

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

City of Bellingham seeking artist(s) or artist team(s) for
central library remodel of children and teen spaces



Bellingham Central Library ground floor is for young readers and their grown-ups.

Project Summary

The City of Bellingham, WA is seeking artist(s) or artist team(s) qualified to design, fabricate, and install interior artwork associated with the phase 2 renovation of the Bellingham central library, located at 210 Central Avenue. This project will encompass the library spaces for children and teens, and is part of the City's Percent for Arts program. Opportunities for public art in this popular City library space prioritize wall work (mural, mosaic, bas-relief, etc), hanging sculptural work, and/or artistic elements integrated into the interior entries or help desk. A thematic focus on the local environment and natural world and youth-focused style is paramount for the selected finalist.

THE AVAILABLE PROJECT BUDGET FOR ALL ELEMENTS OF THE ARTWORK DESIGN, FABRICATION AND INSTALLATION IS APPROXIMATELY \$85,000

**Submission Deadline: before noon (12:00 PM PST) on September 18, 2026.
Late submissions will not be considered.**

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Exhibit B: Architectural Finishes

Exhibit C: Summary of Student Advisory Group Recommendations

1. General Information

Background

The ground floor of the Bellingham central library will be remodeled in 2027, and design is substantially complete. Construction will occur through the end of 2027. This area will primarily house spaces for children and teens, as well as a multipurpose room. The project is subject to the City's Percent for Art program, which allocates one percent of the project budget for the incorporation of artwork. The artwork allocation is approximately \$85,000 for all aspects of the design, fabrication, and installation. The artwork will be installed after the building remodel is complete.

Desired Project and Available Surfaces

See **Exhibit A: Floor Plan** for a detailed drawing of the new ground floor library space. **An optional tour will be held Thursday, September 3, 2026 from 11:00am-12:00pm.** Interested applicants should meet at the ground floor of the central library (210 Central Avenue) at the bottom of the stairs near the elevator.

Relationship to Architectural Design

The architect team (Miller Hull) identified themes and color schemes for the design of the new ground floor library space. This includes the concept of the ground floor representing the “forest floor”, main floor of the library representing the forest, and the mezzanine representing the canopy. A visible public stairwell connects all three floors. The artwork should relate to this theme and could inspire, but not replace, functional elements such as shelving, seating, etc. which are outside of this scope of work. See **Exhibit B: Architectural Finishes**

Available Surfaces

Surfaces available for the incorporation of artwork are primarily walls, ceilings, and columns. A signature artwork piece should signal entry into the children and teen spaces, with the opportunity for additional reinforcing pieces incorporated into other areas.

Figure 1: Summary Table of Available Surfaces

Surface	Opportunities
Ground floor walls/ceiling, Stairwell walls/ceiling	Murals, bas-relief, hanging sculpture, lighting, or other elements could be painted or attached to the walls and/or ceilings, including those leading up the staircase to the main floor of the library.
Columns	Artwork could be hung or otherwise incorporated onto existing columns between the library stacks.
Window walls	Walls surrounding the interior windows could support murals, bas relief, hanging elements, etc.
Help desk/entryway	A centralized help desk will be centered in the new space. Artwork could be painted or otherwise attached.

Desired Themes

Youth representing a range of ages participated in a series of visioning sessions with library staff to provide feedback on the design and function of the new teen and children's spaces. This included a session focusing on the types and styles of artwork that should be considered as part of the Percent for Art program. A link to the student feedback, including presentation videos, is available [here](#) and a summary is attached as **Exhibit C: Summary of Student Advisory Group Recommendations**. Desired themes include connection to the local environment and natural world.

The artwork should signal that visitors are entering a space for youth and teens. It is important for the work(s) to resonate with and be responsive to the desires of younger library users. The artwork design must consider the highest standard of safety based on the intended audience and their need to explore. The artwork(s) should be durable to sustained public use and handling or remain out of reach.

Available Funding

The available budget for this project is approximately \$85,000. This includes any and all expenses related to the planning, design, and installation of the artwork, including incidentals such as food, lodging, per diem, travel, engineered drawings and calculations, permitting, overhead and profit, bonding and insurance, supervision, labor, equipment and materials, communications, reproduction, mockups, plaques, etc. A portion of this budget will be contracted for the artist to carry out a negotiated scope of work.

Preparation Costs

The City of Bellingham shall not be responsible for qualification submittal preparation costs, including oral interviews (virtual or in-person if held), nor for costs including attorney fees associated with any challenge to the determination of the highest ranked applicant and/or award of contract and /or rejection of qualification submittal. By submitting a response of qualifications, each applicant agrees to be bound in this respect and waives all claims to such costs and fees.

2. Submission Information

Submissions are due before noon (PST) on September 18, 2026 and must be submitted using this form available at this link:

cob.org/artist-rfq-library-remodel

Late submissions will not be considered.

Questions about this RFQ

All proponents should review this request carefully and submit any questions to Arts@cob.org. Questions should be received no later than five (5) calendar days prior to the response submission deadline. Any information obtained from any other source shall not be considered binding and may disqualify your proposal.

Optional Project Tour

An optional tour with the City's Project Managers will be held on **September 3, 2026 from 11:00am to noon at the Central Library (210 Central Avenue)**. Meet in the lobby at the base of the stairs near the elevator on the building's lower ground floor.

RFQ and Project Timeline

Request for Qualifications released	August 14, 2026
Optional site visit	September 3, 2026
Final day for RFQ-related questions	September 14, 2026
Request for Qualifications deadline	September 18, 2026
Artist notification and contracting	October 2026
Concept design development and approval	November 2026-February 2027
Final design approval	March/April 2027
Fabrication	May-December 2027
Installation and dedication	January 2028 or upon remodel completion

Disposition of Qualification Submittals

All materials submitted in response to this RFQ will become the property of the City of Bellingham. The City, at its discretion, may distribute the submittal for evaluation purposes. The file shall be retained by the City and will become part of the public record and subject to Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) disclosures.

Modification/Withdrawal of Qualification Submittals

An applicant may withdraw a qualification submittal at any time prior to the final submission date by sending written notification of its withdrawal, signed by an agent authorized to represent the

artist. The applicant may submit a new qualification submittal prior to the final submission date or submit written modification or addition to a submittal prior to the final submission date. Modifications offered in any other manner, oral, or written will not be considered. A final qualification submittal cannot be changed or withdrawn after the final submission date, except for modifications requested by the City after the submission deadline in response to interviews.

Rejection of Submittals

The City reserves the right to reject any or all submittals and to waive irregularities and information in the submittal and evaluation process. This RFQ does not obligate the City to accept or contract for any express or implied services.

Verbal Changes or Interpretation

No verbal change or interpretation of any provision contained in this RFQ is valid. Written addenda will be emailed to parties of record and/or reposted on the [City's Public Artwork Opportunity webpage](#) if changes, clarifications, or amendments to qualification submittal documents are deemed necessary by the City

3. Evaluation and Selection Process

Evaluation Criteria

Submissions will be evaluated and ranked on the following criteria and point range for each project.

Criteria	Related Submission	Maximum Possible Points
Response to the desired project approach, including relevant themes and available surfaces. Ability to translate themes of literacy, joy of reading, engaged and lively youth, and the environment into compelling work(s) of public art.	Biography, statement of interest, project approach	5
Relevant experience, including projects of comparable scale, scope, and budget.	Examples of prior work	5
Demonstrated ability to manage all aspects of the project timeline, scope and budget, including contracting, concept and final design development, engineering specs, fabrication, installation (including efficiency of travel costs), etc.	Resumes and references, project approach and timeline	5
	TOTAL POSSIBLE	15 points

Selection Process

1. A selection committee will review all submissions and rank them based on the evaluation criteria above. The selection committee includes arts commissioners, library staff, facilities staff, and youth advisory committee representative(s).
2. Finalists may be contacted for additional information and/or interviews.
3. The City will contact all applicants with the results of the selection committee review.
4. The City will enter into contract negotiations with the selected artist/team(s).
5. The City reserves the right to terminate negotiations with any artist should it be in the City's best interest.

4. General Terms and Conditions

Right to Negotiate

Selected artists maintain the right to negotiate any terms or conditions before entering into a Services Agreement with the City.

Equal Opportunity Employment

The successful artist or artist team must comply with the City of Bellingham equal opportunity requirements. The City of Bellingham is committed to a program of equal employment opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, religion, gender, age, national origin, pregnancy, genetic information, marital status, sexual orientation (including gender identity), or the presence of any sensory, physical, or mental disabilities.

The City of Bellingham is also committed to complying with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, that provides “no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

The City of Bellingham, in accordance with Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act (Section 504) and the Americans with Disability Act (ADA), commits to non-discrimination based on disability, in all its programs and activities.

Non-Collusion

Submittal and signature of a submittal swears that the document is genuine and not a sham or collusive and not made in the interest of any person not named, and that the proponent has not induced others to submit a sham offer, or to refrain from submitting a proposal.

Compliance with Laws and Regulations

In addition to non-discrimination and equal opportunity requirements previously listed, the proponent ultimately awarded a contract shall comply with federal, state, and local laws, statutes and ordinance relative to the execution of the work. This requirement includes, but is not limited to, protection of public and employer safety and health; environmental protection; waste reduction and recycling; the protection of natural resources; permits; fees; taxes; and similar subjects.

Insurance Requirements

If you are selected for this project, you will be asked to enter into a City of Bellingham Artist Services Agreement and provide a current copy of your Certificate of Liability Insurance evidencing the following coverage:

- Commercial General Liability (CGL):
 - \$1,000,000 / per occurrence
 - \$2,000,000 / aggregate
- Automobile Insurance:
 - \$1,000,000 combined single limit per accident
- Workers Compensation:
 - Statutory Amount

CGL limits may be met through any combination of primary, umbrella, or excess coverage.

GENERAL FFE PLAN NOTES

1. ALL NEW MOVEABLE FURNITURE TO BE PROVIDED AND INSTALLED BY FURNITURE VENDOR. TARGETED PIECES TO BE SALVAGED. FURNITURE SALVAGE SCOPE TO BE COORDINATED W/ OWNER. REFER TO SCHEDULES AND PLANS FOR APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS.
2. FURNITURE LAYOUT AND BASIS OF DESIGN IS PROVIDED FOR PURPOSES OF COORDINATION AND EGRESS ROUTES.
3. ALL BUILT-IN CASEWORK AND BUILDING FINISHES ARE TO BE PROVIDED AND INSTALLED BY THE GENERAL CONTRACTOR.
4. NO ELECTRICAL DEVICES, DRAINS OR OTHER UTILITY DEVICES MAYBE LOCATED UNDER CASEWORK LOCATIONS U.N.O.

- FURNITURE ITEMS TO BE SALVAGED AND REUSED
- FURNITURE ITEMS TO BE PURCHASED NEW
- SHELVING SHOWN FOR REFERENCE- REFER TO SHELVING PLANS

FURNITURE SCHEDULE		
TYPE MARK	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL

02		
TEEN		
(E) C-1	Task Chair	1
(E) C-2	Task Chair	1
(E) C-3	Side Chair	1
(E) C-4	Side Chair	1
(E) C-5	Side Chair	1
(E) C-6	Side Chair	1
(E) C-7	Side Chair	1
(E) C-8	Side Chair	1
(E) T-1	Work Table	1
(E) T-2	Work Table	1
(E) T-3	Work Table	1
C-1A	Lounge Chair	5
C-2A	Ottoman Medium	1
C-3A	Ottoman Small	3
T-1	Computer Table	1
T-2	Laptop Table	3

03		
MULTIPURPOSE ROOM		
	Marker Board	2
C-4	Stacking Chair	77

04		
STORAGE		
(E) T-4 to T-21	Rectangular Table	18
A-1	Chair Dolly	4

16		
STAFF WORKING AREA		
(E) WS-1	Workstation	1
C-6	Task Chair	2
C-6	Task Chair Armless	1
T-4	Stl Stand Desk	2

17		
SMALL MEETING ROOM		
C-7	Office Chair	4
T-5	Conference Table	1

19		
CHILDRENS LIBRARY		
A-2	Kids Foot Stool	1
C-1B	Lounge Chair	3
C-1C	Lounge Chair	3
C-3B	Ottoman Small	2
C-3C	Ottoman Small	2
C-8	Task Chair	4
C-9	Side Chair	9
C-10	Ottoman Large	1
C-11A	Loveseat	1
C-11B	Loveseat	1
C-12	Oversized Chair	1
C-13	Accent Furniture - Bird Seat Large	1
C-14	Accent Furniture - Bird Seat Small	1

C-15	Children's Chair	8
C-16	High Back Privacy Chair	4
T-3	Self Checkout Station	1
T-6	Mobile Round Table	3
T-7	Self Checkout Station	1
T-8	Computer Table	1
T-9	Computer Table	1
T-10	Round Table	1
T-11	Round Table	1
WS-1	Workstation w/Privacy Panels	4

21		
YOUTH SERVICE STAFF		
(E) C-9	Task Chair	1
(E) C-10	Task Chair	1
(E) C-11	Task Chair	1
C-5	Task Chair	2
T-12	Work Table	1
WS-2	Workstation	2
WS-3	Workstation	2
WS-4	Workstation	1
WS-S1	Pedestal File Storage	5

24		
STAFF BREAK LOUNGE		
(E) T-24	Utility Table	1
C-9	Side Chair	8
C-17	Bench Seat	3
T-13	Round Table	1
T-14	Cafe Table	4

26		
MOTHER'S		
(E) C-12	Lounge Chair	1
(E) C-13	Lounge Chair	1
(E) T-23	Coffee Table	1

Grand total: 225

STAMP

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

BELLINGHAM
CENTRAL
LIBRARY
RENOVATION
PHASE 2

210 CENTRAL AVE,
BELLINGHAM, WA 98225

SUBMITTAL

100%
CONSTRUCTION
DOCUMENTS

August 07, 2026

REVISIONS

No. Description Date

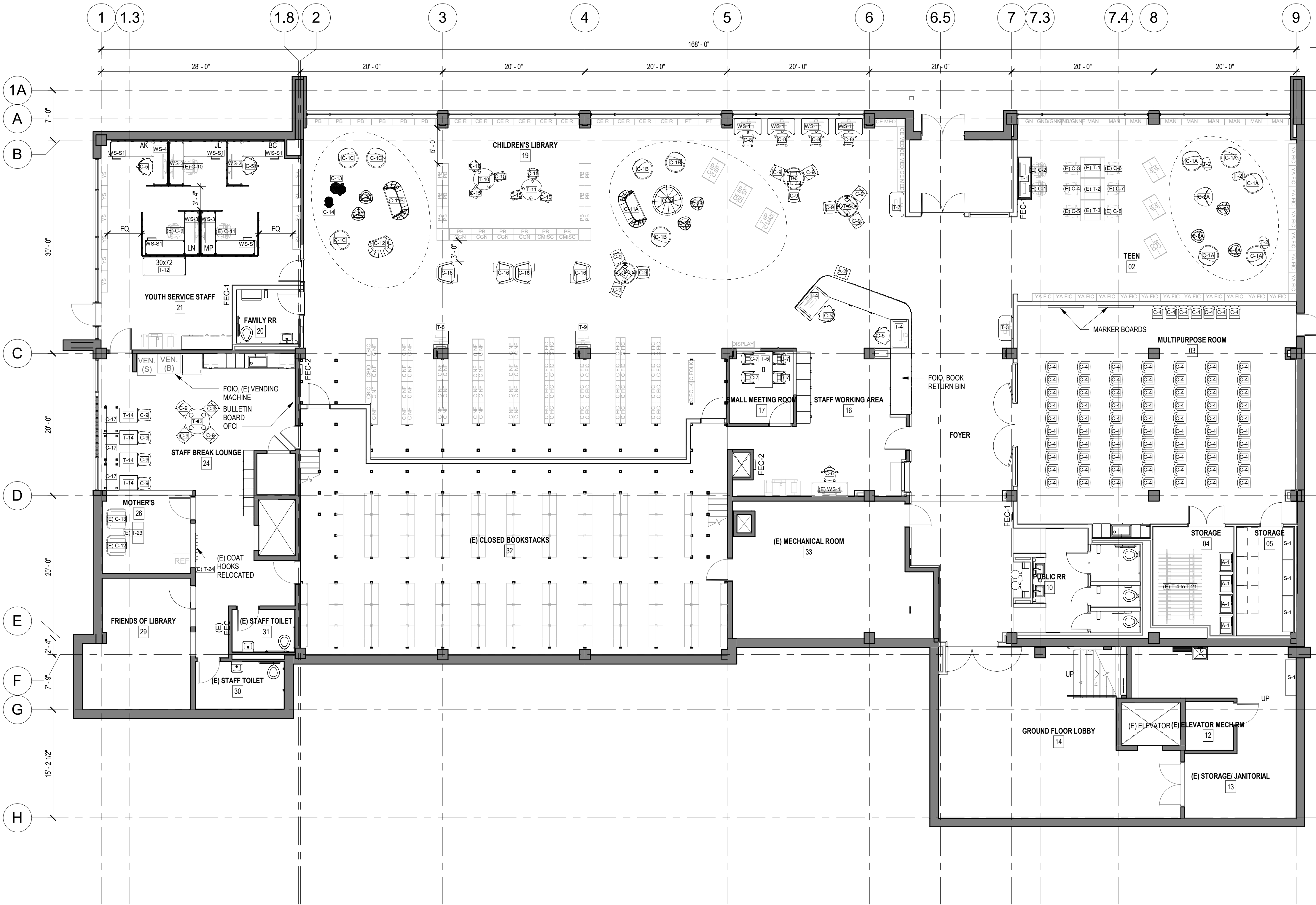
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Checked: EN
MJH Proj No.: A23.0156.00

Issue Date: 08/07/26

SHEET

GROUND FLOOR -
FFE PLAN
A115

EXHIBIT A: FLOOR PLAN



1 GROUND FLOOR - FFE PLAN
A115 1/8" = 1'-0"

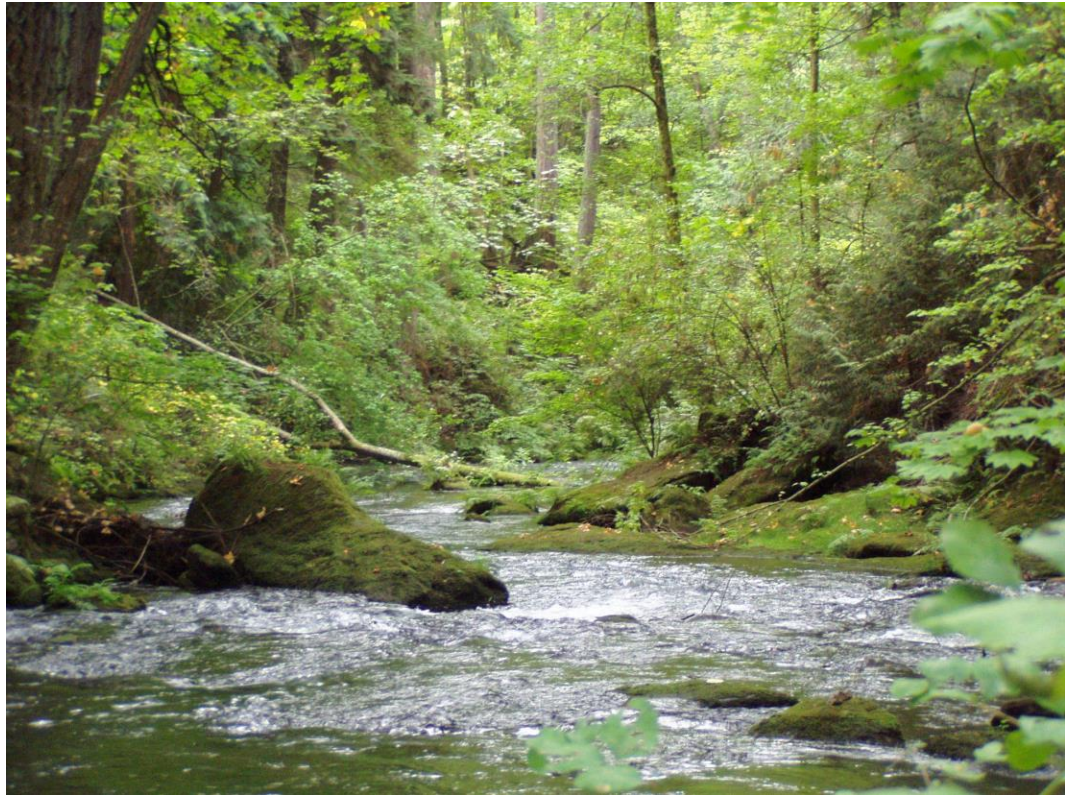
Bellingham Central Library Renovation

June 12, 2026

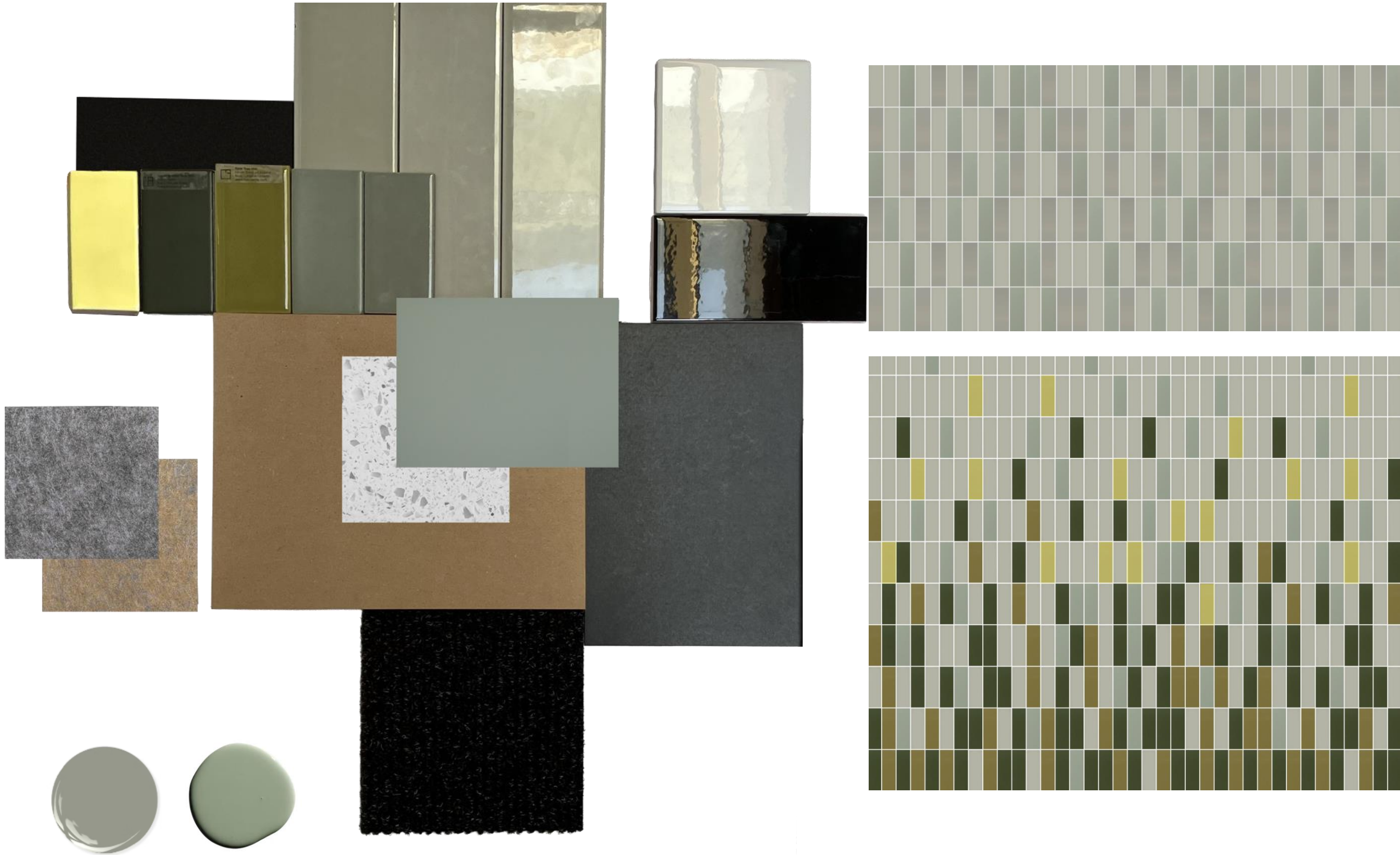
Agenda

- Design
 - The Big Idea: Forest Floor → Forest Canopy
- Finishes Palette
- Flooring Options
- Carpet Options
- Wayfinding ideas

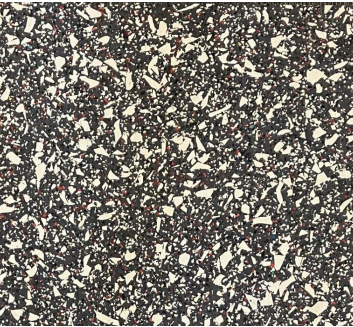
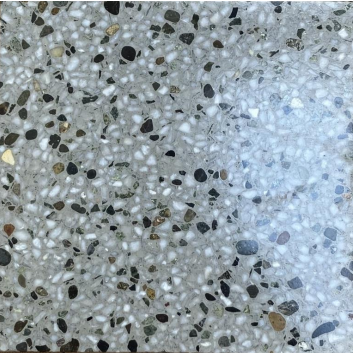
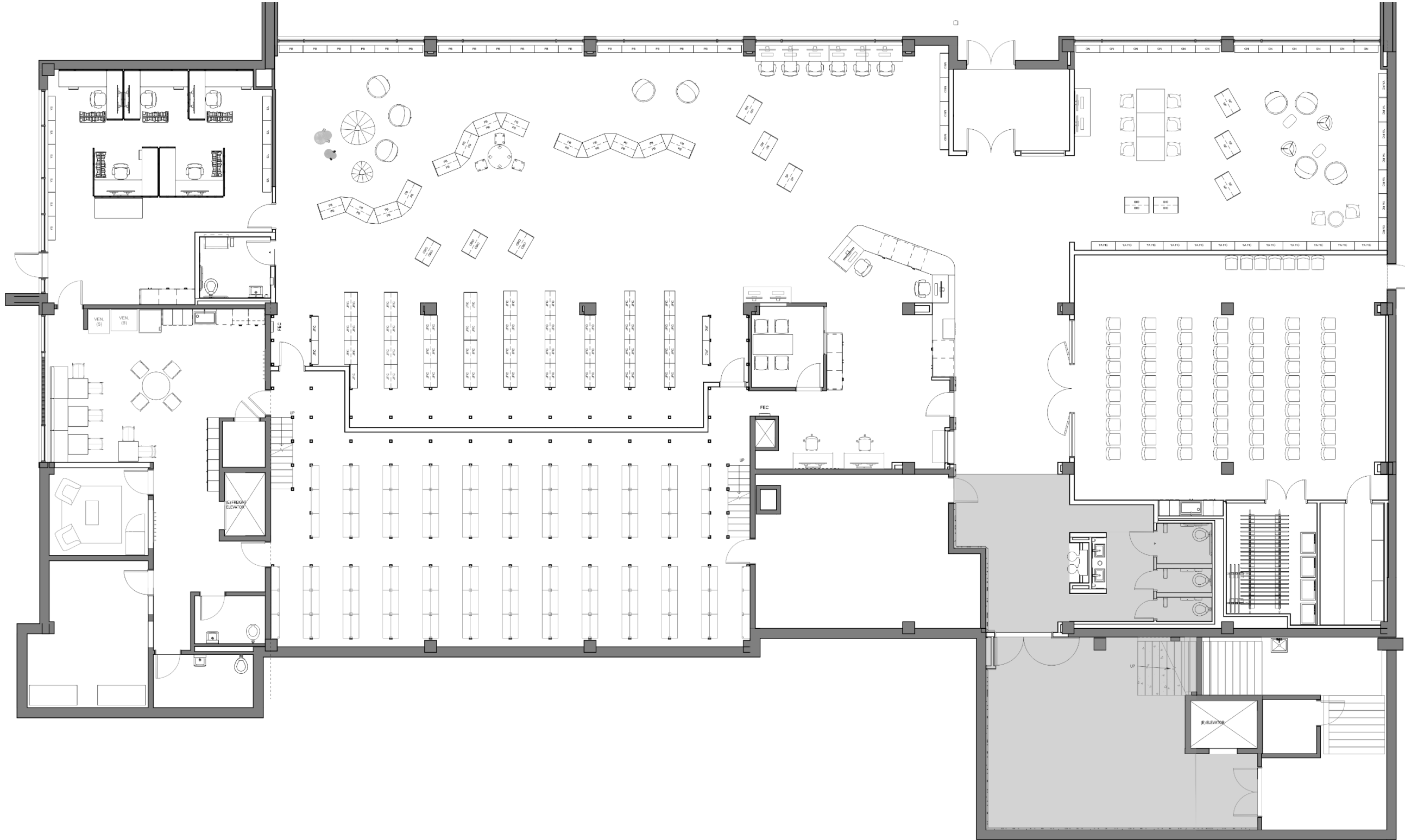
The Big Idea | **Ground Floor – ‘Forest Floor’**



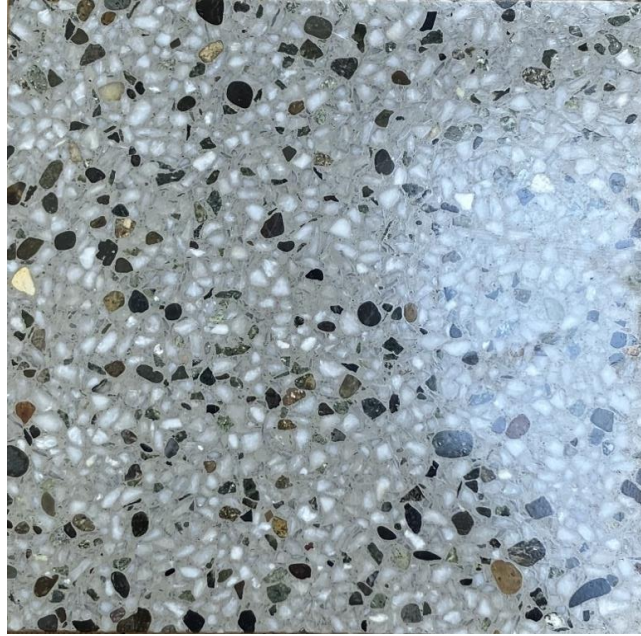
Finish Palette



Flooring Options

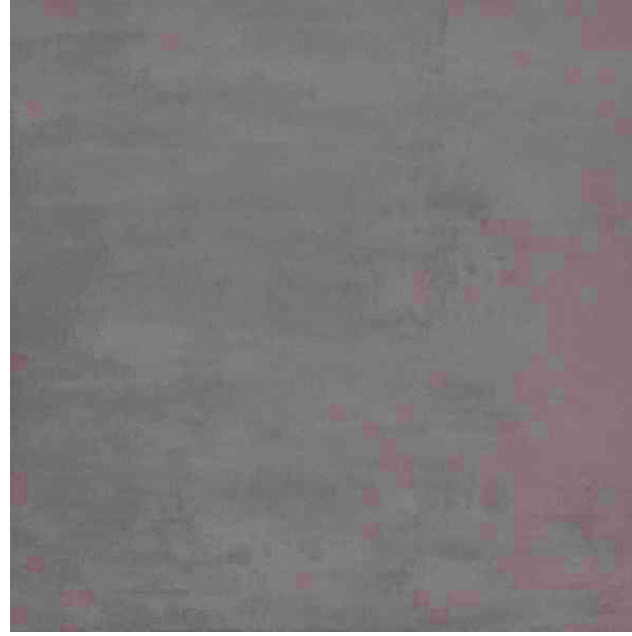


Flooring Options



Poured Terrazzo

- 40-100 yr floor
- Easy cleaning
- Requires periodic sealing – 3-5 yrs
- Smooth / Monolithic
- Hard surface amplifies sound
- \$\$\$\$ Highest Cost



Porcelain tile – 24" x 24"

- 20-50 yr floor
- Resists stains, easy to clean
- Grout traps dirt and stains
- Grout lines
- Hard surface amplifies sound
- \$\$\$ Midrange Cost



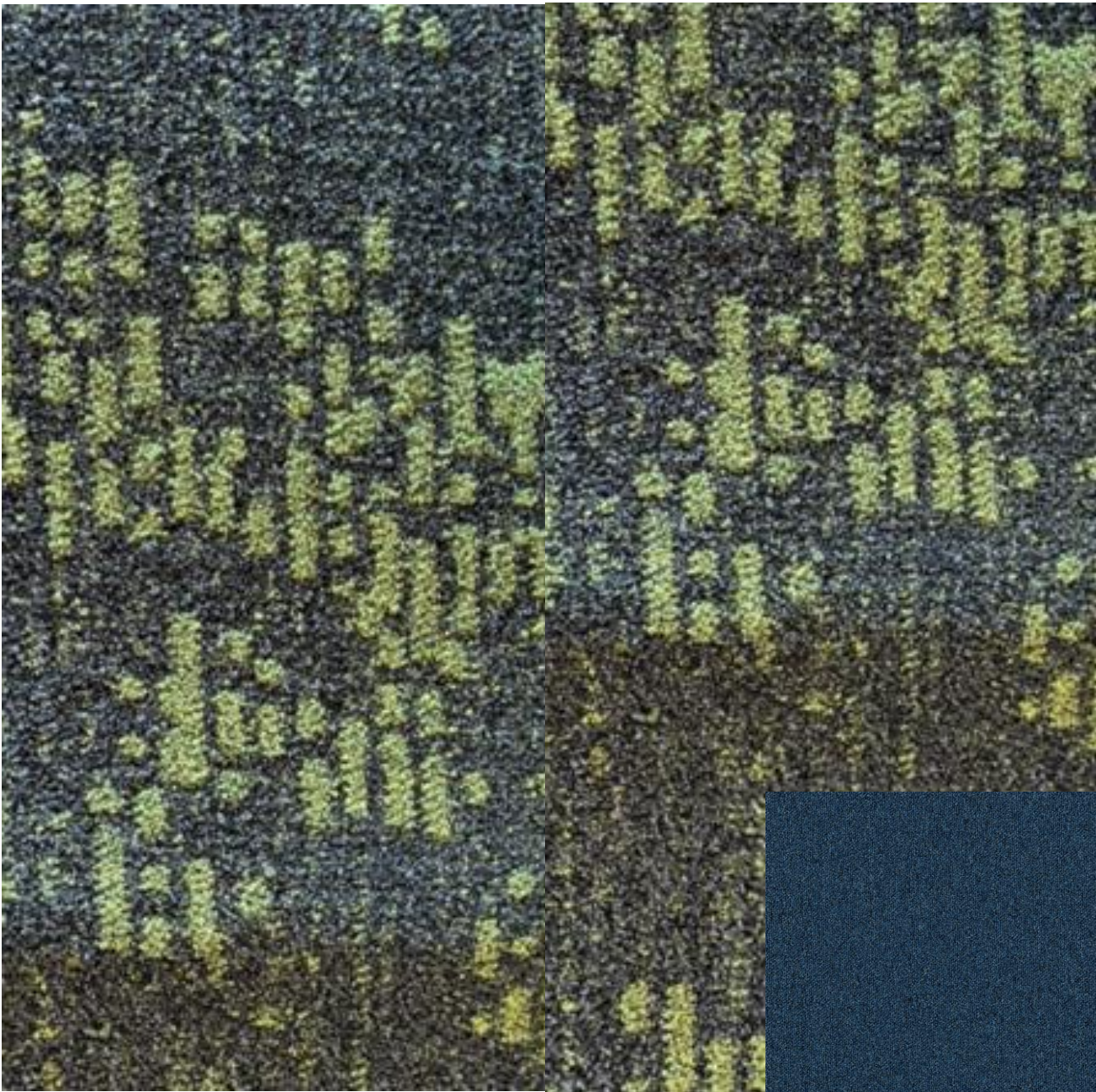
Rubber Flooring – 48" x 48"

- 15-25 yr floor
- Handles heavy loads
- Periodic deep cleaning
- Smooth – flush joints
- Dampens impact sound
- Not suitable for restrooms
- \$\$ Most Affordable

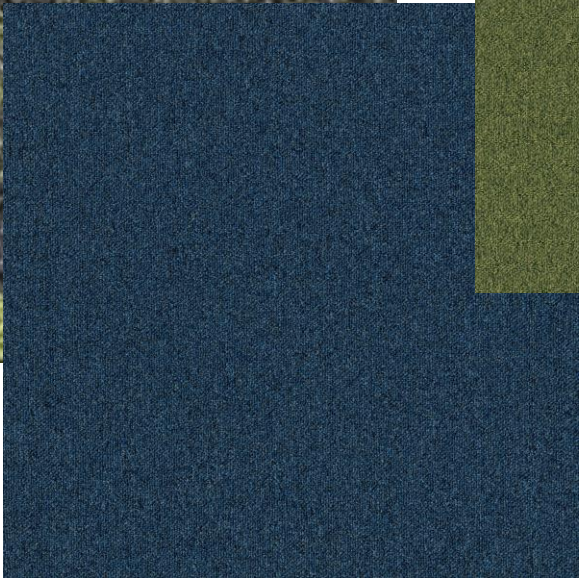
Carpet Layout - Option 1



Carpet Option 1



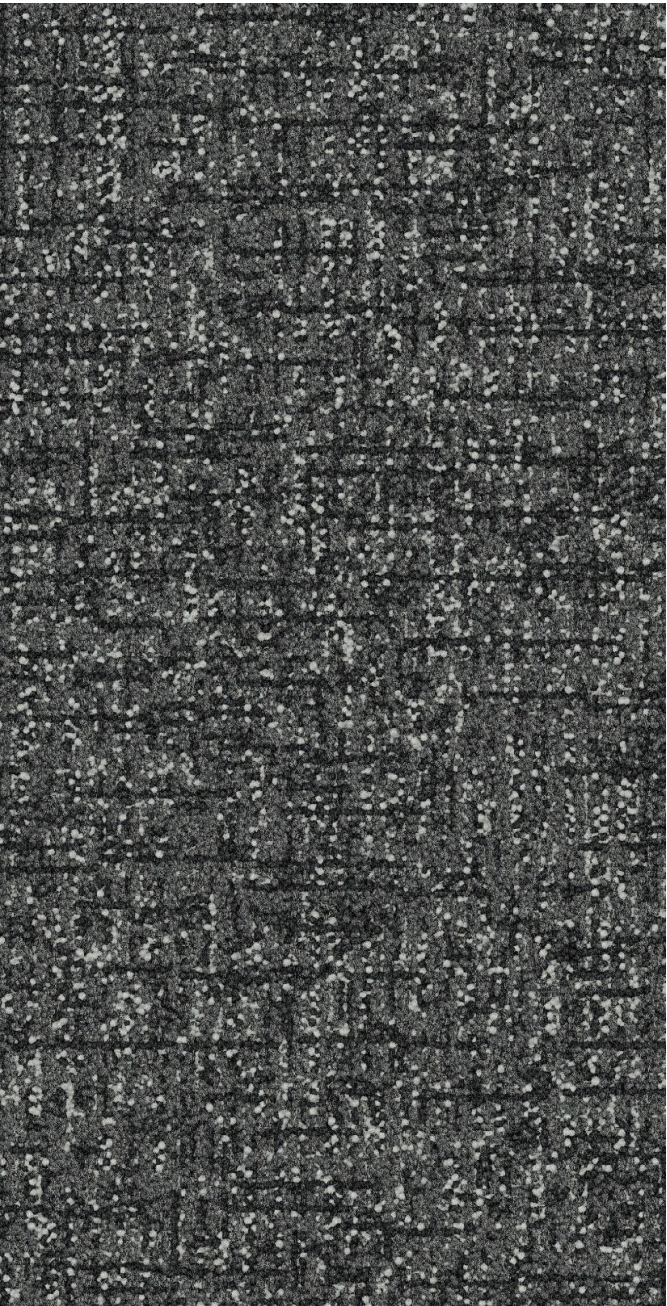
Pattern -
Level 1 public areas



Accent - Teens

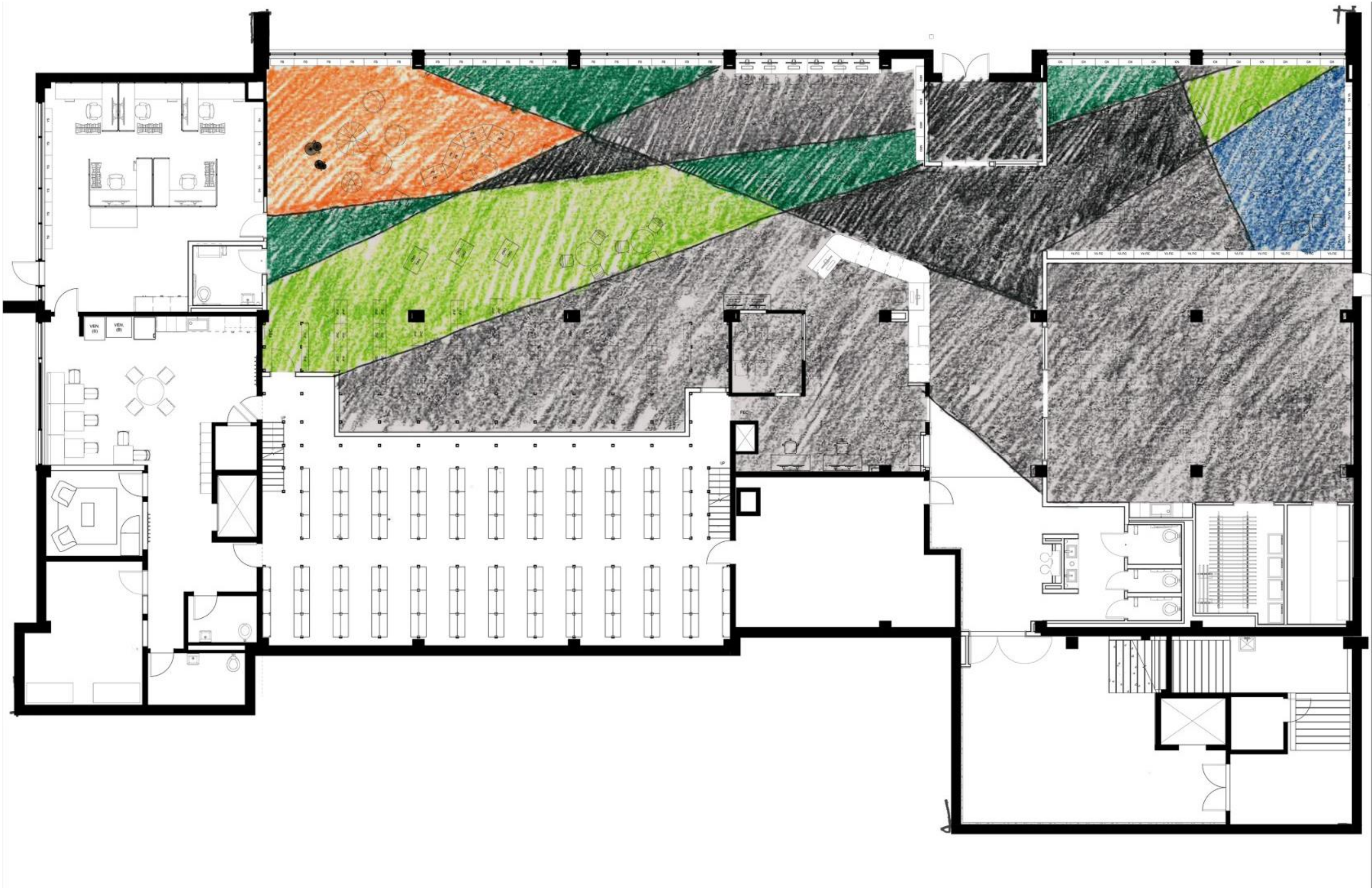


Accent – Young readers



Complimentary solid
Staff areas

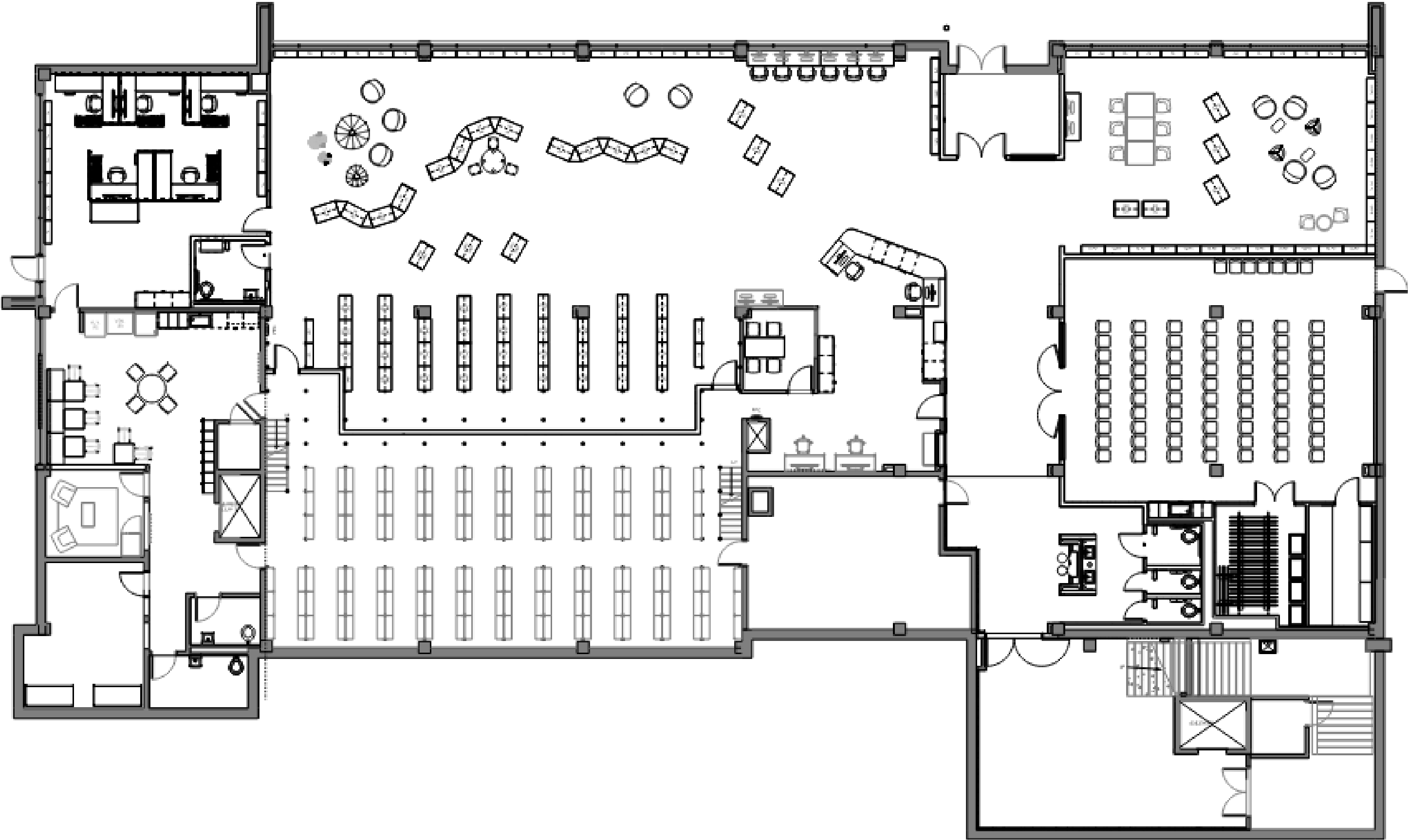
Carpet Layout - Option 2



Carpet Option 2

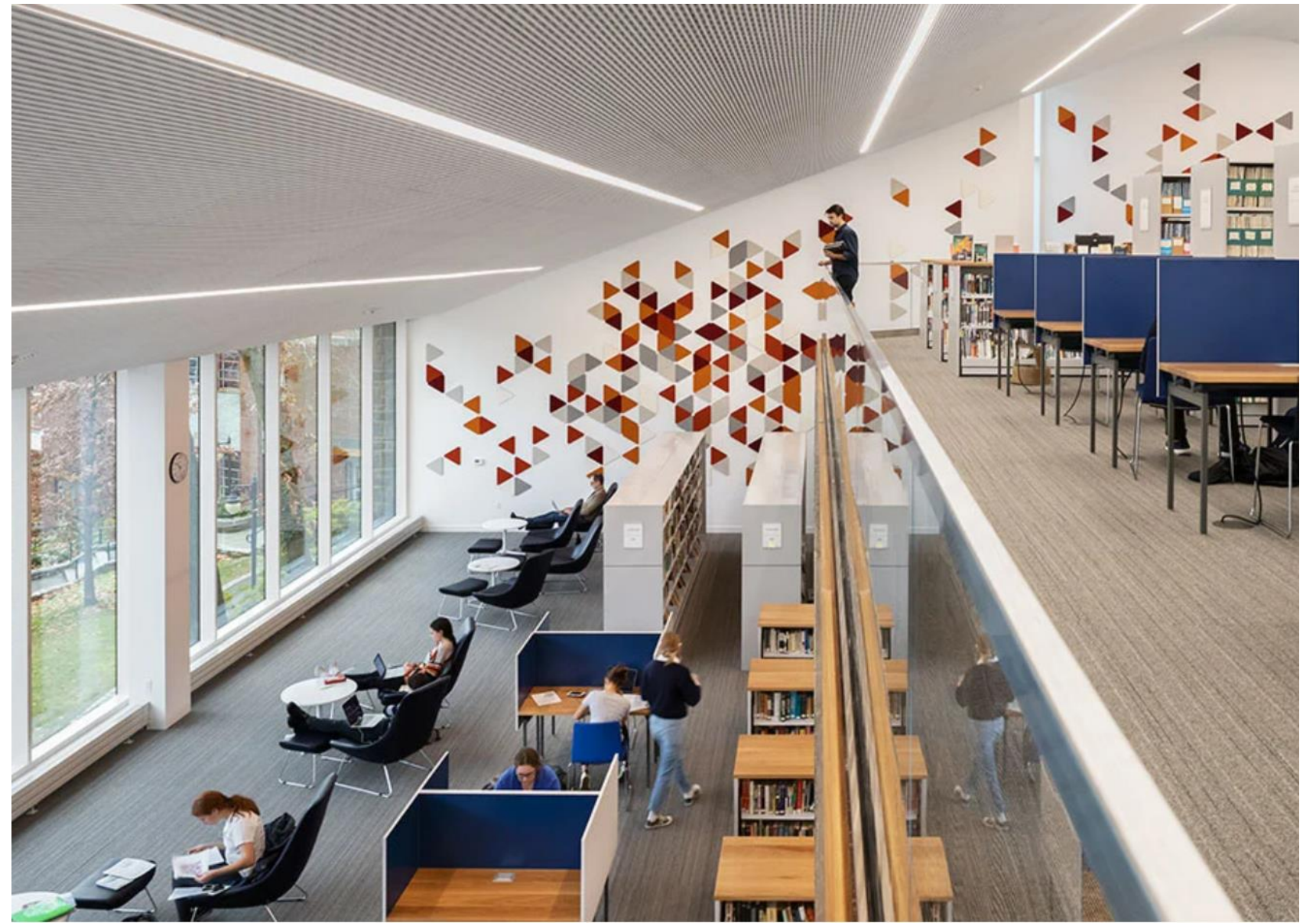
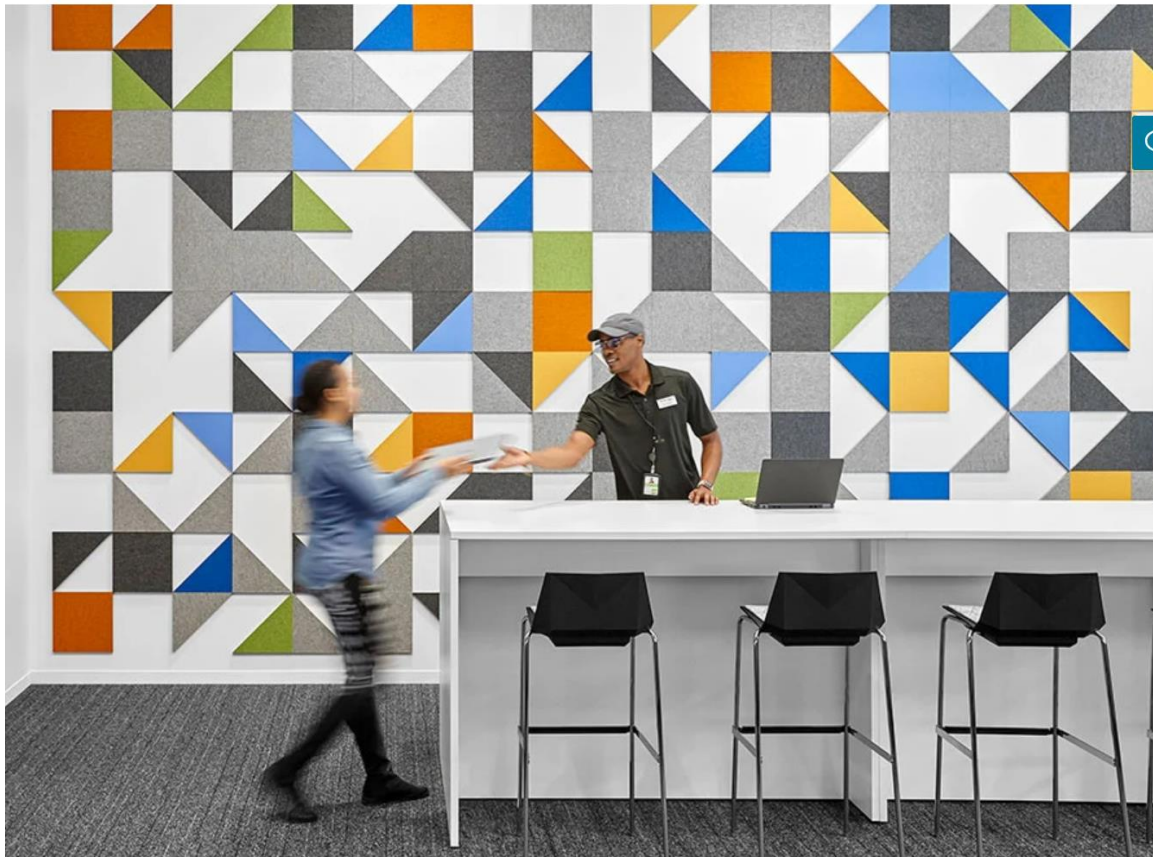


Ground Floor Plan

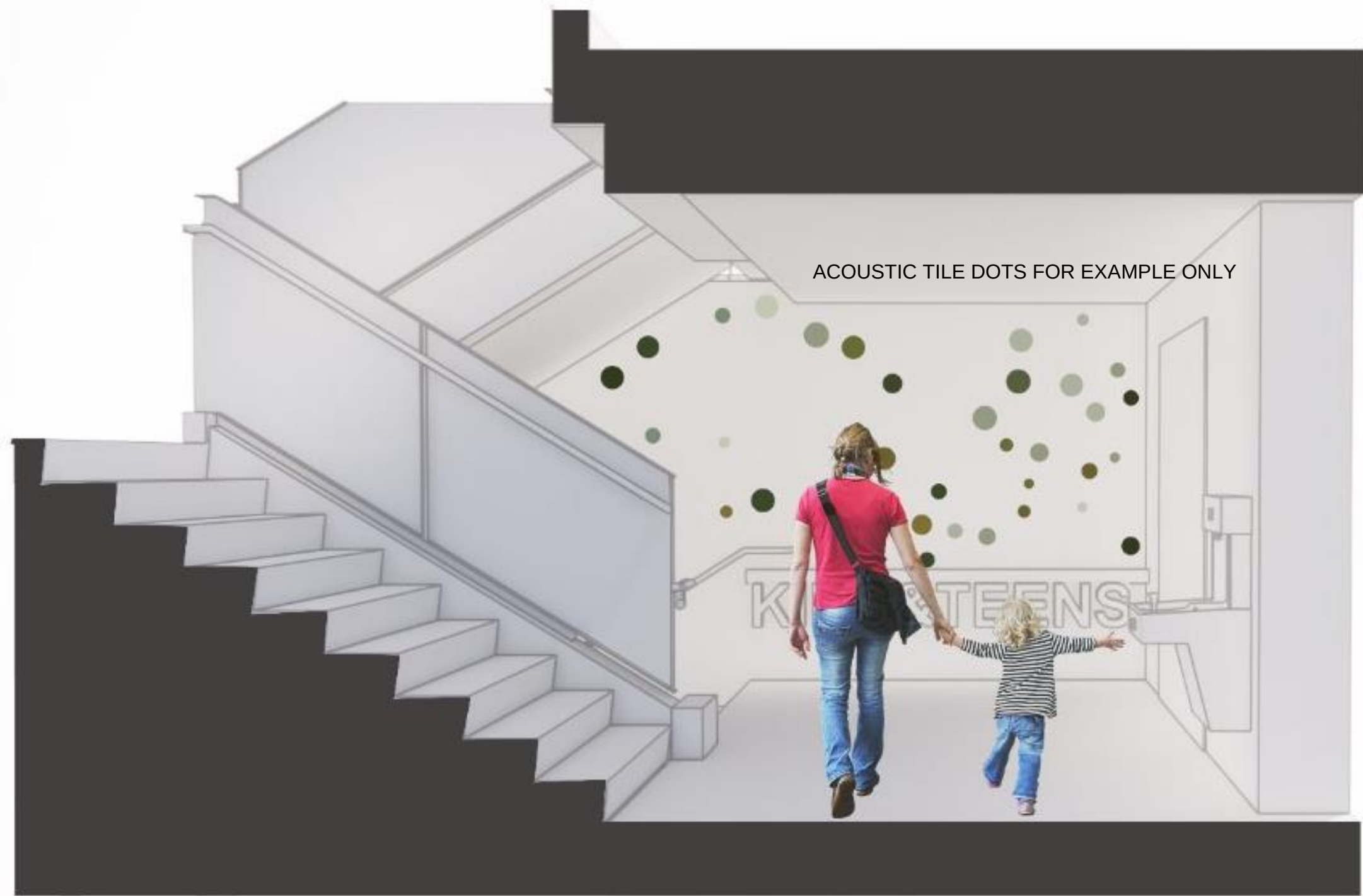


Specialty Wall Finishes | Acoustic Tiles

NOTE: ACOUSTIC TILES ARE ACOUSTIC FILLER AND SECONDARY TO ANY SELECTED ART. DECISIONS AROUND ANY ACOUSTIC FILLER WILL BE MADE IN COORDINATION WITH THE ARTIST AND CITY TEAM



Wayfinding | First Floor Entry



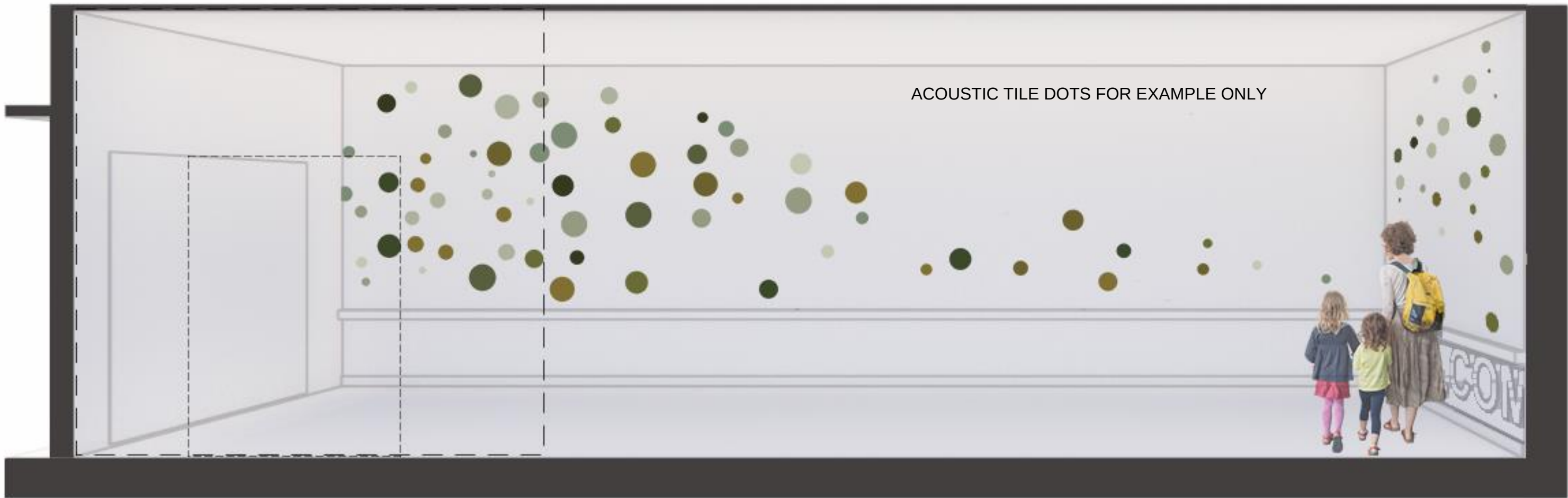
FIRST FLOOR ENTRY

Wayfinding | Entrance from First Floor Stairs



ENTRANCE FROM FIRST FLOOR STAIRS

Wall Feature Idea | Ground Floor Lobby



LOBBY ELEV. ENTRANCE SOUTH

Wall Feature Idea | Ground Floor Foyer West

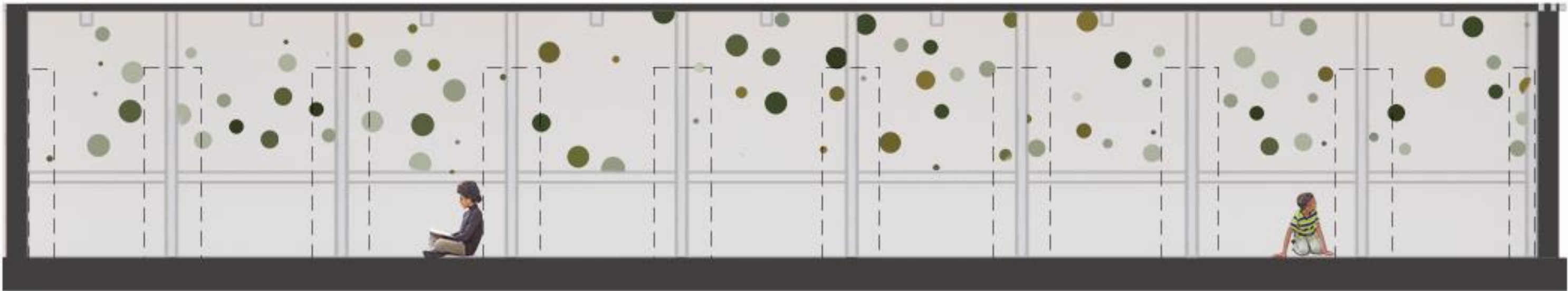
ACOUSTIC TILE DOTS FOR EXAMPLE ONLY



GROUND FLOOR FOYER WEST

Wall Feature Idea | Ground Floor Children's South Wall

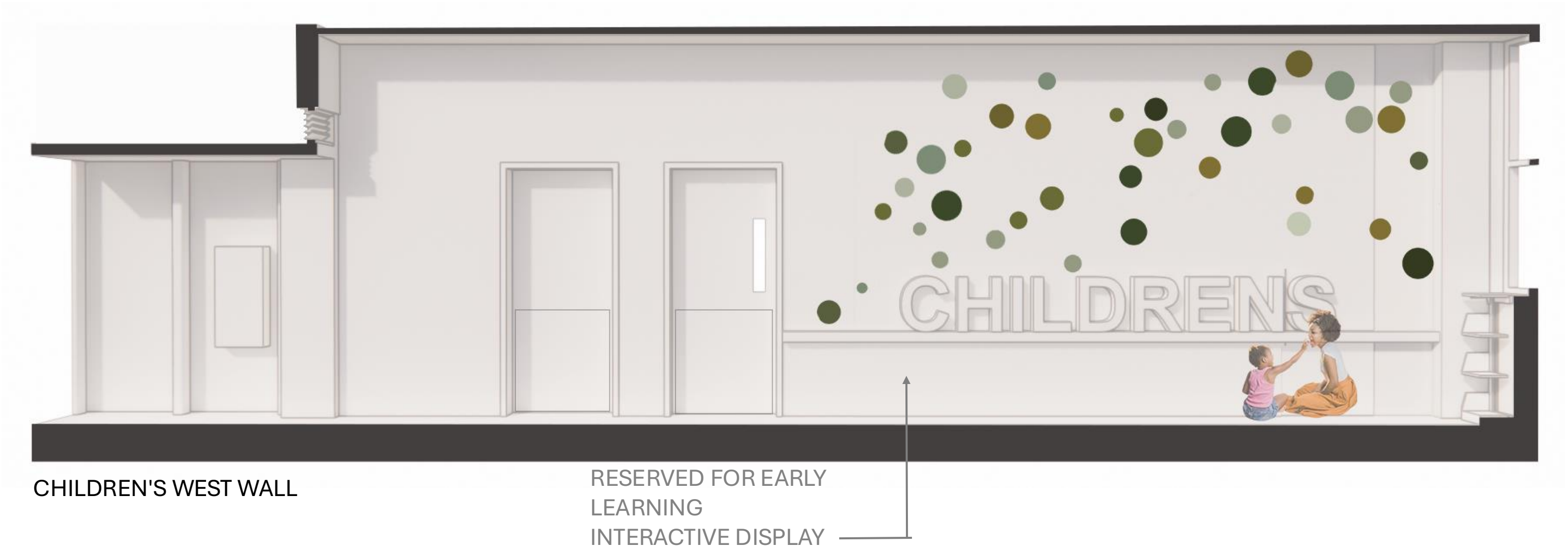
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CHILDREN'S SOUTH WALL

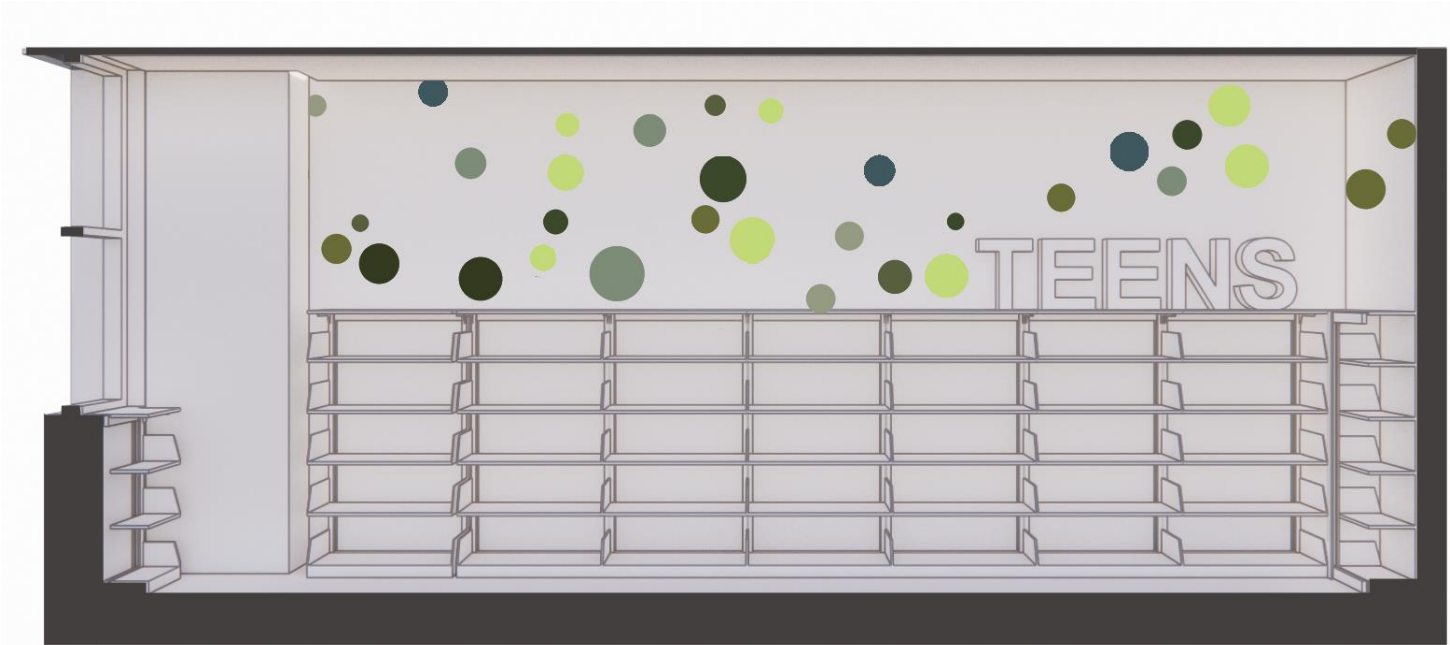
Wall Feature Idea | Ground Floor Children's West Wall

ACOUSTIC TILE DOTS FOR EXAMPLE ONLY



Wall Feature Idea | Ground Floor Teens

ACOUSTIC TILE DOTS FOR EXAMPLE ONLY



EAST WALL



SOUTH WALL

Next Steps

EXHIBIT C: SUMMARY OF YOUTH ADVISORY GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY OF YOUTH ADVISORY GROUP RECURRING REQUESTS & DESIRES:

- Desire for magical, transporting space that sparks creativity, excitement, wonder and visits
- Desire for local, natural elements to be reflected: trees, mountains, water, animals
 - Colors green and blue kept coming up
- Colorful spaces: having colorful spaces is very important
- Desire for a sense of fun and whimsy in addition to realistic
 - Magical elements such as fairytale creatures
- Mural (Bellingham is a mural city)
- Passageway/tunnel to library (like through a tree)
- Entrance(s) an opportunity for art
- Desire for youth art - space to display it and/or incorporate
- Desire for indigenous representation
- Interaction/interactive spaces
 - Both tangible interaction and visual interaction
 - Ex: tree tunnel
 - Ex: Octopus in the stacks mural at SPL
 - Ex: furniture that ties into the art, like log-shaped cushion chairs
- Curriculum or program focus
- Space for children of all ages
- Surrounding natural environment
 - Whatcom Creek is nearby, well established mature trees, topographical changes, Lee Memorial Park