

# THE GIVEN

## AKRON HYGIENE CENTER

### PROBLEM

Throughout the United States and the world there are millions of homeless people or people who don't have houses. Homelessness can mean a lot of things; people who don't have a home but live with friends or family, someone who travels so much for work they don't have a permanent home, people who live in mobile homes, etc. But the most commonly known version of homelessness is when people are living out of their cars, on the street, or in a homeless shelter. There are many resources and services for people to use but they don't all give them everything they need. The purpose of this project is to produce a space for houseless people to keep maintain healthy hygienic routines by providing people with restrooms, showers, and laundry facilities in which they can use 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

### CONCEPT

All across the United States people who are houseless live unnoticed by the majority of people on a daily basis. This notion has made people who are experiencing homelessness feel as though their lives are less valuable or that something has been taken from them due to a variety of causes. All humans, regardless of their economic or social standing, have the given right to be seen, known, and noticed. It is a basic need that people should have a sense of dignity through involvement in a community and obtaining security. In the Given, people experiencing homelessness are given the opportunity to be visible to one another and their communities by being provided with the resources to achieve these basic needs. Their right to have community, safety, and identity will be visible to every individual who enters the space with the addition of people will see an opportunity to give back to the center that gives so much to the users of the services offered.

### RESEARCH



Inspiration was drawn from research of a documentary called *Inside Akron's Tent City* produced by Pressure Life, a magazine based primarily in the greater Cleveland area. In the seven episode film, viewers are informed about this specific city of homeless people located in Downtown Akron located in the back of a private property of a resource center for the homeless owned by an active member of Akron's community, Sage Lewis. Lewis opened the center as a way to provide general support for his friends that struggle with houselessness. People came to Lewis's establishment to bathe, wash their clothes, get some food, and enjoy the company of others. One day in the backyard of his property Lewis noticed people setting up tents, he was pleased that they felt comfortable staying there. Soon enough Lewis's yard was the home of 45 residents who had pitched their tents and began to make a community for themselves. As a response to this, all Lewis asked of them was to follow a few simple rules; to make it a drug and alcohol free environment and that they would be respectful of themselves and the people surrounding them.



It was clear, after watching the videos that the residents of Tent City went through was deeply saddening and troubling. They had worked hard not only to survive, but they had built friendships that were similar to a family, they contributed to the resource center, and were making their way to reestablishing their own lives. With this in mind, it inspired the intent of the making and designing of this facility. It was noticed that the public refuses to see houseless people, they are ignored and disrespected, and many people who are houseless have a hard time seeing the hope that they can have as a result of the hardships that they have been through. It was through this research and realization that the concept of 'visible' was discovered.

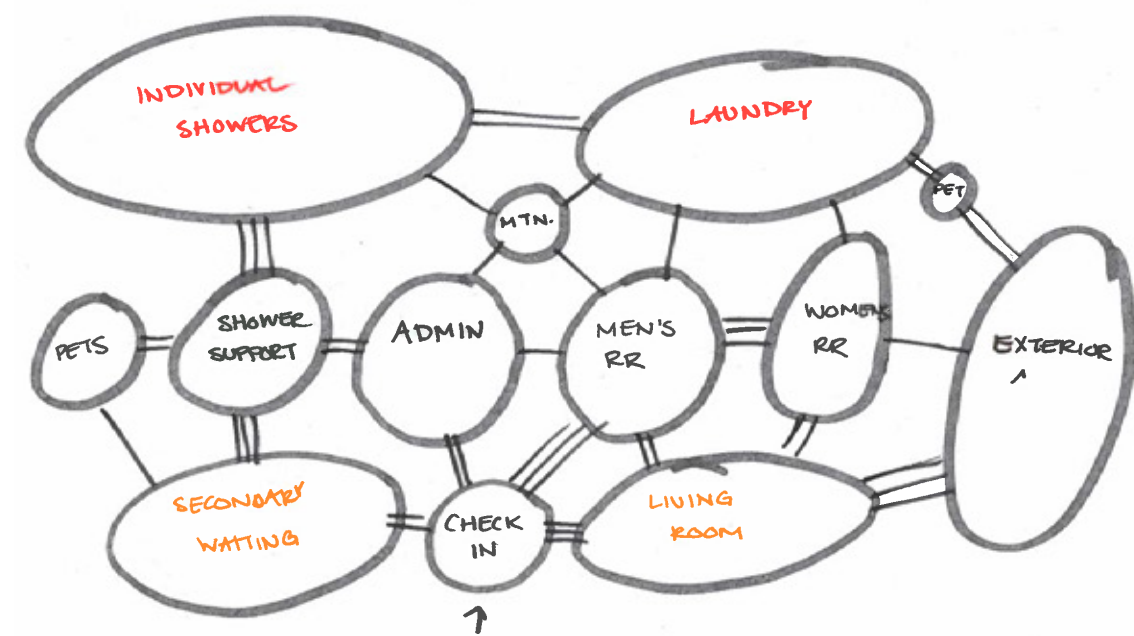


Naughton, Kevin, et al. *Inside Akron's Tent City*. PressureLife, 2014, pressurelife.com/inside-akrons-tent-city/.

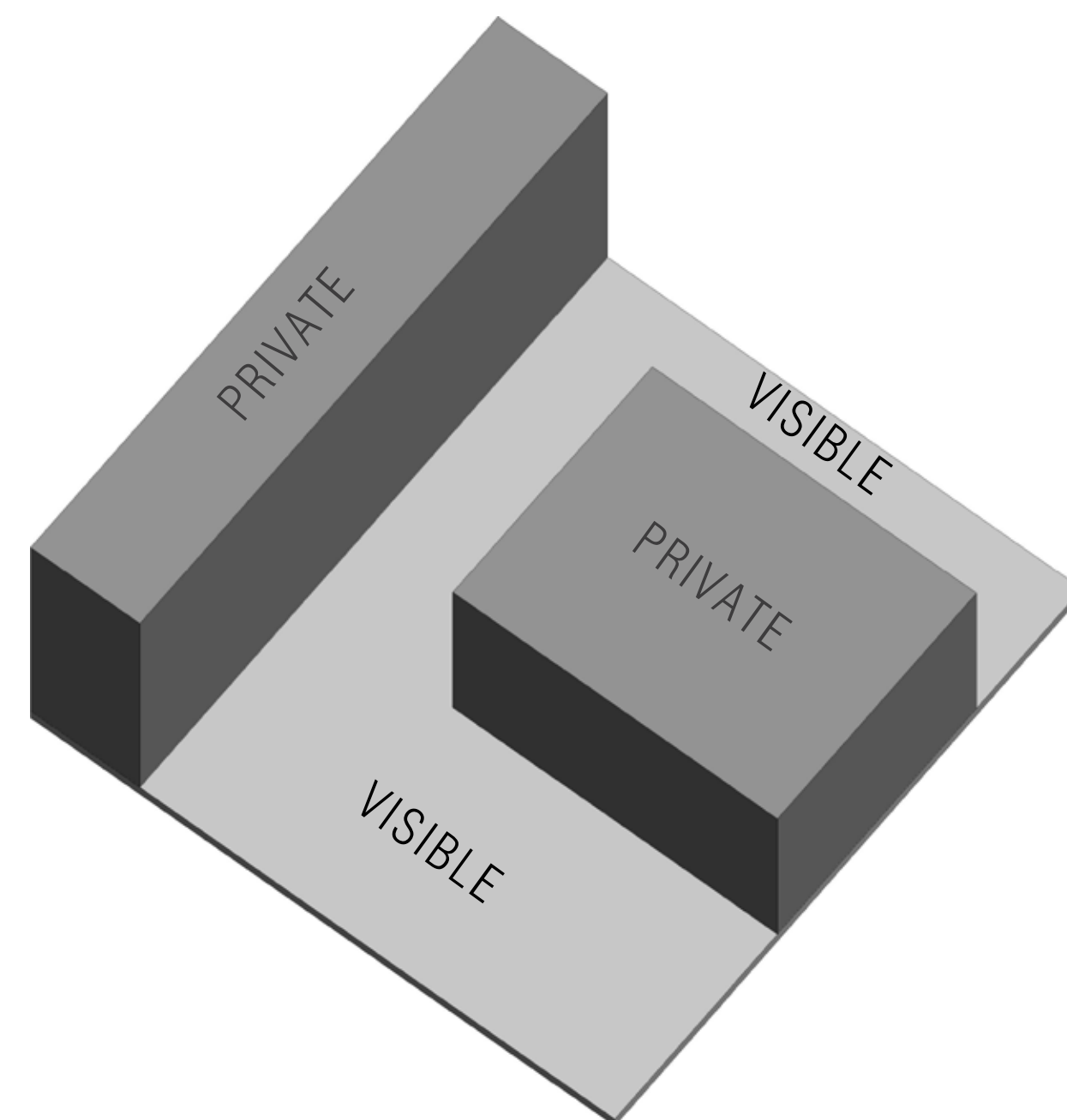
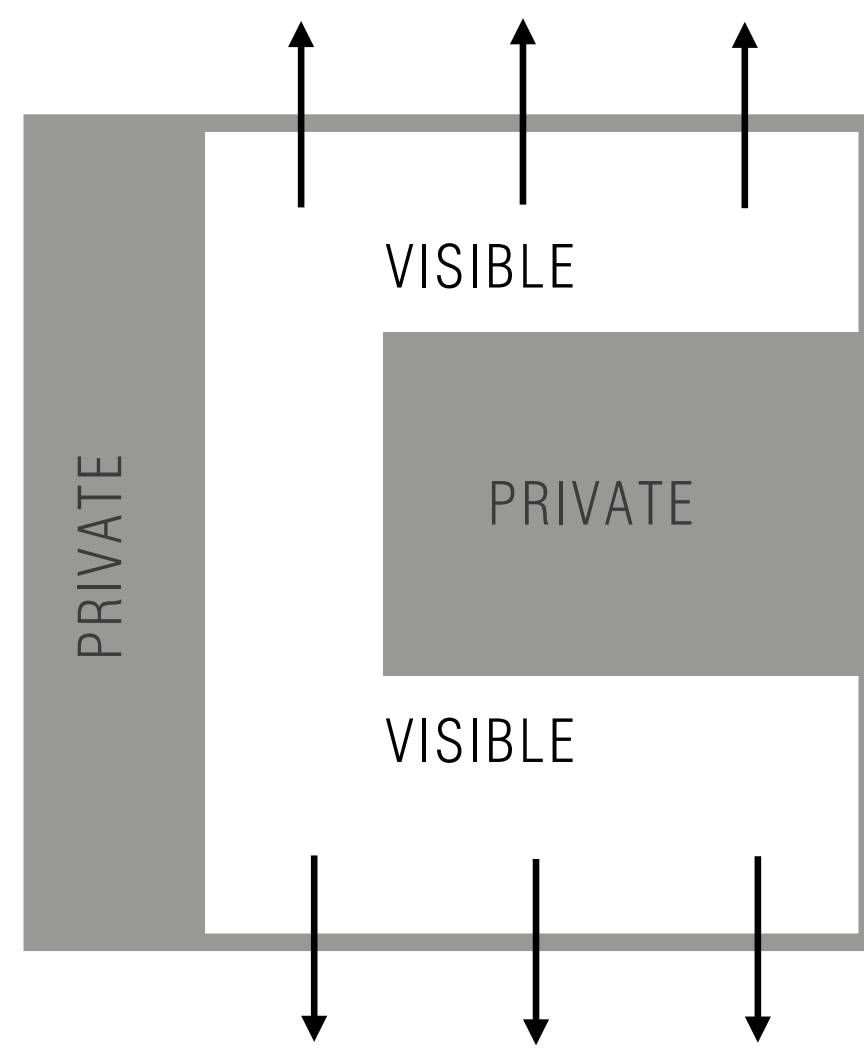
Smith, Mitch. "Why a Private Landowner Is Fighting to Keep the Homeless on His Property." *The New York Times*.

Times, The New York Times, 16 Oct. 2018. www.nytimes.com/2018/10/16/us/akron-homeless-tent-city.html.

### PROCESS



After determining the concept, space adjacencies needed to be determined for what is important to be close in proximity as well as the level of importance. Along side of that it was crucial to determine how users could be visible while respecting the luxury and necessity of privacy. The parti and massing to the right show that within the space it was a goal to make users visible to each other to create community as well as visible to the outside to be revealed to nature and society. Within the private zones users will be able to find solitude by having time to themselves to be rejuvenated by the services of the center.



### AKRON, OHIO

Between researching the need for a hygiene center in communities nearby and conducting research on services for houseless people, it was clear that Akron was in need of a resource like this one. Akron has resources for houseless people to utilize but none that was apparent that was focused on hygiene and community development. There were several that provided food, clothing, beds, or guidance, but none that had the service of this project.

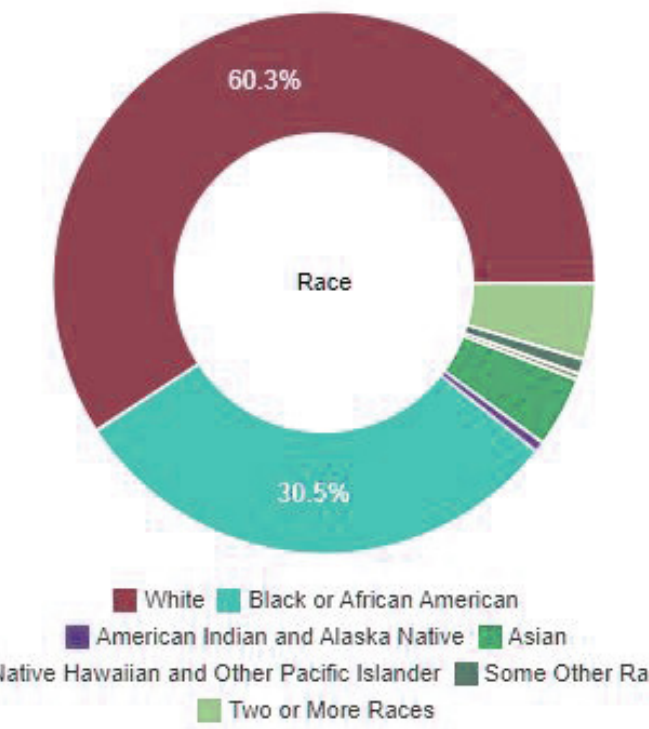
Choosing a site was crucial, to ensure that it the facility was in a place that had a need for the services it would provide and that there were other establishments around the site that users could utilize and take advantage of. When visiting the site, there were signs of people being houseless, plenty of places for people to get food and supplies, medical assistance, and potentially jobs. Within fifteen minutes, walking people can access all of these resources. One in particular that they can utilize was the Well CDC, a multipurpose non-profit community development center that has a main focus in affordable housing in restoring homes in Middlebury and greater Akron and providing homes to people who don't have one. Additionally the Well has a coffee shop, a kitchen for people to rent and use, and an event space, that all of the proceeds go to home restoration.

### DEMOGRAPHICS

AVERAGE INCOME:  
Overall: \$30,113  
Male: \$34,097  
Female: \$26,294

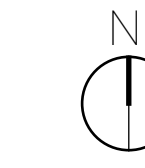
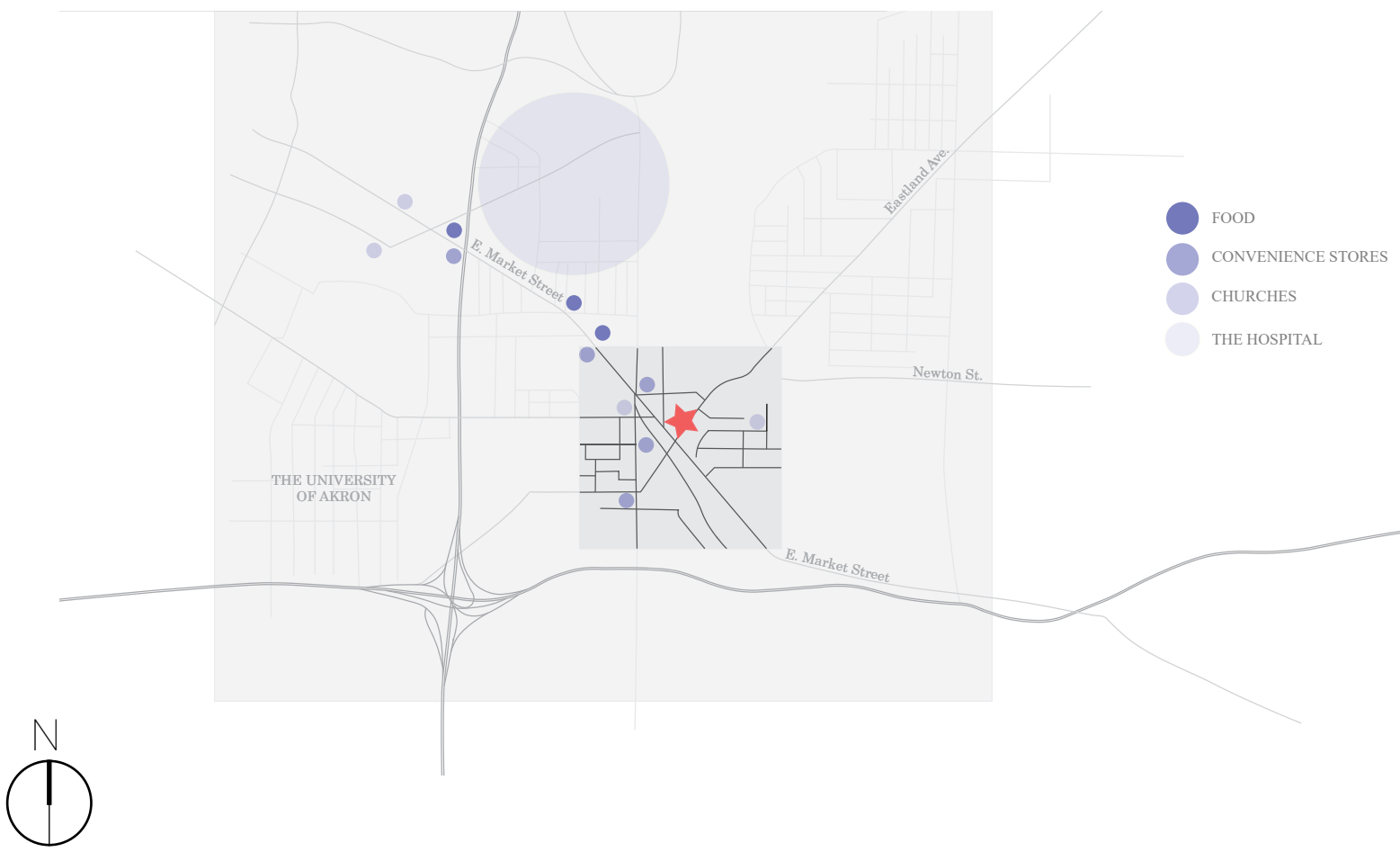
POVERTY RATE:  
Overall: 24.05%  
Male: 21.99%  
Female: 25.94%

POVERTY BY EMPLOYMENT AND SEX  
Female Unemployed: 55.65%  
Male Unemployed: 42.02%  
Female Employed: 14.66%  
Male Employed: 8.69%



"Akron, Ohio Population 2019." Akron, Ohio Population 2019 (Demographics, Maps, Graphs), 2019, worldpopulationreview.com/us-cities/akron-population/.

### SITE ANALYSIS



LOCATION: The corner of East Market Street and N. Case Avenue in Middlebury Akron, Ohio

SITE DESCRIPTION:  
Bordered with hill of trees  
Along an old railroad  
No neighbors directly connected  
Closest neighbors are:  
Mike's Towing  
Skios Trucking  
Machine Company  
Bus stops directly outside  
Within walking distance of many resources

NEARBY:  
Circle K  
Family Dollar  
Dominos  
Ralley's  
Wendy's  
McDonald's  
Burger King  
Series of community churches  
The Well CDC  
CVS  
Community Health Center  
International Community Health Center  
Summa Health System  
Summa Rehab

### LIVING ROOM



The goal of the Living Room was for users to come in to immediately feel a sense of community through the various seating arrangements and opportunity to interact with others or be by themselves. As they arrive, users will approach the welcome desk where they will put their name in to use the showers and/ or laundry and their name will be added to a cue that is displayed. Once they have signed in users can have the freedom to use the space as they please with areas for them to be entertained by books, television, games, with the ability to charge their device or devices from outlets all around the space.



FLOOR PLAN

EXTERIOR ELEMENT



The outdoor area has a variety of seating, tables, and spaces to be. This element however serves as a place for children to play, or for people to socialize. Beyond this element, in the outdoor area, it can be accessed by going through the space or from the outside from a side way that wraps the building.

SHOWER STALLS



Within the showers there is plenty of room for users to bring any belongings that they may not feel comfortable leaving in the shower support or waiting areas as well as shelving units which cross partially over into the shower itself for wet items and dry items.



SALON



To make users feel more dignified, a small salon was added to the program where hopefully, stylists from the neighboring hair salon would be volunteer at the center and give free haircuts to some of the users on specific days. This space is also flexible for any other events at the center where more space is required.

SHOWER ROOM



Before walking into the shower room, users will stop at shower support where they will be given any necessities required for showering as well as a place to drop off and bathe their pets, if they desire to. Within the showers there is plenty of room for users to bring any belongings that they may not feel comfortable leaving in the shower support or waiting areas as well as shelving units which cross partially over into the shower itself for wet items and dry items.

- 1. CHECK IN
- 2. LIVING ROOM
- 3. SALON MANICURE
- 4. ADMINISTRATION
- 5. RESTROOMS
- 6. PET WASH AREA
- 7. SHOWER SUPPORT
- 8. SHOWERS
- 9. SECONDARY WAITING
- 10. LAUNDRY
- 11. PATIO
- 12. PET AREA

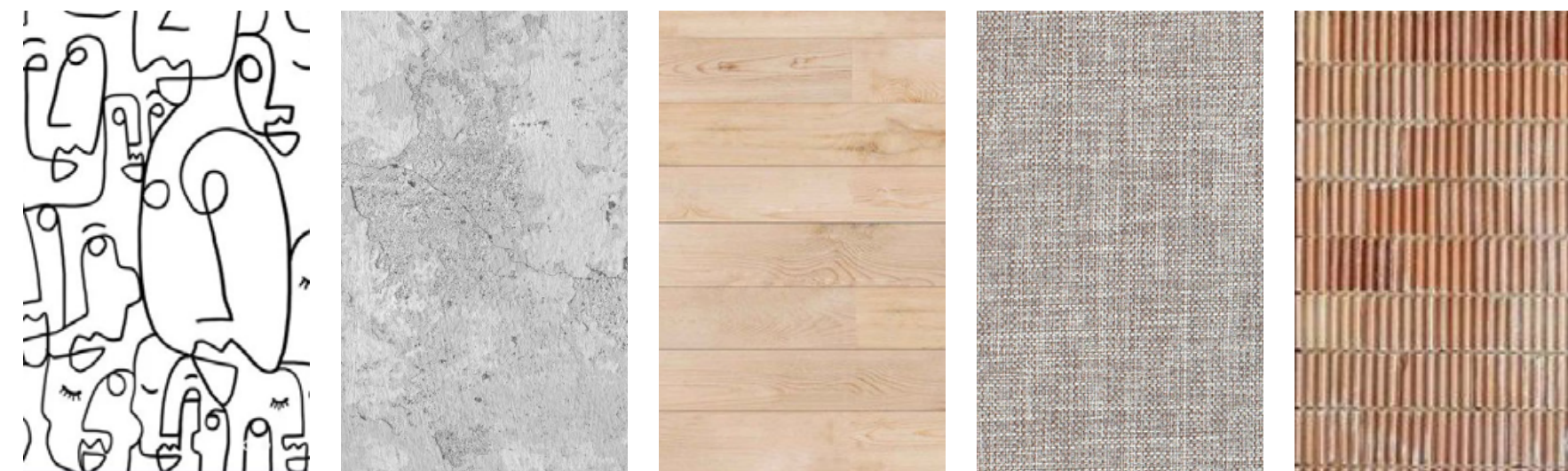
The plan was driven by the sense of visibility, security, and privacy. Before coming into the facility, users and pedestrians can see into the space, once they have arrived they can see the space clearly and the outdoors, which gives them a sense of security, that they are able to see their surroundings. Moving to the restrooms and showers is where there is a sense of privacy and they have a place to call their own for a little while, where they know themselves and their things will be safe and secure. Progressing on, the laundry room, yet again there is visibility from the interior and exterior. Throughout the entire space there is opportunity for users to find a sense of community through a variety of seating, security through being able to control their surroundings, and identity through gaining dignity in being able to take care of themselves through the service the facility provides.

FURNITURE



Considering furniture was deeply important that called for a need to have a variety of chairs for different body types, ages, and situations. Additionally, during a lecture from Jill Pable, interior design professor at Florida State University and creator of Design Resources for Homelessness, stressed the importance of furniture, specifically, either the seat and back being one entity or being completely removable from each other for cleaning purposes. Pable also mentioned that all of the materials for furniture should be bleach cleanable and have a high double rub count as centers like this will most likely not change the upholstery for a long time, if at all. The furniture arrangement within the plan is strategic because it gives ample room for users to sit alone or with a group of people with space to bring in large items they may carry into the space.

MATERIALS



The goal here was that users could see the space and everything would be familiar, it would be clear and simple to the user. In her lecture, Pable mentioned that materials should be tactile, that users could not only see and know what the material is but they should be able to feel it and know what it is, hence why the brick, concrete, and light wood were selected. As for the wall covering, it was selected to give users something to see clearly but also be able to always find something they didn't see before. Lastly, it was important that all materials were cleanable and durable in order to last a long time for the users.

LAUNDRY



The laundry room is comprised of ten washers and ten dryers to utilize. Adjacent to the Laundry is a small waiting area for people to relax while they wait for their laundry to be completed. The space backs up into the exterior area so there will be optimal natural lighting with views and access to the exterior. Considering the concept, it was important to make the two spaces, the living room and laundry room with secondary waiting, that are more visible and social brighter to reveal more to the users, and to make the more private areas darker as places to feel a sense of security and safety.