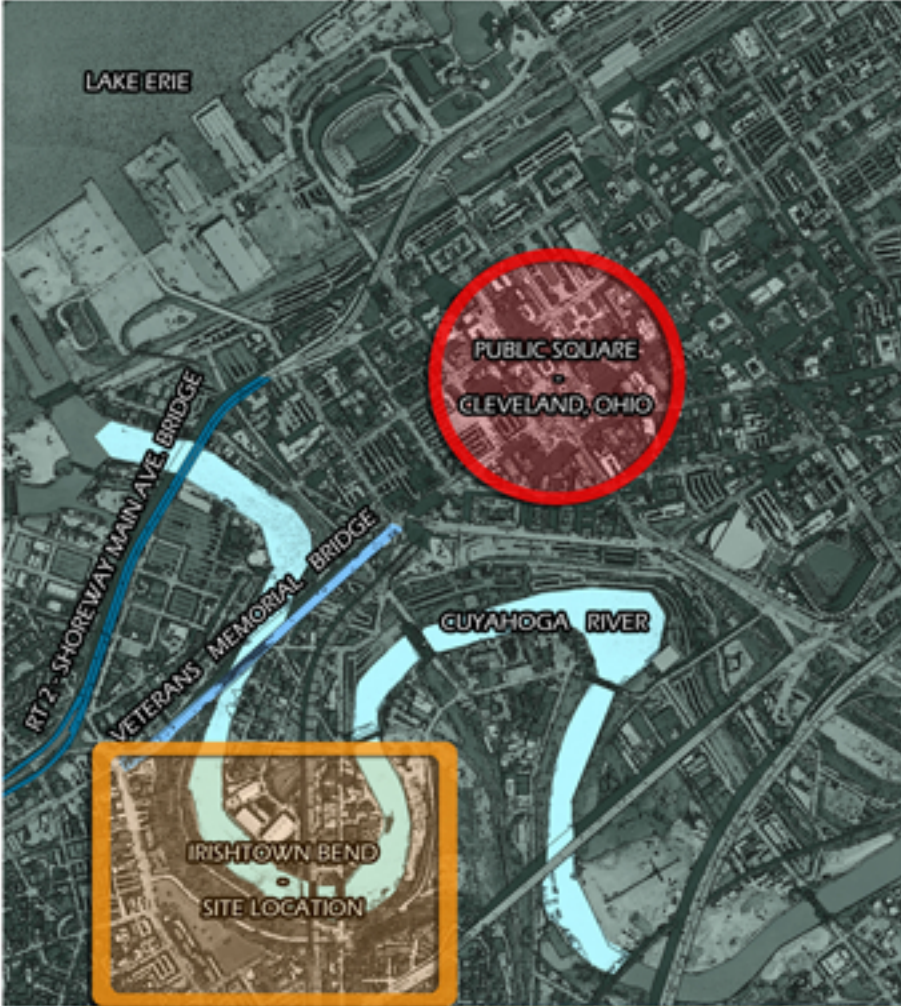
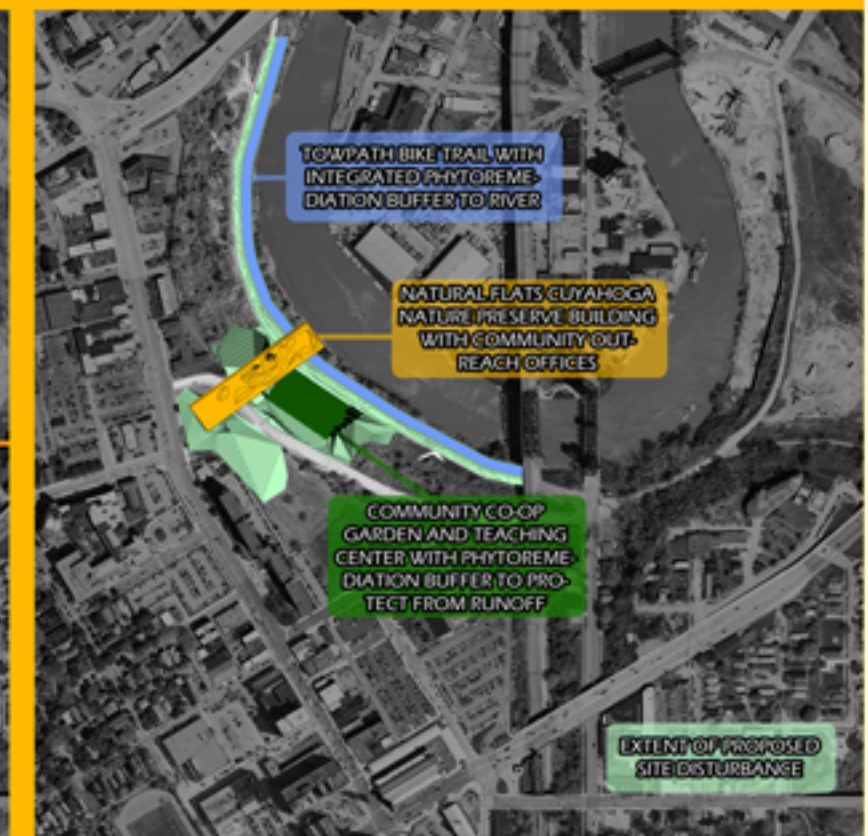
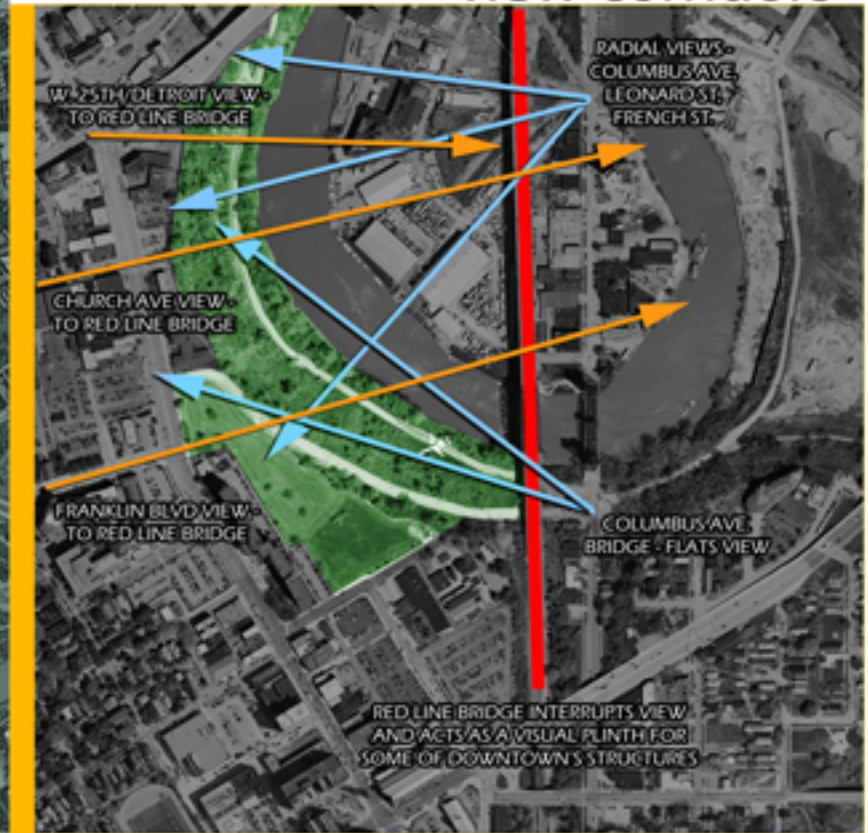


<dear Cleveland, Ohio
 i have had the fortune of spending the vast majority of my life within your shadow. recently i have found myself burdened with finding a solution to a problem that everyone seems to want to ignore. sure we have some prime lakefront property but our real heritage lies in the wonderfully sinuous river that snakes its way through a tired industrial heart. i don't understand why we keep looking to the Lake Erie shore as the creation of our identity when we have grown up around, over and responding to our mighty Cuyahoga. even now, on this very site, we face a past that grew up on the river's shores and helped found this town. how can we protect our river yet celebrate it? how can we share its bounty with the entire region? i know i don't have the final solution, but perhaps i can suggest a path that could lead us to something truly wonderful.>

<location map>



<view corridors>



<amenities - considerations>

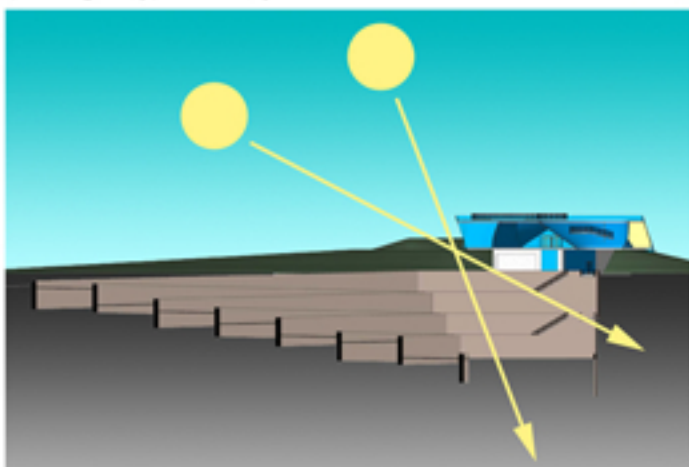
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-neighborhood and amenities - The area currently consists of multi family and single family units, mostly century homes with a healthy mix of new development. Some could argue that the area is going through another stage of gentrification as older homes are being purchased and renovated as well as growing interest in vacant land for new multi-family units of medium density. The neighborhood has ease of access to downtown, Route 2 Shoreway expressway east and Route 90 and 71 to the south. Multiple bus and circulator loops service Detroit and Lorain (east/west) as well as W. 25th (north/south). There is also a covered stop for the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority's (GCRTA) Red Line Rapid Transit which serves Hopkins international airport as well as connects to the Tower City station where one can easily change lines. There are two major food retailers in the area as well as an area of local open air markets. The neighborhood has a quickly growing entertainment district that is successfully branching out away from W. 25th.

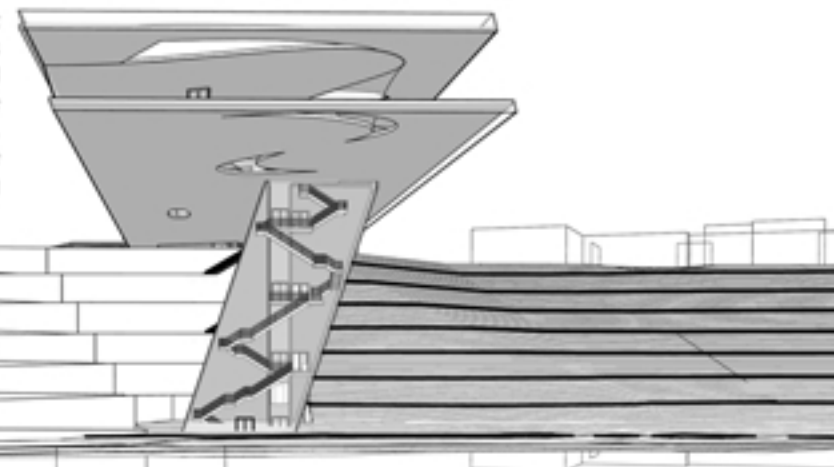
- view corridors - W. 25th is situated on a bluff approximately 100 feet above the Cuyahoga river affording wonderful views across the Cuyahoga flood plain (the "Flats") towards downtown Cleveland. Depending on your angle of incidence and what you are trying to see the many bridges that cross the Cuyahoga would either be considered disruptive of your view or act as horizontal bands creating a base for the tall buildings of downtown. When down in the flats there are many moments of sudden exposure to the site as openings appear between warehouses and office buildings which can be rather exciting if you have lost your way and can only catch glimpses of familiar landmarks.

- proposal - While concerned with possible soil situations with construction on the hillside I wanted to attempt to create a public connection to allow greater access to Riverbed Street in the flats, along the bank of the Cuyahoga, without injecting housing or commercial that could be construed as "owning" the land and inferring it as private property. I also wanted to celebrate Cleveland's local open air markets by creating a community space where the neighborhood could have a shared community garden which could also be used for outreach programs as well as educational purposes. A third aspect was connecting the site to the region as well as the neighborhood and attempting to use the site as an identifiable economic engine for the Flats area. By creating a way station and access point to the Towpath Trail (following the path of the now defunct Erie Canal) as well as establishing a dependable and safe stop for a Community Circulator (GCRTA) for the Flats I hope to increase ease of access without depending on typical solitary automotive use.

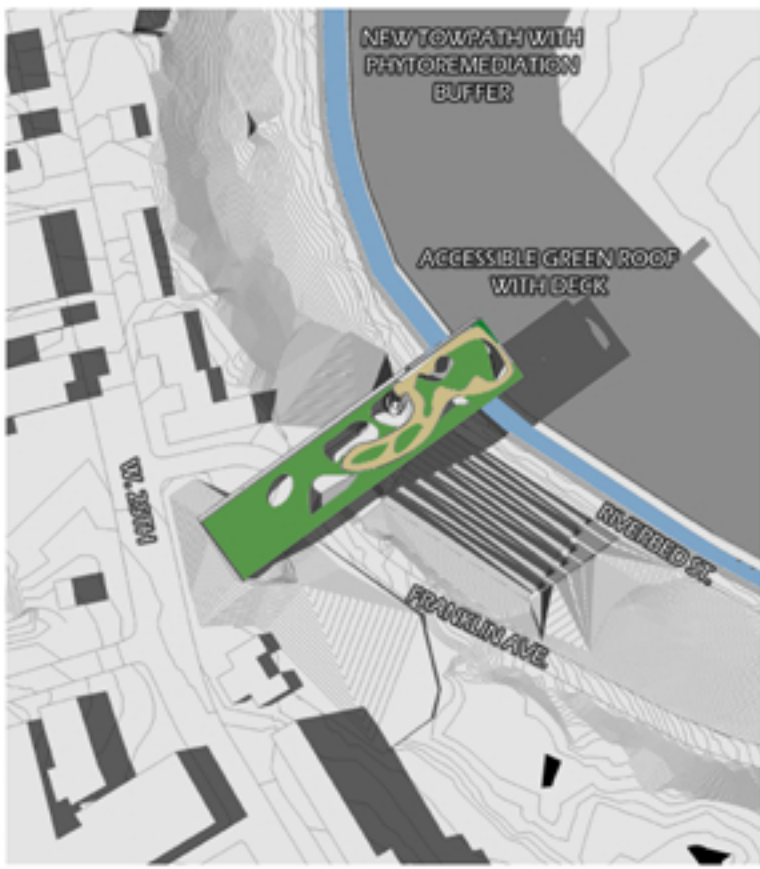
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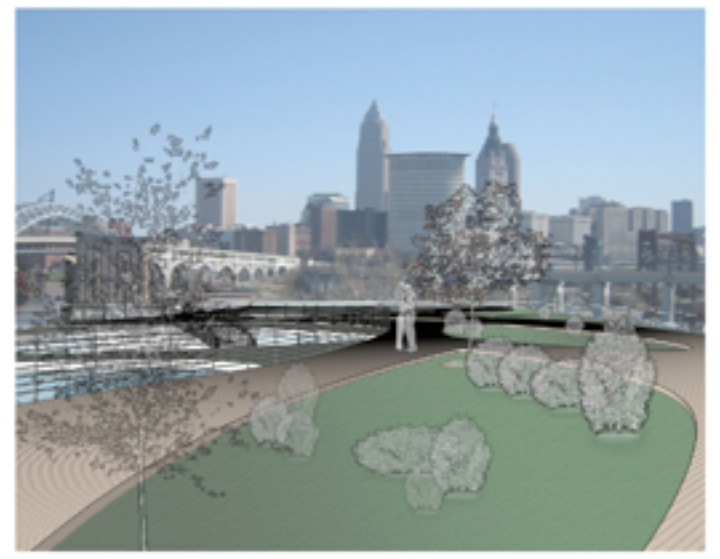
In order to maximize daylight without direct Southern radiation the building's walls are sloped at 72 degrees to avoid the summer sun but still have exposure to the Sun during it's winter inclination. This also allows more light to infiltrate under the bridge structure achieving more garden space.



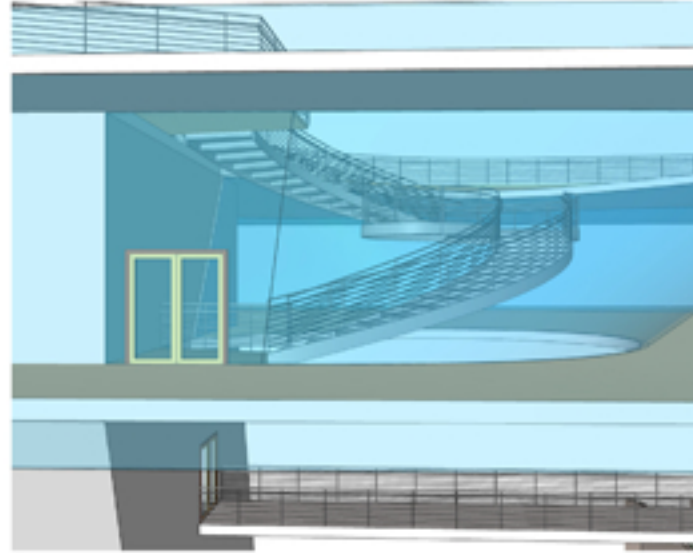
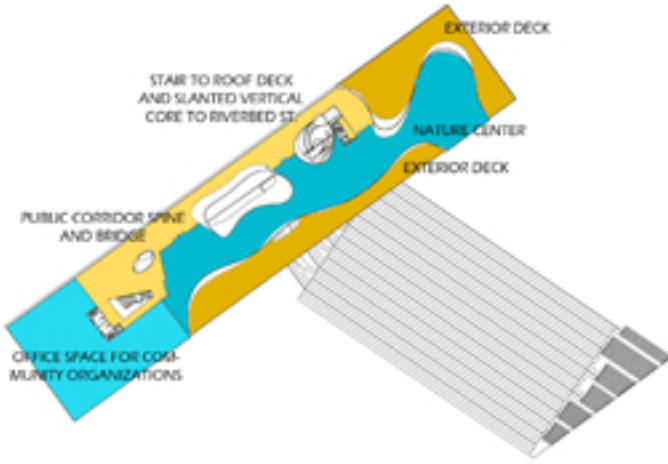
<roof plan>



The roof of the nature center has an extensive planting roof system to alleviate run-off and heat island effect. It is also an inhabitable space allowing grand vistas of the Flats and Downtown Cleveland.

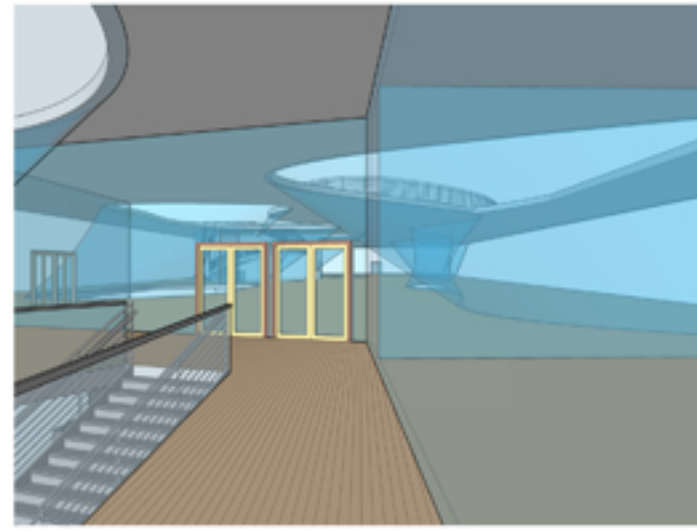
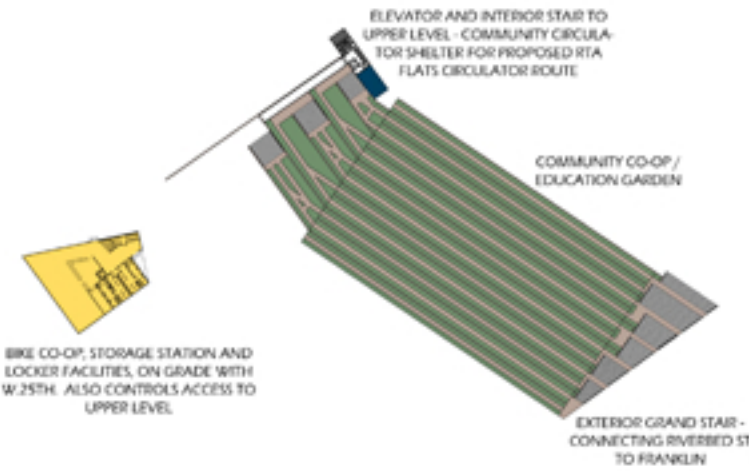


<bridge level>



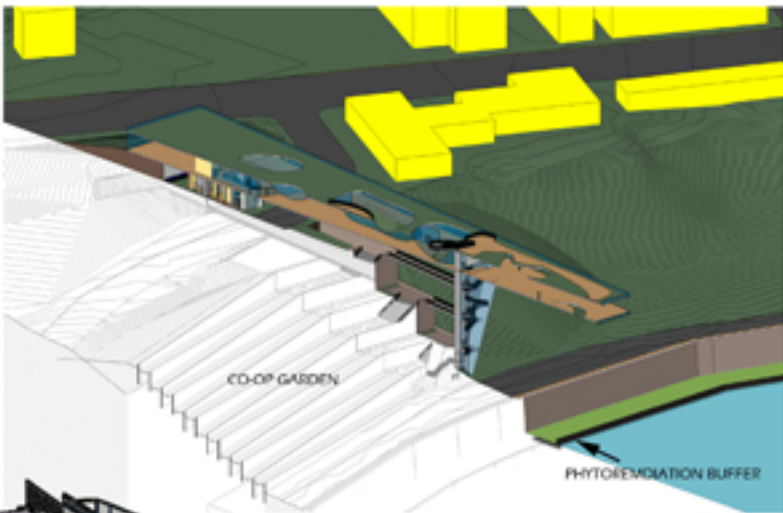
Access to the roof garden is mainly through a grand round stair that exists within one of the many penetrations through the building. These penetrations allow for light to pass through to the ground below but also offers an exciting way to provide views to the landscape, sky and divide interior spaces.

<street(s) level>



The 'bridge' level houses the Nature Center as well as offices for community programs such as Ohio City Bicycle Co-op, City Fresh, NEOCH, etc. This level is almost all glass to allow grand views throughout the structure. The many cuts into the floor and ceiling plate mimic the undulating form of the mighty river of which the bridge looks out over upon. With most of the roof habitable a strong interplay of place and layering occurs developing multiple spaces to be experienced.

<axon cutaway>



The 'Ground Floor' exists on many levels. With a main entrance off of West 25th there is also access via the vertical circulation tower to Riverbed Street as well as the many garden levels that climb the hill. Bookended on the South side the massive garden is connected via a grand stair that can also be used as an exterior gathering space. Runoff from West 25th will be funneled to a bioswale along the west end of the garden with the hope to remove contaminants before the runoff reaches the gardens and the river which is protected by another planting system along Riverbed Road and the adjacent Towpath Trail.

