

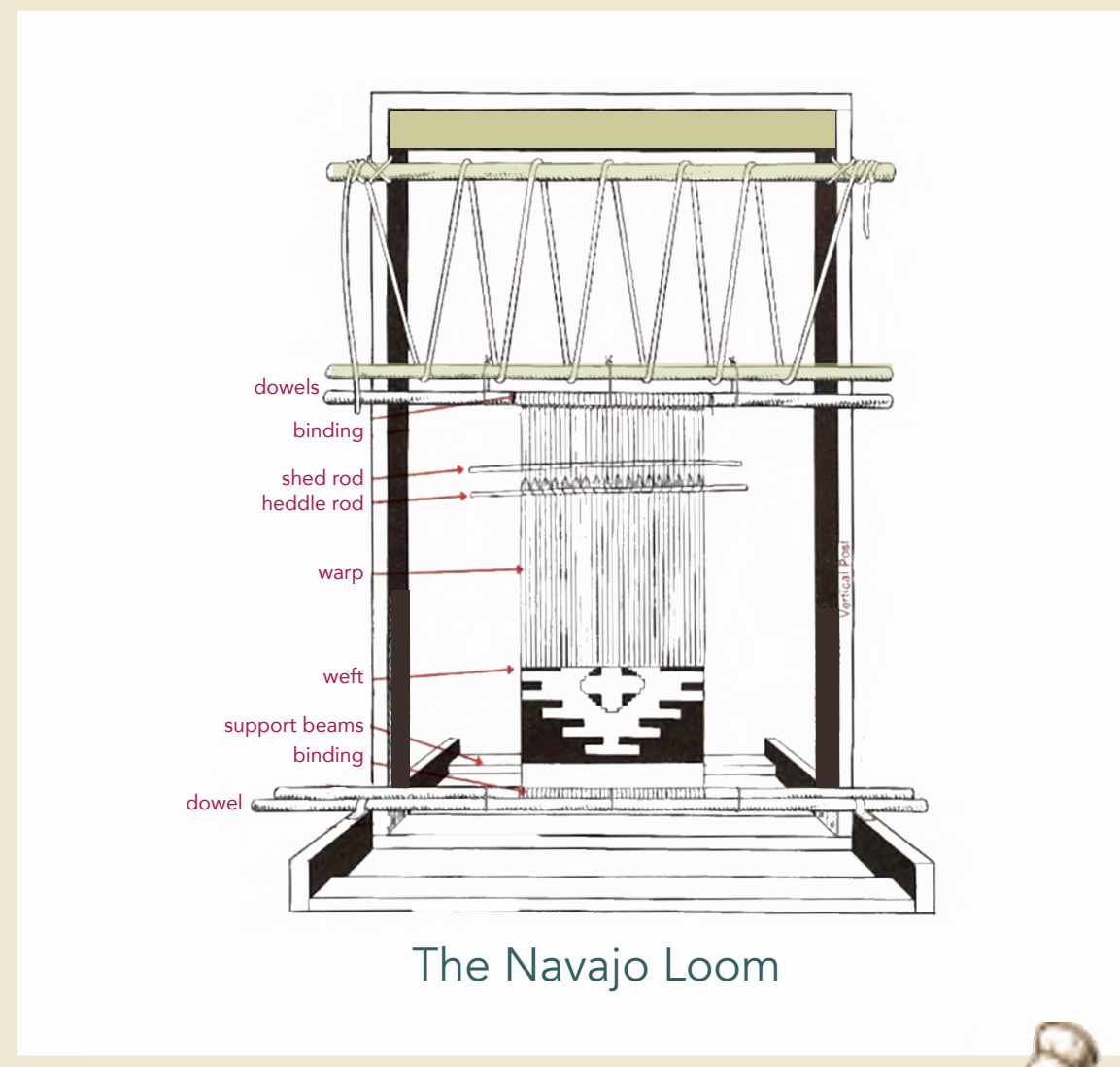
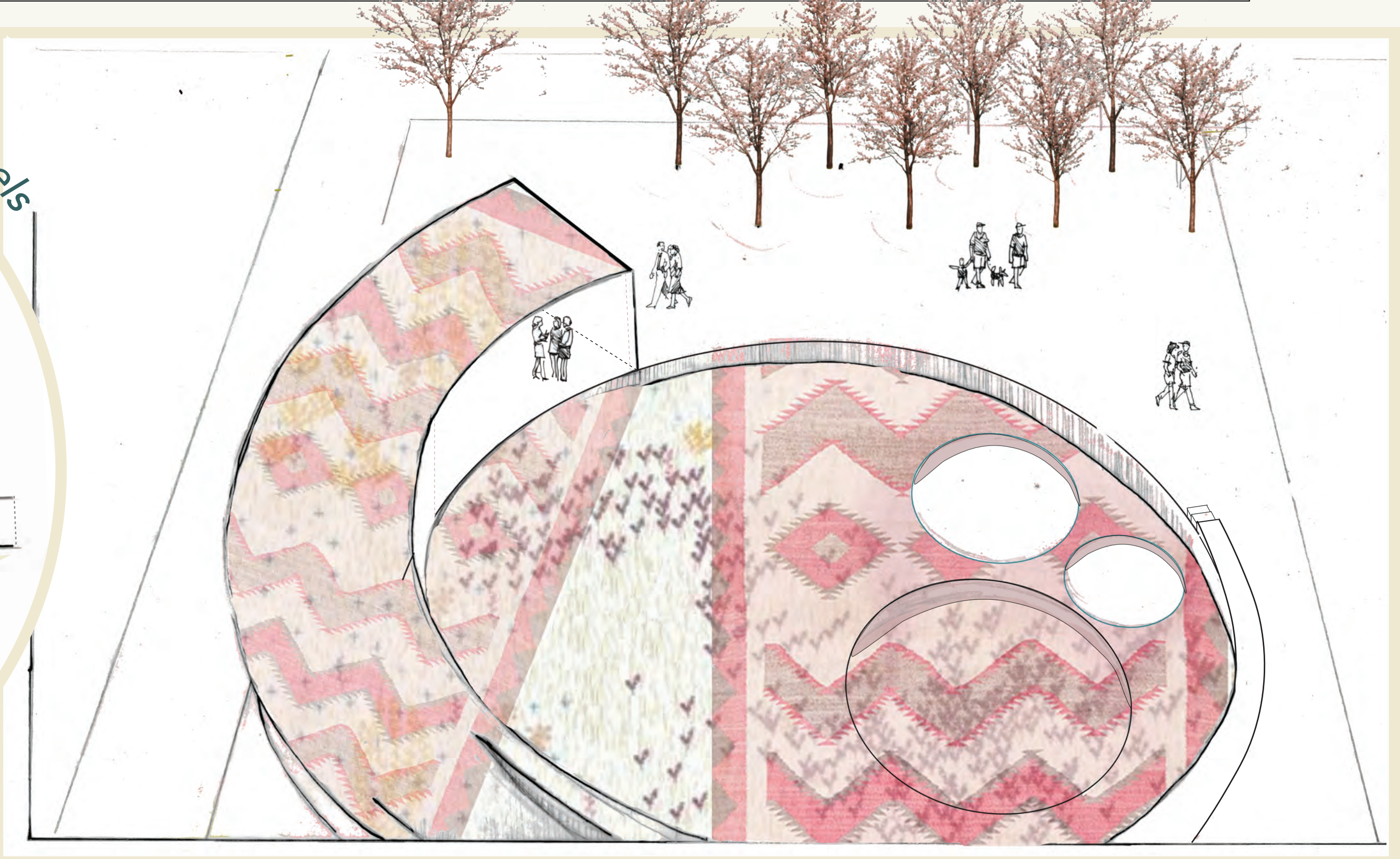
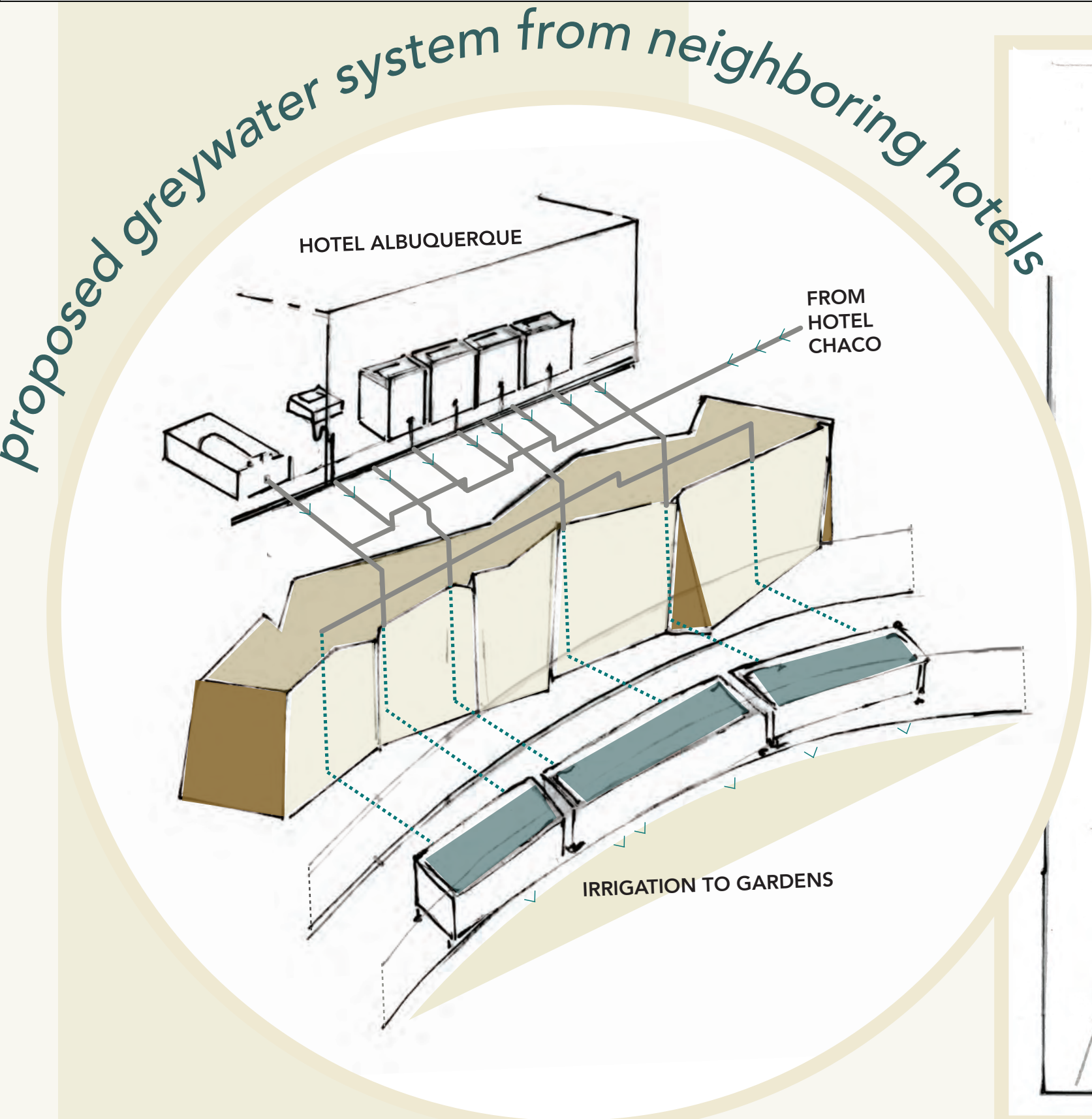
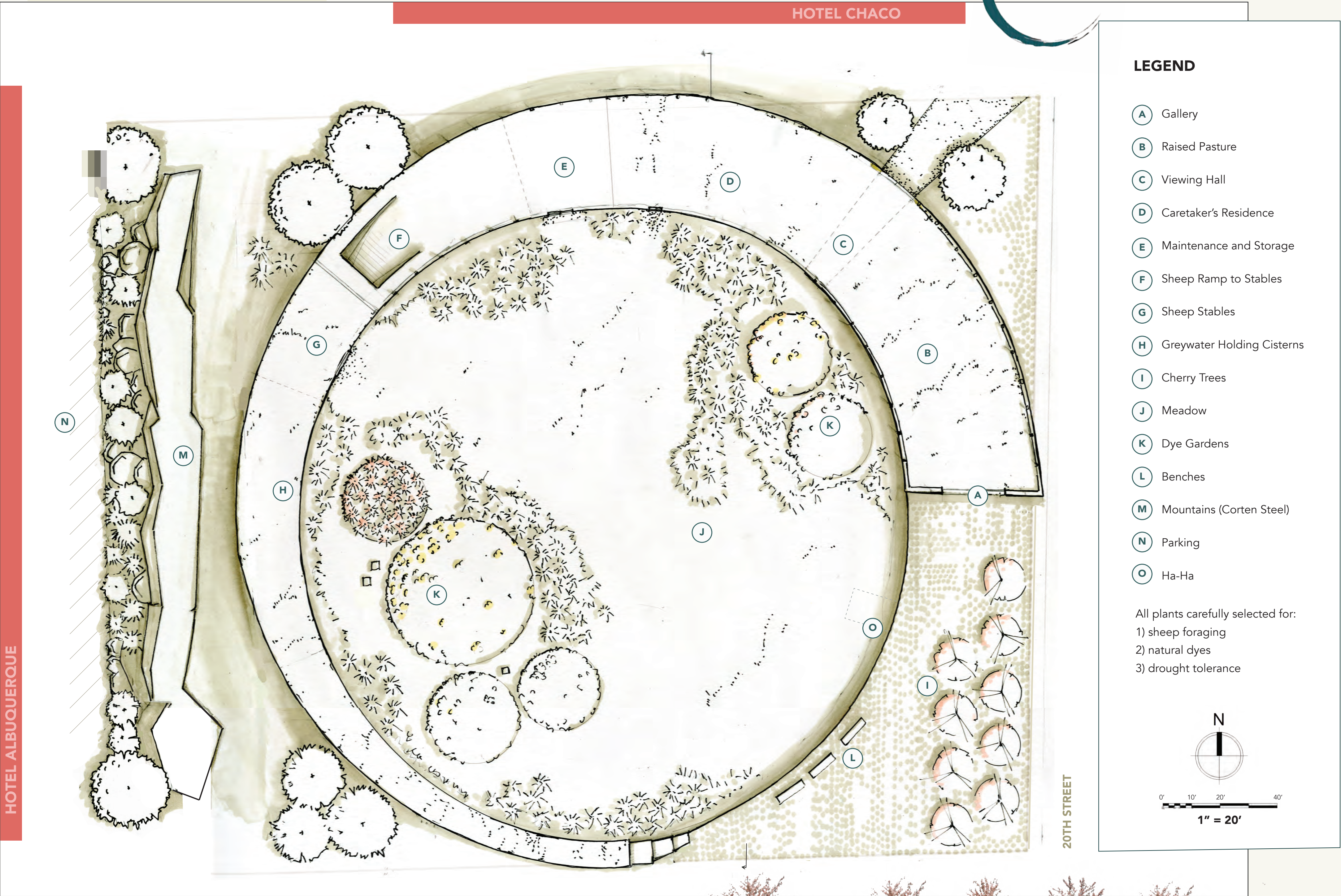
The Commons at Sawmill

Lauren Thomson | LA 501 Studio | Fall 2022

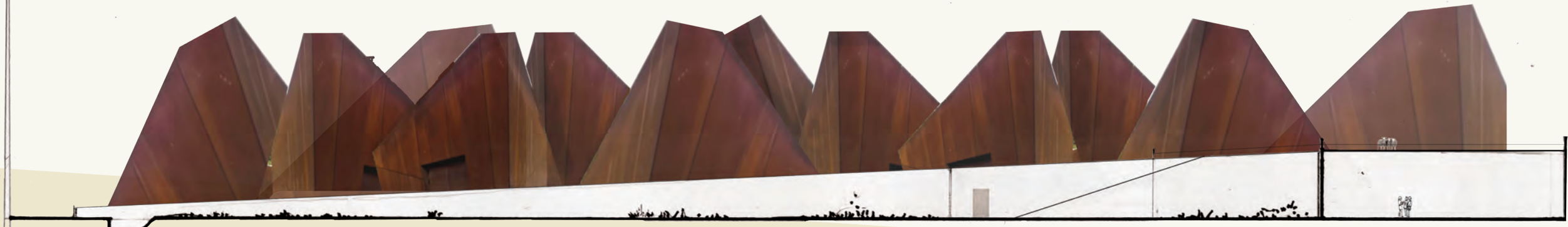
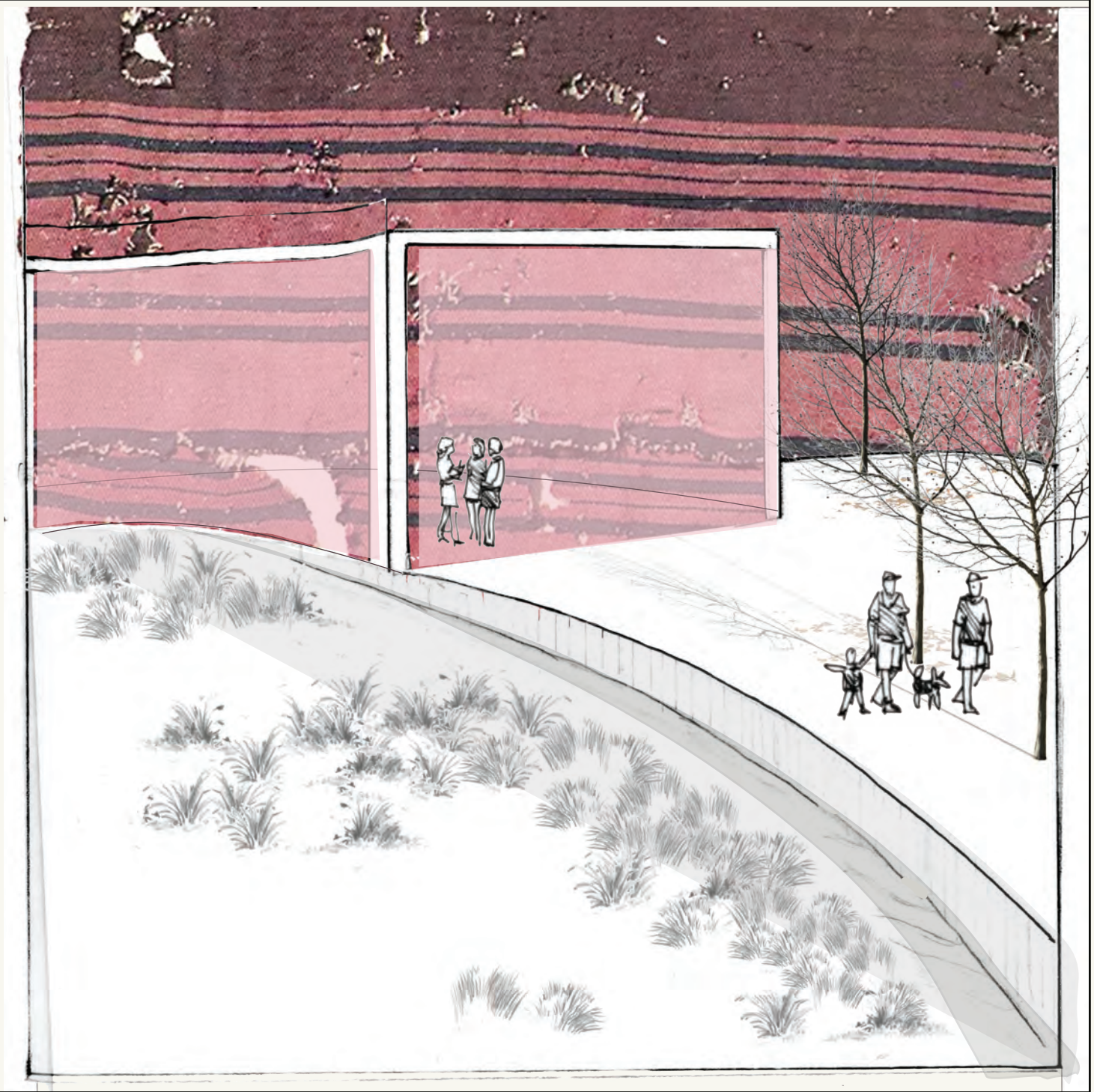
The concept for this project comes from the simplicity of an incomplete circle, a brushstroke, a symbol of impermanence and the bittersweet sense of the transient, ephemeral nature of all things. It is inspired by the weathering of the earth, the natural palette that forms, the reminders that while impermanent, the memory and patina of beautiful things can last forever. The cycle --and circle-- that formed the place that is Albuquerque, its history, its palette, and its people, is at the center of this landscape.

The design is composed of a large meadow surrounded by a circular ramp that rises twenty feet and tops a bright, glass-walled gallery. Navajo-Churro sheep (Taa' Dibe'i'), animals uniquely situated to a drought-stricken landscape, graze the meadow of native grasses that surround circular sunken natural dye gardens. The sheep can roam free, contained by a ha-ha on the east side. They can gallivant up the circular ramp to catch a view of the Sandias. A caretaking family lives on-site and tends lovingly to the sheep and dye gardens. The gallery at the front of the ramp showcases the history of the Navajo weaver and related arts, offering classes on traditional and contemporary Navajo weaving, pastoral traditions, and the tragic history of the Churro sheep.

The fibers, the colors and the weavings; these are the landscape. The plants that the sheep eat, the sheep that the people eat, the wool from the sheep. This is the landscape. A beautifully impermanent cycle of life.



Prickly pear cactus (*Opuntia ficus-indica*) can become infested with cochineal scales that are filled with carminic acid, which produces a gorgeous red dye.



SECTION LOOKING WEST  
1" = 20'

物の哀れ

*Mono no aware* is a Buddhist concept suggesting the sadness or pathos of things, the bittersweet feeling of seeing things change, an understanding that impermanence should not just be accepted, but cherished, a rejoicing in the fact that we had the chance to witness such beauty at all. The most common symbol of *mono no aware* is the cherry blossom, which appears in its glory very briefly each spring. Appreciation of its beauty is heightened by the awareness that the blooms only last a few days. This plan is a tribute to a hyper-nuanced appreciation of the beautiful, ephemeral phenomena of the world.

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