



CONSTITUTION GARDENS

NATIONAL MALL, WASHINGTON, DC



ICONIC LANDSCAPE

Located on the National Mall, parallel to the Reflecting Pool, and between Maya Lin's Vietnam Memorial and the World War II Memorial, lies Constitution Gardens, a 52-acre park planned in the 1970s by SOM and noted landscape architect Dan Kiley. The original design was never fully realized, leaving the park dilapidated and void of activity.

The redesign of Constitution Gardens honors and respects its design origins, while revisioning the area to include a new visitor's pavilion and programmable areas for year-round activities. Once complete, the park will serve as a welcoming destination and retreat for locals and visitors alike.



LIVING LEGACY

Our vision for Constitution Gardens respects and completes the legacy of designers and their ideas that have come before us to contribute to this iconic landscape.

C. 1984

AMPLIFIED VISION

The project amplifies five key elements of the original SOM + Dan Kiley plan.

LAKE

augment the lake edge

TOPOGRAPHY

develop the topography

FOREST

diversify the planting palette

PAVILION

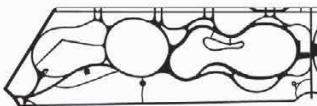
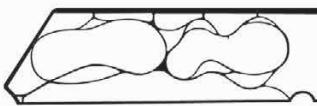
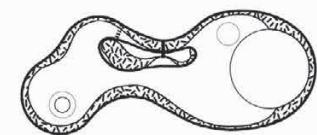
build the pavilion

PATHWAYS

enhance connectivity

1973

2018



AESTHETIC ECOLOGY

Rather than asserting an aesthetic at the expense of sustainability, Constitution Gardens will be re-created as an integrated environment that is as ecologically productive as it is beautiful.

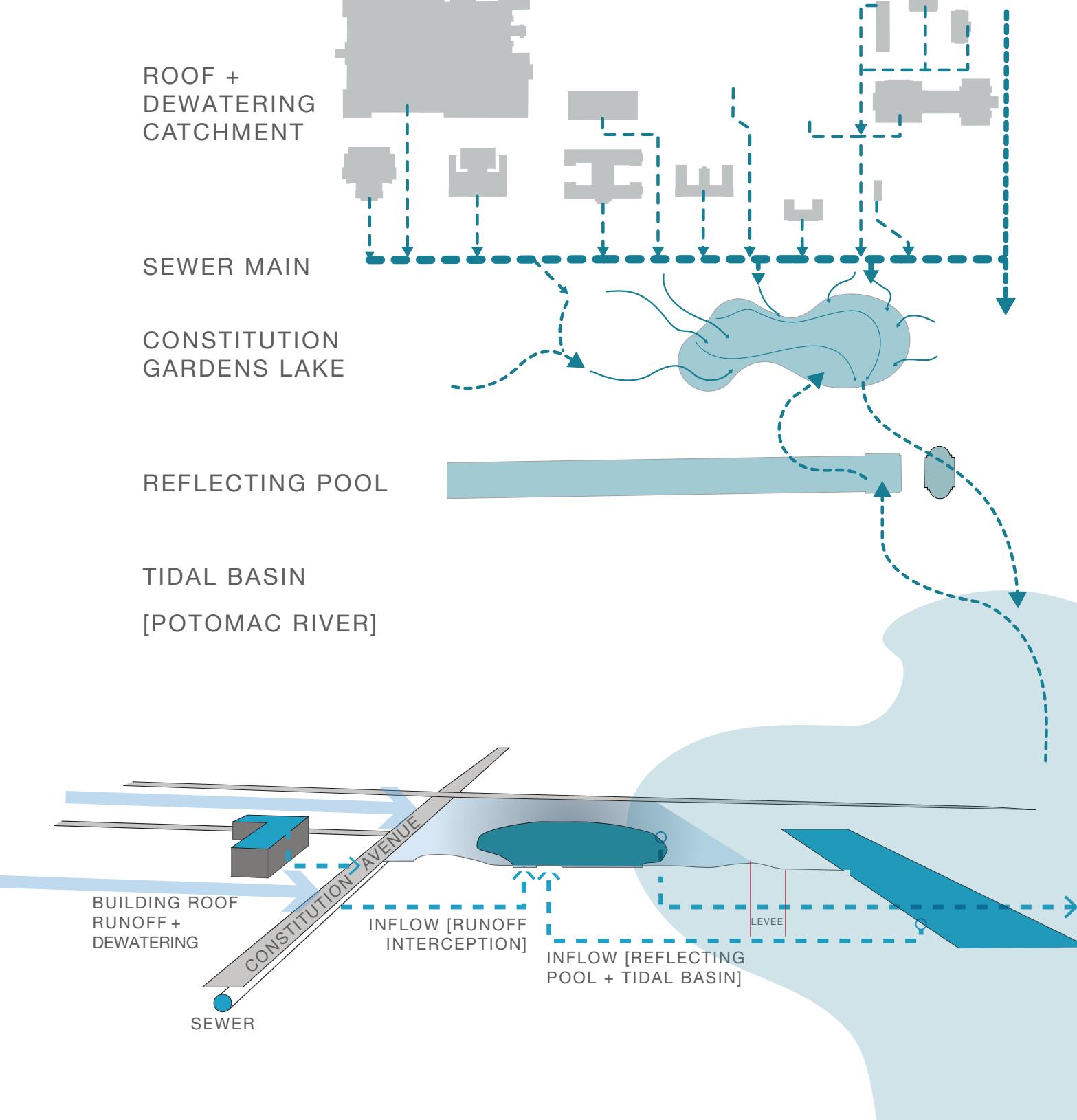




WINTER NIGHT ICE SKATING

LAKE TRANSFORMATION

The 6.75 acre lake is reconceived as a crucial piece of infrastructure, while retaining the elegance of its original contours. It is performative programmatically as well as environmentally – a ring of shallow water within it transforms from a model boat basin in summer to an ice rink in winter.

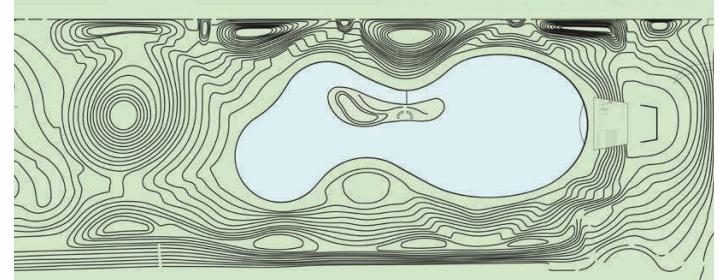


INTEGRATED WATER CYCLE

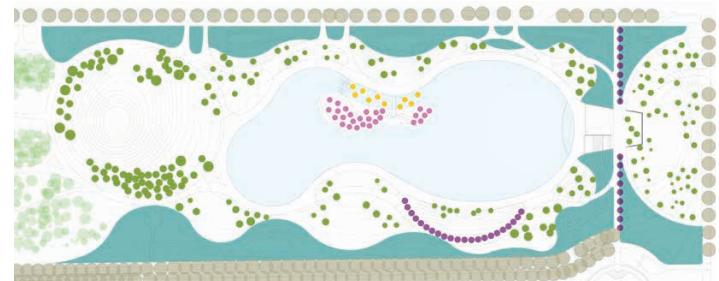
Our design will reduce the damaging impacts of stormwater while creating a source of reusable water.

LAYERED TOPOGRAPHY

The character of Constitution Gardens will continue to be expressed in its rolling lawn and canopy of trees, though with a more diversified and seasonally dynamic planting palette.



TOPOGRAPHY



CANOPY



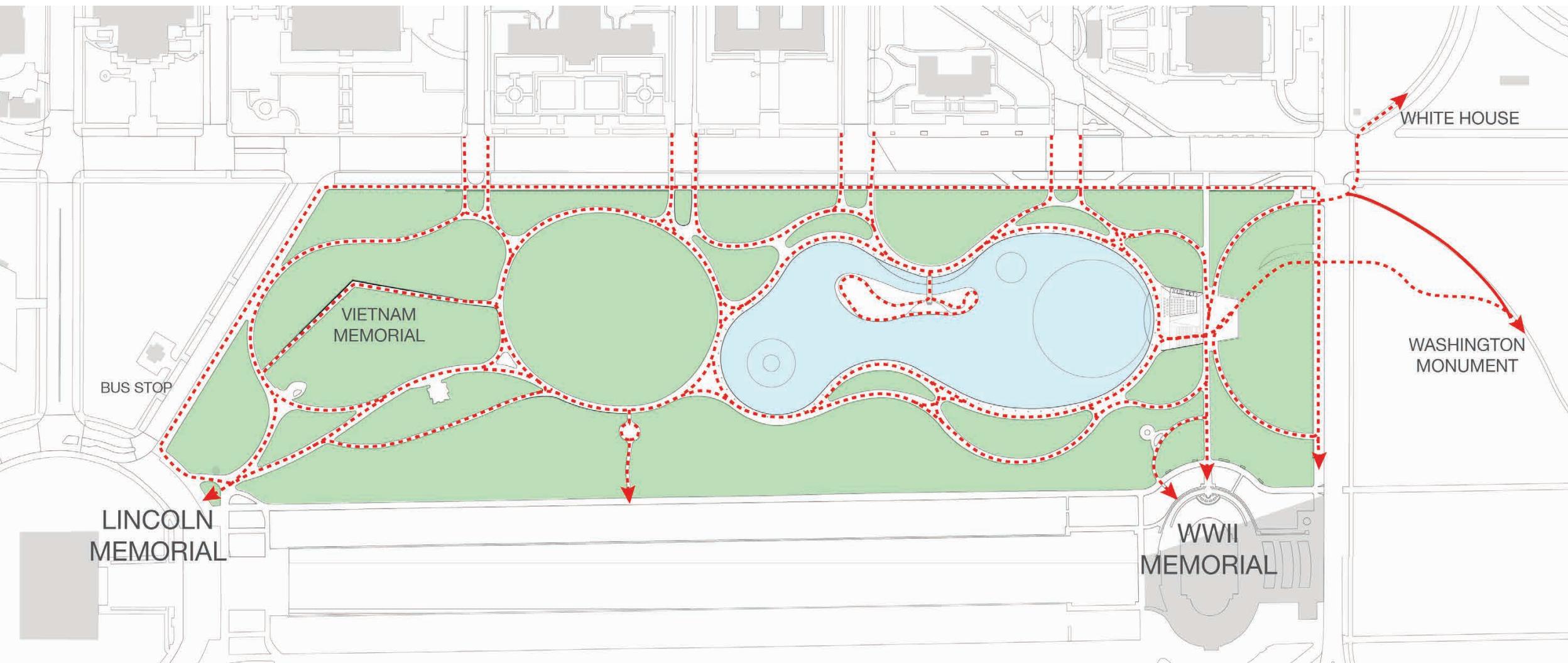
UNDERSTORY





ENHANCED CONNECTIVITY

Wider paths surrounding the lake as well as smoother pedestrian connections encourage use of the garden and provide better access to the other memorials and monuments on the Mall.

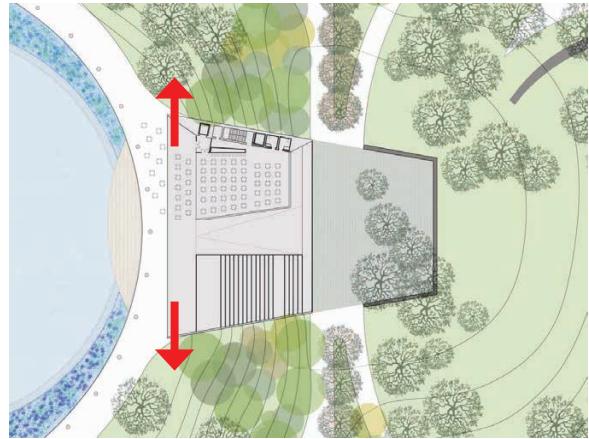




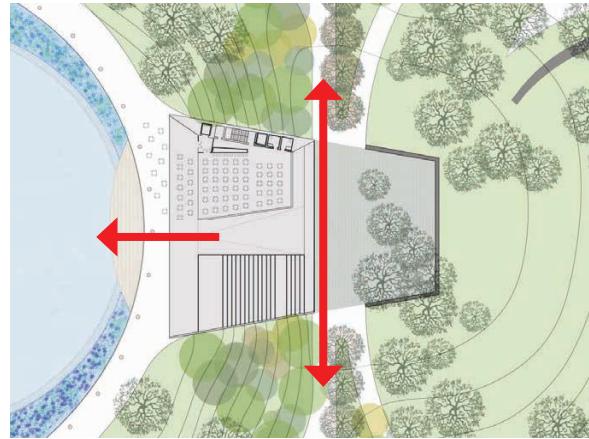
THRESHOLD

The design of the pavilion is deliberately low, taught and humble.
Its horizontality a visual counterpoint to the iconic verticality of the
nearby Washington Monument, the world's tallest masonry structure.

EXPERIENCE



The pavilion is splayed to accentuate and frame picturesque views across the lake.



Formal axial approach to WWII monument is retained by shifting the pavilion out over the lake.

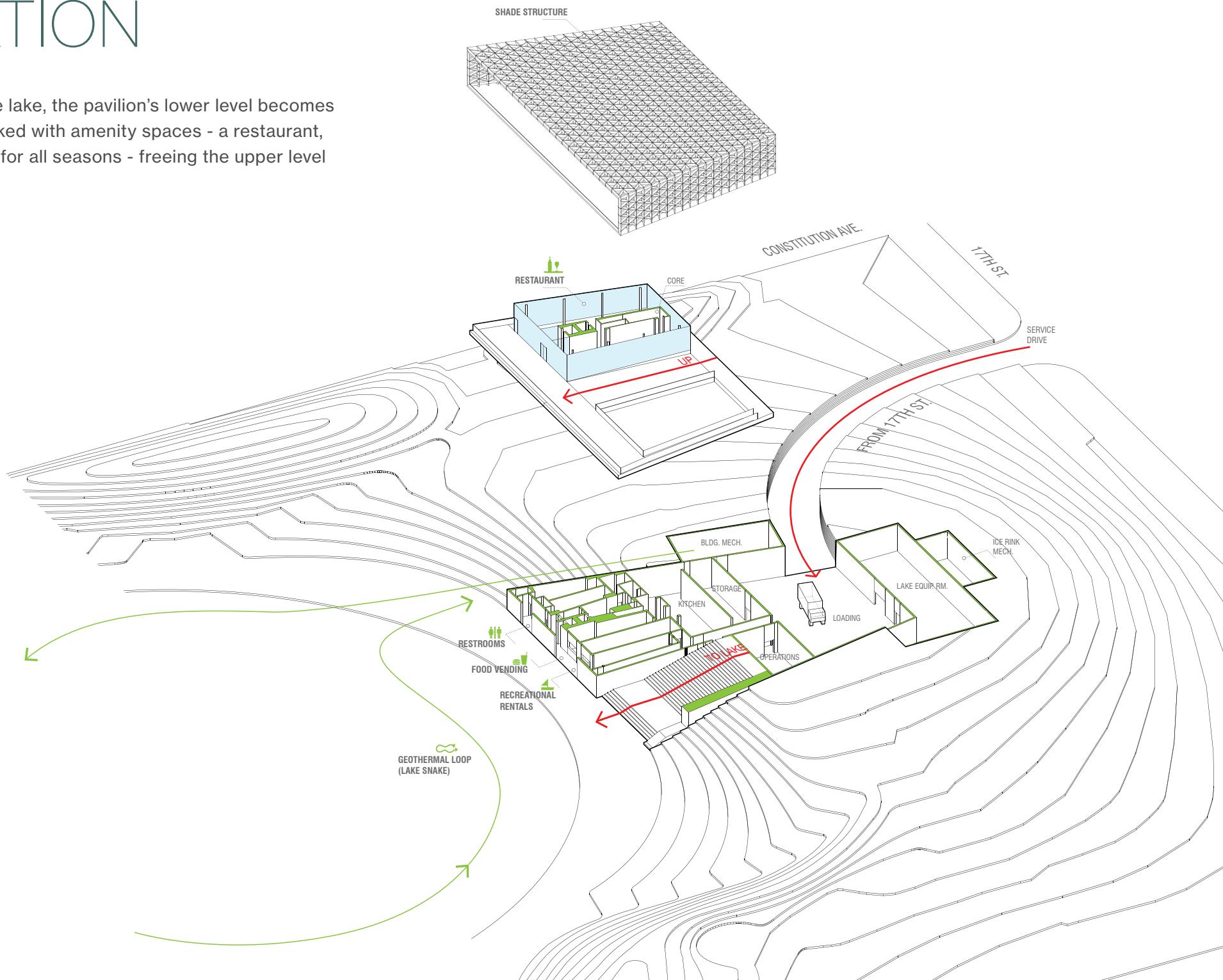


Viewing terrace is lifted to create a sense of arrival and delight as visitors look across the Mall from a privileged but democratic perspective.



ORGANIZATION

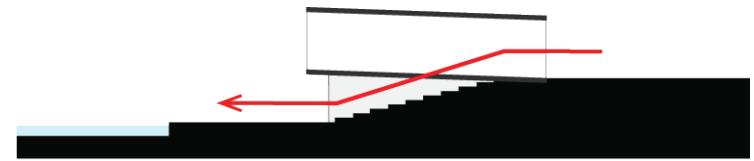
Nestled in the berm at the edge of the lake, the pavilion's lower level becomes part of the rolling landscape. It is packed with amenity spaces - a restaurant, public restrooms, recreational rentals for all seasons - freeing the upper level to become a light geometric shell.



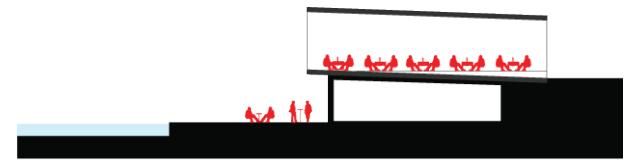
PROGRAM

A unique nexus of activity on the National Mall, the pavilion contains a restaurant, public restrooms, recreational rentals for all seasons, and a variety of formal and informal spaces for gathering and contemplation.

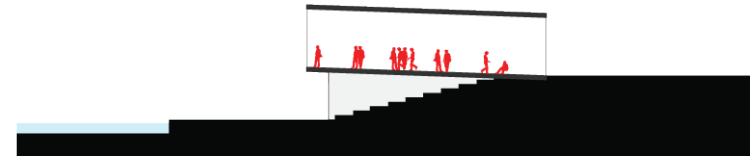
THRESHOLD



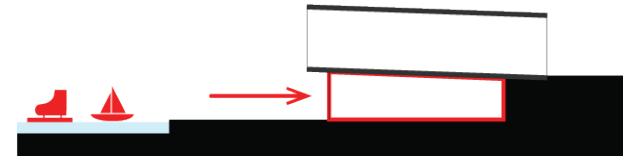
DINING



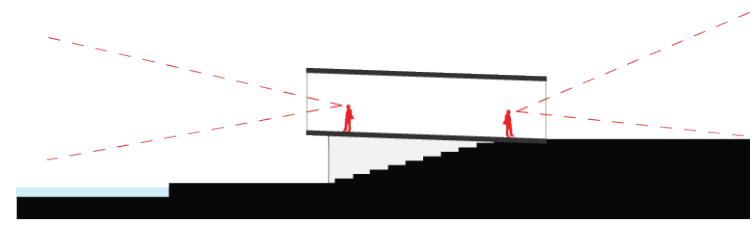
ASCENT



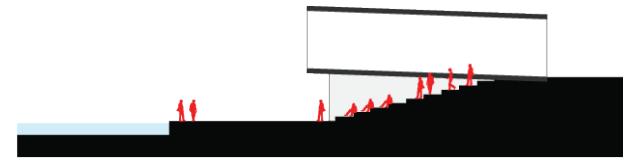
RECREATIONAL RENTALS



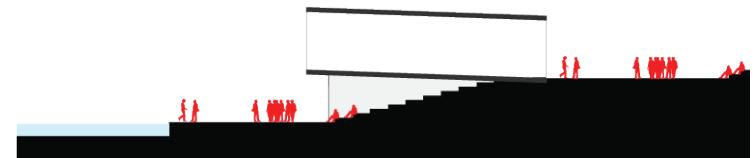
VANTAGE POINT



INFORMAL SEATING



EXTERIOR GATHERING



OVER AND INTO THE WATER

