NEW YORK STATE MUSEUM
MASTER PLAN

NEW YORK STATE MUSEUM MISSION STATEMENT

The New York State Museum serves the lifelong educational needs of New Yorkers and visitors through its collections, exhibitions, scholarship, programs, media and publications in science, history, anthropology, and art. The Museum explores and expresses New York State's significant natural and cultural diversity, past and present.

BACKGROUND AND VISION

For nearly 180 years, the New York State Museum has preserved and interpreted the rich natural and cultural legacy of the Empire State. The museum is now engaged in a major renovation of its permanent exhibition galleries to better explain the state's natural and human history to better serve the educational needs of its visitors.

The new Museum galleries will tell the stories of New York State's natural, cultural and human history in an integrated, relevant, updated and memorable way. Newly-designed exhibitions will lead the visitor through these updated stories as well as link to iconic, existing exhibitions. The exhibitions will be driven by content, be collections-rich, and include high-impact graphics, technology and media.

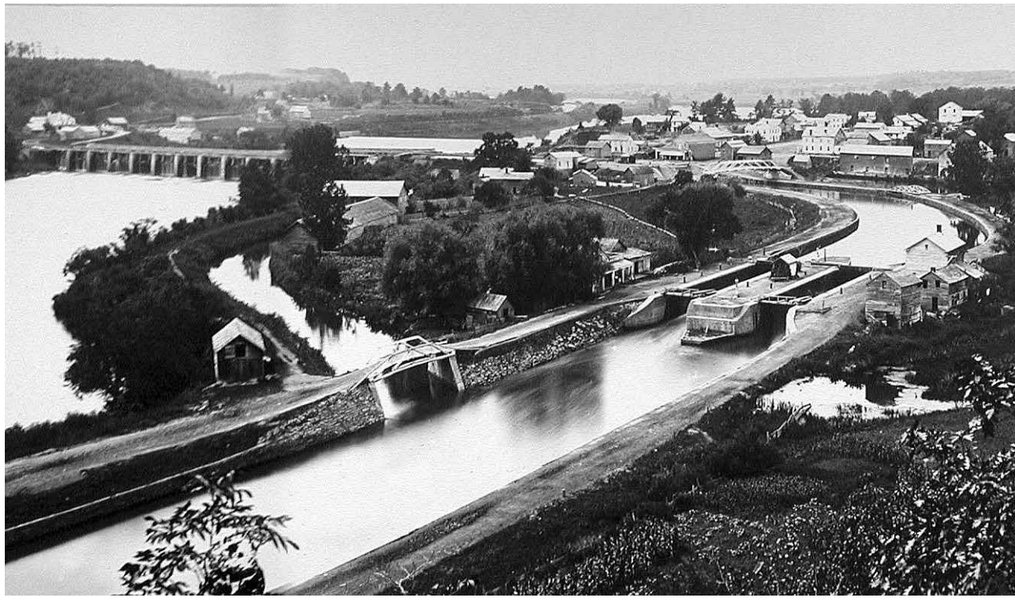
New galleries will allow for flexible, expandable, and changeable architecture and exhibitions. The many important (iconic) museum exhibitions such as the 9/11 gallery, New York City neighborhood exhibits, the Cohoes Mastodon, and Native Peoples of New York, will be reinterpreted and linked to new exhibitions.

GOALS AND MESSAGES

- The museum renovation presents a major opportunity to tell a more complete, diverse and compelling story of the State as a whole. Every visitor will come away with a greater understanding of the people, places, events, and natural history of New York State.

- The Museum galleries will use State Museum collections and include images and artifacts from lending institutions across the State to support and articulate these stories.

- State Museum collections will be featured throughout the galleries in interpretive exhibitions and open study galleries.



OVERARCHING GOALS

- Visitors will have a memorable experience and leave the Museum with a better understanding of the people, places, events, and natural history of New York State.

- The exhibitions will support New York State Learning Standards.

- The new exhibitions will offer a comfortable, visitor-friendly environment with clear orientation and way-finding and communicate information through up-to-date technologies that attract, engage, and inform.

OVERALL MESSAGE

- **New York is Unique:**
  New York is one of the most important states in the nation historically, scientifically, and culturally.

- **New York is Diverse:**
  New York is one of the most diverse places on earth. For over 13,000 years, New York's diverse people have lived here. NYC is populated by people who have come from across the state, nation and world.

- **New York's History Spans Millions of Years:**
  For millions of years, New York's landforms, ecosystems, plants, and animals have been evolving and changing.

- **New York's History is Integrated:**
  The natural, human, and cultural histories of New York State are interlinked.

AUDIENCE

- Families and students will remain the Museum's primary target audiences.

- The new exhibitions will be clearly hierarchal in form and accessible by all ages and levels of expertise.

- The exhibitions will reach out to a broad audience—including visitors of different ages and cultural backgrounds, people with different interests and levels of knowledge, and visitors from New York as well as from out of state. Because of the Museum's location in the state, it has an unparalleled opportunity to communicate its unique messages to a large and diverse audience.

SPATIAL ORGANIZATION/ARCHITECTURAL APPROACH

- Museums are living institutions. The approach is to transform the immense gallery spaces into flexible spaces, with a new lighting grid that can be modified for each area and a movable but major wall system. Galleries are a combination of fixed spaces and areas designed to be changed, updated, and reconfigured to address museum needs in the future.

- Rather than standard sheetrock construction, a heavy, but flexible wall system will be installed that shape gallery spaces, support new exhibitions, and integrate existing galleries and components (Mastodon, Whale, NY Neighborhoods, etc.) and provide a platform for media installations. Gallery space vistas, sightlines, and heights of spaces will be maximized.

- Special seating, study, and lounge areas will be incorporated to allow for contemplation, reflection, and learning.

- All galleries will be activated with wireless connectivity.

- The exhibition galleries can be accessed from two main entrances. The galleries will have two introductory sections – one in the east and one in the west entrance. The exhibitions do not have to be viewed in a determined path, but rather by complete sections.

- Visitors can clearly choose paths.

INTERPRETIVE APPROACH

- The new first floor galleries will comprise approximately 35,000 square feet of new exhibitions that integrate existing exhibitions.

- The exhibitions will be organized around the framework of galleries which integrate human and natural histories, from 500 million years ago to today.

- The exhibitions will include “voices” of actual and diverse peoples.

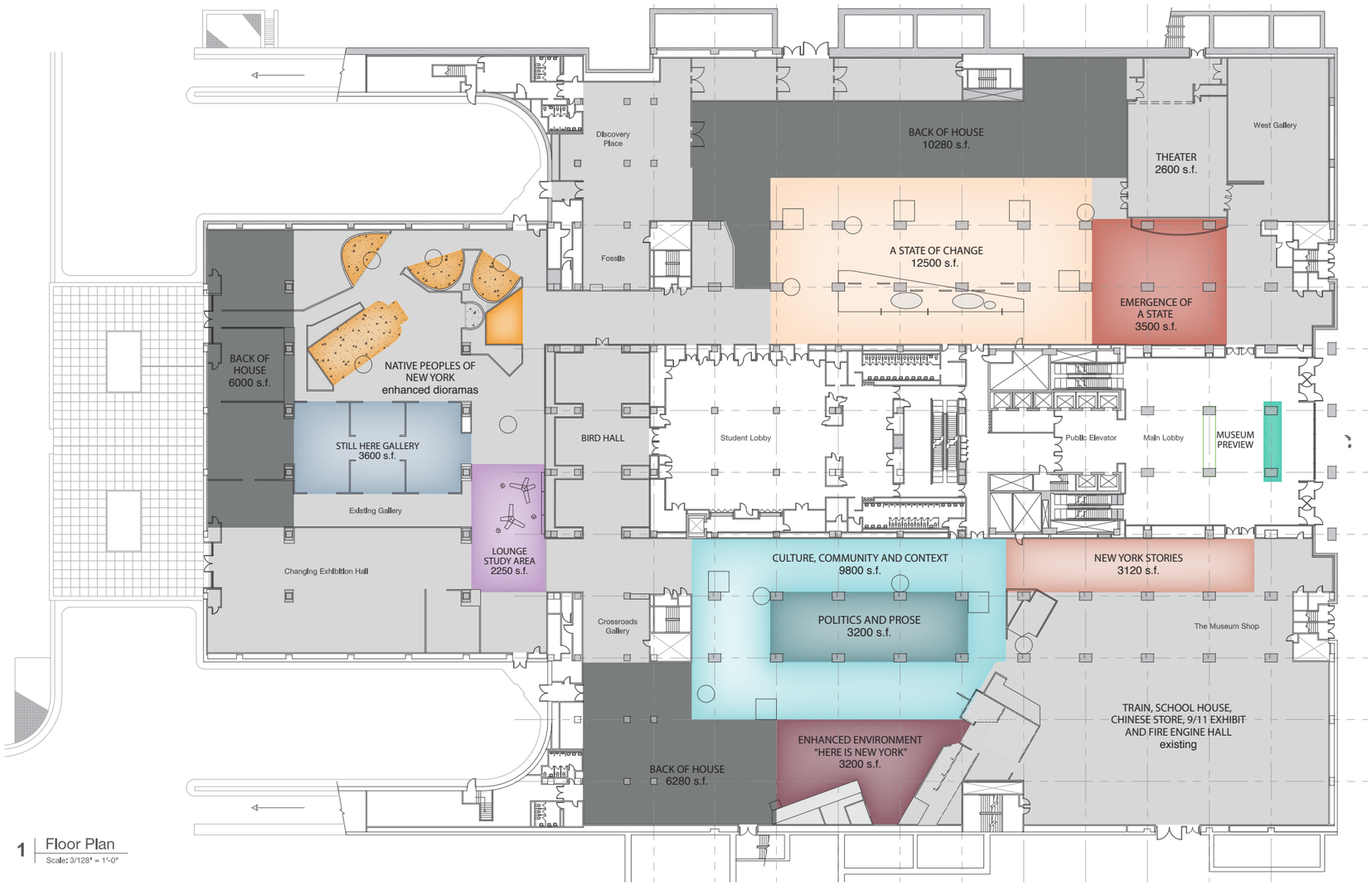
- All exhibitions will be accessible to all visitors – New Yorkers and beyond.

- Special galleries that are activated by users off-site will be explored.

CONTENT DIAGRAM

Conceptual Approach Of Ideas

FLOOR PLAN

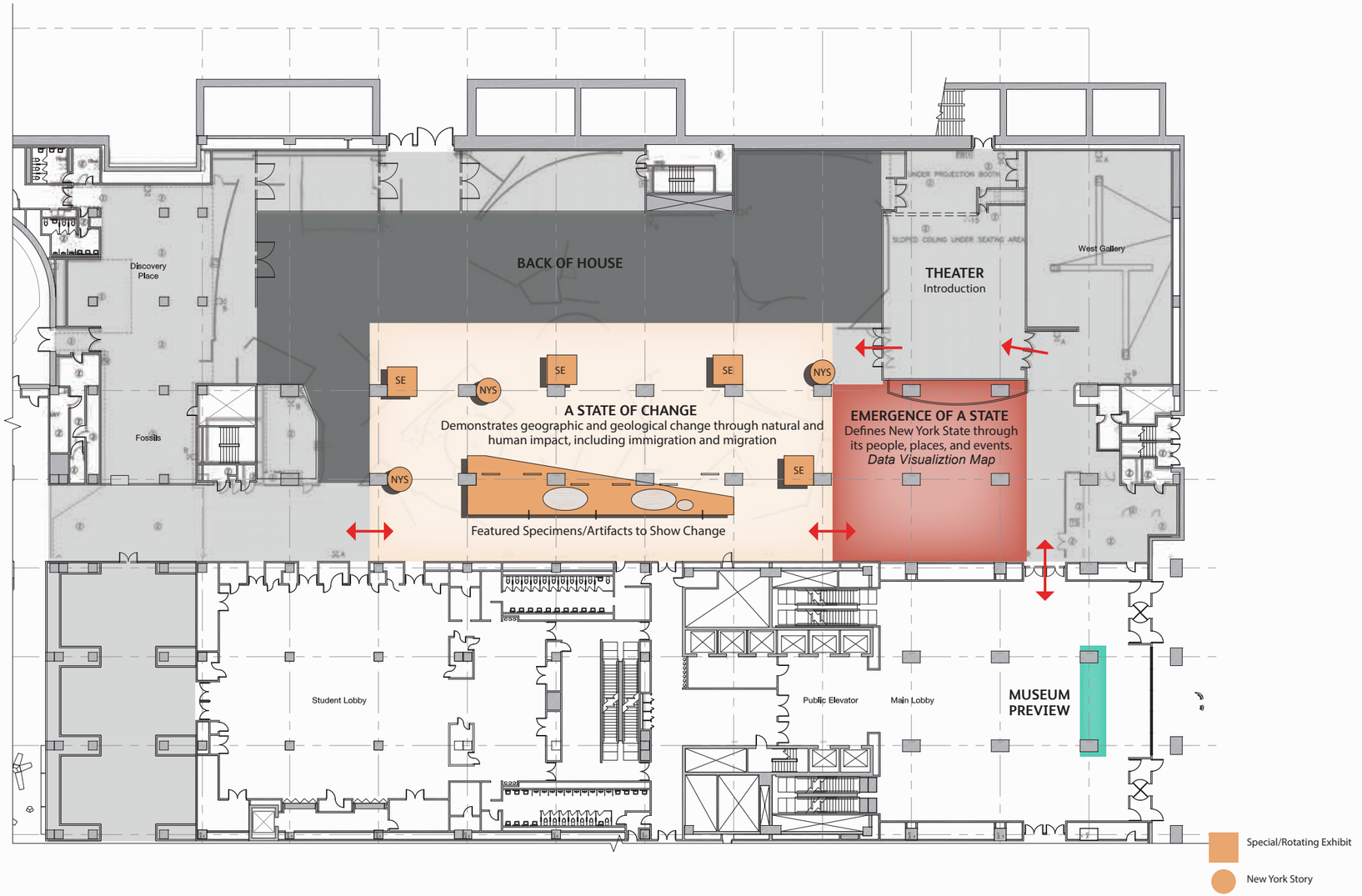


1 Floor Plan
Scale: 3/128" = 1'-0"

CLIENT	LOCATION	PHASE	DATE	PAGE
NEW YORK STATE MUSEUM	ALBANY, NY	MASTER PLAN	05.22.2015	11

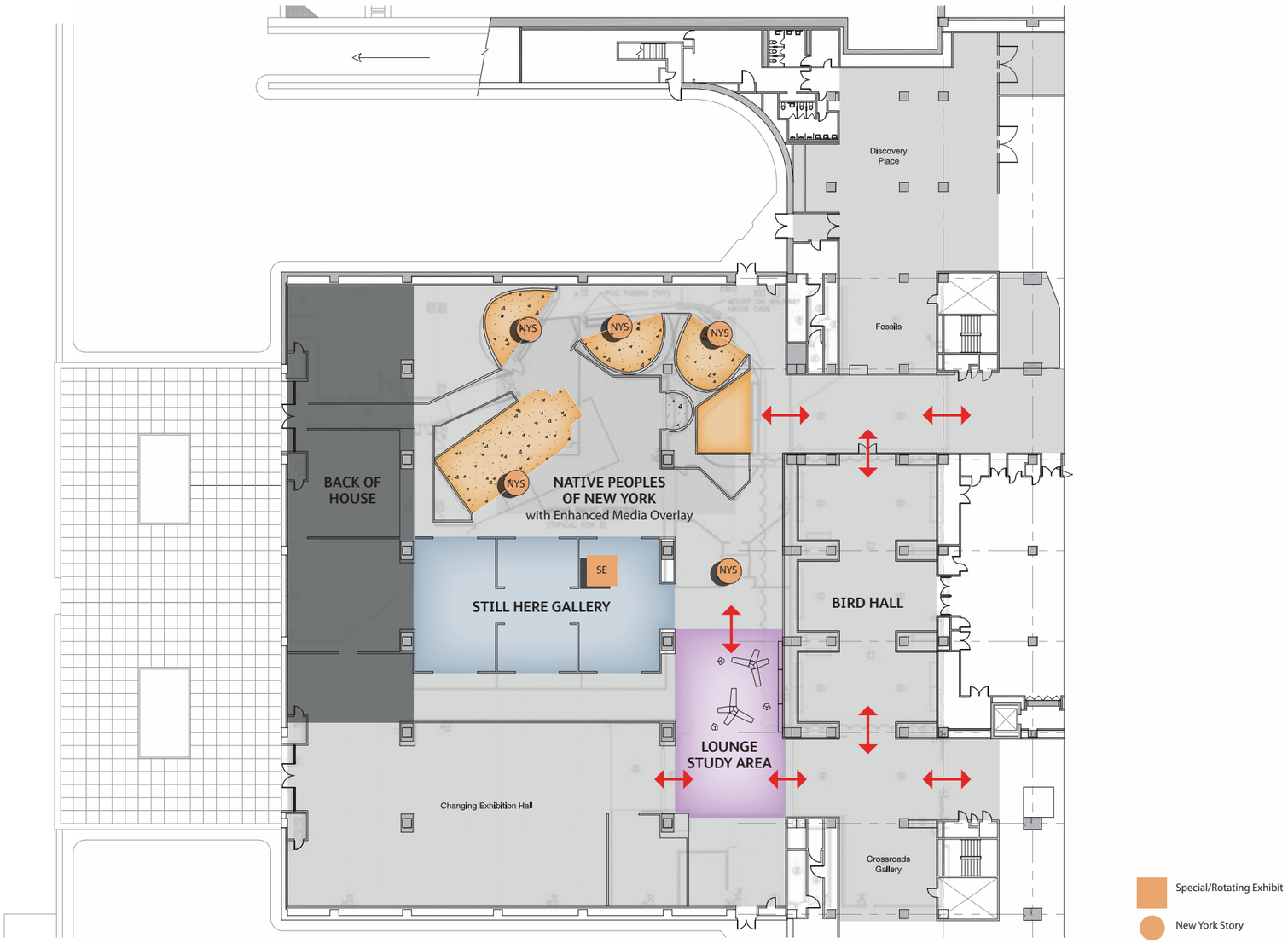
FLOOR PLAN

North



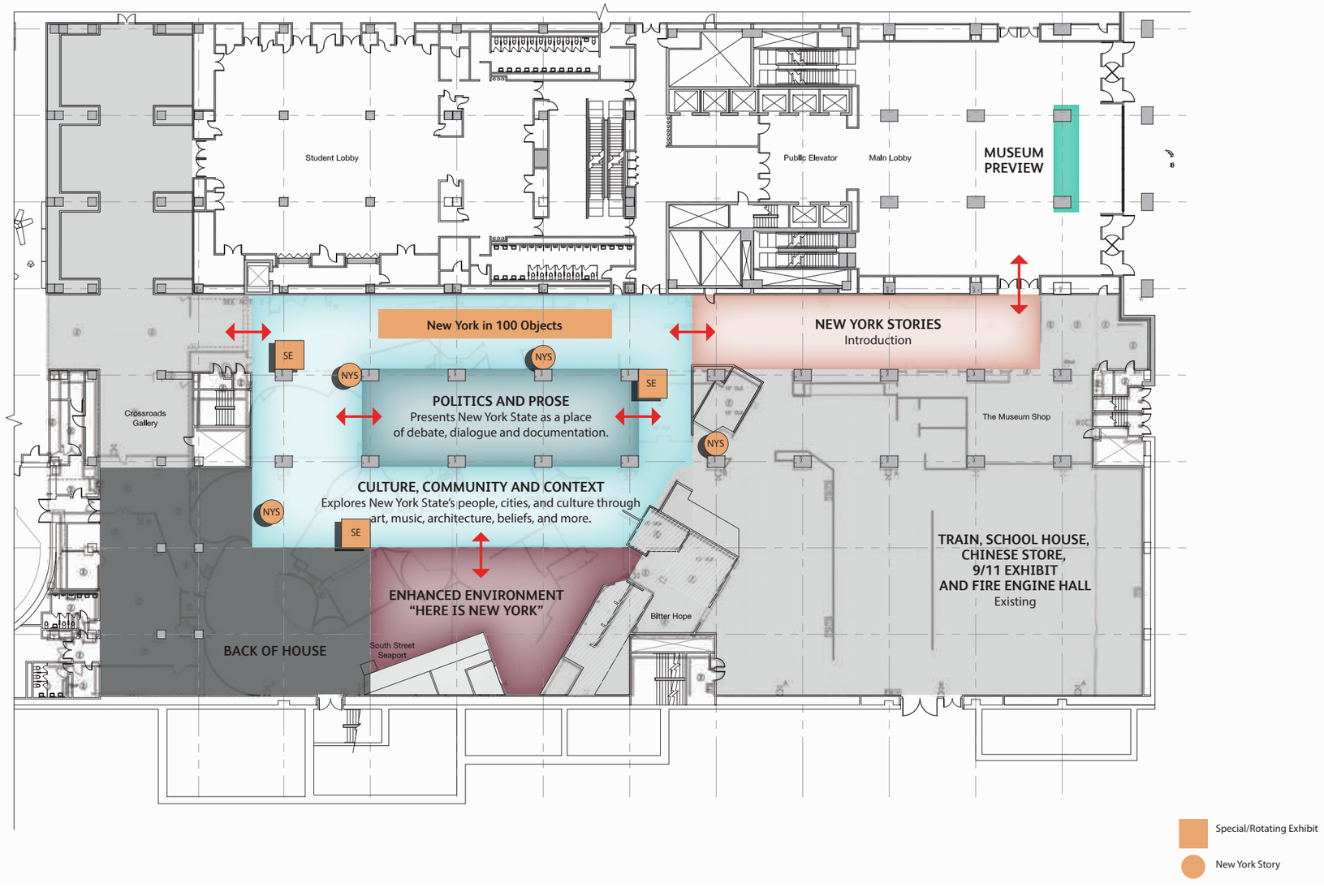
FLOOR PLAN

West



FLOOR PLAN

South



A STATE OF CHANGE

Rendering

A State of Change serves as an entry into the renovated galleries and demonstrates geographic and geologic change through natural and human impact. Featured in this area are specimens from the Museum's renowned paleontology, geology and anthropology collections. Iconic objects such as the Cohoes Mastodon, will be brought to life in a new manner utilizing the latest technologies. Visitors of all ages will explore what we know about the past and how that informs our future with themes like sustainability, eco stewardship and citizen science.

EMERGENCE OF A STATE

Rendering

This area, an unexpected and immersive experience for visitors, will connect the stories of natural history and human change. Central to the area is projection mapping on the floor of the state of New York, showing “time lapse” in terms geologic/geographic eras and the migration/immigration of human beings.

EMERGENCE OF A STATE

Rendering

The imagery can be reactive to visitors in the space and also integrate and highlight objects. For example, one segment could highlight a 300 million-year-old tree stump from the Gilboa fossil forest and show the connection between history and the recent discovery of an ancient forest floor. Additional sequences in environmental changes due to human activity will be developed, so this interactive experience will weave between state stories that have a global impact.

NEW YORK STORIES

Rendering

New York Stories addresses the questions: Whose New York is it? What makes New York unique? For centuries, New York has been an incubator of innovators in politics, art, music, science and activism. Through words, works and actions, visitors will become both emotively and intellectually engaged with the stories of diverse New Yorkers who have made a lasting impact on American history and culture.

NEW YORK IN 100 OBJECTS

Rendering

This visually rich area is inspired by the British Museum's hugely successful exhibition, *History of the World in 100 Objects*. Working with diverse curators and collectors across New York State, we will bring together the best objects to represent the breadth of New York's rich history through one-of-a-kind objects. Working collaboratively with other cultural institutions—from the Hudson River to the Adirondacks, from New York City to Buffalo—will create a lens for audiences to see the diversity of history, art, culture, science and technology all in one venue. It will invite visitors to see the richness of the state's collections and encourage them to go out and explore the state in a new light.