

ADAPTING THE FUTURE REDESIGN BREITENBACHPLATZ

Berlin-Warsaw Workshop
September – November 2021

Workshop Framework

The Faculty of Architecture at Politechnika Warszawska and the Institute of Urban and Regional Planning at Technische Universität Berlin have a long-standing partnership. Since 1992, they have been offering a yearly joint urban design workshop.

A design task for a location in the respective city is alternately chosen by the involved institutions. During two intense weeks divided between Berlin and Warsaw design proposals are being developed. With participating students from the fields of architecture, urban and mobility planning, and urban design working in mixed teams, this framework provides an opportunity for both international and interdisciplinary exchange. The cooperation receives funding from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).

Site Description

The 2021 workshop dealt with the area around Breitenbachplatz, an oval-shaped square in southwestern Berlin. Located on the brink between inner and outer city, it is characterized by great heterogeneity in typologies and architectural styles. The project site is currently dominated by an elevated motorway crossing it in a long curve, with ramps connecting it to the streets on ground level on both sides of the square. In the north, the elevated structure is attached to a tunnel with an apartment building atop. This megastructure, nicknamed “Schlange” and extending for 570 meters, is globally unique in its vertical combination of the functions of transportation and housing. A station of the subway line 3 is also located at the square.



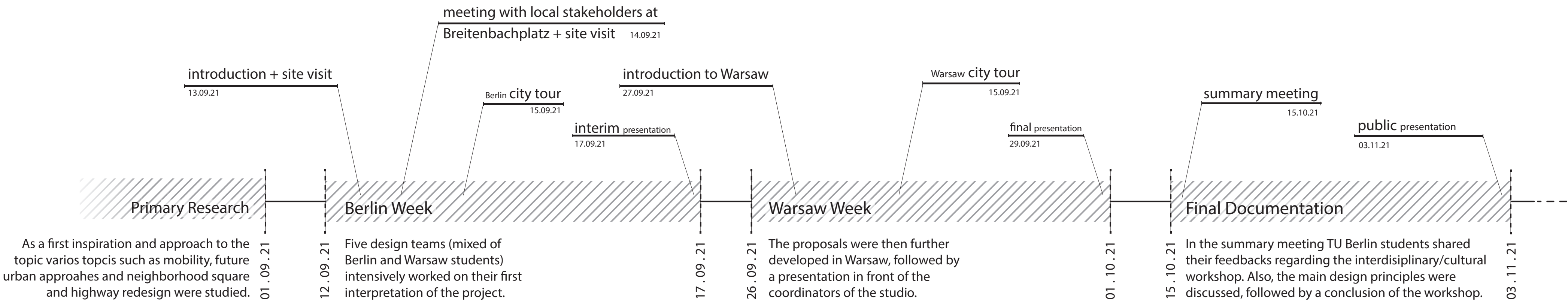
_ Aerial view of Breitenbachplatz, workshop area marked in white

Preliminary studies:

The Berlin students started the studio project by a primary research regarding:

- _ Context of urban mobility development
- _ Future urban studies
- _ Historic and current planning for Breitenbachplatz
- _ Examples of highway redesigns
- _ Neighborhood squares

Studio Time-line



Supervision: Sławomir Gzell, Mikołaj Gomółka, Katarzyna Kierczyńska-Królikowska, Christian Kloss, Christoph Wessling
Participants: Kamil Ambrozik, SeyedeHKosar Asghari, Frederick Coulomb, Lara Danyel, Daniel Dilger, Ruben Döhrer, Karolina Hajkowicz, Julia Jedrys, Aleksandra Kłopotowska, Bartłomiej Kruk, Anastasia Kuznetsova, Adam Morawski, Leonard Noack, Danuta Olszak, Karolina Padło, Konstantin Petrick, Karolina Rogowska, Olga Rosińska, Julia Wegmann



_ Site Visits | Schlange Building



_ Site Visits | Schlange Building



_ Site Visits | Artist Colony



_ Site Visits | Latin American Institute (FU)



_ Site Visits | Below the overpass



_ City tour | Berlin



_ Welcome evening | Warsaw



_ Final presentation | Warsaw

Design Task

A local initiative has been lobbying for a removal of the bridge for years. In 2020, a feasibility study was commissioned by the Berlin senate to investigate the ecological, urban planning and traffic implications of a demolition of the bridge, outlining opportunities and threats of a redesign of Breitenbachplatz. Meanwhile, it has been found that the elevated highway structure is approaching the end of its lifespan. In this context, the goal of the workshop was to develop courageous visions for the future shape of the area, rethinking it in an equally fundamental way as the past transformation under the paradigm of the car-friendly city. From a larger-scale analysis of the site's functions, its links to, and borders with surrounding areas, participants were asked to derive concepts for both the square itself and the void left after the highway removal. These were to integrate the heterogeneity of typologies found in the vicinity and adapt the area for the current major challenges climate change and mobility transformation. As a final step, the groups were to develop detailed design proposals after choosing sections of the area that were especially interesting to them, e.g., the square itself or the space in front of the “Schlange” building.



_ Ex-A 104 overpass



_ Breitenbachplatz in 1935



_ Ramps leading to the overpass



_ Cycling the car-friendly city



_ Breitenbachplatz, a hidden square



_ Transportation hub



_ Cars parking below the overpass



_ Buildings at the square



_ A nice place to stay?



_ A (visual) barrier

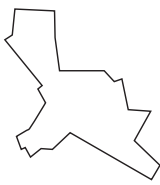


_ Garden square Breitenbachplatz



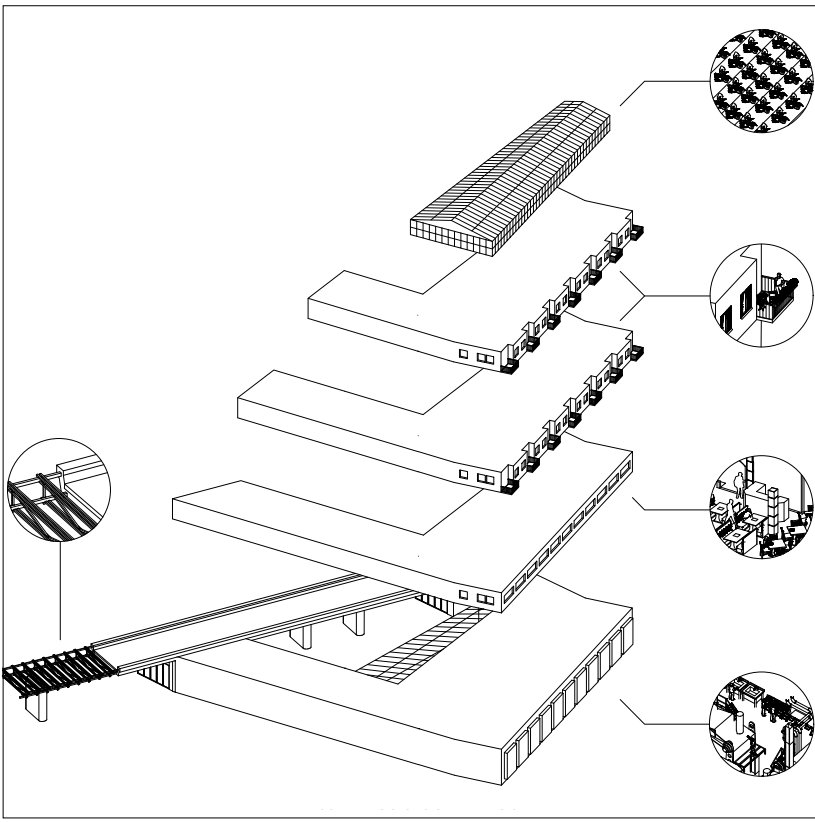
_ Dominance of car traffic

BREITENBACH ARCHIPELAGO

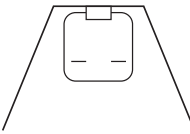


By Bart Kruk, Julia Wegmann, Kara Padło and Ruben Döhrer

- _ Turn a blurry void into legible spaces, complete spatial edges, provide additional building land.
- _ Add buildings for more functional and social diversity; mediate between the existing typologies.
- _ Reinterpret the elevated highway structure as a positive landmark accessible to the general public.
- _ Showcase integrated state-of-the-art production sites.

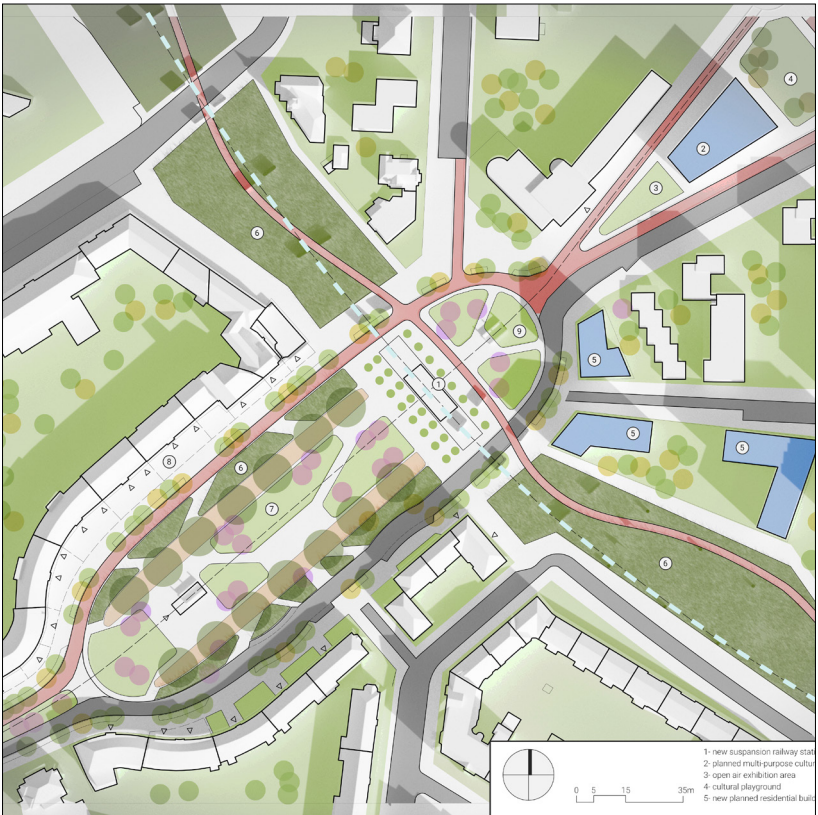
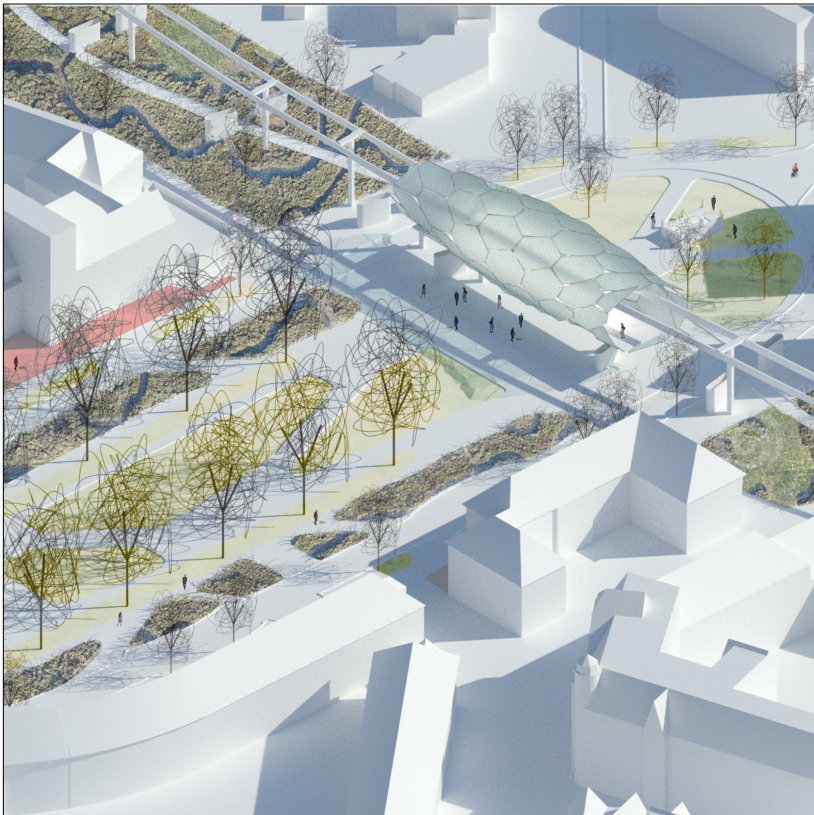
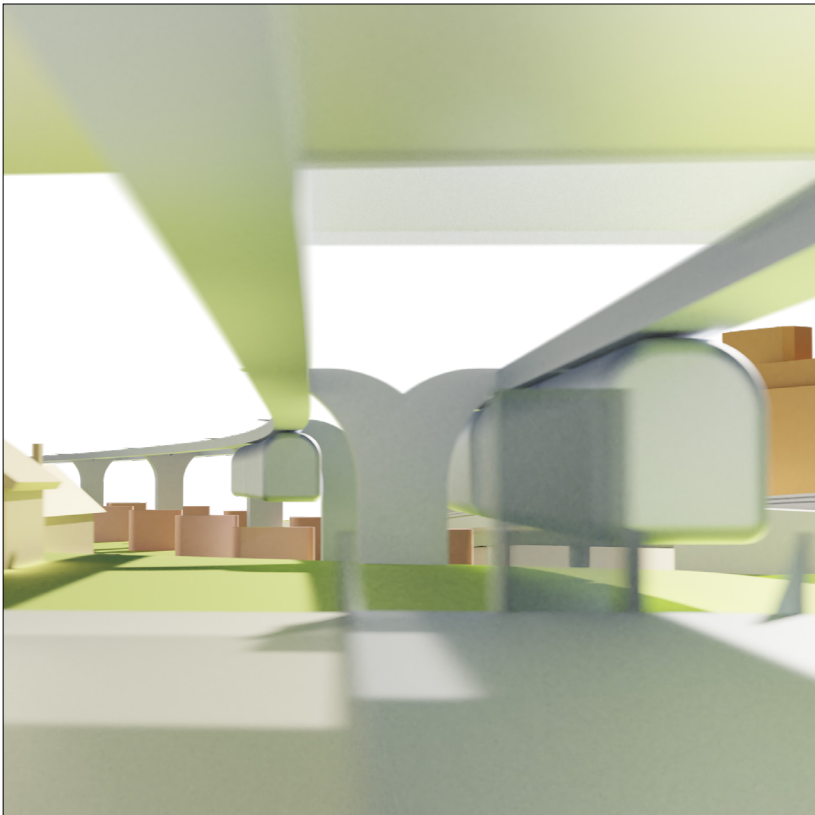


NEW GREEN BOULEVARD

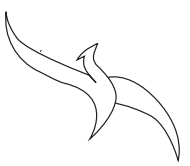


By Olga Rosińska, Frederick Coulomb, Konstantin Petrick and Jan Zawadzki

- _ Replace the former highway with a suspension railway that is operated electrically and has little soil consumption.
- _ Replace pavement with urban wet fields and greenery.
- _ Use relics of the bridge for recreational purposes.
- _ Reorganize Breitenbachplatz by closing streets and giving more space to the people.

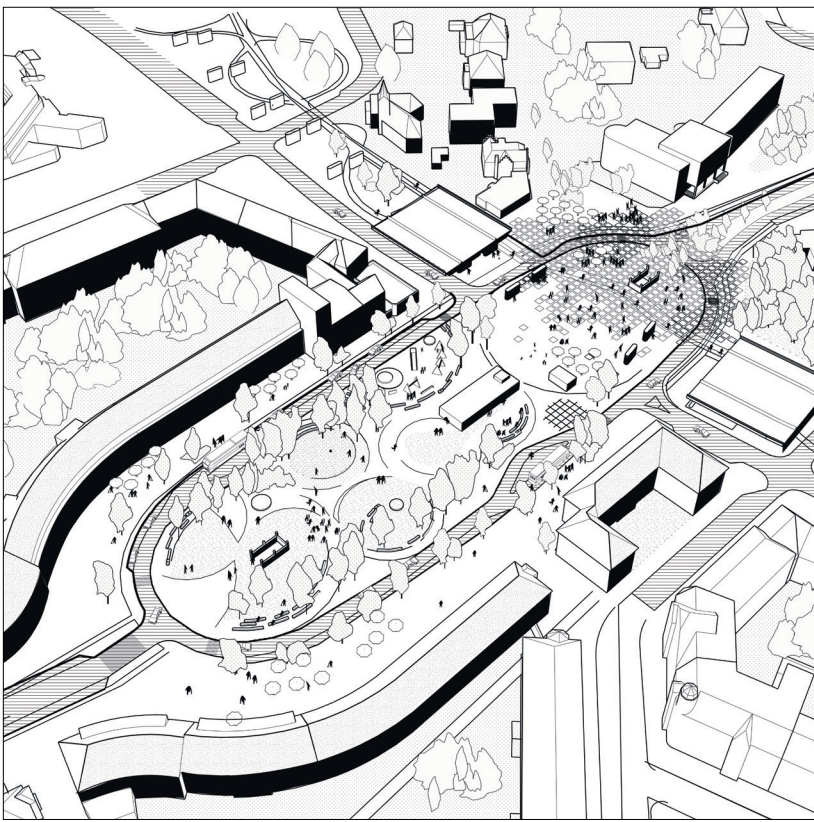
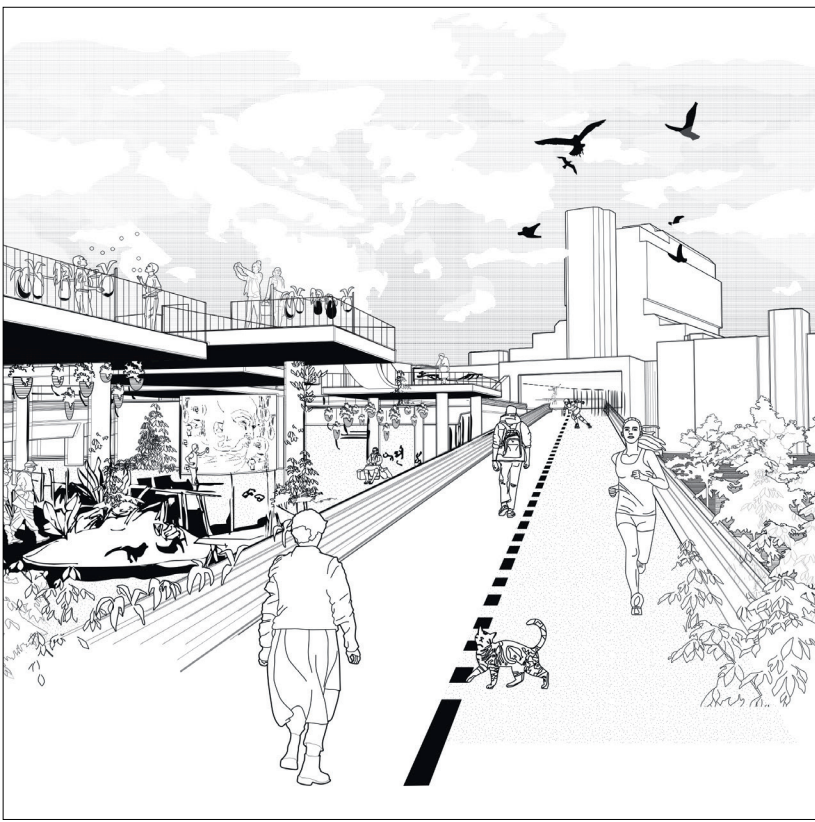


PHOENIX (DYING TO BE REBORN)

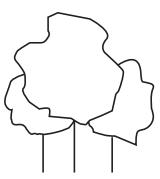


By Julia Jędrys, Kamil Ambrozik, Kosar Asghari and Anastasia Kuznetsova

- _ Connectivity and collaboration between the residents, artists and students.
- _ Defining traffic policies and designs based on two-wheeled vehicles traffic facilitation to provide mobility efficiency.
- _ Improving the aliveness and safety of the space.
- _ Preserving some parts of the overpass as the past futuristic monument.

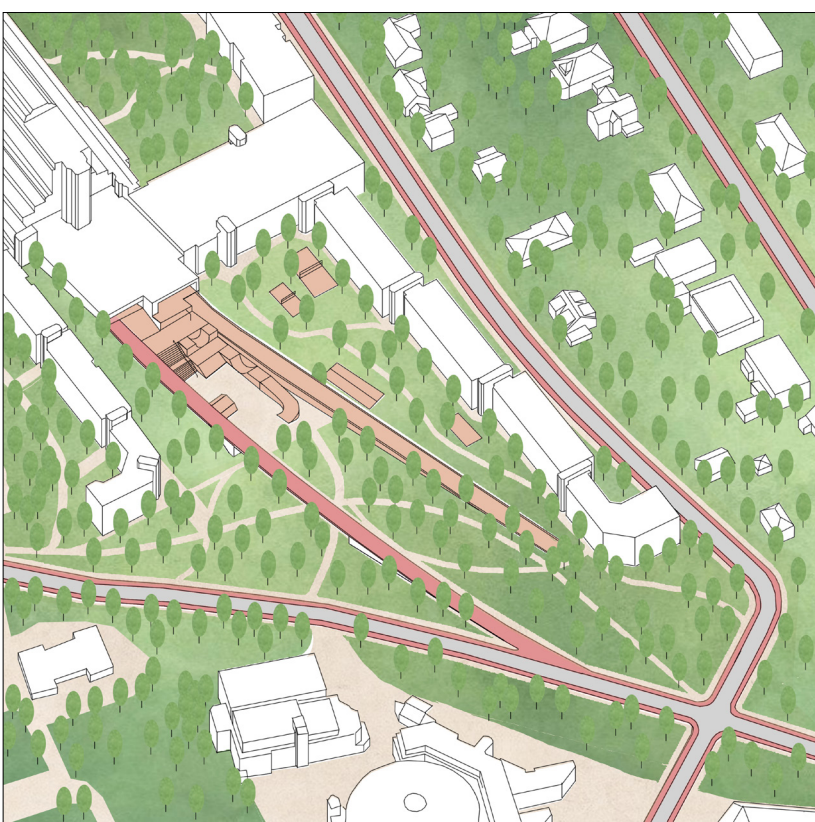


BLOOMING NUCLEUS

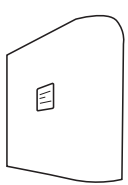


By Ola Kłopotowska, Karolina Rogowska, Leonard Noack and Daniel Dilger

- _ Introducing green areas inspired by the movement of people.
- _ Breitenbachplatz as the center of radiating paths of contemporary greenery.
- _ Implementation of three mobility hubs to ensure multimodal mobility.
- _ Create new points of interest and enhance the ones already existing.

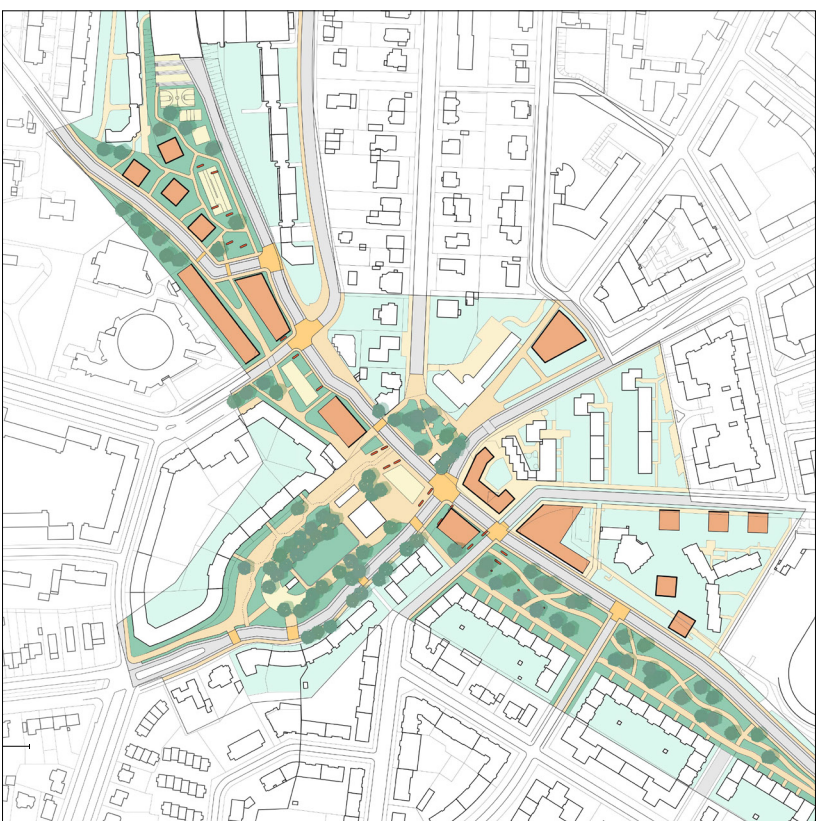


AUTO SKANSEN

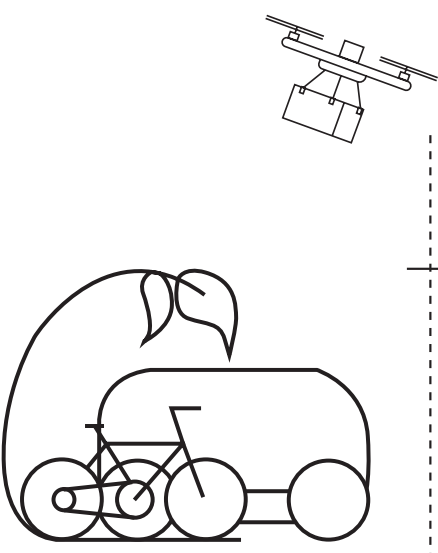


By Danuta Olszak, Adam Morawski, Karolina Hajkowicz and Lara Danyel

- _ Rethink the former highway as an open-air museum of the distant car-oriented past.
- _ Create a green axis which guides the perspective of the pedestrians and helps to orientate in the public space.
- _ Identify public spaces serving different purposes according to their position, acting as stages for their users, creating small-scale local temporary exhibition spaces for everyday life.

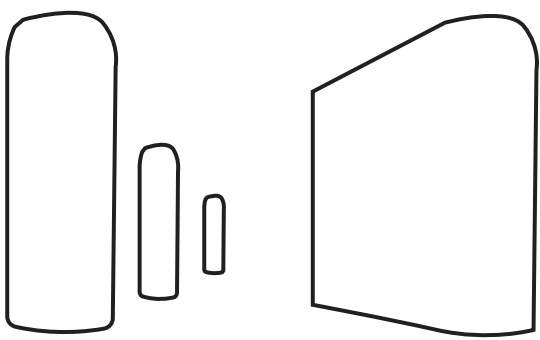


Common design principles



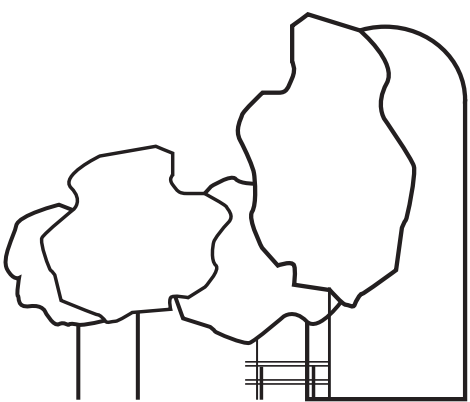
mobility transformation:

- + space for micro-mobility
- + close side-streets



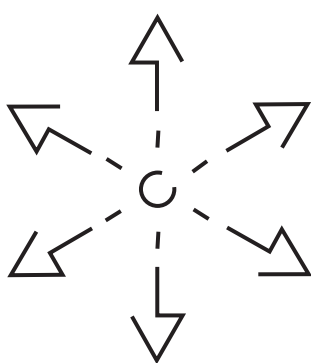
leave structures of the past:

- + leave relics of the bridge to showcase former car-orientated design
- + give space for people to appropriate the structures



public and green space

- + ranging from smaller parks to a large green axis
- + divide the public space in smaller areas



multifunctional

- + increase the density of functions in the area
- + increase the density of people passing the area