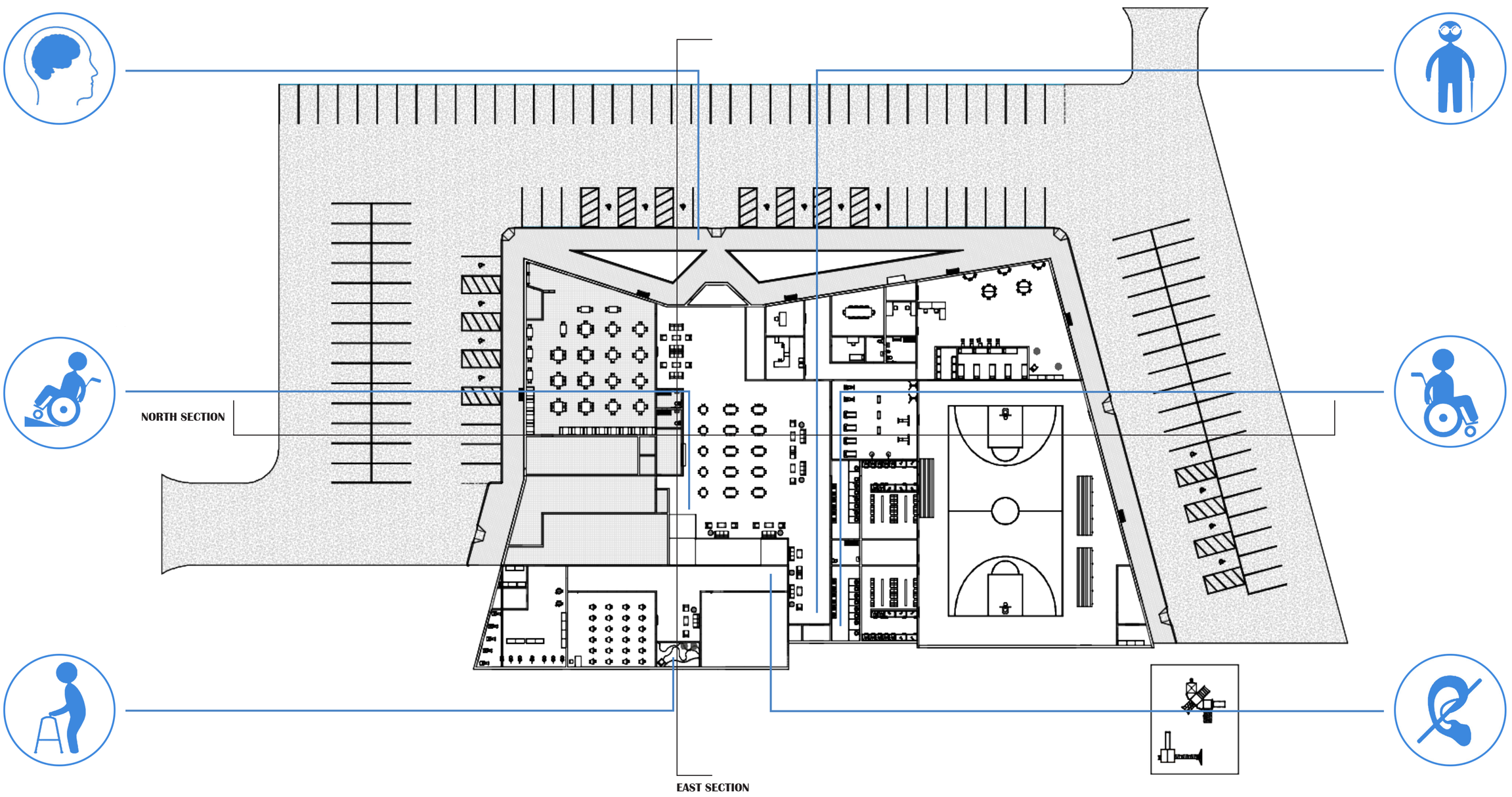
ENABILITY

HOW ARCHITECTURE CAN ENABLE THE DISABLED

Architecture today is always evolving but the conversation about improving accessibility guidelines has not been changing at the same rate. There is no lack of design strategies to move forward in this way, but still many designers treat accessibility as a checklist item and not the goal of their design.

Potential Point Community Center is designed differently. Various design strategies were considered for a range of disabilities, whether physical or mental, to create the best possible experience for all users. Potential Point also considered lifestyle difficulties that can come up for someone with a disability, so to combat those, includes a variety of spaces that benefit those in the community. The building has a connected childcare center helping to combat the difficulty for parents of disabled children trying to find childcare, and the childcare center as well as many other amenitiies that are offered at Potential Point have employment positions open to disabled individuals that want to contribute to their community or just learn new skills for future employment.



MOBILITY ASSISTS

For individuals with mobility limitations it can be hard to walk long distances, so it is helpful to place benches along long stretches of walking for individuals who need to take breaks. Curb cuts with directional paving are also important to show blind individuals what is happening around them and to assist wheelchair users.

BLIND ADAPTATION

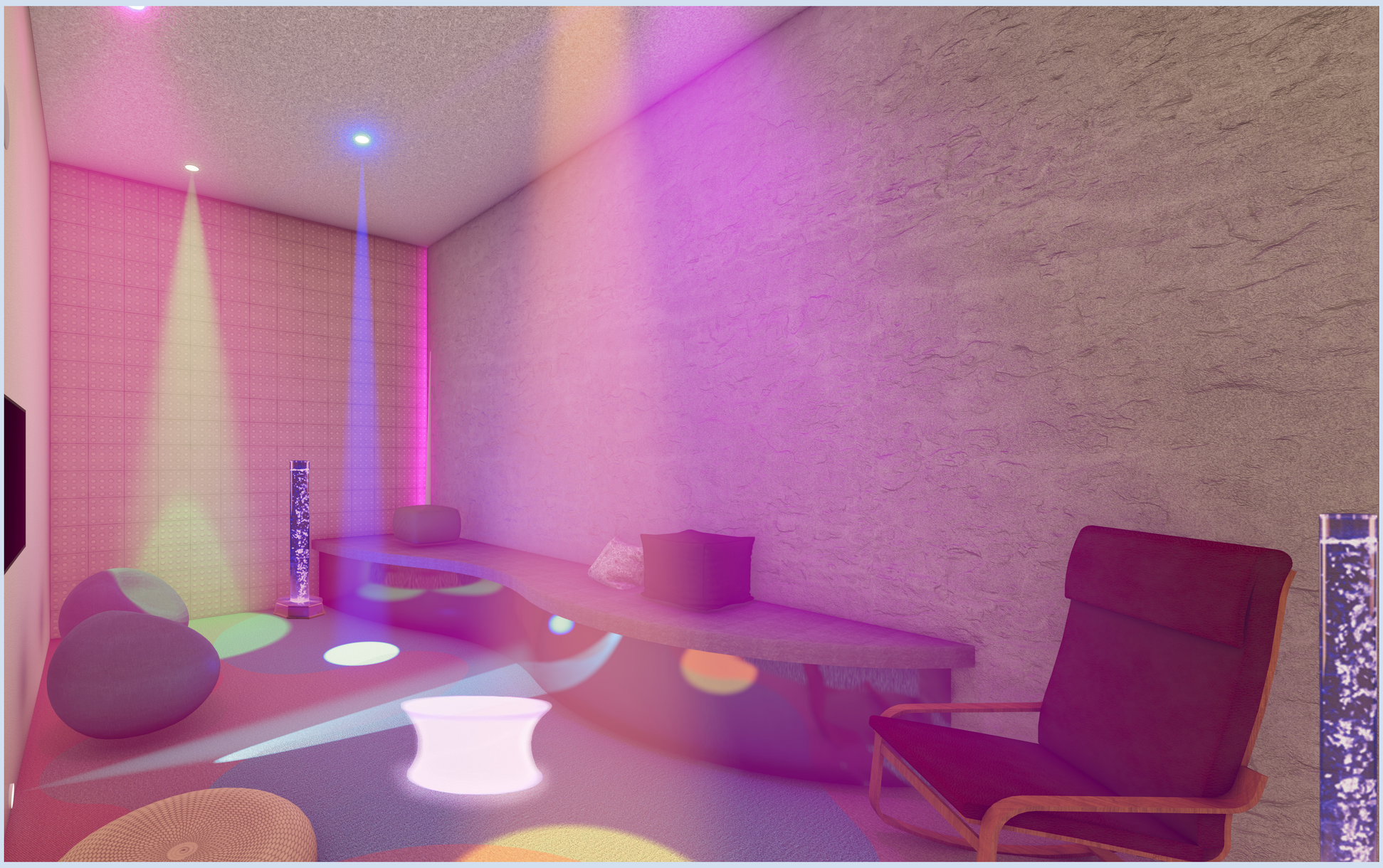
Braille signage is important to communicate what specific signage represents to blind individuals. It also assists with navigation throughout new buildings they have not experienced before. Speakers are also important to convey information to blind individuals. They are placed throughout buildings to communicate alerts or other information that is not posted.

NAVIGATION ASPECTS

For wheelchair users ramps become the most reliable form of traveling up in elevation. By designing a wide ramp in a building this allows two wheelchair users to travel together and not interrupt conversation. For deaf individuals that may miss verbal announcements, screens are placed around the building so information is readable.

DEAF ADAPTATIONS

Designing with wide hallways can be helpful because it allows two Deaf individuals to walk next to each other and communicate using sign language. By incorporating widened halls for ASL users, it keeps sight lines clear for effective communication. TV screens are also positioned throughout the building to convey verbal communication.

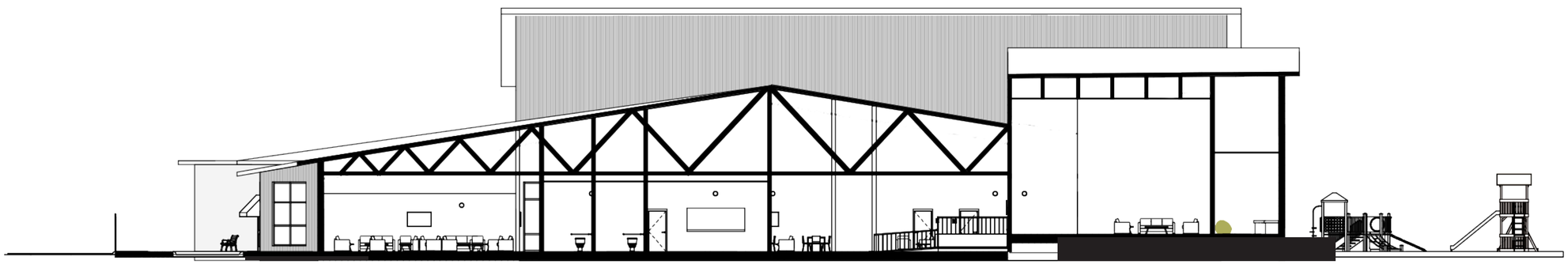


SENSORY ROOM

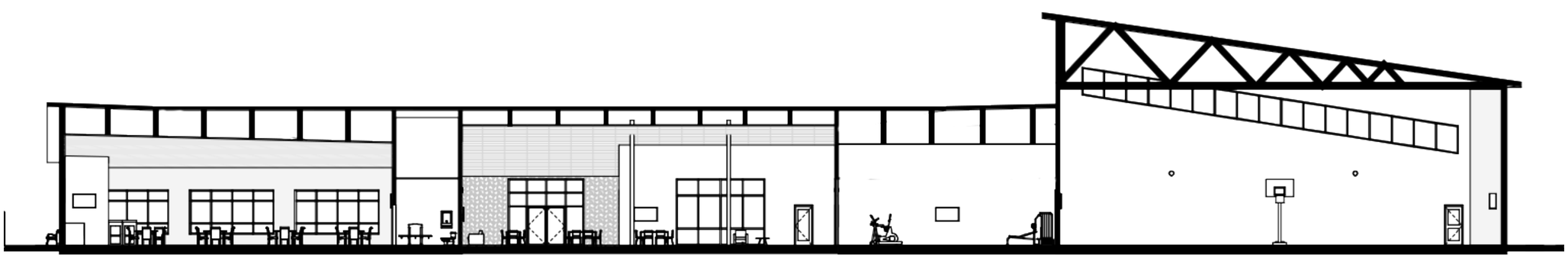
Sensory rooms encourage interaction with aspects like lights, textures, and movement while also limiting distraction to allow for relaxation and promote a better attitude. They can also provide respite for individuals that are feeling overwhelmed by stimuli they cannot control or allow a safe space for one to let pent up energy out.

LOWERED COUNTERS

When designing for wheelchair users it is important to have lowered sinks, hand dryers, soap dispensers, and changing stations in bathrooms to assist in creating an accessible space. This design practice should be continued throughout a building by lowering any amenitity that is used manually for easier use.



EAST SECTION



NORTH SECTION

POTENTIAL POINT COMMUNITY CENTER OFFERS:

HIGH VOLUME SPACE

LARGE GATHERING SPACE WITH COMMUNITY KITCHEN

CHILDCARE CENTER

RESTAURANT

GYMNASIUM WITH LOCKER ROOMS

WORKOUT GYM

LOW VOLUME SPACES

RENTABLE STUDIO SPACE

CLASSROOM

SENSORY ROOM

ART STUDIO

RENTABLE STUDIO SPACE