

# Chabot College Library and Learning Connections

CHABOT LAS POSITAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT  
HAYWARD, CALIFORNIA



Campus Beacon - Illuminating the Heart of the Campus  
View from Existing Amphitheater





Group Study Rooms + Atrium



Indoor / Outdoor Social Spaces

## Executive Summary

Chabot College in Hayward, California, serves a diverse student body including many students who have full-time jobs, speak English as a secondary language, or come from low-income families. Whether they are first-generation students or lifelong learners, each student has unique educational needs and journeys. So, when Chabot College wanted to design a new Library and Learning Connections building, we proactively engaged students, faculty members and other stakeholders to understand these journeys. **Inspired by this outreach, we developed a design focused on visual clarity and transparency. The design thoughtfully intertwines academic resources and study and social spaces to soothe the stigma around seeking help and promote diversity, equity and a sense of belonging.**

Chabot Library is a high-performance library on multiple fronts. The library fosters the success of its students through a variety of programs, formal and informal learning environments that are supported by ample daylight, optimal acoustics, and thermal performance. The design implemented various sustainable strategies to create an efficient building that promotes the health and wellness of its occupants. As a result, the library recently earned **LEED Gold Certification**.



# Scope of Work

Scope of work includes construction of a new Library and Learning Connections Building and adjacent site work.

## Project and Budget Data

- Institution:** Chabot College
- District:** Chabot Las-Positas Community College District
- Location:** Hayward, California
- Project Building:** Library and Learning Connections Building
- Construction Type:** I-B
- Stories:** 4
- Building Occupancy:** A-3 Mixed Non-Separated Occupancy
- Site Area:** 2.2 Acres
- Building Area:** 62,000 SF
- Climate Zone:** 3C (CA3)
- LEED v4:** Gold
- Construction Cost:** \$79,742,697
- Cost per SF:** \$1,276 (includes sitework)
- Project Completion Date:** July 2024

## Project Background

In their 2012 facilities master plan, Chabot College identified the campus’s Grand Court as the preferred location to develop a shared building for the Library and Learning Connections program. In 2019, the design team launched an extensive campus outreach campaign to gather feedback on the project from the extended College community. Since then, **hundreds of stakeholders and Chabot community members** have helped shape the project through their engagement, input and feedback. In response, the project has developed to support a range of activities, including core library services, lifelong learning, learning connections, and community gathering spaces. The blend of indoor and outdoor spaces celebrate community values and activate the Grand Court and adjacent campus buildings.



Aerial Campus View



Existing Concrete Library and Grand Court



# The Heart of the Community

Located in Hayward, California, Chabot College opened in 1961 with an enrollment of just over 1,000 students and today enrolls more than 30,000 students. Of those enrolled, over 80% of the students identify with minority groups and over half are over the age of 21. Similarly, over half of the students are not planning on transferring to a four-year institution and attend Chabot College for career education, job training, or personal development. The college serves not only those who live in the city of Hayward, but neighboring cities including San Leandro, Castro Valley, Oakland, Union City, San Lorenzo, Fremont, Livermore, Dublin, Cherryland, and others.

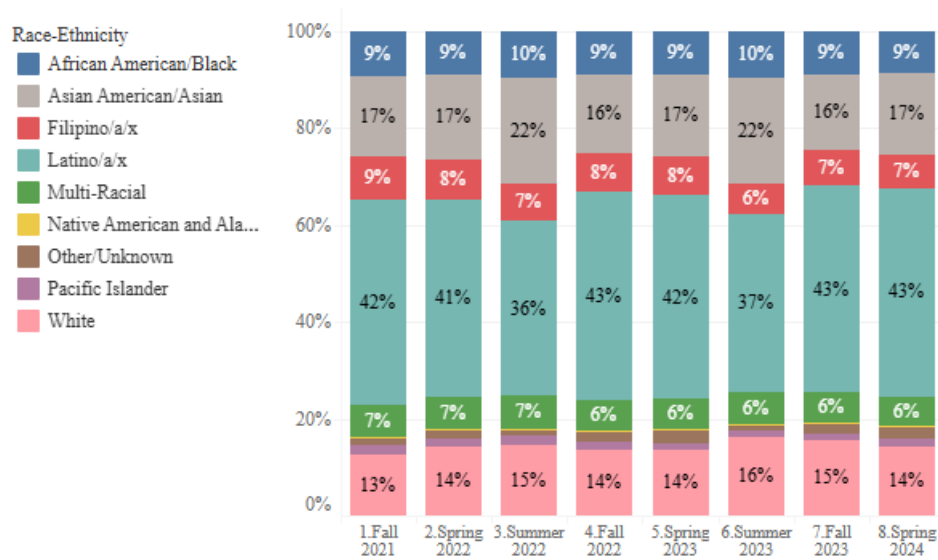
The city of Hayward is officially a sanctuary city, and Chabot College is a designated sanctuary campus. Here undocumented students can receive an education without worrying about deportation. Since the 1960s, Chabot has built a long history of helping disadvantaged students. Through numerous special programs and the Friends of Chabot College Foundation, Chabot College continues their legacy of empowering students on their educational journeys.

*“We provide culturally responsive, revitalizing, and sustaining learning and support services driven by a goal of equity. Building upon students’ strengths and voices, we empower students to achieve their goals and lead us towards an equitable and sustainable world.”*

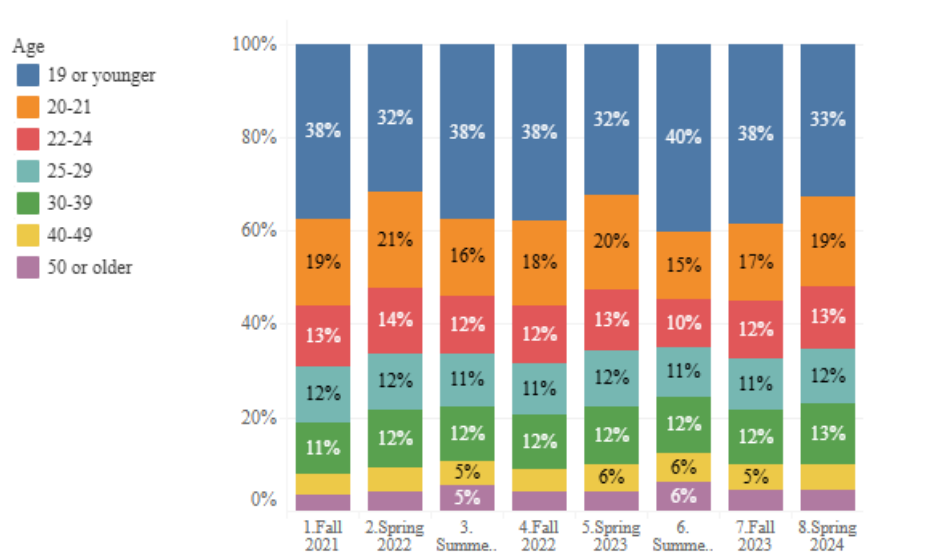
- Chabot College Mission Statement

Aligned with the college’s mission, the new Library and Learning Connections is an active and open resource for the entire East Bay community, providing expanded accessibility to not just students and faculty, but their caregivers and extended communities. Beyond materials access, the building itself is located proximate to multiple bus routes and is truly at the heart of the campus, nestled in the middle of the Grand Court. This overlap of physical proximity and programmatic attractions centers the library at the heart of community life for this generation and beyond.

College Enrollments by Race-Ethnicity  
(Data by Chabot Institutional Research)



College Enrollments by Age  
(Data by Chabot Institutional Research)



Greg Lopez, President of what was then called Disables of Chabot, shown receiving an honor award.  
(Photograph from chabotcollege.edu)



Engraved quote on campus walkway:  
*“All of us do not have equal talent, but all of us should have an equal opportunity to develop our talent”*  
- John F. Kennedy



# Challenges

Following the 2012 master plan the college developed another master plan in 2018. The 2018 master plan recommended a 100,000 GSF building. A project of that size could not be supported within the project budget. During early program and conceptual design phases, the design team developed a cost model indicating that the project could support an approximately 70,000 GSF building at most. This budgetary constraint helped establish a collective mindset to rightsize the project by seeking synergy and efficiencies between programs and departments and to look at creative ways to consolidate spatial needs and eliminate redundancy.

Using stakeholder input, the design team was able to synthesize the building program into a 62,000 GSF building that not only meets the essential needs and expectations of the college and the community today, but also provides flexibility and capacity for future growth.

The existing library is outdated and uninviting. Its main space is dark, glary and has poor acoustics. The furniture is heavy, difficult to move, and outdated. Spaces lack windows, daylight, modern technology and infrastructure. Also, the library and learning connections programs operated independently on two separate floors and had no shared use and synergy between them.

Other related programs were dispersed on the campus and difficult to find. The existing building lacks social and educational spaces that foster student connections and learning. The spaces also lacked branding and placemaking that promoted students' sense of belonging and cultural acceptance. Hence, the library and learning connections spaces were substantially underutilized and did not support modern student and community needs.

The main challenge was to create a new facility that inspires students to stay on the campus, creates vibrant social and educational environment, promotes equity, diversity and inclusion, and celebrates student life and community.



Uninviting, Dark, and Glary Existing Library Grand Room



Windowless Existing Computer Lab



Inadequate Quiet Study Area



Outdated Furnishings



Lack of Branding and Identity



# Leveraging Assets

Chabot leadership, faculty, students, and the design team had a clear mission to support the campus community and their Hayward neighbors. From the beginning of this project, the greatest asset to its success was input from those who directly benefit from the services inside. The Chabot community was open about their experiences and ideas and kept the design team fed with invaluable information on how best to create a building that captures the heart of campus. This collaboration enabled the design to evolve in response to fiscal limitations, respond to program needs, and incorporate creative space layouts to maximize the site and house a variety of services and resources into one building. This alignment and collaboration between design team and user groups allowed the project to become what it is today.

## Programs and Services

Bringing dispersed programs and services together into a consolidated home was an opportunity to create rich vibrant student environment that supports social, educational, cultural, and personal needs.

## Natural and Campus Environment

The Bay Area has temperate climate and distinct natural environment. The design team harvested natural elements, optimized views, and integrated the design with the campus fabric. The building design maximizes views towards the Hayward Hills, San Francisco Bay, and the campus’s outdoor amphitheater. The building geometry and it’s outdoor spaces responds to the radial plan of the campus, pedestrian circulation, and adjacent buildings.

## Campus Infrastructure

Chabot College has a central plant that serves the entire campus. The new building is connected to the central plant to take advantage of the existing infrastructure and reduce a need for bringing new services.



Former Chabot College Student Providing Input

*“I wonder what it’d be like for a community space to hold the struggles, failures and pain of our people, rather than glamorize its accomplishments and beauty. To me, it’d inspire, motivate, and challenge me to do better, and I believe the same for the community of Chabot.”*

- Chabot College Student



San Francisco Bay View West From Campus



Hayward Hills View East From Campus



# Stakeholder Engagement Process

To develop the architectural program, the design team executed an extensive participatory process and listened to the broad voices and stakeholders across the entire Chabot College community, which included **students, classified professionals, faculty, administrators, college executives, district staff, facilities and operations staff, and local community members.**

The design team engaged each of the stakeholder groups in workshops, focus groups, and campus wide pop-up events throughout the design process. From programming through construction documents, the team continually met with all stakeholders to validate and gather feedback on the design progress to ensure the project vision and goals were captured in every detail of the project.

## Vision and Goals

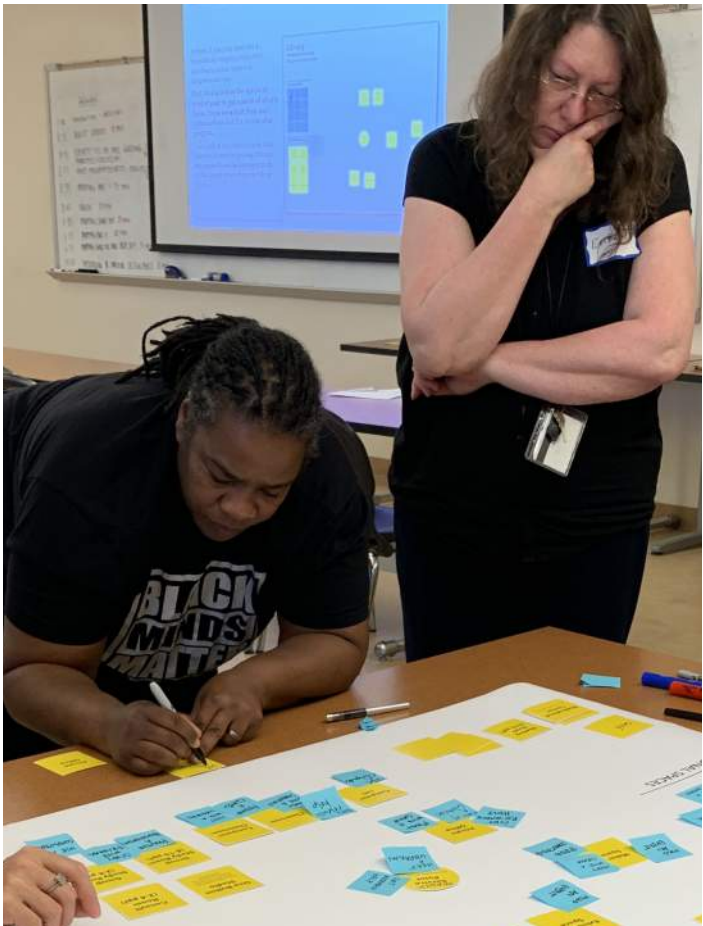
The stakeholder engagement process informed the design of the project and set the following vision and goals:

**Program Vision:** the library will provide a structured and coherent space that will motivate students to persist and enable them to explore.

**User Experience:** seeing community, assistance, resources, and experiencing self-belonging from the moment you walk in.

**Program Identity:** the learning connection program is integrated into and will be part of the overall library. It will empower students through academic support, modern study environment, social and cultural exchange, and a holistic student experience.

As a result of these goals, we developed a forward-looking space program and building design focused on creating a **transformative student experience**. The design provides **integrated academic support** and services, supports a **holistic student experience**, celebrates local culture, and **highlights the values voiced by the Chabot community**. To encourage learning and remove **stigma from seeking help**, the design created a transparent environment that features student activity, **highlights community groups**, and provides direct **visual access** to resources from the moment someone enters the building. The design also embraced sustainability goals centered around **student wellness** and **positive environmental impact**.



Stakeholder Engagement Meetings and Events



## Chabot Empowers Students



Academic Support



Modern Study Environment



Social and Cultural Exchange



Holistic Student Experience



Community



Assistance



Resources



Yourself

## Visible from the Moment You Walk In

## Program Identity Evolution





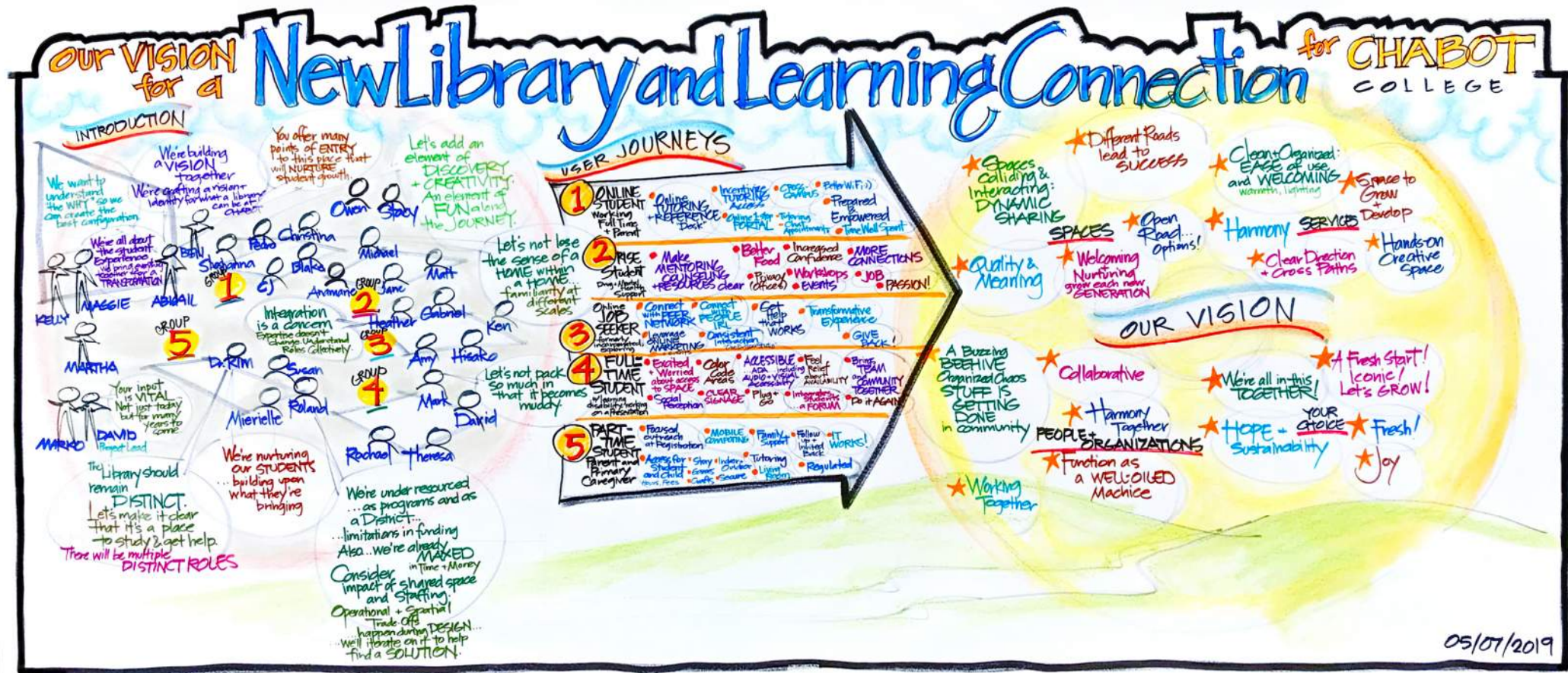
Design Concept

Inspired by the stakeholder engagement process, the design concept is centered around inclusion, diversity, and equity.

The Library and Learning Connections takes a stand against neutrality and embraces inclusion, diversity, equity, community, and partnerships. By interlocking learning and social spaces, the building strives to express the values of its diverse student body through:

- Inclusion:** The first floor is open and welcoming with gathering spaces, library collections, seating, and technology, as well as a social stair and day-lit atrium.
- Diversity:** The second floor houses the learning connections and communities, supporting the entire student body.
- Equity:** The third floor reading room is a democratic learning space catering to students’ diverse learning styles and needs. The outdoor terrace offers views of the campus and landscape.

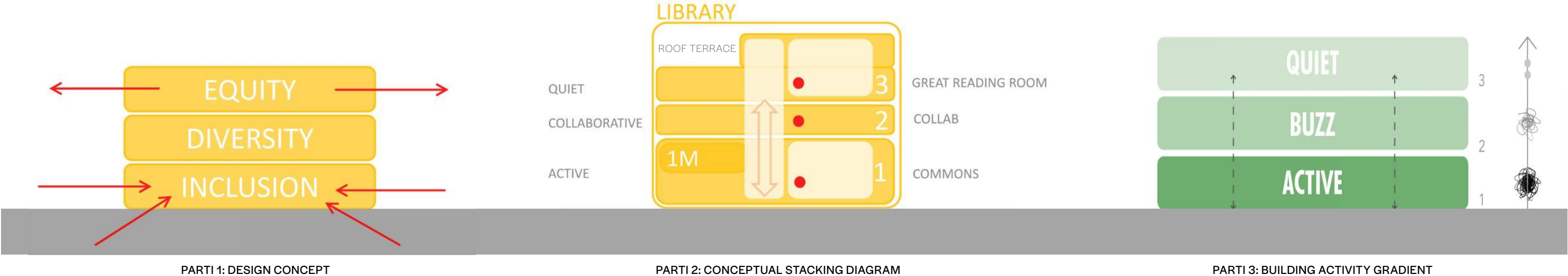
The Library and Learning Connections at Chabot College redefines the community college experience, seamlessly blending academic resources, study spaces, and wellness to support all students. With its bold, student-centered design and prominent four-story atrium, the building serves as a beacon of inclusion, diversity, and equity in the heart of the campus.



Graphic Recording of User Group Committee Project Vision Developed by Channotate During the First Programming Workshop, May 7, 2019

“Chabot College empowers students to reach their academic and career goals and to lead in sustainability, innovation, and equity in their communities and the world.”

- Chabot College Vision Statement



PARTI 1: DESIGN CONCEPT

PARTI 2: CONCEPTUAL STACKING DIAGRAM

PARTI 3: BUILDING ACTIVITY GRADIENT



# Site Plan

The architectural design celebrates the radial geometry of the 1960s-era campus plan. The new Library and Learning Connections rises above its neighboring two-story buildings to create a striking beacon in the heart of the campus.

Taking advantage of the Bay Area's temperate climate, a series of outdoor classrooms and small-group study areas wrap the building's south and east plazas. These new amenities activate the building's perimeter and compliment the existing amphitheater while increasing biodiversity through expanded natural habitats and softscapes. Outdoor furnishing, as well as extended Wi-Fi and power transforms the once placeless Grand Court into a range of student-scaled gathering spaces.

## LEGEND

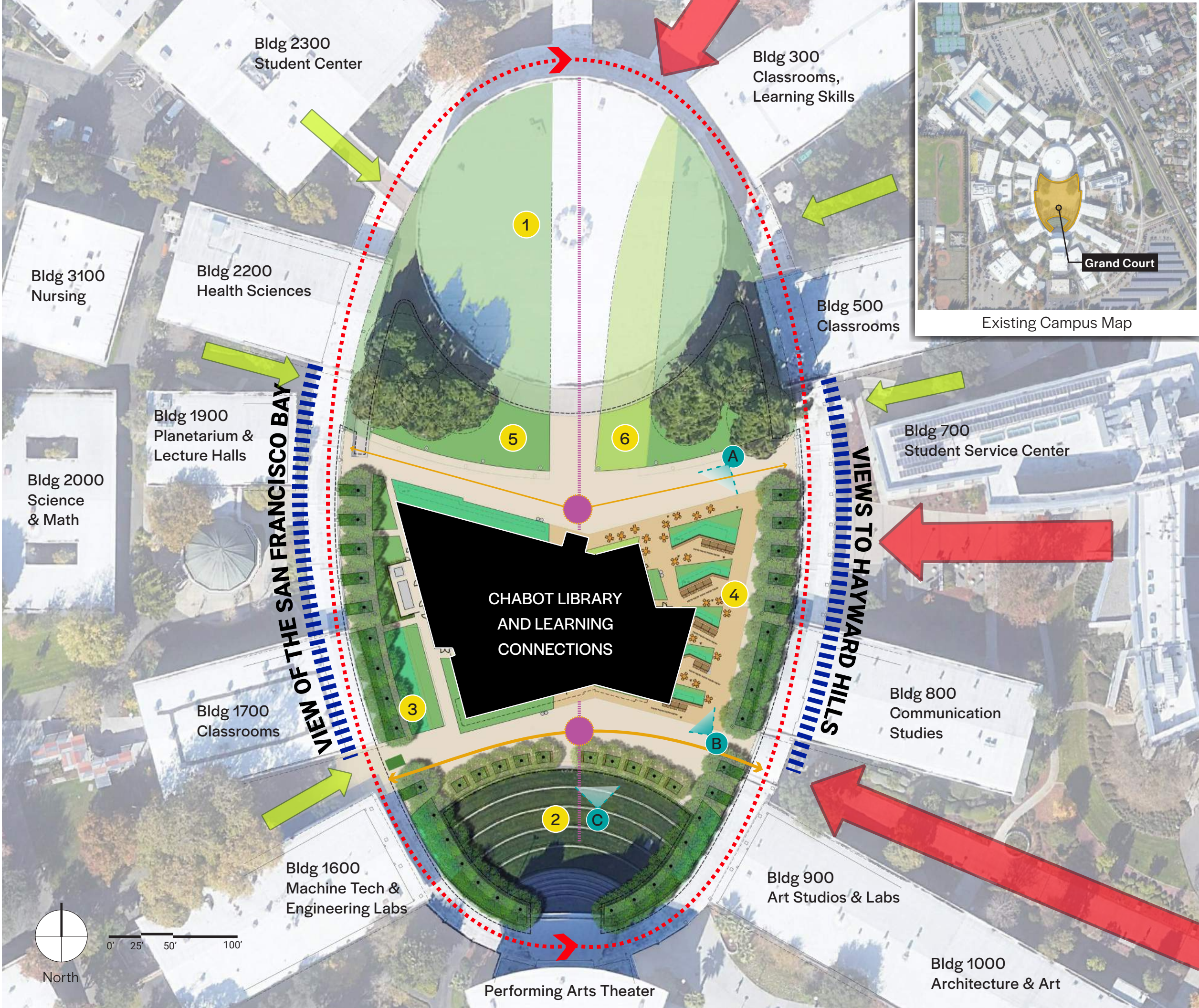
- MAIN WALKWAY
- SECONDARY WALKWAYS
- SITE AXIS
- MAIN ENTRANCE

## PERSPECTIVE VIEWS

- A NORTHEAST VIEW
- B SOUTHEAST VIEW
- C AMPHITHEATER VIEW

## SITE ELEMENTS

- 1 (E) LIBRARY/ FUTURE QUAD
- 2 (E) AMPHITHEATER
- 3 BIOSWALES
- 4 COLLABORATION LOUNGES
- 5 ESPLANADE
- 6 GLADE





## Southeast View

The building's architecture is expressive and instructive. On the exterior, the building's two wings are articulated by distinct façade treatments. On the north side, fiber reinforced concrete panels link the new architecture with the original campus. The south side is completely glazed, with a custom exterior sunshade that frames views of the surrounding plaza, campus, and community. Inside the building, the unique structural system uses aspirational, upwardly-oriented, and interlocking 'V' braces that reflect the staggered building section while maximizing public space. Integrated wood benches and counters bring a human scale to the grand spaces.





Northeast View

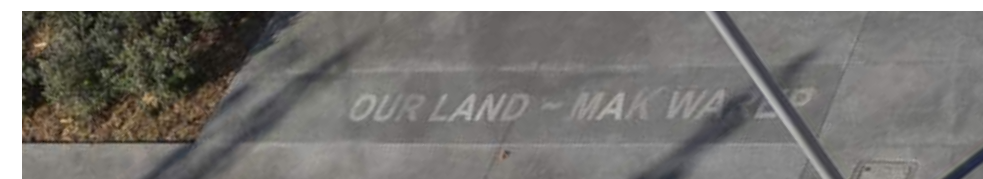
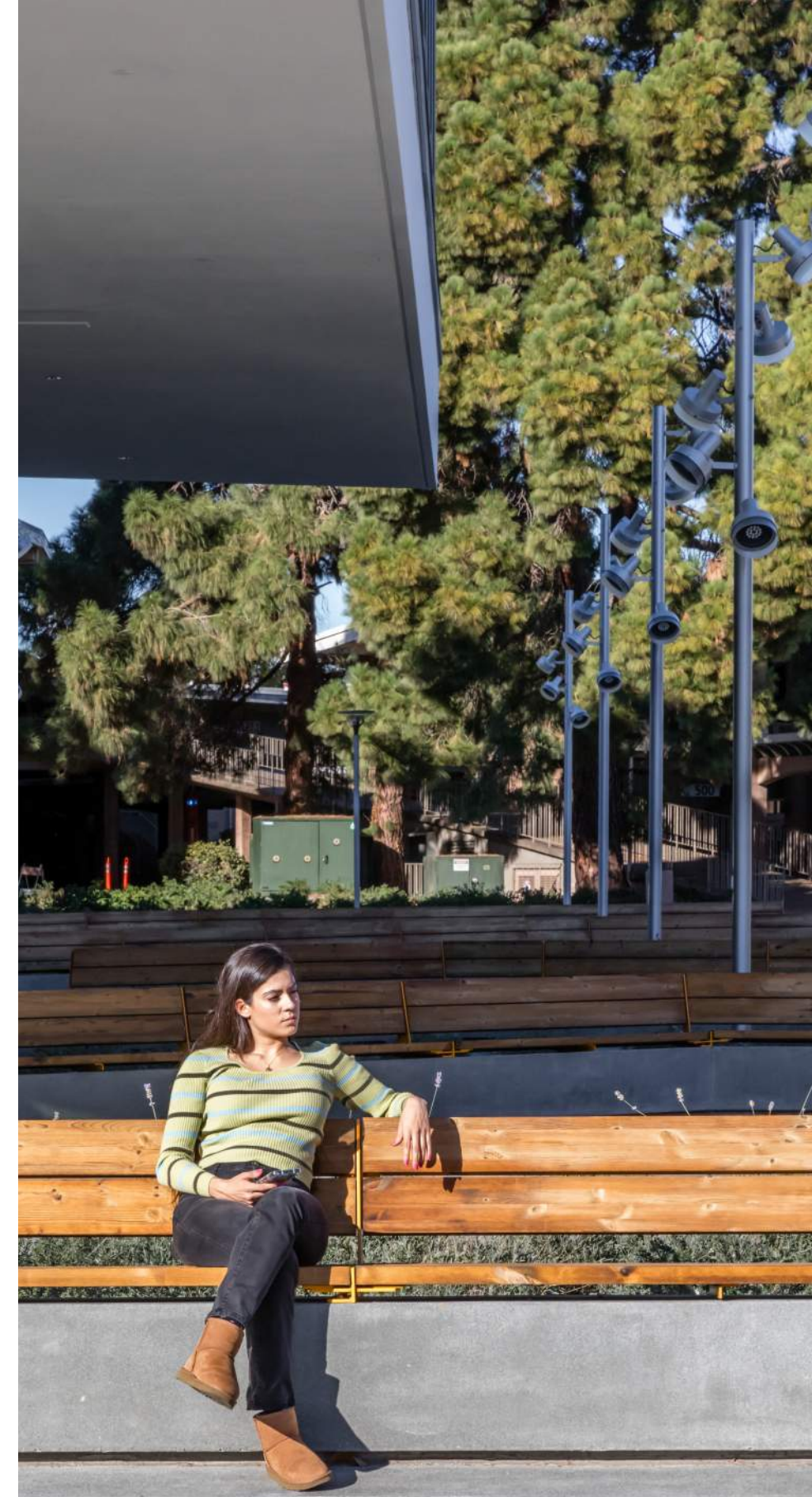






## Inclusive, Welcoming Outdoor Spaces

Four outdoor collaboration lounges incorporate native flora and an integral land acknowledgment to promote inclusion within the student community as well as to the indigenous communities and ecologies of Chabot College and the East Bay. A land acknowledgement is a formal statement that recognizes and respects Indigenous peoples as the traditional stewards of a specific land. This sensitive integration of the new building and outdoor gathering spaces furthers the district's goal to foster community connections and student success through a sense of belonging.

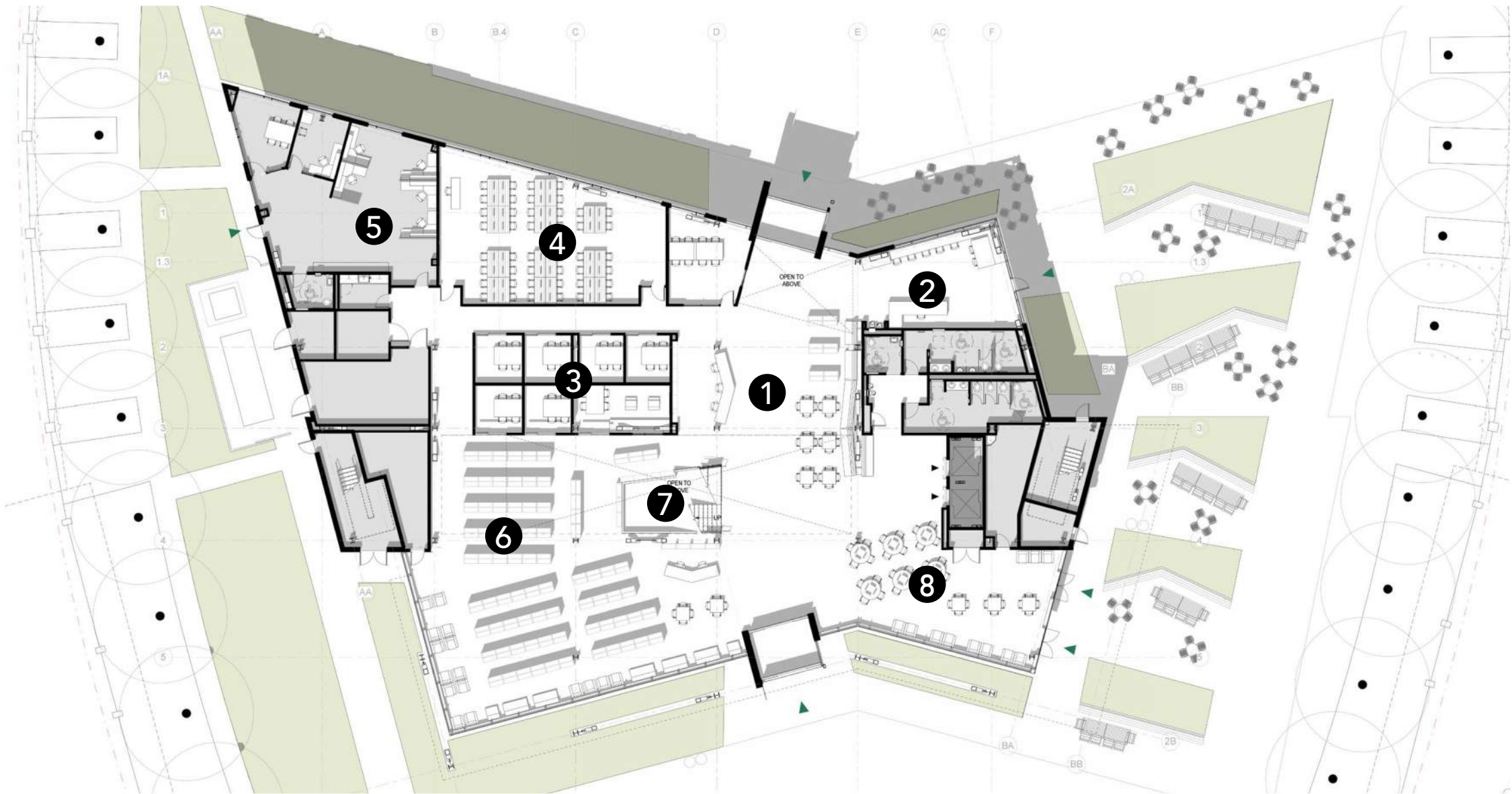


Land Acknowledgment

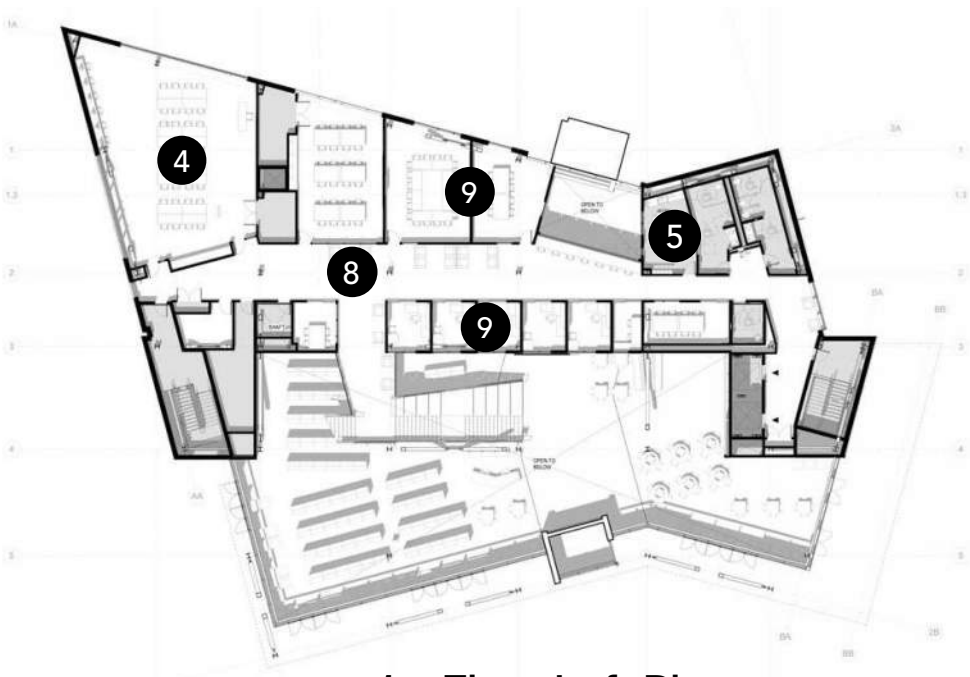


# Floor Plans

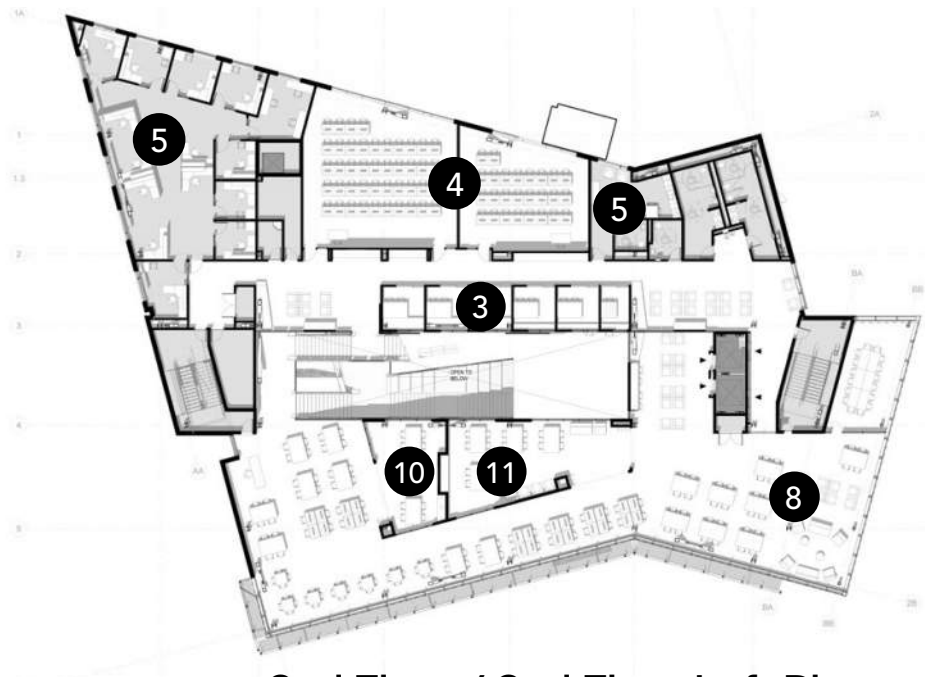
Inside the building, the intersecting geometries of the campus pathways inspire unique settings for gatherings of all sizes, from one-on-one tutoring to commencement events. Ample interior glazing enhances transparency and expresses the Library and Learning Connections' collaborative nature.



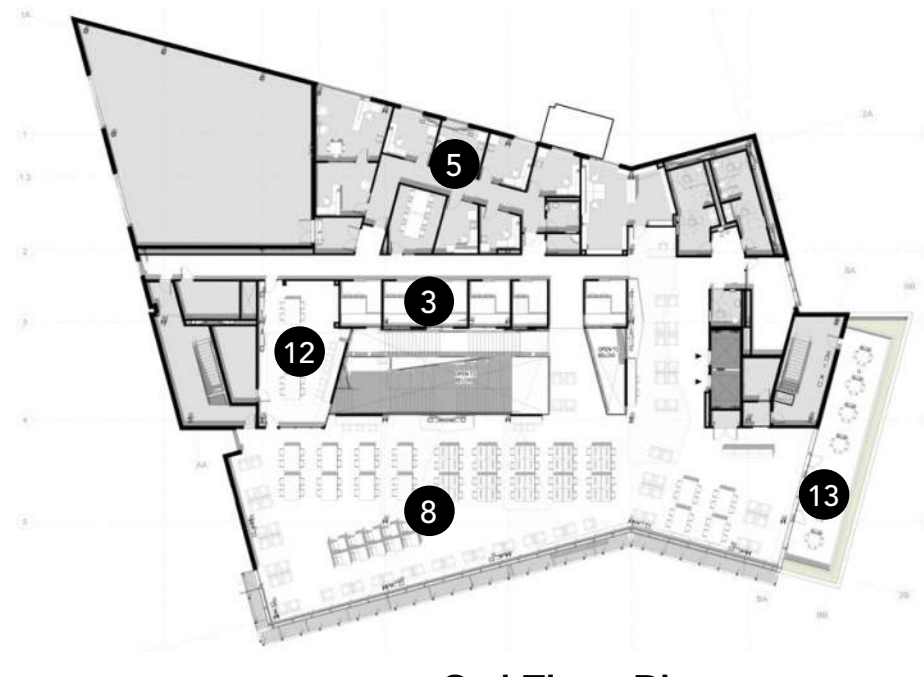
1st Floor Plan



1st Floor Loft Plan



2nd Floor / 2nd Floor Loft Plan



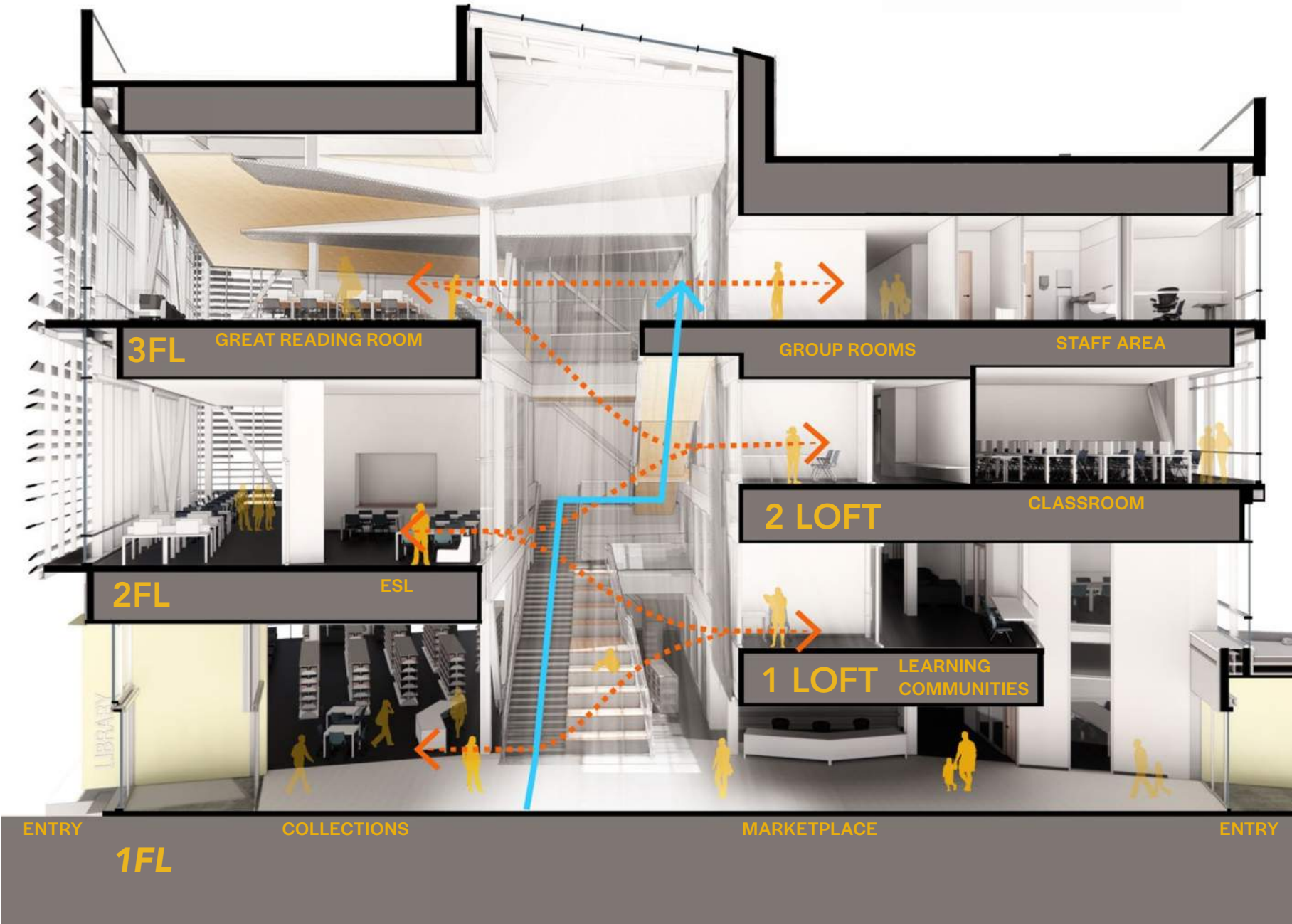
3rd Floor Plan



# Making Connections

The full-height, east-west oriented atrium pulls daylight deep into the building while creating a shared, community-focused social stair. This central space is flanked by visually interconnected offset floor plates which reveal the Library’s myriad of gathering spaces as students and faculty move vertically through the building from the first to the third floor.

The four-story atrium provides unobstructed visual connections through the building. From the inclusive, welcoming first floor, through the diverse communities on the second floor, to the equitable great reading room, study spaces, and roof terrace on the third floor, the library provides expansive opportunities for student wellbeing and community building.



North-South Section Perspective Looking West



Atrium + Social Stair



## First Floor Atrium + Social Stair

A fully glazed first floor invites users in to explore and experience the building's unique offerings. Beyond architecture, the spaces on the first floor are designed to be inclusive and welcoming, with a community café, soft seating, and general library collections accessible from the north, east, and south sides of the Grand Court. As one moves into the building's atrium and up the social stair, clear pictograms unveil the vertically zoned acoustical strategy of the library, from dynamic and active to peaceful and quiet.







# First Floor Loft - Learning Communities + Social Stair

The atrium and social stair also functions as a large formal and informal social gathering and event space

Mobile  
Podium  
Area



# A Place of Belonging

Branded, unique learning communities within the library elevate distinctive cultural experiences and expressions, giving not just physical spaces, but voice and representation to Chabot's student body.

The library breaks down language barriers by providing English as a Second Language (ESL) and materials for students, caregivers, and community members. Dedicated, student-run learning communities center and elevate the lived experiences of Latino, African-American, ESL, and returning citizen students. For example:

**RISE: Restorative Integrated Self-Education:** The RISE program helps students who were once incarcerated access the support and resources they need to achieve academic success.

**Umoja:** Focused on African American history, literacy, and culture, Umoja provides disadvantaged students with resources to help them graduate.



Connecting Learning Communities



Celebrating Community Branding



# Third Floor Great Reading Room

The third floor great reading room rises above campus, reconnecting students to the stunning natural ecology. From dramatic views of the San Francisco Bay to the west, to the East Bay foothills visible from the outdoor terrace, this full-floor gathering space welcomes the entire student body.

Quiet Study Room



Scan the QR code to watch a short video message about the educational spaces from Pedro Reynoso, Chabot College's Outreach and Instruction Librarian







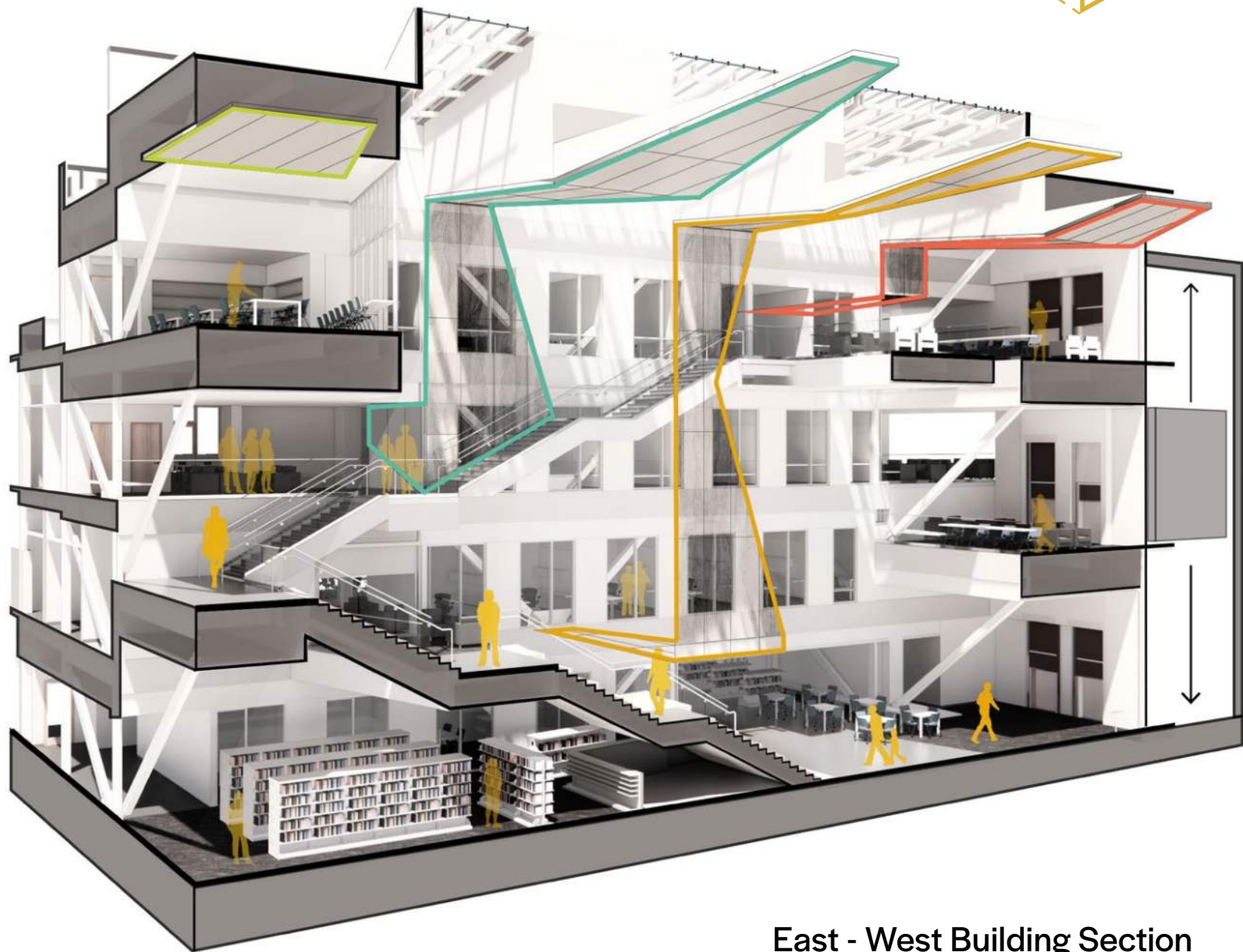
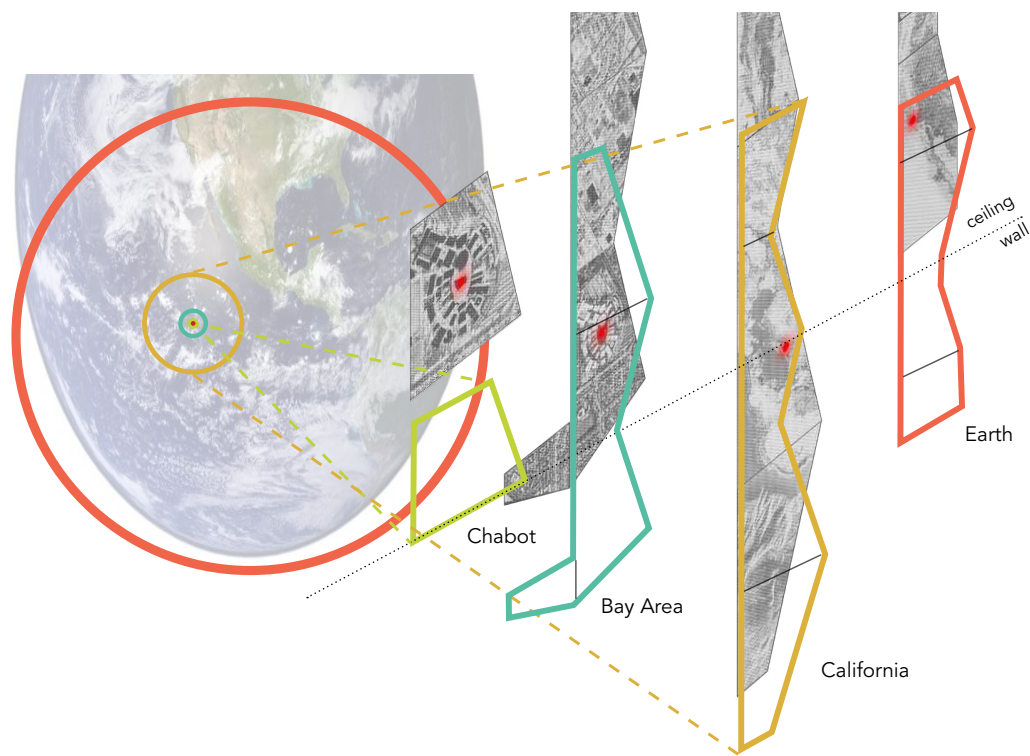
Quiet Study Room + Holistic Student Experience

The quiet study room features informal lounge seating, side tables, and portable tables and chairs for individual and small-group study. The building also includes meditation and wellness space for contemplative thought and reprieve. Family Study Rooms which provide a reservable space for students with families to bring their children. It will have child play areas to keep children close by and occupied while students do work, and also prevent children from disrupting other students.

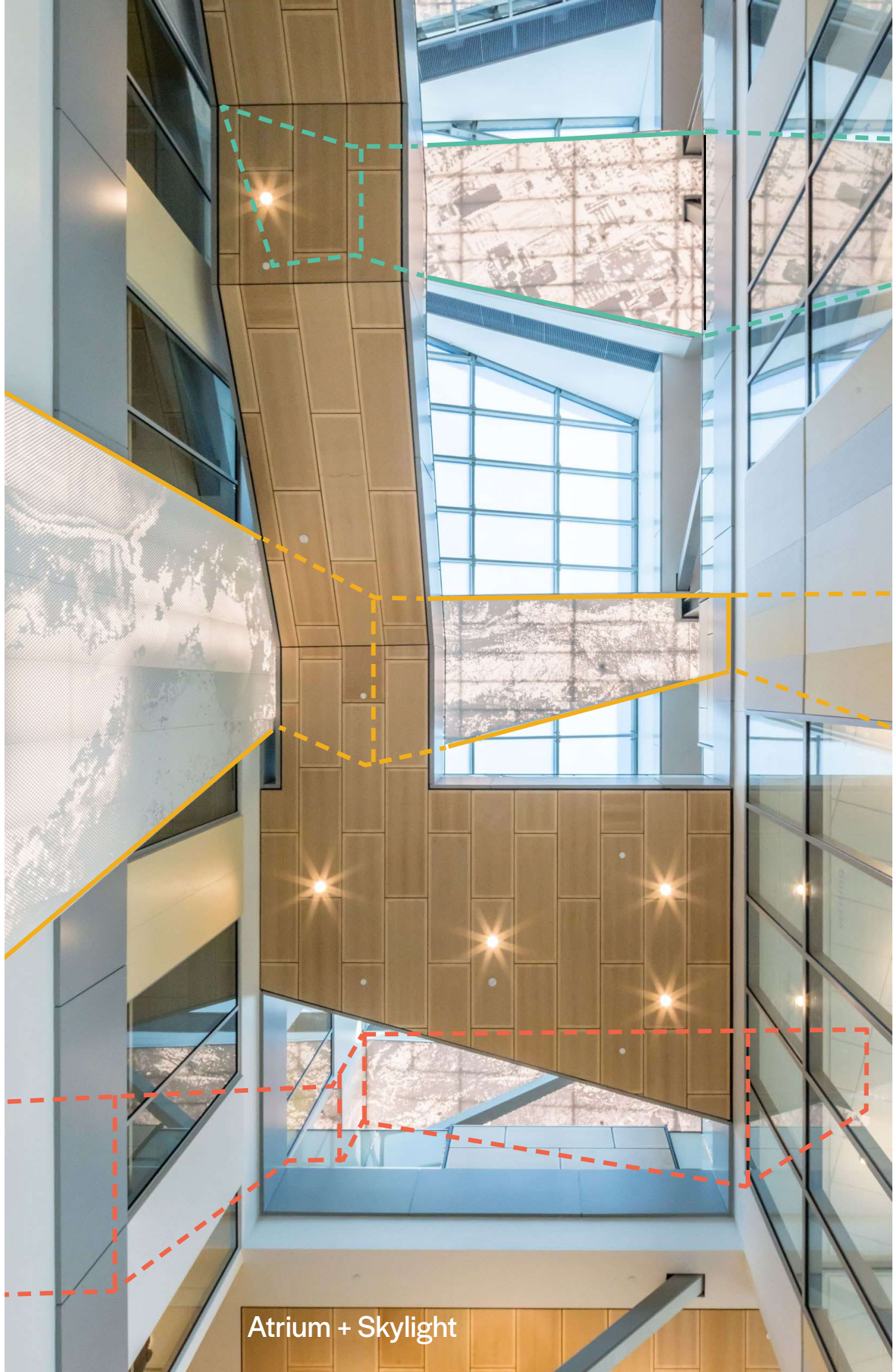


# Connecting Beyond

The atrium’s social stair weaves back and forth across the space, physically linking varied program areas. Four large-scale perforated metal “pathways” complement this weave by wrapping from the first-floor ceiling up the atrium’s north facade and into the great reading room ceiling. The perforated panels incorporate diffused, back-lit acoustical baffles, and glow in the evening. The custom water-jet-cut maps reflect both the district’s mission statement and the aspirational nature of the library itself, connecting students to the campus, Bay Area, California, and the world.



East - West Building Section



Atrium + Skylight



76.2%  
DAYLIGHT

82.5%  
QUALITY VIEWS



### Second & Third Floor - Flexible Learning Environment

The spaces offer variety of seating accommodations with indoor-outdoor views. Access to Wi-Fi, powered computer stations, benches, lounge furniture, and flexible tables and chairs provide a modern study environment.



### Outdoor Terrace

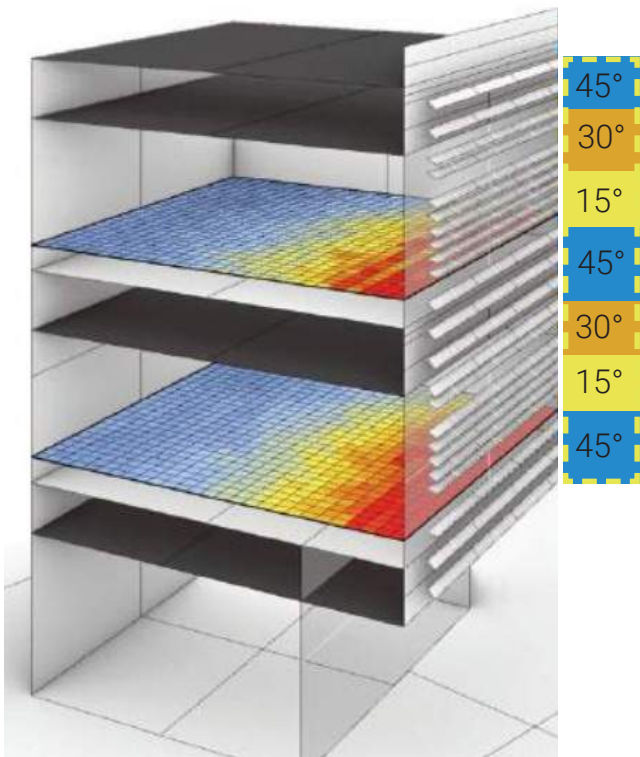
The outdoor terrace offers a 180 degree view towards the performing art's outdoor stage, amphitheater, main entrance of the campus, Hayward Hills and Grand Court.



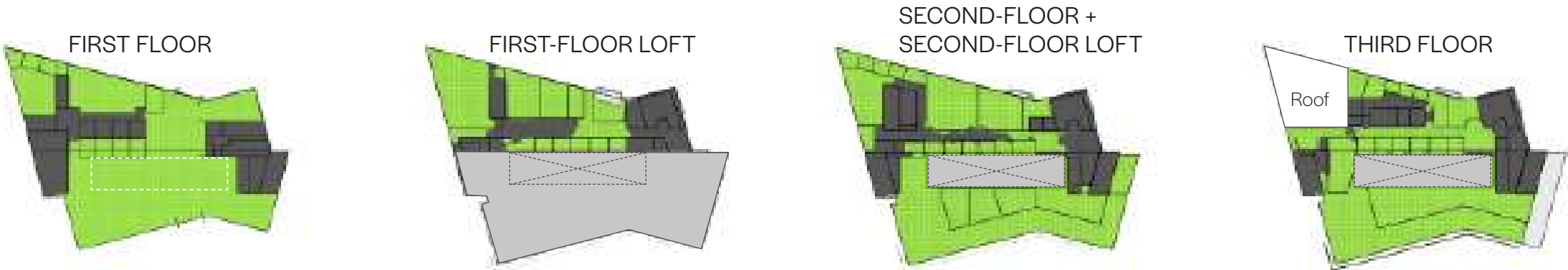
# High-Performance Screen

The exterior louvered shading system is specifically designed to respond to local climate conditions and the needs of the interior building program. To optimize energy performance and daylighting, louver size, spacing, and angles are carefully designed to frame views, minimize glare and provide appropriate amount of daylight porosity. As a result, eight different panel types were developed and varied across the façade.

Effective exterior shading, building fenestration, and skylight design optimize daylighting inside the building where 76.2% of the regularly occupied spaces receive daylight.



Environmentally Responsive Shading Panel



Annualized Spatial Daylighting Autonomy (sDA)



# Environmental Respite

The project transforms a predominantly paved central plaza into a vibrant outdoor lounge, framed by a canopy of shade trees. The design triples the existing amount of native and adaptive vegetation from 11% to 33% of the project site. The new design invites students to connect with the campus’s natural and cultural heritage. **Located on the traditional lands of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe, Chabot College honors Indigenous heritage with Ohlone words inscribed into the pavement throughout the Grand Court.** The third-floor terrace of the library offers views of the surrounding mountains, grounding the campus in its broader regional ecosystem. The design incorporates low-maintenance plant species, reducing overall upkeep and promoting long-term resilience. Vegetated stormwater bioretention gardens filter runoff from roofs and paved surfaces, improving water quality before it enters the storm drain system. **By tripling the vegetative area, the project enhances the habitat for migratory species and pollinators, contributing to the campus’ overall ecological vitality.** The library is grounded in the landscape through generously planted bioretention areas. An allée of trees softens the edge of the Grand Court’s colonnade while creating shaded outdoor pathways through the site.



Native Planting

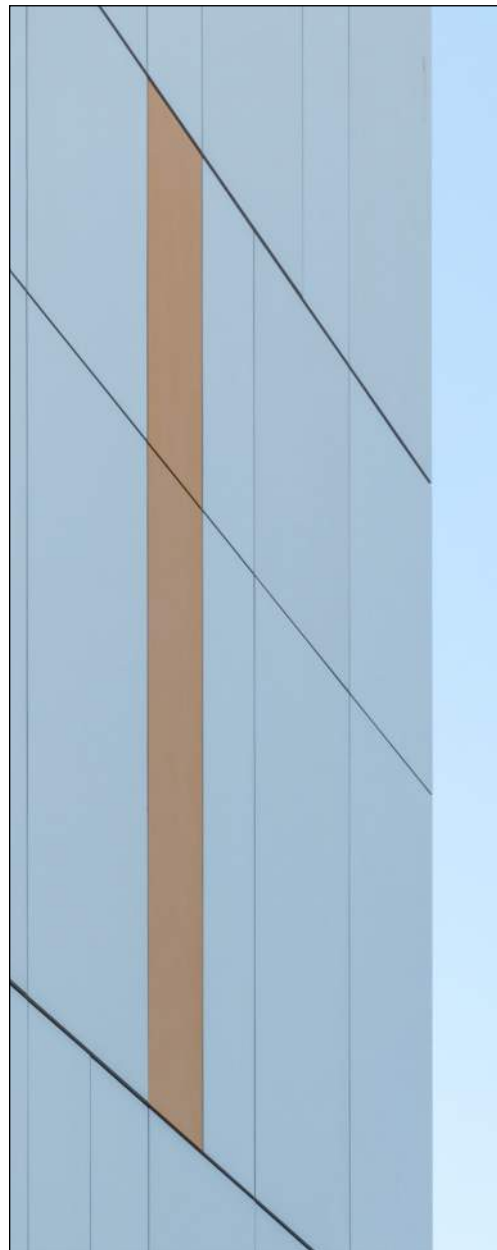


Absorbing Nature

34.2%  
INDOOR WATER USE  
REDUCTION

100%  
POTABLE WATER  
REDUCTION FOR  
IRRIGATION





Fiber Reinforced Concrete Panel System



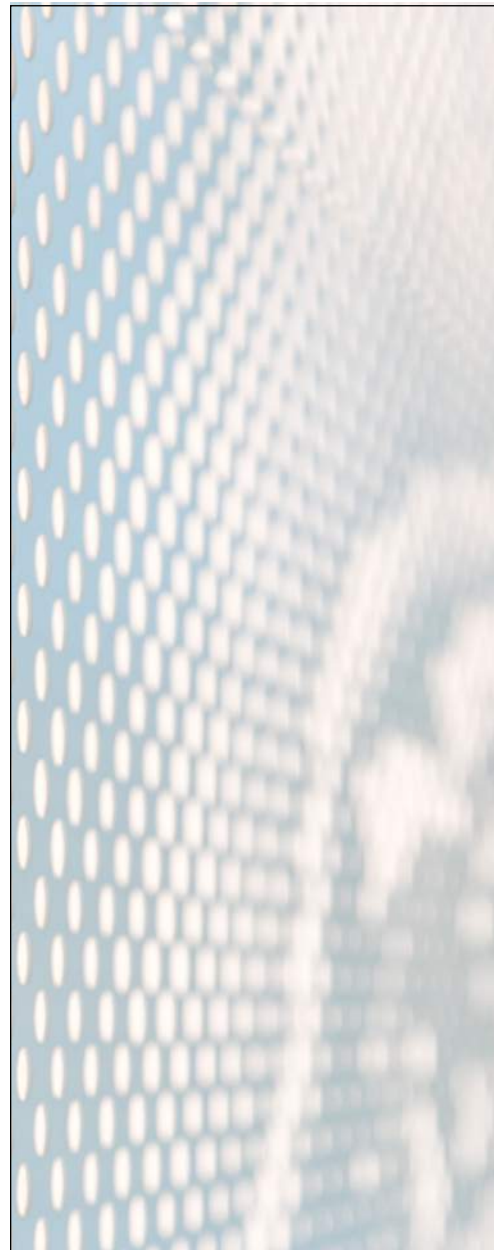
Aluminum Curtain Wall with Low-E Glazing and Aluminum Airfoil Shading System



Terrazzo and Wood Flooring



Staggered Acoustical Wood Ceiling Panels



Backlit Perforated Metal Panel Wall and Ceiling System



Acoustical Wood Grill Ceiling Panels

## Sustainable Design Decision


The building materiality is inspired by the local natural environment and Chabot College's branding and campus context. The soft and neutral color palette includes sand and wood tones of the nearby bay, hills, and redwoods. Glass and aluminum louvers reflect and filter views of the surrounding natural environment. The materials bring warmth and reflect identity of the local and regional geography. The exterior fiber-reinforced concrete panel and cement plaster systems complement the pre-cast concrete materiality of the existing campus buildings because they are both based on cement aggregates. In addition, terrazzo floors depict soft shell-like textures. Chabot College's yellow branding accents are incorporated in the exterior and interior design which are featured on exterior panels, metal trims, terrazzo floors, and painted interior walls. The design team selected regional materials, materials with recycled content, and with environmental product declarations.

The project was also designed to minimize embodied carbon. Early in the design process, the design team evaluated different building configurations with varying heights and footprint sizes on the site. By finding synergy and efficiencies between programs and departments, the design team was able to reduce the overall building size. In addition, the split level concept that features atrium space adjoined with three-story and four-story wings reduced the overall building height which reduced overall material use for the library's superstructure and envelope. Carefully articulated exposed steel brace frames and gravity columns reduced the need for additional materials and finishes, and displayed the tectonics of construction. These thoughtful strategies all work together to create a building that promotes wellbeing and celebrates the local environment.




# Positive Environmental Impact


Chabot College is working toward LEED certification for the entire campus. The Library and Learning Connections project was awarded **LEED Gold** certification in December 2024, exceeding the goal of LEED Silver set at the start of the project. Some of the key sustainability strategies are noted below:




**Optimized Energy Performance:**  
The project has net predicted **EUI 33.15** (gross EUI 37.03). This is a **31.2%** annual energy cost reduction from LEED baseline.




**Renewable Energy:**  
The project has allocated renewable energy from campus PV arrays to offset **10.2%** of the total energy by cost




**Access to Daylight and Views:**  
Daylight Access - **76.2%** of regularly occupied spaces  
Quality Views Access - **82.5%** of regularly occupied spaces




**Ecological Site Design:**  
1. Welcoming exterior open spaces  
2. Reduced heat island effect with light-colored paving and roof.  
3. Minimized light pollution with responsible selection of exterior lighting fixtures.




**Design for Active Occupants:**  
The design encourages physical activity and occupant well-being with inviting social staircase. Use of stairs by default instead of elevator also reduces electricity demand.




**Water Efficient Landscaping:**  
The landscaping and irrigation systems are designed to reduce potable water consumption for irrigation by **100% with on-site non-potable well supplied recycled water** throughout the campus.




**Indoor Water Use Reduction:**  
The project achieved a 34.2% reduction in potable water demand within the building through the use of water-efficient plumbing fixtures



**Soil Restoration:**  
**33.25%** of previously disturbed site area restored with native or adapted vegetation



**Sustainable Material Selection:**  
The project used products with optimized environmental product declarations, material health disclosures, and low VOC building materials. **17.2%** of the products by cost met LEED criteria for responsible sourcing of raw materials.



**Promoting Alternative Transportation:**  
1. Pedestrian have access to many nearby diverse uses  
2. Bicycle network, storage facilities, and showers are distributed throughout the campus  
3. Students have access to frequent public transit

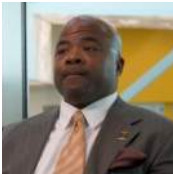
# Positive Impact - Education + Student Life + Community

Since its opening, the project has transformed student life on campus, exceeded everyone’s expectations. The campus’s heart buzzes with life and many stakeholders noted that they have never seen this many students in one place on campus.


*“More than 35,000 Chabot College students have visited the new library and learning center - the tallest building on campus - this semester, (in first two months) already surpassing last year’s total. College administrators are calling it an educational “renaissance” after years of distance learning since pandemic.”* - Mercury News


*“It is really important to have that visible centerpiece of the campus, which this has been since day one. It’s such a modern and contemporary building, and we really designed it with a lot of student feedback in mind.”* - Paul Pinza, Chabot College Dean of Liberal Arts, Mercury News

*“Chabot College student David Sanchez Delgado said he’s used the library and learning center nearly every weekday this semester. As a computer science major, he said the designated quiet places have helped him achieve the focus needs when writing code.”* - Mercury News



Scan the QR code to watch a short video message about the value of the library from Jamal A Cooks, Ph.D., President of Chabot College





Scan the QR code to watch a short video message from Angel Velasco-Carlos, Student at Chabot College

