

Deconstructing Housing (Policies)

Rotterdam's housing policies in the context of displacement

TUDelft

Master Thesis

By Kim van Balken



How can **Rotterdam's new housing policy** (focused on social mixing) integrate **spatial guidelines** to address the issue of **displacement** more effectively in future redevelopment of vulnerable neighborhoods?

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How can **Rotterdam's new housing policy** (focused on social mixing) integrate **spatial guidelines** to address **the issue of displacement** more effectively in future redevelopment of vulnerable neighborhoods?

The strategy of social mixing



The strategy of social mixing



The strategy of social mixing

Decrease the amount of affordable houses by **47.600** before 2030

Only Dutch city to see a decline in their housing stock during a **national housing crisis**



The strategy of social mixing



The strategy of social mixing

"(...) **did not improve** social disadvantages, inequalities, or deprivation"

"**Minimal to no positive impact** on social cohesion,

increased social tensions"



The strategy of social mixing

n. De kleur is niet het probleem, maar het probleem heeft wel een kleur.

Municipality of Rotterdam (2006). Rotterdam Act.

Zo verandert ook de sociaal-economische balans, ten gunste van midden- en hogere inkomensgroepen.

Municipality of Rotterdam (2016). Housing Vision.

voor mensen die een zinnvolle bijdrage aan Zuid leveren,

Municipality of Rotterdam (2011). NPRZ Works!



The issue of displacement

Displacement

Involuntary relocation

Losing your (sense of) home



The issue of displacement

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Mandates of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context; the Special Rapporteur on the right to development; the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants; the Special Rapporteur on minority issues and the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights

REFERENCE:
AL NLD 3/2021

19 April 2021

Excellency,

We have the honour to address you in our capacity as Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context; Special Rapporteur on the right to development; Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants; Special Rapporteur on minority issues and Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, pursuant to Human Rights Council resolutions 43/14, 42/23, 43/6, 43/8 and 44/13.

In this connection, we would like to bring to the attention of your Excellency's Government information we have received concerning housing policies of the municipality of Rotterdam aiming to reduce the number of affordable homes, in an overall climate of predicted growing shortages of affordable housing and homelessness in Rotterdam. In particular, the municipality's involvement together with Vestia in a controversial project in the city centre of 535 social rental homes, which will be fully privatized, is

in violation of the human right

The project has already displaced the vast majority of Vestia's tenants in the neighbourhood, without a chance to be properly consulted or receive assistance to find alternative housing. Nearly an entire neighbourhood is due to be razed, not so much due to structural problems with the concerned housing units, but allegedly for the financial benefit of the housing association, which seems to be facing continued financial difficulties due to prior unmanaged risk-taking on financial markets. These actions would undoubtedly affect disproportionately migrants and individuals and families of minority and immigrant background, and contribute to their further social vulnerability and risk of falling into homelessness. The City of Rotterdam is also implementing the Special Measures for Metropolitan Problems Act ("Rotterdam Act"), which has discriminatory features.

This communication is also sent in follow up to the earlier communication (AL NLD 4/2019) of the former Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on non-discrimination in this context, Ms. Leilani Farha, to the Netherlands on 20 December 2019, concerning persons living in homelessness. In this communication, the Special Rapporteur pointed out that evictions have contributed to homelessness in the Netherlands and that more than half of all persons living in homelessness and situations of extreme social vulnerability have an immigrant background. The current Special Rapporteur



A New Direction?

The new Housing Vision (2023)

“Rotterdam: A home for everyone”

“Towards an affordable and inclusive housing market”



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“Rotterdam: A home for everyone”

“Towards an affordable and inclusive housing market”



How can **Rotterdam's new housing policy** (focused on social mixing) integrate **spatial guidelines** to address the issue of **displacement** more effectively in future redevelopment of vulnerable neighborhoods?

00. Introduction to Rotterdam's housing policies

01. Past displacement issues

02. Future displacement risks

03. Spatial guidelines

04. Implementation in design

05. Broader socio-spatial relevance

06. Conclusions

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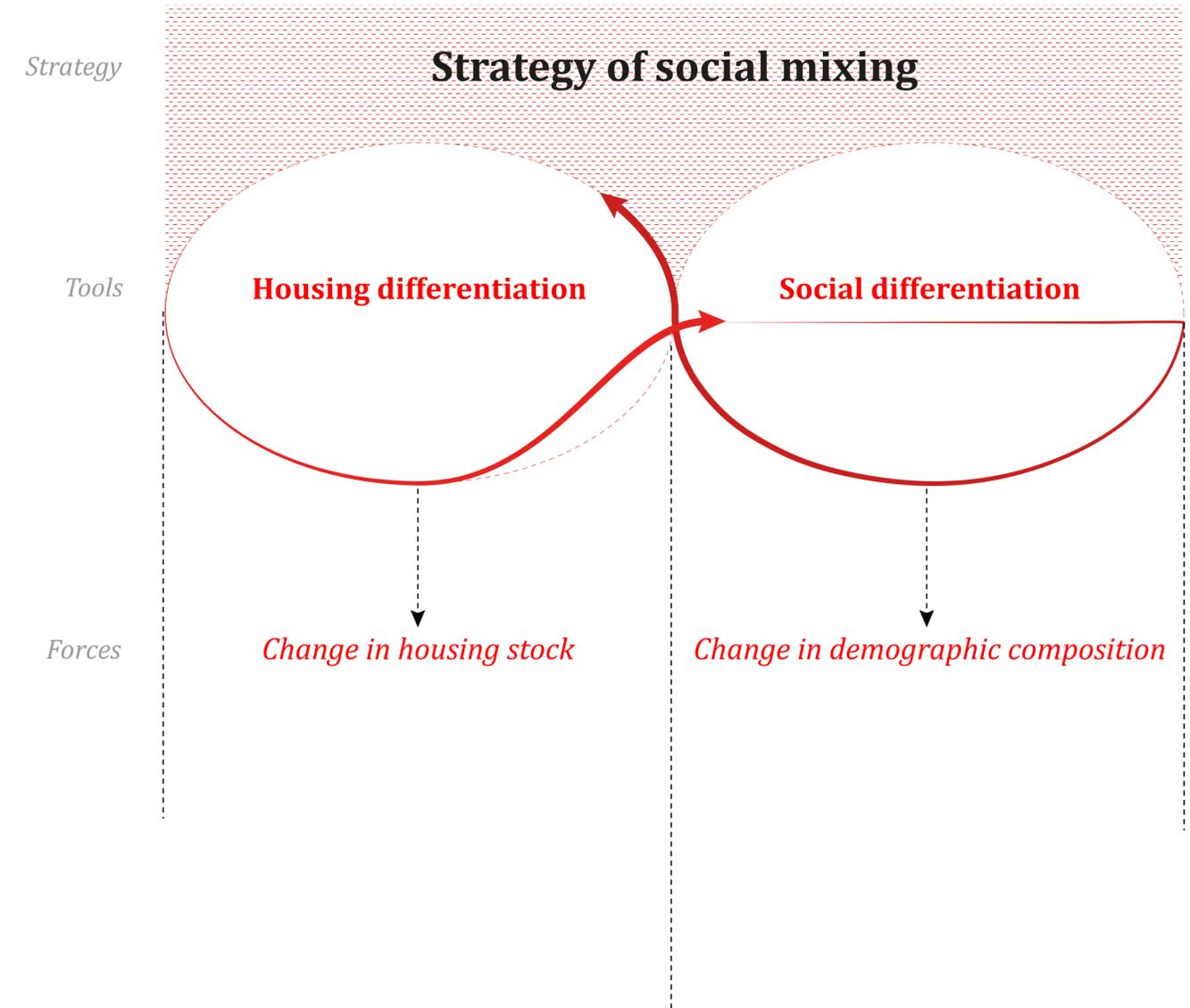
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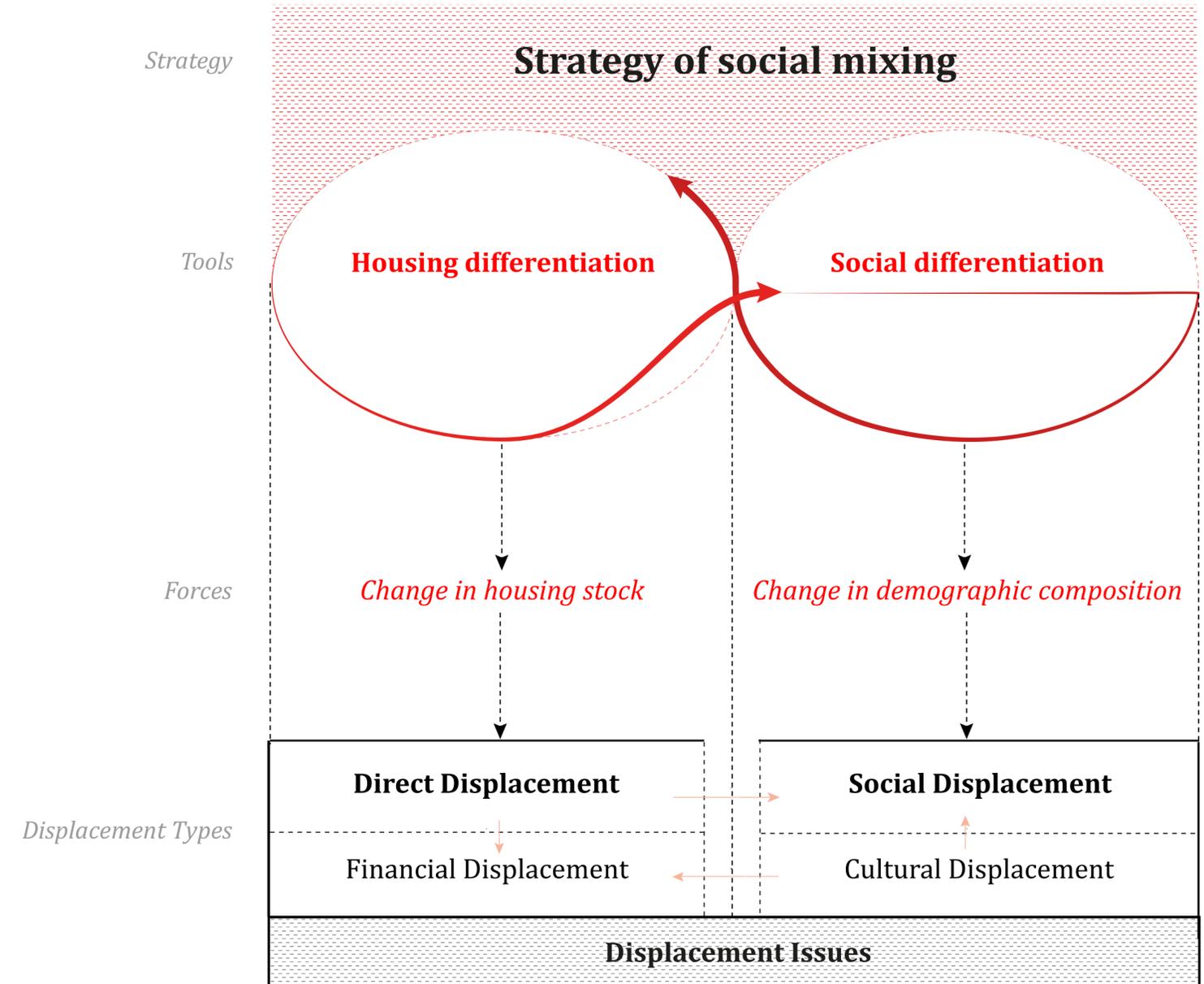
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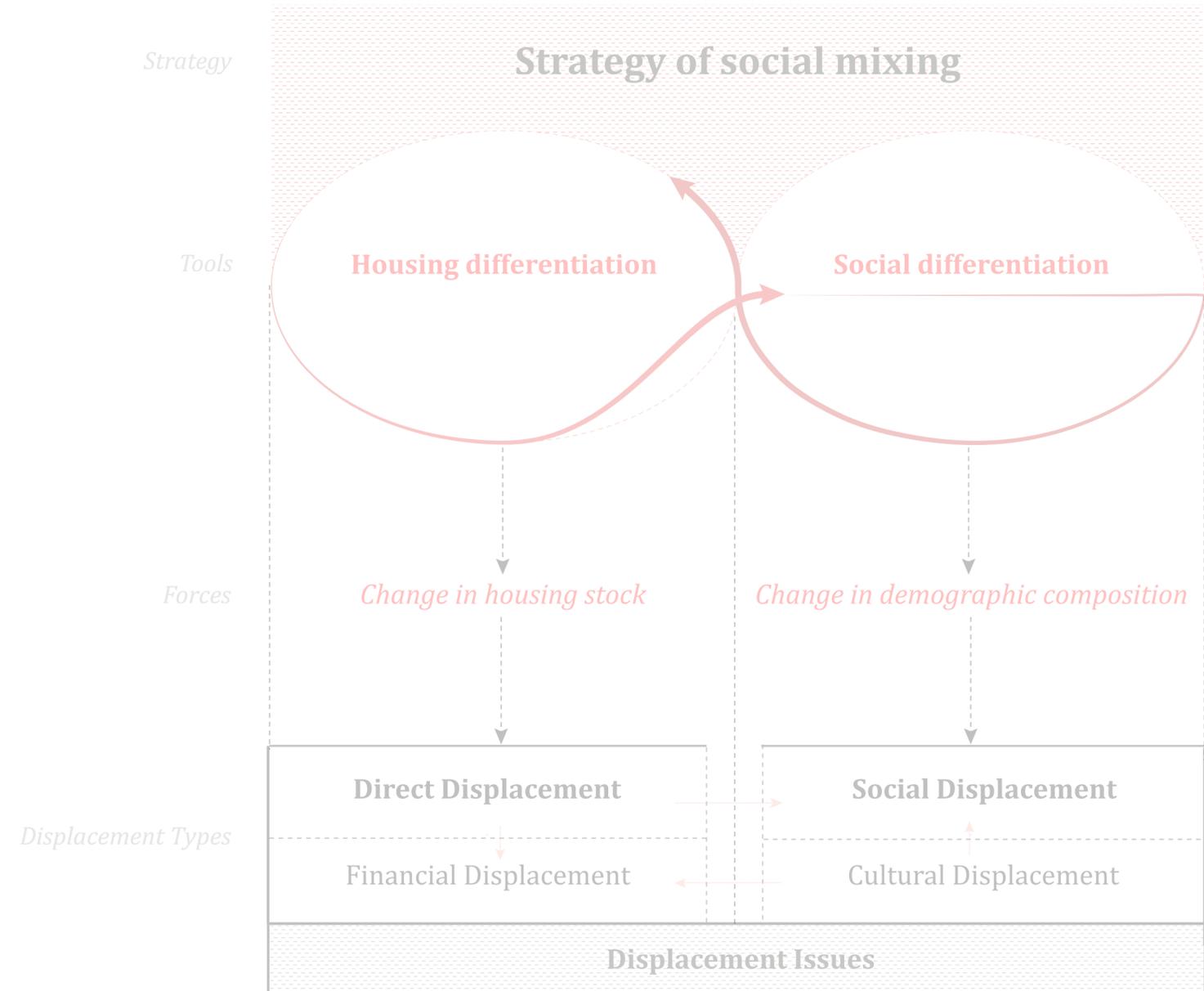


Losing your home/

Losing your sense of home



<i>Losing your home/</i>	<i>Losing your sense of home</i>
Direct displacement	Social displacement
Reduction of social housing	Loss of familiar social networks
Lack of a right to return	Undermined value of within community
Financial displacement	Cultural displacement
Rising rental prices	Cultural facilities change to meet new demand
Limited affordable options	Loss of identity and character



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Persistent stigma favoring the decrease of social housing

1) The new Housing Vision
Pressures the Right to Housing

No response to the overall housing scarcity

3,700 decrease in lower-incomes despite demand of 56,860

2) The current social mixing strategy
is unjust and not sufficiently
grounded in research-driven measures

“More affordable housing” but no new social housing until 2040

Persistent use of unreliable data

Misclassification of the social segment

3) The new Housing Vision
lacks opportunities for
a localized approach

Relying on unpredictable relocation patterns

Persisting (non-inclusive) social mixing

Advocating a 'balanced mix' instead of addressing actual issues

Misconception of the anticipated effects

Lack of positive effects, very mixed results, or negative outcomes

Unclear guidelines and lack of research-based objectives

No vision on how to design a successful mix

1) The new Housing Vision
Pressures the Right to Housing

2) The current social mixing strategy
is unjust and not sufficiently
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3) The new Housing Vision
lacks opportunities for
a localized approach

Zero funding available for area-specific translations

1) The new Housing Vision
Pressures the Right to Housing

District Atlas to dictate 'optimal numerical distributions'

2) The current social mixing strategy
is unjust and not sufficiently
grounded in research-driven measures

Disruptive measures for differentiation

That still involve altering the existing stock

3) The new Housing Vision
lacks opportunities for
a localized approach

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1) The new Housing Vision
Pressures the Right to Housing



1) Provide sufficient housing by using a fair prioritization of user-centered and demand-driven objectives

2) The current social mixing strategy is unjust and not sufficiently grounded in research-driven measures



2) A fair, inclusive, and research-based social mixing strategy, ensuring positive outcomes for overall social cohesion

3) The new Housing Vision lacks opportunities for a localized approach



3) Encourage policy adaptability based on local characteristics & networks

1) Provide sufficient housing by using a fair prioritization of user-centered and demand-driven objectives

Guideline	Description	Vision (2023)
 <p>PROTECT & EXPLORE EXPANSION SOCIAL SECTOR</p>	<p>Revise the new construction targets for 2023-2040: Acknowledge the persistent increase in demand within the affordable sector and the uncertainties in future supply and demand, leading to a protective approach towards social housing and possible expansion of the sector.</p>	<i>Revise</i>
 <p>OPTIMIZE INNER CITY DENSIFICATION</p>	<p>Intensify the focus on inner-city densification to meet the growing demand, and use this as the primary way to increase differentiation. Promote innovative, high-quality, and efficient living forms and building typologies.</p>	<i>Improve</i>
 <p>MAXIMIZE LOCAL (RE)HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES</p>	<p>Alternative housing must be directly allocated to the displaced residents, or the development should be strategically phased to construct new housing prior to demolition. The 'expanded flexible housing supply' can be utilized as in-between housing.</p>	<i>Improve</i>
 <p>USE FAIR AND COMPREHENSIVE DATA</p>	<p>Estimations in supply & demand should be informed by a fair and comprehensive data analysis, and not driven by the aim of attracting a specific group. Cease categorizing part of the private rental sector as social housing.</p>	<i>Improve</i>
 <p>IMPROVE & BETTER UTILIZE THE CURRENT STOCK</p>	<p>The objectives and available budget for improving the quality and sustainability of the current stock can be used to prioritize renovation over demolition and new construction during urban restructuring.</p>	<i>Implement</i>

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Description	Vision (2023)	Type	Actors
 <p>Revise the new construction targets for 2023-2040: Acknowledge the persistent increase in demand within the affordable sector and the uncertainties in future supply and demand, leading to a protective approach towards social housing and possible expansion of the sector.</p>	<i>Revise</i>	<i>Policy</i>	<i>Regional Government, Municipality, Housing Associations</i>
 <p>Intensify the focus on inner-city densification to meet the growing demand, and use this as the primary way to increase differentiation. Promote innovative, high-quality, and efficient living forms and building typologies.</p>	<i>Improve</i>	<i>Policy/ Design</i>	<i>Municipality, Designers</i>
 <p>Alternative housing must be directly allocated to the displaced residents, or the development should be strategically phased to construct new housing prior to demolition. The 'expanded flexible housing supply' can be utilized as in-between housing.</p>	<i>Improve</i>	<i>Policy</i>	<i>Municipality, Housing Associations/ Private Developers</i>
<p>Estimations in supply & demand should be informed by a fair and comprehensive data analysis, and not driven by the aim of attracting a specific group. Cease categorizing part of the private rental sector as social housing.</p>	<i>Improve</i>	<i>Policy</i>	<i>(Regional Government), Municipality</i>
 <p>The objectives and available budget for improving the quality and sustainability of the current stock can be used to prioritize renovation over demolition and new construction during urban restructuring.</p>	<i>Implement</i>	<i>Policy</i>	<i>Municipality</i>

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OPTIMIZE INNER
CITY DENSIFICATION



PROTECT &
EXPLORE EXPANSION
SOCIAL SECTOR



MAXIMIZE LOCAL
(RE)HOUSING
OPPORTUNITIES



USE FAIR AND
COMPREHENSIVE
DATA



IMPROVE & BETTER
UTILIZE THE
CURRENT STOCK

2) A fair, inclusive, and research-based social mixing strategy, ensuring positive outcomes for overall social cohesion



BE CAUTIOUS WITH
SOCIAL MIXING



MIX SIMILAR
INCOMES &
LIFESTYLES



MIX ON STREET-/
NEIGHBORHOOD
LEVEL



CONNECT MICRO-
DISTRICTS THROUGH
OVERLAPPING
ACTIVITIES &
SOCIAL SPHERES



DESIGN A WELL-
DEFINED NETWORK
OF SPACES



AIM FOR
UNIFORMITY IN
DESIGN

3) Encourage policy adaptability based on local characteristics & networks



RESPECT CULTURAL/
HISTORICAL VALUES



ACKNOWLEDGE
RESIDENTS' PLACE-
ATTACHMENT



PROTECT LOCAL
RIGHTS & NEEDS

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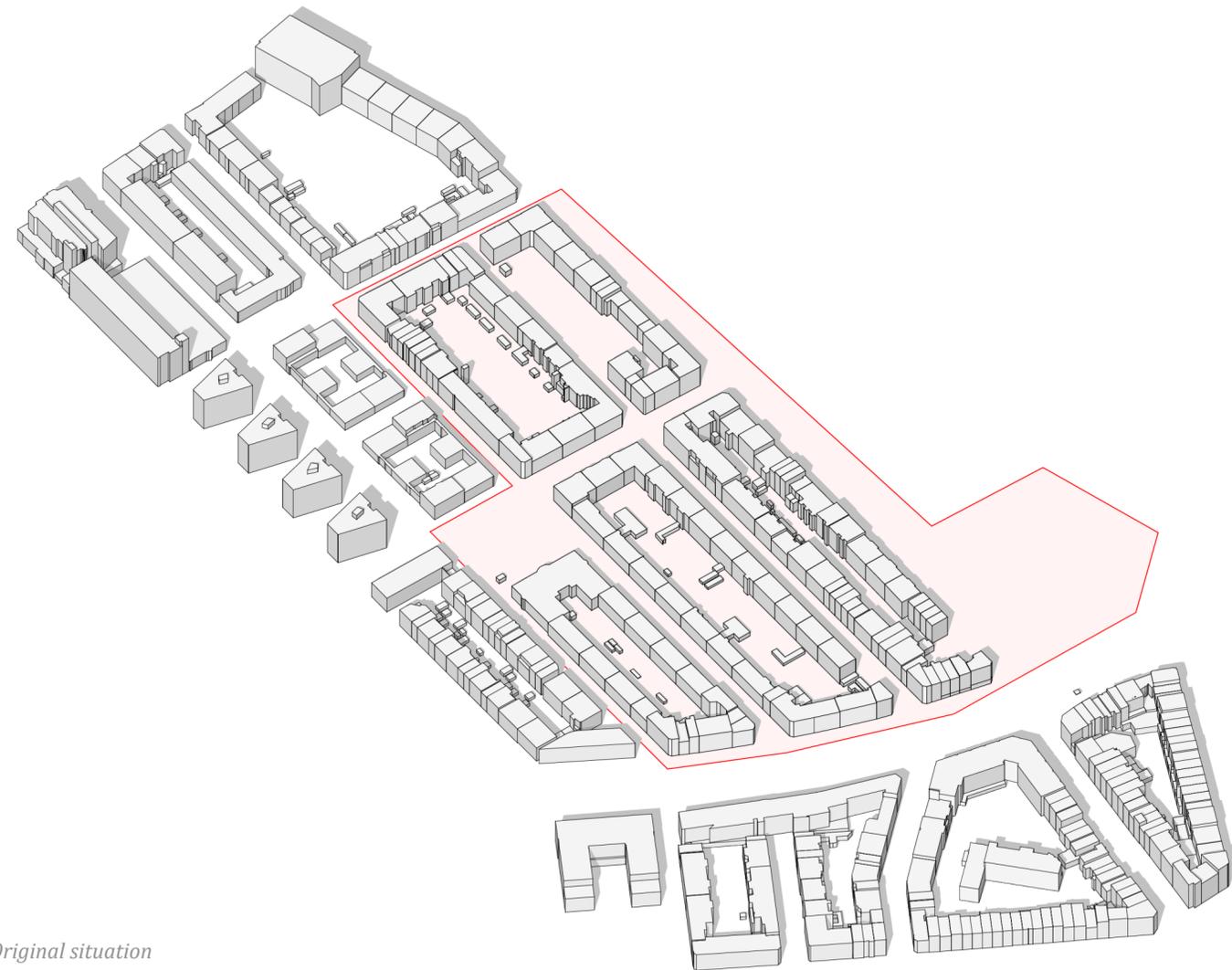
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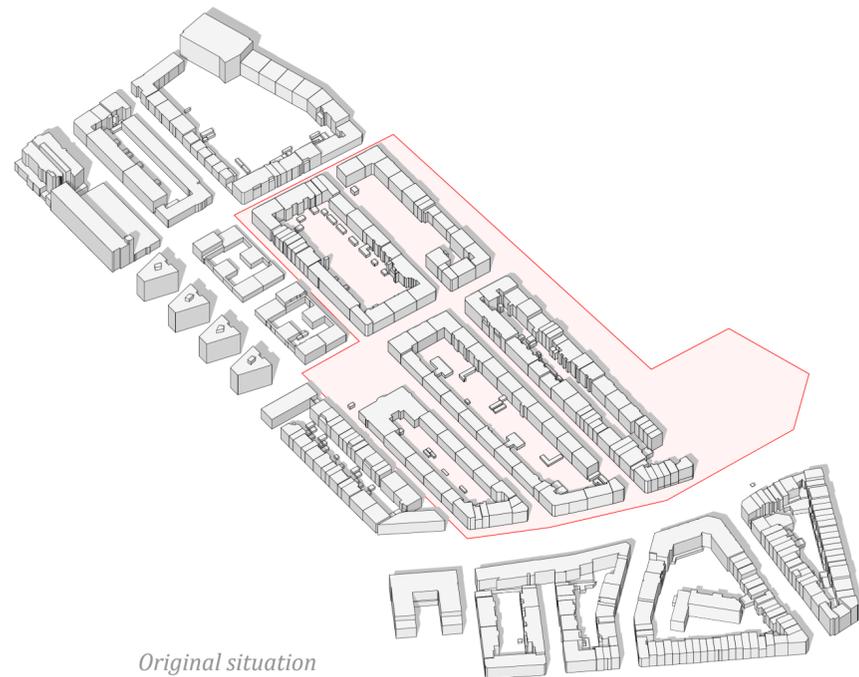
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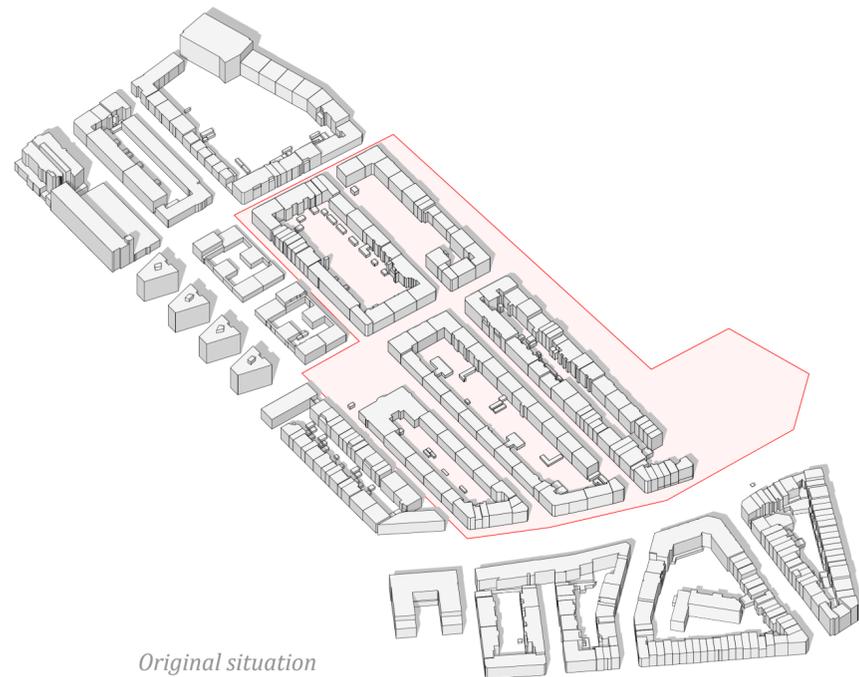
Original situation



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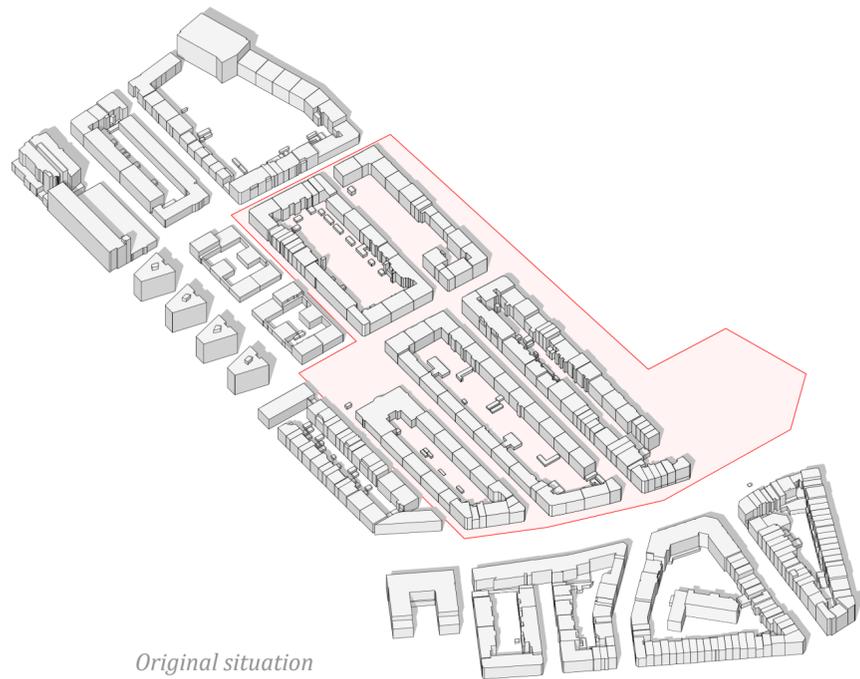
De Roo, F. (2018). *De huurwoningen van Vestia gaan tegen de vlakte* [Image]. AD.



Original situation

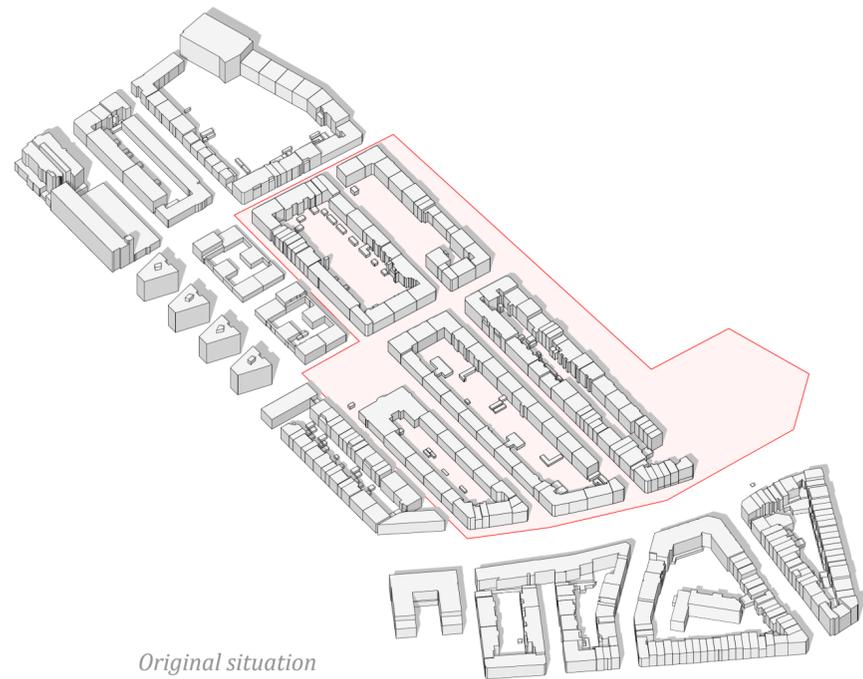


Dondejs, S. (2021). *Mevrouw Pelger veegt haar stoep* [Image]. AD



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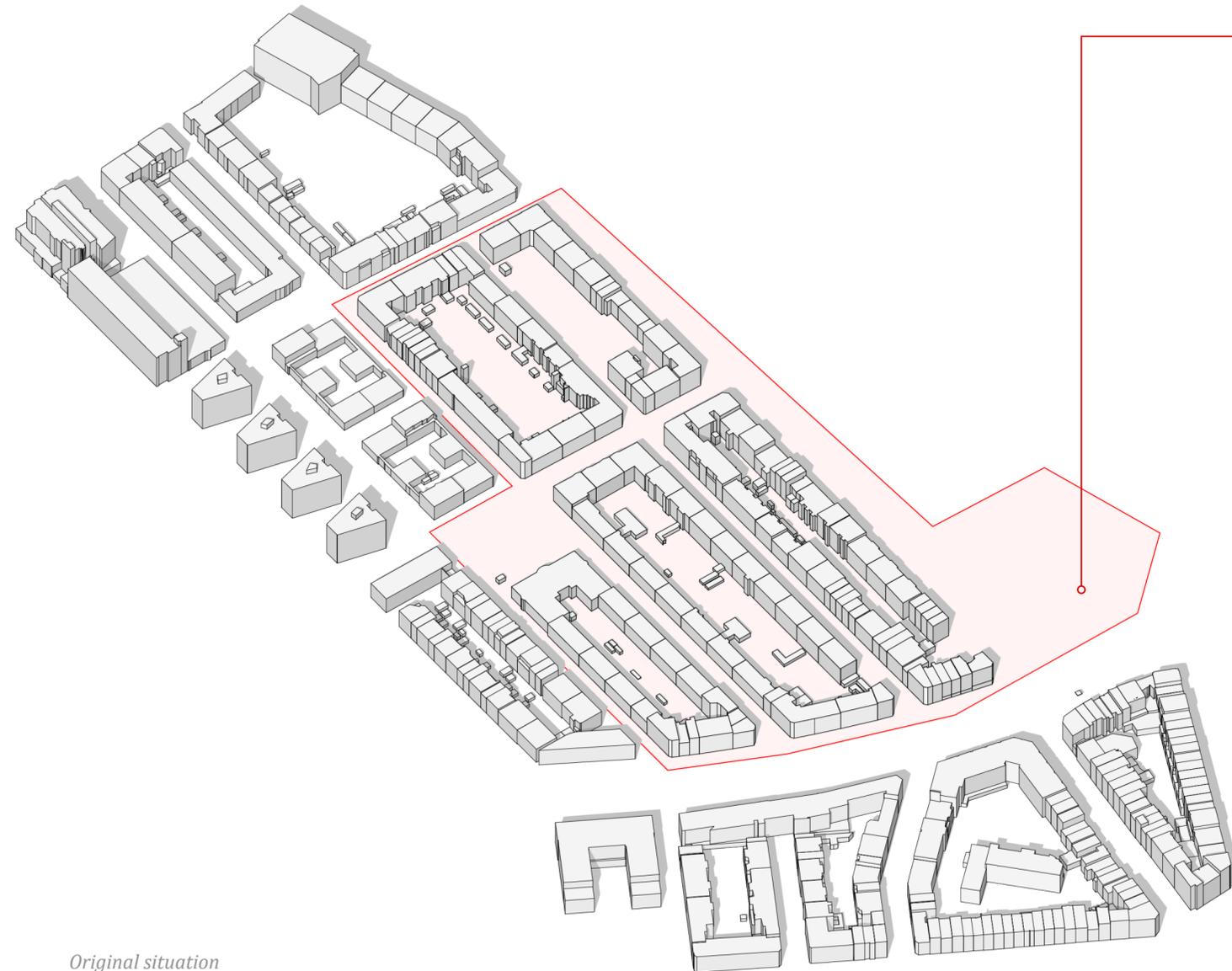




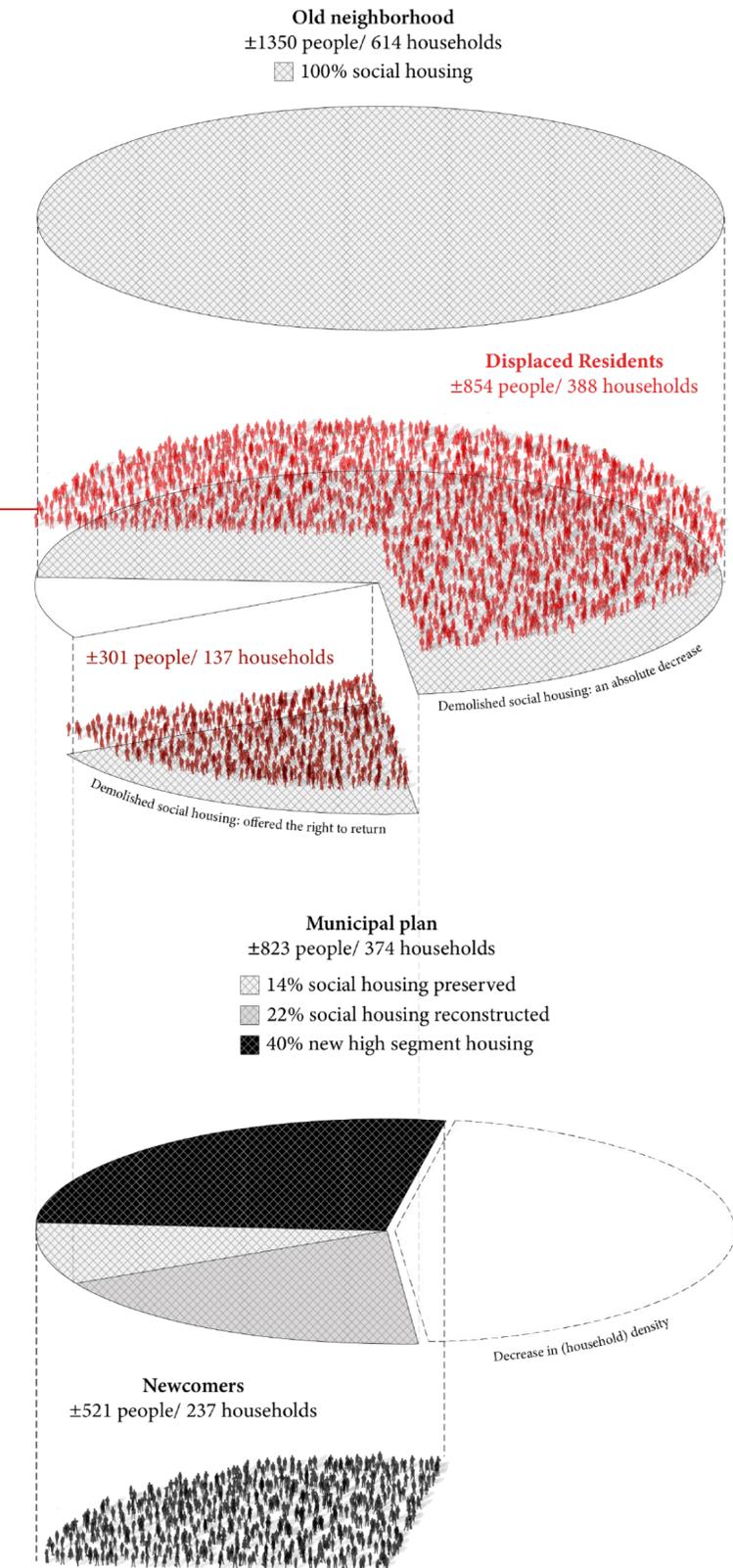
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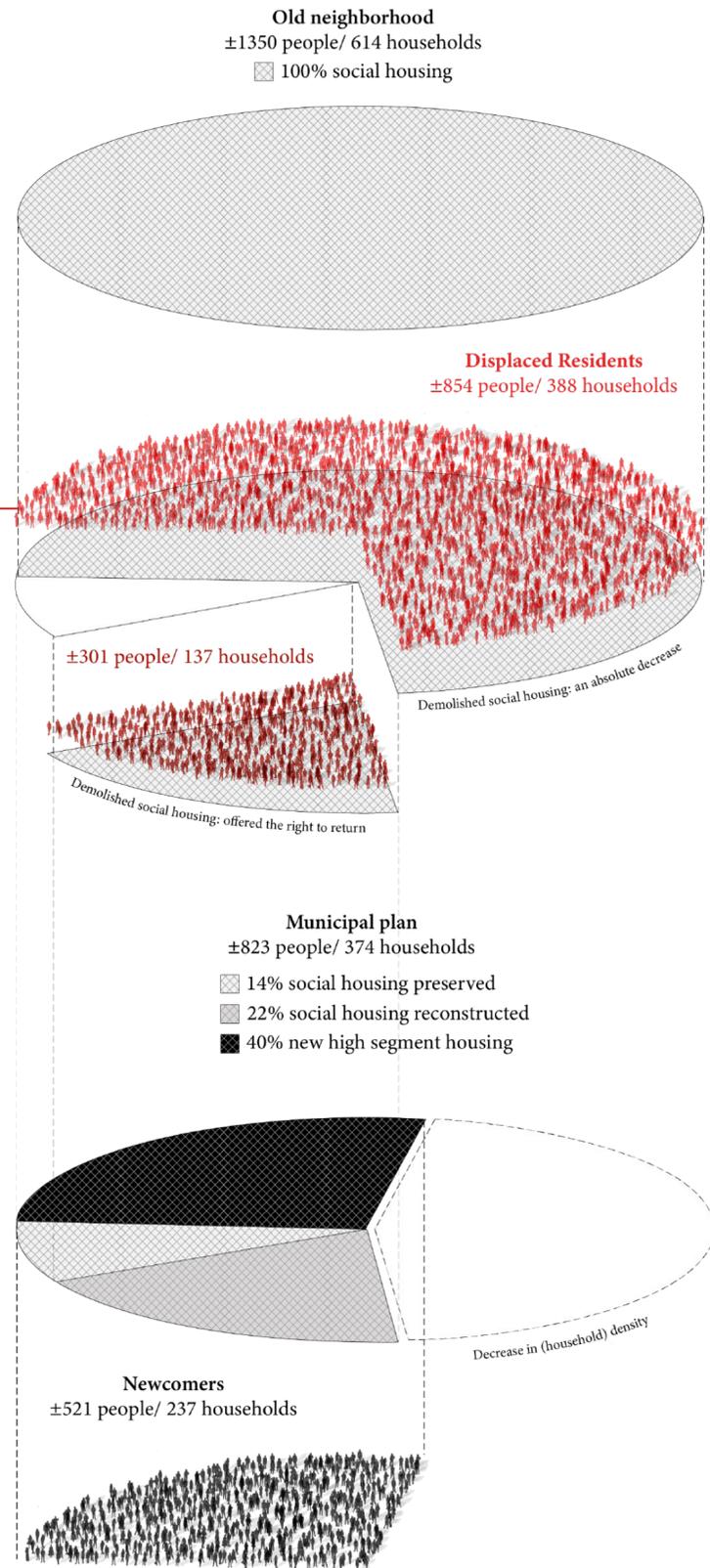


Donders, S.(2021) De sloop begon maandag [Image]. AD

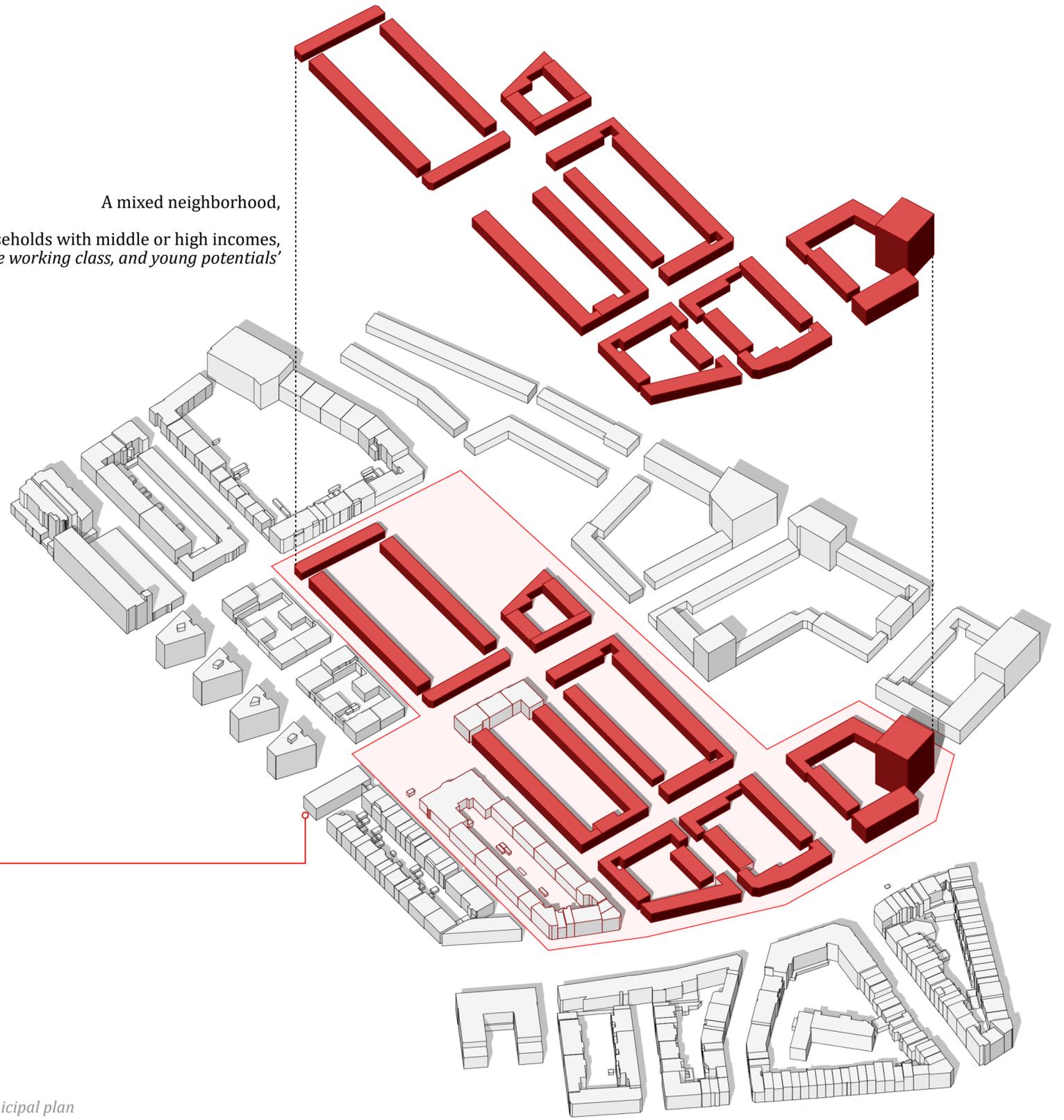


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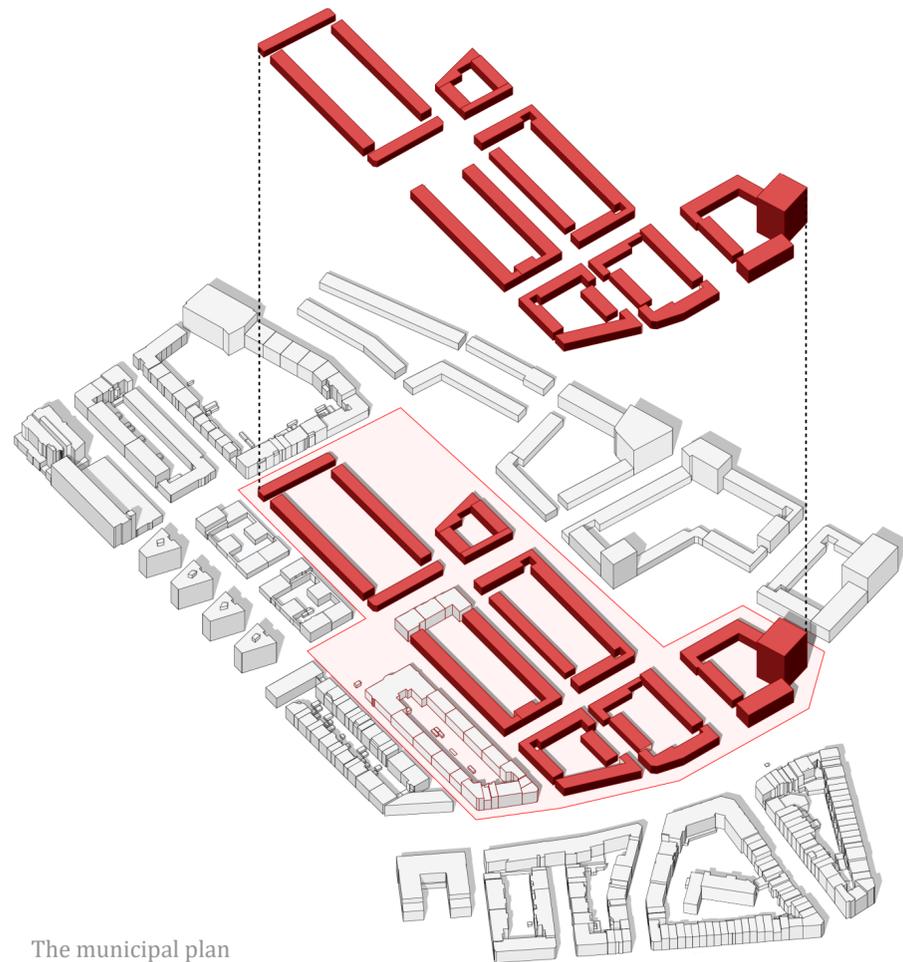




A mixed neighborhood,
for households with middle or high incomes,
'the working class, and young potentials'



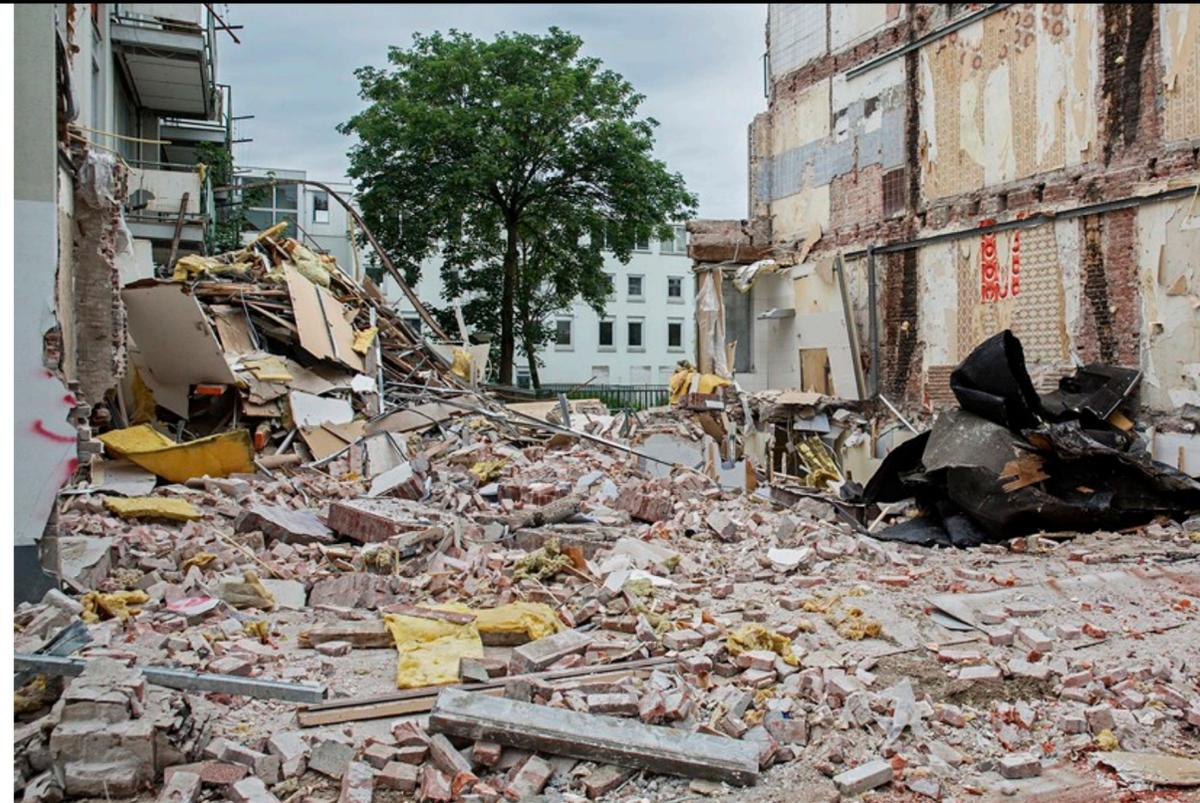
The municipal plan



The municipal plan



Wonen in Rotterdam.(2021) *Maak kennis met Parkstad: de nieuwe entree naar Zuid* [Image].



Representation of past mistakes / Fictional revision

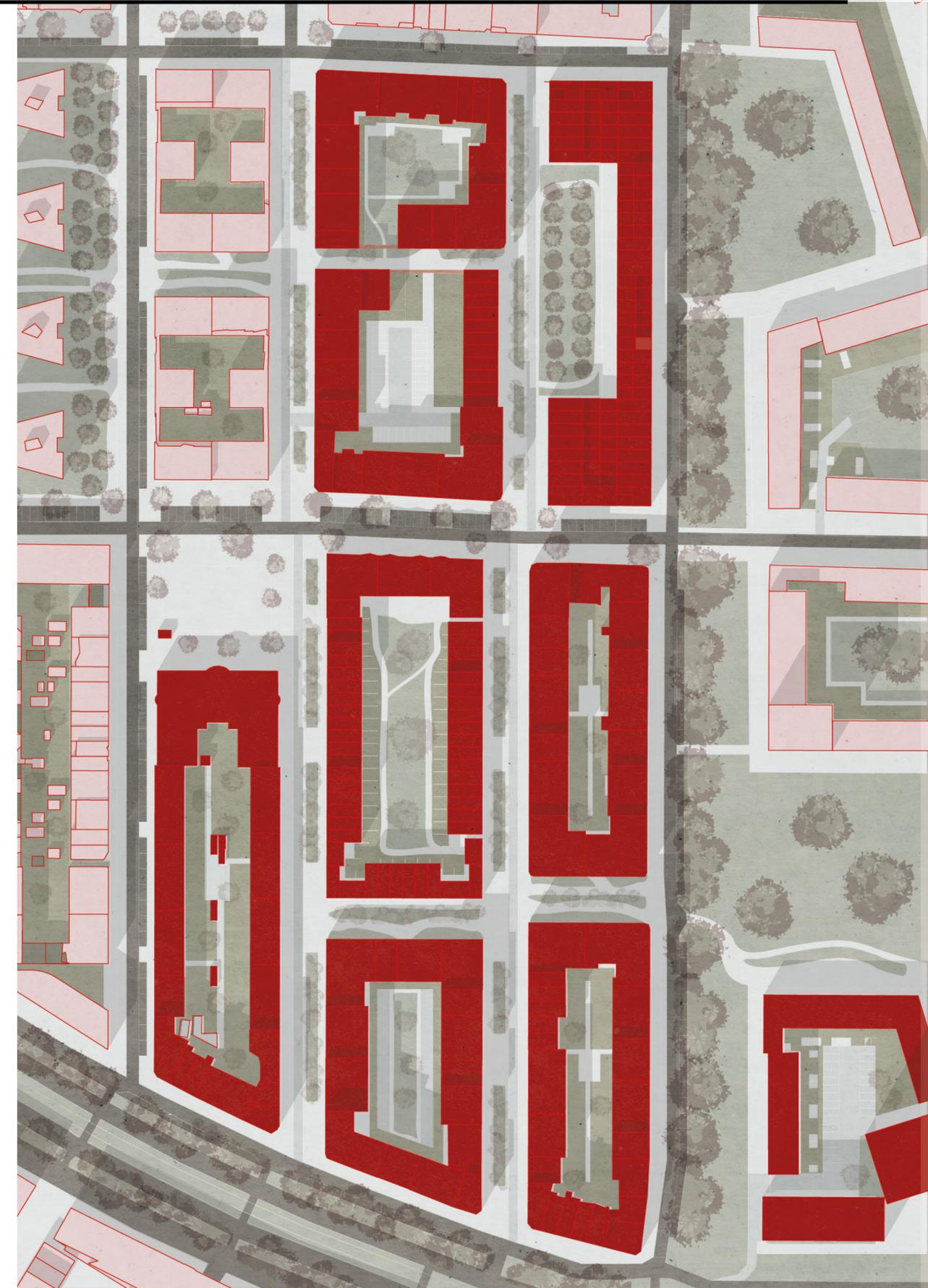


Municipal design still under development

Can guide and inform similar future projects

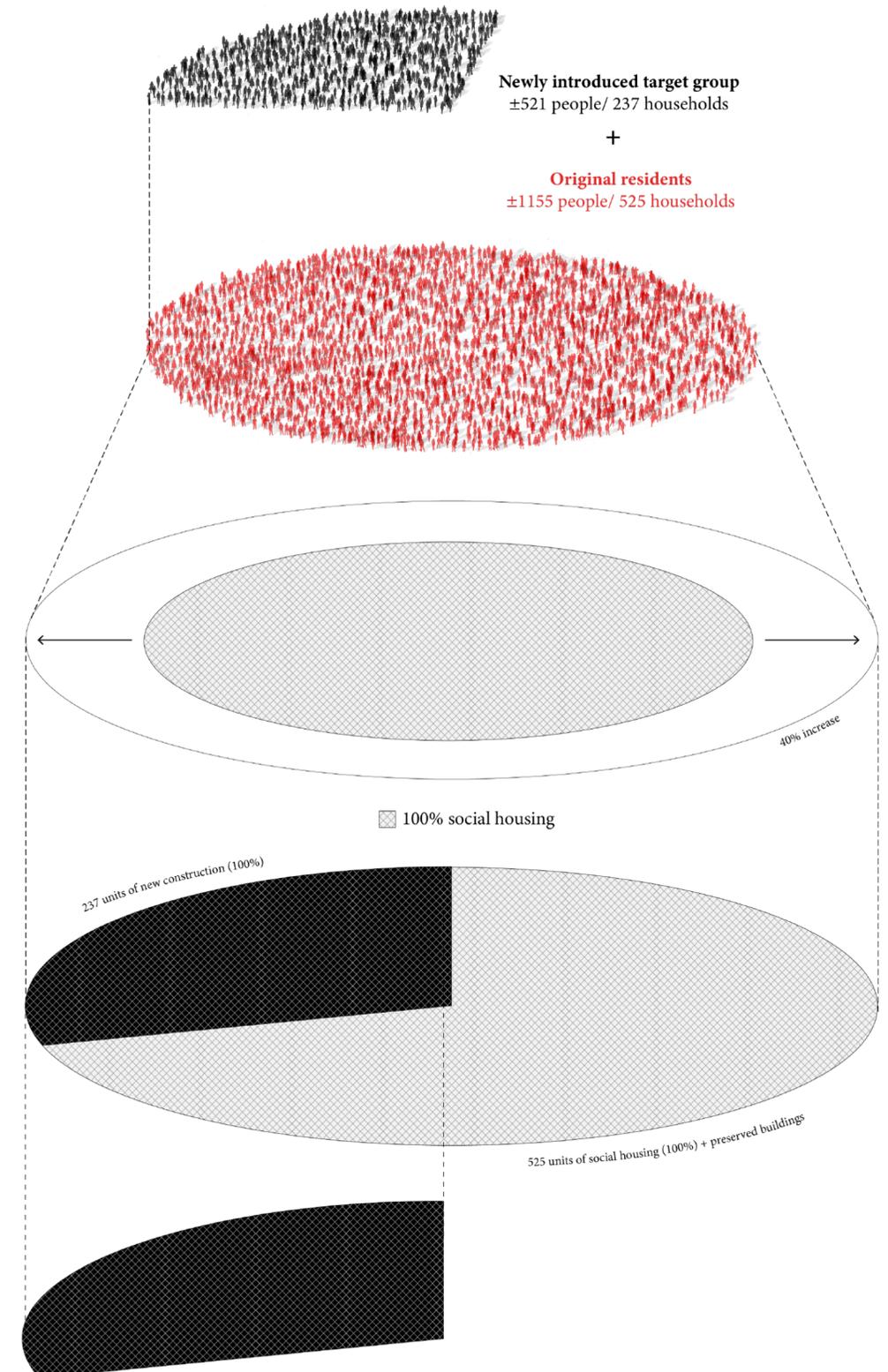


- 1) Provide sufficient housing by using a fair prioritization of user-centered and demand-driven objectives
- 2) Encourage policy adaptability based on local characteristics & networks
- 3) Design a fair, inclusive, and research-based strategy of social mixing



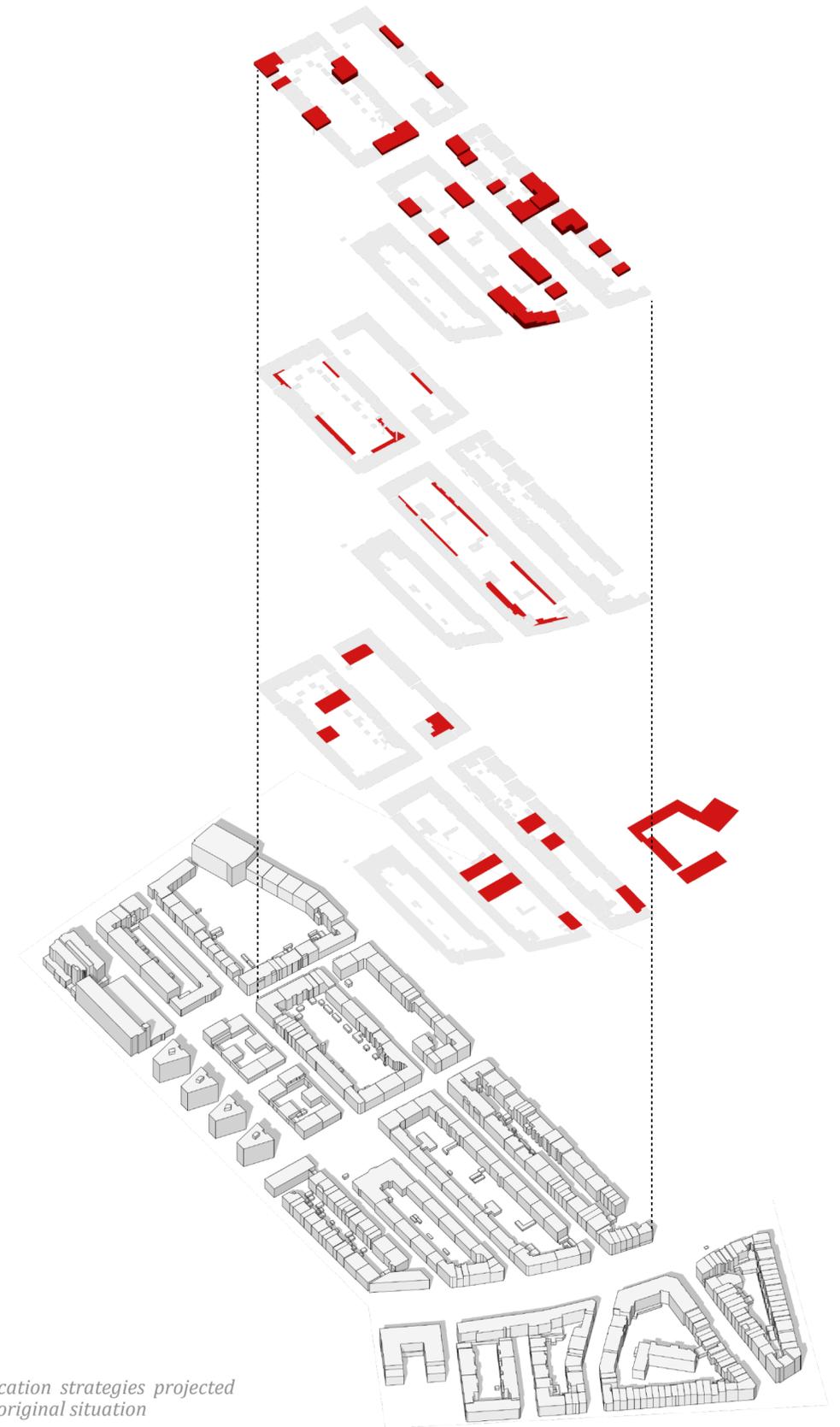
Provide sufficient housing by using a fair prioritization of user-centered and demand-driven objectives

- Protection of the social sector
- Right to (re)housing
- Demand-driven objectives



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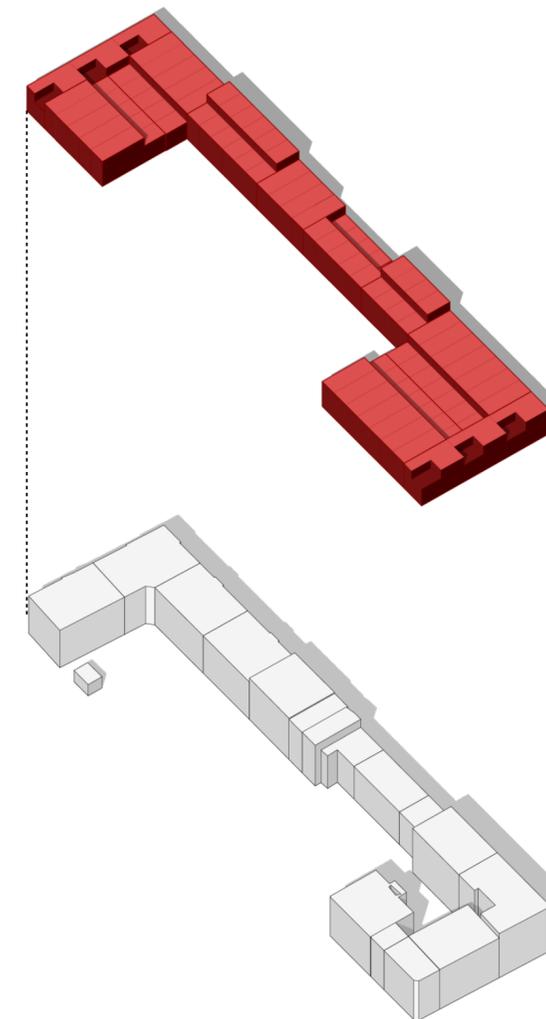
- Protection of the social sector
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- Demand-driven objectives
- Increased focus on inner-city densification



Densification strategies projected on the original situation

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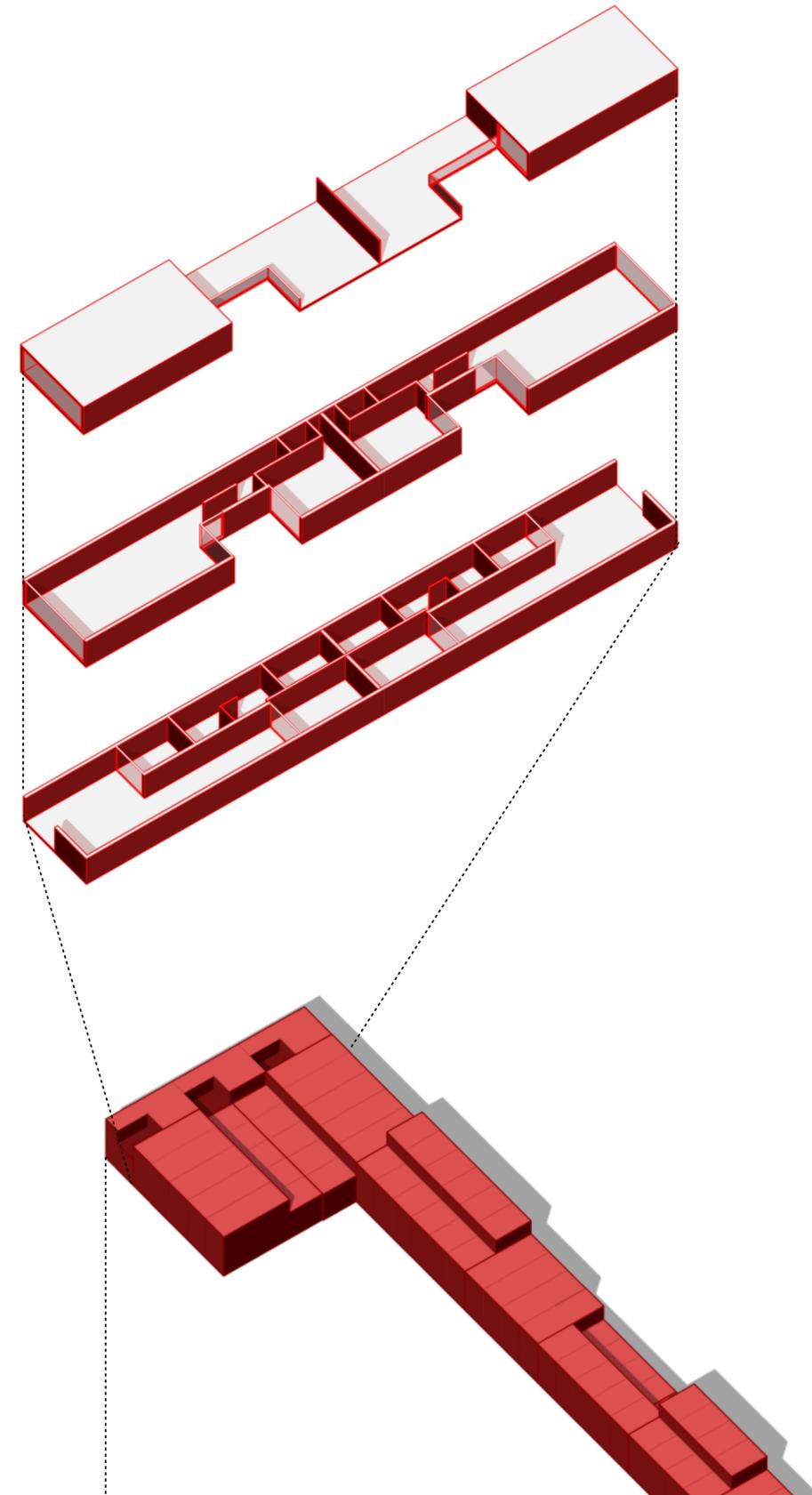
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High-density building typology

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High-density building typology

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Protection of the social sector

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This thesis's design proposal

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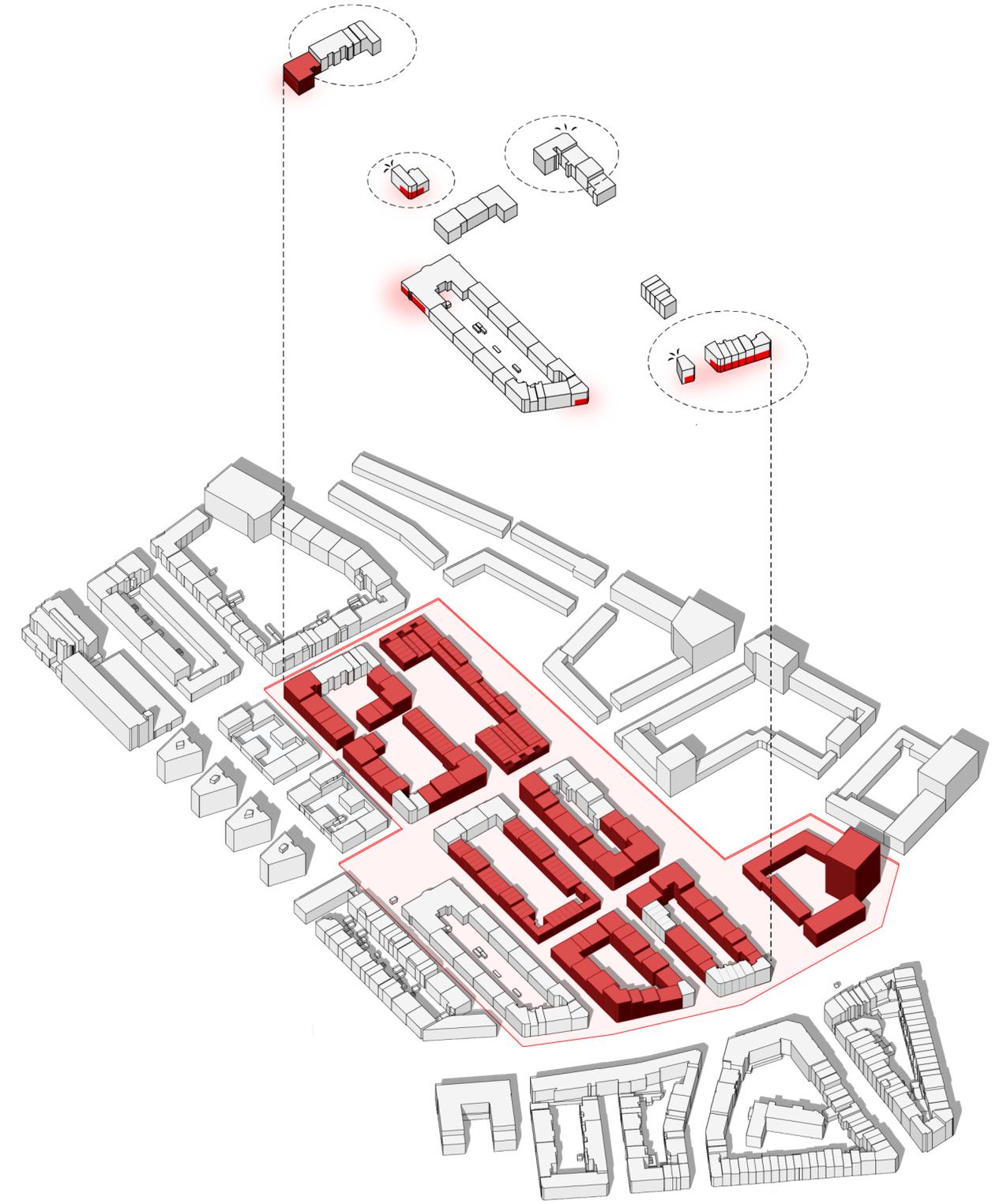
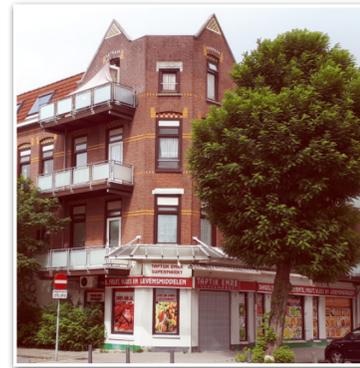
2) Encourage policy adaptability based on local characteristics & networks

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Encourage policy adaptability based on local characteristics & networks

Respect cultural/ historical values

Acknowledge residents' place-attachment

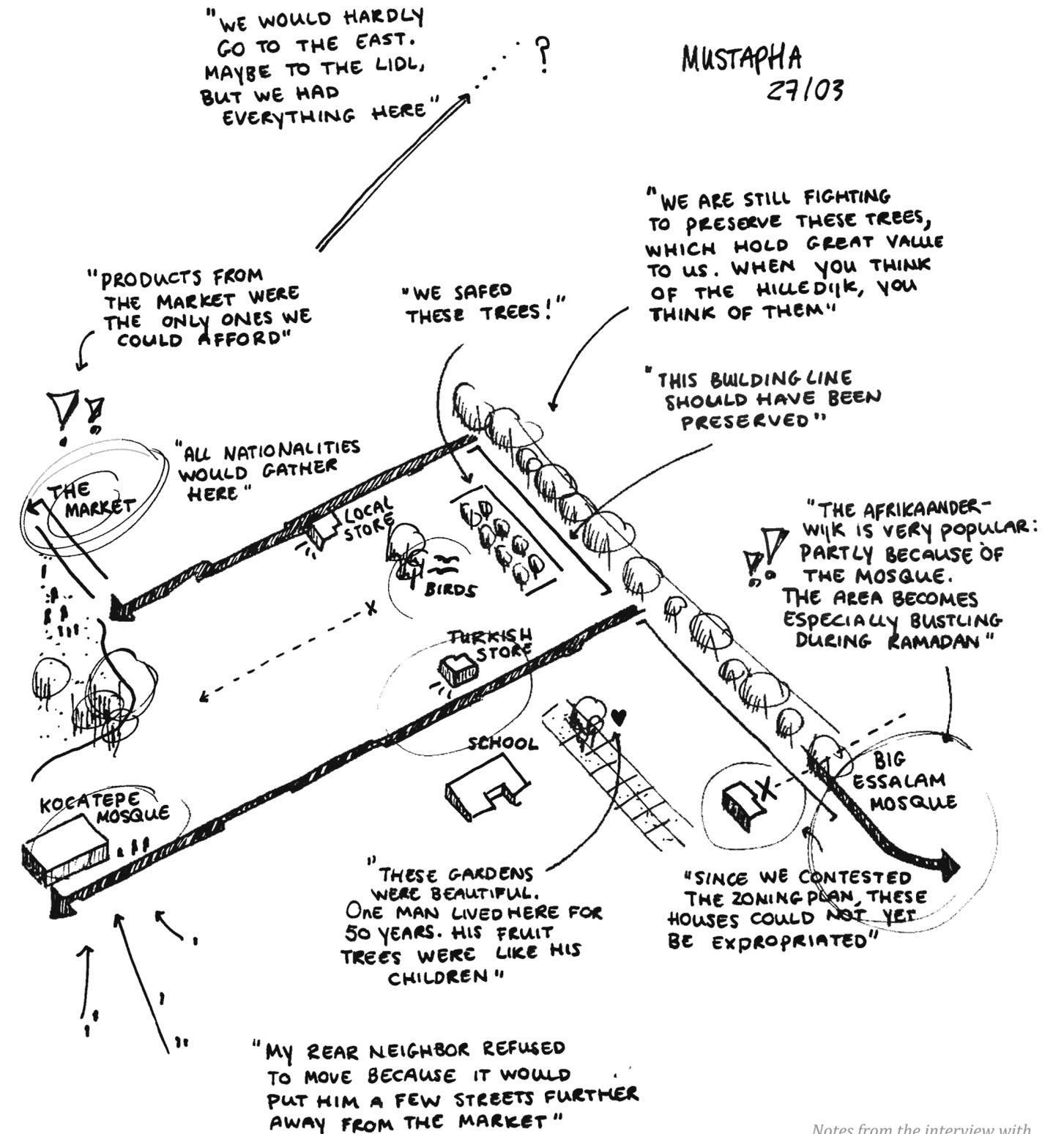


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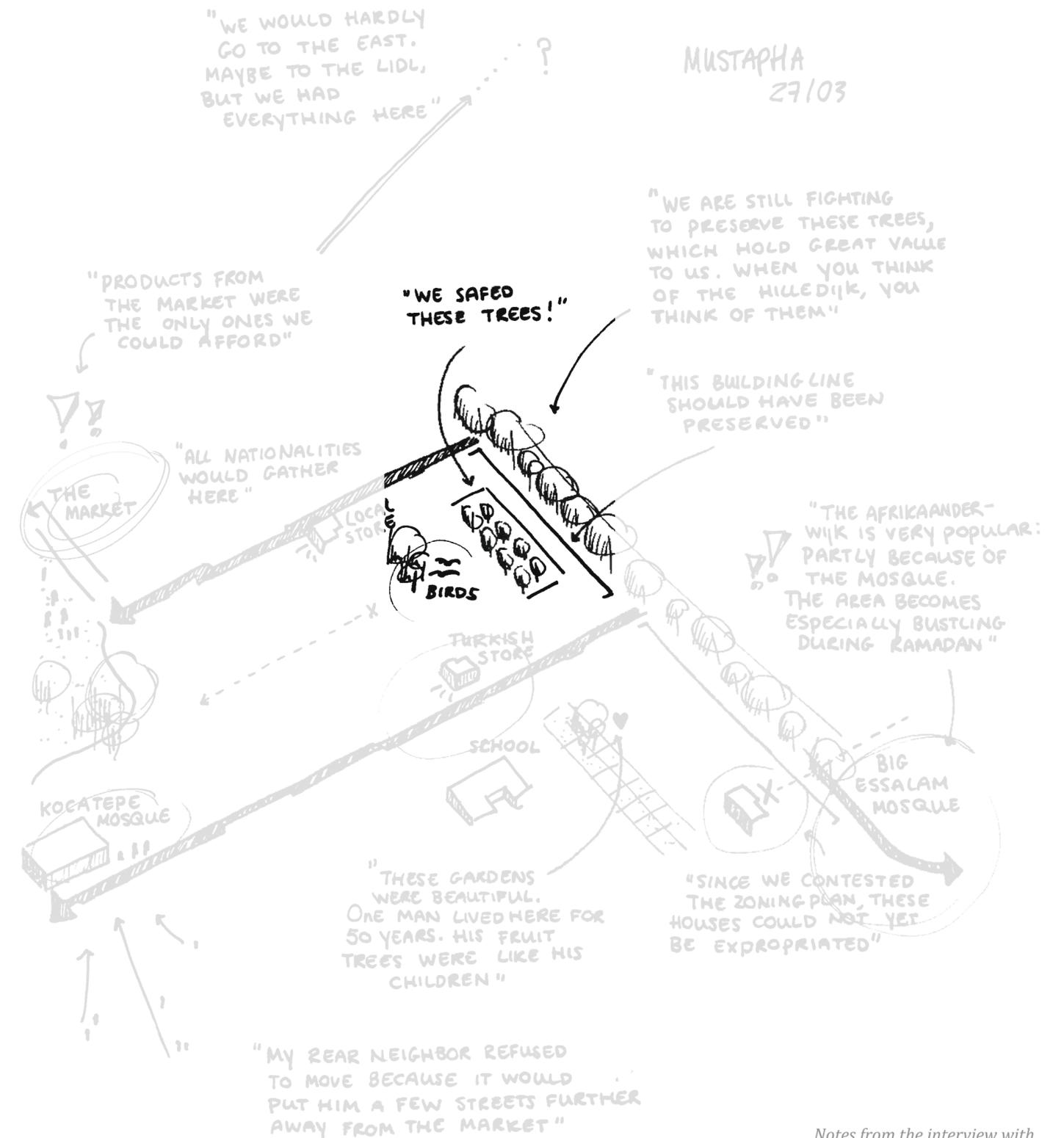


Notes from the interview with Mustapha (27.03.24)

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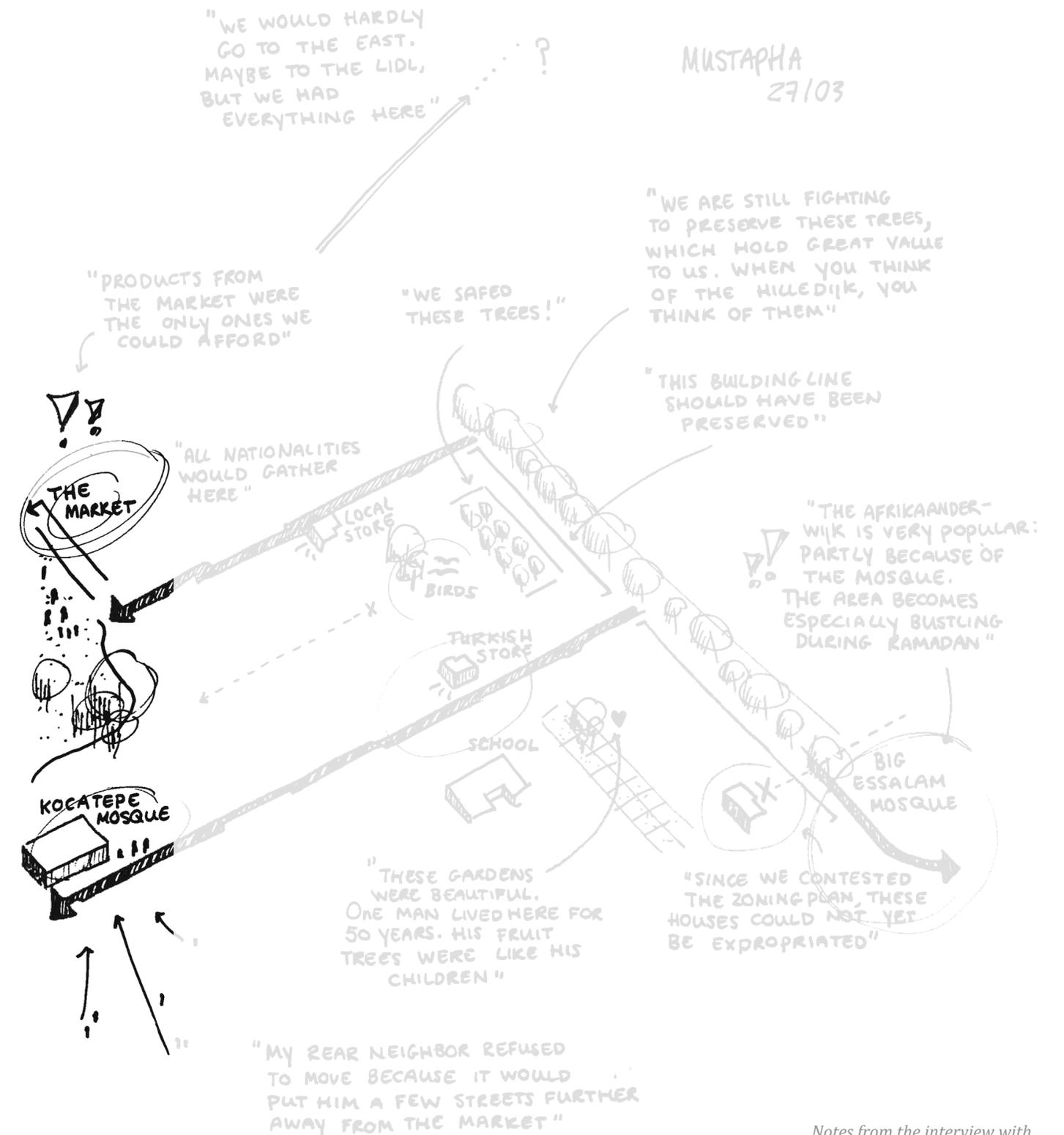


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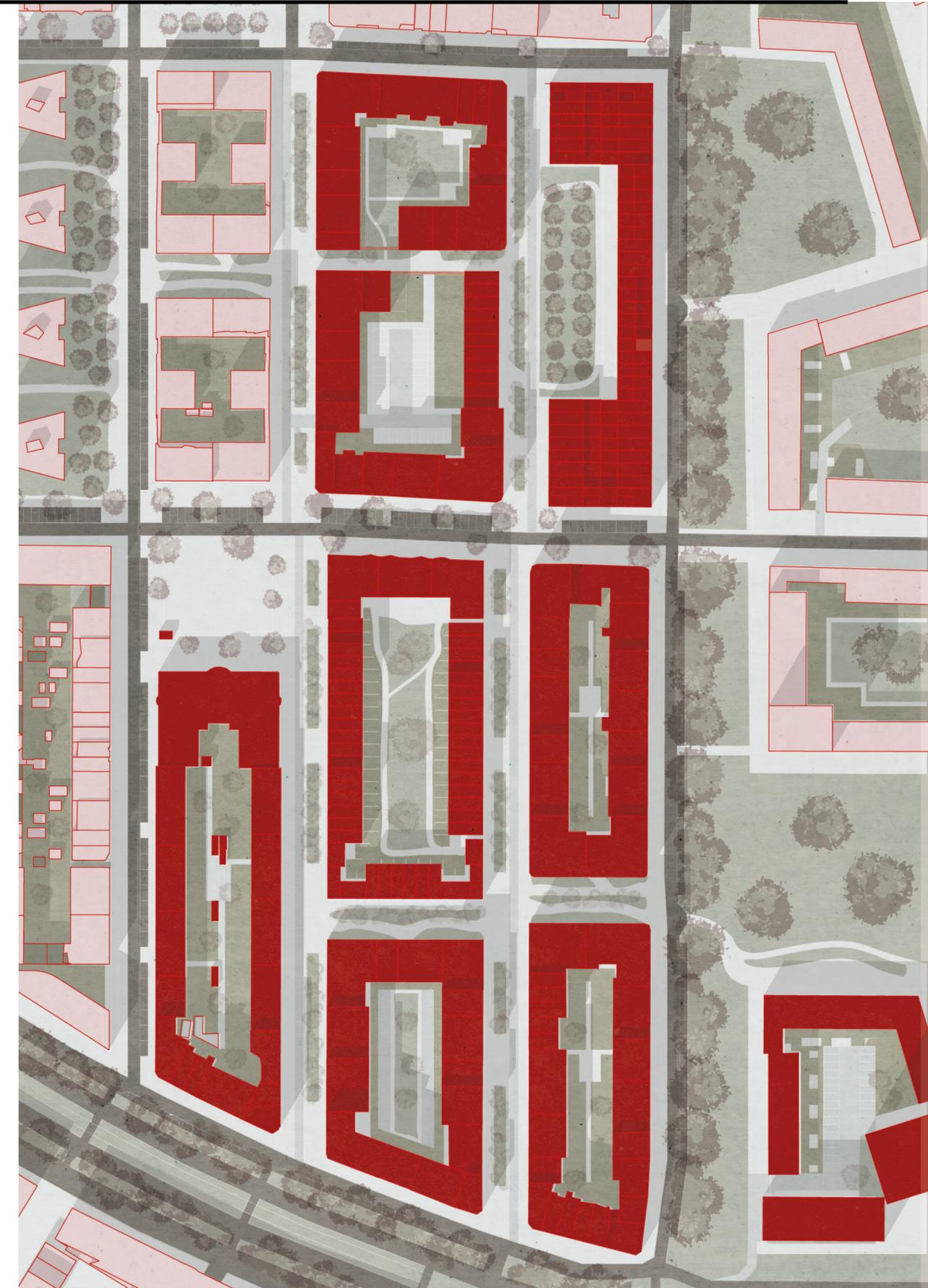
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 Design a fair, inclusive, and research-based strategy of social mixing

Design a successful social mix, following the guidelines:

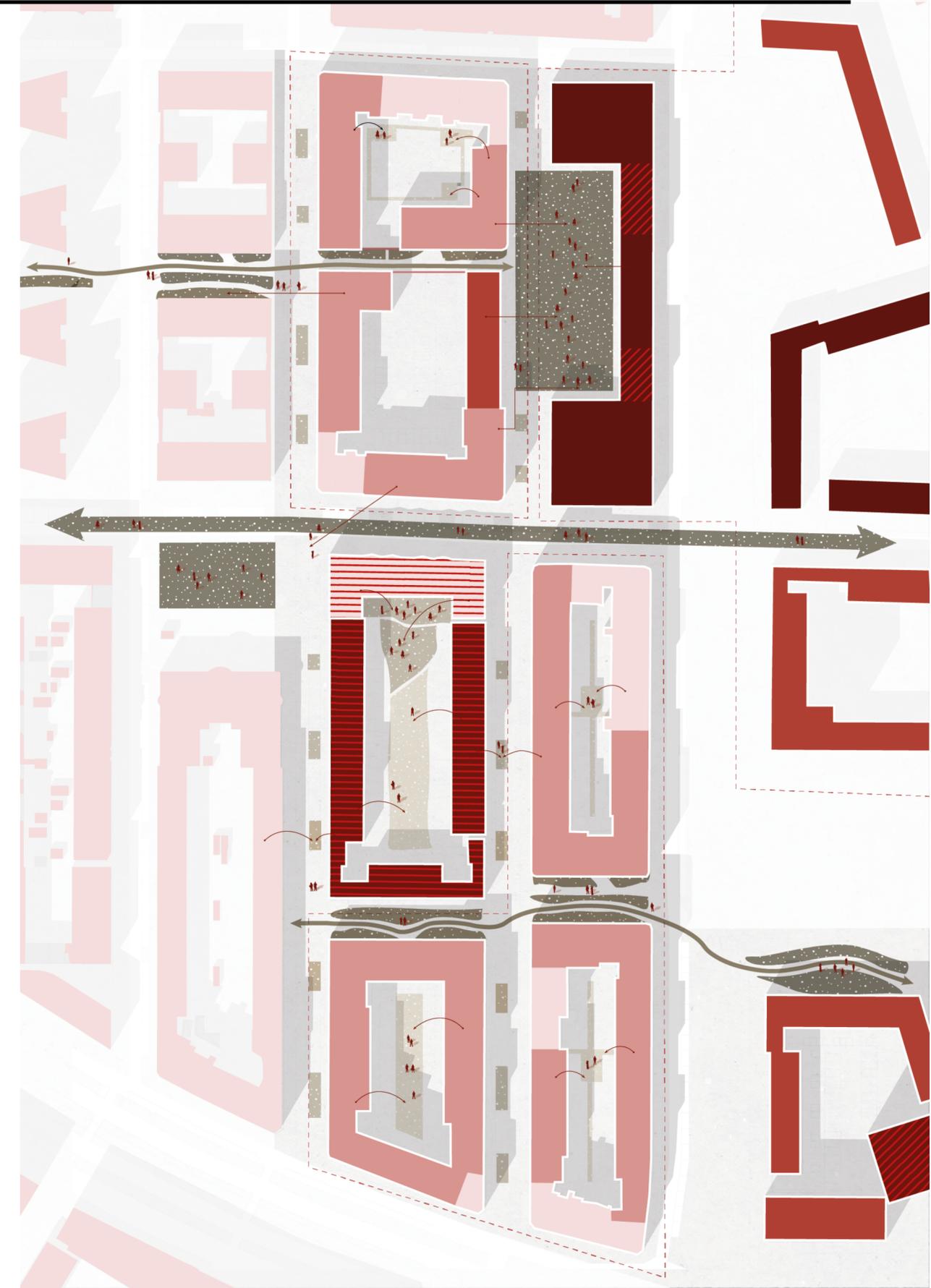
- Mix similar incomes and lifestyles;*
- Mix on street- or neighborhood level;*
- Connect micro-districts by overlapping activities and social spheres;*
- Design a network of clearly defined (public) spaces*



 Design a fair, inclusive, and research-based strategy of social mixing

Design a successful social mix, following the guidelines:

- Mix similar incomes and lifestyles;*
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The Environmental Vision

Omgevingsvisie Rotterdam



De Veranderstad

Werken aan een wereldstad voor iedereen

The Environmental Vision



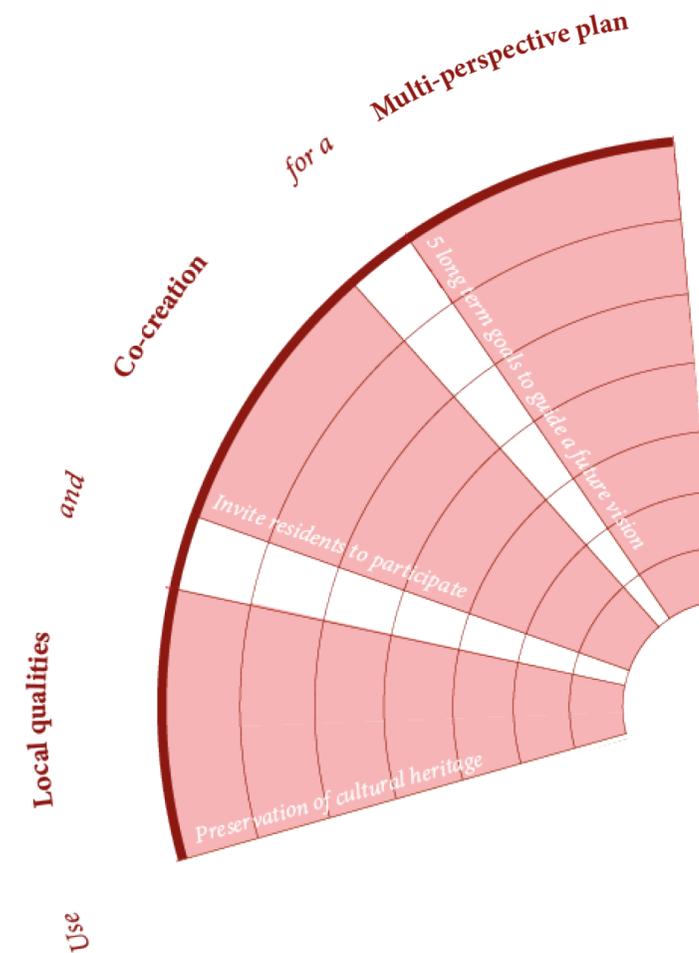
The Environmental Vision

Local qualities; Preserving identities and cultural heritage

Co-creation; Involving Rotterdammers

Multi-perspective plan; A future vision guided by four urban perspectives

+



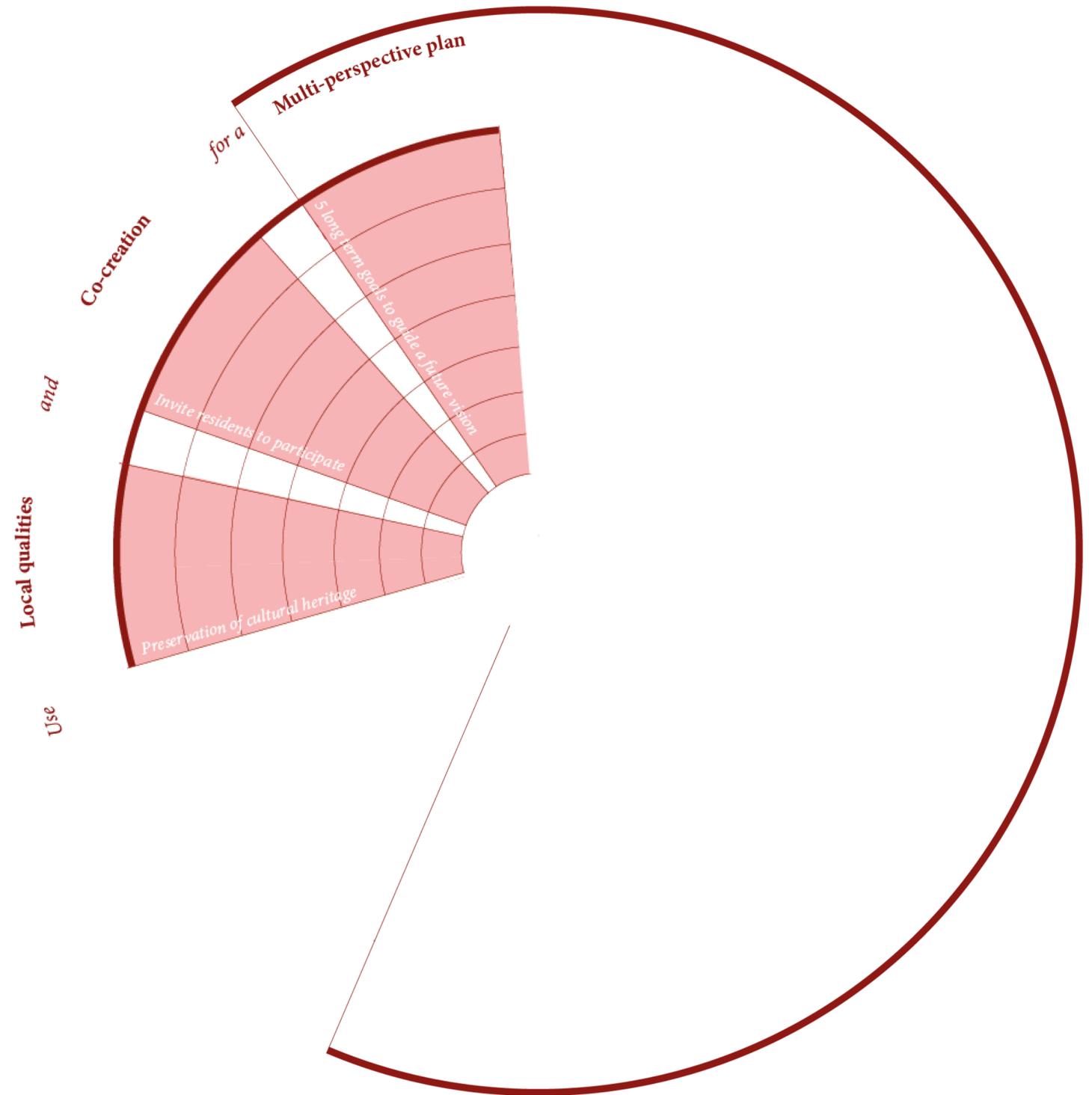
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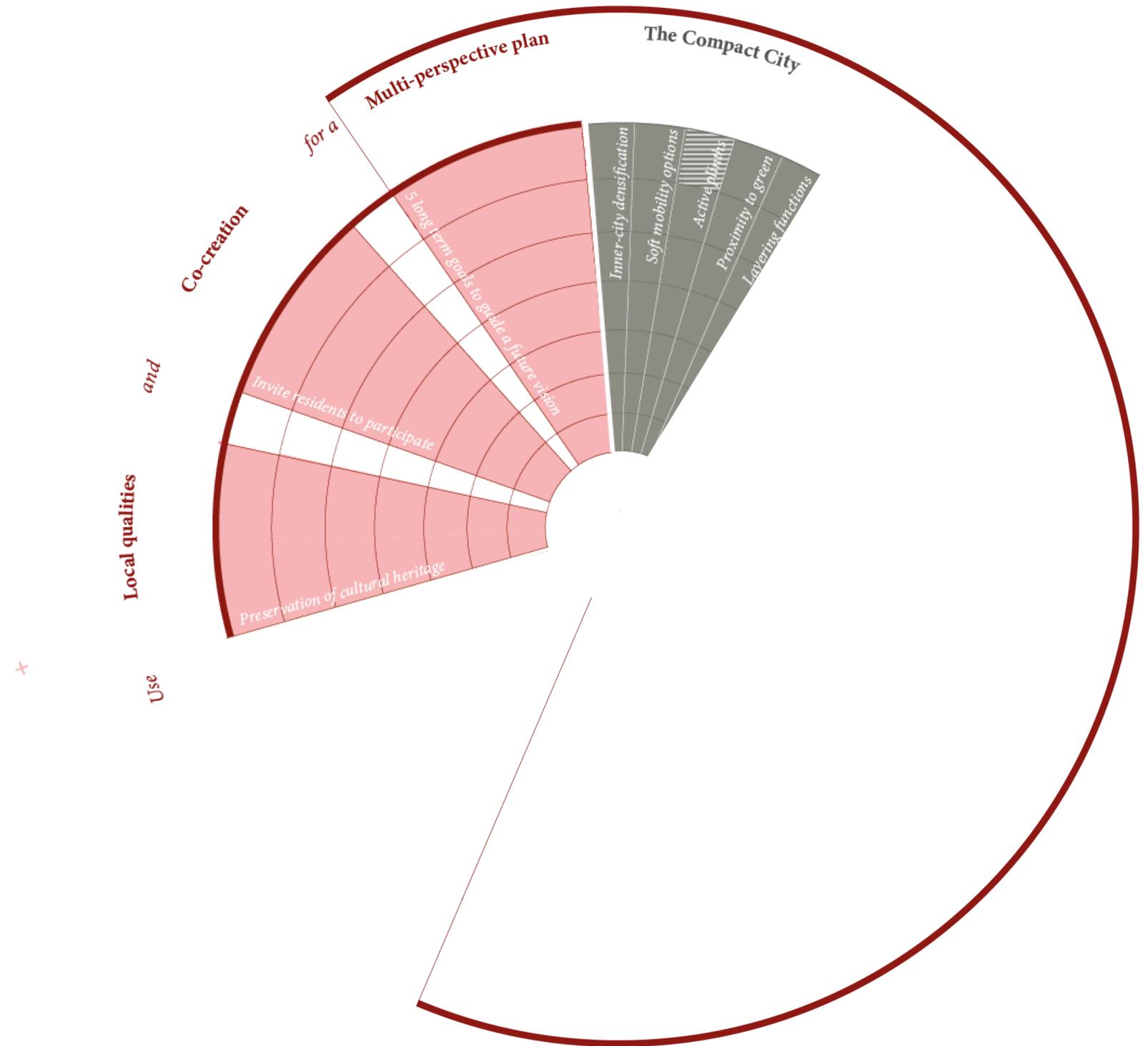
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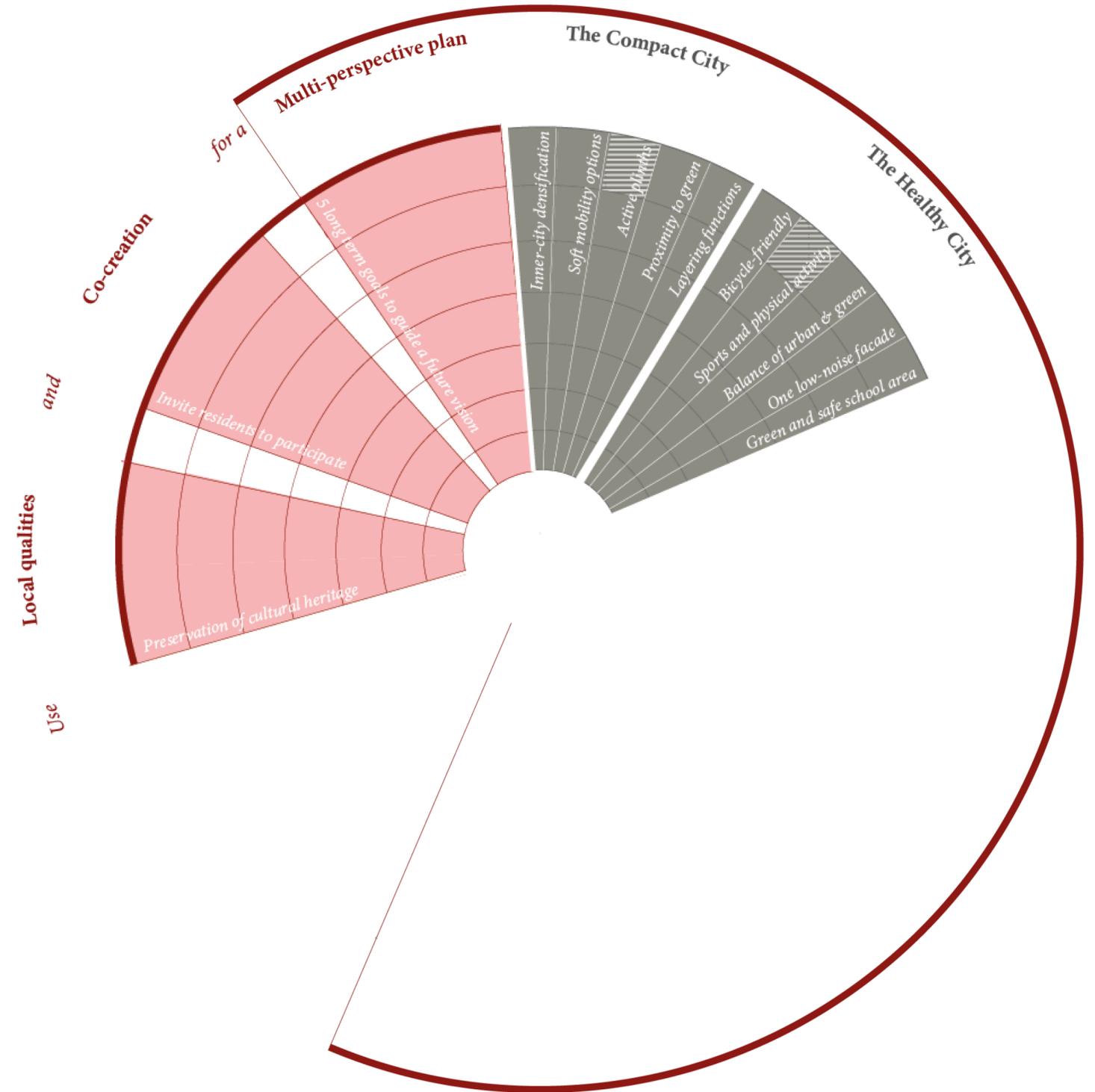
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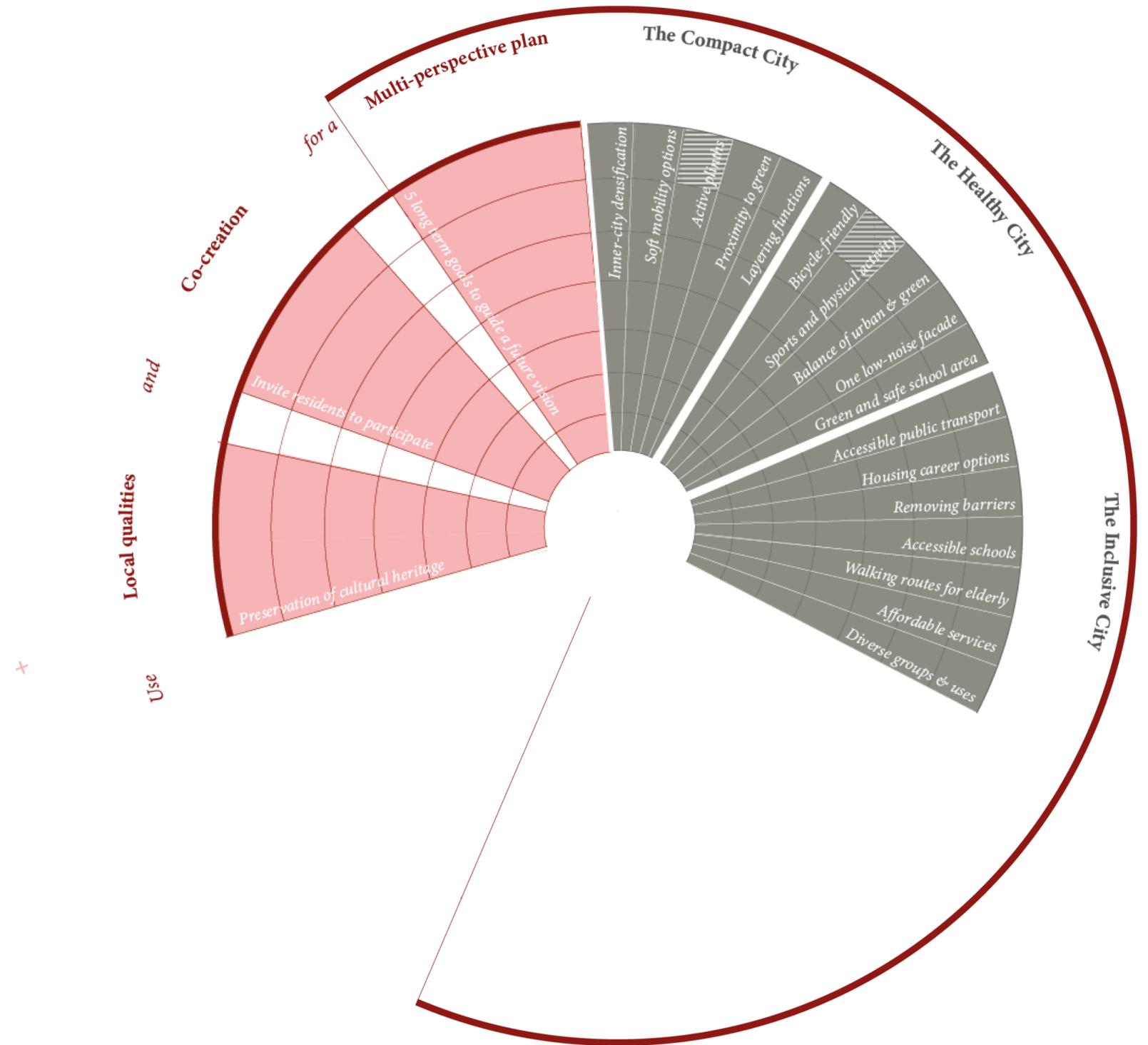
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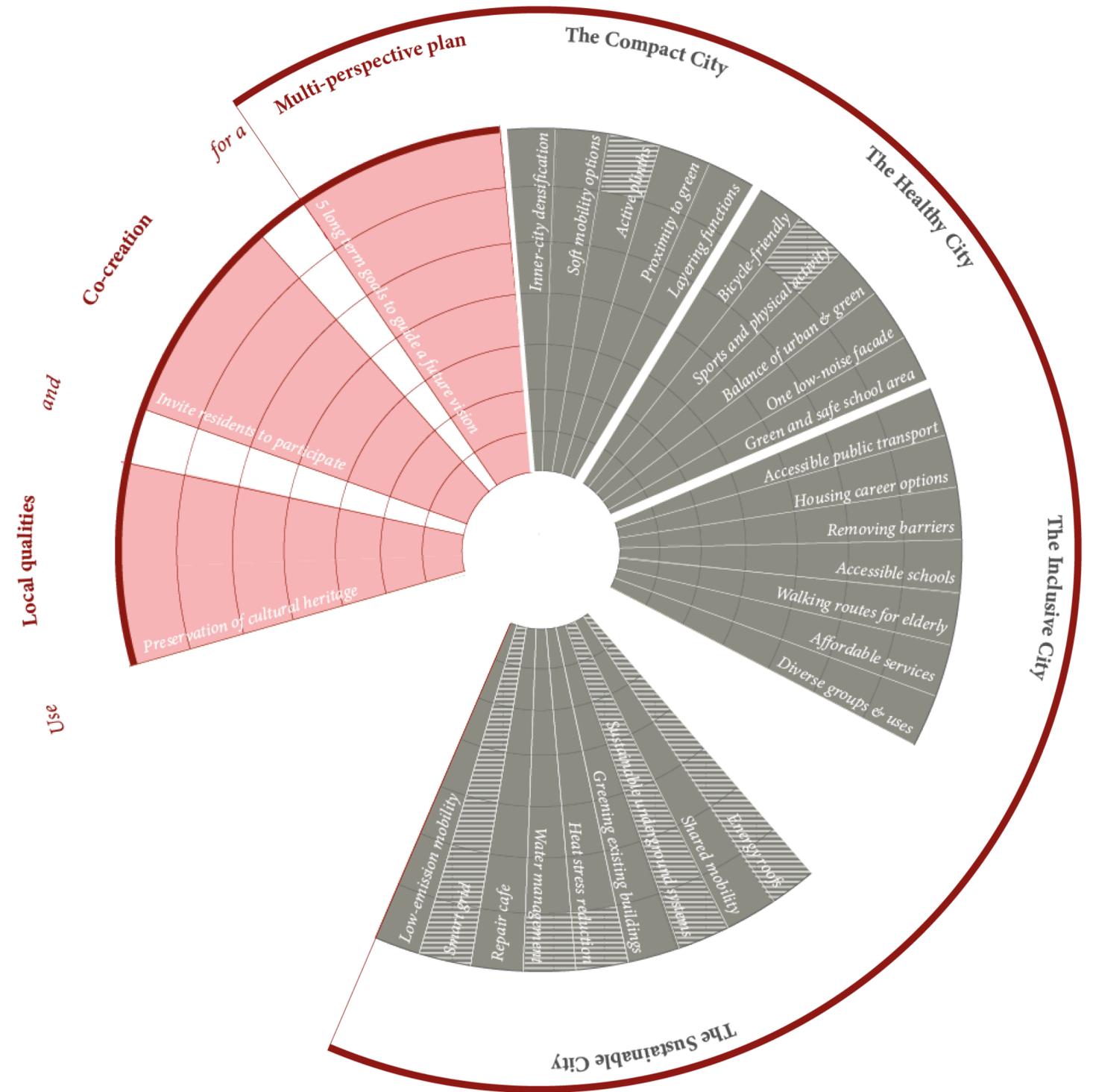
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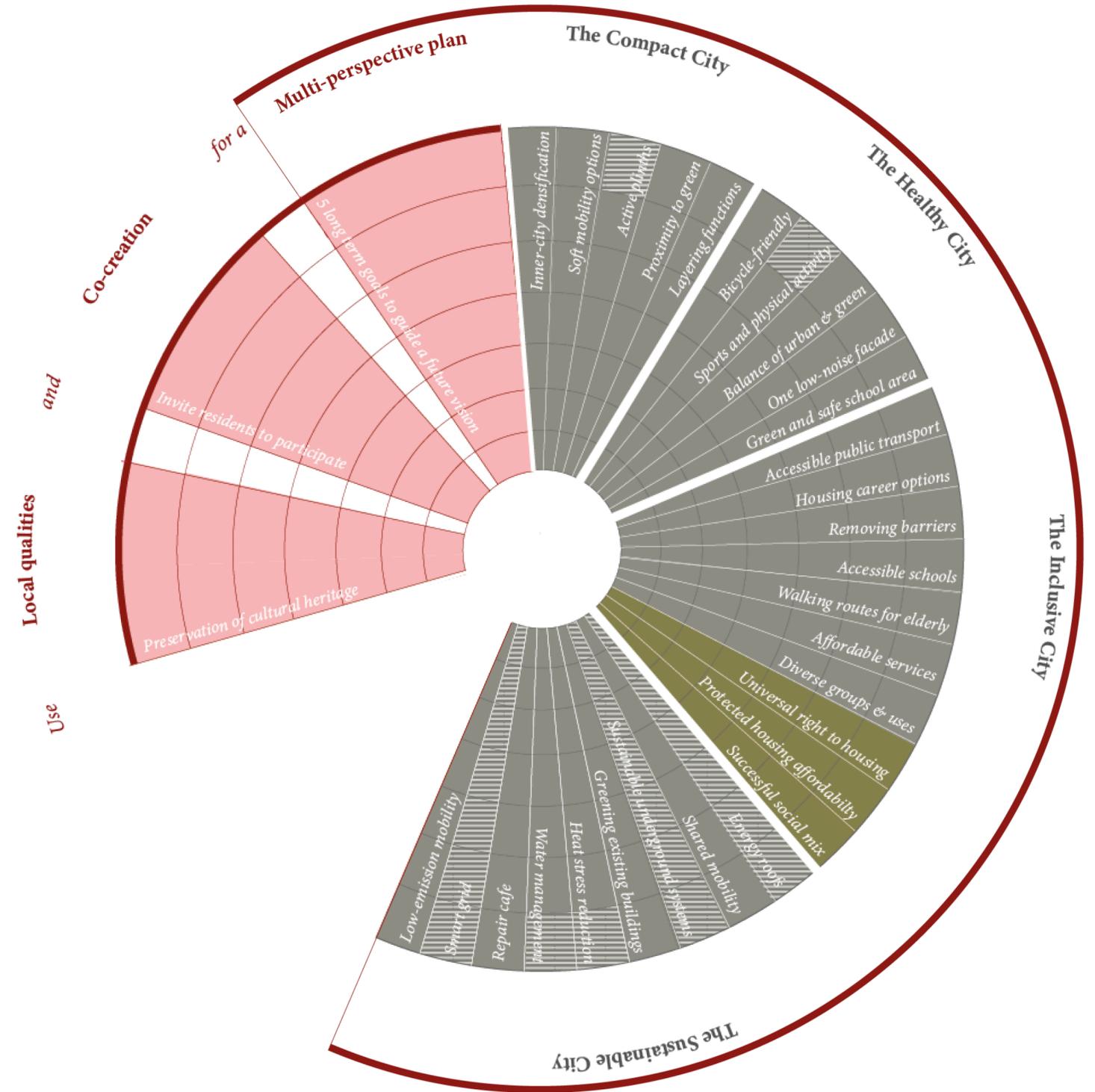
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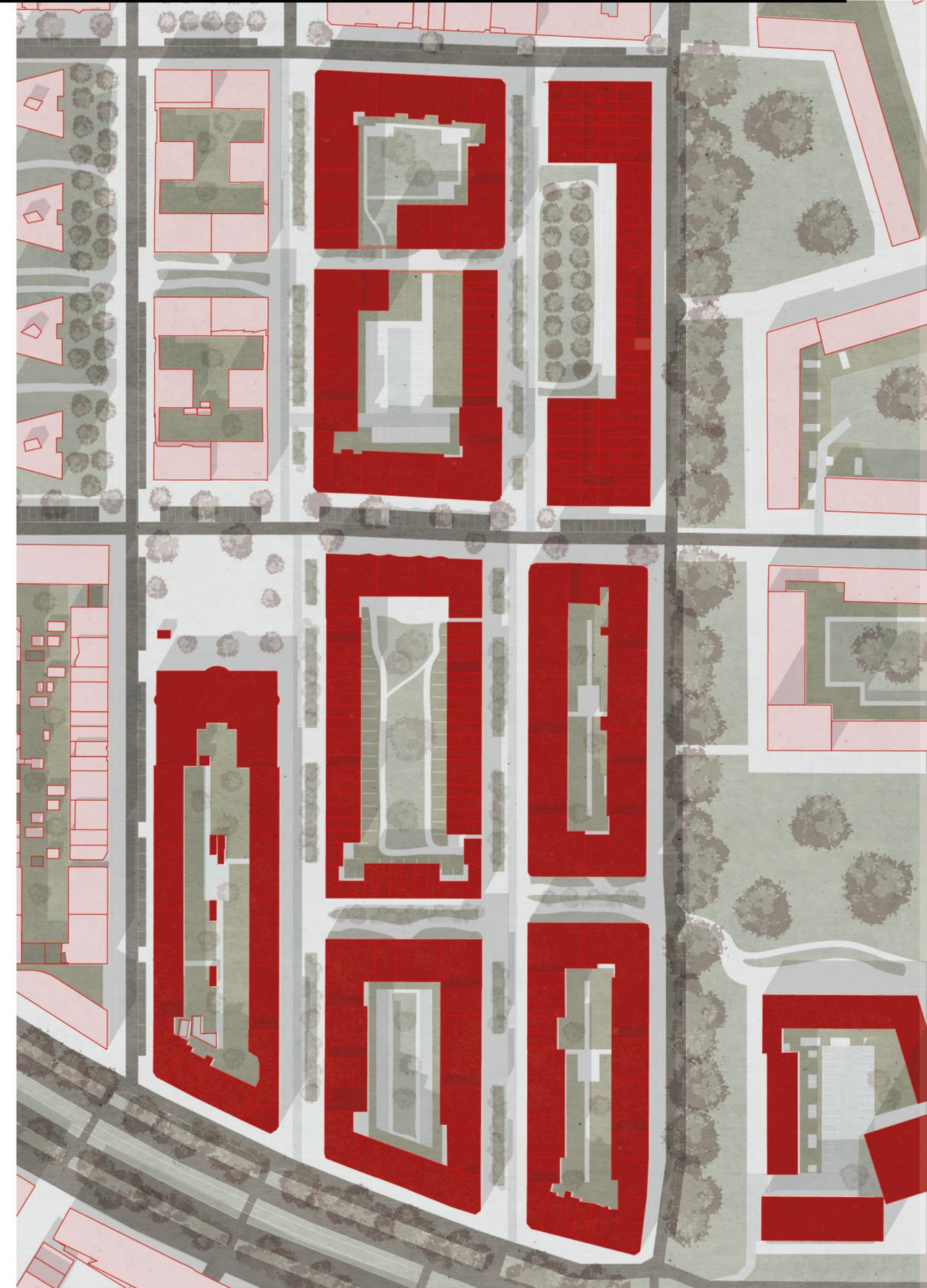
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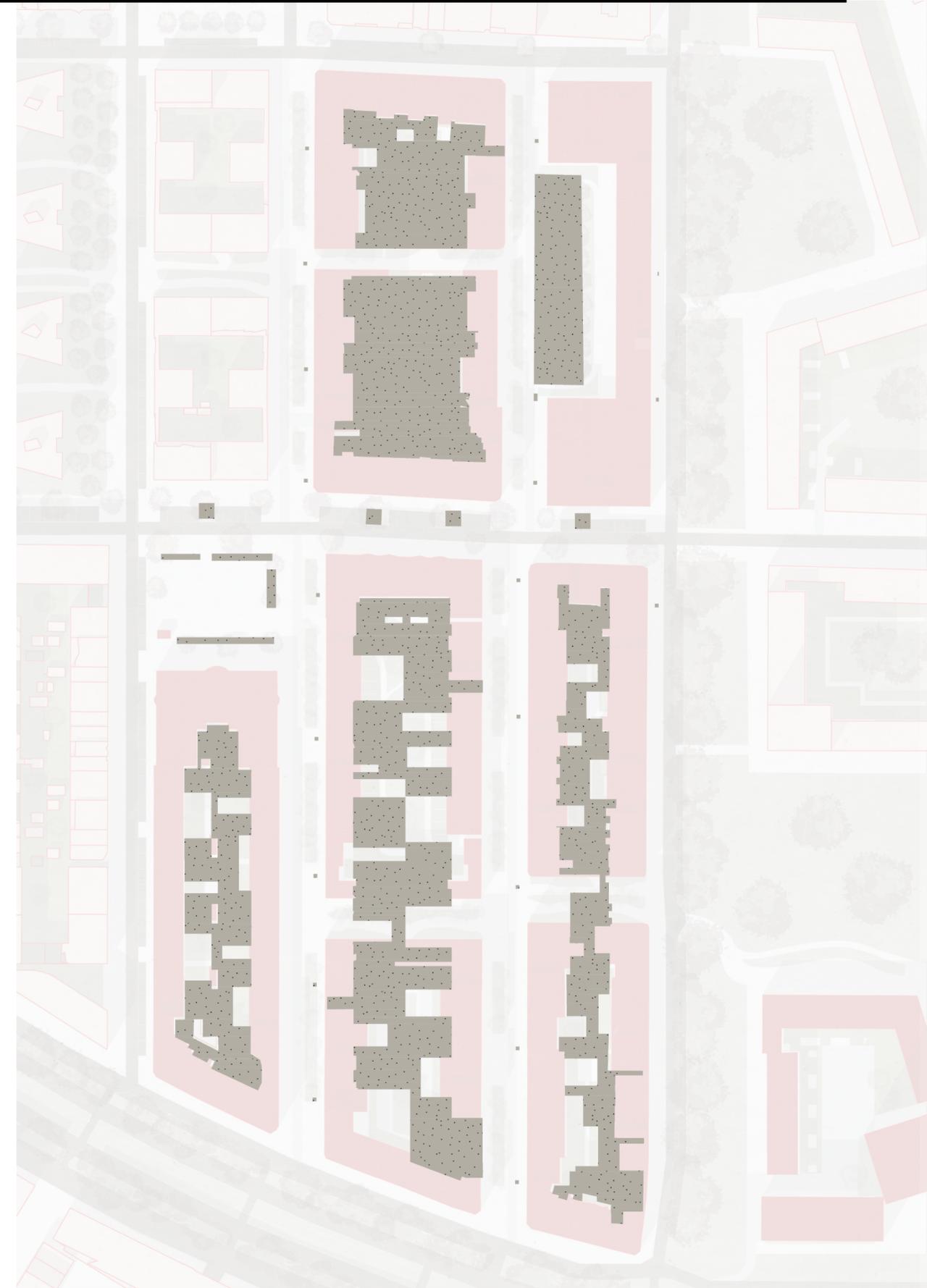
Co-creation; Involving Rotterdammers

Multi-perspective plan; A future vision guided by four urban perspectives

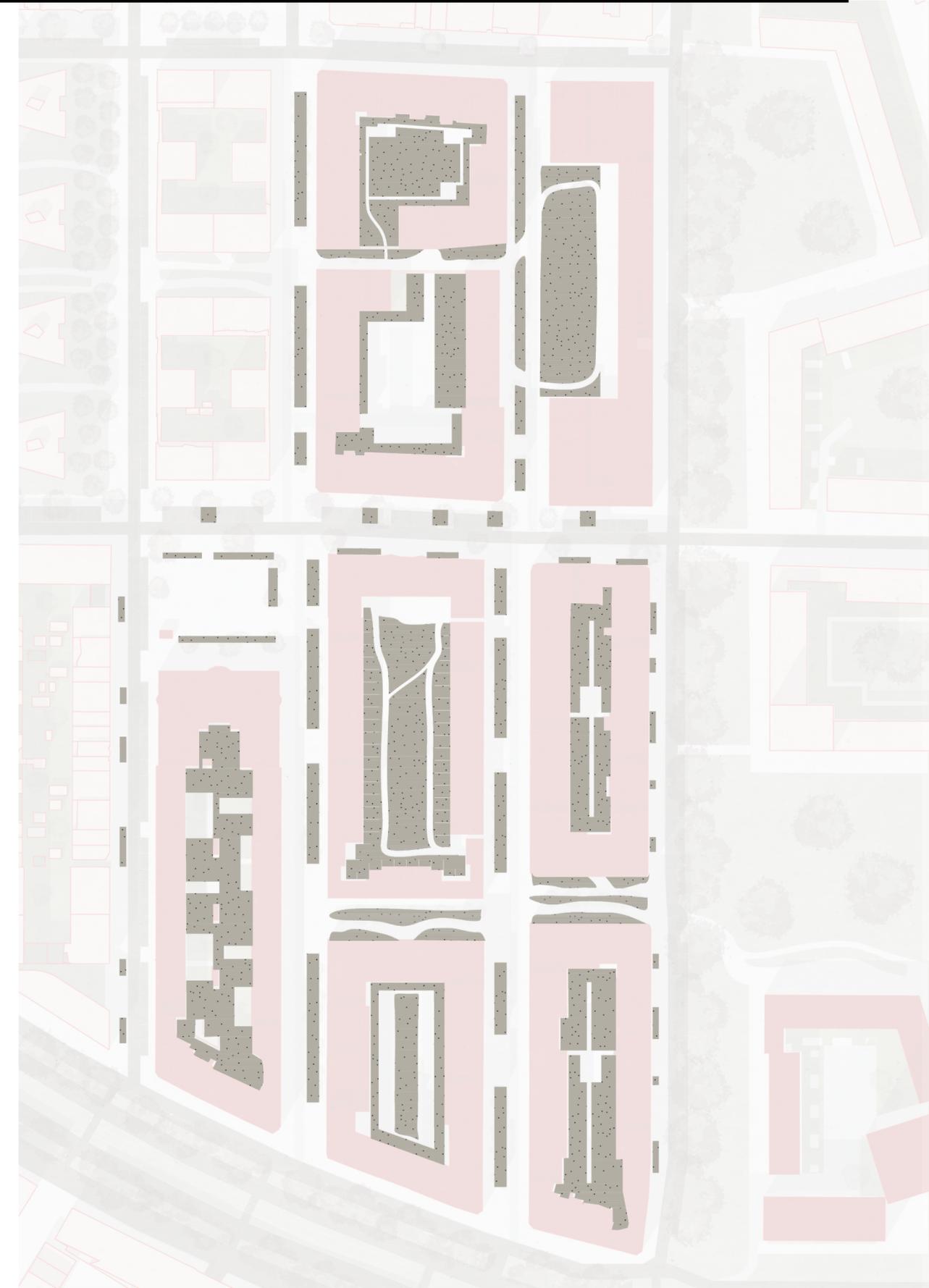
- The Compact City
- The Healthy City
- The Inclusive City
- The Sustainable City



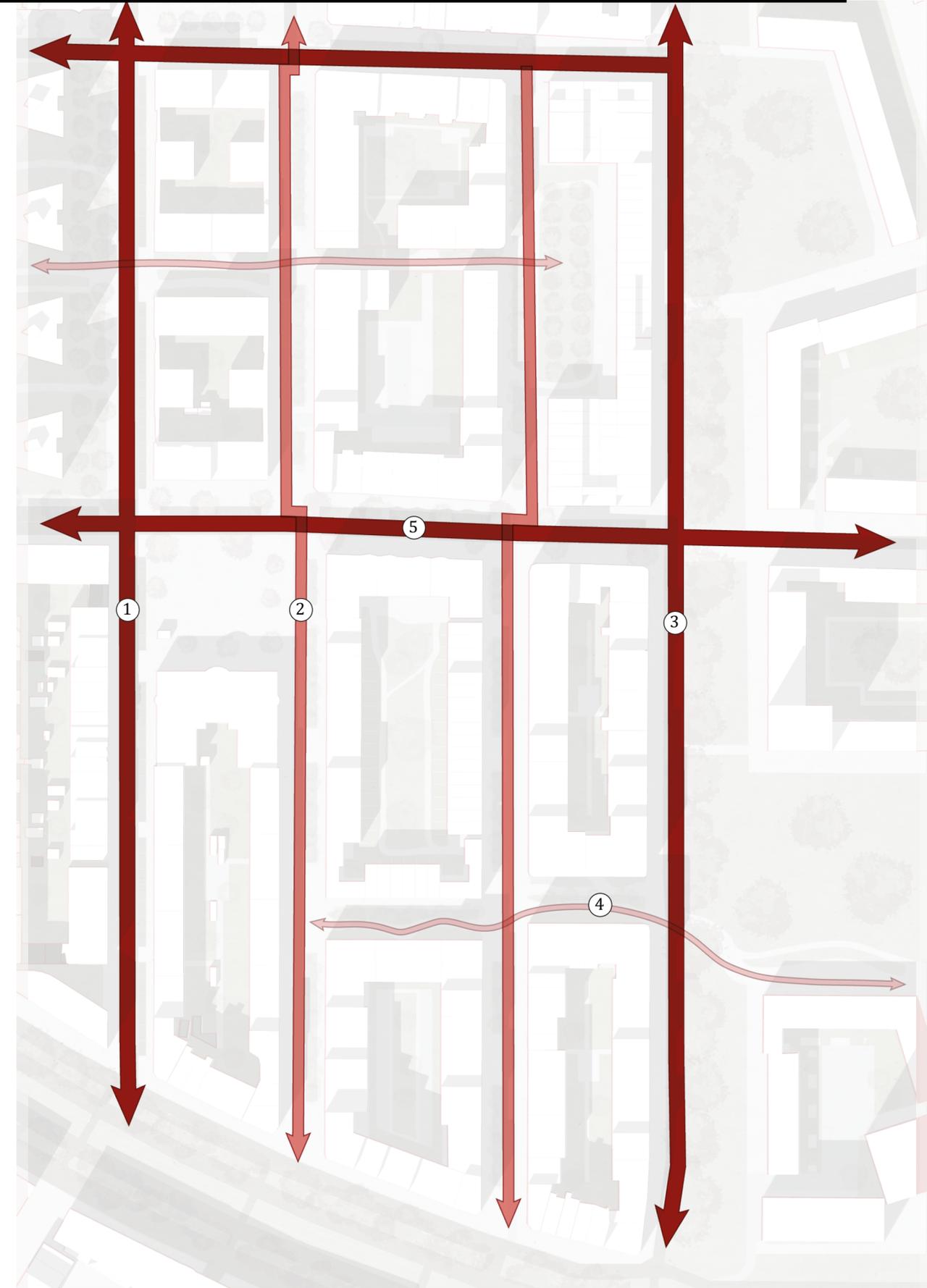
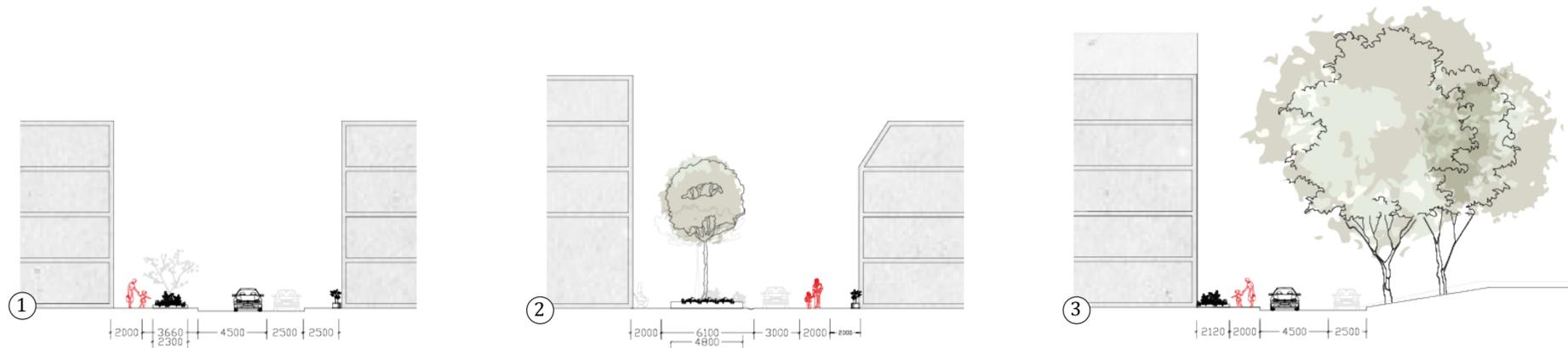




- The Compact City**
- The Healthy City**
- The Inclusive City**
- The Sustainable City**



The Compact City
The Healthy City
The Inclusive City
The Sustainable City



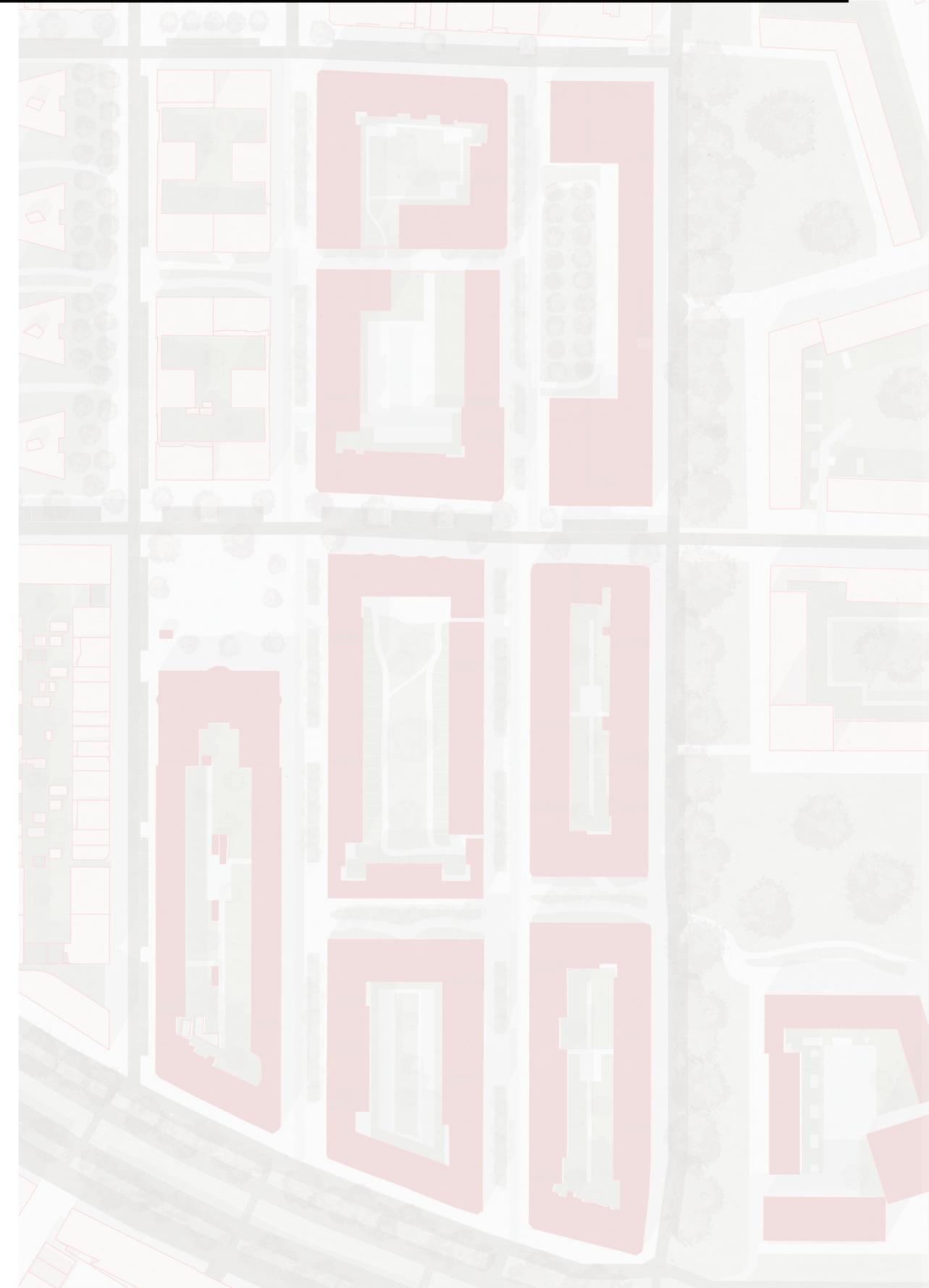
The Compact City
The Healthy City
The Inclusive City
The Sustainable City



The Compact City
The Healthy City
The Inclusive City
The Sustainable City

Affordable services
Resident engagement
Inclusive housing options
Accessible public transport
Removing barriers

Universal right to housing
Ensuring housing affordability
Successful social mix



The Compact City
The Healthy City
The Inclusive City
The Sustainable City

Affordable services
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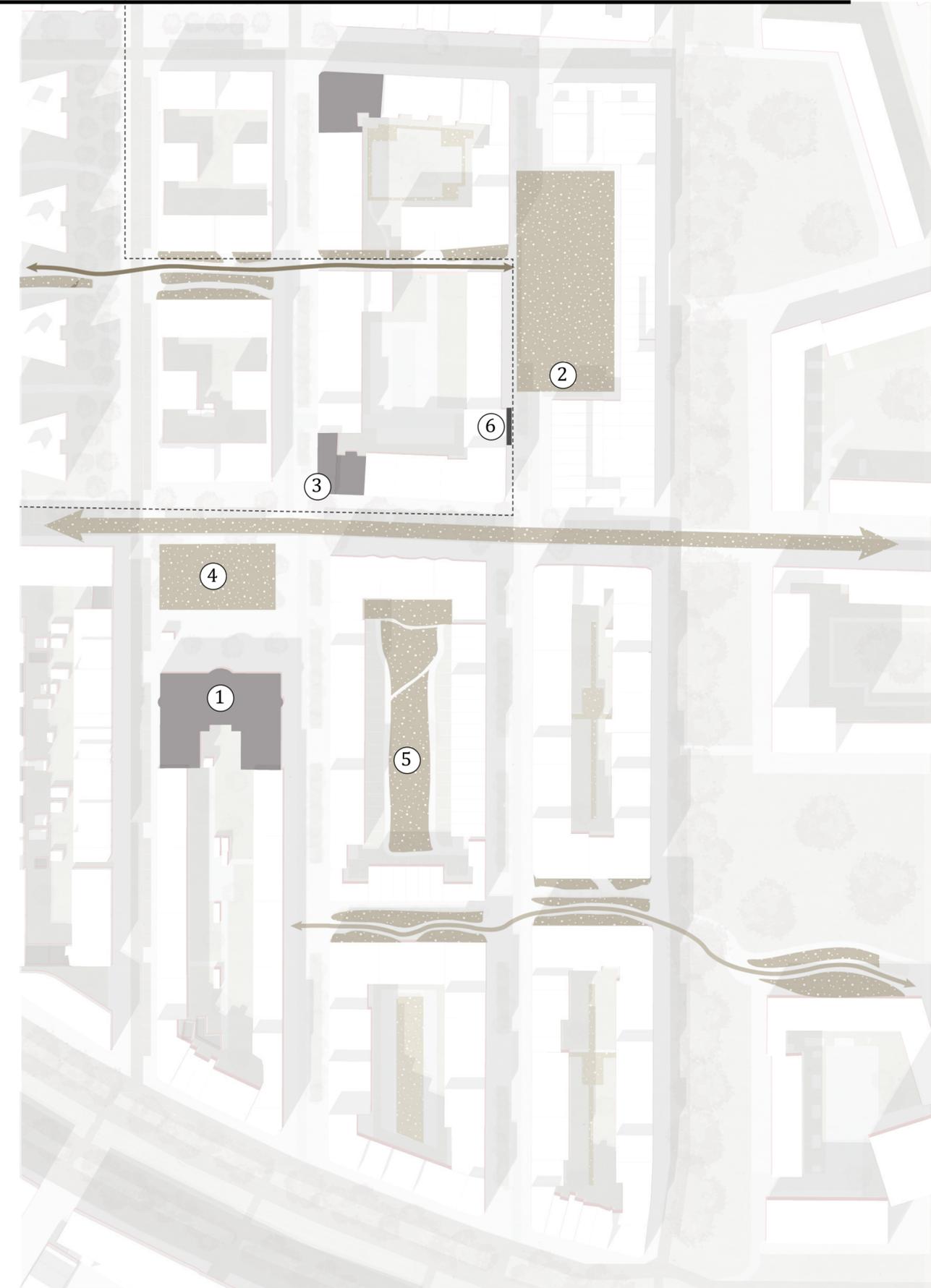
Universal right to housing
Ensuring housing affordability
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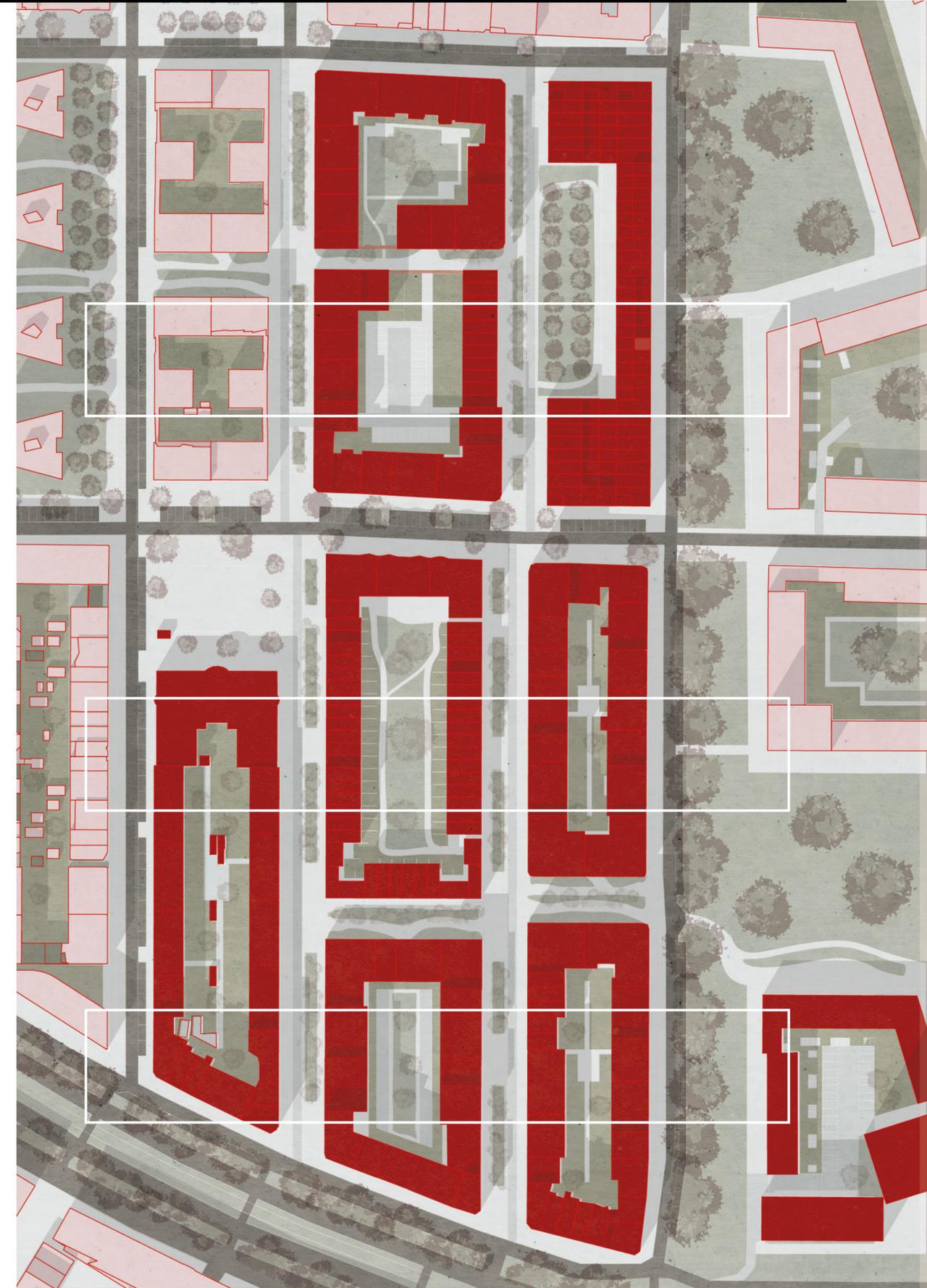
Facilitating spaces for diverse groups and uses

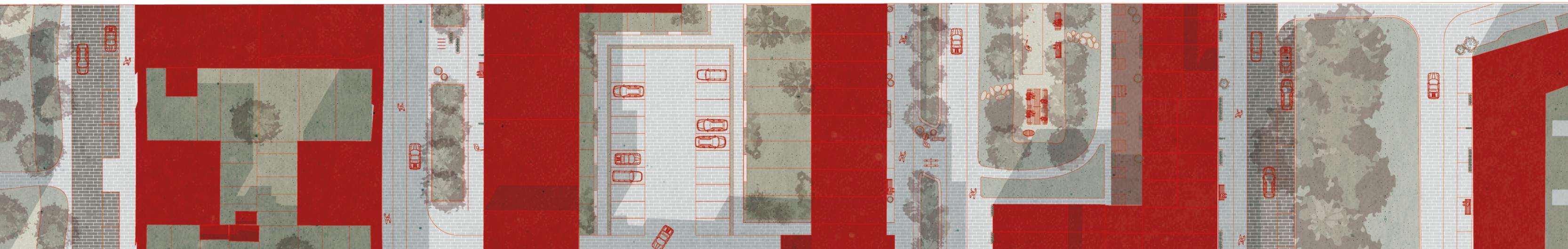
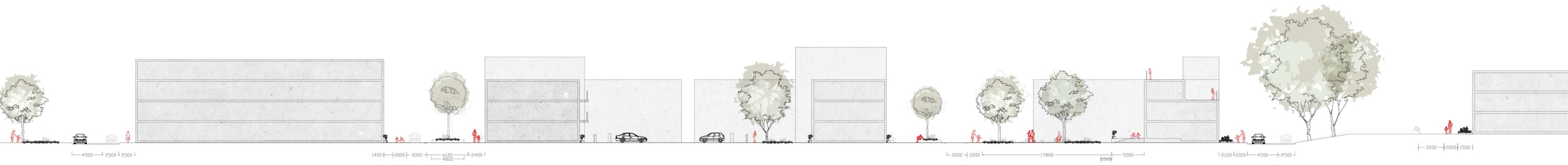


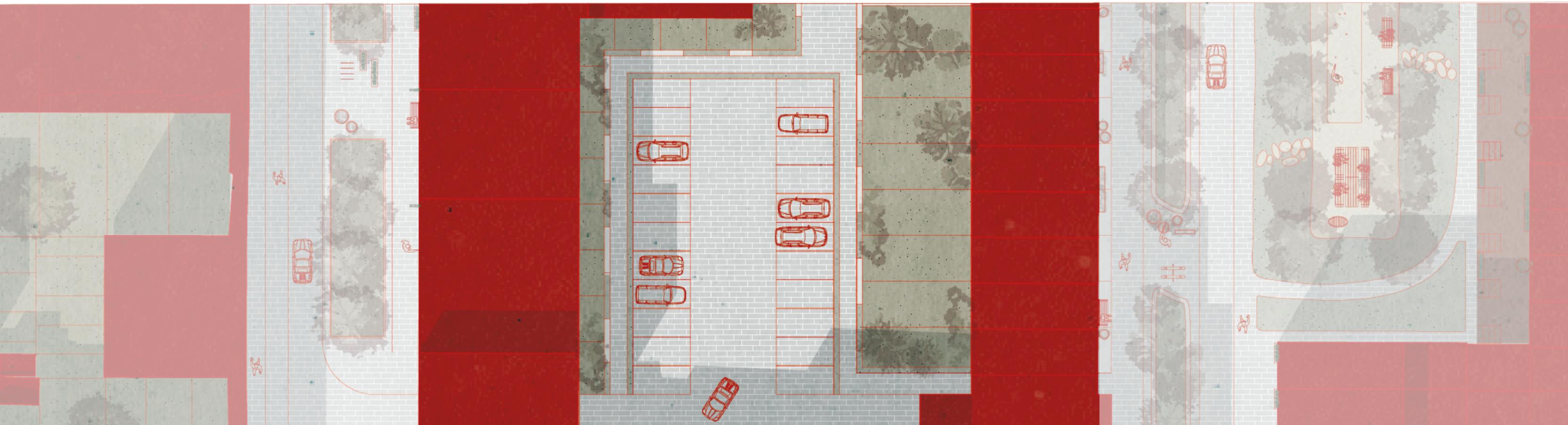


The Compact City
The Healthy City
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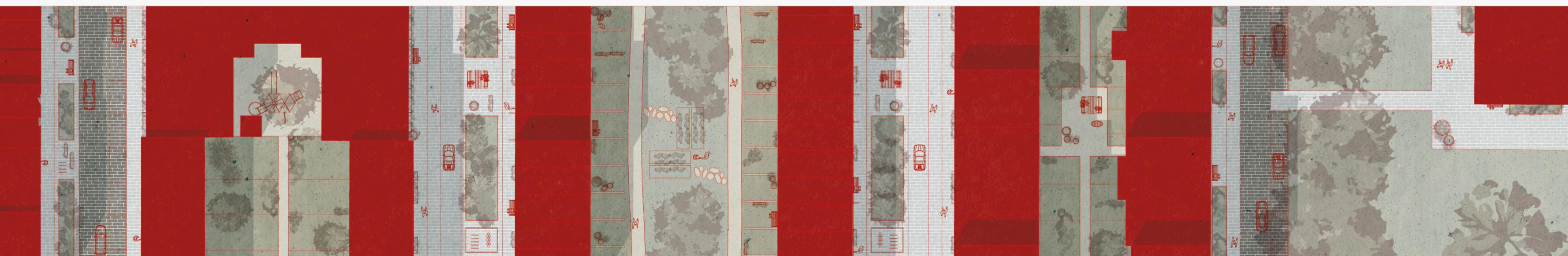
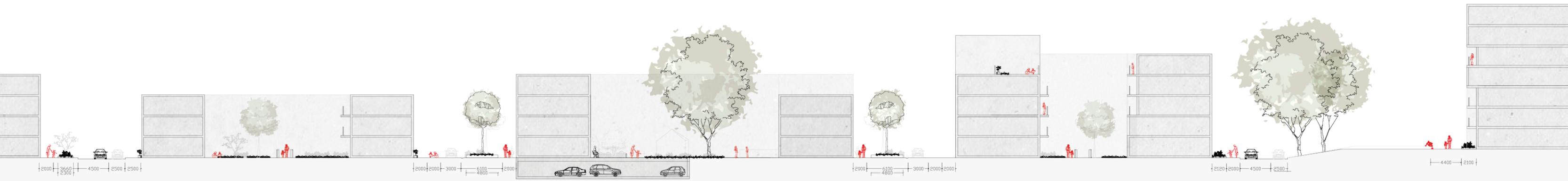










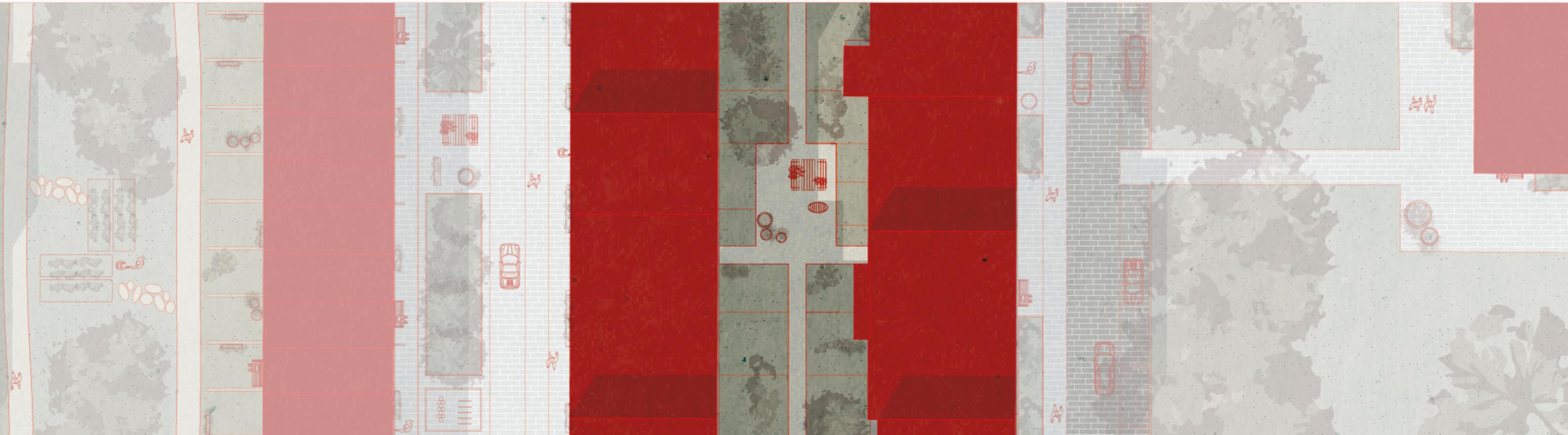
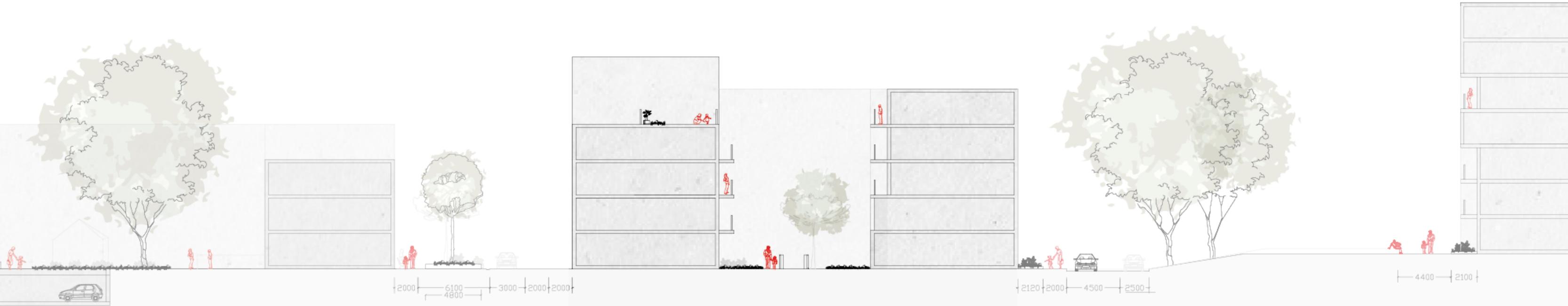


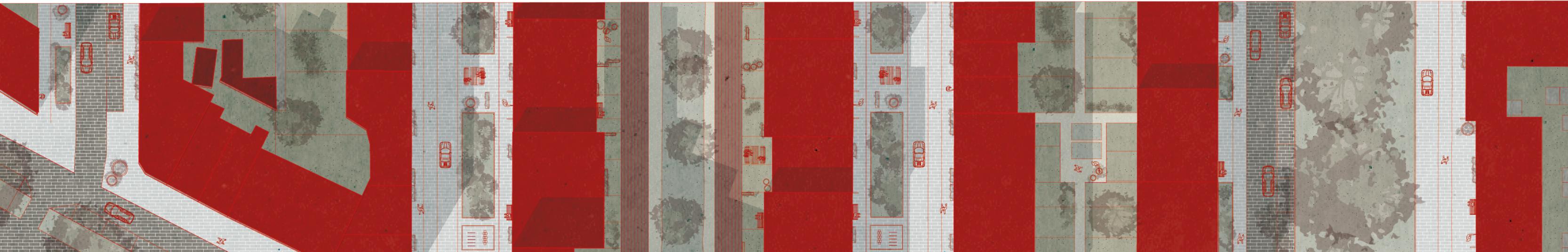
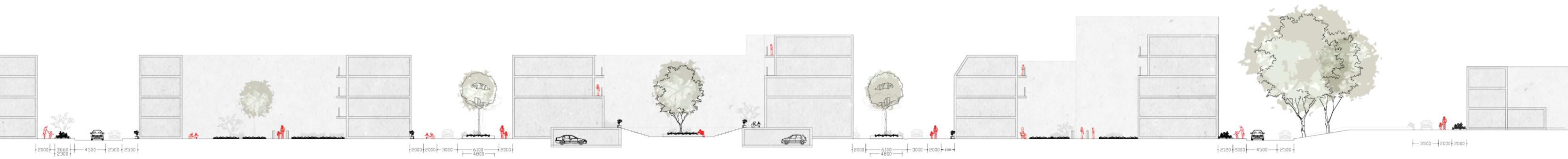


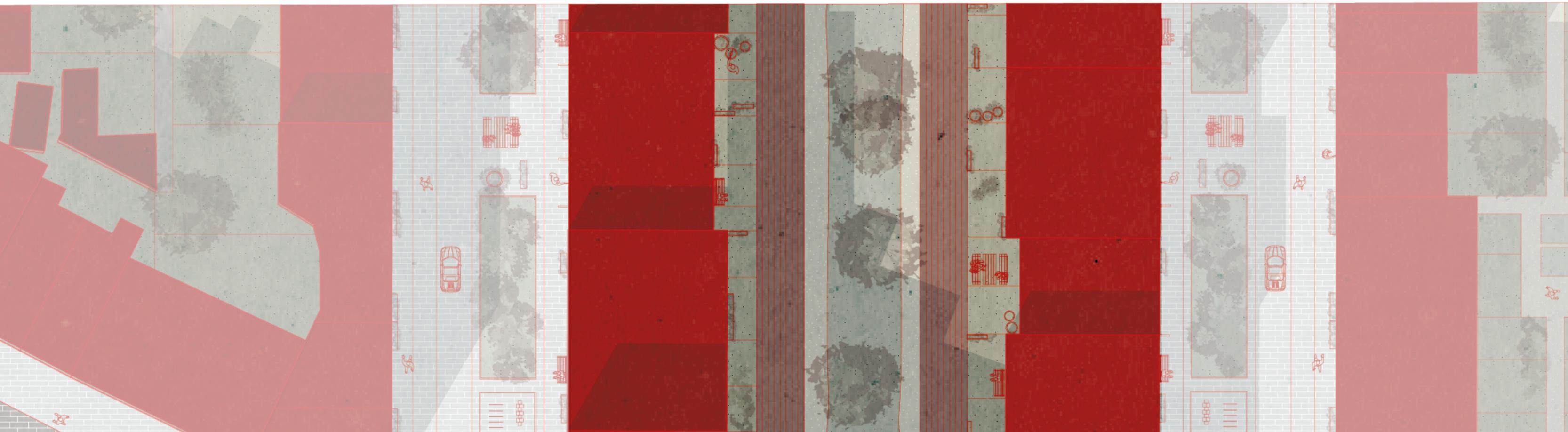
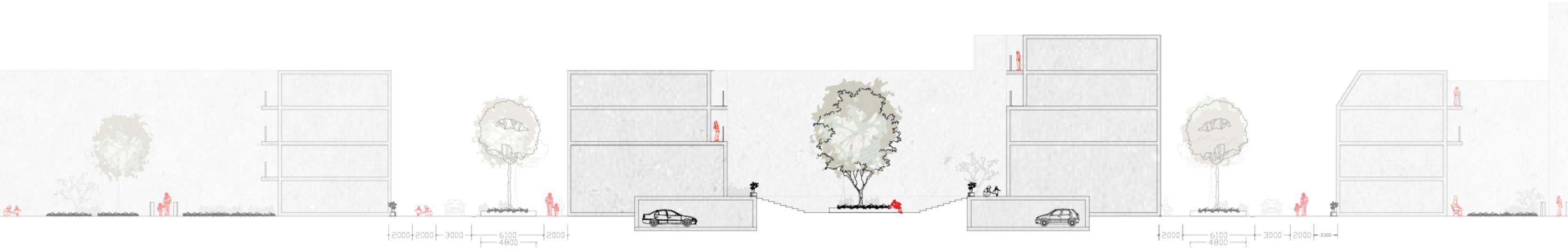
Kas & Co (2022). *Collective living in Utrecht, Veemarkt* [Image].

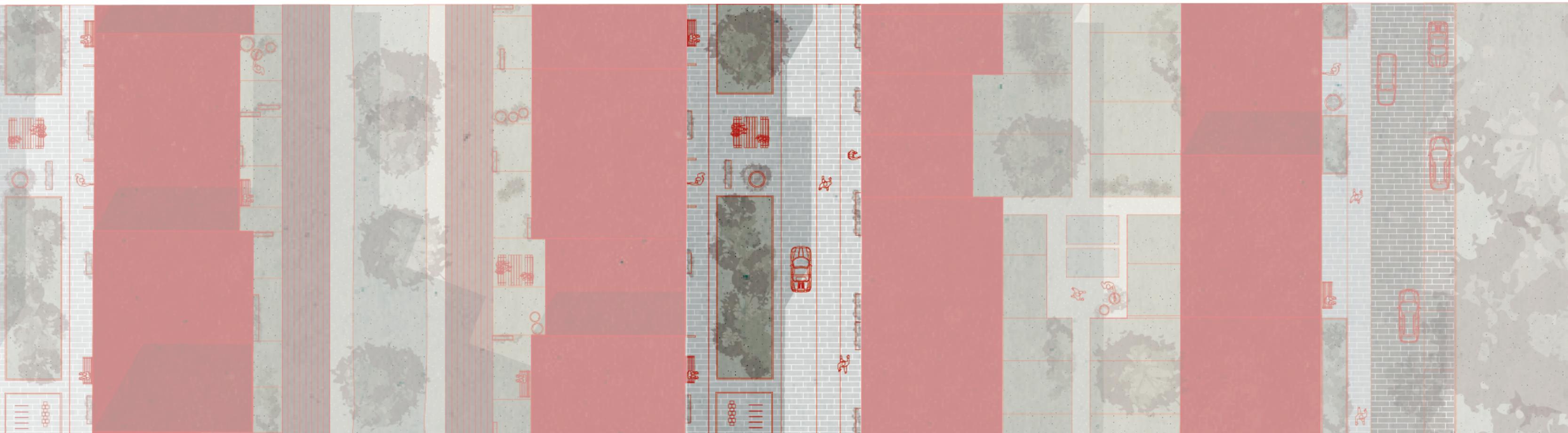


VORM (2021). *Artist Impression of KOER Rotterdam* [Image].





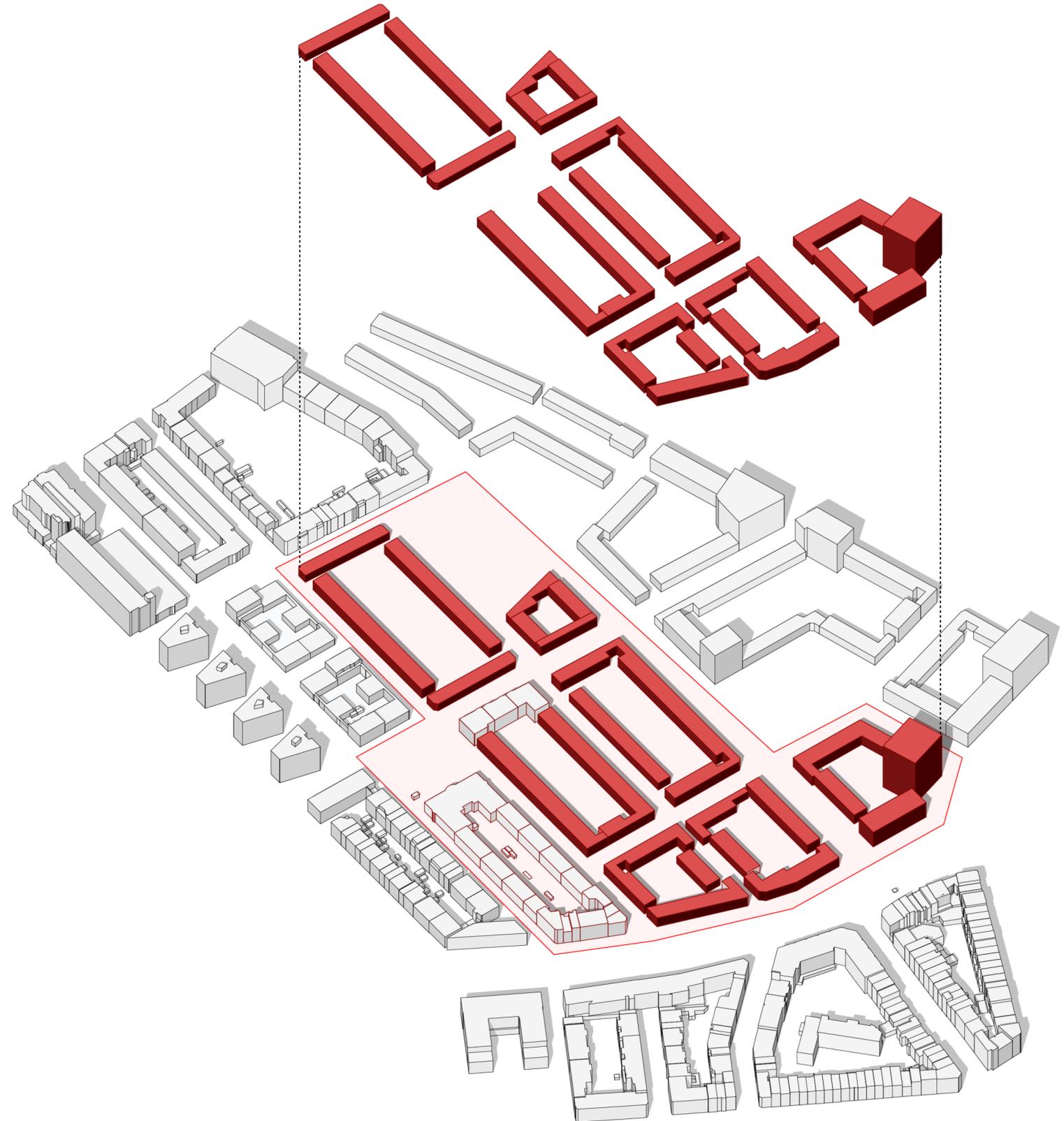




The Environmental Vision

Intentions

Execution



The Environmental Vision

“Local qualities; Preserving identities”

Municipality of Rotterdam (2021). Environmental Vision.

Intentions

Execution



The Environmental Vision

“The Inclusive City”

“Co-creation; Involving Rotterdammers”

Municipality of Rotterdam (2021). Environmental Vision.

Intentions

Execution



00. Introduction to Rotterdam's housing policies

01. Past displacement issues

02. Future displacement risks

03. Spatial guidelines

04. Implementation in design

 **05. Broader socio-spatial relevance**

06. Conclusions

00. Introduction to Rotterdam's housing policies

01. Past displacement issues

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05. Broader socio-spatial relevance

 **06. Conclusions**

Housing Vision (2023)

Intentions

Execution

Housing Vision (2023)

“Rotterdam: A home **for everyone**”

Intentions

Execution

Pushing towards a 3,700 **decrease in lower-incomes**

Housing Vision (2023)

“**Affordable and inclusive** housing market”

Intentions

Execution

No new social housing until 2040, and **decrease** in areas where this segment is dominant

Housing Vision (2023)

36 years of social-mixing-based housing policy **Intentions**

Execution

"I also don't exactly know what can't actually be mixed and what can, maybe you know better." - Interview with the municipal designer of the Tweebosbuurt

Housing Vision (2023)



Disconnect between intentions and execution

Spatial guidelines to bridge policy, vision and design

Lack of honest intentions

Substantiating the potential value of the design

Break persistent stigma's

Differentiation ≠ Displacement

Solving local issues ≠ Relocating local issues

Perfect balance ≠ Perfect mix



**ROTTERDAM.
INCLUSIEVE
STAD.
IS IT HAPPENING?**

#ROTTERDAMISITHAPPENING

VANDAA
WIJ
MORGEN JL

WONEN
= EEN
RECHT!
TWEEBOS