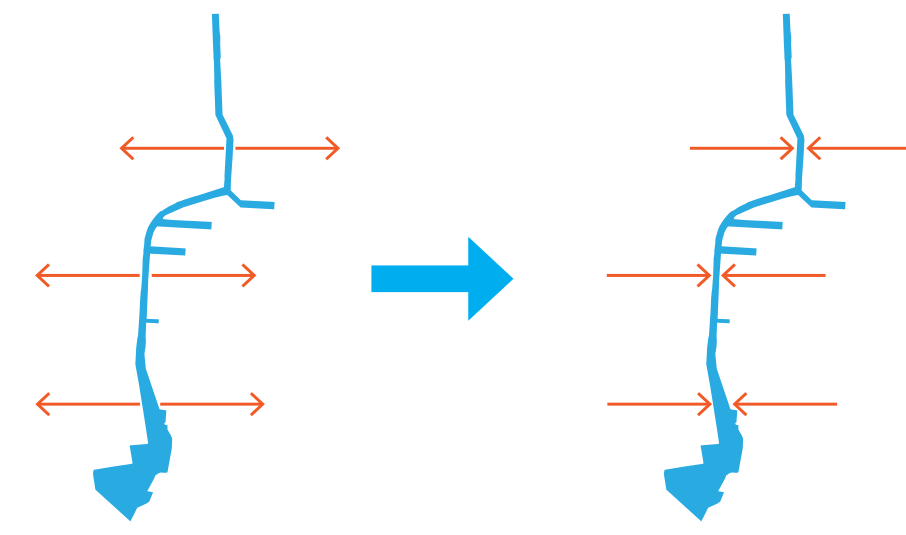


LIVE ENDS



1. Current Condition

Gowanus' back is turned to its namesake canal.

This is observable in both incidental and absolute forms. A close look at patterns of street litter and public trash cans produces a stark depiction of the lack of public infrastructure and maintenance along the corridor of the canal (MAP 1). Meanwhile, mapping the smells of the neighborhood illustrates its evolving uses; the contaminated canal waters create a repellent spine that is suffered by industrial users while clusters of new restaurants huddle at the periphery (MAP 2).

2. Urban Figure

At the most ingrained level, the canal splits the urban fabric of neighborhood down the center. The street grid is fractured, leaving ten dead ends fronting the canal amidst the four built crossings. As shown in MAP 3, these dead ends form a network of un-stewarded spaces along the canal.

Atypical for New York City but fundamentally characteristic of the urban figure of Gowanus, these vacant dead-end territories should be recognized for their potential as an embedded system of unique public spaces for the neighborhood. We propose capitalizing on this inherent local condition to create a network of small urban field stations along the canal.

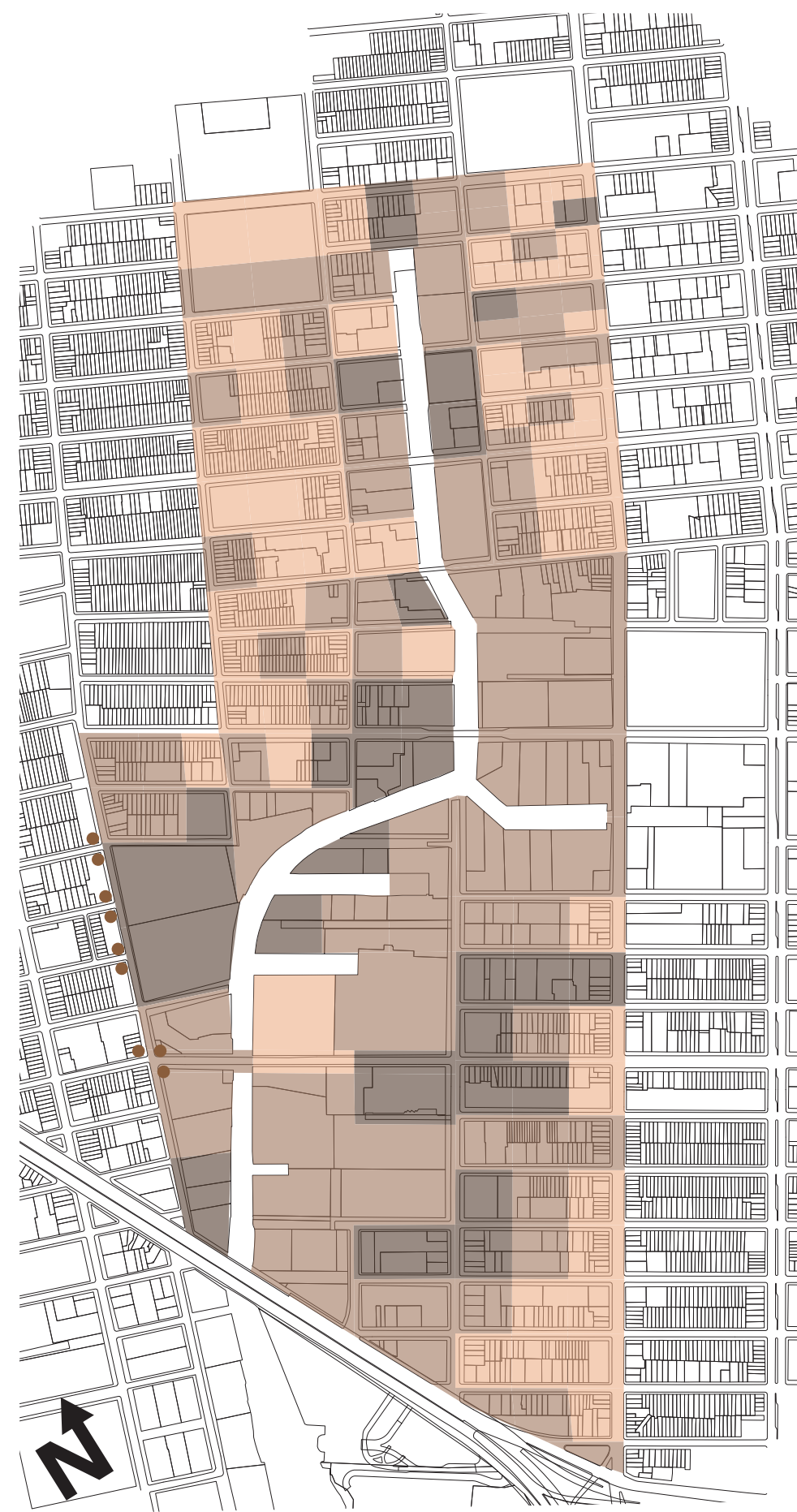
3. Proposed Program

The field station program is distributed across the network and is meant to be experienced in a non-linear sequence. The full program includes two research stations, two exhibit halls, space for artists- or scientists-in-residence, a large events auditorium, a small outdoor amphitheater, a community garden, and a play-scape. These programs will enrich the awareness and use of the neighborhood, and this is amplified and made accessible by the expansion of public spaces and programming that happen below and between the field station structures.

4. Impact

Each station is elevated off the ground to create a protected public space below and to ready the field station infrastructure for rising water levels. The light structure is reminiscent of the elevated transit structures found throughout the neighborhood, and provides a shady respite from the sun, a beacon for nighttime illumination, an accessible observation deck, and backdrop for community organizing and public events. The interior program is reached via a stair and a small elevator.

Creating a network of 'live ends' in these otherwise unused spaces will encourage exploration, discovery, and revitalization -- a critical first step in the re-orientation of the neighborhood, as the two cleaved sides slowly turn to address the 'axis civitas' of the canal.



MAP 1: STREET LITTER

This map shows the average of three individual mappings of street litter in Gowanus. Each block has been divided into thirds, and each is third rated from low to high. Street litter is visually unattractive but is also exacerbates larger environmental issues. Street drains on high-litter streets are almost always clogged with trash; amplifying precarious conditions brought about by storms.



MAP 2: SMELL

Smell is subjective, fleeting, and often shifts with the wind and weather. It shapes our experiences of space and conjures memories. This map shows the combined smell mappings of three different observers to the site on three different days, to produce a non-exhaustive snapshot of a critical, yet invisible, site condition.

MAP 2 KEY

- NEGATIVE MANMADE SMELLS**
- garbage
 - industry
 - chemical
 - dust/sediment
 - sewage
 - metal
 - oil/petrol
 - mildew/mold
 - exhaust
 - rubber

POSITIVE MANMADE SMELLS

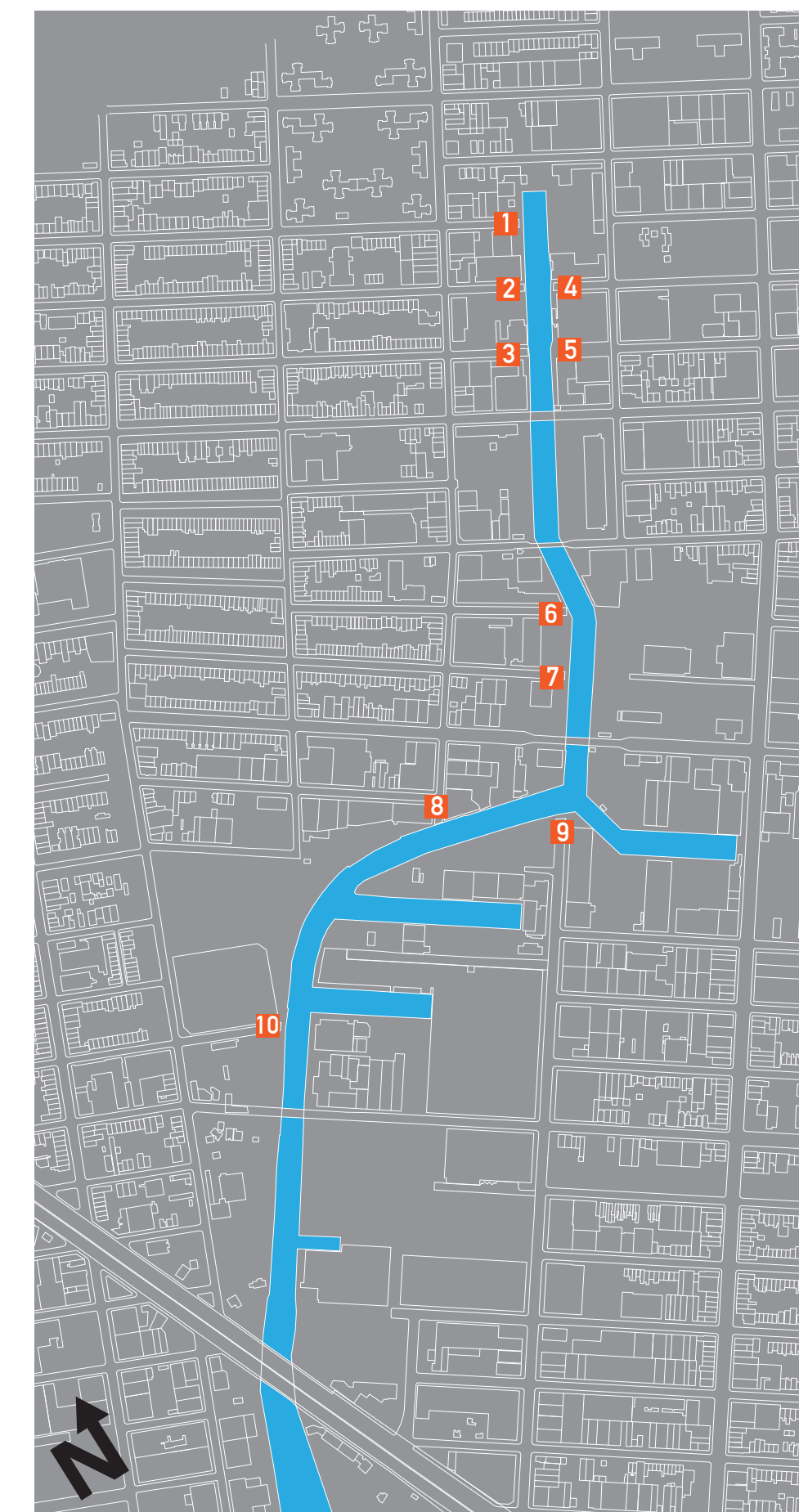
- food
- fragrance
- lumber/wood
- salt marsh
- plant/flower
- earth/soil
- fresh air

MAP 1 KEY

- high litter
- medium litter
- low litter
- public trash can

MAP 3 KEY

- existing buildings
- imagined future development
- A: shade
- B: sidewalk condition
- C: seating
- D: stewardship
- E: excrement
- F: trash



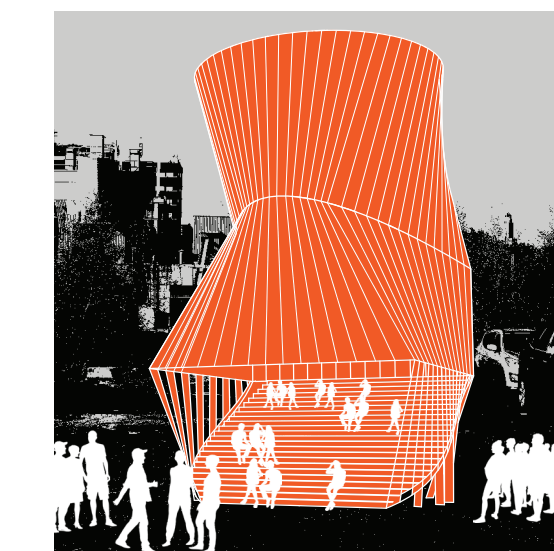
PROPOSAL: GOWANUS FIELD STATION NETWORK



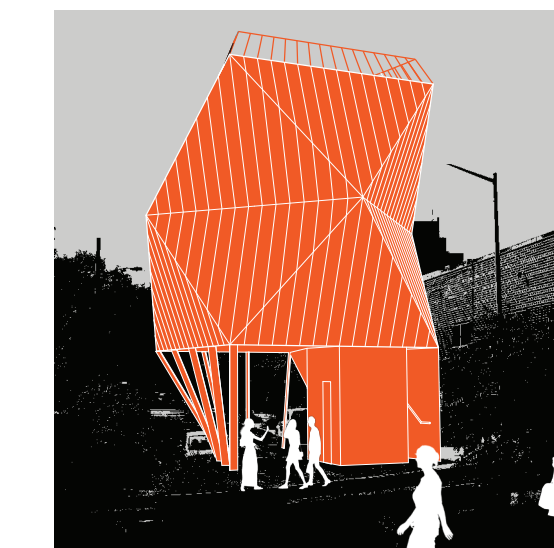
1. AMPHITHEATER



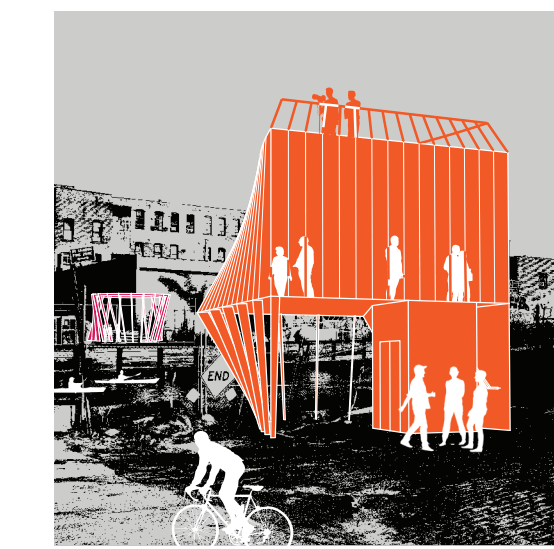
4. RESEARCH LAB



7. AUDITORIUM



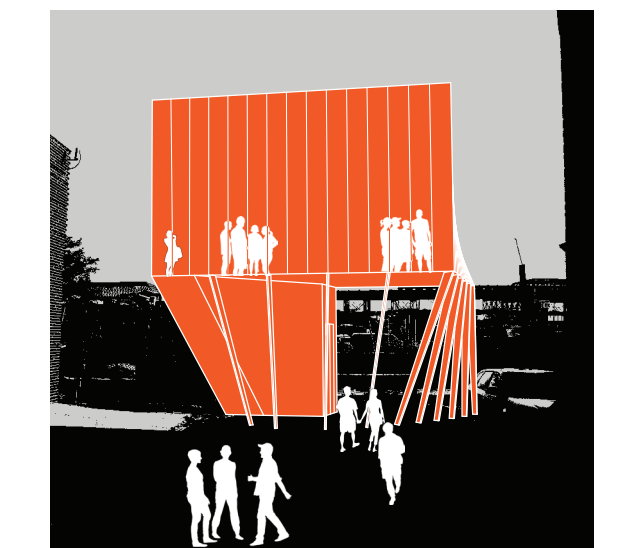
2. RESIDENCY STUDIOS



5. EXHIBIT / 3. KAYAK PAVILLION



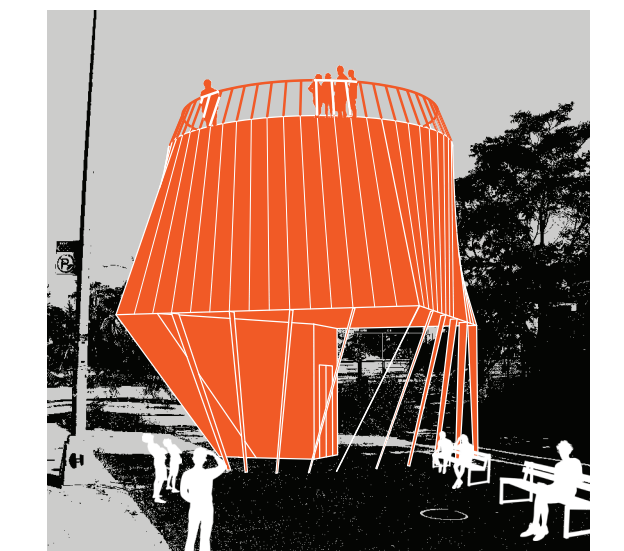
9. COMMUNITY GARDEN



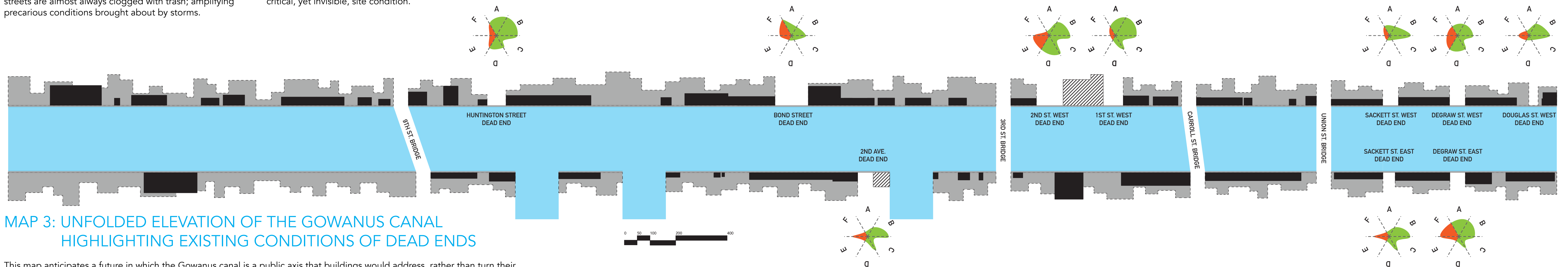
8. EXHIBIT



6. PLAY-SCAPE



10. RESEARCH LAB



MAP 3: UNFOLDED ELEVATION OF THE GOWANUS CANAL HIGHLIGHTING EXISTING CONDITIONS OF DEAD ENDS

This map anticipates a future in which the Gowanus canal is a public axis that buildings would address, rather than turn their backs on. Existing buildings are shown in black, imagined future development (within allowable MX-11 zoning regulations) is shown in light gray. The conditions of each end are evaluated by the 'dead end rose' (see key above).