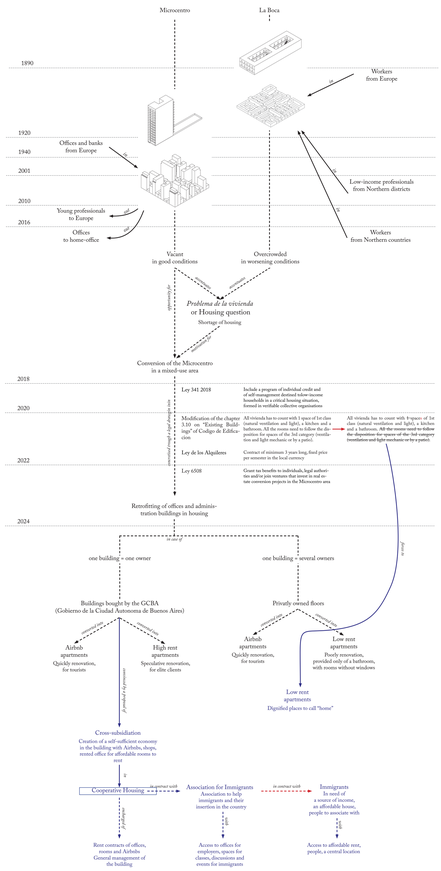
Destination Home
A Retrofitting Model for Buenos Aires' Immigrant Community

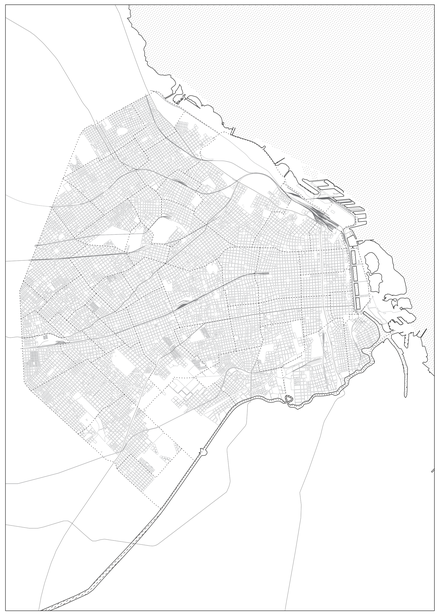
The fragmented urban landscape of Buenos Aires reflects its migration history. This condition, accentuated by current international and urban migration patterns, has led to a contradictory occupation of the city centre: densely overcrowded conventillos are juxtaposed with vacant neoclassical office buildings.

In response to the crucial 'problema de la vivienda,' or housing question, a specific legal framework is being employed to convert Microcentro into a mixed-use neighbourhood through the formal and informal introduction of residential units.
However, the speculative demand for luxury housing or Airbnb is leading this transformation process, ignoring the pressing needs of those requiring affordable housing.

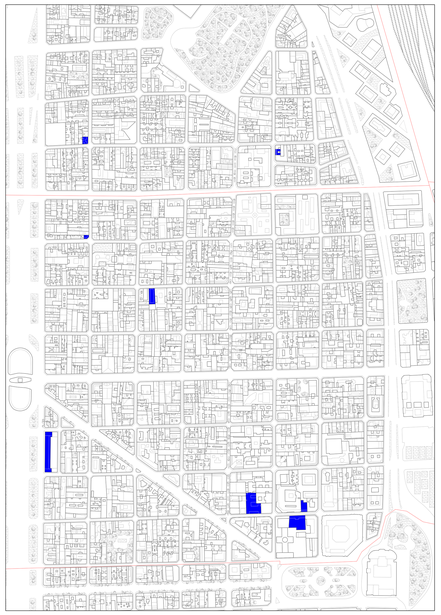
By recognising and analysing the immigrants' necessities and priorities, the built environment and the typical collective housing types (conventillos), 'Destination Home' proposes a tailored strategy to rehabilitate state-owned historical buildings in Microcentro into cooperative housing alternatives for urban and international immigrants. Centrality, affordability, and the notion of community are key themes of this transformation.

The project aims to provide a dignified place to call home based on immigrants' desires and needs, by promoting cooperation between the government, non-profit organizations, and users as a viable policy approach to address the 'problema de la vivienda,' urban vacancy and to practically answer to immigrants' constitutional rights.

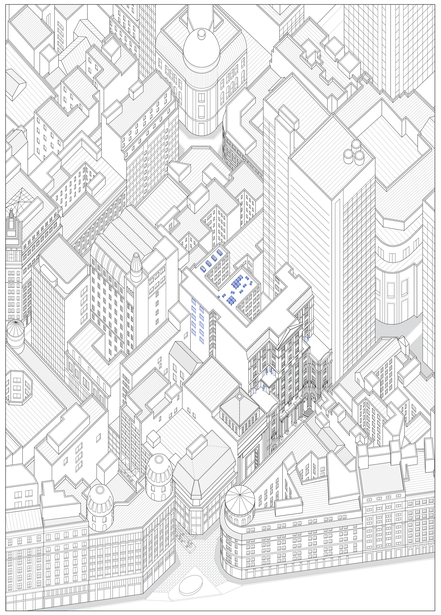




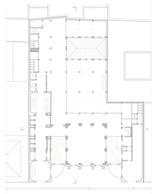
Buenos Aires, the centrality of the harbor and the train station



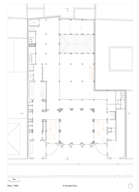
The grid of overbuilt manzanas in Microcentro



Modern and neoclassical buildings around the manzana
between Calle Mitre, Avenida Florida, Avenida Peron and Calle San Martin

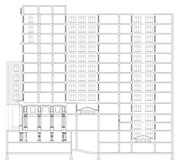


Public entrance, private entrance, public space

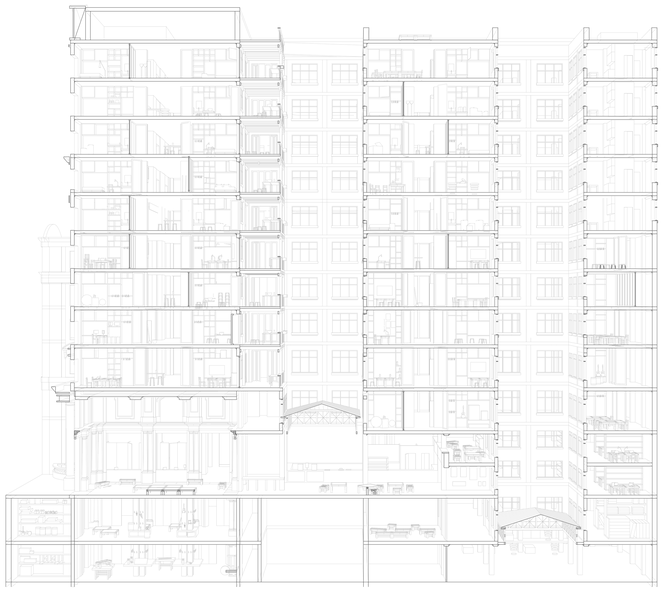


Common kitchens, shared rooms, private offices

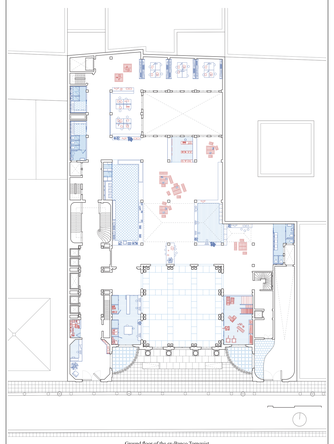
Shared amenities, private rooms



Public ground floor, administrative floors and housing floors



Vertical cross-subsidiation

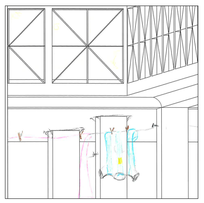


Ground floor of the ex-Banco Torquist

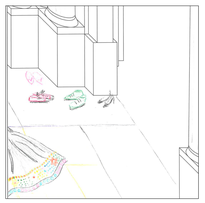
1-2-3-4 floor

5-6-7-8-9 floors

Ancient structure of a conventillo and its utilisation today



Common laundry and drying sheets in the basement,
under the light and ventilation of a glass roof



Event of Bolivian traditional carnival dances in the main hall,
surrounded by the imposing doric columns

Preparation of a common dinner of empanadas with warm mate,
taking fresh air in the balcony of the courtyard

Shared sink in the common majestic bathroomn,
looking at the mirror and at the window

Patio of a conventillo with drying sheets.
Ramos. Jorge. 1998. "La habitacion popular urbana en Buenos Aires." In Vol. 91. Instituto de Arte Americano e Investigaciones Esteticas: 29.

People playing guitar and accordeon
Archivo General de la Nacion Argentina: 3462143

Children smiling in a corridor of a conventillo
Archivo General de la Nacion Argentina: 320825

Children sharing a meal inside one room
Archivo General de la Nacion Argentina: 18299

Coloured timber structure and drying sheets
"Mundo Conventillos", Telefe, January 2021: add minutes

Colored common stairs
"Mundo Conventillos", Telefe, January 2021: add minutes

Common patio of a conventillo, place for exchange
"Mundo Conventillos", Telefe, January 2021: 00'05"

Kid playing footbal in a patio of a conventillo, between entrances doors
"Mundo Conventillos", Telefe, January 2021: 06'10"