

# ***THE POTENTIAL OF ARCHITECTURE TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS IN NORTHERN ONTARIO.***

*Christopher Baziw*

04/03/2021



**WHO AM I?**

AN ARCHITECT



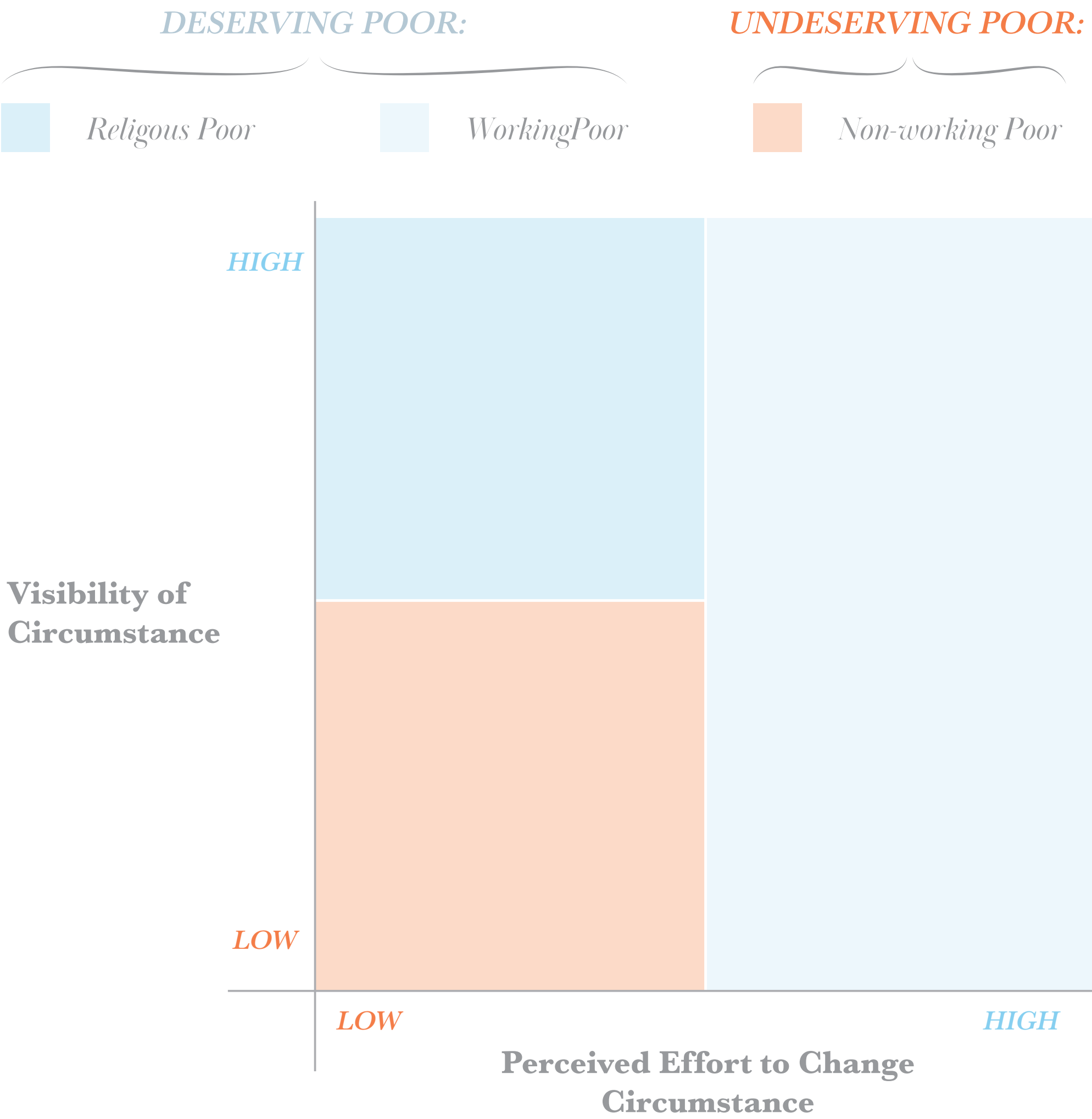
NOT AN EXPERT

*Daily breakfast provided by Elgin St Mission.*



A BRIEF INTRODUCTION: **COMMON PERCEPTIONS OF POVERTY**

CLASIFICATIONS OF POVERTY:



## *WHAT IS HOMELESSNESS?*

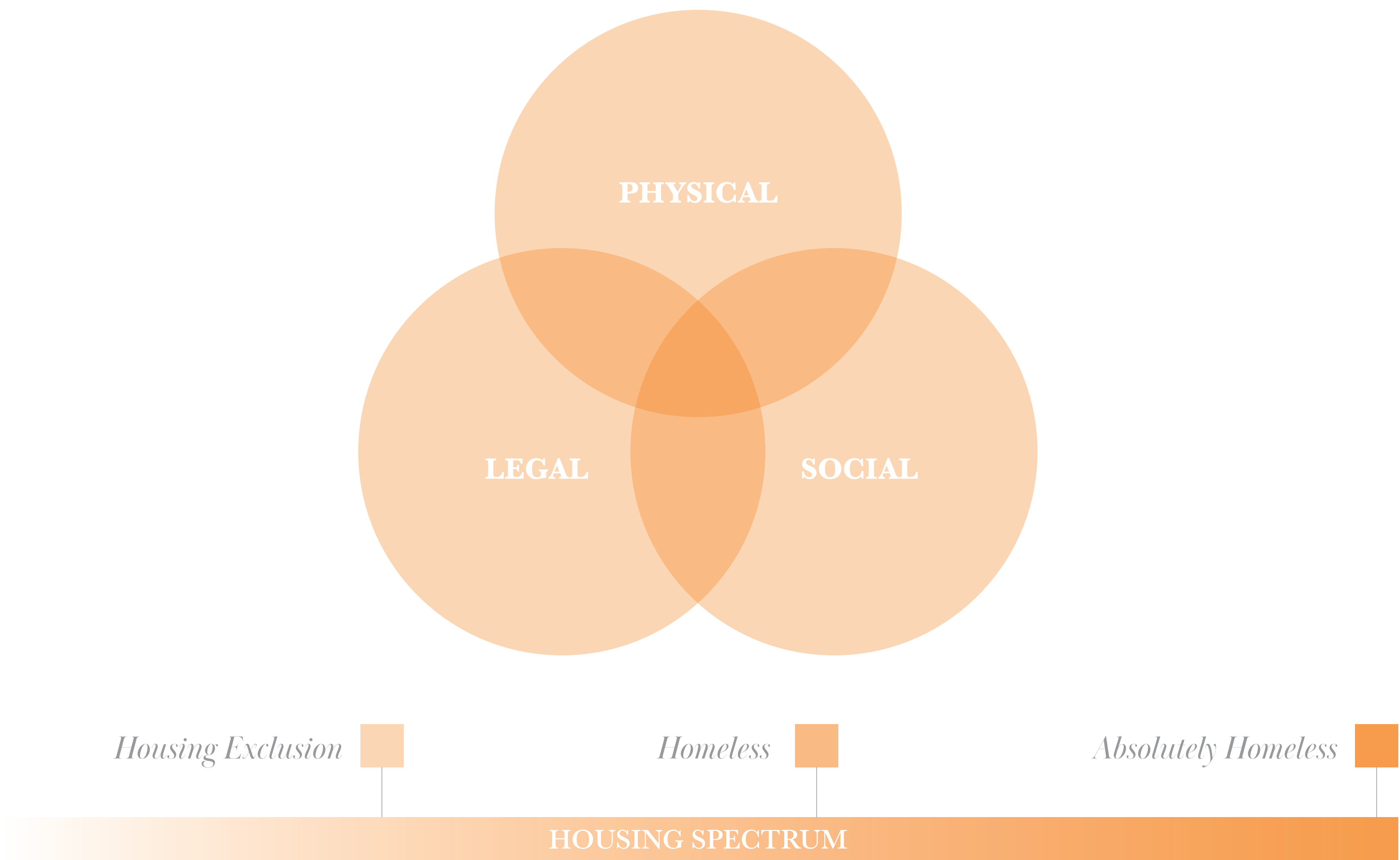
OUR COLLECTIVE FAILURE AS A SOCIETY TO MAINTAIN HOUSING AS A BASIC HUMAN RIGHT

## *WHAT SHOULD HOMELESSNESS BE?*

RARE, BRIEF, NONRECURRING



DEFINING HOMELESSNESS: MORE THAN A LACK OF A HOUSE



HOW CAN ARCHITECTURE ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS?

SOCIETAL HOME    - - - - - ➤    PUBLIC SPACE

INDIVIDUAL HOME    - - - - - ➤    PRIVATE SPACE

**SOCIETAL HOME**

**PUBLIC SPACE**



# SOCIETAL RESPONSES TO THE PRESENCE OF INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS:

## EXCLUSION THROUGH CRIMINALIZATION

### Past



15th Century wood carving of beggar being whipped through the streets after the Poor Law of 1601.

### Present



Downtown Sudbury bylaw enforcement.



# CONFLICT: DEFENSIVE AND HOSTILE ARCHITECTURE DOWNTOWN SUDBURY

## Definition:

**Hostile Architecture:** (Defensive Architecture, Unpleasant Design, Exclusionary Design, Defensive Urban Design)

Hostile architecture is an urban-design strategy that uses elements of the built environment to *purposefully* guide or *restrict behaviour* in order to prevent crime and maintain order. It often *targets* people who use or rely on public space more than others, such as youth and the *homeless*, by restricting the physical behaviours they can engage in.

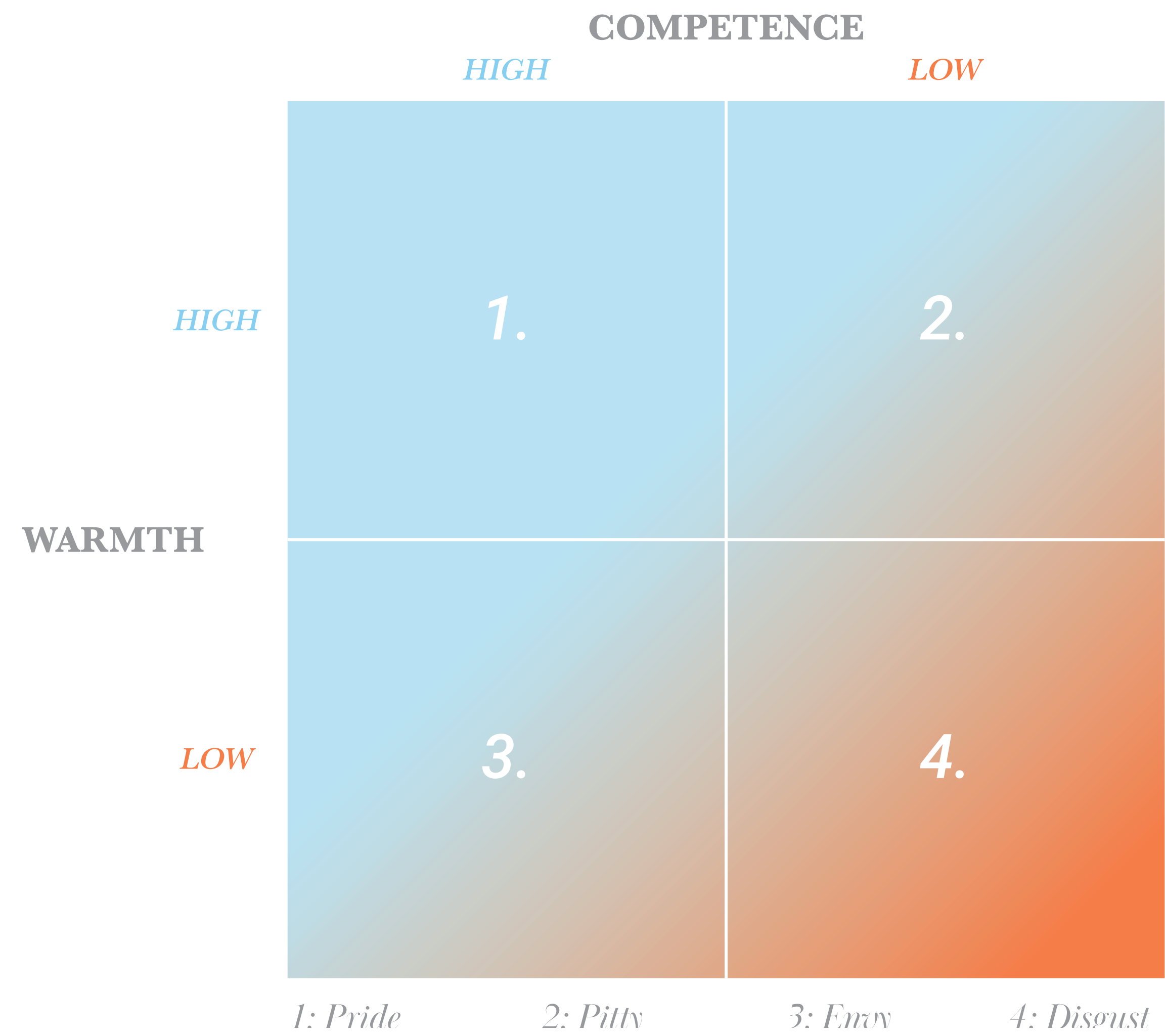
Chellew, Cara (2019). “Defending Suburbia: Exploring the use of defensive urban design outside of the city centre”. Canadian Journal of Urban Research. 28: 19–33.



Collage of legal and physical manifestations of exclusion found in Sudbury. Photos by Author.



WHERE DOES PREJUDICE COME FROM:



Harris L. T., Fiske S. T. (2006). Dehumanizing the lowest of the low: neuro-imaging responses to extreme outgroups. Psychol. Sci. 17 847–853. 10.1111/j.1467-9280.2006.01793.



*WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?*

**Invisibility** is at the core of the problem of why we can't solve homelessness. Not seeing someones humanity **enables** us to treat them with **indifference** and **malice**.



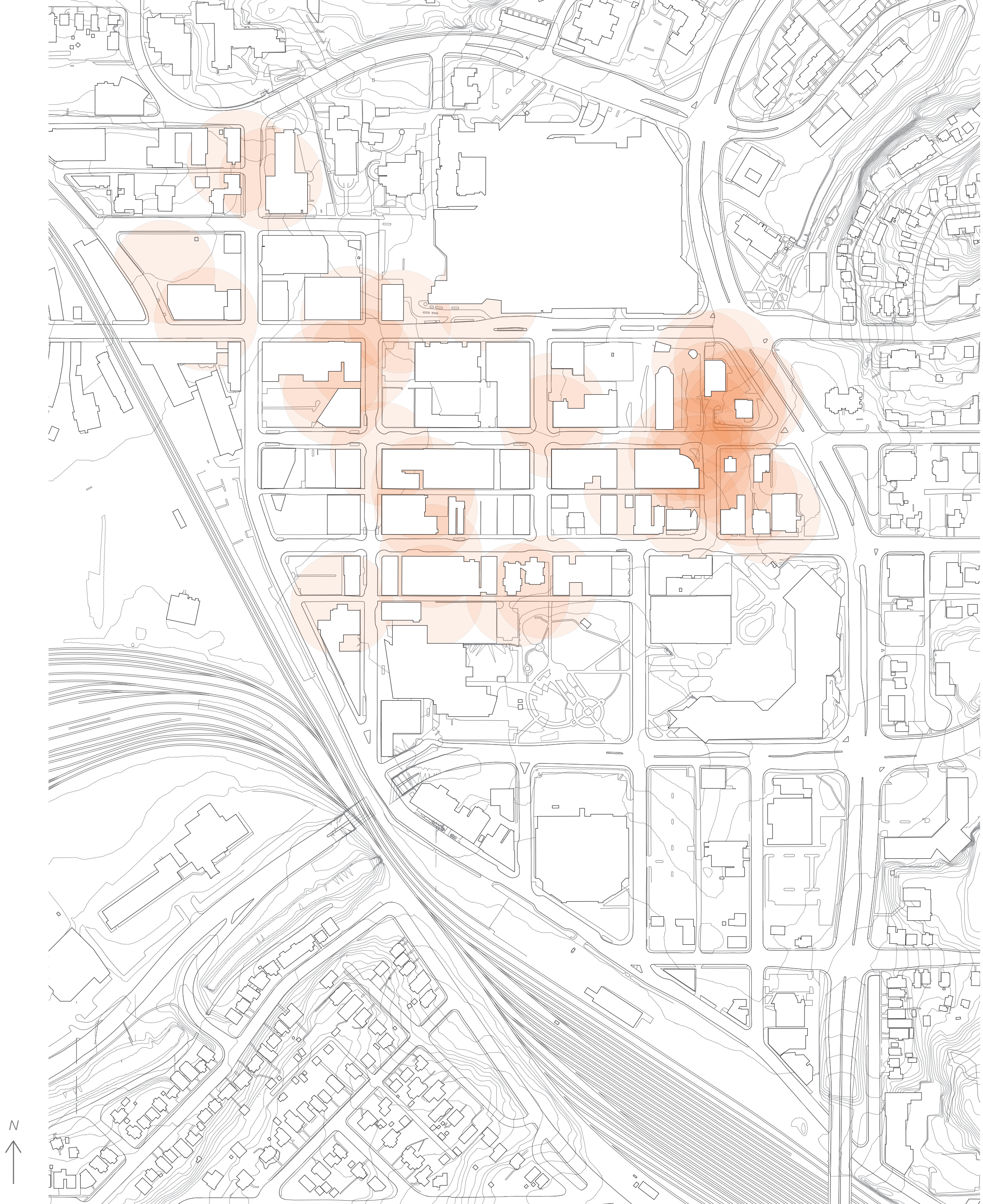
HOW DOES OUR DOWNTOWN LANDSCAPE **ENABLE** AND **PERPETUATE** PREJUDICE?



Collage of legal and physical manifestations of exclusion found in Sudbury. Photos by Author.



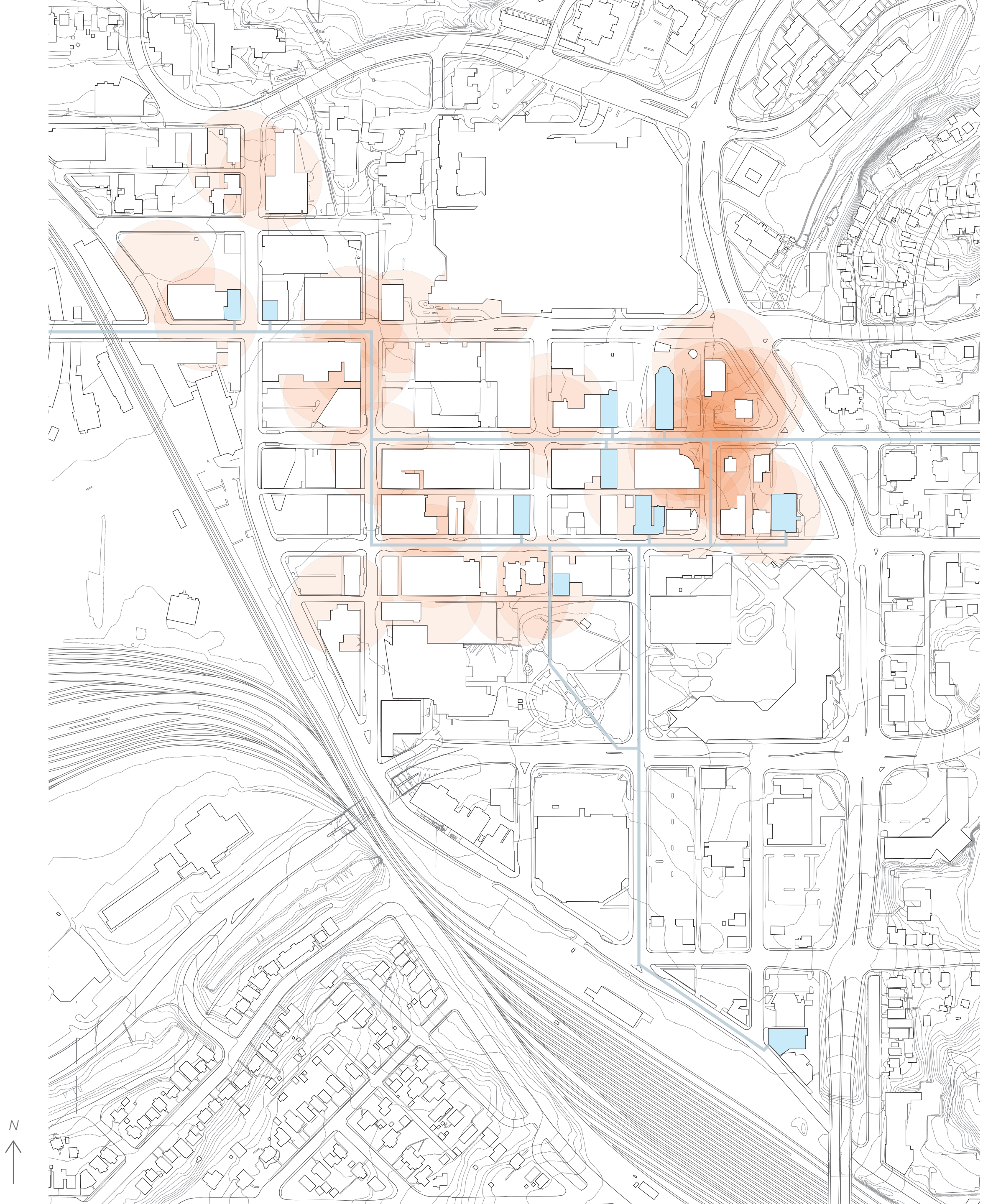
MAPPING THE CONFLICT:



Map of downtown Sudbury, each orange circle representing a 100m radius around a hostile sign.



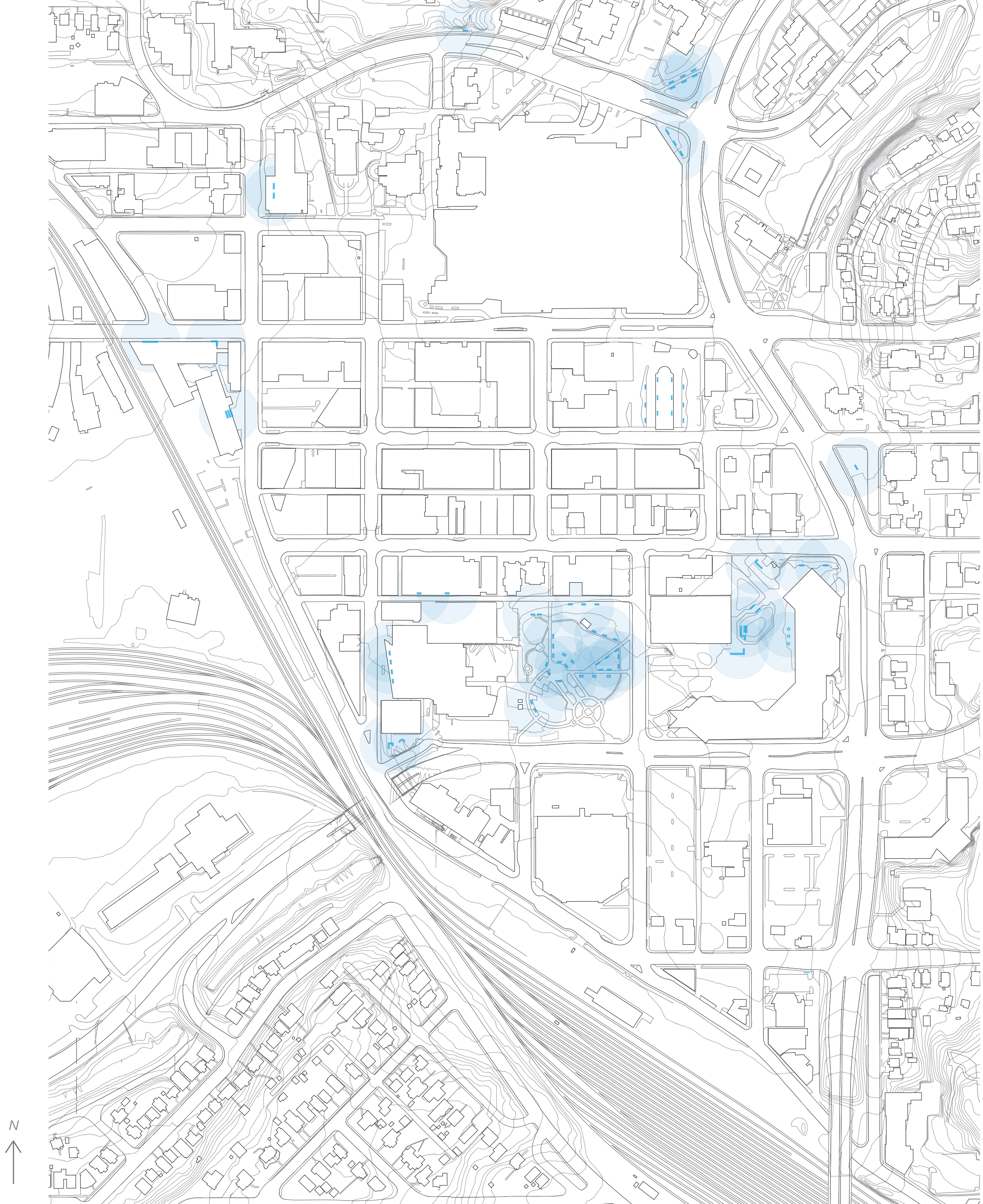
FINDING CORRELATION:



Map of downtown Sudbury, each orange circle representing a 100m radius around a hostile sign.



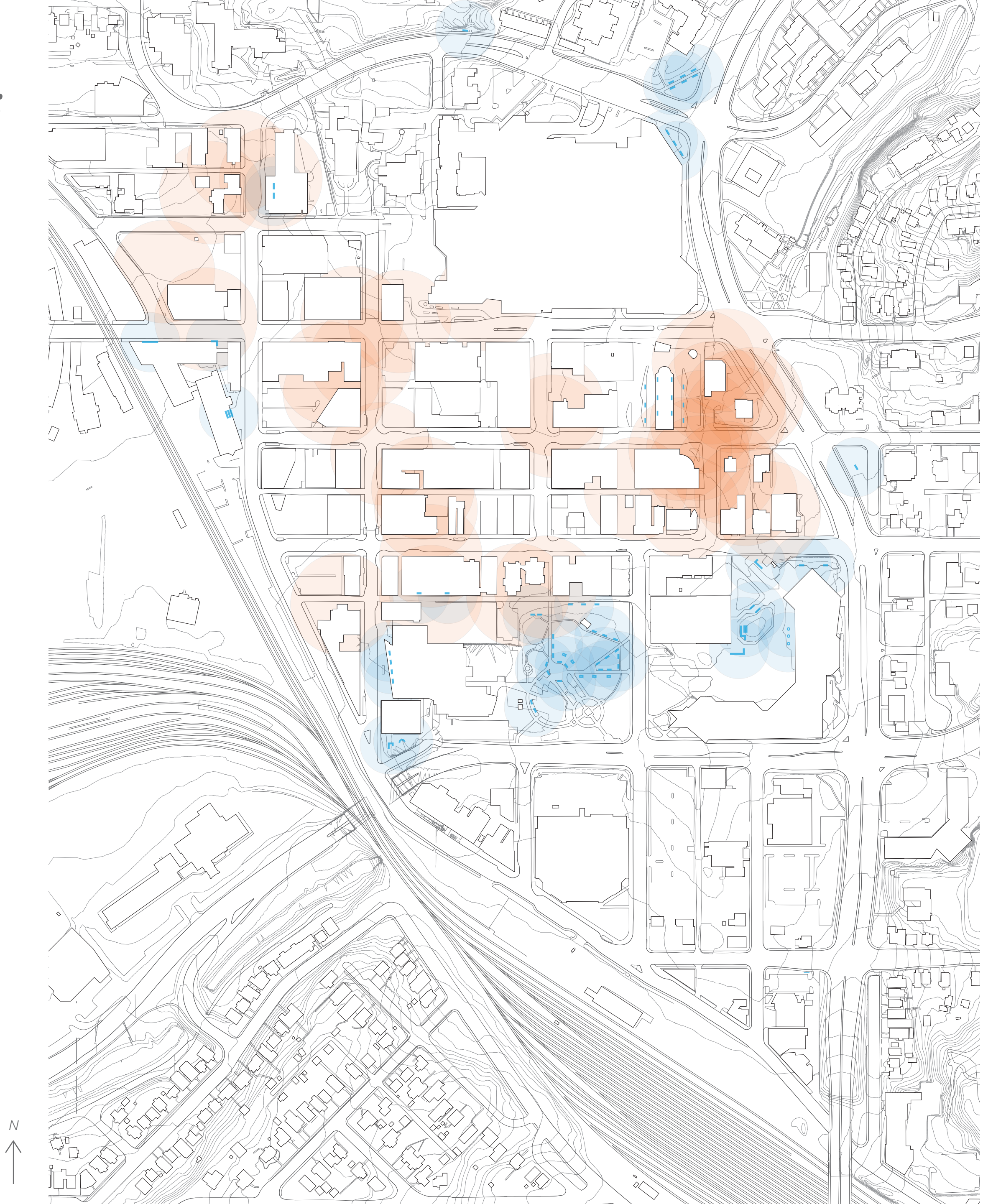
WHERE ARE BENCHES:



Map of downtown Sudbury, each blue circle representing a 50m radius around a bench.



WHERE AREN'T BENCHES:



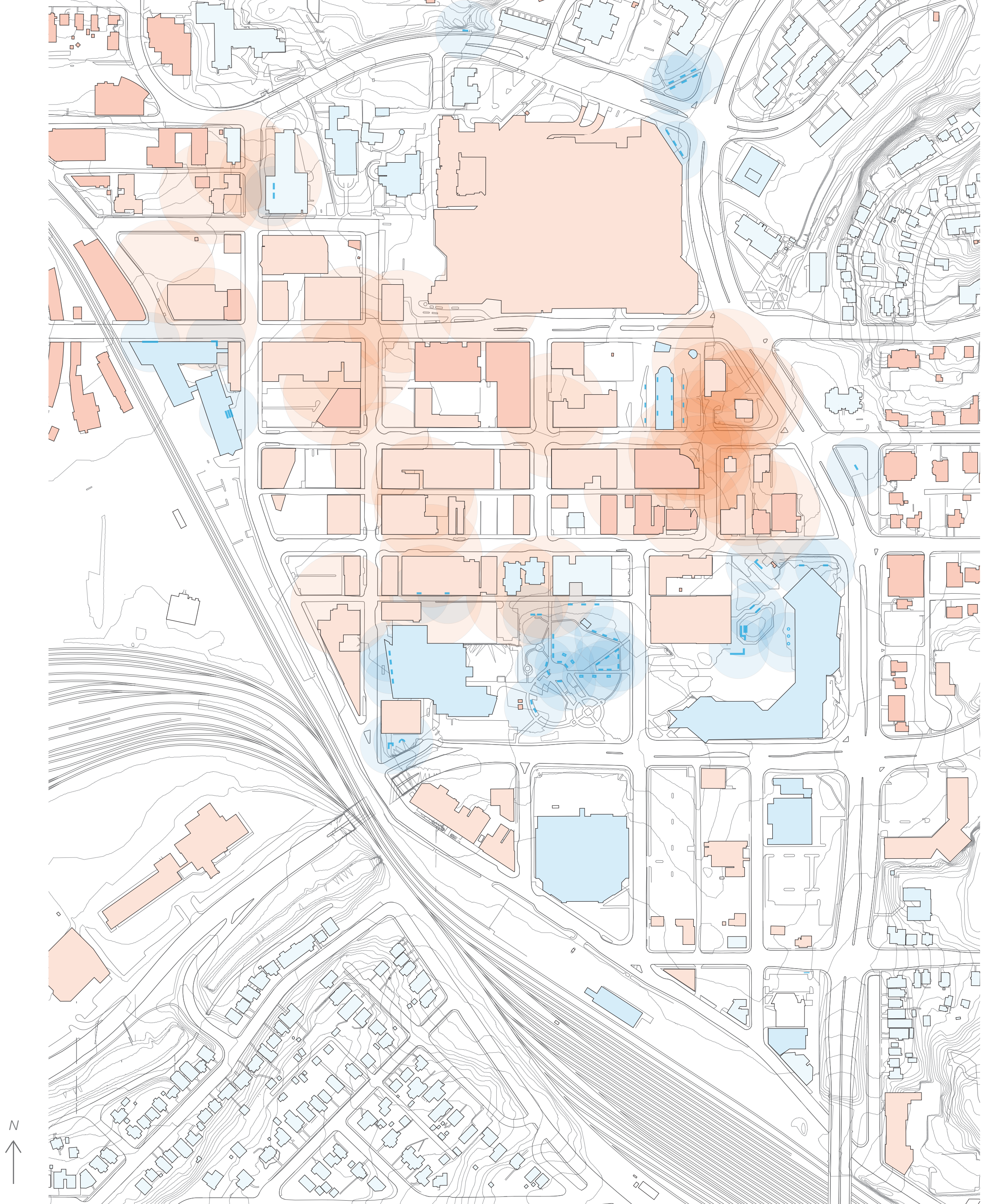
Map of downtown Sudbury, each orange circle representing a 100m radius around a hostile sign.



FINDING CORRELATION:

Street Level Program Legend:

- Commercial
- Office
- Industrial
- Civic/Institutional
- Religious
- Housing



Map of downtown Sudbury, each orange circle representing a 100m radius around a hostile sign.



# HOW CAN OUR DOWNTOWN LANDSCAPE **HUMANIZE**, INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS?



New benches built outside of shelter and transitional housing in downtown Winnipeg 2021. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/homeless-seating-main-street-winnipeg-1.5896332>



# HOUSING IS A **HUMAN RIGHT**

*WHEN WE ALL AGREE HOUSING IS A HUMAN RIGHT IT:*

**ENABLES** INDIVIDUALS TO CLAIM THEIR RIGHT

**OBLIGATES** OUR GOVERNMENTS AND SYSTEMS TO PROVIDE THIS RIGHT



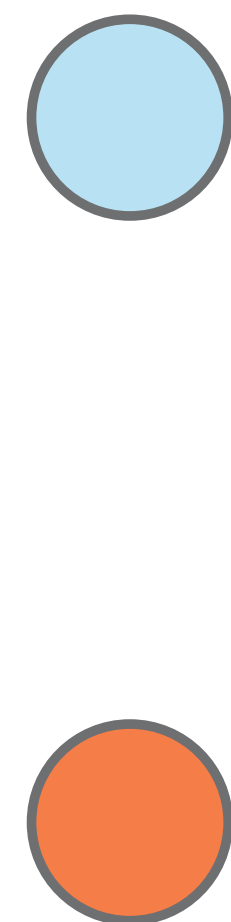
## *WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?*

Those whom we **cannot** currently provide a **house** for have a **right** to **claim** their home on our **streets, parks, benches, etc.**

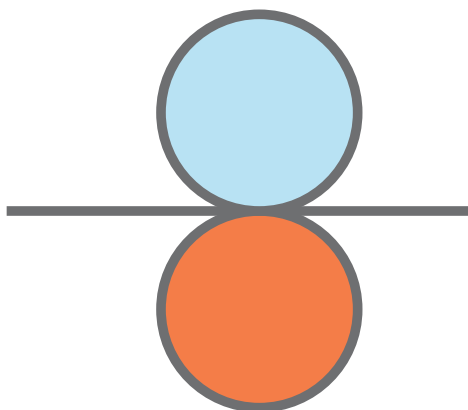


ADDRESSING PREJUDICE: **INTER-GROUP CONTACT**

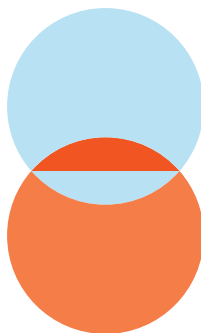
*Social Separation of the Poor.*



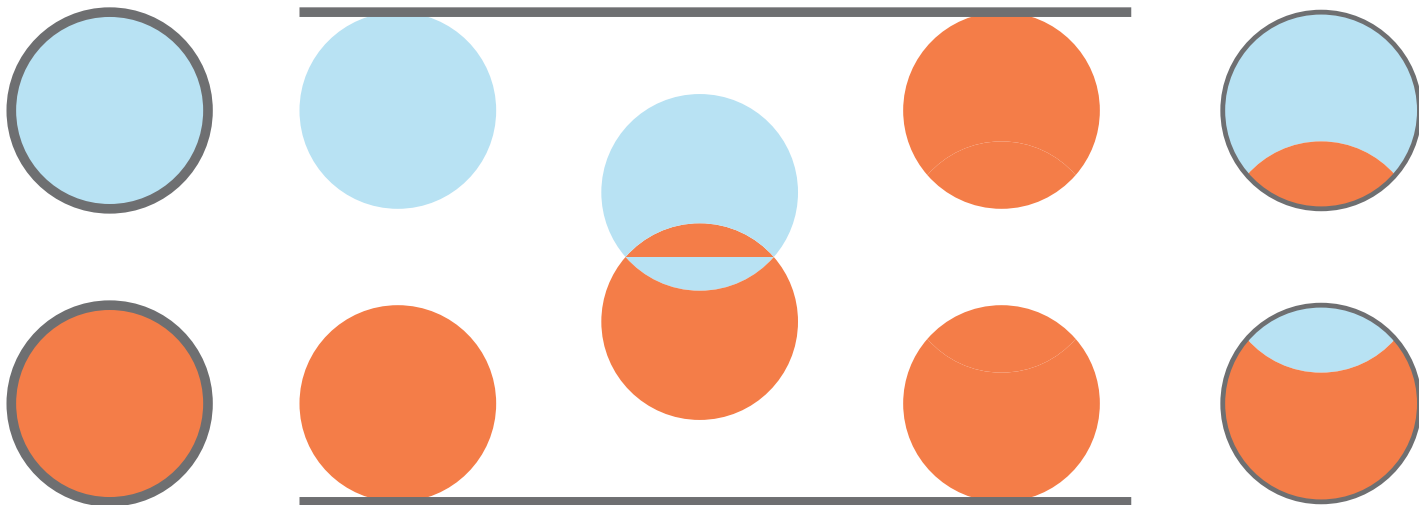
*Conflict at Urban Sites of Contact.*



*Intergroup Contact.*



*Architecture Mediating Conflict and Facilitating Intergroup Contact.*



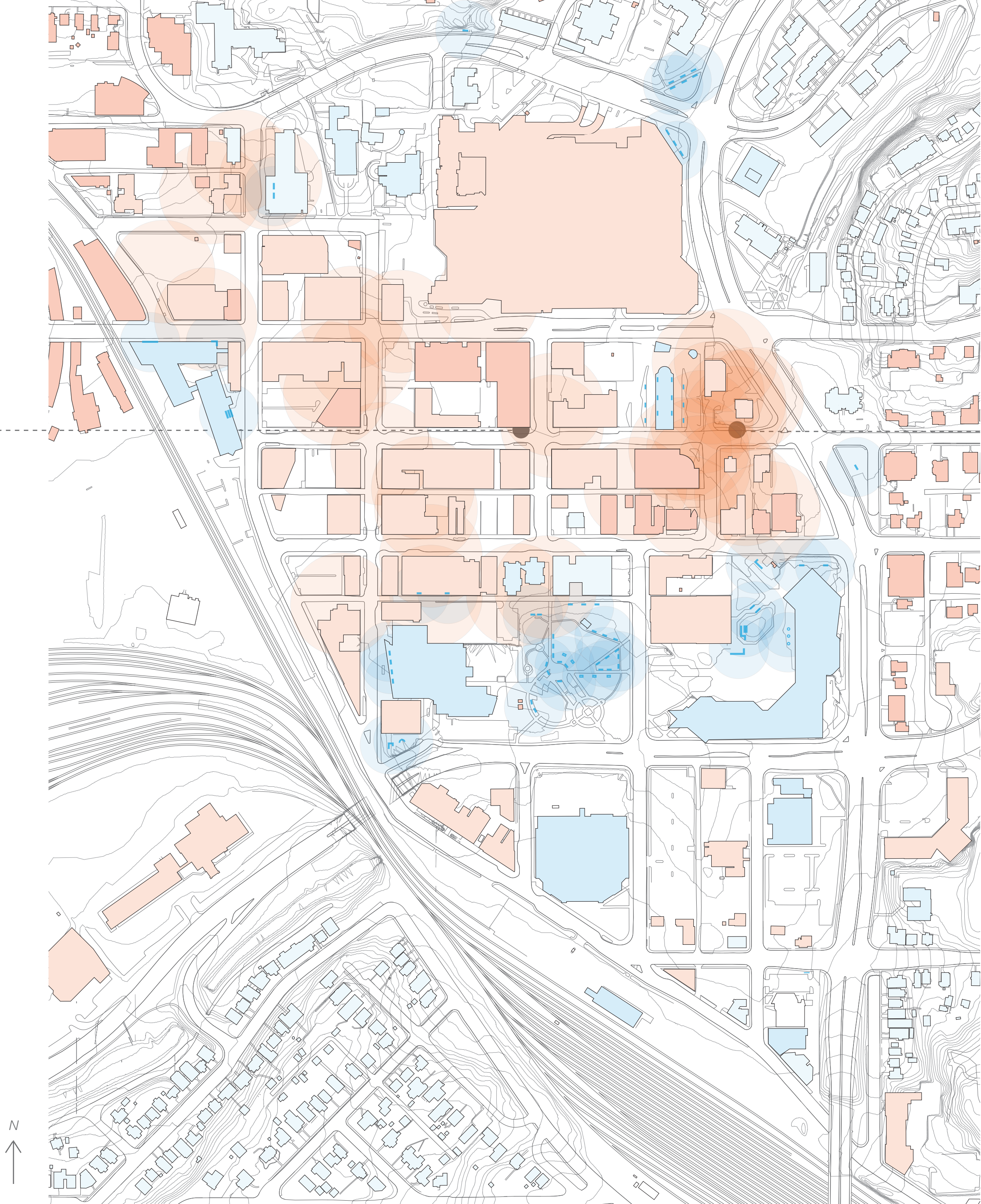


RESEARCH CREATION:



Facade of Canadian Federal building downtown Sudbury at intersection of Cedar St. and Lisgar St. ,2019

Photos by Author



Newly installed fences and spikes along sidewalk of Tim Hortons Plaza.



RESEARCH CREATION: **FREE COFFEE STALL**



Photo by Suleman Khan, 2019.



Photo by Braeden Martel, 2019.

*“We want to be inclusive.”  
“We want to be included.”*

*“We love what you have done, if only more of  
downtown could be like this!”*

*“Can I give you a hug?”*



Photo by Suleman Khan, 2019.



Photo by Suleman Khan, 2019.

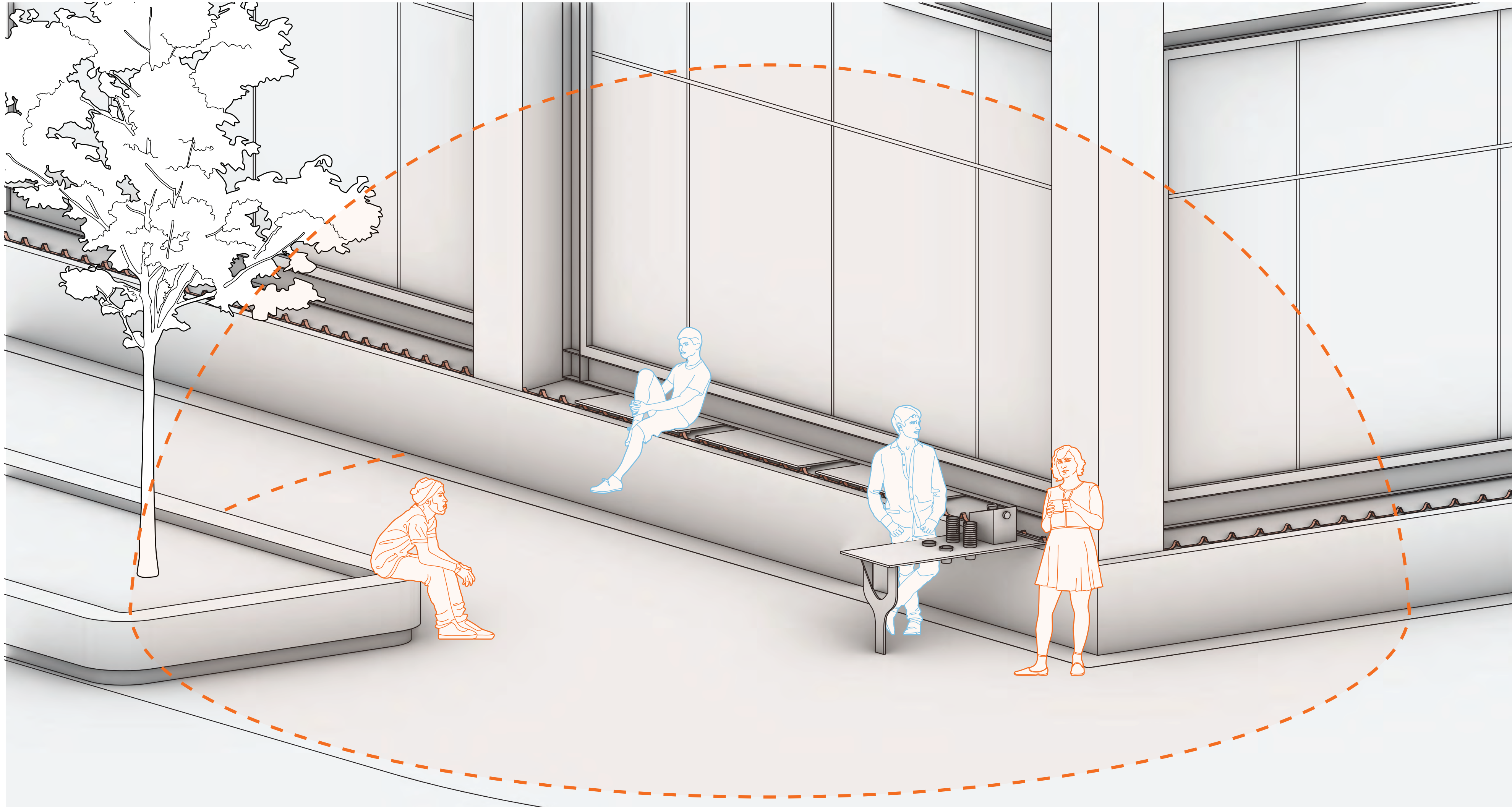
*“Do you know where I can get a free  
meal around here?”*

*“I dont want coffee, I just want to hear  
about what you’re doing.”*

*“You take the sugar, I’ll take the milk”*



## INSTALLATION: **FREE COFFEE STALL**



*Intergroup Contact created by Free Coffee Stall.*



RESEARCH CREATION: **FENCE BENCH**



Photo by Jacob Riehl, 2019.



Photo by Jacob Riehl, 2019.

*“Now I have a place to sleep tonight.”*

*“This is so kind, thank you for acknowledging us.”*

*“Can these be permanent?”*



Photo by Jacob Riehl, 2019.



Photo by Jacob Riehl, 2019.

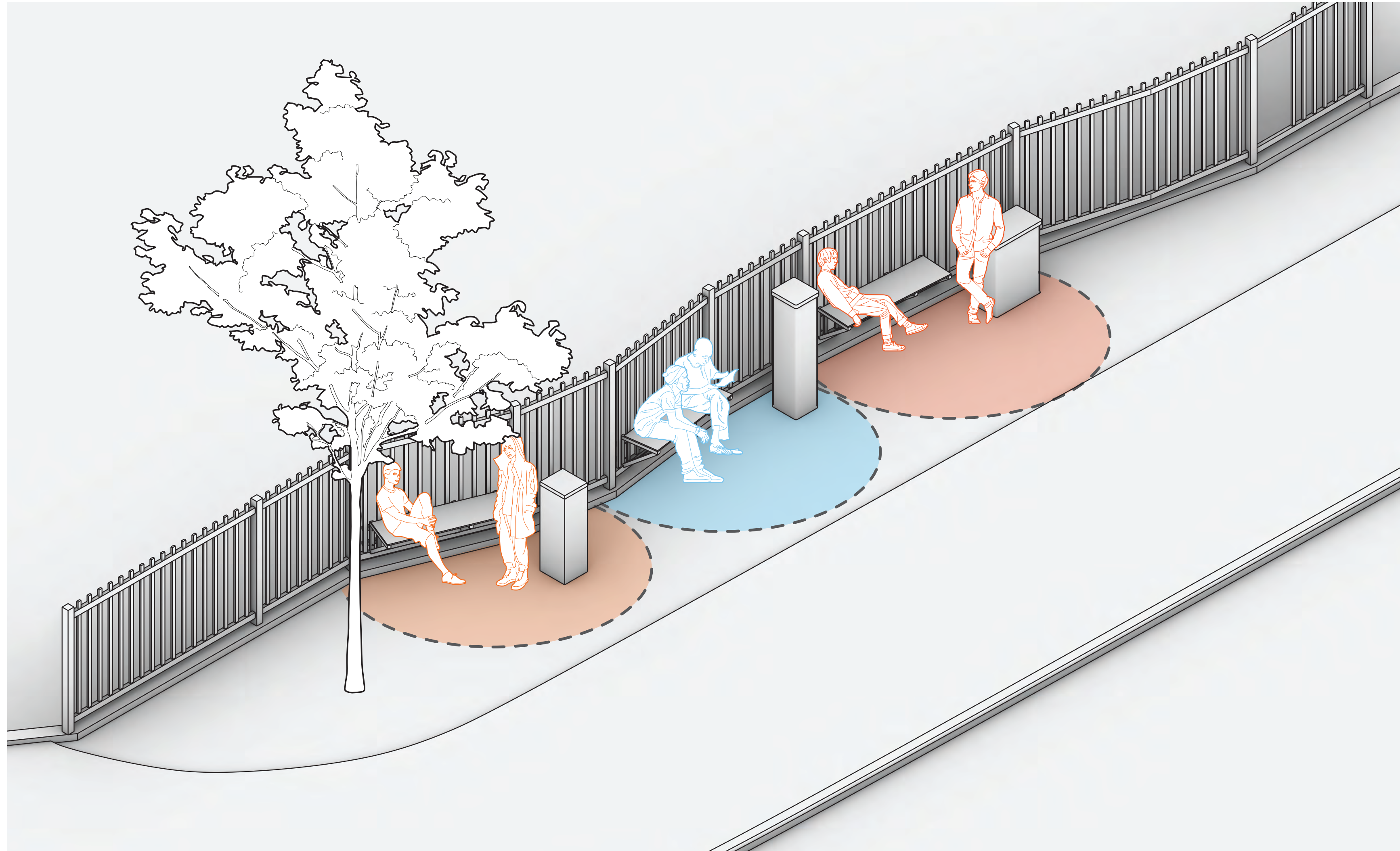
*“We should lock this up at night so that the city doesn’t come and take it!”*

*“Dont listen to the security guard, if he tries to take these away we’ll fight him!”*

*“Respect is earned, you showed us respect, the delinquents who run that Tim Hortons never show us respect, so why should we show them any?”*



## RESEARCH CREATION: **FENCE BENCH**



*Social distance created  
between groups at benches.*



## KEY FINDINGS:

*HOMELESSNESS IS OUR COLLECTIVE FAILURE AS A SOCIETY*

*HOMELESSNESS IS MORE THAN THE LACK OF A HOUSE*

*HOUSING IS A HUMAN RIGHT*

*THOSE WITHOUT A HOUSE HAVE A RIGHT TO CLAIM THEIR HOME ON THE STREET*

*DESIGN CAN HUMANIZE OR DEHUMANIZE INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS*

*INVESTMENT IN HOSTILE ARCHITECTURE PUNISHES EVERYONE*

*SUDBURY'S URBAN LANDSCAPE LACKS COMFORTABLE PUBLIC SPACE*

*INVESTMENT IN COMFORTABLE PUBLIC SPACES BENEFITS EVERYONE*



*THE END.*



*WHAT DO I PICTURE FOR THE FUTURE OF DOWNTOWN SUDBURY?*

Places to Sit

Places for Accessibility

Places for Native Vegetation

Places to Gather

Places for Inclusion

Places for Public Washrooms

Places for Activities

Places for Acceptance

Places for Garbage/Hazard Bins

Places for Shelter

Places for Relationships

Places for Public Art

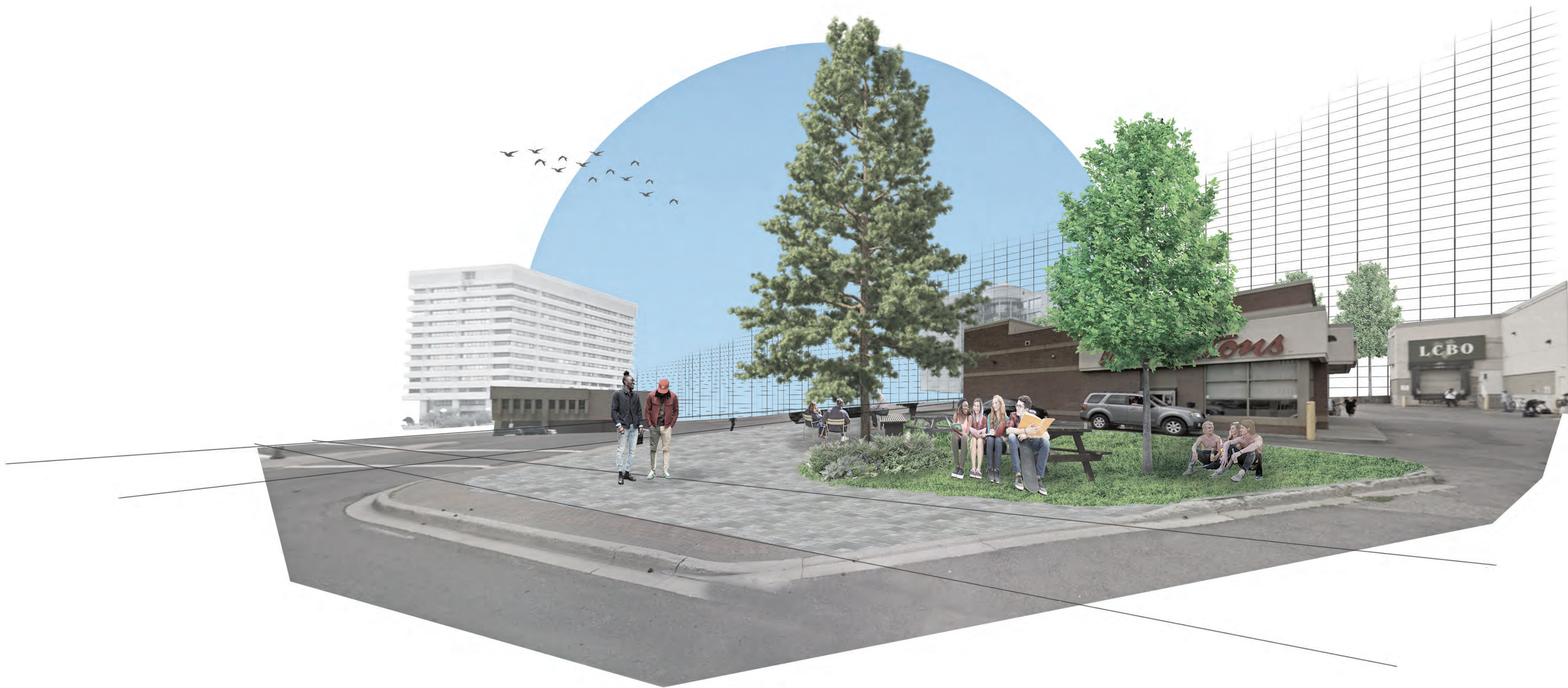
**GOOD DESIGN BENEFIT'S EVERYONE**





Transit Terminal Revitalization:





Transit Terminal Revitalization: