



# Active design in buildings

forum bâtir + planifier: villes en pleine santé!

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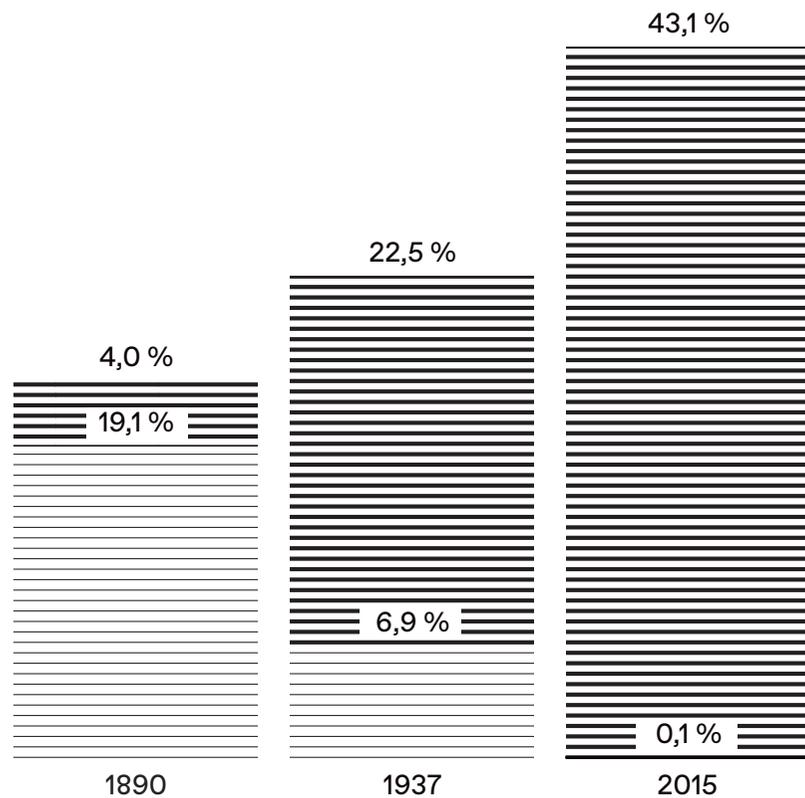


**Active Design  
in Buildings**

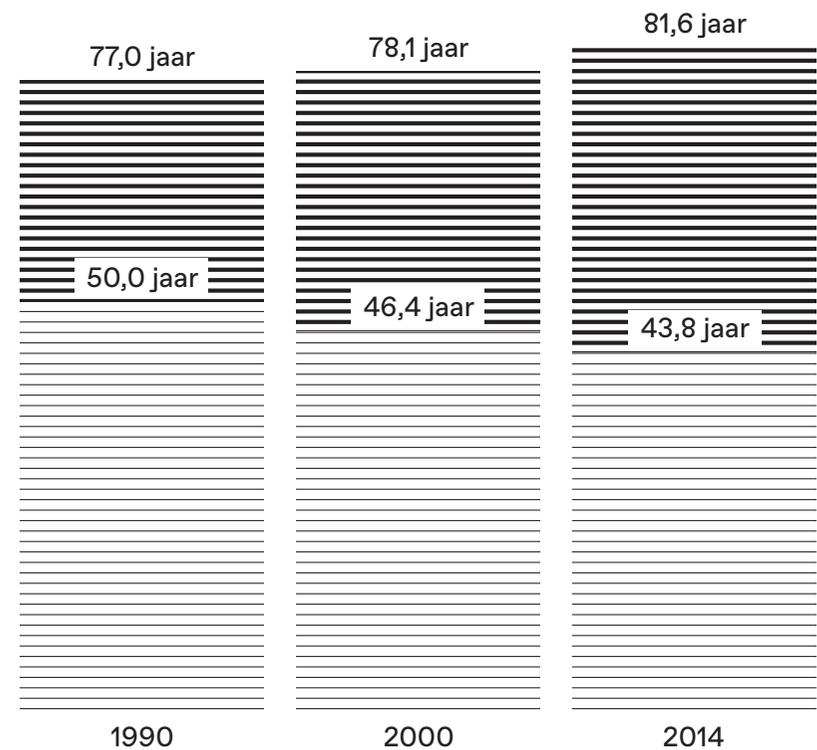
BETA office for architecture and the city

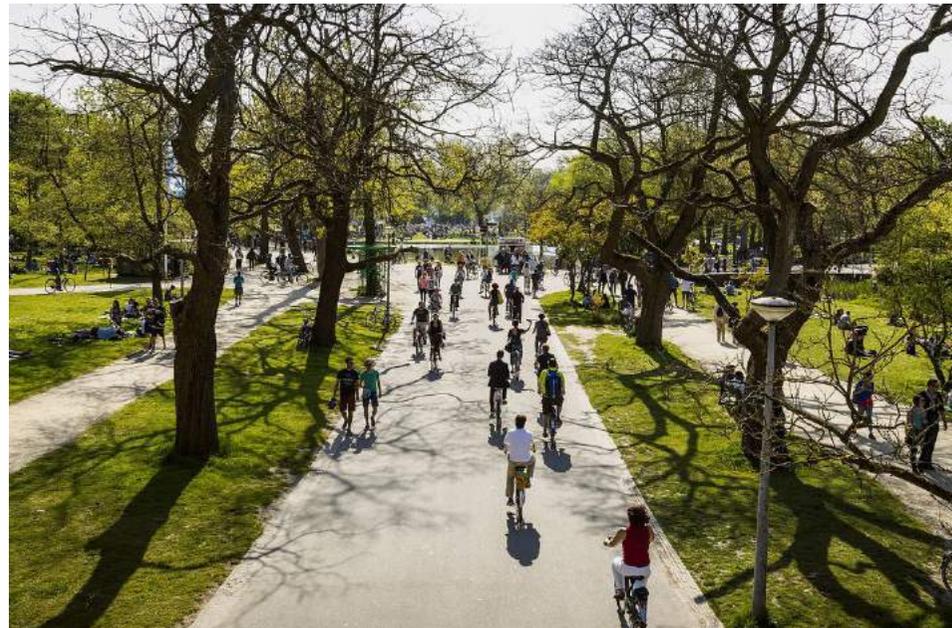


## INFECTIOUS VS. CHRONIC DISEASE IN AMSTERDAM



## HEALTHY LIFE EXPECTANCY IN THE NETHERLANDS









**BAD PLANNING  
MEANS  
LONG JOURNEYS**



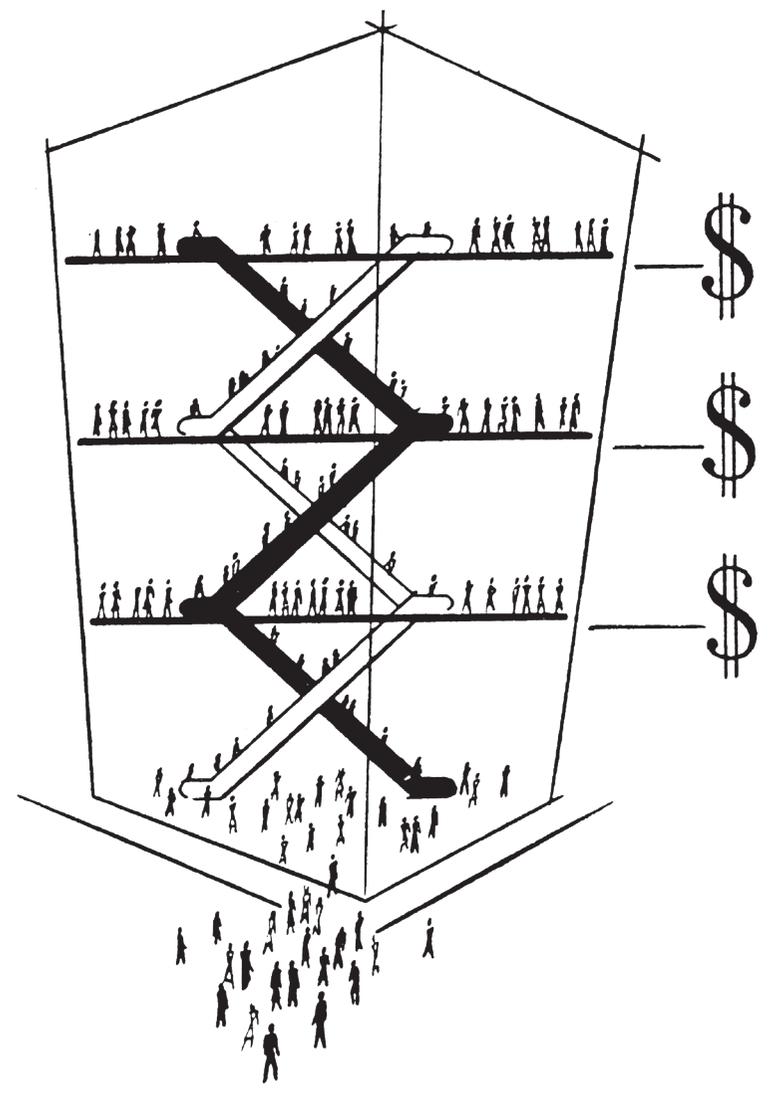
THICKNESS OF THE COLOURED LINES IS  
PROPORTIONATE TO NUMBER OF JOURNEYS

**PLANNING  
SAVES  
FATIGUE**



THESE TWO KITCHENS  
ARE THE SAME SIZE

C  
D  
S  
St  
T  
COOKER  
DRESSER  
SINK  
STORE  
TABLE







'The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces' (1980), William Whyte



'The Infinite Happiness' (2015), Bêka & Lemoine

# THE FOUR DOMAINS OF ACTIVE DESIGN



ROUTES



DESTINATIONS

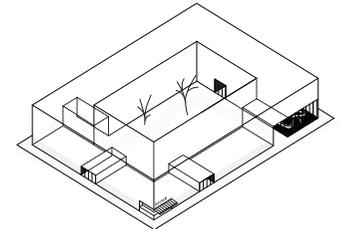
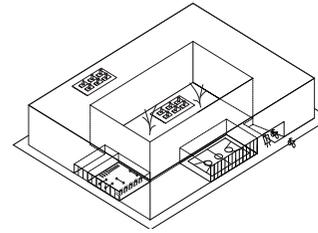
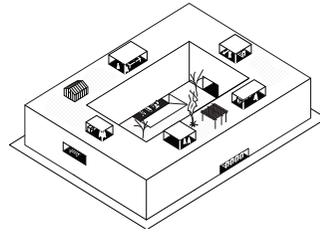
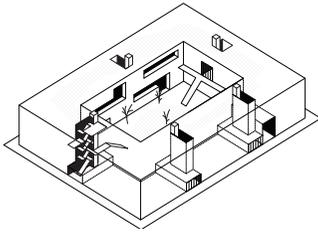


ACTIVITY PROGRAMME

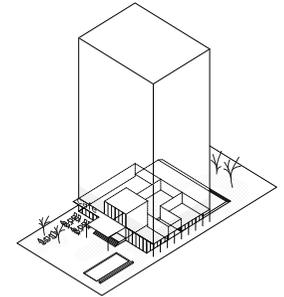
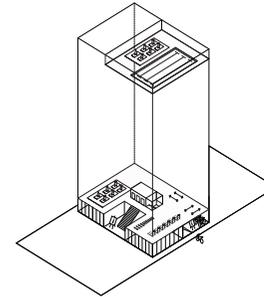
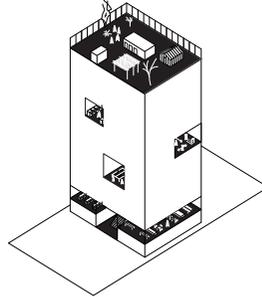
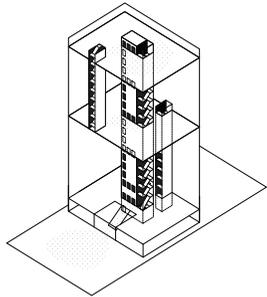


BUILDING SURROUNDINGS

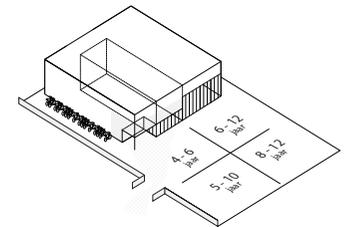
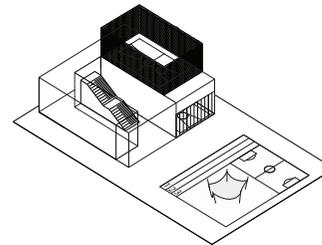
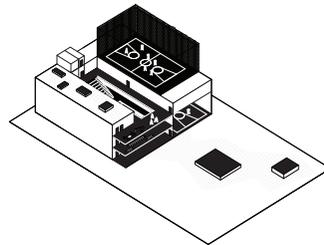
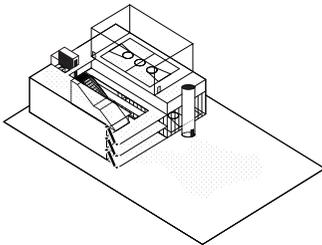
residential  
block



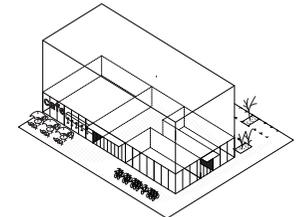
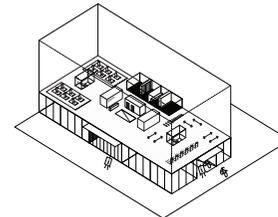
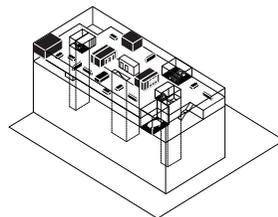
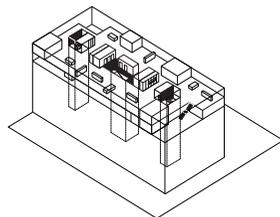
high-rise



school



office



## S/M/L PRINCIPLES

Some active design principles are easy to apply, even in the operational phase of a building. Others must be incorporated into the earliest sketches due to their large impact on the building structure. As such a distinction has been made between far-reaching and less far-reaching principles with the aim of creating a system applicable to various levels of ambition and for both new and existing buildings.

We define three categories in this regard: small, medium and large. It is important to note that this classification refers solely to the implications for a building's structure and not to the impact a principle might have. A 'small' principle with limited structural implications can nevertheless have a profound effect on physical activity. Some extra attention is given to the two most comprehensive domains; Routes and Destinations.

### M MEDIUM

A medium principle involves limited modification to the spatial structure with a view to encouraging physical activity. Such interventions often evoke activity through horizontal or vertical variations or the strategic ordering of programme. These can often be realized with a minimal change to the building's structure or its detailing.

### L LARGE

A large principle has a major influence on the building's structure and must therefore be incorporated into architect's earliest ideas. They determine the spatial organization of the building and include aspects such as the configuration of access systems, creating views within a building or combining Routes and Destinations.

### S SMALL

A small principle is not connected to the structure of a building. It is often an intervention that involves colour, material, furnishings, fittings or lighting (including daylight). Though relatively inexpensive, these principles can have a major effect on walkability and can often be deployed in the operational phase of a building.

## The Toolkit and the Dutch Building Code

Bouwbesluit 2012 (the Dutch Building Code) determines to a large extent how buildings in the Netherlands can be configured. In the Toolkit some extra attention is given to the safety issues in the domains Routes and Destinations as these domains have a direct relationship with the emergency evacuation of a building. The points listed should be used as additional notes to the relevant articles of the building code.

## TOOLKIT 'CARD' EXPLANATION

Each principle encouraging physical activity is described as a card and follows a fixed pattern.

The unique code of the principle. References are made to this code in the fourth chapter covering building types.

⋮ Symbols indicate the domain to which the principle belongs.



Routes



Destinations



Activity Programme



Building Surroundings

⋮ An indication is made whether the principle is classified as being Small, Medium or Large.



Small



Medium



Large

⋮ Some principles also promote physical activity for wheelchair users and/or people who have difficulty walking. This is indicated by a corresponding icon.



⋮ This icon shows that the principle also applies to those with a mobility impairment. Often these are concerned with interventions that improve the walkability of stairs and height differences in general.



⋮ This icon is used for principles that promote activity among wheelchair users. It goes without saying that those with a more minor physical impairment also benefit from these measures.



⋮ Objective principles are not subject to taste or personal preferences and can be applied universally in nearly all instances. These objective principles are indicated using the Sigma symbol.



⋮ Nearly all principles are synergistic with sustainability as they encourage the use of metabolic over mechanical energy. Still some principles have a more direct or more versatile contribution in the field of sustainability.



⋮ Brief explanation of the principle. References to existing literature (numbers) or interviews (letters) are made in the event of relevant literature or to widen the context.

## 1.12



### VISIBLE STAIR ENVIRONMENTS STIMULATE USE

Fire stairs in particular are often not visible from a building's main spaces because they are encased in opaque fire-resistant material. Replacing this with transparent materials such as fire-resistant glass makes a stair environment visible and encourages stair use. Open staircases between floors (within a single fire compartment) are another way to increase stair use. (14)

## 1.13



### HIDDEN ELEVATORS ARE USED LESS FREQUENTLY

Make elevators subordinate to stairs. Ensure the elevator is not directly visible upon entering the building, for example by placing the elevator entrance at a ninety degree angle. Remember to use signage to guide physically challenged users to the elevator. (14) (22)

## 1.14



### WIDE STAIRS ARE MORE APPEALING

Research indicates that wider staircases are more frequently used. Stairs wider than 120 cm can accommodate people travelling in two directions. Wider stairs make it possible to walk side by side, turning the staircase into a place for social interaction. (14) (23)

## 1.15

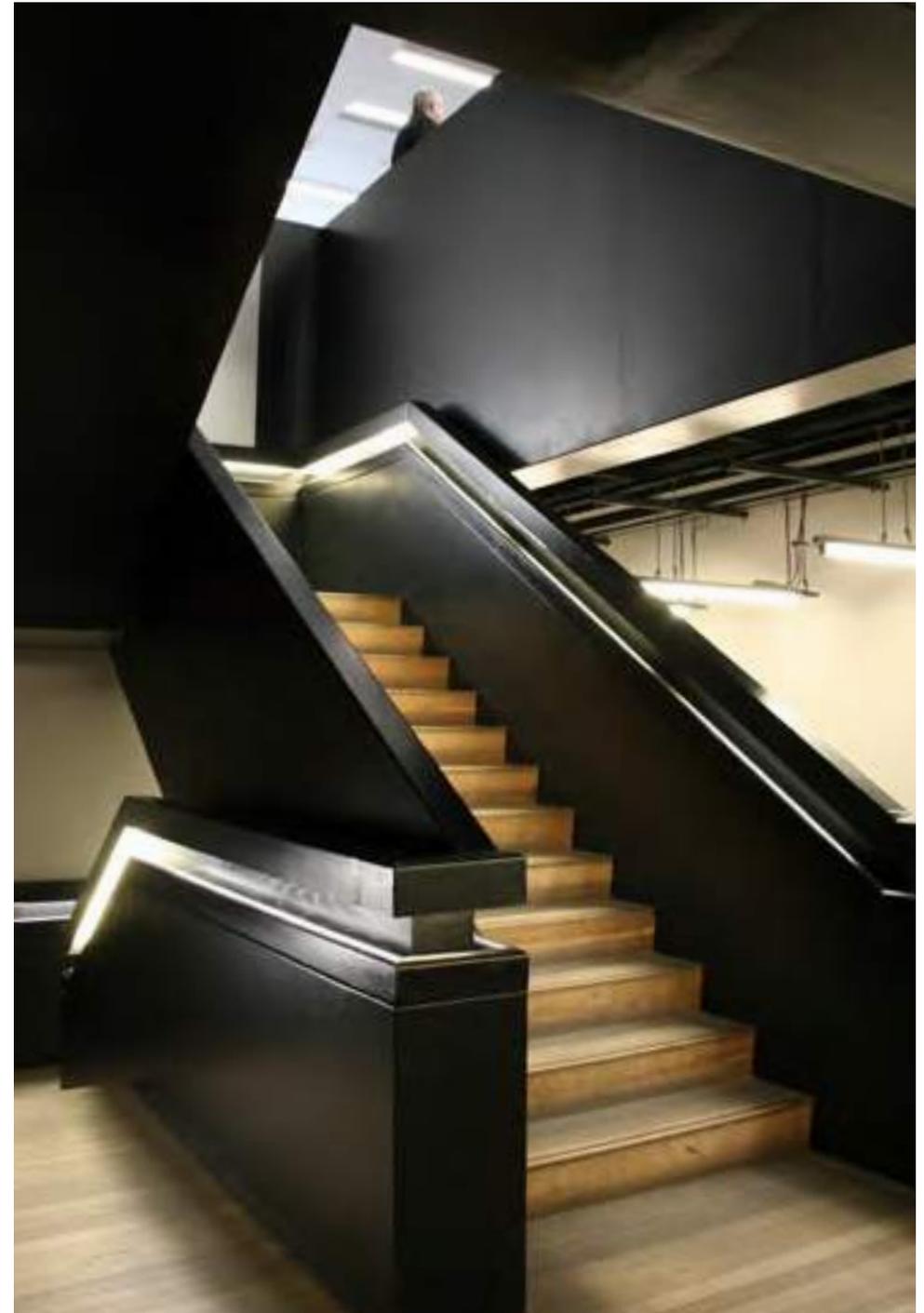


### STAIRS WITH A LOWER INCLINATION ARE EASIER TO CLIMB

Stairs with fewer steps per flight are not only more pleasant to climb; they are also safer and more accessible. Research indicates that the ideal stair ratio is approximately 30 degrees. A riser of approx. 17 cm and a tread of approx. 29 cm results in 10 cal. being burned per kg/m. Provide landings at regular intervals to give physically challenged users an opportunity to rest. (14) (23)

## Medium Routes and the Building Code

- > The Building Code sets minimum requirements for the dimensions of stairs, including measurements for risers and treads, and the height between landings. These requirements represent the lower limit with regard to safety and are not optimal from an ergonomic perspective.
- > Interventions that involve making stairs wider or less steep, or the addition of more landings, can improve evacuation capacity and boost accessibility in a building.
- > Increasing the visibility of stairs promotes their use. This also familiarizes users with the escape routes in a building. Although not measurable in the Buildings Code, frequent stair use has a favourable effect on safety in the event of an emergency.
- > In the interests of smoke control, some emergency stairwells are pressurized relative to the surrounding spaces. In such cases, special requirements apply and the stairwells cannot be ventilated naturally.



**Burn Calories,  
Not Electricity.**



**Take the Stairs!**

Walking up the stairs just 2 minutes a day helps prevent weight gain. It also helps the environment.

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## SOCIAL

community / collectivity  
balance privacy / exchange  
mixed generations  
sharing concepts  
addresses loneliness



## ACTIVE

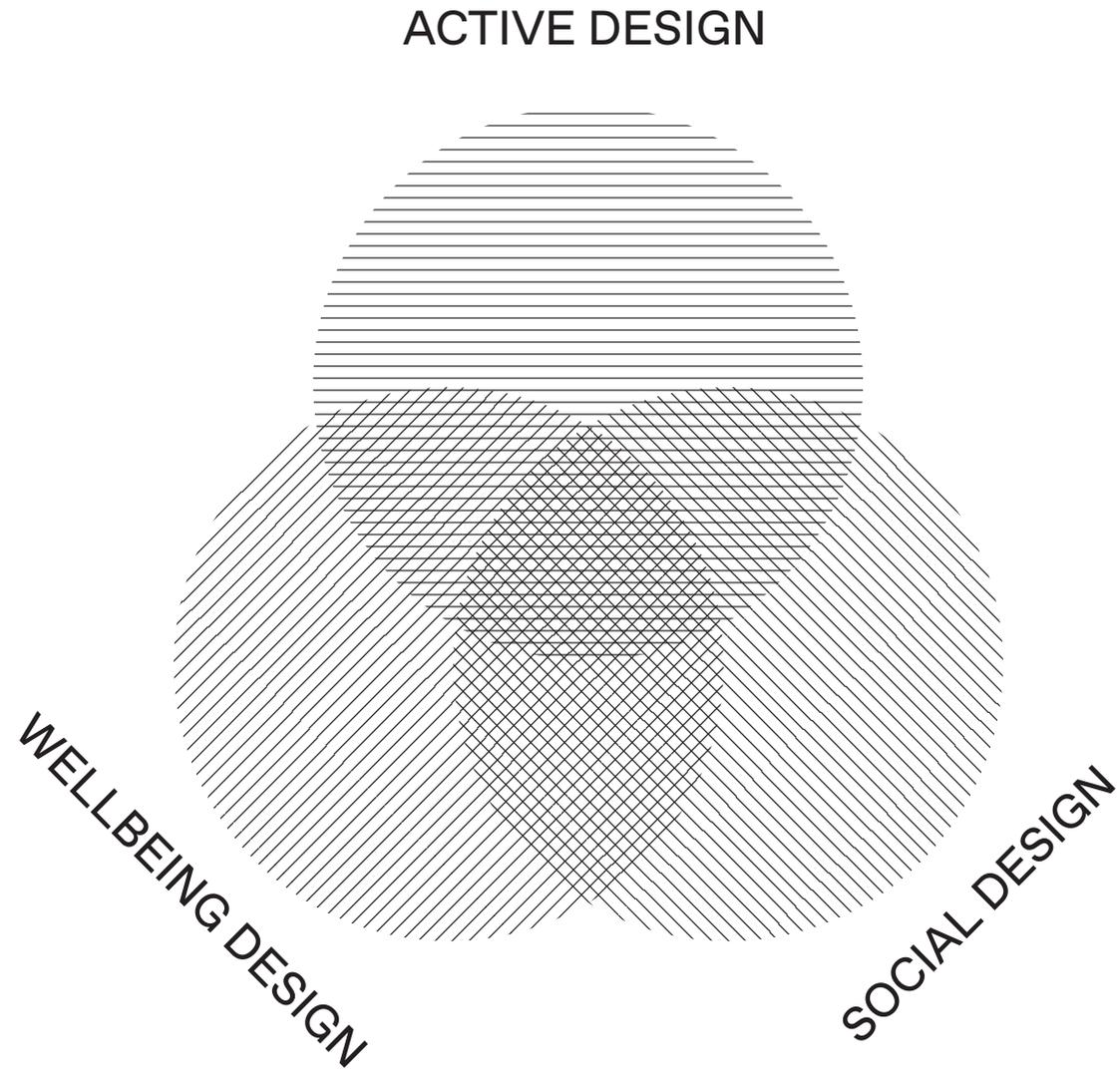
movement / sports / play  
walking / biking  
public transport / carsharing  
education for an active lifestyle  
encouraging active behaviour  
nudging



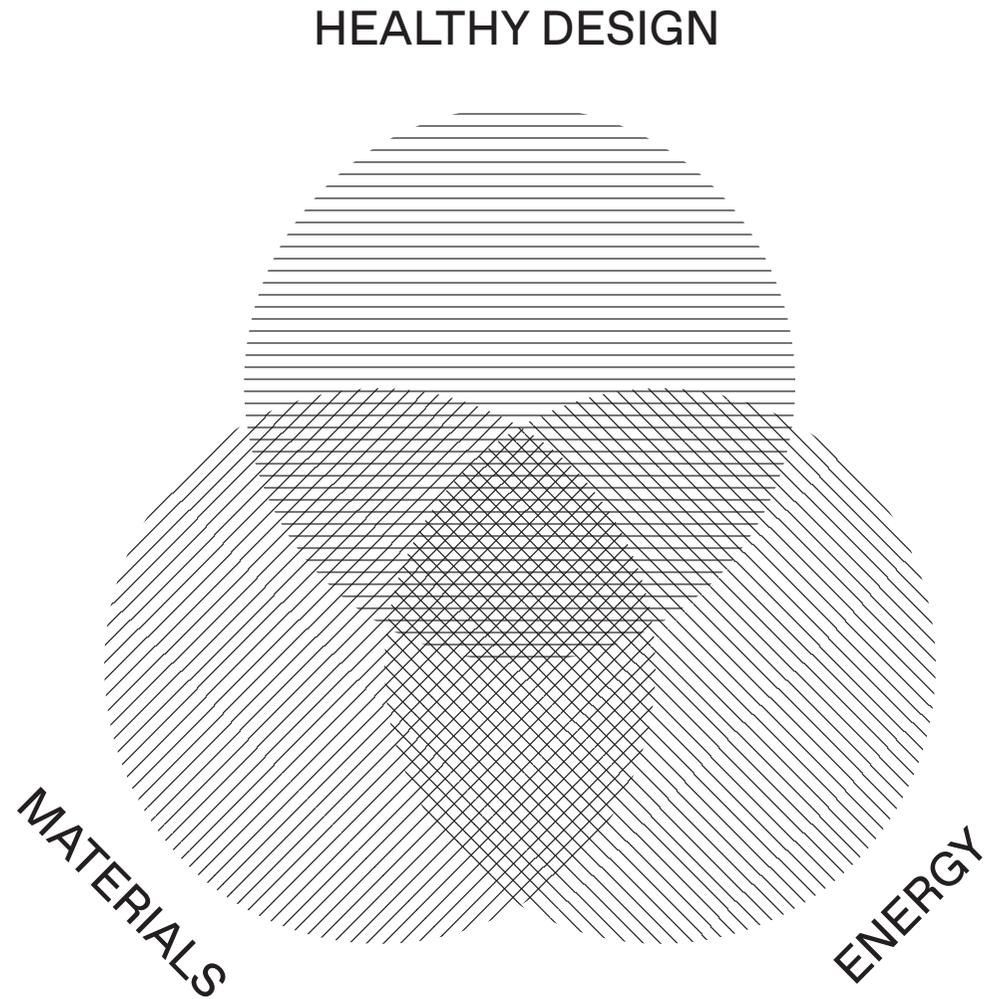
## WELLBEING

healthy building and materials  
education about food  
green spaces

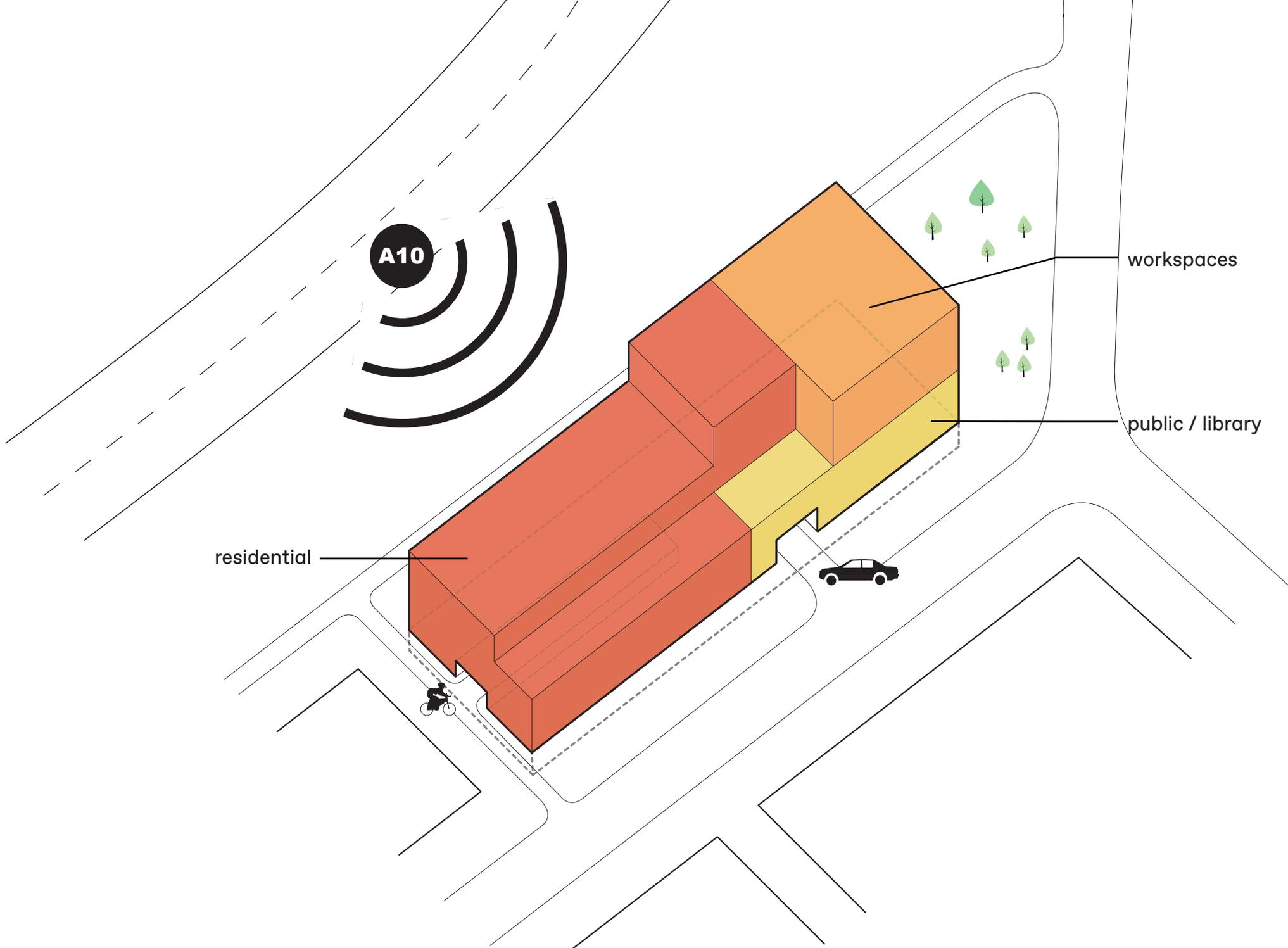
# SYNERGETIC HEALTHY DESIGN



# SYNERGETIC SUSTAINABLE DESIGN





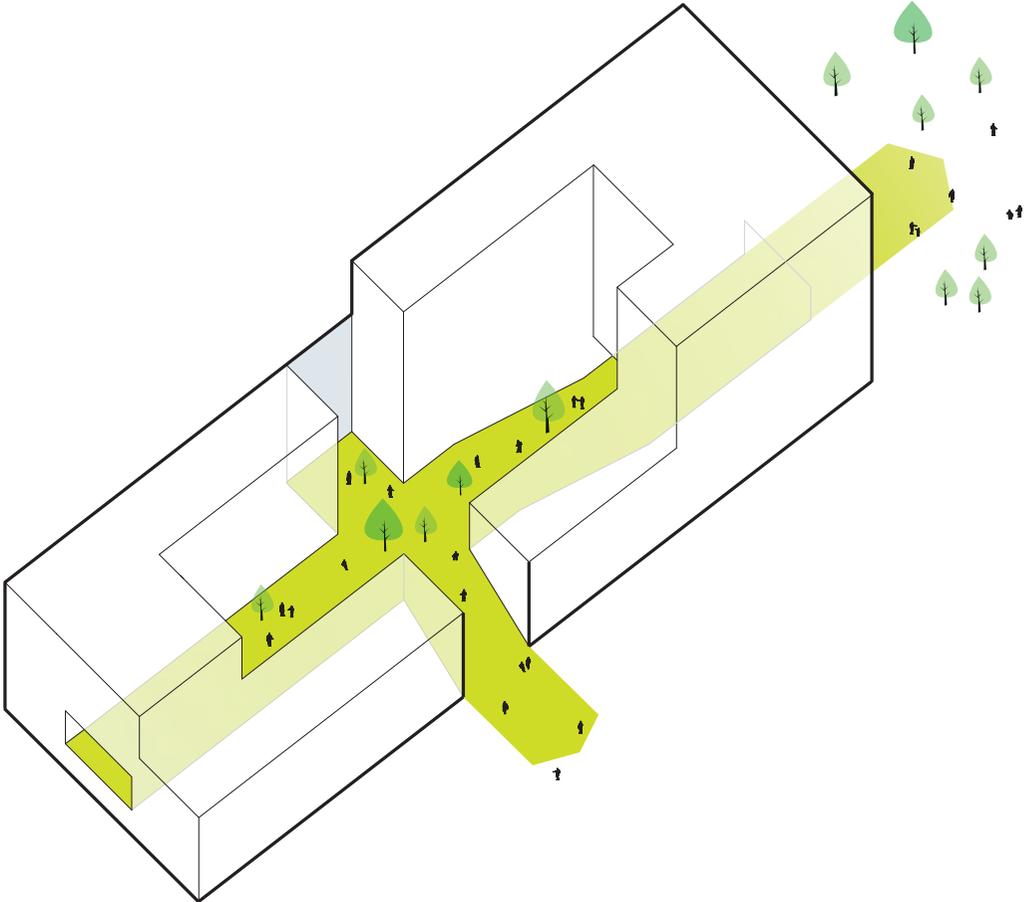


residential

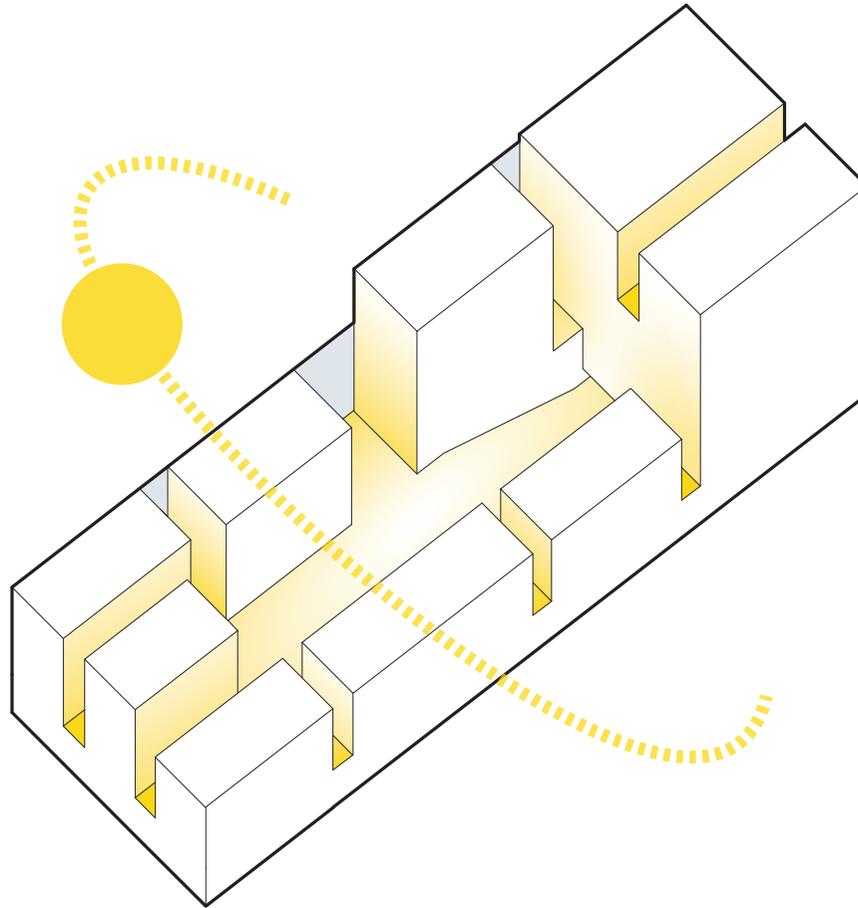
A10

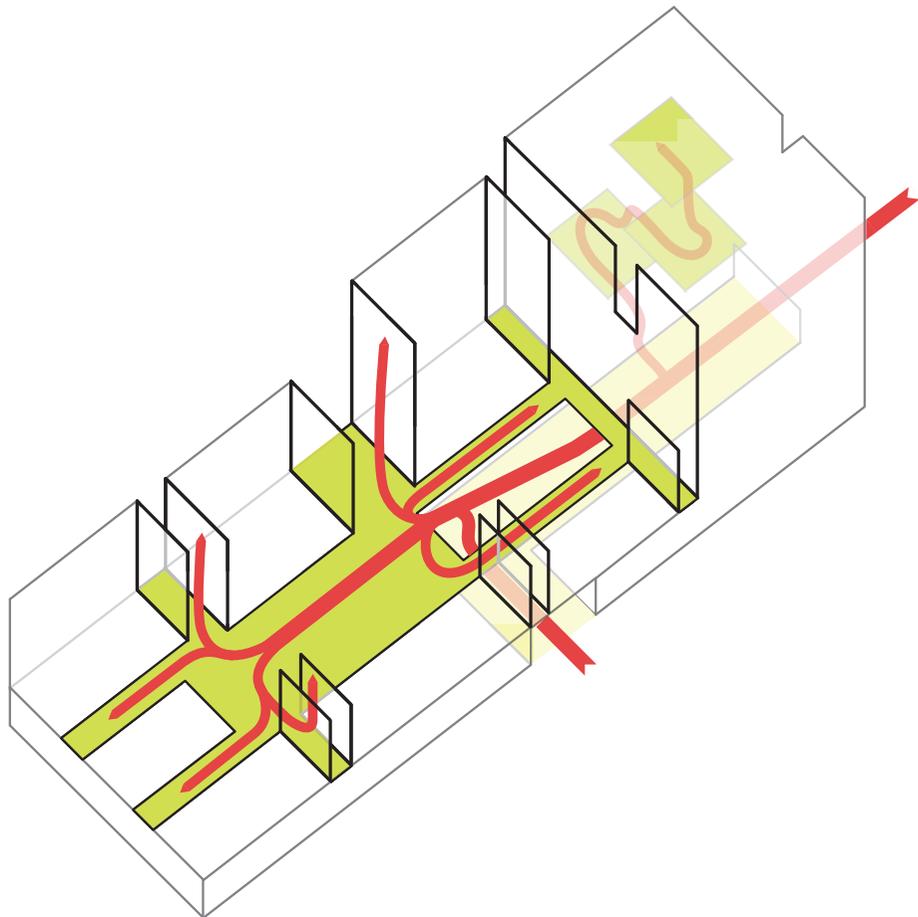
workspaces

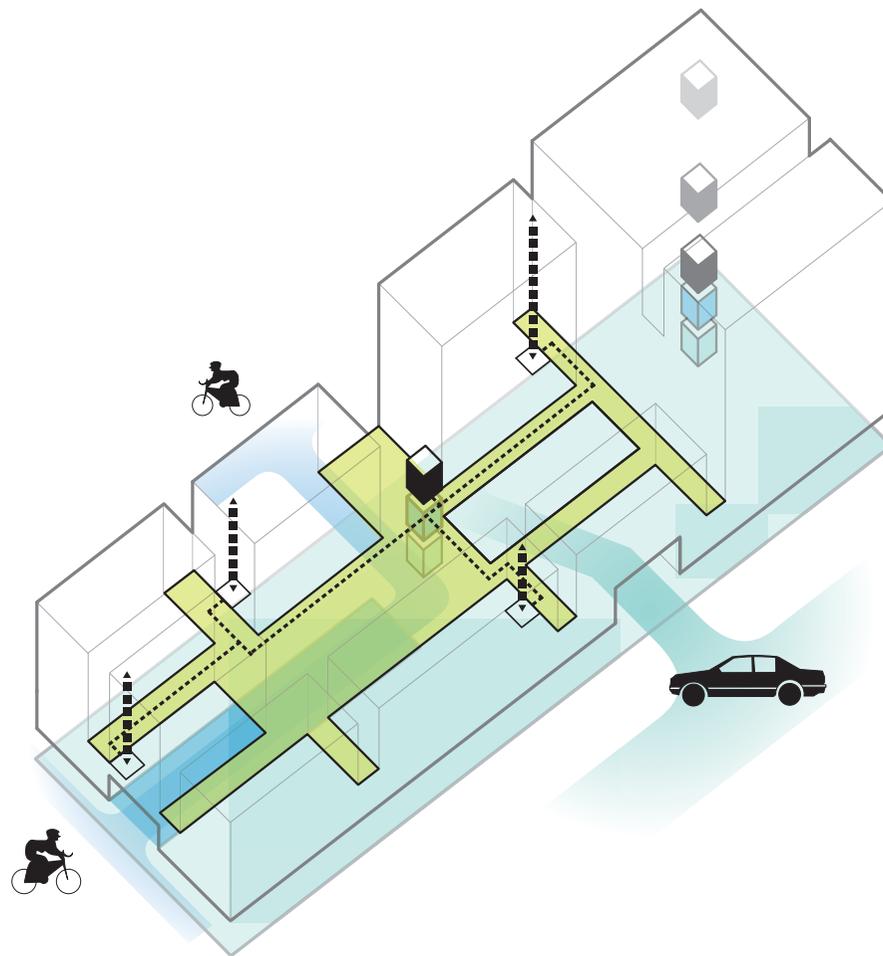
public / library

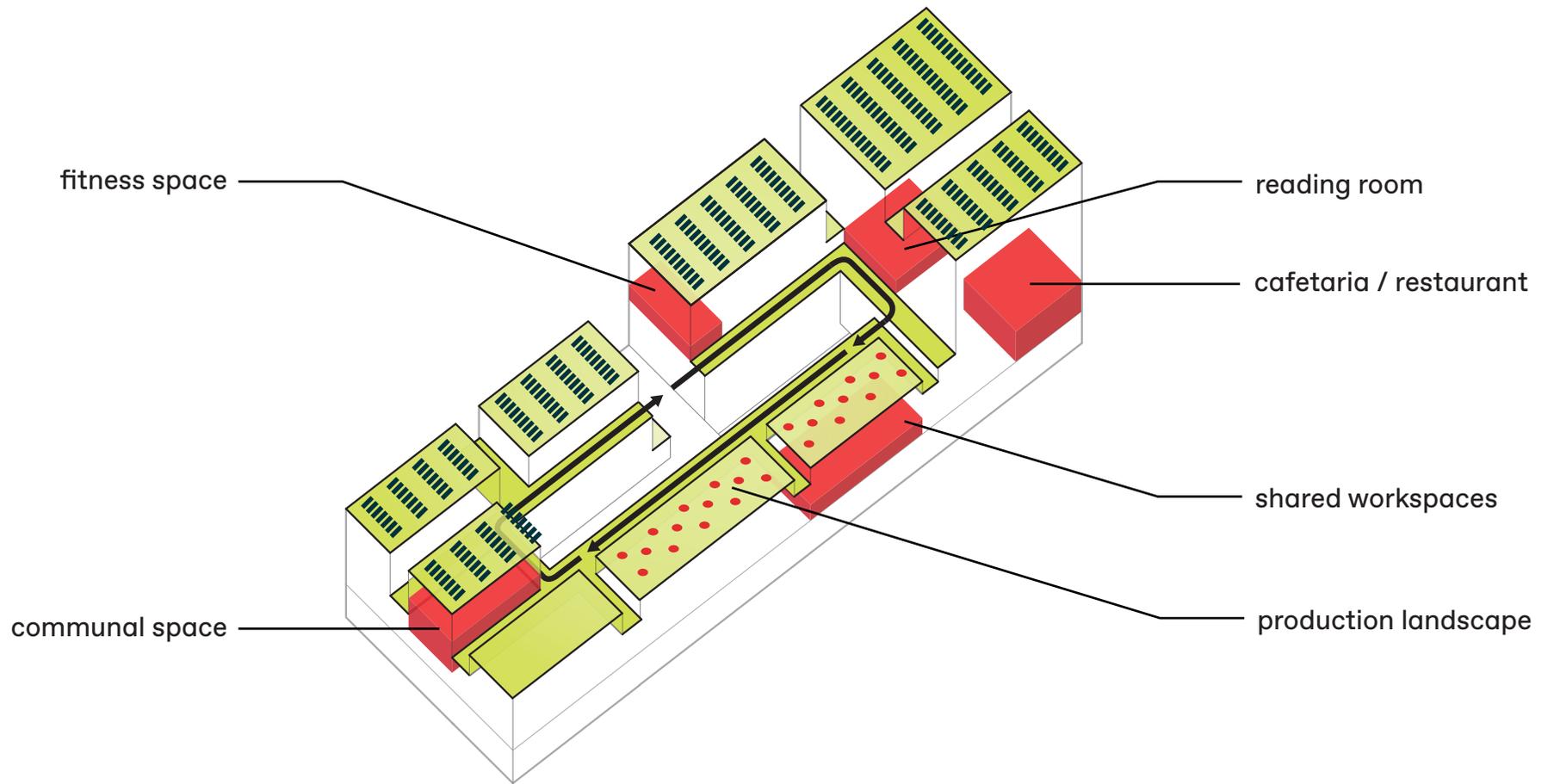














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