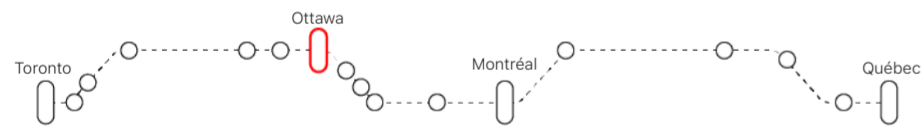


Ottawa Train Station in Section
Existing
Addition

Can you point me to the city?

With a need to divert Canadian transportation further away from independent car travel, how should Ottawa Train Station's roof adapt to allow a more meaningful arrival to the nation's capital?

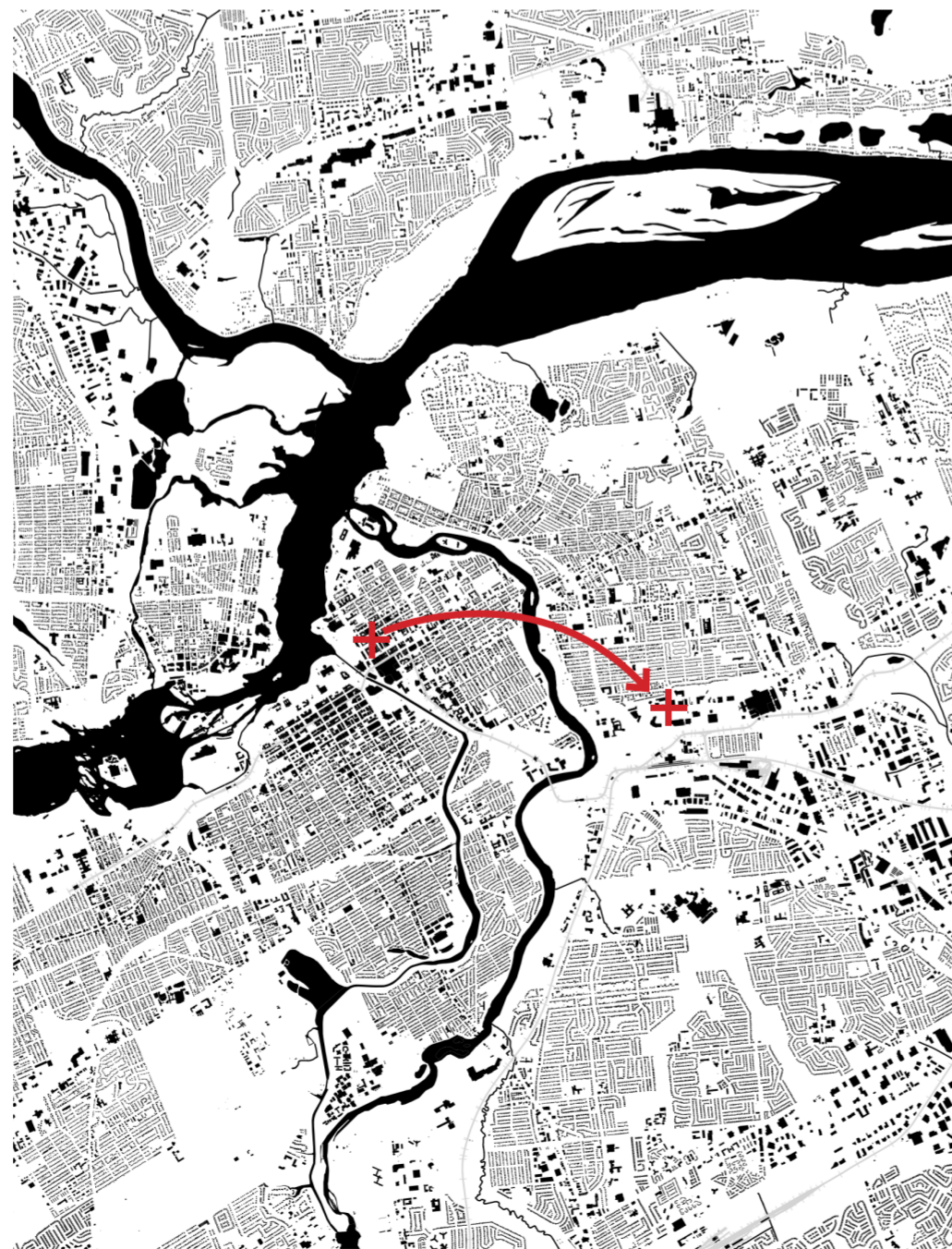


Future high frequency rail corridor between Toronto & Québec City

This project proposes occupying Ottawa Station's roof as a key act of pause while allowing travelers to connect to the city within a greater journey. The current site separates the station from the urban centre and has removed opportunities to rest during a long trip. This is an issue for the nation's capital as train commutes to Ottawa increase to pre-pandemic levels and the city is projected to become a central destination within new infrastructure promoting rail travel. As the Canadian government works towards building 1000km of dedicated high frequency tracks between Toronto and Québec City, travel time between Toronto and Ottawa alone may be reduced by an hour and half. The federal government predicts an increase of trips in the Toronto-Québec corridor from 4.8 million in 2019 to 17 million by 2059. As more and more people are projected to move through Ottawa Station, access to the roof will provide a needed opportunity to decompress and orient oneself upon a major arrival.

In 1966, Ottawa's Union Station moved from its central location to its new home in the suburbs. This move, key to Jacques Gréber's Plan for the National Capital moved the rail entrance to the city from neighbours like the Chateau Laurier and Parliament to the urban periphery. Part of a greater effort that converted the capital into a car-oriented municipality, it also led to the construction of a masterpiece in Canadian architecture.

John B. Parkin & Associates designed a roof, a magnificent glass & steel truss canopy that floats above the rail lines and shelters a light filled concourse. Recognised as a heritage site in 1996 the project sits isolated in between highway 417 and a paved landscape of suburban box stores and parking lots. Upon arrival at the station by train, commuters take a ramp from the platform underground, pass below the tracks and onto a spiral ramp leading into the grand concourse. Sunlight pours in from clerestories and roof openings while passengers are waiting for their departure. Without diversity in programming, those arriving simply pass through the building, exit, and are greeted by a car port and wall of trees as one embarks on their next journey, be it by car or public transit. Leaving, one would not have a intuitive understanding of their location within the city nor a prominent recognition that they have in fact arrived.



Ottawa Union Station moves from centre town to suburban periphery



Ottawa train station designed by John B. Parkin & Associates, photo from Canadian Architect, <https://www.canadianarchitect.com/ottawa-train-station/>



Kiss and ride car port, main exit and entrance. Ambiguous urban orientation.

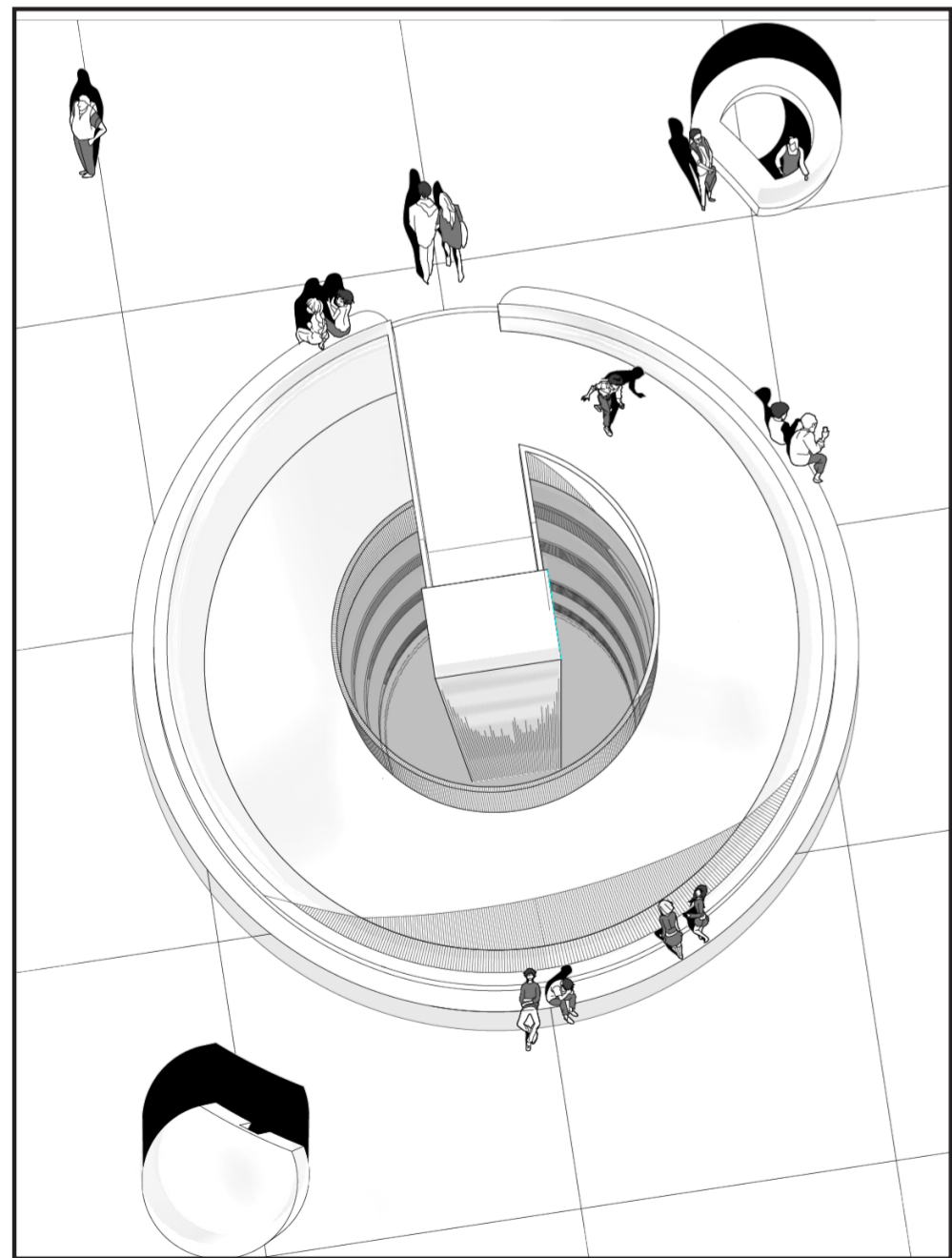
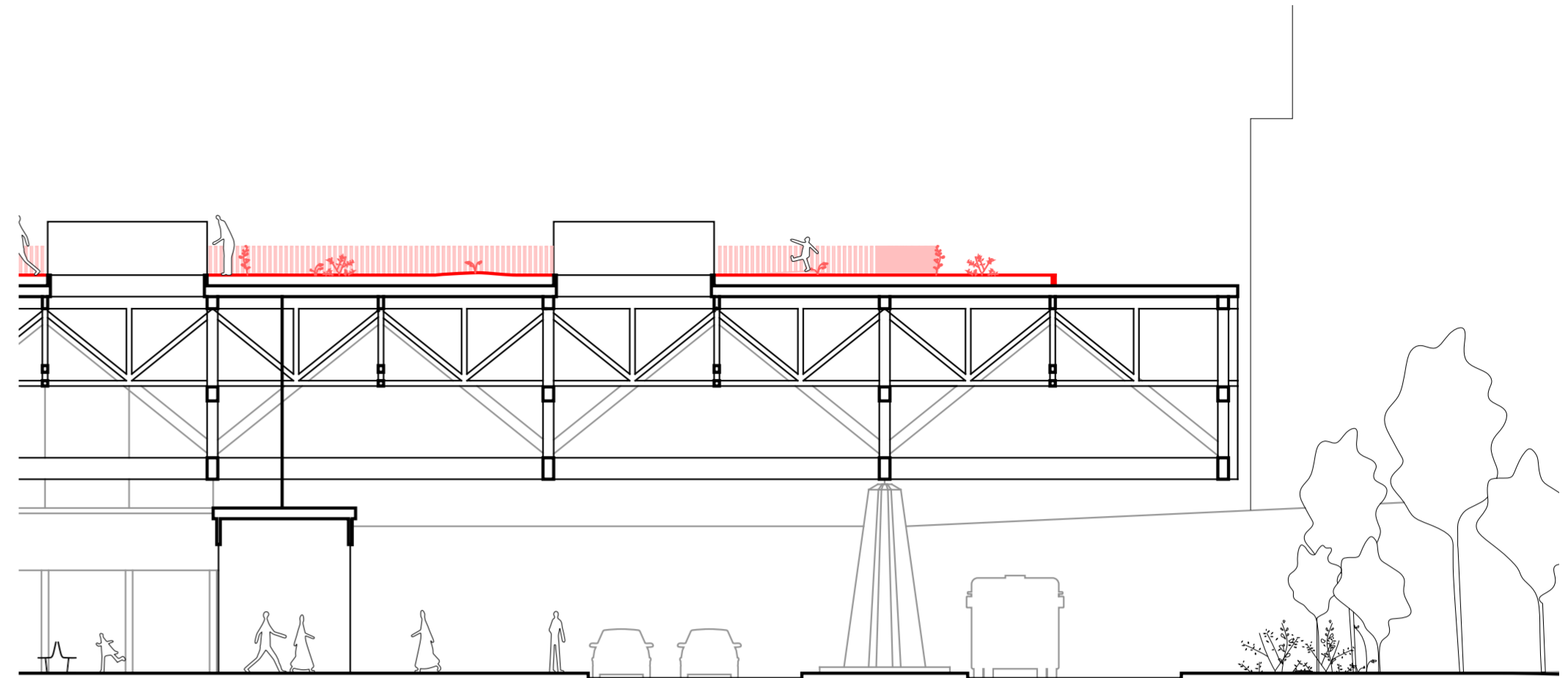
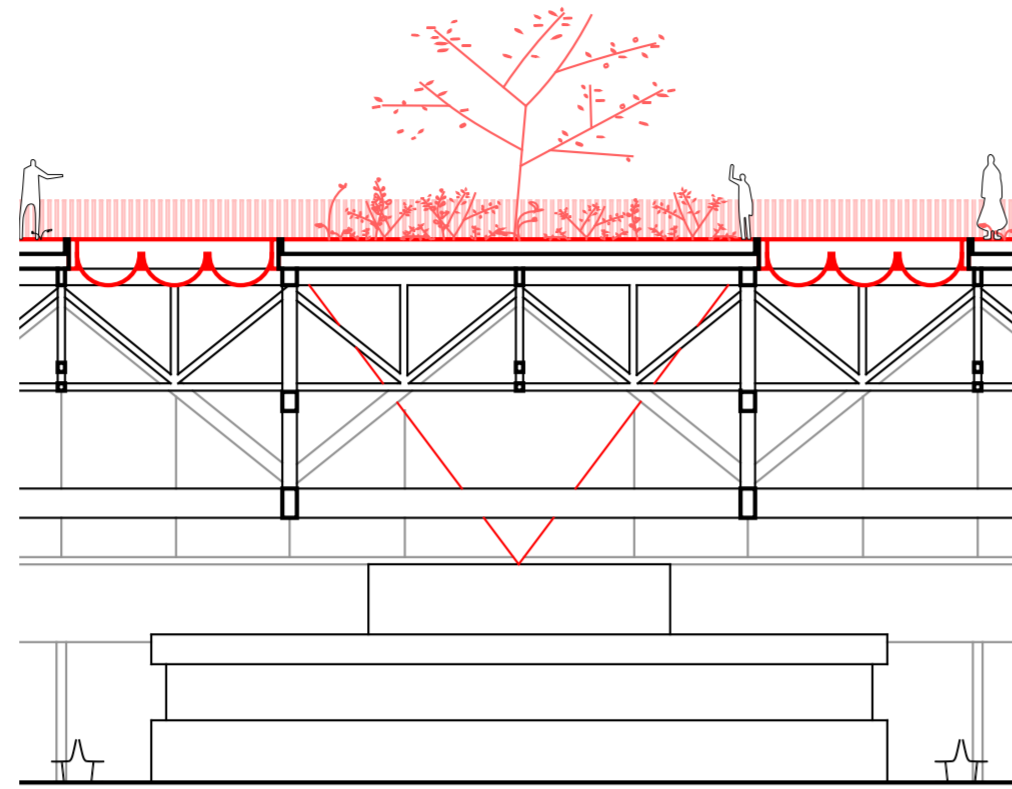
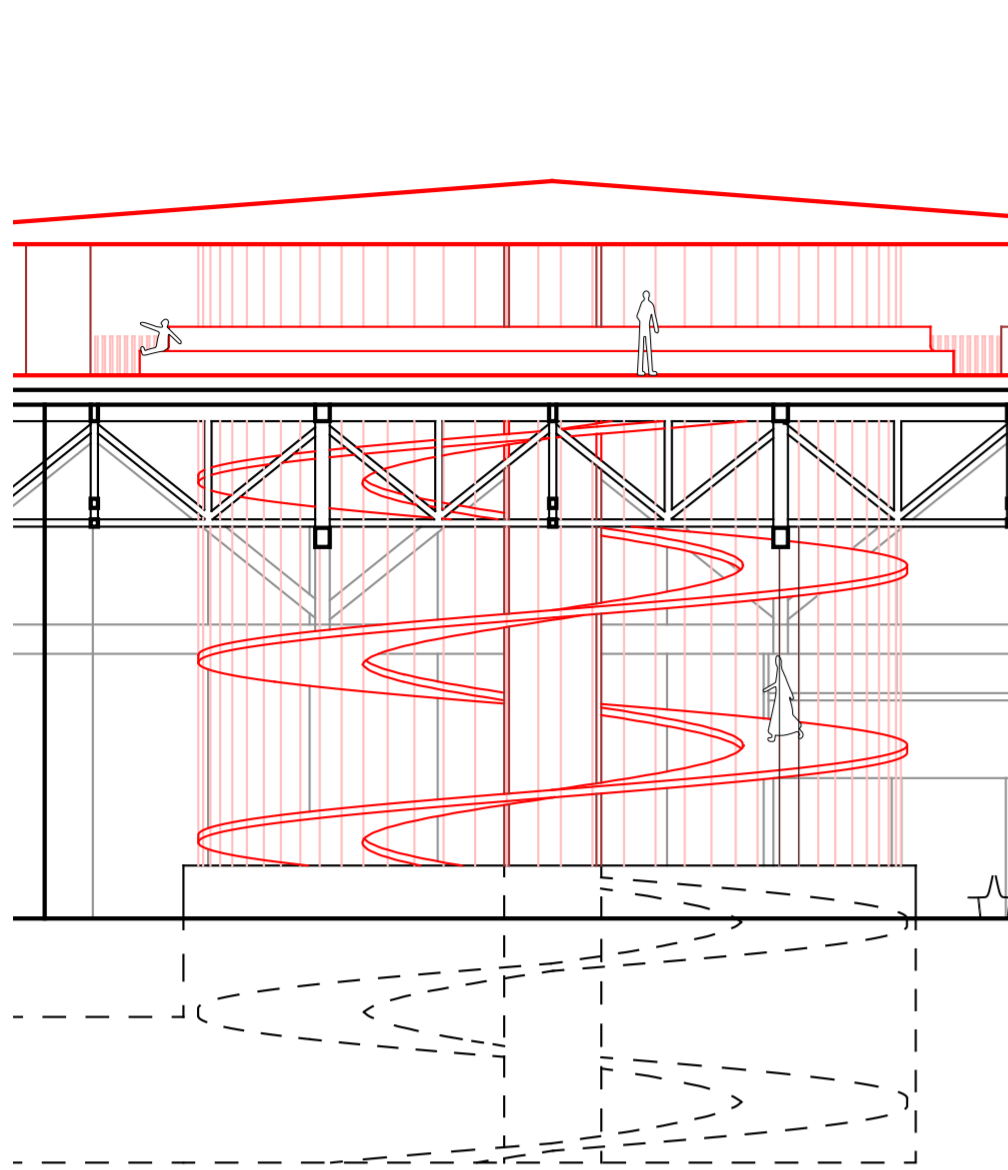
Here lies the unfortunate reality of Ottawa Station and the transition of the City towards a dominant car culture, there is no rest from a long journey and no immediate sense of arrival. An opportunity for rest, a connection to the destination, these are significant qualities of other beautiful stations around the world. At Milano Centrale and Strasbourg's Gare Centrale, travelers flowing from the station into public plazas are simultaneously given the chance to pause while also being able to immediately orient themselves to the heart of a city centre. Though a central station is almost never the final destination, it should represent a sense of arrival and a connection to the city proper.

Using the existing architecture, the underground spiral ramp and elevator are extended upwards, past the forest of steel frames and opening onto a new landscape. Aside from a singular bar for coffee and drinks, sparse movable furniture litter an open lawn. Inviting one to find a comfortable position, or rest on the open grass, a public plaza forms floating

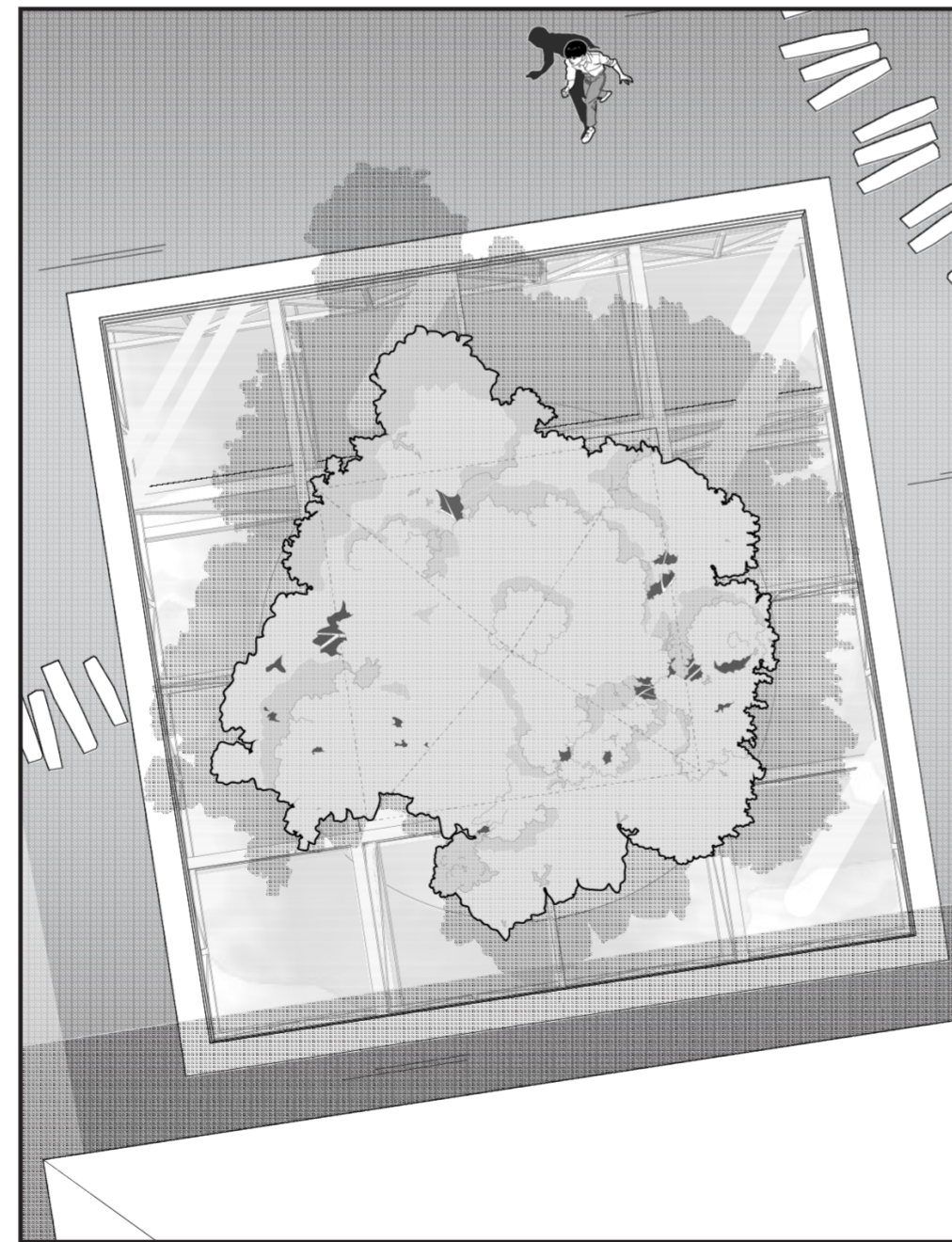


Ottawa Train Station's suburban surroundings, the lawn to the north is an inaccessible patch with LRT tracks

above the tracks and busy traffic. From up here, views are far reaching, and the downtown core seems only a stones throw away. Smells of freshly planted flowers and junipers echo a beautiful city abundant natural charm to offer. Unlike the fast-paced concourse below, there is space here -to sit, to rest, to see- we know we have arrived.



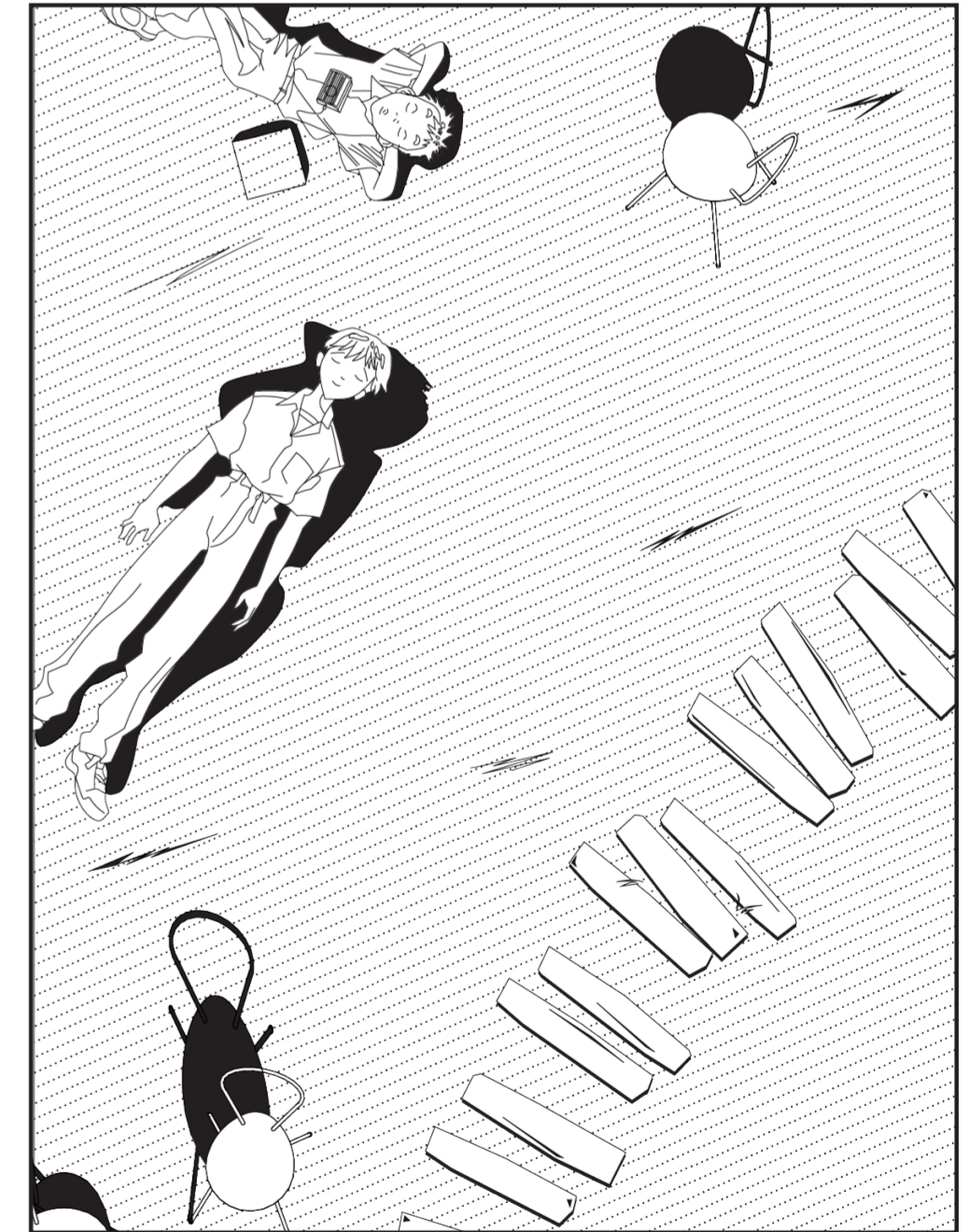
An existing ramp extends to a new roof-scape



Skylights extend to surround a deep planting bed, its form allows light to wash over it and into the concourse above the ticketing pavilion



While passengers flow through the busy terminal below...



others gain a moment of rest above