

# The Woods Fellowship

## Sylviculture Potential

We see downtown Sudbury as a future hotbed and centre for research into the architectural and urban potentials of silviculture, employing interventions at different scales leading to a framework of care through the understanding, reading, using, living with, and learning from, woods.

In the short period since confederation, the primary motivation of Canadian development has been to turn Indigenous lands into territories for extraction and export. Canadian municipalities, as “creatures of the Province”, are administered by the same jurisdictional authority that oversees resource extraction. Violently disciplining opposition to the extractive sector, employing a logic of the grid, and the introduction of the railway provided the infrastructure to divide the land, and a cultural project recasting this frontier violence as “wilderness” followed for the sake of a legible settler-Canadian identity. Canadian cities remain settlements established alongside colonial strategies of policing, mining, & genocide.

While Sudbury has a strong cultural and educational sector —often in creative opposition to settler-colonialism— it will flourish as a city once the colonial assumptions inherent to Canadian masterplanning are overturned, and those most often left outside the planning processes are instead allowed to lead. And while we position our work against extractivist growth models, we recognize the rich heritage of mining labour in Sudbury, and present instead an entirely different way of imagining how urban design policy is generated.

We work from the premise that a new urbanism for Sudbury’s downtown will not result from changes to the built form alone. Sudbury’s downtown is a result of a colonial project that is ongoing, and to look 30 years ahead is a move away from short-term developmental, extractive, and political cycles. We call for a timescale even more responsive to the moment: 153 years, or several million. Our proposal takes the next three decades as a challenge to establish a method of urban sustainability and the promotion of impacted voices. As Sudbury has an opportunity to transform itself, it can act as a catalyst and a leader for others to follow, moving towards an urbanism of regional care.

## Towards a City Centre, Wood as Teacher

Reimagining downtown Sudbury allows for an inquiry into a healthy transition away from an overdependence on mining. The Canadian extractive project as a whole has eaten into forests that have sustained ecosystems for millennia and this continued activity contributes to global health and climate risks. We find in these same woods relations that help us establish a more resilient future.

Sudbury has been the venue for a number of silvicultural interventions and research projects, including a very successful urban greening program, and we look to leverage these works. We take this as an opportunity to interrogate the economic, social, and cultural potentials

of wood, to see wood and its production as a tool to do away with obsolete planning and design approaches meant to first foster extractive settlement. Wood urbanism, to be truly transformational, necessitates a move toward reconciliation and social justice. If not, it is to repeat a violent past through a different material.

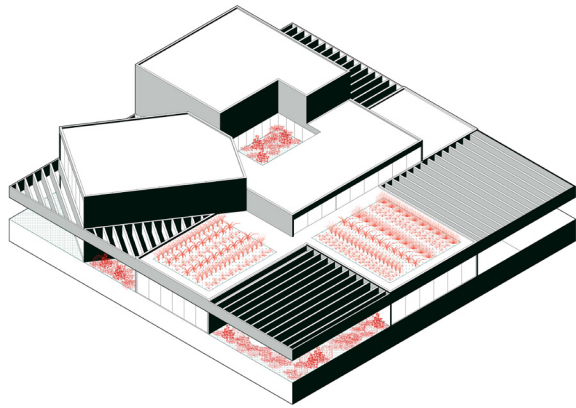
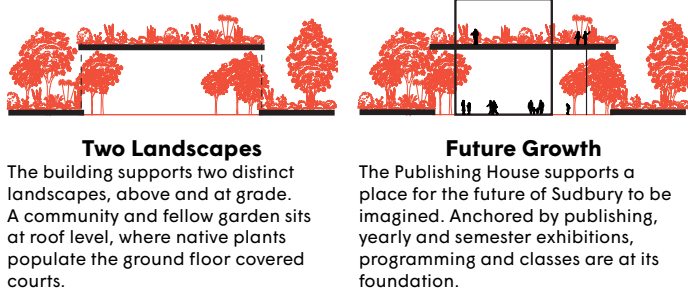
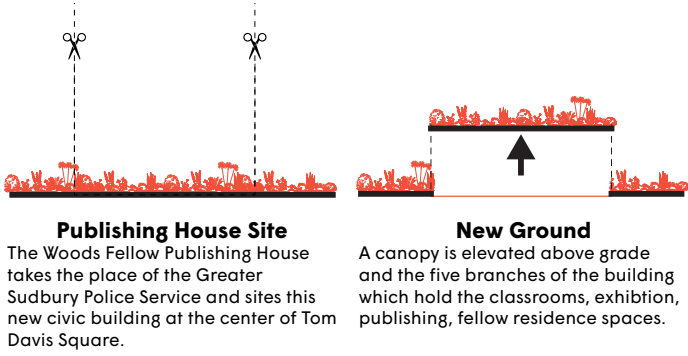
Trees, from species to species, offer us means of addressing significant urban design and architectural challenges, at multiple scales simultaneously. This proposal finds wood as a material with multiple benefits, from capturing carbon in service of human and non-human lives, to providing thermal adaptations made to increase sustainability both at the building, site, and even regional scales. Best of all, working with wood’s material potential allows us to understand the city as an open-ended metabolic process, one which advances our understanding beyond binaries. But wood also implores us to understand what anthropologist Anna Tsing describes as “weedy landscapes”: not singularly categorized as a part of nature, or conservation, or extractive development alone.<sup>1</sup>

Working intentionally with wood as we do goes against single-use Euclidean zoning as the monolithic ideology of North American land use. As we find in the promotion of Canadian settlement countless false binaries, weedy landscapes expose the fallacy of idealized states: at once either resource or pristine nature. Architect Daniel Ibañez is clear, “Given all its ramifications, wood has the potential to transform the way in which urbanism is developed today.”<sup>2</sup>

As an open-ended process, our intervention evokes a myriad of possible futures and a confrontation with the histories that have brought us to our current environmental crisis. In that these crises are married to environmental and economic dispossession, situating our analysis in downtown Sudbury provides a much needed context in which research into silviculture, until now largely speculative at the urban scale, can take root. In this proposal therefore we look to build out a method of learning from, and following, woods. Using the lens of wood and its products to establish a new downtown for Sudbury, we critique ongoing colonial institutions, and propose envisioning an alternative weedy urbanism.

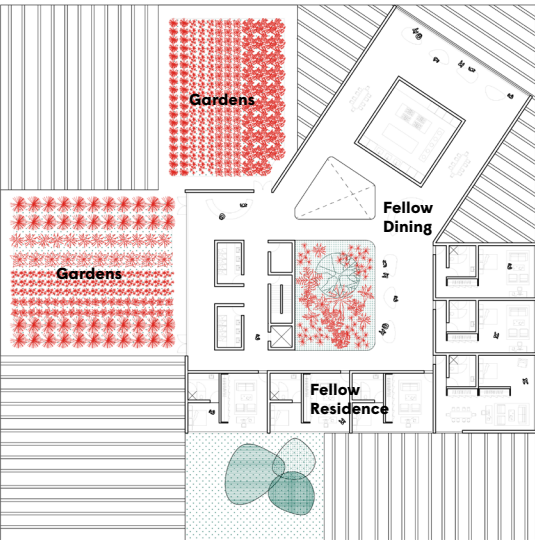
<sup>1</sup> Anna Tsing. The Buck, the Bull, and the Dream of the Stag: Some unexpected weeds of the Anthropocene. Suomen Antropologi. 2017;42(1):3-21

<sup>2</sup> Daniel Ibañez in Ibañez, Daniel, Jane E. Hutton, and Kiel Moe, ed. Wood Urbanism: From the Molecular to the Territorial., New York, NY : Actar Publishers. Print: 313.

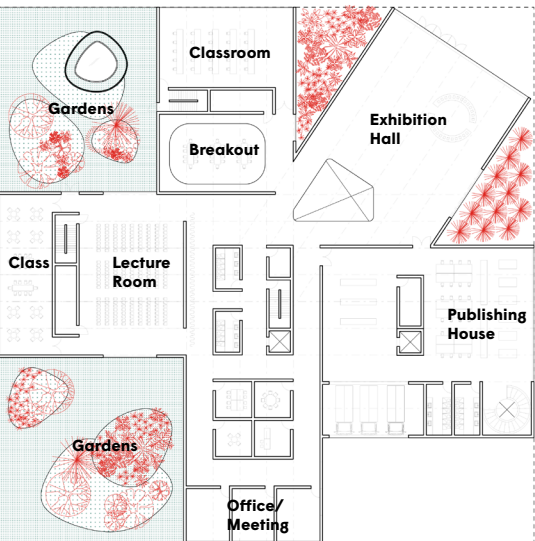


## The Architectural Press Publishing House

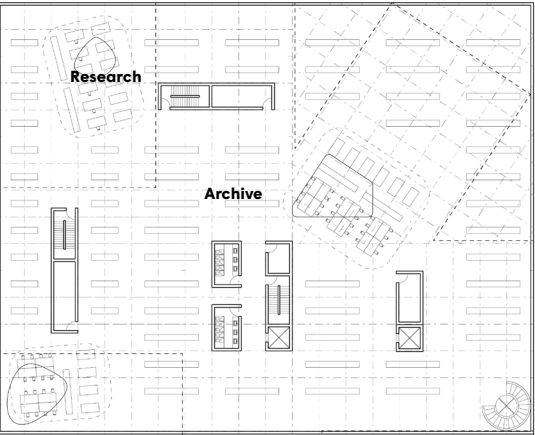
As the keystone building for a new downtown Sudbury, the Architectural Press (AP) publishing house promises to be the beating heart and central hub of this program. Understanding planning and design as a process, paper’s central role in the production and communication of our discipline’s knowledge is more than a metaphor for



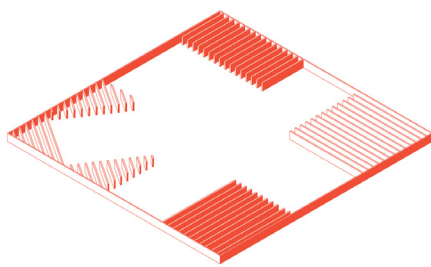
Upper Floor - Fellow Residence



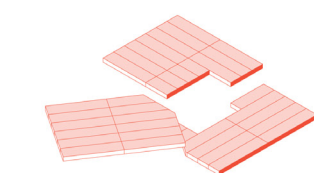
Ground Floor - Publishing + Community



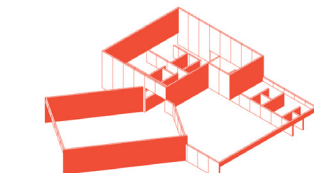
Basement - Archive and Research Space



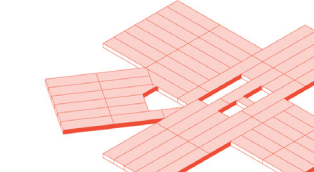
**Glulam Canopy**  
71 glulam members create a canopy that wrap the building volumes



Roof



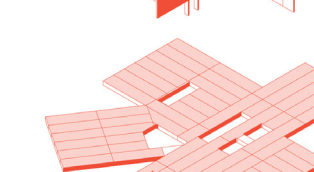
Upper Floor CLT Walls



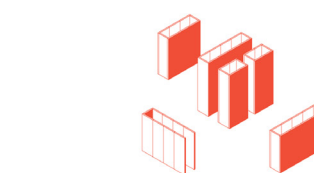
Upper Floor



Ground Floor CLT Walls

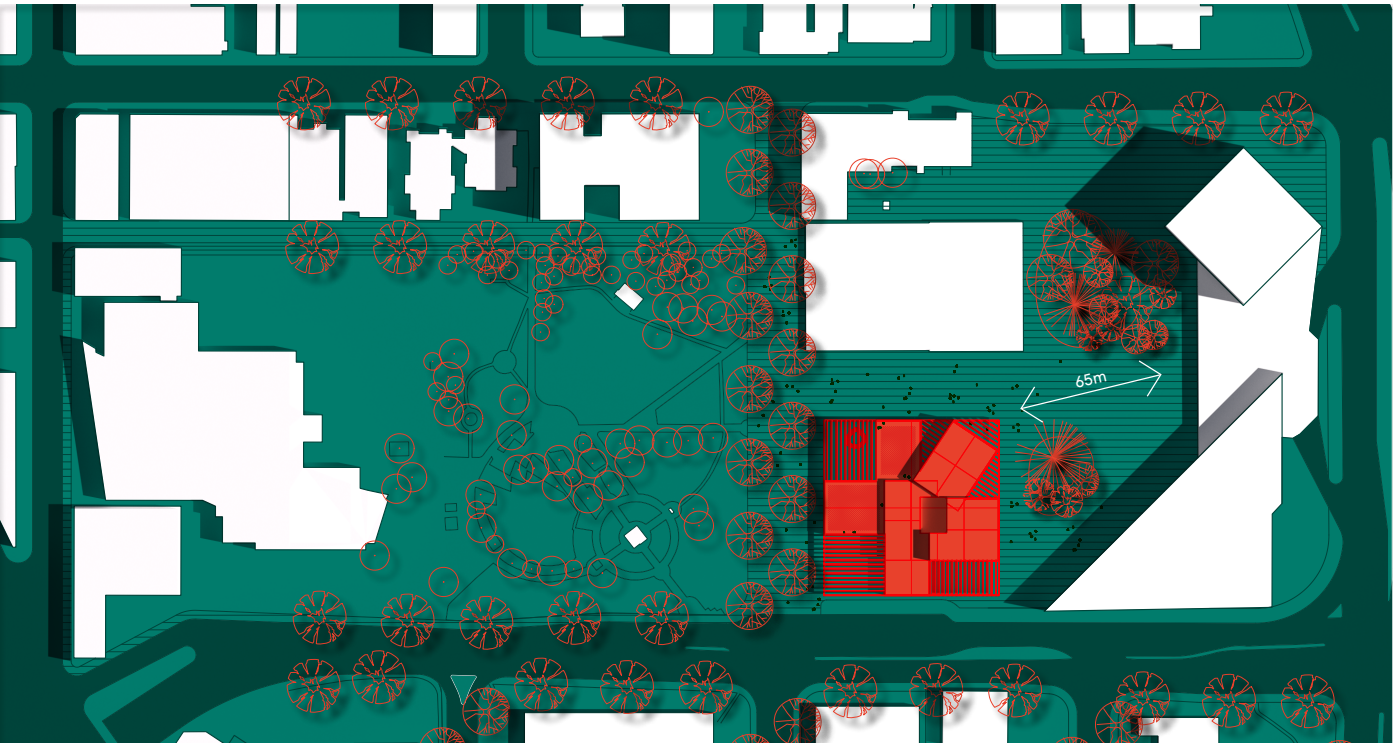


Ground Floor



Assembly

**CLT Structure**  
The building is made up of 488 CLT panels, of 1m and .3m depth for structural floors and walls. A singular system of assembly reduces waste, material and construction time, while activating a local and growing industry in Sudbury.



The Architectural Press - 65m from Greater Sudbury City Hall



Skylight to Archive



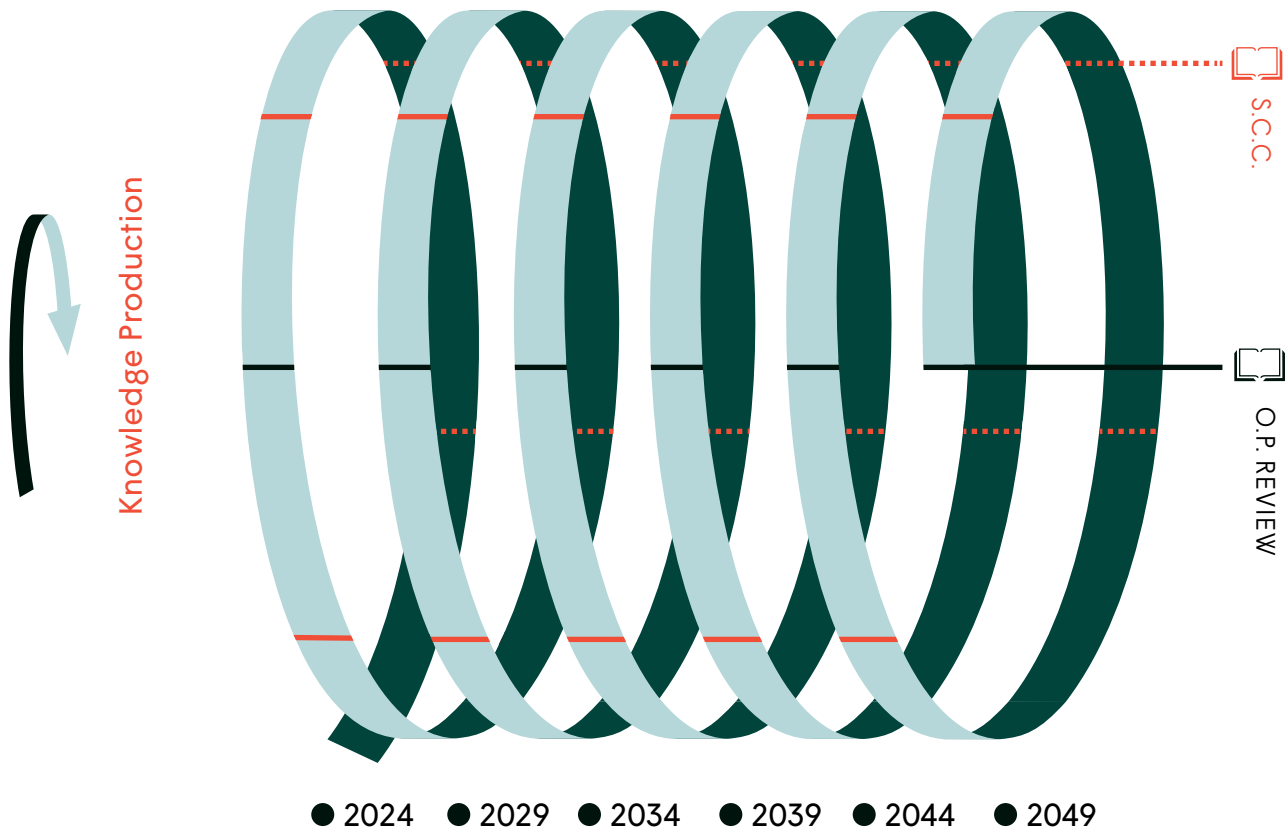
# Fellowship Program

This framework develops through iterative cycles of knowledge production and advocacy in the built environment while establishing new means of generating the strategies themselves: urban design tools and guidelines which will meet the challenge of planning and designing resiliency for the next century's coming emergencies. Findings are published yearly as the Sudbury City Code (S.C.C.). In this way, fellows are also co-editors.

The program will provide resources for practitioners, artists, academics, and activists, to lead courses mixing theory and practice. Each year, fellows research and teach in a studio environment that learns from wood(s). Courses are based at test sites with different themes which redress extractive planning's legacies: Civics, Craft, Nature, Home, Technology, and Time. The program mandate is to build an accountable form of urban co-production, and priority is given to members from communities marginalized from the formal planning process. This open-ended process ensures a unique form of engagement: Research from each course is published as the S.C.C. and each fifth year the cycle ends with critical recommendations and comments specific to the Official Plan Review Process.

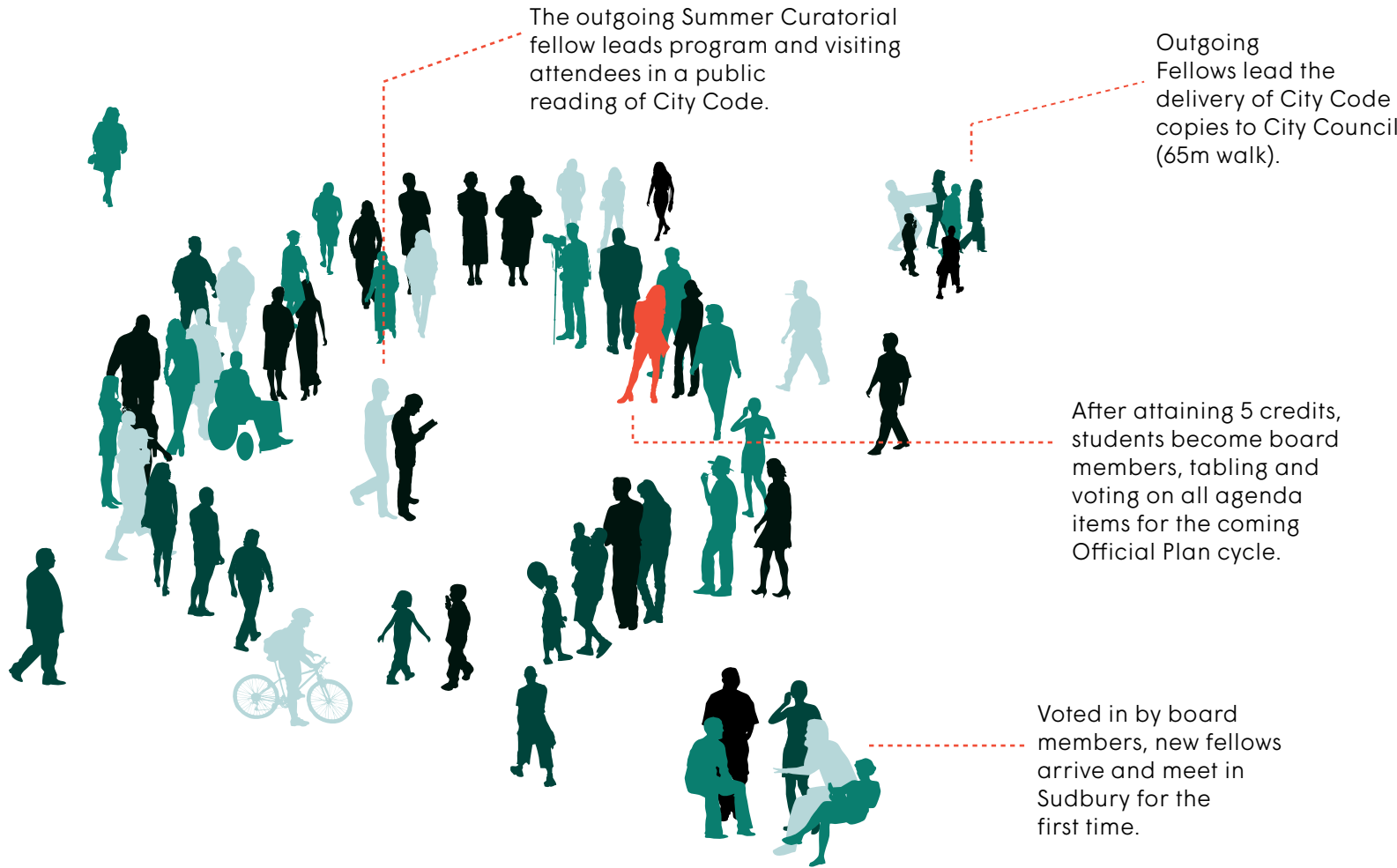
## Publishing Schedule

30 Years of Silvicultural Research



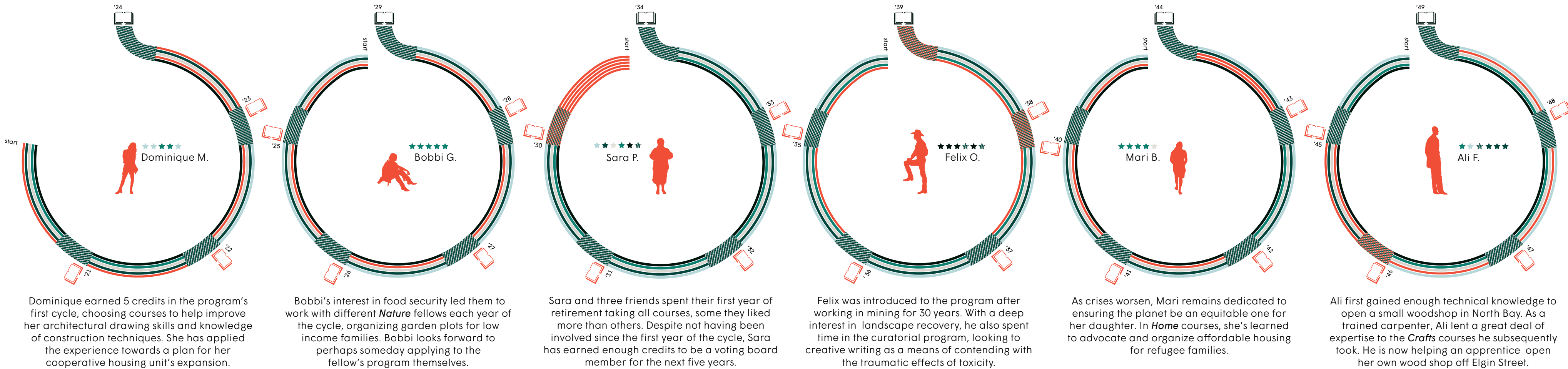
## Vernissage [2024]

Yearly public reading and advocacy procession to Sudbury City Council



## Official Plan (O.P.) Review 5 Year Cycle

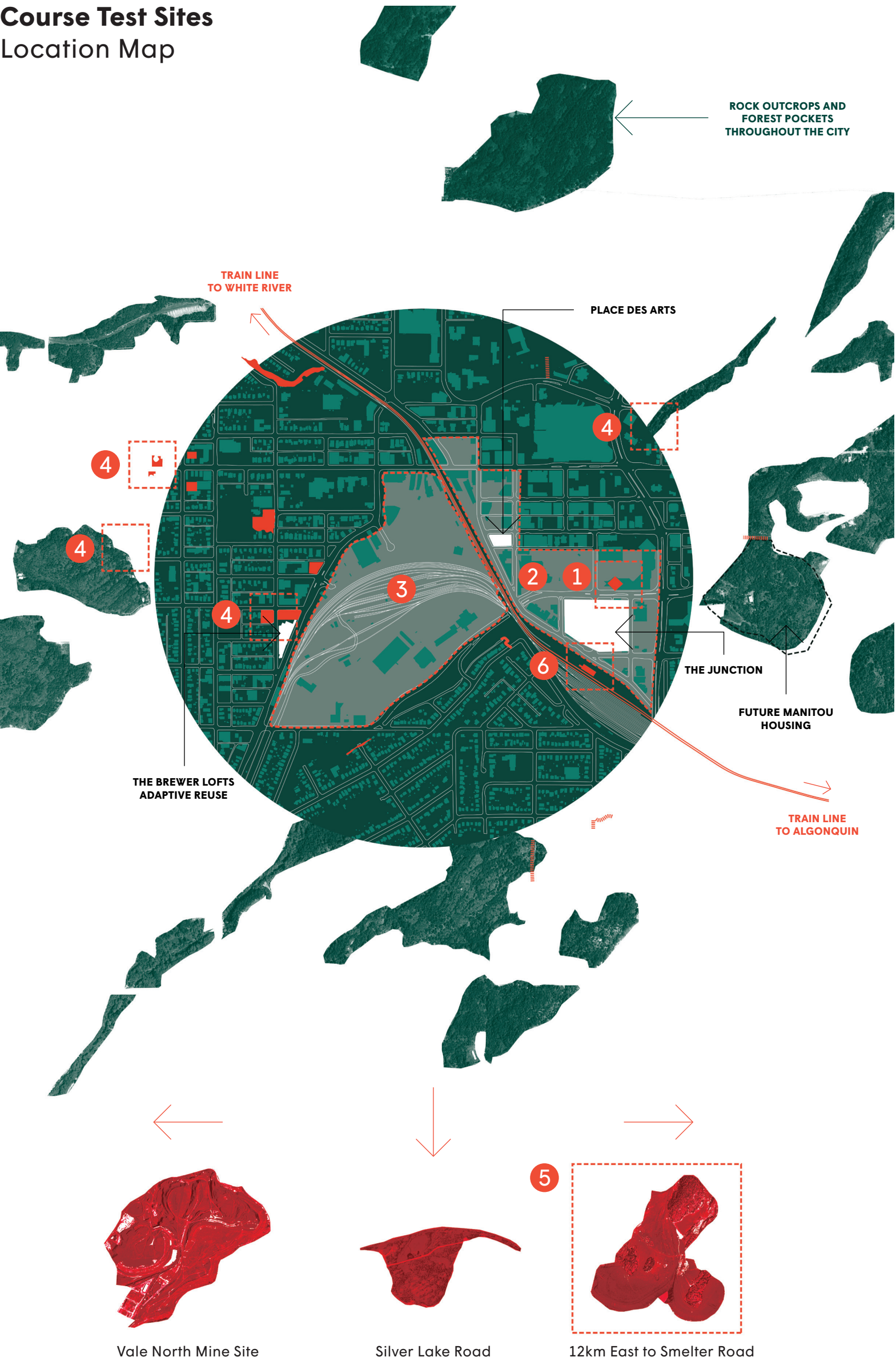
Attaining 5 credits during any cycle grants membership to the program's board for the following cycle, able to vote on incoming fellowship applications. Fellows propose a program based on their own expertise and agenda, and how well it fits within the program mandate. Why students join and how they work through the program varies widely.





# Site Projections 2020

## Course Test Sites Location Map



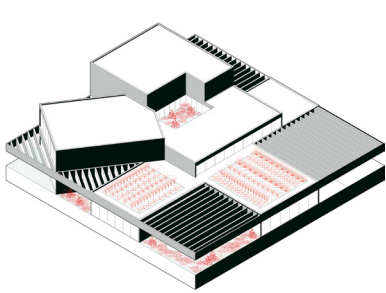
X Course # and Location

Site Detailed for 2050

### Course 1 Civics

**Architectural Press Publishing House**  
Location: 190 Brady Street  
Current Program: Greater Sudbury Police Department  
Zones: C6: Downtown Commercial (no change)

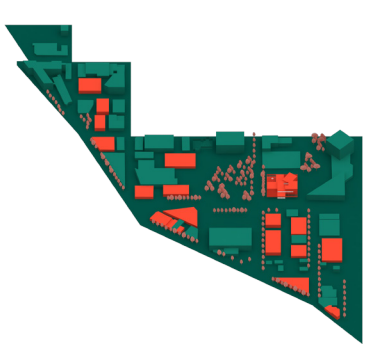
The Sudbury Police building provides no cultural or commercial activity, and limits the ability for Sudbury's downtown to flourish. With immediate connection to the City's administrative offices, the new Architectural Press building will directly inform Sudbury's planning process through its activities and advocacy.



### Course 2 Crafts

**Commercial and Artistic Seam**  
Location: Elgin Street  
Current Program: Commercial strip, 2-3 Story High Brick Buildings  
Zones: C: Office Commercial (no change)

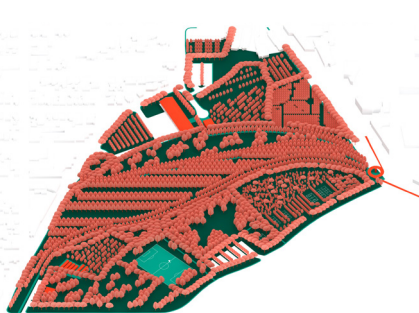
A hard edge, Elgin street provides poor connectivity between the rail yards and the downtown. As a uniting seam, Elgin will leverage artistic and cultural production already in existence as a chain of commercial craft sites, serving as a translation between the woods of the urban forest and wood itself as a primary building product.



### Course 3 Nature

**Central Demonstration Forest**  
Location: Downtown Rail Yards  
Current Program: Forest, Light industrial  
Zones: C: Office Commercial; M: Business Industrial; OSC: Open Space Conservation; C: Downtown Commercial (change required).

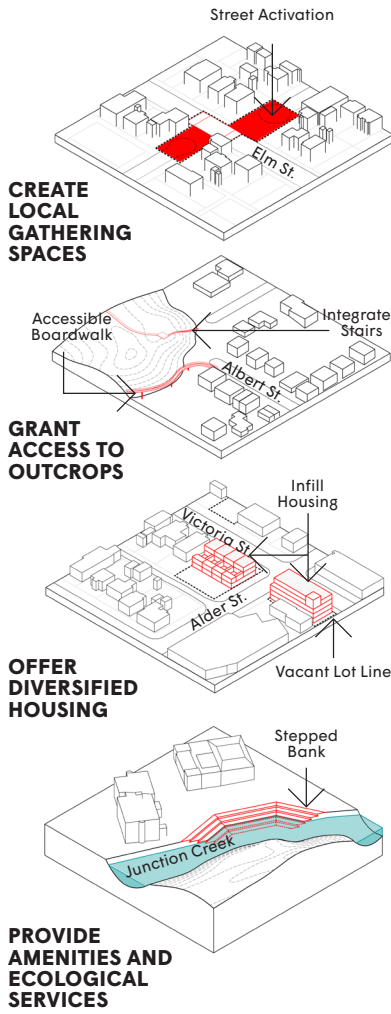
The rail lands and adjacent properties total 32 ha, almost equal to the central business district. A central forest will be an amenity while providing small scale silvicultural production, a living research laboratory, sports and recreation facilities, and substantial health benefits to residents.



### Course 4 Home

**Housing and Access: Woods as Neighbour**  
Location: Various  
Current Program: Residential, Gathering space, Recreational  
Zones: OSP: Open Space Private; R: residential, low and medium density; C: Commercial; P: Park (no change)

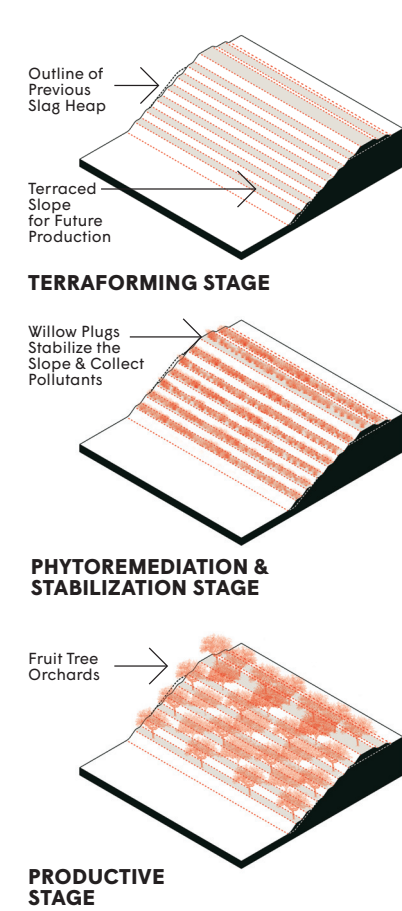
Reforested pockets have been left as rocky outcrops within residential districts. Community management has activated several of these sites while residential conditions create sometimes surprising adjacencies. Remnant spaces in close proximity are proposed to integrate housing densification while thinking of outcrops as a system of neighbourhood hubs.



### Course 5 Technology

**Terraforming, Phytoremediation and Beyond**  
Location:  
1) 85 Smelter Road  
2) Silver Lake Road  
3) Vale North Mine Site  
Current Program: Abandoned Copper Mine or Active Mining  
Zones: H21OSR(3): Open Space Recreation; M3: Heavy Industrial (change required)

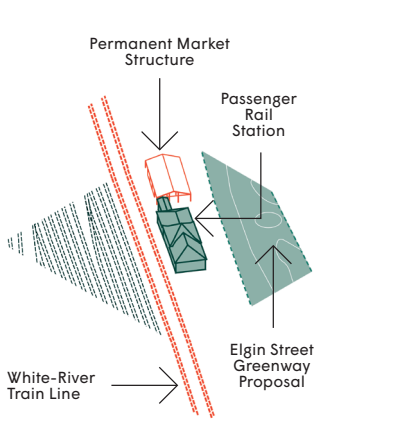
Though operations have been active here for over one hundred years, mining in the region is a relatively recent imposition. We cannot anticipate they will, or even can, remain in the same capacity for another hundred. We propose these remain "productive" areas long after the capital from mining has been exhausted, finding no reason that anyone should lose employment as part of a just green transition.



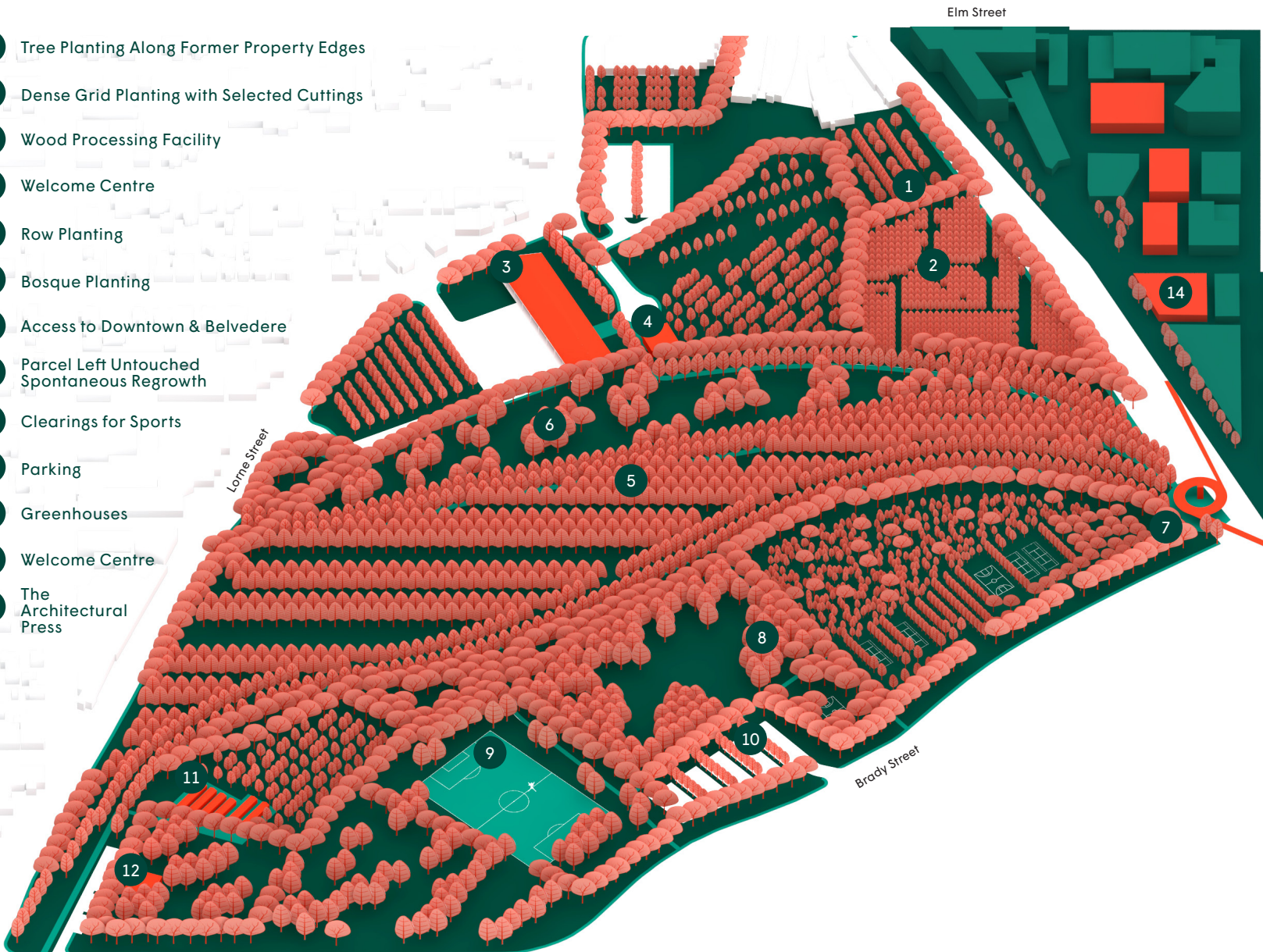
### Course 6 Time

**Relearning Relations: Into the Woods**  
Location: Downtown Sudbury  
Train Station  
Current Program: Regional rail; Temporary Market  
Zones: C6: Downtown Commercial; Zone M1(14) Mixed Light Industrial/Service Commercial (change possible)

As a proxy for holiday-making in this region, the Sudbury-White River train romanticizes wilderness when presented as an 'adventure route' and allows for a frontier narrative to emerge from the landscape. By dwelling in the contradictions can new regional narratives be written: The curatorial fellow each year will engage with history as motivation. We propose no physical change to the site, but suggest ownership be granted to First Nation signatories of the Robinson Treaty.



- 1 Tree Planting Along Former Property Edges
- 2 Dense Grid Planting with Selected Cuttings
- 3 Wood Processing Facility
- 4 Welcome Centre
- 5 Row Planting
- 6 Bosque Planting
- 7 Access to Downtown & Belvedere
- 8 Parcel Left Untouched Spontaneous Regrowth
- 9 Clearings for Sports
- 10 Parking
- 11 Greenhouses
- 12 Welcome Centre
- 13 The Architectural Press

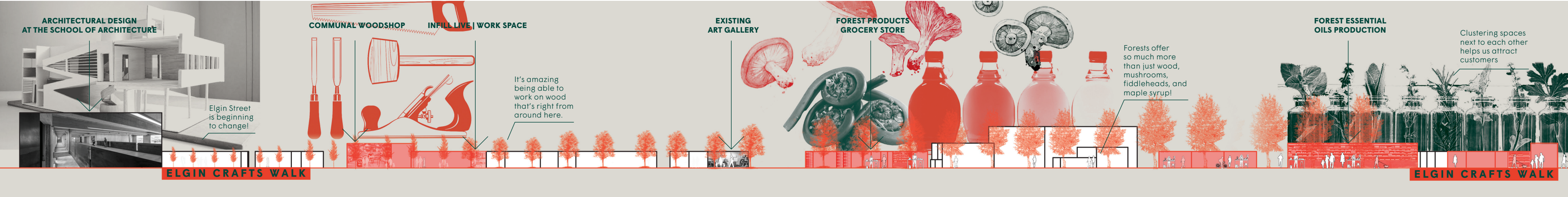


- 13 The Architectural Press
- 14 Communal Woodshop
- 15 Forest Products Grocery Store
- 16 Essential Oils Distillery

# 2050

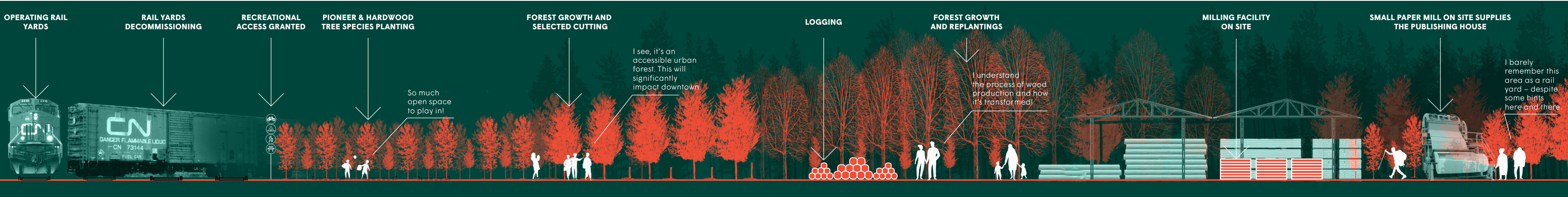


# Futures



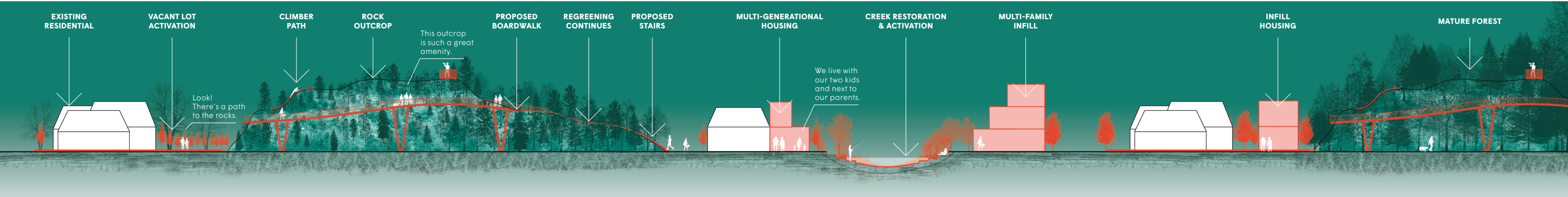
### Course 2: Crafts

This course looks to Elgin Street in order to establish a range of different commercial spaces which promote the free exchange and production of small scale goods. Advancing questions of scale in these practices, this course offers a dual purpose: Firstly, to experiment with the new practices of production made possible through wood and Non-Timber-Forest Products (NTFPs), while secondly looking to the sites of production themselves to establish sustainable commercial models of collective ownership and cooperative production. Finally, these courses look to establish principles whereby these models can be reproduced, and replicated elsewhere.



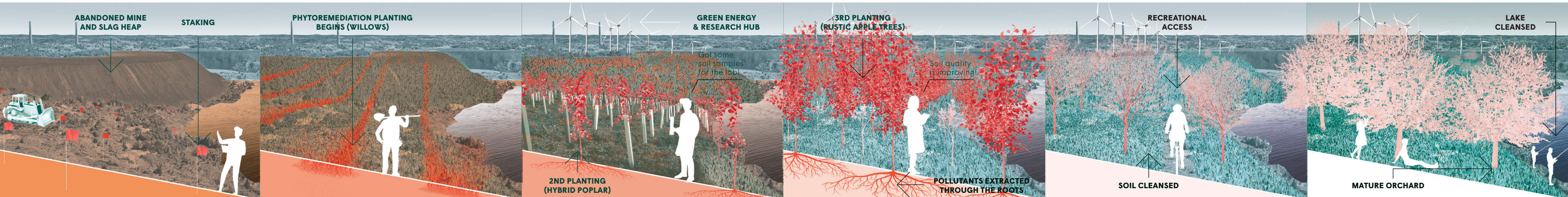
### Course 3: Nature

A model forest such as this one represents endless casual educational, recreational, and eventually productive opportunities. Recent research suggests that walking in forest increases psychological health. A sustainably scaled paper mill demonstrates a process of transformation, and supplies the Architectural Press with paper for its City Code series. As the site is remediated, the forest also provides goods other than simply wood such as NTFPs. By offering an open-ended and adaptable forestry process, this course significantly impacts downtown life.



### Course 4: Home

This course offers the opportunity to understand the broader geological history of Sudbury and the 40 years of regreening efforts of the city through the microcosm of the home and surrounding neighbourhood. Improving access to unique landscape features and granting new recreational rights contributes to raising quality of life in the neighborhood. Adding to the residential fabric through methods of intricate densification and redevelopment offer an alternative to building on more suburban land. Together, these hubs form a chain of active green neighbourhoods.



### Course 5: Technology

The tree and mine accomplish nearly polar opposite outcomes. A tree provides multiple services, and here it is most directly able to contribute to the reduction of environmental harm in favour of environmental care. Mining operates at varying cycles, from care and maintenance shutdowns to the cycle of exploration and closure. But toxicity has a longer memory. At three new sites, the capacity for phytoremediation to engender new yet equally productive lives will be explored in full, understanding healing land as catalyzing economic sustainability as symbiotic efforts.



### Course 6: Time

This course constructs a regional narrative different than that told by the Group of Seven. The train as pedagogy instead instigates a move towards reconciliation. As settler-designers we stand in solidarity with those working on the land to enact these changes and look to the Tshuettin Rail Transportation Inc., as a model of Indigenous rail ownership. Meanwhile, the summer curatorial fellow will filter the other 5 course findings through an analytic that confronts the often violent contradictions of Canadian urban history.

