



REJUVENATING
THE
CORE

OF
UMM AL-FAHEM

أم الفحم

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REJUVENATING THE CORE OF UMM AL-FAHEM

Highlighting the importance of the core of Umm Al-Fahem, and how to make it socially integrated and spatially accessible.

Key words: rejuvenation, familial system, inclusive planning, social integration, spatial accessibility, city core, Umm Al-Fahem

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GLOSSARY

REJUVENATION

To rejuvenate is to give new vitality to something old in order to give it new life, and rejuvenation is the process of freshening something up or reviving it.

In the case of Umm Al-Fahem, rejuvenation is the tool to bring back the life of the historic core of Umm Al-Fahem to its people.

HISTORIC CORE

This project describes the original four neighborhoods of the city as the core. The focus on this core originates from socio-spatial and hegemonic systems that are most pronounced in this core.

INCLUSIVE PLANNING

Inclusive planning is a development process that involves the people who are affected by this development. In this project, inclusive planning attempts to incorporate the various dimensions of the decrypted core of Umm Al-Fahem into the planning formulation and implementation process. These dimensions have a significant impact on people's livelihoods.

HEGEMONY

Hegemony refers to the dominance of one group over another group, usually, hegemony is which is frequently justified by legitimating norms and ideas such as religion and culture.

STAGNATED SPACE

Stagnated space is a space that is experiencing the absence of continuous movement or functional flows, and is enduring prevention of any kind of social or spatial development.

SOCIAL INTEGRATION

Refers to the incorporation of different groups in specific actions. Social integration helps reduce conflict in society, and it can help different groups feel more connected to their community.

FAMILIAL SYSTEM

A collective hierarchical institution that restricts members from taking part in their own fate. In this project, the familial system is not necessarily blood-related but belongs to a specific system.

SPATIAL ACCESSIBILITY

Refers to the ability to move from a specific space of facility to another with the help of well-connected infrastructural systems.



MOTIVATION

This project is inspired by a personal interest in the social and spatial development of an Arab city in the Jewish state of Israel.

Since the establishment of the state in 1948, the traditional urbanization process in the Arab cities of Israel has changed, especially the city of Umm Al-Fahem, which is considered the political front of the Arab minority in the country. Fueled with strong opinions and empowered by the rich history, the people of the city have rejected a number of ineffective spatial developments attempts in the city due to the overprotectiveness of people of their space and culture, and due to the lack of knowledge of the people on the one hand and lack of understanding from the governmental authorities on the other hand.

Growing up in the city of Umm Al-Fahem, I have been through it all. Therefore, as a person from within and as a future professional, I aspire to try and investigate the levels of the social and spatial complexity within the city and examine to what extent could different spatial design strategies change these social and spatial systems and how.

INTRODUCTION

Umm Al-Fahem is an Arab city in Israel, a city of social, geographic, historic, and political importance. Once a small village, Umm Al Fahem developed to be the third-largest Arab city in the state of Israel (OECD,2017). It endured several hegemony stages of occupation and mandates, which shaped its socio-spatial systems through the years.

The city's unique social feature is the existence of only four indigenous families: Agbaria, Jabareen, Mahameed, and Mahajna. Historically, the village was distributed between the four families dividing it into four different neighborhoods. Currently, these four neighborhoods are resembling the old core of the city, and all of the city inhabitants of the city belong to one of the four families. An important spatial feature is that due to the different hegemonic stages that the city went through in time, the infrastructure was built as a defense system from the army and not as means of movement of people. As the population grew, the infrastructure investments in the city did not keep pace with the housing development (OECD,2017) making the city spatially and structurally unorganized and complicated. These social and spatial features created a system of segregation and inaccessibility within the different scales of the city, mainly reflected in the core of the city.

Therefore, given the long history of the city and its constant unplanned spatial growth, and its important cultural familial heritage, the urban core gradually became impenetrable to those who do not live in it, socially and spatially. It became stagnated in order to prevent unauthorized access to it, only readable and open to those who culturally belong, resulting in the need for rejuvenation.

This project's main focus is to understand the city and its people, create intervention strategies in order to rejuvenate the core of Umm Al-Fahem to be socially integrated and spatially accessible on different scales. Through the medium of investigating the history and context of the city and proposing possible minimal and extreme spatial intervention scenarios, this project will be examining and answering the main question:

"To what extent can the socio-spatial strategies of rejuvenation make the stagnated core of Umm Al-Fahem be socially integrated and spatially accessible?"

“A city that evolved in the absence of plans and tools suitable to local needs”

(OECD,2017)



1. RECOGNIZE

This chapter starts with an introduction to the research context of Umm Al-Fahem city in Israel, then discusses the problem field and the aim and objectives of this research, including the ethical consideration along with the social and scientific relevance of this research. Followed by the methodology of this research and its frameworks and the graduation timeline.

1.1. CONTEXT

UMM AL- FAHEM

Country: Israel
District: Haifa
Population: 56,250
Area: 25.5 km²
Density: 2,200/km²
Since: before 1265
Religion: Islam

The city of Umm Al-Fahem is an Arab city in Israel with a population of 56,250 inhabitants. Due to the geographic location, from 1948 to 2000, Umm Al-Fahem functioned as a transit city for Palestinians working in Israel (Leroux, 2016). From 2002 the separation wall with the west bank was structured after the second intifada (the second Palestinian uprising), this was created an end zone at the back of the city making Umm Al-Fahem spatially limited.

The name of Umm Al-Fahem translates in Arabic to “the mother of charcoal” which originated from the fact that the city is surrounded by a forest that the inhabitants used to produce charcoal. The mountainy and valley topography made Umm Al-Fahem distinct in various aspects (W. Jabareen, 2021): the water springs for agriculture, the wadi and the mountains as a defense mechanism from different hegemonic times. Figure 1 shows the relation between the highest mountain (522m) and the wadi, which is also known as street 65, an important regional connector to the city.

Historically the city dates back to before 1265 (W. Jabareen, 2021), it went through four different hegemonic periods of time, in which the city is still under the hegemonic system of Israel.

As the people of the city have been there for generations before the establishment of the state, they consider themselves as Palestinians, not Israeli. Therefore, the rejection of the state has been loudly and clearly declared, and Umm Al-Fahem became the political voice of Arab cities.

The city that once used to be a rural Arab village was inhabited by four families. Interestingly, those families are still a strong characteristic of the city, where each person who lives in the city belongs to one of the families. The familial system, which was once known as Hamula) in this city is unique and differs very much from what the West would call a family, and is close enough to the universal Arab familial system. This system affects the social and spatial aspects of the city and therefore will be elaborated on further in the research.

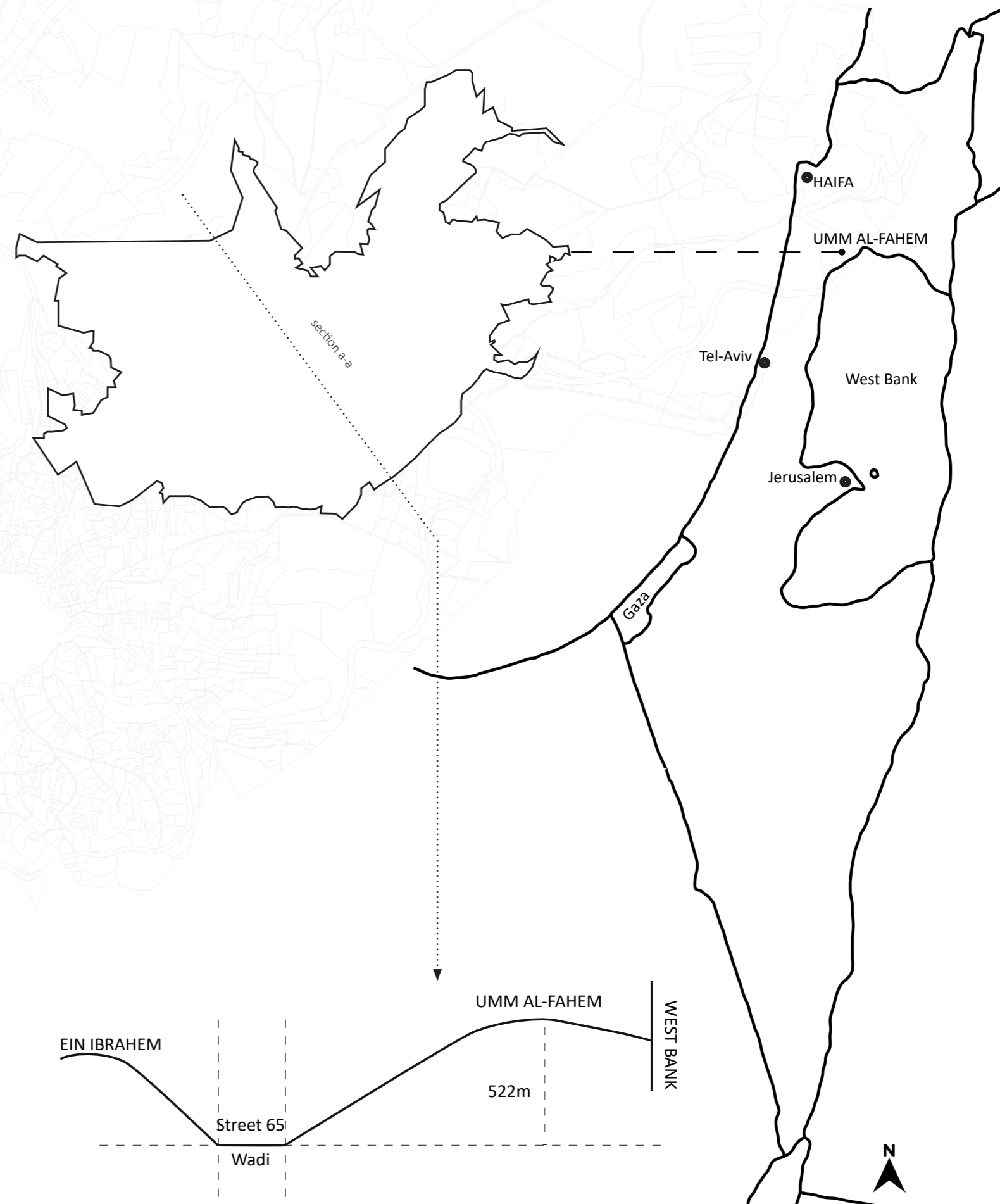


Figure 1. Schematic section a-a of Umm Al-Fahem topography, by author.

1.1. CONTEXT

URBAN GROWTH OF UMM AL-FAHEM

Maps credit: Karim Mahmood Mahameed (2021)

Umm Al-Fahem was a small agricultural village that rested on mountains and used the wadi as a trade road (Leroux, 2016). The once small village in Palestine is now the largest Arab city in Israel with an area of 25.5 km².

Since 1948, after the establishment of Israel, many refugees from various cities came to Umm Al-Fahem to seek refuge and became part of the city. Therefore, the urban growth of the city was very fast from 5,490 people in 1944 to 56,108 people in 2020.

The growth of the city continued from the village to the wadi and along the veins of the mountains, the growth was random and unplanned. After 2002, the West Bank border (which will be elaborated on further in the research) became a barrier to this growth and the city had to develop towards the North-East and the South-West of the city.

“Over the last 60 years, Umm Al-Fahm has grown from a small village of about 5 000 inhabitants to a city with a population of about 50 000.”

(OECD,2017)

1944



1956



1968



1975



1985

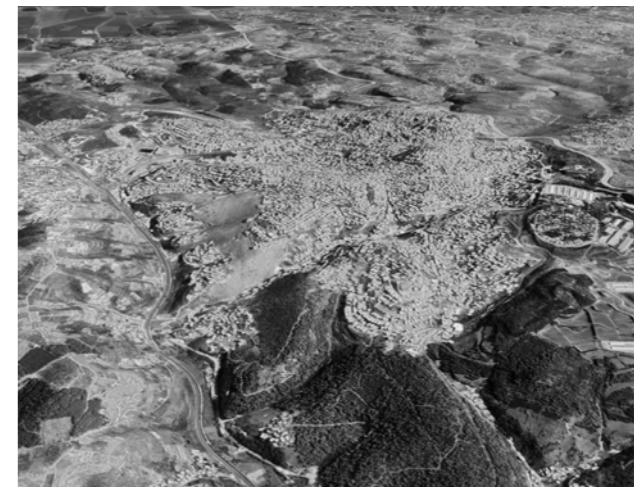


1992



2006

2020



Until this day, even with the efforts to implement urban planning policies and development plans, most of the development and growth of Umm Al-Fahem is random and unplanned.

1.1. CONTEXT

IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CITY

HISTORIC OVERVIEW

The city of Umm Al-Fahem is an ancient city that went through different hegemonic systems through time. These systems developed the spatial growth of the city, and with time it became more crucial to its surroundings. As the former village emerged in 1265 during the Mamluk era, the city belonged to the sultan of Syria and was recognized since the Canaanite era age due to its location and its fertile land. Umm Al-Fahem hosted an important trade route that was the connection between Egypt and the empires of Damascus(Leroux, 2016).

Since 1517, the village of 24 households was integrated into the Ottoman empire and developed in the agriculture section. In 1872, the village witnessed the diversion into four quarters, in which each quarter belonged to one family (W. Jabareen, 2021). During the Ottoman empire, there was no planning legislation, and cities were not planned, they were developed according to the socio-cultural code of construction (OECD, 2017).

The British mandate began in 1922, and Umm Al-Fahem kept growing strong in the agriculture sector, with the help of the wadi for the transportation system, the city became the economic center for the neighboring villages and cities (W. Jabareen, 2021). During the Mamluk era, the Ottoman era, and the British mandate, The village faced minor threats to its socio-economic systems, until 1948, where the village started to experience a radical transformation in all of the sectors (Koldas, 2008).

15 May 1948, the day of the Nakba when almost half of the Palestinian population fled or were expelled from their homes was the day Umm Al-Fahem accepted many refugees from surrounding villages (W. Jabareen, 2021). As the population grew, in 1984 Umm Al-Fahem got the status of a municipality.

Mamluk era
1265

Ottoman era
1517

British Mandate era
1922

State Of Israel
1948

image 4



image 3



image 2



image 1



Figure 2. old images, Source: Umm Al-Fahem photo gallery

A POLITICAL CITY

Politics play a very strong and crucial role in developing any Arab city in Israel. The ethno-political conflicts are shown in many ways in the city: spatial planning policies, subsidies, land use, police aggression, public transportation, land expropriation, etc. These conflicts began as soon as the establishment of the estate of Israel in 1948 and continued to be more intense through time.

In the early days of the Israeli state, the location of Umm Al-Fahem was strategically marked as the most important transportation route, therefore Umm Al-Fahem became a target for aggression in order to create policies to “Judaize” the city and the Wadi. Even though Umm Al-Fahem became a city, the representatives of Umm Al-Fahem were not given any access to the policy and decision-making concerning the inhabitants’ lives in the city (Kaldas, 2006). Due to the aggression and to the beliefs of its inhabitants, the people of Umm Al-Fahem refused to recognize the Israeli government and created a counter-hegemonic stance to express their dissatisfaction with the Israeli dominance.

The strong voice of counter-hegemonic stance that was created by Umm Al-Fahem, made the city the center of the regional Arab movement against the state actions towards Arabs. To the point that a caricature by Naji Al-Ali was created to appreciate the movement that the city is doing as the voice of Arab people in Israel (figure 4). The meaning of the caricature is: “Umm Al-Fahem, the movement name of Palestine, not that whom you call someone nor that person considers himself someone”. This famous caricature resembles the political importance the city has for the people regionally and locally.



Figure 3. People protesting police aggression in Umm al-Fahem (2021)
Source: panet.co.il



Figure 4. Naji Al-Ali caricature about Umm Al-Fahem
Source

1.1. CONTEXT

IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CITY

FAMILIAL SYSTEM - FOUR INDIGENOUS FAMILIES

The Arab culture is recognized for how many family members are close together, not only the parents and the siblings but also the uncle of the mother is considered as your grandpa and you have to give respect to the oldest in the room. Historically, this kind of familial system is a collective system in order to face the danger that each tribe had to face, as Dwairy mentions in his book: “ the interest of the collective exceeds the interest of the individual”.

The familial system in Umm Al-Fahem is different than any other, socially and spatially.

Socially: The story of the families in Umm Al-Fahem began before the Ottoman era, where people from all around the Middle East started to find a home in the former village because of

its strategic location and economic function. The family structure, formerly known as the “hamula”, started to form from different clans that followed a Mokhtar as their leader. The four known leaders through the time were: Mahmood, Jebreel, Al-Aghbary, and Mahjan. With time, the names of the families changed to make an easier pronunciation in order to reference the families: Mahameed, Jabareen, Agbaria, and Mahajna.

Every time a new clan or small family moved to Umm Al-Fahem, they have to address their belonging to one of the families (figure 5). Even after the establishment of Israel in 1948, the refugees who came to the city from neighboring villages became part of a family of one of the Mokhtars (reasons for choosing which family is not known).

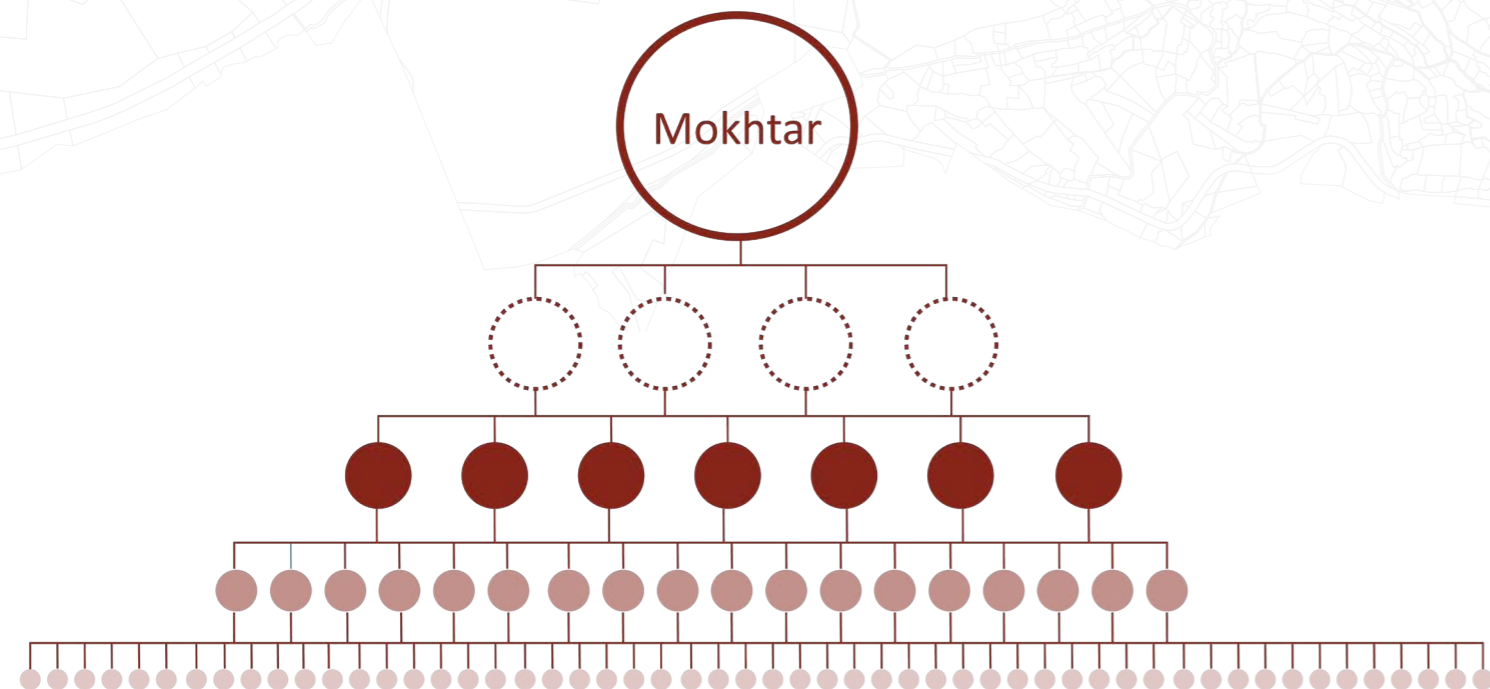


Figure 5. Family structure in Umm Al-Fahem, created by author.

Zahra Marwan Mustafa Assad Mustafa Yassin Mousa ben Eisa Al-Aghbary (Agbaria)

This familial system is dominant until this day, and it is one of the most unique characteristics of the city. Each person’s last name has to relate to the Mokhtar, for example, my name: Zahra Marwan Mustafa Assad Mustafa Yassin Mousa ben Eisa Al-Aghbary (Agbaria).

This system creates segregation between the four families, considering that each family is protective of its own. Meaning that each family has strong opinions about the other families and proceed to detach, and sometimes attack each other. Segregation also exists in the sub-family systems, as some sub-families are more educated than others with a different lifestyle. According to Dwairy, this difference in education level and lifestyle leads to creating sub diversion in the collective system.

Spatially: This social segregation is most pronounced in the old city core. Historically these families situated themselves in four neighborhoods- which are now the old core of the city (figure 6), the diversion between the neighborhoods was not legislated, but was an agreement between the people. With the change of hegemonic systems from the Ottoman empire to this day, and according to the Arab culture, people tend to build their houses around their families. Therefore, considering the small area of the core, the neighborhoods became overpopulating and overcrowding. Nonetheless, the borders between the four families (even though not tangible) did not change.

Yet, the people of Umm Al-Fahem needed space to live, thus some decided to leave the core and live somewhere in the city that is not overcrowded and is safe. Which interestingly created social segregation between the core inhabitants and the “out of the core” inhabitants.



Figure 6. Location of families in the core, created by author.

“Social dynamics within the Arab states resemble that within the Arab families. Both of them are hierarchical authoritarian structures that prevent the members to take part in their own destiny. Political authority controls and suppresses the residences in the name of collective interests, facing the enemy, national unity, comprehensive development, liberation, or socialism. The authority of the family also does so in the name of love, name of the family, protection of the family, and so on. Both of them are concerned for maintaining the system much more than the development for all.”
(Dwairy, 1998)

1.2. PROBLEM FIELD

Umm Al-Fahem is a city of many characteristics, some could be recognizable for the benefit of the city while others are considered as a disadvantage on various scales.

Based on bibliography and personal experience, this section will elaborate on three themes: Hegemonic system- focuses on the familial system segregation and the ethno-political conflicts, Social aspects- explores the overpopulation and the civic dissatisfaction in the city, and lastly the spatial structure- which is referring to the lack of space and the inadequate infrastructure the city is facing.

HEGEMONIC SYSTEM

The hegemonic system is reflected in Umm Al-Fahem in two scales: the regional scale reflects the ethno-political conflicts, and the local scale reflects the segregation in the familial system.

Familial system segregation

As mentioned in the previous section, Umm Al-Fahem has a strong and recognizable familial system. This system is considered a hegemonic system of the local scale because of the dominance of the family ideology on different groups within the city. This system creates segregation between the different families, and between the sub-families.

Ethno-political conflict

Usually, on the mention of “Arab city in Israel”, the brain of a person who does not live in the country or does not have enough information about the Israel-Palestine conflict, immediately think: “and?”. The obvious but yet sensitive terms in “Arab city in Israel” mean much more to the people who are experiencing major segregation due to ethnic and political factors, which is called ethno-political conflict.

The hegemony system in Israel is based on politics and ethnicity, this ethno-political structure determines the extension of the distribution of power between the government and the cities, and between the ethnic groups of Arabs and Jews (Y. Jabareen, 2013).

The rejection of the people of Umm Al-Fahem to the government is reflecting how the smaller ethnic group is recognizing and acting against the ethno-political discrimination that is happening against them. Figure 8 shows an example of this conflict, where Arab people gather around to protest the police brutality against them, and they express this rejection not only by holding signs for the political parties to read, but also the Palestinian flag in order to express that this is a deeper ethnic issue.



Figure 7. protest against police brutality, credit: Al Quad camera.

SOCIAL ASPECTS

There are many social aspects of Umm Al-Fahem. As a person who is originally from the city, it is important to focus on the overpopulation of the city and the civic dissatisfaction as it is crucial to understanding the city’s social aspects.

Civic dissatisfaction

According to CBS in 2016 a social survey was conducted about the satisfaction of the Arab residents with their area of residence (figure 9). This survey concludes that Arab people are mostly dissatisfied with their area of residence. This dissatisfaction is reflected in the psychology of the people, as it results in them maintaining violent and rebellious behaviors to stress their anger and dissatisfaction.

Based on figure 8, this dissatisfaction also illustrates that the amenities, services of the city are lacking the quality that the residents need in order to be satisfied as citizens, it also implies that spatial structures are not well developed and do not meet the citizens’ needs.

Overpopulation

The area of Umm Al-Fahem is 25.5 km² and has a population of 56,250 with a density of 2,200/km², it is considered densely packed. Due to the overpopulation, most of the land use function is housing as seen in figure 10.

Since 1948 the city accepted refugees from neighboring villages which increase the population number, 74 years later, the city borders are still the same but the population number is still increasing. Creating major discomfort between the inhabitants in the city sphere.

The city’s core is the one that faces major overpopulation than any other area within the city. With a radius of 600 meters, 410 buildings, and almost 1600 people living there, considering the historical houses that are not inhibited but still standing, the city core is denser than ever.

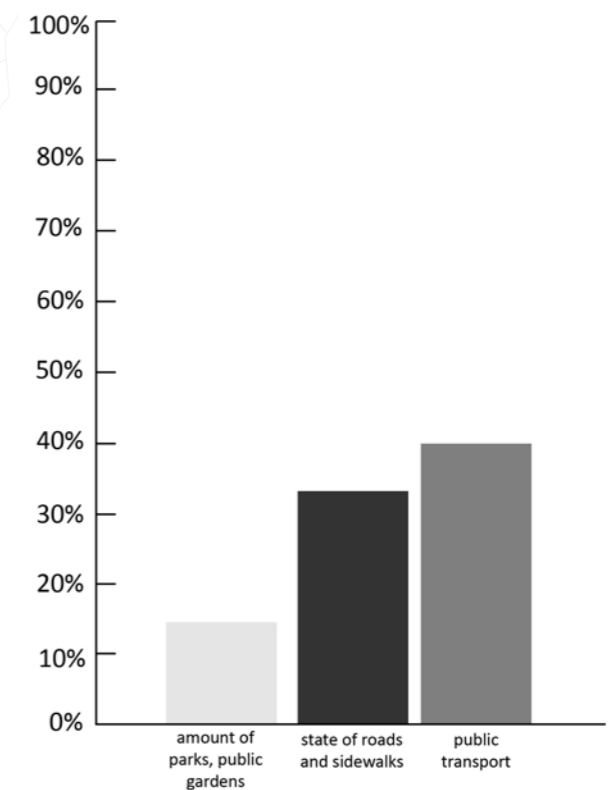


Figure 8. Satisfaction of Arab residents in their area of residence, based on CBS 2016 survey.

1.2. PROBLEM FIELD

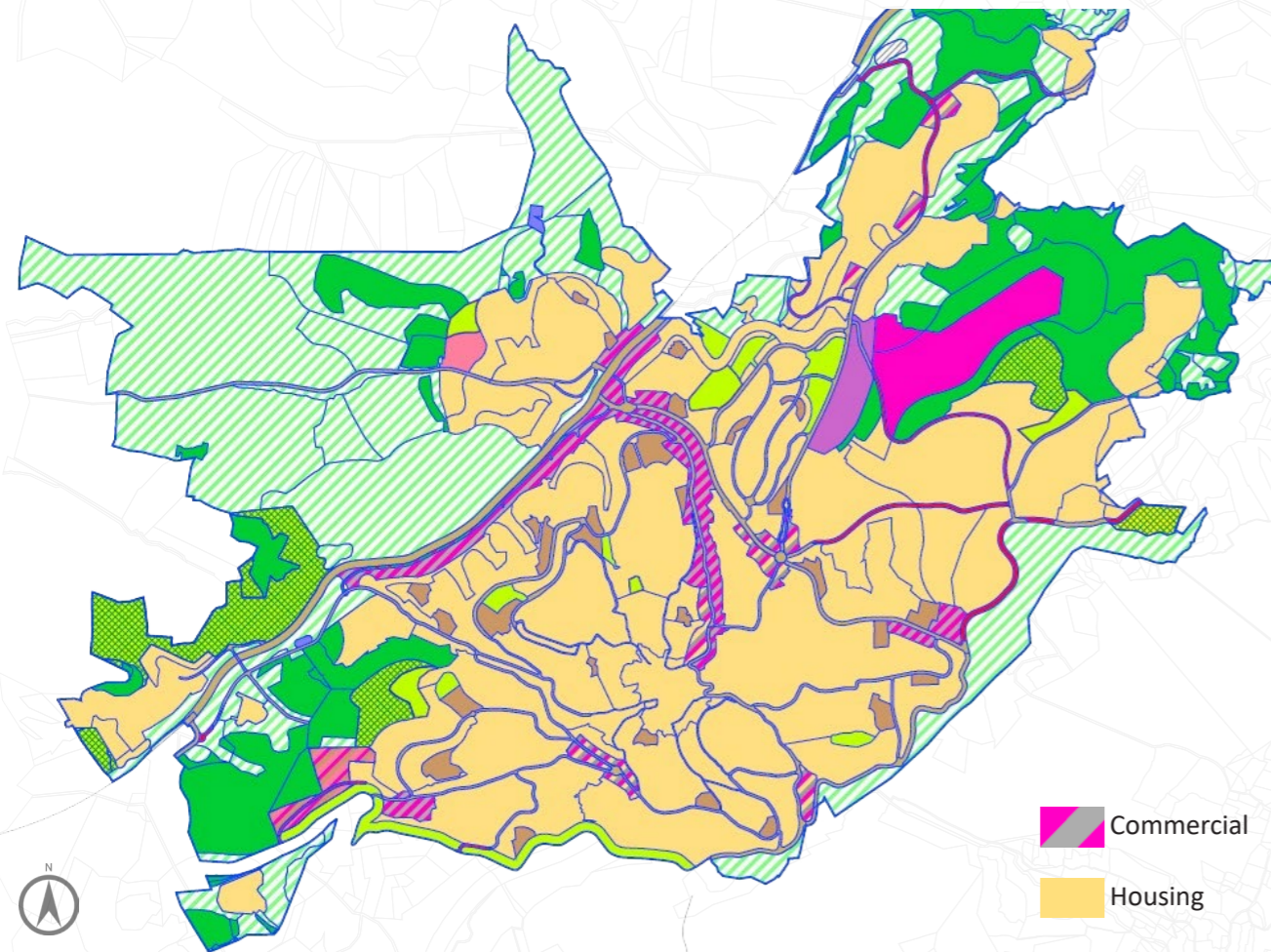


Figure 9. Umm Al-Fahem Master plan, source: <https://mavat.moin.gov.il/MavatPS/Forms/SV4.aspx?tid=4>

SPATIAL STRUCTURE

As the city developed in an unorganized approach and the population kept on growing, the buildings are built in a packing manner with very poor infrastructure.

Lack of space

As mentioned before, the city is facing the issue of overpopulation, and to keep with the pace of overpopulation, people kept on building houses without any urban planning. Leading to an unorganized city structure and is very packed. Therefore, with a combination of land ownership issues, people have almost nowhere to build. Not only finding space to build is an issue, but the city is lacking public spaces.

From my experience as a resident, there are limited public space locations within the city. From these public spaces, some of them are not even an option due to the lack of safety and the conditions of the space.

This lack of space is mostly seen in the city core, as the land ownership is still not legislated and the main purpose for people is to build houses to live in while neglecting public space and the development of infrastructure. Resulting in no public spaces in the core and unorganized narrow alleys.

Inadequate infrastructure

The infrastructure in Umm Al-Fahem has several stories but only one way to describe it: inadequate. The topography of the city played a role in the history of the shape of the infrastructure. As seen in figure 10, most streets are snake-shaped, this shape is mainly a consequence of the British mandate era. As the British army aimed to build streets in the city in order to move with their cars and military armored, a Palestinian planner was assigned to design the streets, this planner used his position and the mountainous topography to create streets that are easy for the indigenous inhabitants to move between, and difficult for the military cars and armored to transport (W. Jabareen, 2021).

Due to the lack of planning, and the focus only on building new accommodation, the infrastructure was not developed properly in the city or taken care of. This neglect is to be blamed on the municipality, even though the Arab municipalities receive less subsidy than the Jewish cities, the focus of the city should be aimed towards creating safe and competent infrastructure for the inhabitants to use.

This neglect That leads to inadequate infrastructure within the city is mostly reflected in the city core. The city core is the oldest area in the city, the origin of the four neighborhoods of the four indigenous families. As seen in figure 10 and figure 11, the infrastructure in the core is so poor and dangerous to the people who live there, as most of the people who live there gain their living from driving big trucks that they can only park in front of their house in the core.



Figure 10. Poor infrastructure, photo credit: Salam Jabareen



Figure 11. unsafe infrastructure, photo credit: Arwa Mahajna

1.2. PROBLEM FIELD

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Since 1948, Arab cities in Israel have faced difficulties in developing spatially due to ethno-political conflicts. No additional Arab cities have been established in order to contain the rising number of the Arab population. Therefore, the overpopulation of these cities is reaching its highest, while the infrastructure and public amenities are not keeping pace with the housing developments. This unevenness between the social and spatial developments in the Arab cities can lead to a lack of public spaces, unsafe environments, and social complications within.

As most likely there will not be any new Arab cities in Israel in the near future and considering the continued overpopulation, spatial planning is the key to finding the balanced distribution within the existing and future social and spatial developments.

Focusing on one Arab city that has geographic, historic, and political importance, Umm Al-Fahem is one of the cities where these social and spatial conflicts are most pronounced. Therefore, this project will be focusing on Umm Al-Fahem, specifically on the old core of the city, as the case study for the unevenness between the social and spatial developments in Arab cities.

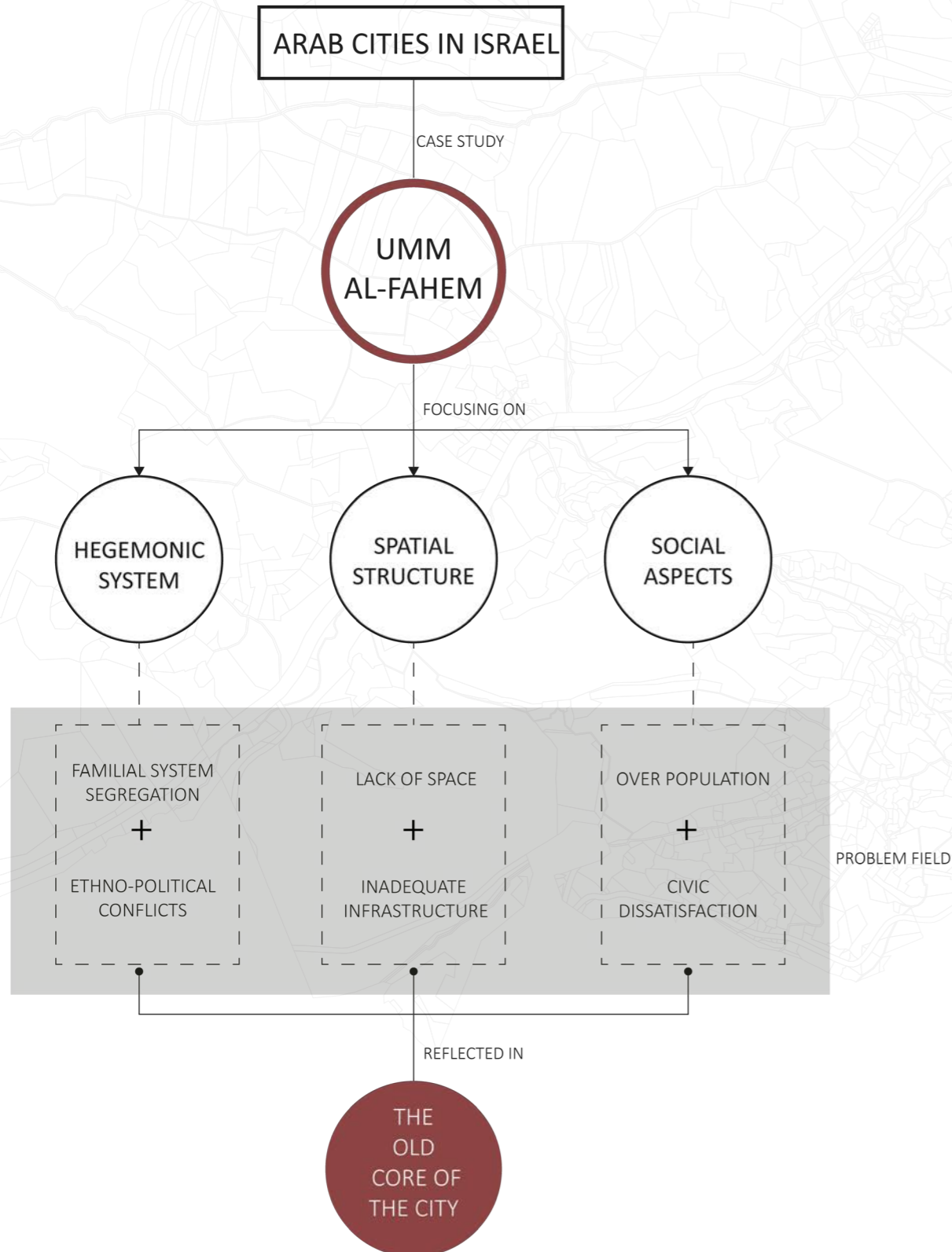


Figure 12. Problem field diagram, created by author.

1.3. FOCUS LOCATION

THE CORE OF UMM AL-FAHEM

As mentioned in the problem statement, the historic city core is the location where the social, spatial, and hegemonic systems are most reflected. This core suffers from overpopulation, a lack of space to build houses, and an unsafe environment.

Spatially, this core is recognized with its narrow alleys and old complicated infrastructure. It lacks commercial activities and is fully built with houses.

Socially, the core is the origin of the four families. Therefore, unlike the rest of the city, this core still has the division between the four original neighborhoods. These families are still closed up to the outside and their inhabitants suffer from segregation, between the families and the sub-families.

“The city is characterized by a historic core that features detached family buildings that were adjusted gradually to the needs of the family over time.”

(OECD,2017)



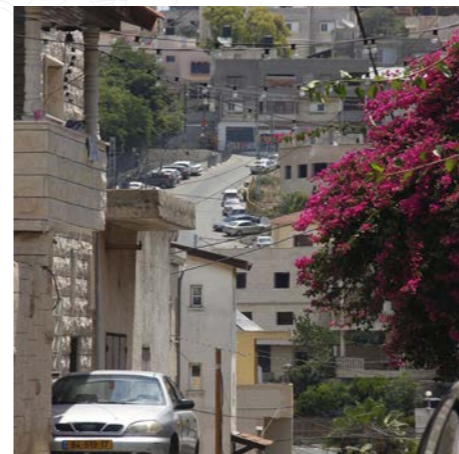
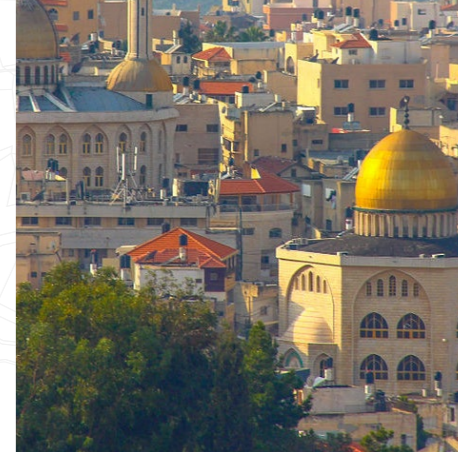
600 m

- 410 Buildings
- 1600 residents
- Area: 0.205 km²
- Extremely dense area
- Narrow streets

1.3. FOCUS LOCATION

PHOTOGRAPHIC TOUR IN THE CORE

Photos credit: Moataz Agbaria



1.4. AIM AND OBJECTIVES

Research aim

With time, due to the various hegemonic systems, the core of Umm Al-Fahem was encrypted by its inhabitant in order to secure and protect their community and their privacy. The core became socially and spatially unreadable to those who do not belong to it. The aim of this project is to create rejuvenation strategies that help create minimum and extreme intervention scenarios, these scenarios assist in rejuvenating the core of Umm Al-Fahem to be socially integrated and spatially accessible. In order to reach this aim, this research will be following observational and experimental methods.

Research objectives

The research objectives are divided into four research phases: recognize, investigate, formulate, and propose. Recognizing the context characteristics and the problem field that needs to be researched, investigating the socio-spatial systems within the context on different scales. Followed by formulating possible rejuvenation strategies based on the investigation that was conducted, and finally moving towards proposing and experimenting the minimum and extreme intervention scenarios on different scales based on the rejuvenation strategies.



- Familial system segregation
- Ethno-political conflict
- Overpopulation
- Civic dissatisfaction
- Lack of space
- Inadequate infrastructure

Intervention strategies are strategies that are created by the author. These strategies are based on inclusive planning and maximazation approach.



These strategies will be used as a tool to help create minimum and extreme intervention strategies to reach the aim of rejuvenating the core of Umm Al-Fahem.



Figure 13. Research aim diagram, created by author

1.5. RELEVANCE & CONSIDERATION

SOCIAL RELEVANCE

Even though The Arab cultural attitude follows the rule of “be there for whoever needs you, no matter where no matter when”, people of Umm Al-Fahem are still being closed to outsiders and sometimes to each other. This project is a call for the people of Umm Al-Fahem to be more open to change, for openness, participation, and acceptance. One focus of this project is the social dimensions of the people of Umm Al-Fahem, with a focus on the inhabitants of the core of the city. Therefore, observation and interviews as a research method are crucial to reach the peak of understanding these social dimensions that the city is based on.

This city has been rejecting several development plans, especially in the core of the city as people are even more overprotective and closed to any change that would affect their comfort and their cultural perspective. Thus, as a researcher and a person from within their closed cultural system, this project would be an opportunity and a guide for change that the city desperately needs in order to develop and keep up with the urbanization of this changing world.

This research’s aim is to find strategies that help create a rejuvenated city core for the city’s inhabitants. This will be done by considering the psychological, economic, religious, and cultural dimensions of the people of the city of Umm Al-Fahem. This consideration will help apply inclusive planning in the city therefore hopefully strengthening communications between the different groups in the process.

SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

This project contributes to the fieldwork of urbanization in Arab cities in Israel, the case study of Umm Al-Fahem offers an understanding of the historic, social, political, and spatial situations of these cities.

This work is exploring various research methods, observational and experimental, in order to analyze and understand the different socio-spatial systems and the utmost strategic intervention scenarios. This method could be adapted and used for guidance of future development plans of the core of Umm Al-Fahem.

The methodology process of this research, especially in the recognizing and proposing phases, is partially assessing and relating to scientific readings and statistical analysis about Arab cities in Israel.

Further, the conceptual and methodological frameworks offer a unique and unfamiliar perspective of Umm Al-Fahem, they propose a scientific strategic framework from the perspective of an indigenous point of view. Therefore, future research projects about Umm Al-Fahem that are conducted by a non-indigenous researcher can use this framework to gain better insight into the city of Umm Al-Fahem.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

In the case of an Arab city with a majority of the Muslim population, this project should be religion and culture-sensitive. This project will approach people on a personal level, by talking to people and having their input as the main source of further steps. Aiming for inclusive planning implies that the inhabitants of the core should be counted and integrated into the process of intervening in their personal (and collective) spaces such as their streets, houses, yards, neighborhoods, etc.

As a person who originally grew up in Umm Al Fahem, language and living perspectives are shared with the discussed population, this will make them more comfortable and less overprotective over their space and their privacy. During interviews and documentation, the approval of the participants is required and crucial. They will be informed about the project and will be provided with the last version of it.

On the professional scale, the municipality of Umm El Fahem will be part of the information collecting process and therefore will also be provided with information about the project. The information provided by officials will be credited.

Note: all interactions with people will be respecting Covid-19 safety measurements.

During the duration of this research, there are possible challenges to face. The main challenge is the possible rejection of the overprotective community, as they have in fact already rejected existing policy plans for development. This could be experienced during interviews or during the future implementation of the strategies.

1.6. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

MAIN QUESTION:

To what **extent** can the socio-spatial **strategies** rejuvenate the stagnated core of Umm Al-Fahem to be **socially integrated and spatially accessible**?

SUB QUESTIONS:

SQ1 What are the socio-spatial elements that are critical structuring components of the stagnated core of Umm Al-Fahem? And how do they support the hegemony of the existing cultural system?

SQ2 What are secondary spatial features of Umm Al-Fahem that can be an asset to making the stagnated core of the city more socially integrated and spatially accessible?

SQ3 What are the socio-spatial strategies of the rejuvenation principle that can be applied to the core of Umm Al-Fahem? how could they be applied?

SQ4 Who are the different stakeholders that affect the development of the socio-spatial strategies in the stagnated core of Umm Al-Fahem?

SQ5 In what way can these stakeholders positively impact a more socially inclusive planning of the urban core?

SQ6 Which spatial characteristics of the urban core have the potential to emphasize the core's relevance on a higher social and spatial level?

SOCIALLY INTEGRATED
+
SPATIALLY ACCESSIBLE

INVESTIGATE

SQ1

SQ2

STRATEGIES

FORMULATE

SQ3

SQ4

SQ5

EXTENT

PROPOSE

SQ6

1.7. REJUVENATION PRINCIPLE

SOCIAL AND SPATIAL TOOLKIT

Based on the intensive courses of TU Delft at the beginning of the thesis year, and by being familiar with the context, a new strategic rejuvenation principle is created to be used as a tool to start the path of implementing change in the city of Umm Al-Fahem. This principle will be implemented with the help of intervention strategies, it is important to mention that the intervention strategies are flexible, and will change through the duration of this research based on the observational and experimental methods of working. Based on the problem field, this approach will focus mainly on the social and spatial systems of the city.

The approach to the *spatial systems* is established in the intensive course “Designing with Flows”, the main idea of the course is to maximize scenarios in one specific component of the analysis. In this project, the main question is to what extent do the intervention strategies benefit the rejuvenation of the location socially and spatially. Therefore, in combination with creating maximum intervention scenarios, another minimal design intervention will be created based on the intervention strategies.

The *social systems* approach is based on the course of “Governance, policies, and stakeholders”, it focuses more on the stakeholders of Umm Al-Fahem on different scales. It focuses on who is involved in the social systems and who is affected by them, analyzing the involved stakeholders and their extent of power will determine the inclusive planning extent of these social systems.

The rejuvenation principle (figure 14) is a combination of both the social and spatial dimensions of the historic core of Umm Al-Fahem. The flexibility of the intervention strategies for rejuvenation is based on the observation and the analysis throughout the different phases of the research.

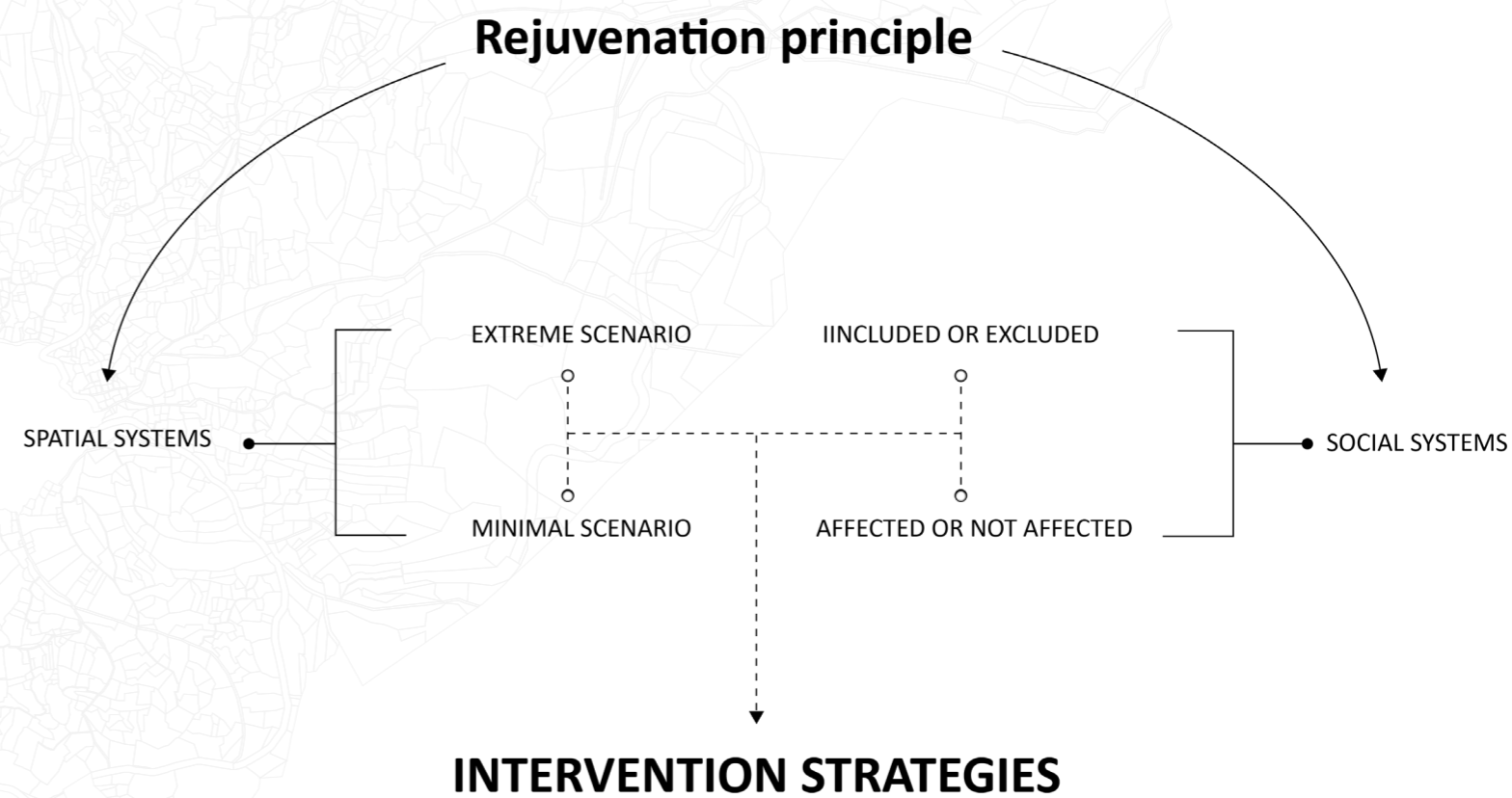


Figure 14. Rejuvenation principle, created by author.

1.8. METHODOLOGY

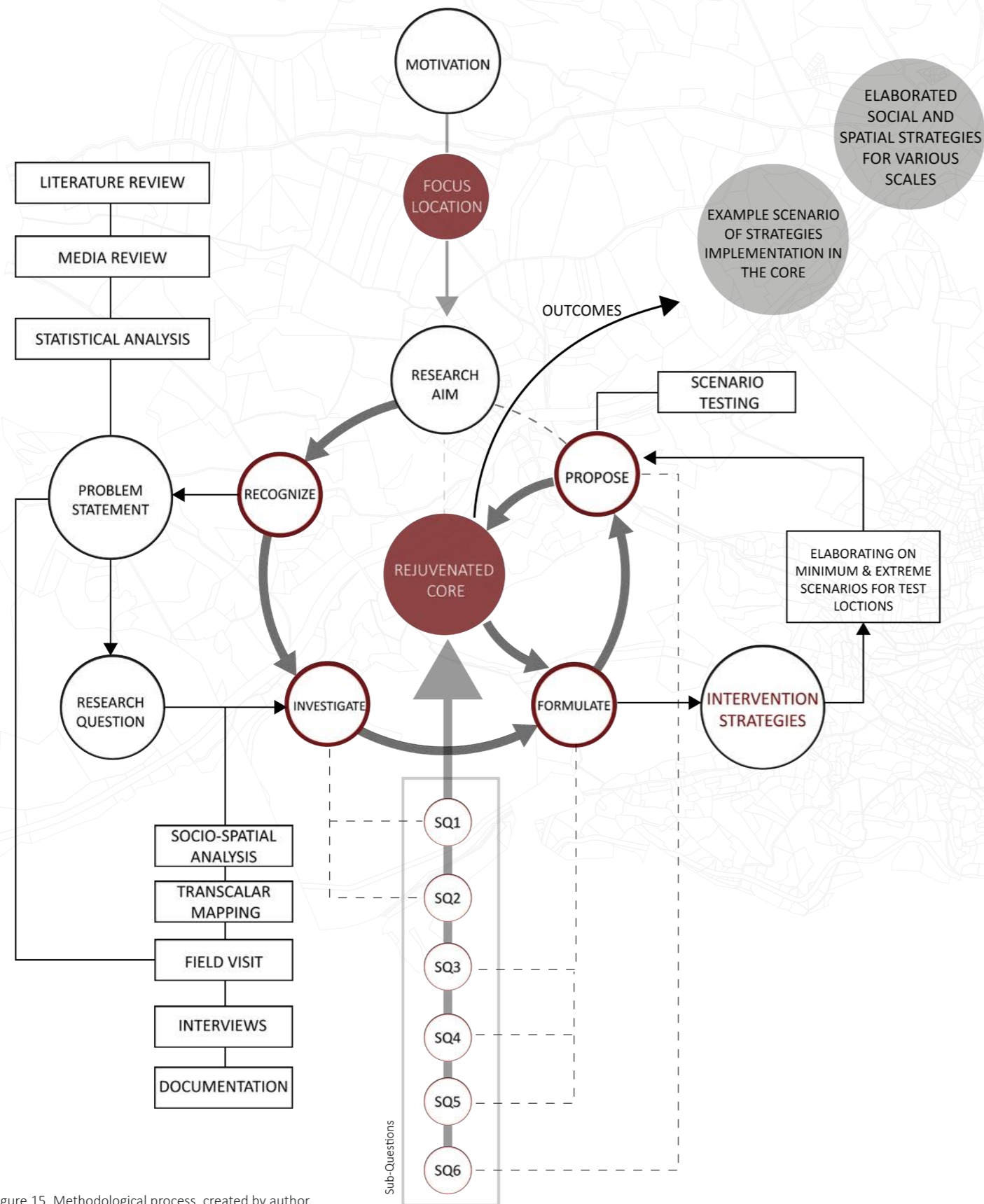


Figure 15. Methodological process, created by author.

METHODOLOGICAL PROCESS

The methodological process (figure 15) elaborates on how the research phases are connected and how the various methods are associated.

Literature review

Searching and reviewing related scientific writings about planning in Arab cities, psychology in the Palestinian culture, and official information from governmental institutions. These writings could be books, former thesis, journals, etc.

Media review

As media controls most of what we see on our screens, media review is crucial to understand aspects regarding the city from different angles. As the context at hand is in a different continent and due to Covid-19, media review is a sensible method to get a better grasp at the city of Umm Al-Fahem.

Statistical analysis

Some analysis involves critical investigation of the collected data, especially the ones gathered from governmental or financial institutions. Therefore it is crucial for the first stages of the research.

Socio-spatial analysis

The socio-spatial analysis will be done with mappings or drawings that explain what is needed to understand and conclude the relations between the systems.

Transcalar mapping

As the project is working on the regional scale, city scale, and the scale of the core that resembles the deep neighborhood scale. Therefore, transcalar mapping is a method to understand and improve the relations between the different scales of the project.

Field visit

Fiel visit to the location in November 2021 and in February 2022 to connect to the location and have better understanding of the spaces.

Interview

Different parties of different categories will be interviewed, officials and locals. The targeted group of locals will be from different families and various age ranges, while the officials are Wajdi Jabareen- historian and the mayor's right hand, Sameer Mahameed- the current mayor of Umm Al-Fahem.

Documentation

As the final result of the project will be an urban documentary, a process of documentation is necessary to reach this goal. The documentation will be of all of Umm Al-Fahem with a focus on the core.

Observation

During the field trip, it is important to observe and note what is happening spatially and how does it affect the social dimension of the city. These notes will benefit the development of the rejuvenation strategies.

Stakeholder analysis

Based on the intensive course of "governance, policies, and stakeholders", stakeholders analysis will be conducted to understand who is involved in the development and who is affected. This understanding will help create more inclusive planning for the city.

Strategy making

Based on observation and stakeholders analysis, the making of rejuvenation strategies start to develop. It is important to mention that this method is flexible, mainly due to the experimenting and the observation.

Building scenarios

Based on the rejuvenation strategies, minimal and extreme intervention scenarios will be created to be proposed to answer the main question.

Experimenting scenarios

This method connects the interventions and the various scales. Researching if the intervention scenarios impact the city core on all the scales and if the intervention should have some alterations, then that means a change in the rejuvenation strategy is required.

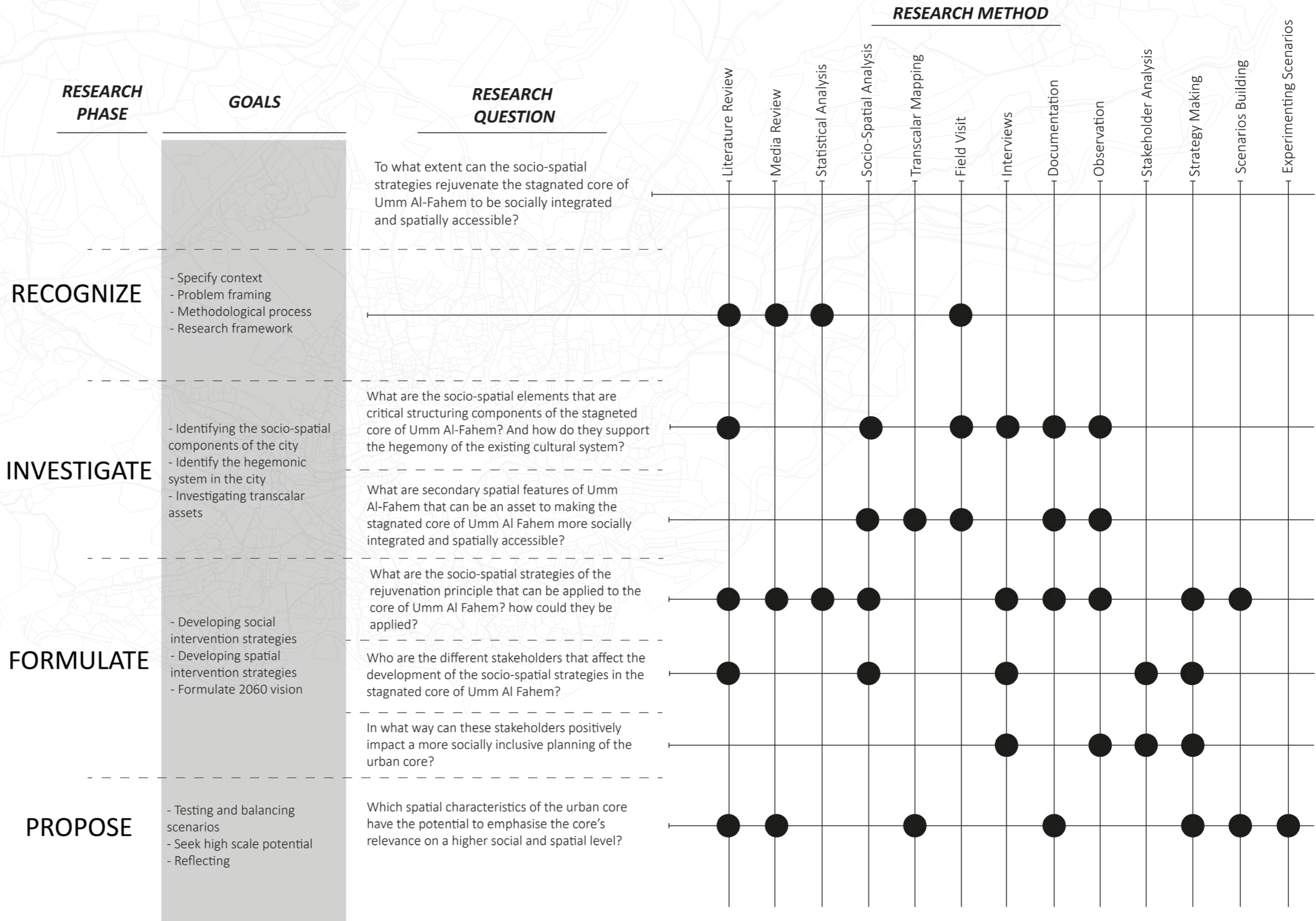
1.8. METHODOLOGY

LINES OF INQUIRY

The lines of inquiry is created to show what are the different methods that will be used to answer what sub-questions. It is divided into four sections: research phases, the goal of the research phase, research questions, and the methods used to answer the research questions.

The first phase, recognize, does not relate to any research sub-question as it is the phase of recognition of the context and the problem field. However, each of the other phases has different goals that are being answered by different sub-questions.

As seen in the lines of inquiry table, the first two phases are mainly about literature review, analysis, mapping, and documenting, while the last two phases are about creating strategies and experimenting with the scenarios.



1.9. RESEARCH FRAMEWORKS

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Theoretical framework was created to understand the relation between the different theories of the project. This theoretical framework (figure 16) is based on the problem field theories. Starting with emphasizing that the problem field is implemented in a contested city.

The problem field components are the social, spatial, and hegemonic systems, in which each one of them is divided into two main focus problems. These problems connect in two scales of this project: neighborhood scale and local scale.

These components and sub-components all reflect on the city core. Therefore, whatever happens on the larger scales, it immediately affects the core of the contested city. And the other way around, whatever changes happen in the core, the contested city will face changes based on the change of the components.

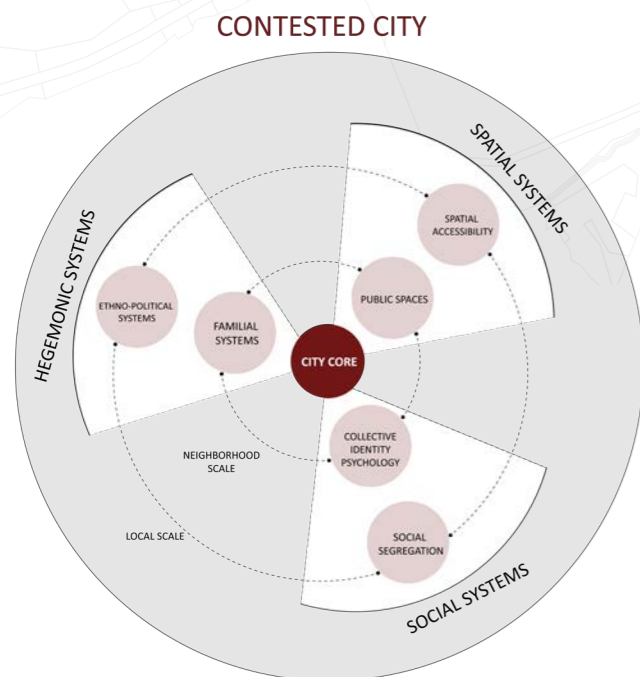


Figure 16. Theoretical framework, created by author.

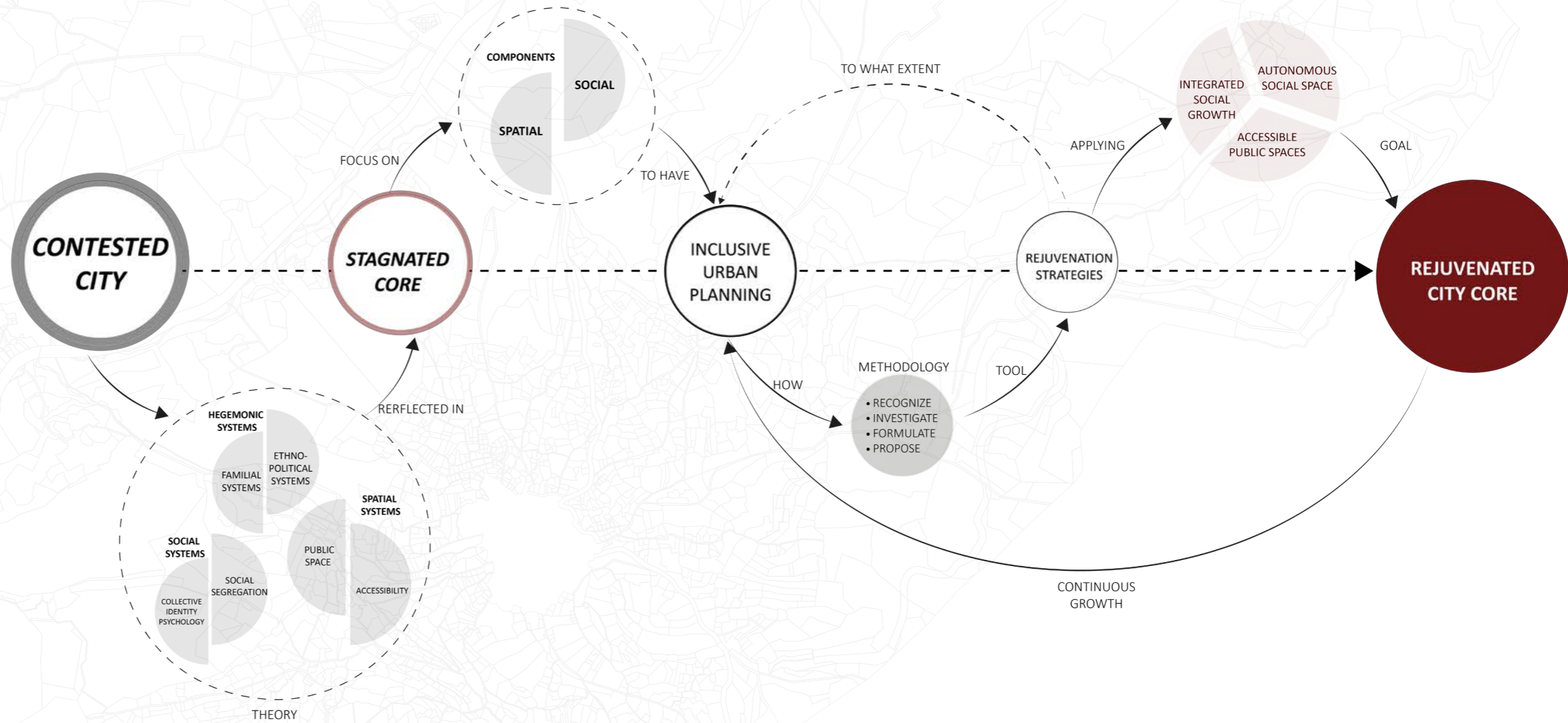


Figure 17. Conceptual framework, creator by author.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This conceptual framework (figure 17) is to show and elaborate on how the terms of the project will function in the research process.

In relation to the theoretical framework, the research process starts from the contested city and the problem field by diving into the stagnated core of the city. Followed by focusing on and emphasizing the social and spatial components in order to have inclusive planning of the city, this will be done via the four research phases that will create rejuvenation strategies.

The result of these strategies will imply the social and spatial goals that are desired for rejuvenating the city core.

Nonetheless, even after the rejuvenation, the process of the research will be in continuous growth. Resulting in reverting back to the process of inclusive planning and so on.

1.10. GRADUATION TIMELINE

The expected outcomes of this research will be a link between the professionals that are incorporated in the project, and the locals who will be the most affected and included in the process of the research.

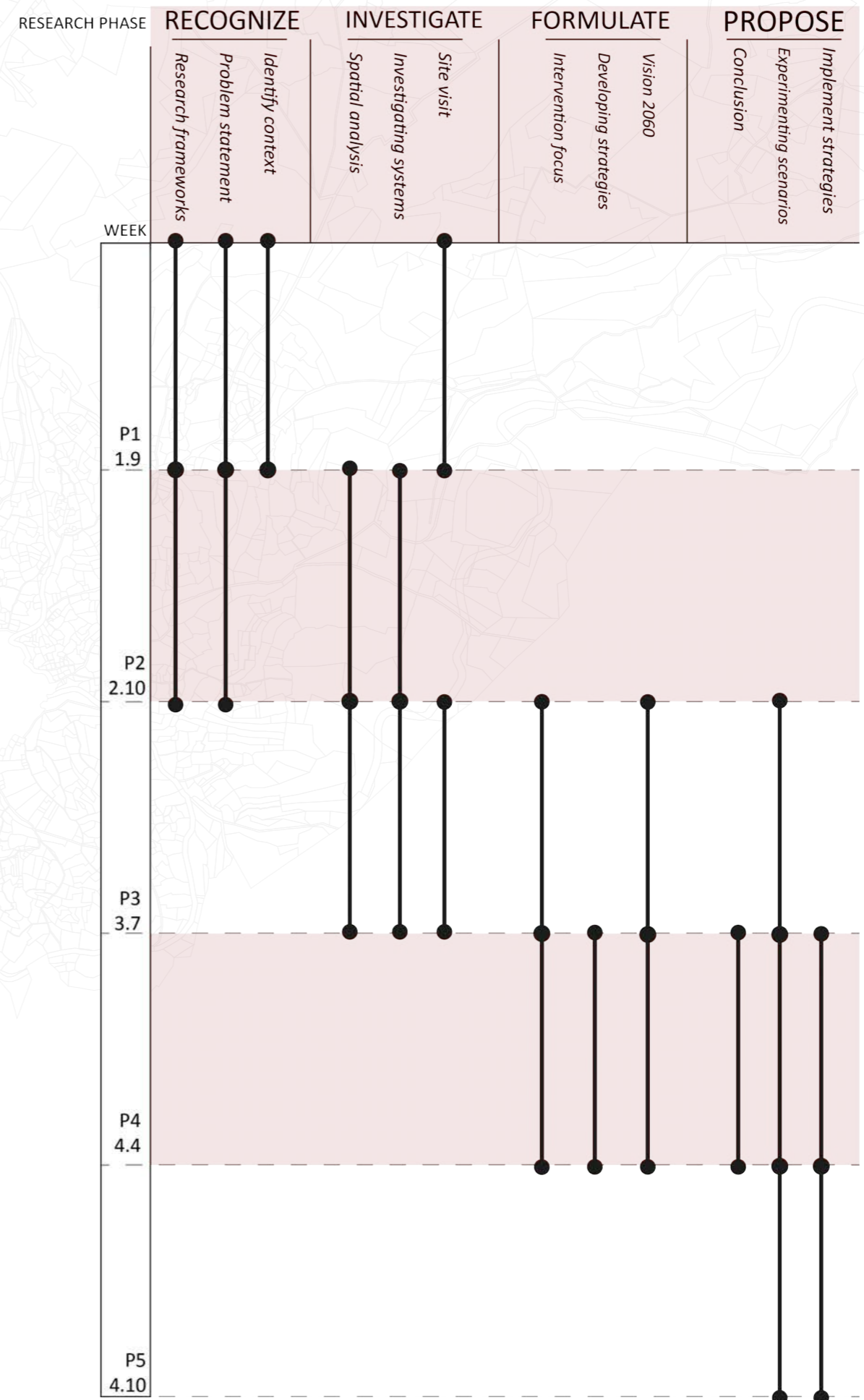
Elaborated strategies

As the aim of this project is to decrypt the core of Umm Al-Fahem with the help of rejuvenation strategies, one of the desired outcomes will necessarily be the elaborated rejuvenation strategies on the various scales of the project. These strategies are a tool not only for this project but also for future projects of other professionals who desire to explore the city of Umm Al-Fahem in a distinctive manner, from an indigenous point of view.

EXPERIMENTING SCENARIOS

After investigating the core and formulating the intervention method and strategies, one location is selected to undergo the experimentation of the maximum and minimum intervention scenarios. The scenarios are exhibiting the possible interventions that are considered part of a network to rejuvenate the core of Umm Al-Fahem to be socially integrated and spatially accessible.

On the right: the graduation timeline based on the goals of each research phase.





2. INVESTIGATE

This chapter is about analyzing and investigating the city of Umm Al-Fahem both socially and spatially. It begins with a spatial analysis of the location on regional, local, and core scale levels, followed by investigating the story of the locals of the core and the involved stakeholders.

2.1. STORY ON SCALE LEVELS

2.1.1. REGIONAL CONNECTIONS: CONNECTING OR SEPARATING

Regional scale: Public Infrastructure (trains)

Over the past ten years, the trains in Israel have been extensively developed and relatively frequent. Israel Railways, the national train operator, provides well-connected transportation mainly on the Coastal Plain (Tourist Israel, 2021).

The train transportation lines are connecting the main major cities of Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Jerusalem, in addition to Ben Gorion Airport and the south of Israel. The railway lines are also commuter lines with other intermediate cities and the suburbs of Tel Aviv (Tourist Israel, 2021).

Figure 18 shows the train connections between the different cities. While there is a strong train connection between the cities in the North, Center, and South, Umm Al-Fahem is one of the cities that are not given the regional privilege of the possibility of accessibility to a nearby train station. The closest train station to Umm Al-Fahem is 17.5 km away, in Afula (figure 19).

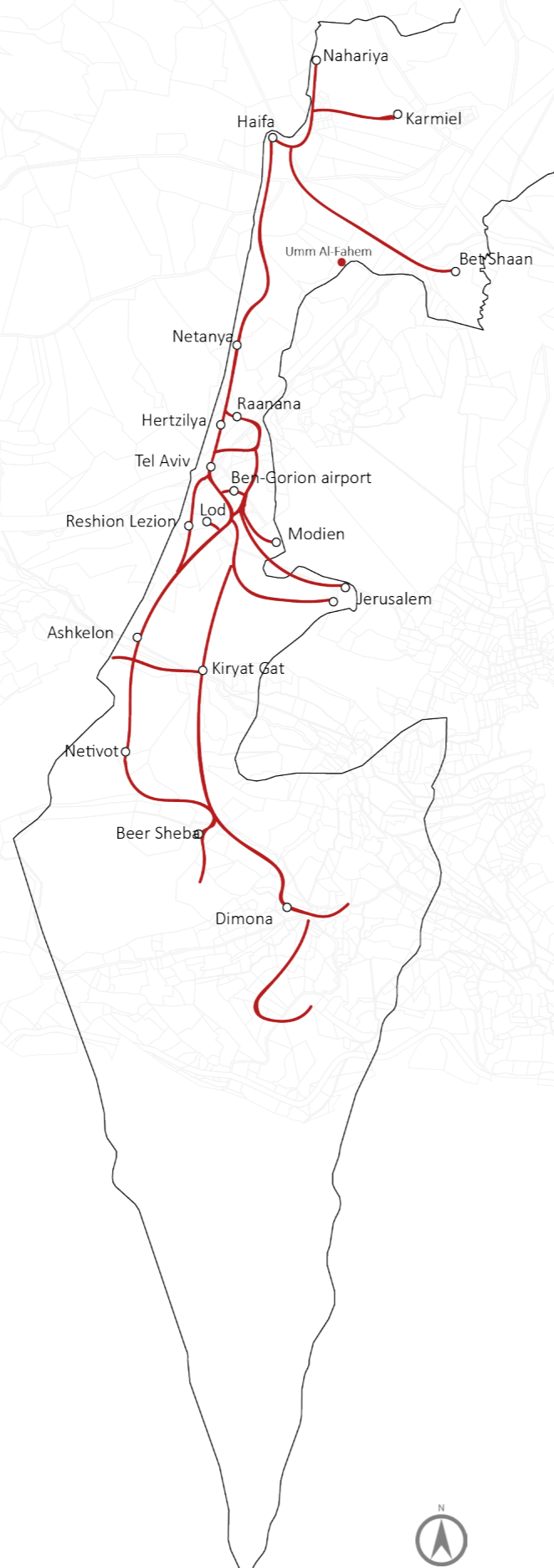


Figure 18. Train stations line in Israel, created by author. based on google maps.

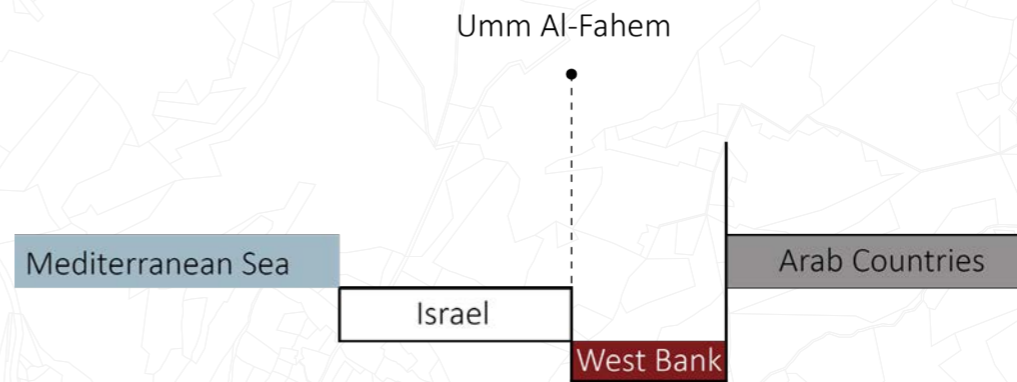


Figure 19. Regional relations diagram, created by author.

Regional scale: Regional barriers

Since the establishment of the state, Israel has been in an ongoing political conflict with all surrounding Arab countries (Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Egypt). These conflicts create a spatial barrier between the countries, as it is forbidden to enter Syria and Lebanon, and entry with restrictions to Jordan and Egypt. Therefore creating a strong barrier between Israel and the surrounding countries, making Israel resemble a political island.

The border between the West Bank and Israel has been established since the establishment of the state of Israel in the 1940s. With time, this border became a physically constructed wall that goes along the border between Israel and the West Bank resulting in an enclosed space (figure 20). Figure 19 displays the regional relations between Israel, the West Bank, and the Arab countries. As the West Bank is under Israeli occupation, therefore it is lower than Israel. In addition, the Arab countries have an obvious and strong barrier with Israel and what is under the occupation of Israel. Umm Al-Fahem is sensitively located on the edge between the West Bank and Israel, a focus on the city scale is therefore needed.

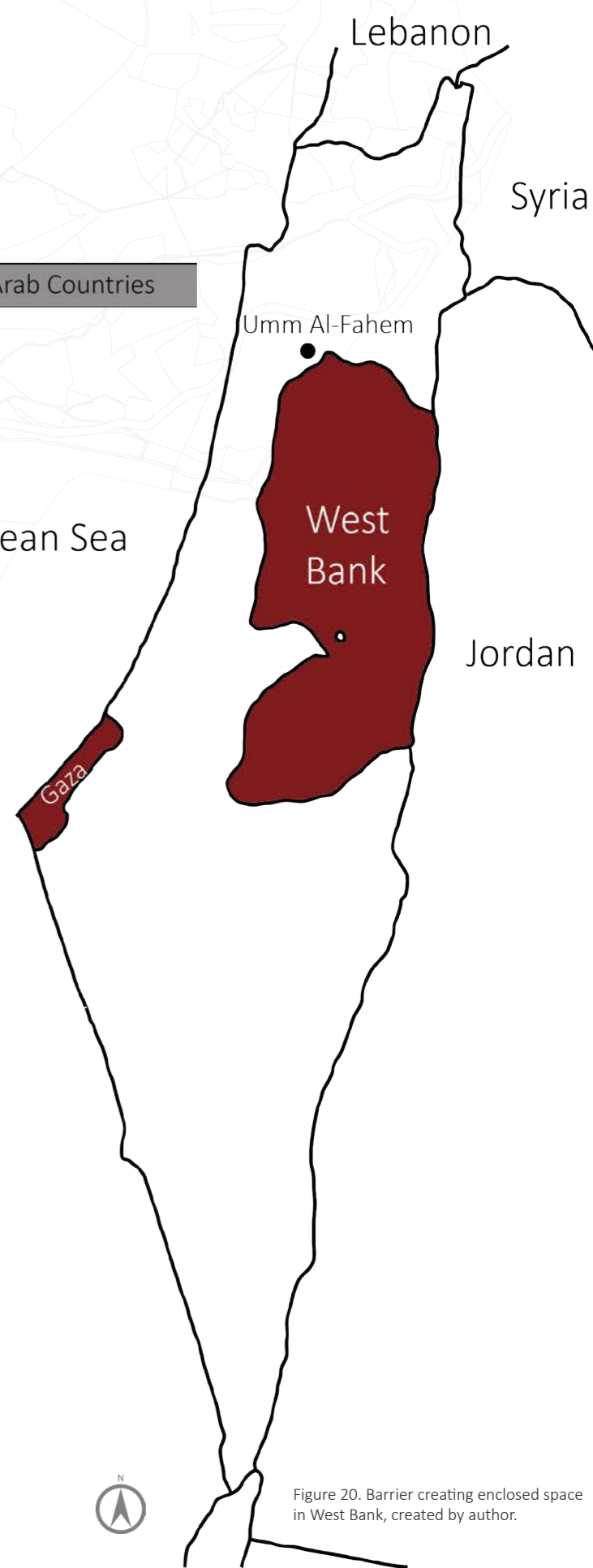


Figure 20. Barrier creating enclosed space in West Bank, created by author.

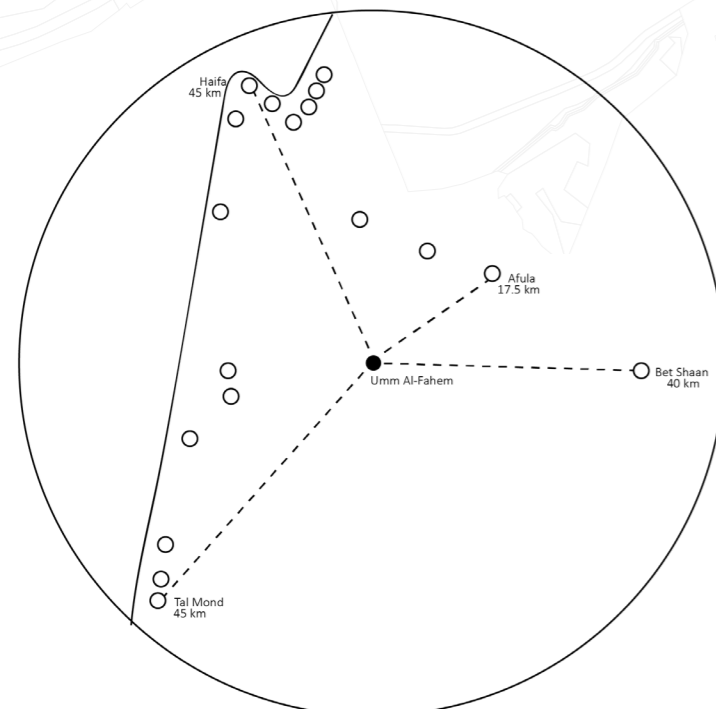


Figure 19. Distance to train stations, created by author.

2.1. STORY ON SCALE LEVELS

2.1.1. REGIONAL CONNECTIONS: URBAN NEIGHBOURS

Umm Al-Fahem is spatially considered distant from the three major cities of Israel, which relates to the previous section about regional connections. The closest major city is Haifa with a distance of 32,76 km, while Jerusalem is the furthest at 81,48km (figure 21).

Despite the distance from the major cities, Umm Al-Fahem is considered the economic urban center of its neighboring cities and villages. One of the reasons that Umm Al-Fahem became an important urban center of the area is its location on street 65 (Wadi Ara).

What was once the important trade road connection between Syria and Egypt (as mentioned in section 1.1. Historic overview) is now a major connector that benefits the city of Umm Al-Fahem.

As seen in figure 22, Umm Al-Fahem is the largest city on street 65. The closest cities to it are Arab cities and the Jewish cities are on the tips of the street, indicating that the Arab cities are spatially accessible and closer to Umm Al-Fahem with a time travel of a maximum of 15 mins by car. Street 65 is a major advantage to Umm Al-Fahem regionally and locally.

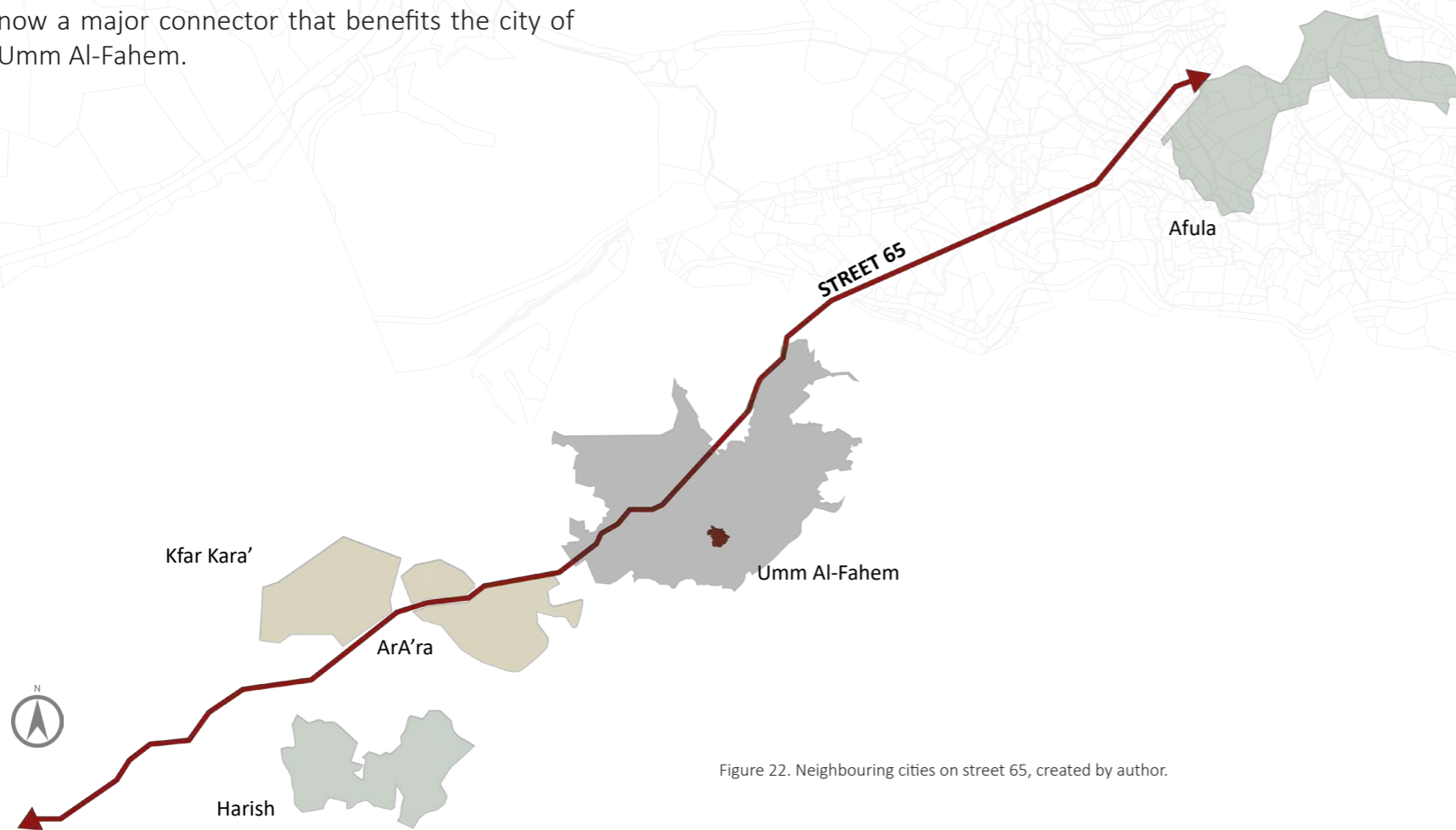


Figure 22. Neighbouring cities on street 65, created by author.

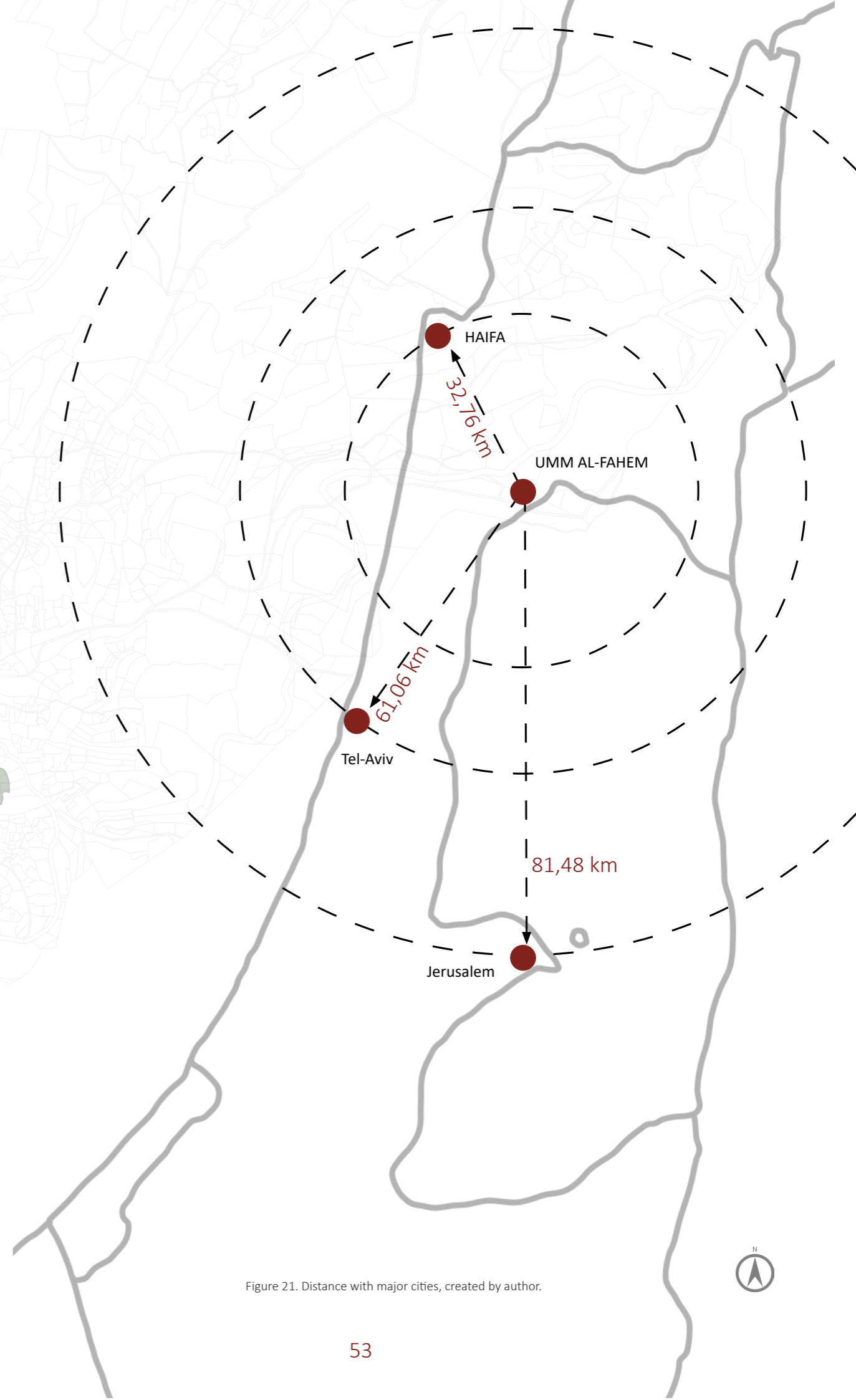


Figure 21. Distance with major cities, created by author.

2.1. STORY ON SCALE LEVELS

2.1.2. EXPLORING THE CITY: CONNECTING OR SEPARATING

City scale: street 65

From the previous section, it was concluded that street 65 is of high importance regionally and locally, as it is a regional connection with Umm Al-Fahem and therefore strengthens the economic situation of the city.

Street 65 can be considered a connector and a separator also on both the local and regional scales. It is also known as Wadi Ara, for the reason that is topographically a wadi that is between two mountains: Umm Al-Fahem mountain and Ein Ibraheem mountain, which is also part of Umm Al-Fahem city (figure 23). Street 65 functions as a connector between these two mountains and the nearby cities and villages.

During protests, the protestors use Wadi Ara as a tool of protesting by gathering in the middle of the street and creating a barrier for any car movements. As this action is very common and repetitive, it declares street 65 as a dynamic separator.

Therefore it can be concluded that street 65 is both a connector and a separator for Umm Al-Fahem (figure 24).



Figure 23. Street 65 separates and connects, created by author.



Figure 25. Separation wall on the edge of the city, created by author.

City scale: border with West Bank

In 2002, based on the events of the second Intifada, the state of Israel took the decision to build an 8-meter high concrete wall on the borders between Israel and the West Bank. Umm Al-Fahem is located on the edge of the West Bank (figure 25), separated by an uncrossable physical border.

This rigid separation reflects spatially on the city. As this wall functions as a back wall for the city (figure 26). Further, it determines the process of entering the city of Umm Al-Fahem.

It is important to mention that the separation wall on the back of the city psychologically roots and strengthens the notion of rejection towards the government in the people of Umm Al-Fahem. Thus the separation wall has social and spatial dimensions that determine the position of Umm Al-Fahem politically and regionally.

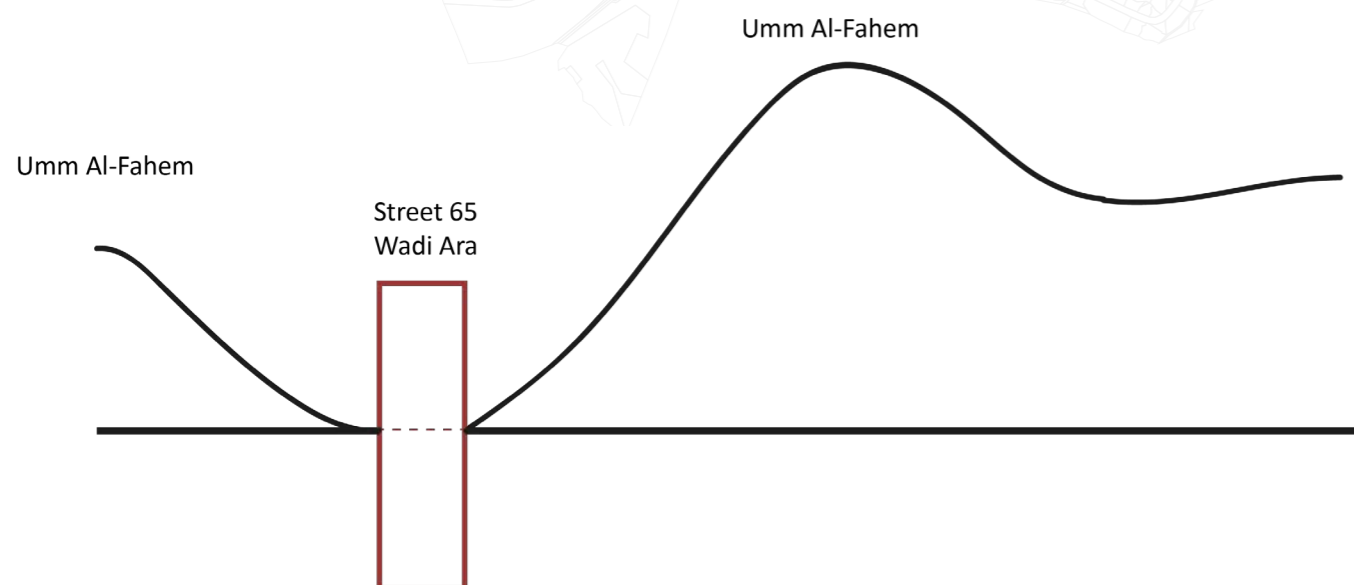


Figure 24. Street 65 a connector and separator, created by author.

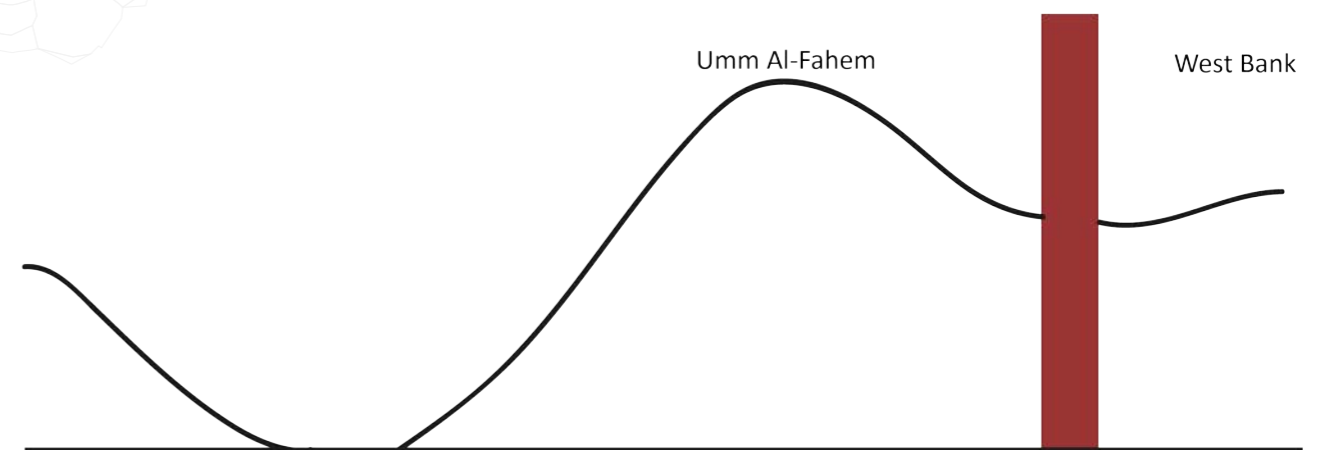


Figure 26. Separation wall as a back wall, created by author.

2.1. STORY ON SCALE LEVELS

2.1.2. EXPLORING THE CITY: ENTERING THE CITY

Accommodating the separation wall with the West Bank on the one side, how can you enter the city of Umm Al-Fahem as a local and as a visitor?

Main entrance

The main entrance is located at street 65 also known as Wadi Ara, which is also the main connection on the regional scale that connects Umm Al-Fahem with the neighboring cities and villages, and with other highways and streets that connect with other major cities.

It is the official entrance to the city and is on the facade of Umm Al-Fahem. The city policy is to implement commercial functions at this entrance as the plan is to attract more tourists and outsiders to the city (OECD, 2017) in order to boost the socio-economic situation of the city in the near future.

Secondary entrances

Umm Al-Fahem is the second-largest Arab city in Israel and existed before the establishment of the state of Israel with a density of 2,200/km². As the main entrance is the entrance for locals and also for the visitors of the city, a traffic jam is created. As a result, the locals are usually using other entry points in order to enter or leave the city on daily basis without being stuck in traffic jams. These entry points are distributed along street 65 and Mi Ami street, locals choose what is the closest to their destination.

Entrances as proving a point

As mentioned in the previous sector, people are using the regional street as a location for protesting and declaring their frustration and anger with various issues. The choice of protesting at the entrance of the city is a declaration of ownership of the city to the people, accordingly, the government also chooses to use these streets as a declaration of power. This indicates that the main entrance of Umm Al-Fahem is also a center for demonstrating socio-political issues.

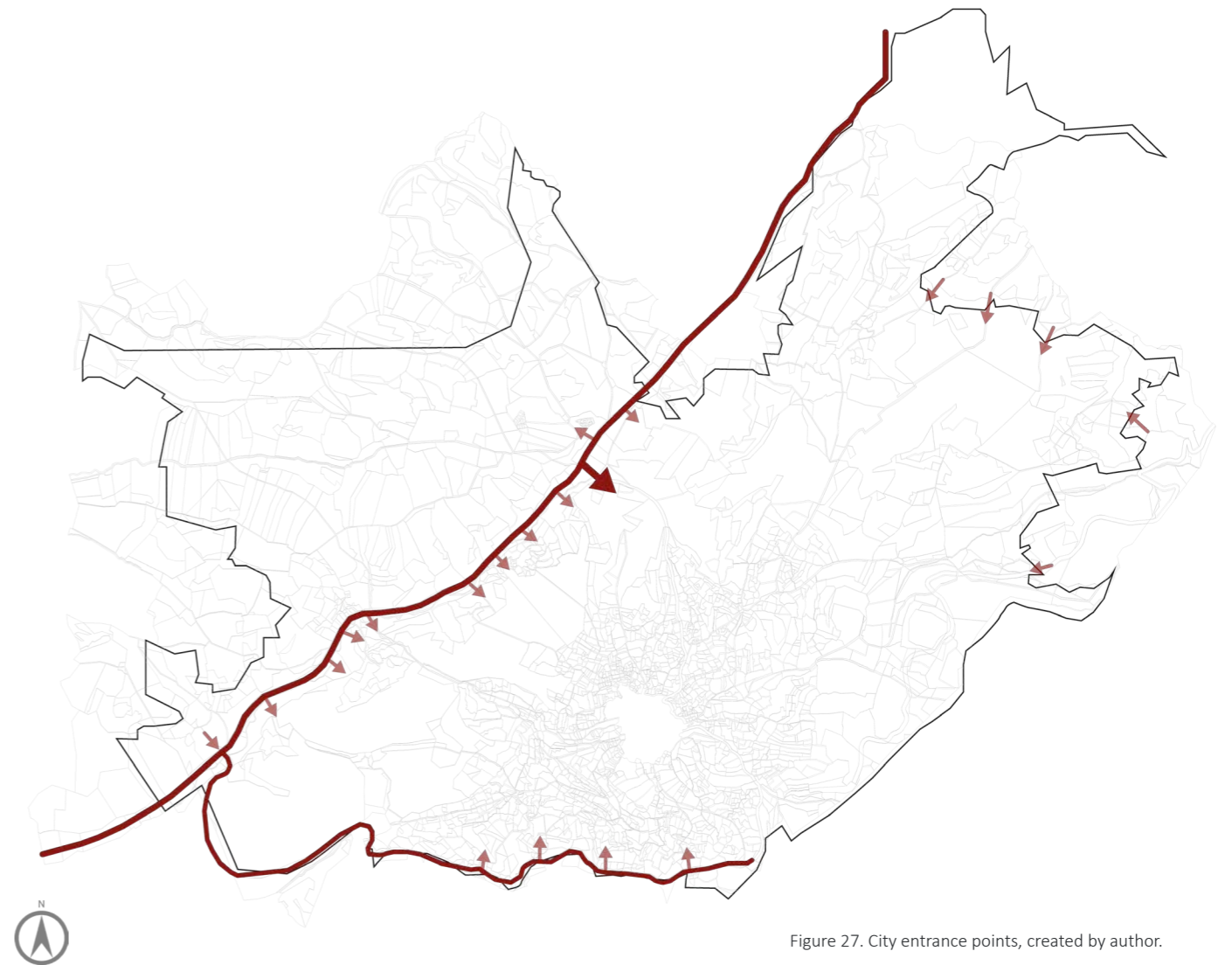


Figure 27. City entrance points, created by author.

Thus for them, masked youth, who blocked the Wadi Ara road at the entrance of the village represented “a gentle warning that the place is off-limits to Israelis”

(Koldas, 2008)

2.1. STORY ON SCALE LEVELS

2.1.2. EXPLORING THE CITY: LAND USE

The analysis of land use is focusing on commercial and housing in order to highlight the importance of Al-Madina street to the city and to understand how the locals of Umm Al-Fahem are mainly concerned about housing.

Commercial

As Umm Al-Fahem is geographically, politically, and economically an important city to the surrounding area and it sits on the regional street 65, the city is using its facade as an economic invitation to enter the city.

The commercial function is based on both Al-Souq street which is located on the facade of street 65 and Al-Madina street which is connected directly with the regional street 65 (figure 28). Al-Madina street is therefore considered the economic

AL-MADINA STREET AS A SOCIO-ECONOMIC CENTER OF UMM AL-FAHEM



Figure 29. Most used streets, created by author.



Figure 28. Commercial land use, created by author.

center not only locally but also on a regional scale. Therefore it is crucial to connect Al-Madina street with the historic core of Umm Al-Fahem in order to emphasize the core socially and spatially on a higher level.

Most used streets

As Al-Souq and Al-Madina streets are situated at the main entrance of the city and are considered the economic strength of the city, and are therefore the busiest streets in the city. Since there is not enough data given, the analysis of the most used streets will be based on my personal experience as someone from the city of Umm Al-Fahem.

As Al-Madina street is getting busier with time, people are now choosing to use Al-Quds street because it is parallel with Al-Madina street but

with no commercial function and therefore traffic jams are less.

In figure 29, the thin veins that are connected to the city core are the streets that are creating easier access to the core from the outside of the city. One of the none direct connections to the core and is also one of the most used streets of Umm Al-Fahem is Mi-Ami street. This street is based on the edge of the city and is connected to the Mi-Ami settlement, so the users of this street are the locals and visitors of Umm Al-Fahem in addition to the locals of Mi Ami Settlement.

2.1. STORY ON SCALE LEVELS

2.1.2. EXPLORING THE CITY: LAND USE

Housing

As it can be seen in figure 30, the majority of the land use is housing. This is a result of the cultural lifestyle and the housing policy situation.

The lifestyle of the locals of Umm Al-Fahem varies, but the cultural aspects maintain this lifestyle and deem it not to drastically change. This cultural aspect of the familial system helps maintain family members approximately close to each other, additionally, another cultural aspect is the requirement of the man if he wants to get married then he has to build a house. Resulting to the non-existence of house renting in the city of Umm Al-Fahem.

Accordingly, when the younger generation builds a new house and tries to pursue their career, most likely that this career is outside of the city, which means they want to stay around their families and want to keep this tradition so more and more housing is being built.

The urban housing policies affect the way the buildings are distributed in the city, even though it needs to be legal yet is unplanned and unorganized, as there are no specific policies that can organize the city spatially instead of it being random. One of the reasons people build housing randomly in the city of Umm Al-Fahem is the mountainy topography that makes it difficult to maintain a specific organized structure of buildings.

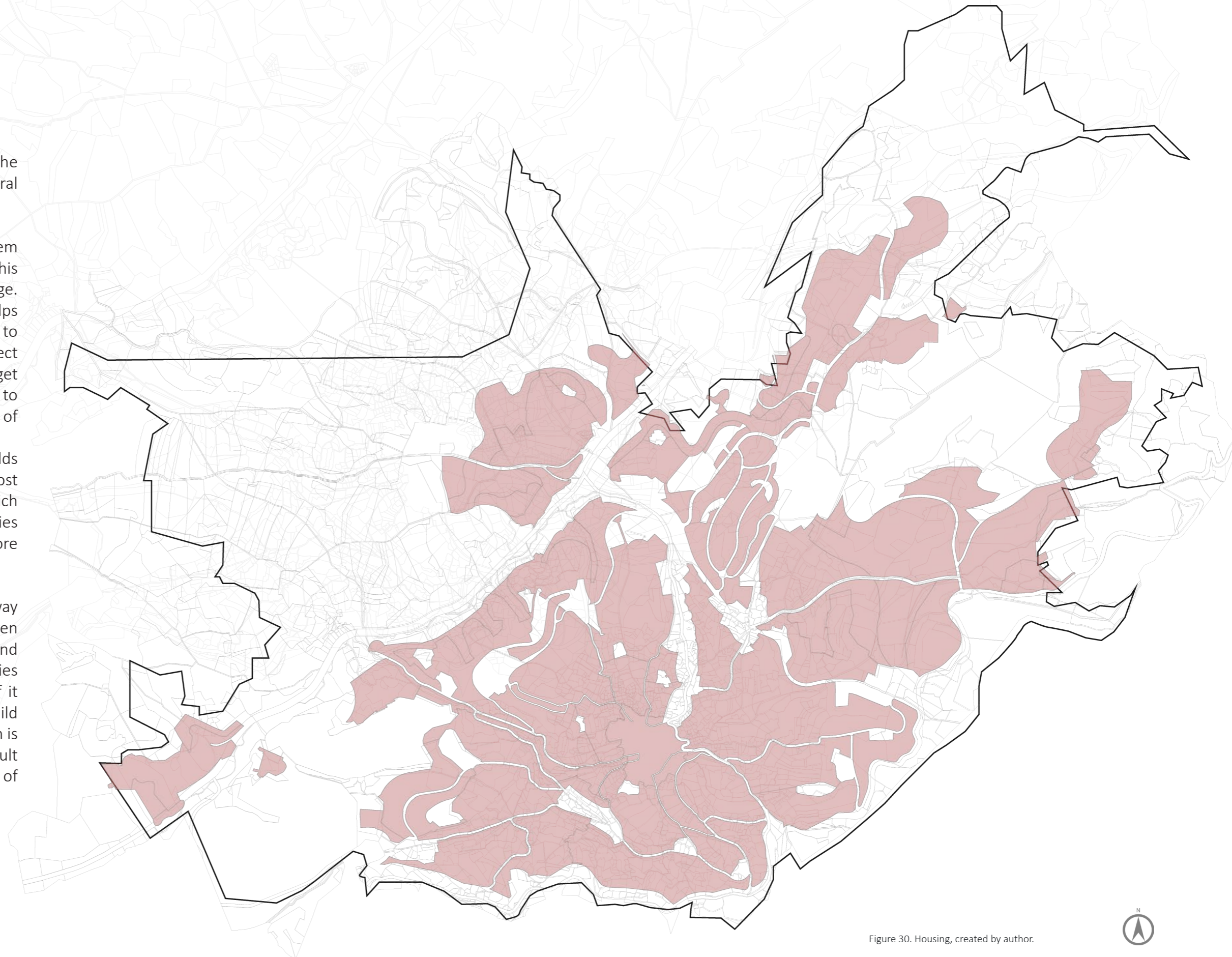


Figure 30. Housing, created by author.



2.1. STORY ON SCALE LEVELS

2.1.2. EXPLORING THE CITY: FAMILY AND TOPOGRAPHY

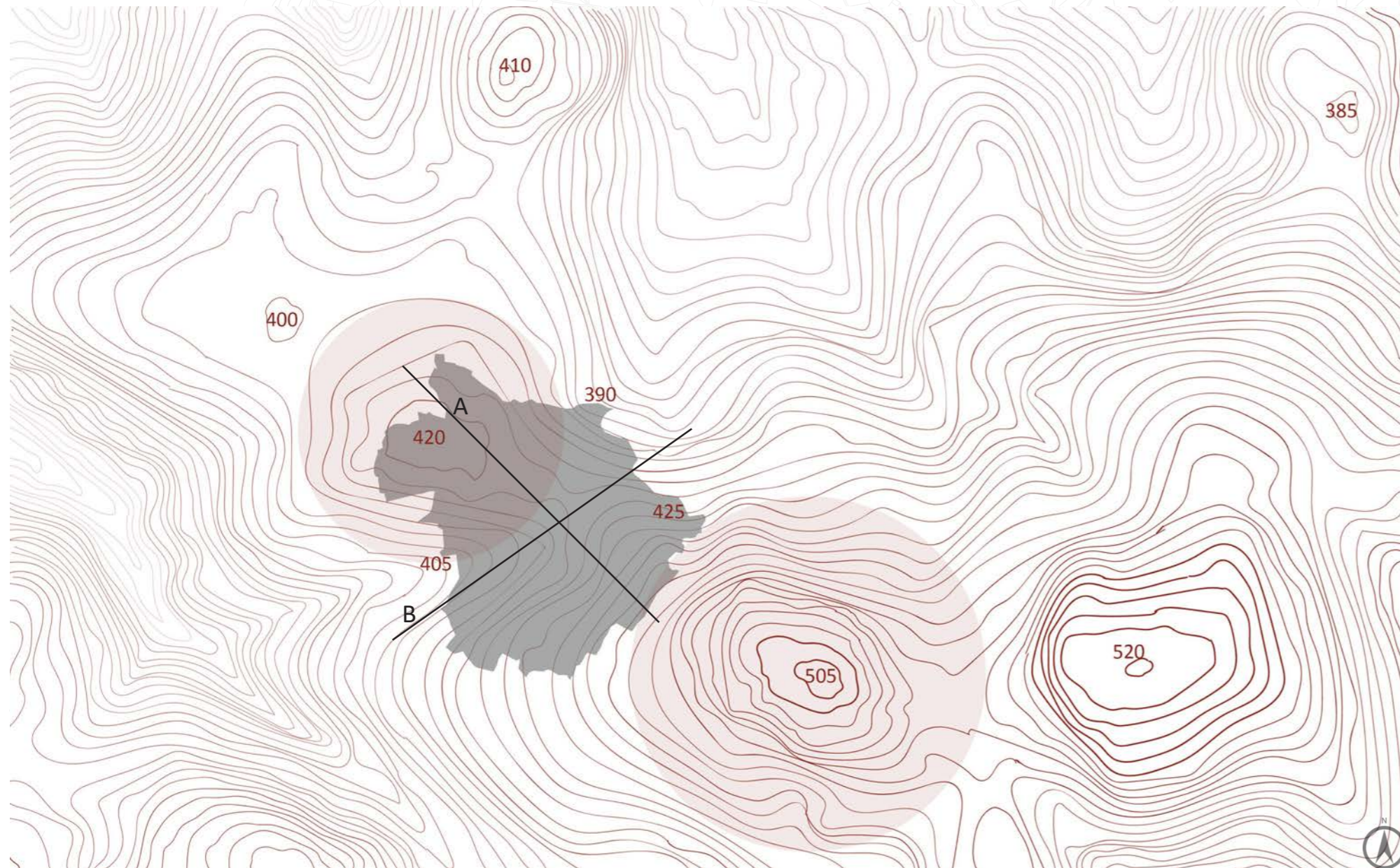
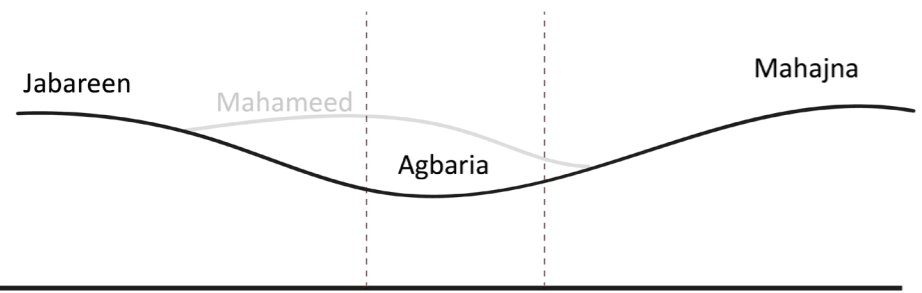


Figure 31. City topography with sections, created by author.

A



B

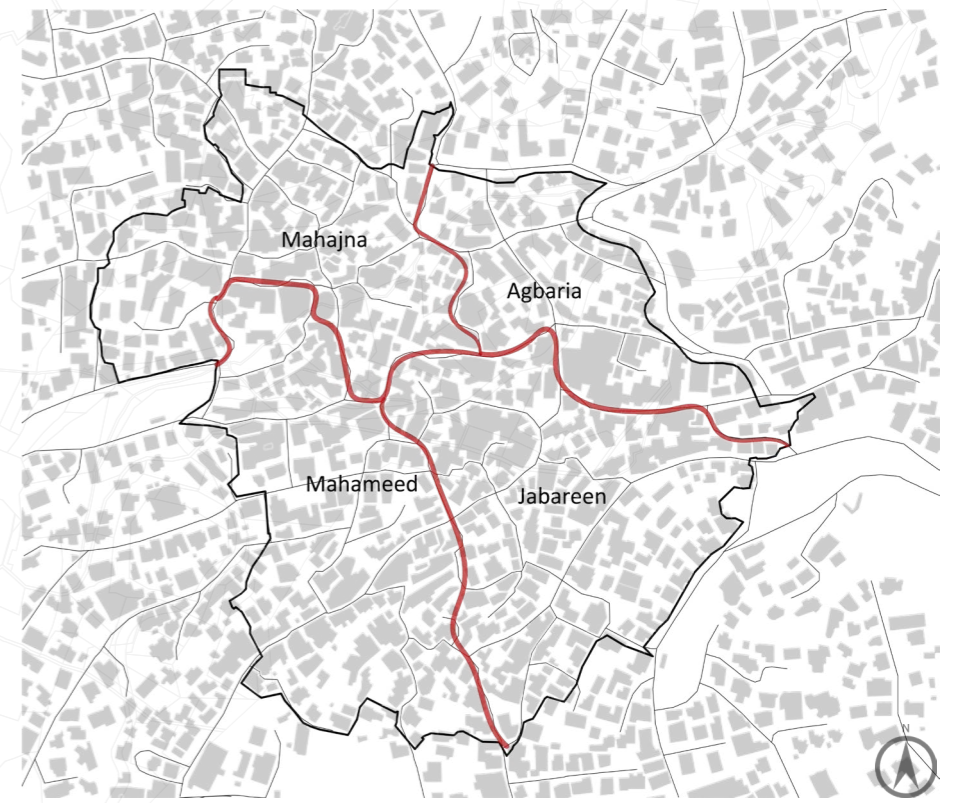
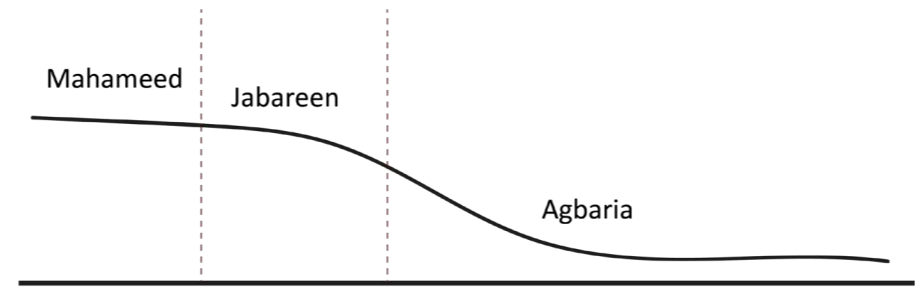


Figure 32. Neighbourhood borders, created by author.

As mentioned previously, the topography of the city determines the housing structure and the distribution of the functions, as the commercial function is situated in the lower part of the city and the high points are for housing. Figure 31 shows part of the city with the topography, the highest point of Umm Al-Fahem is Mount Iskandar at the height of 520m and the historic core of the city is situated between two other high points of the city.

Figure 32 shows the borders between the two family neighborhoods, even though these are not tangible borders, locals who live in the core are mostly the only people who can identify these borders. Section A and B show the relation between the neighborhoods and topography, it is possible to observe that Mahajna, Jabareen, and Mahameed are located on the high points of the core whilst Agbaria is based down the valley. The reasoning for the locations of each familial neighborhood is historic, Wajdi Jabareen (2021) mentioned in his book. The Mokhtars of Jabareen and Mahameed were brothers and the first familial neighborhoods, so they took over the top of the mountain (W. Jabareen, 2021). Followed by Mahajna and later on Agbaria, therefore Agbaria is on the lower points of the city (as seen in sections A and B).

2.1. STORY ON SCALE LEVELS

2.1.2. EXPLORING THE CITY: ENTERING THE CORE

This research is aiming towards highlighting the historic core of Umm Al-Fahem and making it socially integrated and spatially accessible, thus the first step is to investigate the current spatial accessibility to the core.

This historic core is accessible via different streets that connect it to the rest of the city, moreover, there is the main entry location in each neighborhood of the core (figure 34).

As previously mentioned, Al-Madina street is the most used street in the city and it is the socio-economic center of the city. As a result of this continuous use, most people enter the historic core from the connection with Al-Madina street (figure 33). This connection is distributed in several streets (figure 34.1) and it could be of significant importance as a secondary spatial feature that makes the core spatially accessible on different scale levels.

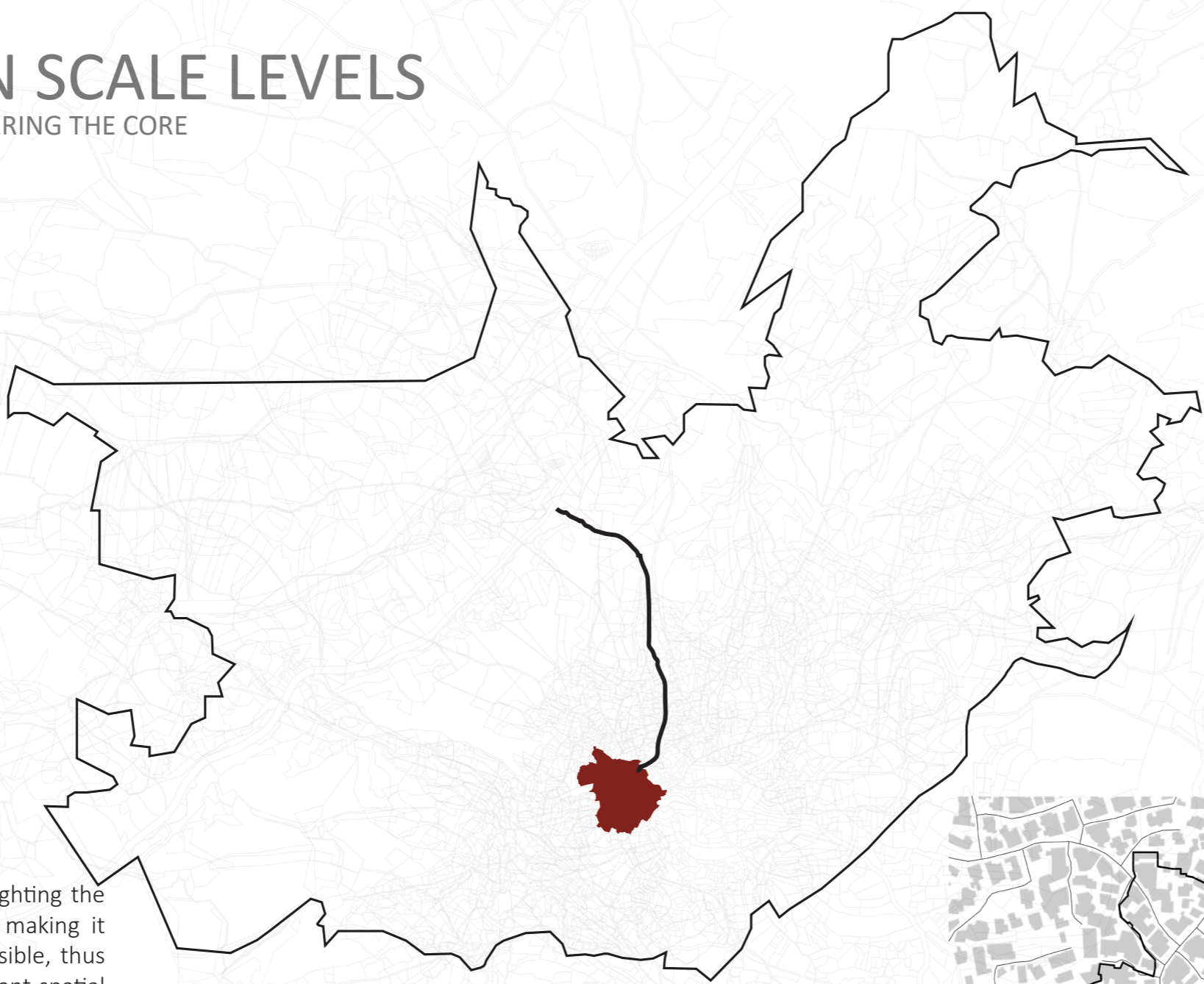


Figure 33. Al-Madina street and core connection, created by author.

Figure 34.1. distributed street connections, created by author.

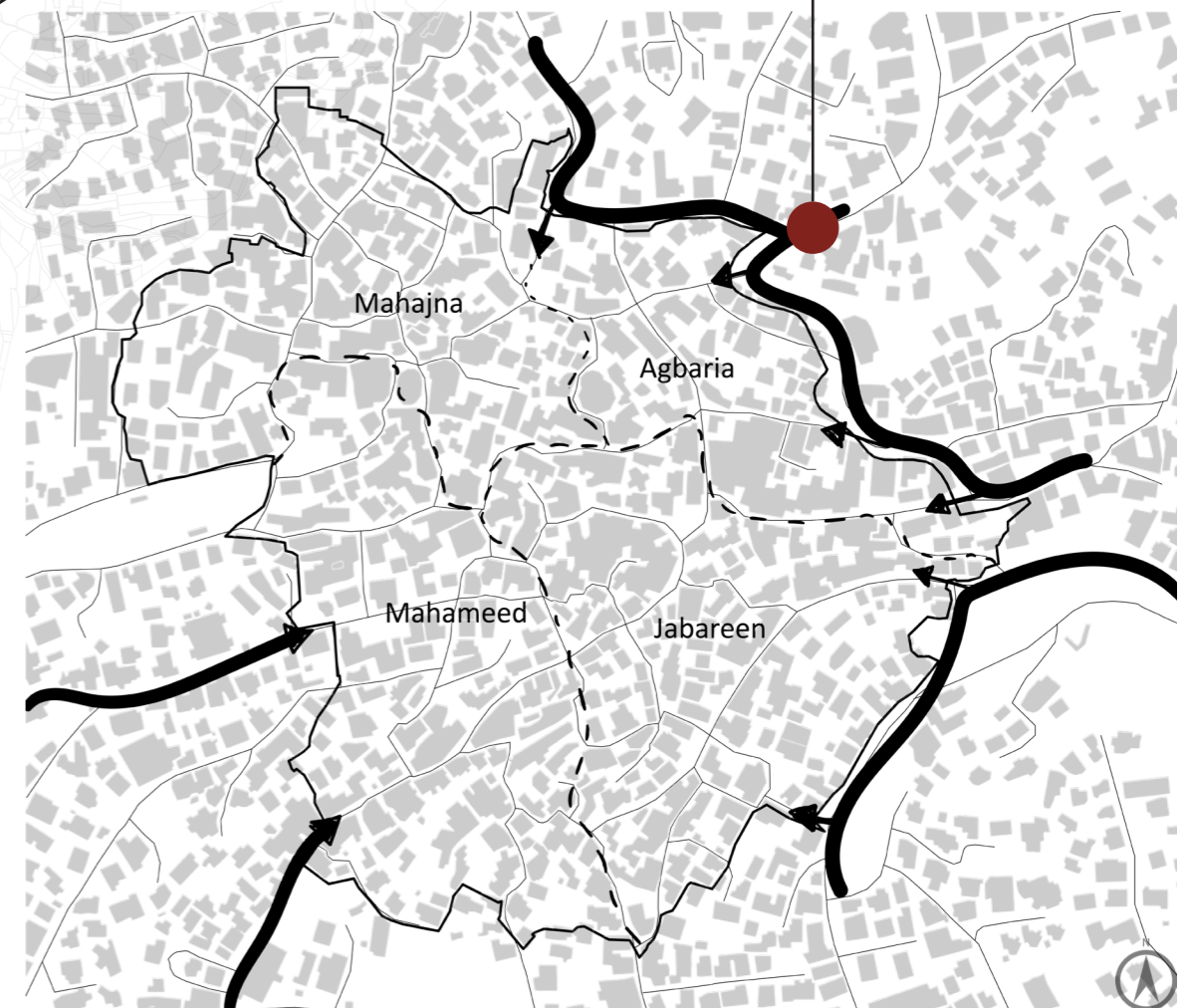


Figure 34. Entering the core, created by author.

2.1. STORY ON SCALE LEVELS

2.1.3. LAYERING THE CORE: INFRASTRUCTURAL SYSTEMS

One of the important characteristics of Umm Al-Fahem is its inadequate infrastructure which is mainly exhibited in the historic core of the city.

Connecting infrastructure

The inadequate infrastructure of the core is interconnected in an unorganized manner (figure 35), a street is there in order to separate one collective familial house from another. Streets are connected with dead-end streets, which leads to a collective familial courtyard or parking space.

As the infrastructure was built with time, there has been no consideration of creating space for people to move in space: the car path is the same as the pedestrian path.

Main streets in neighborhoods

Observation during the fieldwork concluded that each familial neighborhood of the historic core has its own main street that is more lively than other streets (figure 36). These streets have commercial functions on the ground level and housing on the higher level.

Mahajna and Agbaria's main streets are connected with each other, and therefore the residents are more intertwined and experience more interaction. While Mahameed and Jabareen's main streets are distant and more exclusive to the neighborhood residents.

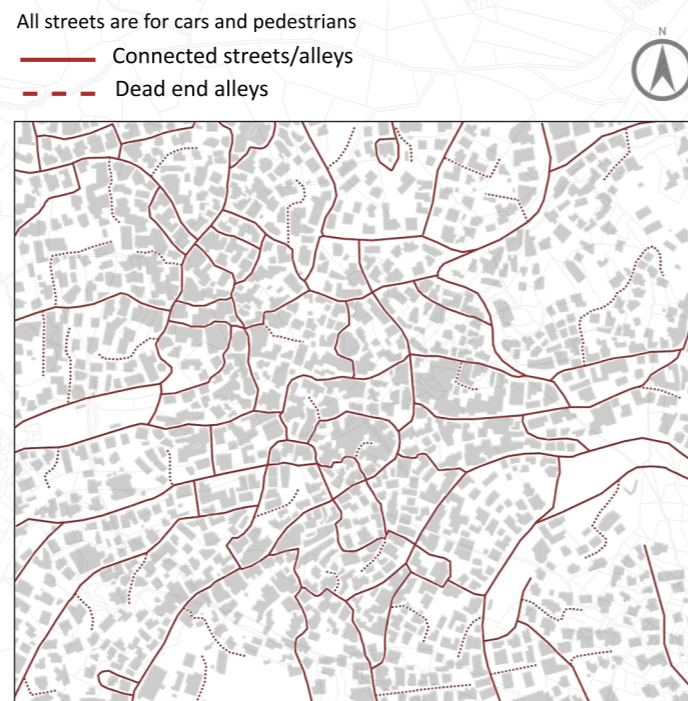


Figure 35. Infrastructure network, created by author.

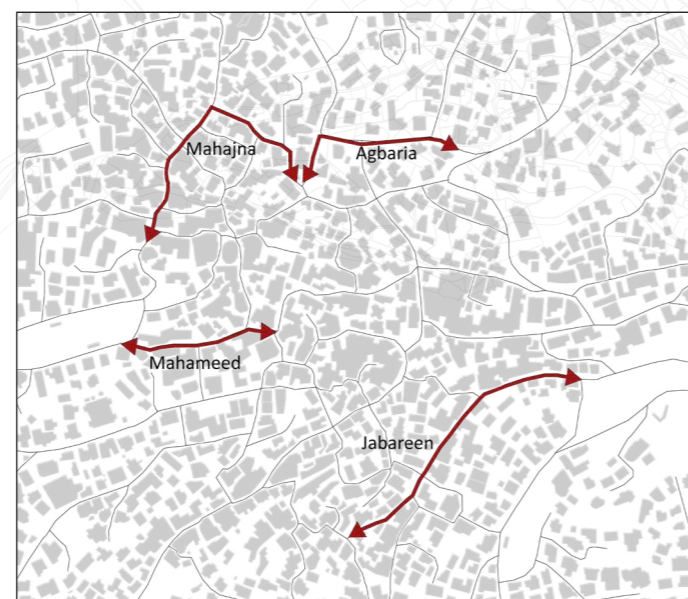


Figure 36. Main street of each neighbourhood, created by author.



2.1. STORY ON SCALE LEVELS

2.1.3. LAYERING THE CORE: FUNCTIONS

As there is no detailed information about the functions of the core as a result of the land ownership situation of the historic core, where the land belongs to the people and is not possible for the government to legislate, according to Karim Mahameed during an interview. Therefore this analysis is based on observations and interviews with professionals that are familiar with the historic core of Umm Al-Fahem.

Old municipality

The old municipality of Umm Al-Fahem has influential importance, it is situated on the edge of all four neighborhoods of: Mahameed, Jabareen, Mahajna, and Agbaria.

When the municipality location changed, the location became functionally neglected and lifeless. The space is currently functioning as parking and has strong intervention potential for rejuvenating the historic core of Umm Al-Fahem.

Mosques in core

Each one of the Neighborhoods has its own mosque. Usually, in the Muslim culture, houses are built around the mosque. While in the case of Umm Al-Fahem, as religion became a lifestyle in the later stages, the mosques were built according to each neighborhood.

Education

The historic core is older than the implementation of education facilities in the city.

The closest official education facilities are outside the borders of the core, this is affecting the social life of the core.

Health care

The majority of the locals who live in the core are the older generations, therefore it is crucial to implement health care facilities that are nearby in case of an emergency. There have been few health care facilities in the core itself.

Commercial

As the life of the city moved from the core to the facade of the city, the commercial situation keeps on changing with time (interview with Ali Agbaria).

Shops in the core do not function for long before changing. based on observation, the shops that are currently functioning are as mentioned in the previous section, on the main neighborhood's streets.

Abandoned locations

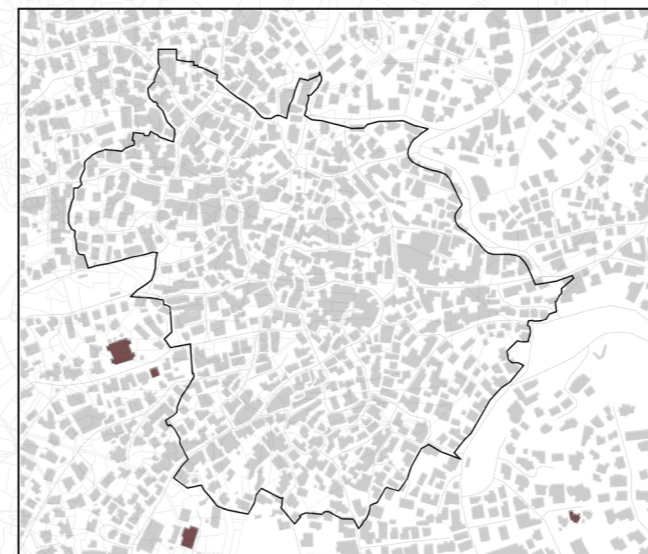
As the core becomes stagnated, many buildings are either abandoned by choice or the owners are deceased. Based on the field trip, most abandoned buildings are in Agbaria, Mahajna, and Mahameed while in Jabareen they are not very common as the locals tend to demolish and rebuild.



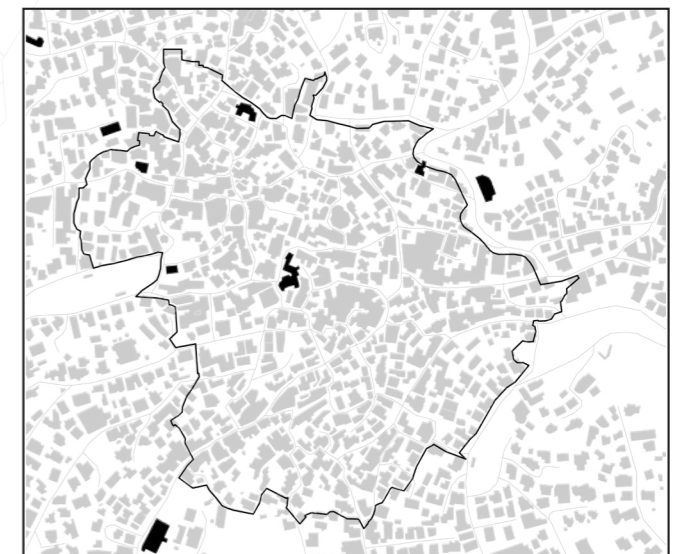
Old municipality: connecting all neighbourhoods



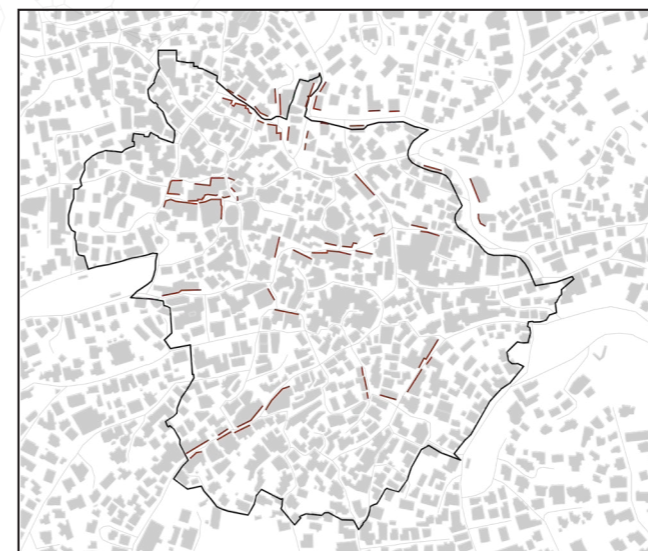
Mosques in core



Education



Health care



Commercial



Abandoned locations

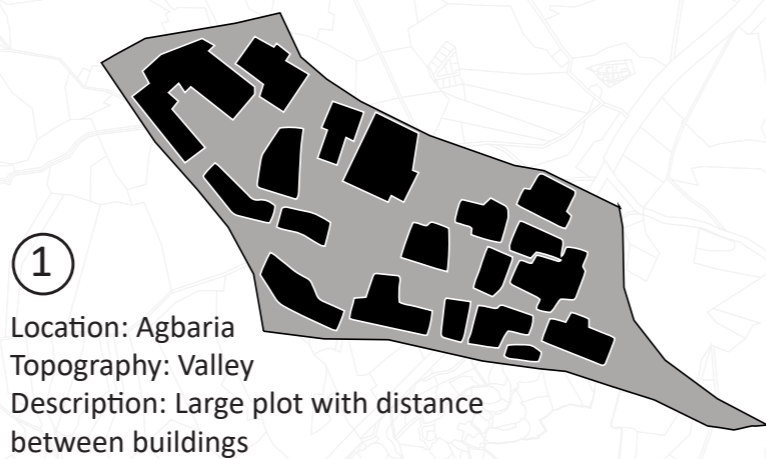
2.1. STORY ON SCALE LEVELS

2.1.3. LAYERING THE CORE: PLOTS

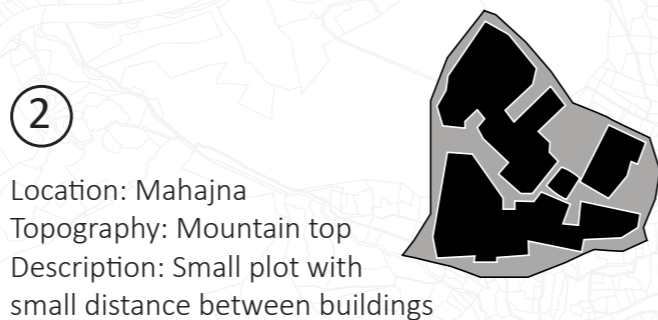
Figure 37 shows the plots of the core and its surroundings, it shows the difference between the area sizes of the plots. The plots of the core are noticeably smaller and more than the plots that are outside of the core, this indicates to the historic urban growth of the location as the plots are owned by generations of the people who live there. Land owners divided the plots in a manner that they were small and collective family housing can fit the plot.

Therefore in figure 38, it can be seen how dense the building are on plots of the core than on the outside of the core. The reason behind this housing density relays also on the fact that the core residents keep on building additional housing in the core, because it is legally easier for them to build in the core next to other family members than on land that is owned by the government.

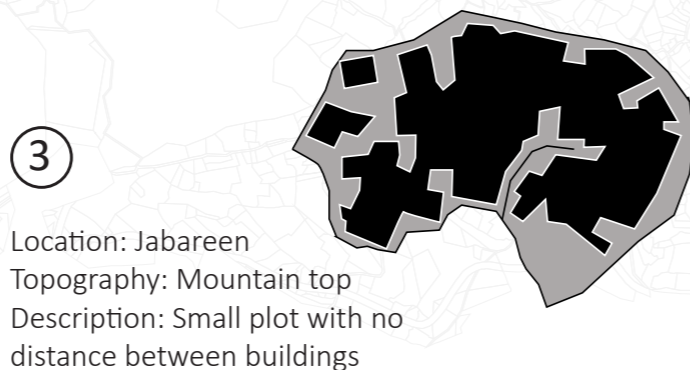
In order to understand the relation between the plots, the buildings, and the location of the plots, one zoom-in plot from each neighborhood has been indicated in figure 37. It can be concluded that the location of the Agbaria plot is on the lower points of the core and therefore the porosity between the buildings is larger than the porosity between the buildings in Mahajna, Mahameed, and Jabareen that are located on the high mountains.



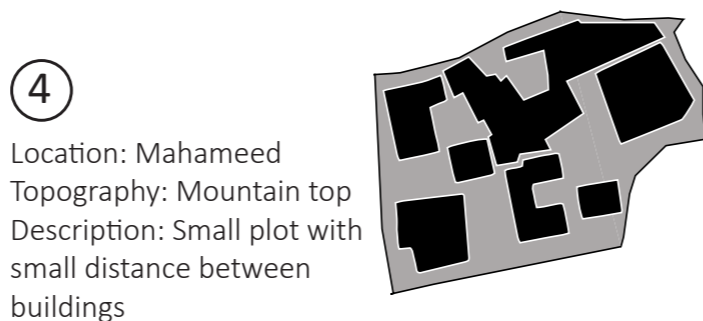
①
Location: Agbaria
Topography: Valley
Description: Large plot with distance between buildings



②
Location: Mahajna
Topography: Mountain top
Description: Small plot with small distance between buildings



③
Location: Jabareen
Topography: Mountain top
Description: Small plot with no distance between buildings



④
Location: Mahameed
Topography: Mountain top
Description: Small plot with small distance between buildings

- Plots in core
- Continued with core
- Outside the core
- Cemetery

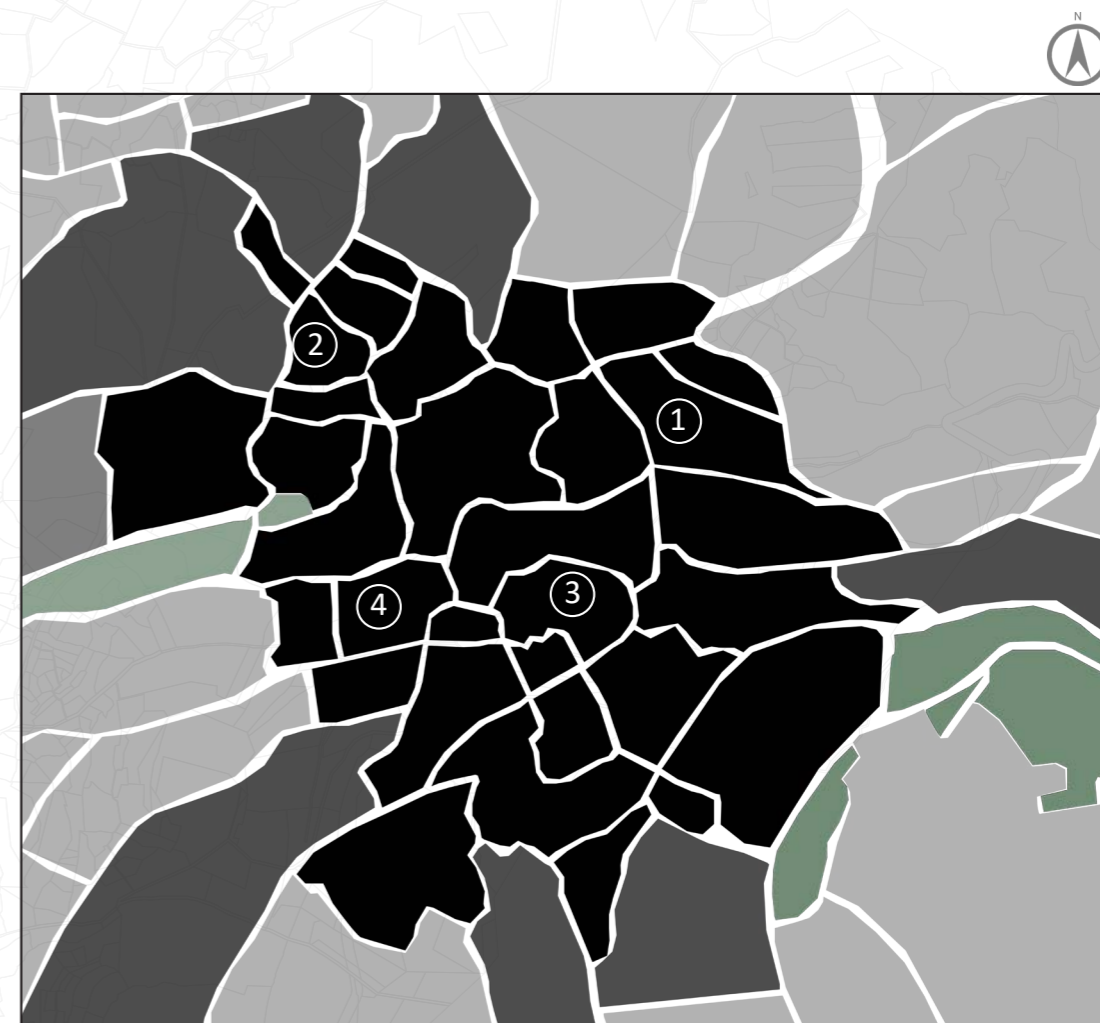


Figure 37. Neighbouring cities on street 65, created by author.



Figure 38. Neighbouring cities on street 65, created by author.

2.1. STORY ON SCALE LEVELS

2.1.3. LAYERING THE CORE: COLLECTIVE FAMILIAL HOUSING STRUCTURE

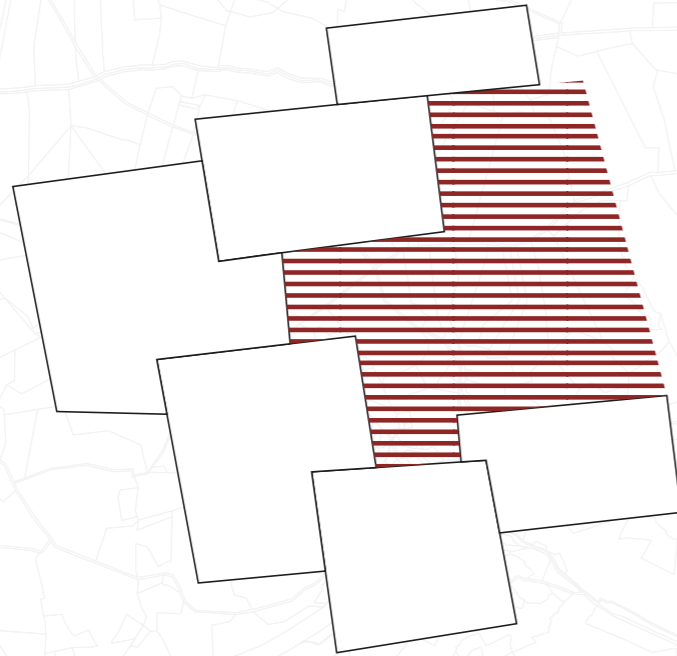


Figure 39. familial house structure, created by author.

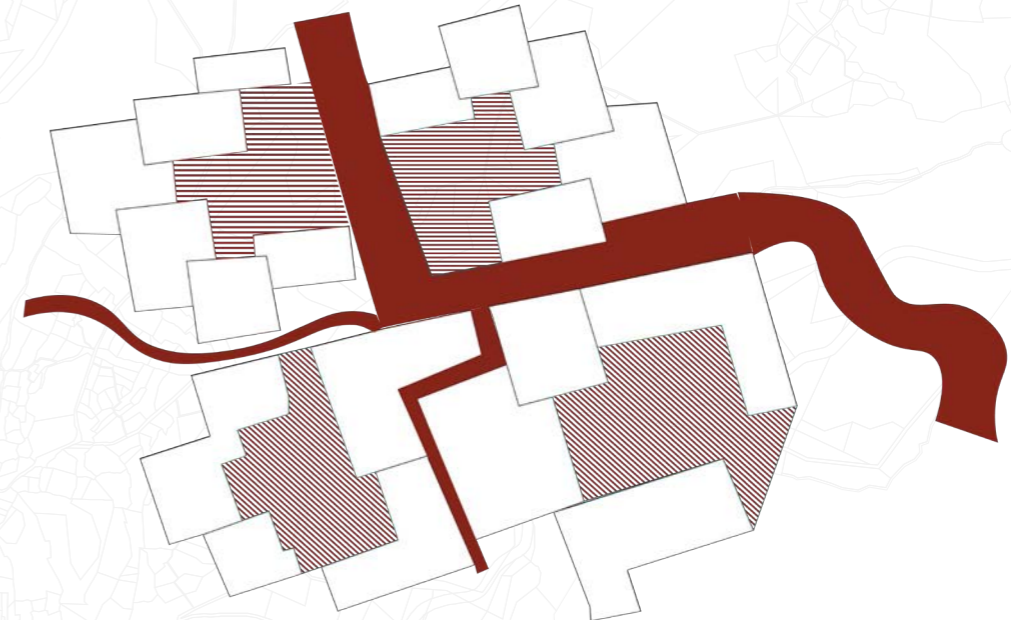


Figure 40. Neighbouring cities on street 65, created by author.

The city of Umm Al-Fahem identifies as an Arab city, and its core mostly applies to the Arab familial housing style. The main key concept of building a house in the Arab culture is privacy (Saraya, 2022), the privacy applies to the privacy of one household and to the privacy of the extended family which lives around this household and shares the same private courtyard (figure 39).

Dwairy mentions in his book: "The relationship between Arab family members is still characterized by interdependence". And Hays claims in his article: "Houses often grow as the family grows - they develop according to need, not to a grand design". Both Hays and Dwairy highlight the importance of the connection between extended family and household housing structure, which reflects clearly in Umm Al-Fahem.

Figures 39.1 and 39.2 are an example of current and old houses within the core, that share the same character of collective housing with a shared courtyard.

So even though Umm Al-Fahem grew from a village to a city, the core still obtains the characteristics of the Arab cultural lifestyle of the collective familial housing structure.

As a result there are several families, a collection of collective familial housing structures is in order to be constructed and this collection is to be separated by streets and alleys to keep the privacy of each household (figure 40).

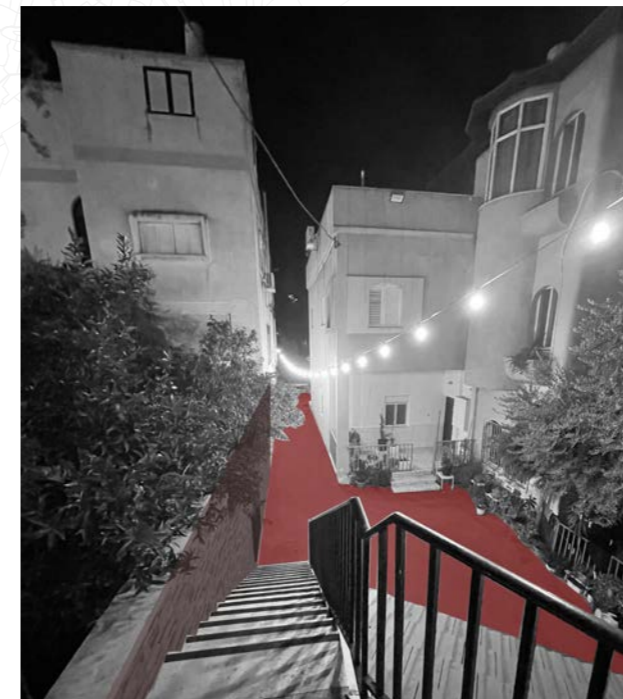


Figure 39.1. example of new house, created by author.



Figure 39.2. example of old house, created by author.

2.2. STORY OF THE PEOPLE

2.2.1. WORDS OF THE PEOPLE

The roofs are for the women and the street used to be for men, but now its for cars.

We need a safe place for our children and their children!

It is weird if you move without a car

I don't feel safe anymore

I just want a seat and street lighting to be able to just sit somewhere

And now those elderlies are gone, the neighborhood is gone

People don't raise their children anymore, damn them, thats why these weapons are swimming freely among us

Umm means mother, and Umm Al-Fahem as a city is our mother that contains all 4 families

The core became too tight, so they killed it and moved it to the main street

فش محل للكل

We lost the root of this city, we lost the love of people

Don't come and start making changes!!

2.2. STORY OF THE PEOPLE

2.2.2. CORE OF OPINIONS



At the start of this project, it was highlighted that civic dissatisfaction is one of the problems that Umm Al-Fahem is facing as a city.

During the fieldwork that happened in February 2020, the observation was focused on how people express their opinion and where. It was very clear that people are using walls most of the time as the location for expressing what they feel, using colorful colors with encouraging quotes as if they are trying to revive the core and make it a happier place. It was inspiring that there is still hope if this dissatisfaction.

Another style of tempts to emphasize this dissatisfaction was placing furniture on the streets, as a way of expressing the need for space for the people to move and to enjoy the historic core that they claim is theirs, legally and mentally.

2.2. STORY OF THE PEOPLE

2.2.3. STAKEHOLDERS

The city of Umm Al Fahem is an Arab city within the state of Israel with a historic-cultural value. Meaning that it has contrasting stakeholders' points of view when it comes to the planning and development of the city. These stakeholders are divided into three sectors: public, private, and civic.

The analysis of stakeholders begins with identifying the stakeholders and in which sector they exist, followed by the power-interest matrix and onion diagram in order to see the relations of the different stakeholders.

To understand what is the dynamic within the stakeholders' system, a power-interest matrix is conducted. After identifying the stakeholders and their sectors, each stakeholder was placed on the spectrum of their interest and their power in the socio-spatial development of the core of Umm Al Fahem.

- National government
- Municipal government
- Ministry of transportation
- Ministry of construction and housing
- Ministry of labor and social services
- Ministry of local collaboration

Public sector

- Private enterprises
- Planners & developers
- Cultural institutions

Private sector

- NGO's
- Local community associations
- Locals

Civic sector

In figure 41 we can see that in the current situation the stakeholders from the private and civic sectors are more interested in the socio-spatial development in the core than most of the public sector. Nonetheless, the public sector and mainly the national and municipal governments have a higher power in this development than the private and civic sectors.

Interestingly there is one civic stakeholder that outstands in both the power and the interest spectrums, the locals. These locals are the four families of Umm Al Fahem, and they are extremely overprotective of their space and specifically in Umm Al Fahem, these locals are the most interested ones in this development, but under their own conditions.

Figure 42 shows how the ideal power-interest matrix should be in the case of the socio-spatial development of Umm Al Fahem. Private and civic stakeholder sectors gain more power and the public sector stakeholders improve their interest.

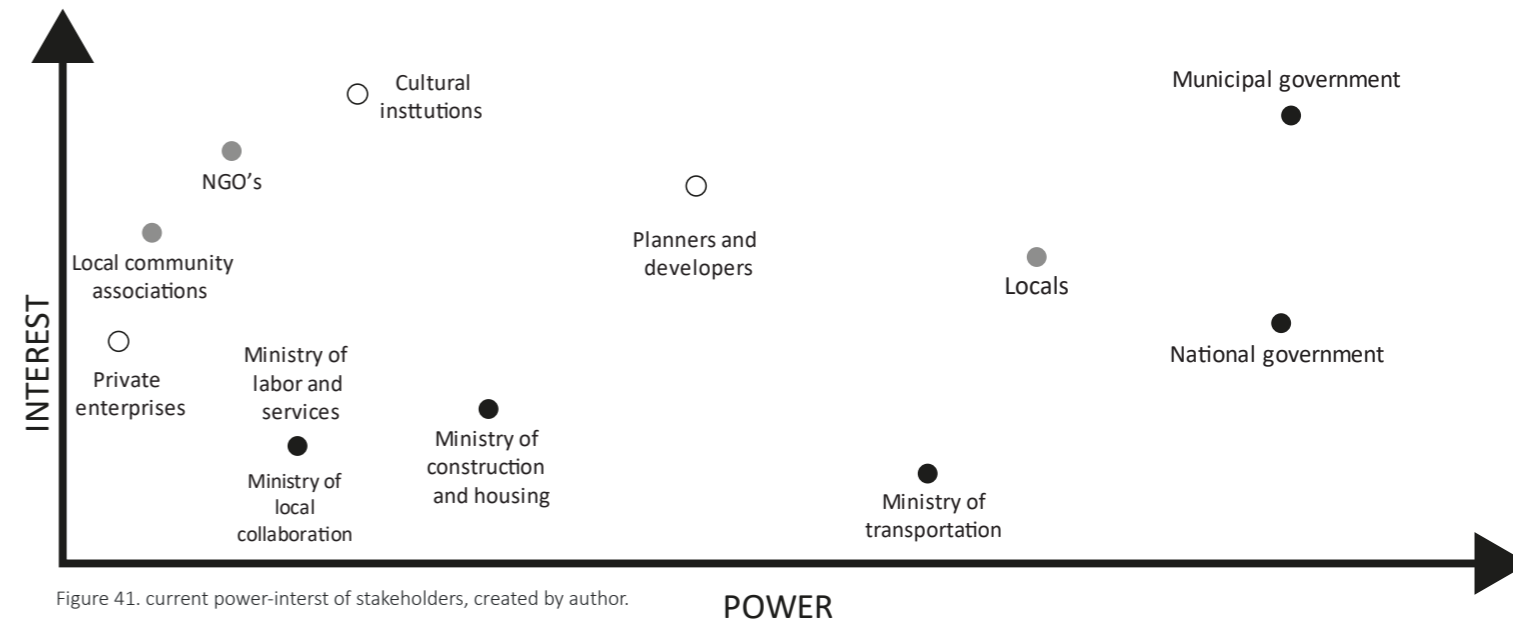


Figure 41. current power-interest of stakeholders, created by author.

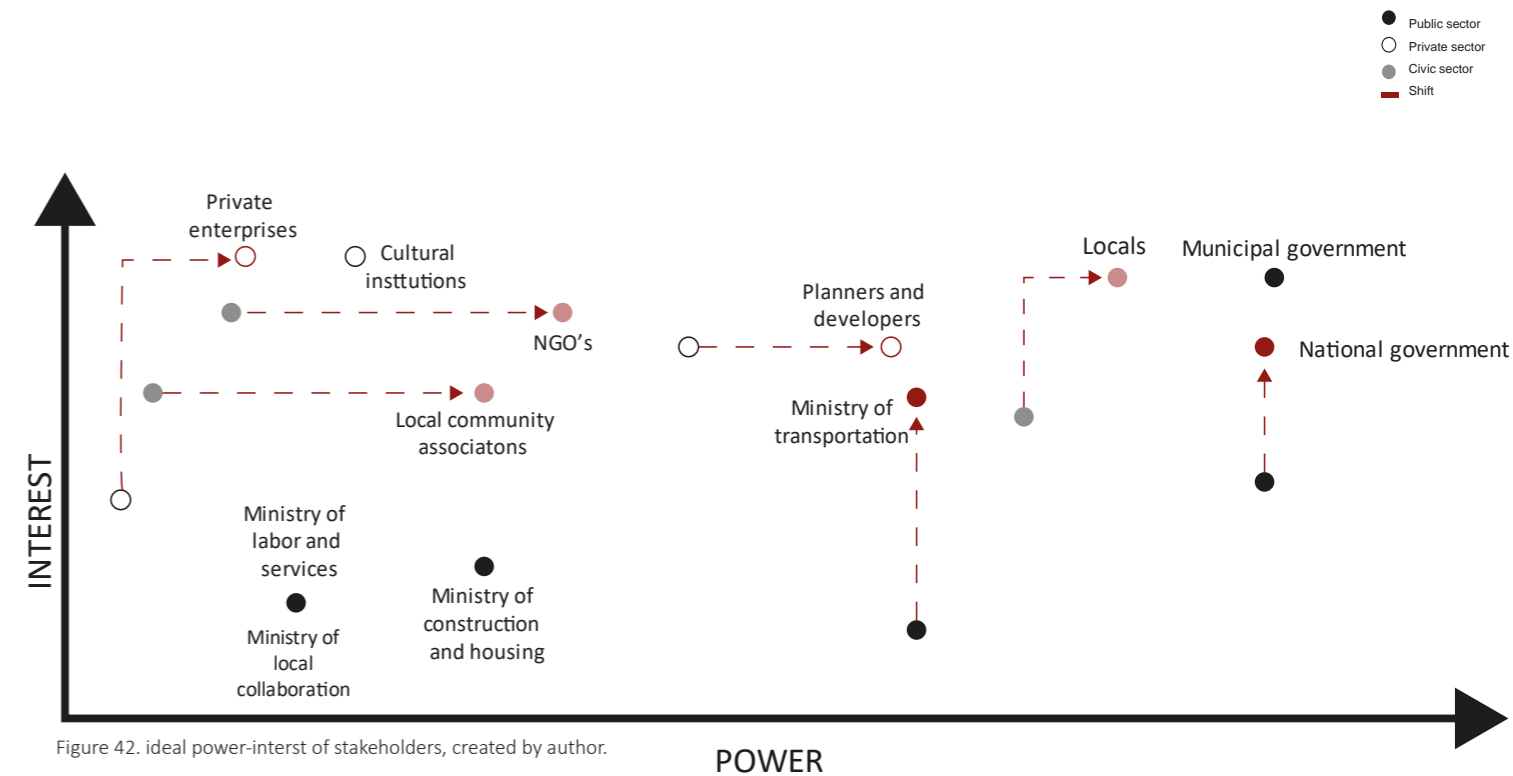


Figure 42. ideal power-interest of stakeholders, created by author.

2.2. STORY OF THE PEOPLE

2.2.3. STAKEHOLDERS

Based on the stakeholder analysis, it was concluded that there are insufficient relations between the locals and other stakeholders. This conclusion reflects spatially in Umm Al-Fahem when there are development plans, the policymakers are not benefiting from the knowledge of locals about their own space. Therefore the strategy is for locals to be more included in the decision-making and the implementation of the desired plans, the inclusive approach in Umm Al Fahem should include participatory and co-implementation as tools for socio-spatial intervention.

How would this inclusive approach be implemented within the stakeholders of the engagement strategy?

This approach reflects in an engagement outline (figure 43) and will be bottom-up and it starts by giving power to the people, the locals will be part of the decision-making of the vision for their space. They will have informal meetings with NGOs and local community associations so that they represent the decisions of the locals, these private sector stakeholders will gain more power. This is followed by direct collaboration with the planner/ developer who will forward the spatial visions of the locals to the local government through a formal setting. Due to the big political, cultural, and language barrier between the locals and the government, the Local government acts as the mediator aiming at a win-win situation.

The municipal government will forward the decisions of the locals to the national government in order to higher their interest in the socio-spatial development of Umm Al Fahem. When the national government is interested, it will lead to a rise in the interest of the involved ministries who will give feedback on the vision that was created by the participation of the locals.

When there is an agreement, there will be co-implementation, this co-implementation will be the common language between the locals and the government.

Of course, this is if there was an ideal situation of mutual acceptance between involved stakeholders, which in the situation of an Arab city in Israel could be more complicated and most likely the inclusive approach will exclude influential stakeholders.

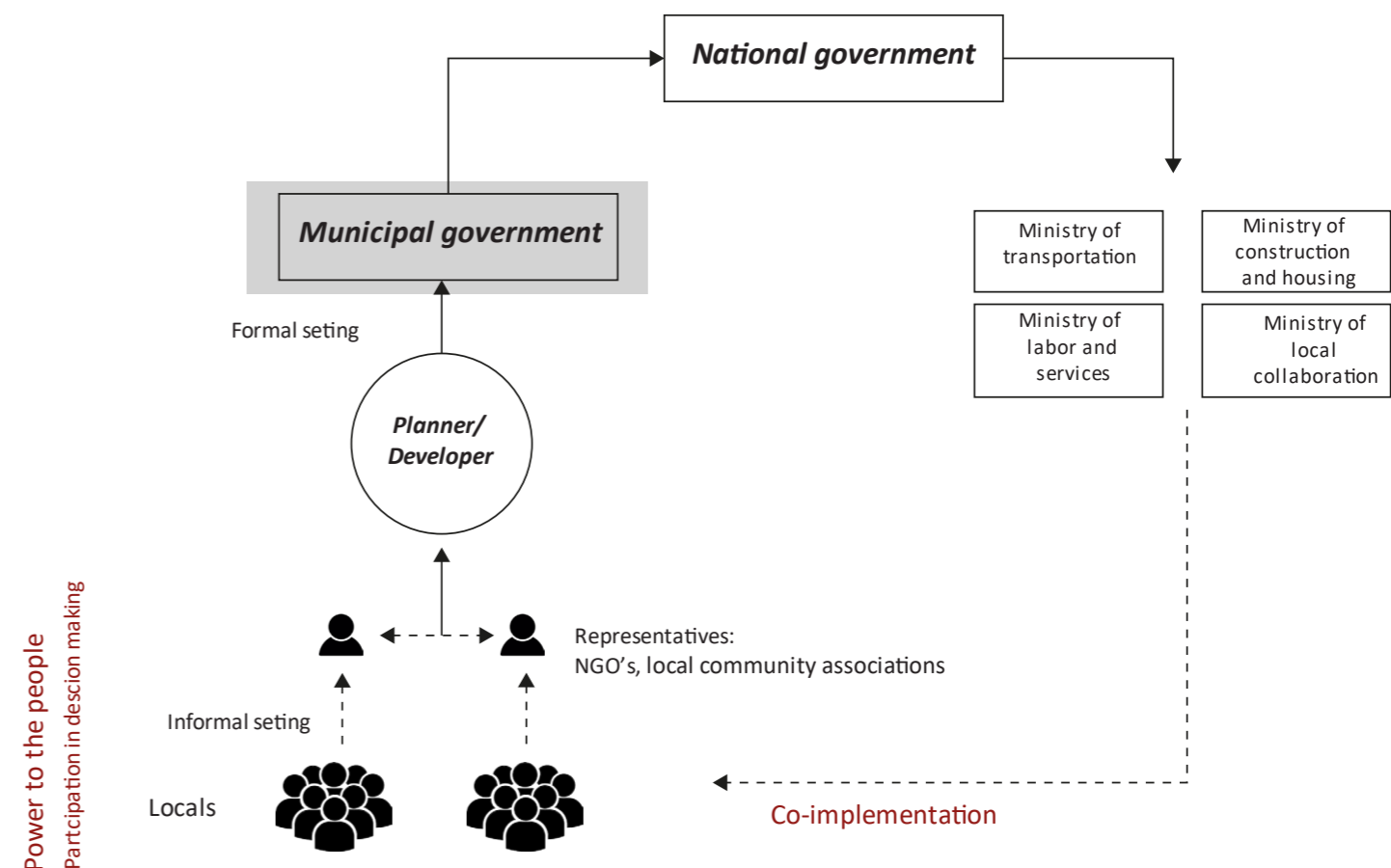


Figure 43. stakeholders engagement outline, created by author.

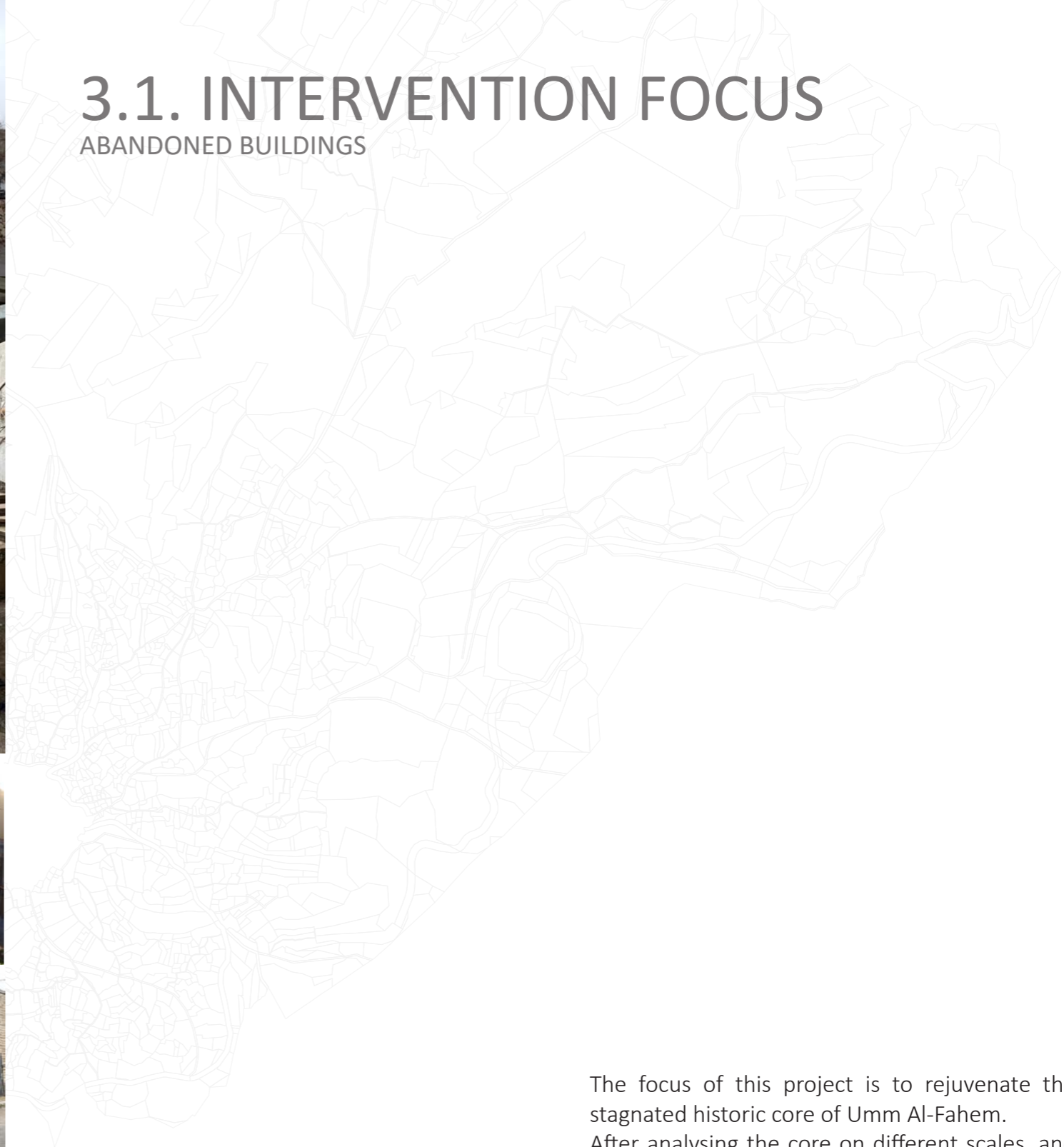


3. FORMULATE

This chapter highlights the intervention focus and the 2060 vision for the project of rejuvenating the core of Umm Al-Fahem. Then introduce the strategies process that formulates the social and the spatial systems strategies, followed by presenting the method for generating these strategies in the core of Umm Al-Fahem and focusing on possible further developments of strategies in different intervention locations.

3.1. INTERVENTION FOCUS

ABANDONED BUILDINGS



The focus of this project is to rejuvenate the stagnated historic core of Umm Al-Fahem. After analysing the core on different scales, and visiting the location two times, it is concluded that the abandoned locations within the historic core have the highest potential to achieve the goal of rejuvenation. These abandoned locations have both historic and social importance to the core and could benefit the core's spatial and economic situation locally and regionally.

3.2. REJUVENATED CORE 2060

CORE VISION

2022

- Include and inform locals of the expected development
- Rejuvenate four locations in different neighborhoods

2030

Start of green infrastructure

Connect to Al-Madina street

Spatially connect rejuvenated locations

Implement various engaging functions

No-car policy in core two days a week

Start of public transportation on borders of core

2060

No-car policy in core all week

Green network

Larger rejuvenated system

100% accessibility with public transportation

Touristic historic center

Recognize further locations to rejuvenate

The core of Umm Al-Fahem in 2060 is socially integrating and spatially accessible.

The rejuvenated core will be a car-free zone with public transportation on the edges with a strong spatial and functional connection with Al-Madina. A connected core via a green network that connects between the intervention locations of the core.

Figure 44. vision timeline, created by author.

3.3. STRATEGY MAKING PROCESS

SOCIAL & SPATIAL ASPECTS

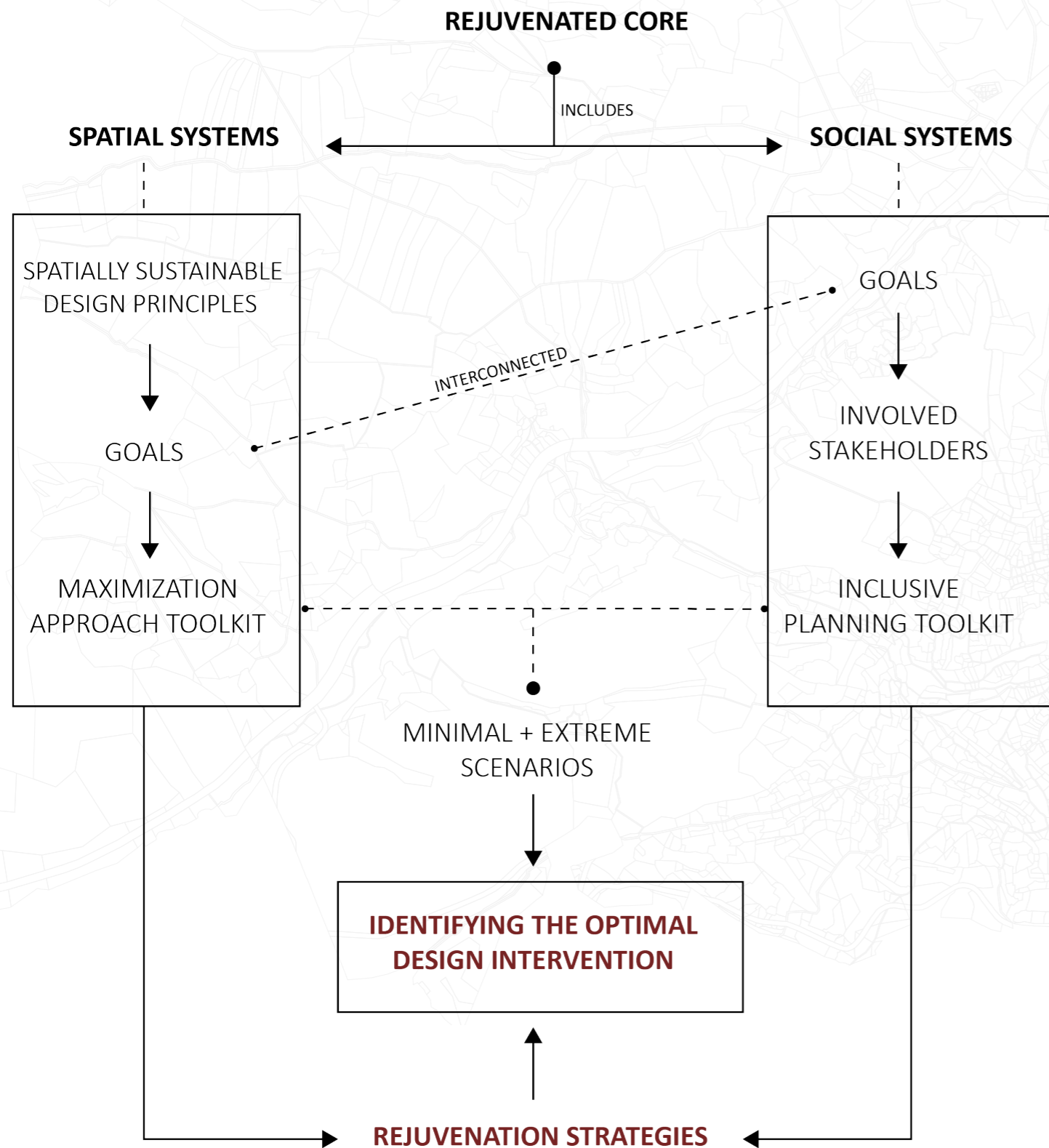


Figure 45. explains the process of strategy making to achieve the goal of a rejuvenated core of Umm Al-Fahem including both social and spatial systems.

Spatial systems

The spatial systems strategies will include spatially sustainable design principles with their goals that are possible to be implemented in a case study in the core, these principles will be used in the maximization approach toolkit to create the rejuvenation strategies.

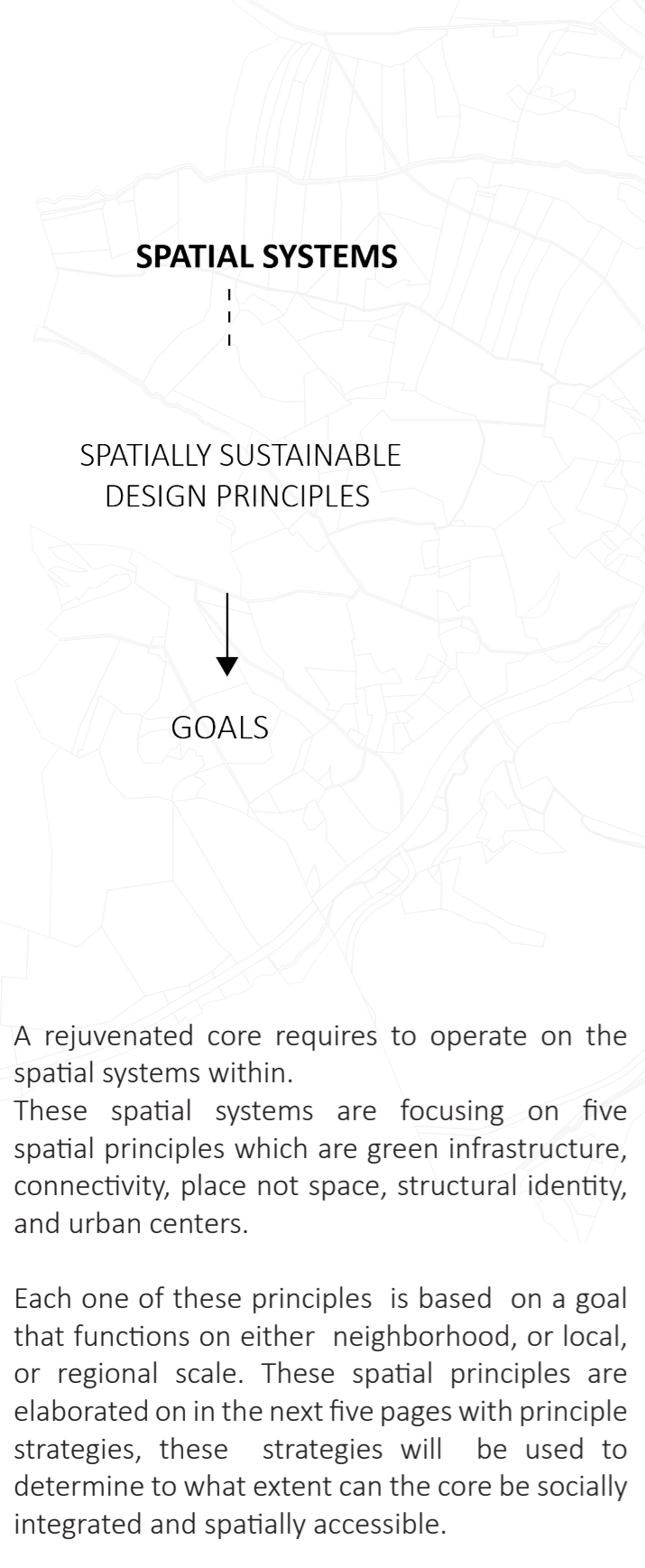
Social systems

Because the social systems are a more sensitive topic, it is important to initially decide on the goals of the system followed by stakeholders analysis to propose the inclusive planning toolkit that will help with the creation of the rejuvenation strategies.

Both the maximization toolkit and the inclusive planning toolkit will help create minimal and extreme intervention scenarios that will help determine the optimal design intervention.

Figure 45. Strategy making process, created by author.

3.4. SPATIAL SYSTEMS STRATEGIES



A rejuvenated core requires to operate on the spatial systems within. These spatial systems are focusing on five spatial principles which are green infrastructure, connectivity, place not space, structural identity, and urban centers.

Each one of these principles is based on a goal that functions on either neighborhood, or local, or regional scale. These spatial principles are elaborated on in the next five pages with principle strategies, these strategies will be used to determine to what extent can the core be socially integrated and spatially accessible.

SPATIAL PRINCIPLES

- **GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**
- **CONNECTIVITY**
- **PLACE NOT SPACE**
- **STRUCTURAL IDENTITY**
- **URBAN CENTERS**

STRATEGY GOAL

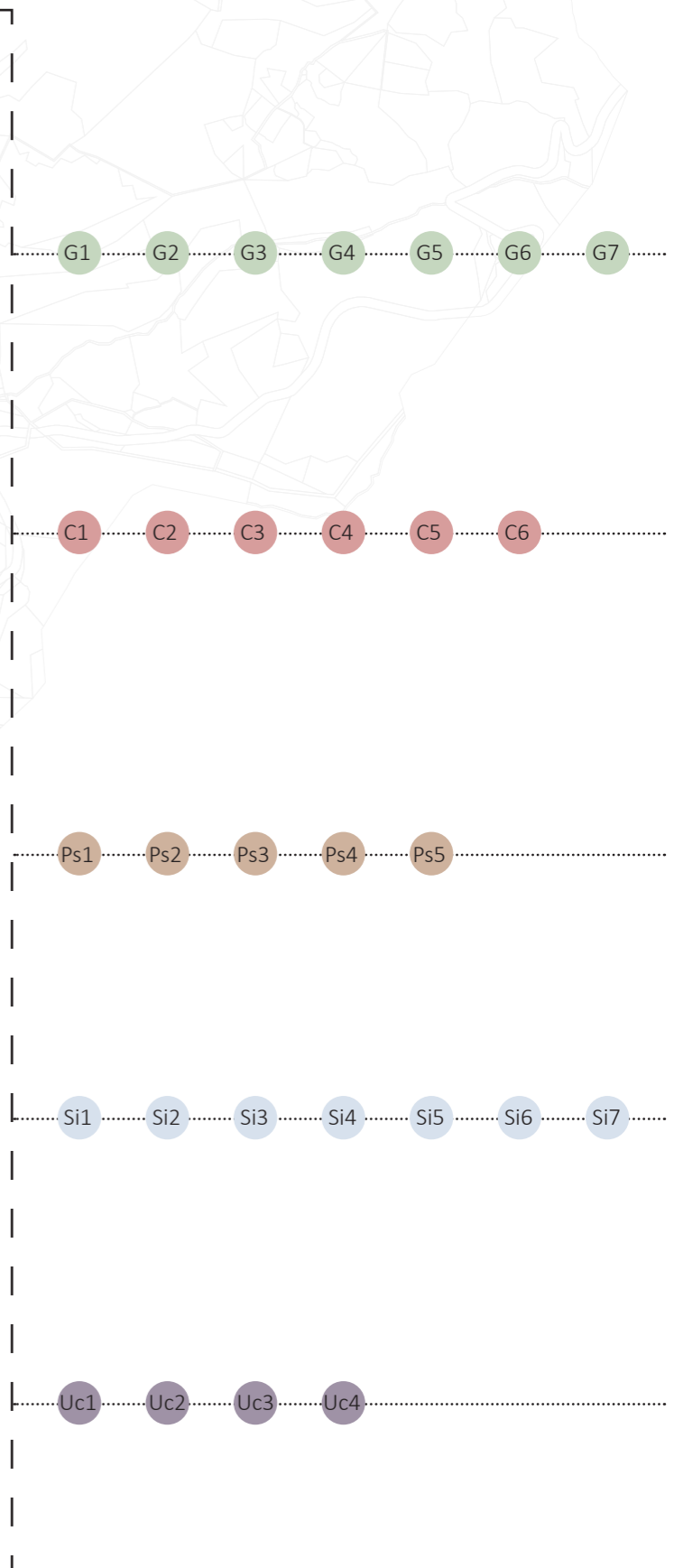
The goal is to implement as much green as possible. Green elements will filter the air, more green will reduce heat, and improve mental health by making people more optimistic and refreshed.

Make the core accessible on higher levels, and facilitate better connections in the in-core movement. Create a hierarchy in the movement to and from the core.

Create the possibility to experience the space as a place by creating the possibility for the user of the space to adapt and use based on their desire and their need.




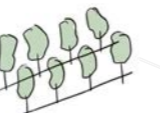


To modify a building structure according to its surroundings or its history

Create space for all people to belong to and experience as part of their culture, religion, and individuality.



3.4. SPATIAL SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION	IMPLEMENTATION	SCALE
G1 PLANTS IN POTS	Place plants in pots in any random location in the space to create more personal feeling of the space		Neighborhood
G2 GREEN FACADE	If the facade of the location is not aesthetically attractive- implement a green facade to improve it		Neighborhood
G3 GREEN ROOF	Create a connection on a higher level by implementing green roofs on the roofs of the buildings		Neighborhood
G4 GREEN CORRIDOR	Highlight the street connections by implementing green corridors on the existing street sides		Local
G5 OPEN PARK	Erase whatever element there is in the location and create an open public park		Regional
G6 GREEN COURTYARDS	If the space is surrounded by three or more building- create a green courtyard in this space		Local
G7 GREEN NETWORK CONNECTION	Connect several green locations with the help of a green infrastructure network to create a system		Regional





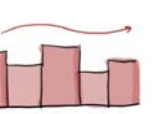

*** The elaborated strategies function on the different scales

Green infrastructure

A green system in cities is an important part of urban environments as it reduces the need for air-conditioning, and adds aesthetic value to a city. Urban vegetation in cities can improve the air quality and decrease pollution, and it is a critical component in generating a sense of well-being among locals. (Botkin & Beveridge, 1992).

Adding trees, greenery pots, and greeting parks as well as a green network to the city core is an essential ingredient for a more spatially connected and sustainable system.

CONNECTIVITY

PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION	IMPLEMENTATION	SCALE
C1 CONNECTION WITH AL-MADINA STREET	Implement a direct transportation system that connects the location to Al-Madina commercial street- bus lines and stops		Regional
C2 CONNECTION WITH OLD MUNICIPALITY CENTER	Implement pavement to create direct walking path to facilitate connection with the old municipality center		Local
C3 CONNECTION WITH OTHER ABANDONED LOCATIONS	If more abandoned locations are in less than 500 distance is available, connect the locations by function		Neighborhood
C4 WAY FINDING	Implement directing elements that help find the way to the desired intervention locations		Neighborhood
C5 STREET WALL	Honor streetwalls and create continuous frontage along the sidewalk to make a more comfortable movement and transitions in space.		Local
C6 OPEN REALM	Highlight entrance to a specific location by implementing a gate with lighting		Regional

Connectivity

Urban connectivity resembles the structure of movement connections and indicators for routing choices. Low-connectivity areas can lead to several points of failure, making the urban system fragile and unsafe (Nel, Gerhard & Higgins, 2018). A stagnated core means that the number of network components is below the minimum for an efficient connectivity system.

Place Not Space

“A place is a space to which people have personal attachment “- Frederick and Mehta(2018)

As the functions and purposes change in a specific space, it becomes a place as it is richer in change and adaptivity for the users, their daily culture, and their requirement of space.

3.4. SPATIAL SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

PLACE NOT SPACE

PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION	IMPLEMENTATION	SCALE
Ps1	FLEXIBILITY Keep open space flexible for different functions to be exhibited either at the same time or separately		Local
Ps2	CONTINUITY Emphasizes continuity of specific direct movements from one location to another via open space		Local
Ps3	POSITIVE VOLUME Modify the space to be in a clear shape and more enclosed in order to facilitate civic engagement		Local
Ps4	SEE & BE SEEN Update a space with multiple activities on different levels of visibility		Neighborhood
Ps5	IF IT FITS, IT SITS Implement seating surface options wherever it is open and safe for people to interact and rest		Neighborhood

URBAN CENTERS

PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION	IMPLEMENTATION	SCALE
Uc1	REWARD Enrich personal experience and promote interactions during the movement from one space to another		Neighborhood
Uc2	AVAILABILITY Implement a focal element in the center of the public space in order to imply at least one purpose to participate and experience this space		Regional
Uc3	RESPOND TO TIME Base the function display of the urban center to be applied as a response to the cultural and religious times of the users		Local
Uc4	POROSITY Activate an open space zone by creating an inviting public-private transition zone where life happens in the public realm		Neighborhood

STRUCTURAL IDENTITY

PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION	IMPLEMENTATION	SCALE
Si1	ARCHITECTURAL LANDMARKS Declare a space as a landmark to highlight its sentimental importance		Regional
Si2	ACTIVATE FUNCTIONS Activate at least one function in the specific structure- function relates to what function is missing and relates to the surrounding		Regional
Si3	OPEN Keep the structure of the building and clear the surrounding to emphasize the structure		Neighborhood
Si4	CLOSE Adjust the existing structure by making it part of a new structure		Neighborhood
Si5	CHARACTER VISIBILITY Put the structure under the spotlight by adding different shapes and materials to the existing structure		Local
Si6	DEMOLISH Eliminate the structure and use the space for another purpose		Neighborhood
Si7	BUILD UP Adjust the current structure and assign the current structure as the ground floor of the new structure		Neighborhood

Urban Centers

As space in containing an urban center, there is an observation by the users of this center where they recognize the movement with the different purposes within this center (Frederick and Mehta, 2018). Users of the urban center create a specific relationship with the space on their own terms as the space is static and they are the active component of the equation in this open realm of space.

Structural Identity

The structural identity emphasizes the importance of functional connections, historic symbolism, and location identity. The way a building is changing affects the surrounding, and the surroundings affect the conception of a building and highlight its importance.

3.5. SOCIAL SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

It is important to state that the social systems are based on inclusive planning (figure 46), because the idea behind inclusive planning is the engagement of the people in the implementation and decision making of the development. Therefore the choice of the desired system is based on the knowledge of the people and the social situation in the stagnated location that requires rejuvenation.

Stakeholders involvement will be elaborated on in each one of the social systems. Recommendation will be given for the mentioned stakeholders, this will be conducted with the help of the stakeholders analysis of the previous chapter. The three social systems of resilience, engagement and awareness contain specific goals per system and these goals will be translated spatially. Each spatial translation will be collided with compatible spatial strategy from the spatial principles of the spatial system.

SOCIAL SYSTEMS



GOALS



INVOLVED
STAKEHOLDERS



INCLUSIVE PLANNING

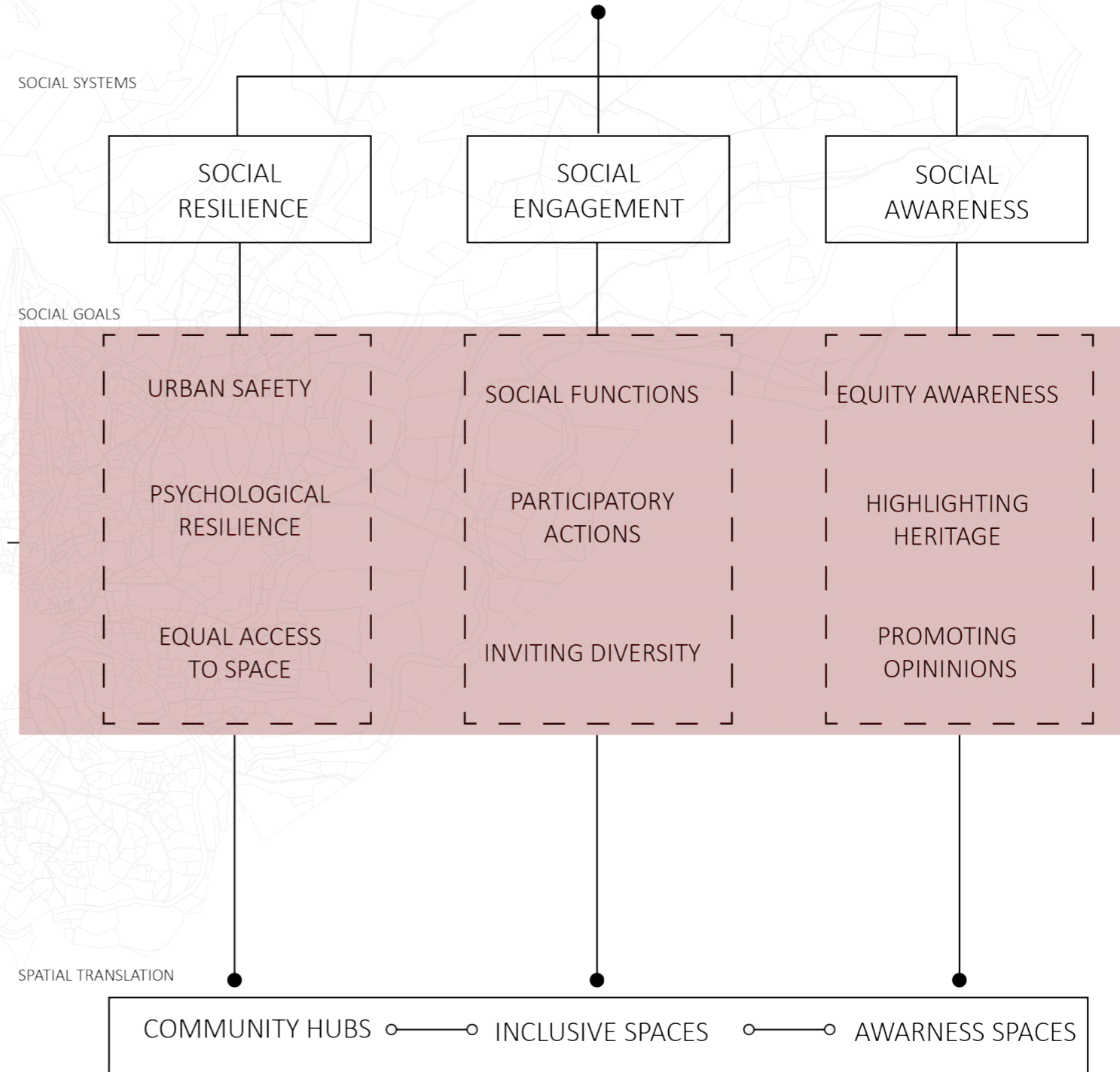


Figure 46. social systems goals, created by author.

3.5. SOCIAL SYSTEMS STRATEGIES

The social systems strategies begin by selecting the desired social goal, to activate these goals it is required to detail the principles of this goal, and these principles discuss the involved stakeholder in the development.

In this sector of the chapter, there will be recommendations for these stakeholders and a description of the possible spatial translation of each goal. Based on the translated functions, the possible connections with the spatial strategies are provided per goal.

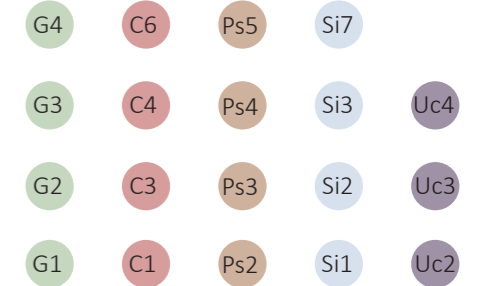
INVOLVED STAKEHOLDERS

- LOCALS
- MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT
- NGO'S
- PRIVATE ENTERPRISES
- MINISTRY OF TRANSPORTATION
- PLANNERS & DEVELOPERS
- MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

SOCIAL RESILIENCE

- URBAN SAFETY
- PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE
- EQUAL ACCESS TO SPACE

POSSIBLE CONNECTION WITH SPATIAL PRINCIPLES



SPATIAL TRANSLATION: COMMUNITY HUBS

- LIGHTS IN STREET
- INVITING CENTERS
- PLACES TO SIT
- WALKING SPACES
- COMMUNITY KITCHENS
- EDUCATION FACILITIES
- COMMUNITY DESIGN SPACES
- EDUCATION FACILITIES
- HEALTH FACILITIES

Social resilience

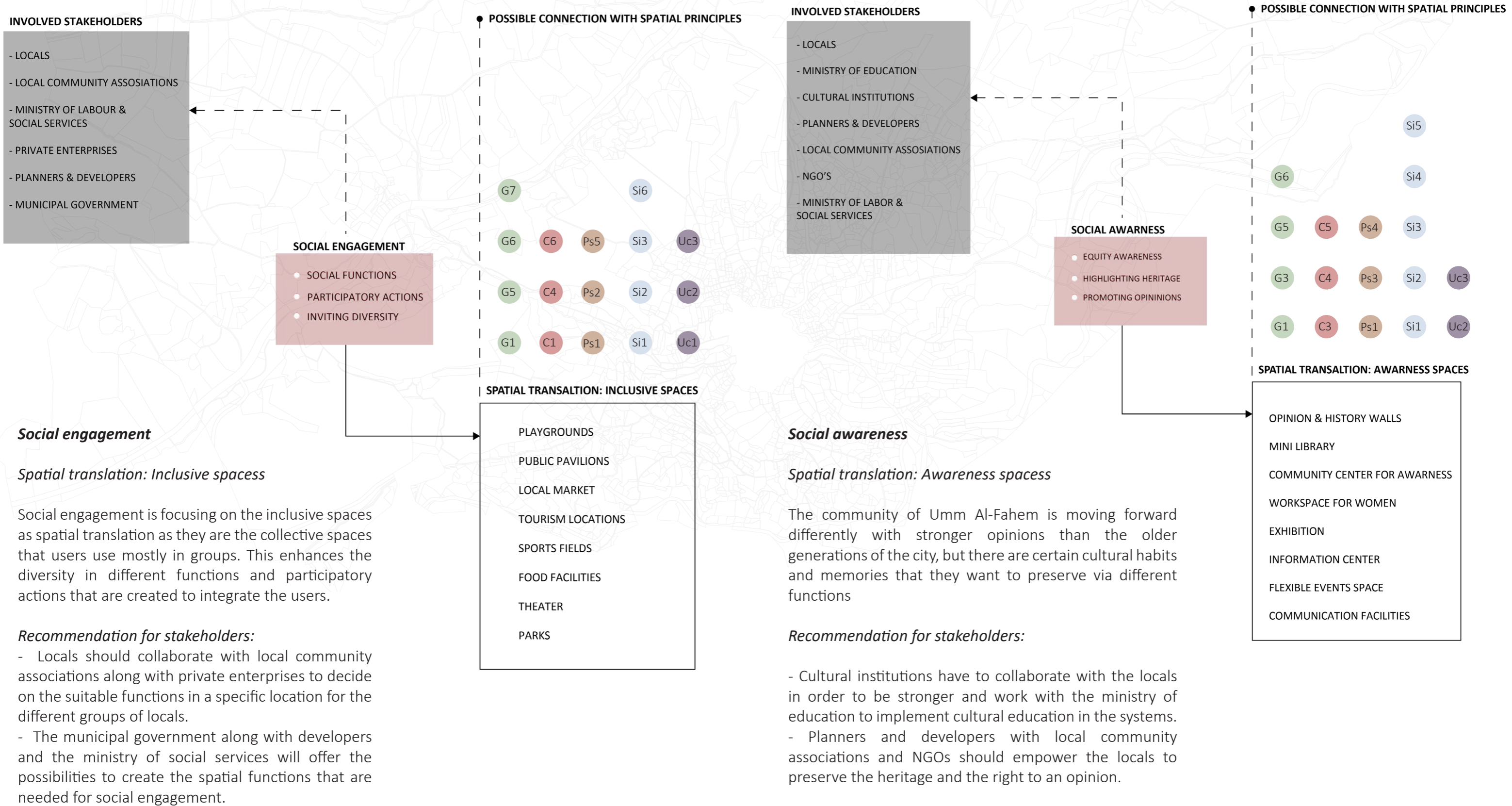
Spatial translation: Community hubs

Community hubs are the locations that give the user of the space a possibility to reconnect with others and with the space. These hubs are created to develop the community making it more resilient.

Recommendation for stakeholders:

- The Ministry of education, NGOs, and the municipal government need to collaborate to create a safe environment for this development.
- Planners and developers connect with locals and private enterprises to ensure creating a suitable environment for the resilience of the people.

3.5. SOCIAL SYSTEMS STRATEGIES



3.6. GENERATING THE STRATEGIES

CONNECTING SOCIAL AND SPATIAL

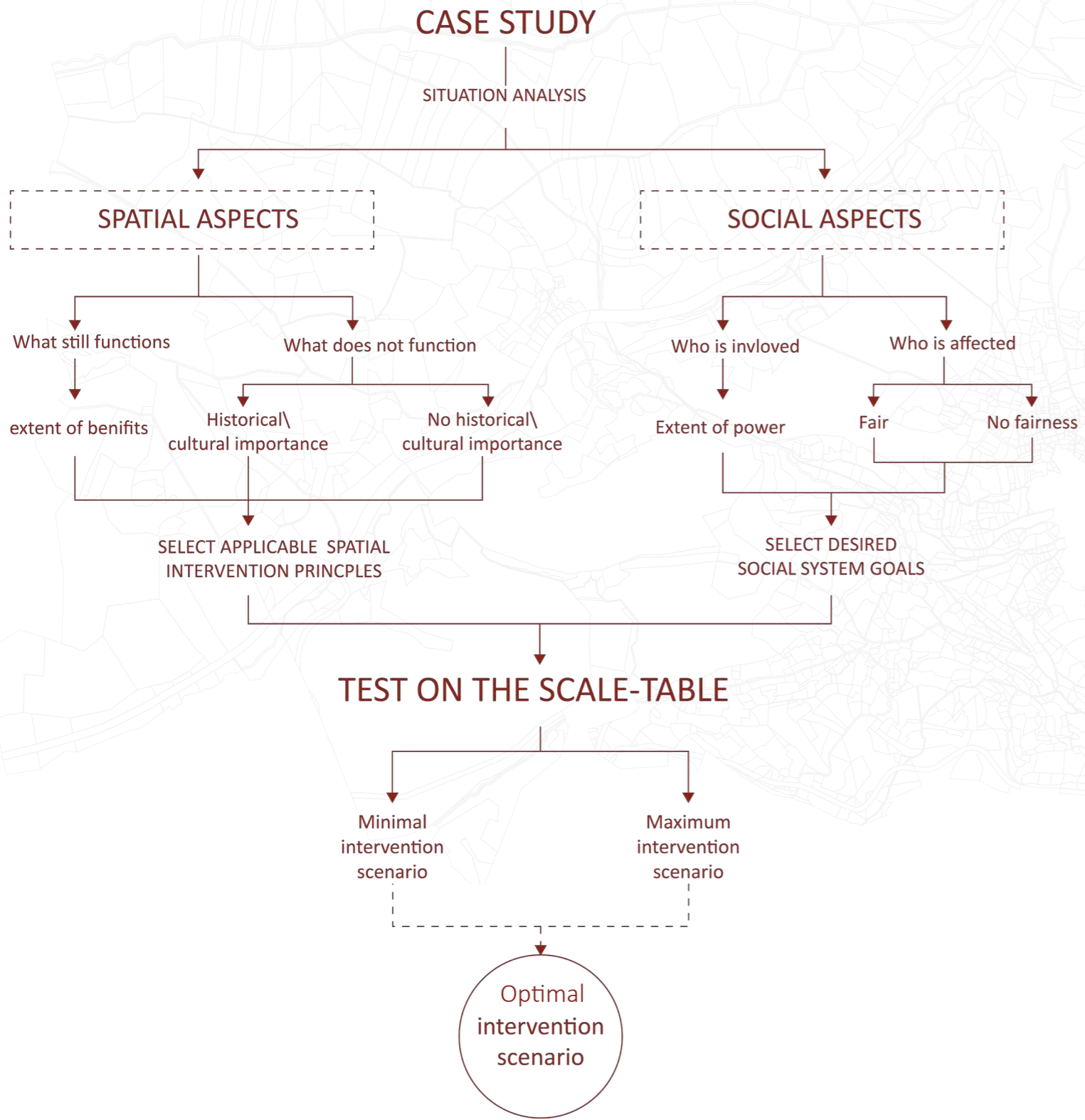


Figure 47. generating case study, created by author.

In order to connect the social and spatial design strategies, figure 47 is created.

In each case study an analysis of the situation should be conducted, this analysis focus is both social and spatial.

Spatial aspects are about asking the main question of does the current situation of the case study still functions or not, if it does then it is necessary to see to what extent in order to see if it will be in an abandoned situation or not.

Nonetheless, if it does not function that means it is abandoned and is a possibility to be rejuvenated. The historic and cultural importance will affect the selection of the most applicable spatial intervention principles.

Social aspects are examining the affected and the involved parties in the case study. Based on the

examination, the desired social systems goals are to be determined.

These goals will be translated spatially and connected to the intervention principles of the social aspects.

As soon as the principles and the goals of the social and spatial aspects are determined and connected, they will be tested on the scale table (figure 48).

The scale table will result in three designs which are the minimal design intervention, the maximal design intervention and the final outcome: the optimal design scenario.

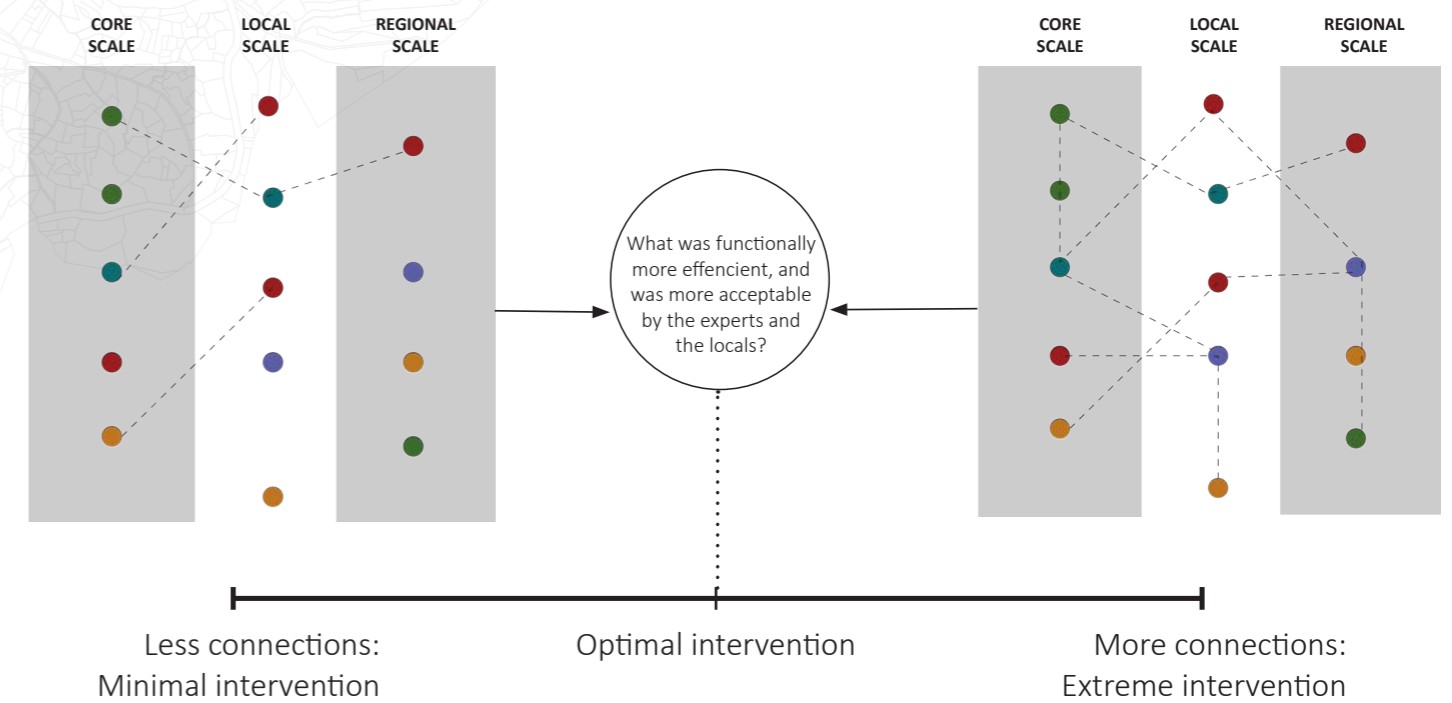


Figure 48 scale table, created by author.

3.7. FLEXIBLE STRATEGIES

FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS OF STRATEGIES IN DIFFERENT INTERVENTION LOCATIONS

As the city is growing and the life of the city is leaving the core for its expansions, people are also leaving their own houses for better life opportunities or to live in more safe and livable locations and as they leave, they leave abandoned buildings behind them that have no function and is taking space in the core. Another reason for abandoned buildings is either that they have been so old and unlivable, or that the owners of the house pass away and the building stays still but abandoned in bad condition.

This project aims to rejuvenate this core and make it livable and alive again with the help of these abandoned locations (figure 49), the locations are based on the field visits due to a lack of given data on the core.

It is important to state that in order to intervene in a location and generate strategies, it is important to investigate the location first because all these locations have different spatial characteristics and there are mostly sentimental stories behind them. Therefore it is essential to highlight the flexibility of the strategies based on each location and its story, the development of the rejuvenated network of the core is focusing on social and spatial systems that are open for change with time and stakeholders.



- Initial abandoned locations to generate strategies
- Abandoned locations for possible interventions

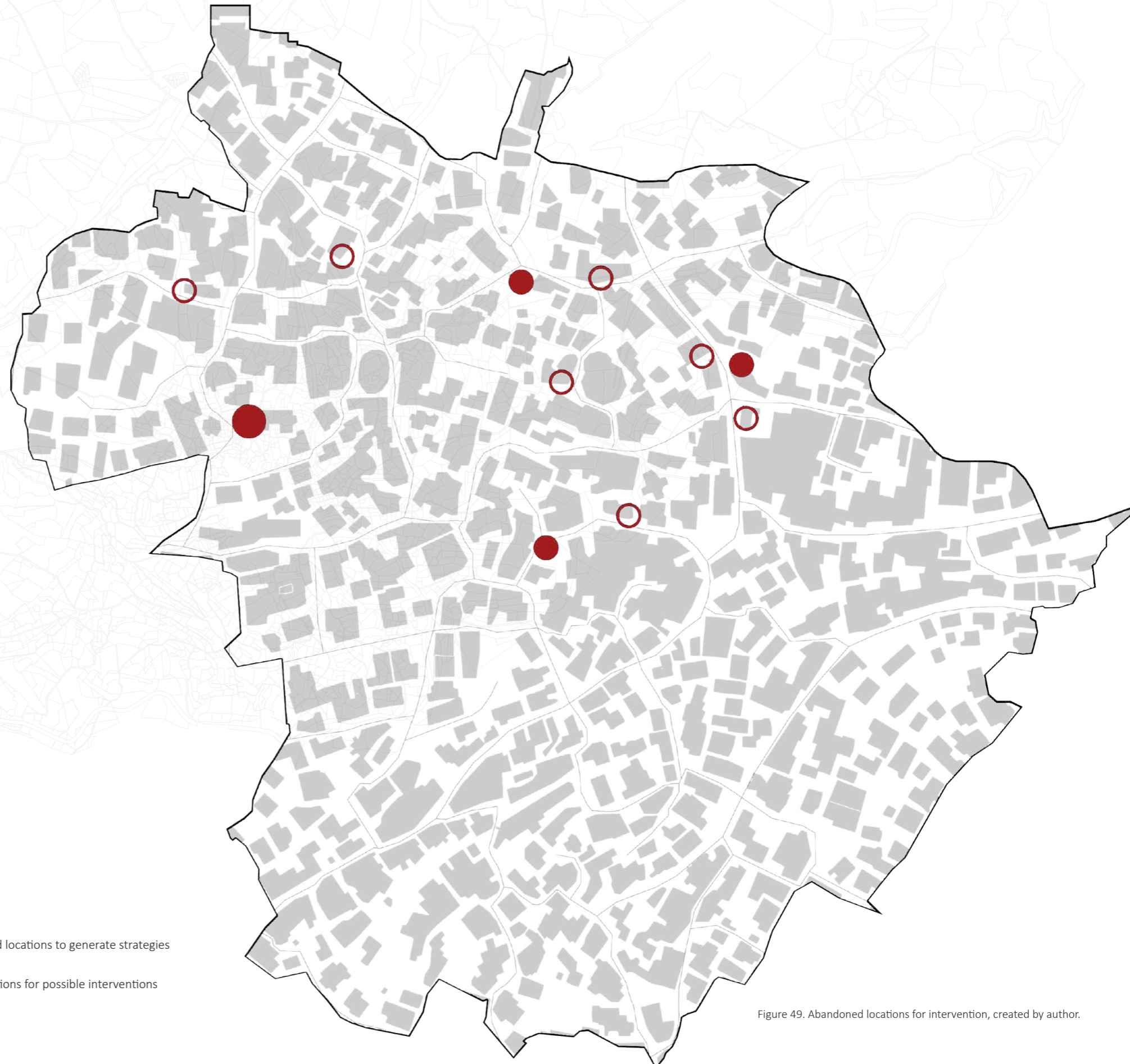


Figure 49. Abandoned locations for intervention, created by author.



4. PROPOSE

This chapter proposes four possible intervention locations, each in a different neighbourhood of the four neighborhoods. Then elaborates on one location to exhibit how the intervention strategies will be generated in an abandoned location and how it relates to the scale of the city and the country.

4.1. INTERVENTION LOCATIONS

FOUR ABANDONED BUILDINGS

There are several abandoned buildings in the core of Umm Al-Fahem, which are located in all four neighborhoods. For the design intervention, it is constructive if there are different case studies from all of the four neighborhoods (figure 51) of Agbaria, Jabareen, Mahameed, and Mahajna in order to accomplish the desired vision of this project which is a socially integrated and spatially accessible core. Each one of the intervention locations has a reason for it to be chosen as a case study:

Agbaria As mentioned in the problem field, the people of Umm Al-Fahem are overprotective of their space, and based on the interviews where it was asked not to “come and change anything”, it is most suitable to intervene and design a personal space, my great-grandfather’s old house in Agbaria. This will make people more accepting and open to the change I will tempt to implement as a person with personal relations and goals with the core.

Mahameed The location in Mahameed was formerly of high public importance. The public library of Iben Zaydoun was abandoned as a result of mice in the building which gave the municipality an option to move the library. This abandoned building has a high potential to continue serving the community of the people locally and possibly regionally.

Mahajna The historical abandoned building in Mahajna is accessible and has a strong spatial connection with Al-Madina street. The old structure of the building still exists and therefore has a high potential of being declared a landmark. The location of this building is an advantage because it overlooks Umm Al-Fahem from a high point.

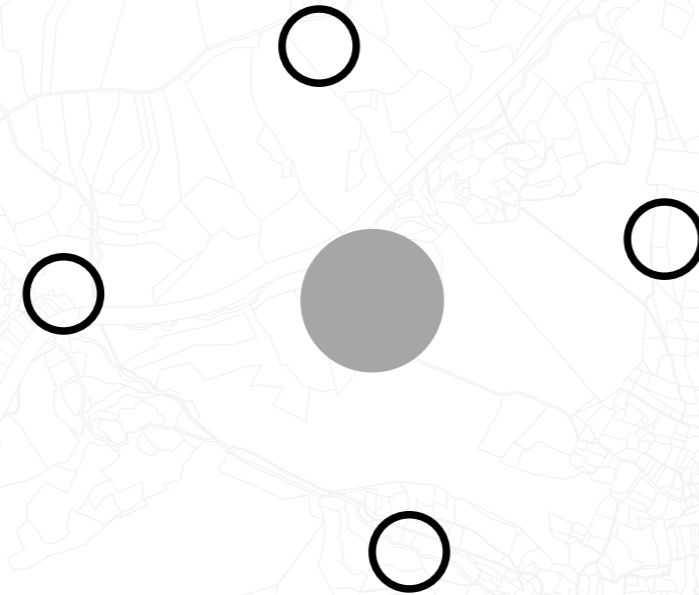


Figure 50. urban center and four buildings, created by author.

Jabareen this location was the hardest to locate due to safety reasons and the fact that the people who live in Jabareen demolished their old buildings and build new ones instead. This abandoned building is hidden and is the closest to the rest of the chosen buildings.

The old municipality center The goal is to rejuvenate the core of Umm Al-Fahem, the core has four neighborhoods that are connected at one location: the old municipality. This location could function as a connection and as an urban center that helps achieve the rejuvenation process of the core.

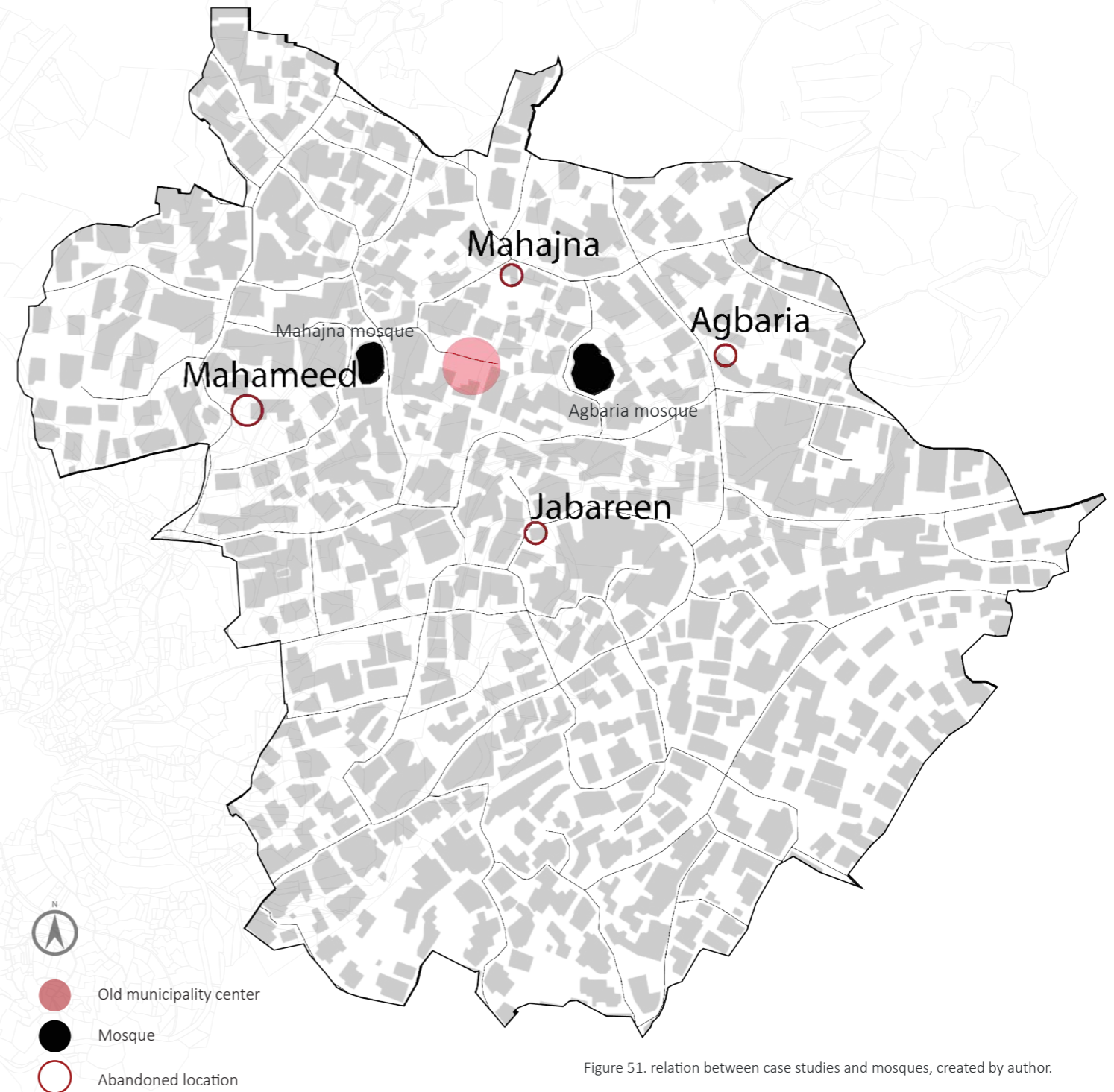


Figure 51. relation between case studies and mosques, created by author.



4.1. INTERVENTION LOCATIONS

NETWORK OF REJUVENATION

The old municipality center is crucial for rejuvenating the core of Umm Al-Fahem due to its location, previous function, and relatively large open space declaring it as an urban center. The location of the old municipality center is in the center of the core between all the selected four locations (figure 52), giving it the potential function as the center of the rejuvenation network. Moreover, the abandoned location requires to be connected along with the old municipality center (figure x) in order to create a successful network, and that is possible by highlighting the pathways between the intervention locations and the old municipality center.

This visual connection between the Mahajna and Agbaria mosques with the old municipality center and the surrounding (figure 53) to demonstrate as a movement guideline. This visual guideline gives the feeling of continuity and connectivity to the users of the core, making it easier to recognize where they are at and the possibilities of further movements in the core.

The rejuvenation of the abandoned locations and connecting them spatially, functionally, and visually with the help of the Agbaria and Mahajna mosques leads to a network of rejuvenation that generate the goal of this project.

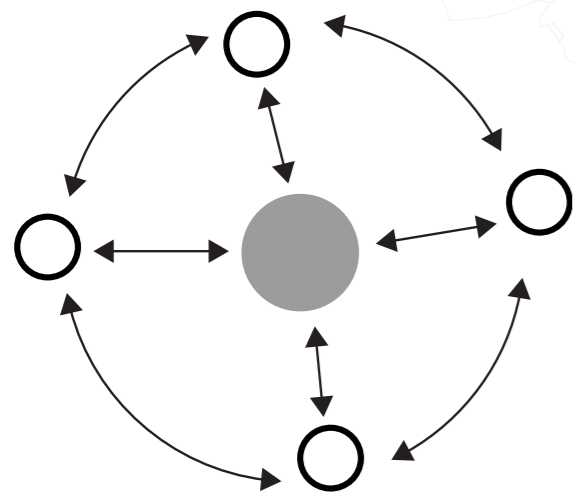


Figure 52. Connecting the urban center and four buildings, created by author.



VISUAL CONNECTION WITH MOSQUES FROM OLD MUNICIPALITY CENTER

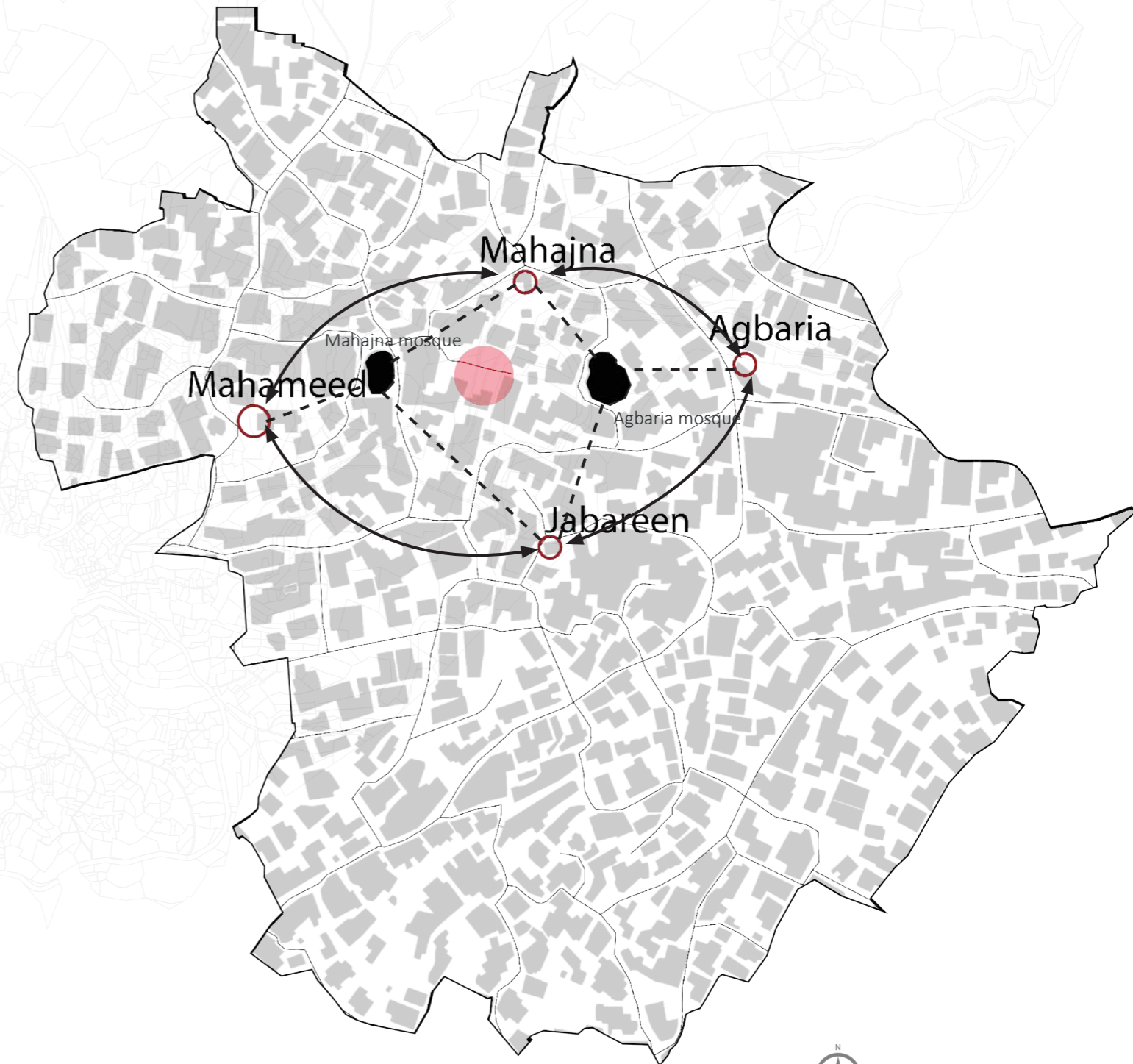
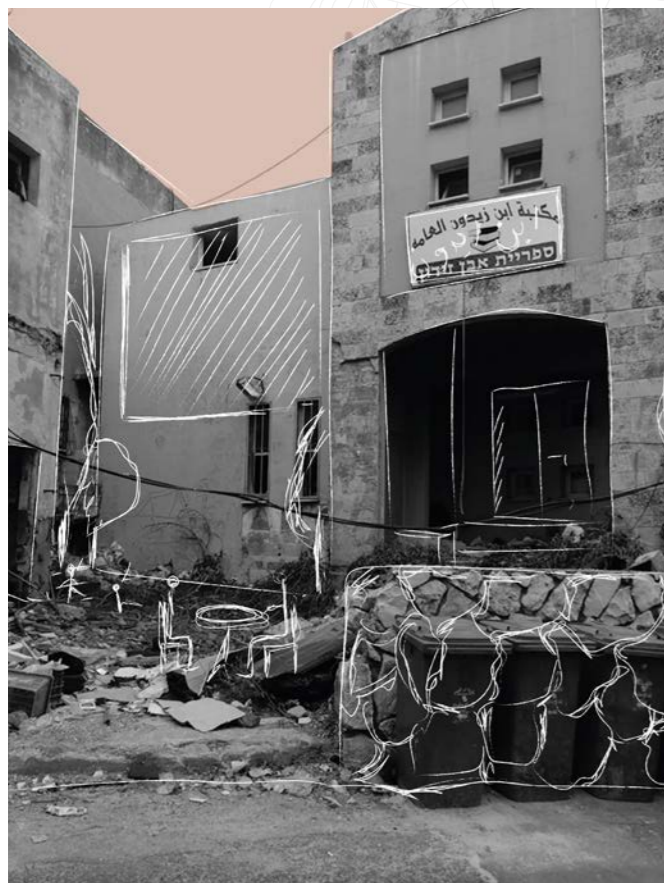


Figure 53. Network of locations, created by author.

- N
- Old municipality center
- Mosque
- Abandoned location
- Visual connection
- Functional connection

4.1. INTERVENTION LOCATIONS

POTENTIAL INTERVENTION FUNCTIONS PER LOCATION



Mahameed: Ibin Zaydoun Cinema سينما ابن زيدون
Function: Local Cinema-Art gallery *Keyword:* Creativity

As the previous central library, already has an identifying name: Ibin Zeydoun, and to keep the identity of the location and to make it recognizable it is important to keep the name. As Dwairy mentions in his book, it is important to give the new generations a tool to express and connect by creativity, therefore the function of the location is a place to show the new generations expressing their identity with the help of an art gallery with an outdoor movie wall that gathers different groups of locals and tourists to enhance social integration. The location is on the edge of the core, therefore will be accessible by public transportations.

Advanced potential: To enhance creativity and due to the lack of educational functions in the core, the nearby abandoned building is to be used as a school for creativity in the long term.

Stakeholder: The municipality and ministry of education and ministry of transportation have an overpowering hand in the development of this location. Locals and NGOs are the users that will keep the social aspects effective and integrated.



Agbaria: Core Market السوق الفوقاني
Function: Local market *Keyword:* Connectivity

As locals complain how the life of the core went to Al-Madina street, bringing a local market that will attract more visitors and the economic life back to the core is essential.

Advanced potential: Possible further expansion of the function in other neighboring abandoned spaces around it. Therefore the market would grow with time and give a stronger spatial and social advantage to the core.

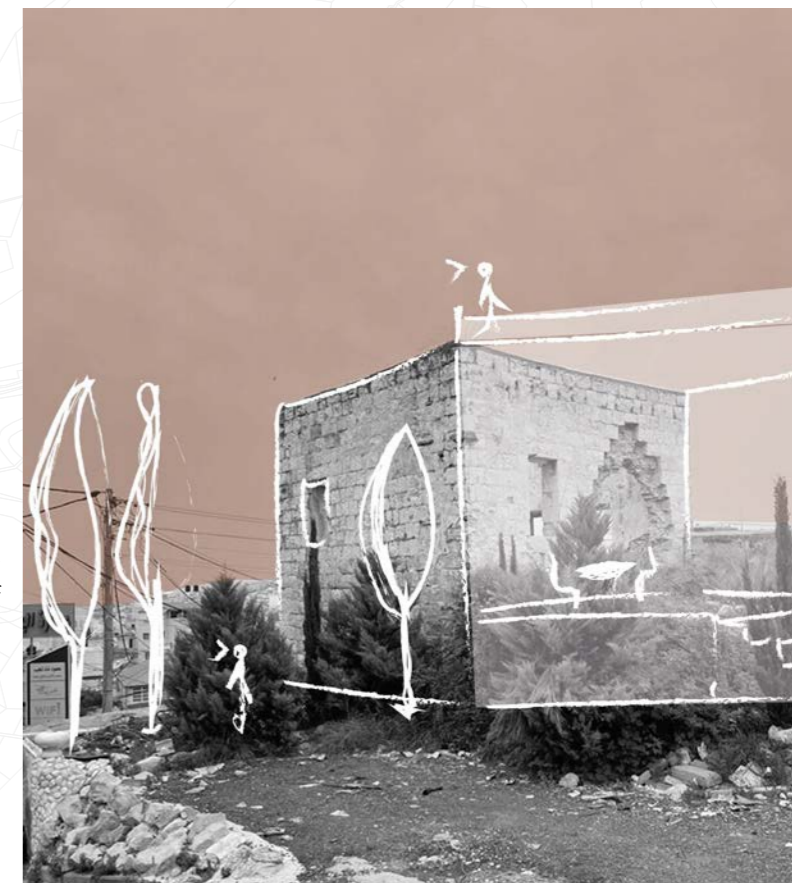
Stakeholders: the municipality will create a spatial connection to this market, and the locals will use this market all seasons of the year to advance their economic situation and to strengthen the socially integrated identity of the location.

Mahajna: Umm Al-Fahem Eye عين البلد
Function: Cafe-library *Keyword:* Inviting

The location of Mahajna has historical and cultural importance, it has the strongest direct connection with Al-Madina street which is a benefit of various scales of the development. The location is situated on a high level of the mountain that overviews the city and previously it viewed the wadi, which was a benefit during the British mandate era. Therefore this location is the Eye of the city and can function as a cafe-library that is inviting both locals and tourists to visit and bring importance to the core.

Advanced potential: on the long term, this cafe-library can use the surrounding buildings as part of keeping the culture and highlighting the core of the city.

Stakeholders: Cultural institutions and private enterprises benefit from the given functions and use the space as a way to connect people, the municipality will use this space for advertising the city and therefore benefiting the economic situation of the city and further develop the core.



Jabareen: City heaven الفردوس البلد
Function: Woman and child center *Keyword:* Safety

The location of Jabareen is a more private location that is relatively the least accessible from Al-Madina commercial street, therefore a more guarded function is needed. As the core needs safety and a location for women to grow and connect while watching their children in the private park of the location, this location has limited accessibility in general and it could socially benefit from this limitation.

Advanced potential: Nearby open spaces are to be used as extra private parks to create the urban network of safety in the core.

Stakeholders: Local community associations and NGOs will join along with the municipality to benefit the development of the location, the women and younger generations of the city will make use of this space to insure social safety and integration.





4.2. MAHAJNA

“ This old house resembles our history and heritage, but they just want to destroy it as if it has no value”

Nedaa Kiwan (in the picture) - interviewed by author

4.2. MAHAJNA

DESIGN INTERVENTION IN MAHAJNA- DOCUMENTATION

Photos 4, 5 credit: Moataz Agbaria
Photos 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8 credits : Zahra Agbaria

The example case study of the abandoned house in the Mahajna neighborhood is the first location to be intervened in to rejuvenate the core of Umm Al-Fahem.

The municipality currently has plans to demolish the existing parts of the building in order to make parking (interview with Nedaa Mahameed).

The first step to examining the extent of interventions is to present documentation of the location that overviews Umm Al-Fahem and beyond, followed by spatial analysis of the location on a smaller scale.

Afterward, the goals of the social system and the spatial system principles will be identified and placed in the scale table to be connected to create each intervention scenario. The minimal and extreme scenarios help choose the ideal scenario of the location.

Photo 2: View from abandoned building



Photo 1: Overview on old building



Photo 3: Mosque view from location



Photo 4: Abandoned building facade



Photo 5: Entering abandoned building



Photo 6: North view in the building



Photo 7: South view in the building



Photo 8: East view in the building



4.2. MAHAJNA

SPATIAL INVESTIGATION

The Mahajna location is not only culturally and historically important but also has strong spatial features that define the location as a possible connection on a larger scale.

To have a better understanding of the spatial qualities of the location, it is crucial to conduct a spatial investigation to conclude possibilities for further spatial developments.

Connection with the other intervention locations: Figure 54 elaborates on showing the spatial connection between the other intervention locations, it shows which streets to use in order to connect between the locations and how they are situated in relation to the old municipality and the two nearby mosques.

The map concludes a strong direct spatial connection between the locations which is a spatial advantage for the rejuvenation of the core.

Map 1: Functions

The buildings in the core are mainly housing and some have a commercial facade on the ground floor, giving the street an atmosphere of public use. Two other buildings around the location of Mahajna are abandoned and in a condition for possible re-use.

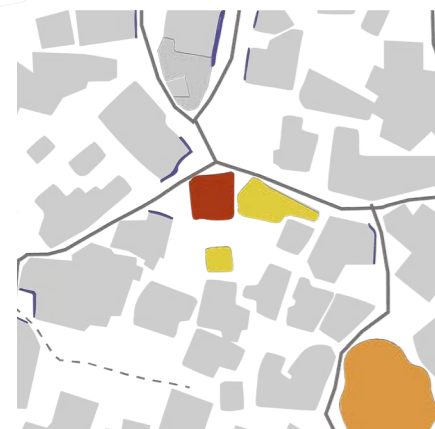
Map 2: Open spaces

The location of Mahajna includes open space and the old municipality center space in direct connection, another open space on the north side of the location that is separated by a street and on a different topographic level than the location.

Map 3: Movement directions

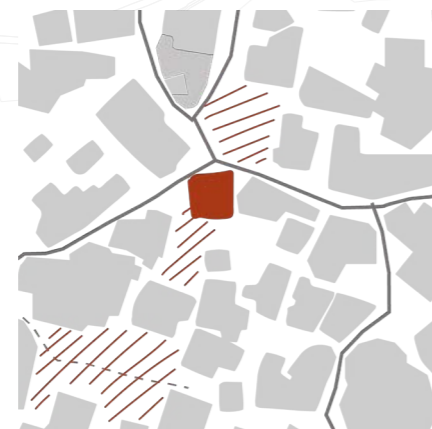
The location is on the corner of two streets that connect with a third in the continuation of the streets. Each of the streets currently has one direction as shown on map 3. Which is a spatial disadvantage for the location.

Map 1



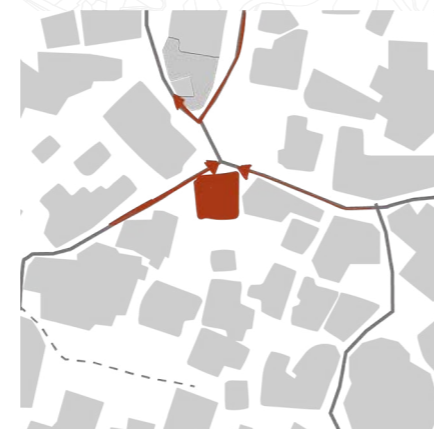
- Surrounding abandoned buildings
- Mosque
- Commercial

Map 2

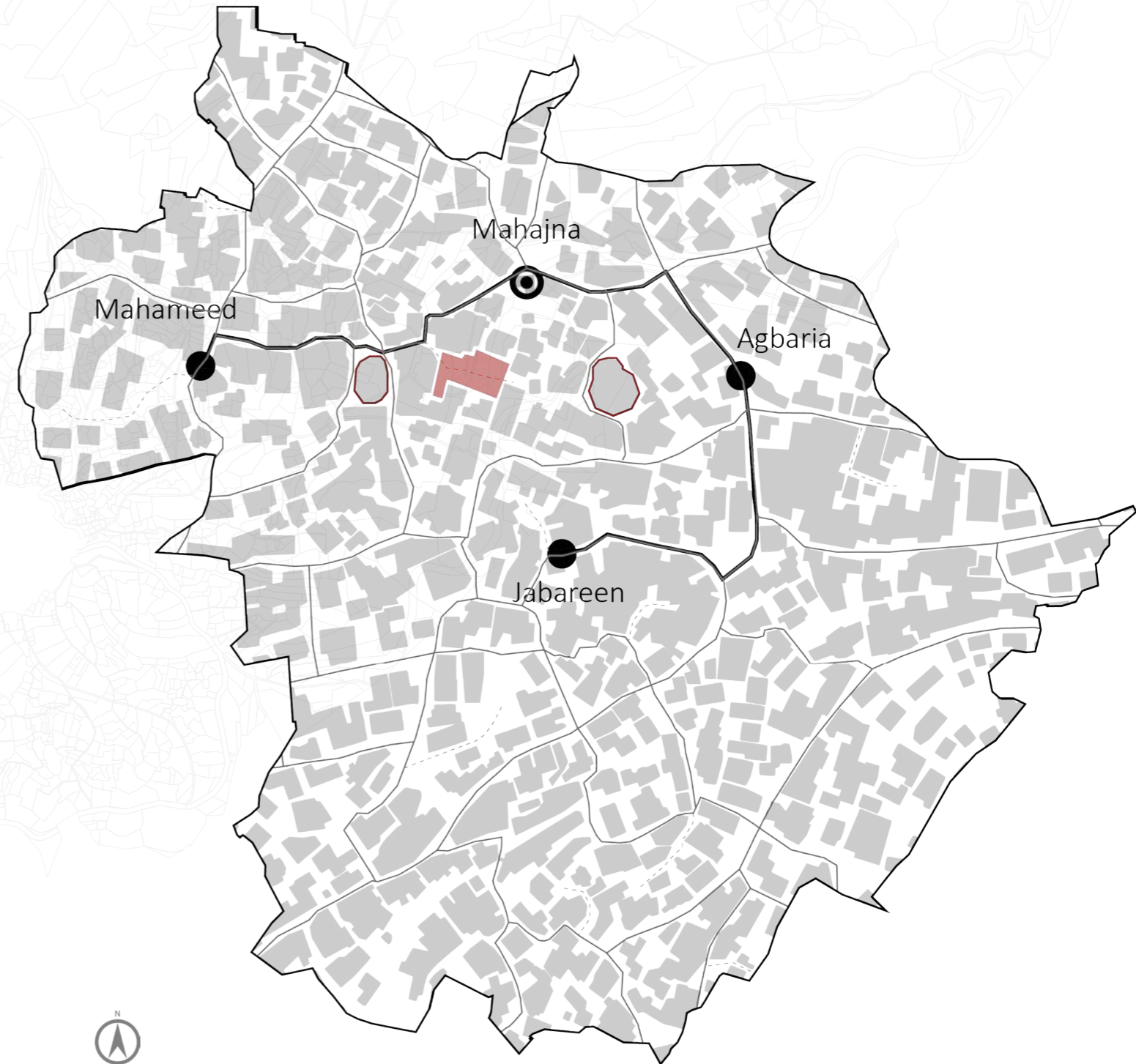


- Open space

Map 3



- Street direction



- Abandoned locations
- Mahajna
- Old municipality center
- Mosque

Figure 54. Connection with the surrounding functions, created by author.

4.2. MAHAJNA

Connection with Al-Madina Street

Al-Madina street is the socio-economic center of Umm Al-Fahem, it is the main street where all people meet no matter which family they come from or what they work, or where they live within the city. It is a direct spatial connector between the core and the regional street 65, therefore it is a strong asset to the core for connection on different scales.

The Mahajna location is the closest spatially to Al-Madina street than the other abandoned locations that this project used as initial intervention locations to rejuvenate the core of Umm Al-Fahem.

Figure 55 displays both the visual connection between the Mahajna intervention location and the end of Al-Madina street and the direct street connection between them. There is a gap between the visual extent of both Al-Madina street and the Mahajna location, but the direct street between the two is the connector to complete the connection puzzle. This project will elaborate on further possible ways to enhance this connection.

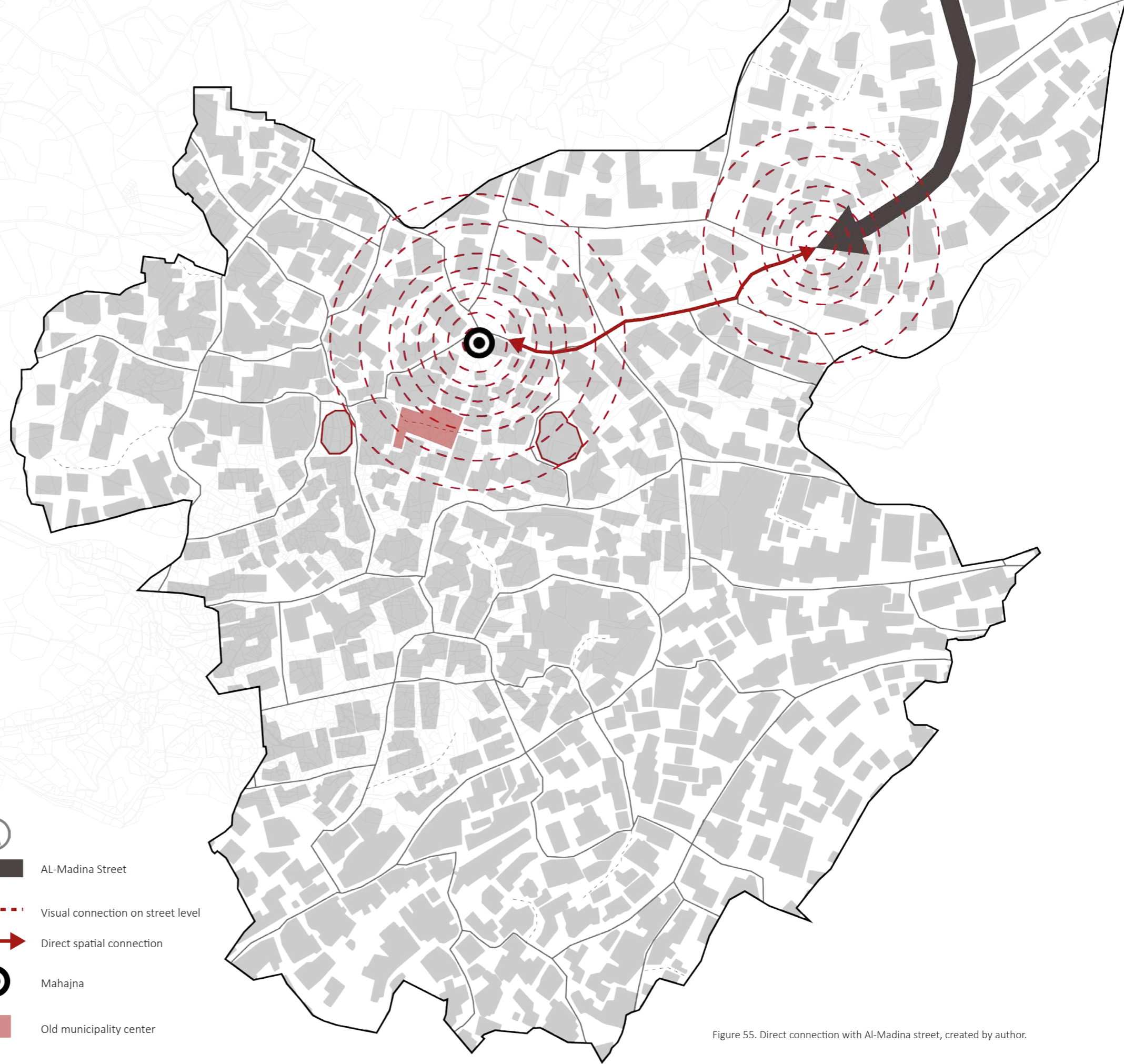
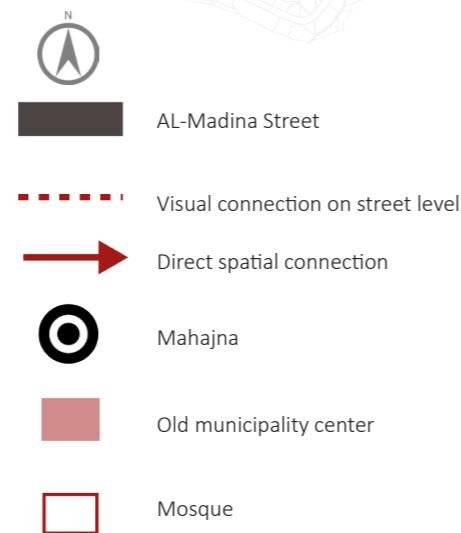
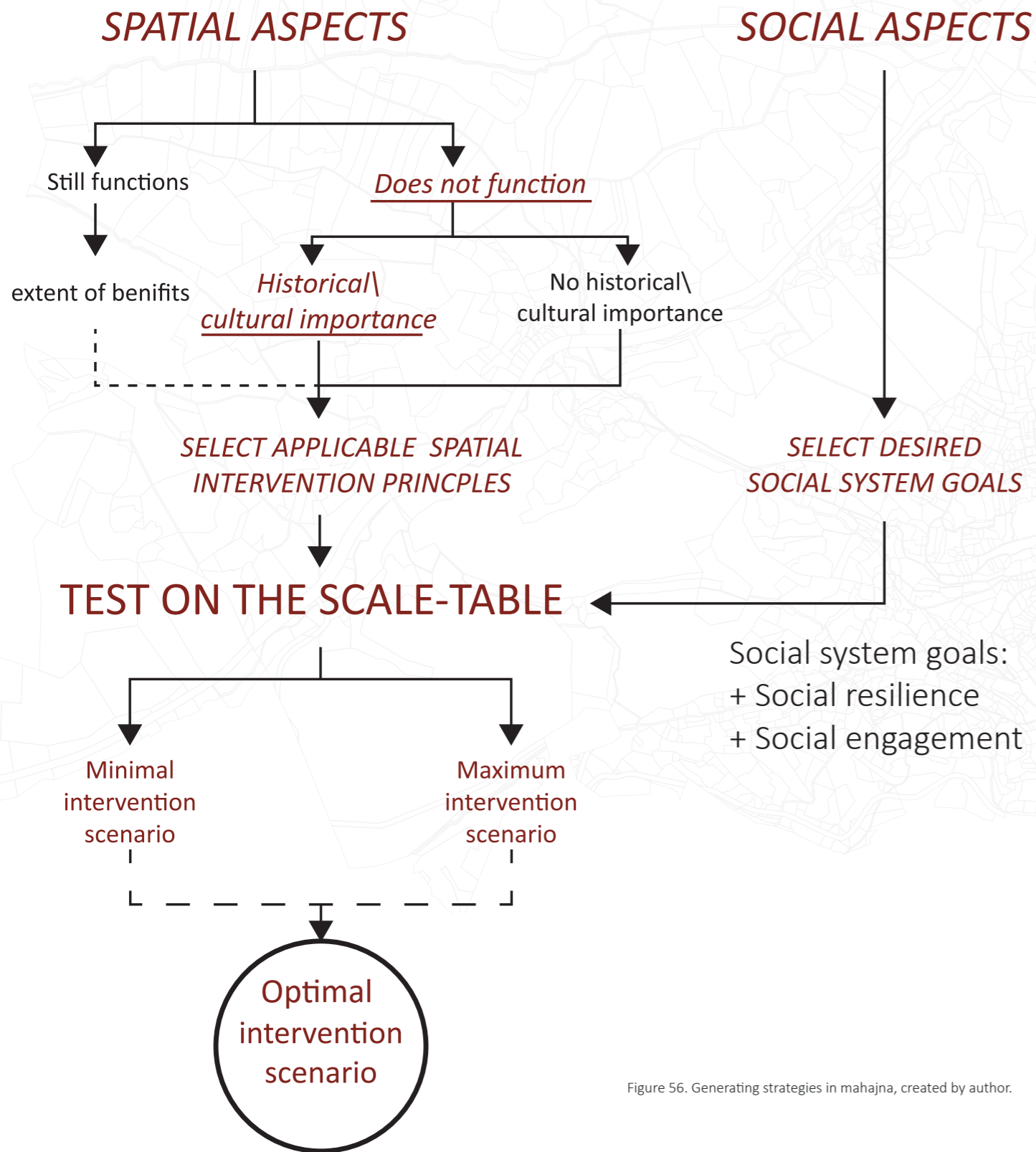


Figure 55. Direct connection with Al-Madina street, created by author.

4.2. MAHAJNA

GENERATING STRATEGIES



Generating the strategies is examining both the social and spatial aspects of the location (figure 56).

Spatial aspects:

- The location currently does NOT function therefore it is applicable for intervention.
- The location HAS both historic and cultural importance, therefore IF it is possible to keep the structural Identity of the location.

Social aspects:

- The location of Mahajna has historic and cultural importance, and locals see it as an iconic location for the city of Umm Al-Fahem (based on interviews) which focuses on the psychology of the people. And it is currently threatening the safety of the people in the late times of the day because it is abandoned therefore the location will be key for urban safety. The desired intervention function of the location could enhance equal access for all gender, ages, and cultures. As a result: Social resilience is the social goal for Mahajna.

- The desired function of the location aims to encourage social engagement by recognizing the lack of diversity and social integration in the core and enhancing social functions and participatory actions with the assistance of the intervention function in the location. As a result: Social engagement is another desired social goal for Mahajna.

Each intervention scenario (minimal and extreme) can generate various possible spatial strategies that are applicable and flexible with the chosen location and the desired function. As the social strategies are translated spatially, the social strategies are also added as part of the intervention strategies in each scenario.

The scale table will determine the optimal intervention strategies and therefore the optimal intervention scenario of the Mahajna location and will be elaborated on in the rest of the chapter.

Figure 56. Generating strategies in mahajna, created by author.

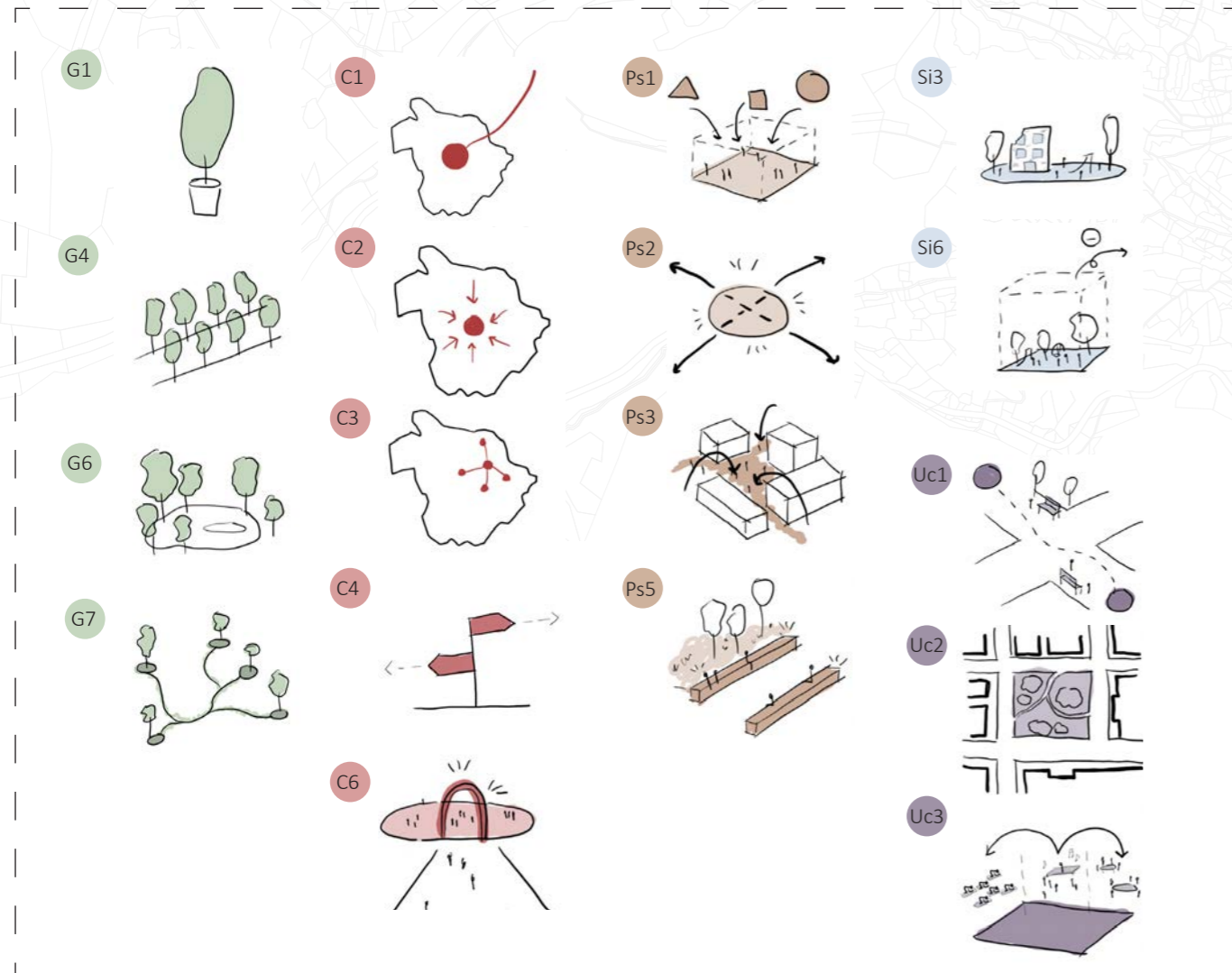
4.3. EXTREME INTERVENTION

GENERATING STRATEGIES

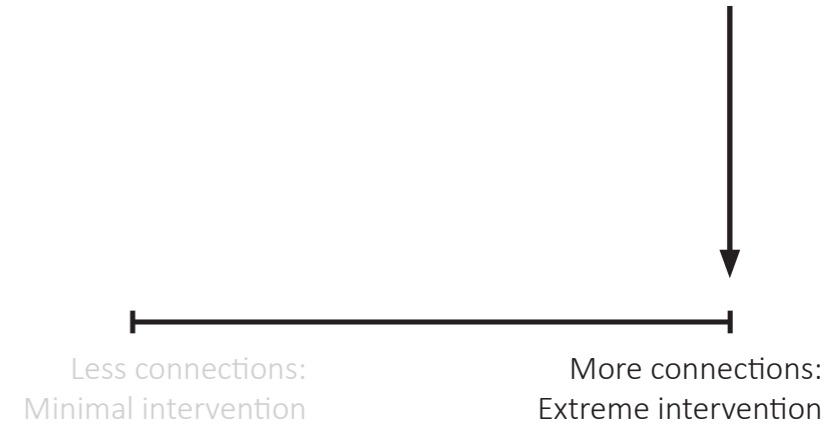
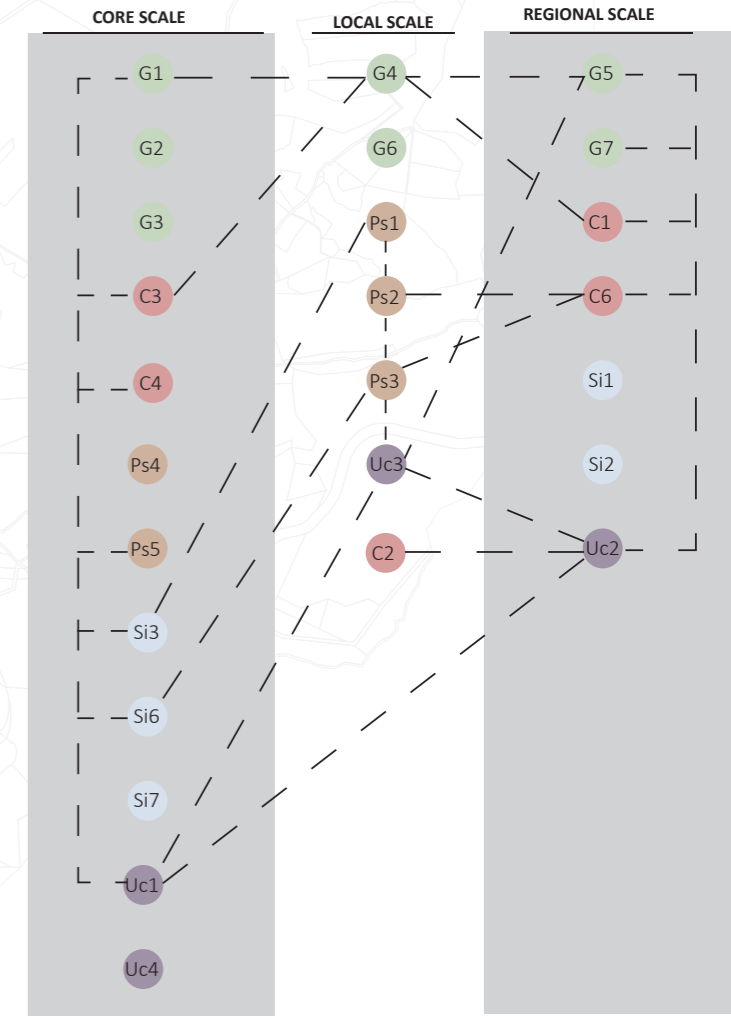
The green infrastructure strategies in the location of Mahajna can help the location function as a crucial and large green network (G7), the location will be an open park (G5) that is connected with the green network via the green corridors (G4). A connection with Al-Madina street and the old municipality center (C1,2) will create a series of movements in the location, with a connection to a nearby abandoned location (C3). Wayfinding (C4) and the open realm (C6) are the indicators for users toward the open space. The connection with the municipality center will allow these two

nearby open spaces to open for public use by being flexible (Ps1) with the positive volume (Ps3), these spaces also respond to time and availability (Uc2) strategies. while the continuity connects with the wayfinding strategy and the green corridor and placing simple locations to sit (Ps5) is a helpful method for the reward strategy.

There are several strategies and several connections between them on different scales, therefore this is considered an extreme intervention and needs to be tested in a scenario.



- G1- Green in pots
- G4- Green corridor
- G5- Open park
- G7- Green network connection
- C1- Connection with Al-Madina street
- C2- Connection with old municipality center
- C3- Connection with other abandoned locations
- C4- Way finding
- C6- Open realm
- Ps1- Flexibility
- Ps2- Continuity
- Ps3- Positive volume
- Ps5- If it fits, it sits
- Si3- Open
- Si6- Demolish
- Uc1- Reward
- Uc2- Availability
- Uc3- Respond to time



4.3. EXTREME INTERVENTION

MAPPING NETWORK

Implementing the strategies for the extreme scenario requires an initial understanding of the qualities of the location, the strengths and the weaknesses.

As the extreme intervention implicates that there is an open green park with the strategy of demolish (Si6) and keeping open (Si3). Therefore an extreme scenario will be based on these strategies and the information about the intent of the municipality to demolish the historic abandoned building.

The extreme scenario for the Eye of Umm Al-Fahem will be to demolish the Historic building indeed and make it an open green park. This demolition is extreme because it means erasing the identity of the city and losing a possible cultural landmark.

In the network map of the extreme scenario on the right, the green corridor is connecting the old municipality center with the new open park in the location.



4.3. EXTREME INTERVENTION



Section A-A EXTREME

The extreme intervention was translated by deleting the existence of the historic structure and creating a public park instead.

The initial idea is for the location to be considered as the visual eye of Umm Al-Fahem that overlooks the rest of the city and the surrounding mountains, the function of an open park is an inviting function that strengthens socialization and a tool for the users to create a new identity connection with the surrounding and the location.

EXTREME INTERVENTION



4.4. MINIMAL INTERVENTION

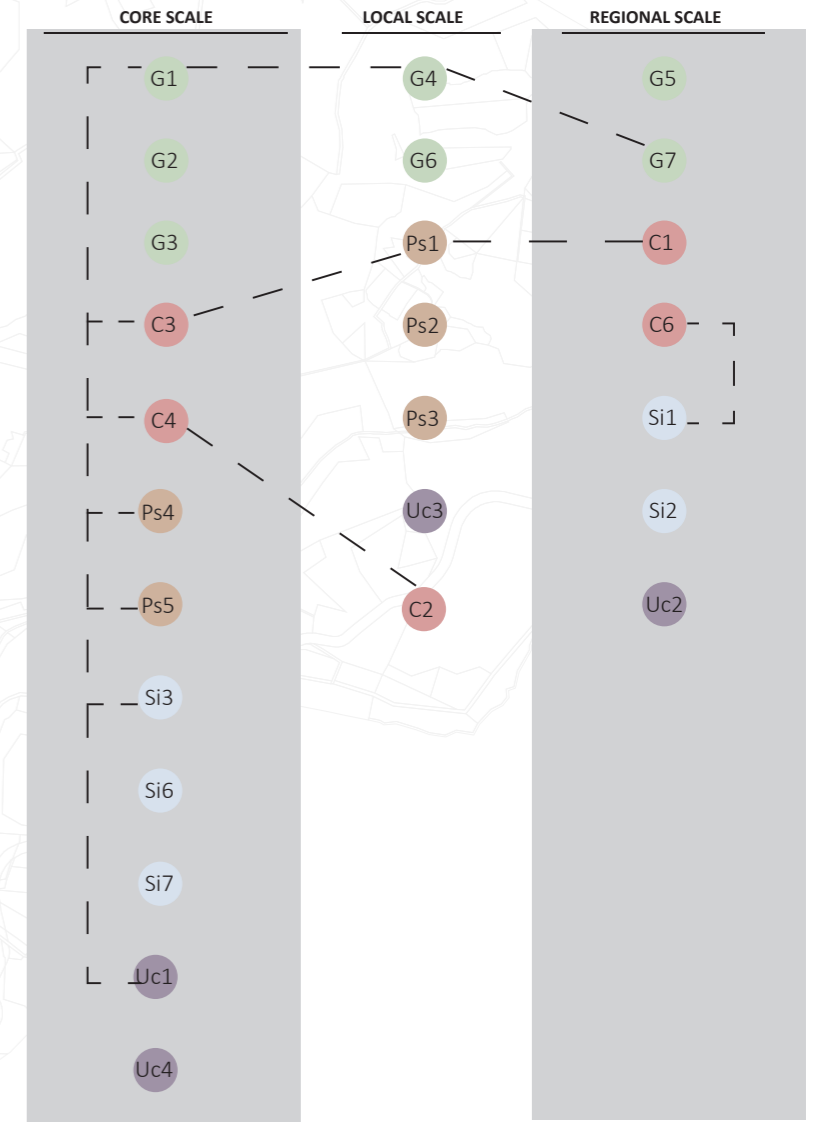
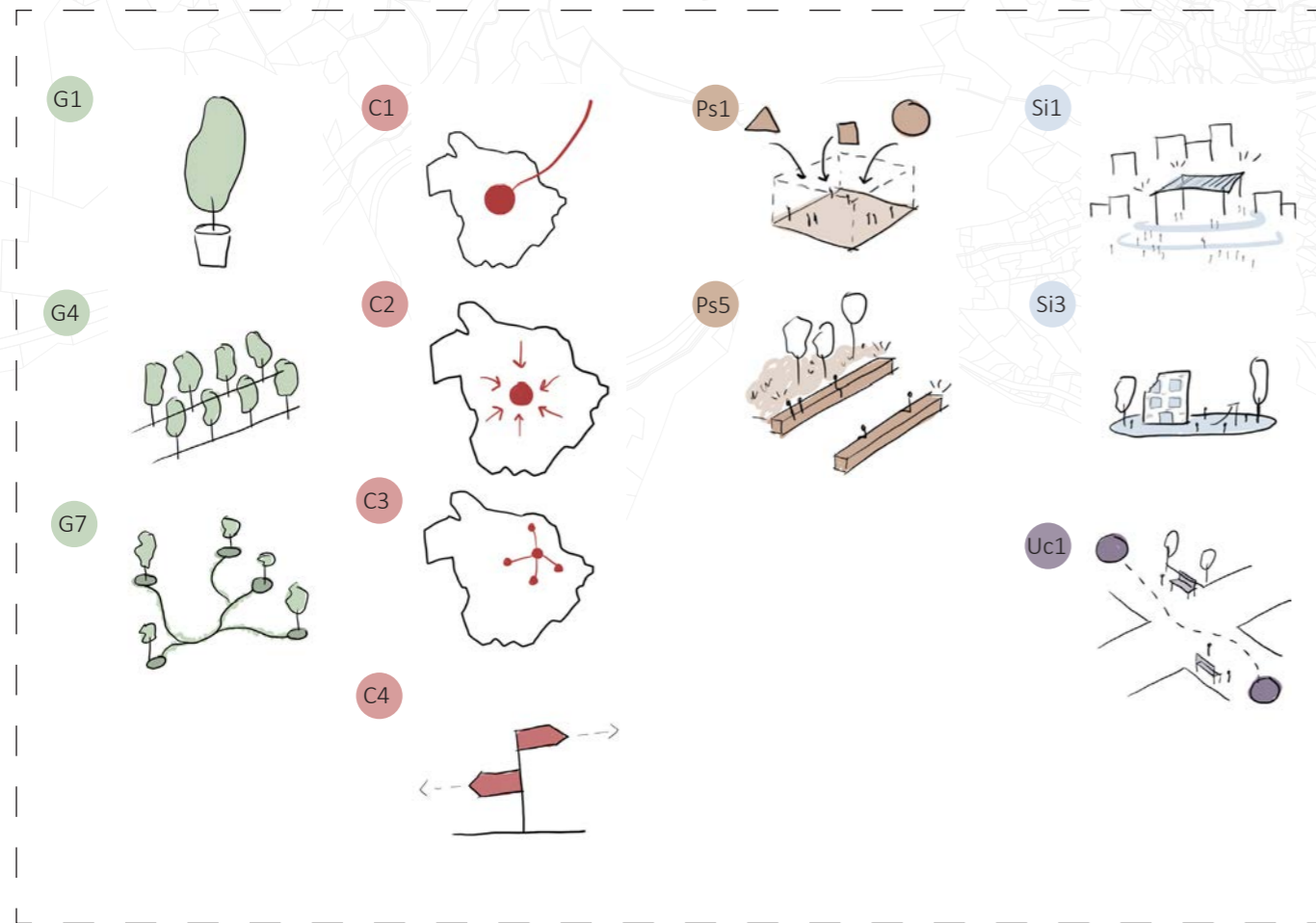
GENERATING STRATEGIES

The green infrastructure strategies green corridor (G4) and Green network connection (G7) connect with the connectivity strategies connection with Al-Madina street (C1), connection with the old municipality center (C2), and connection with other abandoned locations (C3).

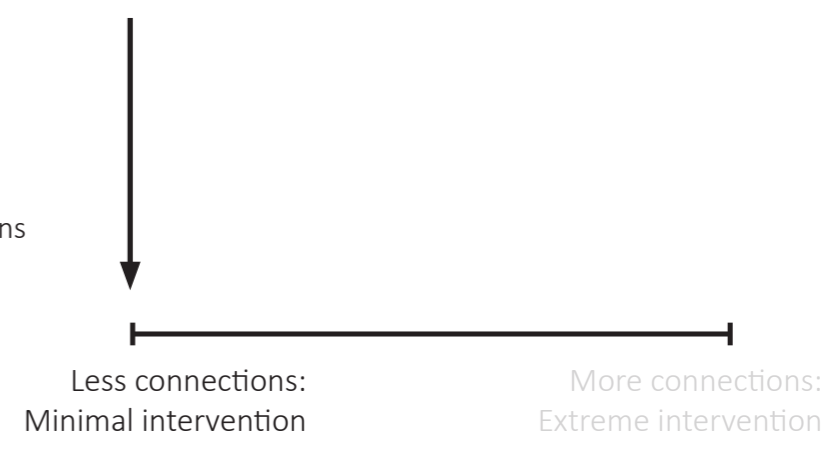
The place not space strategy, if it fits it sits (Ps5) and urban center strategy (UC1) are connected on the core scale. The minimal approach is to proceed with the structural identity strategy (Si3) by keeping the location open and declaring it a landmark (Si1).

The connection between the strategies is based on the core scale, which means that most of the interventions are changing on a small scale with minimal effect.

The stakeholders of these interventions are mostly locals that can make flexible changes in these strategies.



- G1- Green in pots
- G4- Green corridor
- G7- Green network connection
- C1- Connection with Al-Madina street
- C2- Connection with old municipality center
- C3- Connection with other abandoned locations
- C4- Way finding
- Ps1- Flexibility
- Ps5- If it fits, it sits
- Si1- Architectural landmark
- Si3- Open
- Uc1- Reward



4.4. MINIMAL INTERVENTION

MAPPING INTERVENTION

As the minimal intervention has the least strategies and the least connections between them, the space of the Mahajna location does not change drastically.

Declaring the abandoned building as a landmark(Si1) establishes the fact that the historic cultural importance is to be preserved.

The connection of the location with Al-Madina street and the old municipality center is via the green corridor (G4) and the green network connection(G3). The new landmark is a structural reward in this intervention.

Even though this is considered a minimal spatial intervention, it has extreme social dimensions as people are emotionally and mentally connected to this location. The open space of the location is used as a park that is part of the green urban network.



4.4. MINIMAL INTERVENTION



Section A-A Minimal

Declaring the structure of the abandoned building as an architectural landmark is the most minimal intervention possible for the location in Mahajna.

This strong identity is translated into preservation that attracts the locals to mentally connect with the space and make it a place, is also offering an open space that is used as a green park for people to use for socializing and integrating.

MINIMAL INTERVENTION



4.5. OPTIMAL INTERVENTION

GENERATING STRATEGIES

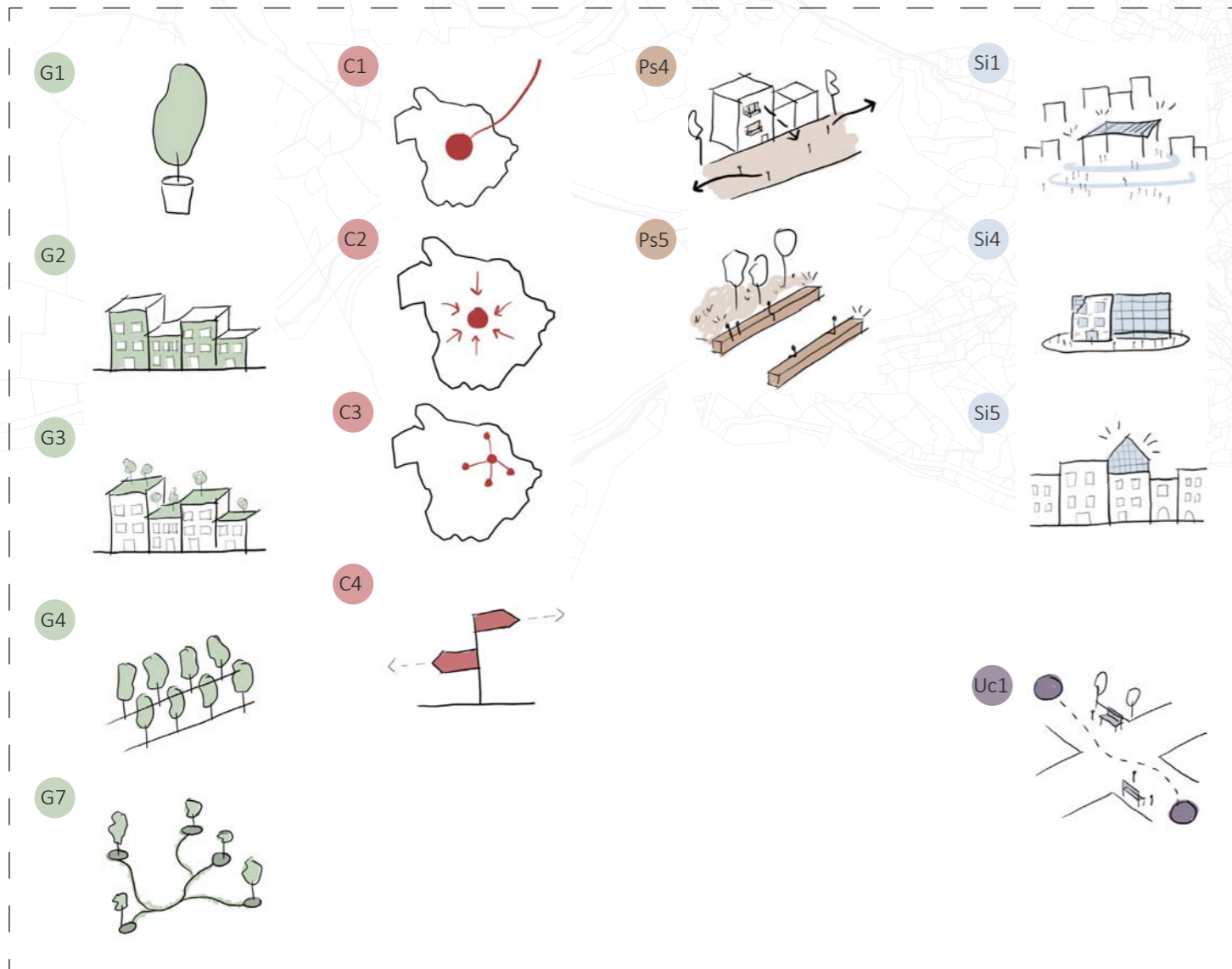
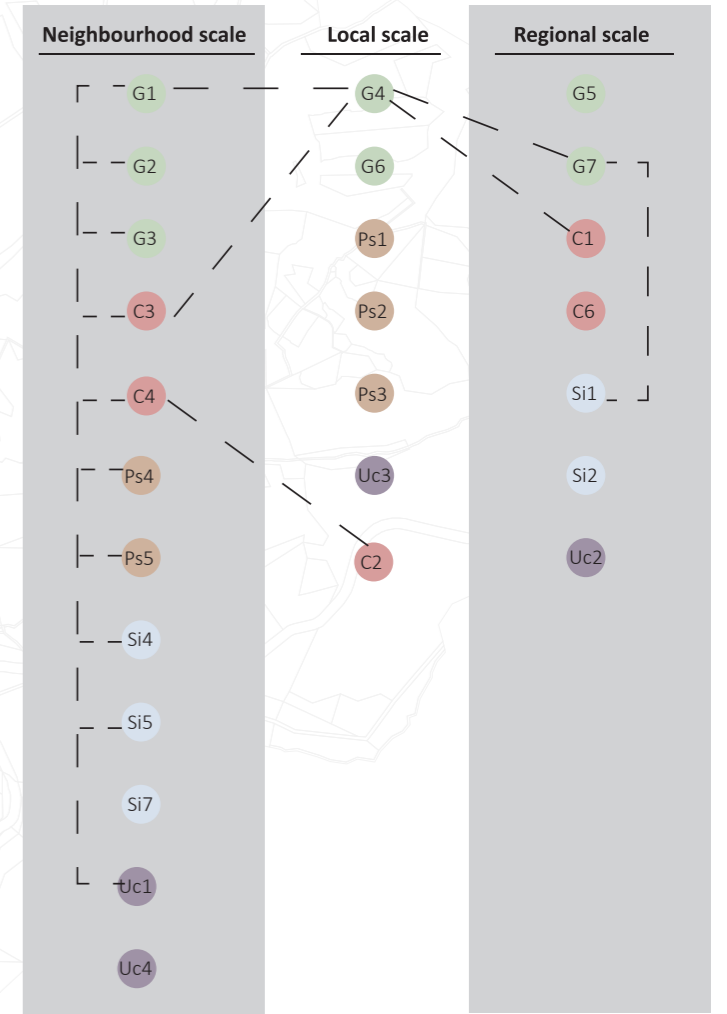
The complexity of the optimal intervention lies with the fact that it is important to keep the identity of the location and enhance it, but to develop the location to be highlighted and important on the different scales also.

As seen in the minimal and extreme strategies, there is a number of strategies that were repeated in both interventions that are functionally efficient to the location and important to the locals: G1, G4, G7, C1, C2,

C3, C4, Ps5, Uc1. These strategies highlight and connect the intervention on all three different scales.

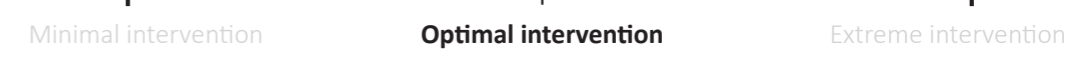
The structural identity (Si4) states to close the existing structure and the (Si5) strategy is to add extra character visibility which can associate with extra green infrastructure strategies of the green facade (G2), green roof(G3), and the see and be seen(Ps4) strategy if the intent is to build higher.

A strategy that is an important social advantage for the intervention location is declaring the abandoned building as a landmark (Si1).



- G1- Green in pots
- G2- Green facade
- G3- Green roof
- G4- Green corridor
- G7- Green network connection
- C1- Connection with Al-Madina street
- C2- Connection with old municipality center
- C3- Connection with other abandoned locations
- C4- Way finding
- Ps4- See and be seen
- Ps5- If it fits, it sits
- Si1- Architectural landmark
- Si4- Close
- Si5- Character visibility
- Uc1- Reward

What was functionally more efficient, and was more acceptable by the experts and the locals?



4.5. OPTIMAL INTERVENTION

MAPPING NETWORK

The optimal intervention is highlighting the advantages of the minimal intervention and the extreme intervention, and completing what are the missing strategies from these interventions in order to rejuvenate this core to be socially integrated and spatially accessible.

The strategy for closing the abandoned building and giving it character visibility, as seen in the network map on the right, is to give the location a stronger presence in space. The connected structures are directed to the North, which connects to the originality and history of this building as an observer for enemies coming from the valley towards the village- now the core.

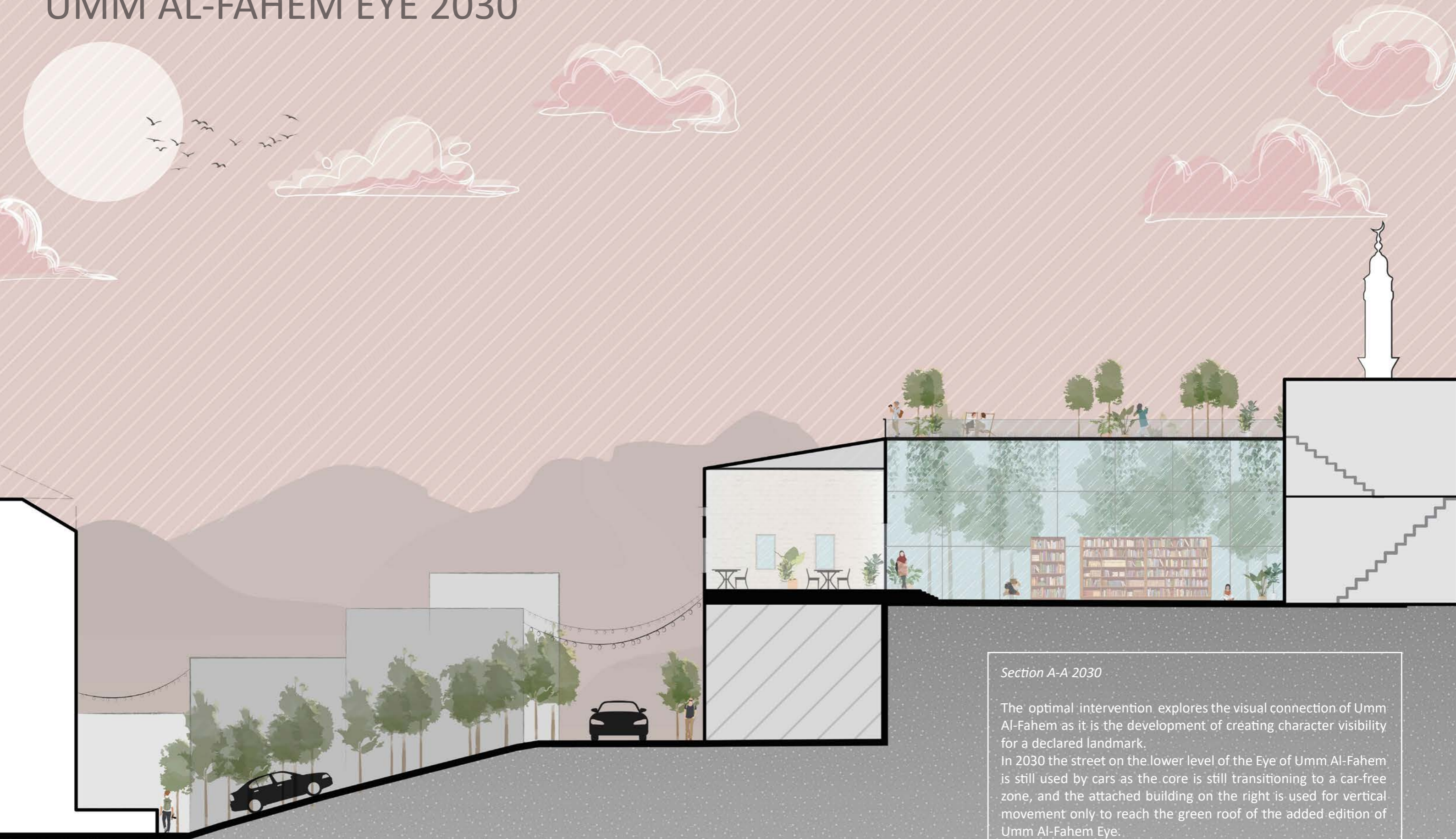
Also in the optimal intervention, the connection with Al-Madina street and the old municipality center is via a green network and path indicator.

The new rejuvenating function of the Mahajna location, Umm Al-Fahem Eye, is a mini cafe library in combination with a cultural exhibition, which is an inviting function for both locals and tourists.

The social dimension of Umm Al-Fahem Eye is extending in the familial system, as this location does not belong only to the Mahajna families and is now a location for all families, genders, and ages to socialize and connect with the city.



UMM AL-FAHEM EYE 2030



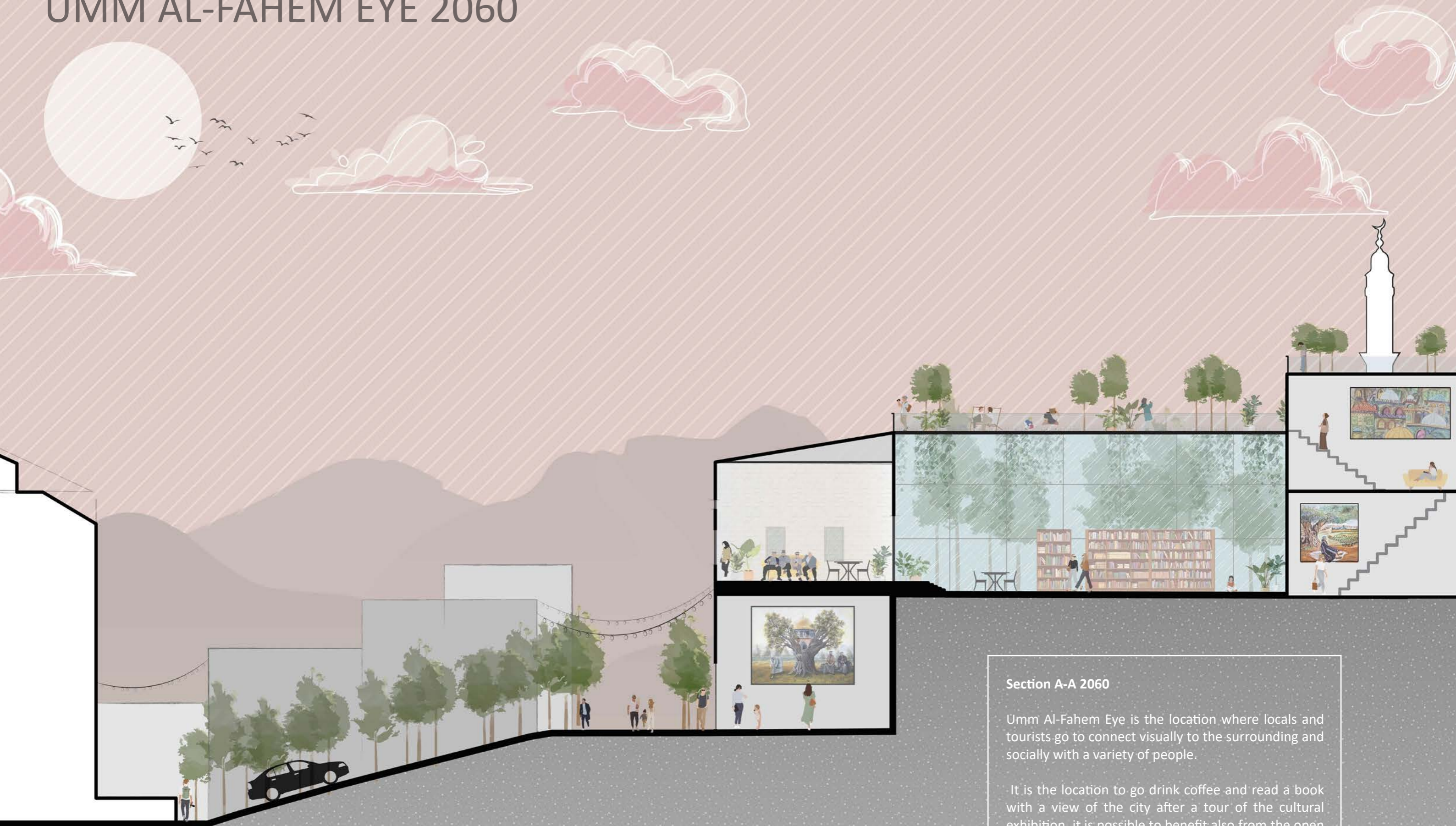
Section A-A 2030

The optimal intervention explores the visual connection of Umm Al-Fahem as it is the development of creating character visibility for a declared landmark.

In 2030 the street on the lower level of the Eye of Umm Al-Fahem is still used by cars as the core is still transitioning to a car-free zone, and the attached building on the right is used for vertical movement only to reach the green roof of the added edition of Umm Al-Fahem Eye.

The use of space is for all generations and genders. The cafe-library function is an inviting function for people to socialize and integrate while enjoying a view of the city.

UMM AL-FAHEM EYE 2060



Section A-A 2060

Umm Al-Fahem Eye is the location where locals and tourists go to connect visually to the surrounding and socially with a variety of people.

It is the location to go drink coffee and read a book with a view of the city after a tour of the cultural exhibition, it is possible to benefit also from the open atmosphere on the green roof and the intimate street sphere on the ground level of Umm Al-Fahem Eye.

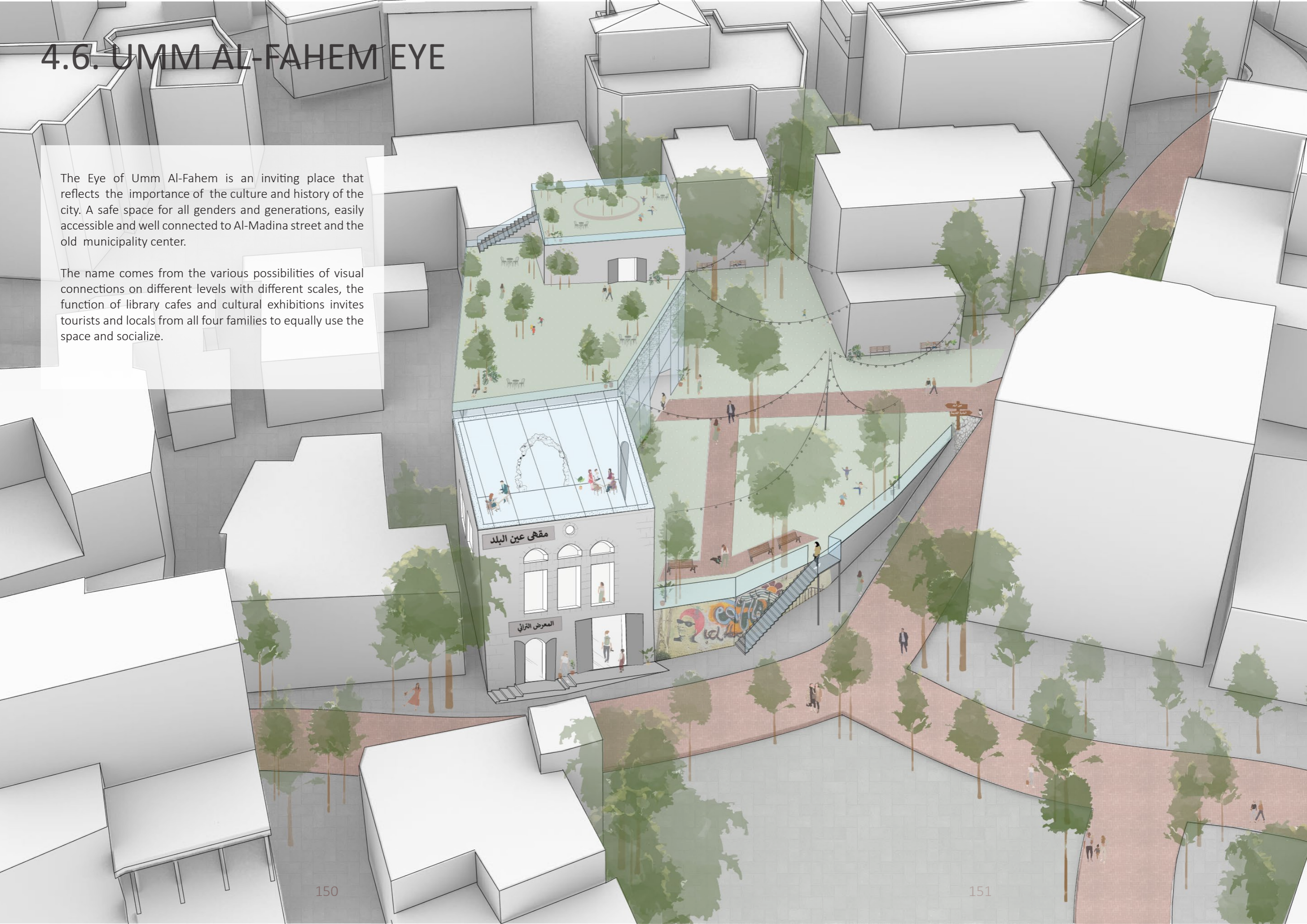
OPTIMAL INTERVENTION



4.6. UMM AL-FAHEM EYE

The Eye of Umm Al-Fahem is an inviting place that reflects the importance of the culture and history of the city. A safe space for all genders and generations, easily accessible and well connected to Al-Madina street and the old municipality center.

The name comes from the various possibilities of visual connections on different levels with different scales, the function of library cafes and cultural exhibitions invites tourists and locals from all four families to equally use the space and socialize.



4.6. UMM AL-FAHEM EYE

VISUAL CONNECTIONS

Umm Al-Fahem Eye is located on a high point of the mountain with an open view of the entrance of the city and neighboring cities, it is surrounded by various buildings and some of these buildings are limiting the vision for the location before the intervention. The used strategies were Si5- Character visibility, Ps4- see and be seen, C1-connection with Al-Madina street, and C2-connection with the municipality center. These strategies were implemented and generated by creating several levels that are structurally connected with the existing abandoned building, each one of these levels has a visual connection on a different scale.

Figure 57 shows how each level of the location connects with a different scale, the higher levels connect with the regional scale but also connect with the local and core scale, while the higher level of the existing building connects with the local scale and the ground level connects only with the core scale. This variety of connections resembles the strength of the Eye of Umm Al-Fahem spatially and gives a unique feature to the location.

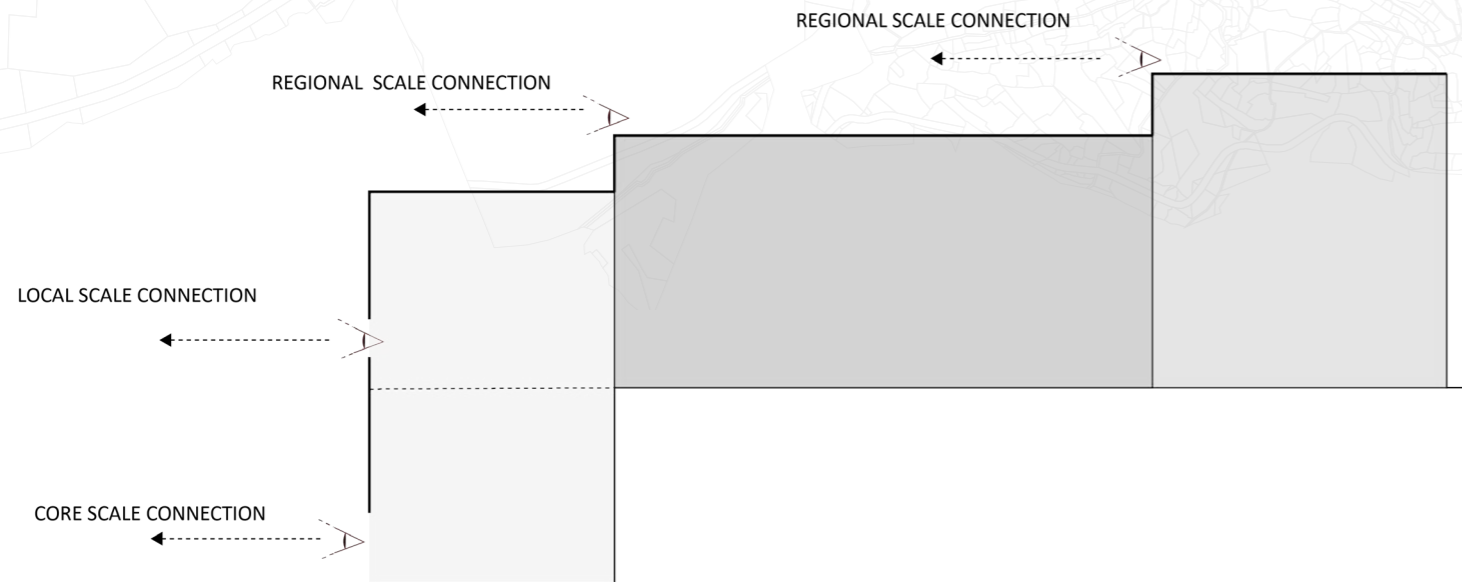


Figure 57. visual connection on scales, created by author.

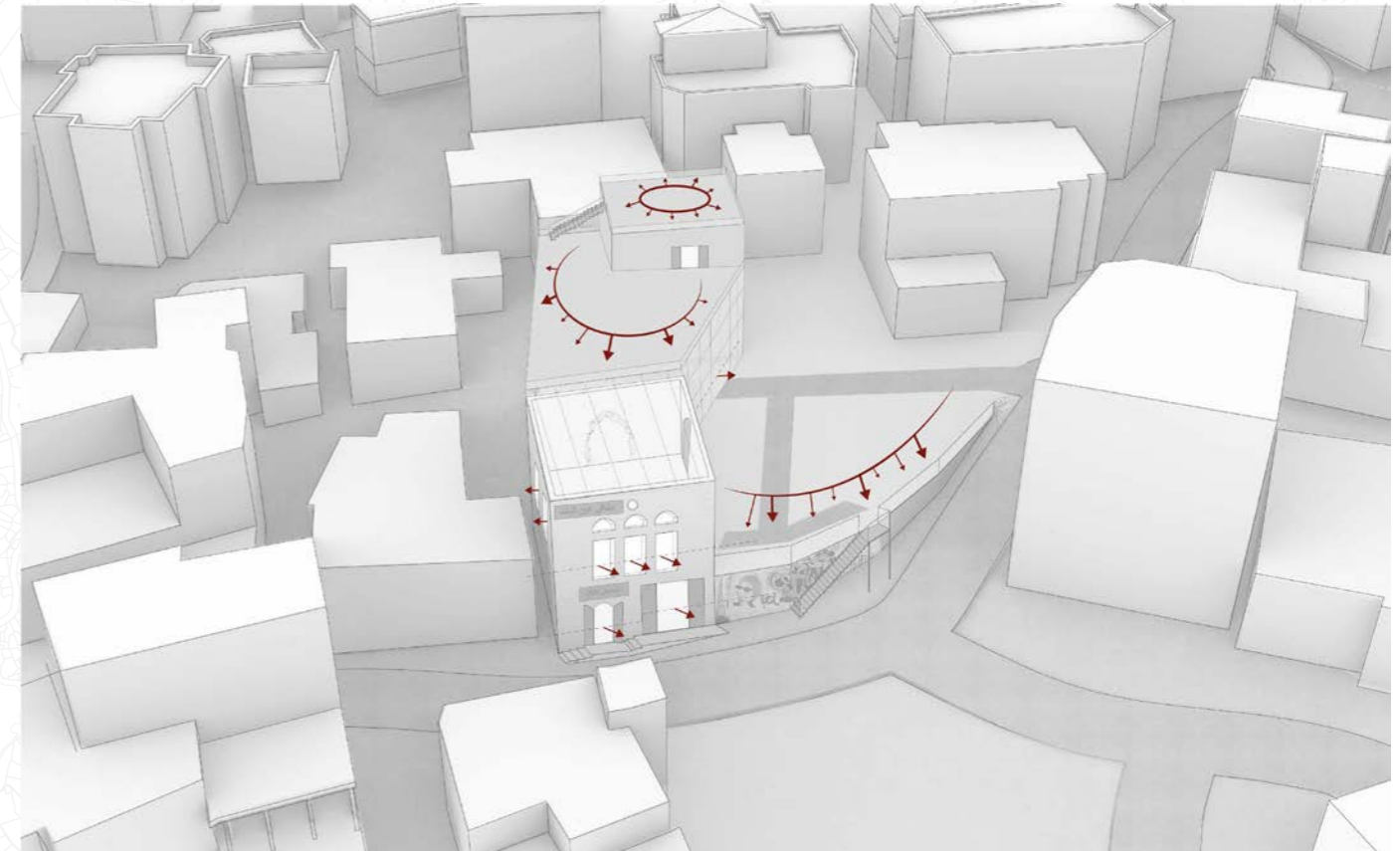


Figure 58. Field of vision, created by author.

Figure 58 exhibits the field of vision in each one of the different levels. The possible vision of the highest level is 360 degrees and the rooftop of the added building has a visual field of 270 degrees and is connecting which allows the users who use this space to observe and see and be seen (Ps4). The open space level is encouraging the users to move towards the edge and observe the complexity of the spatial movement around the location.

The restored abandoned building is using the existing doors and windows to connect with the core and be the closest to experiencing this physical movement within the location.

This visual field on various levels strengthens the future rejuvenated network as it is socially and spatially more accessible

4.6. UMM AL-FAHEM EYE

MOVEMENT FLOW

Movement in the space indicates the movement in and out of the location. Figure x is highlighting the entrances of the rejuvenated location of Mahajna, the open space of the location with the help of the colored pavement is leading to the new main entrance of the building. This building gives various movement options within, with a focus on the function and the visual connection discussed in the previous section. Therefore this main entrance is the beginning of a larger connection.

The entry on the ground level does not provide entrance to the main abandoned building, moreover, in figure 59 the flow of movement to the stairs next to the ground level is shown.

The movement flow in the Eye of Umm Al-Fahem (figure 69) shows how the location is connected with the core via a path and shows the transition between the various levels, this transition is possible via public stairs that are available for use freely during the day and night. The level transition in the building is limited during the times the location function is closed in order to ensure privacy and safety.

This movement flow indicates also a flow of functions within the location for people to use and benefit from, figure 70 shows the flow between the different uses via numbers. Functions number 2 and 6 are outdoors different functions on different levels, while numbers 1 and 5 share the same function but on different levels. Number 3 is the transition location with a flexible usage of the function and is continued with numbers 4 and 5.

- ① Cultural exhibition
- ② Public street
- ③ Open library cafe
- ④ Mini cafe
- ⑤ Cultural exhibition
- ⑥ Green roof

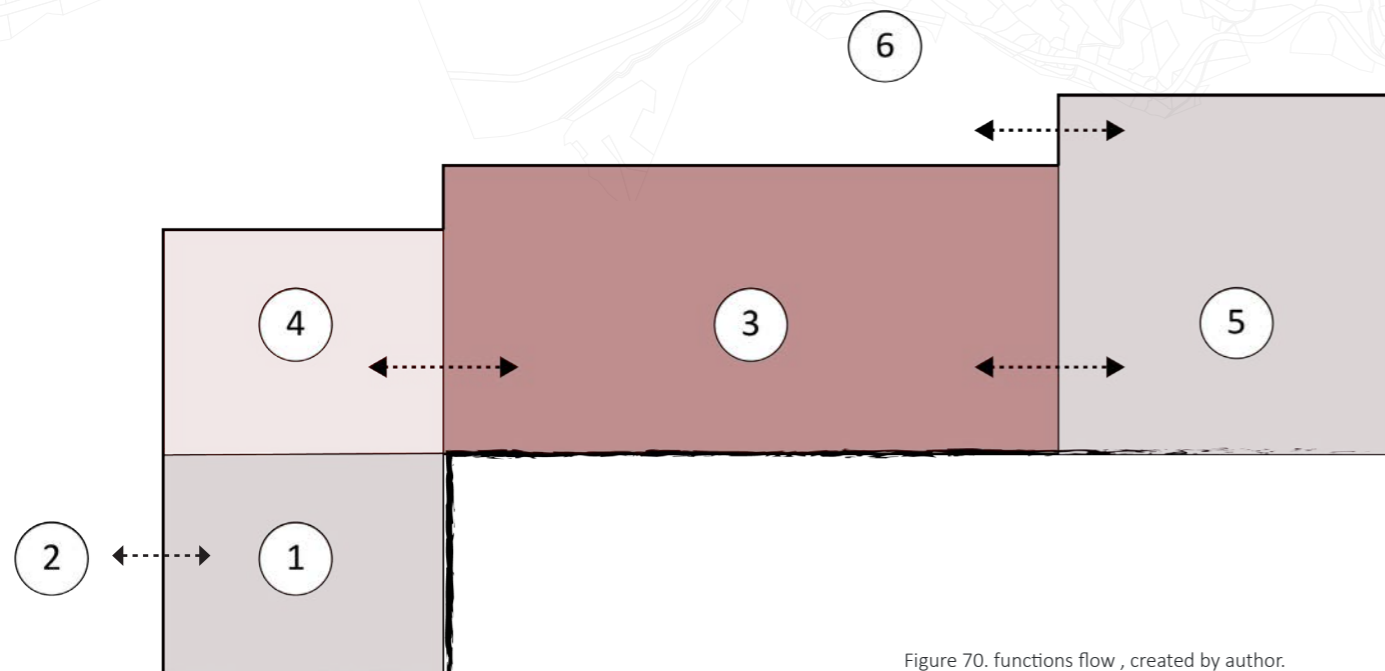


Figure 70. functions flow , created by author.

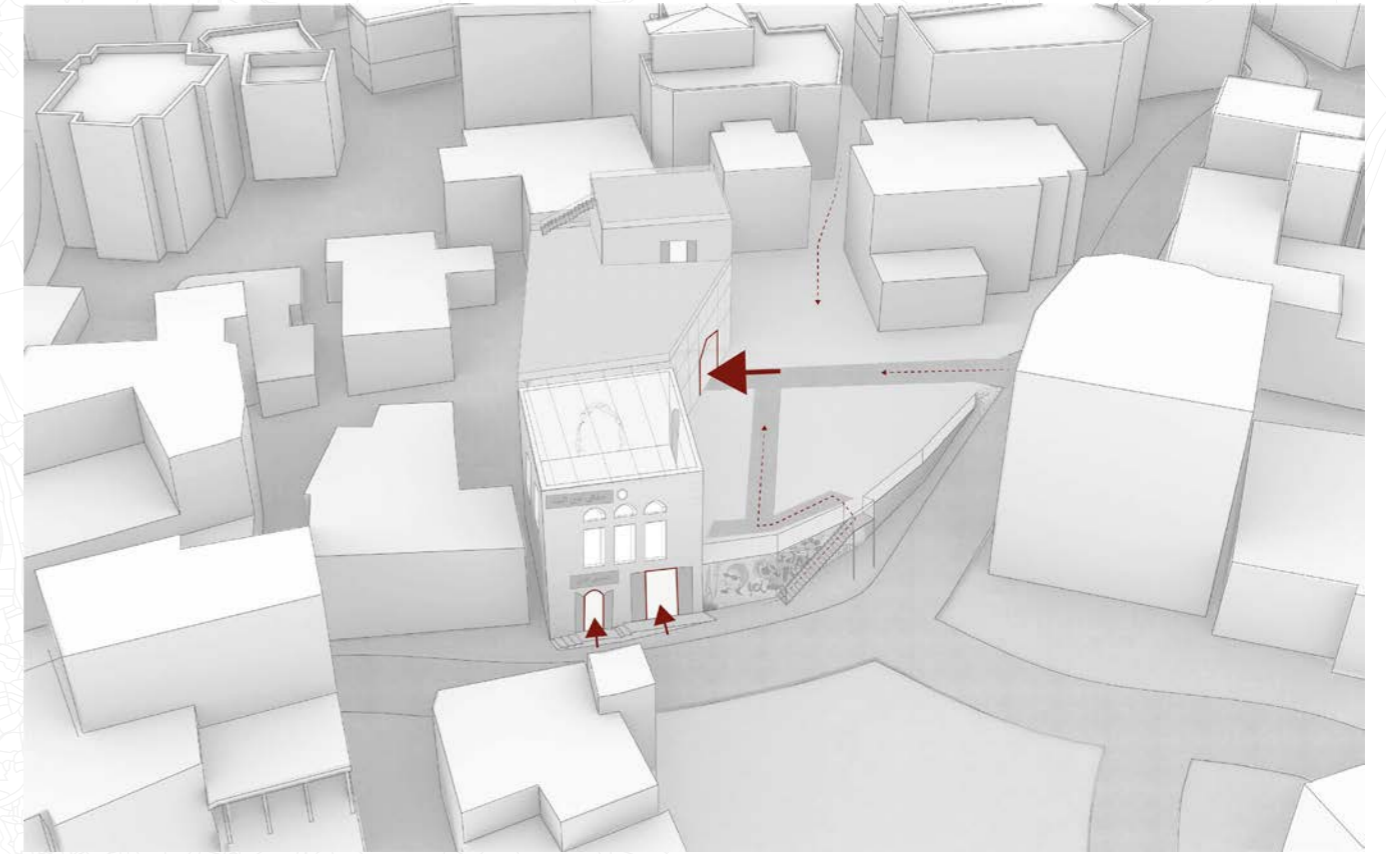


Figure 59. entering the Eye of Umm Al-Fahem, created by author.

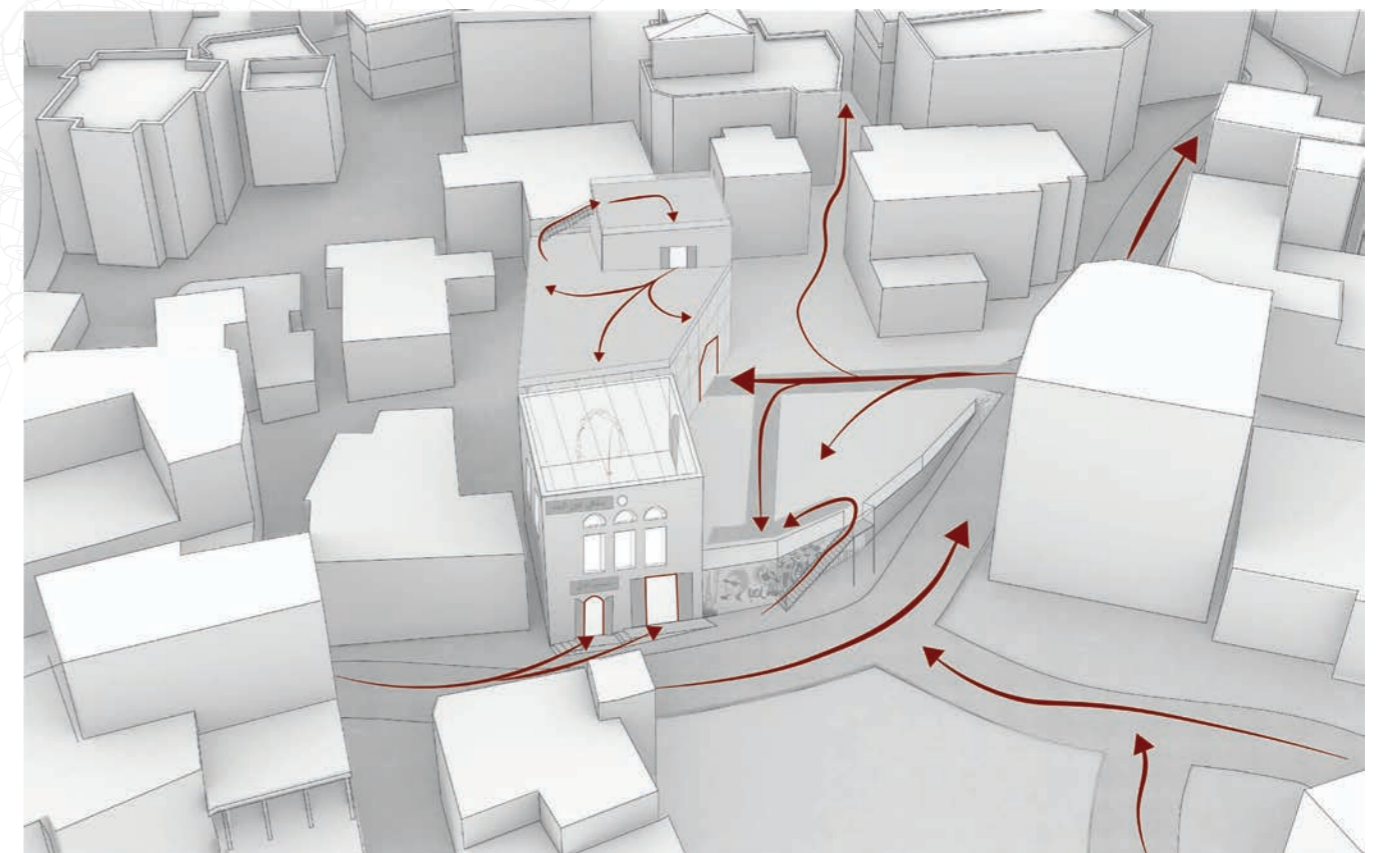
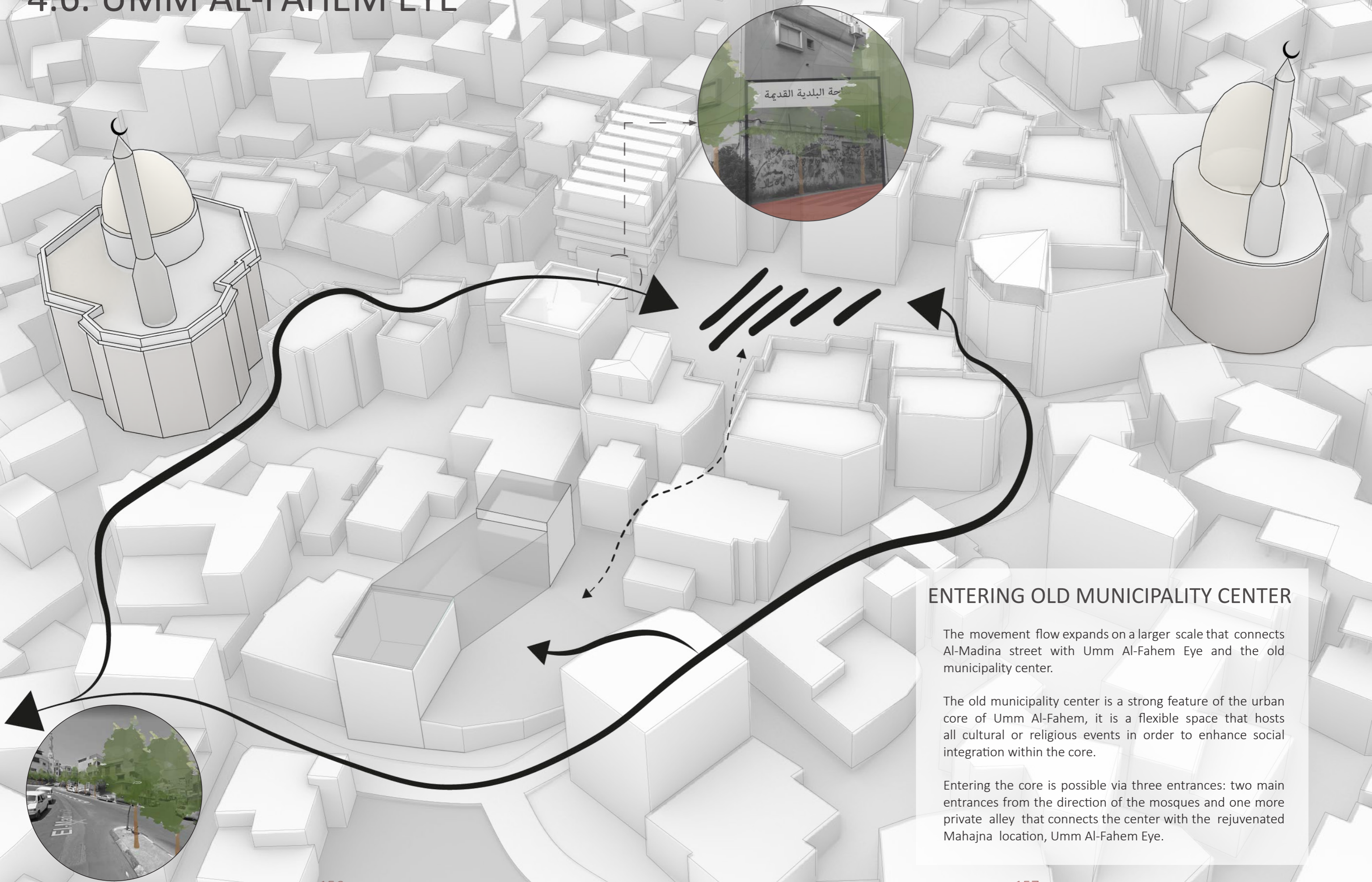


Figure 69. movement flow in Eye of Umm Al-Fahem, created by author.

4.6. UMM AL-FAHEM EYE



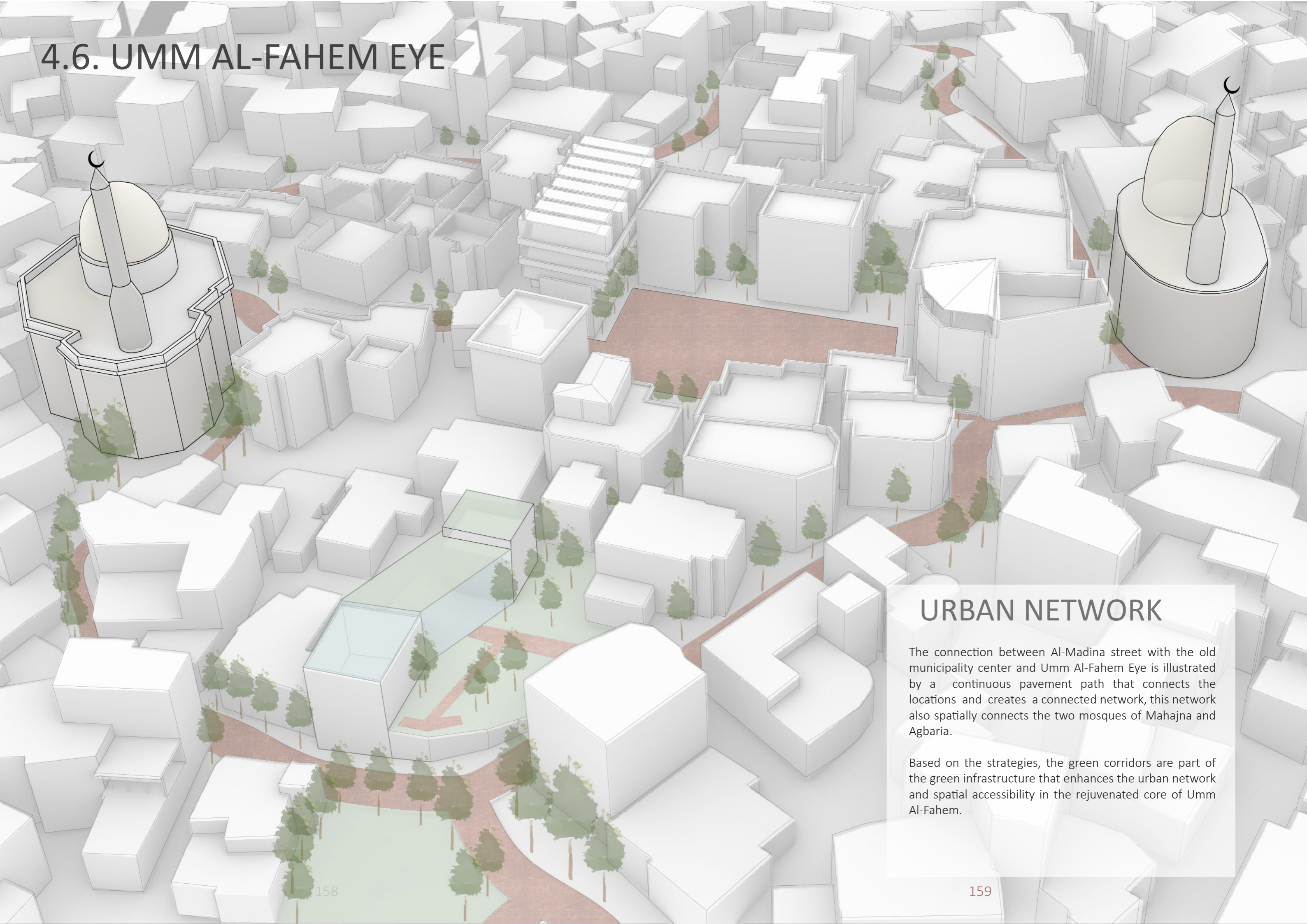
ENTERING OLD MUNICIPALITY CENTER

The movement flow expands on a larger scale that connects Al-Madina street with Umm Al-Fahem Eye and the old municipality center.

The old municipality center is a strong feature of the urban core of Umm Al-Fahem, it is a flexible space that hosts all cultural or religious events in order to enhance social integration within the core.

Entering the core is possible via three entrances: two main entrances from the direction of the mosques and one more private alley that connects the center with the rejuvenated Mahajna location, Umm Al-Fahem Eye.

4.6. UMM AL-FAHEM EYE



URBAN NETWORK

The connection between Al-Madina street with the old municipality center and Umm Al-Fahem Eye is illustrated by a continuous pavement path that connects the locations and creates a connected network, this network also spatially connects the two mosques of Mahajna and Agbaria.

Based on the strategies, the green corridors are part of the green infrastructure that enhances the urban network and spatial accessibility in the rejuvenated core of Umm Al-Fahem.

4.6. UMM AL-FAHEM EYE

URBAN DETAILING

As mentioned previously, the spatial connection between the core and the rest of the core and Al-Madina street is based on two main elements: pavement and vegetation.

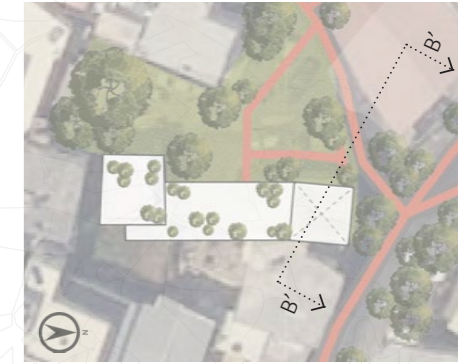
Red brick pavement:

As Umm Al-Fahem is in a country in the Middle east which can be extremely warm and the city lacks vegetation, the heat stress island is very high. In order to reduce the albedo, according to Baldiri, Peter & Karel Mulder (2009), it is needed to change the color of the pavement to a light color. They also mention that brick pavement surfaces have strong permeability, allowing water to infiltrate beneath the surface.

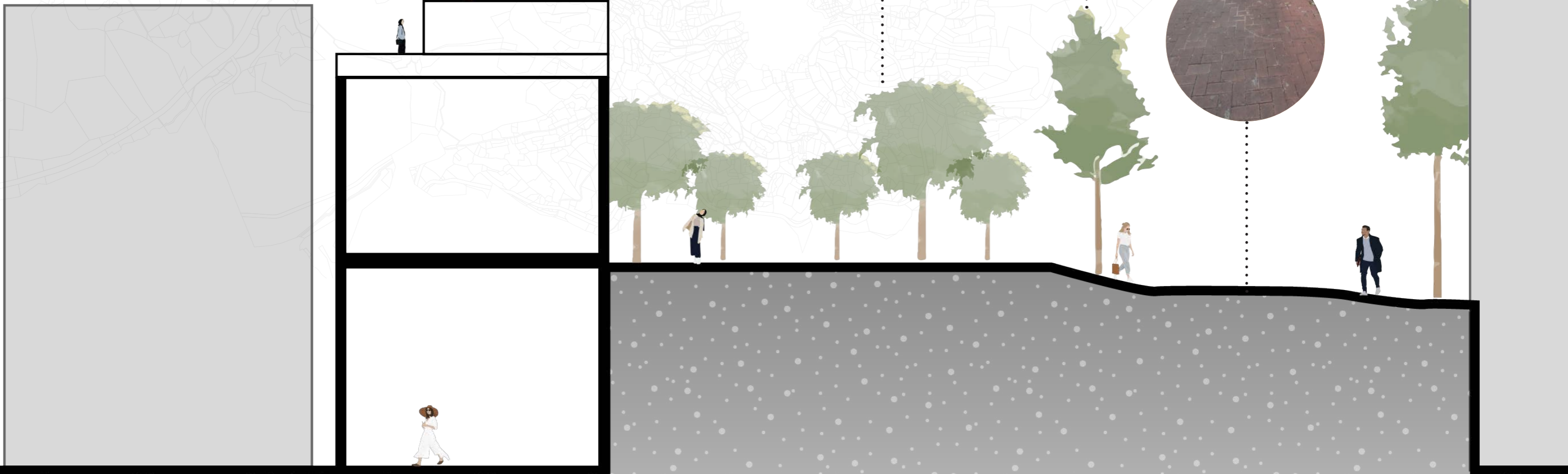
Vegetation:

Along red pavement: The connection via the red brick pavement is also in relation to a uniformed tree type along with this urban network, a possible option is the palm tree as it can handle the heat and can give shadow.

Open space: In the open space in the intervention location of Mahajna it is possible to use vegetation as a method to maintain the identity of the location. There are several fruit trees that are planted in the Palestinian fertile lands, such as figs and citrus (David et al., 2000).



The aesthetics play a strong role in this choice as the municipality has already started by applying brick pavement in the core of Umm Al-Fahem, so the best decision is to keep on and using this pavement as a spatial and visual indicator within the urban core.

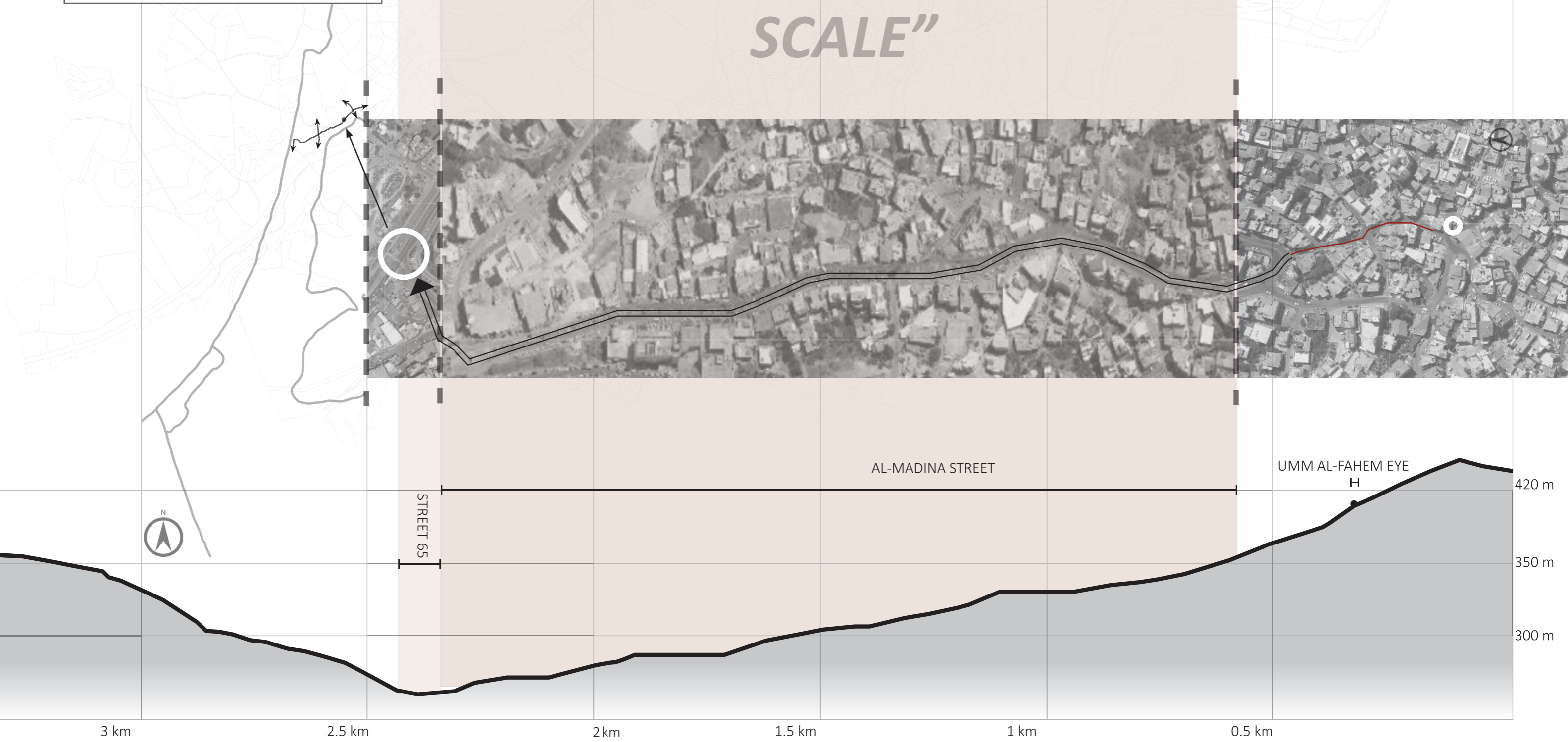


4.7. ON THE LARGER SCALE

The Eye of Umm Al-Fahem is an inviting location and a “to go to” location in the core of Umm Al-Fahem, this invitation is operating on the regional, local, and core scale.

Al-Madina street is a crucial socio-spatial asset to connect the core with the larger scales, the economic importance of Al-Madina street benefits the core to be socially diverse and spatially accessible.

“AL-MADINA STREET AS AN ASSET TO EMPHASIZE IMPORTANCE ON A LARGER SCALE”



CONCLUSION

This project is focusing on the city of Umm Al-Fahem, this city faces daily sadness as a consequence of the murders, each day a fight, each day an accident. Its people are suffering from the aggression of the government, and facing segregation between the families and sub-families within the city. Therefore, the initial target is on how to find a new vitality with the old values of the city, a new life!

The historic urban core of the city is the previous village that Umm Al-Fahem was before it expanded to be the third largest Arab city in Israel, this core is the origin point of the whole city. Currently, this core is not serving the city what an urban core is supposed to and is reflecting all the social, political economic, and spatial issues of the city.

What distinct the city of Umm Al-Fahem from other cities is the familial system within, as each person who lives in this city has one of the four family names: Mahajna, Jabareen, Mahameed, and Agbaria. The family name does not mean that the belonging families are related, it rather means that hundreds of years ago each family followed one of the four existing Mokhtars (leader), and therefore the families were named after their own Mokhtar.

The existence of four Mokhtars in the former village of Umm Al-Fahem, which is now the core of Umm Al-Fahem, affected the spatial expansion of the village as each Mokhtar marked their territory in the village. This territorial mark is now considered the four main neighborhoods of the current historic core of the city, this led to both spatial and social segregation between the families that are nowadays affecting the socio-spatial development of the core immensely.

Due to history, culture, religion, and politics, the city started growing in an unorganized manner, leading to an unorganized infrastructure and a chaotic system of building houses. As the city is expanding and the generations and growing and changing based on how they use the space, the city has to be flexibly developed and that starts with the core.

“A city that evolved in the absence of plans and tools suitable to local needs”

The contested city of Umm Al-Fahem is hosting a stagnated urban core, therefore a rejuvenation principle for planning is created and elaborated into strategies, the strategies are flexible and function on three different scales: regional, local, and core.

This project is conducted in four phases of research, each one of these phases is elaborating on different sub-questions that help answer the main research question of this project: To what extent can the socio-spatial strategies rejuvenate the core of Umm Al-Fahem to be socially integrated and spatially accessible?

Recognize phase

The recognize phase is an introduction to the research context of Umm Al-Fahem city in Israel, it discusses the problem field and the aim and objectives of this research, including the ethical consideration along with the social and scientific relevance of this research. Followed by the methodology of this project and its frameworks and the graduation timeline.

This chapter highlights the importance of the familial system and how history affected the spatial development of Umm Al-Fahem and in return, it creates social segregation. It emphasizes the necessity to create intervention strategies and experiment with different scenarios and introduces the rejuvenation principle as a potential solution for Umm Al-Fahem to be socially integrated and spatially accessible.

Investigate phase

The investigation phase is about analyzing and investigating the city of Umm Al-Fahem both socially and spatially. It begins with a spatial analysis of the location on regional, local, and core scale levels, followed by investigating the story of the locals of the core and the involved stakeholders. The goal of this investigation is to answer the two sub-questions about the socio-spatial elements that are critical components of the stagnated core of Umm Al-Fahem and how they support the hegemony of the existing cultural system, and about uncovering secondary spatial features that can be an asset to making the core of Umm Al-Fahem more socially integrated and spatially accessible.

AL-MADINA STREET AS A SOCIO-ECONOMIC CENTER OF UMM AL-FAHEM

CONCLUSION

The several socio-spatial components are a combination of how the locals use their private space in the core and how the spaces are connected, in which both are relying on the hegemonic system on the larger scale and the familial system to claim the sentimental and legal ownership of the space in the city and the core. It was also concluded in this chapter that Al-Madina commercial street which is considered the socio-economic center of the city, is an active secondary spatial feature that can be used as an asset to the rejuvenation of the core of Umm Al-Fahem.

Formulate phase

The formulate phase elaborates on the intervention focus and the 2060 vision for the project of rejuvenating the core of Umm Al-Fahem. It introduces the strategies process that formulates the social and the spatial systems strategies and presents the method for generating these strategies in the core of Umm Al-Fahem and focusing on possible further developments of strategies in different intervention locations. This project provides intervention strategies to both professionals and locals, in which both sides can find a common interest in the development of the stagnated space of the core of Umm Al-Fahem and the benefit will be for both.

The strategies are based on social and spatial aspects, and the two of the three sub-questions for this phase are based on the social aspect and are about the recognition of the different stakeholders, and their effect and positive impact on the development of the socio-spatial strategies and development of the location. The social strategies are following the inclusive approach to include the different stakeholders within the development of the core so that the generations of locals are given the power for change and be part of the process.

The spatial aspects are answering the third answer about the socio-spatial strategies and principles to create a rejuvenated core and how would they be applied, this chapter provided a strategies toolkit that can be used as a manual for intervention generating and implementation for different scenarios in the different chosen locations.

Propose phase

This phase proposes four possible intervention locations, each in a one of the four neighborhoods. It elaborates on the Mahajna location to exhibit how the intervention strategies are generated in an abandoned location and how it relates to the scale of the city and the country.

It is the detailed design phase where the formulated intervention strategies are applied and tested in the Mahajna location, and the phase to examine the final sub-question of which spatial characteristics of the urban core have the potential to emphasize the core's relevance on a higher social and spatial level?

The connection between the historic urban core of Umm Al-Fahem and Al-Madina commercial street is the spatial characteristic that has the high potential to emphasize the importance of the core on a higher social and spatial level. Al-Madina street connects the core with the important regional street 65, therefore it gives the core the potential for a larger variety of users in the space when the core is more accessible.

After answering all the sub-questions via different phases of the research, the conclusion is now about the main research question:

To what extent can the socio-spatial strategies rejuvenate the stagnated core of Umm Al-Fahem to be socially integrated and spatially accessible?

Even though this project tested one abandoned location, it is possible to conclude that extent of the strategies varies based on the location and the level of intervention. Currently, the rejuvenated location Eye of Umm Al-Fahem is the first link of the rejuvenated urban network in the core and the first step towards a more socially integrated and spatially accessible core.

After creating the social and spatial strategies and finishing the process of implementation, it is clear that there are several possibilities of design when it comes to the implementations. In the case study of Mahajna, the design is based not only on the strategies but also on personal preference.

Therefore, the questions to be taken into consideration for further steps in the project are about whose personal preference with the future designs in the urban core is it going to be? And will it be suitable for most of the users? What are the possibilities of flexible design and flexible change for the case study to help rejuvenate the core?

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REFLECTION

The project of rejuvenating the core of Umm Al-Fahem comes close to the heart for me as a local person and as an aspiring professional who might have the potential to manifest a solution for the stagnated city to be more spatially accessible and socially integrated.

Few challenges and learning moments have happened in the process of the ten months between September 2021 and June 2022, both in the societal and scientific aspects of the project. Therefore this reflection is structured in three themes (research process, personal and societal relevance, data collection and ethical issues) that elaborate on those challenges and learning moments.

RESEARCH PROCESS

The research process is structured into four different phases: recognize, investigate, formulate and propose. This method was created for a structured and optimal organization from P1 to P5. This method was beneficial throughout the research because it put results in perspective and in order, and the desired goals of each phase has been reached.

RECOGNIZE → INVESTIGATE → FORMULATE → PROPOSE

Before the start of the project, the faculty offered us intensive courses, I followed the courses on maximization approach and stakeholders and policies. The stakeholders and policies course was clear on how it will function within the research process, but the maximization approach took me a bit of time to clarify how to connect it to the research. Moreover, the two courses were implemented in the project of rejuvenating the core of Umm Al-Fahem, the implementation was in the formulate phase, and it was used to create and improve the different scenarios that were created in the propose phase.

The research phases of recognizing and investigating are about understanding the dynamics within the city and its historic core, in addition to developing a conclusion about where is it important to intervene and finding the key elements to intervene in to rejuvenate the historic core of Umm Al-Fahem to be socially integrated and spatially accessible. The formulate phase is the connection between the research and the design because it is the toolkit that professionals and locals will use for the future development of the rejuvenated design of Umm Al-Fahem. After the design of one location has been completed and is based on the strategies and the 2060 vision for the location, it is interesting that after developing all designs for all selected locations to see if the functional, social, and spatial connections are strong and clear to have a rejuvenated core.

During P2, the methodological line of inquiry was created as a tool to connect the goals with the research questions and research methods throughout the project timeline. The initial research method was literature and media review, there was a considerable amount of documents and research to read, but only a few were focused on the city of Umm Al-Fahem and none about the historic core of the city. Therefore a focus on the personal experience and knowledge of the location was the strongest feature for developing the methodological aspects of this project while using the knowledge that was gained by the literature review and the information gained through my study at TU Delft, which was a challenge because when not a lot of information is offered. This challenge, if not successfully accomplished, there could be a missing link in the project.

In the case of the project rejuvenating the core of Umm Al-Fahem, which is the very start of enormous possible development for this socially and spatially important area, the challenge could be successfully accomplished if put in the appropriate stakeholders' hands that have the interest of the people as a priority.

PERSONAL AND SOCIETAL RELEVANCE

One very important reason for me to study Urbanism is my hometown, Umm Al-Fahem, which this project is addressing. It is fascinating that such a large city with high political and social importance is not able to develop based on policies and spatial planning, but is based on how and where the locals wish to build.

As a person who lived in the Netherlands for a few years now, the importance of the city having a center was emphasized, it promotes social life and spatial accessibility, which is lacking in the city of Umm Al-Fahem. Therefore the project of rejuvenating the core is essential to the socio-spatial development of the city.

This graduation project is context specificity, it is elaborated on based on the people of the city, the history, politics, and infrastructure. It is about the story of the people, what they suffer, what they are experiencing, and what they desire for their future generations. The community of Umm Al-Fahem became one defense ball that rejects anything external that may create any type of change and several development implementations were rejected and took a very different turn than expected. Therefore, the fact that this community might actually accept this socio-spatial development that rejuvenates the core of their city, is based on the belief that there will be acceptance to the implementation and the process of the development if the person who is trying to implement these strategies is a person who lived in this core, and therefore has the feeling of belonging and protectiveness as much as this community, at the same time has the practical professional knowledge.

Even though the core is currently inhabited by mostly older generations, the younger generations' behavior changes with time. Therefore the key point in this project was realizing the flexibility of strategies and use of space in order to meet the needs and behaviors of each generation.

REFLECTION

DATA COLLECTION AND ETHICAL ISSUES

The methods used to collect data for this project were based on literature review, location mappings, interviews and site visit.

Due to Covid-19 and the restriction, people who were interviewed were asked if they prefer online interviews or face-to-face and they all preferred face-to-face interviews. Therefore the meetings were planned before leaving for the field trip, with people from all four families and from various professions and ages. Two main behaviors were identified. Firstly, people did not agree to be filmed, but most of them showed interest in participating to make the core alive again and safer. The second behavior was the shock on people's faces when they notice a stranger who does not live in the core, to be walking in their streets and taking pictures and filming.

It was surprising that the people were the ones who opened their arms to potential change more than some of the professionals who kept on, several times, canceling the meetings last minute. This exhibits the fact that the people of the core are the key to rejuvenating.

A very important detail in the field trip that needs to be tackled in the project, is safety. It was not surprising that there were locations that are more dangerous than others, but it was necessary to visit these locations to get a better grasp and choose all four locations in all four neighborhoods, because how is it possible to make them safer if it is not possible to even visit.

In several locations in the core, it was not allowed to film or take pictures, and most of these locations were in the Jabareen neighborhood (which involves the most dangerous families in the cities). It was allowed to go with a professional or someone who is known in the area, which in February 2022 was not available because this was not taken into account before the field trip. Thus another visit was planned for the end of March 2022, and even though it was a success to visit and determine the abandoned location in Jabareen, it became more obvious that this core needs social integration for it to be safer for all genders, all ages, and all families.

SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

Umm Al-Fahem is a stagnated city that fits in the category of the planning complex cities studio. This graduation project focuses on providing strategies with the goal to rejuvenate the core of Umm Al-Fahem socially and spatially, these strategies impact the city on different scales: core scale, local scale, and regional scale. This project is discussing urban planning in a stagnated complex city in the masters of Urbanism.

Rejuvenating the core of Umm Al-Fahem offers strategies that focus both on the social and spatial aspects that establish a system of connections on various levels. These strategies are offering design

solutions that help the core of Umm Al-Fahem reach the goal of being socially integrated and spatially accessible. These design solutions are tested in abandoned locations that are based on the research that has been done on the core of Umm Al-Fahem.

These strategies and designs are flexible and continuous with time and generations. This flexibility is formed in a way that the designs will keep testing the strategies and the strategies will keep being tested in the designs until the stakeholders reach an optimal design for each specific abandoned location in the core of Umm Al-Fahem.

At the beginning of the project, I set some goals of how will I work this graduation through, because the focus from the beginning is to make Umm Al-Fahem a location for people to enjoy and want to visit. To my surprise, there was a lot yet to learn about how to try to develop and improve a stagnated city socially and spatially that went through several difficulties during its time. As a person who lived in this city, these difficulties were the normal reality, which made creating the strategies complicated to some level.

The complications were based on how not to be biased because I wanted to develop this project with a "professional mind but a local heart", which was possible to some level. Nonetheless, the defining moment that a step back had to be taken was when reached the realization that I also started to reject some of the strategies just like the rest of the locals. As a result, more conversations with the locals were established on how they envision the city and its core and what would they want to personally implement in such a project.

This step made me realize the power of stakeholders' involvement and the importance of having an inclusive approach that focuses firstly on the vision of the people in such sensitive locations.

The limitations of this project are categorized into two: lack of available data and the acceptance of the locals. As the project of rejuvenating the core of Umm Al-Fahem is done by a student in a university, the authorities (due to legal reasons) are not willing to most of the data they were asked to provide, therefore I had to gather most of the information solely- in which means there is a possibility of some inaccurate data. The acceptance of the people is always a limitation for any project, but this project is context specificity and people specificity due to history, politics, religion, and social segregation between the four families of the city: Mahajna, Mahameed, Jabareen, and Agbaria.

