

National Underground Railroad Freedom Center RFP for Architectural Renovations

RAA

The racial issue we confront in America is not a sectional, but a national problem. **Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.**

— *Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., 1960*

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LETTER FROM NURFC

The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center in Cincinnati, OH, invites your firm to bid on architectural design for work associated with the remake of its permanent galleries and amenities. We seek a highly qualified, experienced and equity-minded firm to create the architectural structure beneath this transformational museum renovation project.

Suppose you feel you can offer the Freedom Center additional value by providing a proposal that includes fabrication/construction, or other related services (e.g., project management). In that case, you must designate this as “Optional” and separately delineate the pricing.

All proposals are due by October 6, 2023

Attached, you will find a summary of what we propose to do. The Freedom Center has developed initial concepts and program requirements with Ralph Appelbaum Associates (RAA), who developed the Strategic Plan for the Freedom Center. RAA will continue to work with Freedom Center leadership to develop the interpretive planning and visitor experience.

In the coming weeks, there will be opportunities to visit the Freedom Center site, ask questions, and submit bids for architectural work. We look forward to discussing this exciting opportunity with you.

OVERVIEW



This document outlines the architectural components for the expansion plans for the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center (NURFC). Initial concepts for NURFC and program requirements have been developed by the NURFC leadership with the input of Ralph Appelbaum Associates (RAA) who developed the Strategic Plan for the Center. RAA will continue to work with NURFC leadership to develop the interpretive planning and visitor experience.

The following pages include brief descriptions of the components, background on the existing building and exhibits, and specifics of the proposed program for the renovations.

OVERVIEW



ABOUT THE NATIONAL UNDERGROUND RAILROAD FREEDOM CENTER

The National Underground Railroad Freedom Center opened in August 2004 on the banks of the Ohio River in downtown Cincinnati, Ohio. Since then, more than 1.3 million people have visited its permanent and changing exhibits and public programs, inspiring everyone to take courageous steps for freedom. Two million people have utilized its educational resources, working to connect the lessons of the Underground Railroad to inform and inspire today's global and local fight for freedom. Partnerships include Historians Against Slavery, Polaris Project, Free the Slaves, US Department of State and International Justice Mission. In 2014, the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center launched a new online resource in the fight against modern slavery, <https://www.endslaverynow.org/>.

OVERVIEW



PROJECT BACKGROUND

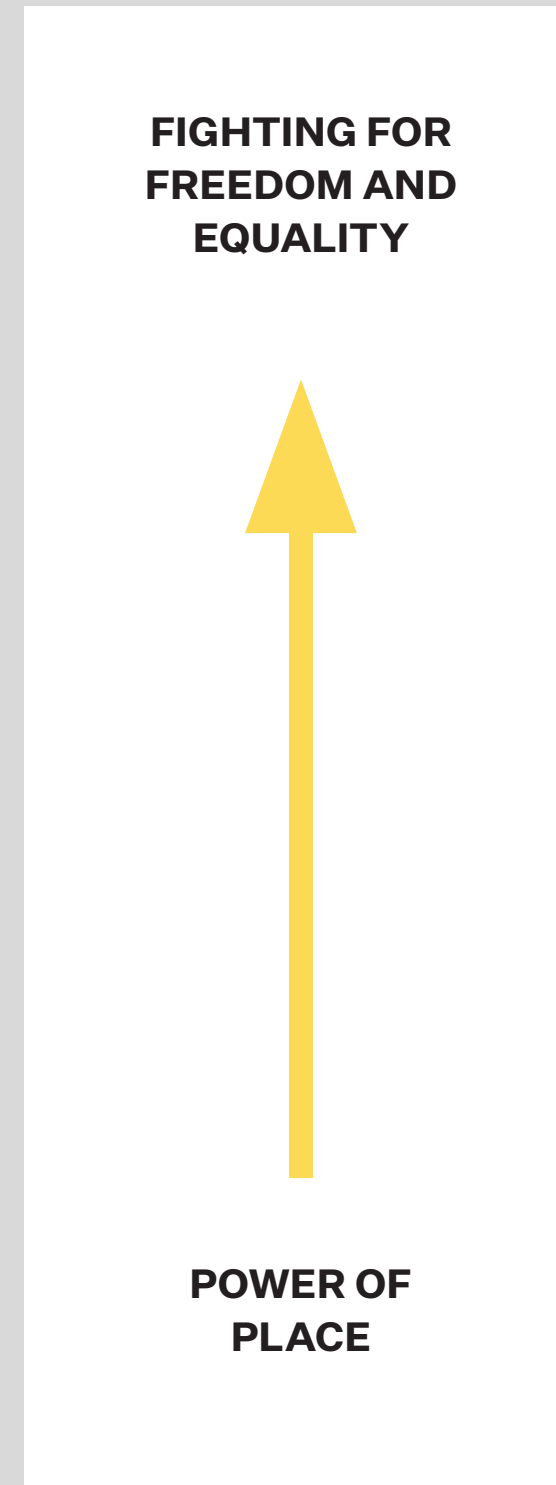
As the need for context on growing social justice movements continues to evolve and change each year, the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center (NURFC) proposes to “meet the moment” by creating the United States’ first permanent exhibition on social justice in an accredited museum. NURFC serves as a convener of dialogue that encourages visitors to fight for inclusive freedom today. The Underground Railroad itself represents the nation’s first multi-racial social justice movement, making NURFC the ideal location for an exhibition focused on the modern social justice movement. This groundbreaking exhibition aspires to help visitors understand why, in modern America, we are still facing these unresolved issues. It will also empower guests to consider how they can make impactful change and inspire them to help create a more just world. At the same time, NURFC will update its permanent galleries, which include exhibits on the Underground Railroad, as well as the broader history of slavery and racial oppression in the United States, and the freedom struggles to change and overcome them.

Visitor Journey and Circulation

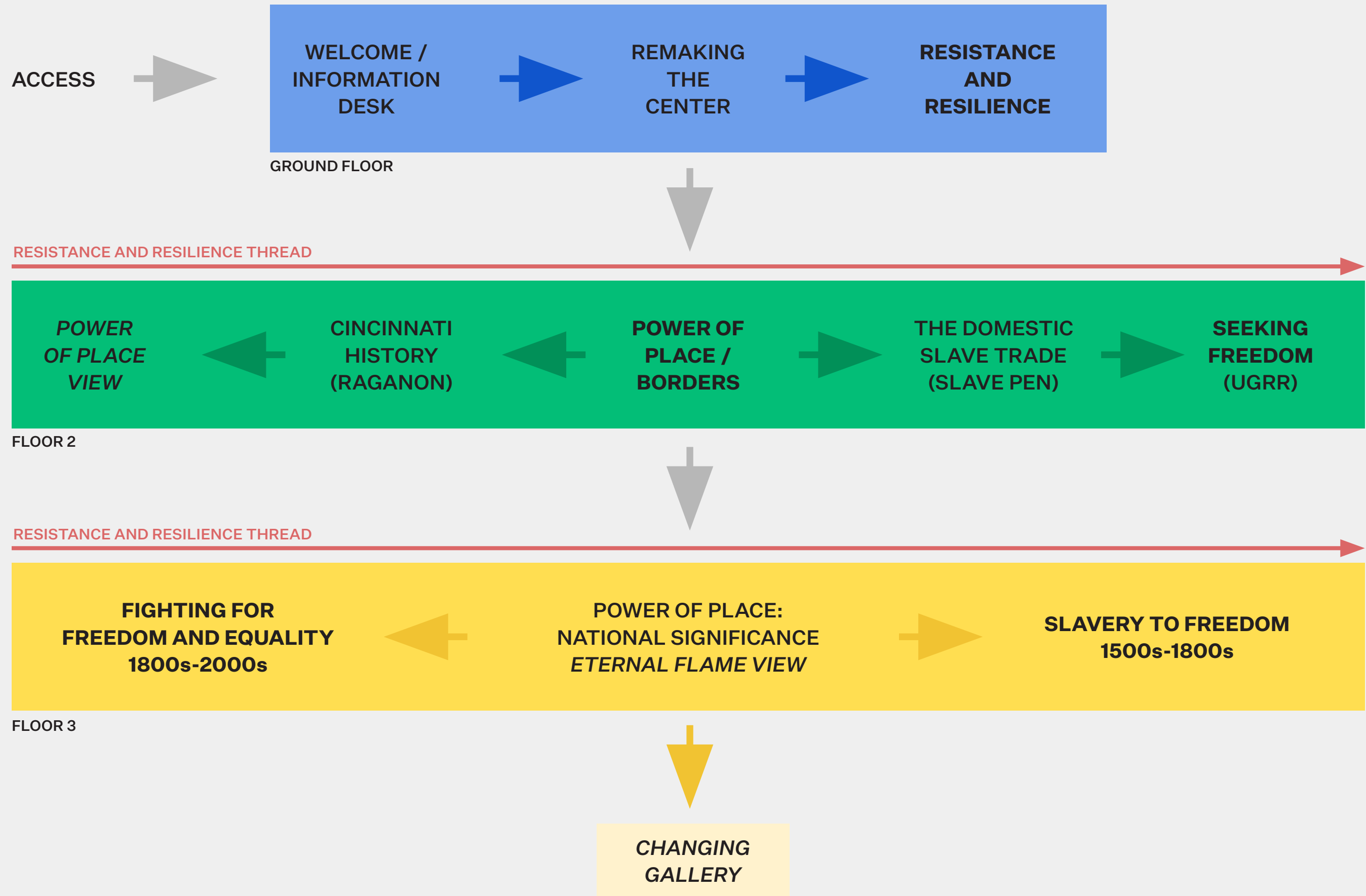
VISITOR JOURNEY

The Visitor Journey will begin with grounding visitors in the historic significance of the Freedom Center's location, and continues through interpretive threads of resistance and resilience to present the long history of fighting for freedom and equality in Ohio and throughout the United States.

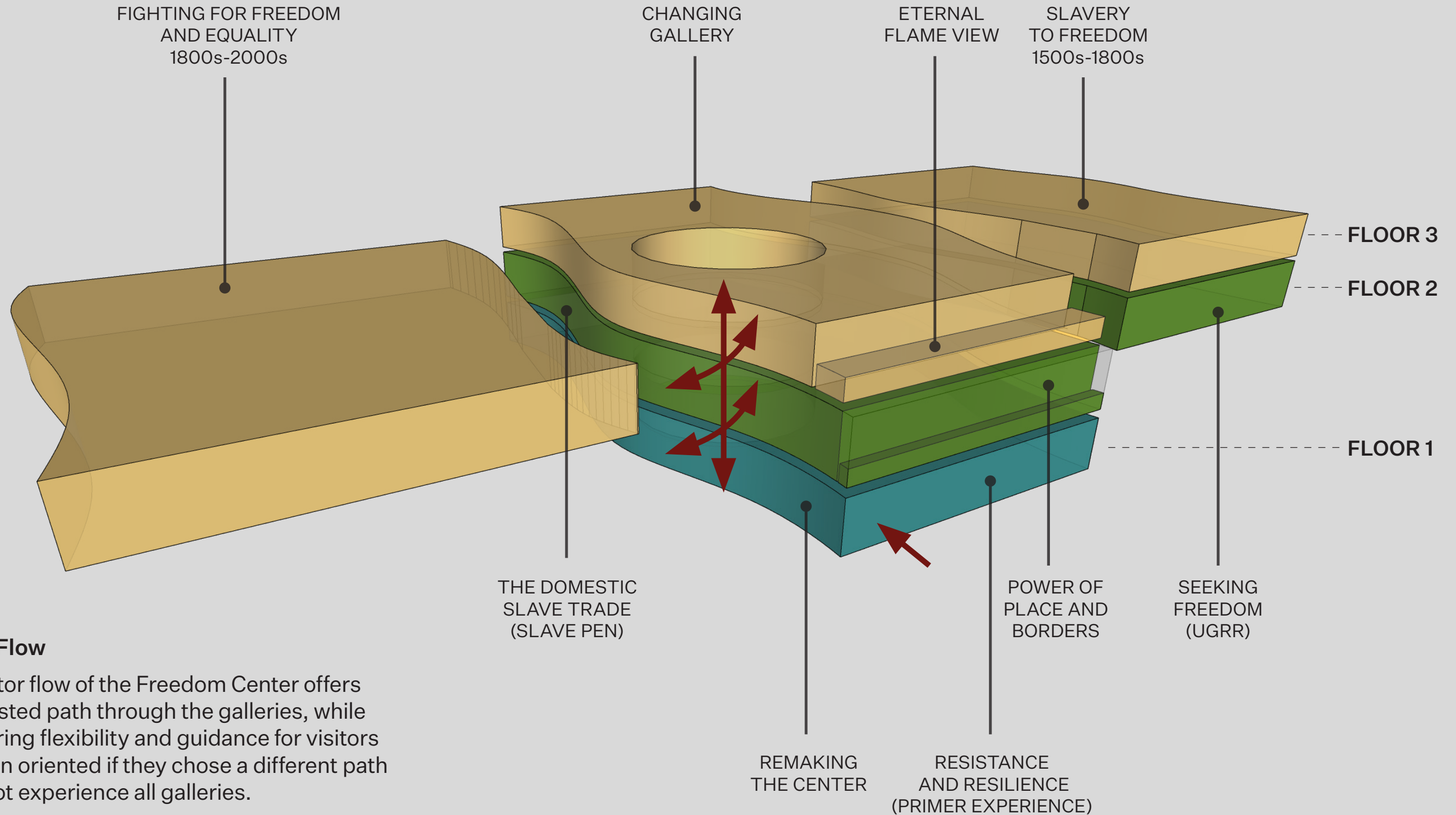
RESISTANCE AND RESILIENCE



VISITOR FLOW



FLOORS 1-3: CIRCULATION



Visitor Flow

The visitor flow of the Freedom Center offers a suggested path through the galleries, while still offering flexibility and guidance for visitors to remain oriented if they chose a different path or cannot experience all galleries.

... People [should] understand the **weight of social injustice** ... of the **oppressive force** of slavery's history and anti-Blackness.

— *Jasmine Coaston, 2023 Visioning Session*

Narrative Flow

FLOOR 1: INFORMATION, INTRO TO POWER OF PLACE / BORDERS AT SITE LOCATION



FLOOR 1: INFORMATION, INTRO TO POWER OF PLACE / BORDERS AT SITE LOCATION

Exhibits: Narratives / Galleries

1. Remaking the Center

- Signage, graphics, and other exhibit techniques to introduce plans for upcoming renovations
- Reflections on the founding and history of the Freedom Center
- Images of planning and design work with the Freedom Center and RAA teams; scholarly and community engagement; and images of key assets that will be featured in the galleries.

2. Resistance and Resilience

- Introduce threads of Resistance and Resilience and Power of Place/Borders, emphasizing the significance of the site's location in Cincinnati overlooking the Ohio River
- Highlight Cincinnati's connections to the Underground Railroad and movements for abolition and racial equality in the 1800s
- Emphasize how social justice activists in the 1900s and 2000s built on the movements of the 1800s to continue advocacy for freedom and equality
- Highlight select objects that emphasize Power of Place/Borders (i.e. Union uniform connected to Little Africa; signs about changing to segregated cars, Black Lives Matter Cincinnati, etc.)
- Serve as trailhead to relevant historic sites in Cincinnati and the surrounding region; connect to national network of UGRR sites



Architectural Updates

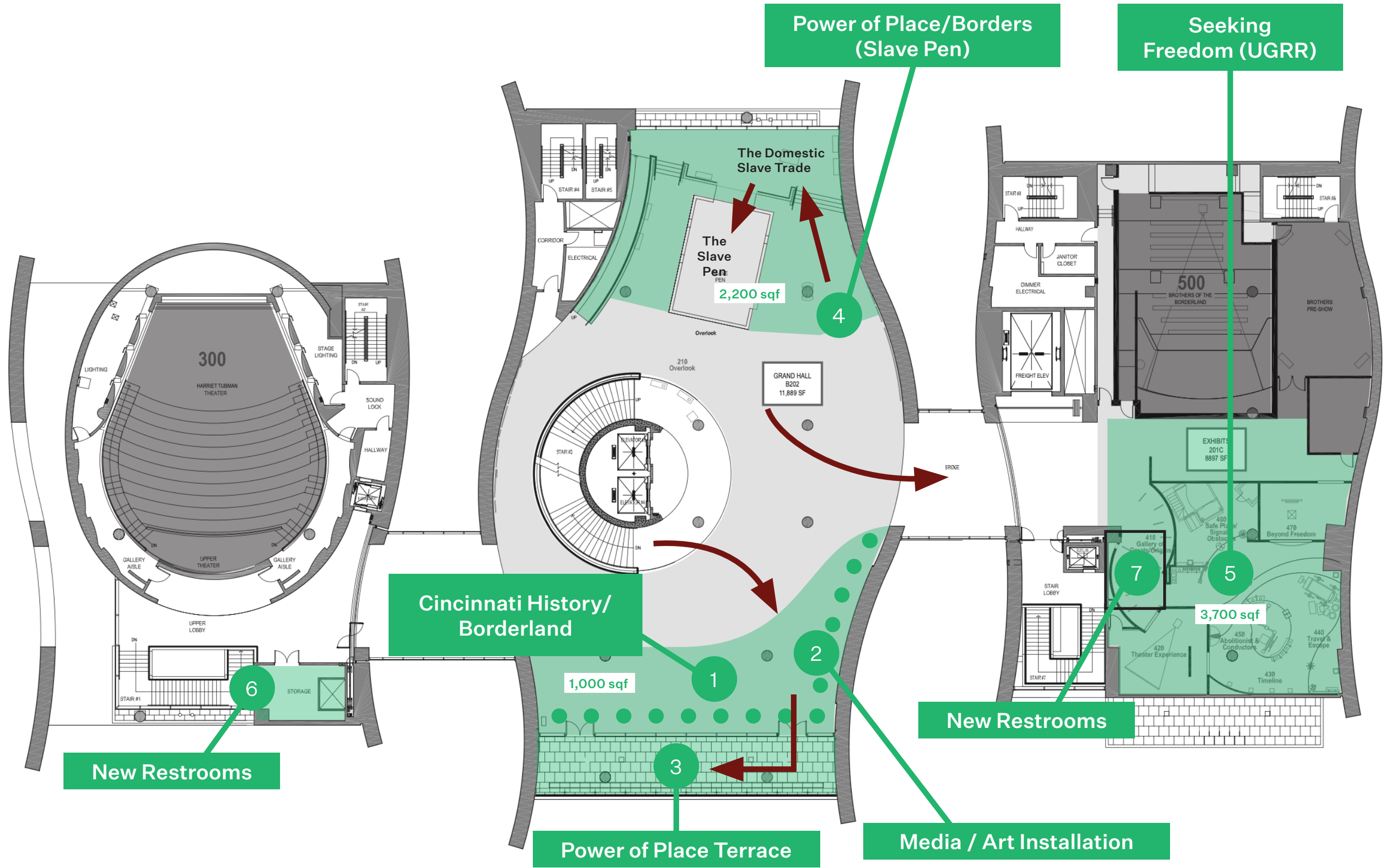
1. Remaking the Center

- This temporary exhibit, located in the main lobby entrance, should be flexible and able to adjust or change locations throughout the project's phased openings. Exhibits will be independent from the building.
- Very limited lighting, power and data coordination might be required

2. Resistance and Resilience (1,420 sqf)

- Demolition of current exhibits (artifact removal by NURFC)
- Reworking of supporting building systems
- Potential relocation of gallery entrance might be necessary

FLOOR 2: LOCAL/REGIONAL WITH NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS



FLOOR 2: LOCAL/REGIONAL WITH NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS

Exhibits: Narratives / Galleries

1. Cincinnati History/Borderland

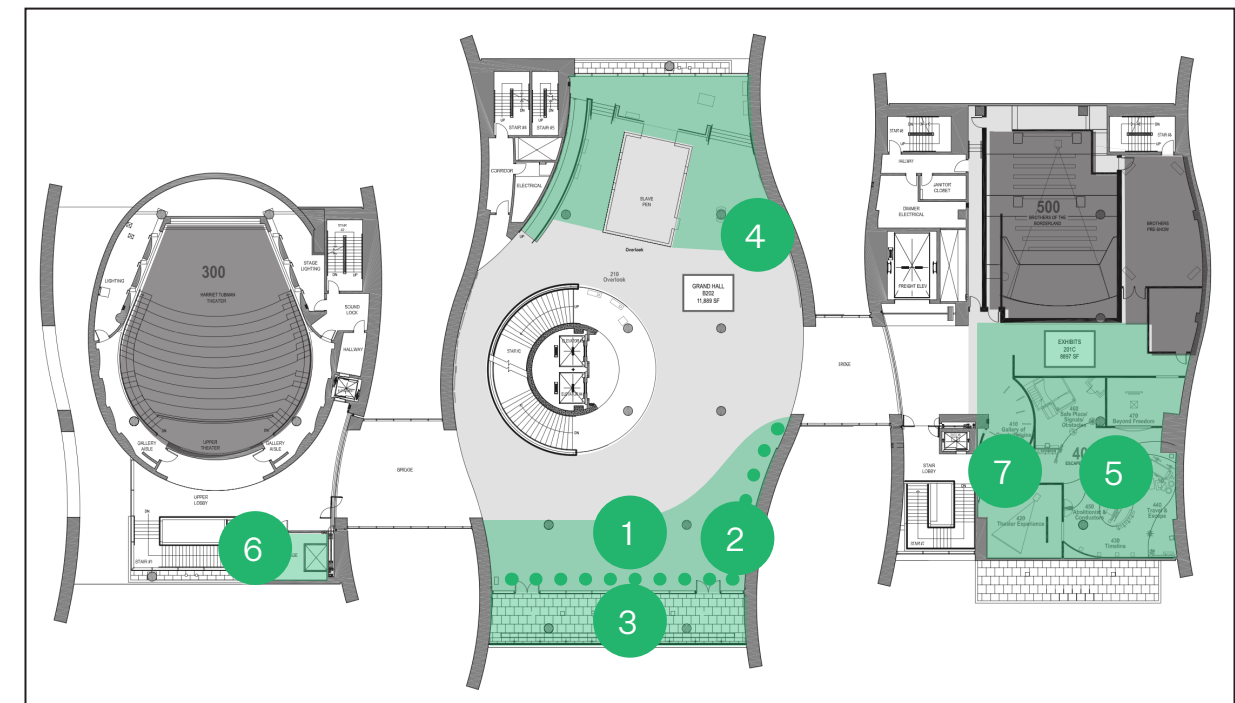
- Engaging the Center's location and panoramic view of the Ohio River, this interpretative area in front of the windows addresses Cincinnati's distinct positioning as a borderland city on a dividing line between slavery and freedom in the 1800s.
- It also reflects on Cincinnati's historic Black communities, including many located along the riverfront.

2. Media/Art Installation

- This media installation, inspired by the current Raganon quilt installation, will reflect on events and people connected to local, regional, and national freedom struggles from 1800s to 2000s.

3. Power of Place Terrace

- Overlooking the Ohio River outside on the Terrace, visitors will engage touch maps and quotes reflecting on the Ohio River and the borderland area of Cincinnati.



Architectural Updates

1. Cincinnati History/Borderland (1,000 sqf)

- Limited General Construction involving potential attachment of graphic or other exhibit elements to the architecture and coordination of building systems
- Acoustic analysis

2. Media/Art Installation (included in 1,000 sqf above)

- Limited General Construction involving potential attachment of graphic elements to the architecture and coordination of Lighting, Power and Data

3. Power of Place Terrace (1,100 sqf)

- Very limited General Construction potentially involving attachment of graphic elements to the architecture

FLOOR 2: LOCAL/REGIONAL WITH NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS

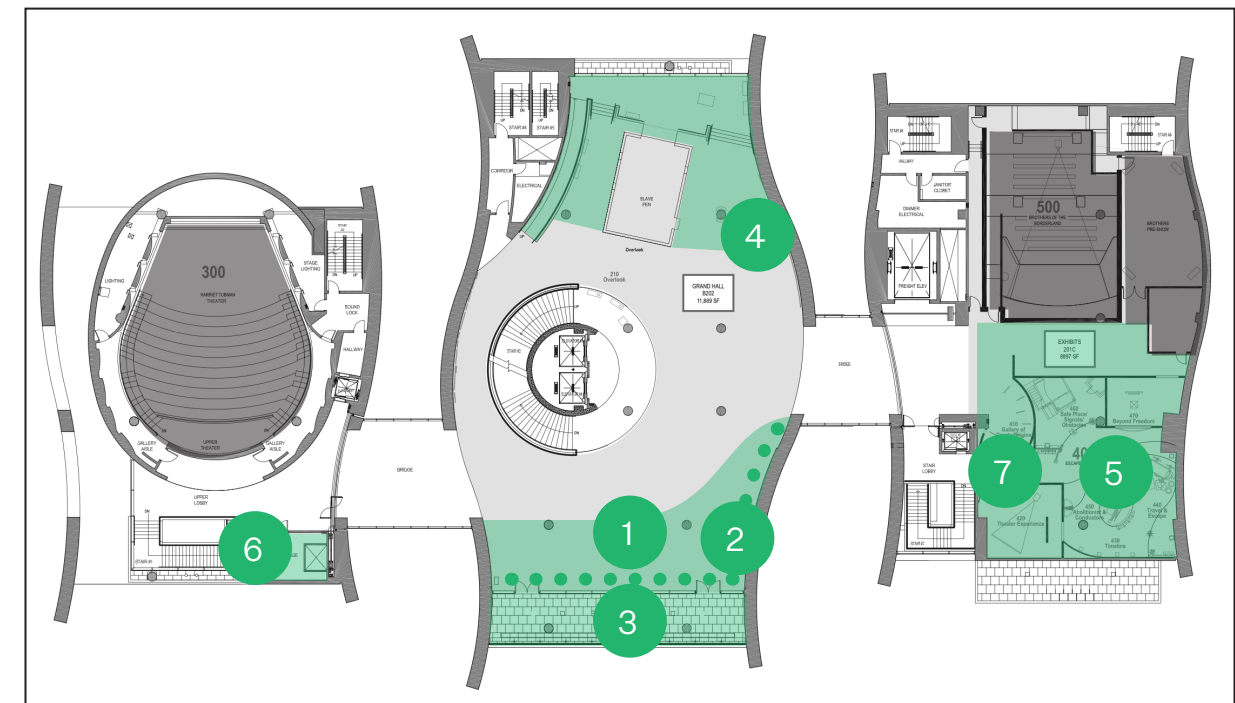
Exhibits: Narratives / Galleries

4. Power of Place/Borders (Slave Pen)

- The slave pen, brought to the Center from Kentucky, reveals the close proximity between slavery and freedom in Kentucky and Ohio, and demonstrates the sectional tensions that divided the nation in the 1800s.
- Interpretation around the slave pen provides didactic storytelling about the history and preservation of this structure and its connections to the internal slave trade.
- Within this historic structure, visitors will have an immersive audio experience to reflect on the experiences of enslaved people held in bondage in the pen.

5. Seeking Freedom (UGRR)

- Expand on the role of Ohio in the Underground Railroad in the 1800s, connections to national and international Underground Railroad movements
- Overview of the long history of resisting slavery and seeking freedom in the Americas from the 1500s to 1800s
- History of freedom seeking in North American colonies/the United States, with international connections (i.e. escaping from slavery in Spanish Florida, Canada, the Caribbean, Mexico, and Europe by the 1800s, as well as to US free states).



Architectural Updates

4. Power of Place/Borders (Slave Pen) (2,200 sqf)

- Demo of current exhibits (artifact removal by NURFC)
- Gallery upgrade, rework all supporting systems
- Potential soft separation of gallery space from the Grand Hall
- Acoustic analysis and solutions

5. Seeking Freedom (UGRR) (3,700 sqf)

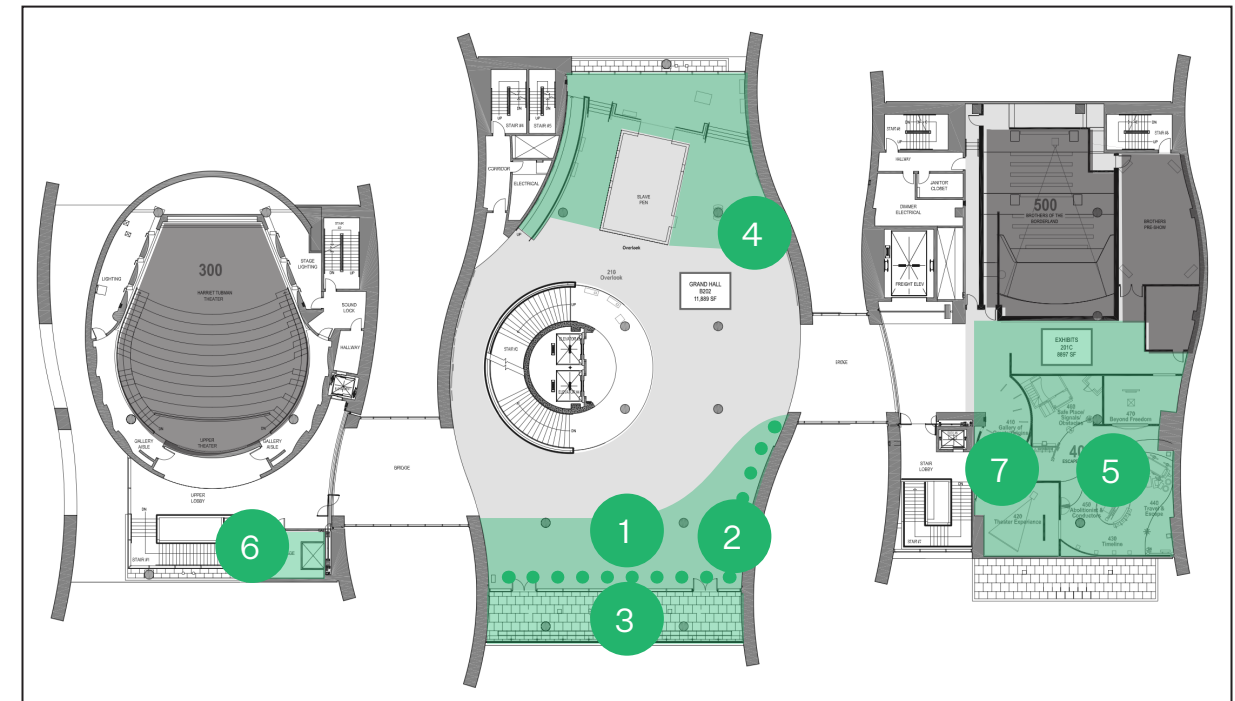
- Demo of current exhibits (artifact removal by NURFC)
- Base building demolition and fit-out
- Rework all supporting building systems
- Acoustic Analysis and design

FLOOR 2: LOCAL/REGIONAL WITH NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS

Exhibits: Narratives / Galleries

6. New Restrooms

7. New Restrooms



Architectural Updates

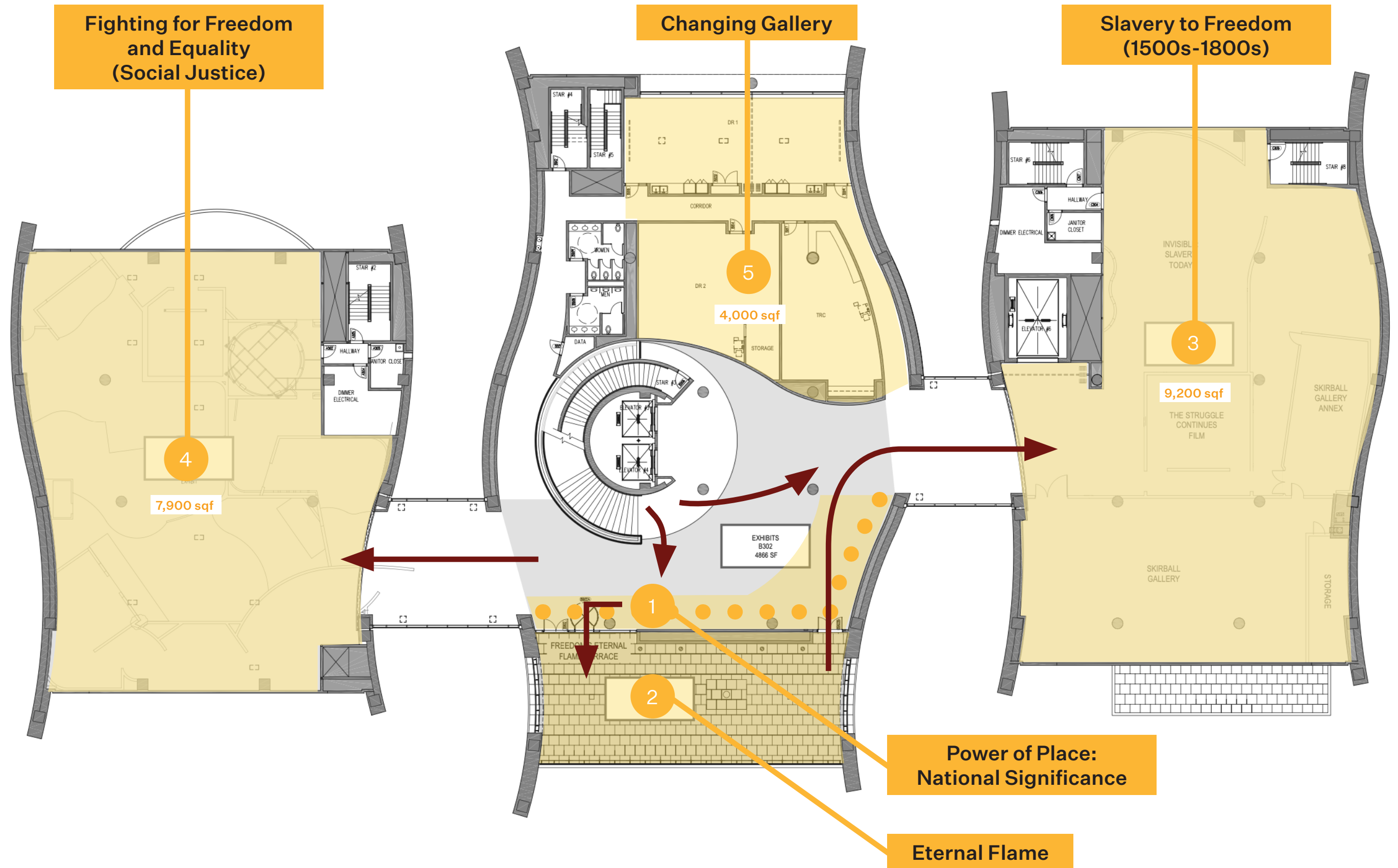
6. New Restrooms (330 sqf)

- Heavy general construction

7. New Restrooms (350 sqf)

- Heavy general construction

FLOOR 3: NATIONAL WITH LOCAL AND REGIONAL CONNECTIONS



FLOOR 3: NATIONAL WITH LOCAL AND REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

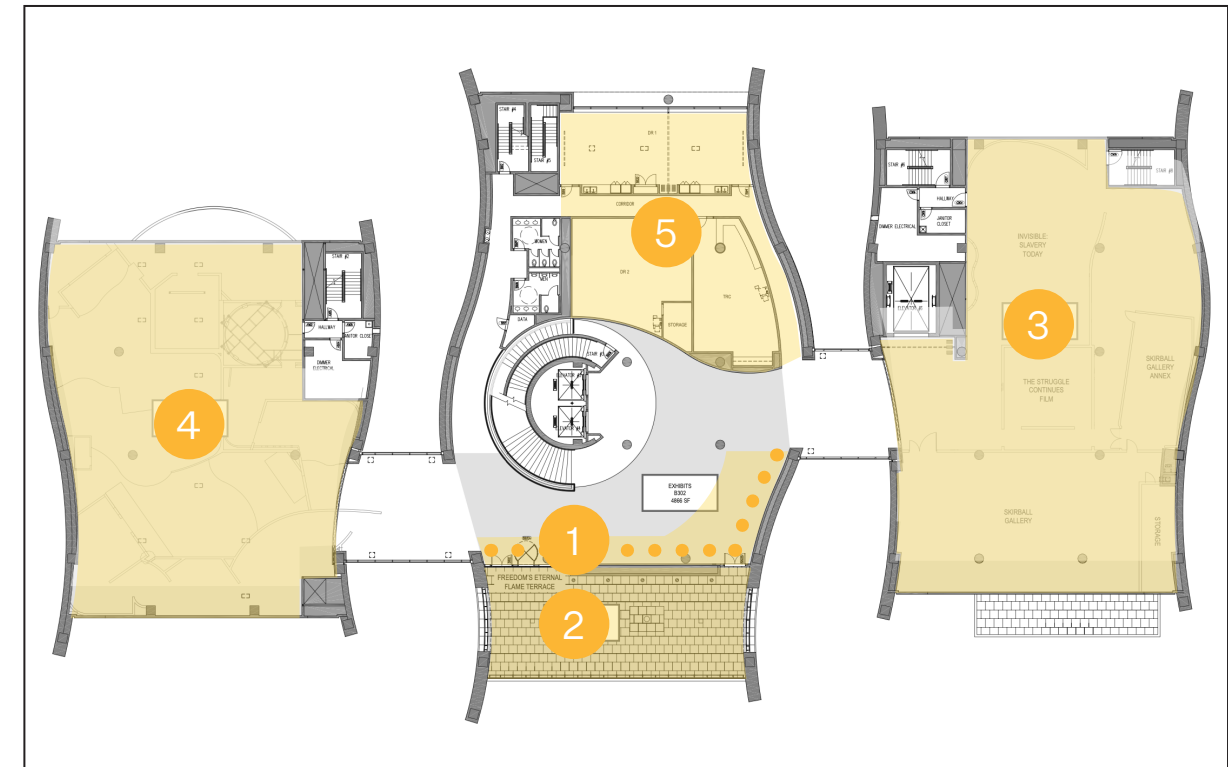
Exhibits: Narratives / Galleries

1. Power of Place: National Significance

- National significance of the Underground Railroad and struggles for freedom and equality
- Open wall to view Eternal Flame

2. Eternal Flame

- Monument presented with light didactic interpretation and quotes
- Touch map of the United States highlighting key routes in the Underground Railroad, including through Ohio



Architectural Updates

1. Power of Place: National Significance (included in item #2 below)

- Limited General Construction involving potential attachment of graphic elements to the architecture and coordination of building systems
- Acoustic analysis

2. Eternal Flame (2,400 sqf. Wall length: 43')

- Opening of exterior wall work
- Extension of existing curtain wall
- Significant general construction and coordination of building systems
- Terrace: Very limited General Construction potentially involving attachment of graphic elements to the architecture

FLOOR 3: NATIONAL WITH LOCAL AND REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

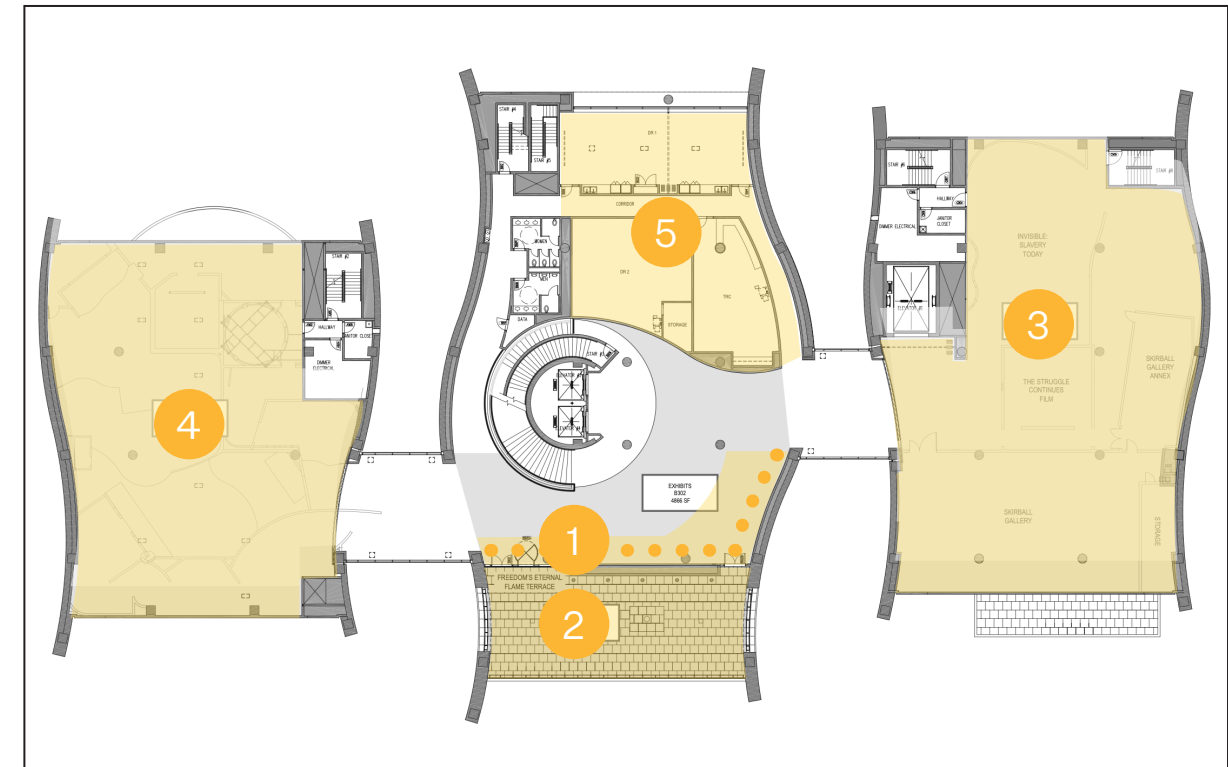
Exhibits: Narratives / Galleries

3. Slavery to Freedom, 1500s-1800s

- History of slavery from the trans-Atlantic slave trade to abolition, focus on North American colonies/United States with regional and international connections, emphasize resilience and resistance
- History of Reconstruction following the abolition of slavery, revealing ongoing struggles for equality and freedom

4. Fighting for Freedom and Equality (Social Justice)

- Long history of advocating for social justice and civil rights in the 1800s, 1900s, and 2000s
- Cincinnati and the surrounding region as lens into national divisions and freedom struggles, past and present
- Threads to examine systemic racism and economic injustice locally and nationally



Architectural Updates

3. Slavery to Freedom Gallery (9,200 sqf)

- Demo of current exhibits (artifact removal by NURFC)
- Base building demolition and fit-out
- Rework all supporting building systems
- Acoustic Analysis and design

4. Fighting for Freedom and Equality (Social Justice) (7,900 sqf)

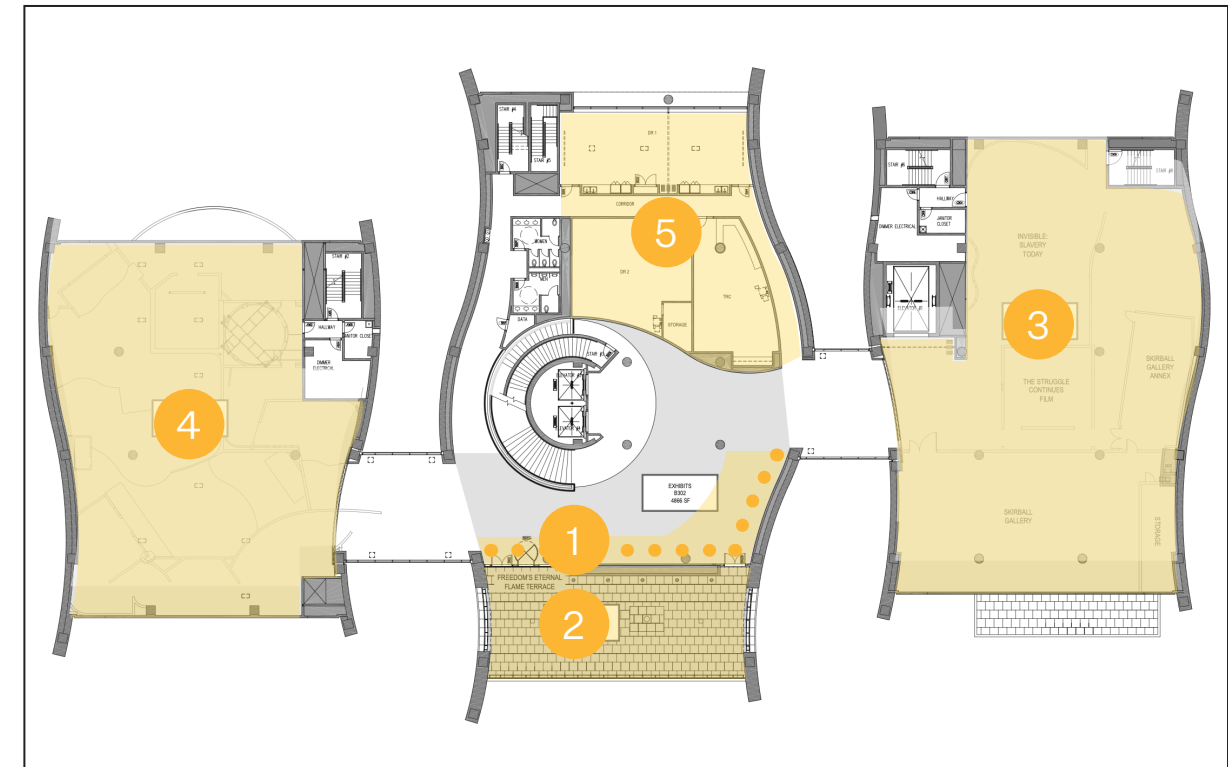
- Demo of current exhibits (artifact removal by NURFC)
- Base building demolition and fit-out
- Rework all supporting building systems
- Acoustic Analysis and design

FLOOR 3: NATIONAL WITH LOCAL AND REGIONAL CONNECTIONS

Exhibits: Narratives / Galleries

5. Changing Gallery

- Feature temporary exhibitions that connect to various topics and themes across time periods relevant to the Freedom Center's mission

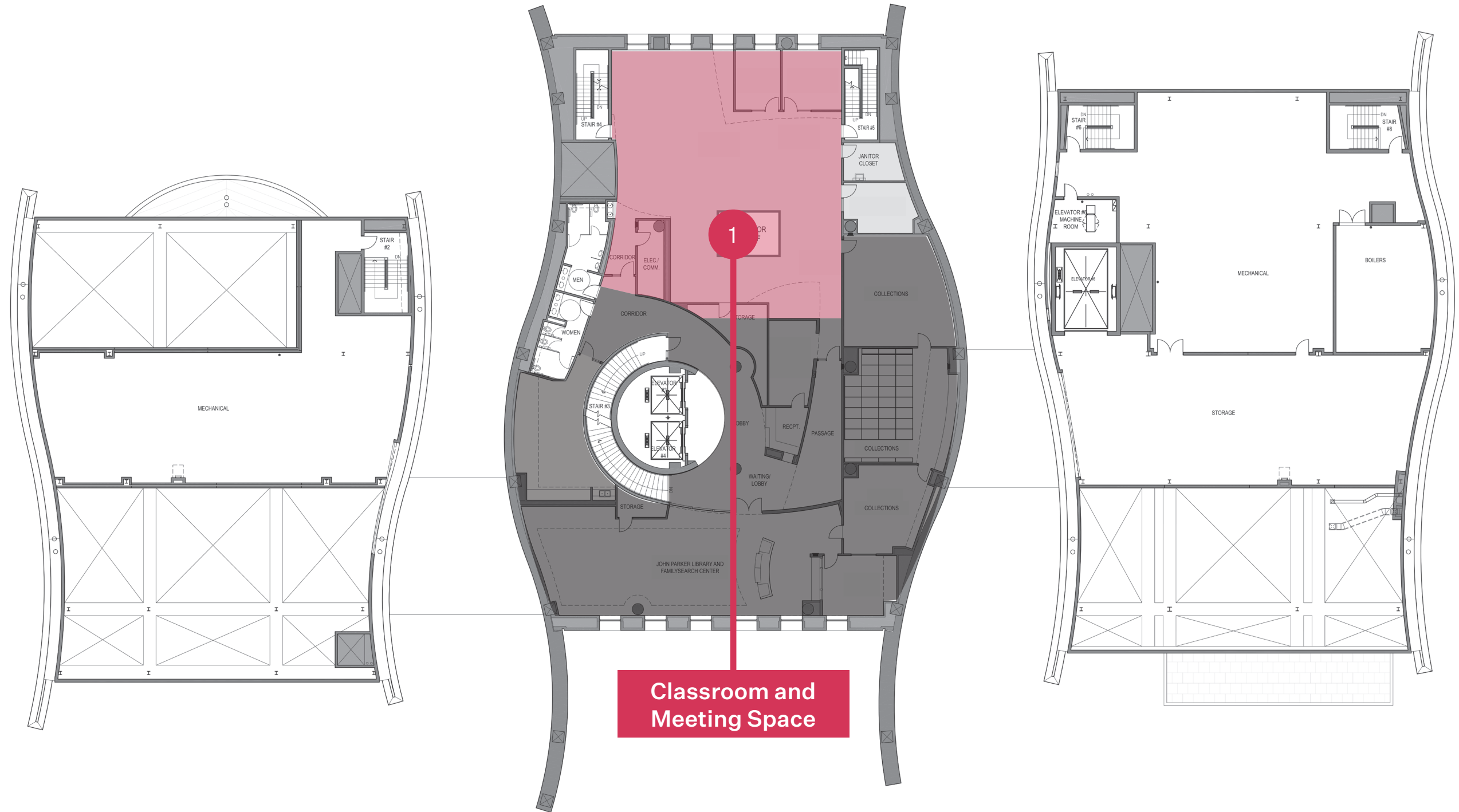


Architectural Updates

5. Changing Gallery (4,000 sqf)

- Removal of existing education spaces and replacement of changing gallery.
- Heavy general construction
- Acoustic Design

FLOOR 4: RESEARCH, COLLECTIONS, CLASSROOM

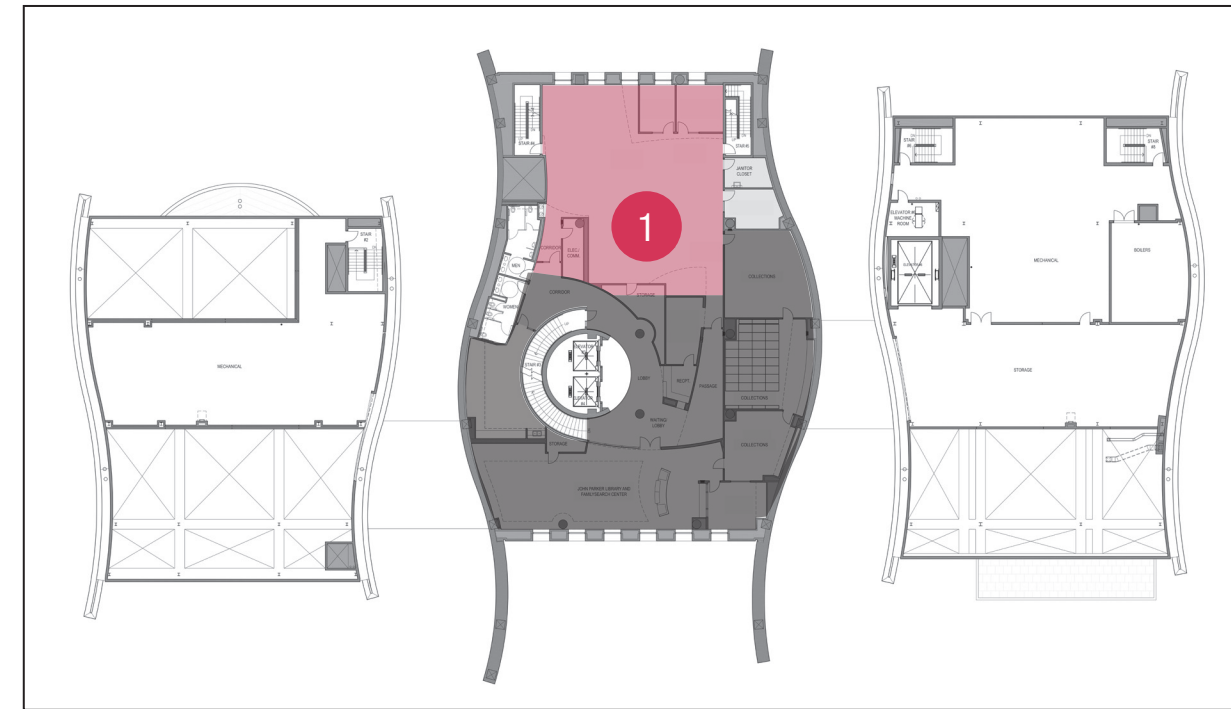


FLOOR 4: RESEARCH, COLLECTIONS, CLASSROOM

Narratives / Galleries

1. Classroom and Meeting Space

- Area for workshops, meetings, and group discussions



Architectural Updates

1. Classroom and Meeting Space (2,900 sqf)

- Heavy renovation of existing space

Program

PROGRAM

ARCHITECTURAL RENOVATIONS PROGRAM AND SCOPE

PHASE 1: OPENING MAY 2025

PHASE 1	LEVEL	AREA	LOCATION	PAVILION	DISCIPLINE	PRELIM. DESCRIPTIONS	SPACE TYPOLOGY	SQF
PHASE 1	LEVEL 1	Remaking the Center	Lobby	CENTER	Architecture Exhibits	- Exhibits will be independent from the building. - Very limited lighting, power and data coordination might be required - Dynamic and flexible installation	PUBLIC, NON-COLLECTION AREA	N/A
PHASE 1	LEVEL 1	Resistance and Resilience	Current Lab	CENTER	Architecture Exhibits	- Demolition of current exhibits (artifact removal by NURFC) - Reworking of supporting building systems - Potential relocation of gallery entrance might be necessary - Permanent exhibits. Primer exhibit that introduces Resistance and Resilience and Power of Place/Borders	PUBLIC, COLLECTION AREA	1,420
PHASE 1	LEVEL 2	Cincinnati History/Borderland Ragenon media re-envisioning	Hall, River side	CENTER	Architecture Exhibits	- Limited General Construction involving potential attachment of graphic or other exhibit elements to the architecture and coordination of building systems - Acoustic analysis - Indoor Interpretation to address Power of Place with view from River - Limited General Construction involving potential attachment of graphic or media elements to the architecture and coordination of Lighting, Power and Data	PUBLIC, NON-COLLECTION AREA	1,000
PHASE 1	LEVEL 2	Power of Place Terrace	Terrace, River side	CENTER	Architecture	- Very limited General Construction potentially involving attachment of graphic elements to the architecture	PUBLIC, NON-COLLECTION AREA	1,100
PHASE 1	LEVEL 2	Power of Place/Borders (Slave Pen)	Hall, City side	CENTER	Architecture Exhibits	- Demo of current exhibits (artifact removal by NURFC) - Gallery upgrade, rework all supporting systems - Potential soft separation of gallery space from the Grand Hall - Acoustic analysis and solutions - Area to introduce significance of Center location to the US domestic slave trade and the UGRR, - Includes Slave Pen interpretive area	PUBLIC, COLLECTION AREA (open space to Grand Hall. No independent climate control needed)	2,200
PHASE 1	LEVEL 2	Restrooms at location 1	Theater side	WEST	Architecture	- Heavy general construction	PUBLIC, NON-COLLECTION AREA	330
PHASE 1	LEVEL 3	Power of Place: National Significance, views	Hall, River side	CENTER	Exhibits	- Indoor interpretation with view from River	PUBLIC, NON-COLLECTION AREA	included in Terrace Wall opening
PHASE 1	LEVEL 3	Freedom Eternal Flame Terrace	Terrace, River side	CENTER	Architecture Exhibits	- Opening of exterior wall work. - Extension of existing curtain wall. - Significant general construction and coordination of building systems - Terrace: Very limited General Construction potentially involving attachment of graphic elements to the architecture - Monument presented with light didactic interpretation and quotes.	PUBLIC, NON-COLLECTION AREA	2,400 wall length approx. 43'
PHASE 1	LEVEL 3	Changing Gallery	City side	CENTER	Architecture	- Removal of existing education spaces and replacement of changing gallery. - Heavy general construction - Acoustic Design	PUBLIC, COLLECTION AREA	4,000
PHASE 1	LEVEL 4	Classroom/Meeting Space	City side	CENTER	Architecture	- Heavy renovation of existing space	NON-PUBLIC, NON-COLLECTION AREA	2,900

PROGRAM

PHASE 2: OPENING AUGUST 2026

PHASE 2	LEVEL	AREA	LOCATION	PAVILION	DISCIPLINE	PRELIM. DESCRIPTIONS	SPACE TYPOLOGY	SQF
PHASE 2	LEVEL 3	Social Justice gallery	Gallery	WEST	Architecture Exhibits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demo of current exhibits (artifact removal by NURFC) - Base building demolition and fit-out - Rework all supporting building systems - Acoustic Analysis and design - Permanent exhibits. Advocating for social justice and civil rights, Cincinnati and region highlight national divisions and freedom struggles, addressing systemic racism and economic injustice.	PUBLIC, COLLECTION AREA	7,900

PHASE 3: OPENING MARCH 2027

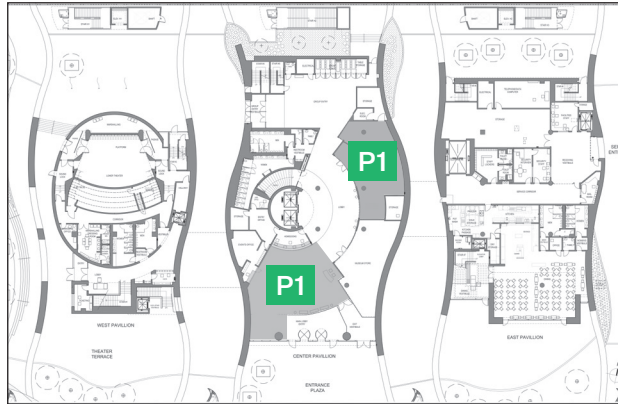
PHASE 3	LEVEL	AREA	LOCATION	PAVILION	DISCIPLINE	PRELIM. DESCRIPTIONS	SPACE TYPOLOGY	SQF
PHASE 3	LEVEL 2	Seeking Freedom gallery (UGRR)	Gallery	WEST	Architecture Exhibits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demo of current exhibits (artifact removal by NURFC) - Base building demolition and fit-out - Rework all supporting building systems - Acoustic Analysis and design - Permanent exhibits	PUBLIC, COLLECTION AREA	3,700
PHASE 3	LEVEL 2	Restrooms at location 2	East stairways	EAST	Architecture	- Heavy general construction	PUBLIC, NON-COLLECTION AREA	350
PHASE 3	LEVEL 3	Slavery to Freedom gallery	Gallery	EAST	Architecture Exhibits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demo of current exhibits (artifact removal by NURFC) - Base building demolition and fit-out - Rework all supporting building systems - Acoustic Analysis and design - Permanent exhibits. The trans-Atlantic slave trade to abolition: North American colonies/US, regional and international connections, resilience and resistance.	PUBLIC, COLLECTION AREA	9,200

Phasing and Schedule

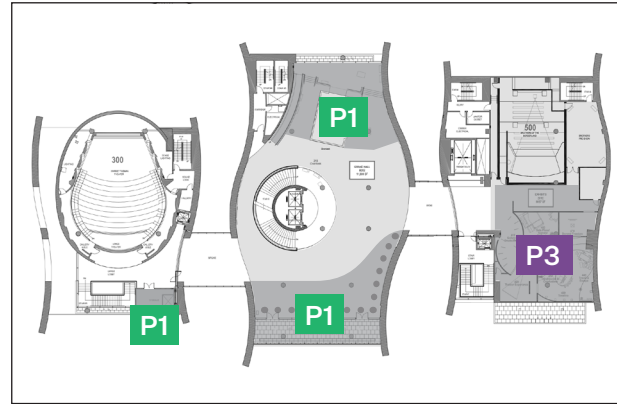
Phasing

PHASING OVERVIEW

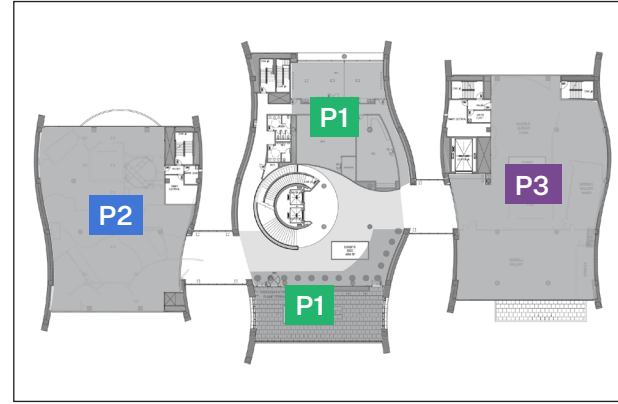
FLOOR 1



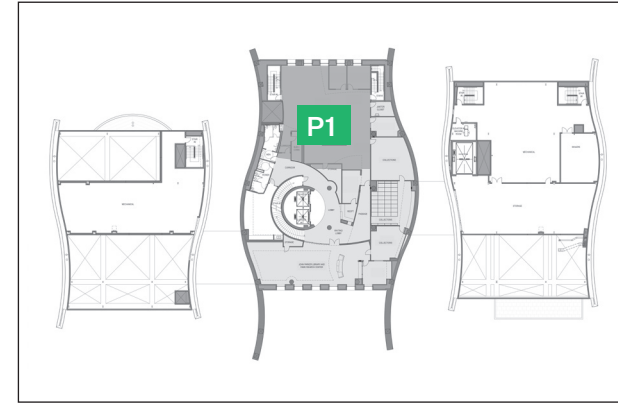
FLOOR 2



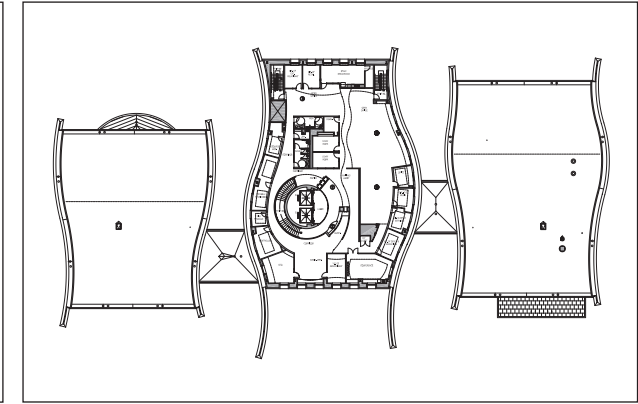
FLOOR 3



FLOOR 4



FLOOR 5



PHASE 1 P1

MAY 2025

- FLOOR 1
 - Remaking the Center
 - Resistance and Resilience
- FLOOR 2
 - Cincinnati History Installation - Raganon
 - Power of Place/Borders
 - New restrooms
- FLOOR 3
 - Introducing Eternal Flame
 - Changing Gallery
- FLOOR 4
 - Architectural Updates: Collective Spaces

PHASE 2 P2

AUGUST 2026

- FLOOR 3
 - Fighting for Freedom and Equality (Social Justice)

PHASE 3 P3

MARCH 2027

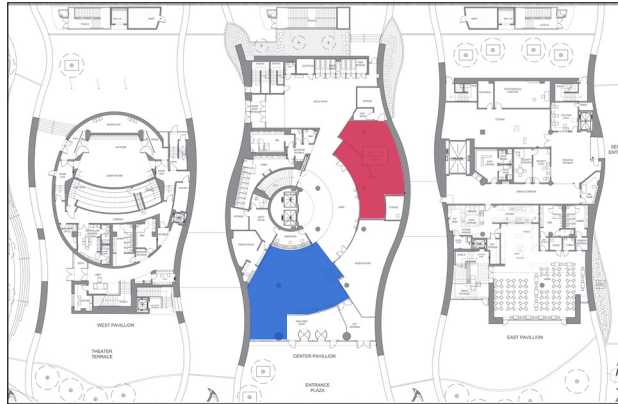
- FLOOR 2
 - Seeking Freedom (UGRR)
- FLOOR 3
 - Slavery to Freedom

CHANGING GALLERY NOTE:

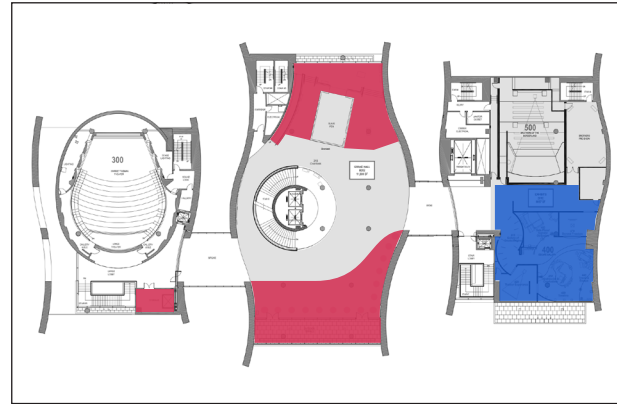
- New Changing Gallery to open on June 2024
- Existing Changing Gallery to stay open until the first half of 2026
- Remaking the Center could be featured in the NEW changing gallery beginning in June 2025

GALLERY STATUS DURING PHASE 1 (January 2024 - May 2025)

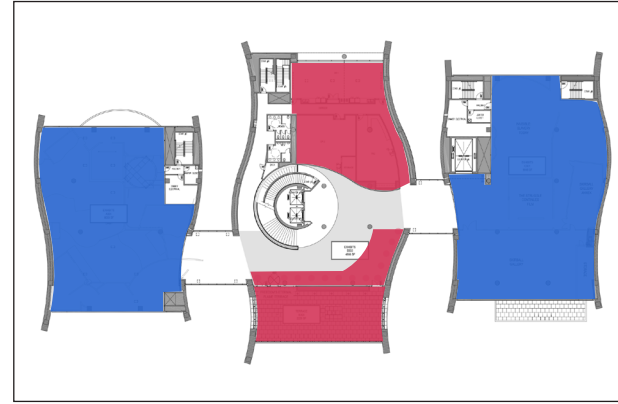
FLOOR 1



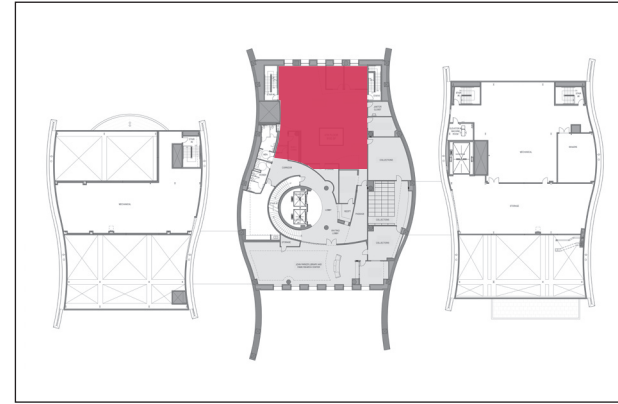
FLOOR 2



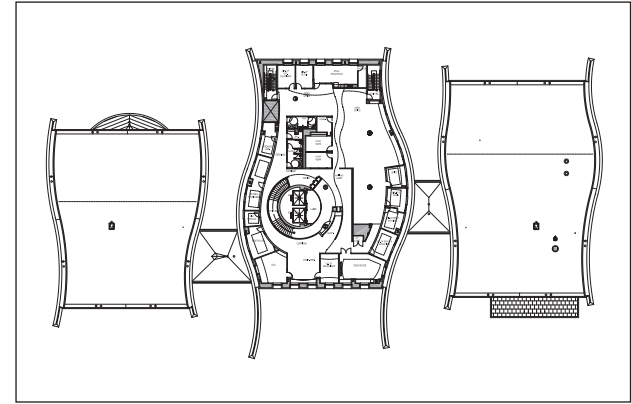
FLOOR 3



FLOOR 4



FLOOR 5



PHASE 1: CLOSED SPACES

- FLOOR 1
 - Resistance and Resilience
- FLOOR 2
 - Cincinnati History Installation - Raganon
 - Power of Place/Borders
 - New restrooms
- FLOOR 3
 - Introducing Eternal Flame
 - Current meeting rooms

PHASE 1: OPEN SPACES

- FLOOR 1
 - Everything open except Resistance and Resilience
- FLOOR 2
 - Seeking Freedom (UGRR) (current exhibit)
- FLOOR 3
 - Social Justice (current exhibit)
 - Slavery to Freedom (current exhibit)
 - Changing Gallery (current gallery)
- FLOOR 4
 - New Collective Spaces

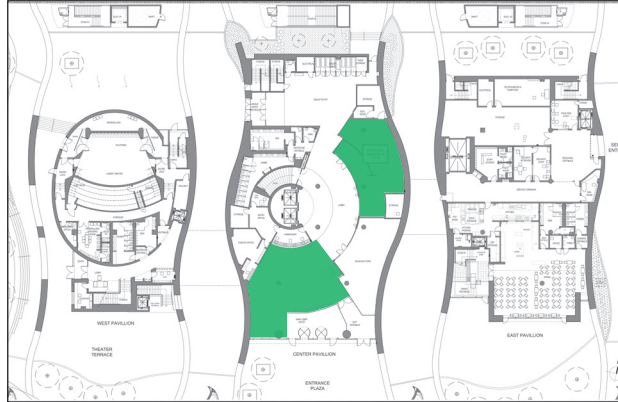
KEY

- Closed for renovations
- Open with current exhibits
- Open with NEW exhibits/spaces

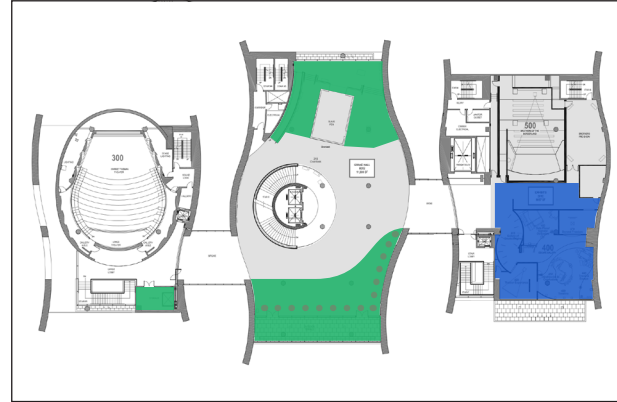
Note: Gallery closures will occur sequentially and following the project schedule attached to this report

GALLERY STATUS DURING PHASE 2 (May 2025 - August 2026)

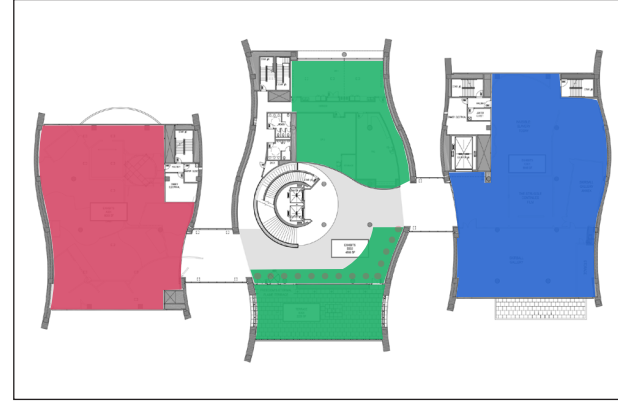
FLOOR 1



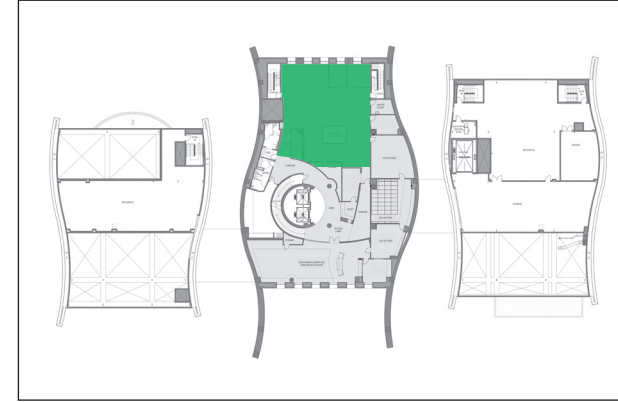
FLOOR 2



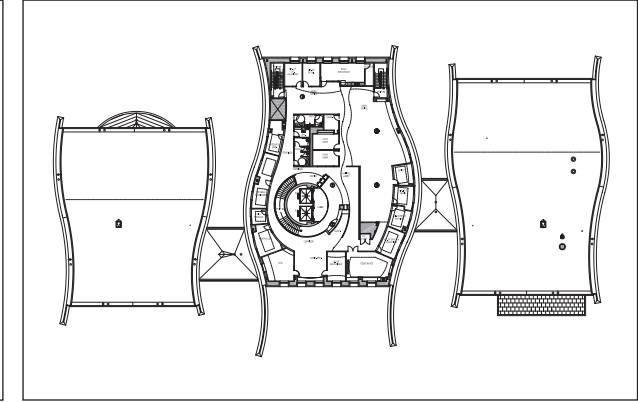
FLOOR 3



FLOOR 4



FLOOR 5



PHASE 2: CLOSED SPACES

- FLOOR 3
 - Slavery to Freedom

PHASE 2: OPEN SPACES

- FLOOR 1
 - Remaking the Center (NEW exhibit)
 - Resistance and Resilience (NEW exhibit)
- FLOOR 2
 - Cincinnati History Installation - Raganon (NEW exhibit)
 - Power of Place/Borders (NEW exhibit)
 - Seeking Freedom (UGRR) (current exhibit)
 - Restrooms (NEW)
- FLOOR 3
 - Introducing Eternal Flame (NEW exhibit)
 - Changing Gallery (NEW gallery)
 - Social Justice (current exhibit)
 - Changing Gallery (current gallery)

CHANGING GALLERY NOTE:

- New Changing Gallery could open June 2024
- Existing Changing Gallery will stay open until the first half of 2026
- Remaking the Center could be featured in the NEW changing gallery beginning in June 2025

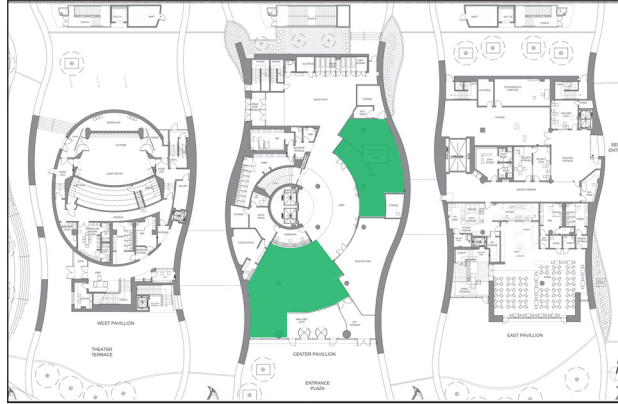
KEY

- Closed for renovations
- Open with current exhibits
- Open with NEW exhibits/spaces

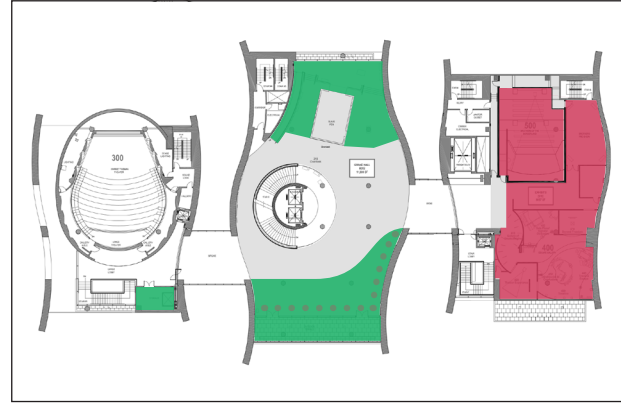
Note: Gallery closures will occur sequentially and following the project schedule attached to this report

GALLERY STATUS DURING PHASE 3 (August 2026 - March 2027)

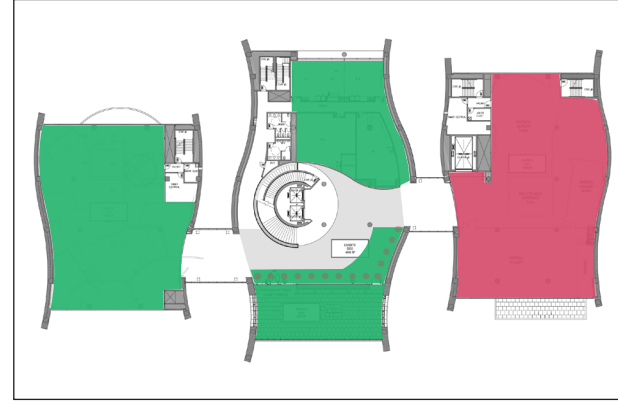
FLOOR 1



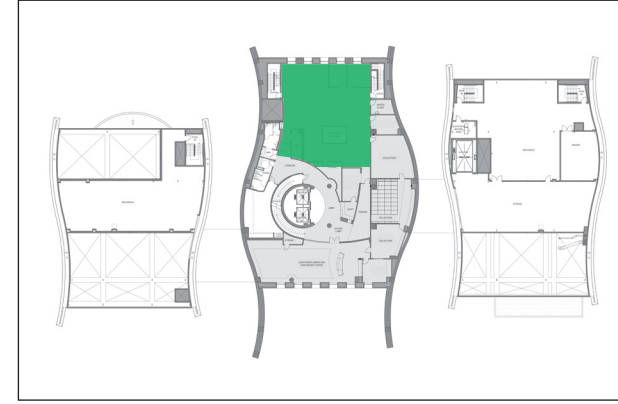
FLOOR 2



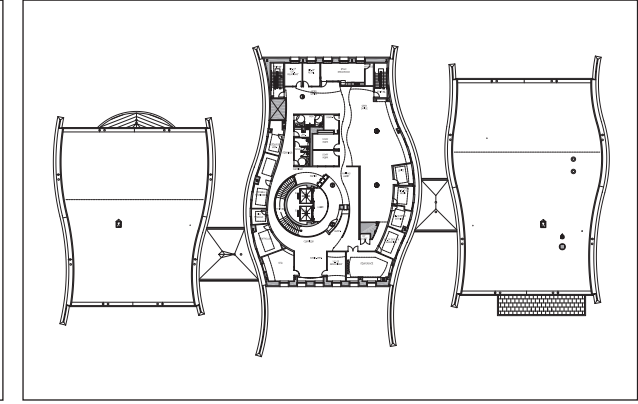
FLOOR 3



FLOOR 4



FLOOR 5



PHASE 2: CLOSED SPACES

- FLOOR 2
 - Seeking Freedom (UGRR)
- FLOOR 3
 - Slavery to Freedom
 - Changing Gallery (current gallery)

PHASE 2: OPEN SPACES

- FLOOR 1
 - Remaking the Center (NEW exhibit)
 - Resistance and Resilience (NEW exhibit)
- FLOOR 2
 - Cincinnati History Installation - Raganon (NEW exhibit)
 - Power of Place/Borders (NEW exhibit)
 - Restrooms (NEW)
- FLOOR 3
 - Introducing Eternal Flame (NEW exhibit)
 - Changing Gallery (NEW gallery)
 - Social Justice (NEW gallery)

KEY

- Closed for renovations
- Open with current exhibits
- Open with NEW exhibits/spaces

Note: Gallery closures will occur sequentially and following the project schedule attached to this report

Schedule

SCHEDULE: OVERVIEW

TITLE	START	END	DURATION	2023												2024												2025												2026												2027					
				J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J				
PHASE 1	7/3/23	5/9/25	22m																																																						
Exhibit Design And Content Development	7/3/23	7/29/24	13m																																																						
Image-Object Research, Selection, Acquisition	7/3/23	9/23/24	15m																																																						
Script Writing	4/8/24	9/23/24	6m																																																						
XC Bidding, Award and EX Fabrication	7/1/24	3/21/25	9.5m																																																						
Installation	12/20/24	5/9/25	5m																																																						
Architectural Design, GC Bidding and Award, Construction	7/3/23	5/9/25	22m																																																						
Phase 1 Opening	5/9/25	5/9/25	--																																																						
PHASE 2	7/3/23	8/4/26	37m																																																						
Exhibit Design And Content Development	7/3/23	5/9/25	22m																																																						
Image-Object Research, Selection, Acquisition	7/3/23	10/20/25	28m																																																						
Script Writing	9/23/24	10/20/25	13m																																																						
XC Bidding, Award and EX Fabrication	3/10/25	2/9/26	11m																																																						
Installation	12/19/25	8/4/26	8m																																																						
Architectural Design and Construction	11/22/24	12/19/25	13m																																																						
Phase 2 Opening	8/4/26	8/4/26	--																																																						
PHASE 3	7/3/23	7/2/27	48m																																																						
Exhibit Design And Content Development	7/3/23	8/4/26	37m																																																						
Image-Object Research, Selection, Acquisition	7/3/23	9/21/26	39m																																																						
TBD: Script Writing	6/2/25	9/21/26	16m																																																						
Architectural Design and Construction	4/14/26	11/24/26	8m																																																						
EX Fabrication	2/9/26	2/8/27	12m																																																						
Installation	10/26/26	7/2/27	9m																																																						
Phase 3 Opening	7/2/27	7/2/27	--																																																						

Path Forward

TIMELINE

Next Steps

Date

Bidding Package release by NURFC

September 8

Site Visit

September 18 (9:00AM-12:00PM)

Questions to NURFC

September 26 (12:00PM)

Responses from NURFC

October 2

Bids Submittal

October 6 (12:00PM)

Bid Award

October 13

Contract Execution and Start

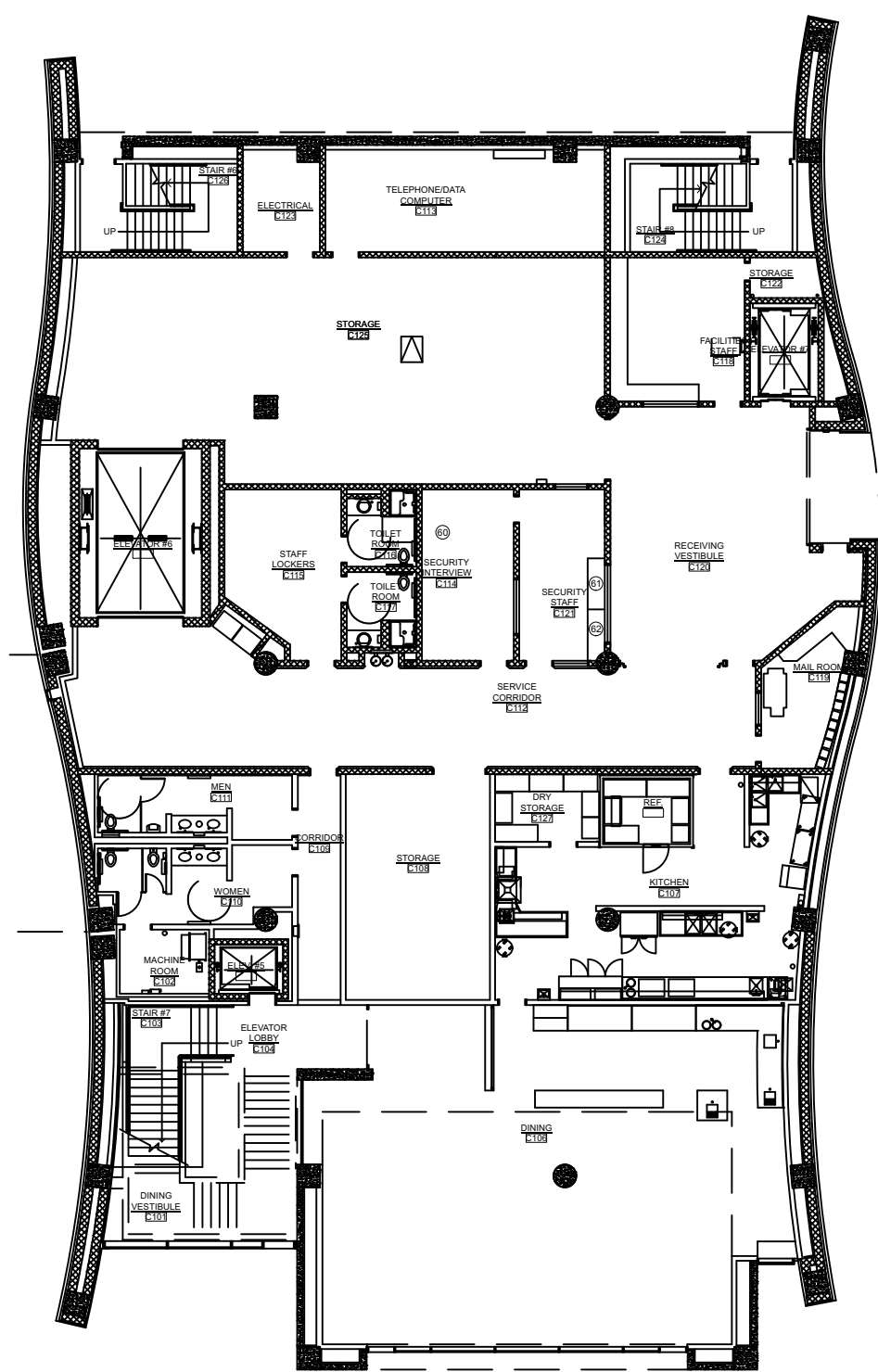
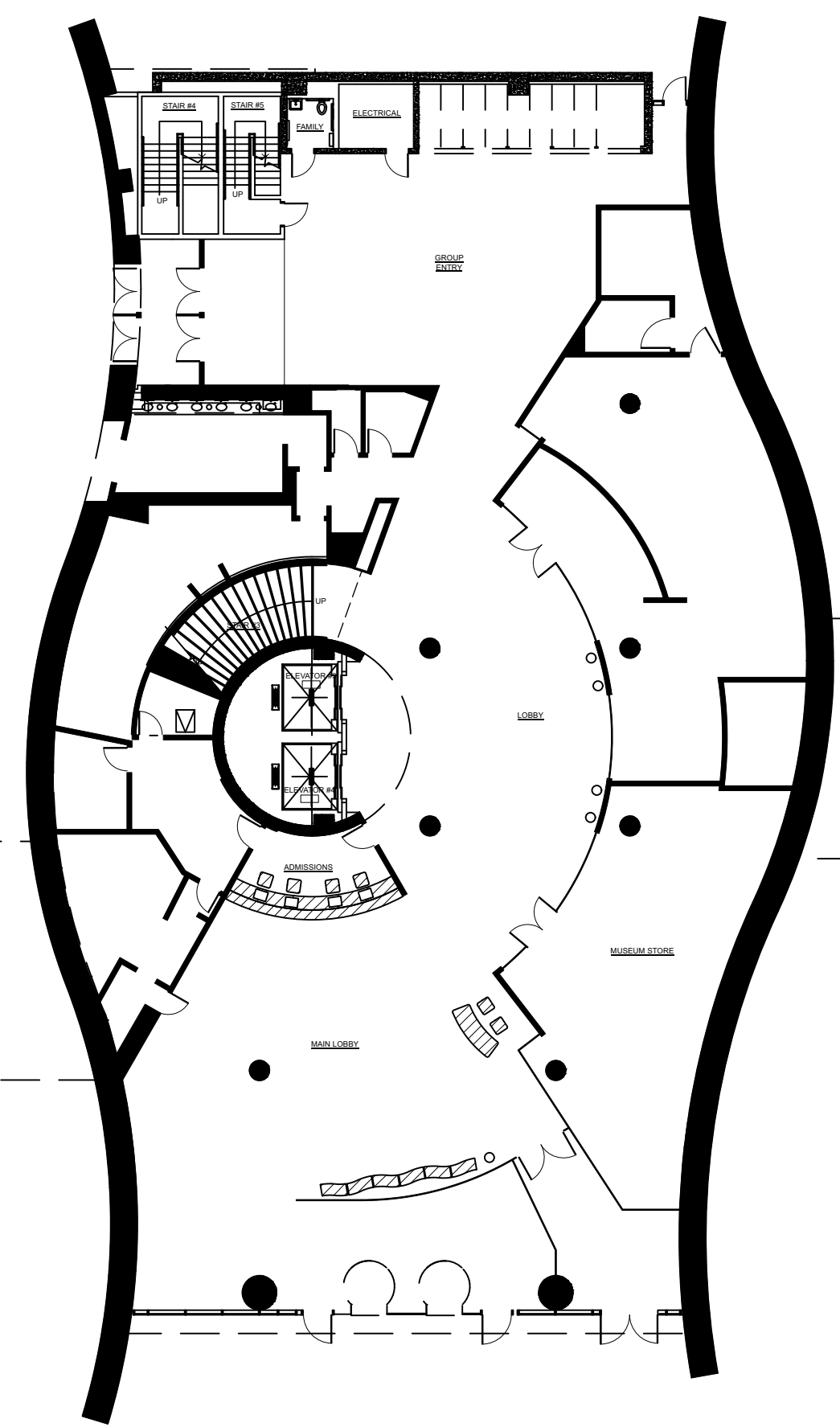
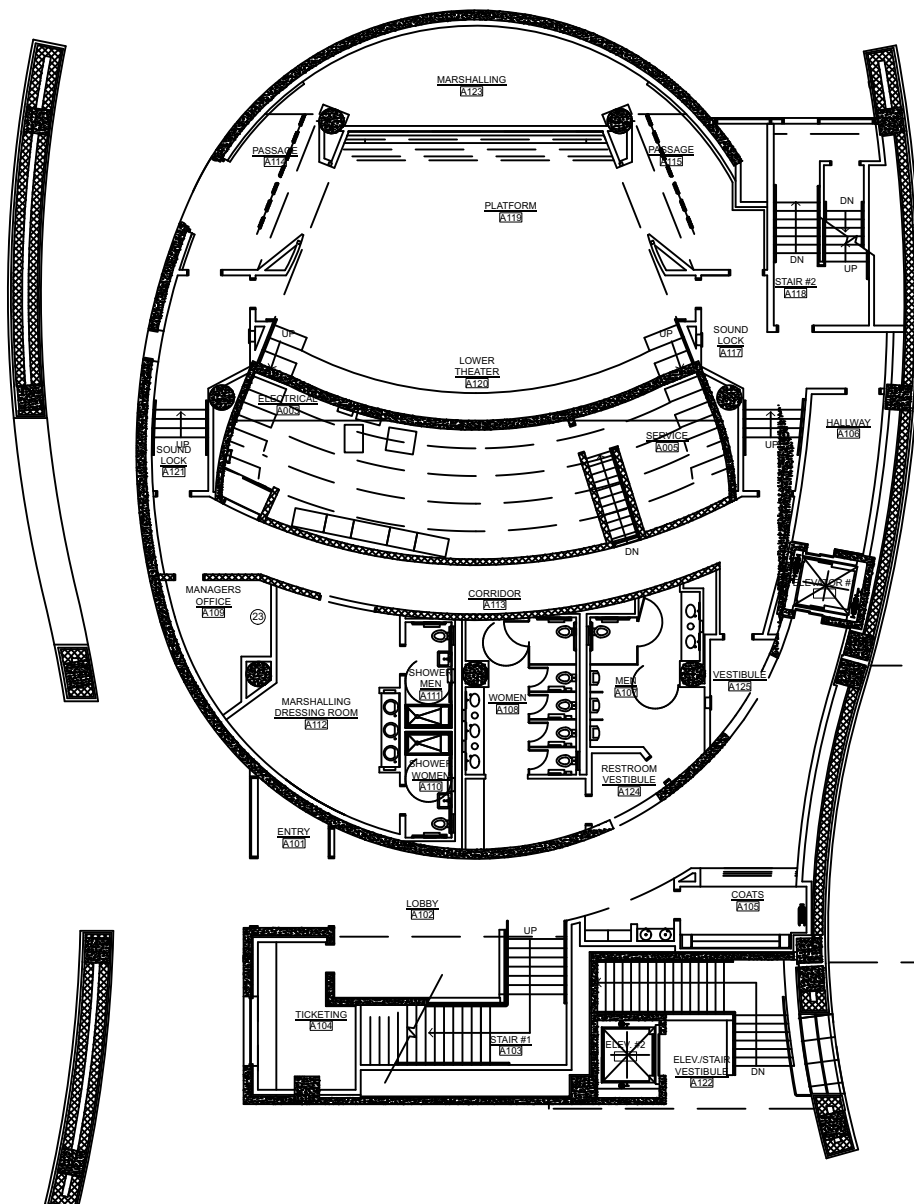
October 27

Requirements

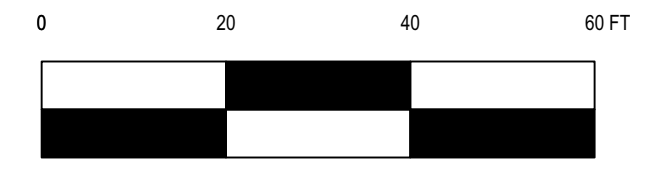
REQUIREMENTS

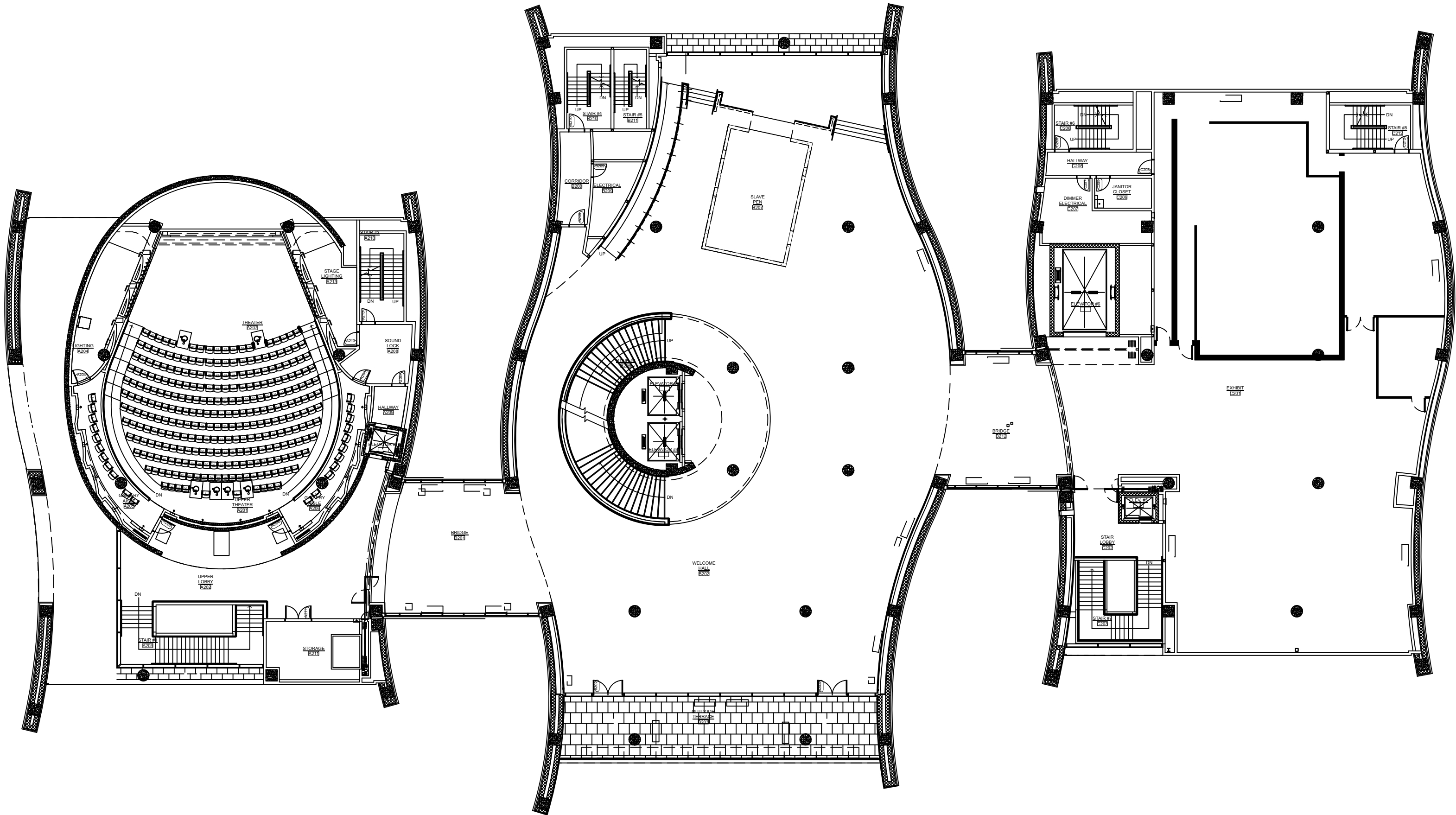
- Firm Profile
 - We are especially interested in your work with public-facing buildings that engage large visitation (3 pages max.)
- Relevant experience
 - Over the past 10 years; please profile up to 5 projects you consider most relevant to the Freedom Center's work (10 pages max.)
- Schedule
 - Proposed Schedule for all Architectural works in order to respond to the Schedule and Phasing Strategy included in this document. Architectural Schedule should be broken down in phases including:
 - Verification of existing conditions.
 - Programming Requirements.
 - Budgeting.
 - Preliminary Design.
 - Construction Documents
 - Permits.
 - Bidding (when needed.)
 - Demolition.
 - Construction.
- Budget
 - Preliminary budgeted costs for General Construction related to the proposed scope of work and phasing broken down by area and phase.
 - A/E fees for full A/E services including existing verification, design, interior design of non exhibit spaces, construction documents, bidding assistance, permitting, submittal review, construction site visits, punch list, and close out for required general construction and to support exhibit elements.
 - Disciplines include Architecture, Structural Engineering, MEP, and Acoustical [consulting and design for immersive galleries.]
 - House lighting will be under the Architectural scope. Exhibit lighting under the Exhibits scope.
 - The goal is to re-use as much existing lighting fixtures and track as possible.

Floor Plans



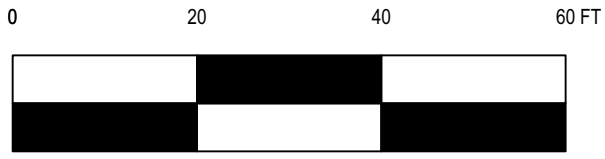
1 **FLOOR 1 - FREEDOM CENTER**
Scale: 1:250

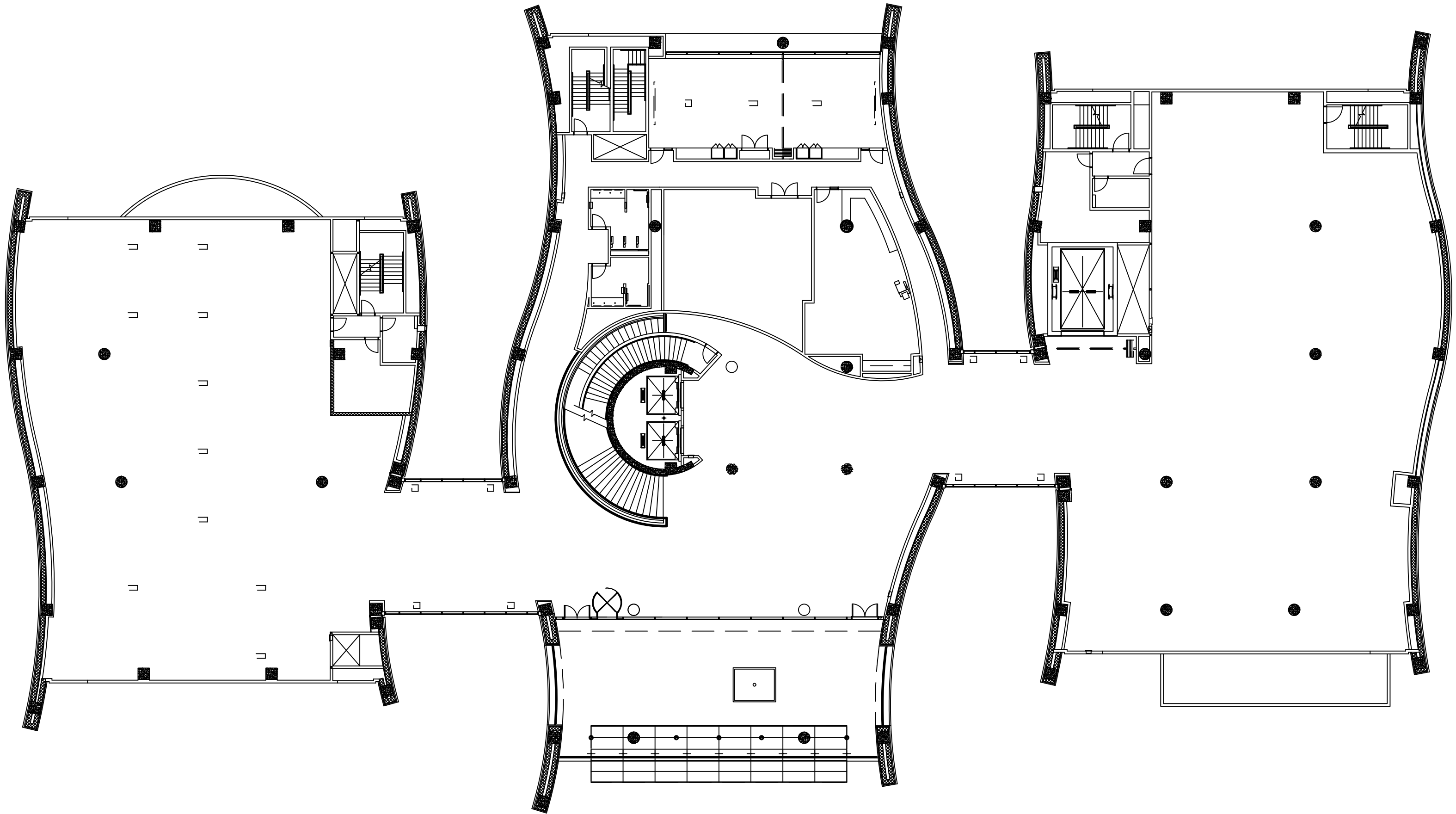




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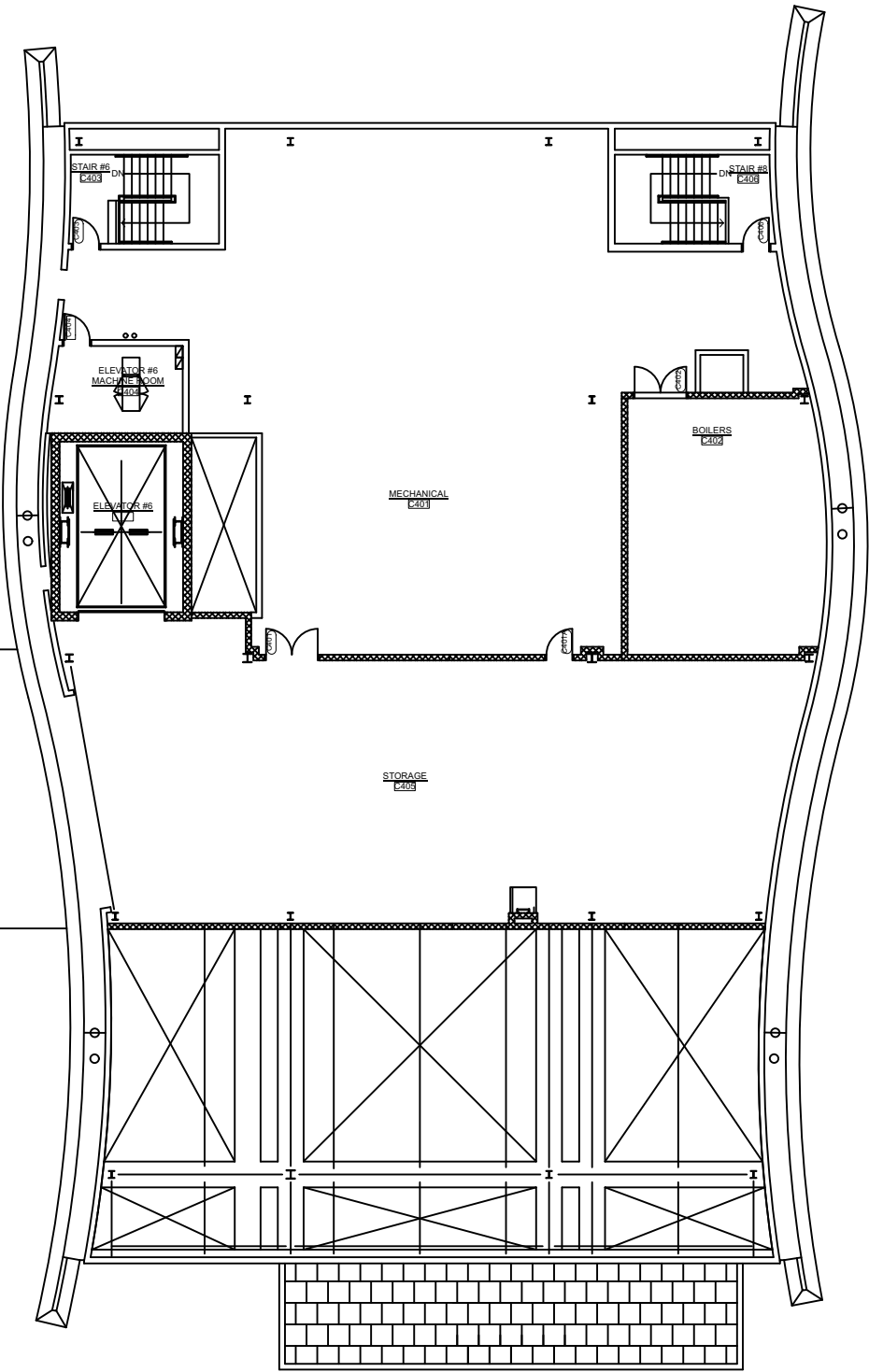
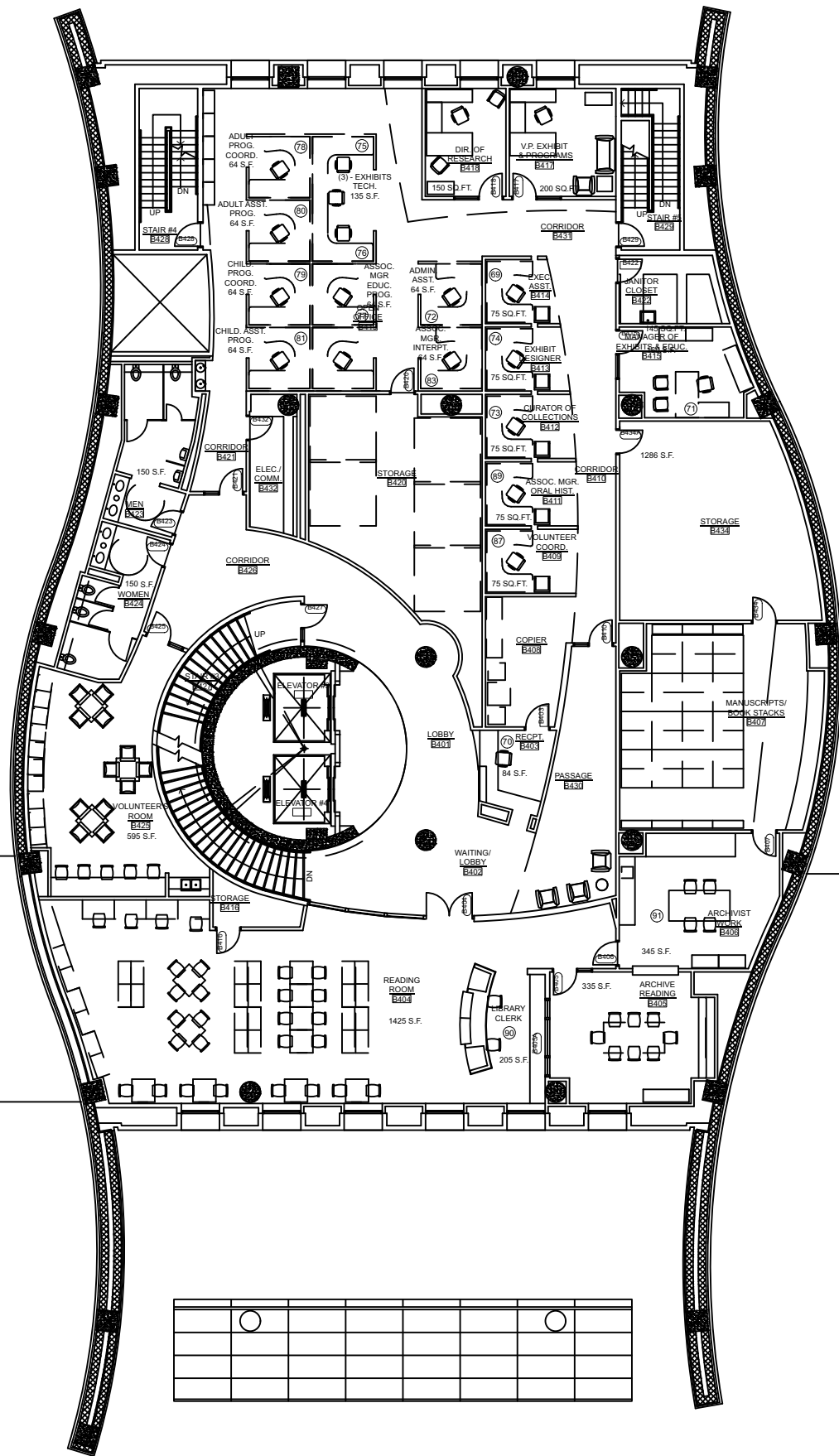
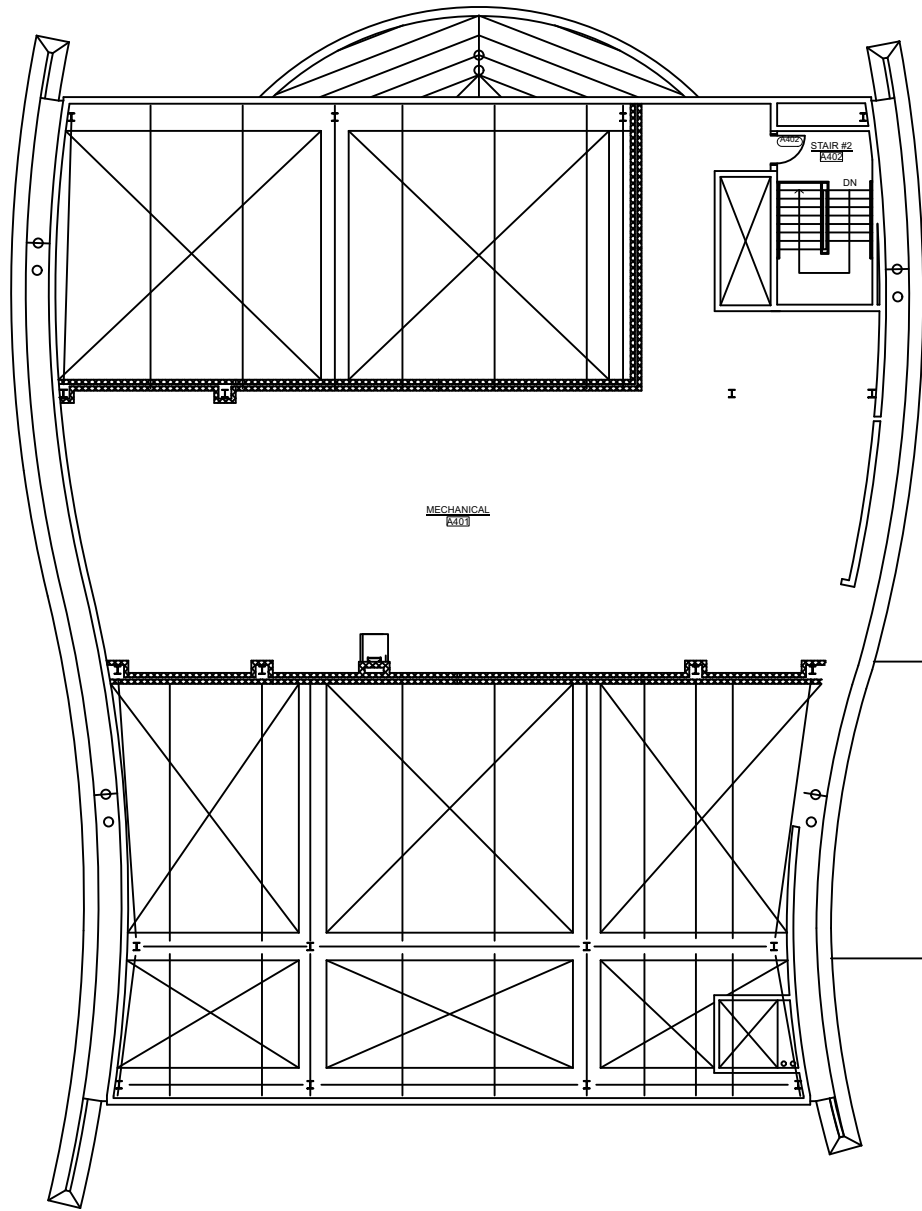
FLOOR 2 - FREEDOM CENTER
 Scale: 1:250





1 **FLOOR 3 - FREEDOM CENTER**
Scale: 1:250





1

FLOOR 4 - FREEDOM CENTER
Scale: 1:250



ANNEX 1: Exhibition Overviews

Floor 1

OVERVIEW

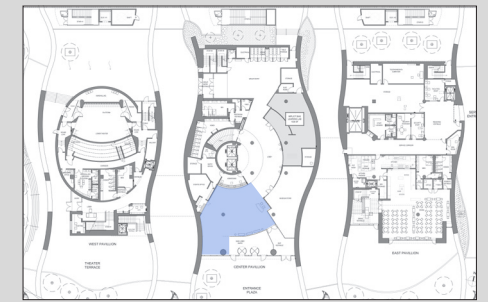
REMAKING THE CENTER

Remaking The Center will be a **dynamic and flexible installation** that shares plans for the ongoing Freedom Center renovations and exciting new experiences.

This installation of **engaging interpretive elements** will present an overview of the renovation goals, punctuated by images connected to the planning and development of Center's upcoming second and third floor galleries. This concept also offers the opportunity to reflect on the founding of the Center, through **oral histories with key founders**; as well as **key moments and artifacts from the Center's 30-year history**.

The installation will engage the public by offering updates and ways for the **community to contribute their ideas** for the Center. It will serve as a **key stakeholder engagement tool and fundraising element**.

FLOOR 1



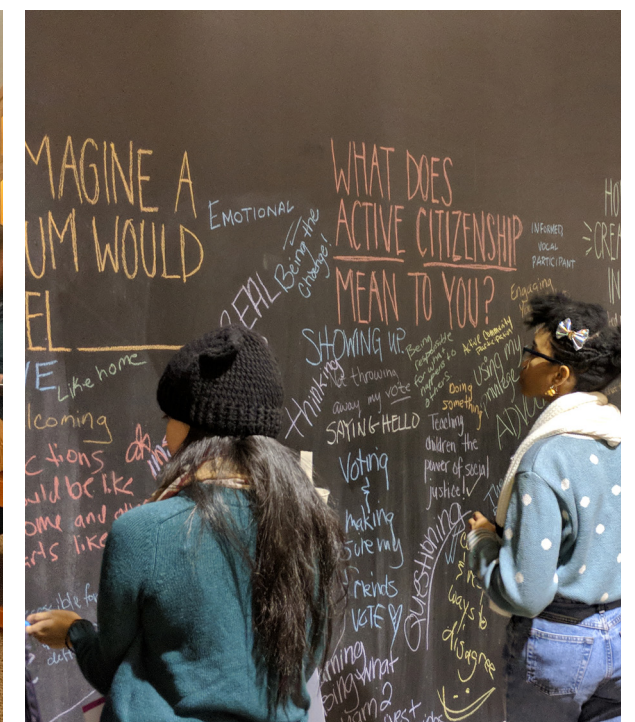
FLOOR 1 / REMAKING THE CENTER

Floor 1

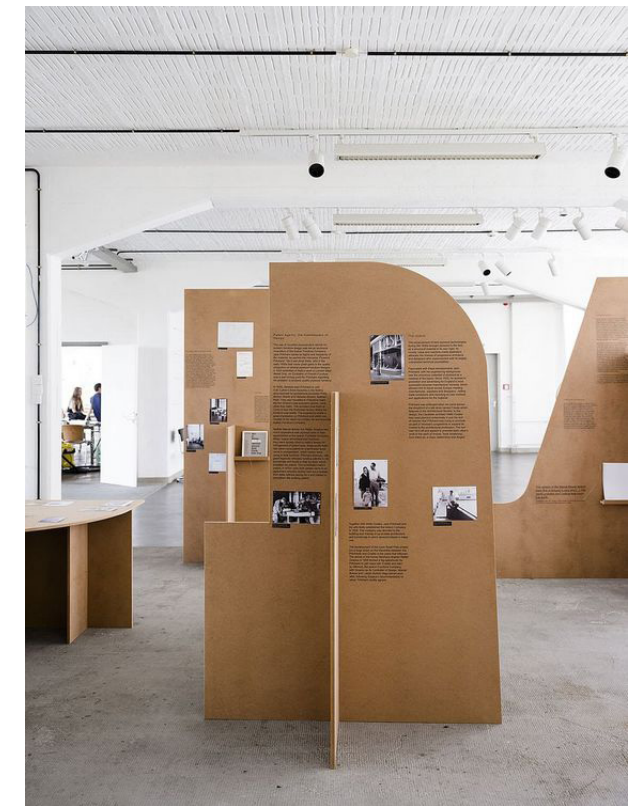
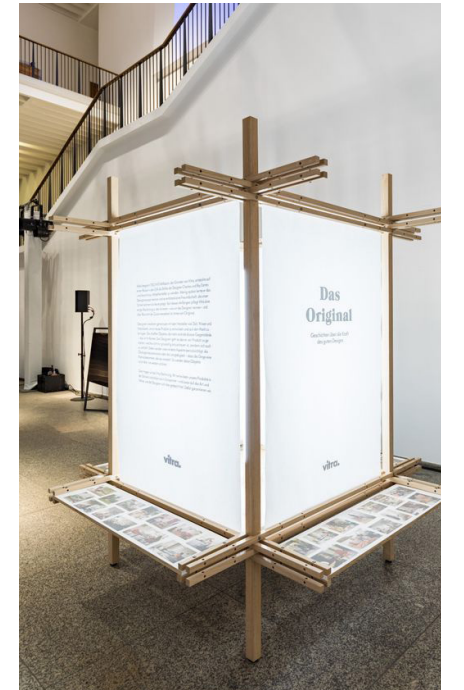
- Intro to plans for renovating the Freedom Center
- Reflect on the Center's founding mission and the influential figures, goals, and activist work involved in the Center's founding
- Encourage visitors to reflect on what the Freedom Center means to them and what they look forward to seeing in the new exhibits

Entrances of Closed Galleries (Phased Closings)

- Further information about plans for renovating the Freedom Center



FLOOR 1 / REMAKING THE CENTER - DESIGN REFERENCE



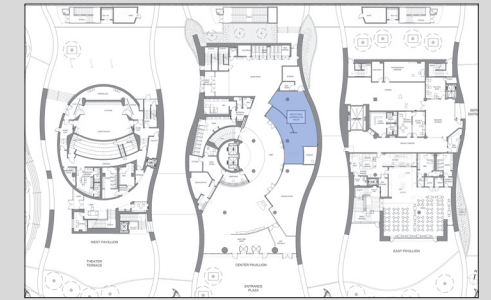


Whatever we do, **it has to be today's truth.**

— *Alandes Powell, 2023 Visioning Session*

OVERVIEW

FLOOR 1



RESISTANCE AND RESILIENCE

As a key border city in a “free state” across the river from the “slave state” of Kentucky, **Cincinnati’s history** provides **powerful insights into the divisions and freedom struggles that transformed the United States** in the 1800s.

The *Resistance and Resilience* ground floor exhibit will **root visitors** in the significance of the **Center’s powerful location**, orient them to the **Center’s key themes**, and **inspire them to support ongoing social justice efforts** today. Through **immersive, “wow” experiences** such as **dynamic, dimensional maps** and **theatrical object vignettes**, visitors will begin their journey at the Freedom Center **grounded and empowered with new knowledge** about the world around them.

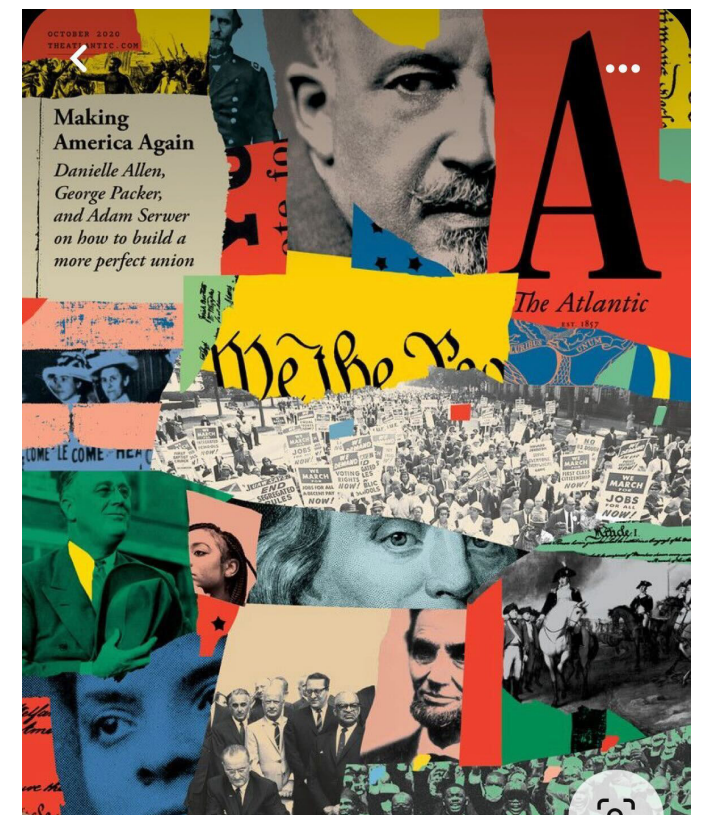
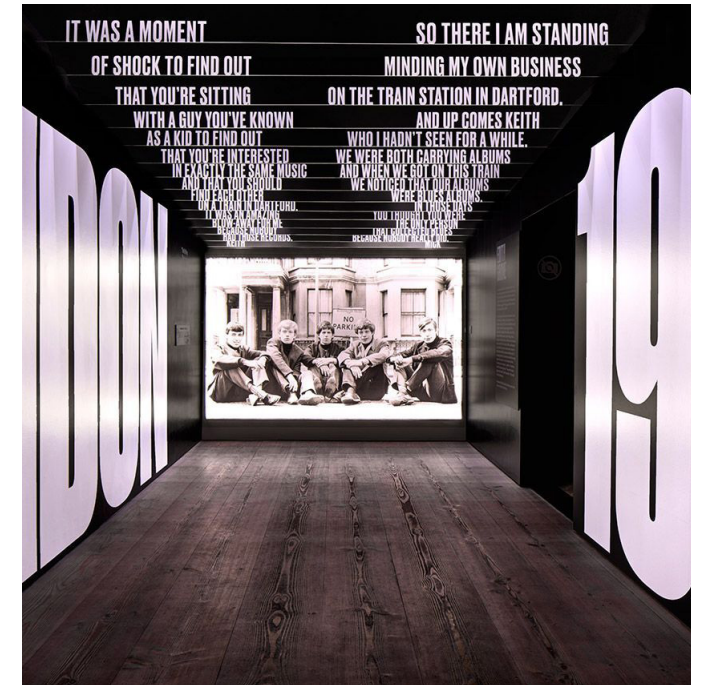
FLOOR 1 / RESISTANCE AND RESILIENCE

Floor 1

- Primer exhibit that introduces Resistance and Resilience and Power of Place/Borders threads that will run throughout the galleries
- Convey the significance of the Center's location overlooking the Ohio River, where enslaved people crossed to freedom through the Underground Railroad and where historic Black waterfront communities were once located, including Little Africa
- Land acknowledgement that honors Indigenous communities
- Present Cincinnati's early history of movements for abolition and civil rights in the 1800s
- Emphasize how social justice activists in the 1900s and 2000s built on earlier movements in the 1800s and earlier to continue advocacy for freedom and equality that still shapes our lives today
- Provide trailhead information about other relevant historic sites in Cincinnati and the surrounding region; connect to national network of Underground Railroad sites



FLOOR 1 / RESISTANCE AND RESILIENCE - DESIGN REFERENCE





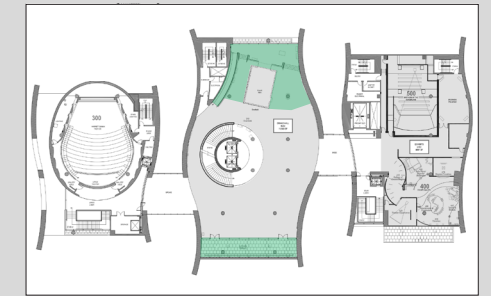
... Until you know where you come from,
you don't have a real straight path to
where you're going.

— *Peggy Mills Warner, 2021, descendant of Betty
Tolar, founder of Ohio's free Black Gist Settlement in
the early 1800s*

Floor 2

OVERVIEW

FLOOR 2



POWER OF PLACE / BORDERS

The Power of Place/Borders exhibit will activate cohesive interpretation around two iconic experiences at the Center—the slave pen and the powerful view of the Ohio River. Connecting these experiences will continue to ground visitors in the Center’s power of place, while also revealing the complex position of Ohio as a border free state across from the slave state of Kentucky in the 1800s. The Ohio River was both a key boundary for freedom seekers escaping slavery, and a conduit for the domestic slave trade. The slave pen, brought to the Center from Kentucky, reveals the close proximity between slavery and freedom in Kentucky and Ohio, and demonstrates the sectional tensions that divided the nation.

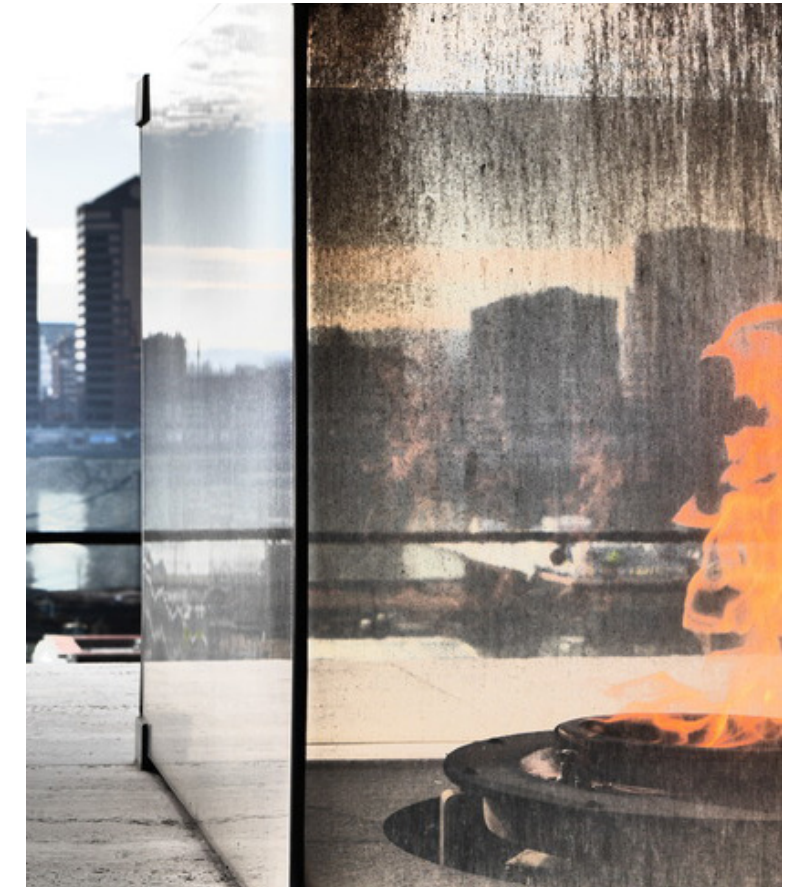
Significantly, national and local divisions in the 1800s continue to resonate with conflicts over how the nation’s history of slavery is represented today. This exhibit will include the historic significance of the slave pen in the domestic slave trade, and an overview of the challenges the Center faced acquiring this powerful artifact, including threats. This story conveys the Center’s critical role in helping visitors understand the importance of advocating for freedom and equality— past and present.

In addition, a media/art installation in this area, inspired by the current Raganon installation and Cincinnati’s local and regional history, will creatively express the power of place and borders at the Freedom Center.

FLOOR 2 / POWER OF PLACE / BORDERS

Floor 2

- Power of place/borders at the Center's location between a slave state and free state in the 1800s
- Engage view of the Ohio River to convey history of freedom seekers crossing to freedom through the Underground Railroad
- Engage view of the Ohio River and Kentucky, as well as the powerful artifact of the slave pen, to also convey connections to the history of domestic slave trade
- Large scale media/art installation that conveys local and regional history (inspired by Raganon)



OVERVIEW

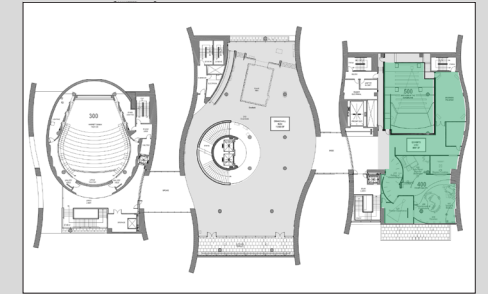
SEEKING FREEDOM

FROM ARRIVAL TO THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

The significance of the Underground Railroad and the inspiring history of enslaved people resisting bondage are central to the Freedom Center’s narrative. A renovation of this key gallery will serve to update design strategies for presenting powerful stories of freedom seekers and their allies, and for engaging visitors with themes of resistance and resilience. The exhibition will also expand on how revolts, escape from bondage, and other forms of resistance against slavery began with early arrivals of enslaved Africans in the Americas in the 1500s, and continued into the 1800s with the abolition of slavery. Over time, enslaved people sought escape in rural maroon communities, Spanish Florida, Canada, the Caribbean, Mexico, and Europe, as well as US free states like Ohio by the 1800s.

In the decades leading up to the Civil War, with the rise of sectional divides between free states and slave states— escaping to free states became known as the Underground Railroad. This powerful, multi-racial movement motivated activists across the nation. Seeking Freedom will highlight Ohio’s role as a key border free state in the Underground Railroad, while also examining these regional, national, and international connections.


FLOOR 2



FLOOR 2 / SEEKING FREEDOM



150 Dollars Reward.

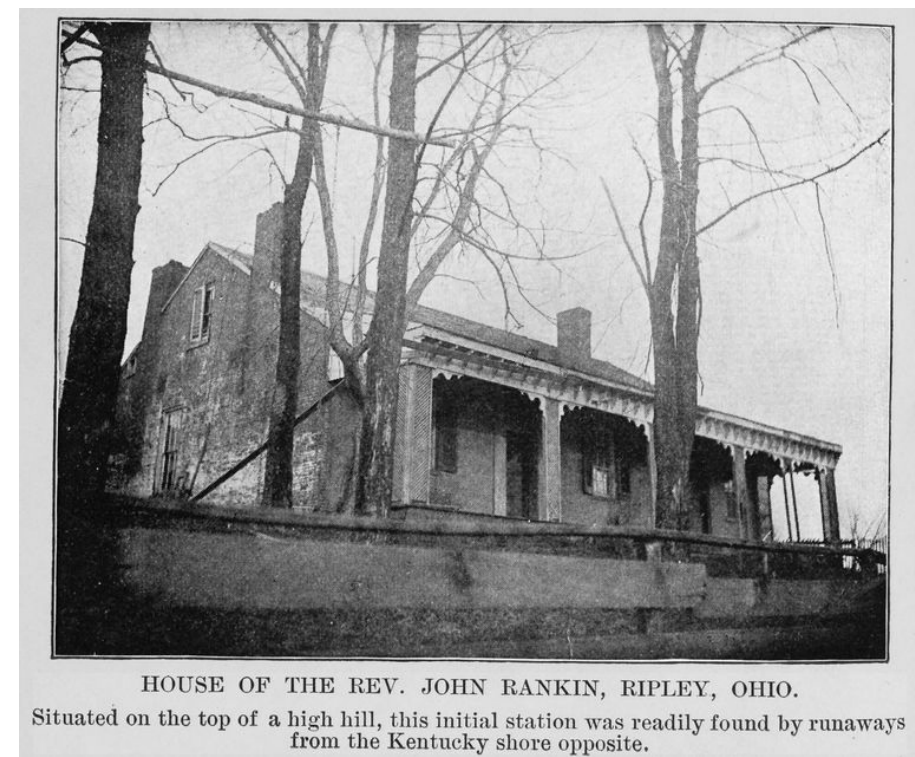


RAN AWAY from the subscriber, off a boat, at the mouth of Twin Creek Scioto county, Ohio, on the morning of Sunday, the 25th inst. a Negro man named **NATHAN;**

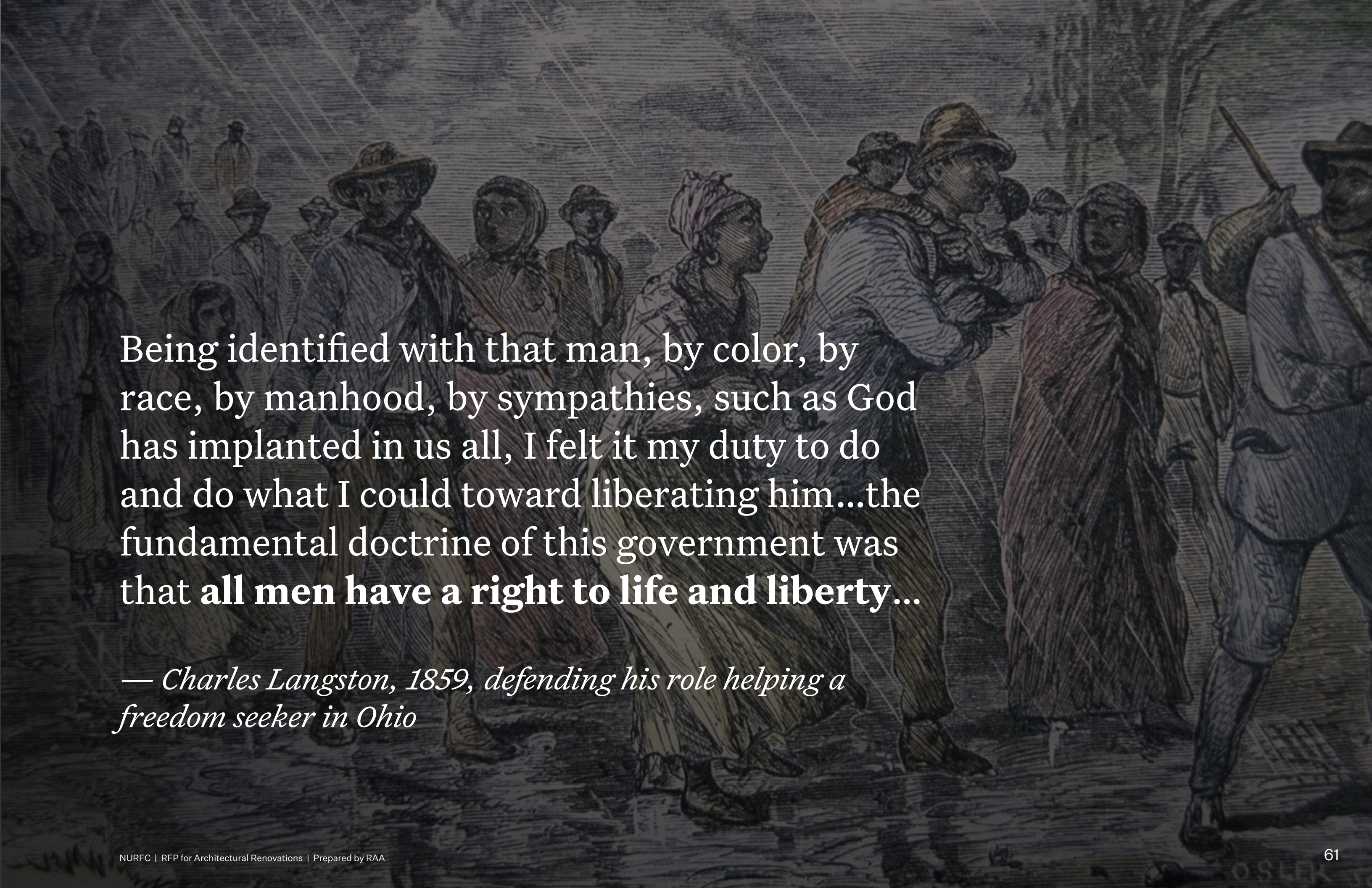
Had on a blue round-a-bout coat, a black straw hat with several holes in it: he is about 6 feet, one or two inches high; is a very good cook, and has been a Sailor; is supposed to be about 28 or 30 years of age.

The above reward and all reasonable charges will be paid to any person who will deliver him to the subscriber at Parish St. James, Acadia county, Louisiana. **J. B. ORY.**

September 26, 1825. 16-18



HOUSE OF THE REV. JOHN RANKIN, RIPLEY, OHIO.
 Situated on the top of a high hill, this initial station was readily found by runaways from the Kentucky shore opposite.



Being identified with that man, by color, by race, by manhood, by sympathies, such as God has implanted in us all, I felt it my duty to do and do what I could toward liberating him...the fundamental doctrine of this government was that **all men have a right to life and liberty...**

— *Charles Langston, 1859, defending his role helping a freedom seeker in Ohio*

Floor 3

OVERVIEW

FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM

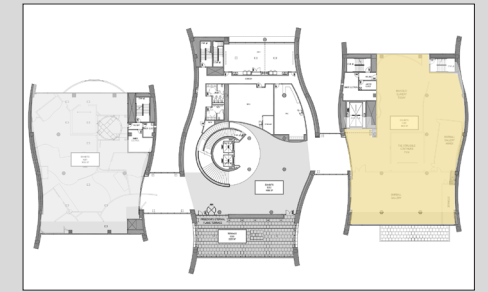
1500s - 1800s

The current From Slavery to Freedom gallery fills a key role at the Center by providing visitors with a foundational, chronological history of slavery and abolition in colonies and later states that formed the United States. A renovation of this gallery will enhance visitor access to this core historic information, while also refining or expanding key topics and visitor experiences.

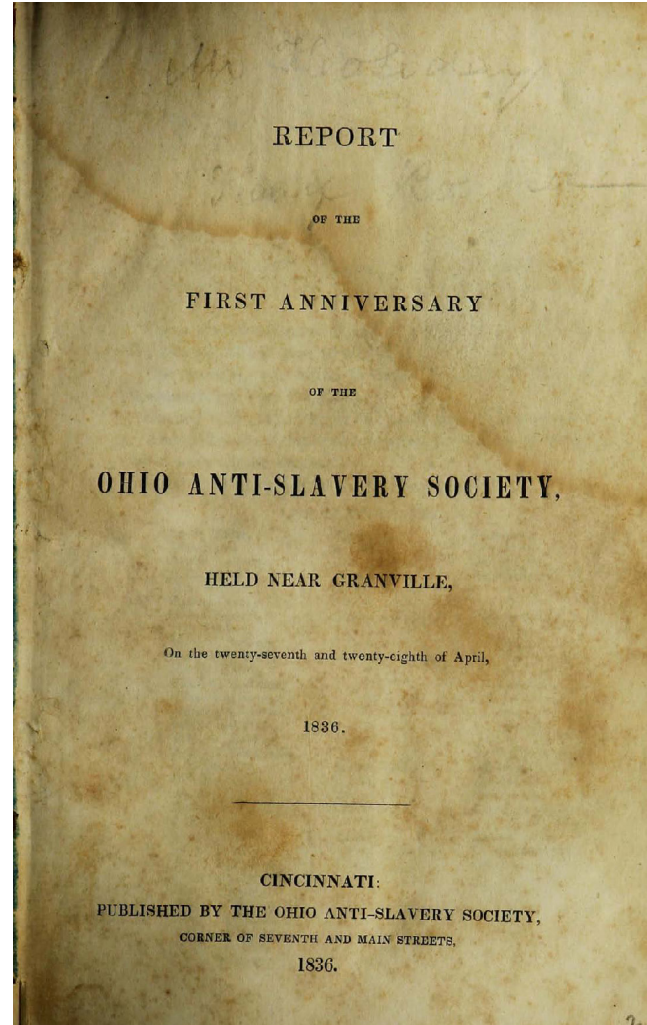
For example, the updated exhibition could further emphasize the development of the trans-Atlantic slave trade to the Americas and the diverse experiences of enslaved people in North American colonies prior to the American Revolution. Interpretive threads will elevate the resistance and resilience of Black individuals and communities, and new research could support enhanced interpretation about underrepresented experiences, including about enslaved women and children. In addition, expanding interpretation about the transformative time of Reconstruction in the nation’s history, and efforts to support racial equality as well as freedom in the 1800s, will offer new and critically important historic experiences for visitors.

Like other galleries, highlighting historic figures, events, and issues in Cincinnati, Ohio, and surrounding areas will offer key insights into the role of slavery and freedom in the nation’s history. Ohio was the first state carved from the Northwest Territory, where the federal government banned slavery but discriminatory laws were permitted. Cincinnati overlooks the Ohio River, a conduit for the domestic slave trade as well as the Underground Railroad. And many locally and nationally influential anti-slavery activists in Ohio played key roles in the movement to abolish slavery. Weaving local, regional, and national stories, the renovated From Slavery to Freedom gallery will continue to be a powerful and engaging resource at the Center.

FLOOR 3



FLOOR 3 / FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM



A CROSSING PLACE FOR FUGITIVE SLAVES ON THE OHIO RIVER, AT STEUBENVILLE, OHIO.
(From a recent photograph.)





The truth is **powerful** and it **prevails**.

— *Sojourner Truth, 1863*

OVERVIEW

FIGHTING FOR FREEDOM AND EQUALITY

1800s - 2000s

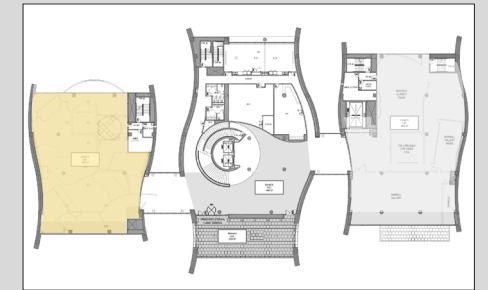
The 1865 abolition of slavery in the United States marked a beginning, but defining and protecting freedom proved to be a long struggle throughout the nation. This groundbreaking new gallery at the Freedom Center will explore how advocacy for social justice efforts and civil rights were key to supporting movements for freedom and equality in the United States in the 1800s, 1900s, and 2000s. Through local, regional, and national case studies, this exhibition will illuminate how historic struggles for civil rights and social justice continue to shape freedom struggles today. Interactive installations will further encourage visitors to consider how they can take part and make a difference.

As a border city in Ohio between the regions of the South and the Midwest, Cincinnati serves as a powerful lens for visitors to engage with the complex history of social justice movements in the United States. Starting in the early 1800s, Black activists in free states like Ohio fought against slavery and racial discrimination. Black Ohioians particularly protested against “Black Laws” that limited their civil rights, despite their free status. Their advocacy on the state level— to define Black people as not only free but also as equal citizens— helped shape advocacy for the rights of all freedpeople on the federal level with the abolition of slavery.

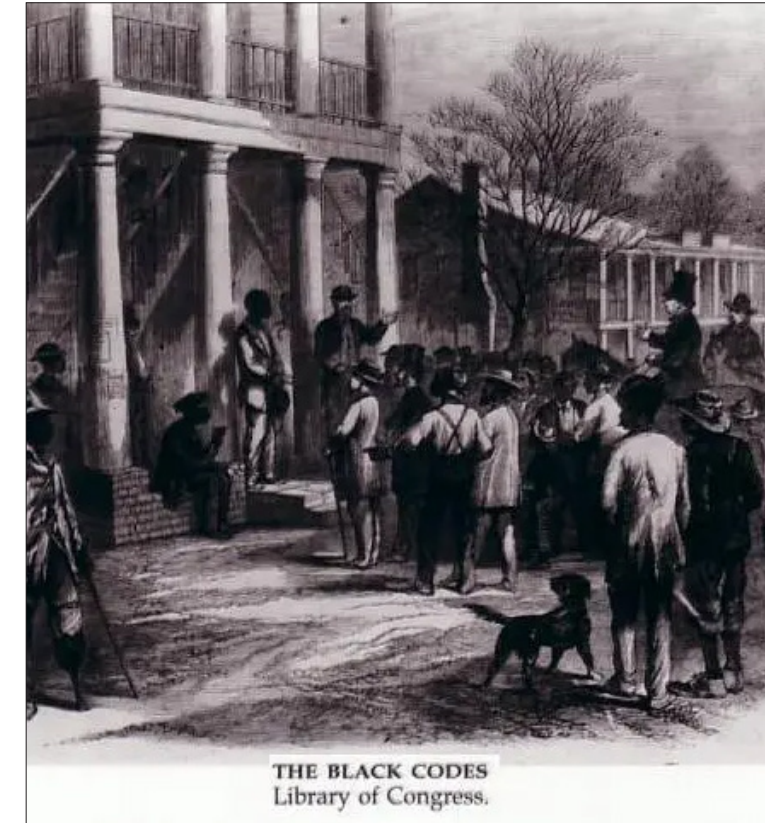
By the mid-1900s, the civil rights movement in the South captured widespread media attention, but as Reverend Martin Luther King asserted, racial injustice was “a national problem.” Like Black southerners, Black people in Cincinnati, Ohio, and surrounding areas faced racial violence and discrimination in various forms, and they organized to advocate for their rights. Many targeted pervasive systemic racism and economic injustice as well as discriminatory laws and customs.

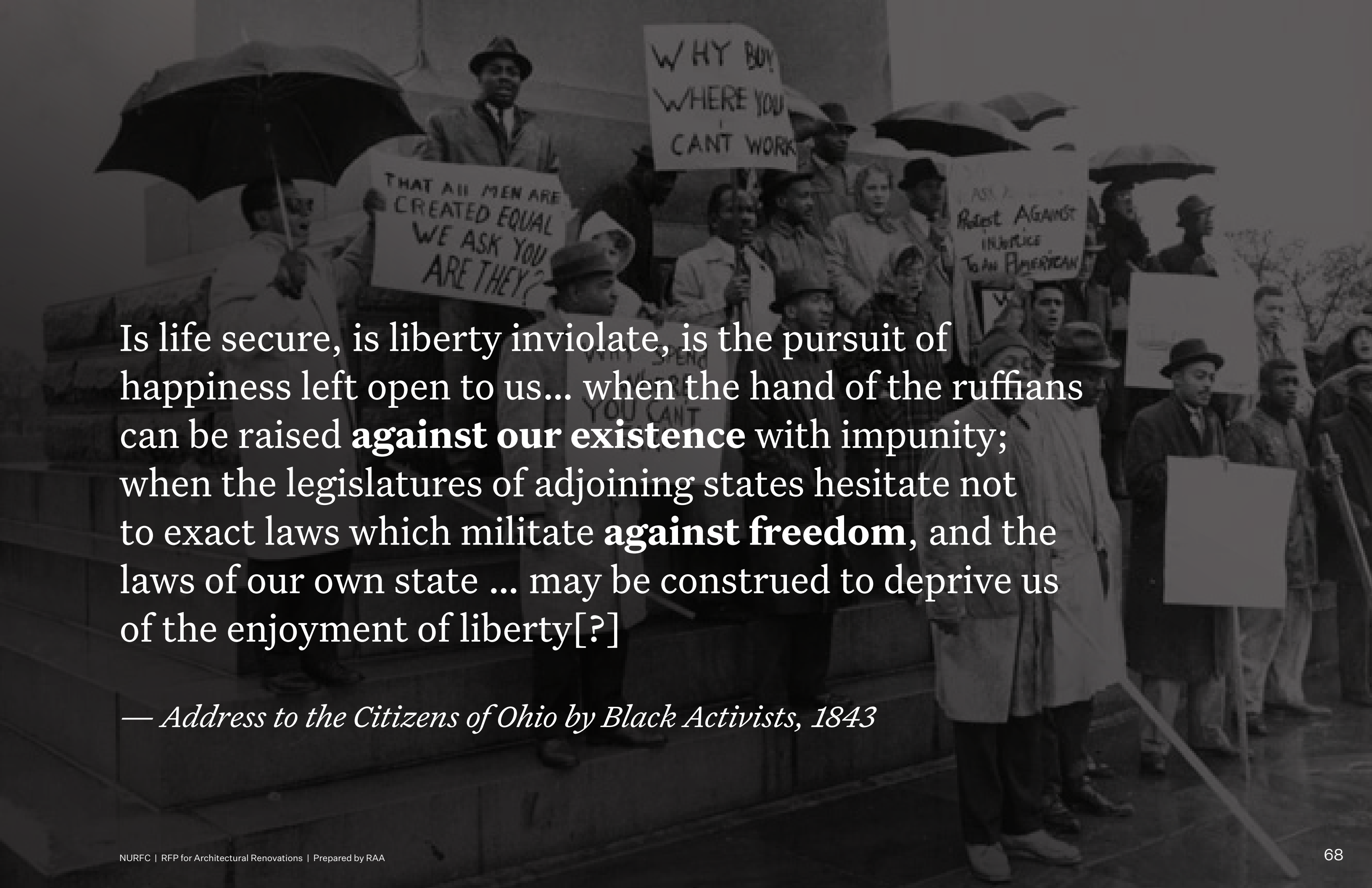
This exhibit will also explore how in the 1900s and 2000s, local and national civil rights activism galvanized, influenced, and often intersected with the freedom struggles of various groups who were marginalized due to race, ethnicity, class, gender and sexuality, ability, nationality, and religion. Throughout, Ohio continued to emerge as a dynamic “border” area, reflecting a diverse range of political opinions, activist movements, and conflicts that continue to unite and divide the nation today.

FLOOR 3



FLOOR 3 / FIGHTING FOR FREEDOM AND EQUALITY





Is life secure, is liberty inviolate, is the pursuit of happiness left open to us... when the hand of the ruffians can be raised **against our existence** with impunity; when the legislatures of adjoining states hesitate not to exact laws which militate **against freedom**, and the laws of our own state ... may be construed to deprive us of the enjoyment of liberty[?]

— *Address to the Citizens of Ohio by Black Activists, 1843*

What's ringing in my ears right now is,
'Never forget.' In this year, we need people
to believe that these things actually happened
... [W]hat can we call into existence or what
can we call into reality?

—*Jasmine Coaston, 2023 Visioning Session*

Thank You.

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RAA