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# Ang Bagong Salamyaaan: Reviving the Marikina Footwear Industry through an Image-Generative Third Place Marikina Shoe Complex

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## Abstract

*Deeply embedded in Marikina's identity and heritage, the city's footwear industry struggles to compete with the dominant mass-produced imports and impose itself upon the market. This study investigates how architecture can invigorate the industry by proposing a Marikina Shoe Complex situated within Marikina River Park and composed of a shopping center and a footwear manufacturing hub. This design is deeply rooted on the concept of "genius loci," emphasizing the Marikina shophouse along with other components of the built environment which has contributed to the growth and survival of the industry. Apart from its heritage structures, strategies to incorporate the industry's emerging image especially amidst online platforms such as Instagram was thoroughly considered. Furthermore, the design will introduce spatial strategies to encourage collaboration among designers and shoemakers within the industry while providing them with a space to innovate. Lastly, an "experiential customer journey map" will be developed to engage visitors and elevate their perception of Marikina footwear. Thus, this research envisions a sustainable, collaborative, and ever-evolving commercial complex that integrates its manufacturing aspect into the concept of a "third place." Ang Bagong Salamyaaan, the physical embodiment of this third space, represents the revival of the traditional Marikina concept of "salamyaan" and how this concept rooted in Marikina can inform the design of a "third place" that will not only promote the sale and creation of Marikina footwear, but also serve as an attractive social gathering place for Marikenaños.*

**Keywords:** Marikina Shoe Industry, Marikina Shophouse, Third Place, Experiential Design, Genius Loci

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Dominique-Anne B. Caranto, a recent graduate of the University of the Philippines-Diliman, is deeply interested in how culture and architecture intersect. This aligns with her belief in the power of experiential design to revitalize local industries and communities. Her research interests include experiential design, sustainable design, and heritage architecture.

## I. Introduction

### A. An Overview of the Marikina Footwear Industry

From its humble beginnings in the basements of hybrid shophouses to the emergence of small-scale factories, the Marikina Footwear Industry has served an essential role in shaping Marikina into what it is today. This economy peaked during its Golden Age in the 1970s, marked by high exports and a thriving Marikina Shoe Trade Fair – attracting both local and international customers to wander through its streets and browse through a variety of footwear available for an affordable price. Soon, the title of “Shoe Capital of the Philippines” was bestowed upon the city, which it still holds up until today.



**Figure 1.** Old Picture of the Marikina Shoe Trade Fair  
Source: MASIDO (n.d.)

Marikina's footwear industry once flourished but faced stiff competition from foreign rivals who leveraged industrialization and lower costs (De la Cruz & Juanson, 2017; Scott, 2005). The lack of raw materials, innovation, and clustered production further hindered its ability to adapt (Mutuc, 2020; Tanchuco, 2013; Rapisora-Lagos, 2018; Scott, 2005).

Despite these challenges, the industry persists, largely due to Marikina's positive public image. The city's strong association with footwear, evident in public institutions and events, continues to attract customers seeking quality and affordable products (Rapisora-Lagos, 2018).

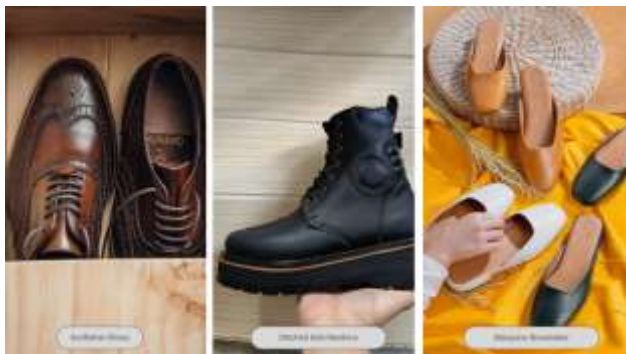
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**Figure 2.** City Hall Engraved Shoe Motif Design  
Source: Lakansining (2015)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Marikina footwear industry faced significant challenges due to lockdowns and the shift to online selling. Many businesses struggled to adapt and closed. However, some enterprises, like Marquina Shoemaker and Stitched Sole, successfully leveraged online platforms to reach customers and sustain their businesses. Initiatives like Zapateria, an innovation hub, have also contributed to the industry's revival by fostering direct interaction between artisans and customers.



**Figure 3.** A collage of social media marketing images for Marikina-made Footwear

Source: Tiu (2017); Stitched Sole (2022); Marquina Shoemaker (2018)

Given these successes, the question remains: how can the Marikina footwear industry as a whole continue to adapt and thrive in the face of future challenges?

## B. Third Places and the Genius Loci of Marikina

The pandemic has roused a growing interest in public green open spaces where people can interact freely and safely with each other - the essence of third places. As defined by sociologist Ray Oldenburg (1999), a third place is a space between home (first place) and work (second place) where people exchange ideas and build relationships. These places are also called the "living room" of society because of the community-building occurring here (Butler & Diaz, 2016). As Marikina's local industry attempts to renew itself in the current market, fostering collaboration between the

city's diverse cultural identities and practices around a location with a shared history could be essential for revitalizing the community (Cilliers, 2019) and consequently, its heritage industry as a result.



**Figure 4.** Marikina Riverbanks Center Park  
Source: Corpuz (2021)

When it comes to third places in Marikina, the Marikina River Park can be classified as one based on the aforementioned criteria. Even before the pandemic, this area was a popular open public space filled with market stalls and amusement park rides, especially during the holiday season. As such, it was common to witness people skateboarding, riding their bikes, jogging, or just sitting in the grass in the amphitheater area with a clear view of the Marikina River every day. Boasting a rich history, the Marikina River Park thrives with the potential to support the city's heritage and cultural infrastructure. Notably, incorporating the Marikina Footwear Industry into the "genius loci" of the Marikina River Park holds immense value in associating the industry with the positive image represented by this third place.

## II. Aims & Objectives

Although streamlining production through machine automation may appear as the most viable solution to ensuring the industry's economic survival in the present fast-paced market, this approach neglects the crucial social significance that defines it as a local heritage industry. Thus, by reintroducing this heritage industry into a location known for its rich history and positive image while also considering how architectural design can motivate a sense of community, this thesis investigates how architecture can reinforce a sense of community, aligning with the genius loci. By examining this relationship between heritage, community, and design, the research aims to develop a typology that supports the Marikina Footwear Industry's revitalization, fostering a renewed identity built on community, collaboration, and innovation.

The research aims to explore three primary objectives. First, the concept of genius loci, or the spirit of a place, in the context of Marikina's footwear industry. By analyzing the

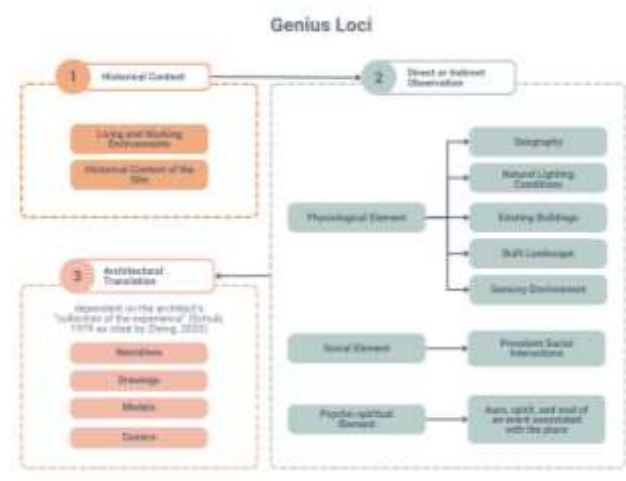
local characteristics and incorporating sustainable and experiential design principles, the study seeks to develop architectural elements that reflect Marikina's identity and create a collaborative workspace that is both appealing and functional. Next, the research will involve examining existing sustainable workspaces and how to incorporate building systems directed at addressing possible health hazards in the workspace. Finally, the third objective involves analyzing the visual codes of Marikina footwear brands, and understanding how design can enhance public engagement and attachment to a space while still being reminiscent of the original image.

### III. Related Literature & Methodology

This section presents a detailed overview of the research methodology divided based on the three primary objectives starting with a review of relevant literature supported by additional qualitative research methodologies.

#### A. Translating the Genius Loci

**Genius Loci Framework.** The "genius loci" is defined by Norberg-Schulz (1979) as the "sense of place" or the collective perception of a particular location. This perception encompasses the tangible and symbolic aspects evident in the natural and human surroundings, fostering a comprehensive engagement of all the senses. As a result, it relies not solely on visuals, highlighting a more holistic multi-sensory means of understanding the essence of a place. Christou et al., (2019) add on to this concept by providing a graphical representation, applying the concept of genius loci to assess the impact of external interventions to the genius loci of an area. In the case of this study, this framework was used to create a general mapping of the chosen site's genius loci.



**Figure 5.** Genius Loci Architectural Translation Framework  
Source: Zheng (2020); Christou et al. (2019)

**Behavioral Mapping of the Marikina Riverbanks Users.** An additional strategy to be utilized in obtaining qualitative information is the place-based behavioral

mapping tactic entitled the "PlaceMaker Method" by Sepe (2013) further expressed in Table 1. The information gathered from this table was used to supplement the primary site and user analyses which then informed the final design proposal.

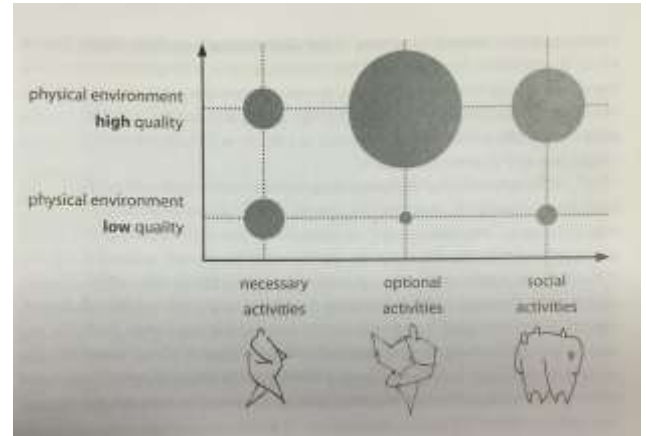
**Table 1.** Suggested illustration sizes for images, photos, etc.  
Placemaking Strategy Adapted from Sepe (2013)

Phase	Description
<b>1 - Anticipatory Analysis (Sepe, 2013)</b>	This is conducted prior to the site visit. It is a description of a place based on a researcher's memories or through second-hand research. It also understands how the place emerged to be the place it is today from the perspective of the social, economical, physical, environmental, financial, and institutional standpoints.
<b>2 - Denominative and Perceptual Description (Sepe, 2013)</b>	<p>This step will identify what features make the space a place. It involves two primary surveys.</p> <p><b>Denominative Survey</b> Analyzing the constructed elements, natural elements, transportation nodes, and people elements and which one of these acts as a monument or landmark determined by assessing what people usually notice when they visit the site</p> <p><b>Perceptual Survey</b> Discusses the sensory nature of the site at different significant points where people gather along the site</p>
<b>3 - Analysis of Traditional Mapping</b>	<p>The urban nature of the site will be thoroughly discussed in relation to the denominative and perceptual analysis.</p> <p>The questions below aided in the analysis (Author's Own, 2023):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Where do people usually gather or stay? What are the qualities of this space?</li> <li>(2) How long do people stay in a certain area? What causes them to stay for that duration of time?</li> <li>(3) What times are the busiest? What causes this area to be busy at that time?</li> <li>(4) What kind of activities occur in the area? What facilities cater to these activities?</li> </ol>



	<p>(5) What are the different types of personalities present and how does this influence their activities within the space?</p> <p>(6) What are the necessary, optional, and social activities occurring within the space? (Sepe, 2013)</p>
<b>4 - On-site interviews</b>	A series of on-site interviews was conducted towards passers-by within the vicinity of the site along the Marikina River. These responses aided the researcher in determining the genius loci and will be counter-checked with the researcher's own observations.
<b>5 - Behavioral Mapping (Author's Own, 2023)</b>	<p>Map of the location illustrating:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Weather conditions at time of study</li> <li>(2) Areas where people congregate and the reasons why they stay in these areas</li> <li>(3) Different sensory experiences within the site and how it affects the overall experience</li> <li>(4) Activities done in each zone and the factors which influence the occurrence of these actions</li> </ol>
<b>5 - Project and design interventions (Sepe, 2013)</b>	The maps were overlaid with the genius loci architectural translations to assess how areas can be connected and the neighborhood quality improved while still maintaining its original place identity.

**Existing Social Patterns.** Social patterns were analyzed using the "Good-quality Public Space Diagram" by Gehl (2010) as cited by Sepe (2013). Necessary activities are those that users do irrespective of the spatial quality. In contrast, optional activities rely on the state of the physical environment taking into consideration optimal weather conditions or an inviting ambiance. These actions include walking, standing, sitting, or sunbathing. Social activities involve interactions with others, such as children playing, users conversing, and passive contact (simply seeing and hearing other people). The author noted that these social activities typically result from encouragement to stay for an extended period or feeling invited by the space, highlighting the importance of the other two activity categories in fostering social processes.



**Figure 6.** Good-quality public space diagram  
Source: Gehl (2010) as cited by Sepe (2013)

## B. Collaborative & Sustainable Makerspaces

**Product Service System (PSS) Framework.** Given Marikina Footwear's unique blend of product (e.g. footwear and leather bags) and service (e.g. footwear repair, customization options) offerings, adopting the appropriate framework for spatial programming is crucial especially during these times where the service sector is considering more than just production alone (Bianchi et al., 2019; Brown et al., 2018). This shift means manufacturers are moving beyond merely selling products, now offering services that enhance the product's use. This aligns closely with the Product-Service System (PSS) concept, which integrates products and services to deliver value through product usage while promoting environmental sustainability (Kim, 2011; Roy & Baxter, 2009).

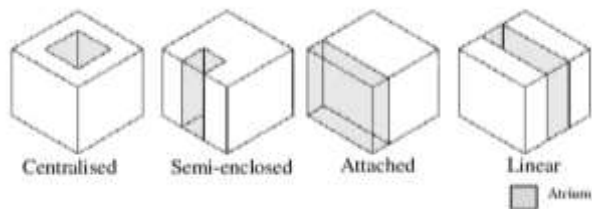


**Figure 7.** Lean & Green PSS Framework  
Source: Li & Found (2016)

Li & Found's (2016) framework provides a valuable foundation for understanding how "lean and green thinking" can improve Marikina's footwear manufacturing. The framework's outer circle identifies key stakeholders, while the inner circle outlines the manufacturing process.

By incorporating stakeholder knowledge and focusing on a cyclical approach, researchers can develop a comprehensive framework for efficient and sustainable footwear production, supported by effective spatial programming.

The maker space, a typology incorporating circular economy principles, is a suitable choice for this project. These spaces foster innovation through decentralized manufacturing and the exchange of ideas (Smith et al., 2017, Unterfrauner et al., 2019). Marikina's decentralized footwear industry aligns with this approach. In designing these maker spaces, Yan et al.'s (2020) study suggests incorporating porosity and built-in atriums into maker space design. Porosity allows the public to observe internal activities, while atriums facilitate social interaction. Figure 13 illustrates four atrium types—centralized, attached, semi-enclosed, and enclosed—that could be explored in the design stage (Yunus et al., 2010, as cited by Yan et al., 2020).



**Figure 8.** Atria configurations  
Source: Yan et al. (2020)

### C. Experiential Third Place Design

Third places are public spaces that foster community building by providing a neutral ground for people from diverse backgrounds to interact (Bertels, 2019; Butler & Diaz, 2016; Oldenburg & Christensen, 2023). Examples include community facilities, local businesses, green spaces, and transitional areas (Sugiyama et al., 2023). In the Philippines, malls often serve as third places due to their air-conditioned comfort, especially compared to open green spaces (Saloma et al., 2021).

Several studies inform this research's approach to incorporating third place concepts. Oldenburg's foundational work (1989) established its core definition, while Memarovic et al. (2014) emphasized the need for updates in the digital age, particularly considering the appeal of people-watching. Saloma et al. (2021) offer insights specific to the Philippines, exploring the contrast between air-conditioned spaces and public green areas. In the case of openness and equality, Oldenburg (1999) stresses the importance of removing physical barriers which may cause social inequalities while Butler & Diaz (2016) highlight the importance of physical third places in combating social isolation, particularly for seniors. This is crucial especially since the proposed space should be designed to encourage the participation of senior footwear artisans together with the younger generations given the industry's lack of successors.

**Table 2.** Third Place Characteristics

Sourced from (Memarovic et al., 2014; Oldenburg, 1999; Saloma et al., 2021)

Property	Characteristics
Neutral Ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing a neutral standpoint for personal expression</li> <li>People-watching</li> </ul>
Leveler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removal of physical barriers such as security checkpoints</li> </ul>
Conversation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People-watching, and leisure activities (board games)</li> </ul>
Accessibility and accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ease of access</li> <li>Benches and chairs</li> <li>Passive Ventilation</li> </ul>
Having regulars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encouraging return</li> <li>Regulars; staff members, and other theme related features that shape the "tone" of a place</li> </ul>
Low profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simple design features</li> </ul>
The mood is playful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conversation is light or directed through the activities and artifacts in the space</li> </ul>
A home away from home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evoke an out-of-home environment with the same feeling as home</li> <li>Incorporated into the users' daily lives and lifestyles</li> </ul>

**Psychological Ownership of Space.** One factor influencing the perception of a "third place" is psychological ownership, which fosters an intimate relationship between the user and the space. This concept suggests a correlation between ownership and loyalty (Jussila et al., 2015, as cited in Joo, 2018). For primary users, achieving psychological ownership involves designing spaces that consider concentration, communication, and self-expressiveness. These elements enhance user participation, place attachment, and overall psychological ownership (Joo, 2020).

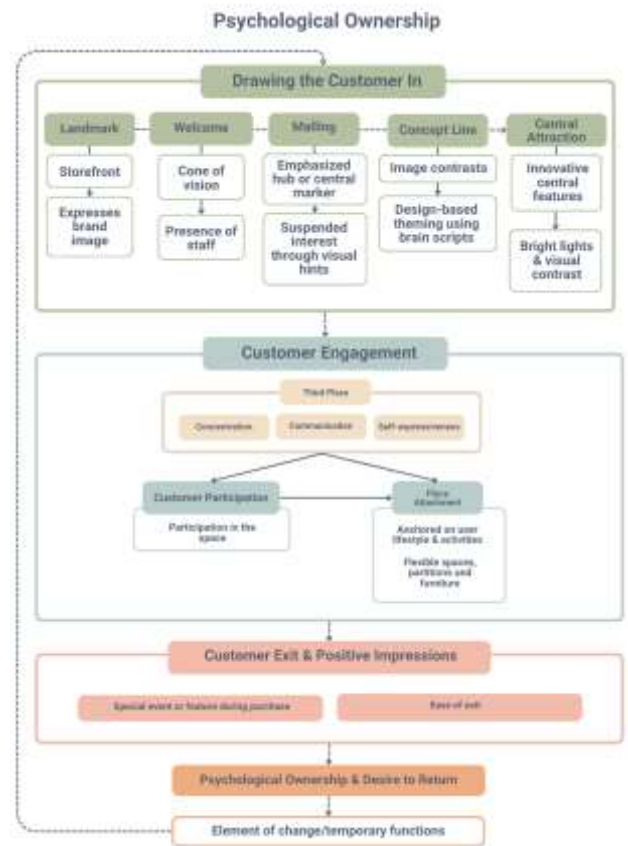


**Figure 9.** Psychological Ownership Framework  
Source: Joo (2020)

Psychological ownership is crucial for integrating the third place concept, particularly through imageability. Rishbeth & Powell (2013) emphasize the importance of familiar activities and personal expression in fostering place attachment. Saloma et al. (2021) support this, noting that renovating spaces to align with user needs can enhance belonging. Additionally, the design must incorporate familiar activities related to the Marikina Shoe Industry and reinforce the site's genius loci. Assessing how the industry's image can be woven into the framework is essential for achieving psychological ownership.

**Customer Journey Maps.** Mikunda (2004), in his book "Brand Lands, Hot Spots & Cool Spaces," offers a specific case study demonstrating how a space's "third place" nature can be leveraged for product marketing. He connects experiential design with third places, highlighting the importance of incorporating the following features in retail design. To create a memorable space, incorporate a (1) landmark, (2) design for exploration, (3) develop a unifying theme, and (4) include a striking focal point. For instance, the Marikina Footwear Industry's unique shoe motifs can be used for the landmark. Central hubs and suspenseful elements can encourage exploration. A unifying theme or concept, such as contrasting materials or storytelling techniques, can add depth. Finally, a striking focal point or sensory elements can create a memorable experience.

Customer journey maps are essential tools for understanding how architectural design influences customer perception in retail experiences. These maps outline a sequence of touchpoints that impact customer perception throughout the journey (Upadhyay, 2021). For this project, the customer journey is defined by seven stages: first impression, welcome, movement, experience clues, point of purchase, exit, and revisiting. Given the architectural focus, the first impression, exit, and revisiting stages will be emphasized. It focuses on attracting customers through the exterior design, engaging them upon entry by aligning with their habits and lifestyles, and leaving a positive impression at the exit.



**Figure 10.** Psychological Ownership Framework  
Source: Author's Own (2023)

**Marikina Footwear Industry Analysis.** Additional interviews were conducted with the leading figures for the shoe institutions in Marikina namely the Marikina Shoe Industry Development Office (MASIDO) along with footwear enterprises not represented in existing literature, more specifically those whose retail space was completely detached from their shoe shophouse. Representation for this user is crucial to the project as it will serve as an alternative retail space for these shoemakers.

This study investigated the visual elements driving the resurgence and innovation of Marikina footwear brands, focusing on Instagram, a powerful platform for marketing their products and representing the brand's ideologies and philosophies. To understand each brand's visual identity, the researcher analyzed a sample of 30-50 recent images from their Instagram profiles. This selection ensures a comprehensive picture while keeping the sample size manageable for a visual analysis. The study assessed factors like follower count, posting frequency, recurring themes, color schemes, and other visual elements. Overall, this analysis revealed the overall image each brand projects and its impact on shaping the perception and emerging image of the Marikina footwear industry.

## IV. Results

### A. Site Selection & Analysis

Within the city of Marikina, three potential sites were identified. Afterwards, a comparison was made where the sites were assessed using a researched set of site selection criteria which was applied to discern and confirm the most suitable site for the project aligned with the main objectives.

**Functionality.** This category considers the technicalities of the site and the ease of construction to minimize costs. This includes (1) natural and man-made hazards, (2) accessibility, (3) traffic & road networks, (4) public utilities, (5) spatial requirements, and (6) natural physical features. All in all, this category has a bearing of 30%.

**Imageability and Social Cognition of Space.** This category refers to the existing perception of the space by its users as well as the collective memory associated with it. As such, it discusses imageability, social cognition, liveliness of the area, public visibility and views, and safety and comfort. In this group, the sub-criteria (1) imageability, (2) liveliness of area,, (3) public visibility and views, (4) safety & comfort are presented. All in all, this category has a bearing of 40%, higher than the previous category as the research has emphasized the importance of a sense of psychological attachment or how its users perceive the geographical area to the site for the introduction of a new program or in the case of this study, an industry cluster (Zelbst, 2016; Ricci, 2022).

**Economic Viability.** This category addresses whether the site can function efficiently with its other auxiliary upstream (e.g. material sourcing, machinery rental) to the downstream (e.g. retail stores, consumers) enterprises. This comprises 30% of the total bearing.



**Figure 11.** Bounds and Vicinity of Site 1  
Source: OpenStreetMap (2024)

From the selected criteria, Site 1 was found to be the most suitable site with a score of 87.4% followed by Site 3 (83.4%), then Site 2 (71.6%). Although Site 1 was initially proposed

as the most suitable site given its direct adjacency to already existing prominent third places, the site selection process attempted to explore other potential sites that were nearer to the shoemakers (Site 2) or nearer to garbage collection facilities (Site 3). Ultimately, due to the score difference for the category 'Imageability and Social Cognition of Space,' the first site was still chosen as the most appropriate for the proposed project.

### B. Site Zoning & Massing

The zoning diagram incorporates the design implications outlined in the previously conducted analyses. The service area was divided into two zones. The southwest zone is strategically located near existing utilities and main roads. The other zone includes bike parking and waste collection areas due to its proximity to the commercial area. Both zones were positioned to provide shade from direct sunlight in areas with high foot traffic. Additionally, the service areas were placed near these areas for convenient pickup and drop-off. Parking spaces were strategically located farthest from areas with the most pedestrian traffic near the site's center.



**Figure 12.** Site Zoning Diagram  
Source: Author's Own (2023)



**Figure 13.** Active and Quiet Spaces Zone Map  
Source: Author's Own (2023)

To supplement the zoning diagram, the active and quiet zone map illustrates the ground-level zoning of spaces



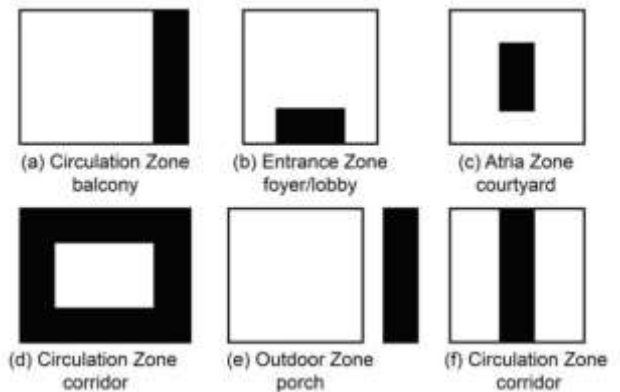
based on the activities to be conducted here. The activity zone is the area surrounded by commercial activities situated at a high vantage point compared to the rest of the site in terms of natural elevation. To supplement the perceived hierarchy of this space, the proposed lighting scheme will highlight this active space, especially in the dark to attract those viewing the site from afar amidst the darkness of the Marikina River Park. Through this, the site can be seen as active through the night from the outside and also serves as an ideal third place for the users. Transitioning outward, the active zone gradually transitions to the quiet zone through a series of outdoor steps which may also serve as a gradual flood prevention measure in the design. Through utilizing this zoning diagram, the researcher will be able to design a space catering to both active and passive activities reminiscent of the existing user behaviors extracted from the behavioral analysis.

## C. Design Concept & Approach

The project will utilize an experiential design approach to motivate the formation of a community and their collaboration. This approach focuses on designing around the user experience and incorporating a themed flow to the circulation space to create a sensory and emotional connection with the space's users. In addition, recognizing the temporal nature of its spaces, the researcher will also thoroughly explore modular design to encourage flexible usage and zoning while aligning with the needs and lifestyles of its primary users.

Aligned to create a community-centered Marikina Footwear Complex, the design centers on becoming the "Bagong Salamyaaan." This design will motivate the participation of people from all ages and backgrounds while being open to the Marikina River. Additionally, the border between public and private spaces will be seamlessly integrated to encourage movement through the themed zones.

Transitional spaces, impermanent spaces that adapt to site conditions and user needs, are closely related to this concept. These spaces often serve as extensions for planned activities, lacking specific purposes or destinations (Singareddy, 2022; Lévesque, 2003; Berger, 2007). They exist temporarily between functional spaces and foster spontaneous activities. This concept's adaptability supports various community uses.

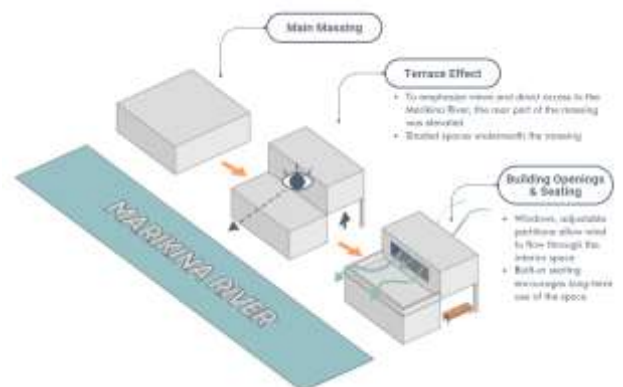


**Figure 14.** Types of Transitional Spaces

Source: Lucarelli et al. (2020)

The project incorporates several sub-concepts aligned with transitional space principles. "Salamyaan," a spatial characteristic, is one. Designing spaces to encourage optional and social activities within retail areas fosters psychological ownership and place attachment. A gradual intimacy gradient, using spatial adjacencies and transformable elements, creates a seamless transition between private and public zones. Finally, an elevated connecting bridge, recognizing the site's flood-prone nature, serves as a transitional space between the site and the Marikina Riverbanks.

Four spatial translations characterize the sub-concept of "salamyaan." These are (1) implied barriers, (2) direct view and access through cascading elevations, (3) passive design through open elements and (4) extending workspaces to the outdoor zones. Figure 15 illustrates a conceptual diagram of how each zone resembles a cascading terrace connecting the building form visually to the existing slope and to the Marikina River. Elevated building massing held by columns also creates the illusion of implied barriers while providing shade for the open areas at the ground level. Finally, incorporating large building openings encourages open air flow throughout the exterior and interior spaces while built-in seating encourages long-term use of the shaded areas underneath.



**Figure 15.** Salamyaaan Spatial Translation

Source: Author's Own (2023)

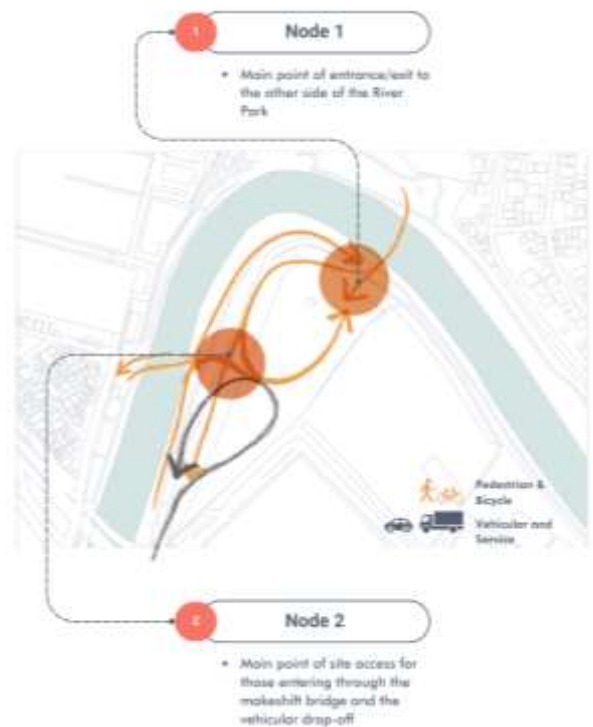


The first and most crucial axis is an indirect approach determined by the amphitheater's axis of symmetry. Given its connection to a gathering point, the building's appearance from this line of sight is essential for creating a positive impression. Next, the rightmost axis aligns with the proposed bridge, the primary access from the Riverbanks Center. This direct approach should connect the activities of the Riverbanks Center to the site by providing corresponding spaces. Finally, the leftmost axis aligns with the makeshift bridge. While integrating pedestrian and bicycle spaces is important, given the new bridge's redirection of traffic, this axis should have a lower visual priority. A more discreet approach to highlighting this axis within the building massing should be considered.



**Figure 16.** Axis Parti Diagram  
Source: Author's Own (2023)

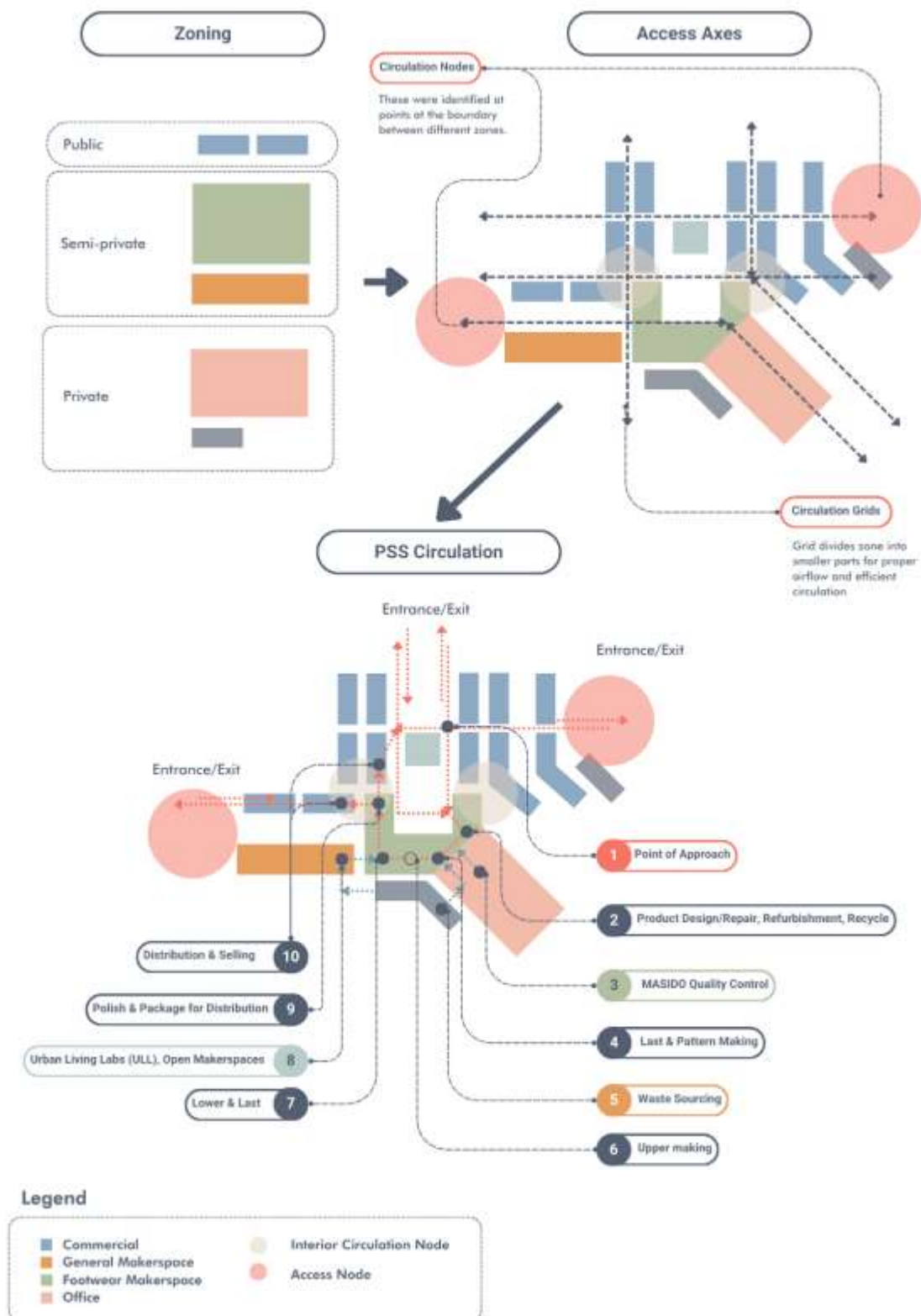
Through overlapping the circulation patterns of the primary users, two nodes were highlighted as the “entrance” of the customer journey map. Thus, these areas should include an experiential feature to introduce the customers to the nature of the site. Moreover, these areas were also identified as the nodes with the most traffic and should be designed to accommodate both bicycle and pedestrian foot traffic.



**Figure 17.** Circulation Parti Diagram  
Source: Author's Own (2023)

The makerspace layout integrates the Product-Service System Framework (PSS) presented in Figure 7. For the researcher to determine the location and adjacency of these spaces, it is necessary to specify the significant spatial zones and segregate them according to primary use and privacy level. Commercial zones are classified as public spaces, whereas the workshop spaces are semi-private, and the office and service areas are private.

After zoning the spaces, a seamless intimacy gradient is created by gradually merging the outdoor and indoor functions through semi-private functions. Successful intimacy gradients also have the potential to positively or negatively influence the way a space is perceived (Alexander et al., 1977). The next step reflects this concept, as the zones were designed to align with the existing axis lines specified previously. From these axes, interior circulation nodes were identified and aligned with the external access nodes, as illustrated in Figure 17 at the intersection point between different zones. The zones were also broken apart into smaller areas divided by a circulation grid for efficient circulation and proper air flow. Finally, the designed circulation integrates the circular nature of the PSS system by aligning it with the desired flow of user circulation. By directing traffic flow to an area where the makerspace is visible, user participation is motivated by generating awareness and access to the space.



**Figure 18.** PSS Schematic Parti Diagram  
Source: Author's Own (2023)

## V. Discussion & Conclusion

### A. Objective 1: Genius Loci

From the conducted research and analysis, the final design proposal was created. All in all, 12,520 square meters of the total lot area of 24,326.41. Of this area, 4,498 square meters are allocated for the buildings and the main pedestrian pathways connecting the various structures on the site. By incorporating the existing axis lines present on the site, these primary pathway connections make it convenient and encouraging for visitors to access the site while incorporating and encouraging the already existing modes of transportation. Additionally, the central point of the complex is strategically placed at the highest point of the existing topography to maximize the existing views of the river while also lessening the risk of flood.

The genius loci framework guided the researcher in understanding the key factors for the study. While most local footwear is sold in large boutiques, the original commercial environment often prioritizes established brands and lacks spaces for emerging designers. This study proposes the "Bagong Salamyaaan" concept, a local shopping center designed to address these limitations. By understanding the local spirit and consumer habits, the Bagong Salamyaaan aims to create a supportive environment for local footwear entrepreneurs.



**Figure 19.** Conceptual Final Site Development Plan  
Source: Author's Own (2024)

The building utilizes a segmented form, where the overall mass is divided into distinct sections. However, these sections are united through their arrangement and the use of similar facade elements, creating a cohesive whole. Each segment resembles a house, with a consistent square meter area of 104 square meters for a single unit and 312 square meters for the collective shophouse units. These modular units allow for easy expansion of the complex in the future following a grid network pattern. Additionally, the elevated stacked massing strategically draws attention to the riverside area, potentially offering scenic views or a connection to the waterfront.

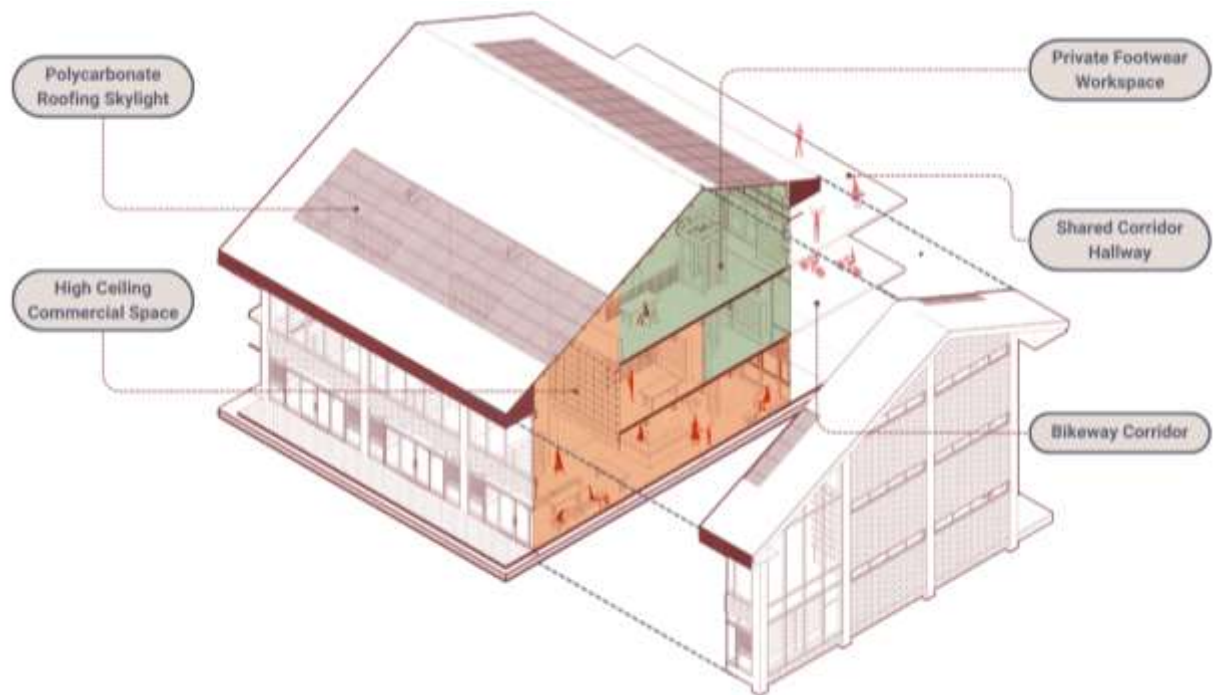


**Figure 20.** Exploded Isometric Shophouse Layout  
Source: Author's Own (2024)





**Figure 21.** Exploded Isometric Shophouse Layout  
Source: Author's Own (2024)



**Figure 22.** Isometric Shophouse Diagram  
Source: Author's Own (2024)



**Figure 23.** Main Entrance Exterior Perspective  
Source: Author's Own (2024)

The main feature of the Marikina Footwear Complex is its shophouses, which were situated on the site to replicate the idea of independent residential units or in the context of the project itself, resembling artist studios. These are spaces commonly included in various creative community-centered architecture projects. The users of these spaces are ideally the shoemakers who want to set up shop in an area separate from their place of dwelling due to lack of space and low amounts of pedestrian customer traffic, considering that the existing location of most shophouses does not attract a large amount of commercial traffic. Moreover, the various shophouse units are designed depending on their location according to the overall circulation path of the

The shophouse design divides into two main zones: the public commercial space and the private workspace (as

shown in Figure 22). Each shophouse features a designated storefront on the first level. Upon entering, customers are greeted by a high-ceiling space that creates a feeling of openness and draws their attention to the display shelf on the second floor, which is also visible from the street. The elongated shape of the shophouse allows for a clear division of space into front and rear areas. The front space functions as the dedicated storefront, while the rear area is designed as a lounge area, reflecting the domestic nature of shophouses. This space can also be used by the shoemaker for consultations with customers on personalized orders. Similarly, retailers or other small business owners can utilize this space for direct interaction with the artisan. Finally, the central area houses the cashier and a freight elevator (1200 x 1100 mm) for convenient transport of footwear products between levels.



**Figure 24.** Shophouse Exterior Perspective  
Source: Author's Own (2024)



**Figure 25.** Shophouse Commercial Space Perspective  
Source: Author's Own (2024)

The private workshop area on the third floor of each designed shophouse unit features an open-plan layout with the freight elevator positioned adjacent to the stairs and near the center of the plan, allowing for easy product transport between levels as mentioned previously. To ensure adequate lighting during working hours, a skylight system is included in the design. Additionally, a motorized folding fabric blind system can be deployed for the skylight, acting as both thermal insulation and a sunlight diffuser during high-temperature periods, further protecting the volatile chemicals within the space which might cause accidents when exposed to too much heat. The last detail for this space is the high ceiling which allows hot air to rise and collect above the regular working zone (around 3.4 meters or higher) where a roof ridge system then helps dissipate this heat.

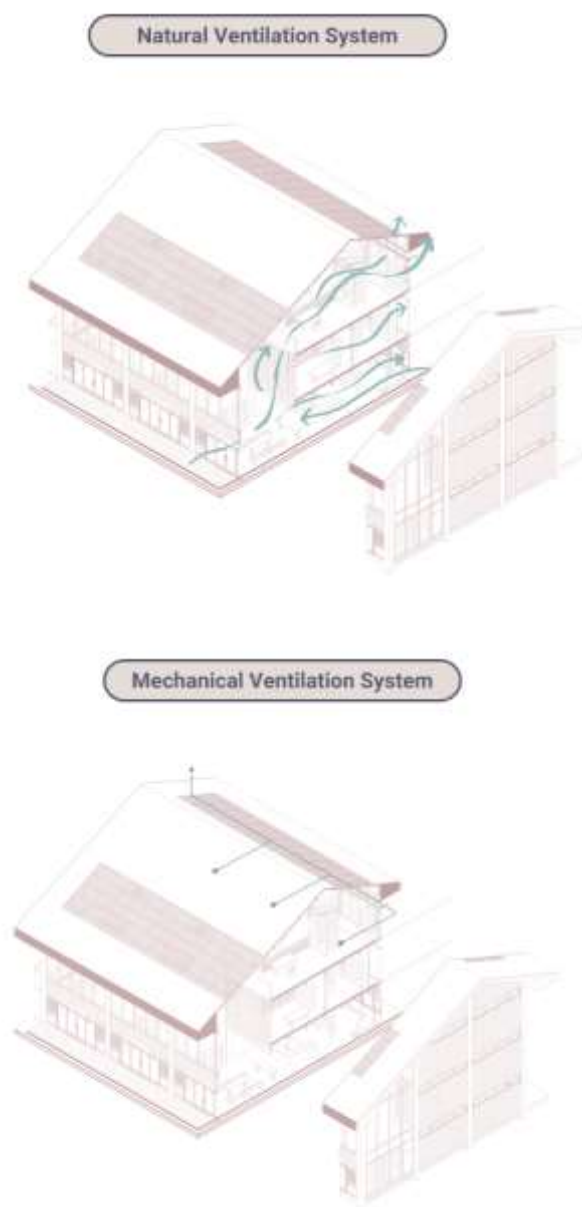


**Figure 26.** Shophouse Interior Workshop Space Perspective  
Source: Author's Own (2024)

Moving on to the second level, this intermediate space functions as a flexible space that may either serve as a mezzanine commercial space, cafe area, lounge, storage area, or an extension of the workspace area above it, depending on the proposed use of its inhabitants. As mentioned previously, Shophouse Design A contains a unique display corridor along its rear end, which can be personally designed so that those passing by the bridge network can glimpse the products on display, encouraging them to visit the space once they descend.

The third level functions as the main footwear workspace.

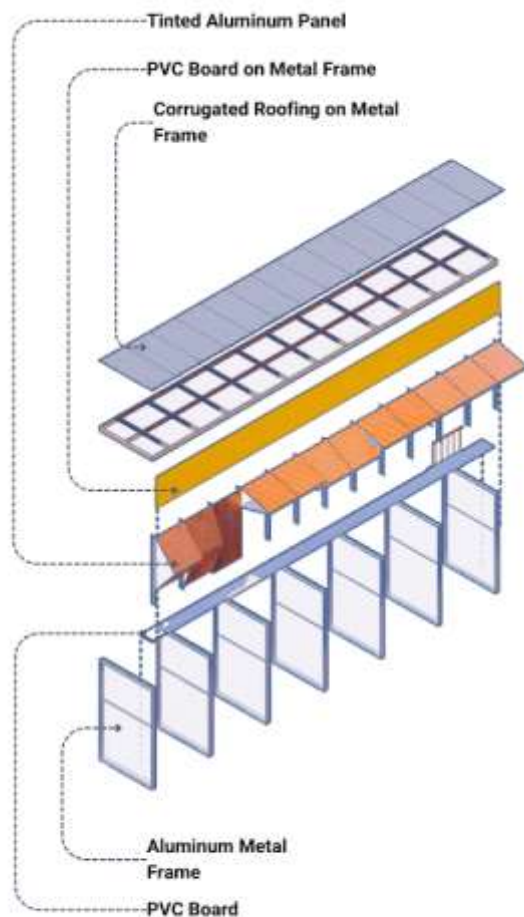
A stark contrast from the typically dark and cramped conditions of the shoe workspace, this space features a polycarbonate-skylight roof layered on top of a metal purlin grid network. This roofing diffuses and limits direct sunlight, creating a more comfortable work environment. The high ceiling collects hot air, which exits through a roof ridge vent, promoting passive ventilation and cooler temperatures on the lower floors. Additionally, mechanical ventilation systems prevent the build-up of toxic fumes. Each of the three shophouse designs includes an exit door on this level for direct access to the makerspace hub, which will be discussed in detail in the following section.



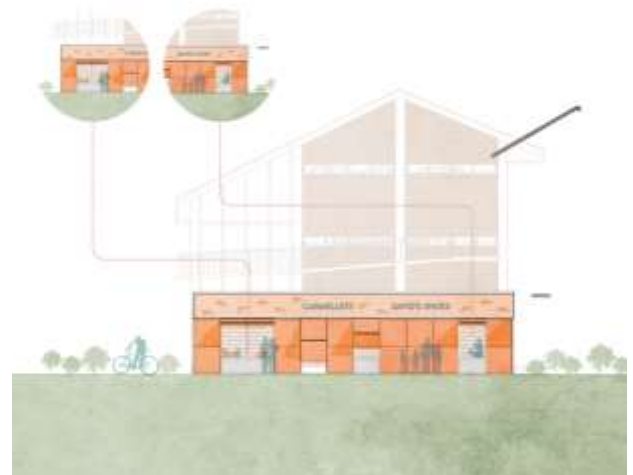
**Figure 27.** Isometric Natural and Mechanical Ventilation Systems  
Source: Author's Own (2024)



The main spaces on this level are the easily accessible shophouse storefronts, readily visible from the main entrance and designed for permanent use. Complementing these are temporary framing systems surrounding the central courtyard. These systems, reminiscent of temporary stalls seen during shoe fairs or holidays, offer versatile spaces, functioning as either rentable commercial areas or recreational rest spaces during non-event periods. The framing system utilizes 30mm square steel sections to support the attachment of PVC boards designed to hold signage or provide a counter space. Additionally, attached to this framing system is a 770 x 2700 mm layered awning panel that allows for opening and closing the space allowing the units to adapt to various uses depending on the season or time of day.



**Figure 28.** Outdoor Commercial Framing System Blow-up Details  
Source: Author's Own (2024)



**Figure 29.** Outdoor Commercial Framing System Elevation  
Source: Author's Own (2024)



**Figure 30.** Courtyard Perspective  
Source: Author's Own (2024)

The second level, encompassing 3,871 square meters, features both a cafe and a bikeway corridor, strategically designed to attract visitors to the complex. As previously mentioned, the bikeway corridor serves a dual purpose: providing a direct connection between the bridge and the shoe complex, and offering a view corridor showcasing the complex's diverse offerings. Cyclists and pedestrians using the corridor can glimpse the commercial storefronts, the shoe museum, and the sustainable makerspace areas. Notably, the shoe museum and makerspaces are designed as atrium spaces, intentionally exposing the innovation hub's activities to entice visitors to participate in the various shoe-making related activities. This visual exposure encourages exploration, prompting them to descend to the first level via the ramps or staircases located in the west and east wings. This design ensures clear circulation, with all paths ultimately leading to the central courtyard area.

Complementing the bikeway corridor on the second floor is a cafe that doubles as a co-working space. Visitors can access this level via the short-rise lifts or the staircase from the central courtyard. Additionally, a ramp pathway leads from this floor to the third level, which will be discussed later. The cafe's prominent location at the front of the complex maximizes natural views of the river and serves as a magnet for visitors. The facade utilizes perforated

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awning metal panels, offering flexibility in terms of interior views and lighting while creating a dynamic visual experience for those approaching from the front.



**Figure 31.** Bikeway Corridor Perspective  
Source: Author's Own (2024)



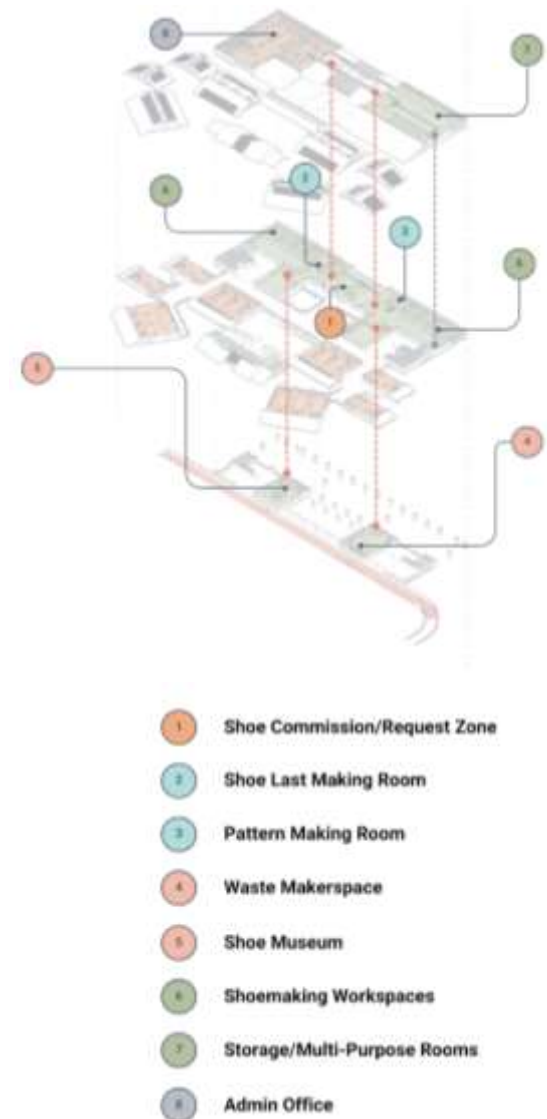
**Figure 32.** Bikeway Corridor with Shoe Museum Perspective  
Source: Author's Own (2024)

## B. Objective 2: Sustainable and Collaborative Workspaces

The third floor plan has a total area of 3,335 square meters and is primarily designed to cater towards the resident artisans or those who desire to visit the innovation hub whose main access is from this floor. Through the elevated bridge networks accessible from the shophouse units, these artisans can easily access the innovation hub and even use the overhang of their area as an extended lounge and place for interaction with their neighbors during the vacant hours of their work sessions.

Upon entering the innovation hub, visitors are welcomed by the central lobby, the heart of the entire structure. This flexible space can function as an extension of the work areas or a lounge for makerspace users to relax between sessions. The PSS framework, discussed earlier, informs the design of this space to promote efficient and sustainable production. From the central lobby, users have access to four key areas: the shoe last making room, the pattern making room, the shoe museum, and the sustainable makerspace. These zones are designed to foster product innovation, which can then be translated into production within the private workspaces located on the west and east wings. Wide hallways bordering the workspaces allow for flexible expansion of workshop activities, especially during

competitions. The east wing hallway can even be transformed into a multi-purpose hall for such events.



**Figure 33.** Innovation Hub Circulation Diagram  
Source: Author's Own (2024)



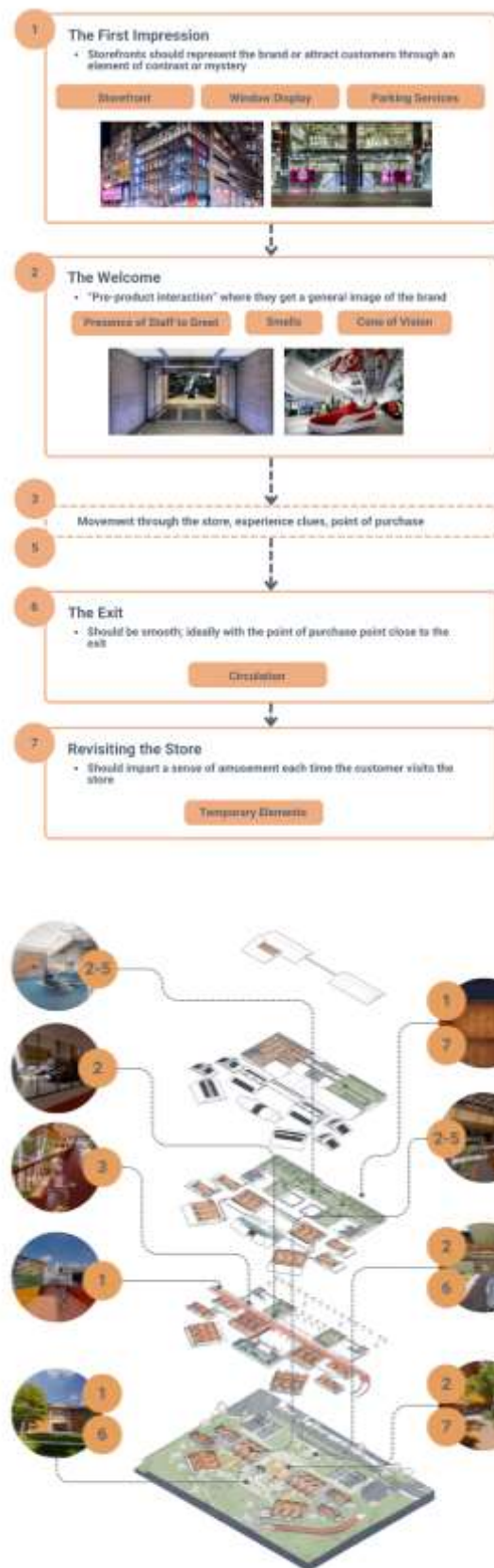
**Figure 34.** Innovation Hub Main Lobby Perspective  
Source: Author's Own (2024)

The fourth level, encompassing 989 square meters of gross floor area (GFA), provides additional support for the spaces below. The west wing houses a multi-purpose unit that can function as extra storage or an office for the building administrator. Similar to the shophouses, this space has access to a freight elevator for convenient movement of products between levels. The east wing features an open-plan office unit with access to a rooftop balcony. This balcony boasts an edible garden and can double as a lounge area.

### C. Objective 3: Sustainable and Collaborative Workspaces

The Marikina shoe complex design aims to translate the image of the city's footwear industry into its architectural elements. This is evident in the building forms themselves, which resemble separate houses. This design choice reflects the industry's origins in individual shophouses interconnected by open walkways, fostering a sense of community reminiscent of traditional Marikina shoe making practices. Furthermore, subtle details incorporated throughout the floors and walls reference the city's well-known shophouses supplemented by a variety of shoe motifs, seamlessly integrating the industry's heritage into a modern commercial setting.

Building upon the findings from the experiential design research, the site's circulation was meticulously planned. Each pathway, from the initial approach to the exit, is designed to reinforce the overall impression of a 'footwear complex'. This is achieved by utilizing the interplay of pathway designs, facade details, and building massing, all contributing to the semiotic language of the space.



**Figure 35.** Experiential Framework Design Approach  
Source: Author's Own (2024)



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The complex's design incorporates subtle cues that speak to the essence of Marikina's footwear industry. First, the flooring in specific areas features a consistent pattern reflecting the complex's function. In the innovation hub, sustainable rubber flooring not only complements the design's eco-friendly approach, but also provides sound insulation for the innovation hub. Second, the facade resembles the existing shophouses with its use of brick, concrete, exposed steel, and corrugated metal panels. However, a vibrant orange contrasts with this traditional palette, referencing the warm brown hue of leather while acknowledging the growing trend of colorful footwear seen on popular platforms like Instagram. These perforated panels offer dual functionality: allowing for customized designs and providing glimpses into the complex for those approaching from afar. Additionally, the perforated nature of these places creates a lightbox effect in the night time, serving as a beacon of light for the people visiting the Marikina River Park at night.



**Figure 36.** Main Facade Detail Layering  
Source: Author's Own (2024)



**Figure 37.** Main Facade Detail with Lightbox Effect  
Source: Author's Own (2024)

## VI. Conclusion & Recommendations

This research successfully addresses the three primary research and design objectives: (1) creating a space anchored on the genius loci of the Marikina Footwear Industry and the Marikina River Park, (2) developing strategies for building sustainable, efficient, and safe workspaces, and (3) imparting a renewed image of the industry through architectural design elements that reflect the visual codes currently present. This was achieved by applying the semiotic design principles of Marikina Shophouses and understanding the physical spatial conditions that allowed the industry to flourish. These

insights were then translated into the programming of the site.

All in all, the study successfully generated a new typology: the "Bagong Salamyaaan" or new third place, rooted in the context of the Marikina Footwear Industry. This accomplishment stemmed from the design process, which began by identifying specific user habits (shoemakers). These user needs ultimately determined the building form and configuration of rentable commercial spaces, further supporting the existing social and commercial patterns within Marikina. Additionally, as previously mentioned, this typology stands in distinct contrast to existing large-scale shopping centers. The Bagong Salamyaaan's identity is deeply intertwined with the identity of the city itself, defining it as a local shopping center designed to support the Marikina Footwear Industry's growth and prepare it for the future by supporting the growth of small enterprises. The design incorporates safe social spaces interspersed between commercial units, fostering a vibrant atmosphere of interaction and collaboration along the Marikina River. Furthermore, compared to these enclosed commercial shopping malls, the design program goes beyond simply encouraging innovation among existing tenants. It fosters the growth of new businesses within its space through its inclusion of smaller, rentable makerspaces. These makerspaces, designed with other functions like the museum and waste makerspace in mind, contribute to an overall efficient and dynamic environment. All this, tied into its experiential design aspects, creates a design that encourages people to connect, shop for footwear, and be inspired to create their own in an open and welcoming environment.

Thus, this research offers a perspective on how architecture can be rooted in its context to promote both the economic and social aspects of an industry. It also considers future trends and projections to ensure sustainability. Through this project, the Marikina Footwear Industry gains a space tailored to their specific needs and lifestyles, while also attracting the public. This serves as a case study for how architecture can contribute to the growth of industries.

One limitation of this research was the low number of participants for each research tactic specified in Chapter 3 relating to the topics of (1) the Filipino definition of a third place, and (2) spatial preferences of shoemakers who have a showroom separate from their main place of residence. To support the information gathered from these points, a co-design approach with various Marikina Footwear makers is recommended. This collaboration could reveal connections with the workspace that are not readily apparent from an external perspective. Additionally, designing a research tactic to generate the present image of the industry through either qualitative (comics, narrative, drawings) or quantitative (surveys) means might produce more specific semiotic design elements which could inform the final design.

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