



**Our Mission:** ReBHS promotes inclusive & livable communities through free and low-cost resource development, services, education, & research in support of creativity, access, agency, & affordability in the built environment.

## Our Aims

ReBHS is a nonprofit center for the study & support of the building and creative arts, and of the communities they foster. Our work is to provide the knowledge, skills and space to help individuals and groups understand & solve problems in the built environment using the time-honored principles of community discourse, education, research, and cooperative work fused with creative thinking.

**Though our organization does not directly engage in building and construction, our programming seeks to facilitate, educate, and foster connections so that individuals and communities are empowered to imagine, design, build, repair, and create for themselves.** Our activities are divided between direct community improvement activities and educational programming (though we aim to have an educational component in all of our programming). Please read further for more descriptions of the two types of programming.

## Non-Profit Model

ReBHS was incorporated in Vermont in the Fall of 2023 as a Vermont Non-Profit Corporation and granted Federal 501c3 status in December 2024. The non-profit model serves ReBHS in its mission to improve lives through the provision of educational programming, resources, and services at little to no cost to those we serve. This attitude of service over profit is echoed in the significant role volunteer members play in all of our programming.

## A Future Home

While we have already been actively developing our programs and funding, we have yet to officially occupy a space. The plan is for our nonprofit to lease and inhabit a portion of the old Brandon High School, once the owner/developers (Welcome LLC) make renovations to the building to achieve safe occupancy standards. We will then be able to more fully develop our educational offerings, to achieve our goal of reanimating and revitalizing the old Brandon High School.



## Action Areas

Our present and future programs address four specific “action areas”, which together define the scope and direction of the organization.

### Education & Empowerment

Our central mission is to educate members of our wider community about the built environment and to empower them to make it their own.

### Ideas & Advocacy

We seek to generate new ideas about the design, organization, & construction of the built environment, and to share them through exhibitions, events & other media.

### Making Civic Space

We hope to create the kinds of open spaces within our organization and community that foster civic discourse and play host to other community-centered programs.

### Direct Action in the Built Environment

We seek to mobilize our resources and those of our membership to modify the built environment in our immediate community, manifesting new ideas and empowering others.





# Membership, Leadership, Community

reBHS is built on its active and committed membership, most of whom have been embedded from the beginning. Our mission is shepherded by a leadership team with deep and diverse backgrounds in built-environment work.

## The Membership Model

ReBHS is a member-led organization. Members pay a small yearly fee or provide an in-kind contribution of volunteer hours. From our foundation, we have had a strong group of active members, each of whom provides a unique set of skills: builders, organizers, designers, communication experts, and social connectors. Members support the organization by serving on committees, which deal with specific programs and initiatives, and by staffing our events and programming. Once we have secured a permanent home for the organization, we plan to extend special access studio and shop space to our membership.

Though founded on a membership model, the organization serves a community much larger than that reflected in its membership roll. The programs of the organization, both active and planned, serve the broader Brandon, Vt. community by helping to solve everyday problems, contributing to residents’ quality of life. Our programming also touches individuals beyond Brandon who seek ReBHS out for assistance on housing issues, and engages a regional, national and global audience through the production and dissemination of ideas-centered media about the built-environment.

## Leadership Team

ReBHS Corp. is led by a board of directors, currently composed of its three officers. The day-to-day operations of the organization are managed by an executive director, who serves by board appointment. Together, this leadership team represents decades of experience organizing community groups, managing non-profits, and directing major construction projects. The leadership, through personal investment and a commitment to extended terms of service, echoes and amplifies the membership’s deep commitment to the longevity and health of our young organization.



**Jeff Dardozzi**, Executive Director *(Brandon/Pittsford, VT)*

Jeff is a Vermont-based designer and builder. He is a managing member of LivingStructure, a design/build firm in Brandon, VT specializing in facilitating self-built housing. The focus of his work is in the architecture and social experience of self-built housing movements. He has over 45 years of experiencing designing & building residential dwellings, commercial & public space. From the moment he walked through the doors of the old high school Jeff felt the old school’s tremendous potential to be a place of imagination, creativity that would contribute to the quality of life of Brandon and the surrounding area.



**Allen Pierce**, President *(Philadelphia, PA)*

Allen is an architect, builder, professor, and scholar with fifteen years of experience in design and project management. He is licensed in New York, Pennsylvania, and Vermont, and is a LEED Accredited Professional in the area of Building Design + Construction. He is the Principal of the Philly-based design studio HEIMA and holds an appointment as assistant professor of architecture at Temple University, conducting research at the intersection of construction technology and human meaning-making. Allen is excited to develop reBHS as a model of cooperation and conviviality for the Brandon community, and to shepherd its settlement into a permanent home.



**Joy Marcotte**, Vice-President & Treasurer *(Pittsford, VT)*

In college Joy worked on the restoration of a 14th c. church in a small village in northern France: a formative experience watching a community unite to save a historic building and bring it to modern-day use as a gathering space. After academic work in international development and anthropology, Joy worked in non-profits focused on human rights and environmental justice. She has taken part in community organizing efforts across the world including international volunteer work camps, community theater and an educational cooperative. Joy has been working on construction projects in the US for 25 years, engaging in all aspects of building, from hammer-in-hand to financial and legal management. She is a co-founding member of LivingStructure, a Brandon, VT-based low-profit design/build company.



**Kevin Booth**, Secretary *(Sudbury, VT)*

Kevin has a passion for keeping things working. As a Scientific Instrument Technician at Middlebury College he works with both cutting edge and legacy equipment on a daily basis, but generally prefers the latter. He has been a partner in a wide variety of community development efforts from the organization of coffee farmers in the highlands of Cameroon to the founding of a growing food cooperative in Chester County, PA. Recently, Kevin has served as the Mentor/Coach of Brandon's youth robotics team, the Otterbots. He is committed to seeing that ReBHS serves as a hub and resource for people who want to build and create collaboratively.



**Gary Smith** *(Bristol, VT)*

Gary is a professional theater artist and administrator who has worked in New York and Regional Theaters with OBIE, TONY and Oscar award winning actors & directors. His guiding vision has been to use theater as a vehicle to create dialogue, awareness, and positive social evolution. He co-founded Pennsylvania’s acclaimed Theater of the Seventh Sister & served as its Co-Artistic Producing Director for 30 years. He also created programing for the Lancaster County Council on Drug & Alcohol Abuse, the Dowingtown, Wilson, & Lewisburg School Districts, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Lancaster, Trinity Lutheran Church, & the Crispus Attucks African American Community Center. He has served as a Panelist for the PA Council on the Arts, where he evaluated grant proposals from across the state, and as President of the Middlebury (VT) Acting Company’s Board of Directors.



# Programs to Educate & Explore

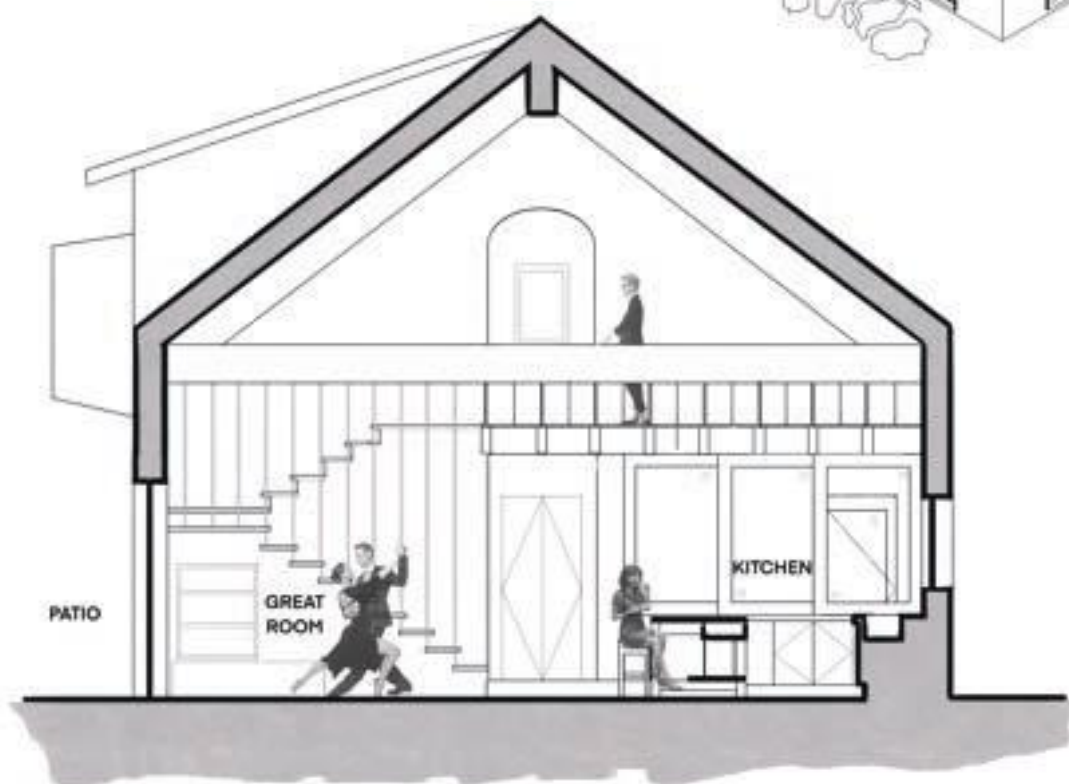
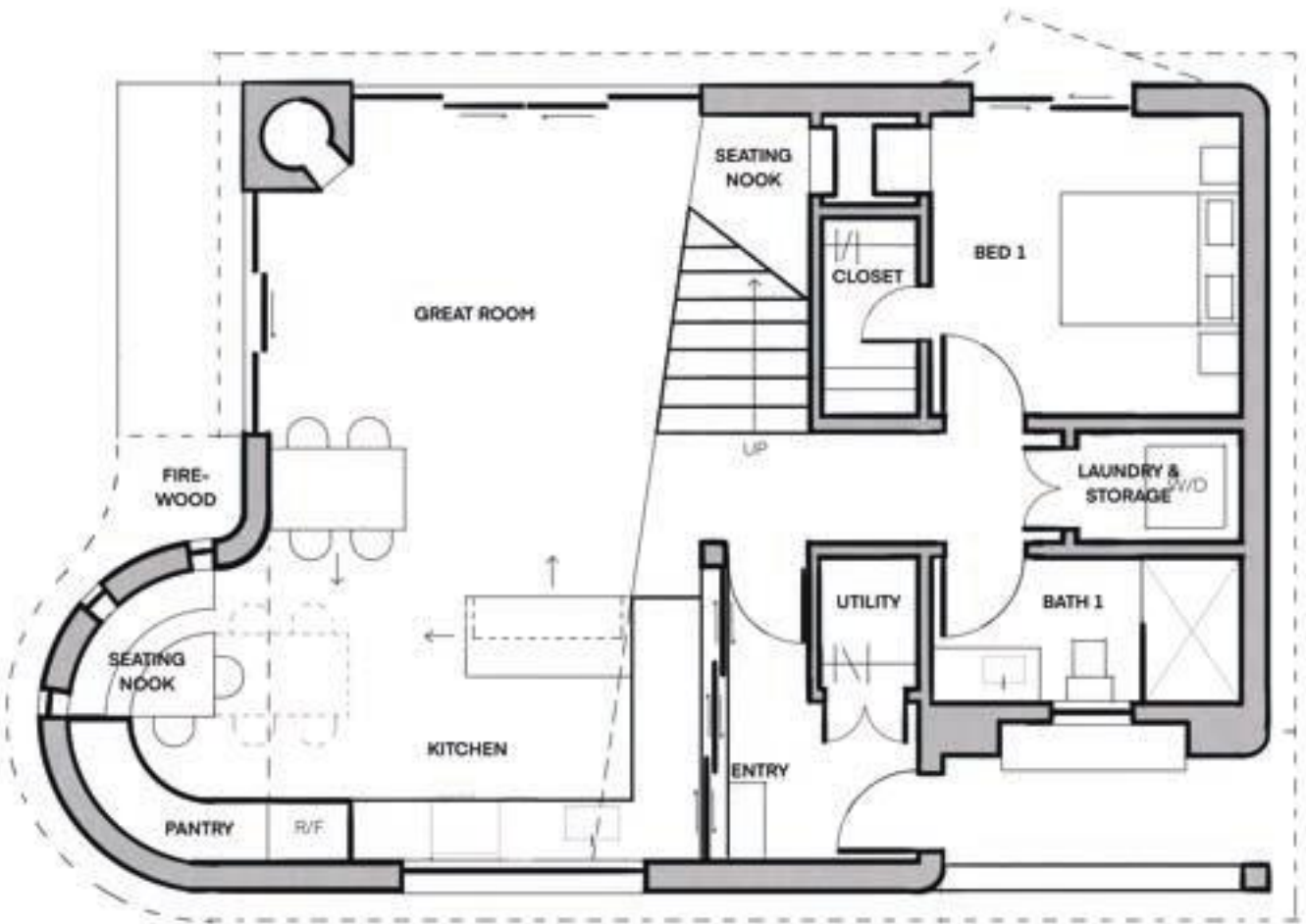
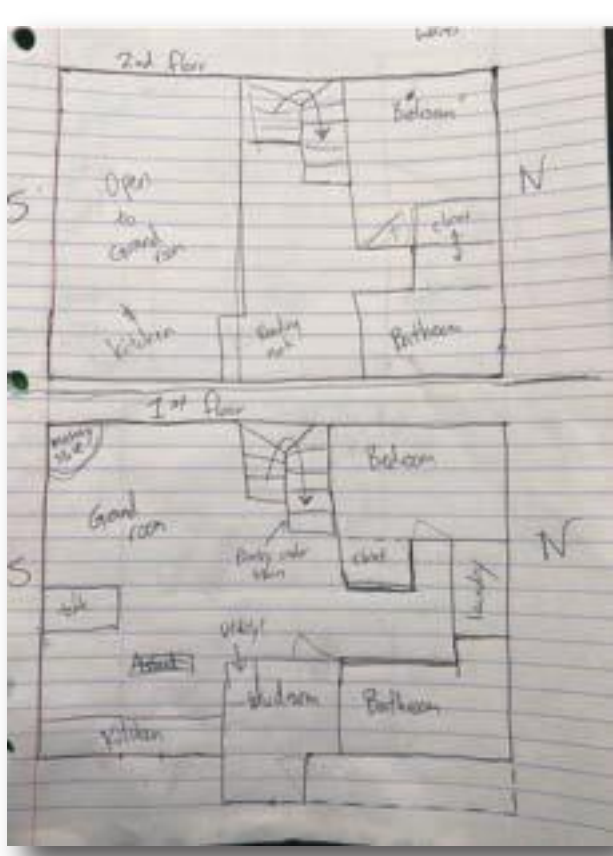
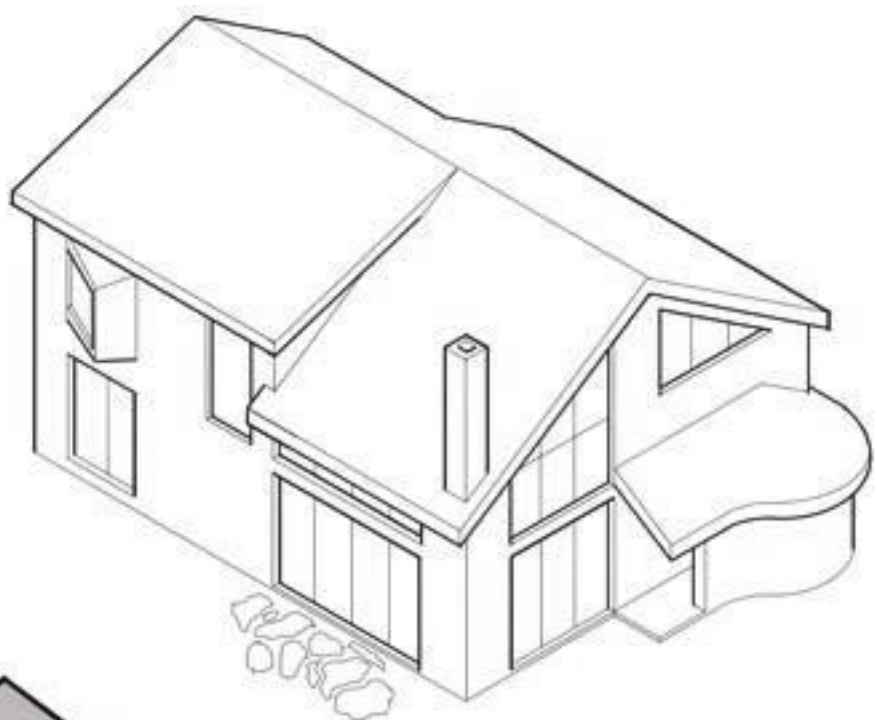
We aim to increase access to the key ideas and skills needed to solve problems in the built environment. We also seek to be a platform for the collective exploration of human environments, and empowerment of their builders.

## HousED: A Partnership Education Model

Housing is by far the greatest monetary cost members of our community face throughout their adult lives, whether they rent, mortgage or buy outright. It is also an important means of self-expression and existential comfort for many. The HousED Program, a central part of ReBHS’ mission, seeks to educate and empower members of our community to develop their own housing, substituting the wealth of their own time and energy for capital, allowing community members to develop original structures that serve them better than market housing, which become significant sites for self expression and significant events for personal development.

Through the HousED program, ReBHS partners with individuals and collectives who have the will, the energy and the resources to pursue self-build housing but lack the expertise of the professionals most people must pay to build on their behalf. Through this partnership, ReBHS connects program participants to licensed professionals willing to offer pro bono educational and consultation services, providing a project-specific education in design, construction, building science, horticulture and other related areas. Participants are thereby empowered to pursue projects that might otherwise be beyond them, and do so with the material efficiency, environmental performance, and aesthetic grace that are hallmarks of professionally-executed projects but are so often missing from traditional self-builds.

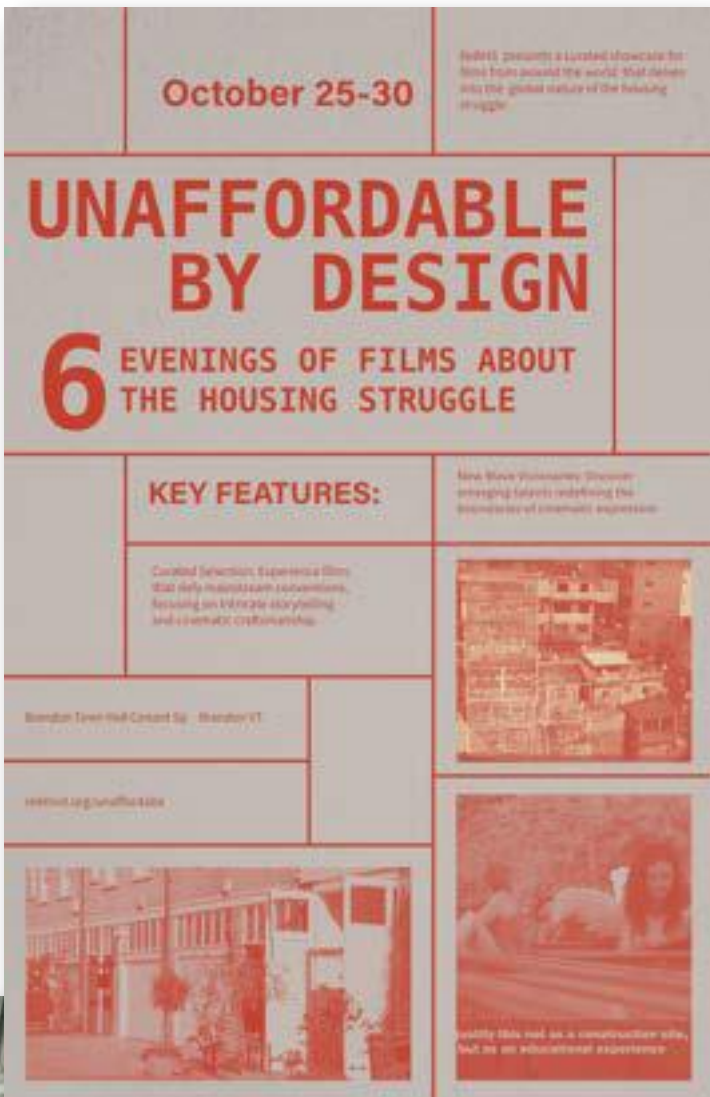
As an initial pilot for the program, ReBHS has partnered with a single limited-income landowner seeking to build a small ground-up home for themselves on a semi-rural property in East Middlebury. Surrounded by timber and deeply knowledgeable about trees, this program participant sought our help, so she can design and build with the resources already present on her home site, and to understand the complexities of the design drawings and construction permitting she will need to generate in order to start work under their own steam.



## Built Environment Film Series

We are in the process of organizing a multi-day film series in Brandon that will play host to a variety of documentary and narrative films that raise important questions or introduce novel ideas about the built environment. The series will serve as a significant means of educating our community about alternate ways of building, dwelling, owning and living in the human-made world, linking our education and advocacy missions and providing a civic space for the discussion and further elaboration of the films’ concepts.

Once funding assistance has been assured, the first round of screenings will be held at Brandon Town Hall. We hope the series will become an annual event going forward, to be hosted in reBHS’ permanent home in future years.



## Built Environment Gallery & Resource Library

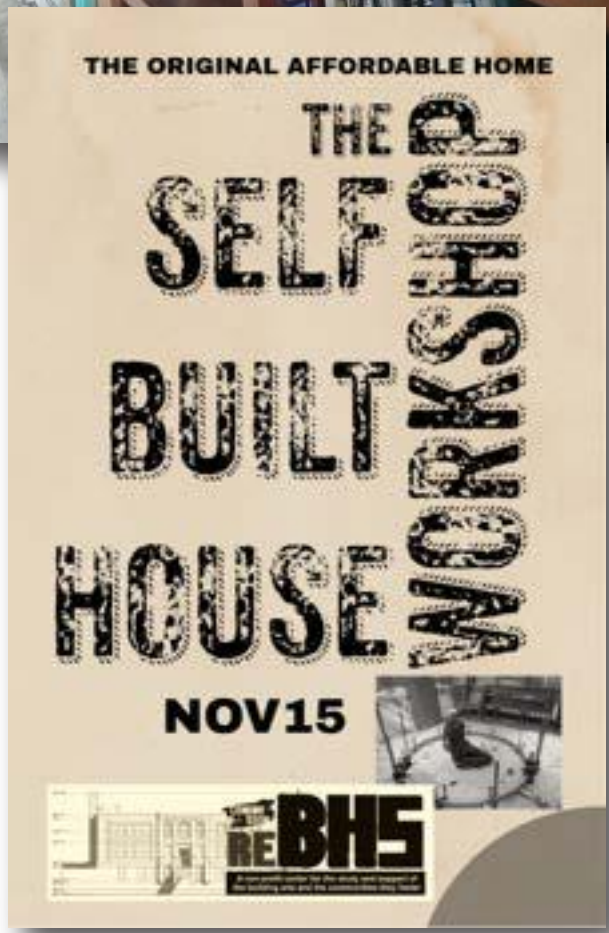
A major part of our vision for our permanent home in Brandon is the creation of a publicly-accessible gallery and library, both centered on the built environment. These facilities will be open regularly, providing access to a variety of written and pictorial resources, and opportunities to encounter new ideas through curated art, history and technology exhibitions.

We have begun collecting and organizing library resources and continue to solicit donations from the community. In the future, the gallery will play host to the Film Series and provide a platform for the work of Visiting Fellows. Both programs await the completion of construction on our future home for full activation.



## Visiting Fellows

As a means of sponsoring new ideas in the built environment, ReBHS hopes to host visiting fellows on a model much like a traditional artists’ residency, open to artists, scholars and craftspeople alike. Fellows would be asked to develop a personal project in keeping with the ReBHS mission and to assist with the staffing and development of the organization’s core programs. Fellows would be given short-term housing in Brandon and access to shared studios and workshops for the duration of their residency. Residencies would culminate in the presentation of the Fellow’s work to the community (a lecture, a gallery show, the unveiling of a built work, etc.).





# Programs for Community Improvement

We seek to develop programming that will improve or enhance the public infrastructure, improving quality of life in the communities we serve. These initiatives are scaffolded and propelled by productive community partnerships.

## Brandon ToolShip

*a partnership with the Brandon Free Public Library*

The Brandon ToolShip is a futuristic and funky mobile tool storage project designed to assist in promoting the use and adoption of electric lawn care equipment. The ToolShip is a small bicycle-towed trailer with a digital lock device that allows library patrons to unlock and check out a single set of electric lawn and yard care equipment via their cell phones, or by calling the library.

The idea behind the project is to increase access to these tools by taking them to people. The program offers easy and equitable access to the tools by regularly rotating the ToolShip throughout Brandon’s neighborhoods during mowing season. The ToolShip is adorned with original art and supported by a poster program by members of ReBHS that engage citizens in the program's mission, encouraging positive behavioral change.

ReBHS received funding for, and donated, the first ToolShip to the Brandon Free Public Library, in August of 2024. An additional ToolShip is in the works to also be donated to the library.



## Art Bikes of Brandon

*partnered with Green Mountain Foster Bikes, sponsoring non-profit winner, 2024 VT Council of the Arts Animating Infrastructure Grant*

The Art Bikes of Brandon is an initiative designed to literally ‘animate’ the downtown infrastructure with kinetic art, in the form of art bikes, and to provide opportunities for local artists to create and exhibit their work. These local artists are creating and installing eight art bikes among the town’s bike racks to draw attention to the public bike racks, and inspire micro mobility as the go-to mode of transport for local errands, exercise and engaging the outdoors

Our goal is to motivate people, especially youth, to experience art, the built environment, social connections and the natural world in new ways. We want to create motivating and inspiring visual cues about healthy ways of seeing, experiencing and being in the world. Additionally, the VCA grant supports local artists engaging in their work.

The project has received strong support from the town and the community. Artists plan to install the first art bikes in September of 2025



## Repair Fair

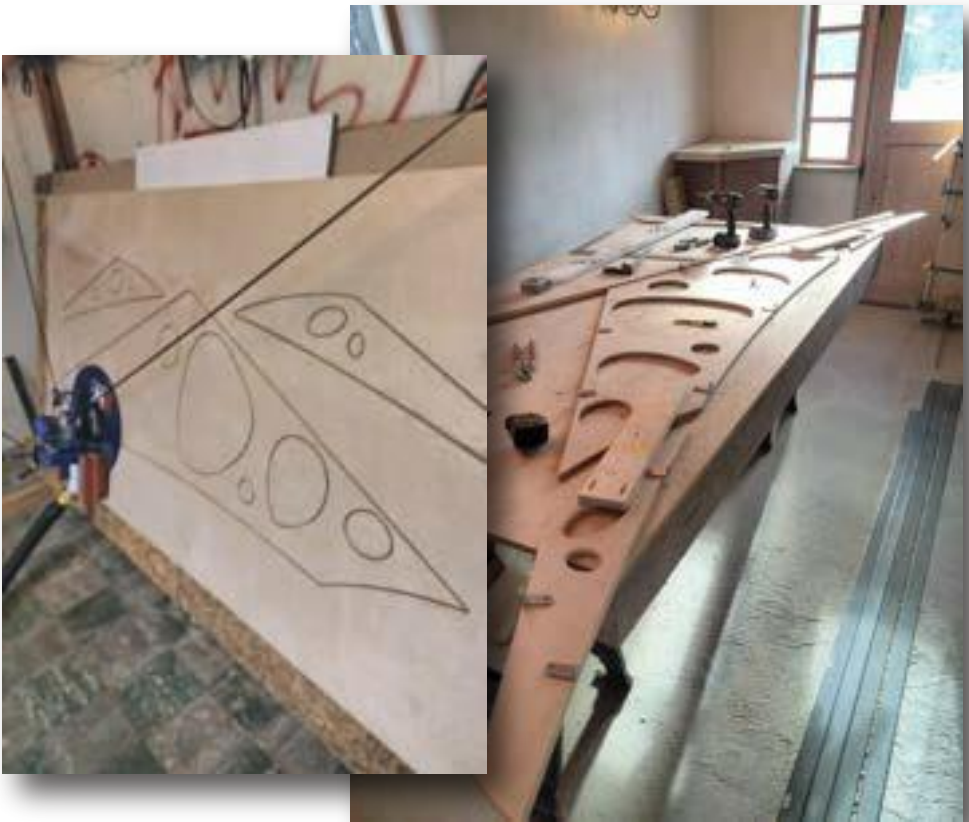
Repair Fair is a one-day event in which community members can bring any broken or malfunctioning household item to ReBHS to have it fixed by ReBHS members and other volunteers who are experts in various crafts and trades. The “Repair Fair” concept is not original to ReBHS but we have sought to translate what is typically a passive service into an opportunity to teach those we serve about the inner-workings of the piece we are repairing, to engage them in the process of repair, and to empower them to take on repair and maintenance themselves in the future.

The Repair Fair now runs regularly in partnership with the Brandon Energy Committee. We are planning to continue hosting semi-annual Fairs going forward.



## Open Workshops

Our permanent home will eventually contain a variety of digital and conventional tools, plus lots of flexible workspace to complete projects ranging from small kitchen gadgets to full building components. These shops exist to empower ReBHS members and others in our extended community to make, repair or modify their own built environments at will. Members in good standing will be eligible for shop training and thereafter have open shop access. Extended members of the community who seek support from ReBHS staff may take classes, or may be invited to use the shops with staff support. Fellows will participate in staffing the shops and will be invited to use them in support of their personal projects.



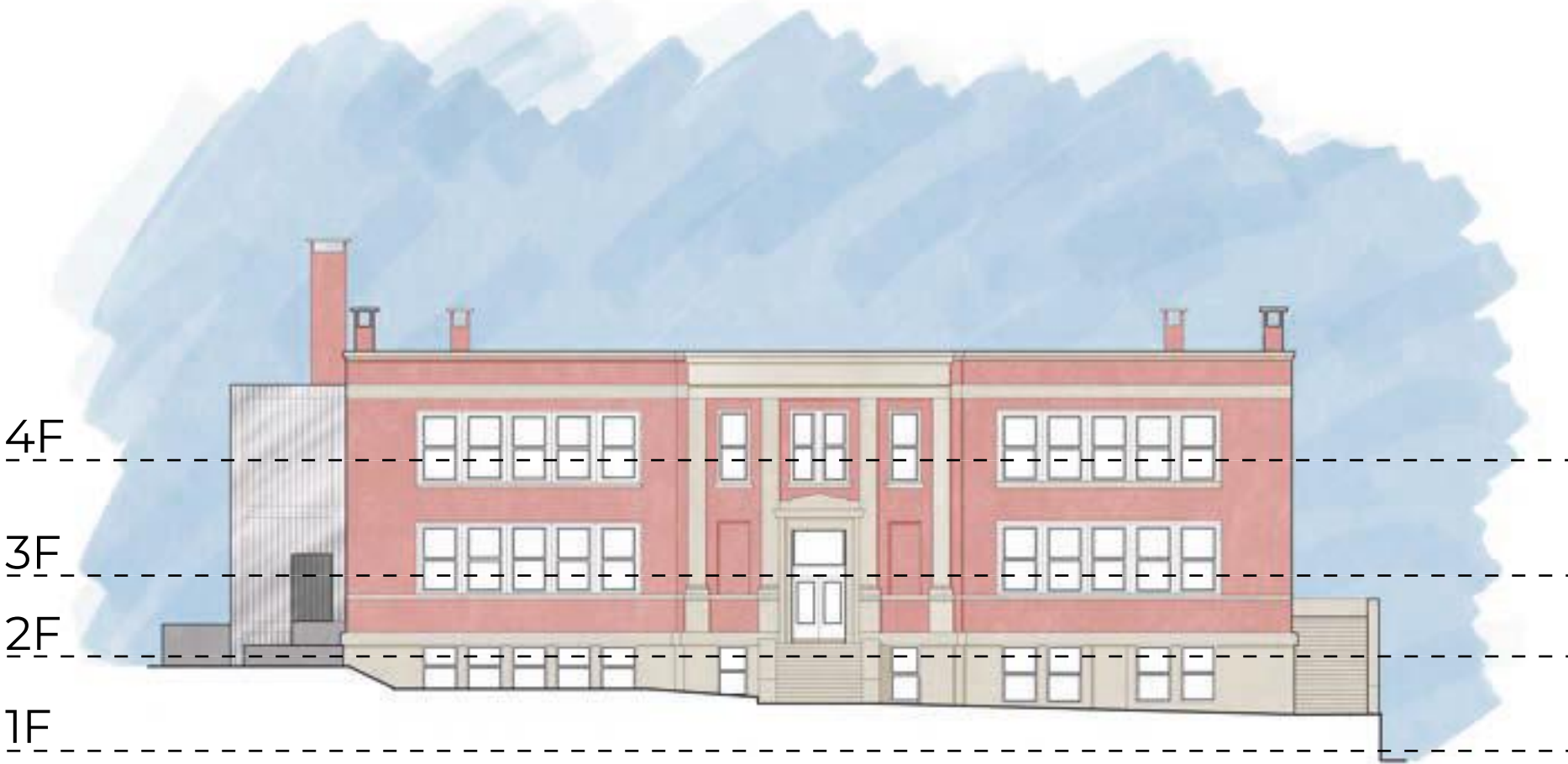


Envisioning a  
Future  
Home

Our mission demands a physical home. We are working with the current owners of the historic Brandon High School to define a space that serves our needs, and we will ultimately take tenancy of the majority of the structure.

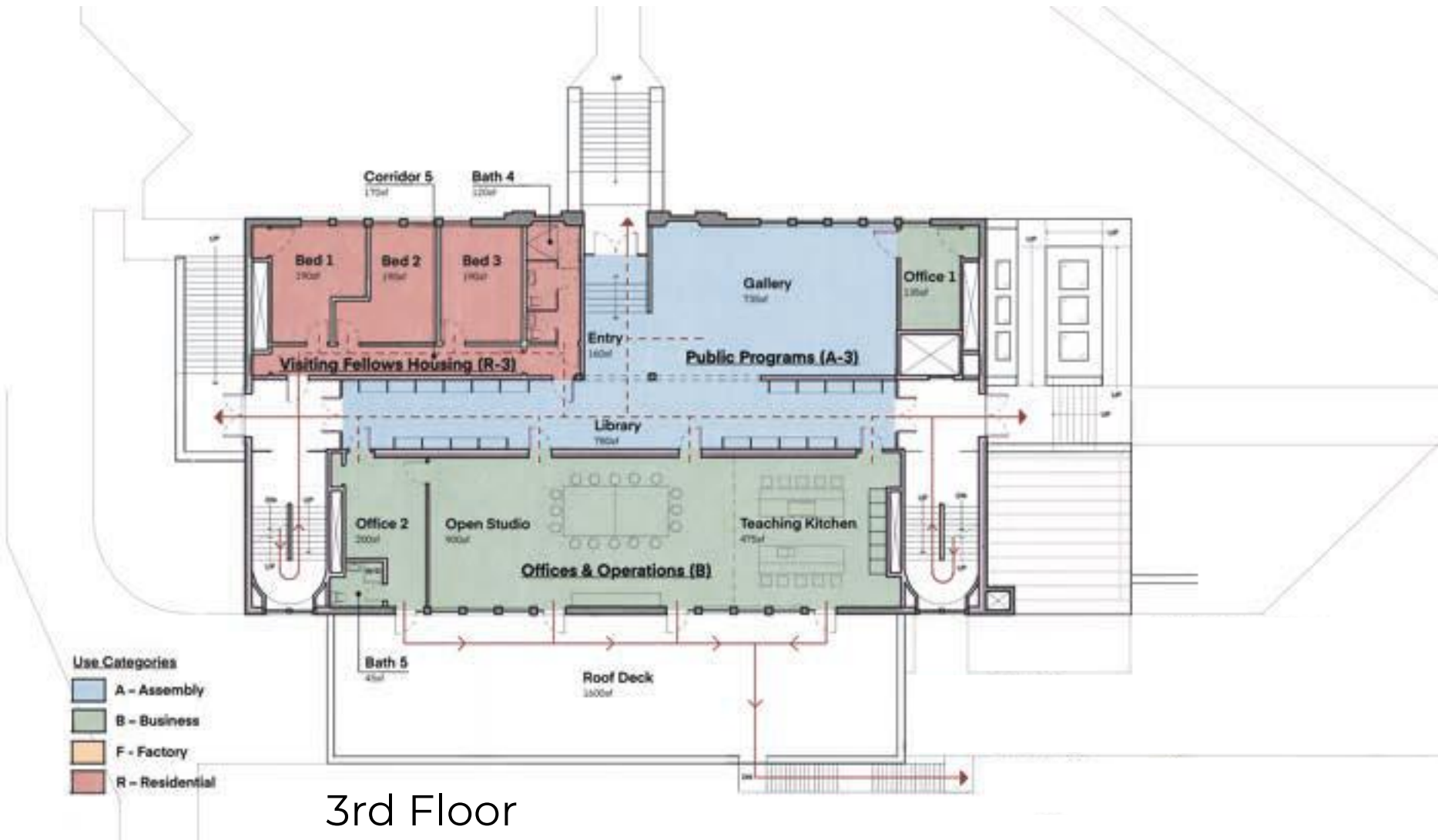
Planning for a Home

Though ReBHS is already finding success, funding, partnerships, and community buy-in across several programs and all of our Action Areas, we remain homeless as an organization. We plan to make a permanent home for our mission, our membership, and our community in the 1916 Brandon High School building: the structure that captured our imaginations and originally brought us all together. The current owners of the building, Welcome LLC, continue to develop and rehabilitate the building, while ReBHS advises Welcome LLC on its vision for the spaces as future tenants.



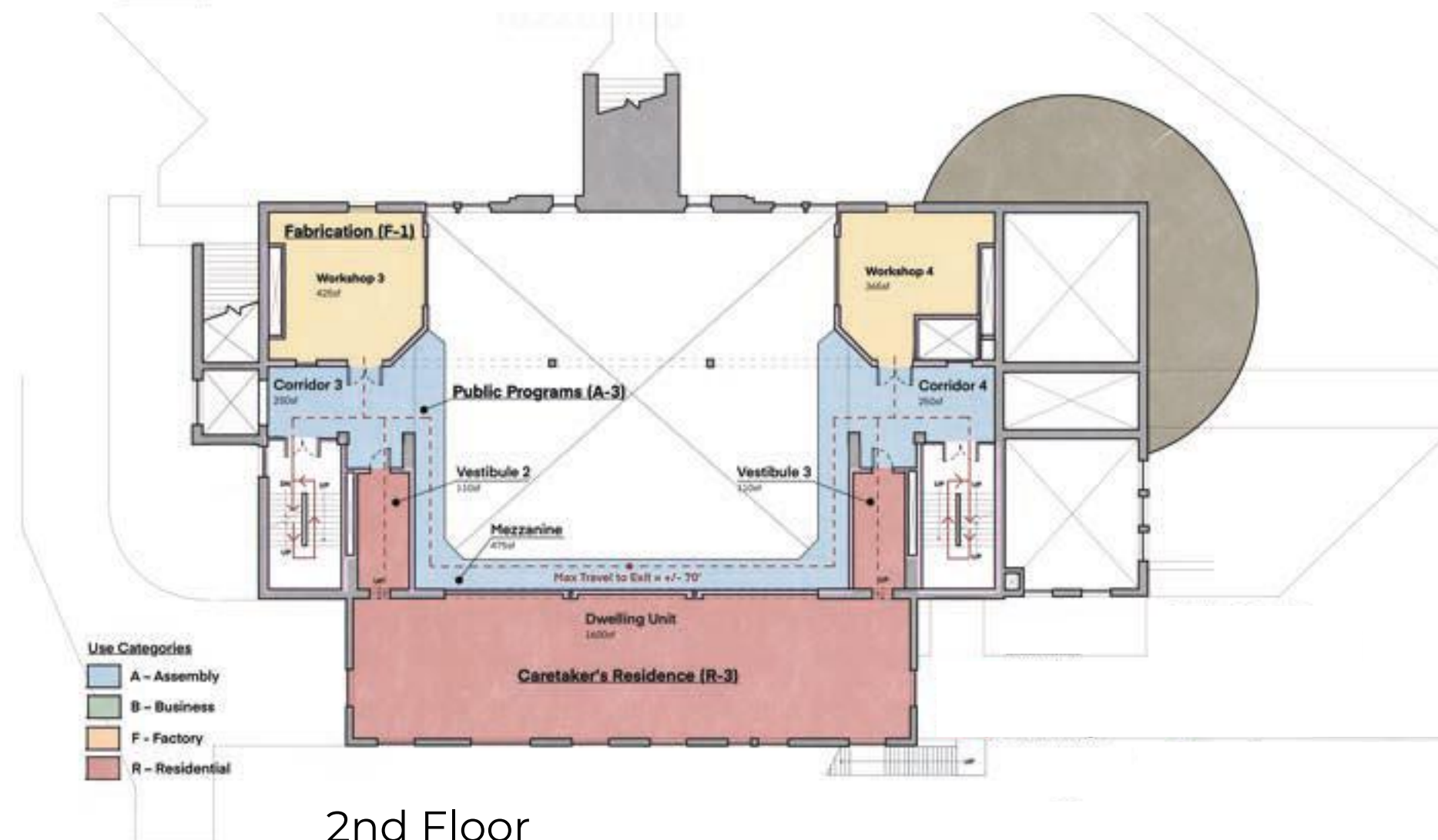
Space for Ideas

Ultimately, the School will serve as a home for new and emerging ideas about the built environment: how it is controlled, financed, built, inhabited, perceived. It will play host to a library and gallery dedicated to these questions. It will house and give workspace to visitors from across the nation and world who have gathered to debate and develop these ideas. It will provide space for Brandonites to develop their own ideas about the built environment, as individuals and collectively.



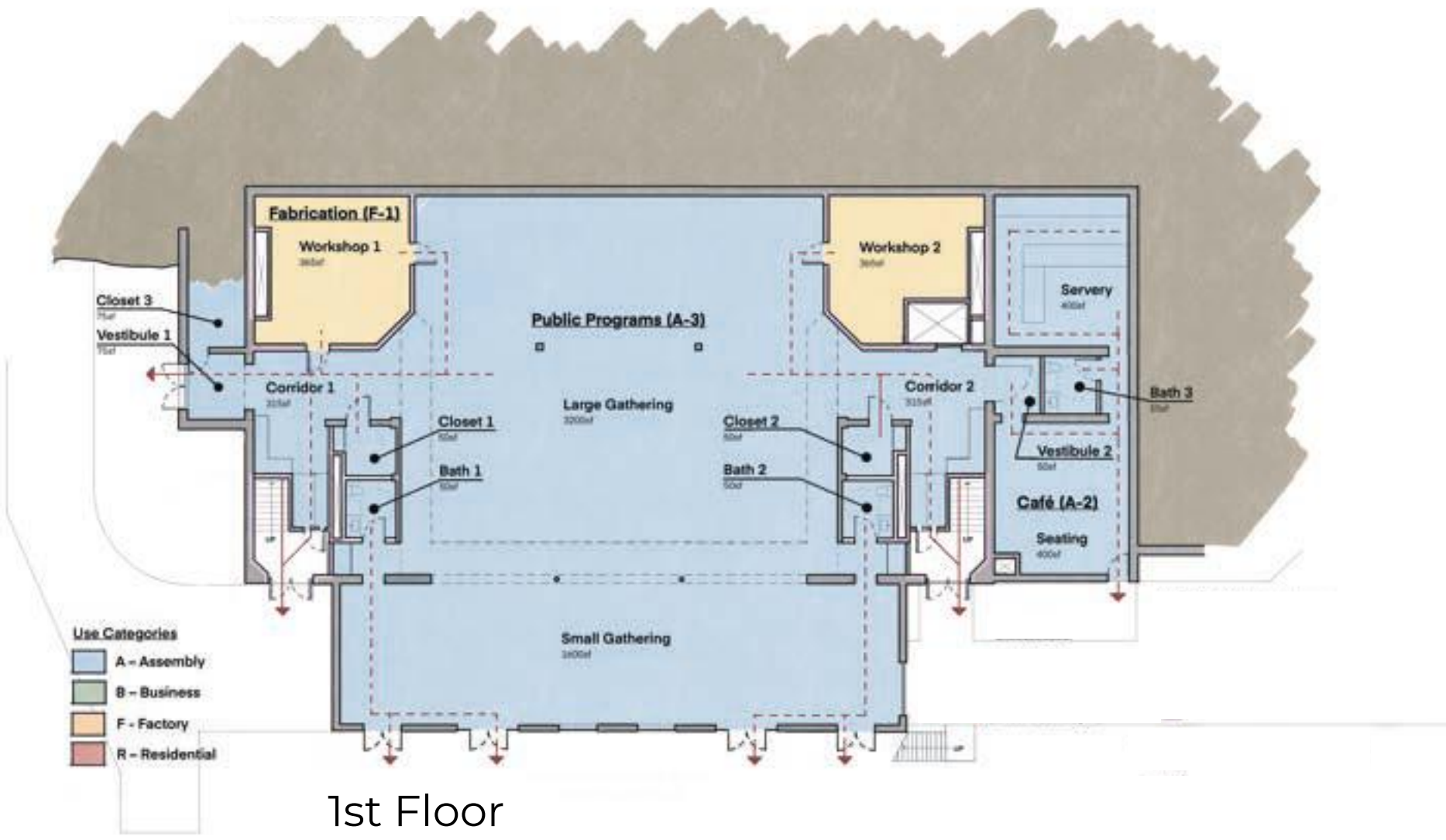
Facilitating Fellowship

The primary, street-connected floor will house most of ReBHS' public-facing program, administration and clean, quiet workspaces. It is at this level that the town and the organization meet, and the community gathers. Much of this floor would be open to the public on a regular basis and other community groups would be invited to use the gallery and studio spaces semi-regularly through limited partnerships. This floor would also serve to house visiting fellows and provide space for their work.



Making Community

The lower floors of the School building, which historically housed a hybrid gym-theater and the school's mechanical innards, are perfectly suited to the kinds of built-environment work ReBHS will host. Former mechanical rooms serve well as workshops, set below ground to muffle sound and made entirely of fireproof concrete. Myriad small closets and corridors provide ample storage for the tools, materials and other resources ReBHS will set at the disposal of its membership, facilitating making at many scales and by many means. The old boiler room and coal bin, now exposed to the sky, will ultimately be occupied by a café, providing a casual gathering space for a range of communities from modern-day high schoolers without a place to rest after school to gallery visitors debriefing after an energizing opening. The large gym provides a flexible empty center that might host a timber framing course on one day and a public lecture from a visiting fellow on the next.



A Partnership for Housing

Welcome LLC plans to set the upper floor of the school aside for future occupation as housing. We imagine this housing to be managed by a separate organization operating as a tenant of Welcome LLC or a junior stakeholder in the building itself. reBHS would play an advisory role in the development of this housing organization, assisting tenants as they cooperatively organize to determine their own best design and use of space, allowing for community input and guided by ReBHS' knowledgeable staff.

