

The "Formgiving" of Domus, Kristianstad

Degree Project in Architecture
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Foreword

Today, we are creating and building more than ever. While buildings rise from the horizon, the consumption of building materials increases massively. More than 22% of global carbon dioxide emissions come from the consumption of building materials such as concrete, steel, and aluminum, etc. 55% of embodied carbon in a conventional building is in the structure and substructure (Smedley, 2019). Hence, it is important to make our buildings meaningful both for the city and people.

The word "formgivning" means "design" in Sweden, which means to give a form that has not yet been given. Today, we can see many architects act like a designer rather than an architect. They actually give a physical form to buildings rather than give a "lifestyle" to the city and people. Architectures suddenly become sculptures like David, Venus De Milo, and Manneken Pis. Modern architecture has a passion for escaping from historical architectural styles and trying to invent something purely functional and new. With the development of engineering technologies and building materials, modernist architecture becomes wild and unstoppable, creating buildings fighting against the built context. As a side effect of this careless and barbarous "formgivning", many cities worldwide start to lose their identity and so do their citizens. One of these victims is Kristianstad.

Kristianstad won the prize "the city center of the year 2014". However, the city trade in the city center is instead a problem today. Many stores have left the city center and people believe that it is the shopping center Galleria Boulevard where the problem rests. The situation has worsened since C4 Shopping opened in Hammar just a little bit outside of the city center. Today, empty rooms start to dominate the city center. People are the greatest attraction in a city (Gehl, 2010). However, many urban planners and architects have gradually forgotten about doing people-centered designs. No matter where we are, we can see that new buildings are occupying our cities coldly, bringing many problems ranging from shortages of usage to social issues. This report seeks an understanding of the problematic situation that may be caused by the shopping mall Galleria Boulevard and demonstrates a transformation of this area with the help of Jan Gehl's theory about people-centered design.

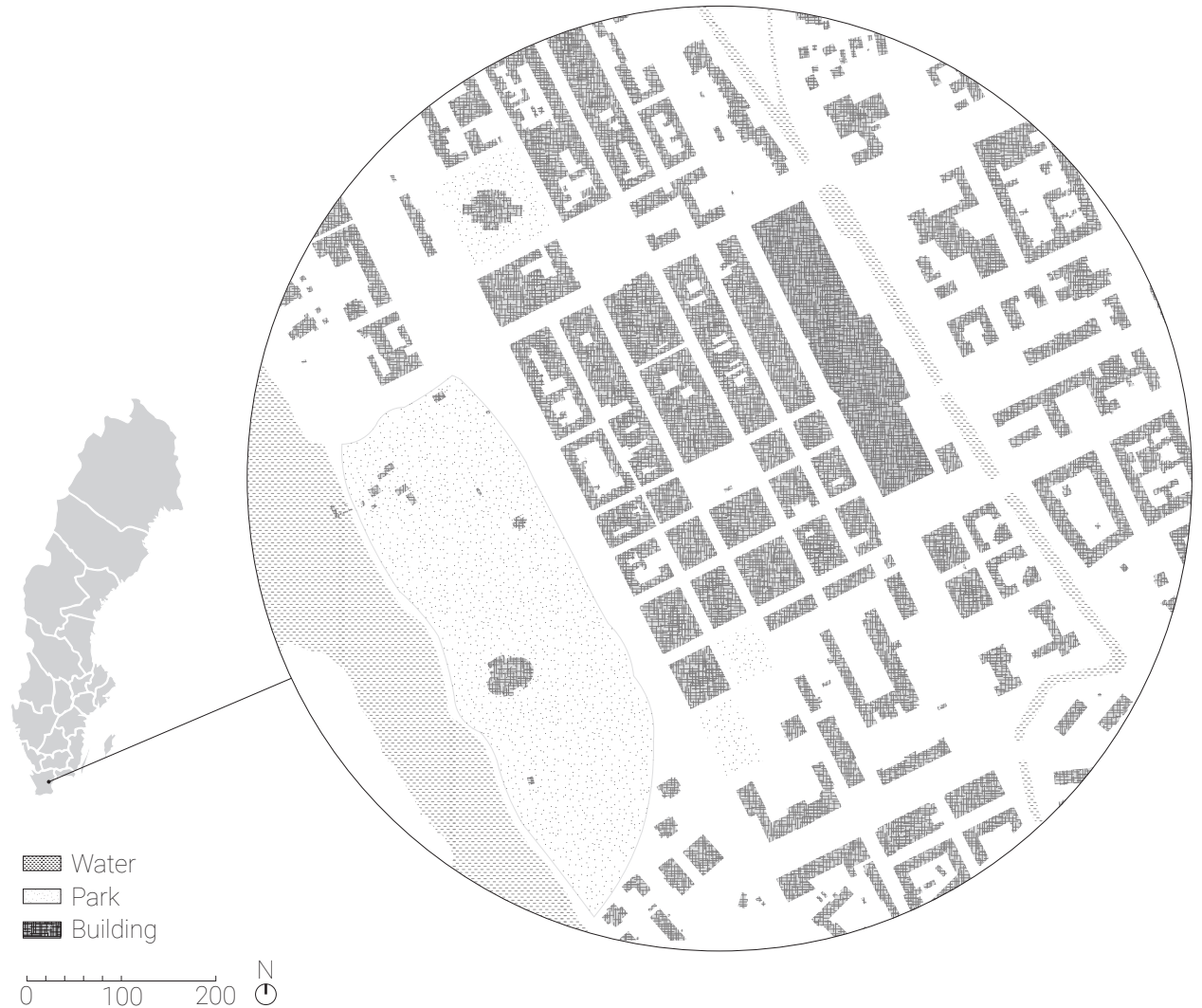
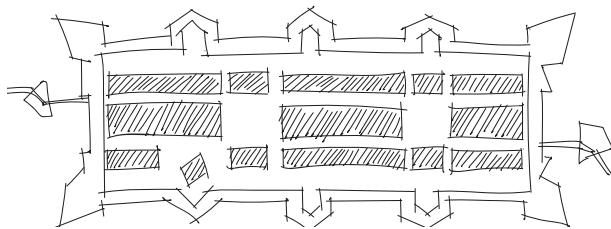
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BACKGROUND

About Kristianstad

Kristianstad is a city in northeastern Skåne in Sweden. The city was founded by the Danish king Christian IV in the early 1600s as a fortification city. Unlike other cities in Sweden of the Middle Ages, Kristianstad was the first city to be built according to Renaissance ideals in the Nordic countries. With a grid plan, ramparts, and bastions, the streets ran straight and parallel between the rectangular plazas and building blocks. Stora Torget, hence, became a parade ground and was also the center of the political administration while Lilla Torget acted as a heart for trade and crafts. The fortress wall surrounded the whole city and outside the moat.



The lowest point in Sweden is located in Kristianstad, creating a unique relationship between the city and the water. The river Helge Å had its outlet to the sea in Åhus. However, in 1775, some farmers near Yngsjö dug a ditch to the sea to veer the water from their fields. Instead, the seawater flooded into Yngsjö and later Kristianstad. This incident changed Kristianstad's future completely. The river Helge Å created a new outlet to the sea near Yngsjö and led to a lower water level on Helge Å. Hence, Kristianstad lost its identity as a fortification city since the deep-sea ships could no longer reach Kristianstad.

The city suffered a lot both from fire and water. Fires destroyed many parts of the city during its history. Therefore, the city center is filled with buildings built with different architectural styles presenting different eras such as the Holy Trinity Church from the 17th, the parade floors from the 19th century, and the residential and office buildings from the 1960s and 70s. A severe flood attacked the city in 2002 and a park near the city center was covered by water and later, a biosphere reserve called "Vattenrike" was created in 2005. It is a model that shows how we can both preserve and sustainably develop nature's resources.

Today, Kristianstad is a city with more than 85,000 inhabitants. Of these,

about 35,000 live in the central town. However, the trading tradition from old times remains and people from northeastern Skåne are usually here in the town on business.



The biosphere reserve "Vattenrike".

The Dilemma

Kristianstad won "the city center of the year 2014". However, the city trade in the city center is instead a problem today. Many stores have left the city center and the situation worsened when C4 Shopping opened in Hammar just a little bit outside of the city center. City trade which was

once a label for Kristianstad is rather a problem today. The city center is fading away.

There is an ongoing debate about city shopping in Kristianstad. Many stores have left the city center. Empty rooms are beginning to take over the inner city. Speculations about the situation vary a lot. But the focus is on the Galleria Boulevard and C4 Shopping Mall. Instead of benefiting city shopping in Kristianstad, many citizens believe that it is the Galleria Boulevard that causes the problematic situation in the city center. As early as 2016, 3 years after Galleria Boulevard opened its doors, people already noticed that there were several empty rooms on the second floor. And the situation worsened when C4 Shopping, a gigantic shopping area, opened in Hammar, just a little bit outside the city center. Since then, store after store has left the inner city and settled in C4 Shopping. Above all, Galleria Boulevard has contributed to several problems in the city center. The parking garage constantly creates traffic chaos on the street. Both Hästtorget and Kanalparken standstill thanks to the poor accessibility. Empty rooms in the mall reduce the number of movements and activities. The broken floor inside the mall is mended with silver tape. What we can see today is a large building block falling apart in the city center.



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Meeting the Municipality

To understand the situation better, I decided to have a conversation with the municipality. During the meeting, it became evident that the municipality's role in this problematic situation is limited. The municipality can try to have a dialogue with the property owners, entrepreneurs, residents, and ultimately come up with a framework for an overview plan or a vision. The municipality's role is to create conditions, a framework to be followed. For example, as the situation for Galleria Boulevard. It is up to property owners Steen & Ströms to decide what they want to do because the municipality does not own the land. What the municipality can do during this stage is to have a dialogue with Steen & Ströms.

A project called "A Lively City Center" is underway and the aim is to create a vibrant and attractive inner city. The goal is to "try to get more people into the city center, and to increase the breadth of the mix of activities and services that are offered". The idea is to try to reach out to the citizens and get suggestions and thoughts on how they want to see their city develop. In the long term, they also want to build for cyclists and pedestrians as well as places for meetings. However, it is a long-term plan. Hence, parking space is a must, according to the municipality. There are plenty of people who do not live in Kristianstad

but visit the town constantly. Cars become their first choice since the collective traffic is not that well-developed as it is on the west Skåne. The municipality argues that people's habits are the reason why more parking spaces are needed. Furthermore, the poor ground condition makes it hard to create a parking garage underground.



Kristianstad town hall

A Lively City Center

1. *Create an establishment strategy.*
2. *In collaboration with the Biosphere Office and Naturum to bring Vattenrike into the city center.*
3. *A long-term accessibility and parking strategy.*
4. *Work with better communication.*
5. *Clearer cooperation between property owners.*
6. *Continued work to densify Kristianstad's city center with more homes and offices.*
7. *Develop the lanes.*
8. *Stora Torg - life and movement*
9. *Lilla Torg - "living room feeling"*
10. *All-activity house/meeting place in the center*
11. *Adopt a lighting strategy in the technical committee and continue the work based on it.*
12. *Let security and safety permeate the work in the city center according to the plan for a more attractive Kristianstad.*
13. *Continue the work of creating events and developing the city as a hospitality*
14. *Work with a holistic perspective to create an attractive place for the future.*

INVESTIGATION TOOL

People-centered City Life

"Cities by people and for people." --Jan Gehl

After having understood the situation better, I was thinking about Jan Gehl, a global leader in people-centered urban design. According to Gehl, people are the greatest attraction in cities (Gehl, 2010). It is crucial to do people-centered designs to accomplish lively, safe, sustainable, and healthy cities. People use city spaces to accomplish purposeful activities such as walking between two places, taking a promenade or exercising in the park, doing casual window shopping, meeting up with friends, enjoying acts by some street artists, sitting on the bench eating ice creams, etc. These activities make a diverse city life that leads to a lively, safe, sustainable, and healthy city.

On the urban level, he mentioned some important points in his book "Stadsrum & stadsliv i Stockholms city" while he was doing an

investigation for Stockholm's public space. I picked up some important points that may help me to identify the causes behind the problematic situation in Kristianstad's city center.

It is on the ground floor level that most of the activities are happening in the city. If ground floor facades and spaces are rich in variation and detail, our city on the ground floor level will be equally rich in providing opportunities for all kinds of activities (Gehl, 2010). Hence, the design on the ground floor level requires much care. As Latour and Yaneva discussed in "Give me a gun and I will make all buildings move: an ant's view of architecture", architecture and space do not just act on paper. Matter and elements are not the only objectives. It is changing with time (Latour and Yaneva, 2008). A carefully designed city space on the ground floor level will be able to trigger a multifaceted city life. A positive space can't do without human lives with the change of time. This is an endless sequence. Activities change according to the changing of time, which changes the quality of the space and how people perceive it, and then people will decide what kind of activity belongs there. For instance, a playground can be filled with happiness and joy throughout a gorgeous afternoon while being gloomy and perished during a rainy and windy evening.

A GOOD CITY TO WALK IN

- *Place to walk, dignified, unobtrusive, without congestion*
- *Good climatic conditions, lots of sun and good shelter from wind*
- *Nice ground floor facades to walk along, interesting facades to look at*
- *Good conditions for the disabled*
- *Clear structure in the pedestrian system, easy to find around the city*
- *A pedestrian system that connects essential destinations*
- *Good walking rhythm, few interruptions, few and short intersections with traffic lanes*
- *A safe city to walk in both day and night*
- *Good lighting*
- *Rest benches*

A GOOD CITY FOR SOCIAL AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE,

A VERSATILE PUBLIC FORUM

- *Good place for active events and communication*
- *Place for theater, fun, music and small-scale commercial offerings*
- *Democratic urban spaces for all population groups*

A GOOD CITY TO HEAR, SPEAK AND SEE EXPERIENCE IN

- *Low noise level, few disturbances*
- *Intimate urban spaces*
- *Nice views and good details*
- *Interesting facades, shop windows and exhibitions*

A GOOD CITY TO STAY IN

- *Good place for living activities*
- *Good climatic conditions, lots of sun and shelter from wind*
- *A good city to stand or relief in the ground floor facades*
- *A good city to sit in with 3 types of seating: many well-placed benches, well-located cafes / outdoor cafes, large selection of secondary seating* - *Good integration of functional and recreational activities*

A GOOD SUMMER TOWN AND A GOOD WINTER TOWN

- *Do more to get the special qualities of the winter situation developed*
- *Use the dark, use the light. Lighting is especially important in Scandinavian cities* *A BEAUTIFUL CITY - Beautiful rooms, wonderful views*
- *Good visual qualities from the details to the whole*

A VERSATILE AND SAFE CITY TO TRAVEL IN

- *Good mix of functions: trade, office and housing*
- *Open, interesting and in the evening illuminated shop windows*
- *Housing that secures a 24-hour city, not a 9 - 17 city*
- *Good lighting*

A GOOD CITY DURING THE DAY - AND AT NIGHT

- *Beautiful and efficient lighting*
- *Mix of day and night functions*

Human Perception

Human mobility and human senses are the fundamental starting point for designing cities for people according to Gehl (Gehl, 2010). To talk about human perception, it is also essential to talk about the walk. People walk every day from place to place. During the walk, people perceive spaces. Bad quality of space may hurry up one's walk such as a strong smell from a fish market. On the contrary, good quality of space may slow down one's walk, and even stop the walk. For instance, an act of a street artist may start to draw one's attention and slow down one's step. If the act is pleasant enough, one may stand there or find a place to sit for a while and enjoy the act. Hence, we need to make the city space interesting and diverse. This will help to trigger potential activities to occur.

As mentioned above, people are the greatest attraction in a city. Most people will prefer streets with lives and activities. The walk or the stay will be more interesting and feel more protected if there are lives around us. We need spaces that allow people to interact with each other, to see, hear, and even talk. In other words, we need spaces that provide contact between people.

Speaking about human sense, we must bring in a concept of the

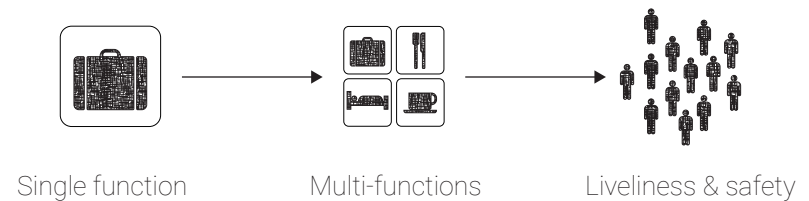
territoriality of materiality. Mattias Kärrholm mentioned that by combining the ANT and the territoriality of materiality, one can investigate the role of material design and materiality in urban public spaces (Kärrholm, 2007). Hence, the materiality of space does not only relate to the aesthetics perspective of view but also how people sense the space and claim it as "private space" for that very moment. For instance, the placement of a pillar, a bench, or a niche in space may not only affect how people sense and use it but also the domain around it.

The Scale

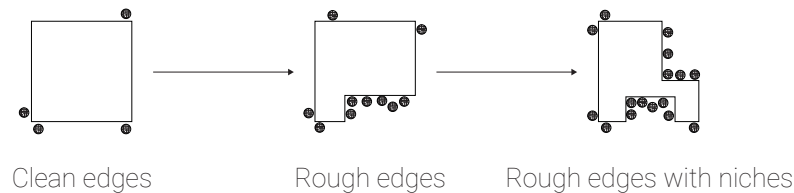
The human scale and the human dimension are the keys. The principles of a good human scale also need to be the fundamental part of the urban framework to attract people to walk (Gehl, 2010). People have a walking speed of a maximum of 5km/h. We see what is happening in front of us because of the position of our eyes. We need stimulation constantly to keep our walk and stay interested. Hence, the scale for car traffic will bore our walks. A suitable scale is an important rule for designing buildings for cities and people. However, the term scale can be divided into two subjects, the scale of the building and the scale of functions.

Normally, the scale of the building is based on the scale of functions. In this case, it is like placing a block in the city and defining it as a school, a shopping mall, or an office building. As a designer, it is then very logical to think about what kind of secondary functions will suit the very specific category. For instance, an office building needs rooms for the worker, maybe even laboratories, and other secondary functions that support an office building. However, if we zoom out and start to see it as a whole, the function of an office building becomes big and it has a significant impact on the area. The activities for an office building have a pattern. Liveliness happens during working hours. But, what

will replace the liveness for the surroundings throughout evenings, weekends, and holidays? In contrast, the impact of a big-scale building with multi-functions differs a lot from a big-scale building with a huge function. We know that the function of housing has its pattern, so do the stores, offices, activity centers, etc. If we add the layer on top of each other, then we can suddenly see a different pattern of liveliness in the area. On the working days, it will be filled with the workers. The workers maybe will enjoy their lunch in the restaurants and even do some shopping after work. Later, the area will be dominated by people who have finished a long day of their work and children come back from school. Family days will happen in this area during weekends and holidays. When the city space is full of liveliness, people start to feel safe and are willing to stay longer. That may lead to other potential activities happening.



The Edge



The edge that frames public space is usually where outdoor space meets indoor space. However, it can also be where spaces with different rhythms meet each other as well, like a square meeting a street. These edges usually act like magnets, drawing people to them for longer stays (Gehl, 2010). This kind of phenomenon is called the "edge effect". For instance, people seek to the edges while waiting for someone because they do not want to be part of the pedestrian traffic. Instead, they want to remain "invisible", but still are able to have control over the situation. In this circumstance, the edges work perfectly. People know it is safe behind them considering it is usually a wall, a window, or a pillar. It is

something that will support their back. These kinds of components provide a sense of safety and people will be able to focus on what is happening in front of them on the street. Hence, the quality of the edges plays a meaningful role in spaces on the ground floor level.

A good edge means that the edge itself needs to be "rough". For example, a niche is an attractive place for people to stay. It is simple to unearth protection in a niche. It provides a chance for people to choose whether to attend the pedestrian flow or not. As an individual, joining in a niche gives a clear signal that he/she wants to stay invisible. It is a sign showing the individual is waiting for someone or something. This kind of occupation also creates a contemporary territory with an invisible boundary for the individuals. Hence, the size of a niche may also affect activities inside them. Another good example is public stairs and places that provide secondary seats. These places are inviting for a longer stay.

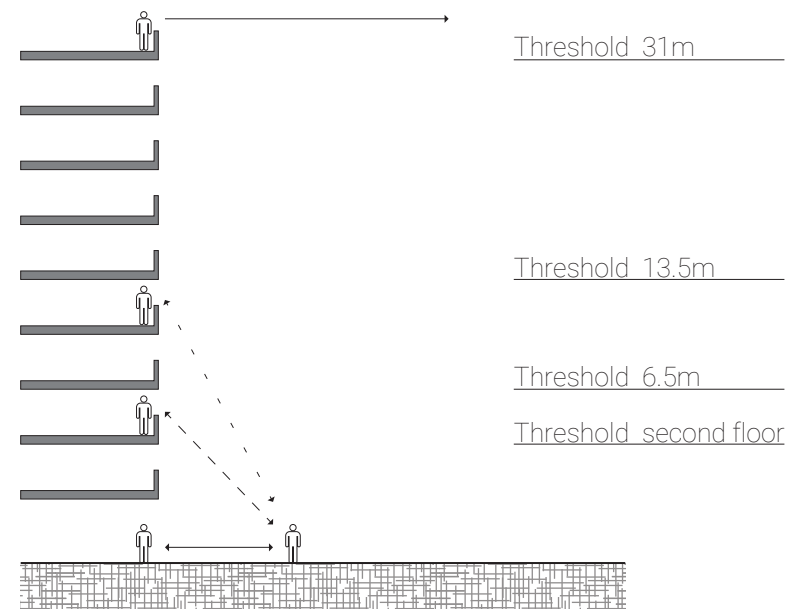
A good edge also means that the edge should have many openings. It increases the interaction between indoor spaces and outdoor spaces. These openings usually work as small junctions as well and paces around them work as waiting spaces, such as meetings and so on.

The Safety

A good quality space will lead to a lively space, which increases safety in the public space. The human sense of safety comes with three fundamental human activities: seeing, hearing, and talking. People's interaction with each other in city space occurs on every level, even between different levels. However, the chance of vertical interaction decreases dramatically as the distance grows compared with it on the same level. The higher you get, the less contact you will receive from the street. Hence, careful programming of the building in the vertical direction is very important. The functions may affect how interactions occur vertically during different times. It may affect how lively the street space can be and lead to different feelings of safety. If space provides a feeling of unsafety, it will then further prevent activities from occurring and decrease the liveness of the space.

Visual contact to and from buildings is essential on the ground floor level. A good visual contact on the ground floor level between the indoor space and the outdoor space provides a positive sense of safety because people will have the possibility to understand what is going on on the other side of the wall. These kinds of visual contacts also work as CCTVs, closed-circuit televisions that help to watch over the situations indoors and outdoors. Hence, tinted glasses, walls without openings

make streets feel unsafe. This makes the city life on the ground floor level poorer in experience.



INVESTIGATION

Protection Against Floods

Before I went to the site, I also wanted to understand how the city center in Kristianstad will be affected by floods. The protection against floods is considerably strong today. The municipality has been strengthening the protection since the severe flood in 2002.

As mentioned in the first chapter, Kristianstad has a special relationship with the water. The city is located on a lowland peninsula. Consequently, the city is facing a high risk of flooding thanks to climate change and extreme weather. You can also find the lowest point in Sweden here in Kristianstad with 2.32 meters below sea level. However, the location of the city center is a little higher than the sea level.

In 2002, Tivoli Park was flooded. The situation was very serious and Kristianstad saw the shortcomings on the mound that preventing Nosabyviken from floods. The city has been strengthening the protection since then. Today, the protection against floods for the city center and Nosabyviken is considerably strong. In other words, the risk of this part of the city being flooded is limited. Södra Dämmet controls the water level on the canal that runs through the city center. The mound prevents water from running into Nosabyviken and the city center from Hammarsjön.








Södra Dämmet



NOSABYVIKEN

Hammarsjön

-  Galleria Boulevard
-  Södra Dämnet
-  Mound
-  Helge Å
-  Canal



The City Center

The city center of Kristianstad has a charming Renaissance character with beautiful architecture ranging from the renaissance style to functionalism. The well-planned street system in the grid makes it different from other cities in the Nordic countries, whose city centers usually expanded in an organic way. This not only makes it possible for stores in the city center to expand their sales to the streets but also makes it easier for the cyclist and the pedestrian to get through the city center. You can find people sunbathing on the benches at Lilla Torget when the weather is pleasant. During spring and summer, outdoor seating and markets will fill the empty spaces at Lilla Torget and wake the city center up after a long and silent winter.

However, the condition around Galleria Boulevard is different. It is not common to find people sitting neither on the benches at Östra Boulevarden nor Kanalparken. Most of the people are rushing through them and sales on the street become nearly "impossible". Hence, you can sense a different character of spaces when you get closer to Galleria Boulevard. It creates a very clear contrast compared to other spaces in the city center.



View over Cardellsgatan in the city center



View over Östra Boulevarden next to Galleria Boulevard

The city center actually has a very beautiful pedestrian streets system. They connect parks and squares together and provide a highly pedestrian-friendly environment. The pedestrian system also connects those important social function buildings together. Such as town hall, theater, church, courthouse. Hence, it is very easy for people to get around the city center for business. However, the cultural district, kulturkvarteret, on the other side of the canal, a very important part of the city, is disconnected from the city center.

The cultural district is another heart of Kristianstad. It locates in the northeast part of the city center with a brief walk within 10 minutes from the train station and bus station. The cultural district includes a concert hall from 1936, the City Library from 1965, and the South's Small Hall and Chamber Café from 1992. You can simply enjoy your book with a cup of coffee in the café. You can even enjoy different concerts that are being arranged year-round. It is also a place where you can find theater performances, exciting lectures, and art exhibitions.



The cultural district, kulturkvarteret.

Kristianstads Tingsrätt

Regionmuseet

Heliga Trefaldighets Kyrka

Centralstation

Rådhus Skåne

Kanalparken

Stora Safaribåten

Hälsoträdgården

Kristianstads Teater

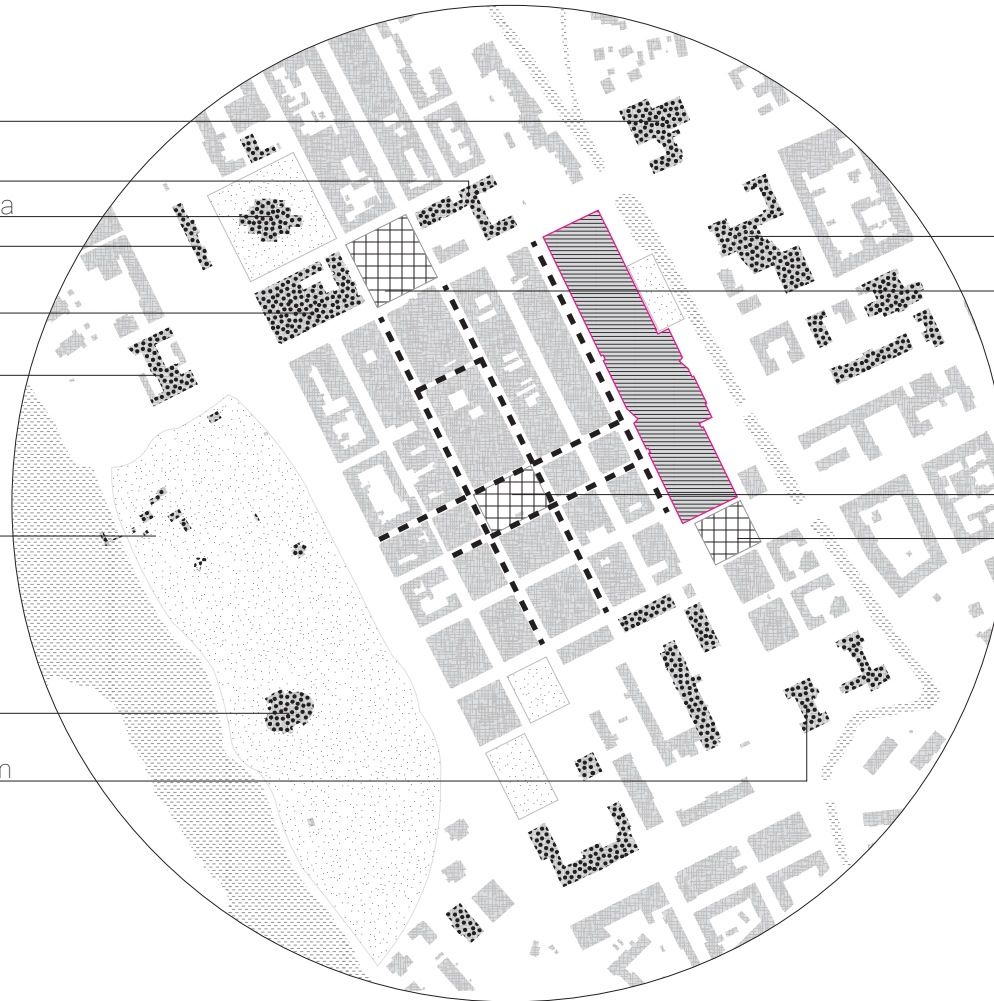
Christian IV:s Gymnasium







Kulturkvateret

Stora Torget

Lilla Torget

Hästtorget



-  Square
-  Water
-  Park
-  Galleria Boulevard
-  Public building (social function)
-  Pedestrian street



Disconnection Of Scale

One of the reasons why this kind of disconnection happens is the disconnection of building scale. The scale of Galleria Boulevard is enormous and breaks the pattern in the city center. The length of the footprint of a building block in the city center is between 36 and 100 meters, while the length of the footprint of the shopping mall is about 320, more than 3 times longer. Therefore, it creates a contrast to human perception. Most of the scales in the city center are built on the human scale that makes it easier for people to relate and interact with. This

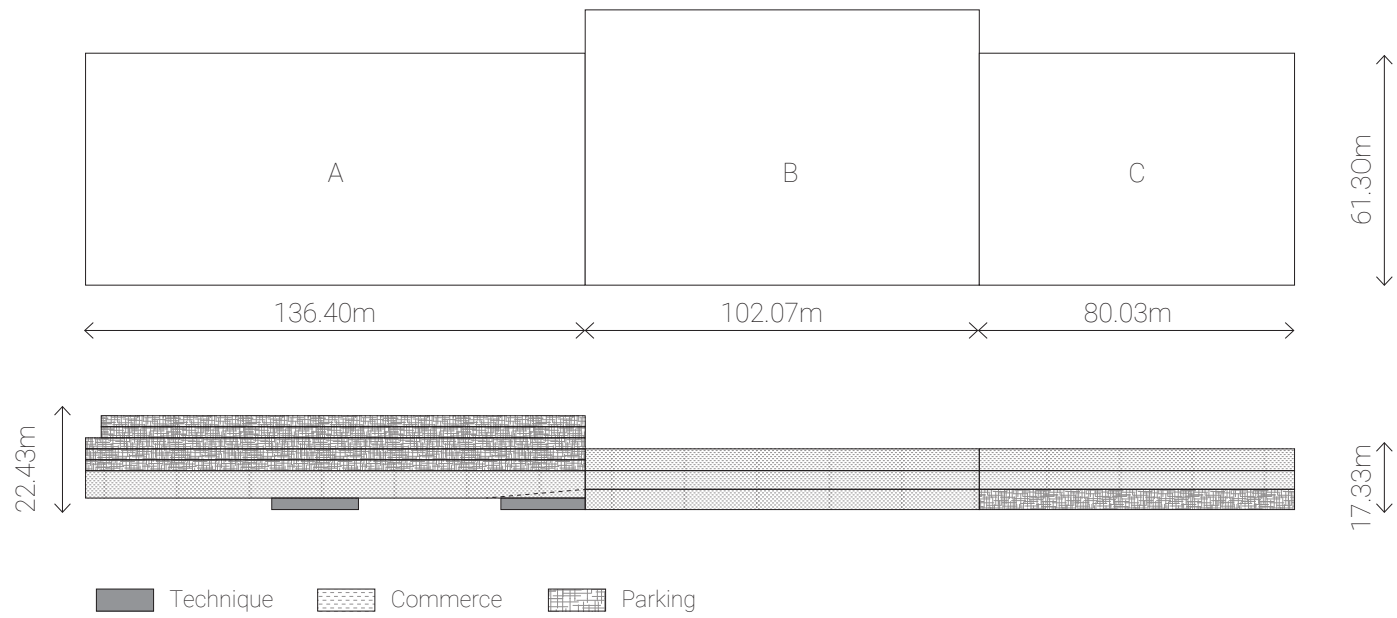
creates a rich experience on the ground floor level for pedestrians. Galleria Boulevard is built on a larger scale. This scale is more for cars than pedestrians. It creates a poorer visual experience for the people on the ground floor level. The result is the lack of attraction and people are not drawn to the building.



The scale in the city center is for pedestrians



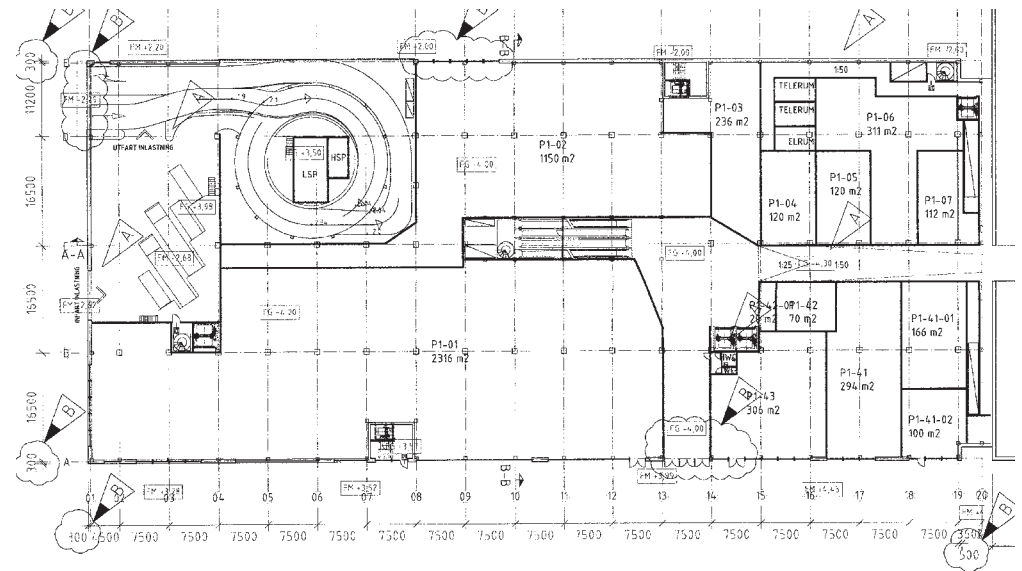
The scale of Galleria Boulevard is for cars



The scale of Galleria Boulevard

Poor Edges & Accessibility

Galleria Boulevard is divided into three parts in construction. Block A is programmed with commerce on the ground floor level and parking from the second floor to the roof plan. According to the ground floor level plan, it has a passage that goes through the building leading to block B and C. More than half of it is dominated by a larger scale of sales. Entrances of stores are facing the indoor passage. Hence, the accessibility for them from the street is very limited. Since the plan is designed as it is, it leads to an impermeable facade design on the ground floor level as well in addition to the entrance. This creates clean but poor edges for the outdoor spaces next to them. The result of it is unsatisfying street experiences for pedestrians. This nicheless space makes it almost impossible for people to find a safe place to stay because they do not have the opportunity to stay invisible. The impermeable facade also prevents people from knowing what is going on inside the building and decreases the interest for people in the street space.



The ground floor plan of block A





The entrance facing Östra Boulevarden with an impermeable facade design.

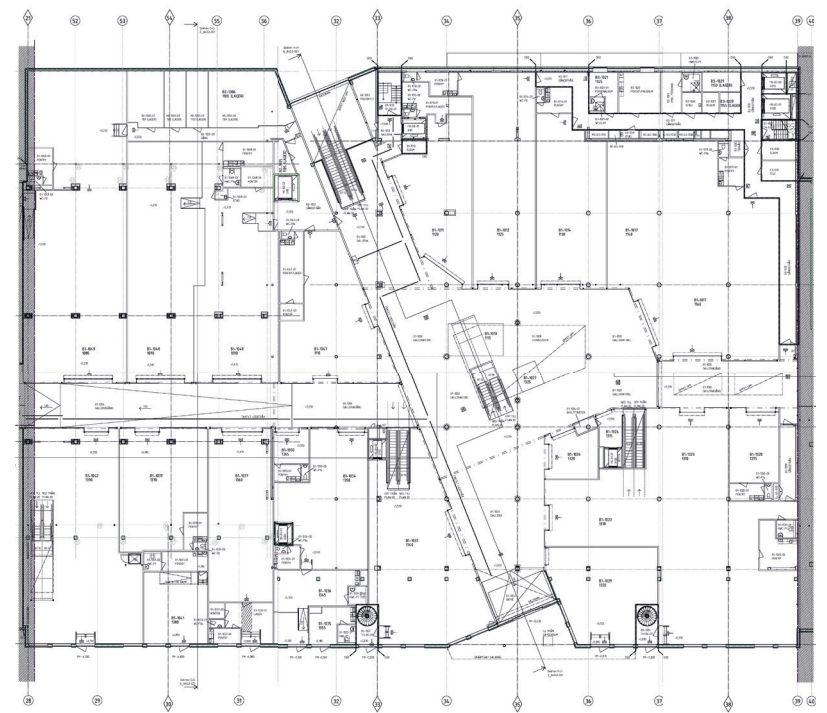


The impermeable facade design facing the canal.



The passage inside Galleria Boulevard leading to Block B

Block B is designed as a junction. Not only for Galleria Boulevard but also for the city. It has an intention to connect the city center and the cultural district in movement. However, the insufficient transparency of the facade continues and becomes the first hindrance for pedestrians. People need to be very familiar with the city center in Kristianstad to use this path. Moreover, the poor design of height difference indoors becomes the second hindrance. People are facing a massive wall with elevators once they enter Galleria Boulevard from the northeast entrance. This creates a kind of rejection for people and a need to move further.



The ground floor plan of block B

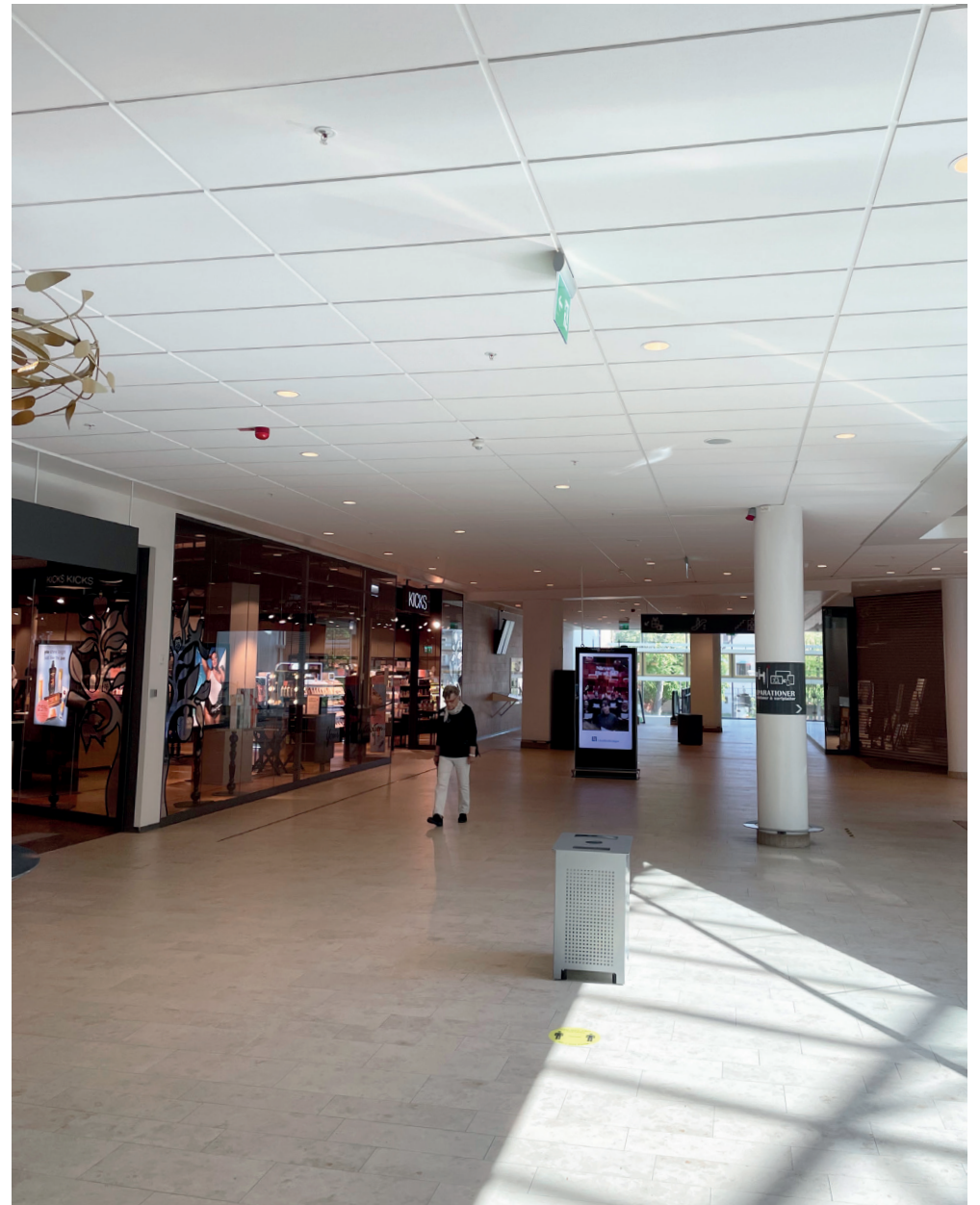




Entrance facing the cultural district with poor transparency of the facade, sending a message to people that they can not go through



Inside the entrance is a big wall and with elevator. If you are not familiar with the building, you get confused

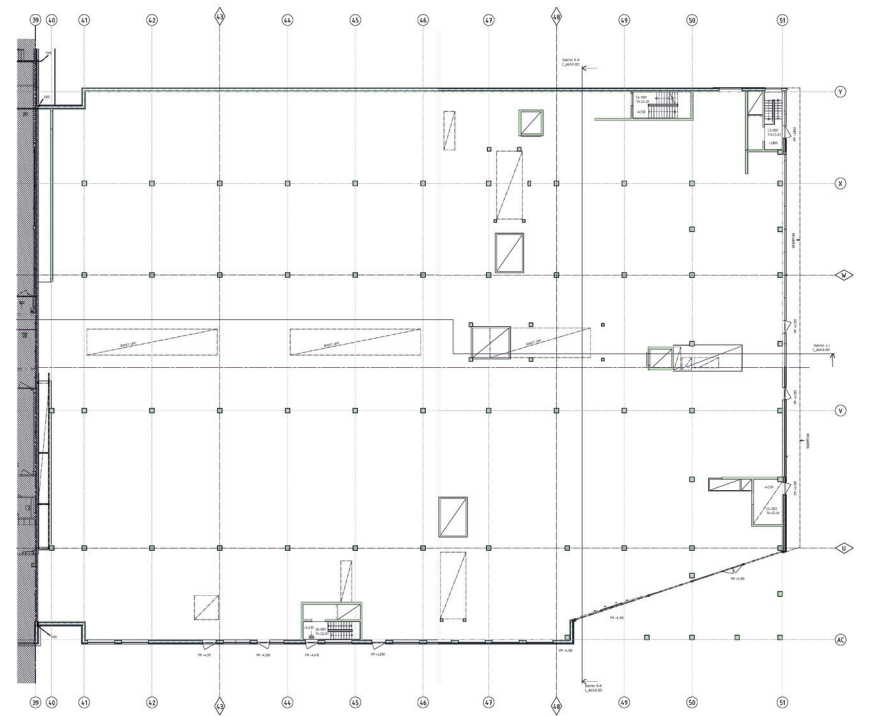


The connection between the city center and the cultural district inside the building.

The last part of Galleria Boulevard is still a mystery to most people. This part has not been opened to the public since the shopping mall opened its door. The effect of this aspect is the decrease of activities for the surrounding environment and the street experience is terrible. This also increases the feeling of unsafety. This part of Galleria Boulevard is facing Hästtorget and connects to the bus station. The outdoor space condition is very unsatisfying. Some benches are randomly placed at the edges facing the square that looks like a desolate place. Next to the shopping mall is a 14-story residential building.



Empty rooms in block C facing a desolate square.



The ground floor plan of block C



It is evident that Galleria Boulevard has many conflicts with Gehl's theory. The lack of design of edges makes it almost impossible for people to use it for extended stays. The transparency on the ground floor level is very low. This makes it difficult for visual contacts between indoors and outdoors. Empty rooms that dominate a great ratio of the building decrease the activities for the surrounding environment. Since this gigantic building is programmed with a shopping mall, this part of the city center will be no man's land after the shopping mall's closure.



The floor inside Galleria Boulevard is mended by silver tape.

THE PROJECT

The Brief About The Program

With understanding the problematic situation of the city center and Galleria Boulevard, I realized that maybe Galleria boulevard needs to change its identity. However, what can it be if it is no longer a shopping mall? What if it is an extension of the city center's quality. I decided, therefore, to create a people-centered program with diversity.

Cities in Scandinavia are characterized by a two-season culture. The winter is dark and cold while the summer is bright and warm. Hence, the city space during the summertime becomes extremely important to the people. It is when everything happens around the city. Gehl argues that it is the period for stays in the city and tourist visits. Everything is fine if the city works well in summer. This does not mean that winter problems should be ignored, but solutions to winter problems must not limit the possibilities of getting the full benefit from the summer city (Gehl, 1991).

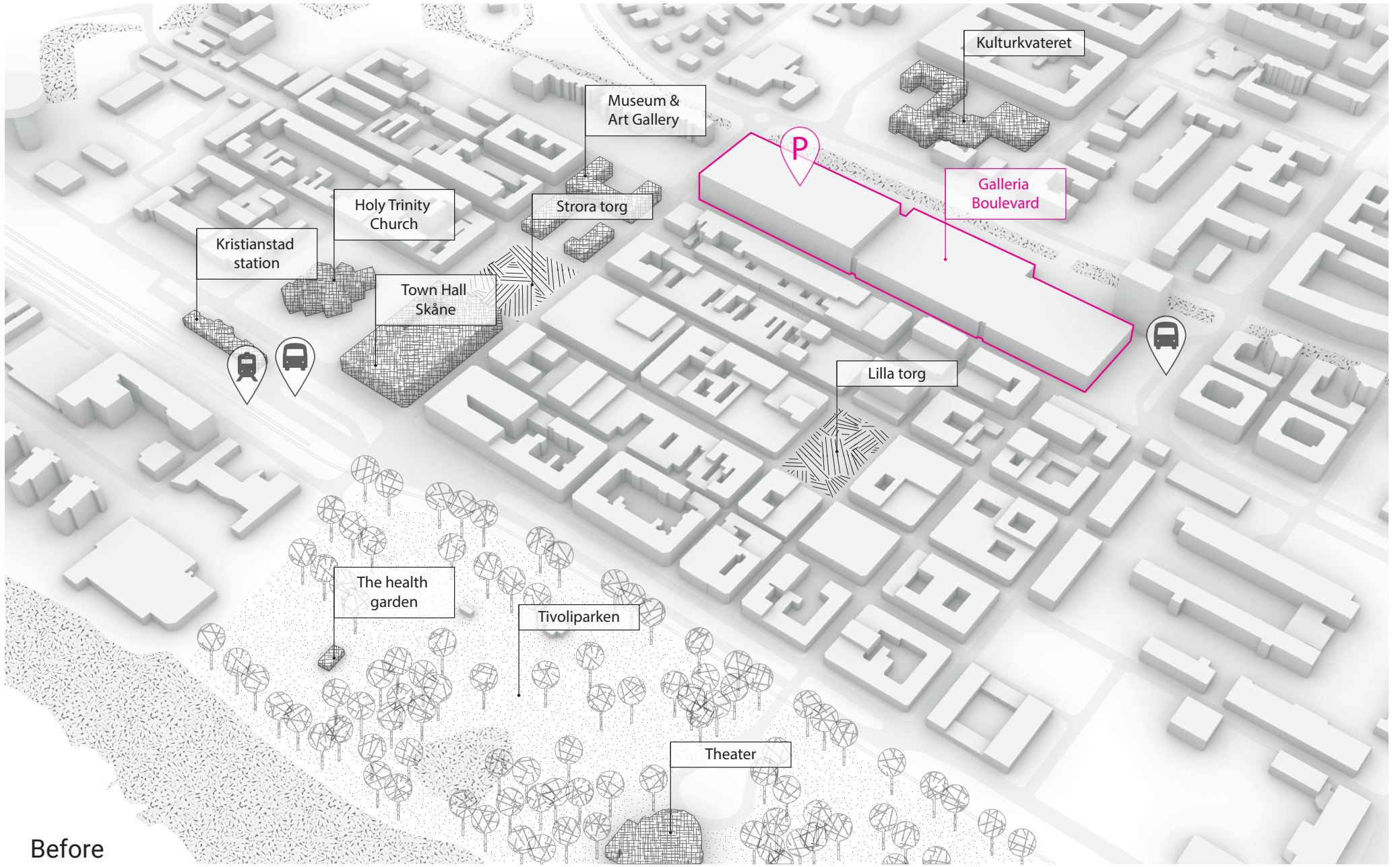
Kristianstad has a charming Renaissance city center structure with a strong identity relating to its history. On the urban level, the new program aims to recreate the streetscape of attraction, charm, openness, and diversity. The program not only wants to bring back the nostalgic feeling of a small-scale city center but also the cityscape of

liveliness. On top of this, strengthen the public cultural infrastructure between the cultural district and other worth seeing spots around the city center. By creating a multifaceted program such as parks, shops, offices, and homes, the idea aims to help to populate the city center. Urban space must be well designed and inviting for citizens. The aim is to create a place where everyone can take a seat, be heard, be seen, and feel safe.

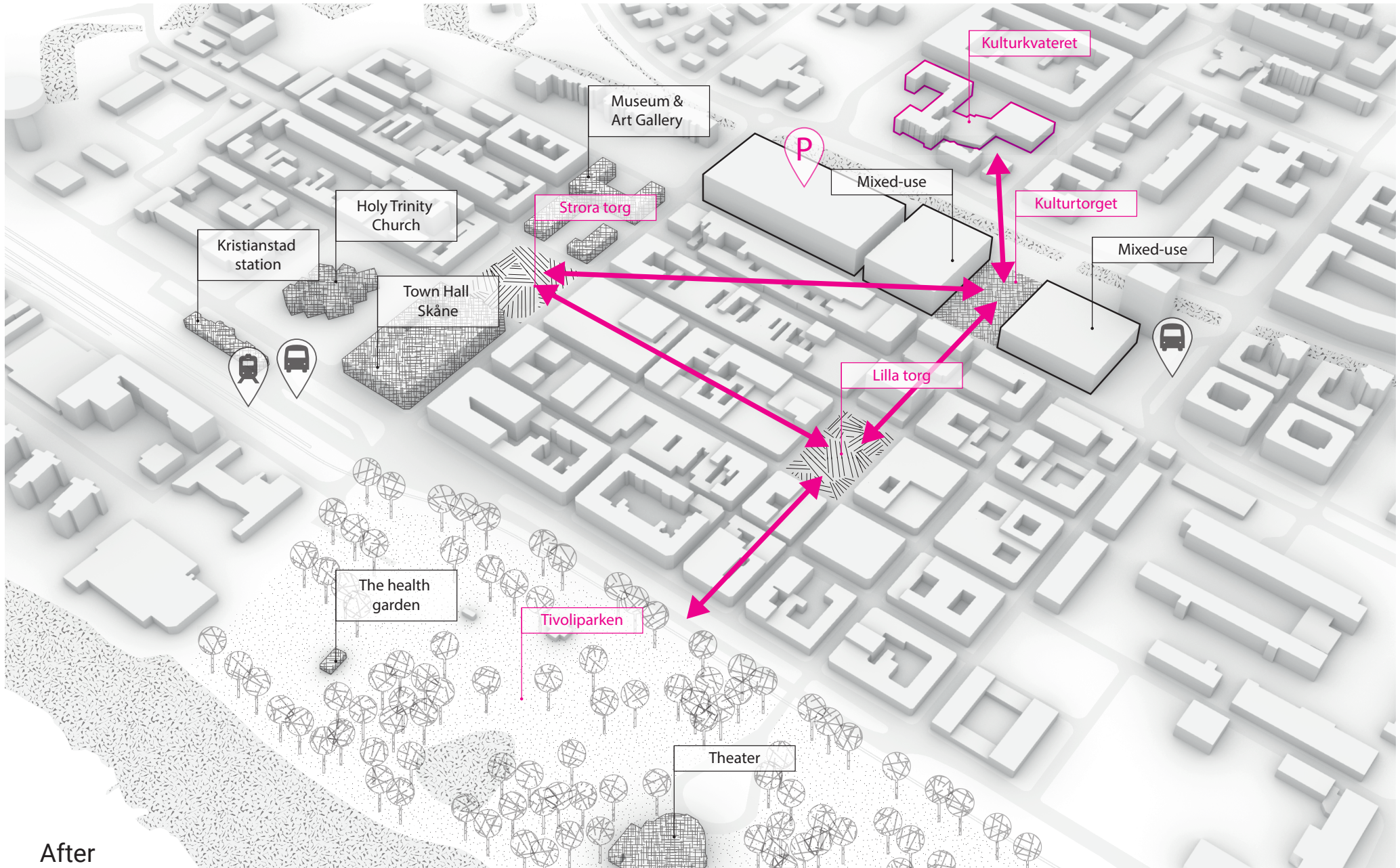
The architecture must emerge out of thoughtful care of how contemporary needs constantly change in the city center. Especially now when it comes to a diversified society and where people are influenced by the global multicultural exchange. I believe that architecture can be used as an anchor that connects people and cities together instead of being an individualistic sculpture. In this way, as an architect, we do not only design a shape of the building but also a lifestyle for people.

The Strategy On Urban Level

Since the building is divided into three parts in construction. It is possible to tear parts of the shopping mall down and keep the parking garage as it is. By doing so, it will be able to create three smaller blocks in this area that follow the city center's pattern. This will create a potential walk from the city center to the cultural district and strengthen the connection between them. The division will also bring different experiences among different squares. For example, Stora Torget is a square today with parking spaces and political activities. Lilla Torget is a place where you can find markets and even some outdoor seating. The new one, Kulturtorget, is more between a square and a park. There you can, for example, enjoy your lunch or meetings outdoors and arrange different events such as dance, outdoor theater, concert, and small seasonal activities, etc. The smaller scale of buildings will also bring a smaller scale of functions. It will create a new pattern of activities and activate this part of the city center during different times.

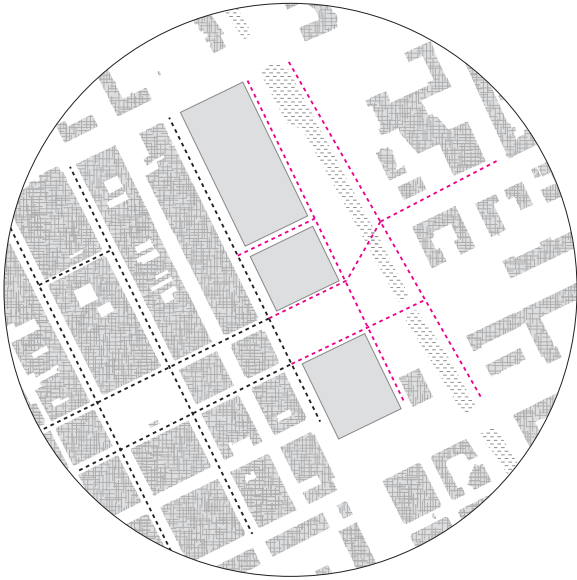


Before



After

The Strategies



1. Strengthening the connection between the city center and the cultural district.



2. Implanting new public spaces with functions of many kinds.

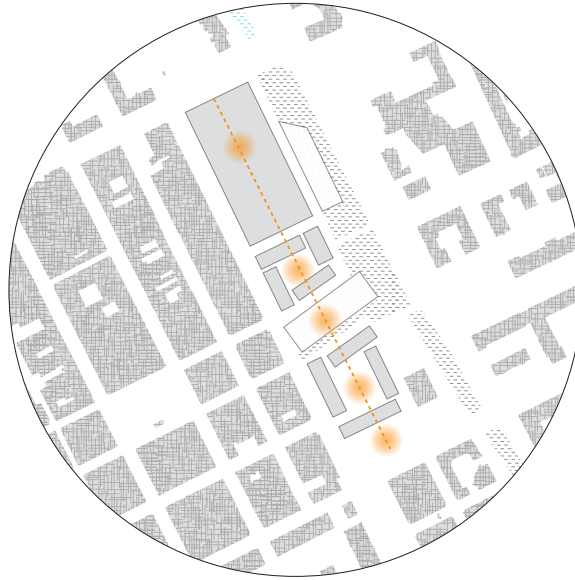


3. Reshaping buildings and public spaces for more dynamic experience on the ground floor level.

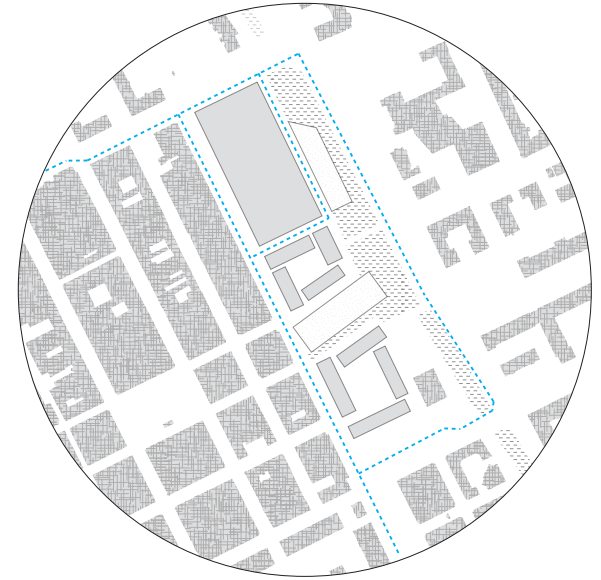
The Strategies



4. Reshaping the water and bringing in the water to the city center.

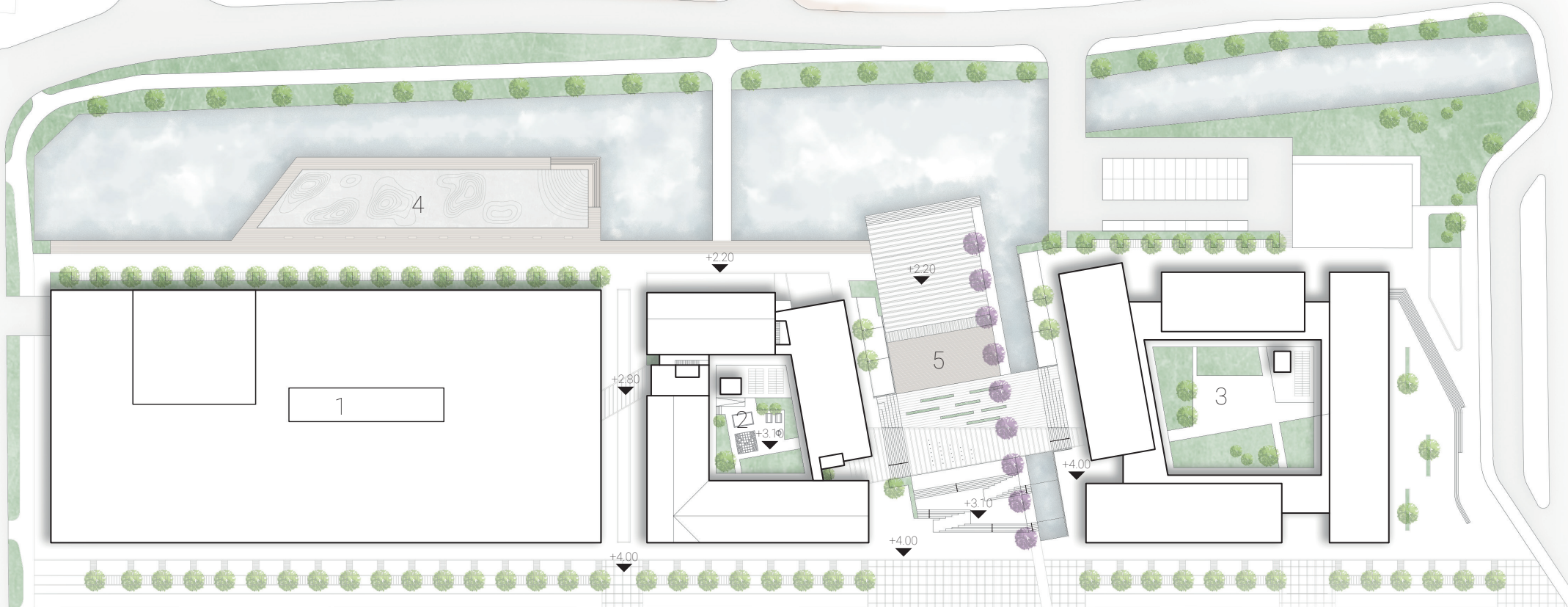


5. Inserting a new layer of pedestrian connection among the buildings.



6. Making it easier for cyclists.

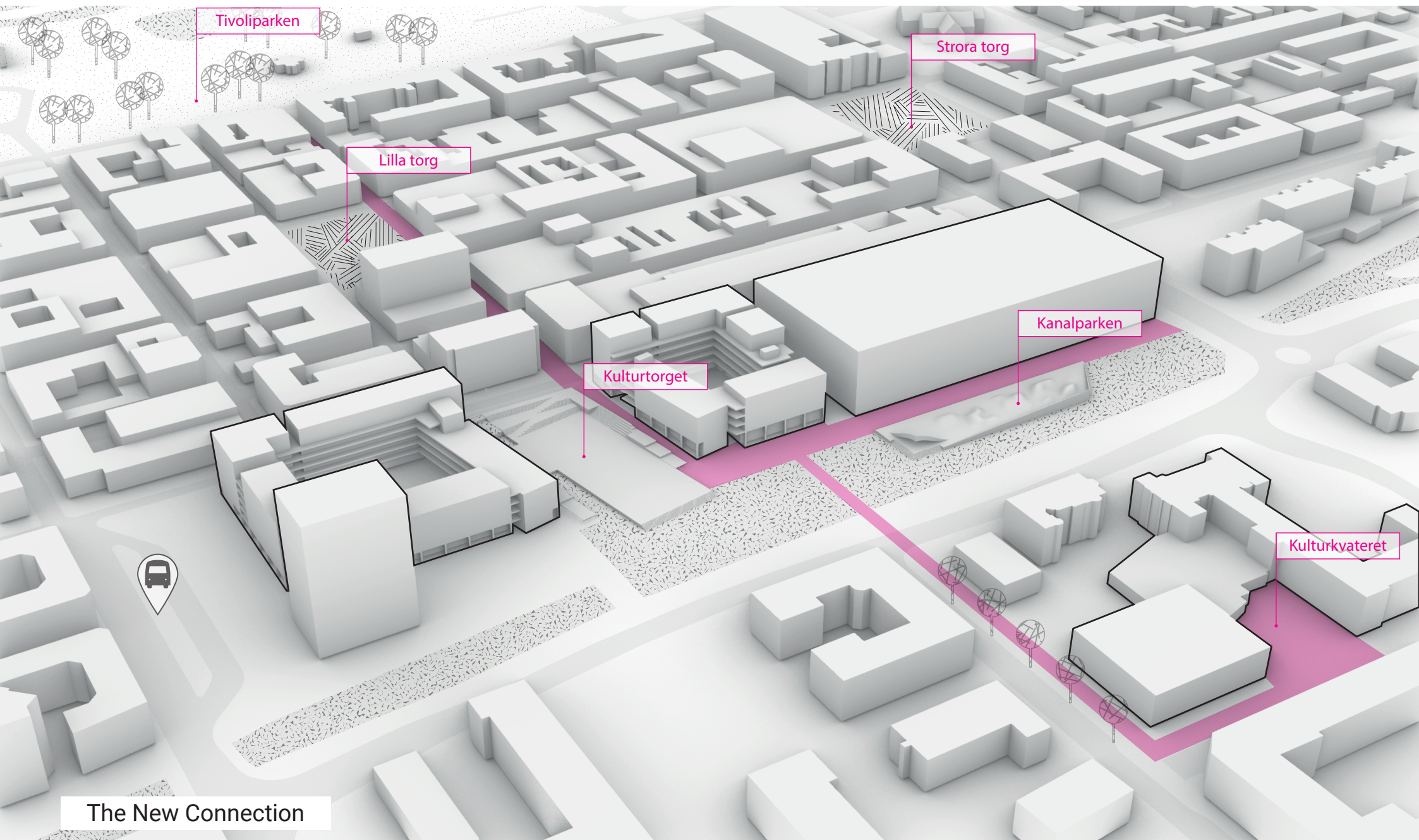
Site Plan



- 1. Block A: Parking Garage; Commerce
- 2. Block B: Commerce; Housing; Office
- 3. Block C: Commerce; Housing; Office

- 4. Kanalparken
- 5. Kulturtorget





Tivoliparken

Strora torg

Lilla torg

Kulturtorget

Kanalparken

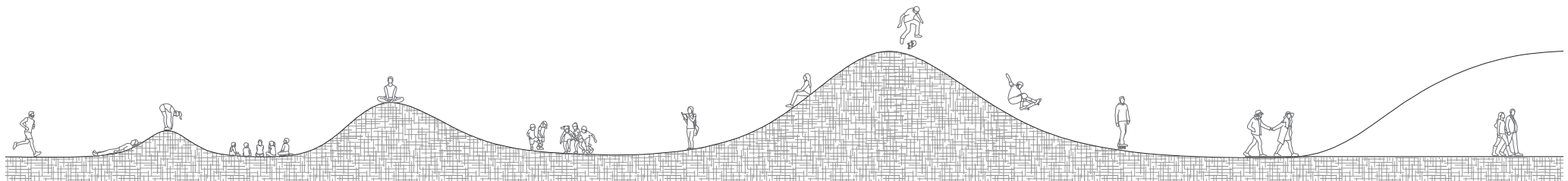
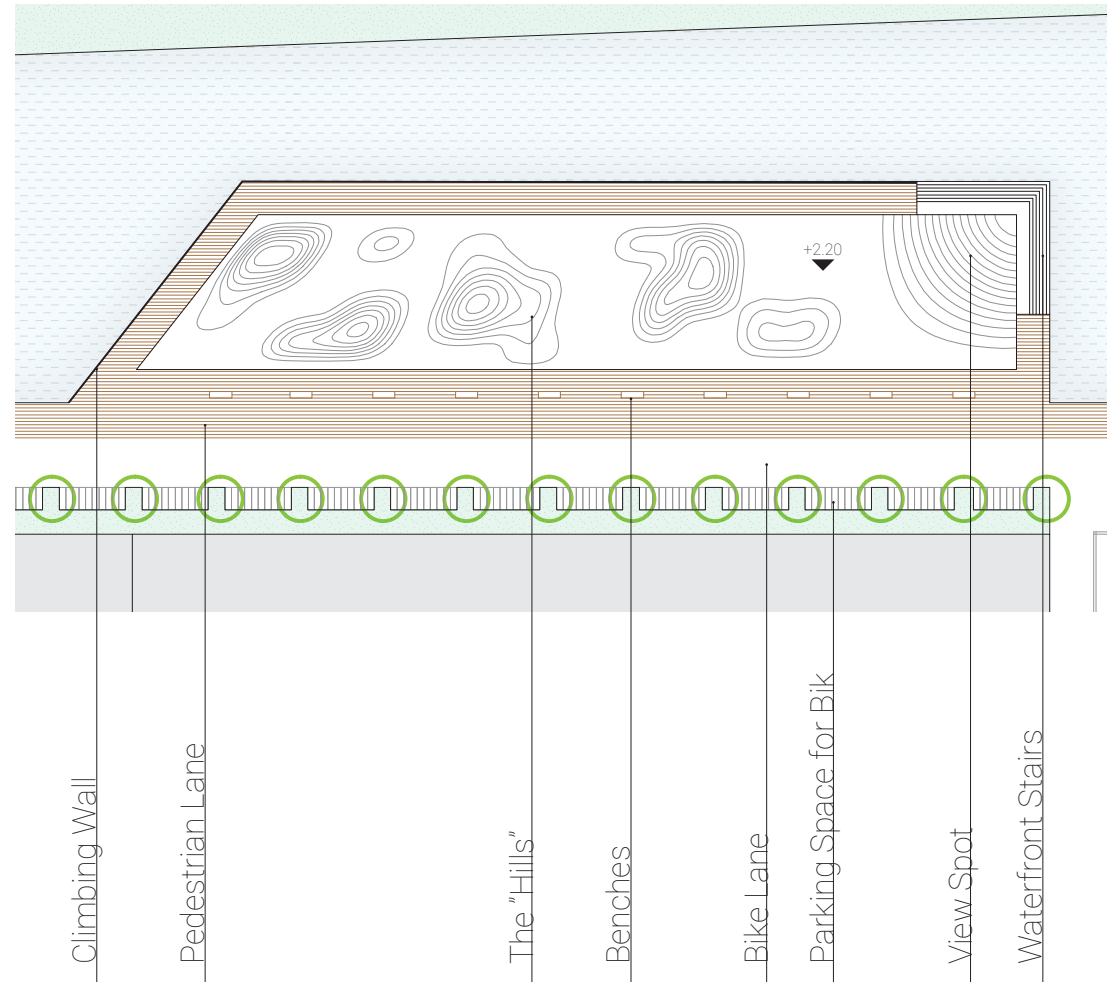
Kulturkvateret

The New Connection

Kanalparken

The original Kanalparken only has the function for skateboarders with a few benches. Hence, it is almost impossible for others to use the park. In other words, the park has a huge scale of function.

The concept behind the new Kanalparken aims to improve the possibility for people to enjoy this charming waterfront near the canal that the city center is offering and break down the single function into several. By creating an organic landscape, people will not only be able to redefine the territories with the help of their own sense but also redefine how to use them. The different shapes of "hills" that are constructing all kinds of unique spaces and provide different experiences in each. Kids may be playing hide and seek among the "hills" while adults may be doing some exercise. Since the park is redefined by "hills", it will not lose the function for the skateboarders.



Conceptual Section



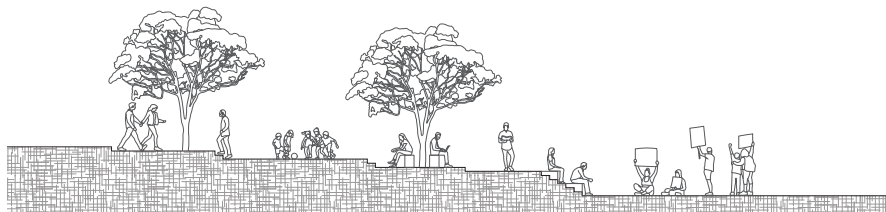
Kulturtorget

Since the city center already has two squares that serve both political activities and trades. The idea behind Kulturtorget is to strengthen the connection between the cultural district and the city center as well as bringing the waterfront closer to the city center.

The square is divided into several zones according to the ground cover. With a path from the city center leading people to the waterfront with the help of cherry trees. The programming of the functions is based on the relation between different activities that lead to interactions among different zones. For instance, people from the audience zone and the public sit stairs will be able to observe people playing among the waterplay. Alternatively, the people from the buffer zone and the audience zone on the sides will have the possibility to watch activities in the event zone.

Event zone: Tivoli, skiing, holiday trade, etc. (Season based)

Scene: dance, theater, concert, etc.



Conceptual Section

Waterfront Stairs

Path

Activity Zone

Buffer Zone

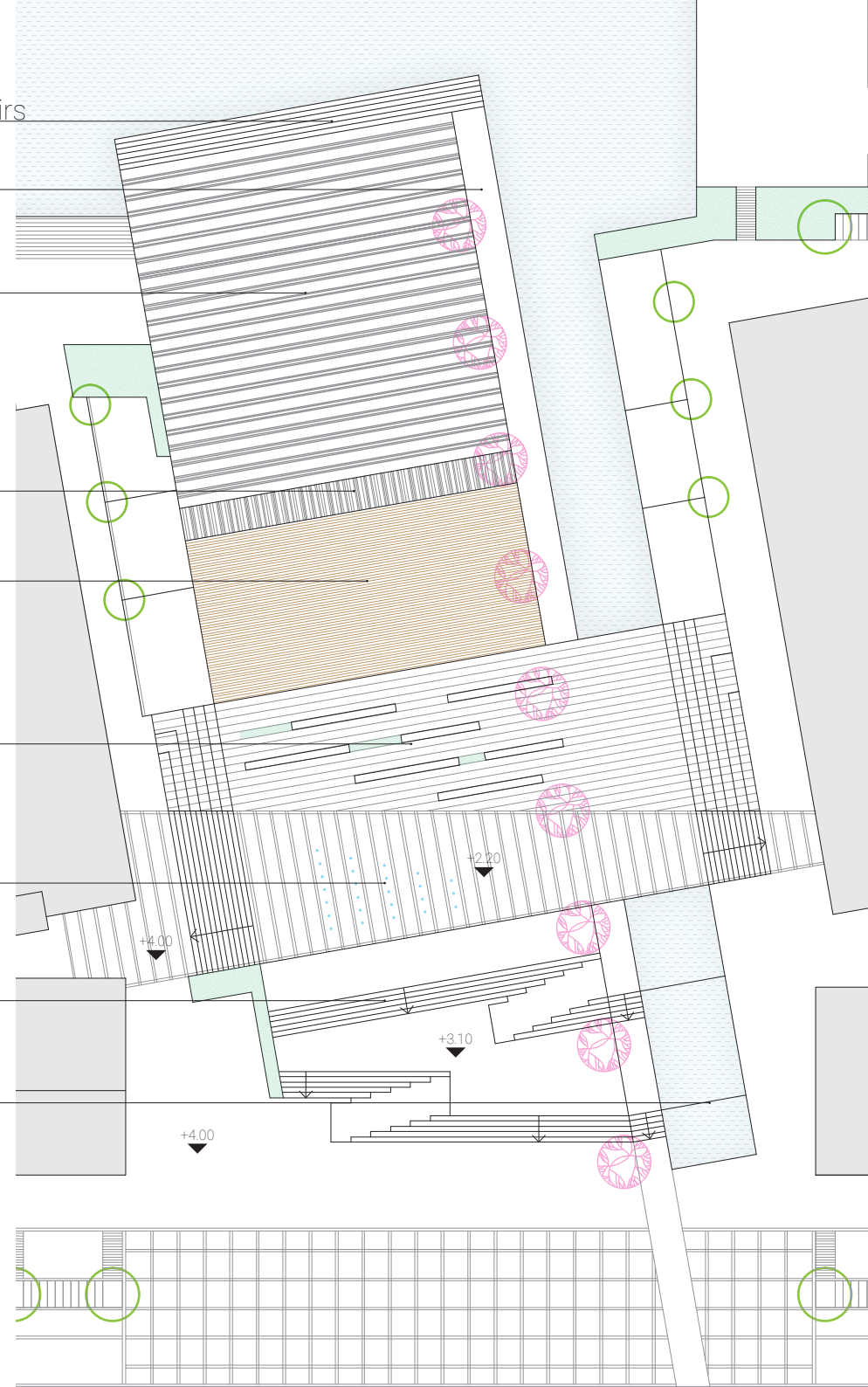
Scene Zone

Audience Zone

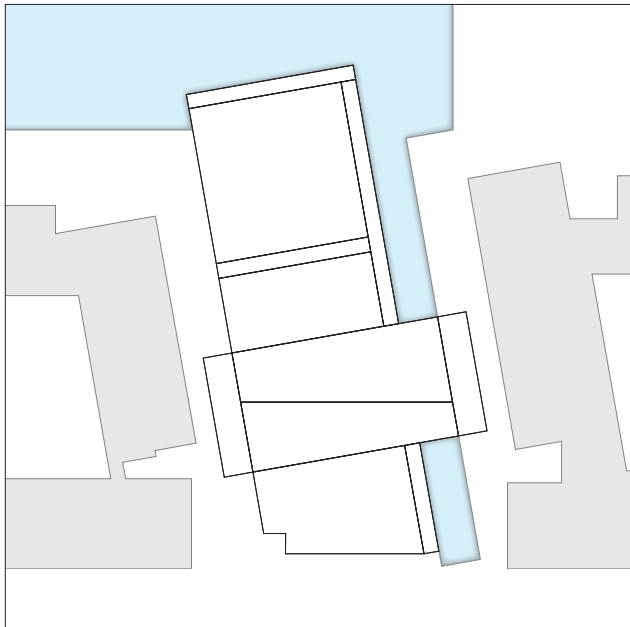
Waterplay

Public Stairs

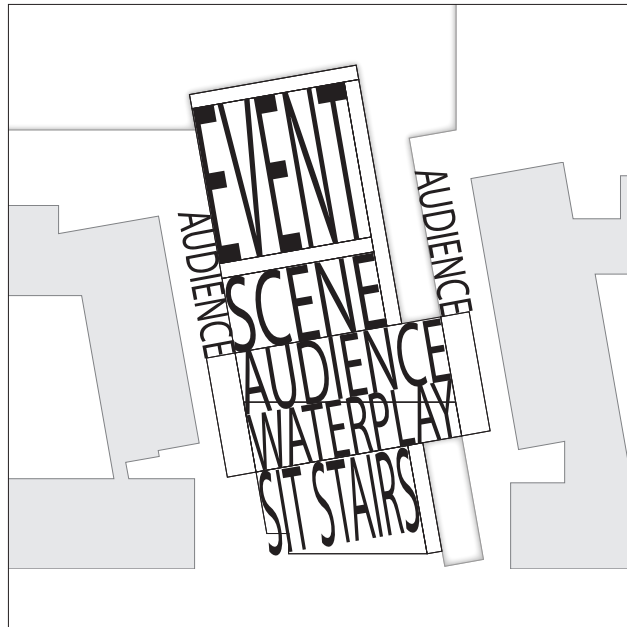
Waterfall



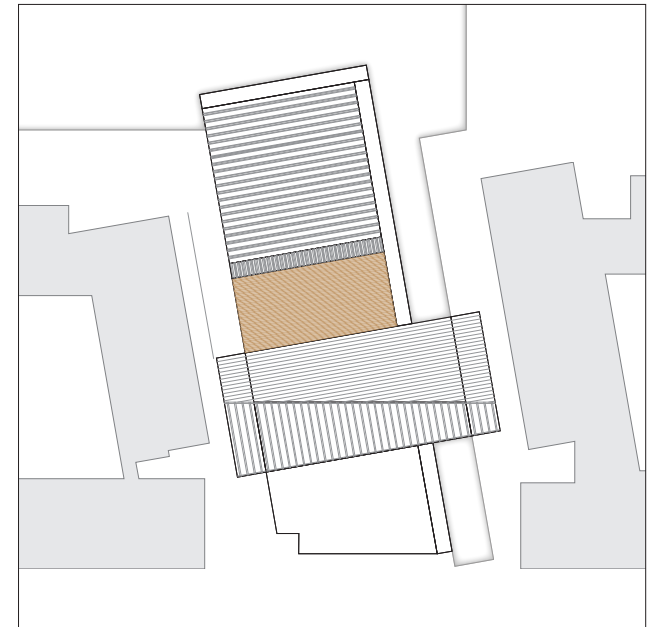
The Strategies



Waterfront



Programs

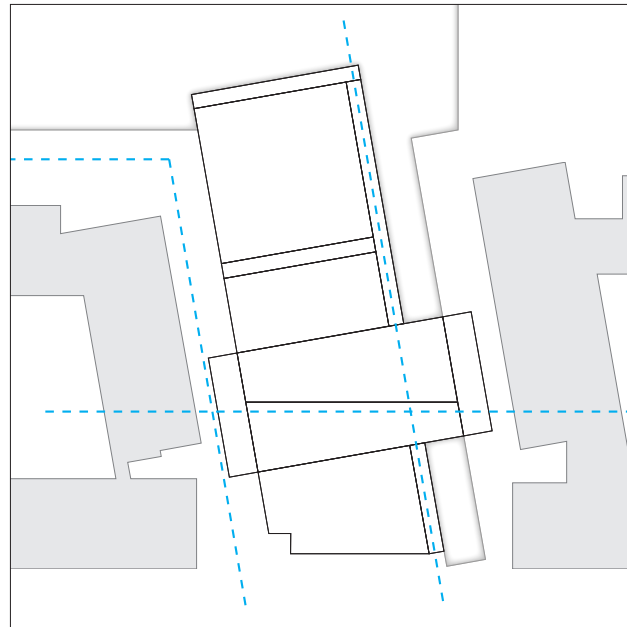


Ground cover

The Strategies



The path with cherry trees

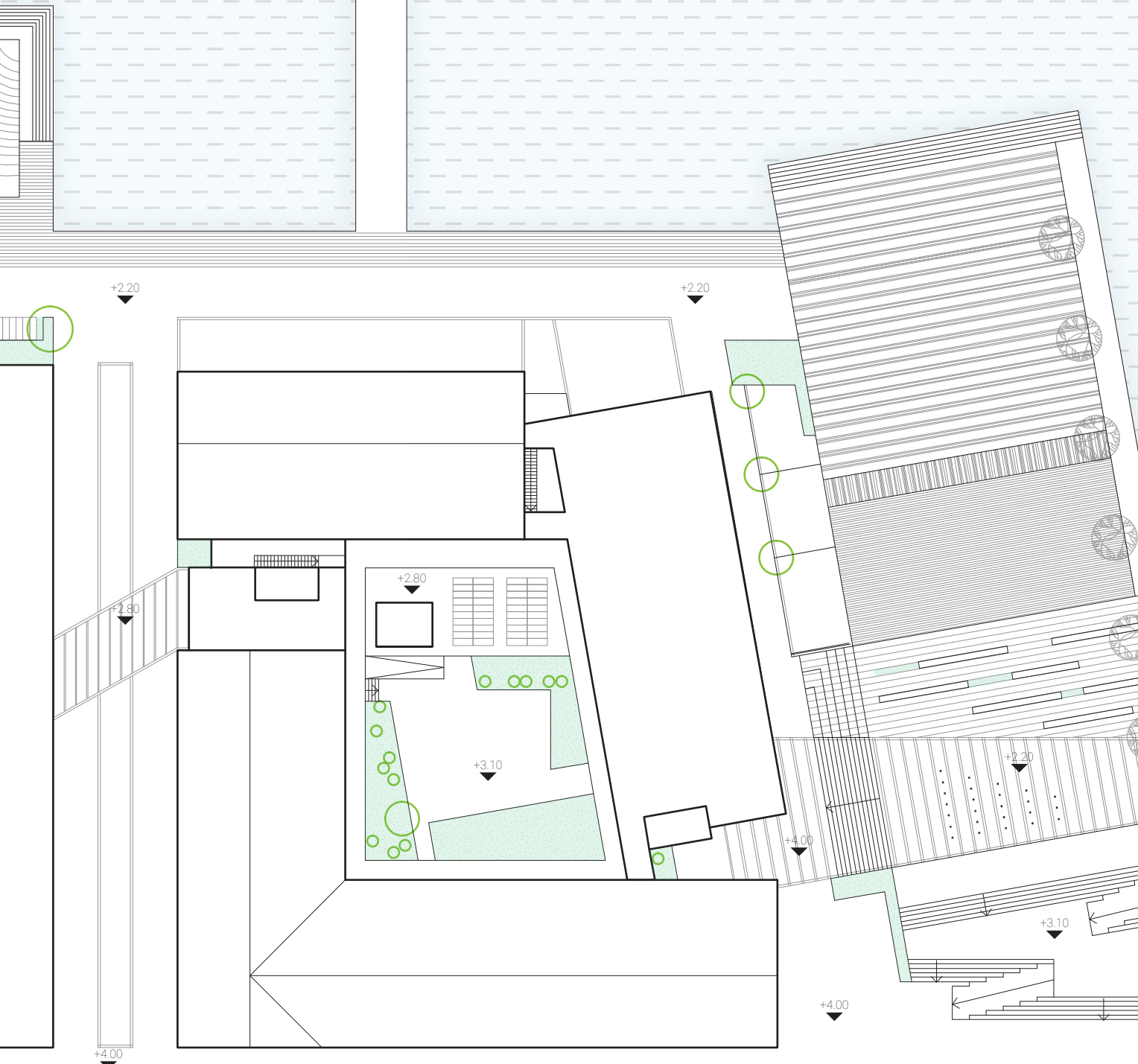


Connection between the city center, the cultural district, the buildings and the water



The scene stays on focus

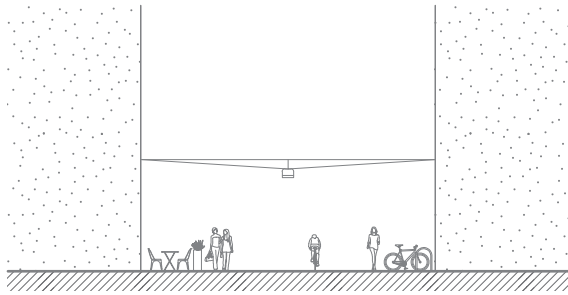




Block B

The design part of the architecture will be demonstrated on Block B. The municipality not only has the intention to densify the city center with more homes and offices but also to increase the safety in the city center. The fundamental thought behind this demonstration is to create a lively and safe environment for people, that suits both municipality's policies and Gehl's theory.



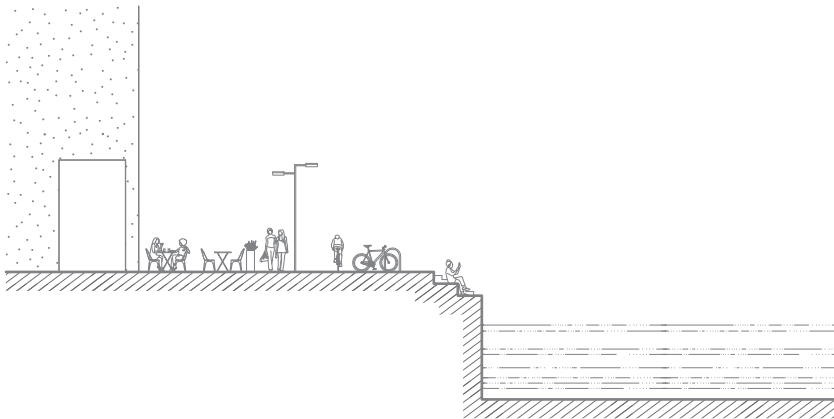


Edges & Street Qualities

A very crucial part of the design is the edges, where indoors and outdoors meet. As mentioned above, the quality of edges will affect how people are going to use them. More stays and even longer stays will happen if the edges are good enough. This will further affect the surrounding spaces and decide the quality of them. However, the programming of functions indoors will also affect the experience of the corresponding outdoor space. For instance, a café or a pub may need more space outdoors for outdoor seating while a clothing store may only need a place to exhibit goods outside the store. This will lead to different experiences for the pedestrians on the street. According to its surroundings, the quality of street spaces near block B can be divided into four categories:

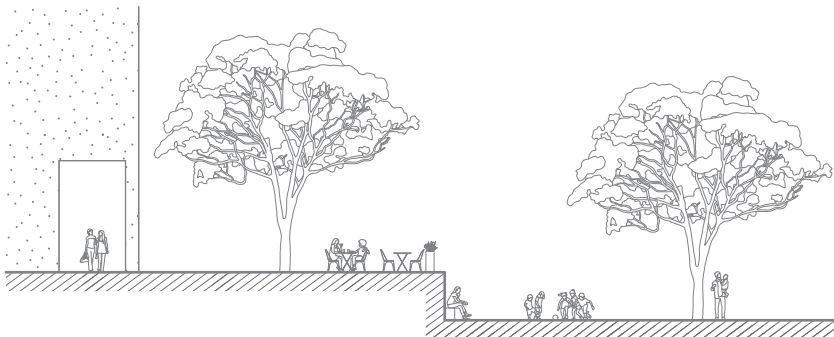


The space between block B and the parking garage is more like an alley. People will mostly be passing through the street.

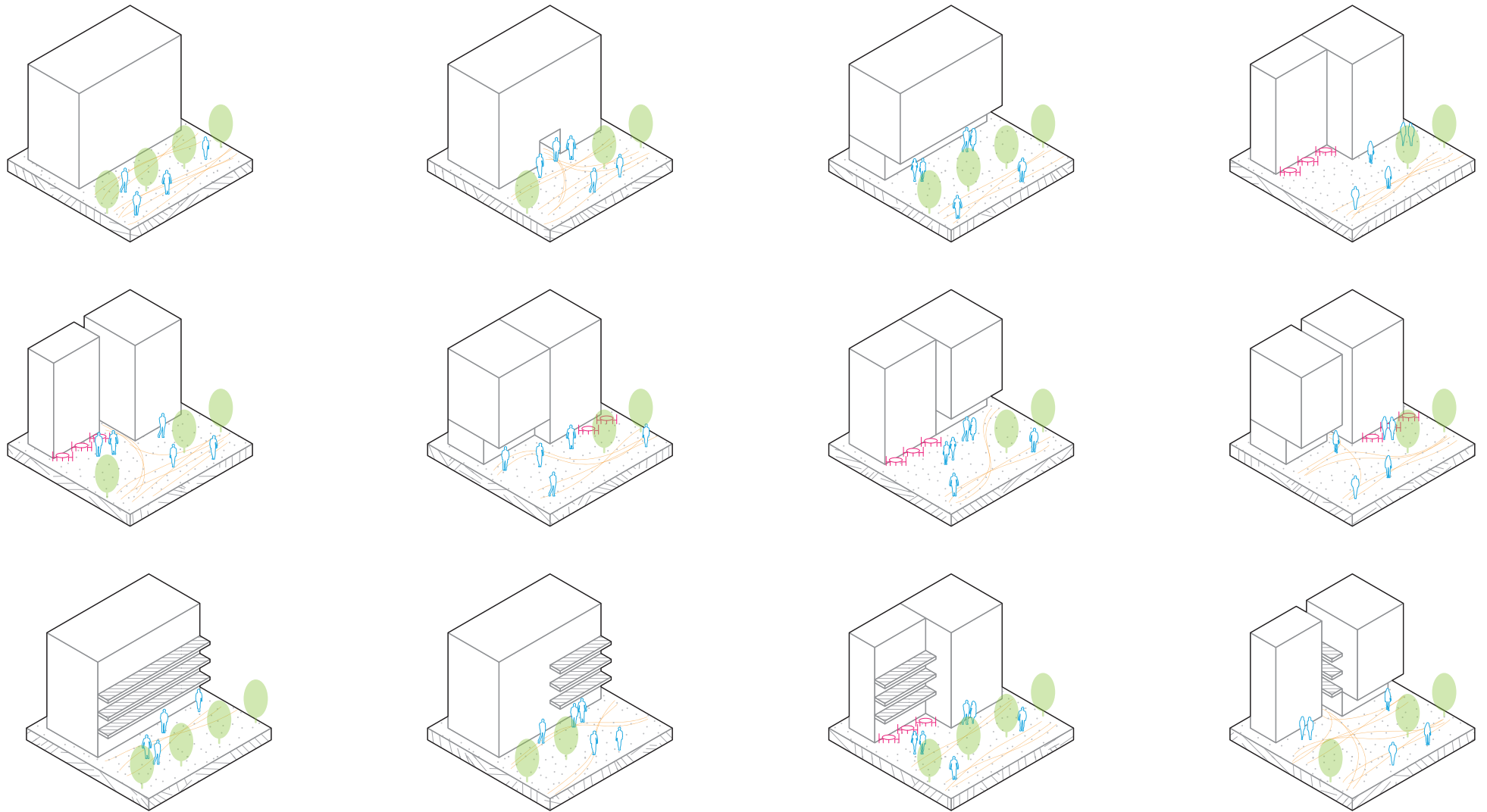


The street space on the southwest of block B is like a boulevard. People will be more inclined to do window shopping here.

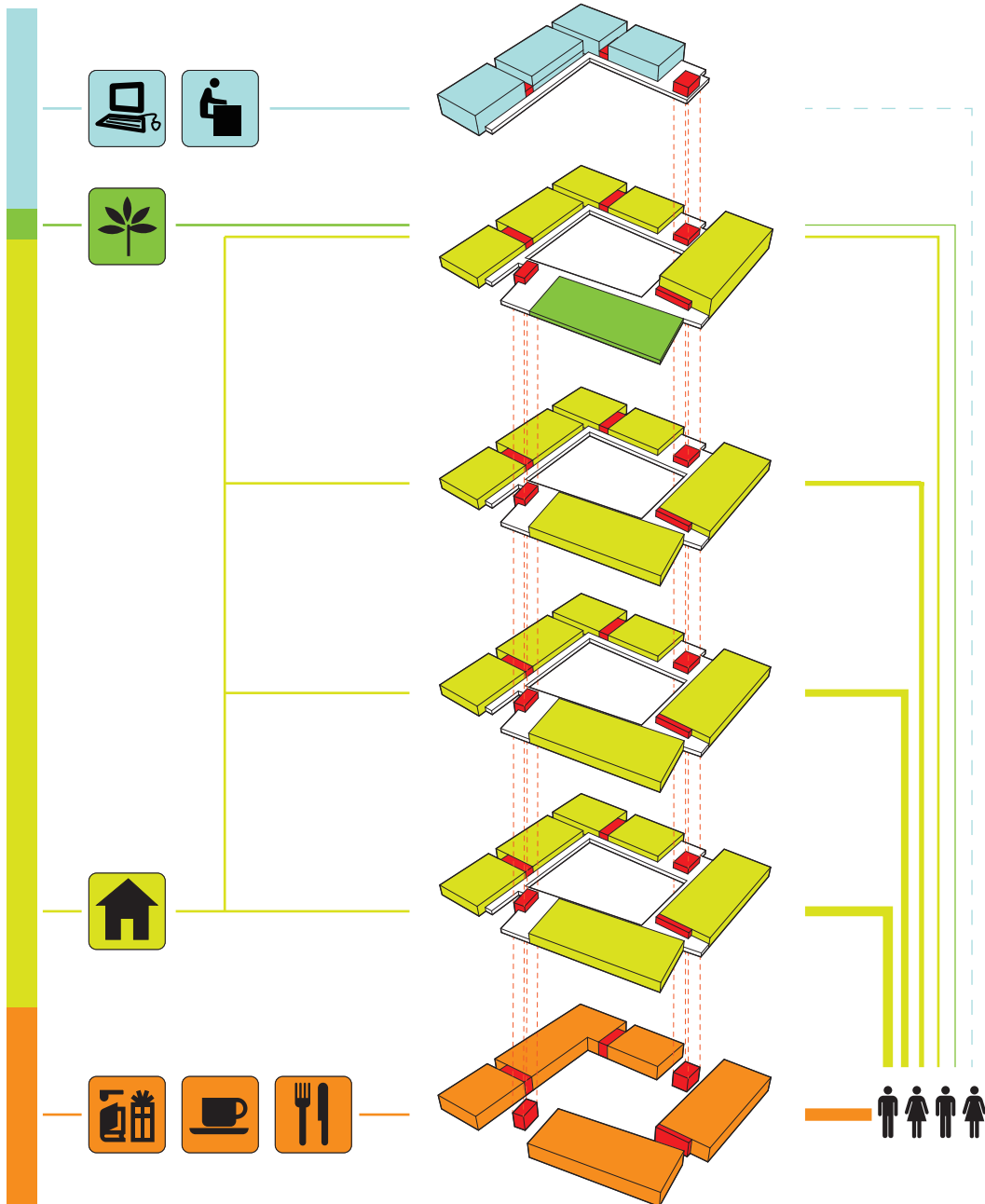
The one with the waterfront is more slow and relaxing, a place where you can enjoy a drink or a meal without being stressed. It is also space where people can take a promenade near the water.



The street space with the square is a place that will be a little bit busy when activities happen on the square. This means that it needs more spaces for people to stay in. This is also space for transition.



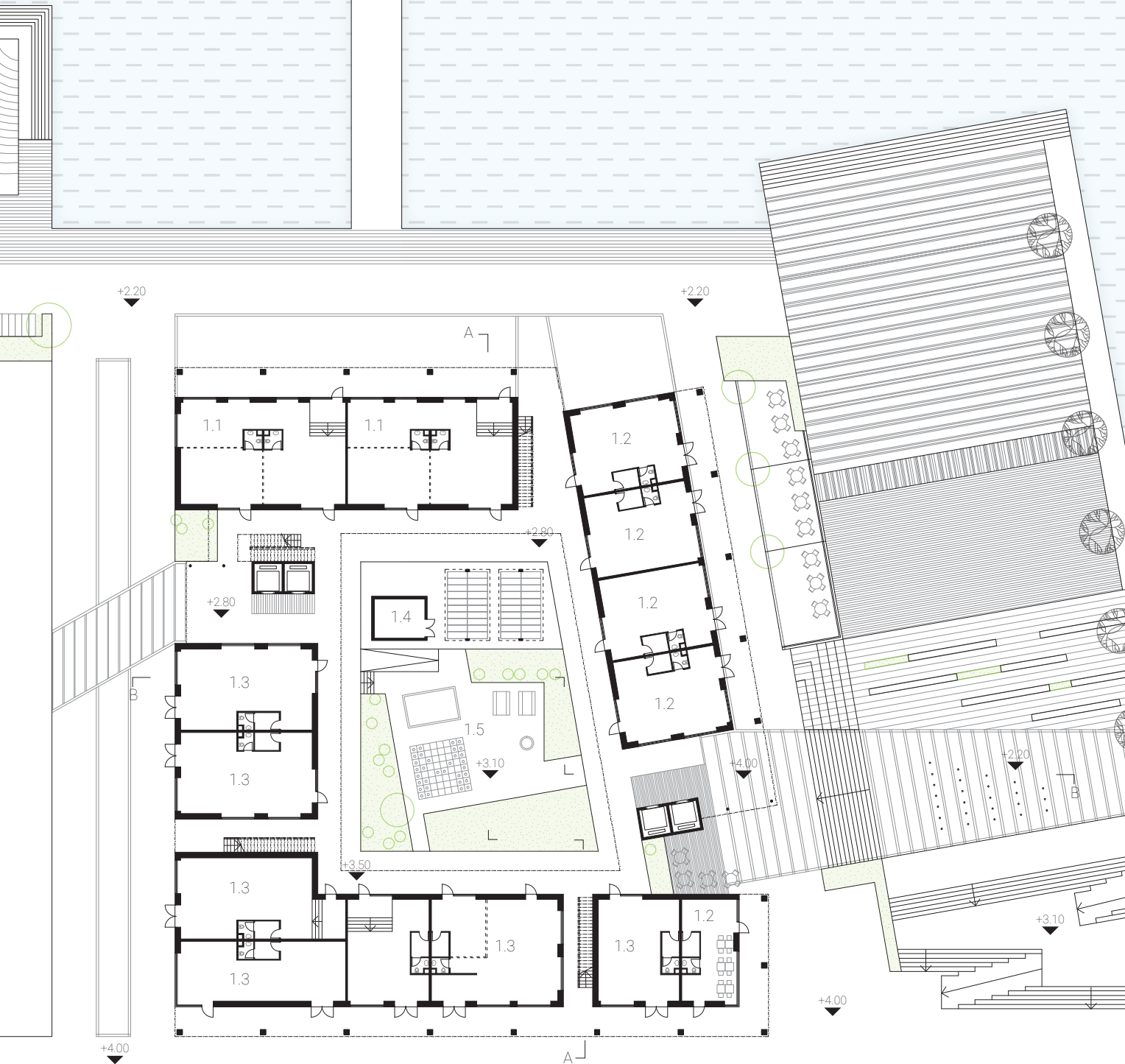
How pedestrians perceive the space is very subjective. The flow can be influenced by where the openings are, how rough the edges are, and what kind of programming it is inside the building.



The Program & The Safety

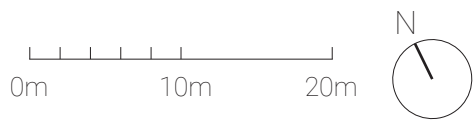
In Gehl's theory, he talks a lot about creating a multifaceted place. This will help to activate the place during different times. Since the place is active all day long, people will start to feel safe because you know that someone is watching over the situation. So the program goes back to the fundamental needs: homes, working spaces, and commercial spaces. Usually, we can see that the working spaces are placed in the middle and the housing spaces on the top. But when we rethink the pattern of each. It is not very wise because the "eyes", the watcher, will disappear during the evenings. And we also know that the higher you get, the less interaction you get with the street. So, I decided to make a change by switching the position between housing spaces and working spaces to strengthen the feeling of safety on the street during the evenings.

As mentioned before, imagine an area filled with offices, homes, and stores. The place will be filled with workers during work hours. People are occupying spaces for lunches and meetings. Later, the area will be populated by people who have finished a long day of their work. Children will be playing around. By putting all these different patterns together, city space will be able to stay busy constantly. People will then start to feel safe and are more willing to stay longer. That may result in more potential activities happening.

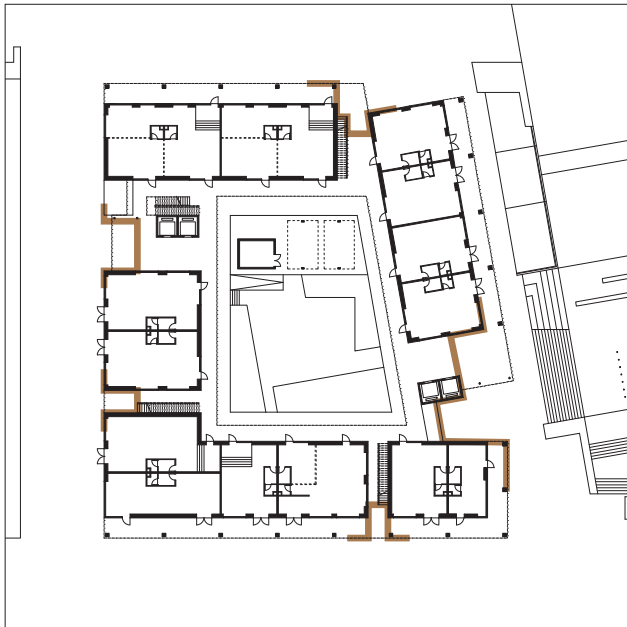


Ground Floor

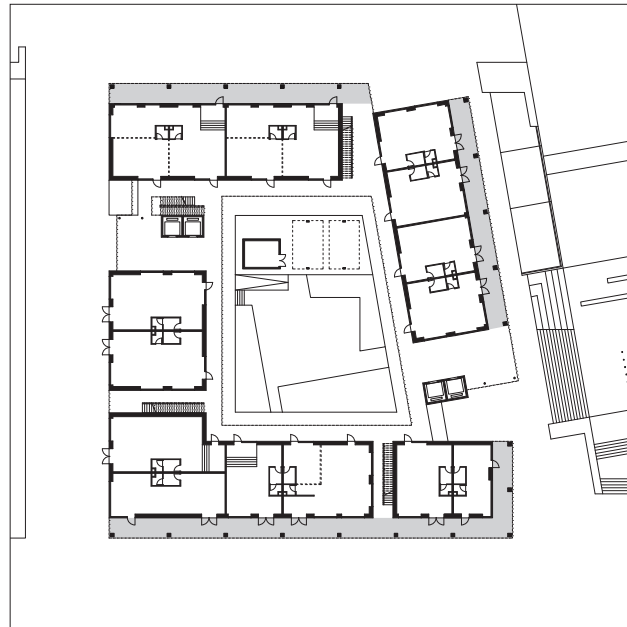
- 1.1 Restaurant
- 1.2 Pub/Café
- 1.3 Store
- 1.4 Garbage Room
- 1.5 Courtyard: Chess Game, Sand box, Grill



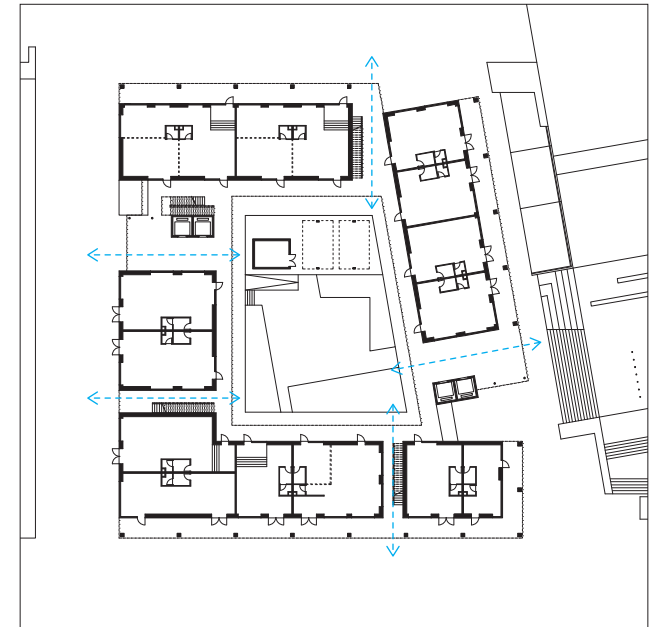
Ground floor principles



Provide rough edges for people to stay

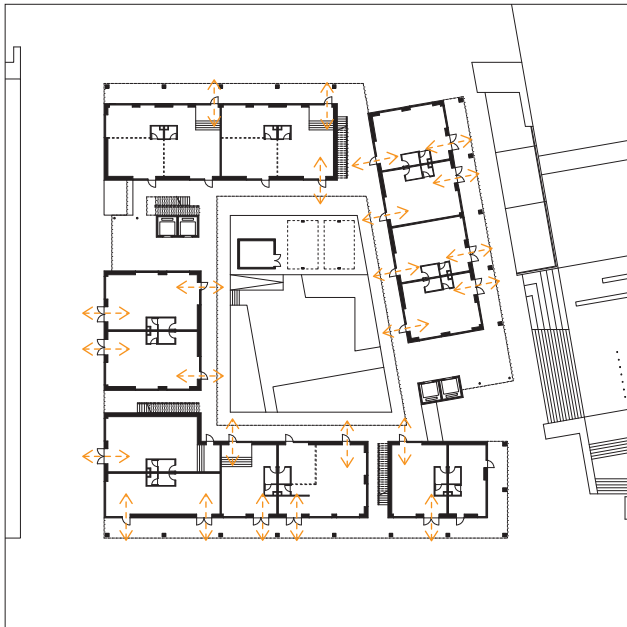


Secondary outdoor spaces for pedestrians and stores



Increase the transparency on the ground level

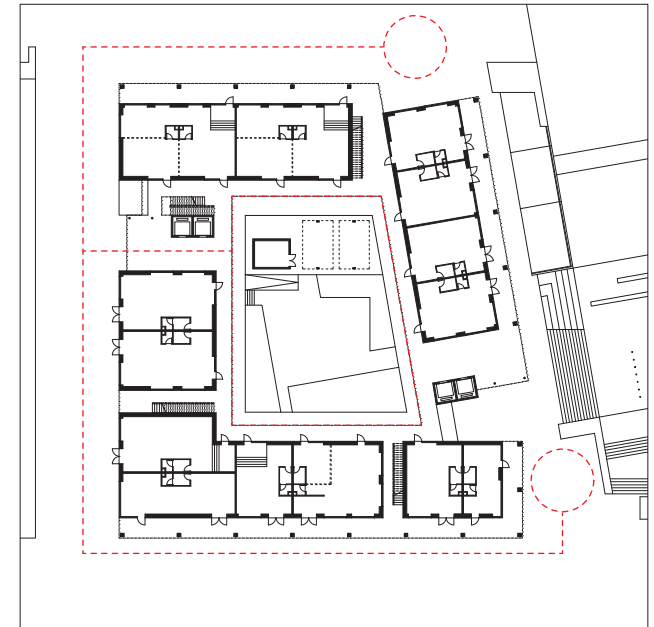
Ground floor principles



Increase the accessibility between indoors and outdoors



Junctions leading people to explore



Passage for emergency, loading and services

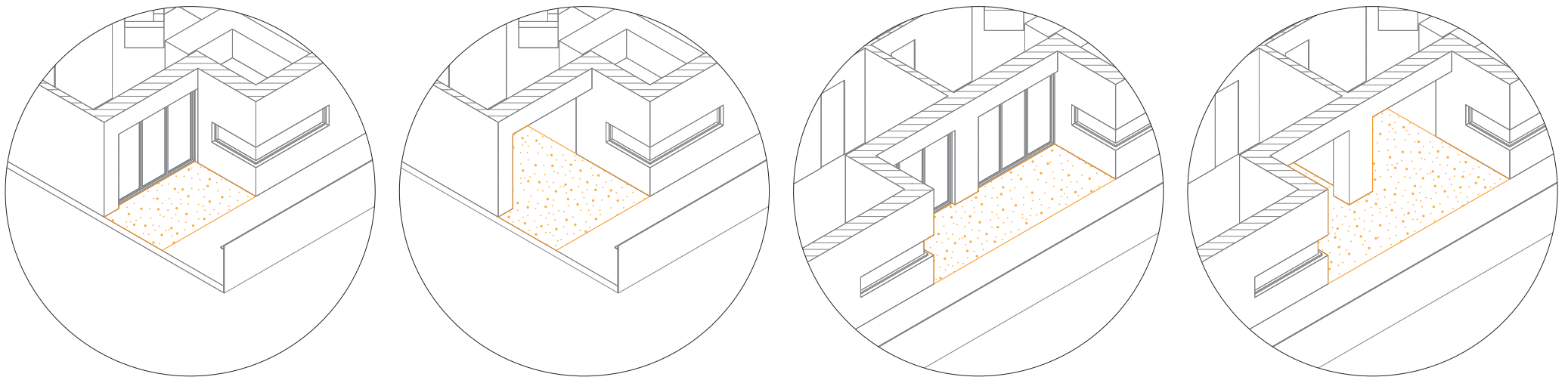


Second Floor

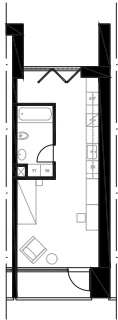


0m 10m 20m

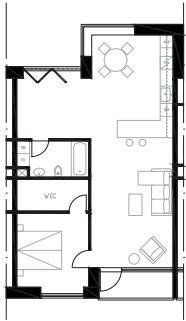
Nowadays, people living in apartments have very few opportunities to get along with neighbors. Apartments are more like superior cell rooms. People return home and close the door, cutting off contact with the outside world. Hence, the design of apartments focuses on the social area. How neighbours can interact with each other. How the social area can be expanded into the indoor space but doesn't lose privacy as well.



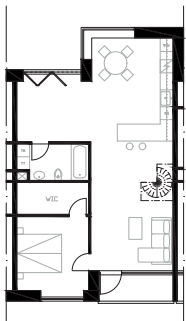
As for the apartments, each unit has a social area just before entering the apartment. People can sit here and enjoy the morning coffee or just read a book. The social area can also be expanded into the hall and then be connected to the kitchen when a bigger event occurs. The social area also offers a chance for people to socialize with their neighbours and a spontaneous meeting with other people on the corridor.



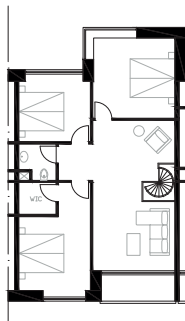
Apartment A



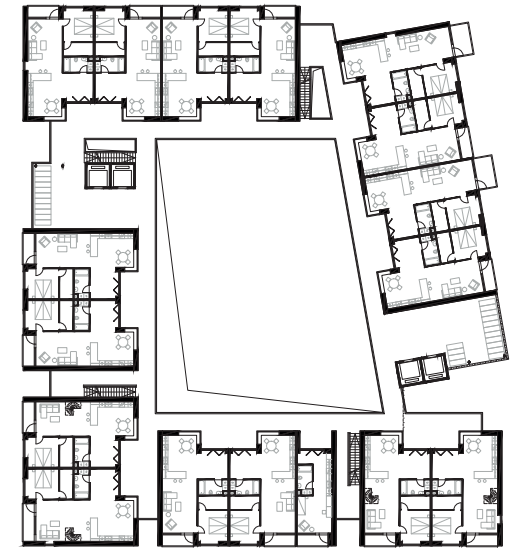
Apartment B



Apartment C



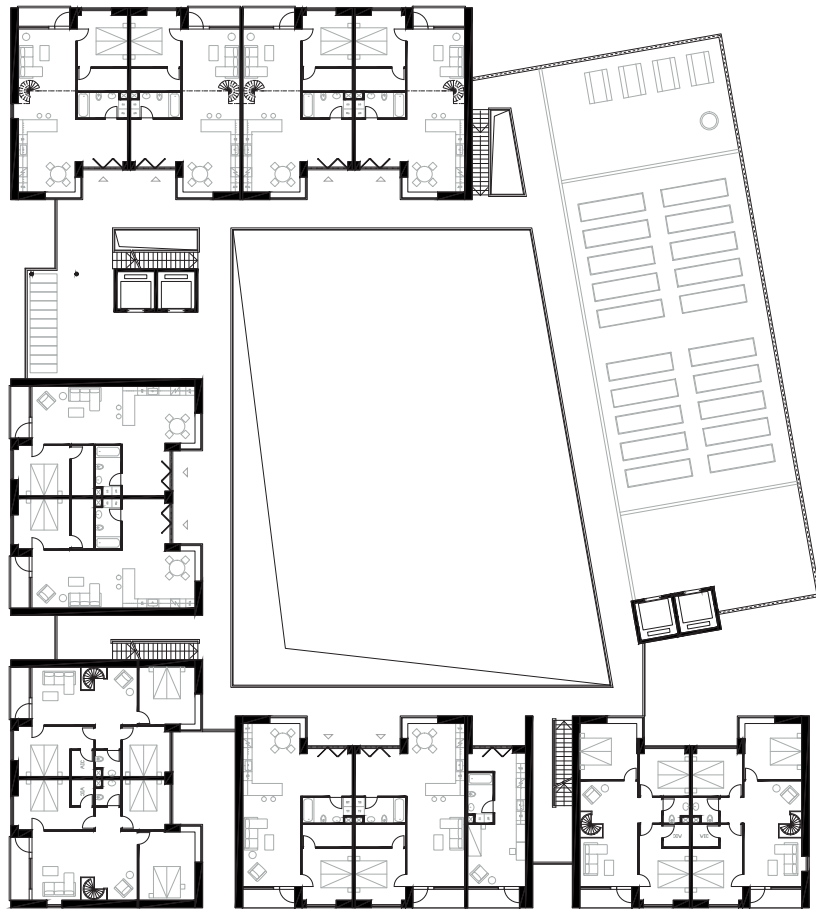
Third Floor



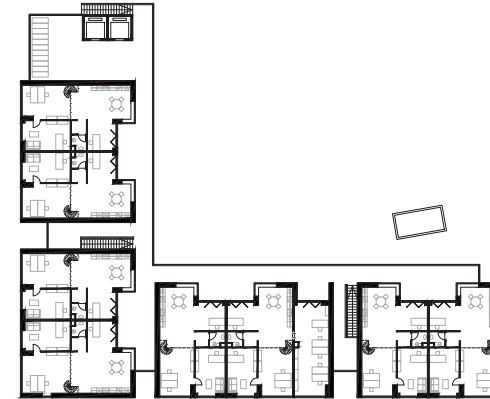
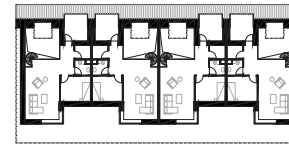
Fourth Floor

There are several sorts of apartment variants that can contribute to diversity. From a studio to a double-story apartment. The smaller apartments are placed on the lower floors while the bigger one is higher. The reason for this is the chance of interaction between the apartment and the ground floor level. Since we know that the higher you get, the less interaction you get with the street. Hence, more apartments closer to the street will contribute to more possible “eyes” to watch over the situation on the street and increase safety.

Fifth Floor



0m 10m 20m



Sixth Floor

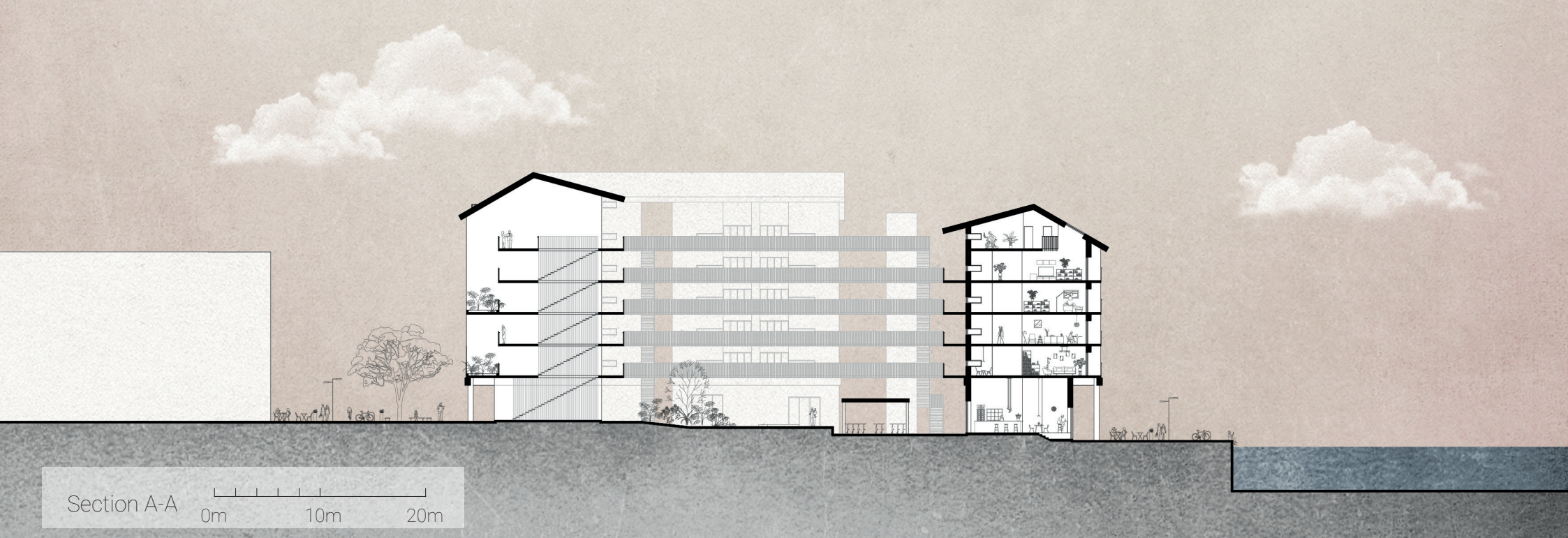


Seventh Floor

The fifth floor offers a large cultivation area where people can temporarily spend a life as a farmer. It also offers a place for larger events such as picnics, outdoor parties, flea markets, and so on.

The sixth and seventh floors are programmed with double-floor offices. Every office has access to a social area where they can share the office culture with each other.





Reflection

I started my thesis project by asking what is happening in the city center of Kristianstad. How the situation may be related to the shopping mall Galleria Boulevard. Spontaneous talks with the dwellers of Kristianstad, newspaper articles, debates, and conversations with the municipality have led me to understand that the causes behind the situation are complex. Opinions about the existing situation and solutions are very divided, but many dwellers believe that the main cause behind the situation is Galleria Boulevard. Hence, even if the cause behind the problematic situation can be explained by many aspects such as the change of buying habits, the Covid-19 pandemic, and so on, one can not ignore the impact of "the building" on the surrounding environment. With the help of Gehl's theory about people-centered design, I started this journey trying to understand the importance of life between buildings better. How life quality between buildings might be influenced by designs. Hence, life between buildings is a crucial part of this design process because it has a decisive influence on how the quality can be for the surrounding environment. I believe that designing architecture is more than just creating a form, applying materials, and arguing for the beauty of it. It is also a process for creating a place full of interest and liveliness for people to dwell.

As you can see, I have worked on my thesis project focusing on the concept of people-centered design. That can be reflected in many ways. Human perception is very subjective and it is changing constantly according to the surrounding environment. This brings a lot of uncertainties to spaces enclosed by buildings as well. Hence, one important principle is to provide opportunities. Opportunities for all kinds of interactions and activities that can be activated under different circumstances. For instance, street spaces with or without a roof provide different opportunities for various kinds of weather. Another example is how buildings and public spaces are programmed. The vitality of different functions differs significantly. This will lead to the different liveliness and affect people's perception of safety. For example, in Galleria Boulevard's case, the shopping mall has a gigantic scale, both function, and size, for the city center. When the mall closes, it also brings down the liveliness in the city center and suddenly becomes an obstacle that lies as a barrier between the city center and the cultural district. However, by breaking down the size and the function, the connection between the city center and the cultural district is strengthened and a new pattern of activities and liveliness is introduced.

Lastly, I would like to note that this project is not about tearing down Galleria Boulevard. There are many places out there that suffer in the same way as Kristianstad does, and changes can be made in many ways. However, while doing so, we can not ignore the life between buildings. Through this project, I have learned to do the design differently. For instance, the life between apartments. By providing a social area that might lead to a spontaneous meeting between people, living in the city may just be as cozy as living in a village. Where the relationship between neighbours is always close. As an architect, I believe that we can shape buildings but also have a significant influence on the space in-between and the life it generates. This in-between space should be a friendly platform that offers a sense of belonging, inviting its dwellers to lively interactions and inspiring a better quality of public life.

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