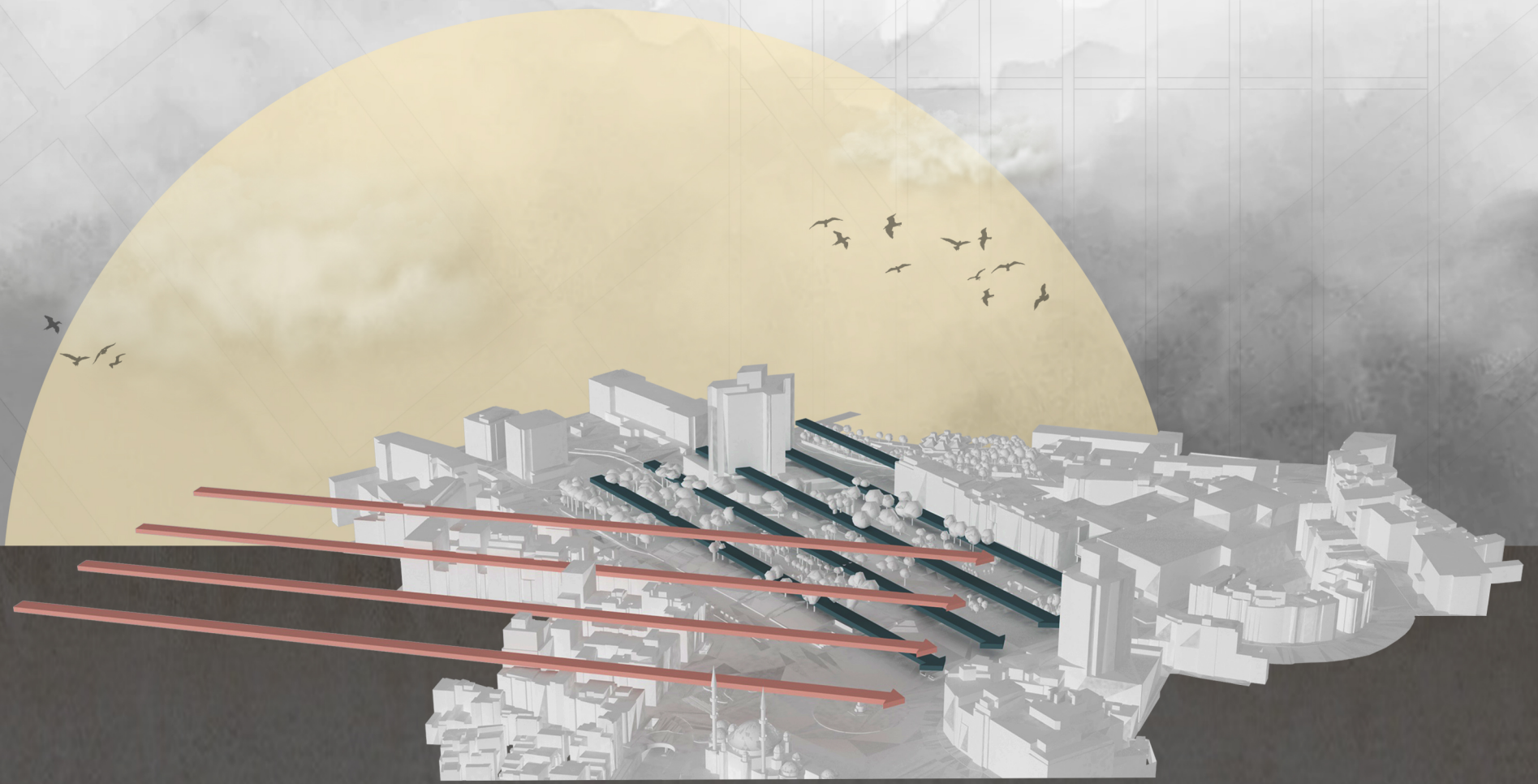


Y9N5371T



TAKSIM URBAN DESIGN
COMPETITION

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SITE PLAN 1/1000



Taksim Square, as being one of the most important urban squares both in İstanbul and in other cities of Turkey, displays a series of problems and potentials. Taksim, having been a **hub of all types of distribution** (as its name 'Taksim' denotes) such as; water sources in the past, humans, activities and transportation in the present time, accomodates a significant **capacity to perform as a major urban space**. It has a potential to bring people together and to distribute public assets back to the community in a çivil environmental setting. However, Taksim square has long suffered not only from the academic, professional and political debates but also from the practices conducted by various actors who are authorized (both centrally and locally) in its development. Various decisions regarding several issues ranging from transportation to landscape arrangements have **crippled the square** which eventually caused a perception of '**spatial confusion**' in a public realm.

Despite its aforementioned problems, Taksim Square is perceived and known as the central urban space of İstanbul. It is used, accepted and established as the primary urban space which has (at least the clues of) a sense of 'place' for masses of citizens in İstanbul. It is the **main gathering space** for the people of İstanbul from all segments of its community. It has also been established as a **symbolic space** particularly for political purposes. It is the primary urban space for all sorts of **public events**. Therefore, Taksim square needs to be upgraded in terms of its urban design characteristics to be re-elevated to the status it has already deserved.

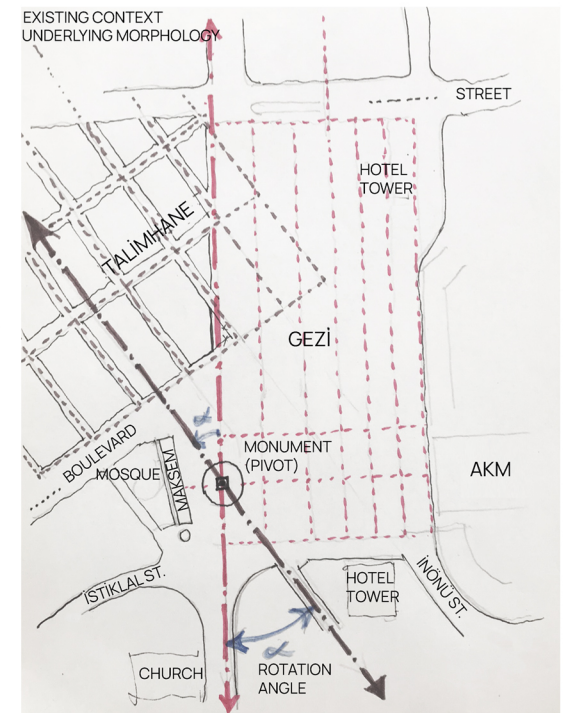
Along this path, a series of interventions are proposed in order to provide the essential qualities of a genuine '**urban place**' through simple and pragmatic means and methods via basic instruments and tactics of urban-architectural design.

URBAN FORM ANALYSIS and PROBLEM DEFINITION

Following its multi-faceted past interventions, currently, the main problem of Taksim Square appears to be the **inconsistency between the periphery conditions of its spatial container and its planimetric/volumetric organizational content**. This discrepancy have inevitably caused a considerable *lack of urban character, and loss of identity* (except the existence of individual urban features such as; Maksem, Fountain, Monument, Gezi Park and AKM building, Hagia Triada Church etc.). Nevertheless a **consistent holistic identity and comprehensive spatial character is still missing**. In terms of the principles of 'urban image', the square is associated with *spatial vagueness* as well as *lack of; clarity, legibility, perceptability and accessibility*.

This situation stems from a set of problems regarding spatial organization;

First of all, the angular reverse L-shaped plaza and its defining architectural shell (*facades*) conveys **conflicting (and therefore confusing) messages** in regard to *the perception of spatial encosure*. In relation to this formal and geometrical inconsistency, the human activity and behaviour patterns perform a different tune in comparison to the dominant orientation of the square in its current state. Likewise, the perceptual forces applied by the **tectonics of the underlying urban morphology** that surrounds the square **contradicts the current organizational structure of the spatial configuration**.



Secondly, the square is **currently divided on various axis of dualities** which obstructs the perception of the square as a whole. This divisions occur on two different yet related levels; **a)** There is a *duality between urban green area* (Gezi Park) and *urban physical space* (Taksim Square) divided along an axis along the southern edge of Gezi Park. That is also a *duality between the urban and natural* (i.e. hard surfaces versus soft surfaces). In addition to this initial duality, Gezi Park is perceptually isolated by various psychological barriers such as monumental stairs leading to the park. **b)** There is another *duality between the traditional* (Maksem & Mosque) and *the contemporary* (AKM) aspects divided along an axis (polarization axis) passing through the Monument aligned with the North-East / South-West direction. **This formal duality has become a stage set of a major socio-cultural polarization that reflects the segregation in the society.**

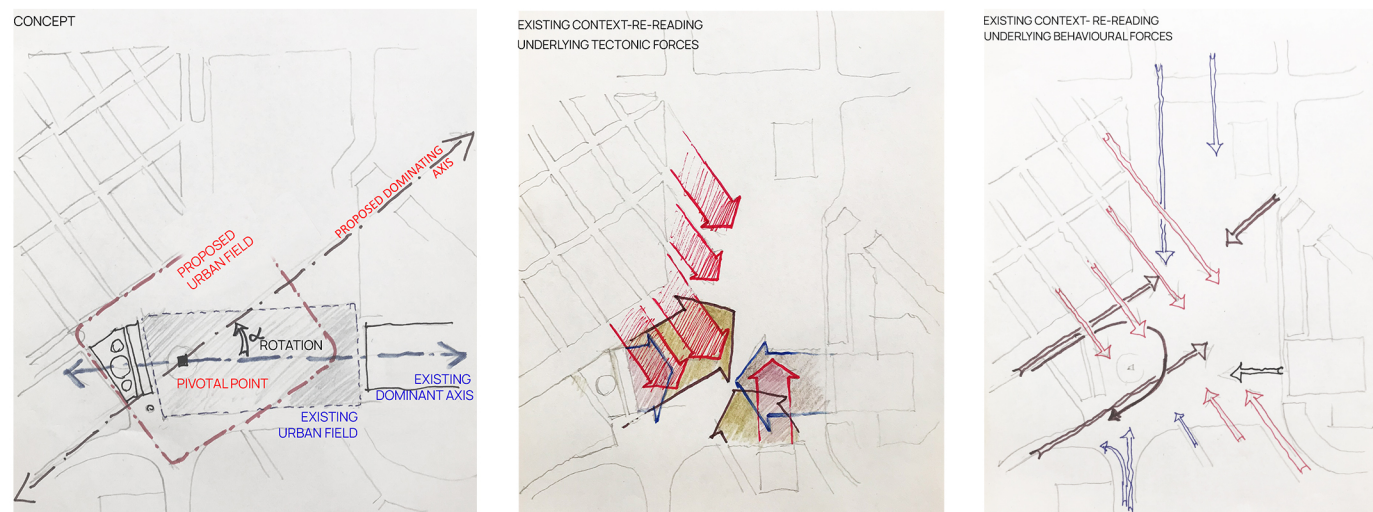


Moreover, a *pseudo-urban area* has emerged on the western side of the Gezi Park as a result of the construction of underground vehicular tunnel from Elmadağ towards Tarlabası which left the ground for pedestrianization in an unplanned manner. Furthermore, *undefined zones* have also appeared; one of which on the western end of this area and another which already existed at the enterence of İstiklal Street.

All these miscalculated arrangements negatively contributed to the **vagueness and illegibility of the square** as a well-defined urban space when compared to its equivalent precedents.

URBAN DESIGN CONCEPT

This set of very obvious problems can easily be analyzed and understood through the **principles of the discipline/studies of the formal grammar of the urban spaces**. Based on this formal and critical analysis, a judicious **strategy of transforming and amending the grammatical errors** is proposed. Therefore, the proposed urban design scheme is not only an **act of re-reading the urban text** through this **deeply-rooted grammar** but also an **operation of re-writing this text** in line with its geometrical essence.



Not only historical documents and studies focusing on the formation and transformation of Taksim square but also researches on the intersection area between 'shape grammars' and 'urban morphology' on the case of Taksim square reveal the **underlying structure of the formal grammar of this specific urban space**. This underlying morphology can be summarized as; **two gridal fields rotating over each other taking the Taksim Republic Monument as the pivotal center point of this rotation**. These two fields are; firstly the urban grid determined by the Talimhane Neighbourhood while the second one is the field determined by the Gezi Park. Consequently, the **tectonic forces of surrounding buildings** that act upon the square **suggest an angular orientation** instead of the existing alignment of the current square. Furthermore, behavioural and perceptual forces acting upon the square also imply an angular orientation particularly when the movement patterns of the people in the periphery of the square are considered.

Based on these critical observations and geometrical analyses, the proposed urban design intervention concept is simply the rotation of both organizing axis and the primary orientation of this urban space. This **operation is intended to be revealed** to the user by **exposing the evidences of the superposition of these two layers** / underlying grids via patterns of pavement throughout the proposed urban space.

This urban tactic which is based on the rotation of primal orientation from existing 'polarization axis' which lies between Maksem and the AKM building towards the new 'axis of infiltration', **enables to integrate the former dichotomies of urban-natural** as well as *traditional-contemporary*. Thus, 'The New Taksim Square' is **organized along the cross axes of infiltration and integration**. In this manner, **a holistic, legible and permeable urban realm is achieved**.



The proposed **urban amphitheatre** which has a hybrid character (green and solid) plays a leading role in integrating the green area level to the urban plaza level gradually and gently. The amphitheatre also serves as a memorial to the political events and the martyrs of 1977 and 2013 (*via amphitheatres of 34 element and 9 elements*). Across this very hub, the unique wall of the Historical Maksem building facing the square constitutes an **urban screen** which creates a focal point in the proposed arrangement.



SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTENT

Having been the **medium of social, cultural and particularly political polarization of the community**, Taksim Square seems to be (almost deliberately) organized in accordance with this political agenda. The square appears to be organized symmetrically along an evil **axis of polarization, conflict and confrontation** creating opposing poles between traditional and contemporary aspects; or rather conservative and revolutionary politics. This axial and **symmetrical configuration which locates the symbols of each side** (particularly the *Mosque* and *AKM*) on the opposite sides of this geometric organisation only serves to keep the social tensions.

The proposed urban scheme, however, suggests the **reconciliation of this age-old political and social conflict in a homogenous setting**. It provides a **planar 'field configuration' instead of an axial symmetry**. Thus, it supplies a spatial opportunity for equal distribution of 'urban rights', reconciliation and collaboration.

COLLECTIVE MEMORY

Taksim is associated with **the history of labour movements** not only in Istanbul but in Turkey. The square is a **'place' of long-accumulated collective memory** including political events, demonstrations, battles and even losses of innocent lives. Therefore, the proposed scheme accommodates a network of humble memorials emphasizing the **lines of collective memory**.

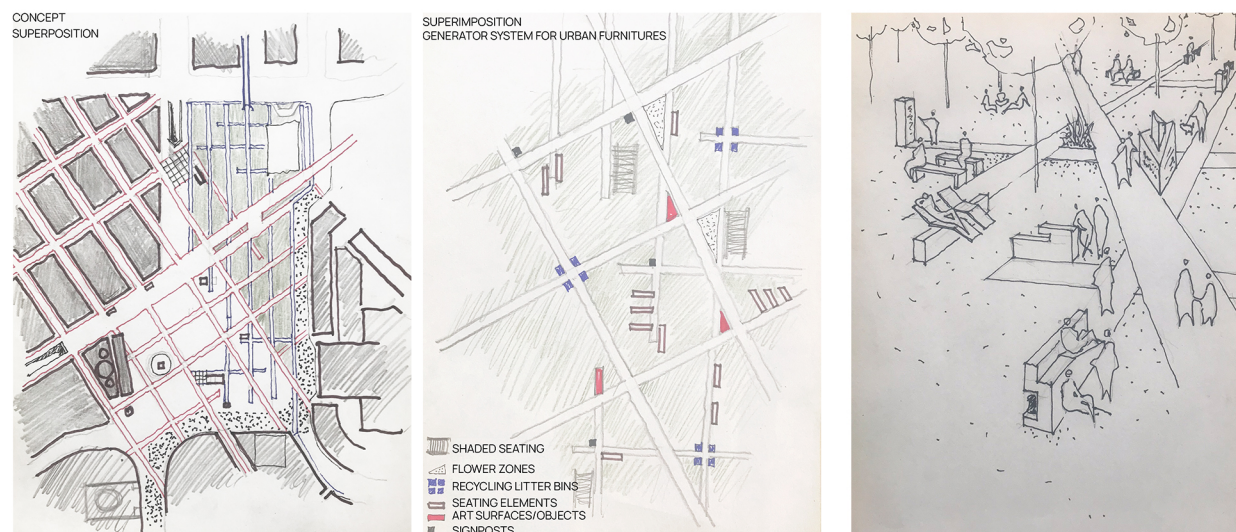


HERITAGE VALUES AND CONSERVATION ISSUES

In addition to the trees in the Gezi Park, its greenery, its major pathways, the elements of water are also the major assets of *natural heritage*. Moreover, Maksem and the Taksim fountain are the primary architectural assets of cultural and historical *architectural heritage*. **Not only by conserving and restoring these elements, but also by placing the in to the heart of the new spatial configuration, the proposed scheme exalts the heritage of Taksim.**

LANDSCAPE CHARACTERISTICS

The strategy of rotation and associated axes are also deployed as overpasses and passages to provide the green continuity extending to Maçka Park. Besides, the aforementioned **tactics of superimposition** also serves as a **generator mechanism for urban equipment and urban furnitures**.



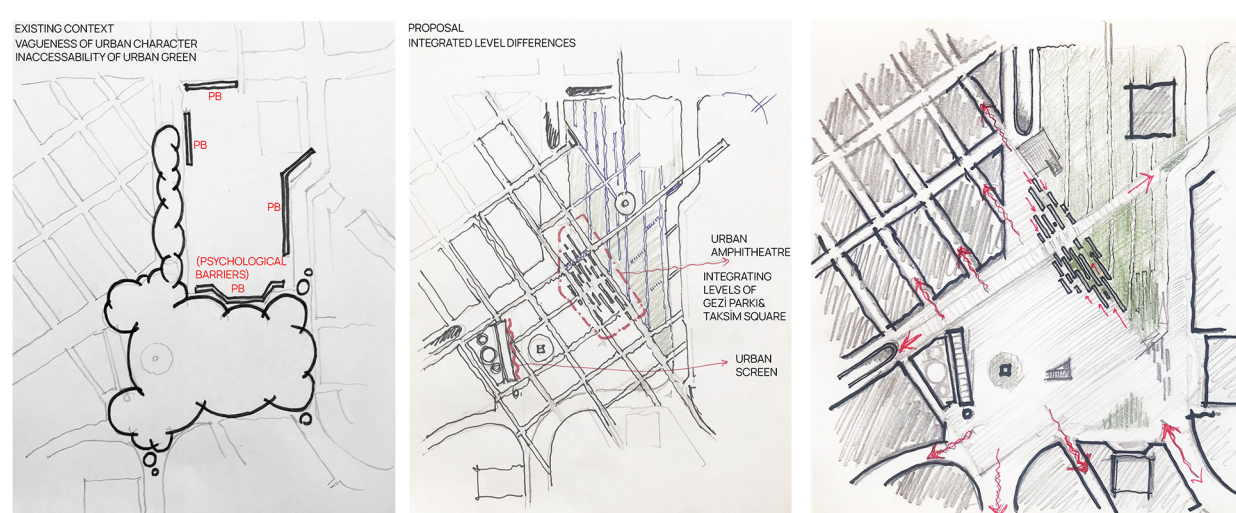
URBAN AFFAIRS & TRANSPORTATION

The proposed scheme maintains not only the current traffic arrangement but also the public transportation routes and stops. Along with the principles of landscape design and green continuity, an opportunity for not only **jogging routes** but also **bicycle transportation** is proposed **via paths in the park, overpasses and pedestrian bridges extending to the green corridor at urban scale.**

URBAN CHARACTER




Consequently, the proposed intervention utilizes the **underlying behavioural and perceptual forces** as well as **underlying tectonic forces** to **correlate the spatial organization of the spatial content with the conditions of the periphery of its container**. Thus, the grammatical errors of the spatial formation are corrected; **a)** to eliminate the **vagueness of urban character**, **b)** to overcome the problems regarding the **inaccessibility of Gezi Park** as an urban green in terms of its perception from and through the square because of the **psychological barriers** surrounding the park. Furthermore, water feature (which constitutes the original spirit of Taksim) will be reintegrated to both the Taksim Square and the Gezi Park in accordance with the juxtaposed grids.

The new urban plaza and its heart containing the historical elements such as Maksem building and Fountain and newly built mosque gains a unique character in maximum harmony with its periphery. In parallel with this spatial core, the amphitheatre, which has a hybrid, modest and casual character, constitutes an intersection hub among the urban area, its core and the urban green zone. **In this way the all fragmented aspects of the park are intended to be united in a coherent whole.**







ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS PLANS

EXISTING

-  GREEN CORRIDORS
-  LINES OF DISCONTINUITY
-  POINTS OF DISCONTINUITY










PROPOSAL









-  GREEN CORRIDORS
-  PROPOSED GREEN BRIDGES / OVERPASSES
-  CONNECTION BETWEEN GREEN CORRIDORS
-  CONNECTION BETWEEN GREEN CORRIDORS

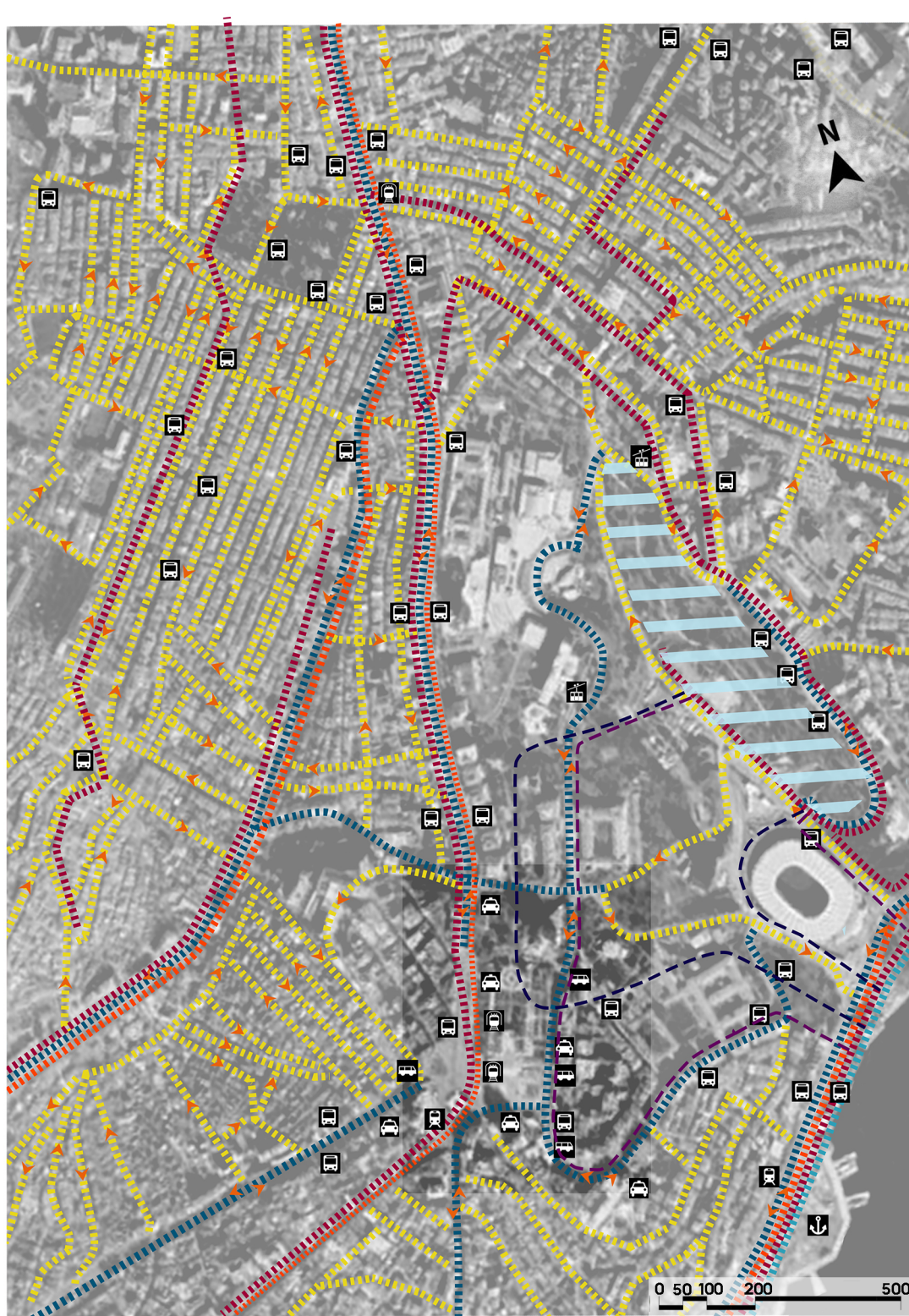


EXISTING

STOPS








-  BUS
-  CABLE CAR
-  TAXI
-  DOLMUŞ
-  TRAMWAY
-  METRO
-  FERRY PORT






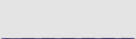


-  BIDIRECTIONAL VEHICLE ROAD
-  ONE WAY VEHICLE ROAD
-  PUBLIC TRANSPORT ROUTE
-  CYCLING PATH
-  RUNNING PATHS
-  DISCONTINUITY OF RUNNING PATHS
-  DISCONTINUITY OF CYCLE PATHS
-  POTENTIAL RUNNING ZONE

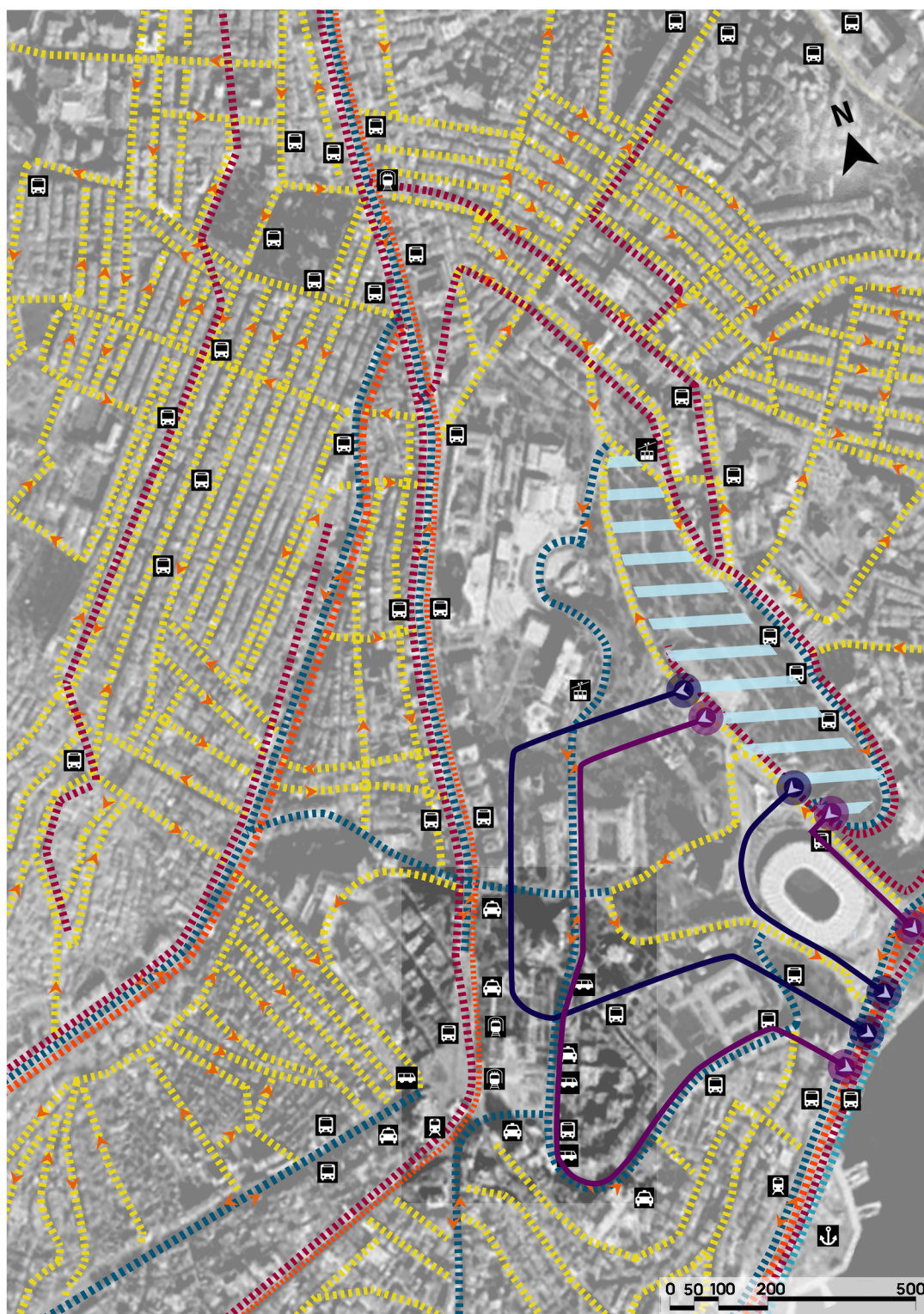


PROPOSAL

STOPS

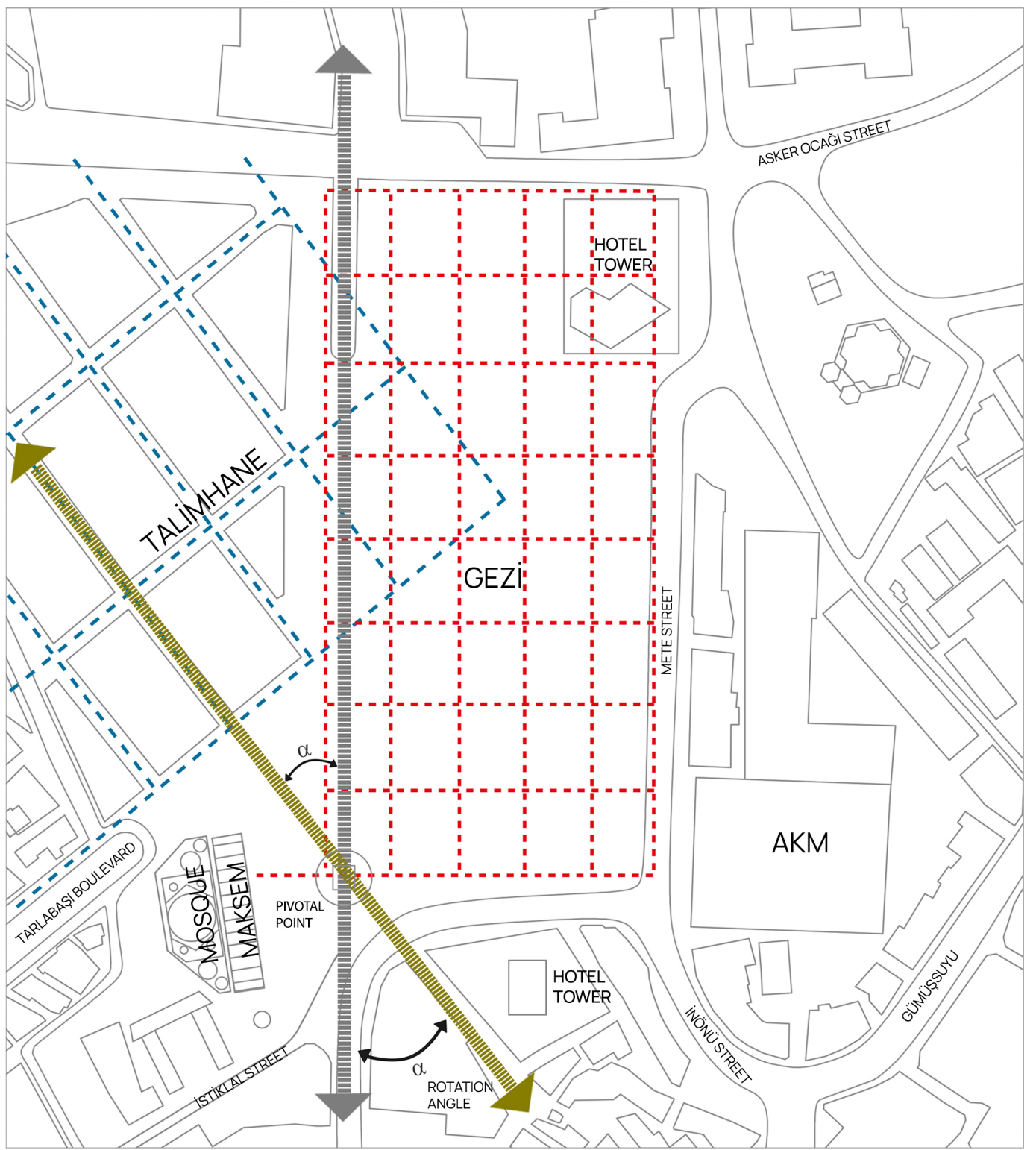
-  BUS
-  CABLE CAR
-  TAXI
-  DOLMUŞ
-  TRAMWAY
-  METRO
-  FERRY PORT

-  BIDIRECTIONAL VEHICLE ROAD
-  ONE WAY VEHICLE ROAD
-  PUBLIC TRANSPORT ROUTE
-  CYCLING PATH
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-  DISCONTINUITY OF CYCLE PATHS
-  POTENTIAL RUNNING ZONE

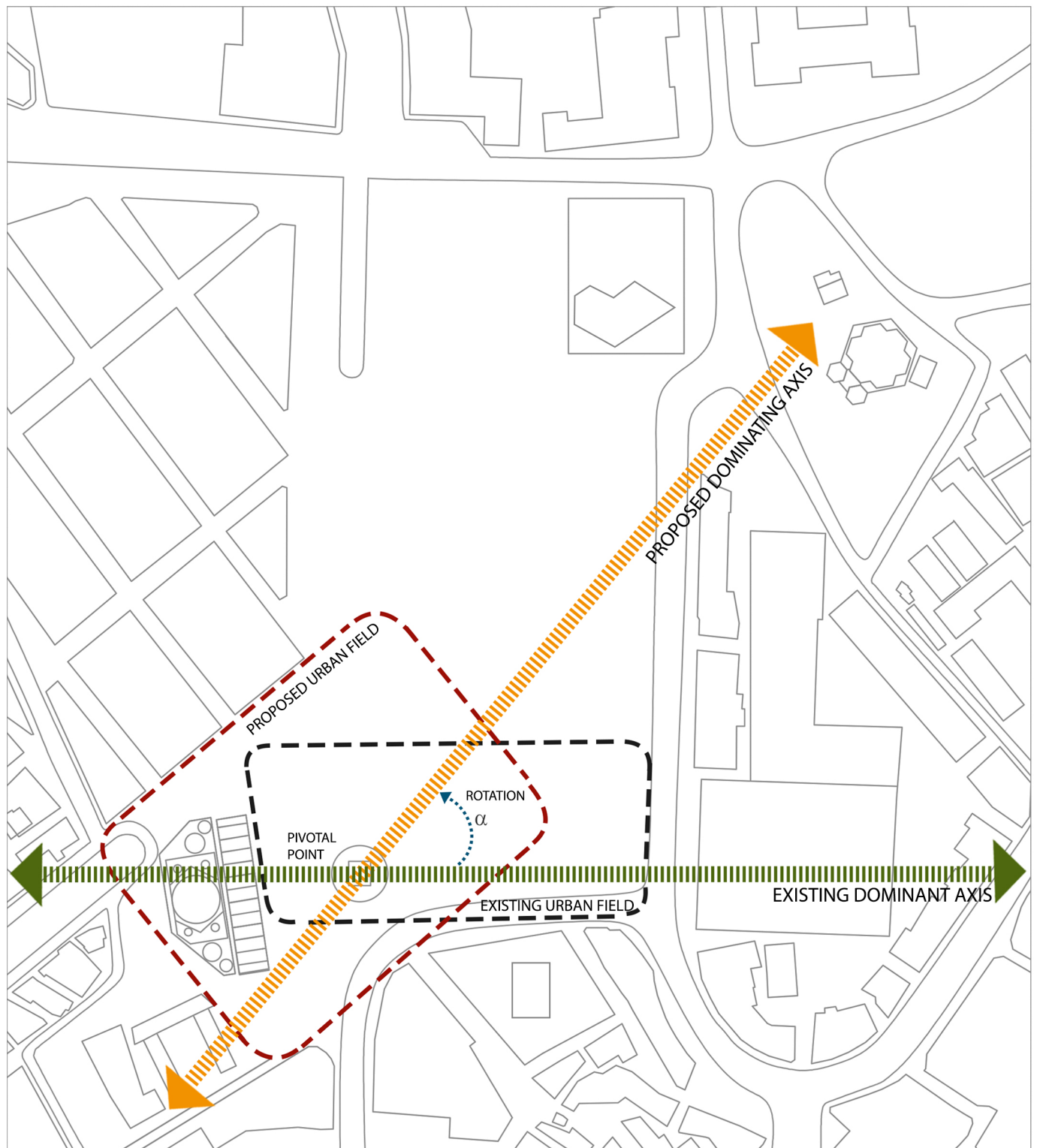


DIAGRAMS

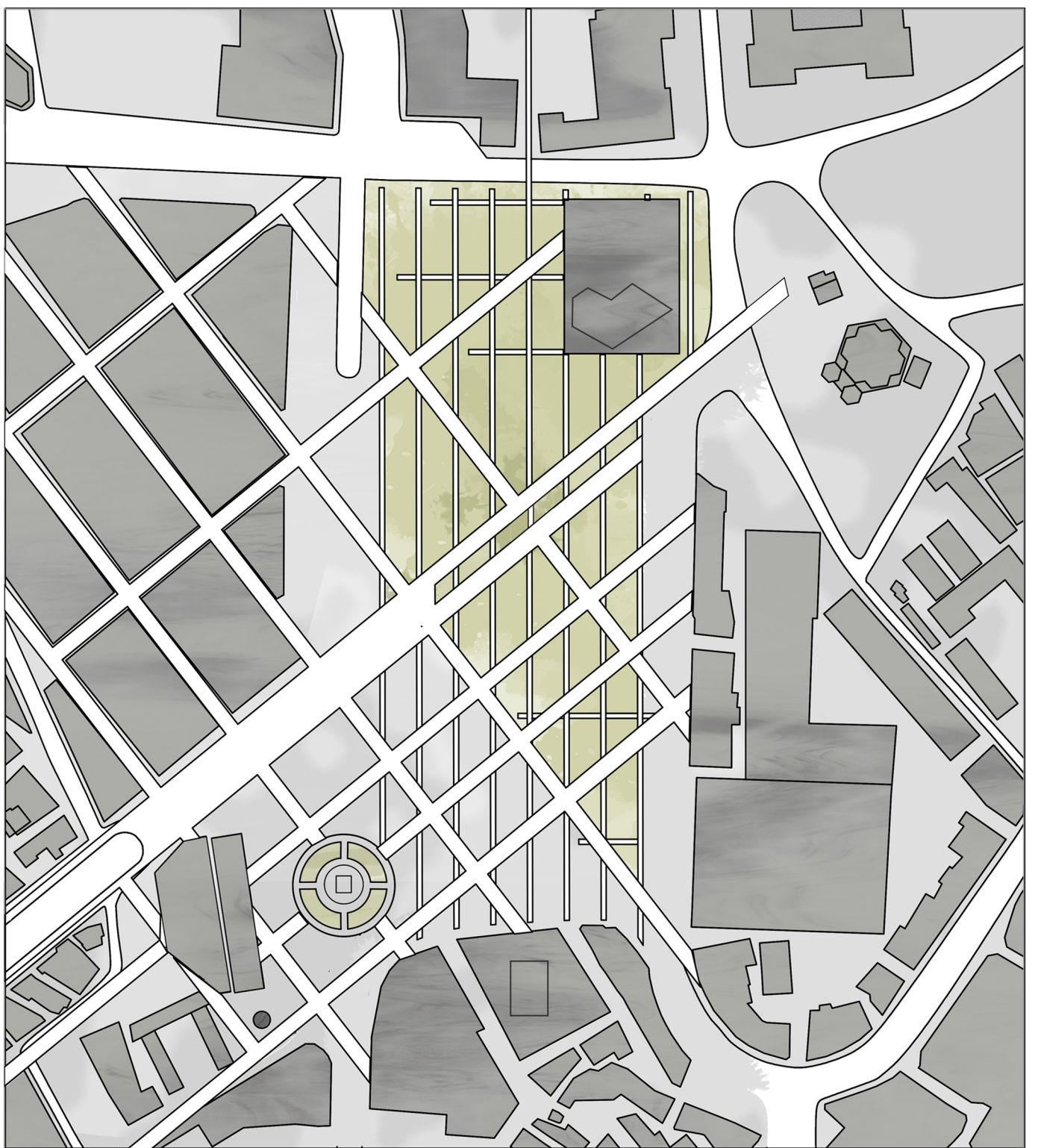
EXISTING CONTEXT UNDERLYING MORPHOLOGY



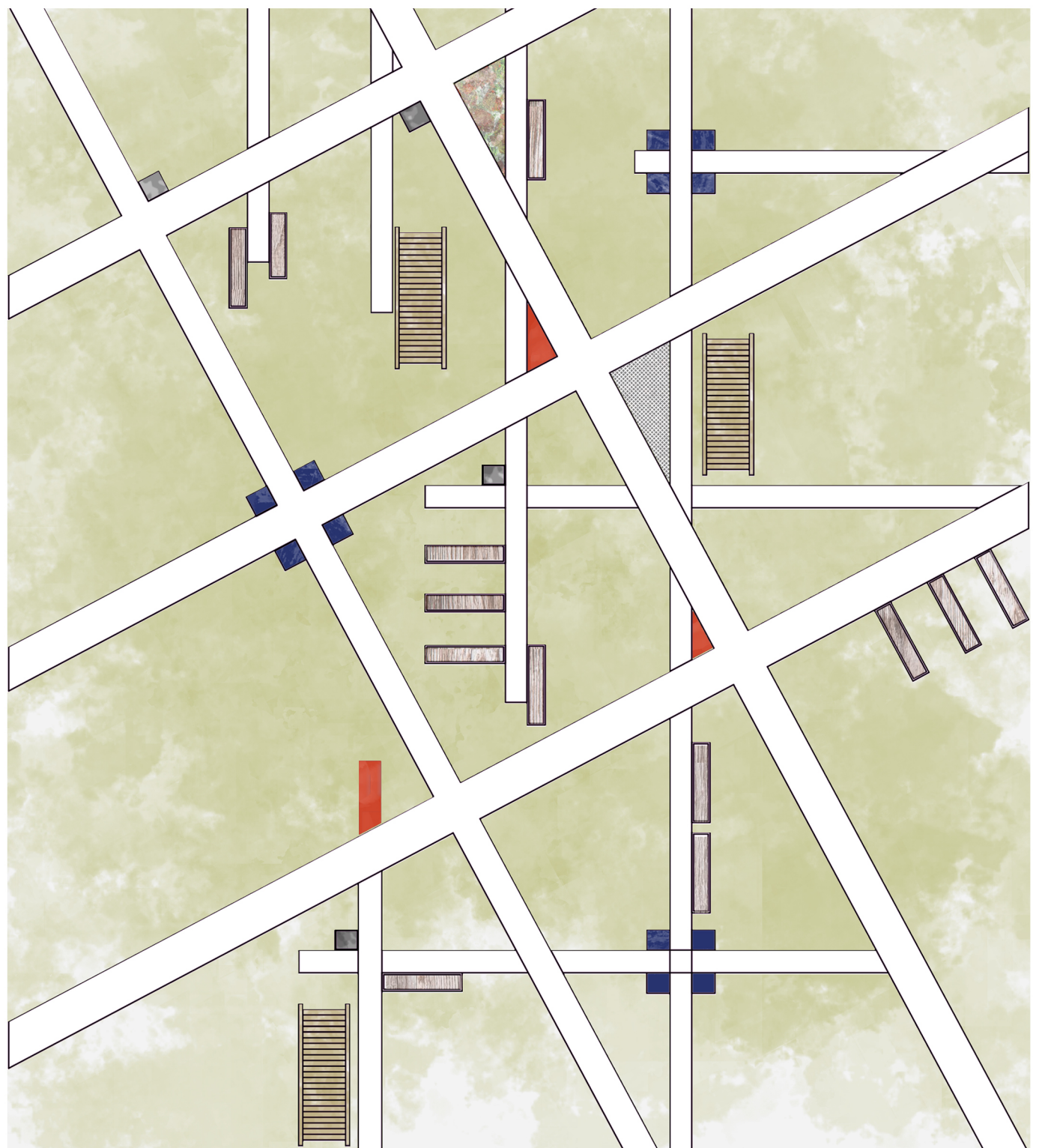
CONCEPT








CONCEPT
SUPERPOSITION

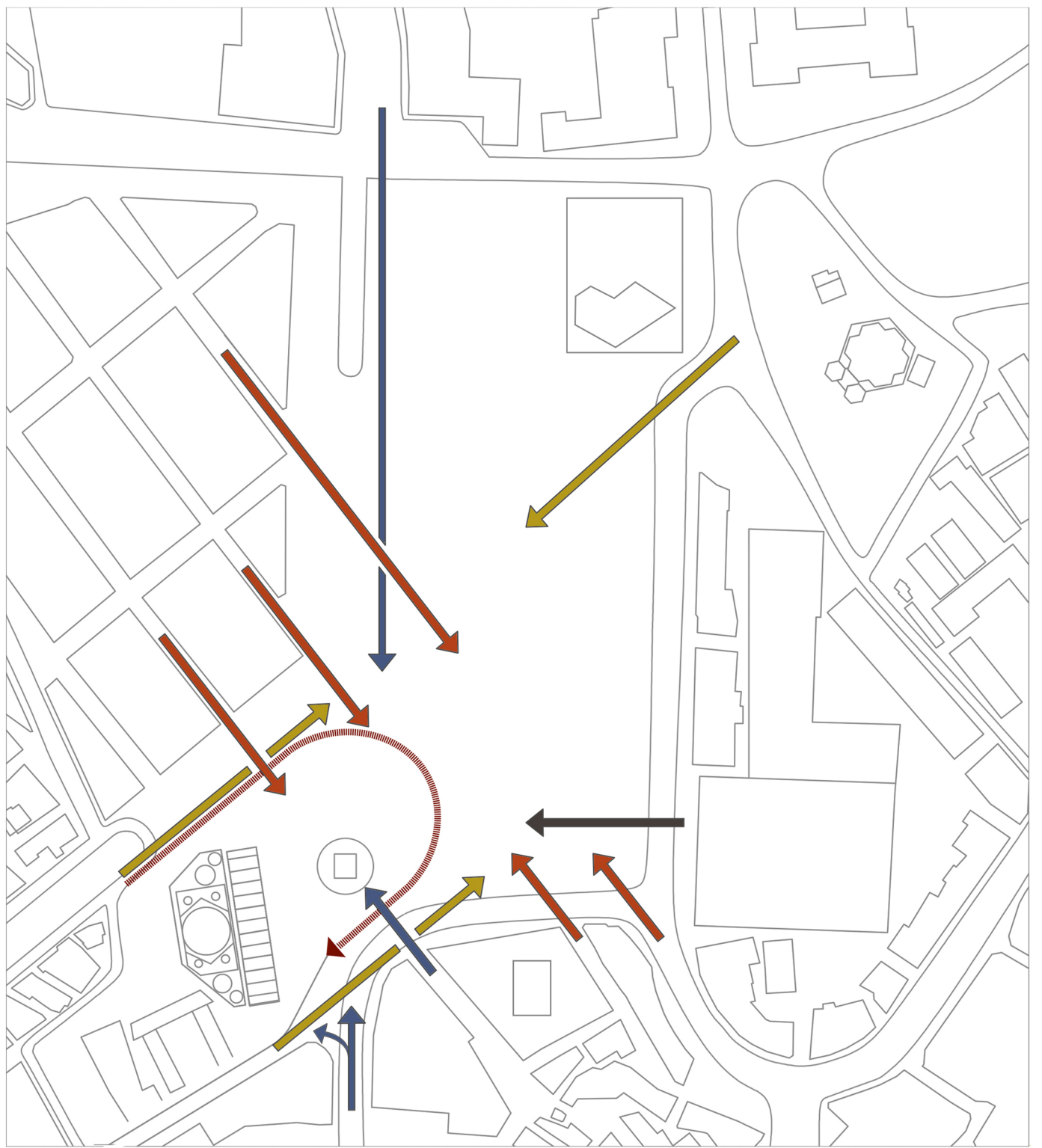


SUPERIMPOSITION
GENERATOR SYSTEM FOR
URBAN FURNITURES



-  FLOWER ZONES
-  ART SURFACES/OBJECTS
-  RECYCLING LITTER BINS
-  SHADED SEATING
-  SEATING ELEMENTS

EXISTING CONTEXT
UNDERLYING BEHAVIOURAL/
PERCEPTUAL FORCES



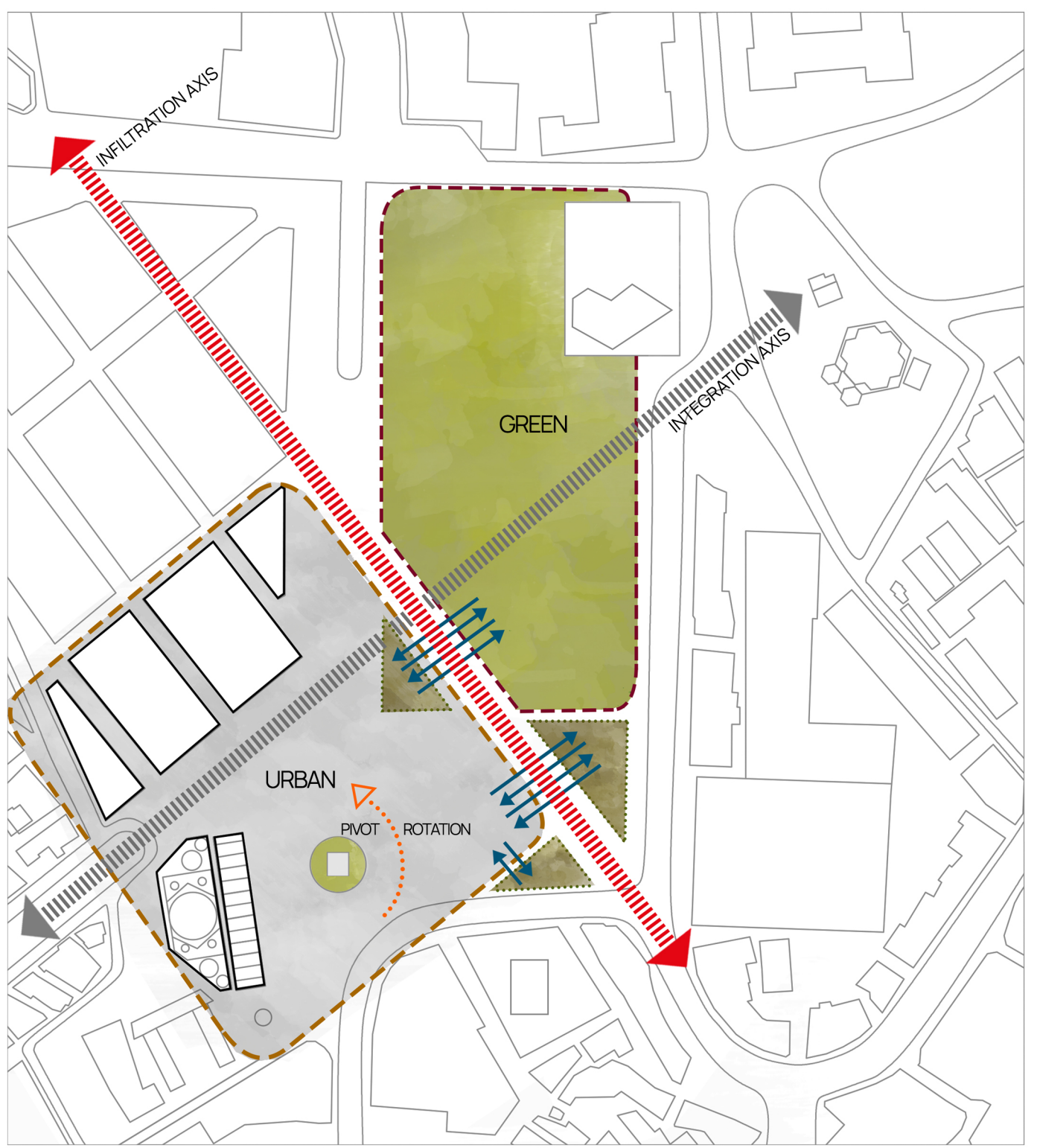
EXISTING CONTEXT
UNDERLYING TECTONIC
FORCES



EXISTING CONTEXT
URBAN / RURAL - NATURAL
DUALITY



PROPOSED SCHEME
URBAN / RURAL - NATURAL
INFILTRATION / INTEGRATION

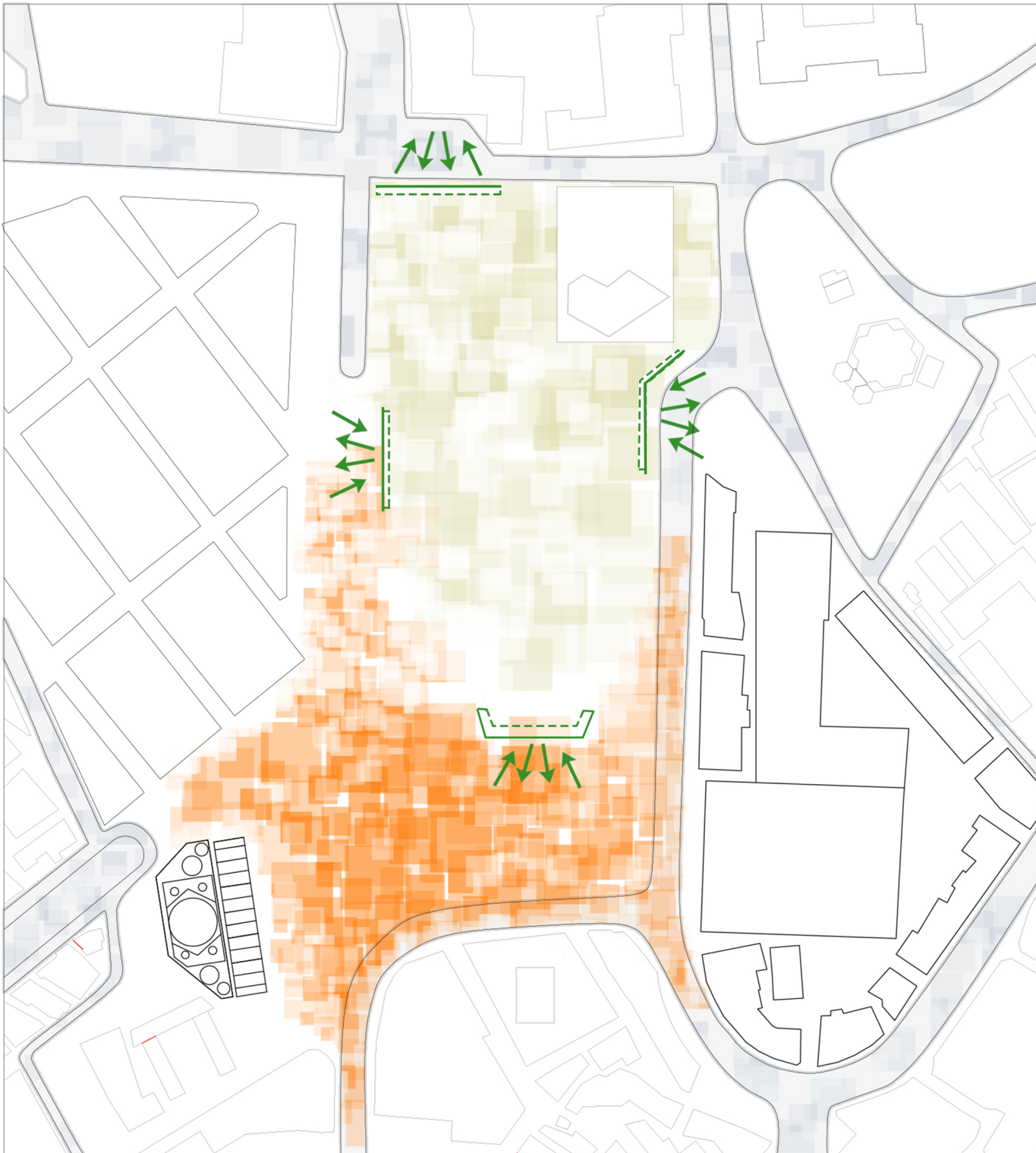


EXISTING CONTEXT

VAUGENER OF URBAN CHARACTER

INACCESSIBILITY OF URBAN GREEN

-  UNDEFINED URBAN AREA
-  GREEN AREA
-  PSYCHOLOGICAL BARRIER

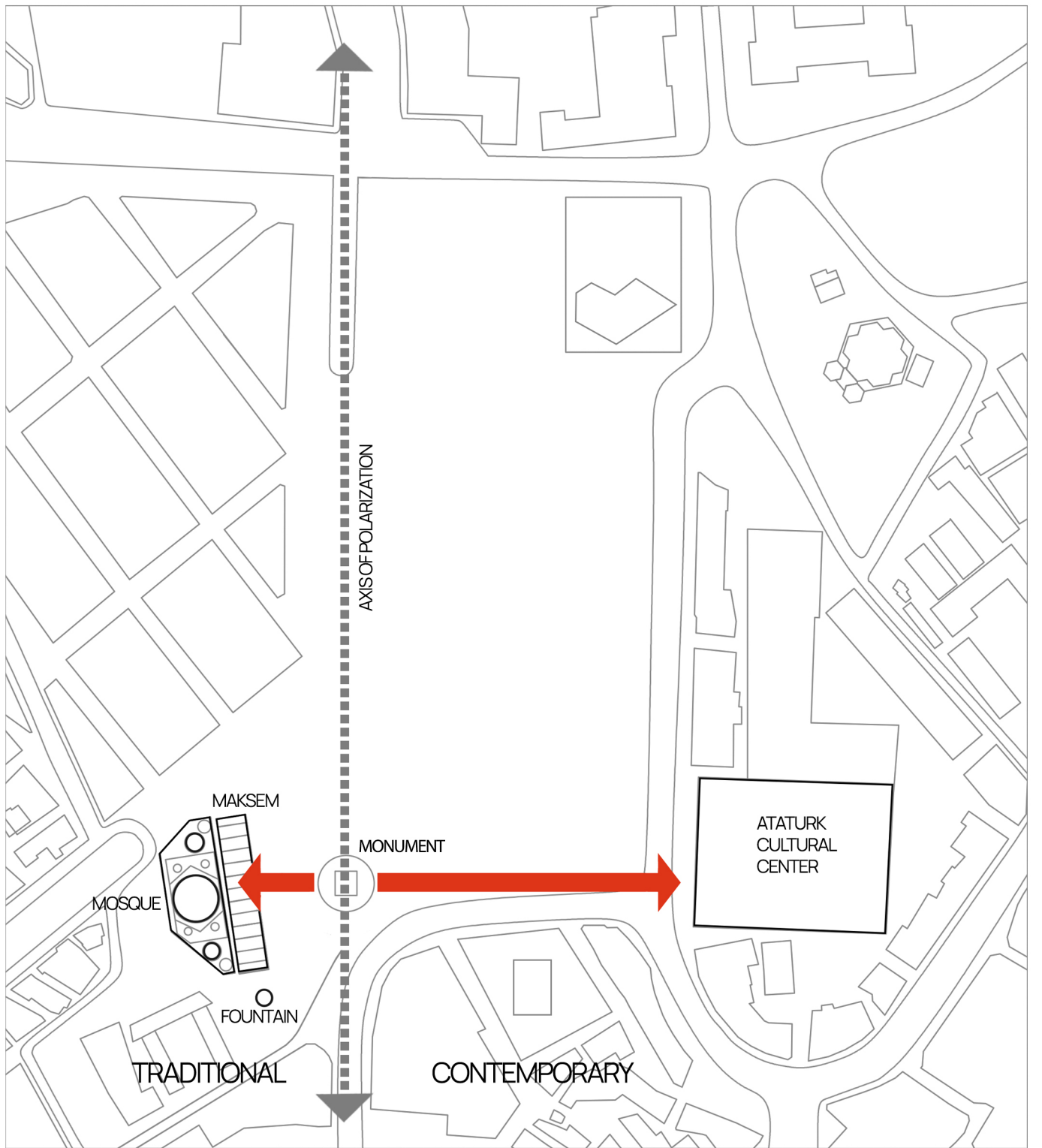


PROPOSAL



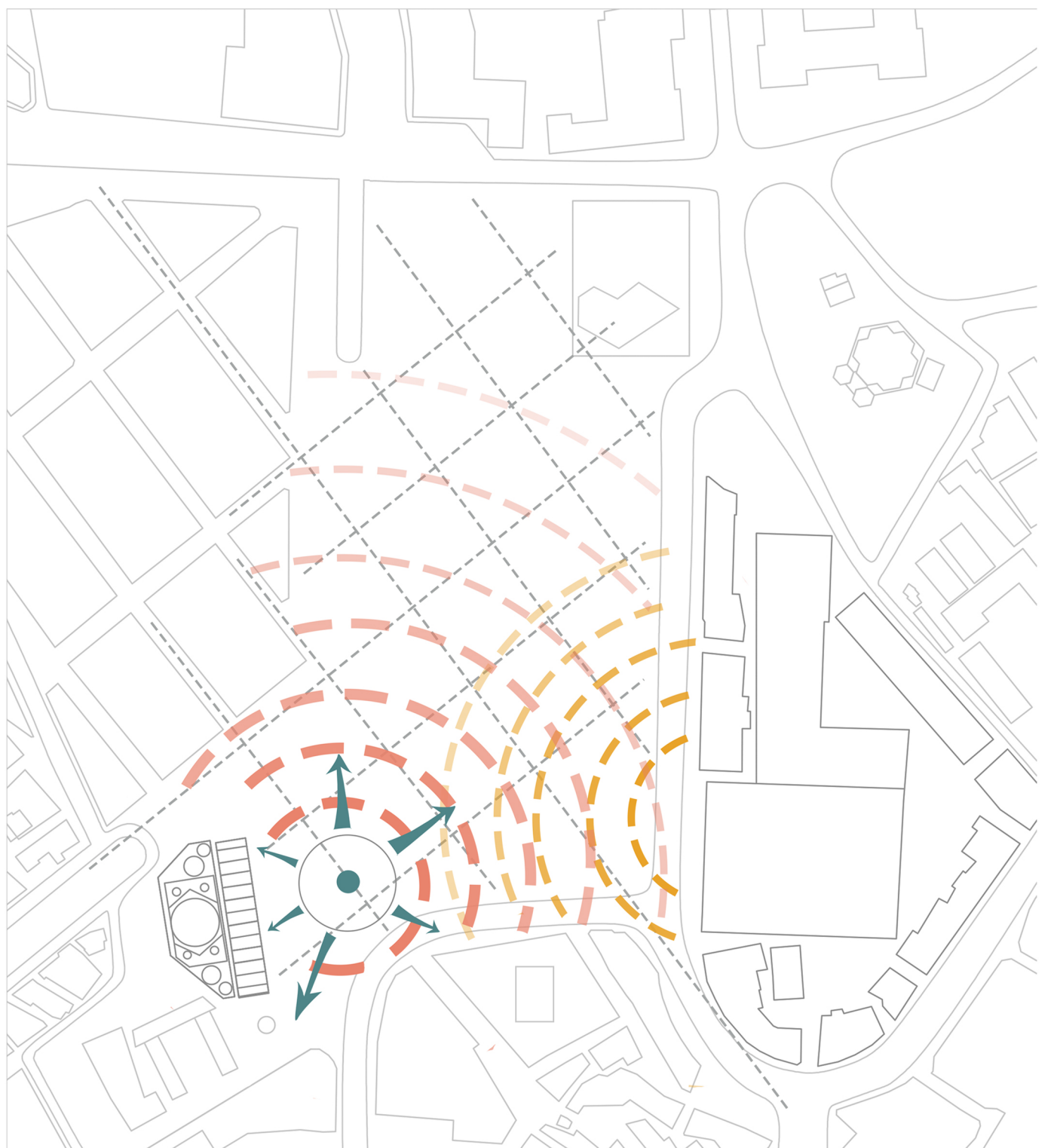
EXISTING CONTEXT

SOCIO-POLITICAL
POLARIZATION /
CONFLICT /
CONFRONTATION

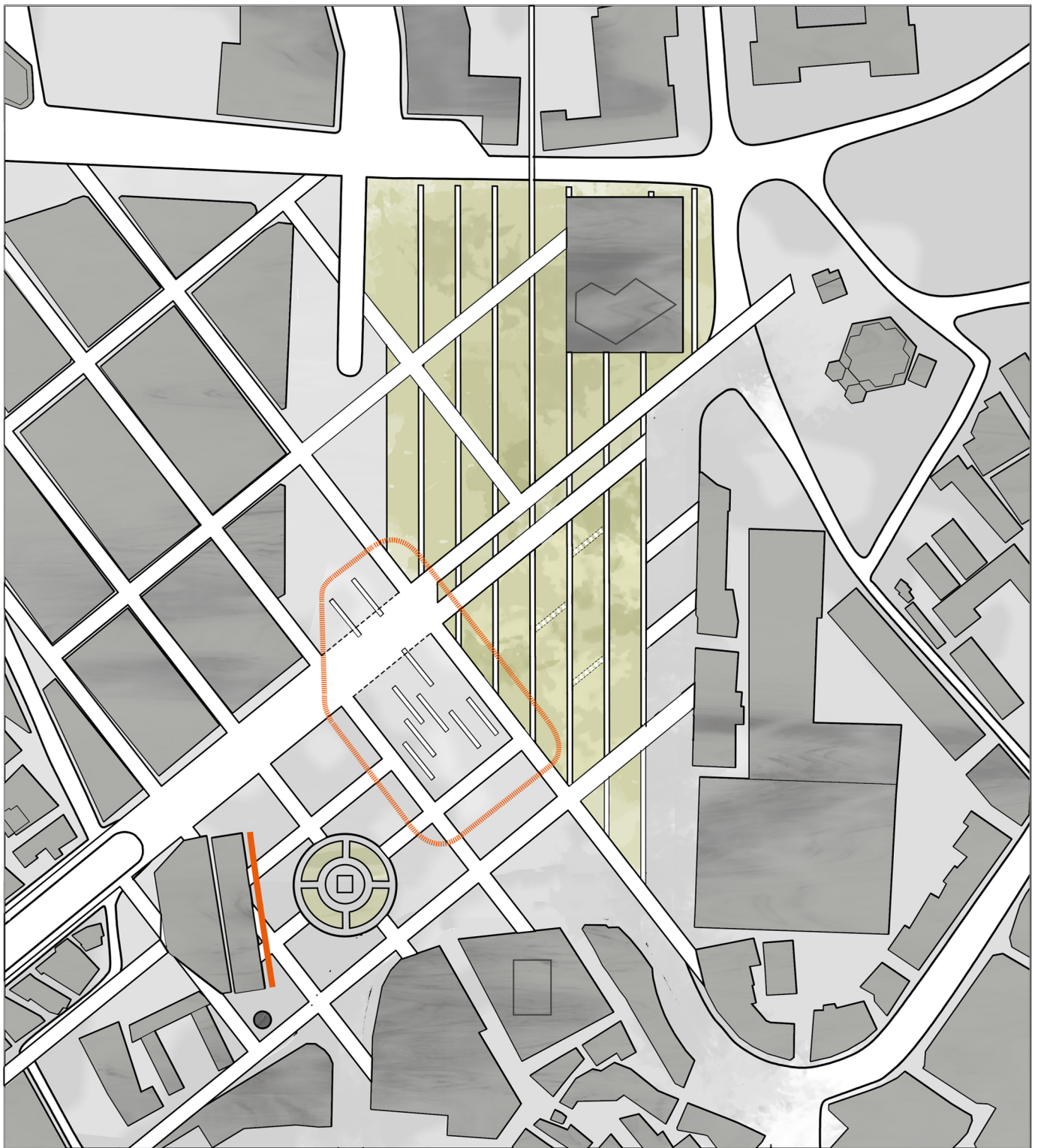


PROPOSAL

SOCIO POLITICAL
DISTRIBUTION /
RECONCILIATION /
COLLABORATION



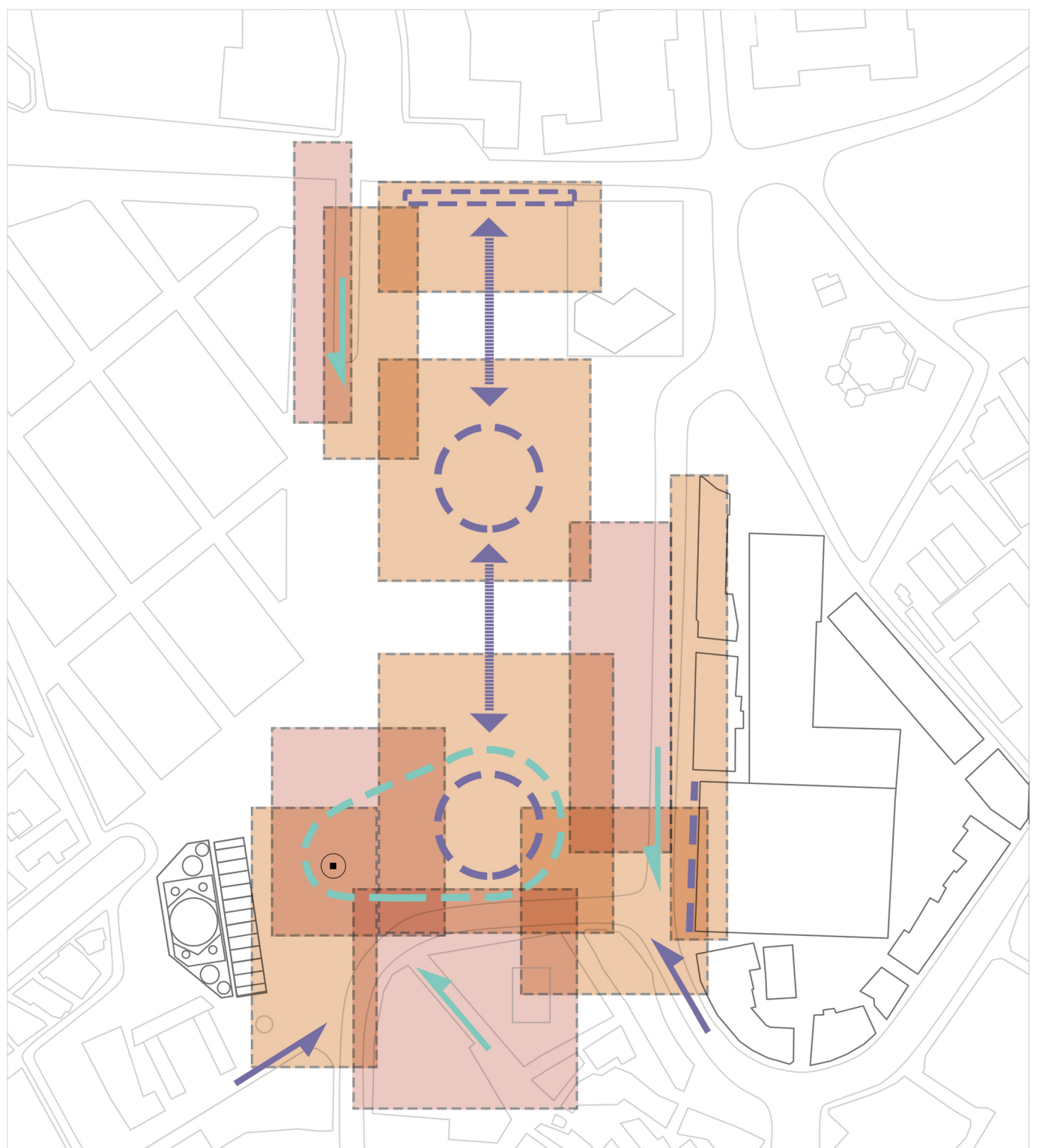
PROPOSAL
INTEGRATED LEVEL
DIFFERENCES



- URBAN AMPHITHEATRE
INTEGRATING LEVELS OF
GEZI PARK & TAKSIM SQUARE
- URBAN SCREEN

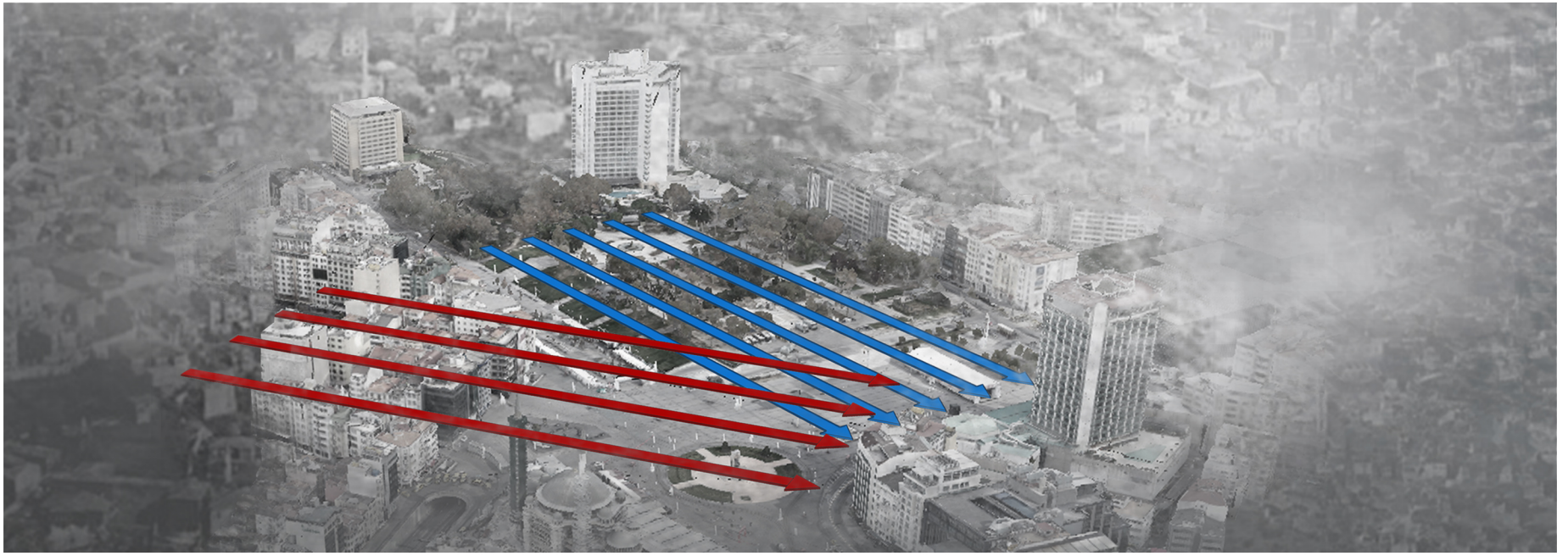
SPATIAL
COLLECTIVE MEMORY

ACCUMULATED HISTORY OF
LABOUR MOVEMENTS

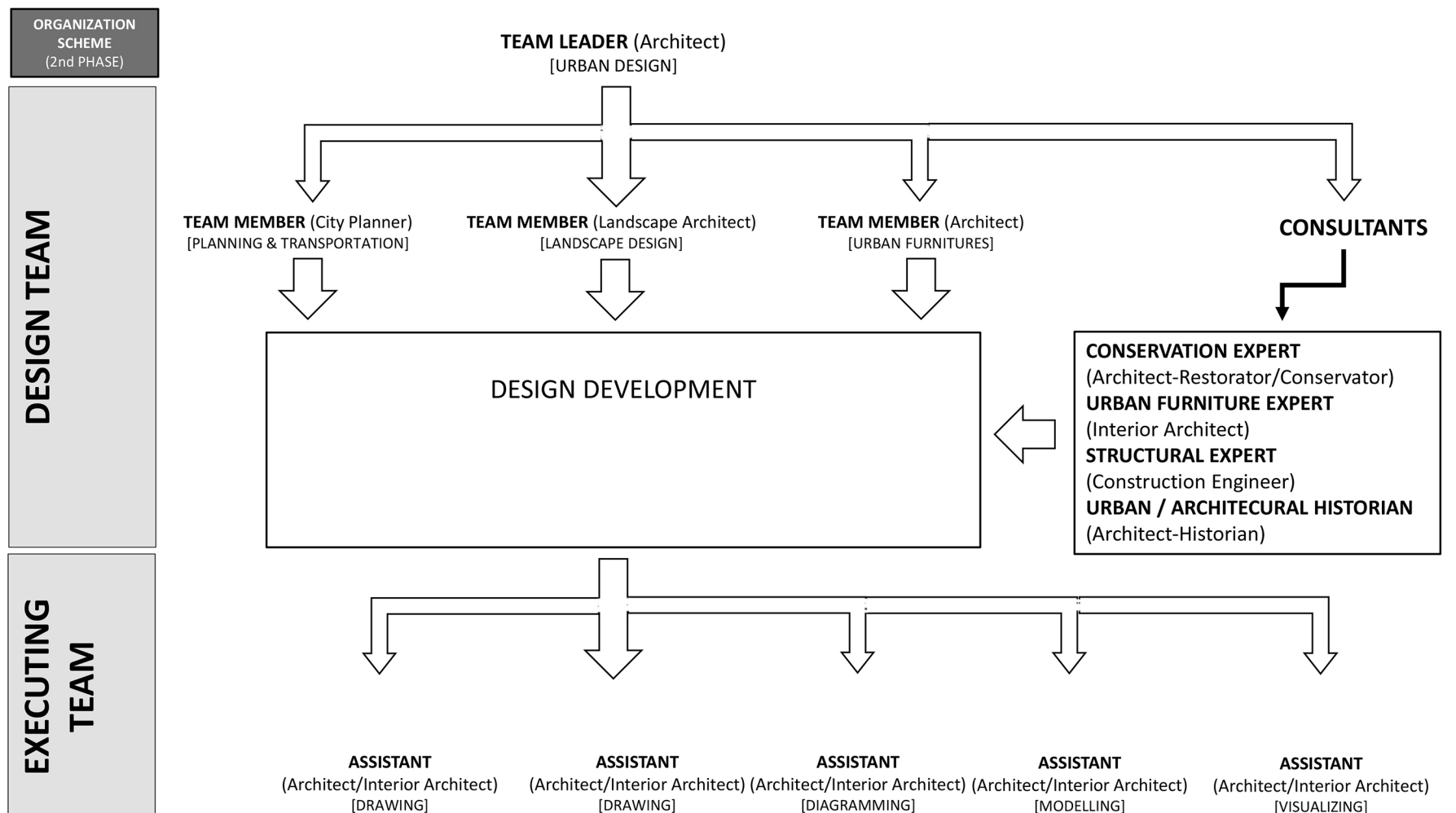


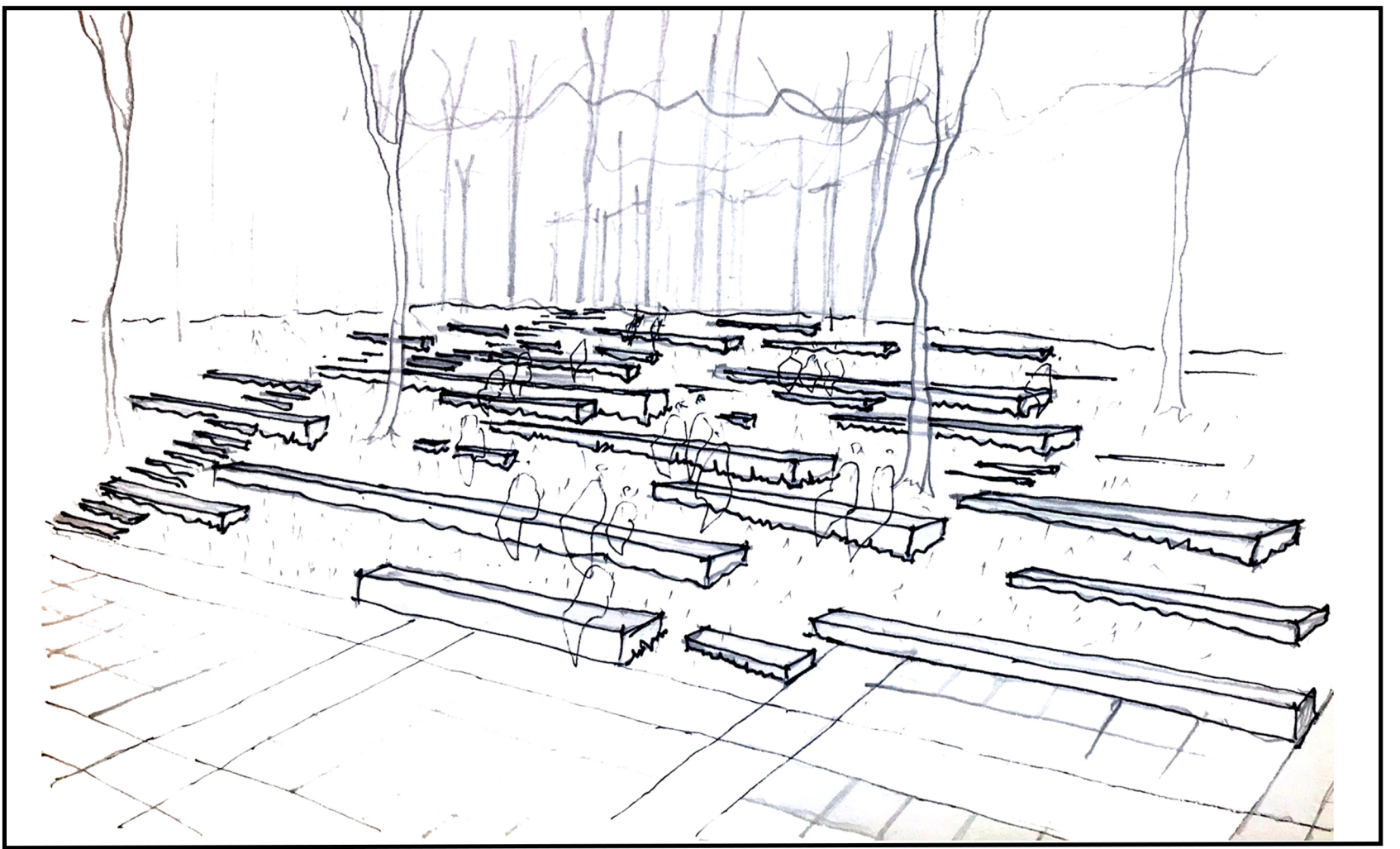
- 2013 EVENTS
- 1977 EVENTS
- 1977 LINES OF MEMORY
- 2013 LINES OF MEMORY

BEHAVIORAL /
TECTONIC FORCES

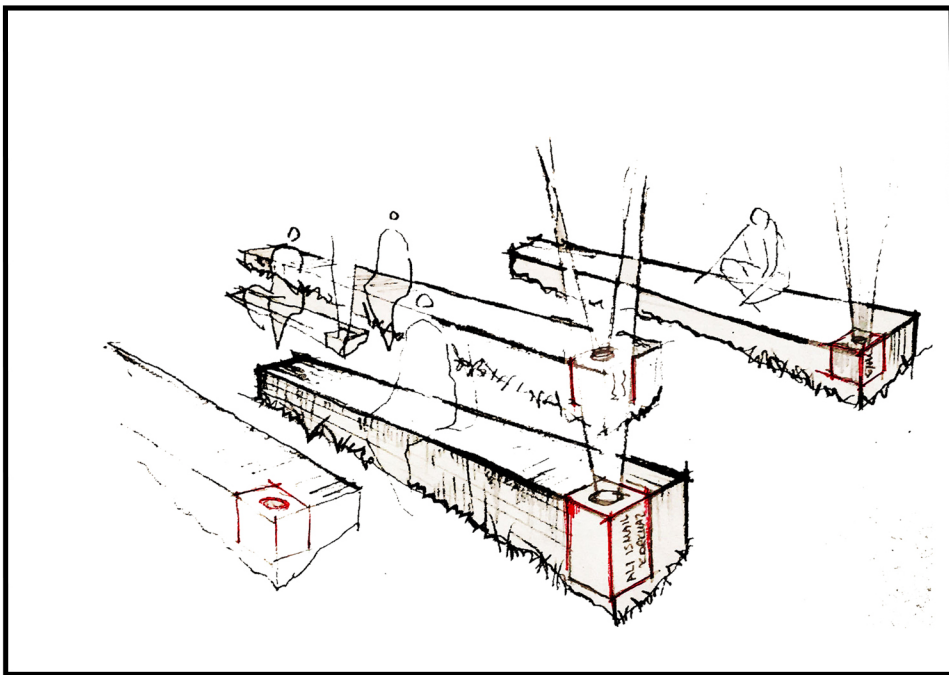


FIELDS





URBAN AMPHITHEATRE



MEMORIAL AMPHI COMPONENTS

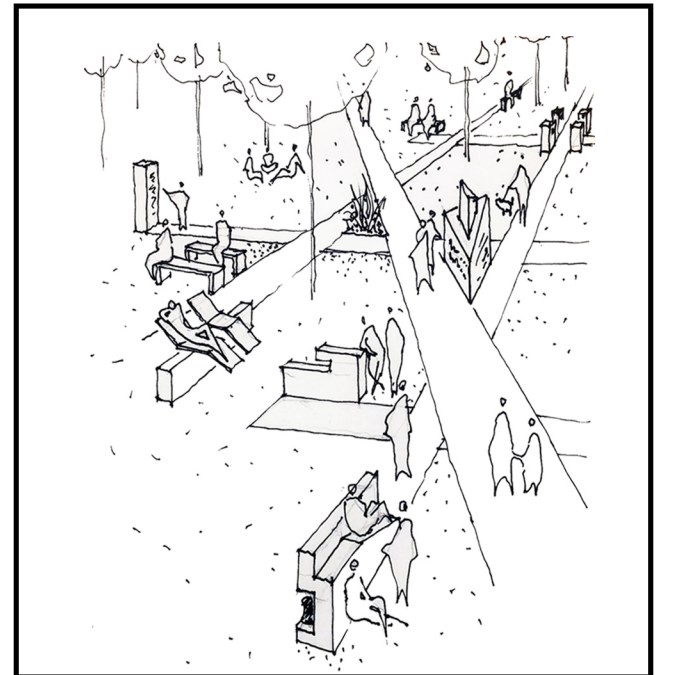
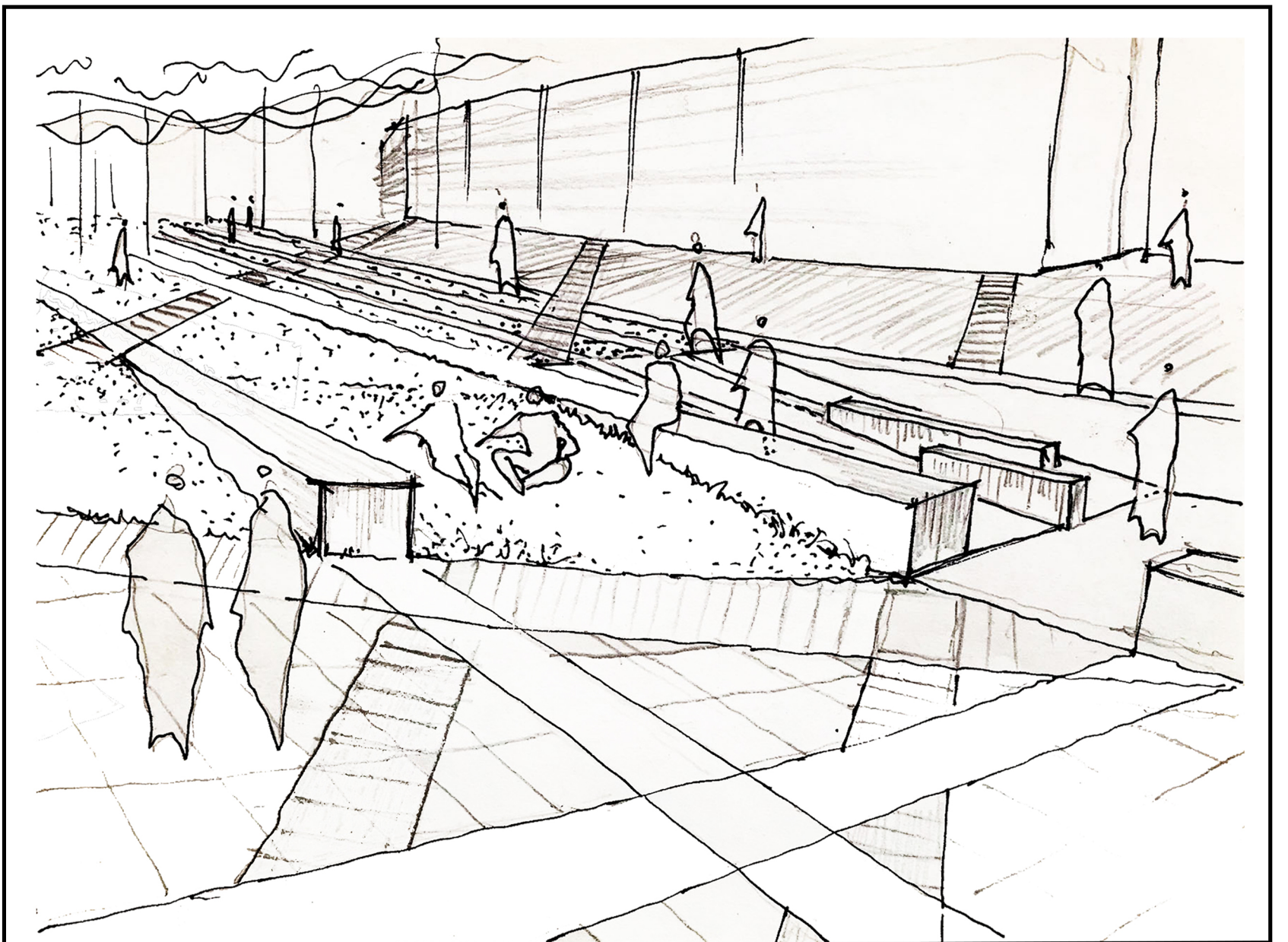


IMAGE FROM GEZI PARK



A VIEW TOWARDS METE STREET