ECHO CHICAGO

ENVIRONMENT + COMMUNITY + HEALTH + OUTREACH

Like the reverberation of sound, the new ECHO Chicago serves as a hub for food, health, research, and education. The ECHO connects to the city via public transport, pedestrian greenways, and drone delivery to create equal access for all Chicago neighborhoods and serves as a catalyst for social good.

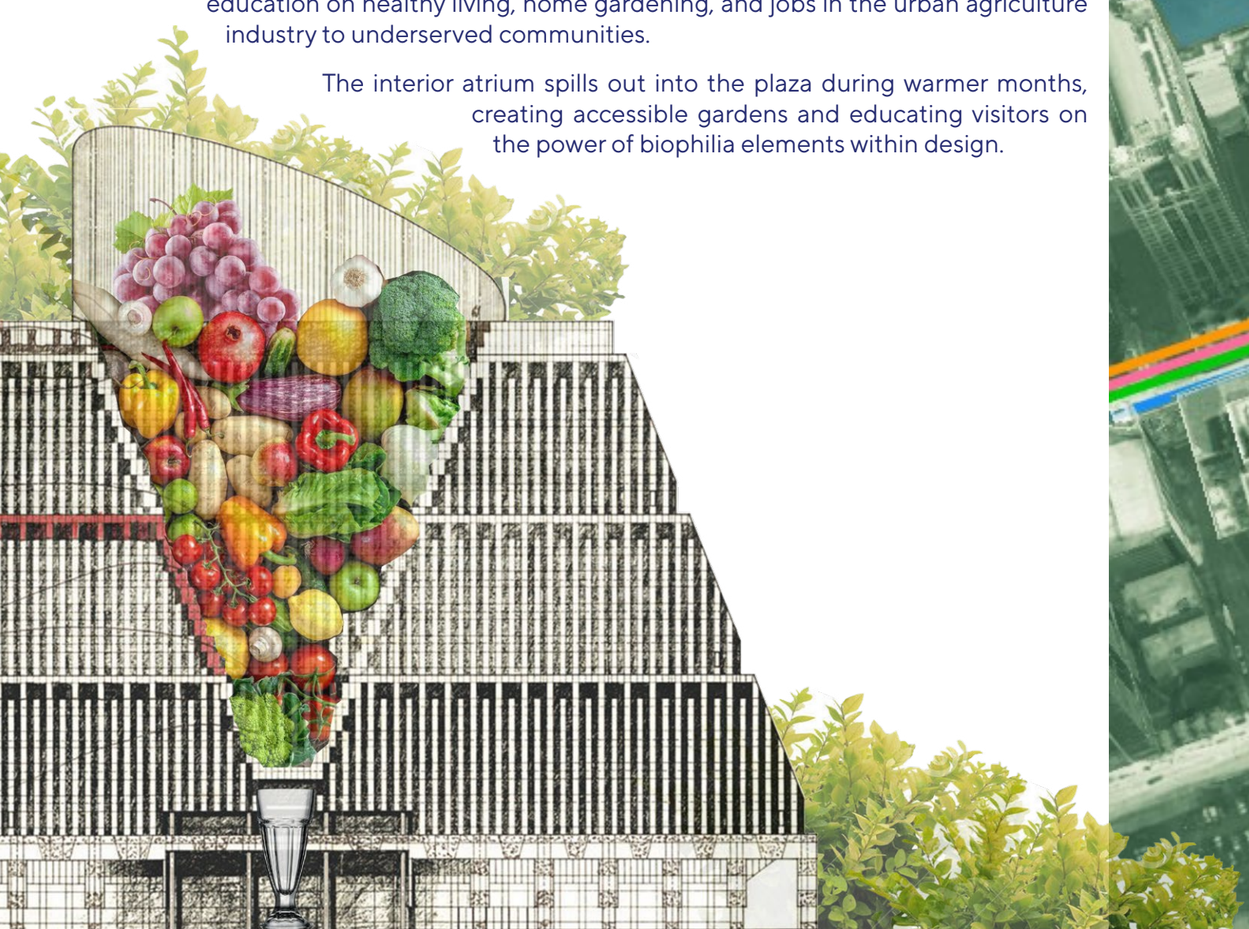
Expansive Indoor hydroponic gardens, powered by photo-voltaic windows and redistributed water from new water purification infrastructure in the basement levels allow the building to be carbon and waste neutral.

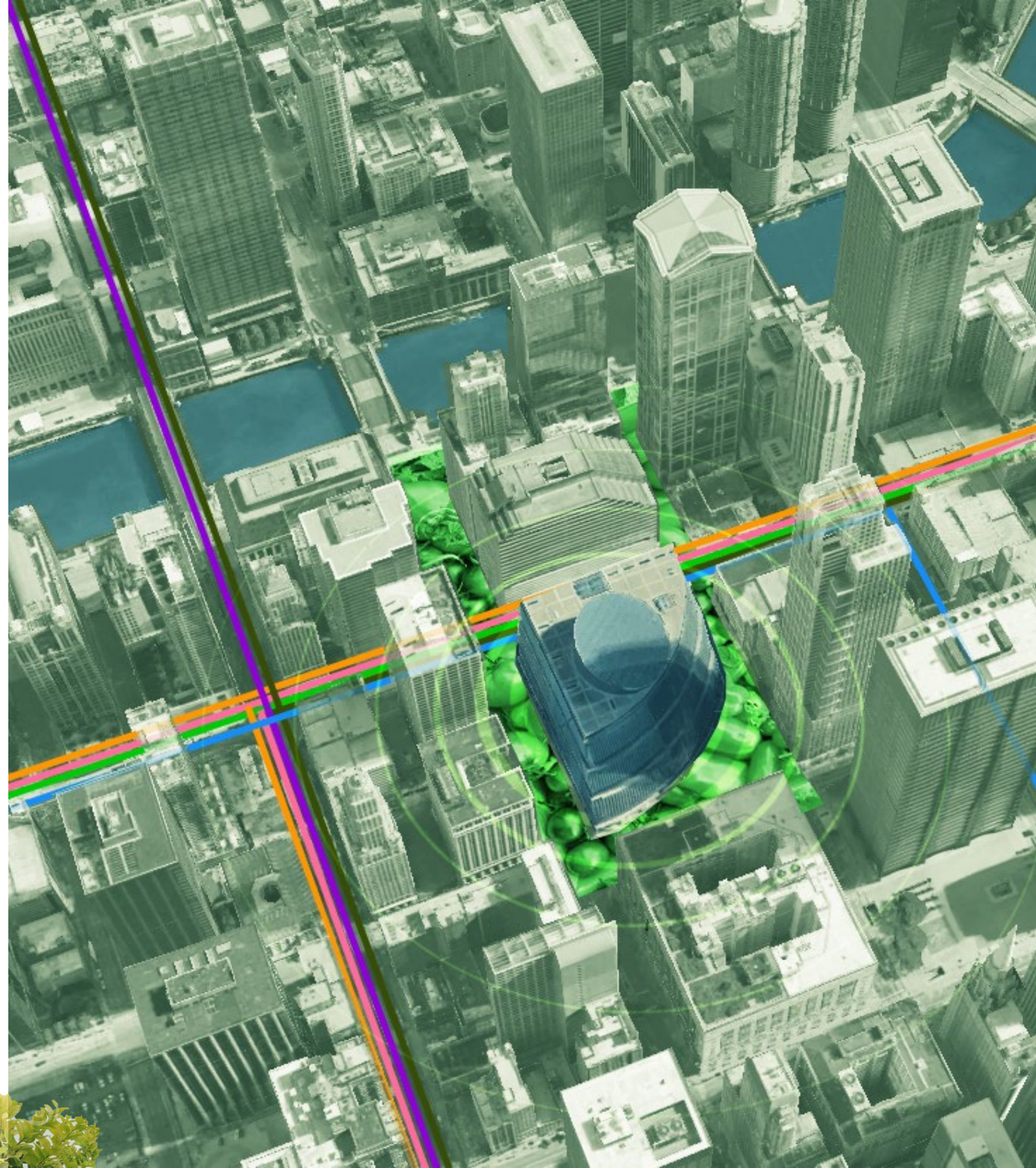
The first floor hosts grocery shopping supplied directly from the gardens within the building. This brings affordable, healthy food not only into the downtown area, but thanks to the ECHO's central location, CSA boxes full of produce can easily be distributed to low-income families all over the city.

In addition to easy access to buses the L, Metra, and bike share, a drone delivery system will help get produce from the building to local restaurants and distribution centers for the corners of the city not as easily accessed by transit.

Public health offices in the storefronts of the bottom three levels bring access to food support, education on healthy living, home gardening, and jobs in the urban agriculture industry to underserved communities.

The interior atrium spills out into the plaza during warmer months, creating accessible gardens and educating visitors on the power of biophilia elements within design.





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ECONOMY

Reusing Jahn's iconic building promotes value for a city known for its architectural history. While complying with the Secretary of Interiors Design Standards, the ECHO transforms original design elements of the Thompson Center to function in more economic-, environmental- and socially-responsible ways.

INTEGRATION

Originally designed to express an open and accessible government, the Thompson Center no longer celebrates the "social role of architecture." The ECHO restores Jahn's original vision by connecting Chicago's 77 neighborhoods with a self-sustaining ecosystem focused on food production, distribution, education, and employment

ECOSYSTEMS

Self-contained, but one with the city, ECHO Chicago connects the building with the City's transportation system, surrounding plaza, streetscape, and Chicago River. Integration of new landscaping, pedestrian walkways, and eco-friendly transportation promotes health, wellness, and environmental benefits.

ENERGY

The new ECHO examines the original innovative system of thermal storage to condition the building, includes additional systems, such as photo-voltaic glass panels, solar panels, and rainwater collection, and utilizes sustainable products for any new furniture, fixtures, and equipment for the building.

RESOURCES

By reinterpreting the Thompson Center, we eliminate additional embodied carbon. Additionally, as we update the building and systems, we will select sustainably sourced, "Red List"–free, and fully transparent materials. Aligning with ECHO's vision, portions of the building can be used for the production of bio-based, environmentally-friendly materials.

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WATER

The plants grown at the ECHO will benefit from collected, cleaned, and reused rainwater. Future plans to connect with and clean water from the nearby Chicago River will be used to help cool the building and improve water quality of the nearby ecosystem.



CHANGE

ECHO is designed to change to the needs of the general public as well as the tenants of the buildings. Flexible growing and HVAC systems mean crops can be rotated throughout the year. Passive survivability through the windows, expansive operational door system, rainwater collection, and future connection to the river ensures ECHO will become a self-contained ecosystem benefiting the environment and serving as an archetype for future architecture.



DISCOVERY

Within ECHO, the possibilities are endless: public entities, private businesses, and the community can collaborate to improve urban farming practices, research and create new bio-fuels or sustainable materials, educate the public on nutrition and incorporating environmentally-friendly practices into their homes, and beyond. The impact of ECHO can be tracked through improved community health, increased number of urban farms, employment rates, and more.

WELL-BEING

Connecting citizens and visitors to nature, nutrition, and wellness, ECHO provides a respite in a bustling city. Inside, a garden-like atmosphere provides nutritious food, ample daylight, and fresh air. The interior spills out into the redesigned courtyard with areas for both quiet reflection and group activities like yoga or tai chi. Nearby bike/scooter share as well as new pedestrian thorough-fares to the City's popular Riverwalk offer greener, more physical ways to get around.





EQUITABLE COMMUNITIES

Connected to the city by seven 'L' train lines, three Chicago Pedway tunnels, and eight CTA bus routes, the Thompson Center provides a central hub for an interconnected food distribution network. Public transportation to ECHO provides access to food, education, and employment. Incorporation of refrigerated train cars and trucks, as well as a new drone delivery system, provides food delivery to underserved communities, eliminating food deserts.