

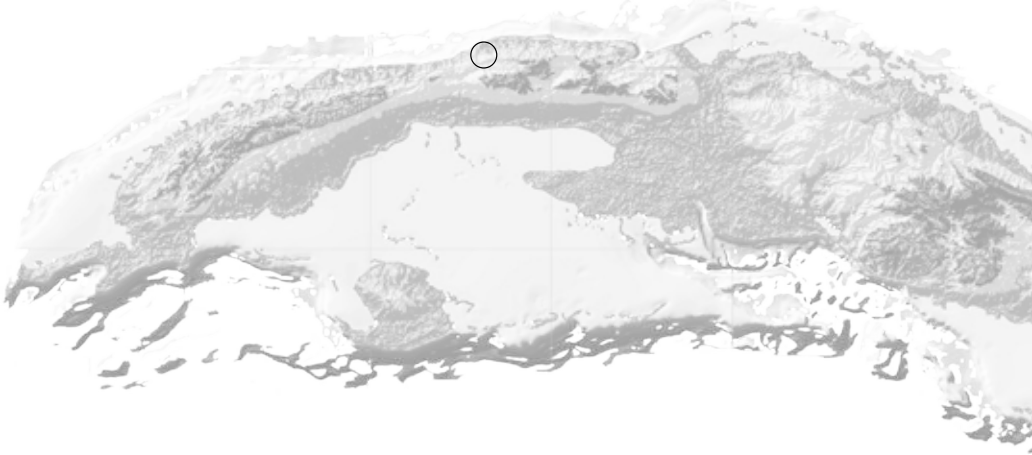


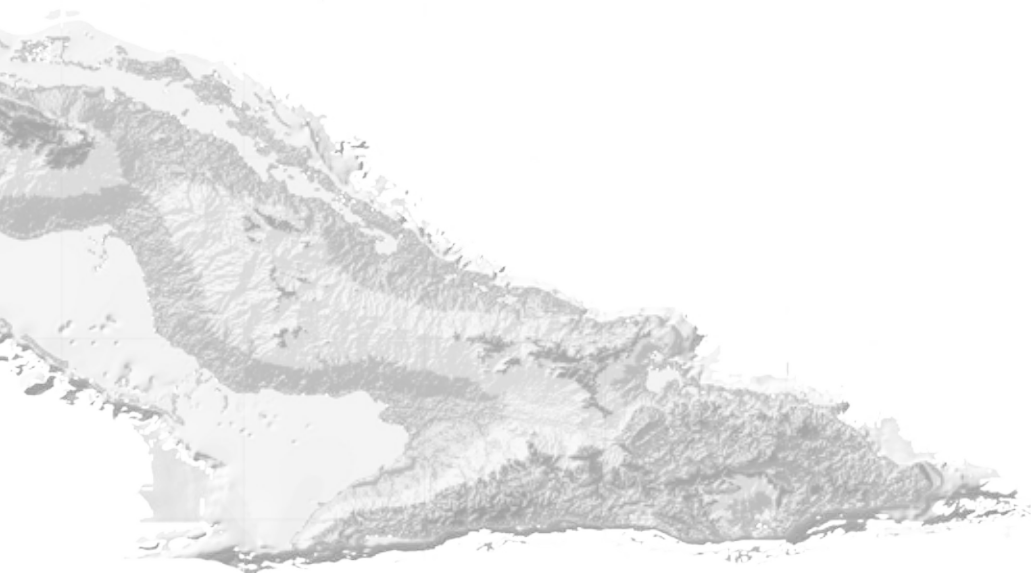
**HAVANA**  
ALAMAR





HAVANA | ALAMAR





TU DELFT  
2016/17

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**HAVANA**  
ALAMAR



## GENERAL INFORMATION

built in 1970's

93.000 inhabitants

socialist dream

## PHYSICAL

New Town social housing

built by **microbrigadas**

municipio 'Habana del Este'

6,0 km<sup>2</sup>; 1,5 km x 4 km

consists of 29 different **zona's**

## MENTAL

'La ciudad del **Hip Hop**'

'City of **Organoponicos**'

'**Alamar-Playa**'

'Heart of **Russian** Barrio'

'City of **Dreams**'

























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# INTRODUCTION



# ALAMAR

## INTRODUCTION

Alamar, a socialistic experiment for the new man by Fidel Castro. The origin of the name is perhaps linked to the representative of the Cuban bourgeoisie, the lawyer Guillermo Alamilla Gutierrez, propeller of “Constructora Alamar SA”, established on September 2, 1957. Apparently it arises from the union of the two front rows of his paternal surname, which takes the first two syllables, which adds to the first letters of the name of his mother, named Mary. This gives name to the cast: Alamilla + Mary Alamar. He named the areas where the building would take place: Alamar Olimpo—the panoramic view, the river estuary, La Habana, the Capitolio, can be seen from here; Alamar Residencial—within walking distance of the mountain and the coast and Alamar Costa Azul.

What Alamar is today—that estranged extension—springs from the La Noria ranch owned by the Velazco family. A municipality to the east of Havana, its construction began in 1958. It was originally designed as an exclusive suburb for the bourgeoisie and well-paid laborers. Later, after the triumph of the revolution, its fate took a sharp turn. In the Sixties, it became a residential area for foreign technicians. It was not until '71, that the Alamar Plan came into being. A Soviet-style urban development project, Alamar began with a rush of workers who arrived with the microbrigade movement and set it up as a model residential area—the only one of its kind in the country. Alamar maintained the same three zones as it had before, but through revolutionary alchemy the bourgeois poetic names were changed to Socialist Realist ones: what was once Olimpo became the Consejo Popular Alamar Alturas, which included zones 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11; what was once Residencial is now Alamar Playa, consisting of zones 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5; and out of Costa Azul came the Consejo Popular Alamar Este, which covered zones 12 through 25 and extended through Micro X as far as Bacuranao.

27550 people live in Alamar, 13405 men and 14145 women. 3.32 people live in a housing in average. American style villas and social housing both can be found here. Villas were built in 20s which is stopped by the revolution. Social housing is the main characteristic of Alamar. They were built during 70s and mainly built by microbrigadas. The microbrigadas is a Cuban phenomena, a Cuban solution to an economical problem, which were made up of thirty-four men: eight for planned social works, twenty-six for constructing the buildings for themselves, plus others that would eventually delineate a shimmering, monotonous maze. This make people from different place work and live together. They build their own house and still be proud of it nowadays. Because of the lacking of building material, plans of the social housing area is not finished. Unbuilt green land can be found everywhere and the infrastructure is also poor here. Water system is not well-organised and roads are

usually ended suddenly.

Alamar located in the east of Havana, in the way to the hot tourism city, Santa Cruz and 20min drive to Havana. People live here take bus or taxi (if available) to city centre to work daily. Alamar owns a strong identity from the others. Apart from the isolated location from Havana and a large amount of unidentifiable social housings, Alamar is also famous for urban farming, Cuban hip-pop and the social movement led by OMNI Zona Franca, which suggest that Alamar is a mixture of soil, music and art.

As we all know, Cuba was impacted by the collapse of the Soviet Union while Alamar was probably impacted the most among all the areas in Havana. In order to solve the food shortage problems, Cuban Government started to encourage urban farming countrywide and it gained success definitely. Vivero Farm is one of the most successful Organopónicos in Cuba owning even an international reputation of organic farming. It outreaches with native and foreign scientific researchers and local education organisations. On the other hand, it provides employments and food supply for the neighbourhoods, which make the farm physically and mentally root into the area while connect to the rest of the world.

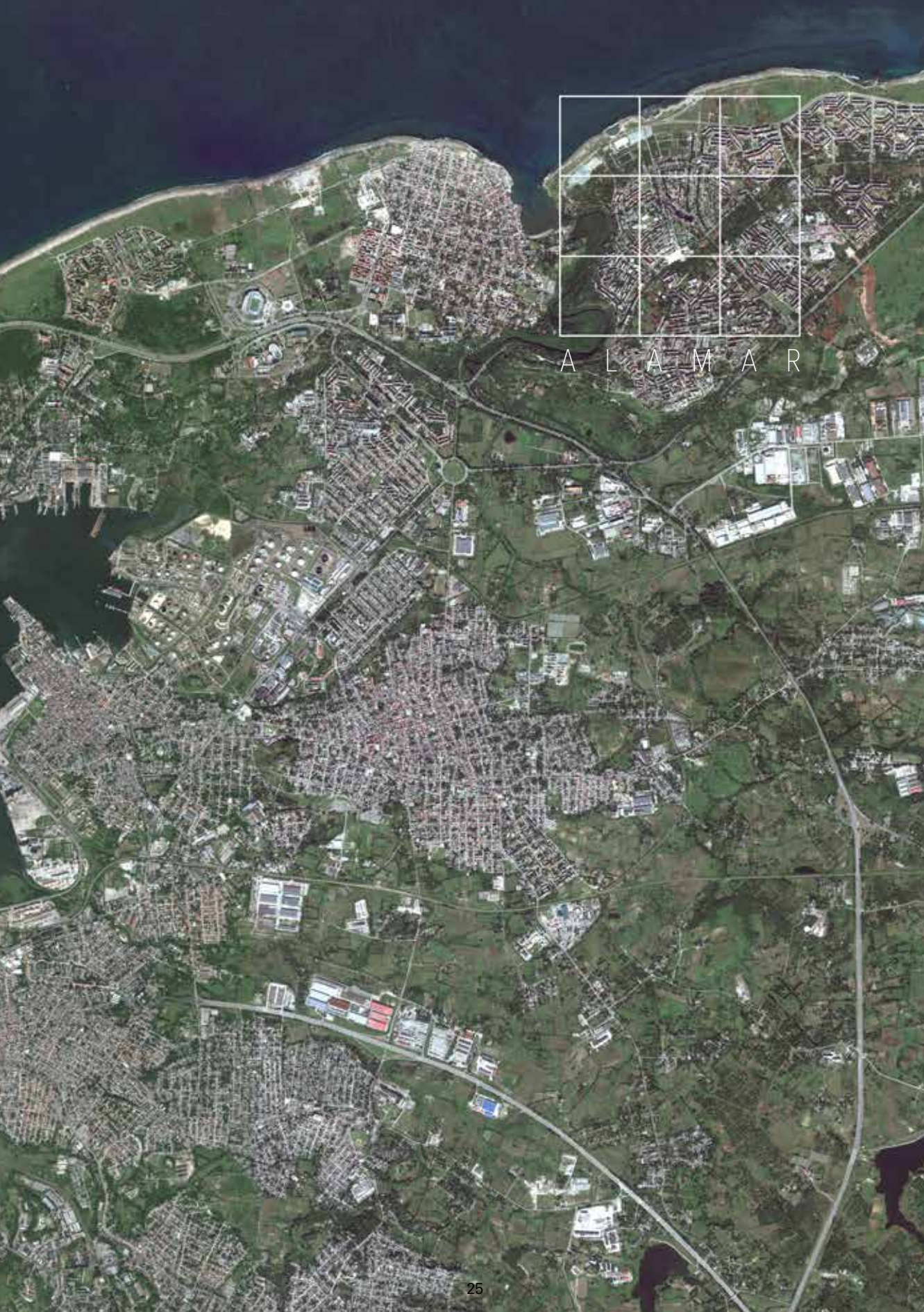
If we look into another kind of culture embraced in Alamar, it should be the Cuban hip-pop which was once born here. This started with the broadcasts from Miami which were coincidentally received in Alamar in 1980s. With the following hard times, namely the so-called Special Period, young rappers here were seeking ways to express their frustrations. Although Several famous rappers flowed to the US and Paris, the hip-pop culture still roots here while the Hip-pop Festival is held here annually bringing a lot people coming here.

The situation of Alamar is a real complex. Young people wants to move out while hip-hop is popular here. People grow food by themselves while only old people enjoy farming. Fishermen fishing along the coast while Cojimar River is polluted. Few jobs can be found here while the oil industry may bring many workers. Tourist only pass by here while more and more Airbnb can be booked in Alamar. Facing both opportunities and challenges, Alamar really need something happen here.









A L A M A R



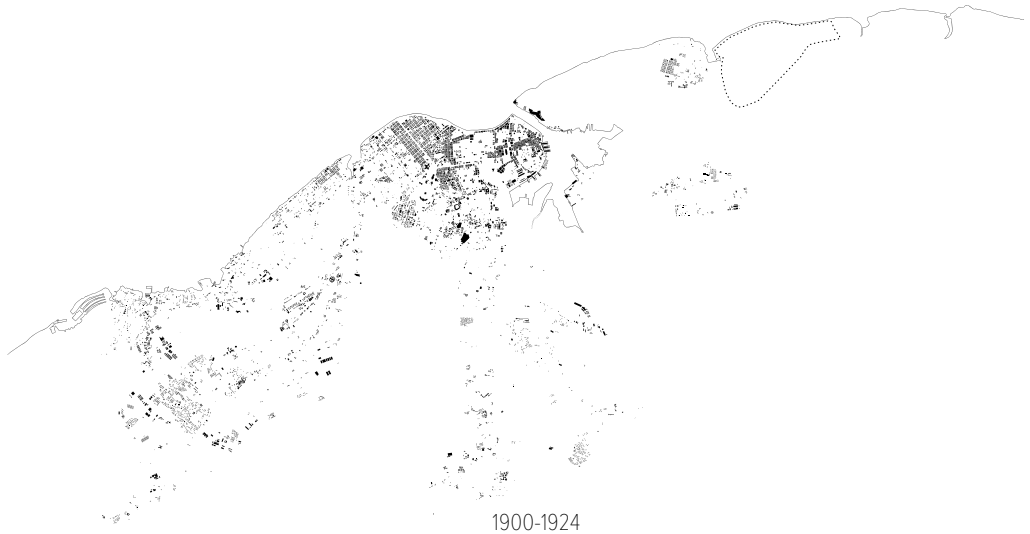
1519-1600



1601-1830



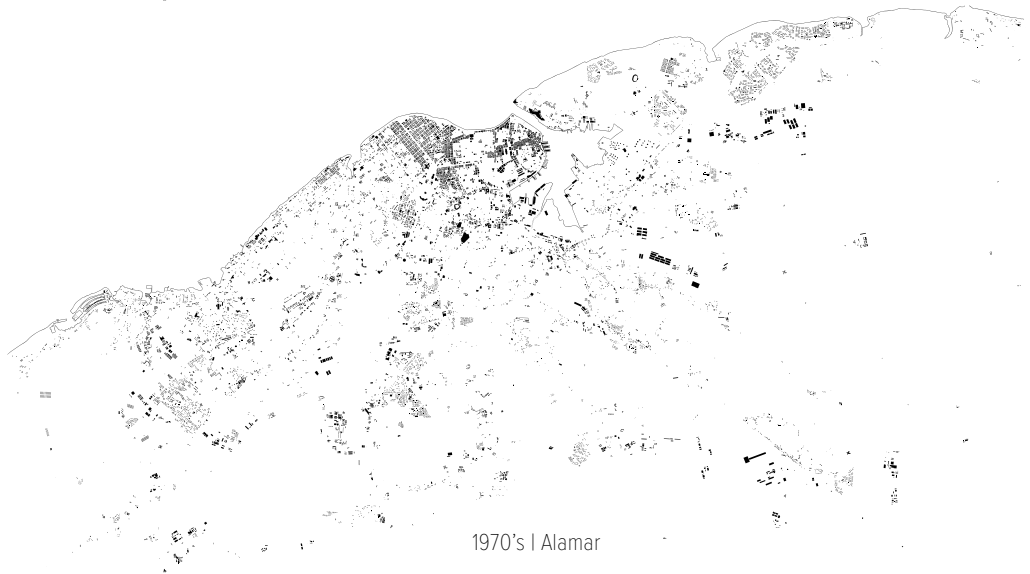
1831-1899



1900-1924



1925-1956



1970's | Alamar



POLITICAL REFUGEES



USSR TECHNICIANS



EDUCATED PROFESSORS



SLUM CLEARANCES

MAFFIA  
GAMBLING  
CORRUPTION

BATISTA

# SOCIALISM

CASTRO

CHE GUEVARA

EL HOMBRE NUEVO

CAMILLO CIENFUEGOS

CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

MICROBRIGADAS

100.000 PEOPLE

HABANA DEL ESTE

PLAN ALAMAR EL OLIMPO

INFRASTRUCTURE ALAMAR

INAV 401 BLUE HOUSES

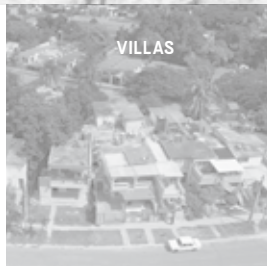
PLAN ALAMAR

MICRO X

ALAMAR  
REVO EMBARGO



TUNNEL



VILLAS



MICROBRIGADAS



MICRO X

1950 - 1955

1960-1965

1970-1975

1980-1985



**ECONOMIC CRISIS**



**RAFTER CRISIS**

**NO FUEL FROM USSR**

**SPECIAL PERIOD**

**MEANINGFUL  
EXPRESSION**

**RAP  
POETRY  
PERFORMANCES**

**AGRICULTURE SELF-SUFFICIENT  
RAP CULTURE  
COUNTERCULTURE**

**SUSTAINABLE  
AGRICULTURE**

**NO CHEMICALS  
NO MACHINES**

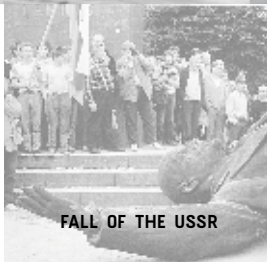
**REGGAETON**

**RELAXATION EMBARGO**

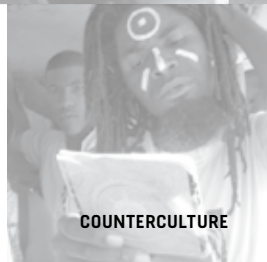
**FUTURE OF  
ALAMAR?**

**?**

**END?**



**FALL OF THE USSR**



**COUNTERCULTURE**



**SELF-SUFFICIENT**



**OIL ALONG THE COAST**

**1985-1990**

**1995-2000**

**2005-2010**

**2015-2020**

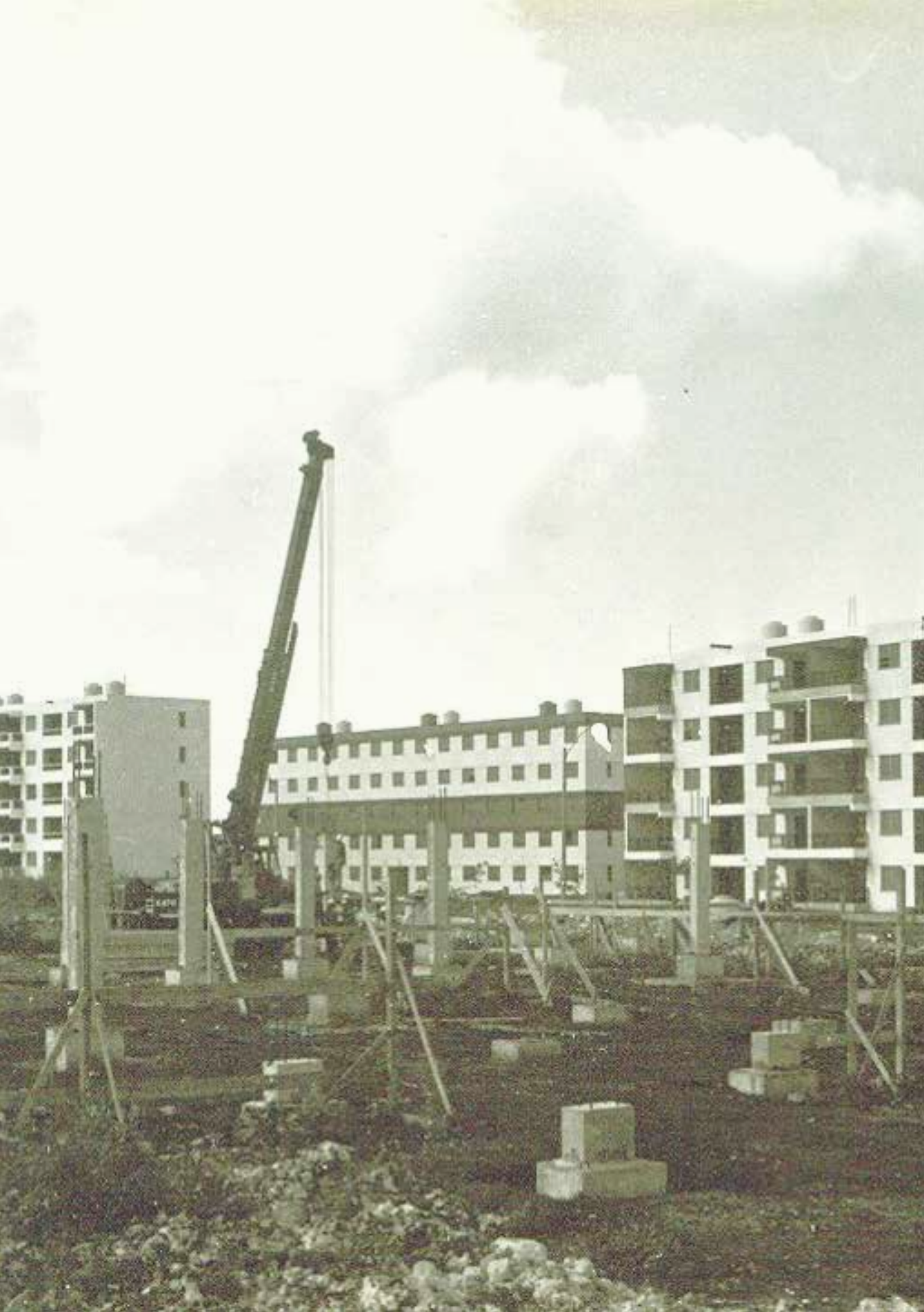


A black and white photograph of a building facade. The upper portion features a window with a white frame and a metal security grille. Below the window is a decorative horizontal band with a geometric pattern. To the left, a set of concrete stairs leads up to a dark doorway. In the foreground, a large, dark-leafed plant is supported by wooden stakes on a gravelly ground. The word "PHYSICAL" is printed in white, spaced-out capital letters across the middle of the image.

PHYSICAL







# ALAMAR PLAN 'EL OLYMPO'

## The beginning of Alamar

The region of Alamar was intended to become a luxurious urban villa extension of Havana. In April 1955 Dr. Alamilla submitted a sketch plan called 'Plan El Olympto (or Olimpo)'. This plan was praised for speculations. The stories of making money by buying a plot became famous in the late fifties. But the villa suburbs would have never been built due to the Triumph of the revolution of 1960. Everything changed.

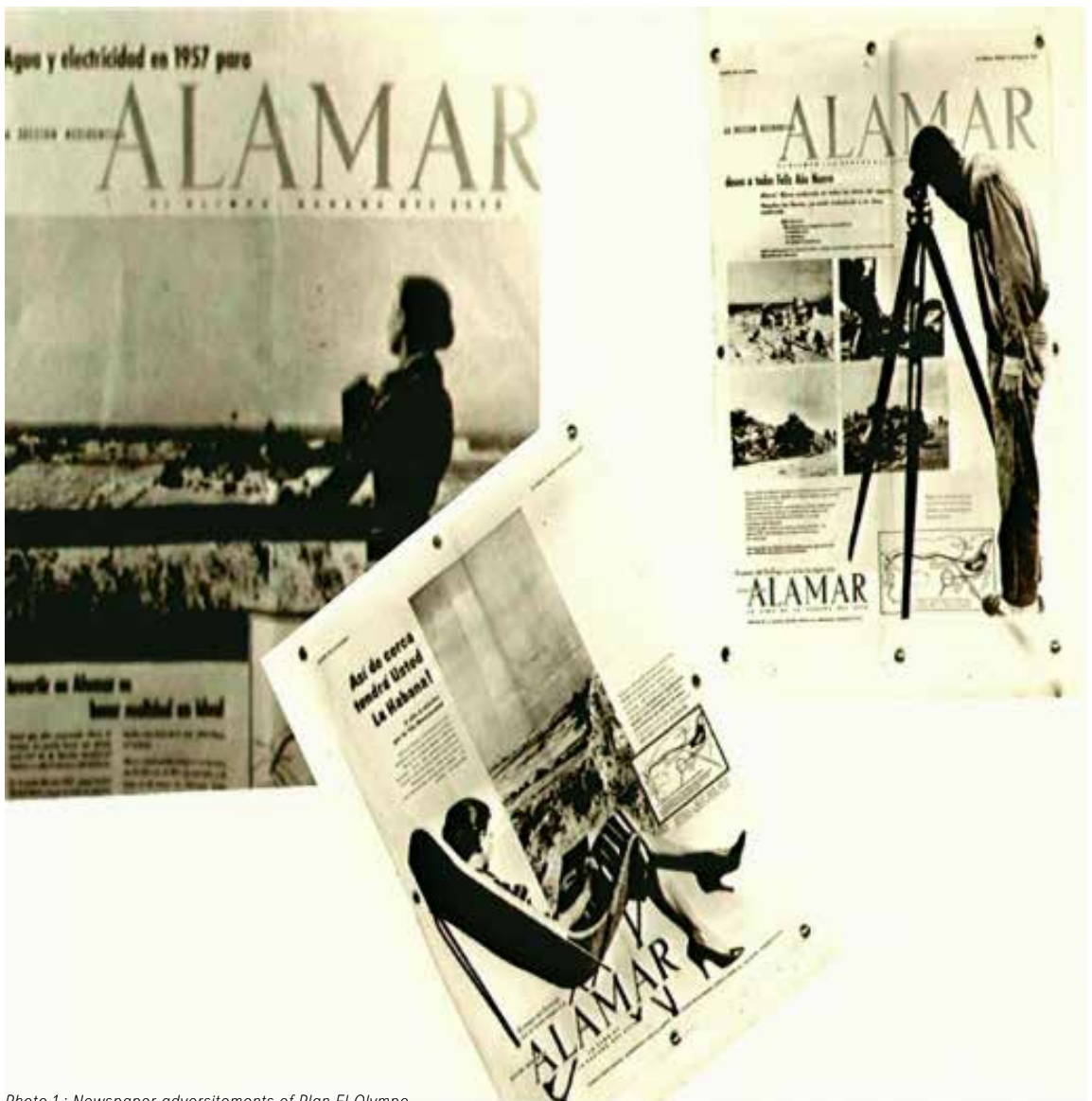



Photo 1 : Newspaper advertisements of Plan El Olympto.



An aerial, black and white photograph of a vast, flat landscape. The terrain is crisscrossed by a dense network of light-colored, winding roads and paths that form a complex, almost chaotic grid. The roads vary in width and direction, some following straight lines while others curve and loop. The overall impression is one of a large-scale, ambitious urban or infrastructure plan that has been partially realized. The background shows a hazy horizon under a bright sky.

### Plan El Olympe under construction

Although the plan will never be finished, the construction workers started very ambitious. All the roads around Alamar were constructed before The Triumph of the Revolution. Unfortunately only a couple of the original villas were constructed since the plan started in 1958.



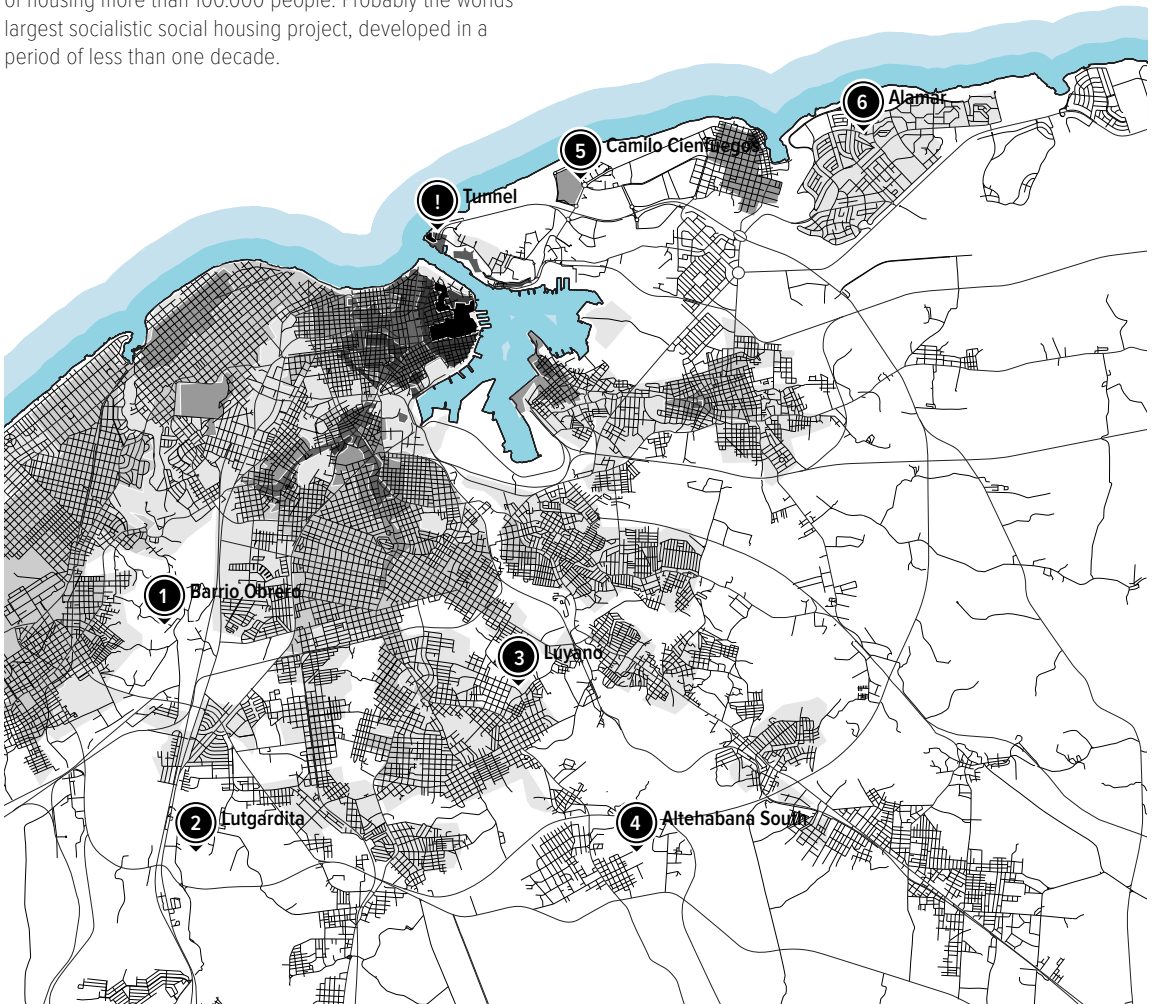
# SOCIAL HOUSING

## Development of pre-revolution social housing

### Social housing development

In the early years of the previous century, there was a trend to expand Havana to the south-west. This had much to do with the harbour closing off the rest of the coastline. Unable to extend to the east. By realizing the Habana Bay Tunnel in 1958, the expansion towards the east coast became an option, which was used intensively. It became a plac for speculations. Invest projects started to raise and people were told that investing in Habana del Este was worth some good money.

According to the book Architecture and Urbanism of the Cuban Revolution (1989), Robert Segre states that between 1965 and 1970 "a significant decline in housing occurs built by the State; over 10,000 made in 1967, which was lowered to only 4000 in 1970". The microbrigadas had taken over as a self built movement. Their main product was Alamar, capable of housing more than 100.000 people. Probably the worlds largest socialistic social housing project, developed in a period of less than one decade.





### 1 - Barrio Obrero (1911)

The very first social housing project starts roughly a decade after the end of the Spanish-American war. This first social housing project was one with 1100 small houses in Pogolotti, Marianao. Typological; small Cuban villa's with brick walls and pitched roofs, orientated towards small streets.



### 2 - Lutgardita (1929)

Twenty years were required to built another 100 small detached houses. For the first time, the urban facilities were designed as part of the project. A post office, trainstation and industry was realized by Govantes and Cabarrocas architecture. Higher quality housing for roughly 500 people.



### 3 - Luyanó (1944-1948)

Characterized as being the first multistory building project and the first social housing project in modern architecture style was realized by Professor Pedro Martinez Inclán. An urban project with roughly 200 houses. The original plan was to hae more than 1.500 houses and different facilities, but these were never built.



### ! - Realizing of the Habana Bay Tunnel (1958)

The Tunnel was the legacy of Batista, realized just months before the Triumph of the Revolution. When the tunnel was finalized, the first connection was made between the west orientated inner city of Havana and the more rural area of the east river bank, maken more housing development possible.



### 4 - Altehabana South (1960-1970)

A big project to house over 110.000 people in an urban development that started before the revolution and was realized in just a bit longer than two decades. It was more an expansion of the already existing urban tissue, than being it a big social housing project.



### 5 - Camilo Ceintefuegos (1965)

As soon as Castro took the power in the early hours of the 1960, he started to present his socialistic plans. equality in the basic needs for all Cubans. The housing project for 15.000 people was designed under influence of Milanese architect Franco Albini.



### 6 - Alamar (1970s)

The housing need was decreased a lot when in 1972, the first part of Alamar, Zona 1 and 2 were realized. Even though money was a big issue, it was possible to provide cheap social housing. This mainly had to do with the fact that the houses were realized by the so called 'Microbrigadas'.

# SOCIAL HOUSING OF THE REVOLUTION

## Architectural plans around Havana in 1960s - 2000s

### 1960's Idealism

#### Masterplan of Camilo Cienfuegos

The first architectural act after the Triumph of the Revolution was implementing Castro's socialist vision on the country. Although Castro decided not to invest a lot in Havana, he had to expand the housing stock of Havana.

The dream of Castro was realized in the sixties by creating an inner facing neighborhood, housing 15.000 inhabitants. an organized green field with independent building volumes around a vivid social core.



1960



Idealism  
Housing as basic need



Rationalism  
Small housing efficiency



Optimism  
Correcting mistakes

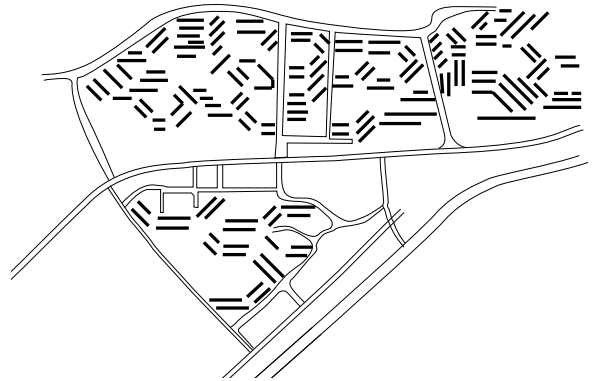


### 1970's & 1980's Rationalism

#### Masterplan of Alamar

The utopian dream of the socialistic leader only lasted for around fifteen years. The Triumph of the Revolution triggered a baby boom. Due to this unexpected population growth, Havana needed an urban extension. The Habana Bay Tunnel opened Havana to the east, where Castro designed his Camilo Cienfuegos dream project.

Repeating this just behind the Cojimar river was the idea. From this idea, Plan Alamar was developed. Much cheaper than the sixties project, simply because there was no money. With no money, Alamar and its rationalism were born.



1975

1990

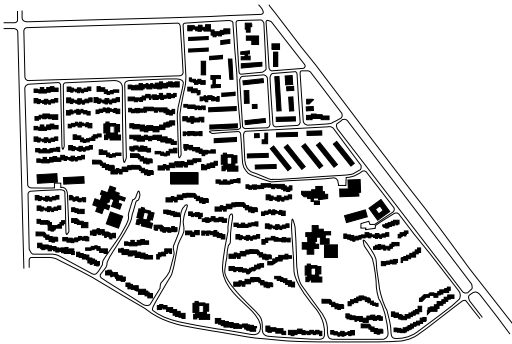


## 1980's & 1990's Optimism

### Masterplan of Los Arboledas

The eighties of last century was a silent period. The revolution had found its place in Cuba and the people were searching for positiveness. The just partly realized plan of Los Arboledas was built in the period defined as 'Optimism'. Political seen, the times were changing, Castro took more distance and the people saw that as an opportunity.

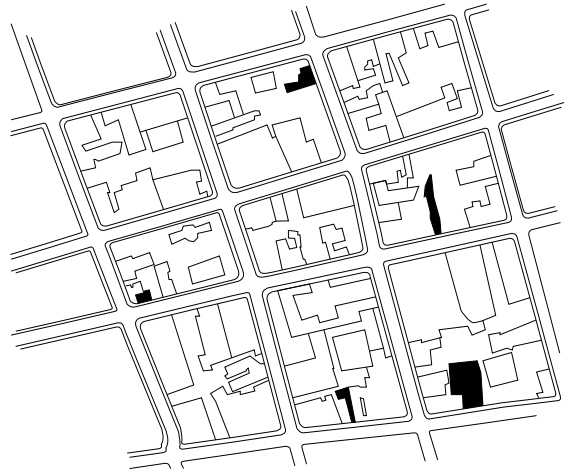
Time to learn from the mistakes of former projects as Alamar, this plan had an very good urban design. Gradually the car roads vanished and the pedestrain walk rised under a green roof of tree leaves. The many trees planted in the area provided a nice climate on the outside as well as in the dwellings.



## 1990's & -- Pragmatism

### Infill projects in the inner city of Havana

Good periods never last long in Cuba. Just a decade after the Los Arboledas masterplan, in 1991, the economic foundation of Cuba was destroyed. The USSR collapsed and Cuba came in bad economic weather. A tough period followed, the so called 'Special Period'. A period of extreme poorness was also visible in architecture. The time of enormous projects like Alamar were long gone. Small interventions in the inner city were mainly made out of pure necessity.



1990

2005

2020



# ALAMAR'S SOCIAL HOUSING

## Background information of Alamar

### Origin of Alamar

The original plan of Alamar suffered a lot during the period followed by the revolution. The sketches of doctor Alamilla were doomed to be realized. The plan stood almost still for a decade.

Until the moment that Castro found a new purpose for the area.

Before Alamar was planned as an urban villa extension, it was a more rural area. The spring is found in the La Noria ranch, property of the family Velazco.

When the speculations of the Habana Bay Tunnel came, the east of Havana became more interesting for development. Multiple companies tried to make plans for the rural east coast. Doctor Alamilla was an ophthalmologist who wanted to leave a legacy. Guillermo Alamilla Gutierrez went to court on June 26, 1957 to finally get proof of his Plan El Olympo, together with his Costa Azul Alamar plan. Both plans were located on the territorial district of the Olympus heights.

April 5th of 1958, the urban plan was finalized in order to house the bourgeoisie.

### Alamar and the name

The ambitious plans of the doctor were never realized. The revolution ended the dream of luxurious villas, but did not end his legacy. The name Alamar had two origins. The first sounds the most logical. Doctor Alamilla's dear beloved was named Margherita. Take the three letters of both names and you will get Ala-Mar.

The second reason behind the name Alamar can be found in the same separation of the word. Ala means the wing, the separation, the new extension. La mar can be translated to the sea, connected to the location.

Alamilla had an image in mind of a Royal Poinciana tree in bloom. The tree is native to the area and can grow with a beautiful pink colour. His dream was flourish.

<http://www.e-flux.com/journal/68/60675/alamar-an-oblique-approach/>



Photo 1. Model of Alamar as it was intended in 1972.

## The location of Alamar

The different areas in Alamar were named to the landmarks in those areas. Alamar Olimpo, was the area with a high amount of housing, the real housing district of Alamar. Strangly enough, he called the district with a panoramic view on the river, on Havanas inner city and from were you could see Capital building, Alamar Residential. . The last area was Alamar Costa Azul, the one closest to the coast. you could walk in two directions from this area, both the beach and the mounstains were close by.

Later these areas we named into more socialistic names. Olimpo became the Consejo Popular Alamar Alturas, which included zones 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11. Residencial became Alamar Playa, consisting of zones 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. Costa Azul was named Consejo Popular Alamar Este, which covered zones 12 through 25, which also included the Siberia of Alamar, Micro X.

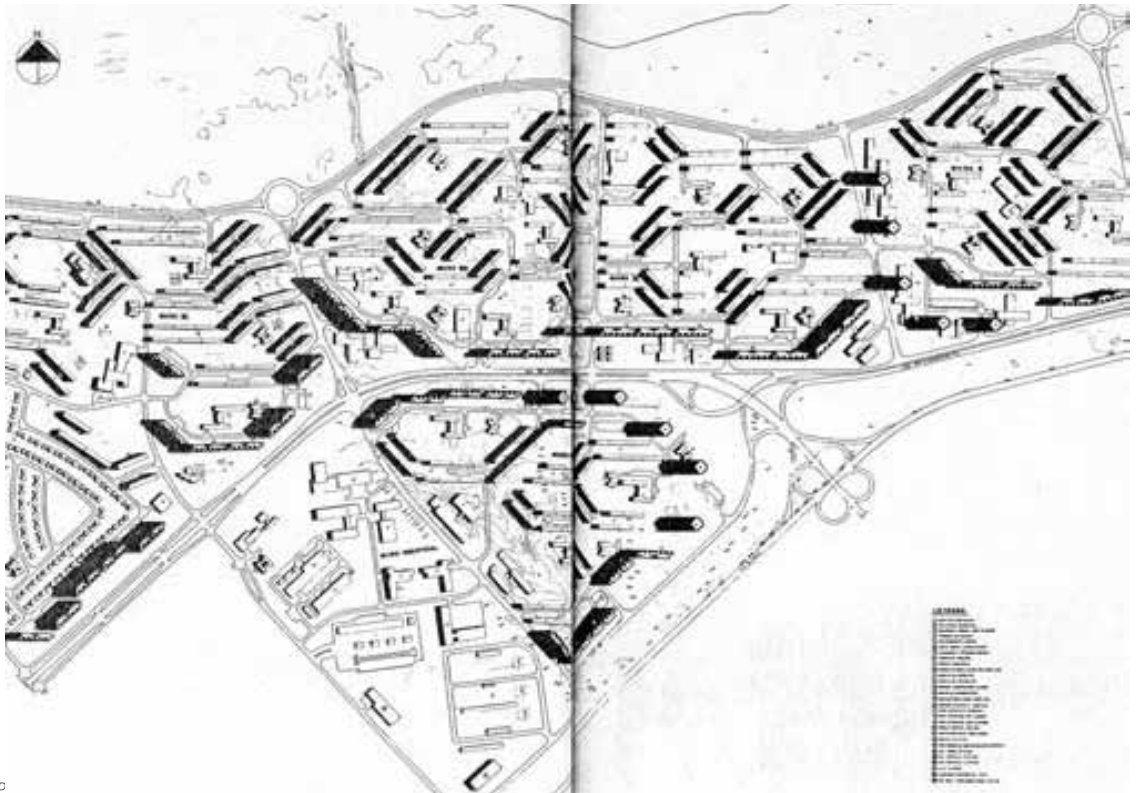
## Alamar in the sixties

Alamar stood almost still between 1959 and 1970. Some people wo obtained pieces of land within Alamar tried to built their new homes. in total 31 houses were realized. 14 of them within a district called El Mirador. The owners of those villas were mainly bank employees, office workers. mainly middle class people. The really wealthy people already found their place somewhere else within Cuba or abroad.

Many of the original inhabitants of the 1960s Alamar fled on a later stage, leaving their villas behind. These houses gave place to foreign technicians.

In the period directly after the revolution, another total of 401 houses were added by the INAV, the housing government. These houses were the so called blue houses.

<http://www.e-flux.com/journal/68/60675/alar-mar-an-oblique-approach/>







# MICROBRIGADAS

## Building and organization

The microbrigadas is a Cuban phenomena, a Cuban solution to an economical problem. Back in the 70's, a lot of houses were needed, but there was no money. The baby boom of the 60's provided an enormous polulation growth, giving a high unemployment rate.

in order to provide work for all the people, Castro came in December 1960 with its solution to both problems, the microbrigadas.

The members of microbragadas were from different companies. They were paid by the state-owned office during they were contracting while also paid by the buiding activity while traditional construction workers were paid much less. People who don't join the brigade as a full time job are required to help building the apartments in the weekends and the evenings.

One team owns a foreman and four administrative

*Fidel Castro's Mansions, 1:13000*



## Procedure

### Step 1

One or more persons of the companies from different sectors go to the microbrigade to build while state-owned offices in the early seventies had a certain production.

### Step 2

Every microbrigade consists of 33 persons. The amount of persons is based on the production required. One standard building block, which many of them are in Alamar, should be finished in exactly nine months.

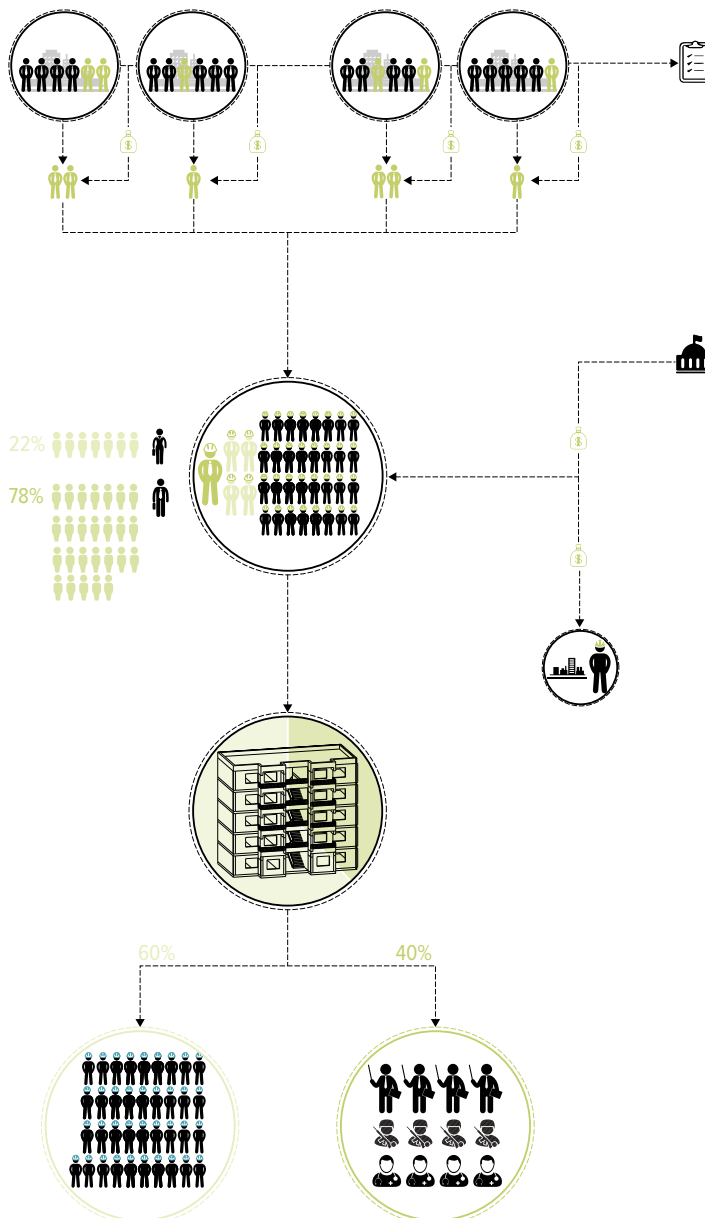
Most of the brigadas had one foreman and four persons with administrative tasks within the microbrigade. Next to these jobs they were also construction workers.

### Step 3

Generally, 60% of the residential space was distributed within the microbrigadas while the rest will supply to other professions, for example, teachers, military and doctors.

persons. The average amount of women in the microbrigade is 22% or seven persons. The amount of women comes from the concept itself. In the case of Alamar, the urban idea was to involve a lot of social and public functions for the community, but also as a second goal to provide work for the women close by their homes. There were also two microbrigadas entirely consisting of women.

78% of the microbrigadas were male. Most of them were unskilled office workers. In the short period that they worked in the brigade, they became skilled, but then quit working, and most of them rejoined the former (state) office where they worked.



# MICROBRIGADAS

## Organization and quality

### Microbrigadas - alternative for state housing

The microbrigadas found their origin in December 1970. The self built movement started with 1.000 workers in order to create 1.154 homes, mainly for themselves.

The situation in which the microbrigadas were formed were harsh. They were transforming Cuban society. The microbrigadas were able to build communism faster than the Soviet Union and China ever did, the microbrigadas were built very fast. They were given free education, no more hungry, fast built hospitals etc. Prostitution and gambling almost vanished. But still, there was the embargo: higher educated (technicians) fled the country. Basic goods as building materials were needed.

### Working in the microbrigadas

Working in a microbrigada was both an honour as well as a difficulty. The privilege was there because there was an option for a new house. Castro promised everyone a home, you were basically working on your own house. The difficulty of working in a brigade was twofold. On one side you could earn more than ordinary construction workers, because you were taken from your office job, and the (state) company would continue to pay your salary. This made things unequal. The people taken from their office jobs had mainly to do with the unemployment rate and the lack of work.

On the other hand, because you were taken from your daily job, you had to learn everything from the start. The unskilled labour was difficult and as soon as you had learned the profession, in like three years, they assigned you a house.

### A quality dwelling by the microbrigadas

For the brigadas, quality was important. The reason was simple. Each of the 33 workers within the brigade could benefit from its own quality, because on forehand it was unknown when or which apartment was assigned to whom. For that simple reason, everyone tried to do their best on every detail of every apartment they worked on. They were tightly connected with the project.

The building typology of the microbrigadas were simple. A floorplan of four apartments next to one another in a row. First four stories, later five, were using two staircases. On each level, two front doors were located on the terrace of the staircase. The total of twenty apartments had to be finished by 33 (unskilled) labour workers within a period of maximum nine months. They were only able to reach such a speed because the building methods were standardized and the buildings were designed to be separated for 33 persons.

The microbrigadas is the only reason why Alamar consists of a repetition of many of the same typology. Although the building system has changed within the decade in which Alamar was constructed, the typology has not changed that much. Only the length of the building had variations, but after building some longer blocks, the shift was made back to the four-row-apartments plan in order to only let one brigade work on one apartment block.



Photo 1: Streetlife of Alamar in the early seventies, just after completion. Source: Robert Segre on <http://www.e-flux.com/journal/68/60675/alamar-an-oblique-approach/>



## The distribution of apartments

Once one brigade finished a building block within around nine months, the workers were gathered for public meetings where they would divide the apartments. twenty percents of the dwellings were delivered to the state in order to house people in desperate need of a house due to any kind of reason. This was back then the same as what happens now with people that had an unsave house in the inner city of Havana.

In theory, the workers that had participated directly in the construction of those houses, did not grant special rights. The colleagues of the ones who joined the microbrigada had the same rights. For this same reason the movement ended. In the end, most workers of the microbrigada did not get a house after all. For the last part of Alamar, Micro X, prisoners were used to finalize the housing project.

## Growth and decline of the movement

Started in december 1970 with the 1.000 workers was just the start. The movement became popular thanks to the involvement of people. Colleagues joined the movement from the beginning by helping in the evenings and the weekends. Not even two years after they started, the movement had already worked on 65% of the dwelling production in Cuba.

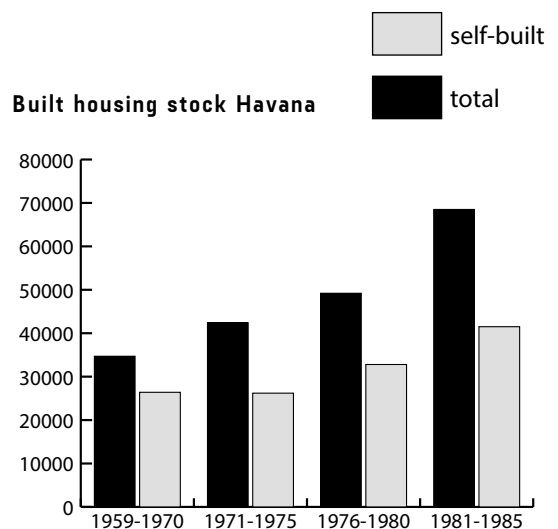
By the end of 1973, 444 brigadas were formed with a total of 12.715 workers, 1975 was the year for the Microbrigadas, 30.000 workers in 1150 brigadas worked 10 hours a day, starting at 08:00 until 18:00. Six days a week and the sunday morning. After 1975, the amount of brigadas started to decline for the first time since it was founded. The main reason was the war in Angola. Castro wanted to support the socialist revolution in Angola. Eventhough, between 1981 and '83, the amount of houses built by the white helmet movement was 3,7 times higher than state housing. 48.785 state units versus 182.439 self-built units.

This all sounds wonderfull, but there should be mentioned that only 40% of those units were listed as 'good'. Next to that, there was a harsh decline of the movement after 1979, the completion of Alamar. Fidel Castro gave a speech mid 1986, where he questioned a revival of the movement. It partly started, more people started to join the movement again. It was the Special Period of 1991 that ended the movement.

*Hamberg, Jill (1986), 'CUBA'. In: The International Handbook of Housing Policies and Practices, London. Matey, K. (1986). Microbrigadas in Cuba a Collective Form of Self-help Housing. Microbrigadas, for Netherland's Journal of Housing", West Germany.*

## Factories had to maintain

If one person was taken from their jobs, the colleagues had to maintain the same level of production. This was the idea, to ideal maybe. Only a hand full of factories were able to maintain their production goals. The Socialist Vanguard factory was one of them. Guided by Maximum Andión. The production even went up! For this reason, Castro and architect Humberto Ramírez added him to the production team of Plan Alamar.



# IMPORTING KNOWLEDGE

## Distribution of building typology knowledge to Cuba

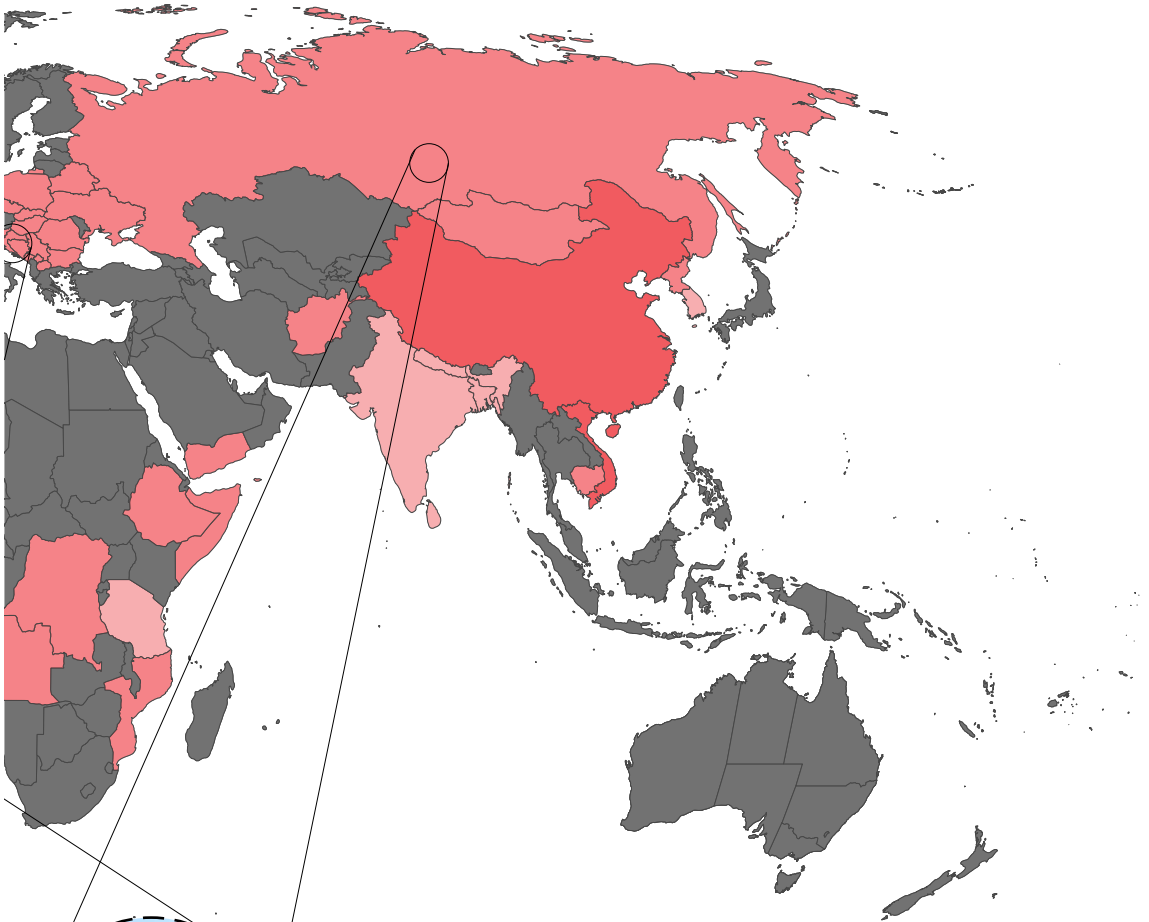


The American embargo made it very difficult for Cuba to import building materials. In the period of Alamar in the seventies, the Microbrigadas were assigned to multiple building materials. Over the years, the construction principle changed, without changing the typology.

Most of the imported construction systems were found in socialist countries. The main supplier of building systems was the USSR. The Scandinavian countries, but also France and Canada have shared knowledge on building solutions in the end of the seventies. The CIAM had been very influential for the reinterpretation of the new building block. Leading were designs based on the principle of Le Corbusier's *Unité d'Habitation* and Russian interpretations.

The Giron building system is the most well known building system. It was developed on the knowledge of school buildings. Giron was used for almost all wall elements, but in the 'Giron-block', a special floor element was used. This element was meant to be used for schools, but out of necessity, also houses were built with it.

Photo 1 : World map with socialist countries and material transport



Great panel VI knowledge transport

- Current socialist countries
- Former socialist regimes
- Former socialist governments

Photo 1 :Construction element movement across the world.

Large panel VI

The large construction panels originate from France as *camus coignet* (Large panel IV), but were further developed by the Soviet Union. Due to hurricane Flora of 1963, the USSR donated a Gran Panel factory to Santiago de Cuba. By sharing this knowledge, it became the most widely used construction method in Cuba. Able to build a facade completely out of one element.

Other construction principles were imported from among other locations: from Yugoslavia came the so called Slip Mold system, Cuba imported knowledge from Scandinavia about the Large panel 70 and the IMS system which was original from the Serbian Material Institute.

2

# URBAN.POSITION



# POSITION

## Centrifugal

Alamar, also named Alamar-Playa, is a district in east part of the city of La Habana in Cuba, part of the municipio of Habana del Este.

### Municipalities in Havana

- Arroyo Naranjo
- Beyeros
- Centro Habana
- Cerro
- Cotorro
- Diez de octubre
- Guanabacoa

### La Habana del Este

- La Habana Vieja
- La Lisa
- Marianao
- Playa
- Palaza de la Revolucion
- Regla
- San Miguel del Padron

### Religion in La Habana del Este

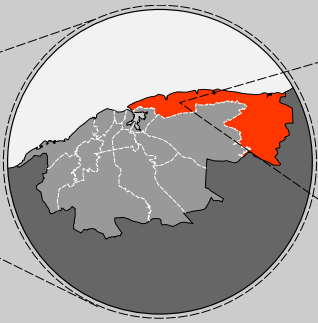
#### Alamar Este Alamar-Playa Alturas de Alamar

- Camilo Cienfuegos
- Campo Florido
- Conjimar
- Guanabo (inculding
- Santa Maria del Mar
- Tarara
- Guiteras)

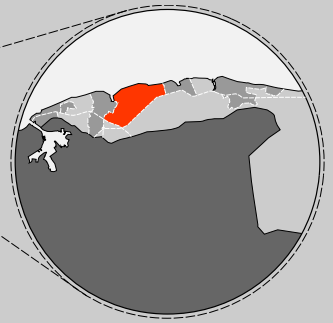




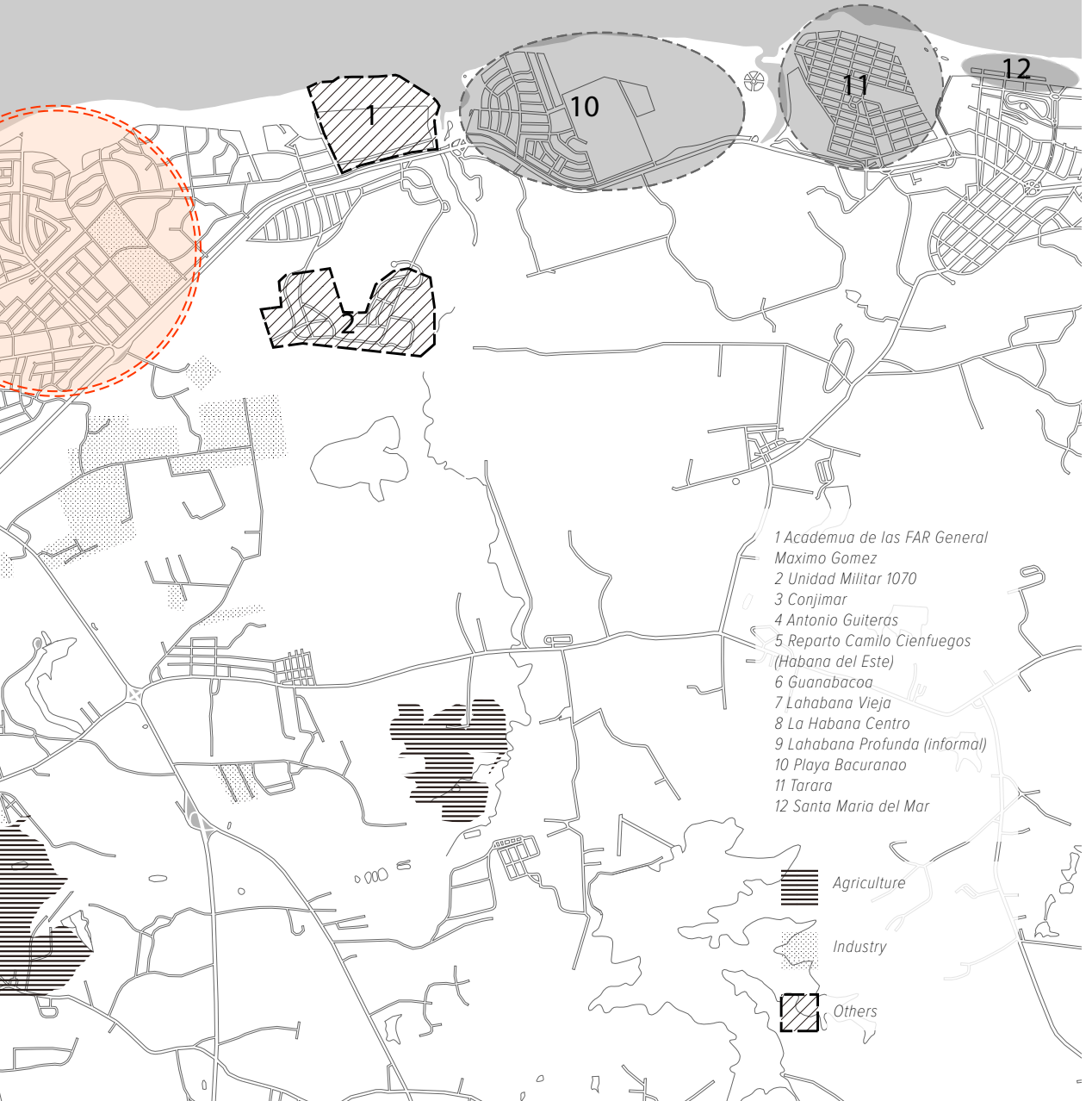
Havana in Cuba









Havana del Este in Havana



Alamar in Havana del Este



**URBAN REGION**  
**Road Network**

-  Street
-  Secondary main road
-  Main road
-  Highway
-  Route towards Alamar
-  Alamar

*Road network of Havana  
and its expansion direction*





The whole story of Alamar starts from the Tunel del La Habana of the great importance for the transport and majesty since it connects two sides of the bay of Havana, Before the tunnel completed, the city has been expanding towards west and deep Havana for hundreds of years (seen by the main roads and highway expansion).

Below the bay of Havana, along 733 meters, the impressive work

was built by the company named French Society de Grandes Travaux de Marseille. It was built between 1957 and 1958, ending on May 31, 1958. The construction condition was extremely difficult since it need to work under water.

The tunnel links La Habana del Este with the rest part of Havana, making it part of the urban area. Nowadays, the main transportation from the old Havana to Alamar way around is

still through the tunnel and the Via Monumental. It takes 15min to 20min around by car.

In Havana, the local cars usually serve as private use or transformed Taxi to earn money from local people or tourism. It usually costs 5 to 8 CUC to get there by taxi.



*Tunel de La Habava in construction*



*Road network constructed before buildings in La Habana de Este*



*Road network constructed before buildings in Alamar*



*Tunel de La Habava in Havana Vieja*



*Former toll Station on the Via Monumental*



*Via Monumental towards Alamar*



*Normal taxi*









*Tourist taxi transformed by private cars*



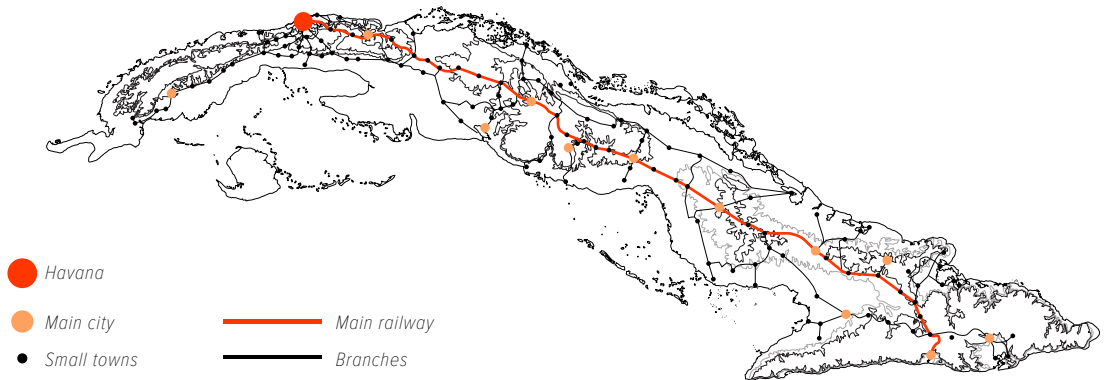
*Tourist minibus*

**URBAN REGION**  
**Railway Coverage**

-  *Railway*
-  *Branches*
-  *Stops*
-  *Industrial coverage*
-  *Domestic coverage*
-  *Alamar region*

*Railway network of Havana  
and its coverage area*





Railway distribution in Cuba as the backbone of the country

HAVANA, Cuba — The National Railway Company of Cuba, Ferrocarriles de Cuba, is the sixth oldest railroad in the world, having opened its first 17-mile long route in 1837. Now the railway covers more than 2,600 miles, stretching from Havana in the west to Santiago de Cuba on the eastern coast. It has a reputation for being the cheapest — but also the slowest — way to travel from one side of the country to the other.

The Central Station of Havana is the intersection of the industrial coverage and domestic coverage. However, from 2005 to 2009, the annual passengers decreased from 11 million to 7.5 million. Now the station is being renovated by foreign companies, causing the transportation of the railway really depressing.

The railway doesn't cover Alamar at all, only passing by the neighbor to the south.



Two-storey railways near Havana Train Station with few trains running on it.



Old train station in Havana









Trains in the station



Empty waiting room

# URBAN REGION

## Public Transportation

-  Tour3 line
-  P3 line
-  P11 line
-  P15 line
-  PC line (the Ring)
-  Region

*Bus lines going through Alamar and their terminal stations*



The Havana MetroBus is a public bus network serving the city of Havana. It is the principal public transport network of Cuban capital and is conceived as a surface subway. The fleet of MetroBus, formerly known as *camellos* or *camelitos* (Spanish for camels and little camels) for their two humps, have been modernized, and now uses large modern articulated buses, such as the Chinese-made Yutong brand, Russian-made Liaz, or

MAZ of Belarus. The stops are usually 800–1,000 metres (2,600–3,300 ft), with frequent buses in peak hours, about every 10 minutes.

though the boarder of Alamar, linking the Havana Vleja and the beach area in east Havana and bringing tourists going through.

The network consists of 17 main lines, all identified with the letter “P” preceding the number. P3, P5 and P11 pass by Alamar. What’s more, the PC line just goes near Alamar, bring the people there to a broader area of Havana. The Tour 3 line also goes

However, with the limitation of the buses and fuel, the condition of the bus in Havana is urgently to be improved. This condition also limits the connection with Alamar and Vleja and Vedado, where there are the most working places and facilities.



*Informal bus service for local people*



*Bus tour T3 from Vieha to the Playa de Este*



*People push hard to get on the bus*



*People squeezed inside the bus*



*The bus Line P11 in Almar*



*Garbage Truck in Alamar*



*Motorbike in Alamar*



*Private cars in front of the residential building in Alamar*

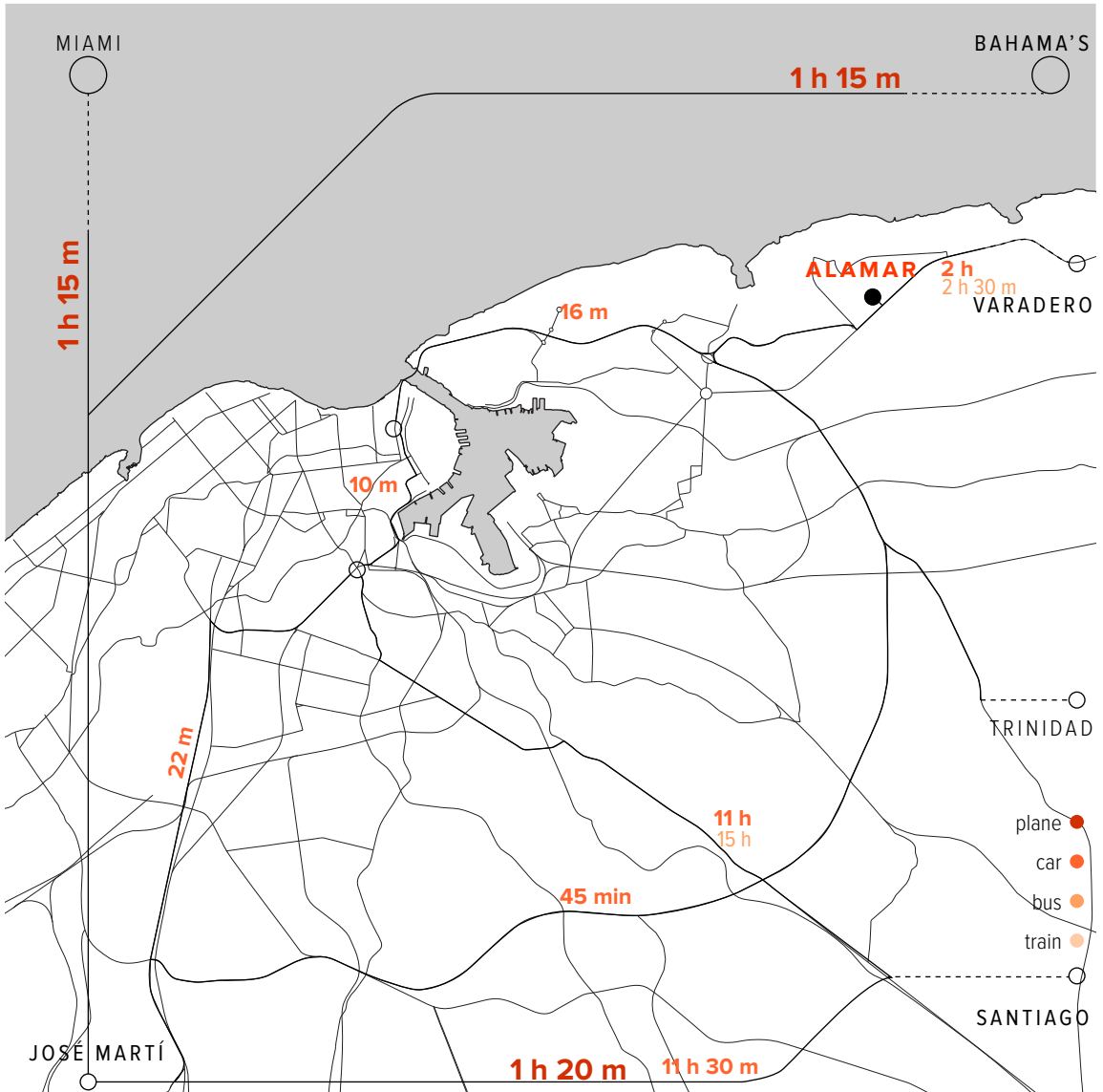


*People in Alamar getting on the bus by turn at bus stop.*



# MOBILITY

## Travel Time





Overall speaking, Alamar is isolated from the main urban areas of Havana. Only three bus lines pass by the area in which only one line goes to Havana Vieja and another one goes to Vedado. It will take at least half an hour to go to the city centre including the waiting time no matter to talk about the crowded condition on the bus.

Secondly, the area is disconnected to the railway system which constructs

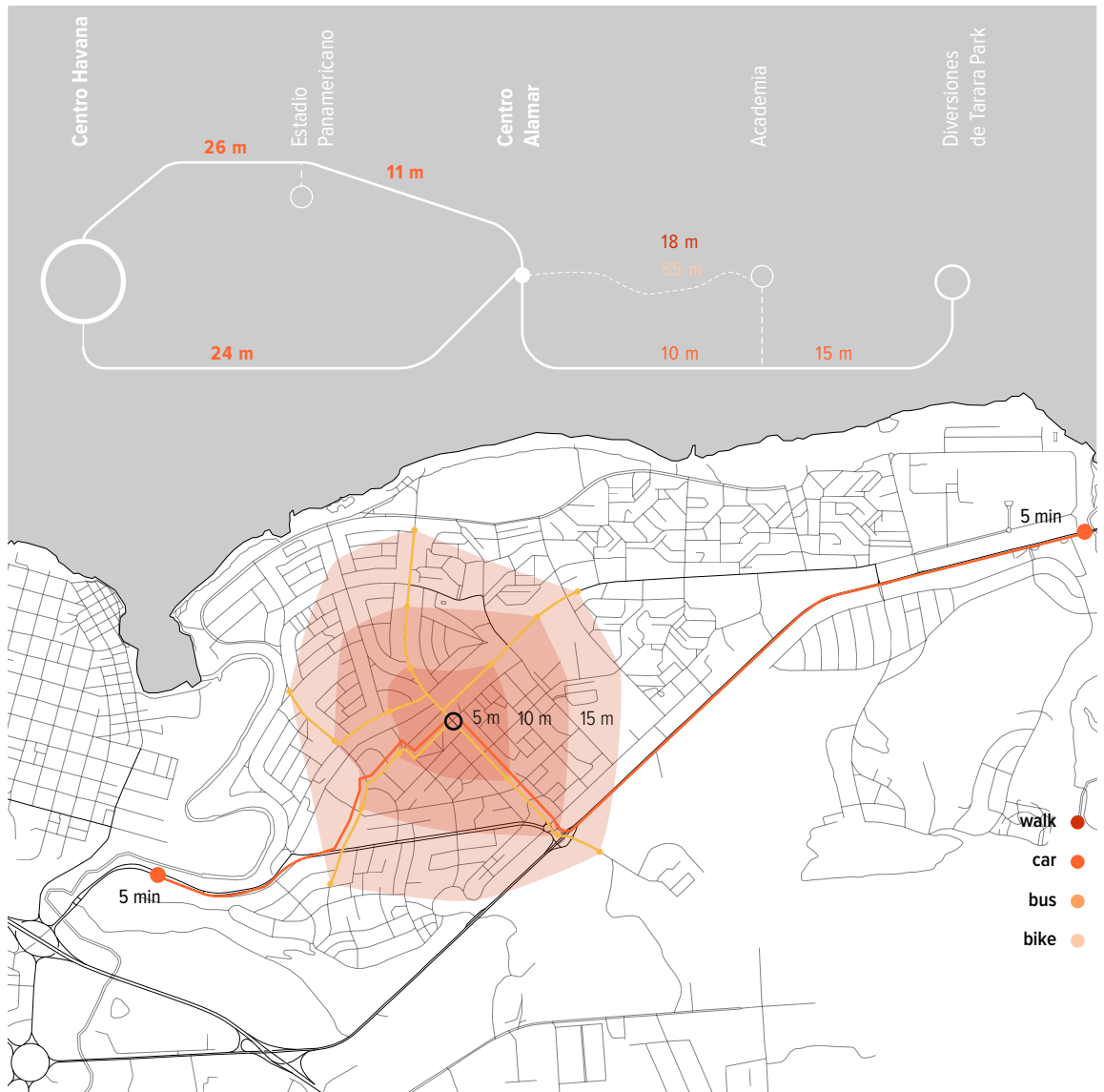
the backbone of the intercity traffic system in Cuba.

Thirdly, the not only but most important joint of Alamar and Havana is the Tudel del Havana, which is actually a four lane vehicle road basically. The load for the road is limited and will influence the future development of the area.

Fourthly, there is no direct public transportation from the area to the

airport. In this case, the area is hardly connected with the world outside. Even if the area is right beside the sea and can even receive the radio from Miami, the area is still isolated with international world.

Nevertheless, the highway passing by Alamar is the artery of the area, linking the area with the neighborhood and other tourist points in the east, such as Playa Santa Maria and even further Veredero. There are still lots of chances.

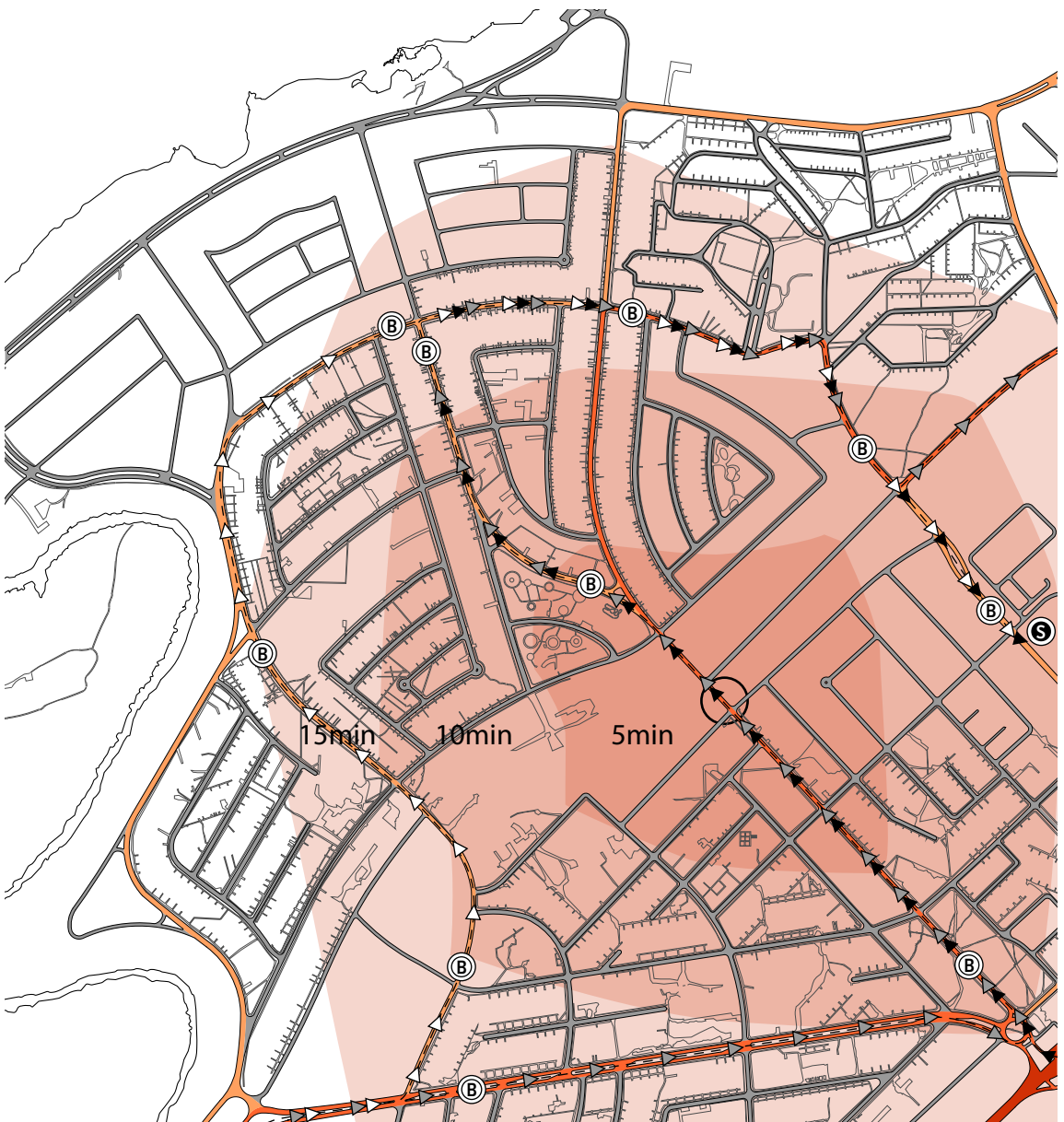


# MOBILITY

## In Alamar

- Highway
- Main neighbourhood road
- Secondary neighbourhood road
- Street
- Path
- Busline 3
- Busline 11
- Busline 15
- Busstop

Mobility Alamar, 1:13000



By cars and bus lines, one can easily get to Alamar from Vieja. The bus stops also covers most of the area while all the roads in Alamar are for vehicle. Within the area, the mobility can also be relied on cars and buses of course while if we consider the central Alamar as the starting point, one can get to the main residential area in Alamar on foot in 15-20 min.

However, for efficiency, other transportation methods also occur in

Alamar. For example, to go to other neighborhood, such as Conjimar and Guanabacoa, people will choose bicycle or motorbikes. There's no specific road for bicycle, even never appears in the whole plan. So the bicycle shares roads with cars, taxis and buses.

The hierarchy of the road system is also different from what has been planned. Except for the highway and main roads, there are also informal

roads in the empty space created by people spontaneous activities. The roads near the seaside are also in a very bad condition due to the lack of maintenance. Even the roads in the central Alamar, the surface is not that plane causing ponding sometimes. All this situations will influence the mobility within Alamar.

Furthermore, there's no continuous slow-traffic system in Alamar.



*Informal routes between blocks*



*Wild seaside road*



*Typical vehicle road*



*Motorbike through the bridge from Conjimar*



*Private car and taxi*



*The vehicle road and bicycle route are mix-used.*

3

A L A M A R  
S T R U C T U R E S





Photo 1 : Aerial photo of Alamar nowadays. Google Earth



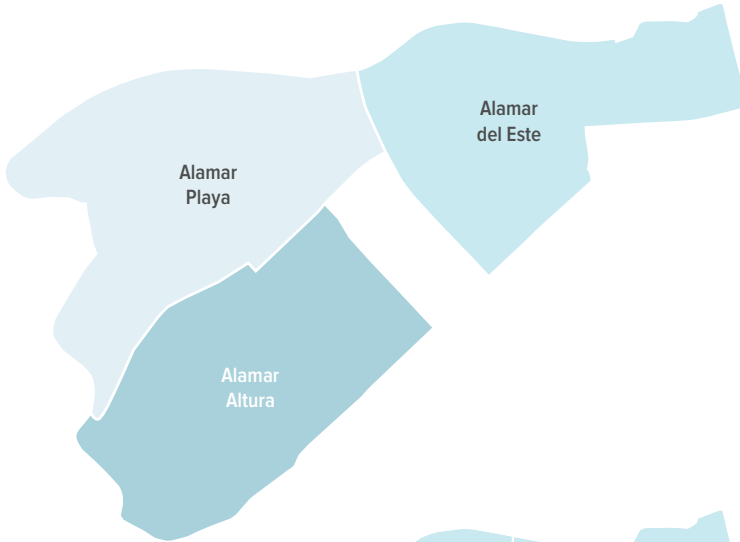
### **New town Alamar**

Alamar is a new town of the early seventies. A young district with a short but interesting history. Unlike other new towns, Alamar has a optimal location, along a coast and a nice but neglected waterfront. Neglecting is the standard in Alamar, the buildings are almost 50 years old and never renovated.

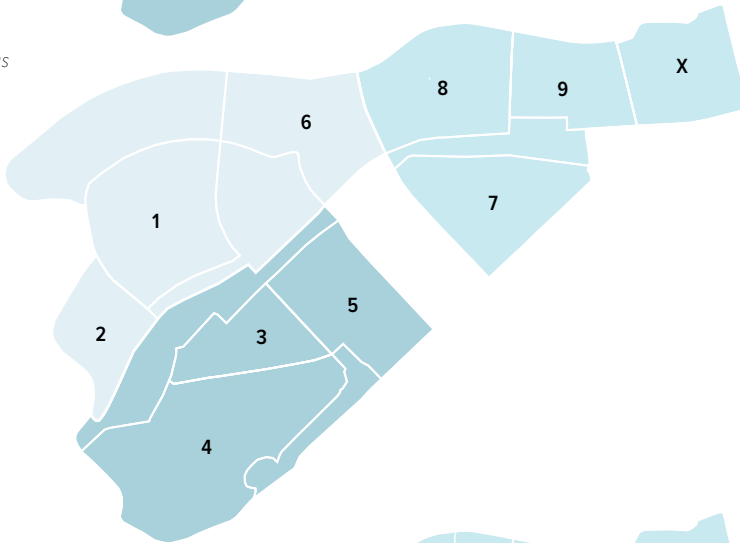
# ALAMAR ORGANIZATION

## Districts and Zonas

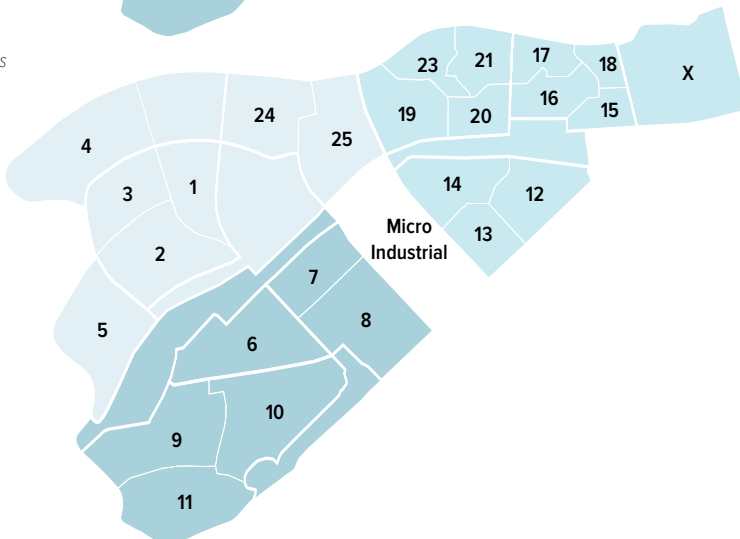
Alamar Districts



Alamar pre-80's - 10 Zonas



Alamar present - 25 Zonas



- Alamar Altura
- Alamar del Este
- Alamar Playa



### 3 stages of Alamar

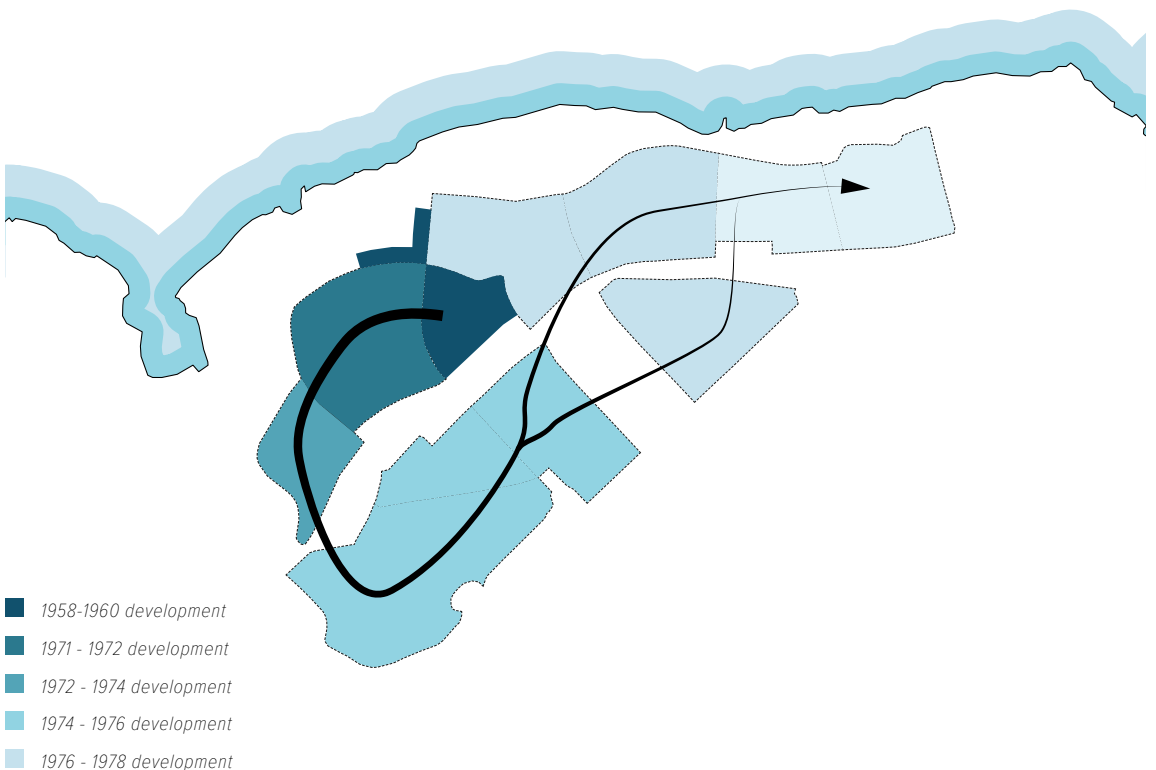
Alamar is as part of Habana del Este also subdivided in three regions; Alamar Playa, Alamar del Este and Alamar Altura. These names were changed over time, due to the revolution.

Alamar Playa is the district facing the beach. In this area, Alamar found its origin, most of the pre-revolutionary villa's are situated within this region.

Alamar del Este is the most eastern part of the municipality Alamar. Alamar del Este is considered as the poorest region. As Del Este was the final part being realized in the 80's, materials became extremely scarce, resulting in less public structures. All materials were used in housing the people. Hit rock bottom with Micro X, a deserted district called Siberia, built by convicts.

Alamar Altura is located on the southbank of the central green belt, more inland. Inbetween the center of Alamar and the microdistrict with all the industrial activities, the area is booming. New renovation have started in this district.

The zonas were not executed in the order in which they were numbered. Alamar started with the infrastructure as a result of an earlier plan, of which only a few houses were realized. More than a decade later, zona 1 to 10 were realized.



# DEVELOPMENT OF ALAMAR

The expansion of social housing in Alamar



1960  
PLAN EL OLYMPO



1972  
ZONA 1&2 PLAN ALAMAR



1974  
ZONA 3-5 PLAN ALAMAR



*Photo 1: Alamar in the early stage just after the Revolution. Source: H. Ramirez.*



*Photo 1: Castro raised the building height to five stories. Source: H. Ramirez.*



*Photo 1: Castro raised the building height to five stories. Source: H. Ramirez.*



**1976**  
**ZONA 10s & 20s PLAN ALAMAR**



**1978**  
**COMPLETE PLAN ALAMAR**

### **Development of Alamar**

Alamar started before the revolution. Villas from before the revolution were combined with the bungalows of INAV after the revolution. From the sixties till the seventies, production was put on hold.

In the early seventies, zonas 1 to 5 were started, a combination of INAV housing for technicians and the socialistic Microbrigadas blocks were realized. After expanding in western direction, Alamar grew more south, realizing the zonas 10 till 20. The final zonas, up till zona 25 were realized at the end of the seventies. In order to complete Plan Alamar, convicts were used to realize the last zona, the so called Micro X. The nickname for this area is Siberia, because the area has almost zero public functions, and is disconnected from the 'center' of Alamar.



*Photo 1 : The highrise blocks were added to the pallet of typologies.*



*Photo 1 : Alamar is finalized by convicts resulting in Micro X.*



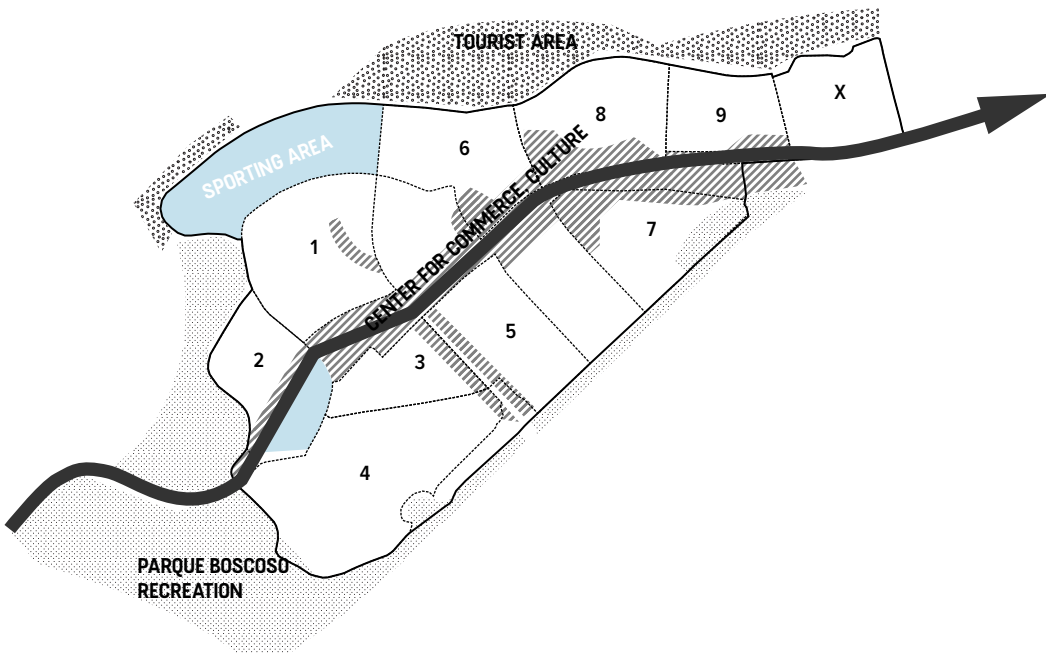
*Photo 1 : The coastline of Alamar nowadays.*

# PLANS FOR ALAMAR

## Scheme of original Plan Alamar by H. Ramirez

### Plan Alamar

The scheme below is redrawn from the original plan provided by architect H. Ramirez. As planner for the original Plan Alamar, he showed the preset goals for the area. The unbuilt coastline should have become tourism area, as the rest of the coastline to the east and west. The blue district in the scheme should have become sporting area. Unfortunately both areas were never realized. The central district and the forest on the south-west area are both partly realized, but not completed.



# PLANS FOR ALAMAR

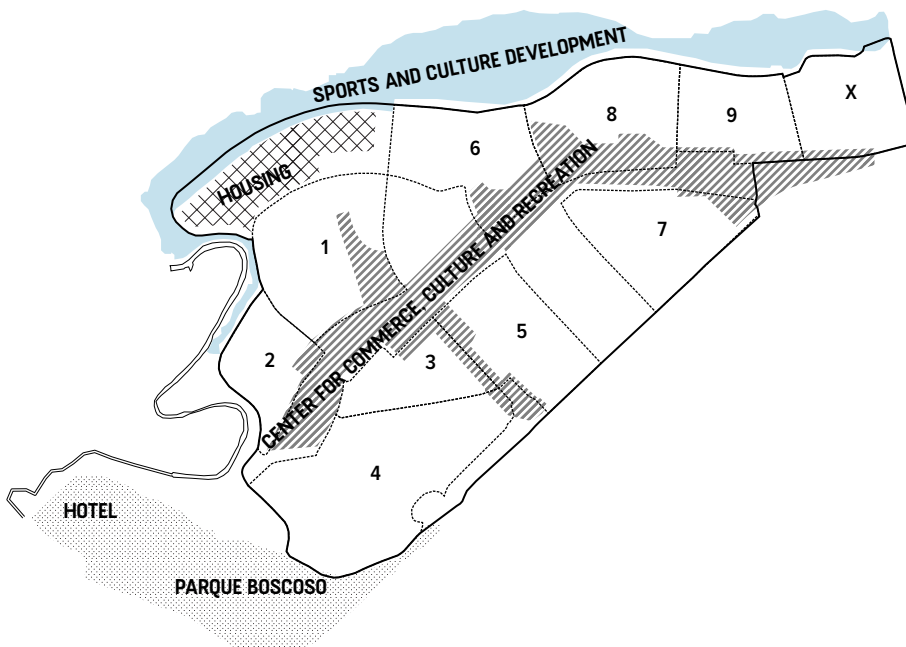
## Future possibility by H. Ramirez

### Possible future development

As architect and technical leader of Plan Alamar, H. Ramirez can not wait to finish his Alamar, Small adjustments have to be made according to him. All small 'illigal' structures as garages should be demolished to create uniformity again. The vision for the coastline is changed, sports and culture is still the goal. The tourism area is removed, in order to contain housing in the unbuilt area, as Alamar is still 30.000 inhabitants short on the original goal of 130.000.

The central district should become not only contain shopping and healthcare, but culture has become more and more important factors. Parque Boscoso on the south should not only remain as nature, but close to the river, a hotel should be built as postcard for Alamar. The northern river bank should also transform into tourism and sports/ culture.

Alamar as future tourism expansion?



# HIERARCHY IN ALAMAR

## The hierarchy of roads and locations

### Major road directions

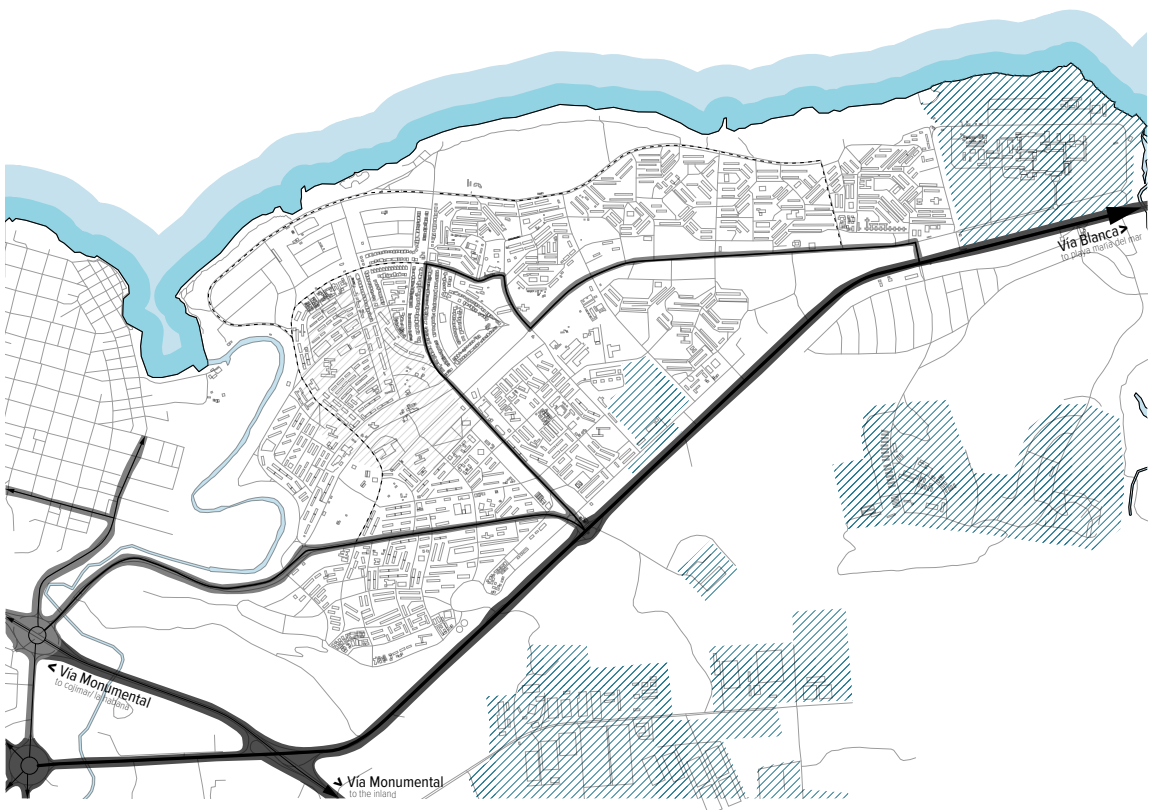
Alamar is an area in between a major highway from Havana to the east, the beaches. Many tourists pass by Alamar, when going to these beaches. On the north side of the new town is the coast, an area that is not really embraced by the city. Not a single major road makes the connection between the highway and the coastline.

governmental areas are located around the central axis, well reachable from the highway, without entering Alamar. Only local traffic goes through the town.

The inner roads are loops that have no specific goal. As a legacy of the former Plan El Olimpo, the curvy roads do serve for housing districts, but that is only local traffic. destination traffic needs a function at the end of the loop to use the roads.

The quality of the roads is quite good in relation to the inner city roads, probably due to the difference in use. There are all the roads connect, in the center of the map, is a gas station of CUPET, the national gas brand. This place has become more of a public space, as people gather there to get a ride.

- Main districts
- Major roads





# ANALYSIS OF ALAMAR

## Connections and districts

### Alamar's structure

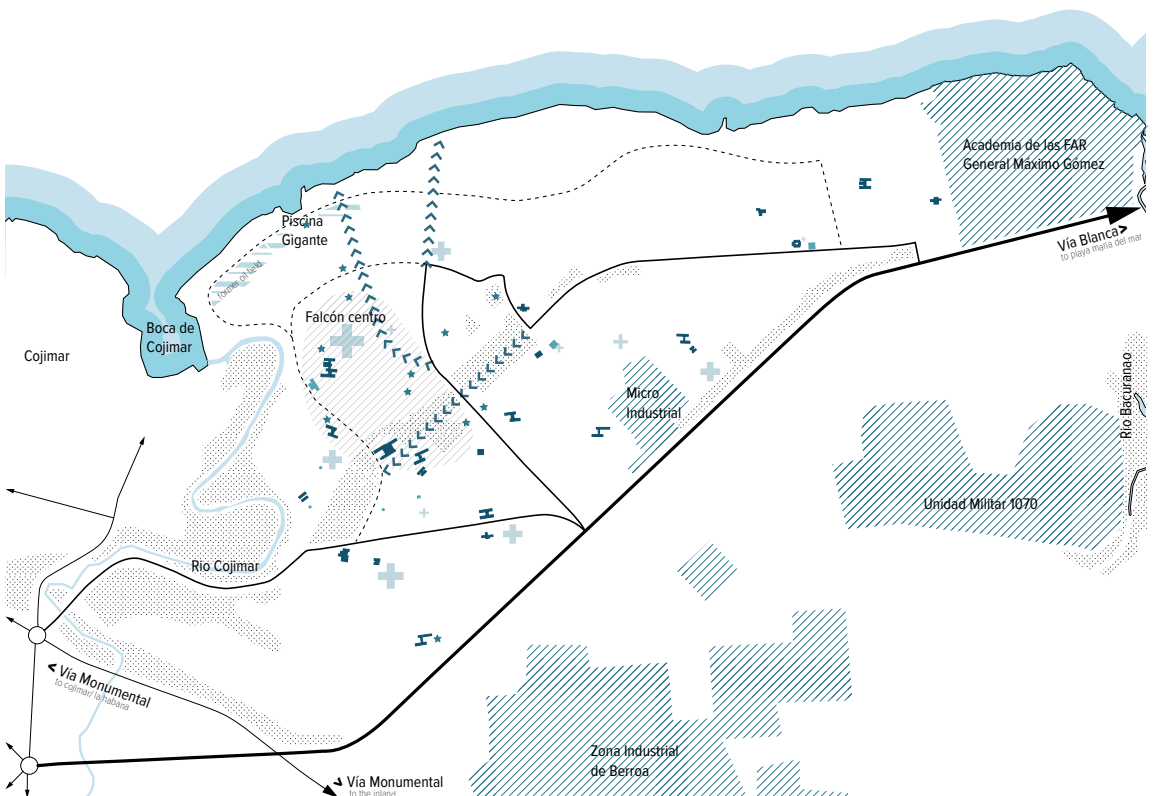
The unfinished landscape of Alamar, shortcoming in infrastructure and disconnection between building and surrounding make it hard Alamar to function as a city. many of the public centers are located in the early parts of Alamar in the west. The eastern part, Microdistrict X, has almost zero public facilities, while major sites, like the university, are located next to the district.

The beach is another story. imagined as entertainment and recreation, it could have made the connection from south to north, but due to shortage, it is never realized.

Alamar is lacking every quality a city needs. Housing over 100.000 people, the 'public building density' is very low! Alamar has a lot of space, a lot of nature, and many resources, but non of those elements is used in order to make the city function.

The blue arrows show potentials that go to the empty area. Originally designed as sports and relax district, the connection can be made again. The 'horizontal' arrow connection is already mentioned by Humberto Ramirez as the first improvement. The road is overused now as a second highway.

- + Commercial centers
- Schools
- Healthcare center
- Waterbody
- Private dwelling
- Public space



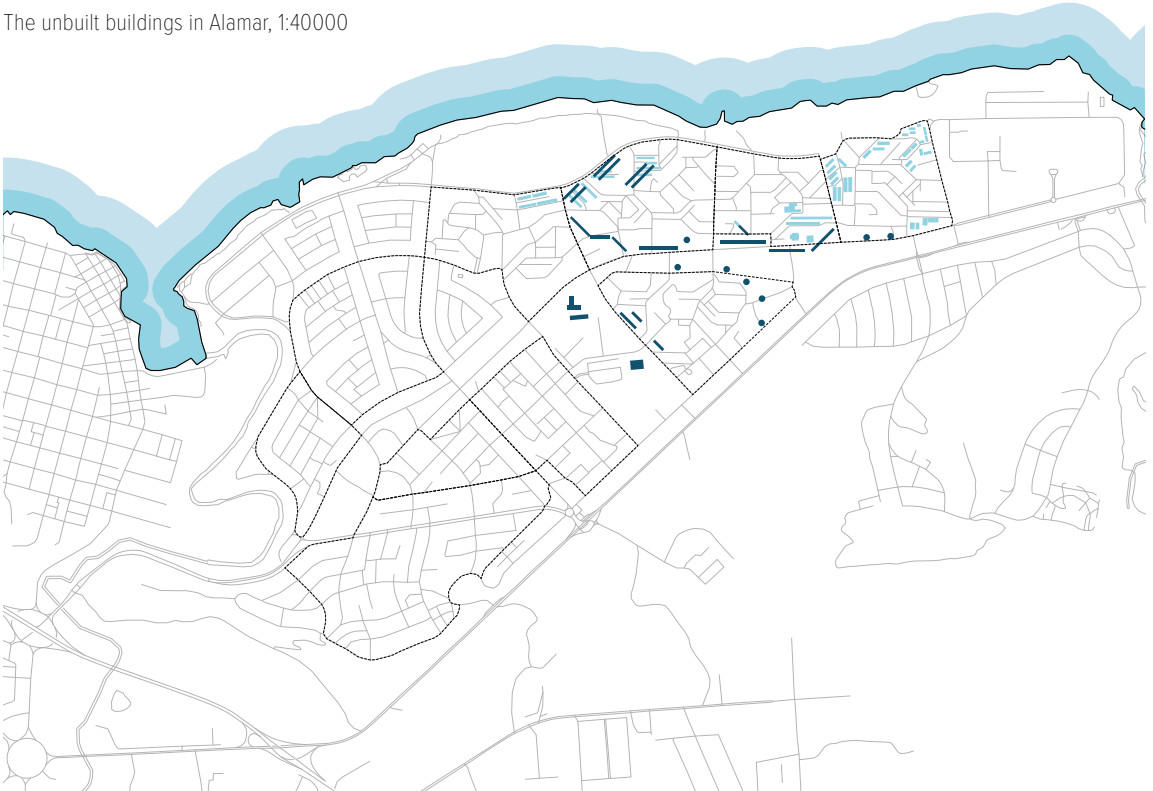
# BUILDING ALAMAR

## Built and unbuilt in the Alamar plan

The built buildings in Alamar, 1:40000



The unbuilt buildings in Alamar, 1:40000



## Not part of the plan

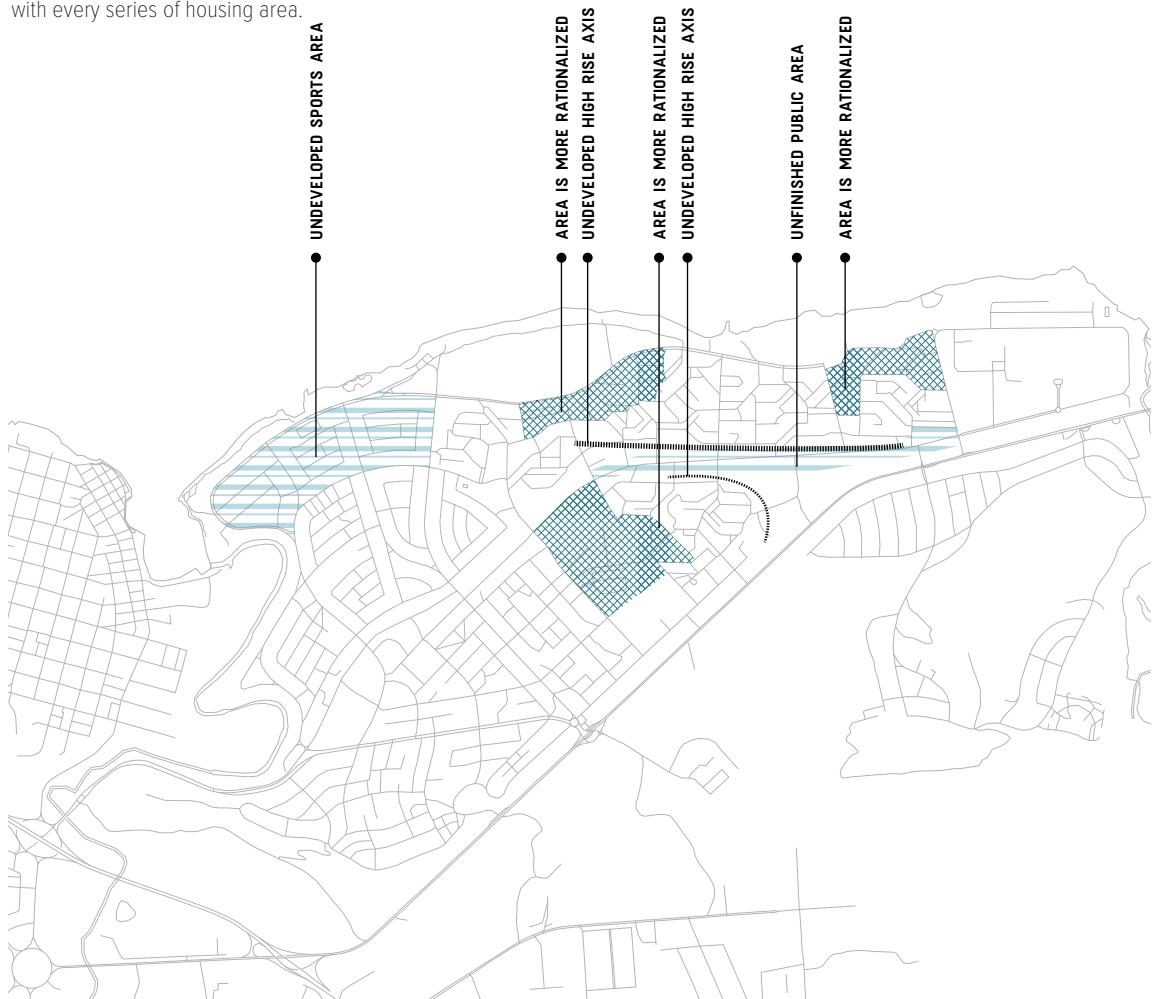
The left page shows the difference between the way it was planned and the current, executed plan. The black dwellings represent the buildings following the Alamar plan.

The buildings that were not built according to plan are divided in two areas. The north west development was rationalized in a way to make longer buildings. The buildings in Micro X, the most eastern development of Alamar was completely not built according to the drawing. The main reason for not following the plan had to be that it was not built by the so called microbrigadas, but by prisoners.

The horizontal core development had to become the center of Alamar, surrounded by longer apartment blocks and even residential high rise. The towers were not built. The reason why they were not created, has probably to do with the lack of building knowledge of the microbrigadas, the lack of money and the construction principles that were changing with every series of housing area.

Although the fact that Alamar was not entirely built by plan, the goal of Castro was achieved. Many people found and still find their homes within Alamar. It is not clear whether the master planners of Alamar knew that the plan should have been built by unskilled microbrigadas.

The plan was finalized in 1972, but the main design was created in the period of 1970 and 1971. In December 1971, the microbrigadas were installed by Castro, and though the fact that Castro was the spiritual father of both concepts, it seems like the Alamar plan was too hard to be built by unskilled labour. This does not mean that they did not reach the goal. As mentioned, many people found a place, the people who still live in Alamar seem to be proud of what they have accomplished in the seventies. New inhabitants of Alamar were former citizens of Havana's inner city. Many of those people were forced to go to Alamar because their former house either collapsed or the government could not ensure that the structure is safe anymore.








# FUNCTIONS IN ALAMAR

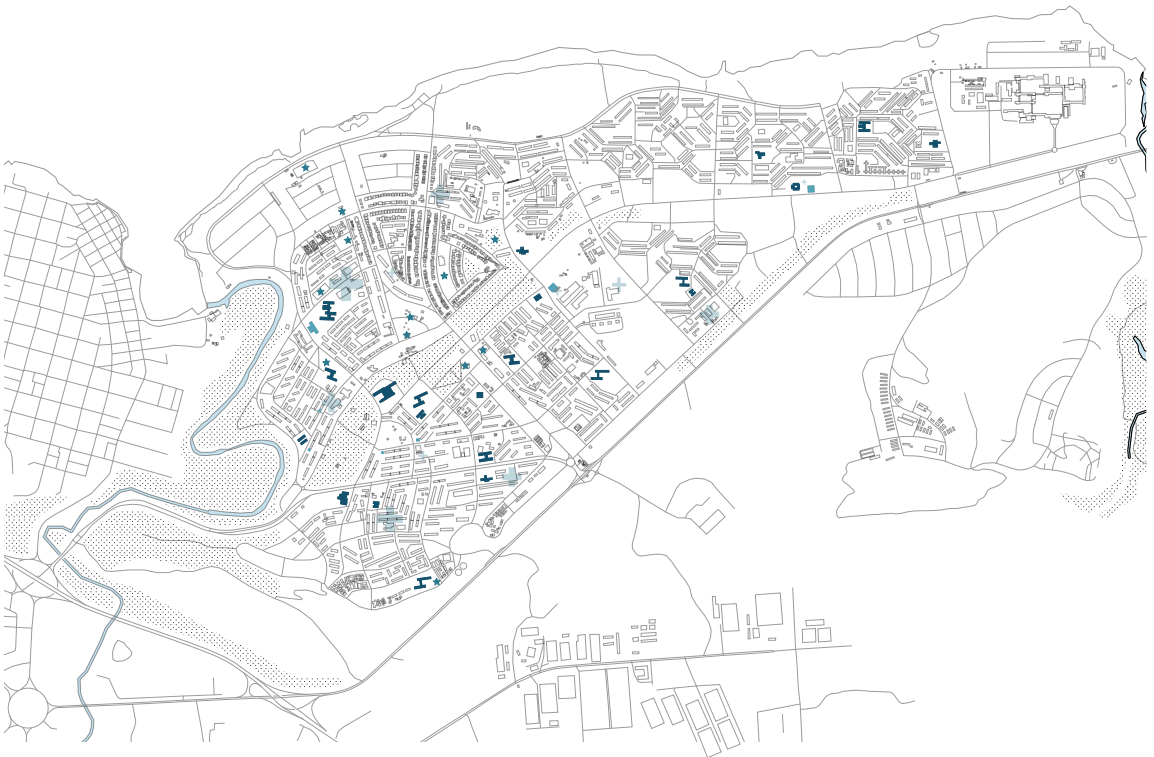
## Hospitals, schools, commercial and green strips as main centers

### Alamar based on zonas & centers

Fidel Castro promised every Cuban the basic needs. A house, free education and healthcare. The decade after the revolution was a period for a baby boom, resulting in housing shortage in the seventies. The goal of Alamar was to house those baby boomers, so housing was given the priority. Public functions were barely realized and as time passed, the other functions were also put on hold.

The schools and healthcare facilities were the last functions realized as public buildings, because they were the basic needs and the promise of the revolutionary leader. As you move more east, the density of public functions become less. The eastern part of Alamar feels cut off from the rest, as the main city center is the commercial center called Falcon. Falcon is located in the first zona, the first zona built by the Microdistrict.

-  Schools
-  Healthcare
-  Commercial centers
-  Private dwelling
-  Green area



# FUNCTIONS IN ALAMAR

## public versus private

### The safe public (space)

Alamar is mainly constructed with five story apartment blocks. The density is low, leaving a lot of 'public' space inbetween the blocks, space that is now claimed by the inhabitants. The community has claimed the area with small structures as sheds and garages. In these small structures, informal businesses are being held. These structures occupy mainly the inbetween 'backyards' of the building blocks and the sides of these apartment blocks. The spaces inbetween the blocks feel less public as the main streets, but they are entirely public. The space inbetween has changed, becoming smaller and more intimate.

Less public areas, as the university campus, the industrial district and the military base are semi-public. In Cuba, these districts are more closed of. Especially for tourists, these places are hard to visit.

- 1958-1960 development
- 1971 - 1972 development
- Waterbody
- Private dwelling
- Public space



# ROAD HIERARCHY

## Streetnames

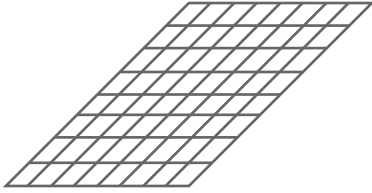
### Renaming Alamar

From the planning fase onwards, Alamar always have been subdivided in ten or twenty-five districts. The change from ten to twenty-five districts had to do with the orientation of the people. Because the typologies did not differ, getting lost in Alamar was a given. The hell for a postman. In order to orientate, the streetnames were changed to its final coordinate system by the 80's.

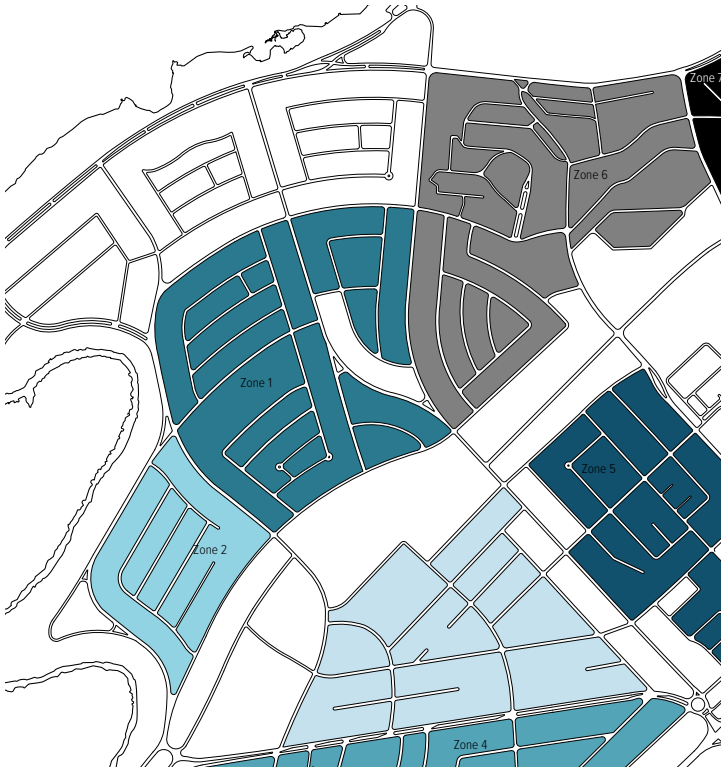
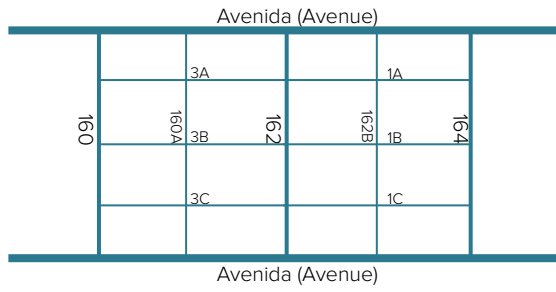
### Where was the building?

Alamar has avenues that run from east to west. To connect those avenues, main roads were appointed. these streets were given a Calle XXX number. Smaller streets were given the XXXA or XXXB name. Than the 'casa' housenumber followed. Streets connecting those two types of roads are called XA or XXA. Always, the streetname ends with the zona. Calle 160E Casa 3D 21 esquina 3F Zona 2





coordinate system



4

## TYPOLGY

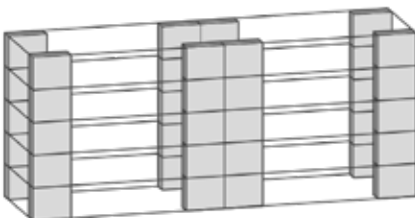
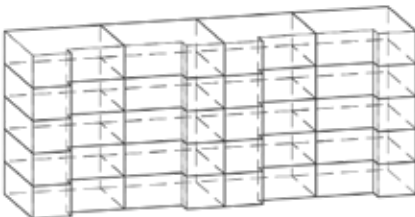
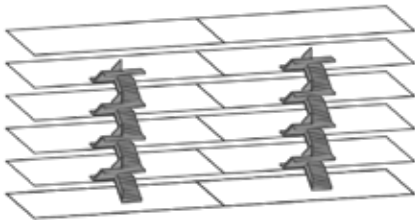
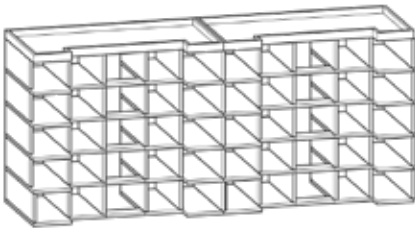
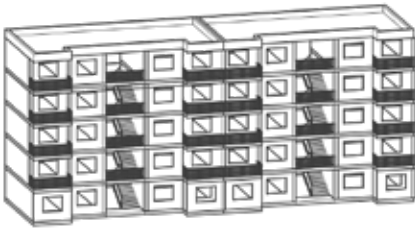
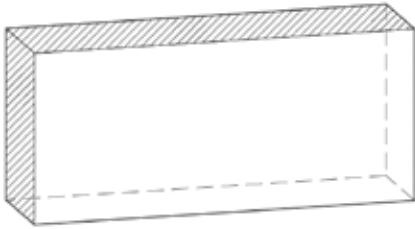




CONSTRUCCIÓN DE UN  
EDIFICIO DE 10 PISOS  
La estructura de este edificio  
está en fase de avance  
en un sitio de Kienboyan.

# BUILDING TYPOLOGY

## The Giron construction system (SP-76)



### The Giron system

Giron system are visible by its floor elements. The lay-out of the floorplan is not much than the other typologies. The two main differences are the balconies and the staircases. The balconies in this building system do not hang on the facade. For the Giron system, due to the floor element used, only loggias could be produced. The staircase goes along the facade and is used as 'public space'. The floor element was named SP-76, and was originally produced for school buildings.

The construction for all the typologies is quite the same. Prefab floors and facades. The construction is all made of 300 millimeter blocks, also called 'Giron Blocks' as they are first used in the Giron construction method.

The SP-76 element was in the early times of Alamar the only element that was widely distributed, so if there was a spare or broken element, people reused it in the urban landscape. Many of the bus stops as well as the park benches were made of this SP-76 floorelement.

*Matey, K. (1991). Self-help Housing Policies and Practices in Cuba"; London*



Image 1 : The Giron building system

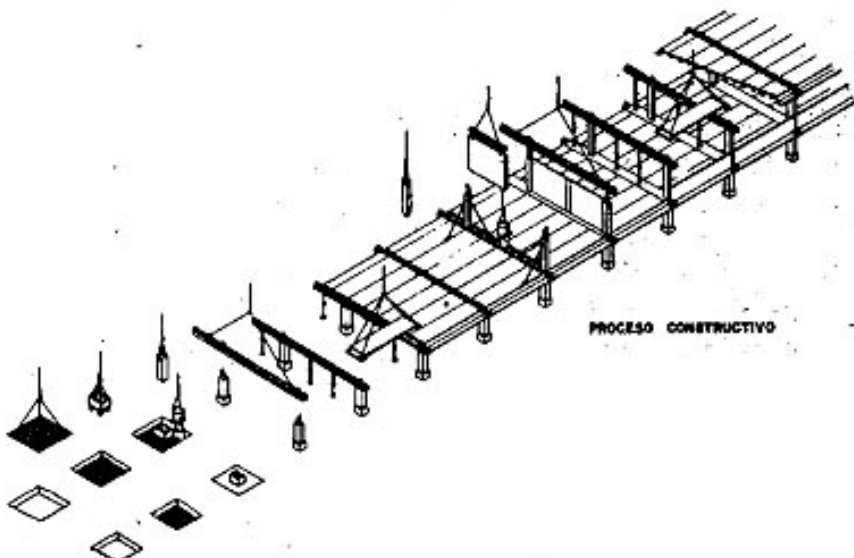


Photo 1 : Construction system principles. Source : <http://www.groundwork.org/English/cuba/pwt005.html>

# BUILDING TYPOLOGY

## The typical two apartment floorplan

### The apartment floorplan of Giron

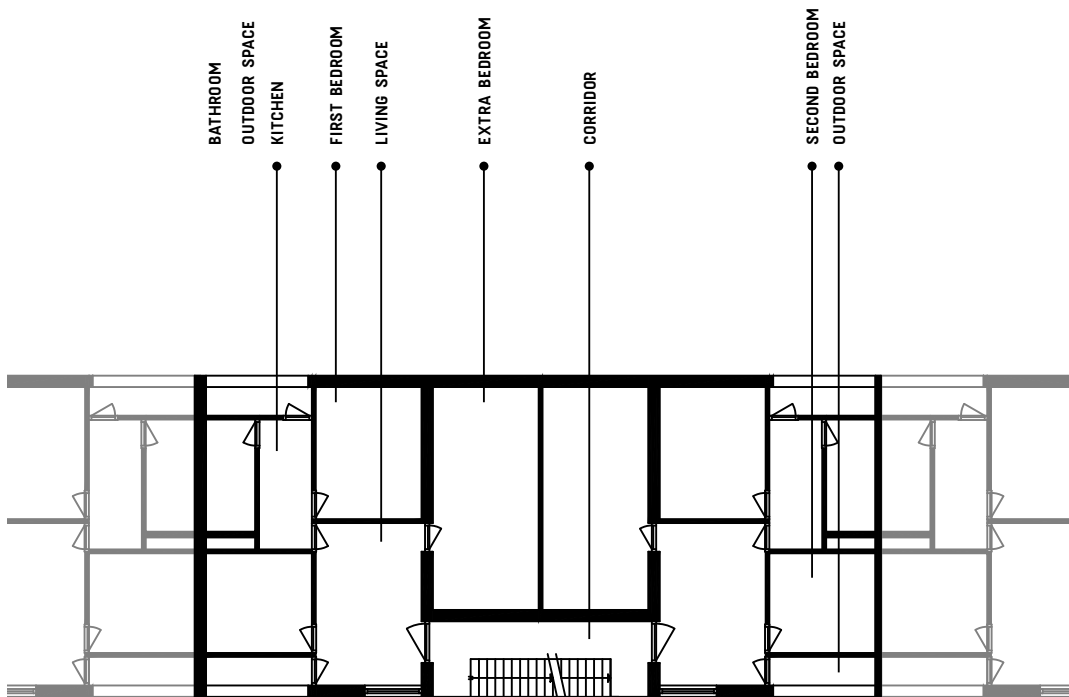
Almost directly as soon as Castro came to power, he stopped the built of the arts school. In his vision, laying bricks was stupidity, it was time consuming. Prefabricated building elements had the future.

It is this choice that involved the design of the Microbrigada apartment blocks a lot. the size; 8,5 by 9 meters is based on the floor elements available at that time. the floors could span six meters, three of these floor elements made two apartment floors. The structural walls were made of Giron. This wall element was on site produced and had a width of 30 centimeters.

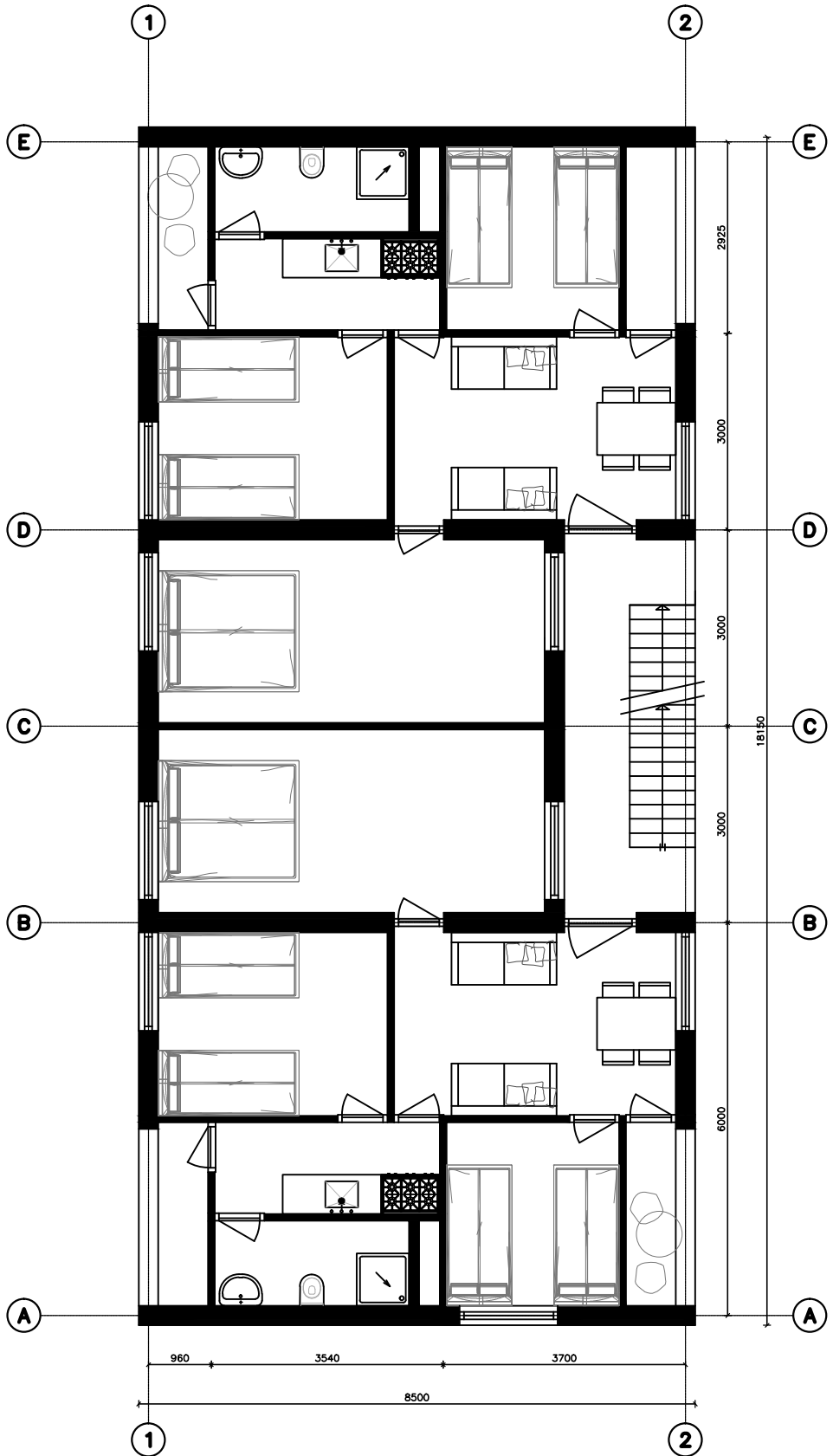
72 sqm apartments were built. Designed for a 4-5 persons household, each one should have around 18 sqm. This was higher than the average 12 sqm per person in the inner city.

### The Microbrigadas in the 80s

"The 80 Microbrigadas did not look like anything of those of the 70," says Ramirez. "People were no longer working with the principal love." quoted Lucia Mirurgia Alie, minibrigade of the new batch. "He worked with enthusiasm," she says. "Each work was taken as what it was: a task politics". In this second stage, the goal was not to build housing on the periphery, as in the 70 -Alamar, Altahabana and San Augustine, but take advantage of the urban infrastructure existing. "They were supposed to construct atypical projects that were carried out in consolidated areas of the city, which was a good idea, but they were not so atypical, they were built with the haste with which everything was done," says the second stage architect Dania González.



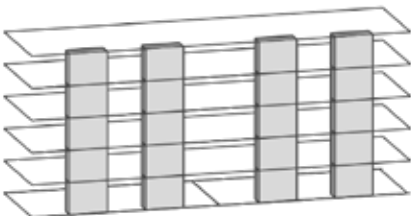
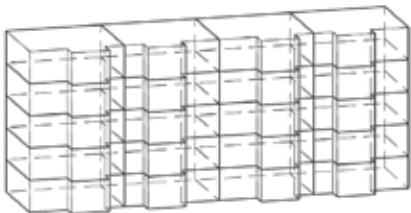
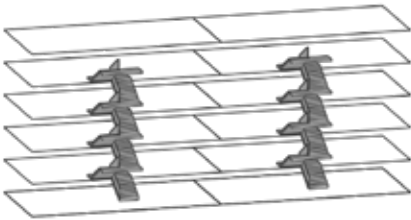
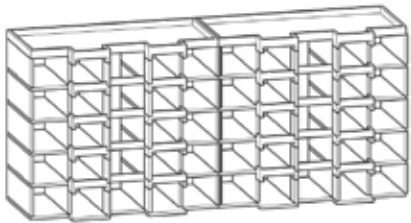
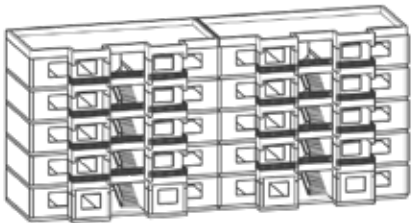
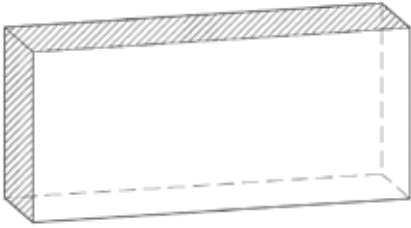
Drawing 1: Floorplan of a typical apartment structure



Drawing 2 : A house within Alamar

# BUILDING TYPOLOGY

## The Gran Panel VI USSR construction system



### Gran panel VI system

The apartment floorplan is based on the Gran panel VI system, the system mainly used in the beginning of Alamar. The factory which had produced this element since 1963 was located in Santiago de Cuba, donated by the USSR. In Alamar, factories were erected on site in order to have as less transport as possible.

The staircases are more compact in comparison with the SP-76 floor element. With the school floor element, dimensions were limited to the 6 meter long floor elements, by rotating the staircase, smaller space could be created, in order to make the block in total more compact.

The only disadvantage of rotating the staircase, is that the space becomes more dark, and less part of the 'public space'.

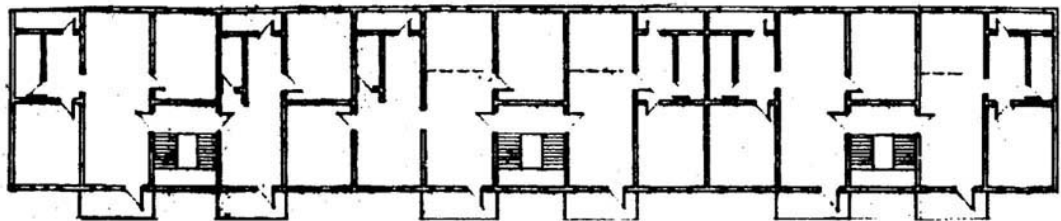
The construction is quite similar to the other typologies, prefab facade elements with construction walls of bricks. The gran panel uses different floor elements, which made it possible to create real overhanging balconies, which were supported by beams. These beams were extensions of the construction walls. later, people closed off the balconies to provide more living space for the extending family.

*Matey, K. (1991). Self-help Housing Policies and Practices in Cuba\*, London*



Image 3 : The Gran Panel VI building system

Source : [http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/world/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2015/12/20151220\\_ALAM\\_02681450743266.jpg](http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/world/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2015/12/20151220_ALAM_02681450743266.jpg)



**GP-VI, STANDARD PREFABRICATED HOUSING SYSTEM, 4½ STORIES**

**KEEPING WHAT'S RIGHT:**

- NARROW BUILDINGS WITH 2 VIEWS FROM EACH APARTMENT.
- INDIVIDUAL ENTRY STAIRWELLS. NO HALLS.
- BALCONY FOR EACH APARTMENT.
- LOUVERED WINDOWS FOR CONTROL OF SUN & NATURAL VENTILATION.
- DURABLE CONSTRUCTION.

Photo 2 : The floorplan of the Gran Panel VI building system. Source: <http://www.groundwork.org/English/cuba/pwt005.html>

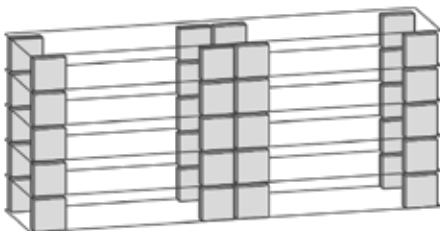
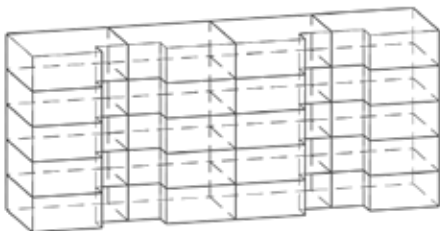
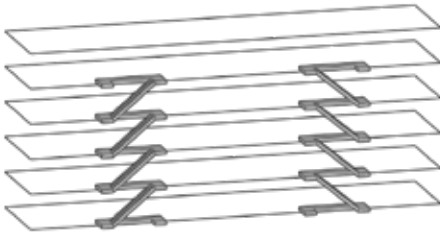
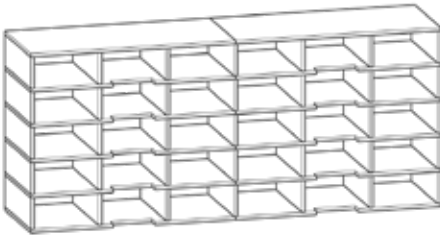
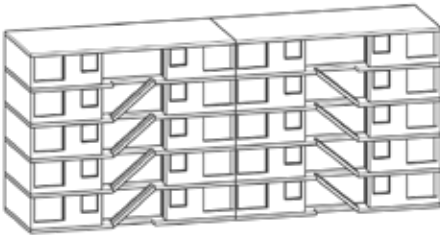
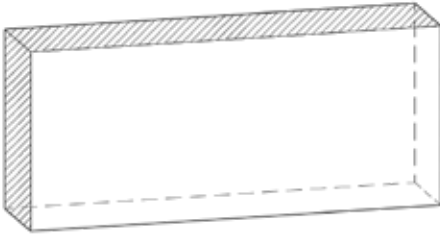






# BUILDING TYPOLOGY

## The E-14 construction system



### E14 construction system

The E14 construction system is most related to the Gran panel system. The floor elements were in this case specifically designed for housing units. The staircase of this building system is the same. The balconies are as the Gran Panel VI also positioned on the outside of the building, hanging on the facade.

The location is only changed, as the balconies are next to the circulation cores, so the balconies are part of the living space.

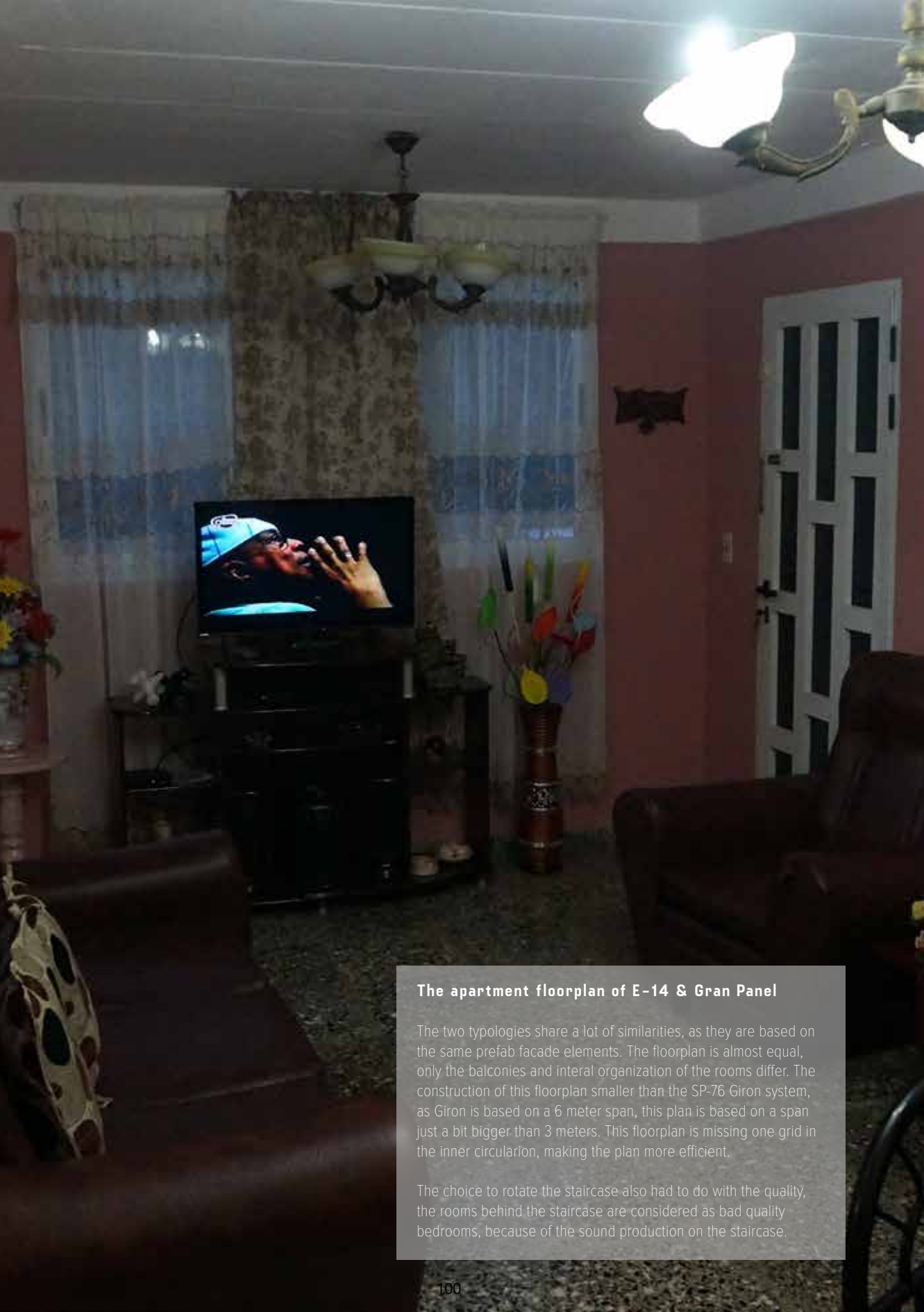
An architectural recognition is the beam of the balcony, as with the Giron building system, they searched for the thinnest possible concrete solution. The beams are characteristics for the building.

Apart from the other floor element, there is no difference with the Gran Panel design.

*Matey, . K. (1991). Self-help Housing Policies and Practices in Cuba", London*



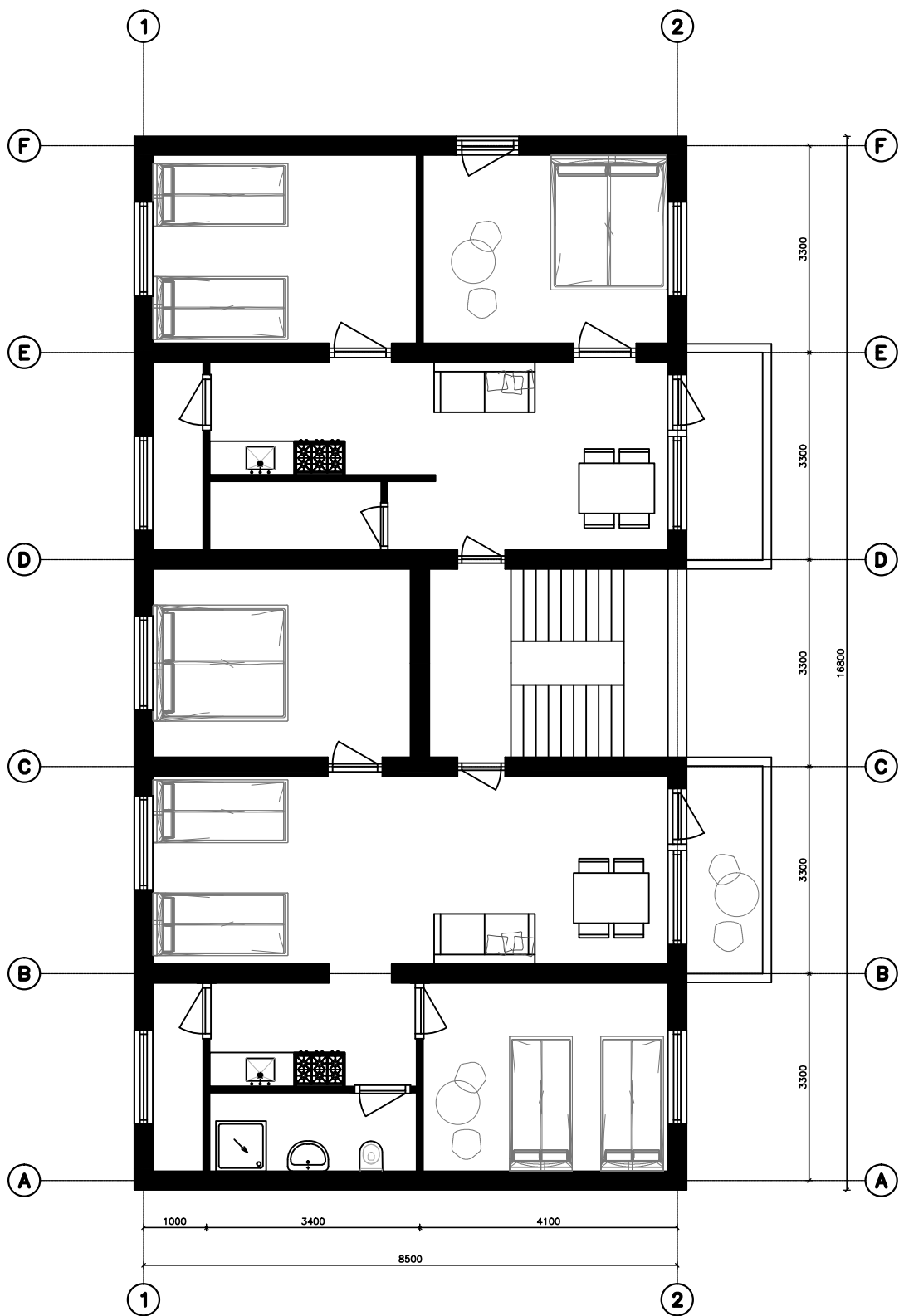
*Image 2 : The E-14 building system*

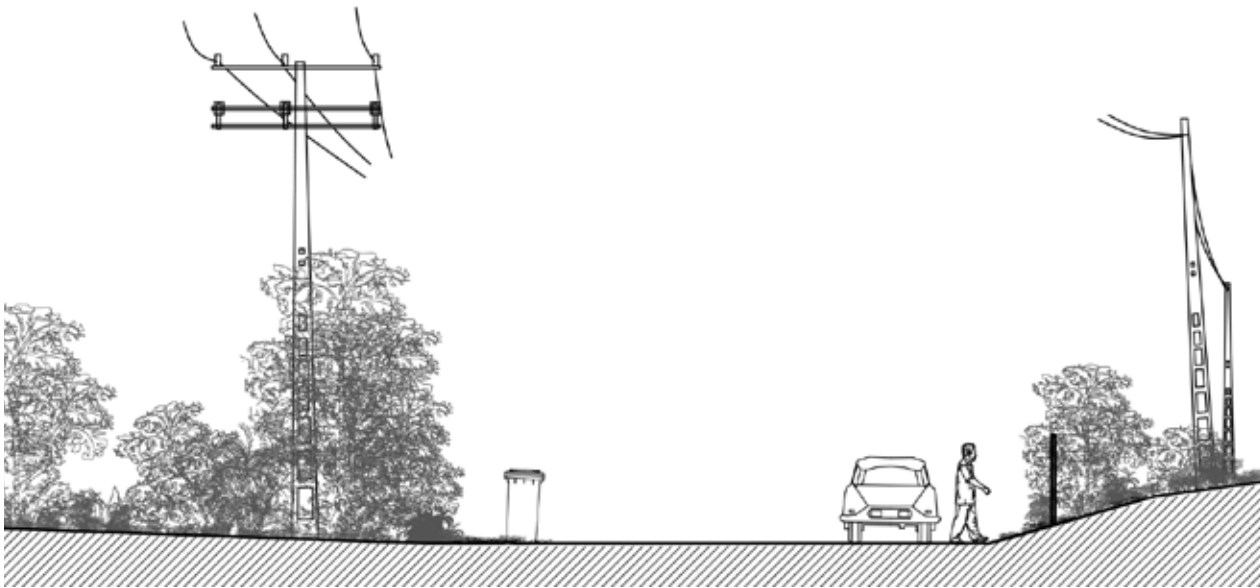


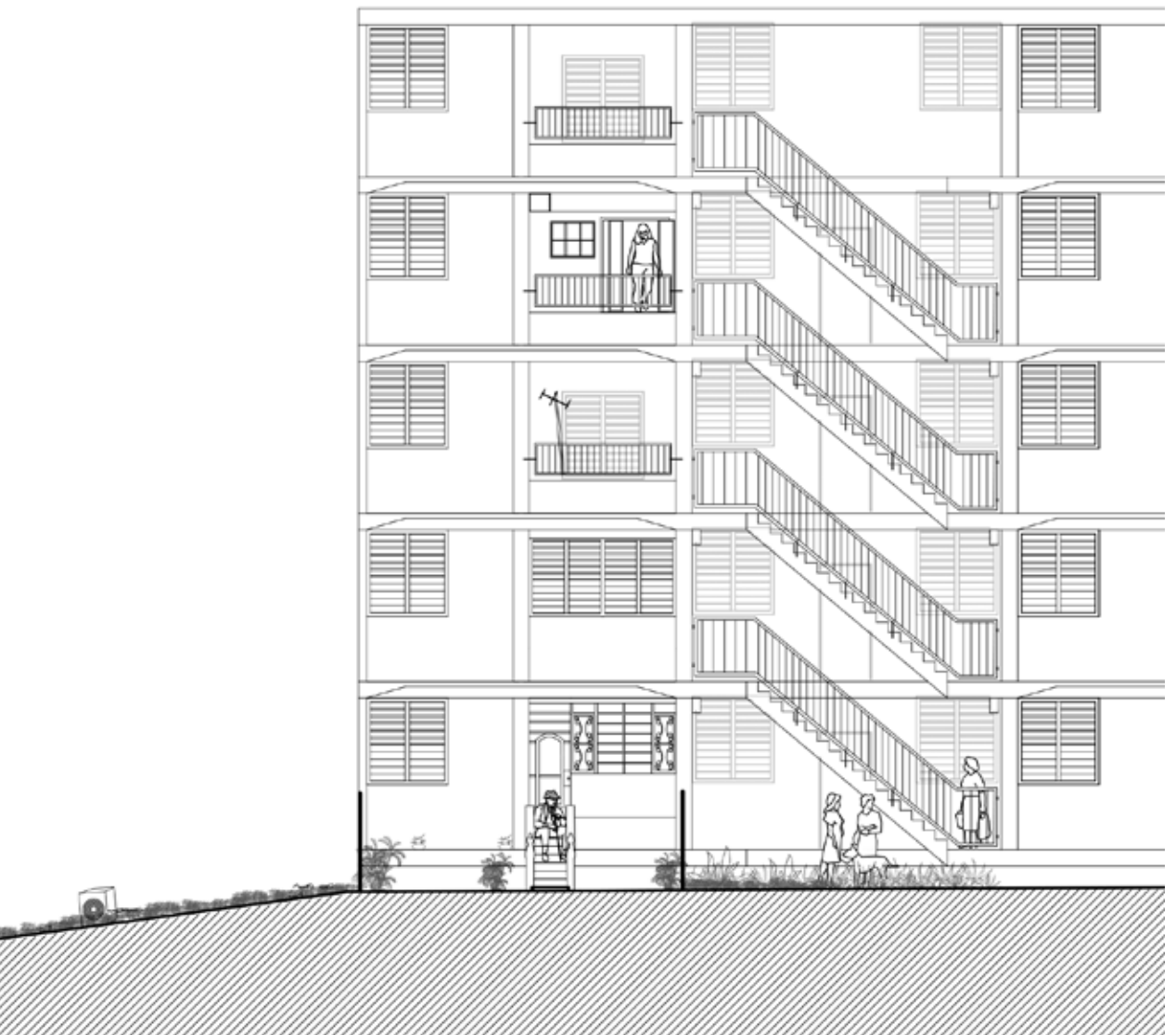
### **The apartment floorplan of E-14 & Gran Panel**

The two typologies share a lot of similarities, as they are based on the same prefab facade elements. The floorplan is almost equal, only the balconies and internal organization of the rooms differ. The construction of this floorplan smaller than the SP-76 Giron system, as Giron is based on a 6 meter span, this plan is based on a span just a bit bigger than 3 meters. This floorplan is missing one grid in the inner circularion, making the plan more efficient.

The choice to rotate the staircase also had to do with the quality, the rooms behind the staircase are considered as bad quality bedrooms, because of the sound production on the staircase.







## The highrise towers

In the center of Alamar are four highrise buildings realized. In times that Cuba had a good ally in Serbia, the Serbian Material Institute donated the knowledge about the building method. The good relations only lasted for a year or so, so only few were built. Construction workers were also needed.







### **The villas and bungalows**

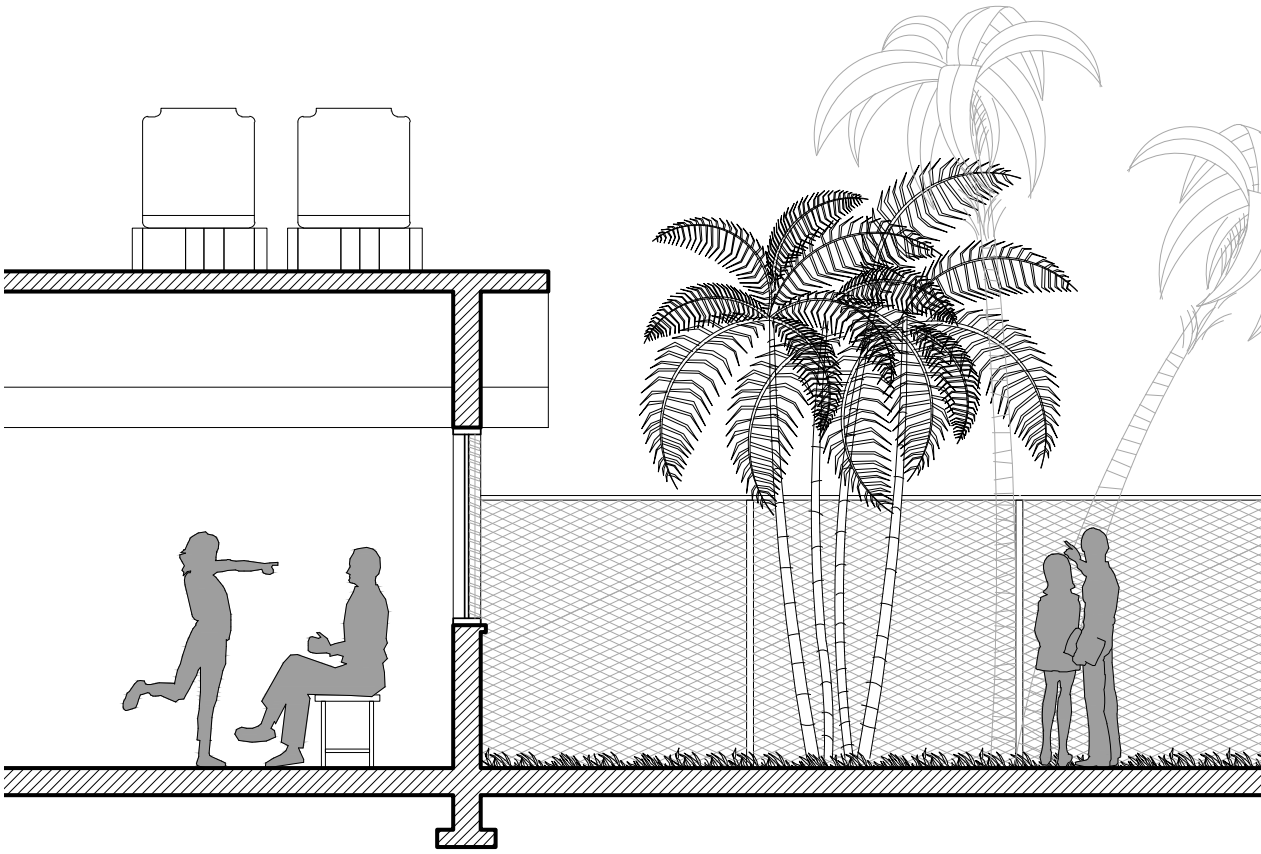
The INAV, the Cuban housing agency, fought for conservation of plan El Olympto. In the sixties, after the revolution, they constructed 401 'blue villas' in Alamar. The small grained housing is located around zona 0 & 1.



### The 'illegal' structures

Tiny sheds made of waste. Left over materials that can be found anywhere are transformed into stores, extensions of houses and garages. The people of Alamar created the missing urban fabric in the most difficult period since The Triumph of the Revolution; 'The Special Period' of the 1990's







# BUILDINGS IN ALAMAR

## Landmarks that make the Alamar image



Piscina gigante



El Golfito



Anfiteatro



Salvador school



Falcon commercial center



Villas



Textile factory



Alamar sign



Parque Hanoi



EnGuayabera

### Landmarks per district

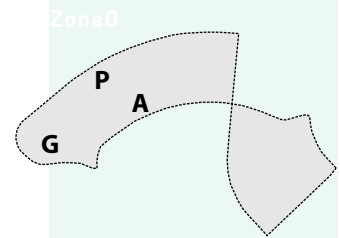
**0 \_ Piscina Gigante \_** The huge swimming pool in the north was a design of Ramirez. The idea was to have an entire stretch of pools filtering the water along the coastline, only this one was eventually constructed. It used to be a very popular pool during the eighties, attracting many people from miles around. The special period and the storms destroyed the pool. **El Golfito \_** It is a restaurant at the utmost eastern corner of the Alamar coast, it was the first restaurant built in Habana del Este after the revolution, now it is a state owned 'chill' spot for the youngsters of Alamar. **Anfiteatro de Alamar \_** An abandon theatre and cinema. A full concrete structure.

**1 \_ Salvador School & Pool \_** The first primary school with a swimming pool in Alamar. It was mentioned as a standard for the rest of Alamar. **Falcon Centro Comercial \_** The biggest shopping district in the first district, recently renovated and housing luxurious electronic stores in the first floor. The groundfloor is partly occupied with small informal stores. **Villas and INAV bungalows \_** Low rise buildings characterize zona 0 & 1 of Alamar. The small houses are the legacy of pre-revolutionary architecture. **Textile factory \_** Many people work in the inner city, as work and production sites are scarce in Alamar. One of few working places is the green Textile Factory in Alamar.

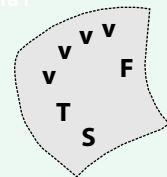
**2 \_ Alamar Sign \_** Not really part of zona 2, but the most well known sign of Alamar is the entrance sign. The Zona itself is the first result of material shortage. The goal was housing, what is the main function of this zona.

**3 \_ Parque Hanoi \_** A good example of the Microbrigadas is Parque Hanoi. The park is made with left over elements. Most of the urban furniture is made of old floor elements, giving the park its character. Parque Hanoi is one of the few WiFi-hotspots in Alamar, attracting a lot of youth. **EnGuayabera \_** The traditional T-shirt of Cuba is called the Guayabera. For the first 5 years in the eighties, the shirts were also produced in Alamar. Halfway towards the nineties, the factory stopped the production. In 1993, the factory was entirely closed due to the special period. In 2015, 2.5 million pesos were used in order to renovate the building to EnGuayabera, a modern social spot with hip new cinematic and theatre activities. It is now a center for the city.

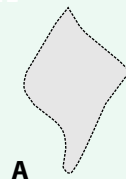
**4 \_ CUPET \_** Along the highway is the only big gas station of Alamar, called CUPET Alamar.



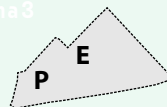
Zona 1



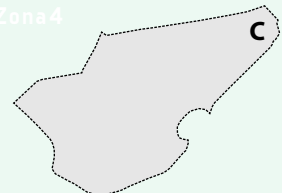
Zona 2



Zona 3



Zona 4





CUPET gas station



High rise tower



Compleyo Commercial



Amusement parque



Vivero Alamar



Gallo garden of Affection

## Landmarks per district

**5 \_ Tower** \_ District 5 is the rivival area of housing and public functions. This district is the first since district 1 to have better schools and hospitals again. The most well known landmark in this district is only the high housing tower. This tower typology is only used once within Alamar. There were many towers planned along this green strip, but they were never executed.

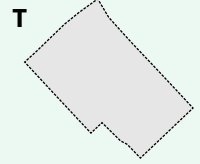
**6 \_ Compleyo Commercial** \_ In relation to zona 1, zona 6 has a big, widespread shopping area. Not as modern as the Falcon shopping center, but not less in quality. The place is a big roofed commercial building with small basic stores, like a butcher or a bakery. The big building is surrounded by small structures which look a bit like kiosks. More to the west of the center is a small Theme park.

The rest of the districts are quite vacant. The zonas mainly contain housing. The only element connecting them with the rest of Alamar is the central green belt.

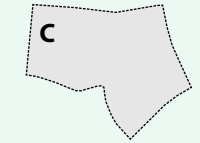
**Green belt \_ Theme park** \_ The big theme park, which is close to the 4 higher Servian corridor flats, used to be along the River Cojimar. relocated after completion of Alamar, it served a couple of years. Now it is being neglected. **Organopónico Vivero Alamar** \_ During the special period, transportation was nearly impossible. In order to survive in Alamar, people started sustainable urban farming. The product of the special period is Organopónico Vivero Alamar, a big organic farm. The farm offers a wide range of vegetables, ornamental and medicinal plants, and other food products. Vivero Alamar also provides community services, applies innovations in science and technology to the farm, and provides technical assistance and training to those interested at the local, national, and international level. The farm is the new image of Alamar.

**10 \_ Micro X** \_ The zona is completely filled with housing, completely cut of from all activities. At the end of the green belt, not a single public building highlights the zona that is nicknamed Siberia. People had to make something of Micro X. So did artist Hector Pascual Gallo Portieles. **Gallo's Garden of Affection** \_ His garden is made of the only product that is in their hands, waste. The 'museum' is not a normal art gallery. As it stated only on his apartment floor, now it is an oasis as garden within Micro X. Like many people, Gallo extended his house with an 'illegal' garden or small garage.

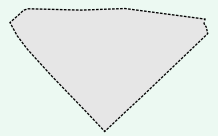
Zona5



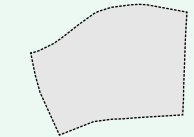
Zona6



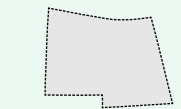
Zona7



Zona8



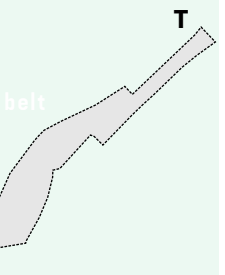
Zona9



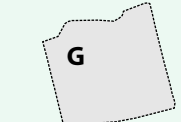
Green belt



Green belt



ZonaX



# BUNGALOWS AND VILLAS

Six types



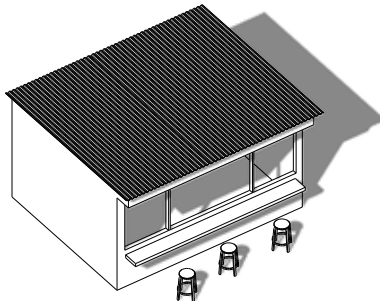
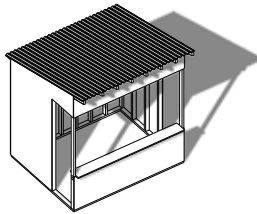
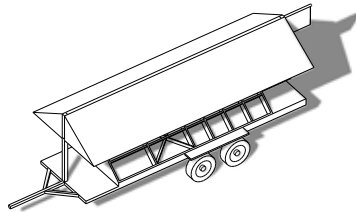
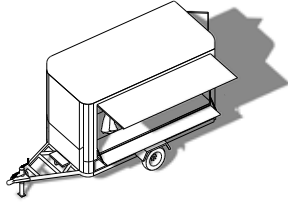




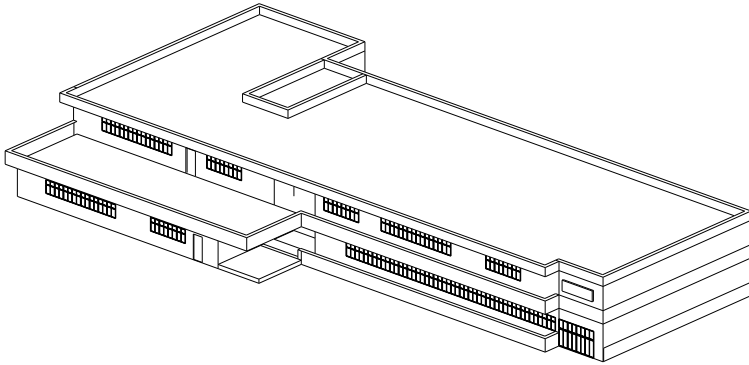
# COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

Informal and formal

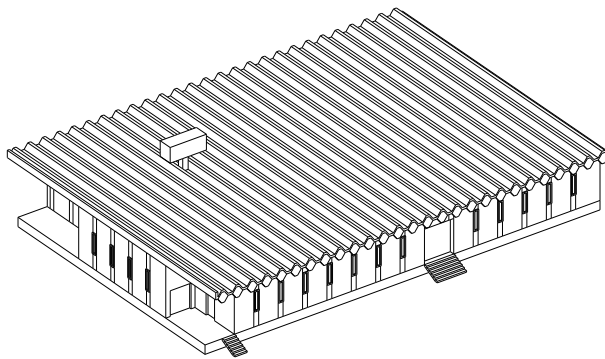
Small stalls and shops



**Falcon commercial center**



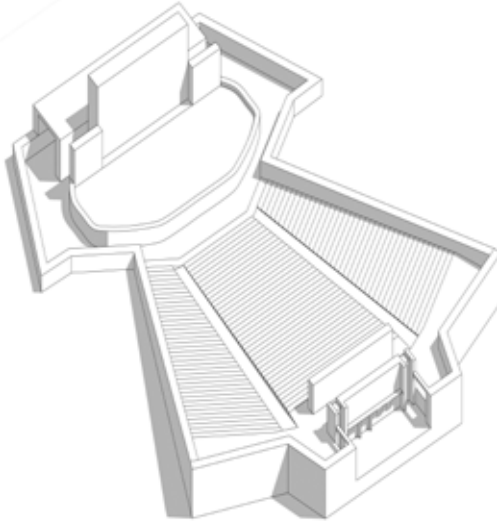
**Indoor market**



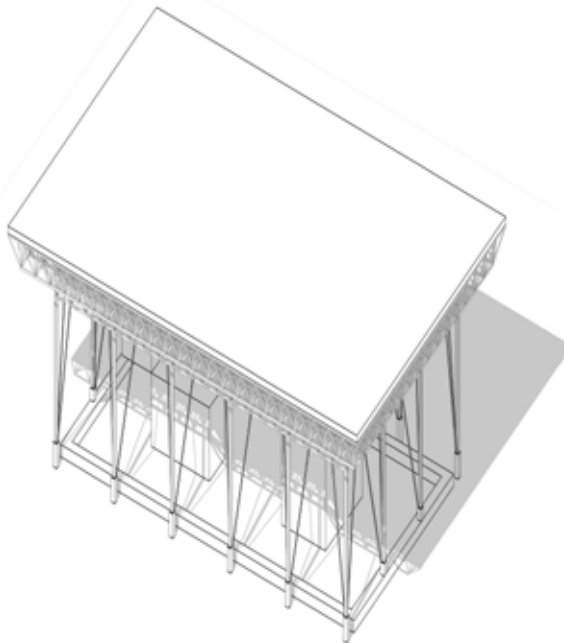
# ABANDONED STRUCTURES

## Theatres

### Amfi theatre



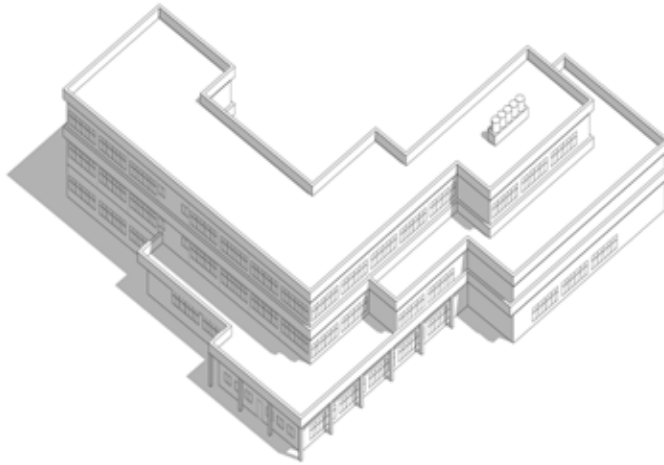
### Theatre



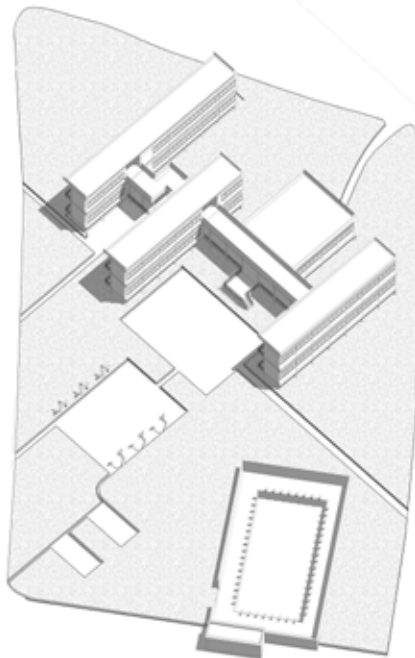
# PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Culture and educational

Casa de la Cultura



Enguayabera



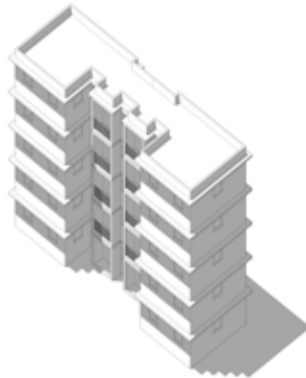
# HOUSING BLOCKS

## Social housing

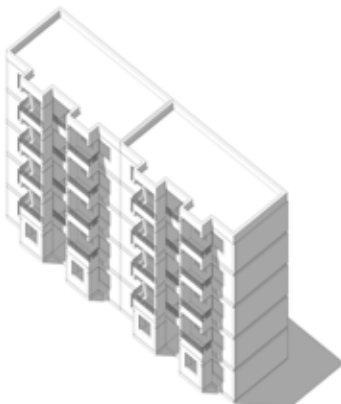
### Gran Panel VI



### New type housing



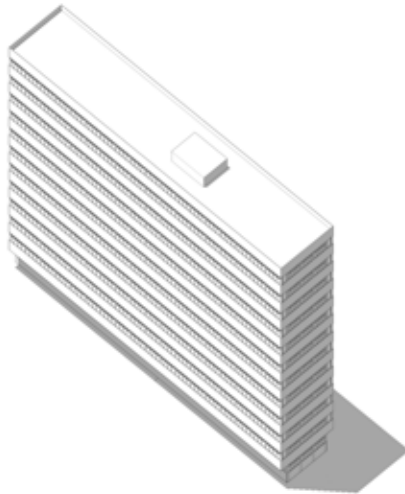
### E14 Construction



**Giron construction system**



**IMS construction system**








# LANDSCAPE

- Water
- Coastal area
- Vacant greenery
- Trees
- Public park
- Urban agriculture
- Banana / coconut plantation





# LANDUSE

-  Vacant greenery
-  Urban agriculture
-  Public park / outdoor leisure
-  Residential
-  Public
-  Industrial



# MOBILITY

- Highway
- Primary neighbourhood road
- Secondary neighbourhood road
- Path
- Busline 3 ; Alamar - Tunel de Linea
- Busline 11 ; Alamar - Vedado
- Busline 15 ; Alamar Guanabacoa - Vedado
- Busstop



# PUBLIC SPACE

- Public park
- Public building
- Meeting point



# AMENITIES

- Government
- Healthcare
- Education
- Industry
- Commercial
- Sports
- Culture
- Agriculture
- WiFi hotspot



# INFRASTRUCTURE

- Water
- Gas/oil
- Site former oil refinery
- Potential water reservoirs
- Potential bio mass energy



# HERITAGE

- Abandoned structures
- Abandoned areas
- Redeveloped structures
- Redeveloped areas



# OWNERSHIP

- Privately owned building
- Partially privately-, partially state owned building
- State owned building
- State owned land
- State owned land, harvest privately owned





M E N T A L





5

POLITICS  
IDEOLOGY



# THE SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY

## Che Guevara's 'El Hombre Nuevo'

The concept of 'El Hombre Nuevo' has been central in the national state ideology and has fundamentally changed the Cuban's perception of their own identity, the world and their role in it. It was first introduced in 1965 by Ernesto 'Che' Guevara in his essay 'El Socialismo y el Hombre en Cuba'. He wrote this letter while on a three-month trip, during which he addressed the United Nation General Assembly and visited several countries in Africa. It was sent to Carlos Quijano, director of the Uruguayan weekly publication *Marcha*, to explain to the Uruguayan people the aims, goals and challenges of the Cuban Revolution. Since then, descriptions of the New Man have served as the personification of the ideals of the Cuban Revolution and have recurred in many speeches given by Cuban leaders, stressing the importance of Cuban nationalism, education, selflessness and internationalism, in their aim to create a national culture of mass participation and revolution.

***“To build communism it is necessary, simultaneous with the new material foundations, to build the new man and woman”***

The central statement made by Che Guevara in 'El Socialismo y el Hombre en Cuba' is that *“to build communism it is necessary, simultaneous with the new material foundations, to build the new man and woman”*. He considers this education of the new man and woman on the one hand and the development of technology (the material) on the other hand to be the two pillars on which to construct socialism. Che Guevara acknowledged that the creation of a new man and woman was not yet finished, but would be an ongoing process that goes hand in hand with the development of new economic forms. To bring about this radical change on all levels of society moral and material incentives are needed. Material incentives can be offered by the state in the form of food, housing and healthcare. However, it is the moral incentives that can create a more powerful response in moments of great peril and have a longer lasting effect. The 'rebirth' of the Cuban people had to result in the creation of an entirely new set of shared values.

To achieve this *“society must be converted into a gigantic school”*. The education of the people was considered critical not only to eliminate illiteracy but, maybe even more important, to socialize the masses with the concept of the New Man and to strengthen their consciousness for the need of the individuals incorporation in society and their importance as the motor of that society. The technical and ideological education had to manifest itself in both direct and indirect ways: by the

official state apparatus and by the constant influence of the mass (organizations). Both were considered equally powerful and had to play an important role in ideological control of the individuals. The education of the youth, characterized by Che as *“the malleable clay with which the new man, without any previous defects, can be formed”*, had to be given the most attention. They were not limited by the former capitalist and imperialist doctrines and mentalities imposed on the other generations and would be the future leaders and workers of the society. In each literacy lesson, the authors included vocabulary crucial for the New Man to understand, often mirroring speeches of the national leaders. The curriculum required teachers to teach about Fidel, Che, the evils of imperialism and agricultural reform.

Che believed that education should be directly related to production. The New Man had to understand that these two elements are closely interdependent and their advancement is parallel. Next to their studies, students were supposed to work on a daily basis. Workers should collectively participate in trainings and other forms of education, not only to develop a consciousness and collective spirit, but to guarantee a minimal educational level in order to be able to meet technological and scientific challenges. Che argued that for the full liberation of humankind from the evils of capitalism, work had to acquire a new social status in which it was no longer a commodity in a market driven economy, but a fulfillment of one's social duty. A reward instead of a necessity or punishment. Voluntary participation in all kinds of projects was considered to be essential for one's personal development and satisfaction.

The most important quality of the *Hombre Nuevo* had to be selflessness; to desire the welfare of the whole over that of the individual. The ongoing success of the revolution required the Cuban people not only to display heroism in war, but in their everyday attitudes. As Che formulated: *“We know that sacrifices lie ahead and that we must pay a price for the heroic fact that we are, as a nation, a vanguard. Each and every one of us readily pays his or her quota of sacrifice, conscious of being rewarded with the satisfaction of fulfilling a duty, conscious of advancing with everyone onward the new man and woman glimpsed on the horizon.”* Personal material possessions were no longer important, because the state would take care of all needs, such as food, healthcare and education. Trust in the power of the community was an essential part of having national pride in being Cuban (Cubania).

Che regarded the Cuban Revolution as the first of many socialist anti-imperialist movements in the world. In his eyes, the New Man is by definition an internationalist, who would accept his role as a vanguard and would not rest until all

oppressed people were free. His statement was evidenced by the thousands of Cubans that volunteered to go to the outskirts of the country or abroad to teach, perform medical services and fight in a wide range of foreign countries.

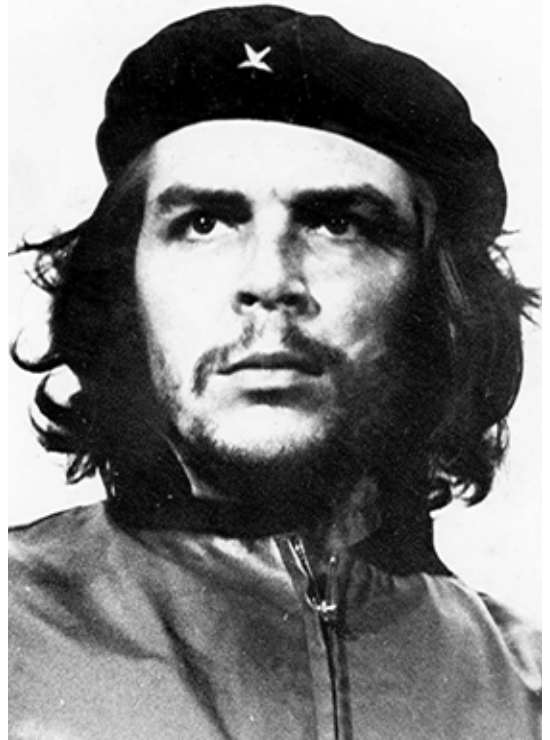
An important aim of Guevara's essay was to dispute the common argument of the capitalist leaders that socialism, and especially the period of building socialism, is characterized by the abolition of the individual for the sake of the state. Che Guevara acknowledges that it is true that the mass follows its leaders, especially Fidel Castro, with a great enthusiasm and without hesitation, but ascribes this trust to the party's ability to interpret their desires and aspirations. The institutionalization of society had to improve the integration between the people and the vanguard. However, the individual was still a fundamental actor in the revolutionary process, with the task to mobilize and generate consciousness and militant enthusiasm in the often still sleeping masses.

The Revolutionary Government promoted Che Guevara as the embodiment of the New Man. Tales of his heroic selflessness, leadership sacrifice of personal health, neglect of personal objectives and nationalism not only form the start of many political arguments, but are also still very evident in the educational curriculum and in the arts. To protect this ideal of the New Man, the government imposed censorship protecting Guevara's image. This also implies the discrimination of counter-examples who threaten to weaken the macho culture of the strong revolutionair, such as homosexuals.

## ***“Hasta la Victoria siempre... Patria o muerte!”***

### **El Hombre Nuevo in Alamar**

Alamar as an urban development that is the direct product of this ideology. The characteristics of the Hombre Nuevo are especially evident in the contributions of the Microbrigades. A great amount of workers active in all kinds of professions volunteered to perform physically very demanding work, not just for personal objectives, but for the welfare of the collective. In the mean time their colleagues had to work extra to make up for the lost labour force. Especially admirable were those volunteering outside of their regular work hours. For all of them consciousness of their social responsibility formed the most important moral incentive, while the state provided material incentives in the form of building materials and the prospect of a housing for the whole work unit. Being part of a microbrigade carried with it special social status and until this day, the original residents of Alamar are extremely proud of their homes and their collective achievement.



Ernesto "Che" Guevara  
June 14, 1928 - October 9, 1967

*“If we could choose how we would like our revolutionary fighters, our militants, our men, to be, then without hesitation we should say: We want them to be like Che. If we were to choose how we would like our future generations to be, then we should say: We want them to be like Che. If we were to say how we want our children educated, then without hesitation we should say: We want them to be educated within the spirit of Che. If we want to follow the example of a man, of a man who did not belong to these times, an example of the man of the future, I wholeheartedly say that this man, without a single stain on his conduct, attitude, and actions, that example of man, is Che. If we could choose how we would like our children to be, then, we must wholeheartedly, and with revolutionary spirit say that we want them to be like Che.”*

*Speech by Fidel Castro after the death of Guevara  
(8 October, 1967)*

# POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

## Alamar as a political centre

### ALAMAR ALTURAS

- Pre-revolutionary name 'Olimpo'
- Divided in 21 electoral districts
- Includes zona's 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, & 11
- Population of 30.780 inhabitants

### ALAMAR PLAYA

- Pre-revolutionary name 'Residencial'
- Divided in 19 electoral districts
- Includes zona's 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 24 & 25
- Population of 27.550 inhabitants

### ALAMAR ESTE

- Pre-revolutionary name 'Costa Azul'
- Divided in 23 electoral districts
- Includes zona's 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 26, 27, 28, micro x
- Population of 35.000 inhabitants





### **Political institutions**

Alamar is the political centre of the municipality Habana del Este and home to the municipal and local department of both state- and mass organization institutions. Most of them are located in Alamar Playa. The political activity can be divided in four main categories. The first category includes all governmental and party institutions, such as municipal and local governmental Assemblies and Administrations, Consejos Populares, electoral districts. The second category includes all state-run municipal and local services, such as the Municipal office of Water Supply, the Municipal Post

& Press office, the mercado's and the Public Prosecutor's office. The third category includes all municipal and local departments of the mass-organizations, such as the committees of the FMC, CTC, UJC, CDR, the Casa de orientación de la Mujer and the network of local CDR that have their own committee in every building block. The last category includes all public space used for more informal political activity, such as the amfi theatre, the parks and commercial clusters where the people come together to discuss the daily news, and the art manifestations in zona X.



*Es hora ya de que los colectivos  
todas las Cubanas y Cubanos  
de Cumplir y hacer cumplir lo que*





### **Hasta la victoria siempre**

Just like in the rest of Havana and Cuba, visual reminders of the ongoing Triumph of the Revolution are very evident in the Alamar streetscene. From the living room to the modern commercial centre, from broken down walls to billboards along the roads, from rundown gardens to organopónico's, political symbols can be found everywhere. They often have materialized in inspirational quotes, portraits, statues of the national heroes, monuments for important historical events or self-made collages congratulating the Castro's with the birthday of the Revolution. Additionally, the names of the public institutions such as schools and cultural centres often refer to historic revolutionary figures.

# EDUCATION

## Education in Cuba

Cuban education had been a major subject of political debate in Cuba before the revolution. The 1940 constitution enacted under Fulgencio Batista included a requirement that the Ministry of Education should take the largest share of the government's budget, except in cases of emergency. And the same constitution provided for compulsory primary education between the ages of 6 through 14. In the 1950s, though Cuba had an overall illiteracy rate of 23 percent (with 53 percent in rural areas), this was good for Latin America. Cuba's secondary-school attendance was relatively high as well. But standards varied, and affluent parents often chose to pay to send their kids to private schools; these school inequalities mirrored those across Cuba during that time.

So the scene was set for Fidel Castro to select education as a major issue for his revolution. He had mentioned plans to raise teachers' salaries and improve rural schools briefly in the manifesto of his revolution, but once in power it was clear that he saw education as having a pivotal role in consolidating his revolution. Under Fidel Castro, education became universal—but he also stipulated that anyone who received this education would have to actively promote government policies both during and after their schooling. They would also be required to take government-approved courses that didn't tolerate any criticism of socialism as a way of life. In other words, education was seen as key to the revolution taking hold and creating a literate population loyal to the government.

Increasingly, Cuban education was geared around the needs of the state. As Cuba became officially socialist, children followed the Marxist maxim of combining work and study. The government assigned them tasks like working in agriculture or tending the gardens of the school. And adolescents were sent to boarding school for a period to make sure their loyalty to the revolution was secure. Engineering and technical education took priority over the arts.

**“Practically every factory, every agricultural zone, every hospital, every school will be a university” --Fidel Castro**

Citizens of post-communist nations have understood that a new curriculum for their schools is as important as a revised constitution for their governments. The resources Fidel received from the Soviet Union funded a massive increase in new institutions. His vision for education was that the revolution would be built doing practical work—not in university classrooms. The individual competition for grades or achievement was played down in favor of nurturing the ethos of the colectivo.

## Ideas weapons in the class struggle against capitalism and Western-style democracy.

Although he's rejected political reform, Raul Castro has called for new ideas—he advocates for a new sense of self-reliance among individual Cubans and an end to the inverted pyramid of salary payment, among other goals. All of these objectives, of course, have implications for education. Again, of the institutions central to the revolutionary government, education has been the most crucial because it represented the process of ideological transfer; the strategy is key for the Cuban state's claim to its citizenry. Its leaders also stress the function of education as a way to foster social equality. But this reliance on education as a tool for indoctrination can no longer be taken for granted: Many Cubans, especially those born after the fall of the Soviet Union (who now account for nearly 20 percent of the island's 11 million population) no longer believe in the Marxist ideology.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/02/how-education-shaped-communist-cuba/386192/>



## Education in Alamar



## Educational Buildings in Alamar



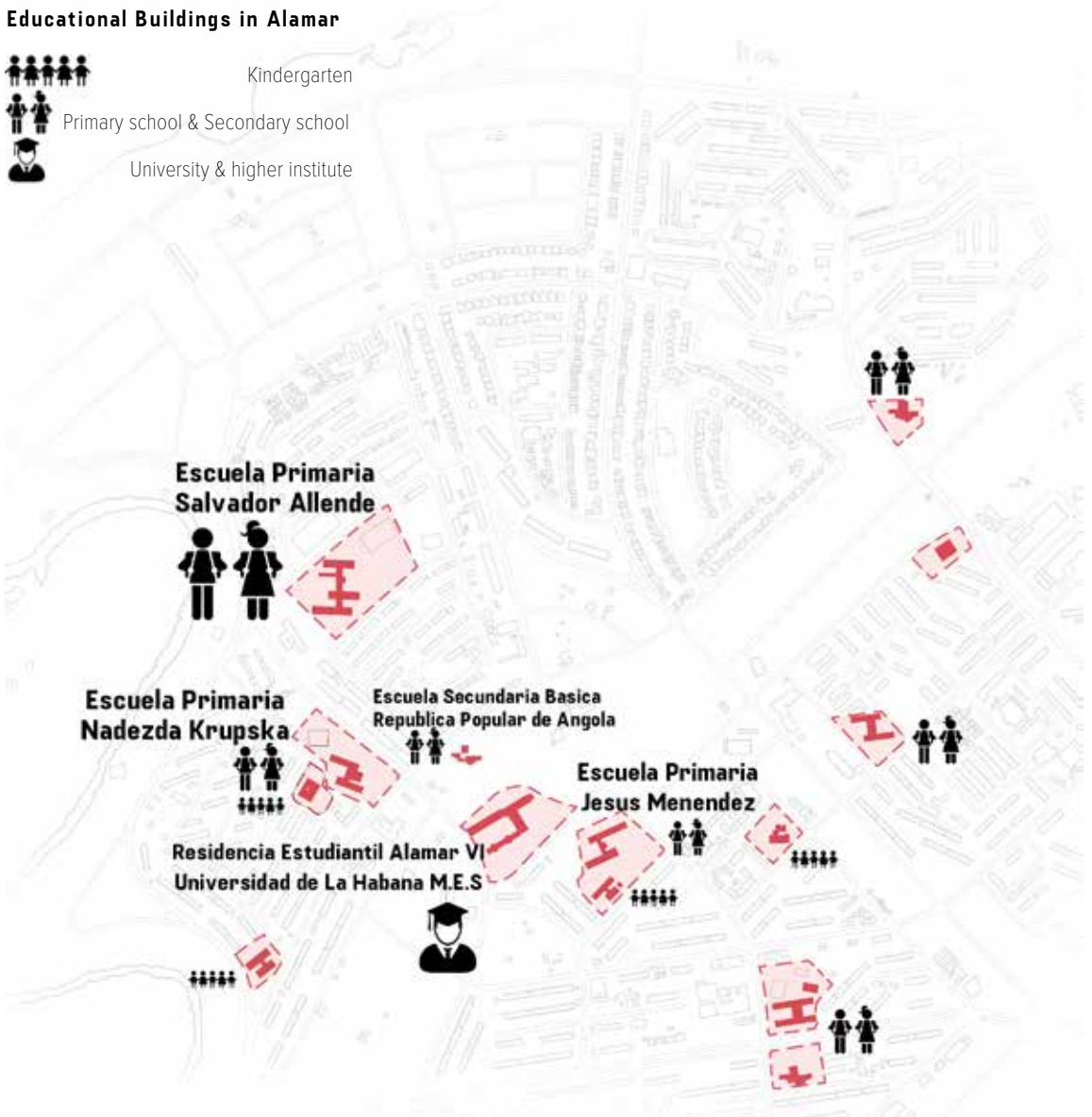
Kindergarten



Primary school & Secondary school



University & higher institute



# RELIGION OF ALAMAR

## The location of churches in alamar

According to the statistic found from the internet, there are 52 hidden "house churches" around Alamar, as a result of their decentralised religious characteristic. After the Opening of 1991, Afro-Cuban religions grew rapidly, like other faiths. The Cuban government began to bring Afro-Cuban organizations by giving official recognition to certain religious organizations, like these three official churches marked on the map.

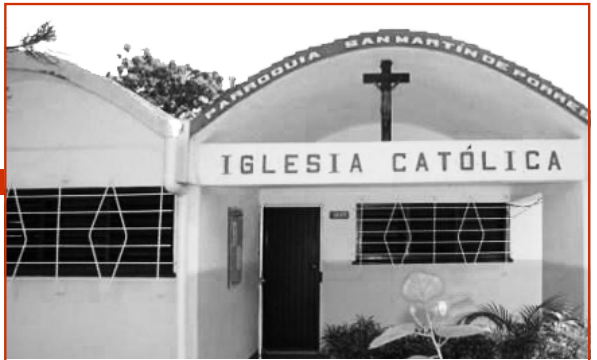


Religion of Alamar

House church



1 Camp Amore



Official church

2 Iglesia



3 Church



6

A L A M A R  
E C O N O M Y



# ECONOMY

## Bedroom Community

93330 people live in Alamar  
around 45% labour force (from the age structure of Cuba)  
 $93330 \times 45\% = 42000$  jobs requirement  
Through the excursion, the atmosphere of Alamar becomes clear. It is a sleeping city. Most people live in Alamar travel to Havana everyday. And there are still a lot of people hanging on the street with nothing to do. They get money from the welfare or their kinsfolk in Miami.

### What can people do in Alamar?



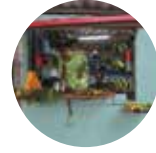
Urban Farming



C.T.A Agriculture Tech Support



Organic Agriculture



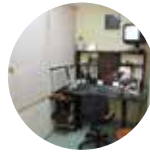
Product Selling



Self-Business



Bakery seller



Electronic Fixer



Private owned Mercado



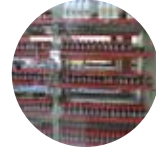
State-Business



Food market



State Owned Shop



Supermarket



Public Service



Primary school



Library



Healthcare



Industry



Textile Factory



Food Factory



Stella Candy Factory



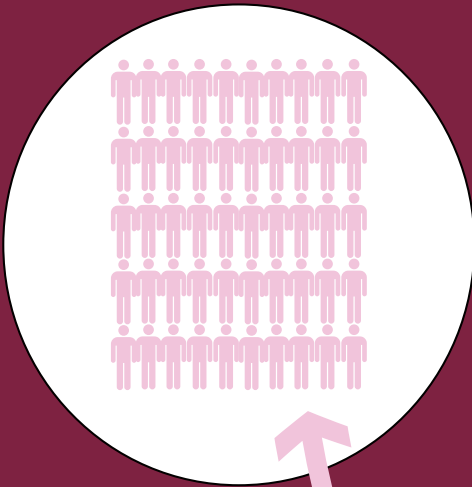
Unemployment



Young people sitting in the balcony

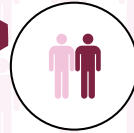


Alamar as a bedroom community



Work in Havana and other area

Work in Alamar



Farming



Self-business



State-business



Public Service



Industry



Unemployment



Buses in rush hour are very crowded to move people to their working area, but the bus in back turn is always empty.



Taxis are not easy to catch in rush hour and Alamar people are used to share a taxi with 6 strangers in a price of 10 CUP per person. But this crowded taxi becomes a good social space to meet new people.



# ECONOMIES WITHIN ALAMAR

## The formal and informal economy

- Production
- State-run mercado
- Formal commercial centre
- Urban Agriculture
- ▲ Formal economic activity
- ▲ Informal economic activity
- ★ Informal commercial centre
- Main clusters of economic activity





### **The informal economy**

The absence of local job opportunities has resulted in a wide range of informal activities in Alamar. These initiatives are often extra occupations outside the regular job workhours, in an attempt to have some additional income upon the state-regulated salaries. Since the urban plan of Alamar was never finished due to a lack of means, an official municipal centre is missing. Contrary to the more formal commercial facilities, the informal manifestations have now become the most vibrant public social meeting places, dominating the streetlife. However, although most of the structures are legal and the ground on which they stand is rented, the self-built sheds are often of very poor quality and are an eyesore for the local urban planners. The expected future inflow of capital will mean the end of these important public spaces and social structures.

## FORMAL PRODUCTION

Although most of the former industrial activity of Alamar has come to a stop during the Special Period and the facilities have been abandoned or changed in function, some production centres are still active.



## INFORMAL PRODUCTION

Behind the doors of the shabby self-built sheds there is a wide range of small scale informal activity hidden, such as the manufacturing of wooden objects and the repair of vehicles, clothes and electronic devices.



## FORMAL CENTRE

There are two important formal commercial centra in Alamar. Here the people have access to a cluster of facilities, for instance a bank, a bakery, an agro mercado, a pharmacy and commodities such as cloths and electrical devices.



## INFORMAL CENTRE

Informal foodmarkets form the most important and vibrant commercial centra of the neighbourhood. Here the public is offered a wide range of fresh fruits and vegetables cultivated in local urban farms or in the nearby periphery.



## FORMAL SHOP

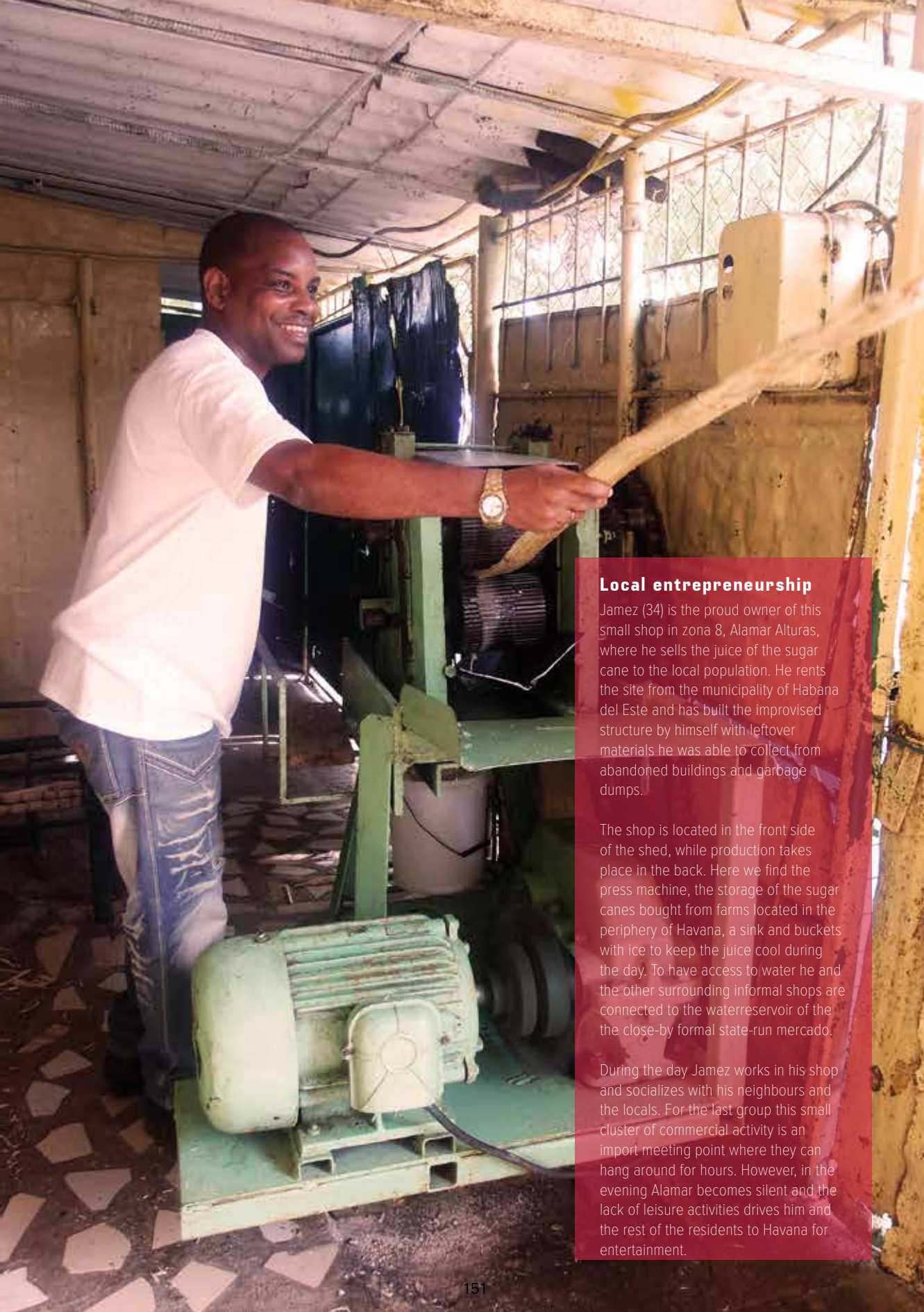
The formal mercado is a large empty hall with a very limited offer. Locals only come here to pick up their monthly state-provided food rationing. Official bars and specialized shop are more popular gathering spaces.



## INFORMAL SHOP

Informal shops can be found almost on every building block and are an important element in the daily routine. They offer all kinds and often strange combinations of commodities, such as food, rum, beauty products, gas and jewelry.





### **Local entrepreneurship**

Jamez (34) is the proud owner of this small shop in zona 8, Alamar Alturas, where he sells the juice of the sugar cane to the local population. He rents the site from the municipality of Habana del Este and has built the improvised structure by himself with leftover materials he was able to collect from abandoned buildings and garbage dumps.

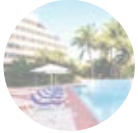
The shop is located in the front side of the shed, while production takes place in the back. Here we find the press machine, the storage of the sugar canes bought from farms located in the periphery of Havana, a sink and buckets with ice to keep the juice cool during the day. To have access to water he and the other surrounding informal shops are connected to the waterreservoir of the the close-by formal state-run mercado.

During the day Jamez works in his shop and socializes with his neighbours and the locals. For the last group this small cluster of commercial activity is an import meeting point where they can hang around for hours. However, in the evening Alamar becomes silent and the lack of leisure activities drives him and the rest of the residents to Havana for entertainment.

# HAVANAS COASTLINE

## Economies

M I R A M A R M A L E C O N T U N N E L



TOURISM  
RESORTS  
HOTELS



TOURISM  
CULTURE  
SOCIAL  
INFRASTRUCTURE

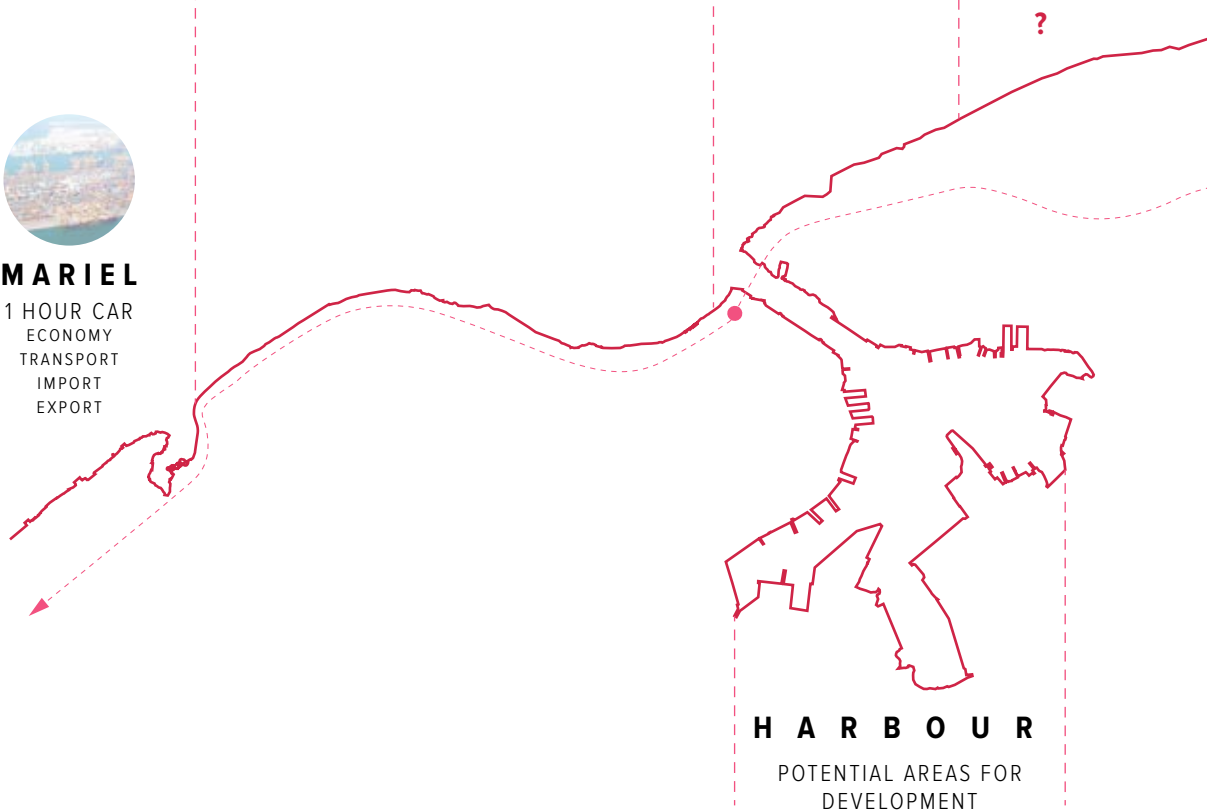


INFRASTRUCTURE



**M A R I E L**

1 HOUR CAR  
ECONOMY  
TRANSPORT  
IMPORT  
EXPORT



**H A R B O U R**

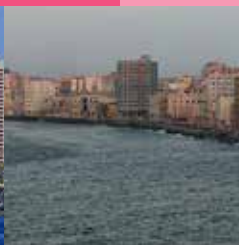
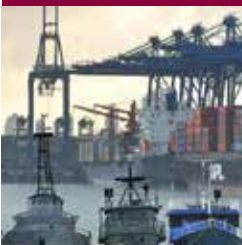
POTENTIAL AREAS FOR  
DEVELOPMENT

**TRADE**

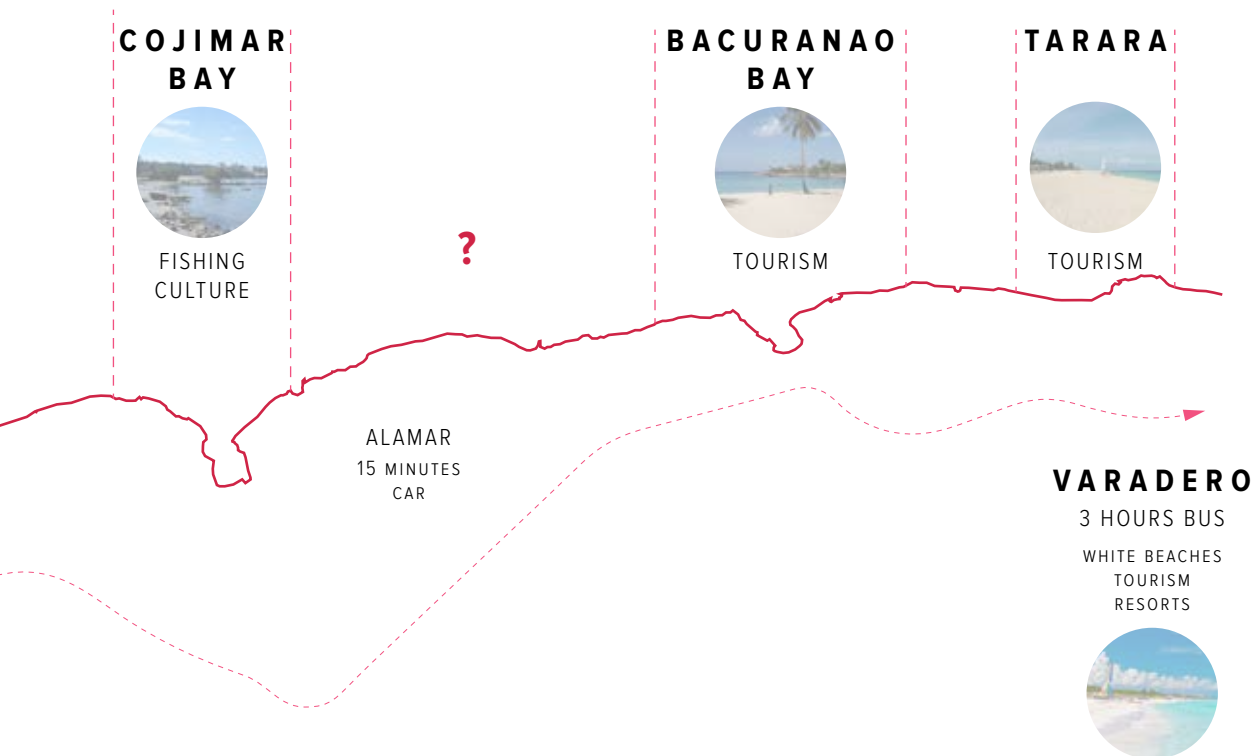
**TOURISM**

**POTENTIAL**

**?**







### Mariel to Varadero

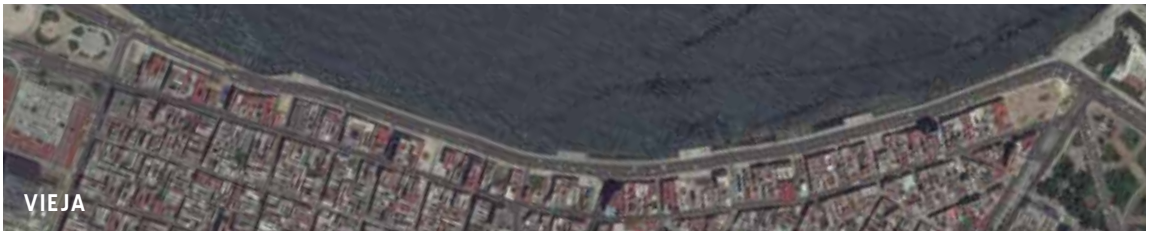
On an urban scale, following the coastline West to East, Alamar positions itself without a clear function. Beginning from Mariel harbour, which has an important position related to trade of import and export, the coastline meets the outskirts of Havana West. Miramar is well-known destination for high-class tourism who spend their days in blue swimming pools from resorts. The Malecon represents the transition from Vedado to the harbour of Vieja. The Malecon functions in different ways, as well as a social gathering space as a protection for the waves from the sea. The harbour of Vieja has transformed the last years, as industries moved

to Mariel. However at the Eastern part of the harbour an undefined land occurs. Along the coast there isn't much build until Cienfuegos, the first social housing project in the East. Cojimar is a well-know local fishing village which is famous of Hemmingway's stories. The Cojimar Bay, the departure of Hemmingway's fishing trips separates the wasteland of Alamar. More to the East this wasteland transforms into touristic white beaches with its high point in Varadero, a famous touristic resort and hotels spot.



# COASTLINE ARCHITECTURE

Development along the coast



## **Skyline of Alamar**

Along the coastline different architectural expressions as well as functions occur. From resorts and hotels with swimming pools to Havana's old center to oil fields. As seen in those spaces along the coast infrastructure plays an important role. However how would the vacant area, wasteland, of Alamar develop in the coming years?

**TOURISM  
HOTELS  
RESORTS  
PRIVATE POOLS  
SWEET WATER  
WHITE BEACHES  
CONSUMERISM  
BEACH TENTS  
SUNBEDS  
CLUBS  
MALECON  
SOCIAL SPACE  
RESTAURANTS  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
WASTELAND  
REFINERIES  
OIL FIELDS**

**?**

# COJIMAR AND ALAMAR

## History of the coast



### Cojimar fishing village

The Cojimar bay has a rich history related to fishing. One of the main reasons why Cojimar is known as a famous fishing village is because of the presence of Ernest Hemmingway. Hemmingway often went with his boat from the Cojimar Bay fishing on seas. The book 'The old man and the sea' is based on the stories from Cojimar. At this moment the area has been used for informal fish markets.

### Monster of Cojimar

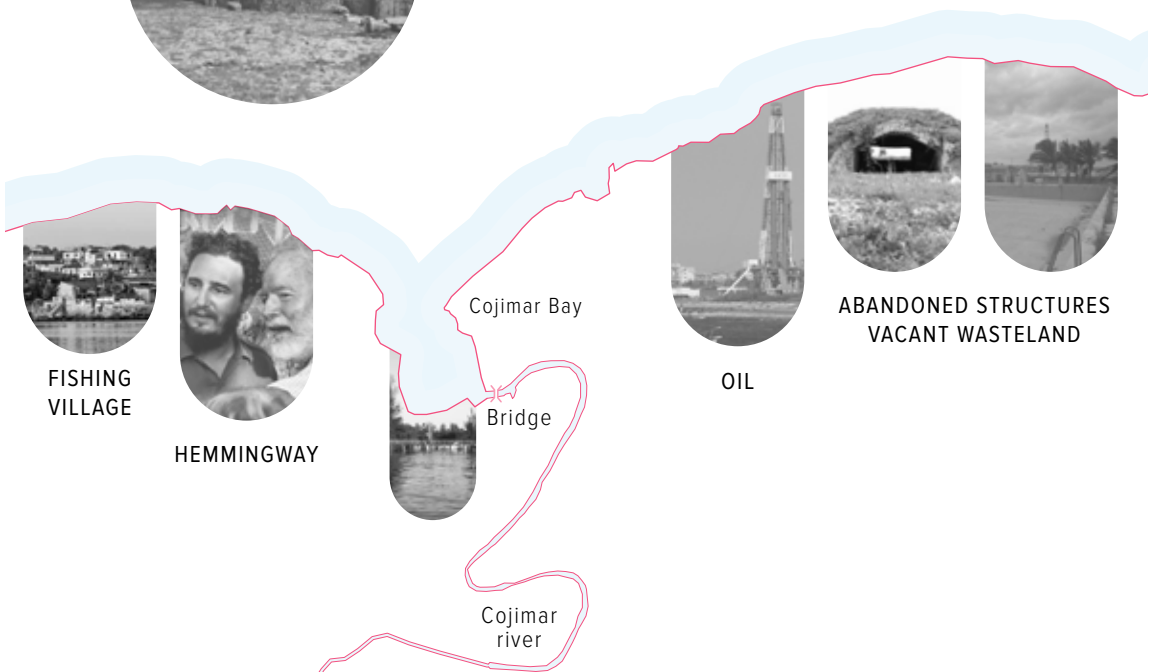
At the same time the Cojimar bay was a base for another famous legend, which is known as the Monster of Cojimar or the Cojimar Specimen or as the local people would call it El Monstruo de Cojimar. The Cojimar Specimen was caught back in the 1940s, however at that time measurement tools were lacking. The estimation is that this monster weighted 3.200 kilogram and was 6,5 meters. Among the Cuban the story of the Cojimar specimen was a famous myth.

### Rafter crisis

During the rafter crisis a lot of Cuban people left and headed to the United states. The Cojimar bay and the coastline was a place of departure for those people who wanted to escape.

### Russian remnants and trenches

During the revolution Russian technicians moved to Alamar. Some remnants of Russian people are still visible in the landscape of Alamar. Trenches which were used to watch the Americans incoming or some ruined russian houses along the coast. The first Russians introduced a black market economy. Russian people were able to buy groceries at shops only for foreign people and sold the stuff to local Cuban people.









# OIL IN ALAMAR

Changing the coastline for oil





## The oil drilling

*In time of the special period, oil was scarce. The inhabitants of Havana had to use different ways of transportation and living. Local solutions like urban farming were needed to survive.*

*Years after the start of the special period in 1991, it looks like the solution was not far away. Recent test drillings have shown that there is oil rich ground under Alamar. The place that had to suffer so much from the special period, was living on the solution, but is it the future solution? Anyway, the people in Alamar are still using their basic ways for transportation.*

*Cuba has probably a lot of oil reserves. The amount of Cuban oil can be so high that it will involve economical changes. Alamar was part of a plan to expand the oil exploration. The Cuban national oil company (CUPET) is unstable. In order to carry the risks, foreign companies are attracted. For the Alamar site, which was mainly testing, China was involved. In the years 2009 and 2010, Alamar was the test site for oil. Nowadays, only a small amount of oil is retrieved from underground sources, leaving the coastline battered. What will the oil-economic future be for Alamar?*



7

# SOCIAL STRUCTURES





# ALAMAR:



### The bedroom community

What once started as one of Cuba's socialist dreams, is now a place where one feels that the sense of belonging is missing along with a link to the city's past.

'Thirty years later, Alamar is a dirty city with garbage everywhere and few parks. The buildings suffer from years of neglect, their paint peeling off, with makeshift additions by residents trying to add rooms for their growing families; expansions that stand out more as a solution than as something that follows the building code.

The majority of Alamar residents go outside of Alamar not only to work but to develop their projects and for recreation. The new people who today are moving to Alamar do so as a result of house exchanges'

*R. Cano, havanatimes.org*

# CITY OF DREAMS?

# POETRY FROM ALAMAR

## Counter-movement

### YOU HAVE TO SEE

*You have to see*

*My kung fu master is a man who comes from the African continent.*

*I know, from having inquired, that students of kung fu like to have a master who comes from dynastic  
China, but my kung fu master is a man who comes from the African continent.  
Because we're not in China, or even in one of the many Chinatowns of the Americas,  
but in Alamar, site of intermingling, where these things happen.*

*You have to see him.*

*My kung fu master is a man who professes the doctrine of Christ.*

*I know, from having inquired, that students of kung fu like to have a master who professes the doctrine of  
Buddha, but my kung fu master is a man who professes the doctrine of Christ.  
Because we're not in China, or even in one of the many Chinatowns of the Americas,  
but in Alamar, site of intermingling, where these things happen.*

*You have to see him.*

*Juan Carlos Flores,*

*The Counterpunch (and other horizontal poems)*

## **THE DIVER**

*Whether The dumpster diver be occupation one exercises or horizontal real estate or foolish son of the homeland or child feeding from bottle (areas thick with grass, there are unused wastelands, where pedestrians from the neighborhood throw debris from their daily lives and among weeds, the first mushroom rises for a new civility, not yet included on maps of the counterculture), whether The diver be occupation one exercises or horizontal real estate or foolish son of the homeland or child feeding from bottle (areas thick with grass, there are unused wastelands, where pedestrians from the neighborhood throw debris from their daily lives and among weeds, the first mushroom rises for a new civility, not yet included on maps of the counterculture), whether The diver be occupation one exercises, horizontal real estate, foolish son of the homeland, or child feeding from bottle: "at the appointed hour, when they call me by my name, I will not respond."*

*Juan Carlos Flores,  
The Counterpunch (and other horizontal poems)*

# HUMANS OF ALAMAR

Different stereotypes within Alamar



## Identity

The inhabitants of Alamar is a mixture of different cultural backgrounds, ages, and interests. Different unique groups can be formulated.



## The rapper

Alamar is the hometown for many rappers, around the 90s people from Alamar received Miami radio and were influenced by the American rap scene. This inspiration transformed into an own identity which was/is visible on the streets of Alamar. Festivals were held at the Anfiteatro.

### Location:

- Anfiteatro
- Salvador Allende Sports Complex
- On the streets



Photo 1 : underground boxing in Alamar

## The poet

Famous poets found Alamar a source of inspiration. Poets such as Angel Escobar, Mario Benedetti and Juan Carlos Flores lived in Alamar. As the living room was often the space to share written word, also the Fayad Jamis gallery, named to artist and poet Fayad Jamis was the place where poets of Alamar came together.

### Location:

- Fayad Jamis gallery
- Cine Alamar
- Living room



Photo 2 : Juan Carlos Flores, the founder of OMNI

# HUMANS OF ALAMAR

## Different stereotypes within Alamar

### The buzo

The 'buzo' is a local term used to describe a dumpster diver, especially during the Special Period many Cuban people went going to the garbage to find usefull stuff which could be reused. One of the famous 'buzo's' is Hector Pascual Gallo Portieles. Gallo reuses 'trash' found from everywhere and makes art out of it. Those objects are exposed in his garden, known as El Mundo de Gallo, the world of Gallo.

### Location:

- El Mundo de Gallo (Micro X)  
Open air trash art museum.



### The performance artist

The waiting line for the bus, the market or the space inbetween architecture, every space is a stage for the counterculture movement in Alamar. A group of self-taught performance artists go on the streets to make the Cuban people aware of their own thoughts, to create a free mind.

### Location:

- Fayad Jamis gallery
- Cine Alamar
- Public space



Photo 1 : underground boxing in Alamar



Photo 2 : Juan Carlos Flores, the founder of OMNI

### The farmer

After the special period, Alamar had to provide a self-sufficient way of living. One of the important scenes was agriculture. Right now Organoponico Vivero is one of the pioneers of urban agriculture. The farmer produces food.

#### Location:

- Organoponico Vivero Alamar
- Urban private gardening



Photo 1 : underground boxing in Alamar

### The fisherman

With improvised fishing boats the local people of Alamar found a way to catch fishes on sea. A inflatable inner tube has been transformed into a necessary tool for fishing.

#### Location:

- Along the coastline
- Cojimar bay
- Cojimar river



Photo 1 : underground boxing in Alamar

# HUMANS OF ALAMAR

## Different stereotypes within Alamar

### The underground boxer

Below the Olympic swimming pool an underground scene of boxing is happening. Young Cubans train here for boxing.

#### Location:

- Salvador Allende Sports Complex  
Underneath Olympic swimming pool



### The bodybuilder

In parts of Alamar gardens and garages have been transformed into informal gyms where local people can train. It is the playground for the bodybuilder but also a social meeting point.

#### Location:

- Informal extension as gyms



Photo 1 : underground boxing in Alamar

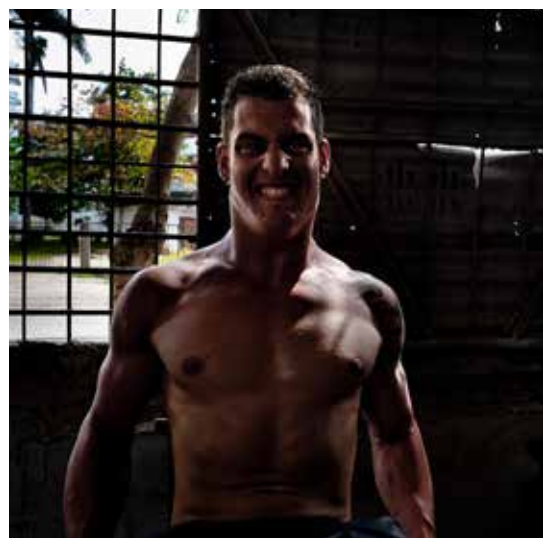


Photo 2 : Juan Carlos Flores, the founder of OMNI

### The homosexual

Along the Cojimar river the magrooves have been a place where homosexuals would meet each other. Moreover along the coast there are trenches which also have been used for sexual activity.

#### Location:

- Grove along the Cojimar river  
biggest gay hook-up area



Photo 2 : Juan Carlos Flores, the founder of OMNI

### The school kid

The school kid can invent its own games everywhere on the streets and playgrounds all over Alamar. Also an abandoned amusement park in the center was once the place for kids to meet other kids.

#### Location:

- Schools
- Playgrounds
- Streets of Alamar
- Coastline of Alamar




Photo 2 : Juan Carlos Flores, the founder of OMNI

**Daniel Casanova (from Alamar)**

Daniel, a friendly forty years old Cuban, who grew up in Alamar. In 2006 he moved to Tampa in Florida but returned six years later to Alamar. He has still friends in USA who sends him shoes which he trades in Havana. Meanwhile his wife works in the Havana Centre.







## El Hombre Nuevo

After the Special Period the Cuban lost their human side, OMNI is trying to bring back this human side and improve human relations. El Hombre Nuevo, is their ideal, a human not based on material needs nor fulfilled with being apathetic to the revolution. An important source of inspiration is the Cuban poet Jose Marti (1853-1895), who already fought for liberty of the Cuban people. In his poems he would describe that the revolution would be followed by a superior state of human existence, and according to OMNI, right now it is this moment for transition. The Cuban people already are familiar with the mentality of a community or to be united. In the daily rituals of OMNI this mindset can be seen, as they meditate, all in their own way, daily. Another performance that shows the way OMNI Zona Franca acts in public space is explained by Amaury Pacheco (member of OMNI Zona Franca) :

*We did one of our first actions in 1997 when the entire city—and especially Alamar—was full of trash on every corner. It piled up week after week without them coming to collect it, with flies, rats, and people passing very close. So we had the idea to bury ourselves in the garbage. People started to gather when they saw feet or a hand sticking out of the trash. The police arrived quickly and also other authorities such as the Municipal Director of Culture. Except for a garbage truck, the whole world was there! We were detained by the police for six hours.*





## Alamar, home for a counterculture

Whereas the city centre of Havana created their own culture through history over many centuries, Alamar was built without any history to start from. A desolate landscape with forests along the Cojimar river. Alamar at this moment was known as the Olimpo heights. Through the build of the tunnel east Havana was connected to the city center, however Alamar was mentally disconnected from Havana. Those aspects played a role in the creation of a counterculture, different than the culture you can find in Havana Vieja or Vedado.

At first, after the bourgeoisie left their villas in Alamar, the Russian technicians arrived in Alamar. The local people called them 'Russians', meanwhile they were from the Soviet republics, as well as from several Eastern European countries. Those 'Russians' were mainly military collaborators, engineers and technicians. Together with the arrival of Russians, the first manifestations of the black market appeared. Russians could buy stuff from the so called 'diplo-shops' (diplo-tienda), which existed when the use of the dollar was penalized and only foreign diplomats could shop in these stores. The Russian women sold or traded with the Cuban people the stuff acquired at the diplo-shop.

After the Russians a large community of Chileans arrived. Those Chileans fled their country because of persecution of General Pinochet. Together with the Chileans other political refugees from Latin America and the United States (African-American civil rights militants) arrived and moved to Alamar. Besides the political refugees, Castro ensured a clearance of the shantytowns of Havana. Many of the people living in those poorer areas were moved to housing in Alamar. However, also, Cuban intellectuals deliberately choose to move from the city center, who preferred a higher existential liberty. This hotpot of different cultural, educational and religious background caused a trigger for the counterculture going on in Alamar. Without an history Alamar had to be reinvented by the people themselves. Culture in Alamar has a lot of freshness and youth, it is the place where rock, graffiti, hip-hop and poetry brought to a new dimension.

# MEANINGFULL EXPRESSION

## Written and verbal word as protest

### Censorship by the government

In the last decade of the twentieth century was remarked by its censorship by the government. Around the 90s there was a shift undergoing in Havana, as rock was introduced to the Cuban people. For a long time this phenomenon of rock was prohibited and vetoed by Cuba. However by an independent group, organized by Rensoli, the first Rock festival happened at the Anfiteatro in Alamar. Soon the government tried to intervene with the movement of rock. The government thought that rock should be domesticated in order not to lose control over it. The government created the National Rock agency and took over the role of the independent organizer of a rock festival. Soon the hype of rock disappeared and Rap popped up among the streets of Alamar.

### Special period

During the hype of Rock music, already a rap culture was evolving in the outer regions of Havana, especially in Alamar. After the special period rap generated an explosion in this new musical scene. As Cuba was heading downwards on economical scale, rap was a positive influence to change society and music.

Copied text : From that state at the Alamar Amphitheater, rap questioned the State's current ethics and attitude, and its political, military and police institutions. It questioned the Cuban economy's grave condition and the changes brought about by new measures. It also questioned Case No. 1 (1989) against General Arnaldo Ochoa and others, as well as the war in Angola. It questioned education and the irreparable crisis it is now in, and each one of the State's leaders, and their ineptitude and lack of interest in solving serious economic problems. It even questioned rap, rappers, and rap's place in Cuban musical culture.

One by one, one topic at a time, Cuban rappers ended up doing scatological research, not leaving any social or human space untouched by its investigative rhymes. Rap was a major explosion. Rappers became kings of the streets and filled every corner with improvised phrases criticizing domestic violence, growing alcoholism, and increasing police brutality. Cuban rap had allies, brothers in arms that seconded this novel way of expressing one's self through innovative sound and vocals. Its history was deeply rooted in the history of African storytellers and griots, rhyme improvisers who walked from town to town orally transmitting the history of myths and nations, offering anonymous advice from place to place.

Source : *Identidades 1, no. 3, september 2014*

### Counterculture movements

Besides a meaningful rap movement in Alamar, a secondary movement of expression evolved during the same years. Whereas the rappers expressed themselves with music, this other counterculture mainly uses performance arts in the public space together with poetry in order to transmit a message to the Cuban people. As this movement focusses on performance arts and poetry the members varies from poets, painters, performers, sculptors, writers, photographers, filmmakers, sing-songwriters, actors and rappers.

There are three major movements known in Alamar, OMNI Zona Franca, Garaje19 and Misceláneo. OMNI Zona Franca acts as a pioneer in this web of counter-cultural movements. Often those three movements work together on different projects.

The story of OMNI Zona Franca starts in Casa de Cultura, which is also known as the Fayid Jamis Gallery. Here a self-taught group of artisan sculptors worked together. Probably the name of this group artisan was OMNI. At the same time another experimental group called Zona Franca, which means 'free zone', was formed out of poets. Zona Franca was led by poet Juan Carlos Flores, who lived since his 9th in Alamar. Through Flores's poems he is describing life in Alamar and the struggles with it. In 1995 those two groups met each other at the Fayid Jamis Gallery and this was the beginning of a series of multiple collaborations. In 1997, the two groups 'officially' joined together and OMNI Zona Franca was founded. Juan Carlos Flores played an important role in the collaboration of those two movements.

OMNI Zona Franca sees themselves as constructors of networks, whereas the city is their network. They make use of the urban fabric and places such as, the market, bus stop, the space in between the buildings etc. They are activists of free thought. The aim of OMNI Zona Franca is to intensify the communication between individuals in order to make the Cuban people aware of their own thoughts and opinions. In this way communication is an important aspect, they prefer to work with their voice, body, gestures, behaviour together with cheap immediate materials, quick and difficult to control or censor.



## Alamar La Ciudad del Hip-hop

For some, to use a plaza of this locality for rhythm meetings, may seem strange, even paradoxical especially for those who only know this site for its architectural elegance and privileged location, between coast and city, tunnel and countryside, doorway to the beaches of the East, Varadero and East Cuba.

*Antonio Paneque Brizuela*

*Hoy parece que no es así  
El oficial me dice a mí, "no puede estar allá, mucho menos salir de aquí."  
En cambio al turista se la trata diferente.  
Será posible que en mi país yo no cuente?*

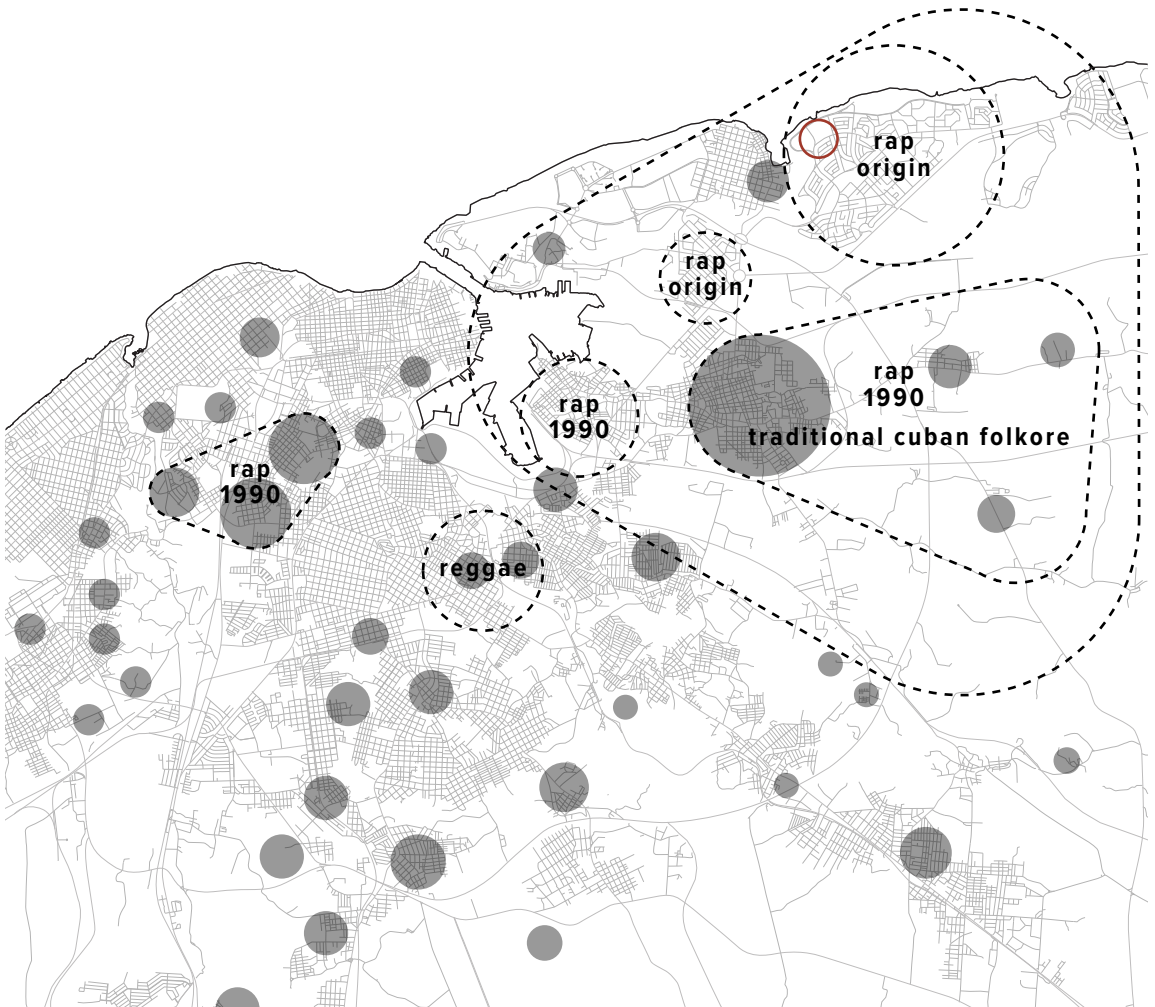
*Today it seems it's not like that  
The official tells me, "You can't be there, even less can you leave here."  
On the other hand, the tourist is treated differently.  
Is it possible that in my country, I don't count?*

*"They're always saying we're all equal  
But you tell me if the doorways are crumbling in the generals' houses.  
Of course all the hospitals in Cuba are free  
But who do they treat better, the officers, or me?"*

*Los Aldeanos - Ya Nos Cansamos*

## History of rap and the role of Alamar

In the last decade of the twentieth century was remarked by its censorship by the government. Around the 90s there was a shift undergoing in Havana, as rock was introduced to the Cuban people. For a long time this phenomenon of rock was prohibited and vetoed by Cuba. However by an independent group, organized by Rensoli, the first Rock festival happened at the Anfiteatro in Alamar. Soon the government tried to intervene with the movement of rock. The government thought that rock should be domesticated in order not to lose control over it. The government created the National Rock agency and took over the role of the independent organizer of a rock festival. Soon the hype of rock disappeared and Rap popped up among the streets of Alamar.




*‘Here in Cuba we are  
all like students learning  
all the time to break  
through the wall of prison  
surrounding us. ‘*

*“It has happened  
in every system, in  
every empire, that the  
moment has come to  
begin with dialogue,  
time to recognize  
each other. It is a  
time when we look at  
each other, there shall  
be no division, no  
mediator between you  
and me, think the way  
you think and be who  
you are.”*

### **Poesia Sin Festival**

Poesia sin fin, poetry without end, was first organized in 1999. In the early years the event was organized in the houses of people from OMNI Zona Franca, however it expanded into the streets of Alamar and later also to regions in Central Havana. Whereas this festival was in the beginning only for one day, right now it is an festival which covers the whole month of December. The idea of the festival is to convey through poetry and arts positive social change, to create a space for dialogue but also to celebrate life with art, humor and poetry in all its dimensions. The reason for this festival could be traced back to the values of OMNI Zona Franca, where they acknowledge a Cuban society which is socially, culturally and psychologically depressed. It is according to them necessary to awaken a particular joy that values the past, shows the past and sense the future as a nation wherein individuals are able to insert themselves into the global context, taking into account that the Cuban has lived isolated for fifty years.

A new game  
you can still



*“At the end of the film, all  
bad guys have disappeared  
and the good ones have  
forgotten their role.”*

*“It is a generation  
carrying a burden,  
interrupted in dreaming  
and not seeing anything,  
of illusion lost in sight,  
of a bitter bile, which  
was already bitter.”*

has started,  
win, right?

## ALAMAR'S ARTISTS

from musician to sculptor



Alexey Rodríguez Mola and Magia Lopez  
Obsesión



Edgar Gonzalez  
Doble Filo



Yotuel, Ruzzo and Roldán  
Orishas

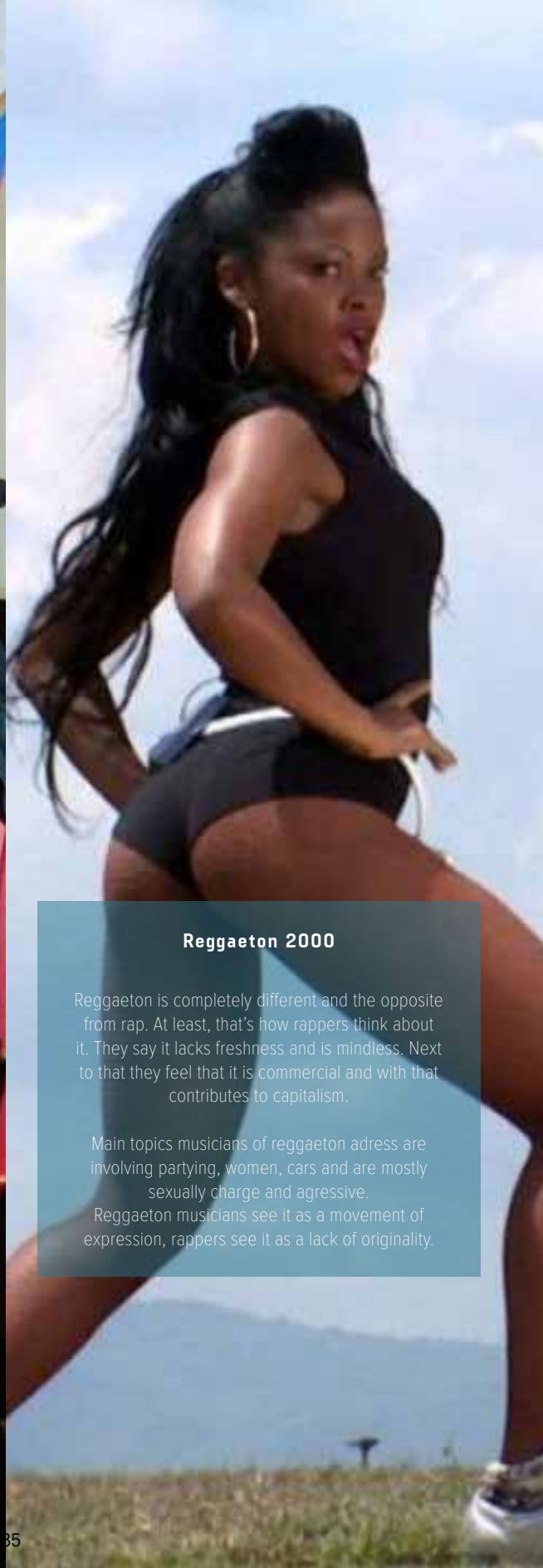




### Rap (hip-hop) 1980

Cuban rap culture is all about giving the afro-cuban youth a voice to express discomforts with ongoing racism in an egalitarian society.

Rappers aren't at all only involved in making music. They are concerned with different types of issues on political and social levels. Via the vocal expression produces by their raps, they show their opinions and thoughts on different topics.



### Reggaeton 2000

Reggaeton is completely different and the opposite from rap. At least, that's how rappers think about it. They say it lacks freshness and is mindless. Next to that they feel that it is commercial and with that contributes to capitalism.

Main topics musicians of reggaeton address are involving partying, women, cars and are mostly sexually charged and aggressive.

Reggaeton musicians see it as a movement of expression, rappers see it as a lack of originality.



### **Criminality in and around Alamar**

Bridge connecting Alamar and Cojimar built between 1993 and 1994. The bridge linking the Alamar and Cojimar is categorized as high risk zone of danger for the population. The last three years a total of 60 murders have occurred around this place. Most victims are young people returning to their homes in Alamar after going to the disco La Costa nightclub in Cojimar. The sad thing about this is that the police and those responsible for ensuring order do not deny this information but do nothing to clarify this situation.



### **Danger of bacteria and polluted water**

HAVANA TIMES - Alamar, as Babylon, came between two rivers: the Cojimar and Bacuranao. If we go by the smell and appearance, the Cojimar is very ill. Hundreds of sewers discharged sewage into its bed; but also Suchel, the cosmetics industry associated with fragrance, neatness and cleanliness, makes a magnificent contribution of toxic detritus.

The fishermen of Cojimar, dairy farms whose cattle pass on the shore and agricultural farms in the environment, take shrapnel river course his plate of food. Following the channel towards the mouth, right at the entrance of Alamar, there is a grove lies the city singódromo. It's funny how nature insists gather pipí and caca (the river in this case) with eroticism and sexuality.

If we abstract from the waters of Cojimar the place is nice, dark, full of vines and birds. On the ground there are many used condoms, empty rum bottles and sometimes grows, timely, some intoxicating honguito. It is noted that the area round Baco but what cowards have left him here maenads.



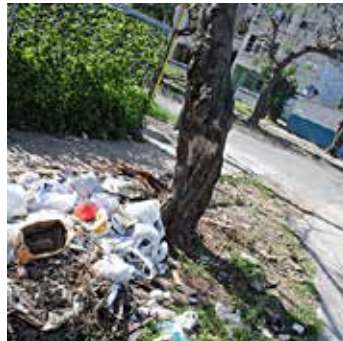
# COJIMAR RIVER

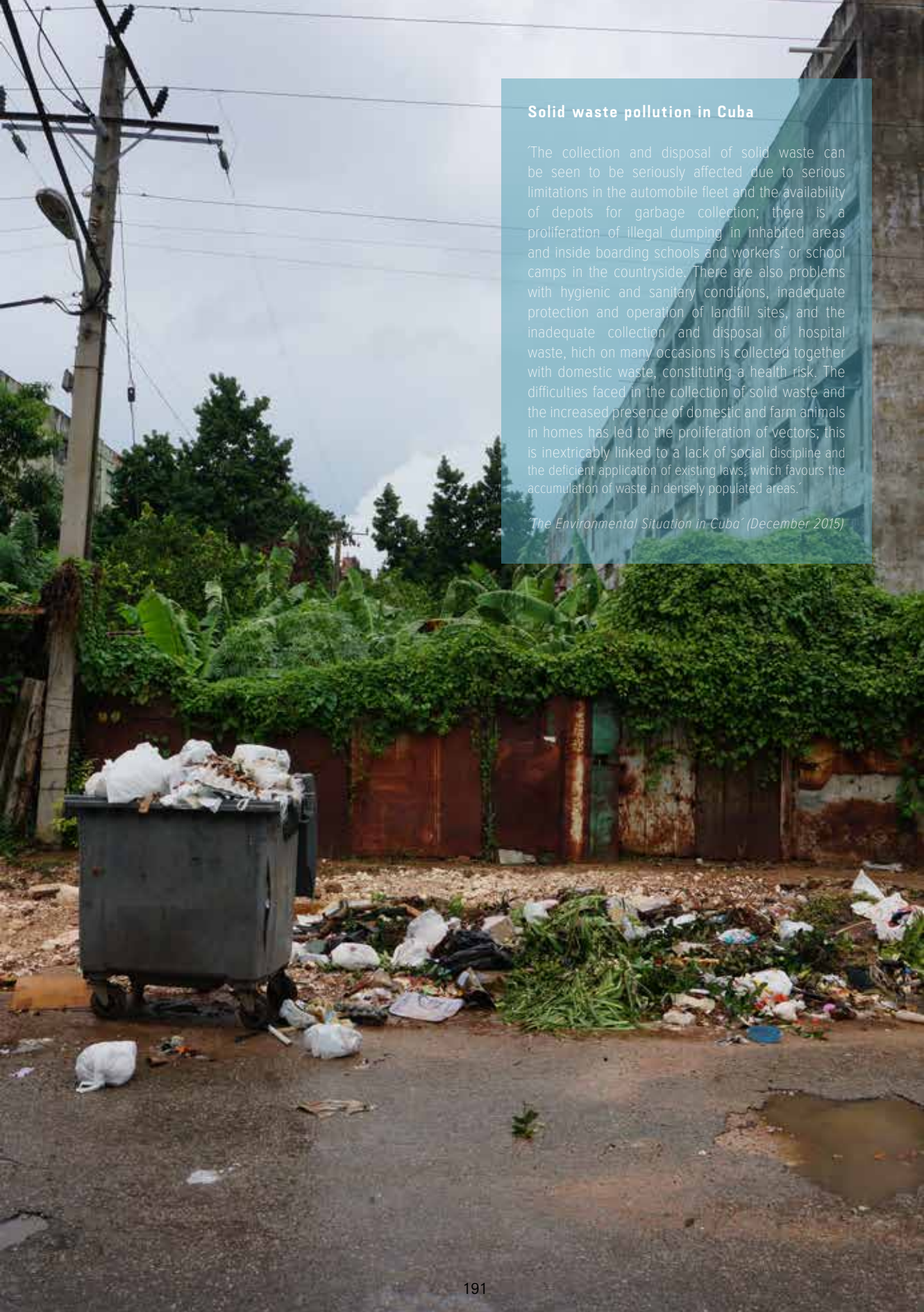


# POLLUTION

## Alamar

Since around 2009 Alamar is dealing with pollution problems. Garbage is piled up in the streets. People living in Alamar don't feel responsible anymore to deal with the garbage.





## Solid waste pollution in Cuba

'The collection and disposal of solid waste can be seen to be seriously affected due to serious limitations in the automobile fleet and the availability of depots for garbage collection; there is a proliferation of illegal dumping in inhabited areas and inside boarding schools and workers' or school camps in the countryside. There are also problems with hygienic and sanitary conditions, inadequate protection and operation of landfill sites, and the inadequate collection and disposal of hospital waste, which on many occasions is collected together with domestic waste, constituting a health risk. The difficulties faced in the collection of solid waste and the increased presence of domestic and farm animals in homes has led to the proliferation of vectors; this is inextricably linked to a lack of social discipline and the deficient application of existing laws, which favours the accumulation of waste in densely populated areas.'

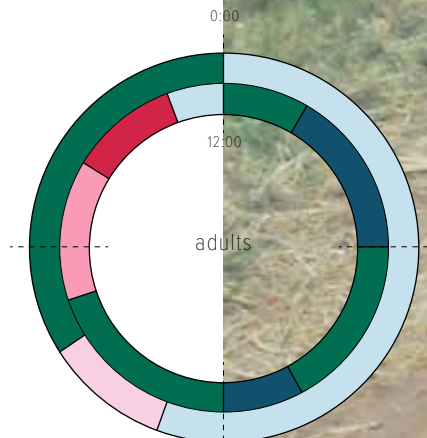
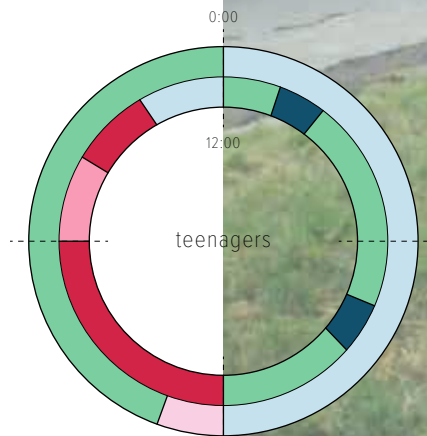
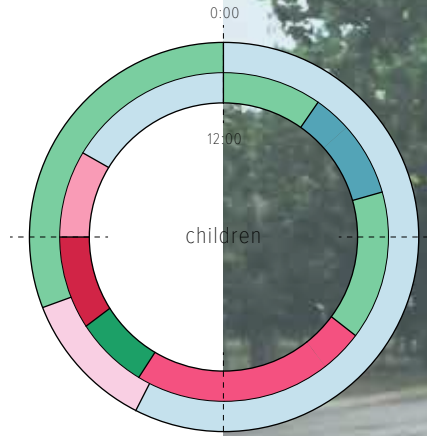
*'The Environmental Situation in Cuba' (December 2015)*

# DAILY ACTIVITIES

## people's activitie 24-hours cycle in Alamar

Alamar currently is known as the bedroom community, what means that a lot of daily activities would supposedly occur in

24 hours cycle's  
october 1 weekday

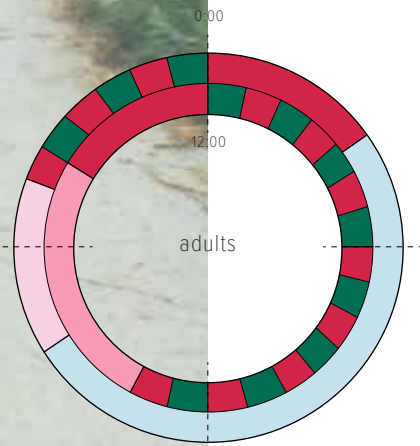
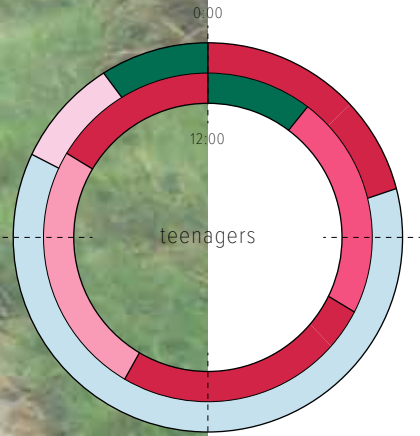
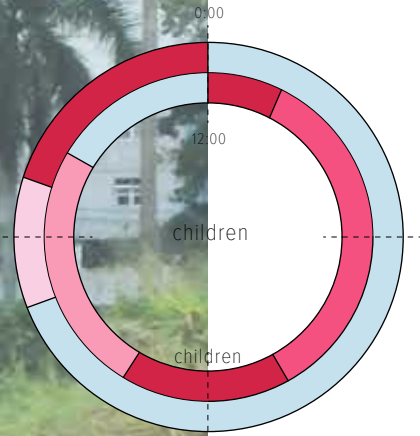


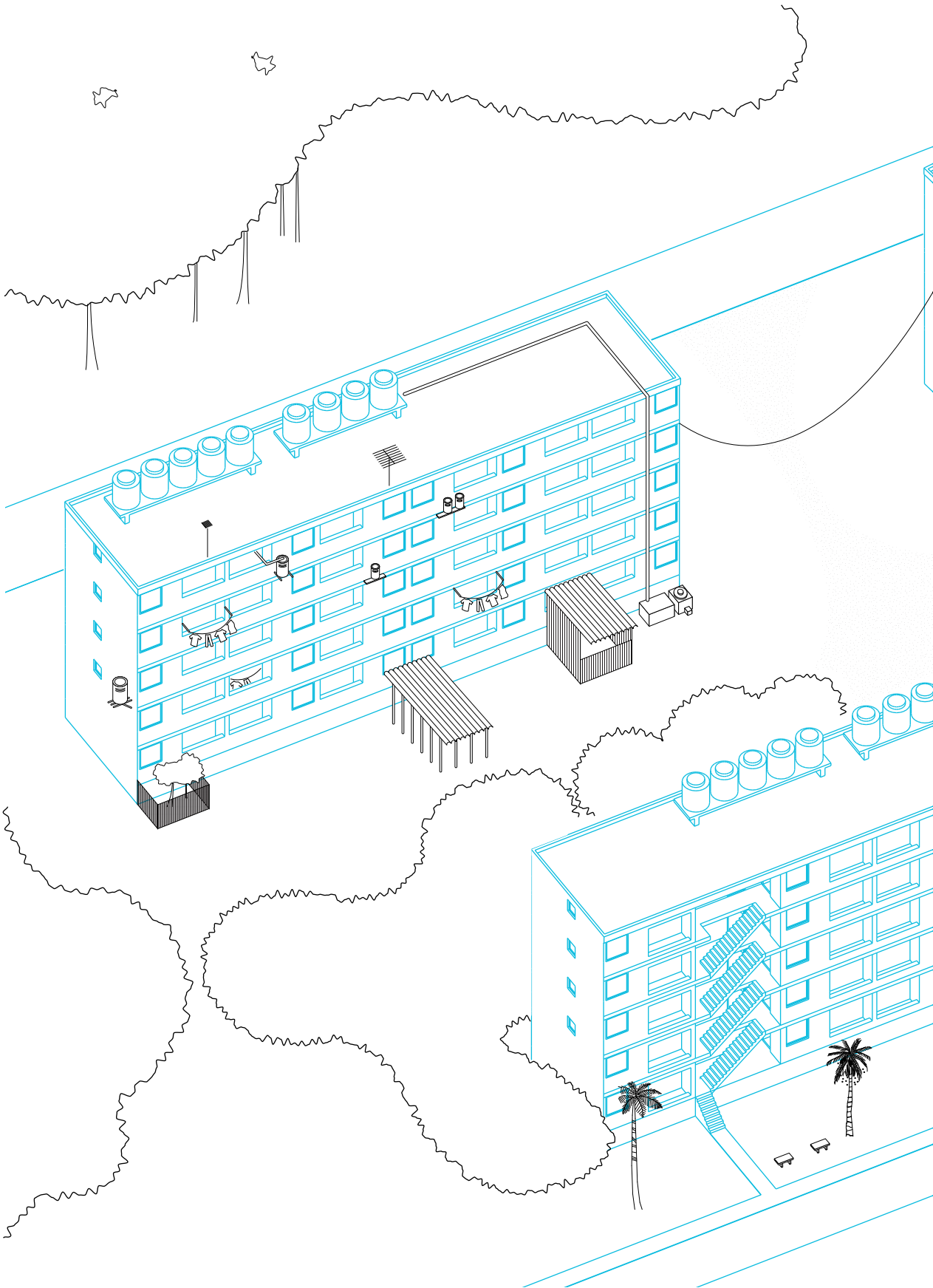
- sleeping
- siesta
- siesta/lunch
- breakfast
- dinner
- sports
- daily activities
- work
- homework
- school

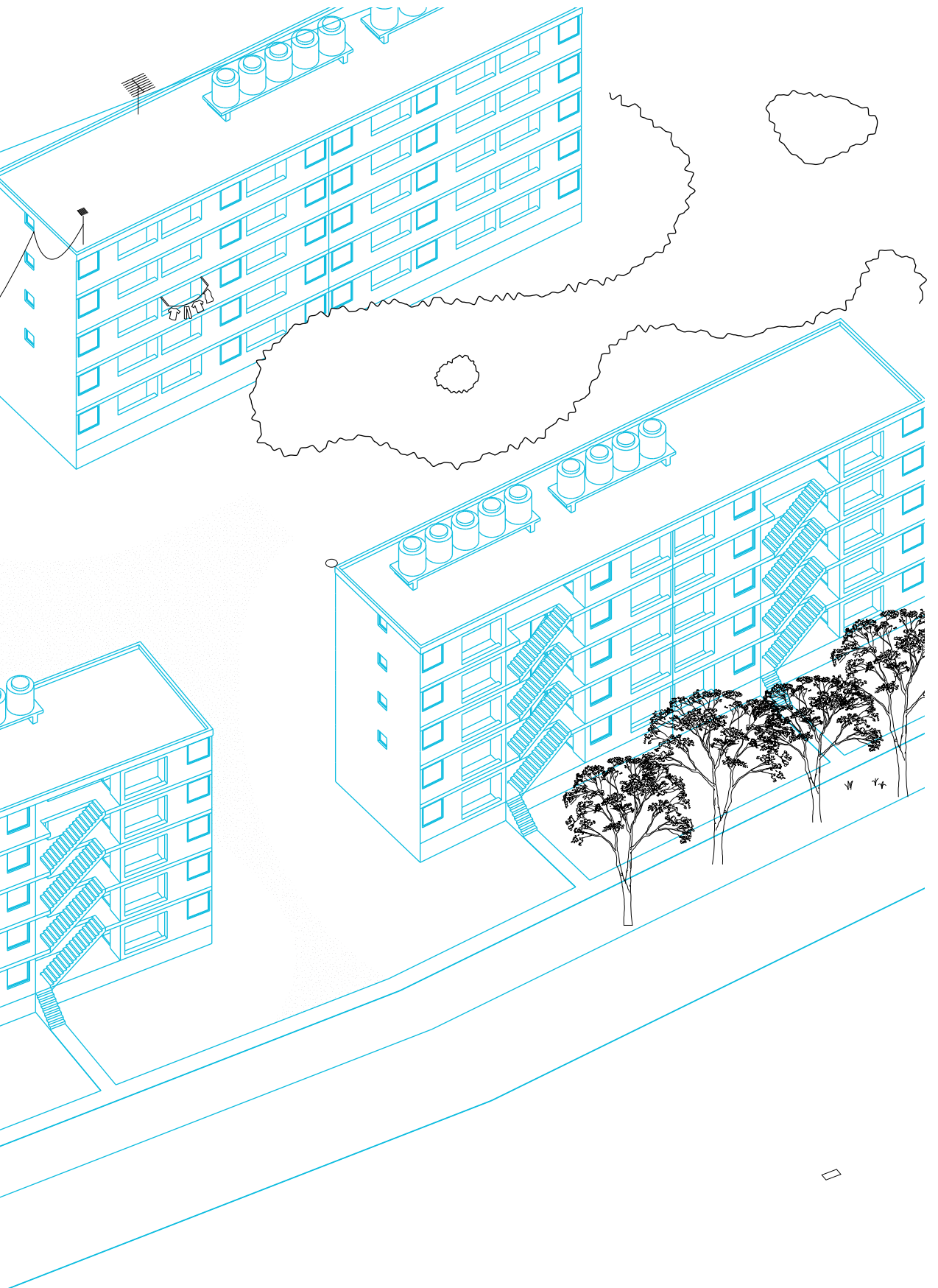




24 hours cycle's  
october | weekend







## PRECONCEIVED IDEAS

### *commercial and work related activities*

Havana is the place where the inhabitants of Alamar go to work during the day. Also, during the evening people will go to bars in Havana vieja or Vedado, because there are (almost) no bars or other cultural places in Alamar.

### *deserted coastline*

Alamar's coastline appears to be a deserted place, with it's abandoned huge swimming pool, leftover structures randomly placed and with pollution in the sea as well as on the beach.

### *cultural activities*

Since most of the cultural places in Alamar seems to be abandoned or totally closed for the public, there probably aren't a lot of social activities that can be found on the streets or at public places scattered around the city other than the rap- and hip-hop related activities.

## POSITIVE EXPERIENCES



## PRECONCEIVED IDEAS

### *pollution*

Many Alamar related blogs include writing about the huge pollution problem that turns street into a great dump. A collection of photo's shows the garbage issue which is not possible to overcome soon since the trucks are running out of gasoline.

### *focus on housing*

From the start, Alamar was planned essentially for housing, not in the first place as a city centre. Since current developments in Alamar moving in the direction of needing more cultural and social related functions belonging to city centres, new structures are needed.

### *water issues*

Cuba in general is dealing with huge water problems. The same goes for Alamar. Different from Havana -that is closely related with the coastline and the malecon in between-, Alamar is situated a few hundred meters away from the sea.

## NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES



8

AGRICULTURE  
FOOD & WATER



# URBAN FARMING

## Support System and Branches

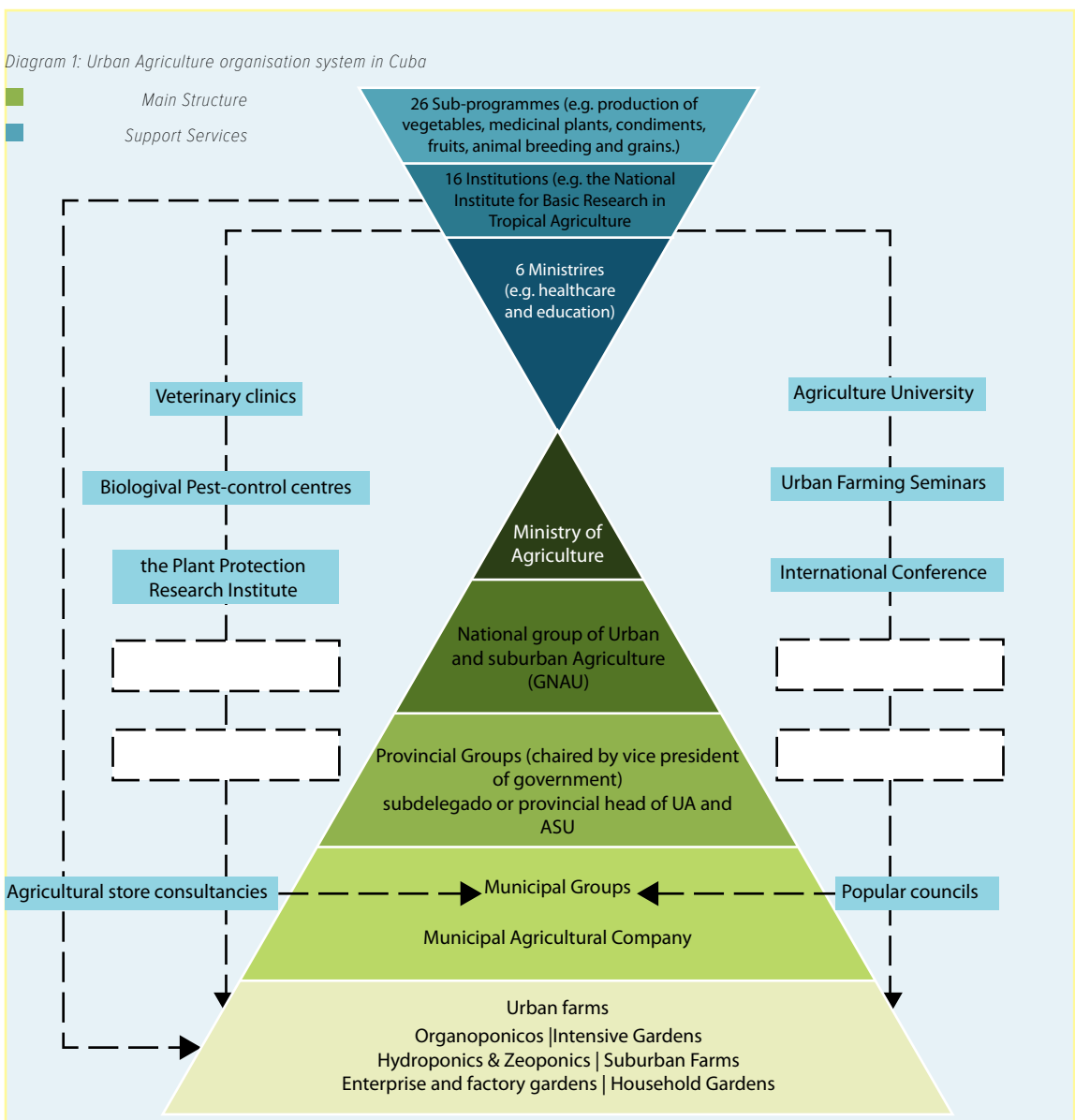
### Complex organisation

The agriculture urban in Cuba built in an organisational model that allow it to be present in all towns and cities of the country, due to the impact and development reached in this popular mode of foods production and to the grade of the Cuban population's urbanisation.

The top level is management by the National Group of Urban Agriculture, which exercises its influence until the base level through the provincial and municipal groups. These

territorial groups take over the coordination among all the organisms and factors related with the production and distribution of foods in the perimeter of each municipality and county, in the first place with the Popular Power which is the Government's basic unit of organisation.

The Popular Council (the neighbourhood government) coordinated the urban agriculture through a deputy of the agriculture. The coordination among all the Popular Council that conform a municipality is carried out through the Urban Municipal Farm.





The Urban Municipal Farm is the organisation that contains all the productive units of the urban agriculture in a municipality and it plays a role of vital importance handling the technical consultant ship of the producers and being the link among producers, research and education centres, and services.

### Catalogue

Based on different reference, there are different catalogues of the urban farming types. Basically, the popular gardens are the most popular form of urban agriculture in Havana. Basic production co-operative units (UBPCs) and the State Co-operative Supply Units are related to the government

while individual farms are mostly located in Havana with a small size. The state farms are usually run by the state-run enterprises (Empresas Estatales). The Organoponicos is a special feature in Havana for mainly vegetable production and the intensive gardens are kind of update after the soil condition becoming better and then replacing the Organoponicos.

In the meantime, the catalogue from GNAU is: Patios, Parcelas, Hueras intensivas (Intensive gardens), and Organoponicos. Patios and Parcelas are more 'domestic' while Hueras intensivas and Organoponicos are defined by their advanced techniques more than social structure or tenancy type.

### Types of urban gardens

Garden type	Cover area (1997)	Soil Quality	Seeds supply	Character	Ownership
Intensive Gardens	Small/ 17.00 ha	High	Direct plantation	High quality of soils, drainage and adequate watr supply.	Mixed state and private ownership
Organoponicos	Small/ 23.80 ha	Poor	Previous nursery	Cultivation occurs in containers or raised beds filled with organic matter and soil mix.	Mixed state and private ownership
Suburban farms	large/ 7,718 ha	Various	Various	In the periphery of densely populated urban areas in large units which have a more highly integrated system of production.	Mixed state and private ownership
Popular gardens	small/ 1,854 ha	Various	Various	Cultivated by community gardening organisations. Established in reclaimed dumps and vacant lots in urban and suburban areas. Managed by local individuals or groups.	Generally private use of state or private land
Enterprise and factory gardens	Large/ 5,368 ha	Various	Various	Located on or near the property of factories and businesses. Produce used to promote self-sufficiency by feeding factory workers and their families.	Owned by enterprise or factory
Hydroponics	Small/ 111ha	Unknown	Unknow	Plants cultivated indoors in a nutrient rich solution, which is run through an inert planting medium. Least extensive type of garden due to higher costs.	State owned
Household gardens	?	Unknown	Unknown	Gardens cultivated by individuals in thier own yards with a high variation in size and type of produce.	Private owned



CTA is known as the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation, the branches of the system.



The different seeds in the store



The seedlings for sale in CTA





## URBAN FARMING

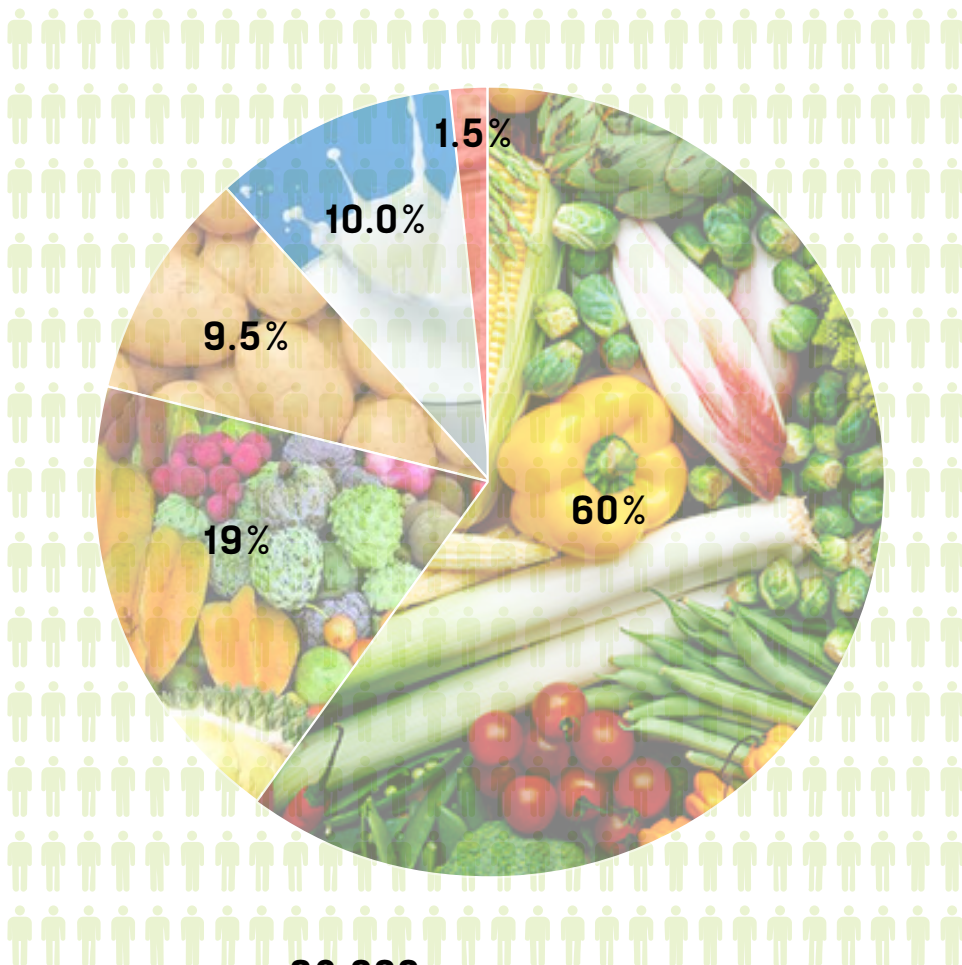
### Situation in Havana

#### Food as landscape

Today, Havana has a unique food production infrastructure woven into its contemporary city form, including 475 large state farms, 318 livestock farms, 179 organoponicos, 418 high production orchards, 28 seedling production centres, 324

greenhouses, 162 Autoconsumos, 7,848 parcelas, 3970 patios, 126 forest farms, 67 cattle farms, 52 different agricultural stores and 3 compost production sites, etc. With a large production for Cuban diet, the city gradually becomes self-feedable and sustainable as well. The products from urban farming is totally organic.

*Production of urban Farming in Havana Province 2015 (Data from the UN)*



**63,000** tonnes of vegetables

**20,000** tonnes of fruits

**10,000** tonnes of roots and tubers

**10,500** tonnes of milk

**1,700** tonnes of meat

**90,000** residents involved

## From revolution to revolution

Urban agriculture is currently defined and applied in Cuba as ‘small-scale agriculture practiced near urban populations [greater than 1,000 persons] and using very petroleum (or petroleum derivatives) and machinery’. All of Havana is considered urban.

In 1989, the land-use for Havana is quite irregular as we can see in the diagram. The cultivated areas are spread in the outskirts, mainly in the east Havana while the rest is whether urban area or natural pasture. There are few agricultural activities in the city before the Special Period.

However, in Cuba there was a thriving suburban agriculture. Nowadays ‘no one speaks, and it is as if it never existed trying to erase the memory of those revolutionary inventions as the ‘Cordon of Havana’ and the like, which washed away all the orchards surrounding cities, which supplied the markets, supplying fruits and vegetables to local markets, restaurants, cafes, and guaranteeing a characteristic diversity of tropical agriculture, ecological and sustainable. The belt reminds people of a huge Garden City, a green belt surrounding Havana to ‘make it self-sufficient in virtually all lines, except a few, and export. The country will get 100 million in foreign exchange.’ Based on Castro’s opening speech of a village on Jan. 6th, 1968. But as we all know, all this was nothing but words. Nothing has become true.

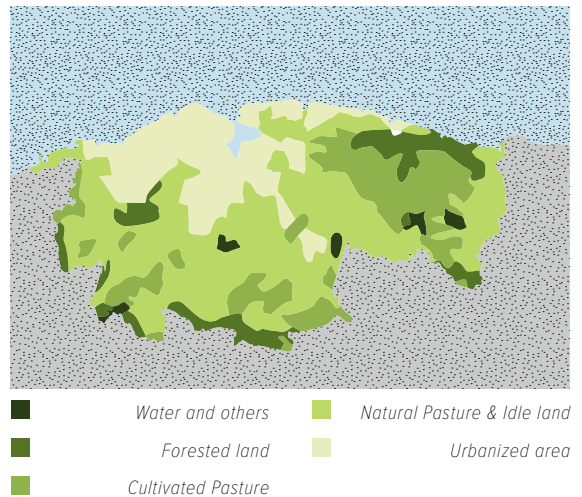
After the collapse of the USSR, Cuba started to develop the urban farming. It is like that the whole country took a step backward and then towards a new direction to be self-sufficient. Havana’s total land area is 71,000 ha, 32,000 ha of which is available for agriculture. In 2008, 21,000 ha or 29%.16% of total land, was in cultivation giving the city a cultivation index of 66.3%. This represents approximately an 85% increase in cultivated land from 1989. To be more specific, the urban farming activities cover 12% land area of city of Havana. In addition, 89 000 backyards and 5 100 plots of less than 800 sqm are used by families in the city to grow fruit, vegetables and condiments and to raise small animals, such as poultry and guinea pigs, for household consumption. In densely populated areas, food is produced in containers on rooftops and balconies. In all, some 90,000 Havana residents are engaged in some form of agriculture.

Reference:

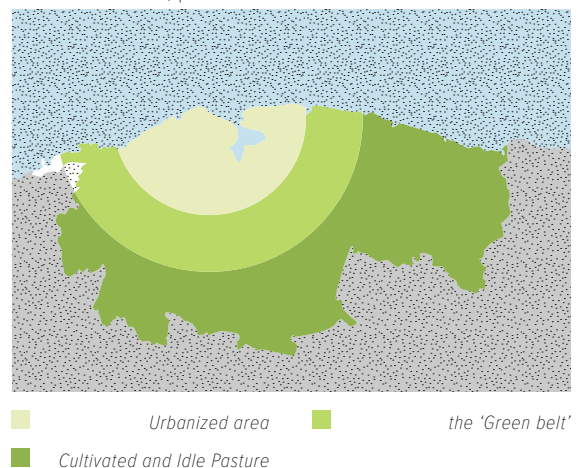
<https://cubaout.wordpress.com/2009/10/15/el-cordon-de-la-havana-y-los-talleres-de-la-fao/>

<http://www.foodurbanism.org/report-on-urban-ag-in-havana/>

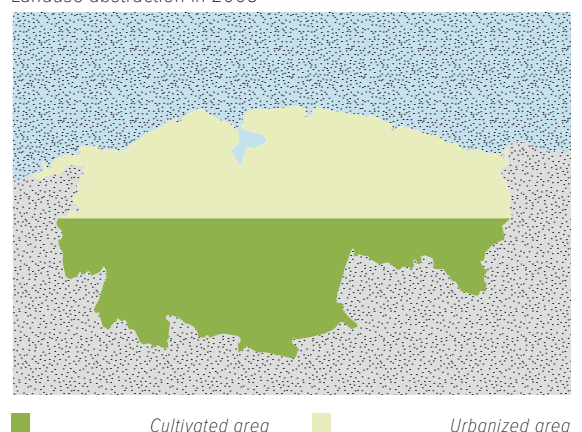
Landuse in 1989



Cordon of Havana, plan in 1960s-1970s



Landuse abstraction in 2008



# URBAN FARMING

## Overview in Alamar

- Water
- Trees
- Green area with farmland
- Farmland
- Banana Plantations
- Organoponicos
- Farmsheds
- Huertos
- Patios



*Braview of the central green belt. The urban farming and banana plantation are hidden by the forest.*

### **Shaped by Urban Farming**

Urban farming generates in Alamar mainly due to the location itself, which means the empty space for formerly planned public facilities which have never been realised provides a possibility to develop urban agriculture. The site is also besides the green ring of Havana and the sea, along which is still empty space. In Alamar, the urban farmland is a main brach of the landscape system and there is a transformation in between shown by the undefined farmland near the waterfront, reflecting the residents there desiring to explore the urban farming activities into a wider area. The former natural shelter forests have been cultivated while the empty space near the beach is used for banana plantations. With so many types of formal and informal land-use, urban farming indeed transforms the environment there into another kind of quality.

## URBAN FARMING

### Typology in Alamar

There are three types of urban agriculture in Alamar. Unlike dense Vieja or Vedado, the urban condition in Alamar provides a possibility of developing a larger scale urban farming project. From patios to Organopónicos, the differences are mainly about the size and the technologies they apply. This also influences the food supply chain of different types.



**Patios**



**Huertos**



**Organopónicos**

Type	Patios	Huertos	Organopónicos
Scale	Small size	Medium size	Large size
Usual location	On balconies, terraces, small gardens and house backyards	Near living space or educational infrastructures	Large empty spaces in several hactres
Labor force	One or two persons' participation	One person taking care of all these Huertos in the neighborhood	State owned or run by enterprises
Target customers	Directly to their own families, or partly sold to neighbors and friends on the free market (Mercado agropecuario)	Directly to their own families or to the students and kids in the kindergartens	Directly to the neighbors with their own selling stalls next to the fields
Products range	Vegetables, fruits, medical herbs, plants for Santeria worship, 650 plant species included	Vegetables, fruits, etc.	Vegetables, fruits, meat and milks, etc. (covering 90% of vegetable consumption of the country now)
Other characters	More than 150,000 families involved in the micro-gardens and family plays the most important role	Huertos privados are private allotment of single family or a group of people. Huertos populares are accompanied by schools and kindergartens in Alamar. The students and kids own a priority of food supply in Cuba. The gardens provides the food for the canteens in the schools as well as the education tool.	100% Organic production method with green and natural solutions for all the agricultural phases such as seeding, fertilizing and cultivating. It is the most successful type of urban farming due to its high-level technologies. Vivero is almost the most successful one in the country.
Income distribution	Private economic gains allowed	Unknown	Salary
Notes	Have a direct interaction with the special religion called Santeria in Cuba		



**Patios**



**Huertos**



**Organopónicos**



# URBAN FABRIC

## Density Map of Urban Agriculture

- Residential Buildings
- Farming Shed
- Agriculture Land

Density map of Urban Agriculture, 1:13000



Photo 1 : Streetlife of Alama

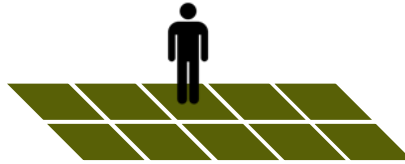


**Vivero 111400m<sup>2</sup>**

This community has 100,000 persons  
 Maybe the food that we grow here can be 10-12% of the total food that the people eat here every day.



**Afford 11000 people**



**10m<sup>2</sup>/person needed**

As the lady in Vivero said, they can use 11.14 hectare land to produce 11000 people's food. Which means 10 square meter organic farming land can afford one people in Alamar. Now the organic agriculture land in Alamar can afford half of the people there. If Alamar want to be self-sufficiency, the land need to be doubled. Fortunately, Alamar lack many things except land.



**5m<sup>2</sup>/person owned**

190000 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Farming land in  
 this area



40000 residents  
 in this area



# URBAN FARMING

## Food Supply in Alamar

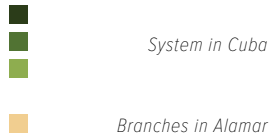


Diagram 1: Food supply and distribution system in Cuba

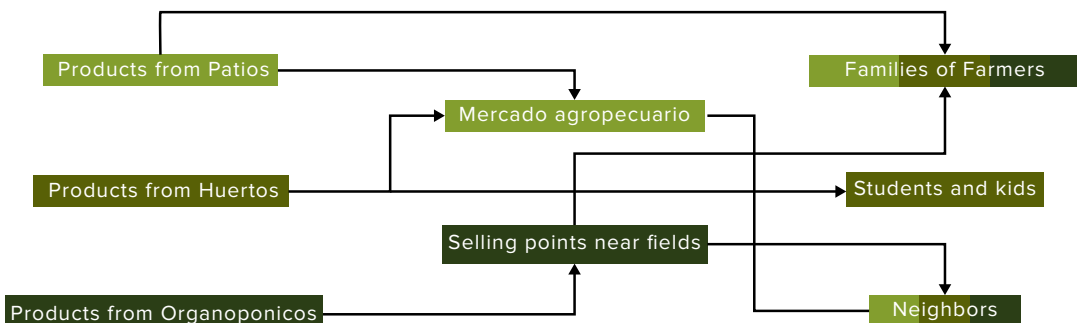
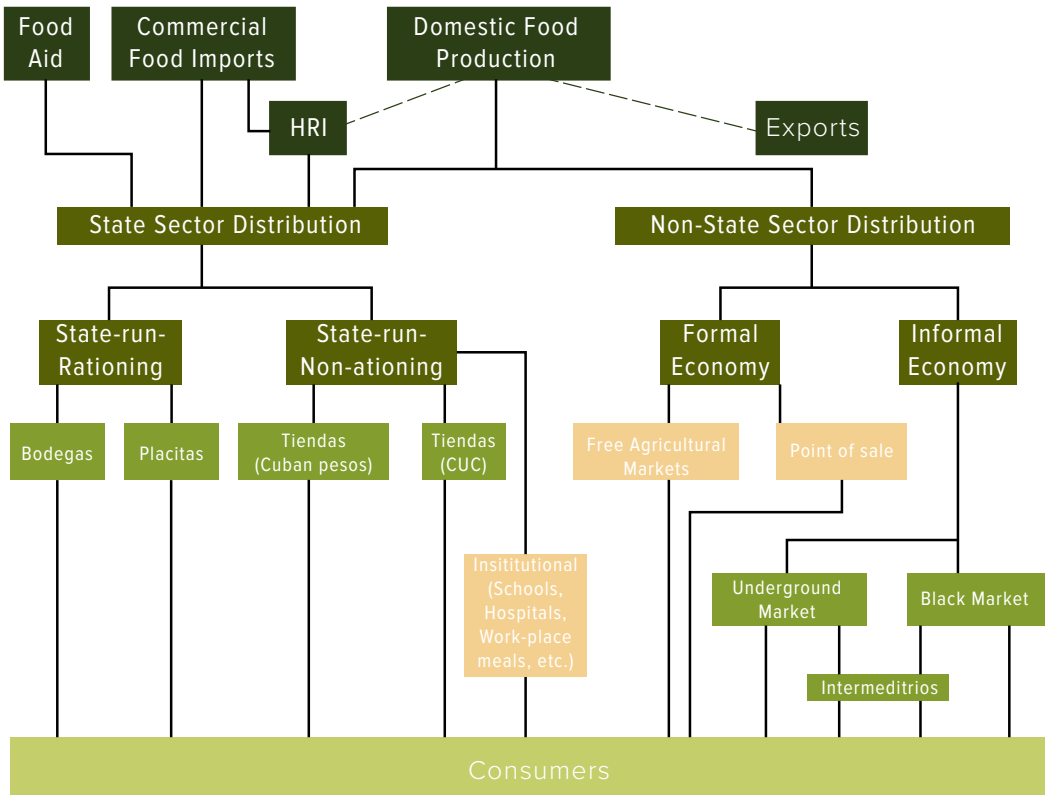
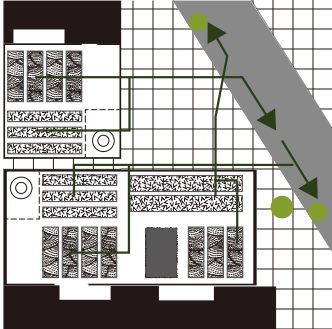
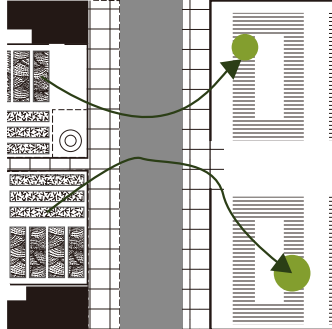


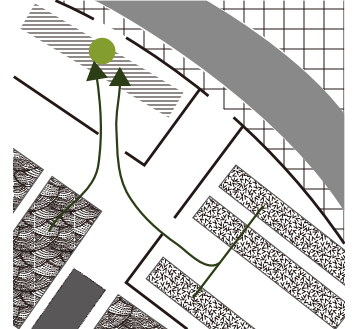
Diagram 2: Food supply and distribution system in Alamar



Type1 Mobile micro-stores



Type2 Sale at the Mercado Agropecuario



Type3 Own market



The mobile micro store for patios



The agriculture market in Alamar



The point of sale for Organoponicos



The bread-guy with his mini mobile store



Banana transportation



The point of sale in front of the Organoponicos of Vivero

## URBAN FARMING

### Vivero and its people

#### As a Joint

With the food supply system reaching every corner in the life, urban farming really becomes the joint in social life, especially in Vivero. The programme started in 1997 with 5 persons, covering only 800 square metres. Now it covers 11,53 hectares and has been the best example of urban farming Organoponicos over the country.

The religious and commercial activities are involved as well as the educational and social events. Urban farming is not only tightly combined with education activities for local students and kids in the kindergartens but also the workers/farmers from the neighbour. There are weekly or monthly meetings in the farm and community discussing about future

plans and potential improvements. Workers will get their extra salary based on their work quality.

Furthermore, the Vivero is also connected to local scholars and even international researchers. The urban farming is not only a kind of technique but also owning a scientific aspects. In the meantime, the successful urban farming case also attracts creative groups to make advertisement for them. For example, the well-designed official website of Veviro was designed by by six students in Elon University's Interactive Media master's program over three weeks in January 2013.

Urban farming connects different activities and social aspects, gradually becomes an intersection.



Reference:

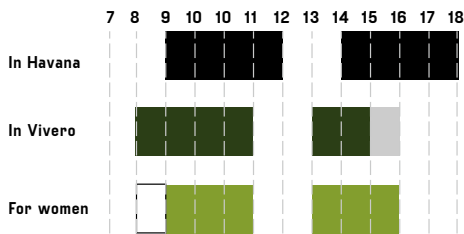
<http://farmcuba.org/>

Cuba's Food & Agriculture Situation Report by Office of Global Analysis, FAS, USDA, March 2008

Connections with different aspects

## Labor Force

There are basically around 150 workers in Vivero, of whom not all live in Alamar. The average age of the worker is around 50 because agriculture is lack of attraction for young people. Furthermore, the agricultural activities is not suitable for women traditionally. Consequently, there's some bonus as attractions to maintain the diversity of its labor force. For the basic salary, the minimum is 400 pesos per month, but there is an increment that depends on the sale profit. 50% is distributed between members but not in an equal way. It depends on the seniority.



Working hours



Extra service



Older worker is dealing with sugarcane.



Old couple are coming to work in Vivero.



Older seller at the selling point



*Bungalows*



*Urban Agriculture*







*Green Avenue*



*Social Housing*



*Detailed Section*





S U S P I C I O N S

# ALAMAR PORT

## A Leisure Harbour for the Havana Citizen

This scenario starts from the idea that Alamar can be the future gate of Cuba or a new harbour of South America. Through reading and researching we found this ambition to be too big for Alamar as a district of Havana. There is already a special economic city Mariel in construction now. However there there is a small bay and a river named Cojimar located between the neighborhoods of Cojimar and Alamar. This place could become a nice natural leisure backyard for the Havana citizens.



# POLYCENTRIC HAVANA

## New Business Centre or?

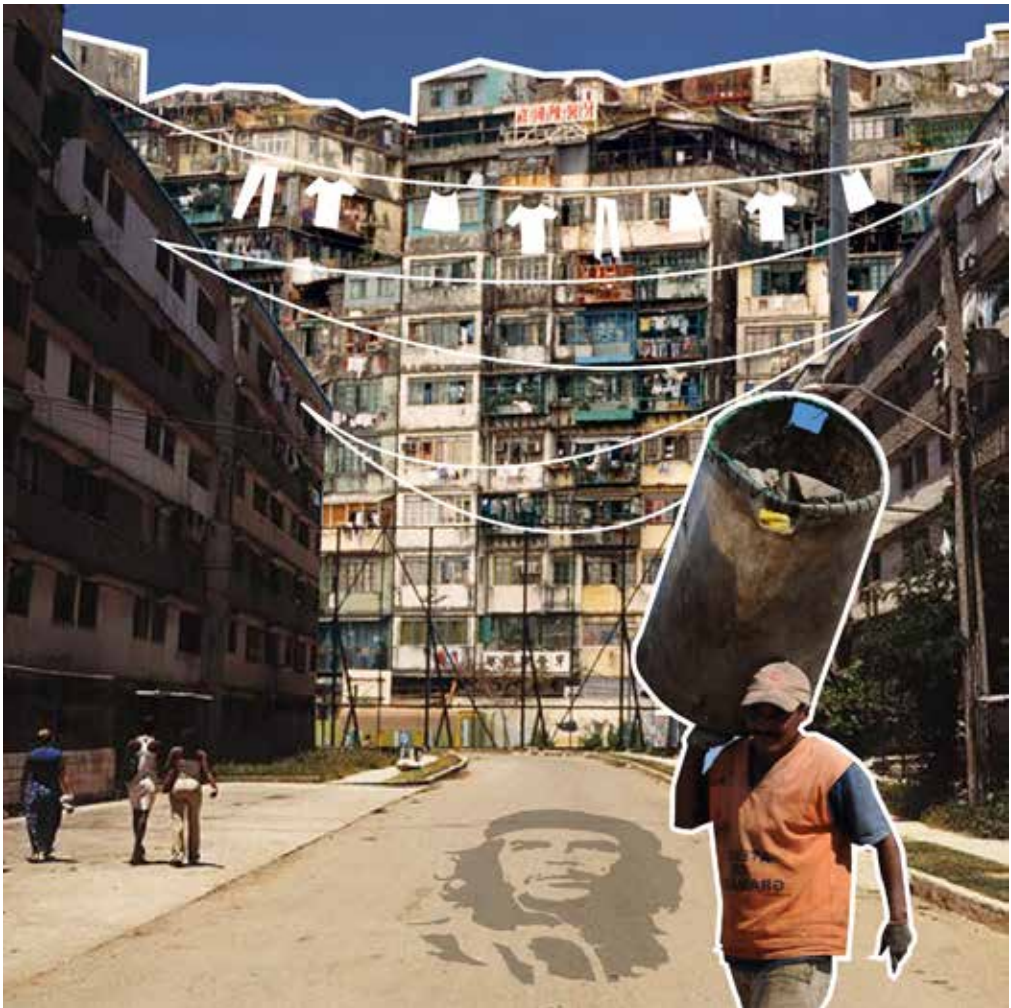
With Cuba economically opening to the world, a lot of capitals will flow into the country to be developed. The former CBD Vedado is probably not able to afford such an increase. Thus, a new business centre needs to be planned, even the so-called Special Economic Zone. However, since Mariel which is west of Havana has already been planned as a future SEZ, Alamar is at most planned as one of the sub-centres or Havana in economical realm. Considering the current condition, constructing a CBD might cause more problems than the benefits it can produce.



# ALAMAR BARRIO POBRE

## Havana's Embargo Slums

After the embargo was lifted, Havana relived the golden years of the fifties. Tourism hit wall and the Cuban people were confronted with capitalism. The money made out of tourism was spent in touristic areas like Havana Vieja, Centro and Vedado. From rural areas locals moved to the capital to make money and live 'their dream'. However the costs of living in the centre raised tremendously, causing a migration to the periphery. Whereas the Alamar district was counting 100.00 inhabitants in 2016 in 2030 this number was sixfolded and still growing.



## **NATIVE & WEALTHY IN SYNERGY**

### **Re-implementing Original Function in Synergy with Native use**

Originally, the Alamar Plan was designed for the wealthy people from Havana. A Soviet style plan for the New Man. The product of the Revolution. The second movement transformed the area into low-cost housing for the working class. The last movement taken in '80 and '90s, Alamar is now a small uprising suburb in East-Havana.



# PASSION LEADING THE PEOPLE

## Reborn of Alamar Spirit

Music and sports can be the accelerator of economy. After decades of stagnancy, Alamar needs an opportunity to enhance its identity and importance. By showing passion to hip-hop music and baseball, people are encouraged to open their life, while young people also obtain the chance to re-educate themselves.





# CITY OF ENTERTAINMENT

## Self-help Activity

After the revolution, Alamar became the solution of the self-help housing for the workers. The living condition of the local people was not so well, but they kept enthusiasm for life for half a century. A large number of activities emerged, such as open air fashion show, contemporary art exhibition and hip-hop music events, especially after the cultural and economic embargo. What is more important is that they got much greater religious freedom since then. The spiritual and cultural heritage should be paid more attention. The spirituality of the history should also be embedded in the program.



# ALAMAR AS SELF-RELIANT AREA

## Organic Farming

Cuba was forced to become self-reliant in its agriculture production by the collapse of the Soviet Union. The organoponics of the future, that we be brought to the next level, could make sure Cuba can stay more self-reliant instead of being reliant on increased tourism or the influence of America that will influence the Cuban economy.

Cuba already created the largest program in sustainable urban agriculture ever undertaken. Alamar could have the right location (little bit out of the city center) to enlarge this. It could also be extended to ocean-friendly farming, aquaculture. Alamar could be a pioneer.



# MODERN COMMUNIST UTOPIA

## A Self-built community

Alamar has a long history as a communist utopia and self-providing community. As one of Havana's largest satellite cities it was completely built by Microbrigadas to provide housing for their community. Born out of necessity during a time of economic crisis, the green areas between the block were cultivated for large scale sustainable food production.

However, the unprofessional character of most of these operations has led to the decline of the neighborhood. By providing necessary accommodations for i.a. schooling, public facilities, transport, production and distribution Alamar can become a community developed experimental site for the Modern Communist Utopia it was meant to be.



