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# ADAPTIVE ASSEMBLIES

[A SCALABLE SOLUTION TO ATLANTA'S HOUSING CRISIS]

0



The Future of Multi-Family Development Typology: an Adaptive Assembly Approach...



### ADAPTIVE ASSEMBLIES

[A Scalable Solution to Atlanta's Housing Crisis]

Approval of Thesis Research Project Book is Presented to:

#### Ameen Farooq

and to the Faculty of the Department of Architecture College of Architecture and Construction Management by

#### Claudia Aguilar

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree :

**Bachelor of Architecture** 

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### ACKNOLEDGEMENTS:

This thesis would not be possible without the support of:

#### Thesis Advisor: Ameen Farooq

I am deeply grateful for his unwavering mentorship and guidance throughout the entire process. He provided me with insightful criticism, words of encouragement, and a constant belief in my ideas. His consistent challenges pushed me to become the best version of myself and without his support, this thesis would not have been possible.

#### KSU Department: Faculty & Staff

I would like to thank Faculty and Staff who have worked tirelessly to support and guide us, thank you for your commitment to our education and well-being. Your tireless efforts have not gone unnoticed and we are grateful for all that you have done to help us achieve our goals.

#### Friends and Family

To my architecture friends, who have shared this unique experience with me like no one else could. I want to thank you for your constant support and inspiration throughout the years. Watching each and every one of us grow during this five-year journey has been a real pleasure. Thank you for being there every step of the way.

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### ABSTRACT

Among other cities in the US, Atlanta, Georgia is experiencing levels of growth that surpass anything we have witnessed in the last century. It is projected that within the next ten years the city of Atlanta will grow by 2.5 million people to a current population of 7 million. With the surge of population influx reaching a record high of 2% growth per year, the available housing is practically bursting at the seams. Supply is low and demand is high. In effect, the average one-bedroom apartment runs for 1,800 dollars per month. The city is desperately seeking new opportunities for providing affordable housing at an expeditious rate. This has been made evident by the recent updates to the city's zoning. With the city's recent influx in the housing market, young professionals, in particular millennials, are desperately looking for alternatives to stay within the city to be part of urban life besides seeking professional jobs within metropolitan Atlanta.

To aid in competing with the rising demand for housing in Atlanta, the new legislation aims to incentivize affordable housing in Atlanta. Recently, the city of Atlanta is planning to introduce forty thousand new affordable housing units. Further rezoning in parts of the City of Atlanta is being enacted to encourage the development of accessory dwelling units on existing plots to accommodate the fast-paced needs of millennials and migrants from other states. To achieve the urgent need for more affordable housing, the architectural response has shifted to a more non-traditional means of constructing and supplying homes of varying scales, from ADU [accessory dwelling units] to multifamily developments.

A method that has proven successful in modern housing is to practice modular means of development, The modular system led to the development of standardized housing that was optimized for the constructability of standardized forms of housing developments. The design has been constrained to the dimensions of the max load for an eighteen-wheeler. This approach has diluted the architect's ability to produce site-specific, responsive, informed design and rather contributes to the "cookie cutter" stigma that the method has been labeled with.

This paper explores the design methodology for modular housing by revisiting its constructability, affordability, flexibility, and adaptability to accommodate the living standards and lifestyle of millennials, today. This research focuses on a modular housing type that could break away from the constraints of transport<sup>1</sup> and deliver new adaptive assemblies. These adaptive assemblies are reconfigurable<sup>2</sup> in form of structure, and constructive materials [flooring, wall panels, ceiling, and other finishes] that allow spaces to be more flexible, interchangeable, affordable, and constructible being more responsive to the 21st-century living patterns. To achieve this, an integrated design strategy for assembling dwelling units requires that the accessory dwelling units<sup>3</sup> by the City of Atlanta need to be revisited and should be further broken down into more adaptive assemblies.

To address this issue, this research investigates the current housing assembly methodologies, which take advantage of modular construction methods on a component-based system. The goal of this paper is to explore a scalable solution to modular housing to simplify the traditional approach of a one-and-done" designed unit. This proposal aims more specifically to design a kit of parts that are made to be easily transported and assembled but also gives the ability to customize the use of components to benefit all unique conditions. The benefits of this concept could include decreased construction time, cost, and on-site labor/disruption while providing guality housing with affordable and flexible options for young professionals [millennials] within the urban setting of Atlanta.

#### <sup>1</sup>Typical truck bed of 8.5 ft W x 40 ft L.

<sup>2</sup> Kit of parts methodology will allow for a flexible layout with interchangeable structure components and material finishes. <sup>3</sup> "Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) is a legal and regulatory term for a secondary house or apartment that shares the building lot of a larger, primary home."

# **CHAPTER** THESIS BASIS

# 1.1 OVERVIEW

#### [Summary]

Atlanta, Georgia is experiencing unprecedented growth, with a projected increase of 2.5 million people in the next decade, resulting in a severe shortage of affordable housing. To address this, the city is introducing new legislation to incentivize the development of affordable housing, including the construction of 40,000 new units. Modular housing has proven successful in meeting the demand for affordable housing, but its "cookiecutter" design is a drawback. This paper explores a new design methodology for modular housing that allows for more adaptability and flexibility, breaking away from the constraints of transport to create more responsive housing. The goal is to design a scalable kit of parts that can be easily transported and assembled, providing affordable and customizable housing options for young professionals in Atlanta's urban setting.

### [Definitions]

**ADU:** Accessory Dwelling Units

Kit of Parts: Design concept where a product or system is broken down into individual components or modules that can be easily assembled or configured in different ways to create a variety of different solutions

The city of Atlanta's population peaked in 1970 at 496,973. As the region grew dramatically over the next two decades, the city's population shrank to 394,017 by 1990. And over the next 20 years the population grew a mere 0.85 percent. That shrinking pattern has now changed.

2%

The census indicates that in 2016 Atlanta's population was 472,522: a 12 percent increase in a six-year span from 2010 to 2016. This magnitude in growth has not been seen in Atlanta in the last 50 years. There is no reason to believe this trend will not continue and accelerate. Between July 2016 and July 2017, the city of Atlanta permitted more than \$4 billion in construction: more than any other 12 months in the city's history.

12%

Atlanta is experiencing levels of growth that surpass anything we have witnessed in the last century. It is projected that within the next ten years the city will grow by 2.5 million people to a population of 7 million.



### 1.2 INTRODUCTION

# THESIS STATEMENT

The intent of this thesis is to redefine the architectural approach to modular housing. This thesis asks "What if modular housing could break from the constraints of transport, and deliver new adaptive assemblies which could benefit the occupant, environment and urban fabric in which the product exists. What if rather than a holistic strategy for assembling dwellings, that instead the current unit were to be further broken down into the essential components of architecture. If the construction method was treated as a kit of parts.

# QUESTIONS

where is it failing?

housing crisis in Atlanta?

affordability, scale, and accessibility?

methods?

methods of construction?

- Define how or where can the current model for modular construction be improved and
- How can a revitalized model of modular construction contribute to the solution of the
- How can the current model of modular construction can be challenged in terms of
- What factors have contributed to the stagnation of development of construction
- What design strategies /technologies could be implemented to respond to the stagnant





### 2. SUPPORTING DATA Main issues:

The issue at hand is the severe shortage of affordable housing in Atlanta, Georgia due to unprecedented growth. The city is expected to see a surge of 2.5 million people in the next decade, resulting in a significant increase in demand for affordable housing. To tackle this problem, the city is introducing new legislation to incentivize the development of affordable housing, including the construction of 40,000 new units.

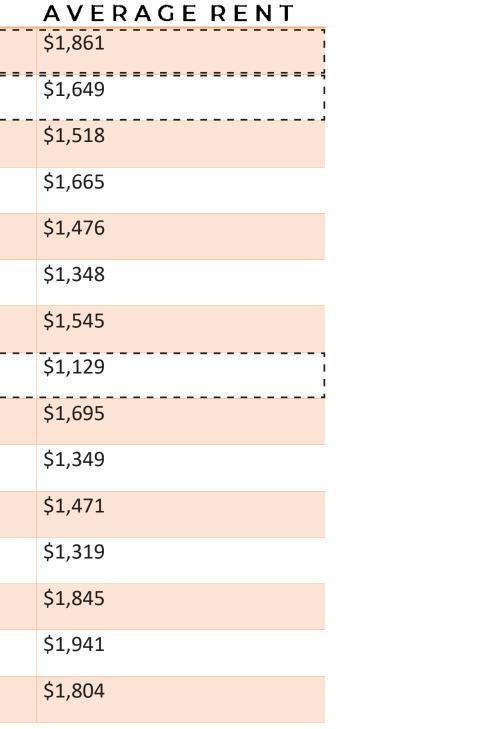
The average size of an apartment in Atlanta is 971 square feet, however, this can vary significantly depending on the type of unit. Studio apartments are the smallest and most affordable option available, followed by onebedroom apartments which are closer to the average size. Two-bedroom and three-bedroom apartments, on the other hand, offer a more generous square footage.

Additionally, there are both cheap and luxury options available for both houses and apartments, further increasing the variance in size and cost. The discrepancy in size and cost of living spaces in Atlanta can make it challenging for individuals and families to find a living arrangement that suits their needs and budget.

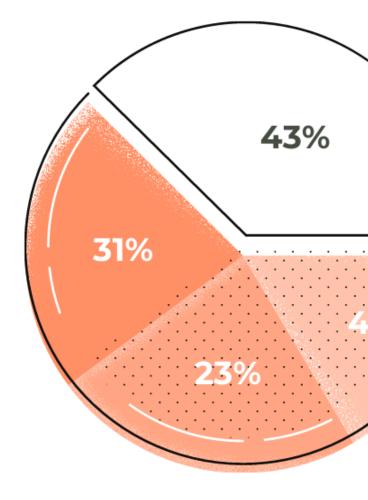
### Atlanta's Rental Market

CITY
Atlanta
Marietta
Douglasville
Lawrenceville
Lithonia
Stone Mountain
Decatur
Augusta
McDonough
Jonesboro
Snellville
Riverdale
Sandy Springs
Kennesaw
Duluth

#### Atlanta, Ga Apartment Rent Ranges







#### What is the average apartment size in Atlanta?

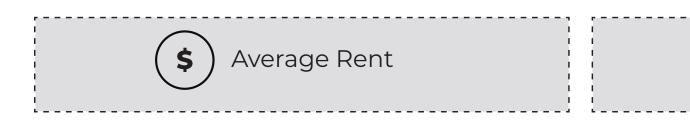
The average size for a Atlanta, Ga apartment is 971 square feet, but this number varies greatly depending on unit type, with cheap and luxury alternatives for houses and apartments alike. Studio apartments are the smallest and most affordable, 1-bedroom apartments are closer to the average, while 2- bedroom apartments and 3-bedroom apartments offer a more generous square footage.

>

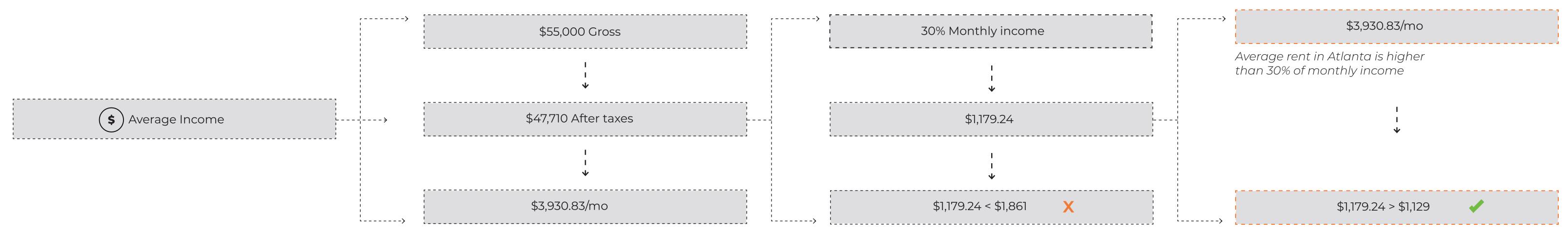
> 118,669 or 55% of the households in Atlanta, Ga are renter-occupied while 96,480 or 45% are owner-occupied.

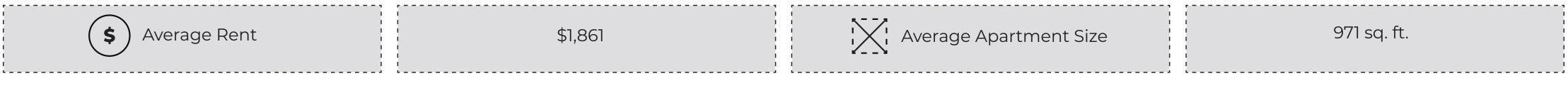
### AVERAGE INCOME | AVERAGE UNIT SIZE

Atlanta's Average Rent for a 1 Bedroom Apartment



Atlanta's Average Rent Calculation - Average Income

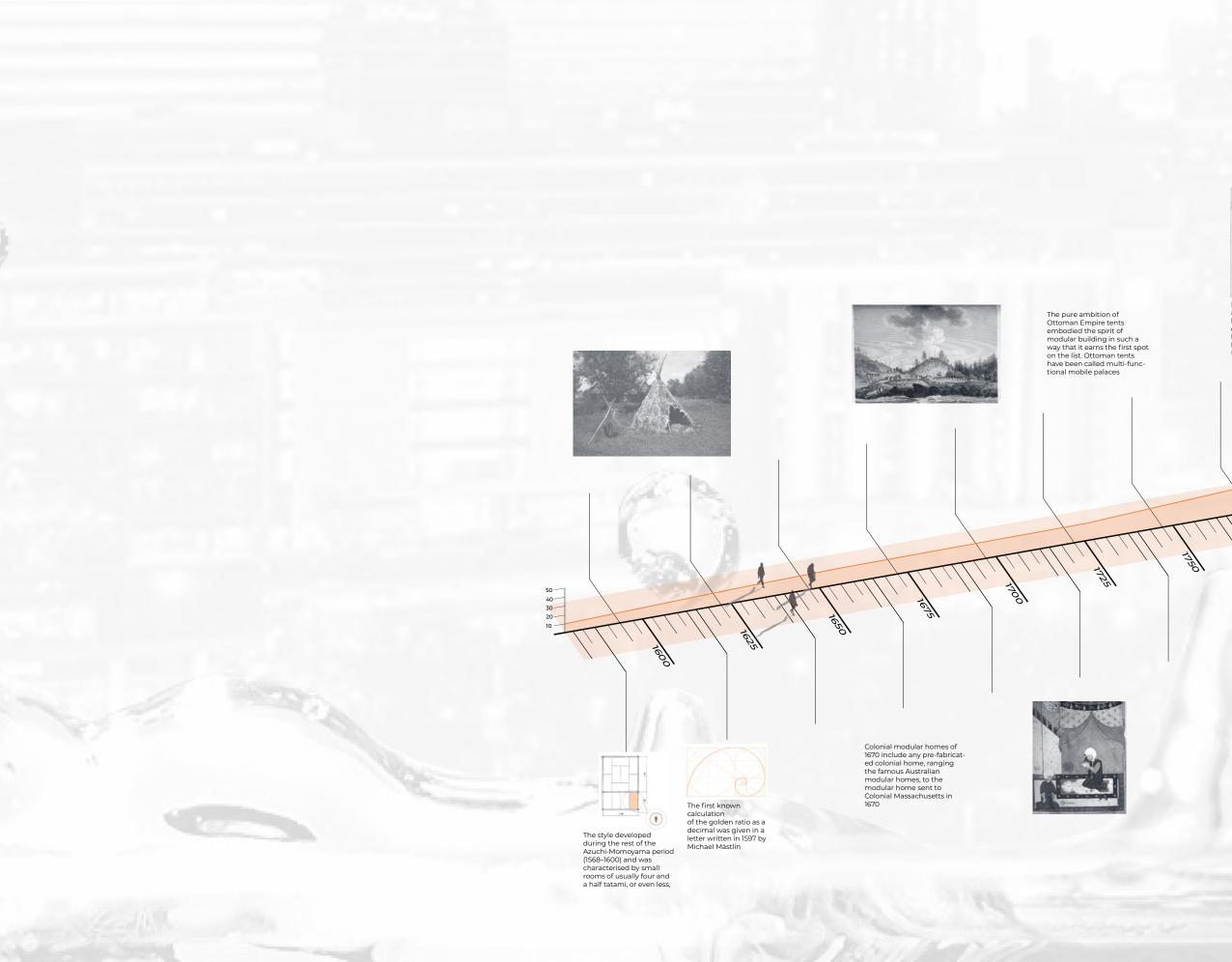










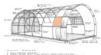




Between 1908 and 1940, Sears Roebuck and Co. sold more than 500,000 prefab homes through its catalog, straight to consumers. At the time, these houses cost less than two-thirds of conventionally built homes, and many still exist throughout the United States



Augustine Taylor, a builder in Chicago, devised the balloon-frame method, enabling walls to be built off-site, then transported to the intended construction site, for speedy assembly.





Prefab structures continued into World War Two, to meet the growing demand for mass accommodations for military personnel. So-called "Quonset Huts," or "Nissen Huts" in the U.K.



Following the war, as soldiers began returning home, the United States experienced a severe housing shortage, and once again turned to prefab homes for efficiency, reduced costs and quick construction. American architect Paul Rudolph was given the role to solve a housing shortage in New Haven Conneticut.

First documented prefabricated home was created by London carpenter John Manning for his son, who was moving from England

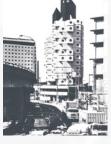


Modular construction made its way to the United States in response to the housing needs of the California Gold Rush.



The "Crystal Palace" was built for Britain's Great Exhibition, and remains one of the most famous examples of early modular construction.

Was constructed in only a few months. Afterward, the palace was dismantled, moved, and rebuilt at



Japanese architect Kisha Kurokawa designed and built the Nagakin Capsule Tower.

Tower. Led to another push in the modular architectural industry. As technologies continue to advance, the limits and



Le Corbusier developed the Modulor in 1943, and the first volume of his study on the topic was published in 1950.

### 3. MODULARITY OVERVIEW

#### Issues with modular means of development

Although modular housing has proven to be a successful method of development, it has its drawbacks. It involves creating standardized housing optimized for standardized forms of housing developments, which limits the architect's ability to produce site-specific, responsive, and informed designs. The maximum load for an eighteen-wheeler also restricts the design dimensions, which can lead to a perception of a lack of uniqueness, also known as the "cookie-cutter" stigma.

Modular housing faces issues with transportation due to the constraint of standardized dimensions for transportation. This has led to a limitation in the adaptability of the design to the site-specific needs. In addition, although the cost of modular housing is generally lower than traditional construction, the upfront costs can be significant, making it less affordable for some potential buyers or renters.









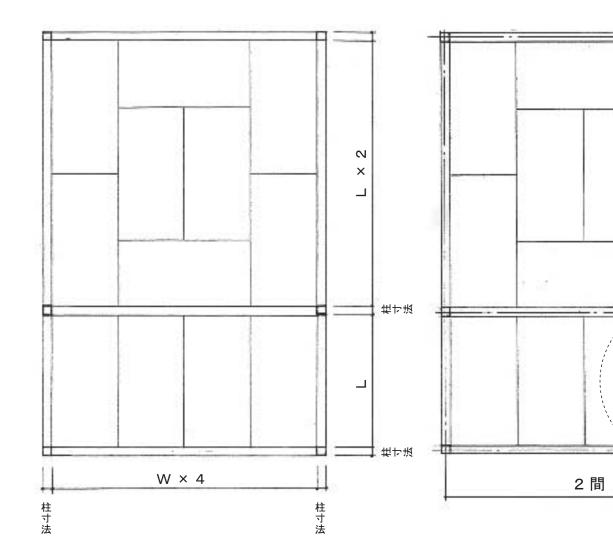
## 3.2 PRECEDENTS

#### Japanese Tea House

Modularity refers to the quality of being able to combine or arrange separate parts or units in a variety of ways to create a larger, more complex structure. In the case of a tatami mat, modularity refers to the ability to combine individual mats to create a larger flooring system.

A tatami mat is traditionally made up of a core of rice straw, covered with a woven rush straw covering, and bound with decorative cloth edges. The mat's dimensions are standardized and typically measure 1.82 meters by 0.91 meters. This standardized size allows tatami mats to be combined and arranged in various configurations to create larger flooring systems that fit a particular space.

The modular nature of tatami mats makes them a versatile flooring option that can be adapted to a wide range of architectural and design styles. This flexibility has made them a popular flooring option in traditional Japanese homes, as well as in contemporary spaces that embrace the aesthetic and practical benefits of tatami flooring.

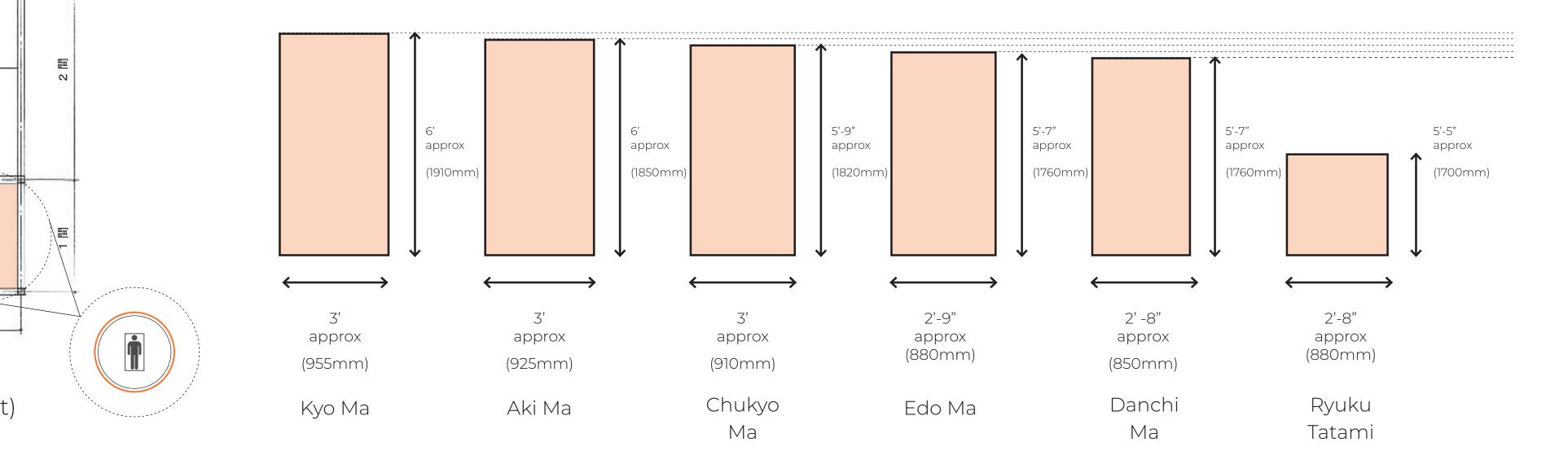


90 x 180 centimeters (approx. 3 x 6 feet)

"From ratio to overall concept"

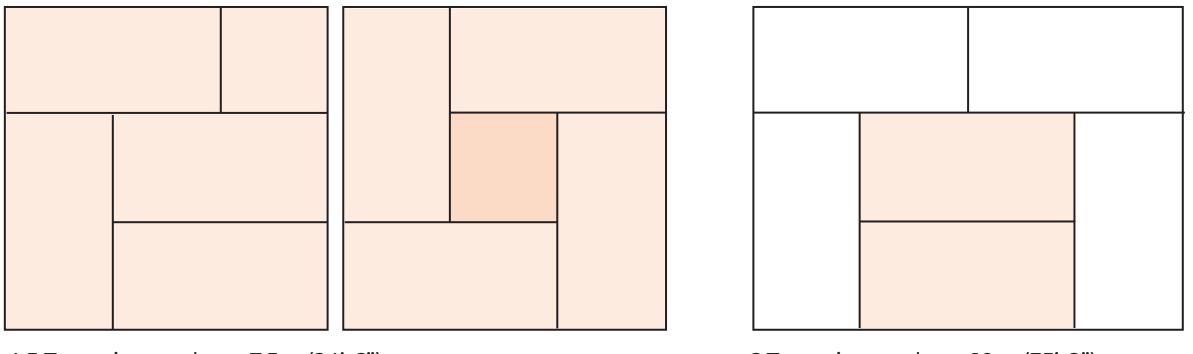
STANDARD SIZING

Tatami mat size variations & naming converntions

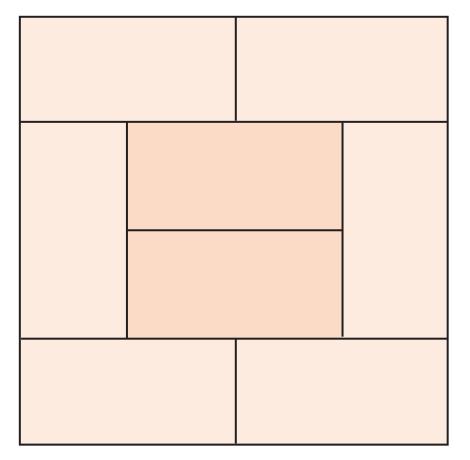


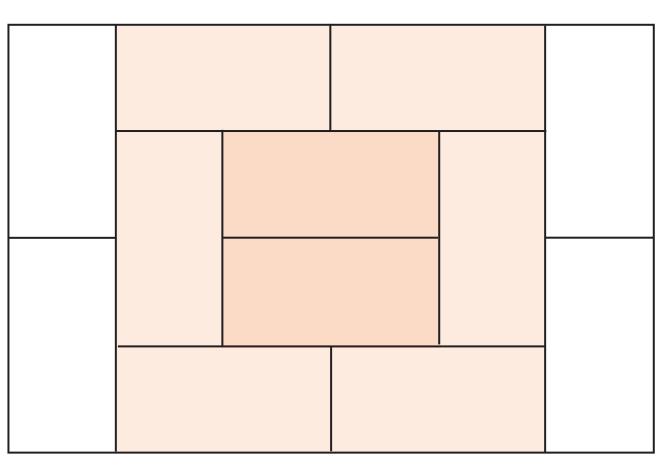


#### Tatami mat floor plan arrangements & patterns



4.5 Tatami mat: about 7.5m (24'-6")



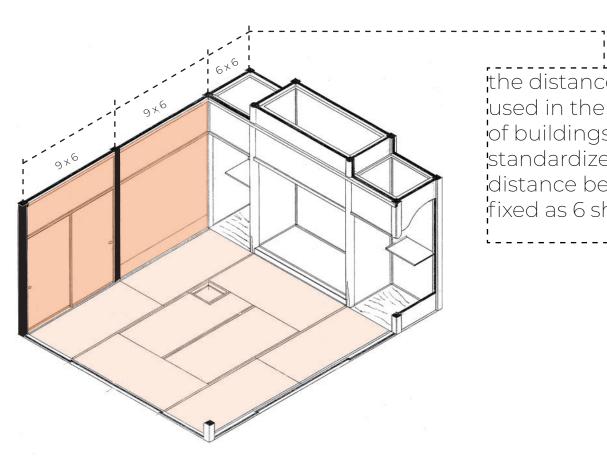


8 Tatami mat: about 14m (45'-9")

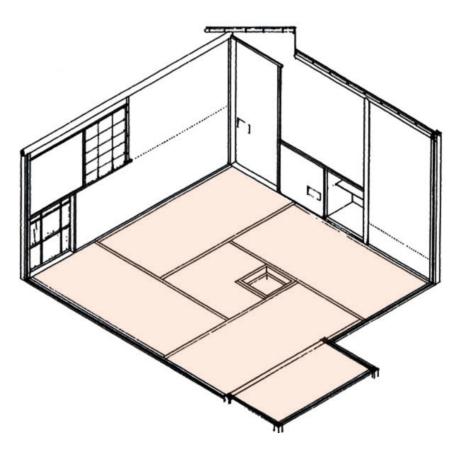
12 Tatami mat: about 20m (65'-6")

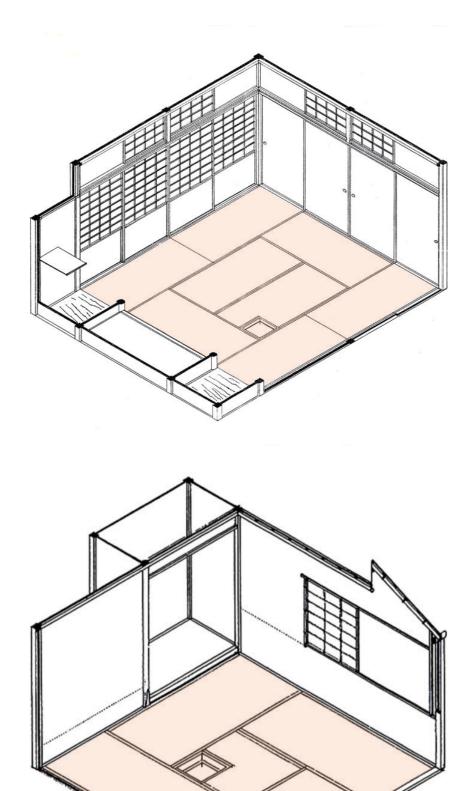
#### 6 Tatami mat: about 10m (35'-8")

### Three dimensional configurations



the distance between pillars used in the construction of buildings had to be standardized. So the distance between pillars was fixed as 6 shaku 5 sun





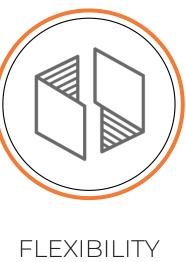
#### Main elements derived from the Japanese Tea House

Ø			
NATURE	RATIO	MINIMALISM	
Adjacency to nature Minimal transitions Sense of balance	90 x 180 centimeters (approx. 3 x 6 feet)	Honshitsu "real essence"	Fle Mult
	"From ratio to overall concept"		

#### Japanese Tea House Overview

PR	OS
Compact Space	Reconfigurability
Flexibility	Adaptability
Sustainable	Reconfigurable
Modular	Minimal

CC	NS
Limited space	(
Maintanece	
Limited functionality	Д
Climate limitations	Lir

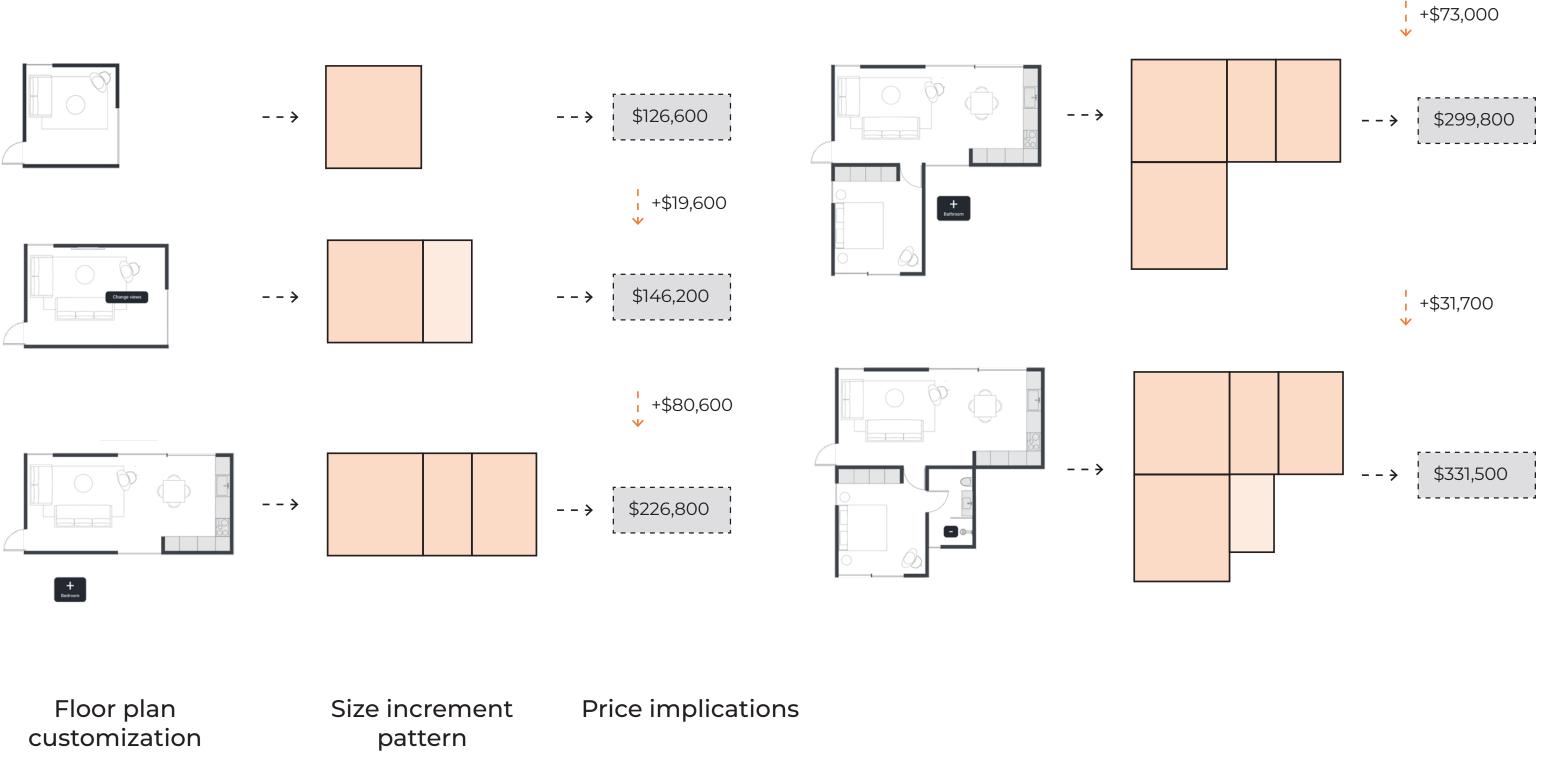


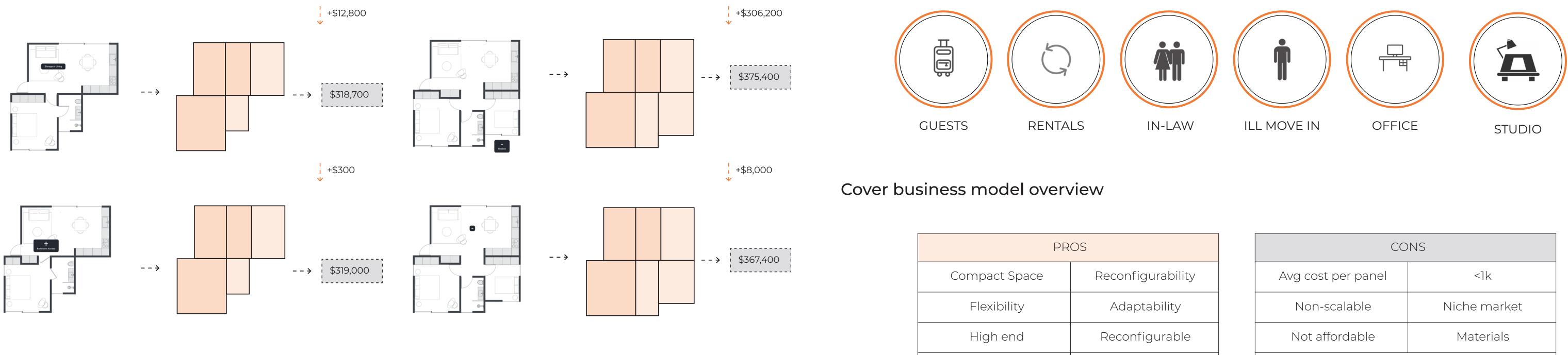
lexible program Iltipurpose spaces



3.3 PRECEDENTS

### Cover Business Model





Floor plan customization Size increment pattern

Price implications

#### Intended use of space

Site specific

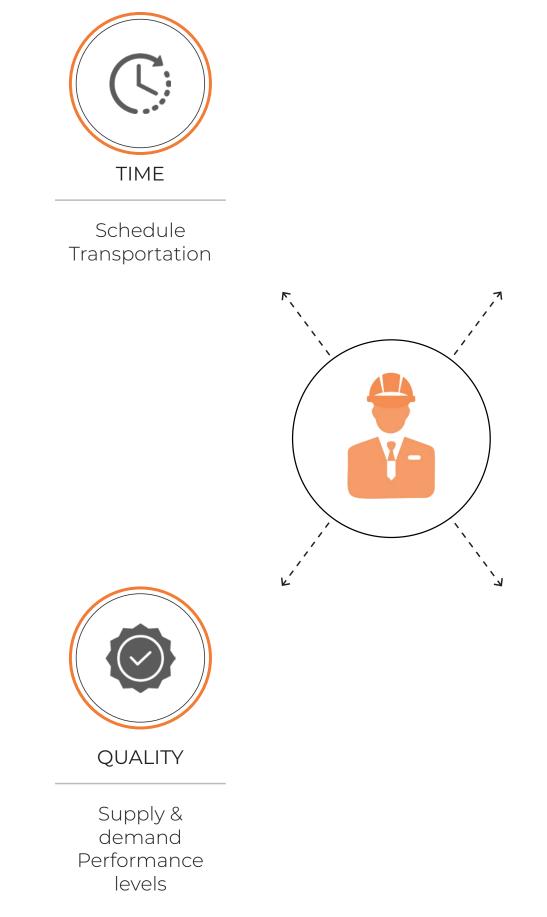
Customizable

СО	NS
Avg cost per panel	<1k
Non-scalable	Niche market
Not affordable	Materials
Significant upch	arge for added sf

## **3.4** TARGET MARKET

### Developer's Profile

A construction developer has several priorities when managing a project, including delivering the project within the scheduled timeframe, staying within the allocated budget, ensuring the quality of the final product meets the expected standards, and generating a satisfactory return on investment. These priorities must be balanced and managed effectively to ensure project success and profitability.





Schedule Transportation Scale Cost estimating



ROI

Budgeting (without compromising design excellence) Rental rates > cost of construction

### Millenial's Profile

Millennials prioritize several factors when looking for an apartment, including location, budget, community, and flexibility. Location is important, as millennials often seek walkable neighborhoods with access to public transportation. Budget is also a significant consideration, with many millennials seeking affordable housing options.

Community is important, with many millennials valuing shared spaces and amenities that promote social connections. Finally, flexibility is key, as many millennials seek apartments with lease terms that allow for short-term commitments or the ability to sublet.





THESIS STUDIO 34

Urban setting Job opportunities Entertainment



Avg. of 30% of monthly income

COMMUNITY

Sens of belonging Social sceneries



- (21+

FLEXIBILITY

Reconfigurable spaces Remote working





No	Proposed Sites   Surroundings	Constraints	Potentials	Priorities	Opportunities
1		8 acres. 3590 Pleasantdale Rd, Atlanta, GA 30340	- Multifamily housing/ Mixed use development	- Mixed income community - Housing - Mixed use commercial development	- Extensive side affords exploration of different residential scales of modularity
2		4 acres. 229 Holtzclaw St SE, Atlanta, GA 30340	- Multifamily housing/Mixed use development	- Housing development - Millennial target lifestyle - Urban activity	- Connection to beltline - Urban scenery - Activity -Workability arounc a compact site
3		2 acres. 170 Boulevard SE, Atlanta, Ga 30312	- Multifamily housing/Mixed use development	- Housing development - Millennial target lifestyle - Urban activity	-Historic district - Urban scenery - Activity -Workability around a compact site

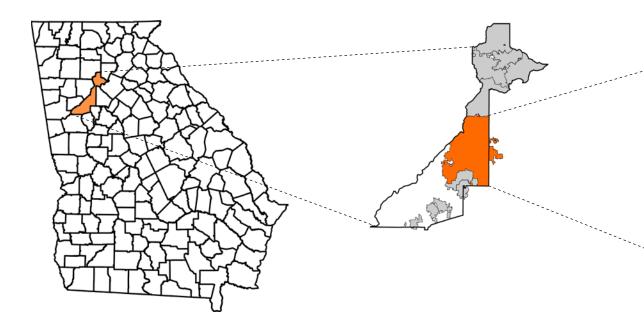
# 4.1 SITE

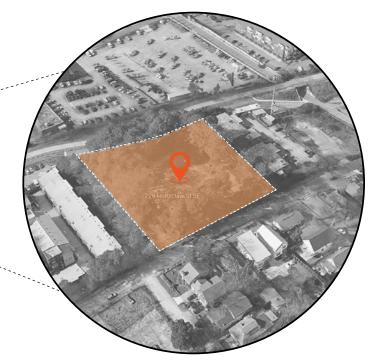
The chosen site located at **229 Holtzclaw St SE, Atlanta Ga** was selected for several reasons, including interactivity, connection to the Beltline, being an up-and-coming area for development, and being a millennial hub.

**[Interactivity]** One of the main reasons for selecting the site is its interactivity. The location is easily accessible and wellconnected, with a lot of foot traffic, which makes it an ideal spot for a millenials.

**[Up-and-coming area]** Cabbage Town, where the site is located, is a historic district that is undergoing revitalization. The area has seen significant investment in recent years, with new shops, restaurants, and housing developments.

**[Millenial Hub]** Millennial hub: Finally, the site is also a millennial hub, attracting a lot of young and urban professionals. According to research, millennials are one of the largest users of modern style housing.







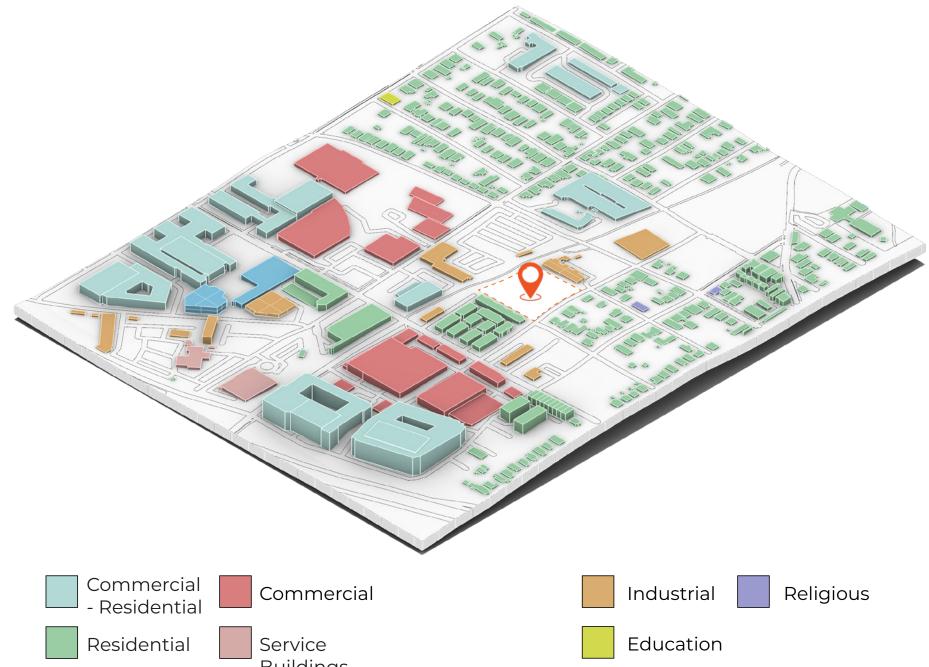


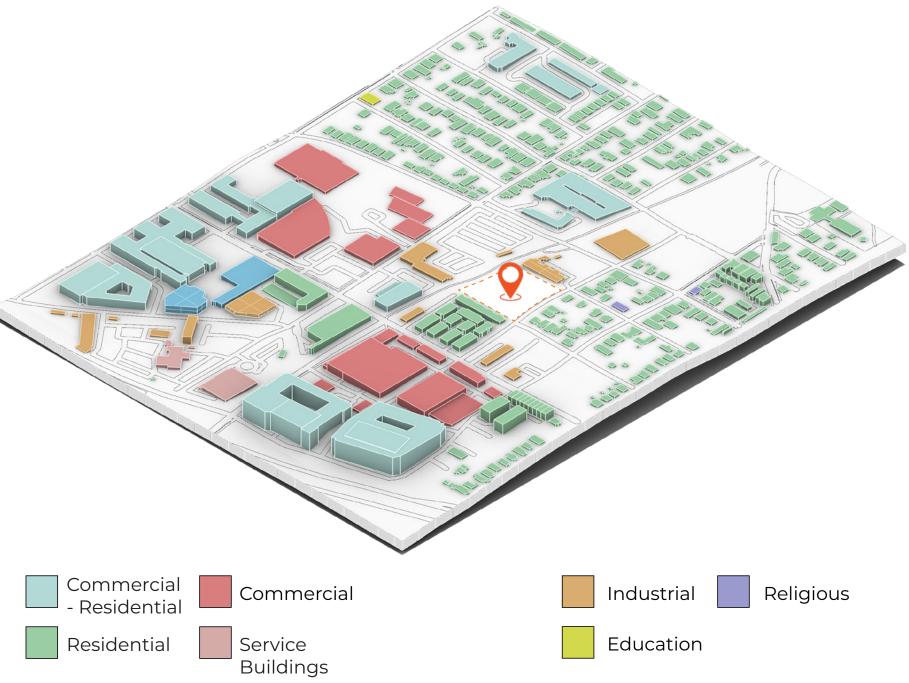
### Surroundings







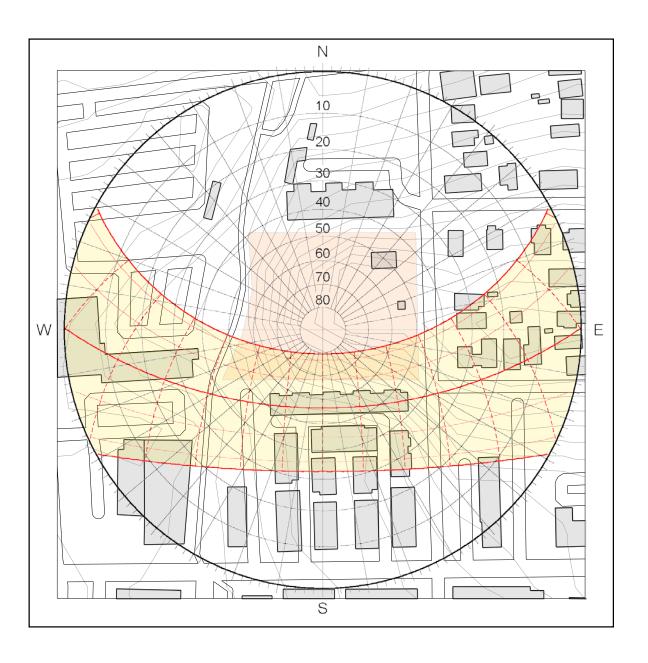




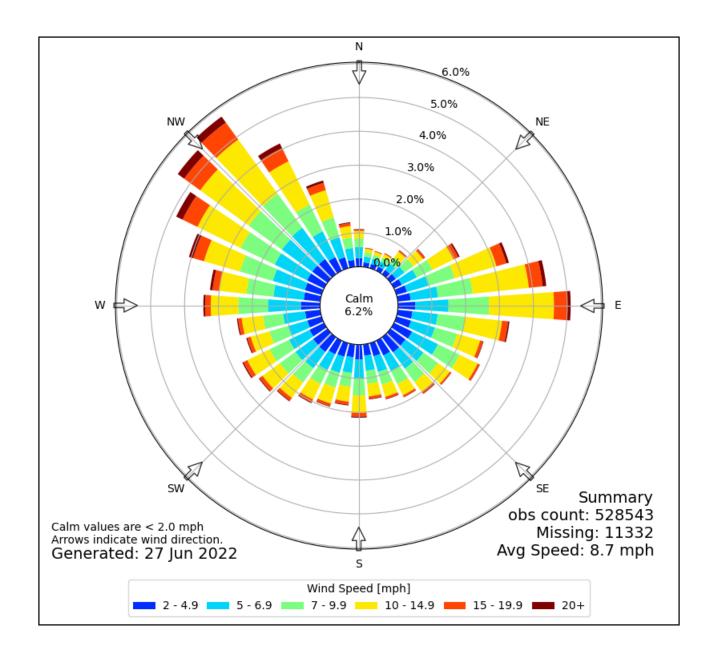
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#### Performance





# ∩ Z $\geq$





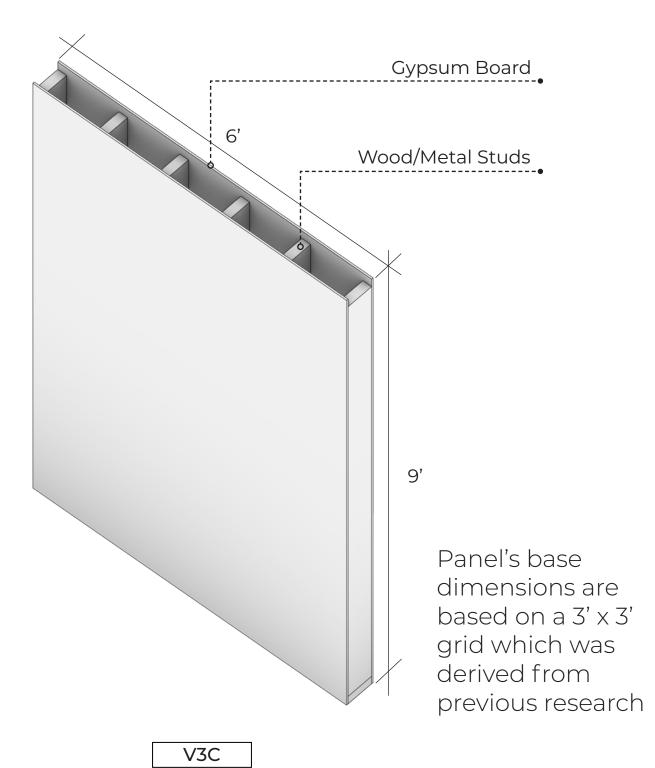




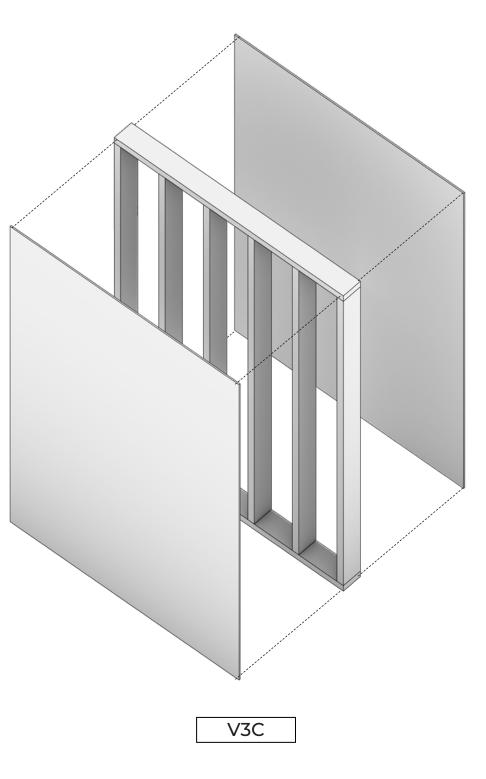


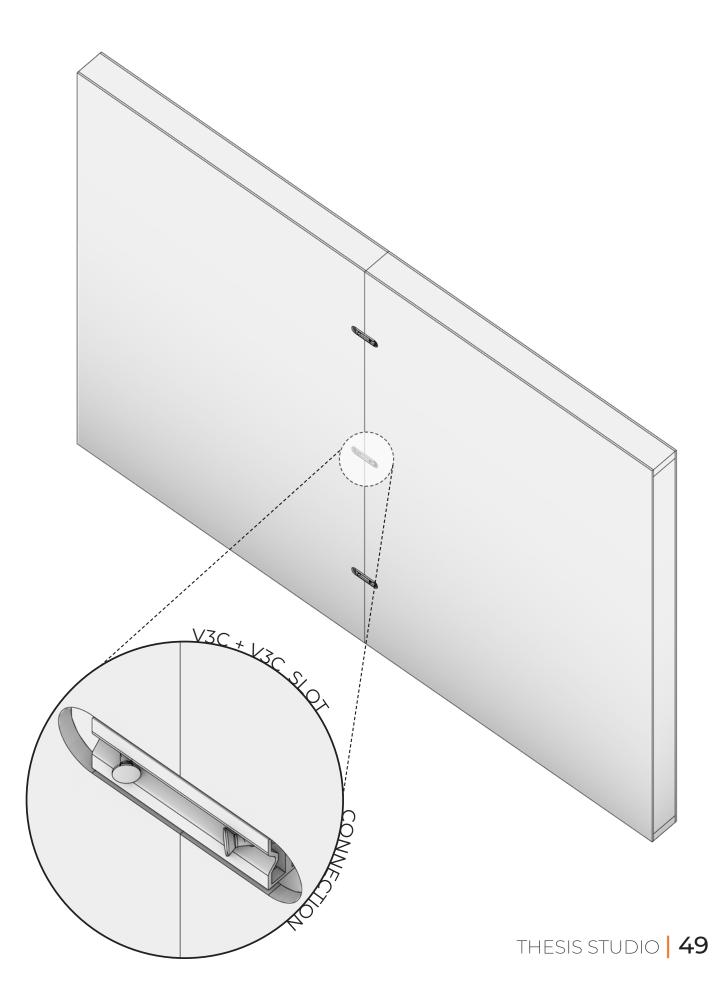
### 5.1 VERTICALASSEMBLIES

Assembly Number	L	W	D	Cost Per Panel
VIA	9'	2'	4 3/4"	\$101.62
V2B	9'	3'	4 3/4"	\$111.17
V3C	9'	6'	4 3/4"	\$237.30
V4C	9'	6'	4 5/8"	\$264.2
V5D	9'	6'	6"	\$309.30
V6E	9'	6'	6"	\$314.47
НІА	6'	18'-6"	15"	\$687.56
H2B	6'	18'	15"	\$675.56
НЗС	6'	24'-6"	15"	\$902.32
H4C	6'	24'-0"	15"	\$890.32



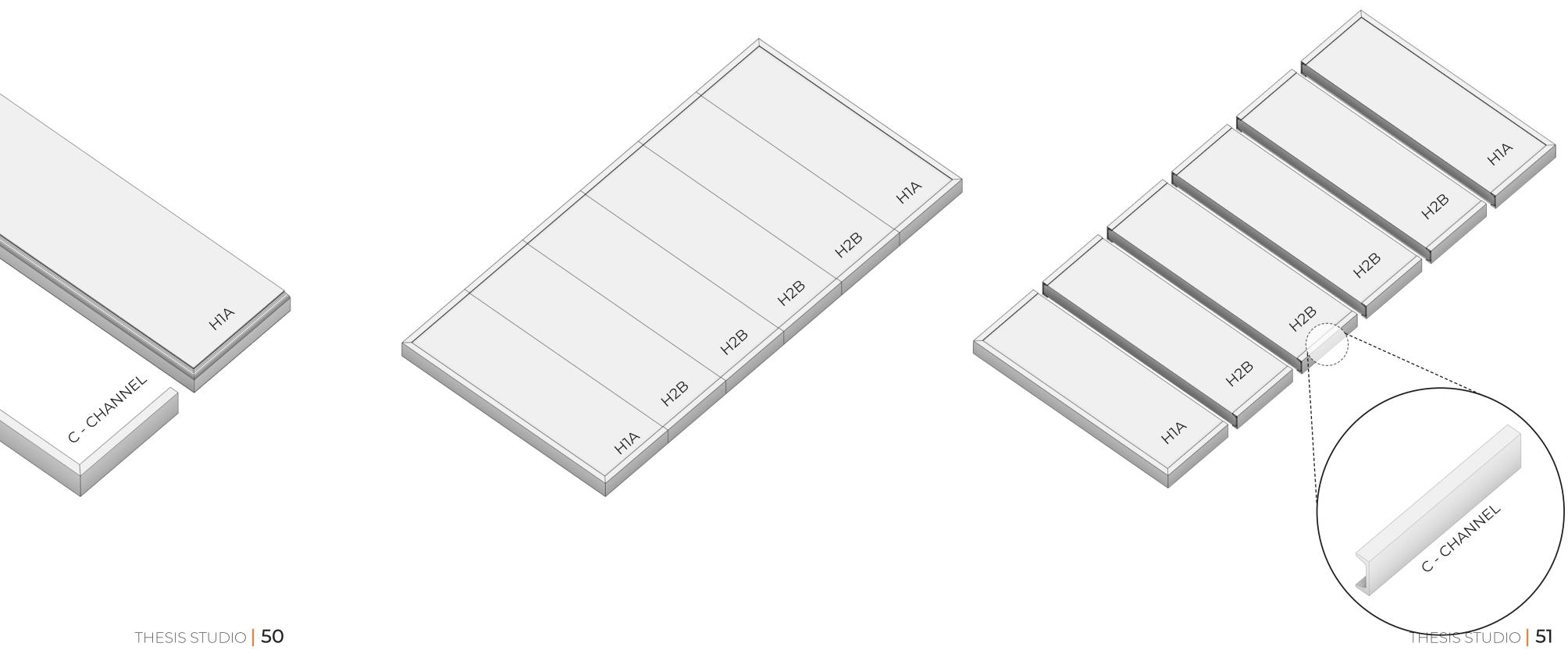
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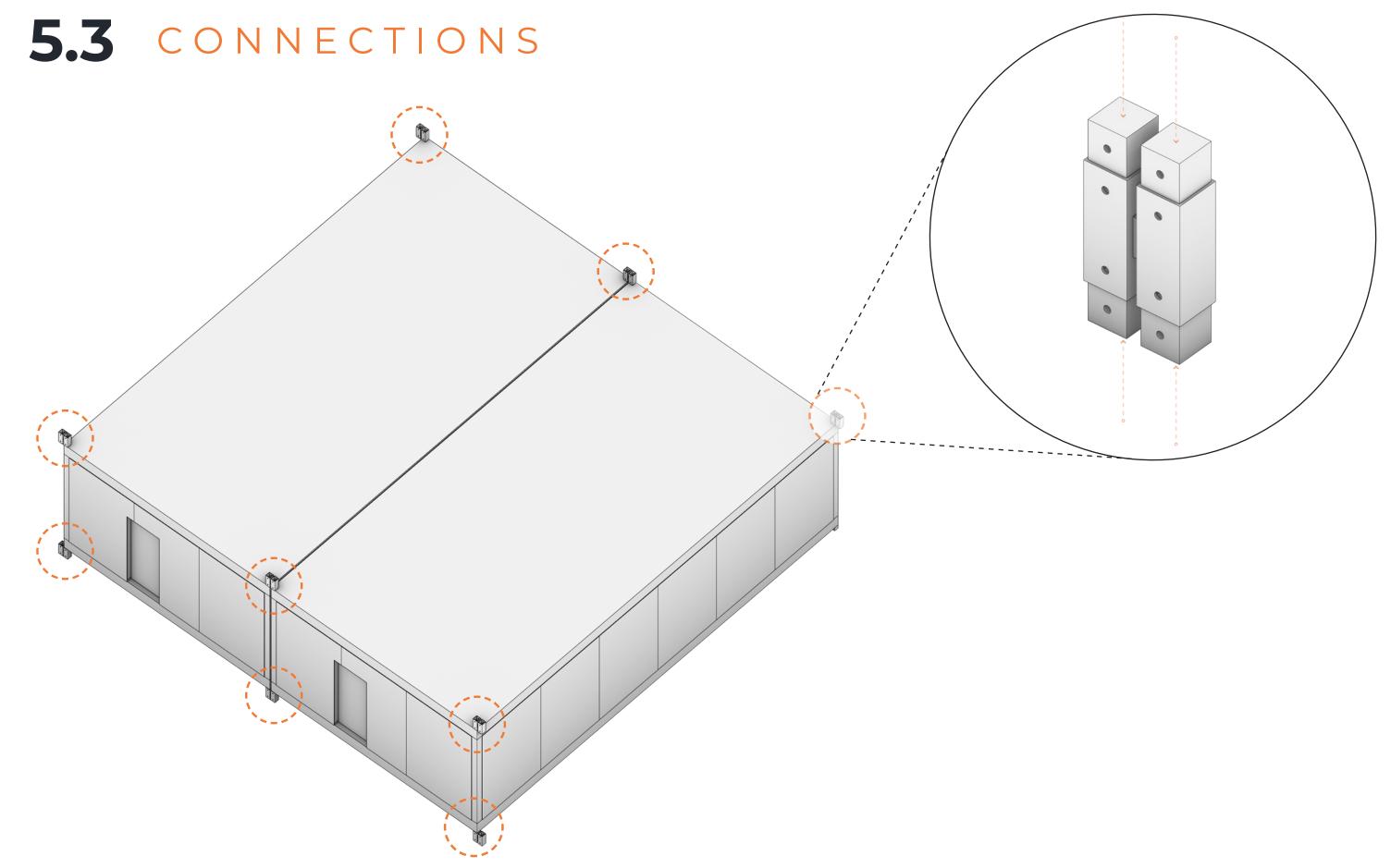


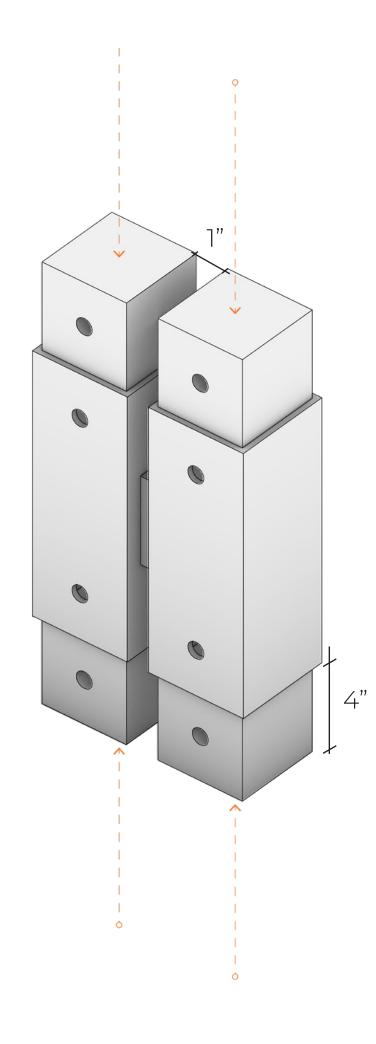


## 5.2 HORIZONTAL ASSEMBLIES

Assembly Number	L	W	D	Cost Per Panel
VIAD	9'	2'	4 3/4"	-
V2BD	9'	3'	4 3/4"	-
V3CD	9'	6'	4 3/4"	-
V4CD	9'	6'	4 5/8"	-
V5DD	9'	6'	6"	-
V6DD	9'	6'	6"	-
V3CW	9'	6'	4 3/4"	-
V4CW	9'	6'	4 5/8"	_
H5D	6'	36'-6"	15"	\$1,391.15
H6D	6'	36'-0"	15"	\$1,371.80

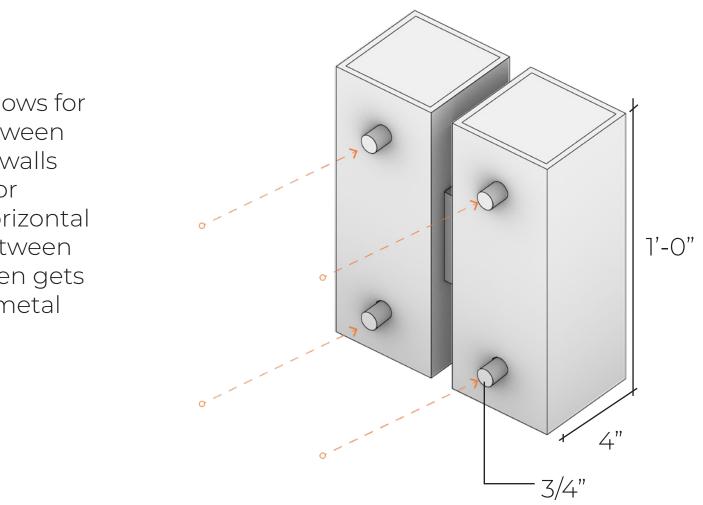




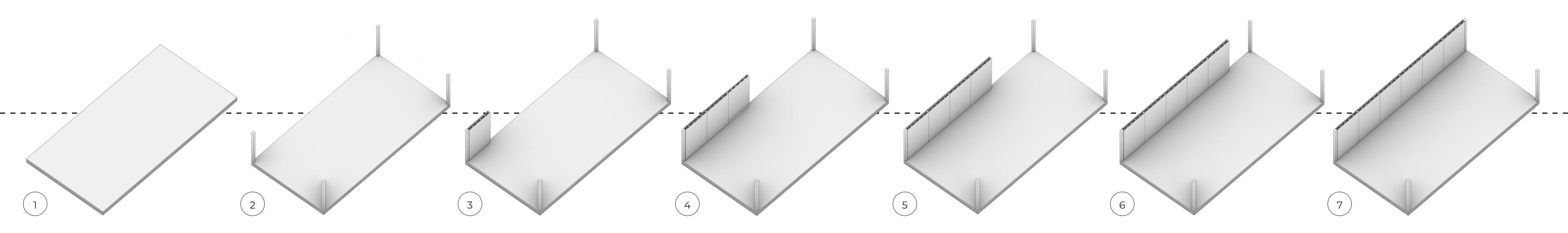


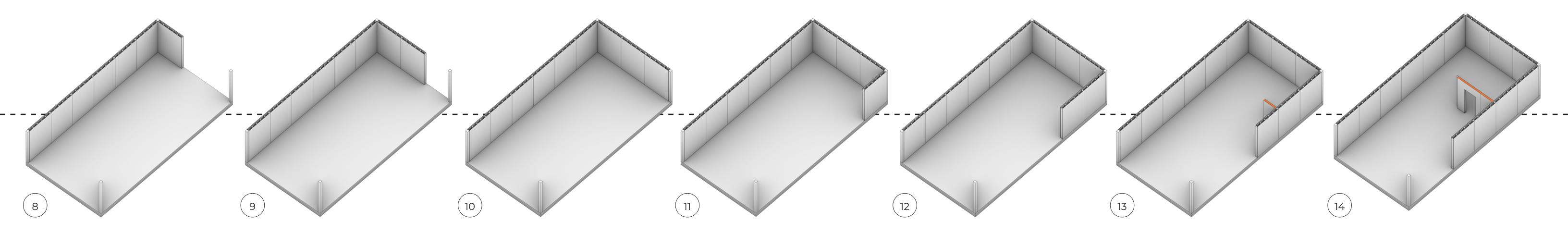
This locking mechanism allows for 1" in airgap between unit demising walls and provides for vertical and horizontal connection between units which then gets supported by metal beams

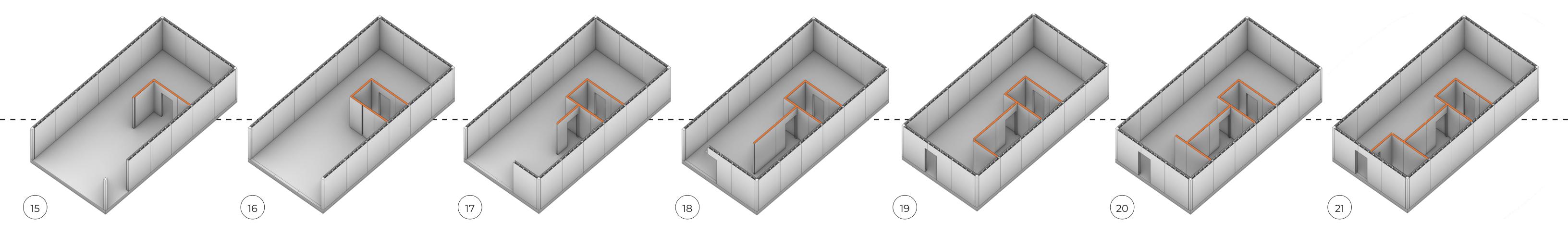


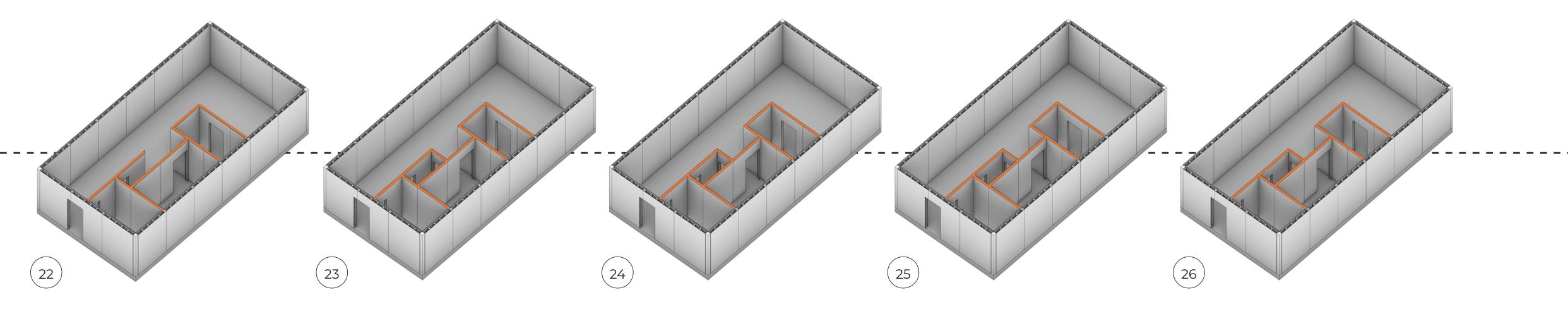


## 5.4 ASSEMBLY PROCESS





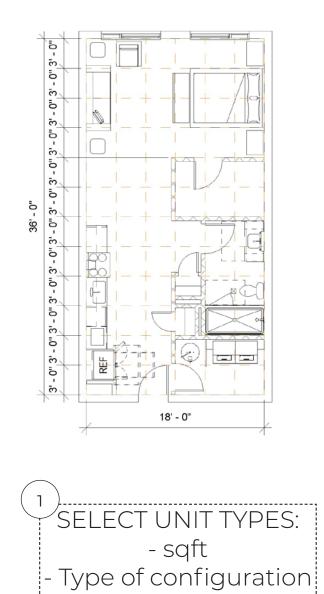


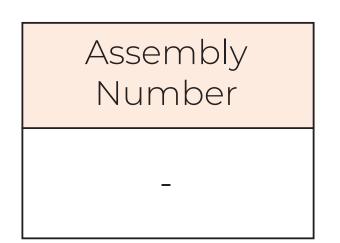


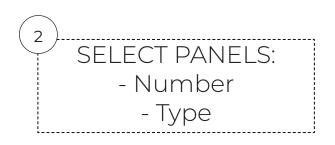


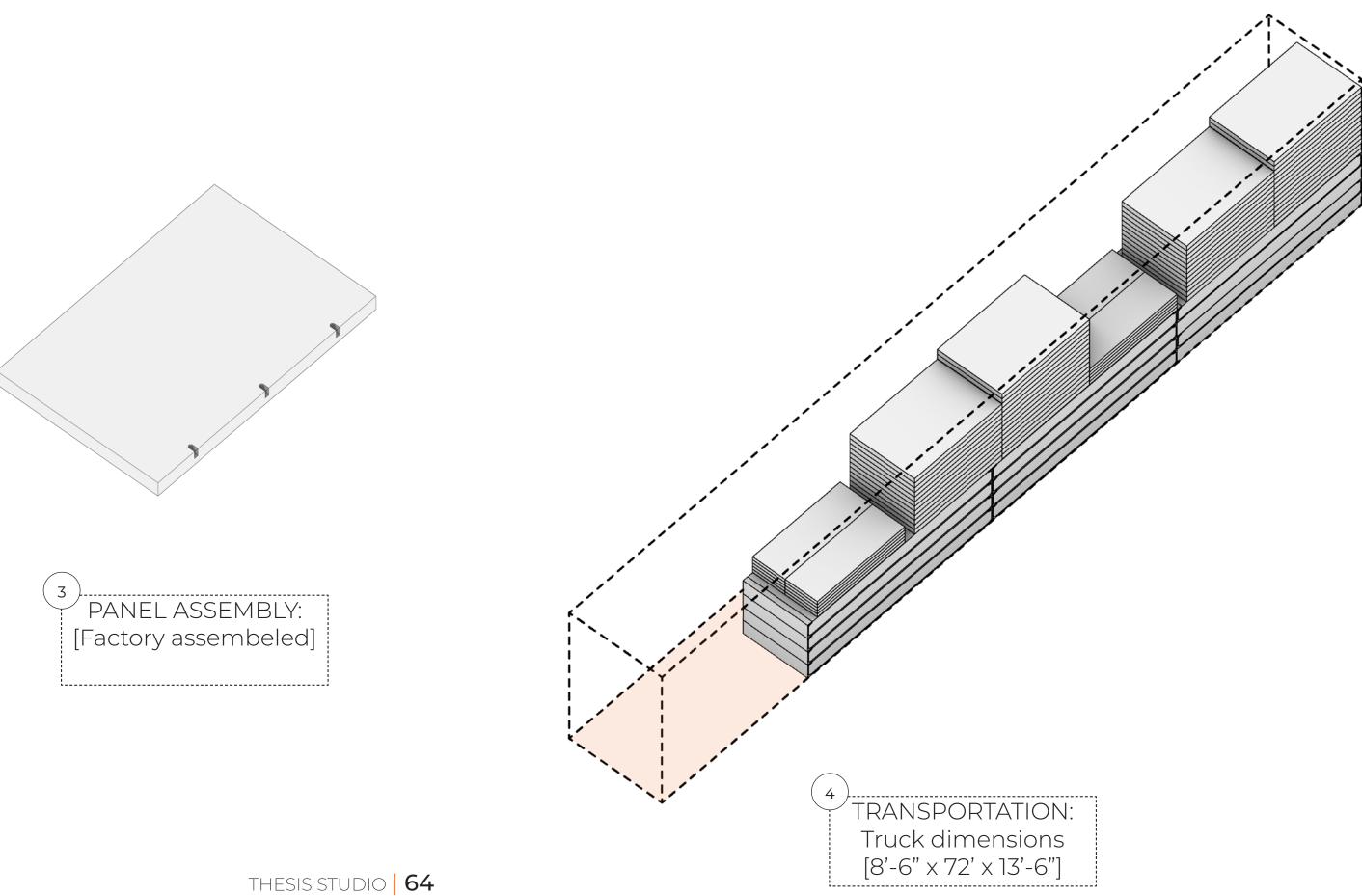


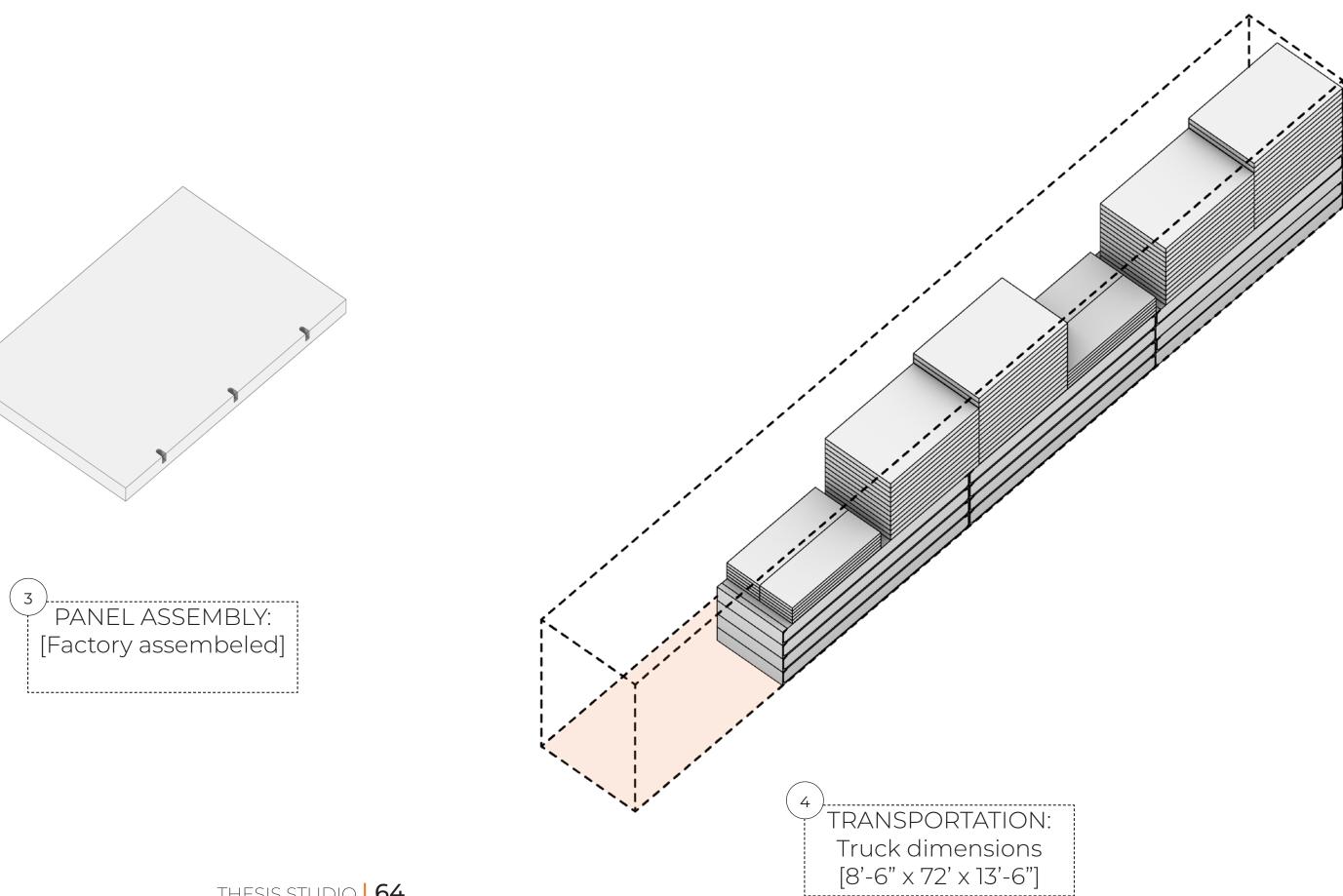
#### ENCOMPASSING PROCESS 6.1



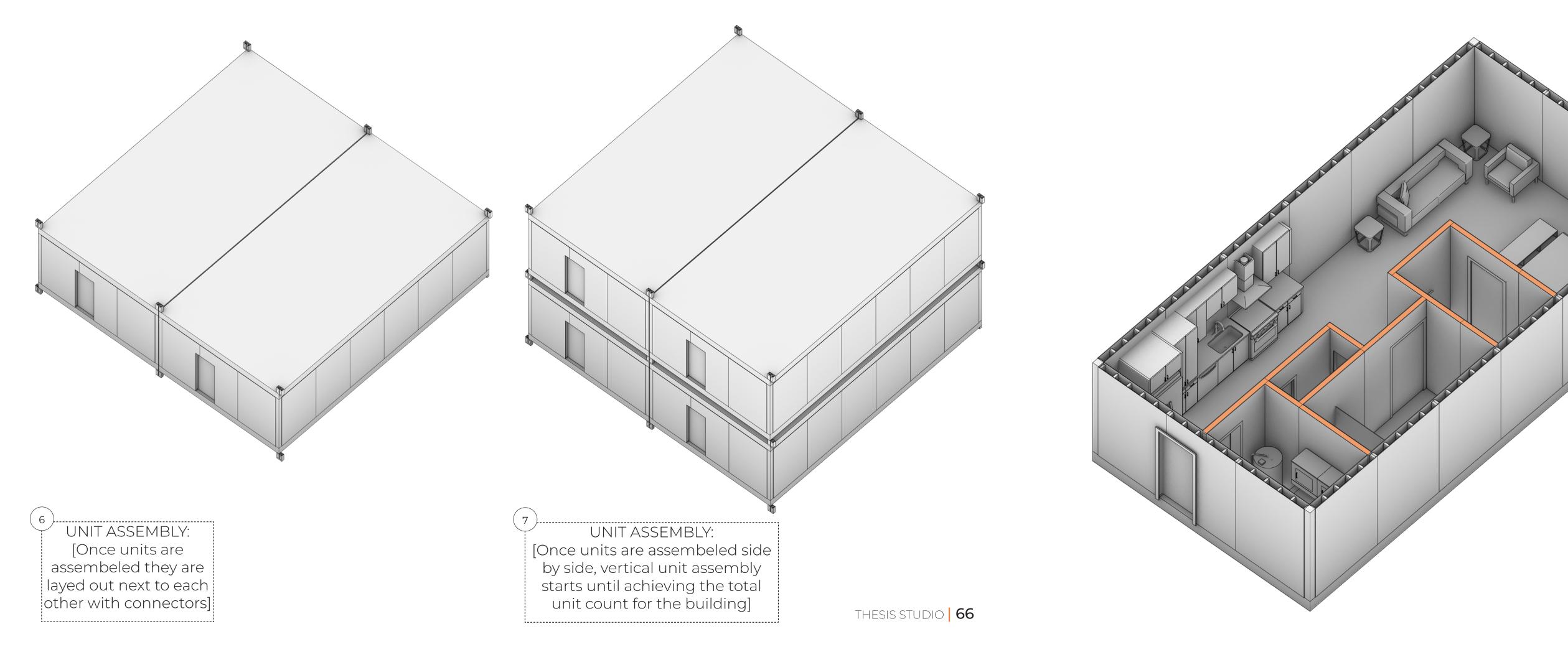












#### U N I T - A 1

Quantity : 14

Vertical Panel Type :	Horizontal Panel Type :
V4C	H1A
Quantity : 12	Quantity : 2
Vertical Panel Type :	Vertical Panel Type :
V2B	H2B
Quantity : 4	Quantity : 4
Vertical Panel Type :	Total Number of
V3C	Panels : V & H

V:30 H:6

# 6.2 COMPARISON

Traditional Construction Method	AA Construction Methods	
Construction	n Time on Site	
8 months	2 months	
Cost p	er sqft.	
\$300	\$13	
Cost per Unit (Avg. 648sf)		
\$194,400	\$8,532	
Cost per Floor (2	25 units - 648sf)	
\$4,860,00	\$276,696	
Overall Cost (5 Floors)		
\$24,300,000	\$2,075,220	

Traditional Construction Method
F
Reliable
It embraces various building shapes
It is easily used for two way structural systems
Connection are homogeneous with res of the frame
C
Not configurable
Not cost effective from renter's standpoint
The quality control is difficult

n	AA Construction Methods
PR	OS
	Reduced const. cost
	Reduced on site labor
)	Reduced schedule
st	Reduced weather disruptions
	Quality control
0	NS
	Increased moving pieces

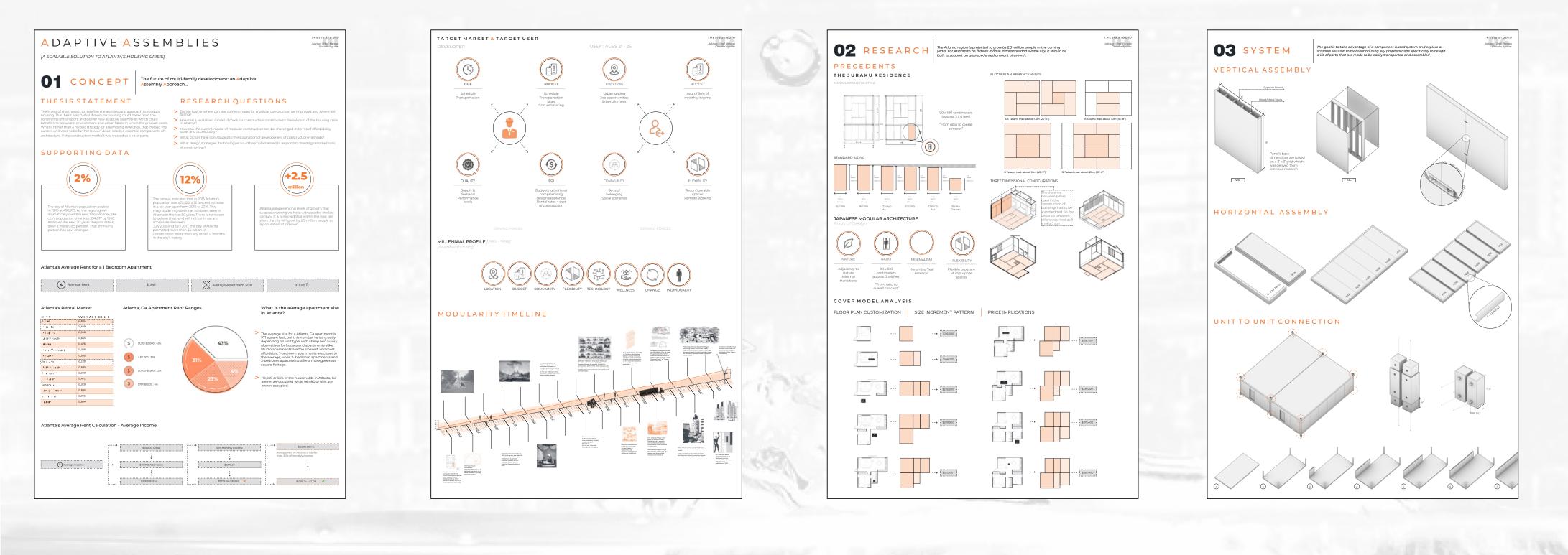
	Increased moving pieces
а	Structural challenge
	Number of connections

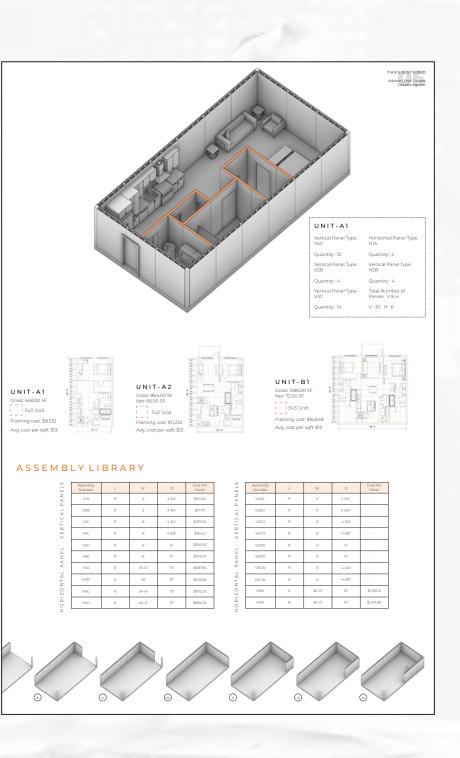


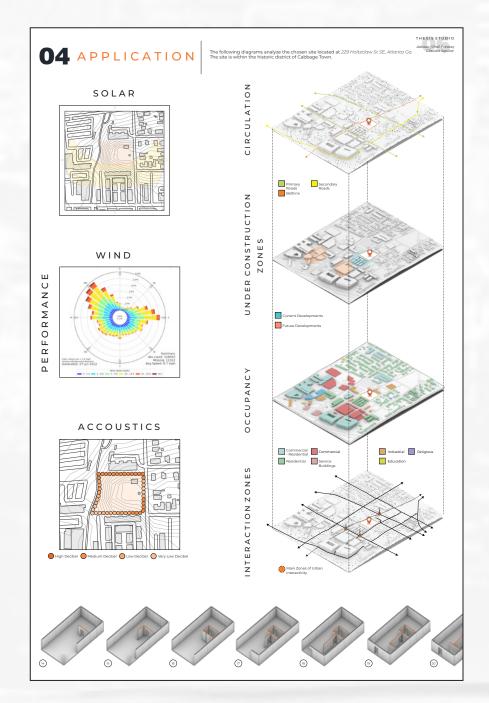


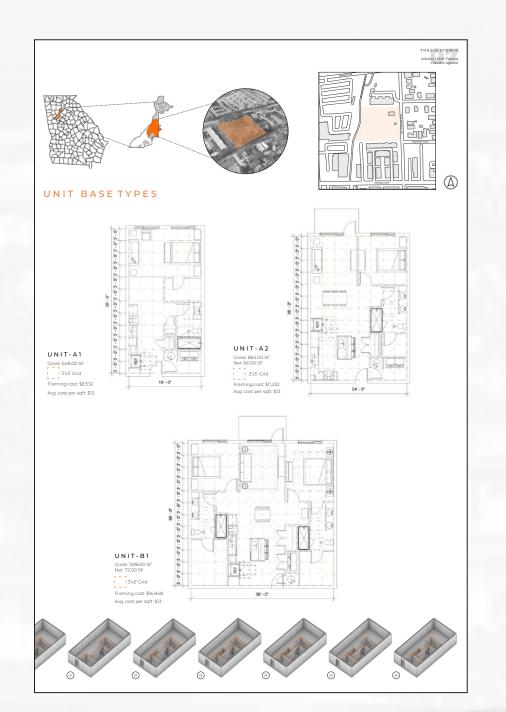


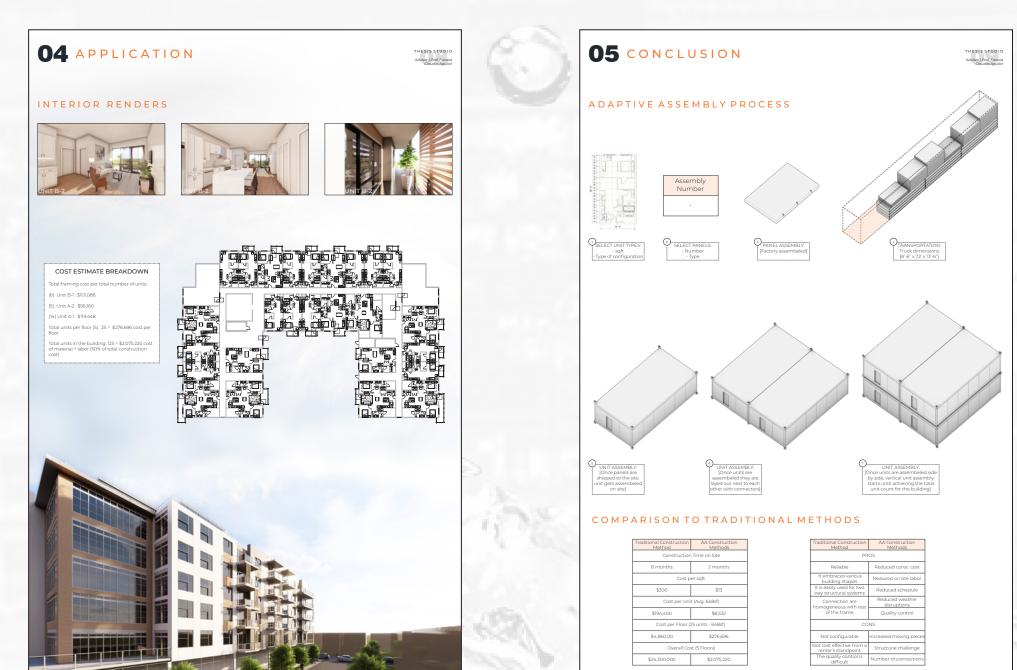
## 7.1 BOARDS







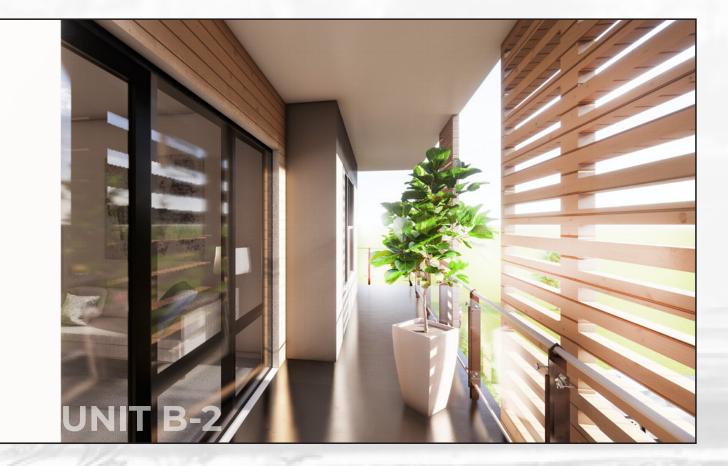




raditional Construction Method	AA Construction Methods
Construction	Time on Site
8 months	2 months
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Cost per Uni	t (Avg. 648sf)
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Cost per Floor (2	25 units - 648sf)
\$4,860,00	\$276,696
Overall Cos	st (5 Floors)
\$24,300,000	\$2,075,220



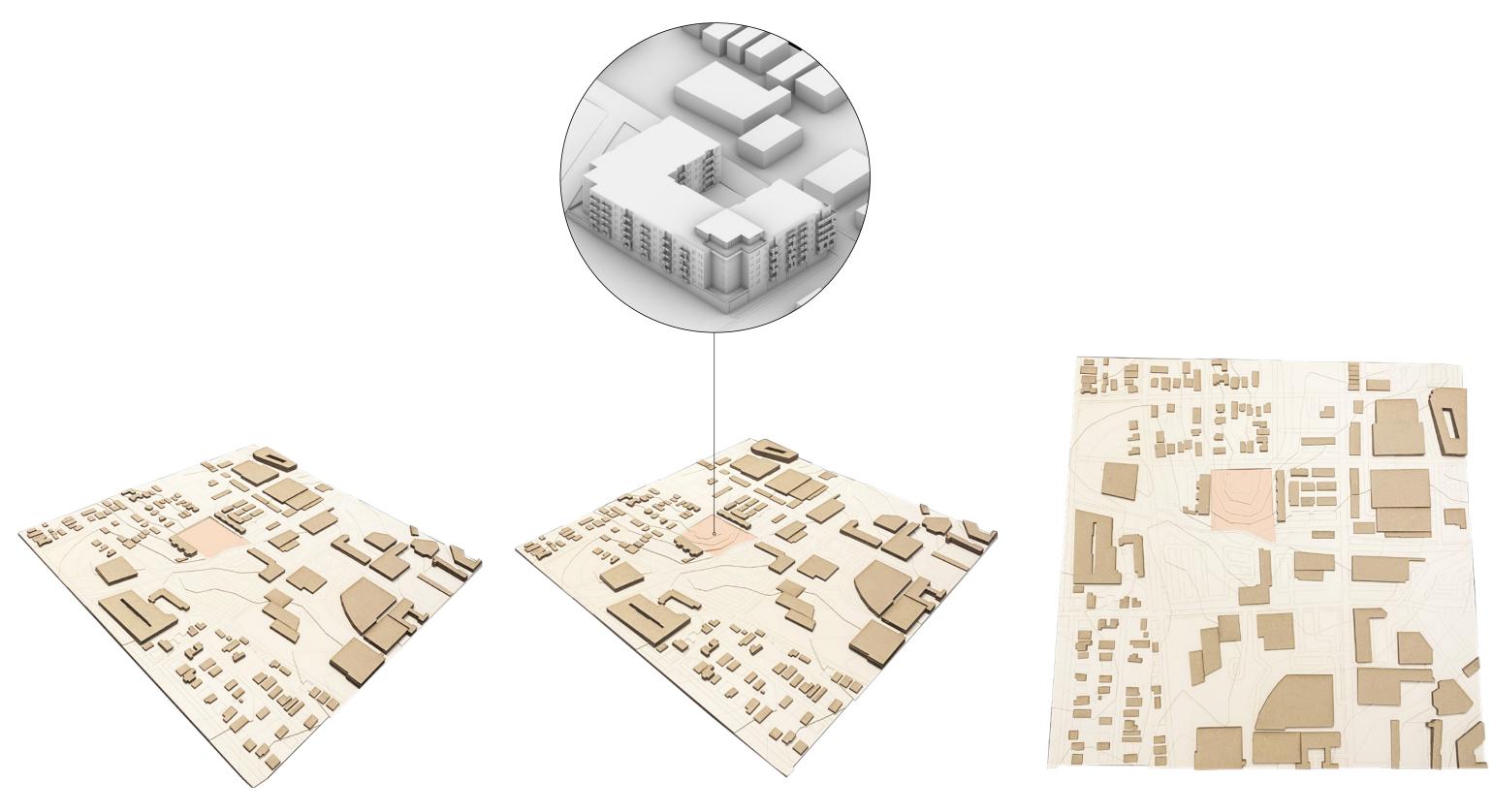


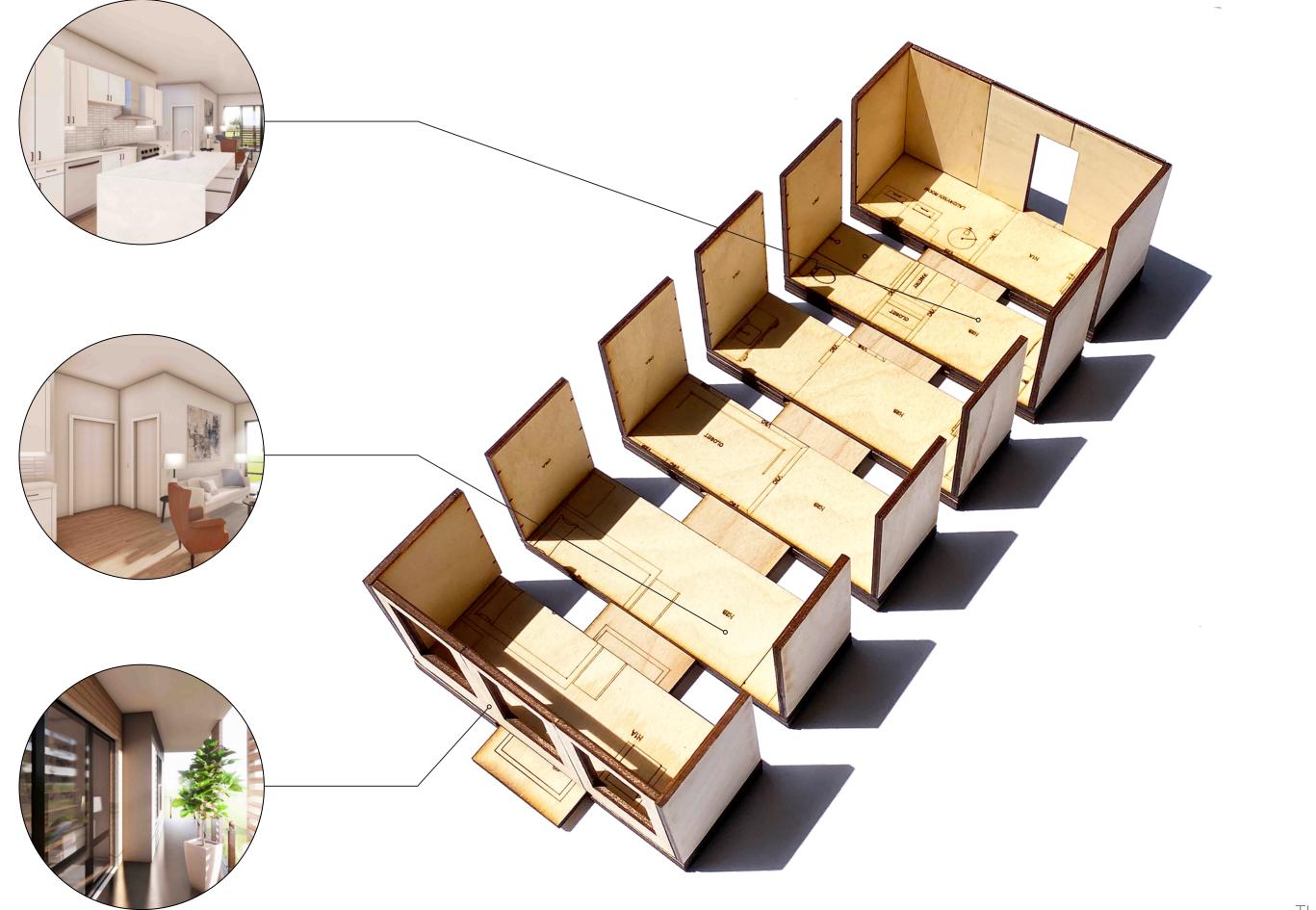


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## 7.2 MODELS





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