

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ECUADOR

A multi-scaled civic framework that synthesizes territory, community, and plurinational identity into a living ecosystem anchoring the nation’s cultural heritage while bridging the urban landscape of Quito.

THE MUSEUM CONCEPT

The National Museum of Ecuador is conceived as an urban ecosystem and porous extension of Quito’s urban grid. It weaves city, culture, and territory into a continuous narrative journey that spirals around a central communal space. The experience culminates in an elevated landscape terrain sheltered beneath a unifying civic canopy.

The architectural concept is built on five core pillars that celebrate the relationship between people, place, and time.

5 THE MANGROVE CANOPY (UNIFYING INFRASTRUCTURE)

Hovering above, a monumental canopy inspired by Ecuador’s mangrove forests unifies the courtyard, galleries, and rooftop terrain into a resilient whole. Environmentally, its branching structure adapts to the equatorial climate by filtering daylight and harvesting rainwater. Symbolically, this architectural skin transcends a traditional roof, representing national diversity, ecological unity, and a collective identity for the entire nation.

4 THE PANORAMIC TERRAIN (SCULPTURE GARDEN & PUBLIC DINING)

The gallery journey culminates in an active roof topography, transforming the building into an inhabitable, Andean-inspired terrain. Sheltered by the canopy, this elevated realm fuses art and nature into a premium public destination. Visitors enjoy independent access to a panoramic sculpture garden and dining terrace, framing dramatic views where culture, leisure, and Quito’s urban life intersect.

3 THE BRAIDED PROMENADE (GALLERY JOURNEYS)

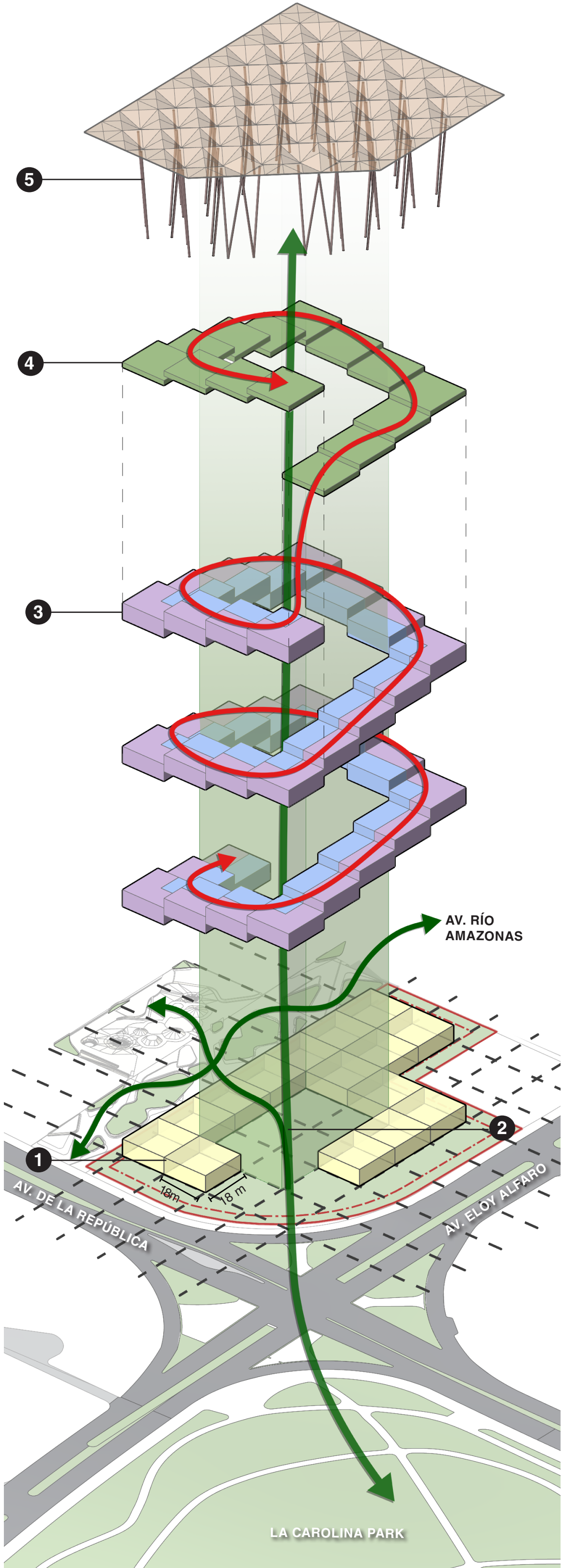
Wrapping the courtyard, the modular framework evolves into a helical promenade, organizing the galleries as a continuous journey. As galleries spiral around the central void, their intertwined paths reflect Ecuador’s history as interconnected stories. This fluid sequence culminates in framed views of the Quito skyline and Andean mountains, linking indoor exhibits with the broader landscape.

2 THE CENTRAL PLAZA (CENTRAL GATHERING)

At the intersection of these connections sits a new central plaza. As the project’s social heart, this central void functions as a contemporary public room hosting year-round events, performances, and markets. It transforms the museum into an extension of the public realm where locals and tourists converge, creating a vibrant public environment active beyond normal hours.

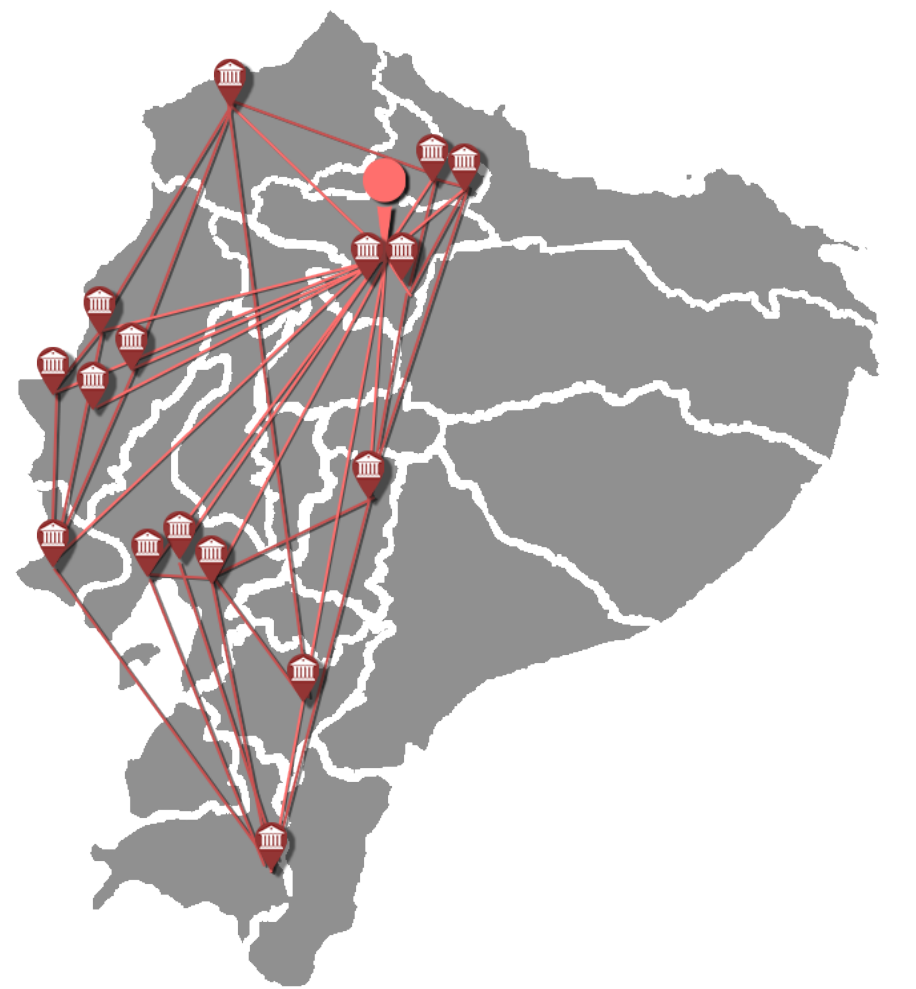
1 THE CONTEMPORARY DAMERO (THE URBAN FRAMEWORK)

Reinterpreting Ecuador’s historic *Damero*, this contemporary modular framework organizes the museum with clarity. Through subtraction, this porous field extends Quito’s urban fabric into public passages connecting La Carolina Park and Boulevard La Pradera. Embedded within this corridor is a new public Art Center, a dynamic civic anchor where mobility, ecology, and culture converge, letting city life flow seamlessly through the site.



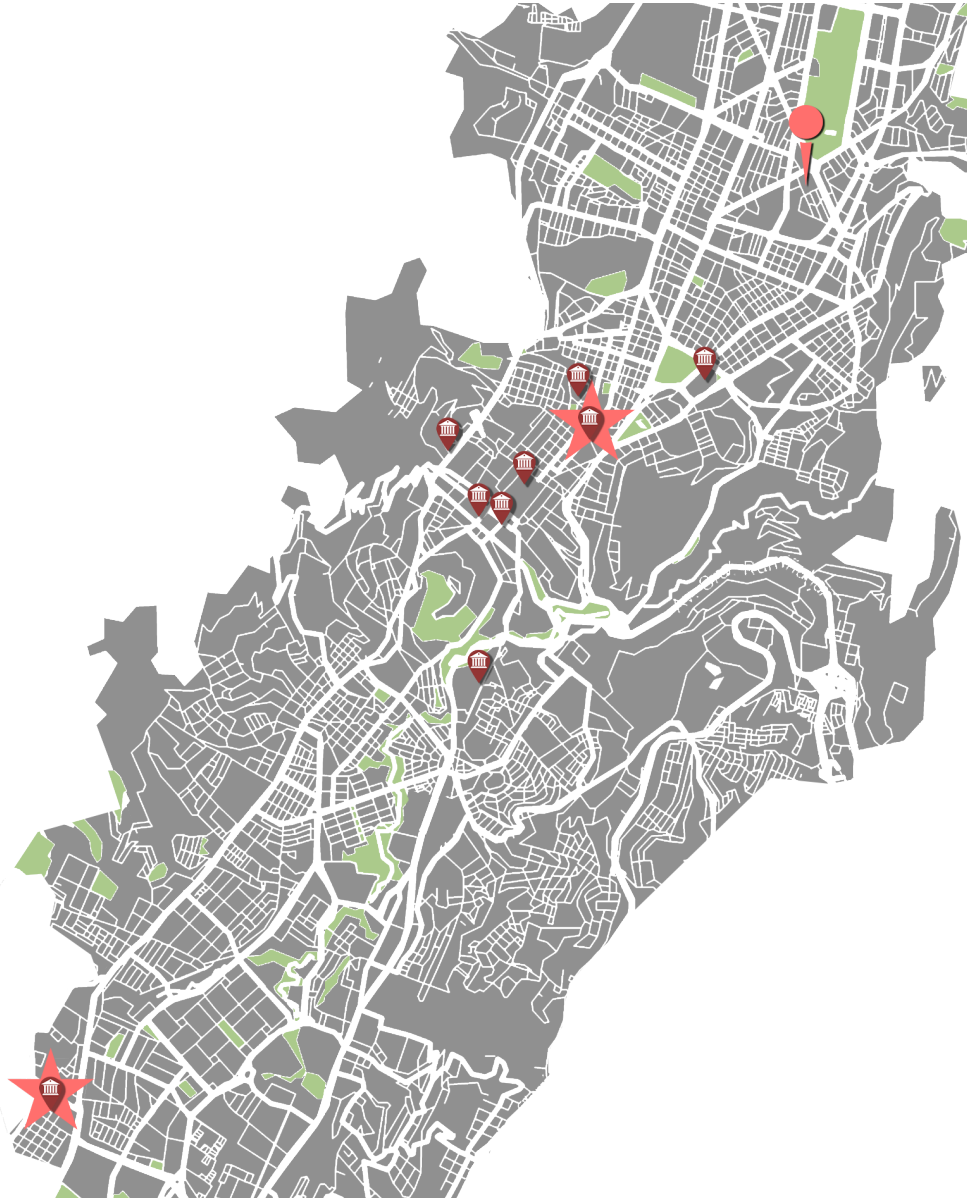
NATIONAL MUSEUM NETWORK

MuNa anchors Ecuador’s national museum network, creating the space for collaboration, exchange, and innovation across a connected landscape of cultural institutions.



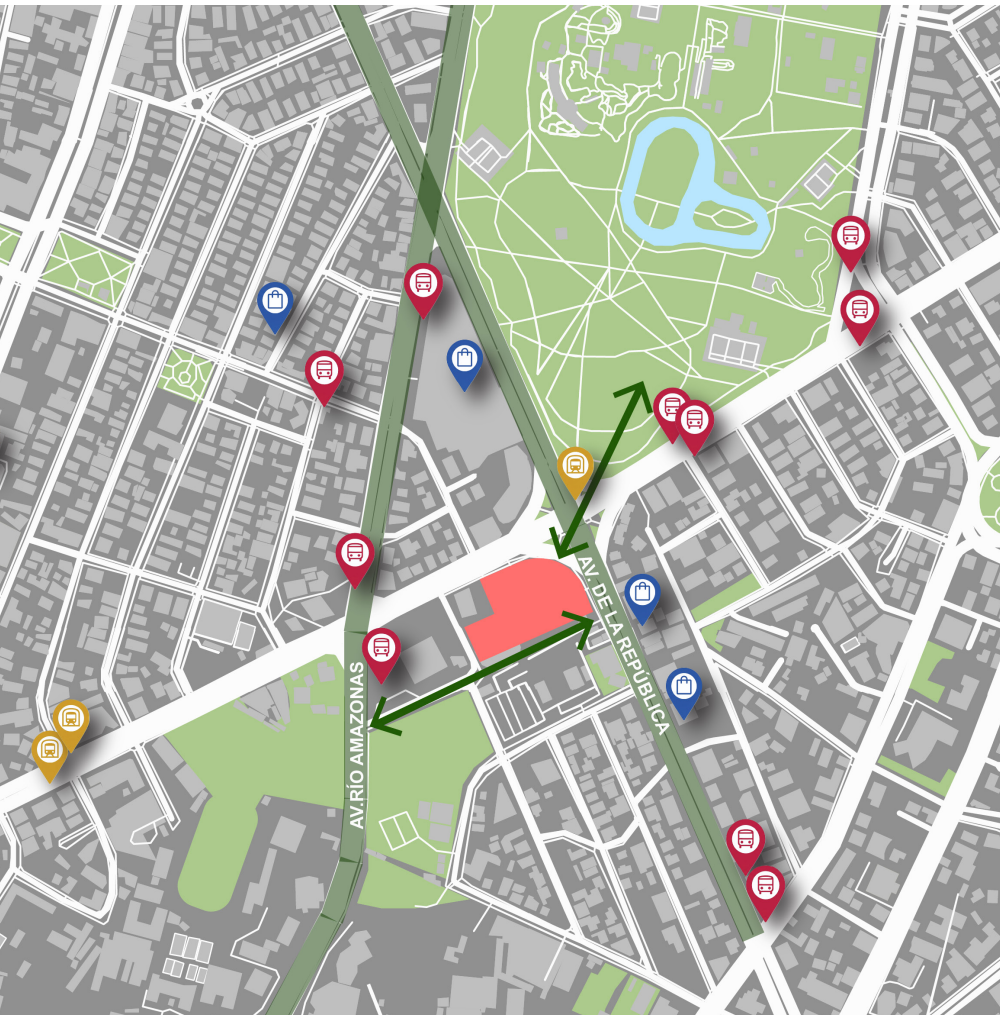
QUITO CULTURAL NETWORK

The museum is a key node within Quito’s cultural network, linking institutions, communities, and cultural experiences across the city.



NEIGHBORHOOD URBAN NETWORK

The site completes a critical link in the neighborhood’s green and pedestrian network, connecting La Carolina Park, the new boulevard, and major urban corridors while creating a vibrant hub for retail, social interaction, and urban life.



A VIEW OF THE ART CENTER ALONG LA PRADERA BOULEVARD

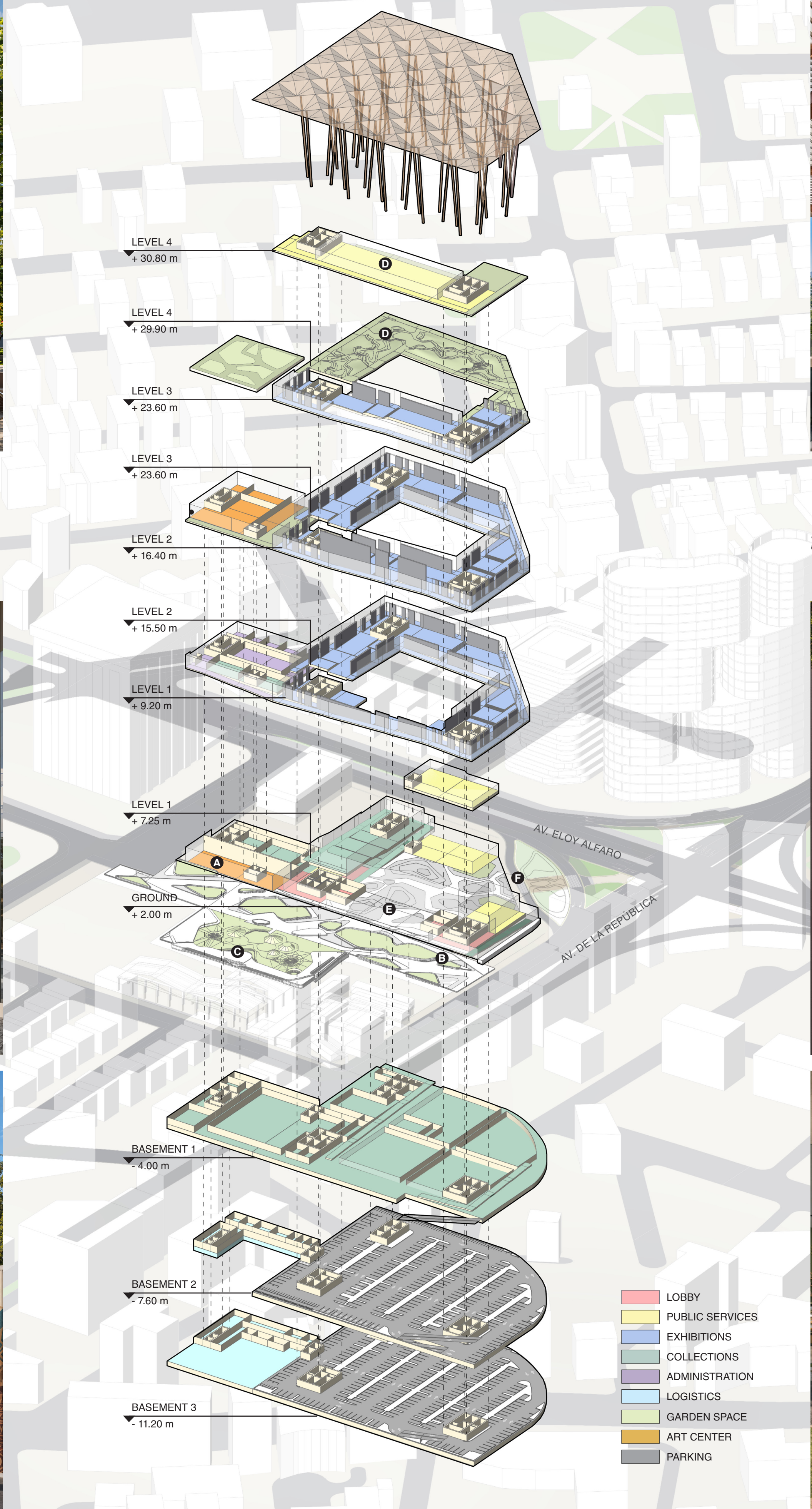


The edge of the building is transformed from a static threshold into a vibrant hub of cultural production, ensuring that everyday movement along La Pradera Boulevard is immediately integrated with artistic expression.

B VIEW ALONG LA PRADERA BOULEVARD WITH THE MAIN LOBBY



C VIEW OF LA PRADERA BOULEVARD MARKET



D. SCULPTURE GARDEN & PUBLIC DINING



The central plaza forms the project's open-air social heart, weaving La Carolina Park and vibrant street life directly through the site into an ever-active public realm.

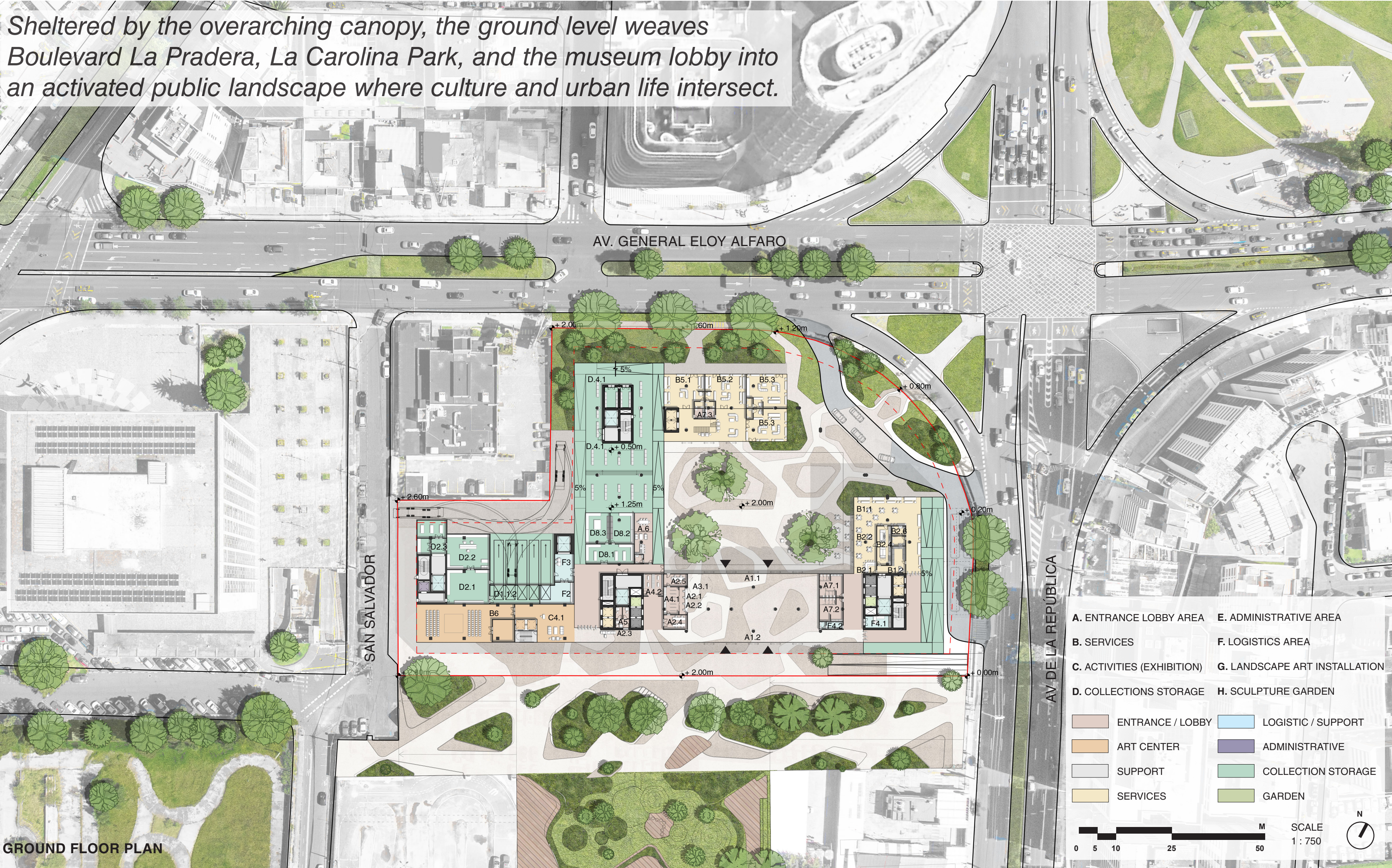
E THE CENTRAL PLAZA & THE MAIN LOBBY



F MAIN ENTRANCE



Sheltered by the overarching canopy, the ground level weaves Boulevard La Pradera, La Carolina Park, and the museum lobby into an activated public landscape where culture and urban life intersect.



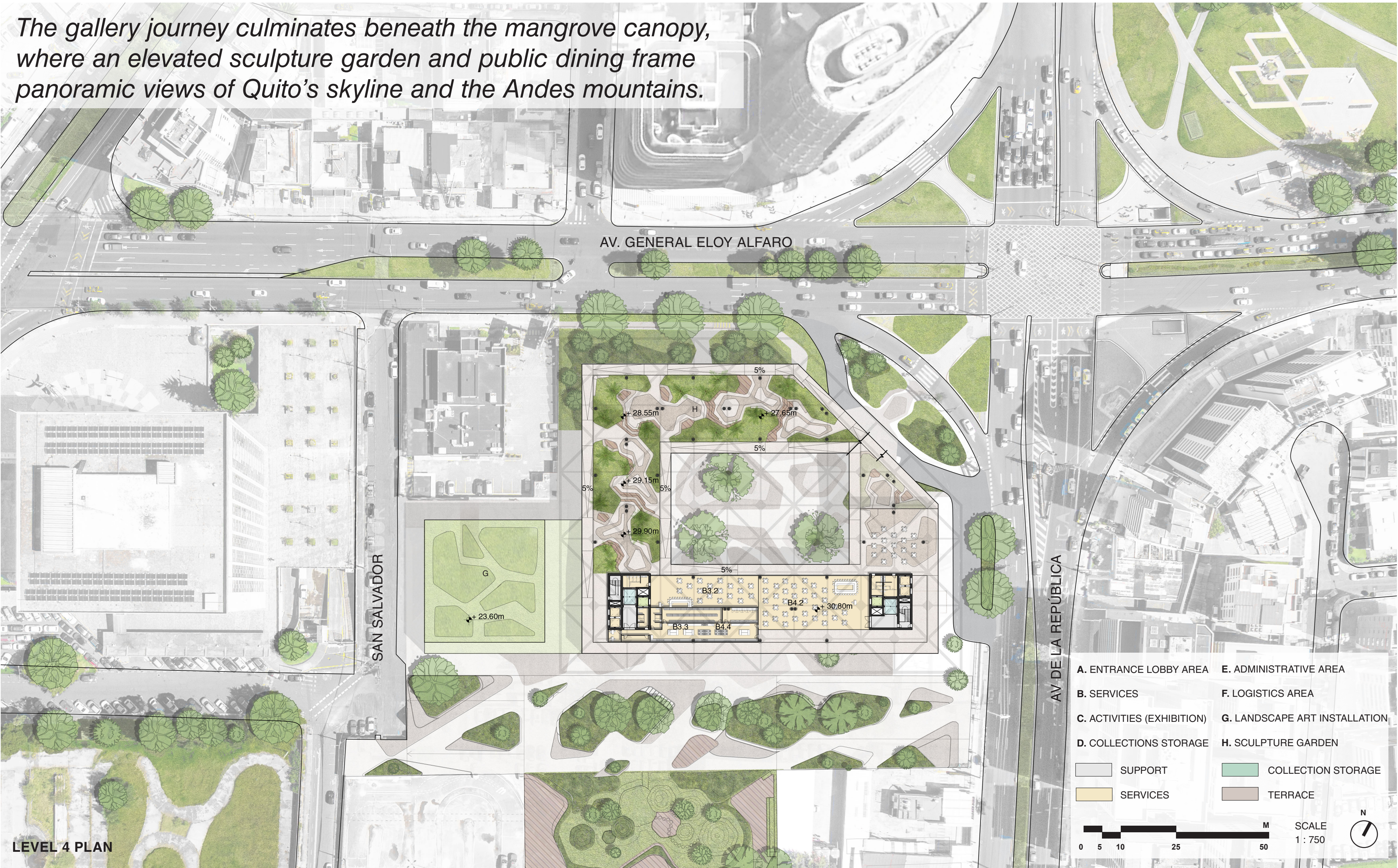
APPROACHING FROM LA CAROLINA PARK



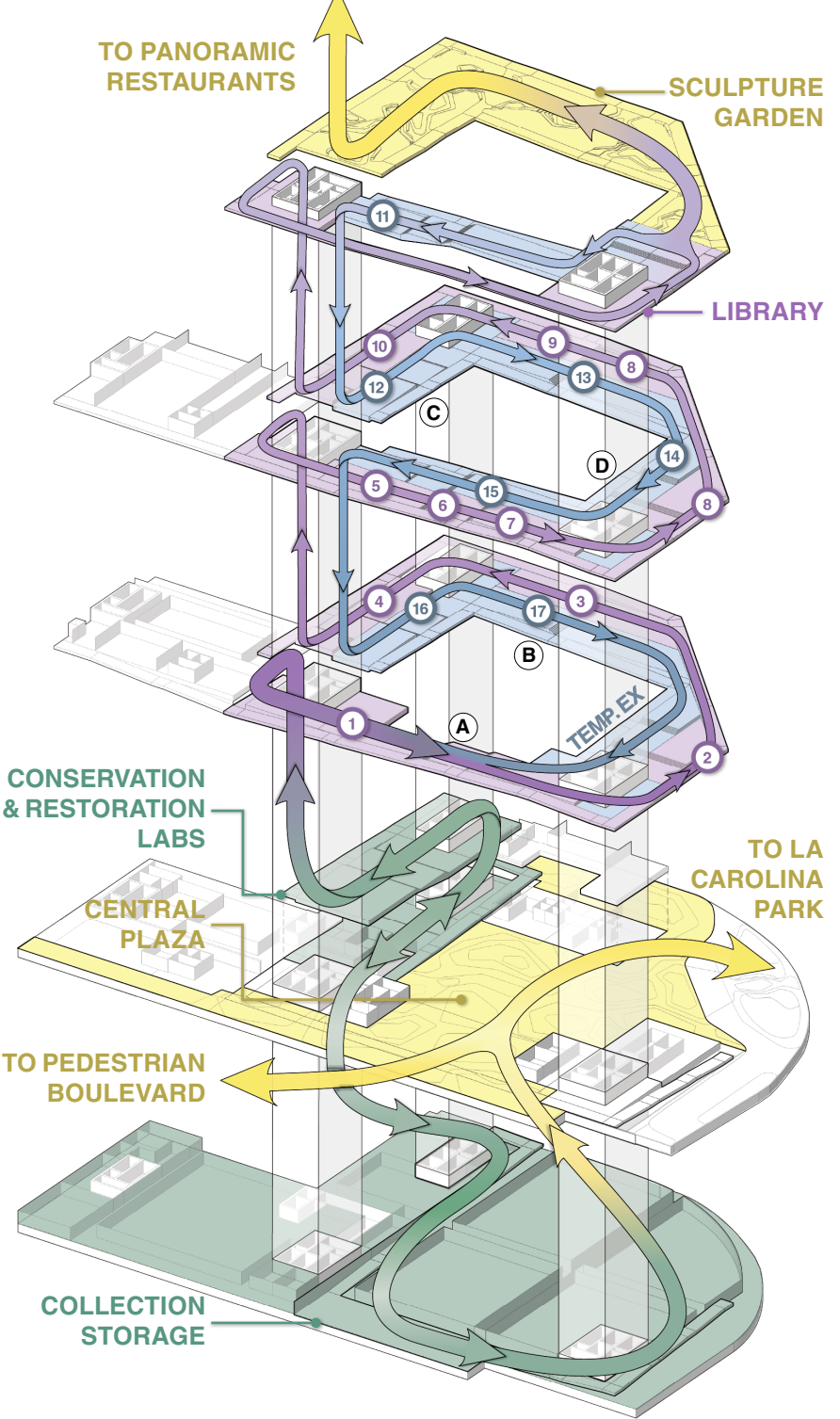
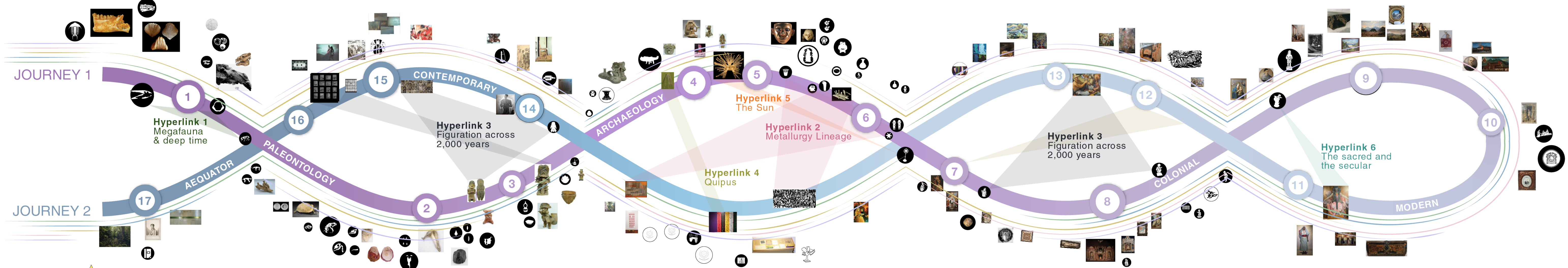
CONNECTING THE CENTRAL PLAZA TO LA PRADERA THROUGH THE LOBBY



The gallery journey culminates beneath the mangrove canopy, where an elevated sculpture garden and public dining frame panoramic views of Quito's skyline and the Andes mountains.



Galleries follow a braided sequence, creating a rhythmic network of axes that balance moments of wonder, reflection, exploration, and intimate looking.



EXHIBITION STRATEGY
The exhibition strategy is organized around a sequence of narrative Moments that explore the relationship between territory, culture, and identity across Ecuador's past, present, and future. Beginning with the formation of the land itself and progressing through settlement, exchange, creation, conflict, and transformation, the visitor journey reveals how diverse peoples, landscapes, and ideas have shaped the nation over time. Rather than presenting history as a linear timeline, the museum creates an interconnected experience where multiple stories unfold through objects, media, and space. The visitor path links collections, visible storage, conservation activities, and public spaces, presenting heritage not as a fixed record of the past, but as an ongoing process of interpretation, exchange, and collective memory.

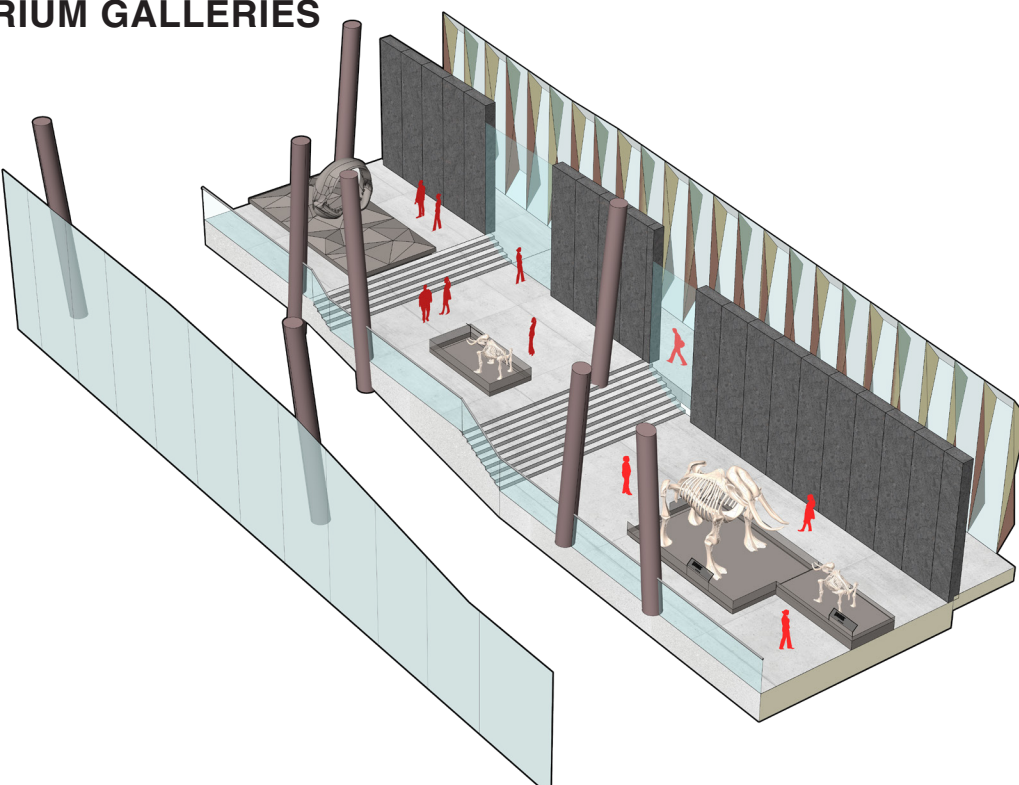
- PROGRAM**
- Sculpture Garden & Central Plaza
 - Exhibition - Journey 1
 - Exhibition - Journey 2
 - Collection Storage

- AXES**
- 1. Territory, Nature, and Diversity
 - 2. Beliefs, Spiritualities, and Sacredness
 - 3. Migrations, Exchanges, and Human Movement
 - 4. Power, Conflict, and Possibility
 - 5. Imagination, Technology, and Creation

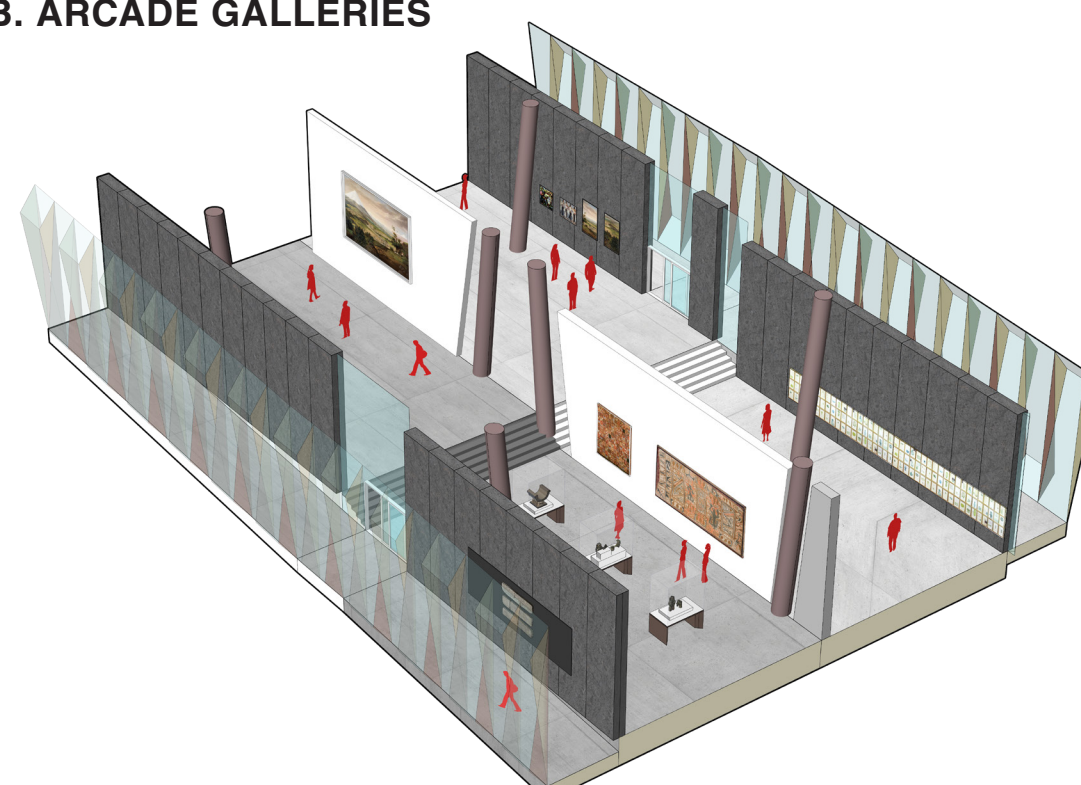
- MOMENTS**
- ① Land, Nature, and Diversity
 - ② Hunter-Gatherer Societies
 - ③ From The Age of Horticulture to Agriculture
 - ④ Settlement and Expansion
 - ⑤ Transforming Matter
 - ⑥ Contacts, Exchanges, and Movement

- ⑦ The End of the Known World? New Dominions, Old Resistances
- ⑧ The Age of the Pact and Baroque Culture
- ⑨ Dissent and Reordering
- ⑩ The Republican Project
- ⑪ Modern Times
- ⑫ Modern Ecuador? Unequal Modernity
- ⑬ Reimagining A World of Our Own
- ⑭ Dierent Contexts, Strange New Hairstyles
- ⑮ Change of Century, Change of Currency
- ⑯ Very Far, Perhaps Very Close: Globalization and Fragmentation
- ⑰ Aequator

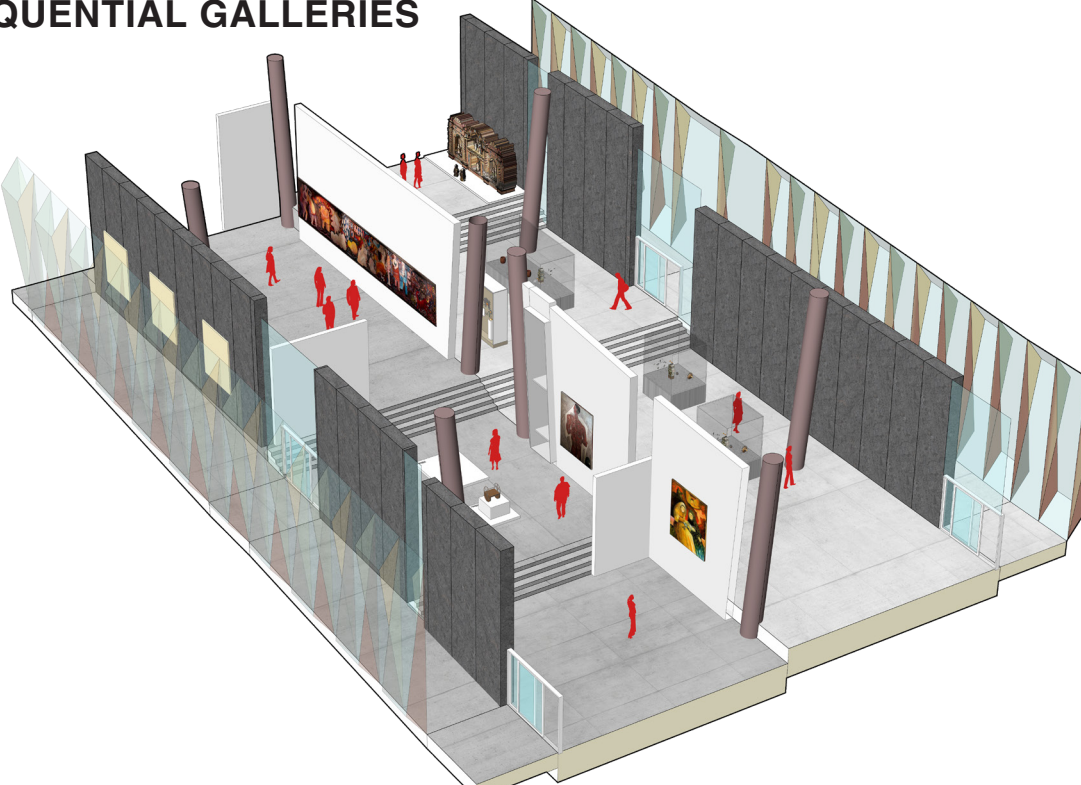
A. ATRIUM GALLERIES



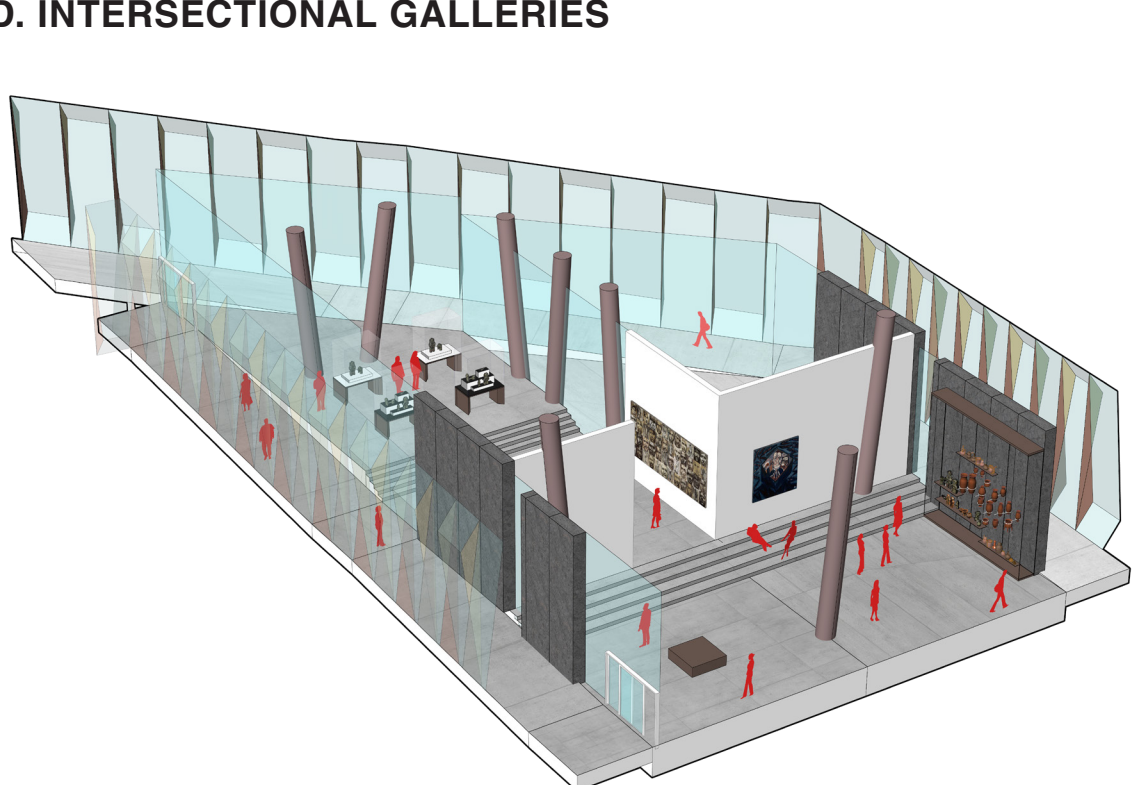
B. ARCADE GALLERIES



C. SEQUENTIAL GALLERIES

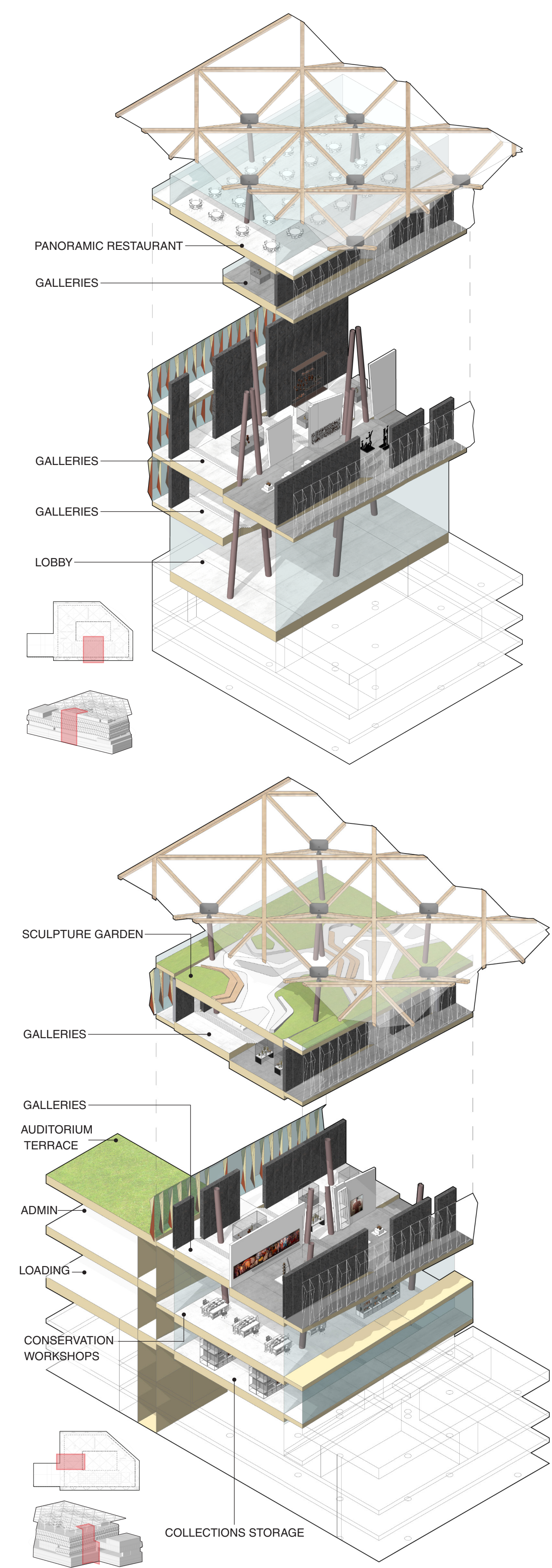


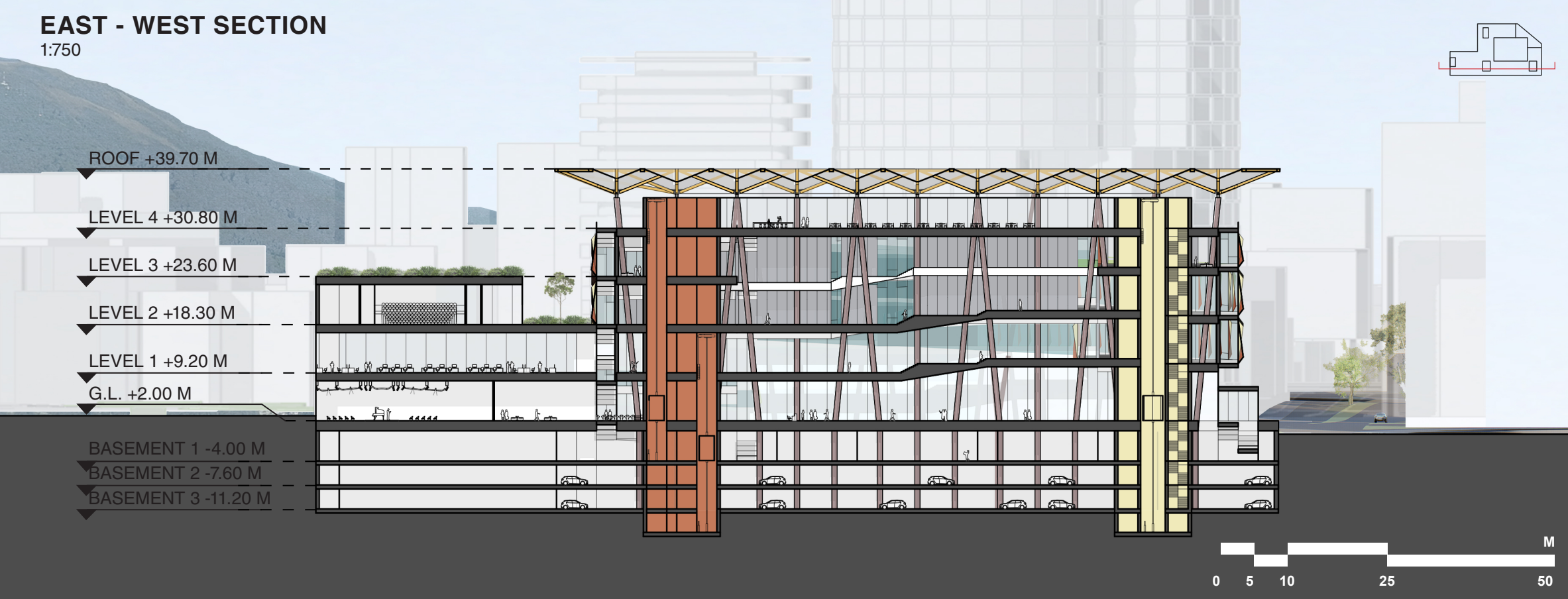
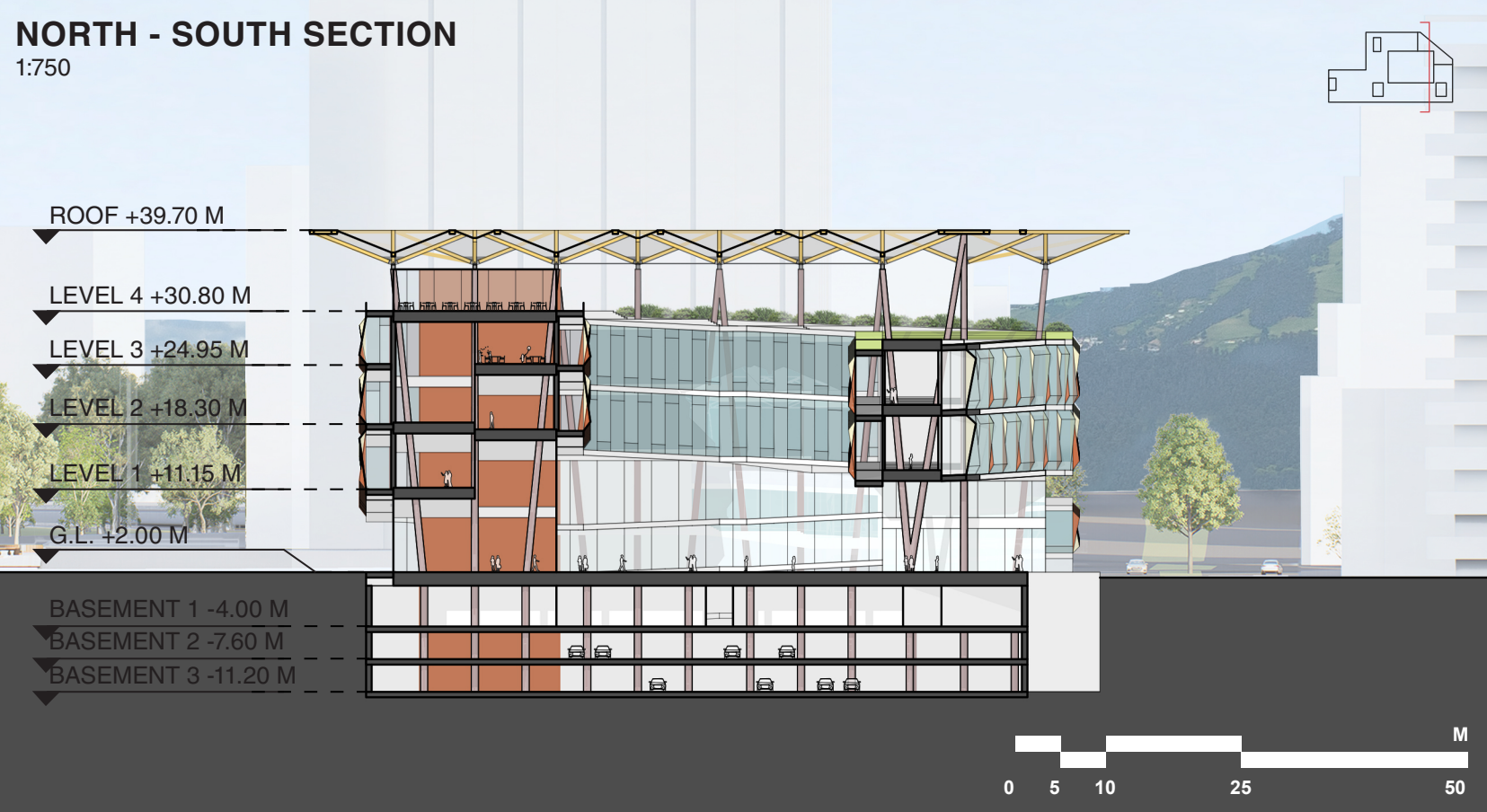
D. INTERSECTIONAL GALLERIES



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Visible storage and a transparency of care turn hidden conservation processes into an engaging, public exhibition experience.

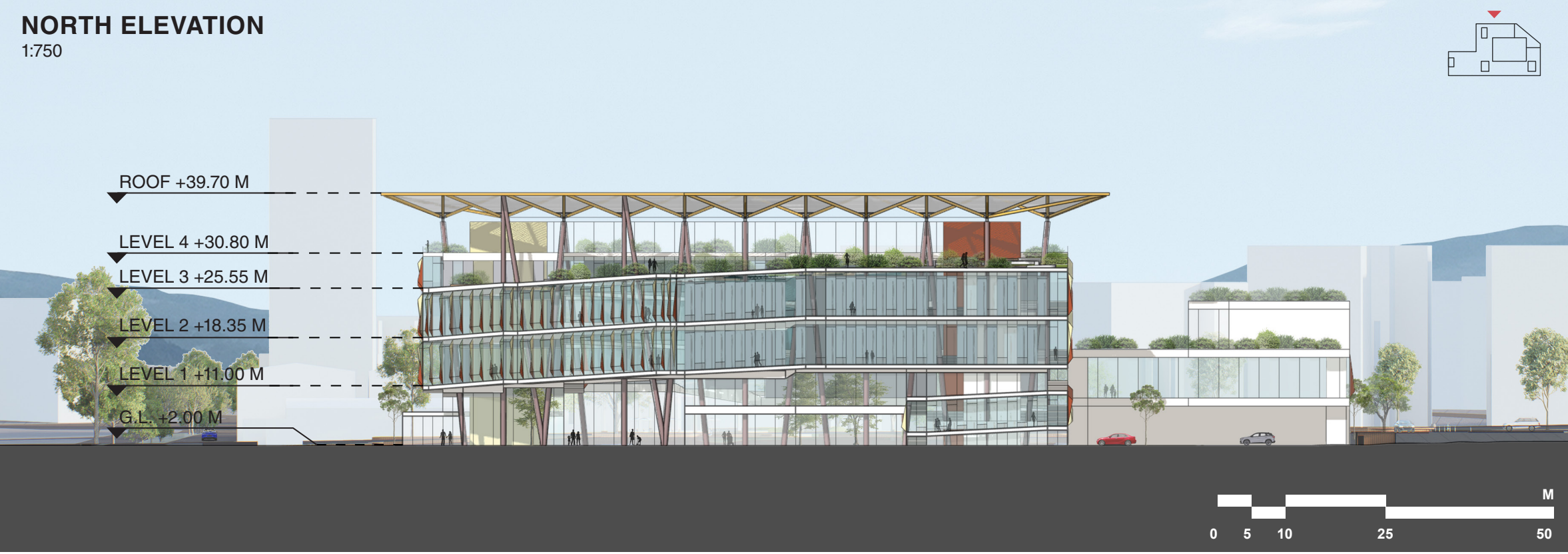
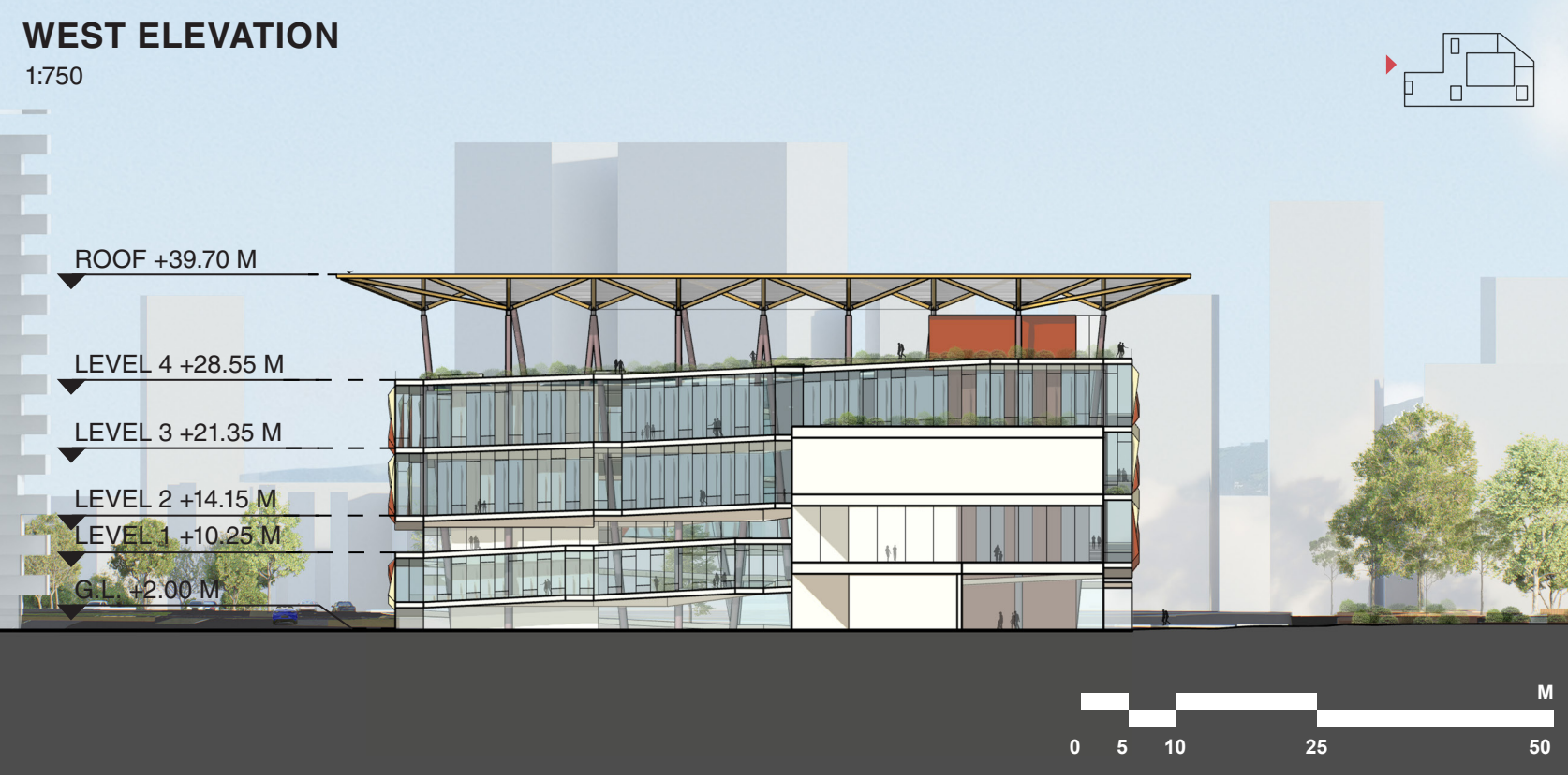
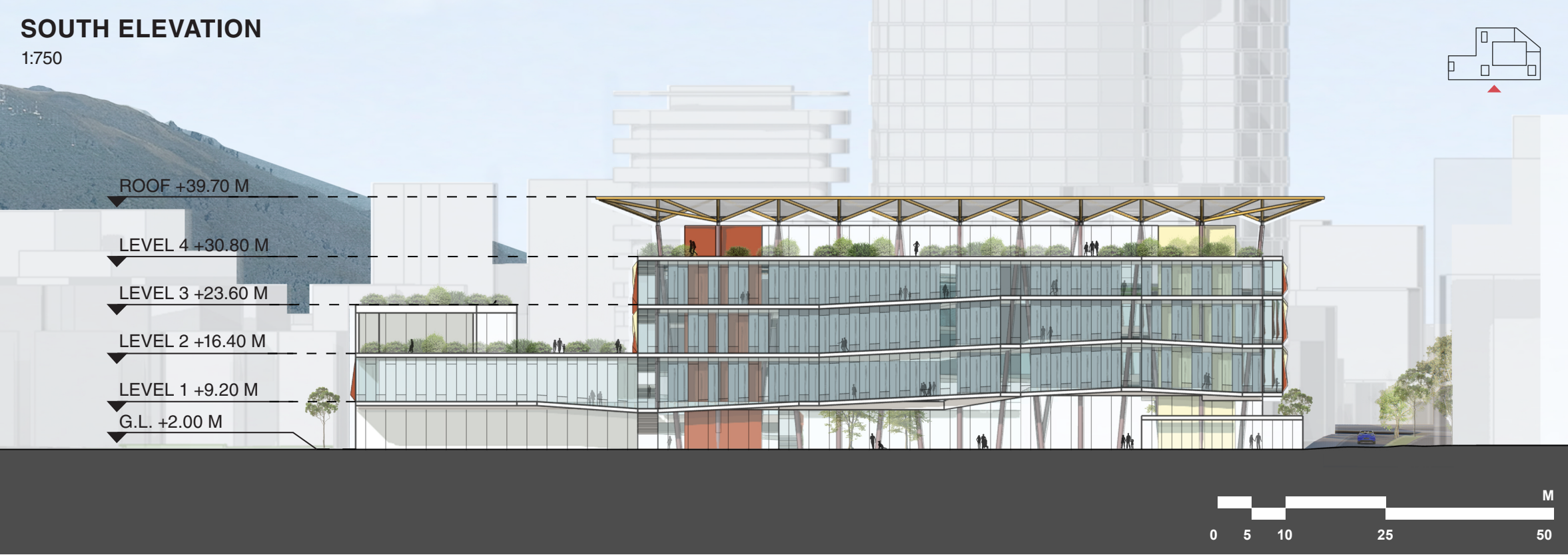
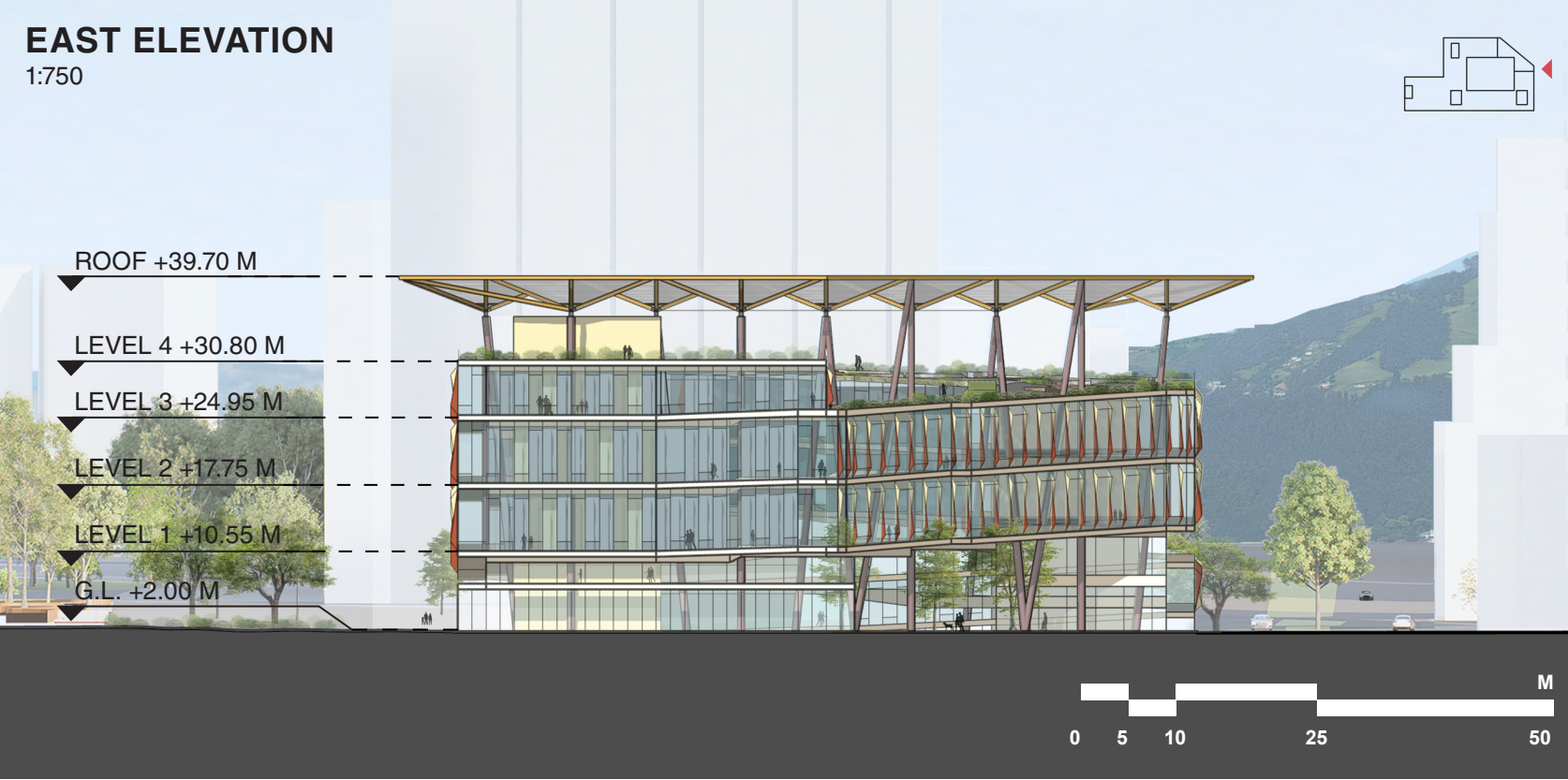




The building turns its very architecture into the exhibition narrative. By dissolving traditional boundaries, the structure transforms into an immersive, inside-out museological experience.



Evoking a continuous cultural journey, the braided facade's shifting colors accentuate the helical promenade's movement, guiding visitors through transitioning museum moments and fluid historical narratives.



The building's materiality honors Ecuador's heritage and climate, blending sustainable local resources with tactile, contemporary surfaces to anchor identity in form.

MATERIAL DESIGN STRATEGY

ROOF

1

Roof Canopy
Timber

2

Roof Louvers
PTFE

3

Roof Structure
Steel

25

Terrace
Vegetation

Structure + Cores

4

Columns
Colored
Concrete

6

Vertical Cores
Terracotta

7

Core Interior
Walls
Finished
Concrete

ENCLOSURE + SKIN

8

Facias
Adobe +
Concrete

14

Exterior
Enclosure
Colored Metallic
Plate

15

Exterior
Enclosure
Glass

16

Interior
Partition +
Collections
Viewing Wall
Glass

FLOORS + WALLS

9

13

Auditorium +
Administration
Flooring
Carpet

10

21

Gallery +
Collections
Perimeter Walls
Volcanic Stone

16

17

Lobby +
Retail Ground
Flooring
Cobble Stone

18

26

Gallery +
Collections
Partition + Art
Center Walls
Plaster Board
White L5 Finish

11

19

20

Museum +
Art Center +
Collections
Flooring
Polished
Concrete

CIRCULATION

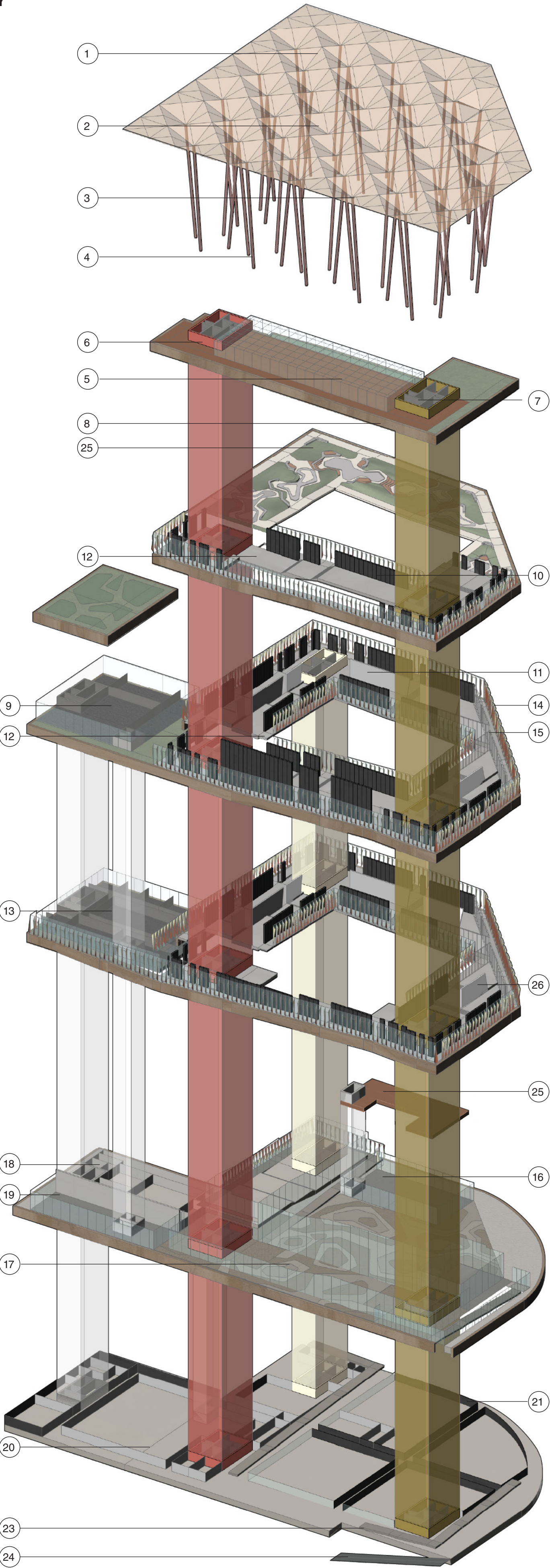
12

23

Museum Ramp
Polished
Concrete

24

Parking Ramp
Traffic Coated
Concrete





CARBON EMISSION APPROACH

Zero On-Site Combustion: All-electric heat pumps with low-embodied-carbon refrigerants eliminate fossil fuels.

25–50% EUI Reduction: High-performance envelopes, heat recovery, low-power fans, and potential geothermal systems lower energy use.

10–20% Lower Embodied Carbon: Utilizes local low-carbon concrete, recycled steel, and timber.

On-Site Renewables: Canopy photovoltaics and battery storage enable clean generation and peak shaving.

WATER MANAGEMENT APPROACH

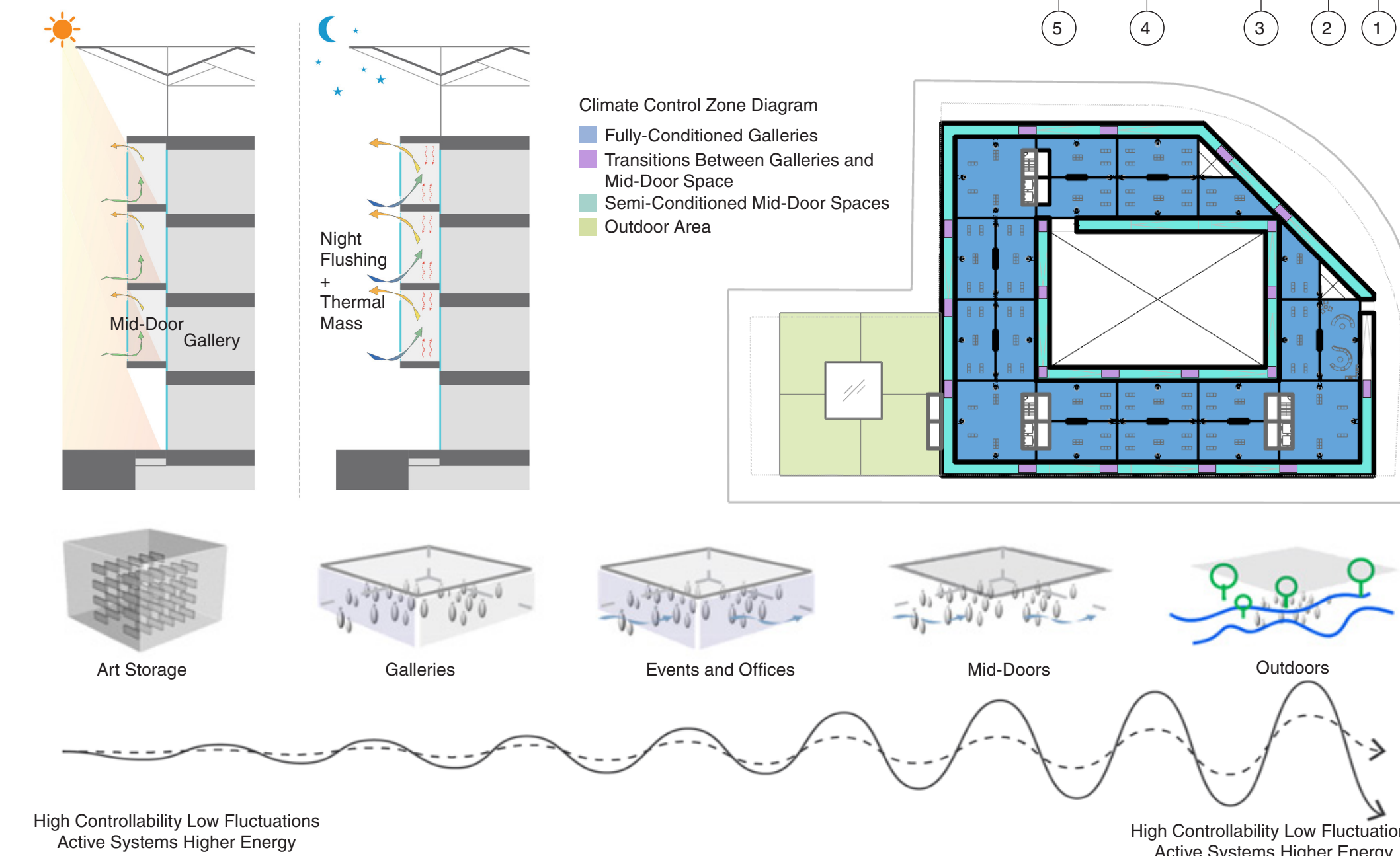
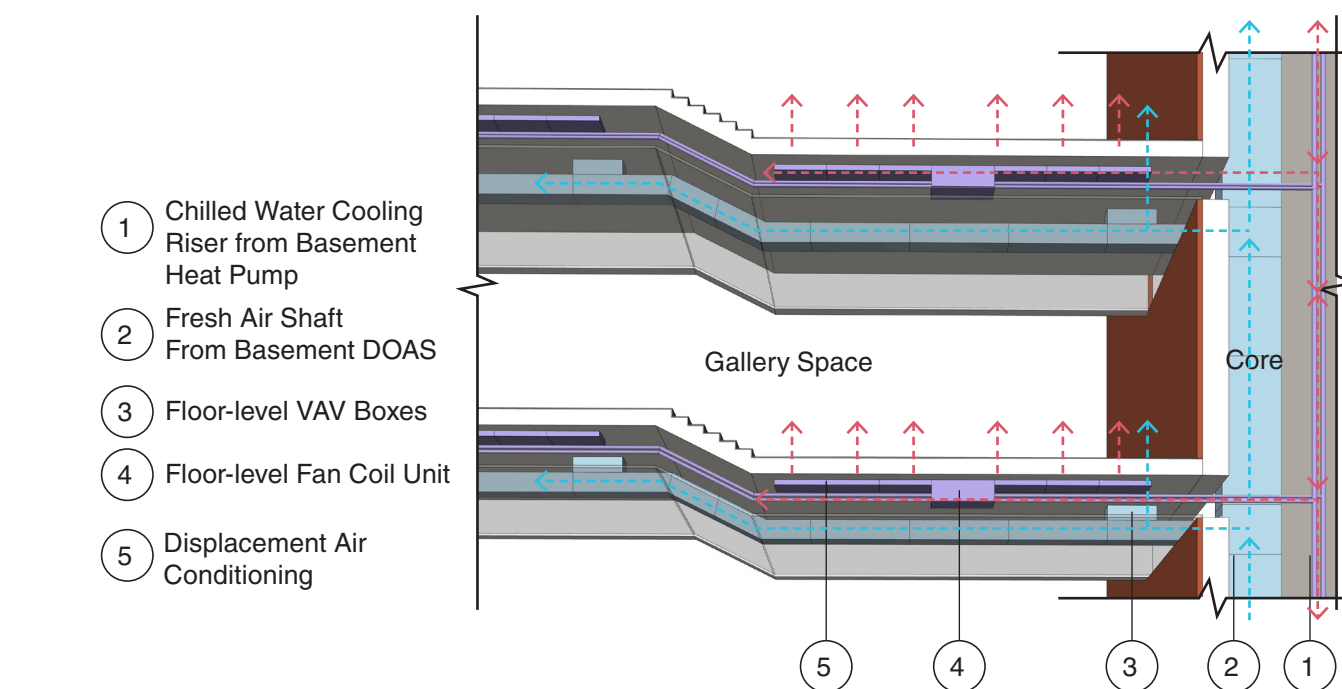
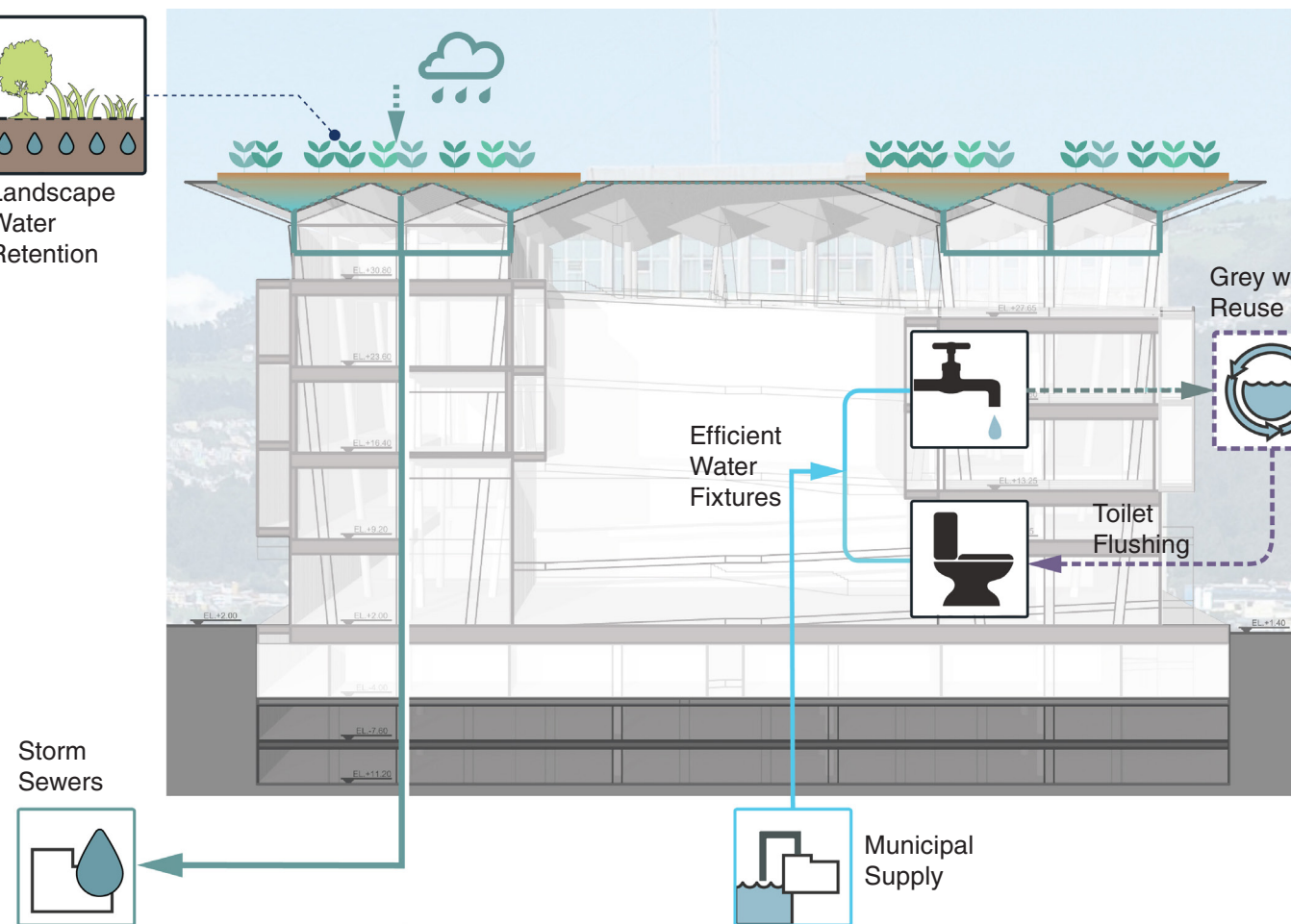
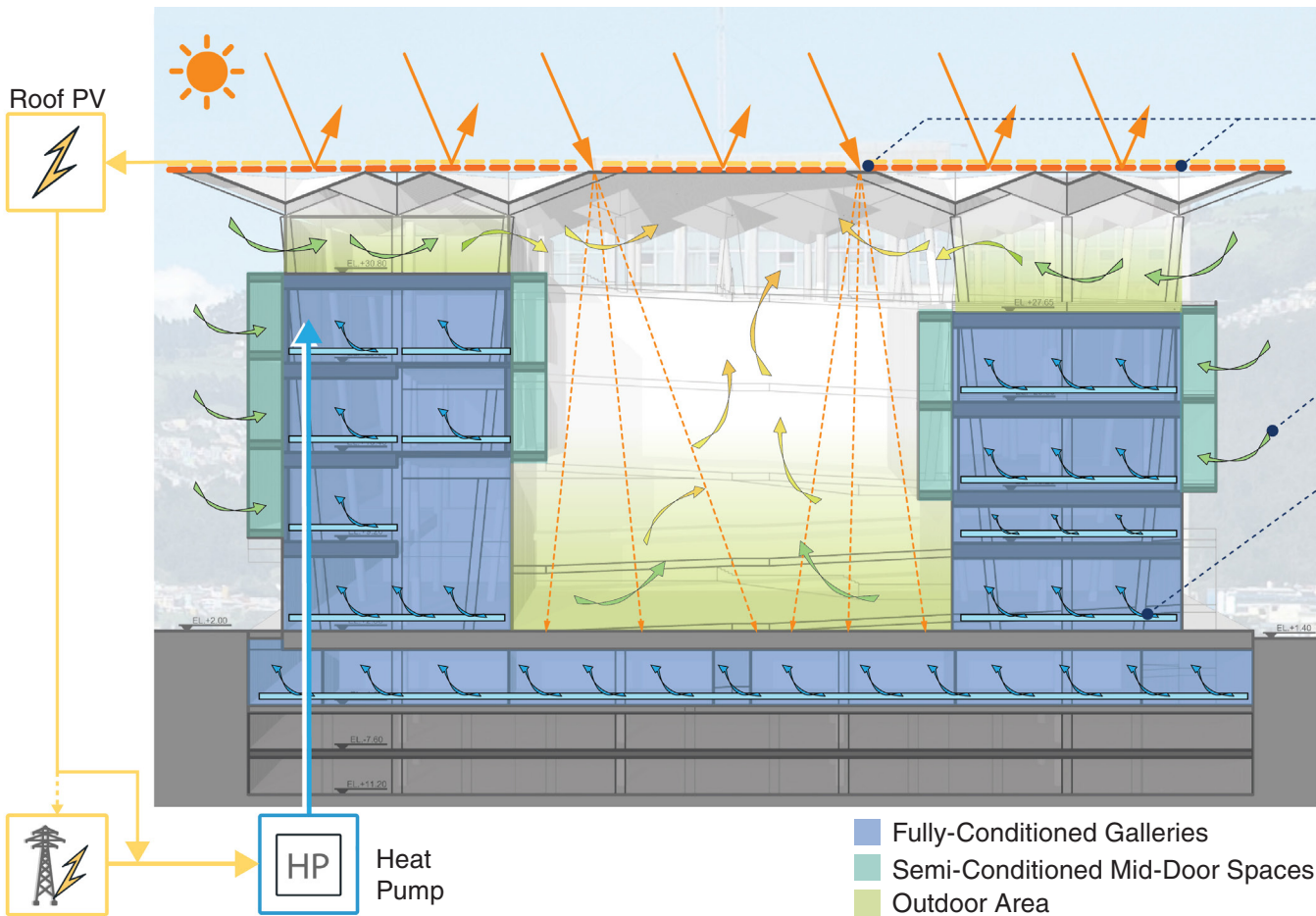
Water Efficiency: Low-consumption fixtures reduce base demand, particularly for toilet flushing.

Urban Water Management: The roof canopy and courtyard landscape maximize rainwater retention to support large-scale urban water management.

Greywater Reuse: Systems will investigate potential greywater collection and reuse for toilet flushing and facility cleaning.

CLIMATE CONTROL APPROACH

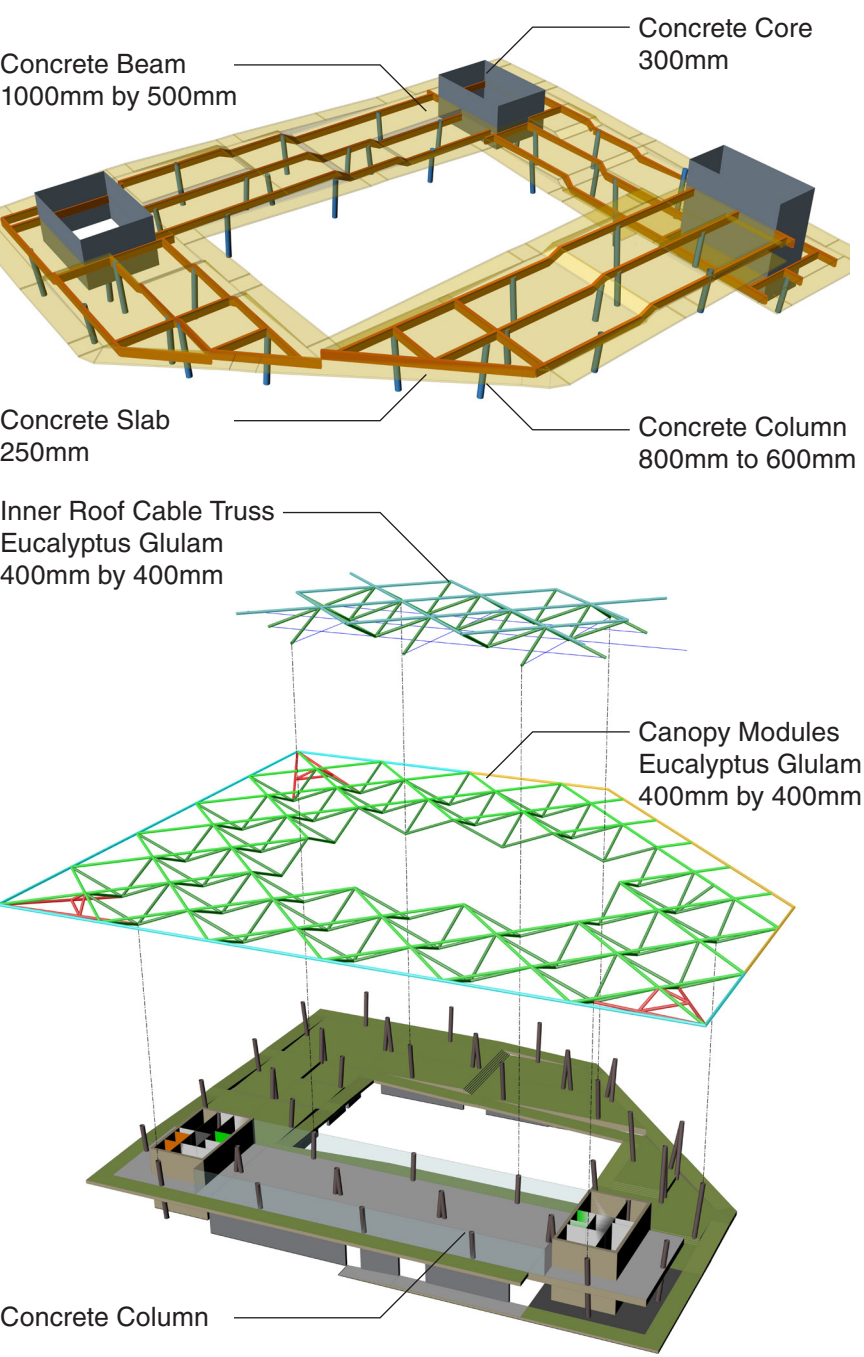
The museum transitions from outdoor courtyards to naturally ventilated ramps for resilient art. Inside, invisible DDC and DOAS systems maintain round-the-clock archival gallery conditions via displacement air conditioning. Perimeter spaces leverage passive cooling, night flushing, and predictive window controls, while ground and air-source heat pumps provide sustainable hydronic climate control.



STRUCTURE APPROACH

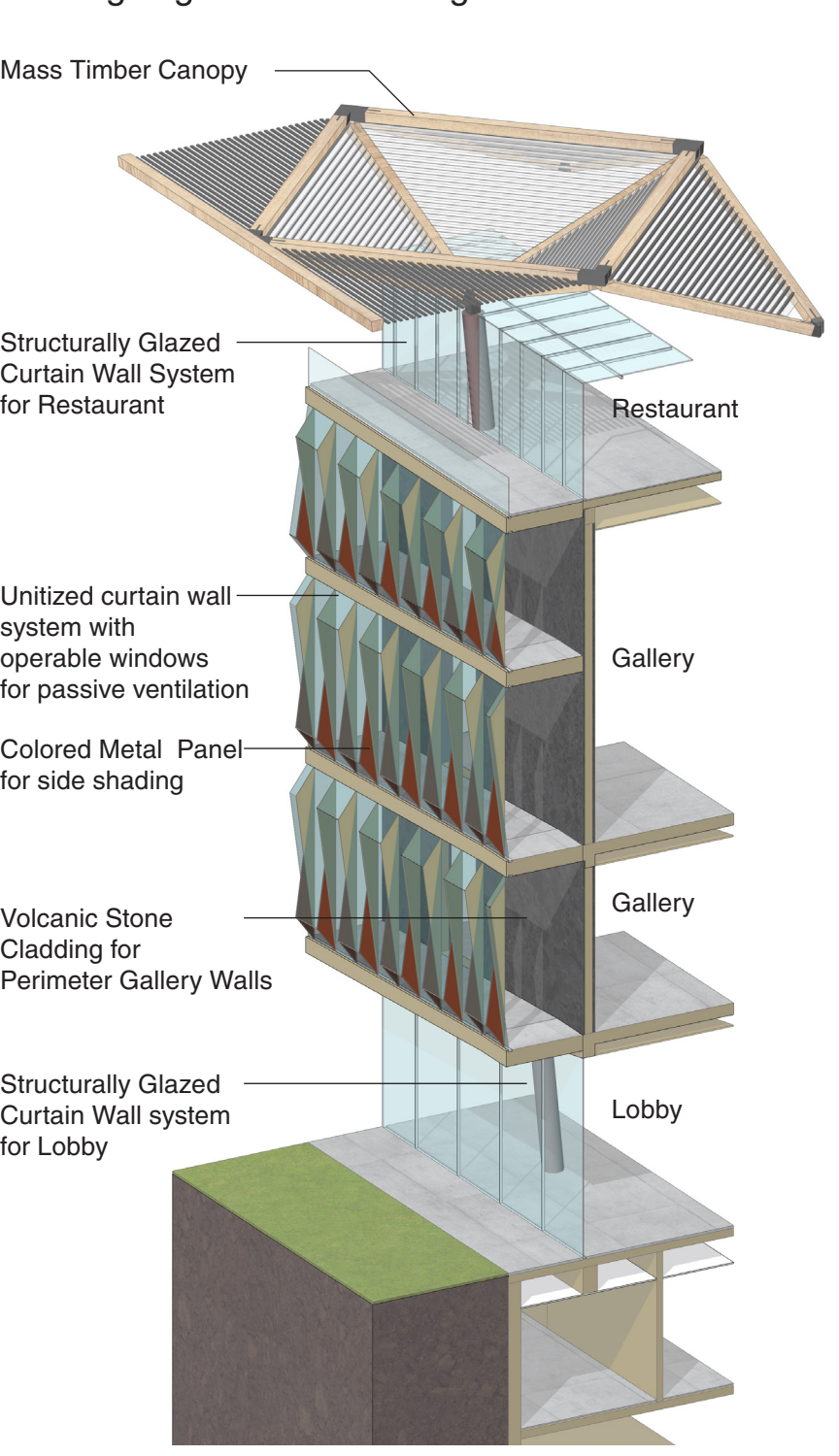
The structural design utilizes local materials and techniques to achieve a seismically resilient, spiraling form:

Structure: 37m-tall, spiraling cast-in-place reinforced concrete frame surrounds a central courtyard. Seismic Stability: Three concrete cores and inclined moment frames deliver robust earthquake resistance. Foundations: Continuous mat foundation secures volcanic subsoils near metro infrastructure. Canopy: A lightweight, Glued-Laminated Timber roof minimizes seismic mass and provides shading.



FACADE APPROACH

The high-performance facade integrates structurally glazed curtain walls at the lobby and restaurant for daylighting and transparency. Unitized curtain walls with operable windows and colored metal panels enable passive ventilation and side shading. High-thermal-mass volcanic stone cladding envelopes perimeter gallery walls, stabilizing indoor temperatures and aligning with local ecological resilience.



MODULAR BUILDING COMPONENTS

