



# RHYTHM SQUARE

by

STUDIO  
VOLCY

Development Review Panel

1 May 2024

**At Studio Volcy, ownership is at the  
forefront of our design process.**

We believe that change happens at the  
intersection of beauty, culture, and  
economic empowerment.



# IMPACT

With a focus on community-centered design, we have successfully partnered with many corporate organizations in the Pittsburgh region.



DESIGN

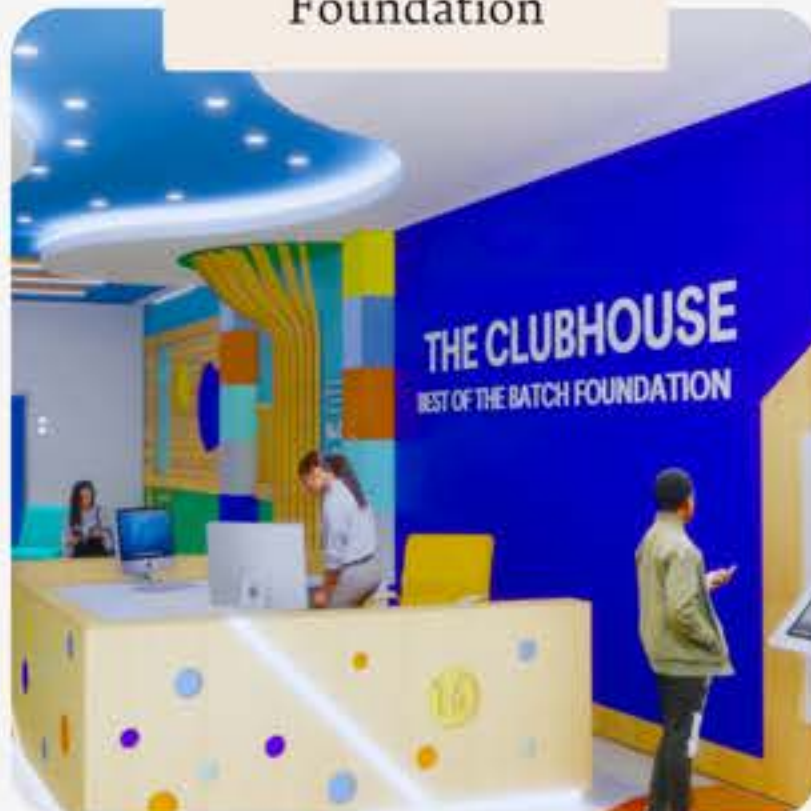


DEVELOPMENT

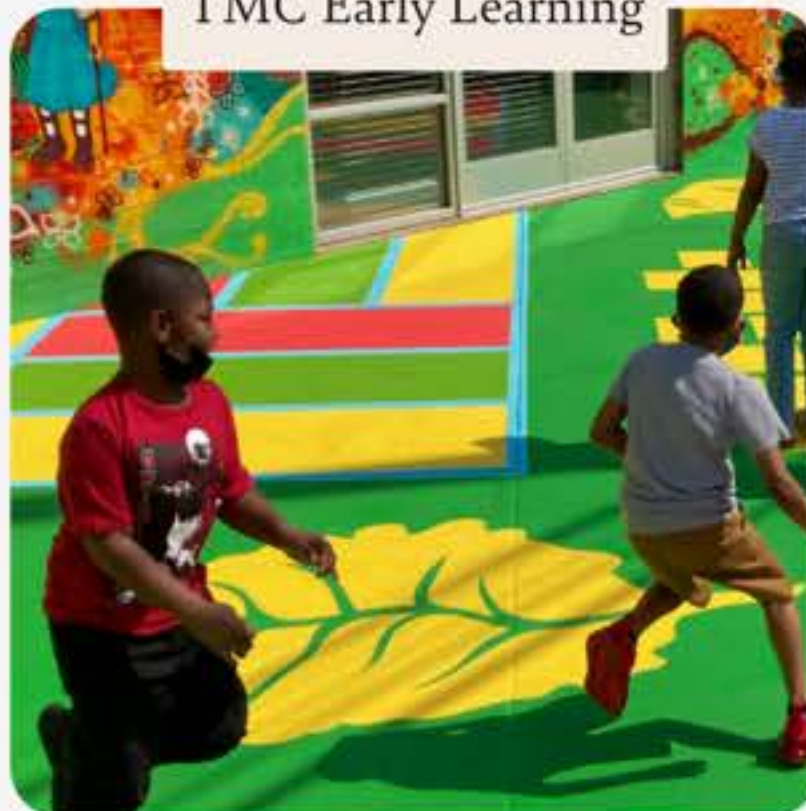


PLACEMAKING

THE CLUBHOUSE  
Best of the Batch  
Foundation



OUTDOOR  
CLASSROOM  
TMC Early Learning



OWN OUR OWN  
Bible Center Church



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0. Project Team & Overview

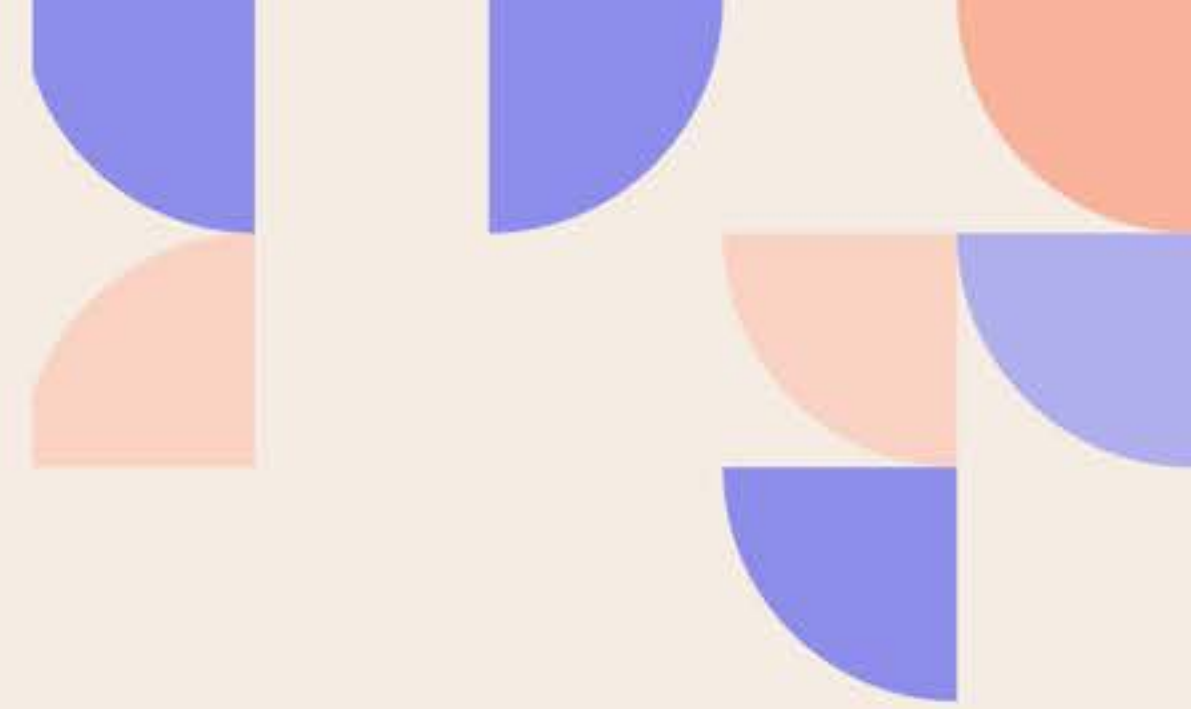
1. Cultural Legacy Goals

2. Housing Development Goals

3. Economic Empowerment & Commercial Development Goals

4. Mobility Parking & Transportation Goals

5. Green & Well-Designed Community Goals



The background is a dark grey color with a subtle, light grey grid pattern. Overlaid on this grid are several geometric shapes: a large diamond shape in the upper left, a large circle in the lower right, and a large square in the lower left. The text is centered horizontally and positioned in the lower half of the image.

# **RHYTHM SQUARE**

## **TEAM & OVERVIEW**

# OUR DESIGN TEAM



**ALICIA VOLCY**  
Owner & Founder



**ROBYN ENGEL**  
Project Manager

## CONSULTANTS



**MEL NGAMI**  
Project Architect



**AMANDA MARKOVIC**  
Architect of Record



**KEN ROLLINS**  
Consulting Architect



**ADAM GUY**  
Consulting Architect



**BETH ECKENRODE**  
Passive House Expert



**JONATHAN IAMS**  
MEP Engineering



**FAIRINGER,  
McCARTY,  
GREY, INC.**



**BRIAN ALMETER**  
Landscape Architect

# SITE & CONTEXT

**RHYTHM SQUARE** IS LOCATED ON CENTRE AVENUE, BETWEEN **SOHO & KIRKPATRICK**



# PROJECT OVERVIEW

## WHAT IS RHYTHM SQUARE?

Rhythm Square is a Creative Hub for Black Artists and Entrepreneurs.



### GHDMP Goal

Development name and artists hub mission honors cultural legacy of arts in the Hill district.

### Space

- ✓ 5 Affordable Apartments
- ✓ Retail Space
- ✓ Shared Gallery Space
- ✓ 12 Artist Studios

### Sustainability

#### BUILDING REVITALIZATION

The project includes renovation of the Centre Lumber Supply Warehouse built to Passive House standards.

### Affordability

- ✓ 3 Apartments **50% AMI**
- ✓ 2 Apartments **60-80% AMI**
- ✓ Studio Rent Subsidies
- ✓ 12 Artist Studios



# PHASE 1



**PHASE 1** CONCEPTUAL RENDERING



1

# CULTURAL LEGACY AT RHYTHM SQUARE

# ART STUDIO SPACE WITH SUBSIDIZED RENT

- Applications for studio space will be prioritized for Hill District-based Artists and/or arts organizations
- Prioritization of Black Artists and Creatives
- Commitment from Studio Volcy to establish artist selection process in concert with the selected operating tenant.

**Goal:** Create expanded retail distribution opportunities with partners in surrounding markets

Possible Opportunities:

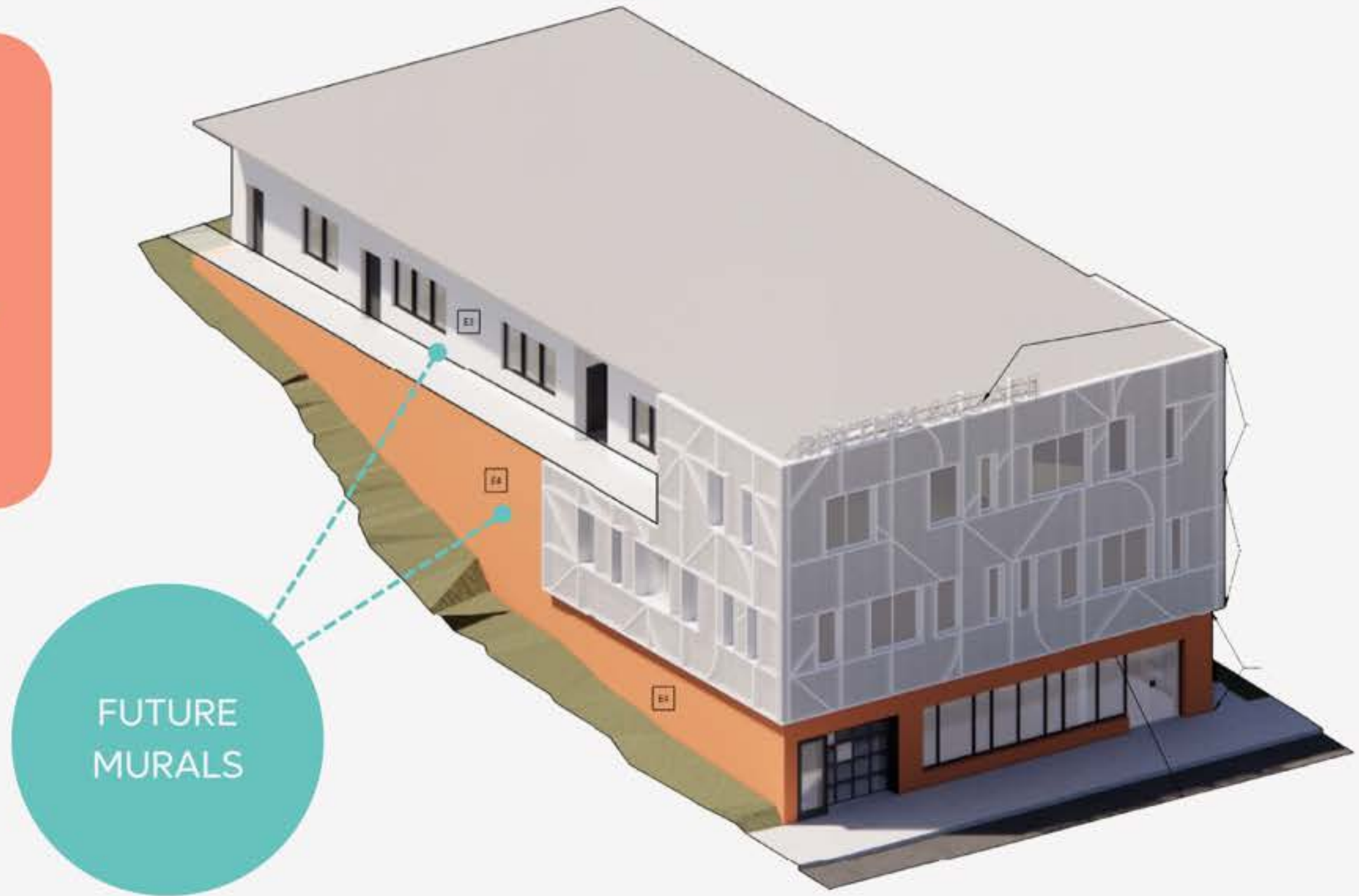
- Oakland Business Improvement District (OBID)
- ORIGINS
- Monmade



# RHYTHM WALLS | MURAL ART

RHYTHM Walls is a collection of exterior and interior murals that features black art created by artists from across the diaspora, honoring the rich cultural legacy of the Hill District.

- Publicized call for artists to be marketed for interested artists.



# RHYTHM X **DESIGN** | BLACK ARCHITECTS RESIDENCY

**RHYTHM X DESIGN** is a transformative six-month residency program designed to support and empower Black architects and designers. This residency program recognizes the significant barriers that Black architects and designers face in the profession. Only 1.9% of architects in the United States are Black, with Black women comprising a mere 0.5%.

We'd like to make historic change to these metrics by housing the residency program right here in the Hill District.

## Historic Fact:

Macedonia Church of Pittsburgh was designed by the first black female architect in Pennsylvania.



# 1. Cultural Legacy Goals Checklist

FURTHER INTEGRATE THE ARTS INTO NEIGHBORHOOD LIFE.

RESIDENCY PROGRAM DESIGNED TO SUPPORT AND EMPOWER BLACK ARCHITECTS & DESIGNERS.

ART STUDIO SPACE WITH SUBSIDIZED RENT.

MURALS THAT FEATURES BLACK ART CREATED BY ARTISTS FROM ACROSS THE DIASPORA TO BUILD ON THE HILL DISTRICT'S LEGACY.

DEVELOPMENT NAME AND ARTISTS HUB MISSION HONORS CULTURAL LEGACY OF ARTS IN THE HILL DISTRICT.

**2**

**HOUSING**

AT RHYTHM SQUARE



# HOUSING WITHOUT DISPLACEMENT

## **EXISTING BUILDING**

LUMBER SUPPLY WAREHOUSE - 8,640 S.F.

The Lumber Supply Warehouse sits on Centre Avenue and will feature artist studios, retail, and 5 affordable apartments.

## **NO DISPLACEMENT**

As far back in the public record as is visible, the existing buildings have only ever been home to retail warehouses, and the remaining parcels have been vacant. No residents will be displaced by this development, nor will any businesses. Formerly, these establishments were owned and operated by Jewish families. After being vacant for more than two decades, we are excited to bring new life to these buildings with the community in mind.



# SUSTAINABLE HOUSING FOR MULTIPLE INCOME LEVELS

## THIRD FLOOR PLAN APARTMENTS

### AFFORDABILITY GOALS

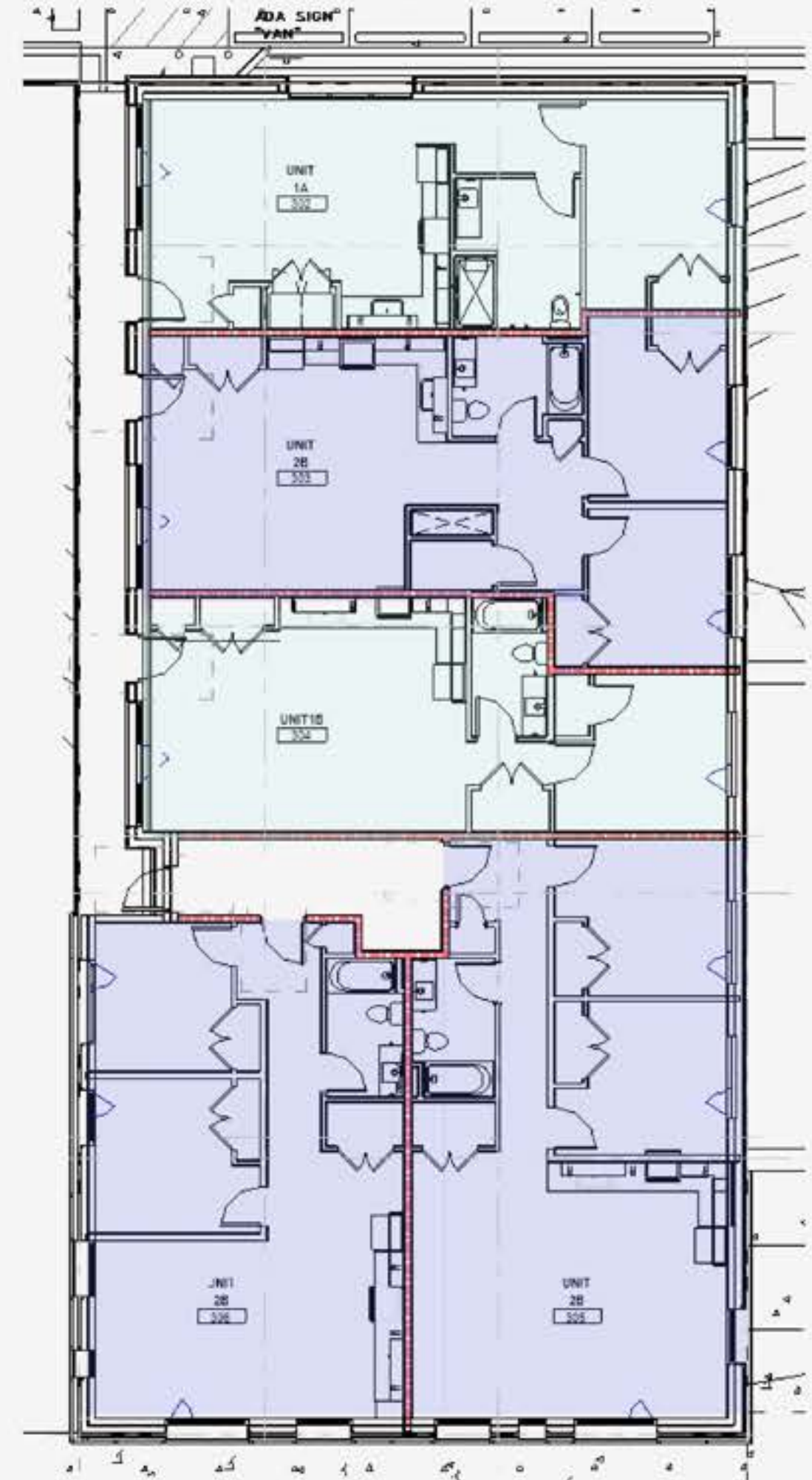
(3) 2 BED/1 BATH  
APARTMENTS

< 50%  
AMI

(2) 1 BED/1 BATH  
APARTMENTS

60-80%  
AMI

ONE UNIT IS TO BE  
RESERVED FOR A  
FORMERLY UNHOUSED  
PERSON



# THIRD FLOOR APARTMENTS



TYPICAL BATHROOM



TYPICAL KITCHEN

# MULTI-DISCIPLINARY RESIDENT SERVICES

## EMPOWERMENT SERVICES PROVIDED TO RESIDENTIAL TENANTS

Residents in our dwelling units may have multiple needs depending on where they are in their lives. For individuals and families in transition, we will offer:

- Case Management
- Financial Literacy/Credit Counseling/Budgeting
- Life Skills Classes for Residential Tenants
- Access to After-school Programs for Youth
- Housing Placement



# 2. Housing Goals Checklist

## HOUSING DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT DISPLACEMENT

### **NO BUSINESS OR RESIDENTIAL DISPLACEMENT**

(5) AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS WHERE NONE WERE PREVIOUSLY AVAILABLE.

NO PRIOR HISTORY OF BUSINESS OR FAMILY DISPLACEMENT ON THESE PARCELS AT ANY POINT.

HIGH QUALITY HOUSING TO BE OFFERED AT MULTIPLE INCOME LEVELS.

EMPOWERMENT FAMILY RESOURCES FOR RESIDENTIAL TENANTS

3

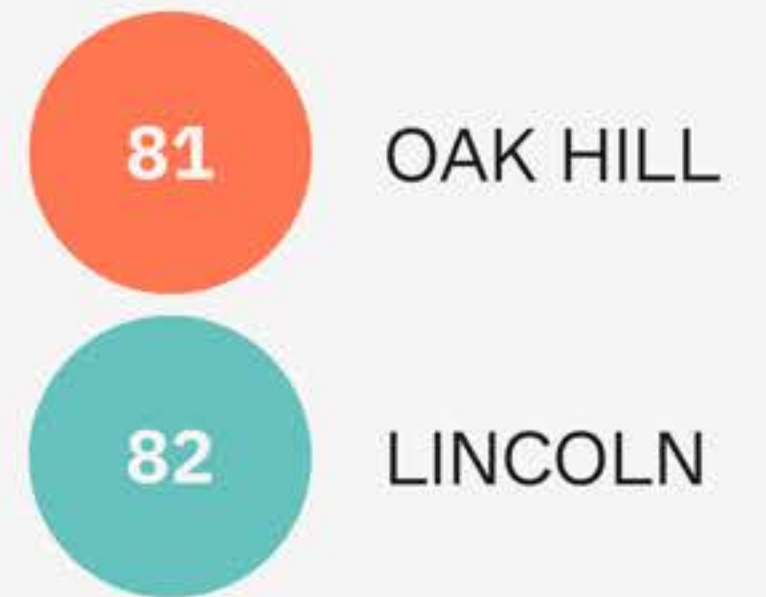
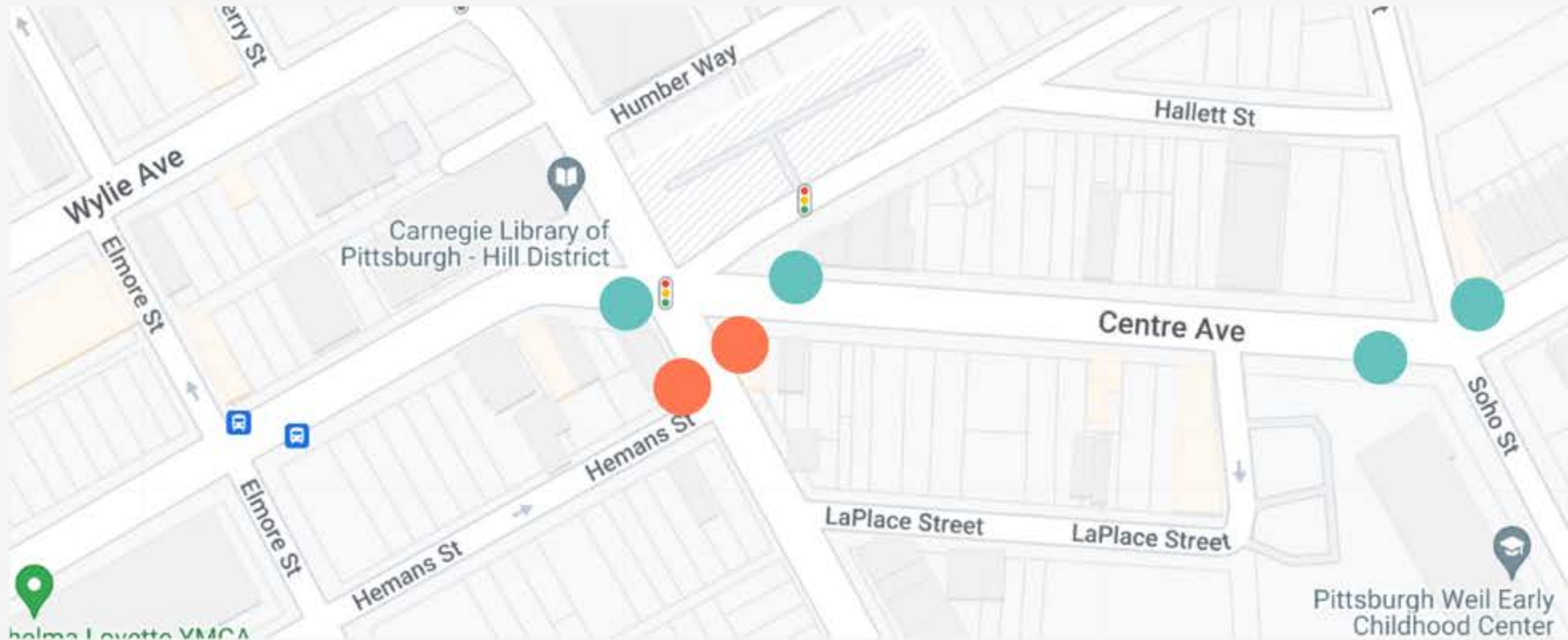
# MOBILITY & TRANSPORTATION AT RHYTHM SQUARE

# MOBILITY TO THE SITE

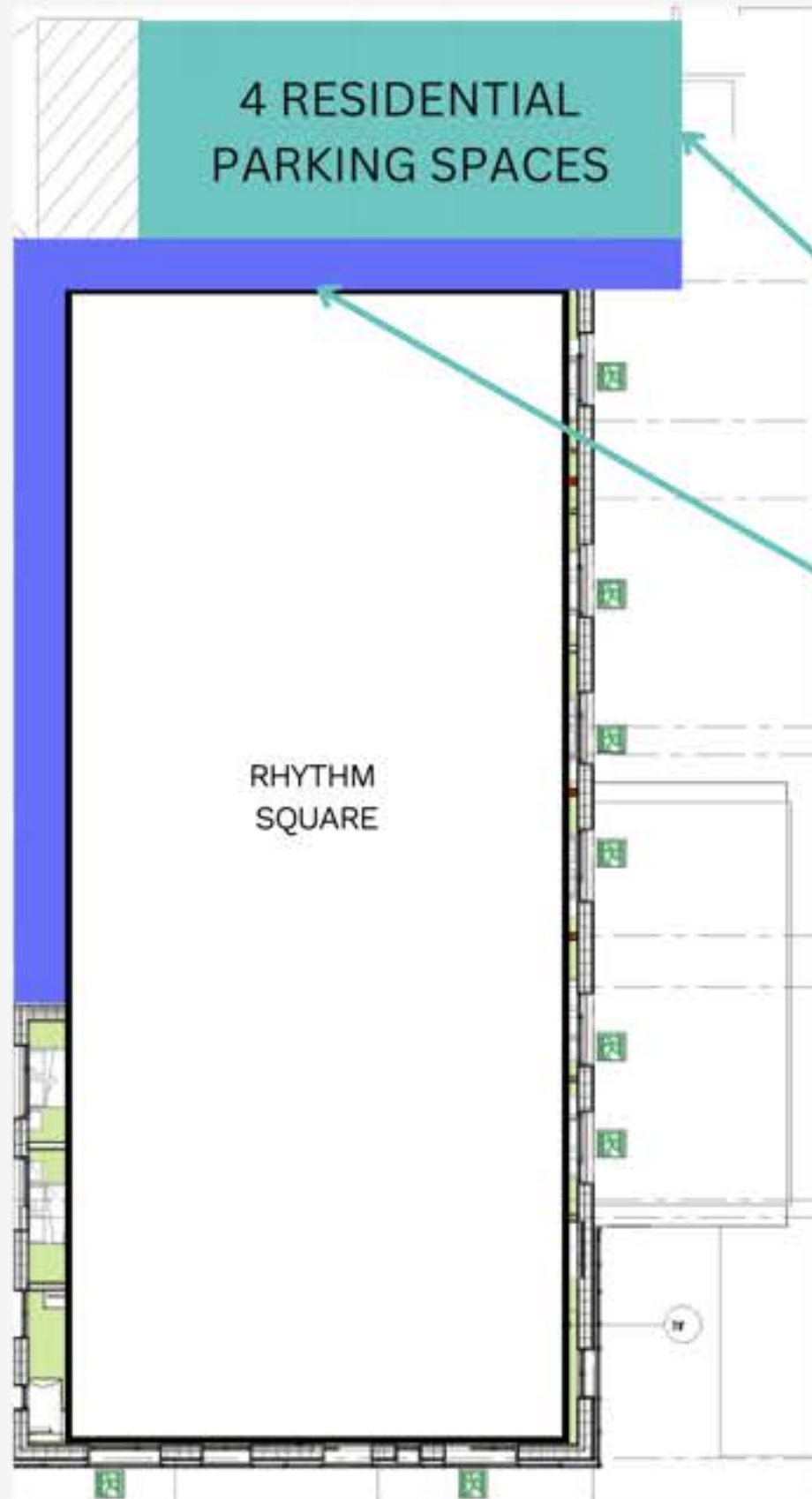
## BUS STOP ACCESS

There are several nearby bus stops that are part of the Pittsburgh Regional Transit network.

The several routes that stop on either end of the 2200 block of Centre Avenue provide connection from the site to Downtown, South Side, Lincoln, and Oakland.



# PARKING & WALK-WAYS



## **GHDMP Goal**

CREATE A WELL-PLANNED PARKING STRATEGY THAT SUPPORTS NEW DEVELOPMENT WHILE MINIMIZING NEGATIVE IMPACTS ON RESIDENTS

- Accessible Parking
- Covered Walkway for accessibility on Hallett Street
- Well-lit parking parking and walkways for added safety
- Bike racks to promote multi-modal transportation and healthy living



# 3. Mobility Goals Checklist

## IMPROVE CONNECTIONS AND SAFETY

ALL PUBLIC SPACES ARE ADA ACCESSIBLE, INCLUDING ONE FULLY ACCESSIBLE HOUSING UNIT AND PARKING SPACE.

SIDEWALKS TO BE REDONE AS PART OF PROJECT SCOPE TO ENSURE APPROPRIATE SLOPING FOR FULL ACCESSIBILITY.

WELL-PLANNED PARKING STRATEGY WITH ACCESSIBLE PARKING AREA AND EXTERIOR LIGHTING FOR SAFETY.

INTERNAL ACCESSIBILITY RAMP & ELEVATOR ADDED TO ENSURE THAT THE BUILDING IS ACCESSIBLE TO ALL RESIDENTS.

4

**ECONOMIC  
EMPOWERMENT &  
COMMERCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
AT RHYTHM SQUARE**

# MBE/WBE PARTICIPATION

32%

## MBE



**KEN ROLLINS**  
Consulting Architect

STUDIO  
VOLCY



**ALICIA VOLCY**  
Developer + Interiors



**ADAM GUY**  
Consulting Architect

48%

## WBE

FULL @ UIVER  
CONSULTING



**MICHELLE CONNOR**  
Affordable Housing Consultant



**BETH ECKENRODE**  
Passive House Expert

# HIRING HILL DISTRICT RESIDENTS & PRIORITIZING MBE/WBE PARTNERSHIPS

We are committed to meeting the GHDMP goals of 30% MBE participation and 15% WBE participation, prioritizing the goal of 1 in 3 hires coming from the Hill District.

## Goals for Phase I...

- ✓ 50 temporary construction jobs
- ✓ 5-6 permanent new jobs
- ✓ 4 jobs retained
- ✓ 1 in 3 Hires from the Hill District



RIVERSIDE  
CENTER FOR  
INNOVATION



Urban  
Redevelopment  
Authority  
of Pittsburgh



# TENANT PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

## REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

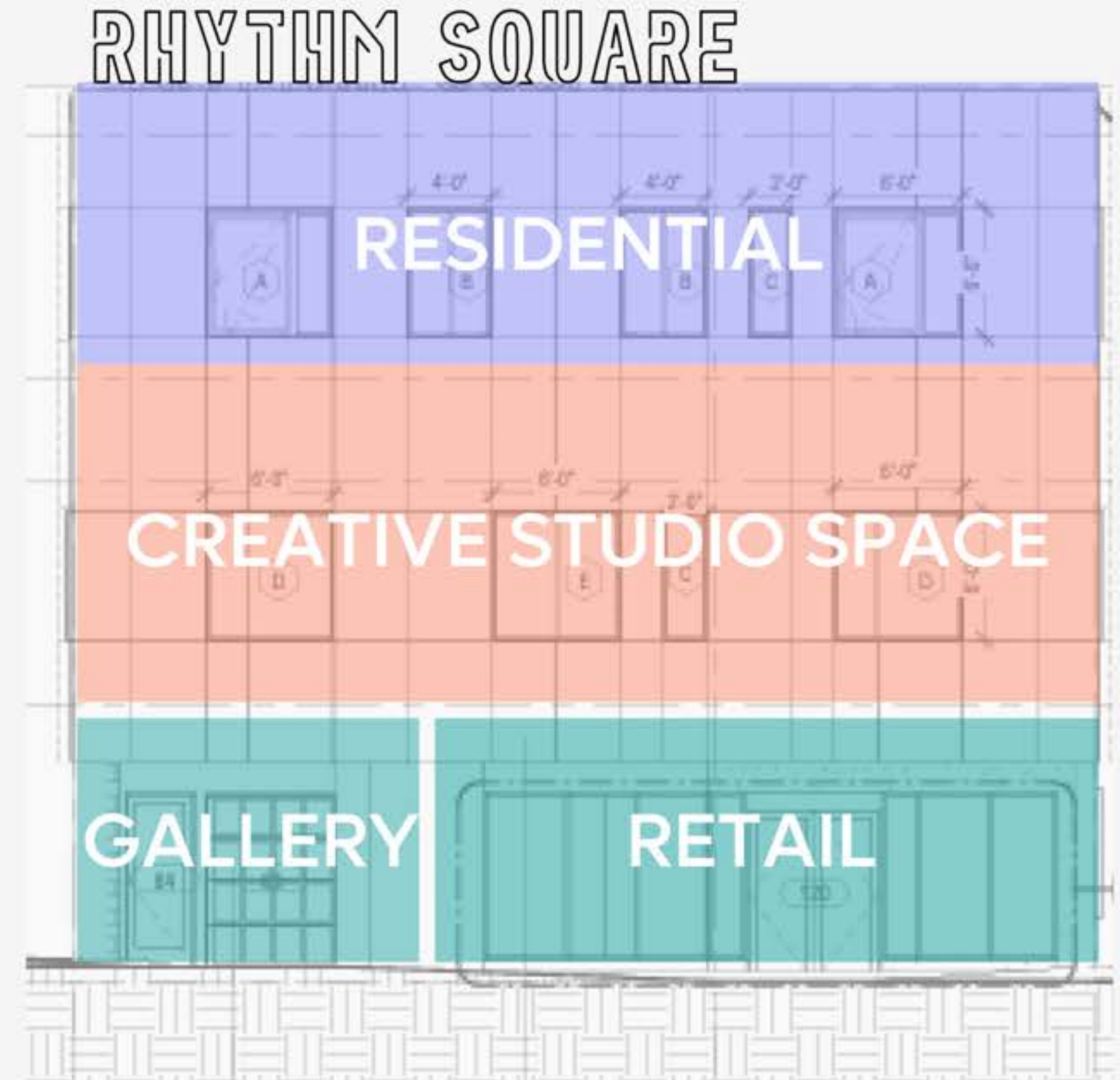
Studio Volcy is seeking partnerships with mission-aligned creative organizations with operations and management of arts & culture programming.



Existing buildings with sufficient light and large rooms can often be converted relatively easily into clusters of art studios/galleries. A

### Potential Creative Programming:

- Arts Incubation
- Retail Incubation
- Retail Growth & Expansion
- Entrepreneurship Support
- Small Creative Business Incubation
- Creative Production
- Gallery Operation



# 4. Economic Goals Checklist

## INCREASE VIBRANCY & INNOVATION

(3) DIFFERENT SPACES AVAILABLE FOR COMMERCIAL USE, INCLUDING RETAIL, EVENT/GALLERY SPACE, AND ARTIST STUDIOS.

(2) FIRST-FLOOR STOREFRONTS WITH PRIME VISIBILITY FROM CENTRE AVENUE.

WBE / MBE PARTICIPATION GOALS TO MEET OR EXCEED 15% WBE AND 30% MBE.

COMMITMENT TO FIRST SOURCE HIRING.

5

**GREEN & WELL-DESIGNED  
COMMUNITIES  
AT RHYTHM SQUARE**

# A CASE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

In Pittsburgh, Black communities are disproportionately impacted by pollution. In 2023, hospitalization rates for asthma in predominantly Black neighborhoods were **2.5 times higher** than in predominantly white neighborhoods.

## PITTSBURGH'S REALITY:

- According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), In 2023, the average Air Quality Index in predominantly Black neighborhoods was 20 points higher than in predominantly white neighborhoods.
- As of 2022, 70% of Pittsburgh's African American population lived within three miles of a hazardous waste facility, compared to only 30% of the white population.
- As of 2023, there was a 40% difference in the availability of green spaces between predominantly Black and white neighborhoods in the city.





# SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

## APPROACH

The project will be built to both Passive House and RESET Air Certification standards. These are two of the most rigorous sustainable certifications available. This could make the project a model for best practices in housing design, green construction/technology and repair/maintenance.

- ✓ Continuous Insulation
- ✓ Airtight Construction
- ✓ Optimized Glazing
- ✓ Minimized Mechanical System

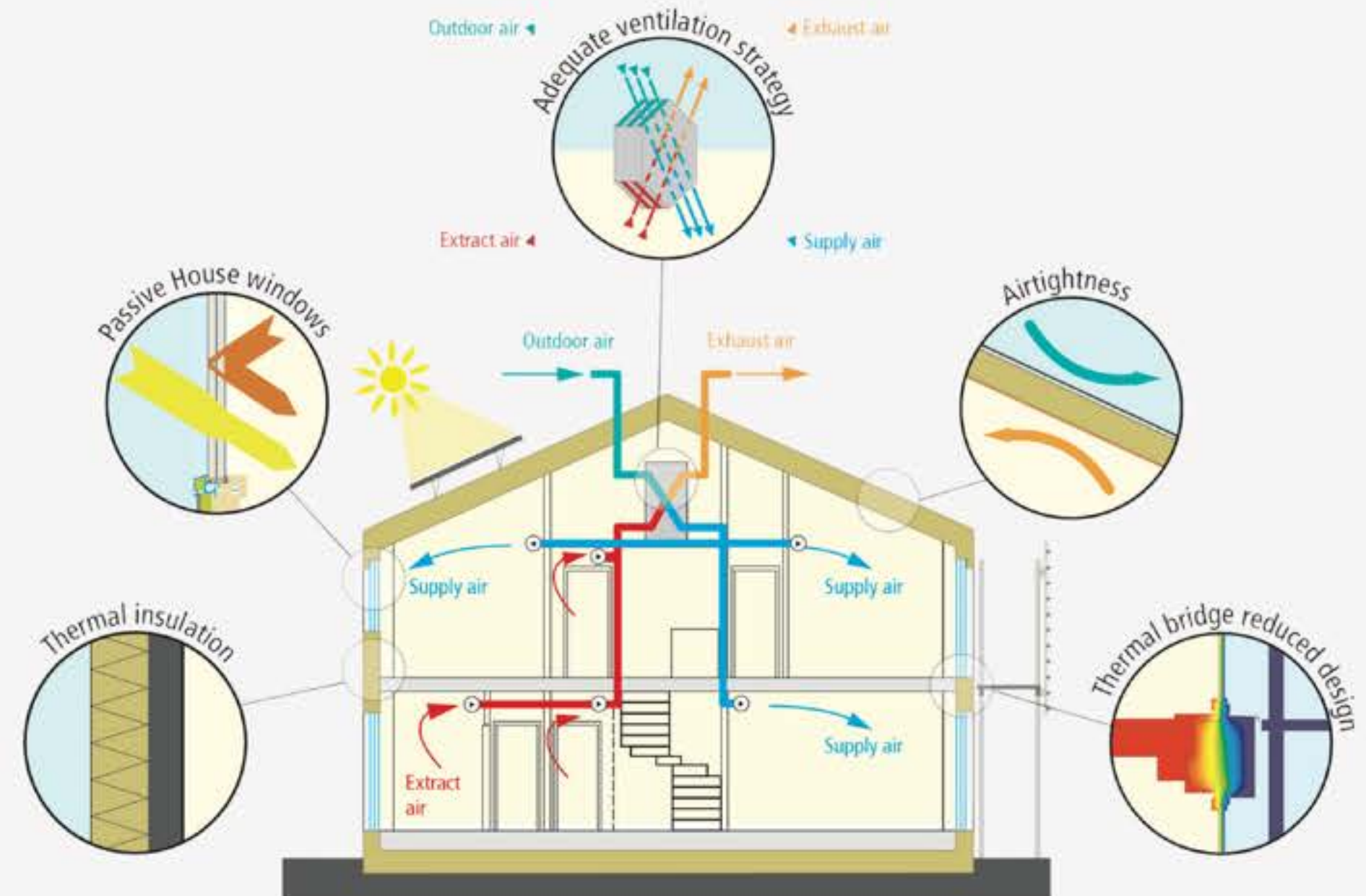


# WHAT IS PASSIVE HOUSE?

Passive building is a set of design principles for attaining a rigorous level of energy efficiency while also creating comfortable indoor living spaces.

## REAL IMPACTS

- Upwards of 80% energy use reduction over traditional building design.
- Constant supply of filtered, fresh air.
- High performance doors, windows, and walls means a quieter building.
- Reduced reliance on outside power.
- Reduced utility costs.
- Far exceeds LEED certified building standards.



# OUTDOOR SPACE



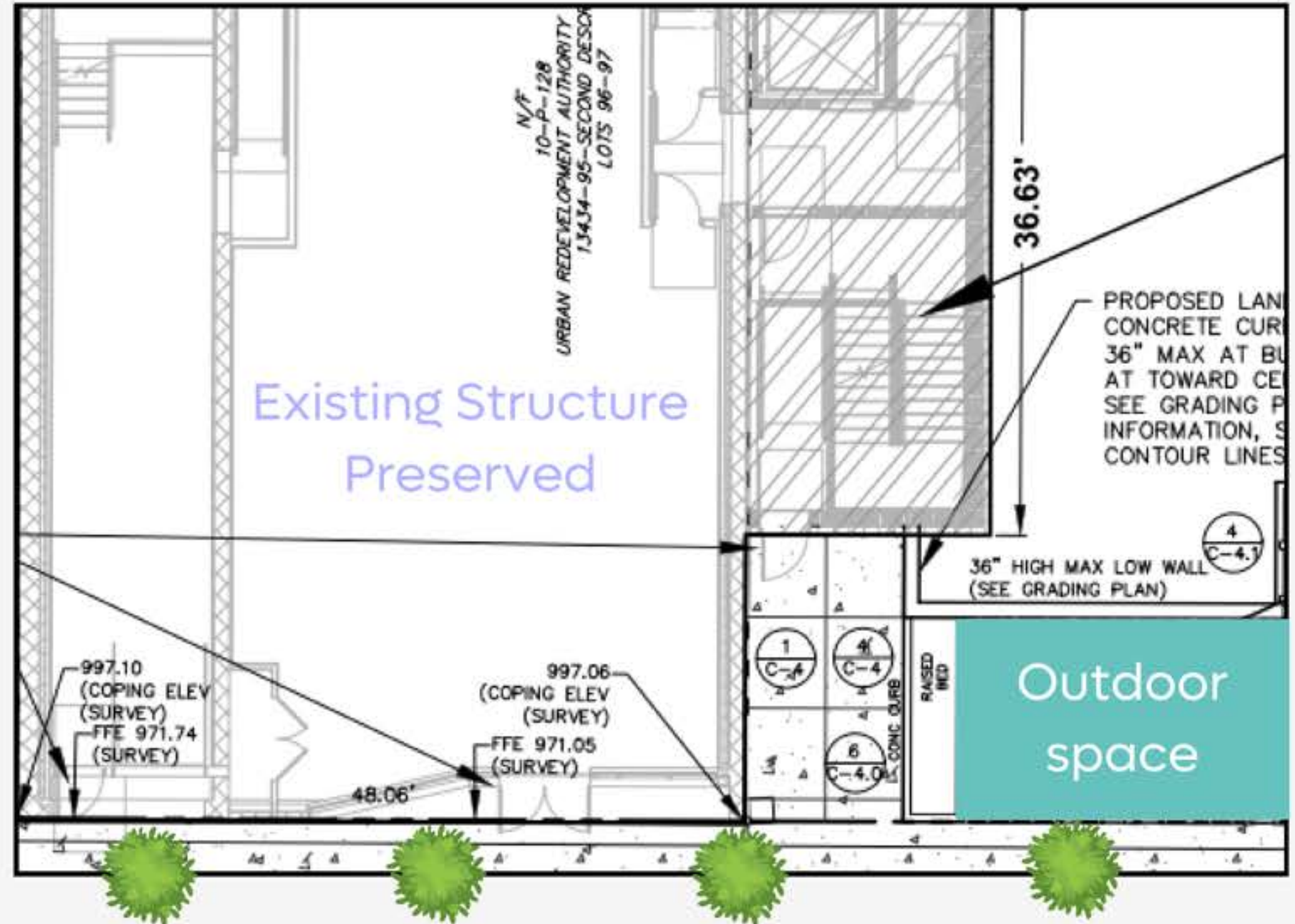
## GHDMP Goal

Improve the quality and availability of open spaces in the Hill District. Connect Hill District open spaces into the citywide and regional green network. Leverage the Hill's natural features.

### Intended Uses

- Outdoor Vending
- Entertainment
- Outdoor Art displays

Hallet Street



Centre Ave

Street Trees

# 5. Green & Well-Built Goals Checklist

FURTHER INTEGRATE THE ARTS INTO NEIGHBORHOOD LIFE.

EXISTING STRUCTURES INTEGRATED INTO NEW CONSTRUCTION.

DEMONSTRATES BEST PRACTICES IN HOUSING DESIGN, GREEN CONSTRUCTION/TECHNOLOGY AND REPAIR/MAINTENANCE.

HIGH-QUALITY FIRST FLOOR EVENT SPACE WITH GARAGE DOOR FOR FULL NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIVITY & NATURAL VENTILATION

# FIRST FLOOR RETAIL SPACE A



# FIRST FLOOR RETAIL SPACE B



# SECOND FLOOR SPACE C



# DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

## COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION

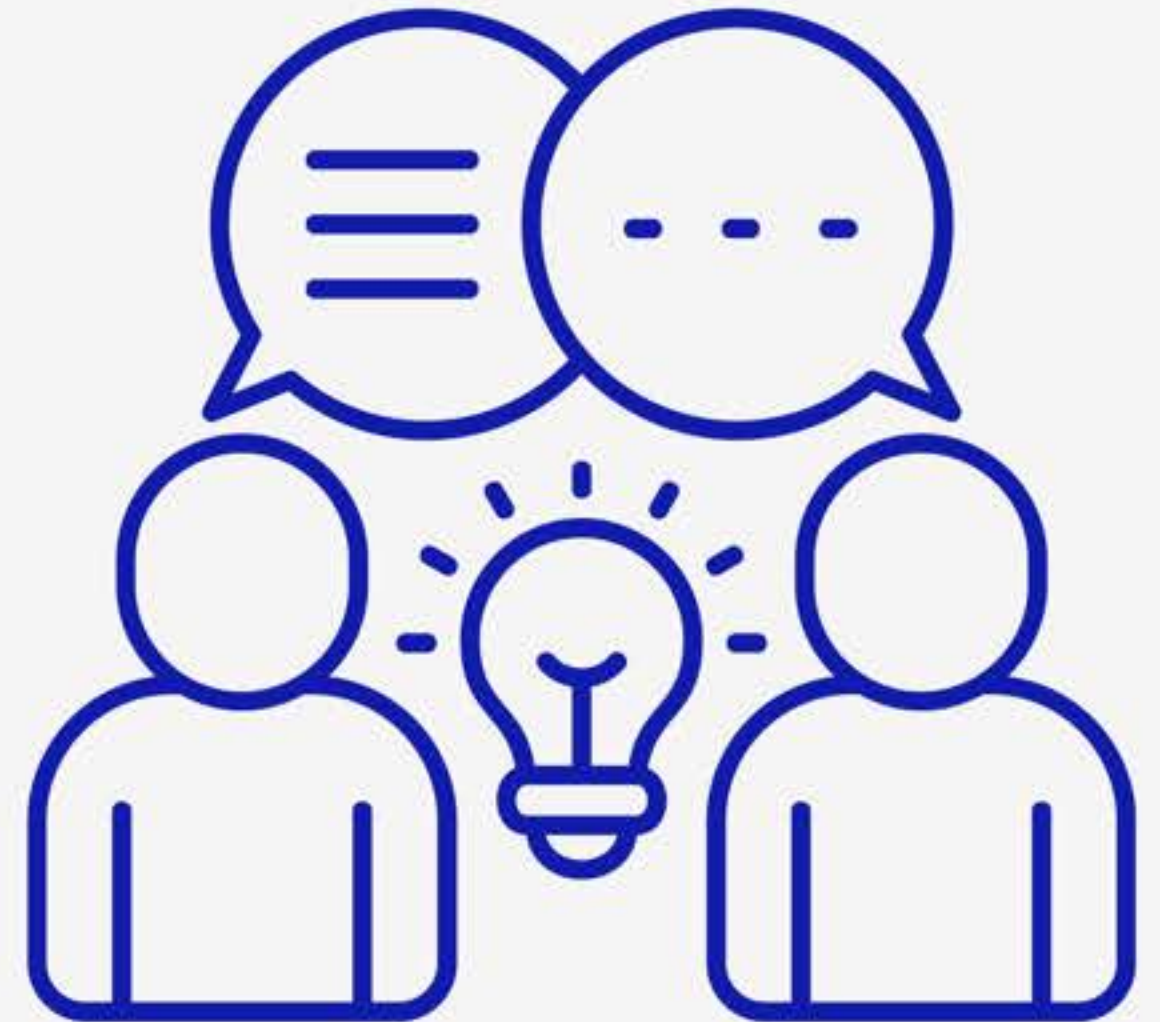
Community revitalization is exciting, and we want to affirm that we will provide periodic public updates throughout the construction process, to ensure the community is informed and empowered as Rhythm Square becomes a reality.



**GHDMP Goal**

## COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

- Dedicated Development Website
- Instagram Updates
- Periodic updates that can be distributed via community organization newsletters.





# Rhythm Square Goals:

REVITALIZATION AT THE INTERSECTION OF  
**BEAUTY, CULTURE, & ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT**

## ✓ 1. CULTURAL LEGACY

RESIDENCY PROGRAM DESIGNED TO SUPPORT AND EMPOWER BLACK ARCHITECTS & DESIGNERS.

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MURALS WITH BLACK ART BY ARTISTS FROM ACROSS THE DIASPORA BUILD ON HILL DISTRICT'S LEGACY.

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EMPOWERMENT FAMILY RESOURCES FOR RESIDENTIAL TENANTS

## ✓ 3. MOBILITY & TRANSPORTATION

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SIDEWALKS TO BE REDONE AS PART OF PROJECT SCOPE TO ENSURE APPROPRIATE SLOPING FOR FULL ACCESSIBILITY.

SIGNAGE TO BE INCLUDED FOR NEARBY BUS ROUTES THAT CONNECT THE HILL DISTRICT TO OTHER NEIGHBORHOODS.

INTERNAL ACCESSIBILITY RAMP & ELEVATOR ADDED TO ENSURE THAT THE BUILDING IS ACCESSIBLE TO ALL RESIDENTS

## ✓ 4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

(3) DIFFERENT SPACES AVAILABLE FOR COMMERCIAL USE, INCLUDING RETAIL, EVENT/GALLERY SPACE, AND ARTIST STUDIOS.

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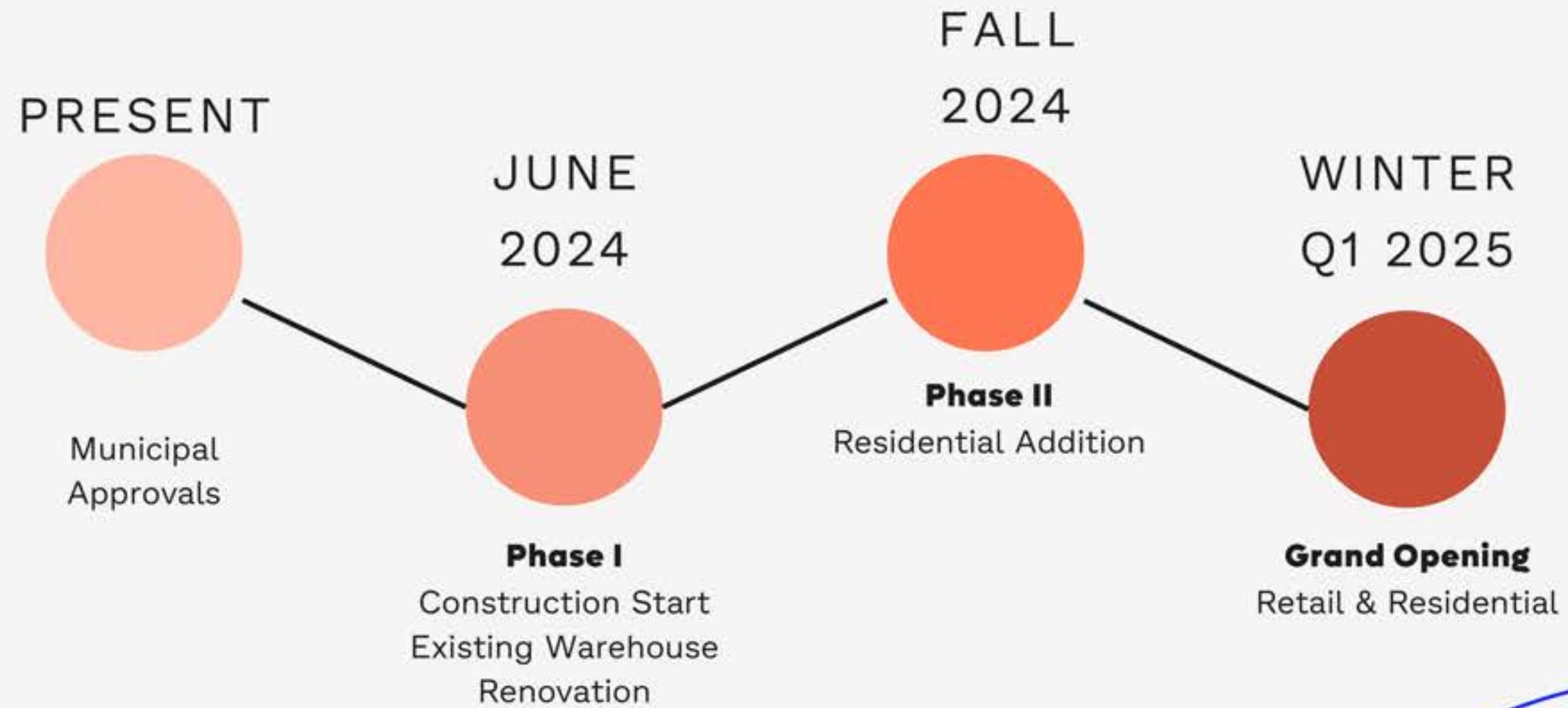
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EXISTING STRUCTURES INTEGRATED INTO NEW CONSTRUCTION.

DEMONSTRATES BEST PRACTICES IN HOUSING DESIGN, GREEN CONSTRUCTION/TECHNOLOGY AND REPAIR/MAINTENANCE.

HIGH-QUALITY FIRST FLOOR EVENT SPACE WITH GARAGE DOOR FOR FULL NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIVITY.

# PHASE 1 TIMELINE





THANK YOU

[www.studiovolcy.com](http://www.studiovolcy.com)

