

## **URBAN BY NATURE**

**AS IS OFTEN THE CASE, THIS COMPETITION IS GIVEN A TITLE AND A RESEARCH THEME. HERE, RESPECTIVELY TIRANA LAKE PARK ENTRANCE, URBAN BY NATURE. THE TITLE IS QUITE CLEAR: IT ADDRESSES THE SUBJECT AND THE LOCALITY DIRECTLY. NEVERTHELESS, THE RESEARCH THEME LEAVES MORE ROOM FOR INTERPRETATION. IN A SENSE, THIS WORDPLAY FIRSTLY IMPLIES THAT THE PARK ENTRANCE (AND BY EXTENSION TIRANA ITSELF) DRAWS ITS URBANITY FROM ITS RELATION TO THE PREEXISTING FAUNA AND FLORA. SECONDLY THAT IT IS FUNDAMENTALLY URBAN, OR SO TO SAY, HUMAN, THUS RADICALLY SEVERED FROM NATURE.**

**THE PROJECT WE PROPOSE IS INTENSELY RELYING ON THIS CONTRADICTION.**

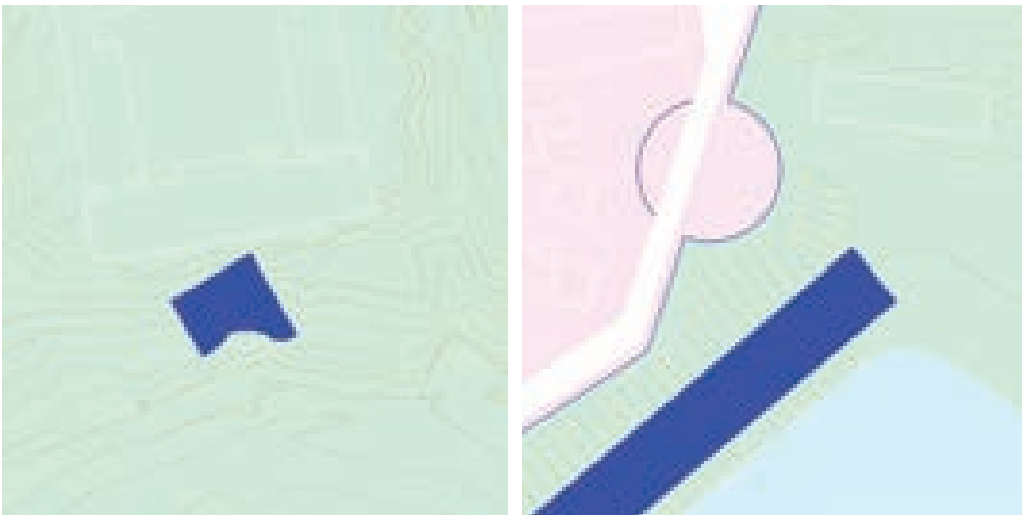


### **TIRANA PARK ENTRANCE**

**OUR PROJECT PROPOSES TO REAFFIRM A CLEAR BORDER FOR THE PARK, BUT NEITHER ONE, WHICH IS DESIGNED AS A MASTER PLAN WITH A “MODERN” ATTITUDE, FROM THE “POLITICAL”. NOR IS IT AN “INFORMAL” PROJECT, MIMICKING THE “VERNACULAR” FABRIC. BY REFUSING THE IDEA OF AN AUTHORITARIAN MASTERPLAN, AND BY RULING OUT THE NAÏVE HYPOTHESIS OF A SPONTANEOUS GROWTH, BY AVOIDING THE SYSTEMIC ANSWER, WE PROPOSE A PROJECT ADAPTABLE TO THE STRUCTURAL VERSATILITY OF THE CITY. A PROJECT THAT CAN NEGOTIATE WITHOUT BEING FRUSTRATED.**

### **THE SINGULARITIES**

**WE PROPOSE THE PRODUCTION OF AN INTRINSIC APPROACH TO THE BORDER, GENERATED FROM WITHIN ITS OWN THICKNESS, AS A SUM OF SINGULAR LOCAL CO-BORDERING DEVICES. ON EACH SIDE OF THE BORDER, IN THE CITY AND IN THE PARK, WE INTEND TO PLACE A NUMBER OF SO-CALLED DEVICES. IN THE PROJECT WE SUBMIT, THERE ARE SIX OF THEM, BUT IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT WE CONCEIVE THEM AS INDIVIDUALLY EXPENDABLE. THIS LIST IS ALSO EXTENDABLE TO A CERTAIN DEGREE. THE AIM OF THESE INTERVENTIONS IS TO CREATE A TRUE LOCAL DIFFERENCE IN QUALITY (AS OPPOSED TO A MERE DIFFERENCE IN QUANTITY: MORE OR LESS CITY, MORE OR LESS PARK) ON BOTH SIDES OF THE LIMIT. IT IS BY EXPLICITLY BRAGGING THEIR IDENTITY, THAT THEY GENERATE A TENSION WITH THE OPPOSITE SIDE. IT IS THIS PUNCTUAL TENSION, WHICH WILL MARK A DIFFERENCE, THUS ALLOWING TO TRULY ENTER (OR EXIT) THE PARK.**

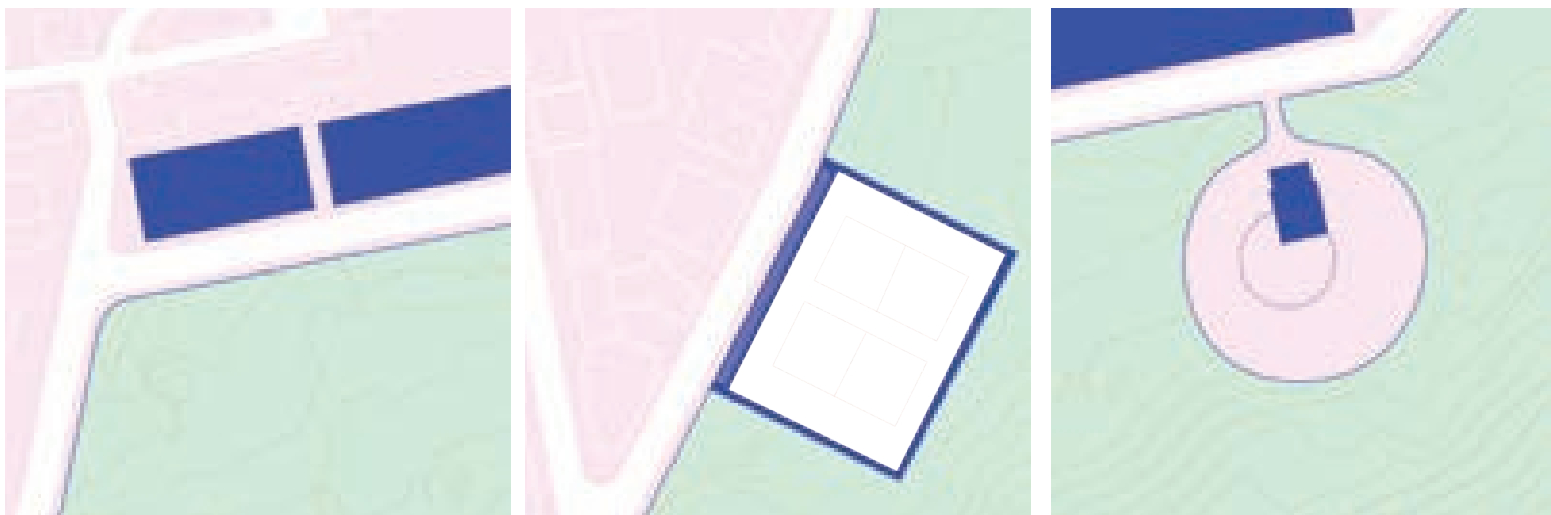


## **INSIDE**

**OUR APPROACH AIMS AT CLEARLY DEFINING THE LIMIT OF THE PARK IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH THE CONDITIONS FOR A SUSTAINABLE DISCUSSION WITH THE CITY. IN THIS REGARD, OUR FIRST INTENTION IS TO EXTEND ITS SURFACE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE TOWARD THE CITY, AS A RESPONSE TO ATTACKS SUFFERED FOR MANY YEARS. THEN, A SERIES OF DEVICES, OR “SINGULARITIES”, IS CONCEIVED AS INTERNAL FRAGMENTS OF THIS EXTENDED SURFACE.**

**ON THE WEST SIDE, THE DIKE IS REFACTORED IN A SIMPLE FASHION: WE GET RID OF THE SIDEWALK/ROAD SEPARATION. WE SUGGEST A CONTINUOUS FLOOR. THIS ELEMENT DOES MORE THAN CONNECT TWO SIDES OF THE CITY: IT IS A TRUE PUBLIC SPACE. THIS OPEN STRUCTURE ALLOWS VERY SIMPLE AND INFORMAL USES LIKE AN OPEN MARKET, SPORTS EVENTS, PROMENADE AND SO ON. IT ALSO ALLOWS A FURTHER CONSTRUCTION DEVELOPMENT.**

**ON THE EAST SIDE, WE EXTEND THE POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY WITH A TERRACE. THE UNIVERSITY BECOMES A TWO-SIDED CHIMERA: ON THE NORTH IT EMBRACES THE CITY, ON THE SOUTH IT REACHES TO THE PARK. BUT IT DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A TRANSITION. THIS ROLE IS SINGLEHANDEDLY HELD BY THE NEXT ELEMENT.**



## **OUTSIDE**

**A SECOND GROUP OF SINGULARITIES BELONGS TO THE CITY. TO ACHIEVE THIS, WE WILL USE AN EFFORTLESS METHOD: NO BUILDINGS CAN BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE PARK. THE SHERATON IS THE LIVING TESTIMONY OF A FAILURE IN THIS FIELD. INDEED, IT IS INCAPABLE OF GENERATING THE SMALLEST AMOUNT OF PUBLIC SPACE ON THE PARK SIDE AND IT NEEDS A RIDICULOUS AMOUNT OF ROAD SYSTEM TO MERELY SUSTAIN ITS ECONOMIC ACTIVITY.**

**THUS, THE PUBLIC BUILDINGS (POLICE DIRECTORATE, PUBLIC SERVICE MALL) BY THEIR MERE PROGRAM BELONG TO THE CITY. WE SUGGEST THAT THEY COULD BE PLACED ANYWHERE IF THEY STAY ON THE CITY SIDE. IN OUR PROJECT ILLUSTRATION, WE PLACE THEM VIS-À-VIS A WOODED AREA OF THE PARK. THEY PARTICIPATE IN THE SIMPLEST CONDITION OF A STREET BORDERED WITH BANAL BUILDINGS ON ONE SIDE, WITH DENSE GREENERY ON THE OTHER.**

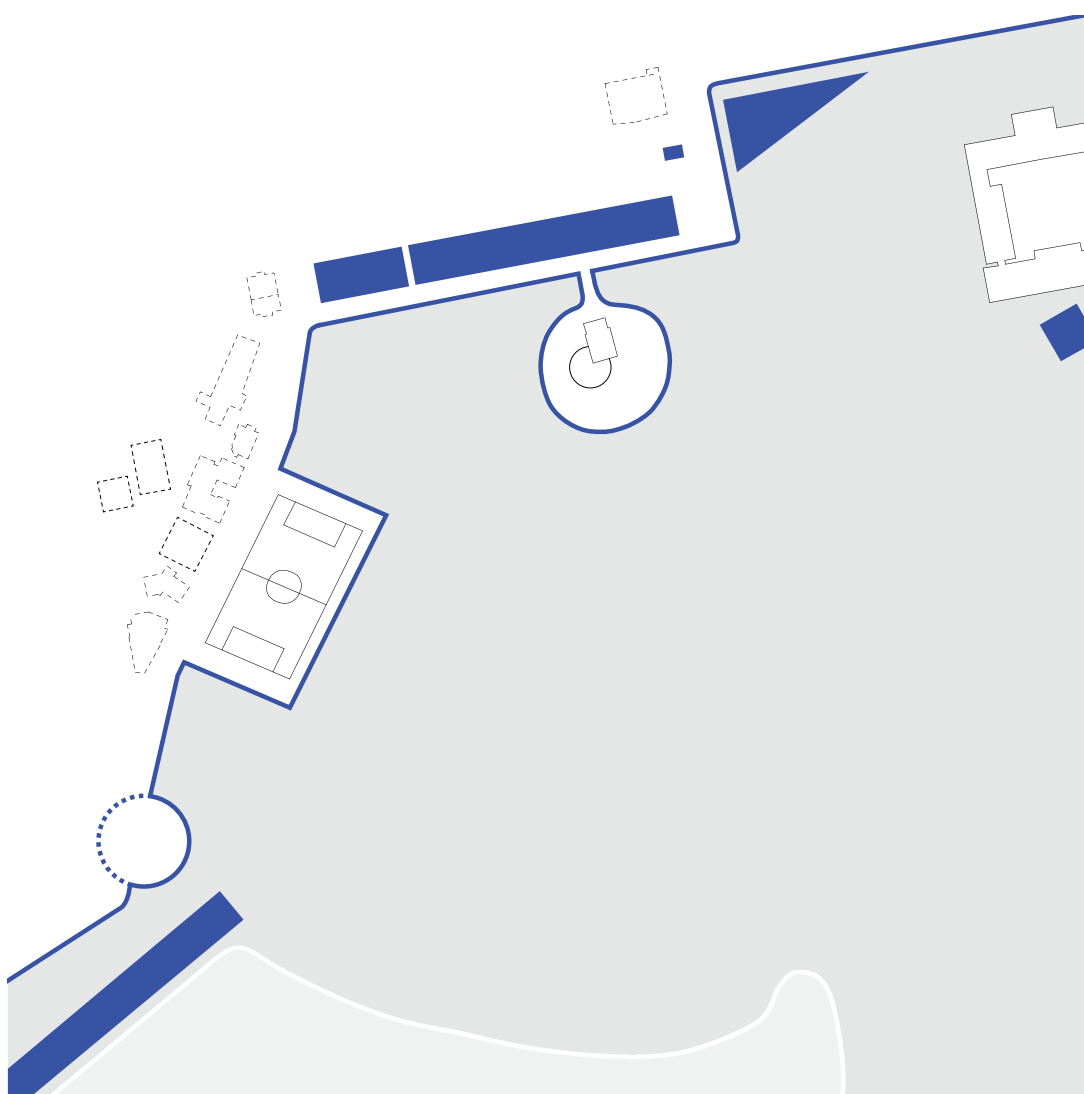
**THE FOOTBALL FIELD IS FENCED; ITS PLAYING AREA IS TRANSFORMED INTO A MINERAL (CONCRETE) SURFACE. A LIGHTING SYSTEM ALLOWS FOR NIGHTLY PRACTICE. THE CONDITION CREATED IS CLOSER TO A URBAN PLAYGROUND; ITS LIMITS ARE CLEAR; IT CAN BE APPROPRIATED TEMPORARILY.**

**THE GUARD OF THE REPUBLIC BUILDING IS EXTRACTED FROM THE PARK BY A GEOMETRICAL TRICK. A SORT OF POCKET OF CONCRETE SURROUNDS IT. IT NOW BELONGS TO A FLOURISHED COURTYARD, BUT A COURTYARD NONETHELESS. ONE CAN EASILY IMAGINE IT HOSTING A FOOD-RELATED PROGRAM.**



### **IN-BETWEEN**

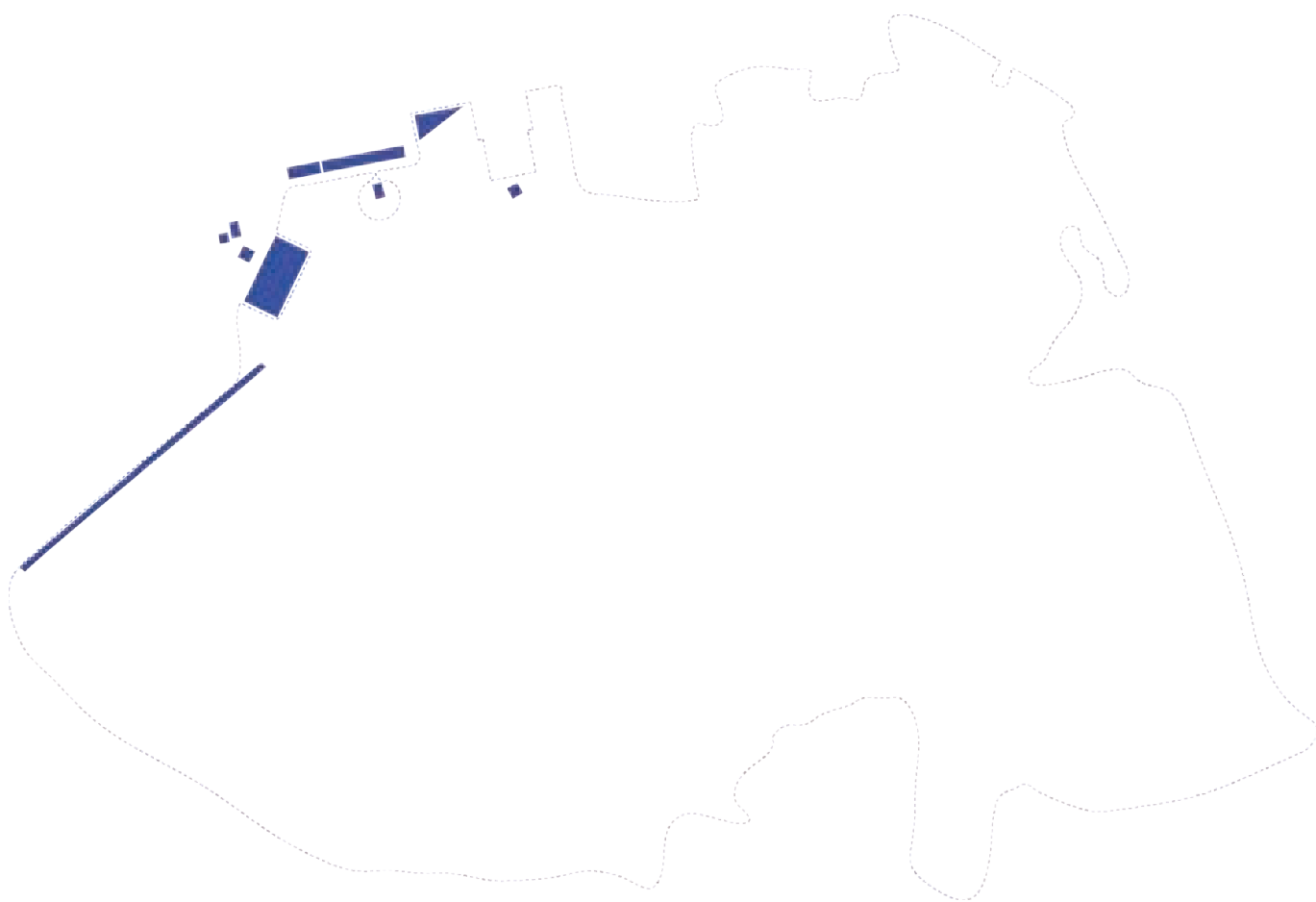
**IN PLACE OF THE FREDERIC CHOPIN SQUARE, WE BUILD A TRIANGULAR PERGOLA. IT IS ANCHORED IN THE CITY ON TWO OF ITS FACES, WHILE IT IS ORIENTED TOWARDS THE PARK. WHILE ITS FORM COMES FROM A STRICT UNDERSTANDING OF THE FORMS OF THE CITY, IN A VERY “POLITICAL” WAY, ITS USES REMAIN TOTALLY OPEN TO THE SPONTANEOUS OCCUPATION BY THE CITIZEN. IT IS THUS AS A REAL PUBLIC SQUARE, NOT AS A PLACE FOR THE REPRESENTATION OF THE POWER, BUT AS A SPACE FOR THE PEOPLE.**



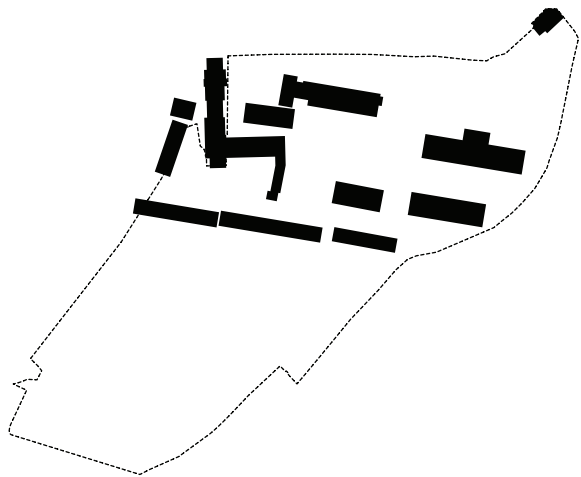
## **THE BORDER**

**THESE LOCAL QUIRKS, WHICH, WHEN TAKEN ALONE APPEAR INSIGNIFICANT, AS A WHOLE, PRODUCE A LEGIBLE BORDER. THIS BORDER REINFORCES THE DICHOTOMY BETWEEN TWO DISTINCT QUALITIES: URBAN AND NATURAL. THOUGH ONE MUST NOT BE LURED INTO BELIEVING THE PARK IS A TRUE NATURAL ELEMENT, THE CONTRAST PRODUCED BY THE BORDER INDICATES A CLEAR LIMIT: IT IS BY CROSSING IT THAT ONE KNOWS HE HAS LEFT THE CITY OR IS BACK IN TIRANA. THE TEAM PRACTICE IS NOT IN THE PARK BUT RATHER BY THE PARK.**

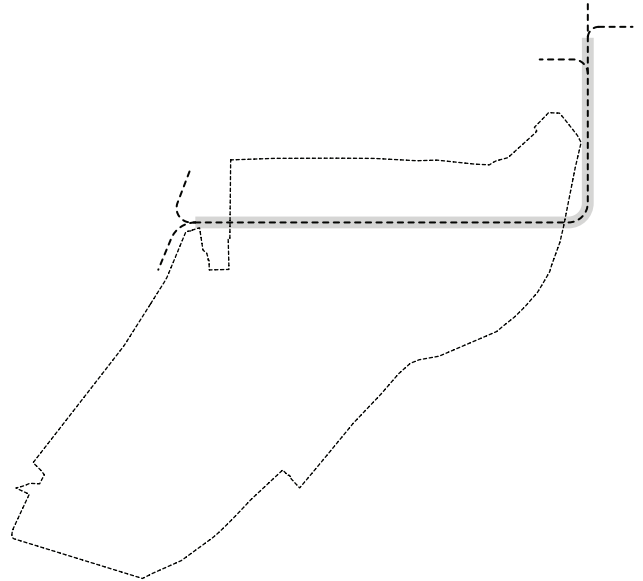
**INDEED THROUGH SMALL OPERATIONS LIKE THE ONE MENTIONED BEFORE, THE LIMIT (WHICH WAS BEFORE HAND RELATIVELY SIMPLE ALBEIT POROUS) GAINS IN COMPLEXITY. THE CITY PUSHES IN, EATING AWAY SMALL PARTS OF THE PARK. THE PARK ALSO GAINS LAND. IT ABSORBS THE DIKE AS A PUBLIC SPACE AND ACQUIRES YET ANOTHER PART OF THE LAKE, REINFORCING ITS STRUCTURAL ROLE. IN BETWEEN THE URBAN ELEMENTS, “PARK PENINSULAS” REACH OUT TO THE CITY WHILE MAINTAINING THEIR RIGOROUS IDENTITY.**



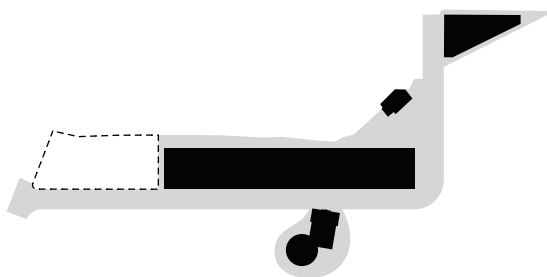
**THIS LENGTHENING OF THE BORDER IS NOT A STRONG ARGUMENT IF SIMPLY TAKEN AS SUCH. THE TRUE IMPACT OF THIS PROCESS RESIDES IN THE AUGMENTATION CO-BORDERING OF THE TWO PARTS OF THE PROJECT. IT IS ONLY BY DEFINING, BY ENTERING AND BY QUALIFYING THE BORDER THAT WE CAN CONSIDER ONE CAN ENTER THE PARK. WHILE RECENT ATTEMPTS OF QUALIFYING THE INTERIOR / EXTERIOR SPATIAL COUPLE TEND TO INVESTIGATE BLURRING THE LIMIT, OUR TAKE ON THE QUESTION IS ONE OF ZOOMING IN UNTIL THE LIMIT AND ITS ATTACHED CONTRADICTION APPEAR FOCUSED AGAIN.**



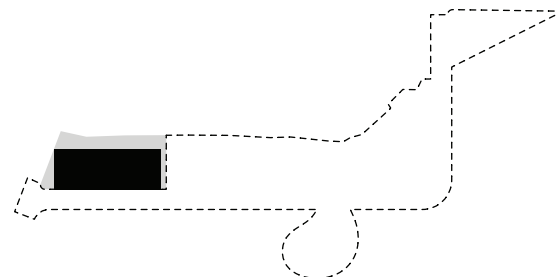
EXISTING  
REPUBLICAN GUARD SITE



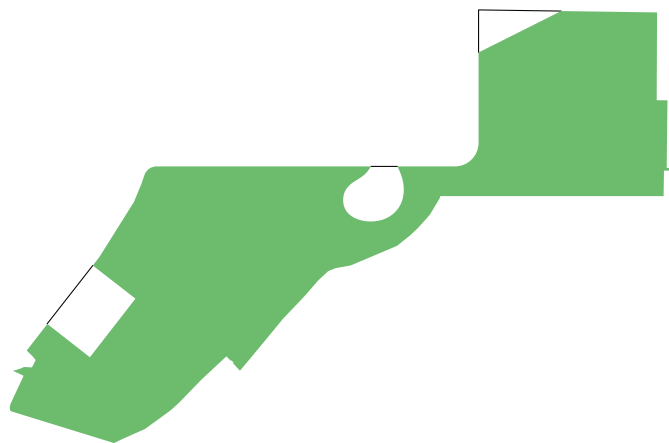
NEW ROAD



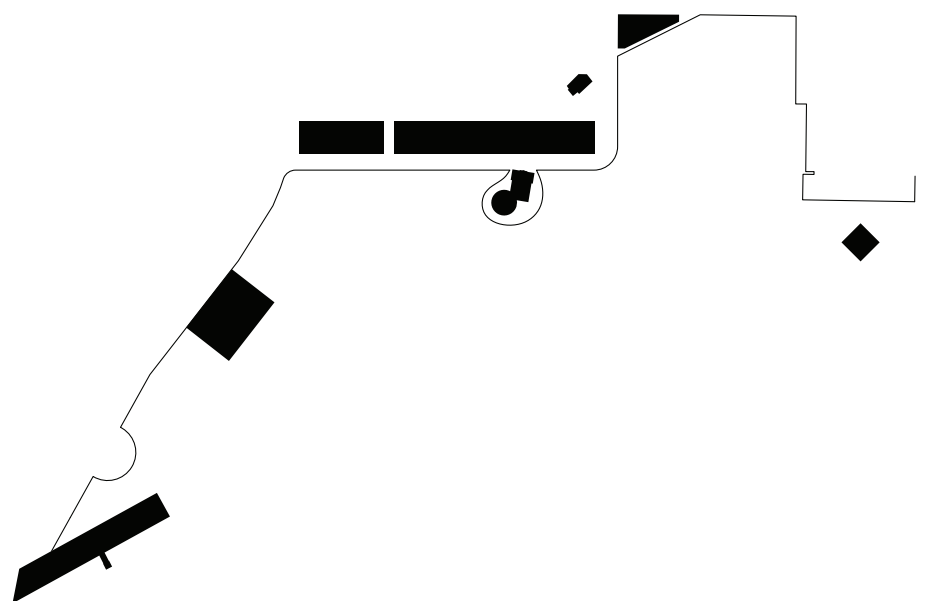
PUBLIC SERVICE CENTER  
14 780m<sup>2</sup>



GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF STATE POLICE  
15 030m<sup>2</sup>

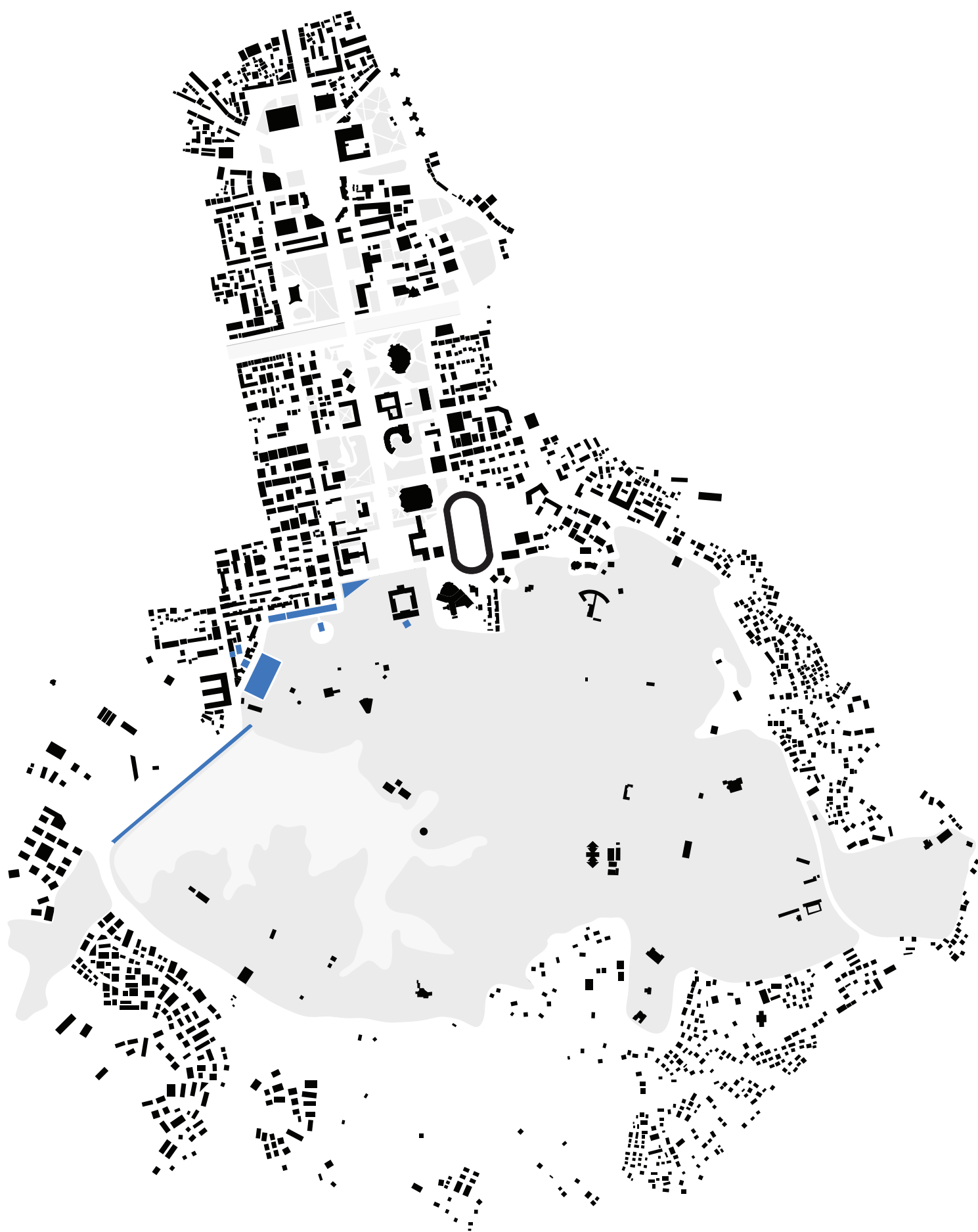


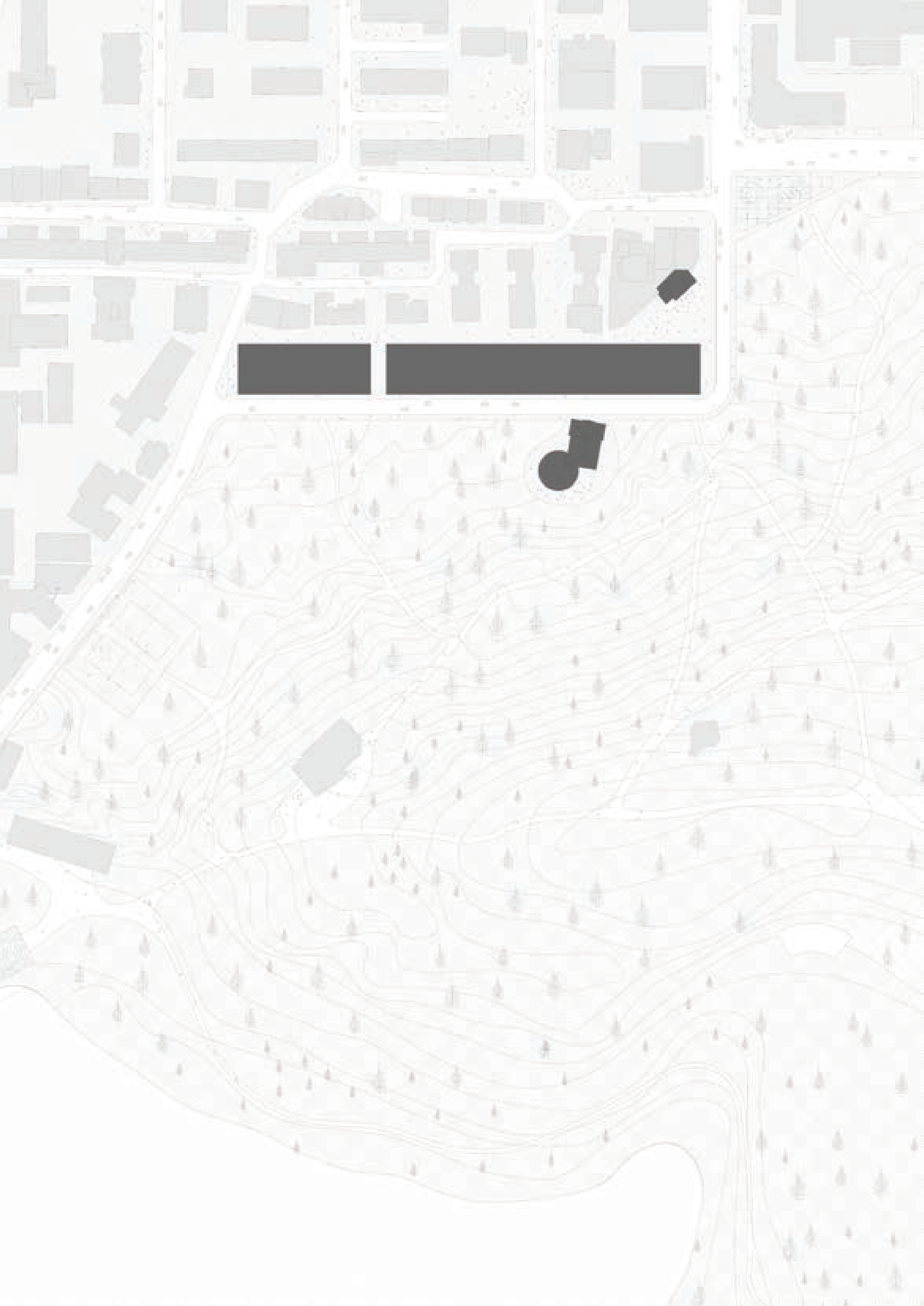
EXTENSION OF THE PARK  
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A SET OF DEVICES  
BETWEEN THE PARK AND THE CITY





























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