

Fascinations

Forests

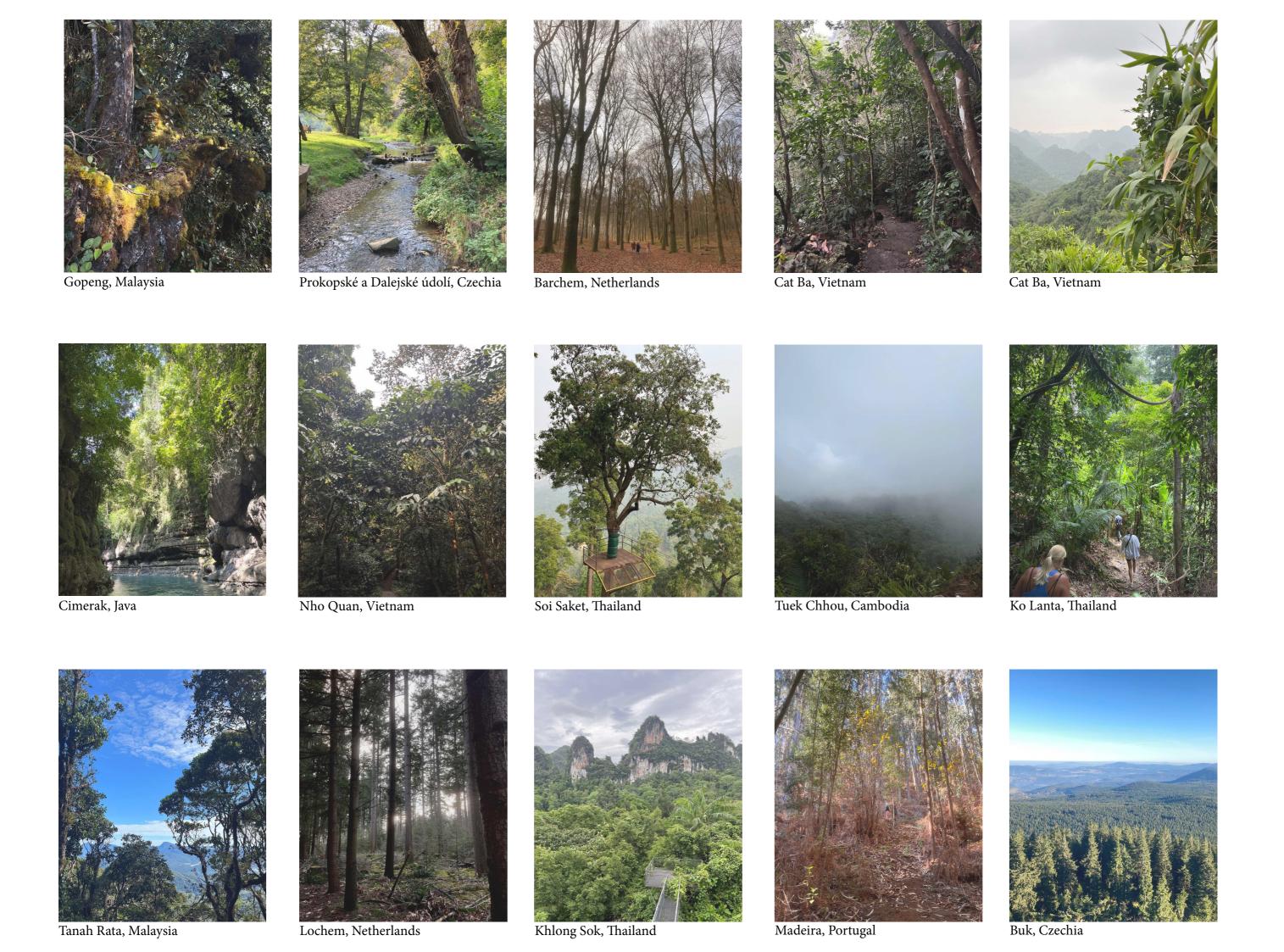


Living conditions in Metropolitan cities



Mental Health







Paris, France



Athene, Greece



Istanbul, Turkey



Napels, Italy



Madrid, Spain



Marseille, France



Sofia, Bulgaria



Bucharest, Roemenia



Skopje, Noord Macedonia



Dublin, UK



London, UK



Manchester, UK



Lille, France



le Havre, France



Delft, Netherlands



Problematique

- O **Rising** urban stress & mental health issues
- Trees planted mainly for climate & aesthetics
- O Psychological restoration not a **design priority**
- O **No tools** for emotion-driven green design
- O **Little research** on how different forest types impact mental well-being

Research Questions

Main Research Question

"How can a theory-driven typological framework for urban forests be designed and implemented in the city of Paris to optimize residents' psychological restoration, while also supporting the city's ongoing greening efforts and contributing to the reinvention of Paris as a sustainable, evolving urban space?"

Forest:

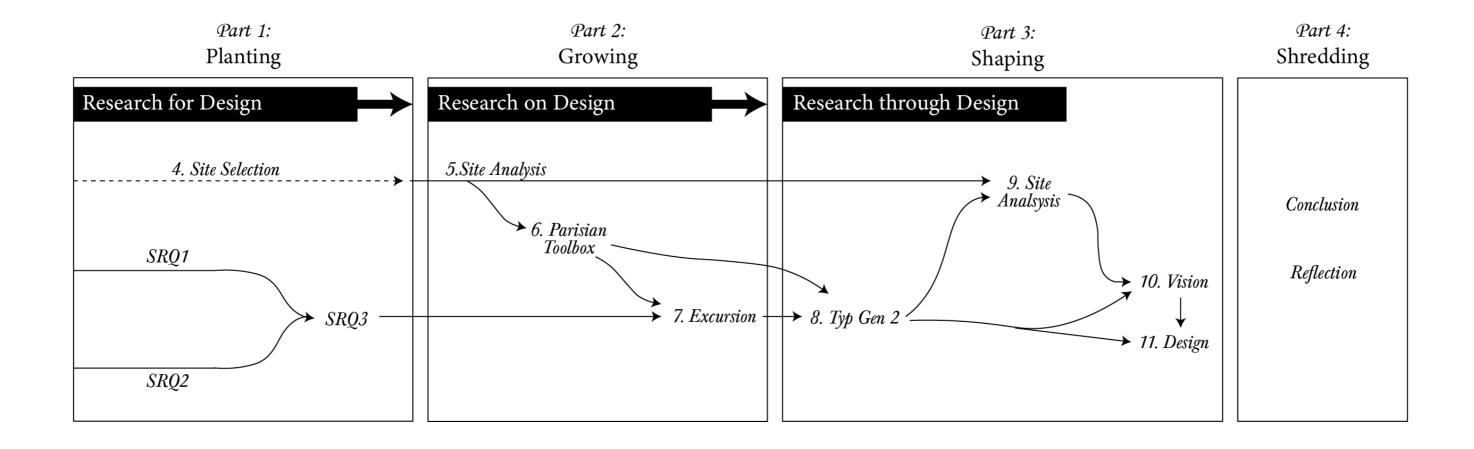
The concept of 'forest' in this thesis refers to a system characterized by the presence of trees, ranging from dense woodlands to linear formations and individual trees, all of which contribute to a larger (urban) forest. While this system does not constitute a 'natural' forest, it seeks to emulate the ecological, sensory, and psychological benefits typically associated with forests, integrating these qualities into the urban context.

Psychological Restoration:

The process through which mental and emotional capacities—such as attention, mood, and cognitive clarity, recover after being taxed, leading to a more balanced and functional psychological state.

Method & Progress

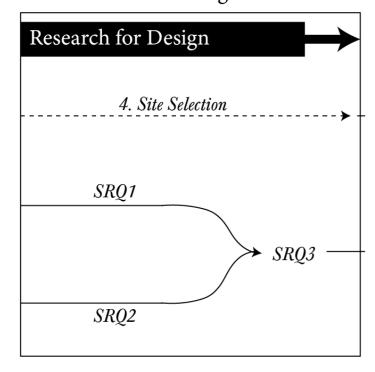
Diagram



Planting

Part 1: Research for Design

Part 1: Planting



- 1. How can the integration of nature, through elements like trees, within urban landscapes support human mental health, foster emotional recovery, and strengthen the connection between people and the natural world (in cities)?
- 2. What role do urban forests play in shaping mental health outcomes, and how can their design be tailored to address specific psychological and emotional challenges within urban environments?
- 3. How can a framework for urban forest typologies be developed, based on relevant theories and precedent studies, to address the psychological needs of city residents and create restorative spaces?

Shinrin-Yoku

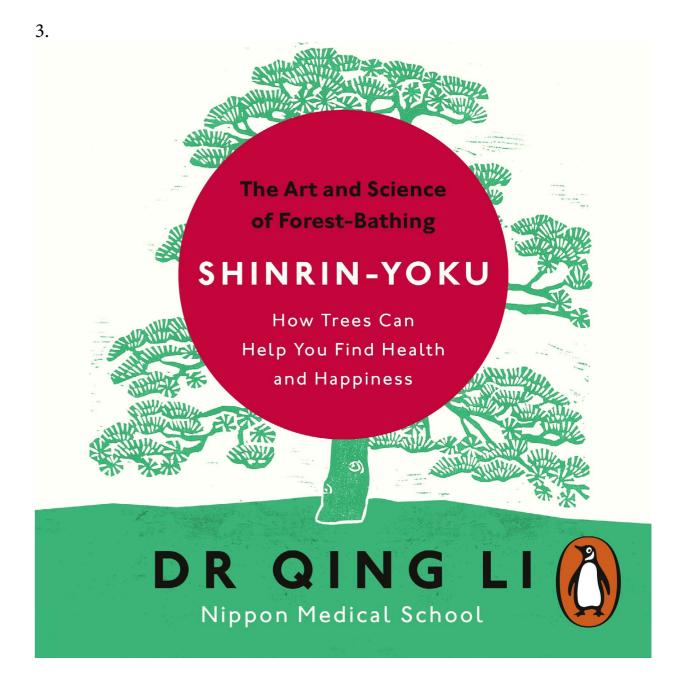
the japan times

THE INDEPENDENT VOICE IN ASIA

COMMUNITY / OUR LIVES / TELLING LIVES

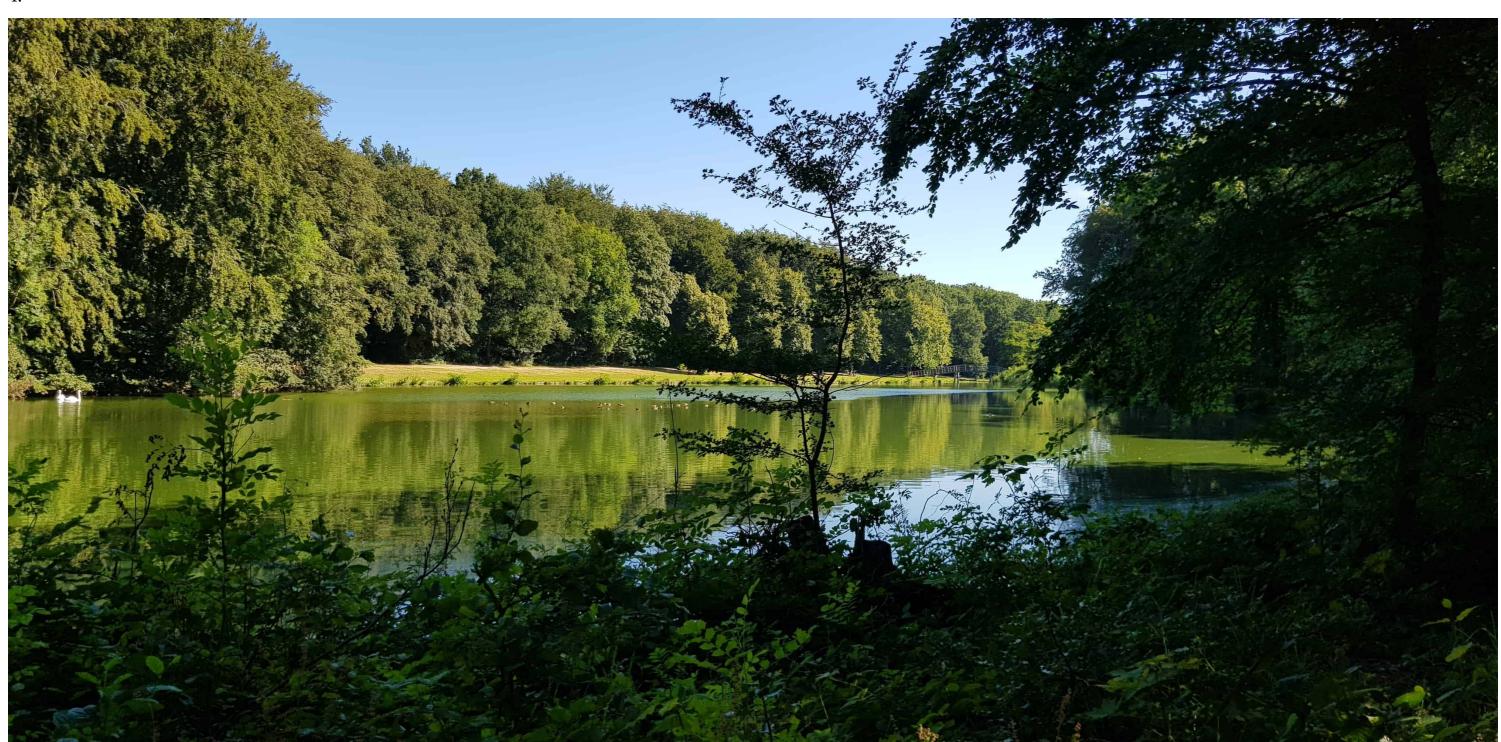
Stressed out? Bathing in the woods is just what the doctor ordered





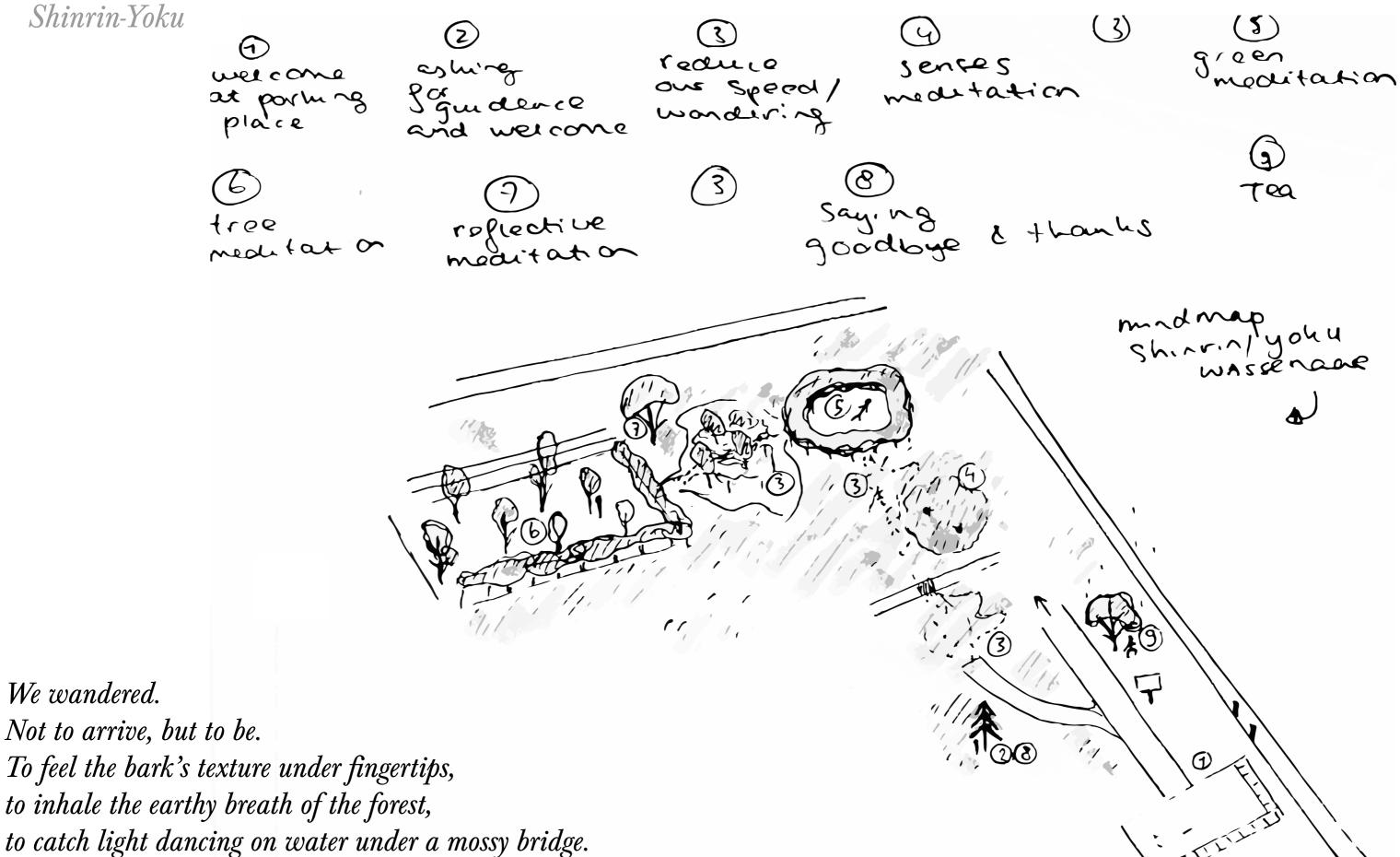
Shinrin - Yoku

4.



De Horsten, Wassenaar

Shinrin-Yoku



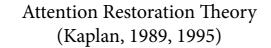
Theoretical Framework Shinrin-Yoku

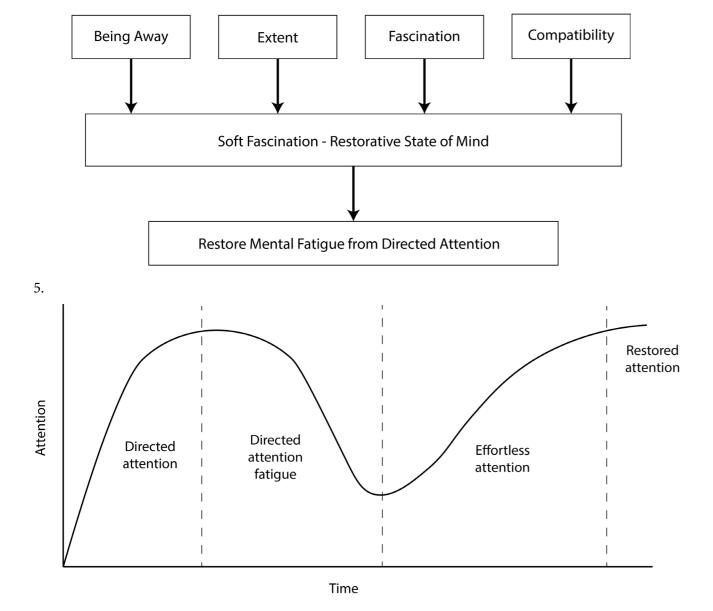
And yet—
I felt a tension.

Must we pay to remember how to be with the forest?

Can something ancient and shared be packaged and sold?

Attention Restoration Theory & Stress Reduction Theory

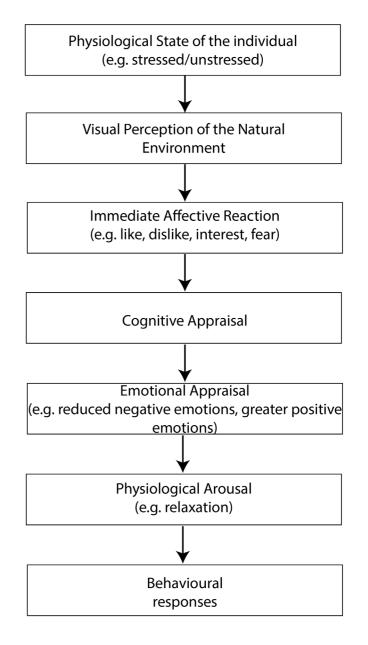




"Natural environments abound with 'soft fascinations' such as clouds moving across the sky, leaves rustling in a breeze or water bubbling over rocks in a stream..."

(Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989)

Stress Reduction Theory (Ulrich, 1991)



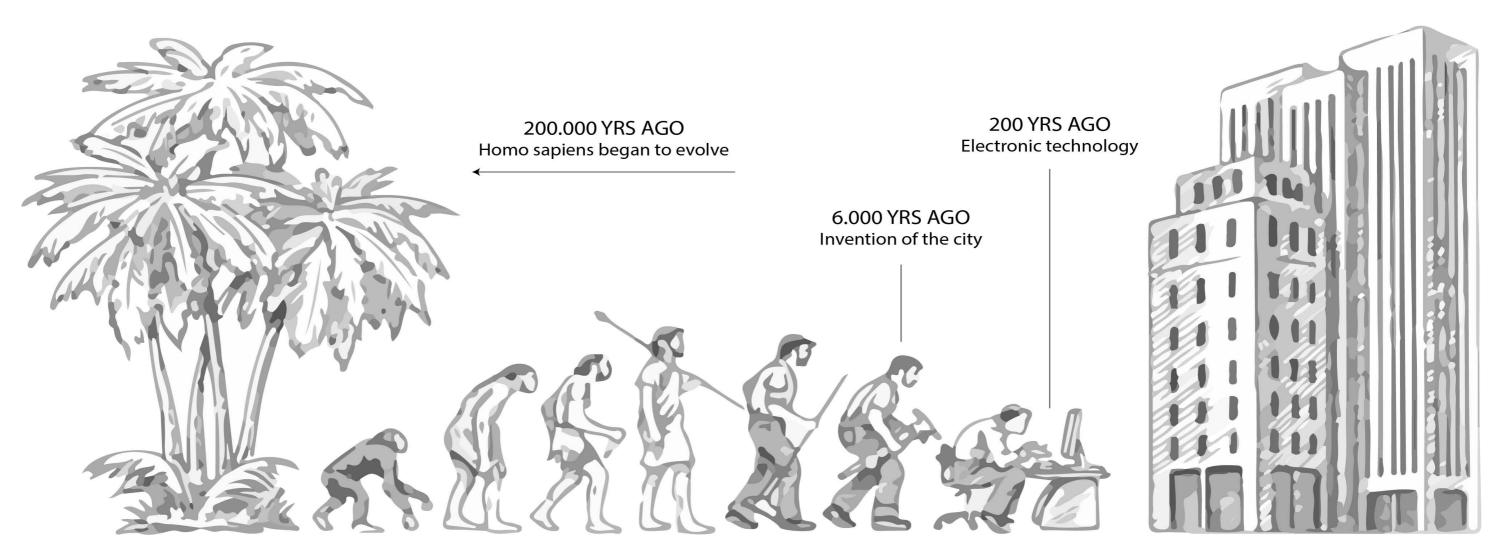
"Exposure to nature settings has been shown to enhance positive emotions, reduce physiological arousal such as blood pressure and heart rate, and promote faster recovery from stress."

(Ulrich, 1993)

Biophilia

"Nature holds the key to our aesthetic, intellectual, cognitive and even spiritual satisfaction."

(E.O. Wilson (1984), Biophilia)



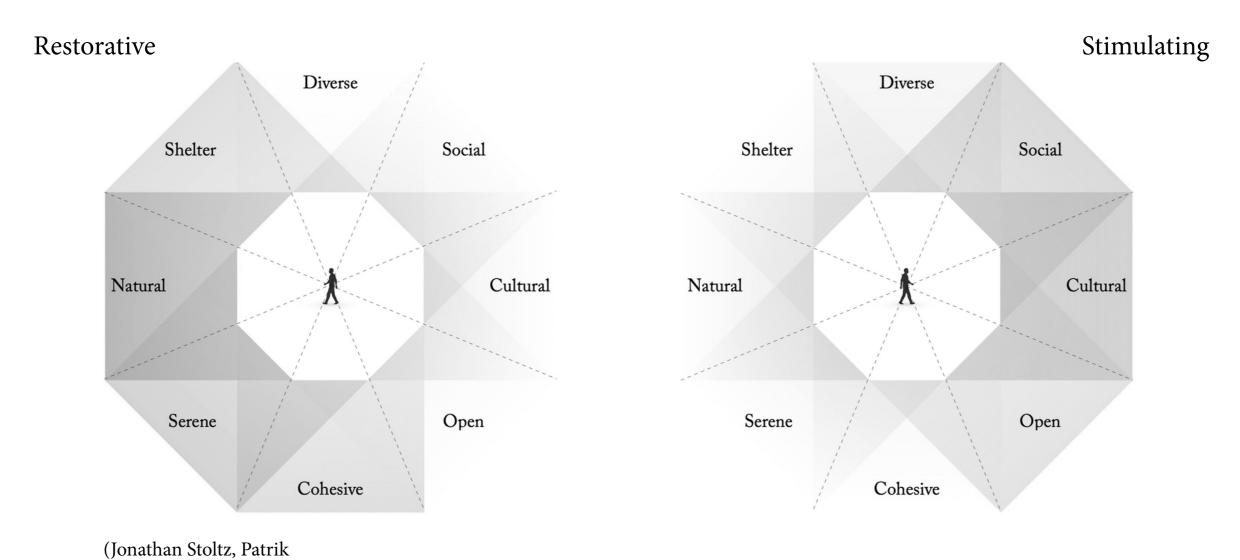
Biophilia (Edward O. Wilson,1984)

Precedent Studies

Perceived Sensory Dimensions

Grahn, 2021)

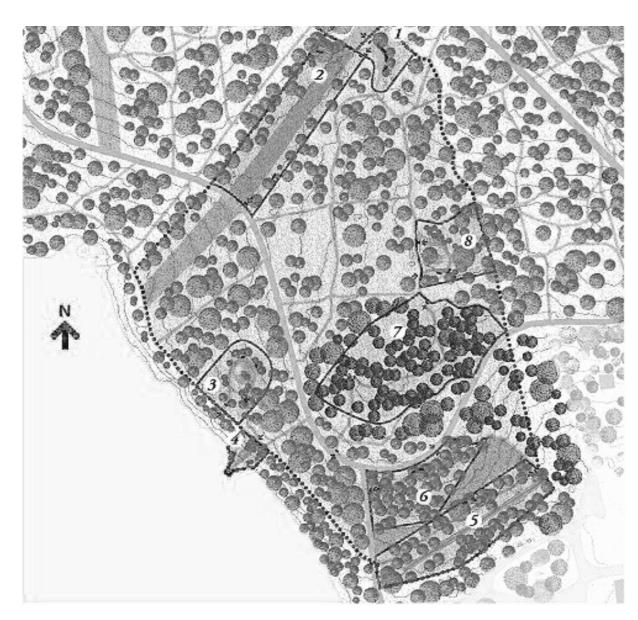
(Berggren-Bärring Grahn, 1995)



Precedent Studies

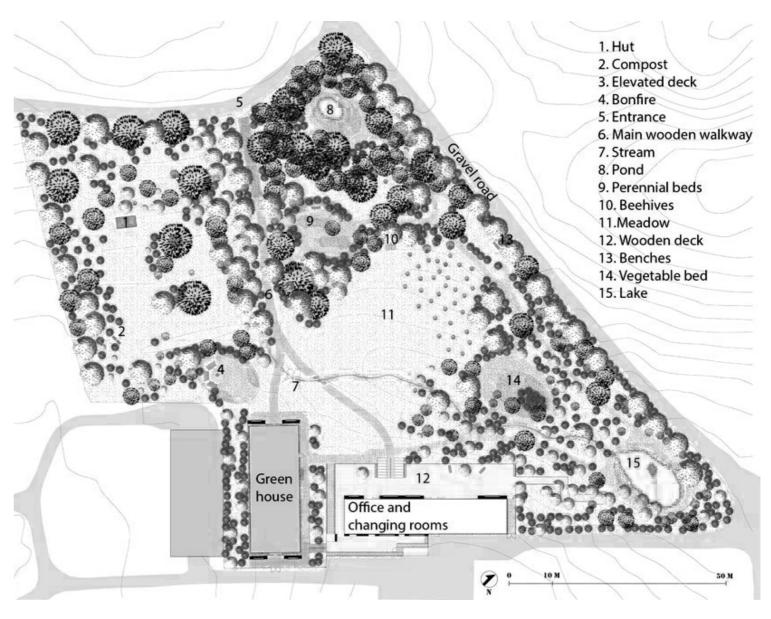
Octovia & Nacadia

The Health Forest Octovia



(Stigsdotter et al., 2016)

Forest Therapy Garden Nacadia



(Stigsdotter et al., 2010)

Research & Precedent Studies

action -> freedom, open space, legibility

Design Elements			
_	ART	SRT	Biophilia
Fascination -> support soft effortless attention -> movement, filtered views, depth		Physological restoration through calm and soft environments -> water features, soft planting, low stimulus zones	Restoration through natural sensory richness -> scented zones seasonal planting
coninuity ->	eate immersion and immersion, visual entinuity	Low pressure shared spaces to reduce social stress -> shared spaces, open paths	Social interaction through shared experience in nature -> community garden, shared green space
9	escape, transition	Reduce stress through enclosure and safety -> sheltered seating, enclosure, quiet zones	People are drawn to signs of life and growth -> wildlife traces, natural materials
	y -> match the users support freedom of		

Research & Precedent Studies

Design Elements

Shinrin-Yoku

Restoration through multisensory immersion in nature -> scent, stilness, water



Safety and calm via enclosure and subtle stimuli -> shaded areas, enclosure, framed paths



Nacadia

Reflection and therapy through structure and rhythm -> quiet rooms, sequiential layout



Psychological safety through buffer and withdrawal -> retreat zones, woodland pockets



Right setting at the right time -> Intuitive movement -> emotional alignment zoning



Gentle sensory experience for psychological healing -> immersive planting, minimal stimuli



Engagement through (low*key) shared activity -> flexible* edges, active zones



Serene -> calm, stable environment, reduve arousel -> still water, gentle movement



Natural -> signals of wilderness, ecological function -> spontanious vegetation, wild



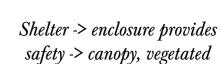
Open -> spaciousness supports overview and informal use -> clearings, sightlines



Social -> environments for social interaction -> benches, gathering nodes



Rich in species -> biodiverisy signals health and vitality -> mixed planting, flora and fauna



PSD's



buffers

Cohesive -> coherence creates clarity and order -> repeated structure, consistent materials



Cultural -> connecting to meaning and memory enhances comfort -> art, symbols



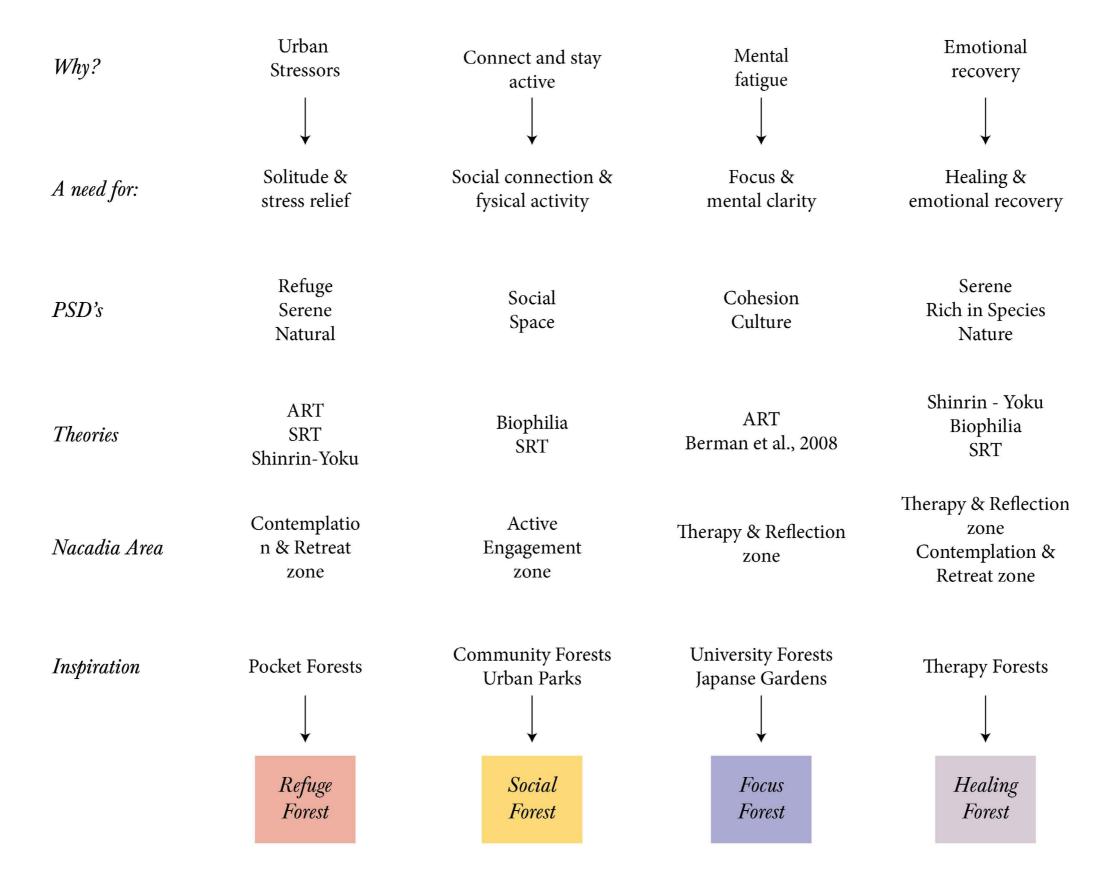
Diverse -> Variation supports exploration and engagement -> variety



The Conceptual Framework

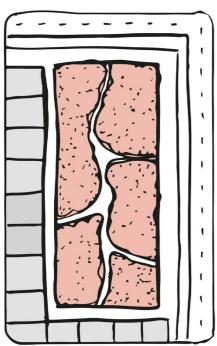


The Conceptual Framework

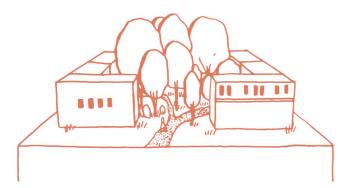


The Four Typologies

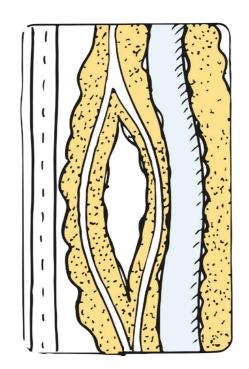
Refuge Forest



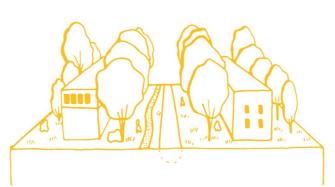
In the midst of a dense urban jungle, the Refuge Forest offers a peaceful sanctuary, where the noise fades, and the soul finds solace in the quiet embrace of natu-



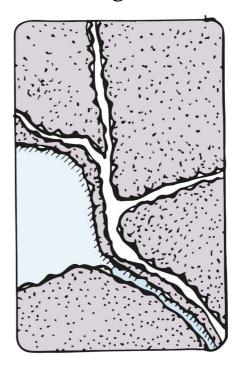
Social Forest



The Social Forest sparks spontaneous connections, drawing people into a space where movement, laughter, and shared experiences flow freely beneath the canopy of trees.



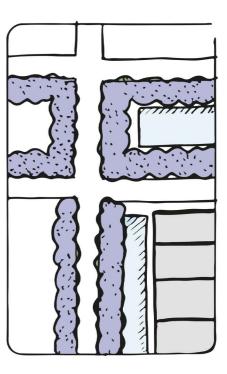
Healing Forest



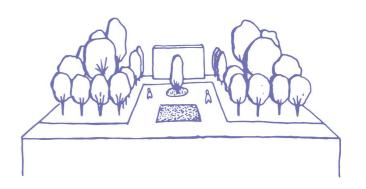
The Healing Forest is an immersive haven, where the soul slowly surrenders to the therapeutic rhythm of nature, offering a deep, restorative retreat from the pressure of the outside world.



Focus Forest



The Focus Forest invites the mind to find clarity, where every step and every leaf whispers a quiet call to creativity, restoring both attention and calm.



The Four Typologies

Refuge SocialHealing Focus minimized in the man and minimized in the man and the

Design Elements from Theoretical Framework

Fascination -> support soft effortless attention -> movement, filtered views, depth



Extent -> create immersion and coninuity -> immersion, visual continuity



Physological restoration through calm and soft environments -> water features, soft planting, low stimulus zones



Low pressure shared spaces to reduce social stress -> shared spaces, open paths



Being Away -> encourage mental escape -> escape, transition



Compatibility -> match the users needs and support freedom of action -> freedom, open space, legibility



Reduce stress through enclosure and safety -> sheltered seating, enclosure, quiet zones



Restoration through multisensory immersion in nature -> scent, stilness, water



Restoration through natural sensory richness -> scented zones, seasonal planting



People are drawn to signs of life and growth -> wildlife traces, natural materials



Reflection and therapy through structure and rhythm -> quiet rooms, sequiential layout



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Natural -> signals of wilderness, ecological function -> spontanious vegetation, wild



Open -> spaciousness supports overview and informal use -> clearings, sightlines



Social -> environments for social interaction -> benches, gathering nodes



Shelter -> enclosure provides safety -> canopy, vegetated buffers



Cohesive -> coherence creates clarity and order -> repeated structure, consistent materials



Cultural -> connecting to meaning and memory enhances comfort -> art, symbols



Diverse -> Variation supports exploration and engagement -> variety

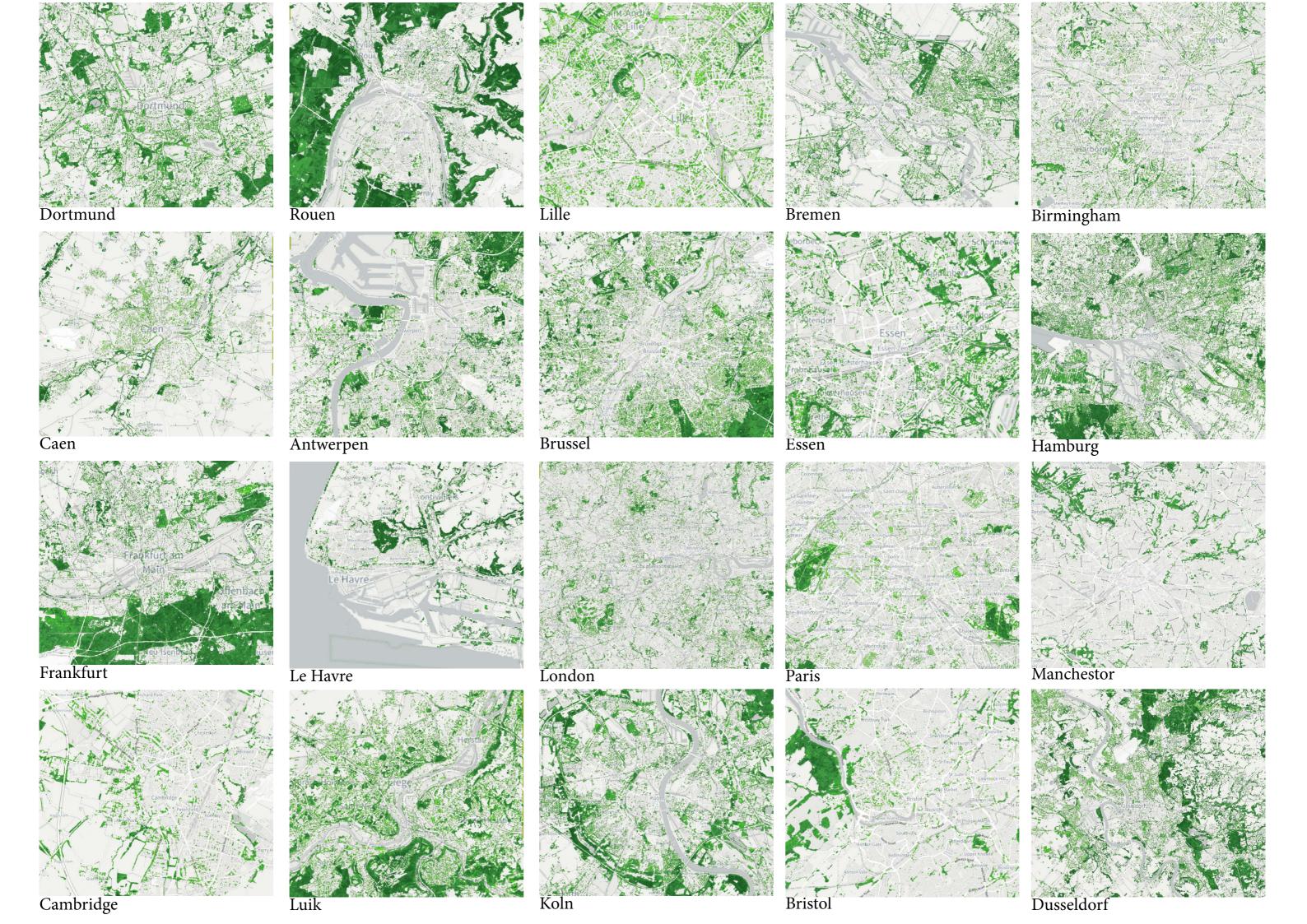


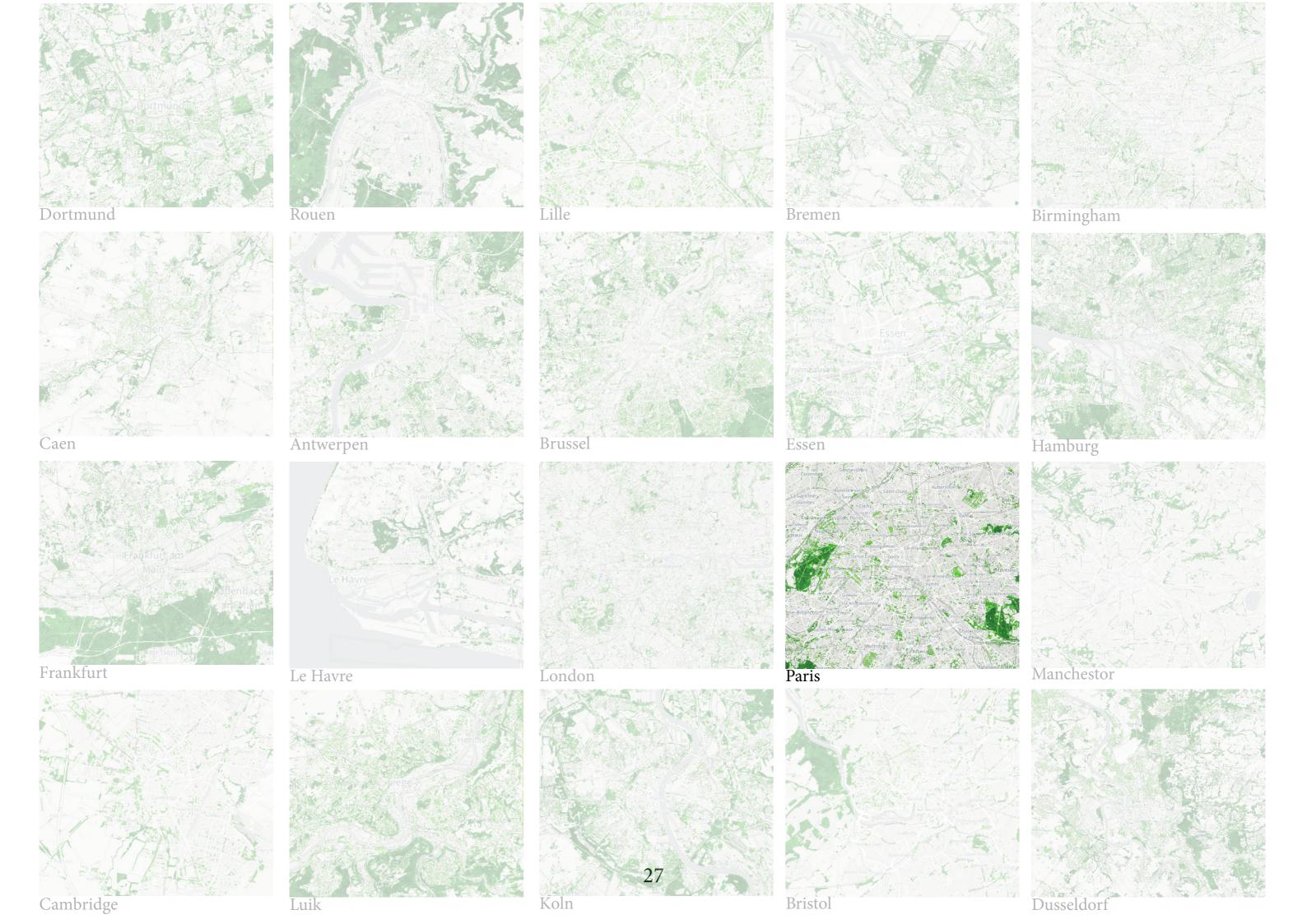
Rich in species -> biodiverisy signals health and vitality -> mixed planting, flora and fauna



Test Case

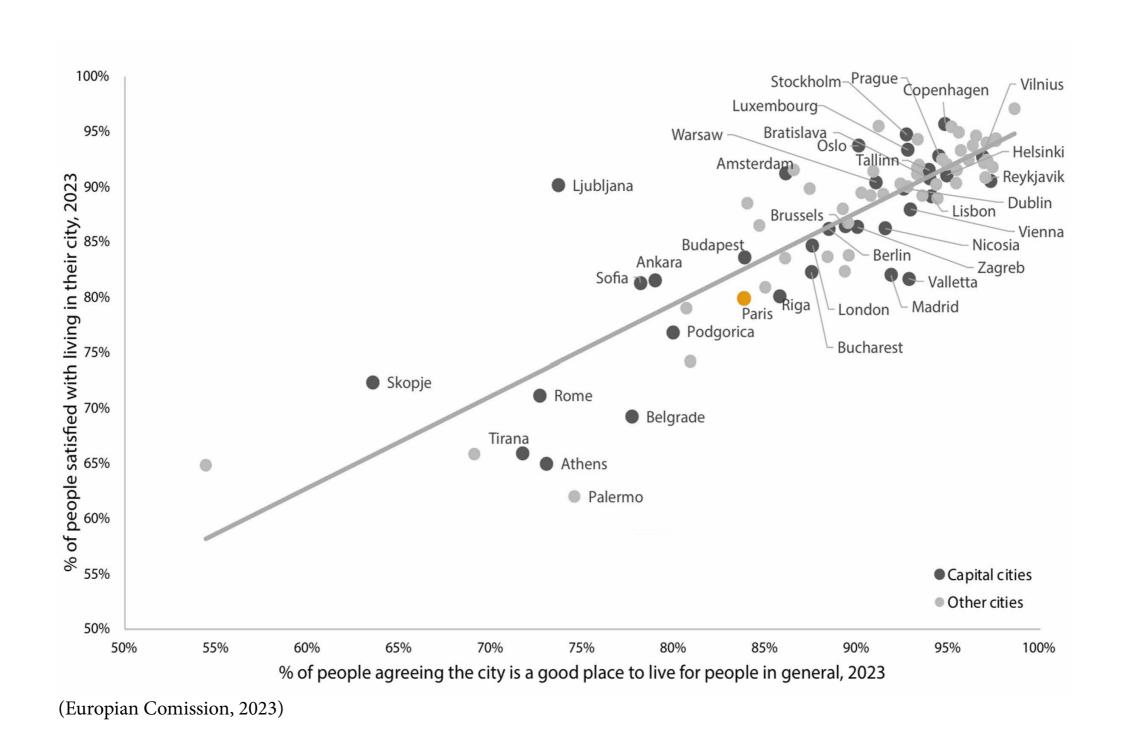
What are the conditions in nearby cities regarding tree coverage, mental health, and living environment, and which city would make a strong candidate for the application of this urban forest framework?





Test Case

Quality of Life Documents



Test Case: Paris



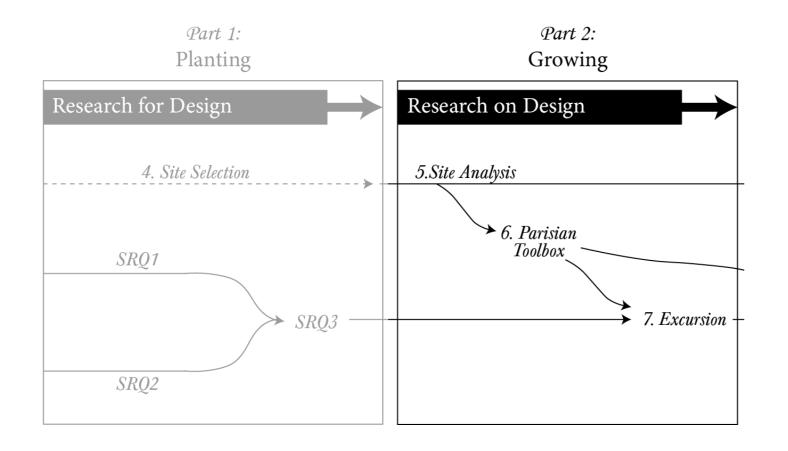




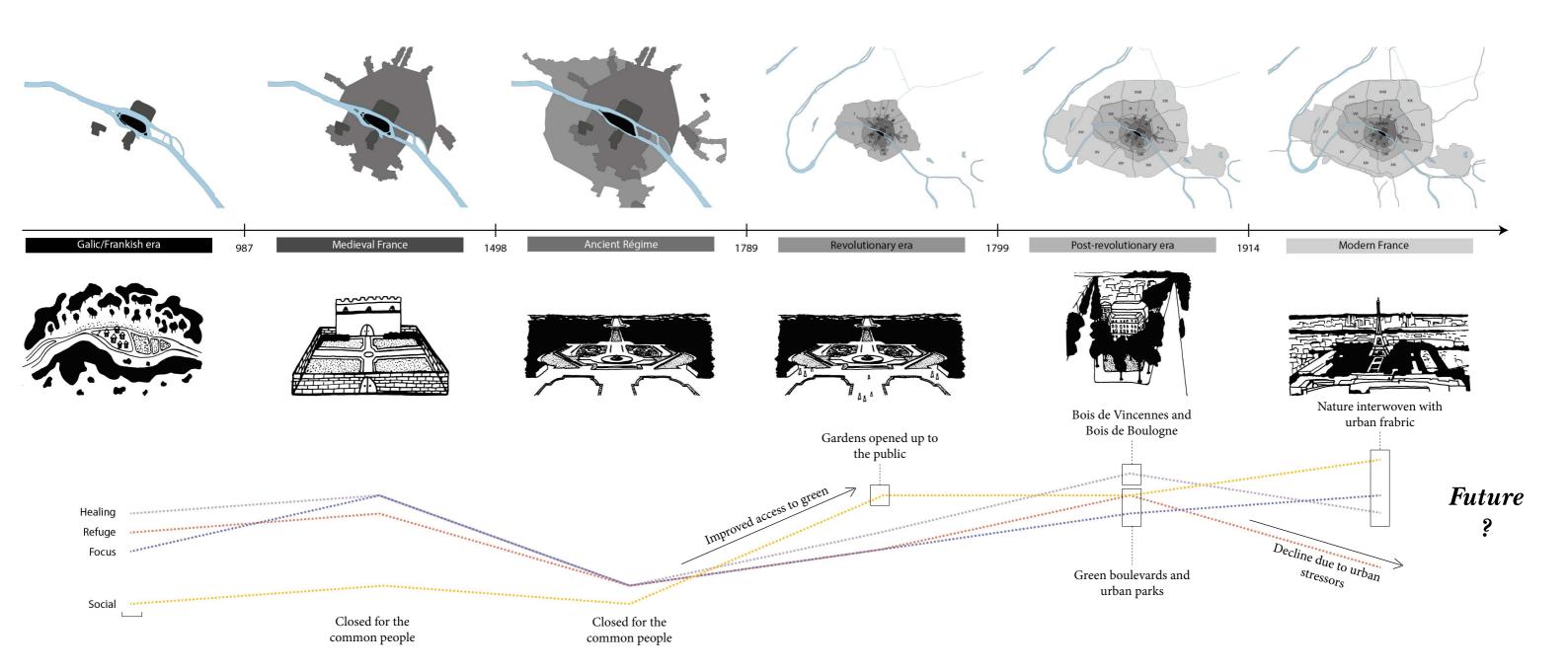


Growing

Part 2: Research on Design



Analysis *Historical*



Recent Plans & Projects

10.



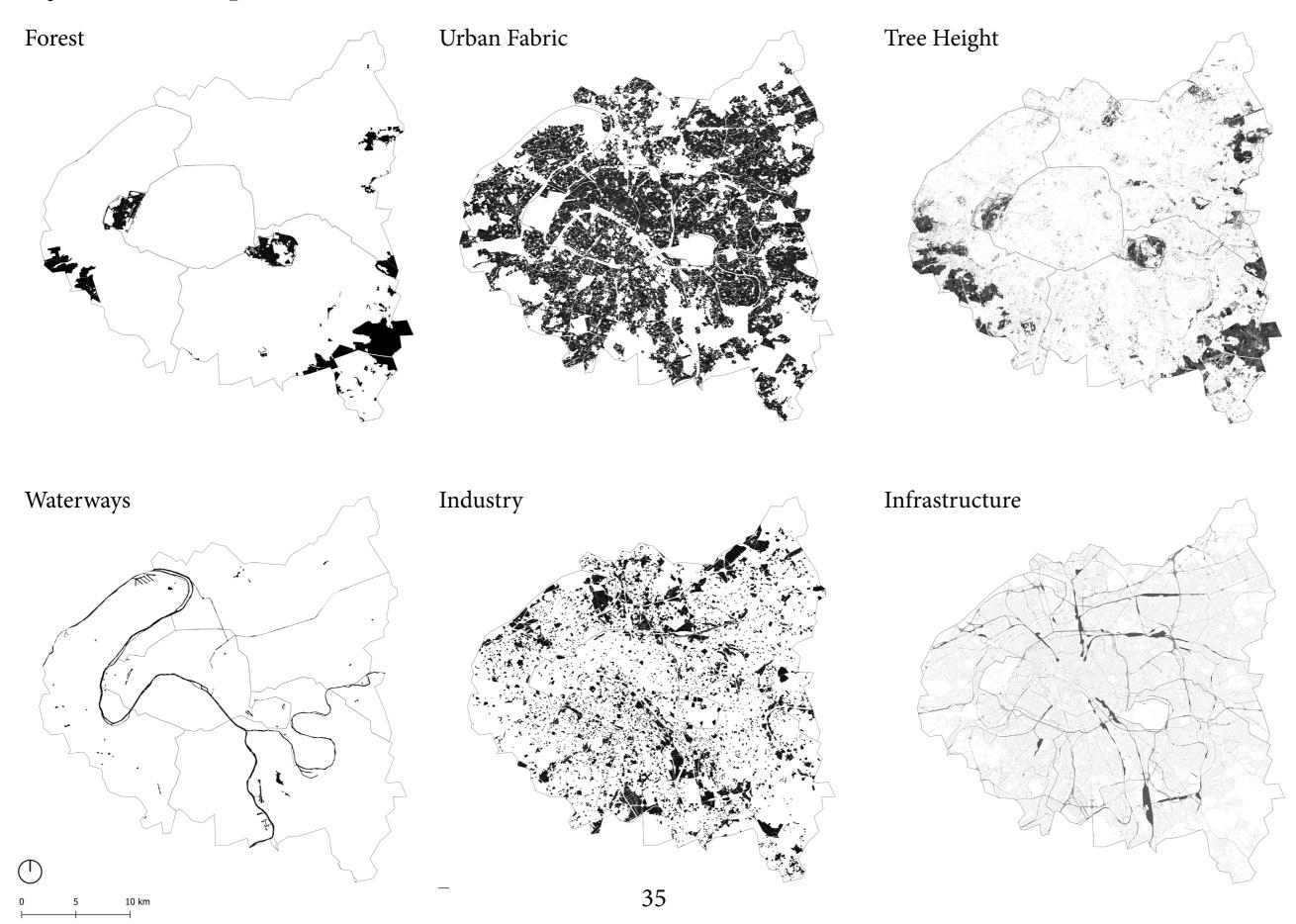
Recent Plans & Projects

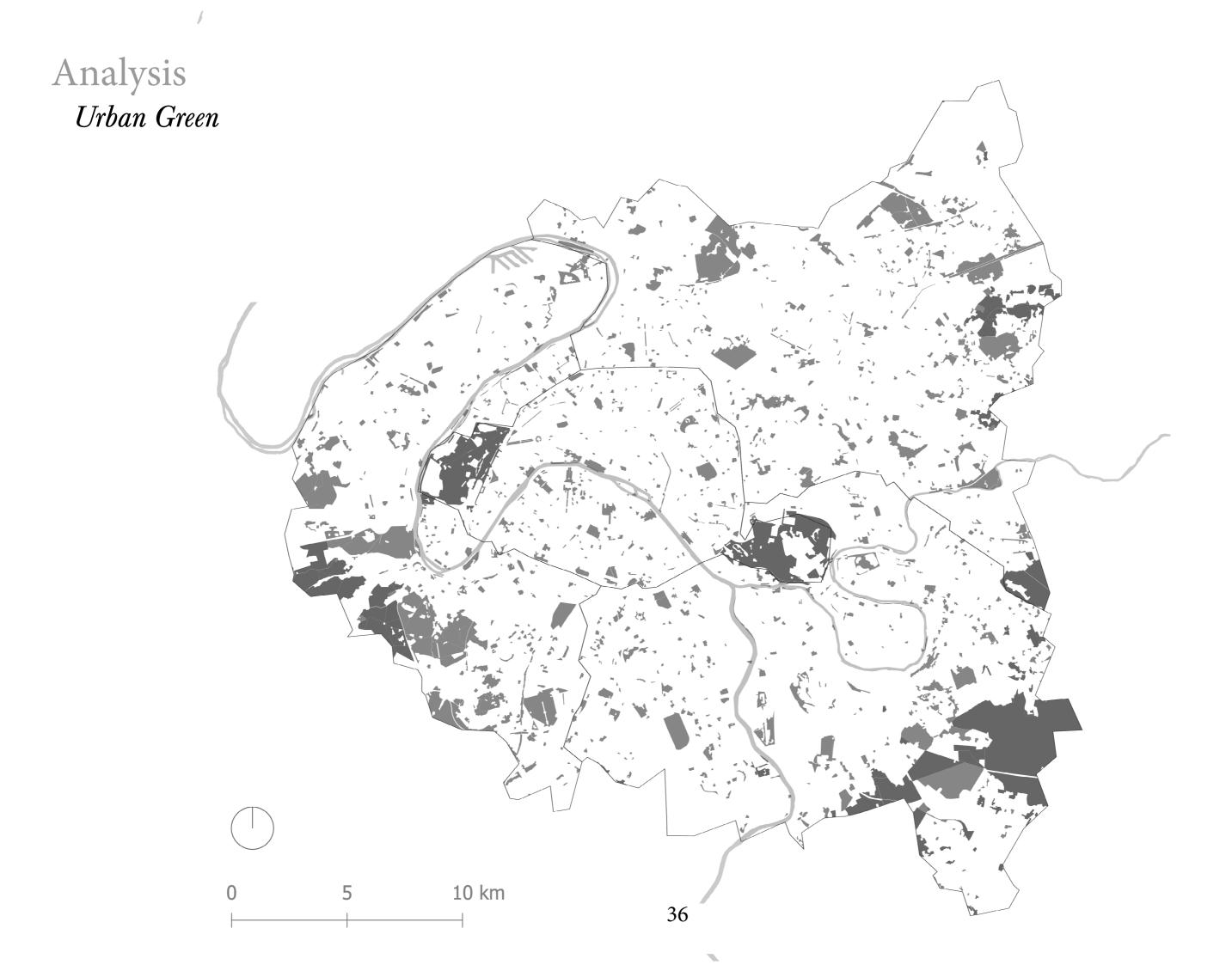


Recent Plans & Projects

- O Focus on climate adaptation and visual greening
- O Little emphasis on psychological impact
- O **No approach** to match forest with emotional needs
- O Restorative qualities underused
- O Mental health **rarely** a design or planning objective

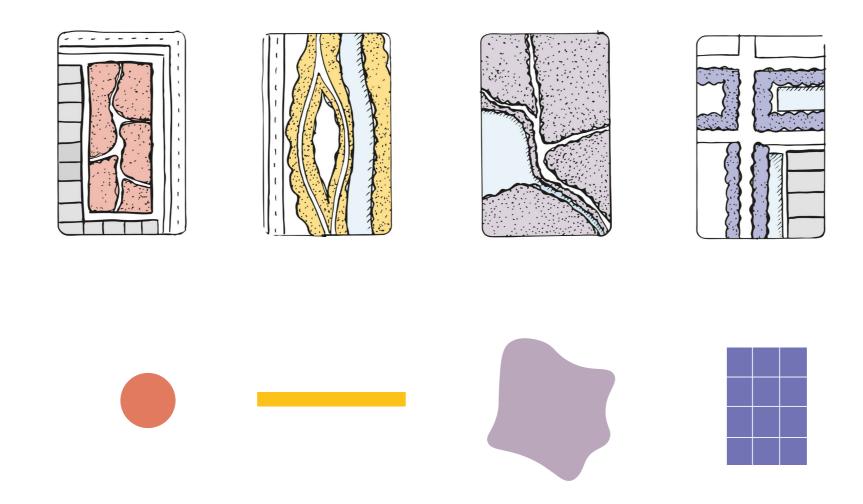
The Layered Landscape



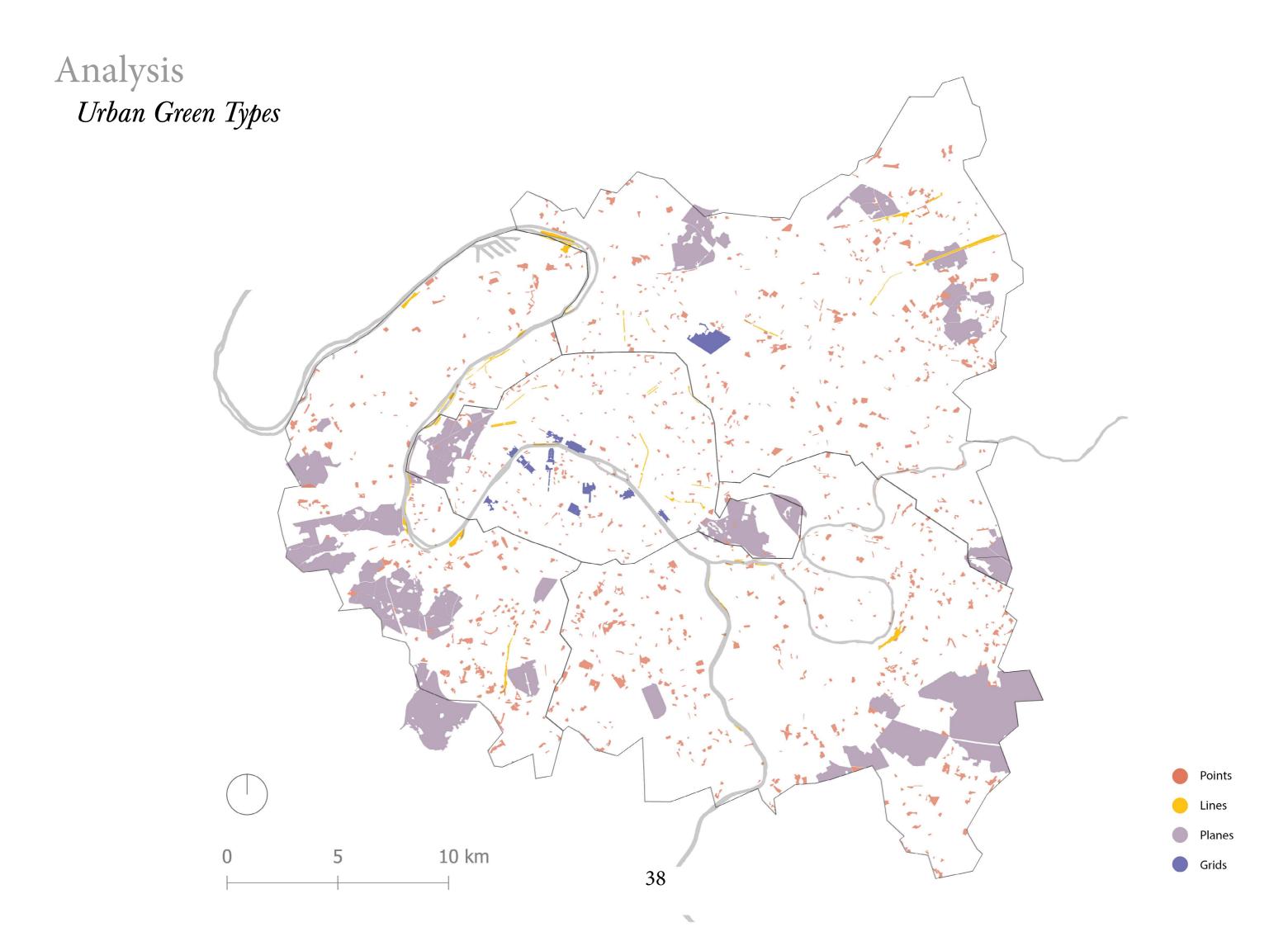


Analysis

Urban Green Hypothesis



"The four forest typologies—Refuge Forest, Healing Forest, Social Forest, and Focus Forest—are predominantly represented in Paris as points, planes, lines, and grids."



Analysis

Points - Refuge

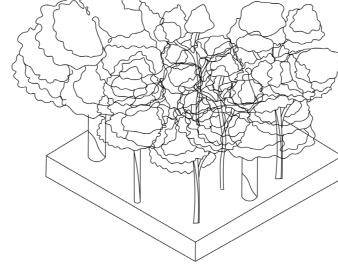




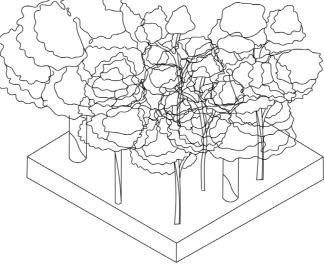


2. Square des Batignolles





Dense tree canopy cover



Wild

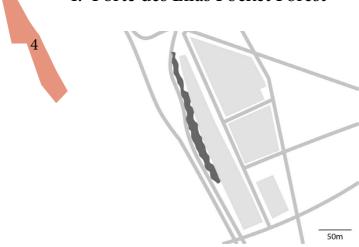
Biodiversity

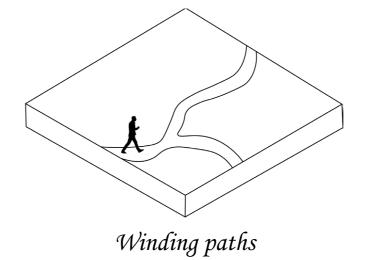


3. Jardin de la Nouvelle



4. Porte des Lilas Pocket Forest

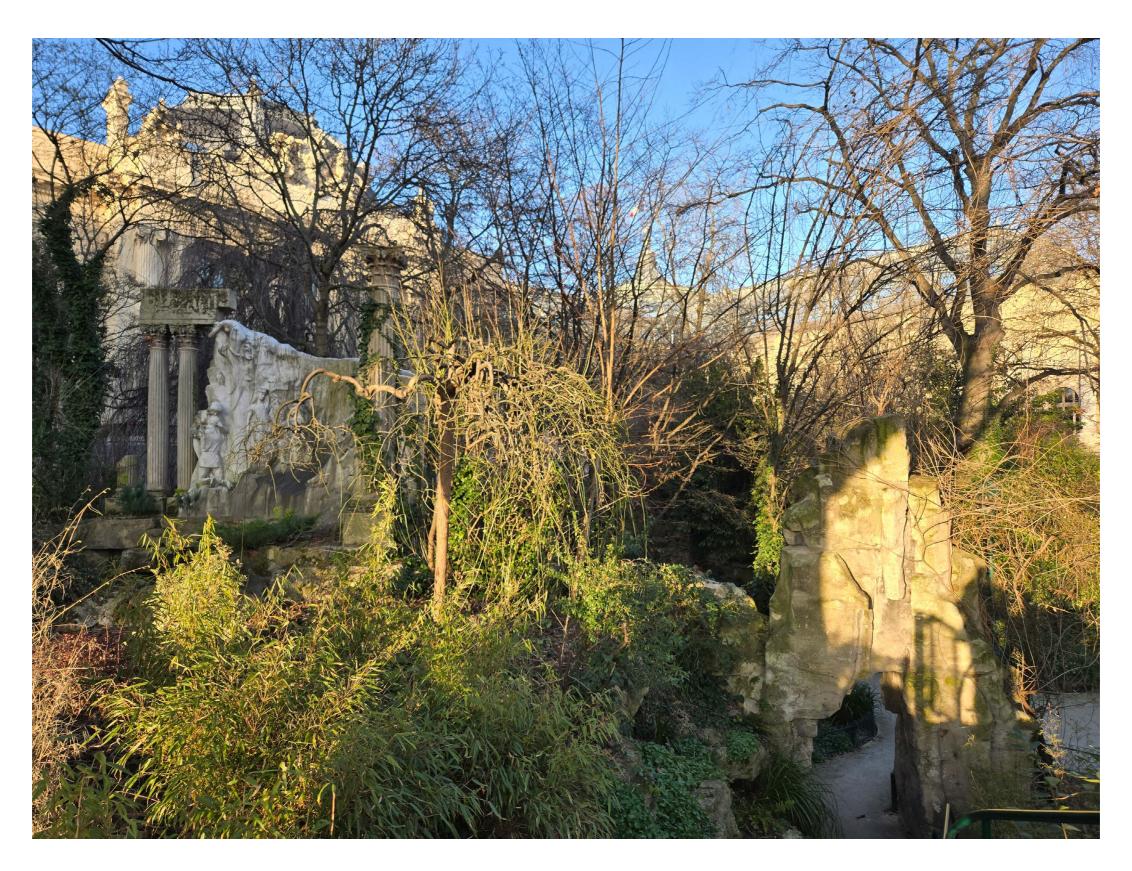




Dense Urban Context

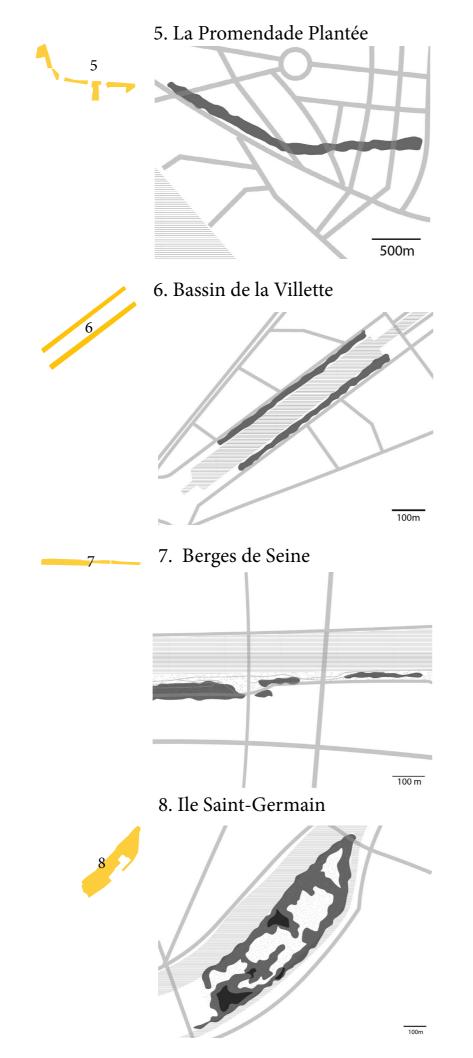
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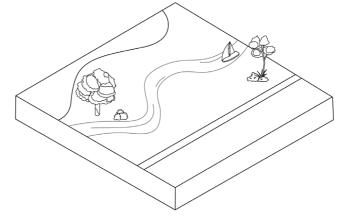
Jardin de la Nouvelle



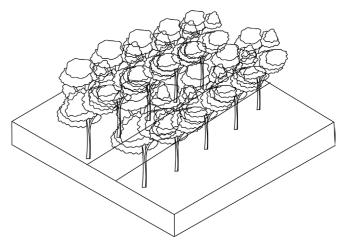
Analysis

Lines - Social

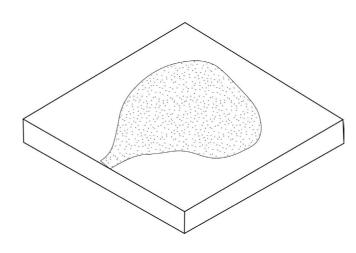


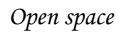


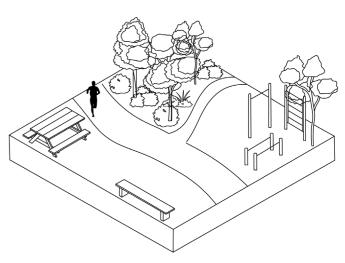




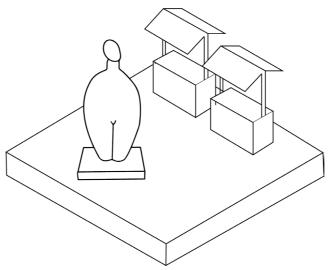
Tree lined promenades



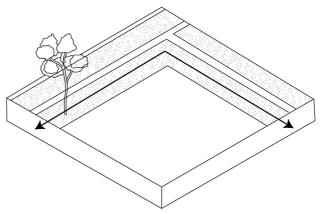




Versatile spaces







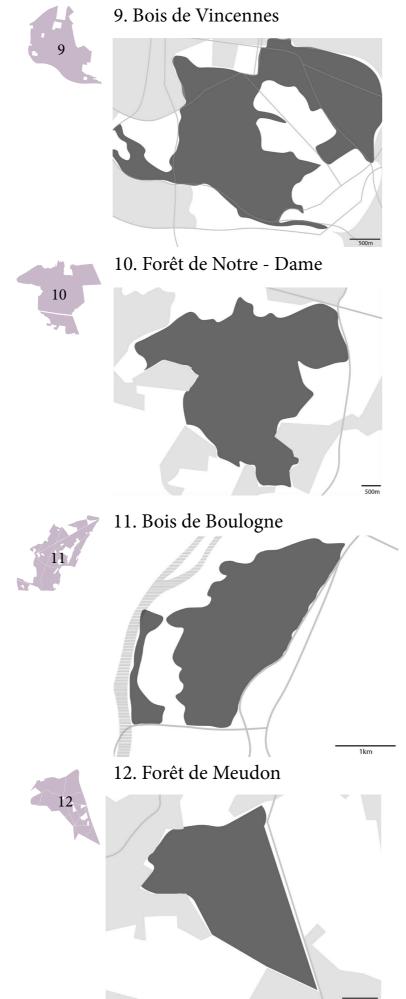
Lineair pathways

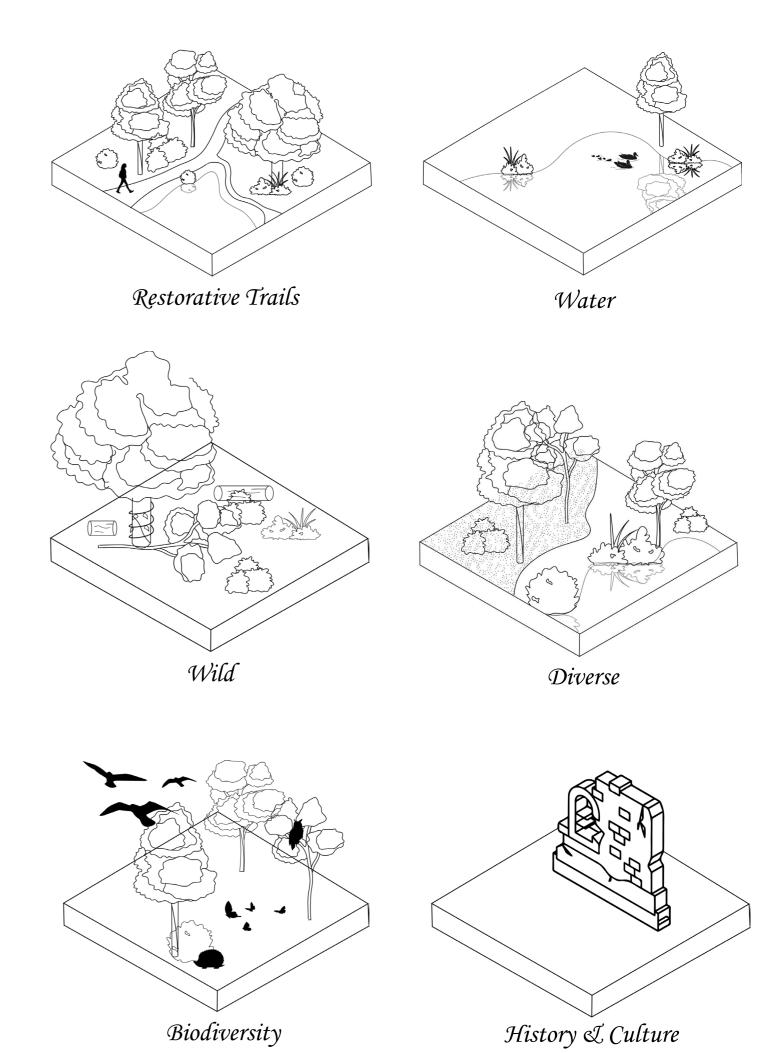
Seine River Banks



Analysis

Planes - Healing





Bois de Boulogne



Analysis

Grids - Focus

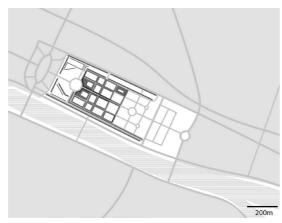


13. Parc de Bercy



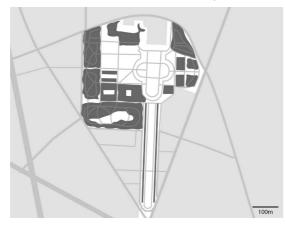


14. Jardin des Tuileries



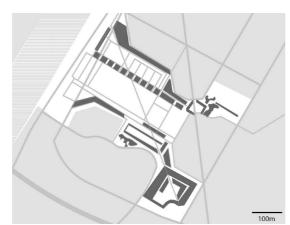


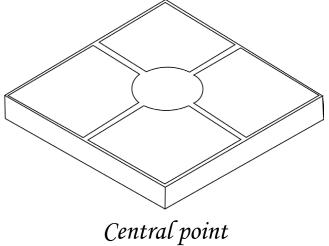
15. Jardin du Luxembourg

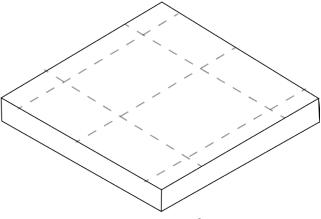




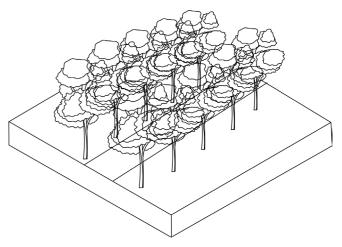
16. Parc André Citroën







Geometric layout



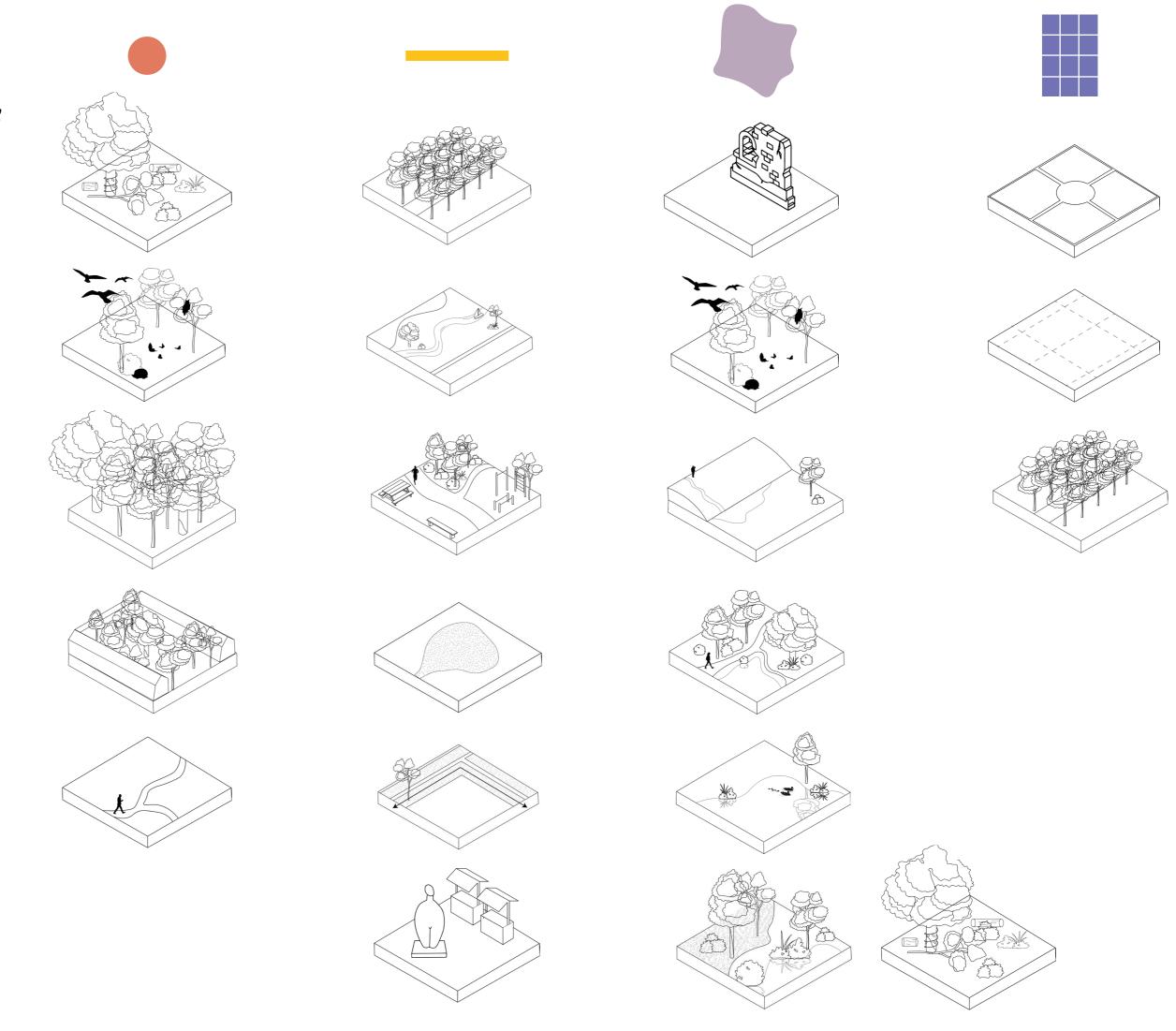
Tree lined promenades

Tuileries



Analysis

Parisian Toolbox



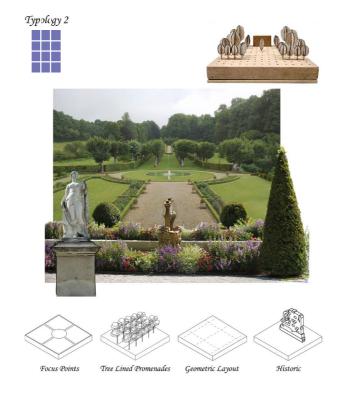
Interviews



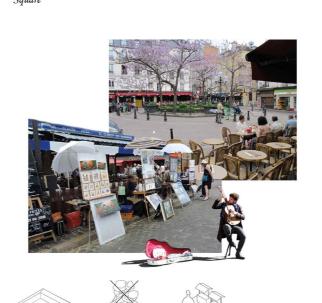
Interview Collages



Typology 3



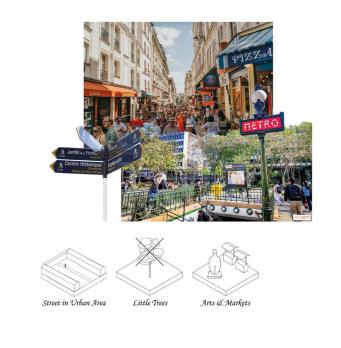




Little Trees

Lawn

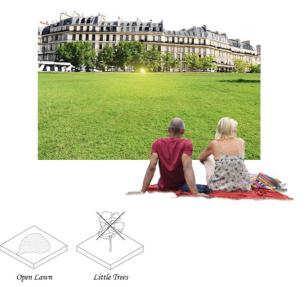
Arts & Markets



Busy Street

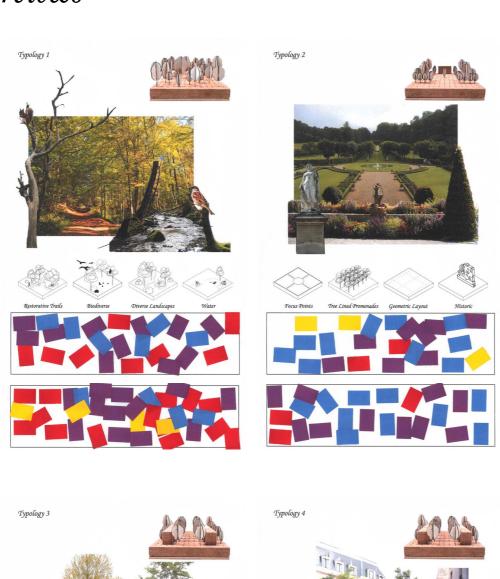
Other

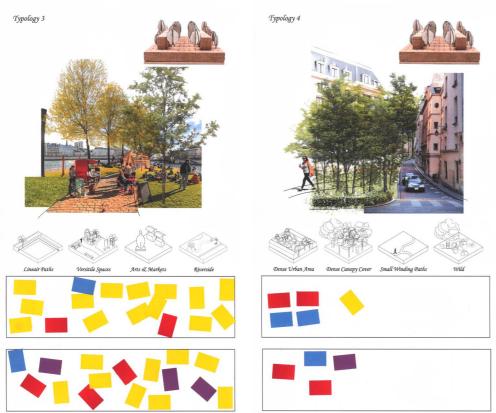






Results Interviews



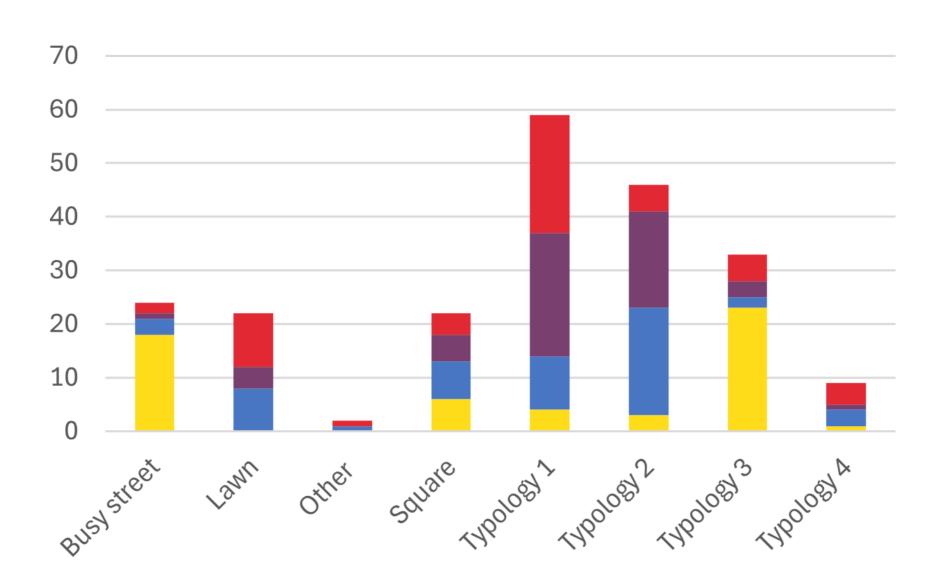


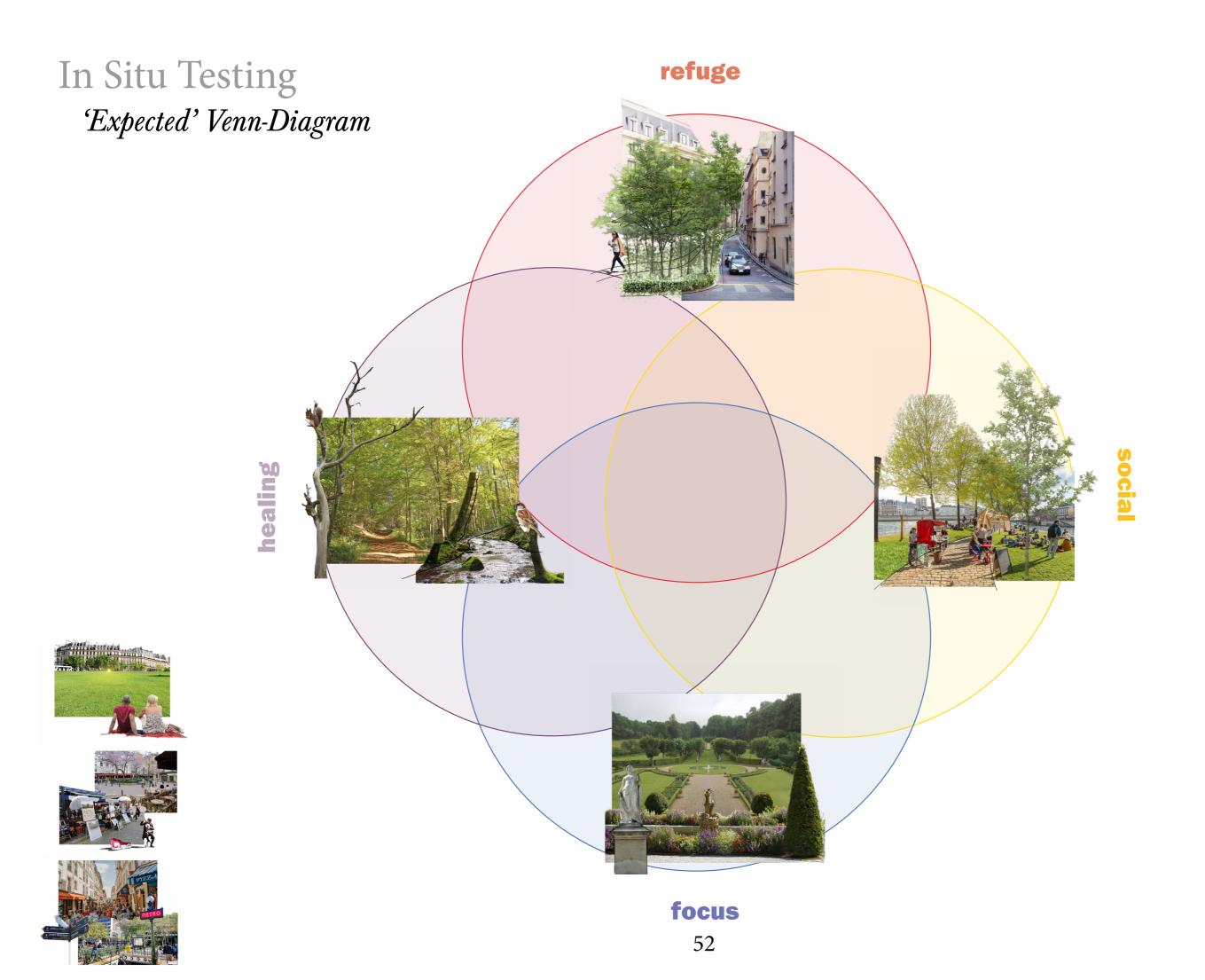


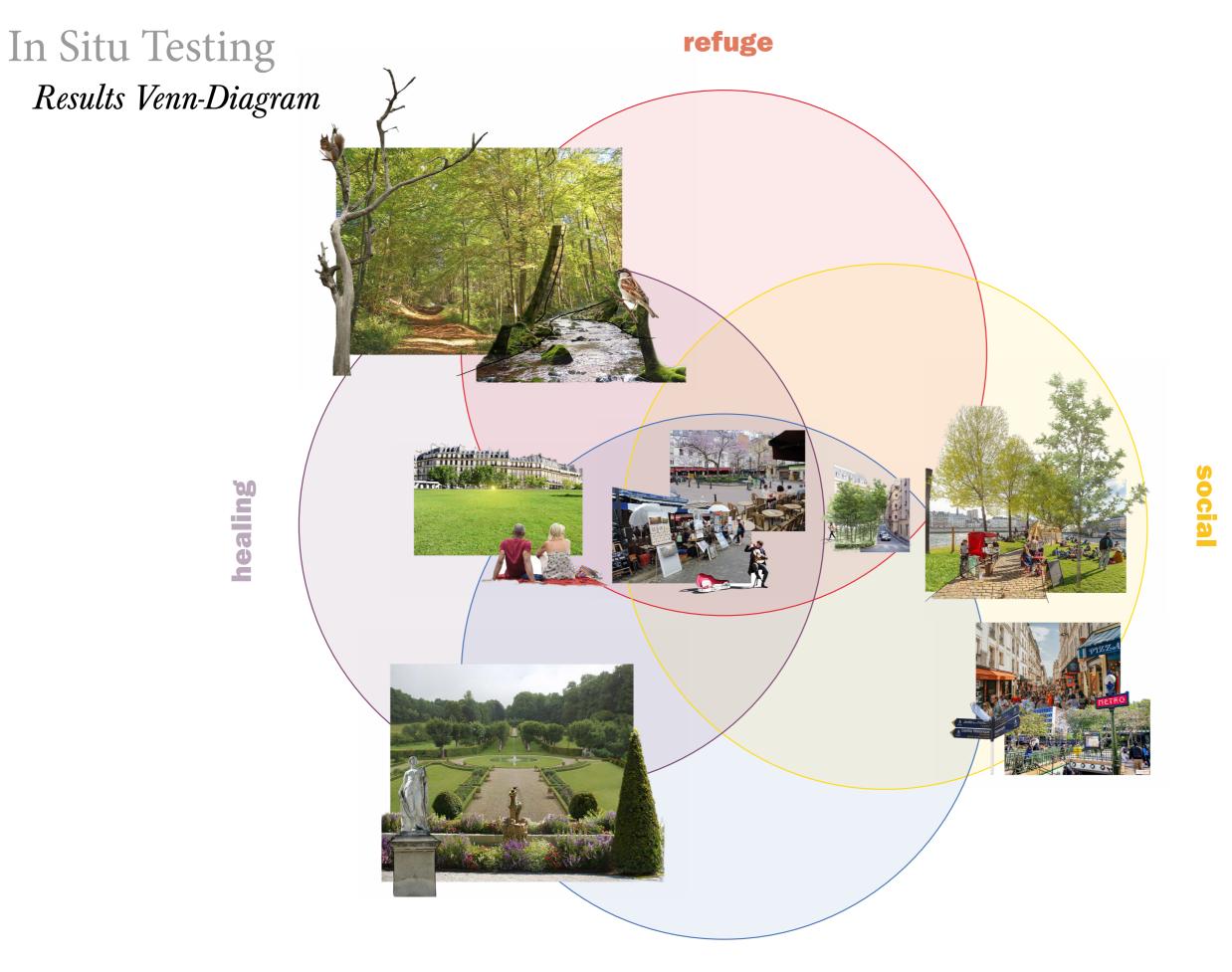


In Situ Testing

Results







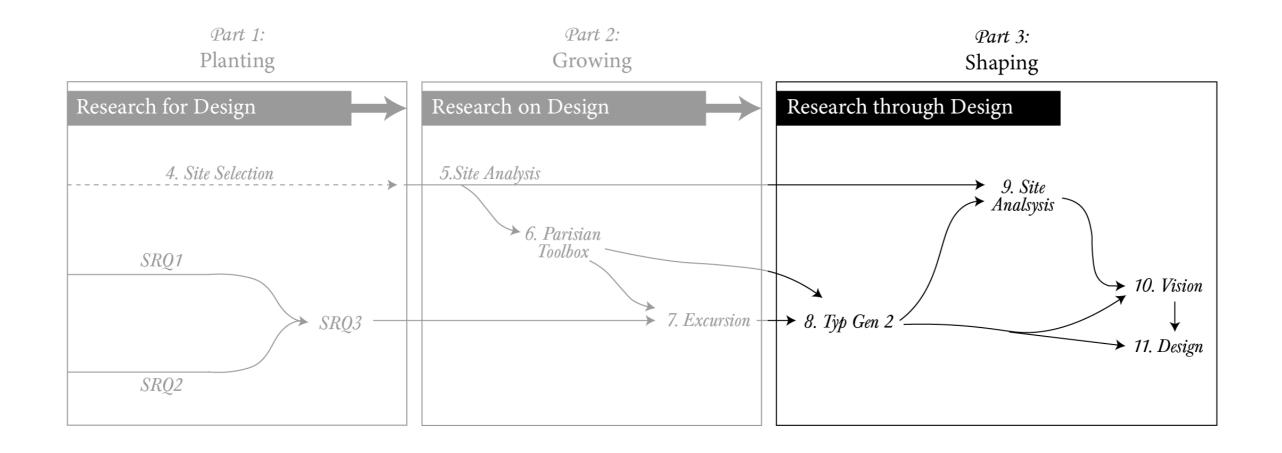
focus

Other Observations

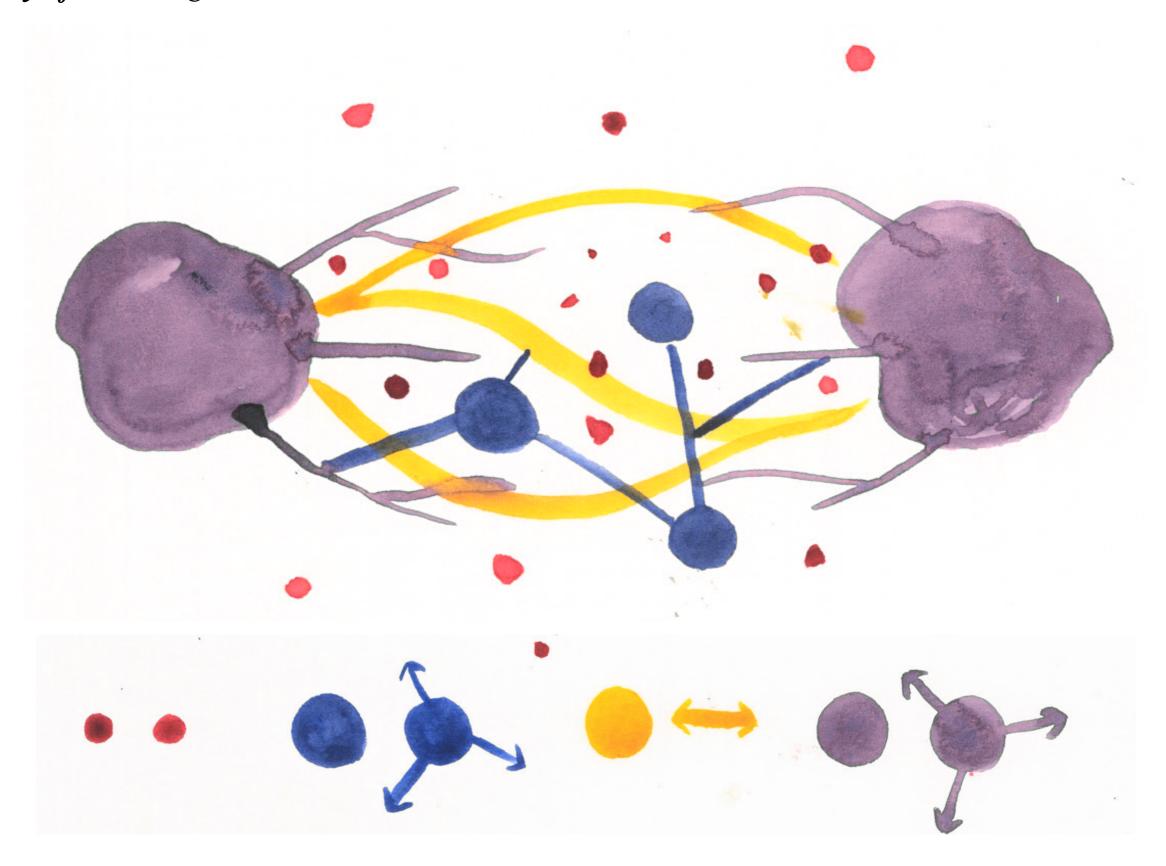


Shaping

Part 3: Research through Design



A New Way of Thinking



Social Forest

Problems

Social interaction is hindered by fragmented and car-dominated public space

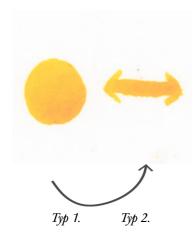
- Many urban routes lack greenery, comfort, and space to pause or gather
- Existing walking paths often feel unsafe or uninviting for informal use

Opportunities

Social experiences unfold naturally along shared green routes

Linear form allows continuous, walkable, and engaging environments

- Green corridors support gathering, movement, and informal exchange
- Enhancing social use doesn't require new parks, just better daily routes



Healing Forest

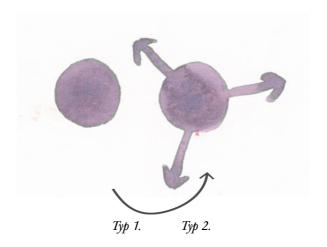
Problems

- Stress and sensory overload peak in the dense city
- Immersive natural spaces are not part of daily urban life
- Limited space is available for large new restorative areas

Opportunities

Healing qualities can extend into the city through linear green routes

- Lines allow gradual transition from urban intensity to natural calm
- Sensory-rich corridors fit well within narrow, con strained spaces
- Make healing accessible through everyday move ment, not isolated destinations



Focus Forest

Problems

- Urban spaces often lack rhythm, structure, and orient ation
- Focus-promoting green areas are disconnected from daily use
- Existing formal spaces are static and limited in reach

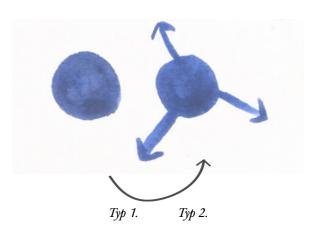
Opportunities

Lines can express clarity, repetition and symmetry through planting and layout

A sequential spatial experience enhances mental focus during movement

Translating formal garden principles into routes improves urban legibility

Linear focus spaces support calmness in motion, not just in stillness



Refuge Forest

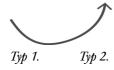
Problems

- Calm, enclosed green spaces are scarce in the dense city
- Existing public green is often open, exposed, and overstimulating
 - There are few dedicated places for solitude, reflection or quiet retreat

Opportunities

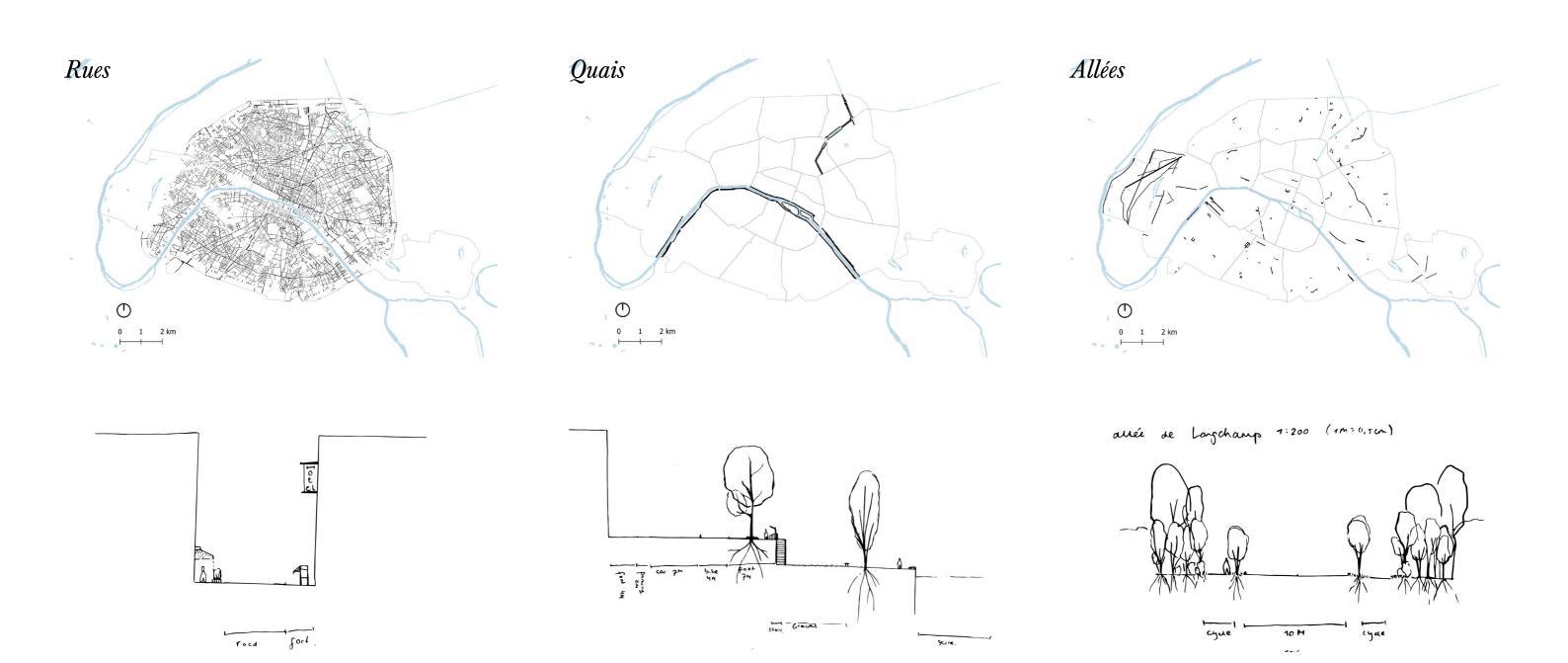
- Point-like pocket forests offer spatial contrast within busy urban fabric
- Dense planting and enclosure create a sense of protection and calm
- Refuge pockets can be placed in underused or lefto ver spaces
 - Small-scale forests can enrich other typologies as still, hidden nodes



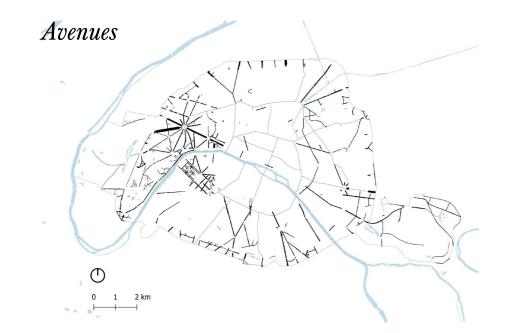


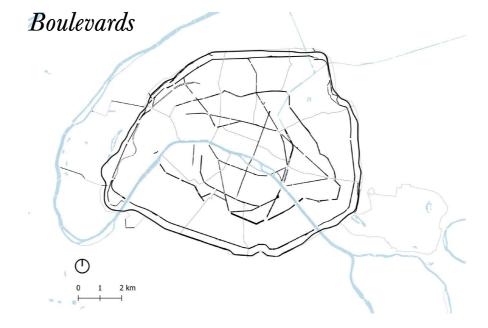


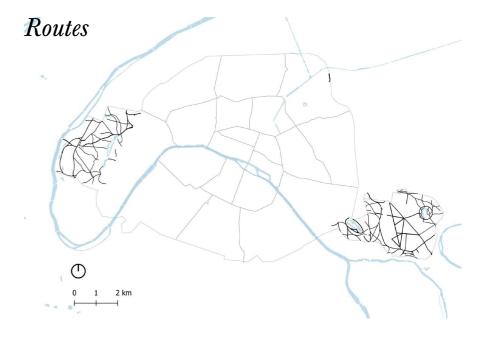
Infrastructure Analysis

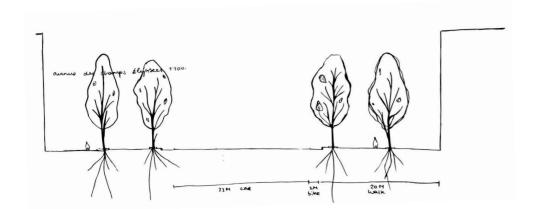


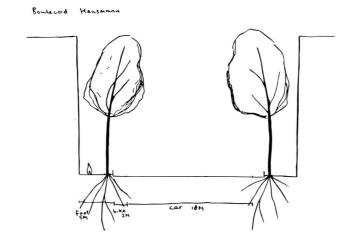
Infrastructural Analysis

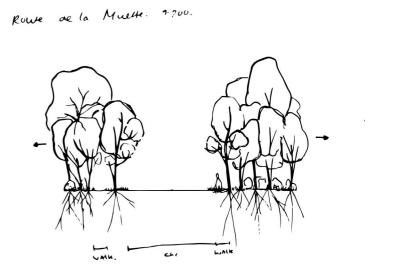












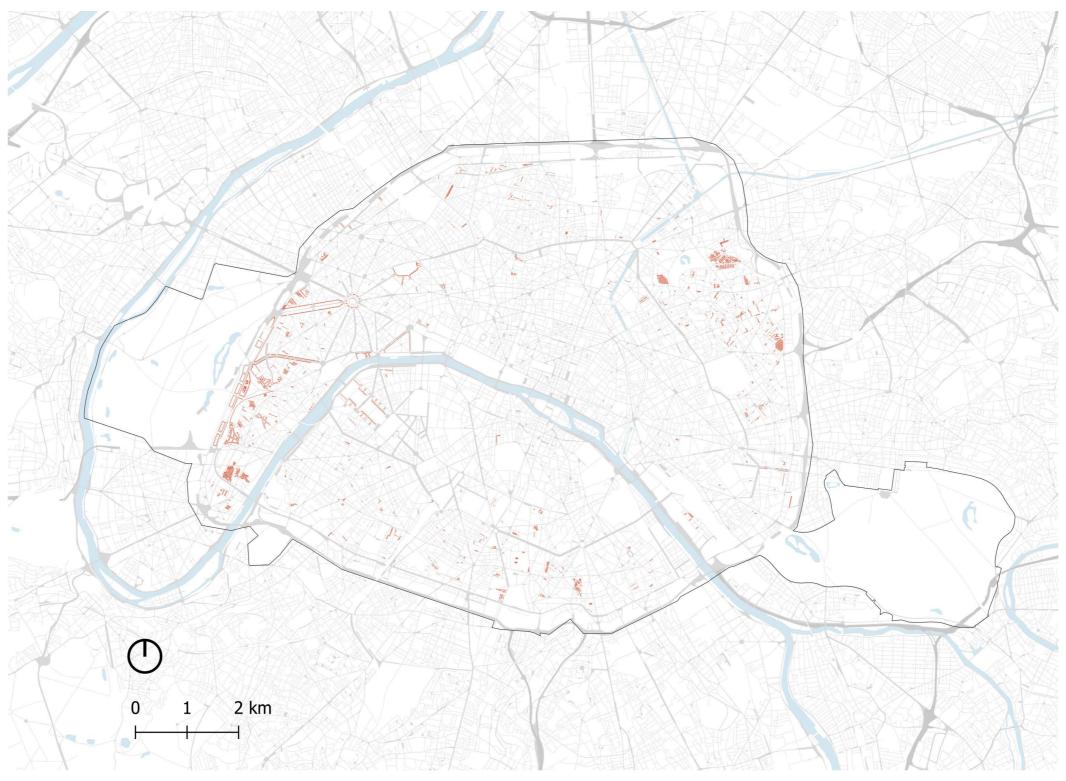
Conclusion Infrastructural Analysis

	Characteristics	Historical Context	Location		Typology Fit
Allée	Pedestrian - Oriented Embedded in parks / along water Shaded, quiet, immersive, naturalistic or formal	Used for promenades and leisure in green areas and estates	Parks and near water		Healing Forest Lines Formal ones: Focus Lines
Avenue	Grand- scale, tree lined, axial, formal structure, connects landmarks	Designed for royal use, Huassmann's plan emphasized symmetry and vistas	Radiate from central points; lined with cultural institutions		Focus Forest Lines or Healing Lines depending on context
Boulevard	Wide section, social acitivity, central medians	Developed under Haussmann to structure modern Paris	Ring-like stuctures in urban core		Social Forest Lines
Quai	Lineair waterfront, scenic, relaimed from cars, often wide	Used for transport and trade; increasingly pedestrianized	Follow Seine and canals		Social Forest Lines
Rue	Narrow, enclosed, varied use, spatially limited	Core of Paris, mixed use and limited room for expansion	Dense urban fabric troughout neighborhoods		Less suited for large interventions
Route	Natural park roads, light traffic, surrounded by trees and nature	Originally rural or park baesd: integrated into new green areas	Inside parks		Healing Forest Lines

Conclusion Infrastructural Analysis



Possible Refuge



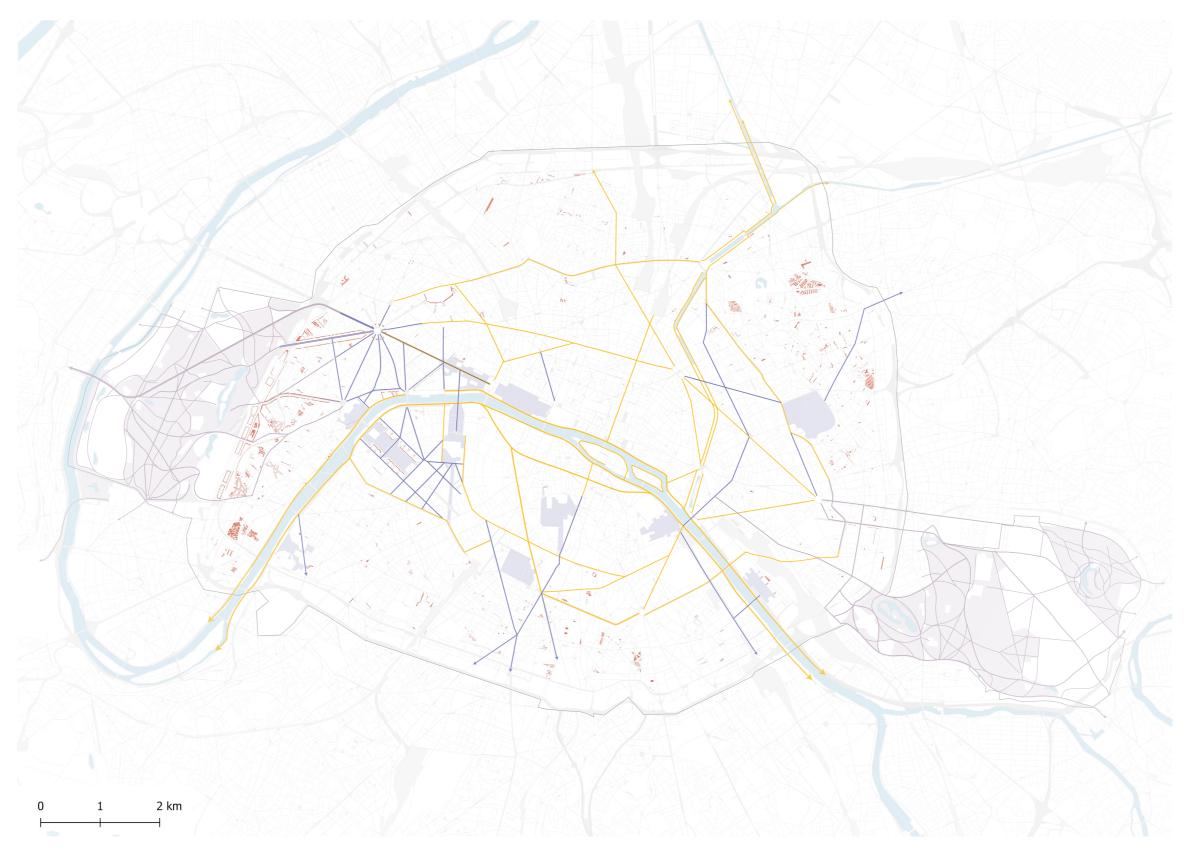
Edited from (Open Data Paris, 2022)

City Vision



City Vision

Infrastructure as Carrier



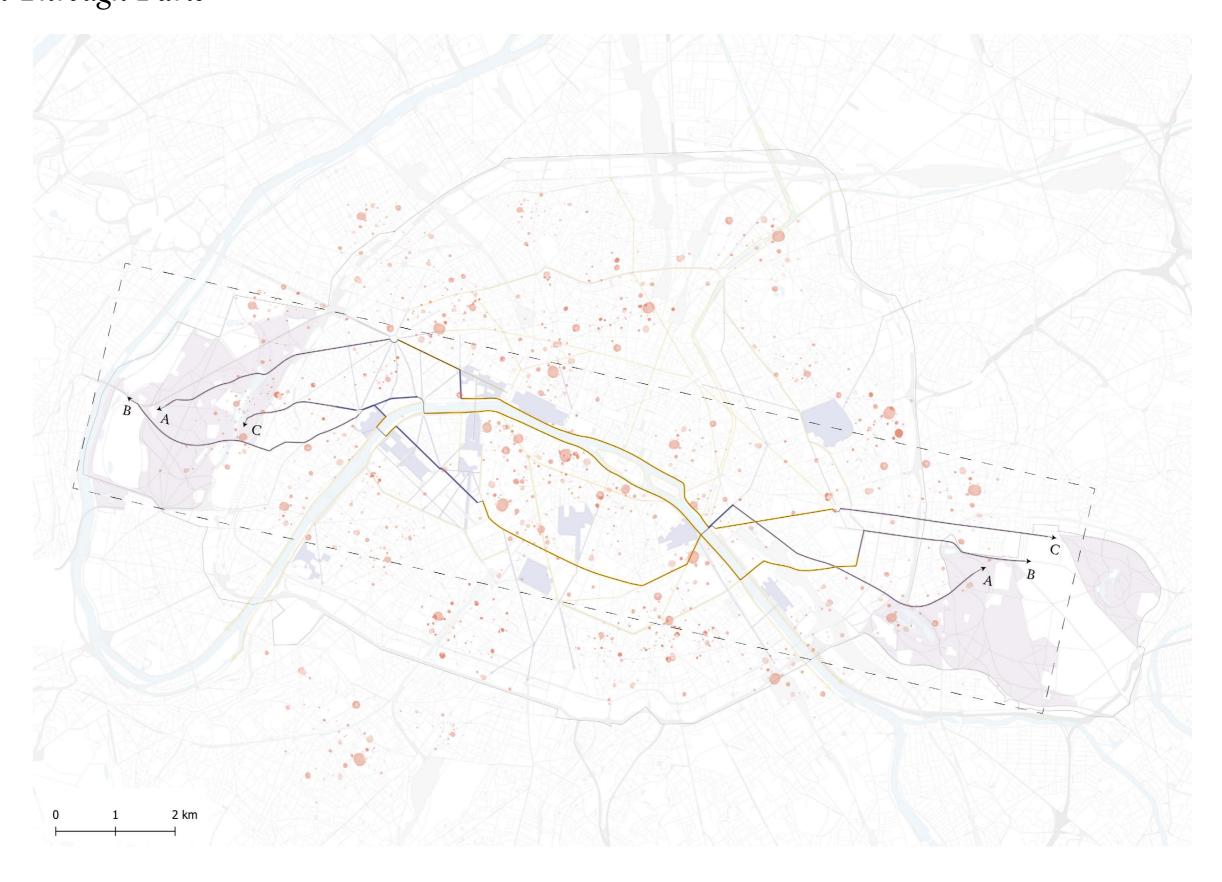
City Vision

A New Green Structure



Design Concept

A Walk Through Paris



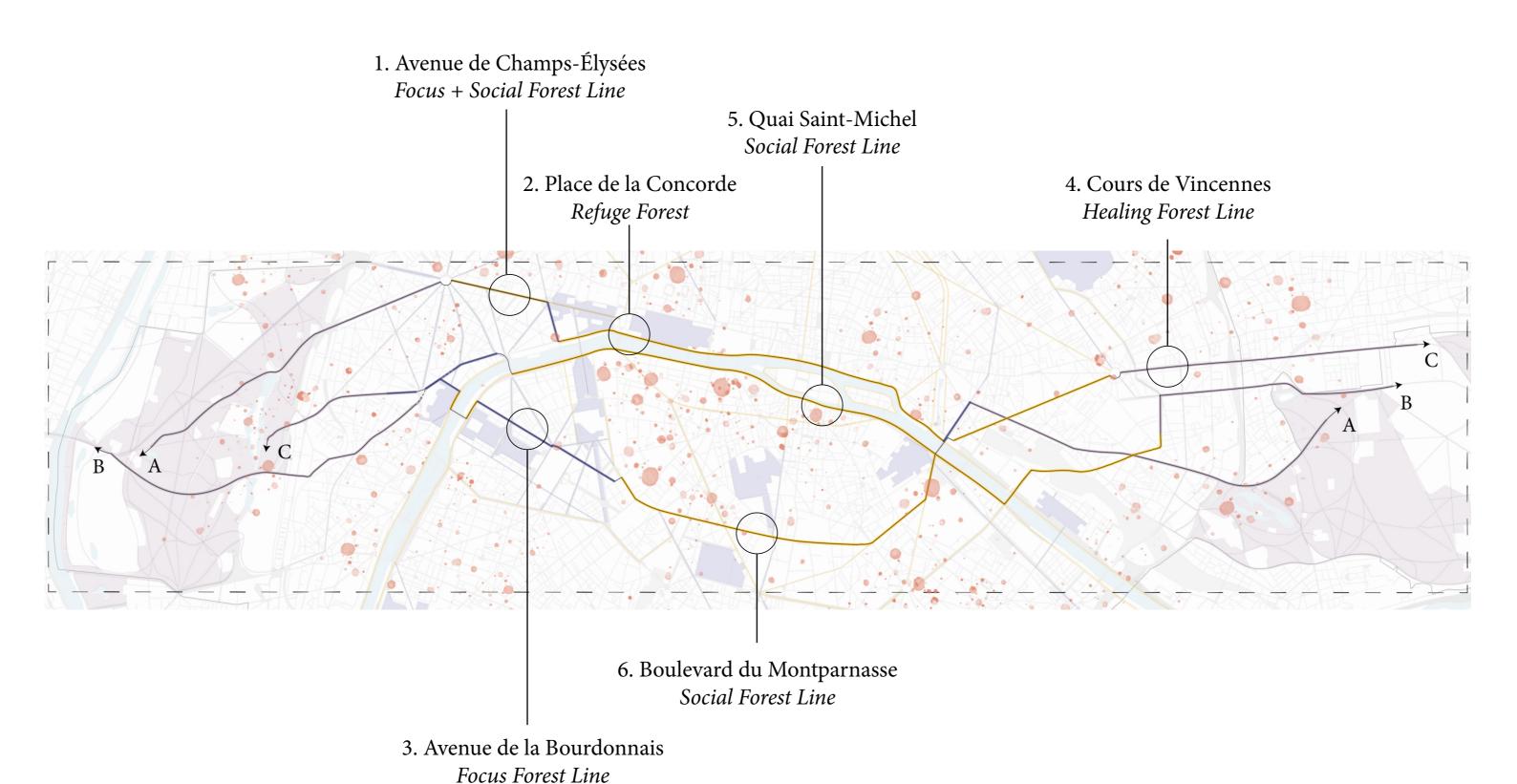
Design Visualisation

A Walk Through Paris



Zoom In-Visualisations

Locations & Types



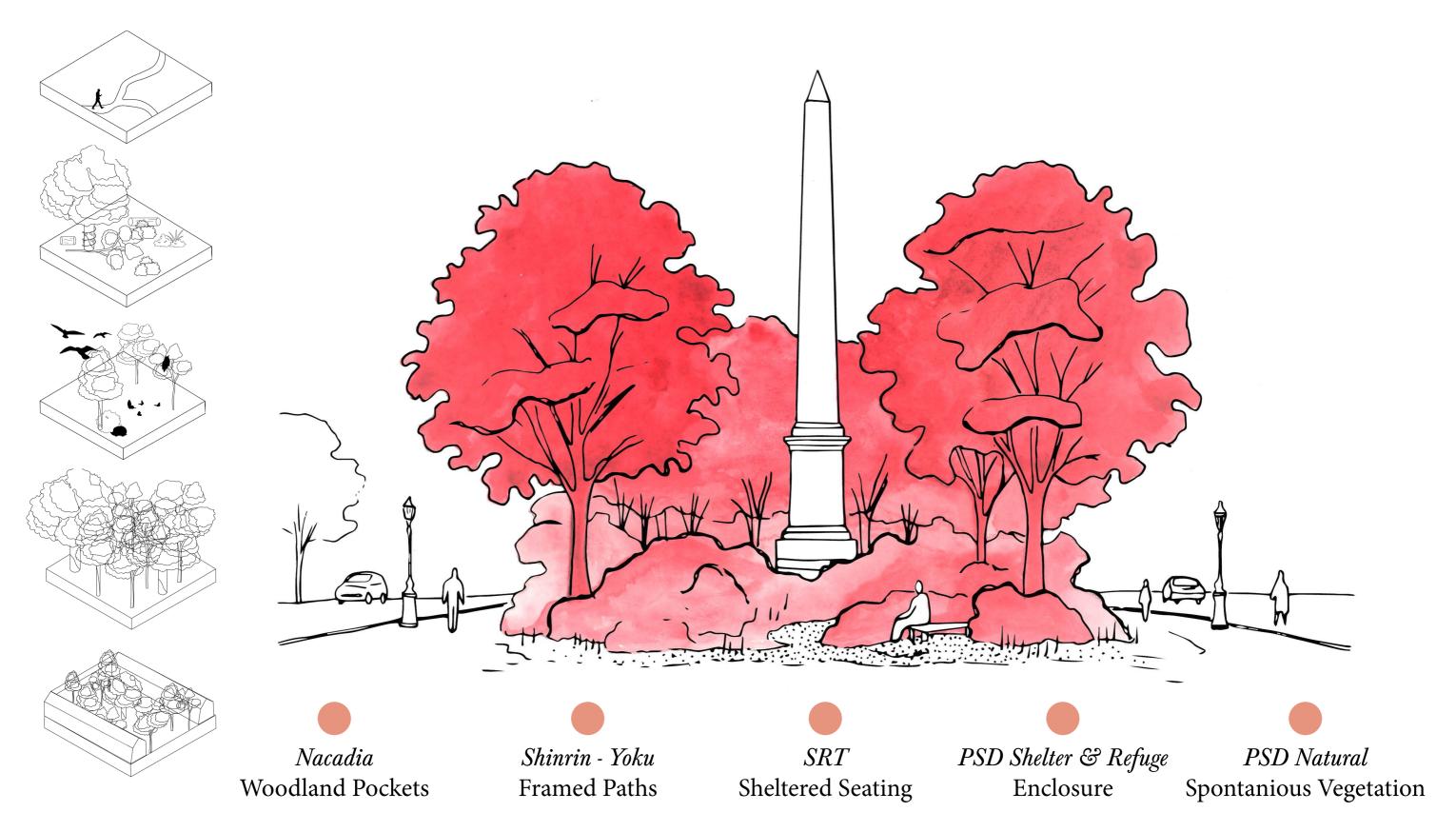
Zoom-In Visualisation

Avenue des Champs-Élysées

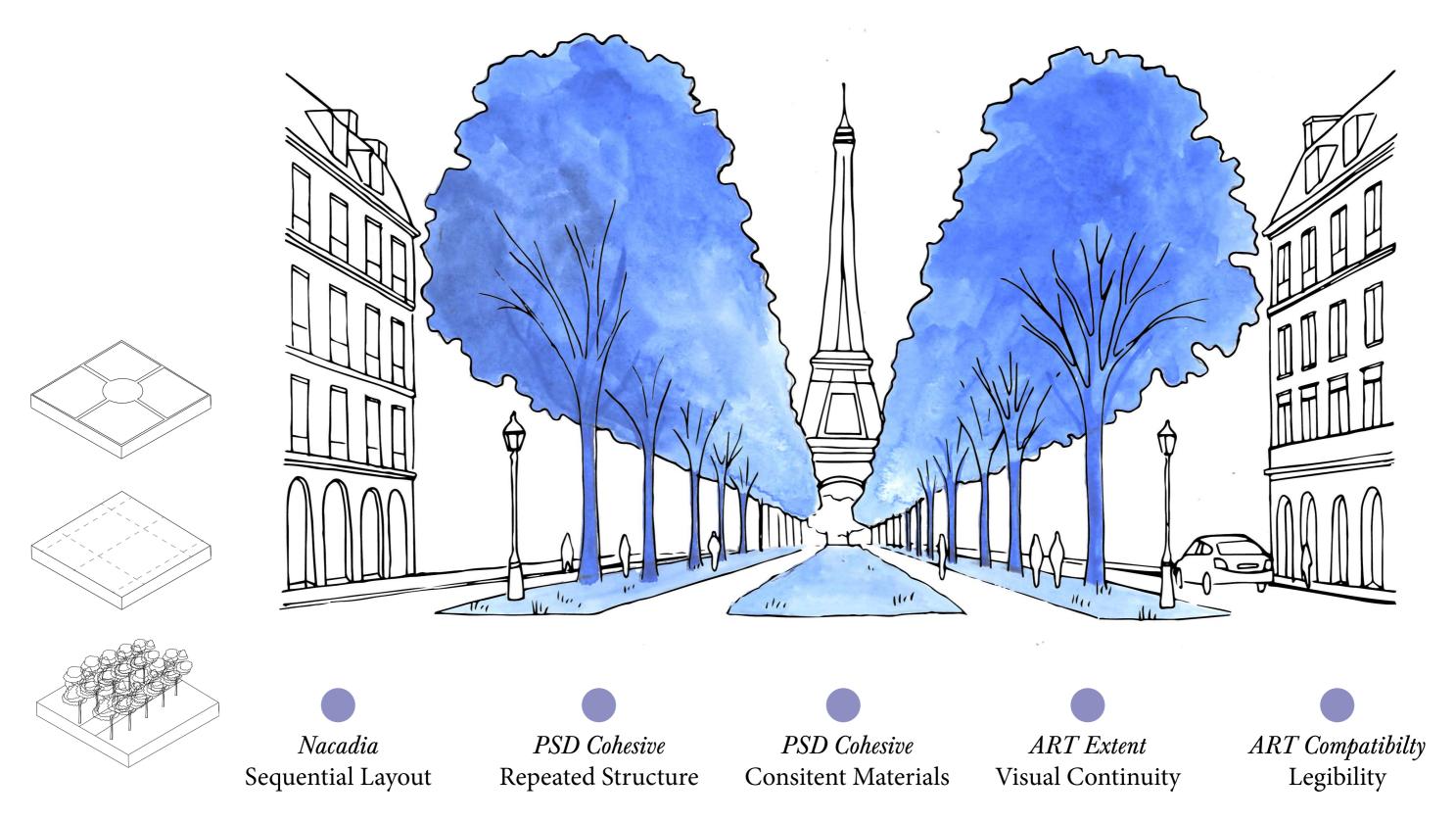


Zoom-In Visualisation

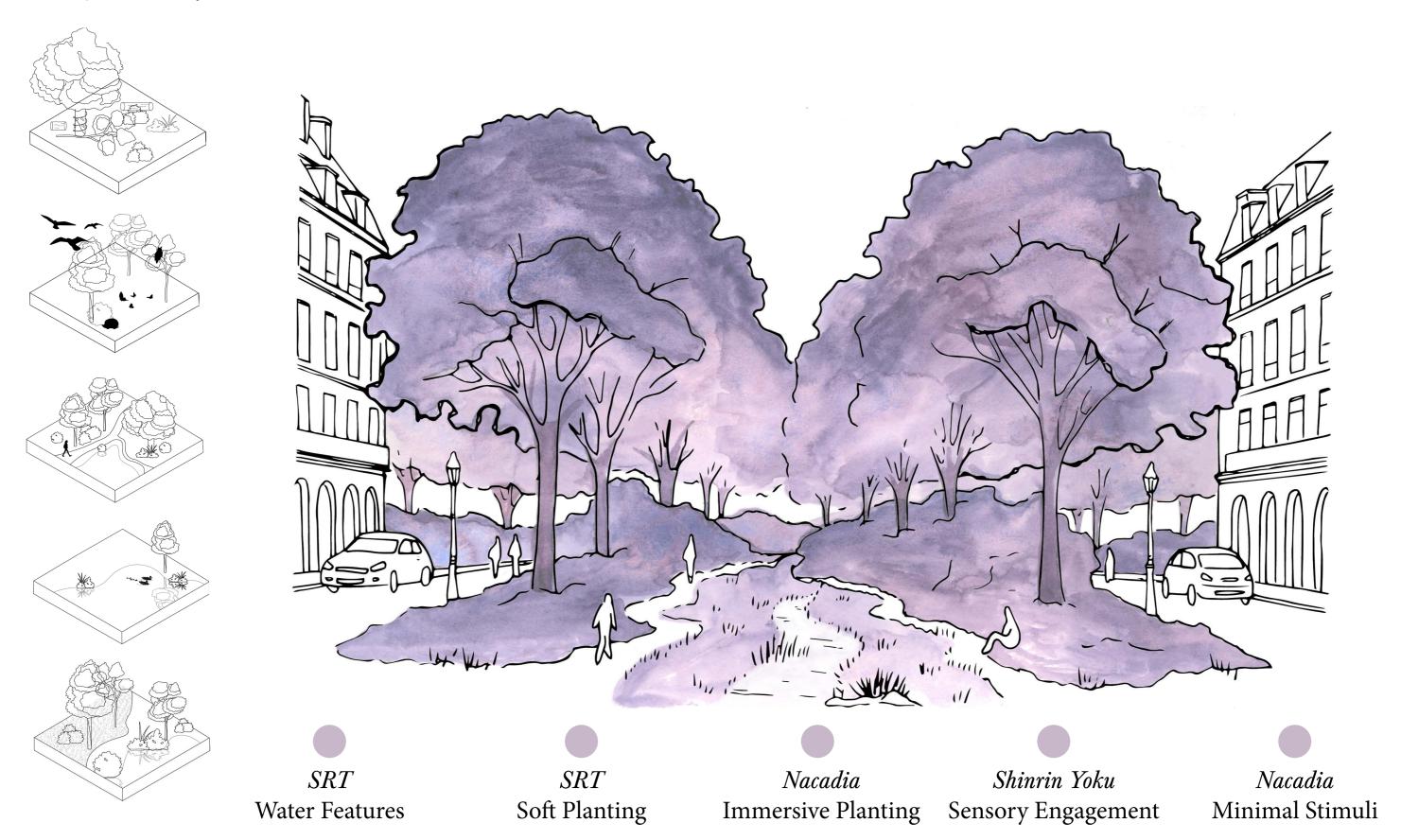
Place de la Concorde



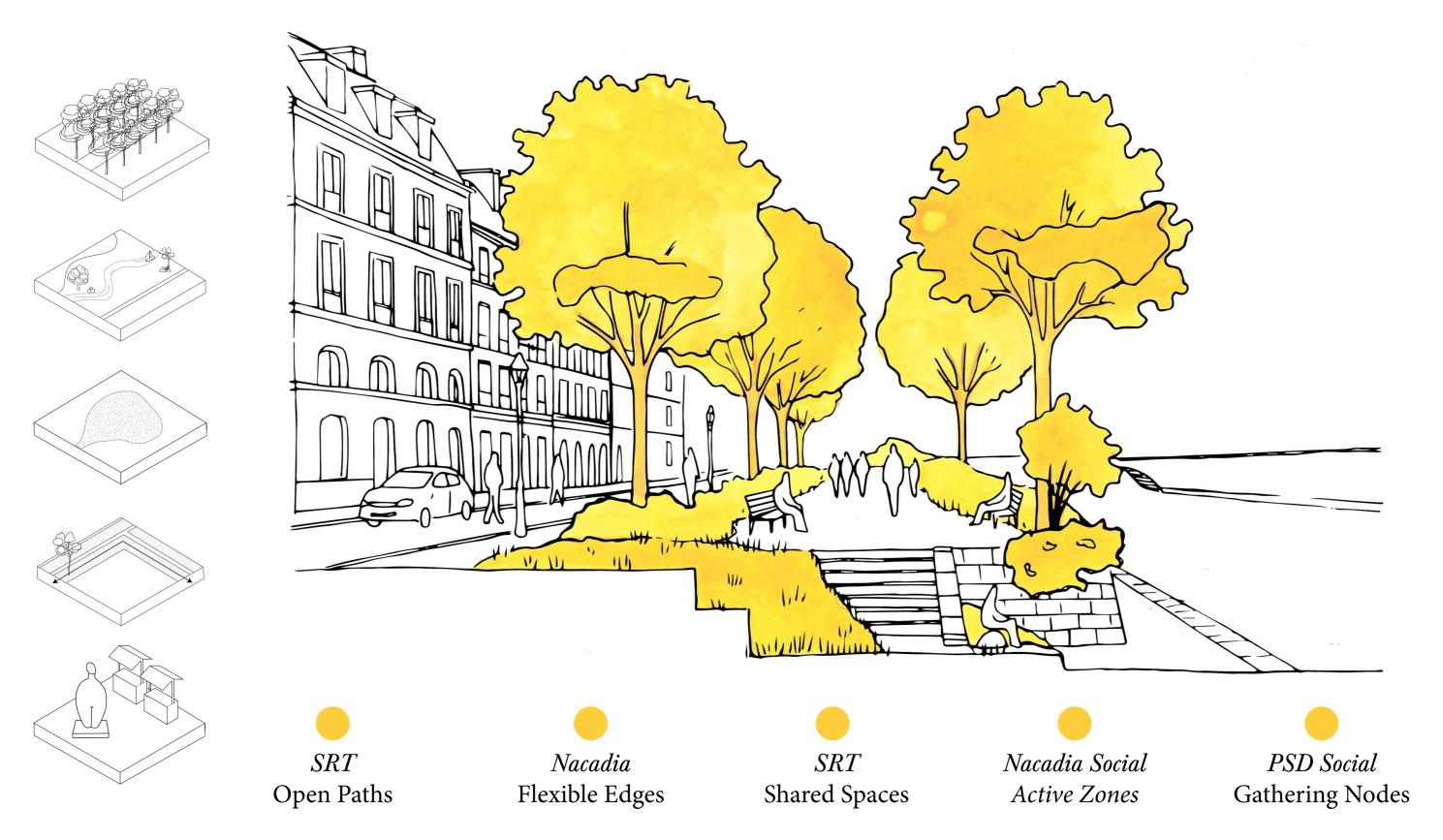
Avenue de la Boudonnais



Cours de Vincennes



Quai Saint-Michel

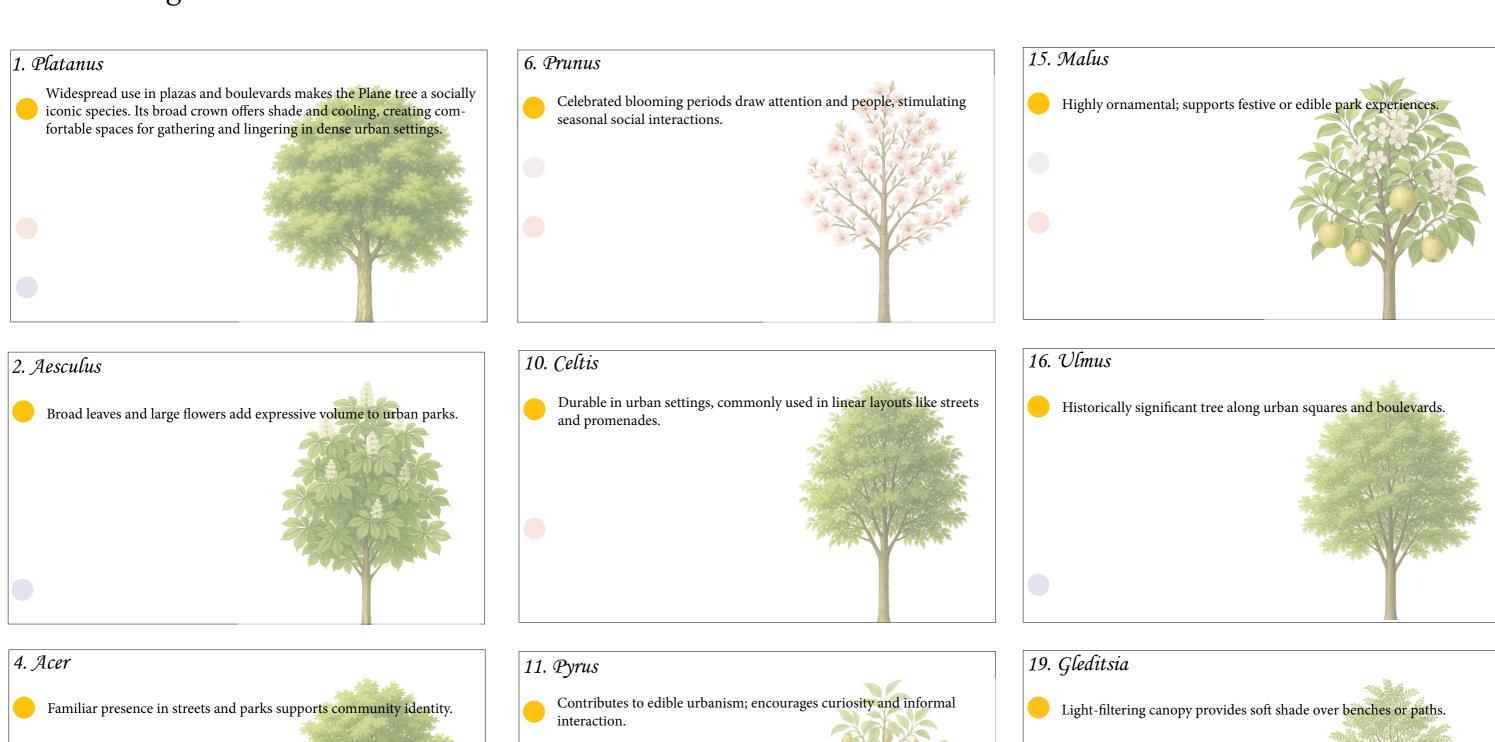


Boulevard de Montparnasse

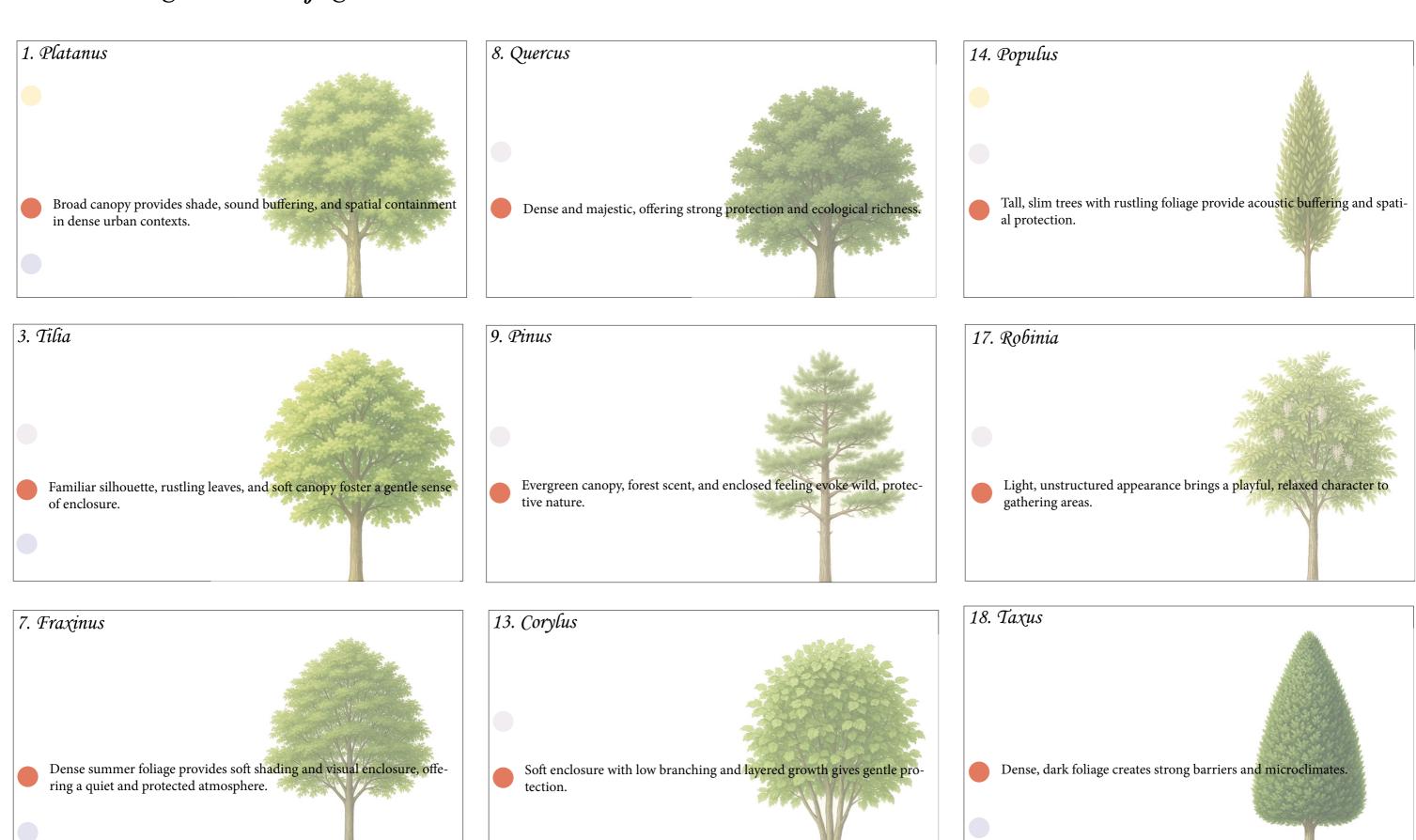


Tree Catalogus

as a Design Tool - Social



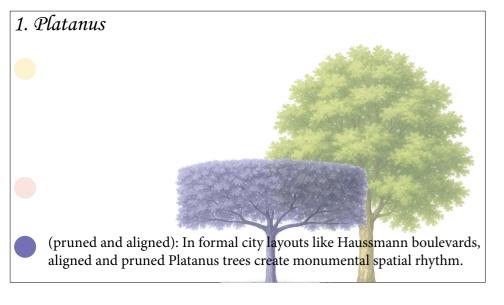
Tree Catalogus as a Design Tool - Refuge

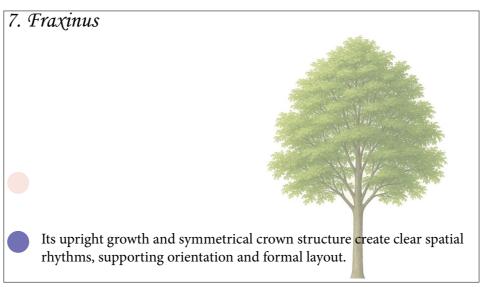


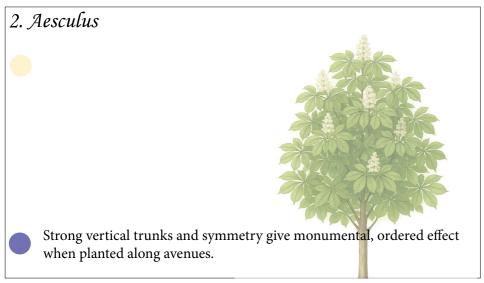
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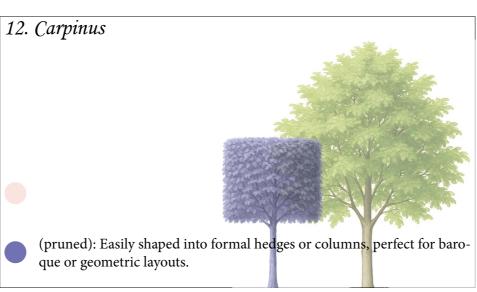
Tree Catalogus

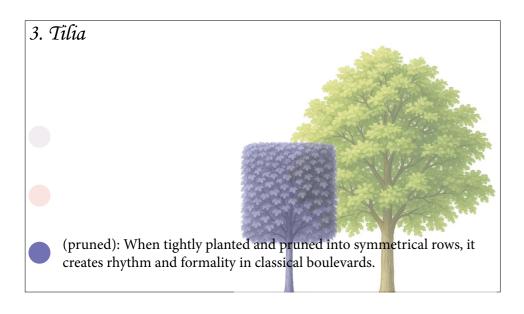
as a Design Tool - Focus

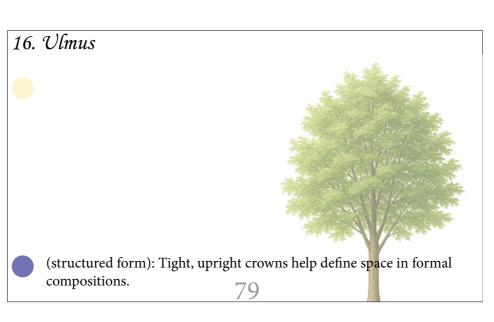


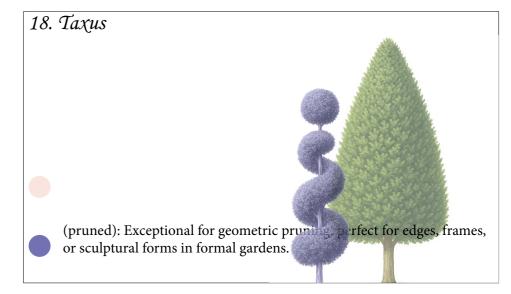






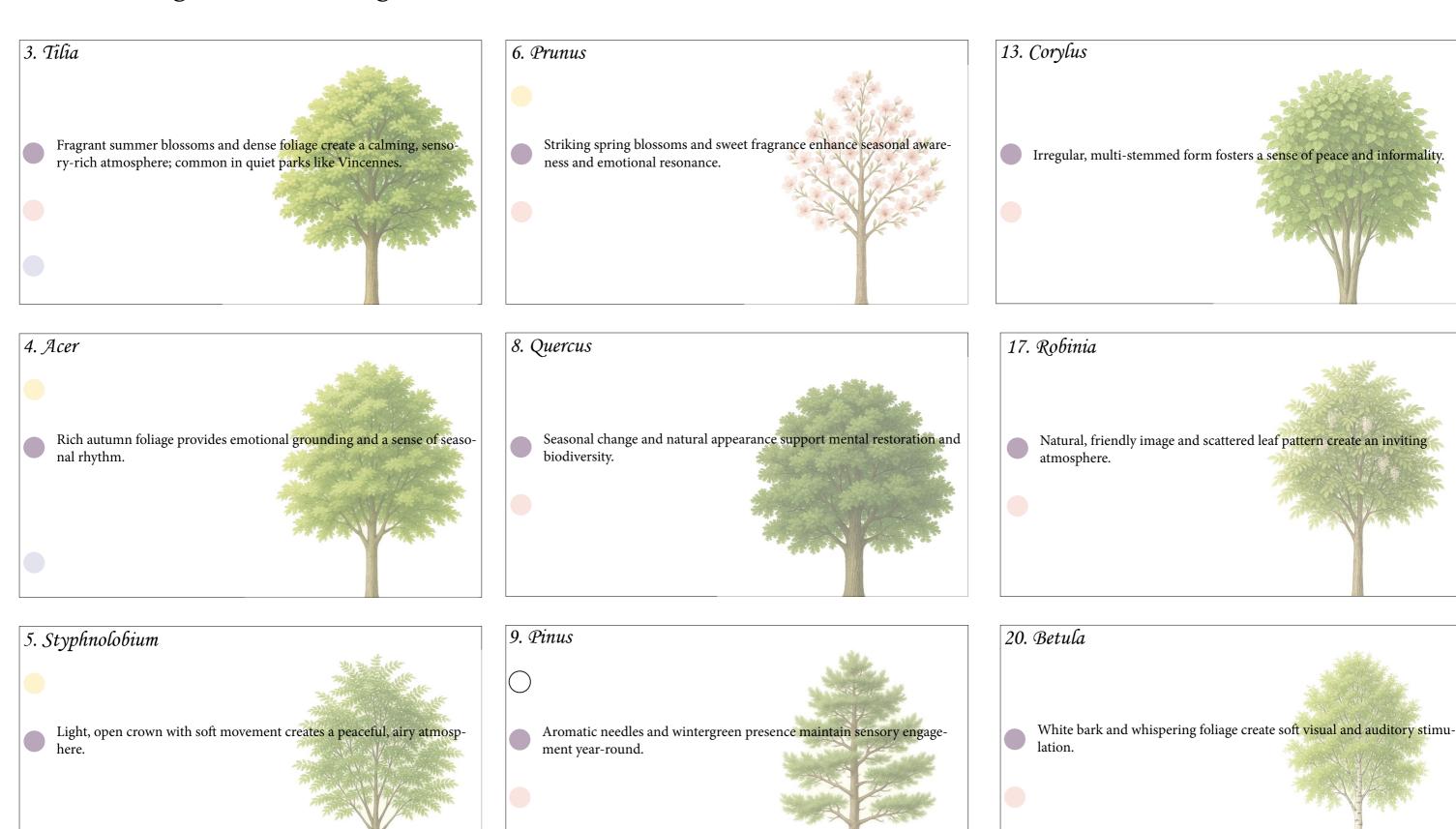






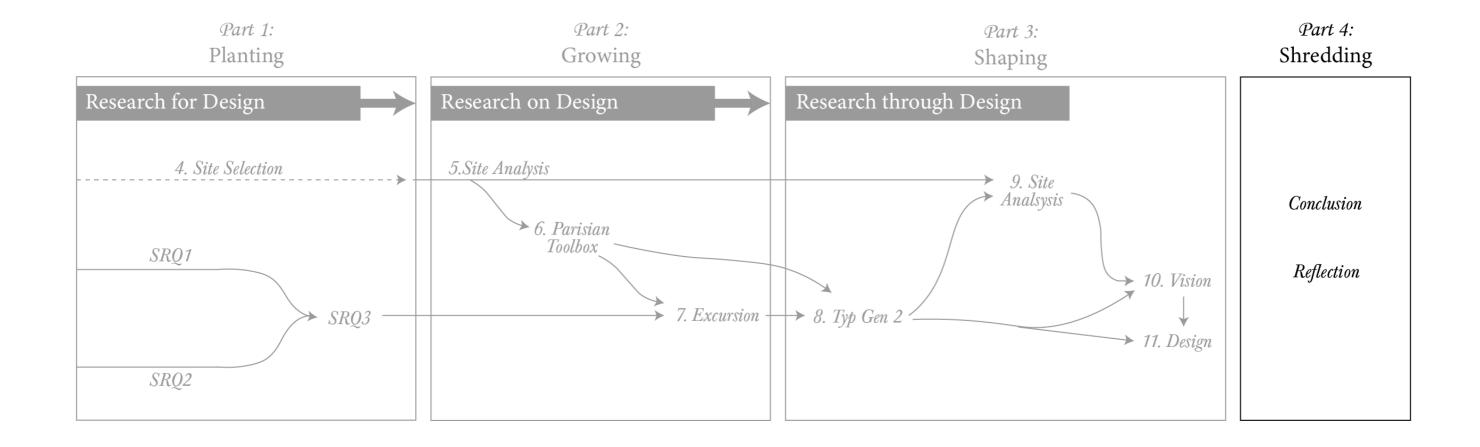
Tree Catalogus

as a Design Tool - Healing



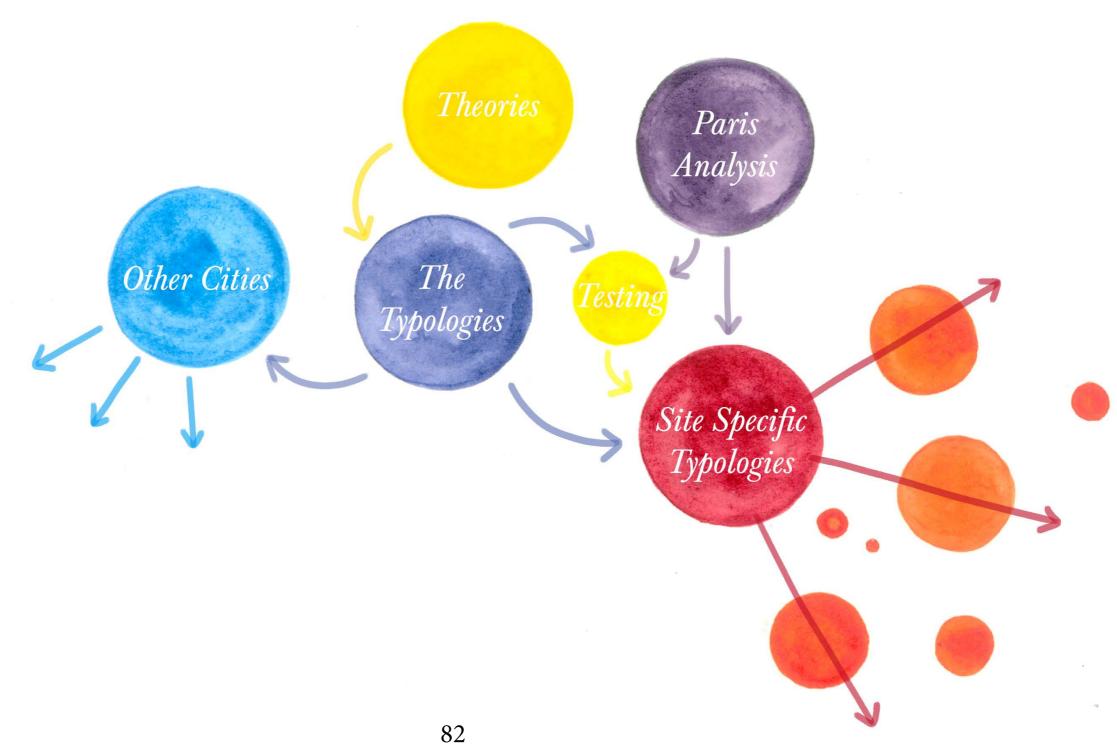
Shredding

Part 4: Conlusion



Conclusion

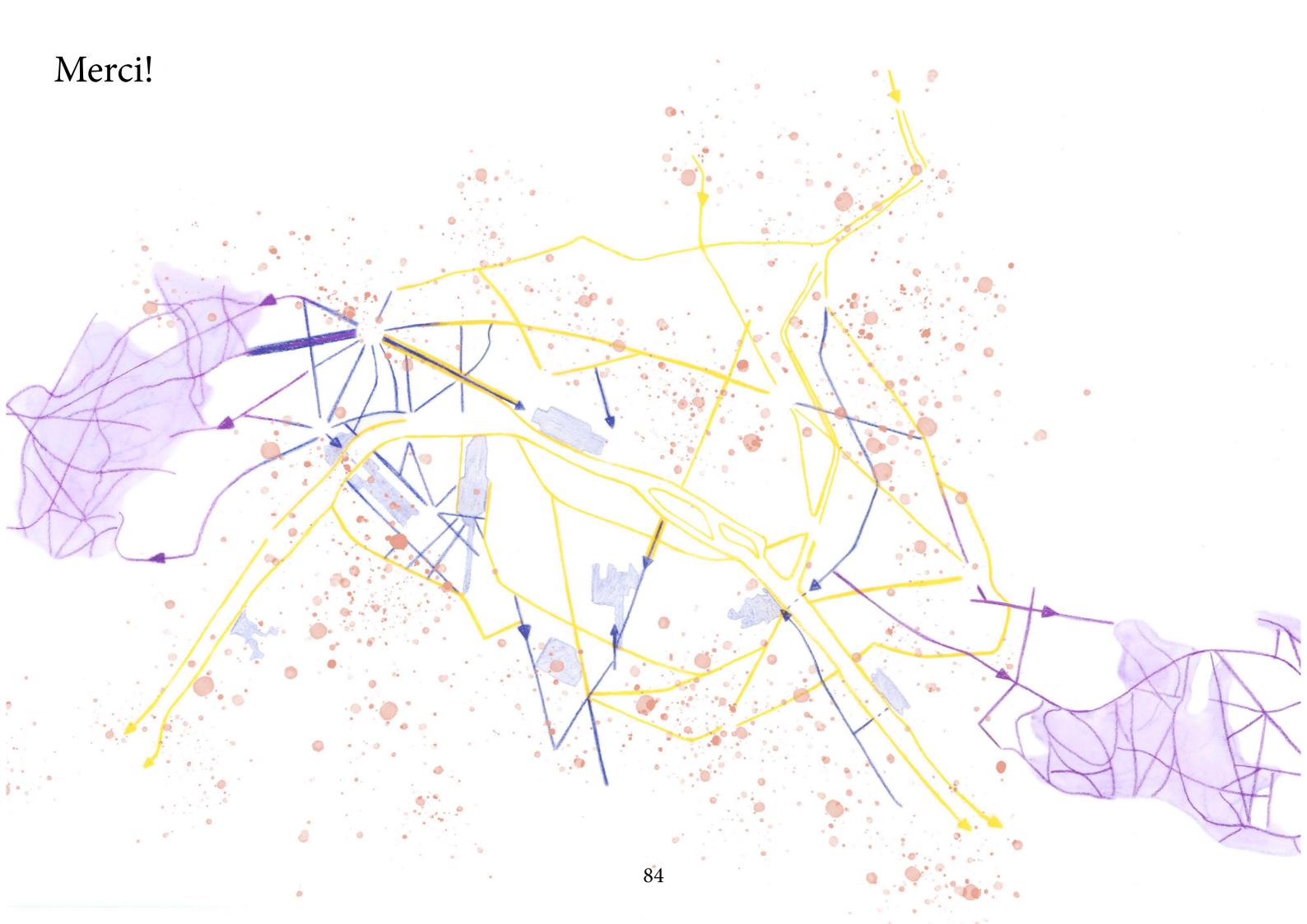
"How can a theory-driven typological framework for urban forests be designed and implemented in the city of Paris to optimize residents' psychological restoration, while also supporting the city's ongoing greening efforts and contributing to the reinvention of Paris as a sustainable, evolving urban space?"



Reflection / Discusion

Emotional responses to green space are highly personal; one forest type can evoke different reactions in different people.
 While the framework is grounded in theory, its application remains context-sensitive and partly interpretative.
 Due to the limited research on psychological effects of forest types, I often had to make intuitive design choices guided by theory and observation.
 This project strengthened my belief in the designer's role in shaping care-based, emotionally responsive urban environments.
 It would be exciting to explore how these typologies perform in other cities and cultural contexts — and whether they evoke similar restorative effects.

Translating theoretical concepts into spatial typologies



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Paris skyline with Arc de Triomphe

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Paris shopping street scene

iStock / Getty Images. (z.d.). Paris shopping street with pedestrians and traffic [Stock photo]. iStock/Getty Images. gettyimages.com

Suburban Paris street with parked cars

Getty Images. (z.d.). Paris suburb street – parking and residential buildings [Stock photo]. Getty Images. gettyimages.com