

National Bonsai & Penjing Museum

3501 New York Avenue, NE, Washington DC

Approval of Comments on Concept Plans

United States Department of Agriculture

Project Summary

Commission Meeting Date: April 1, 2021

NCPC Review Authority: 40 U.S.C. § 8722(b)(1) and (d)

Applicant Request: Approval of Comments on Concept Plans

Session: Open Session

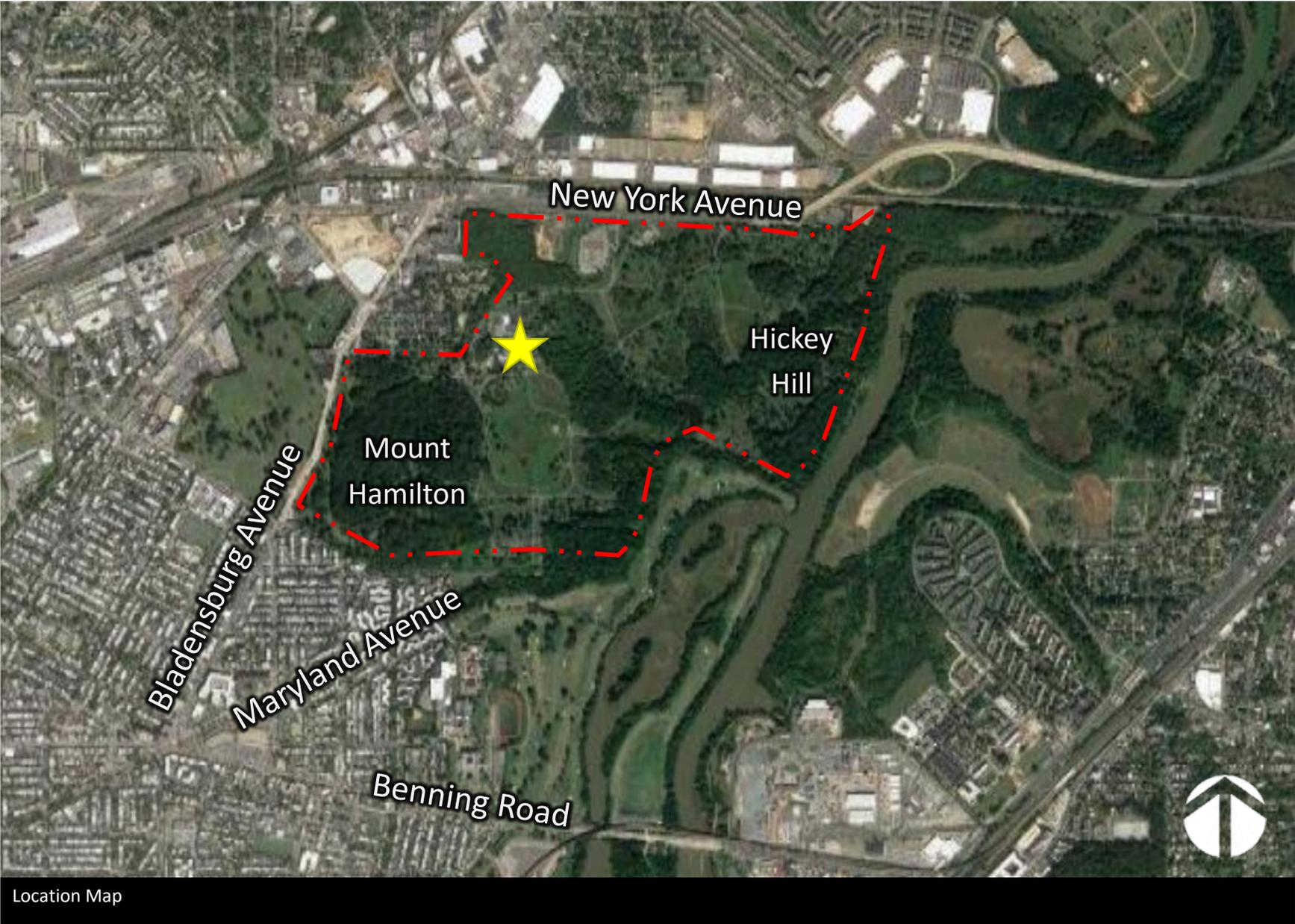
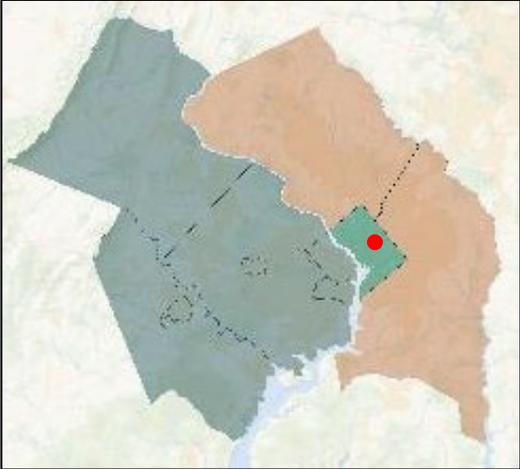
NCPC Review Officer: Stephanie Free

NCPC File Number: 8251

Project Summary:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture - National Arboretum (USDA-NA) has submitted concept plans for a full renovation/rebuild of the Bonsai & Penjing Museum (Museum) at the U.S. National Arboretum (USNA) in Washington, DC. The proposed project is included in the draft Master Plan that is being reviewed concurrently with this application. The project will retain existing exhibition programs and expand gallery space for new collections; provide new classroom, service, and administrative spaces; and consolidate and screen service/operations activities from public view. The renovation is intended to improve the USNA's ability to use the space for events; bring clarity to the daily visitor experience including entrance, circulation and wayfinding; and provide universal accessibility throughout the Museum complex.

Site Location



Location Map

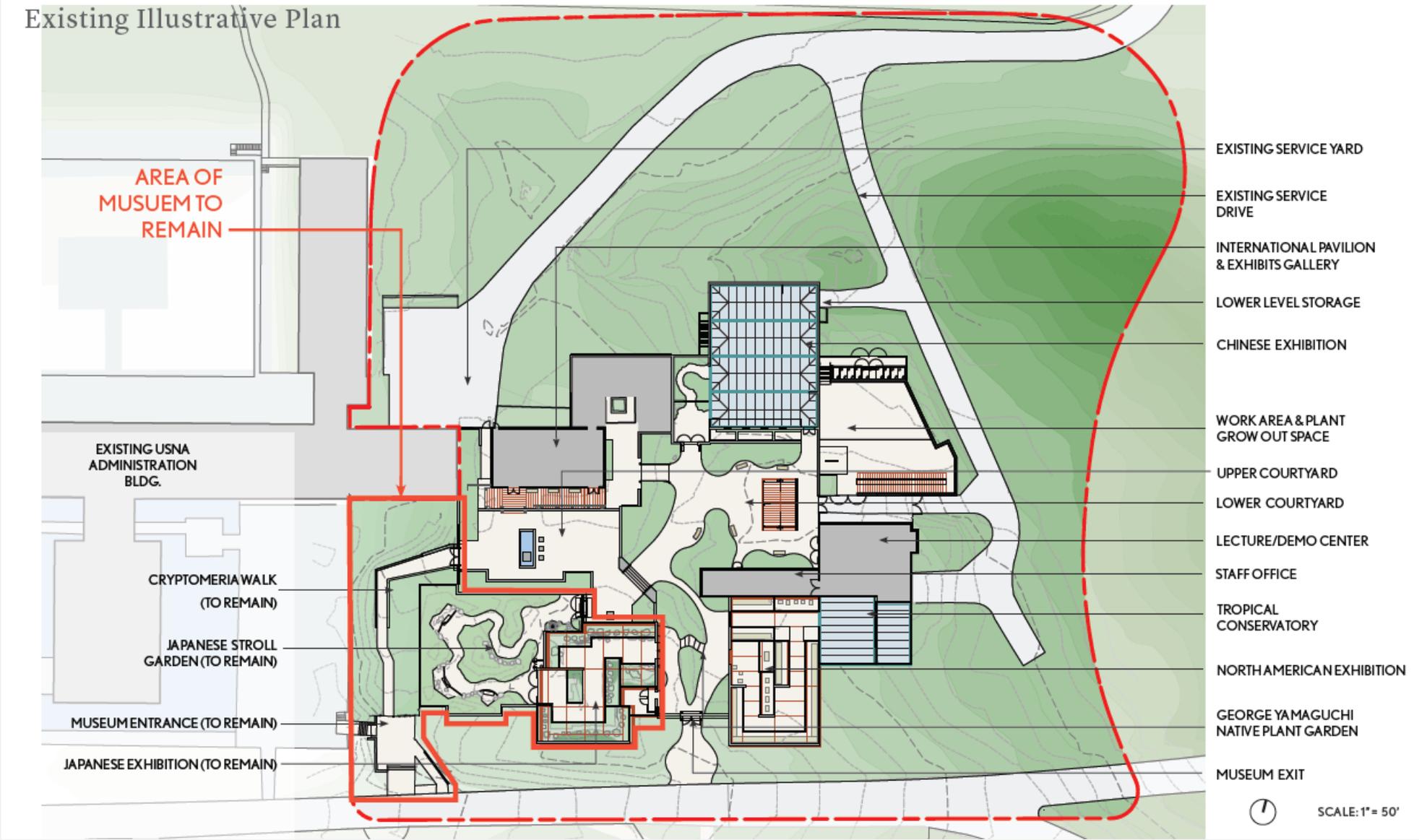
Site Location within Arboretum



Existing Site Aerial



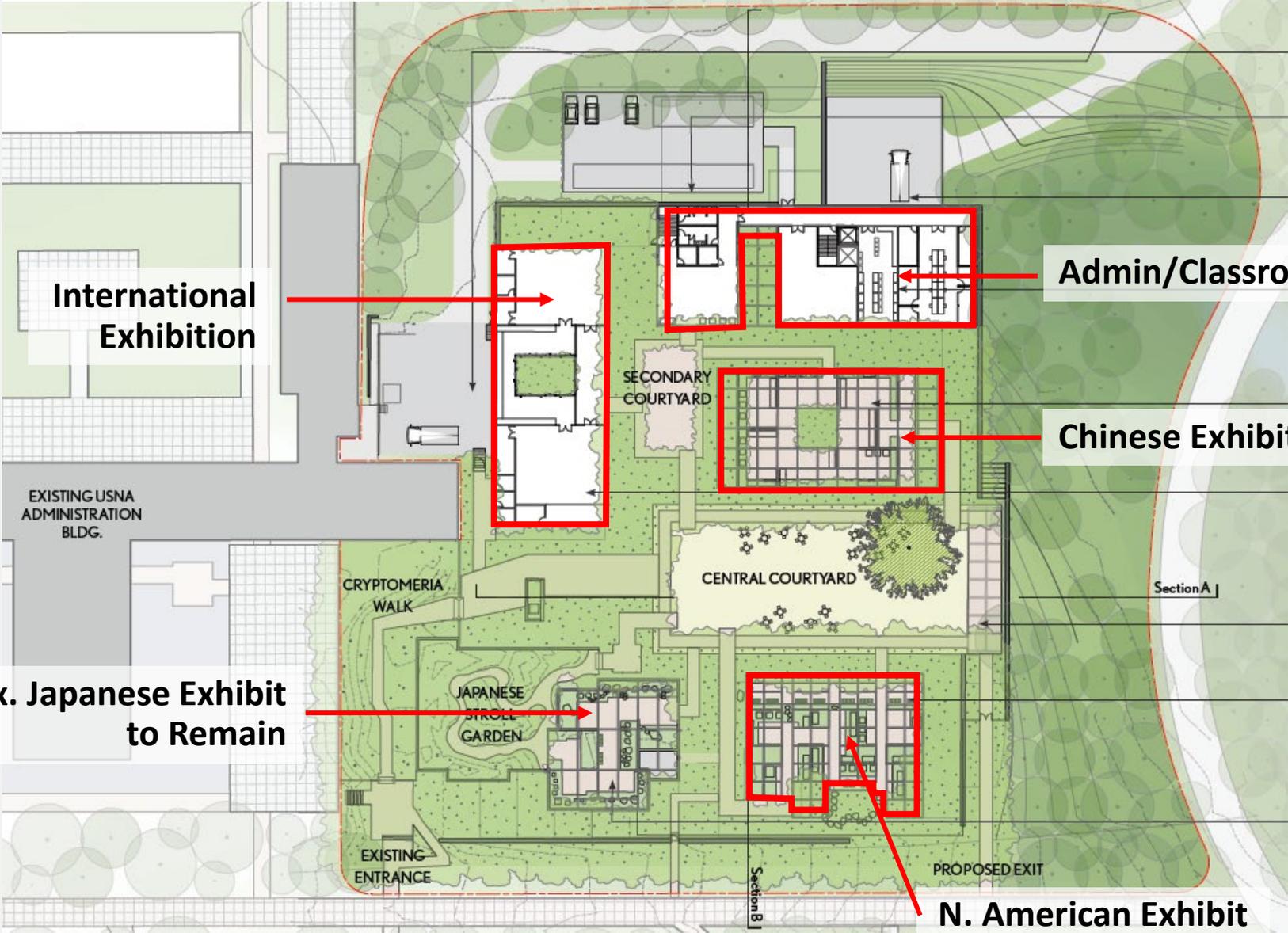
Existing Museum Site Plan



Project Goals

1. Renovate/rebuild the exhibitions to a level of quality expressed in the new Japanese Exhibition
2. Expand exhibits gallery with space for new collections; provide opportunities for interpretation within the collection
3. Bring clarity to the visitor experience including entrance, circulation and wayfinding
4. Improve ability to use the space for events
5. Strengthen the connection between the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum and the Arboretum Core including the future events pavilion
6. Provide universal accessibility throughout the museum complex
7. Consolidate service/operations, improving their functions while providing support space for events

Proposed Museum Site Plan



Museum Program

Existing and Proposed Programs



- LEGEND**
- EXHIBITION
 - GARDEN
 - COURTYARD
 - EVENT PREPARATION
 - ADMINISTRATION
 - CLASSROOM
 - RESTROOM
 - SERVICE
 - WORKSPACE

Principles for Organization

1. Provide clear points of entry into the museum complex from the arboretum core, defined by gardens
2. Develop a central court with flexible use to unify the museum complex
3. Provide identifiable entrances into each exhibition located on the central court
4. Develop a garden at each exhibition entrance that prepares visitors for the bonsai experience within; allow adequate space for small groups to gather
5. Create clear, directional circulation through the bonsai collections; visitors should not wonder if they have missed a portion of the collection
6. Separate and clarify exhibition entries and exits
7. Privilege the bonsai exhibitions and minimize the presence of service/support in the complex; organize service spaces to support the goals of the Master Plan Update

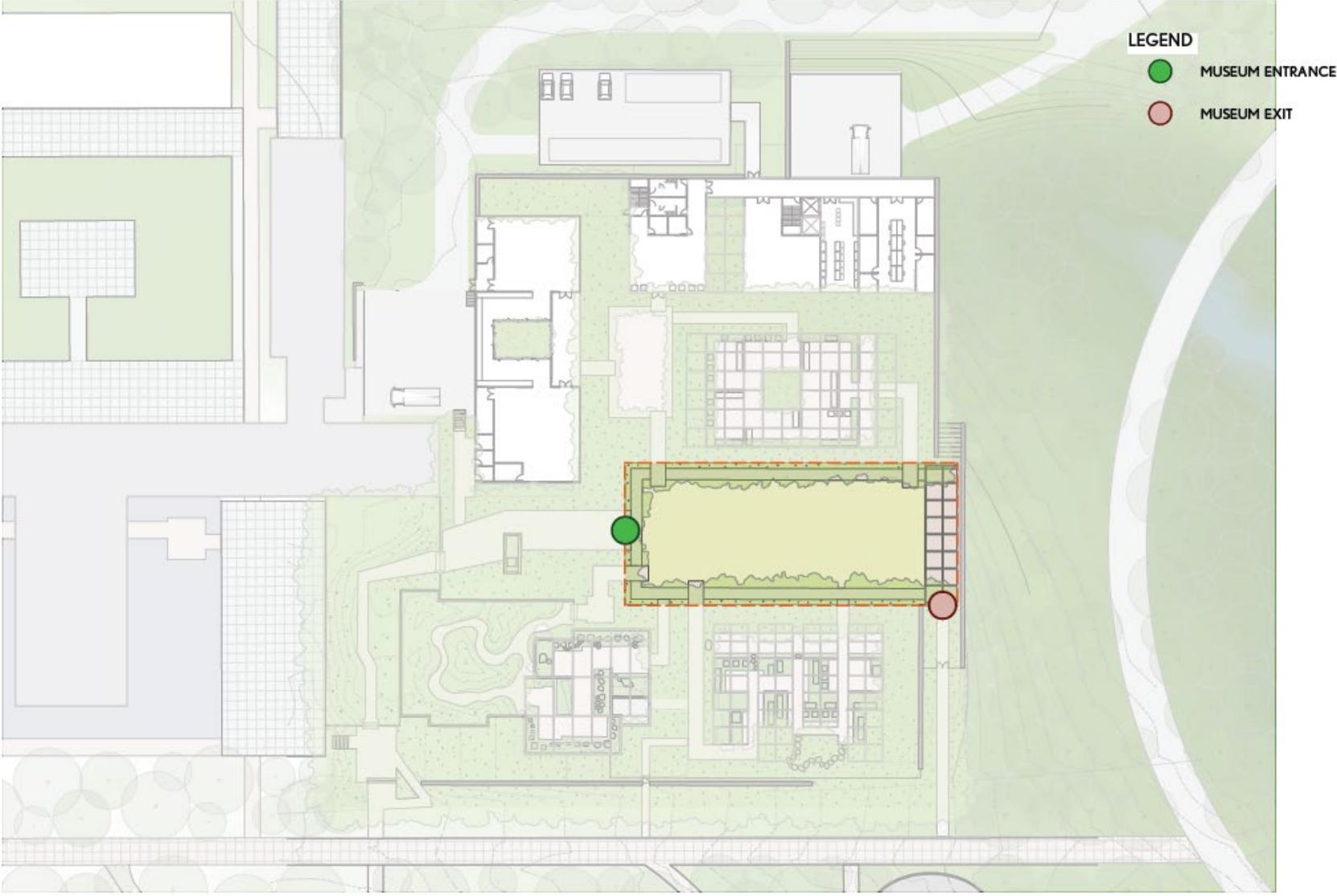
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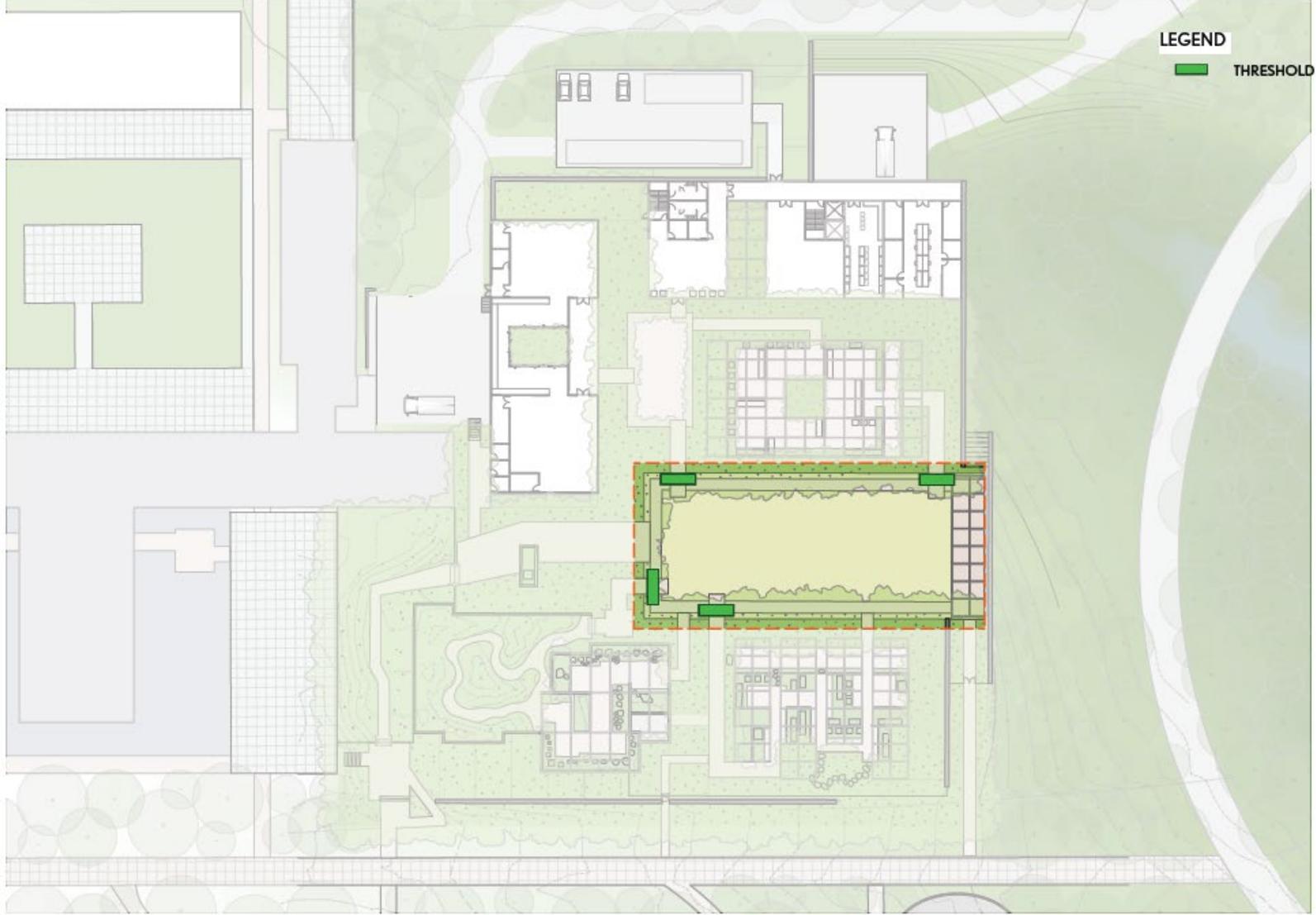
Principles for Organization

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Principles for Organization

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Principles for Organization

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Principles for Organization

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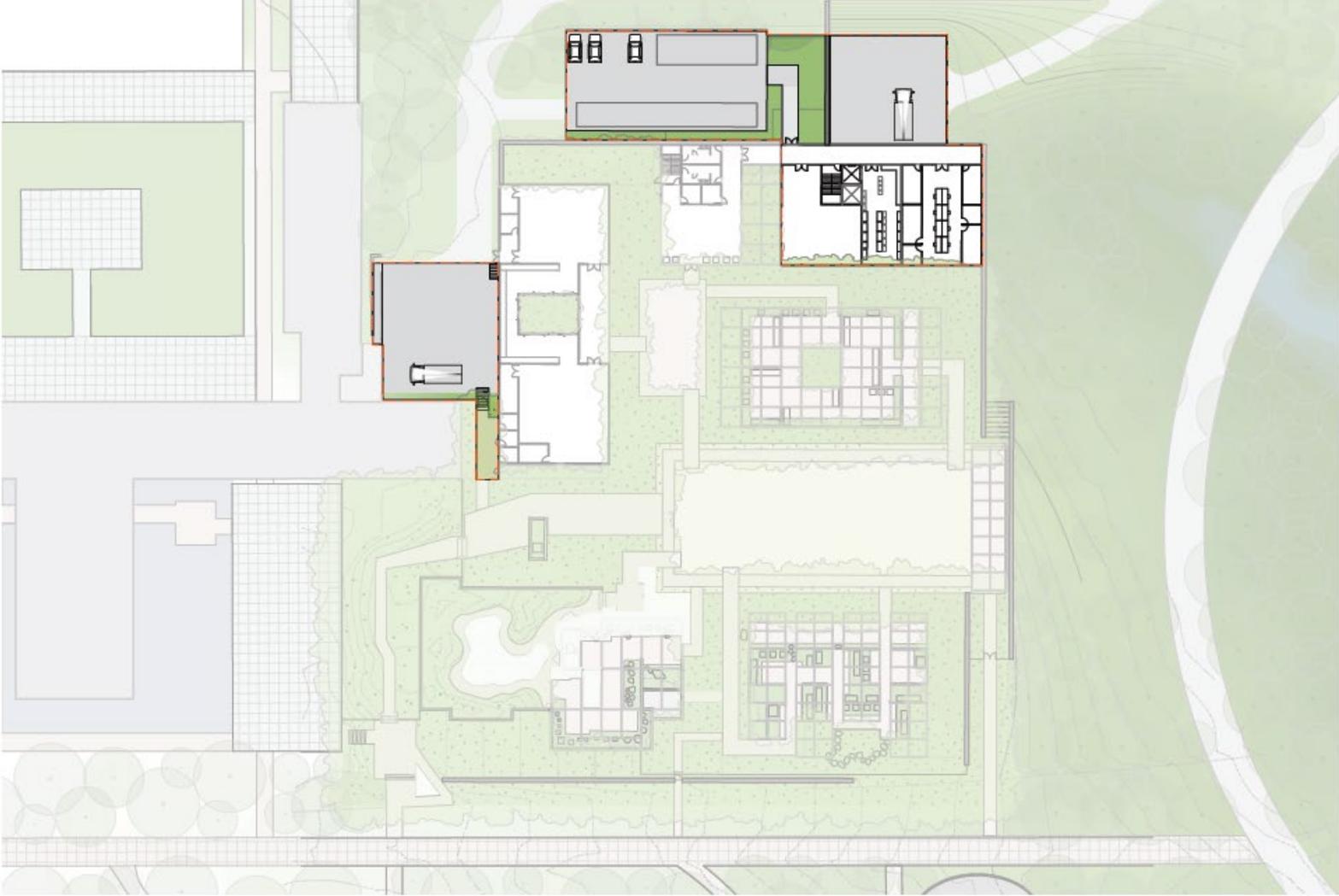
Principles for Organization

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Principles for Organization

7. Privilege the bonsai exhibitions and minimize the presence of service/support in the complex; organize service spaces to support the goals of the Master Plan Update



Museum Site Vegetation

Develop the exhibitions as gardens for shade, the cooling benefits of vegetation, and to create a connection between the larger landscape and the intimate bonsai



Precedent: Pacific Northwest Bonsai Museum



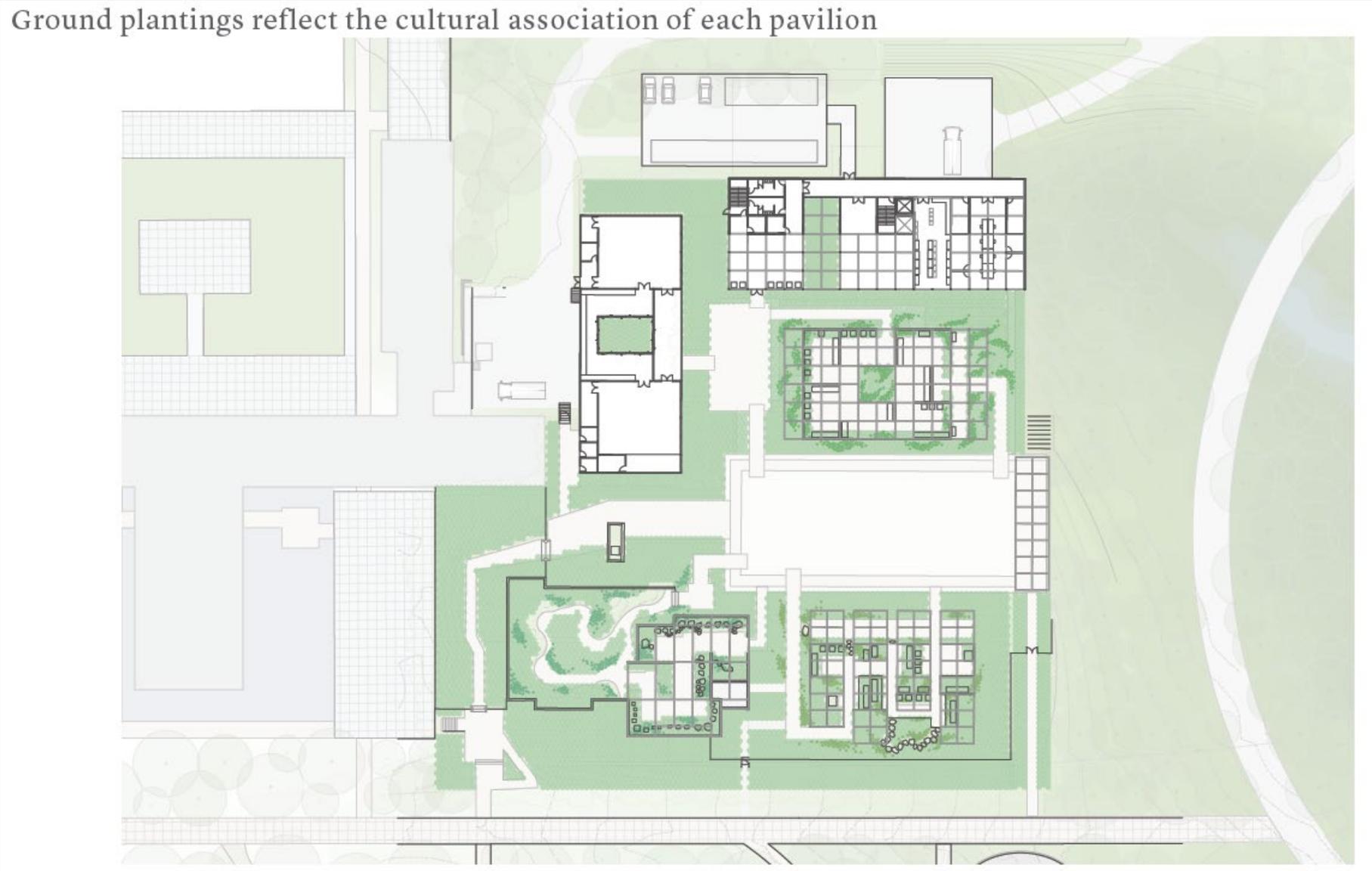
Museum Site Vegetation

A pervasive grove of understory trees unify the gardens/museum perimeter



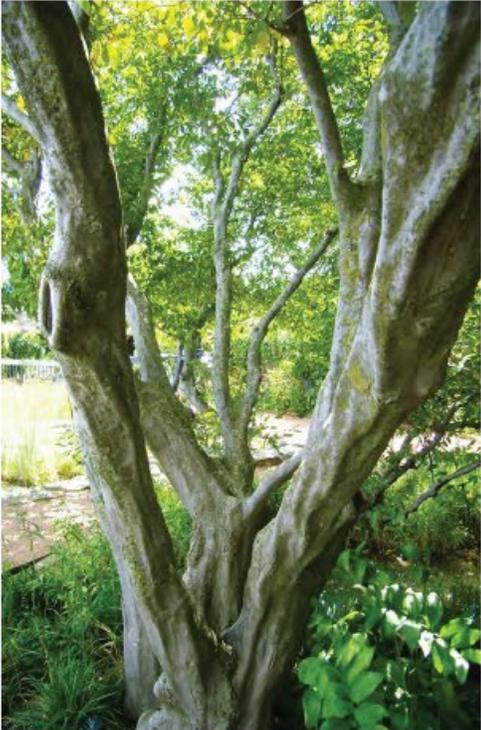
Museum Site Vegetation

Ground plantings reflect the cultural association of each pavilion



Museum Site Vegetation

Understory trees with evergreen groundcovers: potential species selection



CARPINUS CAROLINIANA



MAGNOLIA VIRGINIANA



BETULA POPULIFOLIA



AMELANCHIER SP.



SARCOCOCCA HOOKERIANA



HAKONECHLOA MACRA



CAREX PENNSYLVANICA



JUNIPERUS CHINENSIS

Museum Site Aerial Perspective



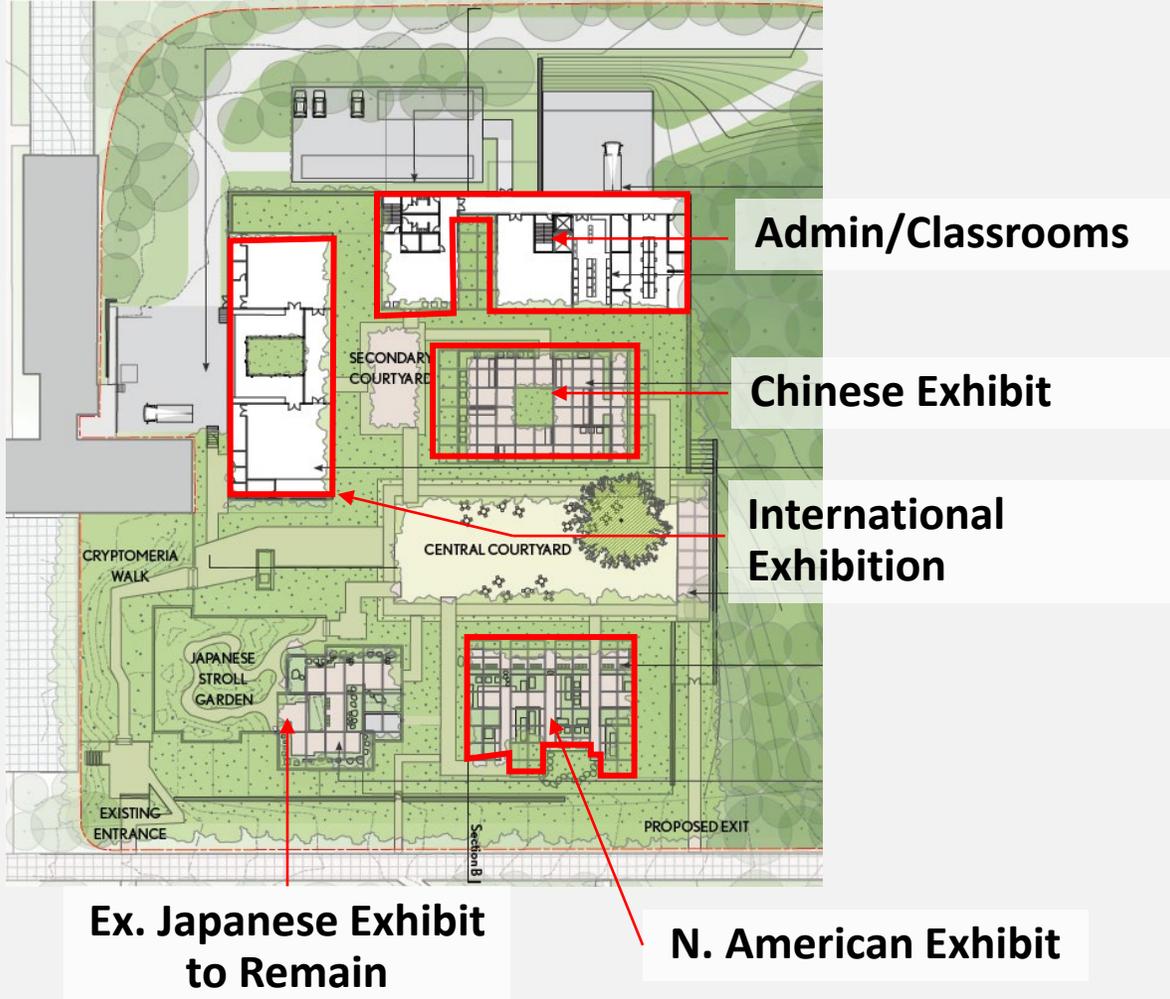
Museum Site Courtyard Perspective



Chinese Exhibition

N. American Exhibition

Proposed Garden Exhibitions

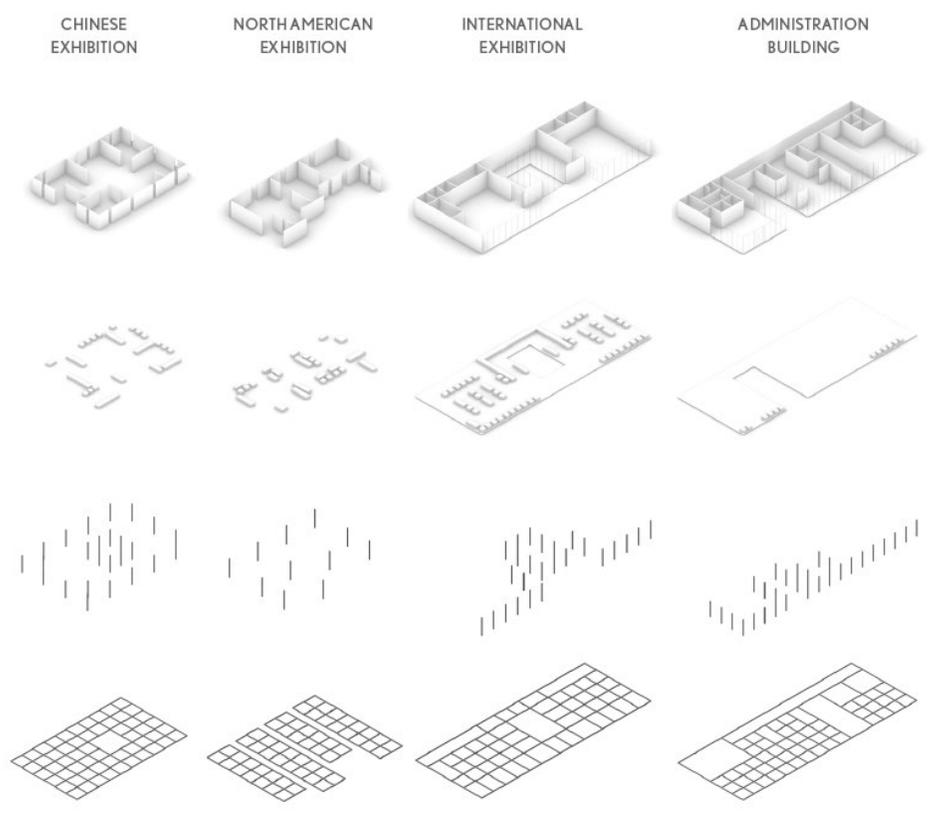


GARDEN EXHIBITIONS: PRINCIPLES

1. Each exhibition shall reflect the cultural expression of the bonsai or penjing within it, whether subtle or distinct
2. Promote the exhibitions as gardens rather than buildings
3. Create clear circulation through the exhibition for ease of wayfinding
4. Configure spaces to bring elements of surprise, revelation, and discovery to the visitor experience; allow for moments of pause and reflection within the exhibitions
5. Provide apertures in the exhibition enclosure for borrowed views and air flow
6. Incorporate vegetation into the exhibitions for cooling benefits
7. Allow for many solar orientations and micro-climates of the bonsai tree display areas to promote flexibility of use and tree rotation
8. Allow for ease of access and maintenance for museum staff
9. Provide physical barriers or visual cues to keep visitors at appropriate distance from the trees
10. Utilize durable materials that will age or patina over time, reflecting the longevity of the bonsai or penjing tradition
11. Forego winterization of exhibitions; develop overhead structural system for shade and lighting

Proposed Garden Exhibition System Components + Organization

Precedent & Inspiration



Proposed Garden Expositions - Materiality

Materiality

Backdrop Walls
Concrete



Interior Floors
Exposed Concrete



Floating Displays
Wood Block/
Concrete/Stone



Interior Ceilings
Plaster/Fabric



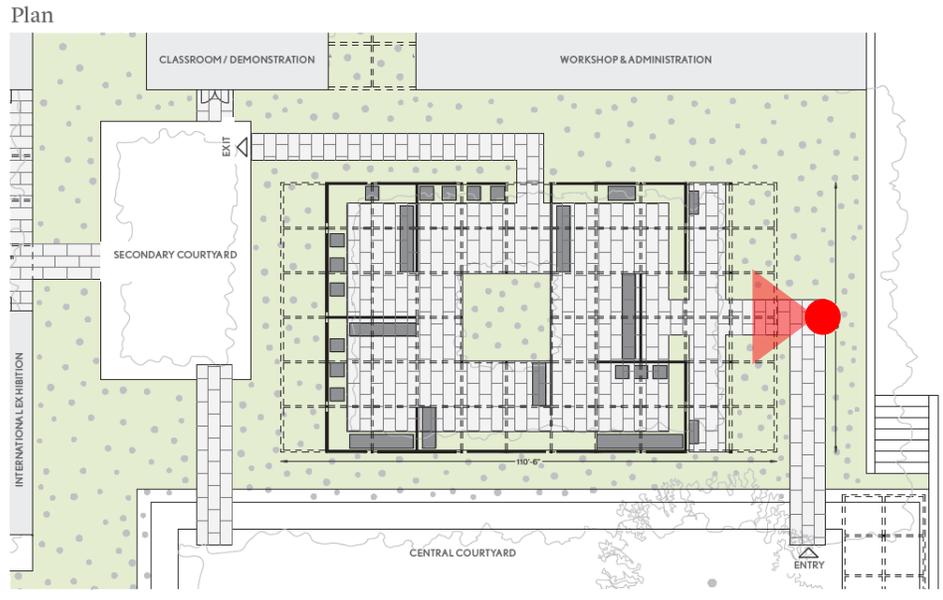
Columns/Veranda
Overhead Structure
Shou Sugi Ban or
Treated Wood



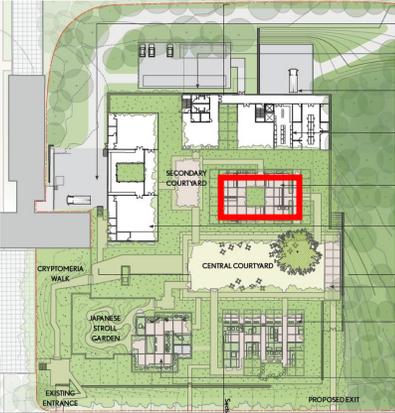
Glazing/Skylights
IGU with Dark Frame



Proposed Chinese Exhibition

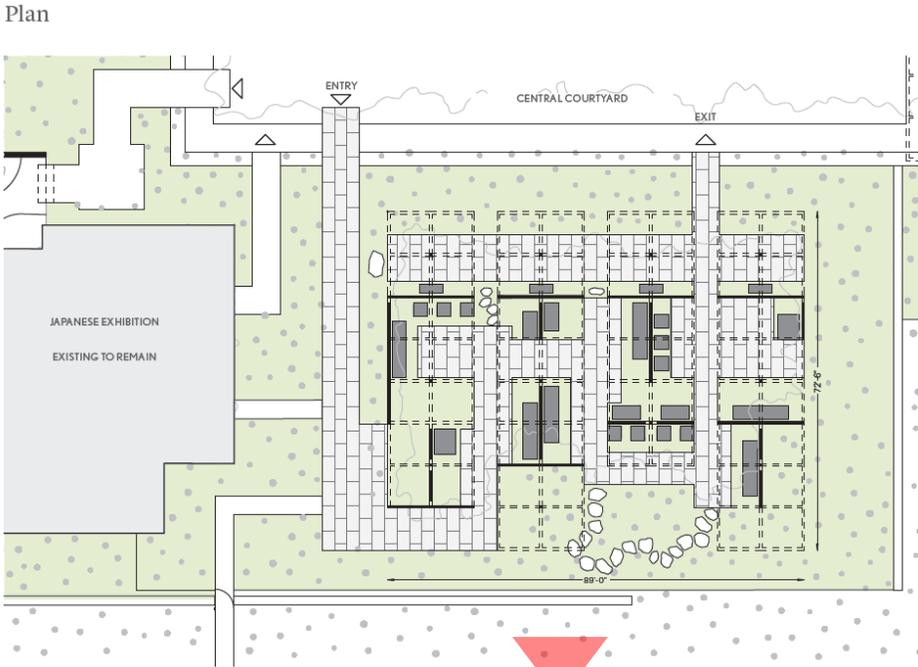


Exterior View of Entry Looking West

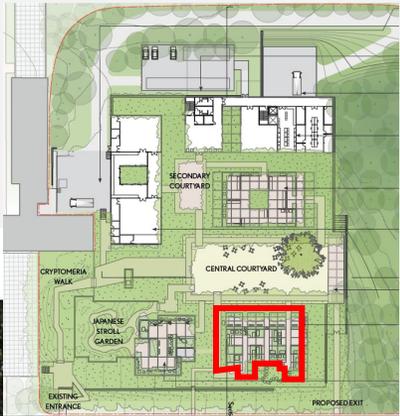


Plan Key

Proposed North American Exhibition

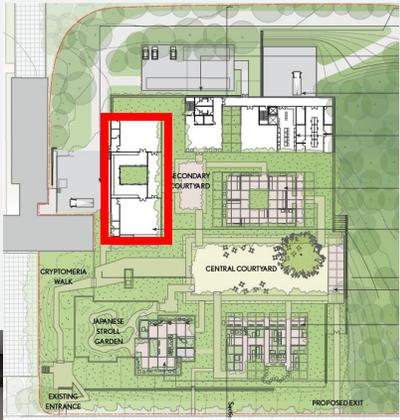


Exterior View of South Elevation



Plan Key

Proposed International Exhibition & Stone Gallery (Conditioned Structure)

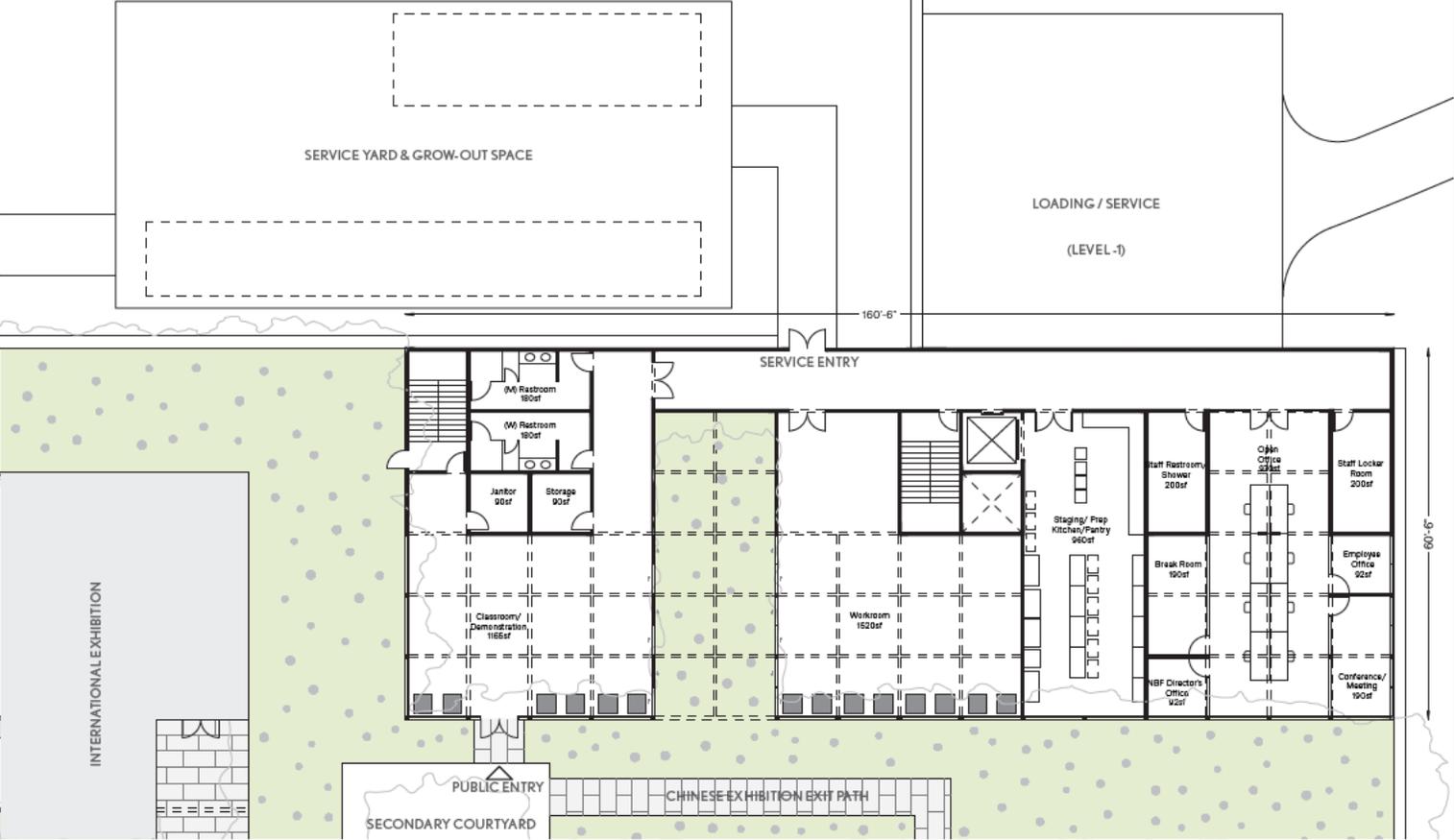


Plan Key

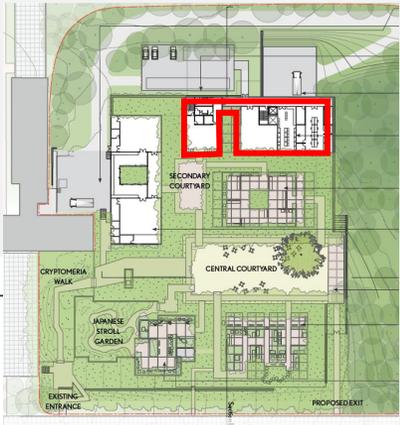


Proposed Administration, Classroom & Service Building (Conditioned Structure)

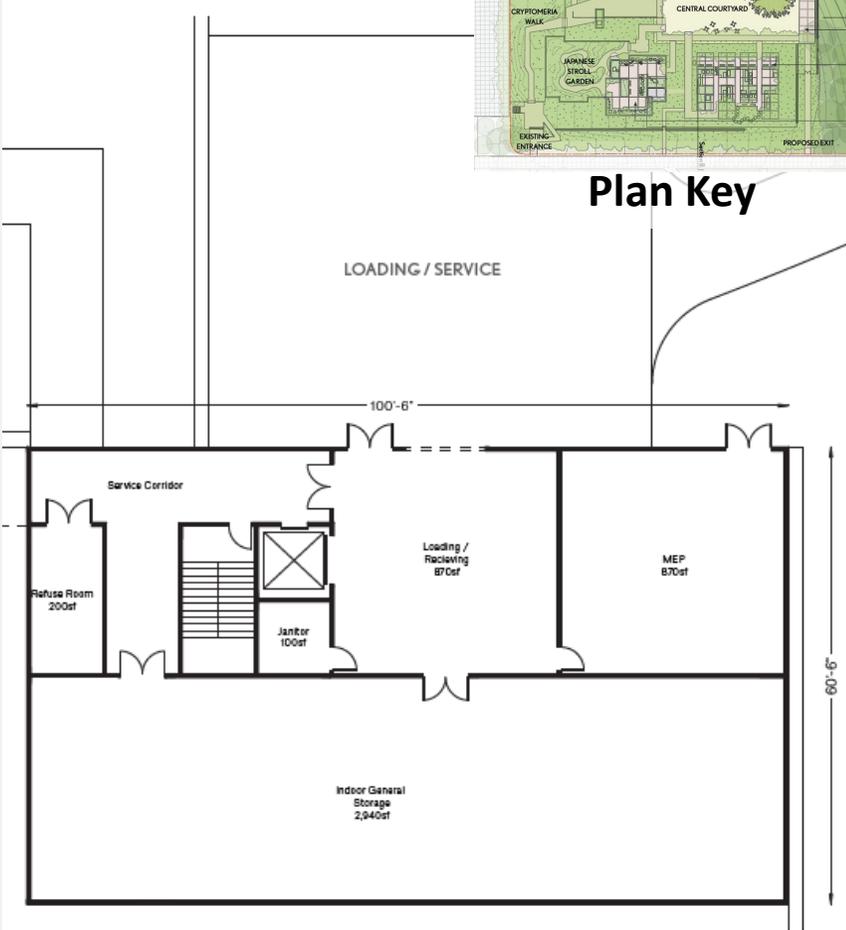
Plan : Level 1



First Floor Plan (at-grade w/gardens)



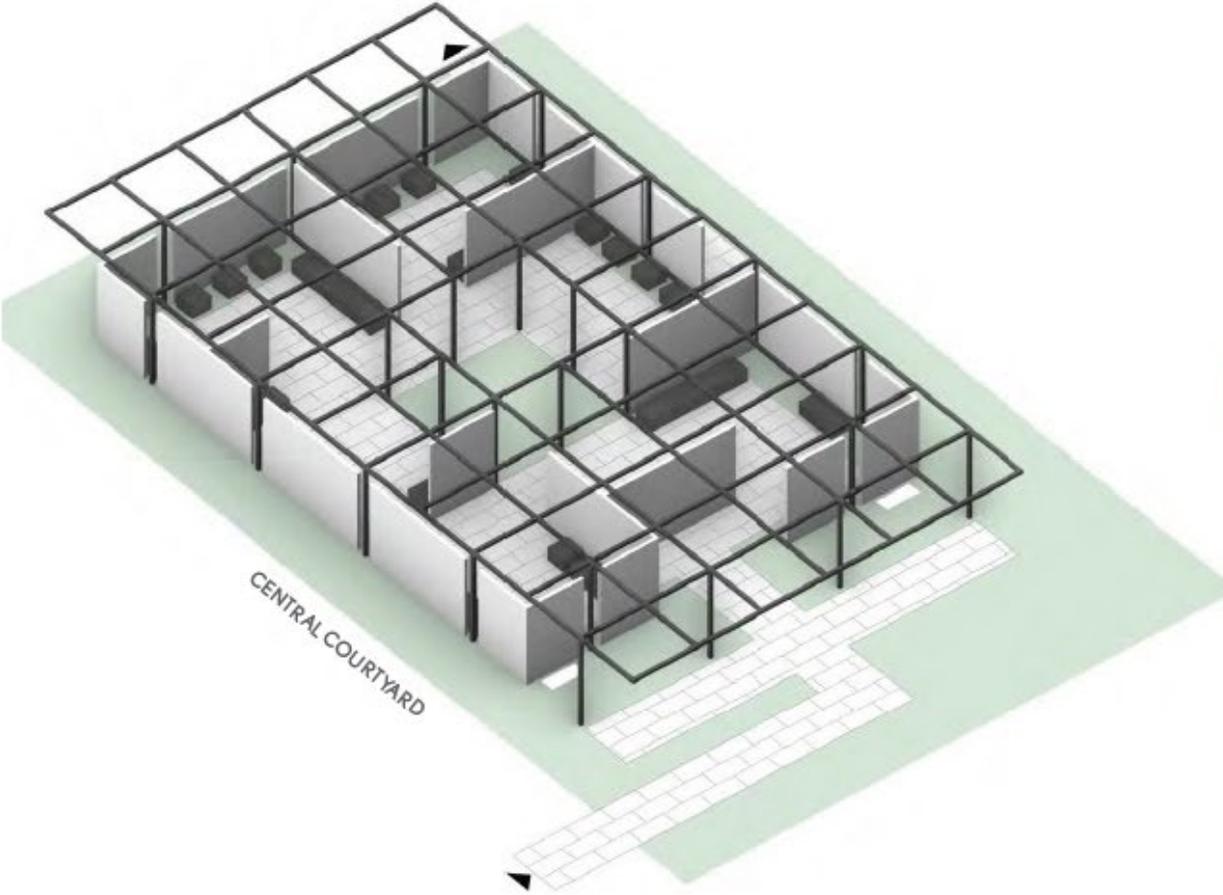
Plan Key



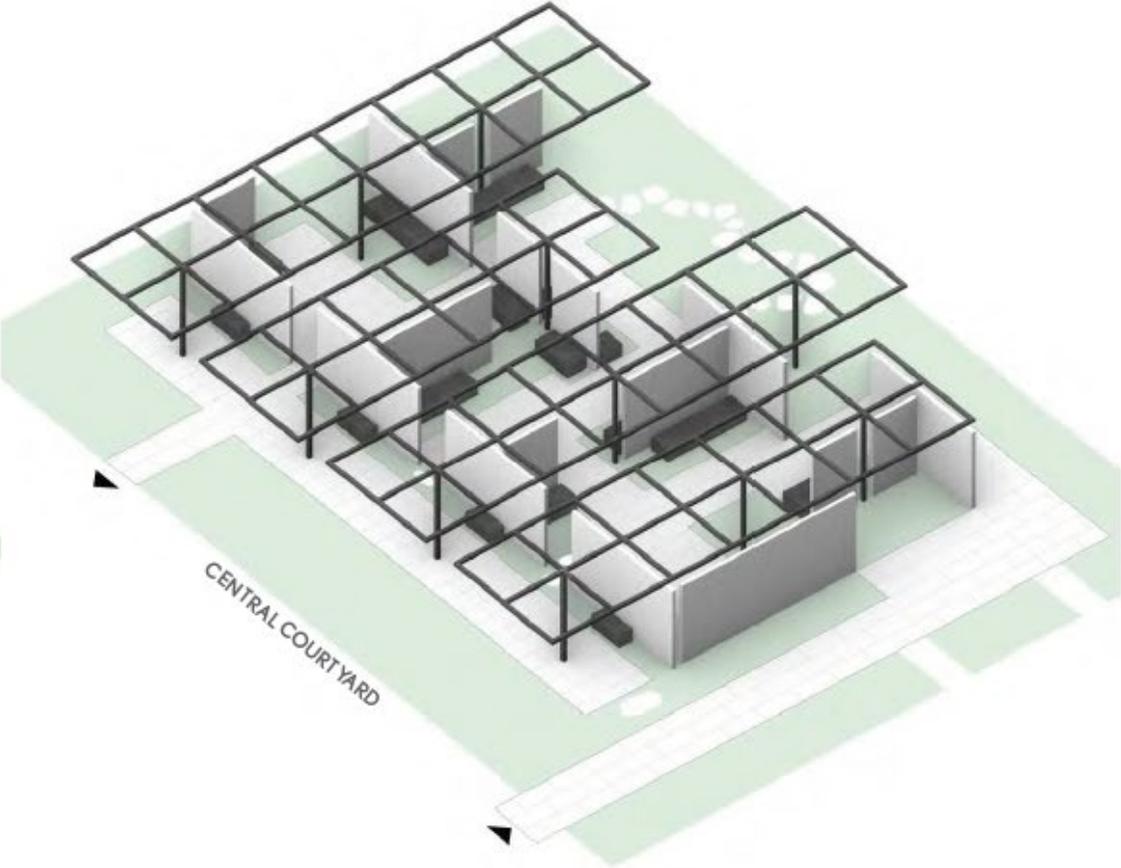
Basement Floor Plan (walkout to rear)

Chinese and N. American Exhibitions Axonometric

CHINESE EXHIBITION

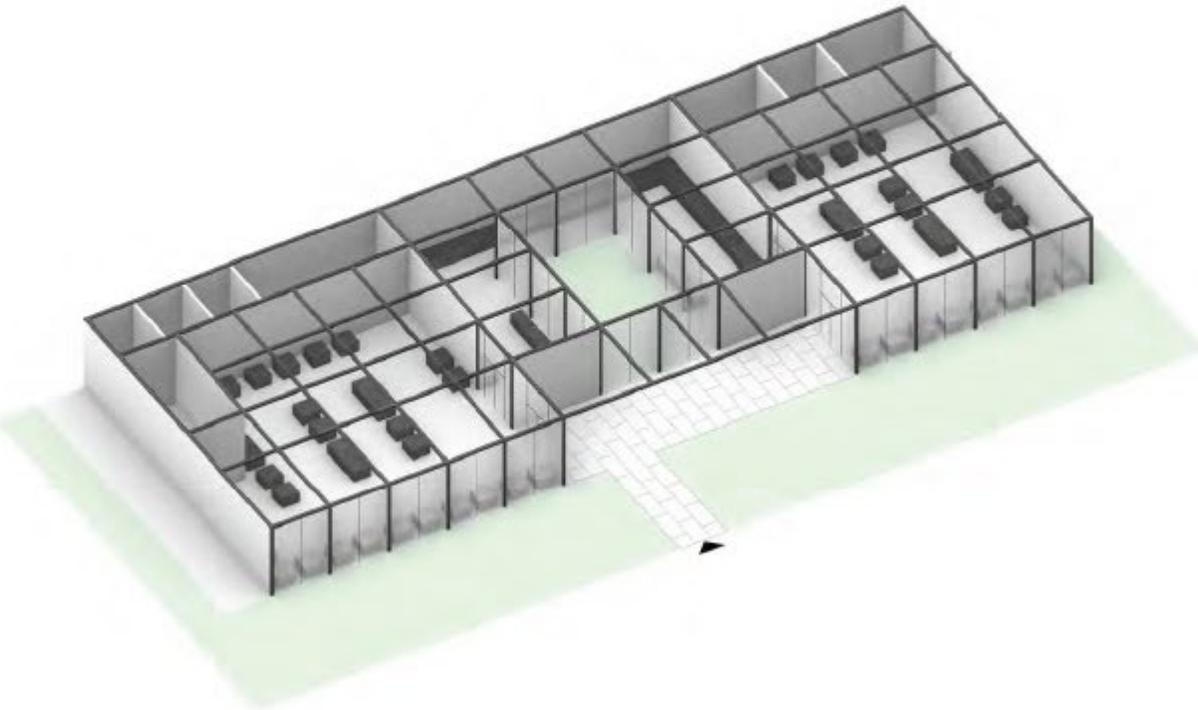


NORTH AMERICAN EXHIBITION

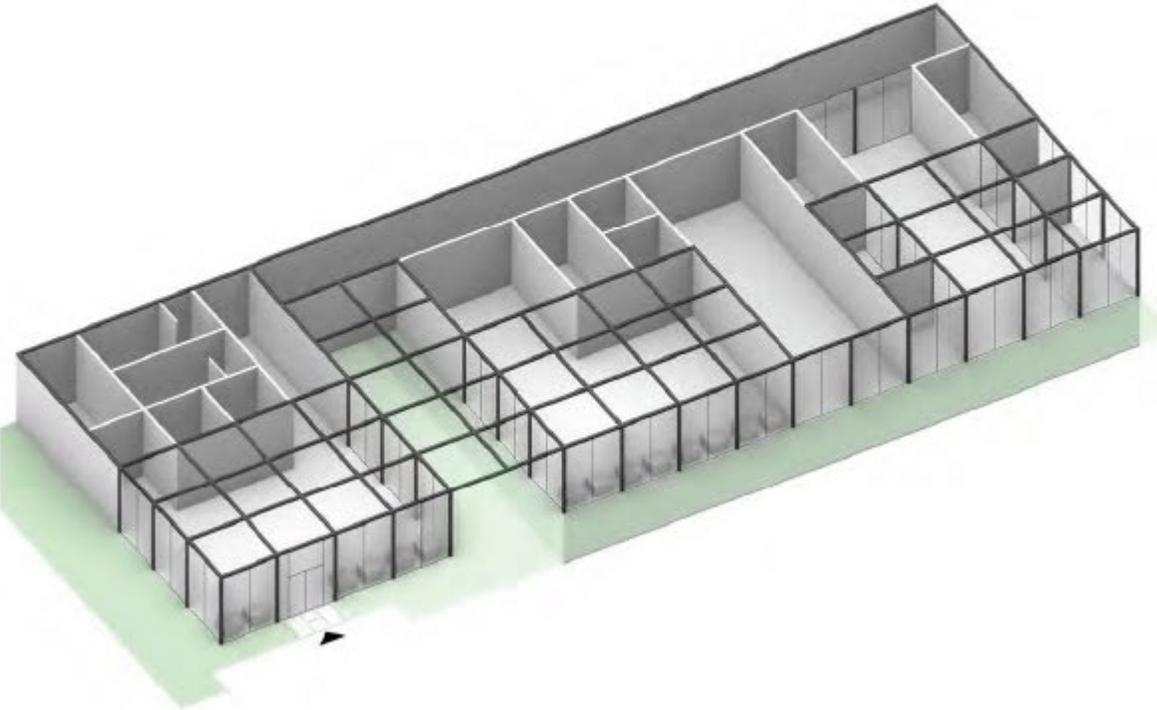


International Exhibition & Stone Gallery & Administration, Classroom, & Service Building Axonometric

INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION & STONE GALLERY



ADMINISTRATION, CLASSROOM & SERVICE BUILDING



Museum Complex – Physical Model

