



Fostering trauma recovery through citizen participation

Reshaping public space through trauma-informed urban design in Alytus, Lithuania

P5 Presentation | Technische Universiteit Delft | Urbanism
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Research question
Methods and analytical approach

Collective trauma
Micro-districts
Participation

Engagement strategy
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Conclusion(s)
Final remarks

Introduction



Debrecenas, Klaipėda

August 2023



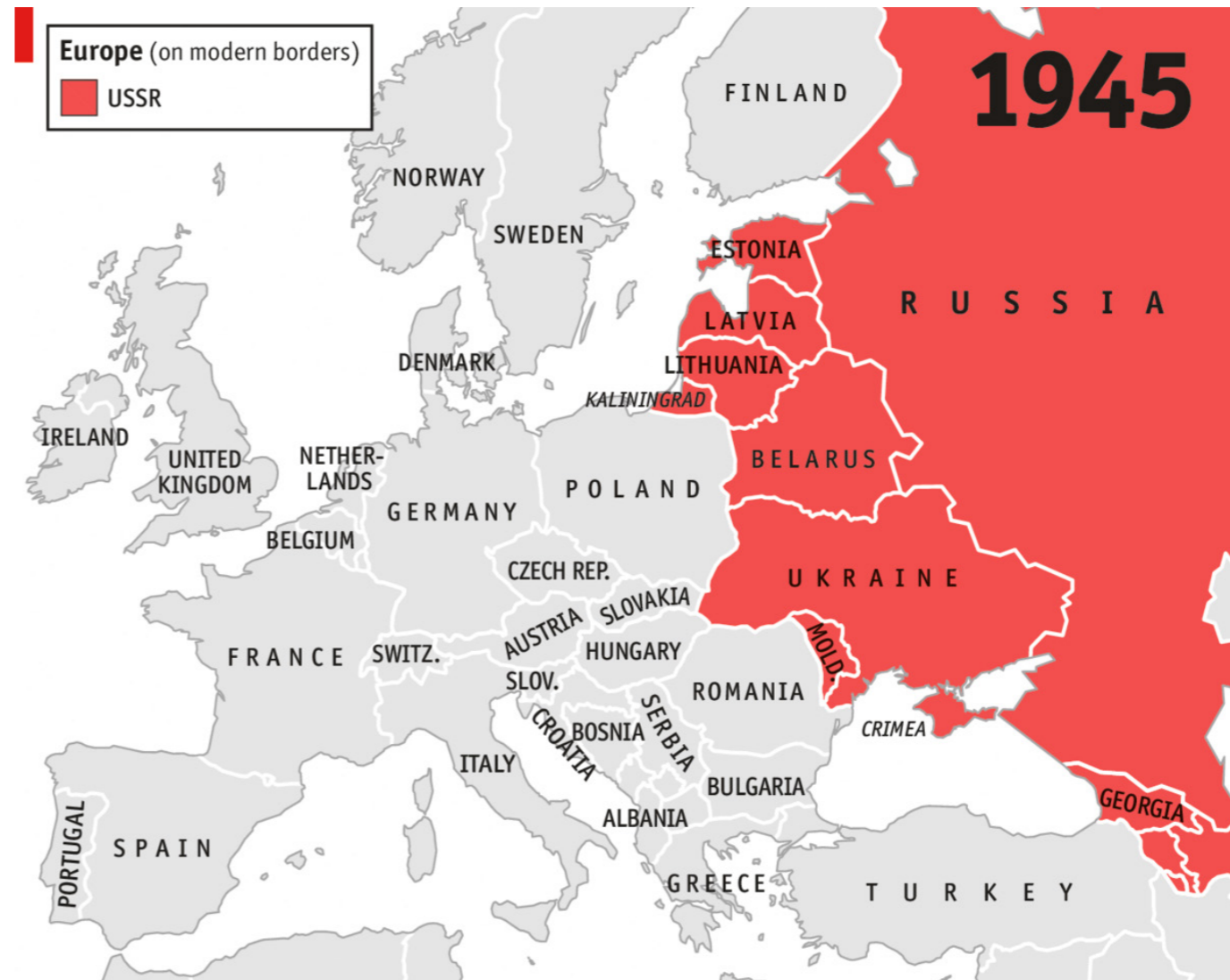
Vidzgiris, Alytus

April 2024

Introduction



[*What They Have Done To Us: Lithuanian life in terms of the psychology of trauma*]



USSR in 1945

Gailienė, D. (2021). *Ką Jie Mums Padarė: Lietuvos gyvenimas traumų psichologijos atžvilgiu* [What They Have Done To Us: Lithuanian life in terms of the psychology of trauma] (2nd ed.). Tyto Alba.

<https://www.economist.com/graphic-detail/2014/03/20/hammer-and-scythe>

Existing trends



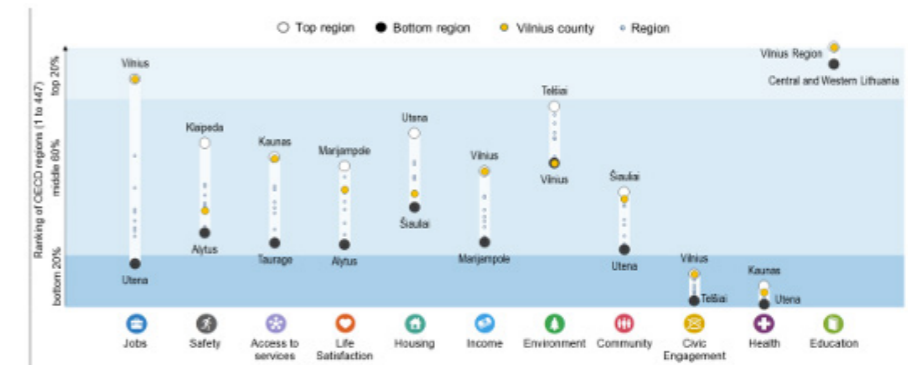
The need for self-isolation
(suburbanisation)

<https://www.bepradinio.lt/isperkamoji-nuoma-rent2buy/Kaunas-Romainiai-E-Volterio-g-3-kambariu-butis-5052/>

**“...around 47.8%
of Lithuanians feel un-
heard by authorities
and don't feel valued
in their contributions”**

Mistrust and
lack of participation
in society

Giedraitytė, V., Smaliukienė, R., & Vedlūga, T. (2022). The Impact of Citizen Participation on Public Sentiments during Crises: Comparative Study of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Sustainability. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su142416981>

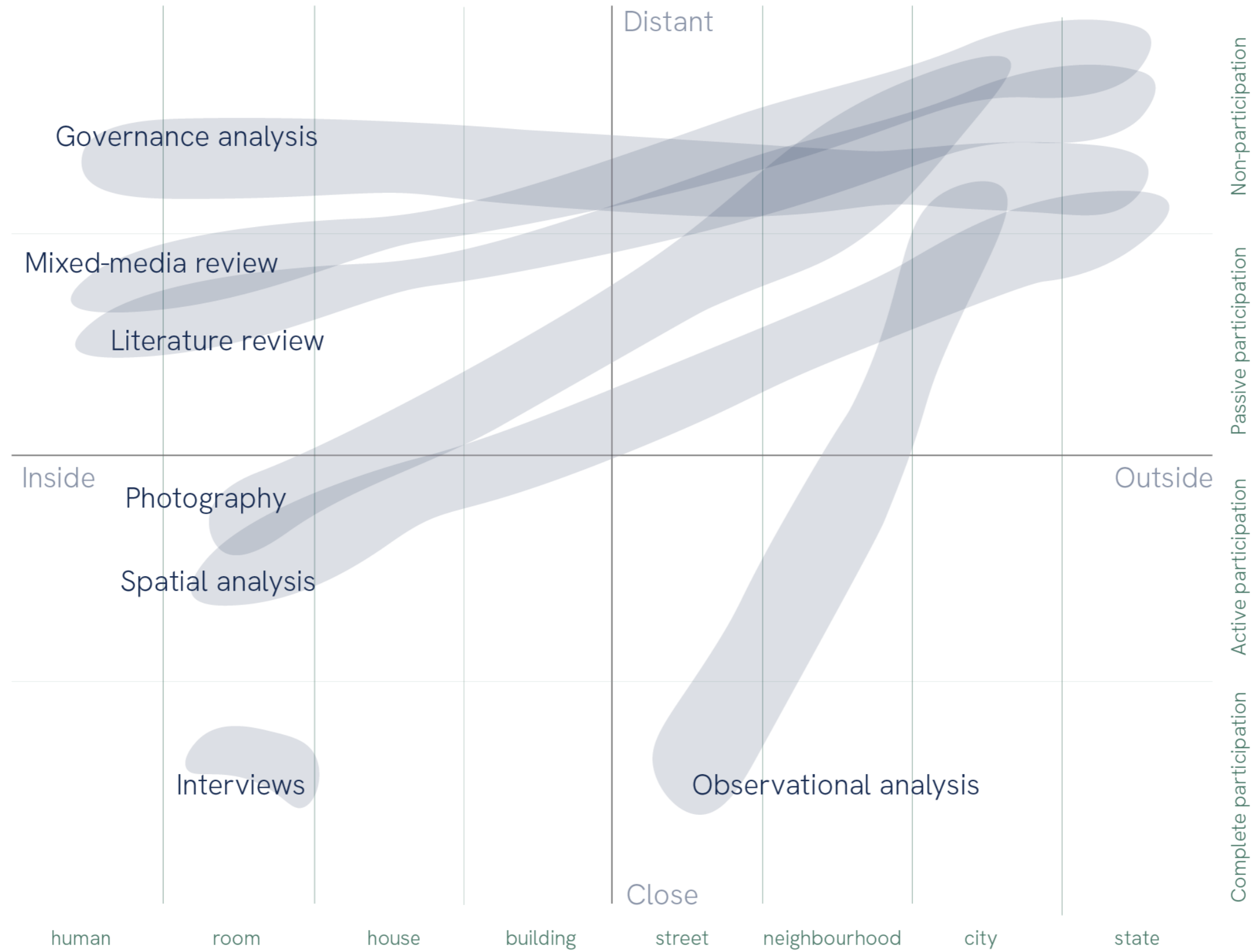


Regional gaps in well-being
with jobs, safety and ac-
cess to services leading.

OECD, (2021). Regions and Cities at a Glance. OECD.

How can participatory urban design facilitate the healing of collective trauma while also enhancing public spaces within micro-districts in Alytus, Lithuania?

Methodology



Analytical approach



Macro

Lithuanian history
collective trauma
modernistic planning



Meso

Alytus
traces of the past and current development
trauma manifestation in micro-districts



Micro

Residents of the block
frontyard and backyard
sense of living

How might participatory urban design facilitate the healing of collective trauma while also enhancing public spaces within micro-districts in Alytus, Lithuania?

Occupation, the social environment

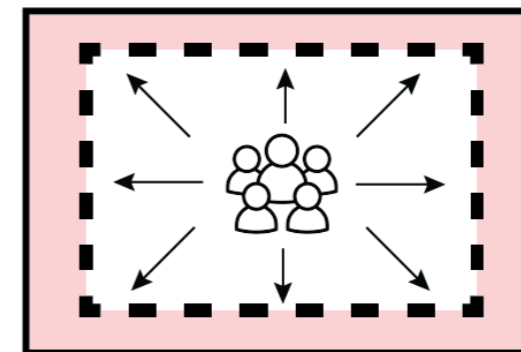
**We solemnly promise to live up
to our heroes' glory.**

May they remember!

**Who makes war? Who kindles
hatred?**

**No country is stronger than our
homeland!**

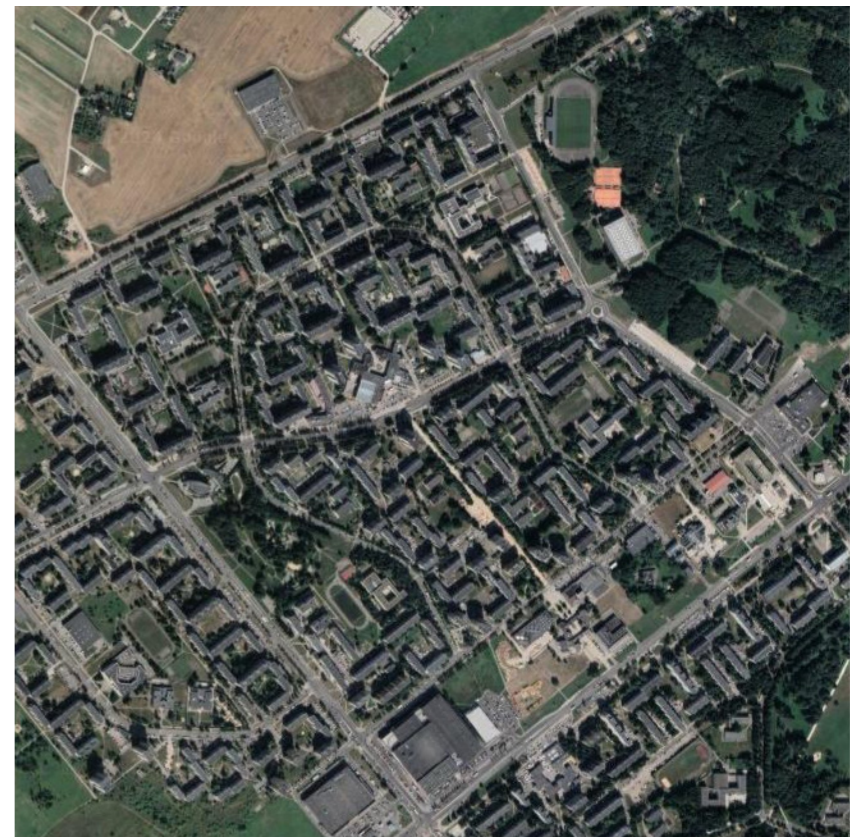
**Its strength is friendship and
peace!**



Occupation, the built environment

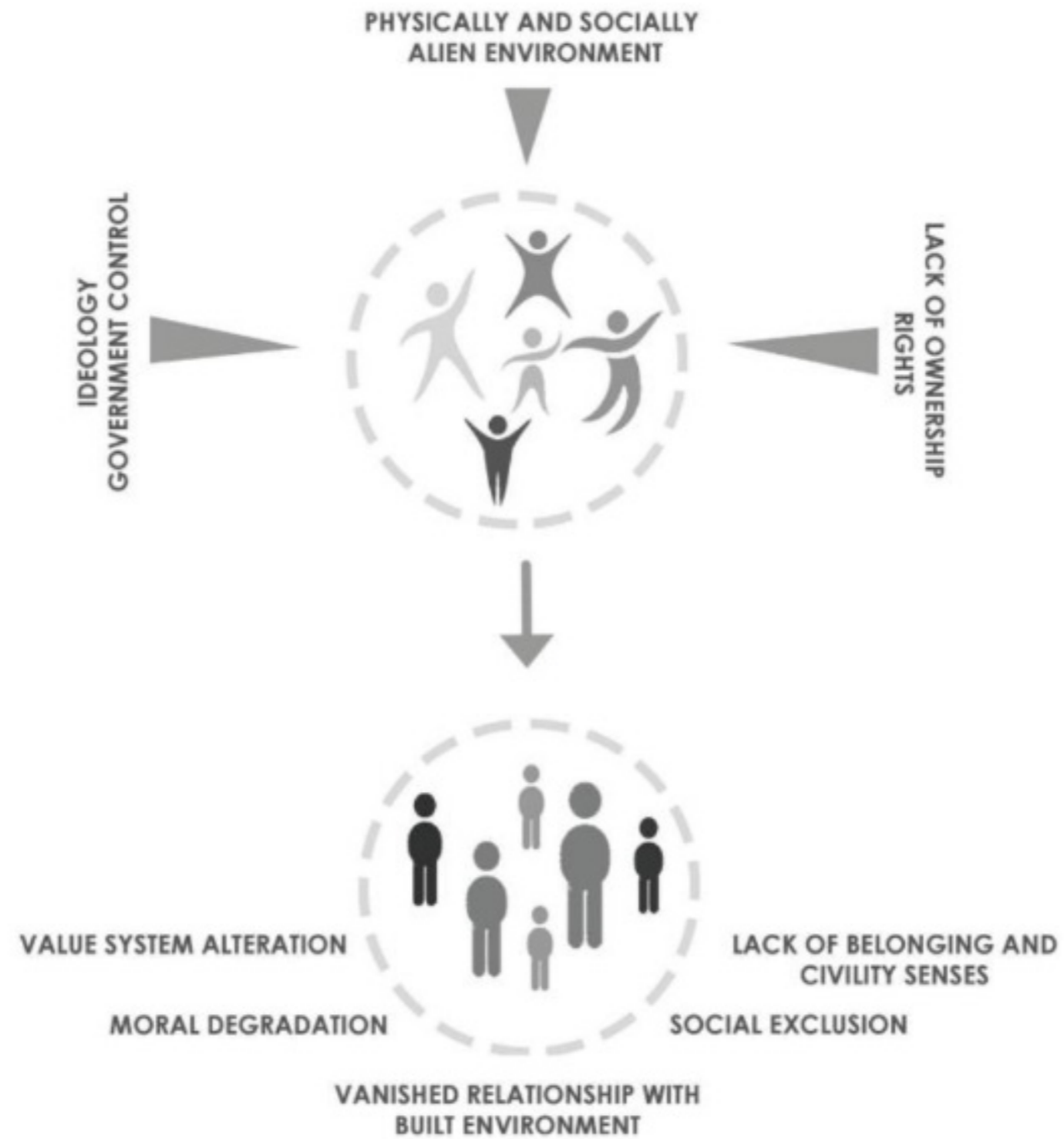


Occupation, the (stamped) built environment

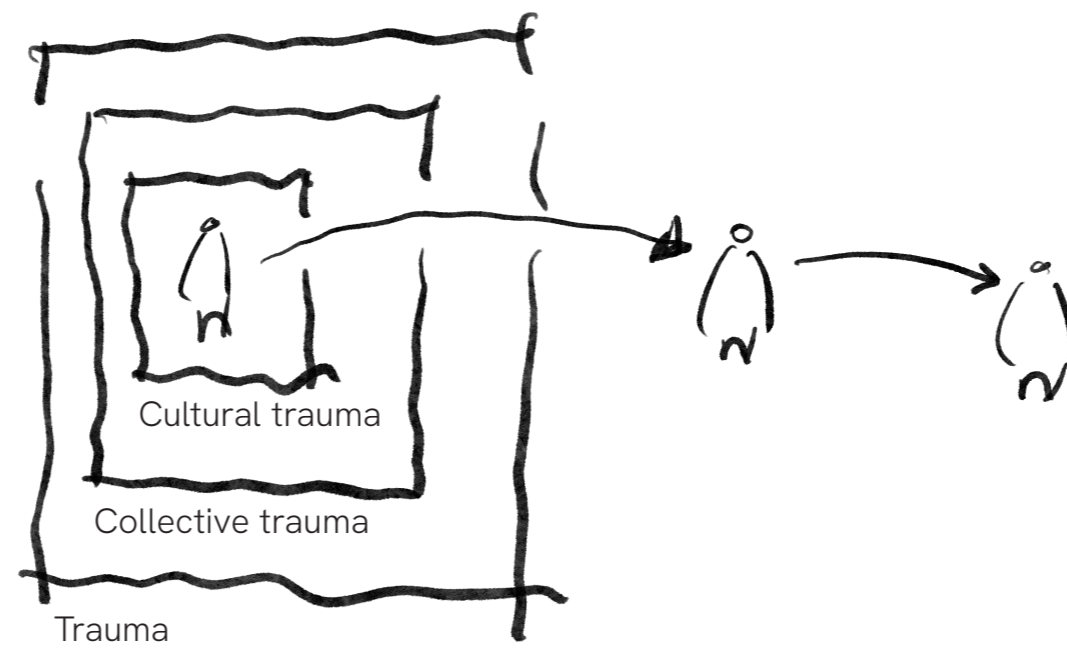


Micro-districts from different cities (Vilnius, Klaipeda, Marijampole and Sauliai). Images from google maps.

The aftermath



Transgenerational trauma



Gailienė, D. (2021). Ką Jie Mums Padarė: Lietuvos gyvenimas traumų psichologijos atžvilgiu [What They Have Done To Us: Lithuanian life in terms of the psychology of trauma] (2nd ed.). Tyto Alba.

The micro-districts today



Vaidilos Square, Klaipeda, by PUPA Urbanists
<https://pu-pa.eu/eng/projects/vaidilos-aikste/>



Fabijono Svetaine, Vilnius, by Sigita Simona
<https://www.sigitasimona.com/fabijonosvetaine>

The micro-districts today



Fabijoniskes, Vilnius
Google Maps images

The micro-districts today

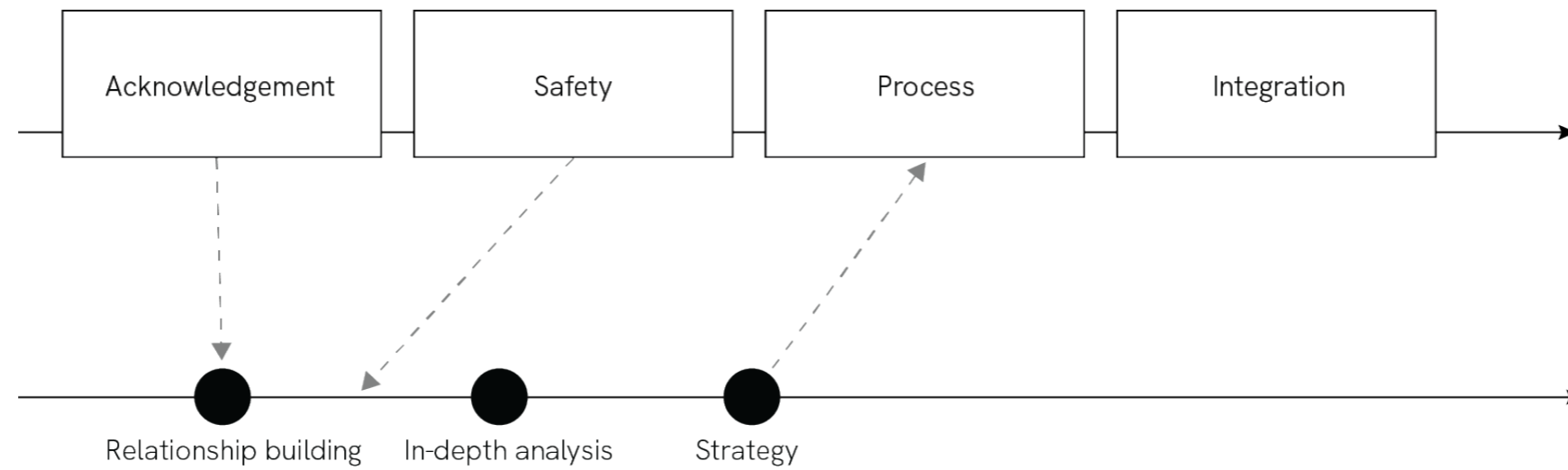


The stairway

What is lacking to facilitate trauma recovery in micro-districts?

Intangible

Collective trauma recovery



Individual trauma recovery

Trauma recovery, in summary

Tangible

Collective

Community house



Public library



Playground



Individual



Benches

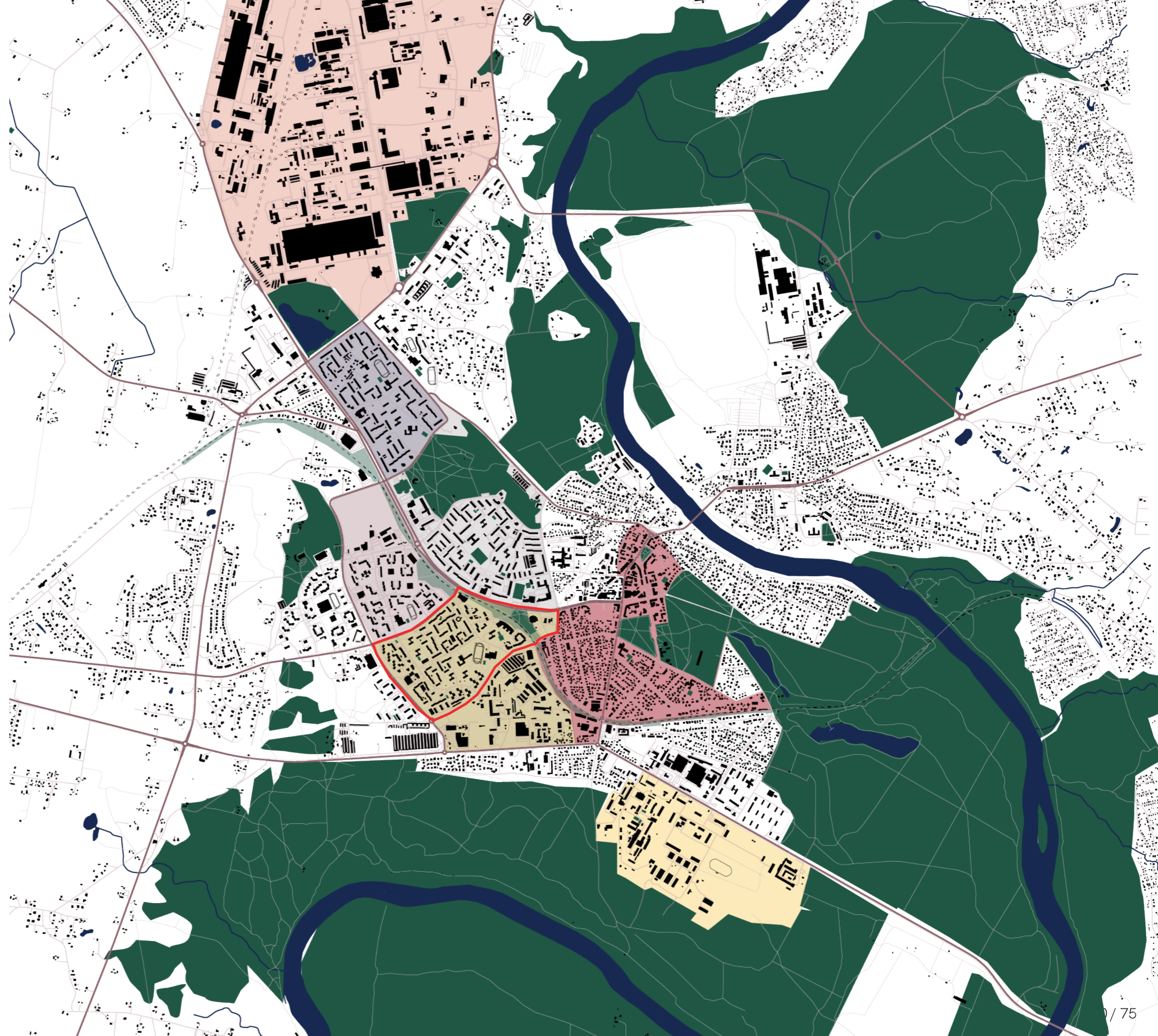


Walking / bicycle paths



Gardening

Alytus, Lithuania



1:25,000

🕒 Fig. 18: Map of Alytus' urban fabric

- Military area
- Industrial area
- Vidzgiris district
- Volunge district
- Dainava district
- Putinai district
- Old town
- Forests and parks
- Waterbodies

The case of Alytus

Functions

Lack of social infrastructure



1:5.000

🕒 Fig. 54: Map of functions and greens spaces in Vidziris, Alytus.

- Residential volumes
- Schools and kindergartens
- Garages
- Transformers
- Global grocery stores
- Local grocery stores
- Office
- Library
- Gas station
- Railway park
- Green interrupted spaces
- Parking

The case of Alytus

Unused spaces
surrounding the
green corridors



1:5.000

🕒 Map of used and unused spaces in
Vidzgiris, Alytus.

- Built volumes
- Sport facilities
- Garages
- Transformers
- Unused spaces
- Used spaces
- Potential area of intervention with
built environment

Observational analysis

The routes from fieldtrip 1-3.



1:10.000

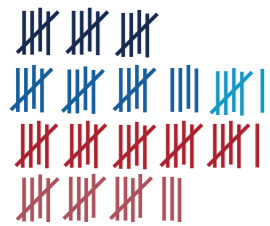
🕒 Fig. 100: Map of observational analysis routes and districts in Alytus.

- Putinai district
- Dainava district
- Volunge district
- Vidzgiris district
- Session 1 route
- Session 2 route
- Session 3 route
- Session 4 route
- Session 5 route

Observational analysis



Walking



Walking with groceries



Walking with dog



Families with kids on bikes / scooters



Kids playing on their own



Kids playing on playground



Kids / young people playing basketball



People sitting on bench



People talking from ground / balcony



Working in garden



People looking through window



the process

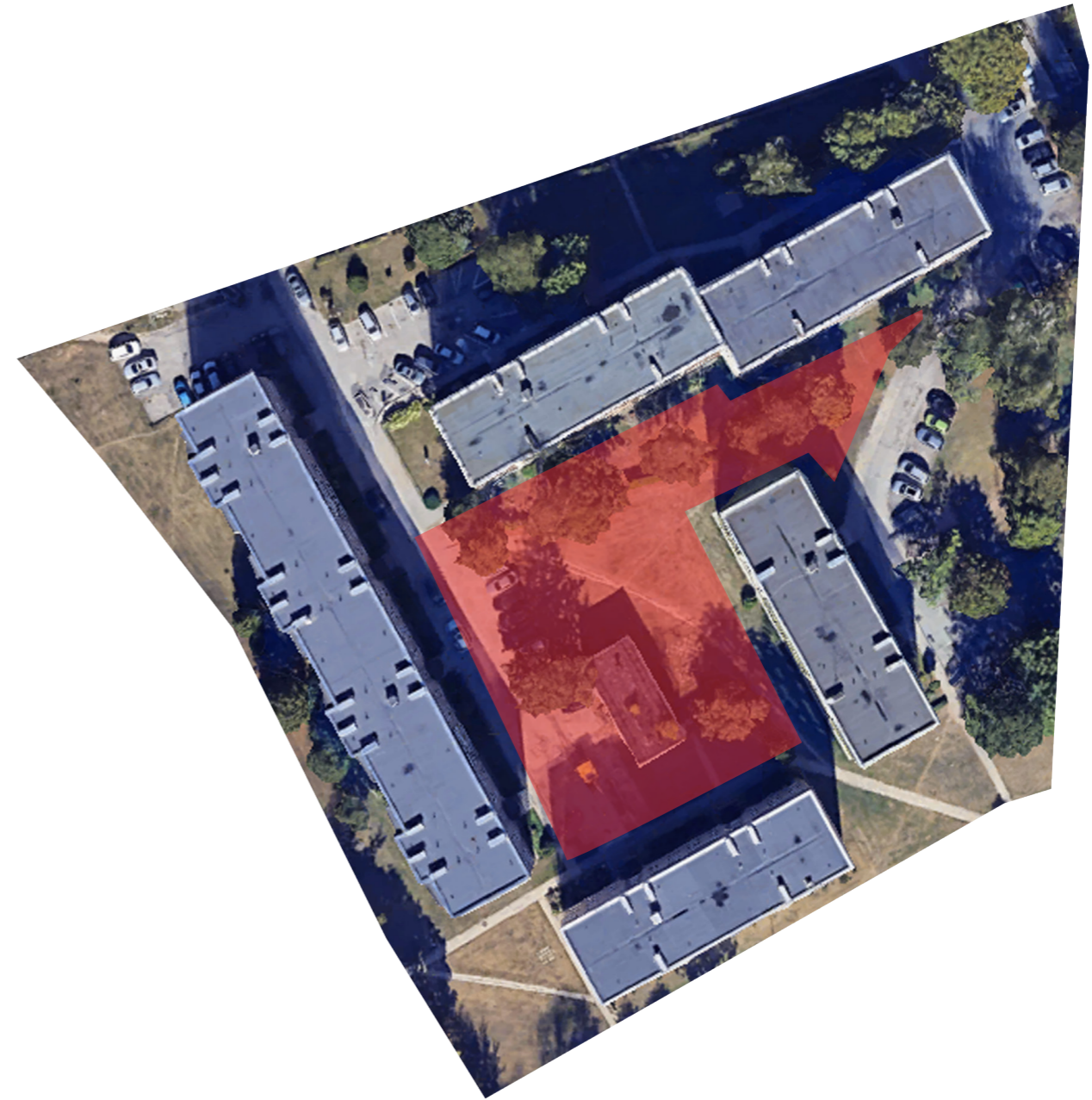
the design

A case - Kaunas and Initiative "Revolucija"



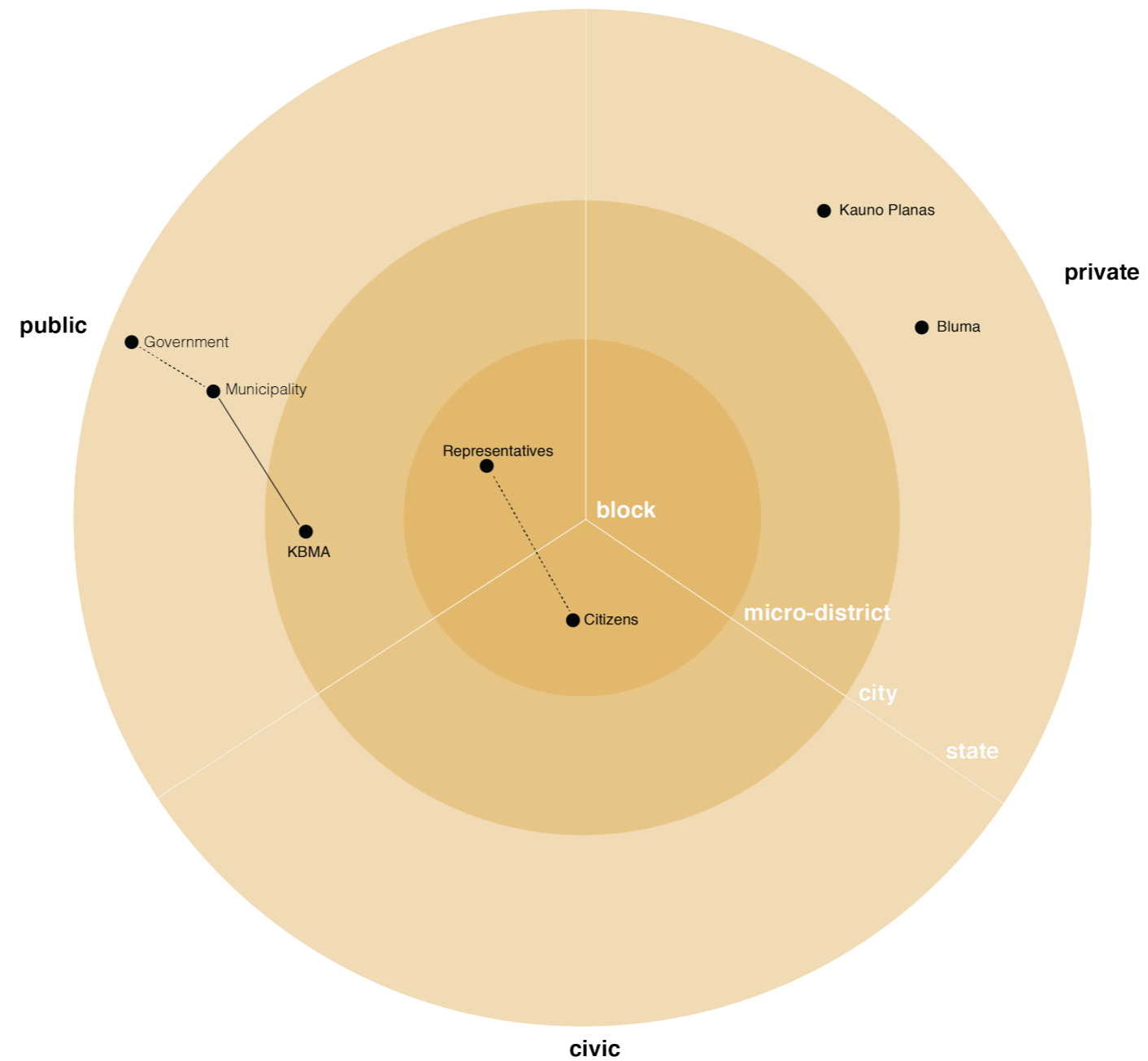
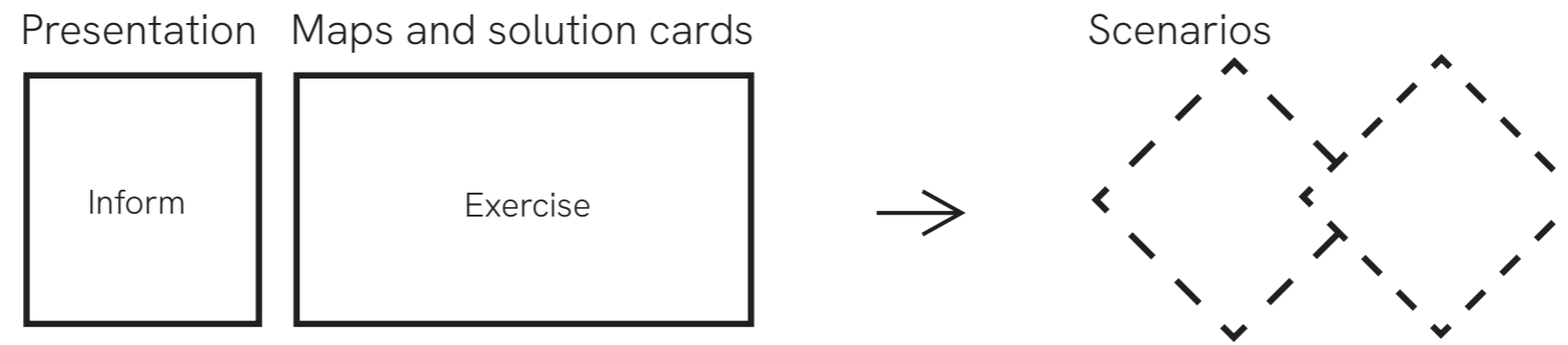
RE-
VOLUCIJA

RE-
VOLUCIJA

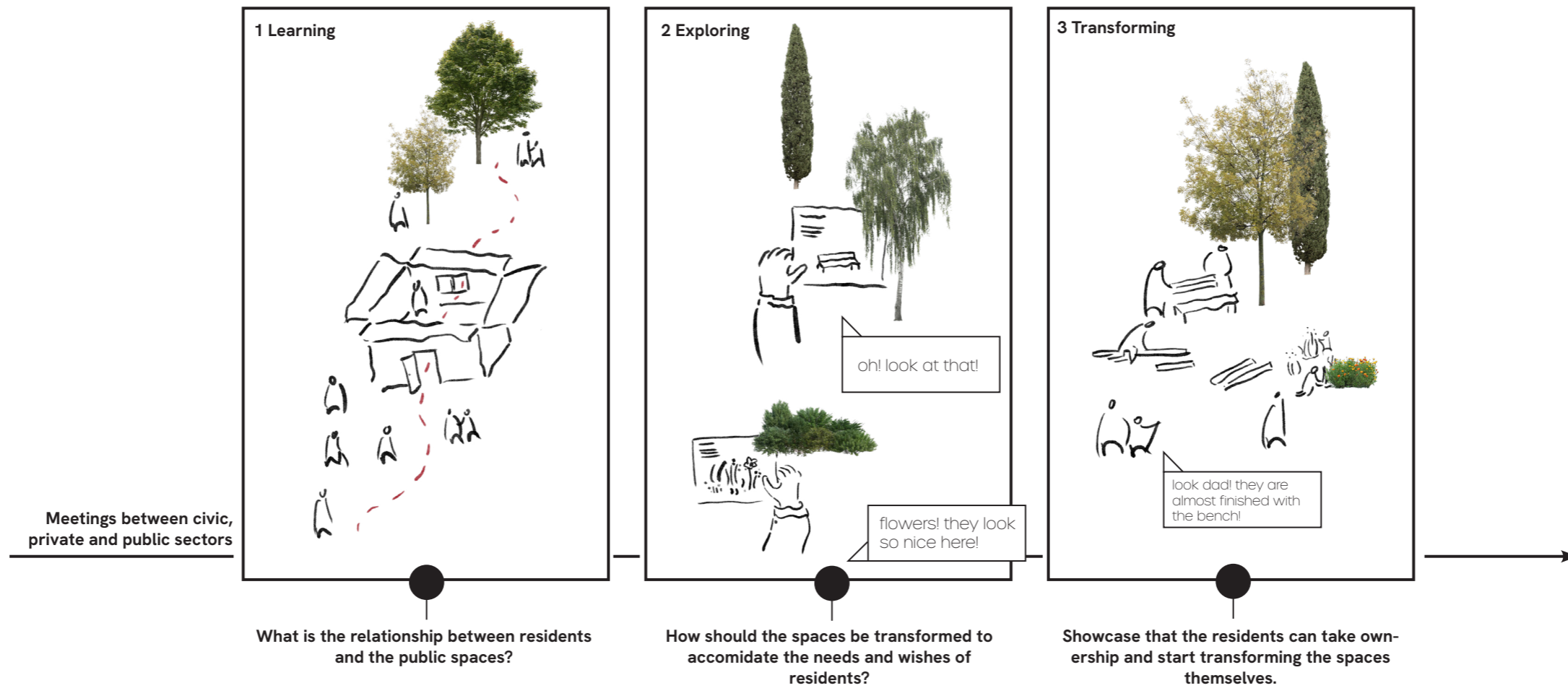


A housing group

The existing participatory process

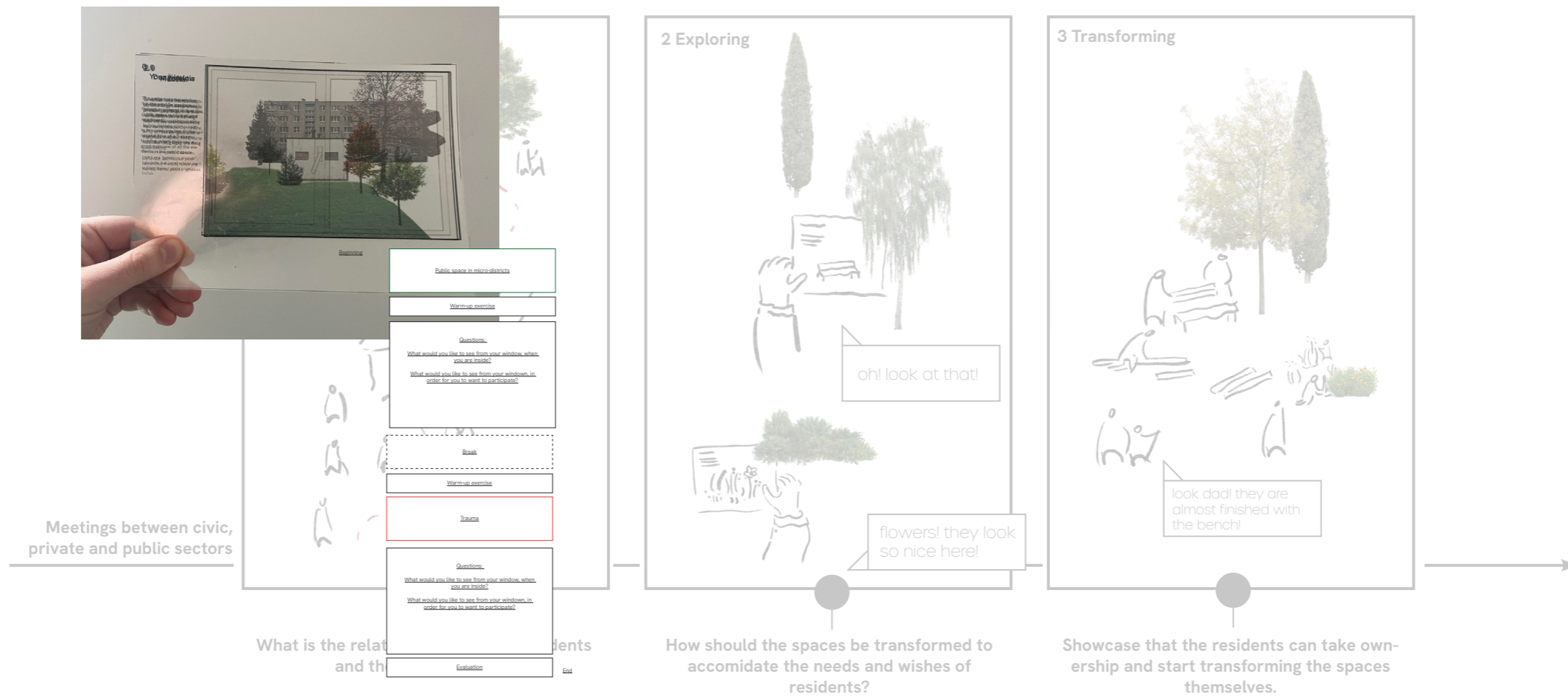


Design



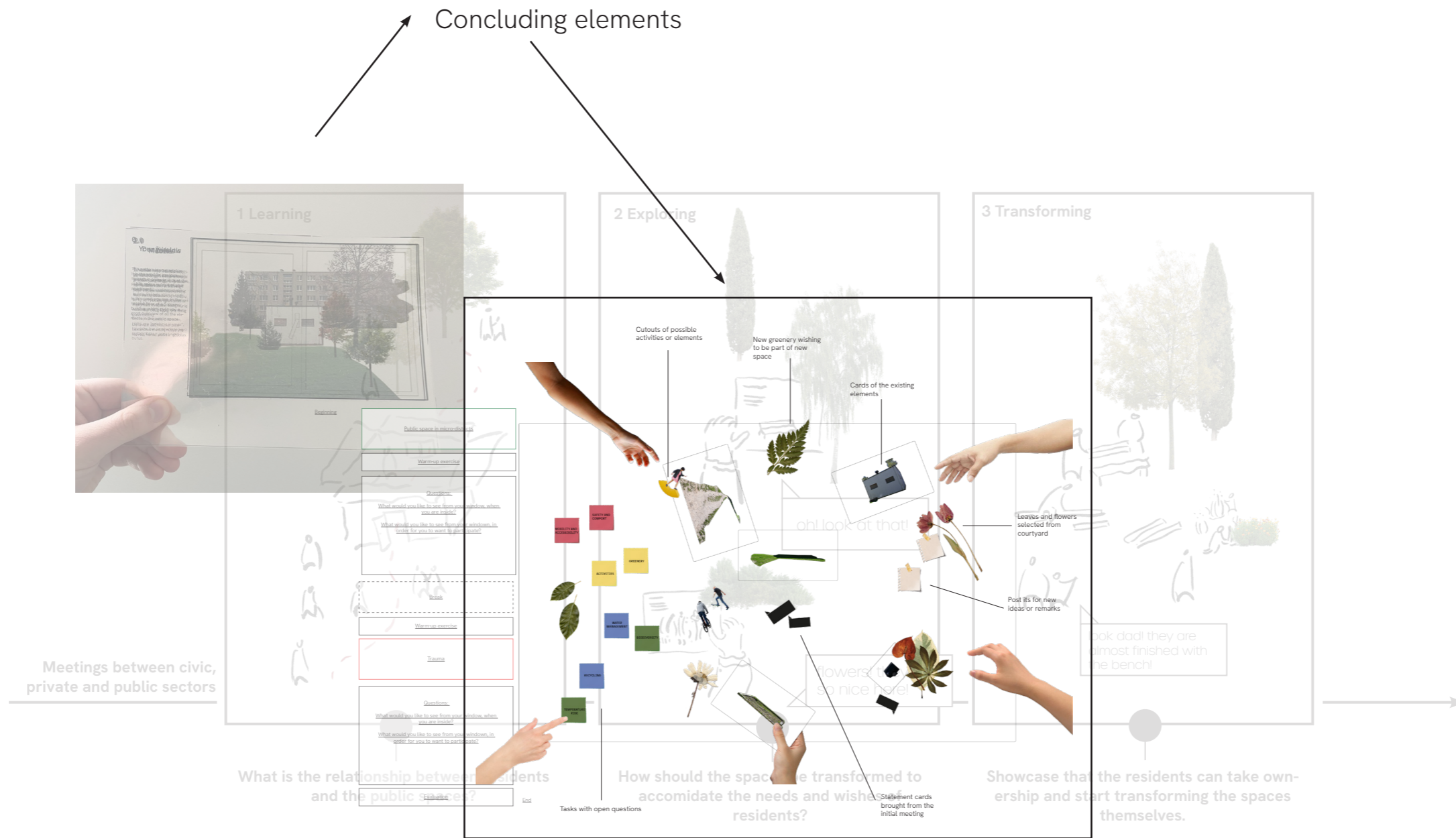
1 Engagement strategy

Overview



2 Tool and process development and testing

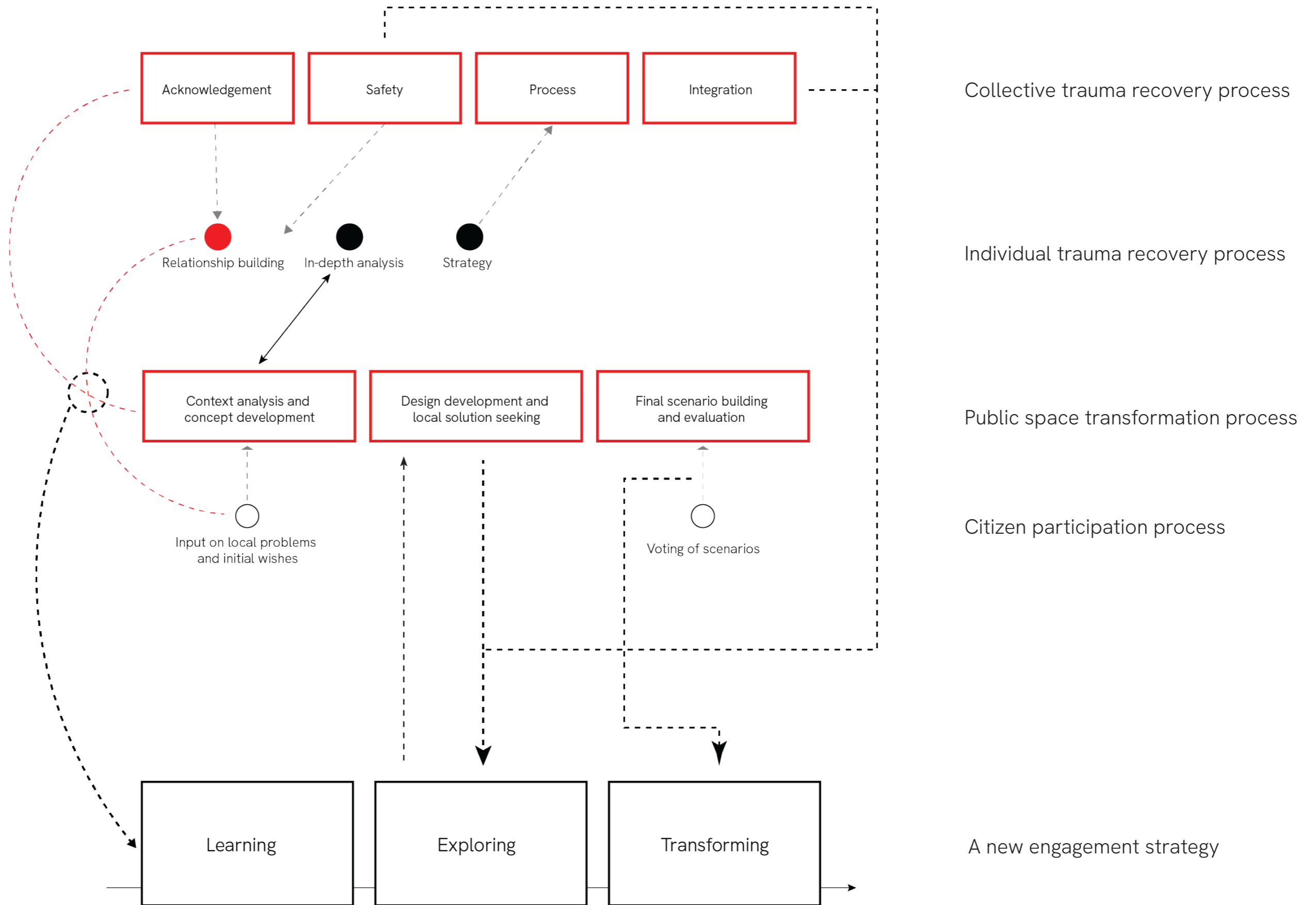
Overview



3 Further design

1 Engagement strategy

Development of the engagement strategy

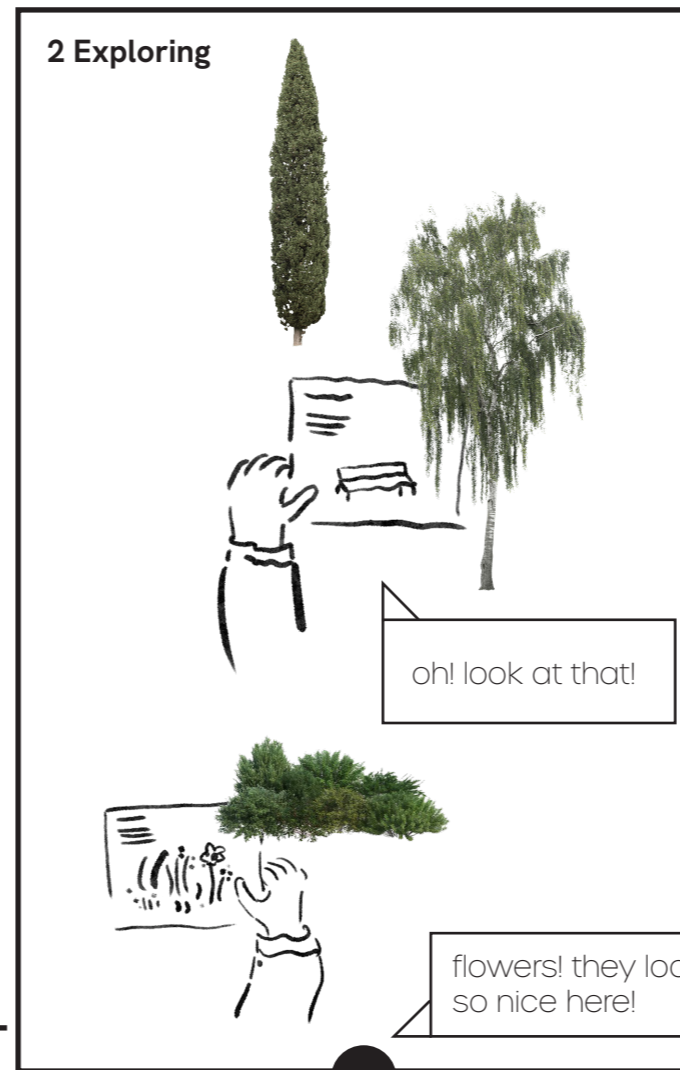


A new engagement strategy

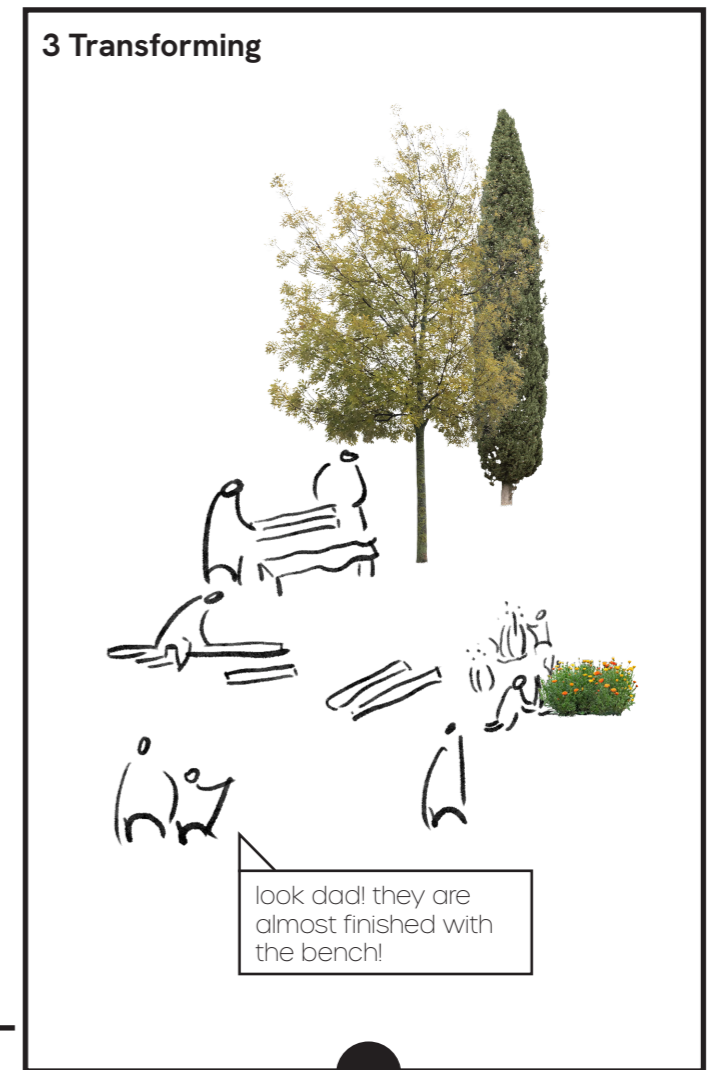
Meetings between civic,
private and public sectors



What is the relationship between residents
and the public spaces?

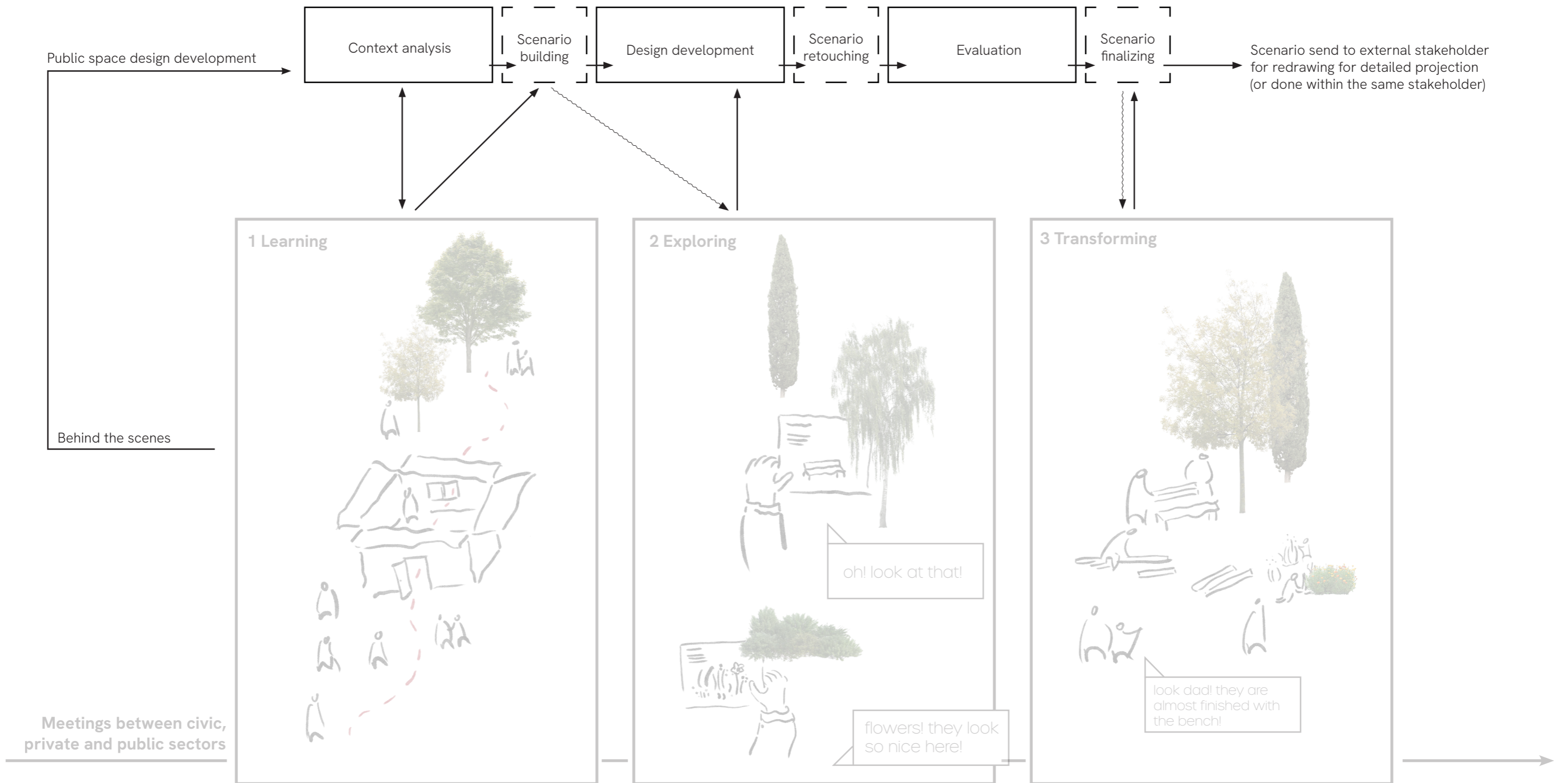


How should the spaces be transformed to
accommodate the needs and wishes of
residents?



Showcase that the residents can take own-
ership and start transforming the spaces
themselves.

“Behind the scenes”



Participating stakeholders

Urban designer

Municipality

Residents

1 Learning
Psychotherapists
Sociologists
Anthropologist
...



What is the relationship between residents and the public spaces?

2 Exploring
Detailing architects
Botanist
...



How should the spaces be transformed to accommodate the needs and wishes of residents?

3 Transforming
Craftsman
Botanist
...

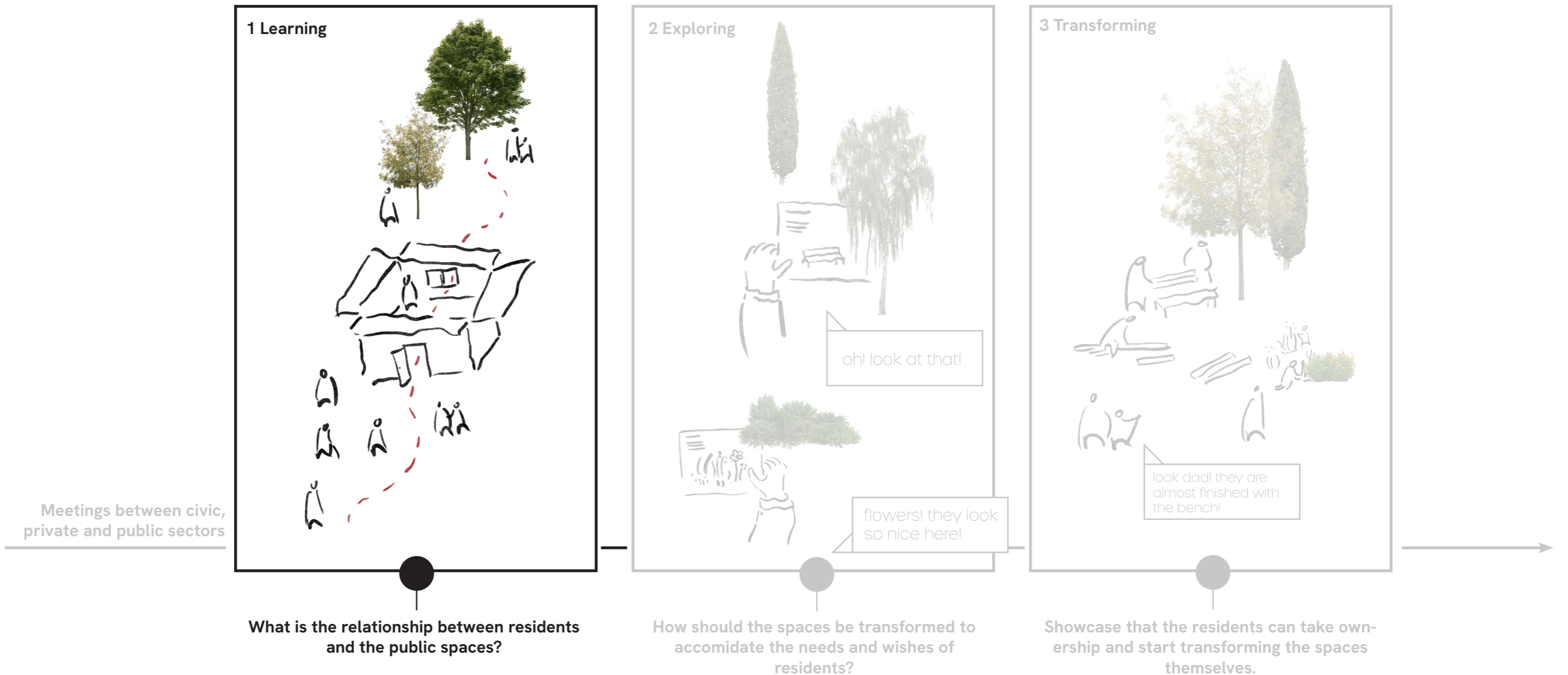


Showcase that the residents can take ownership and start transforming the spaces themselves.

Meetings between civic, private and public sectors

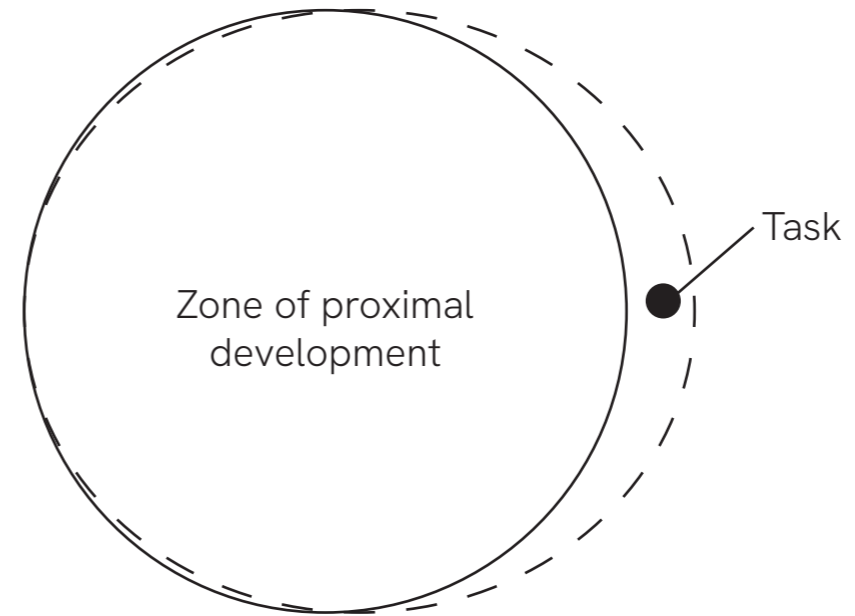
2 **Tool and process development and testing**

What is the **relationship** between residents and the public spaces?



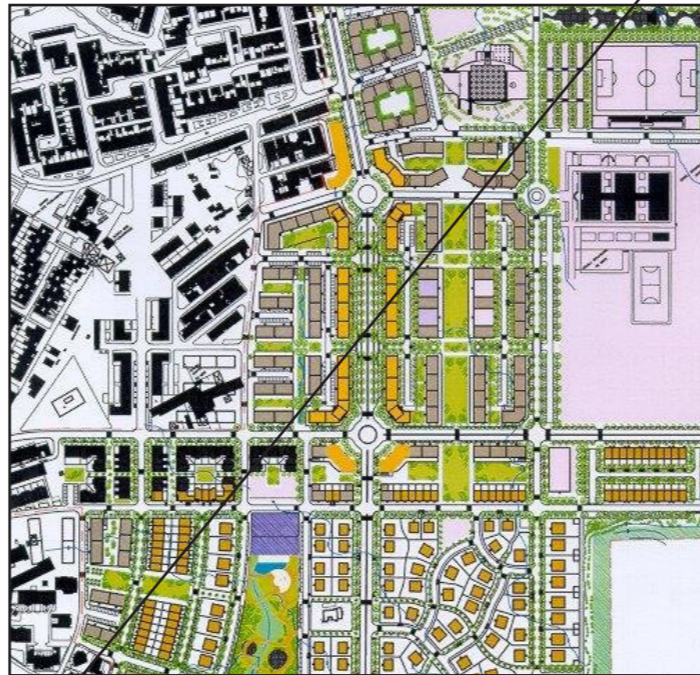
Existing tools in participatory processes

Trauma research



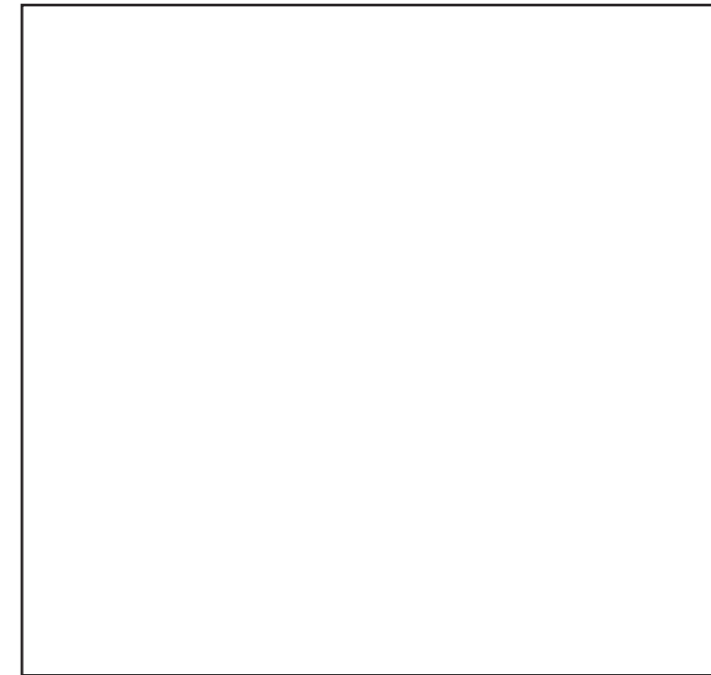
Models

Urban maquette
<https://www.studiokuplus.com/work/urban-design/0494>



Detailed drawings

Detailed urban plan
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344432991_The_Sines_New_Planning_Process_Toward_an_Urban_Design_Experience/figures?lo=1&utm_source=google&utm_medium=organic



?

Criteria for the new tool

Familiar

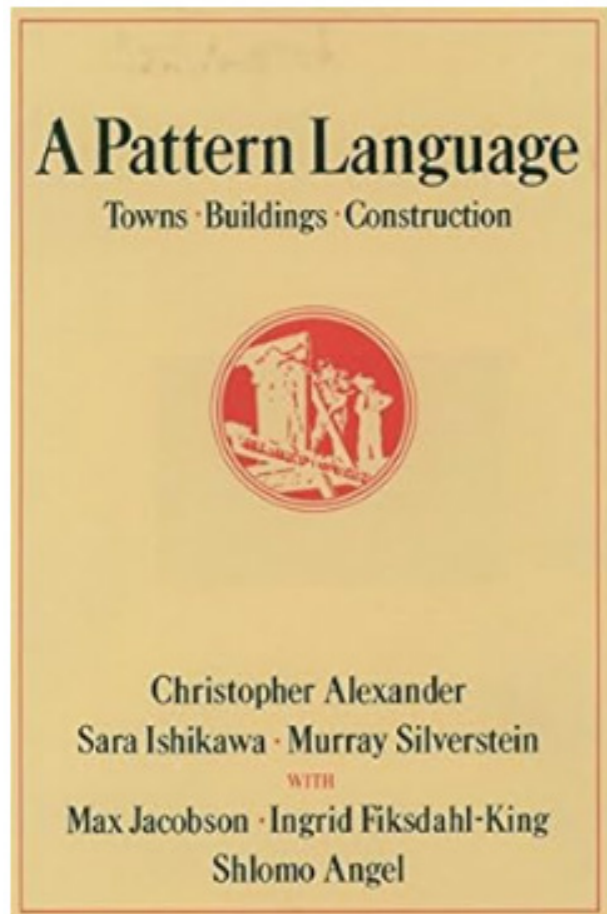
Enjoyable

Multisensory

Scalable

Portable

Inspiration



Deconstruction of urban design elements

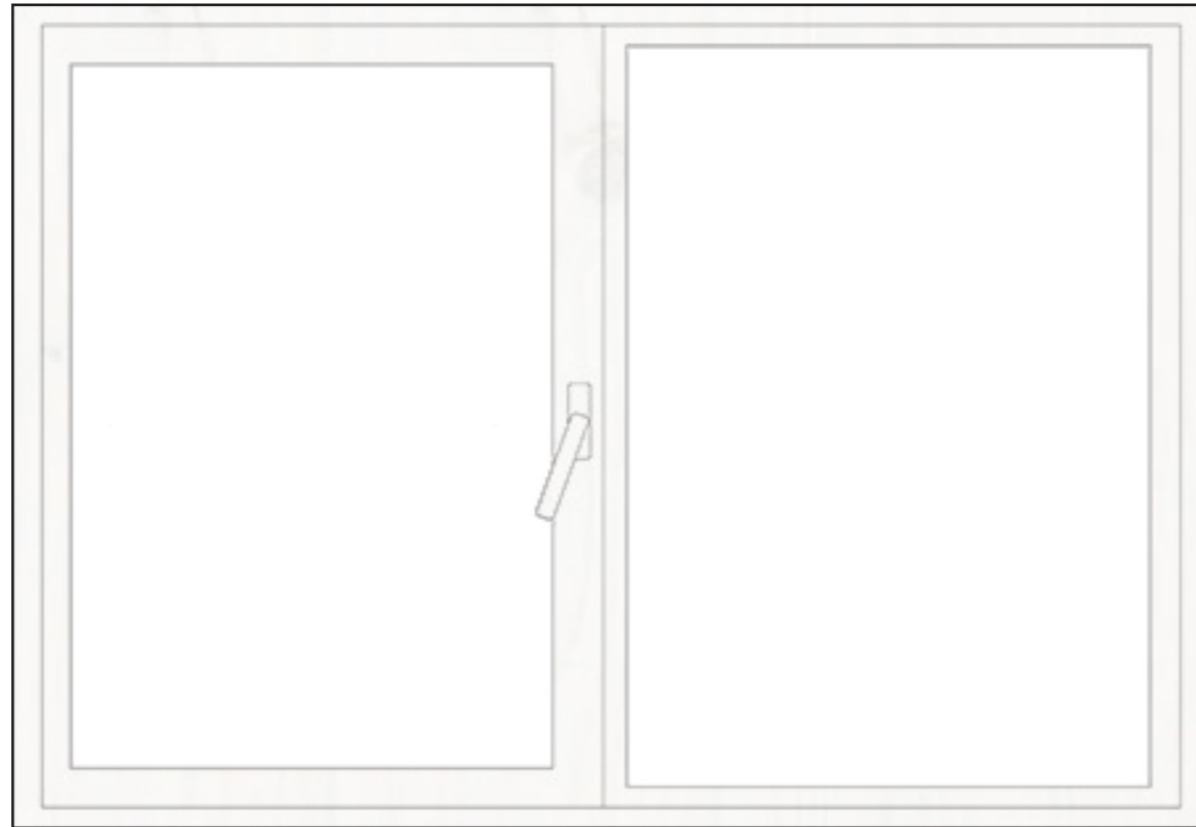


Curation of the conversation through multisensory means

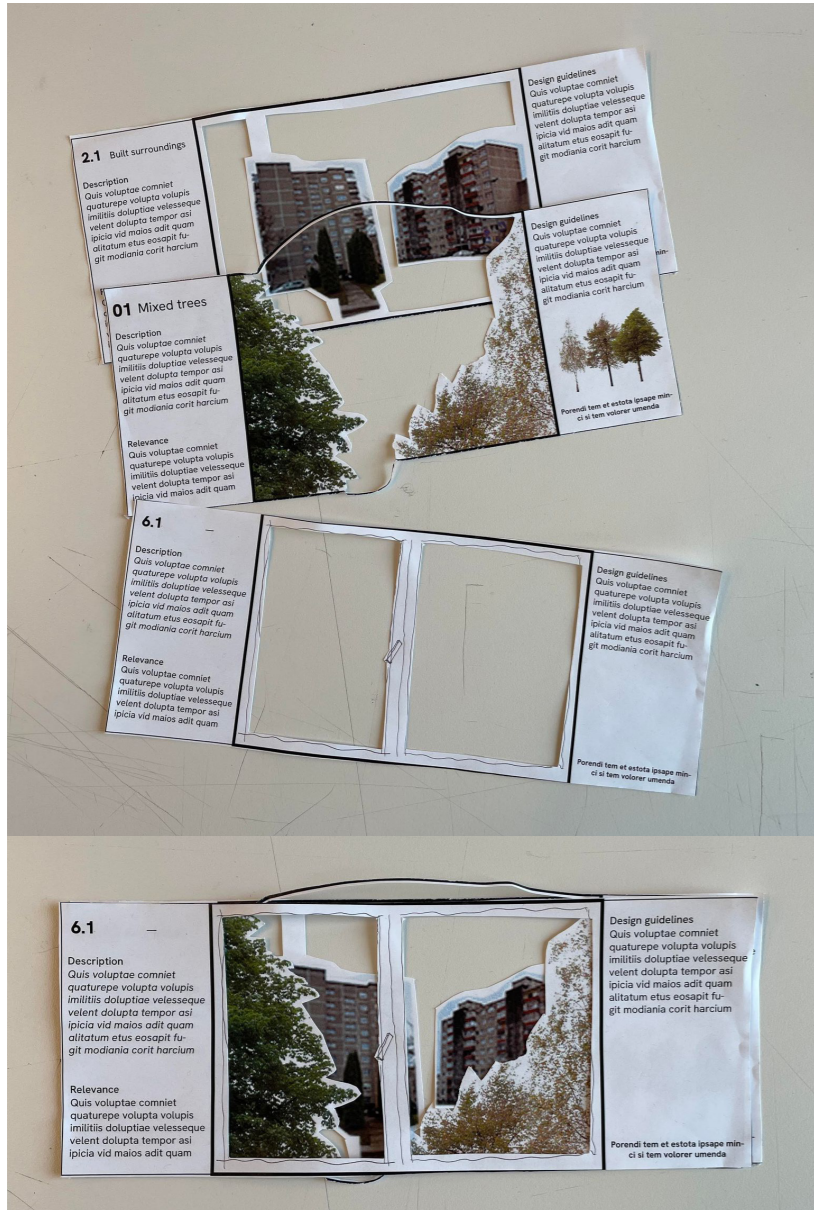


Deconstruction and reconstruction visually

The window



Prototype 1-2-3



Final deck of cards, 11 exterior elements

1.0
A building

This pattern showcases the building in front of you. It is a 5-story building, from around 1975, with two stairways and 30 mixed-sized apartments. The entrance of the building is also on this side, and can be spotted by the small roofs and benches by the stairway's front door.


The space you both share is for them their "front garden," which means that they arrive here in their car and enter their apartments.



3.0
Pedestrian paths


This pattern highlights the pathways that pedestrians use.

One is a solid pathway designated for pedestrians, while the other is a shortcut through the grass that pedestrians choose to take.



2.0
Grass

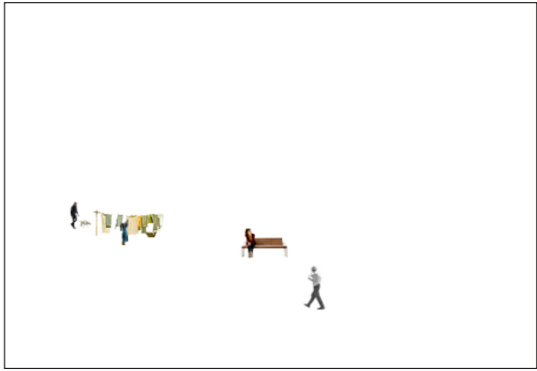
This pattern showcases the expanse of grass that blankets the large public area in front of your windows. It's a space you share not only with the neighboring buildings but also with the rest of the city.



4.0
Individual activities

This pattern highlights the various activities individuals can engage in within a public space.


Here, we observe a woman sitting on a bench, a man walking a dog, another woman hanging laundry on a drying rack, and a man simply passing by. These activities don't demand much from the public space, and there are no designated activity zones dictating its purpose. This flexibility allows individuals to utilize the space according to their needs and desires.



1.1
The renovated building

This pattern showcases the building adjacent to you. It is a 5-story building, dating back to around 1975, featuring two stairways and 30 mixed-sized apartments. Recently renovated, the building now sports a green color, aimed at optimizing the indoor living environment and reducing energy usage.


The entrance to this building is on the opposite side, meaning that the area you both are observing serves as their "back garden."



3.1
Bicycle paths and parking

This pattern illustrates potential routes for cyclists. In this scenario, the pathway runs along the edge of the public space, accompanied by a designated bicycle parking area.


Alternatively, the bicycle path could traverse the public space, allowing cyclists to cut across swiftly. However, this decision depends on the desired activities within the public space.



2.1
Trees

This pattern displays different trees planted in the public area in front of your house. The type of tree isn't as important as recognizing the variety present here. From trees that bear fruit to those with bright colors or nice scents, to ones that shed a lot of leaves, there are many options.


The most common trees in Lithuania are maple, hazel, Scots pine, and English oak.



4.1
Collective activities

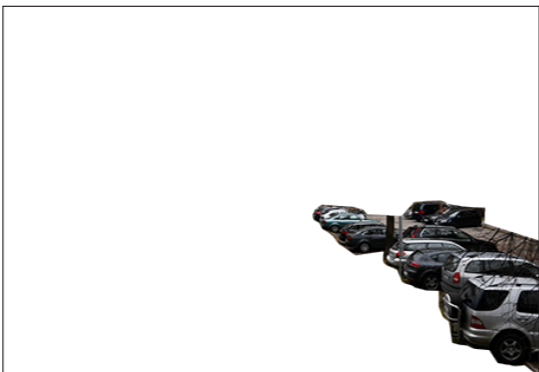
This pattern illustrates the diverse range of collective activities possible in public spaces.

Here, we see a group of people enjoying a picnic, children playing, some individuals going for a run, and others gathered for a game of petanque in the sandy area. These activities don't demand much from the public space, except for some zoning to ensure that different activities can occur harmoniously.



3.2
Cars and parking

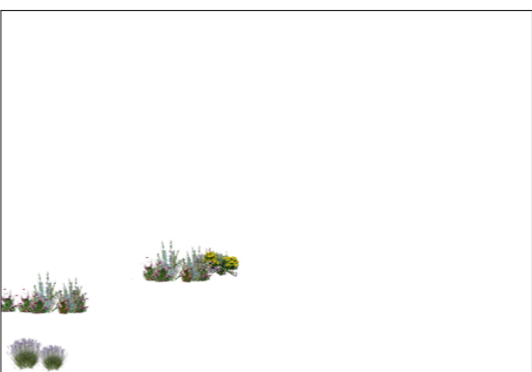
This pattern illustrates the significant space that cars occupy in the public area. They not only require roads for driving but also parking space when not in use.



2.2
Flowers

This pattern displays a variety of flowers in different colors and sizes that can be planted.

Flowers and trees can help divide the public space, creating cozy corners and areas for various activities to take place.



0.1
Tree in front of your window

This pattern shows the tree that blocks your window and your view towards the public space.

It is a tree that is close to your house, and which you cannot see the full image of, only the part of the tree that has grown tall enough to block the second floor, your floor.



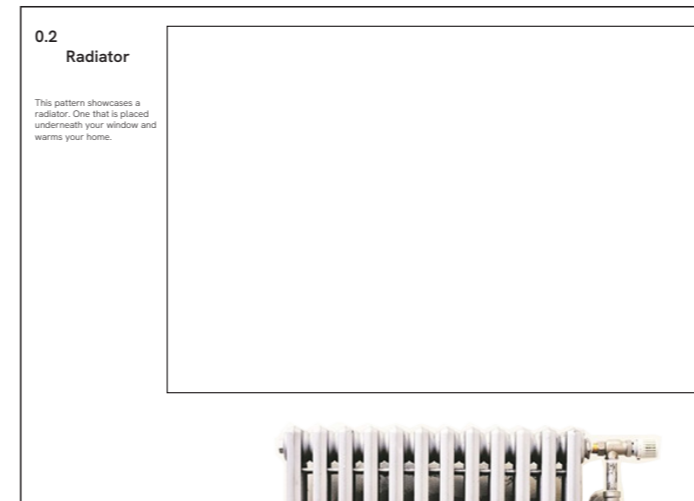
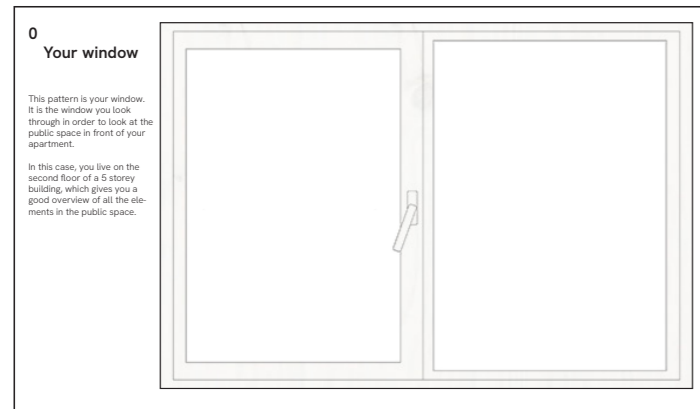
Built environment
(housing)

Built environment
(mobility)

Ecological environment
(greenery)

Social environment
(activities)

Final deck of cards, 4 interior elements



The frame

Greenery

Radiator

Curtains

Process development

What is the **relationship** between residents and the public spaces?



Association game

"Tell me 1-3 words that pop into your mind when i say _____"



Question 1:

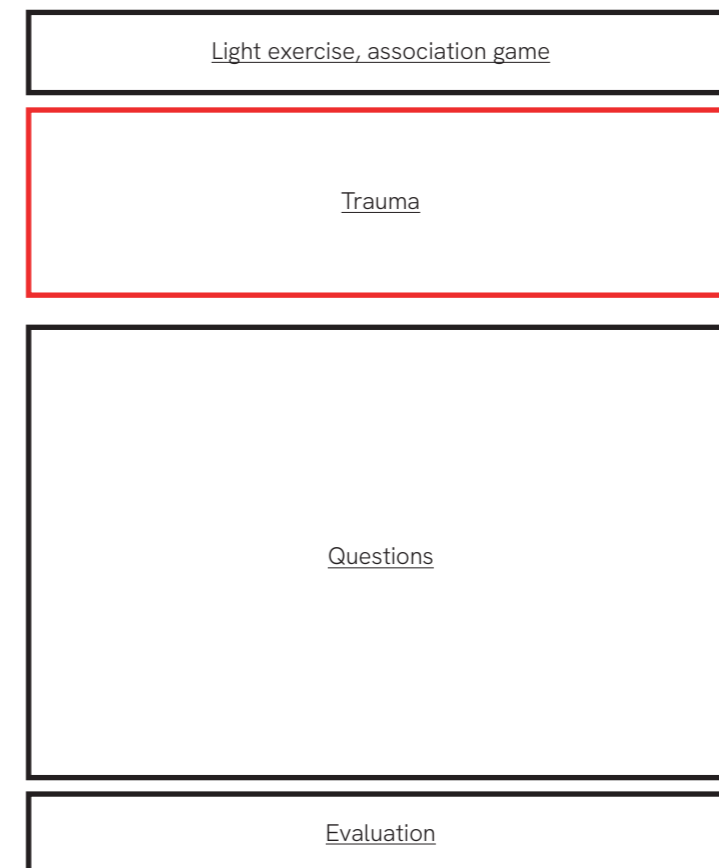
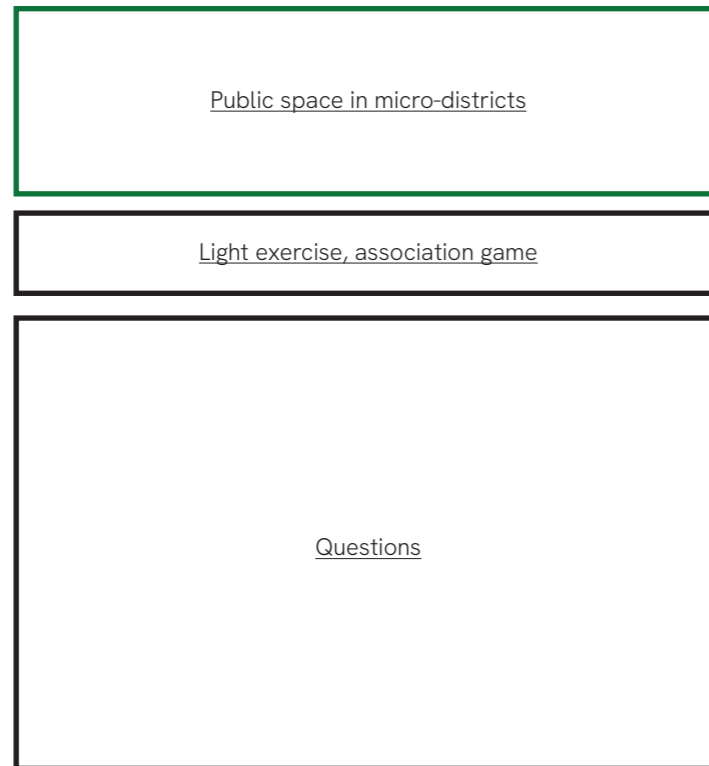
What would you like to see from your window, when you are inside?

Question 2:

What would you like to see from your window, in order for you to want to out and participate?

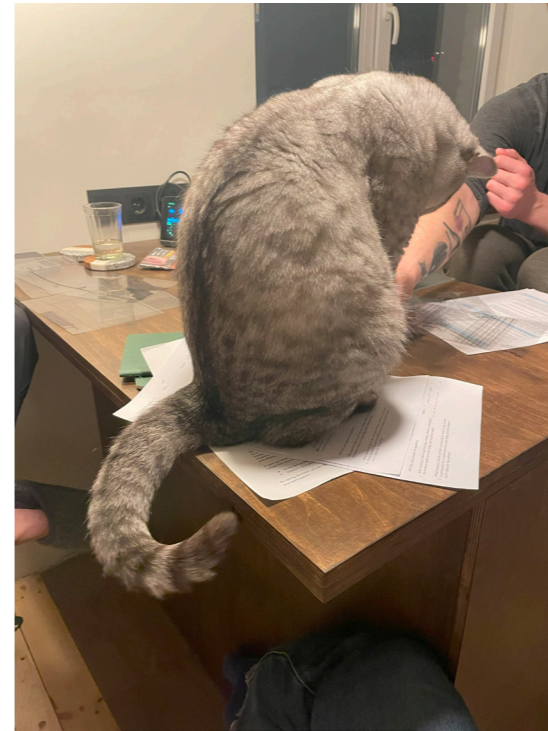
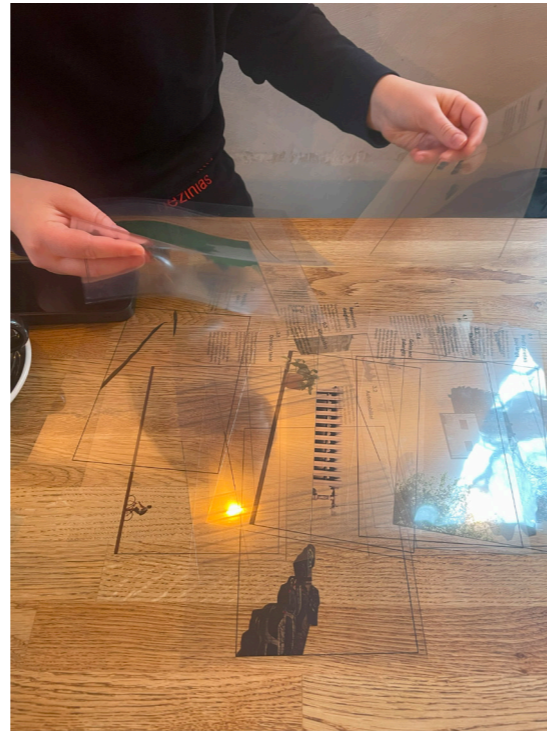
The full process

Beginning



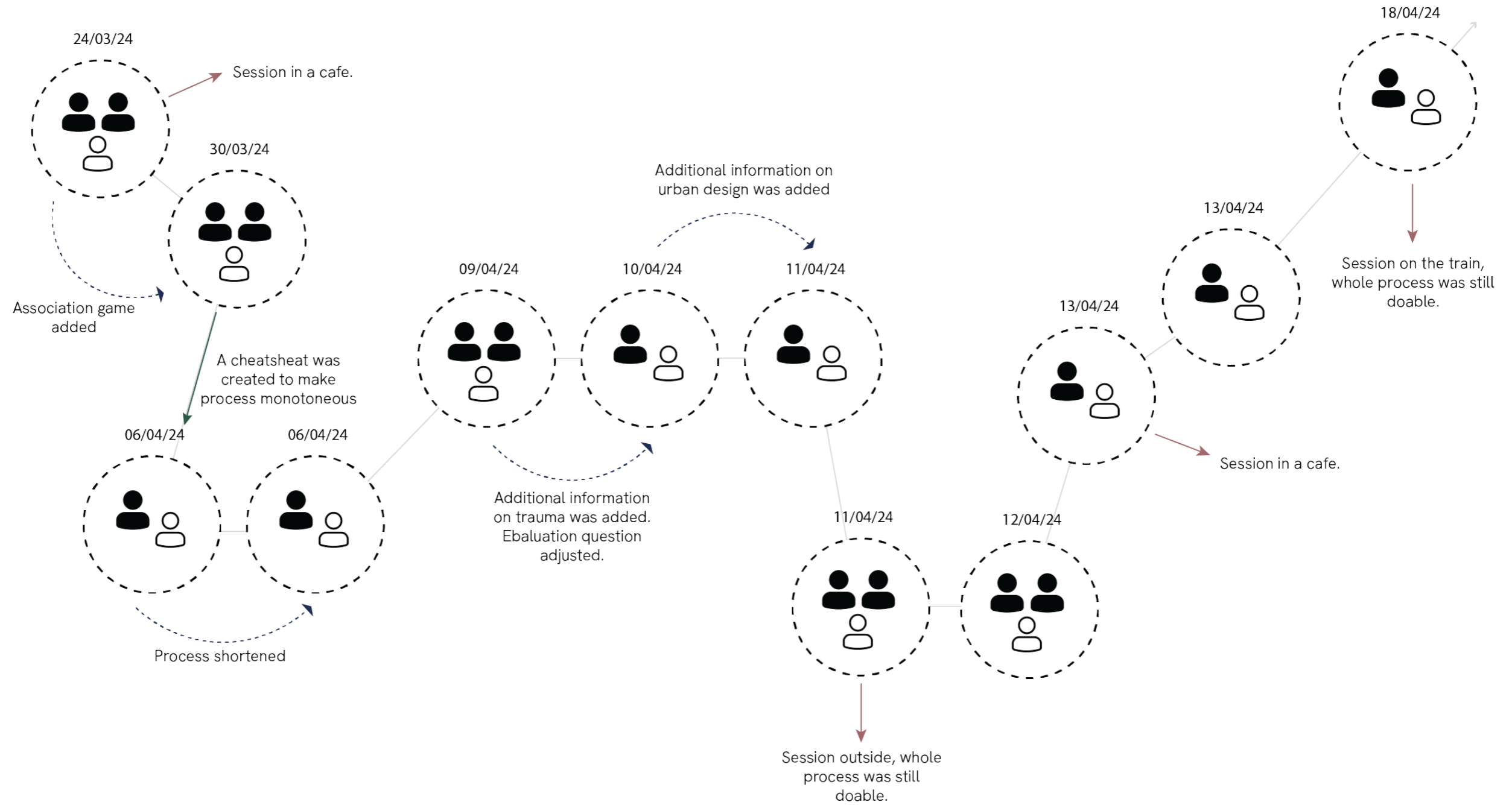
End

A spatial participatory tool

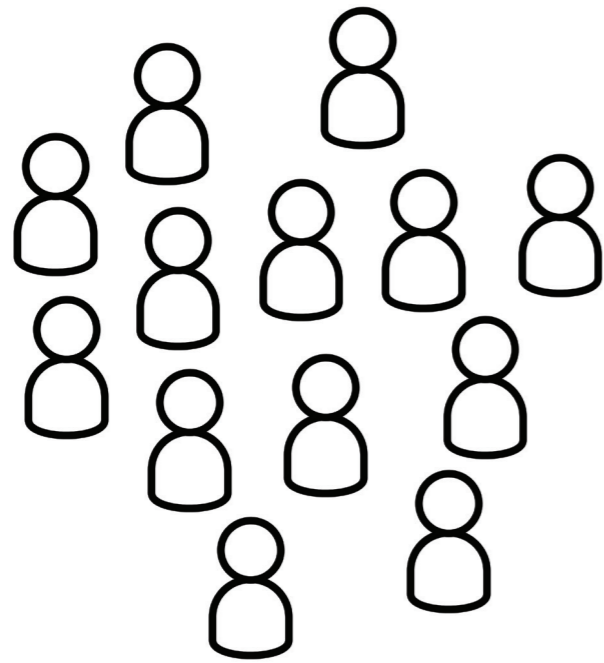


Testing and results

Timeline



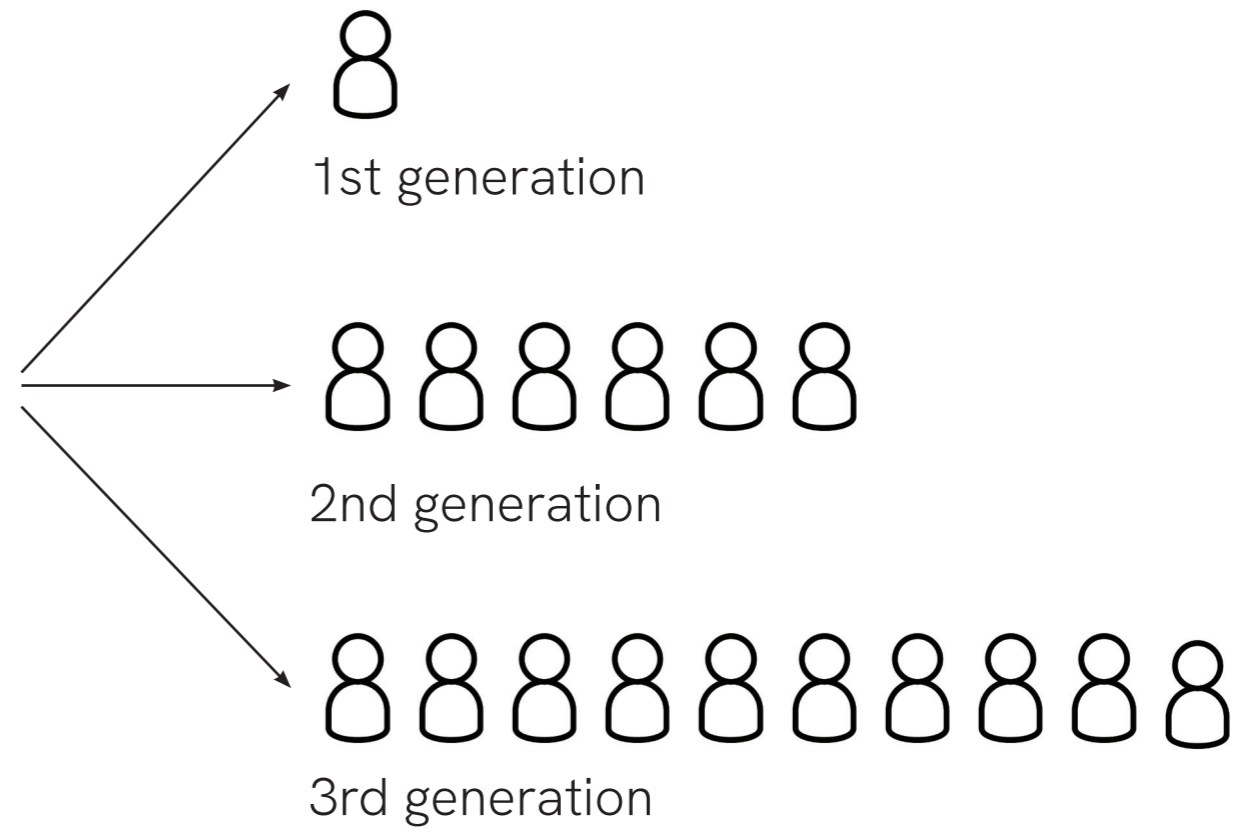
Participants



17 participants



Have you / or do you currently live in an apartment building built under the Soviet occupation?

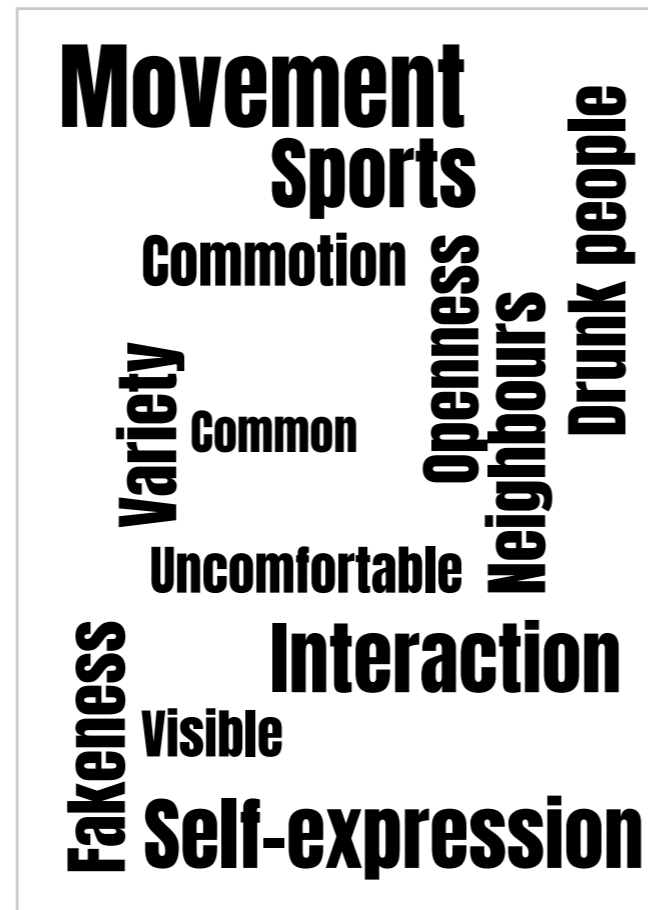


First section, association game

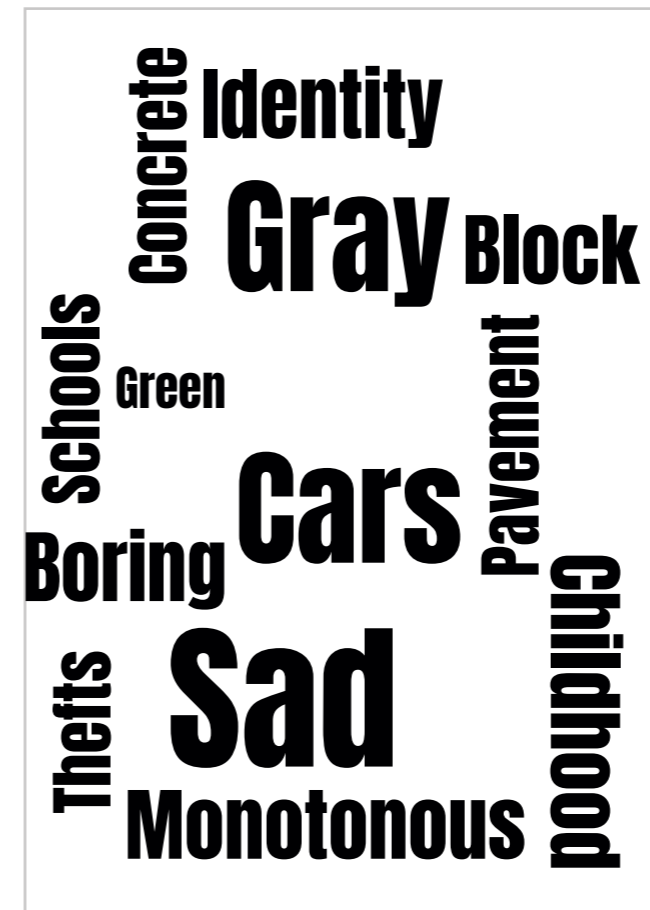
—— Introduction to the research and aim of the workshop scenario ——



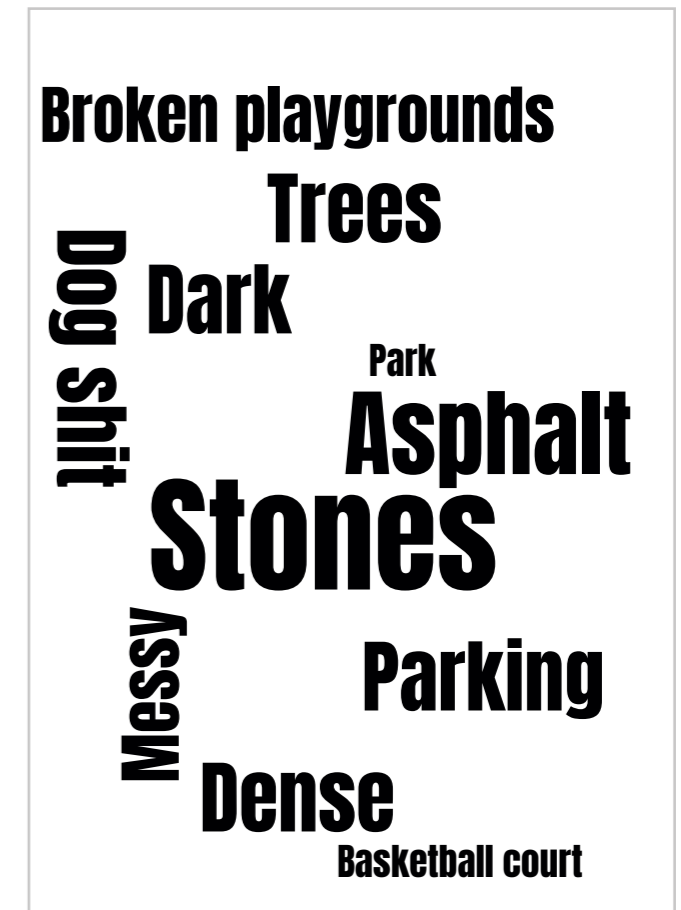
"Public space"



"Public life"



"Micro-districts"



"Public space in
micro-districts"


First section, card selection

Most popular

3.0 Pedestrian paths

This pattern highlights the pathways that pedestrians use.

One is a solid pathway designated for pedestrians, while the other is a shortcut through the grass that pedestrians choose to take.




"In-grass paths - Symbolise freedom for me"

"I use them as a guiding point in the space"

4.0 Individual activities

This pattern highlights the various activities individuals can engage in within a public space.

Here, we observe a woman sitting on a bench, a man walking a dog, another woman hanging laundry on a drying rack, and a man simply passing by. These activities don't demand much from the public space, and there are no designated activity zones dictating its purpose. This flexibility allows individuals to utilize the space according to their needs and desires.




"Nice to be alone but together"

2.1 Trees

This pattern displays different trees planted in the public area in front of your house. The type of tree isn't as important as recognizing the variety present here. From trees that bear fruit to those with bright colors or nice scents, to ones that shed a lot of leaves, there are many options.


The most common trees in Lithuania are maple, hazel, Scots pine, and English oak.



4.1 Collective activities

This pattern illustrates the diverse range of collective activities possible in public spaces.

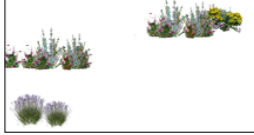
Here, we see a group of people enjoying a picnic, children playing, some individuals going for a run, and others gathered for a game of pétanque in the sandy area. These activities don't demand much from the public space, except for some zoning to ensure that different activities can occur harmoniously.



2.2 Flowers

This pattern displays a variety of flowers in different colors and sizes that can be planted.

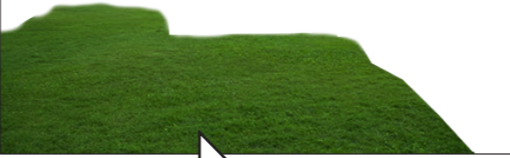
Flowers and trees can help divide the public space, creating cozy corners and areas for various activities to take place.



"Reminds me that someone takes care of them"

2.0 Grass

This pattern showcases the expanse of grass that blankets the large public area in front of your windows. It's a space you share not only with the neighboring buildings but also with the rest of the city.




"Better than seeing asphalt"

Least popular

1.0 A building

This pattern showcases the building in front of you. It is a 5-story building, from around 1975, with two stairways and 20 mixed-sized apartments. The entrance of the building is also on this side, and can be spotted by the small roofs and benches by the stairway's front door.

The space you both share is for them their "front garden," which means that they arrive here in their car and enter their apartments.



"Ugly"

"Depressing"

Second section, association game

—— Introduction to the trauma and its connection to the environment ——



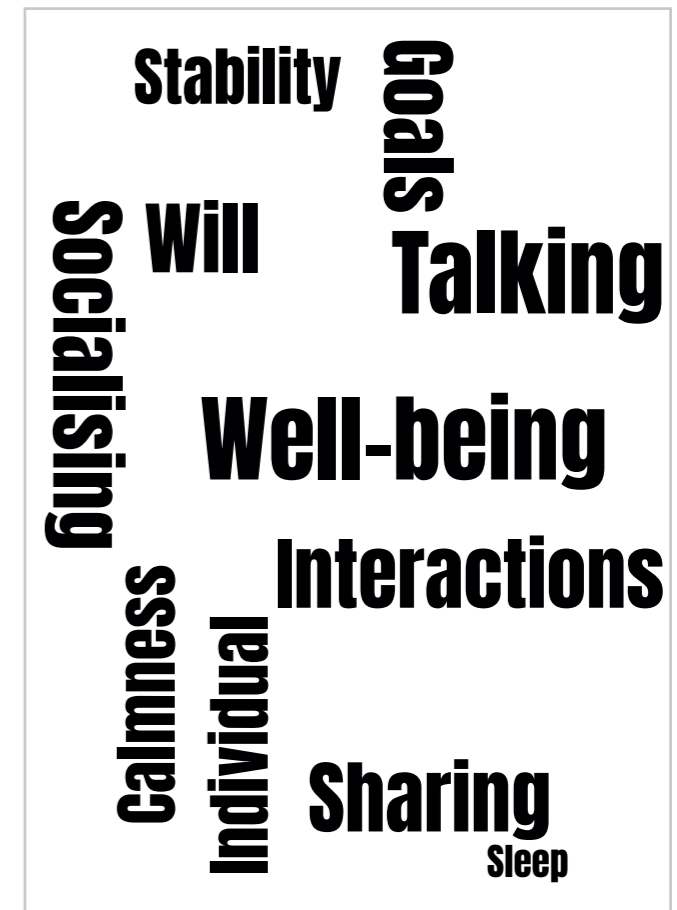
"Trauma"



"Collective trauma"



"Trauma recovery"



"Mental health"

Second session, cards selection

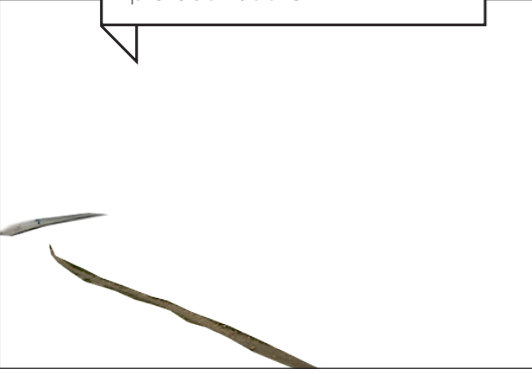
The introvert

"I want to see traits of people but not them"

3.0 Pedestrian paths

This pattern highlights the pathways that pedestrians use.


One is a solid pathway designated for pedestrians, while the other is a shortcut through the grass that pedestrians choose to take.



0.4 Flowers on the windowsill

This pattern showcases a flower on the windowsill.


In some cases, with enough flowers, they can almost act as curtains from the outside world.



2.1 Trees

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The most common trees in Lithuania are maple, hazel, Scots pine, and English oak.



0.1 Tree in front of your window

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It is a tree that is close to your house, and which you cannot see the full image of, only the part of the tree that has grown tall enough to block the second floor, your floor.



2.2 Flowers


This pattern displays a variety of flowers in different colors and sizes that can be planted.

Flowers and trees can help divide the public space, creating cozy corners and areas for various activities to take place.



2.0 Grass

This pattern showcases the expanse of grass that blankets the large public area in front of your windows. It's a space you share not only with the neighboring buildings but also with the rest of the city.



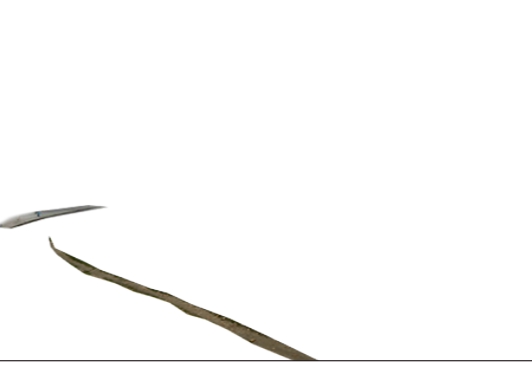
The extravert

"I want to movement"

3.0 Pedestrian paths

This pattern highlights the pathways that pedestrians use.


One is a solid pathway designated for pedestrians, while the other is a shortcut through the grass that pedestrians choose to take.



4.0 Individual activities

This pattern highlights the various activities individuals can engage in within a public space.

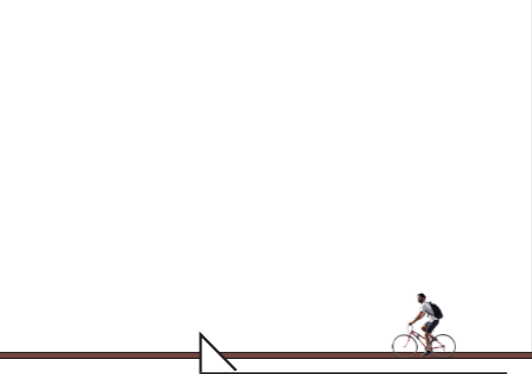
Here, we observe a woman sitting on a bench, a man walking a dog, another woman hanging laundry on a drying rack, and a man simply passing by. These activities don't demand much from the public space, and there are no designated activity zones dictating its purpose. This flexibility allows individuals to utilize the space according to their needs and desires.



3.1 Bicycle paths and parking

This pattern illustrates potential routes for cyclists. In this scenario, the pathway runs along the edge of the public space, accompanied by a designated bicycle parking area.


Alternatively, the bicycle path could traverse the public space, allowing cyclists to cut across swiftly. However, this decision depends on the desired activities within the public space.



4.1 Collective activities

This pattern illustrates the diverse range of collective activities possible in public spaces.

Here, we see a group of people enjoying a picnic, children playing, some individuals going for a run, and others gathered for a game of petanque in the sandy area. These activities don't demand much from the public space, except for some zoning to ensure that different activities can occur harmoniously.



Overall evaluation

About the tool:

"Let's me understand a bit better what you urbanists do"

Easy to understand
Fun

"Nice to be able to see the elements seperately"

About the process:

"Nice to clarify what I already knew"

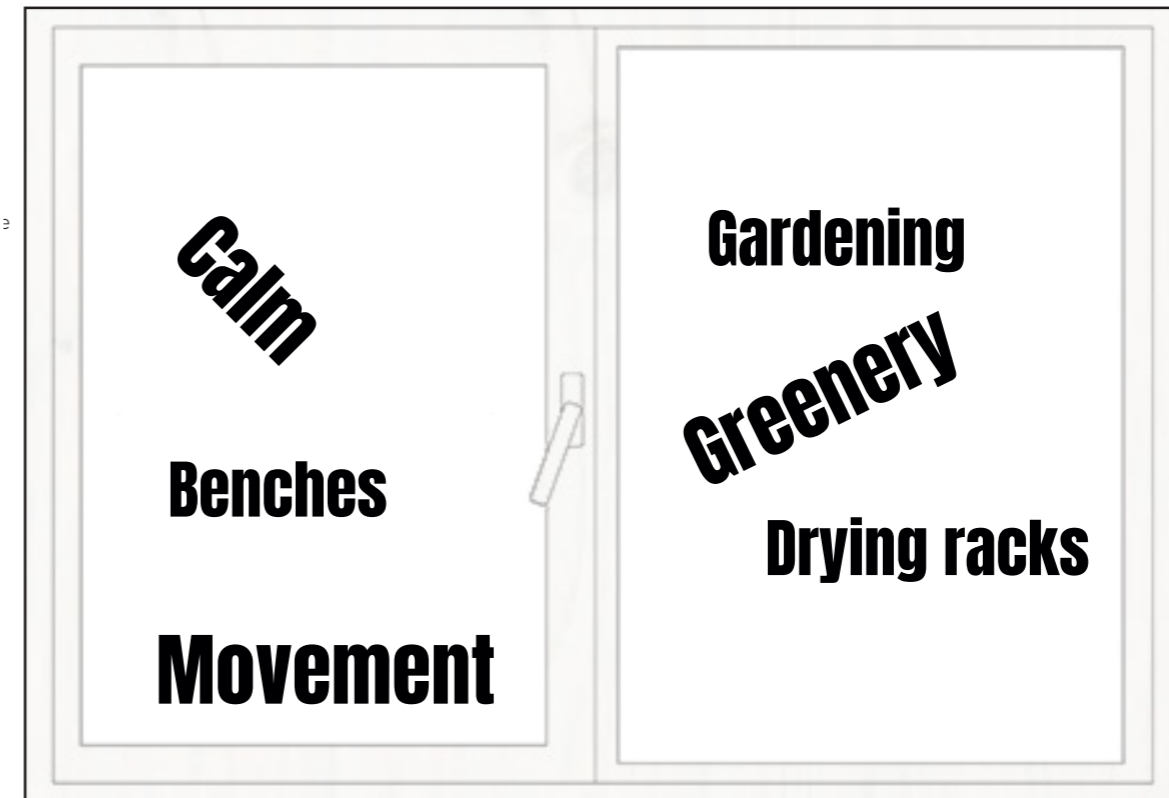
"Association game was a good warm-up exercise"

"Maybe I didn't complete understand my relationship to public space, but it got me thinking"

About the public space (and outside):

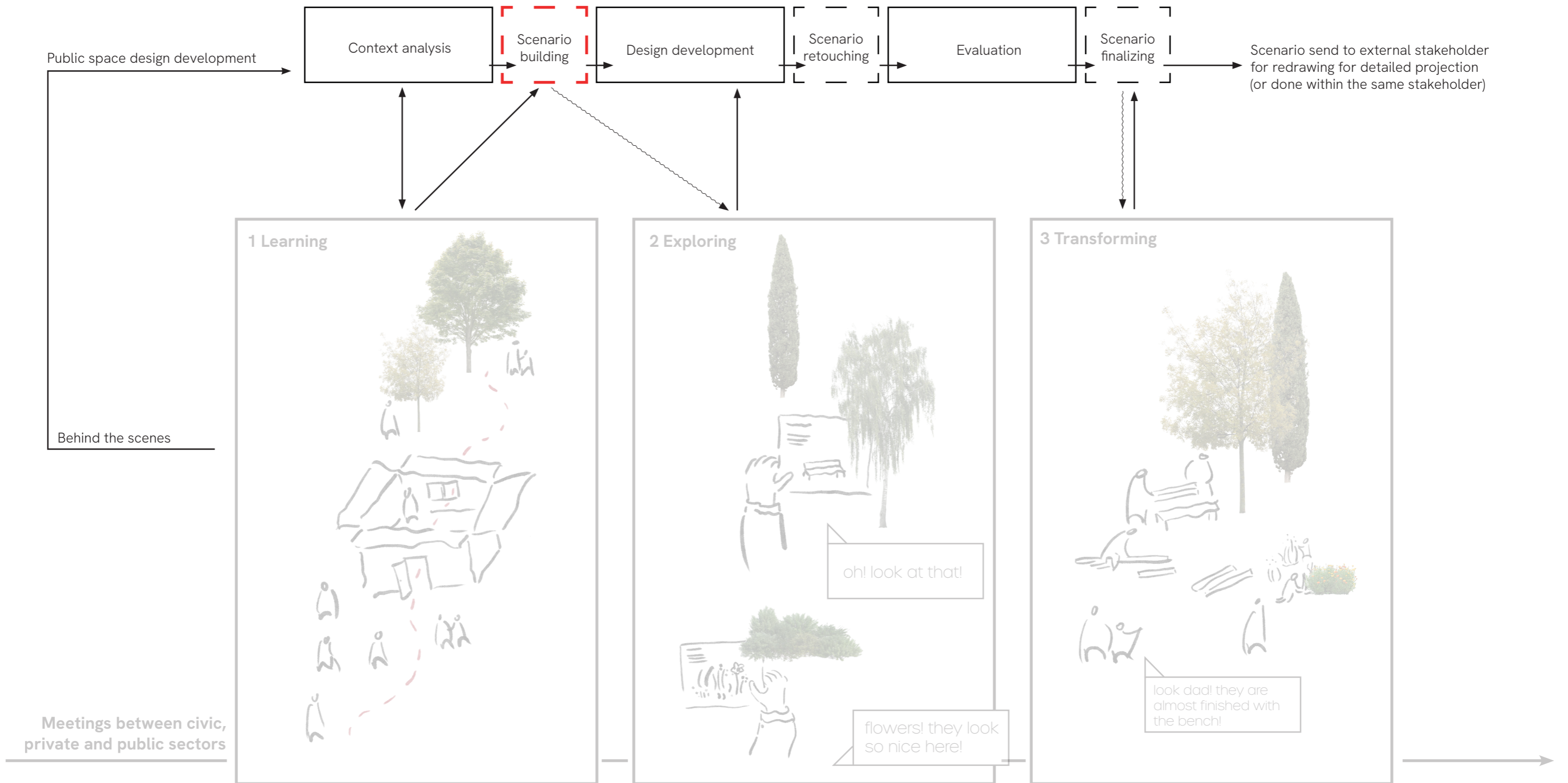
Collective activities

Bicycle paths

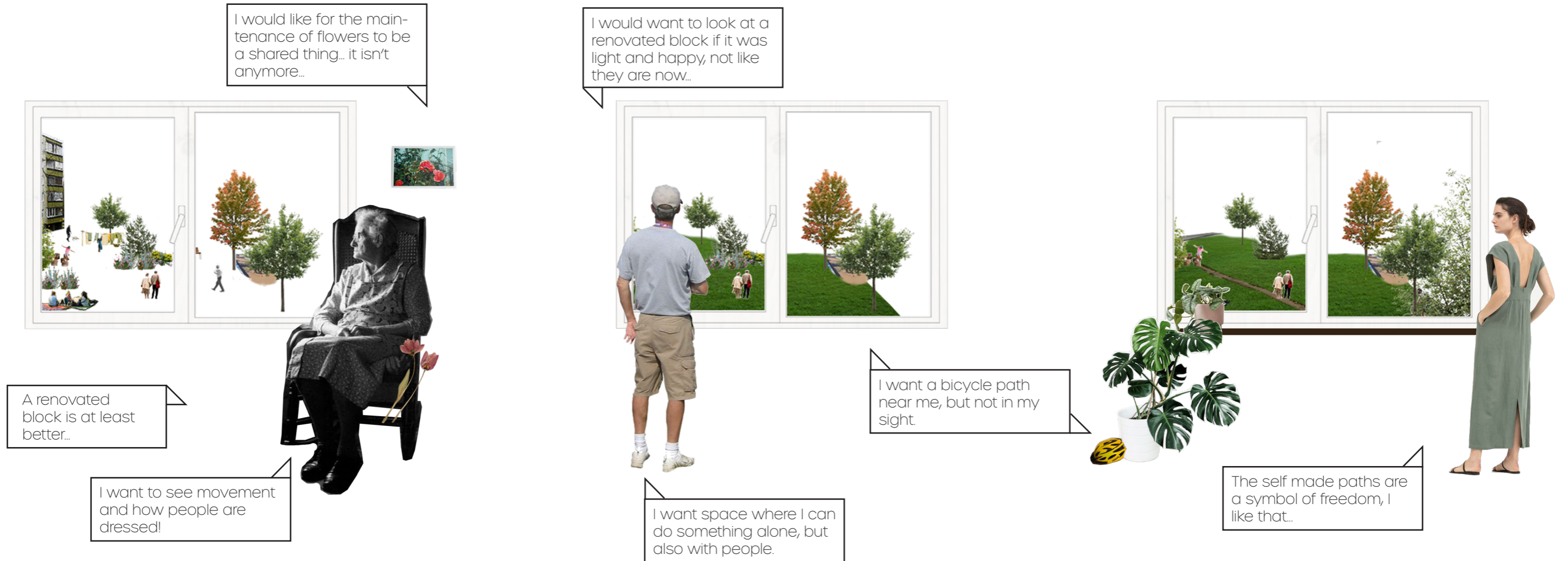


Initial concluding elements

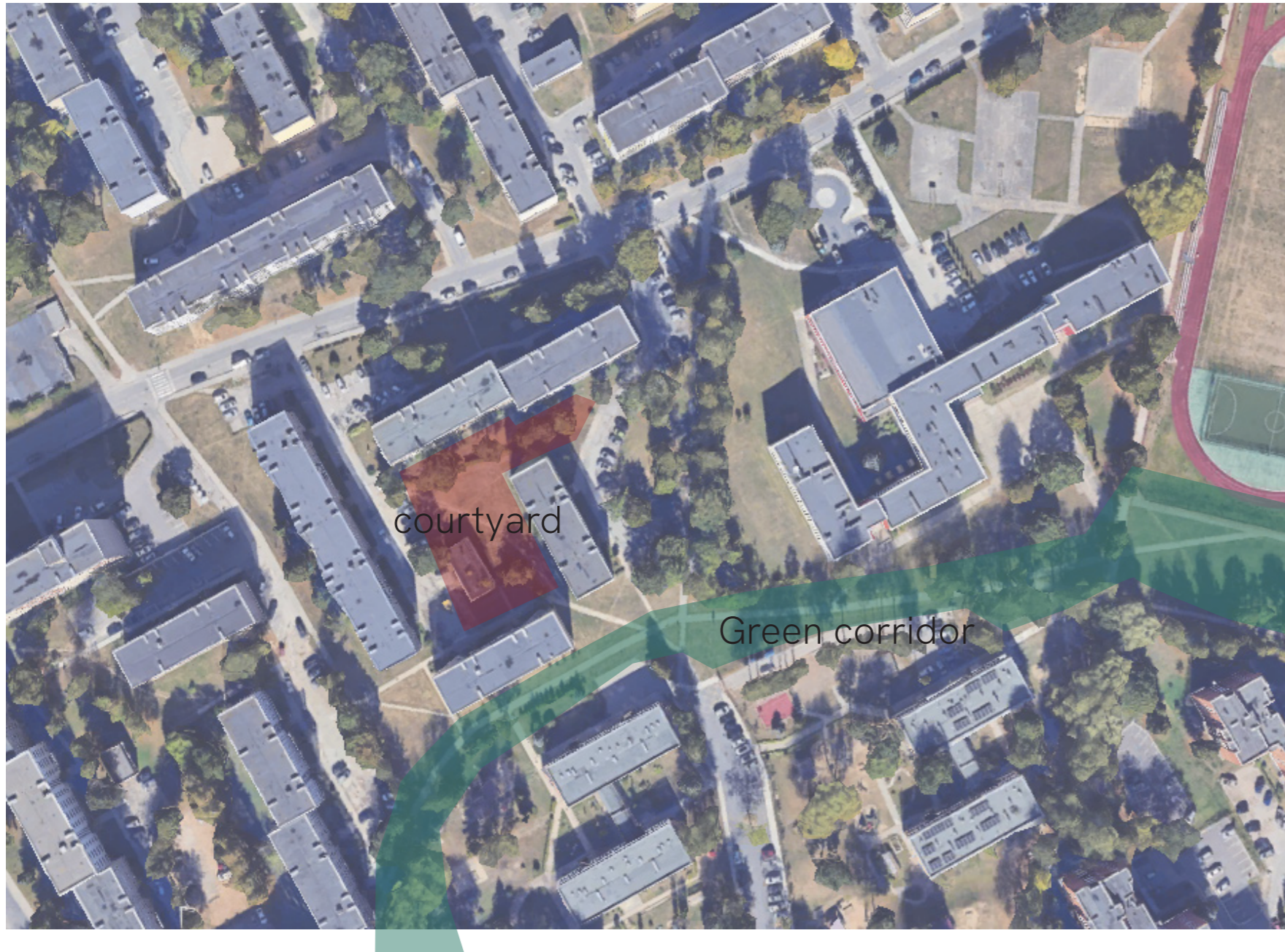
Input into the design development process



Statements from residents



Concluding elements



Distintion of public space



Other elements of importance

I would like for the main-tenance of flowers to be a shared thing... it isn't anymore...

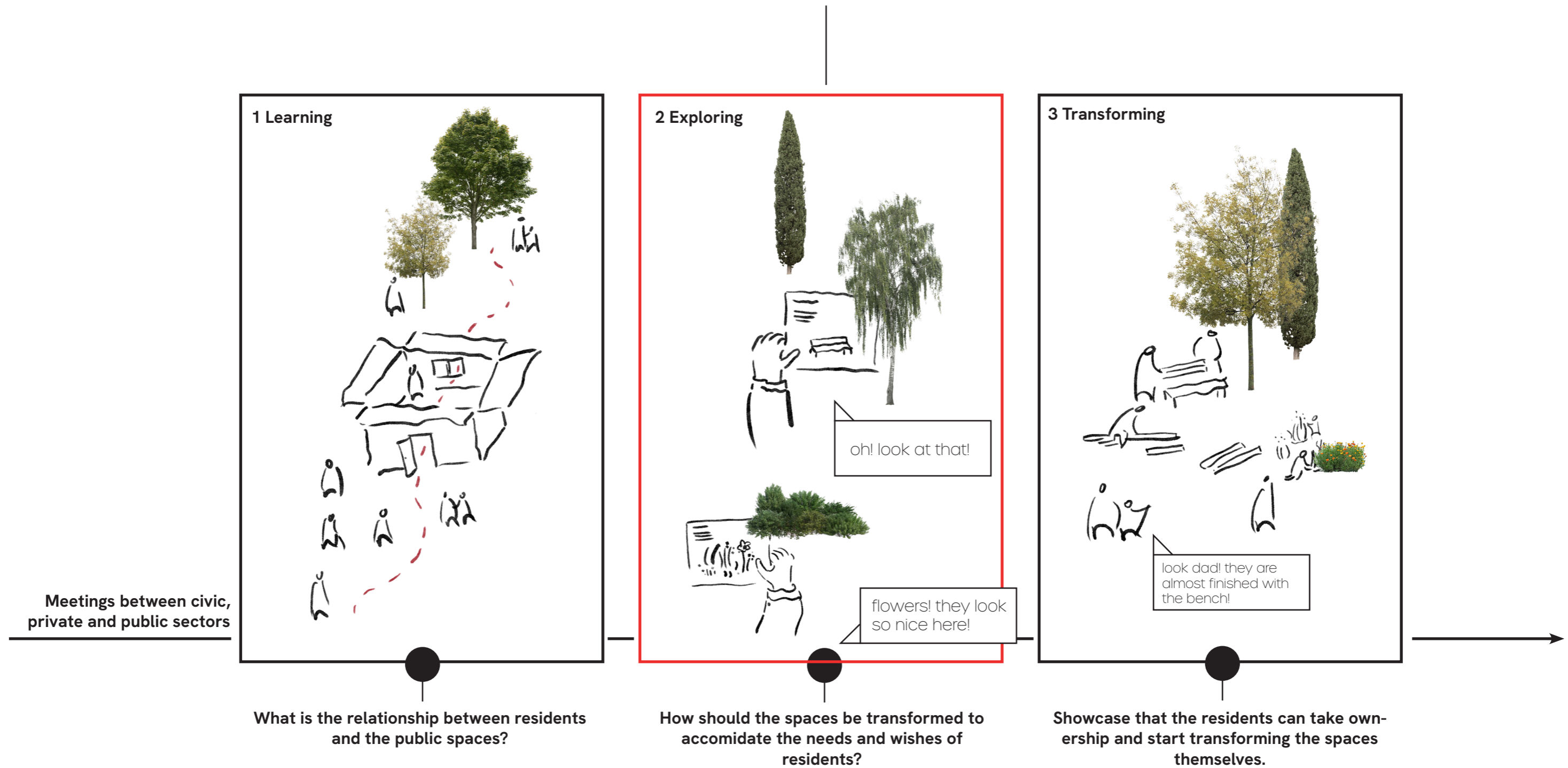
I want space where I can do something alone, but also with people.

I want to see movement and how people are dressed!

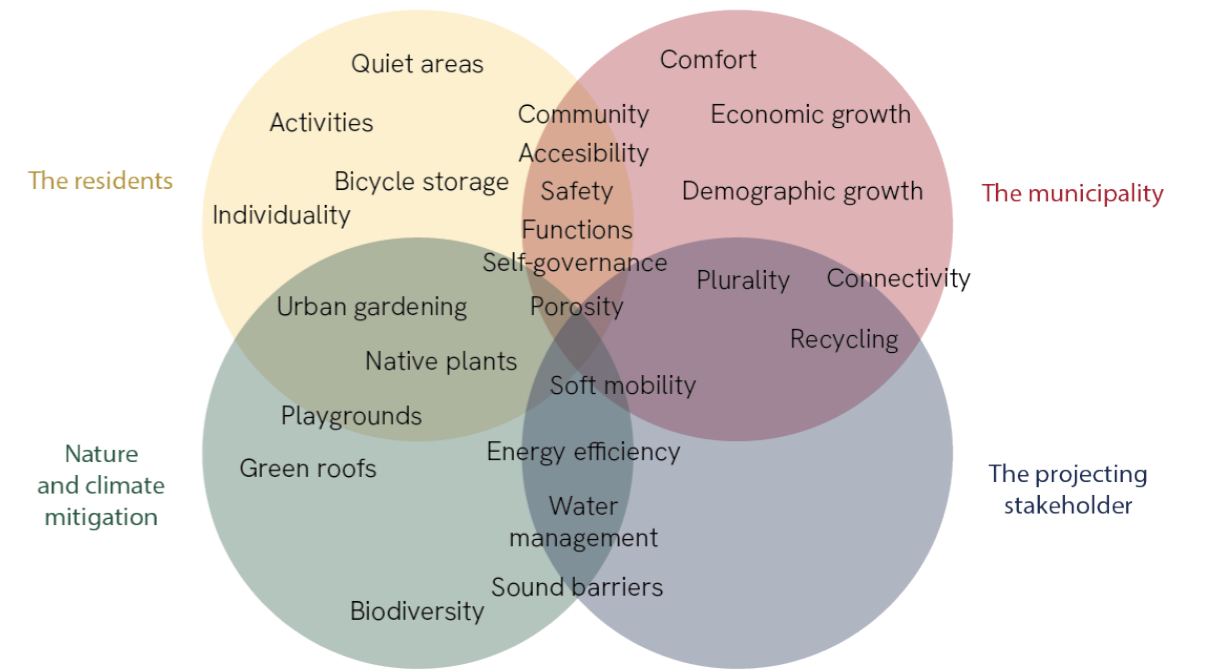
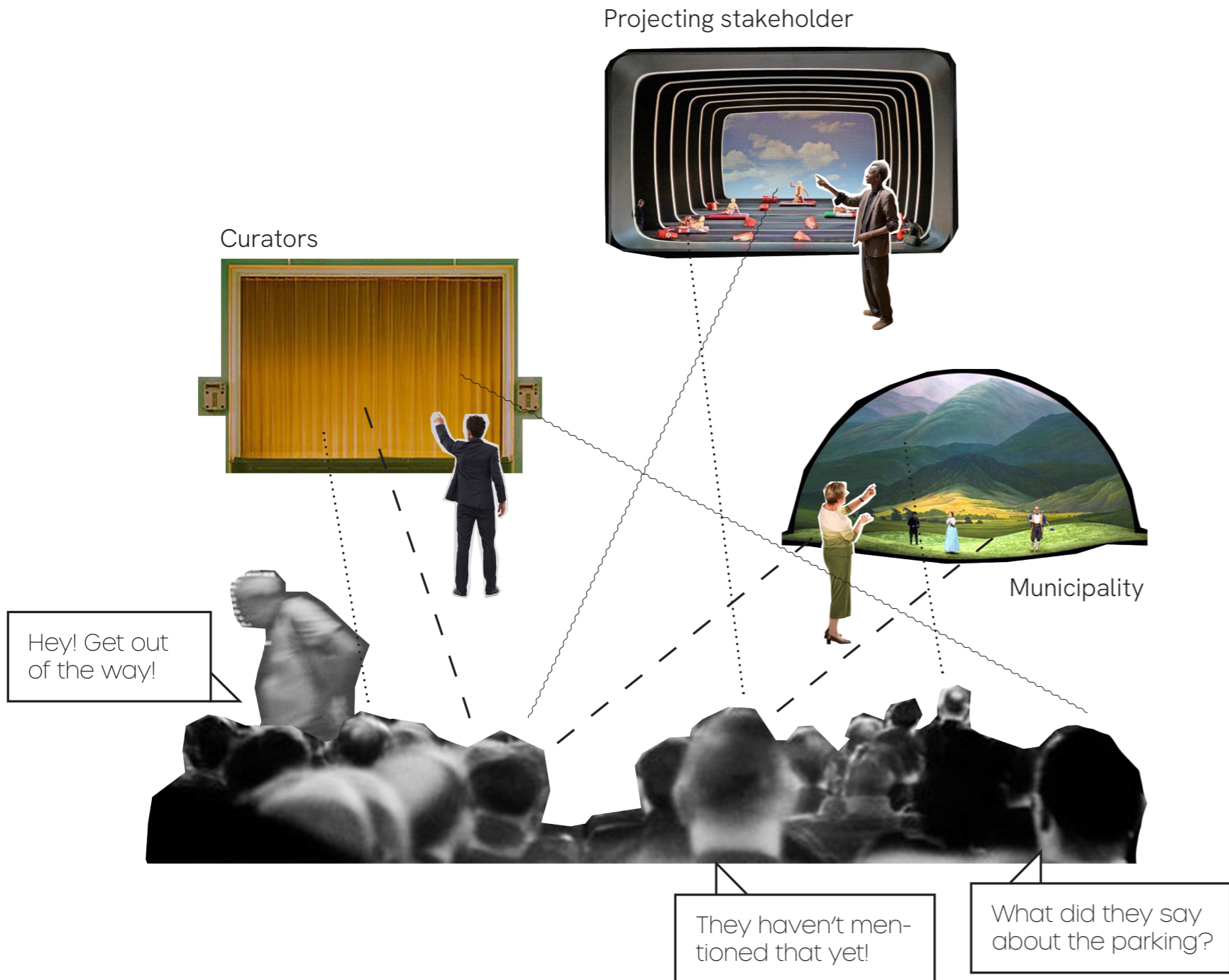
Statements

3 Further design

How should the spaces be transformed to accommodate the needs of residents?



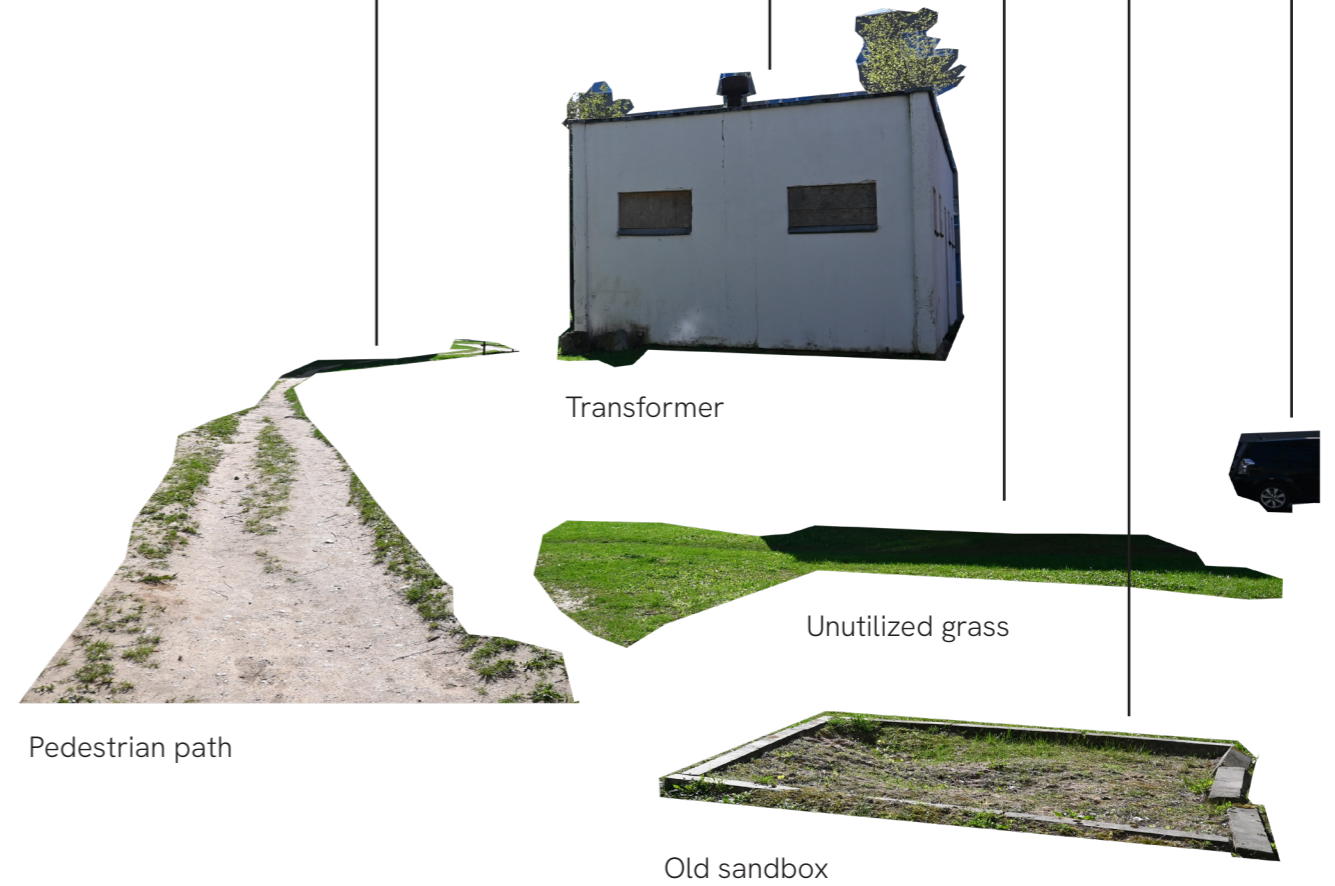
The presentation cycle



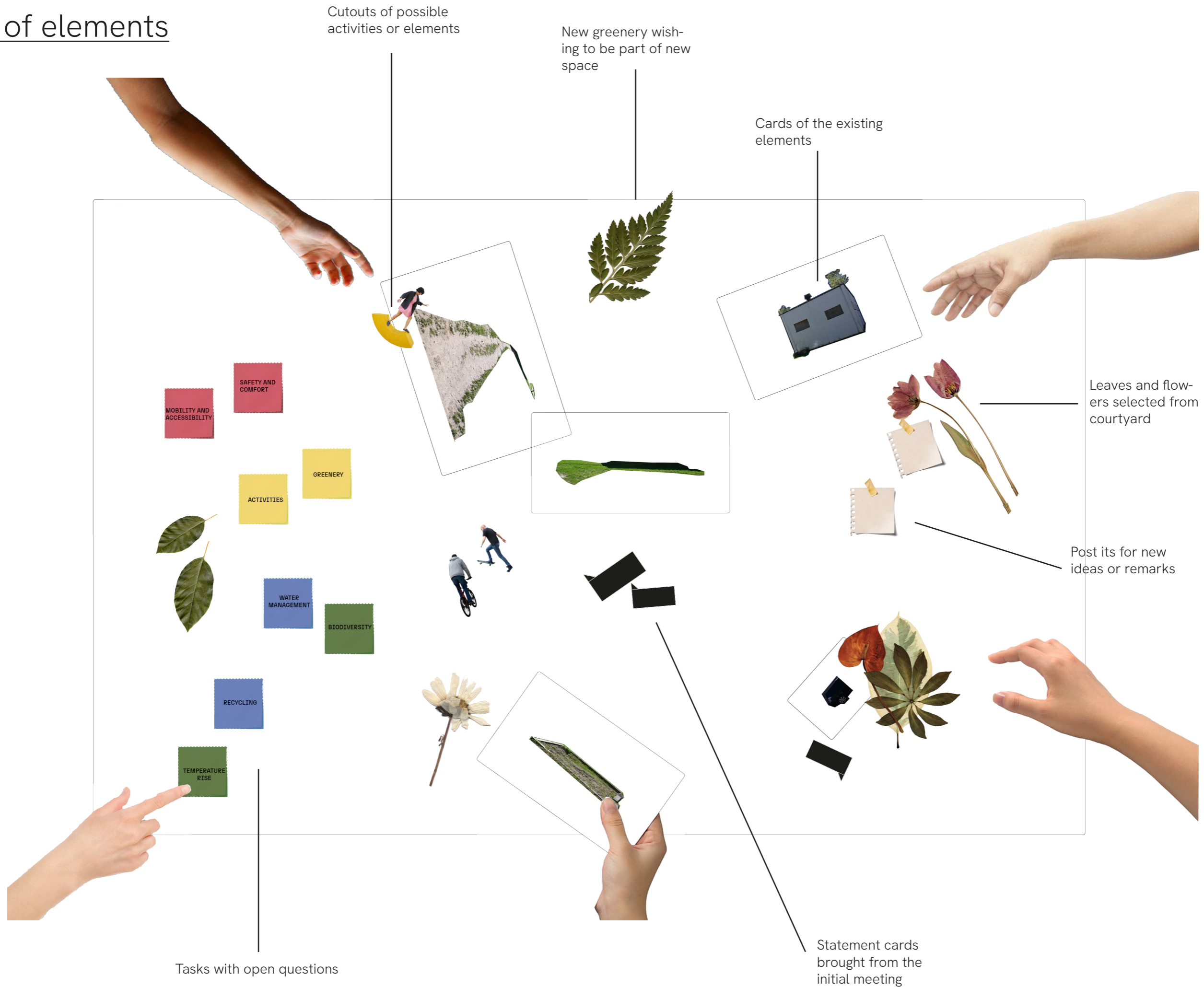
Focus areas



A reuse of the deconstruction method



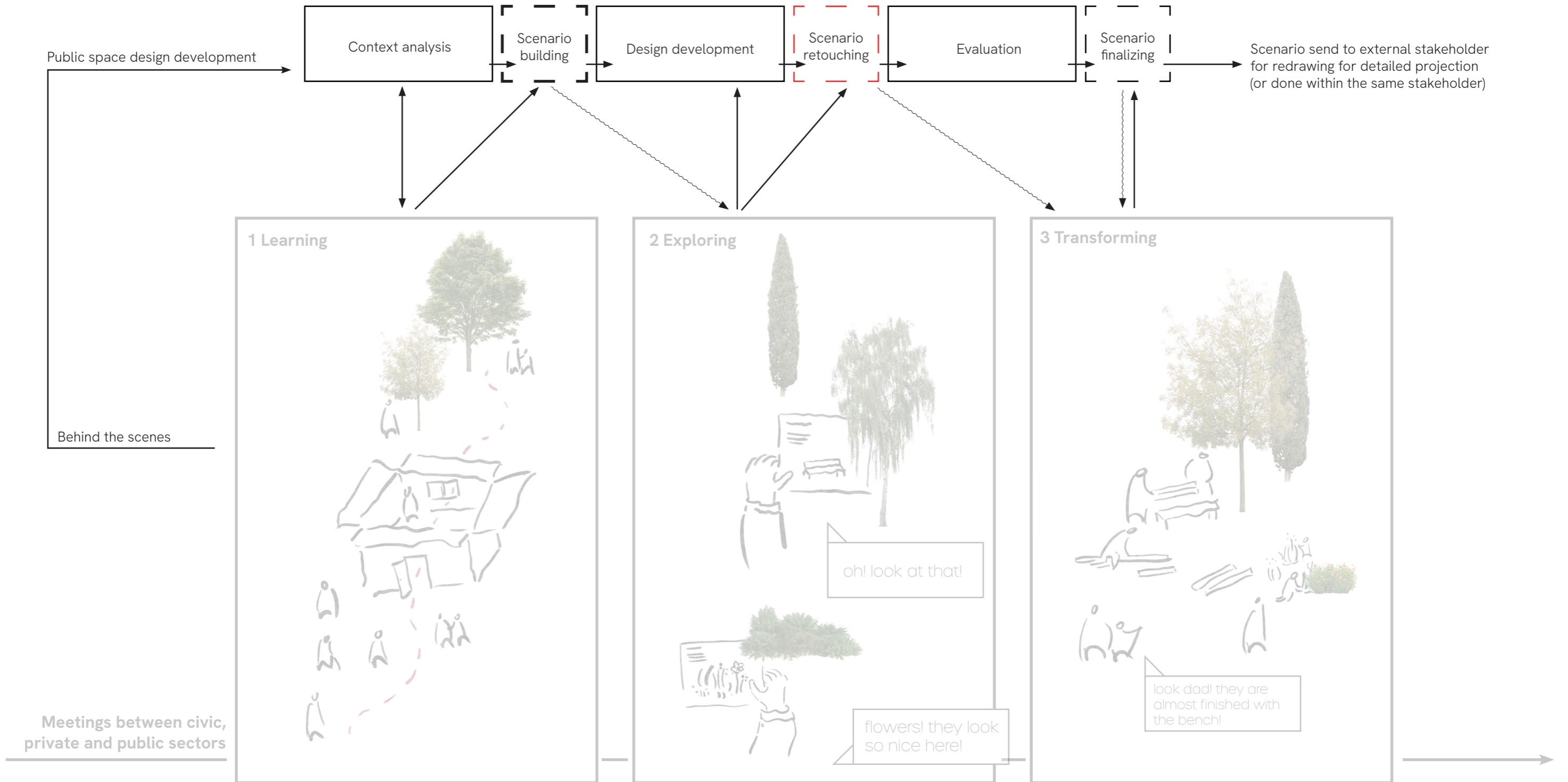
A table of elements

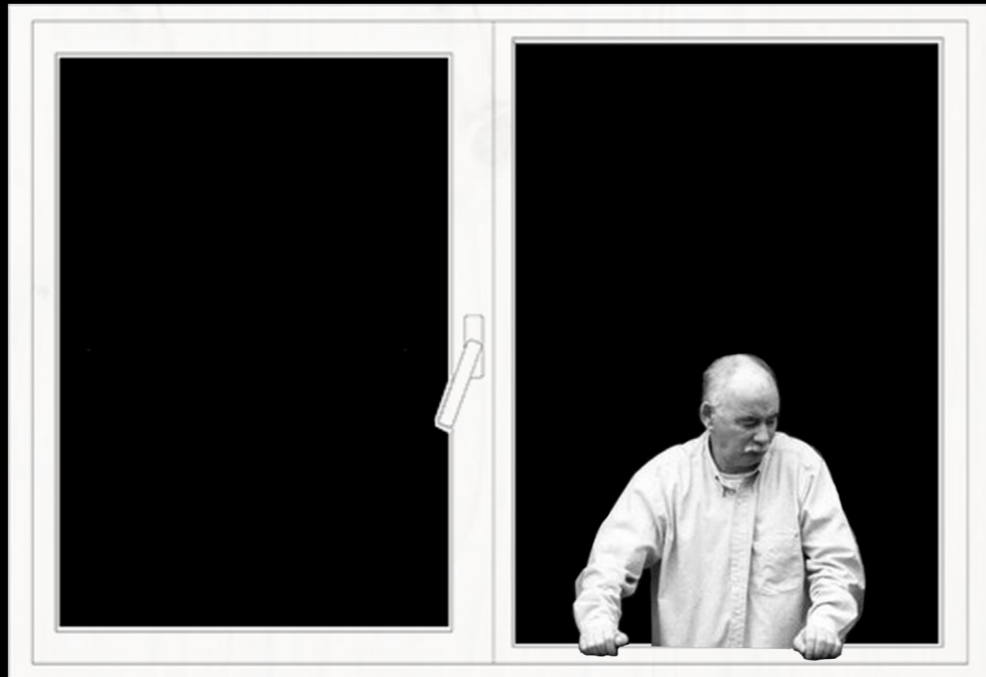


Initial image



Input for the development process





conclusion(s)

Conclusions, macro



Acknowledgment

...on the link of **trauma and the built environment**

...on the need for micro-districts that **facilitate trauma recovery** through soft mobility, empowering community action and self-expression

...on the need to discuss **the blocks as a result of modernistic planning** rather than occupation

...on rethinking the **existing tools** we use when communicating with citizens

Conclusions, meso



Seeing the potential in...

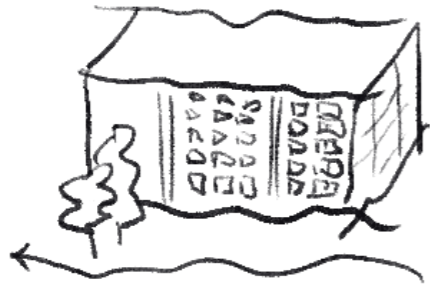
...using the **monotonous areas** as a catalyst for transformation

...encouraging **soft mobility** in micro-districts

...encouraging **new identity finding in green corridors**

...seeing the green corridors as the main **space for collective recovery**

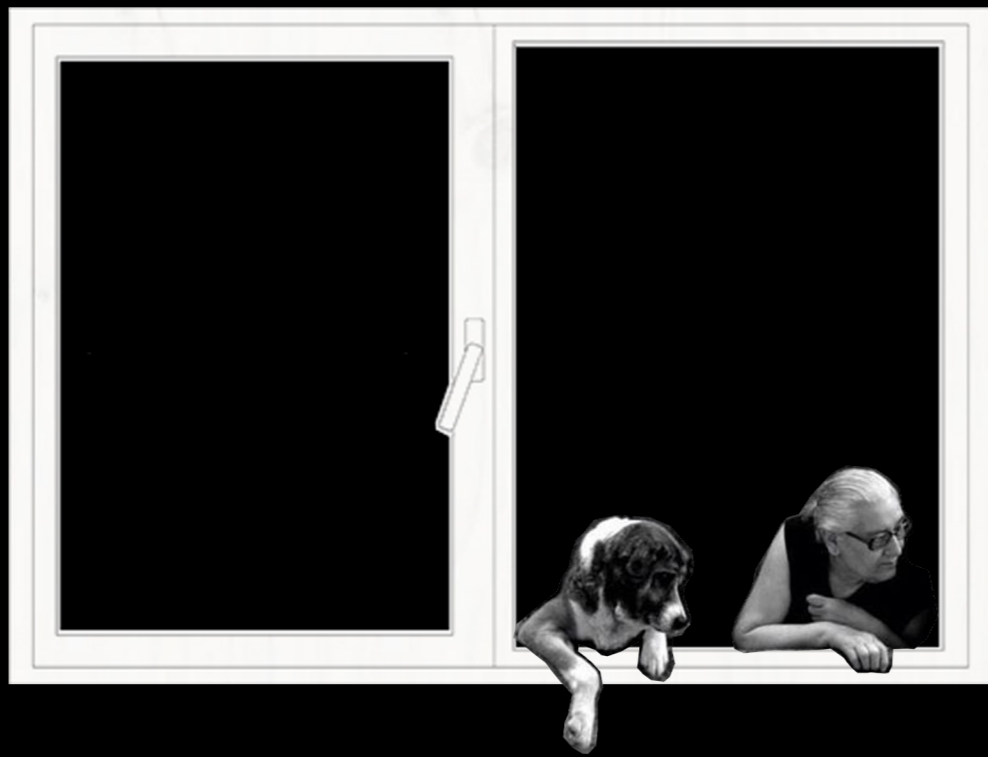
Conclusions, micro



...**A rethinking of "private"** is needed in the nearest public spaces through greenery and zoning

...**Ground floor transformation** of the blocks is an essential first step

...**Public spaces, back and frontyards,** should be the space for individual recovery



final remarks

Thank you!