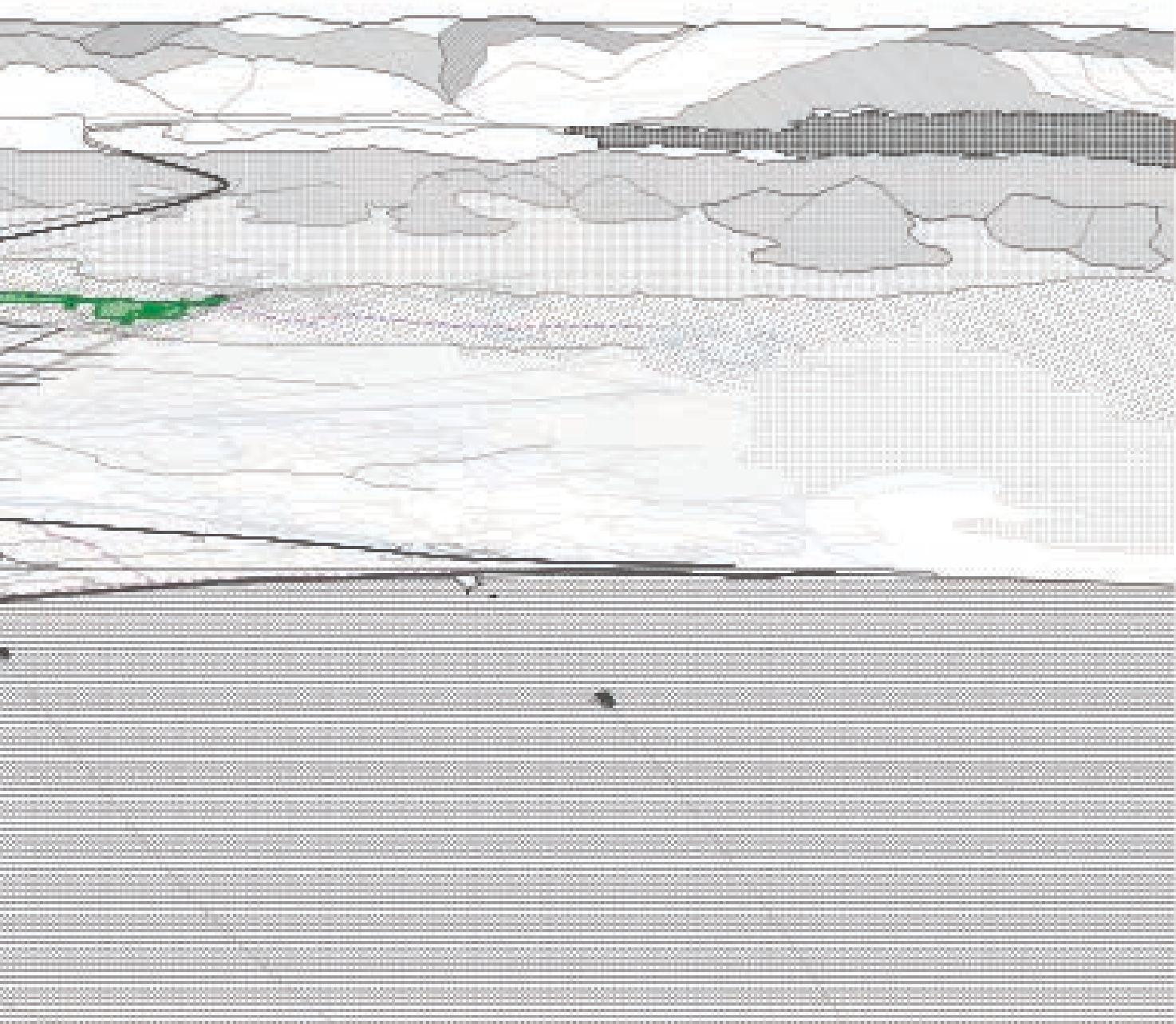


DURANA'S NEW HIGHWAY

ATELIERALBANIA . URBAN COMPETITION . LOT 3: DURRES





SUMMARY

**ALBANIA'S DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC MUTATIONS CONTEXT
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A VIEW FROM THE HIGHWAY

THE THREE MAGNETS STRATEGY: THREE PILOT PROJECTS

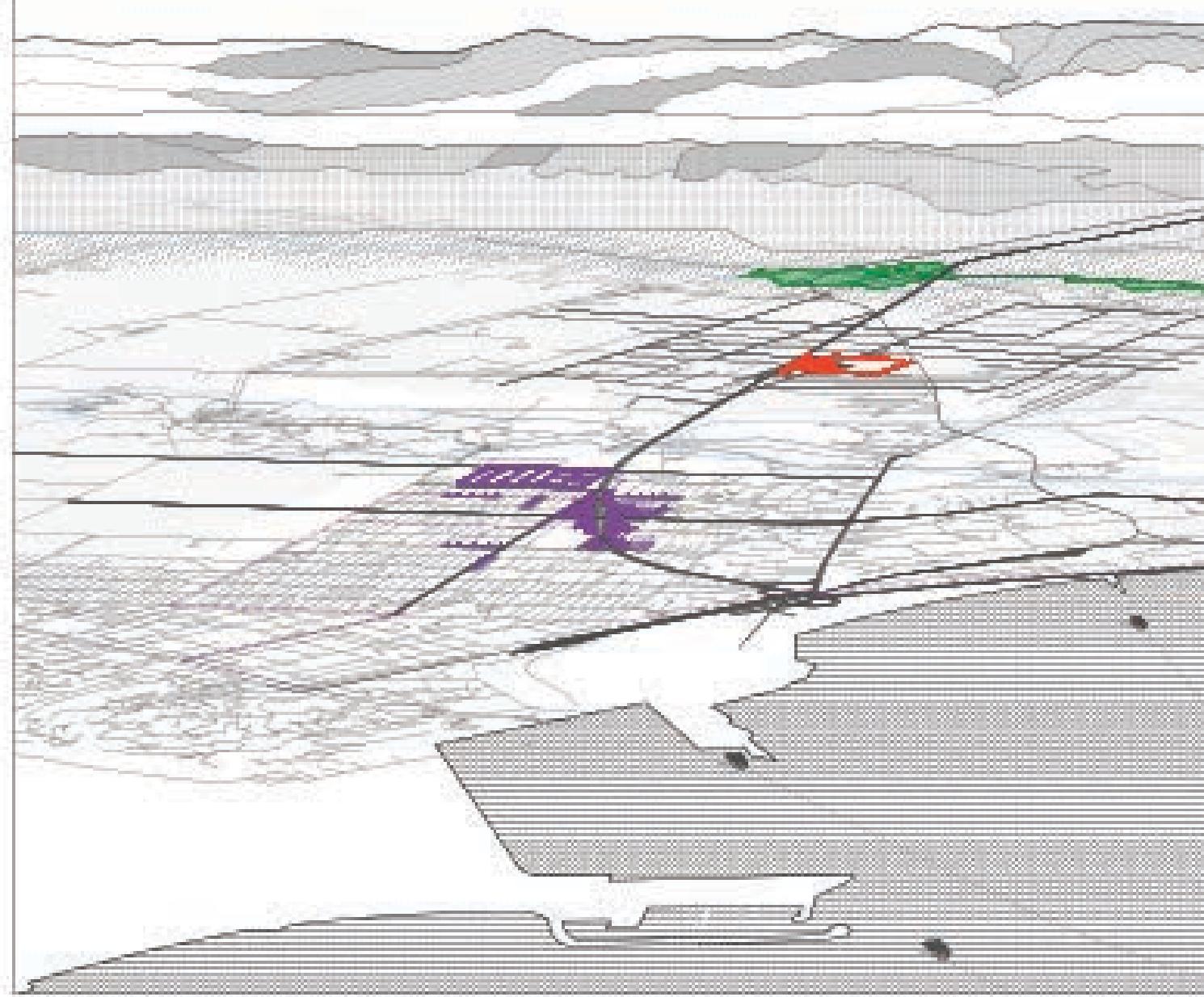
A NEW LANDSCAPE AND GRAPHIC IDENTITY FOR THE HIGHWAY AND ITS TERRITORY

INPUT #1_ HISTORY AND ANALYSIS OF THE TIRANA-DURRËS ROAD AND HIGHWAY

INPUT #2_ CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

INPUT #3_ METHODOLOGY

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DURANA'S NEW HIGHWAY

DURRËS GATE. RURAL COMMUNITY CENTRE. RIVER NODE.

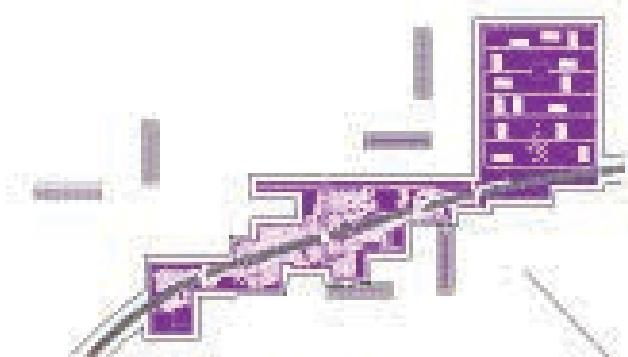


We propose to transform the Highway from Durana to Durrës into a showcase of Albania's new society and economy. This will be a gradual process aiming to organise a modern and efficient infrastructure and to strengthen the relations of the highway and its immediate vicinity with the urban, agricultural and natural environment behind it. This long term perspective will support economic and social development along the Durana corridor on the basis of urban industry, local agriculture, tourism and culture. It will also be backed up by the reorganisation of mobility on and around the highway to provide safer and more efficient accessibility between the major cities (Tirana, Durrës), villages, settlements, and most attractive spots (Gurës beaches, the lakes, the rural countryside...).

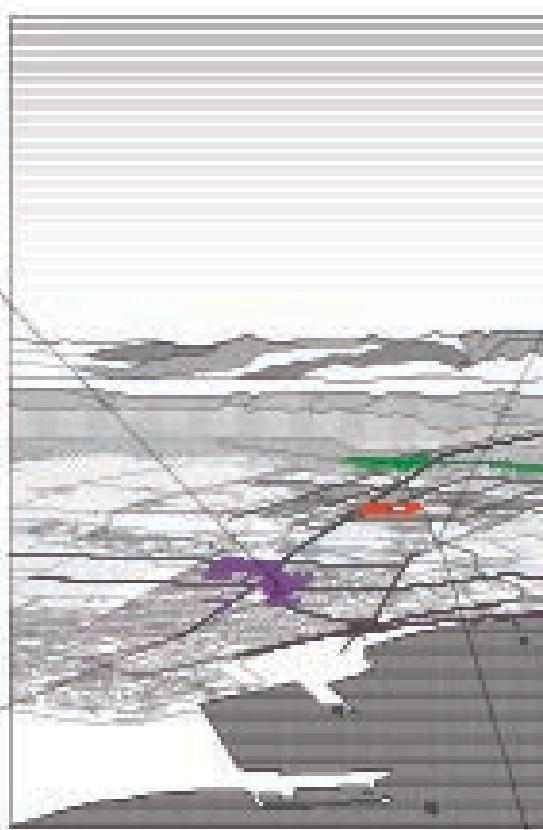
In the short term, we propose to develop THREE "MAGNETS", three pilot projects that will rapidly initiate visible and effective transformation of the highway from the public space around it, establish better relations between both sides of the highway, insert a new landscape on key points where the highway and the territory behind it meet to stimulate social life, interaction and exchange between local residents and visitors. These three projects will only require reasonably limited investment but they will be socially and culturally hyper-efficient. The DURRËS GATE will provide a multi-useage parking space where people

can stop and commute to shared bicycles for an attractive ride to the Durrës beaches or the nearby lakes, using dedicated cycling or trekking paths. A pilot development for light industries (such as fashion and creative start-ups) can also be attached to the Durrës Gate. The RURAL COMMUNITY CENTRE between Flakë and Matqë Muça will provide a vast field enclosed by a square of high trees where social and economic events such as a rural fair can take place. A smaller enclosure surrounded by an arcade will house a permanent market place where local farmers can showcase, trade or sell their production to residents or visitors. The RIVER NODE between Sulisht and Shkodra will provide an upgraded bus interchange station where people can commute from the express regional bus line to local routes connecting to the surrounding villages and settlements. It will be the starting point of a pedestrian and cycling promenade along the Ereni River, linking all attractive points of the area (King Zogu Villa, Shkodra mosque, centres of villages, local schools...), punctuated by a series of attractive view-point on the surrounding territory.

THE 3 MAGNETS STRATEGY



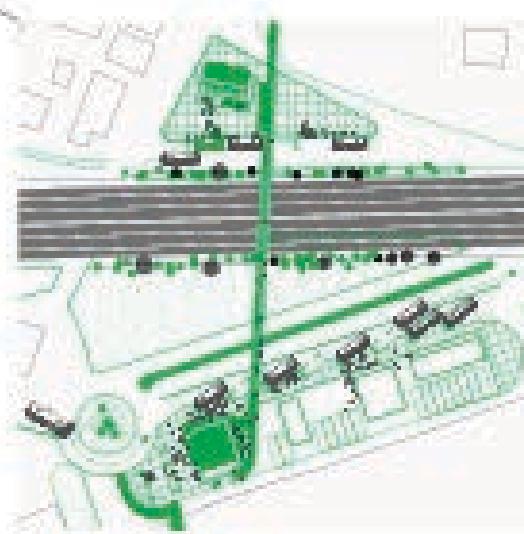
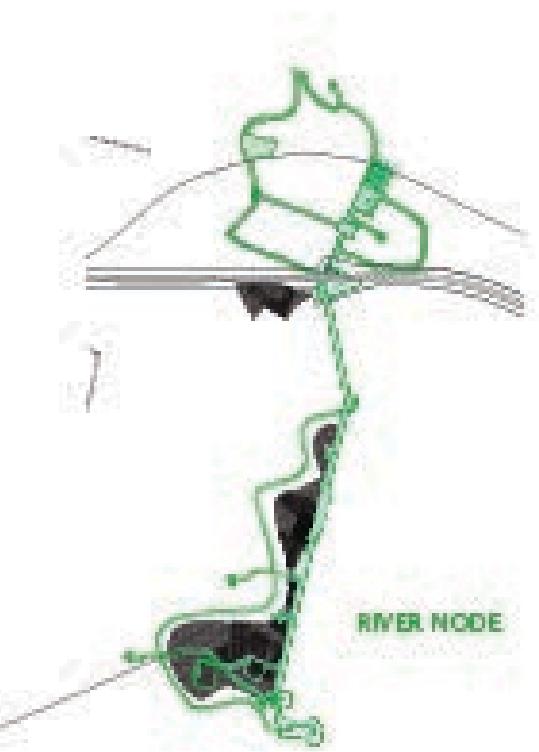
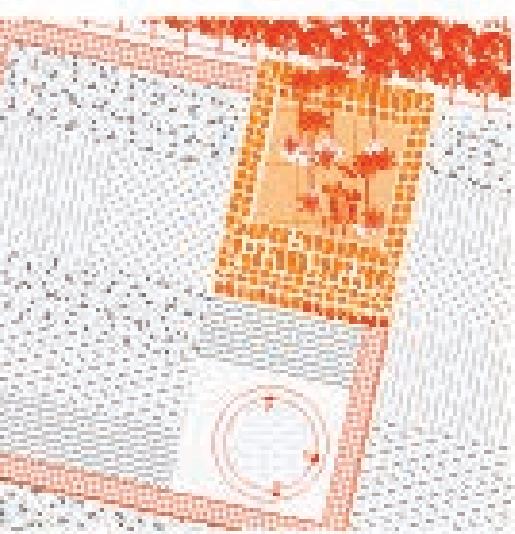
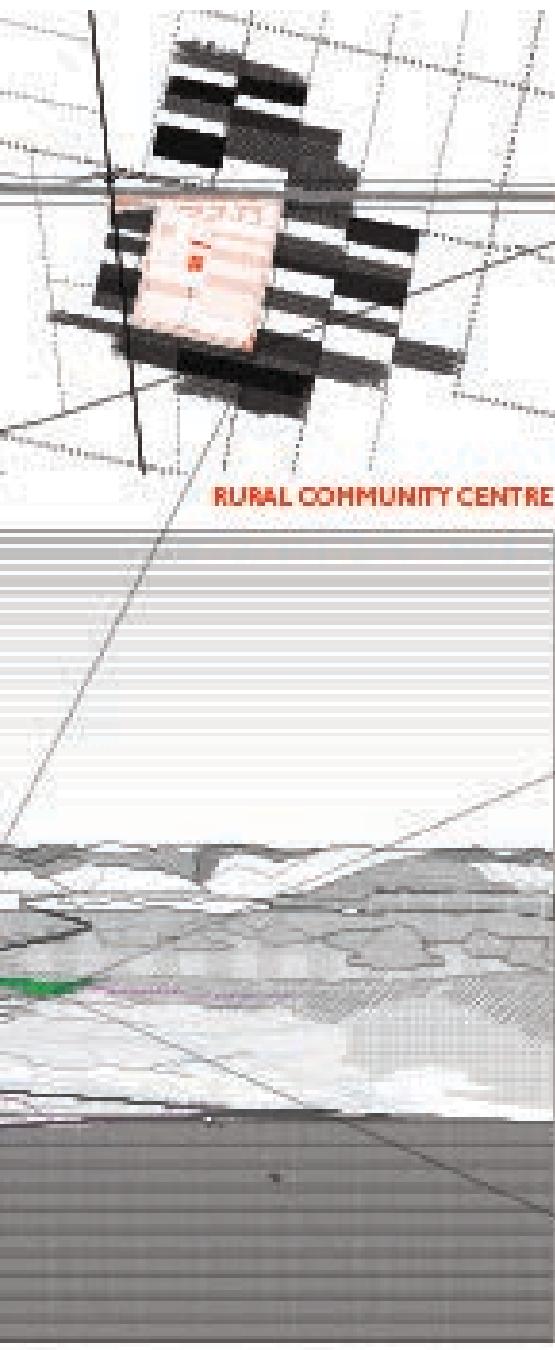
DURRES GATE

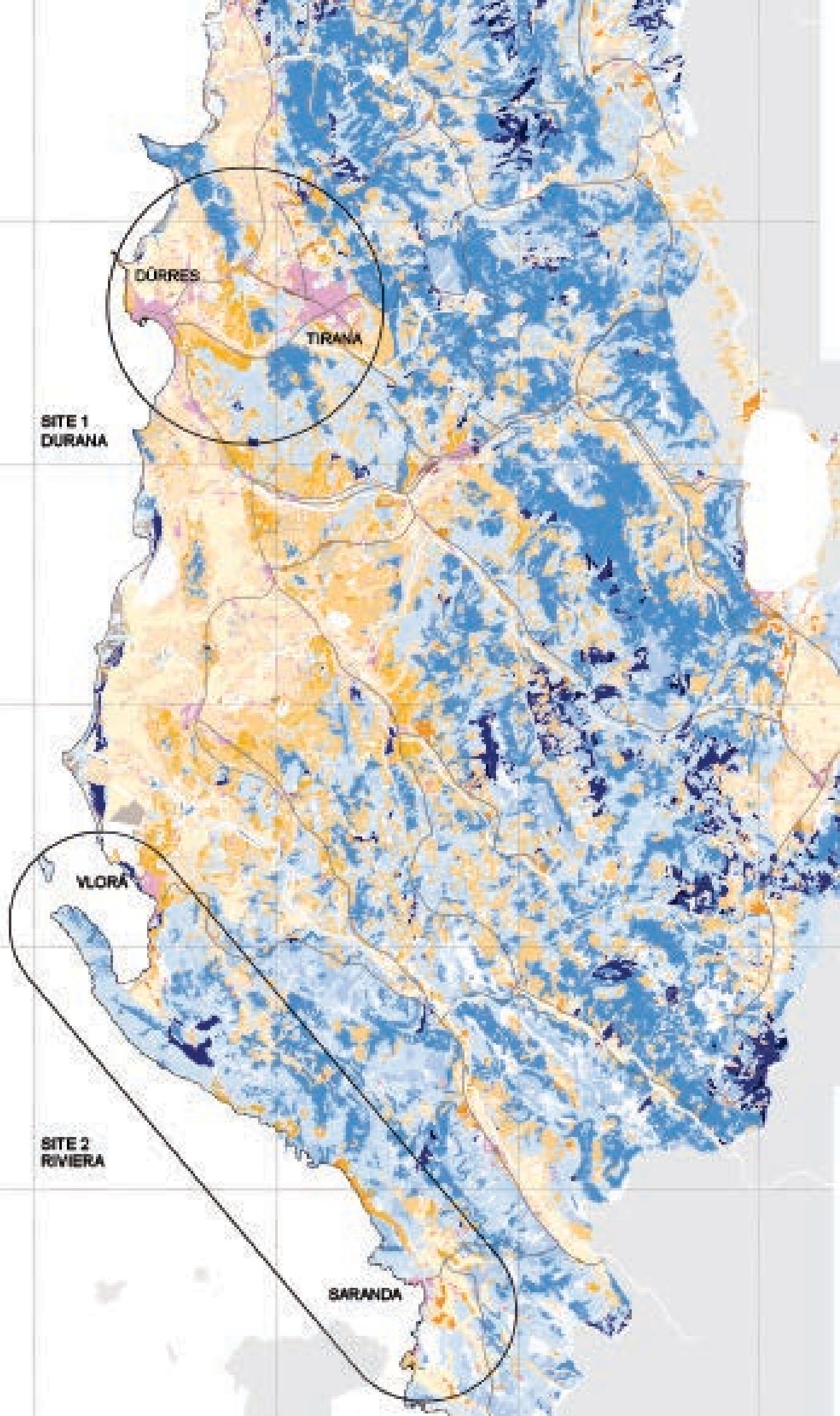


TERRITORIAL VISION



3 PILOT PROJECTS





ALBANIA'S DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC MUTATIONS CONTEXT METROPOLISATION. LITTORALISATION. MOUNTAIN DESERTIFICATION

Albania has known since the beginning of the 90s, political, demographical and economical mutations, which modified the structures of the country. Two phenomena plus an implicit third one are particularly interesting for the competition and the territories in question.

First of all, after a long period of politic regulations, the metropolisation is occurring very fast. Tirana and Durres developed particularly during the last twenty years and nowadays they form a more or less continuous conurbation of urbanization and economic development.

The littoral appears to be a very appealing environment for population leaving the mountainous hinterland.

The third demographic and economic fact which we feel less concerned about in the present competition concerns the mountainous regions, which represent more than 60% of the national territory.

The end of the communist period match with the end of very hard politics of territorial occupation. The liberalization of the politic and economic life brought heavy mutations. If the rural-urban migration is a common demographic fact, it appeared in Albania with impressive proportions and took a radical form.

The competitions run by the government and Atelier Albania are anchored in this precise context of huge changes in the life of Albanian citizen and Albanian economy: a massive rural-urban migration, the possibility to live on the coast or in the largest cities, the appearance of metropolisation facts, the development of new economic sectors, the foreign investment ...

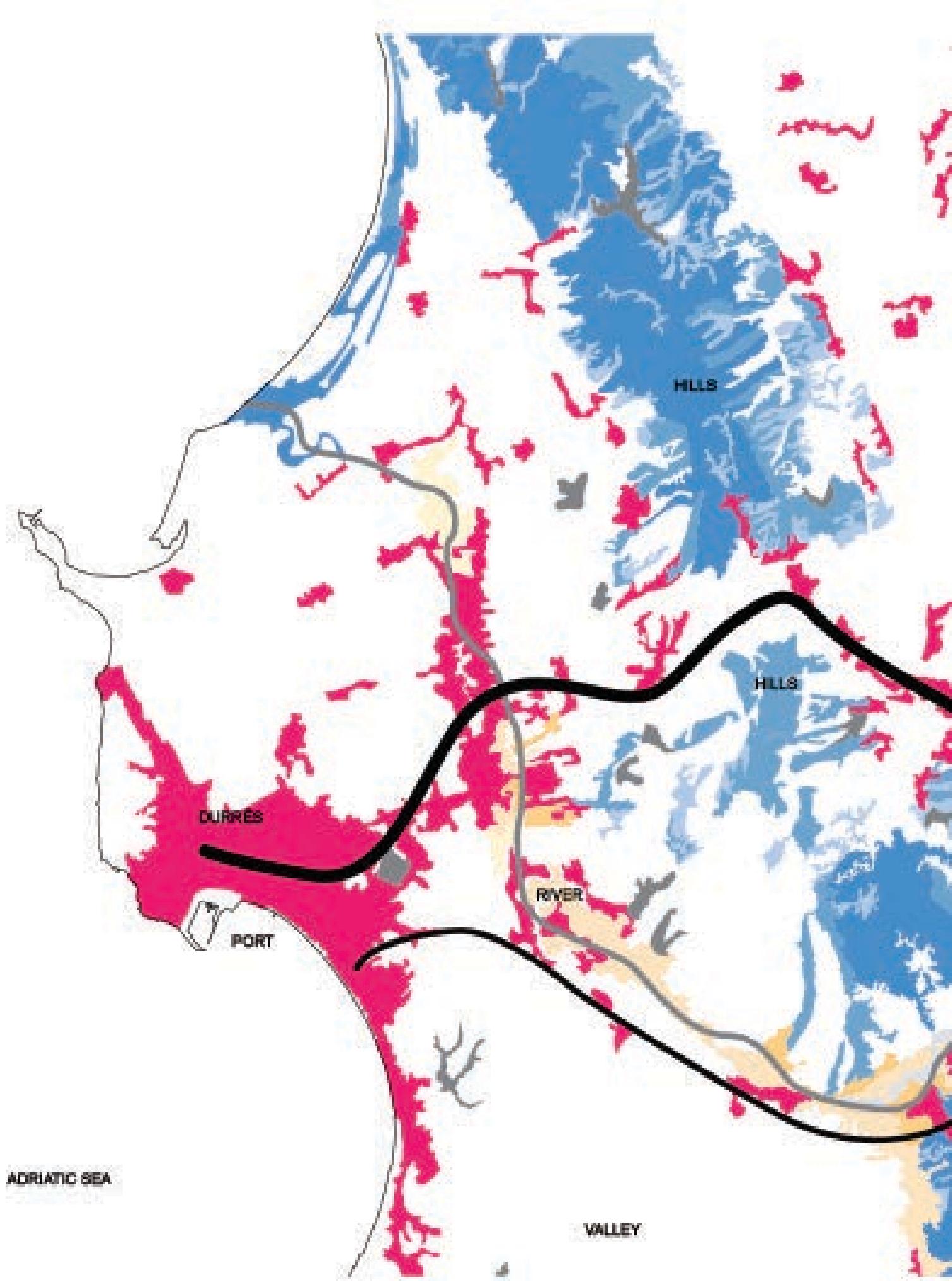
The aim of such competitions is, by developing public space and structuring the urban development, to maintain and develop such mutations in a virtuous way: better places to live in, strengthen the economic changes by efficient public spaces and infrastructures, regulate the territory after a period of laissez-faire, approaching European standards, and facilitate the economic growth ...

The first competition, taking place in Vlore (the second city in the country) allowed to cross a certain body of issues and problematic concerning the space and the Albanian society: promoting the landscape and the urban waterfront for touristic purpose, regulating the urban expansion, affirm strong public structures and public equipment for tourists and peoples, deal with the lack of possible investments...

The two current competitions are in the same manner inscribed in the most attractive places of the state, with the highest migration, and the most potentiality of economic growth.

The first site concerns the Tirana-Durres conurbation. The majority of the urban population is nowadays living in this area. The economic growth and the development of a new economy of services are changing radically the structure of the territory. The economic corridor which developed between the two cities, changing villages into steps of a whole urbanized and metropolitan area, has to become the spatial structure of the coming Durres metropolis.

The second site, less developed today, except Vlore, offers large potentials of touristic development thanks to exceptional natural amenities. How to develop the touristic infrastructure (roads, hotel, tourist village, beaches and coastal layout) without affecting the natural qualities (resources)? Each site along the Riviera questions a possible articulation of preservation and development.





DURANA ISSUES : THE CORRIDOR AS A METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The rapid growth of both Durrës and Tirana has led to a new form of continuity between the two cities. Villages that used to be base on rural economy are now part of the largest conurbation of Albania. The massive arrival of new inhabitants change profoundly the urban landscape and the image of the city. The city has known three main changes in its form :

VERTICALISATION : there is more and more high buildings in Tirana, so more and more people can live close to the economic centre of the country

SPRAWL : the urban expansion went so far that the urban area has more than doubled in the last twenty years. The most fertile lands of Albania are nowadays replaced by housing and small industries. There is a need to invent new forms of coproduction between productive landscape and needs new economies.

RIBBON EXPANSION : The urbanisation has been effective essentially along the road infrastructure. The latest urbanised areas are concentrated along the road between Durrës and Tirana, but also along the river, and along the coast.

The form of the metropolisation of Durana let us think that we can envisage the road as a strong figure to structure the development of the next years. New economies are already taking advantage of this situation. We could imagine a virtuous interdependency between the two cities, in terms of economy and lifestyles. Durrës could become a more leisure oriented city while Tirana could become more specific in the urban services and economy.

The road is also crossing various natural amenities that could be brought in the metropolitan mutations. What could be the role of the river developments, of the surrounding mountains and hills in the metropolisation of the territory ? Can we imagine new types of residential clusters along the river and on the hill : close to nature with efficient accessibility to economic centre ?

Can we also imagine the road as a gigantic infrastructural freight device area between the port and the airport, avoiding the freight traffic to transit by the centre of Tirana and offering a new efficiency for production ?

We believe that a new layout for the road area could have very strong impacts on the further developments, that we could invent new kinds of contemporary lifestyles, all connected by the infrastructural axis formed by the road and the train linking both cities.

It appears for us that the more urgent issues concern the suburban areas of both cities. That is why we would like to work on lot 1 or 3, let Tirana and Durrës areas.



A VIEW OF THE HIGHWAY FROM A HIDDEN ORDER TO URBAN RULES. LONG TERM REFORMS.

In the history of human settlements and urbanisation processes, the road has always been a major vector for civilisation and culture. From the Roman roads to contemporary highways, roads are symptoms and symbols of our societies, our economies and their mutations.

The highway between Tirana and Durës witnesses the recent changes in the Albanian society. Rural populations from the mountains resettled along the main roads where economic opportunities are

Hundreds of gas stations, motels and roadside diners have flourished along the Albanian roads. Spontaneous illegal urbanisation has sprawled across the territories adjacent to the main roads. Economic activities including industry, education and services has also developed in direct connection to the roads.

The Durës corridor has become a showcase of Albania's new society's dynamics. It looks like a chaotic landscape and it is perceived as a negative factor for the image of modern Albania. Yet we believe that behind this chaotic landscape lies a hidden order that needs to be revealed to build a positive image of Durës, which will in turn contribute to the construction of the new image of Albania as a whole. This hidden order lies in the close connection between the economy of the highway and the economy of the territory on both sides of it, according to three sequences : a natural sequence where the highway crosses the Erzen River; a rural sequence through the agricultural plain, and an urban sequence once the highway enters the city of Durës.

Regarding the highway itself, a series of crucial issues needs to find solutions:

- traffic regulation and safety for the drivers and pedestrian crossing the highway.
- inefficient extra-urban public transport conditions.
- physical, social and economic division between neighbouring villages and settlements separated by the road.
- a distanced landscape and panorama between the chaotic foreground and the beautiful mountains and hills in the distant background.

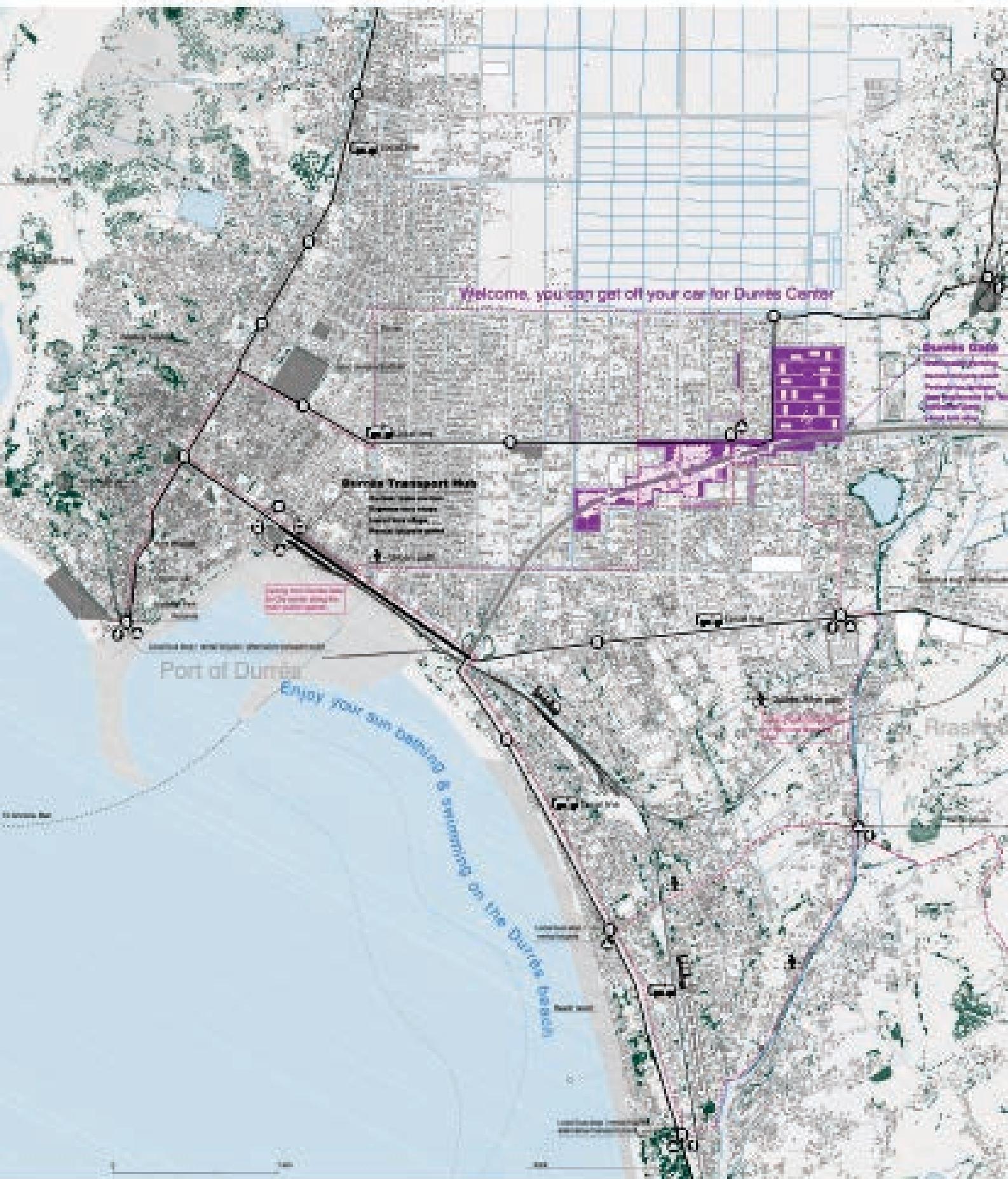
Action on the highway must not be limited to infrastructure. It should seek to establish new relations between the highway and the cities, villages, settlements, rural territory and natural countryside behind it. The road should not only be a vector of economic development along its own sides. It should initiate social and economic dynamics at a territorial scale. In the long term, the undergoing land reform will make efficient planning and urbanism possible at large scale. But the necessary reforms will not happen overnight and will take time to bear visible effects. In the meantime, certain solutions could be gradually implemented to make the situation better and initiate in depth transformation of the territory.

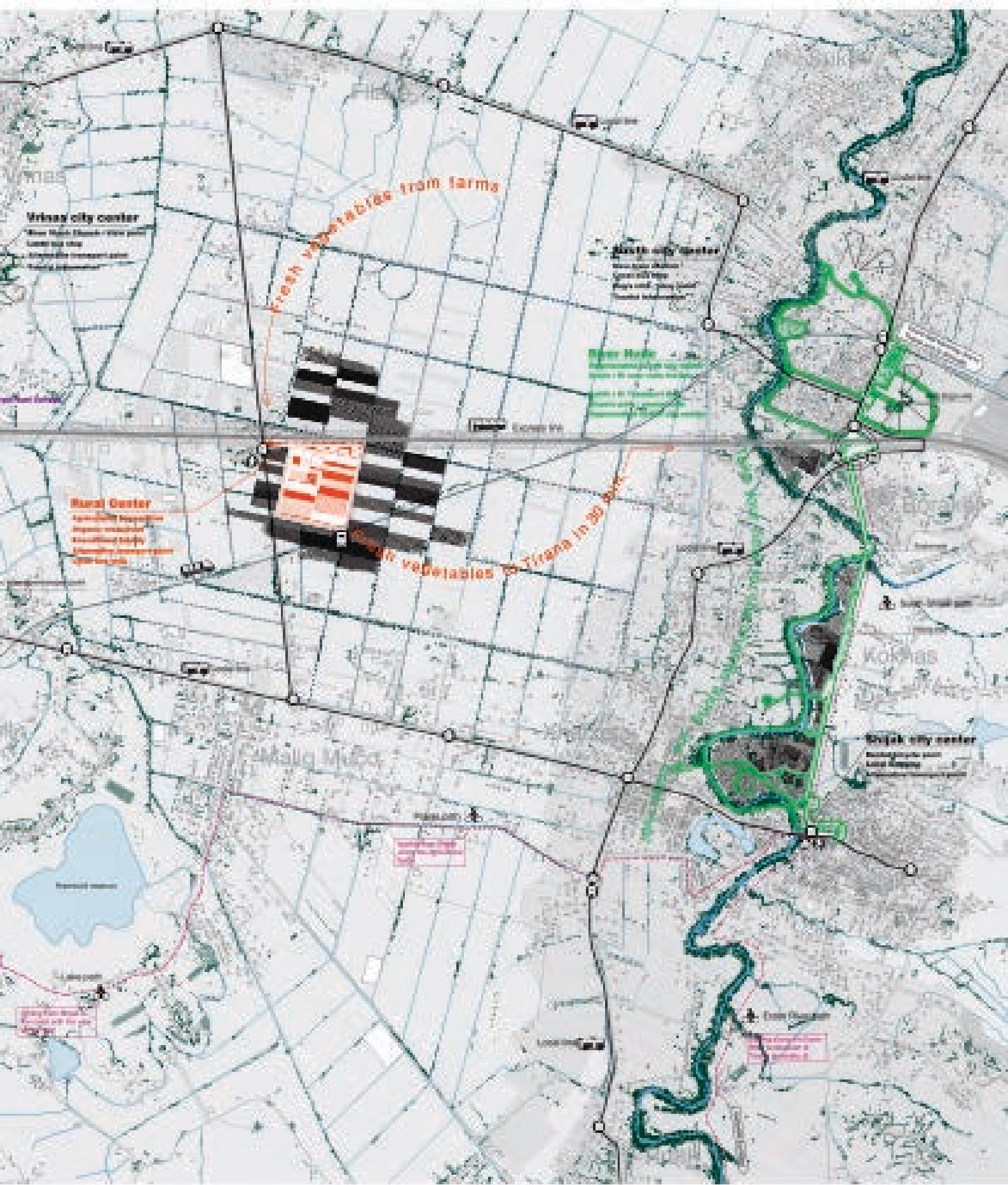
One thing that can be done is to reorganise public transport and mobility at a larger scale to help solving the problems of the highway itself. We think that the relocation of the sub-

urban public transportation from the highway to the secondary road can help to clarify the status of a clear highway for long distance travel and inter-urban (Tirana-Durës) public transportation. Such reorganisation can rapidly improve the development of urban spaces and micro-centralities in areas that are presently not connected. Rerouting the suburban public transport through these areas will offer them new opportunities. Furthermore, the development of such micro-centralities along secondary roads, at a reasonable distance from the highway but still in close connection to it, can help initiating a redevelopment process along the 50 m legally unbuiltable corridor on both sides of the highway, and support the creation of a new attractive landscape along the national road.

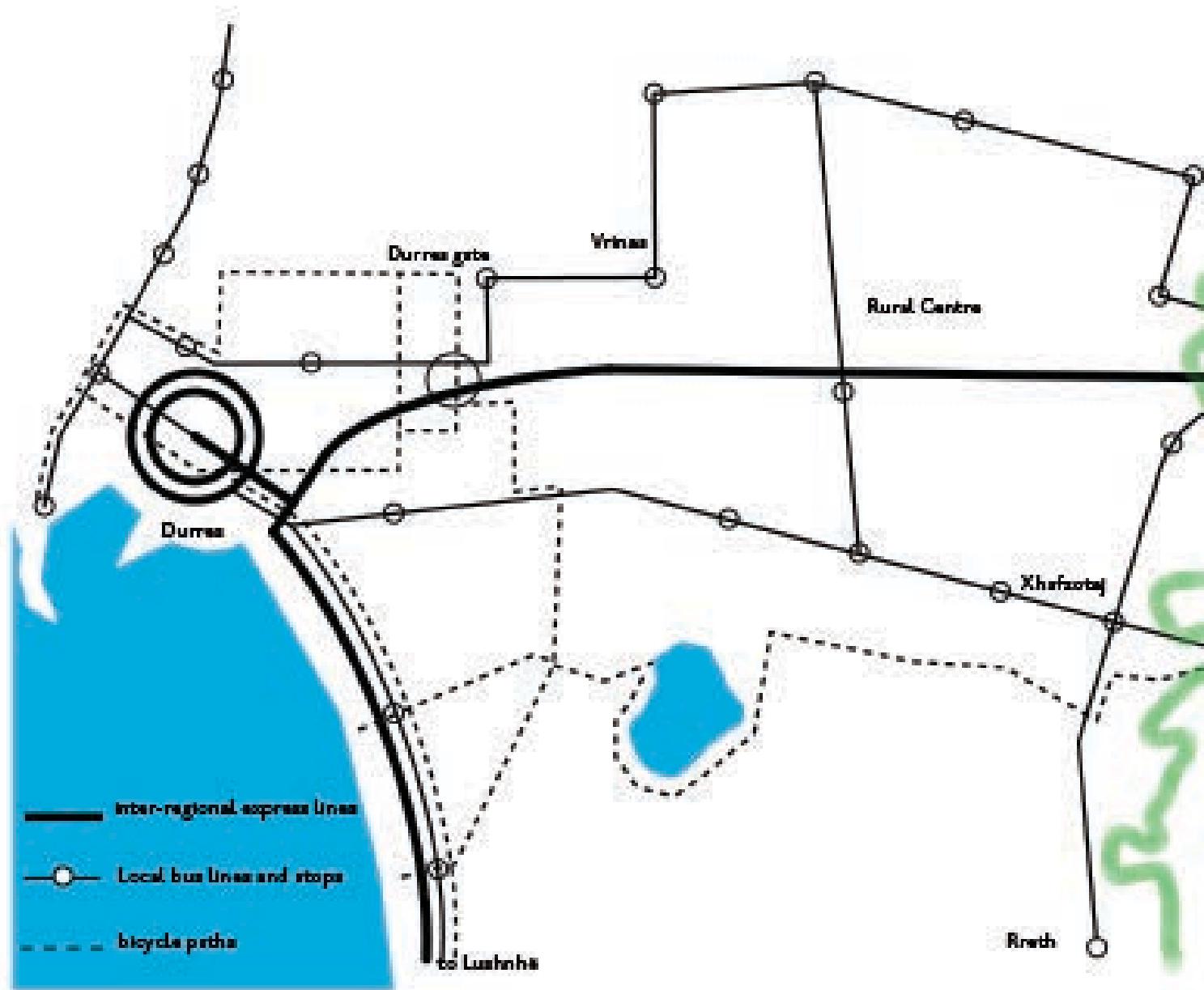
The territorial vision that we propose as long term framework for action on the Durës part of the highway relies on a system of bus lines connecting the existing villages and settlements on secondary roads. This will allow to organise the presently chaotic urban development on the parallel roads. This will also solve the problem of illegal bus stops as well as safety issues due to illegal bus stops, and reduce dangerous crossings of the highway by increasing the intensity and possible connections between the villages and settlements. We also propose a network of bicycle and trekking paths from key nodes along the highway, where parkings will be provided, to the seaside and the hills. Apart from providing attractive routes to reach attractive destinations, the objective of this network is also to reduce car traffic inside the city of Durës, encourage alternative mobility (electric cars, bicycles...) and develop the urban fabric in the background of the city where locals, visitors and tourists could find restaurants, kiosks and shops along the paths in the future. If all the above mentioned issues require long term vision and actions that will take time before they become fully operative and deeply effective, they can nonetheless be addressed from now on through the public transport strategy and become the framework for short term actions and pilot projects implementation, with direct and immediate positive effects on social and cultural dynamics.

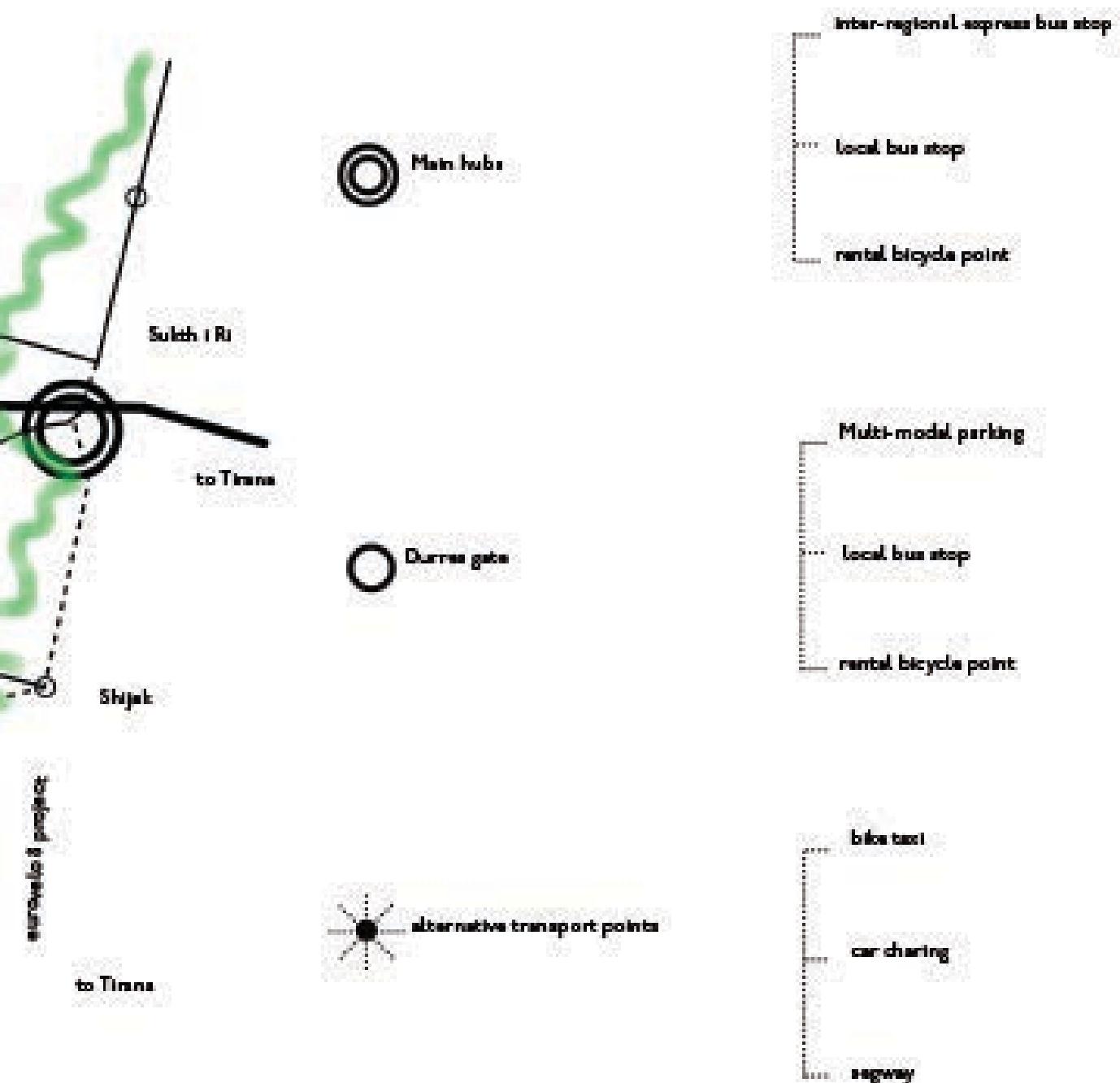
TERRITORIAL VISION





MOBILITY AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTS STRATEGY



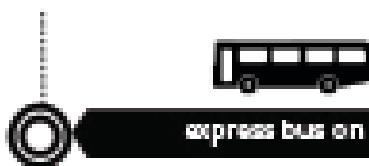


EFFICIENT AND ATTRACTIVE MOBILITY

One day trip of Mr. Agani (Tirana resident visiting his brother in Shijak)

Tirana

Mr Agani takes an express bus for Sulth Main Hub.



express bus on highway

Sulth i RI Main Hub

After Sulth Main Hub, the same bus takes the itinerary of local bus with less stops.



express bus on local itinerary

Shijak

After visiting his brother, takes a rental bicycle.

bike

Weekend of Mr & MS SAVA (Tirana residents coming for week-end's excursion)

Tirana

Mr Sava drives on highway from Tirana.



drive on highway

Durres Gate

He parks his car and takes rental bicycle with his wife to see the lake and the coast.



bicycle path

South Coast

After swimming, they take a local bus to Durres Main Hub.



local bus

Business trip of Mr. Rocci (Italian business man visiting RRC)

Durres Port

Mr. Rocci takes a local bus from the Durres Port.



local bus

Vrinas

He visits Shen Mesh Church before taking a bike taxi.



bike taxi

Rural Centre

He visits RRC and takes rental segway to see the farms around.



visiting farms by segway

house, ha



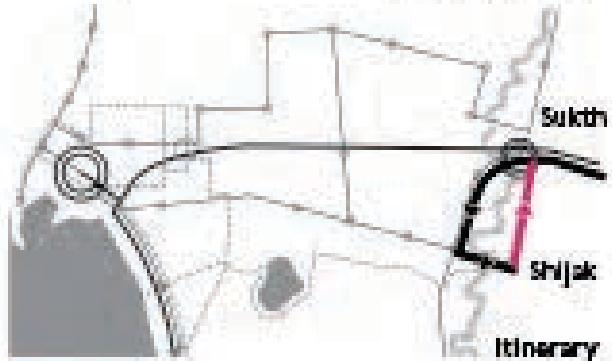
cycle path

Sukth I RJ Main Hub

Rental bicycle point is just next to the bus stop for Tirana.



Before, I had to get off a bus on a highway and wait for my brother to come to pick me up. It was a long trip... Today I can come to his place directly from Tirana.



Tirana Main Hub

Next day they take rental bicycle
Durrës gate.



bicycle path

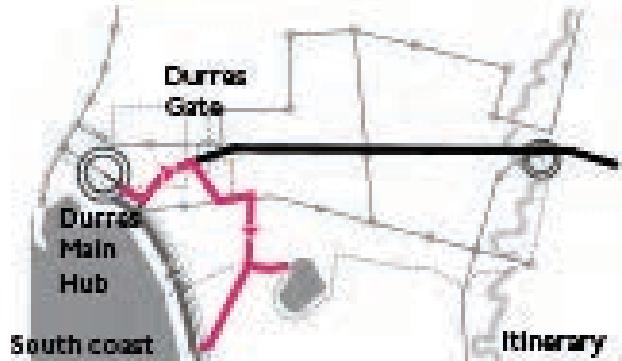
Durrës Gate

They take their
car for Tirana.



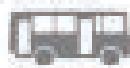
drive on highway

It was good idea to go to
the coast by bicycle and
avoid a heavy traffic jam. We
discovered many attractive
points on the way.



sport point

takes a local bus to go
to the Durrës Port.



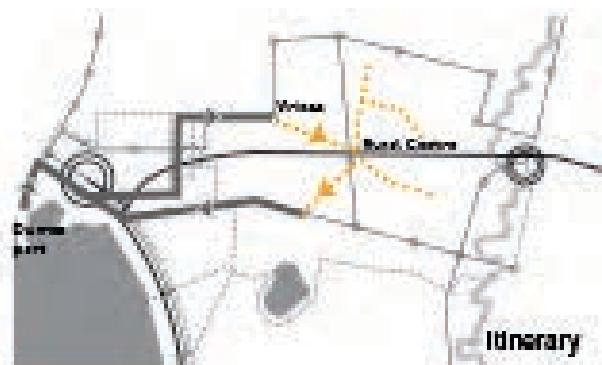
local bus

Durrës Port

Mr. Rocci takes a
ferry for Italy.



Thanks to alternative transports
I could visit efficiently Rural
Centres and towns around. I
could also manage to see a
beautiful church in Vlora
despite my tight schedule.





A VIEW FROM THE HIGHWAY

THE THREE MAGNETS STRATEGY. THREE PILOT PROJECTS

In the short term, it does not seem realistic to envision a total transformation of the highway between Sukh and Durris. What is important is to stimulate social and economic interaction through public space, as a means to engage a "new deal" between people and their territory.

By acting on a limited series of carefully selected spots, it becomes possible to "light up" the whole stretch of highway and surrounding territory between Sukh and Durris. These actions can be undertaken and implemented very rapidly to initiate visible and effective transformation of the highway from the public space around it. The three pilot projects that we are proposing will not require massive investment, but they will be socially and culturally hyper efficient. We chose three sites where transformations can be implemented without the prerequisite of massive demolition or relocation of existing constructions and activities. On the contrary, we chose the three pilot projects' sites according to these factors:

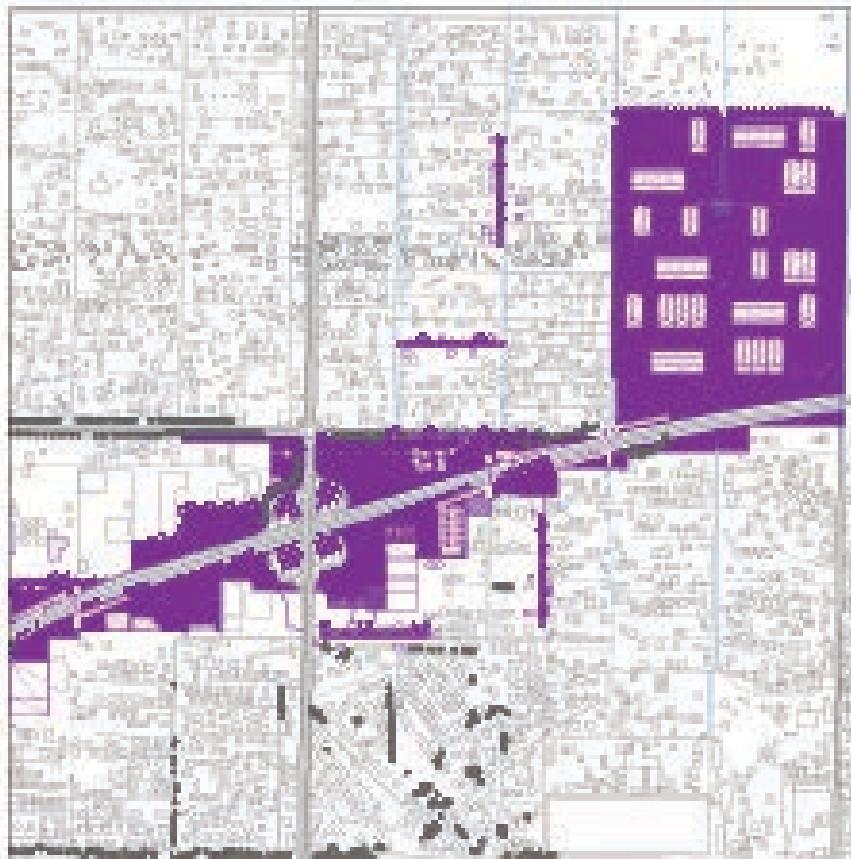
- the potential of existing elements from the geography (river, seaside, countryside), from infrastructure (side roads, bridges, connections), urban and rural economy (city centre, villages, farms...).
- the presence of structuring elements of social infrastructure and interaction, even at a micro-scale (a bus stop can have the same importance as a highschool or a college in the creation of an attractive environment along the highway).
- the availability of unoccupied land that can easily be transformed to create a new landscape that will be visible both from the highway itself and from the territory around it.

These are three sites where the highway and the territory

behind it have maximum interaction. Therefore the projects that we propose to initiate will have immediate and lasting effect on the transformation of the highway's landscape and will have the capacity to develop in time for deeper transformation and development processes.

By their strategic position and co-dependency, the three pilot projects will install strong public figures acting at territorial scale to organize natural amenities, villages and settlements, rural areas, central and attractive places, touristic spots... in an integrated network.

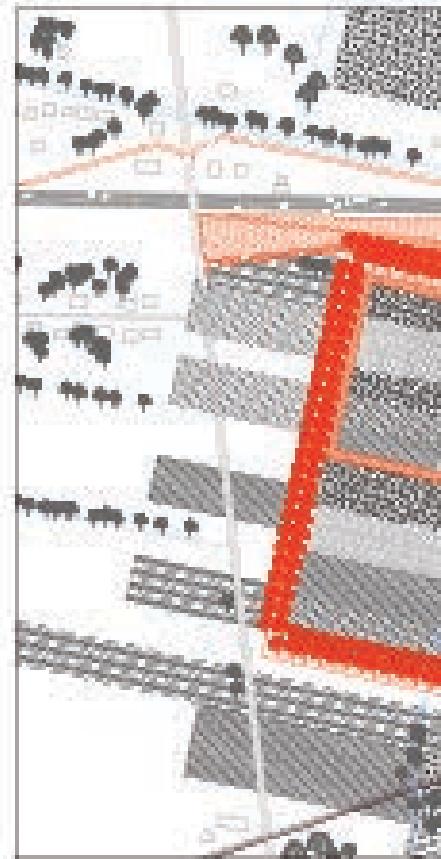
3 MAGNETS / 3 PILOT PROJECTS



DURRES GATE

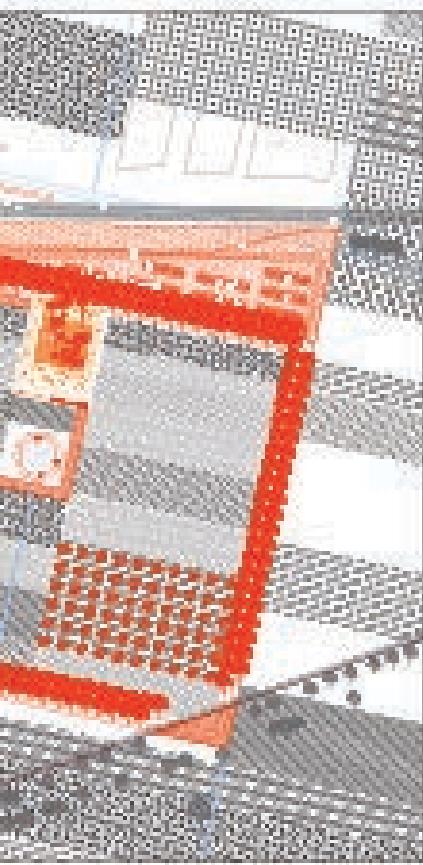
The Durres Gate pilot project is attached to an existing highway access. It aims at redefining the entrance to the city from the highway and from Tirana. It also aims at providing an attractive destination where people can leave their car and commute to alternative transport modes, hence relieving the city centre and the last sequence of the highway from heavy car traffic on weekends and holidays. A multi-use parking structure provides shared bicycles and shared electric cars services. The structure can also be used for special events and occasions (parties, celebrations, gatherings, cultural fairs...). Cycling and trekking routes converge towards the parking from the surrounding touristic spots (Durres Beach, the lakes, the hills). These routes will encourage and support economic development in the periphery of Durres: a light and flexible economy linked with tourism and

leisure (hostels, caffs, small outdoor restaurants, arts and crafts, souvenirs, local products...). The trekking and cycling paths will also support the revitalisation of the landscape and local villages or settlements urban fabric on the hilly part of the city.



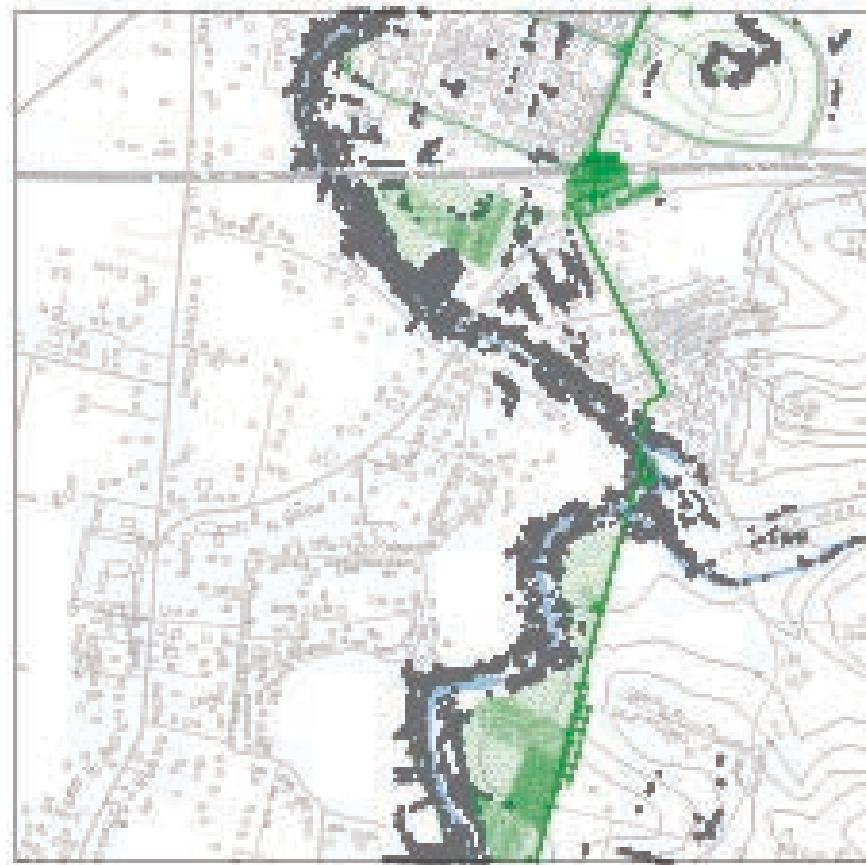
RURAL COMMUNITY CE

The Rural Community Centre pilot project is located at the intersection of the highway with a existing crossing road. It consists of a vast open space, delimited by a square of high trees, where the rural culture of the valley can be displayed, showcased and promoted. It provides a very visible facade of the agricultural hinterland along the highway. The area around the site is dedicated to agriculture and should therefore be preserved from urbanisation. Regulations against illegal construction should be drastic in such areas. Clear limits between agricultural land and urban development should be set and enforced. Within the open square, another smaller square is developed to receive an intense program related to agriculture and rural culture. The main feature of this program is a



ENTRE

market place surrounded by a continuous arcade. Covered spaces around the market and arcade will be used for an agricultural cooperative program, an agriculture centre and showroom, and a cultural centre with artists residence. The Rural Community Centre pilot project could act as an experiment and test bed program that could then be exported to other locations in Albania. We see it as a forum, a functional square where all kinds of people could meet at different hours of their day for work, for meeting each other, for relaxation... in tune with the mediterranean warm climate, outdoor culture and social way of life. The square itself can be used for an open air market, agriculture fairs or special social events and gatherings. It would be a place where urban and rural cultures meet and blend.



RIVER NODE

The River Node pilot project is located at the crossing of the highway and Erzen River. It connects three main elements: the existing bus station, that will be redeveloped into an inter-city bus interchange node; the existing train station that could be developed to receive a fast tramway line between Tirana and Durres in the future; and the Erzen River sides which we propose to develop as a natural park and nature reserve.

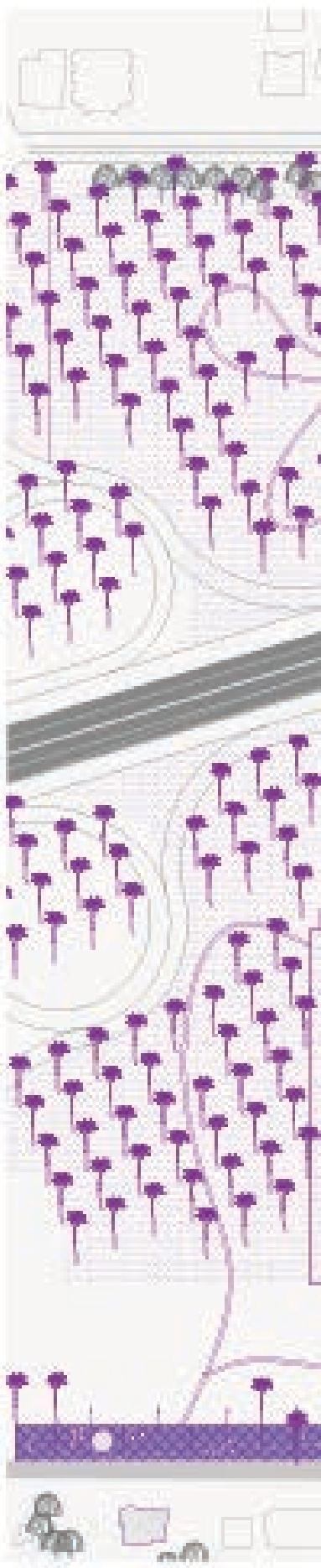
The existing bus interchange station is developed by creating a wider bridge that will provide maximum interconnectivity between all places of interest in the area. A pedestrian and cycling promenade is developed along the river as a backbone to the natural park. The promenade is punctuated by a series of interesting spots such as the King Zog's Villa, the Shijak Mosque, local schools, the centres of existing villages and settlements, nearby farms and vineyards... were smaller public

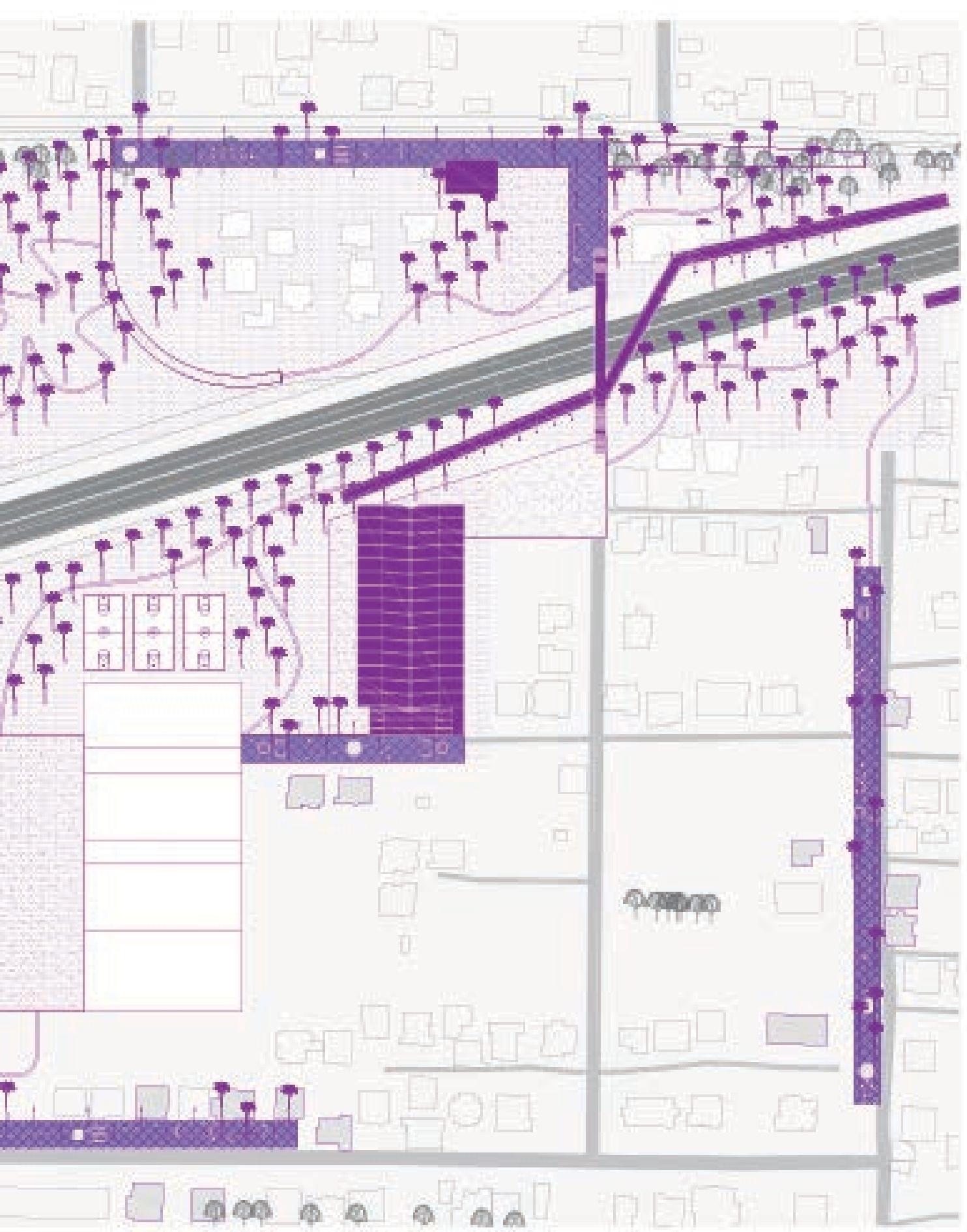
spaces can be developed and benefit from open views on the valley and surrounding territory.

This project is about the meeting of the metropolitan culture of Durres with nature. It provides simple recreation activities in direct connection to nature that will bring people together in a much more efficient way than a big and costly infrastructure would.

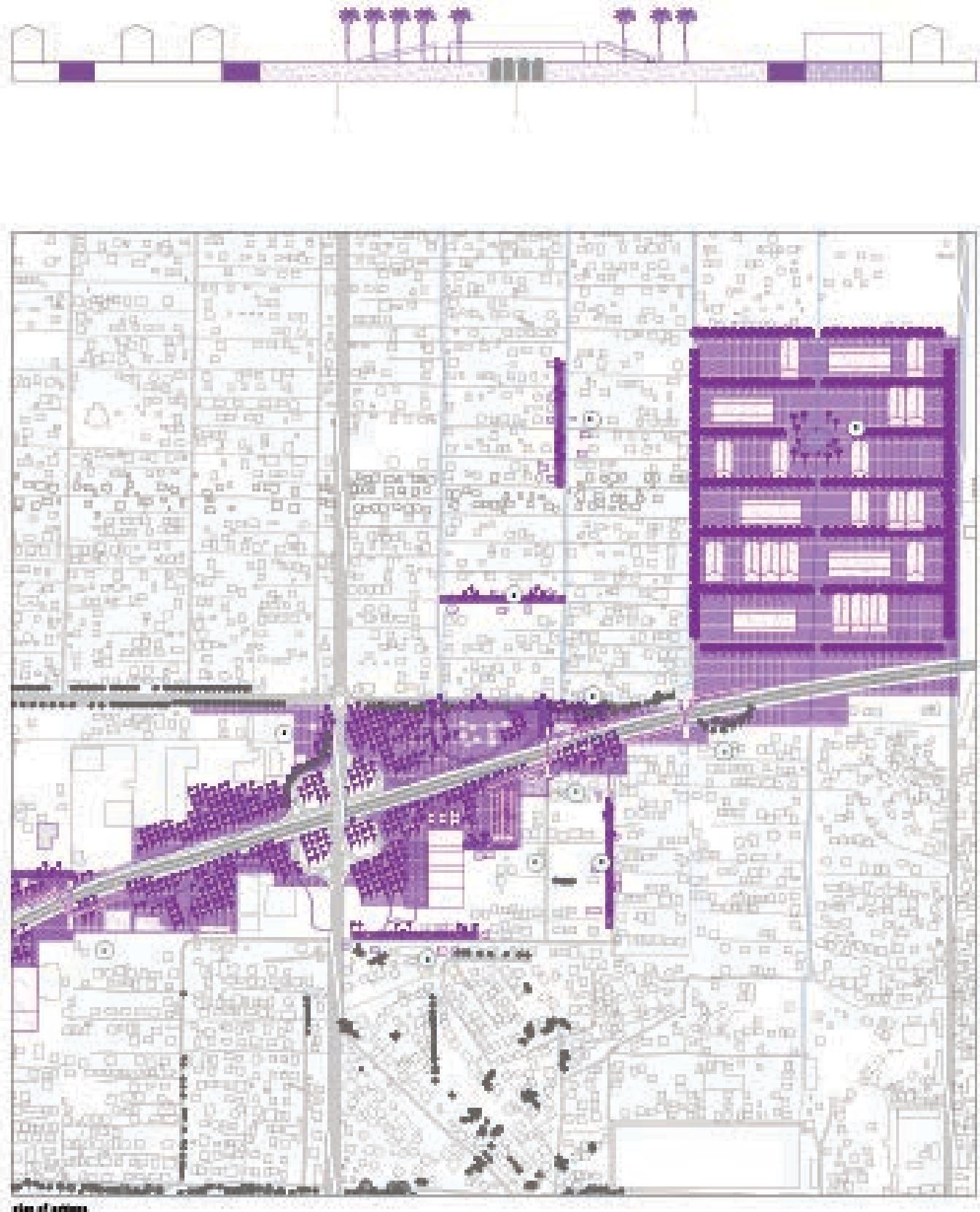
It is also about re- and co-integration of the existing settlements which share a common history of coexistence. The River Node pilot project is meant to initiate and support regeneration processes within the settlements of the area. Finally by bringing regional and national public transport (bus and fast tram) closer to their centres. Secondly by introducing simple local public spaces (mini-squares, small public esplanades, pocket gardens...) where outdoor cultural and social activities could take place, all linked to the river by a network of green connectors.

DURRES GATE





DURRES GATE



plan of sections

① EASY CROSSINGS / STRONG CONNECTIONS

Existing bridges (enlarged and redesigned).

New bridge.

Parallel palm trees park.

② NEW PUBLIC SPACES

Services Platforms : elongated public spaces with playgrounds, cafe, promenade where public facilities are addressed (school, hospital or health care services, community centre, post offices...).

New possible urban development.

③ CREATIVE URBAN INDUSTRIAL PARK

New industry and showroom area: a place dedicated to creative and fashion industries.

Pre-structure of trees defining the maximum lots for further development opportunities.

Industrial showroom.

④ MULTI-USAGE MULTI-MODAL PARKING

Public parking with shared bicycles and electric cars.

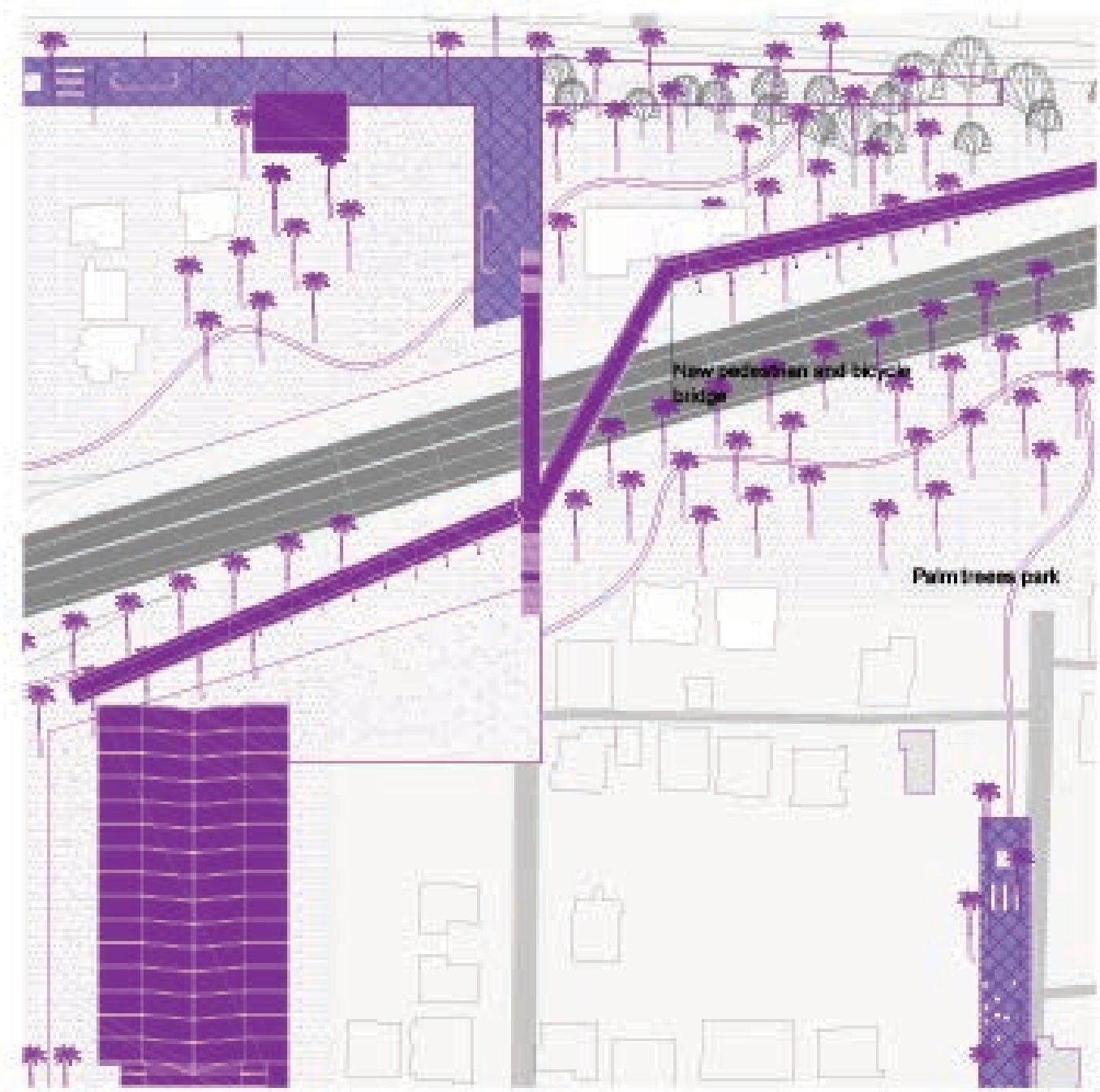
Bus lines.

Bus stops.

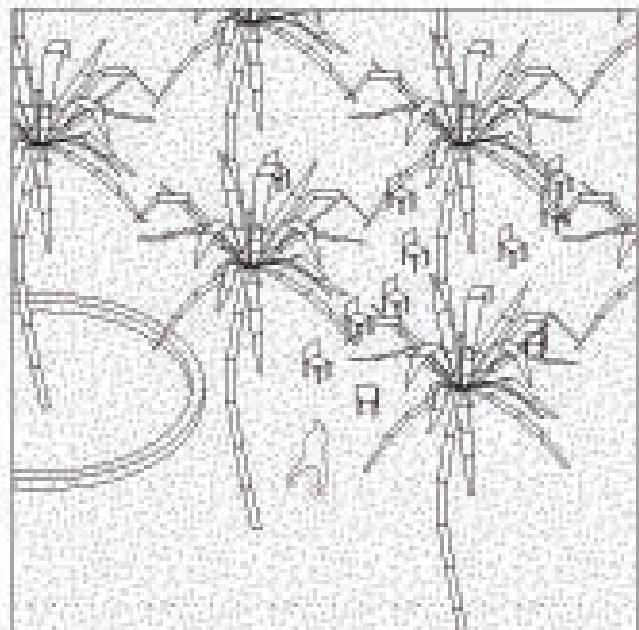
Bicycle paths and trekking routes.

DURRES GATE

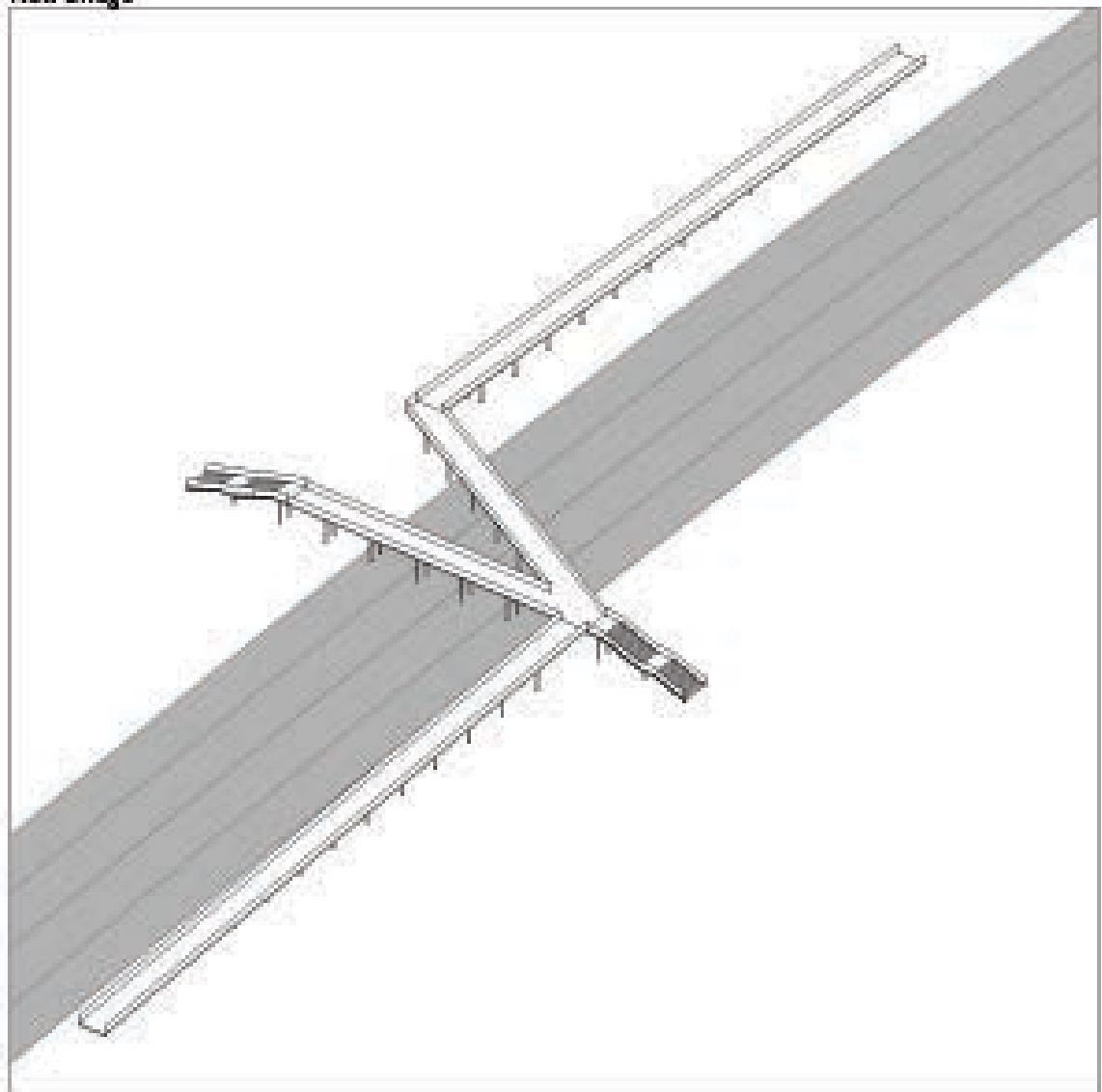
EASY CROSSINGS / STRONG CONNECTIONS



Palm tree park along the road

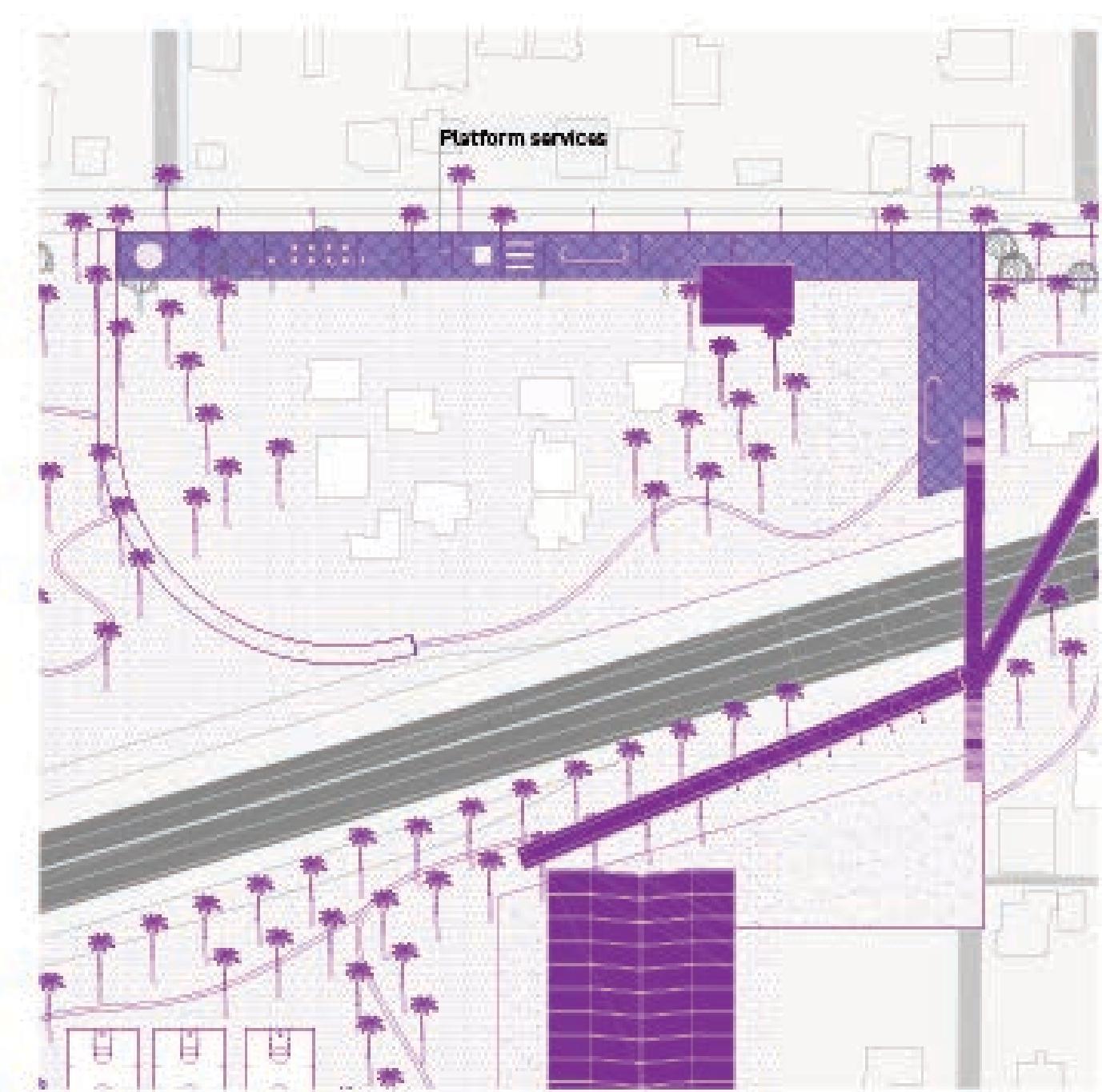


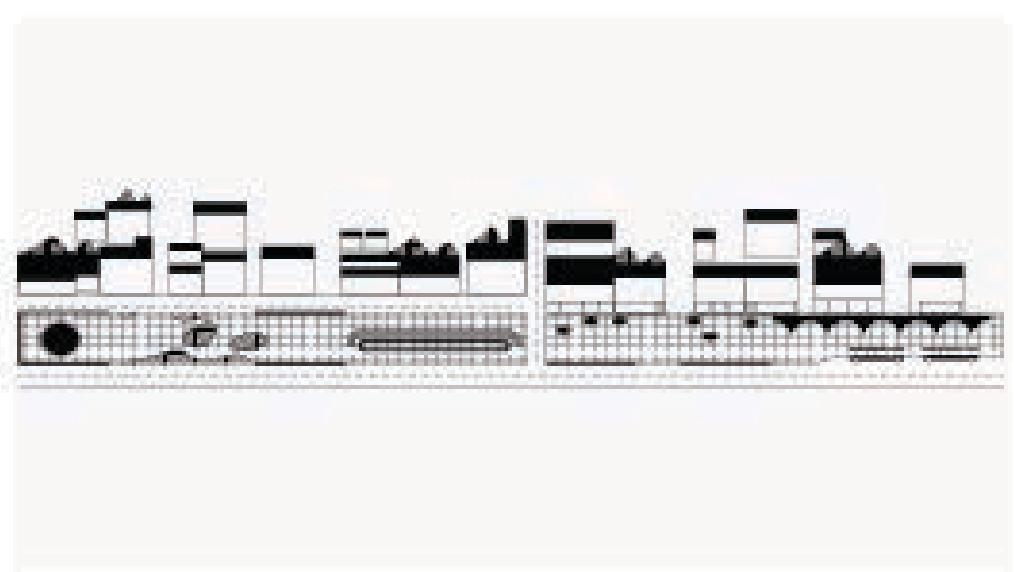
New bridge



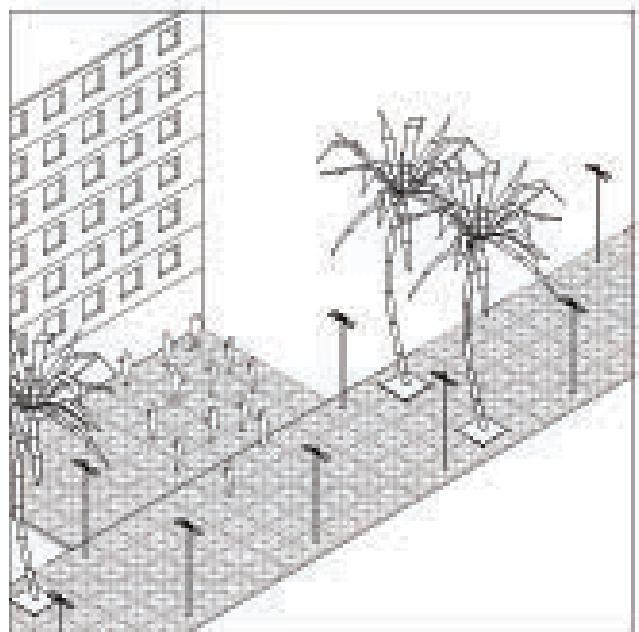
DURRES GATE

2. NEW PUBLIC SPACES

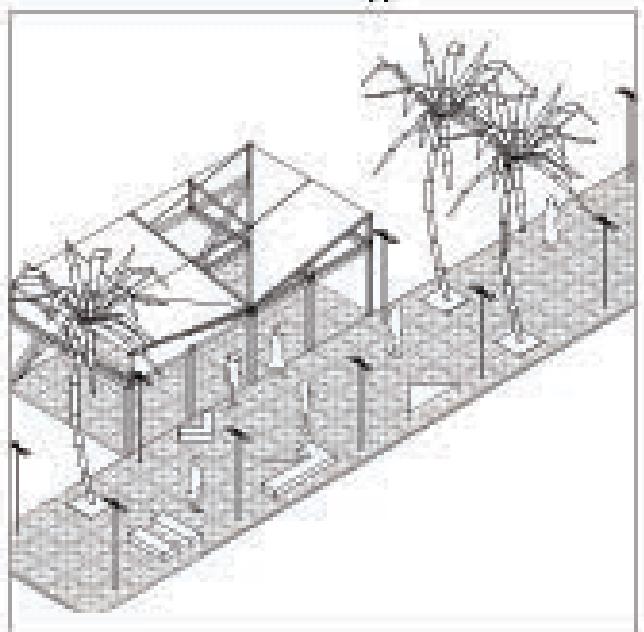




Existing facilities connected

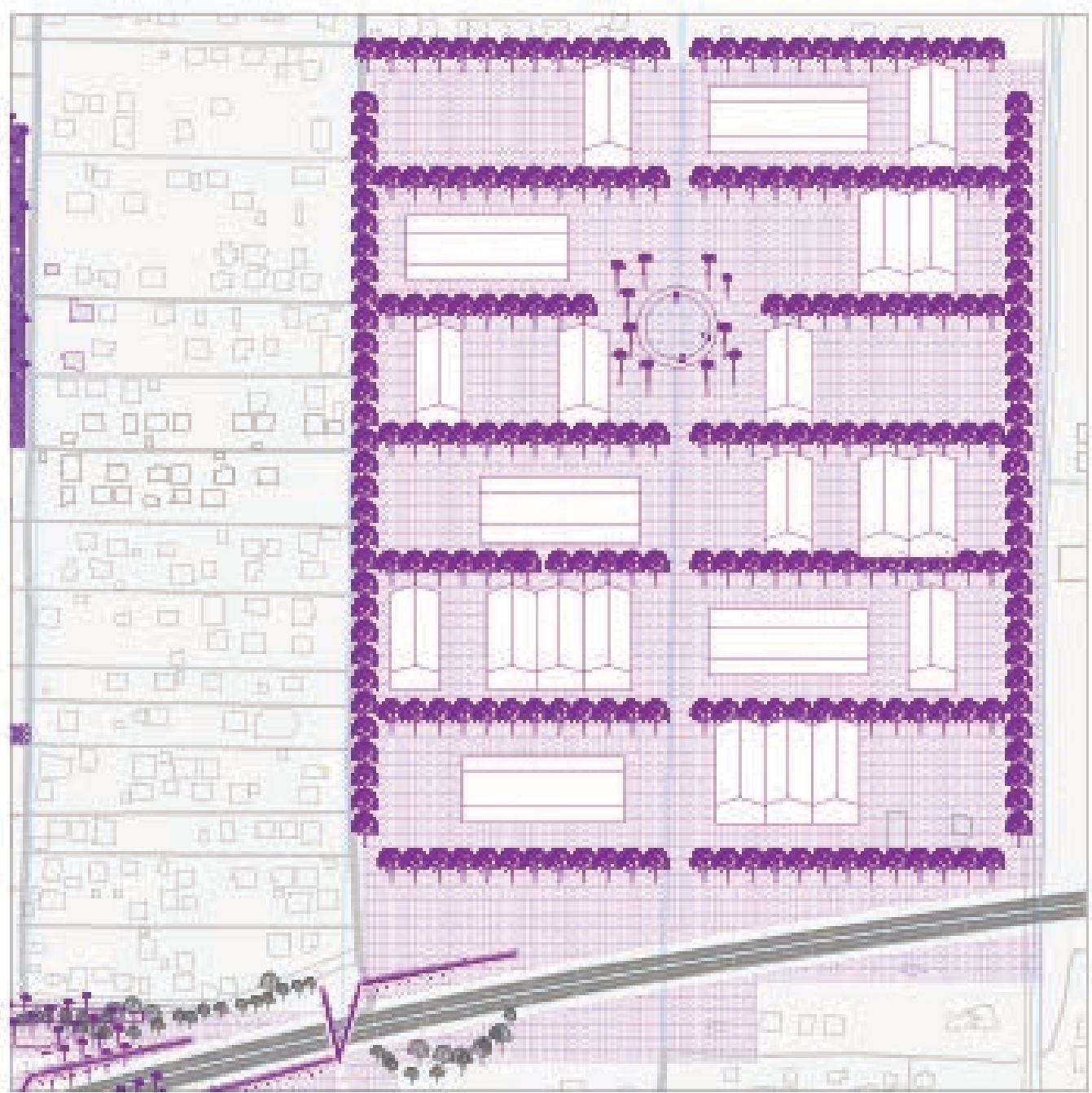


New facilities could be developed



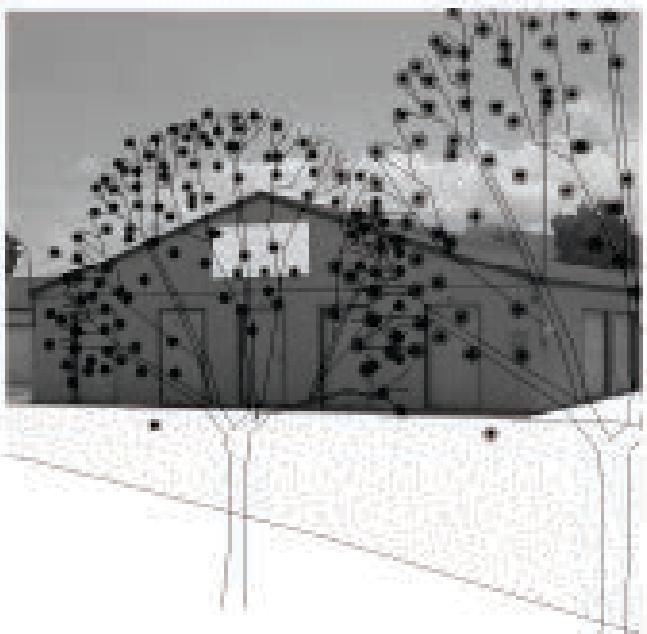
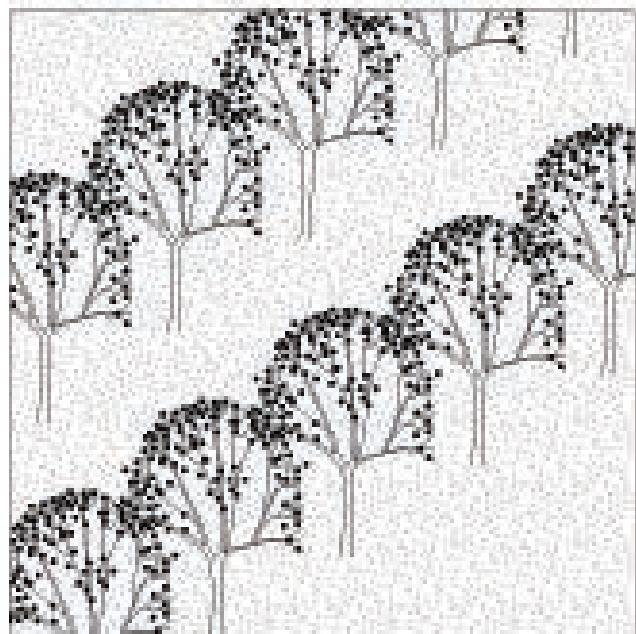
DURRES GATE

3 CREATIVE URBAN INDUSTRIAL PARK



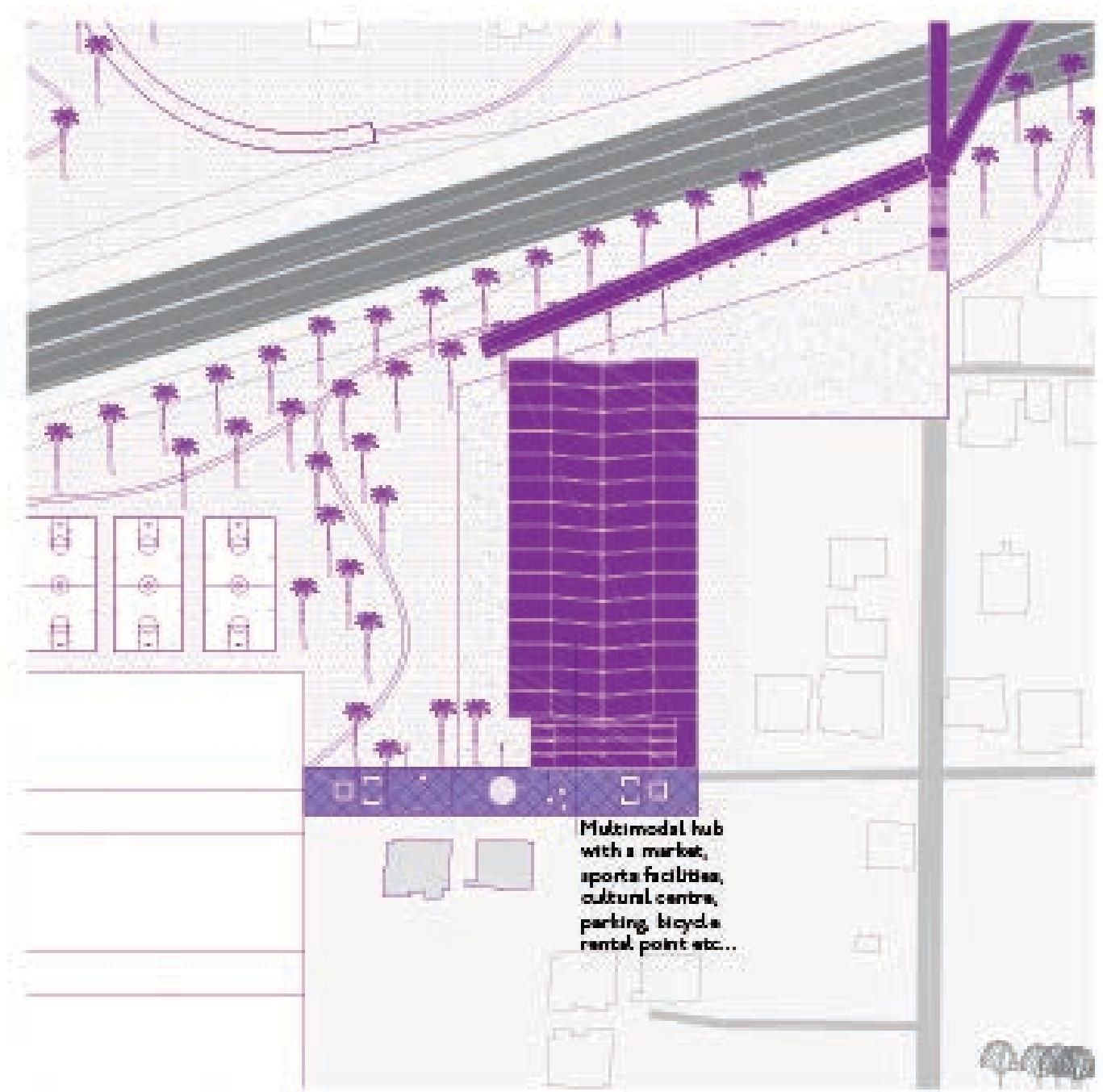


The first phase of the warehouses area

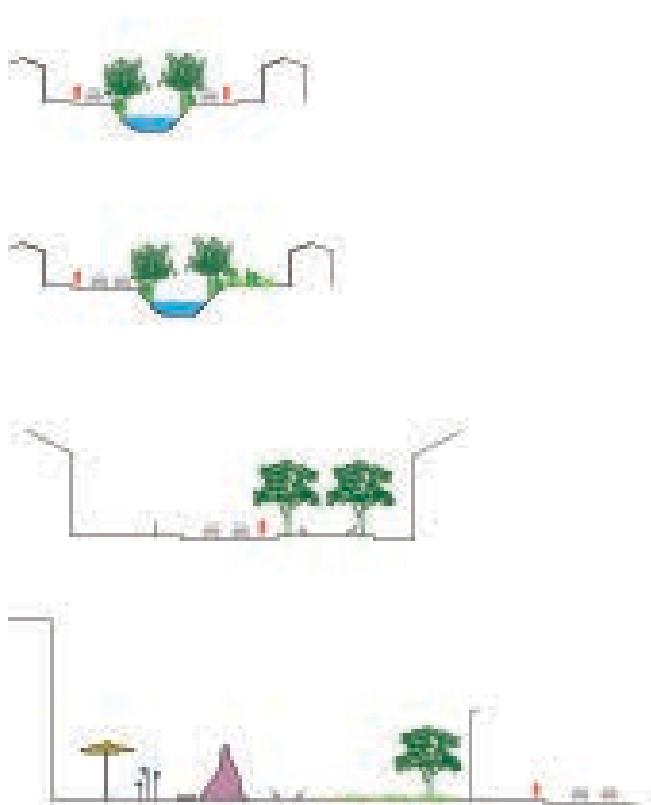


DURRES GATE

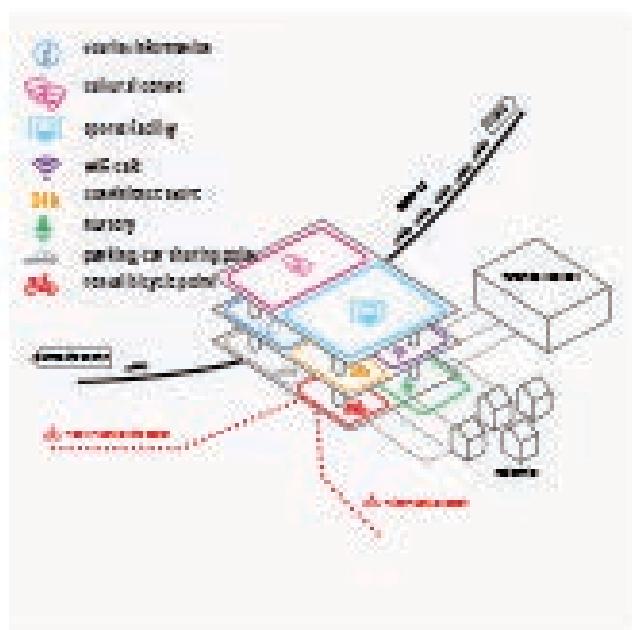
4. MULTI - USAGE MULTI - MODAL PARKING



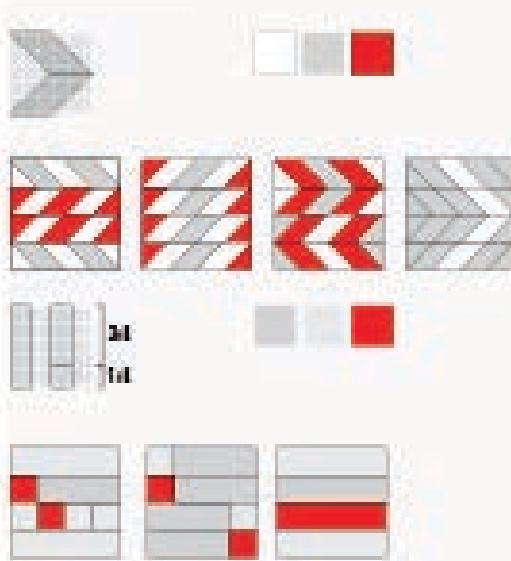
sequences of bicycle paths



Multimodal hub building

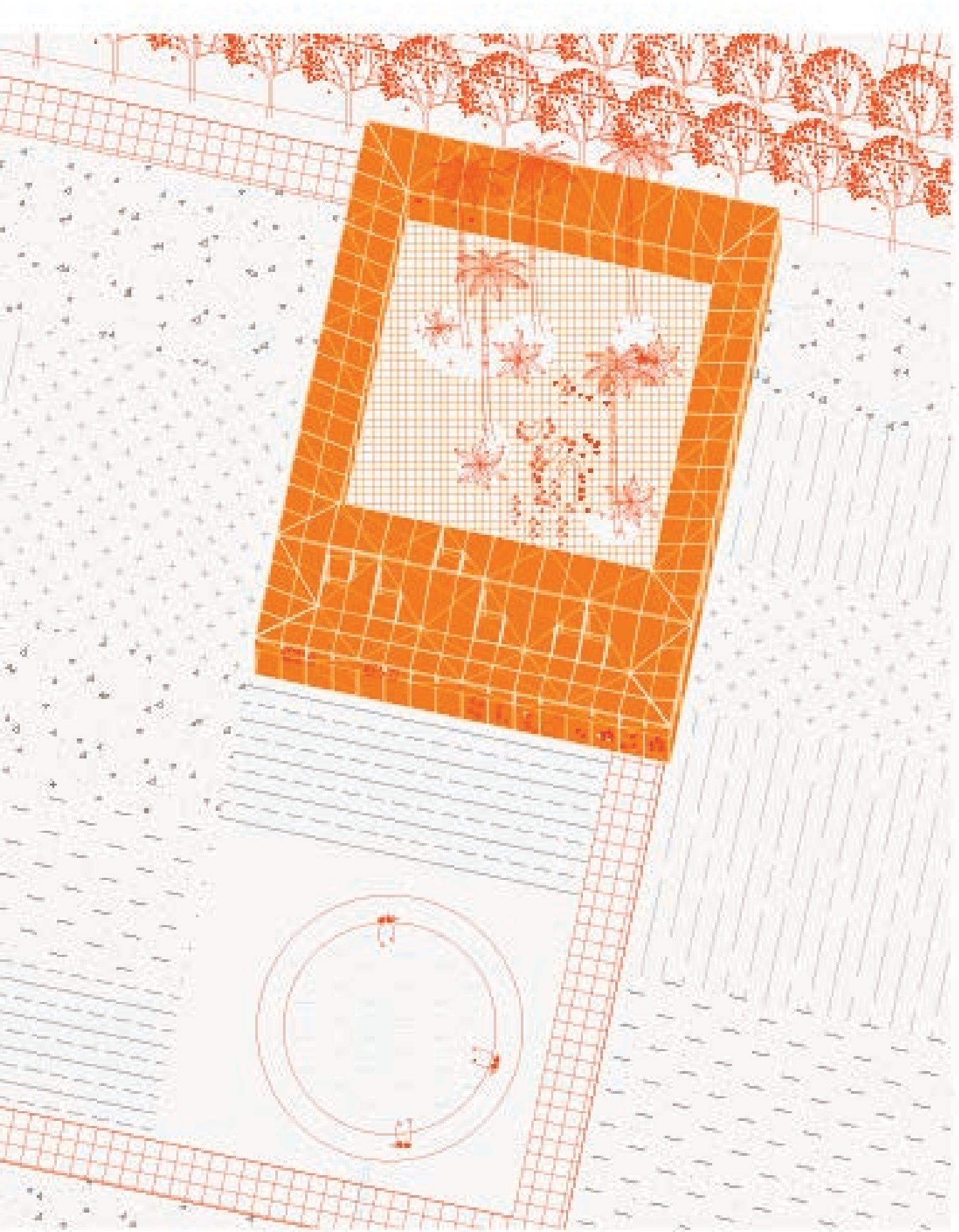


New graphic designs

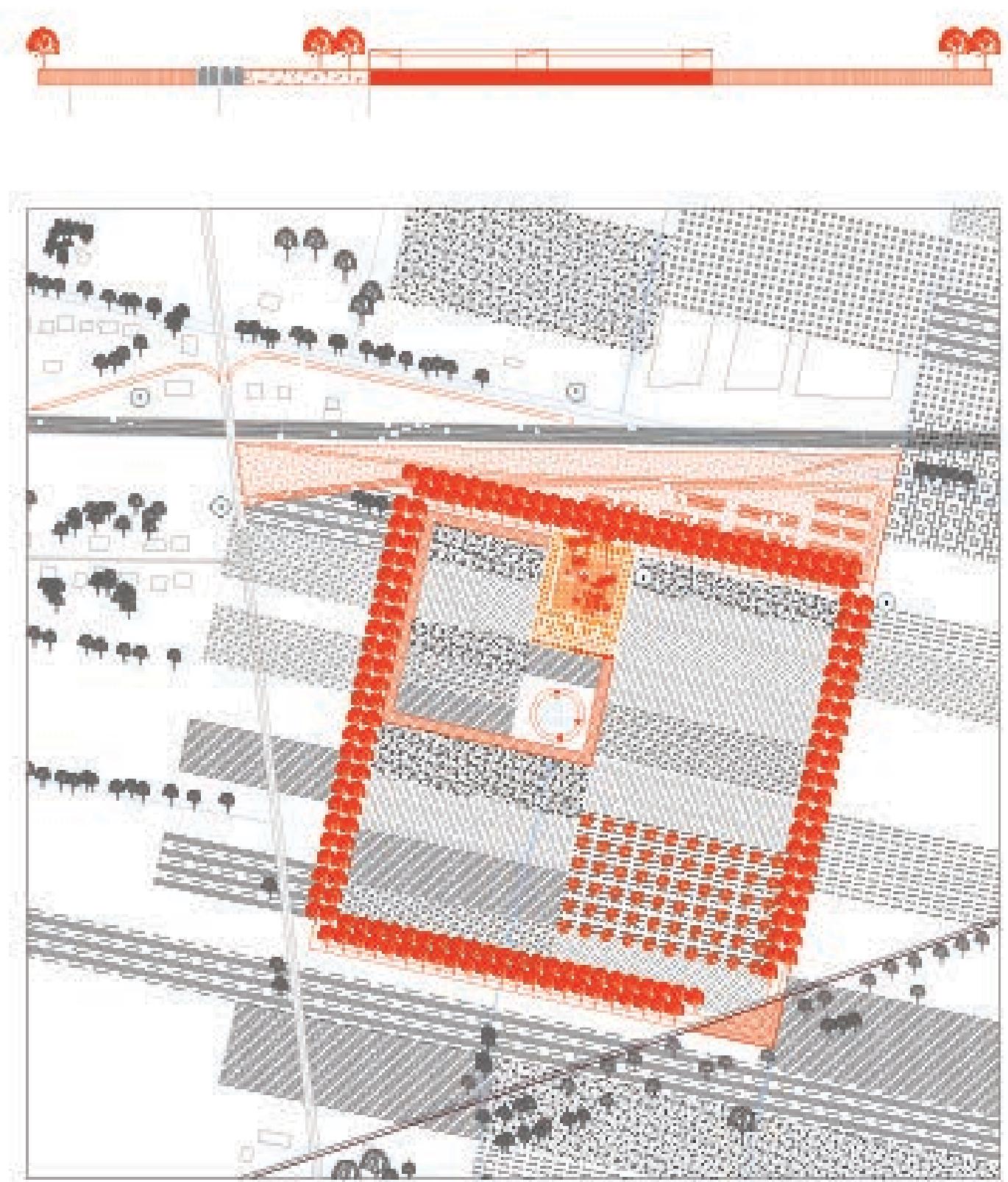


RURAL COMMUNITY CENTRE





RURAL COMMUNITY CENTRE



① EASY ACCESS / HIGH VISIBILITY

New exit and entrance on the highway.
Access to Rural Community Centre.

② COOPERATIVE SPACE AS COMMUNITY CENTRE

Main building with several activities: conference centre, market, agricultural cooperative office, artist residence, rural educational facility (biodynamic and permaculture classes), artists residence, offices, hall for temporary events (art biennale, cinema, meetings..).

Tourist residences.

Parking.

Renewed water system with trees.

Botanical garden.

Agricultural fields.

Possible train station.

③ INCREASED VALUE OF THE LANDSCAPE

Preserved agricultural land.

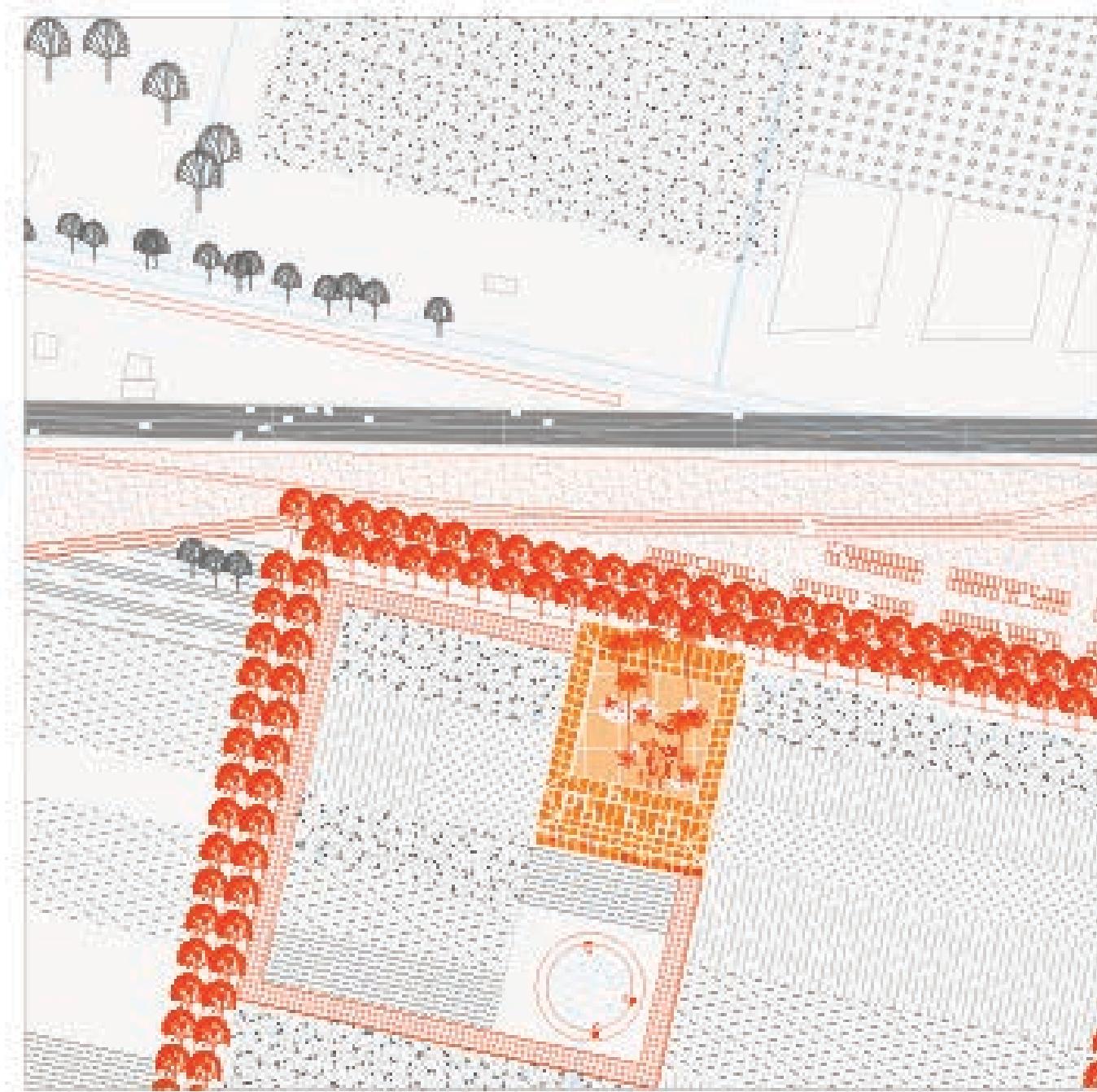
Aligned trees in the landscape.

④ MADE IN DURANA

Cafés and restaurants in Tinen and Dörns where ROC products are sold and served.

RURAL COMMUNITY CENTRE

EASY ACCESS / HIGH VISIBILITY

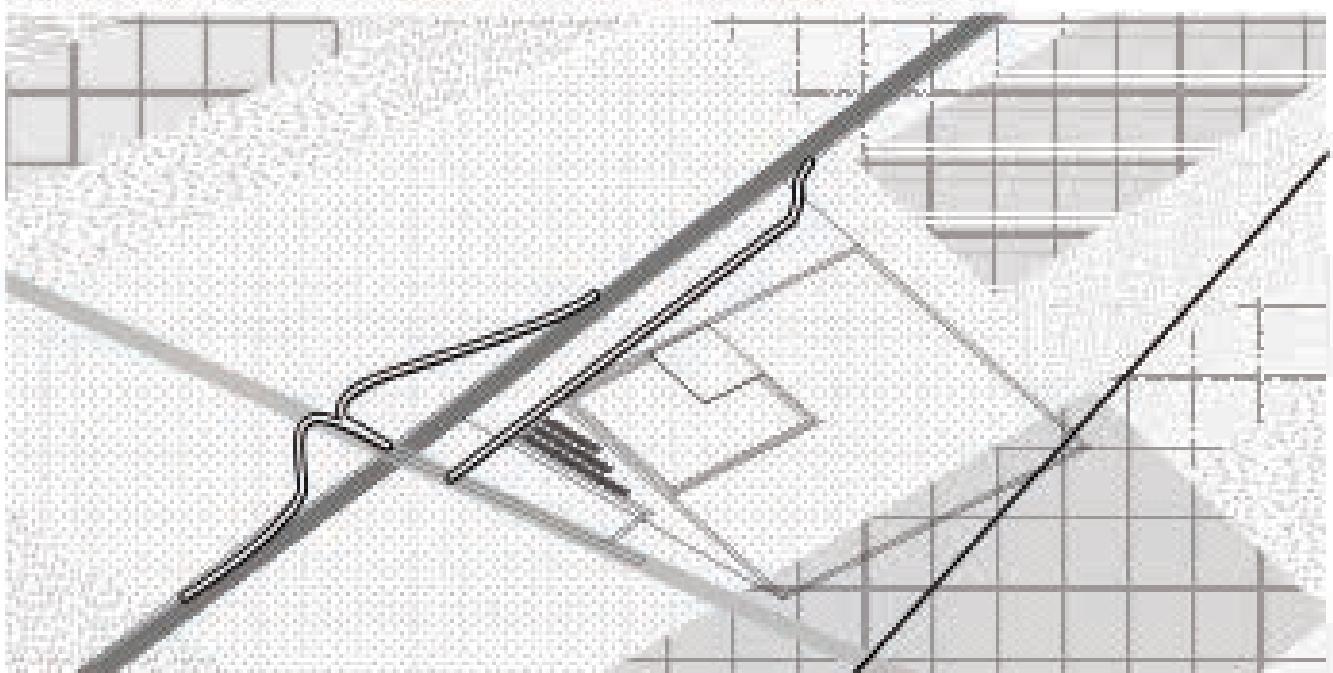




View of the RCC from the highway

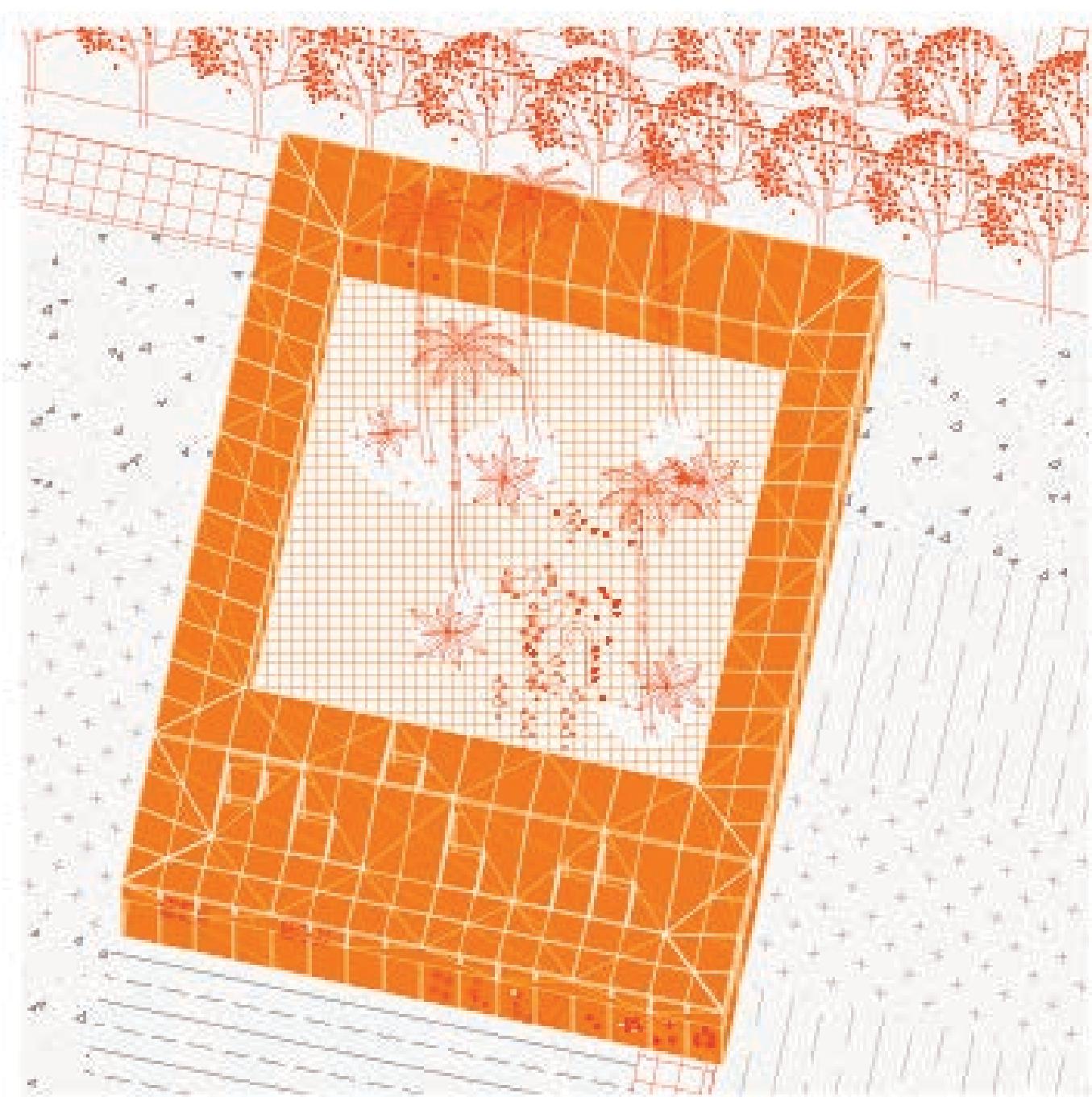


Connection to the highway (Rural Centre is directly accessible from the highway)



RURAL COMMUNITY CENTRE

2. COOPERATIVE SPACE AS COMMUNITY CENTRE



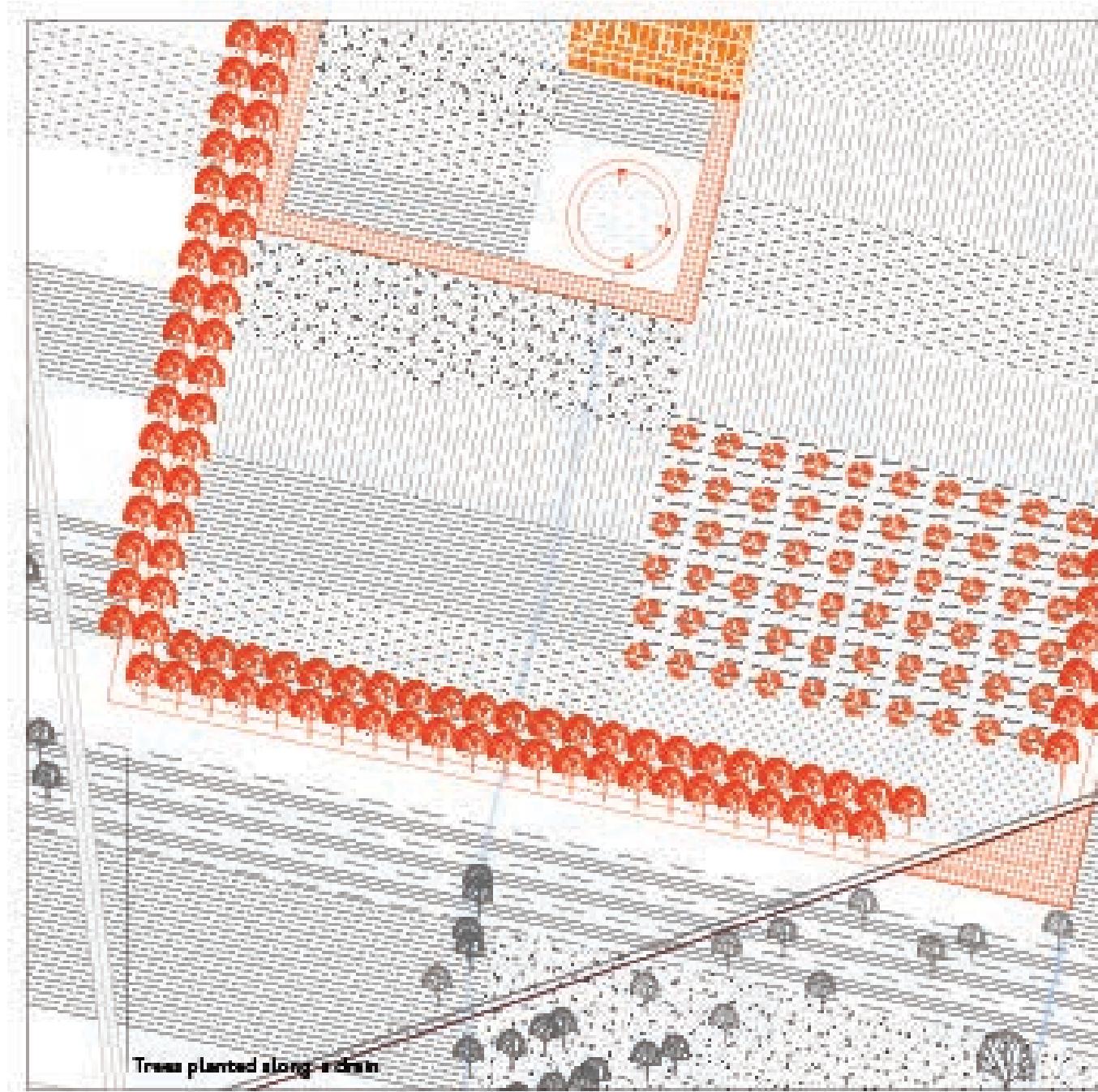


Rural Centre (view from the access path to the patio)



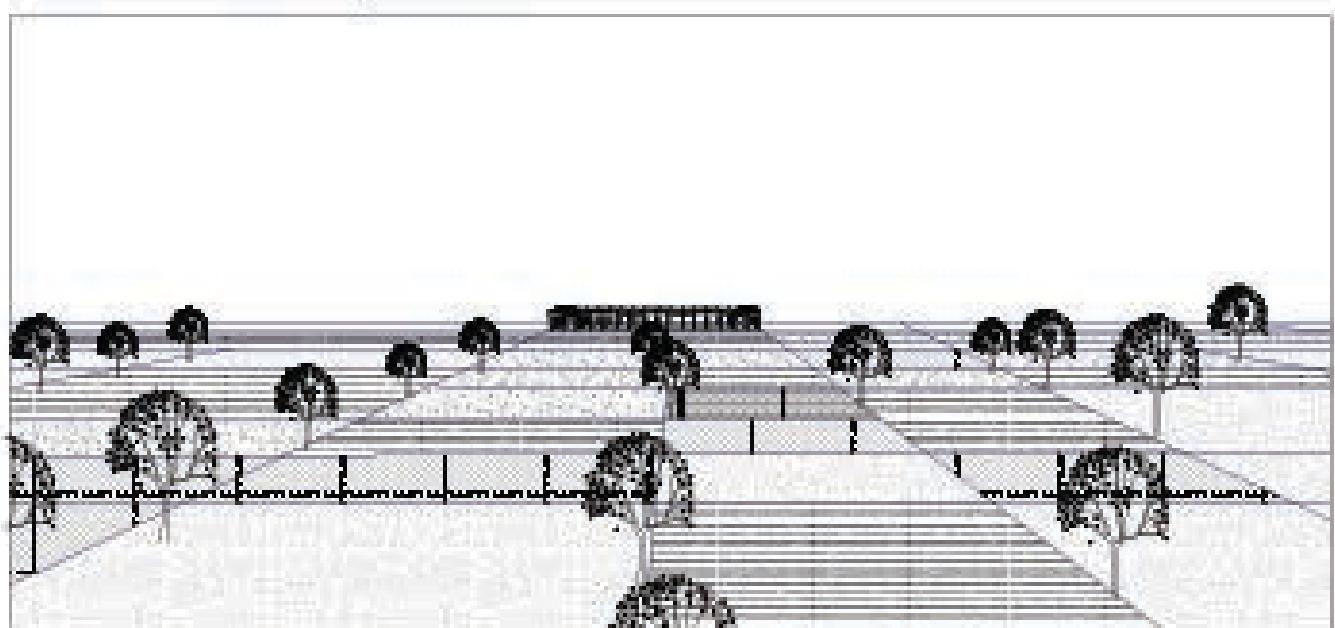
RURAL COMMUNITY CENTRE

3. INCREASED VALUE OF THE LANDSCAPE



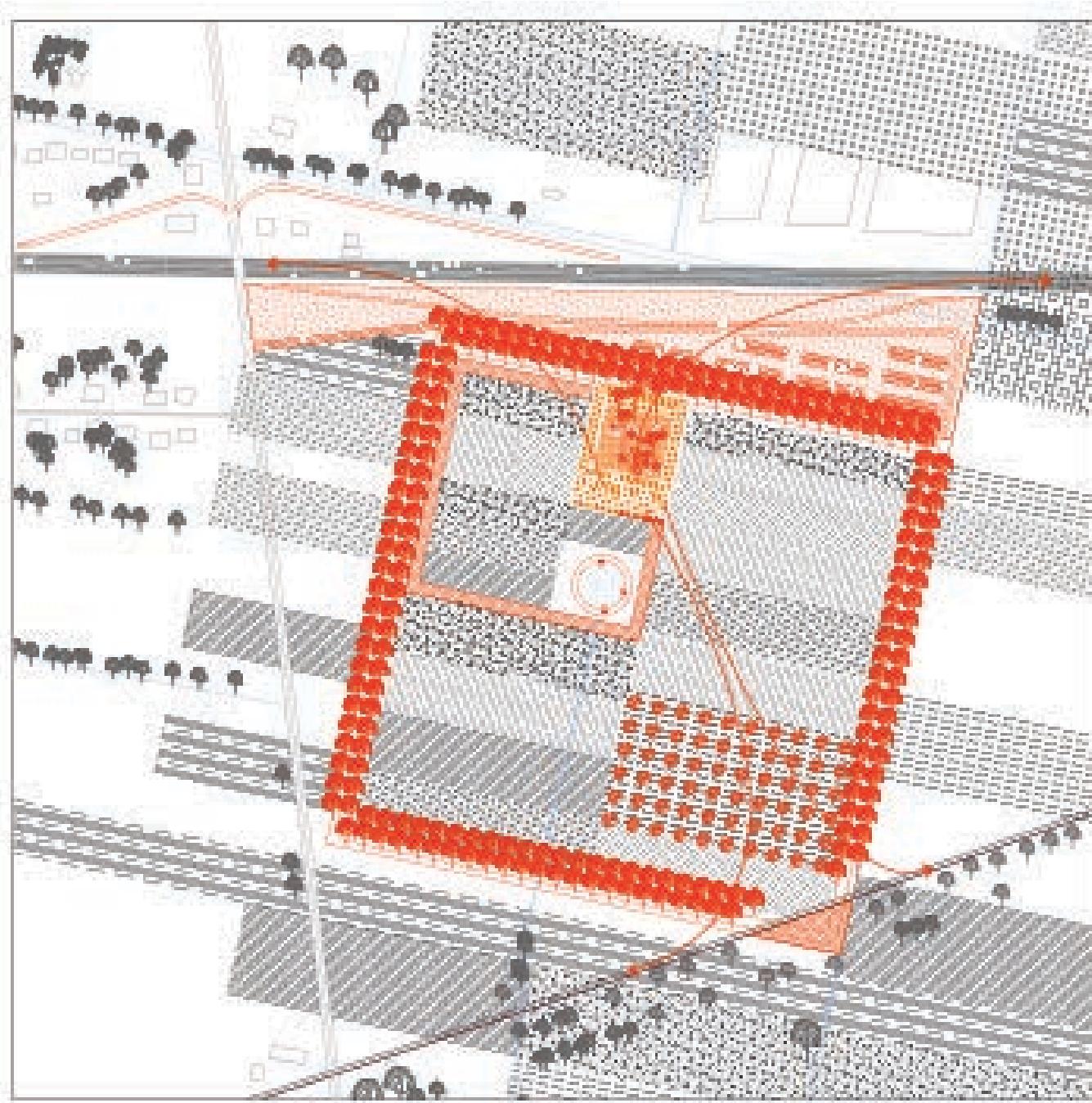


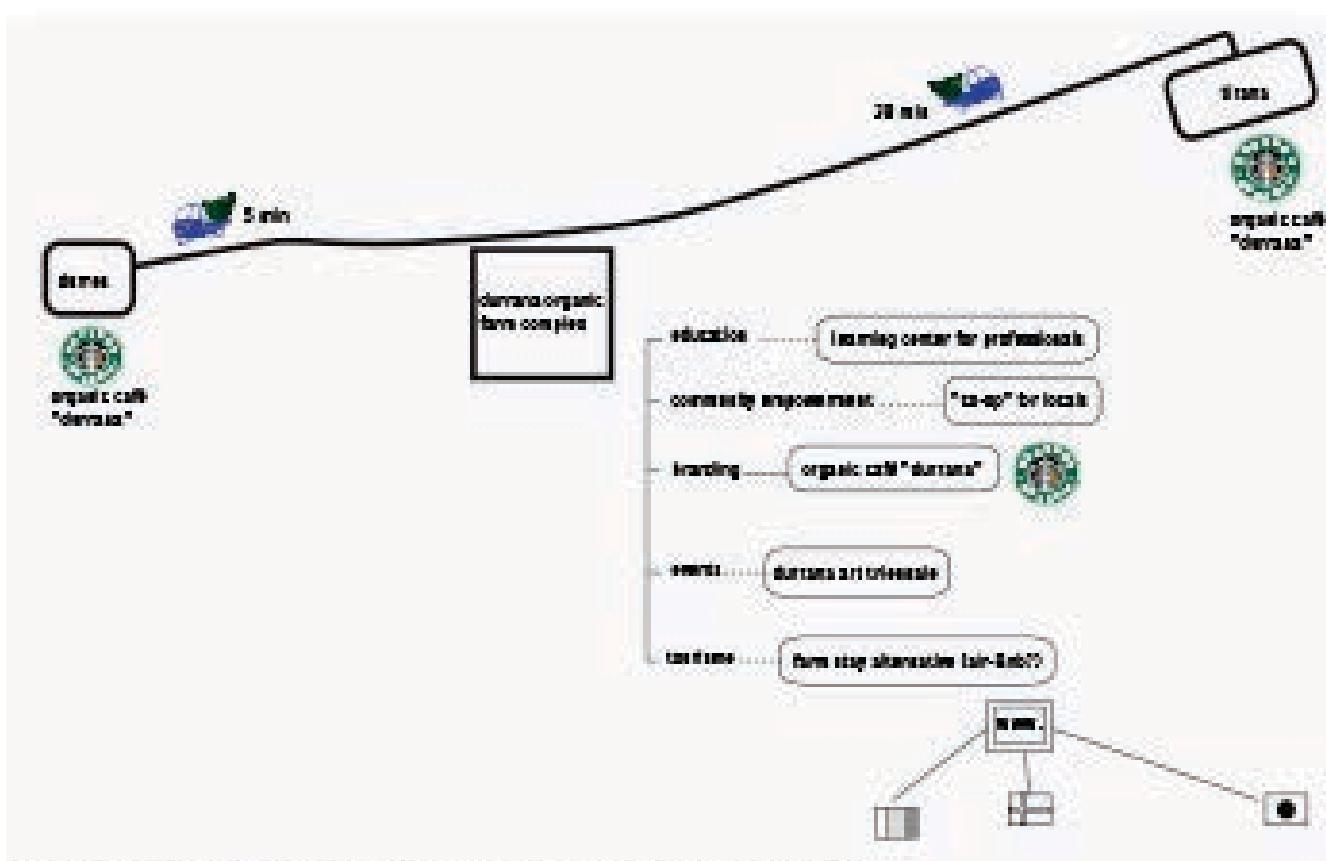
Rural Centre in the middle of agricultural fields



RURAL COMMUNITY CENTRE

3. MADE IN DURANA



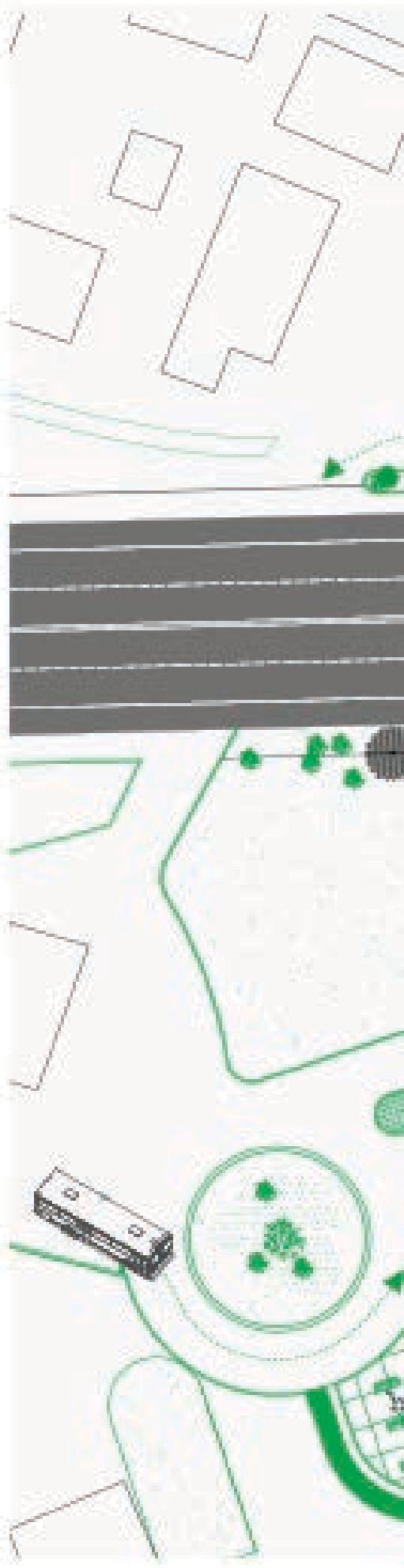


With the opportunity of the freeway, fresh vegetables and fruits can be fastly delivered in Tirana or Durres

DURRËS PRODUKTET

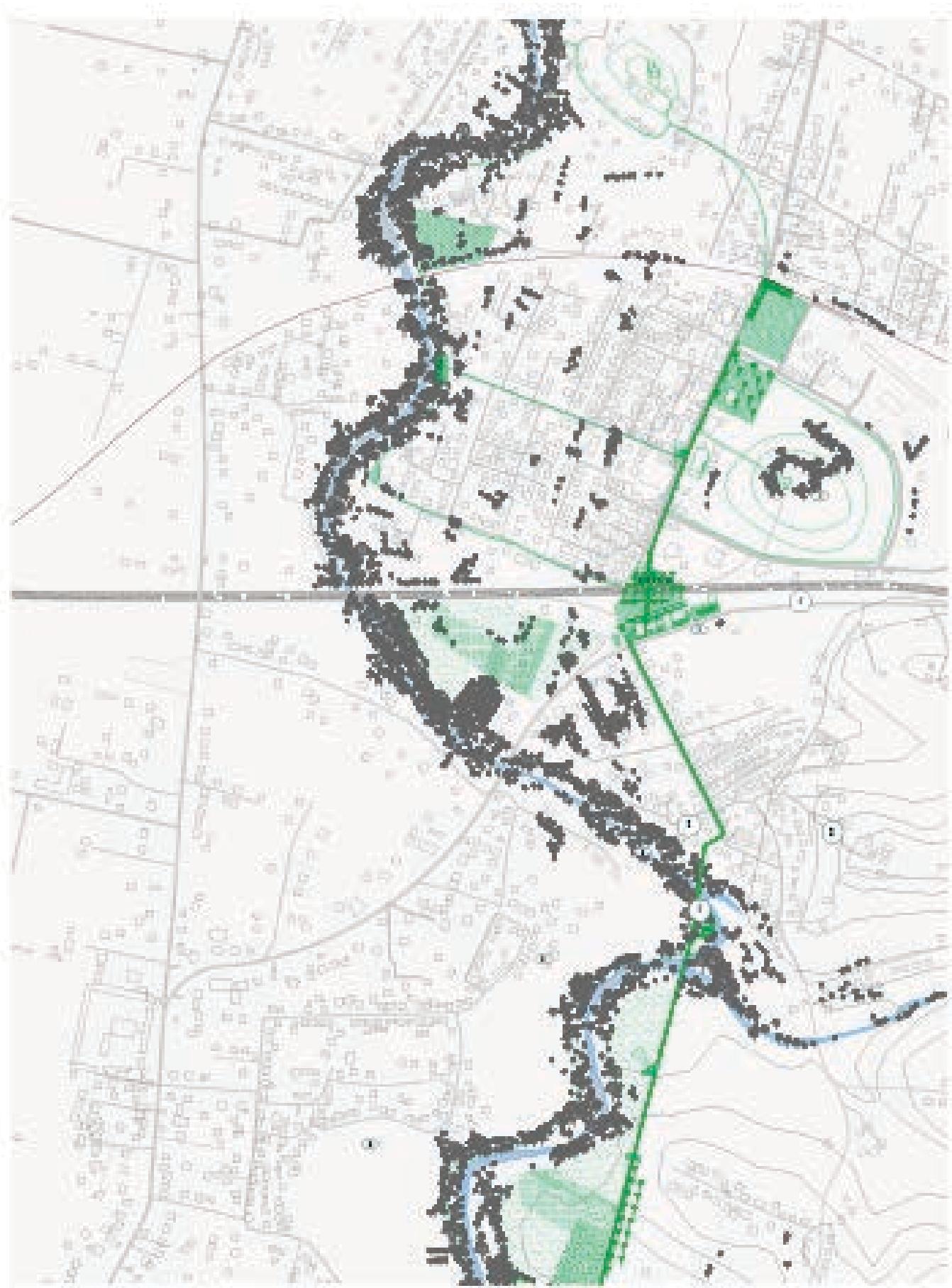


RIVER NODE





RIVER NODE



① SUKTHIRI TRANSPORT HUB AND STATION

New train station beside the football field.
New bus station.
Existing bridge enlarged and redesigned.
New bus station.

② SUKTHIRI - SHIJK PARK

Programmed park and nature reserve.
New network of bicycle and pedestrian paths.

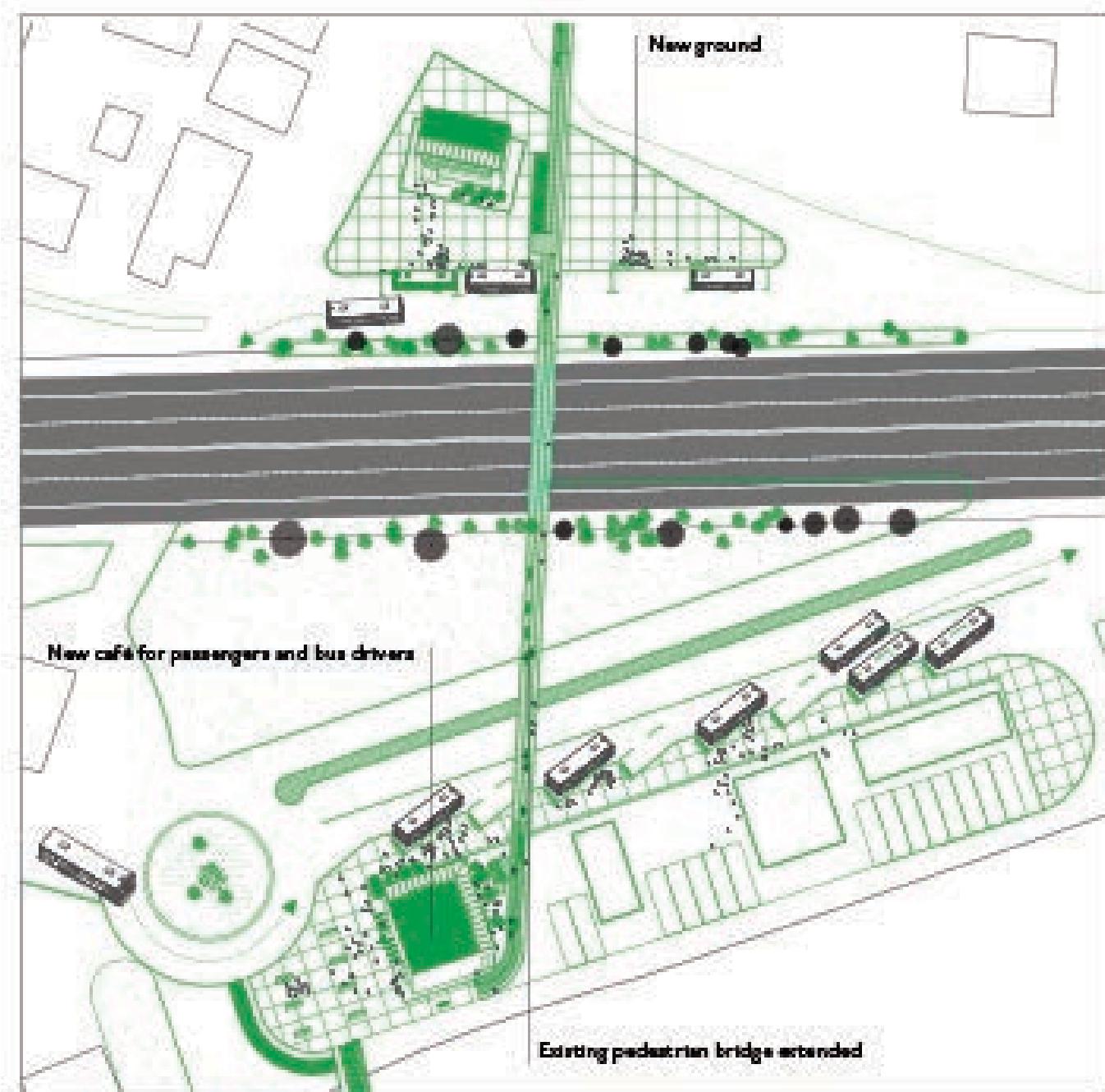
ERZEN RIVER PARK

Protected river and landscape.
Cultural areas.
Outdoor and sports facilities.



RIVER NODE

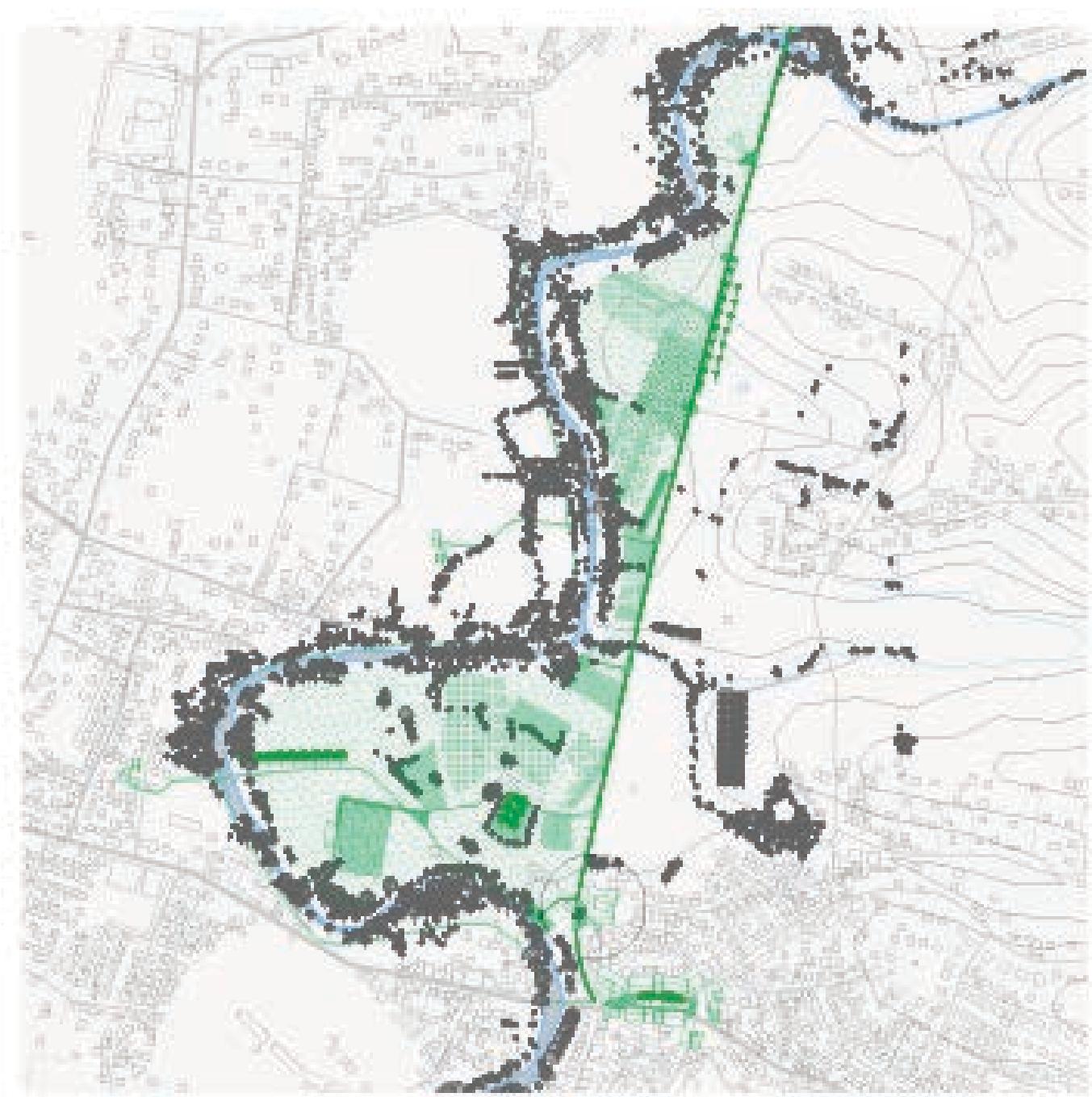
L SUKTHIRI TRANSPORT HUB



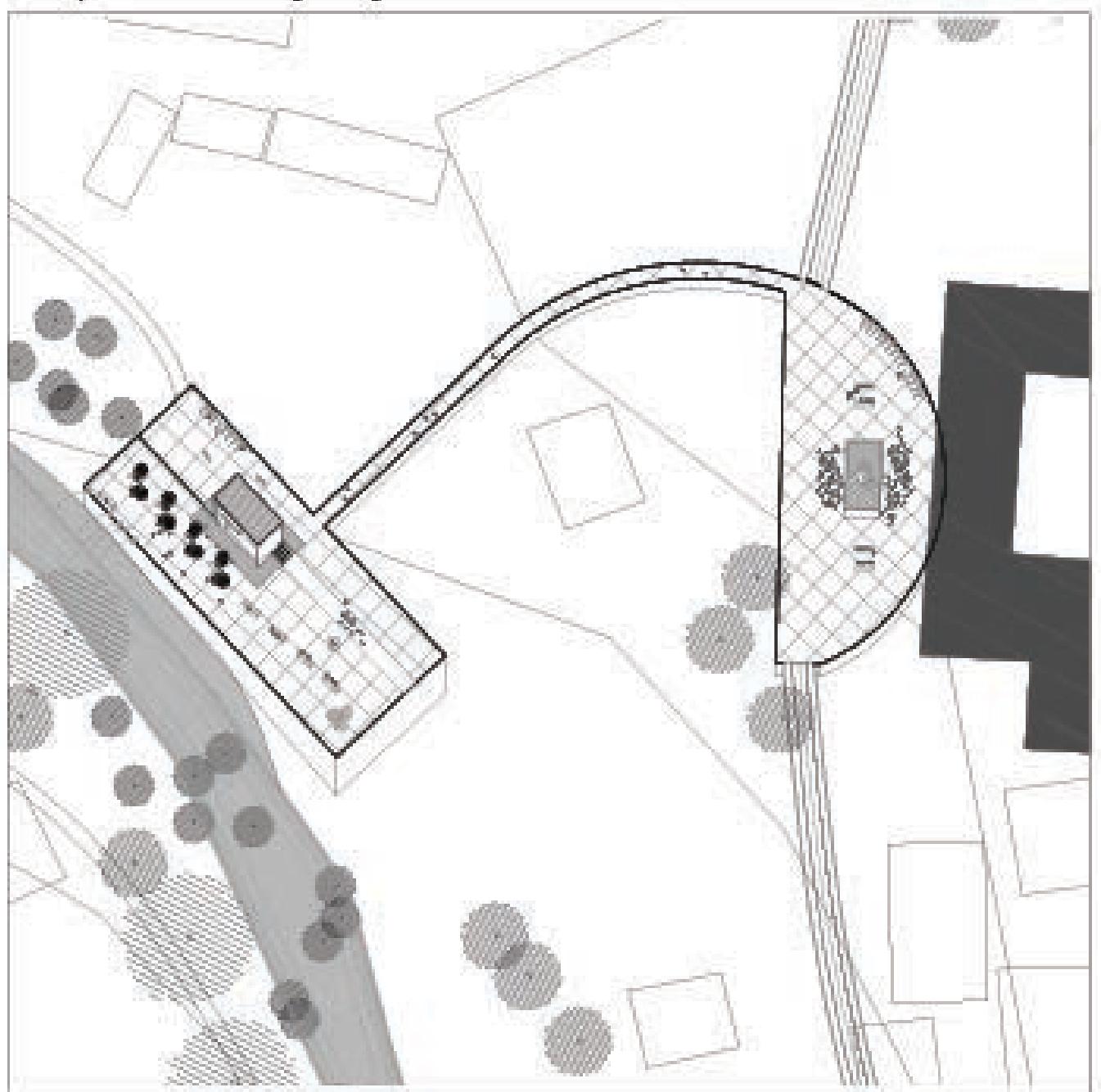


RIVER NODE

2. SHIYAK MOSQUE ESPLANADE



Public spaces in front of existing buildings

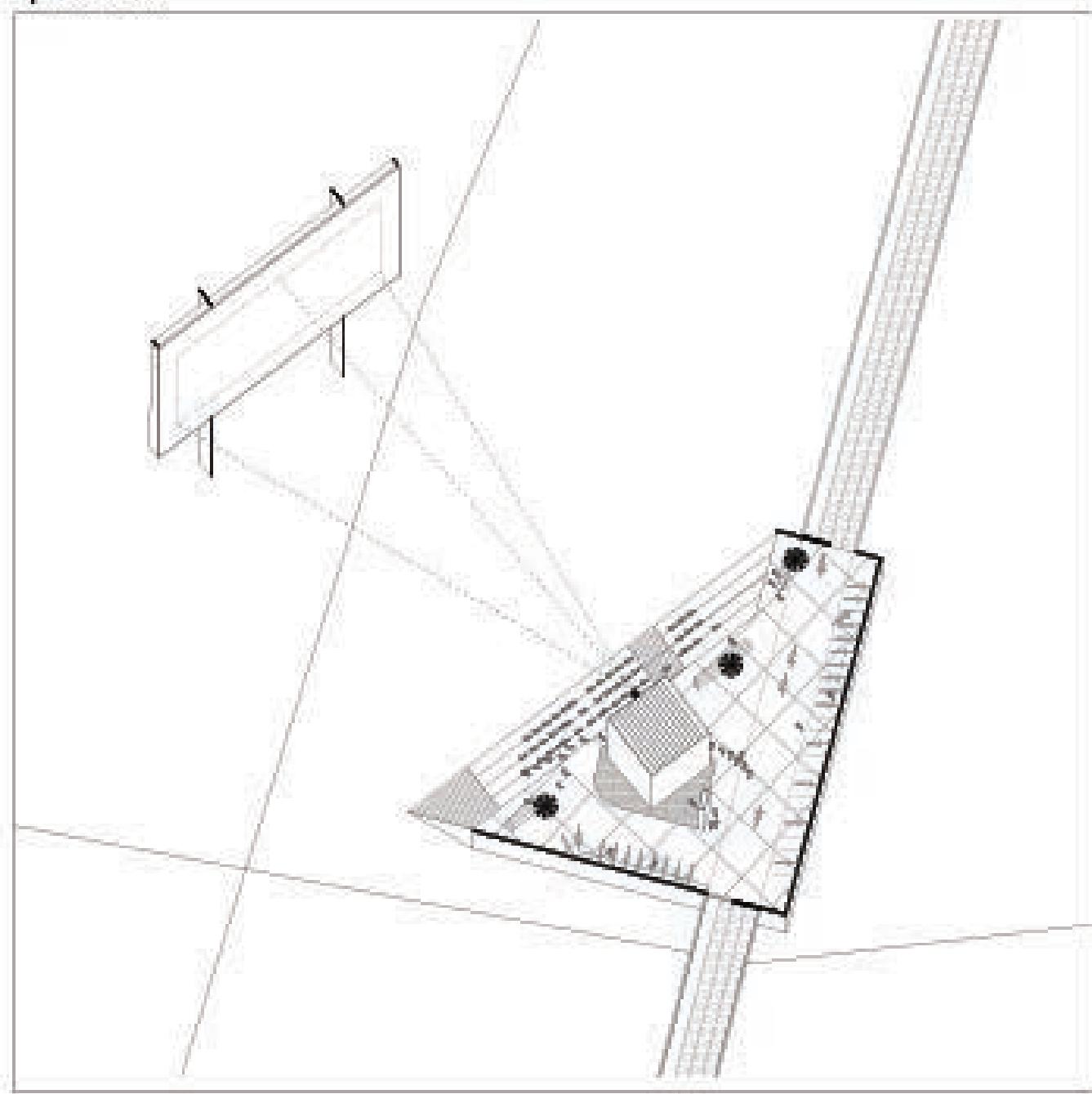


RIVER NODE

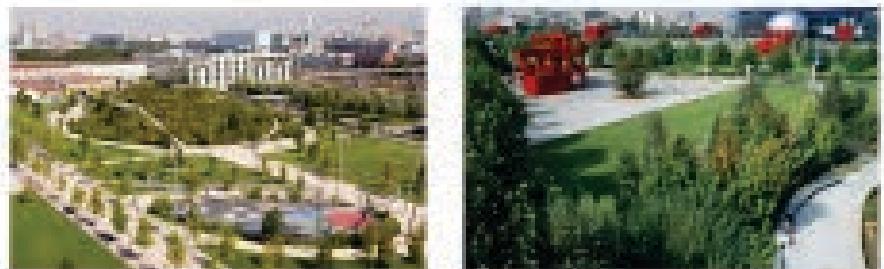
3. SHIJAK PARK OPEN AIR CINEMA



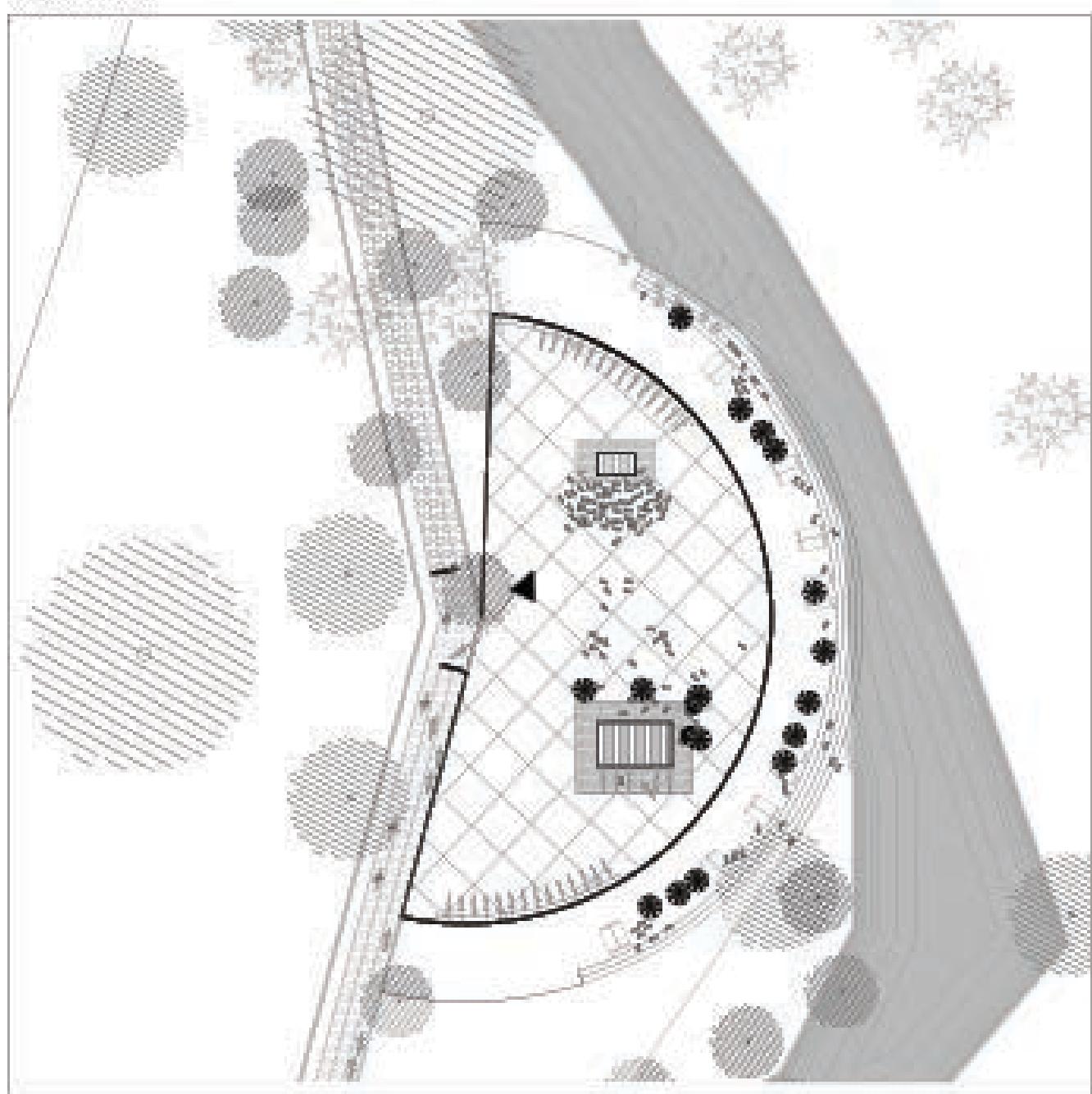
Open air cinema



4. ERZEN RIVERBEACH



River attraction





A NEW LANDSCAPE AND GRAPHIC IDENTITY FOR THE HIGHWAY AND ITS TERRITORY

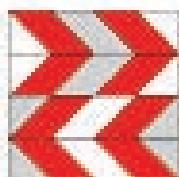
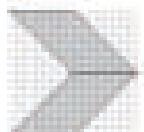
GRAPHIC IDENTITY / BRANDING DURANA

Branding for the ROC products

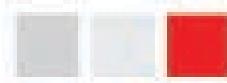
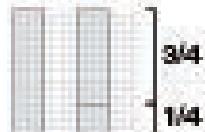


Different grounds for the platform services

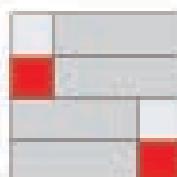
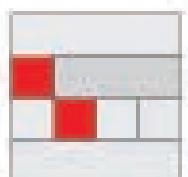
Type 01



Type 02

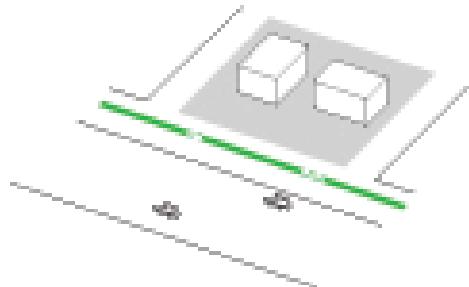


furniture



DURRËS TRAMA

Different kind of signals



For bicycle paths

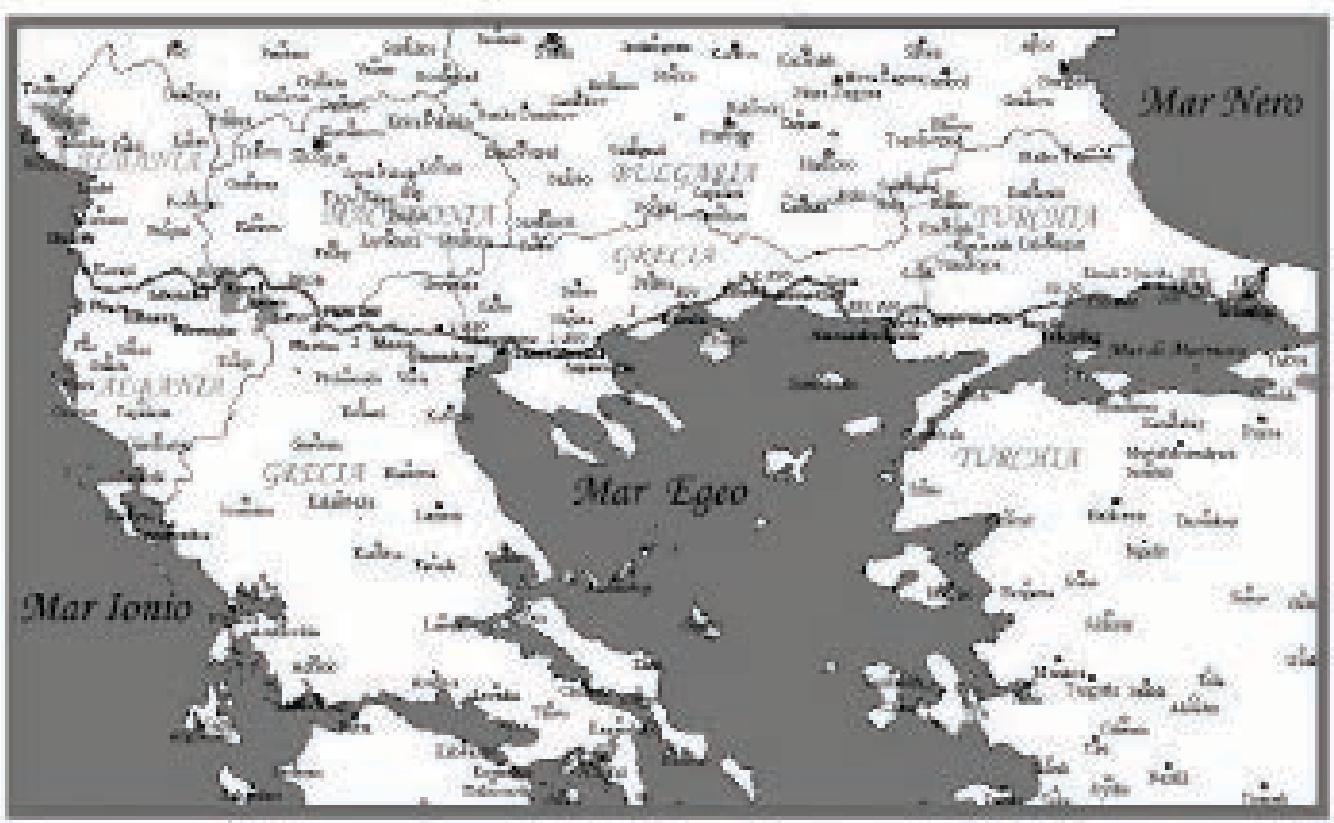


For bicycles and ped bridge



For highway exit





INPUT # 1_HISTORY AND ANALYSIS OF THE TIRANA-DURRËS ROAD AND HIGHWAY

THE STORY OF THE VIA EGNATIA, DURRES IS A HISTORIC GATE TO EUROPE FROM THE WEST-EAST CORRIDOR.

The Via Egnatia was a road constructed by the Romans in the 3rd century BC. It crossed the Roman provinces of Illyricum, Macedonia, and Thrace, running through territory that is now part of modern Albania, the Republic of Macedonia, Greece, and European Turkey.

Starting at Dyrrachium (Durrës) on the Adriatic Sea, the road followed a difficult route along the river Oescus (Shkumbin), over the Caudine (Jabllanica) mountains and thence to the highlands around Lake Ohrid. It then turned South, following several high mountain passes to reach the northern coastline of the Aegean Sea at Thessalonica. From there it ran through Thrace to the city of Byzantium (later Constantinople, now Istanbul). It covered a total distance of about 1,120 km (695 miles / 746 Roman miles). Like other major Roman roads, it was about six metres (20 ft) wide, paved with large polygonal stone slabs or covered with a hard layer of sand.

The Via Egnatia was constructed in order to link a chain of Roman colonies stretching from the Adriatic Sea to the Bosphorus. The route, thus, gave the colonies of the southern Balkans a direct connection to Rome. It was also a vital link to Roman territories further to the east; until a more northerly route across Illyria was opened under Augustus. It was Rome's main link with her empire in the eastern Mediterranean. It was repaired and expanded several times but experienced lengthy periods of neglect due to Rome's civil wars. In later years, the Via Egnatia was revived as a key road of the Byzantine Empire; Procopius records repairs made by the Byzantine emperor Justinian I during the 6th century, though even then the dilapidated road was said to be virtually unusable during wet weather. Almost all Byzantine overland trade with western Europe traveled along the Via Egnatia.

THE STORY OF THE TIRANA-DURRËS HIGHWAY

Tirana was proclaimed capital city of Albania on 11 February 1920 by National Congress held in Lushnja, mainly because of the geographic strategic position in the center of Albania's territory. In that period Tirana was a "so called" big village settlement and still had to face many challenges to become representative of Albania as a decent European capital. "Durrës" street was built under an emergency urban plan in 1922-1923, as a new connection of Tirana with Durrës in the West orientation and with the Regions of North Albania. This new urban opening in the existing structure appeared in that time like the Haussman boulevards openings under forced expropriations in Paris. The dimension of the road was 20 m wide and it stretched 1 kilometre from the city center.

It was extended a couple of years later toward Durrës, passing near the existing villages and fitting its route to the existing hilly morphology. Therefore the road was not a straight line towards Durrës. The first 15 kilometres of the road (up to the city of Vora) were quite straight along a plain terrain and that's the reason why today the highway in this segment (lot 1) follows the same trace. The other kilometers of the road up to Durrës were in majority curved along the perimeters of the hills (lot 2 & 3). The length of the road was a total of 42 kilometres with a section of 7 m. and two dedicated lanes.

Today the highway in the segment after Vora is not anymore on the same trace as the "old" road, which actually serves as connector between existing settlements along the way. The road was conceived according to the geometry and technical solutions of a 60km/h limited traffic. In that period the traffic was very limited and mostly reserved to institutional cars. During the Second World War it was also used for military trucks convoys. The private cars were quite limited and the traffic was quite incident. The same history continued even after the liberation of Albania in the Communist Period, when the private cars were forbidden and traffic was mostly occupied by institutional cars, public transportation vehicles (buses) and state enterprises trucks. The connection of the villages with each other and both cities (Tirana and Durrës) were established by regional bus lines, using the same "National Road".

After the 1990's, with the establishment of the democratic system, private property in Albania was recognized as a human right and everyone could potentially have a personal car and own private land. The abrupt and acute changes triggered immigration of many families from the very poor villages of Albania, who built illegal homes which quickly became huge settlements with hundreds and thousands of inhabitants. The government was unable to deal with this phenomenon which caused increasing social and urban problems to the region of Tirana and Durrës, and especially to their peripheries.

The same phenomenon occurred in the territory between the two cities, with the people coming from other regions of Albania and with autochthonous who build their houses without institutional permissions, amplifying the urban chaos. The step by step improvement of economy from a long established poverty to a gradual economic progress, was accompanied by a progressive growth of the private car and consequence of excessive traffic disorders. In the beginning of the years 2000, the necessity of a new Tirana-Durrës highway became a reality. Its length was cut down from 42 km to 32 km and travelling time was reduced from 1 hour (60 km/h) to 25 minutes (90 km/h). The first kilometres of the new highway were following the same trace as the existing

road up to Vora, while the other part was "straightened", going through the valleys surrounded by a hilly and sloppy terrain. The nearest kilometers to Tirana city (Lot 1) were "occupied" by the construction of service buildings, parallel to both sides of the highway, with light industry (Coca Cola, etc) and especially showrooms. It was seen by these businesses as the best way to expose the name of their companies and the best location in terms of infrastructure, close to the capital city and directly connected to the main national infrastructure.

The high pressure of these companies' requests to be permitted to develop their activities in this location found the Planning Institutions unprepared to organise such economic and urban transformations and it was decided to solve the question through practical regulations. The business couldn't be build nearer than 25 m from the highway axis, which clearly appears today in the geometry of the highway itself and in its landscape. This part of the highway represents a distinguishable spatial "corridor" (approx. 50 m wide) formed by 2 to 4 storeys buildings, aligned parallel to the highway axis. The construction line criteria was practically meant to future entanglement of the highway and service roads for the buildings along them, but it doesn't help the organisation of future developments behind the first row of buildings.

Later on, business needed to develop logistic support from the service roads and secondary-parallel roads were built on both sides of the highway. Presently, the secondary roads are constructed up to Vora for the North secondary road and up to the airport crossroad for the South one (Lot 1 and half of Lot 2). The other part of the highway from Vora to Durres doesn't have the same characteristics because it did not have to face the same demand from the businesses development. Ultimately, in the last 5 years, we can observe a tendency to expand the "model of Tirana entrance" even for this segment (part of Lot 2 and Lot 3) of the road and especially near Durres with the development of 2 to 4 storeys service buildings.

PRESENT ISSUES OF THE TIRANA DURRES HIGHWAY

The construction of the highway facilitated the connection of Albania's two major cities. But in time, many problems, problems and crucial issues have appeared:

The lack of security and normal driving conditions
The actual driving security in the highway is vulnerable mainly because of illegal and uncontrolled stops of the interurban buses. These buses illegally stop along the highway trajectory and often cause tragic accidents. The problem is not only how to punish the bus drivers, who stop illegally, but furthermore to understand why they stop. And this is the key issue to be resolved as soon as possible to foresee sustainable solutions. Going further to understand, why they really stop, we observe, that there is no existing public regional transportation and people of the settlements along the highway try to get casual travelling opportunities.

So instead of curating consequences, we should strongly work on solving the causes of the problem.

The difficulty for the public extra-urban transport

In the past the "so called" national road" of low speed, and rare traffic, facilitated all the typology of public transportation, interurban and regional, all in one. The acute changes found unprepared the complex urban transportation system and it function spontaneously. The urban and interurban public transportation functions almost well. What is not functioning well is the regional public transportation, which is a real and

soreable obstacle for the people, who lives in the settlements along the highway Tirana-Durres. They should necessarily have a personal car to survive, because otherwise they are totally disconnected from the other neighbor settlements, Tirana, Durres and other cities. So, it is needed a global integrative thinking about the interurban and regional public transportation.

The physical, social and economic division of neighbouring villages and settlements

The highway already separates the natural connection between neighbouring settlements, which used to coexist and interact very strongly on physical, social, and economic levels. There are some existing connections, but they are not enough. Many of these connections are only bridges over highway for pedestrians. To go from a settlement to the other by car, the people in most cases have to enter to the highway, find the first possible exit to go to the other side and then continue for some more kilometers to find the neighbouring village they want to reach. It's a total waste of time, resulting in long distance travels and daily costs. So, in many cases though it's seem ridiculous, you can even see even cows over the pedestrian bridges (cows climb stairs) as the unique way for the animal to pass from one side to another with it's owner.

Disbalance of the landscape and perception between the chaotic foreground and the beautiful and attractive panorama of mountains and hills in the background, that accompanies all highway driving view.

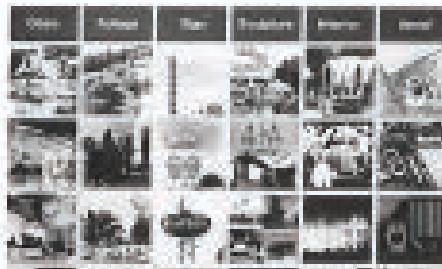
The Albanian panorama is generally picturesque and it is the same even with the Durana driving experience. In every location of driving trajectory you are, you find the wonderful view of the hills and mountains (in the East direction). The problem with the view, during the driving experience in Durana highway, is the first view plan, which is occupied often by chaotic urban development and gives bad impression to the driver, eclipsing the beautiful distant panorama. It is as if you were focusing your camera on an extraordinary picture and suddenly your picture is unfocused by a person who passes by. There are locations along the highway, like the entrance of Tirana, which concentrate the first view plan over "compact" commercial and industrial buildings generally with a good architecture. Meanwhile, the government is implementing a planting plan for the both sides of the highway till "Mother Theresa" airport and this will improve sensibly the first view plan of this highway segment (Lot 1). The other part of the highway (Lot 2 and 3) needs proper interventions to improve this important issue. In both these lots of the highway, as above complained, the construction near the highway are not as compact as in lot 1 and the developments seem to be more chaotic. There are even some existing settlements like Merkaj, Gjerdci, Sulthi i Ri, Mamosh, Shijaku, etc in these lots, that do not present a good looking façade from the highway because of the badly planned urban ensembles, poor architecture, poor construction materials, etc. Special attention should be paid to these "bad pictures" of the driving experience in the Durana highway.

The perspective of the highway itself and the territory it runs through should simultaneously address the above mentioned issues in order to stabilize a sustainable future for DURANA.

INPUT # 2_CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



Ed Ruscha , Standard Station



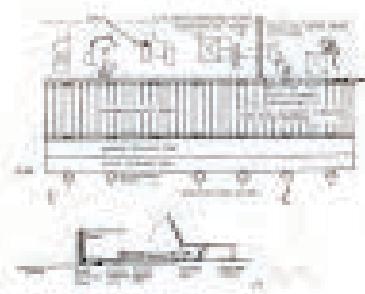
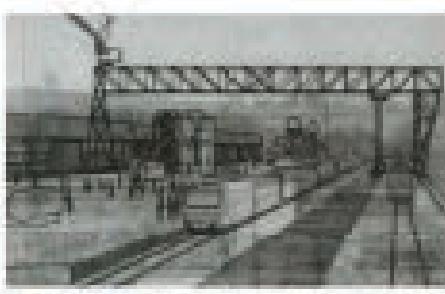
Robert Venturi & Denise Scott Brown , Learning from Las Vegas



Kevin Lynch . The Image of the City . The view from the road

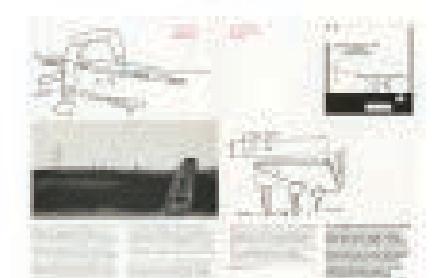
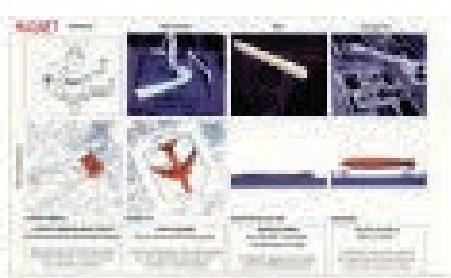


Rayner Banham , Los Angeles . Rayner Banham loves L.A.

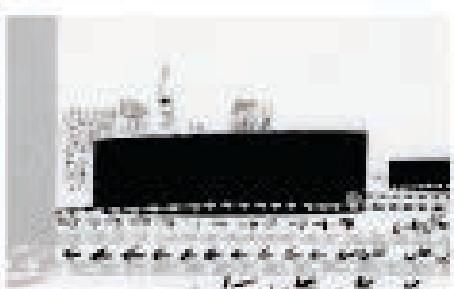
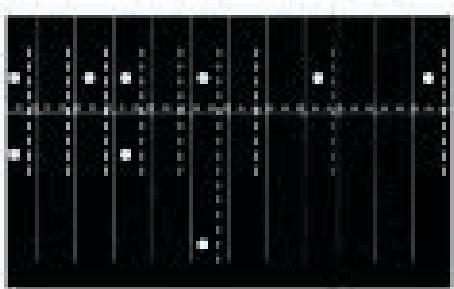
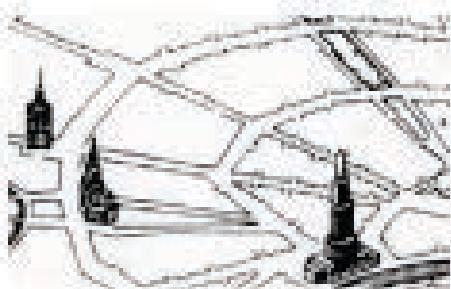


Cedric Price , Potters Thinkbelt , 1980

The Potters Thinkbelt project, developed in the early 80's is a project on a new kind of university. This project was quite innovative at the time and still relevant today because it was mixing contemporary issues such as mobility, education and redevelopment of desindustrialized areas. The solution proposed by Cedric Price consisted in a mobile university with flexible and temporary buildings using the existing railroads left by the former industries, capable of evolving according to the needs of the future. This reference is very accurate for the call for urban concepts because the project deals with developments and educational sectors, infrastructure through an evolutive and implementable strategy.



Cedric Price , MAGNET , 1980



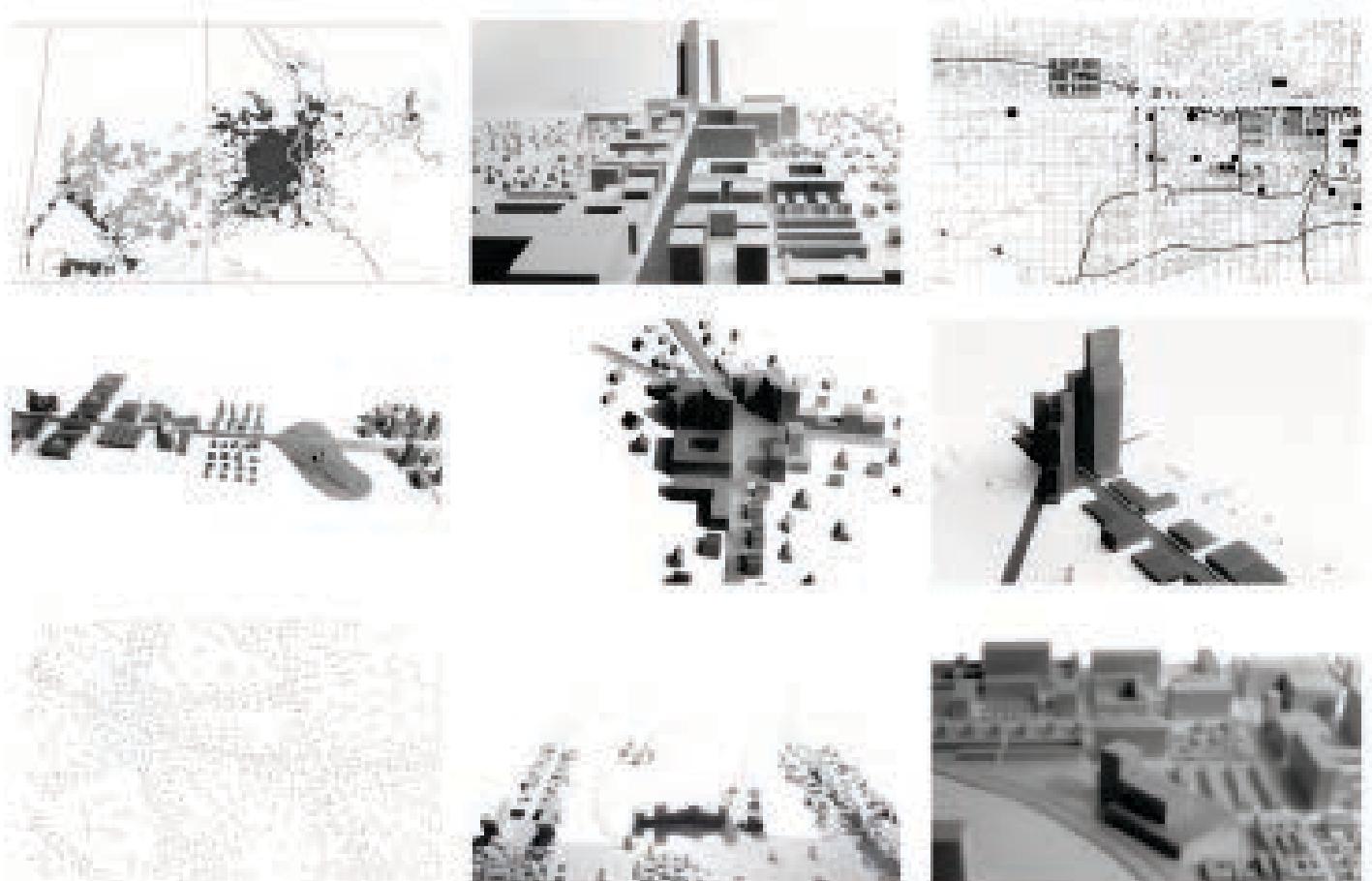
Orchard road , Singapour

Bus Rapid Transit system , Curitiba

Moscow station - icons

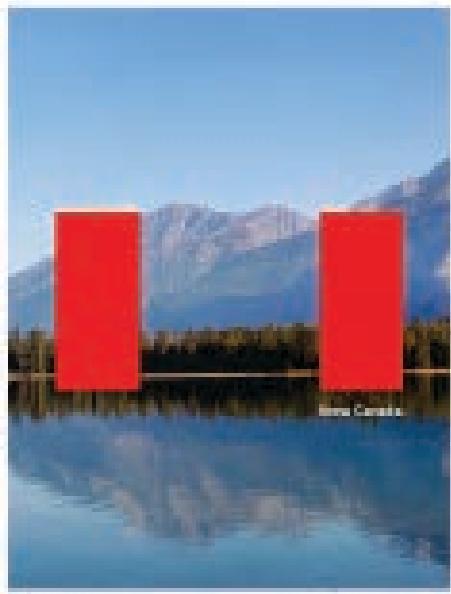
Ladders

Kevin Lynch

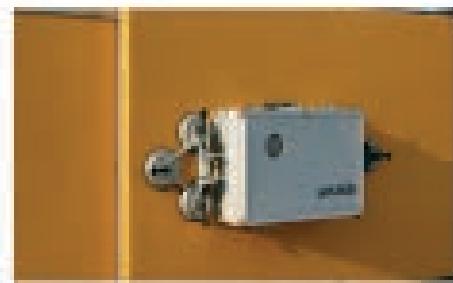


IAUC, Bordeaux 50.000, 2011

Airport strip
City and infrastructure
Network and potencies
Living close to nature

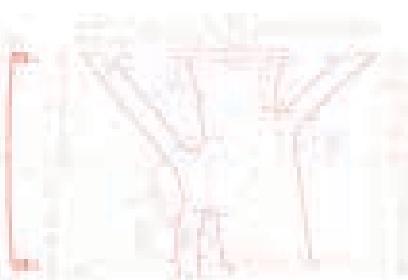


Bruce Mau , KnowCanada



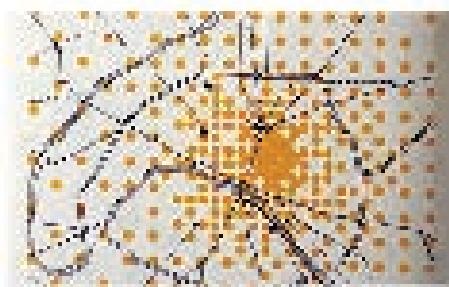
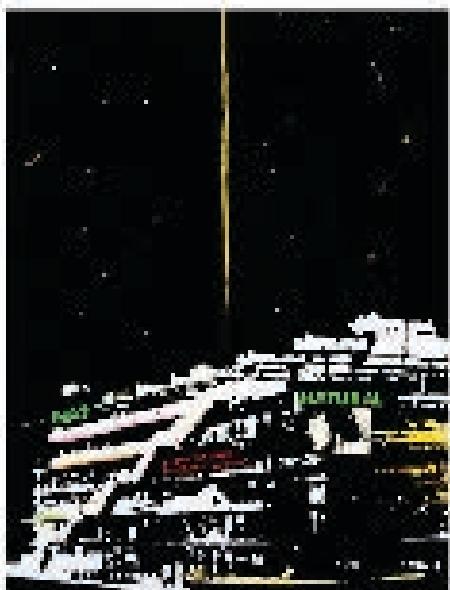
Richard The , Omnidivision

Richard The , The parasite



Mazowan . 50 Bridges for Leidsche Rijn .
1995

Each of the 50 bridges is unique but because they are all made of the same materials and offering the best flows and curves for the users, they give a strong identity to the residential neighbourhood. We can imagine such type of bridges or other urban furnitures along the public spaces.



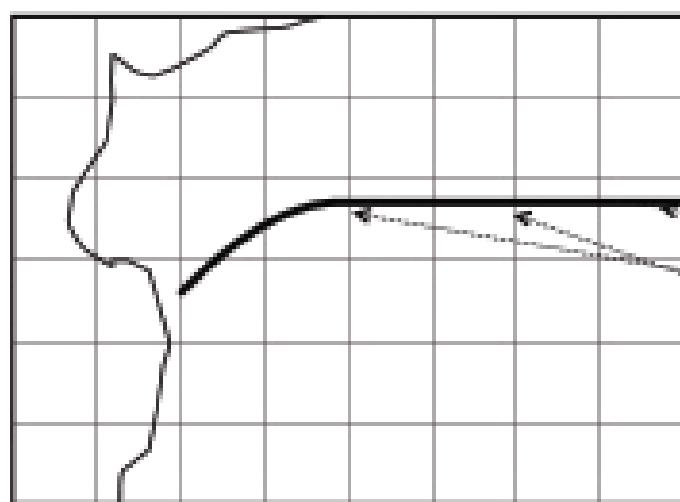
Jean Wilder . Centre Georges
Pompidou

METHODOLOGY

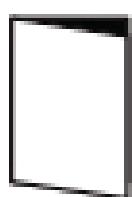
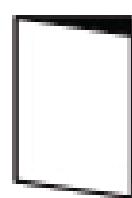
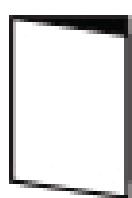
INTERATIVE LOOPS

ITERATIVE LOOP

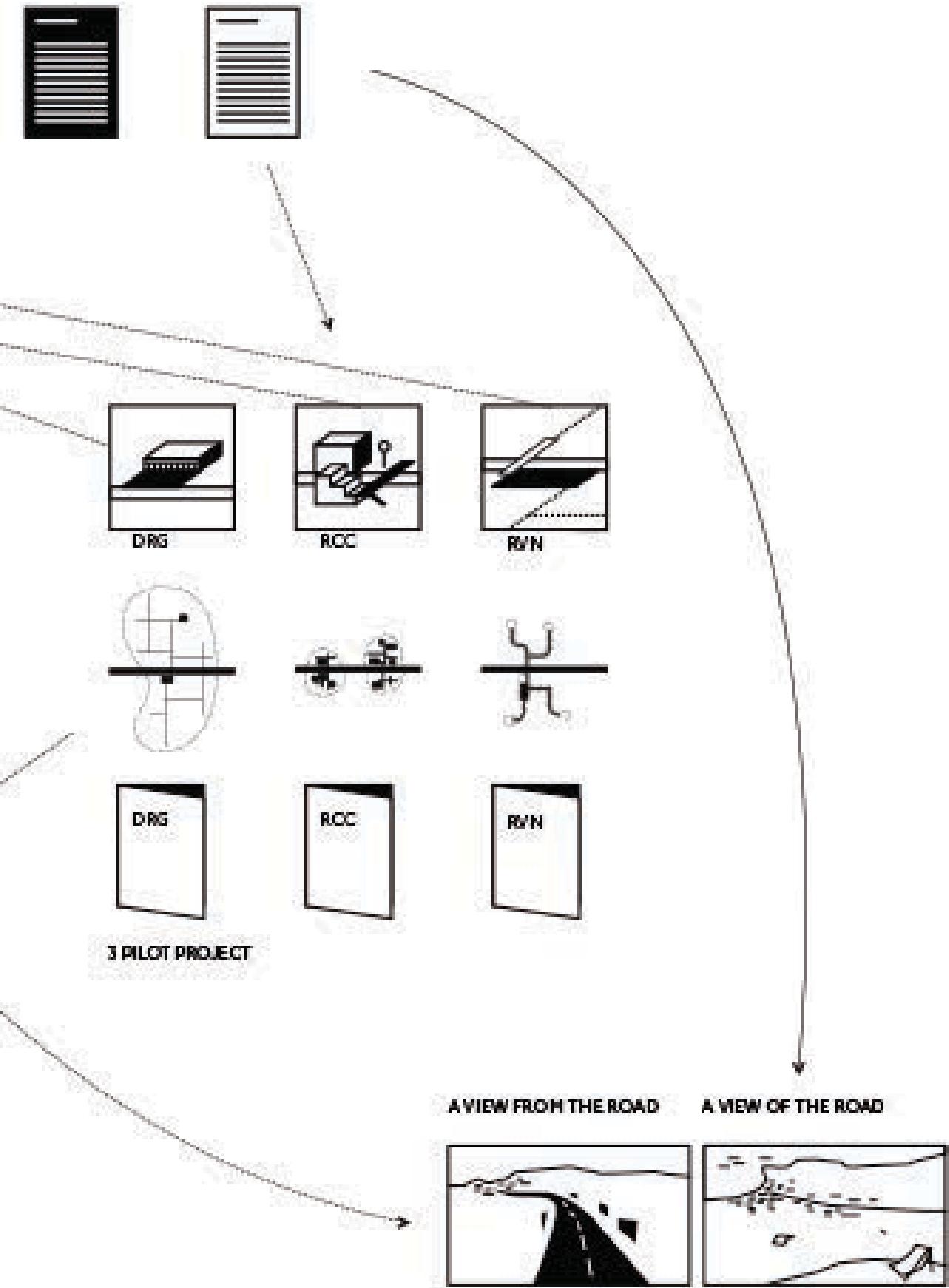
FROM HIDDEN ORDER TO URBAN RULES



PROSPECTIVE THEMES



THEORETICAL BACKGROUND



METHODOLOGY ITERATIVE LOOP

Rapid technical evolution, the increased importance of information exchange and the grown awareness of sustainability allows for a more open and flexible organisation. This opportunity has allowed architects as a profession to come out of isolation and (re)find a place in a multi-disciplinary task force.

Our pursuit, be it in the architectural or the urban fields, of inventing and producing integrated solutions has permitted us to dispose of tools that we now have at our disposal allowing us position projects at the heart of a network of different competences, and at the articulation of many fields of analyse and projection.

This posture underlines the necessity in the contemporary problematic to mobilise other disciplines, resources and techniques. It repositions architecture in a more productive relationship with other players be it the City, clients, managers, technicians or users.

Open systems

The cultural, social and technological mutations of our times are pushing us to develop projects that are based on what we call 'Open systems', by this we mean systems that are capable of branching off and rearticulating themselves as different opportunities are sensed along the way. This ambition is unmissably translated into our work methods to allow a wide girth in the decision and organisation processes and both the planning and construction processes.

The conception process is set in a framework that guarantees and perpetuates quality of the projected environment, by incorporating the necessary flexibility to respond to different opportunities without harming – and on the contrary contributing to – the coherence of the whole.

The production of this framework is the invariant component of a project strategy that must assert itself as a continuous process of management adaptations related to deformation of constraints (economic, programmatic, social...). The urban or architectural project cannot continue to be founded on preconceived ideas of form or program in the long term; nothing can carry on in a totally linear fashion toward a predetermined future. The urban and architectural project should be capable of integrating contextual innovations – social preoccupations, life styles, user's aspirations, economic situations and conditions – and give a new twist to prospects as they arise. For that, the architectural or urban project should not figure, but 'make possible' – accentuate potentialities that are often misread or ignored in urban structures that today seem doomed to failure.

Innovations and mutations

We maintain active awareness of new expectations, of transformation of the usages of space - whilst being careful not to thoughtlessly follow trends.

It is our responsibility to pick up on social demands that are less formalized and to single out the paths by trusting the user's capacity innovation.

CONCEPT PLAN (PH.01) GUIDE PLAN (PH.02)



PROJECT TEAM AND ORGANISATION

Our perception of the competition brief refers actually to a double issue.

There is first of all a need for physical implementation, implying design and public space project. People are expecting changes in the spaces they are practicing every day : making them more efficient, nicer, easy to use, offering a new series of functions, etc ...

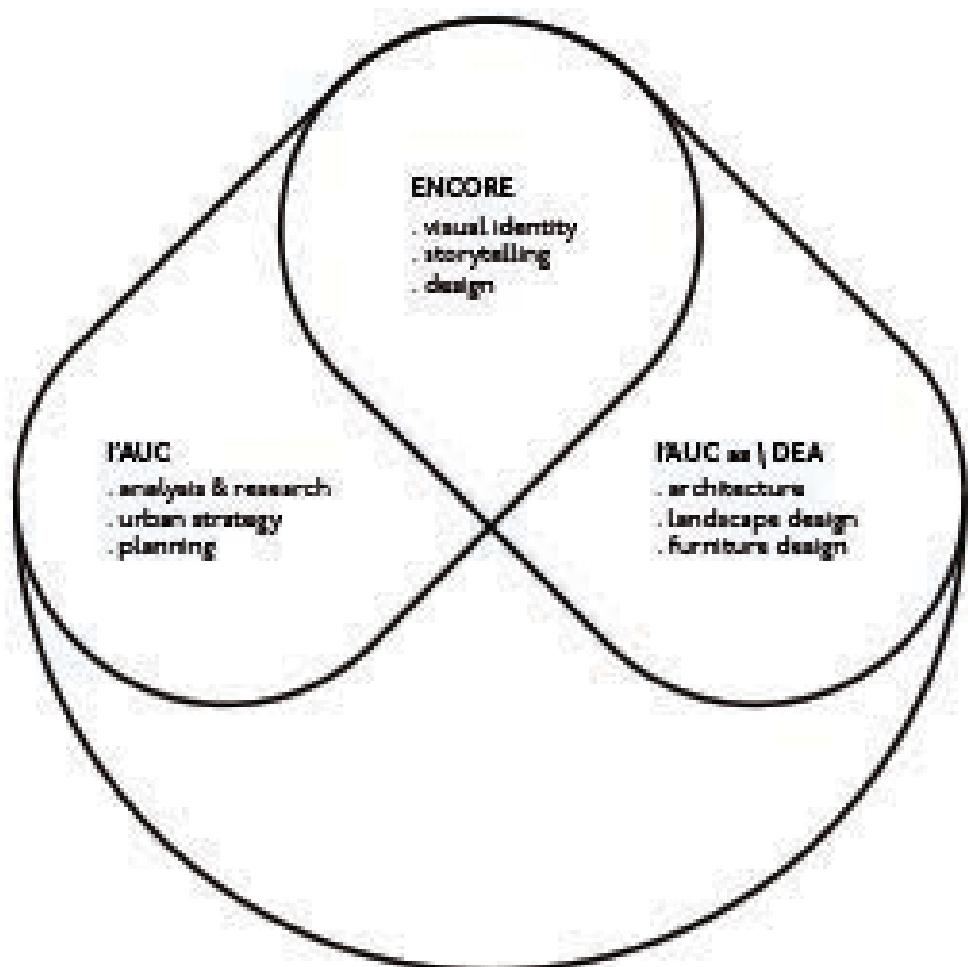
We also understand, because the ongoing mutations are so radical and the situation offers simultaneously instability and great potentials, that there is a need for a clear and strong strategy, able to gather all the living forces and the public and private investments to imagine a comprehensive project.

That is why we propose a tightened up team composed of urbanists and researchers (IAUC), architects and landscape designers (IAUC ss) and a collective of designers, graphic designers, artistic directors (ENCORE).

We have been and are currently working on several projects together and our association is always fruitful.

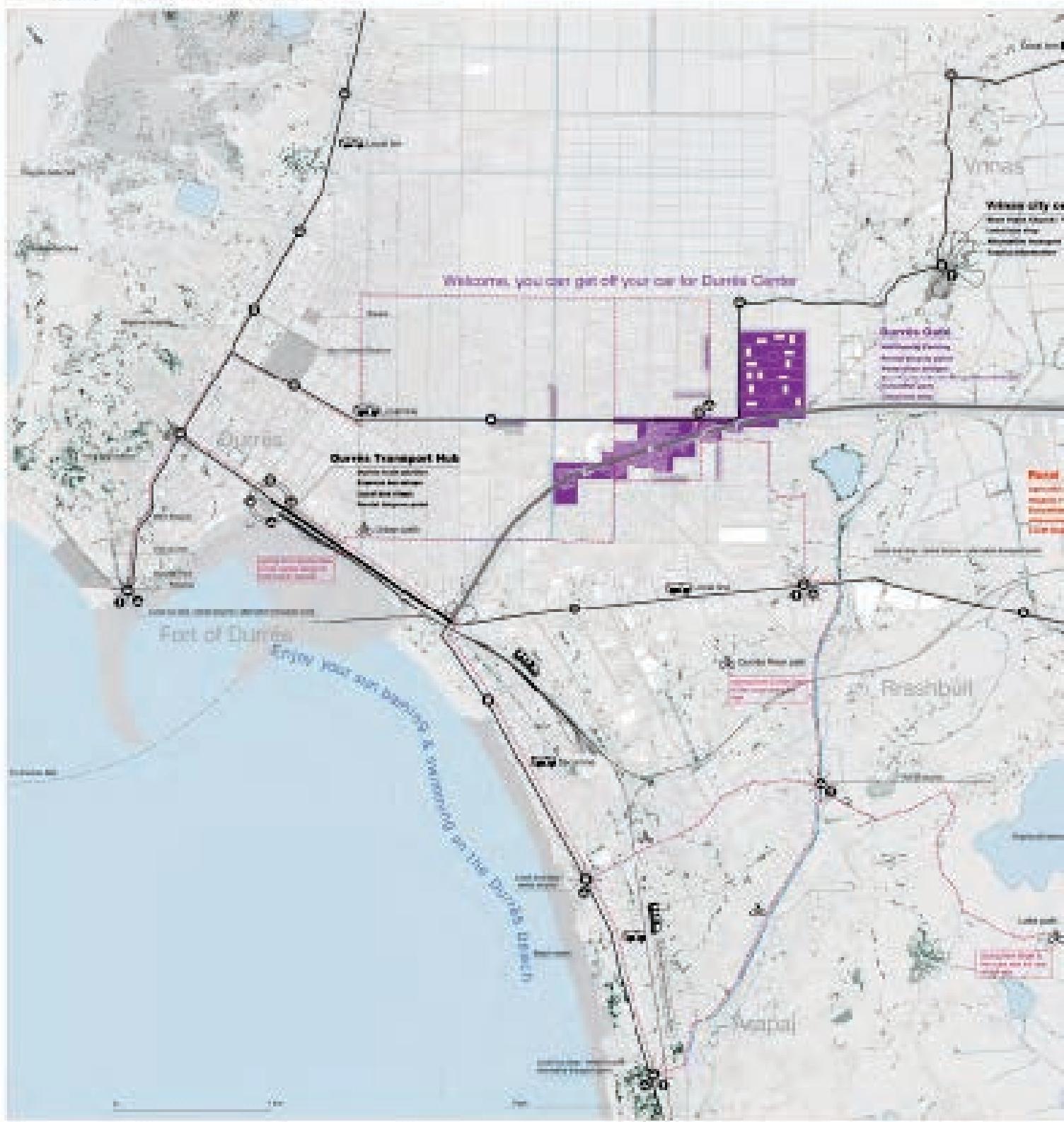
IAUC + ENCORE will develop urban strategies and communication.

IAUC ss + ENCORE will focus on the operational aspects and the visual identity.



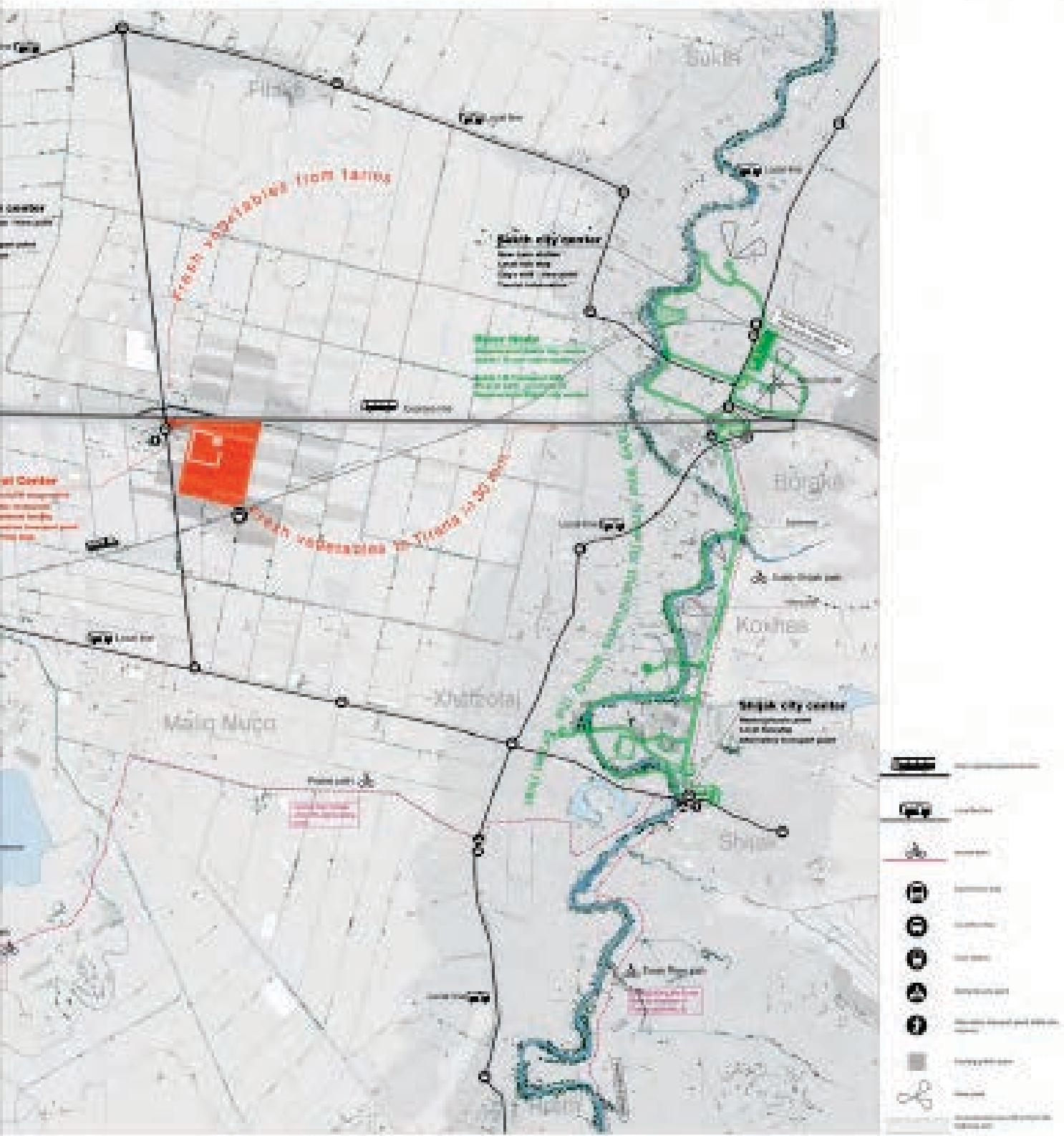
PANNELS

TERRITORIAL MAGNETS



МОСКОВСКАЯ ОДНО





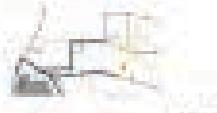
Score Summary of the Agartala Urban area showing the highest weighted value



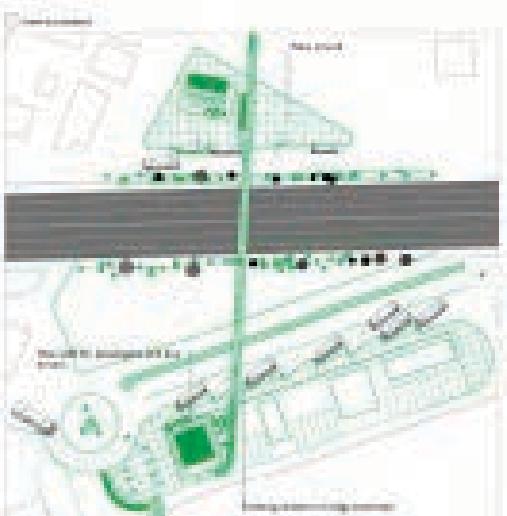
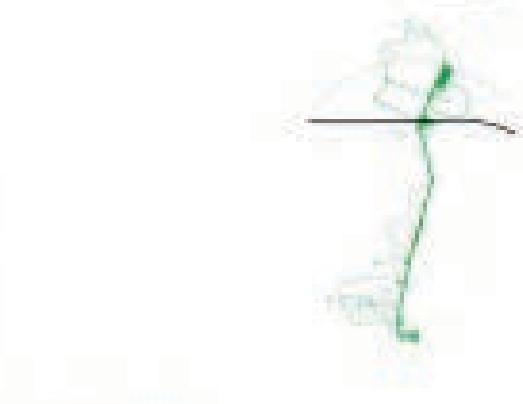
Score Summary of the Agartala Urban area showing the lowest weighted value



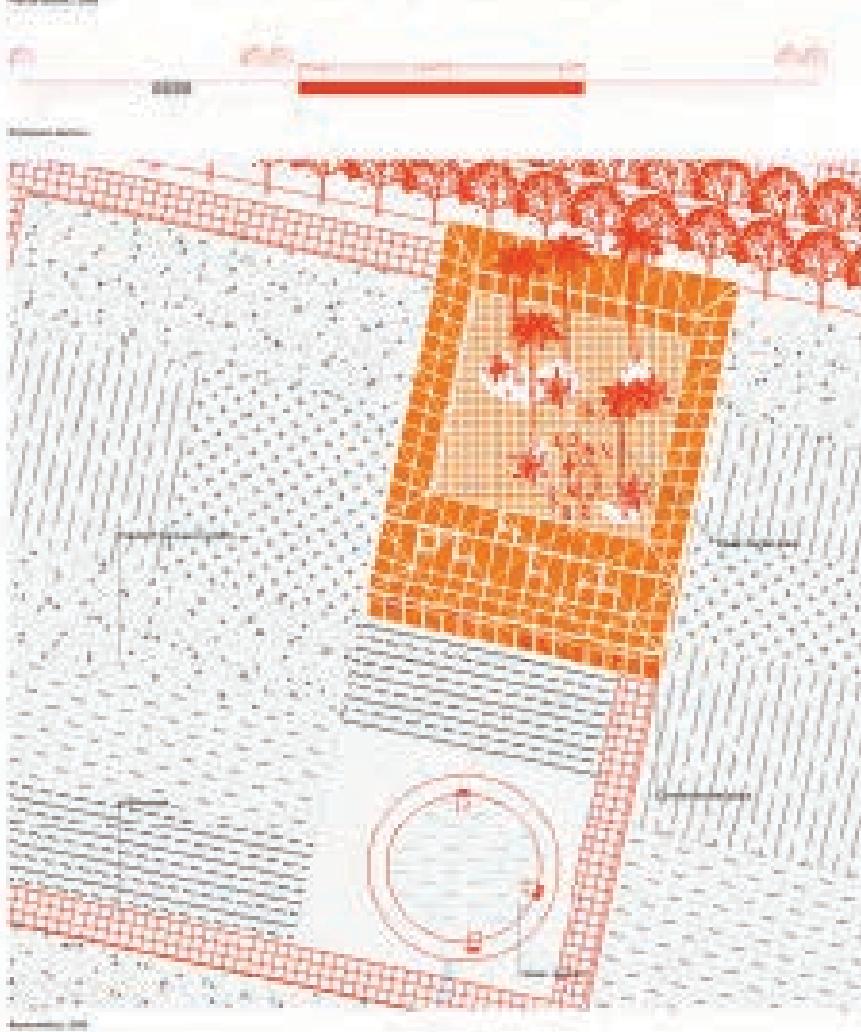
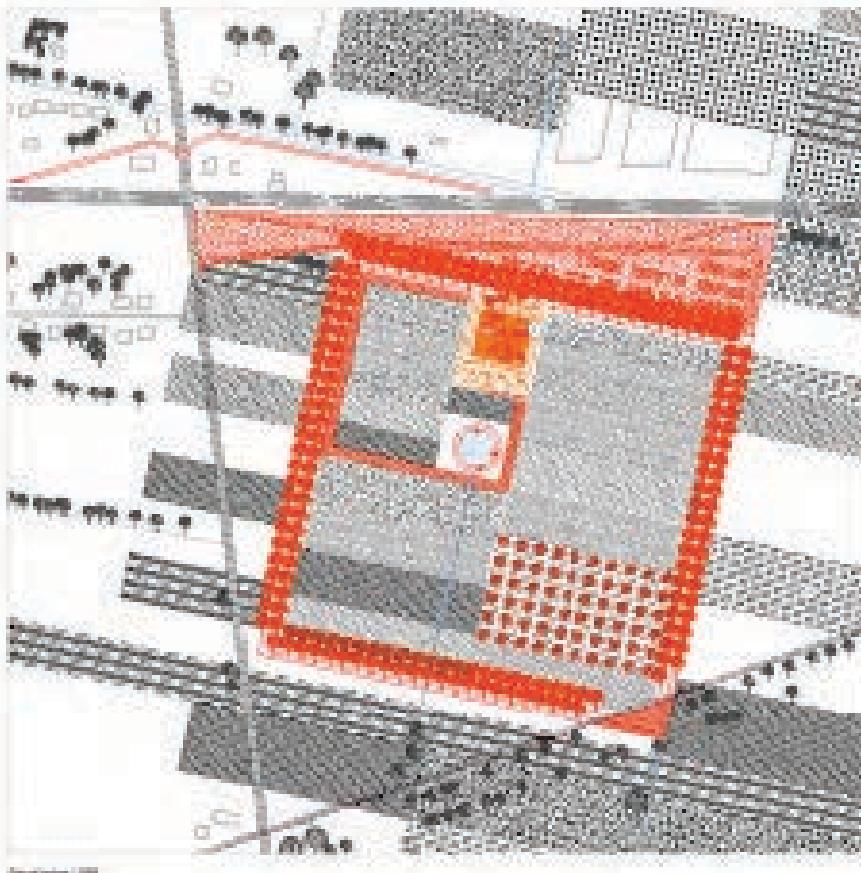
Score Summary of the Agartala Urban area showing the average weighted value



RIVER NODE



RURAL COMMUNITY CENTER



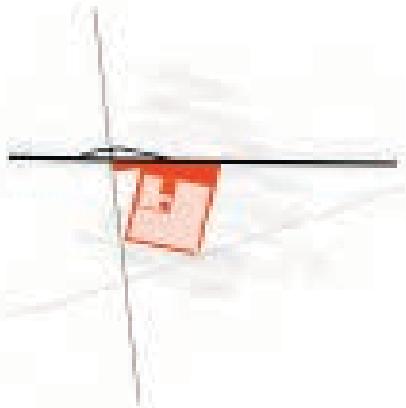
ANSWER

3 MAGNET PROJECT



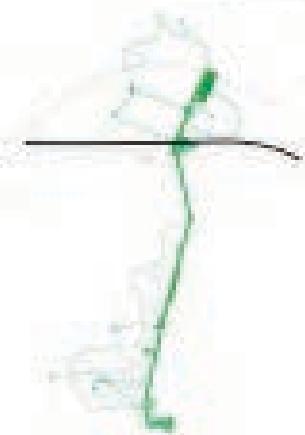
A COURSES GATE

Proposed to be located at the intersection of the two main roads leading to the University, this gate will serve as a formal entrance to the campus. It will be a symbol of welcome and identity, marking the transition from the surrounding urban environment to the university grounds. The design will be minimalist and modern, reflecting the architectural style of the buildings.



B RURAL CENTER

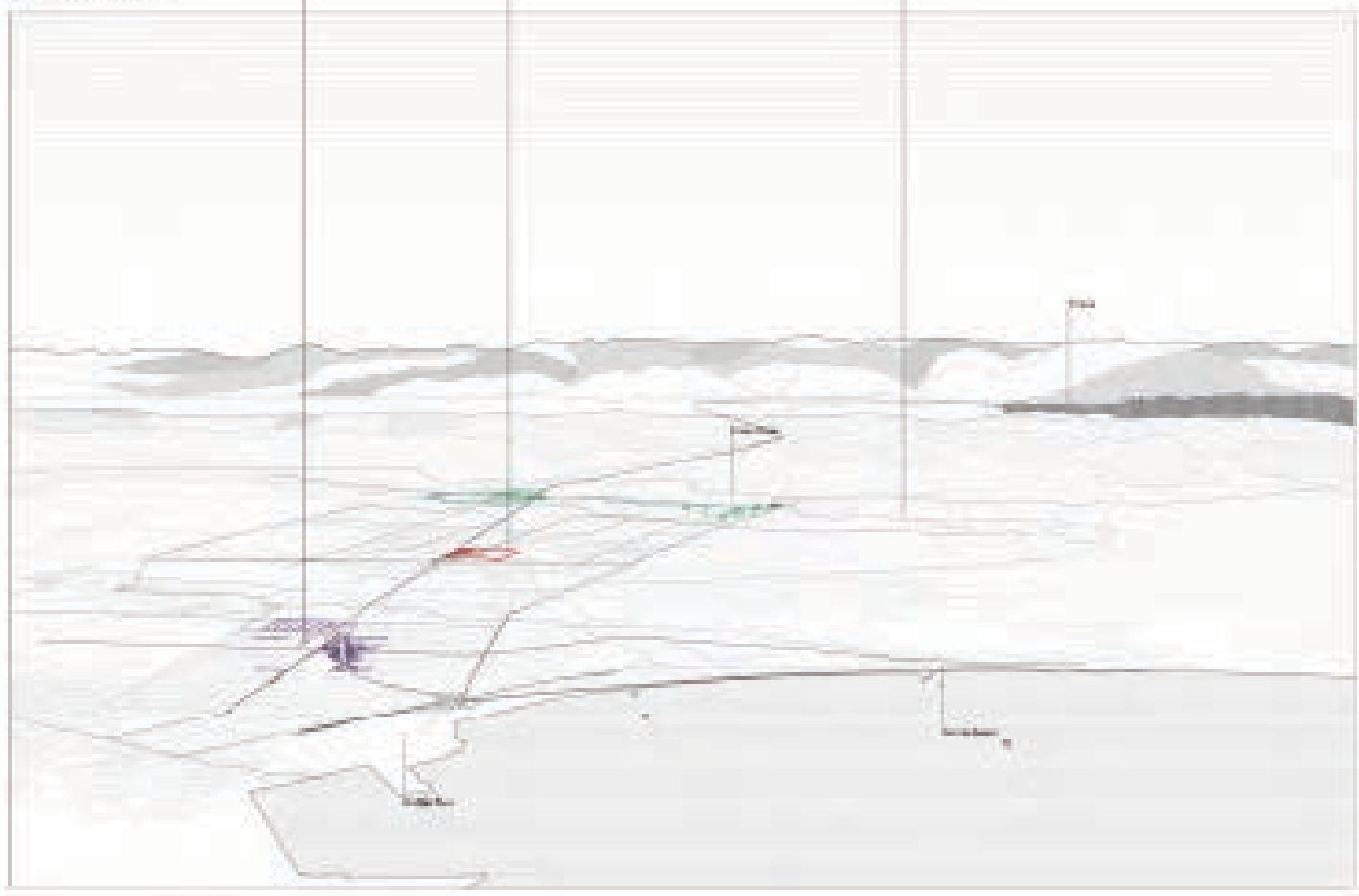
Proposed to be located in the rural areas surrounding the university, this center will serve as a hub for agricultural research and development. It will be a place where farmers can come to learn about new techniques and technologies, and where researchers can conduct experiments and share their findings. The design will be functional and practical, reflecting the rural setting.



C RIVERFRONT

Proposed to be located along the riverfront, this project will consist of a series of modern buildings and infrastructure designed to promote tourism and economic development. It will feature a variety of amenities, including restaurants, bars, and retail outlets, as well as a marina and boat rentals. The design will be vibrant and dynamic, reflecting the energy of the river.

TERRITORIAL VISION



GRAPHIC RESEARCH

BURGESS PRODUCT



