







COMPETITIONS  
**KONKURSE**

**vloa waterfront** | 2014 01  
shëtitorja e vlorës | **ATELIER ALBANIA | AKPT**

# INTERNATIONAL URBAN DESIGN COMPETITION

For an urban design intervention in  
Vlora Waterfront, Vlora, Albania

No. 1

## ORGANIZERS

Ministry of Urban Development  
National Territorial Planning  
Agency (AKPT)  
Atelier Albania

## PARTNERS

Albanian Development Fund  
Municipality of Vlora

## SECOND STAGE PARTICIPANTS

XDGA  
HHF  
L'AUC  
Dogma  
MBA/S  
Metro POLIS

## COMPETITION CONTRIBUTORS

### AKPT

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*Ministry of Urban Development*

*Albanian Development Fund*

## GRAPHIC DESIGN & PRINTING

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Atelier Albania, asked by the Minister of Urban Development and Tourism and the City of Vlorë, launched an international two-stage urban design competition, to design the Waterfront in Vlorë, Albania. The Waterfront is envisioned as a vibrant pedestrian zone and a major recreational area facing some of the newly populated parts of the city, yet representing the city's oldest tourist attraction.

*ALL COMPETITION PARTICIPANTS*

3dv&I Design AGENCY Architecture

ATENA Studio

Agora Chartered Architects

Bekim Ramku & Team

Degli Esposti Architetti

E.ARCH Studio

Elian Stefa & Team

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Emiljano Gjoni & Team

Endrit Tuzi

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Francesco Strada & Team

Marco Massa & Team

Marsida Musta & Team

MoreArchitectStudio

Nizio Design International

Roberto Mascarucci & Team

Studio 75

StudioARCH4

Studio Bascherini

Trevor Pan

X-Plan Studio

platau

van Dongen-Koschuch

AN URBAN DESIGN INTERVENTION IN VLORA WATERFRONT  
VLORA, ALBANIA

International Urban Design Competition  
November - February 2014

# 01

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10 Competition Brief  
22 Jury members

# 02

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26 XDGA  
*Winning Team*

# 03

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52 HHF  
*Second Price*



04

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78 L'AUC  
*Third Prize*

07

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148 Metro POLIS  
*Local Team Prize*

05

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110 Dogma  
*Short Listed*

06

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128 MBA/S  
*Short Listed*

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# 01 COMPETITION BRIEF

## **Beneficiaries**

Municipality of Vlora is the direct beneficiary of this flagship project. It will be the main partner during the process of design and public works execution.

## **Implementing Unit**

National Territorial Planning Agency (Atelier Albania) - as the policy executing unit of the Ministry of Urban Development and Tourism, will draft and follow-up the process. AA will facilitate the process for the winning parties by providing services towards project implementation.

## **Objective**

To pilot an instrument of urban intervention in the urban coastal area of Albania, in order to serve as a model of intervention in other 4 urban and non-urban coastal cases along the 420 km long coast line.

## **Aim and Nature of Intervention**

To introduce a way of intervening by design in the upgrading of the City Waterfront Promenade. The intervention will be of an urban upgrade nature and will be based on the surface application of urban furnishing elements and upgrading network infrastructure throughout the site of intervention. This will be marked by a strong linear and continuous structure like the promenade itself, which is partly existing and partly to be designed and implemented.

## **Area of the competition**

The competition area, named in this document as the Waterfront Promenade, is a 5 km long coastal band that lays territorially from the 'Soda Woods' (west) till the Tunnel (south), and bends at the Port Area as it reaches the city central area. Competitors are asked to generate visionary and original urban design concepts and designs for the whole waterfront band, jump-starting a process that aspires the transformation of an entire waterfront pedestrian experience.



### Design Opportunities

The Waterfront Promenade is composed of two segments. The port is the hinge that connects or stands in-between them. These two segments are facing two totally different urban conditions. Therefore, they have very different identity and should be approached in a different way. They can respectively be named as the West Segment (Old Beach Area, west of port, reaching 'Soda Woods') and South Segment (New Beach Promenade, south of port, reaching the Tunnel).

The South Segment is a narrow one but very well defined, and it stands in-between an existing road and the sea. This road connects the city to the touristic Ionian region, and it holds actually the status of a national connector, as it is the only existing road. There are plans for national bypass that will avoid traffic in this segment, but also plans for an alternative municipal street that will make possible a traffic-free area in the South Segment. Till then, traffic will have to flow parallel/along the Promenade. The South Segment not under very fine urban conditions, even though it already has some sub-segments that offer different programs that are mostly used especially during the long Ionian summer. This segment has gained some extra space lately due to the fact that certain buildings are cleared out, giving back the public space to the city. Therefore, the whole set of sub-segments need to be integrated, harmonized and upgraded in terms of urban furnishing elements and existing underground infrastructure

network. This will make a beautification process and most probably will constitute the short term intervention. Within this perspective the competitors are asked to analyze and propose sectors within the South Segment that might be part of a first and immediate implementation set of projects, aiming at having a touristic impact by summer 2014.

While, on the other hand the West Segment is wider and sandy, facing traditionally touristic structures as well as lately erected high-rise residential structures. This newly built structures have not a designed urban border or an urban element as a mediator. The city road network reaches the West Segment from behind the building stock. This fact gives a pedestrian feature to the West Segment. The intervention in this segment will be to introduce the promenade and to define the urban border that will connect the sandy/ beach area to the urbanized area. The underground infrastructure network of this segment has to be introduced and integrated with the rest of the system. This will constitute the long term intervention.

Here as well, within the West Segment band, the competitors are asked to analyze and propose sectors that might be part of a first and immediate implementation set of projects, aiming at having a touristic impact by summer 2014.

## Methodology

Vlora is one of the most beautiful coastal urban sites in the Albanian coast. It attracts quite a large number of tourists every season but also during the entire year, especially during weekends. These are facts that make Vlora receive a lot of public attention. Therefore the design of the Waterfront promenade should be a product of not a single designer or a single studio. It should be a product of a collective public opinion through an instrument that ensures the expression of interest of many designers, finalized by an open and transparent selection of the wide public facilitated by the local and international expertise.

An international, open, one stage, [partly] anonymous urban design competition would be the right instrument to guarantee the aimed product. The call for participation will be open to all national and international designers, but also to team of about to graduate students of architecture, urban design or landscape design programs. There will be awarded two winning prizes, one for the best design and the other for the best local team/designer. The winner that will be contracted to execute the design will be a team composed of those two winners, the best design winning team and the best local team/designer. The final product will be negotiated between them and the promoter (implementing unit/ Atelier Albania). The city of Vlora, as the beneficiary, will be active and part of the process throughout its duration.

## Expected outcomes

High quality design: The deliverable of the Competition will be handed over in a short period of time but the results are expected to be of high quality. Building of local capacities: Atelier Albania aims at teaming up one international and one local designer or design team for the implementation of the first design phase and the detailing of the second design phase. It is strongly believed that working closely with international experts will have an influence in building design capacities of local designers. While on the other hand, this close collaboration will guarantee that international experts will build deep local knowledge and will have a continuous presence on site.

Ease of detailed design process and implementation: teaming up of the international and local designers will guarantee a direct connection with the site throughout the design and implementation period, as well as easiness of conduct towards real-time problem-solving approach.

### **Inclusive Process**

In order to achieve an urban design intervention that will be accepted and embraced first of all by Vlora citizens and also by tourists visiting the city, QUESTIONNAIRES have been prepared and delivered to citizens and tourists, aiming at getting design guidelines for the Waterfront Promenade. The results of these questionnaires will be made available to the competition subscribers, together with the rest of the base material.

### **Eligibility**

The competition is open to all professional architects, landscape architects, urban planners and engineers. The competition is also open to teams of about to graduate students who are monitored by a licenced architect / landscape architect / urban planner, or a university / academy instructor. All entrants are required to provide evidence of relevant professional registration, accreditation or membership in the Experience Statement. Where an entry is made by a joint venture, consortium or team of professionals, the team must be led by a person meeting the above criteria. This team member must be identified on the Application Form as the entrant. The application form will be available on competition website. Each competitor team is encouraged to include an architect, landscape architect, a visual artist, structural engineer, mechanical engineer and electrical engineer.

### **End Product**

The design proposals will be focused on two different products, one aiming the short term intervention and the other aiming a long term vision (detailed above also in terms of localization). The short term aimed design proposal, corresponding to each competitor's customized selection of parts within the West and South Segment, is about to be implemented immediately, following the guidelines given by the competition design, in order to have the flagship project of the Vlora coast visible and ready to

be appreciated by the visitors of the coming touristic season of 'Summer 2014'. While the long term vision, corresponding to rest of the parts within the West and South Segment, will be detailed following the competition process, by the teamed-up winners (local and international winners) and will be implemented on a second and maybe third phase of intervention in order to have the Vlora Waterfront Promenade completed expectedly the very next touristic season of 'Summer 2015'.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

Each of the 15 short-listed design proposals is going to be reviewed in a jury process and the jurors will be asked to base their decisions on three basic principles:

- Activate the site for the benefit of the public's enjoyment;
- Exhibit architectural excellence; and
- Provide development feasibility.

The judgment given by the jury will verify conformity to the programme and its functional requests, respect of the competition objects, technical practicability and respect of existing norms. In particular, the jury will examine submissions considering the following criteria, which are fundamental for the promoting Institution:

- Overall urban and landscape design quality of the project considering, at the same time, both functionality of space and organizational distribution, aesthetic quality and symbolic value;
- Quality of pedestrian areas and their capacity to allow better accessibility and foster integration with the surrounding urban areas;
- Quality of open spaces for public events in relationship, too, with innovative utilization of local materials;
- Quality of Integration and relation between art and urban design;
- Quality of providing parking solutions, traffic and traffic free mobility schemes.



## TERMAT E REFERENCËS

### **Përfitimet**

Bashkia e Vlorës është përfituesi i drejtpërdrejtë i këtij projekti pilot. Ajo do të jetë partneri kryesor gjatë procesit të projektimit dhe të ekzekutimit të punëve publike.

### **Njësia e Zbatimit**

Agjencia Kombëtare e Planifikimit të Territorit (Atelier Albania) - si njësia e politikave të ekzekutimit e Ministrisë së Zhvillimit Urban dhe Turizmit, do të hartojë dhe të ndjekë procesin. AA-ja do të lehtësojë procesin e palëve fituese duke ofruar shërbime që ndihmojnë në zbatimin e projektit.

### **Objektivi**

Drejtimi i një instrumenti për ndërhyrje urbane në zonën urbane bregdetare të Shqipërisë, në mënyrë që të shërbejë si një model ndërhyrjeje në 4 zona të tjera bregdetare urbane dhe jo urbane përgjatë 420 km të vijës bregdetare.

### **Qëllimi dhe natyra e ndërhyrjes**

Aplikimi i një mënyre ndërhyrjeje duke u bazuar në projektin e përmirësimit të mullit të shëtitores së qytetit. Ndërhyrja do të jetë e një niveli të lartë dhe do të aplikohet mbi sipërfaqen e elementeve mobilues urbane dhe do të përmirësojë infrastrukturën e rrjetit përgjatë gjithë sipërfaqes së ndërhyrës. Kjo do të shënohet nga një strukturë lineare e fortë dhe e vazhdueshme si vetë shëtitorja, e cila është pjesërisht ekzistuese dhe pjesërisht për t'u projektuar dhe zbatuar.

### **Zona e konkursit**

Zona e konkursit, e quajtur në këtë dokument si "Waterfront Promenade-Moli i Shëtitores", është një vijë bregdetare 5 km e gjatë që shtrihet territorialisht nga 'Pyjet e Sodës' (perëndim) deri tek Tuneli (jug), dhe lidh zonën e Portit duke arrn në zonën qendrore të qytetit. Konkurrentëve iu kërkohet të gjenerojnë koncepte vizionare dhe origjinale të projektimit urban dhe skica për të gjithë zonën ujore, një proces që aspiron transformimin e një eksperiencë ujore për të gjithë këmbësorët.





### Mundësitë e projektimit

Moli i shëtitorës përbëhet nga dy segmentë. Porti është nyja që lidh ose qëndron në mes tyre. Këto dy segmente po përballen me dy kushte krejtësisht të ndryshme urbane. Prandaj, ata kanë identitete shumë të ndryshme dhe duhet të trajtohen në mënyra të ndryshme. Ata respektivisht mund të quhen si Segmenti i Perëndimit (Zona e Plazhit të vjetër, në perëndim të portit, duke arritur Pyjet e Sodës) dhe Segmenti i Jugut (Shëtitorja e Plazhit të Ri) në jug të portit, duke arritur tek Tuneli).

Segmenti i Jugut është i ngushtë, por i përkufizuar shumë mirë, dhe ai qëndron në mes një rruge ekzistuese dhe detit. Kjo rrugë lidh qytetin me rajonin turistik Jon, dhe aktualisht mban statusin e një ure lidhëse kombëtare, pasi ajo është e vetmja rrugë ekzistuese. Ka plane për ndërtimin e një rruge anësore kombëtare që do të shmangte trafikun në këtë segment, por edhe planet për një rrugë alternative komunale që do të bënte të mundur projektimin e një zonë këmbësorësh në segmentin e Jugut. Deri atëherë, trafiku do të vazhdonte paralelisht / përgjatë shëtitorës. Segmenti i Jugut nuk ka kushte shumë të mira urbane, megjithëse ai tashmë ka disa nën-segmente që ofrojnë programe të ndryshme të cilët shfrytëzohen kryesisht gjatë verës së gjatë Joniane. Ky segment ka fituar një hapësirë shtesë kohët e fundit sepse janë shembur disa ndërtesa, duke i dhënë përsëri hapësirën publike qytetit. Prandaj, të gjithë nën-segmentet duhet të integrohen, harmonizohen dhe modernizohen sipas elementëve urbane

dhe rrjetit infrastrukturor nëntokësor ekzistues. Ky do të ishte një proces zbukurimi dhe me siguri do të jetë një ndërhyrje afatshkurtër. Sipas kësaj perspektive, konkurrentëve iu kërkohet të analizojnë dhe propozojnë njësi brenda Segmentit të Jugut që mund të jetë pjesa fillestare e një terësie projektesh që do të zbatohen menjëherë, me qëllim që të ketë një ndikim turistik nga vera e vitit 2014.

Ndërsa, nga ana tjetër Segmenti i Perëndimit është më i gjerë dhe me rërë, duke pasur struktura tradicionale turistike si edhe ndërtesa të larta banimi të ndërtuara së fundmi. Këto struktura të sapo ndërtuara nuk kanë një kufi urban të projektuar apo një element urban si një ndërmjetës. Rrjeti rrugor i qytetit arrin Segmentin e Perëndimit nga prapa komplekseve të ndërtesave. Ky fakt i jep një funksion për këmbësorët në Segmentin e Perëndimit. Ndërhyrja në këtë segment do të shërbejë si shëtitorë dhe përcakton kufirin urban që do të lidhë zonën e plazhit me zonën e urbanizuar. Rrjeti infrastrukturor nëntokësor i këtij segmenti duhet të futet dhe të integrohet me pjesën tjetër të sistemit. Kjo do të përbëjë ndërhyrjen afatgjatë. Edhe këtu, brenda intervalit të Segmentit Perëndimor, konkurrentëve iu kërkohet të analizojnë dhe propozojnë faktorë që mund të jenë pjesa fillestare e një terësie projektesh që zbatohen menjëherë, me qëllim që të ketë një ndikim turistik nga vera e vitit 2014.

## Metodologjia

Vlora është një nga vendet urbane bregdetare më të bukura të bregdetit shqiptar. Ajo tërheq një numër mjaft të madh turistësh në çdo sezon, por edhe gjatë gjithë vitit, sidomos gjatë fundjavës. Këto janë disa fakte që Vlora të tërheqëshumë vëmendjen e publikut. Për këtë arsye ndërtimi i shëtitorës nuk duhet të jetë një produkt i një projektuesi të vetëm apo të një studioje të vetme. Ai duhet të jetë një produkt i opinionit publik kolektiv përmes një instrumenti që siguron shprehjen e interesit të shumë projektuesve, dhe për t'u finalizuar nga një përzgjedhje e hapur dhe transparente e publikut të gjerë e mundësuar nga ekspertiza vendase dhe ndërkombëtare.

Një konkurs i projektimit urban ndërkombëtar, i hapur, vetëm me një fazë, [pjesërisht] anonim do të ishte mënyra e duhur për të garantuar projektin e përcaktuar. Thirrja për pjesëmarrje do të jetë e hapur për të gjithë projektuesit kombëtarë dhe ndërkombëtarë, por edhe të bashkohen studentët e diplomuar të arkitekturës, projektimit, ose programeve të projektimit urban. Do të jepen dy çmime fituese, një për dizajnin më të mirë dhe një tjetër për ekipin vendas / projektuesin më të mirë. Fituesi që do të kontraktohet për të zbatuar projektin do të jetë një ekip i përbërë nga këto dy fitues, ekipi fitues i projektimit më të mirë dhe ekipi vendas /projektuesi më i mirë. Produkti përfundimtar do të negociohet midis tyre dhe promovuesve (njësia zbatuese/Atelier Albania). Qyteti i Vlorës, si përfitues, do të jetë aktiv dhe pjesë e procesit gjatë kohëzgjatjes së tij.

## Rezultatet e pritura

Ndërtimi i cilësisë së lartë: produkti i Konkurrencës do të dorëzohet në një periudhë të shkurtër kohe, por rezultatet priten të jenë të një kualiteti të lartë. Ngritja e kapaciteteve lokale: Atelier Albania synon të bashkojë një ndërtues ndërkombëtar dhe një vendas osë një ekip për zbatimin e fazës së parë të projektimit dhe detajimin e fazës së dytë të projektimit. Besohet fuqishëm se duke punuar ngushtë me ekspertët ndërkombëtarë do të ketë një ndikim në ngritjen e kapaciteteve të projektimit të ndërtuesve vendas. Ndërsa nga ana tjetër, ky bashkëpunim i ngushtë do të ndihmojë ekspertët ndërkombëtarë të marrin njohuri të thella lokale dhe do të ketë një prani të vazhdueshme të tyre në vend.

Lehtësia e procesit të projektimit të detajuar dhe zbatimi: grupimi i projektuesve ndërkombëtarë dhe vendorë do të garantojë një lidhje të drejtpërdrejtë me vendin gjatë periudhës së projektimit dhe të zbatimit, si dhe lehtësi drejtuese drejt qasjes së zgjidhjes së problemeve.

### Proçesi përfshirës

Në mënyrë që të arrihet një ndërhyrje e ndërtimit urban që do të pranohet dhe përqafohet para së gjithash nga qytetarët e Vlorës dhe turistët që vizitojnë qytetin, pyetësorët janë përgatitur dhe dorëzuar për qytetarët dhe turistët, duke synuar marrjen e udhëzimeve të projektimit për molin e shëtitores. Rezultatet e këtyre pyetësorëve do të vihen në dispozicion të pjesëmarrësve në konkurs, së bashku me pjesën tjetër të materialit bazë.

### Pranueshmëria

Konkursi është i hapur për të gjithë arkitektët profesionale, arkitektët e estetikës, planifikuesit urban dhe inxhinierët. Konkursi është i hapur për ekipet e studentëve që janë në prag diplomimi të cilët monitorohen nga një arkitekt i licensuar / estetik / projektues urban, apo një instruktor akademik/ universitar. Të gjithë të regjistruarve iu kërkohet të sigurojnë dëshmi të regjistrimit përkatës profesional, akreditimit ose anëtarësisë në përshkrimin e eksperiencave. Kur bëhet një deklaratë nga një ndërmarrje e përbashkët, konsorcium ose ekip profesionistësh, ekipi duhet të udhëhiqet nga një person që përmbush kriteret e mësipërme. Ky pjesëtar i grupit duhet të identifikohet në formularin e aplikimit si anëtar. Formulari i aplikimit do të jetë i disponueshëm në faqen e internetit të konkursit. Secili ekip konkurrent është i inkurajuar për të përfshirë një arkitekt, arkitekt estetik, një artist vizual, inxhinier strukturor, inxhinier mekanik dhe inxhinier elektrik.

### Produkti final

Propozimet e projektimit do të fokusohen në dy produkte të ndryshme, njëri që ka si qëllim ndërhyrjen afatshkurtër dhe tjetri ka si qëllim një vizion afatgjatë (detajuar më lart edhe në aspektin e lokalizimit). Propozimi i projektimit qëllim afatshkurtër, që korrespondon me zgjedhjen e përshtatur të çdo konkurrenti të pjesëve brenda Segmentit Perëndimor dhe Jugor, është gati për t'u zbatuar menjëherë, duke ndjekur udhëzimet e dhëna nga projekti në konkurs, në mënyrë që të kemi projektin pilot

të bregdetit të Vlorës të dukshëm dhe të gatshëm për t'u vlerësuar nga vizitorët e sezonit turistik të ardhshëm "Summer 2014". Ndërsa vizioni afatgjatë, që korrespondon me pjesën tjetër të pjesëve brenda Segmentit Perëndimor dhe Jugor, do të detajohet në vijim të procesit të konkurrimit, nga fituesit e grupuar (fituesit vendas dhe ndërkombëtarë), dhe do të zbatohet në një fazë të dytë dhe ndoshta e tretë e ndërhyrjes në mënyrë që moli i shëtitores së Vlorës të përfundojë në sezonin e ardhshëm turistik të "Summer 2015".

### Kriteret e vlerësimit

Secili nga 15 propozimet e projektit të përzgjedhur do të shqyrtohet në një proces me juri dhe anëtarëve të saj do t'u kërkohet që të bazojnë vendimet e tyre në tri parime themelore:

- zbatimin e projektit duke patur parasysh argëtimin e njerëzve;
- shfaqjen e përsosmërinë arkitektonike; dhe
- mundësimin e zhvillimit të fizibilitetit.

Gjykimi i dhënë nga juria do të verifikojë përputhshmërinë me programin dhe kërkesat e tij funksionale, respektimin e objekteve të konkurrencës, zbatueshmërinë teknike dhe respektimin e normave ekzistuese. Në veçanti, juria do të shqyrtojë aplikimet duke marrë parasysh kriteret e mëposhtme, të cilat janë themelore për institucionin promovues:

- Në përgjithësi cilësitë urbane projektuese dhe estetike të projektit, në të njëjtën kohë, duhet të marrin parasysh të dyja funksionalitetin e hapësirës dhe shpërndarjen organizative, cilësitë estetike dhe vlerat simbolike;
- Cilësia e zonave të këmbësorëve dhe kapaciteti i tyre për të lejuar qasje më të mirë dhe për të nxitur integrimin me zonat urbane përreth;
- Cilësia e hapësirave të hapura për evente publike, gjithashtu, duke shfrytëzuar anën inovative të materialeve lokale;
- Cilësia e integritit dhe lidhja mes artit dhe projektimit urban;
- Cilësia e ofrimit të zgjidhjeve të parkimit, trafikun dhe skemave të lëvizshmërisë të trafikut të lirë.



## JURY MEMBERS

STEFANO BOERI  
ANDREAS RUBY  
JOHAN ANRYS  
DANIEL GJONI  
EGLANTINA GJERMI  
NIKO PELESHI  
PATRICK JANSSENS  
CHARLOTTE MALTERRE BARTHES  
RAINER HEHL



**STEFANO BOERI**

Stefano Boeri (1956) is a Milan-based architect. He was editor in chief of the international magazines "Abitare" and "Domus". Professor of Urban Design at the Politecnico di Milano, he has taught as visiting professor at Strelka Institute, Harvard GSD, Berlage Institute e Architectural Association among others. Between April 2011 and March 2013, has been appointed Executive Councilor for culture, design and fashion for Milan Municipality. He is the founder of "multiplicity" international research network dedicated to the study of contemporary urban transformations. Boeri is a co-author of different volumes such as Mutations (Actar, 2000), USE (Skirà, 2002), Cronache del Abitare (Mondadori, 2007) and author of Biomilano (Corraini, 2011), L'Anticittà (Laterza, 2011). Together with Richard Burdett, Jacques Herzog and William MacDonough, Boeri took part of the Architecture Advisory Board in charge of developing the guidelines for the urban transformations to be implemented within the frame of 2015 Milan Architecture Expo.



**ANDREAS RUBY**

Andreas Ruby is an architecture critic, curator, moderator, teacher and publisher. He has taught architectural theory and design at international universities such as Cornell University, Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture Paris Malaquais, the Metropolis Program Barcelona and Umea School of Architecture among others. Aside from regularly contributing to selected international architecture magazines, he has published nearly 20 books on contemporary architecture. In 2008 he co-founded the award-winning architecture publishing house RUBY PRESS which has a catalog of 20 titles to date. He has organized several international symposiums and exhibitions on architecture and design, such as the "Min to Max" symposium on affordable housing hosted in 2009 in Berlin, the traveling exhibition "Druot, Lacaton & Vassal - Tour Bois le Prêtre" launched in 2012, and most recently the Montenegro Pavilion at the 14th Venice Architecture Biennial in 2014.

Last but not least he is one of the most prolific moderators in the contemporary architecture discourse, with a record of more than 150 moderated panel discussions featuring 200 architects from 30 countries.

**JOHAN ANRYS**

Johan Anrys graduated from the HAISL in Brussels, having followed one academic year in Ireland at the University College Dublin. As student he participated in several architectural projects, design workshops throughout Europe, and master-classes like the 'Floating Resorts' led by Elia Zenghelis & Eleni Gigantes. He worked for Eugene Liebaud before establishing the joint practice of 51N4E in Brussels and Tirana.

Parallel to his professional activities at 51N4E, he has been performing on academic ground, as lecturer at the KHM Lucas Faydherbe – Interieur, as assistant professor at the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Leuven, as visiting critic at the Berlage Institute and the Academy of Architecture in Mendrisio, Switzerland. He acts on regular base as lecturer or jury member in various institutes both in Belgium and abroad. Johan Anrys is the lead partner in 51N4E's Tirana office.

**DANIEL GJONI**

Daniel Gjoni graduated from the University of Tirana, Faculty of Engineering, department of Architecture in January 1987. In 1992, specializes in Florence, Italy in historical building restoration. Cooperated until 1997 with "Ricerca & Progetto", an architectural practice focused on issues of bioarchitecture and sustainable architecture. In 1990, works as architect and restorer at the Cultural Monuments Institute in Tirana specializing in Medieval Architecture. In 1993, is co-responsible for international programs at the "Ricerca & Progetto" - Bologna (Italy). From 1993 to 1996 works as architect at Studio Frascaroli - Bologna (Italy). In 1996 along with architect Artan Shkreli founded in Tirana "sferastudio" (an architectural and urban design firm). In 2000 is appointed General Director of the Urban Planning Department of Tirana Municipality. In 2005 becomes Head of Urban Planning Department at the Ministry of Territory and Transport. Since 2006, collaborates with "sferastudio" as architectural and urban planning project manager. Among his works are the albanian pavillion at EXPO Lisboa 1998 and Hannover 2000, reconstruction of the headquarter offices of the Social Security Institute, reconstruction of the High Court building in Tirana, touristic port masterplan of Saranda, Shkodra University Library Building etc.

**EGLANTINA GJERMENI**

Currently, Ms. Gjermeni holds a PhD in Social Sciences. She earned a Master's's Degree in Social Work from the Grand Valley State University, in Michigan, United States (1997-1998). She attended post-graduate studies in Social Work at the University of Tirana, Faculty of Social Sciences (1993-1994). She earned a Bachelor Degree in History from the University of Tirana, Faculty of History and Philology (1986 - 1990). In 2009, Eglantina Gjermeni was elected Member of the 18th Legislature of the Assembly of the Republic of Albania, representing the Socialist Party. She was re-elected in the 19th Legislation after the general elections held in 2013. She was successful in heading the Centre of the Gender Balance for Development for 10 years. She is one of the most outstanding gender balance and social experts in the country.

In the course of her career, Ms. Gjermeni has attended a series of training courses in Albania and abroad on topics, such as Gender Balance, Project Management, Leadership, Women in Politics, Social Affairs that have been organized by highly reputable international institutions. She is Lecturer at the Social Affairs Department of the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Tirana since 1995.



**NIKO PELESHI**

He has graduated with a bachelor's degree from the Electronic Engineering Department of the Polytechnic University of Tirana with excellent results, receiving the title: Electronic Engineer. In 1989 he graduated from "Raqi Qirinxhi" high school in Korca with a Golden Medal.

Mr. Peleshi has had a significant career in the private sector in the city of Korca and from 2001-2004 he ran with great success the Industrial and Trade Chamber of Commerce of Korca. The political career of Mr. Peleshi starts in October of 2004 when he was elected to be Prefect of the District of Korca, he was also elected as the Mayor of the City of Korca later on. Mr. Peleshi is a member with full rights to the Committee of Monitoring of the Local and Regional Congress of Authorities at the European Council.



**PATRICK JANSSENS**

Patrick Janssens is a Belgian politician, he is a member of the SP.a and the former mayor of the port city Antwerp. He studied "Political and Social Sciences" and "Applied Economic Sciences" (both Masters) at the University of Antwerp and Statistics at the London School of Economics. From 1979 to 1985 he was an assistant in the Department of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Antwerp, first of Jan Vranken (with whom he wrote the first National Report on Poverty in Belgium, within the framework of the First European Anti-Poverty Programme) and then of Herman Deleeck.

From 1985 to 1989, he ran a market research agency (Dimarso (nl)) after which he undertook several positions at the marketing agency VVL/BBDO until 1999. In 1999, he was appointed president of the Socialist Party. He resigned as president to become mayor of Antwerp in 2003. In the general election held the same year, Janssens was elected to the Belgian Chamber of People's Representatives but he left the Chamber one year later when the 2004 regional elections saw Janssens becoming a member of the Flemish Parliament. In the municipal elections of 2006, Janssens was overwhelmingly elected for another term as mayor. He was longlisted for the 2008 World Mayor award.





**CHARLOTTE MALTERRE BARTHES**

Charlotte Malterre-Barthes is an architect and urban designer. She is Director of Studies of the MAS in Urban Design, investigating formal and informal urban dynamics of Cairo. She is involved in research and teaching at the chair of Prof. Dr. Marc Angéilil since 2011, and is currently working towards a doctoral degree on Food and Territories, with Egypt as case study. Charlotte studied at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture in Marseille and at the Technische Universität in Vienna. While doing her internship with the firm Coop Himmelb(l)au in Vienna, she was part of the European Central Bank Competition team. Her diploma 'a Women Social Centre in Baghdad', obtained in 2003 magna cum laude, tackled political and social involvements of architecture. A graduated architect, she collaborated with several offices (Rudy Ricciotti, Dipol Landscape Architects, OOS). In India, Charlotte worked with Balkrishna Doshi at Sangath. She obtained in 2008 a Master of Advanced Studies in Urban Design at the ETH. Apart from her architectural practice, Charlotte co-funded with Noboru Kawagishi OMNIBUS, an urban research laboratory focused on trans-disciplinary metropolitan explorations.



**RAINER HEHL**

Rainer Hehl is an architect and an urban planner. He directed the Master of Advanced Studies in Urban Design at the ETH Zürich until 2013, as well as a theory seminar and lecture series entitled Urban Mutations on the Edge. He studied at the RWTH in Aachen, the University of the Arts in Berlin and the Ecole Speciale d'Architecture in Paris and has worked as a project architect at Diller, Scofidio + Renfro's studio and the Office for Metropolitan Architecture in New York. In 2009, he curated the exhibition SQUAT at the 4th International Architecture Biennial in Rotterdam, through which he initiated test-site projects in Paraisópolis, one of Sao Paulo's largest favelas ( neighborhood ). Rainer Hehl has also organized several symposia, including the opening symposium for the 4th Architecture Biennial Rotterdam, 2009, a round-table at the World Urban Forum in Rio de Janeiro, 2010, and the urban inform symposium at the AIA Center for Architecture in New York, 2011. In addition to having lectured widely on urban informality, popular architecture, and hybrid urbanities, Hehl co-founded the non-profit organization and online network urbaninform.net ([www.urbaninform.net](http://www.urbaninform.net)). Most recently, Rainer Hehl edited Building Brazil! (Ruby Press, 2011). Hehl holds a PhD from the ETH, Zürich, on urbanization strategies for informal settlements, focusing on case studies in Rio de Janeiro.

## 02 XDGA - WINNING TEAM

### TEAM COMPOSITION:

#### **Manager**

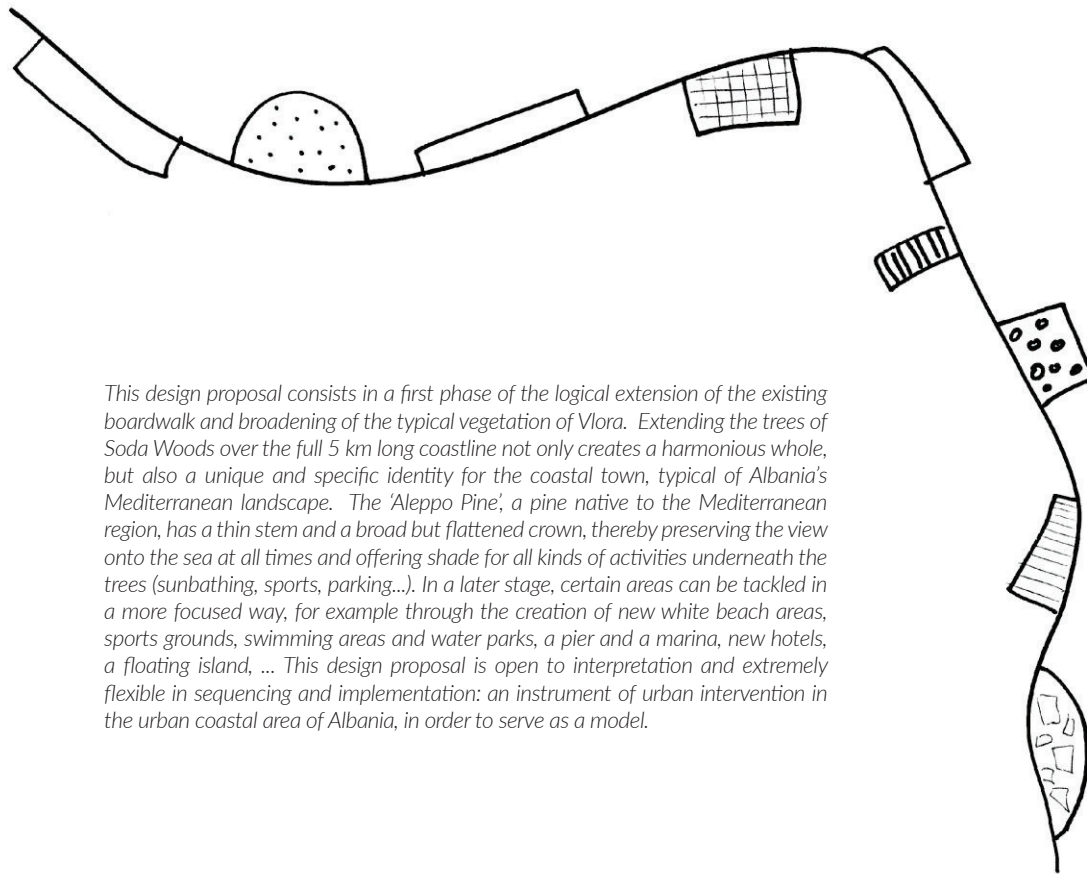
Xaveer De Geyter

#### **Architect**

Pieter Coelis

Pierre Burquel

Mathilde Dutilleul



*This design proposal consists in a first phase of the logical extension of the existing boardwalk and broadening of the typical vegetation of Vlora. Extending the trees of Soda Woods over the full 5 km long coastline not only creates a harmonious whole, but also a unique and specific identity for the coastal town, typical of Albania's Mediterranean landscape. The 'Aleppo Pine', a pine native to the Mediterranean region, has a thin stem and a broad but flattened crown, thereby preserving the view onto the sea at all times and offering shade for all kinds of activities underneath the trees (sunbathing, sports, parking...). In a later stage, certain areas can be tackled in a more focused way, for example through the creation of new white beach areas, sports grounds, swimming areas and water parks, a pier and a marina, new hotels, a floating island, ... This design proposal is open to interpretation and extremely flexible in sequencing and implementation: an instrument of urban intervention in the urban coastal area of Albania, in order to serve as a model.*



Soda woods

### PROMENADE – TREES

The design proposes the construction of a smooth white concrete boardwalk which varies in width over the entire 5 km long coastline. The boardwalk is at its widest in more urban areas, thus creating a distance from the highway. The promenade narrows to 4 meters in the more natural areas to minimize impact on the landscape.

More importantly, along the promenade, the local species 'Aleppo Pine' are planted, creating with a minimum of effort a structure that considerably enhances the spatial quality of the waterfront. The existing trees of the Soda Woods will be extended on the entire coastline to create not only a harmonious whole, but this will also create a unique and specific image for the Albanian coastal city. The plantation is done alternately just along the promenade, sometimes closer to the beach, sometimes in large quantities and sometimes widely spread, depending on the specificity of the area of the coastal strip. The row of trees forms a visual and acoustic barrier along the highway, but the thin tree trunks of the 'Aleppo Pine' have a pervious quality and the view onto the sea is preserved at all times.

The specific local conifer (a pine native to the Mediterranean region) also has a broad crown and is somewhat tilted by the wind, thus giving shelter for all kinds of activities. In the summer, the wide treetops of the conifers provide shade, in winter they protect from the cold wind. The conifers serve as excellent umbrellas, as parking, or as a canopy on arrival in the port. The consistent extension of the wood is a first implementation that leads to an immediate beautification of the coastal band.



## PHASING

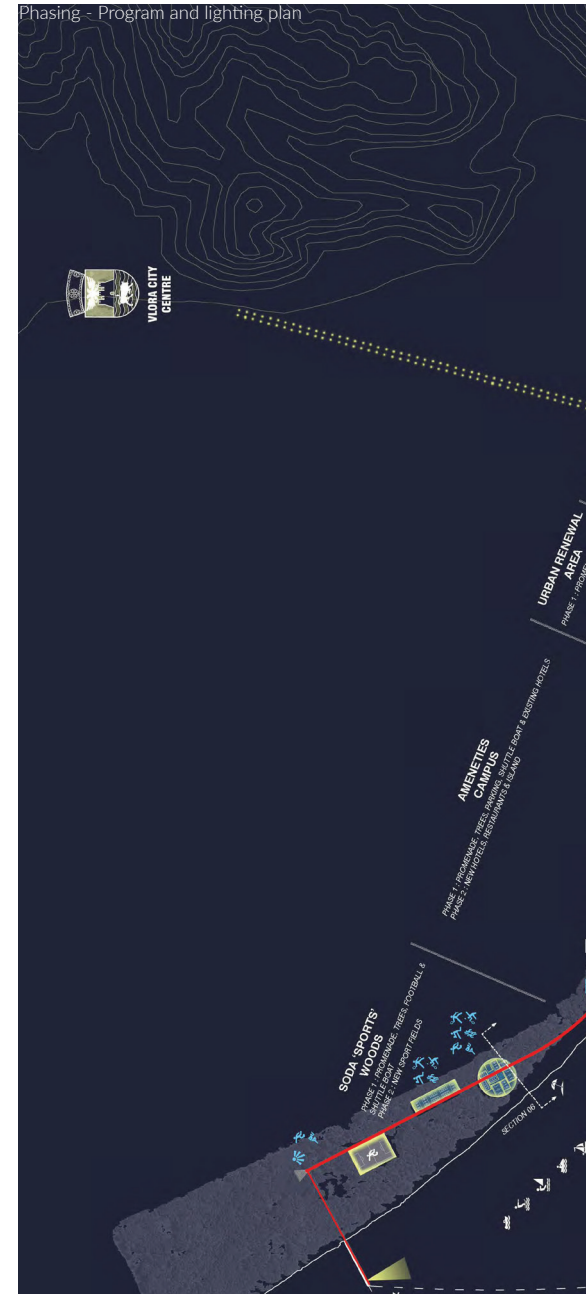
The consistent extension of the Soda Woods, together with the construction of the promenade along the coast is the first implementation that leads to an immediate beautification. Obviously, the first phase involves the application of urban furnishing elements and network infrastructure too: resourceful positioning of benches, showers, rubbish bins, road signs and lighting (built into the pavement or hung in the trees).

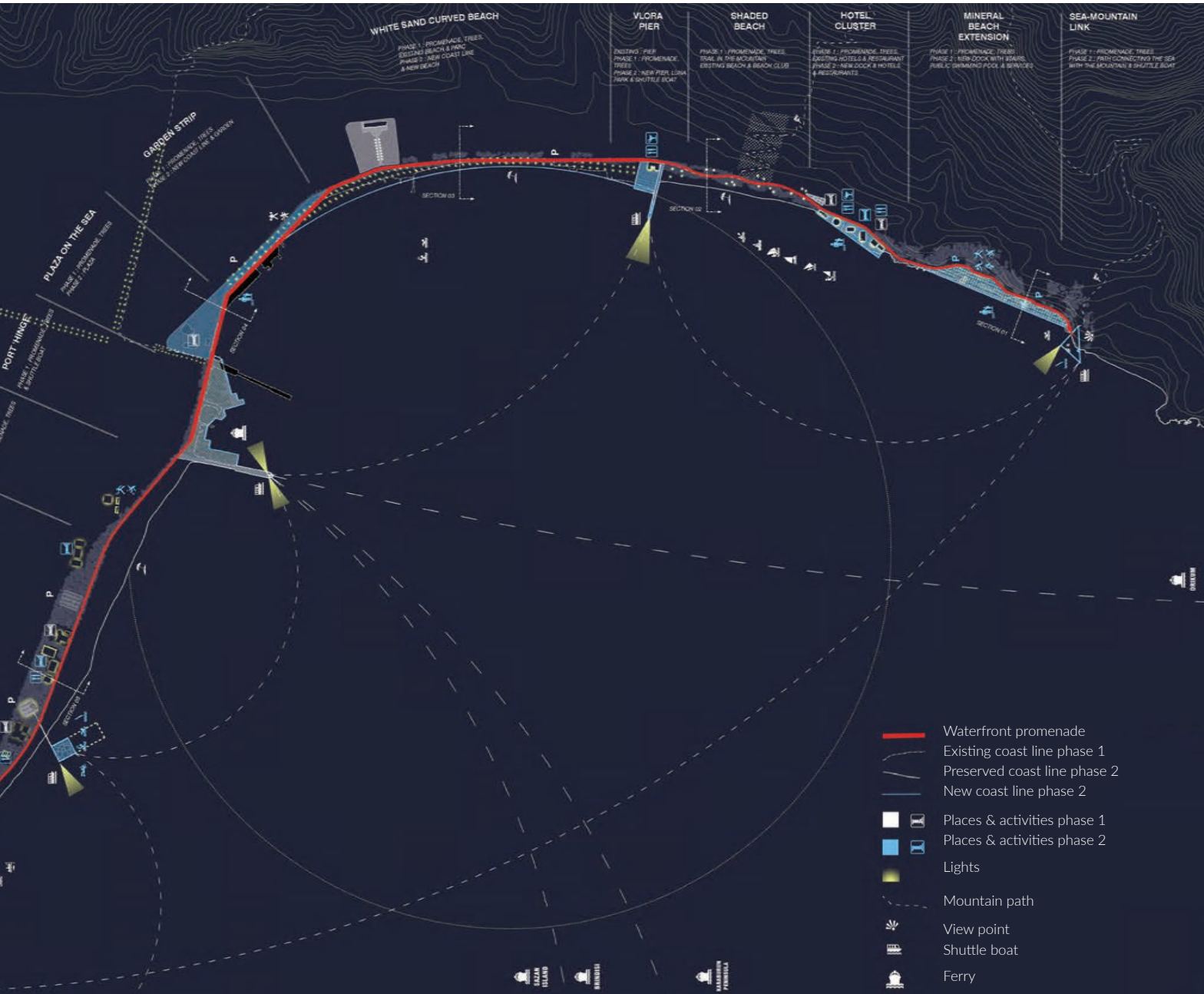
The implementation of the first phase of (part of) the pontoon at the southern tunnel is important for the immediate improvement of the quality of the coastal strip. This walkway of 3 to 4 meters wide only accessible to pedestrians has a triangular shape into the water, continuing into stairs which lead over the tunnel to the mountains behind. This relatively simple construction also serves as a diving board and access to the sea, a mooring place for boats, a viewing point, and as a gateway to the hiking trail in the mountains. It is a launching platform to both the sea and the mountains.

The interventions of the first phase are enhanced by the operations in a possible second or third stage. Certain areas can be focused on to achieve the transformation of the entire waterfront experience, for example by creating a new white beach, central parking along the roads, sports grounds, swimming areas and water parks, a pier and a marina, new hotels, a floating island ...

To clarify the whole project (phase 1 and 2) to the public, the design proposal can be explained in an informative 'project pavilion': it clarifies the use of the type of trees and the project on the basis of photographs, sketches and plans. This project pavilion is to be executed in the first implementation phase.

Phasing - Program and lighting plan





## VLORA WATERFRONT PROMENADE



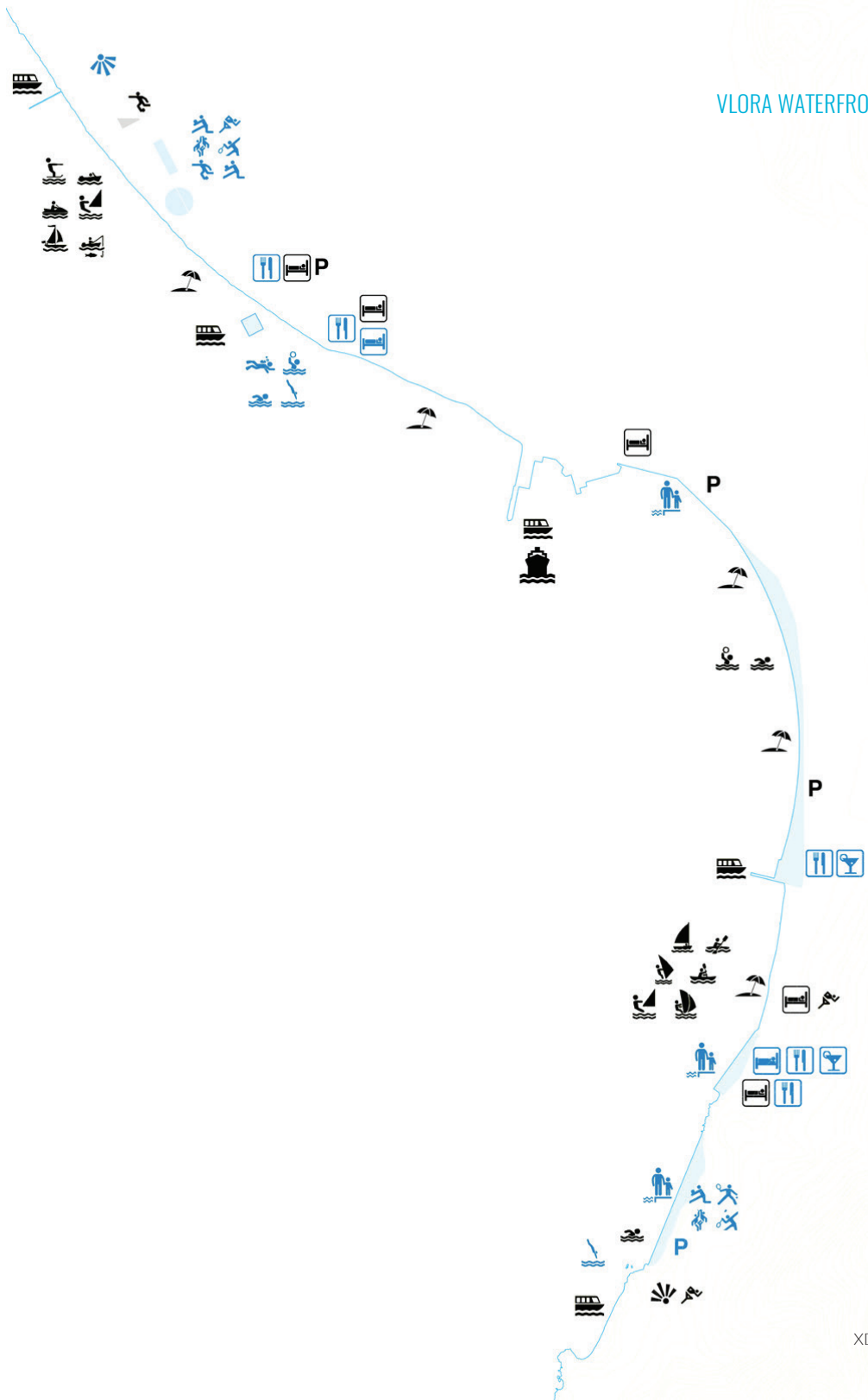
### FLEXIBILITY

The design proposal is open to interpretation and extremely flexible. It is an instrument of urban intervention in the coastal area of Albania in order to serve as a model. It is at all times adaptable depending on financial capacity, timing, and needs of the Ministry of Urban Development, the Municipality of Vlorë and the collective public opinion. 'Ad hoc' decisions can be made regarding whether and when certain areas are being tackled. In this respect, the decisions to be made regarding the accessibility of the coast by car don't have a great impact on the current design proposal: both the plans for a national bypass to avoid traffic in this segment, or the plans for an alternative municipal street that will make a traffic-free area in the South Segment possible, can be incorporated in the design proposal. The (illegally) built houses and hotels in the area along the existing highway are not an obstacle for the project. These properties can be largely maintained, and possibly be legalized according to the wishes of the competent authorities.

1. Promenade and trees.
2. Waterfront and points of interest.
3. Proposed new links (Waterland).



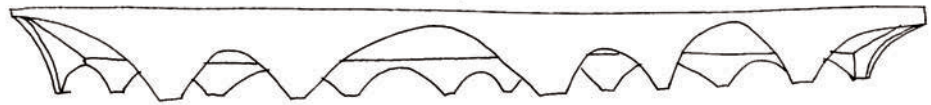
# VLORA WATERFRONT PROMENADE



## VLORA WATERFRONT PROMENADE



Recreational area

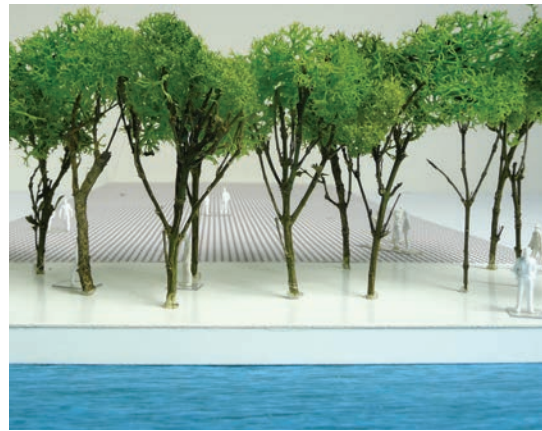


### Market canopy sketch

The market will have these functions:

1. Public space
2. Market
3. Gastronomy fair
4. Art & sculpture expo
5. Events
6. Specialty markets

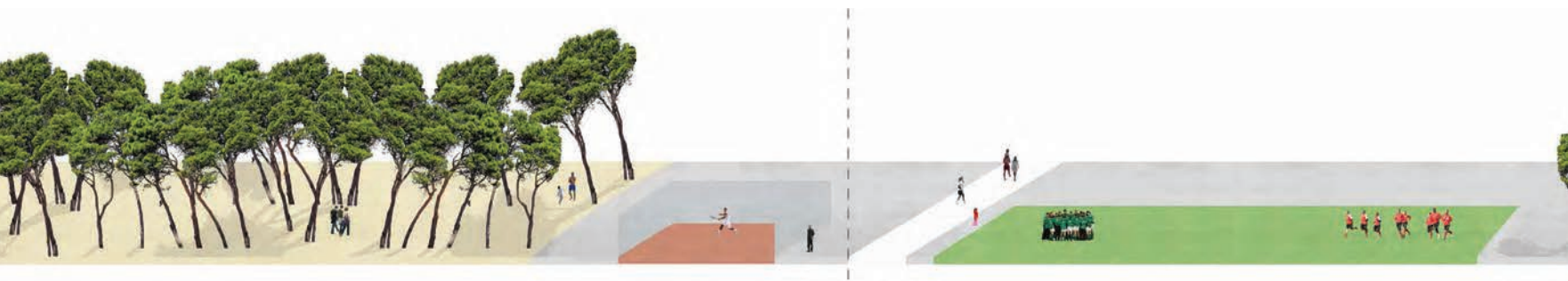
**B**y determining the different zones on the coast, the use of the water is also more defined and intensified. Demarcations in water allow for diversification of use: swimmers, divers, pleasure boats, ferries, floating islands, jetties, diving boards, mooring areas for boats and viewpoints. These various 'points of interest' give structure, sequence and rhythm to the entire coastline.

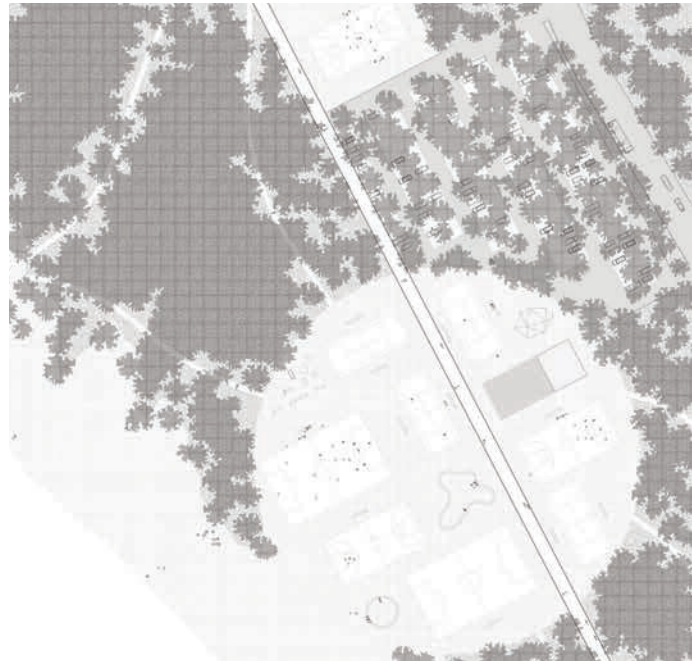


Model photos

## VARIATION - SEQUENCES

The design proposal aims for an integrating, harmonizing and upgrading implementation. The consistent extension of the promenade and the typical vegetation provide harmony and unity. However, some areas can be addressed in very different ways in order to create a variety of sections prone to a range of experiences. Most of the proposed sequences are transformations or clarifications of existing situations. From North to South we encounter the following lineup of places, each with a different tourist and/or user attraction factor.



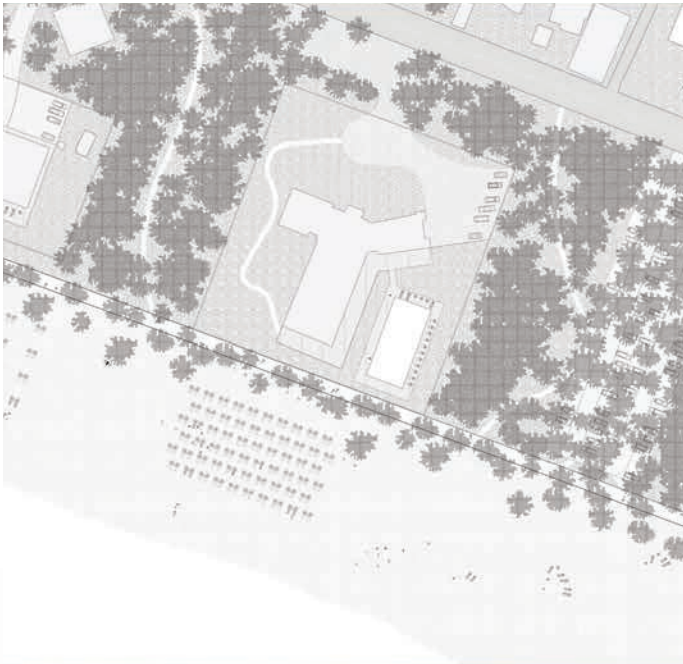


SODA 'SPORTS' WOODS: in the existing forest with the existing football field, new sports grounds and fields are created.

## AMENITIES CAMPUS

The zone with existing (illegally built) infrastructures retains a flexible interpretation: it is a campus with buildings (hotels, resorts, restaurants, car parks) looking out onto the beach. The sea provides a floating island; a platform for swimmers and a dock for pleasure boats.



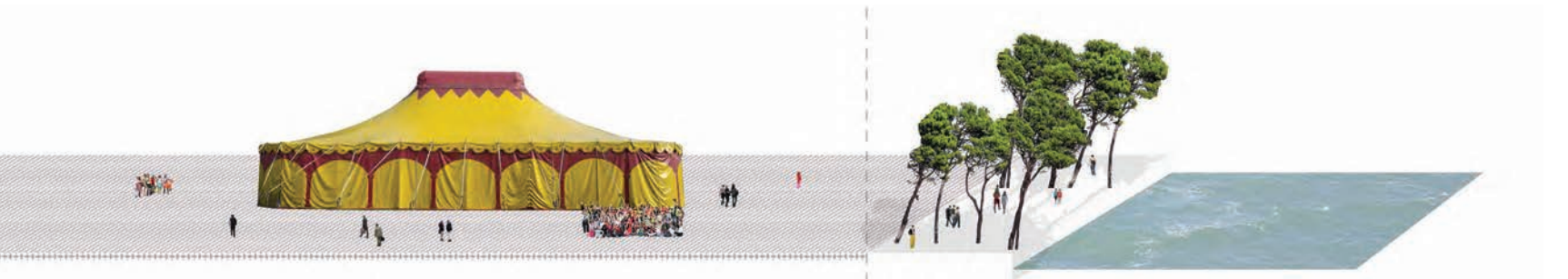


### PORT

The port occupies a pivotal role in the project. It is a tourist harbour for pleasure boats and cruise ships. Tourists are welcomed onto a grand square of marble tiles beneath a canopy formed by the tops of the planted trees.

**PLAZA ON THE SEA:** This is an open square to the quay provided with trees. It offers a superb view onto the water and leads to a zone with wide shaded gardens.

**GARDEN STRIP:** Zone with wide shaded gardens and providing space for different functions (sports, recreation ...).







### WHITE SAND CURVED BEACH

Zone for the construction of a new, white 'Copacabana-ish' beach with a beautiful view over the sea. This section is the most classic stretch of beach and answers to an already very established urban seafront. Behind the beach the promenade continues at around 10m wide, the widest it gets along the new promenade.





PLAN ZOOM WHITE SAND CURVED BEACH

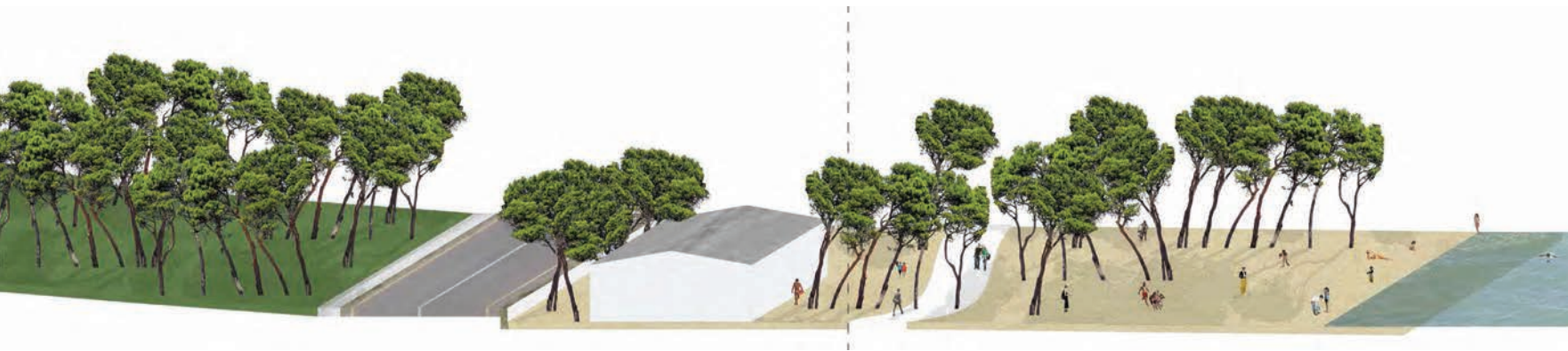


VLORA PIER: the existing pier is being renovated and expanded with activities (pubs, restaurants, jetties).

### SHADED BEACH

This is a more natural, wilder, greener stretch of beach. The trees are standing closer to the water. On the other side of the road natural landscaped stairs lead the way into the mountains behind.

HOTEL CLUSTER: the expansion of the existing zone with hotels and restaurants needs to be structured and clearly defined by constructing a rectilinear square in the water for additional hotels behind which, the row of trees continues.



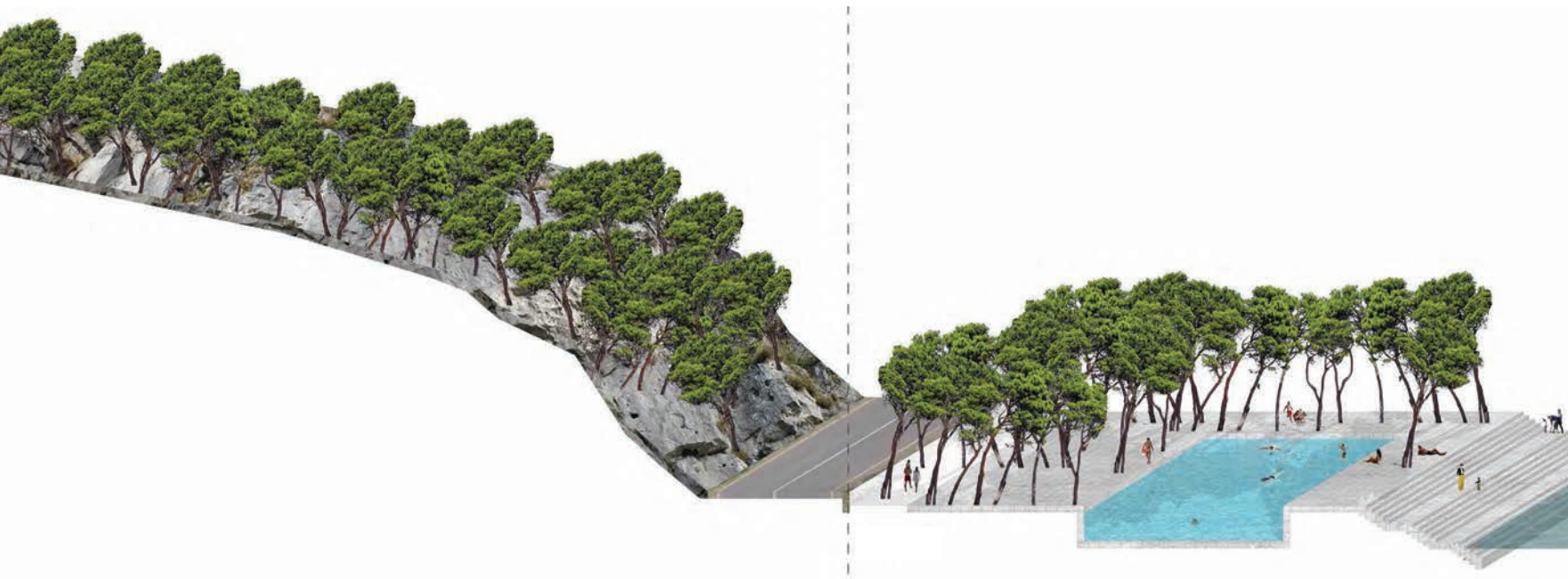


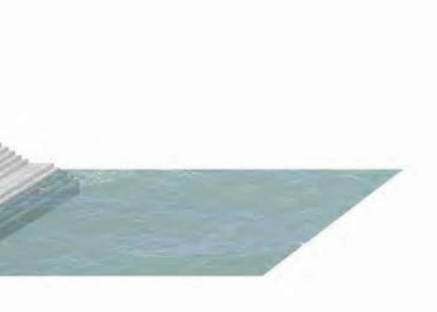
### MINERAL BEACH EXTENSION

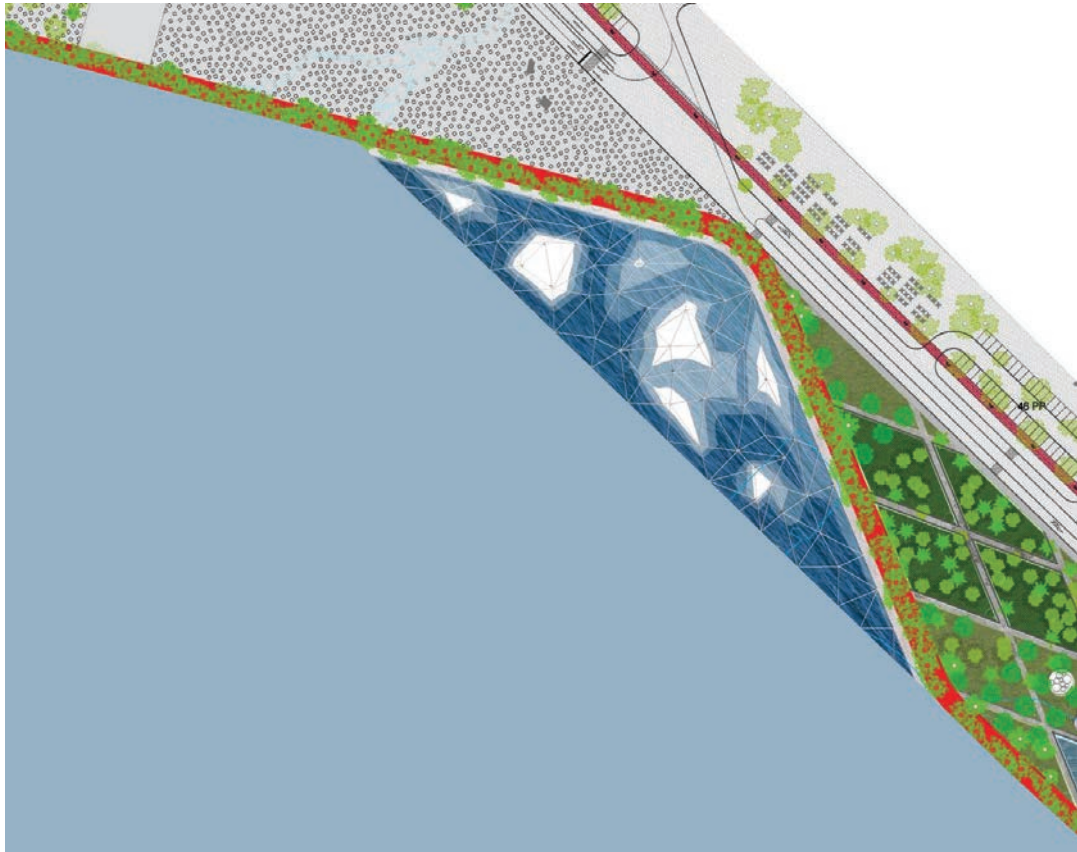
Due to the proximity of the existing highway, the beach is very narrow at this point. This rocky area is extended by a diverse staircase structure directly into the sea. The platform at the top of the stairs offers a municipal swimming pool, sports grounds and parking.

### SEA - MOUNTAIN LINK

A triangular walkway, 3-4 meters wide and only accessible for pedestrians is partly on the water and partly on land. The part in the water is a pontoon that can be used as a diving board and access to the sea, and as a mooring area for boats. The walkway continues into stairs leading over the tunnel to the mountains behind. This simple and light construction serves both as a viewing point and gateway to the hiking trail in the mountains. It is a launching platform to both the sea and the mountains.







Sunken square - detail

**WATERFRONT:** The improved relation to the sea, safe access and treatment of rivers across the waterfront.





Sunken square - view

### **SHUTTLE FERRY**

The various 'points of interest' are to be linked by an water ferry system. Light electric shuttle ferries enable visitors to quickly and easily reach the differentiated sections of the waterfront, while enjoying a view of the beach front itself and of course the beautiful mountainous backdrop of Vlora. This system also allows for an intelligent approach of the parking. Vlora's topography and the existing highways often limit the available space that could be reserved for parking. By linking these areas with areas where parking space can be easily organized, a simple solution is presented for this issue. Most parking can be organized in the amenities campus on the western waterfront section, from there tourists and visitors can get on the jetty to get to the shuttle ferry and go to the beach experience of their choice. In the second phase a car park building could be organized in the amenities campus. Smaller parking areas are maintained or created along the coast where these are compatible with the promenade, the programming and the topography.



Ferry shuttle



Entrance area

## 03 HHF - SECOND PRIZE

### TEAM COMPOSITION:

#### **Team leader**

Simon Hartmann

#### **Architect**

Ivana Barisic

Jelena Vucic

Mariana Santana

Joni Baboci

Bora Baboci

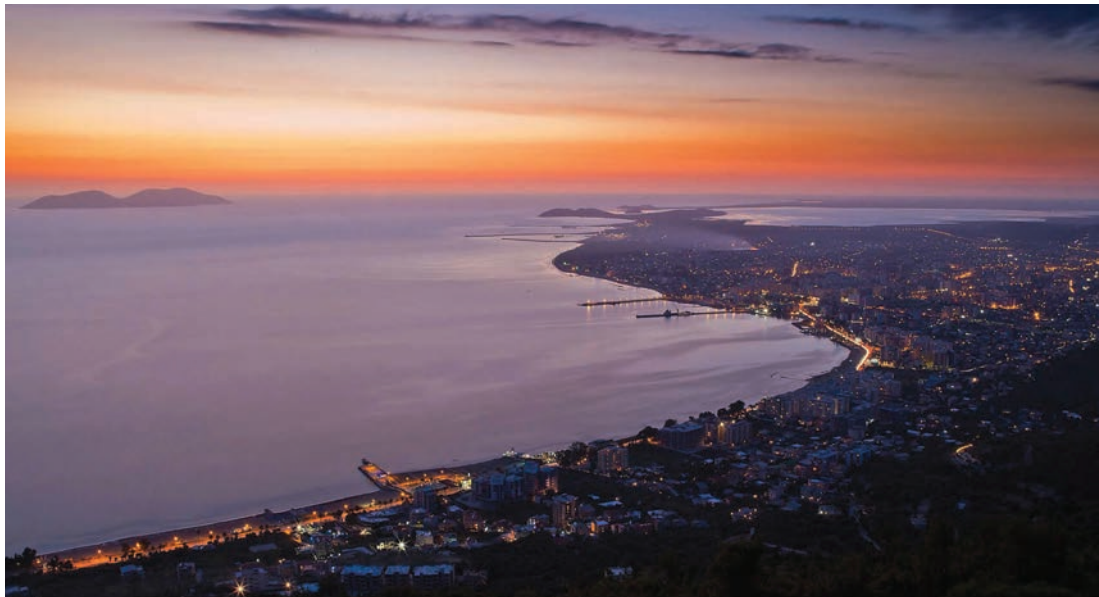
Silvia Vicente

#### **Intern**

Zdenek Liska

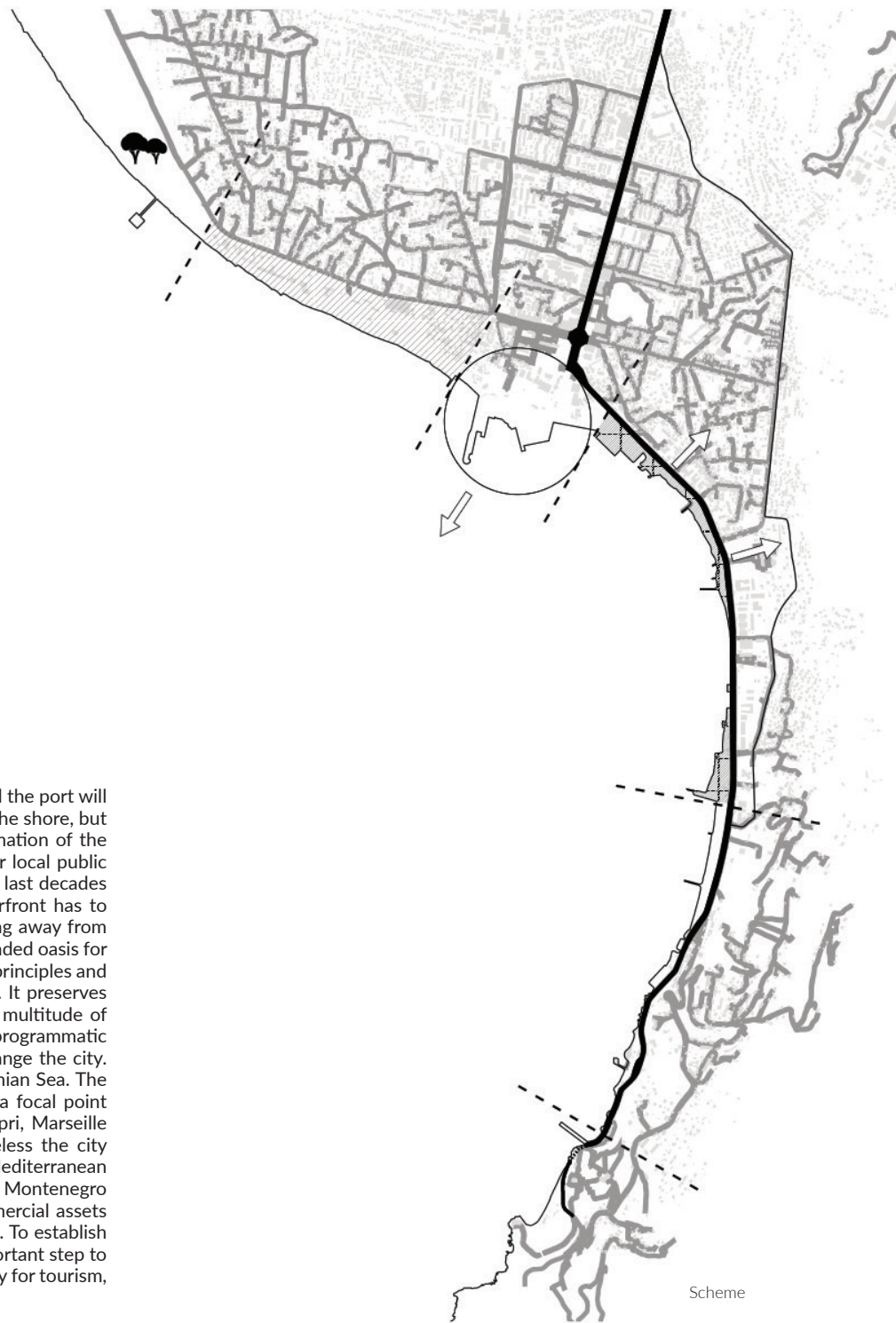
#### **Biosystems Engineer**

Xavier Aliart



*The Vlorë waterfront competition is a first of many opportunities to rethink the figure, the program and the design of the major future public space of the city. The picture above showing Vlorë at night represents the current condition, the picturesque beauty of the topographical setting facing west and offering the most beautiful sunsets. However, the coast line is dark and strangely free of all those signs of public use known and appreciated in all the exciting cities with a similar waterfront on the Mediterranean sea. The development of the waterfront will be a long process of many small steps but it will transform the existing situation into something which smells like a vibrant summer night on one of the new piers of Vlorë.*

**THE BEAUTY IS ALREADY THERE**



### TRAFFIC WILL LEAVE THE SHORE MAKE IT PUBLIC

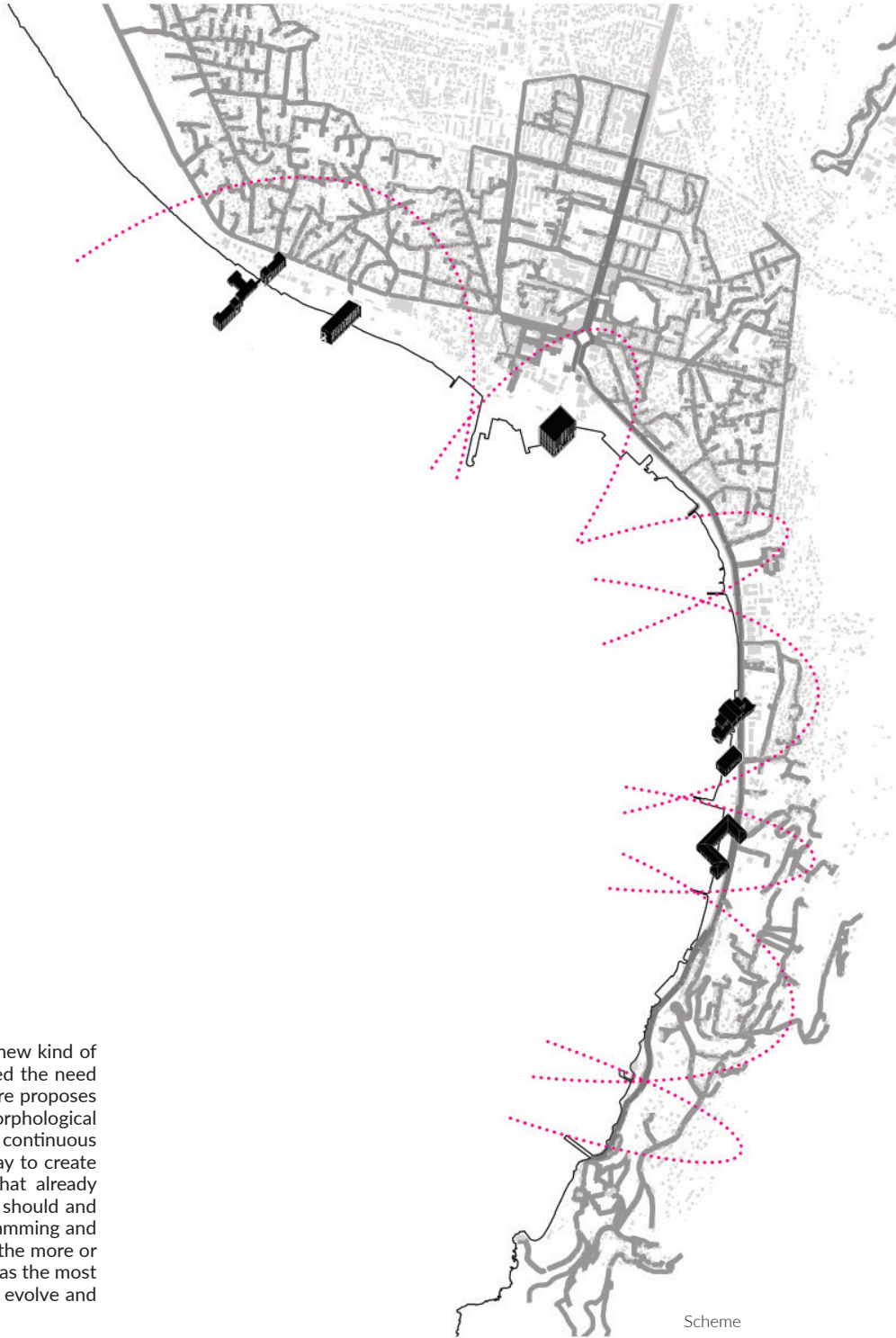
Transit traffic to the south of the country will be diverted and the port will change. These infrastructural elements did not only pollute the shore, but they defined it in the very center of the city. The transformation of the shore from a transit space for others into a public space for local public life is the most significant and radical change of Vlorë in the last decades and should be done in the softest possible way. The waterfront has to transform back into a hub for the citizens of Vlorë, by shying away from the image of the Southern Gate, and transforming in an extended oasis for the locals and tourists. The project therefore adapts a set of principles and elements to the specificities of each part of the waterfront. It preserves what is beautiful and ameliorates what is less attractive. A multitude of small, realistic and practical interventions will fill in the programmatic void left behind by the port and the road to organically change the city. The Bay of Vlorë is located where the Adriatic meets the Ionian Sea. The scenic properties of the bay of Vlorë with Sazan island as a focal point during sunsets are very rare and remind of Naples and Capri, Marseille and Chateau d'If, or San Francisco and Alcatraz. Nevertheless the city encounters the challenge of redefining its importance in the Mediterranean context. Places with less scenic potential in Greece, Italy and Montenegro have outpaced Vlorë in developing their touristic and commercial assets and settling themselves as ports of international importance. To establish the waterfront as main public space of Vlorë is the most important step to profit from the so far not fully used scenic potential - Not only for tourism, but for the public life of the community as well.

Scheme



### **WATER IS A CAPITAL - TREAT IT SO**

Water should be treated like an important capital belonging to the city. The waterfront and multiple beaches in the heart of Vlorë should be regenerated and brought forth as an important spine of local development. Specific attention should be paid to the informal sewage that punctuates the waterfront continually from the old beach to the tunnel. Consideration has to be refocused not only on the local potential of the waterfront but also to the sea's economic potential in tandem with the luxury of Vlorë's location in the Mediterranean. Water holds immense potential to be used as an important design element; it is a constant feature of this project: from the natural filtering of sewage to the ecological floating island. The aim is to create a loop which continually cleans the ecosystem while at the same time developing its eco - potential further and allowing secondary design interventions to supplement and emphasize this natural gift that belongs to the citizens of Vlorë.



### A LOT OF NEW SPACE - START WITH DIVERSITY

Free from traffic and with an improved water quality due to new kind of sewage systems public space in Vlora will multiply and exceed the need and financial potential of the community. The project therefore proposes to use the existing diversity of as many found objects and morphological characteristics as possible instead of trying to implement a continuous redesign of the waterfront. The most simple and effective way to create a vibrant diversity at the shore must take into account what already exists. The proposed project does not put its focus on what should and will be added to the shore, but on the importance of reprogramming and enhancing the functionality of existing buildings as well as of the more or less public spaces. Once the shore will be perceived and used as the most important public space of the city, its design will continue to evolve and get more and more specific as well as more refined.

Scheme





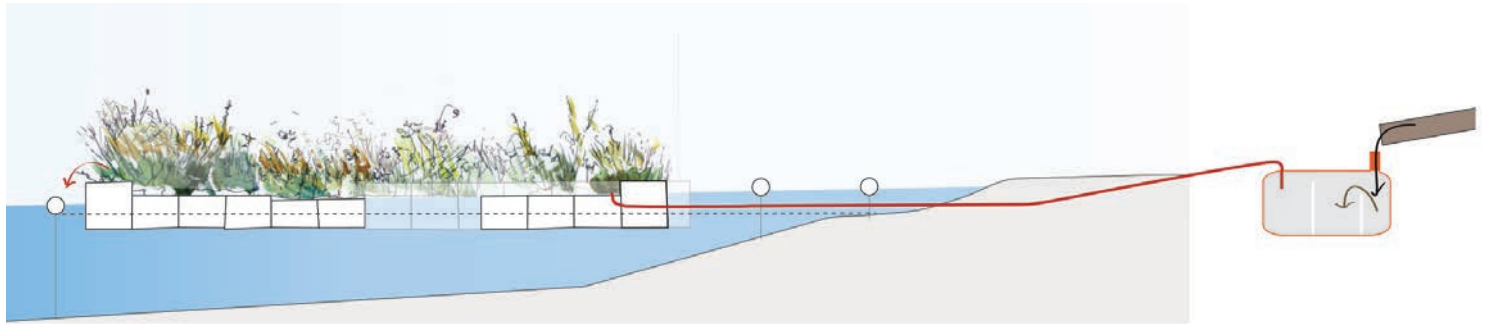
Scheme

### ENHANCE ACCESSIBILITY AND NODES OF ACTIVITY

There is no expectation nor any desire to convert the whole waterfront into a fully pedestrian street since the immense space would need a minimal amount of pedestrian density to become a successful public space. The waterfront is envisioned as an agglomeration of activity nodes that attract people along the coast. In order to achieve punctuated density throughout the 5 km waterfront an intervention of planned diversity is envisioned. An efficient bus or tram service, limited parking times, and appealing bike lanes in-between the palm trees would encourage locals to leave their cars at home and partake in the ecological renovation of Vlora. The meeting point between the city and the sea continually morphs based on the topography and the program, each part of the coastline naturally responding to the needs of the city. The way the urban territory responds to the sea, also designs how people will interpret these landscapes. We want this variety of landscapes to each become a new opportunity at how we perceive and experience the impressive view of the sea, the peninsula of Karaburun and the island of Sazan.

## WATER RESTORATION

Unregulated effluent spillage is an issue that one encounters throughout the Vlora Waterfront. It needs to be dealt with as soon as possible in order to improve the conditions of the water as well as attract locals and tourists who would be distressed by the current situation. The optimum solutions to improve the water quality of the seaside is to install a big manifold along the coast which collects effluent from all sewer pipes currently discharging at the beach. The effluent would then be directly pumped to the city water treatment plant. Because of the length of that manifold it will be necessary to install different pumping stations – with submersed effluent pumps and move all the flow to the depuration station. In order to reduce the amount of water to be treated is also necessary to keep a separate net for rain water so as to avoid mixing it into the sewer manifold. To prevent contamination of floating rubbish it will be necessary to install different grates at the rain water piping network which would remove plastics and other objects carried by rain water during strong rains. In addition, a specialized cleaning boat should collect the floating rubbish near the beach and a tractor with special beach cleaning equipment should work during the night to remove any rubbish from the sand. Since this is a permanent and costly solution the following alternatives are proposed which might serve as temporary interventions to improve the water condition.



### GREEN PIERS

Wetland areas can be created on floating piers. Using standard equipment to build modular floating piers, this proposition uses the assembling of modules sized 50cm x 50cm x 40cm and able to hold 350kg/m<sup>2</sup> as a support for an artificial freshwater pond. A waterproof membrane will be used to keep fresh water on top of the pier. Because of wave action, the pier will be moving and freshwater and aquatic plants should be fixed with a special hose used as substrate and diffusing pipe at the same time (as in the section). Treated water can then flow directly into the sea.

### WETLAND DEPURATION SYSTEM

In order to realize tertiary treatment with aquatic freshwater plants it will be necessary to build a large pond, properly waterproofed with a membrane and keep an inundated space to grow aquatic plants. Treated water can flow directly into the sea or into a drainage well build in the sand. This solution can create a nice landscape similar to a natural wetland area, and possibly become very attractive for different local and migratory bird species, which will create a more natural atmosphere around the area.





Old beach proposal

### OLD BEACH

From the Soda Woods to the port there will be some low-cost efficient interventions. Initially a wooden deck installed at the far edge of the beach would make the whole area more accessible to the locals - especially for retirees and persons with disabilities. Furthermore the derelict “Kampi i Punetoreve” might be regenerated with a new program. Since Vlora is a central city to the Albanian coast by its location as well as its importance it would be appropriate to found a Maritime Research institute and one wing of the “Kampi i Punetoreve” would be ideal being so close to the sea and preserving such an interesting shape. The other wing of the building could be transformed into a maritime museum with different leisure activities, different services, bars and restaurants. The “Kampi” would be the first in a series of activity nodes which are connected by the continuous boardwalk in the five kilometer boardwalk.



West village proposal

## WEST VILLAGE

The informal developments close to the port create an interesting specificity that needs to be dealt with. The project envisions this as one of the only medium-term interventions in the old beach section. The area closer to the informal developments is unsuitable for being used as a beach because of the vicinity to the port as well as the informal houses. Therefore a gradual series of steps would cover this part of the old beach transforming this area in a social magnet to spend some time and have a drink from local stalls while enjoying the beautiful views and still being very close to the center of the city. The stairs section could also be used by fishermen to open their nets in as well as seating space for the audience of the “stage in the sea”. This area has a lot of potential to become a center of gravity for locals.



Independence square proposal

### **EXTENSION OF INDEPENDENCE SQUARE**

This area is imagined as a beautiful finalization of any trip from the boulevard. It should be an urban goal, the achievement of which would offer beautiful views as well as multiple ways of entertainment. It is envisioned as an extension of the current Independence Square - connecting the square to the sea and transforming it into a friendly and vibrant area. The square would further extend south- eastwards as an events and market area with market stalls which are however larger than usual and resemble the typical shops that can be found today in the boulevard of Vlorë. It would be the centre of a dense activity node which is interesting to visit for the citizens as well as for tourists strolling through the waterfront.



Water gardens proposal

## WATER GARDENS

An important element of this project is having a connected waterfront from the port section to the end of the new beach. The water gardens would supplement the strictly commercial program of the boulevard. However this long section of the waterfront has along its way a number of perfectly functioning beaches. In order to let these beaches thrive the project envisions for a strolling path to snake behind the beaches and return to the shore after them, in a way enclosing them while at the same time separating them further from the street and traffic. In sections such as the water gardens the only need it to exploit the potential of what is already working, thus minor rearrangements are more than enough to integrate this already thriving area.



Rocky waterfront proposal

### **ROCKY WATERFRONT**

The central waterfront offers amazing views of the peninsula of Karaburun and the island of Sazan. If traffic is slowed and different modes of transportation are implemented, this area could quickly become a more pedestrian section of the waterfront. Bicycle lanes and a continuous seating space can transform this area. Like in the water gardens there are huge amounts of pedestrian potential here. Narrowing the current automobile street would also create enough space for services while making the beautiful view much more accessible than today.





New beach proposal

## NEW BEACH

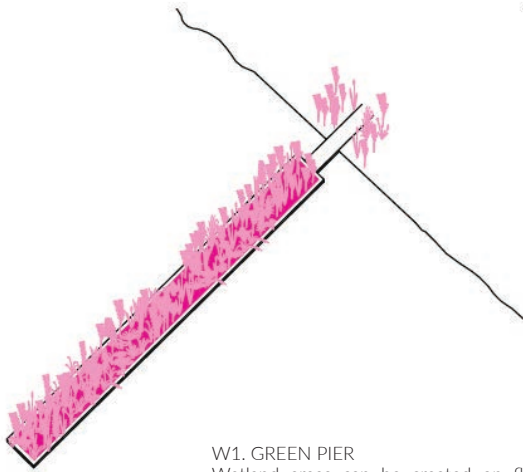
Most beaches will be complemented by green piers which disguise sewage in the vicinity, mask the odors, and help clean the effluent before it is spilled into the sea. These piers would become a constant sight in the city and would disappear only as the sewage problems are permanently resolved. As described in the water regeneration section these freshwater ponds would be isolated from the water and therefore no algae would pollute the sea. This low-cost idea could be easily replicated in all touristic villages in Albania, where sewage spillage into the sea is routine.



### SHORT TERM PROPOSALS

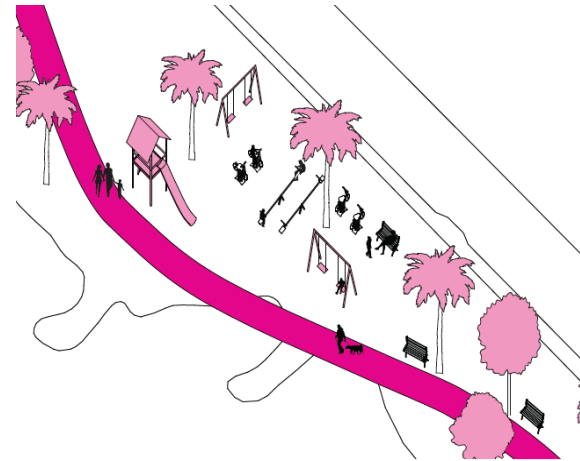
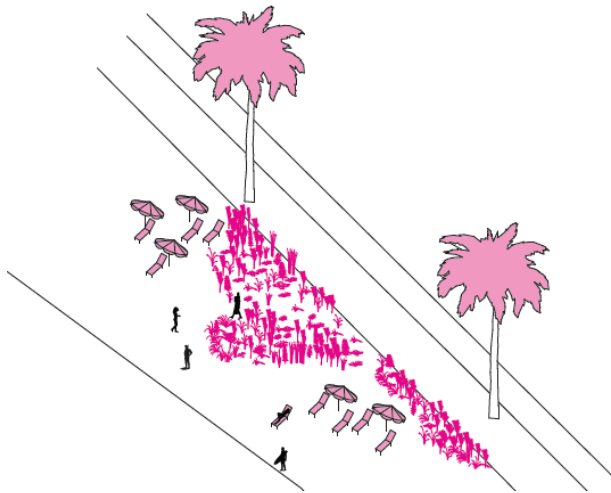
The collection of project propositions describes the possibilities for completely different activities. The project defines the appropriate areas for these elements and it additionally gives informed suggestions based on the perceived needs of the city. An important suggestion is to let the citizens of Vlorë ultimately decide the program of some of these elements. The short term proposals can be adopted right away and be ready for the coming season. The priority is the health and environment issue. Improving the water quality, sport facilities and green spaces and green spaces.

Short term proposals map



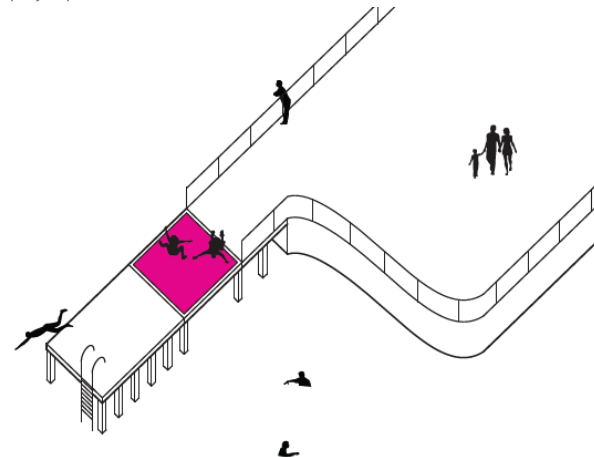
**W1. GREEN PIER**  
Wetland areas can be created on floating piers. Using standard equipment to build modular floating piers, this proposition uses the assembling of modules sized 50cm x 50cm x 40cm and able to hold 350kg/m2 as a support for an artificial freshwater pond.

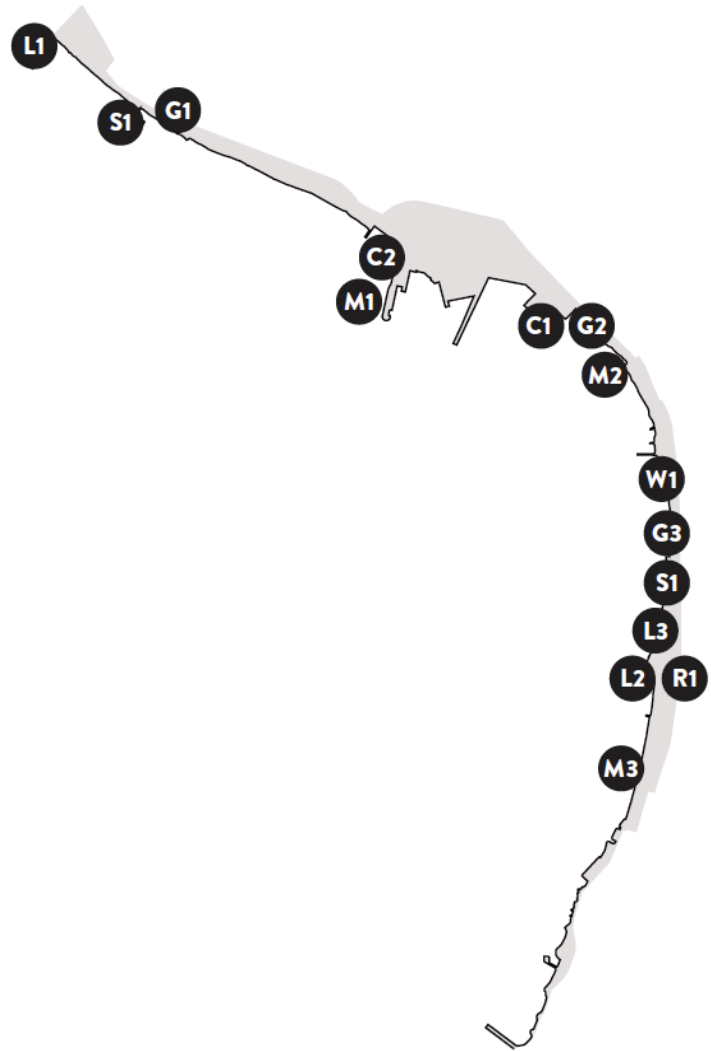
**W2. WETLAND**  
This solution can create a nice landscape similar to a natural wetland area, and possibly become very attractive for different local and migratory bird species, which will create a more natural atmosphere around the area.



**G2. WATER GARDEN**  
The Water garden is a section of the coast that already exists in the Vlora bay. It will be improved, but without changing anything that already works. This would be a central activity node for children playgrounds, animal walking and exercising activities.

**L2. TRAMPOLINE**  
The trampoline is a very unique asset of the Vlora beaches. This specific trampoline has been used by different generations to learn how to swim, to do competitions or to simply enjoy a jump in the water.

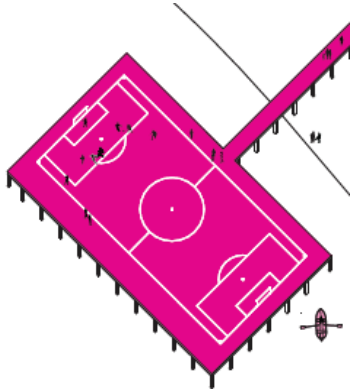




## LONG TERM PROPOSALS

The long term proposals would need more time to be realized, however they would be crucial to the quality and services that the Vlora waterfront would offer. These proposals would significantly increase the level of health, culture, commerce and accessibility that the short term proposals start to delineate.

Map of the long term proposals

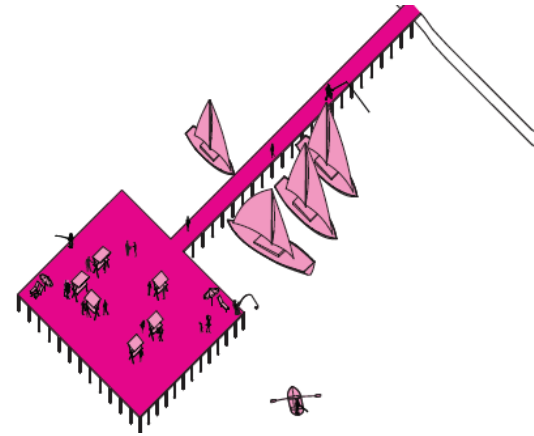
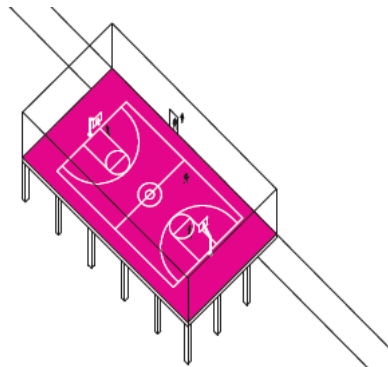


**S1. SOCCER FIELD**

Soccer is a long loved sport by the locals, it is typically played in the sand. This proposal would find soccer played in a platform on the sea, with the gorgeous view in the back and once in a while, with a refreshing jump in the water.

**S2. BASKETBALL COURT**

Basketball is a sport that has been slightly forgotten and should be brought back. The basketball field on the water is proposed as an attractive way to revitalize sports culture and healthy bodies in the city of Vlora.

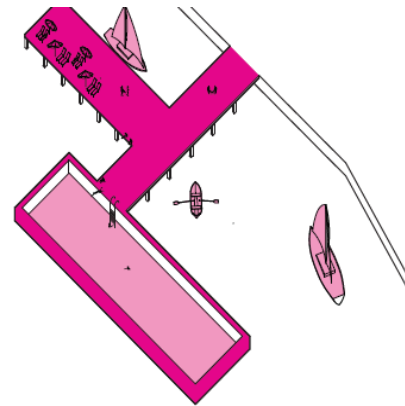


**L1. FISHERMEN PIER**

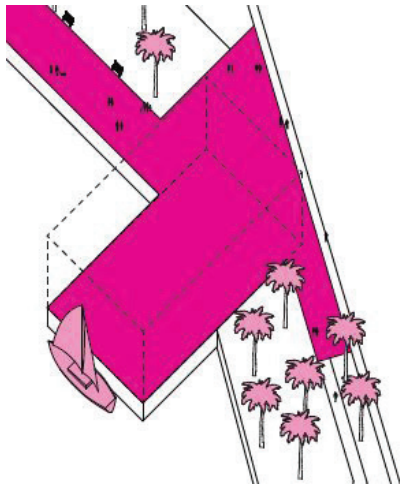
The fishermen pier is a necessary facility for the citizens of Vlora. This is mostly envisioned for the local community that can anchor their boats, unfold their nets, and go fishing, or sailing. This facility is lacking for the moment and it has been demanded by the local community.

**L3. POOL**

The pool would be a summer and winter facility. It would be used for anyone that enjoys a swimming pool facility rather than the. The pool would also serve as a training facility for swimmers during the cold season.

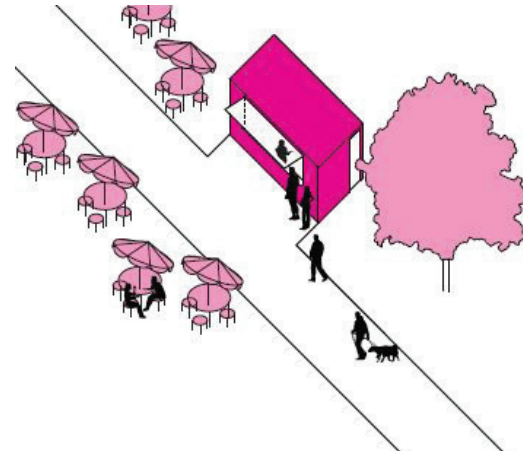


## VLORA WATERFRONT PROMENADE



### C1. LANDMARK BUILDING

The landmark building would be an elegantly designed two-floored building, that would be used in the interior as well as the exterior. Internally it would offer shows as well as exhibition spaces.



### R1. BUVETTE

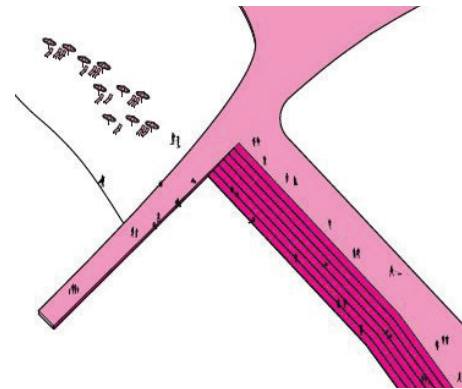
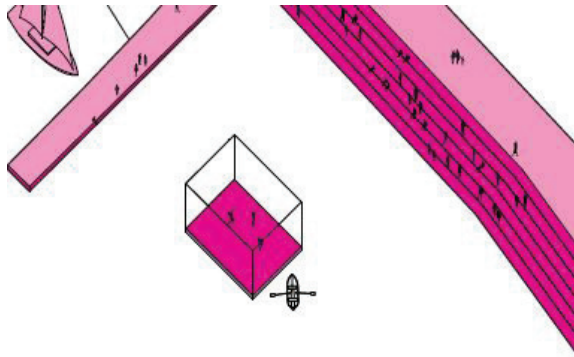
The buvette is an absolute necessity in the Vlora waterfront, not only for the typical necessity for tourists and locals to have refreshments and fast food, but also because of the inevitable Albanian culture of coffee drinking and discussions over it.

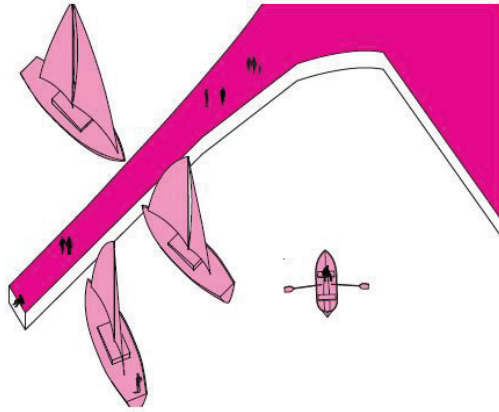
### C2. STAGE

The stage would be the main attraction for anyone passionate of performance art. It would be located in the water, and the shows would be seen from the stairs. This could also work as a summer cinema with projected films.

### M1. STEPS

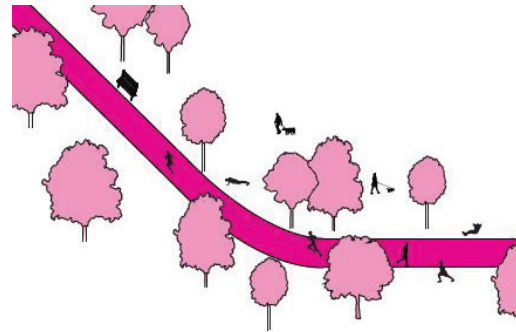
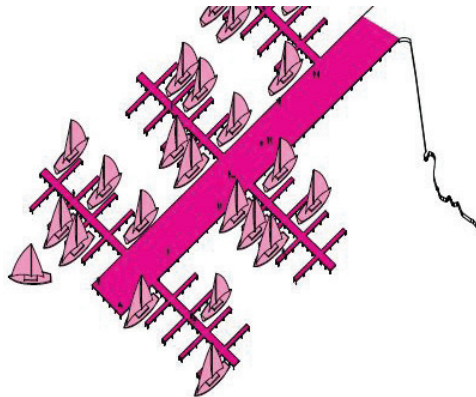
The steps would serve different purposes. Apart from being an alternative way of chilling at the beach they would be a gradual passage from the land to the sea. They could be used by fishermen to open their nets, or by the Stage Audience to sit on and enjoy the shows, the sun, or the stars.





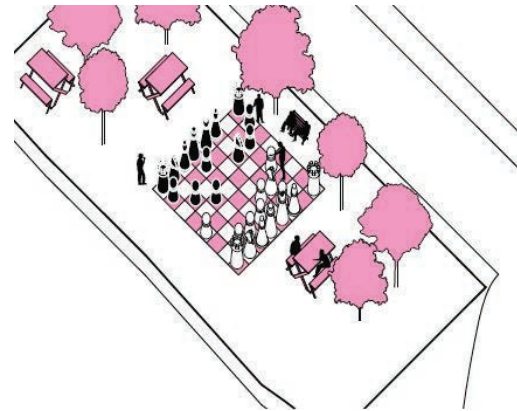
**M2 .PIER**  
The pier would serve for anchoring local and touristic boats, or for an evening stroll. They will also make sure to fill some of the eroded beach mass in critical parts of the coast.

**M3. MARINA**  
Since the port of Vlora will be turned into a Touristic Port then a marina will be necessary for incentivizing tourism and foreigners to anchor their boats and some of their time and money in the city of Vlora.



**G1. URBAN PARK**  
Keeping in mind the intense construction that this landscape has suffered, green space should be given back in the hope that it will regenerate some of the flora and fauna that has been.

**G3. SMALL PARK**  
The small park would be a great place for elders to play their domino games while the youth tries to move human size chess, have picnics or local music shows



### REPROGRAMMING

The reprogramming of existing buildings in the Vlora Waterfront will happen in locations that the waterfront necessitates building mass and program. The buildings we propose in our intervention will become important elements of the waterfront activity nodes.

#### 1. MARINE CENTER

Wetland areas can be created on floating piers. Using standard equipment to build modular floating piers, this proposition uses the assembling of modules sized 50cm x 50cm x 40cm and able to hold 350kg/m2 as a support for an artificial freshwater pond.

#### 2. NAUTICAL CLUB

This solution can create a nice landscape similar to a natural wetland area, and possibly become very attractive for different local and migratory bird species, which will create a more natural atmosphere around the area.

#### 3. FIRST AID STATION

The Water garden is a section of the coast that already exists in the Vlora bay. It will be improved, but without changing anything that already works. This would be a central activity node for children playgrounds, animal walking and exercising activities.

#### 4. SHOPPING STRIP

The trampoline is a very unique asset of the Vlora beaches. This specific trampoline has been used by different generations to learn how to swim, to do competitions or to simply enjoy a jump in the water.

#### 5. CULTURAL CENTER

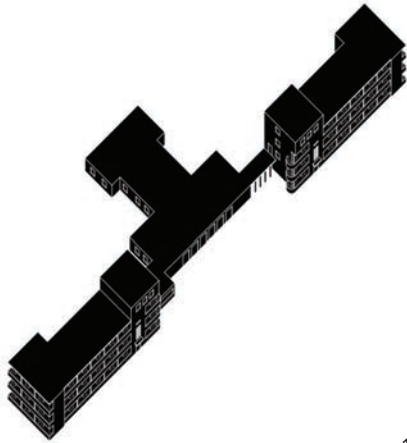
Wetland areas can be created on floating piers. Using standard equipment to build modular floating piers, this proposition uses the assembling of modules sized 50cm x 50cm x 40cm and able to hold 350kg/m2 as a support for an artificial freshwater pond.

#### 6. ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE

This solution can create a nice landscape similar to a natural wetland area, and possibly become very attractive for different local and migratory bird species, which will create a more natural atmosphere around the area.



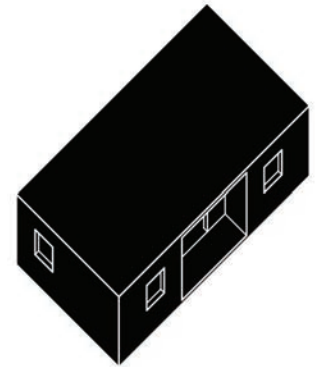
Reprogramming of existing buildings



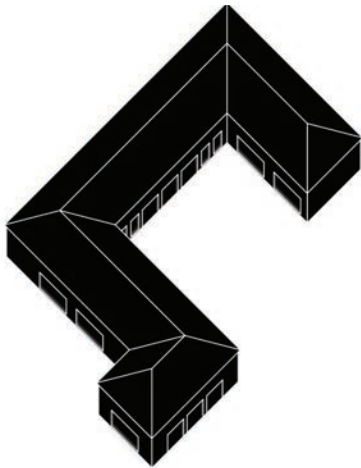
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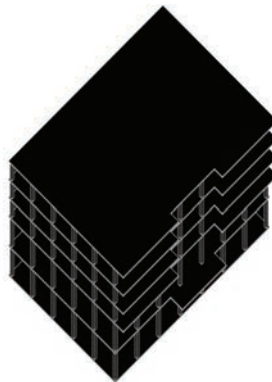
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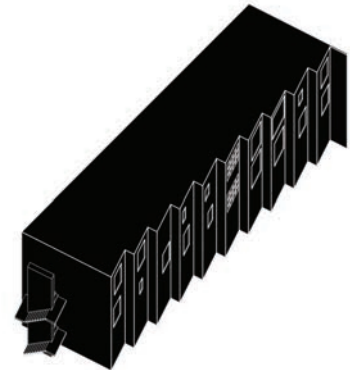
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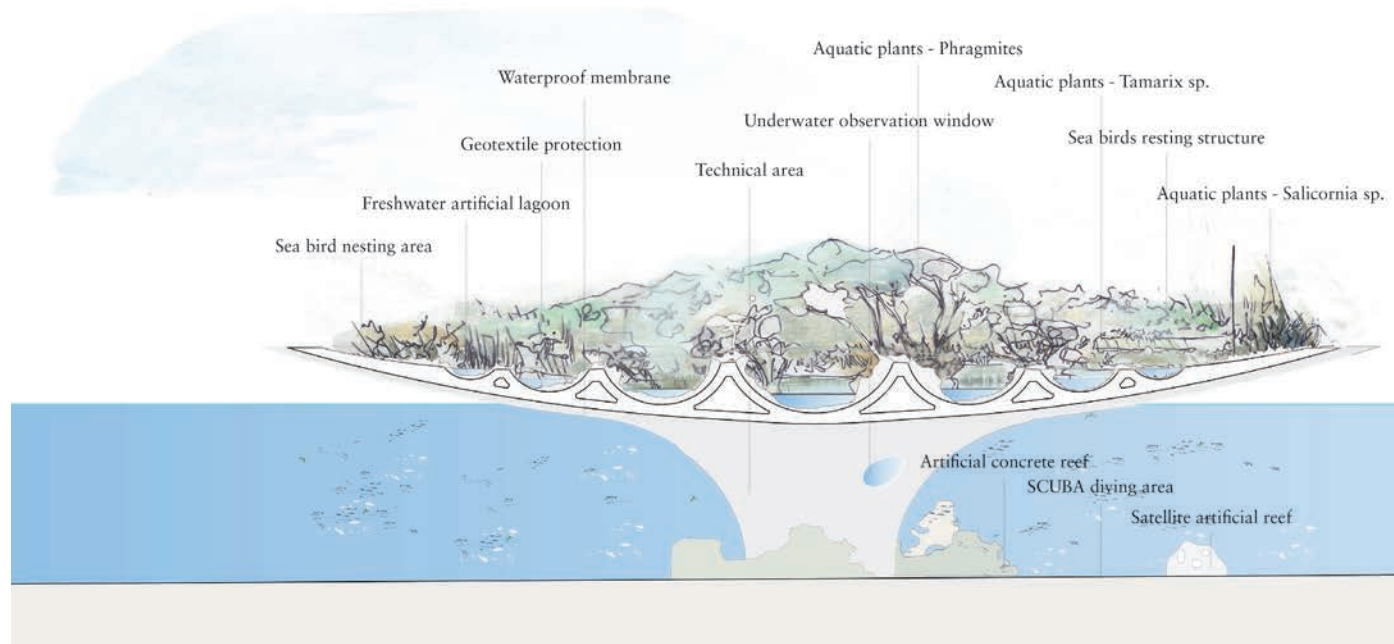
5.



6.

## ISLAND - RECREATION OF NATURAL HABITATS

The ecological island would be a new symbol for the city of Vlora. While it would be a much larger intervention than the proposed water gardens, it would complement them and become an emblem in the fight for ecological preservation. Located peripherally in the context of the waterfront so as not to impede the uninterrupted views to Sazan, the floating artificial island would preserve most plant and animal species found in the region of Vlora. It would constitute a symbolical arc, reminding individuals of the importance of progressing towards sustainable touristic development which when achieved might allow the island to be permanently anchored to the city and become a natural museum of its past.



A complementary solution to a coastal regeneration strategy, the creation of an artificial island is proposed in order to promote biologic colonization. The island will have a submersed part, recreating a rocky reef, to offer enough hides, holes and protection to promote species colonization as fish, crabs, octopus and algae. This renewed habitat can also be an attractive point for divers, at the same time it can be seen from the island through an underwater window. A fresh water pipeline should be connected to allow the creation of a natural habitat with living plants. The construction of some artificial lagoons inside the island will also enable aquatic plants to grow up and will be very attractive for a different kind of sea birds such as *Larus sp*, *Sterna sp* or *Gavia sp*.

To encourage the arrival of more sea birds diverse structures can be created to be used as resting points where they find themselves safe and become easy observation points for species as *Phalacrocorax sp*. The island will catalyze biological colonization and coast regeneration in the nearest areas once contamination level will be reduced by the sewer treatment plant. The island can also be an iconic symbol of the coast regeneration process which can be explained to beach users through permanent displays nearby the seaside.



Green Vlora bay sketch

### THE NEW VLORA WATERFRONT

Considering the failures of the rigidly controlled planning of the communist era and the informal burst of the last 23 years, the context of the city seems to request a “third way.” A solid structure upon which development can grow at a pace defined by economic and social conditions - however always in unison and in a controlled direction. Parts of this vision can be implemented in a few months and have visible results before the touristic season starts. This vision allows for a pacing of the project which is constantly connected to the economic performance of Vlora while at the same time creating a stream of constant interventions.

Green Vlora bay

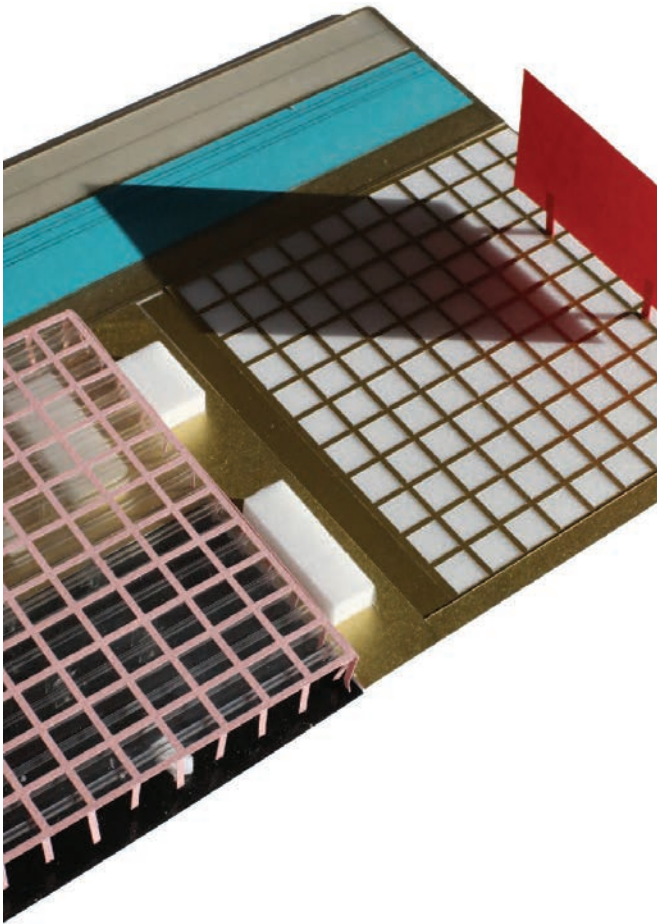




## 04 L'AUC - THIRD PRIZE

**TEAM COMPOSITION:**

**Architecture / Urbanism**  
l'AUC team



### **A city closer to its waterfront**

*Vlora is in need for a renewed image. Major issues have already been approached through infrastructural studies, projects or masterplans. These studies have led to a major restructure of the city's image: the main roads have been enlarged, some parts of the waterfront have been brightened up with squares and public promenades, some larger unexplored territories are now part of the city's development plans... The construction of a large port is currently under study as well as a new bypass aiming to reduce regional traffic through the city centre. All these evolutions are placing Vlora closer to European urban standards, and give a positive signal of its touristic development expectations: a greater number of tourists and a more qualitative category of tourism.*

**W**hat Vlora needs today, as many European cities of a comparable size, is to develop its own specific and strong identity. The emergency of construction of this identity must be taken as an opportunity to organise and envision future developments of the city under a new eye, to assemble these future developments under a progressive and unifying urban image, to establish priorities, to construct a unique and outstanding urban development programme that will allow the city to increase its current standards in terms of quality of life, touristic attraction, cultural and economic dynamism. This identity has to be built upon Vlora's particular assets. The city is located in a very beautiful landscape, facing a protected peninsula, and surrounded by hills aplenty occupied by olive trees and vineyards. This makes the potential for Vlora to become one of the most attractive spots in the Mediterranean region.

Vlora also hosts one of the most important universities of Albania with no less than 15,000 students living and studying there. Projects are currently under study to increase the capacity of the university. These assets must be placed at the service of a sustainable development process organized by a comprehensive project. Yet, in the current situation of most European cities, and especially in Albania, such a project cannot rely only on costly public investment. This does not mean that the project should not aim at ambitious goals, but it means that it has to rely on a clever and gradual urban strategy, allowing to start from simple and inexpensive actions that will trigger further development, attract and organise private investment. The city's coastline is the main asset from which Vlora can build such

an urban development strategy and start implementing it. Our project identifies priorities, instruments and guidelines that form a coherent yet flexible and open set of measures, enabling the city, its population and its visitors to win back the waterfront. From this starting point, we propose actions that can be developed in time with great flexibility, gradually contributing to the emergence of a new structure for touristic and economic growth at the scale of the entire city. To ensure the progress of this development, all actions that we propose are rooted in existing elements of the city and consist in gradually enhancing their potential. We call this a "soft planning" strategy. The revival of Vlora's waterfront requires an infrastructural action. The Coastal Strip starts from simple projects, activations and animations that will at first aim at, address to and imply Vlora's population. This first step will establish the base of new relations between the public and the waterfront in a soft and enjoyable manner. A series of events, temporary seasonal activities, light architectures will establish the waterfront as a new address and destination in Vlora and in the Mediterranean. Progressively, they can consolidate into more solid and permanent forms, clearly identifying a new kind of centrality by the water. A second step will spread the new values, qualities and attractiveness given to the waterfront within the urban structure of Vlora, interconnecting all existing and future strategic sites, from the city centre to the port, from Soda Woods to Tunnel, from the old airport to the future port and industrial zone. The redefined urban structure will reassert the specific geographic position of Vlora, between sea, city and hills, as the basis for its economic and urban development.





**SOUTHERN PROMENADE**  
Urban boulevard ridong along the coastline.  
Dense developments facing the sea

**COASTAL STRIP**  
City open to the sea.  
Cultural activities related to the university and the city.  
Open Market hall.  
New harbour terminal.

**WESTERN PROMENADE**  
Natural facade of the city. Pine tree plantation along the coastline

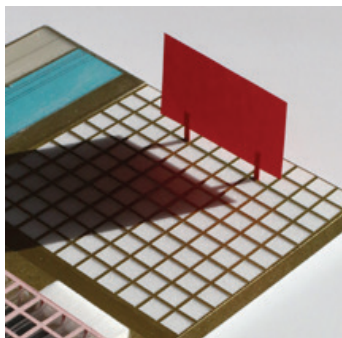
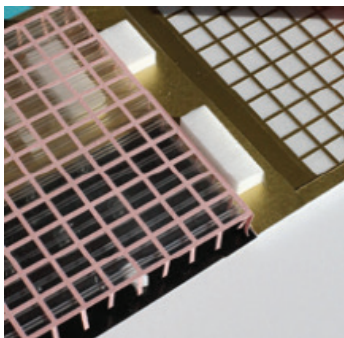
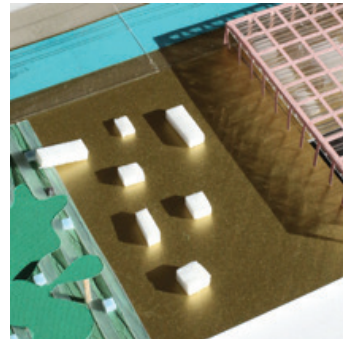
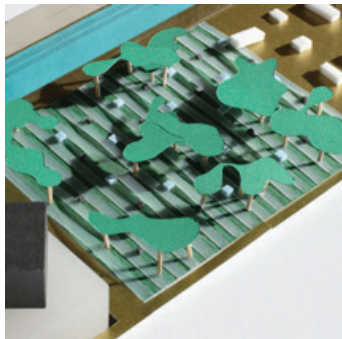
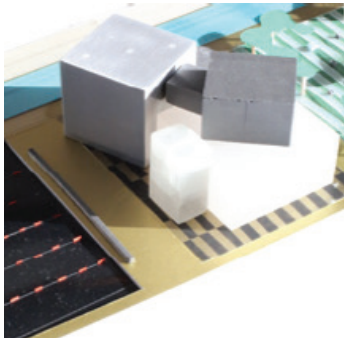
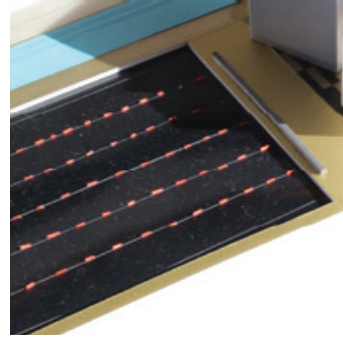
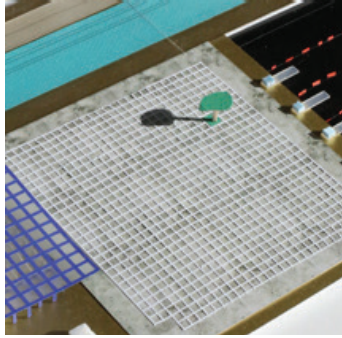
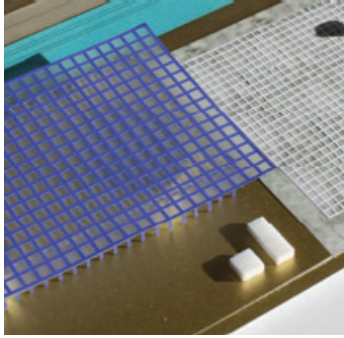
The coastal strip schemes

### THE COASTAL STRIP

The coastal strip emerges from a series of simple movements. This strong figure matches the desire for a diverse and intense waterfront and the infrastructural needs for a harmonious, enjoyable and sustainable development. Only few steps are necessary to understand the logics underlying this figure. It can be summed up as the following simple actions: Prolonging & Articulating – Intensifying & Occupying – Extending & Developing.

- A. The coastal strip emerges from a double movement from the City to the Port and the constitution of one continuous promenade
- B. The coastal strip is a new public polarity from a multidimensional urban articulation to a very intense and programmed strip facing the sea.
- C. The coastal strip triggers the developments of a new centrality by the seaside from the Coastal Strip to a new university district and the definition of new city limits along the coast.

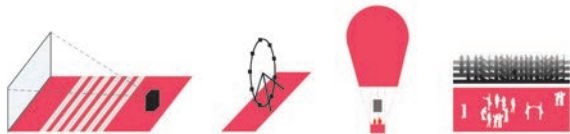
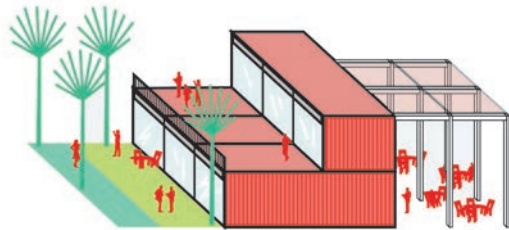




Close up photo on the project's model showing the Coastal Strip and its facilities.

### **PLANNING AGENDA**

In order to ensure the success of the project we propose to set an open agenda. This agenda aims to build the project in time by prioritizing its different parts. It includes equally the infrastructural needs , the constitution of the walkways network, especially the waterfront promenade, the construction of major public and institutional facilities, the timeline for events. This agenda is not only meant to phase the project of the coastal strip but also to build upon time.



## TEMPORARY ARCHITECTURES AND PREFIGURATIONS

Temporary architecture could also be erected on some specific spots of the coastal strip and along the promenades that are defined by our plan. They would prefigure the future and permanent programmes that will be built later: an open stage for a theatre, a few shops and cafés in cargo container for retail hotspots, temporary exhibition structures announcing a future museum...

## SIMPLE EVENTS TO START WITH

Simple events can be organized as soon as the first phase of the coastal strip development, like the installation of a Ferris wheel, open air cinematographic projections, etc. Local events such as the traditional dance festival might be relocated on the plaza facing the sea. A weekly market or outdoors public lectures could also be held regularly.

## THE PLANTS FESTIVAL

Some annual events can be organized by the Project Bureau at no cost or with very low public funding. The first of a wider series could be a Plant Festival: Vlora's population would be asked to bring a domestic plant on the seaside; we could expect some 80.000 plants. The Project Bureau could decide how to distribute and arrange this collective resource of potted or planted plants in the city, as a means to prefigure new public gardens or occupy the mineral walkways of the city with greener ornaments. This type of events would have a strongly positive impact on Vlora's image for tourists as well as for its own population. It would support a positive feeling of identity, community and public space appropriation for the city's inhabitants.

### VLORA'S WATERFRONT PROMENADE PROJECT BUREAU

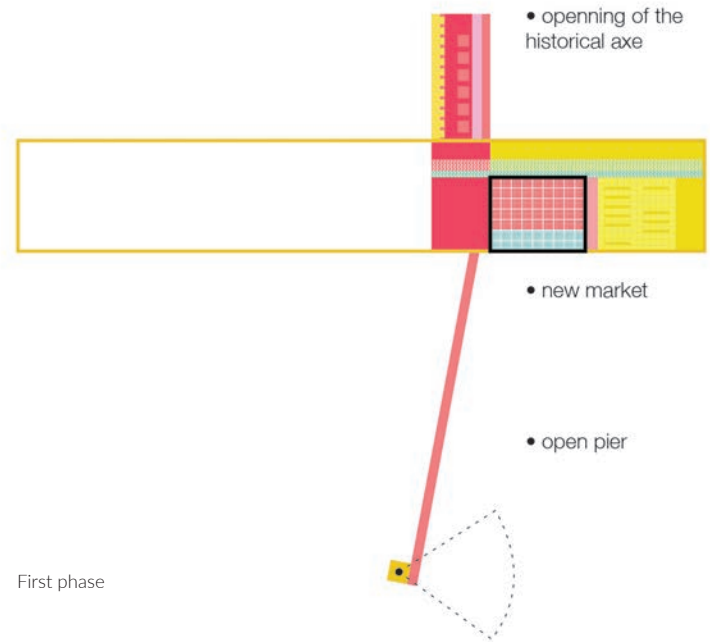
A Project Bureau is founded. Its role is to coordinate the actions on the city: the heavy and infrastructural projects meet the softer urban issues (housing developments, urban politics, public space projects...) and the dematerialized concerns such as communication, events organization, lighter forms of planning in general. These topics are treated equally by a collegium constituted of city representatives, technical services, architects and urban planners, artists, designers and events planners, touristic authorities, neighborhood councillors, etc. The Project Bureau aims to build a fully embodied vision for the city upon time and through precise projects.

#### FIRST PHASE (2014-2015) - THE MARKET

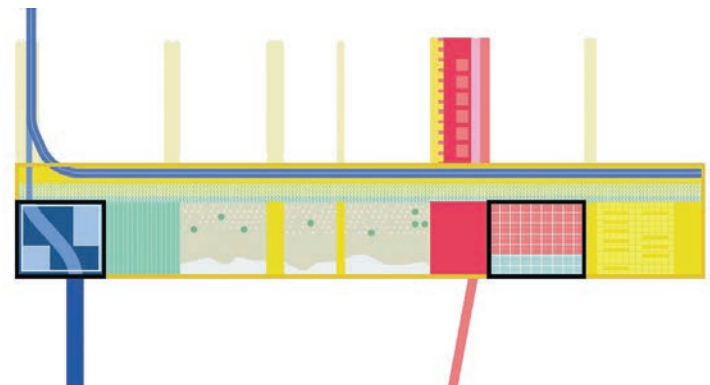
- The historical axis is extended to reach the end of the pier. This will allow citizens and tourists to discover the city under a new angle, with a panoramic view of Vlora from the sea. A new perspective to envision the future of the city.
- A temporary structure is created to host the market. It is located at the convergence of the hills and the sea: a new place to experience local flavours by the seaside: oil, wine and fish.

#### NEXT PHASES (2015-2020) - THE TERMINAL

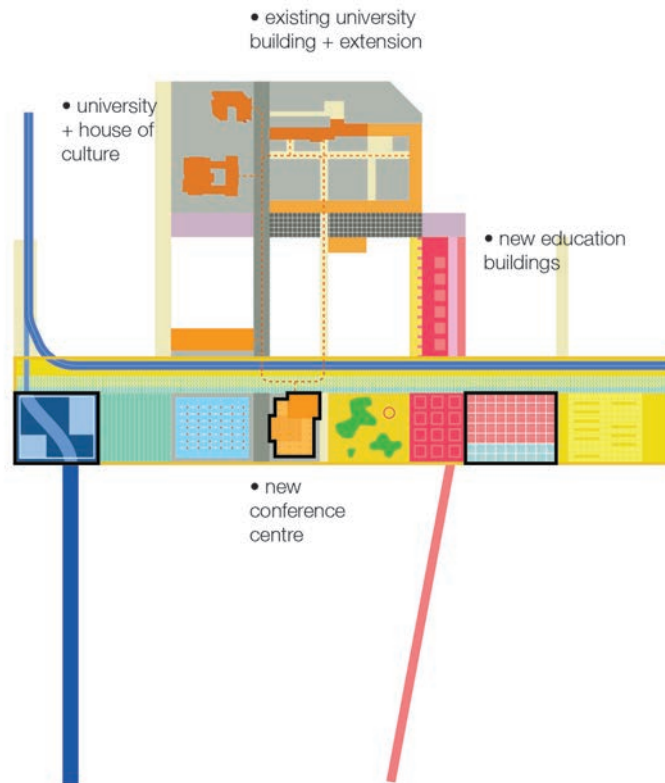
- A new terminal is built on the other side of the Coastal Strip. The second axis clearly links the sea terminal, the train station and the end of the highway. The new terminal gathers the police station, the customs border and the port administration that are presently disseminated on site.
- The waterfront is organized along the coastal strip as a continuous promenade from Soda Woods to Tunnel.
- The coastline is slightly remodelled through the construction of small piers conceived to later receive new programs and facilities.



First phase

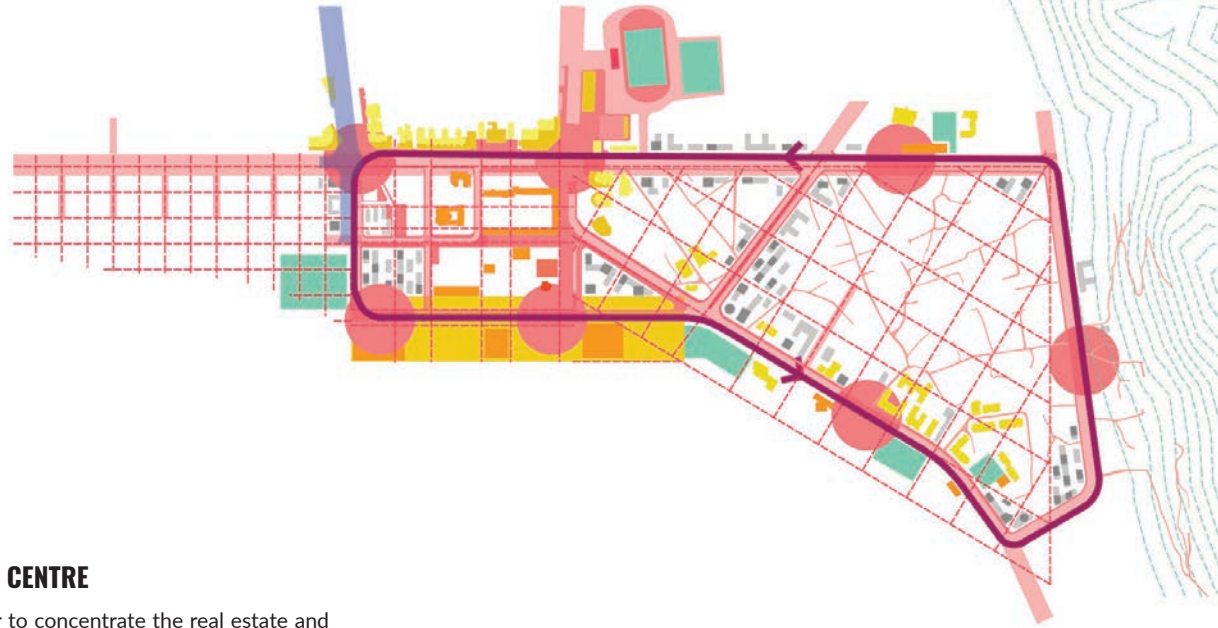


Second phase



## THE CONFERENCE CENTRE

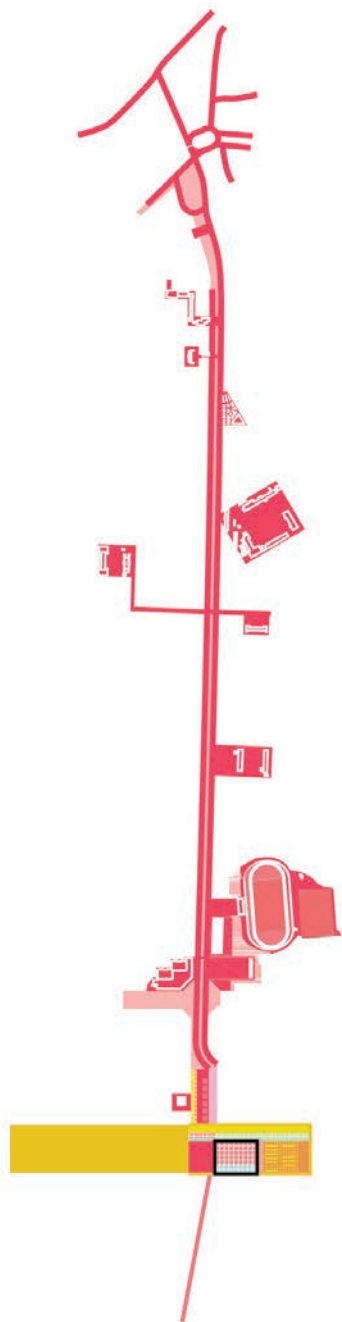
- The Coastal Strip is completed by adding the last main facility: a conference centre. It is meant to be used by students but also for major public events, or even as a part of the university open to the public. Its location on the coastal strip draws a figure that links the existing university, its extension by a new building, and a seawater swimming pool facing a new library.
- With the new conference centre, the university emerges as a structuring facility in what appears to be a new centrality facing the sea and dedicated to everyone: Vlora's citizens and the tourists.



### THE LOOP AND THE SEASIDE CITY CENTRE

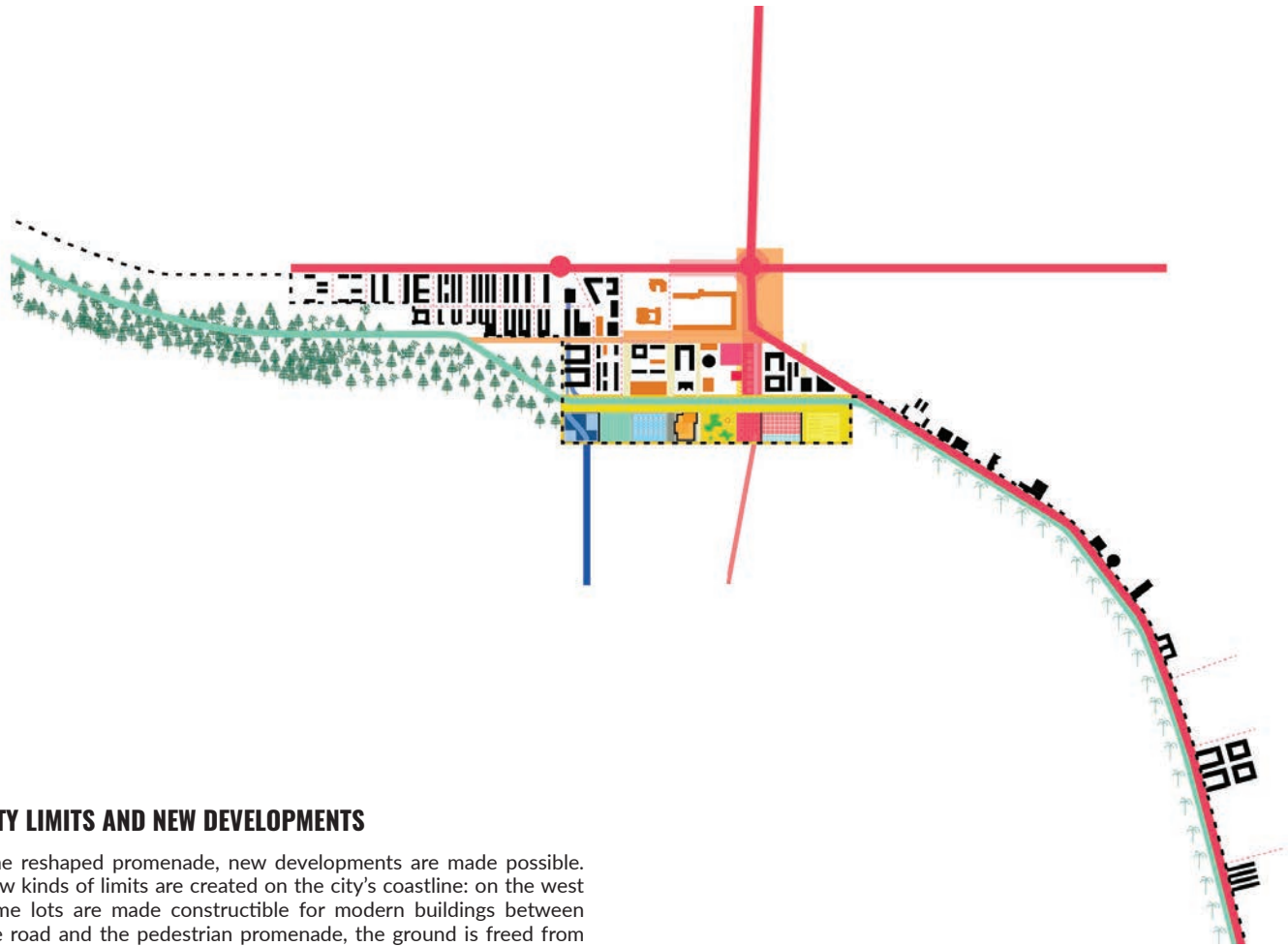
- A new Loop can be created in order to concentrate the real estate and housing developments around the Coastal Strip. This figure of mobility is the support for a bus-in-lane and a bicycle path.
- It links the major facilities of this part of the city and the neighborhoods on which it opens are ready to attract and receive new inhabitants, tourists, and activities. The western area of the Pine Forrest offers a very qualitative condition for those seeking an intimate relation to nature. The central area, directly attached to the Coastal Strip, has an increased attractiveness and urban quality with the university, the stadium, the House of Independence and the programmed ground floors with cafés, restaurant and commercial space for a civic and intense experience of the waterfront. The southern Mediterranean Boulevard offers a more diverse and permissive relation to the beaches and the hills just behind.
- The infrastructural figure of the Loop also revitalizes the east-west street running through the hills. This figure offers a condensed overview of Vlorë's specific geographical assets that are particularly suitable for a new touristic centre: sea, culture, education, sport, hills and local agriculture, varied public spaces, public programmes, market and other sorts of shops and commercial spaces.





### EXTENDED HISTORICAL AXIS

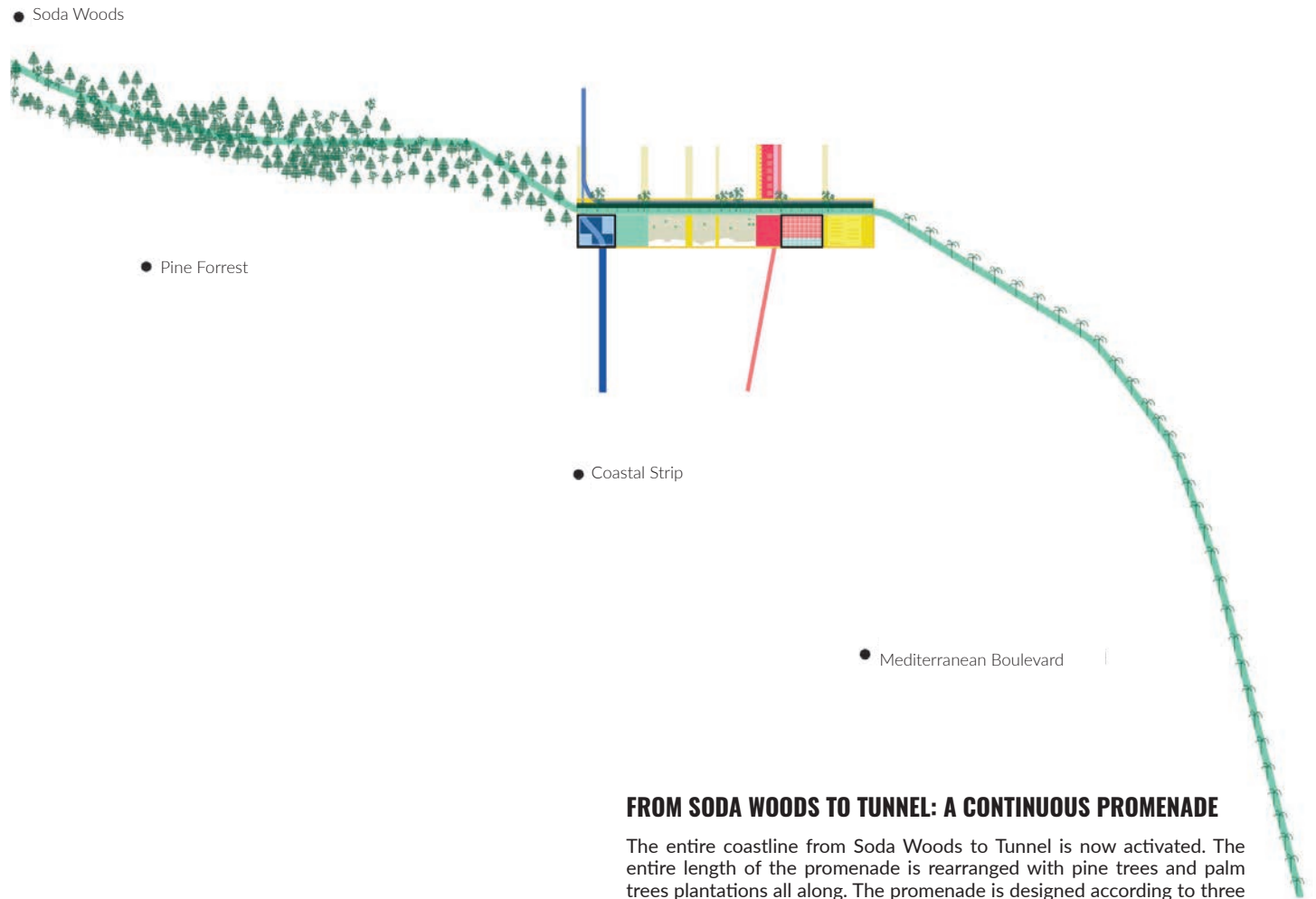
- The openness of the port through the market and the first sequence of the waterfront promenade ensure the physical continuity from the historical centre to the sea.
- This act enhances the strength of the historical axis, mixing all the major facilities of the city in one single and symbolic street.



### NEW CITY LIMITS AND NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Along the reshaped promenade, new developments are made possible. Thus, new kinds of limits are created on the city's coastline: on the west side, some lots are made constructible for modern buildings between the large road and the pedestrian promenade, the ground is freed from car traffic and offers a close and intimate relation to the sea. Behind the rearranged port, the university's influence is enhanced and clearly asserts the vocation of this part of the city, a new city centre by the seaside dedicated to students, inhabitants and tourists looking for a more urban and cultural experience of the coast.

On the south side, the atmosphere is positively urban with tall and modern apartments and hotel buildings facing the sea and the large road planted with regular palm trees along the beaches. Together, these three very clear sections of the coastline offer a multiple, diverse and exciting experience of the city's new waterfront promenade.



**FROM SODA WOODS TO TUNNEL: A CONTINUOUS PROMENADE**

The entire coastline from Soda Woods to Tunnel is now activated. The entire length of the promenade is rearranged with pine trees and palm trees plantations all along. The promenade is designed according to three different sequences.

The first sequence, on the west side, is a natural walkway bending under the pine trees. The second sequence, on the coast strip, is a mineral lane shaded by a long arcade and punctuated by isolated specific trees. The third sequence, on the southern part of the waterfront, is following the road at a lower level, providing an intimate stroll by the sea.

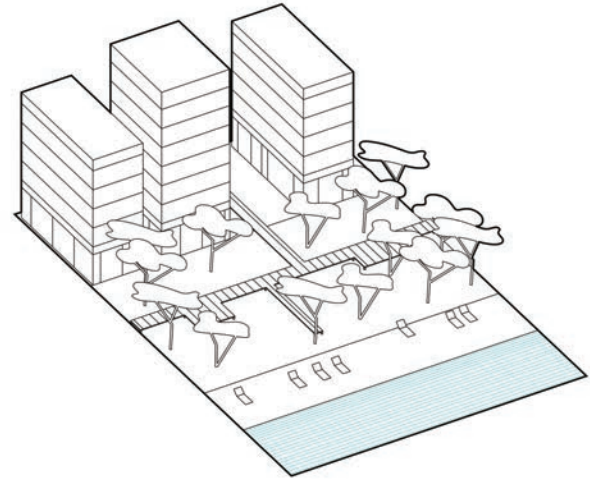
## VLORA WATERFRONT PROMENADE

- 1 WALKING UNDER THE PINE TREES
- 2 ENJOYING NEW AND COOLER PUBLIC SPACES IN THE ARCHAIC CITY
- 3 ENTERING VLORA FROM THE SEA THROUGH A CONTEMPORARY GATE
- 4 LOOKING AT THE BAY WHILE SEATING IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM
- 5 RESTING UNDER THE ARCADE AND ENJOYING THE VIEW
- 6 TASTING THE FLAVORS OF VLORA
- 7 WALKING ON THE SHADED PATH BETWEEN THE SEA AND THE CITY
- 8 ENJOYING MULTIPLE ACTIVITIES ALONG THE COASTLINE



The Vlora of the new century : a fully embodied vision

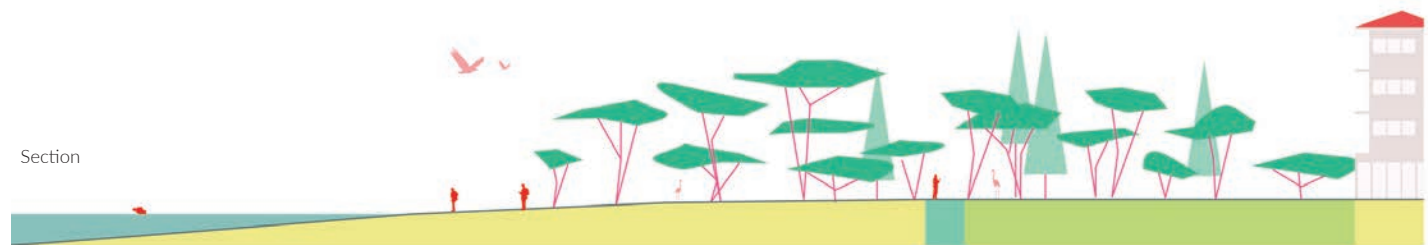




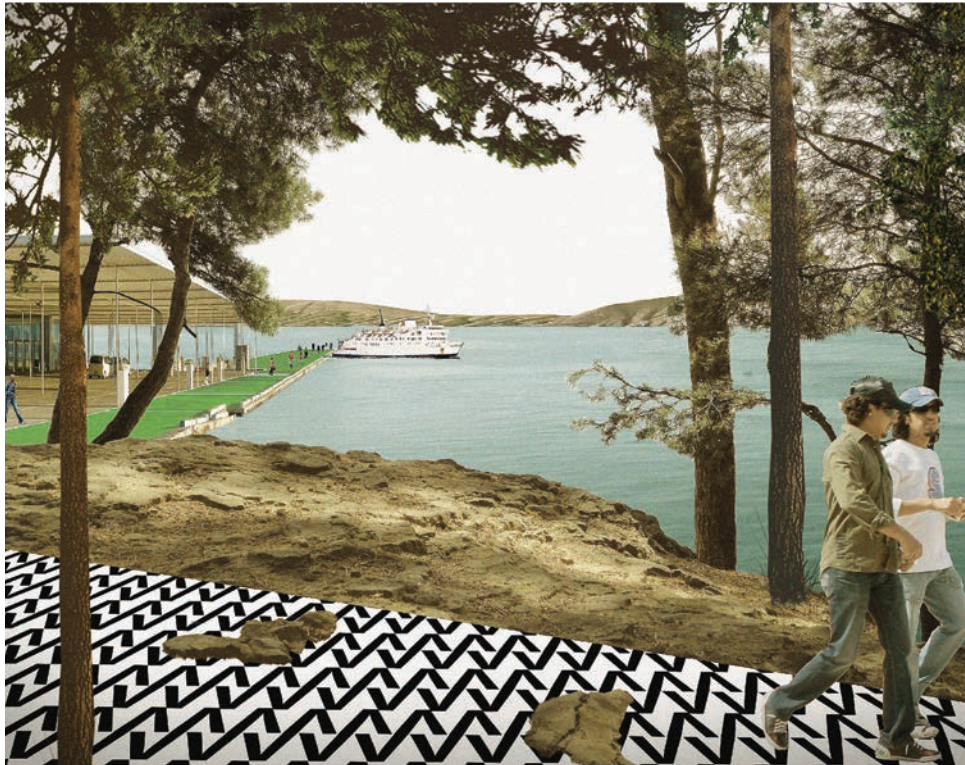
Axonometric view

### WALKING UNDER THE PINE TREES

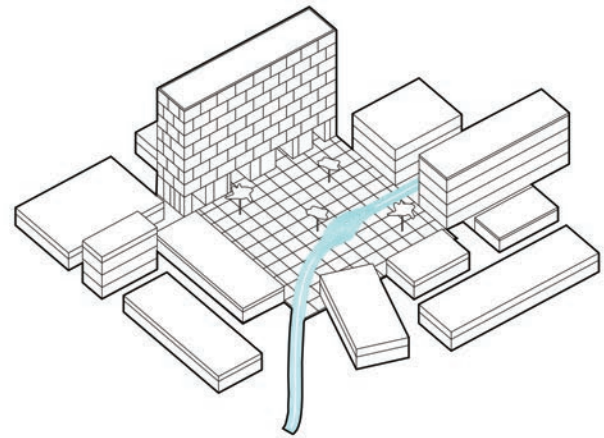
On the west side of the coast, one can walk under the pine trees. A light promenade snakes between the trunks of the newly planted trees that reshape this part of the waterfront as a greener space.



Section



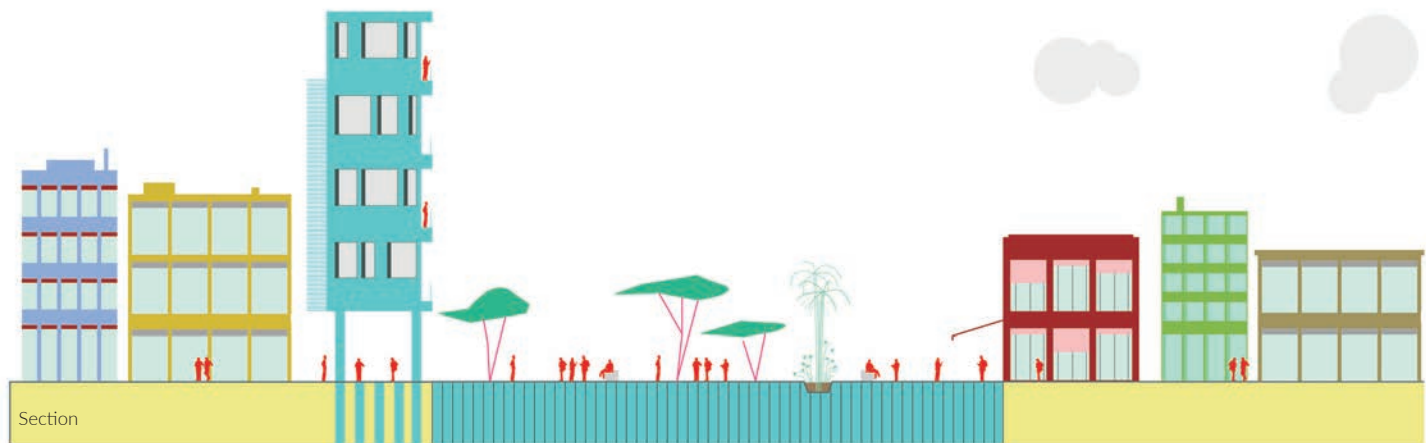
View of the segment



Axonometric view

### ENJOYING NEW AND COOLER PUBLIC SPACES IN THE

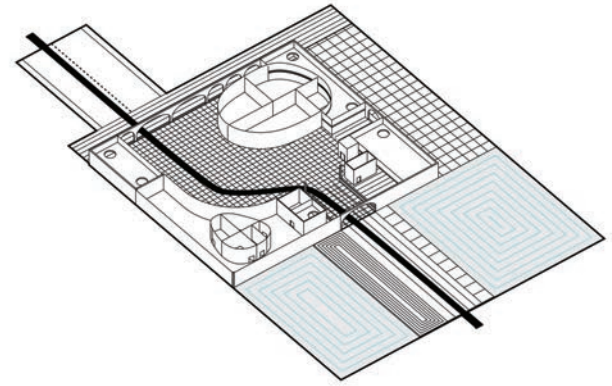
ARCHAIC CITY: Small squares are set up in the archaic urban substance of the western part of the city. A university building or another kind of public facility is built on the edge. New cafés and restaurants make the most of this new public situation.







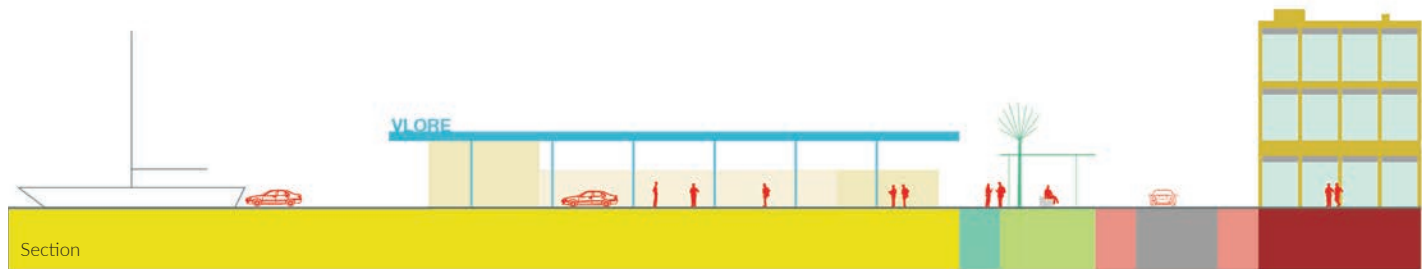
View of the segment



Axonometric view

### ENTERING VLORA FROM THE SEA, A CONTEMPORARY GATE

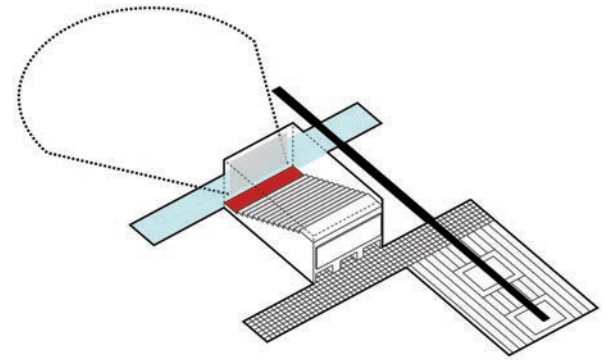
A more compact terminal for an easier access to the city for tourists. The multiple flows and flux are organized into a single building. The compactness of this new structure generates a new intensity on the coastline.



Section



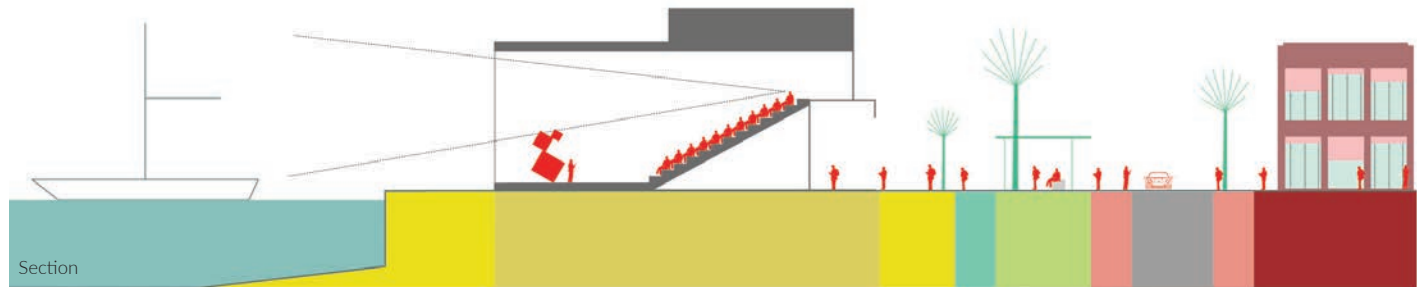
View of the segment

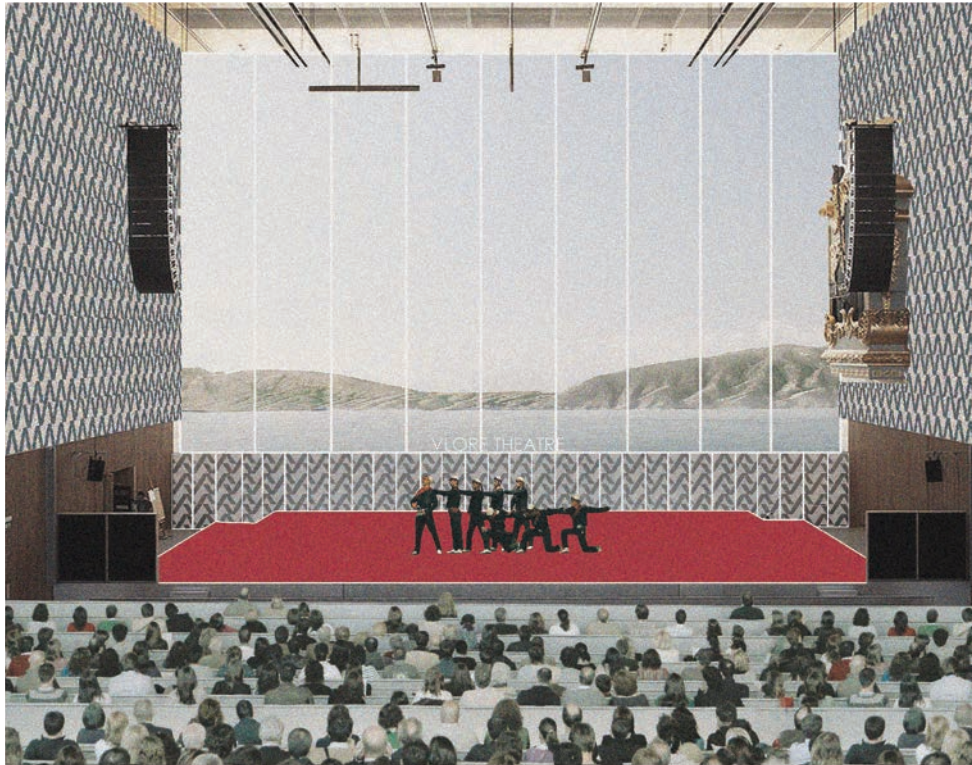


Axonometric view

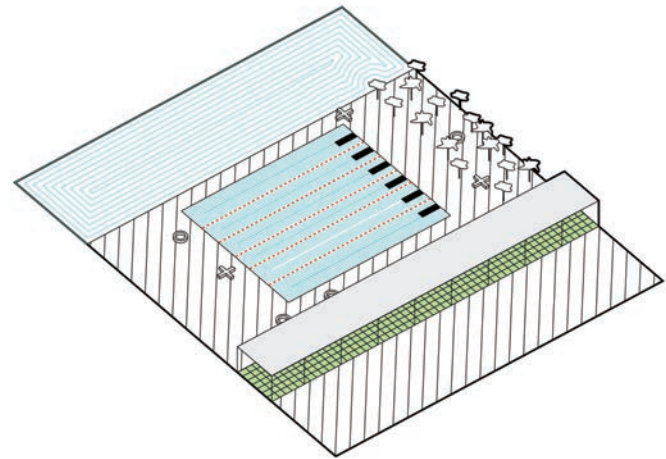
### LOOKING AT THE BAY WHILE SEATING IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM

A new multiuse public facility on the waterfront: during high season, concerts and local cultural activities are shown to estivants in the new conference centre, while during the rest of the year the rooms are used by the university for master classes or daily conferences.





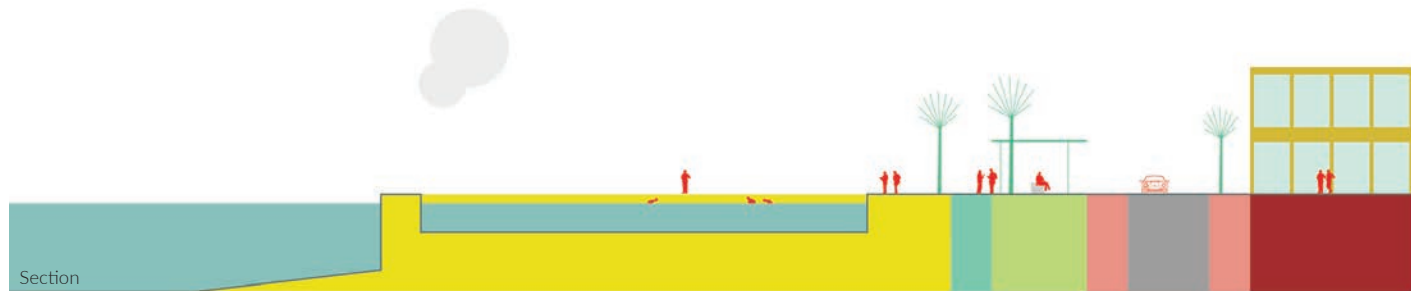
View of the segment

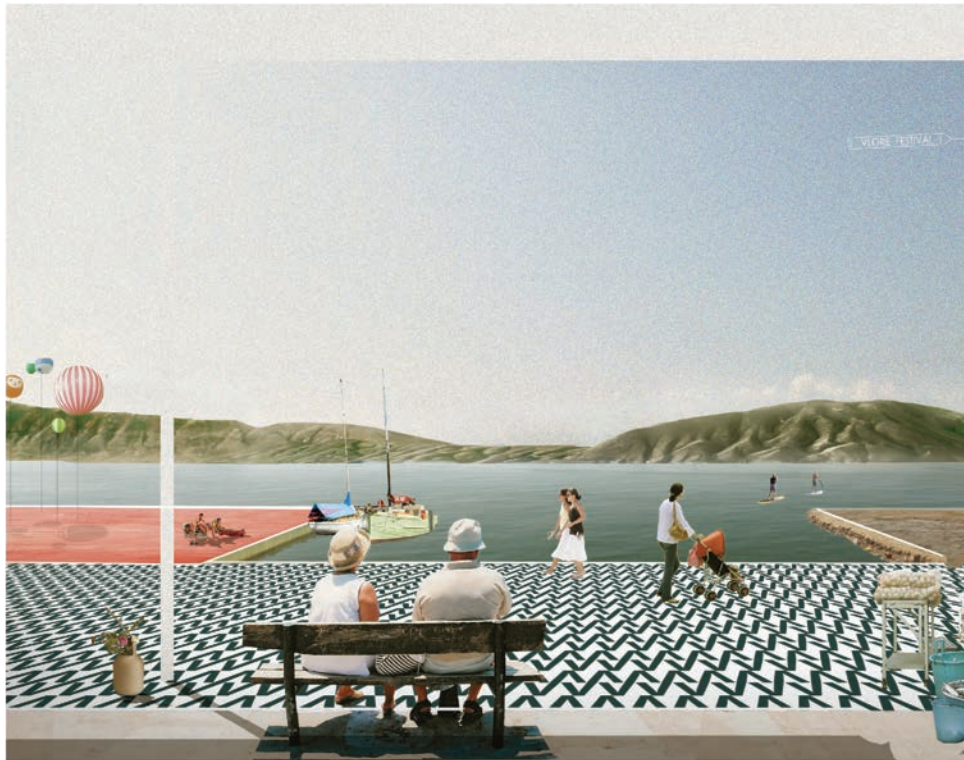


Axonometric view

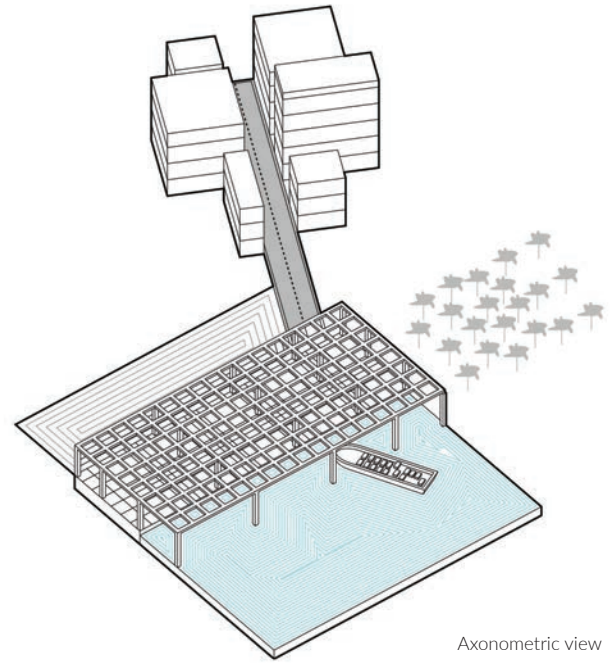
### RESTING UNDER THE ARCADE AND ENJOYING THE VIEW

On the Coastal Strip, the waterfront promenade takes a strong importance. It is wider than in other parts of the city and partially shaded by a long arcade stretching all along the way. Public furniture on its side and punctual trees brighten up this linear promenade.



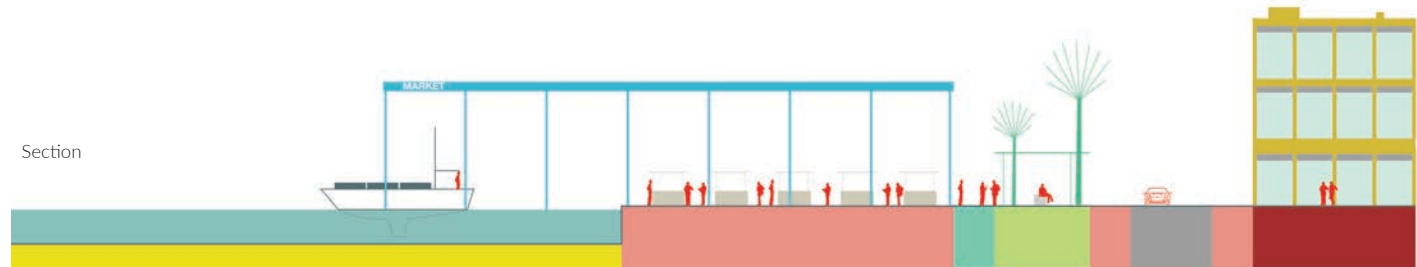


View of the segment

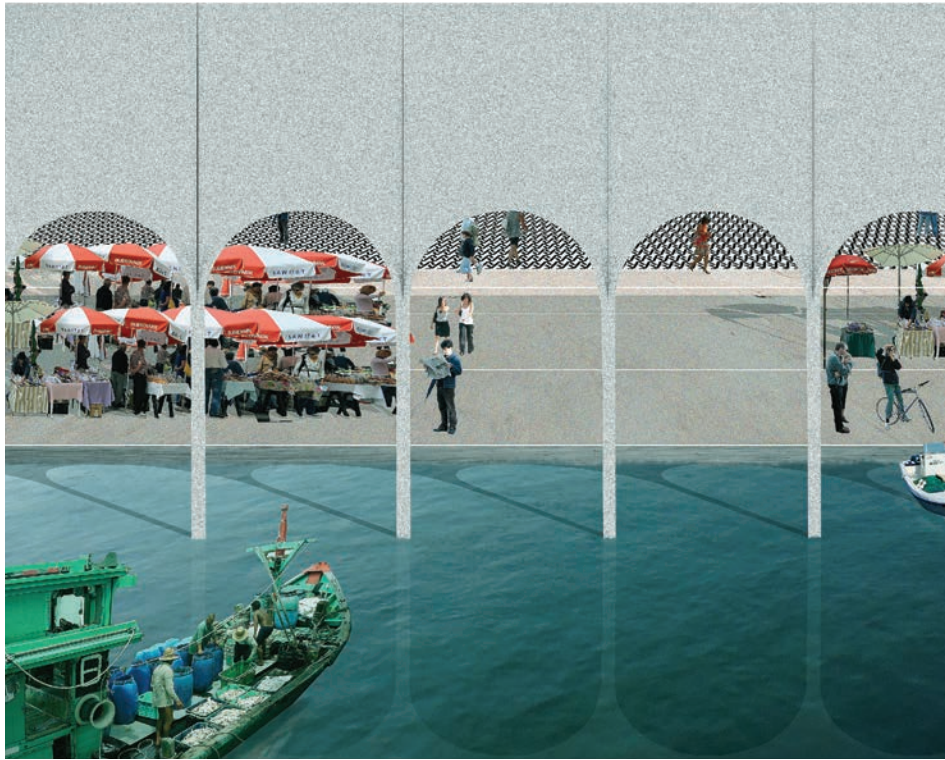


### TASTING THE FLAVORS OF VLORA

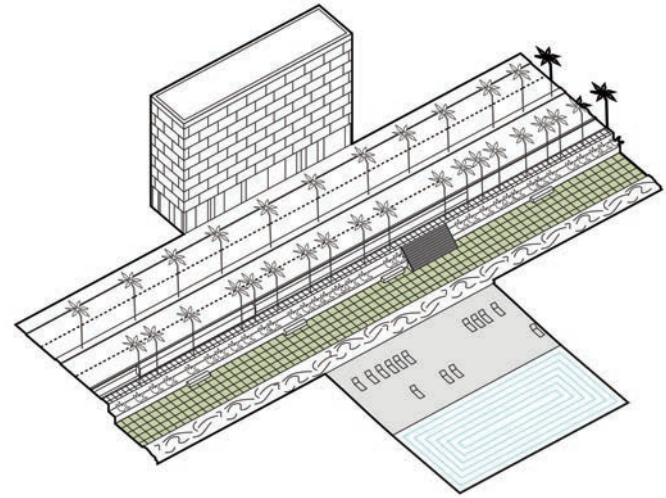
The market is a place of strong importance. It is the first building to be erected on the Coastal Strip. One can access the market from the sea or from the city. Local producers sell their olives, oil, wine, fish and grapefruit under a simple roof. It is a vibrant place for the seaside city life.







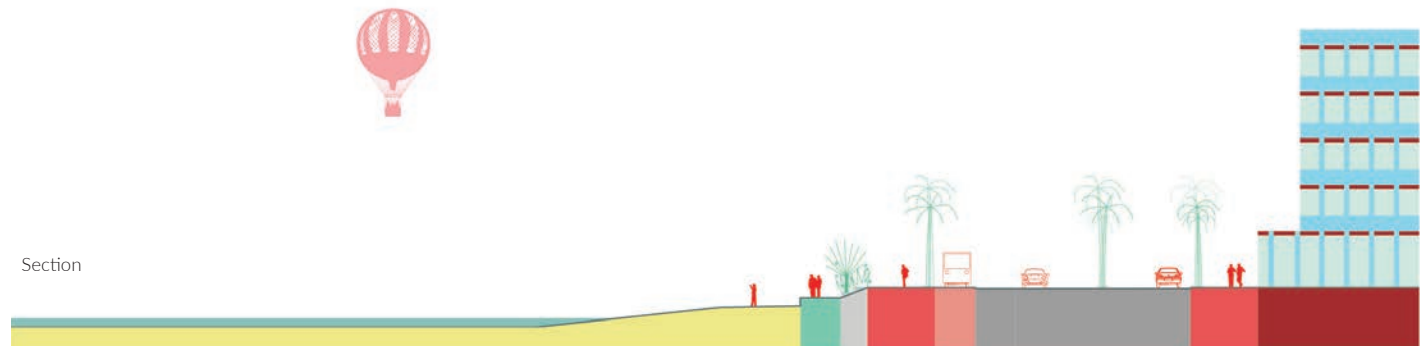
View of the segment



Axonometric view

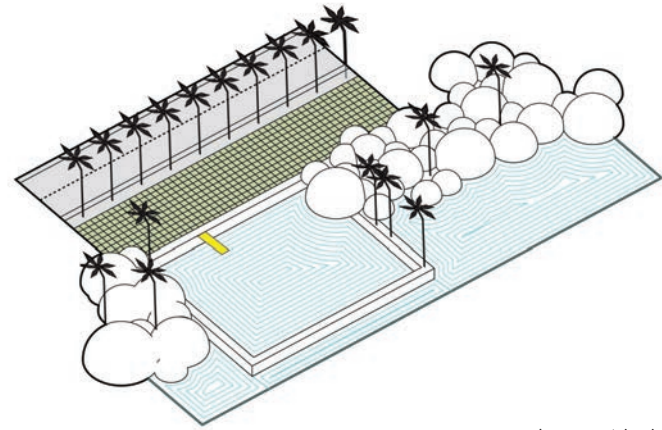
### WALKING ON THE SHADED PATH BETWEEN THE SEA AND THE CITY

On the southern part of the waterfront, the large street is divided into multiple segments. Walkers can enjoy the boutiques at the street level under naturally ventilated galleries, or under the alignment of palm trees that gives this very particular atmosphere to this long urban street, or slightly below at the beach level, protected from the traffic by Mediterranean mid sized plants and specific variety of trees such as fan palm trees, Syrian juniper, Portuguese oak or colored laurel.





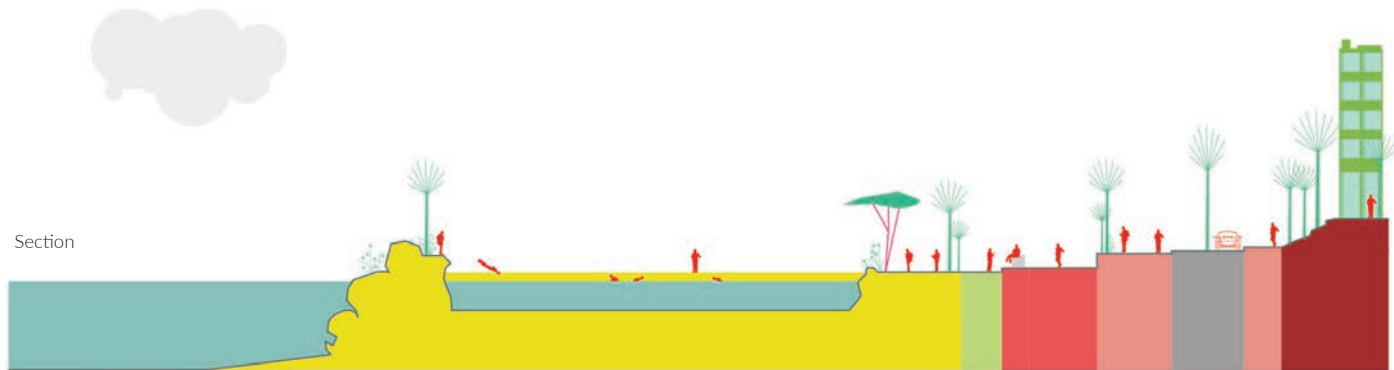
View of the segment

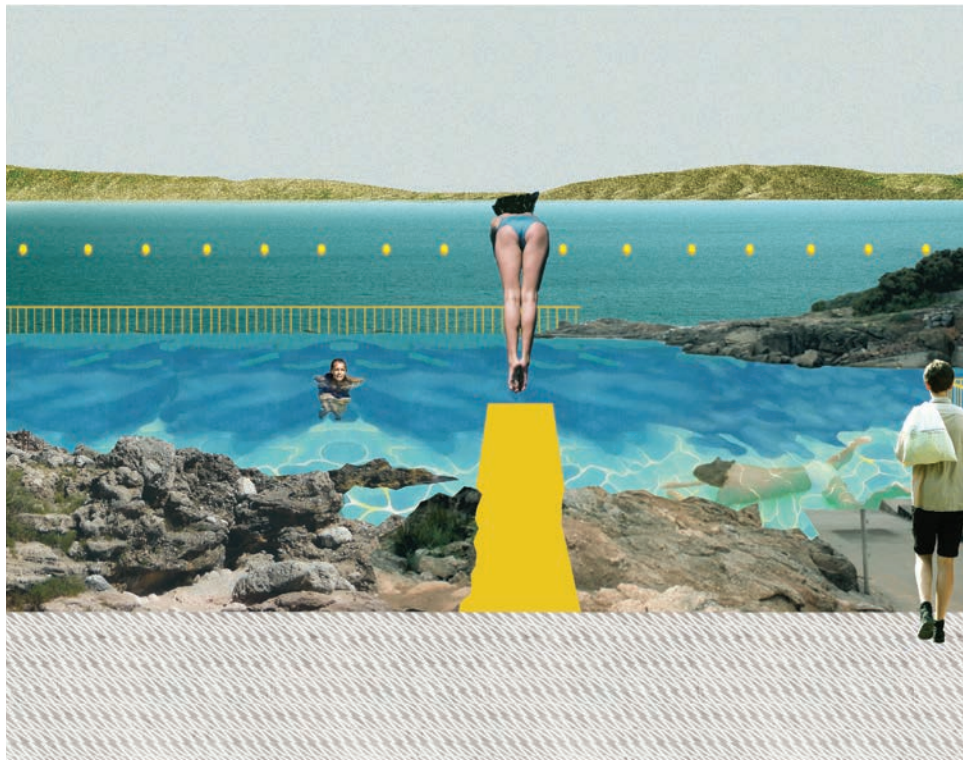


Axonometric view

### ENJOYING MULTIPLE ACTIVITIES ALONG THE COASTLINE

Along the Mediterranean Boulevard in the southern part of the city, new activities and developments define a new waterfront skyline. They are placed alternatively on the beach side or on the city side of the street. They provide extended amenities such as tennis courts, children playgrounds, theme gardens, small pools and fountains.





View of the segment

## 05 DOGMA - HONOURABLE MENTION

### TEAM COMPOSITION:

#### **Architect and Urban Planner**

Martino Tattara  
Pier Vittorio Aureli  
Luciano Aletta  
Lorenz Adriansen  
Elia Zenghelis  
Maurizio Milan  
Orselido Beqiraj



*The City of Vlora occupies a prime position on one of the most beautiful settings of the Ionian Coast: it sits in a calm, protected bay and is surrounded by spectacular mountain scenery. It already possesses a very attractive waterfront, which is characterized by its magnificent palm trees. The chief objective of any urban enterprise against this context, would be to reinforce its existing qualities, by giving it a more dignified, unitary presence, and to capitalise on the multilayered potential that the interface between the city and the sea stimulates; at the same time, it would seek to upgrade its existing form and to overhaul its shortcomings by replacing them with new, strategic interventions. The end product of such an enterprise would be to deliver a recognizable, distinctive and representative «front» to this historical Mediterranean City.*

## VLORA WATERFRONT PROMENADE

Principle: a landscape of Strips

1. Land
2. Linear Forest
3. Boulevard
4. Beach
5. Sea



### FRONT

Our proposal puts forward a very simple and feasible intervention that can be implemented in stages. Its main components are: a Pineta (a forest of pine trees); a pedestrian boulevard that frames the entire waterfront, twelve piers. The piers are envisioned as a focal landmark for Vlora; moreover, they will contain all the amenities for the beach life while extending an already overcrowded shoreline. The piers are the simplest architecture possible, yet their archetypical power is able not only to attract people, but also to become a distinctive feature for the city of Vlora. As a first step for the project we propose a pier equipped with a theatre and a pool to be built for the summer 2014.

### STRIPS

Our proposal consists of a coherent spatial and architectural strategy that enables the development to be built in stages. This strategy resides in the layering of the entire length of the given site into five parallel strips of intervention, which we have designated as: Land, Linear Forest, Boulevard, Beach, Sea. These consist of two distinct sets: two “Outer Strips”, which are part of the existing context, and three fabricated new “Inner Strips”, which are posited as the core of the concept. The “inner strips” trace a precise line that defines the position of all subsequent interventions, and they are:

**A** - the Pineta: a linear “Potemkin” forest that separates the city from the beach and contains both existing structures and new potential program.

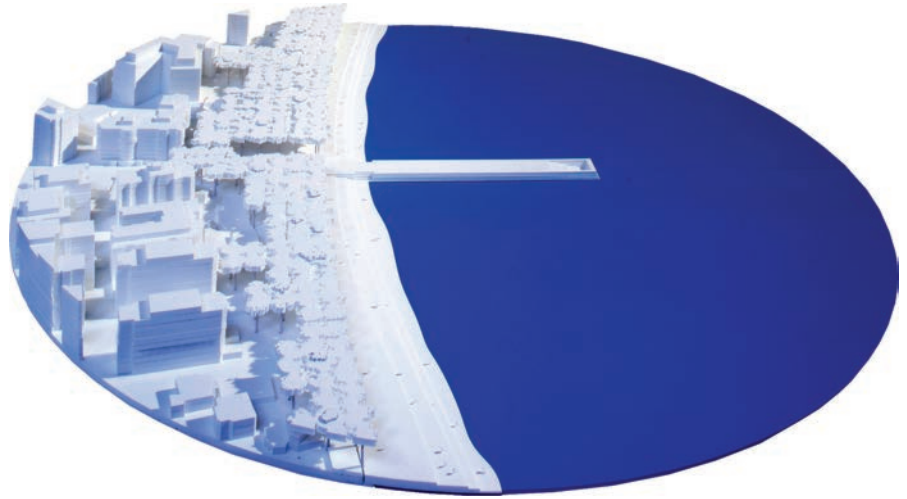
**B** - a pedestrian boulevard that connects and makes the entire coast easily accessible,

**C** - a sequence of piers that extend the bathing area and contain leisure facilities.



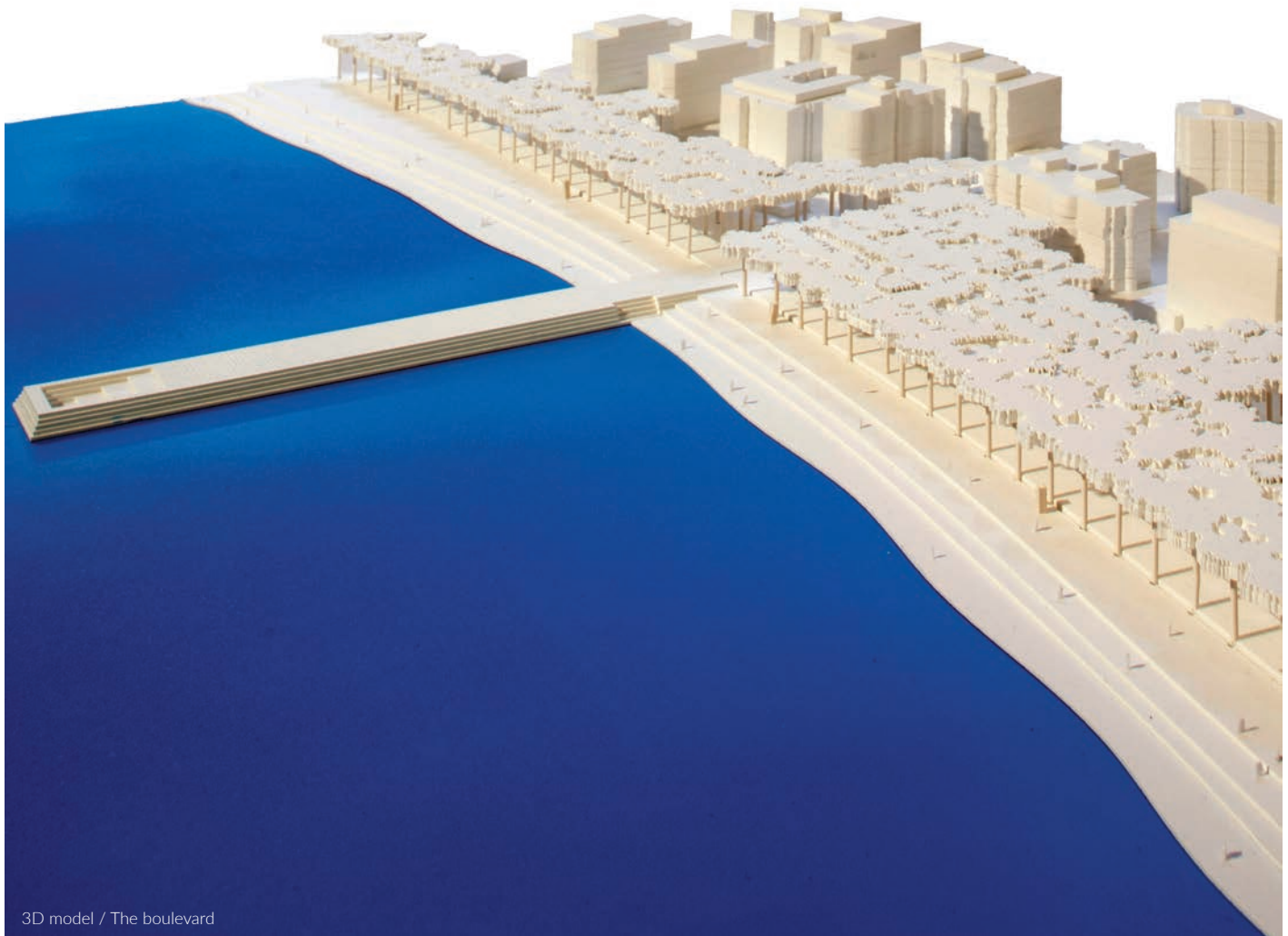


## VLORA WATERFRONT PROMENADE



A detail of the Waterfront

**T**he strategy of the strips exemplifies our approach to the crucial issue of landscape. We view landscape less as an obsessive manicure of flowers and plant species, and more as the archetypical gesture of tracing lines and boundaries that define the form of a place. The image proposed is thus manifested not through traditional architectural features such as buildings, but through the simple lines that separate the built from the non-built, the inside from the outside, and that divide nature from the artificial. This strategy, will give the freedom to the municipal authorities to elaborate and vary their individual, seasonal and other planting and gardening arrangements.

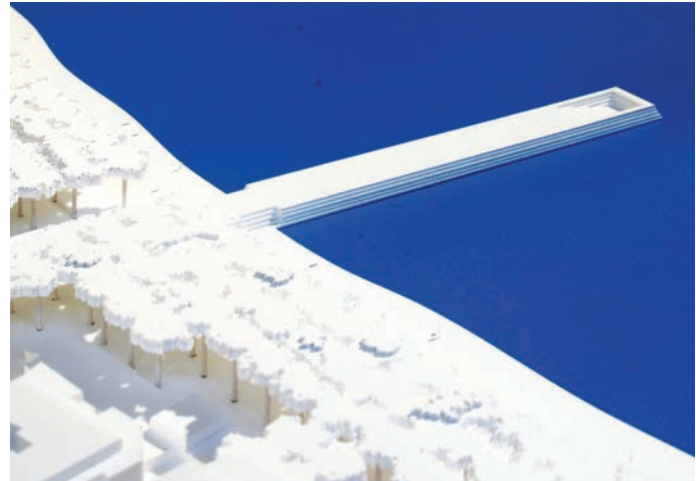


3D model / The boulevard

### **PINETA**

A fundamental component of our proposal is the Pineta: the Pineta is a forest of Maritime pine trees, stretching across the entire site. It contains existing and future development and at the same time defines the edge of the city to the waterfront. The section of the forest varies, according to the changing conditions that it encounters along the way; it can be a thin line merely separating the beach from the city, or it can be a wide canopy where programs are absorbed and sometimes hiding in the wood. Above all, the forest is conceived as an urban mega form, an immense hypostyle room that allows new programs and occupations to happen without invading the beach. The peculiar configuration of pines, allows for either permanent or temporary structures that can be gathered in the generous space underneath the Pineta - which will emerge as a monumental and open-ended room.





The City, the Pineta, the Beach and a Pier

### **BOULEVARD**

The pedestrian boulevard is both limit and threshold: between the beach/ sea on the one hand, and the pine forest on the other. The boulevard, 4.5 km long, and 11 meters wide, consists of:

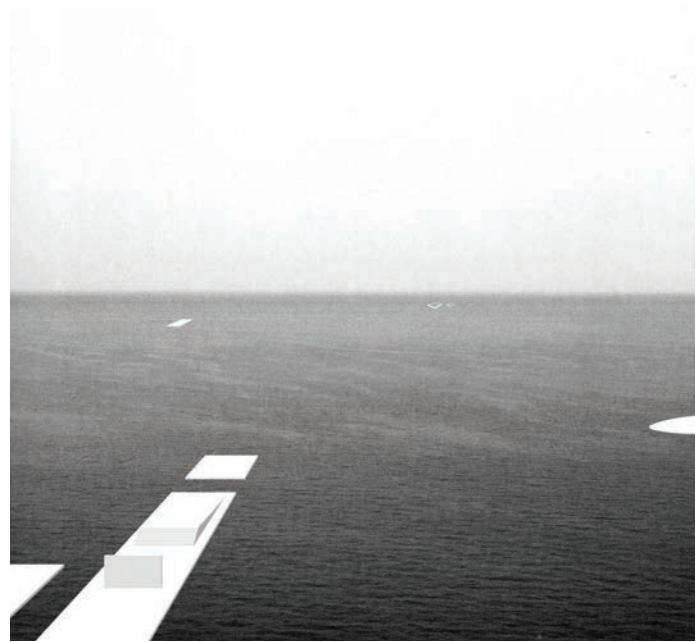
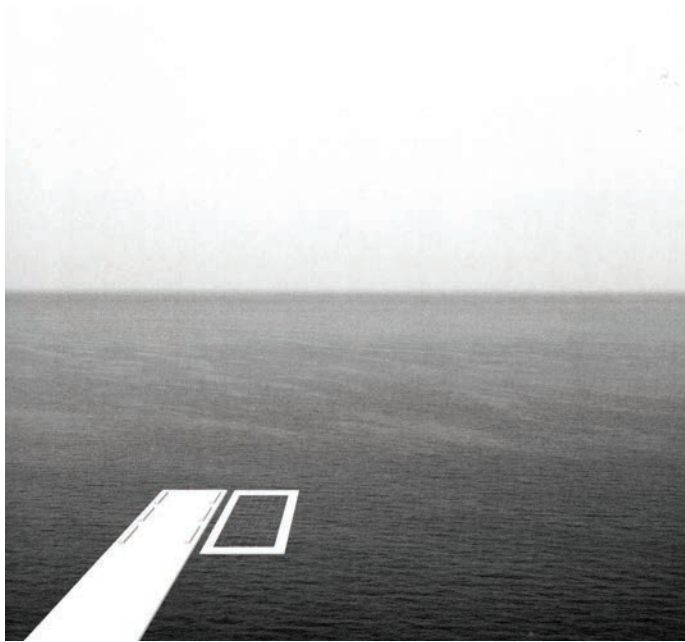
- A pedestrian and
- A bicycle path, plus
- A small road for public shuttles

It is built in concrete and paved with local stone. Its edges are lined with a continuous sequence of pine trees; these are envisioned as columns that support a green canopy over the boulevard. Against the sunny atmosphere of the beach, the boulevard is imagined as a vast shadowy arcade, an endless oasis. All the facilities related to the beach, such as fountains, showers, benches and small kiosks, are assembled here, and become an integral part of the architecture of the boulevard. The boulevard is designed as an easy curve, along the whole length of the given site, embodying and framing the gulf of Vlora; it acts as a vantage point from which all the elements, existing and proposed, become visible and legible as an unitary, cohesive composition.



Shadowy and Sunny

## VLORA WATERFRONT PROMENADE



The Piers activate the Sea

### PIERS

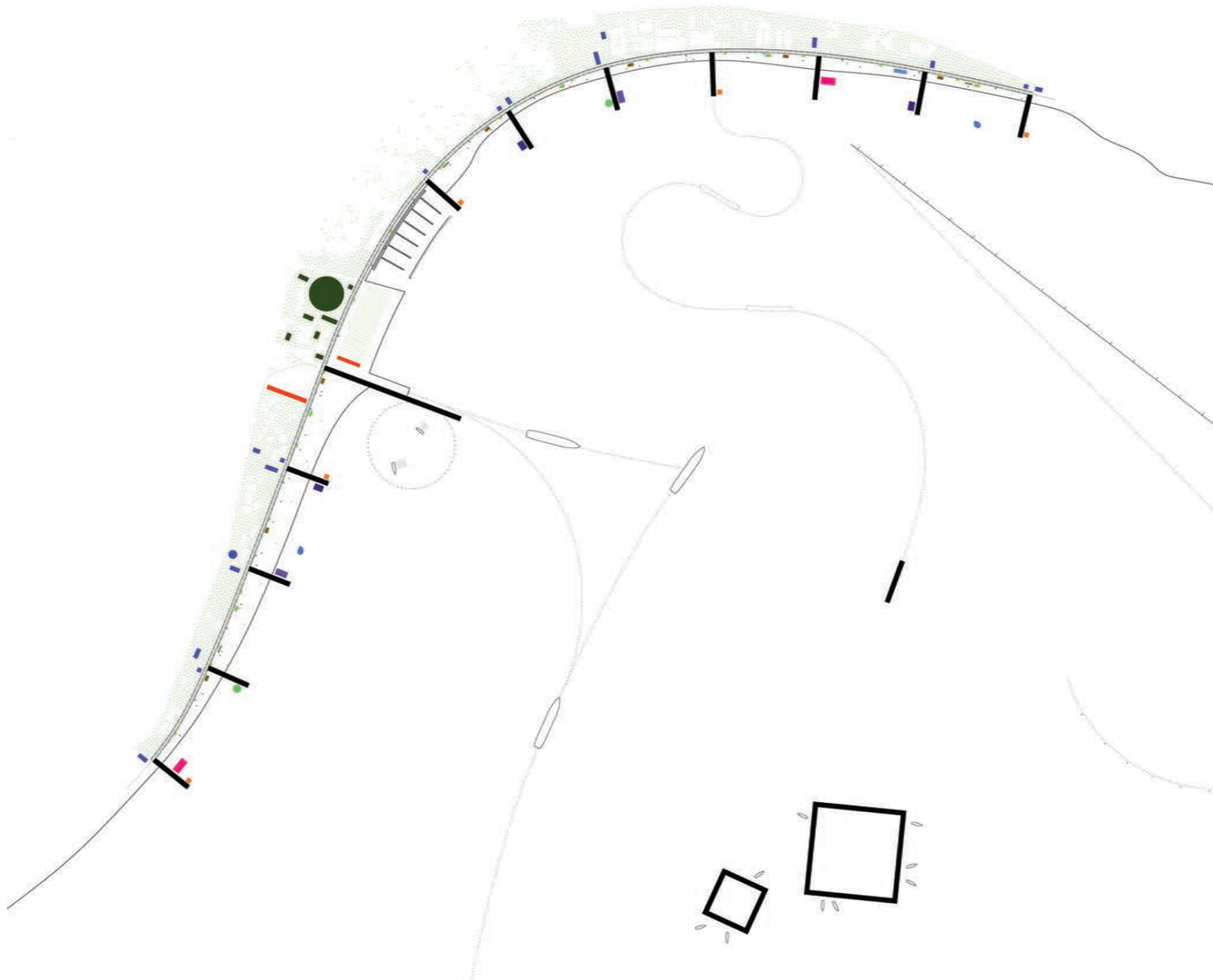
Along the length of the city's waterfront, we have inserted a series of piers, that cut across the beach, and extend far out into the sea: they are, town, boulevard and beach extensions, which, recurring at 370 metre intervals, establish an urban rhythm for the entire new City Front; this rhythm reinforces the concept's view of the proposal as unitary project, and, at the same time, becomes an analogical embodiment of the sea, echo of the waves: indeed, rhythm, from the Greek «ρυθμός», a word whose etymological origins stem from the verb «ρέω», to flow, or the nouns «ρούς» and «ροή», or flow, is a word that mirrors the rhythmical flux of the waves, the morphology of the sea. The piers are the markers of this elemental rhythm and establish the grammar of the project. As regular templates that intersect the boulevard, the piers extend the beach and make it bigger, allowing for more people to indulge in the luxuries of the Mediterranean's everlasting summer; they are urban condensers. At the same time these piers, can be construed as metaphysical elements that execute architecture's primordial purpose, that is, engender an incisive confrontation between nature (the sea) and the artificial (the city); and the waterfront is precisely the place where this confrontation can be had.

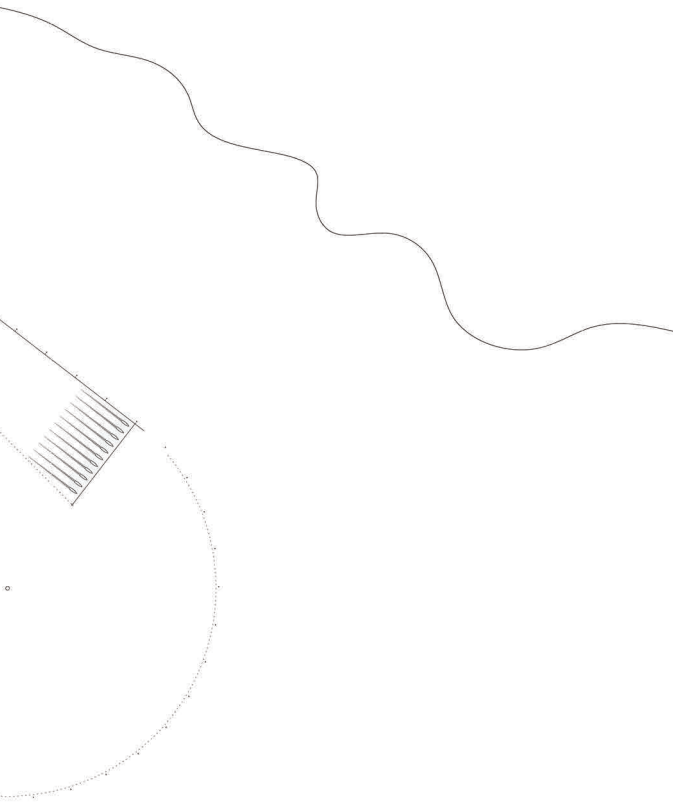




The sea

VLORA WATERFRONT PROMENADE





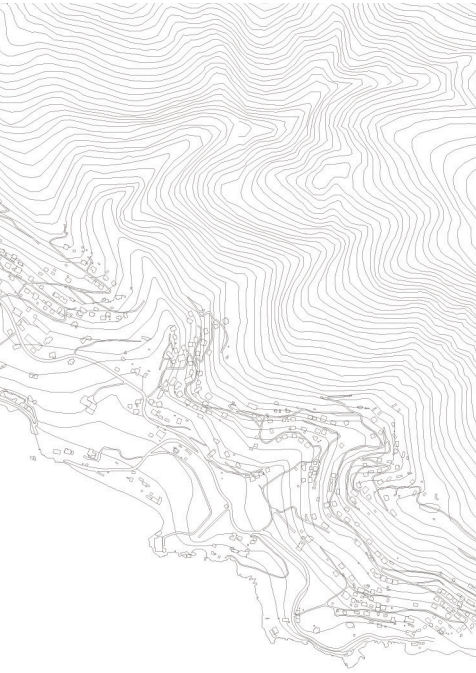
Strategic Interventions

### **CONFETTI - PROGRAMS**

Once the rhythm of the waterfront is established, a number of different program elements is introduced, that appear as if scattered like confetti. However, the placement of the “confetti” follows the same logic as that of the piers. Each program occurs at set, but different distance intervals (see relevant diagrams). The logic of the confetti is reminiscent of the Roman road system, which was defined by a linear choreography of the different elements such as milestones and the “mutations”. The goal of these elements was not only to serve the road, but also to make it become the measure of the landscape around. Here lies the crux of our project: while the proposed structure allows for incremental and even fragmented development to happen, it also frames this for development within a coherent order, and a choreography made of recurring elements.

VLORA WATERFRONT PROMENADE





Map of Vlorë's Bay

## CONCLUSIONS

This is a project of boundaries and not a 'Masterplan' of the traditional type: it is a project of limits and thresholds that triggers the construction of a landscape, allowing for the municipality's own contributions, within the rigor of its set order. It seeks to highlight and complement the existing waterfront's qualities and to substitute any shortfalls or other blemishes with a complex but unitary intervention, commensurate with the dignity that the city's inhabitants would expect: a project that would bestow to the historical city of Vlorë a distinctive and representative landmark. Moreover, it is a Public Intervention: it is an infrastructural proposal, a public investment, which, while allowing for the private sector to enter and elaborate, provides the frame and ordering systems within which such elaborations can take place.



The Piers

Our fundamental concern is to propose something that is easy to build and to maintain: no complicated structures, that look extraordinary in renderings but end up hideous when realized because they demand exceptional building skills and high maintenance. The boulevard, the "pineta", and, especially the piers are easy to build and once they are there they will require minimum maintenance. We propose an architecture that is cheap, but which, precisely for this reason, has the dignity that Vlora's citizen would expect, an architecture that is there before being something and even afterwards: hard, inalterable, loyal, reliable, humble yet magnificent, precisely because of this.



The Pineta



The Beach

## 06 MBA/S - HONOURABLE MENTION

### TEAM COMPOSITION:

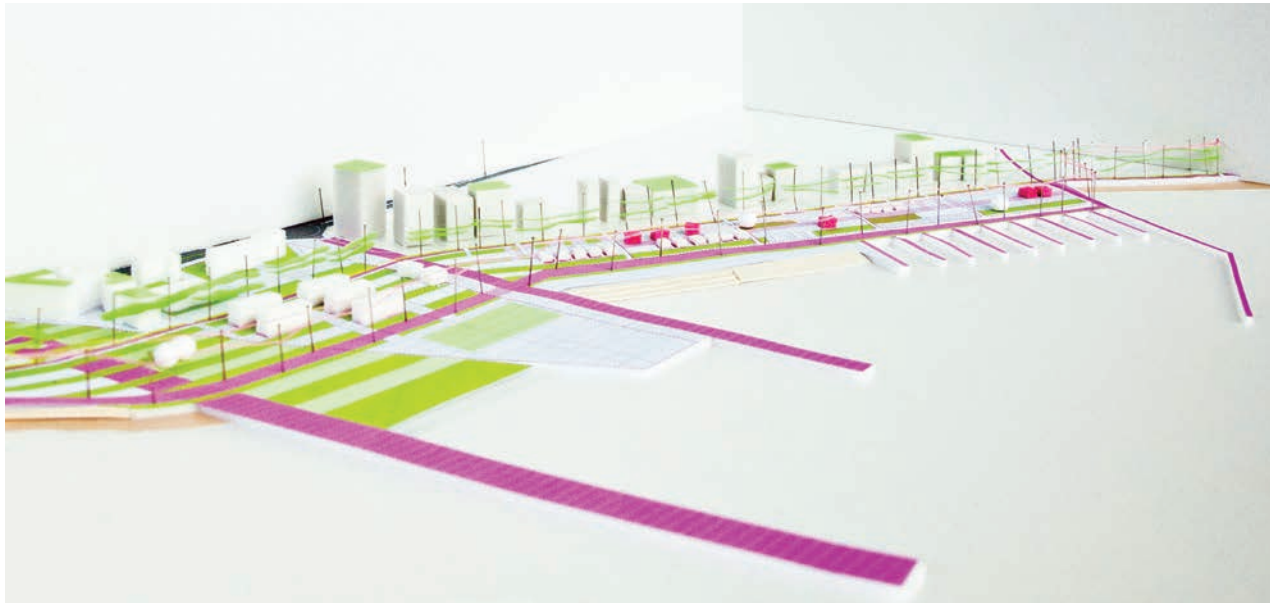
#### **Architect**

Matthias Bauer  
Marta Martínez Méndez  
Rocío Miranda Barreda  
María Rodríguez Cadenas  
Petrit Pasha

#### **Landscape Architect**

Adrienne Scottie McDaniel





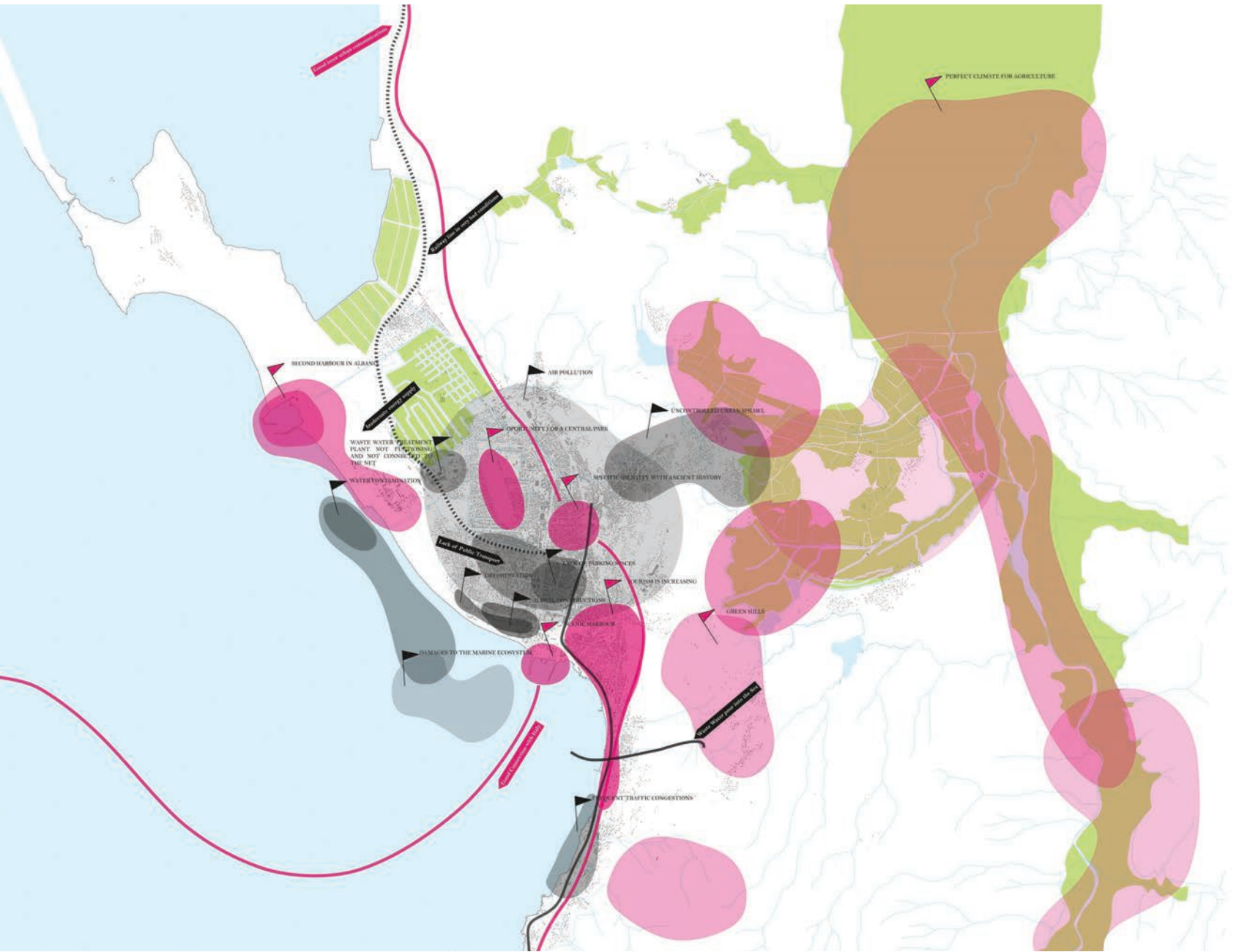
*For the City of Vlora the Sea is a reference point. Most of the leisure and economic activities are related to the Sea, from fishing to tourist resorts. But they were not respectful towards this gift and they did not take care of it as they should. With this project the city has a second chance to grow something from the landscape from which they belong. For this restoration, they will use the Kit of Architectural Seeds. Each Seed will be placed at strategic points to create a basic structure for the redevelopment of the Waterfront.*

VLORA BAY - A blooming city

### **VLORA CITY**

The city of Vlora is one of the most ancient city in Albania dating back to the 6th century BC contemporary to the ancient Greek civilization and known as Aulon. Nowadays, its population reaches 150 000 inhabitants, and the city has the second largest port of Albania which is also a fishing port and holiday resort. Vlora is very rich in historical and archeological landmarks and from natural beauty point of view, one of the most attractive tourist centers in the eastern part of the Mediterranean Sea. In the last 10 years the city economy has been marked by a construction booming that was directed to build new residence for an increasing population and to accommodate tourists. In many cases the existing and outdated urban regulations were disregarded leading to chaotic developments such as disproportional high buildings or erratic building orientations both in the city center and along the waterfront.

As other Albanian cities, Vlora also exhibits many problems associated with unmanaged urbanization, such as pollution, weak sewerage infrastructure and waste disposal, poor water supply, presence of illegal settlements and traffic congestion. Particularly worrisome is the management of the city's waste as the service offered is irregular, inefficient and inadequate. In worst case, solid waste is left to decompose on streets and empty lots. Even solid waste collected by the municipal authorities is dumped and burned in non-engineered open areas within the city limits.

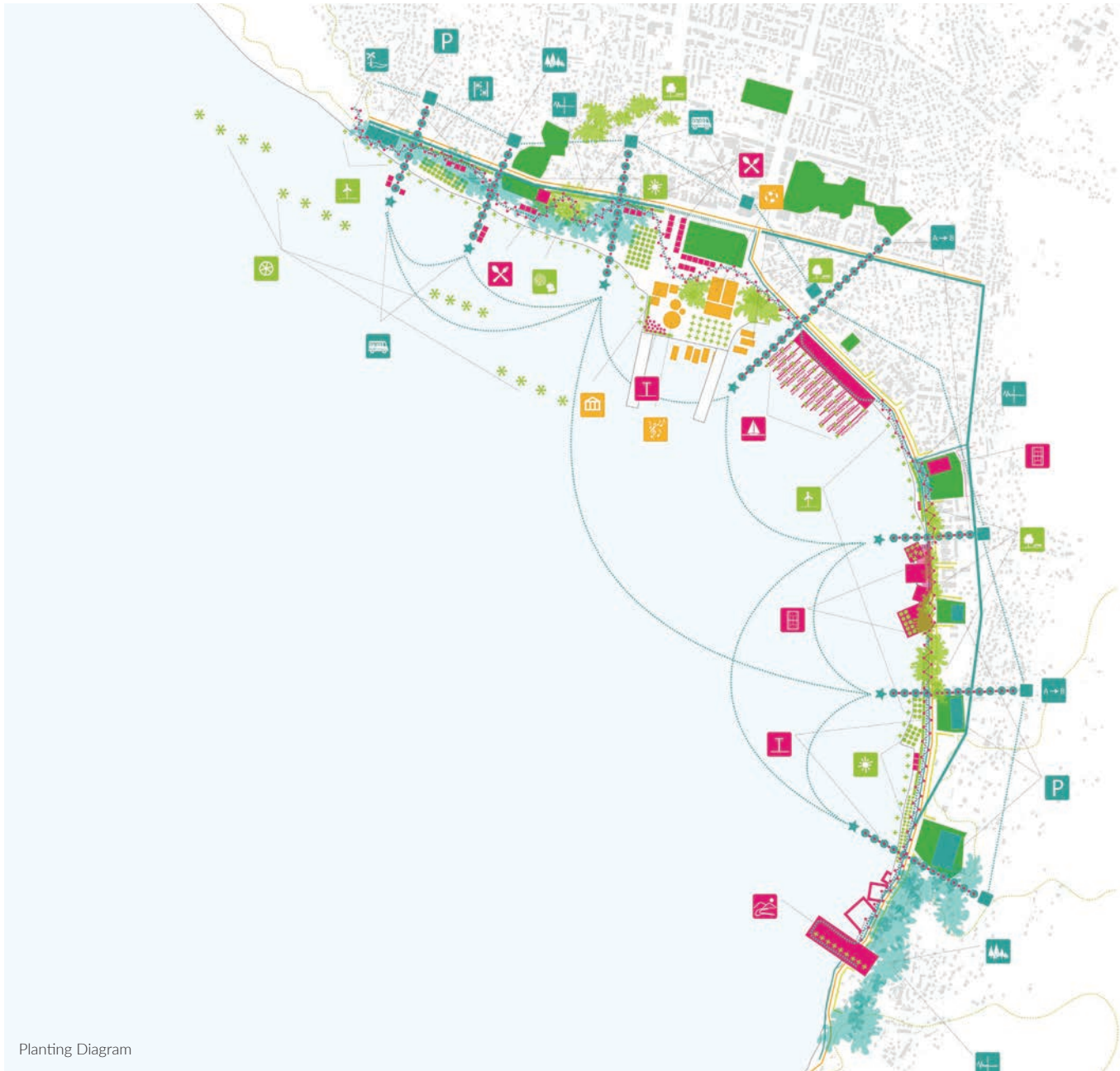


## VLORA WATERFRONT PROMENADE



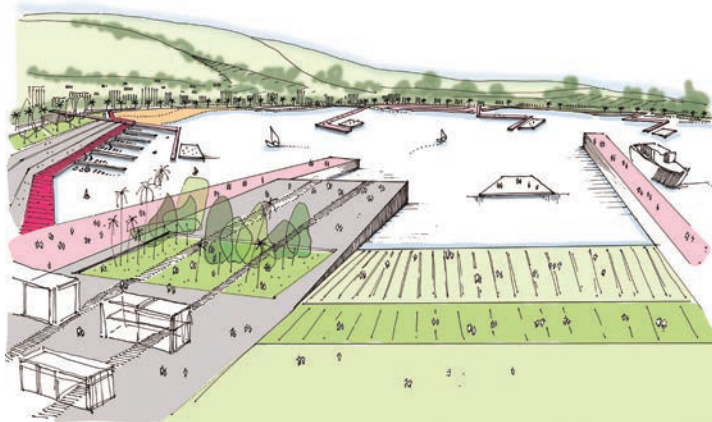
### **KIT OF ARCHITECTURAL SEEDS**

For the regeneration of the Vlorë Bay the project will provide a Kit of Architectural Seeds. These seeds will be planted in the different zones of the site to colonize individual spaces. The seeds are planted as an active response to the specific weaknesses found in each area. The solution to each problem can be provided in several ways. The classification system in Vlorë Bay organizes the seeds by their main function. This way we can observe Structural Seeds, Production Seeds, Attraction Seeds and Autochthonous Seeds. Different types of spatial relationships emerge depending on seed pairings. Each seed type is reliant on the others to continue growing and recreate Vlorë Bay.

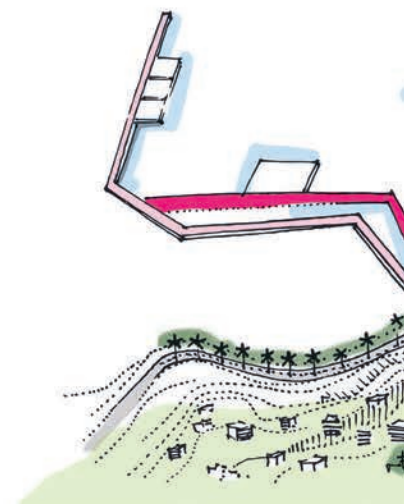


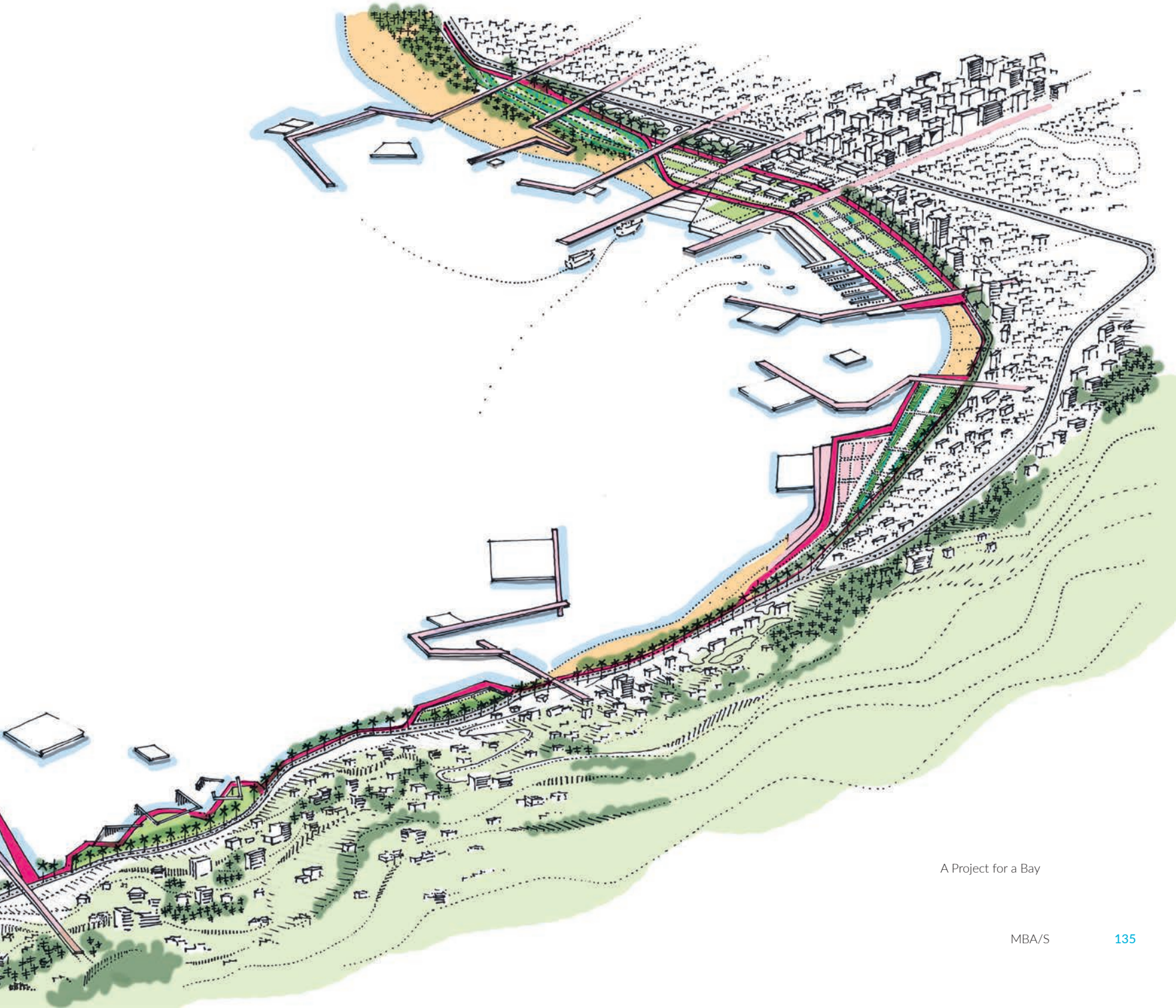
Planting Diagram

The Waterfront will be divided into different areas with diverse atmospheres; The Green Beach, The Sea Gate Vlorë Park, The Holiday Everyday and an Untouched Land. In the Green Beach the project will focus on the cleaning of storm water using wetland systems, and the existing beach will remain intact. The aim is to provide the city with a proper urban beach. The Sea Gate Vlorë Park project aims for an international, cultural exchange where foreigners can get to know the culture of Vlorë and Albania. The harbour is preserved as a touristic port area with adjacency to the new nautical sports marina. In the Holiday Everyday area, tourist will find everything they need to enjoy their time in Vlorë. The Untouched Land will be a Nature Reserve where visitors can only access from the Seaside.



View from the Harbour



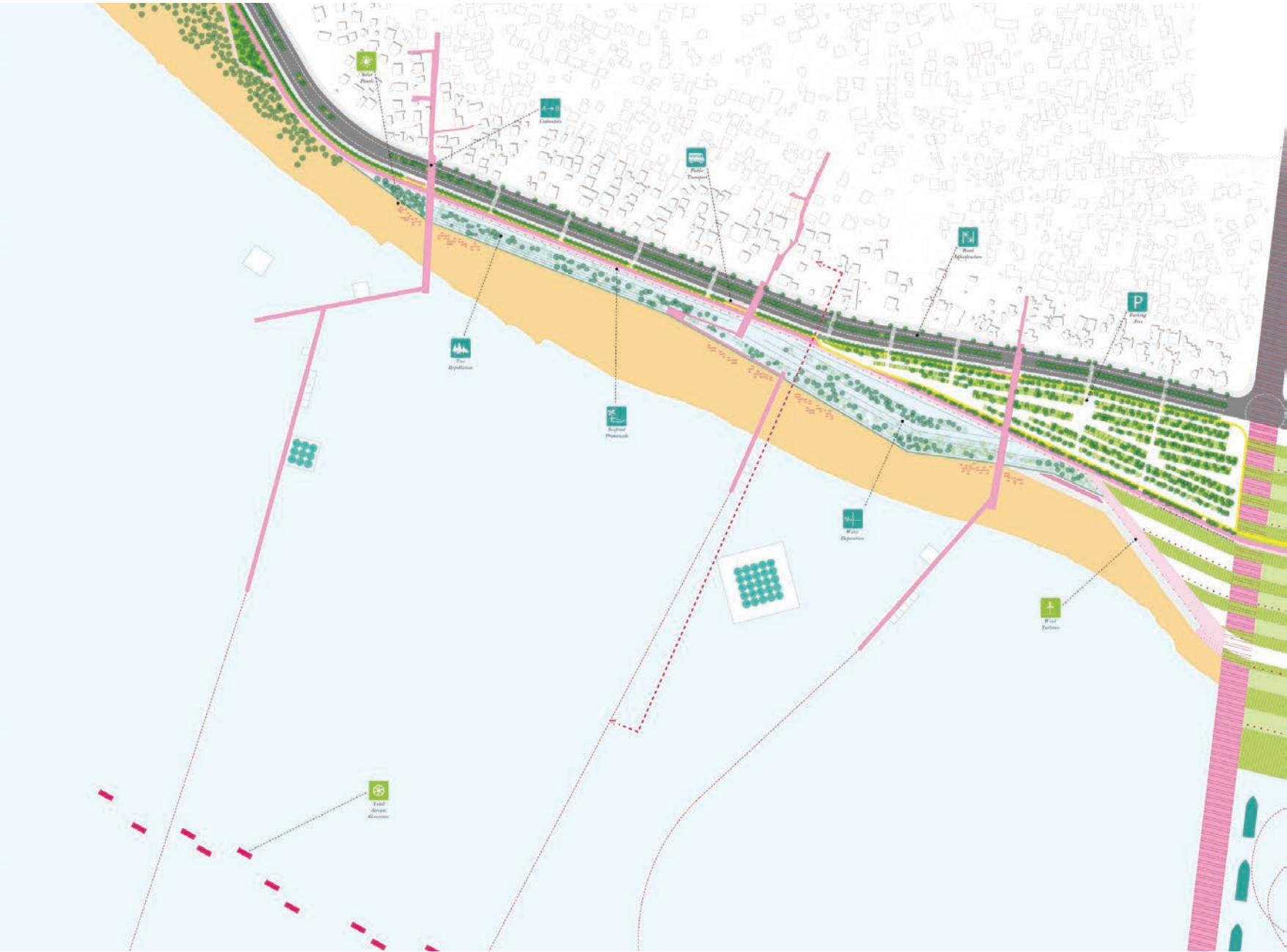


A Project for a Bay

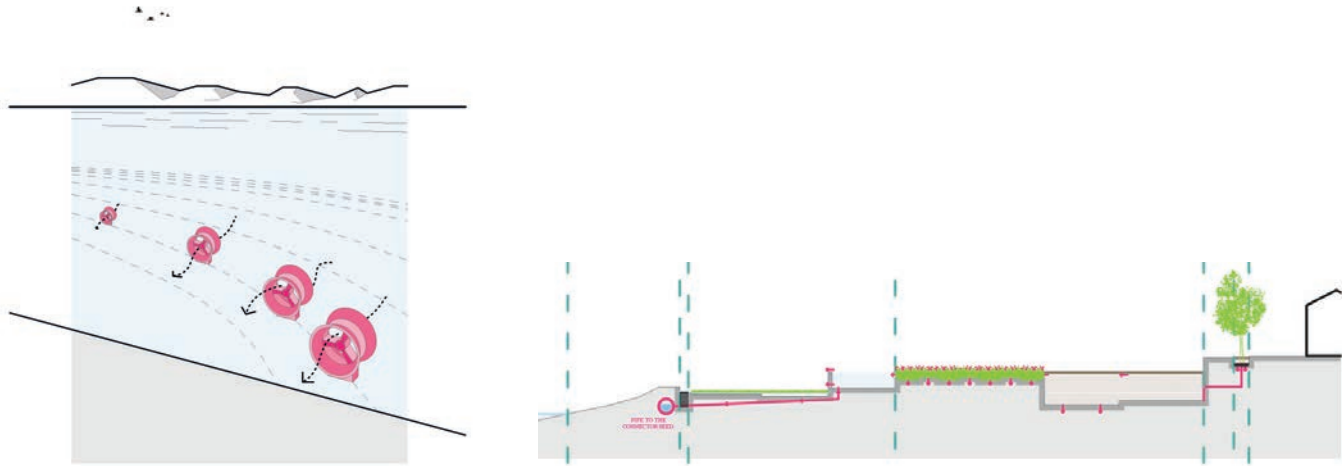
### **THE GREEN BEACH - WETLANDS IN A FOREST**

Environmental degradation and public hygiene conditions are a serious concern. There are about 17 sewerage channels that discharge directly into the sea with inevitable damage to the marine ecosystem. Moreover, groundwater contamination from industrial and domestic sewage has made much of the city's water supply unfit for drinking. To change this situation, the Vlorë Bay will implement a natural system for cleaning contaminated water. The Green Beach is a place dedicated to water remediation. At the Natural Beach, we propose a system of Wetlands that uses plant cycles to clean runoff, groundwater and soil high in mercury. The Wetlands will run along the pedestrian walkway, integrating it as part of the landscape within this coastal zone. A coastal forest is also proposed at the Green Beach, continuing the northern edge of existing woods by replanting trees along the coast. Additionally, the Green Beach will generate energy through tide movements using Tidal Stream Generators placed at a depth of 40 m below sea level.





## VLORA WATERFRONT PROMENADE



### TIDAL STREAM GENERATOR

It is a machine that extracts energy from moving masses of water, in particular tides. Are the cheapest and the least ecologically damaging among the three main forms of tidal power generation. They are very similar to the Wind turbines but much more efficient due to the density of the water.

### STORM WATER WETLAND

As an integral part of the remediation strategy for flood mitigation and edge erosion control, the storm water wetlands are envisioned both as an infrastructural tool and recreational opportunity. This section explores the relationships between the components of a functioning wetland.

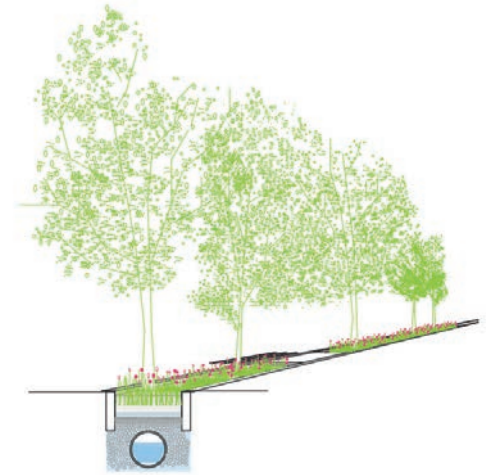
View of the segment



### **THE SEA GATE VLORA PARK - A MAGIC OVERLAP**

The city has the second largest harbour in Albania which is also a fishing port and a holiday resort. Vlora is rich in historical and archeological landmarks, as well as views of the beautiful natural landscape. These features make it one of the most attractive tourist centers in the eastern region of the Mediterranean Sea. The city is benefiting from local and international tourism, mainly from Kosovo and Macedonia where many Albanian ethnic minority live. The city harbour is the actual gate to Europe, connecting Albania to Italy. The project intends to develop an area to allow different cultures can meet. The Sea Gate Vlora Park is where travelers can get to know the Albania and have a culturally enriching experience. Surrounding the Harbour area, an artistic and cultural neighborhood will be encouraged to grow. With flexible streets that host outdoor performances , cultural events, concerts, artistic exhibitions, etc. As part of the Sea Gate, we propose the integration of a new touristic Marina adjacent the existing Ferry Harbour. This will attract nautical sport activities such as Windsurfing, Kitesurfing, Parasailing, and more.



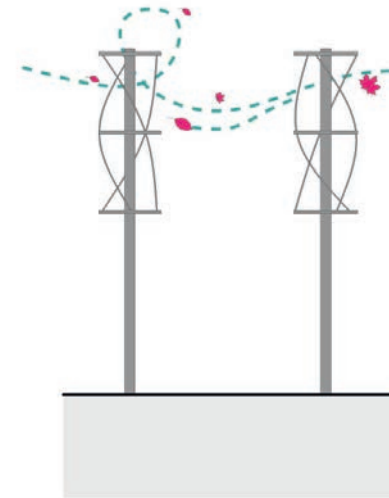


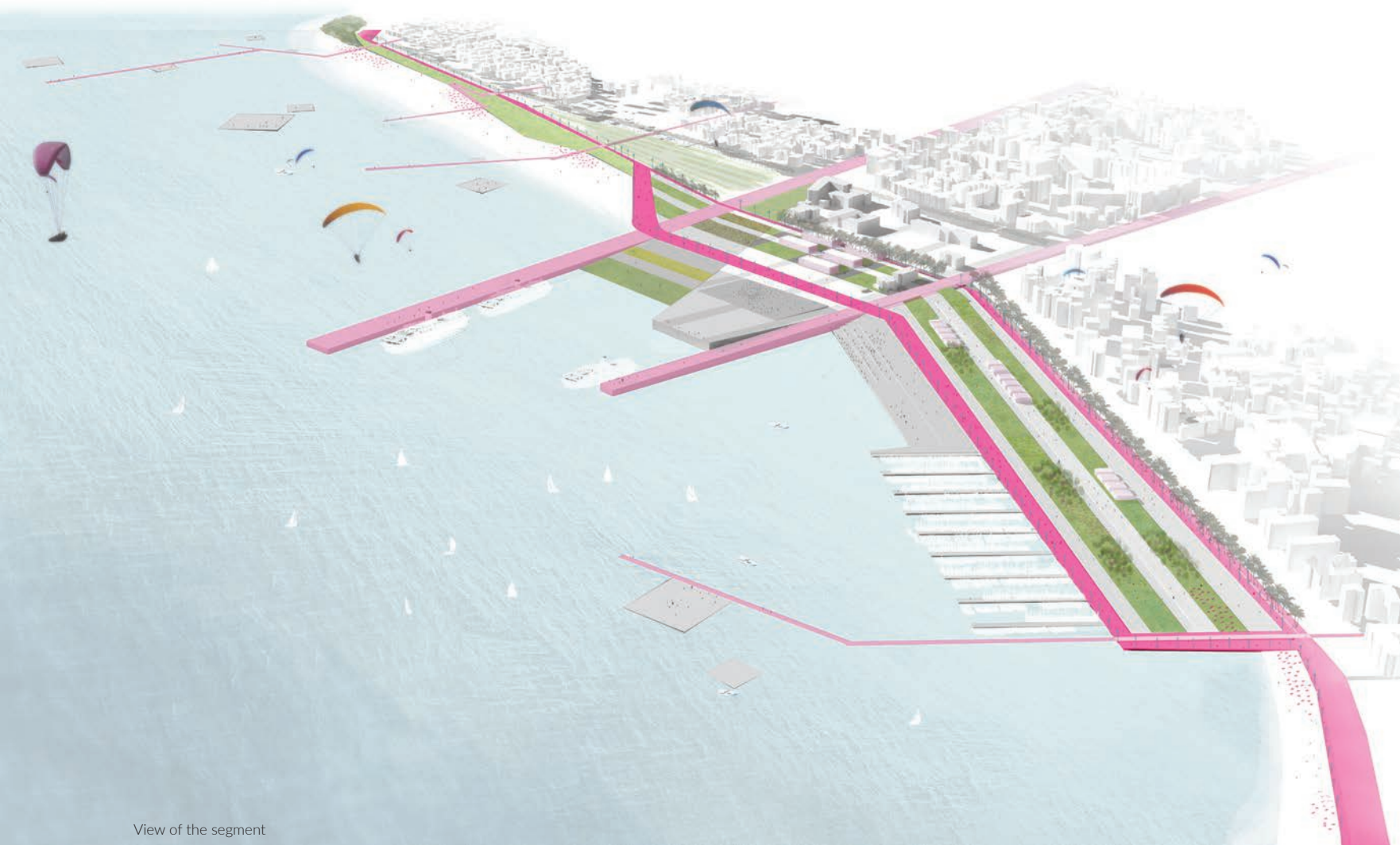
### COMPLETE STREETS

Many landscape elements help manage storm water runoff. Bios wales, green space, rain gardens, and street trees are all mutually beneficial for mobility and ecology. These green elements are increasingly found to be important deterrents of collisions and accidents, and contribute to a more comfortable and visually interesting environment for all users.

### WIND TURBINES

Small wind turbines are employed to charge auxiliary batteries on boats and hybrid caravans, or to power traffic warning signs. Slightly larger turbines can be used for making modest inputs to a domestic power supply or to sell surplus power back to the utility supplier. Wind energy can contribute to the self-sufficiency and sustainability of the Vlora waterfront.





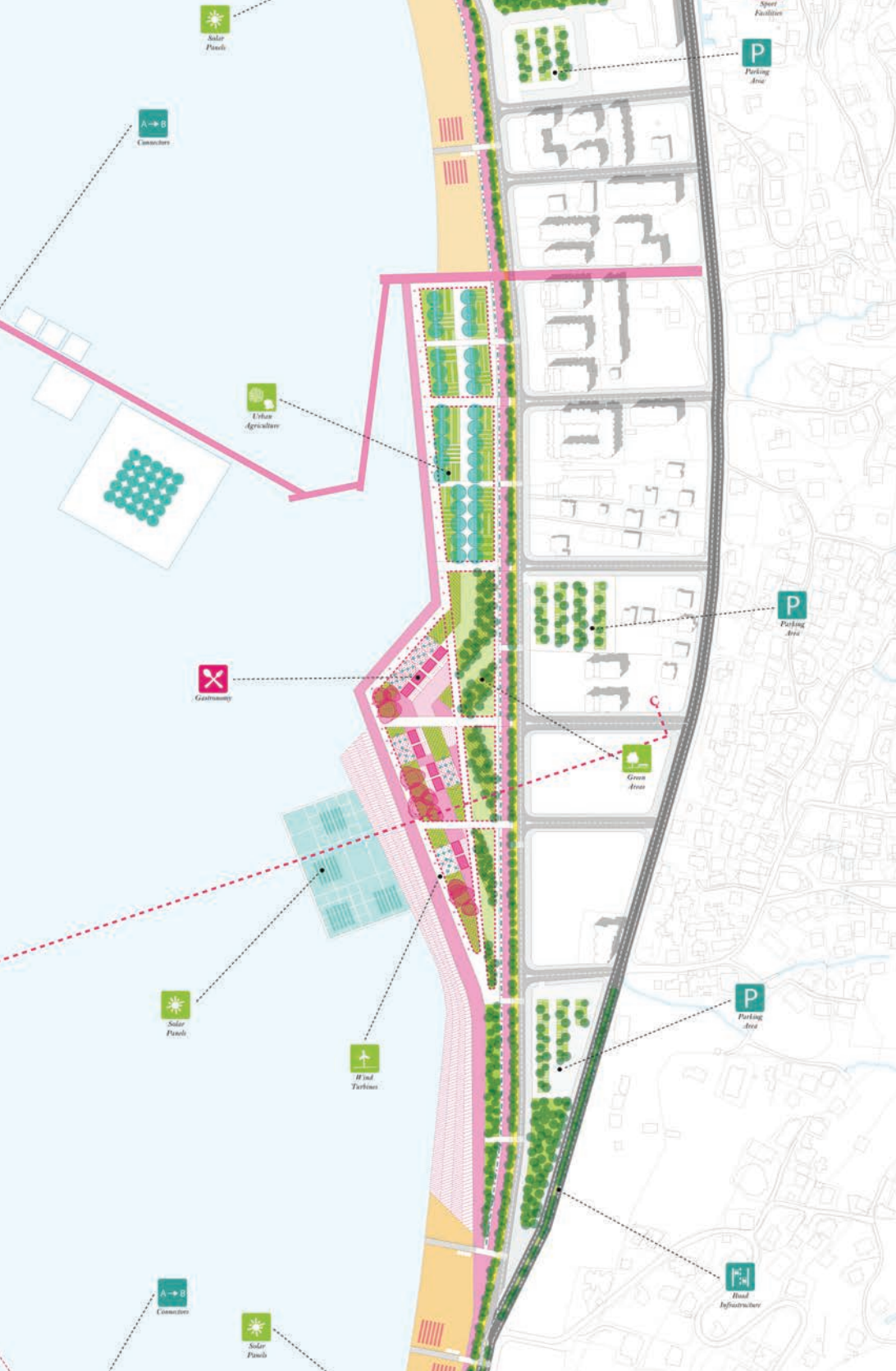
View of the segment

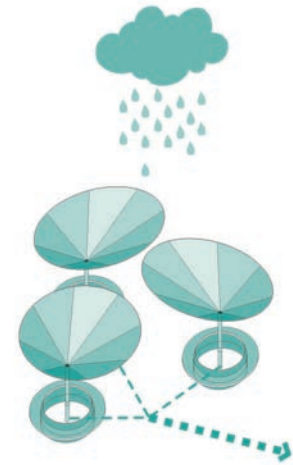
### **THE HOLIDAY EVERYDAY - THE POTENTIALS OF THE SEAFRONT**

Currently, the tourism sector represents about half of the local economy. Huge investments have been made recently to increase the housing stock for residents and improve the hotel and restaurant markets. However, more needs to be done to meet the demands of sophisticated tourists and to compete with similar tourism hotspots along the Adriatic coast. In particular, tourist attraction should be based on a variety of services and amenities to be offered to tourists. These conveniences should be built on the valorization of the coastal mountain area and the discovery of the regional cultural heritage. Vlorë Bay proposes to improve the existing beach facilities and consolidate the narrowest part of the coast line creating an airy platform where visitors can enjoy the sunset, practice yoga, sunbathing or just breathe the fresh air. The Holiday Everyday segment aims to bring people into contact with the sea. A series of connections distribute tourists and residents along the seaside for unique experiences. These connectors allow pedestrians to transition further into the sea simply walking.



# VLORA WATERFRONT PROMENADE



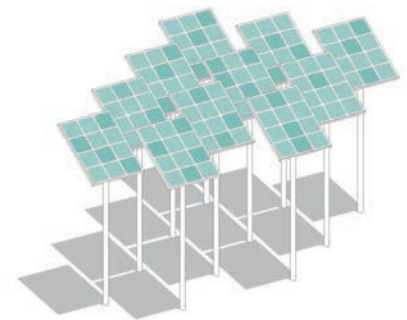


### **WATER COLLECTORS**

In Vlora nothing goes to waste! When it rains the water is collected, cleaned and reused to water the urban agriculture fields. The vegetables produced in these gardens will supply local restaurants in the area.

### **SOLAR ROOFS**

The sun is a natural energy source that can be collected using photovoltaic cells. By placing Solar Collectors along the beach areas, they can be used for both energy collection and sun shading (i.e. parasol elements).



View of the segment



## 07 METRO POLIS - LOCAL PRIZE

### TEAM COMPOSITION:

#### Team Leader

Sotir Dhamo  
Elvan Dajko

#### Project leader

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Endrit Marku

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Renis Batalli

#### City Planning and Urban Design

Dorina Papa

#### Visual art

Gezim Qendro

#### Environmental Design

Juljan Veleshnja

#### Electrical Engineering

Fatmir Brati

#### Civil Engineering

Merita Bego

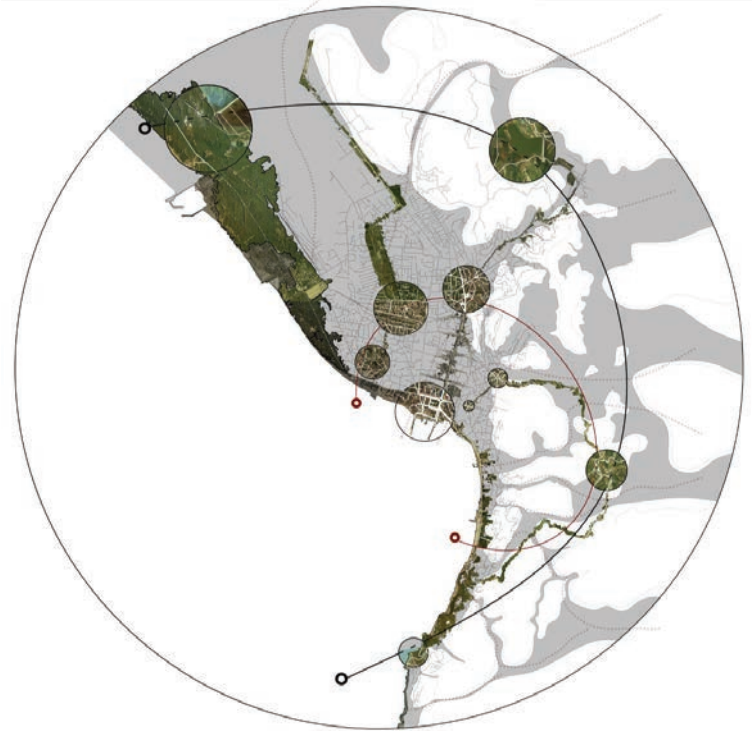
#### Students from POLIS University

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Emel Peterci  
Gjinovefa Xinxo  
Figali Dardha  
Renisa Muka  
Enia Salillari  
Remzi Kutrolli  
Gerti Struga



*The project is developed around the idea of hyper natural. Hyper natural is about artificial environments capable of generating new landscapes, new habitats, sustainable scenarios of radical growth. We consider hyper natural the interventions whose aims are extremely functional, pragmatic and so exasperated to blend, blur and build new relationships with the environment.*

**Hyper natural Vlora**



New strategic portrait for Vlorë

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the project is to make the waterfront of Vlorë an infrastructure that can affect and regulate both at metropolitan and regional scale tourist attractiveness, mobility, and urban growth. Through the concept of hyper natural, the project aims to shape this infrastructure as a permeable interface between land and sea by connecting flows and services. An area in which structural interventions for the coast converge and balance, with the intention of creating a new landscape of public spaces and green areas in between land and sea.

### **STRATEGY**

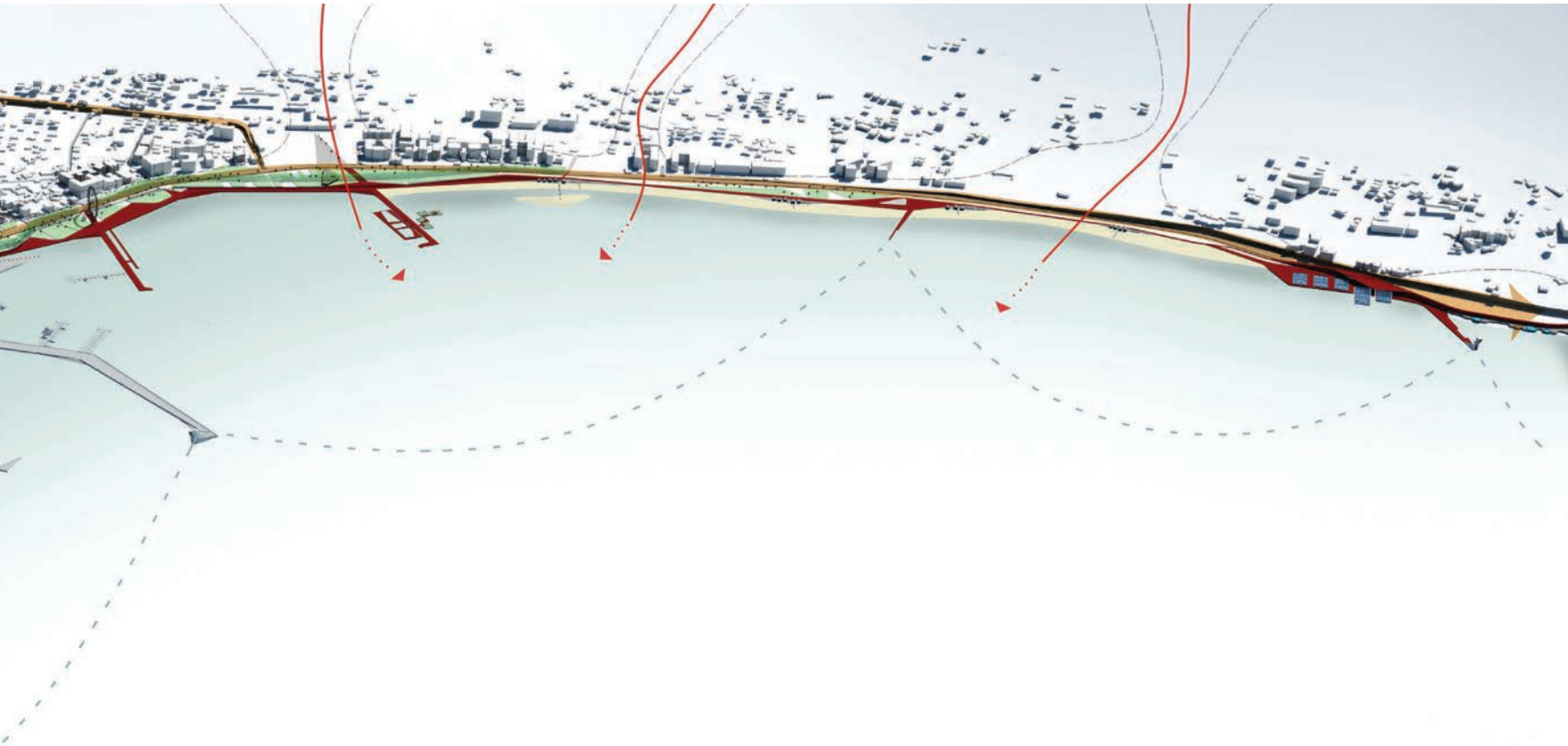
Strategically the project works on two main systems: - one parallel to the coast that deals with mobility, connections and the promenade in relation with the different areas of the city: - the other perpendicular to the coast, focusing on the extension of public spaces and of green urban spaces towards the sea.



VLORA WATERFRONT PROMENADE







## OVERVIEW

The main concept of the master plan is to flow the city into the waterfront and create a unique cultural platform with recreational and entertainment facilities serving the city, its people and tourists with new dimension, meaning and scale of development. The city waterfront should be envisaged as a city's identity on its waterfront. Particularly in the "Skela" part and in the harbor, it assumes mostly public function, while the rest remains more natural, with services for tourism. On this concept is created a vision based on a net of natural elements, on a dialogue with the main built matrix of the city, longitudinal land and water connections, reinforced cross-roads to the sea and the longitudinal continuity of the waterfront.



Diagrams on "green strategy" on the sea

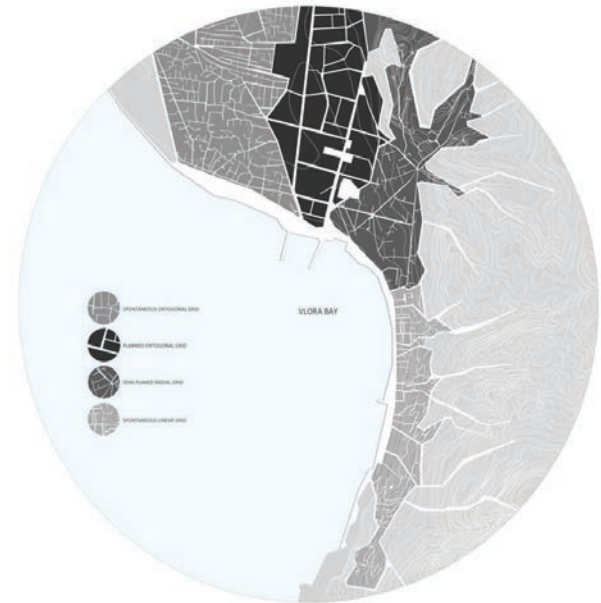
### THE GREEN SYSTEM

The natural green system is an important element of the vision. Green is considered as a way to stop the further uncontrolled urbanization, as a tool to connect different parts of the city, to reshape and heal the landscape from the recent aggressive sprawling, to raise the life quality of the residents beside the overall image of a place. Green is part of the waterfront park and is used as an outdoor space for events, sport or just as a natural green that allows continuity between the sea and the hinterland. This proposal works on this topic, extends it and tries to control it as a system that comes from the hills and from the main green areas in the city and penetrates in the waterfront through the existing urban fabric. According to this vision the "Soda" woods will be extended in the area of the old beach, integrating the existing structures with the pine wood and providing a natural park to the old city beach. The second system of green areas starts from the ex-airport area, which we propose in our vision to be a "Central Park" for Vlora, and includes a number of green areas

along the new green West Boulevard proposed. It will end up in a public square in the central part of the old beach, and will be integrated with the transversal system of pine woods parallel to the seashore. The third green system is represented by small city parks and public squares along the historical boulevard which are connected through the continue sign of the vegetation in the boulevard itself. This system ended up towards the harbor area bringing green city spaces near the sea.

Another important green system starts from the hills on the east and descends slowly in towards the sea. In some points like in the marina area it constitutes important areas near the promenade, areas that can be restored and extended towards the sea. In this way along the seashore promenade, important parks in relation to the hinterland will be provided, which not only will design the promenade itself but will also reinforce the relation with the city and the hills.

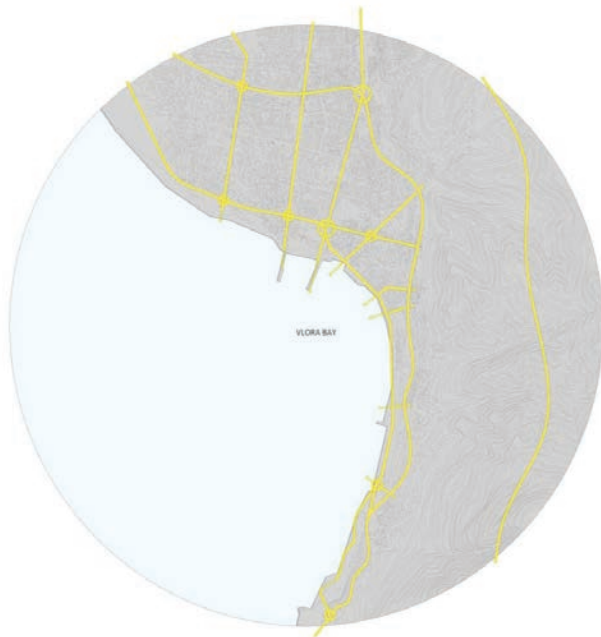




Built system vision

### THE BUILT SYSTEM

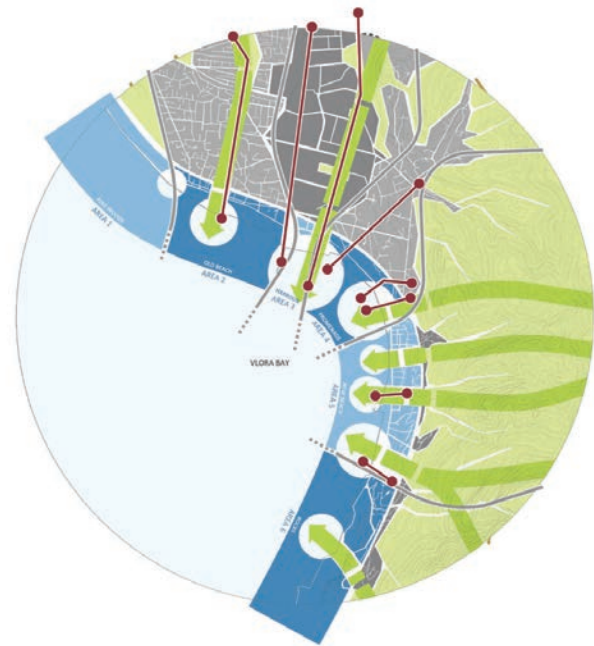
The built system is the most prevailing element of Vlorë. This is a logical conclusion that can be traced for most of the cities worldwide as they are commonly identified with the built part. Our observations are more related to the character of this environment and to the relation that it creates with the other elements of the city. It's exactly through these links that quality is provided in urban contexts, and it's also what Vlorë misses a heavy built city or just unwisely built in some other cases. A built environment informally exploding and imploding that doesn't communicate with the existing patterns that are definitively there or with the people's needs, that doesn't put itself in dialogue even with the main matrix of this place, the reason of the very existence of the city, the sea. The last twenty years of economical and political transition fueled informal that spontaneous developments that have left Vlorë shapeless without a clear identity.



The main crossroad to the sea vision

### THE MAIN CROSSROADS TO THE SEA

The main crossroads to the sea are actually considered as boundaries or transitory lines in between the different urban environments, which often trace important axis within the city or design buffer areas where the passage from the different parts of the city occurs, will impact the waterfront not continuing as urban cuts, but designing some main spots that will be translated in public space and will be signed through some of the new land-marks that will compose the new waterfront. In particular, in the west limit of the Old beach, in the dock area in continuity with the historical boulevard, in the Marina dock and in the pier that marks the border of the Adriatic Sea with the Ionian Sea.



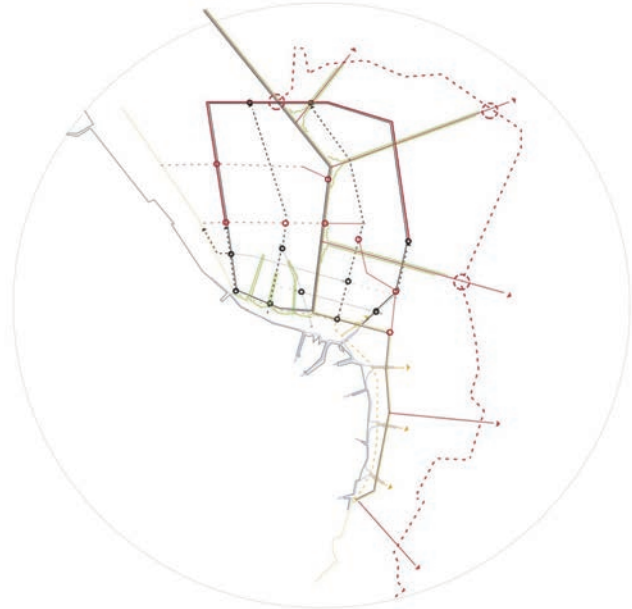
Continue waterfront vision

### THE CONTINUE WATERFRONT

The continue waterfront will be an intersection of many layers: the green system; the different built environments and their borders; circulation especially in its transversal directions. The coastline will become a continuous system with different characterizations. Residents and tourists will experience the new waterfront and find themselves inside evolving and dynamic environments: a new park, extension of the pinewood, will be created in between the seashore and the built part. The residential area next to it will be enriched in services and quality; "the harbor" will become part of the city, the first pier will serve the international ferry connection while the other will become the extension of the urban main boulevard.

Service as the new terminal or the sea museum will be part of a wider variety offered in the area; following in the south "the promenade" will appear as a sequence of squares, piers, green public spaces equipped with bars and restaurants, including the touristic poet; "the new beach" area preserves its functional character but earns new image.

Bathing facilities, pools, a new large promenade and an extend beach are the elements that will transform this part in a beating part of the city; last in sequence is "the rocks" area, which remains more natural. In conclusion the waterfront is conceived as a continuous system, even though it is divided into 6 (six) main sections, according to the character given.



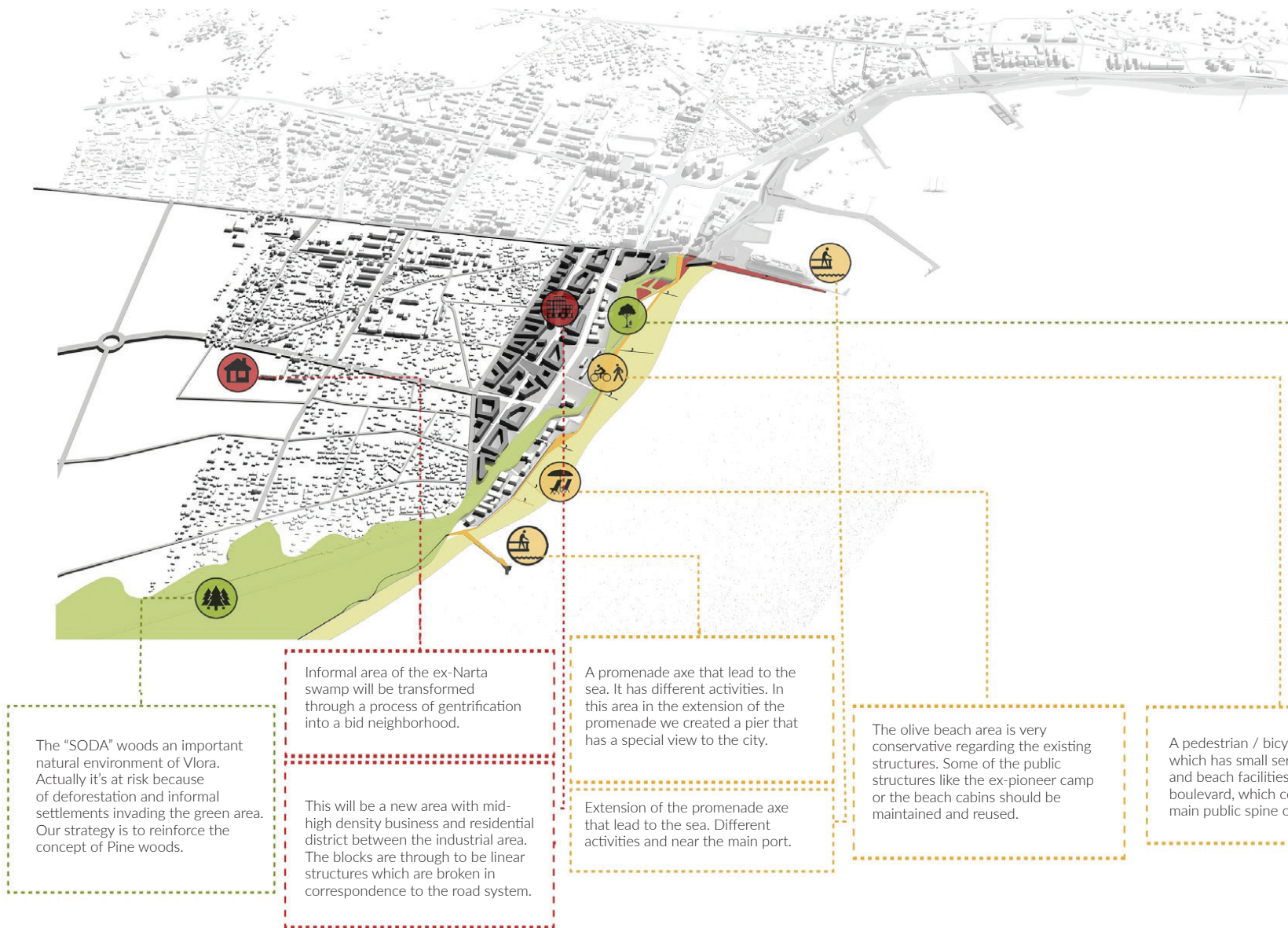
Circulation system / city scale



## CIRCULATION SYSTEM

Circulation is one of the most relevant systems, functionally wise, crucial in order to avoid congestions in the inner circulation of the city, especially during summer. Vlora has already some characteristic axes: transversal ones, like the main boulevard and the trans-Balkan road parallel to each other culminating next to the sea; and the partial longitudinal road, a continuation of the main axis that follows the coast toward the southern exit of the urban area. This system of transversal and longitudinal axes is recalled and improved. The present longitudinal road is connected with the other coastal part, parallel to the "old beach" area, and transformed into a complex route connecting the two extremes of the city and our waterfront area, through pedestrian promenade, bike paths and innovative public transport means. A new parallel axis is partly created and partly built by improving existing ones in order to create a by-pass attracting the traffic and allowing a faster passage through the city without interfering in the waterfront. Another longitudinal axis that can help partially this traffic direction is also the new road on the hill side passing through Kanina. But it is the transversal system that has a real physical impact on the waterfront; connections are increased in number and capacity. The transversal axis will allow a faster connection between the inner city and the waterfront by stitching them together.

## VLORA WATERFRONT PROMENADE



The "SODA" woods an important natural environment of Vlorë. Actually it's at risk because of deforestation and informal settlements invading the green area. Our strategy is to reinforce the concept of Pine woods.

Informal area of the ex-Narta swamp will be transformed through a process of gentrification into a bid neighborhood.

This will be a new area with mid-high density business and residential district between the industrial area. The blocks are through to be linear structures which are broken in correspondence to the road system.

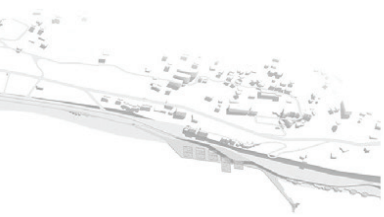
A promenade axe that lead to the sea. It has different activities. In this area in the extension of the promenade we created a pier that has a special view to the city.

Extension of the promenade axe that lead to the sea. Different activities and near the main port.

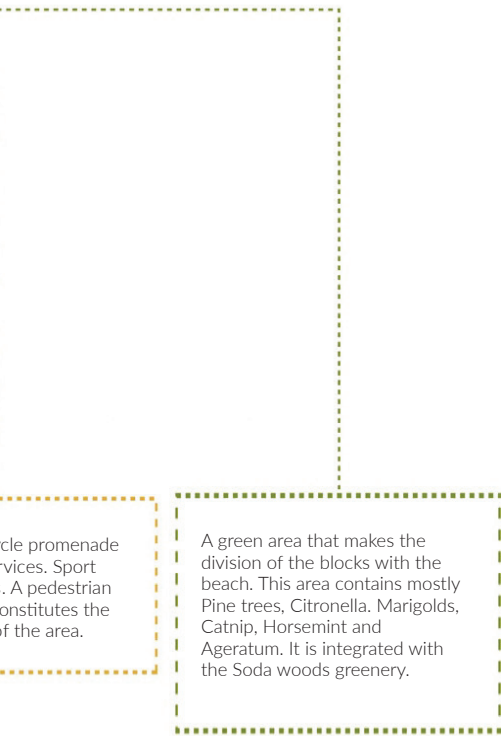
The olive beach area is very conservative regarding the existing structures. Some of the public structures like the ex-pioneer camp or the beach cabins should be maintained and reused.

A pedestrian / bicycle boulevard, which has small services and beach facilities. This boulevard, which is the main public spine of the area.





The Soda wood and the old beach section



cycle promenade  
services. Sport  
A pedestrian  
constitutes the  
of the area.

A green area that makes the  
division of the blocks with the  
beach. This area contains mostly  
Pine trees, Citronella, Marigolds,  
Catnip, Horsemint and  
Ageratum. It is integrated with  
the Soda woods greenery.

### THE EXTENSION OF “SODA” WOODS

The “Soda” Woods has been one of the most important natural environments of Vlorë. It was historically known as the city lung and actually it’s at risk because of deforestation and informal settlements invading the green area. Our strategy is to reinforce the concept of pine woods extending it in the area of the old beach in order to create an organic interface between the city and the sea and to bring shadow to the sunny beach. It is conceived as a shore park integrated with pedestrian and bicycle roads, public spaces and sport areas and serves also visually to mitigate the effect of the build environment proposed on the bottom, merging the natural and the build system.

### THE OLD BEACH WATERFRONT

On our proposal the old beach section will be mainly preserved in his function of a beach area but recreational spaces and leisure activities will be provided in order to create a new landscaped area where beach tourist can enjoy a picnic, passive recreation or sport activities. Pedestrian and cycle roads that will pass through the area, but also public land and water transport will rapidly connect the Old Beach to the rest of the bay as part of the whole. The waterfront project is also one of the important generators of the urban fabric. Given a huge low-density and low quality of formal and informal settlements the aim of the intervention will be that of regeneration and new development of parts of this area. The main interventions will be: The extension of “Soda” Woods, the creation of the West BID, the extension of the waterfront boulevard up to the new harbor, the improvement and appropriate equipment of the old beach area.

### THE CREATION OF THE WEST BID

Due to the waterfront project, the value of the area will increase and this will generate a gradual improvement and densification. The informal area of the ex-Narta swamp starting from the boulevard will be transformed through a process of gentrification into a BID neighborhood, the new image of Vlorë. It will be a mid-high density business and residential district.

The new development is thought to be organized on both sides of a new pedestrian boulevard, which constitutes the main public spine of the area. It is also articulated with a sequence of important public squares on the crossroads with the transversal axes that lead to the sea. Other small public squares are located in the external areas of the blocks, connecting visually with each other. This allows the continuity of public space and generates energy within the area. A series of recreational spaces and services like shops, cafes, restaurants will occupy the ground floors.

The blocks are thought to be linear structures which open in correspondence to the road system and continue with the same logic through the road net designing the large blocks confined by the roads. They reach the maximum high in the central part, in correspondence to the public spine and become lower on both sides by securing a better integration with the surrounding. Particularly in the southern part, the blocks become lower and merge better with the green stain of the pine woods in the waterfront. Their design has also a strong environmental design input which will be explained later on. Of course the development of this new centrality will also counterbalance the development towards the waterfront but at the same time will also give more value to the Trans Balkan way which actually would have become under utilized due to the removal of the transport of goods from the port. An important issue regarding the development of a BID is also the fact of generating higher incomes for the local government due to higher taxes which can permit further investments and development of the Vlorë waterfront.

Section on the old beach and new bid proposed

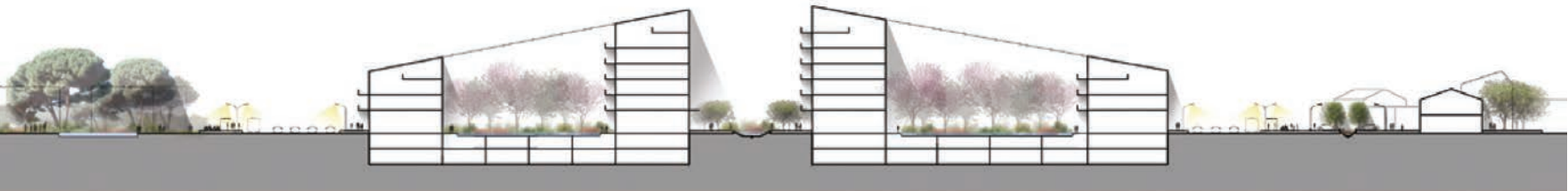


### THE EXTENSION OF THE WATERFRONT BOULEVARD

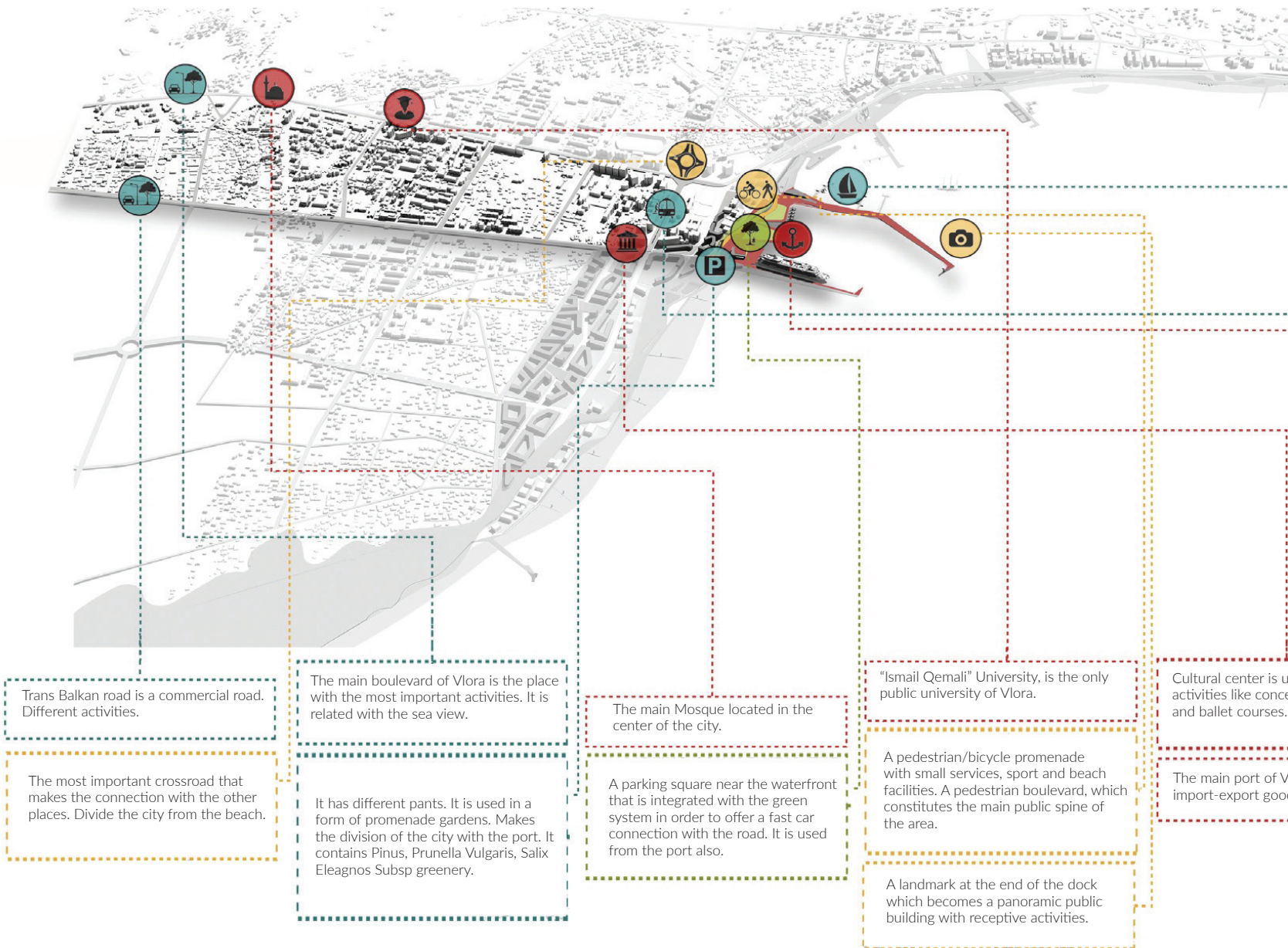
The west boulevard is part of the whole system of the waterfront boulevard which avails of two lanes of cars and two lanes of public transport. This means for the area not a barrier, but infrastructure facilities and transversal connections towards the sea. Bus stations placed in focal areas like the Custom, the center of the old beach and the final pier of the old beach, improve and create a new rapid longitudinal connection along the bay.

### THE IMPROVEMENT OF OLD BEACH AREA

The intervention in the old beach area is very conservative regarding the existing structures. On our idea, some of the public structures like the Ex-pioneer Camp or the beach Cabins should be maintained and reused. The Ex-pioneer Camp is thought to be a health care Centre being favored even by the presence of the pine woods, while the beach Cabins can be restructured and used for touristic activities. The character of this area is given by low density structures integrated with green space, leisure activities and touristic facilities. These structures are connected through a pedestrian/bicycle promenade along which other small services, sport and beach facilities are provided.



## VLORA WATERFRONT PROMENADE



Trans Balkan road is a commercial road. Different activities.

The most important crossroad that makes the connection with the other places. Divide the city from the beach.

The main boulevard of Vlorë is the place with the most important activities. It is related with the sea view.

It has different parts. It is used in a form of promenade gardens. Makes the division of the city with the port. It contains Pinus, Prunella Vulgaris, Salix Eleagnos Subsp greenery.

The main Mosque located in the center of the city.

A parking square near the waterfront that is integrated with the green system in order to offer a fast car connection with the road. It is used from the port also.

"Ismail Qemali" University, is the only public university of Vlorë.

A pedestrian/bicycle promenade with small services, sport and beach facilities. A pedestrian boulevard, which constitutes the main public spine of the area.

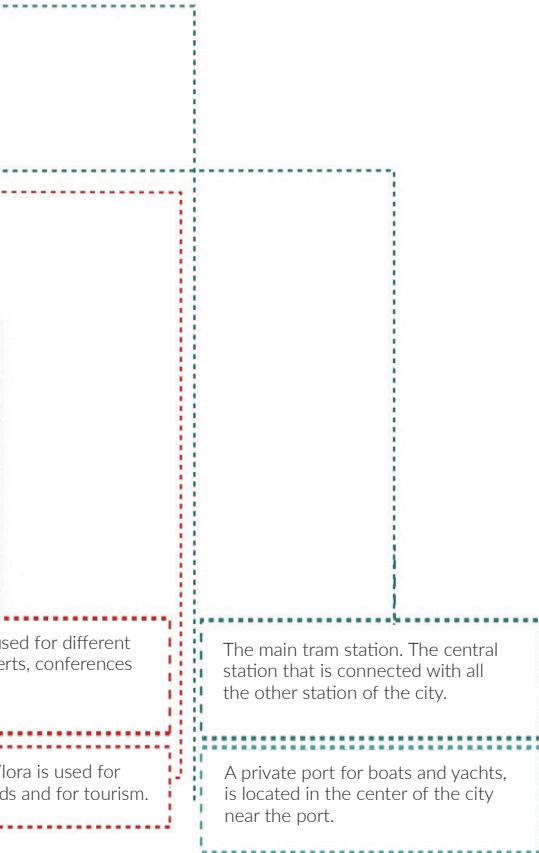
A landmark at the end of the dock which becomes a panoramic public building with receptive activities.

Cultural center is used for activities like concerts and ballet courses.

The main port of Vlorë for import-export goods.



Vlora harbor area section



## THE HARBOR

The harbor area is the central section of the waterfront in relation to the city and constitutes the final part of the historical boulevard. Because of shifting commercial activities from the port, the actual harbor is considered to be used only for passengers, fishing and also as a public space. This means that only a small part of the harbor needs to be closed and controlled: the passenger's terminal and the custom. The rest can be opened and host different activities and functions like the university, the Museum of Independence. The area which is close to the city is planned to be completed with residential and commercial buildings linked in terms of design with the old beach new developments (BID). Here is placed also an important land and water station for public transport, which is thought to be in direct continuity with the historical boulevard. The boulevard is extended into the sea ending with a vertical landmark as a symbol of the projection into the future, acting also as a balcony and a new belvedere for Vlora.

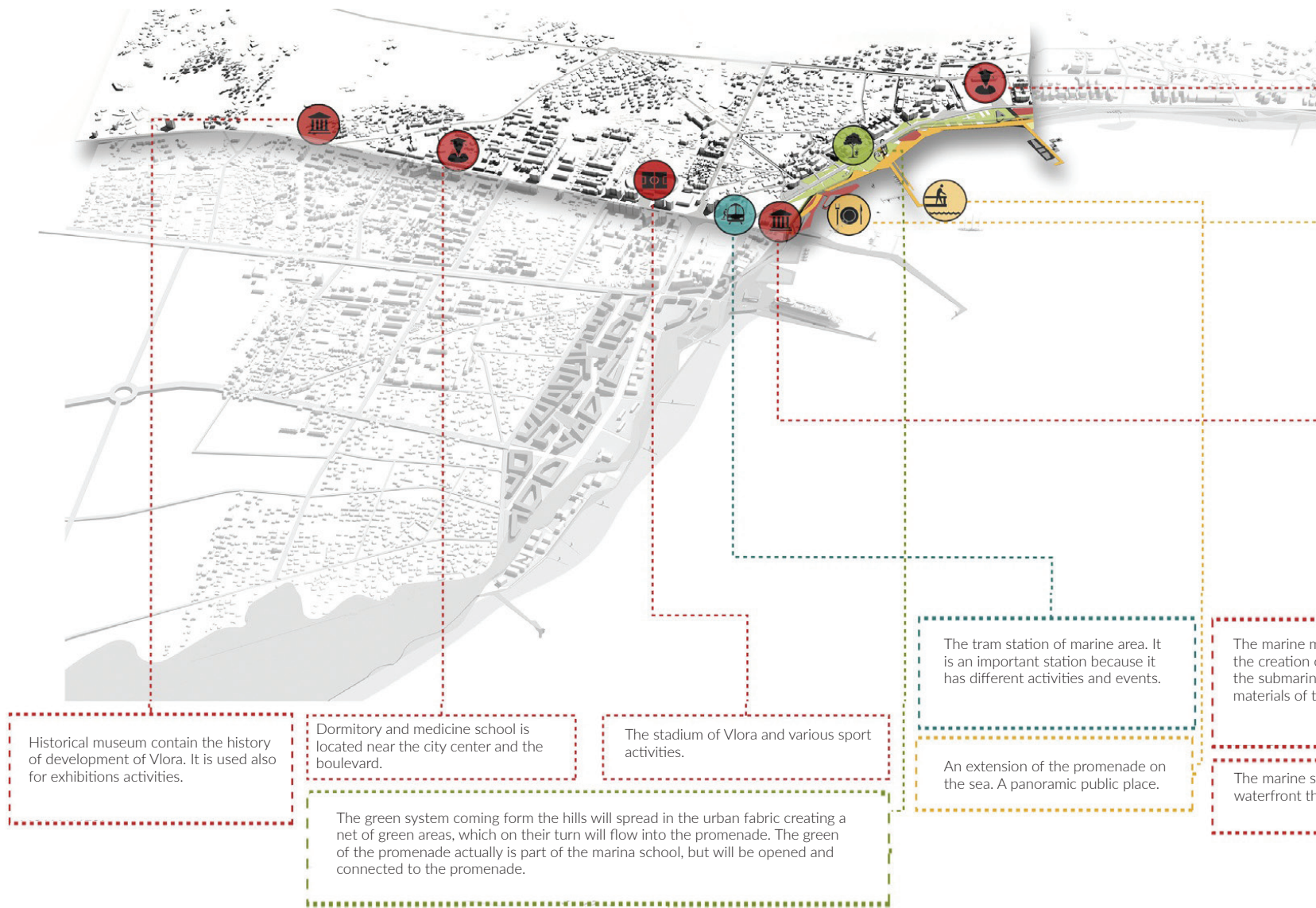
## THE PASSENGERS TERMINAL

The passenger's terminal is placed in the west dock as development of the Trans-Balkan road. At the entrance, a huge parking area is provided for the terminal and a new passenger terminal is planned to be built in the same axis. This area is thought to be concentrated in the west dock, but at the same time as an integral part of the larger system of the waterfront being connected through a pedestrian and bicycle road.

## THE EAST DOCK

The east dock is conceived as a public promenade in continuity with the main boulevard. Along this axe is also placed the Marina museum and a series of green areas which mediate the relation of the city with the water and create a central public space. This ends up with a landmark at the end of the dock which becomes also a panoramic public building with receptive activities.

## VLORA WATERFRONT PROMENADE



Historical museum contain the history of development of Vlorë. It is used also for exhibitions activities.

Dormitory and medicine school is located near the city center and the boulevard.

The stadium of Vlorë and various sport activities.

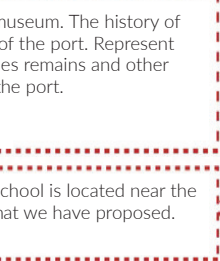
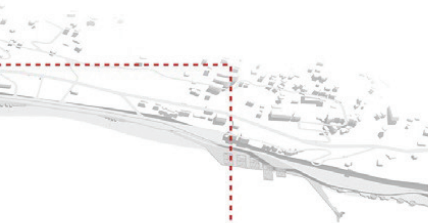
The green system coming from the hills will spread in the urban fabric creating a net of green areas, which on their turn will flow into the promenade. The green of the promenade actually is part of the marina school, but will be opened and connected to the promenade.

The tram station of marine area. It is an important station because it has different activities and events.

An extension of the promenade on the sea. A panoramic public place.

The marine museum, the creation of the submarine materials of the

The marine school waterfront th



museum. The history of  
of the port. Represent  
es remains and other  
the port.

chool is located near the  
at we have proposed.

The waterline itself is modeled  
creating island or bringing the sea  
inside the promenade. This island  
has different activities like bars,  
restaurants, shops.

The waterfront promenade and city square area

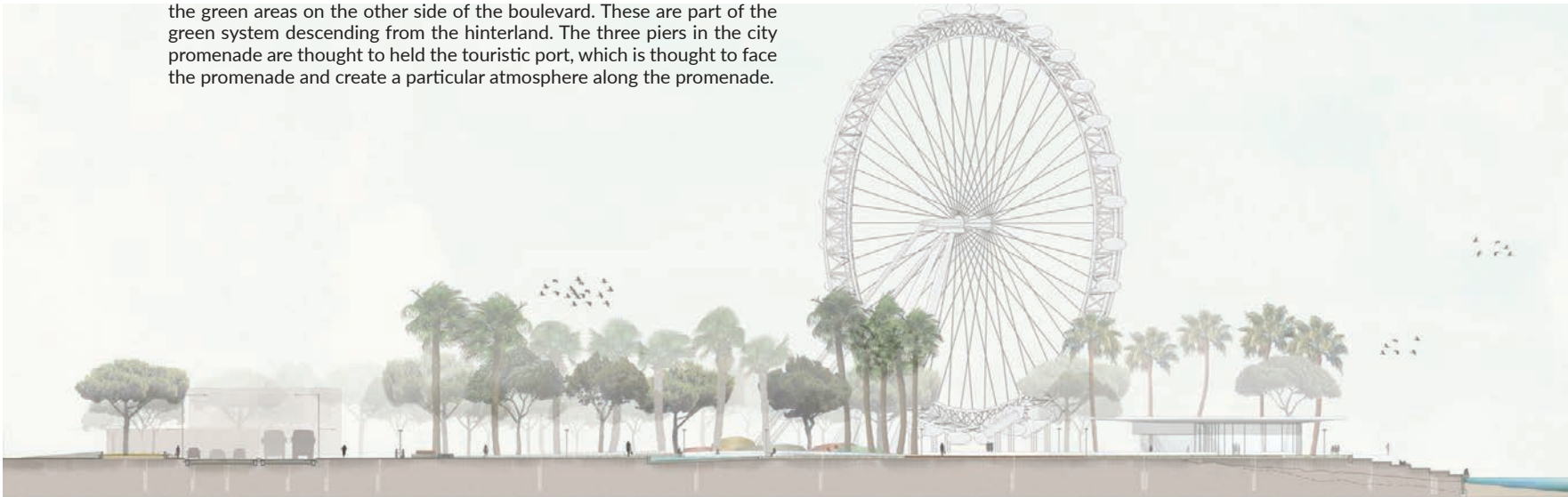
## THE WATERFRONT PROMENADE AND CITY-SQUARE

This section constitutes the area between the central harbor and the Marina Bay. It represents a kind of urban façade of the city in the sea and creates a new urban identity becoming a key factor for the promotion of a touristic city like Vlorë. That's why it is important, specially in this section, the interaction with the city. In this part of the promenade the hinter city has a traditional radial structure, given by the orientation of the water channel. This grid in our concept will be rediscovered by proposed axes perpendicular to the sea and enforced by the creation of a touristic port, a square in the main junctions that connect this axes to the ring road and ends towards the sea with an island.

The same logic is applied for the green area. The green system coming from the hills will spreads in the urban fabric creating a net of green areas, which on their turn will flow into the promenade. The main green near the promenade actually is part of the Marina School, but on our proposal it should be opened and connected to the promenade park. This interaction is enforced on both sides of the boulevard by a strong connection of the green system provided between the Marina Pier and the Park of the School of Marina, and is best represented in the tension of the sealine. The sealine itself is modeled creating islands or bringing the sea inside the promenade, according to an idea of a living and transforming organism. All this energy would turn back to the city regenerating and completing the urban area backwards.

### THE CITY PROMENADE AND THE CITY SQUARE

The city promenade is a new area of attraction offering mixed activities available to both tourists and residents. The main objectives of this development proposal are to strengthen the commercial and recreational activities which reflect social and cultural identity of the place. The core of this area is the city square hosting different type of recreational activities like playgrounds for children, with an open and transformable character while the promenade is a continues pedestrian/bicycle space parallel to the sea that in this particular area follows the free design of the coast line incorporating the island and the piers, and hosting along the section receptive structures serving the area. Green open spaces and parks are integrated along the promenade and are designed in relation to the green areas on the other side of the boulevard. These are part of the green system descending from the hinterland. The three piers in the city promenade are thought to held the touristic port, which is thought to face the promenade and create a particular atmosphere along the promenade.







Bridge to the peninsula square



City promenade view

## VLORA WATERFRONT PROMENADE



The end of the promenade which relates directly to the beach.

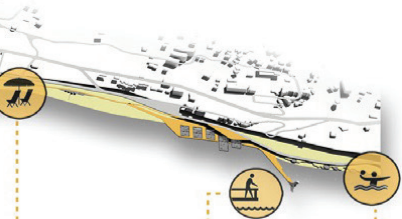
The tram station that moves to the south beach or the "new beach". Helps the residents to move more quickly.

Since this is the main area of the new beach here we have a huge interest for hotels and bars.

A tourist area that has structures and recreation/receptive activities (concerts, events, bars) that are concentrated in the central part of the new beach.

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the promena  
is that repres  
border line b  
and Ionian se



mountain is a touristic  
different activities like  
Panoramic view.

A private beach for the  
activities around.

st of the extension of  
de. The special thing  
sents symbolically the  
between the Adriatic  
ea.

This area is designed to  
accommodate a series of  
swimming pools, services for  
aquatic activities, open air  
cafes and restaurants.

The south beach area section

### THE SOUTH BEACH OR THE NEW BEACH

The new beach shoreline will be developed with imported sand and breakwaters because continued erosion has constantly damaged the adjacent paved promenade and removed most of the imported sand leaving a base of pea gravel along most of the beach. Adjacent to the beach there is a large continuous promenade developing on the seaside a few small bathing structures. Other facilities and recreation/receptive activities (concerts /events) are concentrated in the central part of the new beach that ends into the sea with a touristic pier while in the eastern part of the beach another pier signs the border line between the Adriatic and the Ionian sea and is reinforced adding an aquatic center. Along the promenade green areas are designed in continuity with the green system descending from the hills and small parking spaces integrated with trees offer a fast car connection from the main road. Rest areas are also provided along the promenade integrated in the overall design.

### AQUATIC CENTER

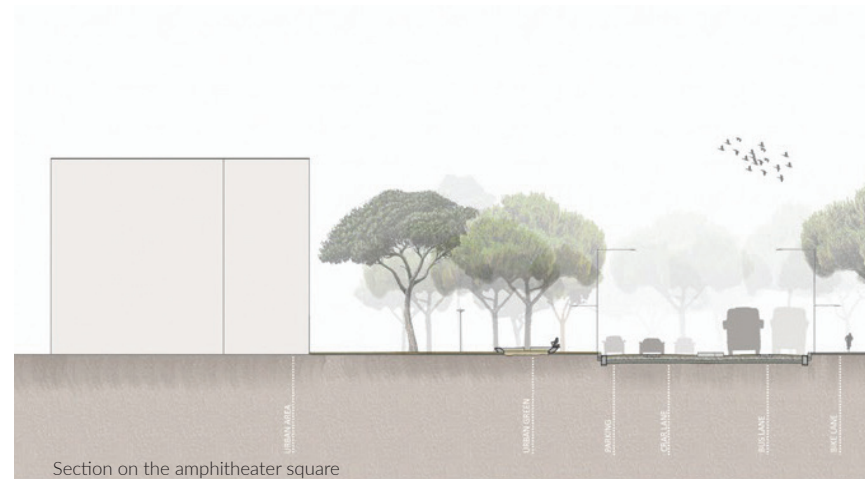
The aquatic center represents symbolically the border line between the Adriatic and Ionian Sea. It is signed also with a landmark that rises up at the bottom of the pier. This area is designed to accommodate a series of swimming pools carved into the site between the sea and the main road, services for aquatic activities, open air cafes and restaurants, a parking area, occupying an area under the level of the main road, so that the landscape impact is minimal.

### REGENERATION OF VLORA EAST

Being a significant project for the waterfront transformation, the master plan has the responsibility for injecting a process of regeneration of its immediate context. We propose improvement of the public space at the edges of the site, towards the existing urban structures, creating green areas, parking spaces near the small ring road, and gradual improvement of the low quality built structure.

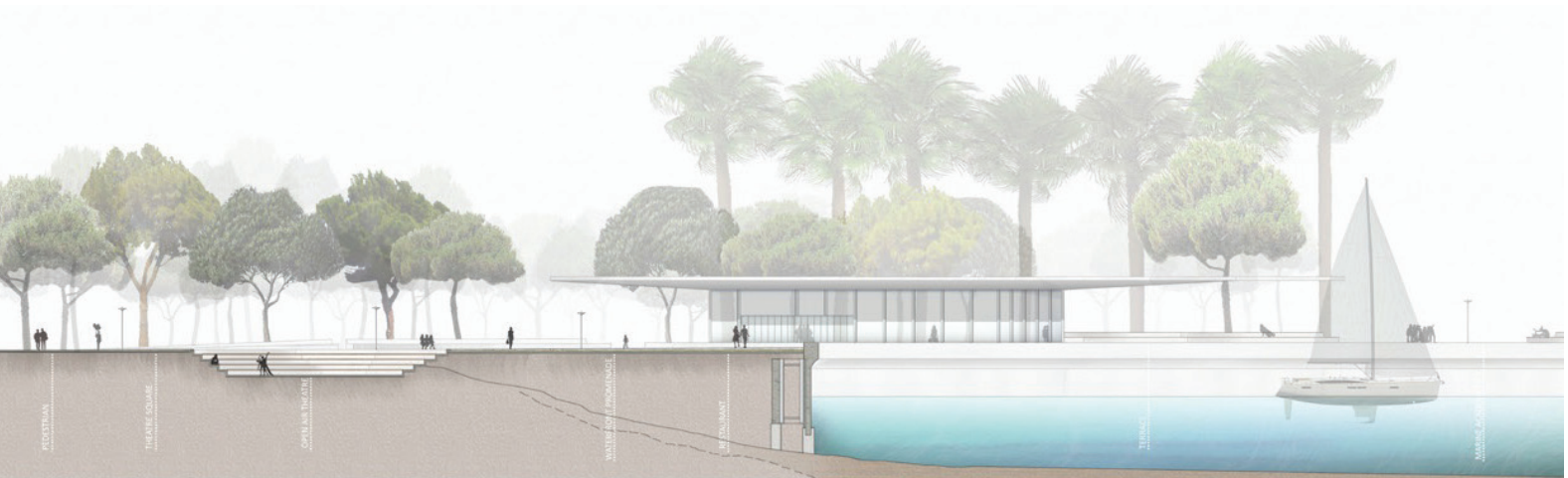
### REDEVELOPED CITY WATERFRONT

The potential of city renewal is applied in a pilot area in the southern part of the city of Vlora, close to the coastline and to the Navy school. This area actually has two main types of buildings: multi-store buildings and small private houses. The intervention that we propose will be accomplished through the regeneration program. We propose 3 blocks in the area considering also the possibilities offered by the existing situation. To solve the problems of congestion we propose to provide the internal block with infrastructure, open several corridors that will allow the connection of the coast with the interior space in that area. What is important to note is that by this redevelopment and densification process where all inhabitants act as stakeholders, it becomes possible to have an adequate compensation and also increase public spaces such as: greenery, parking, parks for children and sports territories that can be used from residents. The spaces proposed are intended to increase the quality of life for residents and the value of existing buildings and new buildings.





Bird view of the waterfront promenade and city square



### **ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY**

The capacity of the ecosystems within the promenade would be maintained together with their essential functions and processes to retain their biodiversity in full extent over the long-term. This would be achieved by replanting native, endemic and naturalized species of flora and as a result the fauna would follow right after. This process would spread in five areas of the promenade.

### **SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY**

As far as mobility goes the project offers many sustainable alternatives to ecologically unsustainable private means of transportation (cars), offering a network of pedestrian, bike and electric and boat public transportation routes that operate on the concept of filtered mobility: new parking lots and bike sharing and parking facilities introduced at each new functional pocket: pedestrian/ bike routes and electric bus and boat stops that connect these parking lots to the major attraction points of the coast and reconnect them back to the rest of the city, promoting and facilitating the use of ecologically friendly means of transportation.



View on the event square







# INTERNATIONAL URBAN DESIGN COMPETITION

For an urban design intervention in  
Vlora Waterfront, Vlora, Albania

No. 1

## *ORGANIZERS*

Ministry of Urban Development  
National Territorial Planning  
Agency (AKPT)  
Atelier Albania

## *PARTNERS*

Albanian Development Fund  
Municipality of Vlora

## *SECOND STAGE PARTICIPANTS*

XDGA  
HHF  
L'AUC  
Dogma  
MBA/S  
Metro-Polis

## *COMPETITION CONTRIBUTORS*

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