

CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY AND URBAN TOURISM

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

01

TOPIC

literature review

02

DESIGN AGENDA

precedents

design probe: scale

design probe: mapping

design probe: materials

project goals

03

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

site

program

materials

04

FINAL DESIGN

plans

perspectives

TOPIC

TOPIC //

literature review

Introduction

'Sustainable Tourism' is a concept that has been in practice for fifty years, yet tourism remains unsustainable in most places (Moscardo and Murphy 2539). 'Sustainable Tourism' is generally understood as a division of tourism that is "friendly towards the environment and local people and helps conservation" (Hall and Lew 3). 'Sustainable Tourism' emerged as a potential solution to offset the negative impacts of tourism, which are numerous and well-documented (Moscardo 5). These negatives include, but are not limited to, little to no economic returns for host communities of destination regions, disruption of social structures due to increase of visitors, loss of local cultural elements that differentiate host communities, restricted land access for local residents, and damage to local environmental and ecological conditions (Mowforth and Munt 14). These are some of the factors that contribute to the un-sustainability of tourism, yet 'Sustainable Tourism' does little to minimize the full scope of associated problems (Moscardo 5). To truly address tourism and sustainability, one must begin with the assumption that 'Sustainable Tourism' does not exist (Moscardo 4). By taking this position, new ways of thinking about the roles and responsibilities of tourism can be established. Tourism itself cannot be sustainable, instead, it must be re-conceptualized

as a tool to improve the well-being of host communities and sustain destination regions (Moscardo and Murphy 2540).

Issues with Tourism

To begin to understand the various issues associated with tourism, it cannot be viewed as simple, innocent enjoyment, providing a break from everyday life. Rather, tourism must be viewed as a multidisciplinary subject to be analyzed through sociocultural, economic, and political lenses (Mowforth and Munt 2). Authors Martin Mowforth and Ian Munt argue in their book, *Tourism and Sustainability: Development, Globalisation and New Tourism in the Third World*, that to understand the complex issues associated with tourism, there are three key themes to consider. These themes are uneven and unequal development, relationships of power, and globalization (Mowforth and Munt 4).

The first theme, uneven and unequal development, describes the relationship between high-income and low-income locations (Mowforth and Munt 4). All forms of tourism are best understood through this disparity in development (Mowforth and Munt 4). This disparity is reflected in the fact that most international travelers are from higher-income locations who have the resources

for expensive trips for leisure. The more impoverished someone is, the less likely they are to participate in voluntary travel (Hall and Lew 6). Additionally, this uneven development is reflected in lower-income countries where there is a growing population of wealthy inhabitants who are newly able to participate in tourism (Mowforth and Munt 4). Rich people face less barriers and are given far more privileges in crossing borders than the poor (Hall and Lew 6). Lastly, tourism development is highly uneven geographically, as popular areas for travel go in and out of fashion quickly. This unpredictability can cause devastation for the lower-income communities that have to quickly adapt to rapid increases and decreases of visitors (Mowforth and Munt 4). For example, when the United Kingdom Foreign Office cautioned British tourists against travel to The Gambia as a result of a coup d'état there, the Gambian economy and tourist sector effectually collapsed (Mowforth and Munt 15).

By beginning to understand the uneven and unequal development that exists globally, it becomes obvious why understanding the second theme, the relationships of power, is critical when discussing tourism (Mowforth and Munt 4). The political, economic, and military power of high-income countries in relation to low-income countries is one such relationship that is central to tourism development (Mowforth and Munt 5). Additionally, the power of international multilateral donors,

the power of wealthy inhabitants of lower-income communities destination regions, and the power of tourists themselves are all relationships that must be assessed to understand the complexity of tourism (Mowforth and Munt 5). As one such example, in lower-income destinations, there is a tendency for communities and individuals to take on a subservient relationship to the tourist's interests (Mowforth and Munt 66).

The final theme, globalization, encapsulates the idea that the world is shrinking, and countries across the world are becoming increasingly interdependent. The deepening of globalization means increased travel and accessibility, making global communities more connected than ever (Higgins-Desbiolles 1195). This connectedness is reflected in the fact that the events and activities happening in one place can affect the lives of those very far away. Over time, lower-income communities that were once peripheral to tourism, have been intricately sewed into the fabric of tourism. The range of possible tourist destinations grows larger every year (Mowforth and Munt 14). In this shrinking world, local differences erode steadily and create a homogenized whole (Mowforth and Munt 13).

The term globalization has expanded in meaning. Cultural globalization now exists, and is a term used to describe the emergence of a single global culture (Mowforth and Munt 29). This culture

is reflected in global consumerism, as it relates to international travel and mass tourism (Genc 398). Mass tourism creates a commodified experience, where the tourists are the consuming agents and the destination region's people and culture are the product to be consumed (Higgins-Desbiolles 1195). Traditional cultural elements such as arts, crafts, and rituals change significantly in order to be more available to the consumer (Hall and Lew 118). Low-income communities transform into unidentifiable, overdeveloped, extravaganzas. Differences and refinement are denied while cultural inauthenticity is fervently promoted (Mowforth and Munt 14).

This increased interdependency has also allowed for the globalization of environmental issues. Over the last fifty years, concern for the impact that tourism has on the environment and natural issues has grown (Moscardo 8). Just as lower-income communities have been drawn into tourism, notions of sustainability have been put onto these communities, and often disproportionately (Mowforth and Munt 20). With this, new forms of tourism have arisen, seeking to distinguish themselves from the mainstream, and offer solutions to the numerous issues of mass tourism. Thus, the idea of 'Sustainable Tourism' was born (Mowforth and Munt 25).

Overview of 'Sustainable Tourism'

When 'Sustainable Tourism' first garnered interest, it presented the opportunity for an exciting and new style of holiday (Mowforth and Munt 1). 'Sustainable Tourism' promises environmental beauty and ecological and cultural diversity off-the-beaten path (Mowforth and Munt 69). Tourists take comfort in the fact that they participate in culturally enhancing experiences while preserving fragile, exotic, and threatened landscapes (Moscardo and Murphy 2540). Tourists crave these 'authentic' experiences in remote and untouched places (Genc 397). This travel is almost exclusively to lower-income countries and is promoted to the middle and upper-middle-classes (Moscardo and Murphy 2540). Key players in 'Sustainable Tourism' often portray activities as 'no-impact', 'responsible', 'low-impact', 'green', 'environmentally friendly' or some other term that conveys the same message (Mowforth and Munt 29). All forms of 'Sustainable Tourism' claim to share a level of concern for the potential overdevelopment of a destination and attempt to take into account what they consider to be the negative impacts of tourism (Mowforth and Munt 23).

The issues surrounding the current standards of 'Sustainable Tourism' are extensive and complex, however three major issues are identifiable: environmental concerns, tourist-centric

experiences, and one-size-fits all solutions. Each will be discussed briefly.

First, 'Sustainable Tourism' focuses primarily on immediate, environmental concerns of the destination region (Tekalign et al 3). In doing so, 'Sustainable Tourism' ignores almost every other dimension of sustainability (Moscardo and Murphy 2540). The public perception of sustainability is most often solely related to ecological sustainability, thus, ignoring and minimizing the actual tourist impact on the local environment (Mowforth and Munt 104). In this way, 'Sustainable Tourism' also fails to consider the larger global system that tourism is a part of. Environmental impacts exist well beyond the limits of the destination region and must be considered if tourism is to contribute to global sustainability (Moscardo and Murphy 2540).

Second, 'Sustainable Tourism' is tourist-centric, allowing for the tourist to be central to the planning and development processes (Moscardo and Murphy 2539). For this reason, market needs remain the core driver of 'Sustainable Tourism', with the ultimate end goal being a profitable tourist sector. Being market driven severely limits the capacity for tourism to contribute to sustainable development, instead, 'Sustainable Tourism' then becomes about sustaining the tourism machine to increase its longevity (Moscardo 8). Tourism is always assumed to be viable, no matter the location, so

destination regions are assessed in terms of resources and assets it can provide to support a potential tourist market (Genc 398). In this regard, 'Sustainable Tourism' is an 'industry', operating according to the various interests and demands of the tourist (Higgins-Desbiolles 1195).

Third, 'Sustainable Tourism' is dominated by external drivers that ignore the subjective nature of sustainability to create a one-size-fits-all solution that disempowers local stakeholders. (Moscardo and Murphy 2540). 'Sustainable Tourism' guidelines and standards are created by academics and institutions that view sustainability as an objective concept supported by science, thus ignoring the social and cultural nature of sustainability. These guidelines are used by agents outside of destination regions. These agents analyze and set objectives for the planning of 'Sustainable Tourism' (Moscardo and Murphy 2542) without being an active or local member of the designated potential destination community. This process disempowers residents and business owners of the host community and fails to create solutions that address the specific goals and needs of the destination region (Moscardo 5). 'Sustainable Tourism' appoints groups external to the destination region to define what sustainability means for the host community (Moscardo and Murphy 2542) and decide how it should be achieved and evaluated (Mowforth and Munt 110).

Reconceptualizing Tourism as a Tool to Support Sustainability

The current standards of 'Sustainable Tourism' fail to achieve sustainability at multiple levels (Moscardo and Murphy 2539). 'Sustainable Tourism' cannot exist, as tourism in its own right cannot be sustainable. Instead, tourism must be reconceptualized as one possible tool that can support sustainability (Moscardo and Murphy 2544). It is important to note that there is no single, all-encompassing, universal definition of sustainability. Rather, sustainability can only be defined in terms of the context. At the bare minimum, sustainability must be addressed at cultural, social, environmental, and economic levels of the host community and destination region (Mowforth and Munt 104).

There is a qualitative approach to sustainability, one that addresses the main issues of 'Sustainable Tourism' through "explicit recognition and assessment of tourism in terms of [...] quality of life" (Moscardo and Murphy 2541). Quality of life refers to the notion of human wellbeing measured by social indicators. To live a gratifying life, key basic needs must be met though access to various forms of capital. The main types of capital that contribute to a higher quality of life include financial, natural, built, social, cultural, human, and political.

Conclusion

To determine how to achieve sustainable development in a destination region, assessment must be done at several levels. Some of the groups that are necessary to include in conversation beyond the individual tourist, are stakeholders in the regions that tourists leave, stakeholders in transit regions, stakeholders in destination regions, and people who work in tourism, (Moscardo and Murphy 2544). All sides must be considered even if all stakeholders are not to be equally involved in the decision-making process as stakeholders each bring their own unique perspectives, attitudes, and behaviors to the table (Tekalign et al 4). As mentioned earlier, the negative impacts of tourism extend beyond the limits of the destination region, and tourism must work to address all negatives.

Tourism planning and development must move away from external agents in favor of engaging and empowering local stakeholders. The host community must be placed at the center of the discourse; it is critical to establish clear communication from the beginning. To build the community's capacity to effectively make decisions, requires the development of effective leaders, networks, and partnerships as well as education about tourism and its impacts. The goal is to be able to work with the community to assess its needs and how, if at all, tourism could act as a possible solution.

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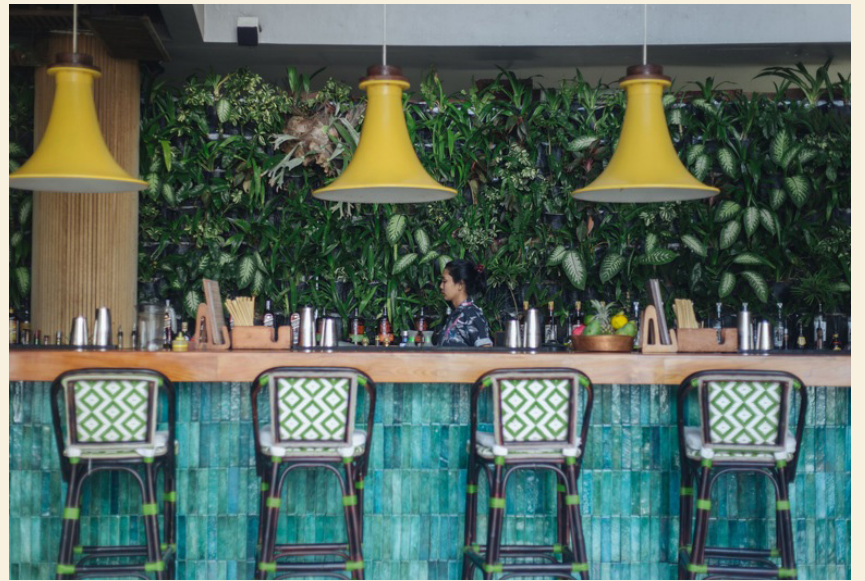
DESIGN AGENDA

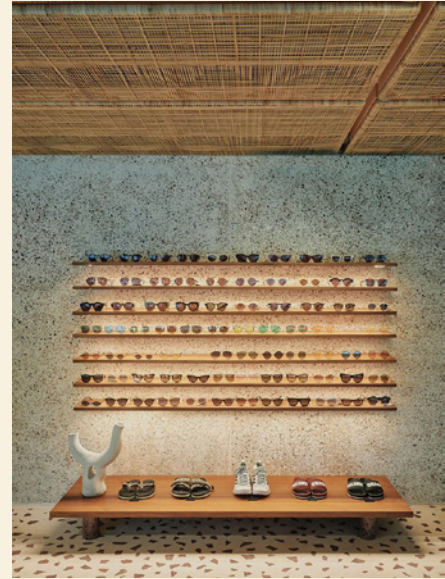
DESIGN AGENDA //

precedents



Desa Potato Head // OMA
Bali, Indonesia









Made in Madrid // Izaskun Chinchilla Architects
Madrid, Spain

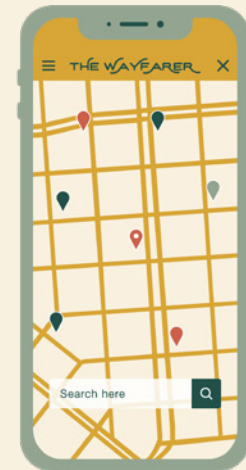
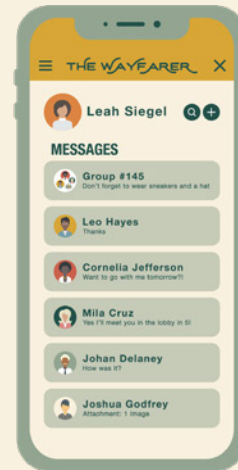
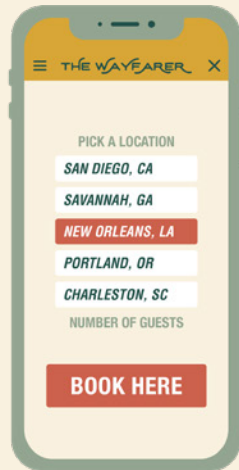
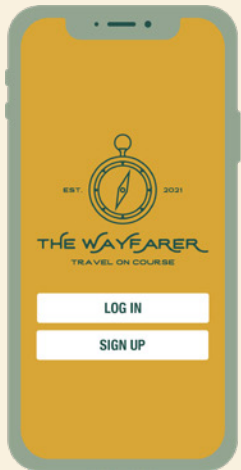




Casa Jalapita // DAFdf Arquitectura y Urbanismo
Tabasco, Mexico

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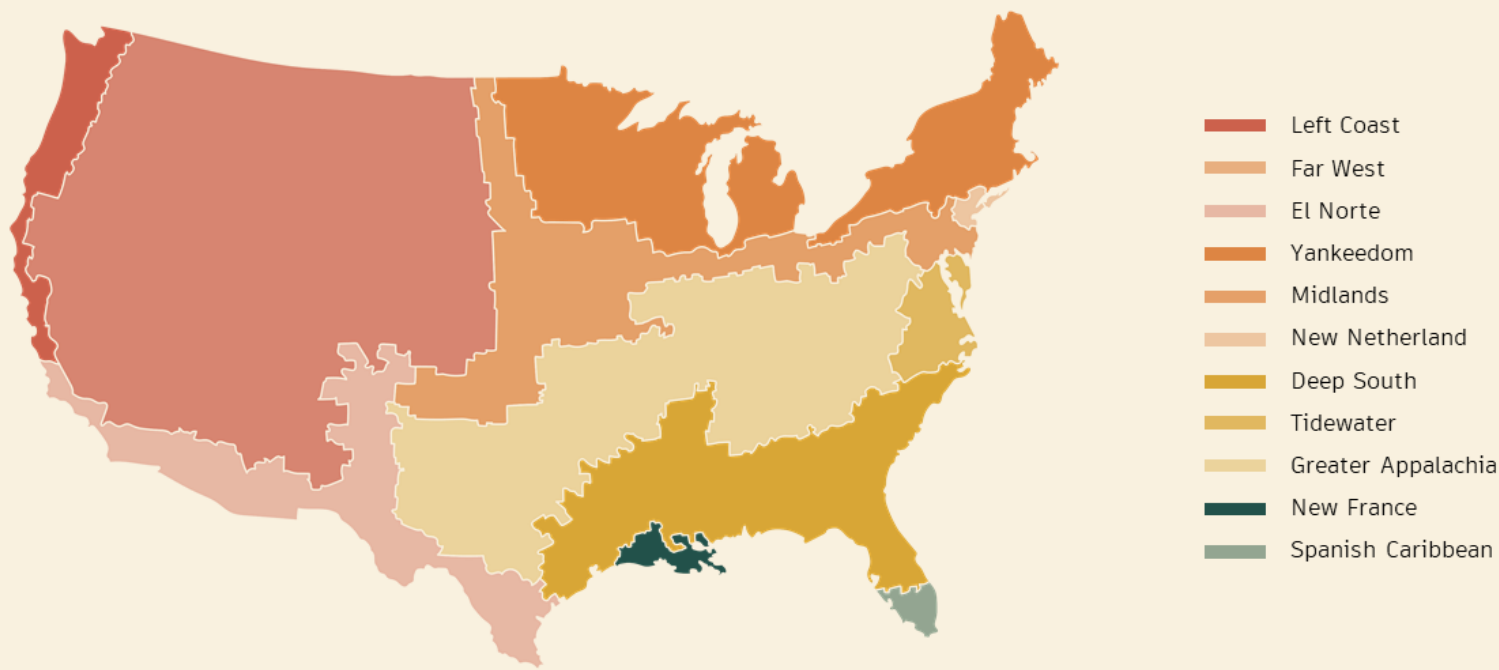
design probe: scale



App Design
Concept Layout

DESIGN AGENDA //

design probe: mapping



Regional Cultures of the United States

Map adapted from “American Nations: A History of the Eleven Rival Regional Cultures of North America” by Colin Woodward

DESIGN AGENDA //

design probe: materials



Materiality Study
The New Orleans Corner Store

DESIGN AGENDA //

project goals

BROAD GOALS:

- Redirect the flow of New Orleans tourism towards a sustainable course
- Support the community that is central to producing New Orleans' culture and recognize their contributions
- Increase convenience and walk-ability for neighborhood residents and visitors
- Preserve vernacular architectural elements and the historical traditions that the built environment has facilitated
- Develop a contemporary language that honors the rich architectural identity of historic New Orleans

FOR THE NEIGHBOR:

- Establish approach that puts the community first
- Create authentic experiences by and primarily for locals that also welcome a reasonable number of visitors
- Create services and infrastructure to support culture bearers of the community
- Incorporate low-income members of the community back into the prosperity of New Orleans tourism
- Channel visitor resources to the benefit of neighborhoods to increase sustainability of local businesses

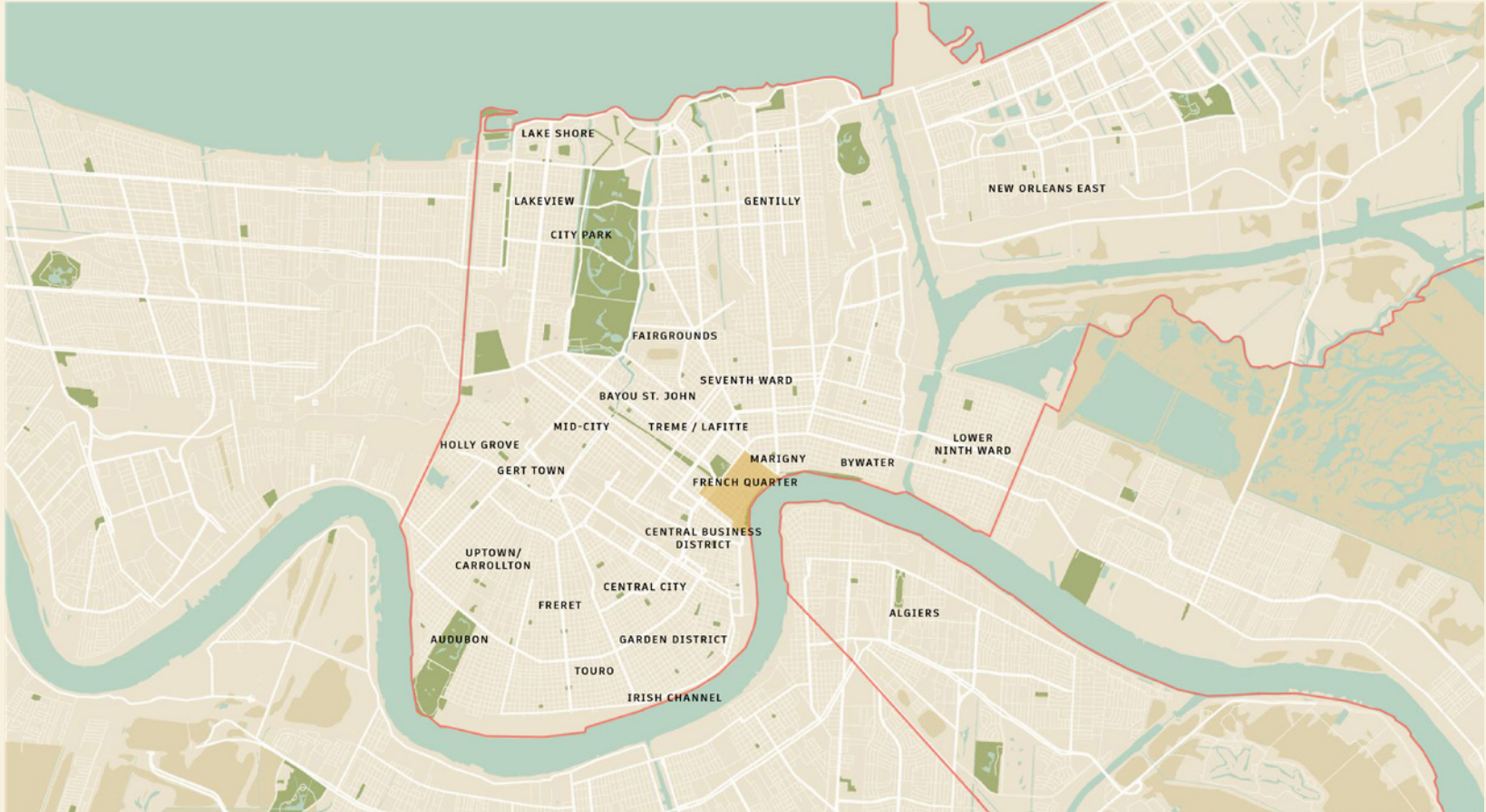
FOR THE TRAVELER:

- Move away from "24/7 Party Town" brand and messaging and de-emphasize Bourbon Street
- Spread the tourist footprint
- Target messaging to specific type of tourist interested in immersing and learning about the nuanced and rich culture of New Orleans
- Removing barriers to travel and creating more equitable experiences
- Emphasizing the residential nature of historic neighborhoods
- Fostering respectful behavior and inviting visitors to create connections with community

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT //

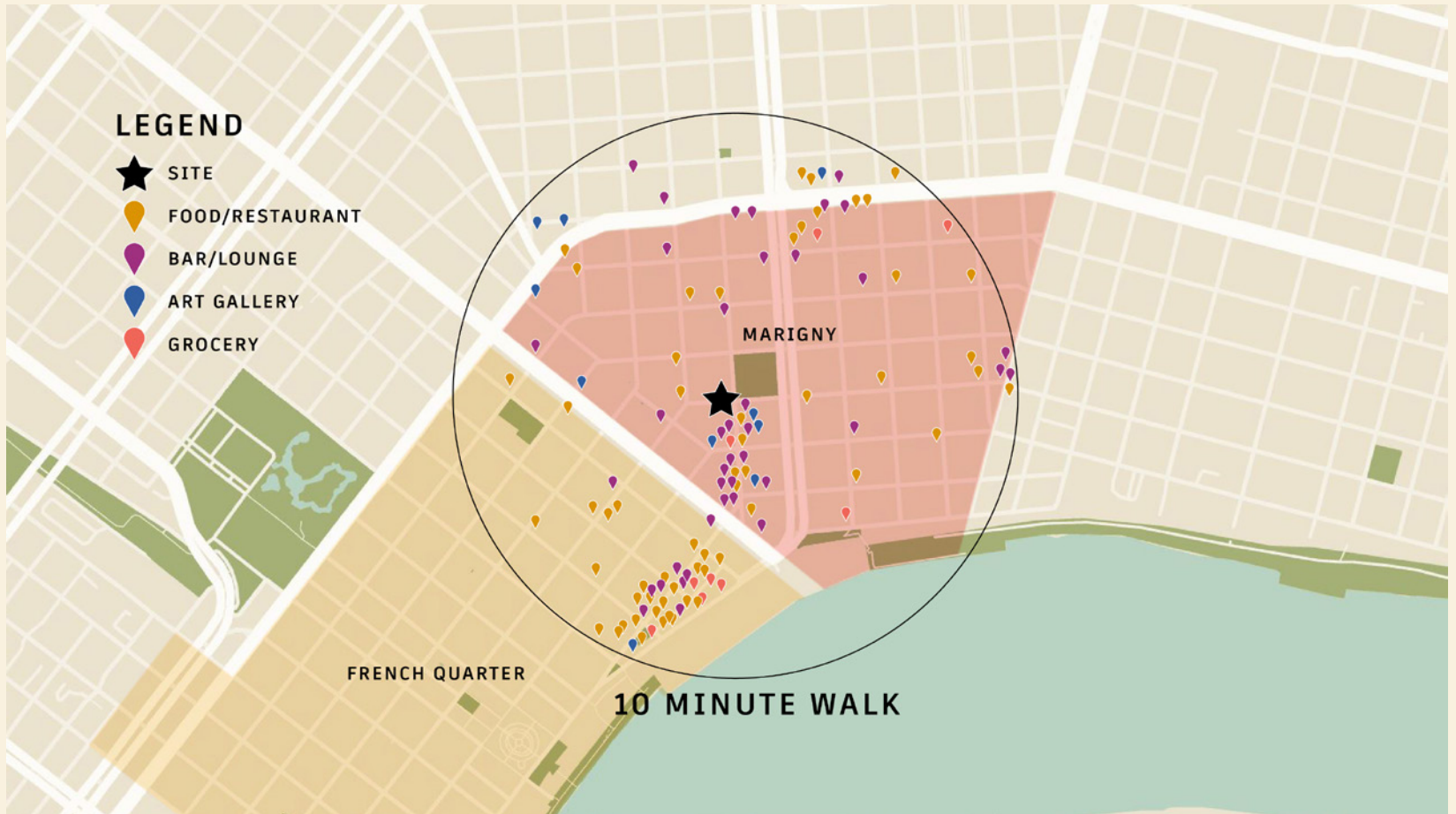
site



New Orleans, LA

LEGEND

- ★ SITE
- 📍 FOOD/RESTAURANT
- 🍷 BAR/LOUNGE
- 🎨 ART GALLERY
- 🛒 GROCERY





640 Frenchmen St



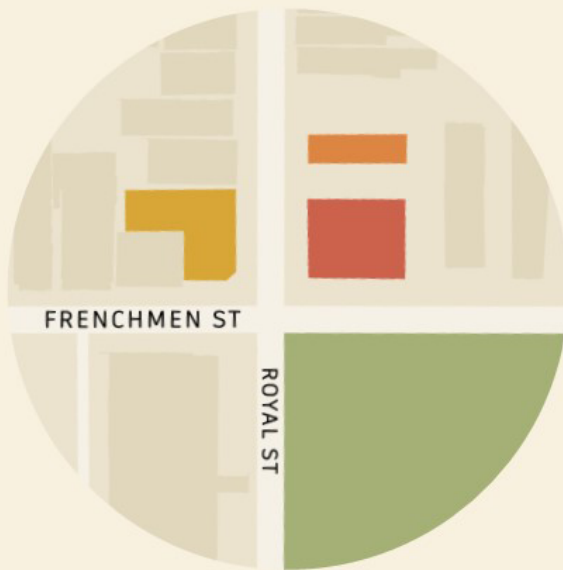
700 Frenchmen St - Front Building



700 Frenchmen St - Back Building

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT //

program



700 Frenchmen – Front Building (11,527 sf.)

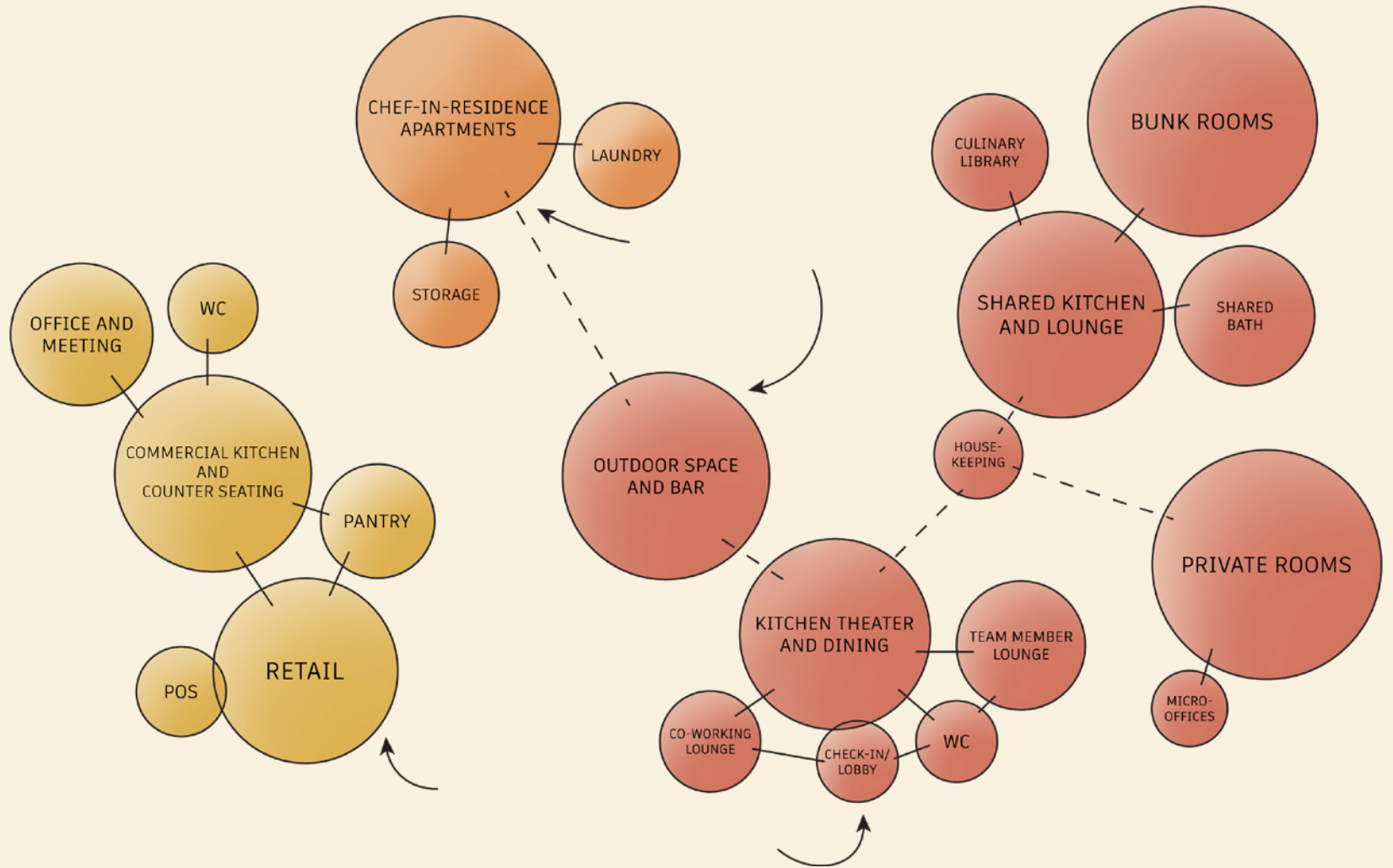
- Check-in/Lobby
- Commercial Kitchen Theater and Dining
- Culinary Library Lounge
- Boutique Guest Accommodations
- Outdoor Event Space and Bar

700 Frenchmen – Back Building (2,502 sf.)

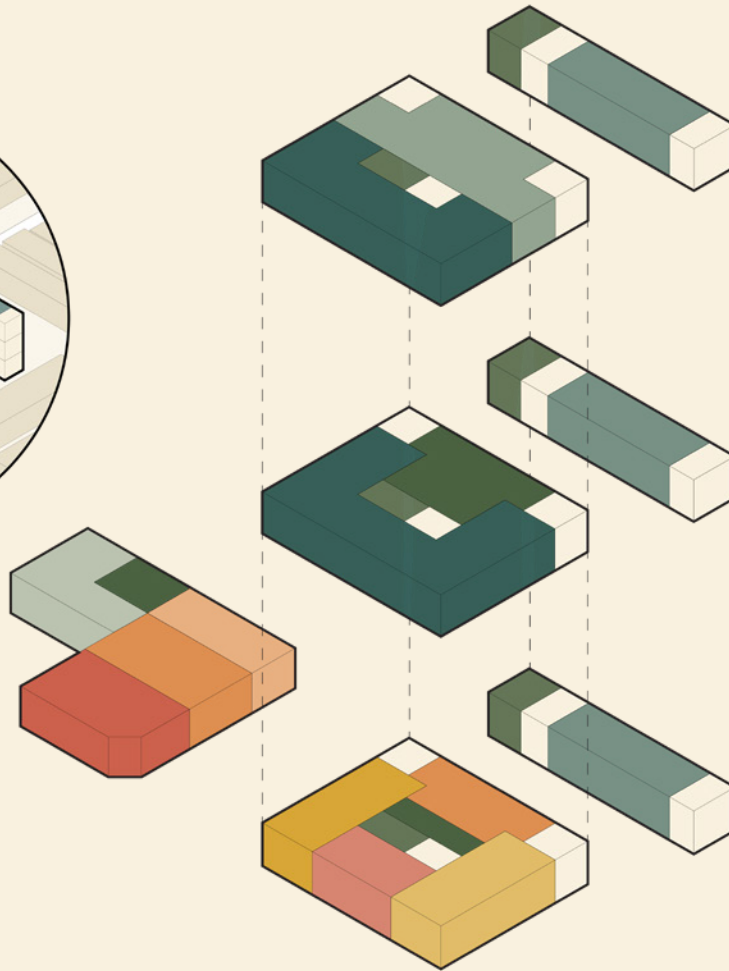
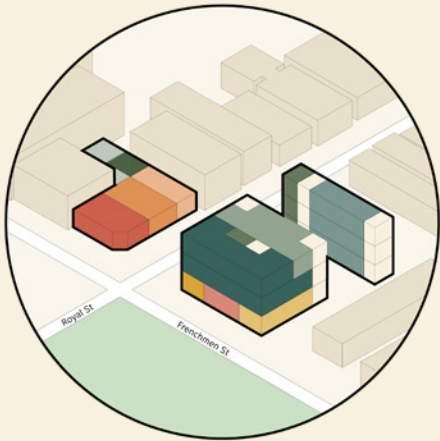
- Chef-in-Residence Apartments
- Laundry

640 Frenchmen – Corner Store (3,087 sf.)

- Market
- Commercial Kitchen with Counter Seating
- Neighborhood Pantry
- Office and Meeting Space



Bubble Diagramming



LEVEL 3

- Vertical Circulation
- Co-Working Lounge
- Storage
- Chef Apartment
- Guest Rooms

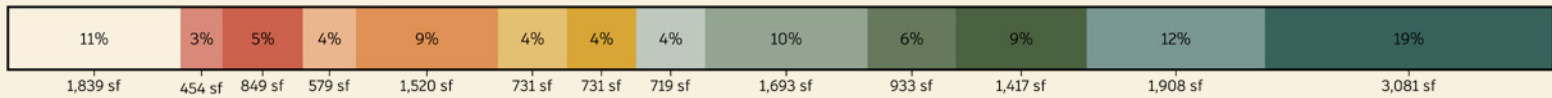
LEVEL 2

- Vertical Circulation
- Storage
- Restrooms
- Chef Apartment
- Guest Rooms

LEVEL 1

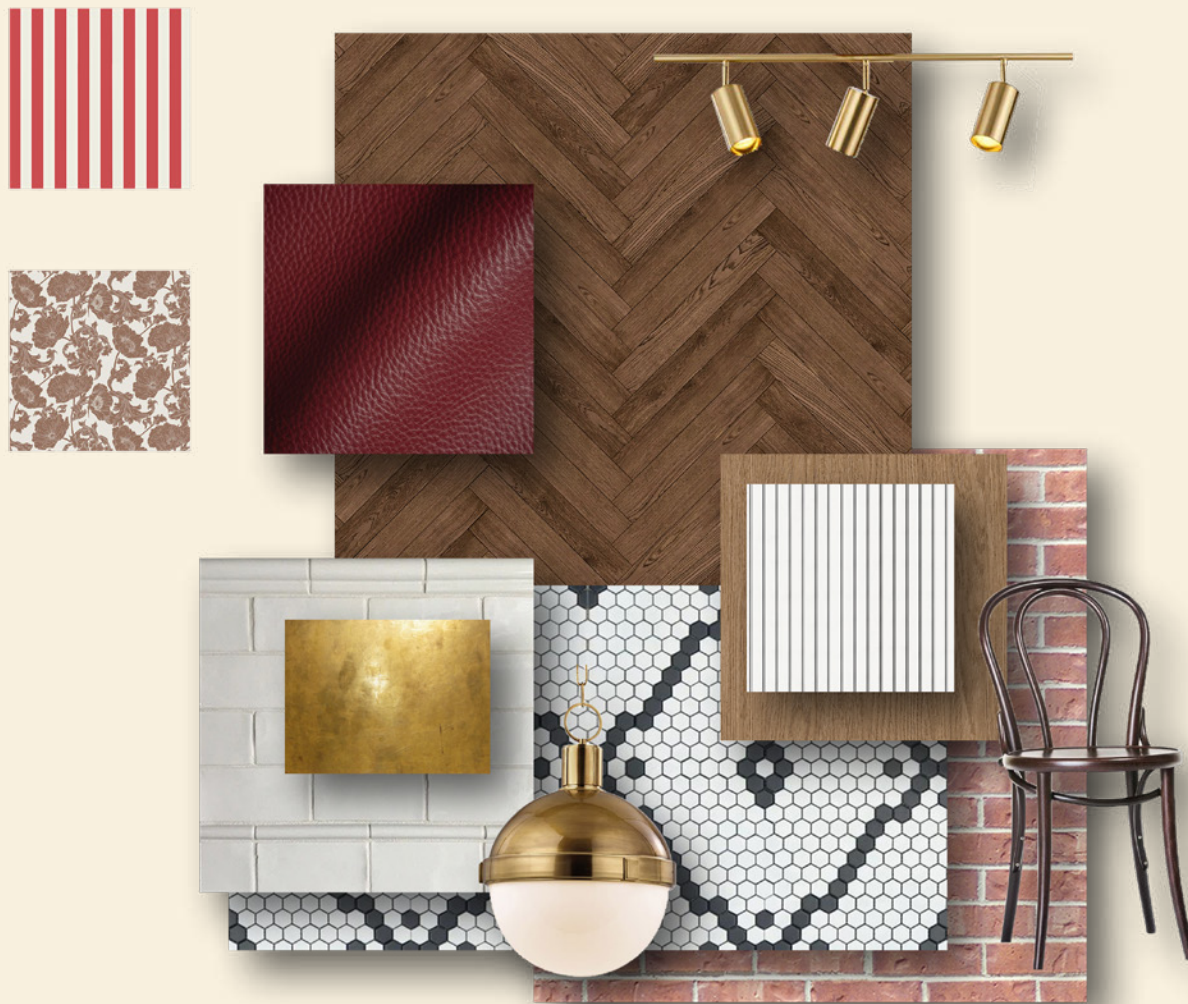
- Vertical Circulation
- Hotel Check-In
- Market
- Neighborhood Pantry
- Kitchen
- Team Member Lounge
- Lobby
- Office/Meeting Space
- Storage
- Restrooms
- Chef Apartment

Square Footage Breakdown (16,454 total sf)



DESIGN DEVELOPMENT //

materials



Corner Store Materials Palette

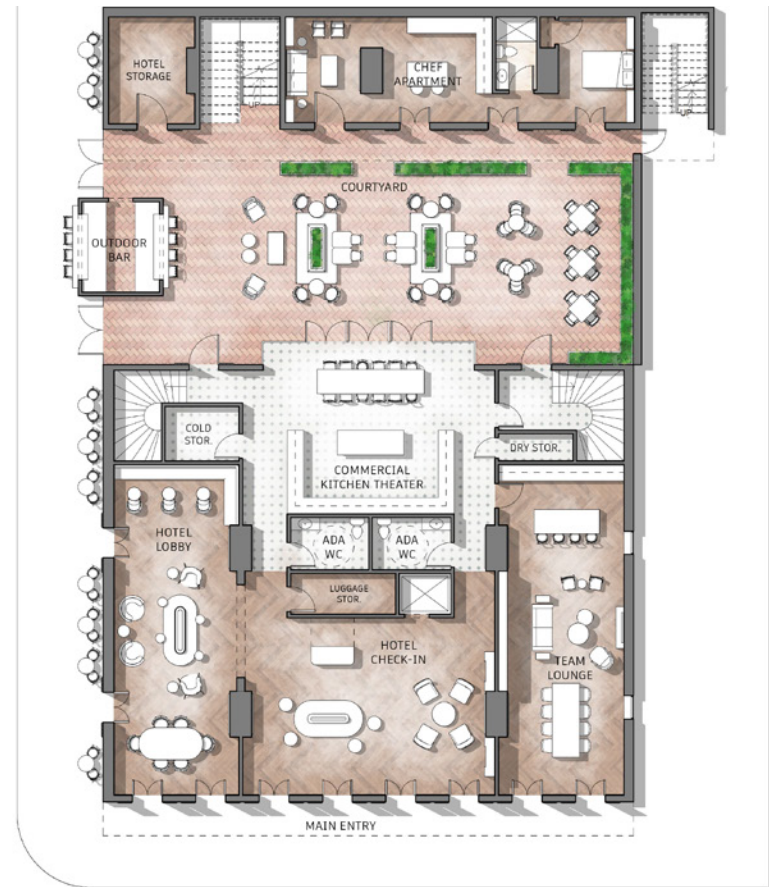
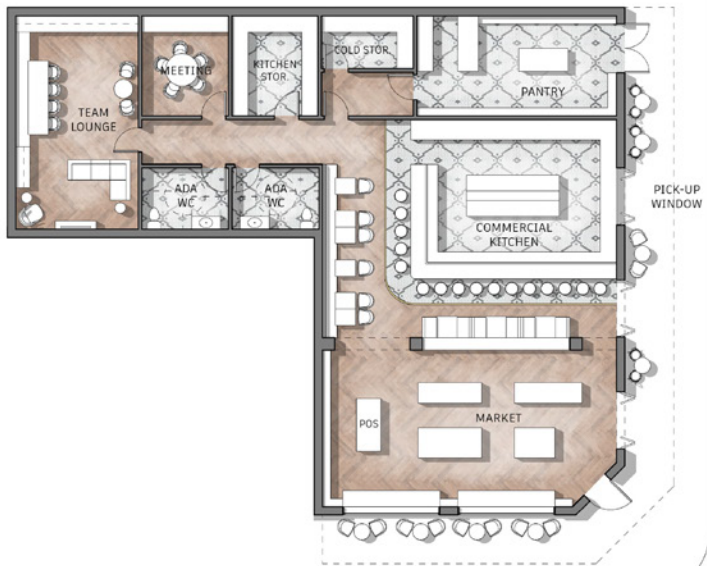


Hotel Materials Palette

FINAL DESIGN

FINAL DESIGN //

floor plans



First Floor



Second Floor



Third Floor

FINAL DESIGN //

perspectives



Streetscape



Rosette's Grocery & Goods



To-Go Window



Corner Store Market



Corner Store Kitchen



Neighborhood Pantry



The Wayfarer Hotel: New Orleans



Hotel Bar



Hotel Courtyard



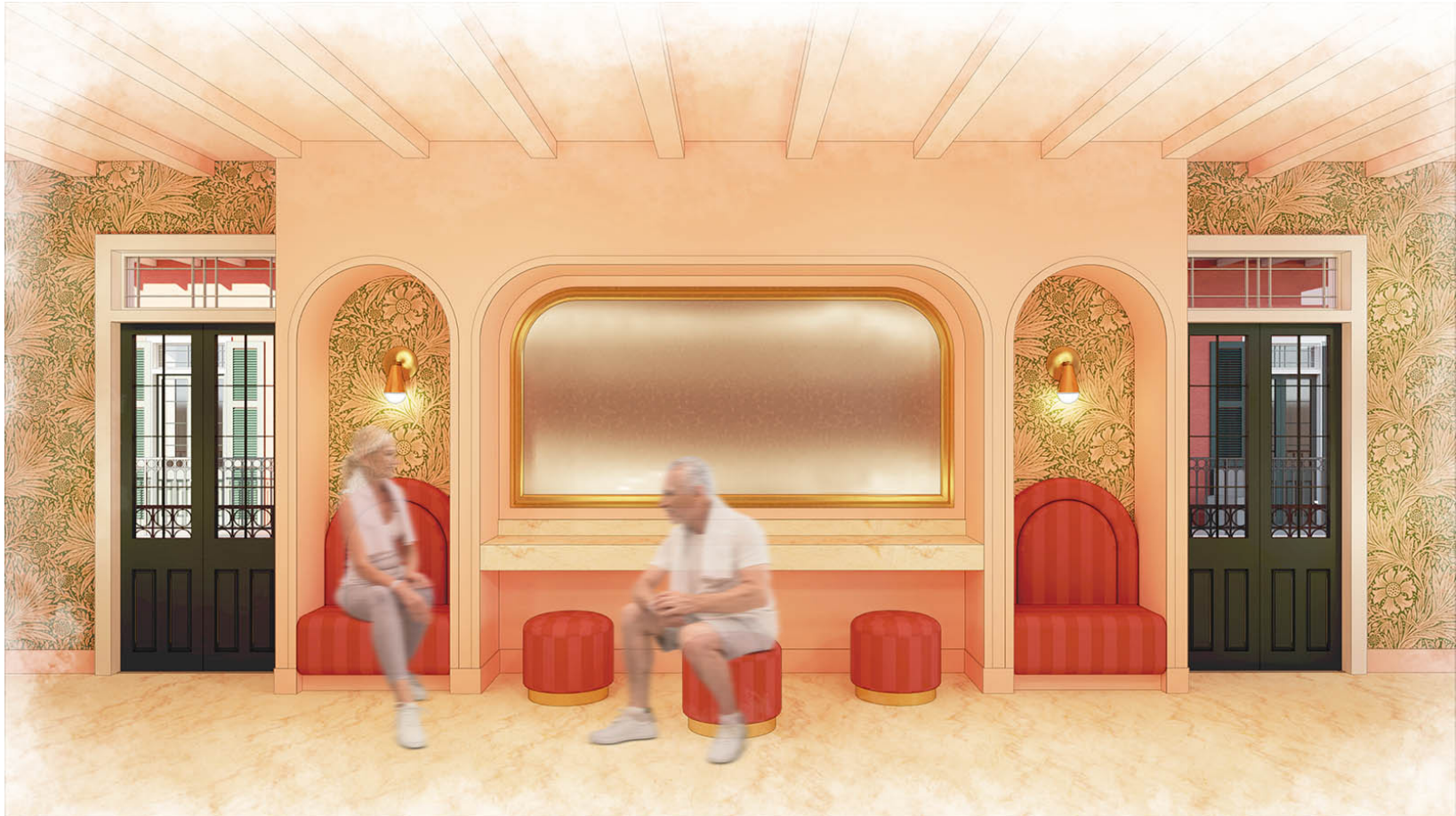
Hotel Check-In



Hotel Kitchen



Six Twin Bunk Room



Shared Bathroom



Queen Suite



Co-Working Lounge



Hotel Balcony

