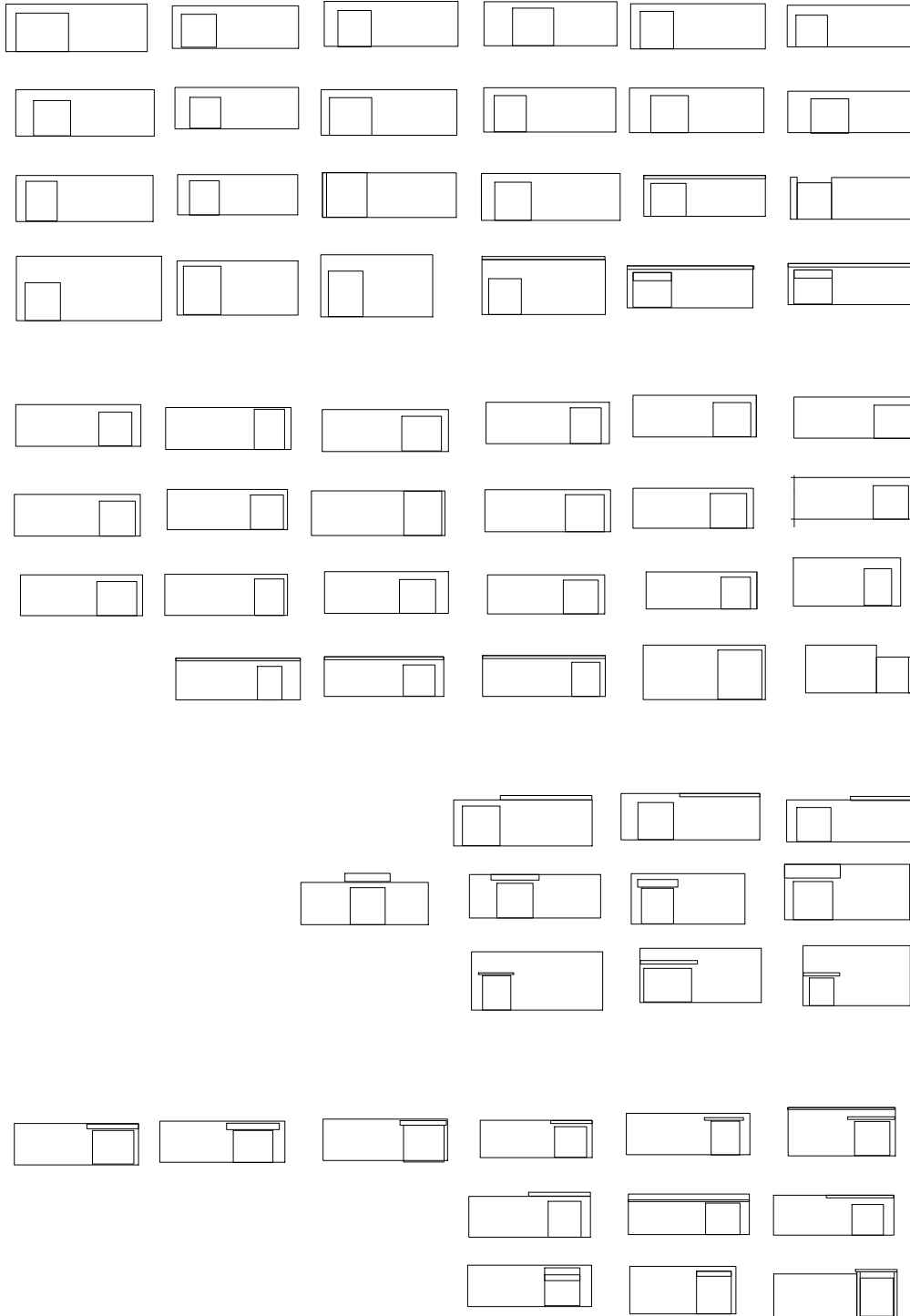


3.2 The dominant house type

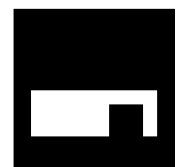
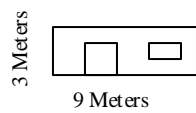
The most numerous group of buildings was that of the houses. Even from the outside it is possible to identify characteristics related to the internal layout of the house. The fact that these features are shared by houses in several different locations and densities lets us conclude, that informal building design is made up not just of individual decisions but also of intuitive and collective decisions, which have been repeated for generations during the informal building process.

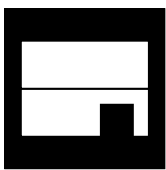


3.2.1
Types of houses in Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl, Mexico City



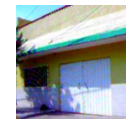
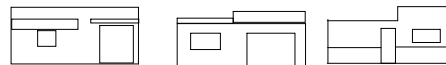
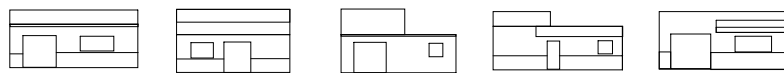
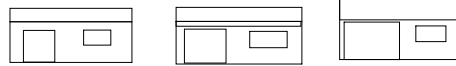
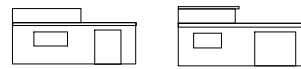
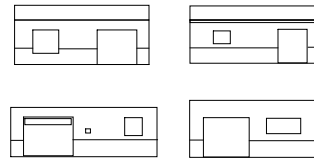
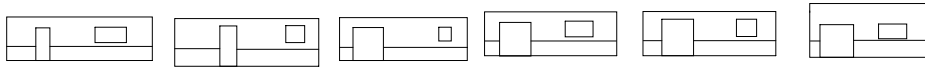
APPROXIMATED SCALE





The one door house

In some instances the house seems turned inwards, no windows overlook the street. This introversion may remain even if the house expands, in some cases some openings, windows and balconies, appear on the upper floor to maintain a visual relationship with the exterior, whereas the rest overlooks the inner courtyard of the house.



APPROXIMATED SCALE

3 Meters



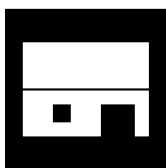
9 Meters





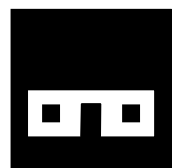
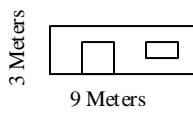
The asymmetrical façade

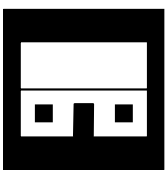
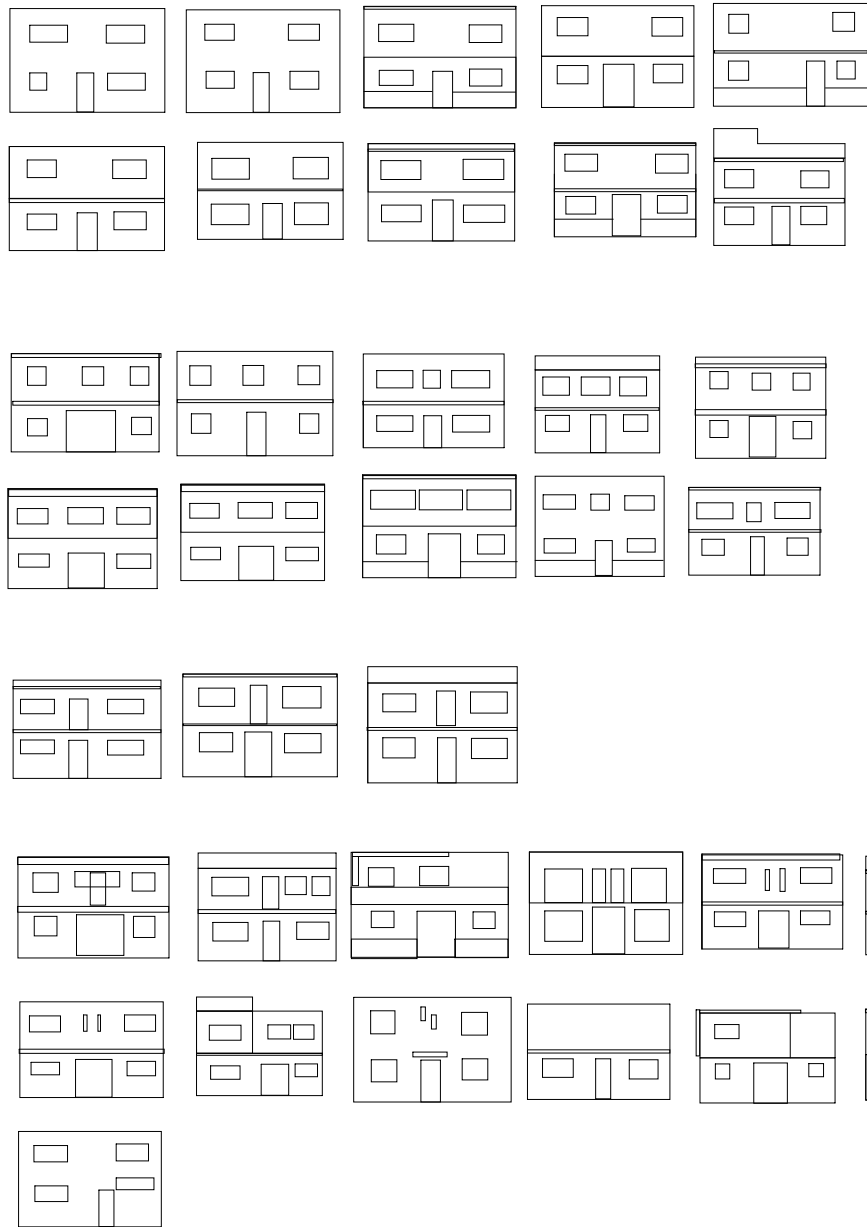
The design of the façade may be systematically repeated in the entire settlement. The simplest layout of façade elements consists of two perforations –an entrance and a window- which are repeated in the next floor.





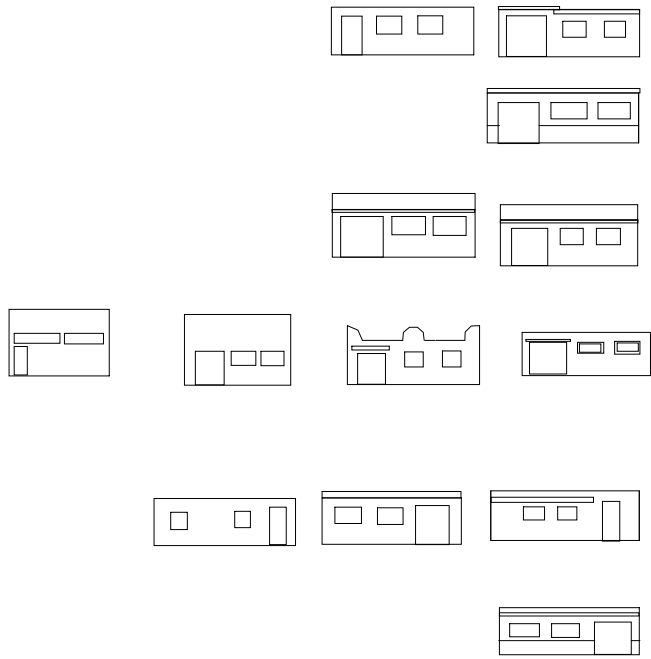
APPROXIMATED SCALE



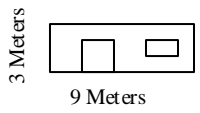


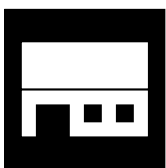
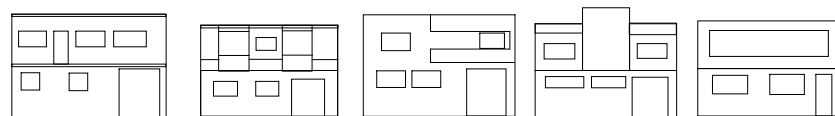
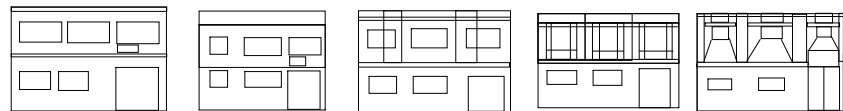
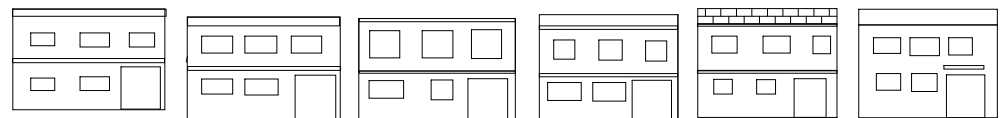
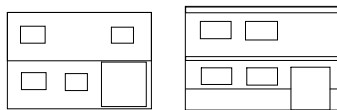
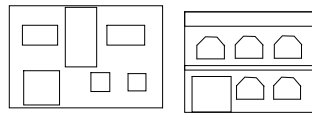
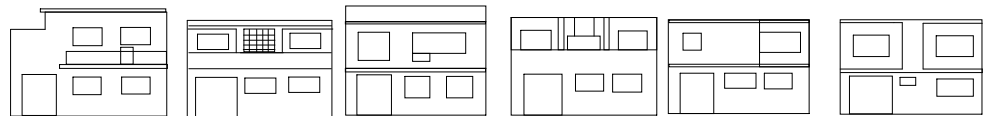
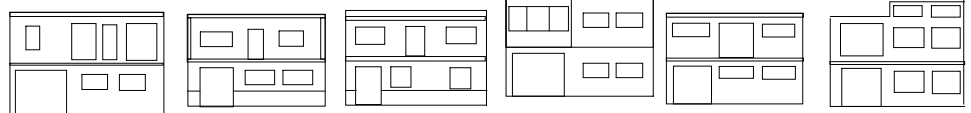
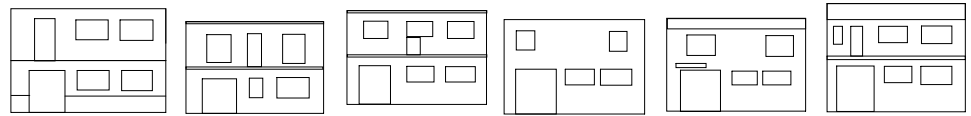
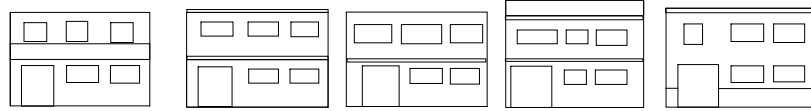
The symmetrical façade

Symmetry and centrality play an important role in arranging the façade. At the center, typically the entrance is placed with windows on its sides. The same distribution of windows is repeated on the next floor. The center of the second floor may be accentuated by a balcony or some variations of window forms.



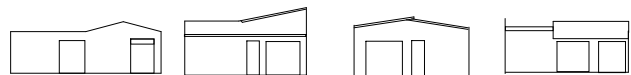
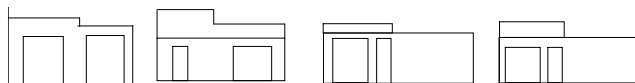
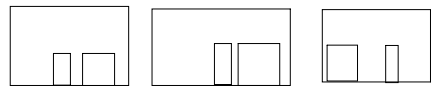
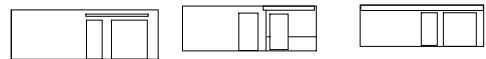
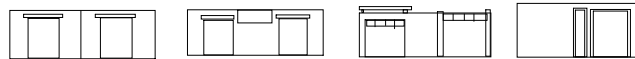
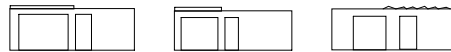
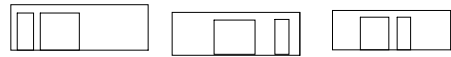
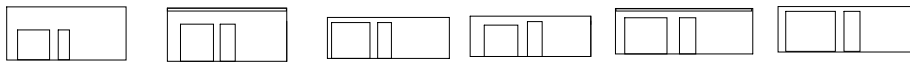
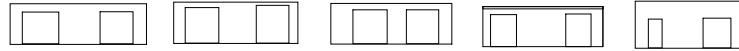
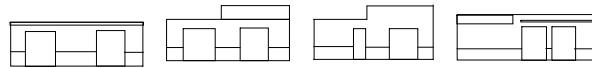
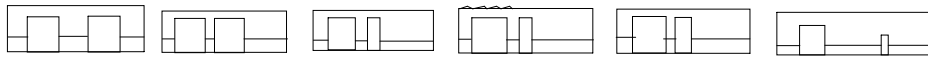
APPROXIMATED SCALE





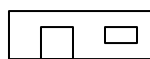
Windows and light

Light is not obtained through the use of big windows but through the repetition of many regular windows. Circular windows and square windows are rarely found. Typically, paired rectangular windows or glass block windows may be combined and accentuated with decorative elements.

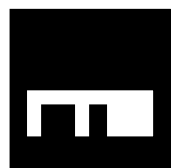


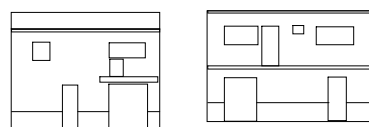
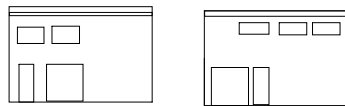
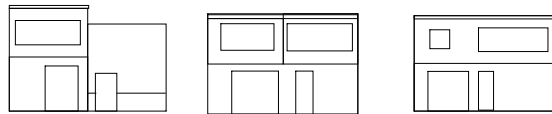
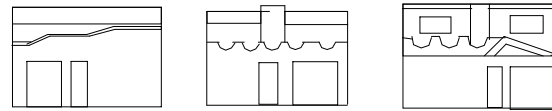
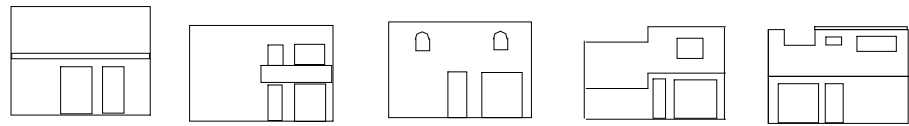
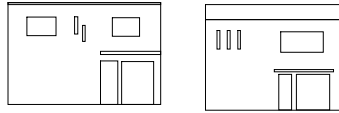
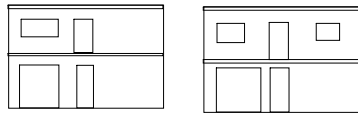
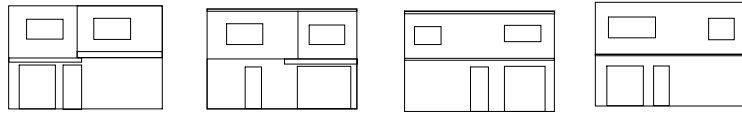
APPROXIMATED SCALE

3 Meters



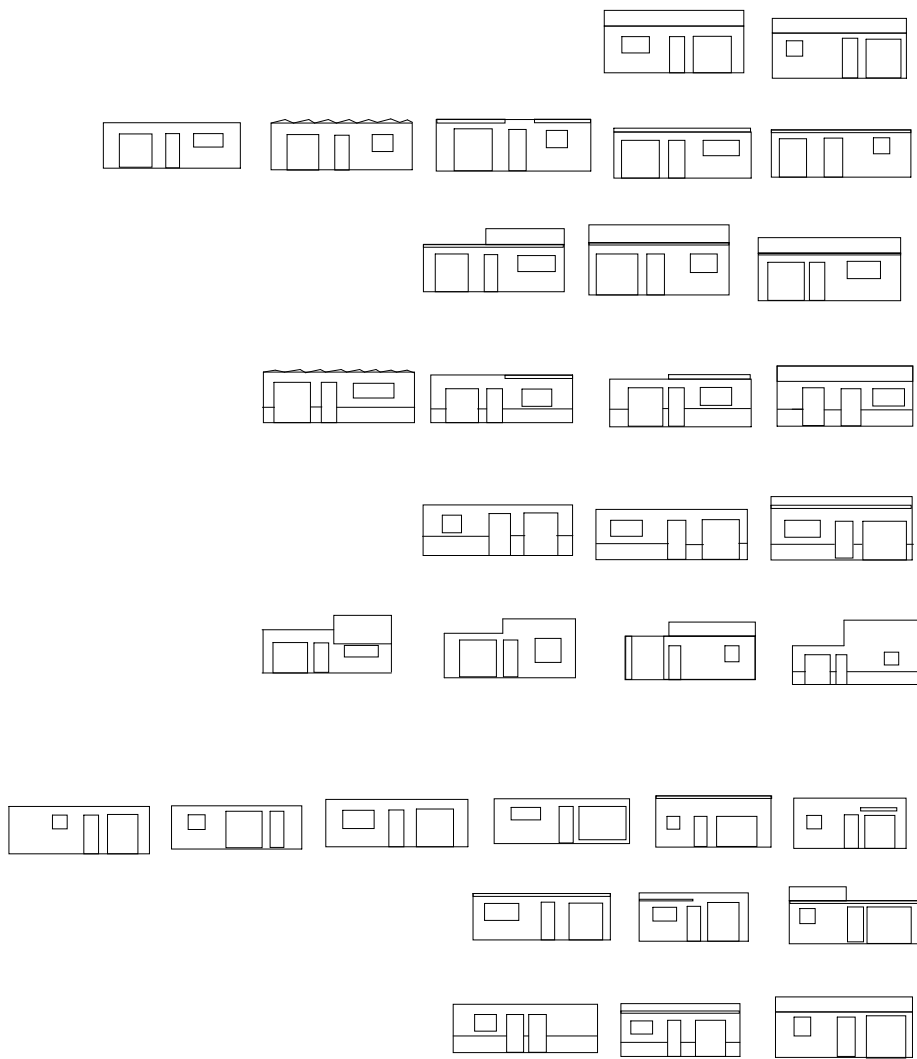
9 Meters



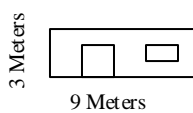


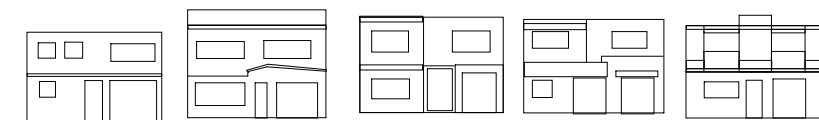
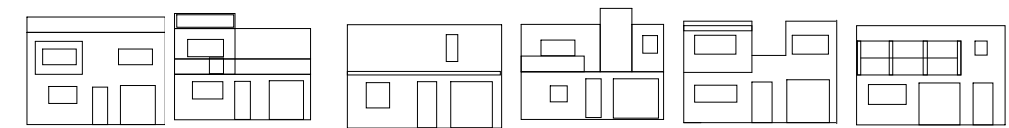
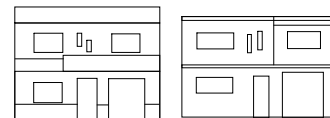
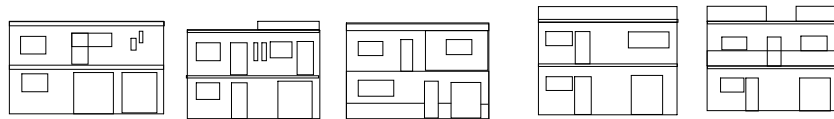
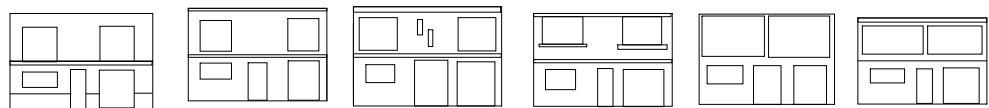
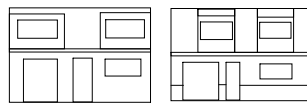
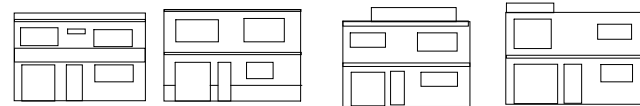
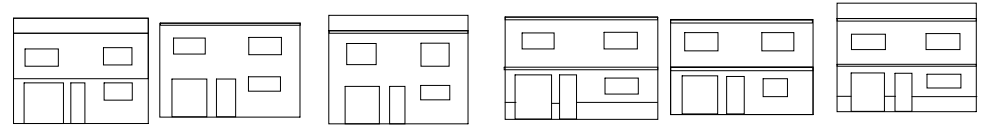
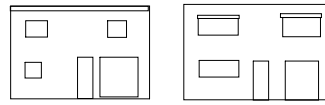
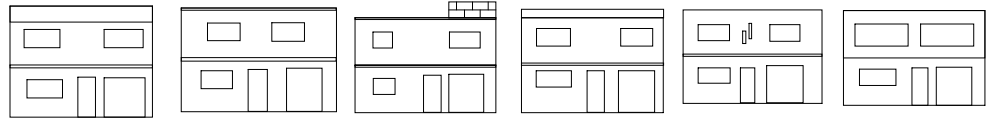
Car ownership and garage

A distinction between the door to the garage and the entrance to the house seems to be a relatively recently introduced element into the design of the house. If one takes a look at such houses, it is obvious that they are built with new forms, atypical decorative elements and different distribution of windows.



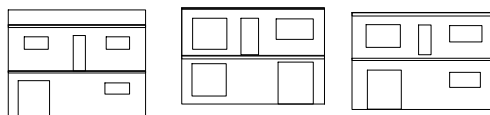
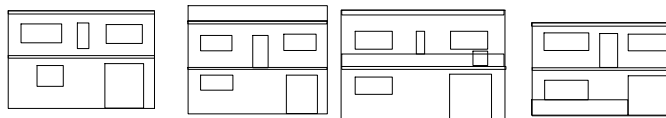
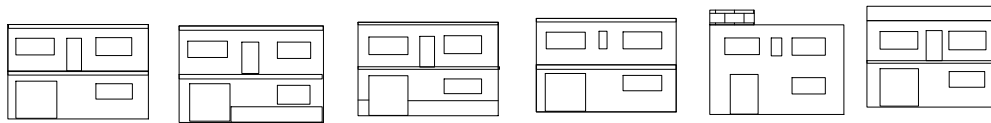
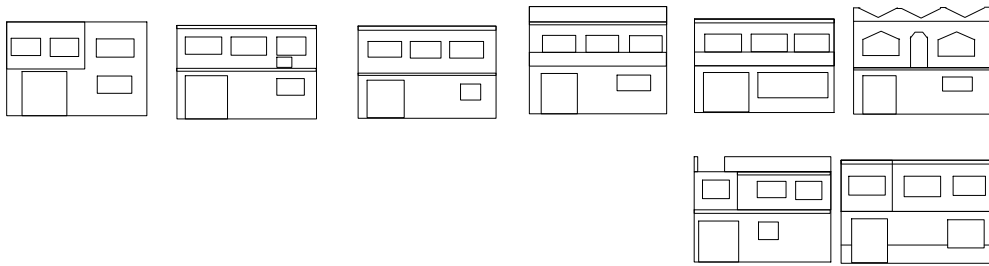
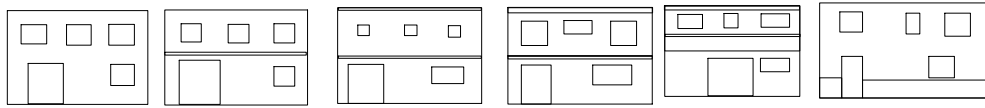
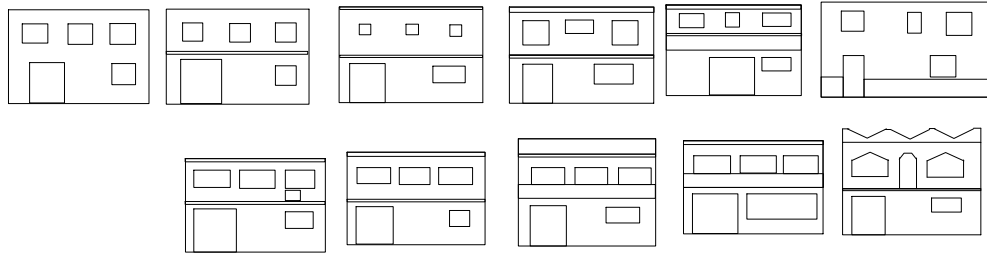
APPROXIMATED SCALE





The mixed façade

A variation of the last house type develops when the house expands and the courtyard practically disappears. As the building gets saturated and dark, a window towards the exterior becomes necessary to maintain a minimum of ventilation and light into the interior of the house.

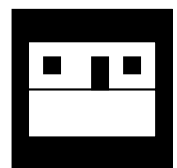


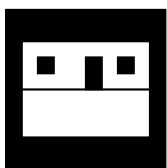
APPROXIMATED SCALE

3 Meters



9 Meters



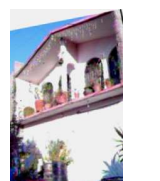
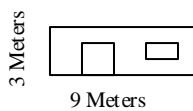


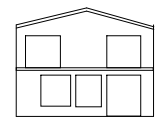
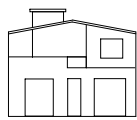
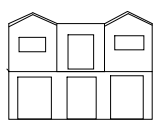
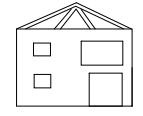
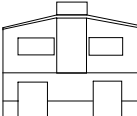
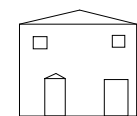
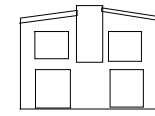
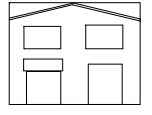
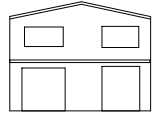
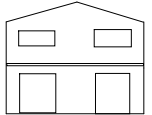
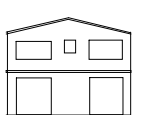
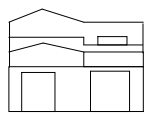
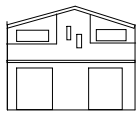
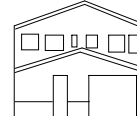
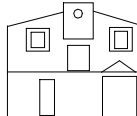
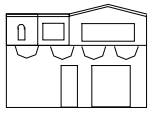
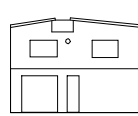
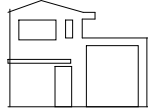
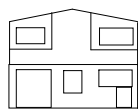
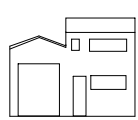
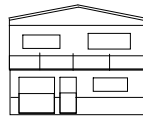
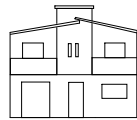
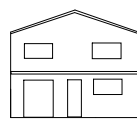
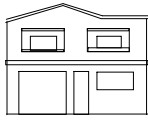
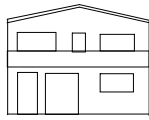
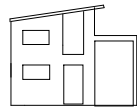
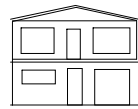
The three windows house

The repetition of elements occurs not just at a street level but also on the upper floor. A combination of balcony doors and windows are symmetrically distributed on the second floor. Though the size of the windows may vary, three perforations seem to be the rule in all variations and forms.



APPROXIMATED SCALE





The sloping roof house

Not just windows and doors are found in similar distributions but also the roofs have become a distinctive element for some houses. In most cases this roof just exists as a decorative element and is intersected in the middle by the staircase or by the bathroom.



APPROXIMATED SCALE

3 Meters

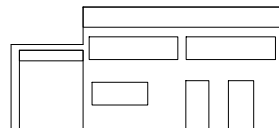
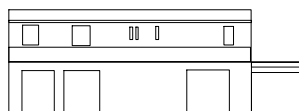
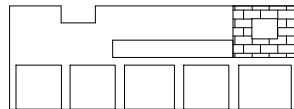
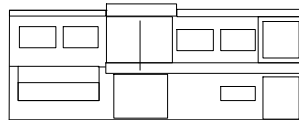
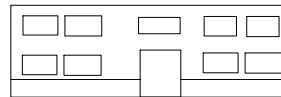
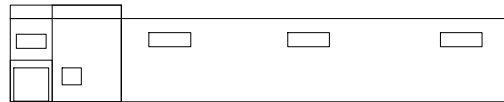
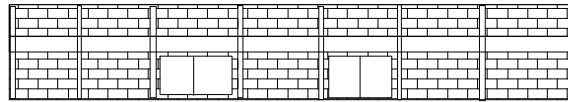
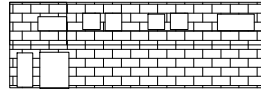
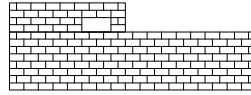
9 Meters





Heterogeneity

The reasons for the heterogeneity of the houses are different: if the courtyard is placed at the front of the house the building may visually be more integrated with the street, through a fence or some trees. The façade may be more saturated by windows and doors due to the adaptation of stores or by decision of the owner. Maintenance of the façade is also a factor that strongly differentiates the houses even the ones of the same typology.

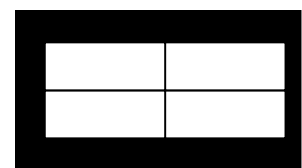


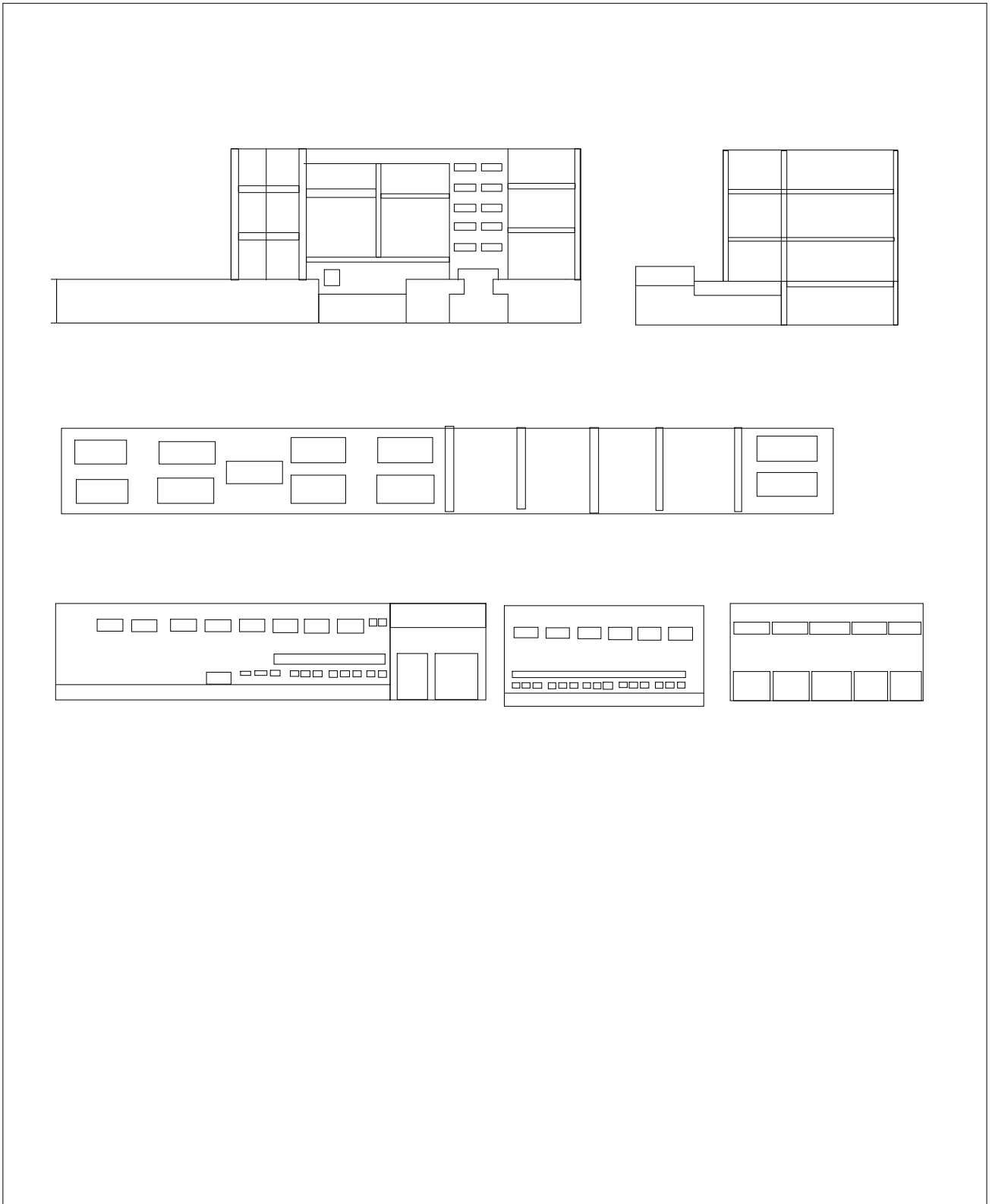
APPROXIMATED SCALE

3 Meters



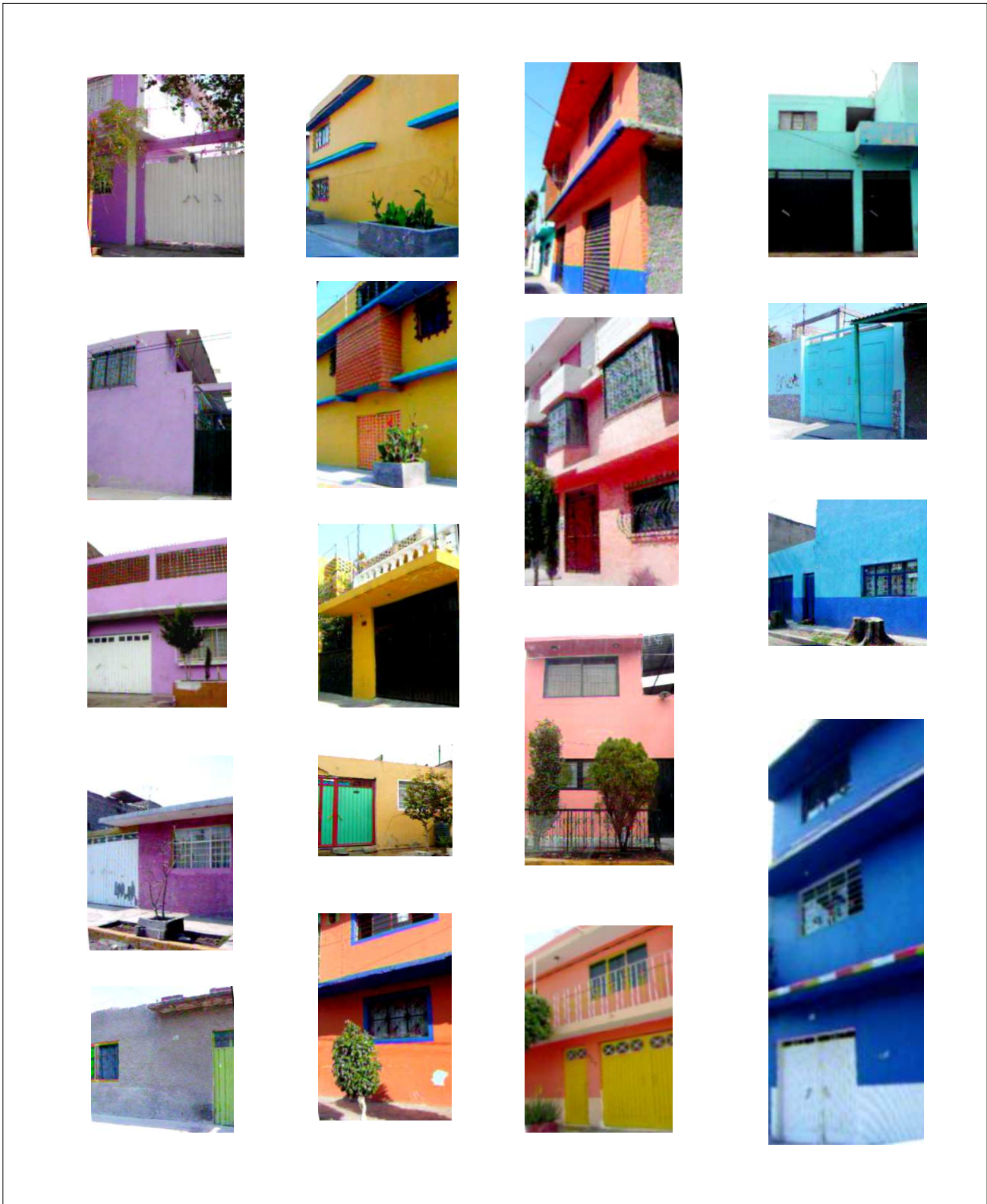
9 Meters





Merging of plots

Another factor influencing this heterogeneity of form is the merging of plots. Commonly, two or three plots are linked together but also half a block may be used for just one building. Plots may be joined to be used as public buildings or houses.



Color and houses

At any scale and in every type of building color plays an important role. In the first stage of the house a contrast is created through the use of color to distinguish the few but concise elements of the incipient house. At the other extreme of the scale, colored buildings become landmarks and serve as reference points in the city.

Example of house

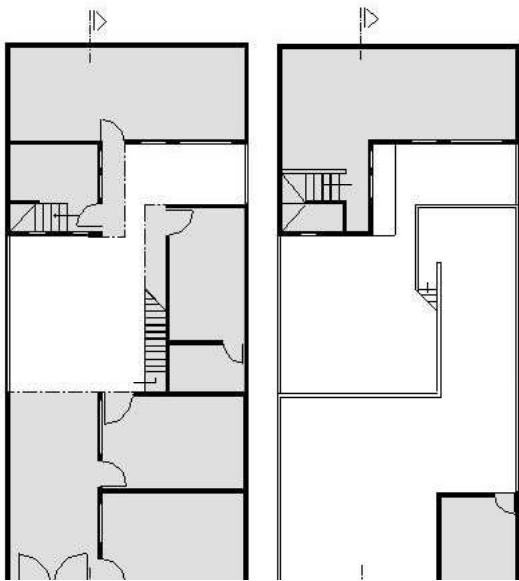
At the time of the interview the house was occupied just by the owner, who had bought it approximately 30 years ago. The original owner moved away to the United States. The present owner worked a long time as a seamstress living in the Federal District before moving to Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl.

By the time the plot was bought two rooms were already built on the front. The house was later continued surrounding a courtyard in form-cell rooms.

The house had been enlarged to accommodate the owner with her two daughters, who married later and moved away from Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl, one of them moved to the centre of Mexico city, the other to Canada. The family is not expected to grow any more and therefore there are no plans to enlarge the house.

The house is practically finished and the surroundings provide for practically everything which is needed. The relationship to the neighbours is good but not close. The present owner works for a governmental office in the Federal District, with an average travelling time of 45 minutes.

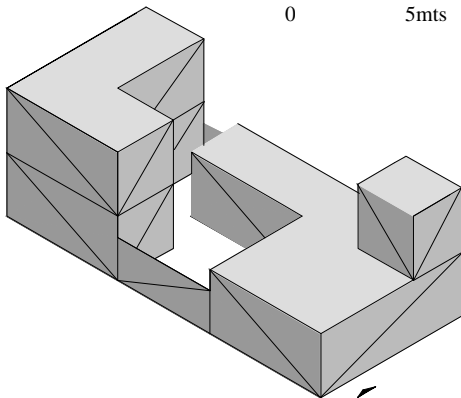
In the meantime the owner probably will move away to live with her daughter to Canada. The destiny of the house is still uncertain.



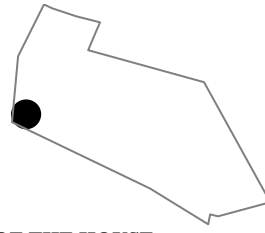
FLOOR PLAN

FIRST FLOOR

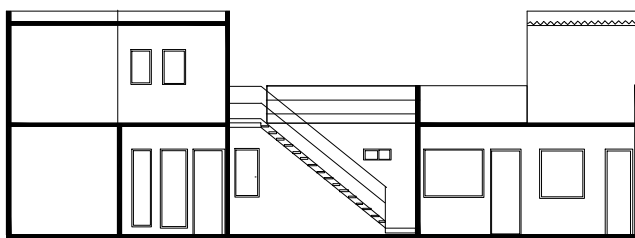
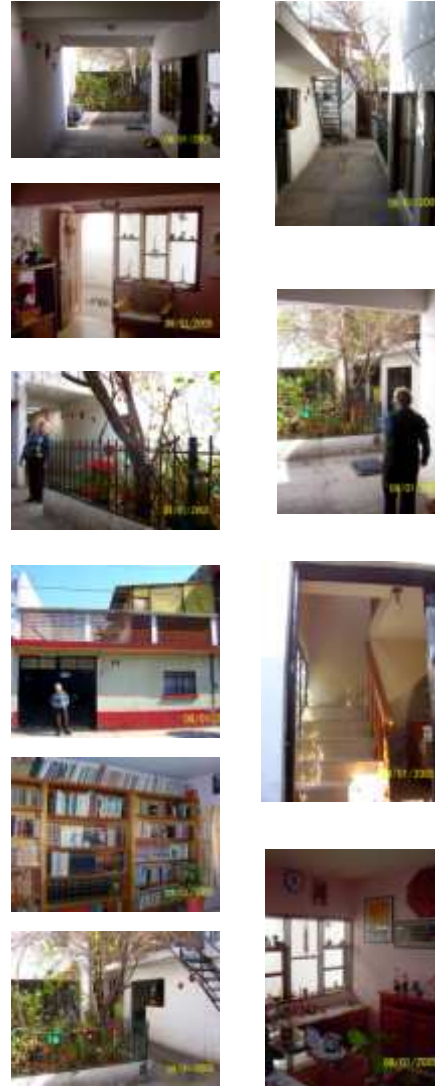
Approximated scale



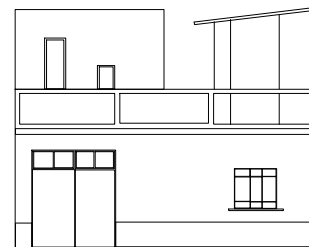
ISOMETRICAL VIEW



LOCATION OF THE HOUSE AND INTERIORS



SECTION AND FRONTAL VIEW



3.2.2

Example of house in Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl