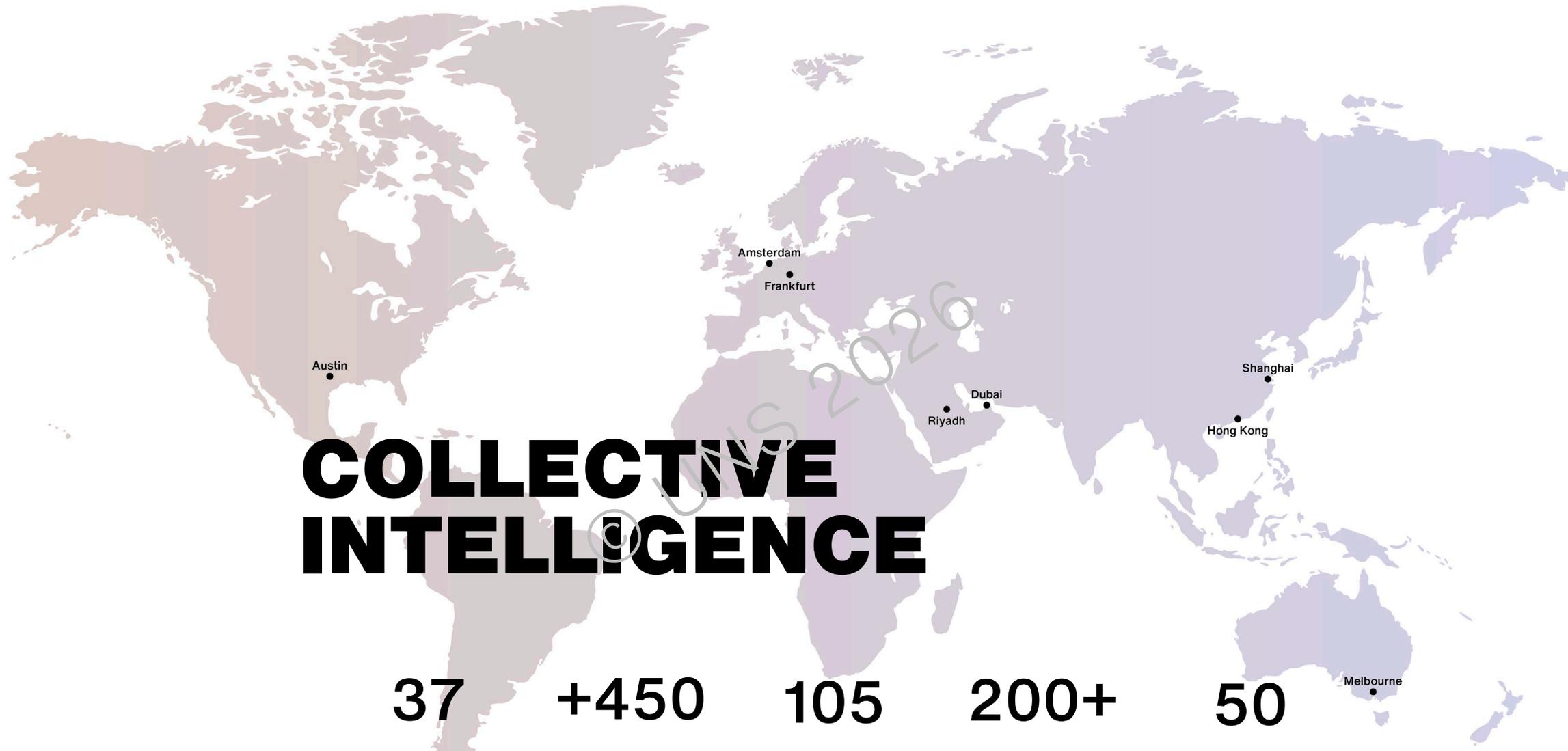
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HIGH RISE CONSTRUCTION CONFERENCE,
HELSINKI, 3RD FEBRUARY 2026

ASTRID PIBER, UNS

**WE ARE A NETWORK OF
+450 PEOPLE**

**WHO THRIVE ON
THINKING DIFFERENTLY**



COLLECTIVE INTELLIGENCE

37	+450	105	200+	50
Years of experience	Employed professionals	Awards	Completed projects worldwide	Active countries



WHERE SOME SEE CHALLENGE,
WE SEE SOLUTION

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**WE SAW THE
OPPORTUNITY TO...**

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CREATE NEW WAYS OF LIVING IN OUR CITY CENTRES



TURN A BRIDGE

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INTO A DEFINING ICON

Rotterdam



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BIG PICTURE THINKERS

170+ Awards

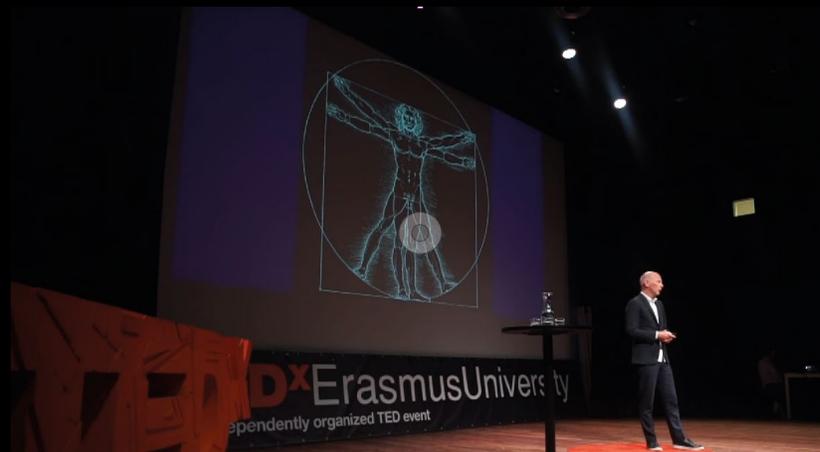
Including the **MIPIM Award** for Booking.com City Campus and the **World Architecture Festival Award** for design excellence.

Ben van Berkel

Founder and thought leader, shaping the future of architecture by challenging conventions and exploring new possibilities.

Commitment to Education

Inspiring the next generation of designers through teaching at renowned institutions, bridging practice and academia to address today's complex challenges.



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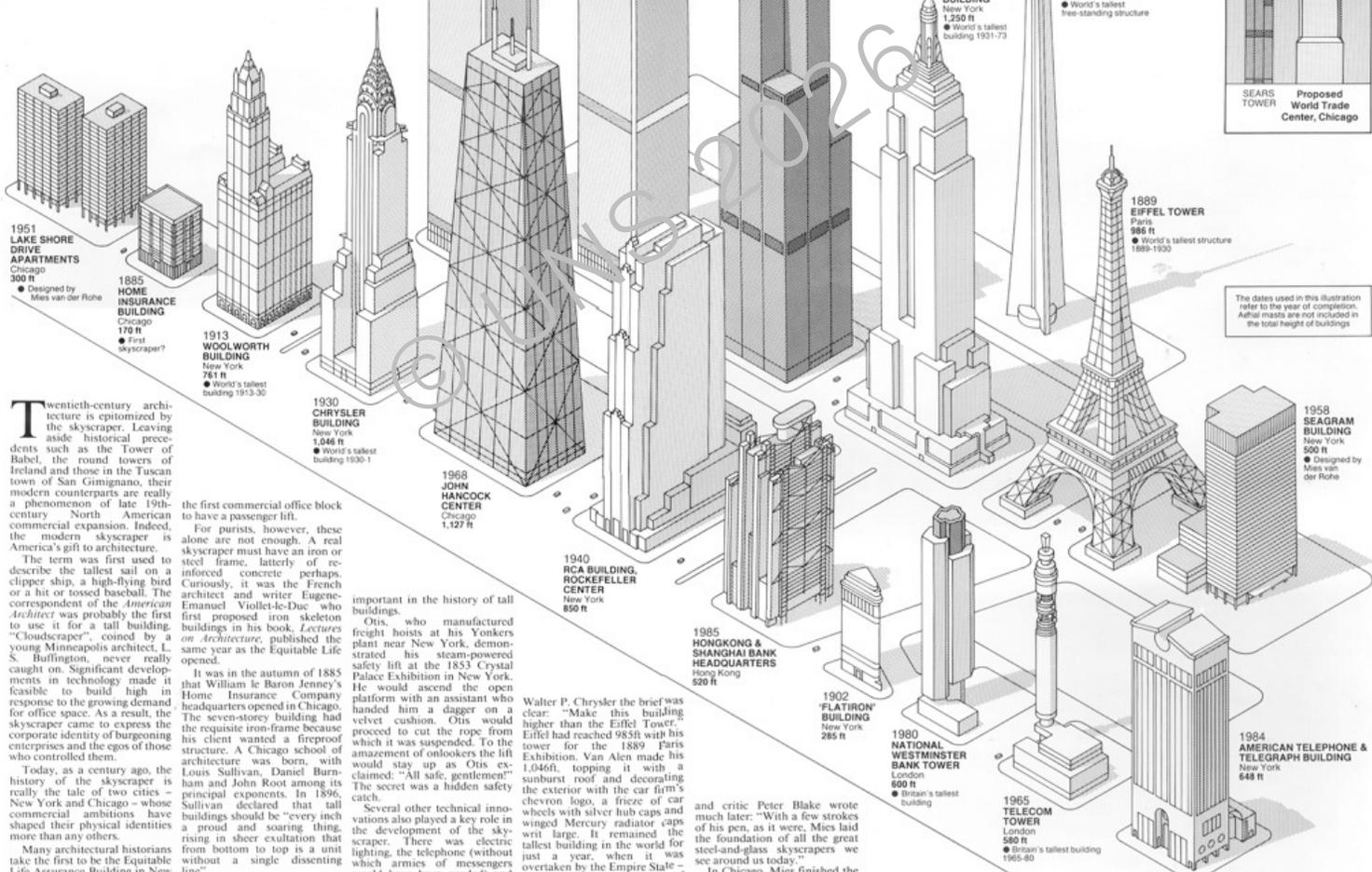


TALL BUILDINGS

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA © 2026

Towers of power

Love them or hate them, for the past 100 years skyscrapers have been transforming the world's major city skylines into dramatic vistas of glass steel and concrete. Charles Kneivitt, Architecture Correspondent, looks at their majestic past, present and future



Twentieth-century architecture is epitomized by the skyscraper. Leaving aside historical precedents such as the Tower of Babel, the round towers of Ireland and those in the Tuscan town of San Gimignano, their modern counterparts are really a phenomenon of late 19th-century North American commercial expansion. Indeed, the modern skyscraper is America's gift to architecture.

The term was first used to describe the tallest sail on a clipper ship, a high-flying bird or a hit or tossed baseball. The correspondent of the *American Architect* was probably the first to use it for a tall building. "Cloudscraper", coined by a young Minneapolis architect, L. S. Buffington, never really caught on. Significant developments in technology made it feasible to build high in response to the growing demand for office space. As a result, the skyscraper came to express the corporate identity of burgeoning enterprises and the egos of those who controlled them.

Today, as a century ago, the history of the skyscraper is really the tale of two cities - New York and Chicago - whose commercial ambitions have shaped their physical identities more than any others.

Many architectural historians take the first to be the Equitable Life Assurance Building in New York, finished in 1870. The reason given is twofold: at

the first commercial office block to have a passenger lift.

For purists, however, these alone are not enough. A real skyscraper must have an iron or steel frame, latterly of reinforced concrete perhaps. Curiously, it was the French architect and writer Eugene-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc who first proposed iron skeleton buildings in his book, *Lectures on Architecture*, published the same year as the Equitable Life opened.

It was in the autumn of 1885 that William le Baron Jenney's Home Insurance Company headquarters opened in Chicago. The seven-storey building had the requisite iron-frame because his client wanted a fireproof structure. A Chicago school of architecture was born, with Louis Sullivan, Daniel Burnham and John Root among its principal exponents. In 1896, Sullivan declared that tall buildings should be "every inch a proud and soaring thing, rising in sheer exultation that from bottom to top is a unit without a single dissident line".

People could not be expected to climb more than five or six

important in the history of tall buildings.

Otis, who manufactured freight hoists at his Yonkers plant near New York, demonstrated his steam-powered safety lift at the 1853 Crystal Palace Exhibition in New York. He would ascend the open platform with an assistant who handed him a dagger on a velvet cushion. Otis would proceed to cut the rope from which it was suspended. To the amazement of onlookers the lift would stay up as Otis exclaimed: "All safe, gentlemen!" The secret was a hidden safety catch.

Several other technical innovations also played a key role in the development of the skyscraper. There was electric lighting, the telephone (without which armies of messengers would have been needed) and eventually air conditioning. Dr Willis Haviland Carrier, the

Walter P. Chrysler the brief was clear: "Make this building higher than the Eiffel Tower." Eiffel had reached 985ft with his tower for the 1889 Paris Exhibition. Van Alen made his 1,046ft, topping it with a sunburst roof and decorating the exterior with the car firm's chevron logo, a frieze of car wheels with silver hub caps and winged Mercury radiator caps writ large. It remained the tallest building in the world for just a year, when it was overtaken by the Empire State - the most famous skyscraper of them all - in 1931.

This was a truly speculative

and critic Peter Blake wrote much later: "With a few strokes of his pen, as it were, Mies laid the foundation of all the great steel-and-glass skyscrapers we see around us today."

In Chicago, Mies finished the two 26-storey towers of Lake Shore Drive in 1951. But the

The dates used in this illustration refer to the year of completion. Aerial masts are not included in the total height of buildings

Illustration by John Grimwade

VERTICAL URBANISM AT THE MEMORIAL SITE

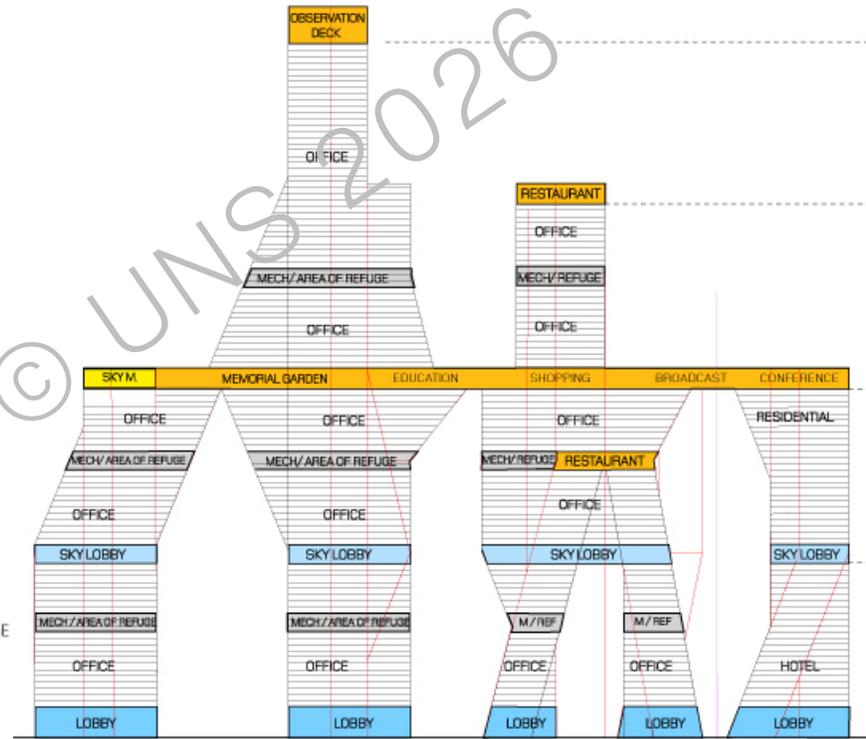
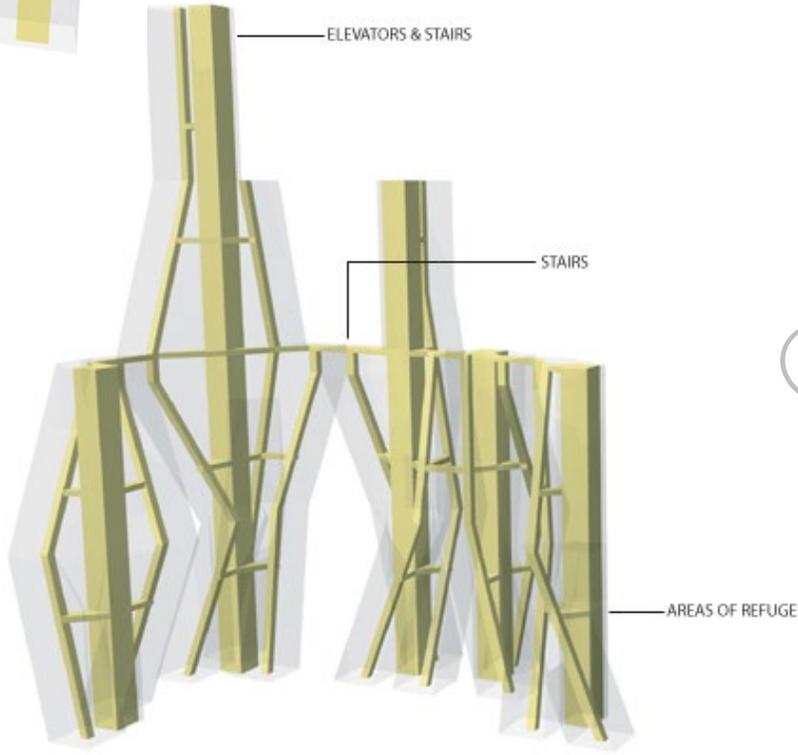
WTC COMPETITION, 2002
UNITED ARCHITECTS



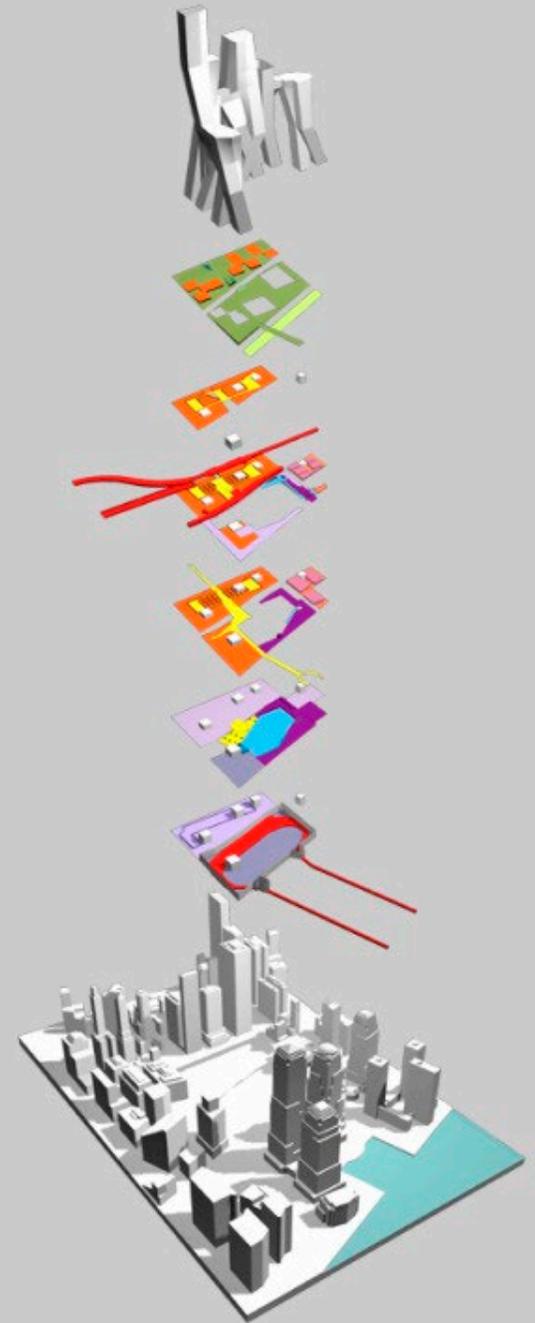
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TWIN TOWERS



T1 1,100,000 SF T2 3,700,000 SF T3 2,900,000 SF T4 1,400,000 SF T5 1,300,000 SF



THE VERTICAL CITY INTERPRETED IN THREE SCALES

The Scotts Tower, 2010-2017

Singapore, Singapore

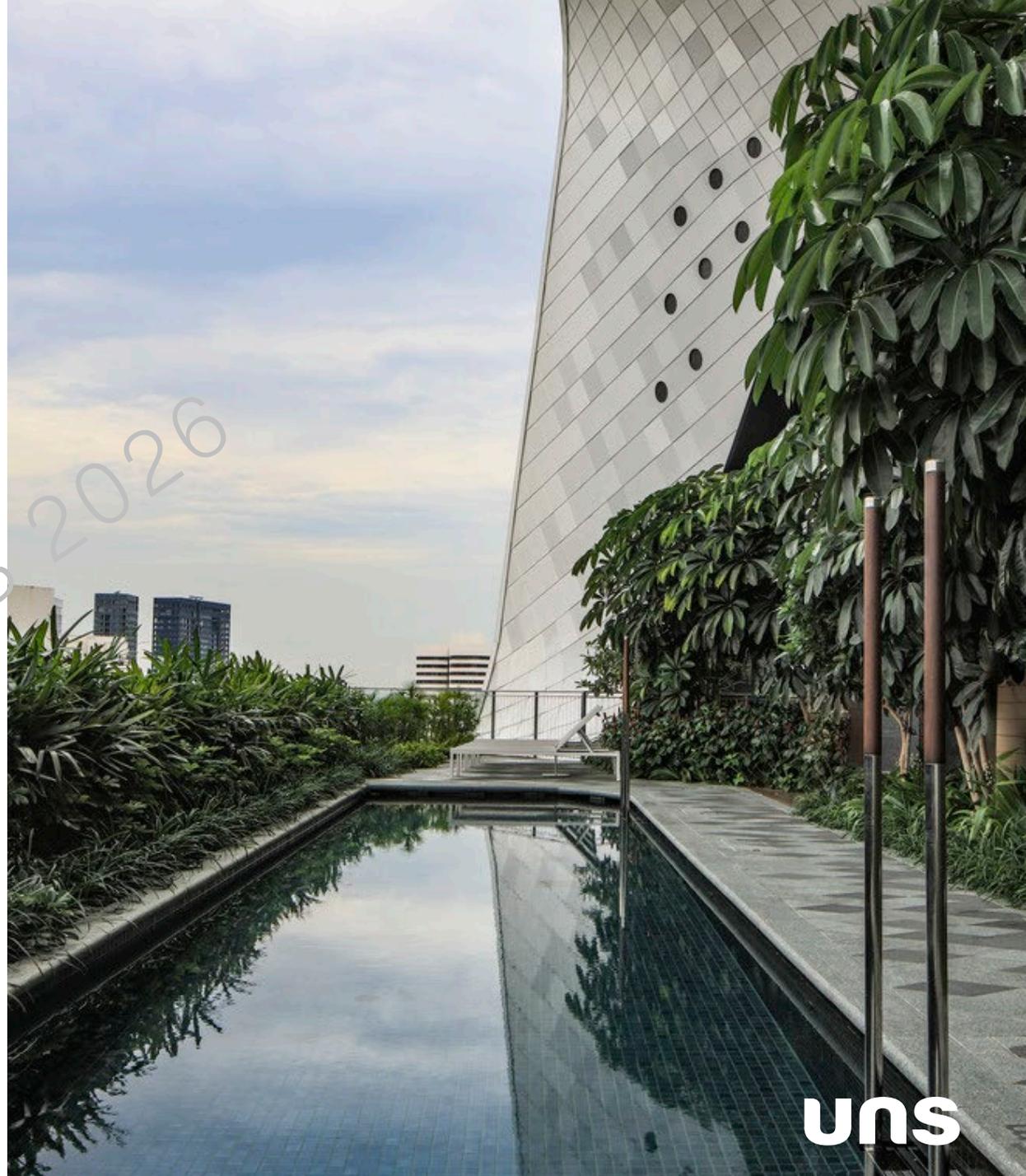
18,500 m²







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LIVING WITH THE LANDSCAPE, INSIDE AND OUT

Ardmore Residence, 2006-2013

Singapore, Singapore

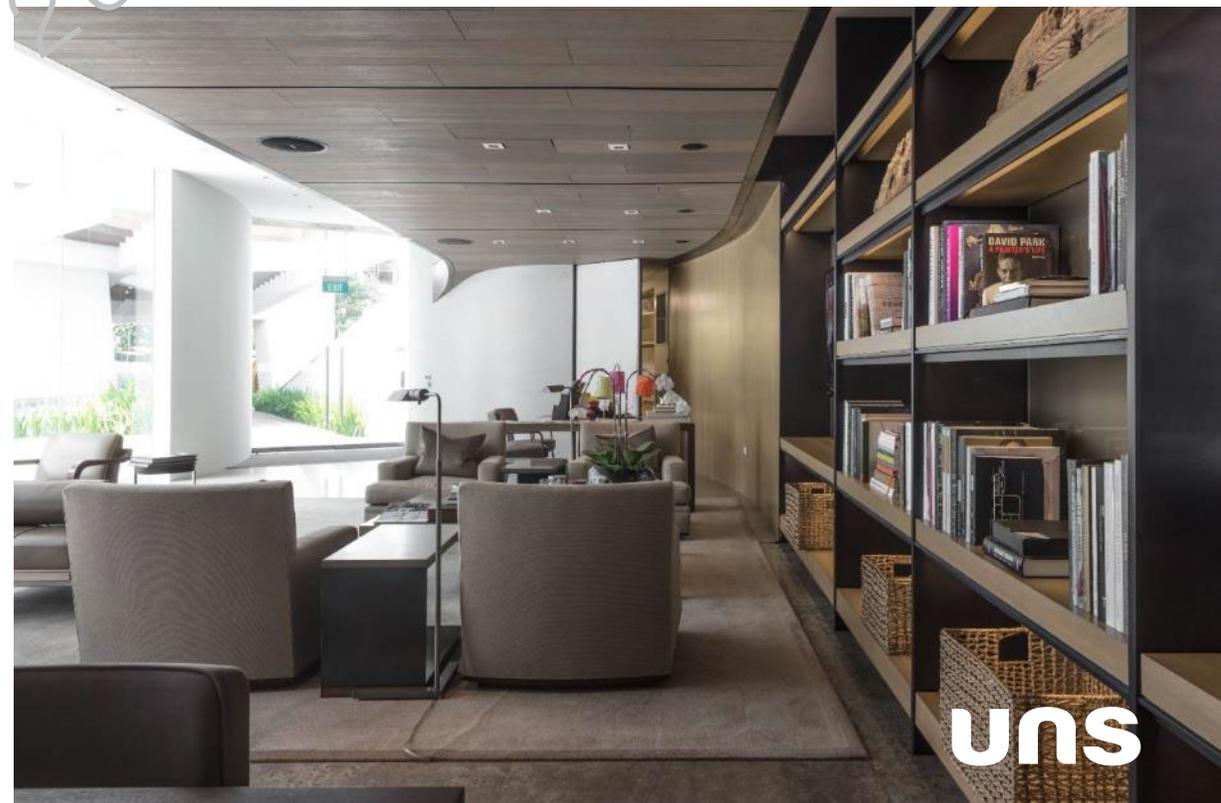
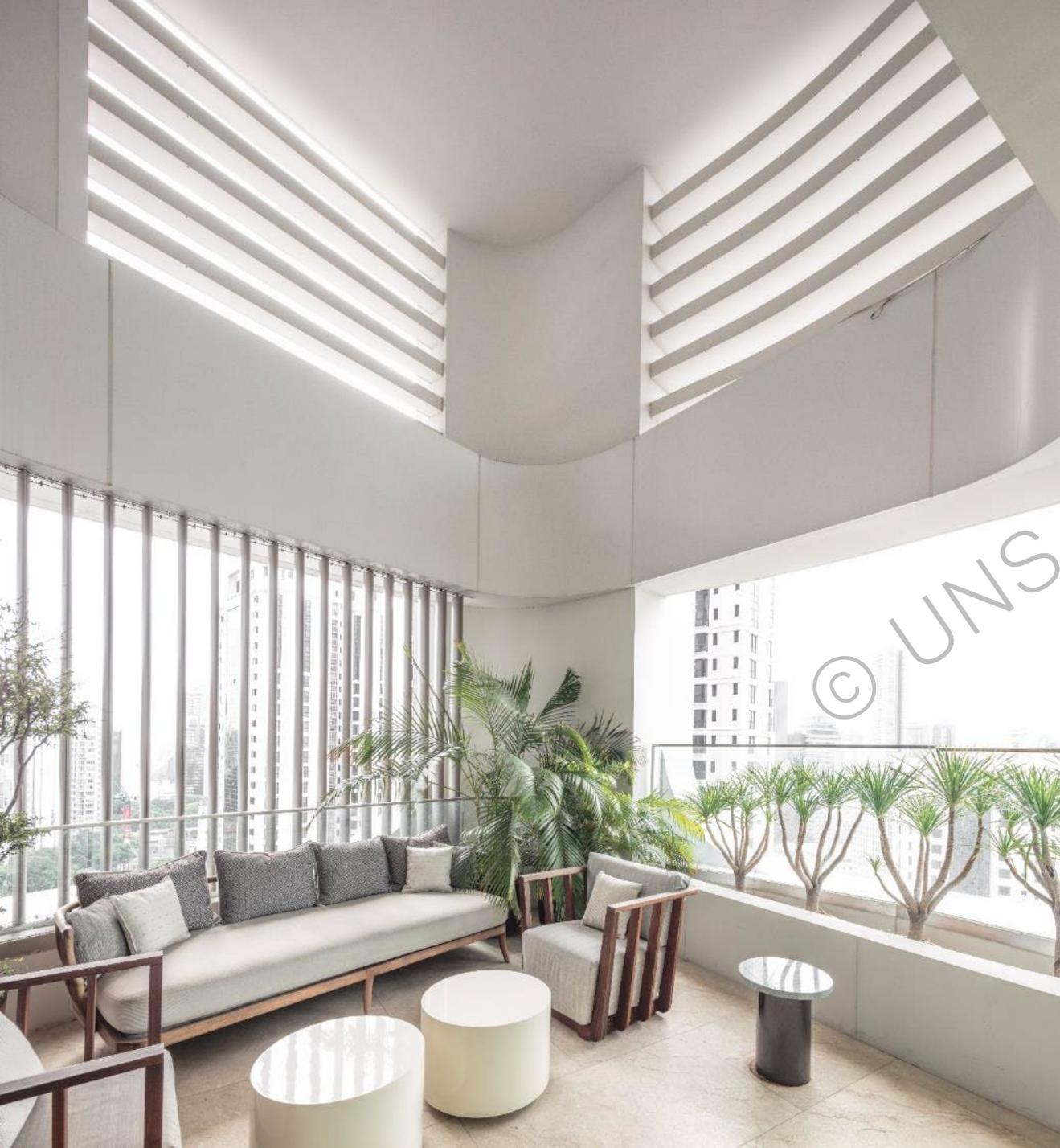
15,666 m²





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TWISTING FOR SUSTAINABILITY, INNOVATION, ELEGANCE

WASL Tower

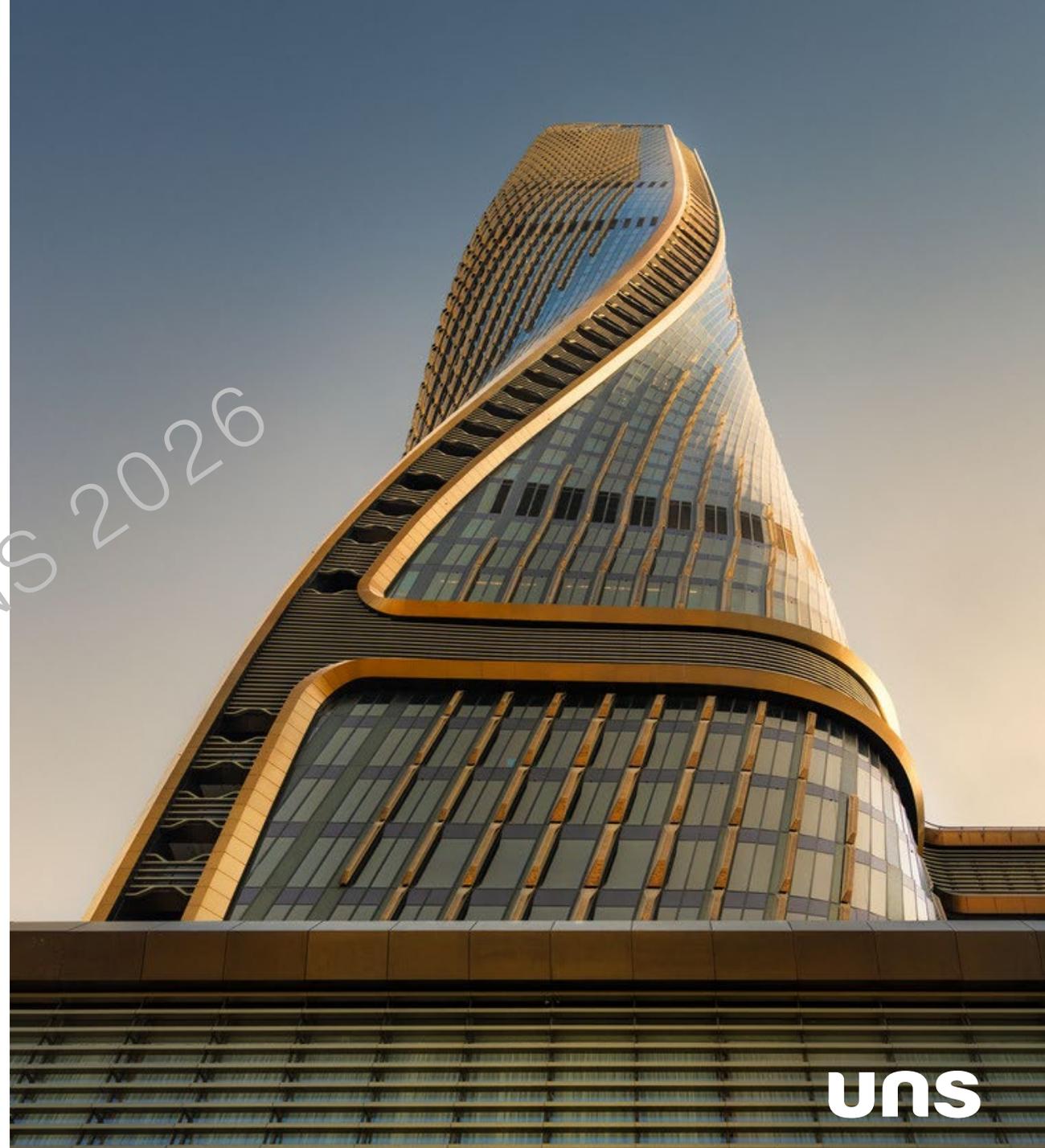
Dubai, UAE
106,534 m2 (GFA)





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FROM SOLITARY BUILDINGS...



CANALETTO,
LONDON



SCOTTS,
SINGAPORE



V ON SHENTON,
SINGAPORE



ARDMORE,
SINGAPORE



EZ PARQUE DA CIDADE,
BRAZIL

An aerial photograph of a city skyline, likely Frankfurt, Germany. The image shows a dense cluster of skyscrapers, including the Commerzbank Tower and the Helaba Tower. Several construction cranes are visible, indicating ongoing development. The foreground shows a mix of older, lower-rise buildings and modern structures. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds.

...TO CITIES WITHIN CITIES

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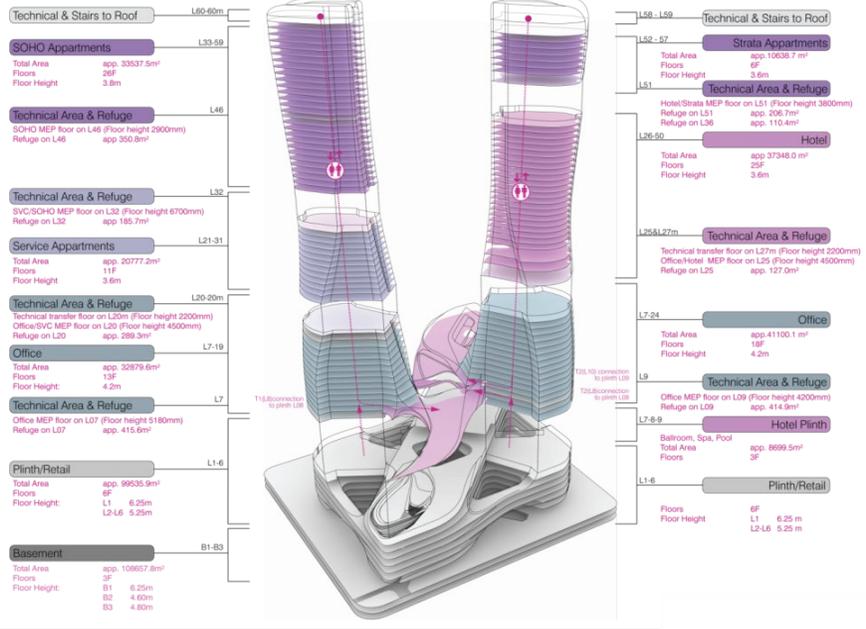
DESIGN FOR LIFE ON THE MOVE

Raffles City Hangzhou, 2008-2017

Hangzhou, China

392,526 m²

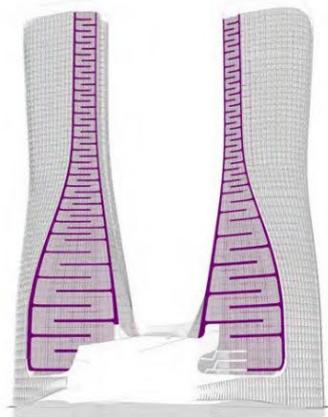




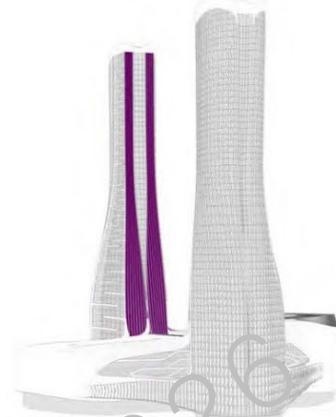
Facade Overview : Towers



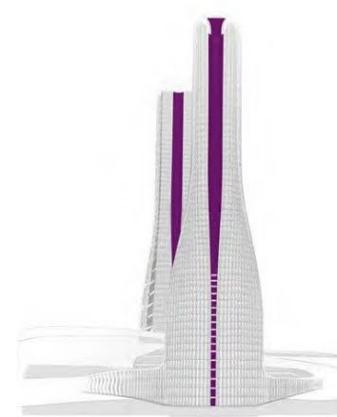
1. URBAN FACADE



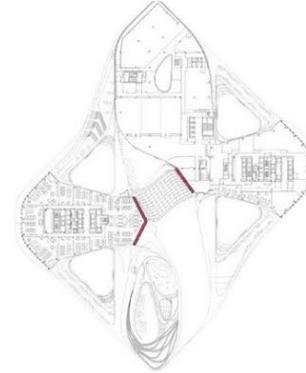
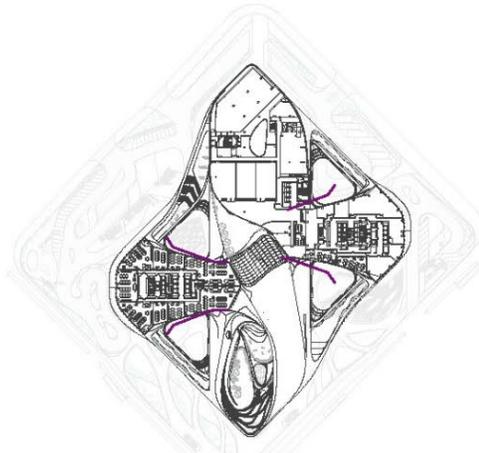
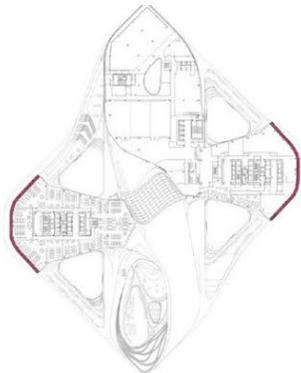
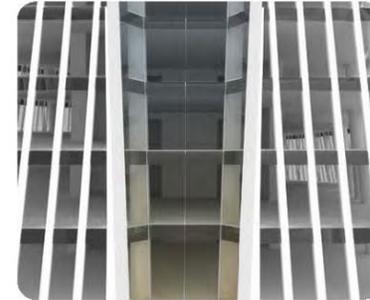
2. LANDSCAPE FACADE



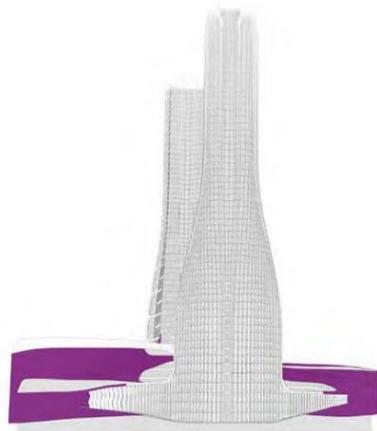
3. TAIL FACADE



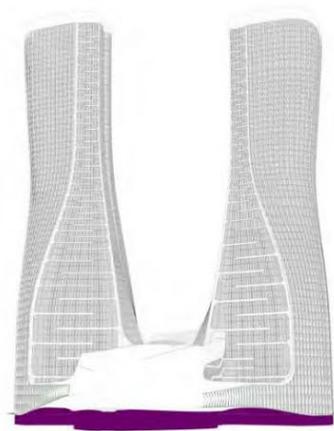
4. SLOT FACADE



Facade Overview: Podium



5. PODIUM FACADE



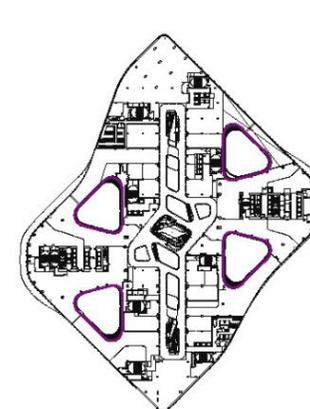
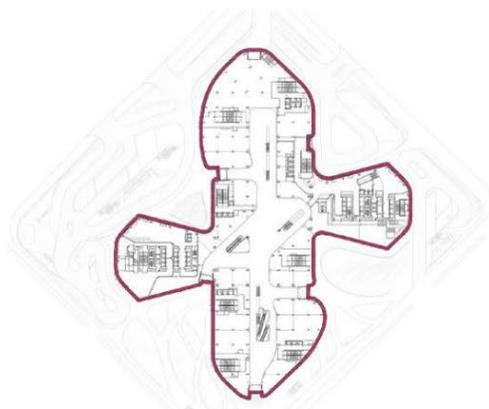
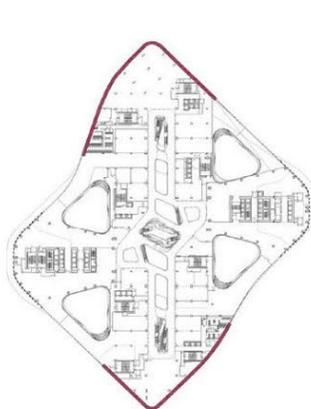
6. SHOPFRONT AND LOBBY FACADE

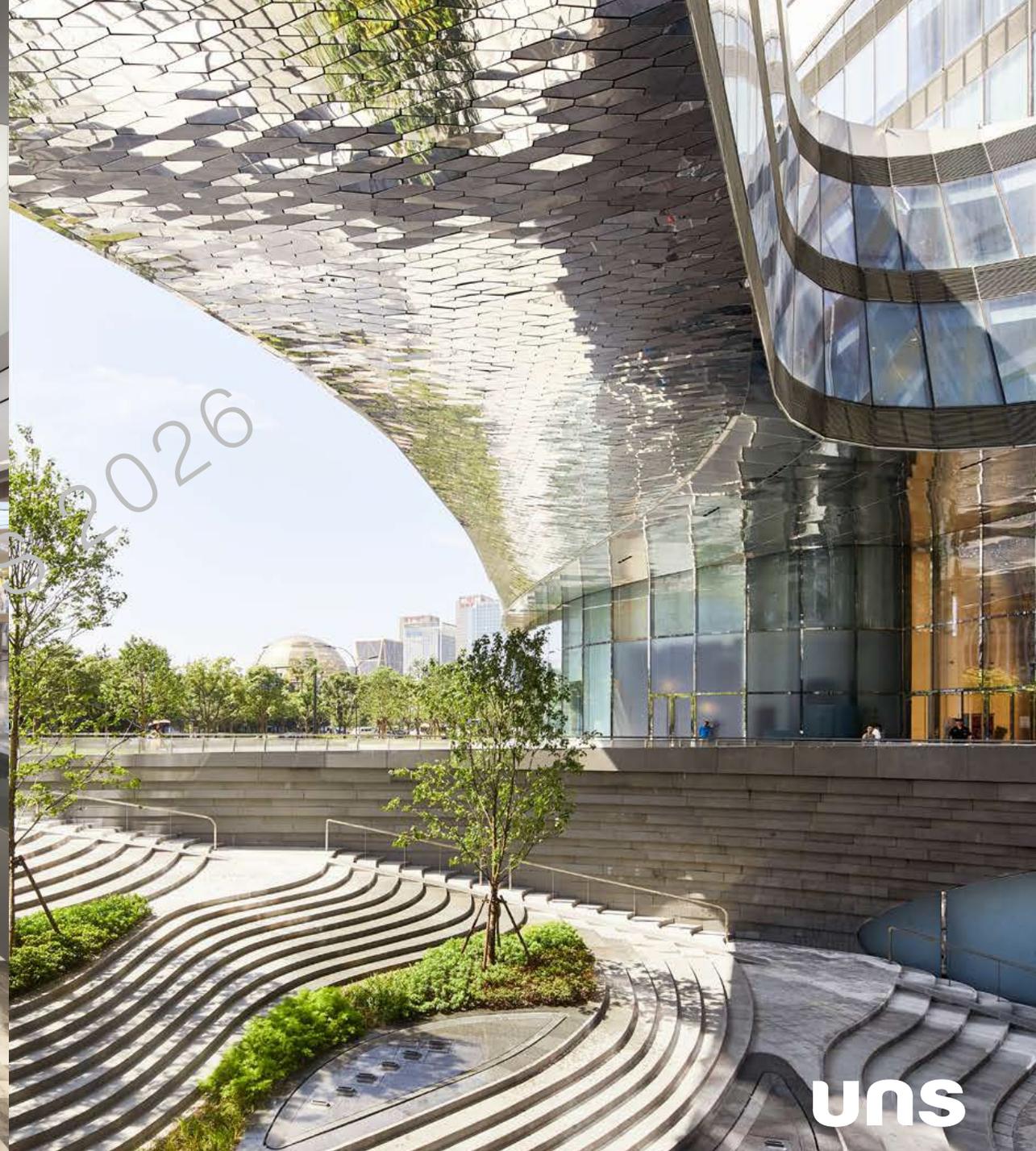


7. BRIDGE FACADE



8. COURTYARD FACADE





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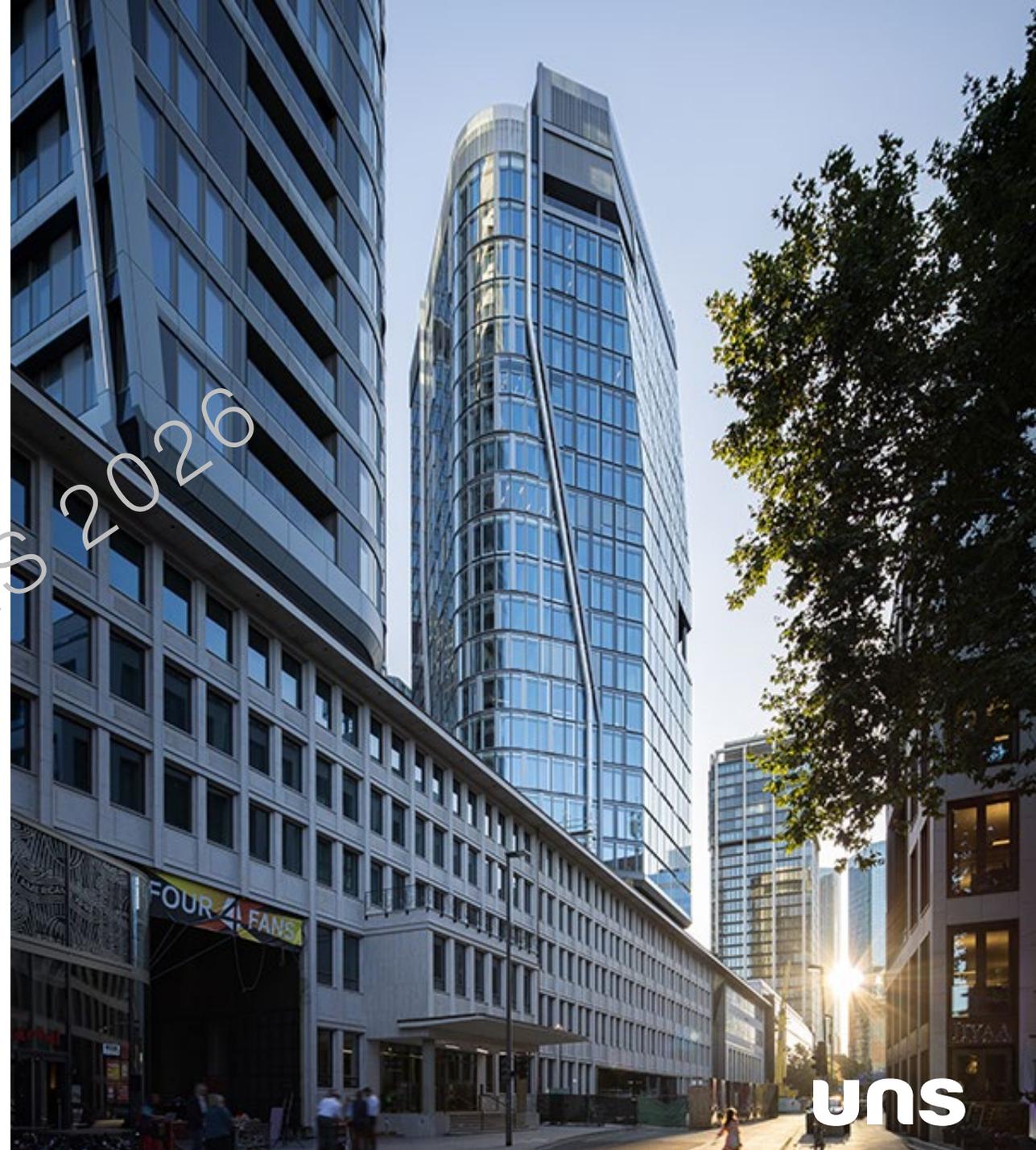


REGENERATE THE MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT INTO A VERTICAL URBAN COMMUNITY

Four Frankfurt

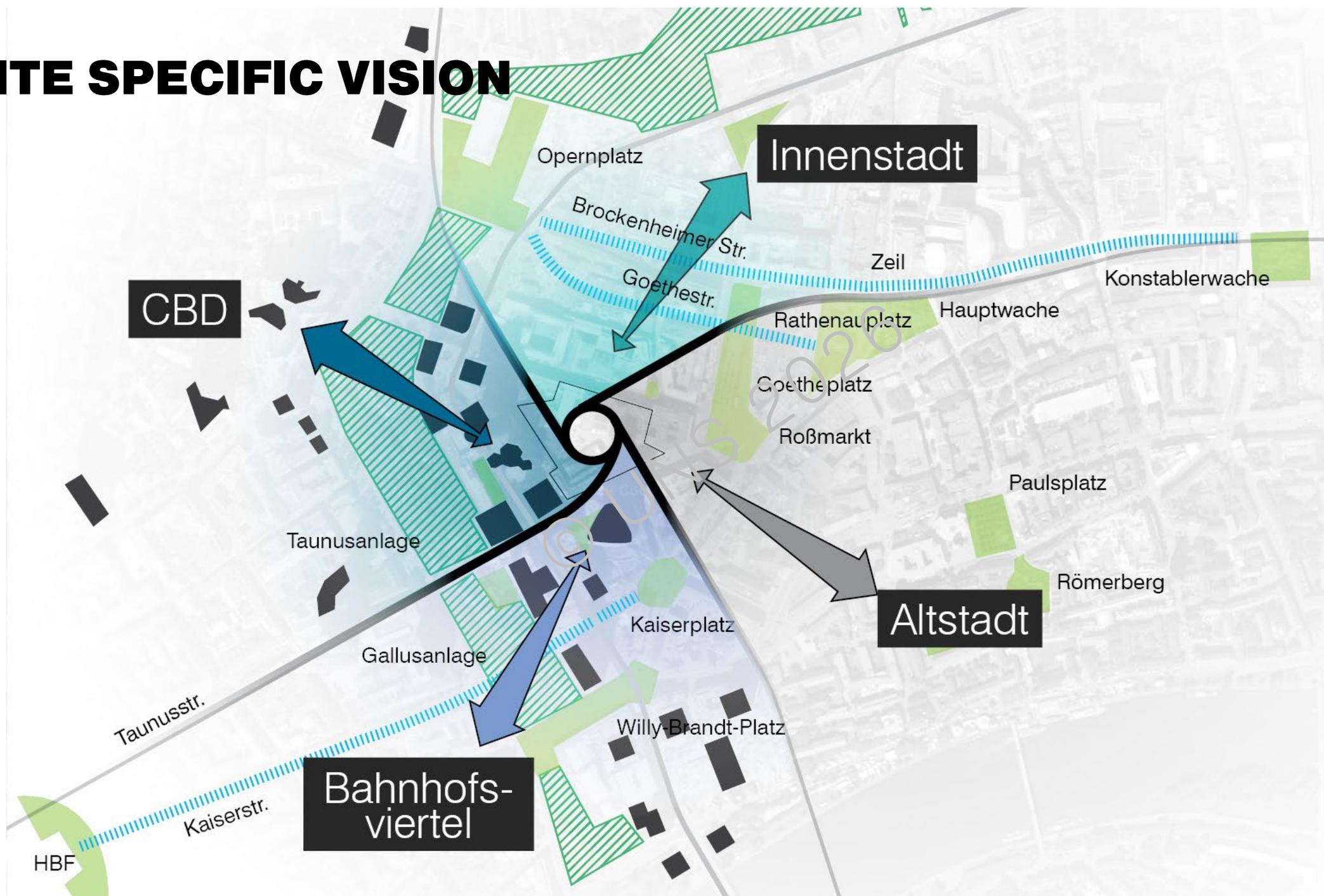
Frankfurt, Germany

219,000 m²





SITE SPECIFIC VISION





FEBRUARY 2020



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MARCH 2021



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JUNE 2023

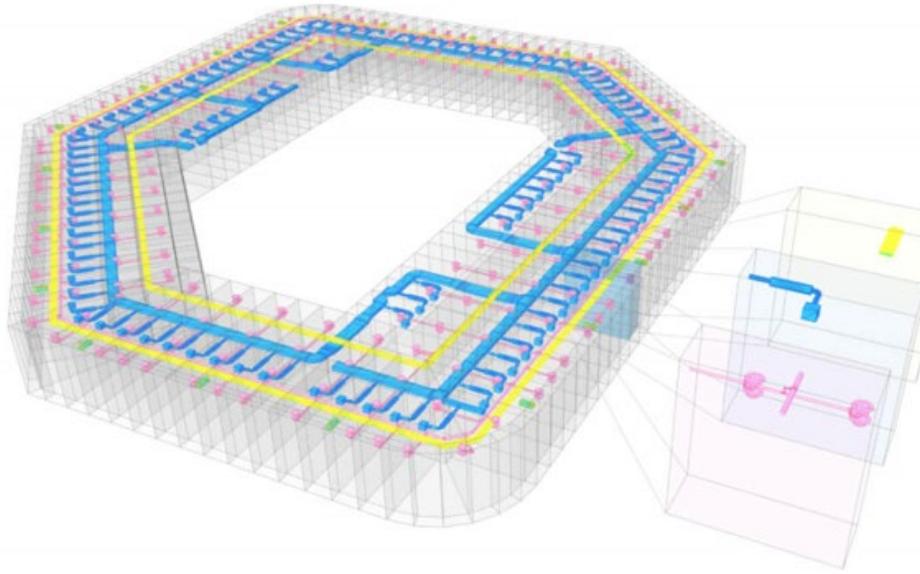


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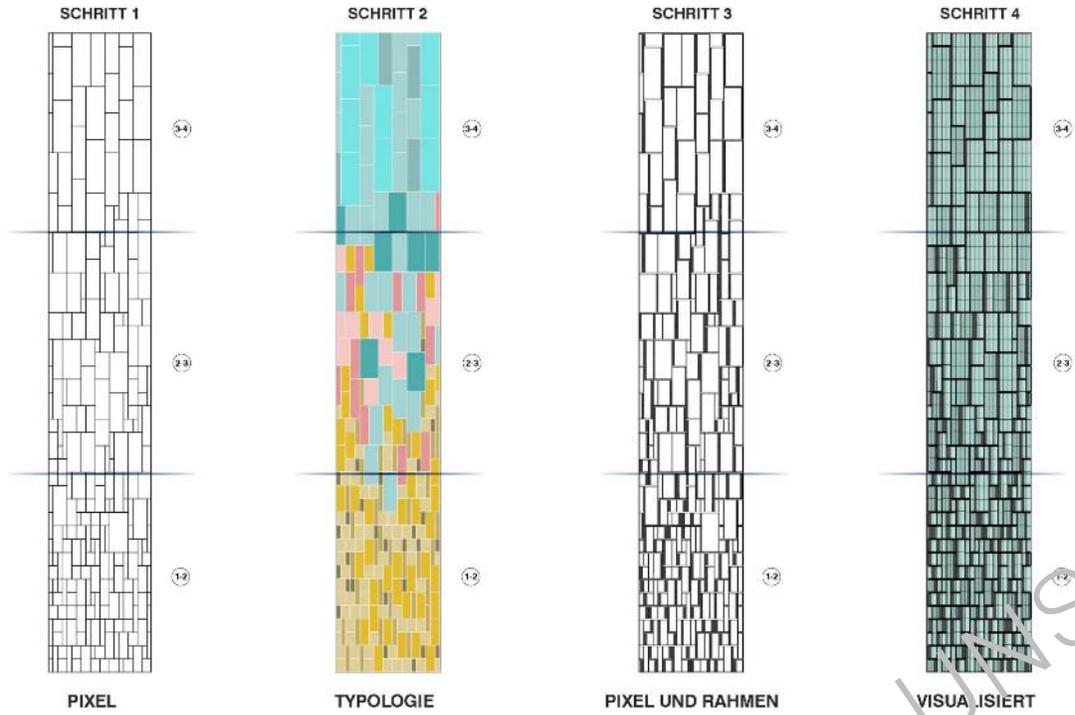
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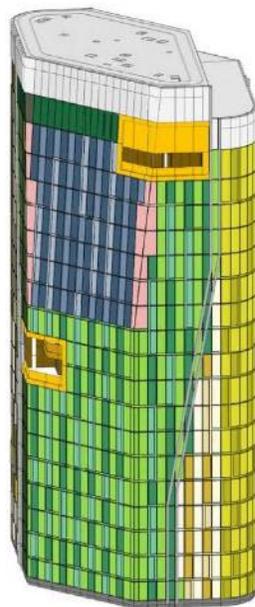




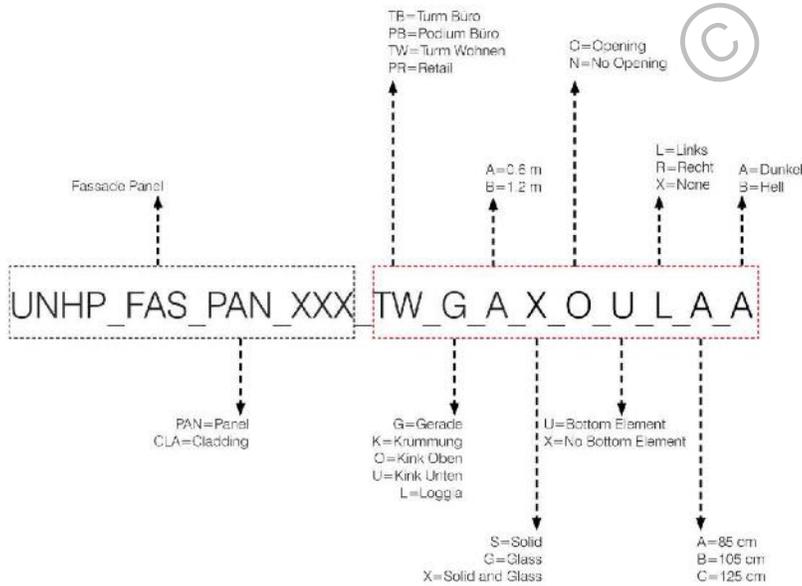


Fassadenelementen

Fassadenelementen 1A	Fassadenelementen TT2
Fassadenelementen 1A.1	Fassadenelementen TT3
Fassadenelementen 1A.2	Fassadenelementen 20/20.1/20.2
Fassadenelementen 1A.3	Fassadenelementen 20A/20B
Fassadenelementen 1A.4	Fassadenelementen 1F
Fassadenelementen 1B	Fassadenelementen 1F1
Fassadenelementen 1B.1	Fassadenelementen 21C
Fassadenelementen 1B.2	Fassadenelementen 22C
Fassadenelementen 1B.3	Fassadenelementen 26A
Fassadenelementen 1B.4	Fassadenelementen 26A.1
Fassadenelementen 1B.5	
Fassadenelementen 1C	
Fassadenelementen 1C.1	
Fassadenelementen 1C.2	
Fassadenelementen 1C.3	
Fassadenelementen 1C.4	
Fassadenelementen 1C.5	
Fassadenelementen 1C.6	
Fassadenelementen 1D	
Fassadenelementen 1D.1	
Fassadenelementen 1D.2	
Fassadenelementen 1E	
Fassadenelementen 1E.1	
Fassadenelementen 1E.2	
Fassadenelementen 1T	
Fassadenelementen 1T.1	



Panel Types of T1 and T4







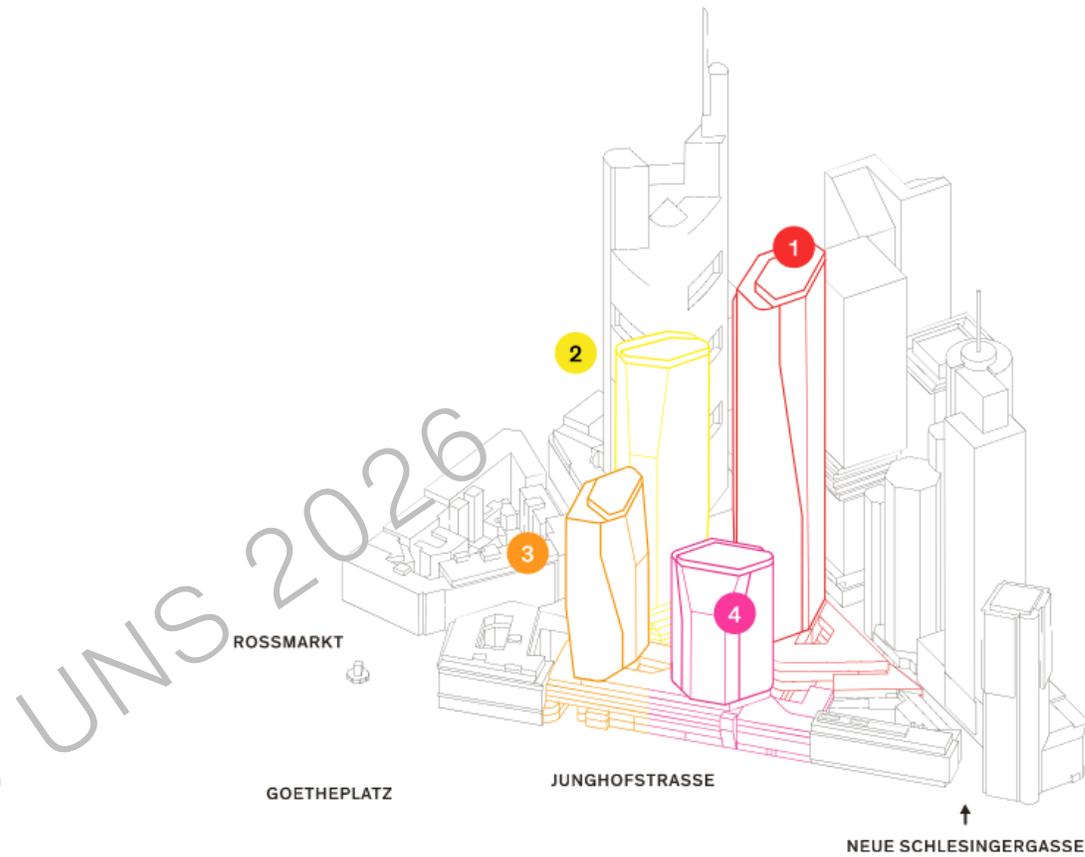
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1 TOWER 1
233 m
Offices
Food hall

2 TOWER 2
173 m
Apartments
Hyatt House

3 TOWER 3
120 m
Condominium apartments
Kimpton Design Hotel

4 TOWER 4
100 m
Offices



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10-EURO-TICKETS FÜR ALLE BIS 25, AB SOFORT.

ORCHESTER
MELIANHONDER

27. JULI
28. JULI
29. JULI
30. JULI
31. JULI

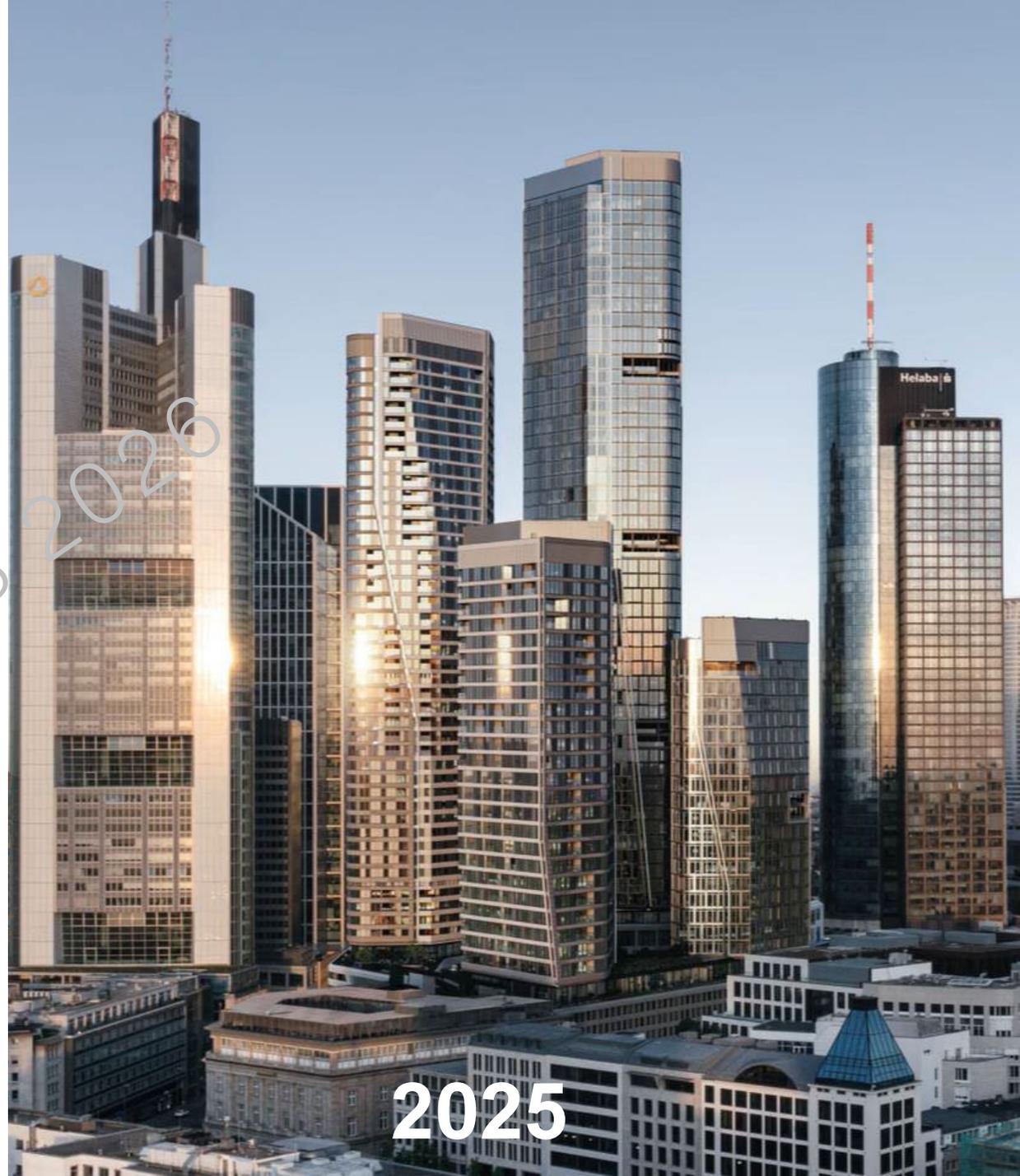
ALTE OPER

UNS





2018



2025

FROM CITIES WITHIN CITIES...



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...TO URBAN ECOSYSTEMS

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THE HISTORY TO TRANSFORM THE FUTURE

18T Mansion

Chongqing, China 2017-2023

Client: GuocoLand

Program: Residential, Amenities

GFA: 230,755 m²

WELL-platinum



Design Approach Human Health & Wellbeing

Key dimensions of WELL Platinum meticulously integrated throughout the design and construction process:



Top 1

largest community clubhouse in China.

Community



6,000 m²

comprise 10 clubhouses that offer spaces for exercises, socializing and community activities.

Thermal Comfort



35%

of the site is landscaped to mitigate the urban heat island effect.

Energy-efficient aluminum panels and hollow low-E glass curtain walls reduce heat gain in summer and heat loss in winter.

Air Quality



PM2.5

filtration and ultra high ceilings ensure good ventilation and clean air.

Acoustic Environment



< 45

decibels ensured day and night by advanced acoustic design both indoor and outdoors.

Movement



372m 24/7

sky running track surrounded by lush garden greenery. ultra-fitness centres, sports halls and a 50m race pool for indoor activities.

Light



85%

window-to-wall ratios and carefully designed floor plan depth,

3.6m

ultra high ceilings maximise natural light, and

270°

panoramic glazing – all work together to maximise daylight and support circadian balance.

Nourishment



Cultivation of culinary, aromatic and edible plants.

Water



Configuration of water purification equipment and direct drinking water facilities.

Mind

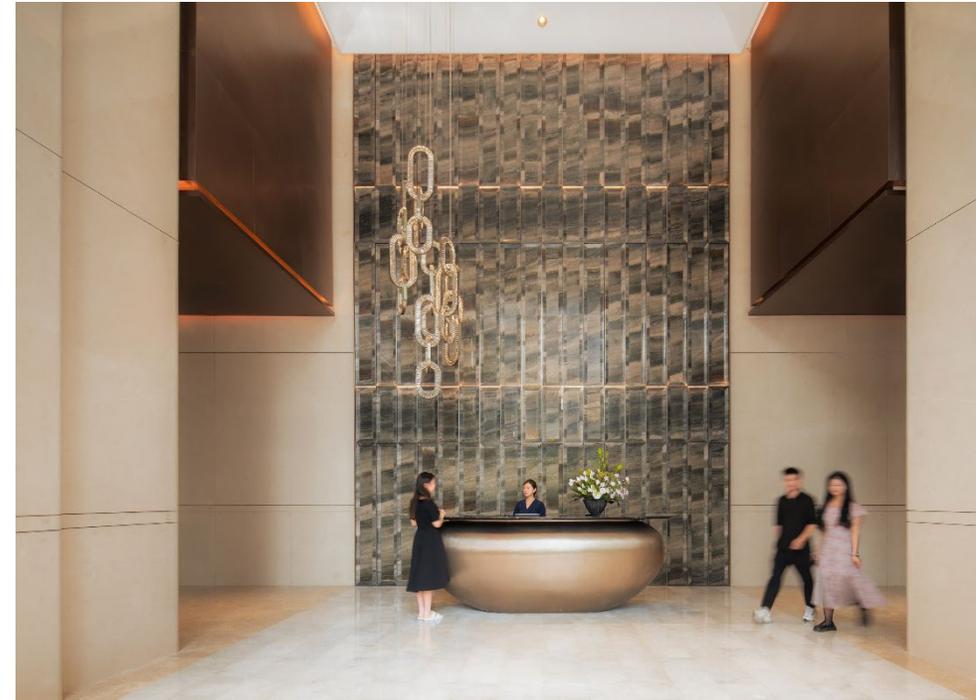


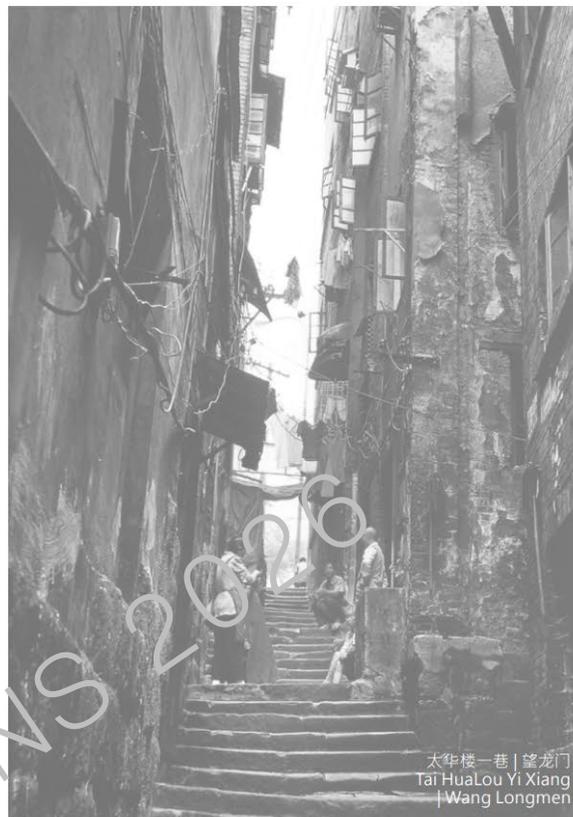
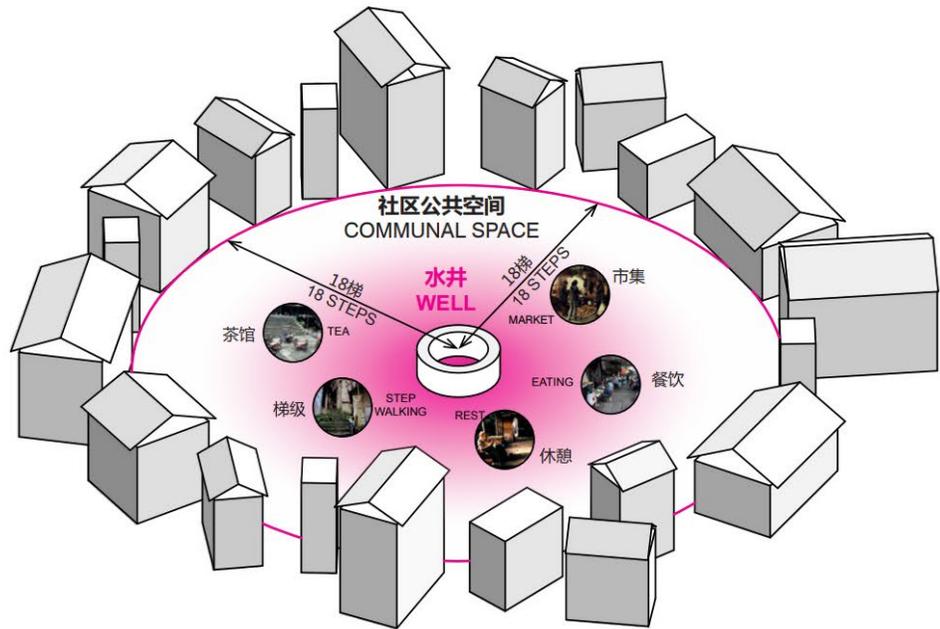
Green, multifunctional spaces for mental relaxation and knowledge sharing.

Materiality

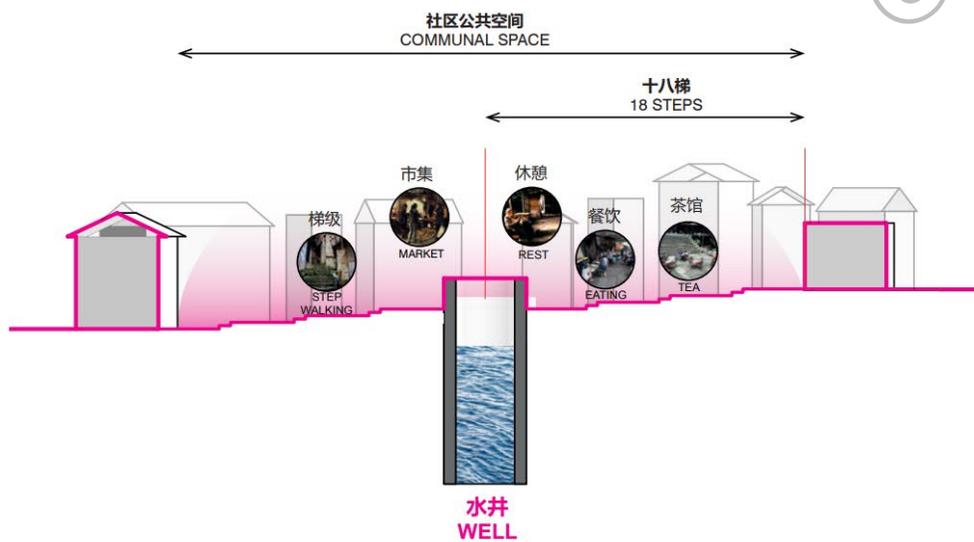


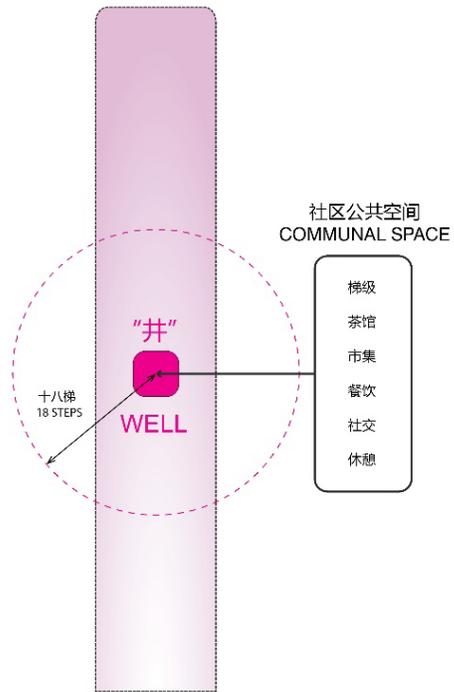
Sustainable, anti-bacterial, and high-performance materials reduce health hazards.



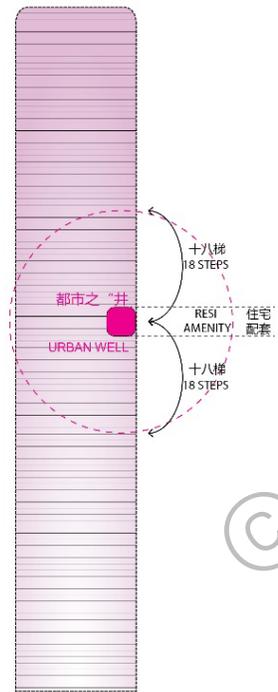


太平楼一巷 | 望龙门
Tai HuaLou Yi Xiang
| Wang Longmen

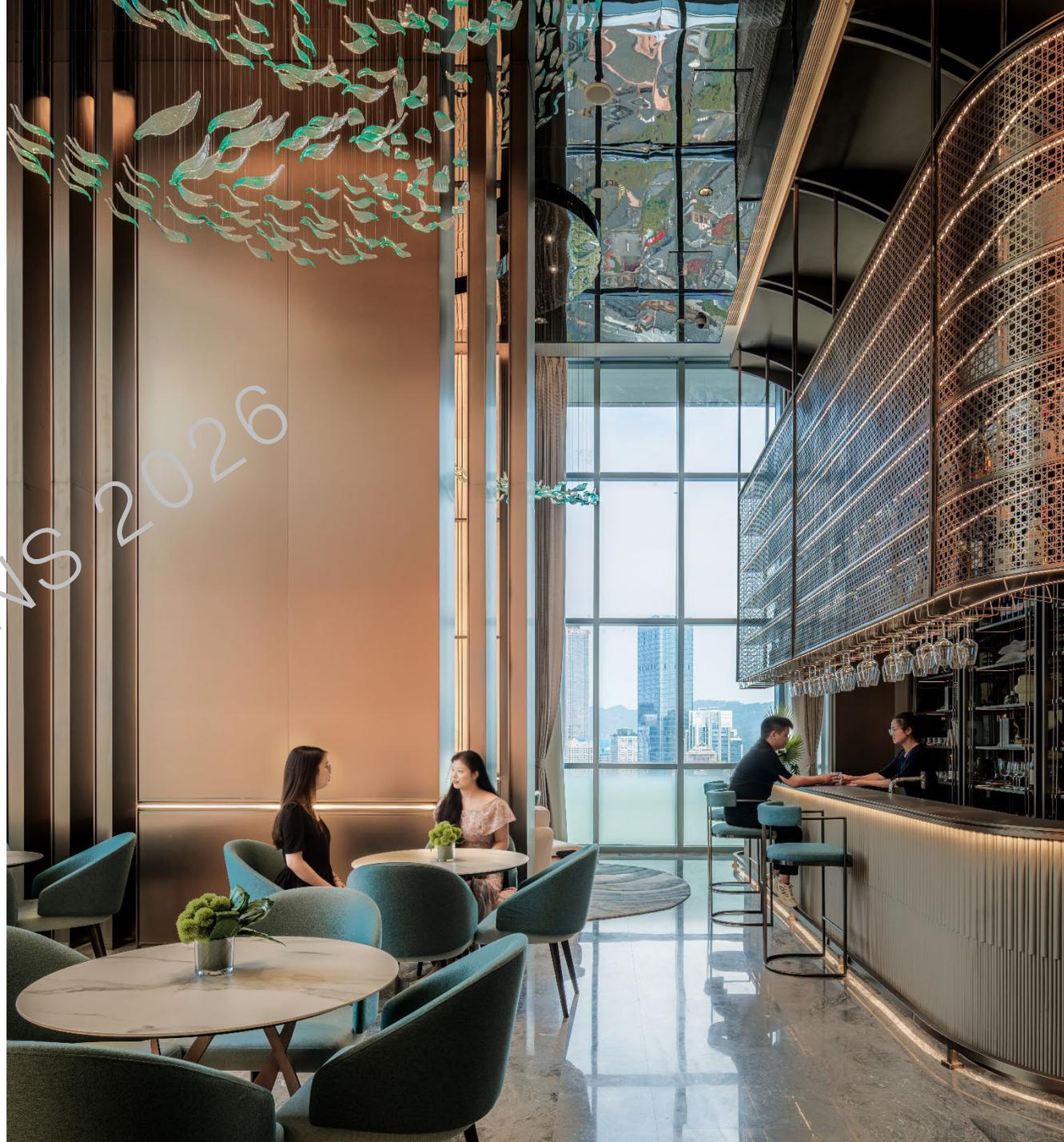




“井” 概念植入塔楼
WELL APPLIED TO TOWER



多处“井”
MULTIPLE WELLS





SPINNING FUTURE GARDENS INTO THE SKY

STH BNK by Beulah, 2018

Melbourne, Australia

253,485 m²







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A BIOPHILIC NEXUS REFLECTING A NEW SMART LIFESTYLE

Hannamdong-4

Seoul, South Korea

262,671.18 m²





TURNING A TRAIN STATION INTO AN ECOSYSTEM

Chamartín Station

Madrid, Spain 2022

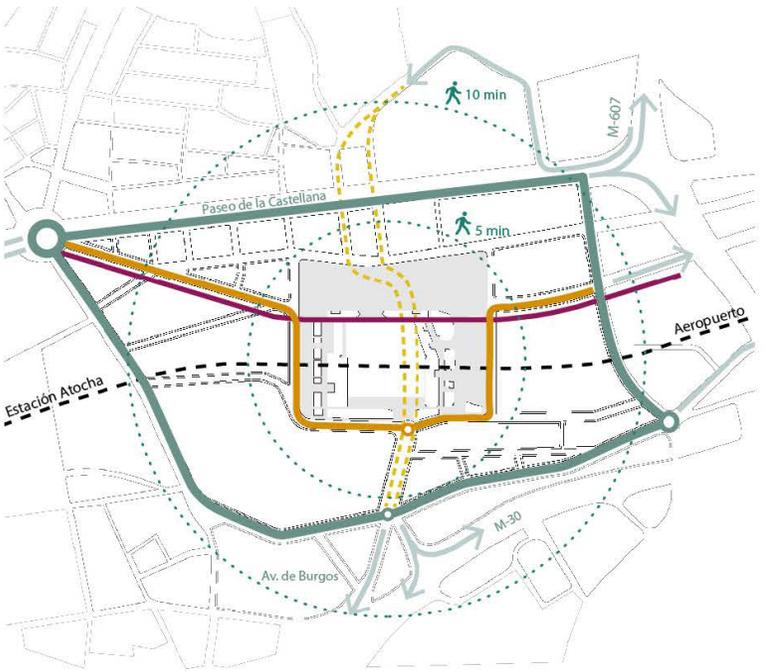
Client: ADIF AV, CreaMNN

Program: Infrastructure, Transport, Offices,
Commercial, Public Space

GFA: 350,000 m²



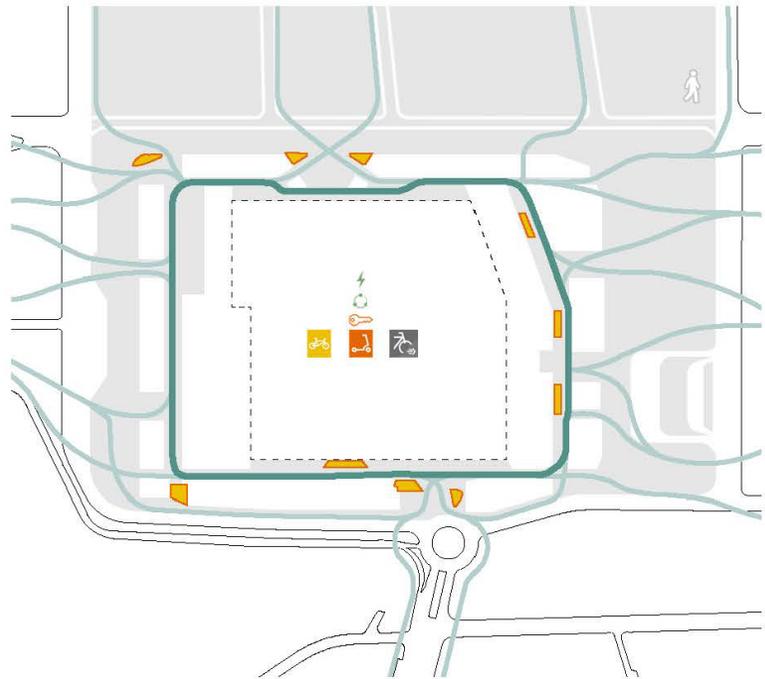
3 scales of mobility



City scale

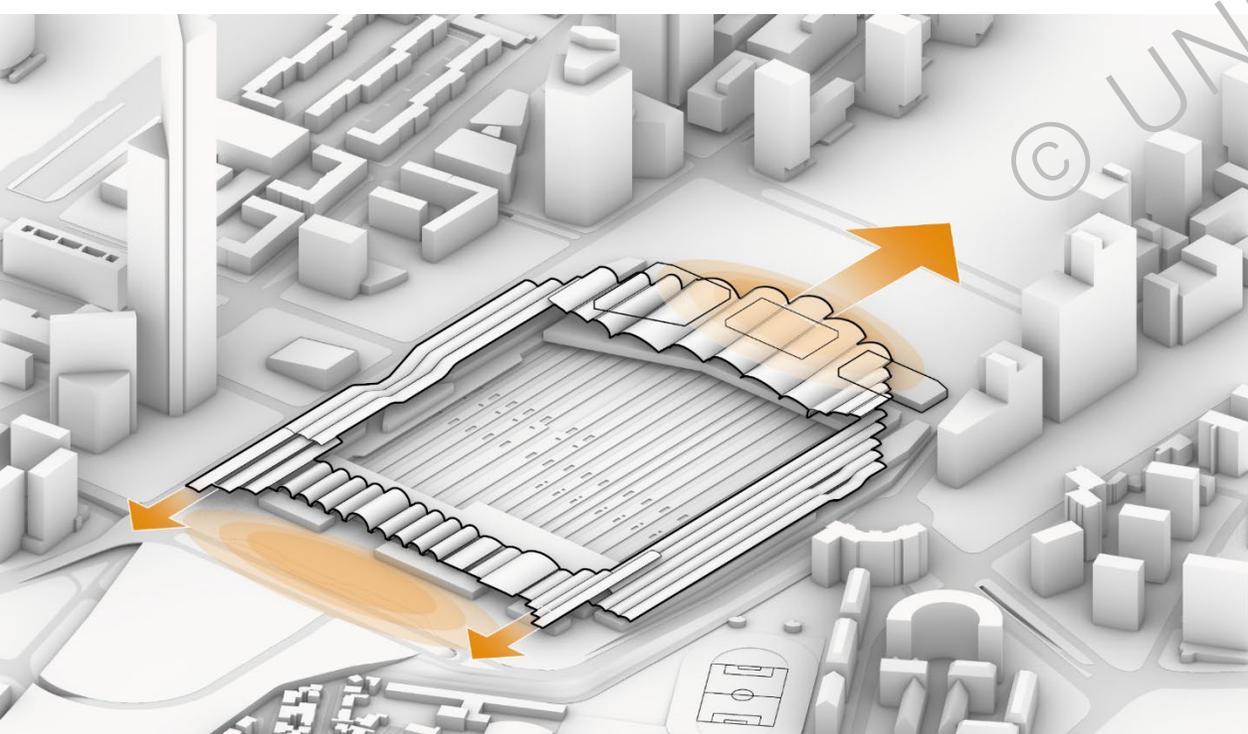
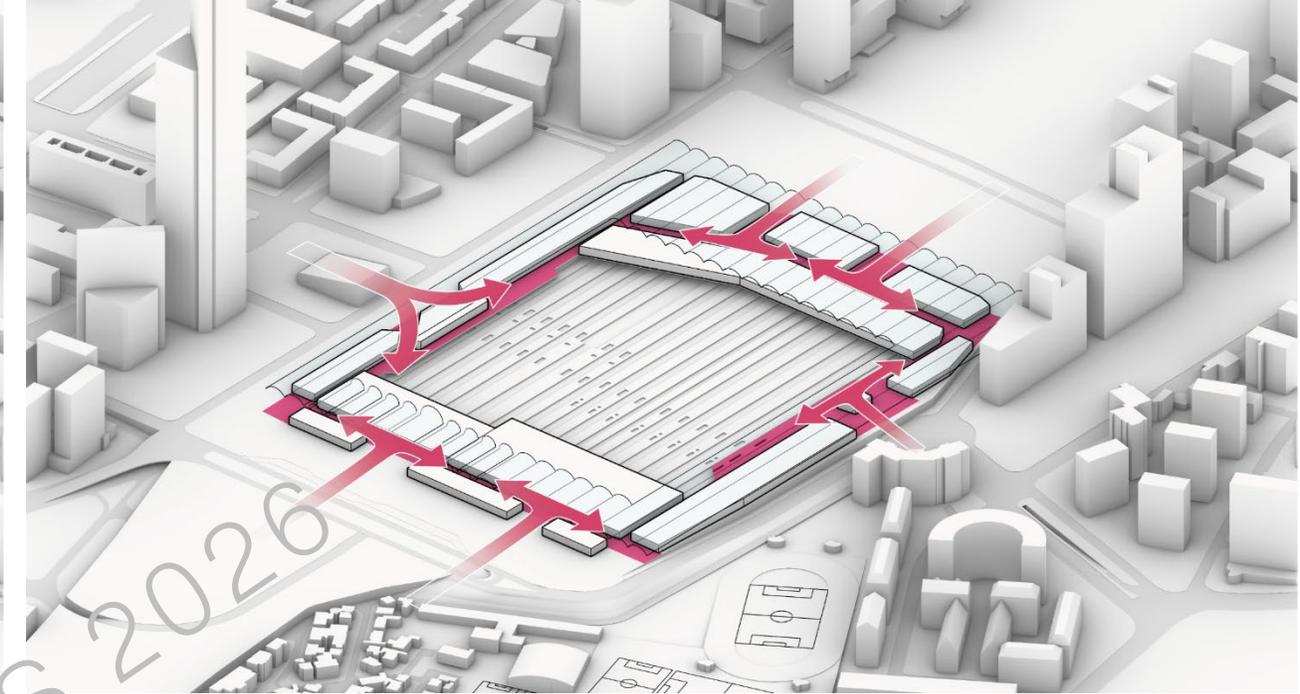
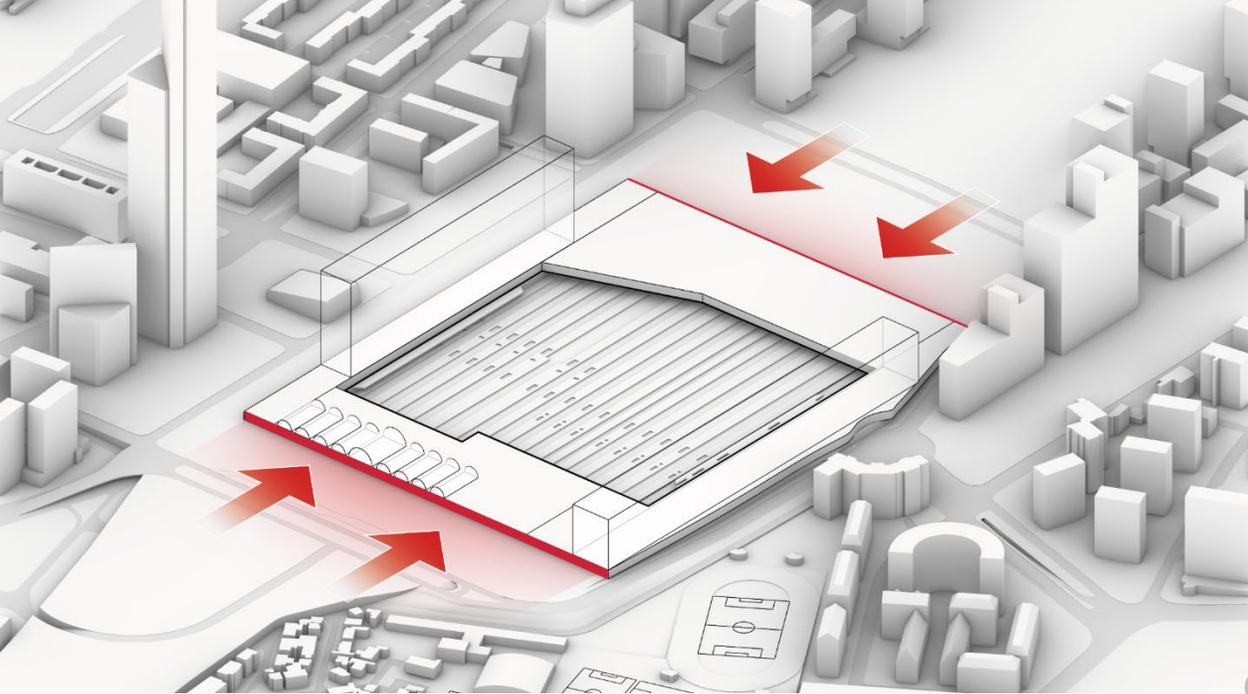


Neighbourhood scale



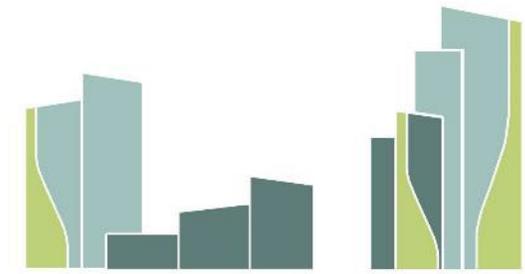
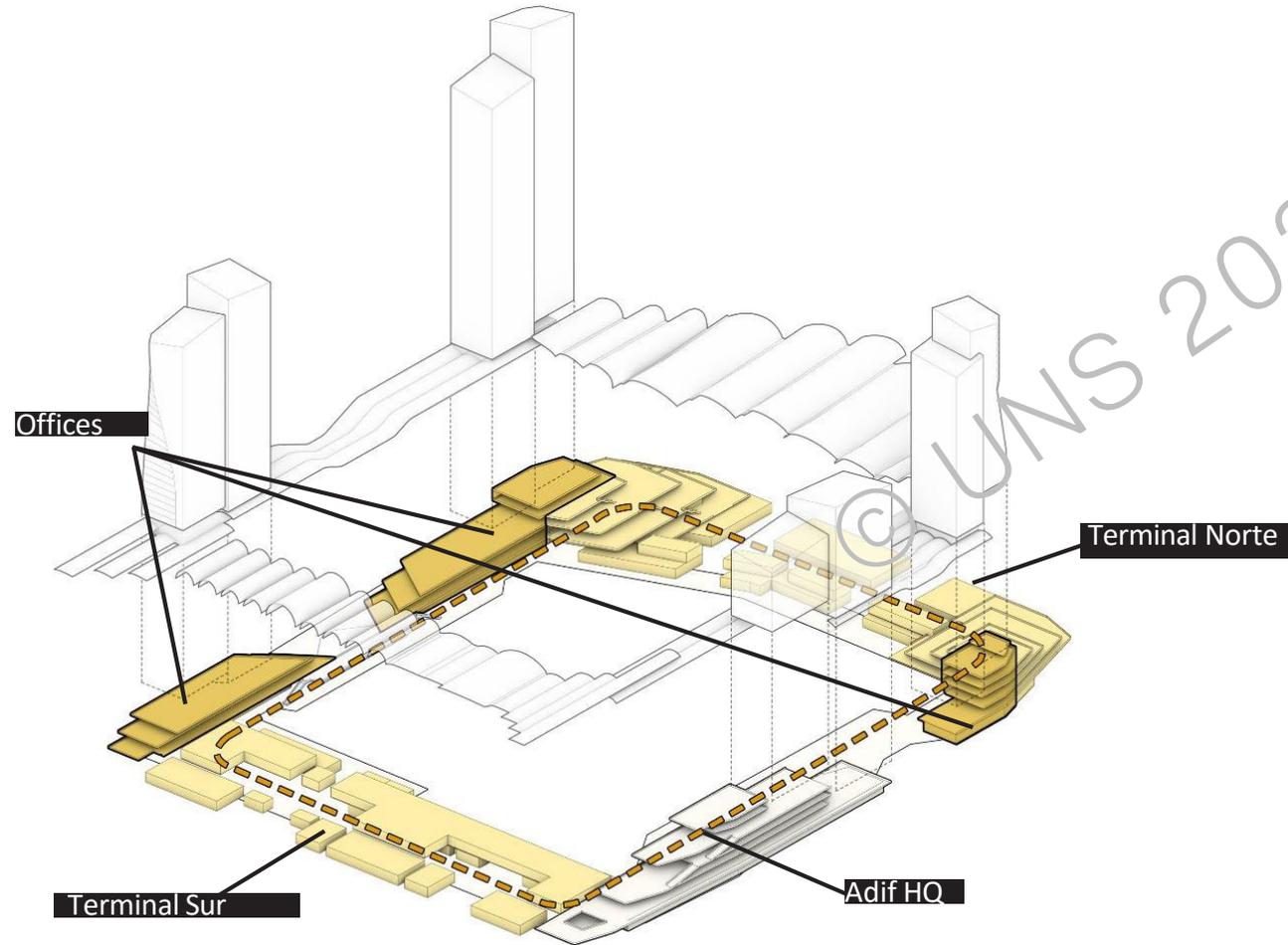
Station scale





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ONE RING OF ACTIVITIES AND THREE DESIGN MOVES



TORRES ESCALA CIUDAD



BÓVEDAS ESCALA ESTACIÓN



TERRAZAS ESCALA HUMANA







2026



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UR
COF



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ESTACION CHAMARTIN - CLAY GARDENS

A CATALYST FOR URBAN HEALTH IN MADRID



UNGS 2026

© MADRID CHAMARTÍN CLARA CAMPOAMOR

REDEFINING TALL BUILDINGS





AS URBAN ECOSYSTEMS

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**WE LOOK BEYOND
ARCHITECTURE**

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