

Life after fences



Negotiating low-income
gated communities
in Bogotá

Federico Ruiz Carvajal



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Cover image
The garden of public delights, Federico Ruiz.

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List of abbreviations

AO	Area of opportunity
BACD	Base area for calculation of development rights
BoH	Back of House
CVP	<i>Caja de Vivienda Popular</i> (Popular Housing Fund)
DANE	<i>Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística</i> (National Administrative Department of Statistics)
FoH	Front of House
LIGC	Low-income gated community
MMW	Minimum monthly wage
POT	<i>Plan de Ordenamiento Territorial</i> (Land Management Plan)
SDP	<i>Secretaría Distrital de Planeación</i> (City Planning Secretary)
SPSP	Special public space plan
UA	Usable area
USD	United States Dollar
VIP	<i>Vivienda de interés proiritario</i> (Priority interest house/housing)
VIS	<i>Vivienda de interés social</i> (Social interest house/housing)

Acknowledgments

This might well be the last acknowledgments I ever write, so, despite the risk of being too pretentious or boring, I will try to include everyone and everything.

Thanks to my cat, Caravana, who’s been waiting two years to bite me again.

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I dedicate this work to Ángela and Roberto, for their unconditional love, and to Sarita, for holding everything together.

Yo tuve una experiencia con los indígenas que fue traducir la constitución a lenguas indígenas. Y con la comunidad Wayúu, que es una comunidad brava de la alta Guajira.

[...]

El artículo 12, para nuestra constitución, para vergüenza de nuestra constitución, dice: “Artículo 12: Nadie podrá ser sometido a pena cruel, trato inhumano o desaparición forzada”. Imagínese esa vaina: que una constitución de un país diga eso. Eso es algo así como si uno llega a una casa distinta y dice: “Por favor no se suene con el mantel”. Uno dice: “No, pero los que viven aquí son unas bellezas”.

[...]

¿Sabe qué tradujeron los indígenas? “Pedazo diez dos. Nadie podrá llevar por encima de su corazón a nadie, ni hacerle mal en su persona, aunque piense y diga diferente.”

Jaime Garzón

Discurso en la Universidad Autónoma de Occidente

Febrero 14^o, 1997

I had an experience with the indigenous people, which was translating the Constitution to indigenous languages, with the Wayúu community, which is a brave community from the High Guajira.

[...]

The 12th article of our constitution, for the shame of our constitution, says: “Article 12: No one will be subjected to forced sequestration, torture, cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.” Just imagine: A constitution of a country that needs to state that. It is like arriving to someone else’s house where it is written: “Please do not blow your nose with the tablecloth.” One thinks: “The people living here must be terrible.”

[...]

Do you know what they translated? “Piece ten-two. No one will carry someone else above their heart, nor harm their person, even if they think and say differently.”

Jaime Garzón

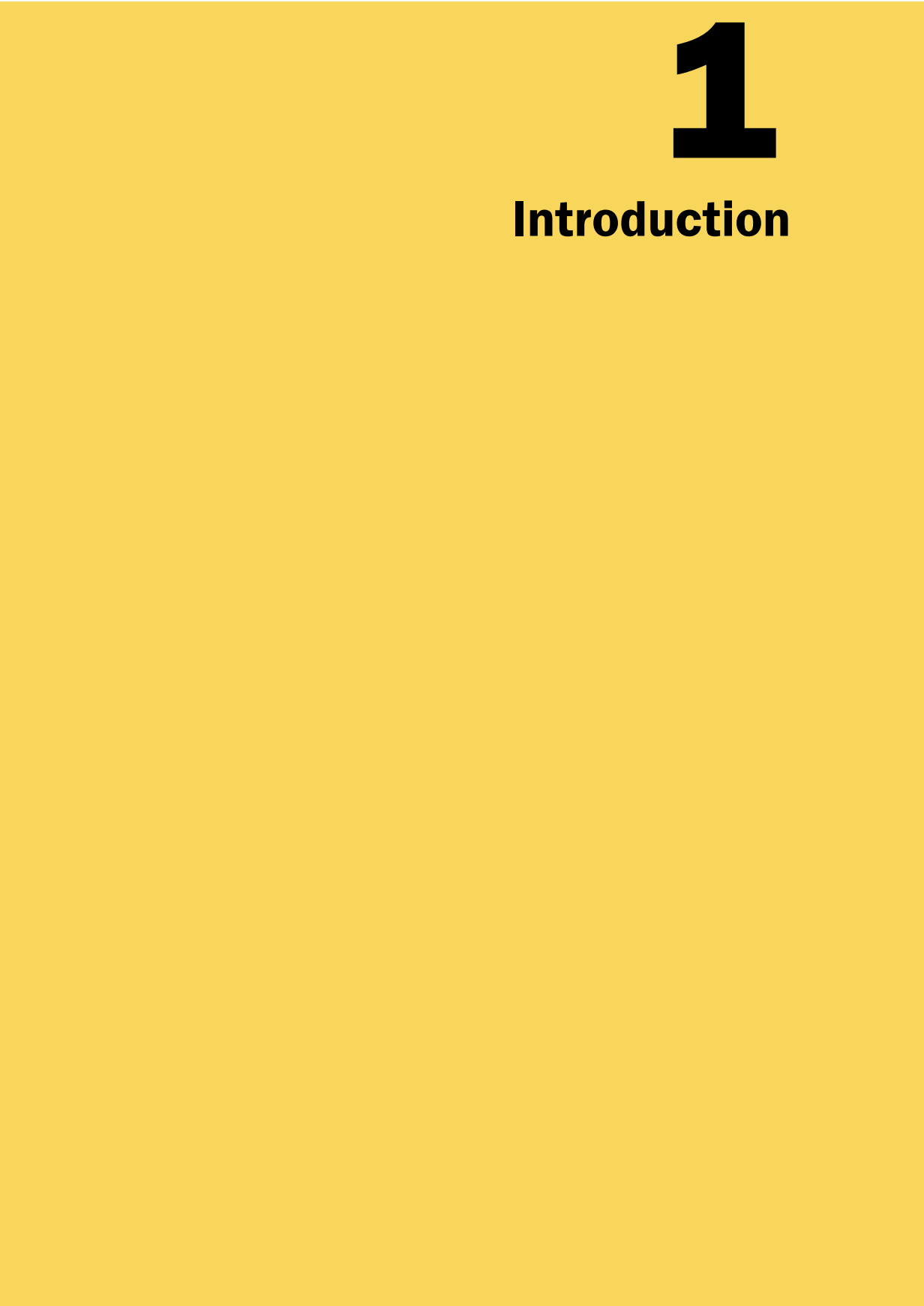
Speech at the Universidad Autónoma de Occidente

February 14th, 1997

[translated by the author]



Source: El Sushi Negro collective



1.1 Abstract

Keywords

Gated communities, Bogotá, negotiation, social housing, urban regulations.

In the early 2000s gated communities became the main growth cells of Bogotá, and in 2018 they housed 38% of the city's households. The case of low-income gated communities, which accounts of more than half of them, is especially complex. Their inhabitants, who see homeownership as the first step in their trajectory towards middle-class, are the first enforcers of their condominiums' written and unwritten codes of conduct. Ironically, these regulations go against the dwellers' previous experiences and economic needs by inhibiting social interaction and cooperation. This unexpected alignment of government, developers and residents defines a "closed city", where the possibility of an open and productive relationship between public and private spaces is denied. Nonetheless, this complex apparatus for control is constantly challenged by those same residents. This "overflow" is evident in the social and productive activities carried out within the gated communities and in the informal services and products offered in the streets around them. This project will explore the ways in which these actions can be translated into and enhanced through a spatial and regulatory "framework for negotiation." The goal will be to create the conditions for the growth of open living environments through actions that prioritise horizontal interaction and spatial flexibility. In this scenario, residents should become the main agents of production of social, political and economic complexity of their neighbourhoods.

1.2 Motivation

We Colombians have trust issues. Decades of civil war, corrupt governments and unfair exploitation have undermined our confidence in institutions and, even worst, have made difficult for us to trust each other. Consequently, institutions got used to dealing with an indifferent and unorganised population: brave resistances were (and still are) bloodily repressed, and lack of social control has made it easier for century-old castes to stay in power. This has created a vicious circle of distrust and exploitation that deepens over time. Perhaps as a last resource, we have put our faith in regulations. There are regulations for everything: official or unofficial, we find certain peace in knowing that, at least as mere formalities, rights are *a thing*.

In Bogotá, this condition has manifested itself in an unexpectedly explicit manner. In certain areas of the city, *Bogotanos* are trying to secure their futures through self-isolation, living in enclaves that offer order and control. Now, protected by hundreds of written and unwritten rules, confronting "the other" (that dangerous and unreliable entity) is no longer necessary. Every interaction is expected to be mediated in an institutional manner by someone hired to do so, be it the administrator of the condominium or the security guard at the entrance. Residents, lured by the possibility of owning a formal house in an *organised* district, have paid a high price. In those spaces, teenagers have no space to be unpredictable, protest is only for the ungrateful, and homes are not supposed to serve as working spaces. As a collateral effect, public spaces have become a necessary evil, a space still to be organised.

If a city is a place for democracy, understood as the negotiation between strangers that allows for their coexistence, then the gated communities of Bogotá are not part of the city. If a city is a place for fair exchange, understood as the negotiation between strangers that allows for their material and intellectual wellbeing, then these are not urban places either. Despite this, these neighbourhoods are constantly changing. People overflow the limits they help impose, and negotiation finds its way through regulations. But the built spaces remain unaltered, in part because of the chronic slowness of reaction of architecture and urbanism.

I believe that the physical and gradual transformation of these neighbourhoods can only improve them. And I think that, as the Wayúu translating the absurd specificity of the Constitution, common sense, instead of written laws, should be the ethical compass in that process, and democratic confrontations its means of deliberation. And I hope that, after some adjustments, the natural arenas for those encounters will be public spaces. Perhaps all is needed is a push.

This thesis wants to contribute, within all its limitations, to that push.



Source: El Sushi Negro

2

Methodology

2.1 Methods: an attitude towards openness

2.1.1 Introduction

Sometimes, it feels as if only experts see gated communities as a problem, or as the expression of deeper problems. For everyone else (dwellers, developers, and authorities) they are the only answers to rather urgent issues. This is different than saying that they are not a problem: in fact, they dramatically limit the options that residents have for entrepreneurship, and they create spaces where “the strange” is resisted through discipline and regulations. Nonetheless, this “desire for a grid” (Hurtado Tarazona, 2018), is determinant for the research design of this thesis. This is why, instead of being focused as a diagnosis of problems, it will assume gated communities as one valid, although extremely limited, response to a complex reality. Therefore, the research assumes a cautious position that first inquires about the reasons behind certain choices, and only then proposes actions that prioritise the reuse of existing social, government and built structures. In this same spirit, this thesis will not try to propose solutions, but rather frameworks and tools for the production of alternative realities.

The selected methodology is defined by three features: attitude, stages and scales. In order to use an ideologically coherent product, the methodology is organised according to an attitude that understands reality as negotiation and planning as the production of tools for that negotiation. It is also organised in three stages (analysis, design and test), so that those parts of the process that are usually more speculative in urban design (i.e. design and test), can work in tandem to evaluate and validate their outputs. Finally, the scales of the research allow to focus the inquiries and proposals of each stage.

The conceptual framework will locate the previously described methodology within an explicit intellectual tradition, therefore substantiating a *way of proceeding* with a *way of thinking*. Central in this reflection will be the notions of closed and open city, and their main tools of action, regulation and negotiation (respectively). For the case of Bogotá, a closed city will be defined as one that intends to be programmed, commodified, complete, and excluding. In opposition, the open city will be described as that which is programmable, dialogical, incomplete, and inclusive. Here, the strategy for the transition of low-income gated communities’ (LIGC) districts towards an open model of city will be described as a process of negotiation of overflow, guided by a framework for negotiation.

2.1.2 Problem statement

In the early 2000s gated communities became the main growth cells of Bogotá. In 2018 there were more than 3500 of such projects, and in they housed 38% of the city’s households (around 2.7 million people). A large part of these dwellings (54%) were social housing projects developed by privates with the financial and regulatory help of the government (De la Carrera, 2019). Today, by supposedly keeping the safety and wellbeing of a few behind walls and fences, gated communities narrow the possibilities that residents have for establishing fruitful relationships between them and with the built environment.

The case of low-income gated communities is especially complex, as dwellers, seeing homeownership as the first step in their trajectory towards middle-class, are the first enforcers of written and unwritten codes of conduct that inhibit social interaction or cooperation, even if this goes against their own previous experiences and economic needs. The consequence is a coordinated “desire for a grid”, as Hurtado Tarazona (2018, p. 125) calls it, that aligns the visions that government, developers and dwellers have for these areas. In this “closed city”, as in Sennett (2018), anything or anyone that defies the tightly predefined “script” set up by powerful stakeholders is censored by the less powerful ones. Nonetheless, rejecting the public sphere is almost impossible for those who do not have the economic means to pay for its private replacements.

It is not surprising, then, that this apparatus for control that should inhibit the growth of complexity is constantly challenged by the same residents who enforce them. This “overflow” (Pinto & López Ortego, 2020), is evident in the productive activities carried out within the gated communities and in the informal services and products offered in the streets around them. Despite this, the built environment and the codes regulating it remain unaltered. The challenge, then, is to find

new strategies that allow for the *spatial* negotiation of difference and complexity, values that are at core of any democratic society, while recognizing the advantages that residents that residents see in these districts. Updated models of governance that acknowledge the diversity of residents and includes them in decision-making processes are necessary. In that same direction, the physical flexibilization of these communities needs to be promoted. Only in that way will these districts become a dynamic and intrinsically *valuable* place for the residents and the city.

2.1.3 Main research question

MRQ How can a new institutional and spatial framework allow for the negotiation of social and economic complexity, within the closed environments of low-income gated communities in Bogotá?

2.1.4 Sub-questions

RsQ1 Which are the typological conditions of gated communities?

RsQ2 Which conditions are specific to low-income gated environments?

RsQ3 How do low-income residents adapt and transform gated environments?

RsQ4 Which strategies could allow for the growth of complexity in low-income gated environments?

RsQ5 How could low-income gated environments perform and evolve under those strategies?

2.1.5 Main aim

Conceptualise and visualise a strategy for the spatial negotiation of difference and complexity of low-income gated communities’ districts of Bogotá.

2.1.6 Subsidiary aims

- Understand the relationship between governance and market economy in the production of LIGC.
- Understand the *intrinsic* social, economic and political performance of LIGC districts.
- Understand the causes and implications

of LIGC in the larger context of the city and its metropolitan region.

- Propose a new governance model for LIGC districts.
- Propose new urban (de)regulations for flexibilization of LIGC districts.
- Propose new platforms for social interaction and cooperation in LIGC districts.
- Visualize the possible spatial outcomes of the new framework for negotiation.
- Understand possible social impacts of the strategy in LIGC districts.

2.1.7 Methodological framework

The methodology design is defined by three main features: attitude, stages and scales.

First, the attitude. This project aims to *build on the built*. Therefore, any methods and theories used should acknowledge that the studied phenomenon is the product of an ongoing spatial negotiation, and that any problems it may cause are very probably outweighed by the aspirations it is fulfilling. In this sense, they must be dialogical. Furthermore, these methods should be operative, and propose ways of doing, not only ways of observing. Therefore, this thesis, especially the final design outputs, should aim towards producing results that are valid within the scope of three dimensions: communities, regulations, and institutions.

Second, the stages of research are defined in correspondence to the research questions. This means they aim to: 1) understand the reality the project is working in (analysis); 2) designing institutional alternatives for that reality (design); 3) apply this new framework, evaluate its performance and propose improvements or adjustments (test). Although these three moments are not organised in a linear way, they do belong to different spheres in terms of methodology. On the one hand, the analysis stage will always rely on reality for the effects of validation (or data collected from reality which will be inferred to be true). This means that quantitative and qualitative research methods

will be the main sources of information on the spatial, financial, legal, social and economic conditions of the city. In this stage, the research needs to focus in three aspects: gated communities as spatial and social model, with features that are common to *all* examples, low-income gated communities as a variant of the model -with characteristics that are not shared by the high-income versions-, and the ways in which low-income residents resist or adapt to these gated environments when faced with discrepancies between expectation and reality.

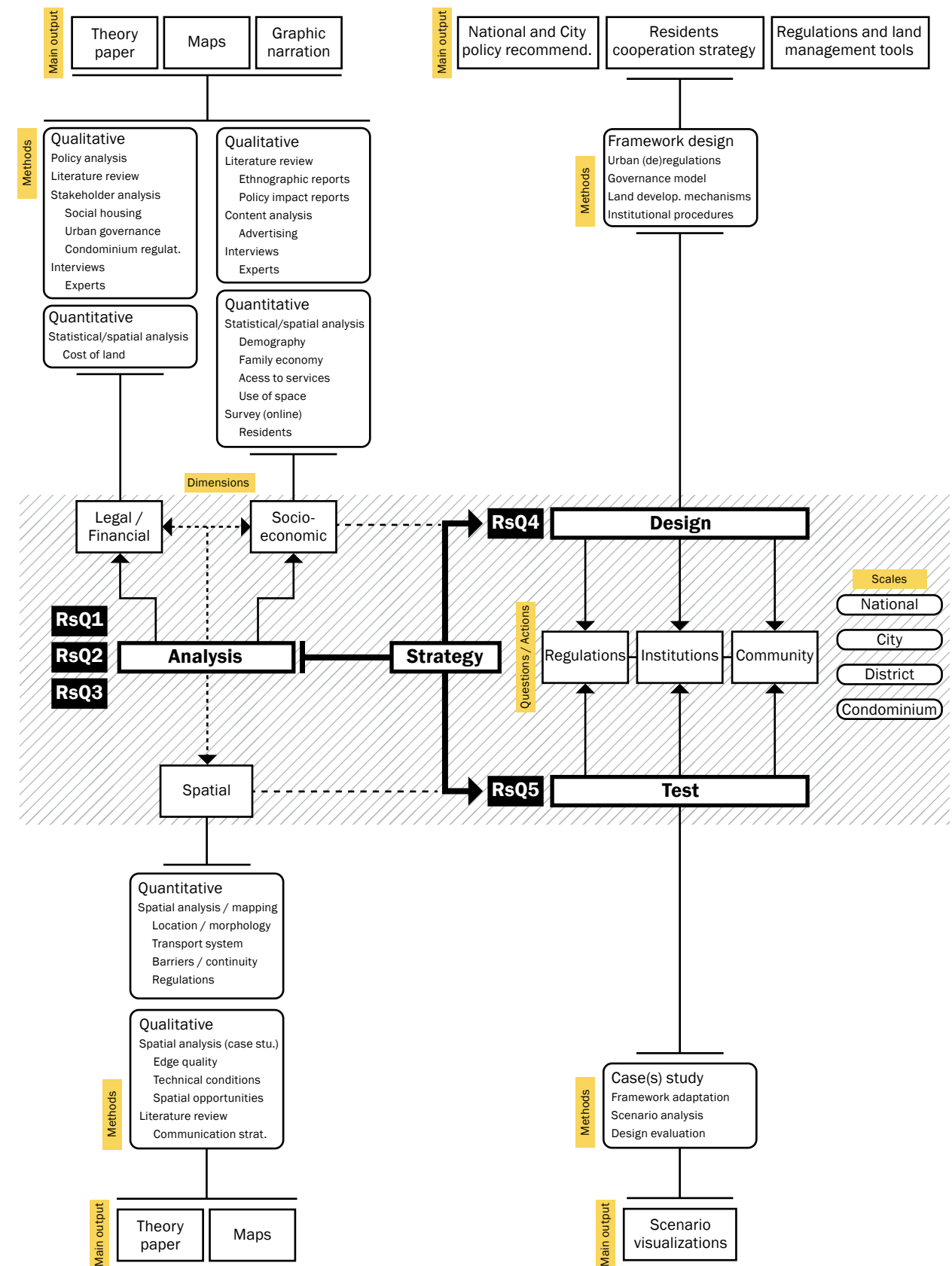
For the design and test stages, of a more speculative nature, the only way of validating findings and proposals is through the constant feedback between design and testing. Therefore, speculative design, scenario analysis and design evaluation will be some of the tools used. The goal here will be to create a framework within which the unique conditions of low-income households can help determine the shape and function of a housing model that has been replicated without considering the specificities of its dwellers.

Finally, the specific conditions of planning in Bogotá define the scales of the research: country, city, district and condominium. While the smaller scales (district and condominium) can be encompassed in all stages, the national and city scales will only be fully addressed in the analysis and design stages. This is because the test stage needs of clearly defined local conditions to produce reliable results. This need for reliability is an implication of the practical attitude mentioned before.

2.1.8 Conceptual framework

Hereby, some concepts of capital importance for this thesis will be defined in a succinct manner, understanding that a brief definition leaves enough things unsaid for making concepts operative and not restrictive. First, the opposing notions of open and closed city are explained, as well as their accompanying notions of regulation, “desire for a grid,” overflow and

Methodological framework diagram



negotiation. Additional to these structural concepts, other ideas of operative importance are also discussed: the framework for negotiation and the testing scenarios. The way in which these concepts are integrated into the methodological framework is explained in the diagram that accompanies this text.

Closed and regulated

An object or system is closed when it is characterised by isolation, self-sufficiency and simplicity. The use of this concept in planning and urban design is not new; this definition is very similar to the one proposed by Sennett (2006, 2018), and in the same theoretical tradition of Jacobs (1961). The main tool for defining and legitimising a closed entity is a regulation, which will be defined as any principle or set of imposed principles meant to keep a state of general or static order.

As with any general concept, the “closed city” and its regulations have specific features depending on the context in which they exist. In the case of Bogotá, closeness is enforced by regulations that intend to make the city: 1) Programmed: the uses permitted in each plot of land are relatively limited. This is especially the case in housing projects; 2) Commodified: planning responds to the needs of market and developers; 3) Complete: a good part of the areas occupied by gated communities are subject to regulations that search to consolidate their form into a final shape. Therefore, possibilities for future development or transformation are limited. 4) Excluding: spatialised socio-economic strata and the possibility of building anti-urban enclaves have defined a city that is segregated through infrastructure, non-porous edges and security agents (both private and public).

In the case of Bogotá, gated communities are the most popular type of closed urban enclave. It has been demonstrated how residents have chosen to live in them guided by the desire of inhabiting spaces that are designed and governed for

keeping order and discipline, something desirable when compared to their previous informal residential experiences. This “desire for a grid”, as called by Hurtado Tarazona (2018, p. 125), is a crucial concept to understand the condition of closedness in Bogotá.

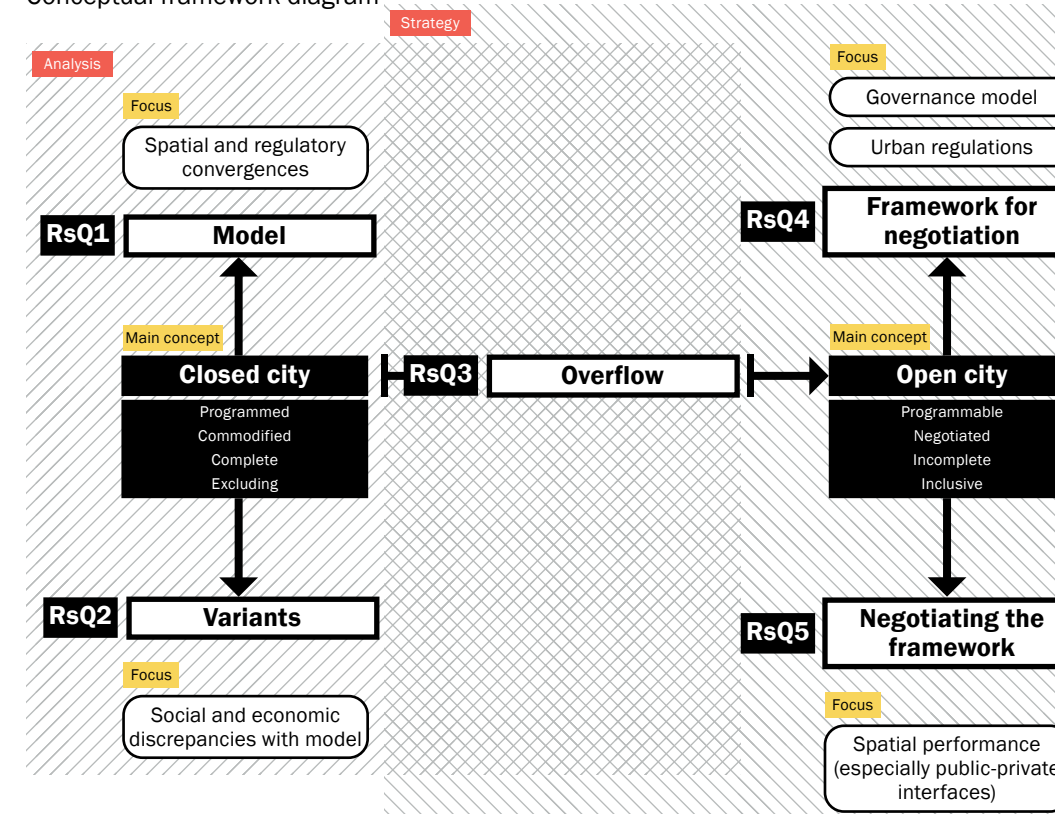
Open and negotiated

At the opposite pole to closedness lies “the open,” a condition in which an object or system is defined by porosity, coordination with external forces and complexity. Several authors have proposed ways to use this concept in the realm of urban design: Sennett has discussed the “open shapes” and open strategies of coproduction and cooperation (2018), and before him Alexander et al. (1975) and Jacobs (1961, p. 291) discussed related ideas as, for example, piecemeal growth and gradual development (respectively).

If the main tool of closedness is the regulation, the “open world” makes use of negotiation: a dynamic exchange of information and energy that defines local and temporal conditions of order. A good negotiation will be that one which produces an outcome that partially satisfies the demands of most actors involved, with a special emphasis in the less powerful ones.

Following the same criteria used before, we could say that the *open Bogotá* has, or could have, the following characteristics: 1) Programmable uses. Aside from high-impact functions, other small-scale commercial or manufacture uses should be permitted to coexist with dwellings (as they already do informally); 2) Dialogical processes should guide the decision making, even more so when planning processes deal with areas that are already densely inhabited; 3) Incomplete form. Spatial flexibility should be improved in such a way that spaces can adapt as the priorities and needs of households mutate. 4) Inclusive towards those who are different: household income should not be spatialised through strata and the initiatives that promote social and economic

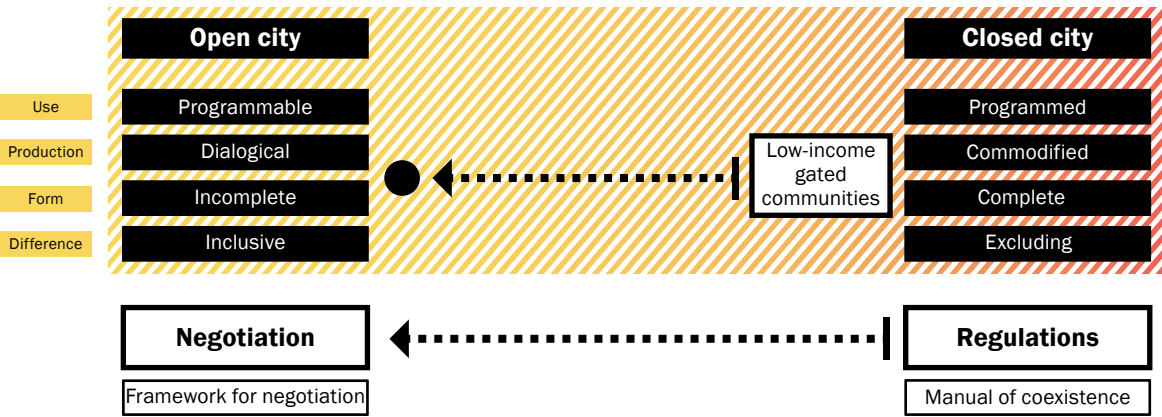
Conceptual framework diagram



inclusion must regain the mediatory role that is now held by security and control institutions.

In Bogotá, the open city has different ways of expressing, also as actions of resistance and negotiation within gated districts. This is where “Overflow” comes into play. This concept describes the products of the clash between a regulation and the intricacies of life, from a small action to a revolution. It happens when the limited agency that an actor has within a closed context is used for “working out the regulations”, with the goal of making it more pertinent to the *real* conditions of life. Although the term is briefly mentioned in the anthropologic study on LIGC of Hurtado Tarazona (2018, p. 233), its development as a concept comes from the on-site work of *Golpe de barrio* and *Arquitectura Expandida* (Pinto & López Ortego, 2020), two collectives working Campo Verde, an LIGC district.

At this point, it is important to clarify two things: the position of the author and the “polar condition” of the concepts mentioned before. Regarding the first one, this work is clearly compromised with the idea of the open city as a better option than a closed one. Therefore, the intent is not to search an “in-between” condition, but to propose the ways in which the closed areas of the city can transition towards an open state. This should not be confused with a legitimization of the areas that are already physically open, which have their own problems and can also suffer the inequality and fragmentation that a close society produces. Second, the ideas of open and closed must not be understood as realizable states: they are polarities within which the city is constantly moving, as a pendulum. Therefore, the proposals contained in this thesis are always aiming towards an open city, but should never be confused with *the plan* for it. This condition cannot have a final structure, so even



the strategies and plans proposed here, as flexible and adaptable as they might be, should always be open for changes in the future.

The manual and the framework

A “framework for negotiation” is proposed to make the conceptual framework operative. It is the main output of the thesis, and its aim is to set the conditions for the *growth of openness*. It consists of a set of spatial and functional parameters and a local governance model, both conceived to enable a negotiation of difference and complexity in low-income gated communities. It is also an *open* opposition to the “manual for coexistence,” a type of document elaborated by the administrators that contains the regulations that residents should observe if they want to be “good neighbours”.

As said before, this framework is tested in a concrete site to evaluate its performance and, when needed, it is modified it and improved (a research by design approach). This final stage requires a critical view from the author on his own creation, a type of reversed negotiation: therefore, this part of the thesis has been called “negotiating the framework”.

As a final complement, it is important to discuss the idea of negotiation. It is not the purpose of this thesis to propose the return to small-scale communities where local decision making completely replaces the large impact that policies and

urban regulations have. This could lead to a situation in which private life extends to the public sphere, thus worsening the ongoing commodification of public life. Jacobs calls this “togetherness” and treats it as situation as undesirable for any city as lack of contact between residents (1961, p. 62). Instead, the notion of negotiation present in this work refers to a distant but engaged type of relationship that allows for the coexistence and mediation of irreconcilable differences. This is similar to the idea of indifference proposed by Sennett as the basis for any interaction between strangers who will always remain strange to each other (Sennett, 2018, p. 294).



Source: El Sushi Negro

3

The gated model

3.1 Introduction

Gated communities are the visible a *pattern* of a cultural and regulatory *model* of development and spatial occupation. Therefore, some characteristics are common to all cases. The first step to find these shared traits is to make an overview of what gated communities are in the context of Bogotá, where they are located and how they have evolved through time. After this general exposition, the focus will shift to show the ways in which gated communities create “closedness” in the city. To do this, a detailed spatial and statistical analysis synthesised in maps will show how the areas occupied by gated communities are programmed, commodified, complete; and excluding.

3.2 The gated community

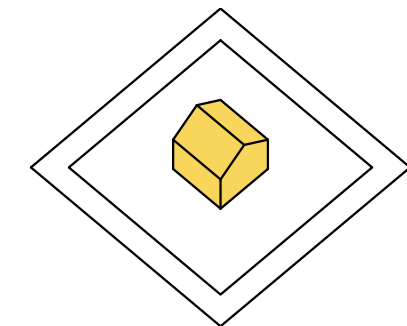
3.1.1 Defining a gated community

Gated communities have been defined in different ways. For this thesis, I will adopt the definition given by David Kostenwein (2021a, p. 3), who defines a gated community as a built project that fulfils four conditions:

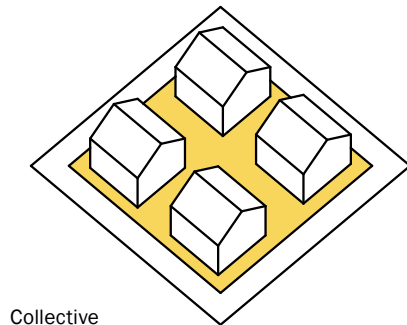
- Residential: It has mainly residential uses.
- Collective: Housing units share spaces and services of private property and collective use.
- Anti-urban: Little or no relation between the private built space and the surrounding public space.
- Enclosed: Limited accessibility with walls or fences and controlled entrances.

This definition is pertinent for this work given its spatial focus. It is also similar to the definitions given by researchers in Bogotá (Island City, 2019), and by other authors who study the same phenomenon in other Latin American cities (Borsdorf, Hidalgo, & Sánchez, 2007; Caldeira, 1996b).

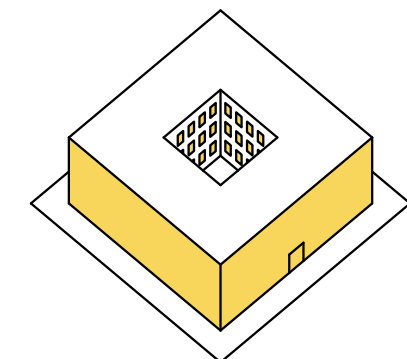
However, this definition is not shared by all authors and institutions studying gated communities in Bogotá. For De la Carrera (2014, 2019), who's work focuses on large-scale spatial analysis, the definition is adjusted according to the geographic data available. Therefore, gated community is defined as a housing project subject to the condominium regulations (*Régimen de propiedad horizontal*) and built in a plot of more than 3000 m². In the case of the surveys conducted by the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE), an *a priori* definition is not provided, so it is left to the surveyors to define if the interviewees live or not in this type of projects. Despite this, a quick review of the



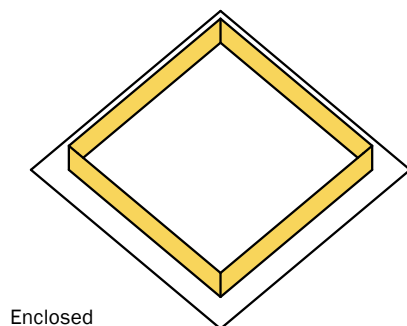
Residential



Collective



Anti-urban



Enclosed

Sources: Ciudad Isla (2019)

outcomes of these studies shows that the agreements on what a gated community is largely outweigh the misalignments.

3.1.2 Closed by law

Today, the Condominiums' Regime Law (675 of 2001) is the only administrative act in force in present times that gives a clear and thorough definition of what a gated community *is* and how it should *work*. In Article 63, it reads:

Closed Real Estate Units. The Closed Real Estate Units are groups of buildings, houses and other constructions integrated architecturally and functionally, that share structural and constructive elements, common areas of circulation, recreation, meeting, [as well as] technical facilities, green areas and visual enjoyment [areas]; whose owners participate proportionally in the payment of common expenses, such as community public utilities, surveillance, maintenance and improvements. Access to such real estate complexes is restricted by an enclosure and entry controls. (Congreso de Colombia, 2001, p. 37)

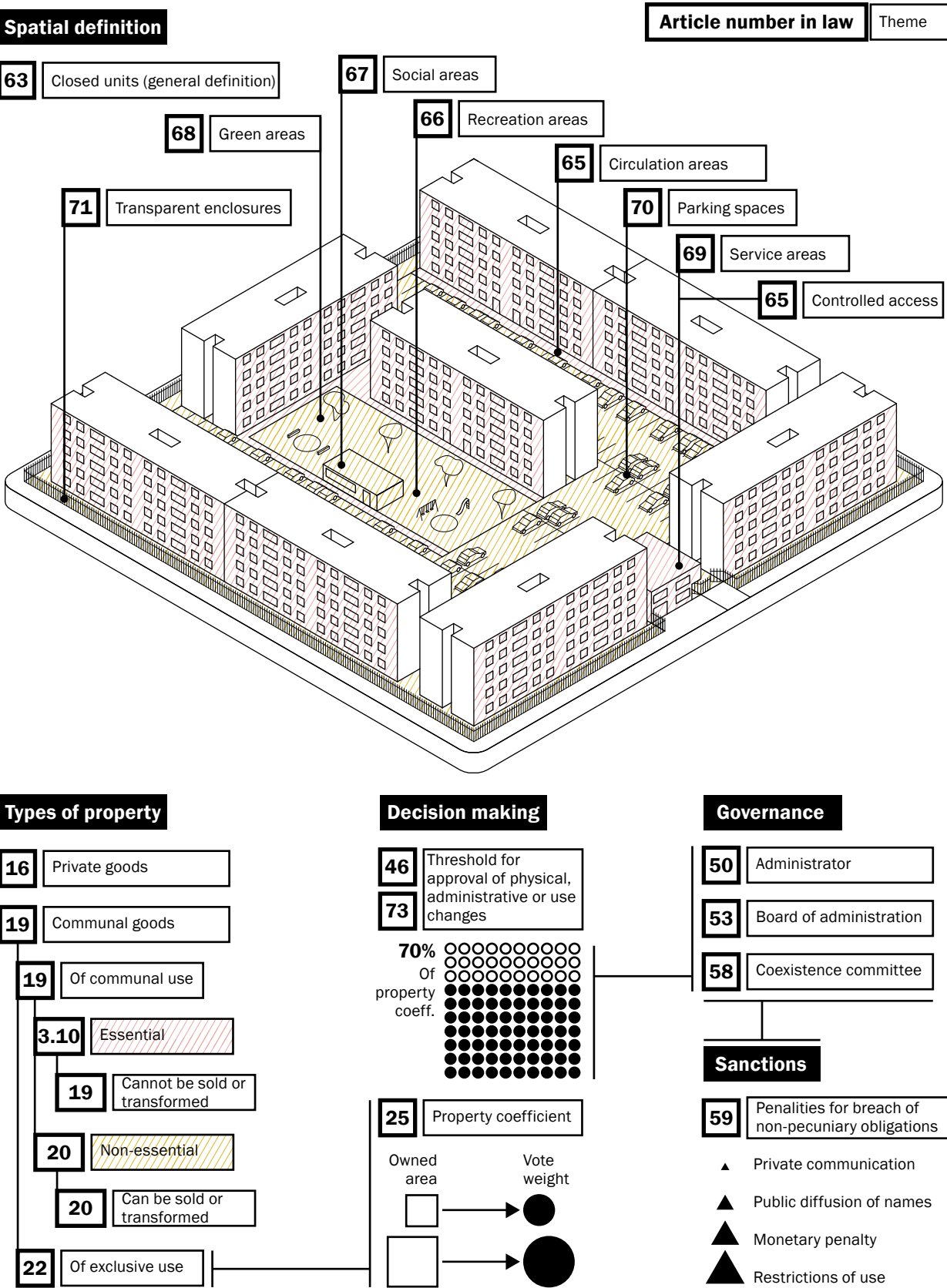
Gated communities are the only building typology that is explained with such detail in the whole document, dedicating an individual article to each one of the common areas that one of such projects should have (see diagram). This is even though its scope is that one of updating and determining the basic parameters for the administrative organization of *all* condominiums, and not defining their spatial configuration, which is something that is ultimately determined by the urban regulations of each municipality. This obsession, though, should not come as a surprise: the year in which the law was issued was the same in which gated

communities became the most prevalent type of housing built in Bogotá, boosted, as it was already explained, by the state policies themselves (De la Carrera, 2014, p. 26). Therefore, this law could be seen as a product of a government that was ensuring the correct performance of a model that was now ubiquitous and, given its capacity to agglomerate many people in a restricted area, especially prone to social conflict.

This explains why the law is so thorough, specifying the owners' rights and duties, property types, decision-making mechanisms, distribution of voting rights and procedure for sanctioning misconducts. Interestingly, the law also gives the power to administrators to impose (after a favourable vote from the owners' assembly) regulations that are stricter than laws and urban regulations in force. This power, which was later declared constitutional by the Constitutional Court (2002), allows for land uses to be restricted to residential-only even urban regulations allow for commercial uses. Therefore, gated communities can define *their own* rules in *their own*, impregnable, space: they are closed by law.

Despite the freedom that laws give to gated communities have for rejecting the exterior world, they also allow for their opening up. For instance, changing the permitted uses, the exterior appearance of buildings and even selling part of the non-essential communal spaces to third parties is possible, as long as it is approved by a qualified majority and there is a fair compensation for those spaces. Therefore, the legal freedom of condominiums can be both a source of urban vitality and apathetic privatisation.

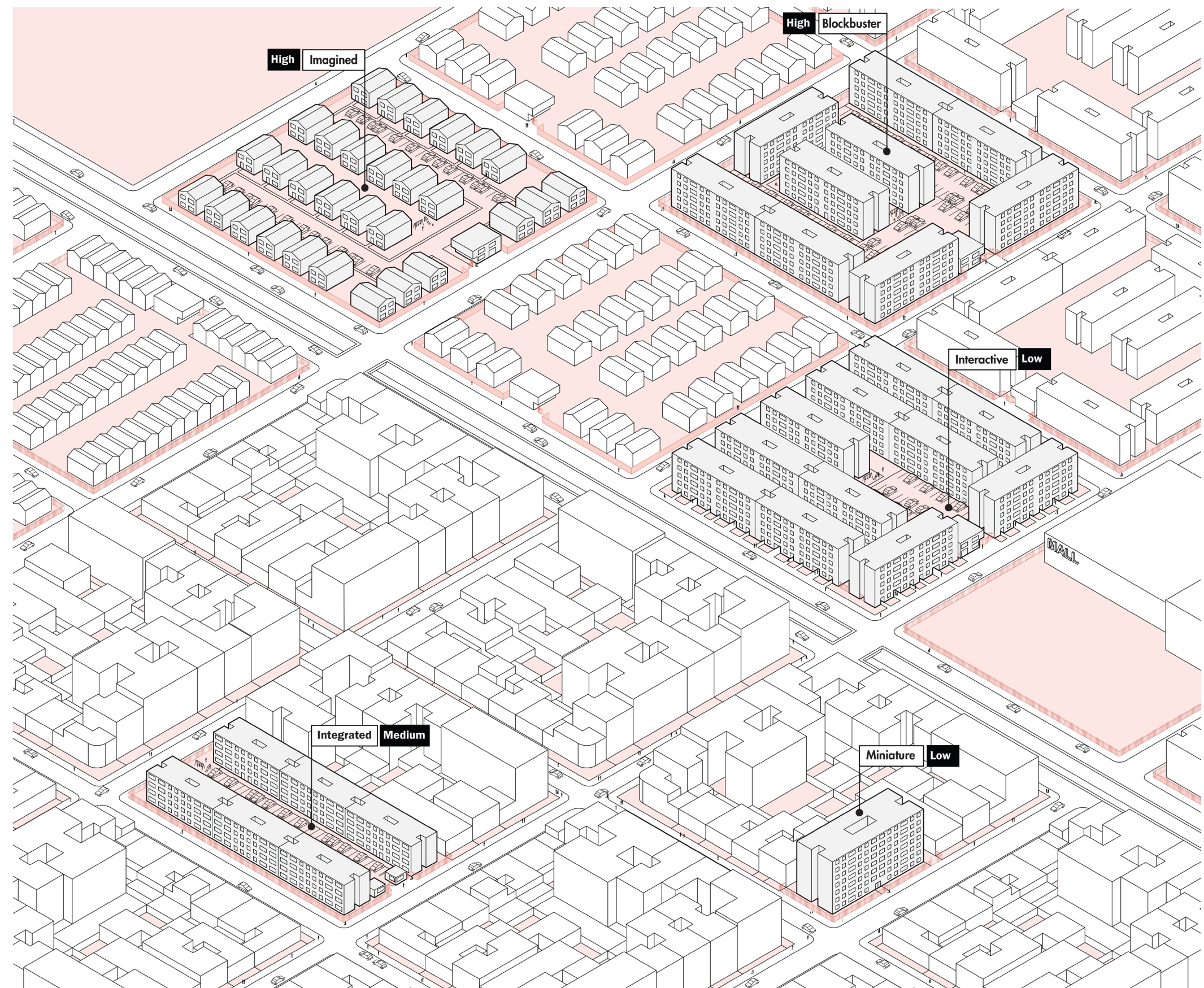
Closed units (i.e. gated communities) in the Condominiums' Regime Law (675 of 2001)



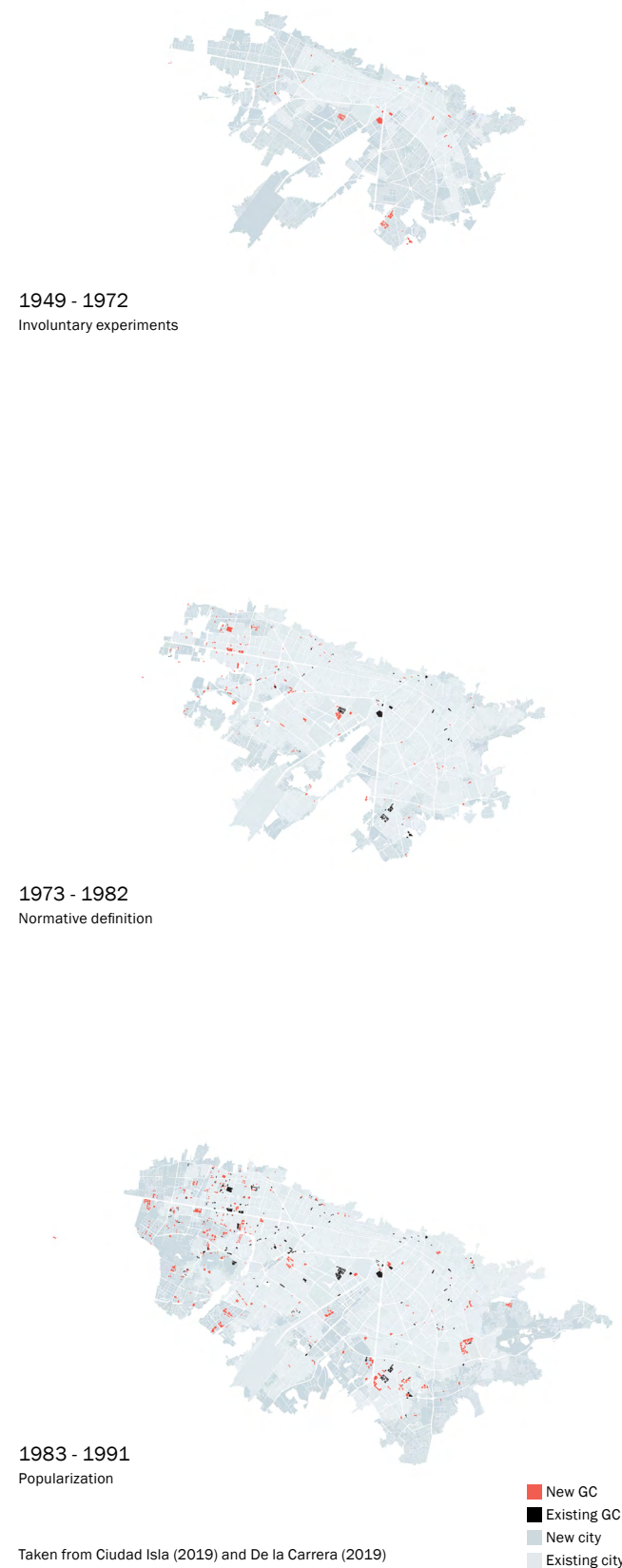
3.2.1 Types

Gated communities are not homogenous. For instance, one study identified 5 typologies of gated communities in Bogotá. The classification was made according to the type of streets that the projects configure around them (Kostenwein, 2021a). One of them, named The Blockbuster, corresponds to what is usually understood as a gated community in Bogotá: a dense project (3 floors or more) occupying an entire block, with all its perimeter in contact with public space, a fenced enclosure with only one (usually guarded) entrance and surrounded by other gated communities or inactive spaces.

This type of gated community is especially relevant for many reasons. First, it houses all socioeconomic strata and can be found in most of the city. Second, it is usually embedded in a cluster of gated communities, which means that, given the large plots required by this type of development, they are most probably located in expansion areas of the city. For these reasons, “it is the standard real estate product on the market today and it represents the new basic cell for developing the city” (Kostenwein, 2021a, p. 10).



Units



3.2.2 Evolution: from units to districts

Gated communities were officially introduced in Bogotá's urban regulations in 1970, with a decree written by the (then) councilman Germán Samper, who was also a well-known architect and urbanist (Samper, 1989). The first built versions of such projects were usually isolated units that were not part of larger urban plans. Large social housing projects were not supposed to be fenced (though many were eventually enclosed) and only some exceptional private projects explored the replication of gated communities at larger scales. In general terms, the gated districts that formed during the first 30 years of existence of gated communities grew organically and without a general plan.

It was not until the second half of the 1980s that the government started exploring the financial and spatial "benefits" of large-scale gated communities' districts. With the liberalization of markets in the 90s, public-private partnerships were used to reach even larger scales. One of the earliest examples of such ventures was Ciudad Salitre, a project for a new district then publicised as "the most important urban project made in Colombia" (Presidencia de la República de Colombia & Banco Central Hipotecario, 1998).

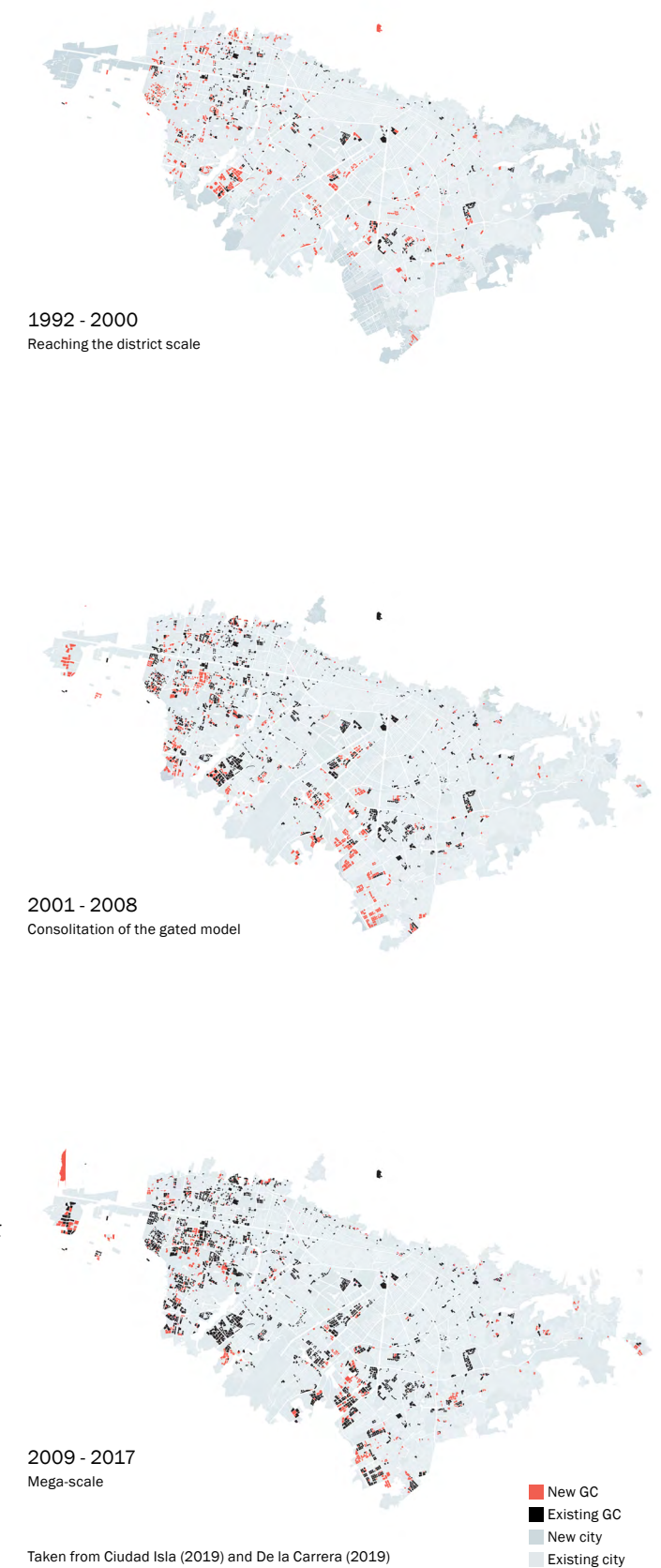
This type of development was later institutionalised under the figure of the partial plan, a mechanism still in use that allows for the development of large plots of land (usually several hectares) following an agreement on the "distribution of development responsibilities and benefits between the different landowners and the local authority" (Ortiz-Gómez & Zetter, 2004, p. 6). The Partial plan also represents the ultimate expression of an urbanism focused more on quantitative parameters (quantity of public space and square meters of public buildings), rather than on the quality of the environments being built. This disregard of the public and the special treatment they give to private in-

vestors has consolidated these plans as the preferred tools for the expansion of the city, as well as the main vehicles for the massive replication of gated communities in the forms of districts. For instance, a study made by the SDP discovered that 85% of blocks built in Partial Plans were gated communities. It also showed that these blocks had an average area of 8000 m² and were part of larger superblocks of 4 to 5 hectares (Secretaría Distrital de Planeación, 2019, p. 285).

The final step-up of the consolidation of gated districts followed the emanation of two national laws that created the Macro-projects of national interest (Congreso de Colombia, 2007, 2011). These plans allow the National government to directly promote large-scale social housing developments. In practice, these initiatives relegate local authorities, which lack the institutional capacity or the will to resist or change them. Then, driven by the urgent need of providing new houses, the national government can ignore local conditions and possible risks when implementing these plans. For instance, a study from 2014 showed that most of the Macro-projects implemented until then were located in peri-urban areas, had changed the use of land from rural to urban and were located in vulnerable areas (Méndez, Hincapié, & Agudelo, 2014).

The land shortage of Bogotá, together with its strong institutions, makes it almost impossible to promote one of these initiatives within the city perimeter. Ciudad Verde (Green City), the only project of this type developed in the *de facto* metropolitan region of Bogotá, was approved in 2009 in Soacha, a municipality in the south-west of the city. The numbers are overwhelming: one developer, 328 hectares of originally rural land, 51500 dwellings and around 150000 inhabitants. All its blocks, with side lengths of up to 200 m, were built as gated communities. A gated district floating in the middle of nothing.

Districts



1990 advertising of Los Elíseos. Translation by the author.
Source: El Tiempo, 03/11/1990.

Your house with its "Own Park"

1971 advertising of Rincón del Country. Translation by the author. Source: El Tiempo, 06/11/1971.



El Rincón del Country in its urban context.

3.2.3 Advertising the privatised life
The history of the consolidation of built gated communities is parallel to that one of the advertisements that propelled their consolidation. Therefore, asking about the rhetoric of gated communities, and how it came to have such a wider acceptance, coincides with the question about the reasons that lead people to live in them, and also about the way in which developers manipulate their needs to turn them into business opportunities. As said by Teresa Caldeira in her review of gated communities' ads of Sao Paulo, "real estate advertisements constitute a good source of information about the lifestyles and values of the people whose desires they elaborate and help to shape" (2000, p. 263).

What follows is a quick review of the development of those advertisements in Bogotá. The source of all images and data is the working paper *Citadels, walls and happy families: the gated communities of Bogotá in classified advertising (1970-1998)* (Ruiz, 2021). This study classified and analysed advertising pieces related to gated communities according to their theme. All the ads came from the classifieds section of a newspaper of national circulation (El Tiempo). To cover a long period of time (1970 to 1998), only one issue per year was surveyed (first Saturday of November).

Origins

The earliest reference to a gated community comes from 1971, just one year after the

promulgation of the decree that permitted this type of projects. Although it does not mention the term "gated community" (*conjunto cerrado*) or any equivalent, it does use elements of the traditional city (i.e. the park) to explain that these houses share an amenity of private use. The use of quotation marks around "Own Park" shows how extraordinary this supplantation of the public life was (at least for the advertising creative in charge). When compared to what was built, it is evident that the project is, in fact, a proto-gated community. Although it shares a private park in the centre, all the houses have an individual entrance from the street, which means that the anti-urban relationship to public space is not *complete*. This lack of closedness might also explain the absence of any reference to extra security in the piece.

The first classifieds that explicitly talk about gated communities come from 1976. One of them, promoting a project named *La Cancioneta* (The little song), could be considered as an early manifesto of gated communities. This is because it is the first to establish and explain the association between this type of housing and security, through elements of the "traditional" city. The piece opens with a heading that already established the relationship between security and tranquillity. Then, it continues by explaining how these objectives are achieved: if in earlier ads it was just an element that was privatised (a street or park), now what is closed is a more complex organism, a "private citadel" where the best of living in a house and in an apartment have been mixed with parks and permanent surveillance. At the bottom of the piece, two lines describe the instructions for the new way of living that the project provides: on the one hand, residents are no longer in charge of worrying about the safety of their property, and can use their time to "go on vacation." The second line mentions how that security extends to all friends and guests who come to visit. In this new lifestyle, private security is not only responsible for protecting residents'

SECURITY! TRANQUILITY!

THAT IS WHAT WE OFFER IN THE

PRIVATE CITADEL "THE LITTLE SONG"

WITH: -The advantages of apartments.
-The comfort of houses.
-A private park for you
-Permanent surveillance [security]

GO ON VACATION AND LEAVE YOUR HOUSE ALONE
YOUR HOUSE, YOUR CAR AND YOUR FRIENDS' ALWAYS SAFE!

IN THE NORTH OF THE CITY!

SEGURIDAD! TRANQUILIDAD!

ESTO ES LO QUE OFRECEMOS EN LA:

CIUDADELA PRIVADA "LA CANCIONETA"



CON: -Los ventajas de los apartamentos.
-Las comodidades de las casas.
-Parque privado para usted.
-Vigilancia permanente

VAYASE DE VACACIONES Y DEJE SU CASA SOLA

SU CASA, SU CARRO Y EL DE SUS AMIGOS SIEMPRE SEGUROS!!!

VISITENOS: Transversal 44b. No. 100-49

EN EL NORTE DE LA CIUDAD!!

INFORMES: *Isauro Restrepo Landate & cia.*

CARRERA 15 No. 77-50 PISO 5º TEL: 56-26-23

Res. 0550 75 / B / 76 - Superbanca

Top and right. 1976 advertising of La Cancioneta. Translation by the author. Source: El Tiempo, 11/11/1976.



La Cancioneta in its urban context.

assets, but also facilitating their social life and safeguarding their prestige (Ruiz, 2021, p. 6).

Compared to the first example, *La Cancioneta* is a consolidated gated community. The only side that faces the street has blind walls and fences that are only interrupted by an entrance for cars and pedestrians. Houses are accessed through interior spaces used for parking spaces and a relatively large park. This is a

mature model that is ready to become a product.

Leitmotifs and the invention of a product

The last years of the 70s saw the sustained increase in the number of advertisements, as well as the number of themes that they mentioned. The permanent reiteration of themes related to social, economic and security reoccupations shows how gated communities eventually became the universal "solution" to all kinds of problems. In total, the review of ads identified nine leitmotifs: security, green spaces and rural environments, collective amenities and services, location, design and finishes, financial advantages, technology, emotions and lifestyle, and class.

When looking at the frequency of appearance of themes, it is interesting to see how most reach a peak between 1976 and 1978 (this is for classifieds that explicitly mention gated communities only). This means that most ads had to explain what they were selling in full, *theme by theme*. In the same moment in which developers were building gated communities for the first time, advertisers were defining them as a product.

Relevant trends

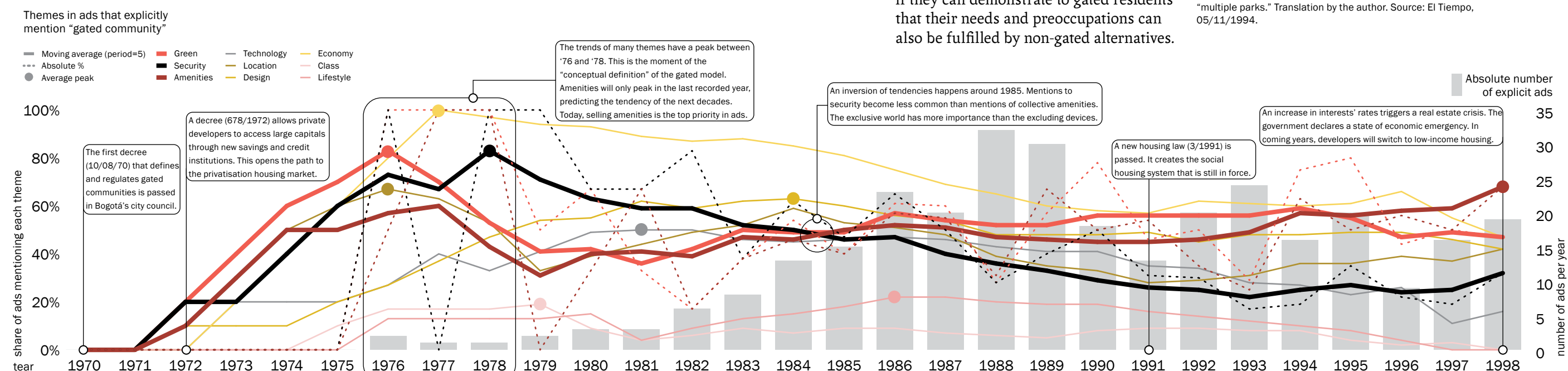
When looking at the historical behaviour of these leitmotifs, there are three themes that are worth focusing on: security, collective amenities, and green spaces. Perhaps the theme that was more dramatically assimilated by gated communities was that one of security. If in 1978 more than 80% of ads explicitly mentioning gated communities included security as one of the characteristics of the projects, by 1993 less than a third did the same. This shows how, in practice, the term "gated community" had become synonym of "security." Oppositely, in that same period collective amenities peaked in different moments and, overall, kept a slight tendency upwards. For instance, in the last recorded year (1998), almost 70% of all ads mentioned them. The third theme, green spaces, showed a very stable behaviour after the 1970s peak, stabilizing at around 50%. This need for a permanent reiteration might be originated in the increasing density of gated communities, which left less space for green areas, thus making it necessary to at least sell them as green (even if they could not be built accordingly).

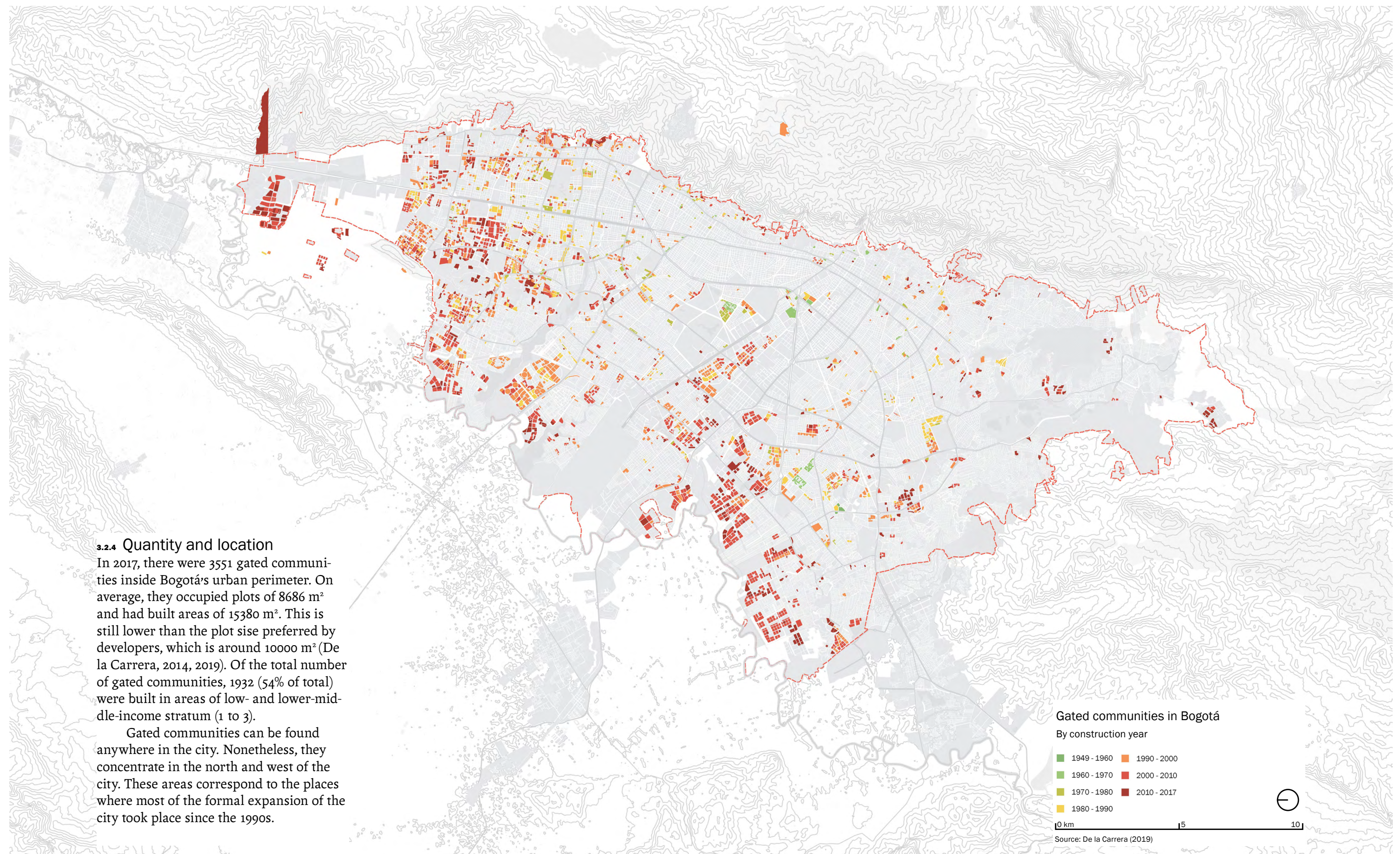
Although the trends of these three themes might look as contradictory, they do tell a story about the social value of gated communities and how it was legitimised through advertisement. As residential enclaves became *obvious* providers of security, the amenities and green spaces offered within their fences remained less evident. The detachment from public life that these enclaves allowed also brought the need to constantly define and re-define the exclusive life happening inside. In these simplified worlds lifestyles were constantly reinvented, communities were bonded by the amenities they possessed and security was no longer the product of a public and collective effort, but a private service that could only be enjoyed by those who lived within fences.

In conclusion, as gated communities became a predominant type of housing, advertising helped them engulf many meanings, and become the *natural* solution for many of people's most urgent preoccupations. This assimilation is something that still exists today, and therefore any negotiation of gated communities must begin by understanding and "unpacking" the values they represent. More democratic ways of city-making will succeed only if they can demonstrate to gated residents that their needs and preoccupations can also be fulfilled by non-gated alternatives.



1994 advertising of Torres de Granada. The disappearance of explicit mentions to security is evident in this ad. Despite this, the promise of "beautiful families" and "pretty people" add up to offer another type of security: social security. A beautified society condemned to eternal pleasure in a "flowery land" with "multiple parks." Translation by the author. Source: El Tiempo, 05/11/1994.







High-class gated communities form an involuntary cluster in the North of the city.



A partial plan of gated communities in the Southwest of the city. On the left, an neighbourhood of informal origin.



Ciudad Verde, in Socaha, the first and only Macro-project in the (unofficial) metropolitan region of Bogotá.

3.2.5 Clusters

As it was explained, gated communities tend to cluster. There are three typologies of gated districts.

Involuntary agglomerations

These are clusters formed by single gated communities lacking a unifying urban plan. Each unit is subject to standard urban regulations, so the construction has been individually approved through the process of required for any multi-family building. They are usually integrated in the more central areas of the city, have high-income dwellers, and show a variety of plot sizes and morphological configurations.

Planned districts

Most gated clusters correspond to this type. Some have been developed through the mechanism of the Partial plan, adopted in Bogotá in the year 2000. Nonetheless, there are examples dating back to the 80s that can be included in this category. On average, these developments have super-blocks of 4 to 5 hectares, subdivided in blocks of 8000 m² (Secretaría Distrital de Planeación, 2019, p. 285). They are built following a masterplan, which allows for large and concentrated public spaces and services, as well as a homogeneous morphology. They are usually located in the West and South of the city, or in the urban areas of neighbouring municipalities.

Macro-projects

Only one of these projects has been built in the (still unofficial) metropolitan region of Bogotá. Its characteristics are the same of the Planned districts, with the difference that this type is larger by a large margin and more disconnected from the city. The possibility of similar projects being developed around Bogotá in future years makes it important to consider it as a separate category.

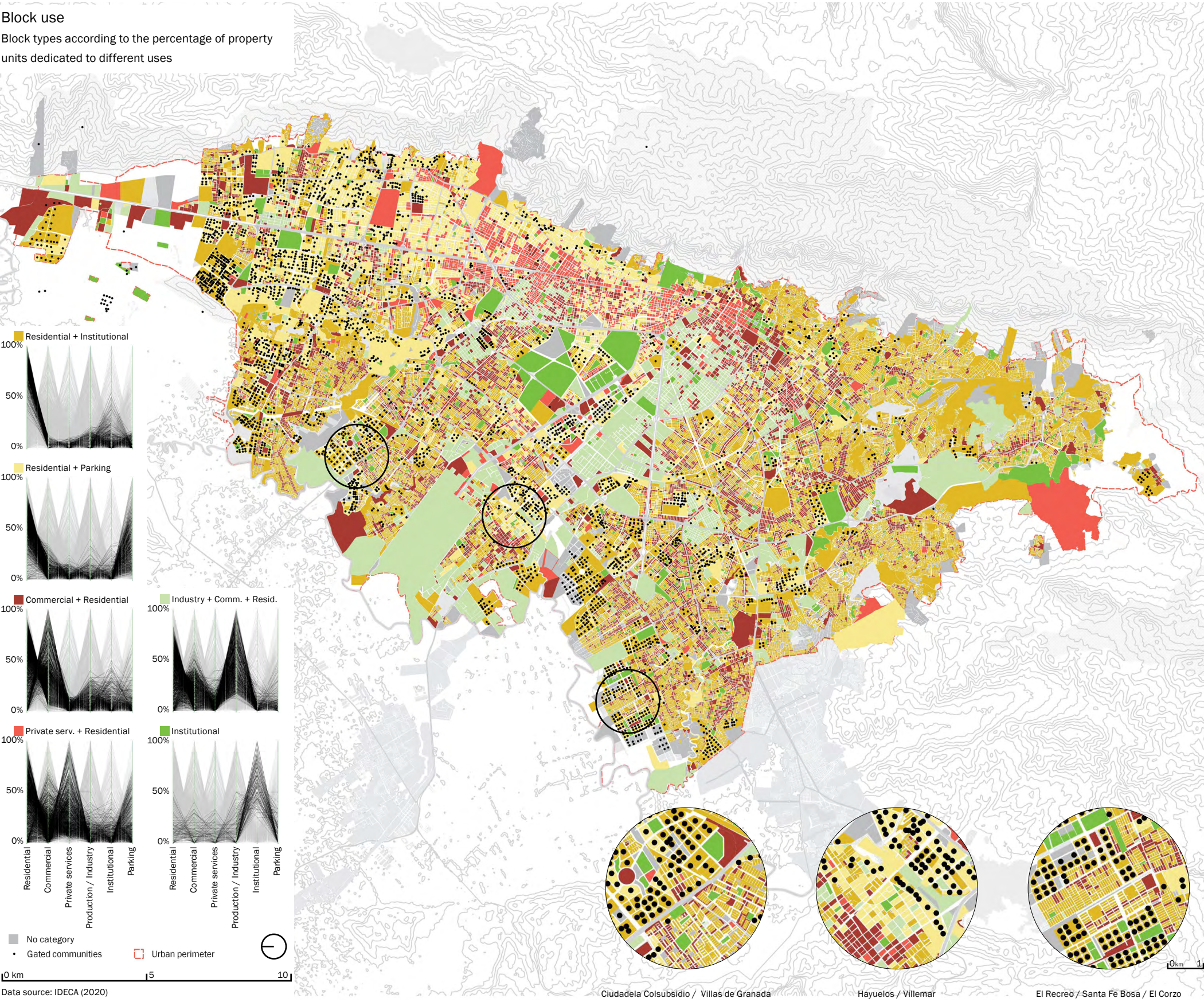
What all these types of clusters have in common is that, by virtue of agglomeration, they allow gated communities to expand their effect upon public space, thus becoming more than single units and defining the character of streets and other public spaces. These are authentic gated environments that produce a closed type of city, meaning that it is programmed, commodified, complete, and excluding.

3.3 Programmed

3.2.6 Low mix of uses

This map, elaborated with the cadastral database of the city, shows the blocks of the city divided into 6 categories according to the mix of uses present in each one. Before this categorization, the percentage of property units dedicated to each one of 6 uses (residential, commercial, private services, production, or industry, institutional and parking) was calculated for each block. When areas with prevalence of gated communities are zoomed in, it becomes evident that they usually have a coarse grain structure in which non-residential activities are concentrated in single blocks, thus breaking with the traditional pattern of agglomeration on main roads of traditional neighbourhoods.

Despite this similarity, there are differences between high and low-income areas. For instance, the north-east area of the city shows the prevalence of two typologies, one with a high concentration of residential and parking uses (in these buildings it is common for each parking space to have its own cadastral code) and one that mixes residences with private services and commercial uses. The west and south of the city are dominated by a mix of two typologies: one with a high mix of residential and commercial activities, and one with a high residential prevalence and some institutional uses. Not surprisingly, most low-income gated communities are located in the latter: it is uncommon for these projects to mix commerce with housing, while it is possible to find institutional presence in the form of schools or small community centres built by developers as mandatory retributions for the construction rights. By not having privately owned parking spaces and the missing mix with blocks of private services, LIGC lack the complementary services that would allow them to really detach from public life.

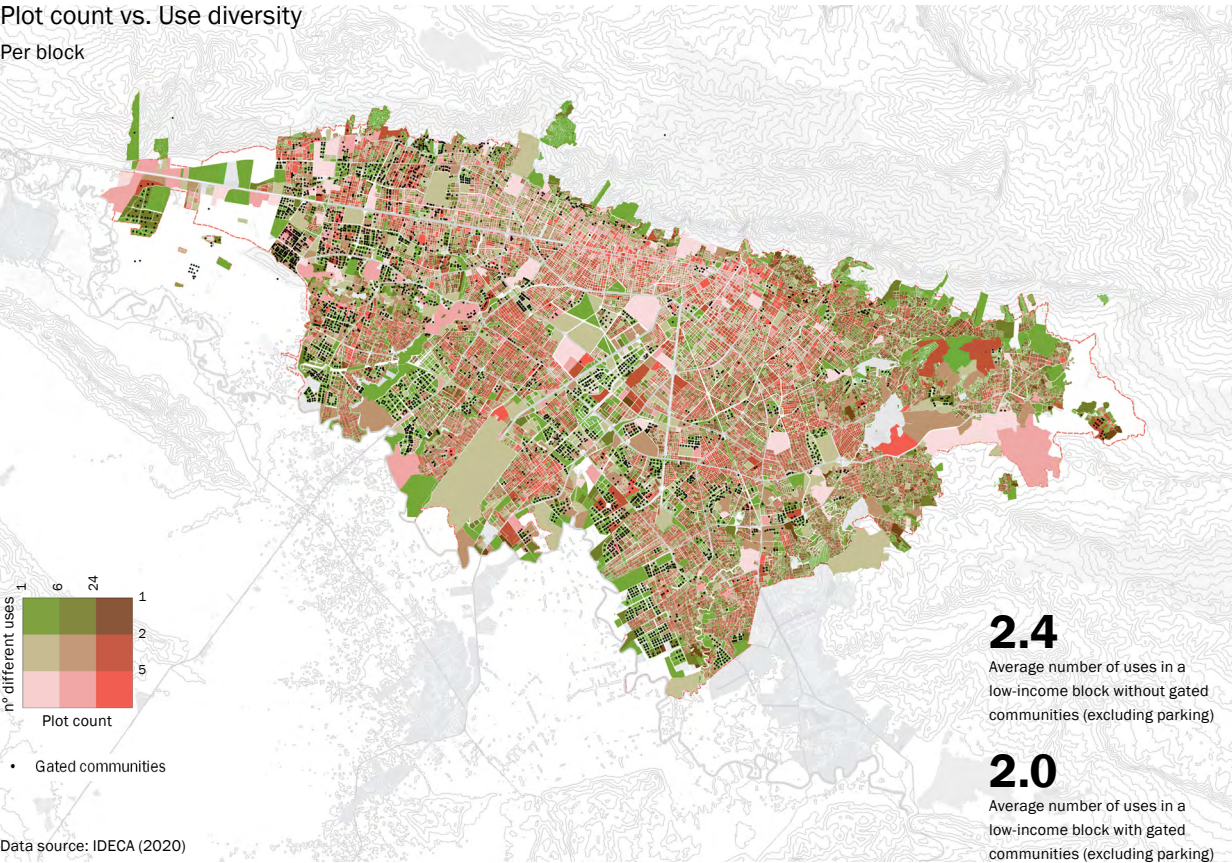
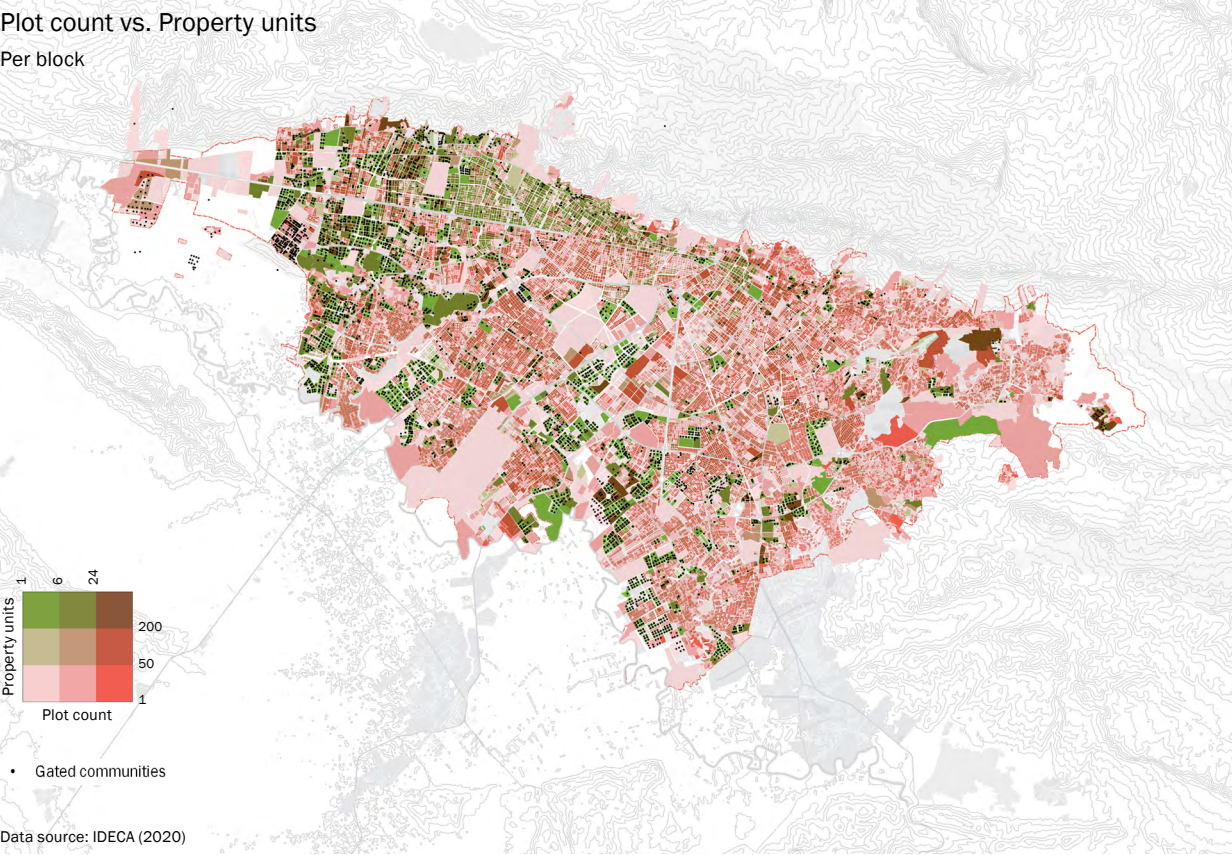
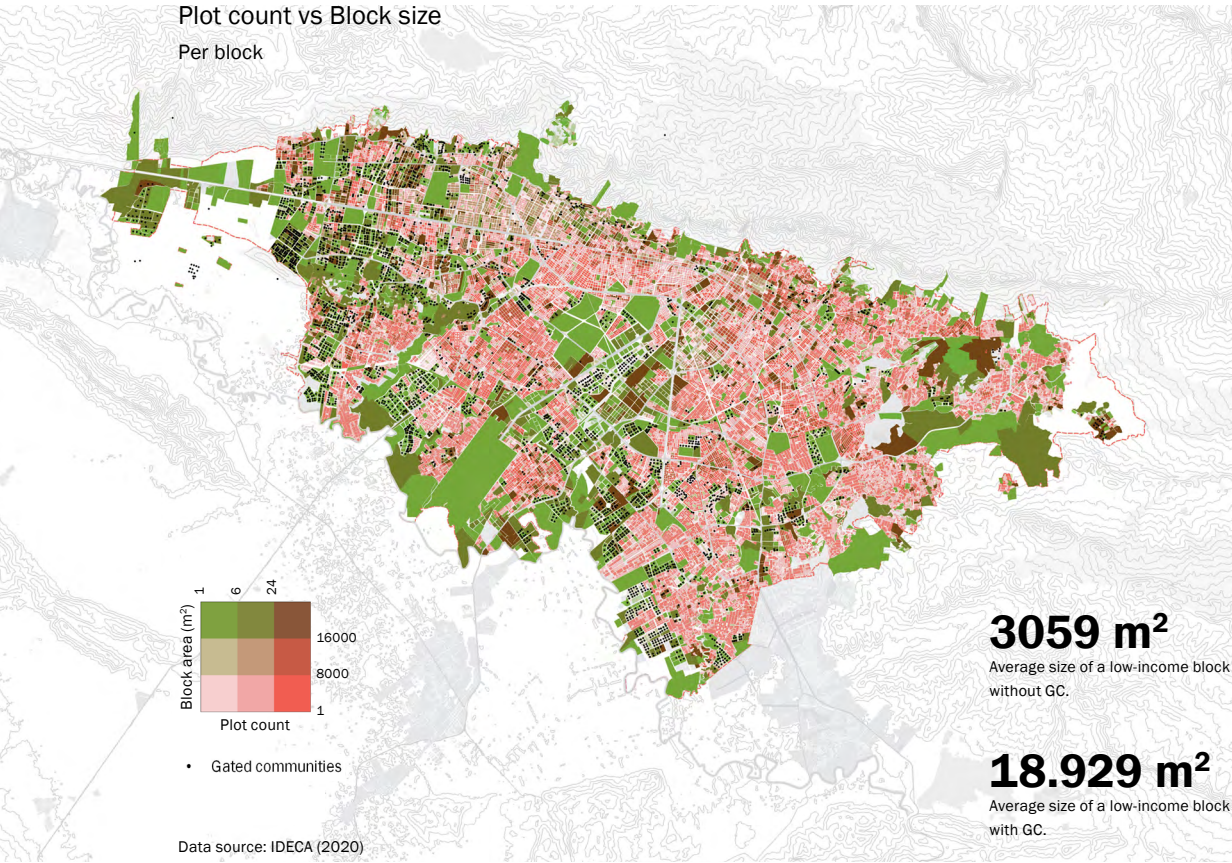


3.3.1 Urban monolith

The maps shown in these pages try to demonstrate the correlation between low count of plots the blocks occupied by gated communities and other phenomena. First, there is a relationship between fewer plots and larger blocks: the map showing their correlation has a unnuanced contrast between small blocks with different plot counts and large plots with a low number of plots. The areas occupied by gated communities are part of the second category. In the same line, there seems to be a relationship between plot count and property units. In this case, the blocks occupied by gated communities tend to have few plots and a very high number of property units within them, something to be expected in areas occupied by condominiums. Final-

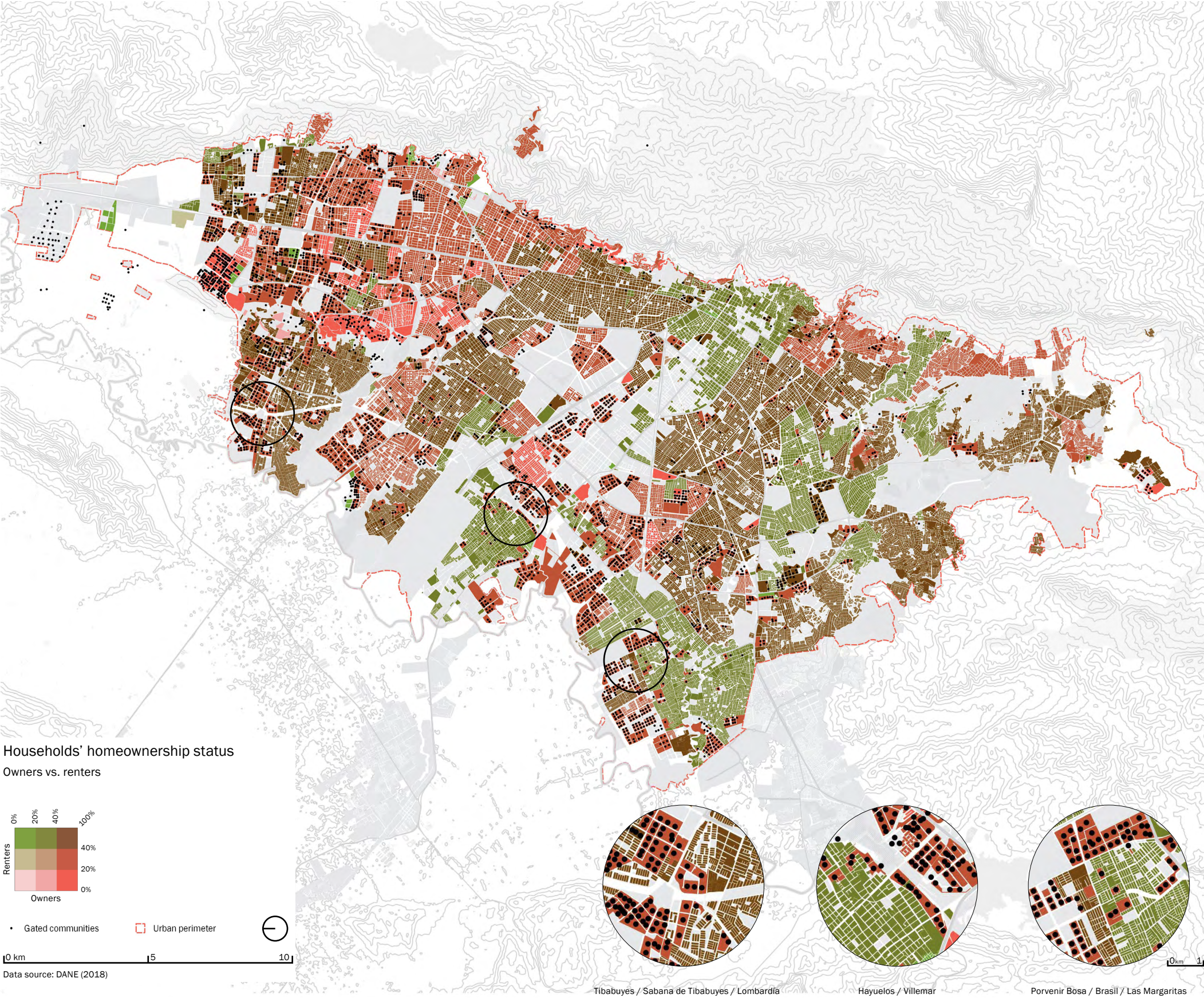
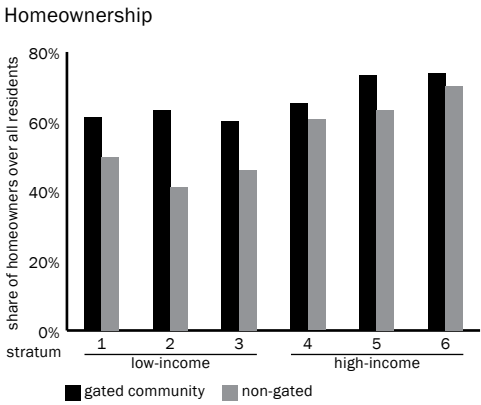
ly, there is the comparison between plot count and diversity of uses (i.e. number of different uses in each block); although more subtle than in the previous maps, a lower number of plots seems to account for a lower diversity of uses (for a clearer read, the legend gradient has been inverted). These three maps confirm that gated communities tend to be built in large blocks with few plots, but most importantly, they reveal how that fact might have an impact on distribution of property and diversity of use.

One block, one plot, one use and many people; gated communities are “urban monoliths.”



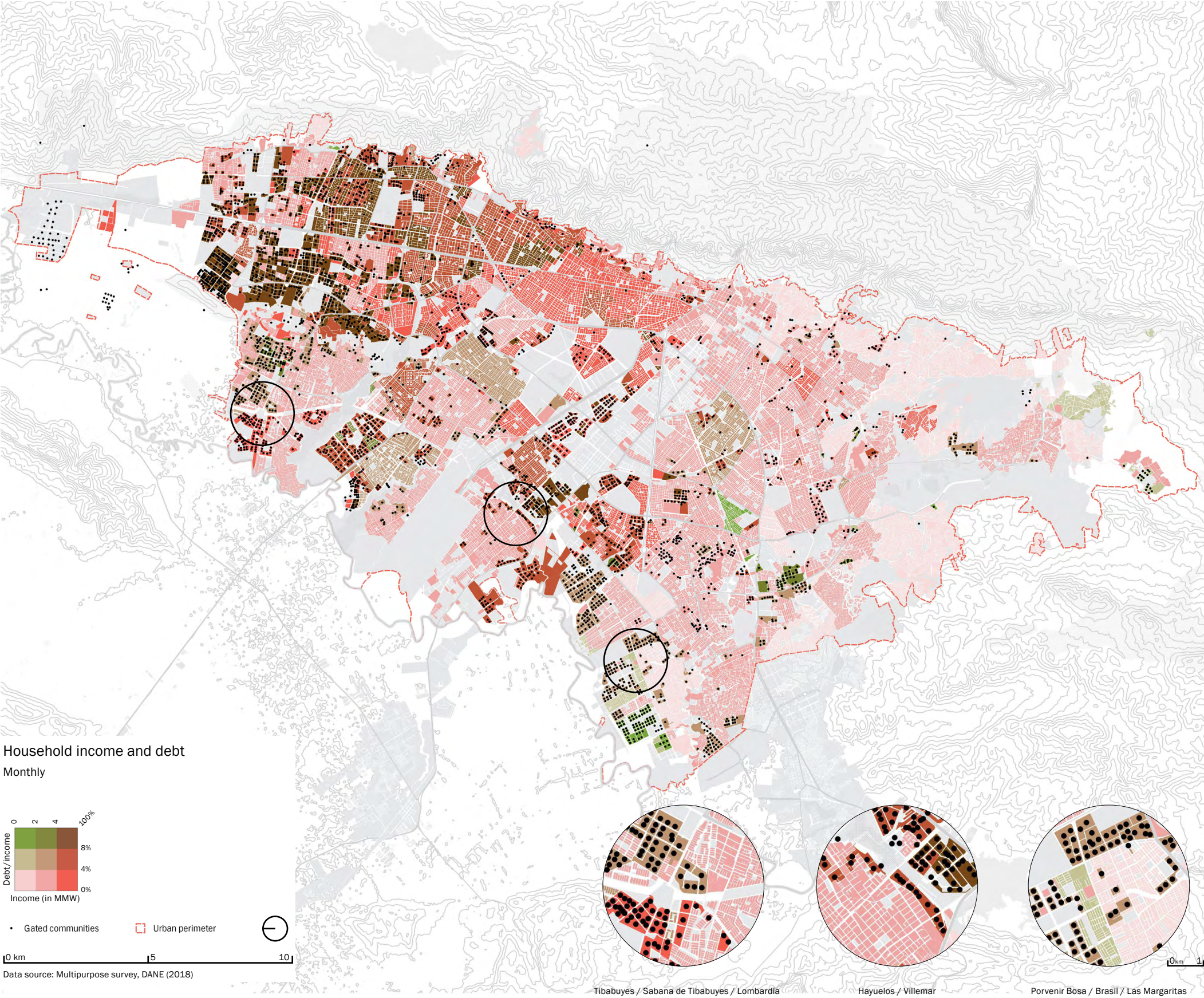
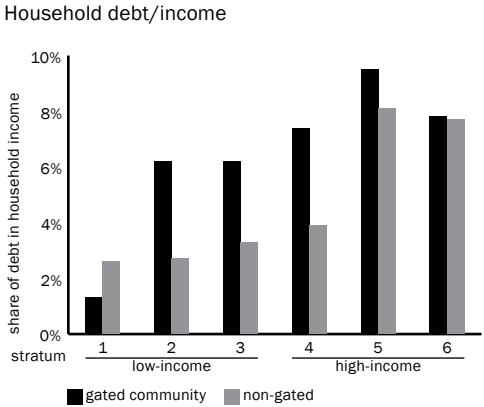
3.4 Commodified

3.4.1 The dream of homeownership
Gated communities are more than shelters, they also have a value as commodities. In fact, the main motivation for people to get apartments in low-income gated communities is to finally be able to *own* a formal house. In theory, this represents the “big leap” towards middle-class citizenship. The promotion of this idea by government policies and developers explains why subsidies are only for buyers, and also why urban regulations promote cheap and easy-to-sell constructions: now, the house is not only a shelter, but also an investment for the future. The translation of this into spatial terms is evident in the following map: while the city has a clear tendency towards ownership in the north and renting in the south, there is an “ownership belt” that breaks that pattern in the west, which coincides with the presence of low-income gated communities. Towards the south, these appear as islands of homeowners in a sea of renters.



3.4.2 New debts

Another part of entering the formal “world” has to do with acquiring debt. With the virtual (as it is still being paid) or real property of a house to act as a collateral and a mortgage in their credit history, residents are now “mortgaged residents” and, by extension, also “subjects of credit”, as Hurtado Tarazona calls them (2018, p. 86). They can now ask for credits for purchasing other goods. As the map shows, despite income, the part of monthly income that goes into the payment of debt is especially high in households residing in gated communities. This type of urbanism is also good for banks (which, let’s not forget, are also developers of social housing).

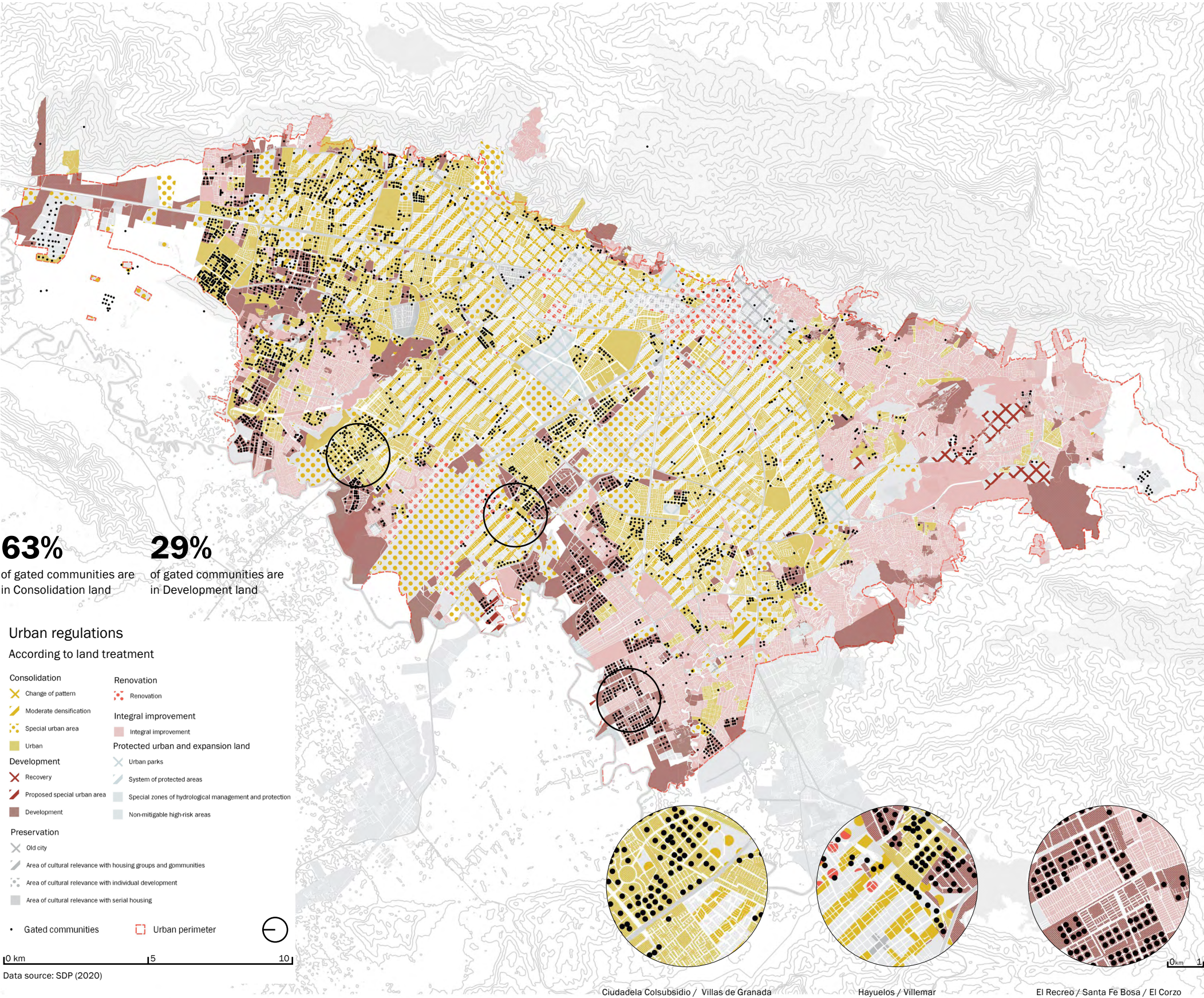


3.5 Complete

3.4.3 Consolidating and obsolete model

The map that determine the urban regulations of each block in Bogotá (called “land treatments”) is contained in the Land Management Plan (Mayor’s Office of Bogota, 2004a), a document that is the main planning document of the city. As the map shows, there are 6 land treatment categories, two of which are usually assigned to gated communities’ plots: development (63%) and consolidation (29%). Development areas are those where the city can expand and where most low-income gated communities were built in the last 20 years, while the consolidation treatment refers to those where the priority is to keep the existing patterns of occupation and public space, or where there can be a moderate densification that does not change those patterns.

The development areas which have already been built, mainly with gated communities, will be assigned a new land treatment in the future: if things are done as they have in the past, they should become part of the consolidation areas. Implicitly, the District Planning Secretary (SDP) will be admitting, as it has done so far, that those projects follow a spatial model that deserves to be consolidated, a model that is already complete. In the meantime, only the neighbourhoods of informal origin are deemed to be in need of an improvement of their “physical, environmental and legal deficiencies generated by their origin outside of urban regulations” (Mayor’s Office of Bogota, 2004a, p. 251) through a treatment of “integral improvement”.

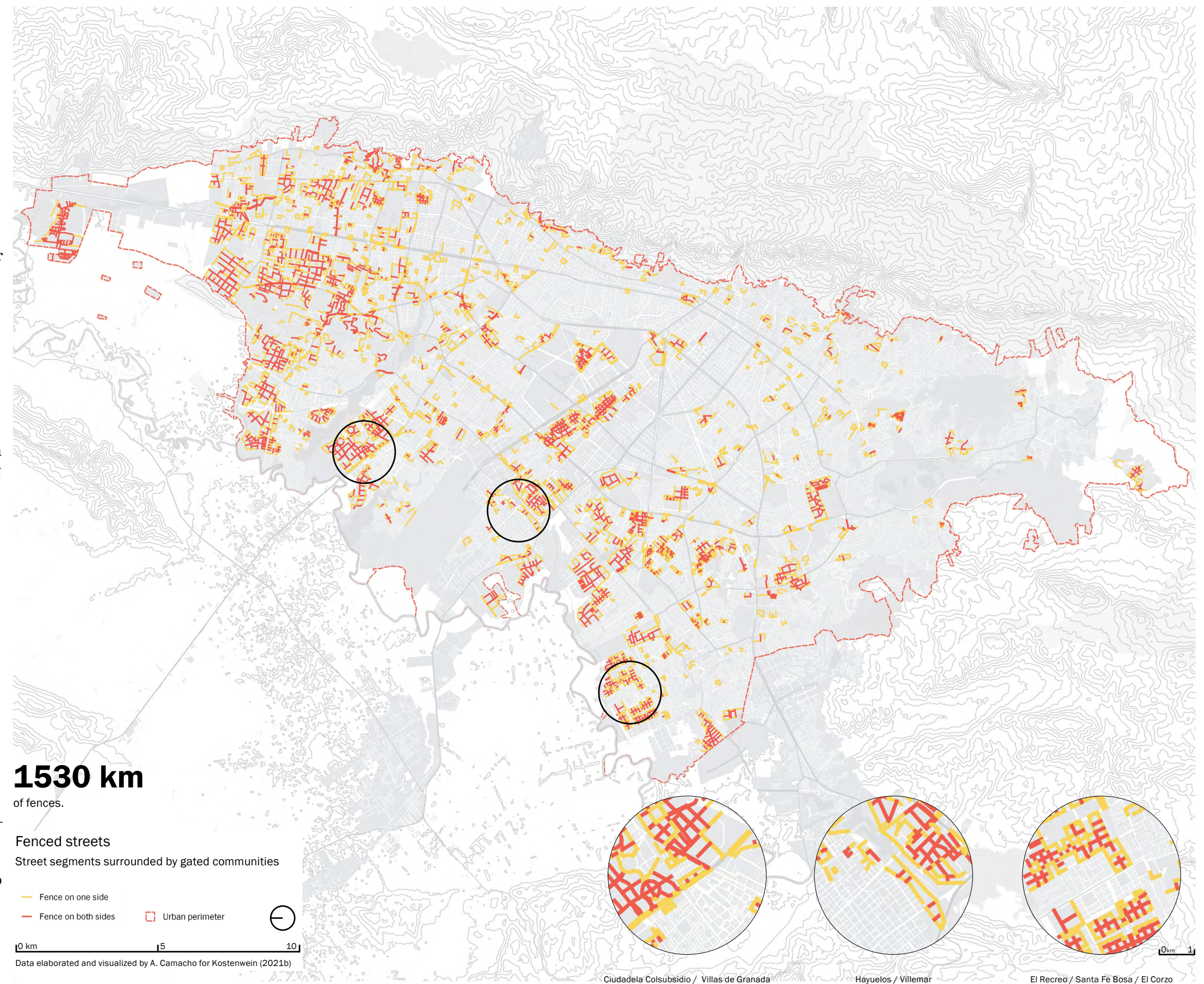


3.6 Excluding

3.6.1 Fences

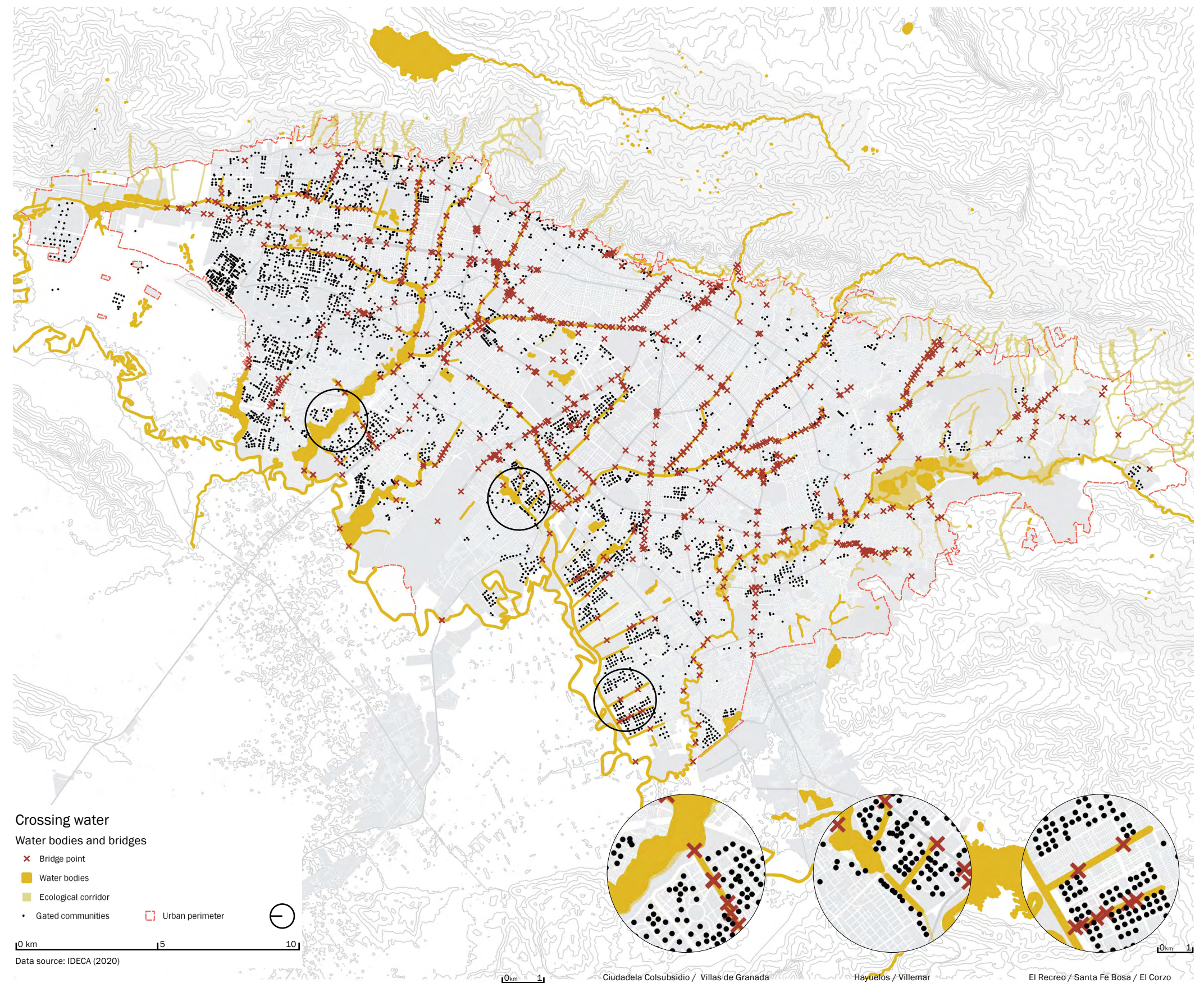
In gated communities, segregating devices as walls and fences create a distinction between private and public spaces, thus defining a relationship of exclusivity through exclusion. In the districts where they cluster, public spaces, usually streets but also parks, are surrounded by fences on all their sides. This happens because urban regulations in Bogotá promote this separation between private and public space through a mandatory front yard that can be fenced. In fact, regulations require all housing projects of more than 3 floors in expansion areas to have a front yard of between 3 and 10 meters (Mayor's Office of Bogotá, 2004b, p. 25). These spaces are required to be green and cannot be transformed, although they can be fenced under the condition that enclosures have a 90% transparency and a maximum height of 1.60 m (Mayor's Office of Bogotá, 2004a, pp. 241–242).

These fenced streets are hostile spaces for strangers and, therefore, are not promoting democratic practices. In fact, they do not meet Jacobs' three qualities of a "city street equipped to handle strangers" (1961, p. 35), meaning that front yards do not allow for edges to clearly demarcate what is public and what is private, enclosures impede residents to become the "real proprietors of the street", therefore making it impossible to have "eyes upon the street", and visual unattractiveness and the lack of points of contact reduce the possibilities of having a continuous presence of users in sidewalks. In Bogotá, some of the most concrete effects of this situation are increased crime (Kostenwein, 2021b) and reduced possibilities for residents' entrepreneurship and capitalization of ground floors (De la Carrera, 2015). Today, there are around 1530 km of fences in Bogotá (De la Carrera, 2019): enough for separating Netherlands and Belgium from the rest of Europe.



3.6.2 Crossing water

The map shows the water system of the city: as it is evident, water bodies (rivers, high-water management canals and wetlands) proliferate in the low areas of the west. The other elements shown are bridges: while they are frequently used for crossing roads, water bodies tend to have few points of crossing. The south-west area is an especially dramatic case: in an attempt of avoiding flooding, the government built more than 10 canals for water catching, while a similar number of gated districts was built next to them. By “virtue” of being supposedly self-sufficient developments, these districts did not create continuities with the non-gated neighbourhoods that surrounded them and transformed the canals into large-scale segregation devices. In a lapse of a few years, the pre-existing neighbourhoods found them inserted in between canals and gated developments, waiting for bridges that never arrived, excluded from the promises that formal development was supposed to bring.



3.7 Conclusion

The shared conditions of gated communities can be seen at the scales of the unit and the city. As units, they have a very stable spatial configuration. This explains why low- and high-income specimens look so similar, and also why regulators and academics define them in a similar way. Furthermore, after years of compelling advertising, favourable regulations, and privatization of the housing market, this type of projects has become the blockbuster product of a national project for the formalization of citizens. This means that gated communities hold political, economic, and symbolic value for many different stakeholders, from residents to developers.

Besides this, gated communities define a closed city. They create programmed environments where uses are segregated and concentrated in large, coarse-grain facilities. In doing so, they break those urban layouts in which non-residential activities agglomerate on main roads. Furthermore, gated communities are commodified. This means they are part of a national project to formalise the population through homeownership, which means that houses are not only seen as shelters, but also as commodities that can be used for trading and to access new credit. Urban regulations also have a role in closing these parts of the cities. In fact, the government sees these areas as worthy of consolidating as they are, which translates into the preservation of their original urban regulations. Finally, gated communities are closed because they are devices for exclusion. This is evident in their use of fences for segregating public and private spaces, but also in the way in which gated clusters transform natural elements of the city into segregating borderlands.



High-income gated community



Low-income gated community



Source: El Sushi Negro collective

4

The low-income variant

4.1 Introduction

Gated communities are a type, a model that fulfils the needs of many stakeholders. Yet, the diversity of residents living in them asks for a more careful observation of the specific conditions of the different variants of that model. The following pages will identify the defining traits of low-income gated communities, based on data and spatial analysis, as well as the analysis of regulations for the last subsection. It will also explain how gated communities became the preferred type for social housing, this chapter will focus on four features characteristic of these developments: 1) Low-income residents; 2) Dependence on public infrastructure and services; 3) Mix of formality and informality; 4) Overregulation.

4.2 Towards gated social housing

Around the year 2000, while gated communities became the main growth cell of Bogotá, private developers were switching their core business to the development of gated social housing projects at a massive scale (Hurtado-Tarazona, Álvarez Rivadulla, & Fleischer, 2020, p. 5). Today, it is almost impossible to find social housing that is not built in the form of a gated community. Before discussing why this happens, it is necessary to quickly expose the local conditions of the social housing market.

Today, social housing policy in Colombia prioritizes home ownership by subsidizing the demand of new housing. There are two types of social housing: Priority Interest Housing or VIP (for its ironic acronym in Spanish), and Social Interest Housing (VIS). Usually, both VIP and VIS housing projects are located within the same districts, which makes them two slightly different versions of the same phenomenon. The main difference is their cost: VIP can go up to 70 minimum monthly wages (MMW), around 16'000 USD, while VIS can be 135 MMW, around 31'000 USD. In both cases, the government offers a subsidy for the initial fee and low interest rates for families who do not own a house. The condition is that these households can have a maximum total monthly income of 2 MMW for VIP and between 2 and 4 MMW for VIS (Minvivienda, 2020).

The subsidies are rarely assigned directly by the government. Instead, a Family Welfare Fund (*Caja de compensación familiar*) or a bank are usually in charge of that task. On the other hand, developers are responsible for asking to be included in the subsidies' program during the process of approval of any project. In theory, this system could give certain independ-



Ciudad Verde, a Macro-Projects of gated communities in Soacha, a municipality South of Bogotá. It houses around 150'000 people in 50'000 dwellings, and was built by a single developer.

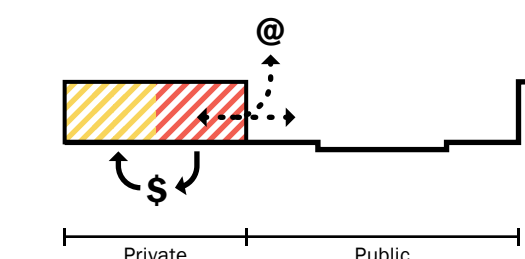
ence to clients for selecting what better suits their needs, as well as room for the developers to have a portfolio that matches that diversity of demand. Instead, the same entities in charge of managing credit are acting as developers, thus defining a monopoly of the social housing market (Ortíz, 2020). They decide what people buy, according to their corporate needs.

This is when gated communities enter the scene, as they match the financial requirements of these large developers and are easy to sell. First, they tackle the preoccupations regarding safety and open space of many residents, and offer a *fenced lifestyle* historically associated to the rich. Second, their detachment from the street allows for a high degree of seriality and repetition. This is because spaces like corners, street frontages and ground floors, which in other conditions would ask for “custom-made” architectural solutions, can be disregarded.

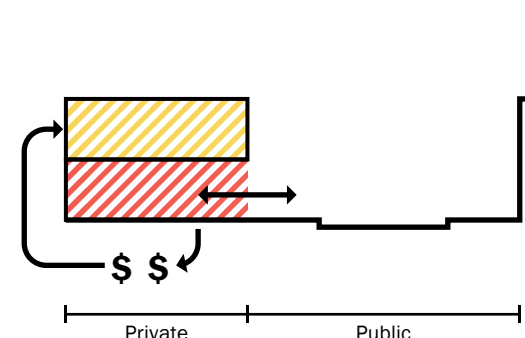
4.3 A short story: when fences are a burden

A low-income household has enough money to buy a house. There are two options: to buy a formal apartment in a gated community with the financial aid of the government, or to get a one-storey high incremental house (formal or not). The following is a schematic illustration, from an economical perspective, of what would happen in both cases.

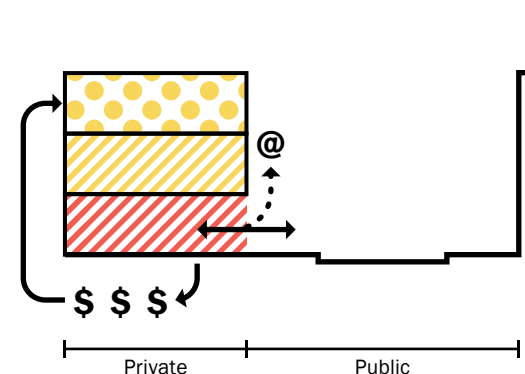
The incremental house



The house is used for living and working in low-impact manufacture. Products are sold to acquaintances and neighbours, or through social media. The money earned is used for daily living expenses and a part of it can be saved for future improvements of the house.



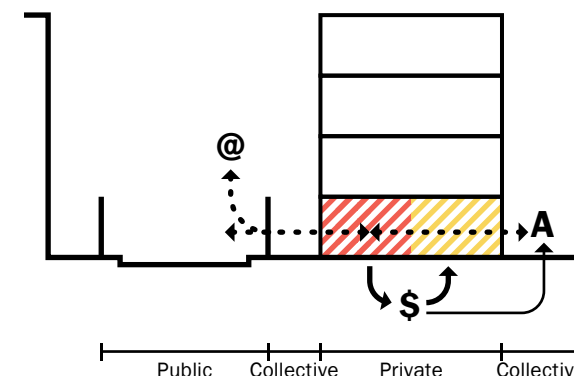
After some years, savings are enough to build a first floor. Poor control from the authorities make it possible to build it without a license. The ground level is now only occupied by the shop, which can be opened to the street, while the first floor is exclusively used as a residence. Direct contact with the street makes it possible to attract new clients.



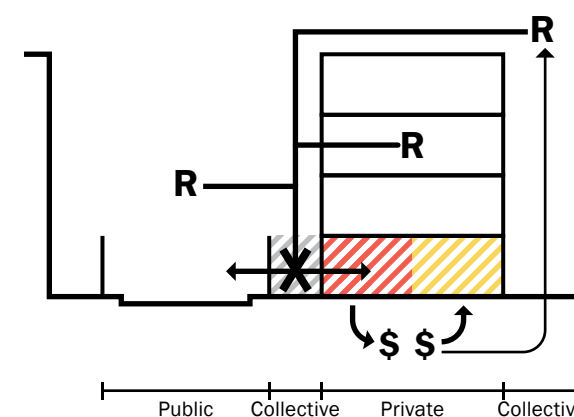
Time passes and the business is good enough to build another floor. There are different possible uses for the extra floor: it could work as a support space for the business, as an apartment for rent or as the house of a second generation of the owners' family. Over time, a solid base of customers has consolidated, and the ground floor store is an animator of the public life of the street.

The apartment in a gated community

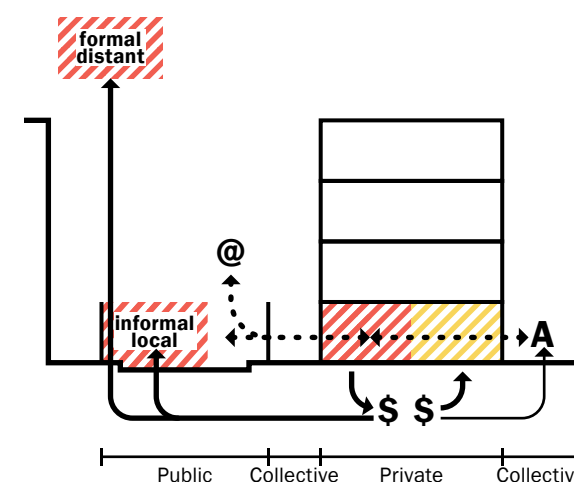
The apartment is used for living and working in low-impact manufacture. Products are sold to acquaintances and neighbours, or through social media. The money earned is used for daily living expenses and a part of it goes to pay the monthly administration fees of the condominium. Only a small part can be saved for future improvements of the house.



After some years, savings are enough to adapt the apartment to the living-working dynamic. The owners think it would be desirable to open their business to the street. But the front yard and fence lie in between. Why not replacing them with an extension of the house? Many regulations make it impossible. Their neighbours would see that as a return to the old, disorganised *barrio* they used to live in. The condominium rules prohibit any transformation of the façade. Urban regulations forbid building in the front yards. Direct contact with the street is impossible.



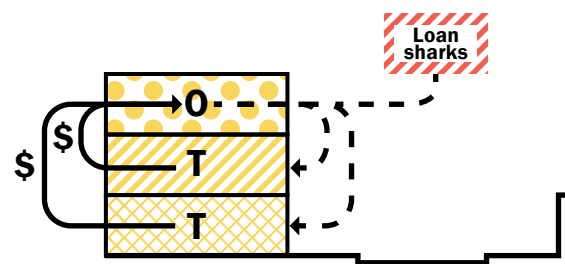
Frozen in time, the apartment has not changed. The owners are forced to keep selling their goods online and through informal and indirect interactions. The only option for selling them *directly* in the local market would be to become informal street vendors. Otherwise, they would have to set their store in a distant commercial district of the city, where rents are low.



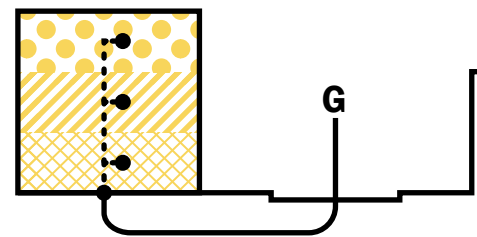
4.4 Choosing fences

Despite the economic reasons that could lead a family to buy a house in a *barrio*, there are very strong reasons for them to prefer the apartment in a gated community.

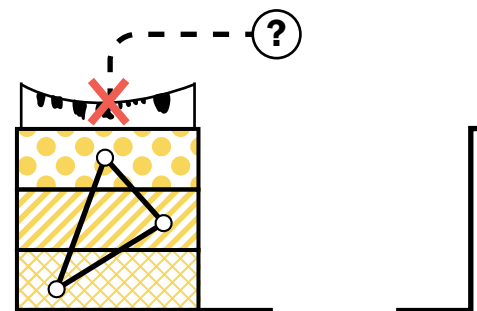
The incremental house



Usually, incremental houses are built for different generations of the same family, mainly with gradual investments of the owners (O). When money is not enough, loan sharks lend the money that banks will deny to families without credit history. When people move out and the family composition changes, empty rooms are occupied by renters (R) or used for different activities. Ironically, because of their size these homes are relatively expensive compared to formal social housing.



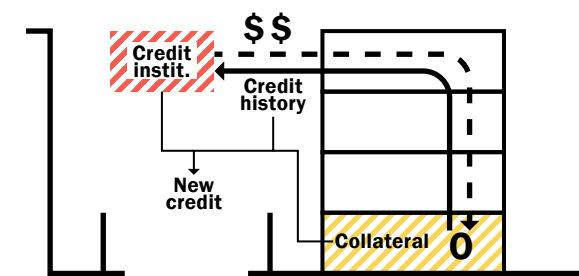
Because it has been built without the necessary permits and is not declared as a condominium, an incremental house is usually considered as a single unit by the government (G), even if many different households live in it. This means that bills must be split equally by residents, despite their real consumption, which then leads to conflicts and discontent among residents.



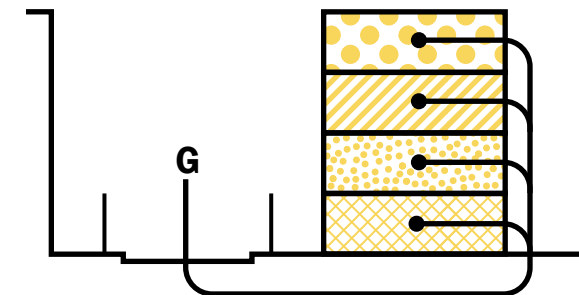
Because many households coexist inside the same house, personal and direct interactions define the relationships within these houses. For many residents, this “cohesive community” (Hurtado Tarazona, 2018, p. 223) feels like an intrusion of others in their life. Besides, this means they cannot recur to any authority to deal with problematic practices within the house (as hanging clothes in visible places, or excessive noise).

The apartment in a gated community

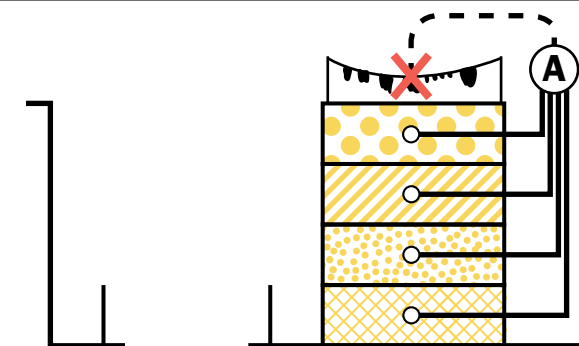
To buy an apartment in a gated community, a family needs a loan from a credit institution. Usually, this money is accompanied by a subsidy from the government. For many families, this process is a constellation of first times: enter the formal financial system, having a credit history, and becoming homeowners. They are now “mortgaged residents” (Hurtado Tarazona, 2018, p. 124) who see their houses both as shelters and financial assets to be resold or used as a collateral for new credit.



Each apartment in a gated community has an individual address and public utilities' accounts, which means that residents pay for what they consume. Although this may seem like a minor issue, it is not. For many, this is yet another symbol of their transformation into formal citizens. Besides, they do not have to pay for what they see as an unfair distribution of living costs, even if this means paying for the extra cost of the administration fee.



All relationships in a gated community are mediated by an administrator (A) who follows the rules contained in the manual of coexistence, which is approved by all homeowners. This “non-intrusive coexistence” (Hurtado Tarazona, 2018, p. 180) allows residents to relate indirectly to their peers, and gives them a clear regulatory framework to report any behaviours that might alter the predefined order of the community.



4.5 Low-income residents

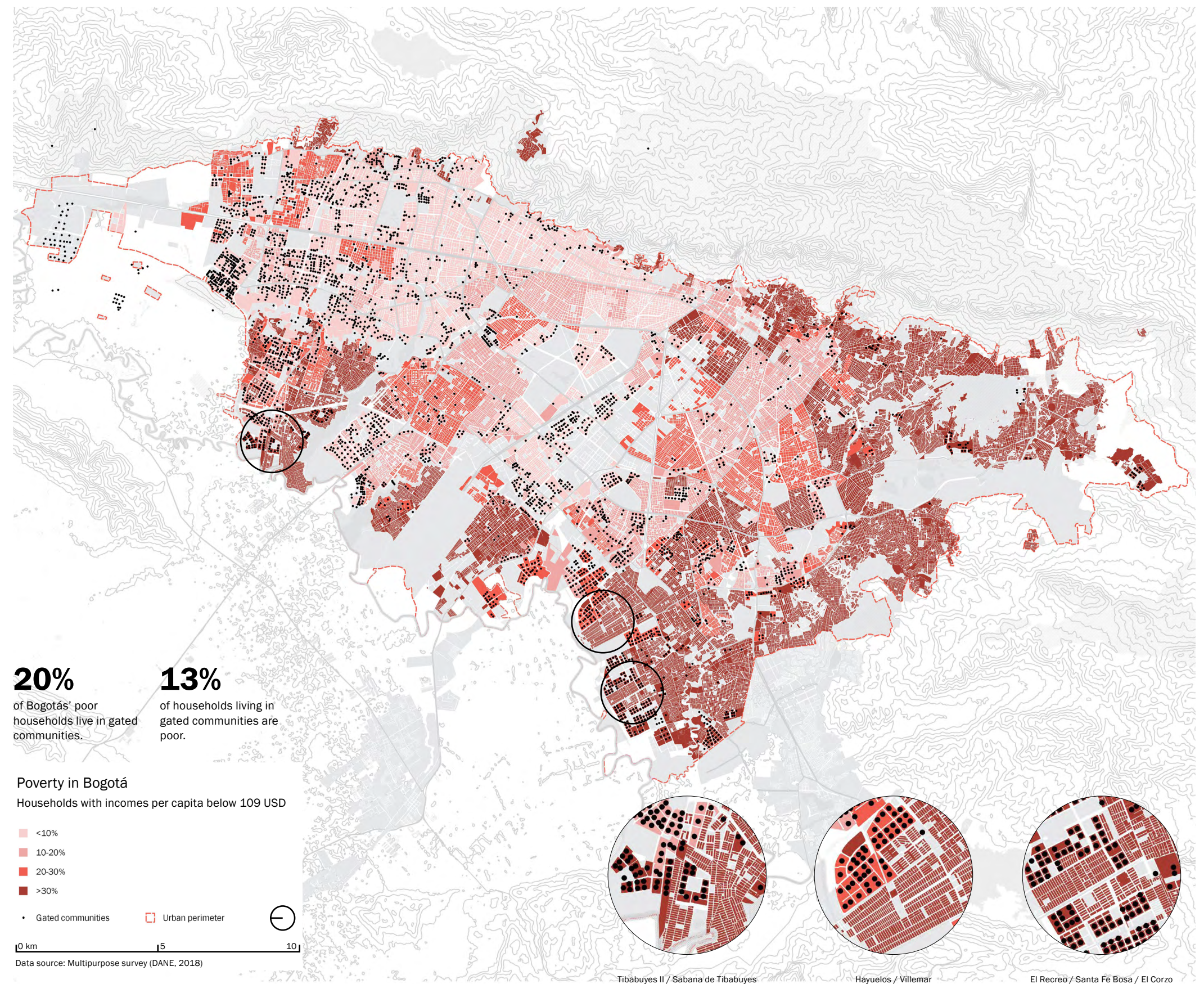
Perhaps the most obvious trait of low-income gated communities is that they have low-income residents. Nonetheless, there are many ways to define what low-income is, which is why three different criteria were used to map it: monetary poverty, minimum wage and access to social housing, and socioeconomic strata.

4.4.1 Poverty

A first way to study low-income is to equate it to poverty. Colombian authorities have two ways for defining and measuring poverty: monetary and multidimensional (DANE, 2020c). While multidimensional poverty (which considers other variables different than money) is comparatively low in Bogotá (7.1% in 2019), monetary poverty is significant in many areas of the city.

Monetary poverty looks at the monthly income per capita of a household. For the DANE (2018), in 2017 12.4% of Bogotá's households, around 951.000 people, were poor (72 USD or lower) and 2.4% were extremely poor (32 USD or lower). In 2019, a redefinition of the poverty line by the DANE revealed that those numbers were higher (DANE, 2020b). A reprojection of these new criteria on the data used in this work (from 2017) shows that 24.6% of households were poor (109 USD) and 4.7% were extremely poor (41 USD). This means that there were around 1'810.000 poor in Bogotá.

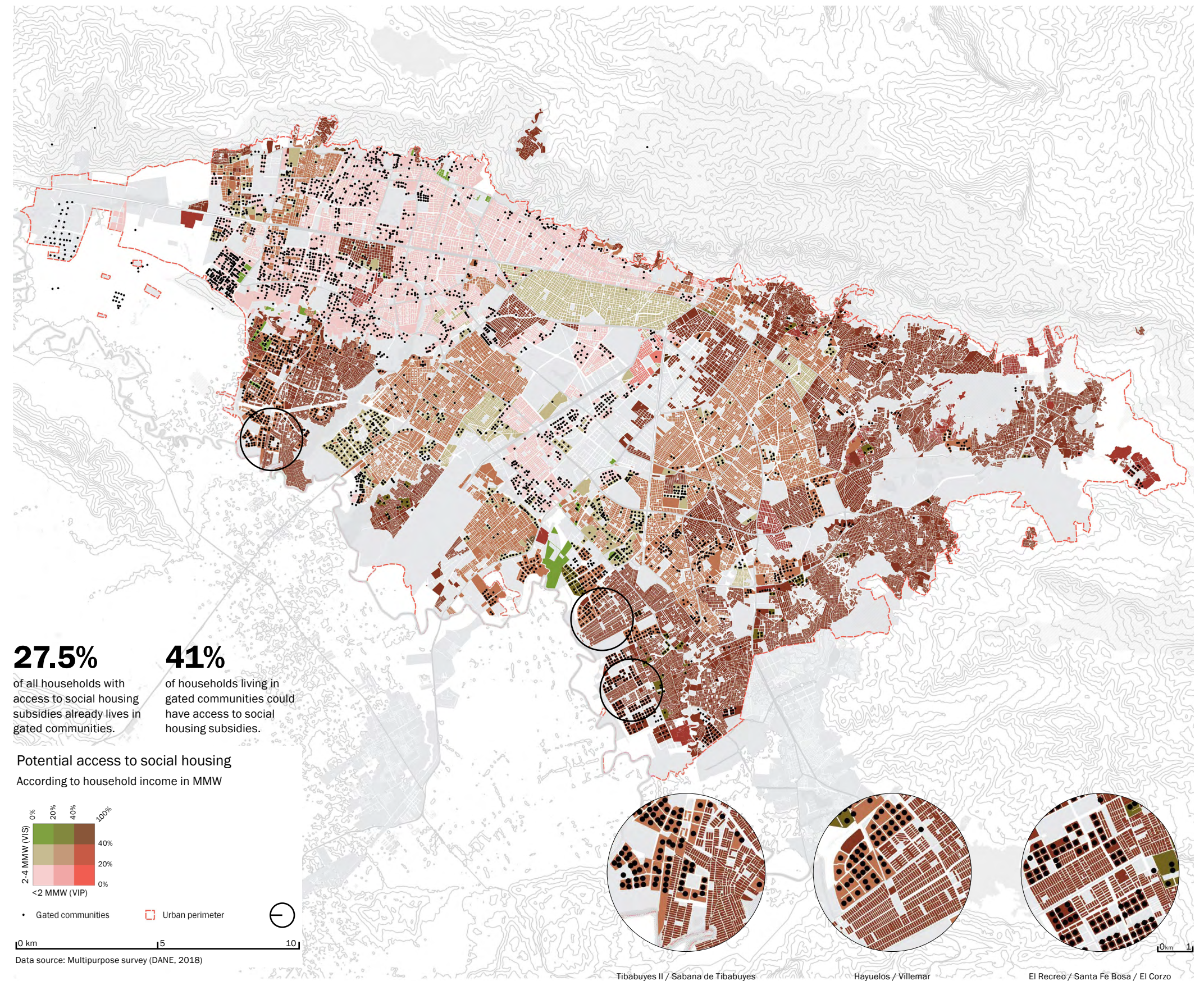
According to the Multipurpose survey (DANE, 2017), 20% of the poor lived in gated communities in 2017: this was around 372.890 people. This number accounted for 13% of all gated communities' residents, or 5% of the city's population. As the map shows, most of these residents live in the south and west areas of Bogotá.



4.5.1 Minimum wage

Low-income can also be defined according to the legal minimum wage established each year by the government. As explained before, the subsidies for social housing are assigned according to the income of families measured in MMW. Although there is an explicit link between social housing and formal employment, it is important to say that formality and poverty are not mutually exclusive. For instance, a household of 4 people with an income of 2 MMW (458 USD in 2020) has access to formal VIP housing subsidies despite having an income of 114 USD per capita, a value below the line of poverty (117 USD in 2020). When it comes to VIS housing, the families eligible must have incomes above 2 and below 4 MMW (458 to 916 USD) (Minvivienda, 2020): being just above the line of poverty, this is a group that could be defined as a medium-class in formation, still vulnerable to changes in economy, with a relatively low capacity of investment and, as the map shows, with the tendency to live in the same areas with poorer residents (gated communities are no exception). Hurtado Tarazona et al. (2020) have shown how this diversity is also present *within* the projects, where it is the cause of constant friction between residents.

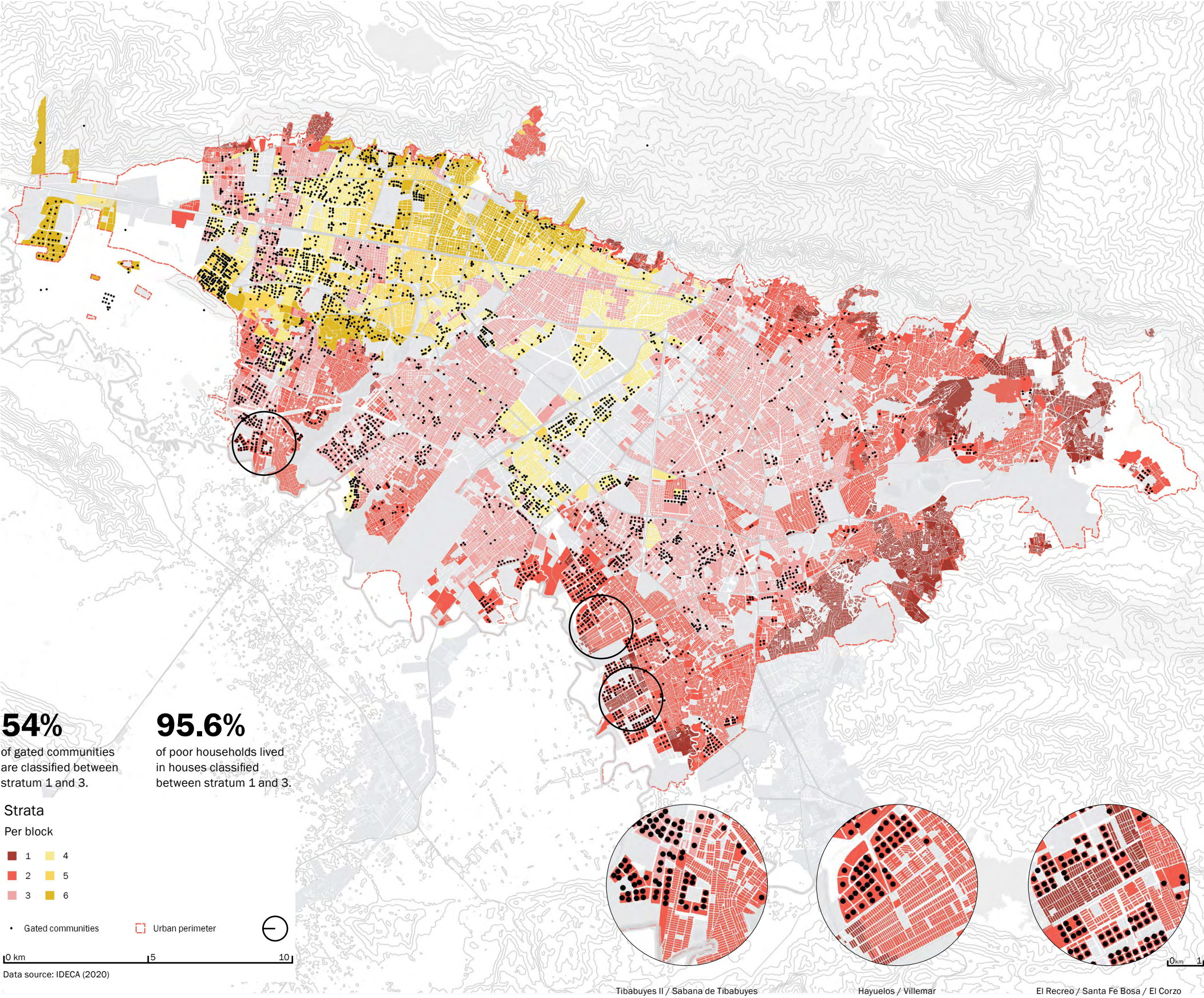
In 2017, 58.2% of households had an income lower than 4 MMW: of those, 32.3% were below 2 MMW, and 25.9% were between 2 and 4 MMW. In short, most of Bogotá's households are part of the target group of current social housing policies. This is more evident when gated communities are considered: in 2017, 27.5% of these households were already living in gated communities. These residents accounted for 41.3% of households living in gated communities, which is evidence of how housing policies have successfully privileged the production of gated communities for low income groups.



4.5.2 Strata

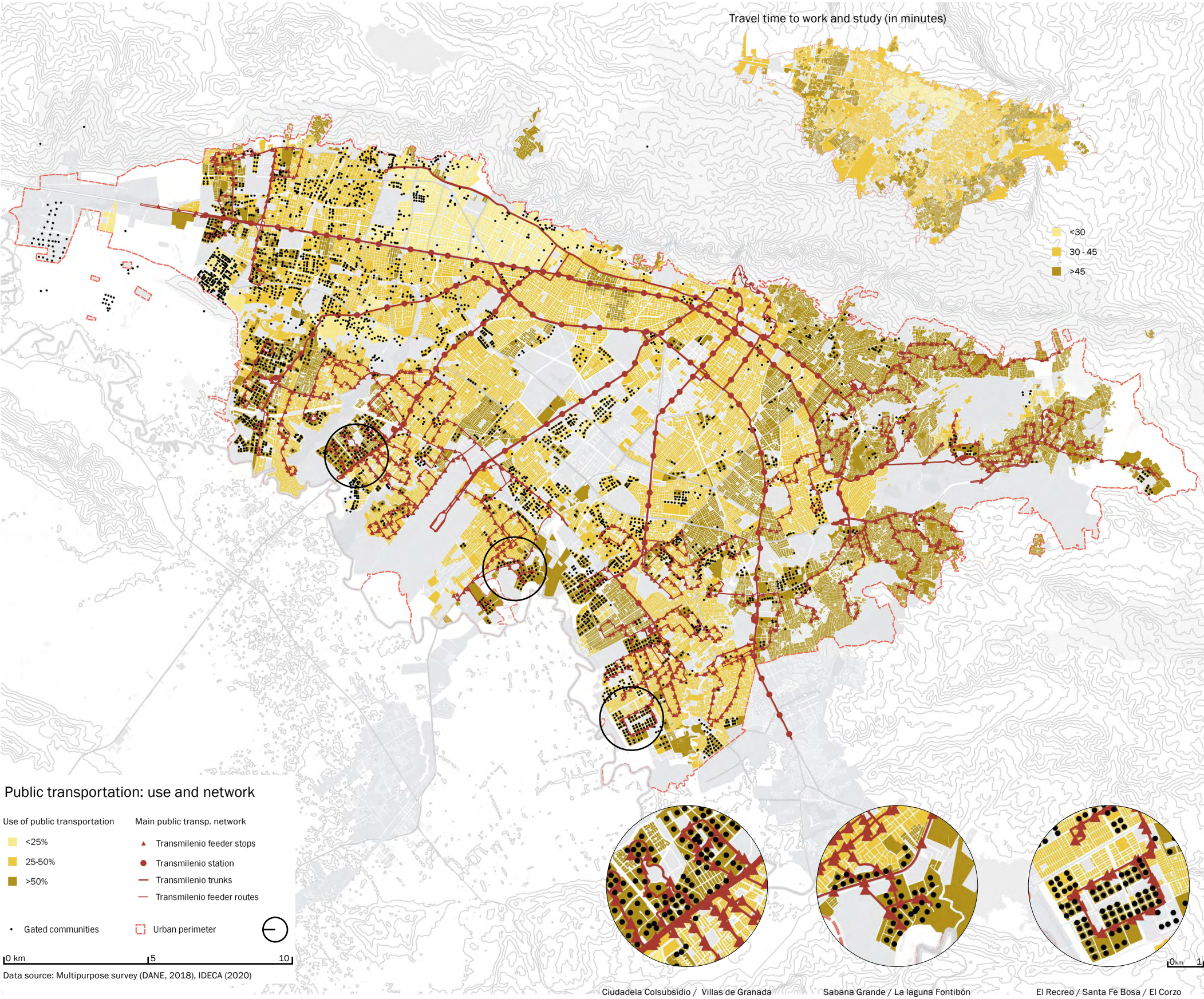
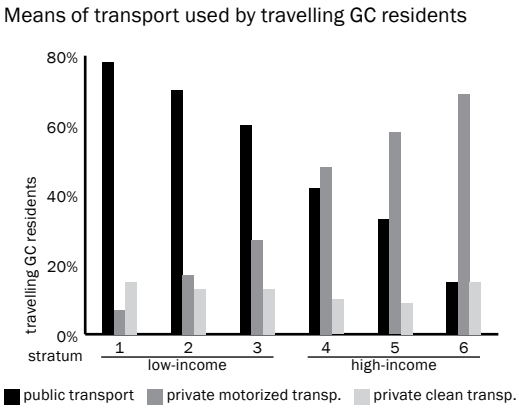
Finally, low-income can be understood in terms of socioeconomic strata. The SDP assigns a stratum (in a scale from 1 to 6) to each block of the city according to the external physical conditions of buildings and their urban context. People living in higher strata areas (5 and 6), pay more for public utilities and taxes to subsidise the lower strata (1, 2 and 3). Only stratum 4 pays the real cost. Over time, strata have been assimilated as markers of social status. Living in a higher stratum has become a symbol of social progress, while moving to a lower-stratum neighbourhood could only be the product of some misfortune. This is why “the language of strata has substituted the language of class” (Hurtado-Tarazona et al., 2020, p. 21). For instance, for an average middle- or high-class *Bogotano*, strata 1 and 2 are considered low-class, 3 is lower-middle-class, 4 is *pure* middle-class and 5 and 6 are high-class. Social housing (both VIP and VIS) are usually stratum 2 or 3.

In 2017, 95.6% of households under the line of monetary poverty lived in houses that belonged to strata 1 (17%), 2 (52%) or 3 (27%). In the case of gated communities, more than half (54%) of gated communities belonged to these strata (0.5% to 1, 20% to 2 and 34% to 3). Strata has been instrumental in making gated communities, and formal housing in general, economically sustainable in time.



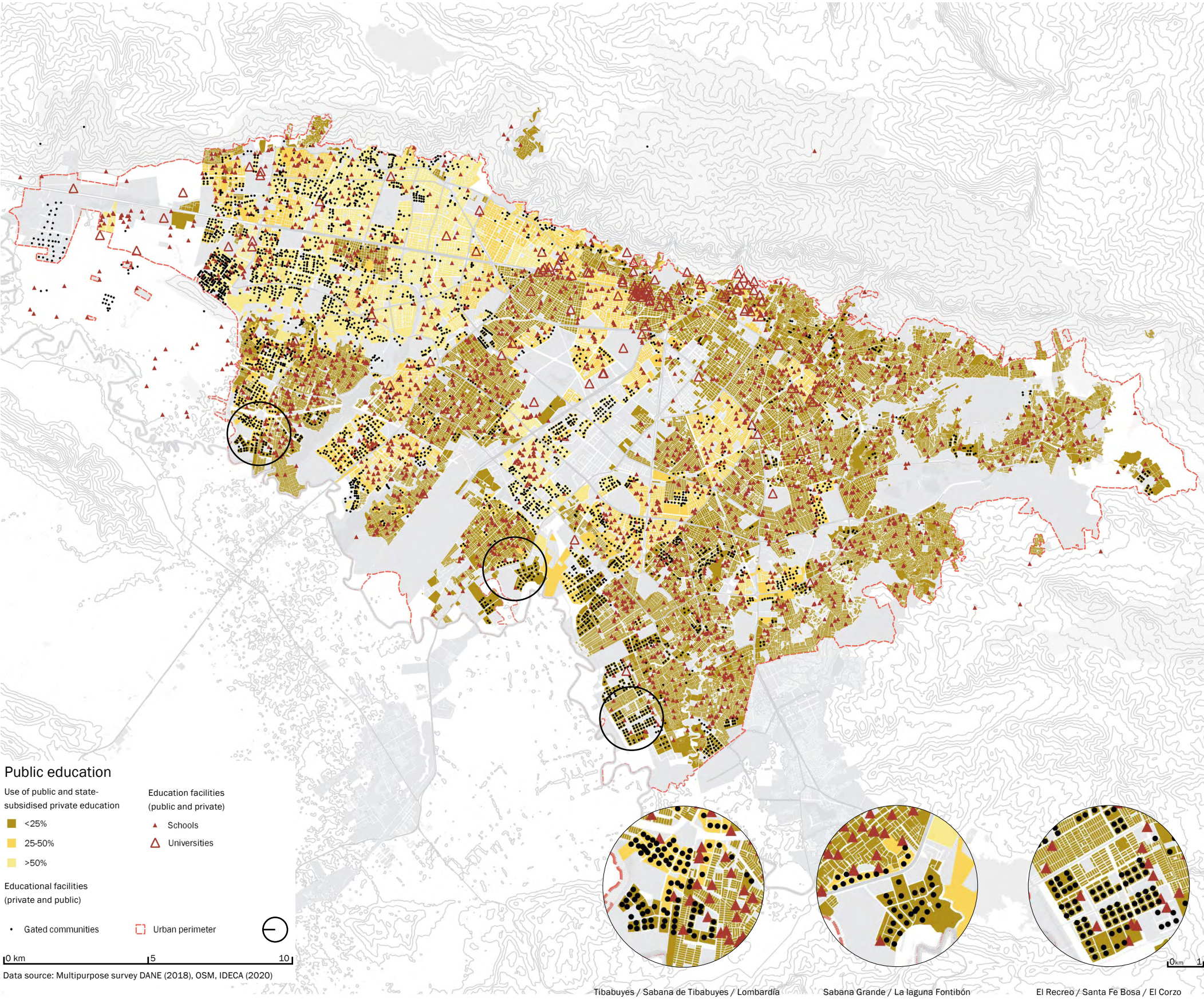
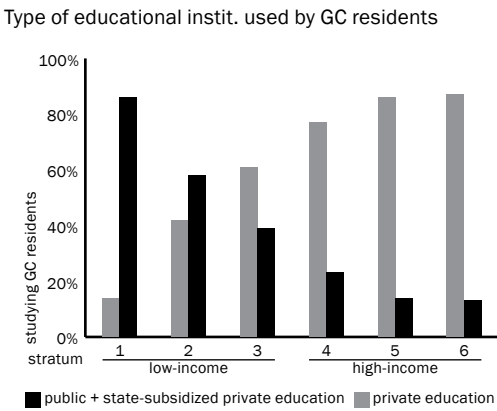
4.6 Dependence on public infrastructure and services

4.6.1 Public transport
Gated communities tend to create cities of low diversity and long distances that ask for motorised transportation. As the map shows, while high-income gated communities are in areas where residents mainly use private means of transportation, low-income gated communities' residents still rely in the system of public transportation. This is despite the fact that many are outside the reach of Transmilenio's trunks (the BRT system that acts as the core of the city's transport system), and are usually serviced by feeder busses. This, together with greater distances to central areas, inevitably make journeys to work and study longer (see complementary map). In short, some low-income gated districts are best suited for a type of transportation that their residents cannot afford to pay.



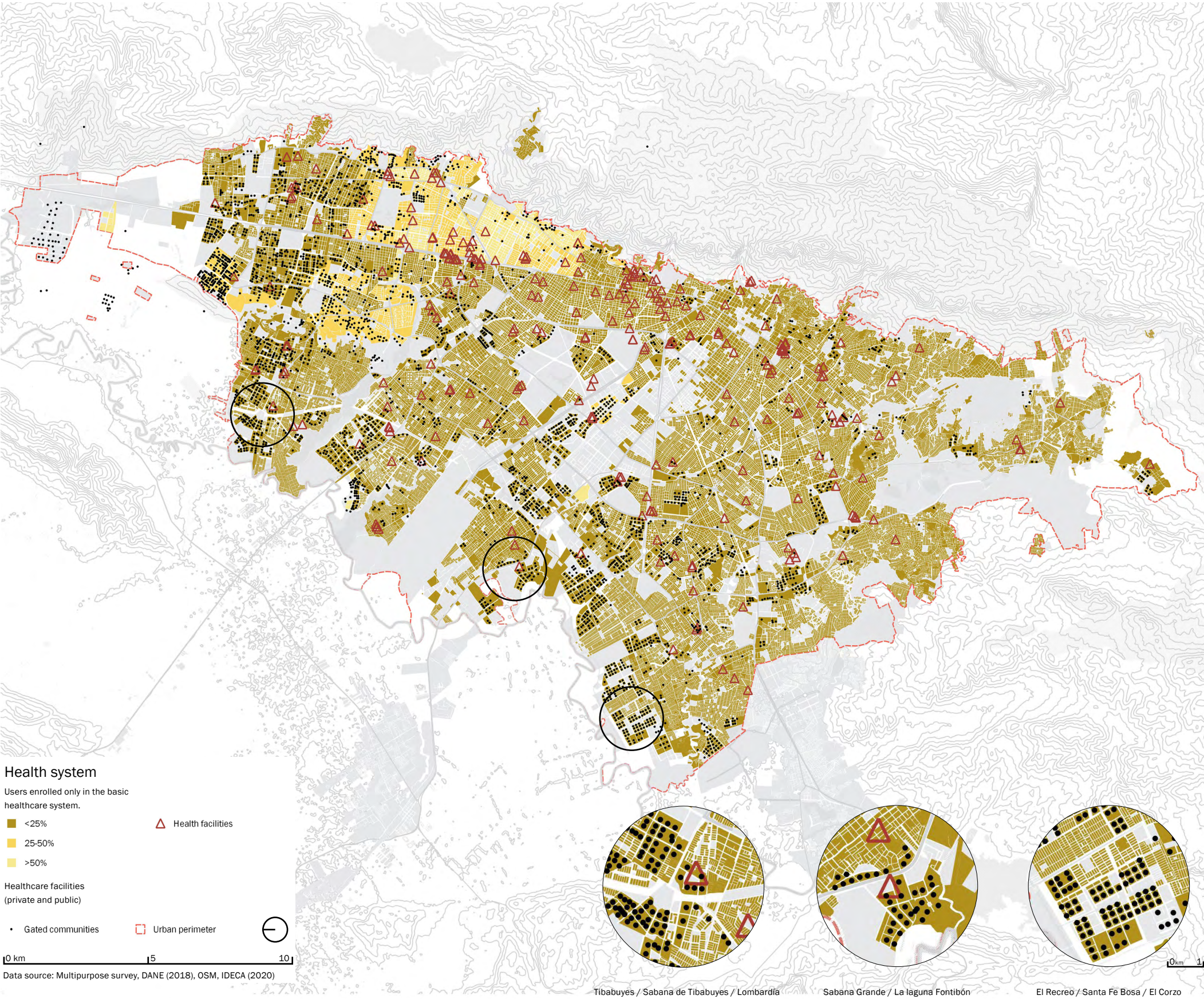
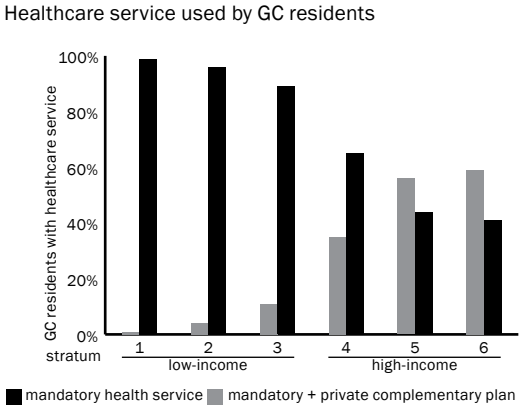
4.6.2 Public education

A similar pattern to that one of transportation is seen in this map: dependence on public or state-subsidised education is ubiquitous in low and lower-middle income areas. Gated communities' neighbourhoods are not an exception, although the prevalence of use of public education is lower than in other, non-gated areas. It is interesting to note how schools are evenly distributed across the city except for the north-east, where the rich live. This is because the private schools they use tend to be far from the city, and distance is a luxury they can afford. Opposingly, universities tend to agglomerate in the central areas. While this is almost irrelevant for middle and high-income households, for lower-income families, including those living in gated communities, this distance can be an obstacle to access education.



4.6.3 Healthcare

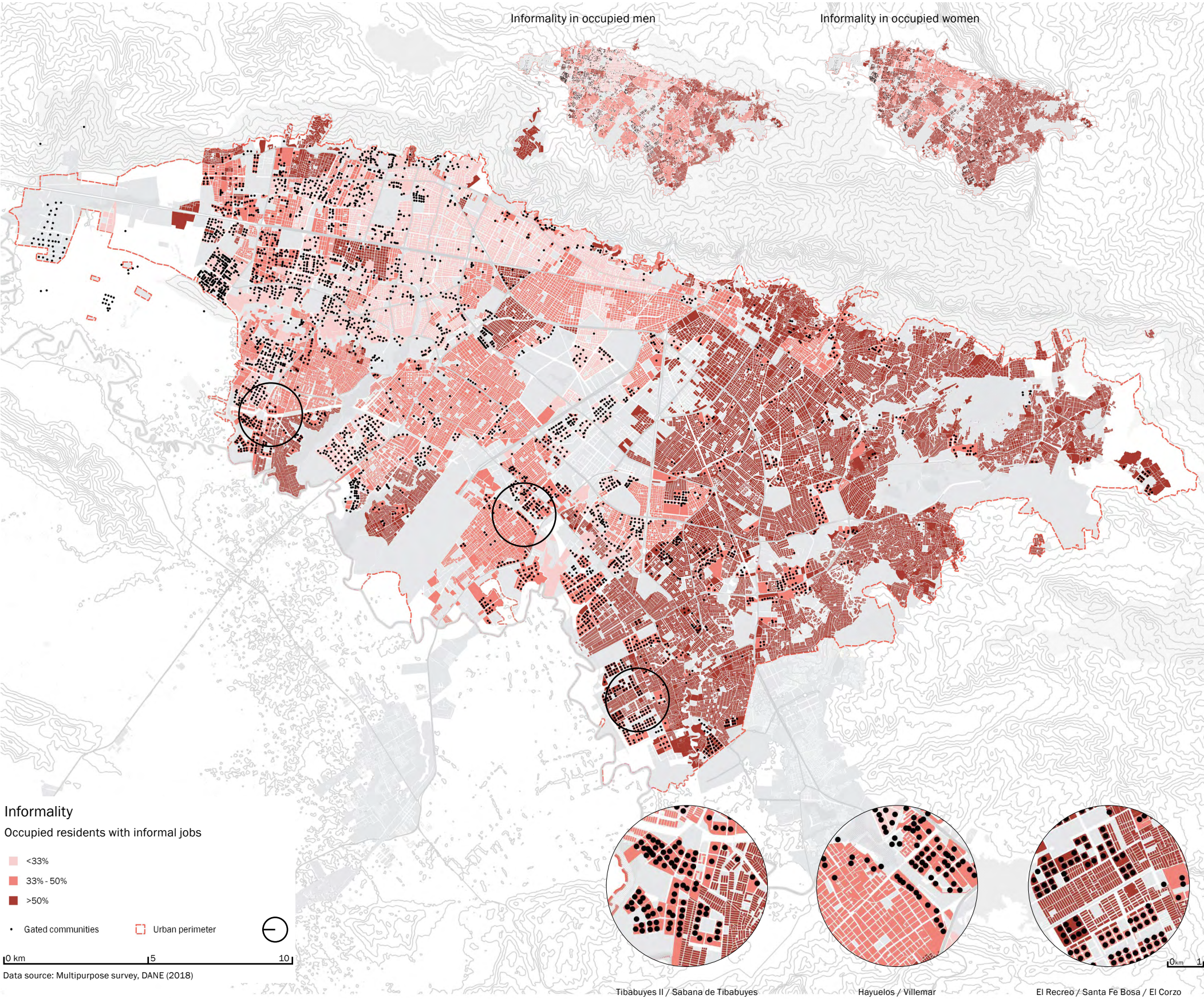
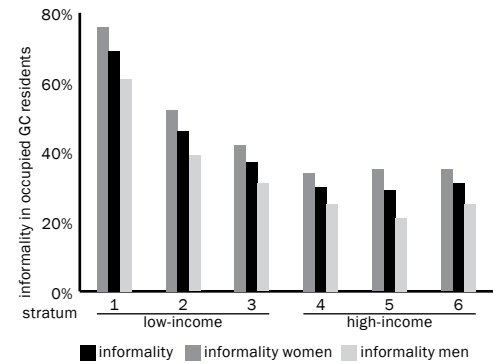
In Colombia, all citizens must have a healthcare plan managed by a private healthcare provider. Depending on their income, people can be either contributors, paying their plan at full together with their employers, or receive a partial subsidy by the state. Given the fact that these plans cover all the population, thus making processes slow and services limited, it is common for wealthy households to pay a complementary plan that gives them the right to schedule appointments, choose the doctors and hospitals they prefer and have access to services faster than a *regular* person. This map shows how, except for the rich neighbourhoods in the north-east, most areas have households where less than a quarter of residents can afford this. Nonetheless, one of the main agglomerations of health services is located near this area: paying extra for health is also paying for short distances.



4.7 Mix of formality and informality

4.7.1 Informal work
For producing the map in this page (with data from 2017), a person was considered to be working under informal conditions if he or she is occupied (domestic work was included) and meets any of the following conditions: 1) Does not have a written contract; 2) Is not paying a worker health insurance; 3) Is not contributing to a pension fund. The astonishingly high results are backed up by the DANE: for instance, at the beginning of 2020, Bogotá had an informality rate among occupied citizens of 41.7% (DANE, 2020a), one of the lowest in the country. When looking at gated communities, it is interesting to observe how both high- and low-income projects in the northern areas of the city (both to the east and west) have a relatively low incidence of informality. This is not true for the south west zone, where gated communities are in areas where more than a third of occupied residents are informal workers. Although gated communities are seen as the point access to formal citizenship, it can be seen how living in one does not guarantee an immediate escape from informality. This is especially true for women, who have a disproportionately higher incidence of informality than men.

Informality in occupied GC residents



4.8 Overregulation

4.8.1 Restraining and redundant

The same that defines gated communities (675 of 2001) also allows administrators and homeowners to impose rules in their condominiums that are stricter than law and urban regulations in force. To understand how strict these regulations are, and if there is a difference between high- and low-income gated communities in this regard, a sample of 5 manuals of coexistence were reviewed (three low-income and two high-income). To focus the review, a content analysis explored if they mentioned and, if so, how they dealt with the following themes: noise, kids, pets, strangers, staff, aesthetics, uses different than residential, physical transformations and sanctions.

Regarding the strictness of these regulations, it was found that they can exceed pre-existing regulations in two ways: by restraining the freedom of action of residents and visitors even more than laws and regulations do, or by being redundant, prohibiting behaviours that are already regulated by law. In the case of restraining actions, they usually have to do with the prohibition of uses different than residential in the private units, physical transformations of the project that might modify the “aesthetics” of the buildings (this is the term used) and certain uses of communal amenities (usually certain sports, walking dogs, commercial activities and political or religious meetings). Hurtado-Tarazona et al. (2020, p. 8) also mention projects that impose a curfew for underaged residents. As it was already explained, there is a national law and a sentence by the Constitutional Court protecting this overregulation (Corte Constitucional de Colombia, 2002).

In the case of redundant regulations, the range goes from storage of dangerous substances and the execution of construction work that could put other residents in risk, to some actions that exceed the scope of action and punishment of an administrator. This is better explained through the case of the Parque de los Cerezos manual of coexistence, in which it classifies under the “Immoral conducts” the following actions:

“1. Prostitution in private units; 2. Acts of sodomy practiced with minors; 3. The exercise of abortive practices; 4. The use of the private unit to receive and house criminals, [or] beggars for [a] retribution; 5. The use of the private unit for the establishment of games of chance; 6. Transit in underwear in common areas” (n.d., p. 43).

Interestingly, the procedure that follows one of these misconducts is not different from the rest, requiring a first, private communication, followed by the publication of the perpetrator’s

name and only then by a fine. In these cases, it is perhaps more interesting to see the symbolic value of these regulations as part of the “desire of grid” of residents, rather than the product of a real intention of dealing with these behaviours within the gated communities.

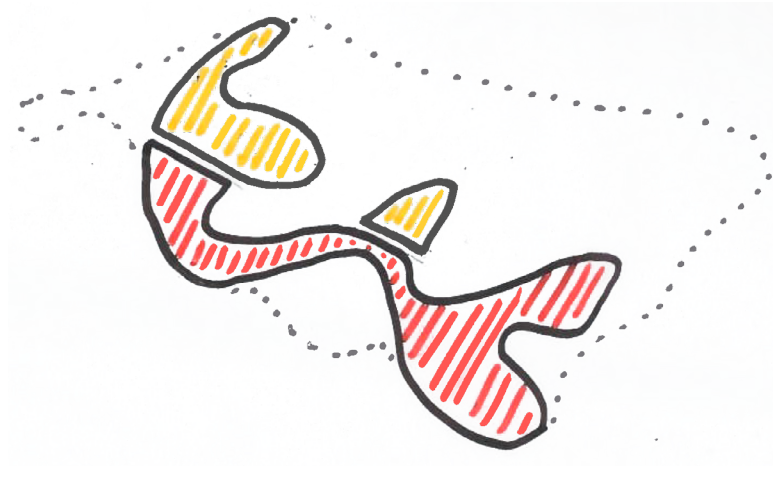
Here, we can move to the differences between the low- and high-income projects, which were found mainly in the mechanisms of warnings and eventual punishments that are triggered when there is a misconduct from the residents. In principle, these are left for each board of administrators to define and execute, with previous approval by the homeowners’ assembly. In the case of low-income communities, there is a very detailed description of the sequence of warnings before the imposition of a fine, as well as a hierarchical organization of infractions according to their severity. For instance, in one case, the fine for painting the doors in a different colour than stipulated has a fine 8 times bigger than the one imposed when someone has an aggressive behaviour towards a neighbour (La Floresta de Suba condominium, 2002).

In high-income projects, these descriptions are shorter, summarizing the steps of the process without mentioning details of the severity of the misconducts. The only exception to this is the parts dealing with service staff (cleaning, drivers, security guards and construction workers), especially regarding the procedures necessary to control their movements. In those, a very evident subtext associates these people with the risk of robbery, undesired behaviours, and actions that residents might find annoying. As an example, it is common to have a mandatory requisition of all service staff’s personal bags when they leave the building, or, in the case of one project, the condition that “the staff working in the complex must maintain a low tone of voice in the development of their work, in order to avoid inconvenience to the residents” (Conjunto residencial Arbos, 2005, p. 3).

For the author’s surprise, what came out as relevant in this review of internal regulations was not the differences, but the similarities among high- and low-income cases. This does not mean, though, that there is not a *relative* difference between them. It is not the same to prohibit productive activities in a community where most residents are formal workers than to do the same in one where most are informal and uneducated workers. In low-income gated communities, copied regulations lead to overregulation. Therefore, new regulations are an urgent need; alternative procedures for the collection of administration fees, or the possibilities of productive or commercial activities within the projects, just to mention two options, are two measures that would make life easier for many residents.

Strictness of regulations by subject		Low-income	High-income
Subject			
kids		M	M
pets		H	M
staff		M	H
noise		H	L
strangers		H	H
aesthetics		H	M
uses different than residential		H	L
physical transformations		H	M
sanctions		H	L
Strictness:		Type:	
High		restraining	
Medium		redundant	
Low			

4.9 Conclusion: one model, two worlds



This chapter showed how low-income gated communities, despite looking very similar to their high-income equivalents, play by different rules in economic, social, and infrastructural terms. This means that they mimic a spatial model regardless of the needs of their residents and the local conditions of the places they are located in. This clash, between a paradigm of development and an urban reality marked by inequality and segregation, creates the need to adapt, adjust and rethink the planned city. Understanding the actors currently involved in this overflow, as well as the shape it assumes in space, are crucial steps towards the proposal for a new framework for negotiation.



The parking space of a gated community, the ultimate private enclave, colonized by the street-vending carts of those residents who cannot afford a life away from public space.



Source: El Sushi Negro collective

5

Theory

5.1 Living in a model. Conditions and characters of low-income gated communities in Bogotá

5.10.1 Abstract

Since the 1970s, South American cities have seen the consolidation of a new fragmented urban pattern characterized by exclusive and socially homogeneous “archipelagos” and “fortified enclaves”, which offer privatized alternatives to traditionally public services and goods. By discussing gated communities, the most widespread version of these developments, several authors have explained the rise of these isolated and self-sufficient islands as a product of rising inequality and social conflict, distrust of the public authorities and economic and political deregulation (Borsdorf, Hidalgo, & Sánchez, 2007; Caldeira, 2000; Coy & Pöhler, 2002; Ortiz-Gómez & Zetter, 2004). In most of these accounts, gated communities are described as developments exclusively oriented for mid- and high-class dwellers, in which social homogeneity and the rejection of “the other” are the norm. Contradicting part of these assumptions, some studies have shown how low-class or socially heterogeneous gated communities also exist in different parts of the world (Boonjubun, 2019; Hurtado-Tarazona, Álvarez Rivadulla, & Fleischer, 2020; Sanchez, Lang, & Dhavale, 2005; Simcik Arese, 2018). Therefore, it is worth discussing the differences and similarities between gated communities made for high and low-income groups. By taking into consideration the case of Bogotá’s low-income gated communities and the main characters that shape them, this paper will show how, although these projects share some characteristics with the ones made for the rich, they ask for a re-evaluation of some of the established assumptions regarding gated communities and how their dwellers coexist and deal with the city.

5.1.1 Introduction: the gated community

Gated communities have been described as the most widespread expression of a fragmented urban pattern made up of isolated and self-sufficient “fortified enclaves” (Caldeira, 2000). From a political and economic perspective, their popularity is seen as an effect of market deregulation and distrust in public institutions (Borsdorf et al., 2007; Ortiz-Gómez & Zetter, 2004). In social terms, they are explained as a reaction to social instability and high crime rates caused by economic inequality and social exclusion (Caldeira, 1996; Coy & Pöhler, 2002).

Although many works have discussed the local variations of the global phenomenon of gated communities, take Caldeira’s study of Sao Paulo’s residential enclaves (1996, 2000) as a paramount example, few of the works reviewed dealt with gated communities inhabited by poor or ethnic minorities (Boonjubun, 2019; Sanchez et al., 2005; Simcik Arese, 2018). This is also the case for Bogotá, where most research conducted by architects and urbanists has treated gated communities mainly as a spatially homogeneous typology, leaving social variability as a secondary issue. This means that, with few exceptions, the study of low-income gated communities is still conducted using the same conceptual tools used forged for high-income projects (fragmentation, speech of fear, anti-urbanity), thus limiting the understanding of the impacts that the socioeconomic diversity of dwellers might have on their spatial configuration and governance.

In the case of Bogotá, researchers have produced a definition of what gated communities are¹ (Island City, 2019; Sanjines, Bermudez, & Kostenwein, 2015) as well as a spatial and urban characterization and classification of gated communities (De la Carrera, 2014; Kostenwein, 2020a; Ortiz-Gómez & Zetter, 2004; Sanchez Garcia, 2019), and a study on their effects on public space (Kostenwein, 2021b). Among other results, these accounts have allowed us to know that Bogotá has around 3500 gated communities, and that, on average, each one occupies an entire block, is enclosed by 390 meters of fences, and has only one entrance² (De la Carrera, 2014). Nonetheless, there is little re-

¹ In this definition a gated community is a project that meets four criteria: 1) Has mainly residential uses; 2) Housing units share spaces and services of private property and collective use. 3) Little or no relation between private space and surrounding public spaces. 4) Limited accessibility with walls or fences and controlled entrances.

² According to De la Carrera (De la Carrera, 2019), the gated communities of Bogotá are surrounded by 1300 km of fences. This is enough for separating the Benelux from the rest of Europe, and then the three countries within it from each other.



"El Tunal" phase II is one of the oldest low-income housing projects designed with fences in mind. Although it was not *intended* to be fenced, the poor interaction of buildings with their context and the strange configuration of public spaces (in triangular

corners) acknowledged the strict division between public and private enforced by law, and eventually made it easy for residents to build fences without many repercussions. Source: Drews y Gómez, 1991.

search that specifically confronts the problems and challenges of low-income gated communities, despite them representing half the total gated projects built in the city (De la Carrera, 2019).

Therefore, this paper will focus on the low-income gated communities of Bogotá, pinpointing some of their unique features and explaining the differences or similarities they have with high-income gated communities. To give a structured and thorough overview of the topic, each section of the paper will introduce a character: developers, state, planners, publicists, lawyers, residents, strangers and negotiators will all serve for telling the story of gated communities from different perspectives and in different scales

5.1.2 The marriage of developers and state

Gated communities became the main growth cell of Bogotá in 2001 (De la Carrera, 2014). This was the last stage of a long process of privatization that allowed for the total transfer of housing provision responsibilities from public to private institutions. This marriage by convenience between developers and state was made possible through different agreements and concessions. For this paper, it is worth telling the story of this marriage focusing on three aspects: the process that made privates the main providers of housing, a social housing system that stimulates homeownership through subsidies to buyers and governance and national laws that favour new, large-scale developments.

From the beginning of the 20th century until the early 1970s, the national government had the exclusive capacity to finance and build large-scale housing projects through public development and credit institutions. In spatial terms, this translated into projects that balanced public and private needs through designs that were intended to remain open to the city. In the 1970s, a new housing credit and savings system was approved, allowing private developers to finance large-scale housing developments. Parallel to this, new urban regulations permitted a radical division between privately owned and public spaces, thus making it easier to enclose them (Island City, 2019). This new model worked well for 30 years, mainly backing up middle- and high-income projects, until an abrupt increase in credit rates led to a recession in 1998. Instead of seeing this as a moment for assuming a critical position towards the liberalization of the market, the Government decided to loosen the regulations even more through the implementation of a new social housing policy.

This new policy, still in force today, constitutes the second relevant moment of this marriage. It was introduced in 1991, right after the approval of a new Constitution that guaranteed the right to a house for all citizens (Congreso de Colombia, 1991). In short, it gave private institutions (as banks and family welfare funds) the responsibility of financing and building social hous-



2003



2009



2020

Historical development of el Porvenir neighbourhood, a state-led initiative from 2002 that consists of 85 blocks assigned to 18 developers for the construction of (mostly gated) low-income housing. The large-scale intervention was possible thanks to a negotiation in which the developers “merged” all the mandatory public areas that they must provide in large public areas and buildings. A project to transform the large green area on the right into a metropolitan park has been halted for two decades. Source: Google Earth.

ing³, while the state now had the task of subsidizing the demand through credits given to buyers and setting the maximum cost of housing units⁴. Other requirements, as a minimum area, were left to the privates to define⁵. Today, this model has created a monopoly where offer and demand are controlled by the same stakeholders, thus dramatically limiting the options of low-income buyers to gated communities (Ortíz, 2020).

If the analogy we are using is that of a marriage, then the wedding ring came in the form of land-management tools. From 1997, new territorial governance and land management tools, the most important being the “Partial Plan” and the “Macro-projects of national interest”, enabled municipal and even the national government to directly negotiate the development of large housing projects with investors and developers, ignoring most of the local urban regulations, disregarding possible risks and allowing for little or no participation from civil society (Méndez, Hincapié, & Agudelo, 2014; Ortiz-Gómez & Zetter, 2004). The main product of these policies has been new social housing districts built in the outskirts of the cities, mainly occupied by gated communities (Secretaría Distrital de Planeación, 2019), with bad accessibility and poorly designed public spaces.

5.1.3 Designers follow the rules

It can be seen how, while high-income residents might have access to different types of housing in different areas, the low-income segment of the population that wants to enter the market of formal housing is forced to pick among a very limited offer. But how does this “limited offer” look like? How is it designed?

In general terms, the task of designers is to give things the shape that is most efficient for the financial needs of developers. Planning regulations align with this logic: they only require certain percentages of the total area to be destined for public spaces or institutional buildings. The quality or size of those spaces is not relevant as long as they meet these predefined ratios. To favour these “cataclysmic” investments, as Jacobs (1961) would call them, all uses are distributed in a coarse grain pattern: parks are enormous, stores are concentrated in malls and gated communities occupy entire blocks, ideally larger than 1 hectare (De la Carrera, 2014). Distances are long, roads connecting to surrounding areas are discontinuous and public transportation is usually deficient. While the residents of high-income gated

communities living in similar conditions of distance and isolation can overcome these limitations through private services and means of transportation, low-income residents depend on public services that cannot meet the demand⁶.

Similarly, when dealing with blocks the designers’ efforts are usually put in fitting as many housing units as permitted by building codes, urban regulations and budget constraints. Therefore, the spaces that usually ask for a special treatment and non-standardized solutions, like corners, ground floors and entrances, are disregarded or reduced to the minimums (Island City, 2019). One regulation that requires to leave a (private) continuous front yard between public space and buildings, where fences are usually built, makes this disconnection with the street even more dramatic. While high-income projects this rejection of the public can be compensated with a range of amenities in the interior, their low-income equivalents struggle to fit enough parking spaces and very small gardens or playgrounds. Paraphrasing Caldeira (2000), the creation of exclusive universes for escaping from public life is a privilege of the rich.

But this passive role of designers extends to the smaller scales. As it was explained before, the size and configuration of buildings are ultimately decided according to the maximum cost of units, so the room for innovation or experimentation is extremely limited. Opposite to what happens in high-income gated communities, where references to architectural styles and high-quality finishes can reinforce the illusion of isolation and exclusivity of residents (Caldeira, 2000), any trace of architectural style or customized design is scraped off from the beginning. The most evident consequence of this is the high degree of standardization of buildings. Another one, perhaps not so visible, is that the apartments are sold without painted walls, tiled floors or any other “non-essential” finishes. For Hurtado Tarazona (2018), the fact that low-income residents embrace the process of finishing their apartments with optimism demonstrates that they do have an agency, although limited, in the construction of space. Then, the idea of standardized projects as places of people’s alienation is partially challenged.

5.1.4 The publicist lets the green be seen

It is not clear, yet, which are the motivations for people to live in gated communities. A good answer to this question can be found in advertising and publicists, as “advertisements and the people to whom they appeal must share a common repertoire. If the ads

³ There are two types of social housing: VIS (the Spanish acronym for social interest housing) and VIP (priority interest housing). The difference is the maximum cost of each and the subsidies that buyers can have access to.

⁴ It must be clarified that housing policies in Colombia have always privileged homeownership, with state-owned rental housing being non-existent. This was also valid before the liberalization of the market. That is why the entities in charge of developing the projects, both public and private, have always worked in tandem with savings and credit institutions. Therefore, access to the social housing market has always been limited to those who can apply for a loan, which is usually those in the formal market. The ones “left behind” must recur to the informal housing market.

⁵ As a consequence, the size of a social housing unit has decreased dramatically in the last years. According to Ortiz (2020), a unit could have a maximum area of 120 m² in 1990. In 2020, it has been reduced to 60m².

⁶ Hurtado Tarazona (2018) notices how sometimes residents in the gated district of Ciudad Verde, in the southern outskirts of the city, have a hard time finding a spot for their children in the district’s schools. Transportation is no different: according to data from a large-scale survey (DANE, 2017), 40.5% of low-income gated communities working residents used the BRT system of the city for going to their jobs, versus 23.3% of high-income gated communities residents. The tendency reversed for the case of private cars: while the former only used them for 15.1 of trips, the latter did so in 46.7 of cases.



Design for the advertisement campaign of a low-income development. The main text reads "Now is the moment. Improve your life." All the items shown as advantages of the project refer to the public spaces and private services of public use.
Source: www.behance.net/SusanSnow

fail to articulate images people can understand and recognize as

their own, they fail to seduce" (Caldeira, 2000, p. 263).

Different authors have tried to identify the main motivations for people to live in gated communities. For instance, Caldeira (1996, 2000) shows how the elites of Sao Paulo decided to escape the public dimension of cities and reject those who were different; an attitude reinforced by a "talk of crime" that was then spatialized in the form of gated communities that offered security, isolation, social homogeneity, amenities and services. Parallel to this process, an "aesthetic of security" was born and became a marker of status. Other authors have given similar explanations for the rise of this phenomenon in other Latin American countries (Borsdorf et al., 2007; Coy & Pöhler, 2002; De la Carrera, 2014). Ongoing research looking into advertising of gated communities in Bogotá between 1970 and 1998, when these projects were still mainly built for middle- and high-income groups, produced similar results, with security, amenities, economic advantages and green spaces being the most prevalent themes (Ruiz, 2020).

Contradicting part of these conclusions, the main reason for low-income residents to decide to live in these projects is not status, nor security, but to become homeowners. This "dream of homeownership" (as is usually stated in advertising) is part of a "national project for the formation of the middle classes through consumption, particularly the purchase of new housing" (Hurtado Tarazona, 2018). Together with this, other motivations which

are closer to those of high-income groups can also be found in advertisements: for example, the idea of a modern space "where there is a space for each thing and clear frontiers between the public and the private" (Holston, 1989, as quoted by Hurtado Tarazona, 2018, p. 59), or the notion of a "new lifestyle" where nature is embedded in everyday life.

In an interview with an advertising creative working in these projects⁷, other peculiarities emerged. For instance, as opposed to the desire of isolation of Calderías' subjects, the proximity of the gated communities to other places is "always mentioned". Other items, as greenery or communal amenities, which are also common in high-income advertisements, are also important even if in reality they are small and probably not enough to meet the needs of residents. As said by this creative:

When we don't have so much green around, what we do is, for example, putting a family in the children's playground, which is a reality, with a couple of trees or something like that behind. Let that green be seen, even if it is contrasted with cement, but let it be seen in something (personal communication, 2019).

Interestingly, according to this creative, the value of these amenities does not rely on their capacity to form self-sufficient enclaves (which they cannot), but rather in the novelty they represented when compared with the previous living environments of future residents (i.e. informal neighbourhoods).

5.1.5 Lawyers regulate, administrators enforce

The moment people buy or rent a house in a condominium, they are immediately obliged to comply with the "Condominium property regime" and the specific regulations of each condominium, contained in a "Condominium regulations document" and, in some cases, also in a "Manual of coexistence". In general terms, these documents specify how communities can participate in decision making, the role of administrators, desired and undesired behaviours, conflict resolution mechanisms and sanctions applicable to those who do not comply to the rules. This complex legal apparatus is set up by lawyers and the legal departments of development companies, its daily enforcement is left to the administrators and any modifications must be approved by the residents' assembly.

It is not a coincidence that the main law regulating this regime was reissued in the same period in which big developers were starting to focus their business in social housing and gated communities. That is why, despite being a regulation for all condominiums, it dedicates a long section to the definition and specification of "real estate closed units", which refer to gated communities (Congreso de Colombia, 2001). Interestingly, this is the only official definition of what a gated community still in

⁷ Given their direct dependence on the construction business, the source preferred to remain anonymous.

force in Colombia. This does not come as a surprise, as there is a natural link between a privatized form of governance and gated communities: the moment projects isolate themselves from public life, they need to establish a clear set of rules that guarantee the coexistence of individuals. In Colombia, these private regulations can even exceed the restrictions set by authorities as long as they do not transcend the “intimacy or private autonomy” of residents⁸ (Corte Constitucional de Colombia, 2002, p. 10).

Here, it is worth noting an important difference between high- and low-income gated communities residents' view on the role of these regulations. According to Caldeira (2000), one of the main challenges in São Paulo's high-end gated projects was to keep the order inside the walls. In fact, “many residents seem to treat the entire complex like a private home in which they can do whatever they like. They interpret freedom to mean an absence of rules and responsibilities toward their neighbours” (Caldeira, 2000, p. 274)⁹.

Oppositely, in the case of low-income gated communities, these regulations are not seen as a way of avoiding the rules from outside, but rather as tools for reinforcing them with even stricter codes of conduct. Residents embrace this new regulatory regime as the basic standard of “a culture of the condominium” (as they usually call it), that then serves for measuring and comparing their behaviours against others'. The complexity of enforcing such a monolithic code of behaviour in heterogeneous communities explains why low-income regulations tend to be more specific and prohibitive than high-income equivalents. Understanding this voluntary acceptance of regulations is only possible if the previous residential experiences of dwellers are considered; while life in informal neighbourhoods relationships used to be ruled by “unwritten codes of neighbourhood conduct based on trust and reciprocity,” condominiums offer interactions with neighbours exclusively mediated by “regulations and contracts” that residents perceive as liberating (Hurtado Tarazona, 2018, p. 230).

5.1.6 Mortgaged residents live a quiet life

Having explained how projects are built and how they are supposed to function, we can delve into the how are inhabited. The first step in this process is to look at residents, and, more specifically, to their shared notions of order, progress, and coexistence.

It is already been explained how low-income residents see gated communities as places where they can overcome many inconveniences from their “previous life” in informal settlements;

⁸ In one project, it is specifically prohibited “to disturb the tranquility of residents with activities that cause annoying noise, such as [...] washing machines” (La Floresta de Suba condominium administration board, 2002, p. 7). Another one forbids to hold “music, dance or gymnastics classes in the apartments” (Compensar, 2009, p. 36).

⁹ In the author's experience, the case of Bogotá is very similar: it is common for teenagers to hold parties in these complexes, where the consumption of alcohol and other substances can happen without the intromission of public authorities.

there, they are finally able to become homeowners of dwellings where clear regulations guarantee a “quiet life”. This “value by opposition” is also present in other realms of daily life. For instance, one resident interviewed by Hurtado Tarazona (2018, p. 125), explained that she liked “to arrive at night, when you see this fog, the towers all organized, it looks very nice, like a model”. This acceptance of visual order and homogeneity, which the same researcher calls the “desire for a grid”, is completely counterintuitive for urban planners and architects. For instance, the criticism of the “city as a work of art” and the “closed city”, elaborated by Jacobs (1961) and Sennett (2006, 2018), respectively, understand absolute order and legibility with as enemies of democracy and diversity. Although these observations are still valid in these complexes, as it will be explained later, it is important to recognize the gap between the scales of value of urbanists and residents.

Adding to this, it should be considered that for most low-income residents, gated communities represent the first and only chance of “not only accessing a house of their own, but [...] also starting their ‘credit life’ and becoming ‘credit subjects’”, which explains why “people experience the purchase of a house as a process of social and economic inclusion, beyond the materiality of the specific house they bought” (Hurtado Tarazona, 2018, pp. 124–125). This economic inclusion is also seen as the first step of the trajectory towards “real” citizenship (i.e. middle class). Therefore, if in high-income gated communities the desire is to safeguard the *status quo* of a lifestyle that is already there, for low-income residents the gates and regulations are protecting and organizing a project still to be realized, an investment in a better future that is not there yet.

This inclusion in the formal market has another interesting consequence for low-income residents: they *also* see their new homes as economic investments. Therefore, they are not forever; instead, these houses are supposed to be temporary shelters to be sold or rented in the future to then get something better. This creates a critical distance between residents and their homes that creates a tension between the will to invest in their customization and the idea that a more neutral space will be easier to sell in the future. In other words, a conflict between value of use and value of change, which could be read as a form of alienation, that is also common among middle- and high-income real estate investors (Hurtado Tarazona, 2018). This creates an unusual challenge for designers: the actions that they may understand as opportunities for appropriation (customization, personalization, variation), might be perceived by residents as devaluating menaces for their investments.

5.1.7 A stranger from a previous life

Now that the motivations of residents for living in these complexes are clear, it is worth focusing in the problem of “the

other” or, as Jacobs (1961) would call it, “the stranger”. If gated communities are supposed to be devices for segregation and exclusion, then who, and what, is being excluded by the fences of low-income projects? In the case of high-income gated communities, the stranger is that one who belongs to different social classes (a distinction usually mediated by race, customs and education): therefore, the control offered by the projects “is in fact class control, which helps to maintain the condominiums as a separate and homogeneous world” (Caldeira, 2000, p. 271). But in low-income gated communities, where most residents do not have professional degrees, have jobs that are usually underpaid or still tied to informality, residents must find a new set of markers for distinction.

First, “the other” can be defined in terms of ownership, or the lack of it. If owning a house is a symbol of personal progress and inclusion in the middle-class, then those who are renters are lacking the moral and physical qualities that a “mortgaged resident” has proved to possess, and are incapable of taking care of shared spaces (Hurtado Tarazona, 2018). This has an unexpected consequence: “one issue that united the great majority of residents in new residential compounds was their shared rejection of renters. Renters are a clear minority in these complexes, yet homeowners widely considered them the principal source of problems” (Hurtado-Tarazona et al., 2020, p. 16). But being capable of owning an apartment is no guarantee of having the same preferences of neighbours, which leads us to the next point.

When it comes to qualifying conducts as appropriate or inappropriate, residents also refer to their residential experience: then, a behaviour that reminds them of that previous life is seen as problematic and even risky, as it may devalue their properties. That is why hanging clothes in the windows and residents who are too loud are usual triggers of conflict¹⁰. Then, the ideal neighbour is the one who “is not perceived” and allows for a “non-intrusive coexistence”, as opposed to the “cohesive community” values of the past.

The perception of order in public spaces follows a similar logic: informal vendors are seen by some as those who mess up the promised order of the “urbanist’s grid”, and teenagers who meet in parks are treated as suspicious (Hurtado Tarazona, 2018). This explains the importance that the police seem to have for many low-income residents: in public spaces, where private regulations are useless, it is expected for the police to be the main preserver of order¹¹. This relationship between residents

¹⁰ Noise is the main source of conflict in these projects (Hurtado-Tarazona et al., 2020). Although this might have something to do with the cultural or personal background of residents, the main reason is the poor acoustic isolation of apartments, which is worsened by the structural system used in low-budget housing projects, consisting of continuous bearing walls of concrete or single-layered brick.

¹¹ The main source for this conclusion is set of interviews conducted in Bogotá by D. Kostenwein for an article still to be published (2020b).

and law-enforcement is the exact opposite of high-income gated communities, where residents try to avoid any interaction with public authorities (Caldeira, 2000).

It can be noted how, although not explicit, a distinction in terms of social class is underlying all these definitions of what is strange. Interestingly, residents have managed to locate themselves in a place that is not the one of the poor, which is behind, but neither the one of the middle-class, which still lies in the future. For them, living in gated communities has a double implication: it is both about unlearning their previous (residential) life, and a continuous process of learning “the culture of the condominium.” In this process, internal regulations play an important role in the definition of what a desirable behaviour is and what is not¹². This willingness to cooperate is reinforced by a generalized sense of satisfaction toward the projects, which in turn produces a rejection to all criticisms towards them. Those who complain and protest are not making an effort to overcome themselves, and they lack “culture” (Hurtado Tarazona, 2018). Therefore, the stranger in low-income gated communities is that one who makes (willingly or not) structural problems palpable; those inequalities that, as much as residents try to overcome through individual efforts, will not disappear without a larger, more coordinated action.

5.1.8 The negotiators of overflow

There is a difference between people’s desires and their actions. This is true in the case of low-income gated communities, where residents are constantly negotiating their expectations with the extremely limited reality of their houses: as Hurtado Tarazona (Hurtado Tarazona, 2018, p. 233) puts it “they ‘fit’ some aspects on the grid while others keep them overflowing its borders.” Interestingly, this idea of the “overflow” (*desborde*) is also used by a group of collectives of social and architectural activists working in low-income gated communities’ districts. Camilo Pinto, rap singer and a member of the *Golpe de barrio* collective, explains the concept like this:

Everything is so standardized, so schematized, that finally the community itself begins to exceed those limits, the limit of the fence, the limit of the sidewalk. The limit of where to get a job, how to do it, how not to do it. It seemed to us that the overflow also reaches an individual dimension, how the individual, even in his own aesthetics, in his own language, begins to overflow in order to qualify the community, qualify the space [...]. (Pinto & López Ortega, 2020)

Some examples of this overflow have already been mentioned: clothes in the window and informal vendors in the street (who sometimes are also local residents) are the most problem-

¹² A similar phenomenon has been observed in Haram City, the first low- and middle-income gated community in Cairo, where everyday conflict resolution, usually related to disorder in shared spaces, is heavily influenced by the vision that planners had for the community, which ends up defining what is appropriate and what is not (Simcik Arese, 2018).



Hanging clothes on the windows is usually seen as a behaviour from a previous life that has no place in the new, regimented gated communities. In the picture above, the resident also offers a haircut service with a poster that reads "Haircut for

5000 [pesos]". Using apartments for productive activities is often prohibited by administrators. Source: students from the Island City collective, 2020.

atic cases. But neighbours also negotiate in other ways. Their desire for a non-intrusive coexistence is counterbalanced by the expectation that, in case of need, neighbours will be there to help. Furthermore, many apartments also serve as workspaces for residents working in the informal market, providing services and products to their community and even to other districts (Hurtado Tarazona, 2018). Limited by an inflexible built environment, Facebook and Whatsapp groups act as the "storefronts" of these businesses, authentic online markets where all kinds of products are offered. Similarly, private forms of transportation are also offered when public networks are distant, or the public service is bad. Even the relationships to non-gated surrounding districts are negotiated: from cheap groceries to neighbourhood friendships, which in high-income projects tend to be limited to the realm of the gated communities and the mall, are found beyond "the borders"¹³.

This overflow has not been assimilated by the institutional apparatus of control that allows low-income gated communities to exist. Neither has it been fully accepted by residents, who still appreciate and help enforce it. Nonetheless, in an unexpected plot twist, dwellers also act as the main negotiators of overflow. They are both enforcers and rebels, and exercise agency in both roles. They demonstrate that the knowledge from their previous life is still a tool for daily negotiation, that the "street smarts", in words of Sennett (2018), are still operating in the dark.

The challenge remains how to give a more powerful scenario for that potential to emerge, to come up with proposals in which the "desire for a grid" can coexist with this "negotiation of overflow."

5.1.9 Conclusion

This text discussed the peculiarities and specific challenges of low-income gated communities. They were presented as a part of a national strategy for the formation of the middle class, in which government, lawmakers and private companies work in tandem for stimulating consumption, mostly of private housing. It was also discussed how this project has successfully permeated the mentality of dwellers, who see homeownership as part of the ideal life trajectory and judge those who do not comply to it as less successful and even as bad neighbours. This idea of social advancement as a problem of individual attitude, regardless of deeper structural problems, is common among low-income residents and is, perhaps, the greatest victory of a model that sees consumption as means of progress.

In general terms, it was observed how low-income residents tend to understand the value of their new gated life by comparing it to their "previous life". Homeownership, neighbourly relationships, amenities, the use of public space and regulations

¹³ Here, I'm using the interviews by Kostenwein (2020b) again.

are all appreciated for the “organized life” they help create. This “desire for a grid”, and the “culture of the condominium” that emerges from it, is also supported by a complex legal apparatus that is willingly enforced by administrators and residents. This logic also revealed to have an aesthetic dimension: standardization and homogeneity, both consequences of budgetary constraints and regulatory limitations, turned out to be valued by dwellers, who feel liberated from the disorder of their previous informal dwellings.

Furthermore, this paper also pinpointed similarities between gated communities for the elites and low-income projects. In both cases, residents see their dwellings not only as shelters but also as investments. This creates a tension between the desire to customize the houses and the need for making them as easy to sell as possible. Besides this, they shared the idea of contractual relationships as liberating, and, as a corollary, the notion that being a “mortgaged resident” is important for acquiring formal citizenship.

It was also shown how, despite this “desire for a grid”, residents of low-income projects are constantly negotiating the limits they help impose. The effects of this “overflow” can be observed in daily life. For instance, dwellers’ relationship to public space and services revealed to be less exclusionary than in high-income projects. Furthermore, they negotiate the lack of flexibility of built spaces through large networks of exchange of goods and information that takes place in digital platforms and social networks.

In short, low-income gated communities are a scenario of constant negotiation between the dream of becoming part of the middle-class through homeownership and the reality of not possessing the capital for paying the private substitutes that would allow them to reject public life. How governance, planning and design can help mediating this negotiation between “grid” and “overflow” are still unexplored, and reveal as interesting and relevant topics for future research.



Source: El Sushi Negro collective

6

Scenes of overflow

6.1 Introduction

Now that the agenda of the actors of overflow has been exposed, it is now time to see how their negotiation of closed living environments is translated into spatial “scenes” at different scales. This stage asks for more detailed observations, so it is important to define a relevant study case. The chosen location is Campo Verde/ Parques de Bogotá, a neighbourhood in the south-east of Bogotá. A discussion on the relevance of the case, as well as some general information about it, opens this chapter. What follows is an exercise of critical mapping that compares and finds the inconsistencies between the planned, advertised, and built neighbourhood. Following this, a zoom into the smaller scale to show the stories of four home-working residents helps explain the implications of the gaps between plan and reality. To draw more general conclusions, the last step proposes a taxonomy that organises social and productive overflow into categories.

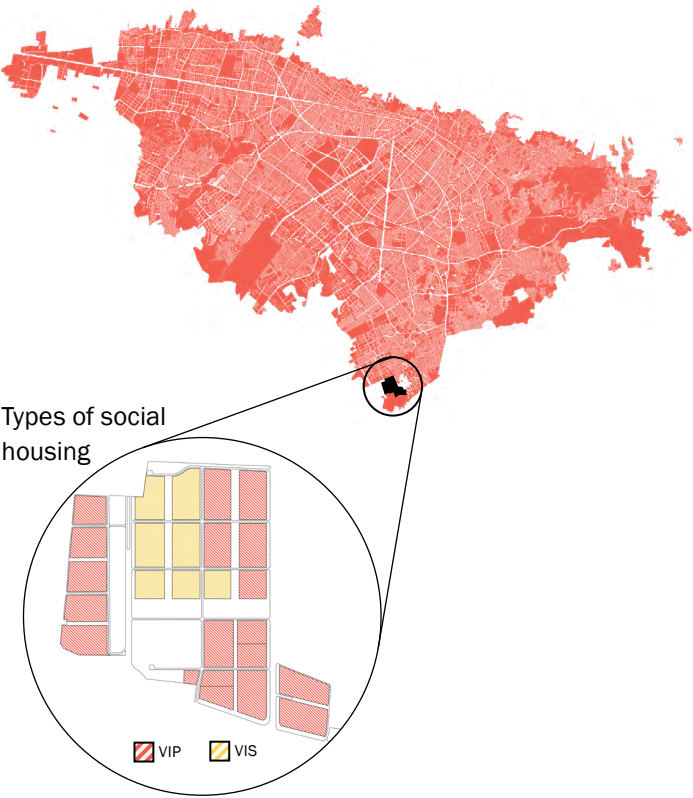
6.2 Campo Verde:
the promise of a better life

In 2011, the Mayor’s office of Bogotá issued the Decree 113 of 2011 (Mayor’s Office of Bogota, 2011), which contained the guidelines for the development of the Campo Verde partial plan in the south-east of Bogotá. The land was owned by an four-part escrow, three private developers (Bolívar, Marval and Amarilo) and the public land bank of the district (Metrovivienda), and was managed by a bank (Fiduciaria de Occidente S.A., 2010). After its approval, construction plans were delayed because the area had a high risk of flood. In 2016, following some works on the water management system, the government considered that it was safe to resume the construction of the project (El Tiempo, 2016).

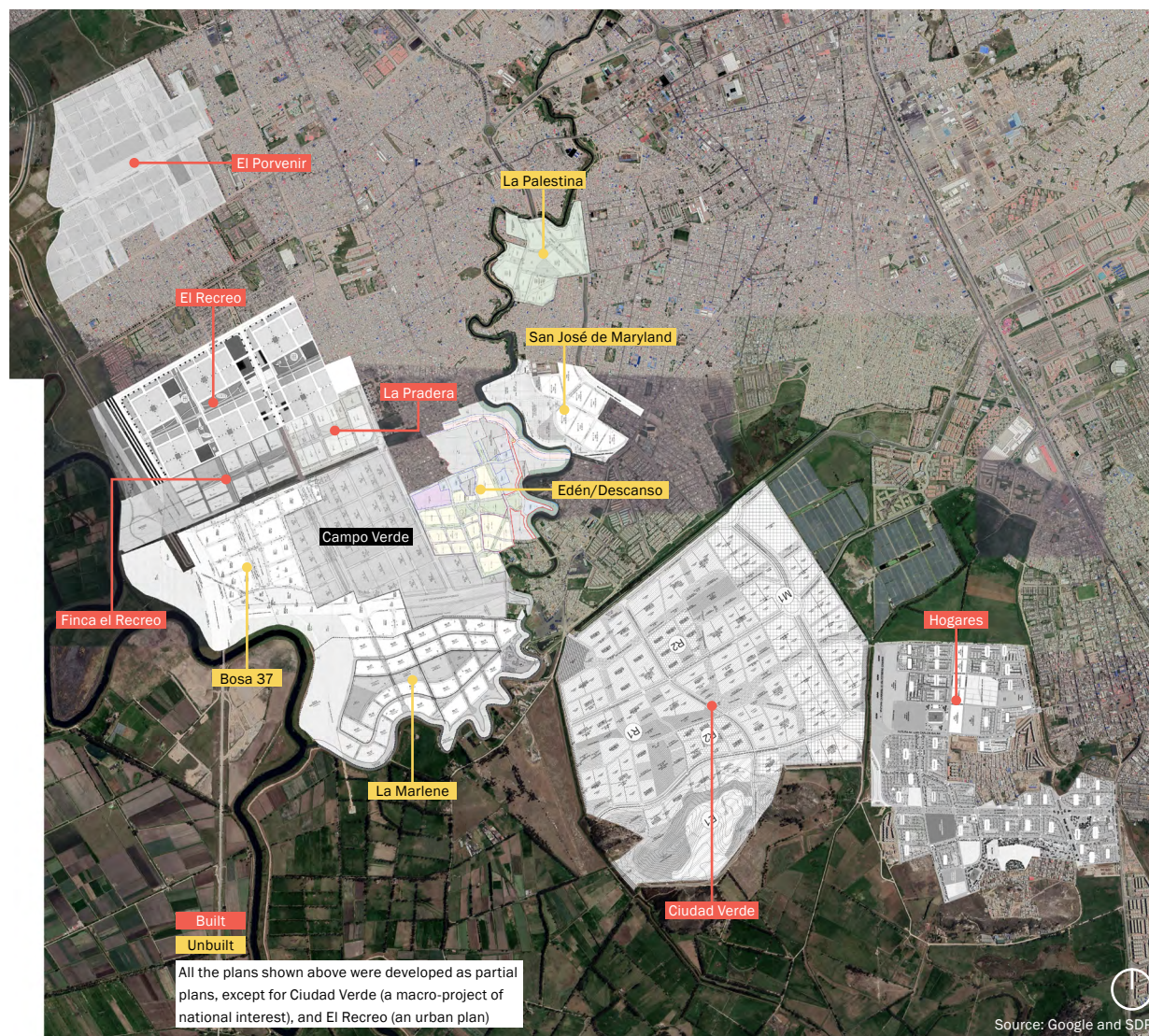
In a lapse of 5 years (2016 to 2020), two of the developers built 26 gated communities. All projects were sold as social housing, 19 as VIP (the cheapest type) and the remaining 7 as VIS. Some of the VIP projects were sold to extremely vulnerable families who got two subsidies from the government, which explains why they were assigned the stratum 1. Furthermore, 3500 of those apartments were destined for victims of the civil war. The general figures of the project are shown below.

Gross area	841666 m ²
Average size of Blocks (24 in total)	16363 m ²
Average size of gated community (26 in total)	15104 m ²
Average apartments per gated community	648
Minimum apartment area VIP	40 – 47 m ²
Minimum apartment area VIS	52 m ²
VIP apartments	11832
VIS apartments	3732
Total apartments	15564
Average residents per household (from census)	2.9
VIP residents	34312
VIS residents	10822
Total residents (Approx.)	45135

Location and types of social housing



Campo Verde during construction, around 2017. From Secretaría Distrital del Hábitat.



6.2.1 Relevance

There are different reasons for selecting Campo Verde Partial Plan as a study case. First, it only comprises gated social housing projects. Therefore, it is safe to say that most of its residents belong to low-income households. Second, it is located in an area of gated communities that has been expanding at a very fast pace for the last 20 years, with plans for further development in the coming years. In fact, it is part of a continuous “gated mega district” made up by 12 similarly developed plans (although two of them, Ciudad Verde and El Recreo, are not partial plans), spanning between Bogotá and the neighbouring municipality of Soacha. A rough calculation shows that

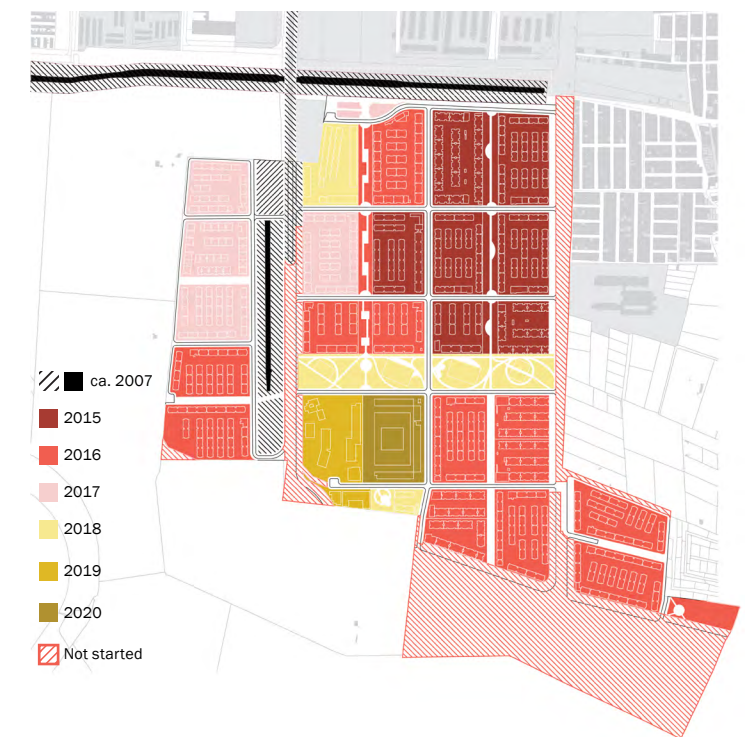
this mega district has an area of around 1000 ha and, when fully built, it will have around 500,000 residents. In this setting, Campo Verde is a sample of a larger area with similar characteristics in terms of morphology (large blocks with gated communities), management (large plans with few stakeholders involved), geography (formerly rural areas with moderate to high risks of flooding) and social economy (low-income residents). Third, this is the most recently built plan in this area of the city. This means that it presents a good chance for observing some phenomena that might only show up during the first years after construction, as, for example, the formation of community networks or

the “finishing-up” of road infrastructure. Finally, the borough where Campo Verde is located, Bosa, is historically been associated to informal neighbourhoods, even though some calculations show that today around 70% of all housing of Bosa are formal condominiums (Mesa de Trabajo Bosa Porvenir-UPZ 86, personal communication). This means that Campo Verde is part of a larger phenomenon of housing formalization in low-income areas of the city.

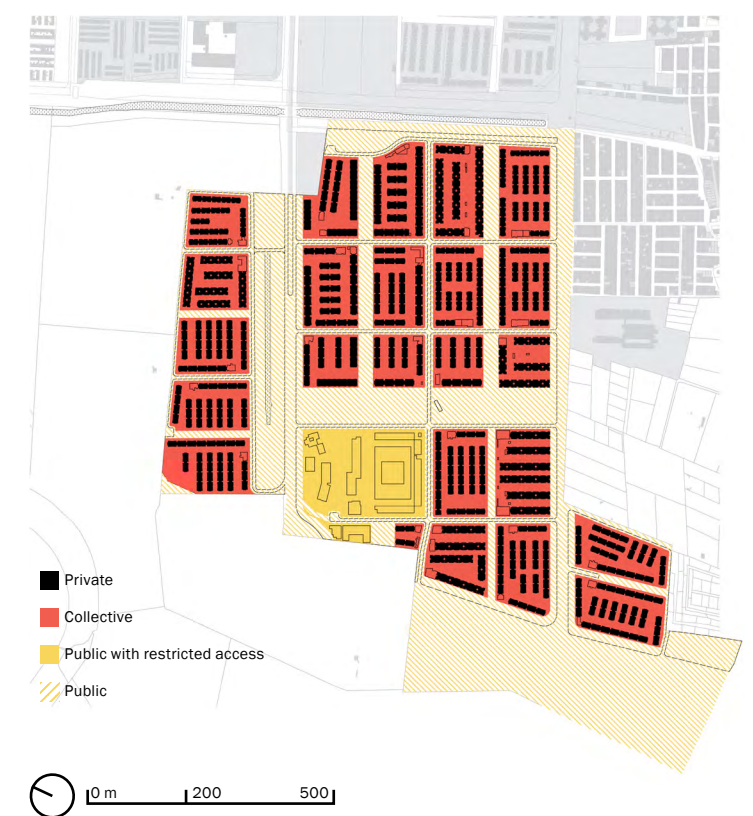
6.2.2 Priorities

The two maps on the right give a good idea of the priorities that guided the construction of Campo Verde. The first one shows the construction start year of all the phases of the project. Apart from a canal built in 2007, most of the neighbourhood was built in a lapse of 5 years, although some areas remain undeveloped. When compared to the map of property, it becomes clear that the areas that were built last, or that have not been built at all, correspond to public spaces as parks, facilities, and roads. In short, it was more important to sell houses than to have a complete neighbourhood. Although strictly speaking this situation is not the responsibility of developers, but the government's, the fact that they started construction despite the lack of minimum *urban* conditions leaves the question about the difference between what is ethical and what is legal. In fact, Campo Verde's clumsy urbanism is not the consequence of ignorance, but just the opposite, a product of the strict interpretation of urban laws.

Construction start year



Property



6.3 The partial plan: a development tool becomes regulation.

6.3.1 Dividing the land

As it was already mentioned, Campo Verde was developed as a Partial Plan. This is a tool that allows a developer to negotiate development rights and burdens with the city Government. The product of this plan has to follow the general regulations set by the Land Management Plan (POT) of the city and other decrees that define the minimum standards for urban expansion land (Mayor's Office of Bogota, 2004c). In general terms, these regulations specify the ratio of the gross area that must be transferred to the government as public spaces and facilities, in exchange of a usable area that the developer can build and sell.

It is worth noticing how these regulations help the developers optimise the amount of usable land they can get: for instance, the base area used for calculating the burdens is smaller than the area used for calculating the development rights. Furthermore, in Campo Verde a 30% of all areas intended to be parks where actually environmental buffers, which cannot be used for recreational purposes and, therefore, do not need to be equipped as parks. This “trick” does not only help the developer save money, but by incrementing the green-space-to-resident ratio it also increases the number of total houses that can be built.

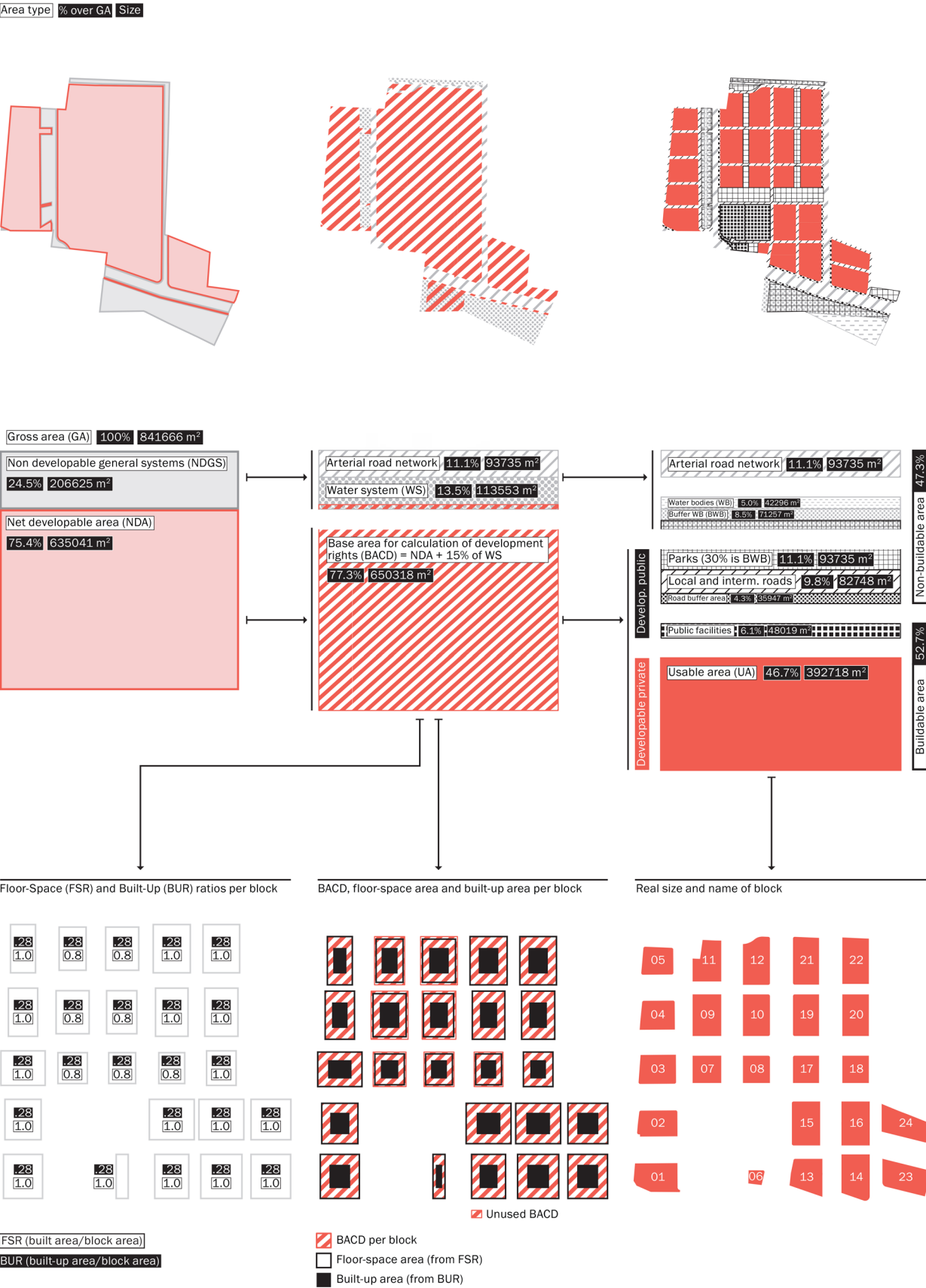
The specificity of this arithmetic system is contrasted by the lack of provisions regarding the configuration of such spaces. Although it could be included in the partial plan, none of the involved parties are interested in doing so. That is why there are parks surrounded by fences and blind facades, and roads that lack any continuity with their context.

To make things worse, even after its completion the partial plan remains as the main urban regulation of the neighbourhood, blocking any transformation or adaptation to the original plan. This is, to say the least, surprising. A partial plan as Campo Verde is defined by a cataclysmic market operation, to borrow Jacobs' concept (1961, p. 291), and it is impossible for that such a tool to regulate the future, gradual transformations of a neighbourhood. To prove this, it is worth looking at the partial plan in detail.

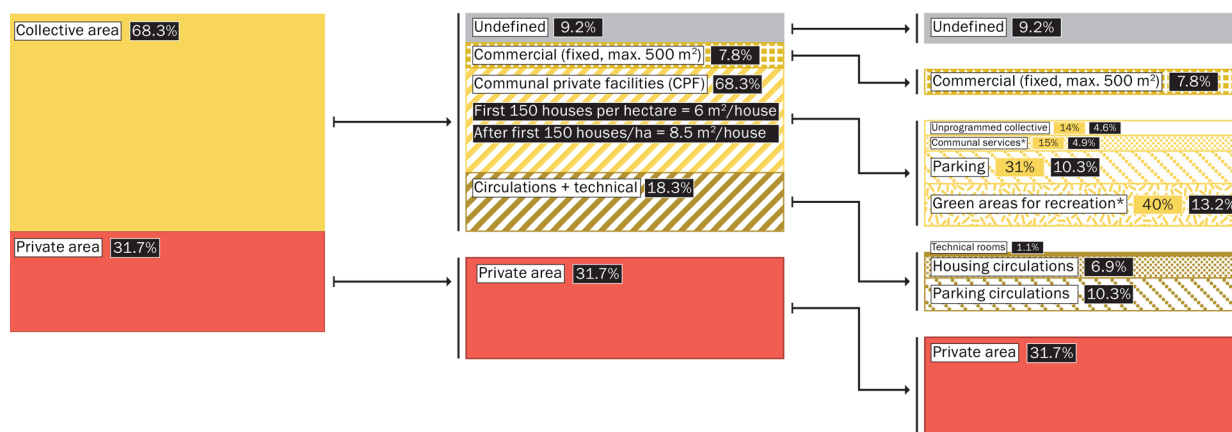
6.3.2 The three lives of the block

In Bogotá, development rights are expressed in Floor-Area Ratio (FAR) and Built-Up Ratio (BUR). In the case of Campo Verde's partial plan, they are calculated based on an area that includes parks, public facilities and local roads (Base Area for the Calcu-

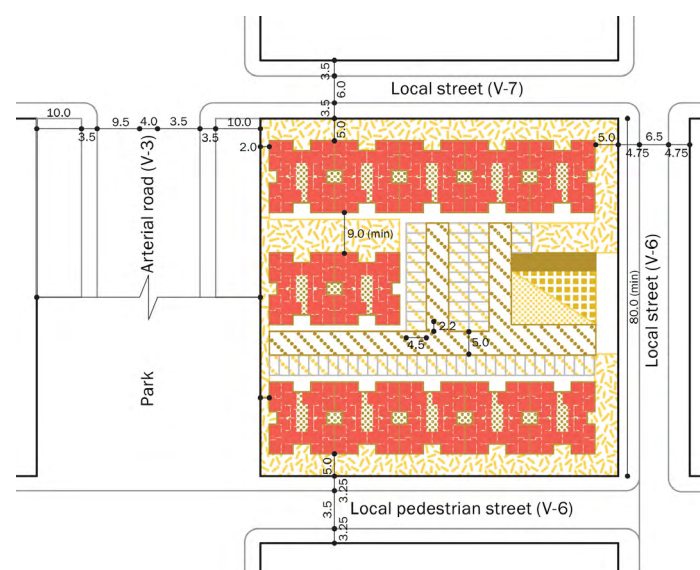
Land distribution in the Campo Verde Partial Plan



Distribution of program in a minimum-sized block
If all collective property was to be placed in the ground floor



Setbacks, minimum distances and street profiles



Numeric model of a minimum sized block (side 80 mts)

Usable area (UA) block	6400 m ²
Ratio BACD/UA: 1.65	1.65
Base area for development rights (BACD)	10560 m ²
Base FSR for VIP project	1.1 (10560 m ²)
Max. BUR for all projects	0.28 (2956 m ²)
Number of housing units	288
Commercial area (max. area)	500 m ²
Communal private facilities (green + parking + services)	2115 m ² (846 + 663 + 317)
Other communal spaces (circulaitions + technical)	1175 m ² (ground) 3173 m ² (all floors)
Total private area (for FSR)	12393 m ²
Built-up area	2775 m ²
FSR relative to BACD	1.17
Excess FSR compared to original regulation	0.17
BUR relative to BACD	0.26
FSR relative to UA	1.93
BUR relative to UA	0.43

lation of Development rights, or BACD). This area is 1.65 larger than the usable area (UA), which is what developers can actually sell. In theory, lower income housing can be more crowded. That is why all blocks with VIP projects have a FAR of 1.0, while in the blocks with VIS houses that value is 0.8. Nonetheless, the Partial Plan's decree states that the FSR indicated in the plan is a base that can be increased by the developer in exchange of either: a) more areas for environmental control; b) more parks and local roads; or c) money. This explains why in all the blocks the FSR relative to the BACD is higher (around 1.08 and 1.17 in the sample blocks studied). Finally, if the block is taken isolated and FSR and BUR are calculated according to the usable area (i.e. the real size of the block), these parameters increase again:

for the FSR, is oscillates between 1.79 and 1.94 (almost double than specified in the plan), while the BUR is between 0.40 and 0.43 (around 48% more than the plan's).

In other words, each block has a regulatory “triple life”: the legal (a negotiable base value calculated from the total areas of the plan), the resultant (what the developer is permitted to build after compensations), and the real (what is actually built relative to the real size of the block).

This “split” is the product of a logic of fast expansion, in which real local conditions are not as relevant as the parameters that private companies and the government have agreed upon. In Campo Verde, the efficient development of the whole neighbourhood, following numerical parameters, is more important than the formal, programmatic, or social configuration of local environments.

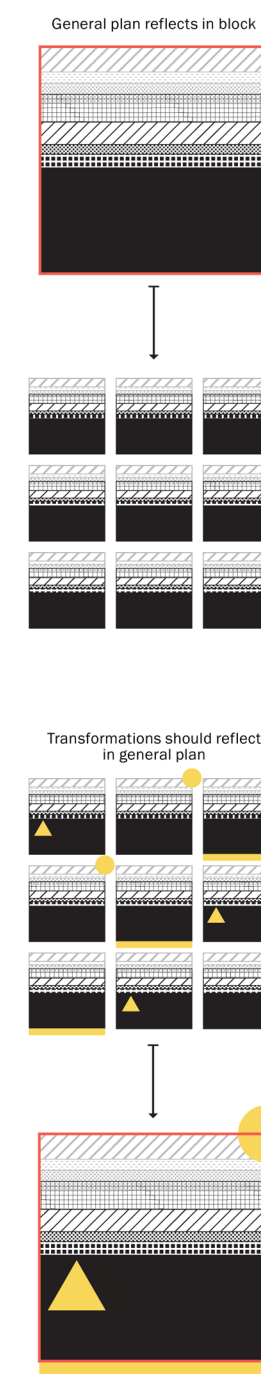
6.3.3 Block-centred

The partial plan is “block-centred.” Urban regulations are “applied” to blocks in a homogeneous way, with very little emphasis on the variations they should have depending on what surrounds them (which are limited to buffer zones and setbacks). In this process, each block becomes a small *representation* of the larger plan.

The product of this strange set of conditions is that, despite how serial and predictable this urbanism is, looking at what exists on the ground will never tell the story about what can be done to transform it. Instead, every local transformation must relate to the “invisible” global distribution of areas of the masterplan. Therefore, under current regulations all future actions (despite how local they are) will always need to follow the logic of the original agreement between large stakeholders.

6.3.4 Towards locality

The Partial Plan, originally a tool for expansion, should not be the primary urban regulation of a neighbourhood. As it has been shown, this makes harder to do small-scale adaptations (which are urgently in need) and misses to provide an intermediate scale of action between the block and the masterplan. The challenge for the future is to create regulations that open possibilities for local and progressive evolution. To do so, a new feature different from the block should be the basic unit for these regulations, dictating the guidelines for transformation and defining basic development parameters. In the next chapter, I propose that this element should be the street, which is an entity that has the power to define local conditions while relating to a larger whole.



Names of gated communities of Campo Verde, and the objects they designate



01 Sauco / Sambucus



02 Avellana / Hazelnut



03 Villa Verde / Green Villa



04 Senderos de Campo Verde / Paths of campo Verde



05 Nogal / Walnut



06 Sol de la Sabana / Savanna sun



07 Caoba / Mahogany



08 Alcaparro / Caper



09 Arrayán / Myrtle



10 Cerezo / Cherry blossom



11 Urapán / Chinese ash



12 Aliso



13 Roble / Oak



17 Manzano / Apple tree



18 Eucalipto / Eucalyptus



19 Valle del sol / Sun valley



20 Manantial del Sol / Spring of the sun



21 Bugarvilla / Bougainvillea



22 Paseo del Sol / Sun walk



23 Puerta del Sol / Door of the sun



24 Campano / Rain tree



25 Guayacán



26 Pino / Pine





14 Cedro / Cedar



15 Sauce / Willow



16 Reserva de Campo Verde / Campo Verde Reservation

6.4 Expectations and reality

6.4.1 The advertised neighbourhood
As for any other gated development, advertising also had a principal role in loading Campo Verde with social meaning. A first sign of this process can be found in the rebranding of the area, from Campo Verde (Green Field) to Parques de Bogotá (Parks of Bogotá). Although there are no documents documenting the reasons behind it, this change is *evidently* emphasising two key features of the project: the presence of large public spaces, something usually missing in the buyers' old neighbourhoods, and the fact that it is located in Bogotá and not in another municipality, where most low-income developments are being built.

From there, we could move on to the gated communities' names. There are two types: tree names for almost all projects developed by Constructora Bolívar, and "sun" names for Marval's projects. In both cases, these are intended to recall the rural imaginary and the sense of quietness and security associated to it, as well as creating a unique branding for each project.

Finally, there are sales documents and images. The few cases that were retrieved for this research are very significant. Although their visual vocabulary is limited to sterile and hyper organised spaces, the images are "softened" by happy families, playgrounds, and cars with posed and unnatural attitudes. This strange contrast is, in part, the product of balancing legal constraints that prohibit showing anything different than the real project, with the need to demonstrate that these spaces are somehow unique. Contradicting this intension, the only render of the whole neighbourhood, which comes from an official document that was never used for advertising, clearly shows that the developers always knew that uniqueness had no place in Campo Verde.



Sales render of Caoba showing the entrance building. The two spaces for commerce appear closed, probably as a way of keeping a visually organized aspect.

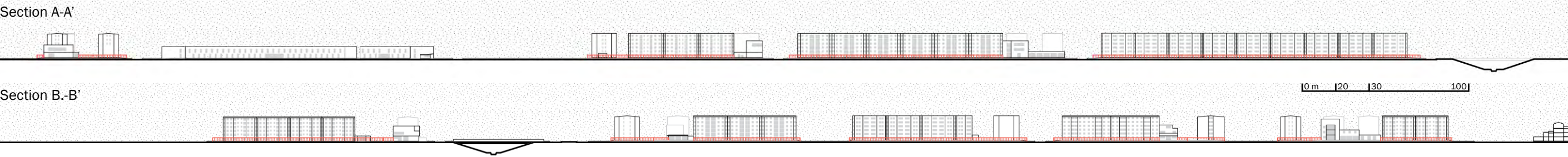
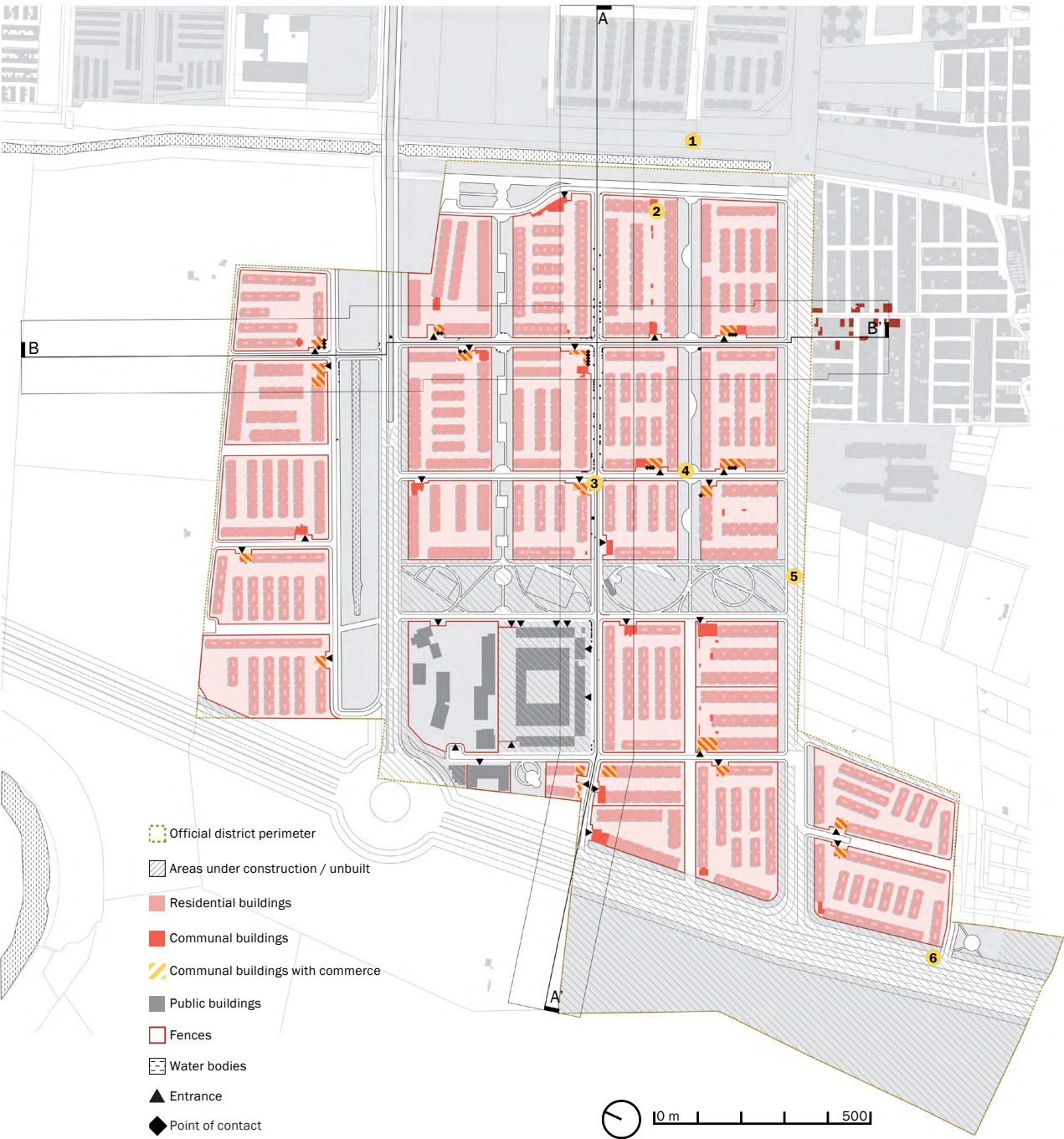


Sales render of Roble showing the interior collective spaces. In the foreground, a happy couple and a semi-luxury sedan define the ideals of a good life. In the background, kids run in a playground surrounded by parking spaces. Source: estrenarvivien-da.com



Render of Campo Verde. This is the only three-dimensional representation of the neighbourhood contained in the Technical Support Document (DTS) that defines the Partial Plan. No attempts to soften its appearance make it the sincerest representation of what was built. Source: Fiduciaria de Occidente S.A., 2010.

6.4.2 The real neighbourhood



6.5 Parques de Bogotá: a dream halfway through.

The differences between the plan and the real neighbourhood go beyond their names. In this sense, mapping the neighbourhood is a revealing exercise. As the following pages will show, if Campo Verde was a plan for realizing the advertised dreams, Parques de Bogotá, the *real* neighbourhood, is still a dream halfway through.

6.5.1 Public space

“There are no parks in Parques”, a resident said during a conversation (Marcela, personal communication). When the map of the planned public space structure and the realised one are compared, the reasons for this statement become clear: as for 2020, six years after the neighbourhoods’ construction began, the only park with sports fields and playgrounds had not been opened to the public. During this time, residents could only use the linear parks, which were built parallel to the gated communities. These are spaces with a very poor spatial quality, no defined programmes, unbalanced proportions (some have 30x160 m) and surrounded by fences on both sides, without any points of contact with private property. Besides, in the partial plan some environmental buffer zones were counted as parks, even if in reality they are inaccessible and have little to offer to residents.

6.5.2 Transportation

Campo Verde is supposed to be surrounded by three big roads, two of local importance in the East and West and one artery road in the South. They were supposed to absorb most traffic, including public transportation, allowing the central roads of the neighbourhood to have a low-intensity activity. But none of the

three were built, and the planned structure inverted: now, the central road runs from the only (paved) entry point of the neighbourhood and through the centre of the residential area, leading to small traffic jams in some corners. Until November 2020, the only public transportation available were unofficial tuk-tuks and collective taxis. Afterwards, the government accepted this *de facto* road structure and placed three bus stops on that same road. Despite this, a resident said that, even with the busses, the fastest way out were the taxis that used an unpaved road in the East (María, personal communication). In the absence of the state, informality will always be one step forward.

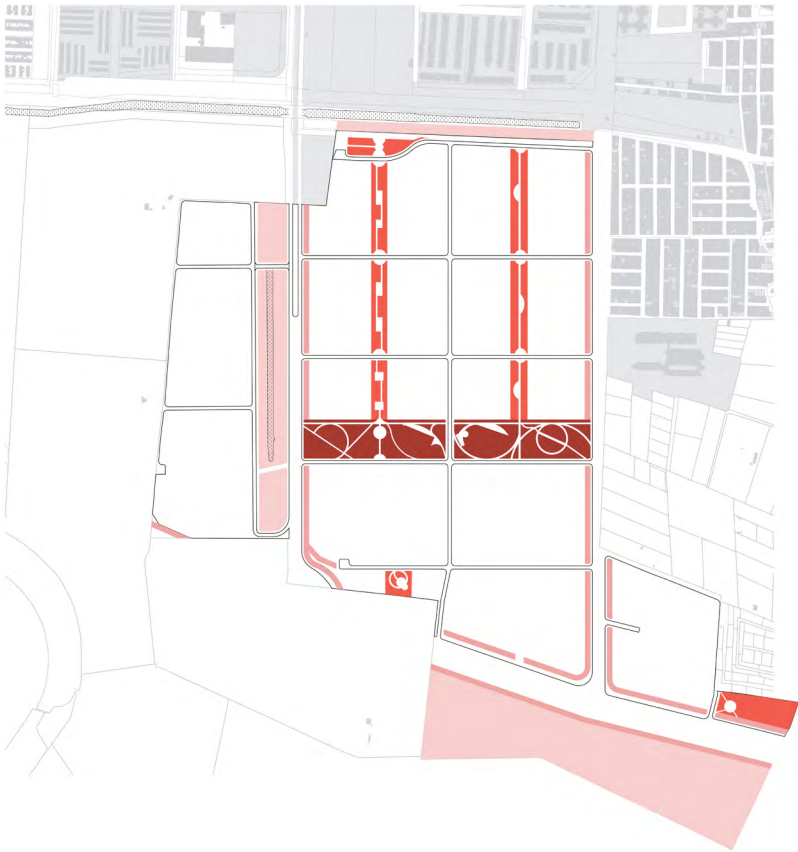
6.5.3 Uses

In the original project, eight blocks adjacent to the main roads in the East and West were the only ones where housing could be mixed with services and commercial activities. Despite this, the gated communities where there are commercial activities approved by administrators is way higher (18). If the productive activities within apartments were considered, there is no doubt that all the blocks would count. Another discrepancy between the plan and reality involves the Justice Centre, a facility that includes a juvenile correctional and a temporary detention centre. Originally, the plots for public facilities did not specify the actual uses they were going to have, and residents only knew of the project when it was already approved. Now that the building is almost finished, they feel that their properties will lose value, and fear for the children that will study in the two schools standing next to the jail.



Planned public space

- Zonal park
- Local park
- Buffer zone
- Enviromental management area



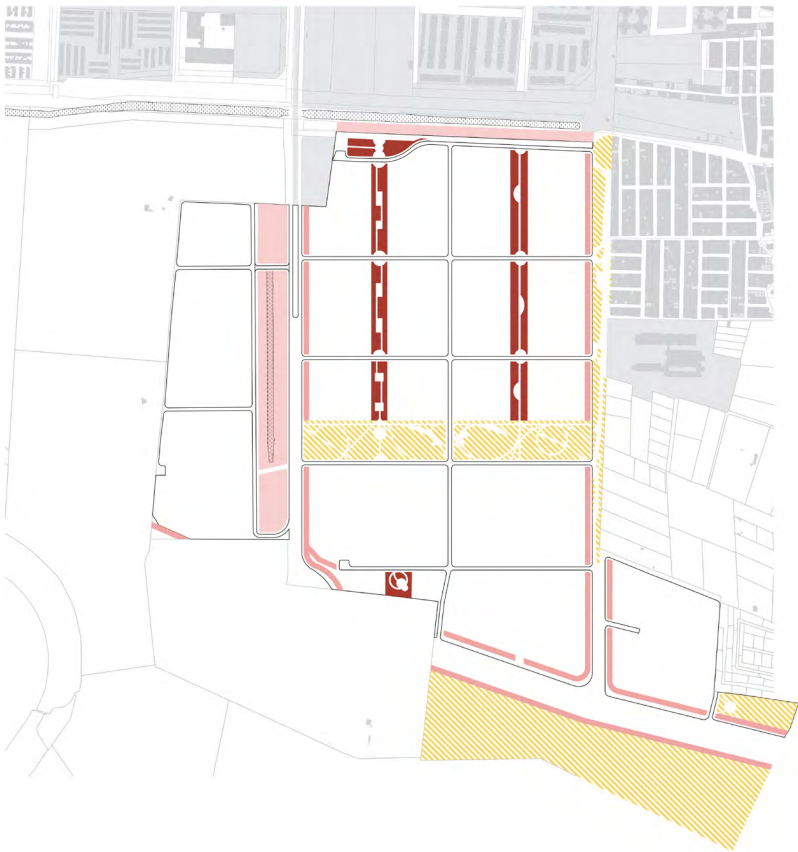
Planned road system

- Artery roads (V1/V3)
- Intermediate roads (V6)
- Local roads (V-7)
- Pedestrian roads



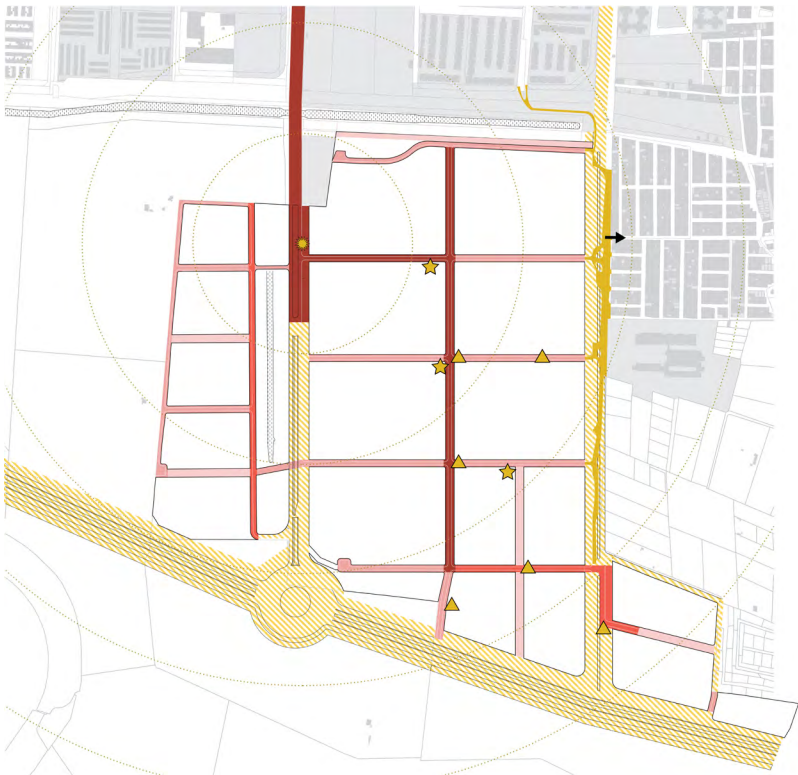
Existing public space

- Main parks
- Buffer zone
- Enviromental management area
- Unfinished / Residual



Existing road and transportation system

- Main roads
- Intermediate roads
- Local roads
- Pedestrian roads
- Unpaved roads
- Unbuilt roads
- The one and only paved exit point and bus stop until Nov. 2020
- Distance to bus stop until Nov. 2020 (each 200m)
- New bus stops from Nov. 2020
- Informal transportation spots (pedicab and collective taxi)
- Unpaved East exit

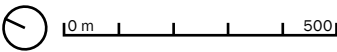


Uses

- Collective
- Collective open
- Commercial
- Education
- Daycare centre
- Prison / Police
- Open areas of restricted use

Commercial uses:
plan vs. reality

- Plots with condominium-approved commercial uses in plan
- Plots with condominium-approved commercial uses in reality
- Communal buildings with commercial uses



6.6 Cascading dependencies

An unfinished neighbourhood as Campo Verde has an impact on its surroundings. From interviews and social media posts from residents, it was clear that in the absence of schools, commerce and well-equipped parks, the demand was supplied in nearby areas. This situation also has institutional and everyday consequences, as public schools unable to meet the high demand of new seats, or residents having to walk more than two kilometres to spend a Sunday in the parks of El Recreo.

For the residents of Campo Verde, this reliance will last until the public infrastructure of their neighbourhood is finished in full. But even then, future dependencies might emerge, this time with their schools and parks as receptors of external users coming from the nearby partial plans that will start construction soon. Something similar might happen with transportation infrastructure: if only the *barely* minimum roads necessary to access these new neighbourhoods are built, the already fragile road network of Campo Verde will be also overloaded with their traffic.

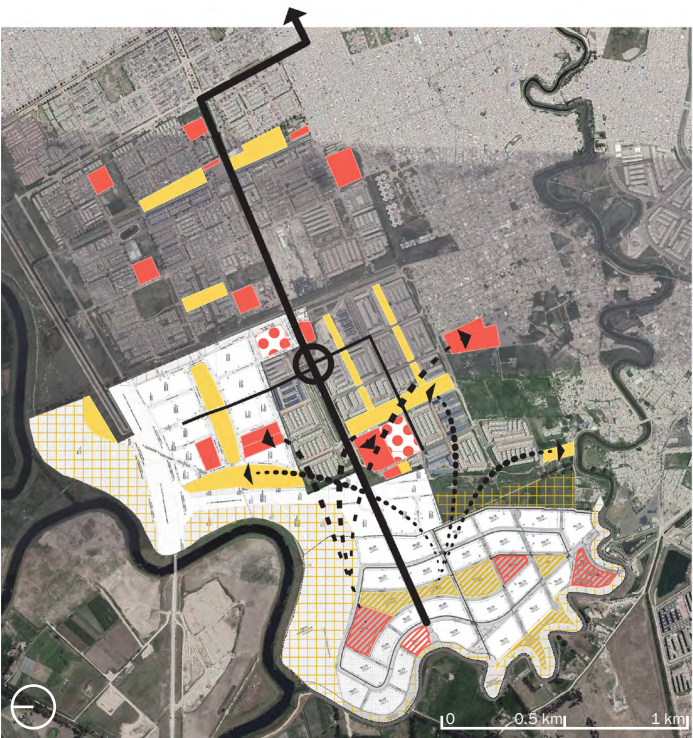
This cascading sequence of dependencies between inhabited, yet unfinished, areas also has a paradoxical side to it. Given the low diversity of uses of gated developments, the years in which they become providers of missing services is also when they are more attractive to strangers. And, as with as Campo Verde's prison, even when they do have an attractor, its urban relevance might be seen as a menace by the dwellers. The question that remains is: what will be the value of Campo Verde once it is no longer a provider of scarce services? Can it have an *intrinsic* urban value for its surroundings?



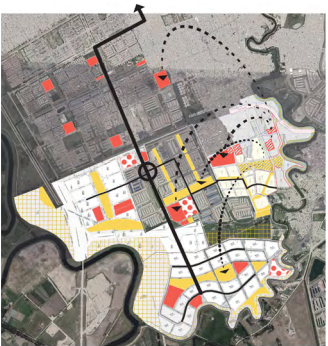
Stage 1 (current): Campo Verde unfinished.



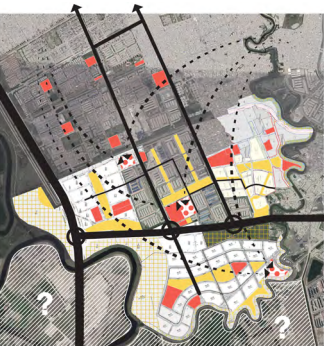
Stage 2: Bosa 37 unfinished.



Stage 3: La Marlene unfinished.



Stage 4: El Edén/El descanso unfinished.



Stage 5: Future peri-urban developments.

- Built
- Public facilities
- Unique-use facilities
- Parks
- Environmental management
- Facilities dependers
- Parks dependency
- Artery roads
- Main local roads

6.7 Four scenes of overflow

The following stories are based on interviews with residents of Parques de Bogotá. These conversations show how residents negotiate the closedness and incompleteness of their neighbourhoods, and the tension existing between their experience, current situation, and plans for the future.

6.7.1 Lenny's delivery

[35.04] *Dou you think some things should be adjusted so that residents can earn a living [from their apartments] without that being illegal?*

I don't really know. First, because it is illegal, one must have the permit from the administration. And second, it should not be like that because it is supposed that if one lives here, then one must find a way to earn a living, right? The bills, food... Here we can't afford luxury. Because of the pandemic and all that, right now we only have [money] for food and to pay the bills. That is the only thing we are doing now. Then yes, administrators should consider that more and make some code, a regulation or something, that permits that [type of activities] without creating inconveniences or something like that.

[48.48] *Where do neighbours know each other better: in the same floor, the same tower, the whole gated community?*

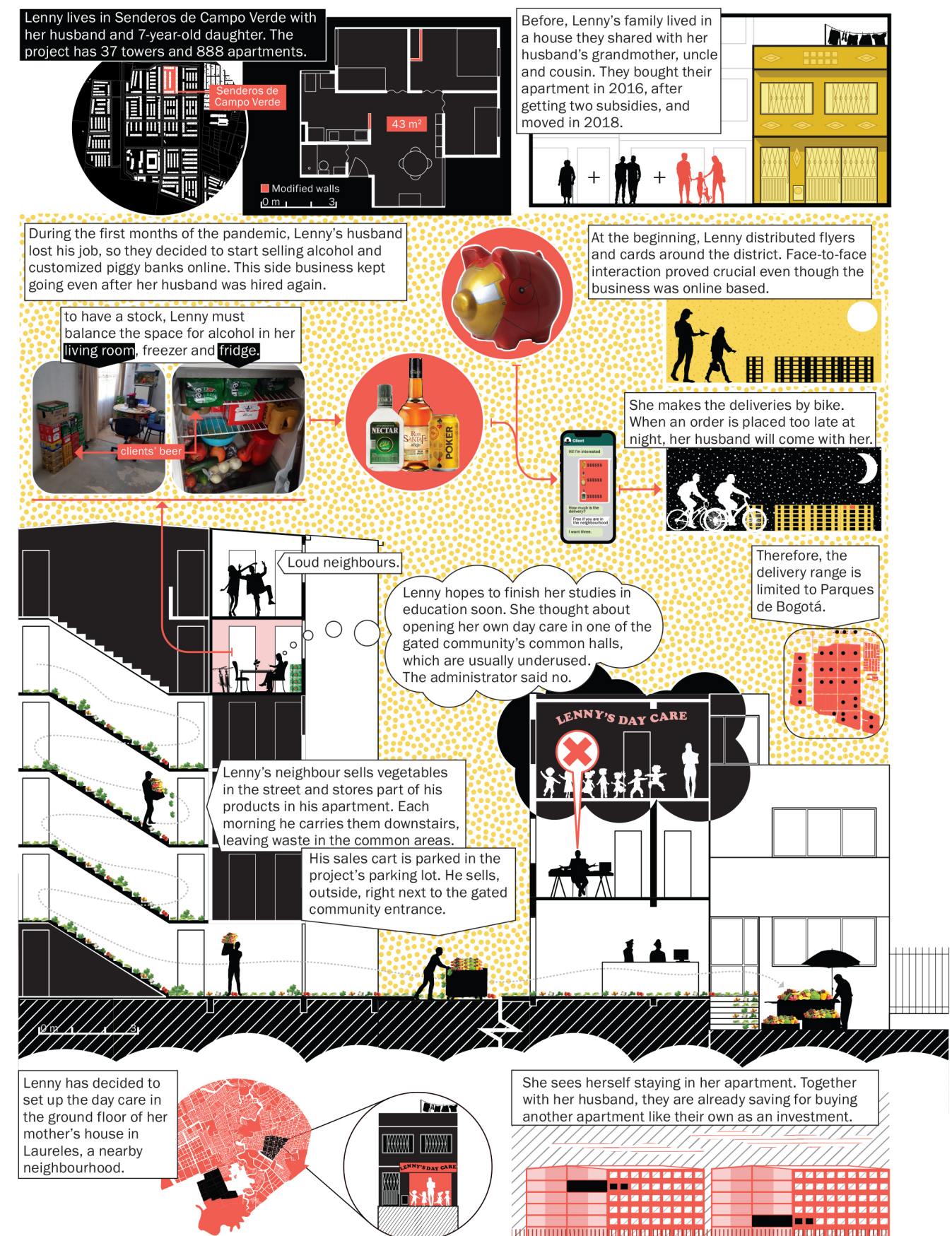
We don't know many people. In the tower, through the WhatsApp group, they try to organize things, saying "hey, what is going on?" or meeting in the tower and talking about what is going on in the tower. For example, outside in the corridors there weren't any of those lights that you pass and turn on, so we met, raised the money, bought them and the maintenance employee of the administration put them. So, when it comes to doing things to see what is missing, it is mostly the tower. I don't know how that works in general, I guess it must be the same for each tower.

[54.24] *Let's say one did something like leaving the interior part of the gated community closed, but allowing the outside apartments, the ground floor apartments to open to the street, have shops and businesses. Would you like that? What would you think of something like that?*

Well yes, it would be better that the entrances to the gated community were outside...the lateral ones. Yes, it would have more commerce and it would have more people, I imagine.

[54.58] *More people... It is better having more people to feel safer, no?*

Yes, because you already know that you can hide in a store or something [if they try to rob you]. Because sometimes one says "There, catch him, catch him!" [the thief], or one screams, and people don't pay much attention. They just look out the window and that is it.



6.7.2 Geraldine, Carlos, and Tommy's Pizza

[5:18] *Why did you decide to live in a gated community?*

Geraldine: First of all, security. Because, despite anything, you feel safer. One rests better.

Carlos: If you have children, that they can go out quietly to a park, they can take a walk around here and they won't let him go outside, the guards.

Geraldine: And second, because you also have your public utilities and you don't have to share them with anyone.

[16:33] *Are there conflicts between commerce and order in the public space? Because I feel that sometimes the people who live in gated communities want everything to be very organized outside [...] How does that work in parks of Bogotá?*

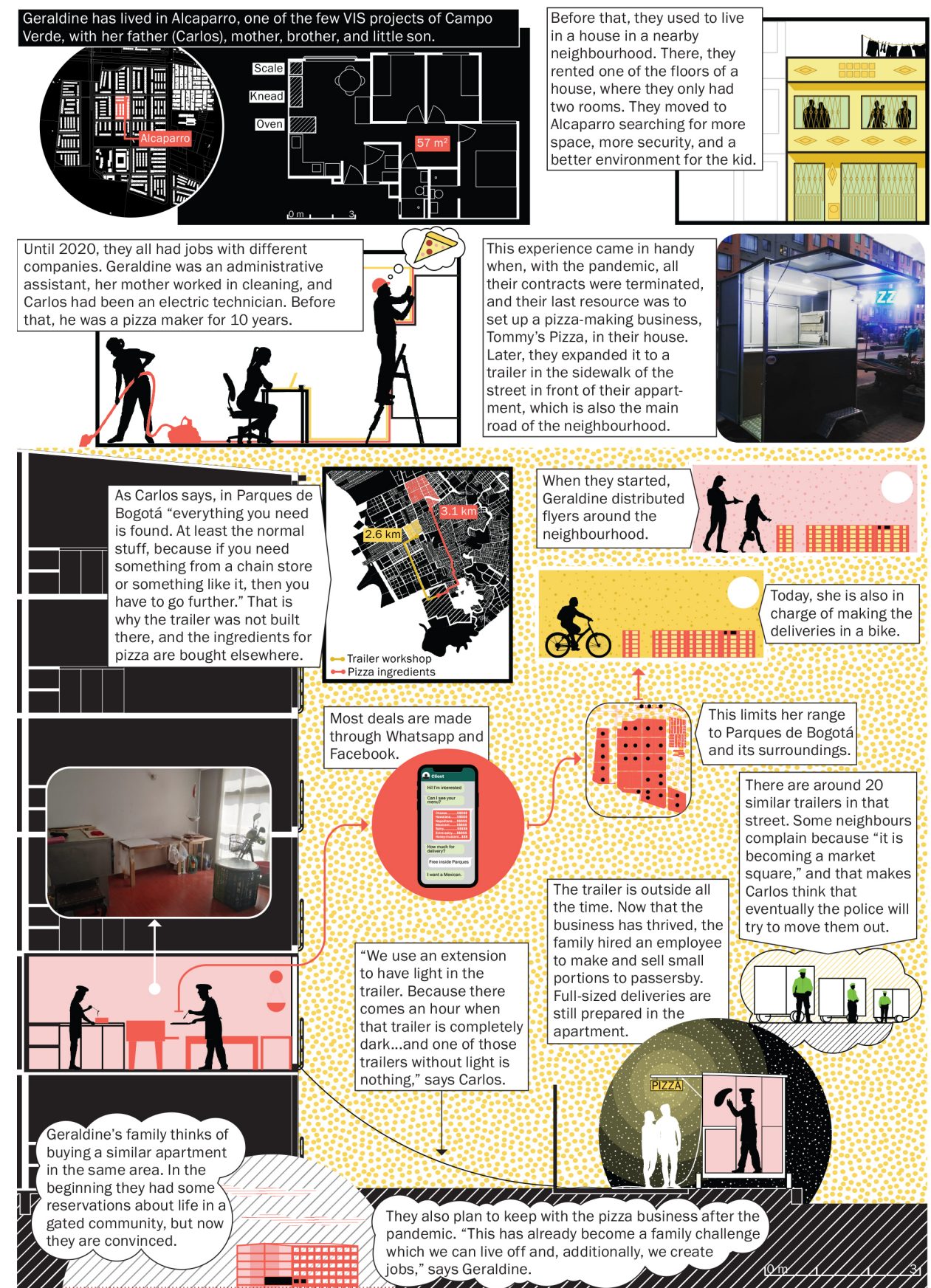
Geraldine: At the moment, the residents have not said anything to the people [working] outside. But one hears comments like "this has already become a market place, there are too many booths, they are invading public space, it is not fair." Well, like everything: there are people who, let's say, do have their steady job and they don't like to see that kind of thing. But since here there are apartments that have practically been given away, there are very vulnerable people, so they must go out. We have seen people with a little umbrella, a table, selling their little things. They don't even have... we don't have enough money to be able to set up something better.

[19:15] *¿Do you know about neighbours who have businesses not in the street, but inside the community?*

Gerladine: Here in this community you can see everything: tamales delivery, fast food delivery, pizza, drink, cakes... I have seen they delivery empanadas. I am in a [Whatsapp] group of this community, and there we all offer things to everyone else; everyone helps each other. So that's why I know here they sell... sweatshirts and everything. In this community there is everything. I do not know in the others, but in this one there are many things.

[27:57] *What would you improve of your neighbourhood?*

Carlos: Maybe [the neighbourhood is missing] something like parks. Parks for children. There are some, but they are very desolate, those little parks. They have practically nothing, so the children cannot go out. That is the only thing.



6.7.3 Yadira, the mariachi

[11.02] What are the things you like more of living in a gated community?

That I am with my sons. I have more tranquillity. Because look, I am the oldest of six siblings. Mi mother was also a single mother. So, one kind of also gets into the role of being the mother of your younger siblings [...] Those are too many things on you. So, since I have been here alone, I have been well. As I am telling you, I don't have many friends here, or anything like that. I have a sister living nearby, in another gated community, but it is not that close. And look, I feel good here, knowing it [the house] is mine, really mine. To be honest, my tranquillity is something I would not change for anything.

[11.56] So it is a matter of tranquillity and independence?

Exactly.

[12.58] Listen, so I guess that [back when you were a mariachi] you went to many houses with the mariachis and everything. Did you notice any difference between serenading in a gated community and serenading in a place that was not a gated community?

Maybe there was. Yes, because in gated communities the neighbours sometimes complained, for the sound, for anything. Instead, in houses it was more independent. People... it was the opposite, they looked out the window, they didn't complain that much.

[29.00] What do you think of informal activities? Of people selling in the Street, of food, of all those things they sell around, the trailers they put in the sidewalks... What is your opinion of that?

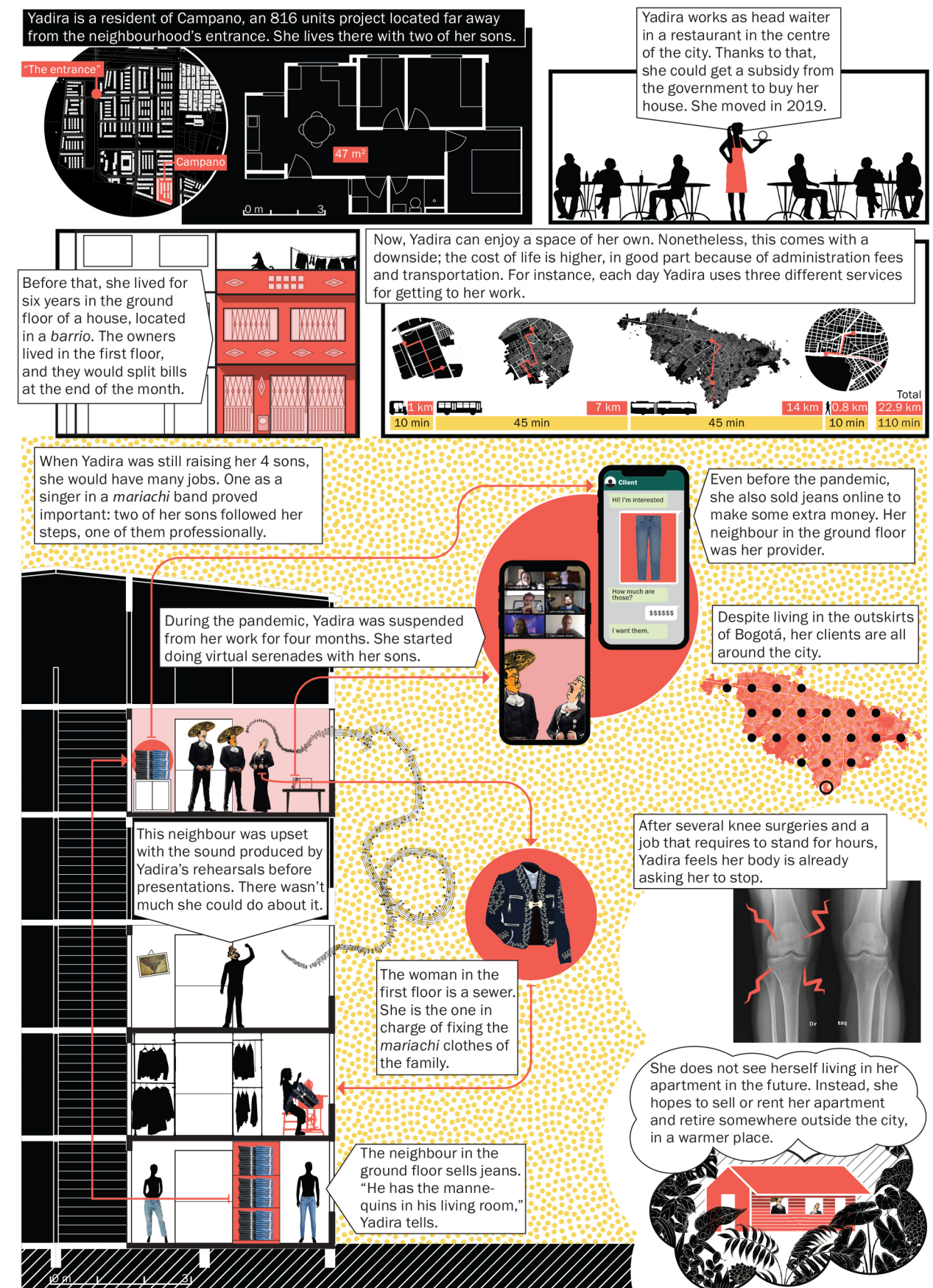
Personally, it doesn't bother me. It doesn't bother me because there are still many people who need to make a living [...] What did bother me a lot were the pedicabs, especially with those foreign people [driving them]. They maybe have the idea that we don't like them, so they are rude, they drive at high speed, so if you say something to them then [they get upset] ... They are very aggressive. So that did bother me a bit about the pedicab services. But when it comes to food and street vendors, no, not at all.

[37.20] What do you think could improve in your neighbourhood?

Safety. There is a lot of insecurity in the neighbourhood lately... a lot of thieves lately, terrible. And something that makes me a bit dissatisfied is that here, near the gated community [...] they are building a large school, it is almost finished, in front of it there is a large kindergarten, and next to it they are going to do ...

[37.48] The prison...

Yes, they are doing that. I don't know, I don't like that. How does that work, a prison near a school? Near a kindergarten? Near a gated community? So there is a lot of discontent with that.



6.7.4 Marcela's many businesses

[27.18] In how many apartments of your tower do you think there are other residents that, as you, also work from their homes or have a business inside their units?

There are many here. There is one that makes soup, one that makes hamburgers, one that makes empanadas, one that sews. There are stationery shops, regular little shops, supermarkets. Here there is sale of underwear, catalogue sales, Leonisa [clothes] sales, Avon [beauty products] sales. There is another lady who also sells natural products, but she has them there, she has a little showcase with little jars.

[28.21] That is in your gated community only?

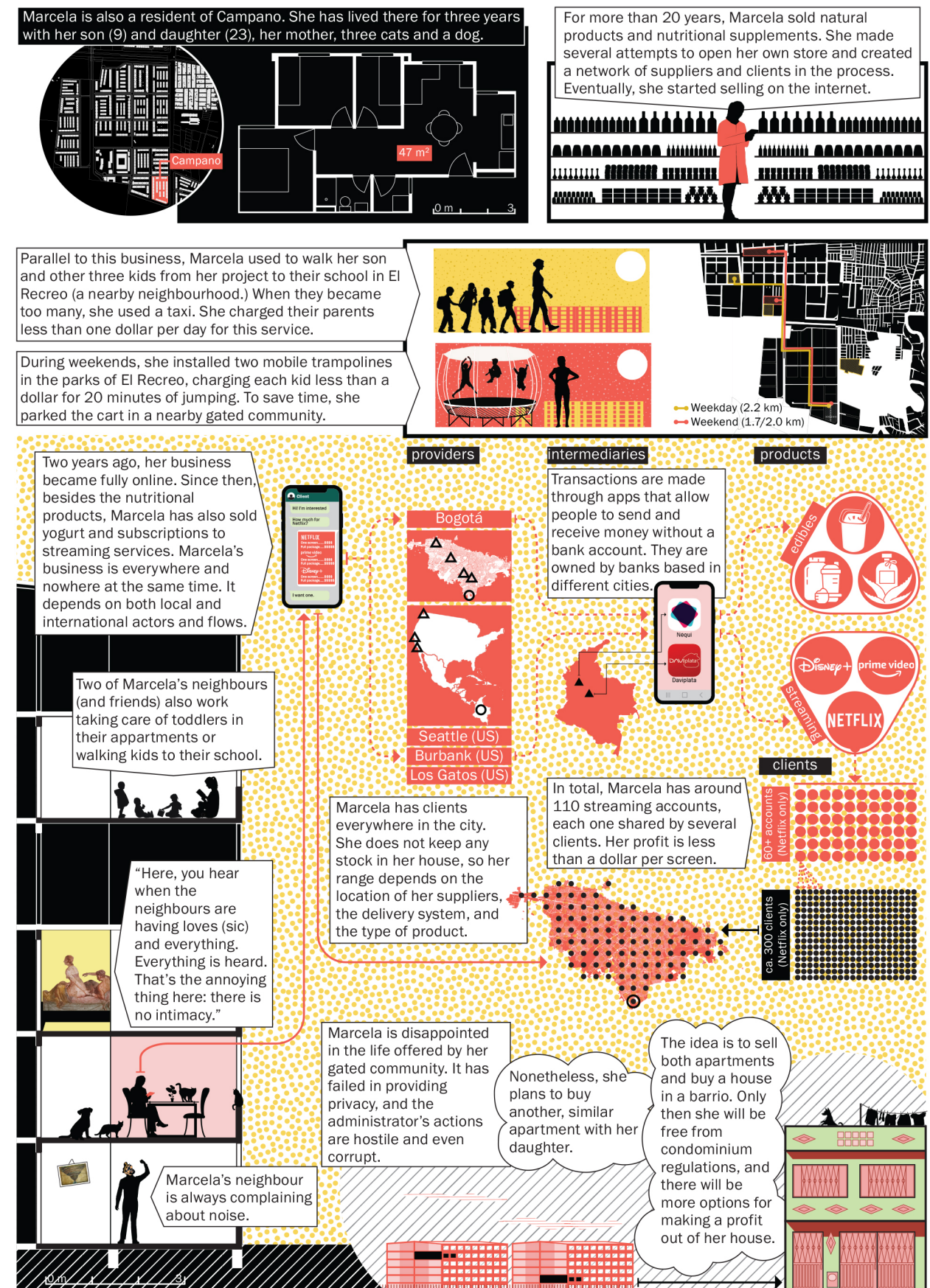
My gated community, yes [...] There is even Nequi and Daviplata [banking services] here. I mean, that is why I never go out. Because here I can pay the mortgage, the administration fee, the bills, everything. There is a man who sells fresh food. There are small signs of alcohol sales, facemasks sales, and so on. There are many, yes, I have seen them do many things, and even more so with the pandemic... reinventing themselves.

[54.02] What things do you see in the regulations that should be written differently? In which cases it should be the regulations that change, and not the behaviours of people?

[...] There is a problem here with those fast-food carts. That man [the administrator] threw them, and also my trampoline, threw them in the trash chute. [...] We put those there [in the parking lot]. [...] Pedro, another councilman, has a fast-food cart, and I had the trampoline cart, and I was also part of the new [administration] council. So, when he saw that we started to make evident the gated community's situation, then he threw those [carts] to the chute, and also the carts of others. So [I would improve] that. That those who have carts could park them there and pay for it, that they can have a nice tent, [a spot that is] well defined.

[1.35.40] So then, is the dream of homeownership in a condominium that the government and developers sell really a dream, or a nightmare?

Well. I think that it would be worst not to have anything. And I really thank God for that [...] But right now it [life in a condominium] has got me tired. [...] There is no intimacy for anything. So, during these times [of quarantine] we have seen many couples fighting, beating each other. Many crazy things that make you very upset. Having to tolerate that? I mean, one is tranquil at home and, at least me, I don't want to have a partner because I feel very happy with my life as I am. But then I have to stand my neighbours when they beat each other and everything. And I get nervous and scared and find nothing to do, because I cannot do anything, because here if you do anything then you are a snitcher, you like gossip, and they start keeping an eye on you.

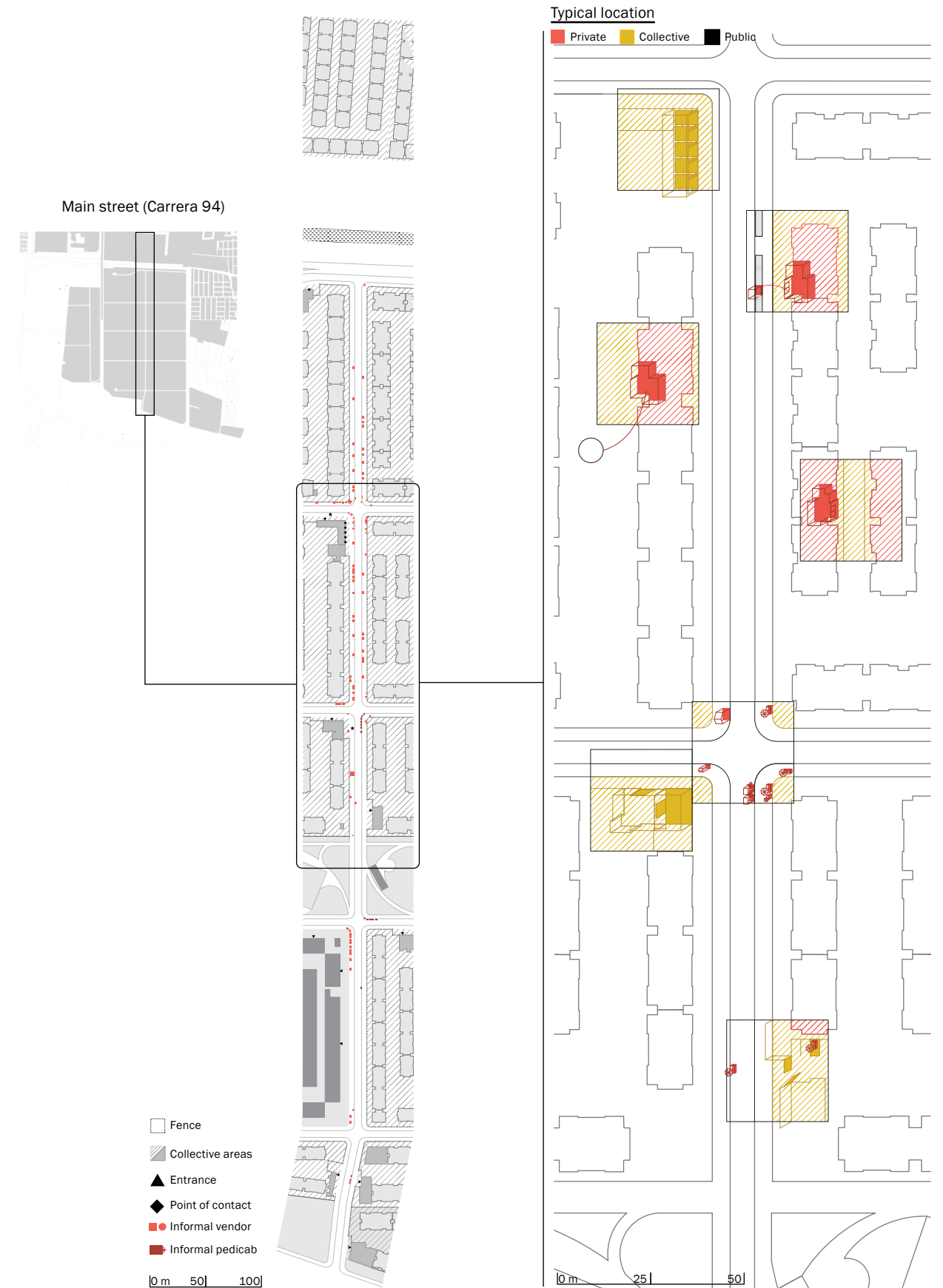


6.8 A taxonomy of overflow

The four scenes of overflow put in evidence how gated communities give a hard time to those residents who need to use their apartments as productive units. This is even though many of them have informal jobs and skills that require spaces with specific technical and sanitary conditions. Now, a classification of overflow into types will try to structure those observations.

6.8.1 Productive overflow

One way of classifying productive activities is by taking into consideration the property of the land where they happen, which implicitly defines a set of stakeholders with the capacity of encouraging or blocking such activities. Four categories result from this classification. The graphics accompanying this section show these types and also some subtypes.





Collective property / Contact with public

This type of business is granted a permission by the administrator to occupy a part of the collective buildings of the gated community. The spaces they occupy can be designed as commercial spaces since the beginning, in which case they usually have direct contact with the street, or might be transformed collective areas (originally intended for community activities), in which case the clients must pass the security filter of the gated community. The main actors in this category are the administrators and private security guards, who have control over the activities and users of these spaces.



Private property / Contact with collective

These activities belong to the interior life of the gated community. They are usually small shops that people set up in their living rooms. If they are in a ground floor apartment, interactions and advertising will happen through the windows. As these activities take place within the houses, residents are relatively independent from the administrator's authority and possible opposition. A variation of this type, which already mixes with the next category, are those cases in which residents use collective property to park their selling carts inside the gated community, thus becoming vulnerable to the decisions of administrators and guards.



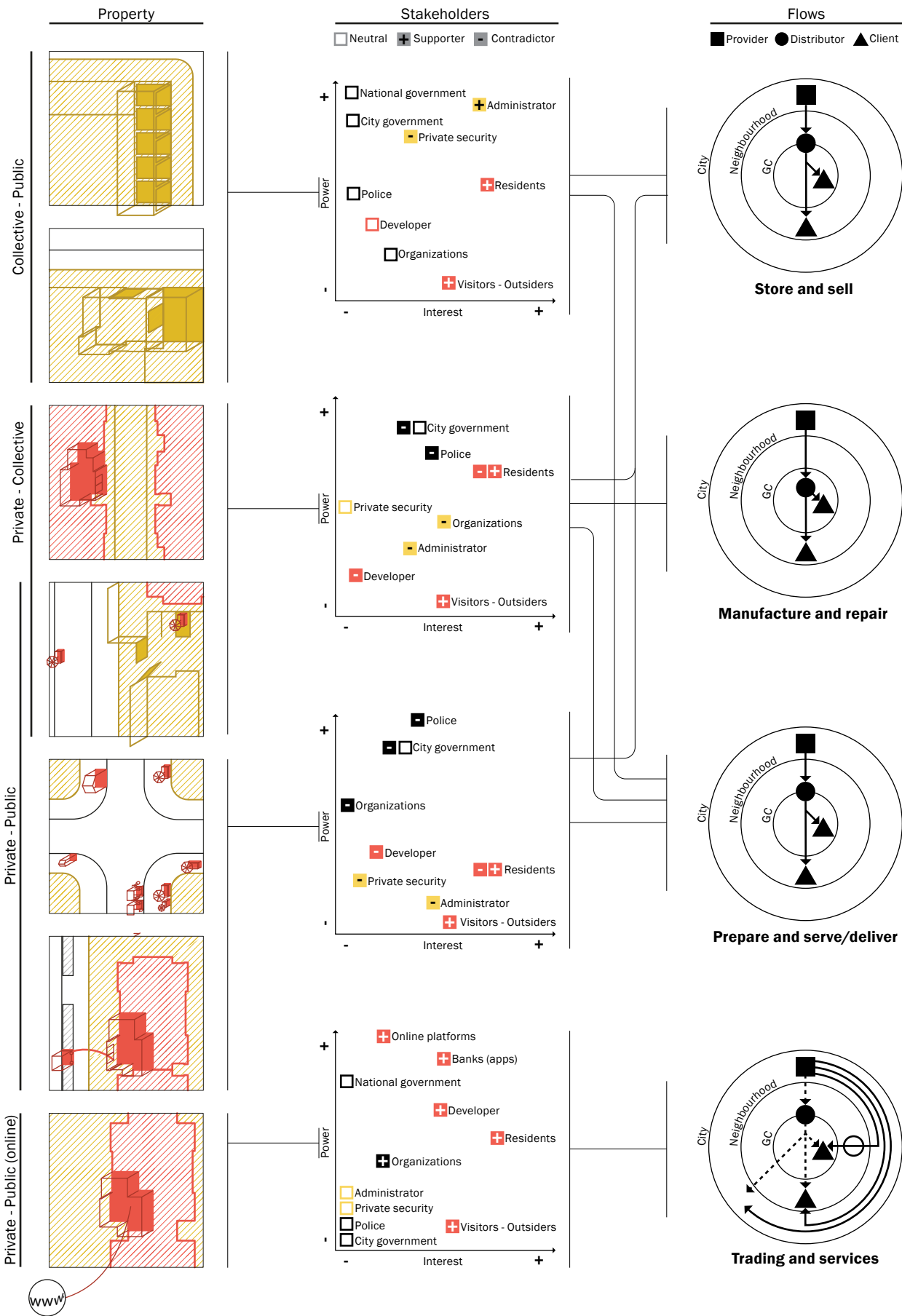
Private property / Contact with public

This type corresponds to what is usually regarded as informal commerce. Small carts, stands and chairs used to set up a small business in the middle of public space. In some cases, these devices work as satellite units of businesses that also exist within the apartments: in fact, if there is enough proximity, the apartment will be used as the source of electric power for the stand. These activities are subject to the decisions made by the city government regarding occupation of public space, but more importantly to the mood of the policeman in charge of making the round each day. In the streets, the police are more powerful (and unpredictable) than the national government.



Private property / Contact with public (online)

This is a variation of the previous one. Here, businesses are part of an online private world, where they offer their services and products to people in the neighbourhood and beyond. Although it is true that almost all the examples shown above also operate like this, there are many businesses that only exist in the digital space. Online platforms are a strange type of public realm: there, the rules are dictated by online platforms such as Facebook, Netflix and some banks that control the payment systems. In this case, any local or national authority is overpowered by the decisions of a CEO, which could change the rules of the game and even bankrupt some businesses.



6.8.2 Spatial configuration

Productive flows configure and are configured by space. Thus, classification of businesses based on the flows of goods that sustains them is also necessary. These flows were studied taking into consideration two variables: first, the way in which three stages of production (storage, processing and distribution) were organised, and second, the point of contact with public space. In total, four types with variations were identified: 1) Store and sell: Their distribution area is also a storage space, although they might have an independent room for storage. No processing area is needed. 2) Manufacture and repair: In these spaces, storage and processing are mixed. There is no distribution space, or it is relatively small. 3) Prepare and sell/deliver: These spaces have clear separations between storage, preparation and distribution spaces. The existence and size of the latter depends on the type of distribution. 4) Trading and services: This type is remotely operated through a digital interface that acts as distribution, while the storage and processing happens in a remote location from which goods are delivered to the customer.

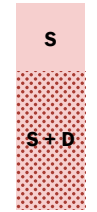
It is interesting to compare a traditional configuration of each type with the examples from Campo Verde. In the former, spaces are as specialised as the activity they house, while in the latter spaces are *typical* apartments, regardless of what happens inside. Furthermore, the contact with public space is very different between the two: borrowing concepts from the world of restaurants, it could be said that traditionally there is a “front of house” where distribution and public interactions happen, and a “back of house” where storage and processing take place. In gated communities that front-to-back continuity does not exist. This means they must have a satellite presence in the public space that can take the literal shape of a stand in the street, or that one of a post in an online social network. Campo Verde is an improvised back with a very unstable front.



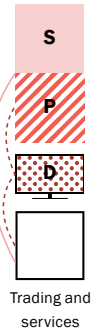
Prepare and serve / deliver



Manufacture and repair

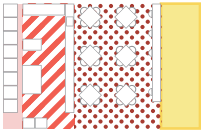


Store and sell



Trading and services

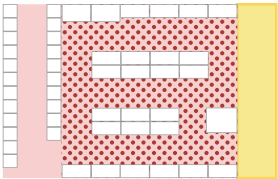
Traditional configuration



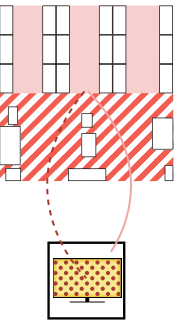
Prepare and serve
S = 6 m² / D = 17 m² / P = 28 m²
Total = 51 m²



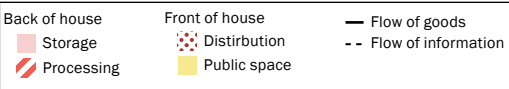
Sewing shop
S = 2.5 m² / P = 10 m² / D = 2.5 m²
Total = 15 m²



Self-service / Supermarket
S = 27 m² / D = 80 m²
Total = 107 m²



Direct online purchasing
S+P = undisclosed and remote / D = Digital device
Total = 0 m² (In Campo Verde)



Overflow configuration in apartments



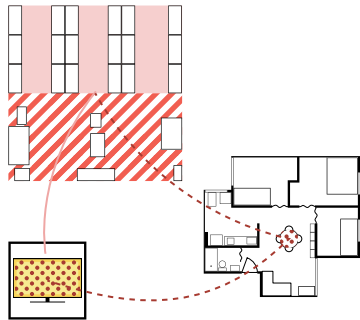
Ghost kitchen and delivery
S+P = 10 m²
Total = 10 m²



Pick-up or Delivery
S = 2-10 m² / P = 2-10 m² (direct if ground floor)
Total = 5-10 m²

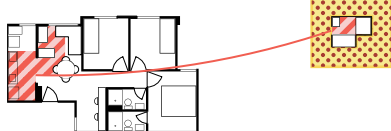


Interior store with delivery
S = 2-10 m² / D only external
Total = 2-10 m²



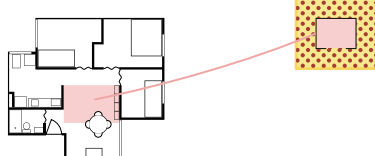
Mediated online purchasing
S+P = undisclosed and remote / D = 2 m²
Total = 2 m² (In Campo Verde)

Overflow configuration with satellite units

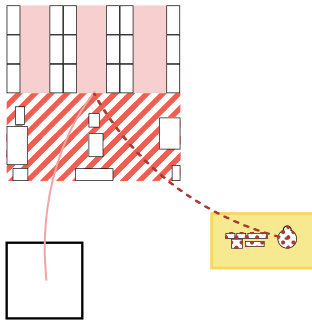


Ghost kitchen and satellite unit
S+P = 7 m² / P+D (satellite) = 3 m²
Total = 10 m²

None observed



Storage + Satellite unit
S = 2-10 m² / D = 2 m²
Total = 82 m²



Mediated online purchasing with live samples
S+P = undisclosed and remote / D = 5 m²
Total = 5 m² (In Campo Verde)

6.8.3 Social overflow

Classification

Social activities, understood as those that allow for encounters among residents and with strangers, also produce overflows in Campo Verde. However, defining what constitutes overflow within this category is harder. This is because public space, even in a highly regulated environment, tends to leave space for uncertainty. Therefore, it is not easy to define what is an “adequate” or “intended” behaviour that matches the intentions of the planners, and what constitutes an escape from that “grid” (i.e. an overflow). Therefore, what is proposed in the following pages is a more general classification of different social activities and the spaces where they happen. As it will be seen, many, but not all, are using public and collective spaces in unintended ways.

The criteria for classification were three. Property was considered is the first relevant variable: it is not the same to socialise under the administrator's authority than to do so in a public space where the police rules. Second, the type of activity is taken into account, with a tendency to define it according to the involved actors; social activities vary in their format and content depending on who organises them, from community groups and spontaneously formed groups of residents to institutions and administrators. Finally, the probable frequency with which those activities happen is also included as permanent, recurrent (one a week or month), or exceptional (less than once a month). The probable *place* of each type is highlighted in small maps.

Observations

Several principles can be derived from this classification. To start, the difference between public and collective private

spaces is worth noting: while the former have the size to support a wide diversity of activities and are designed in a way that only considers sports, playing and contemplative walking as valid uses, the latter are made to house a limited number of uses (leisure, deliberation and parking) in a reduced space.

Despite this distinction, it is evident that in both cases those spaces are used in different ways than planned. In the case of public areas, this happens when the presence of strangers is an asset (e.g. commercial activities, alternative sports, or health campaigns), or when residents living in different gated communities need to meet for large events. On the other hand, collective areas tend to accommodate an increasing number of new permanent uses, regardless of spatial constraints and even though there is plenty of unprogrammed public spaces outside the fences.

From these observations, it is safe to say that the relationship that socializing spaces in Campo Verde has a paradoxical status. Despite its large size, public space it is designed to have a very diffuse and infrequent use and is only desirable when collective areas are not enough. Meanwhile, the activities that could animate it keep compressing themselves within the fences, competing for the scarce secured areas that remain unprogrammed. The disconnection between interior and exterior creates orphan public spaces, in which any act of appropriation is seen with suspicion, especially when it comes from “illegitimate” users as women, teenagers, or minorities. The question then is about the quality of public spaces, and whether they can become extensions of a social life that still prefers the fences.

Collective / Covered spaces

Collective buildings have many empty rooms. They are designed to support only impermanent activities of leisure and deliberation, except for the security filter at the ground floor and administrative offices. Despite this, other functions (mainly commercial) have popped up in those same spaces.

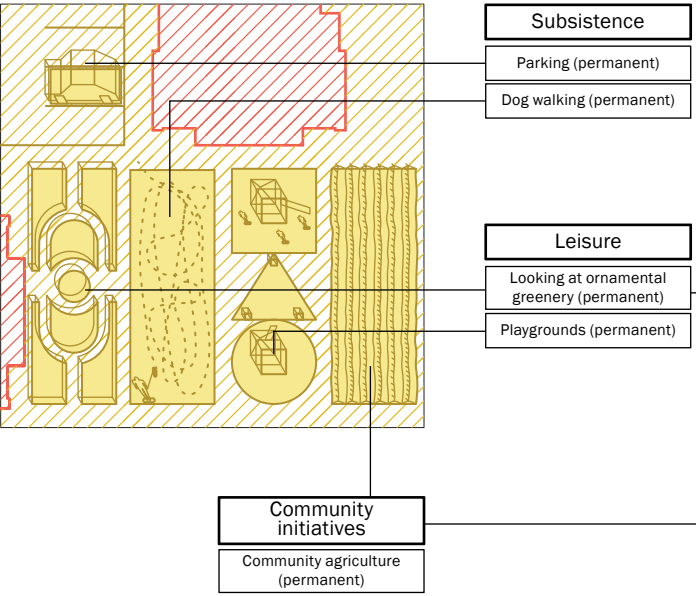
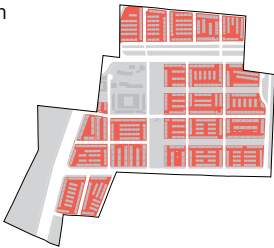
Probable location



Collective / Open spaces

Free space within the fenced perimeter is valuable. It ensures that any initiative or good can be protected from the hostile exterior. Here, it is *realistic* to think about beautifying greenery, car parking or even vegetable gardens.

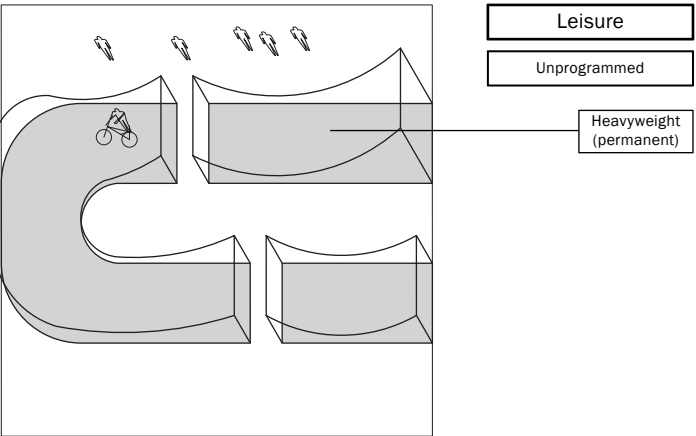
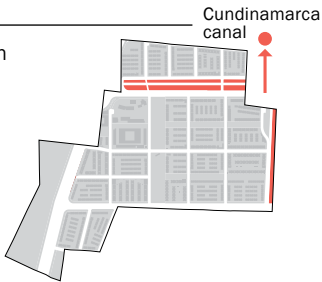
Probable location



Public / Buffer zones

Environmental buffer zones are strange places: they are public but cannot be used for recreational purposes. In principle, this is justified by the ecological processes they protect. Nonetheless, in this part of the city they do not seem to fulfil their purpose either, especially when they are adjacent to water canals. As a reaction, some youth organizations have used them to build self-made BMX tracks.

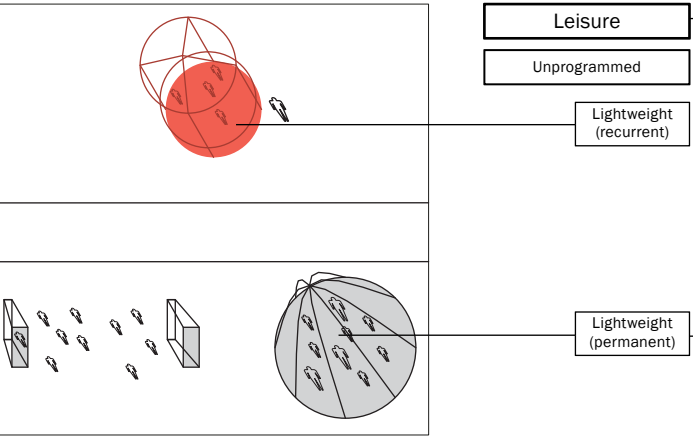
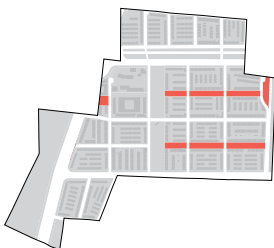
Probable location



Public / Local parks

Local parks, or linear parks, have nothing to offer, at least in spatial terms. Therefore, they can only be classified according to the unplanned activities that happen in them. Some of those are lightweight or ephemeral structures for sports and games, set up by community organizations or by individuals who make a profit of them.

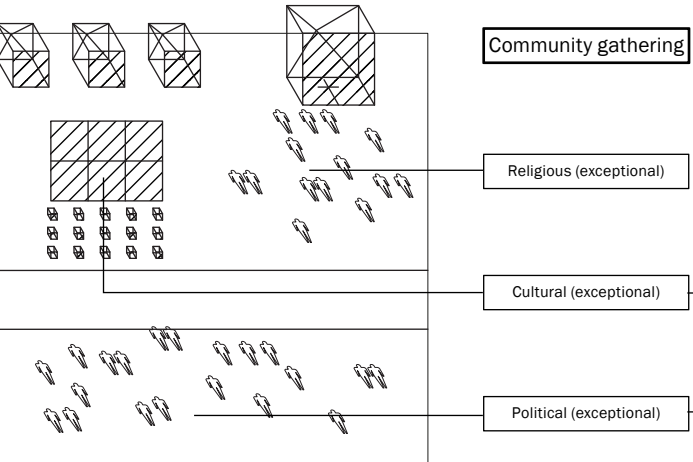
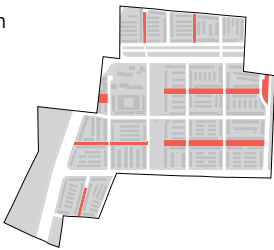
Probable location



Public / Local parks and pedestrian roads

Local parks and pedestrian roads also work as meeting points for events that agglomerate people from different gated communities. From masses to cultural fairs, these are gatherings that require a neutral ground with freedom of access, something no gated space can offer.

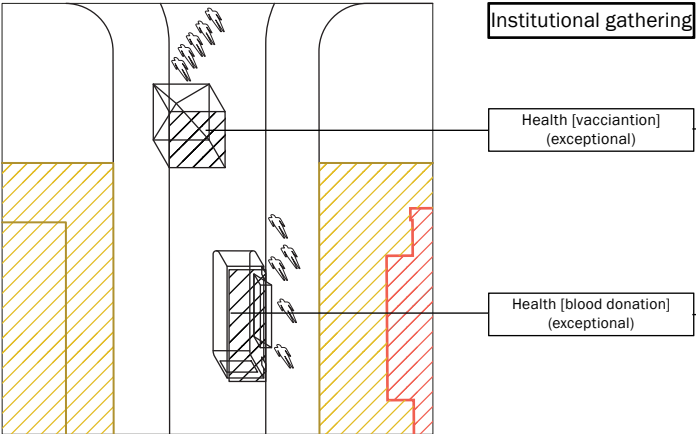
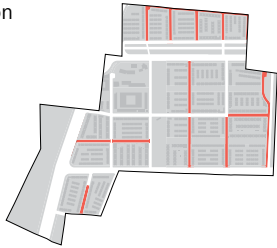
Probable location



Public / Streets

Some of the more remote streets of Campo Verde are used for exceptional or recurrent activities organised by official or non-profit organizations. The two cases that were identified had to do with health programs. One for blood donations, and another for the vaccination of terrified cats.

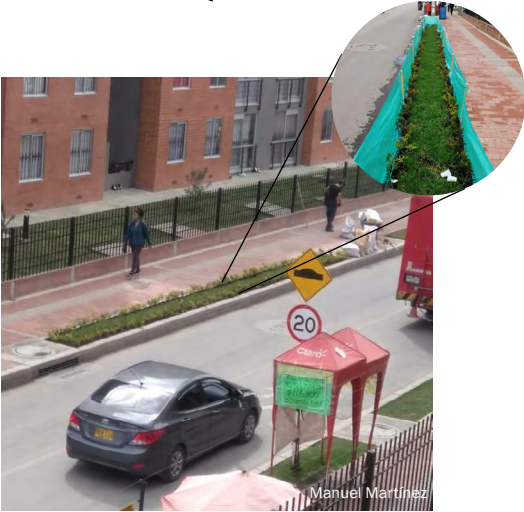
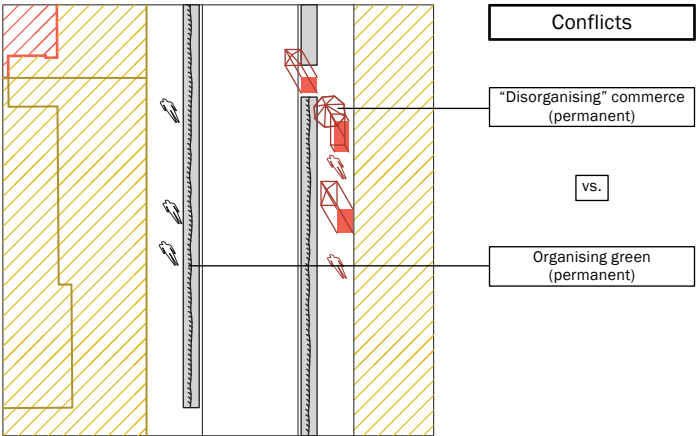
Probable location



Public / Streets

Another unexpected event happening in the streets is that one of ornamental greenery campaigns. They are organised by residents who want to fight back the supposedly improper use of public space of informal vendors, through the beautification of the small green strips of sidewalks.

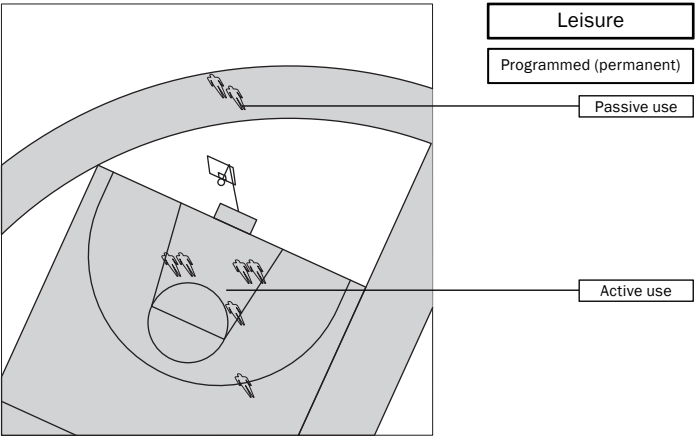
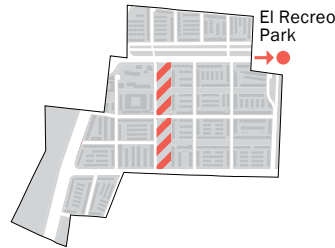
Probable location



Public / Main park

Although it is finished, the inauguration of this park has been delayed several months for obscure reasons. Therefore, the design can only be judged by looking at the activities that *have a place* in it, and by comparing it to similar parks from El Recreo. Walking paths, fields for traditional sports (soccer and basketball) and playgrounds: can public life be satisfied with this short menu?

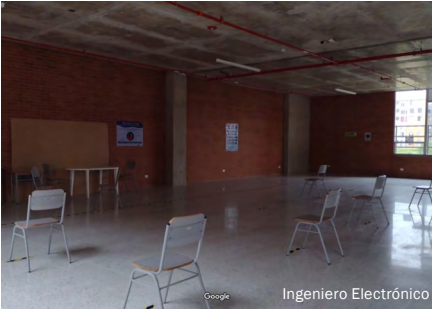
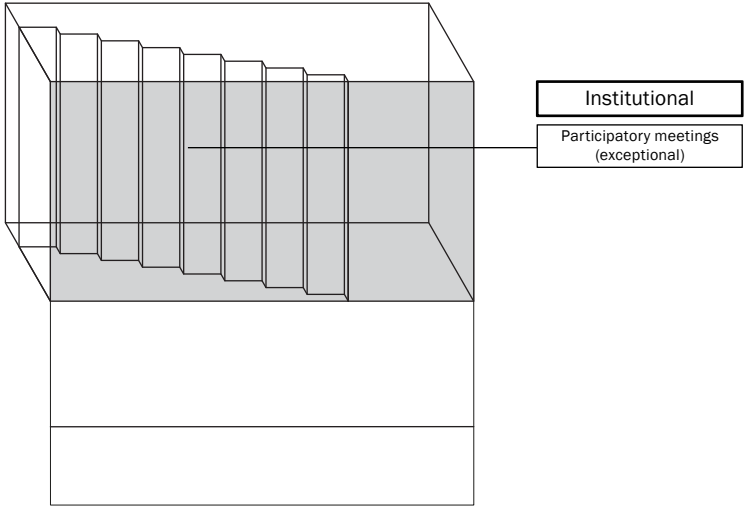
Probable location



Public / Buildings

The schools and justice centre of Campo Verde have auditoria and sports halls that might be used by the community. Because they were finished during the pandemic, these are spaces that still have to be used for the first time. The access to these spaces usually requires the mediation of an institution.

Probable location



6.9 Conclusion

This chapter showed what happens when the gated developments are realised as low-income gated communities, and how overflow erupts from the tension between model and variant. This was done through the careful mapping of different phenomena taking place in Campo Verde, a neighbourhood that is part of a larger gated district under construction in the south east of Bogotá. This study showed how the neighbourhood originated from a sophisticated land transaction (partial plan) between powerful stakeholders that prioritised fast development over good planning. This allowed them to build Campo Verde as a generic and serial neighbourhood with little spatial and regulatory room for future transformations. Despite this, all projects were advertised as unique places to live, with good public infrastructure, large green spaces and located within the limits of the city.

The contrast between plan and reality is even more dramatic when Campo Verde's public space, road network and functions are mapped. This exercise exposed how the planned dream is not the same as the built version of that dream. While the advertised plan remains unfinished, a parallel informal network of services and infrastructures has developed to cover some of those deficiencies.

At this point, it was necessary to recur to the experience of residents to understand how they navigate this tensions between the dream come true of having a house, and that one of having to live in a precariously equipped built environment. For many of them, their experience “before the gates” was still crucial for their daily survival, which allowed them to understand and exploit the opportunities that the public realm had to offer.

As a final step, these “overflows” were classified. If a general conclusion had to be drawn from those taxonomic exercises, it would be that Campo Verde is a split neighbourhood, where productive activities and social rituals keep being pulled within the fences, and public space resists only because it remains a land of unmatched, although precarious, opportunities.

Several questions arise at this point: is it possible to reconcile front and back? In other words, could overflow have a *place*? If so, can Campo Verde's public spaces become more than just a necessary evil?



The police ending a football match. In an orphan public space, all users struggle for legitimacy.



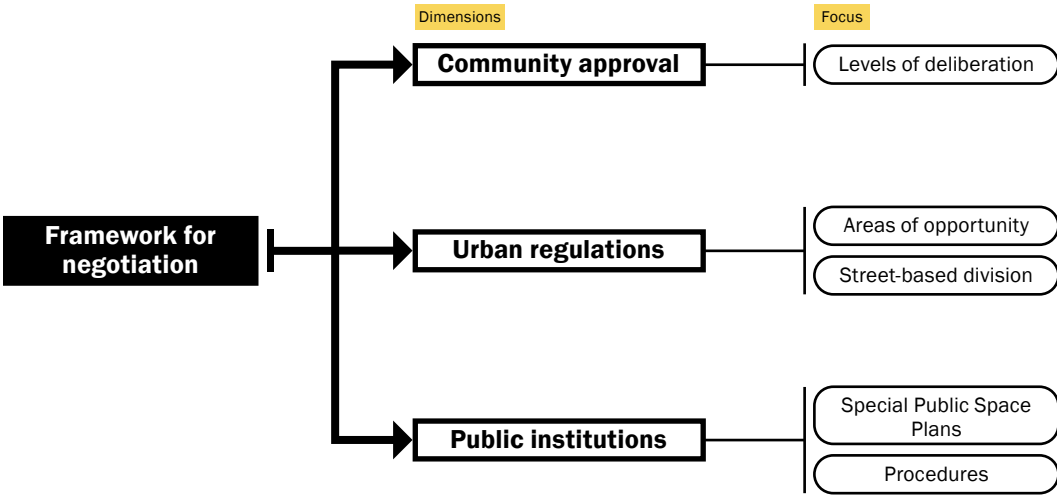
Source: El Sushi Negro collective

7

A framework for negotiation

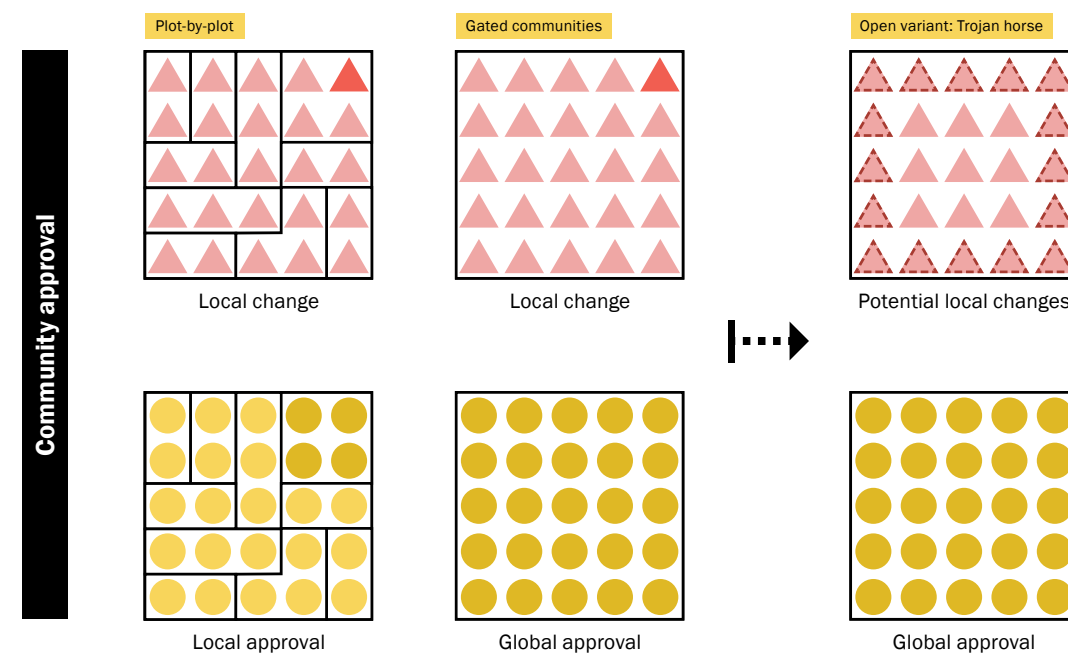
7.1 Introduction

This chapter will propose a framework for negotiation that acts upon three dimensions: community, regulations, and institutions. From the community part comprises a proposal for the redesign of the deliberation bodies with spatial agency within gated communities. The regulatory dimension has two sections. A first part is dedicated to identifying those spaces that have favourable conditions to be transformed (areas of opportunity), while the second integrates those areas into different types of streets. Finally, the institutional dimension also has two parts: one dealing with the a tool for the transformation of strategical public spaces (special public space plans), and another that proposes the “reuse” of an existing institution to provide free-of-charge technical and legal assistance to low-income gated communities that adopt the framework.



7.2 Community deliberation

One of the main bottlenecks when facing the transformation of any condominium is getting the approval from residents. According to the law, a minimum of 70% of the total property coefficients are needed for any change of use or built form, however local it may be (Congreso de Colombia, 2001). As an alternative, this section proposes a peaceful “Trojan horse”: a tool that, once approved by the general assembly of owners, subdivides each community into smaller decision-making committees with the power of approving local changes within a defined area of the project. By approving it, the community would have the necessary organization to make use of the development rights and development mechanisms provided by the new street-focused urban regulations. In the next subsections, I will broadly discuss the new governance structure I propose for the gated communities of Campo Verde, and the relation between levels of decision-making and levels of transformation.



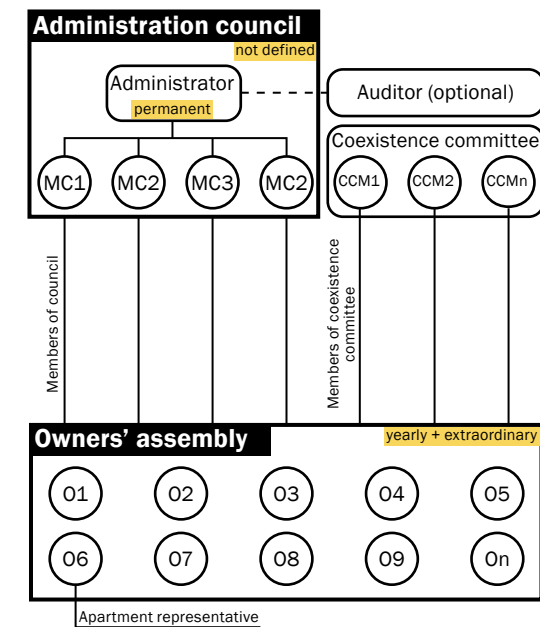
A new organization

Currently, gated communities have an organization that is defined by law. In principle, all major decisions must be approved by the “owners’ assembly.” This is an annual meeting in which the administrator presents a summary of the last year spending and answers any doubts or complaints the community might have. This is also the moment in which residents can propose or approve new projects for the gated community, as well as elect or remove their governing entities: the administrator or administration council (in charge of day-to-day management of the project), and the coexistence committee (in charge of mediating conflicts among residents). While administrator can be a non-resident, this is not the case for the members of the committee.

The limits of this type of process become evident in large-scale communities as the ones from Campo Verde: when I asked Iván Darío Roa, a community leader from the neighbourhood, about the average duration of an owners’ assembly, he said it was around 10 hours (personal communication, 2021). This is a natural consequence of having, on average, 598 apartments per condominium in Campo Verde. This sets the approval threshold in 418 votes. To worsen things, it is common for residents to be barely aware of their duties and rights regarding condominium governance and administration accountability. Just as a poetic analogy, I would like to remind the reader that the Colombian parliament has a total of 280 members who already struggle to come to the most basic agreements.

It is easy to see that this is a decision-making process that is not agile enough for an organic negotiation of physical transformations. Therefore, I propose a new form of organization that subdivides the community into smaller deliberation committees that coincide with smaller spatial units. The main idea is to allow for focalised meetings that discuss more concrete themes and are more accessible and

Current condominiums’ governance structure according to Law 675 of 2001.



open for those who are not familiar with the management of the condominium, while leaving the more general or abstract decisions and discussions for those residents who are interested in becoming representatives.

Levels of deliberation

At the base level, there is the scale of the building. In the case of Campo Verde, these are six-storey high towers with 24 apartments that share the same stairs shaft. In different interviews with residents, it was evident that they all identified the tower as the place where there was a stronger sense of community. That is why the minimum deliberation unit is the “building committee” (or “tower committee in this case). It functions in a more informal way, through daily encounters and random conversations, and is only required to have a yearly mandatory plenary meeting for selecting a tower representative. Any important project requires an extraordinary plenary for its approval.

In the second level, there is the street committee. It agglomerates several towers and is composed by their repre-

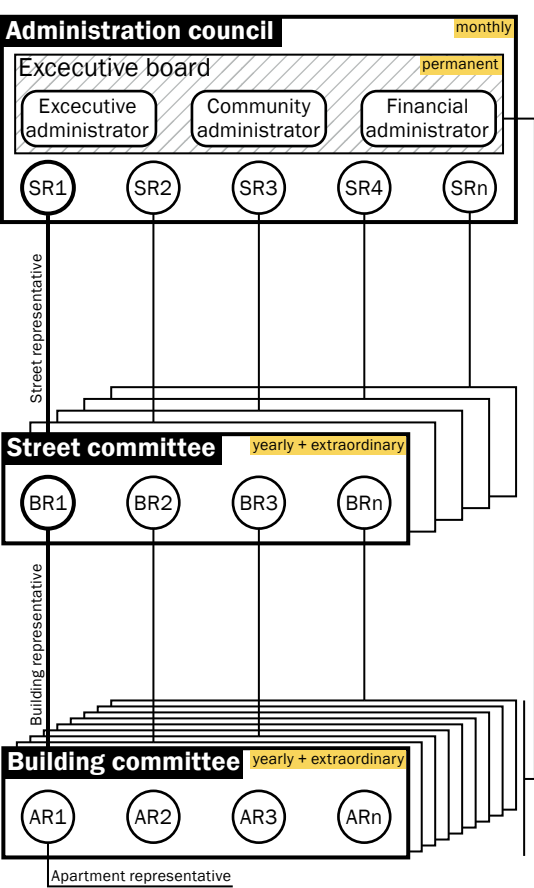
sentatives. Its boundaries are defined by the new land division presented in the urban regulations section (as a caveat, a building included in two streets belongs to the street in front of its main façade.) These committee has a more formal way of proceeding, with meeting minutes and a clear communication strategy for all the residents it represents. The frequency of plenaries is the same as for the building committee, and it also has the role of selecting a street representative, who then becomes a permanent member of the administration council.

Finally, there is the administration council, which has jurisdiction over the whole condominium. It is composed only by residents who elect three administrators with different roles each (finance management, budget execution and community affairs). The idea behind this triumvirate is to create a system where mutual oversight makes the organization less vulnerable to personal whims and corruption. The council meets once a month to discuss the more structural issues of the community and is obliged to communicate and consult all decisions with the lower levels of deliberation. It follows the same formal protocol of current councils.

Matching deliberation and space

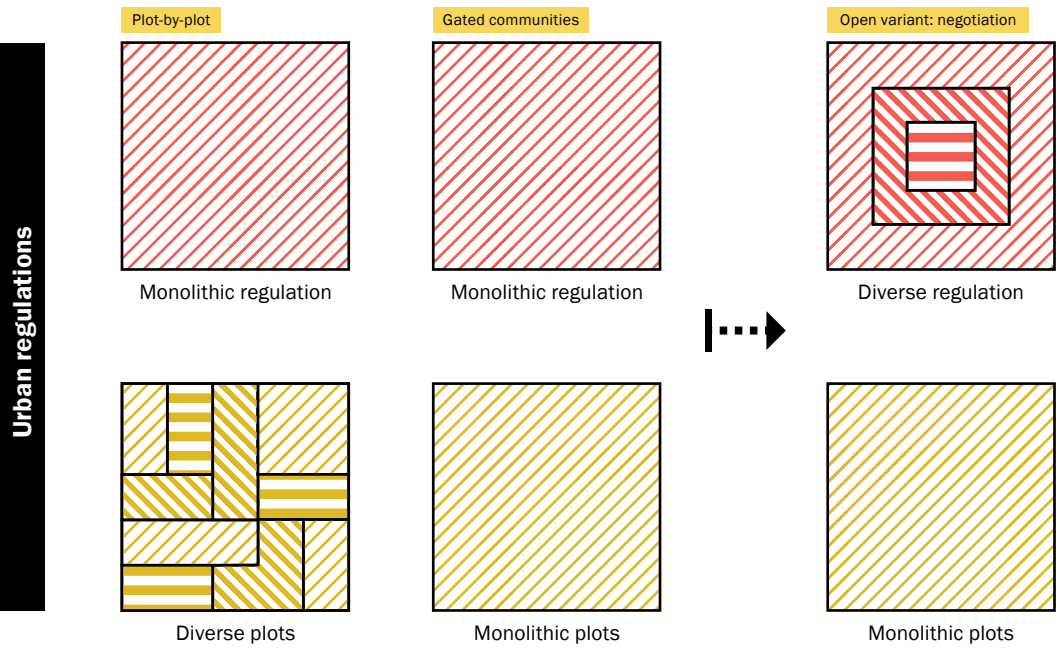
The power of this proposal for a new governance structure lies in the way it is articulated with the new division of land. In the proposed system, each level of deliberation has a certain capacity for transforming the spatial unit it represents. To promote agreements between larger groups of residents, which will always be a symptom of a healthy community, the system will grant more building rights as more residents (and committees) are involved in the negotiation. This will also require an active role of the state in advising communities and providing them with logistic, technical, and legal guidance.

Proposed governance structure.



7.3 Urban regulations

This section deals with the ways in which urban regulations can be used for compensating the lack of diversity of those blocks which have few plots, or just one, as is the case of many gated communities. The proposal focuses in creating less-regulated-zones *within* each gated community that can become high-priority areas for redevelopment and refurbishing. The development of these areas will provide spaces for productive or community related programmes and public-private interfaces. At a second stage, the areas of opportunity are integrated into streets, which become the structuring urban elements of the neighbourhood. In this process, it is important to acknowledge that not all streets are the same, and some have more capacity or critical mass for sustaining some programmes.



7.3.1 Areas of opportunity (AO)

Generalities and criteria for delimitation

This section deals with the characterization of the areas of opportunity (AO) that can be developed or transformed in the future. Two main criteria guide the search for these areas. First, those spaces favourably located to have direct contact with public space, as ground floor apartments and front yards, are automatically declared as opportunity areas, regardless of their position relative to existing buildings. A stricter criterium was used for ground floor outdoor spaces with a more indirect relation with public space. In that case, only those areas that respected the mandatory distance of 9 meters between 6 storey buildings' front facades were included (Mayor's Office of Bogota, 2004c, p. 25). Non-residential blocks were left out of this delimitation.

General figures

The result of the delimitation and classification of the AO can be seen in the map and graphs of the next page. The largest part of AO (86%) are within gated communities and represent the 29% of all the usable area originally defined in the partial plan. The other 14% corresponds to public road buffer areas. Furthermore, 28% of all AO are already built private and collective areas and 58% are in unbuilt collective land. The latter are mainly located within the boundaries of a street (70% in average), while the rest is in block centres (30%).

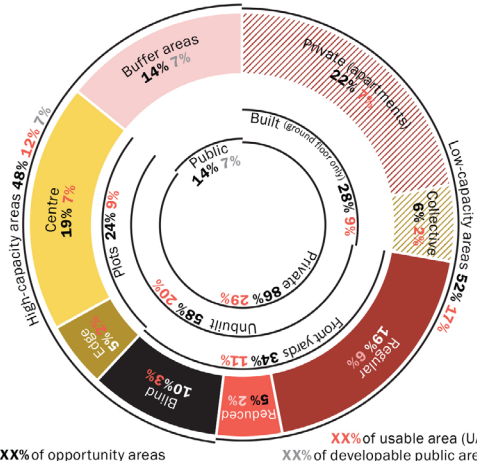
In terms of potential for development, some types (central plots, edge plots and blind front yards) have more squared configurations, which makes them better suited for the construction of freestanding structures. They represent 48% of all AO (34% private and 14% public). Opposingly, most areas in the edges (apartments and front yards) have unbalanced length/width ratios. This means they might be better used to either complement the existing buildings with new spaces, or to build detached micro-scale modules. These are 52% of all AO and are all located in private areas.

In terms of land occupation, if all private unbuilt areas were to be built, there would be an average increase in the BUR indicator of 0.19 per block. If we sum this to the average BUR of the three blocks analysed before (0.41) the result (0.60) would still be below the 0.70 permitted in more central areas of the city (Art. 370, Mayor's Office of Bogota, 2004a, p. 357). IN other words, existing regulations can be used to argue in favour of turning these "free spaces" into developable areas of opportunity.

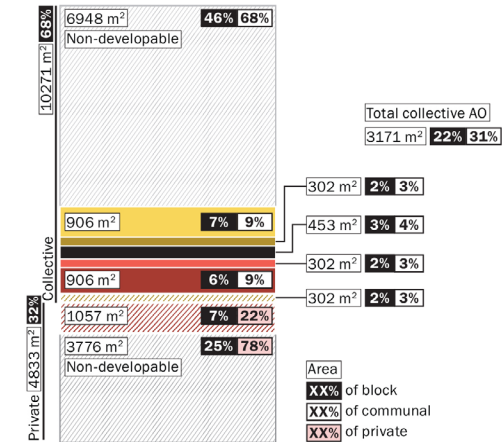
The following sub-section will present each type of area, as well as its morphological characteristics, potentials, and limitations.



Area distribution of AO in Campo Verde



Distribution of AO in an average block



7.3.2 Types of areas

Built / Edge apartments

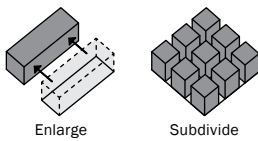
Apartments that directly face the street.

Total number
815

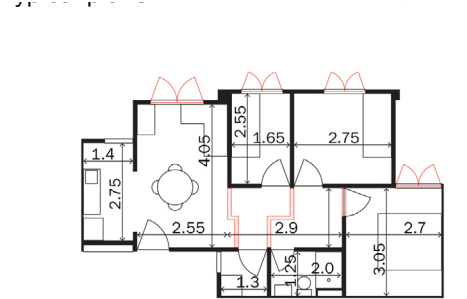
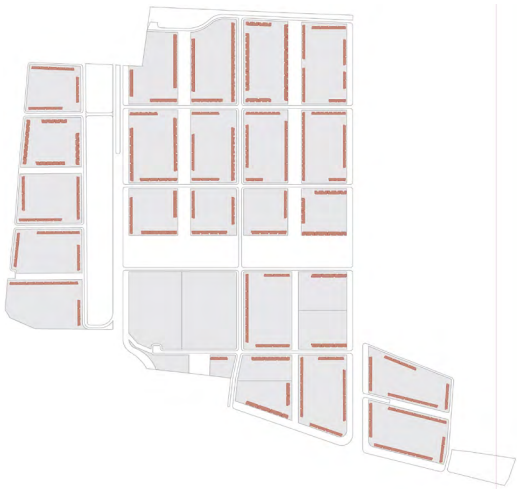
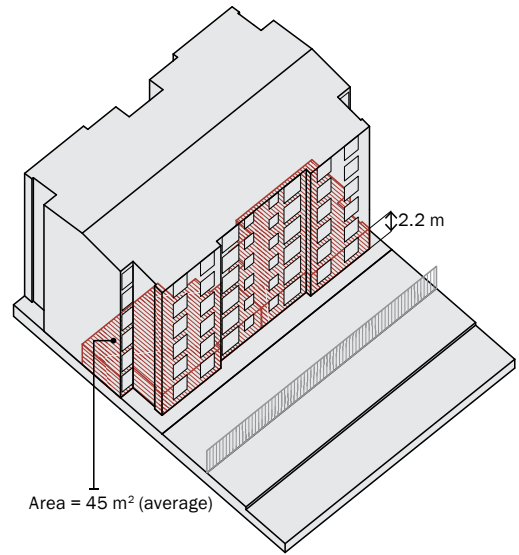
Property
Private

Potential

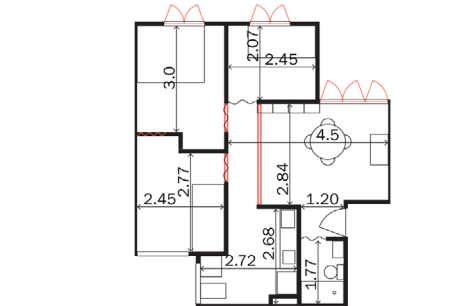
Transformation is possible. In principle, ground floor units have an advantage, but a design solution for accessing higher units from public space would “unlock” other levels. The apartments seem to have potential to be divided into 2, 3 or 4 commercial spaces with a dark storage area in the back and a small front. The main challenge in transforming these spaces is that, with no exception, all apartments in Campo Verde are built with bearing walls structures that make any significant (and cheap) reconfiguration almost impossible. On the bright side, there is a very limited number of typical floor plans, so any successful redesign can be applied to a very large number of apartments.



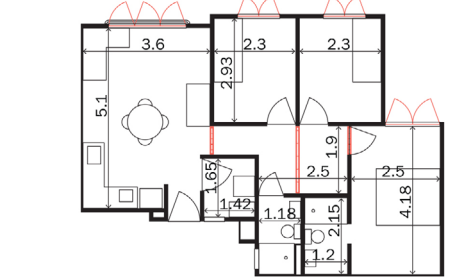
Typical dimensions and configuration



Type: VIP / Area = 47 m² / Developer: Bolivar



Type: VIP / Area = 43 m² / Developer: Marval



Type: VIS / Area = 57 m² / Developer: Bolivar

0 m 3 Potential subdivisions

Built / Collective buildings

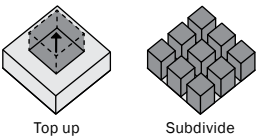
Spaces built for the use of the whole community according to regulatory stipulations. Some have restricted technical uses.

Total number
43

Property
Communal of collective use.

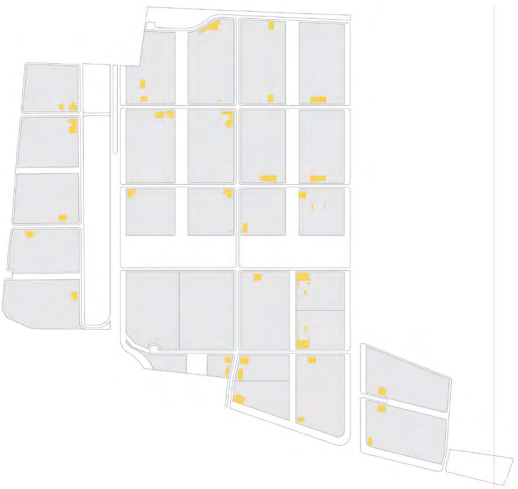
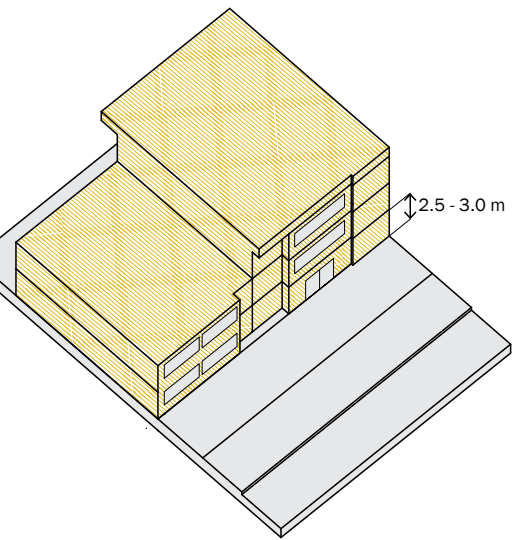
Potential

Transformation is possible and is already happening. In fact, these spaces are already going through adaptations as, for example, subdivision of common halls into smaller commercial areas or partial demolitions of blind facades to open them to the street.

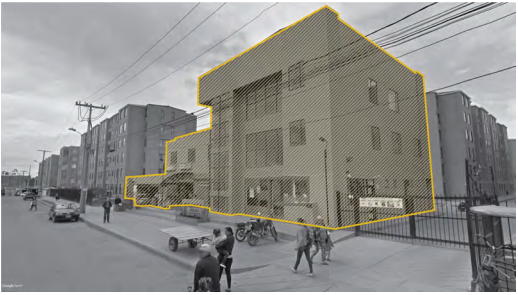
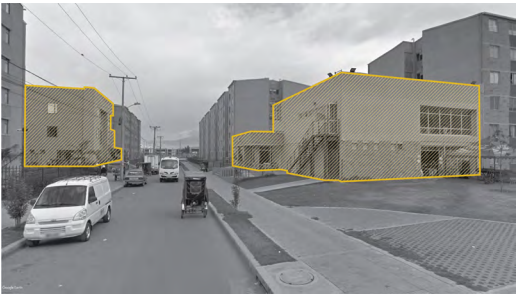
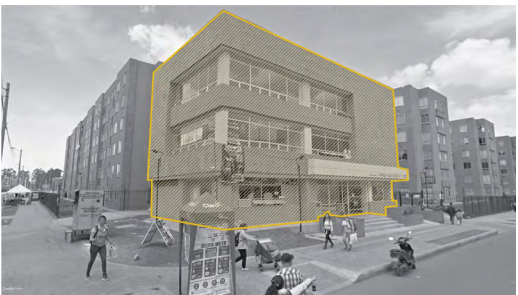


Typical dimensions and configuration

Collective buildings in Campo Verde have 1 to 4 floors, with free heights between 2.5 and 3 m. In many cases, all the collective uses are concentrated in a single building and work as the entry filter of the gated community. The spaces located above ground level are usually common halls, large spaces intended to house large events.



Examples



Front yards / Regular

Open air areas left between local and intermediate roads and private buildings. According to current regulations, they should remain green and unbuilt (Art. 270 Mayor's Office of Bogota, 2004a, p. 241).

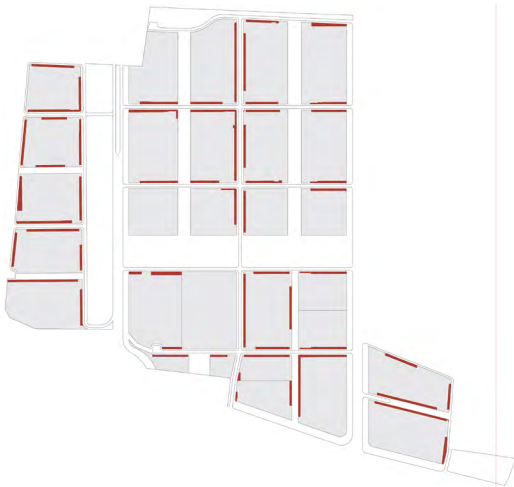
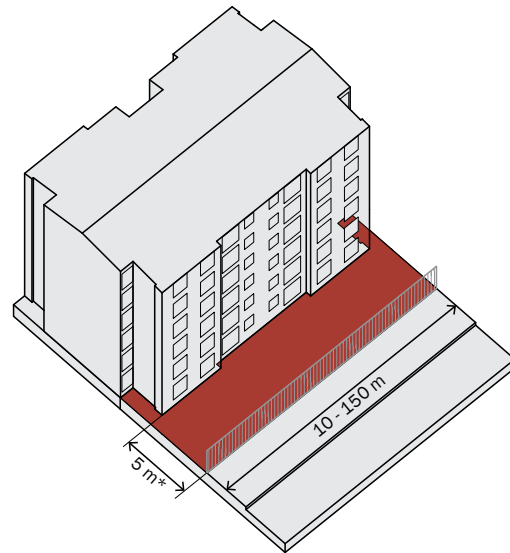
Total number
63

Property
Communal of collective use.

Potential
Transformations through landscaping. Construction of additions to existing structures or independent micro-buildings.



Typical dimensions and configuration
5 m width for 6 storey high buildings (i.e. all housing towers). 4 m for 4 to 5 storeys. 3 m for 1 to 3 storeys (i.e. most collective buildings) (Art. 29, Mayor's Office of Bogota, 2004c, p. 25). Lengths vary from less than 10 m to more than 150 m.



Examples



Front yards / Blind

In regulatory terms these are regular front yards. Nonetheless, they lie in front of blind facades or open-air areas. This is why they deserve their own category: although they only occupy 3% of all the usable area, they are mostly located in corners (which have a crucial role in the public and economic life of the city), and are ideally placed away from front facades. This fortunate combination of factors makes them the most important areas of opportunity of the neighbourhood.

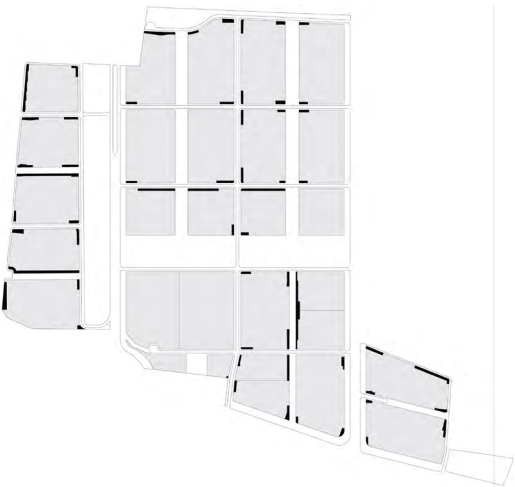
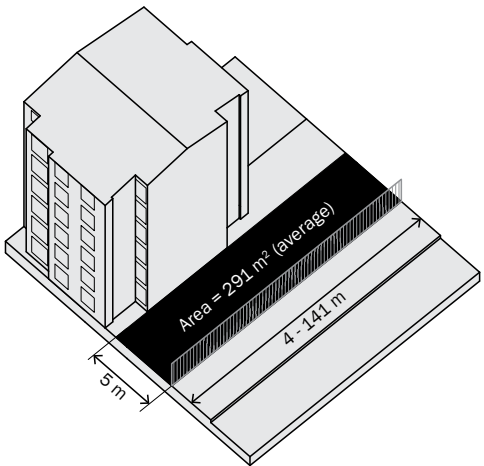
Total number
61

Property
Communal of collective use.

Potential
Construction of independent buildings with direct access from the street.



Typical dimensions and configuration
Same as regular front yards, with lengths between 4 and 141 m. The average area is 291 m², which results in an average size of 5x43 m.



Examples



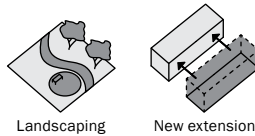
Front yards / Reduced

Front yards with similar characteristics to the regular ones, but narrower dimensions. They are mandatory when the public space surrounding the edge of the gated community is green, either because it is a park or a buffer area.

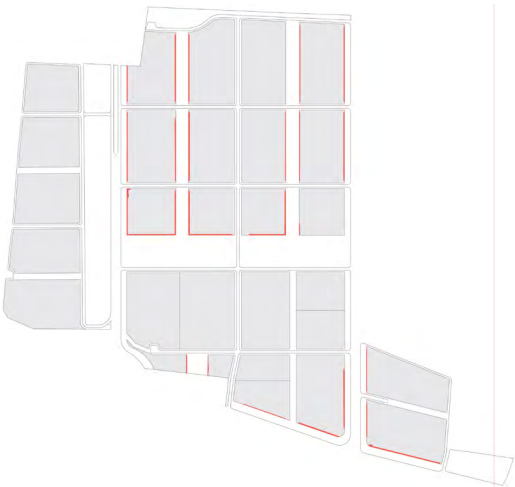
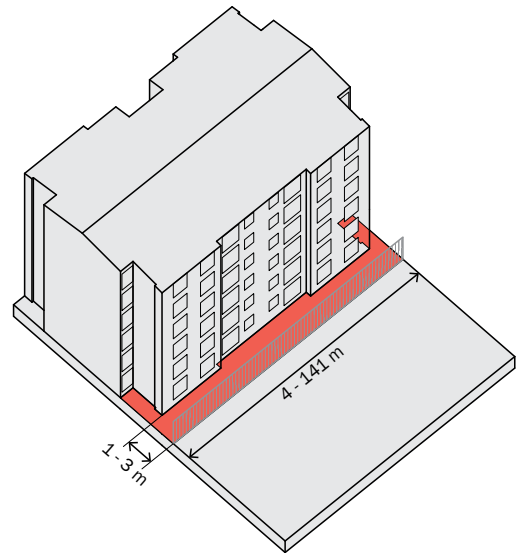
Total number
63

Property
Communal of collective use.

Potential
Transformations through landscaping. Construction of additions to existing structures.



Typical dimensions and configuration
According to regulations, widths should be 2 to 3 m, depending on whether there are interior circulation areas. Despite this, there are narrower ones in Campo Verde. Lengths vary between 42 and 177 m.



Examples



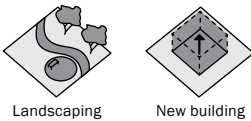
Plots / Centre

Outdoor spaces within in the block centres (see Streets section) which are 9 meters away from all nearby front facades. They are currently used as circulations, play-grounds, green areas, and parking spaces.

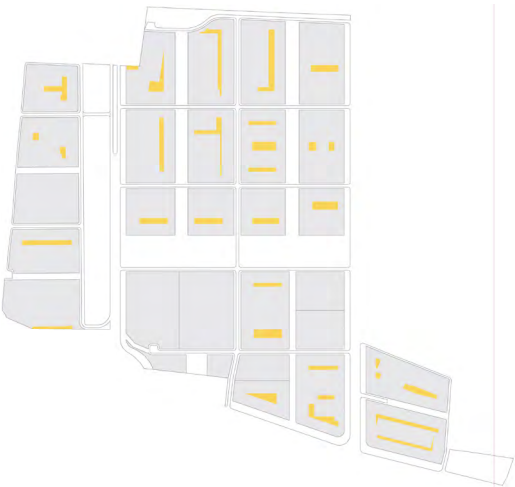
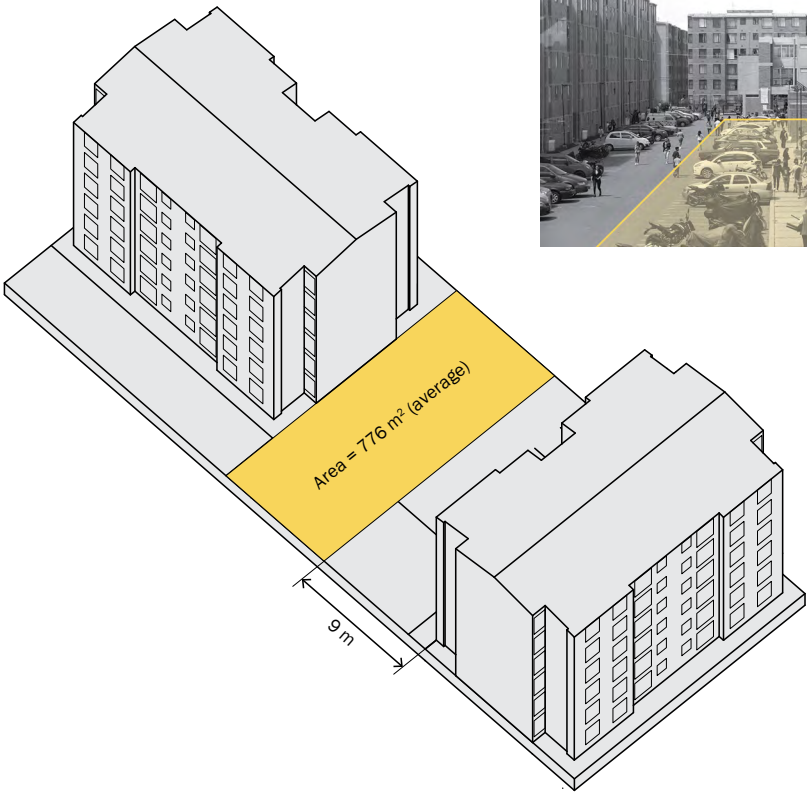
Total number
33

Property
Communal of collective use.

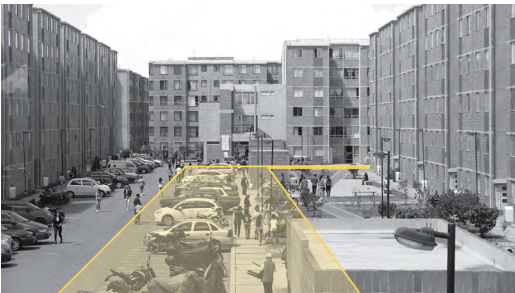
Potential
Construction of independent buildings with indirect access from the street, some integrated with edge plots.



Typical dimensions and configuration
These plots have slender proportions, and their dimensions vary greatly. There are 33 of such areas in Campo Verde, with an average area of 776 m².



Examples



Plots / Edge

Outdoor spaces within in the block edges which are 9 meters away from all nearby front facades.

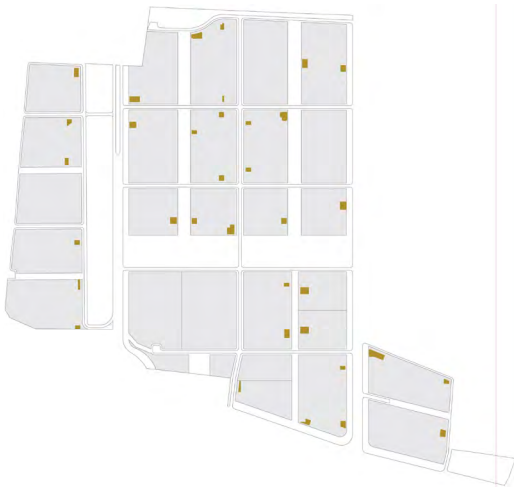
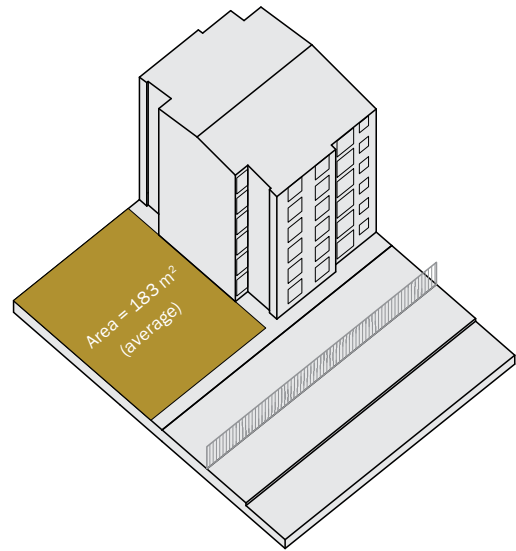
Total number
35

Property
Communal or collective use.

Potential
Construction of independent buildings with indirect access from the street. Some can be integrated with blind or reduced front yards.



Typical dimensions and configuration
These plots are almost always adjacent to the lateral blind façade of a tower and have more squared proportions. There are 35 of them, with an average area of 183 m².



Examples



Plots / Road buffer areas

Public spaces meant to reduce the negative impacts of roads in residential areas. They are the only type of public space prone to be transformed or developed, given that they are not meant to be used by the community and have a relatively low environmental importance.

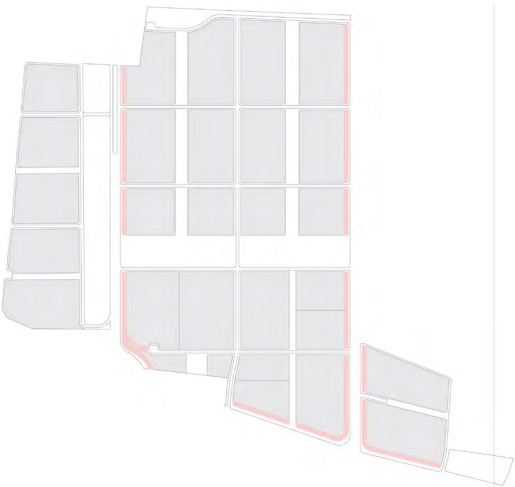
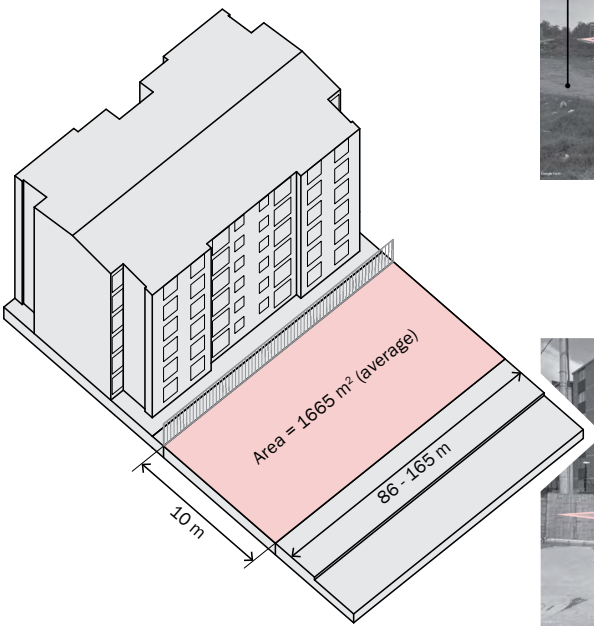
Total number
13

Property
Public with restricted use.

Potential
Transformation for access to developed front yards or edge plots. Construction of independent buildings with direct access from the street.

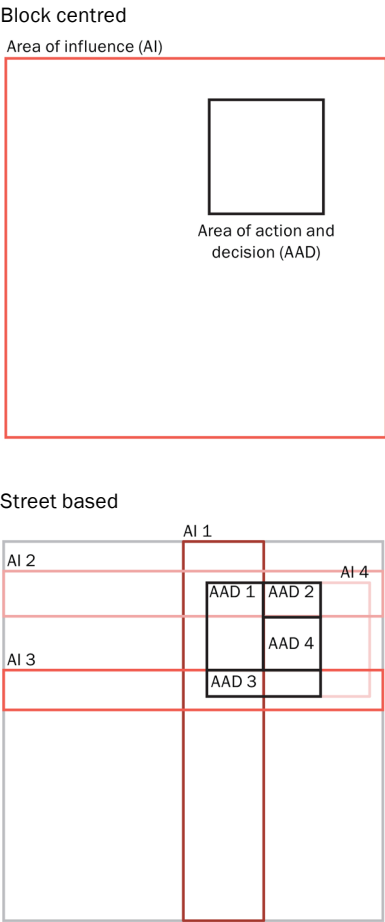


Typical dimensions and configuration
All buffer areas are 10 m width. Their length varies between 86 and 165 m. There are 13 of them, with an average area of 1665 m².



Examples





7.3.3 Street-based

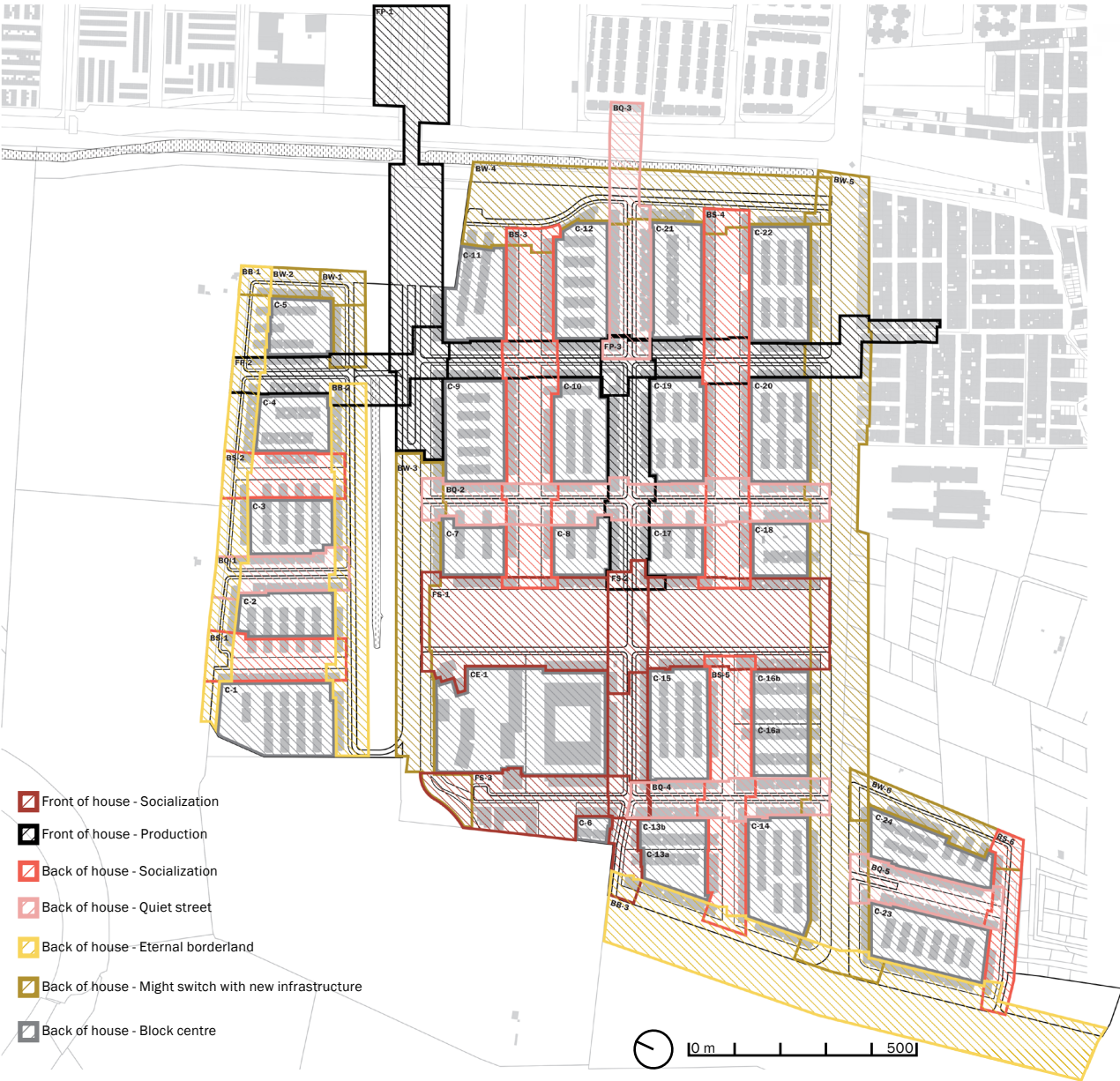
There is a missing intermediate scale in Campo Verde that impedes the spatial transformation of Campo Verde. Therefore, a new division of land that acknowledges and fills that void is required. Today, all regulations are equally applied to an entire block, and they are proportional *representations* of the larger plan. This means that blocks are the minimum areas of action and decision when a transformation is to be done, and their area of influence extends to the whole area of the partial plan. The proposed framework reduces that area of influence to street segments with shared characteristics and defines the urban regulations according to the conditions of each street type. This means that the areas of action and decision are reduced to those fractions of the block contained in each street. This does not mean, though, that transformations can only take place at the scale of the street: as it will be explained, certain developments can happen in the whole block or, opposingly, in each building.

7.3.4 A new division of land

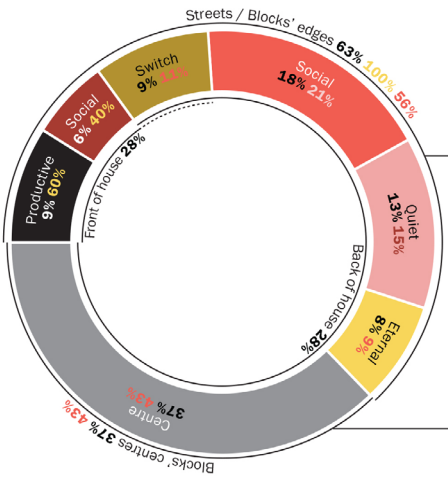
Criteria for definition

First, it is necessary to explain the criteria for the definition of the streets' boundaries. The following aspects were taken into consideration:

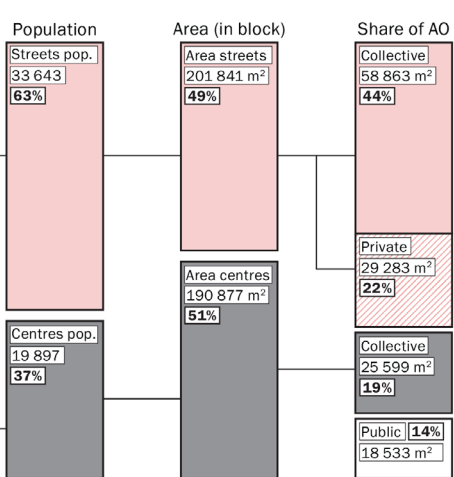
- **Character.** The character refers to the potential for activities and transformation that the street has. It is defined both by the analysis of current conditions and by speculative thinking. All streets were divided into two groups: back of house streets (BoH), where activities that are more closed to strangers (as production and community activities) can thrive, and front of house streets (FoH), where a high concentration of public interfaces serves for displaying the outputs of BoH activities. Here, both locals and strangers can *see* what happens in the neighbourhood and new synergies can emerge. Each type has several subtypes that are explained in the following pages.
- **Location:** The location defines the “spatial horizon” of the street character. Different factors were taken into consideration in this delimitation: existing diversity of activities, position relative to the neighbourhood's edges, planned infrastructures and nearby developments, and continuity with other existing or future roads. In all cases, the streets included private and public areas, understanding that a healthy street is that one where both realms are tightly intertwined.
- **Buildings.** Each street includes those buildings that have potential to have direct contact with it, even if they are currently separated by a fence. In practice, this means that those buildings directly facing a front yard are included. This is a decision that is also influenced by interviews with residents, who say their towers are the places where more socialization and community interactions happen.



Distribution of population in types of streets.



Compared distribution: population, area and areas of opportunity



•Corners. Corners are zones of exception. In the framework, they are the only places where superimpositions of two types of street are permitted. This follows the idea that corners have a “condition of place of encounter, of superposition and conflict”(de Solà-Morales, 2002, p. 13). Therefore, there are corner buildings that are part of two streets. When there is no building in the corner, the whole free area is integrated into it.

Centres: all the areas that are isolated from streets by other buildings are classified under a category of their own (block centres).

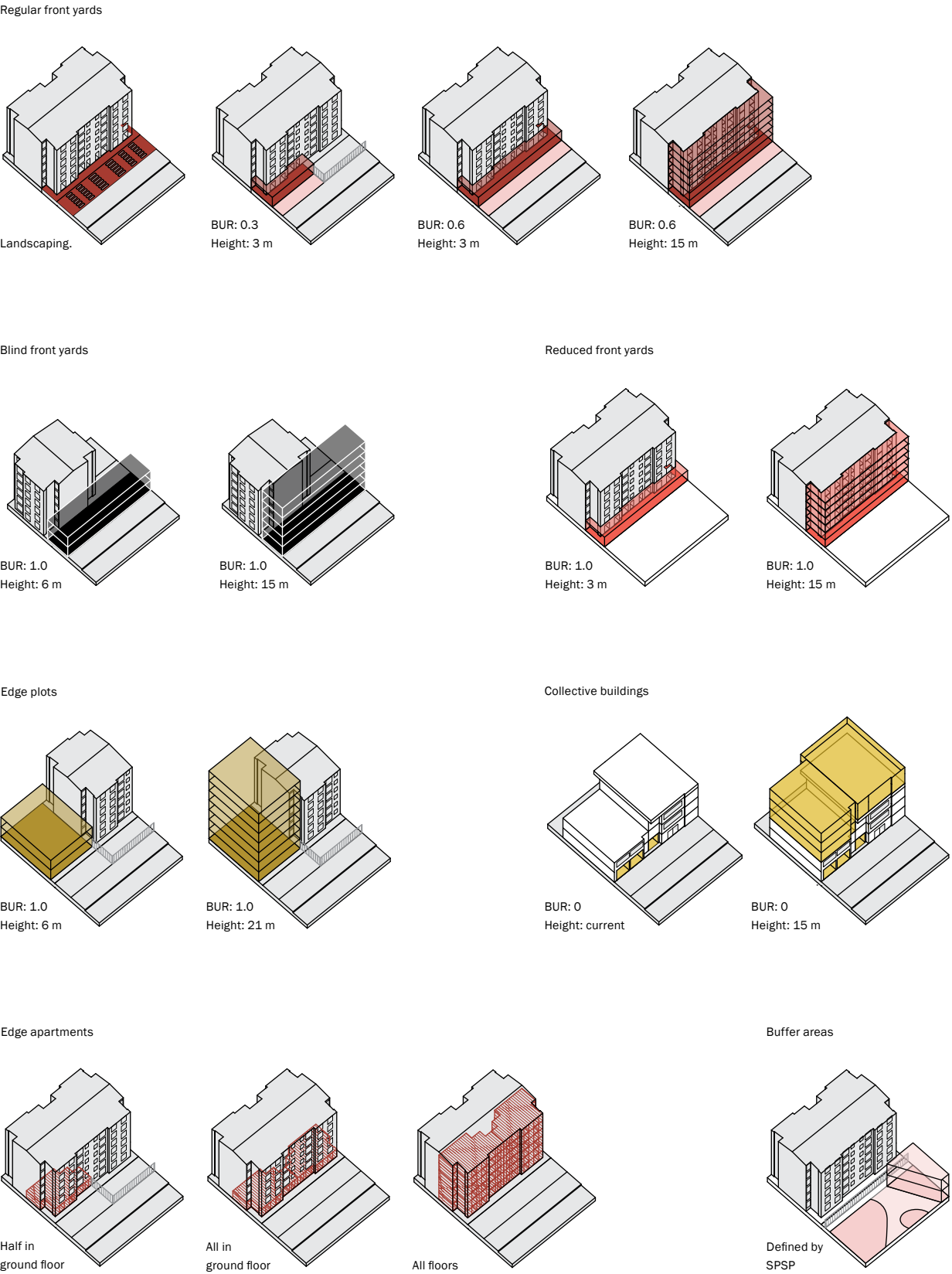
General figures

A new land division map for Campo Verde was made following these criteria. It is presented in the next page, together with two graphs that summarise some of the quantitative results of such division, some of which are worth discussing.

When looking the map, the first aspect that strikes the eye is the apparent lack of balance between the area of each gated community that is part of the streets, versus the dimension of block centres. This is a mere optical illusion: in average, centres occupy 51% of the private area of blocks. Nonetheless, there is an unbalance in how population is distributed in the edges, where 63% of all apartments (9780 units) are located. Meanwhile, the centres only house the other 37% (5784 units). This is good news, because despite the clear anti-urban intent of the original design of the neighbourhood, most people are already living *next to* the streets, even though not yet *in* them. Critical mass, a usually scarce condition, is abundant in these streets. What is needed is the right infrastructure for it to emerge and animate public and productive life.

Regarding the two main street characters described before (FoH and BoH), the general distribution shows that only 15% of all streets are FoH. An extra 9% could switch from BoH to FoH if some missing infrastructure is built. This means that competition to be in FoH streets will be high, so there is the chance an unequal distribution of opportunities between those gated communities adjacent to FoH streets and those that are not. This will require mechanisms for the fair economic participation in the FoH areas. Nonetheless, and despite all efforts, it will be impossible to make all streets equally profitable. What is possible is to propose a way to make all of them equally valuable for the life of the neighbourhood. This can be achieved by fine-tuning the thresholds of activities and developments allowed in each street, as well as promoting specific forms of association in each one. The next subsection will show how this translates types and subtypes of streets.

Occupation parameters matrix



7.3.5 Street types

Front of house / Productive

These streets are the storefronts of the businesses and entrepreneurial initiatives of the neighbourhood. Therefore, their priority is to agglomerate a diverse range of local actors and initiatives, and not necessarily to prove them with *all* the area they need.

Types of spaces

Small units with frontal distribution area and rear storage area. Transformed edge apartments should be subdivided into as many units as possible. Facades should guarantee a minimum degree of transparency for displaying products and services.

Main actors

Local and external entrepreneurs and small businesses.

Recommended uses

Commercial, private services, artisanal production.

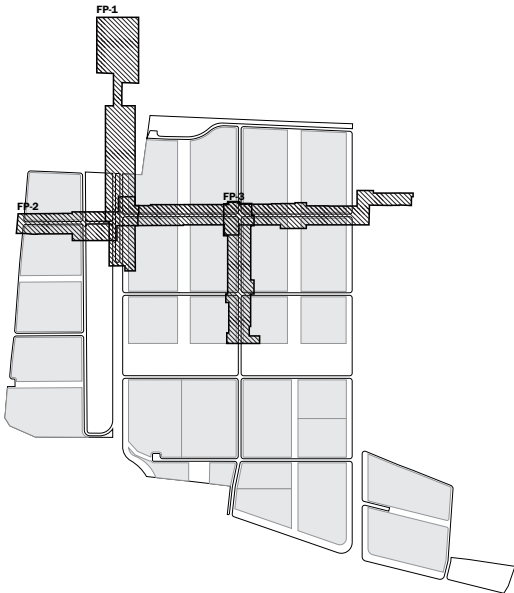
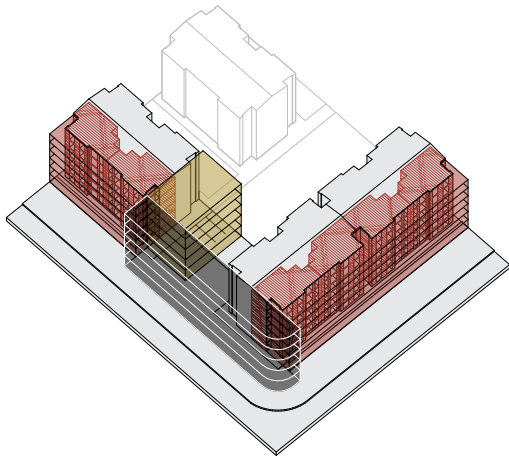
Possible levels of transformation

1 2 3 C

For profit operations

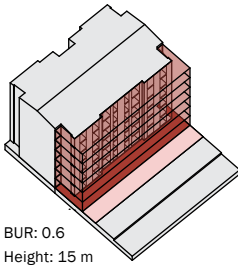
Allowed.

Maximum occupation model

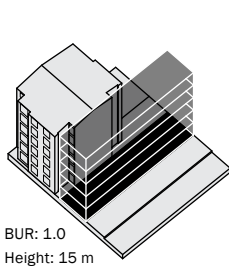


Occupation parameters

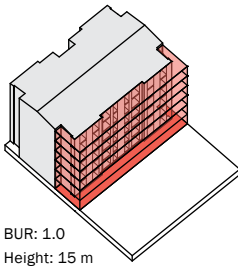
Regular front yards



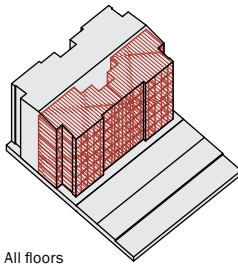
Blind front yards



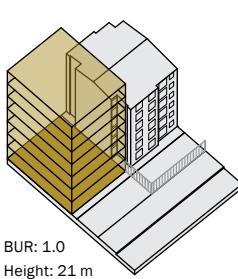
Reduced front yards



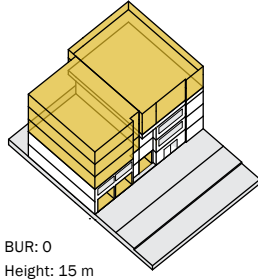
Edge apartments



Edge plots

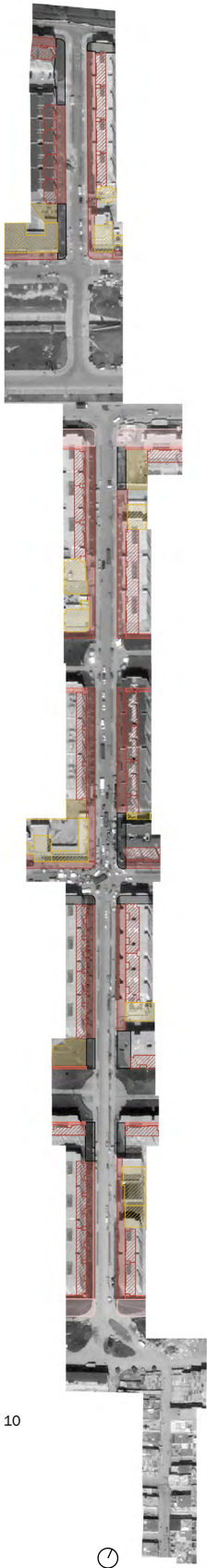


Collective buildings



FP-1
Gated communities: 2
Towers: 7
Residents: 578

0m | 20 | 50 | 100 |



FP-2
Gated communities: 10
Towers: 34.5
Residents: 2848



FP-3
Gated communities: 4
Towers: 17
Residents: 1404

Front of house / Social

These streets are already heavily influenced by the fluctuating intensities of use and agglomeration of spaces as the main park, the schools, and the future justice centre. Any future programmes that are added should support the activities that take place in these spaces and encourage their use by as many different actors as possible. Programmes that foster user permanence will be encouraged to extend the active hours of public spaces.



Types of spaces

Small- to large-sized units with enough space for user permanence.

Main actors

Local entrepreneurs, small businesses, public institutions, and NGOs.

Recommended uses

Commercial, private services, recreation-related institutional services.

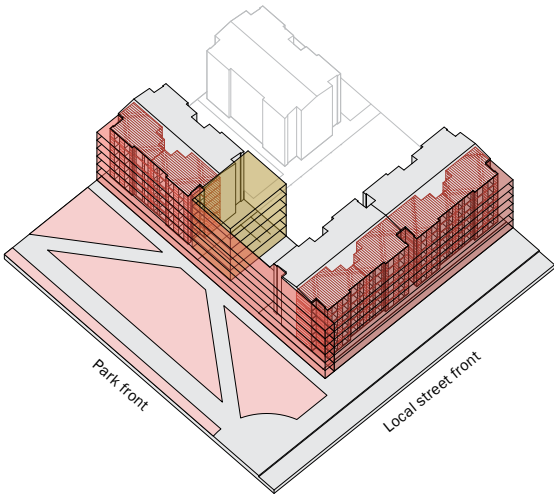
Possible levels of transformation

1 2 3 C

For profit operations

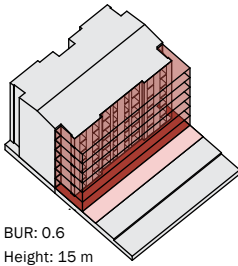
Allowed.

Maximum occupation model



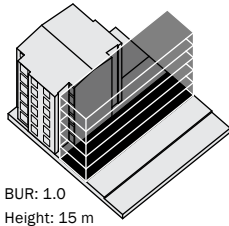
Occupation parameters

Regular front yards



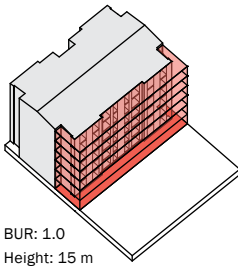
BUR: 0.6
Height: 15 m

Blind front yards



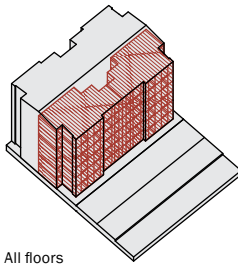
BUR: 1.0
Height: 15 m

Reduced front yards



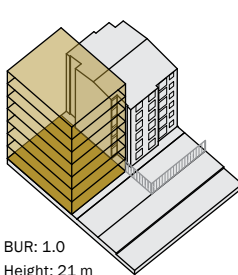
BUR: 1.0
Height: 15 m

Edge apartments



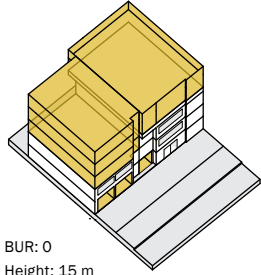
All floors

Edge plots

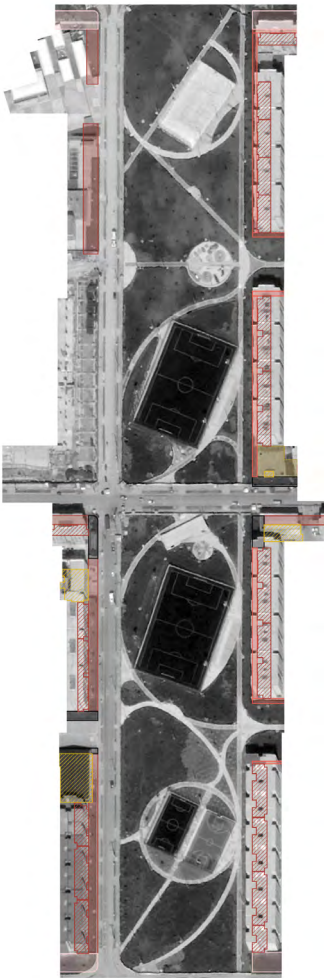


BUR: 1.0
Height: 21 m

Collective buildings



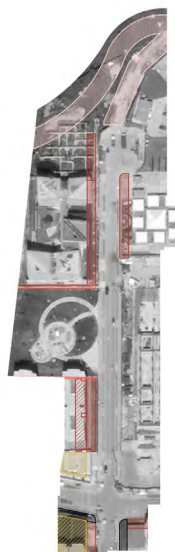
BUR: 0
Height: 15 m



FS-1
Gated communities: 6
Towers: 27.5
Residents: 2270



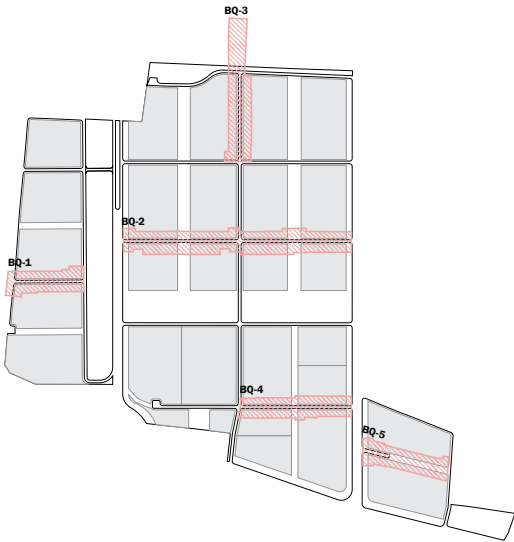
FS-2
Gated communities: 2
Towers: 9
Residents: 743



FS-3
Gated communities: 1
Towers: 2
Residents: 165

Front of house / Quiet

These streets will remain relatively unchanged over time, understanding that any good neighbourhood has places where not much happens, except for silence and intimate interactions. In the case of Campo Verde, they will also be touchstones for those nostalgic neighbours who miss the fences and struggle with change.



Types of spaces

Small- and mid-sized units with enough space for user permanence.

Main actors

Unsuspecting passersby, dog walkers, local business owners.

Recommended uses

Local commerce (essential goods), small manufacture and repair shops, run by residents of the area.

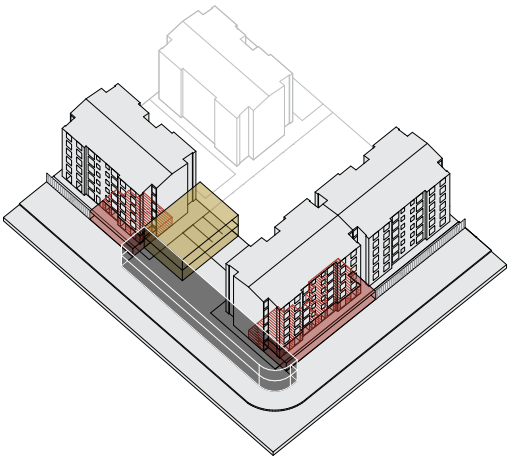
Possible levels of transformation



For profit operations

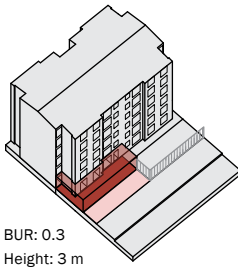
Not allowed.

Maximum occupation model



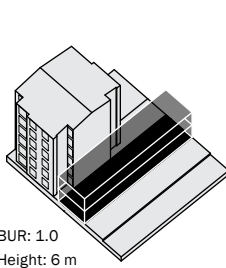
Occupation parameters

Regular front yards



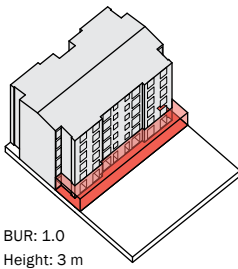
BUR: 0.3
Height: 3 m

Blind front yards



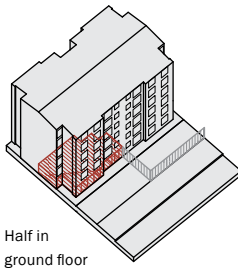
BUR: 1.0
Height: 6 m

Reduced front yards



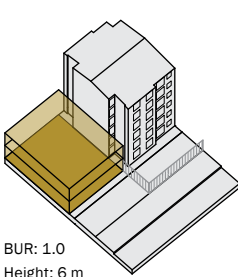
BUR: 1.0
Height: 3 m

Edge apartments



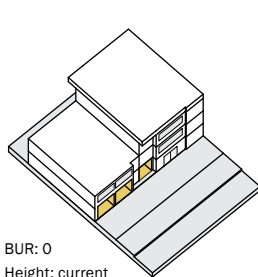
Half in
ground floor

Edge plots



BUR: 1.0
Height: 6 m

Collective buildings

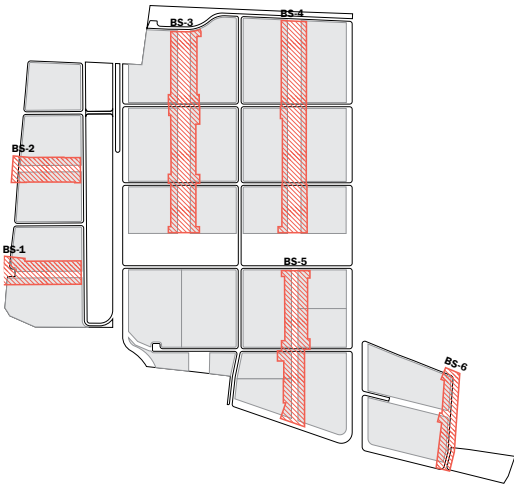


BUR: 0
Height: current



Back of house / Social

These streets correspond with the lineal parks and pedestrian roads that already exist. It will be were small-scale social initiatives, NGOs and other community-oriented entities have a place to operate. These groups will also take over the programme and care of a defined part of those public spaces. All transformations will require a coordinated action between public authorities and social collectives, which will be materialized through a Special Public Space Plan (SPSP).



Types of spaces

Mid- to large-sized units with enough space for management offices, user permanence and storage of items for outdoor activities.

Main actors

Organized community groups (minority and vulnerable groups will be prioritized), NGOs, welfare family funds, City's secretary for recreation and sports.

Recommended uses

Education, technical training, recreation, agriculture, private services and offices.

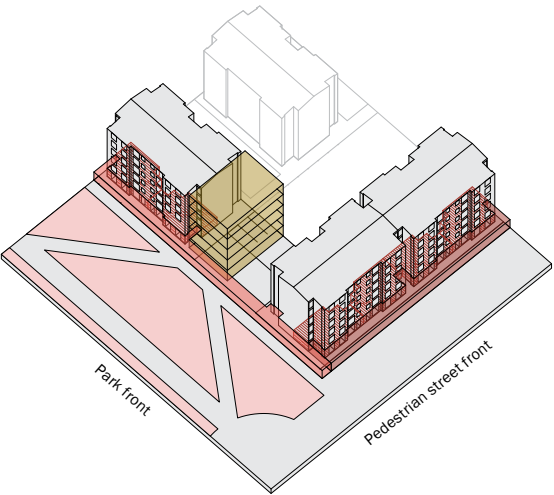
Possible levels of transformation



For profit operations

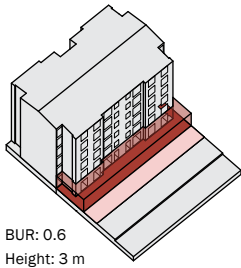
Not allowed.

Maximum occupation model

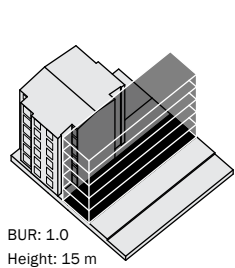


Occupation parameters

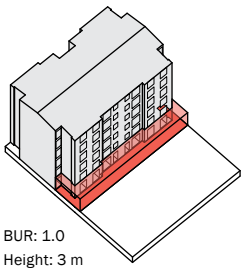
Regular front yards



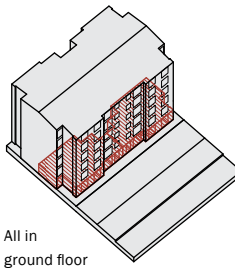
Blind front yards



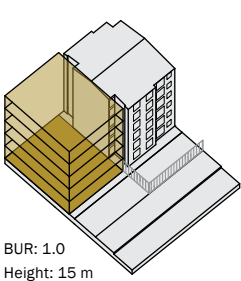
Reduced front yards



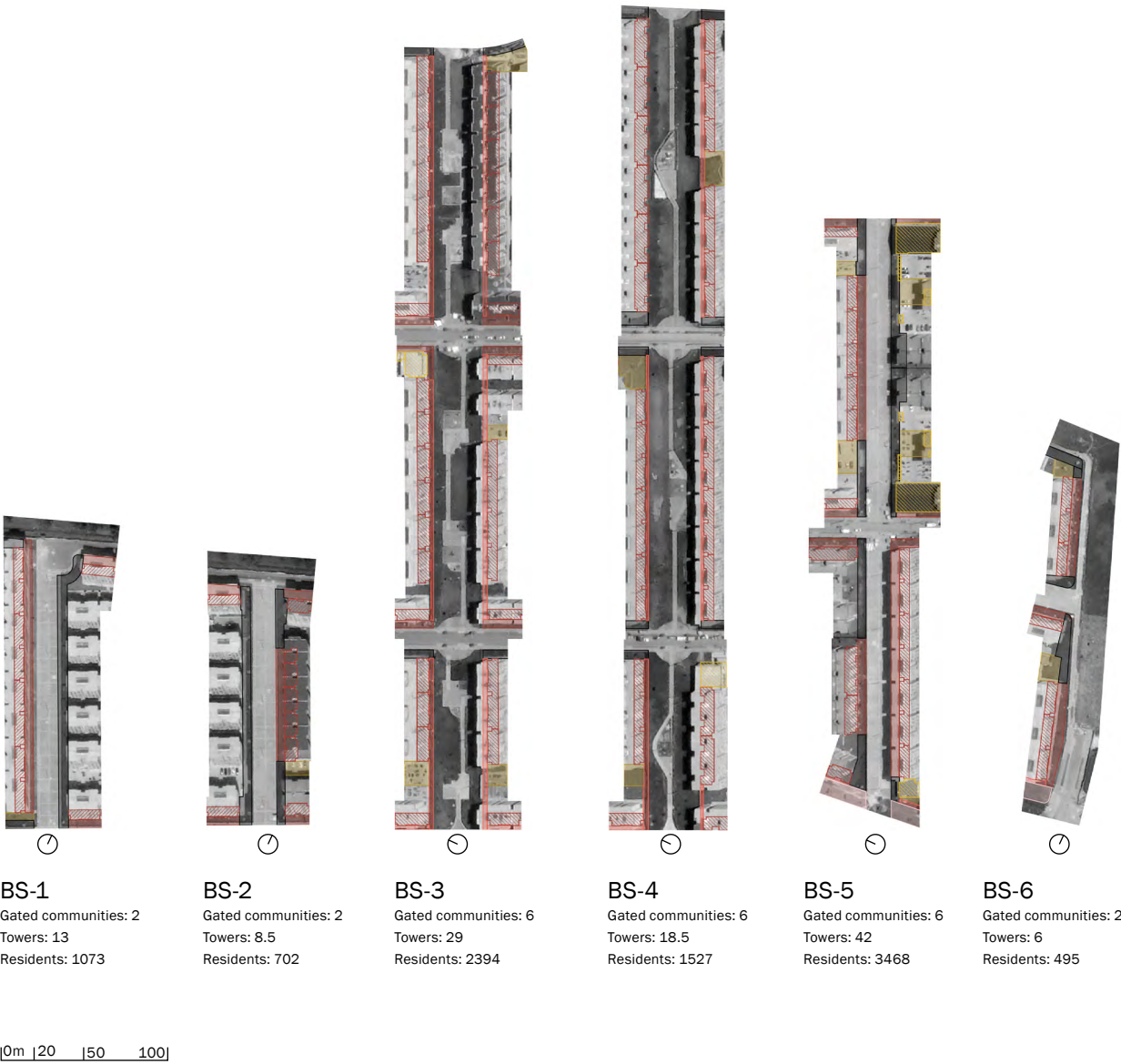
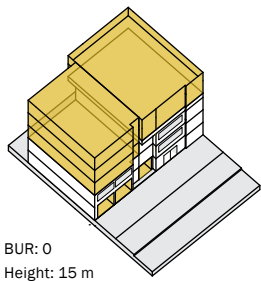
Edge apartments



Edge plots



Collective buildings



Back of house /
Forever borderlands

These streets seem to be condemned to always be remote and isolated borderlands, both because of their current situation and for their role when future developments and infrastructures are built. Therefore, all the new programmes for these streets should either be natural attractors, as medical or bureaucratic services, or productive activities, as small-scale manufacture, and repair services.

Types of spaces

Mid- to large-sized units with enough space for several working places or specialized uses. A special plan for environmental and acoustic contamination management is mandatory.

Main actors

Local and external entrepreneurs, small- and mid-sized businesses, public institutions, private services, health providers.

Recommended uses

Medical offices, bureaucratic services, low-impact industry, commercial storage.

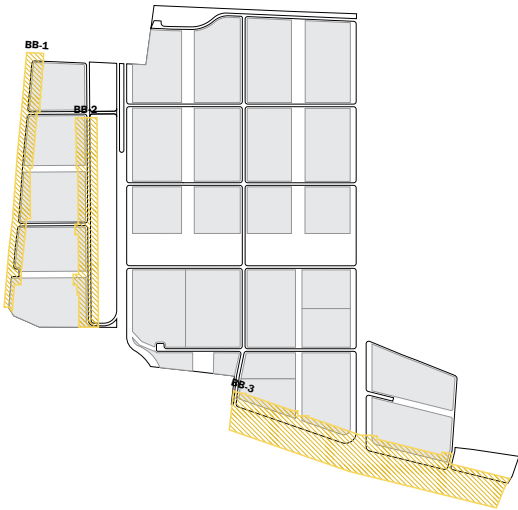
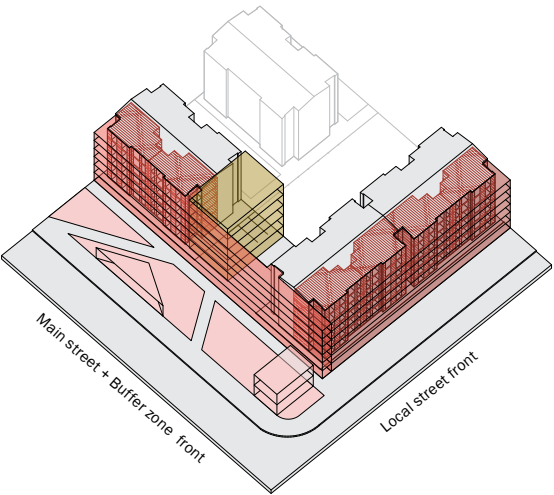
Possible levels of transformation

1 2 3 C

For profit operations

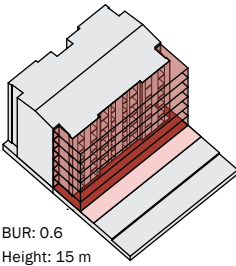
Allowed.

Maximum occupation model

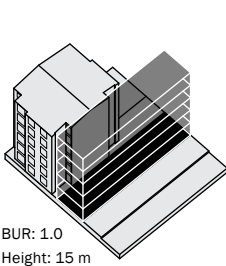


Occupation parameters

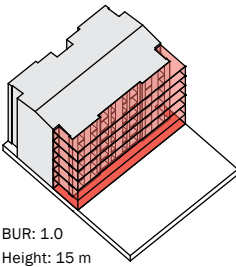
Regular front yards



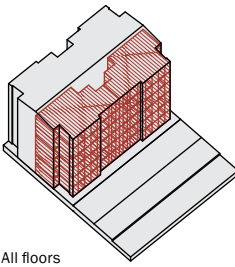
Blind front yards



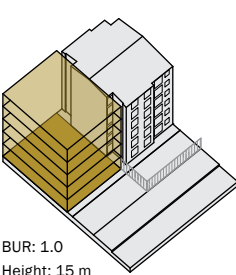
Reduced front yards



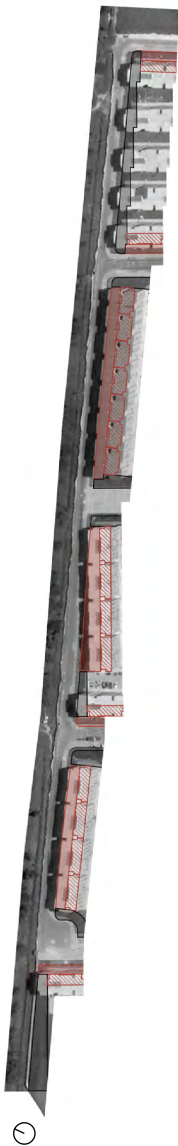
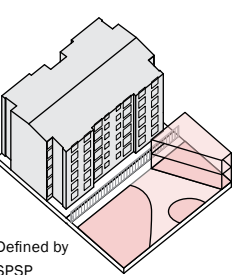
Edge apartments



Edge plots



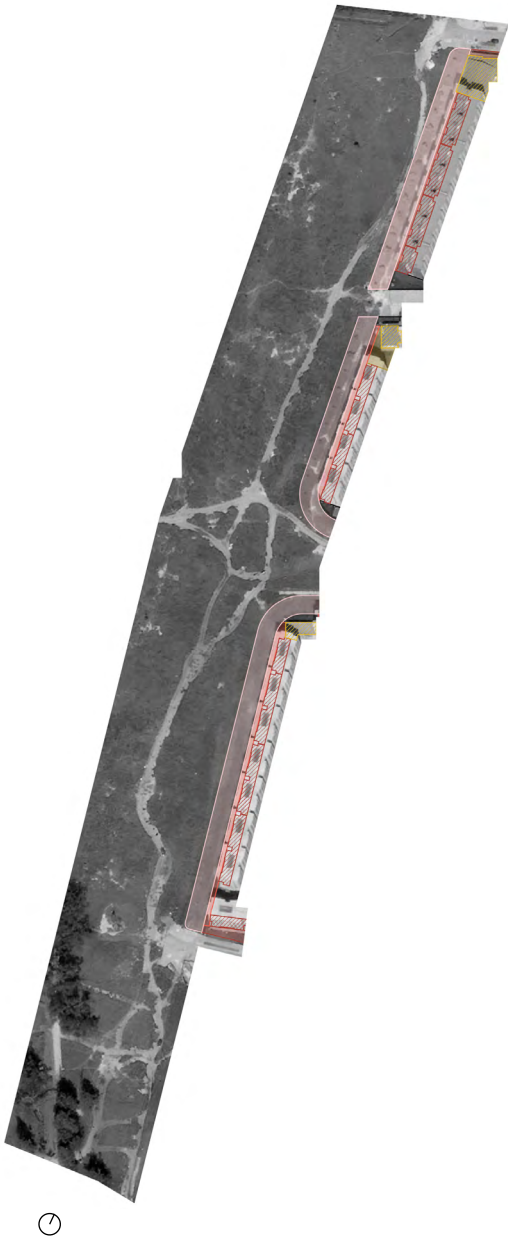
Buffer areas



BB-1
Gated communities: 4
Towers: 18
Residents: 1486



BB-2
Gated communities: 4
Towers: 16
Residents: 1321



BB-3
Gated communities: 3
Towers: 18
Residents: 1486

0m | 20 | 50 | 100 |

Back of house / Block centre

These are streets that would classify as borderlands but have high chances of switching to become front of house or another type of back of house. This change depends on the construction of public infrastructure, mainly roads and bridges, and other Partial Plans around Campo Verde. The effects of these future developments are hard to predict, so regulations should allow for certain flexibility. A specific condition of these areas is that they all include large buffer zones that separate roads and water bodies from buildings. Therefore, an active involvement of the planning and transit authorities will be crucial for any transformation.

Types of spaces

Unknown, but it should be possible to have small- to large-sized units. Road buffer areas should be integrated into the design of those spaces.

Main actors

Residents, local and external entrepreneurs, small- and mid-sized businesses, public institutions, private services, health providers.

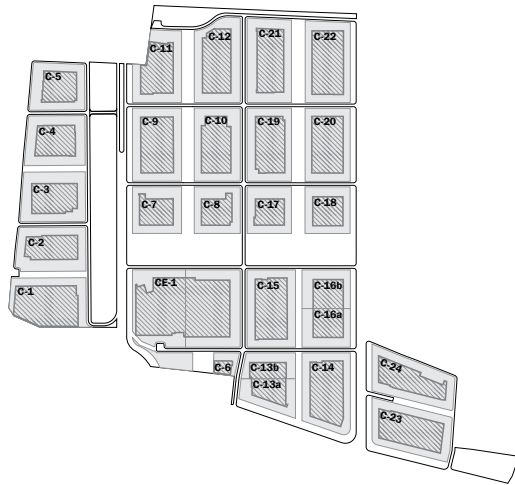
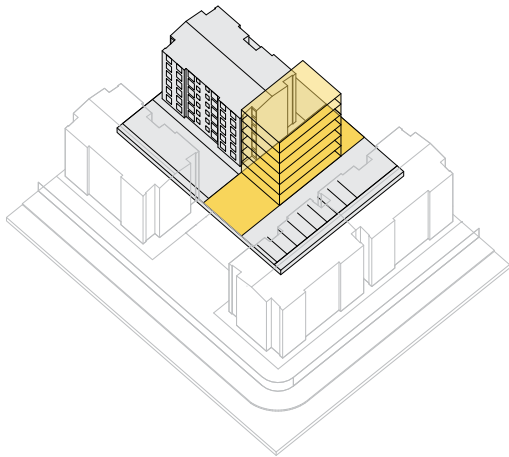
Possible levels of transformation



For profit operations

Allowed.

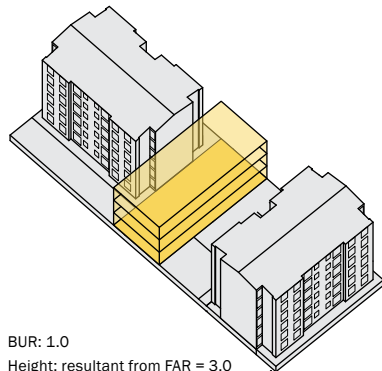
Maximum occupation model



Recommended uses

Collective recreation, manufacture, storage, low-impact industry, bureaucratic services, medical offices, education.

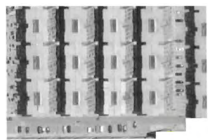
Occupation parameters



C-1
Towers: 18
Residents: 1486



C-2
Towers: 10
Residents: 826



C-3
Towers: 12
Residents: 991



C-4
Towers: 8
Residents: 660



C-5
Towers: 7
Residents: 578



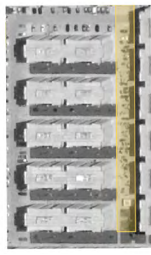
C-6
Towers: 2
Residents: 165



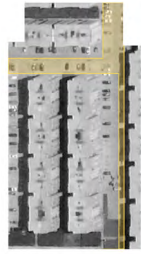
C-7
Towers: 4
Residents: 330



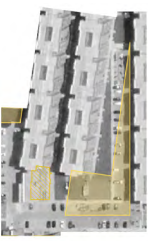
C-8
Towers: 4
Residents: 330



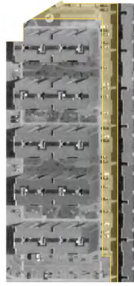
C-9
Towers: 10
Residents: 826



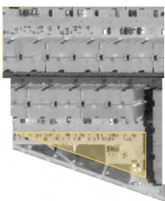
C-10
Towers: 10
Residents: 826



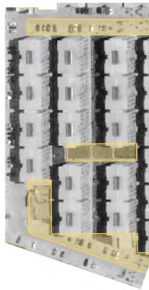
C-11
Towers: 8
Residents: 660



C-12
Towers: 10
Residents: 826



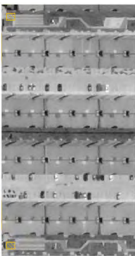
C-13 (a+b)
Towers: 11
Residents: 908



C-14
Towers: 14
Residents: 1156



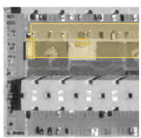
C-15
Towers: 15
Residents: 1238



C-16 (a+b)
Towers: 20
Residents: 1651



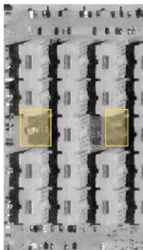
C-17
Towers: 4
Residents: 330



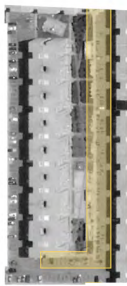
C-18
Towers: 4
Residents: 330



C-19
Towers: 12
Residents: 991



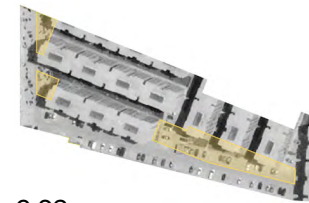
C-20
Towers: 13
Residents: 1073



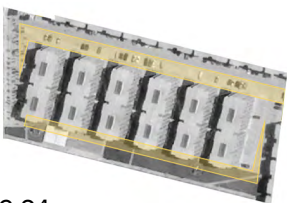
C-21
Towers: 8
Residents: 660



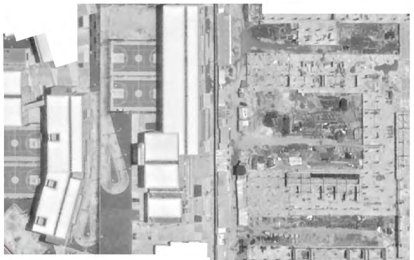
C-22
Towers: 15
Residents: 1238



C-23
Towers: 12
Residents: 991



C-24
Towers: 10
Residents: 826



CE-1
No towers.

0m | 20 | 50 | 100 |

Back of house /Switching
Block centres are isolated from the edges, and therefore their role changes according to the types of streets that surround them. In general terms, they are the places to build the compensations for the use of collective land in the edges. They are also the spaces with more developable area, which means that the initiatives that only have a distribution front in the street will probably need to have a production and storage space in the centre.

Types of spaces
Small- to large-sized units, according to the needs of the streets around. When possible, the spaces that are not compensations should be separated from the areas used by residents and have an independent access from the street.

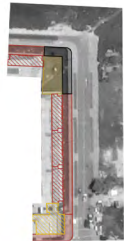
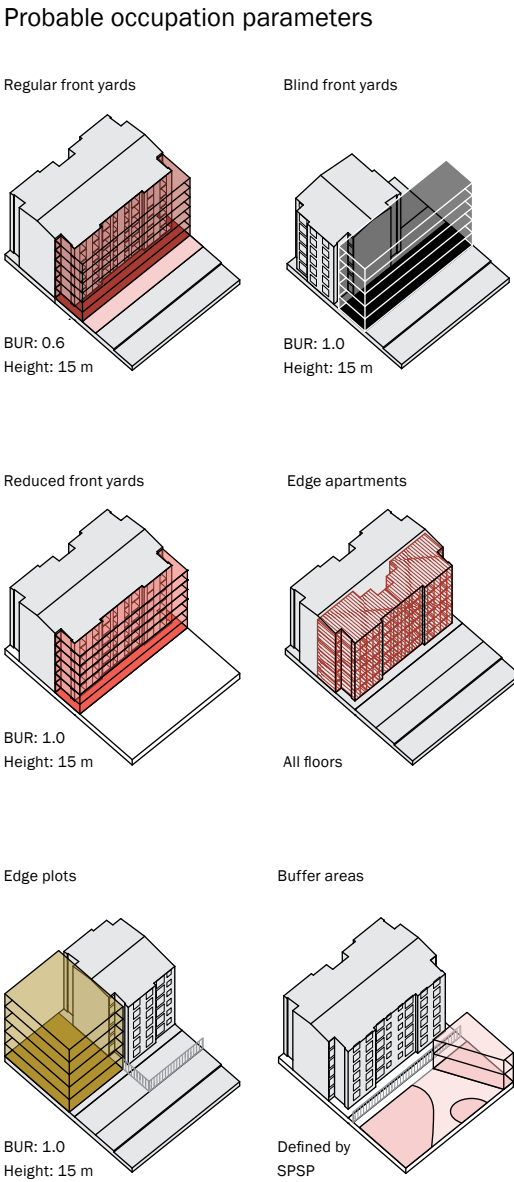
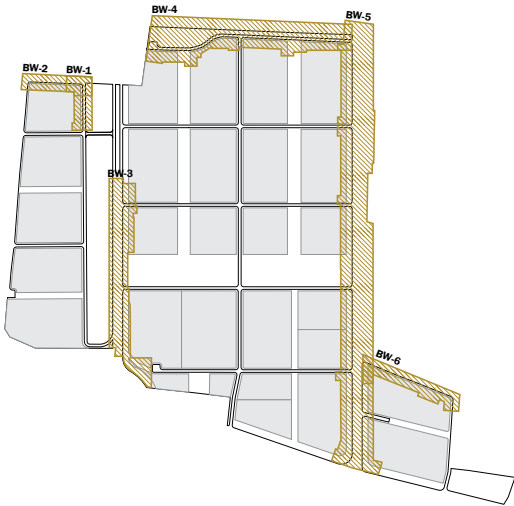
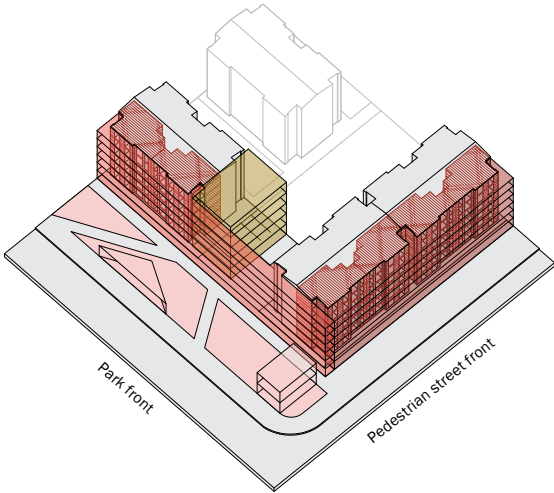
Main actors
Secretary for transit and transportation, and Secretary for city planning. Others to be defined.

Recommended uses
To be defined.

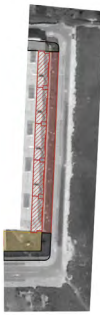
Possible levels of transformation
1 2 3 C

For profit operations
Allowed.

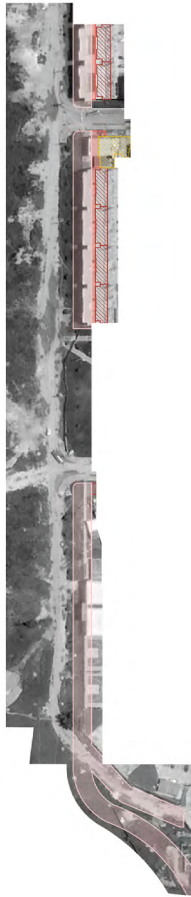
Probable occupation model



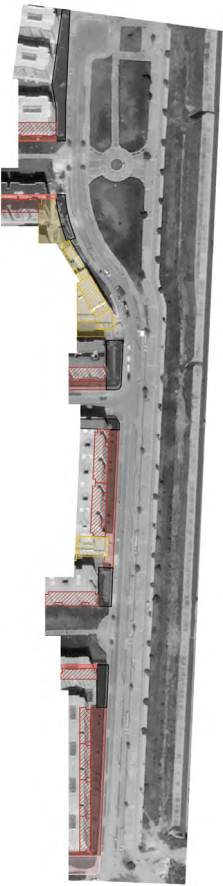
BW-1
Gated communities: 1
Towers: 3
Residents:



BW-2
Gated communities: 1
Towers: 5
Residents:



BW-3
Gated communities: 2
Towers: 6
Residents:



BW-4
Gated communities: 3
Towers: 10
Residents:



BW-5
Gated communities: 8
Towers: 29
Residents:



BW-6
Gated communities: 1
Towers: 7
Residents:

ork for negotiation / Urban regulations

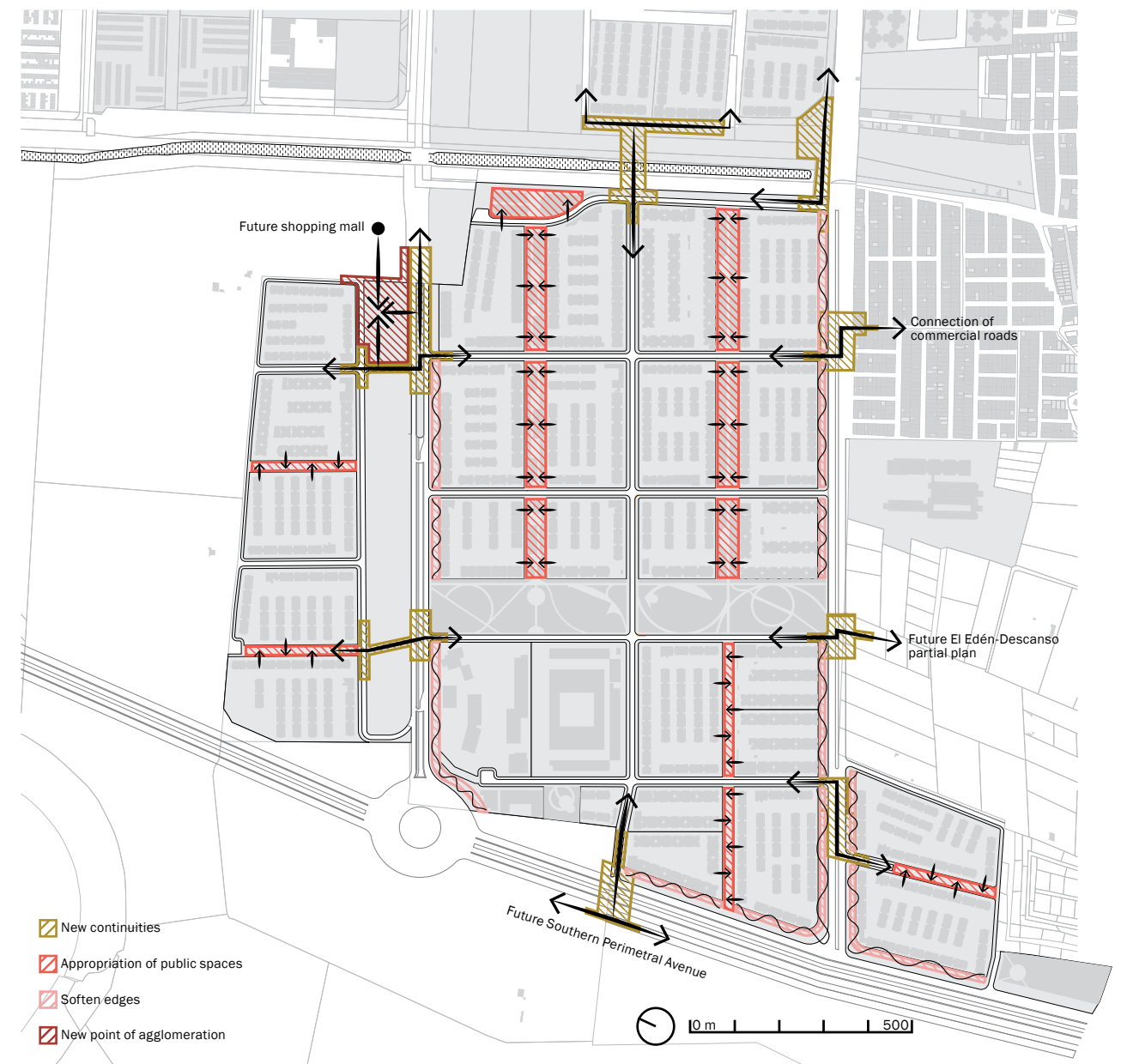
0m | 20 | 50 | 100

7.4 Public institutions

So far, the framework for negotiation has been presented as a set of public regulations that encourage initiatives led by private institutions (i.e. residents' organizations). However, public institutions also play an important role within this framework. For instance, some of the proposed street types in Campo Verde depend on the transformations of large public spaces that are under the jurisdiction of different institutions. This is something that can be achieved through what has been called Special Public Space Plans (SPSP). This tool is explained in the first subsection. Furthermore, the government has a larger, more structural relevance for the framework of negotiation. In fact, only public institutions can provide technical and procedural assistance to transform poor gated communities as the ones from Campo Verde. The nature of this assistance, the institutions that would be involved and their range of action are explained in the second part.

7.4.1 Special Public Space Plans

A first, perhaps obvious, role of public institutions is that one of caring for public space. In Bogotá, many different entities oversee different types public space. Although this is supposed to allow an efficient management of these spaces, it is also a factor that plays against their transformation. For instance, it is not uncommon to see authorities destroying community-led projects (as the demolition of a successful BMX track in El Recreo that was built on a buffer area) or undoing works made by a different entity. For the framework of negotiation, this means that the idea of a unified public space is challenged by its bureaucratic fragmentation, which could turn any negotiation that requires



the presence of the state into a nightmare of overlapping authorities.

In the case of Campo Verde, the three main types of public space are under the care of different institutions: parks are under the City's Institute for Recreation and Sport (*IDRD*), environmental buffer areas are the jurisdiction of the Water and Sewage Company (*EAAB*) and the roads, sidewalks and road buffers are under the authority of the Institute of Urban Development (*IDU*) and the Secretary of Mobility (*SDM*).

For reducing the effect of this fragmentation, the new figure of the Special Public Space Plans (SPSP) is proposed. To be successful, it would require the presence and approval of representatives from all public entities involved in the maintenance of those spaces, the residents of the communities living around it and representatives of the CPS. To be clear on whether one of these plans is needed, each neighbourhood would have a plan indicating the public spaces that would require an SPSP, as well as the goals of each plan.

In the case of Campo Verde, there are four types of SPSP. Each one is defined by the type of spaces they provide.

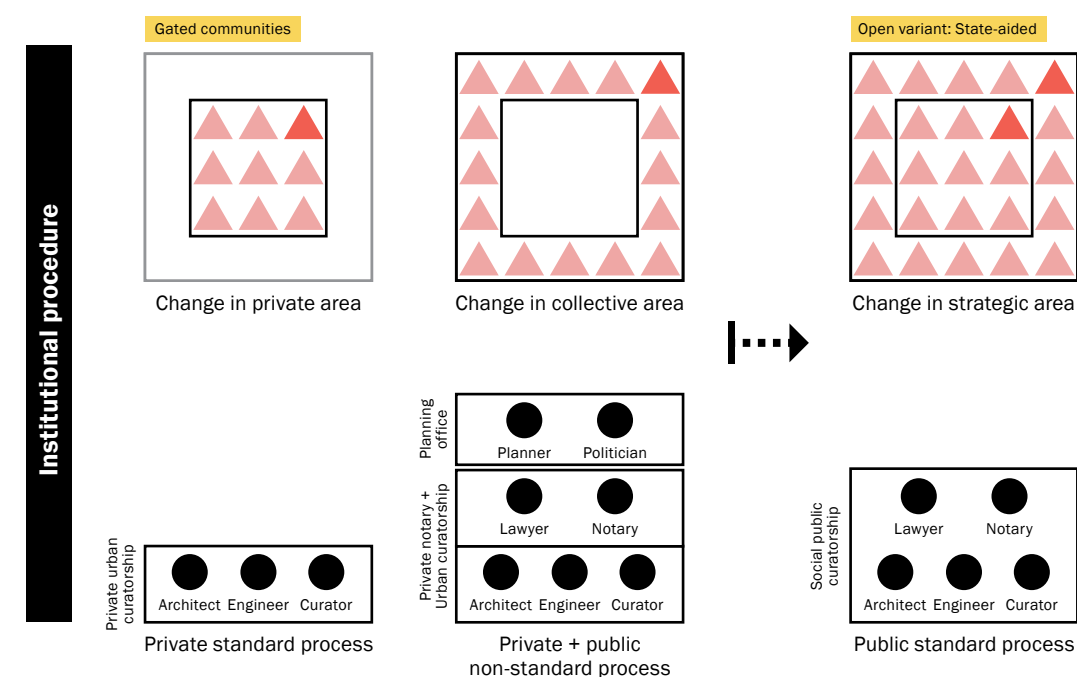
- New continuities. Public spaces as bridges and pedestrian crossings that connect the neighbourhood with surrounding areas, solving some of the discontinuities that already exist or that may arise in the future.
- Appropriated public spaces. The goal of these SPSP is to allow for the gradual transformation of poorly designed parks and pedestrian roads through the non-proprietary allocation of small portions of public space to community organizations.
- Soft edges. These plans are meant to transform buffer zones, which currently act as hard boundaries between the street and private buildings, into permeable and active spaces.
- New point of agglomeration. This SPSPS is intended to design the area adjacent to the "entrance" of Campo Verde, which will inevitably become a point of agglomeration in the near future. In fact, this spot will also be the "entry point" of other neighbourhoods being built around Campo Verde, as well as the place where a mall will be built.

7.4.2 Institutional procedure: The Social Public Curatorship (CPS)

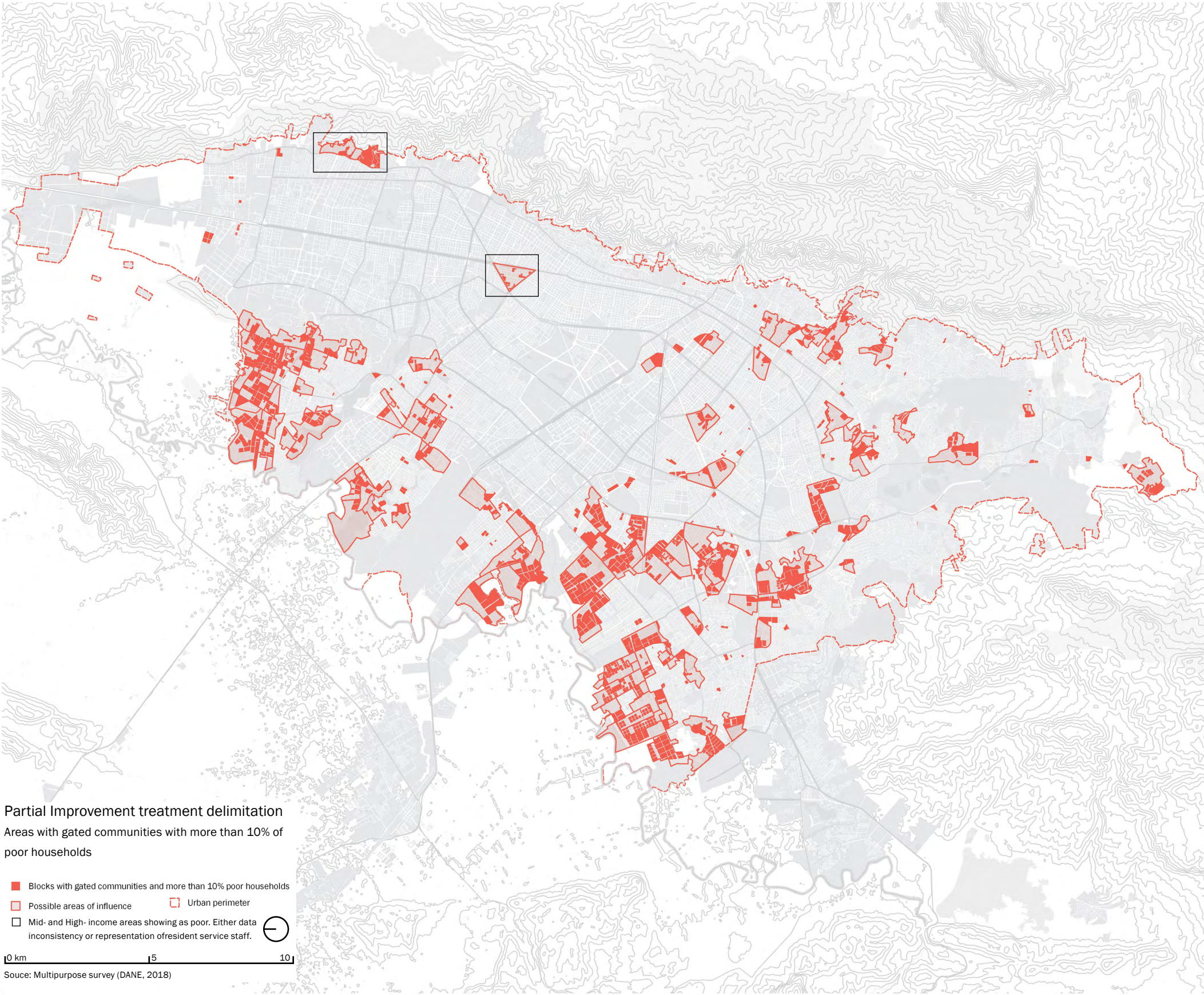
In Bogotá, any major construction work, especially if it is performed outside the private units, requires the approval from an "Urban curatorship", a private entity that issues construction permits after a review of the project's technical standards. This process is costly and requires the signature of registered architects and engineers. Besides, if the project occupies collective land with new buildings, the standard procedure also requires a legal process for the rewriting of internal regulations by a lawyer, and their consignment in a notary (another private entity.) Such a long and costly procedure would be virtually

impossible to pay for a low-income project administration: in fact, it is not uncommon for them to be in fiscal deficit due to residents being unable to pay administration fees. As an alternative, I propose to expand the role of a recently created entity, the Social Public Curatorship (CPS), to low-income formal districts. Today, this is an institution in charge of assisting the owners of informal houses (built without a construction permit and are worth less than 150 MMW) in the process of reinforcing the structures of their dwellings and improving their living conditions. This is done by providing technical, legal and negotiation assistance to communities, as well as free-of-charge licensing for construction works.

The CPS works as a dependency of the Popular Housing Fund (*Caja de la Vivienda Popular*, here CVP), an affiliated entity to the Secretary of Habitat of Bogotá. The CVP was originally created in 1918 for building residential neighbourhoods for the working class, a role it maintained until the 90s, when it became the institution in charge of building houses for families living in high-risk areas that needed to be relocated (*Caja de la Vivienda Popular*, 2021). Subsequently, their involvement in providing assistance to low-income homeowners from informal neighbourhoods was expanded: first in 1999, when the CPV was put in charge of giving property titles to those homeowners who had occupied their land irregularly, and then in 2020, when a decree from the city government gave the CVP the capacity to grant free-of-charge building permits through the CPS (Mayor's Office of Bogota, 2020). With the new POT, the area of influence of the CPV was reduced to those parts of the city land that fell under



the “integral Improvement” land treatment (see the “Complete” section in chapter 3).
What I propose is to further expand the CVP’s and CPS role, putting the latter also in charge of the “partial improvement” of low-income social housing areas as Campo Verde. This new land category, which should be integrated as a land treatment in the POT, would designate those areas in urgent need to be completed with non-residential programmes. The map in the following pages attempts a first delimitation of these areas; it includes all the neighbourhoods where there are gated communities with more than 10% of poor residents.



7.5 Conclusion

This chapter proposed a new “framework for negotiation” for the gradual development of Campo Verde. This was done focusing in three dimensions: community, regulations, and institutions. For the community, a more atomised alternative for the monolithic governance structures of gated communities was put forward. This new setup would match deliberation levels with levels of spatial transformation. The regulatory section dealt with two issues: finding the spaces with more potential for future developments, or areas of opportunity, and the proposal for a new street-based division of land that would coherently integrate small-scale actions into a larger idea of neighbourhood. Finally, the institutional part proposed to “reuse” an existing institution (the CPS) to assist those residents that wish to transform their gated communities but are not able to pay for the costly procedures this implies. Finally, the figure of the Special Public Spaces Plan was proposed as a way of easing the process of transformation of public spaces, which requires a direct dialogue between communities and institutions.



Source: El Sushi Negro collective

8

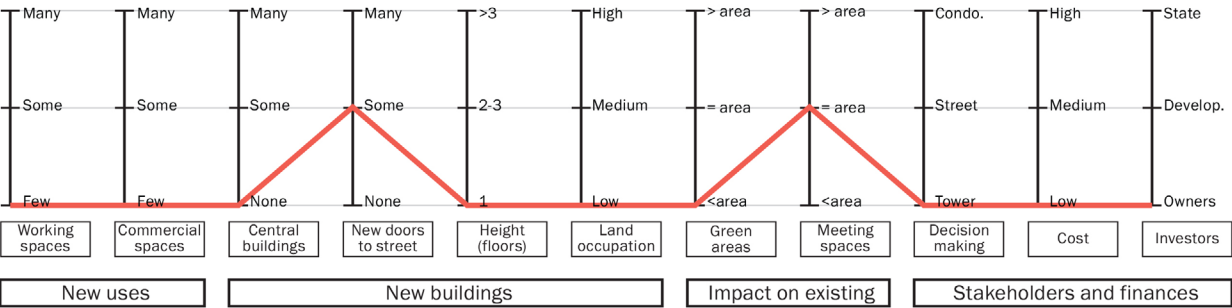
Negotiating the framework

8.1 Introduction

This chapter will test the framework in a small “sample” of two blocks. This exercise is intended to be illustrative, as is not the intention to produce definitive visions, but rather to elaborate on the capacity of the institutional designed proposed. A preface introduces the idea of a negotiation equalizer, an interface (or the concept for an interface) that allows different actors to “speak the same language” when negotiating the transformations of gated communities. What follows is the test itself, which has two aims. The most obvious one is to *expose* the possibilities that the framework offers. To do so, several three-dimensional visualizations will show how the new deliberation bodies (building, street and condominium committees) can produce four different levels of spatial transformation. The second aim is to *propose* constrains and mechanisms for calibrating the framework. This “negotiation of the framework” is intended to ensure that, within rational limits, this tool is able to achieve three goals: first, allow for gradual and fine-grained physical development of gated communities, second, give a certain degree of agency to every level of deliberation, and third, ensuring a fair distribution of development rights and burdens among all residents. The product of this critical reflection will have the form of brief comments and captions. Finally, a section is dedicated to discussing the communication strategy of the framework.

8.2 The negotiation equalizer

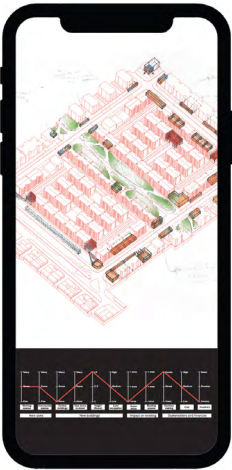
The framework allows for a great variety of possible “stakeholder configurations”, which creates the need for a tool that allows everyone sitting in the table to speak a similar language. This is where the negotiation equalizer enters the scene, as an *idea* for an interface. In short, it is a visual interactive aid that ensures the comprehension of the possibilities and limitations of any given transformation by people with different expectations, levels of spatial thinking and technical knowledge. For example, it could be a street committee debating on whether to open their front to the street, or an administration council discussing the options for a large-scale operation with a developer and an investor.



The chosen parameters for this tool are eleven, each one with three levels that can be altered by the user. Some of these values are naturally constrained to other values, as for example higher buildings and investment size. Other constrains are artificially set by the designer of the tool, as for example setting edge transformations as a prerequisite for developments in the block centre.

The apparent lack of hierarchy of these categories (for instance, “green areas” and “cost” are displayed as equivalent) is the product of an effort to focus on the preoccupations that a resident might, more that on those of a more specialised stakeholder. This compromise is tolerable because the equaliser is intended as a mere negotiation tool, and not as an exact and complete business model simulator.

In practical terms, the tool would need to have two parts. An equalizer-like interface that can be manipulated by the users, and a visual display of those transformations, preferably 3D visualizations from the street level.

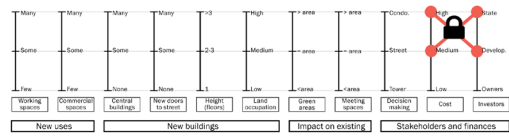


The equalizer in a digital interface

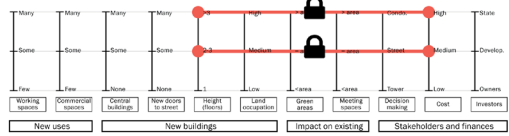
8.2.1 Natural and designed constraints

Natural constraints

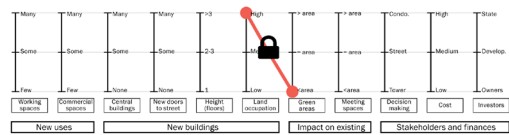
Cost / Investors



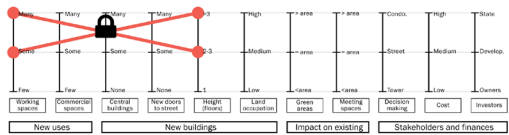
Height / Cost



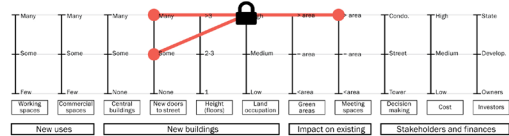
Land occupation / Green spaces



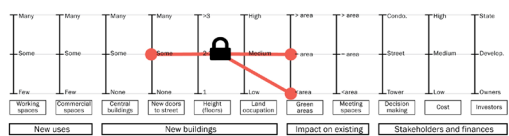
Working spaces / Height



New doors to street / Meeting spaces

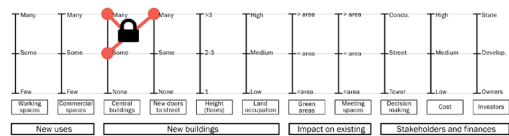


New doors to street / Green areas

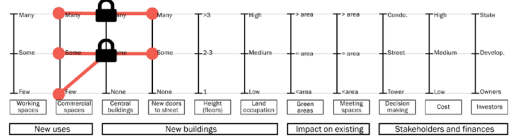


Designed constraints

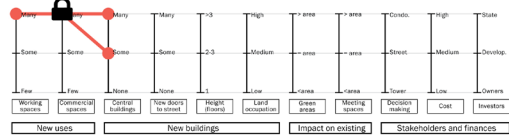
Central buildings / New doors to street



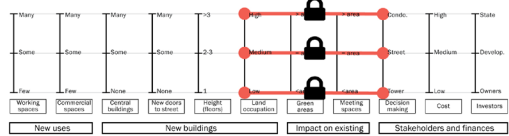
Commercial spaces / New doors to street



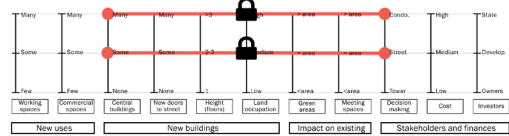
Working spaces / Central buildings



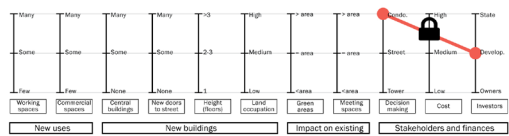
Land occupation / Decision-making



Central buildings / Decision-making



Decision-making / Investors



8.3 Levels of transformation

The following subsections will discuss the three levels of transformation that are made possible by the framework, as well as a special level that is focused in the quick transformations of corners. These levels explore the scale of the projects allowed depending on the deliberation body in charge (building, street or condominium), and discuss possible mechanisms of compensation of collective areas that are transformed for private use. Though it could be argued that each level allows for an increasingly higher “openness,” they are not intended to happen lineal process. This means that several levels can simultaneously co-exist within the same street or gated community. Furthermore, these are general principles that can be limited or modified by the specific regulations of each street type.

It is important to say that the images illustrating each level are not supposed to represent realistic scenarios or concrete visions, but rather visualizations of the transformative capacity provided by the framework. If implemented, the real aspect of a block would probably be a mix of all the levels, rather than a pure version of one. This open-endedness also explains why the texts accompanying the images are not shown as final products, but as critical comments to the framework.

Finally, it is worth noting that, although in principle these regulations are intended to work in Campo Verde, there are many aspects in them that might be replicated or reused in other gated neighbourhoods.

8.3.1 Sample selection

Blocks

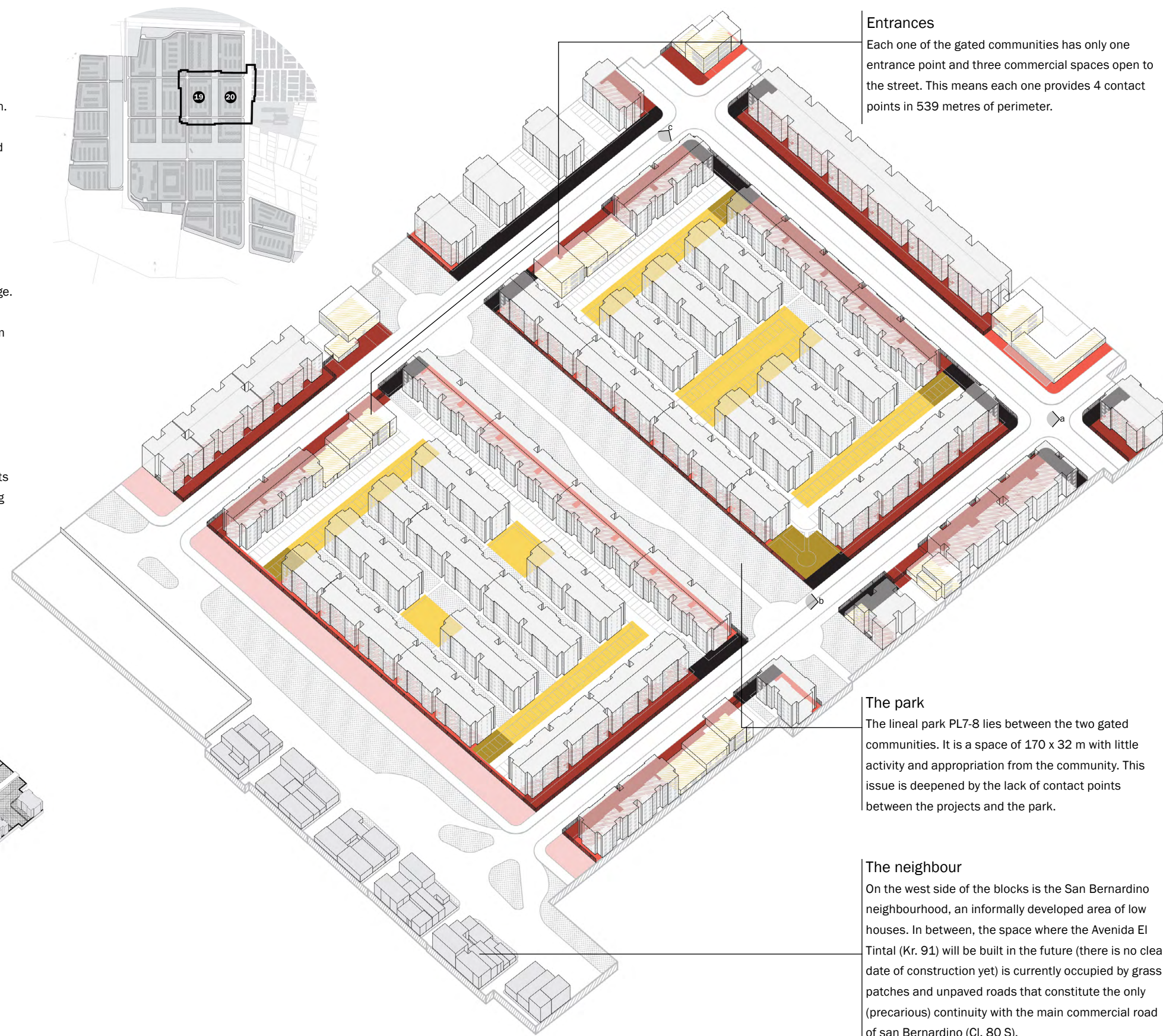
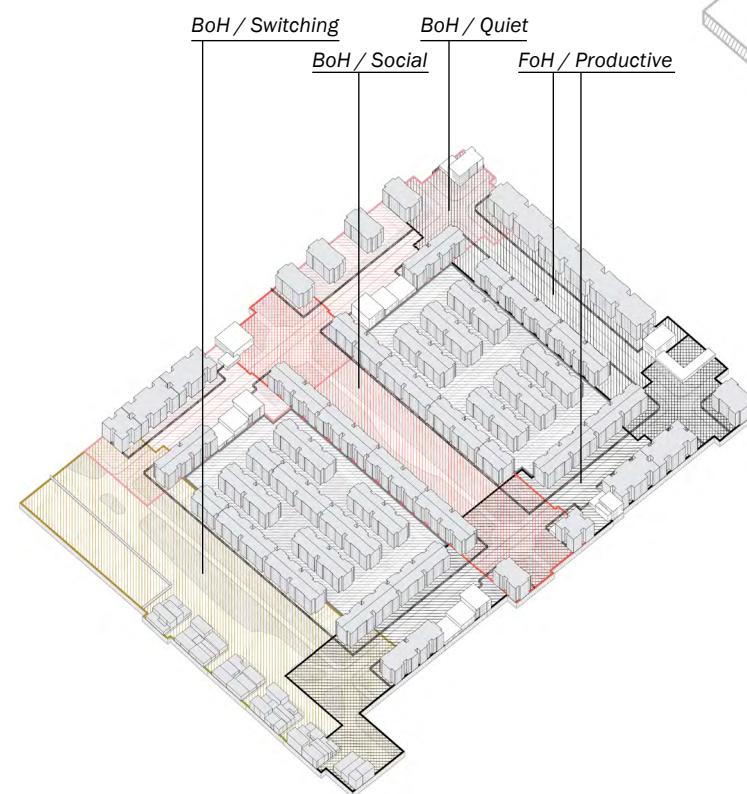
The blocks selected to test the framework correspond to blocks number 19 and 20 in the original partial plan. Both are integrated into the same superblock, with a park in between them. They are occupied by two gated communities (Arrayán and Cerezo, respectively) of VIP social housing.

Areas of opportunity

These are two of the largest blocks in Campo Verde. That is why the areas of opportunity are especially large. This is good for testing the proposed framework, as it can show the consequences of using it to its maximum capacity.

Boundaries

The study area boundaries were defined following the new street-based division of land. This means that all the adjacent public spaces and edges of surrounding blocks were also included. In total, five street segments representing four types of street are part of the testing ground.



Entrances

Each one of the gated communities has only one entrance point and three commercial spaces open to the street. This means each one provides 4 contact points in 539 metres of perimeter.

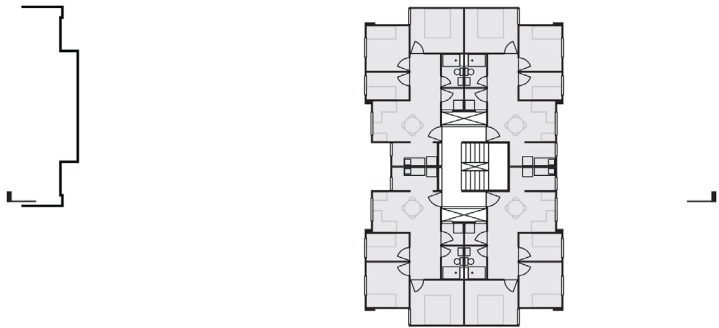
The park

The lineal park PL7-8 lies between the two gated communities. It is a space of 170 x 32 m with little activity and appropriation from the community. This issue is deepened by the lack of contact points between the projects and the park.

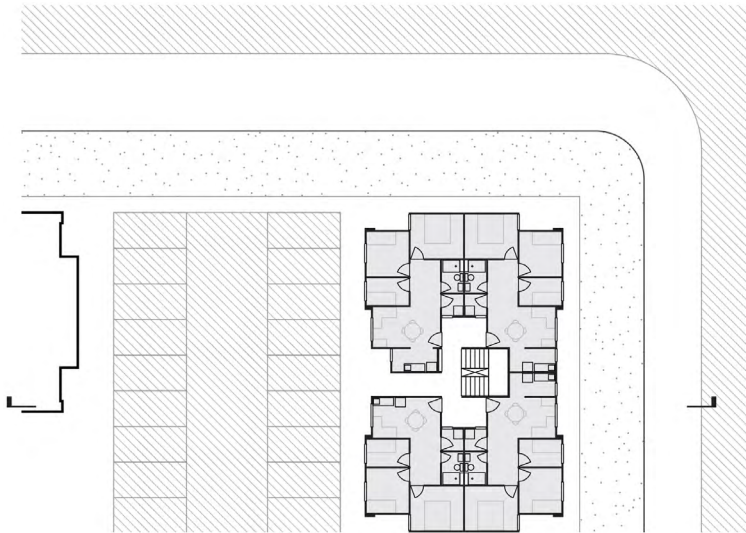
The neighbour

On the west side of the blocks is the San Bernardino neighbourhood, an informally developed area of low houses. In between, the space where the Avenida El Tintal (Kr. 91) will be built in the future (there is no clear date of construction yet) is currently occupied by grass patches and unpaved roads that constitute the only (precarious) continuity with the main commercial road of san Bernardino (Cl. 80 S).

Frist floor sample

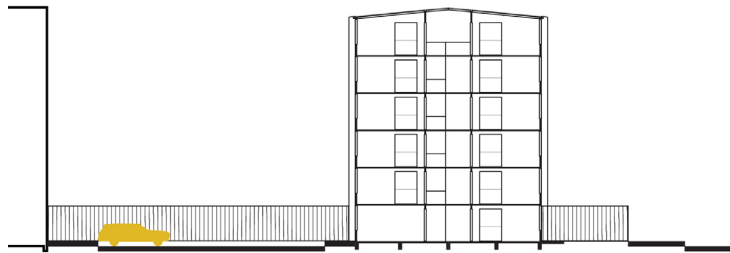


Ground floor sample



Sample section

0 1 5 10 m



View a: Productive FoH



View b: Social BoH



View c: Quiet BoH



8.3.2 1 Level 1: minimum interventions with maximum impact

Aim: Create new points of contact with the street. Trigger change through the introduction of subtle unbalances.

General conditions

All mechanisms included in this level apply to regular front yards and existing collective buildings.

R Change of use of private and collective buildings is allowed. In open-air collective areas, only micro-scale construction and landscaping is permitted.

R No compensation of collective areas is required when front yards are occupied. For collective buildings, technical spaces can change location but not area, and common halls can reduce their area after approval of the owners' assembly.

R No central building rights are derived from these transformations.

C This level corresponds to the small-scale deliberation level (building/tower). Each building has power over the portion of font yard in front of its façade. Transformations to collective buildings belong to condominium deliberation (large scale). They are in this level because they are already happening and need urgent recognition.

Specific conditions / Transformed housing units

R C In the streets categorized as BoH/Social, transformed units that are operated by community organizations or NGOs have the right to become the caretakers of a portion of the public space in front of the unit, following the indications of an SPSP. This applies to all levels of transformation.

S All transformed units will belong to their owners. They will become mixed units for commerce and housing and will pay a higher administration fee.

S Funding for change of use and the subsequent transformations required will come from the benefitted owners.

Specific cond./ Transformed collective buildings

R Topping up and covering terraces with roofs is allowed if all technical and structural regulations are met. Height limits are defined by street regulations.

S Funding for additions and transformations will come from the condominium administration or external investors.

R If collective spaces of common use (i.e. common halls) are relocated, they must remain accessible to all residents.

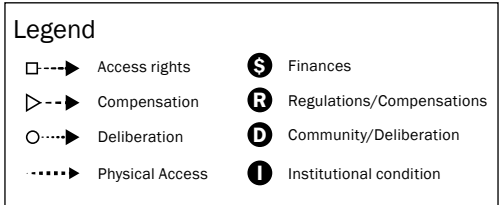
Specific conditions / New spaces

R All new constructions at this scale will belong to the condominium and will have non-residential uses.

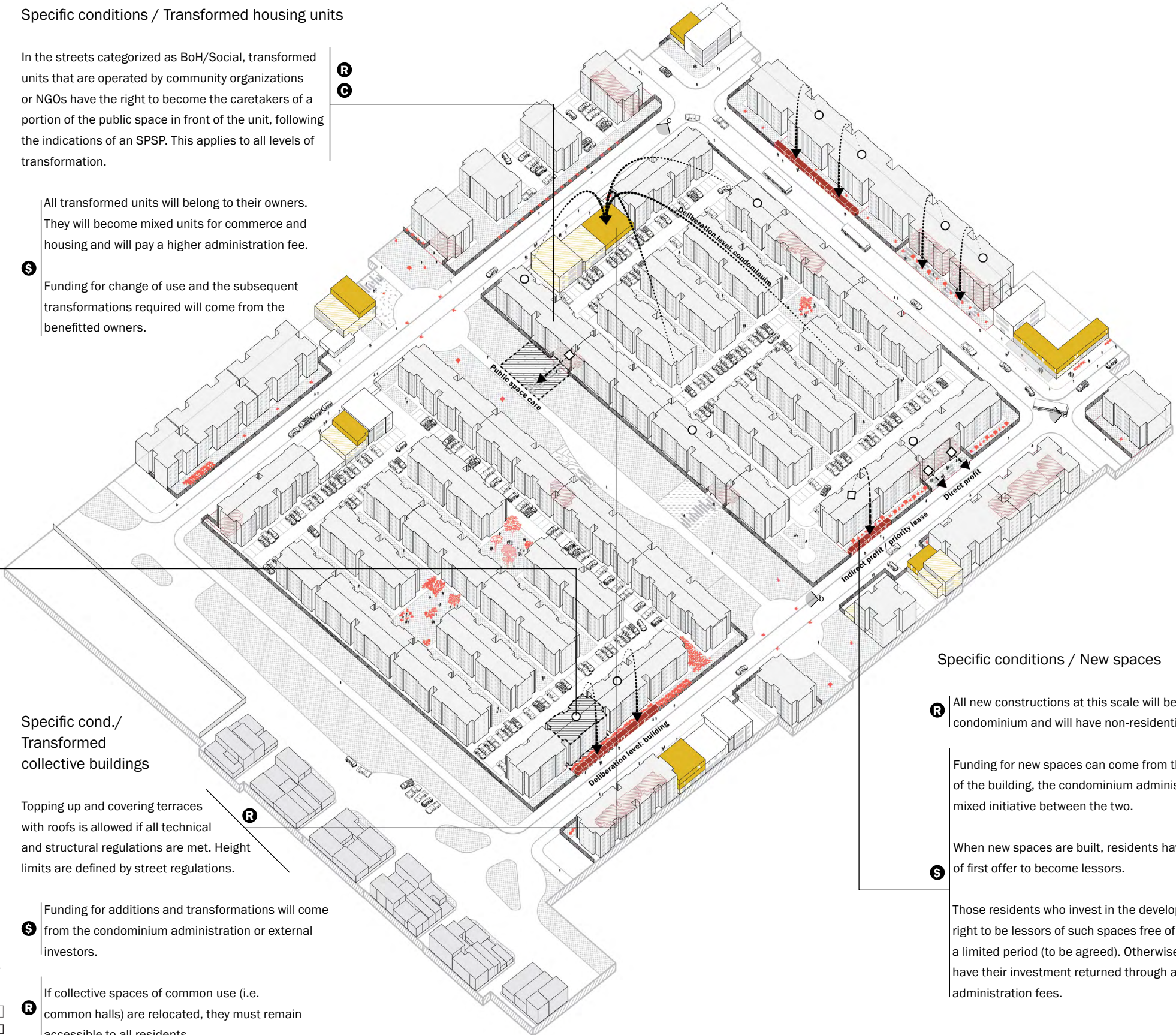
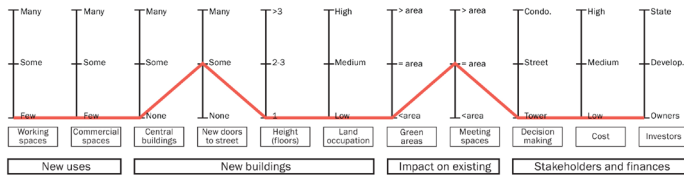
Funding for new spaces can come from the residents of the building, the condominium administration, or a mixed initiative between the two.

S When new spaces are built, residents have the right of first offer to become lessors.

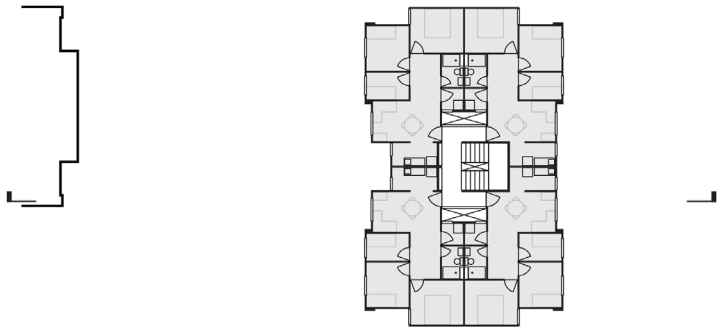
Those residents who invest in the development have right to be lessors of such spaces free of charge for a limited period (to be agreed). Otherwise, they will have their investment returned through a reduction in administration fees.



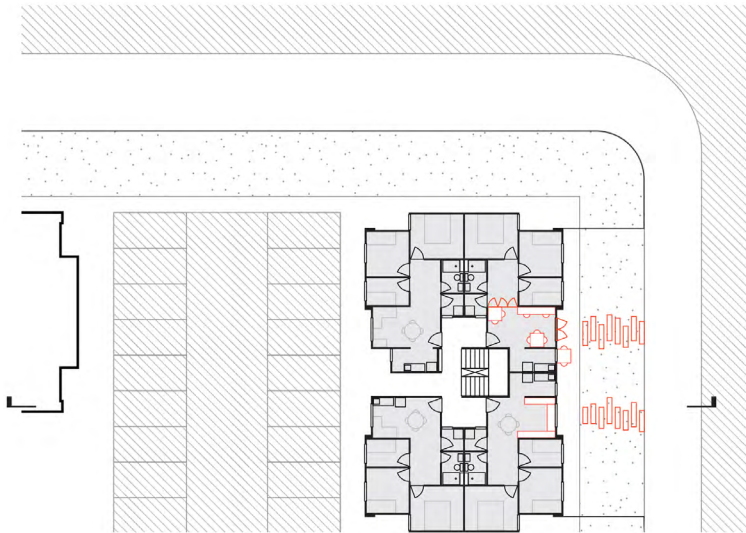
Equalizer



Frist floor sample

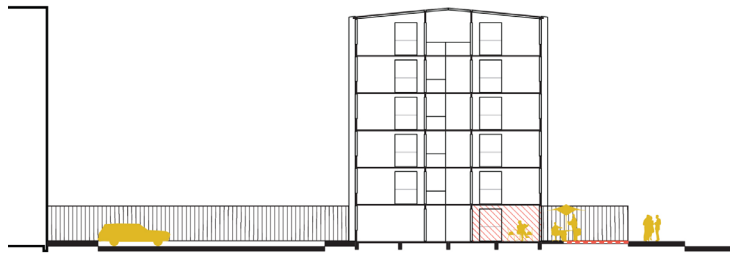


Ground floor sample



Sample section

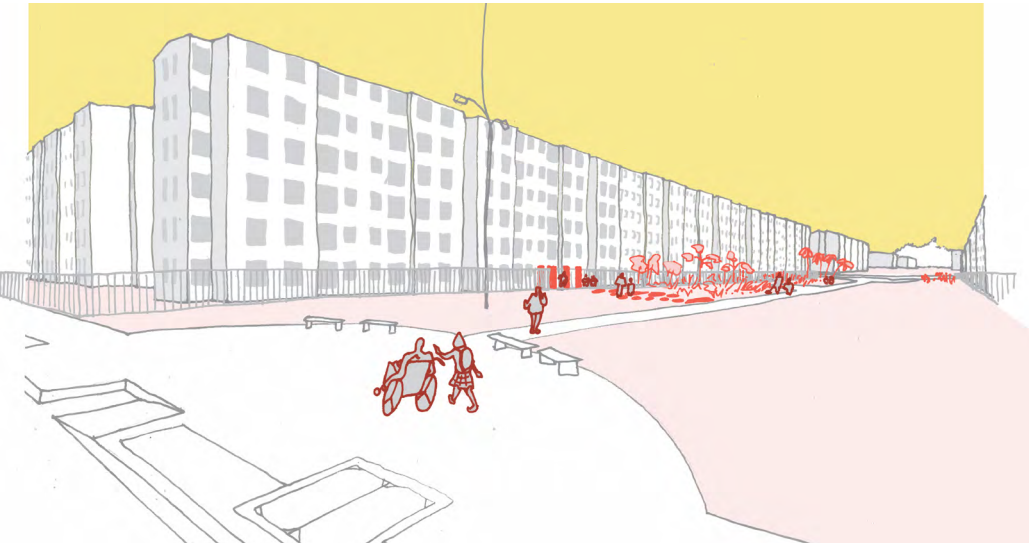
0 5 10 m



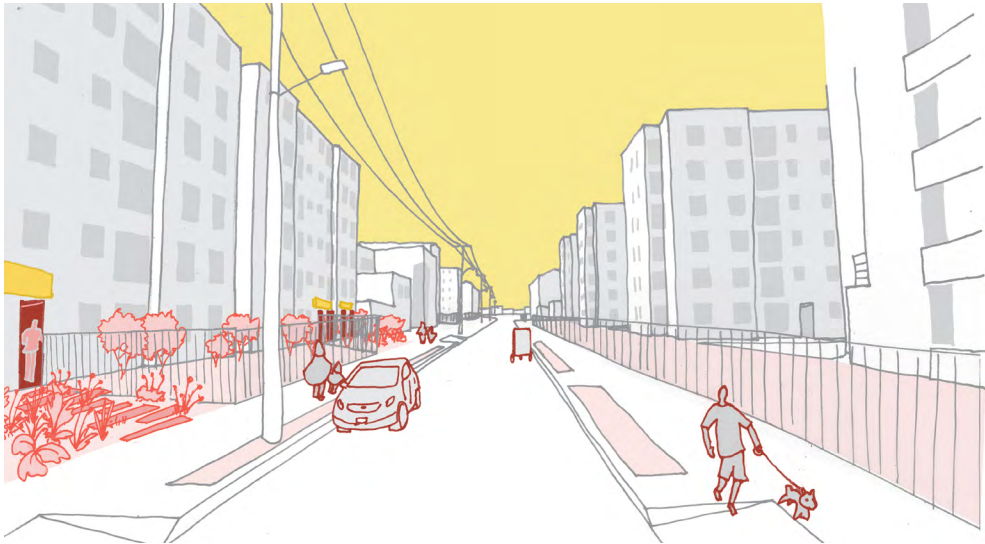
View a: Productive FoH



View b: Social BoH



View c: Quiet BoH



8.3.3 **C** Priority development: corners.

Aim: Activate corners.

General conditions

This level defines the condition for the development of blind front yards. These spaces are usually located in corners, which gives them a strategic importance for public space and a great potential for community building and entrepreneurship.

R These areas will house only non-residential uses.

S These developments will be entirely owned by the condominium but might have exclusive use.

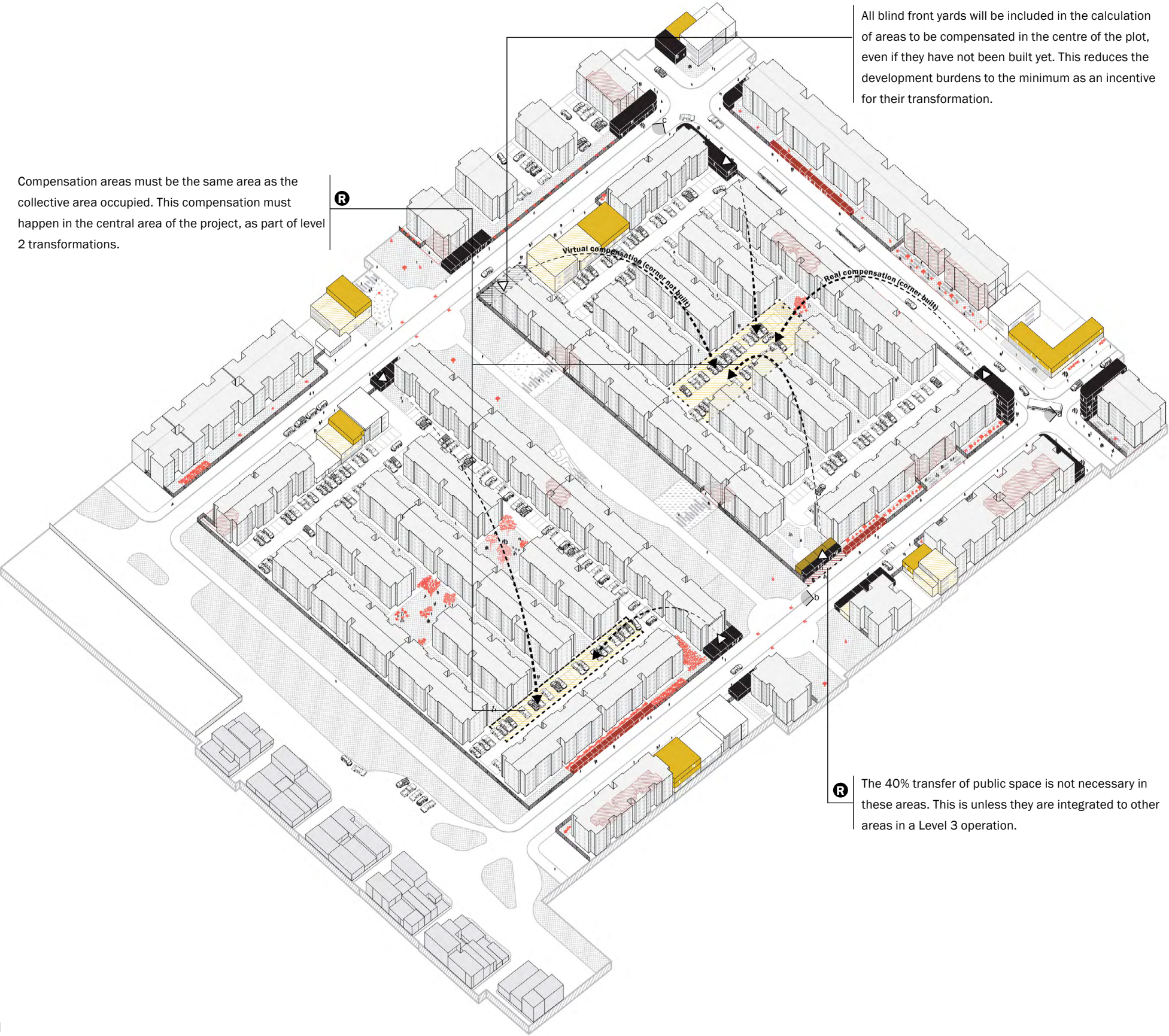
S Residents will have the right of first offer to become lessors of these spaces.

I A subsidies programme is recommended for these projects. This would be a way to ensure that residents can lease for low prices.

R Blind front yards can be fully developed after a decision from the administration council (large-scale deliberation). Street committees can agree upon the partial development of unbuilt corners, under the conditions of level 1.

Compensation areas must be the same area as the collective area occupied. This compensation must happen in the central area of the project, as part of level 2 transformations.

All blind front yards will be included in the calculation of areas to be compensated in the centre of the plot, even if they have not been built yet. This reduces the development burdens to the minimum as an incentive for their transformation.



Legend

□--->

Access rights

▷---

Compensation

○---

Deliberation

.....>

Physical Access

Ⓐ

Finances

Ⓡ

Regulations/Compensations

Ⓛ

Community/Deliberation

Ⓜ

Institutional condition

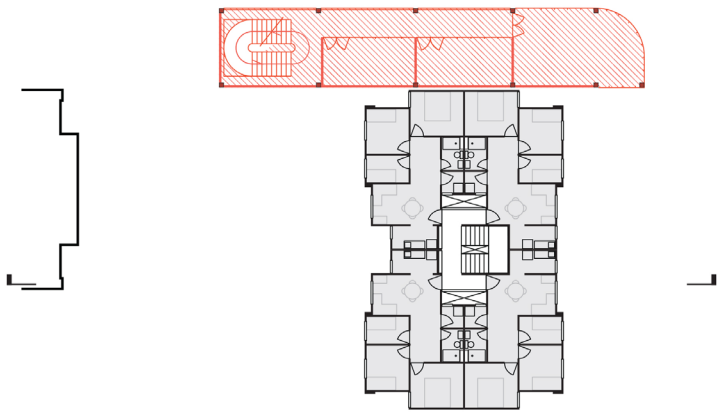
Equalizer

R The 40% transfer of public space is not necessary in these areas. This is unless they are integrated to other areas in a Level 3 operation.

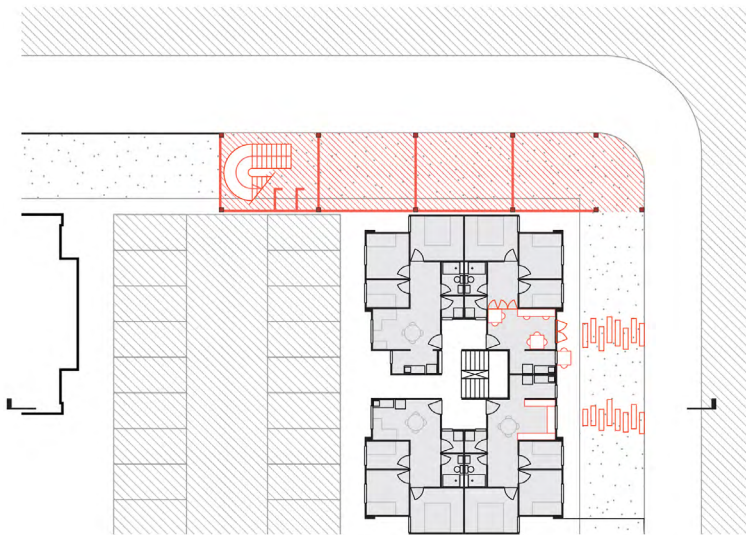
202

203

Frist floor sample

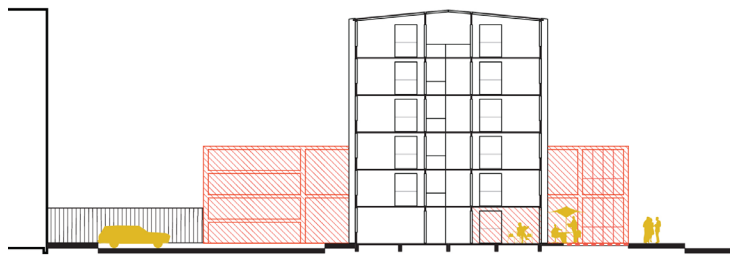


Ground floor sample



Sample section

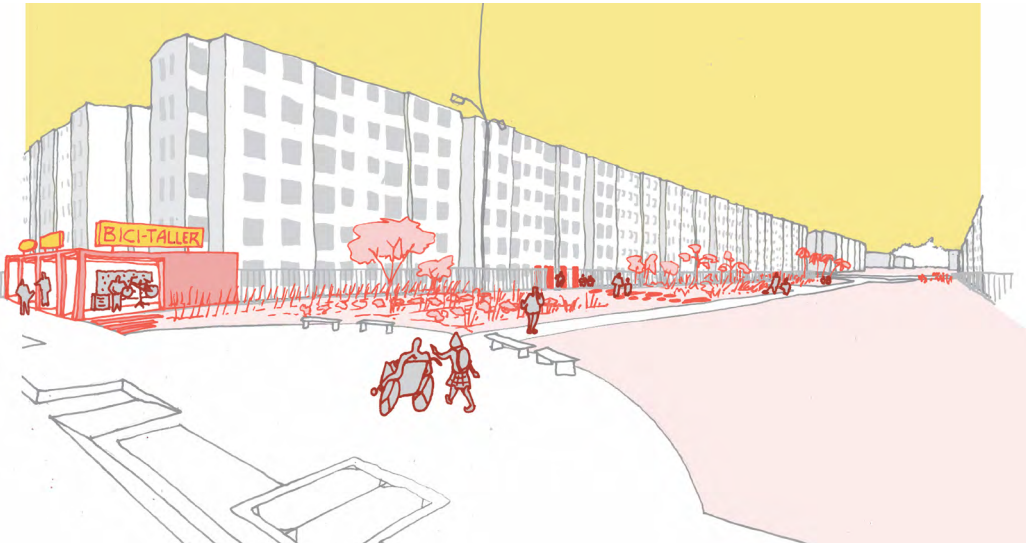
0 5 10 m



View a: Productive FoH



View b: Social BoH



View c: Quiet BoH



8.3.4 **2** Level 2: consolidation of the interface.

Aim: Consolidation of street front and interfaces.

General conditions

All mechanisms in this level apply to regular front yards and centre plots. Some blind front yards and edge plots can also be used.

R All transformations must follow general architectural and public space guidelines (as SPSPs), which are to be defined by the parties involved.

C This level corresponds to the deliberation level of intermediate scale (street committee or group of streets).

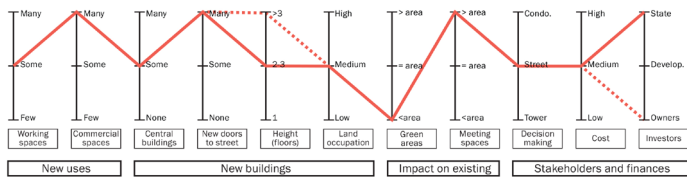
R Moderate construction on ground floor collective areas is allowed. 40% of the width of regular front yards will be transferred as public space to the city government. The other part can become an extension of private property and be used as a collective property of exclusive use. This will not apply to reduced front yards, which can be used entirely.

Compensation of occupied and transferred collective areas is required, preferably in the central area of the block. This does not apply to areas adapted for community activities, even if they are not for exclusive use of the residents.

Compensation areas can have a different use than original, but the total area must be at least 75% of original.

I All transformed apartments must undergo a technical assessment that defines the improvements or mitigate the negative impacts of new activities on their immediate context.

Equalizer



Specific conditions / Compensations in central area

All transformations on the edges will generate construction rights in the central area. These rights will be calculated taking as base the transformed area (public transferences included).

A part of the construction rights will be used for compensating the lost collective areas in the edge. Although they can have a different use, they must remain accessible to all the community.

Specific conditions / Edge transformations

All transformations within the same street must be integrated to the same public space and architecture plan, even if not all units are transformed at the same time.

R All transformed units will have their use changed to non-residential.

R The other part can be sold to third parties, according to the agreement between those involved in the negotiation. These spaces can also remain in possession of the condominium and be used as for additional collective uses or be leased to residents and third parties.

S To make compensation feasible, a programme of public subsidies for these transformations is recommended. Otherwise, this burden might not be achievable for low-income communities.

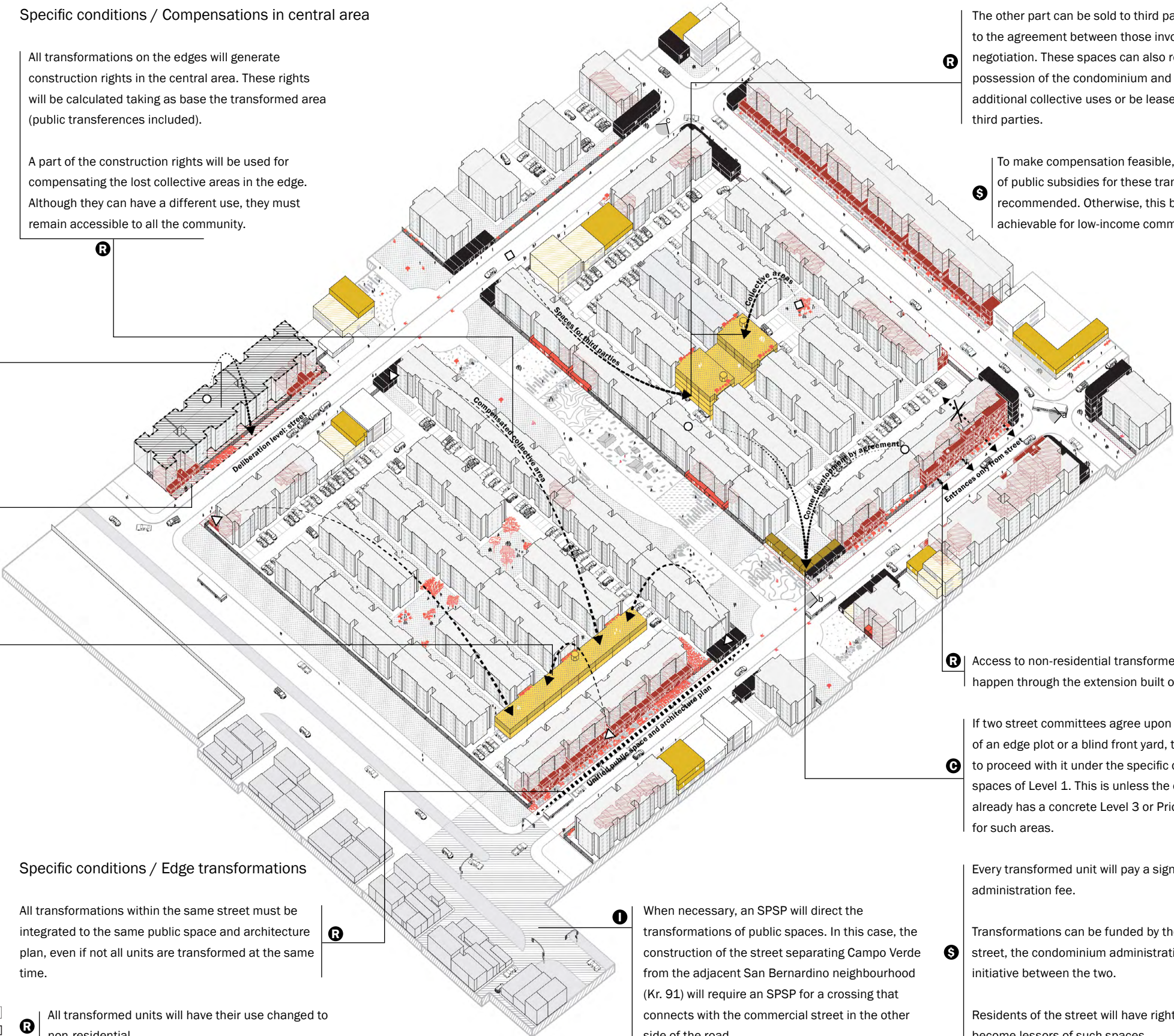
R Access to non-residential transformed units must happen through the extension built on the front yards.

C If two street committees agree upon the development of an edge plot or a blind front yard, they have the right to proceed with it under the specific conditions for new spaces of Level 1. This is unless the condominium already has a concrete Level 3 or Priority corners plan for such areas.

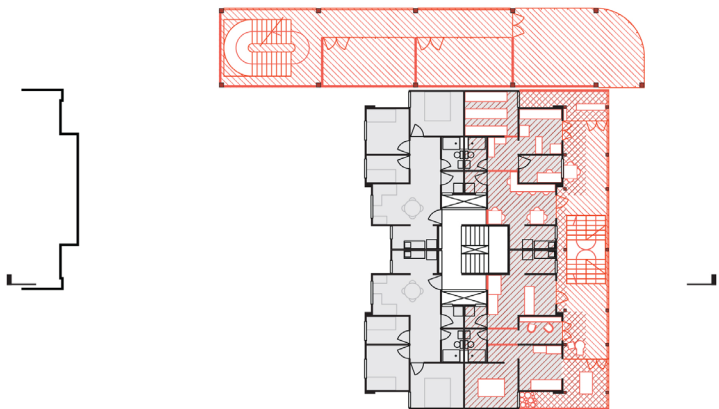
Every transformed unit will pay a significantly higher administration fee.

S Transformations can be funded by the residents of the street, the condominium administration, or a mixed initiative between the two.

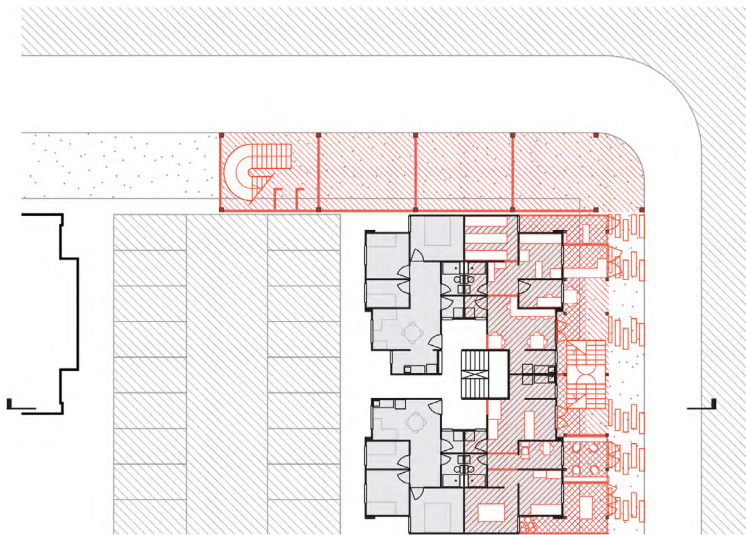
Residents of the street will have right of first offer to become lessors of such spaces.



Frist floor sample

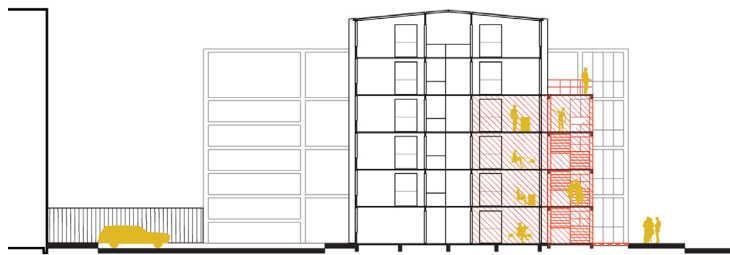


Ground floor sample



Sample section

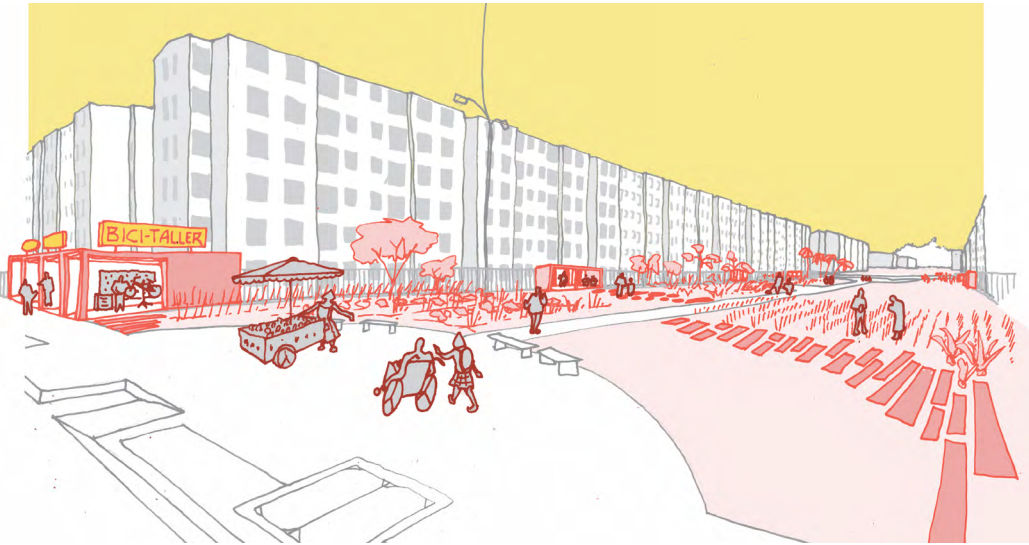
0 5 10 m



View a: Productive FoH



View b: Social BoH



View c: Quiet BoH



8.3.5 3 Level 3: Maximum diversity.

Aim: maximum diversity.

General conditions

All developments in this level occupy edge and central plots.

All projects in this level will be developed as traditional market operations. The only difference is that development burdens are not transfers of public space but as collective areas.

In principle, these developments must compensate the collective land they occupy, with the same use, in any of its floors. The only exception are parking spaces, which can be reduced after approval of the community. Besides this base compensation, an additional amount of spaces for collective use must also be provided. These can have any use, but they must remain accessible to all the residents of the project.

This level corresponds to the large-scale deliberation level (whole condominium or association between condominiums).

Several areas of opportunity can be integrated into the same financial operation. It is possible to have joint developments between several condominiums. In that case, it must be ensured that all residents have a fair and proportional access to the new collective areas

Legend

□--->

Access rights

▷--->

Compensation

○--->

Deliberation

.....>

Physical Access

Ⓐ

Finances

Ⓡ

Regulations/Compensations

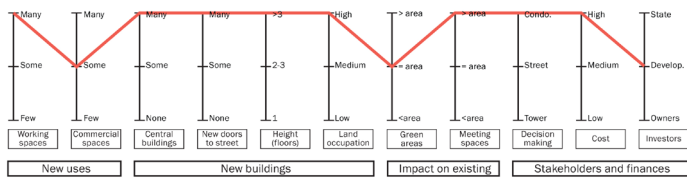
Ⓛ

Community/Deliberation

Ⓜ

Institutional condition

Equalizer



Specific conditions / Central plots

Areas used for compensations product of level 2 actions cannot be recounted as compensations of level 3 developments.

If a central development includes areas for different uses than residential, the access of supplies, users and employees needed by each activity must be agreed with the community prior to the project execution.

Specific conditions / Edge plots

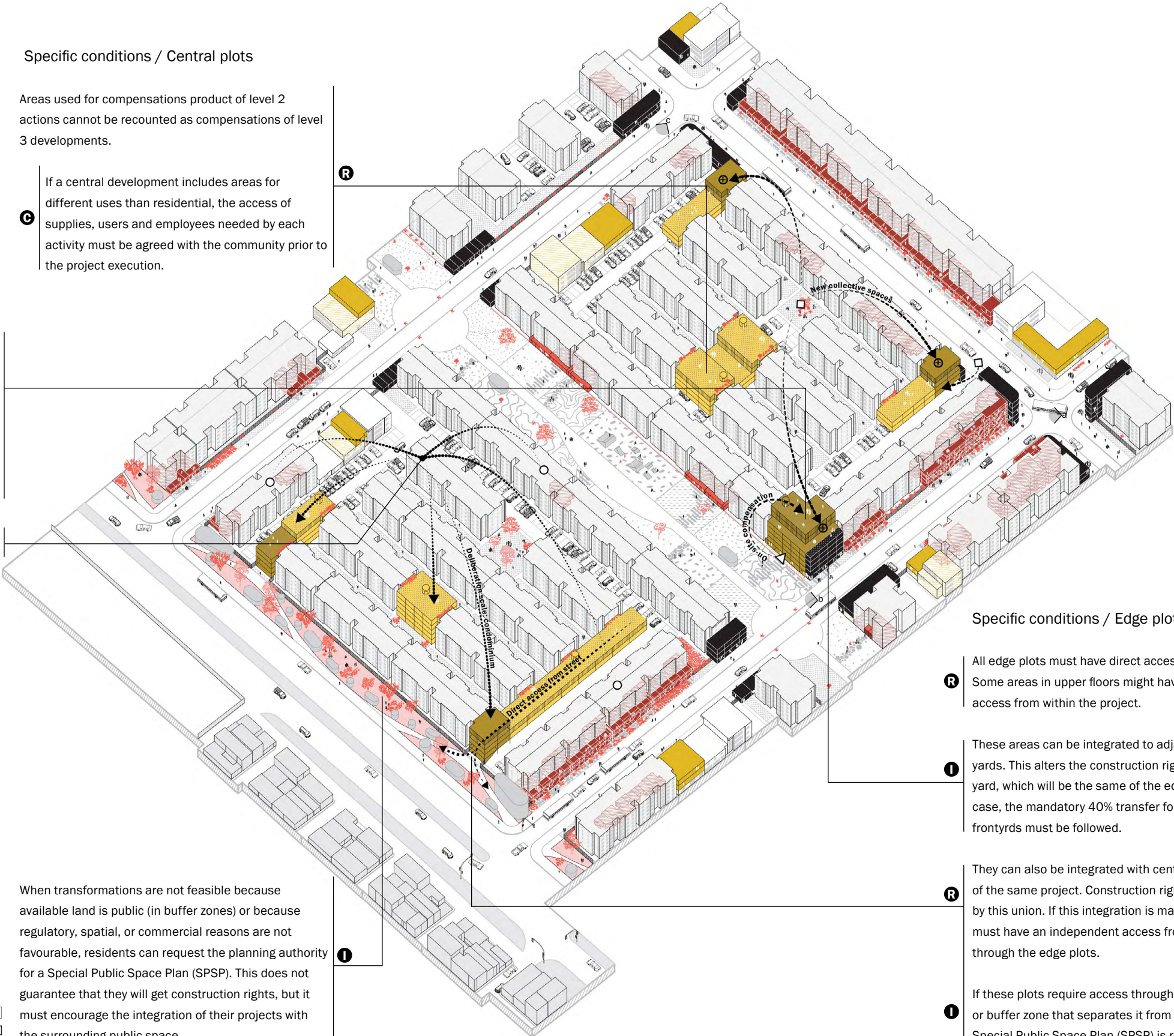
All edge plots must have direct access from the street. Some areas in upper floors might have an independent access from within the project.

These areas can be integrated to adjacent blind front yards. This alters the construction rights of the front yard, which will be the same of the edge plot. In that case, the mandatory 40% transfer for developed frontyards must be followed.

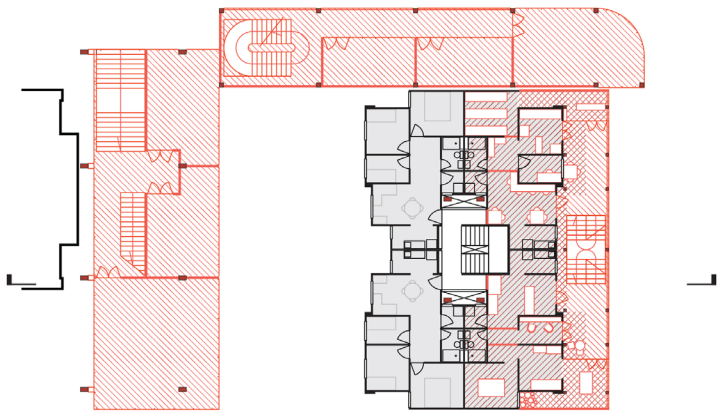
They can also be integrated with central plots as part of the same project. Construction rights are not altered by this union. If this integration is made, central plots must have an independent access from the street and through the edge plots.

If these plots require access through a public space or buffer zone that separates it from the sidewalk, a Special Public Space Plan (SPSP) is required.

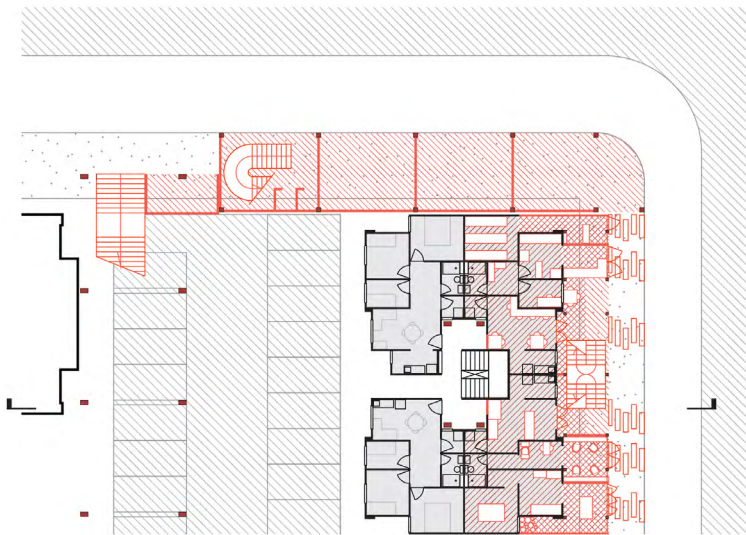
When transformations are not feasible because available land is public (in buffer zones) or because regulatory, spatial, or commercial reasons are not favourable, residents can request the planning authority for a Special Public Space Plan (SPSP). This does not guarantee that they will get construction rights, but it must encourage the integration of their projects with the surrounding public space.



Frist floor sample

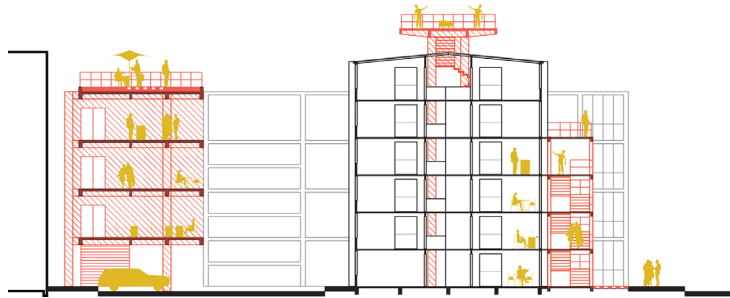


Ground floor sample



Sample section

0 5 10 m



View a: Productive FoH



View b: Social BoH



View c: Quiet BoH



8.3.6 Notes for all levels.

*The rent payments of new spaces owned by the condominium, as well as the increase in administration fees product of the change of use of apartments, might be used in two ways:

- 1. For level 3 developments and improvements that will benefit all residents. In this case, they can be saved for future investments.
- 2. For reducing the administration fees for all residents (except in the specified cases in which residents who invest have the right of a preferential reduction of fees).

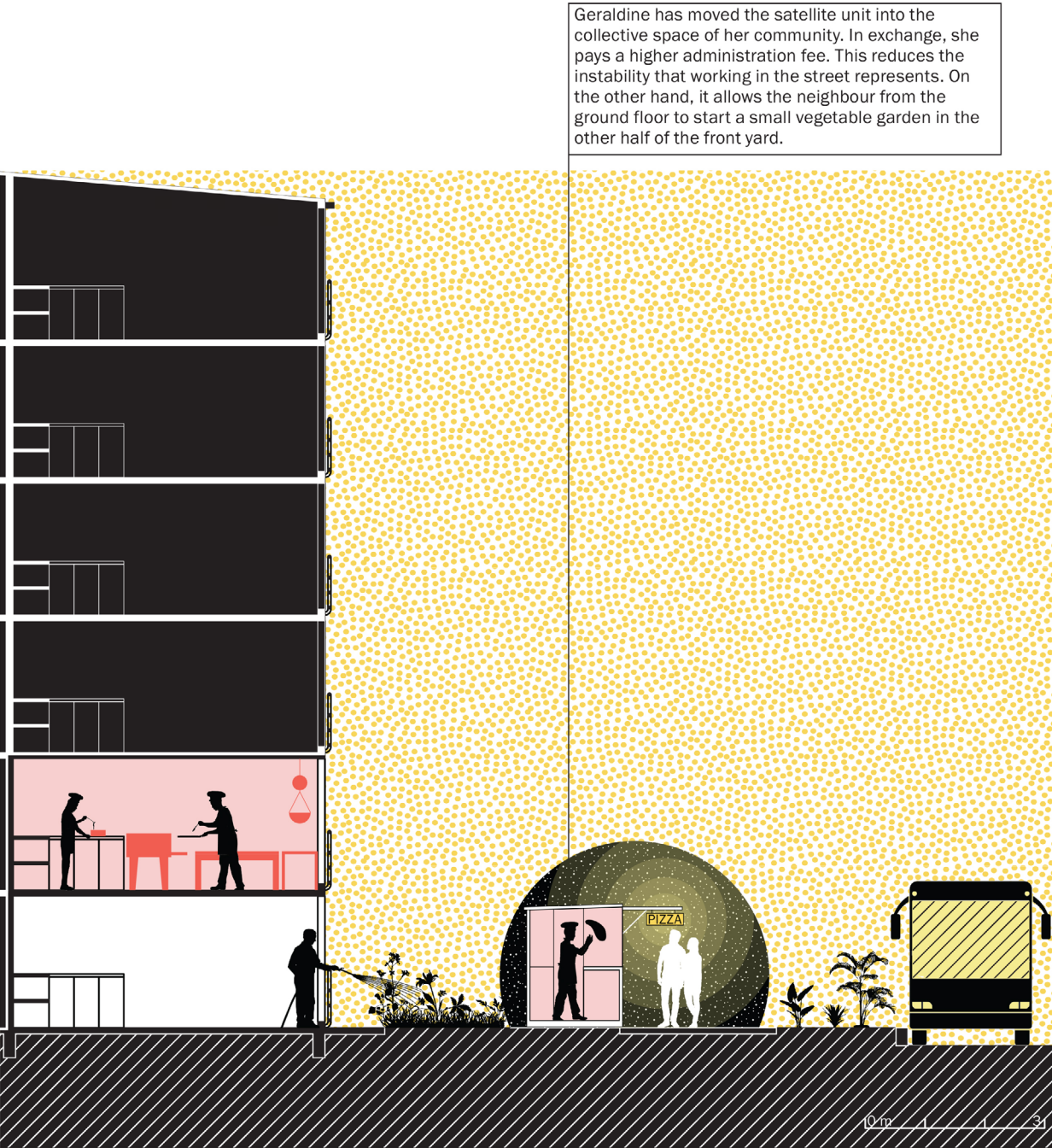
**If a public institution or private non-profit is interested in participating through funding of one of these projects, they can do so under the condition of renouncing to all administration fee reduction and investment return benefits that apply to residents.

***When transformations are not feasible, be it for regulatory, spatial, or commercial reasons, residents can request the planning authority for a Special Public Space Plan (SPSP). This does not guarantee that they will get construction rights, but it must encourage the integration of their units with the surrounding public space.

8.4 A scene of overflow, revisited

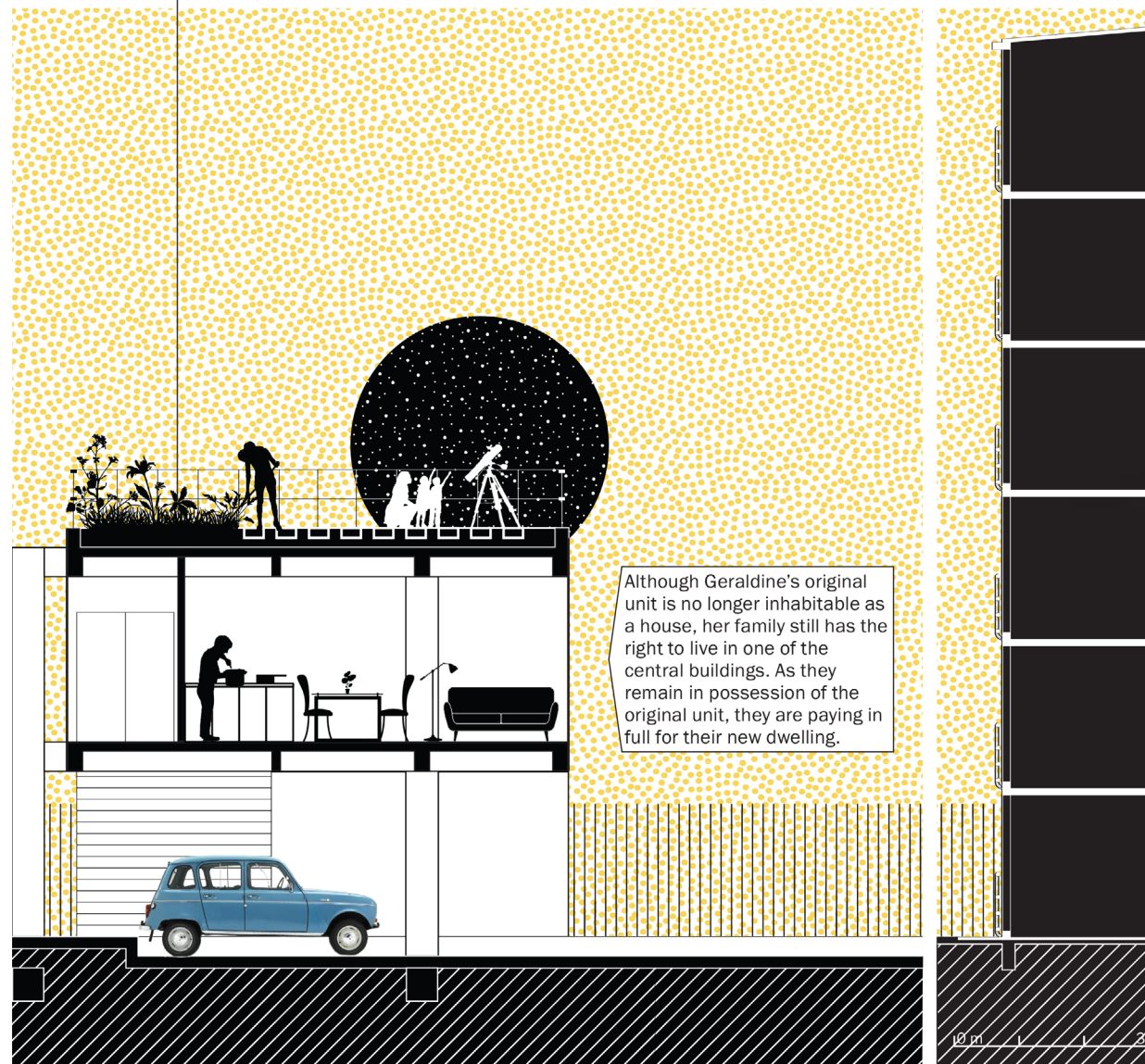
The following scenes show how Geraldine and Carlos' pizza business would evolve under the spatial possibilities created by the framework of negotiation. To complement this exercise of imagination, some of the characters of the other scenes were also invited.

8.4.1 1 Level 1: minimum interventions with maximum impact

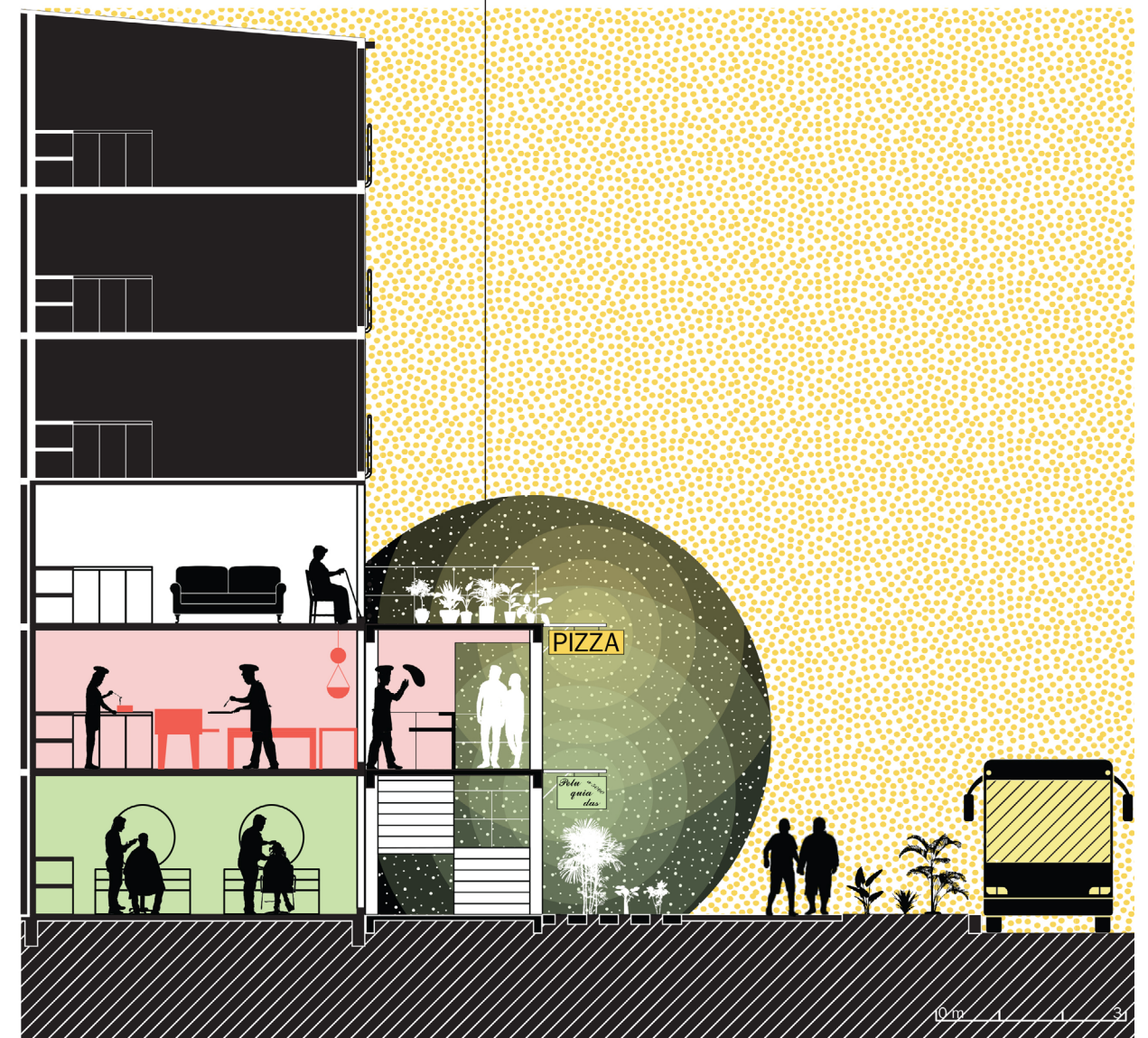


8.4.2 2 Level 2: consolidation of the interface.

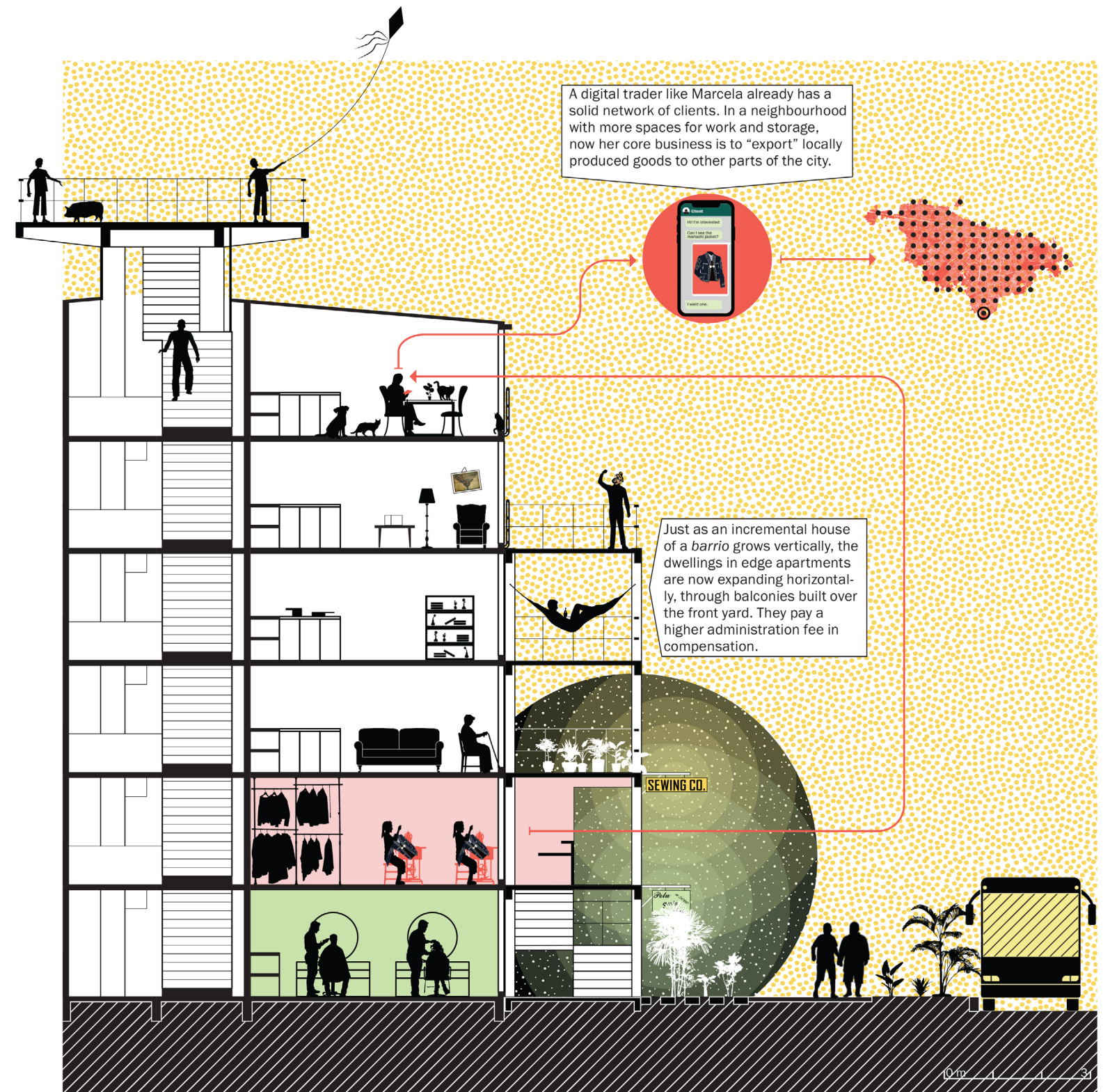
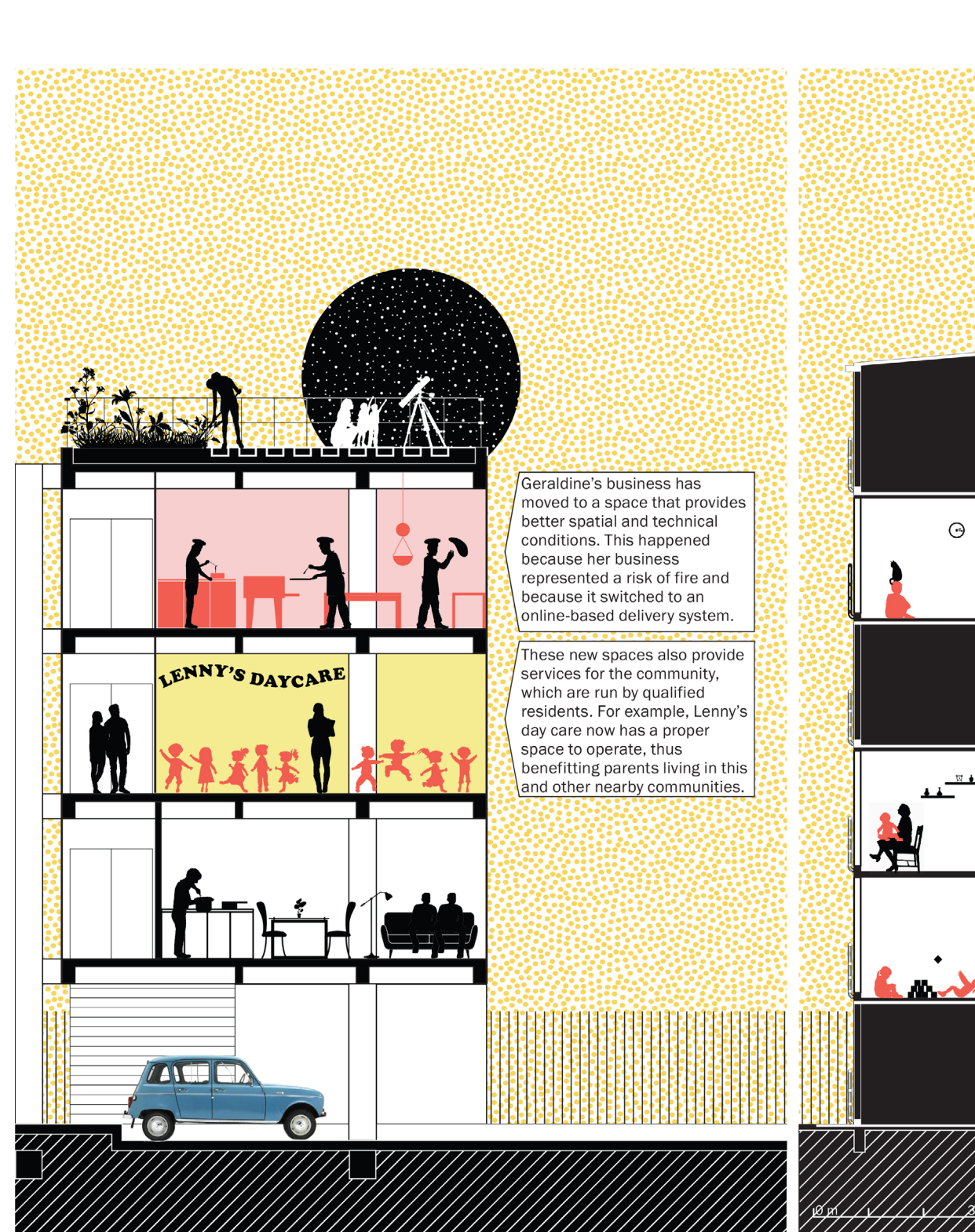
The collective ground floor space transformed into private property in the edges is compensated in the centre. Instead of unused front-yards, this spaces have more accessible spaces with programmes for all residents. Because of their non-profit use, state subsidies are necessary to make this compensations feasible.



Through a sort of parasitic extensions that occupy part of the front yard, Geraldine's apartment has grown and its interface with the street has consolidated. Apart from the reconciliation of back and front of house, this allows for the subdivision of her apartment into several productive spaces. As a compensation, her family is paying a significantly higher administration fee, and the condominium has transferred half of the front yard as public space.



8.4.3 3 Level 3: Maximum diversity.



8.5 Advertising the project

Advertising the framework for coexistence is an important part of its success. As it was already discussed, advertising was a crucial part in the process of making gated communities the mainstream residential products and, in the case of Parques de Bogotá, it also had a role in creating selling a promised plan that was never fully realised. An advertising piece that promotes the transformation of gated communities should acknowledge the values that residents see fulfilled in their projects (formality, visual order, tranquillity, security, etc.) and give a new meaning to them in the context of the open city that the framework promotes. An especially relevant re-signification is that one of individual initiative, which should shift from being focused in the acquisition of property, to the possibility of becoming protagonist in the transformation of the neighbourhood.

Graphically, this new language translates into the re-working of the repertoire of sales renders and happy families, through the inclusion of elements and actors that are usually left out of traditional advertising pieces, such as public spaces and transport, strangers walking in the street, old people, and teenagers.

The images in the next page are showing a possible application of these principles: the format is one of a leaflet, traditionally used in Bogotá by government and developers for promoting their initiatives.

¡Parques de Bogotá is transforming!

This **is** Parques de Bogotá



...and it **could become** this in the future.



Your neighbourhood is going to **improve**, and you can be the **protagonist** of that **change**.

Obverse

The mayor's office invites the **community** to join the Parques de Bogotá **urban improvement program**.

Why participate?

The tranquillity of a place that has **everything** for your family.

The security of walking through streets that **are not lonely**.

The comfort of living **close** to your work

The advantages of deciding the **future** of your neighbourhood

The opportunity to **valorise** your house

Get informed and participate

Ask the administrator of your community and attend the informational meetings.
For more information, visit www.habitatbogota.gov.co/mejoramiento



Reverse




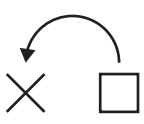

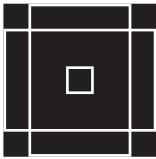
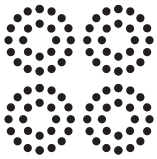
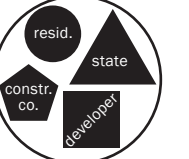
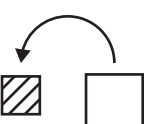

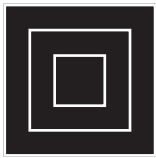
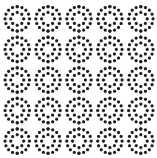
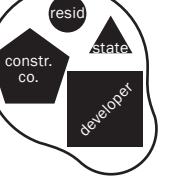
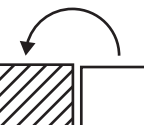


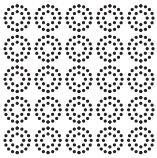
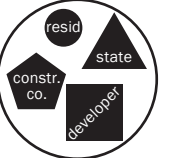
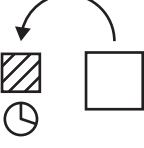

8.6 Comparing levels

The limitations of the framework become clear when the balances and relationships that define each level of transformation are compared in five dimensions: grain, deliberation scale, stakeholder interaction, compensation requirements, and regulatory changes. In the case of grain, level 1 allows for fine-grained transformations, which then are integrated into a coarser grain “plots” in levels 2 and 3. Parallel to this, the scale of deliberation increases in each level.

The increase in the size of developable areas and decision-making bodies has an effect in the relationships between stakeholders. For instance, while the smaller actions are centred in the community’s needs and financial capacity, the larger ones require state subsidies (level 2) and developers’ capital (level 3) to be feasible. This means that, if implemented under current market conditions, the more coarse-grained levels will tend to reduce the leverage of the community in negotiations. Although future research is needed to propose ways in which communities can also become real estate agents, such as cooperatives or CLTs, the framework does propose two mechanisms to deal with these unbalances. First, it does not allow large market operations in most of the edges (regular and reduced front yards), which are reserved for community led projects. Second, it increases the requirements for compensations as larger stakeholders become part of the negotiation. This means that while in level 1 no

compensations are needed, in level 3 they must return more collective area than the originally used. Inversely, the regulatory changes needed are less complex as levels increase. This is because the market is designed for large-scale operations, meaning that, to be approved by regulations, the fine-grained operations require a considerable political effort in both city and national scales (for instance, the re-organization of deliberation mechanisms in gated communities would require the transformation of a law in force since 2001).

The special level for the priority development of corners is an exception to these trends. This is because in this level stakeholders have a balanced relevance, it does not require a change in deliberation mechanisms, and compensations are reduced and delayed. Due to this exceptional condition, it the most feasible of all levels, only requiring a change in city regulations to be a real possibility. This shows the flexible condition of the framework: even though it might look like a linear sequence of levels, it allows for different “starting” points. For a pragmatic politician, it might be that the best is to start by transforming the corners. For a developer, the ideal is to begin with large-scale, level 3 operations. And for the socially engaged urbanist, as the author, it will always be better to start with a political compromise that allows for a community led approach. This is not to say that the framework is neutral, but that it is realistic.

Level of transf.	Grain / Aim	Level of deliberation	Stakeholder interaction	Compensation	Regulatory changes needed
1	 Fine grain / Increase contact with street	 Small [building]	 Community centred	 None	 National + city
2	 Medium grain / Optimise existing spaces for existing uses	 Medium [street]	 State dependent	 Reduced	 National + city
3	 Coarse grain / Create new spaces for new uses	 Large [condominium]	 Developer dependent	 Increased	 City
C	 Fine grain [localized] / Use potential of corners	 Large [condominium]	 No clear protagonism	 Reduced + Delayed	 City

8.7 Conclusions

It is not enough to produce an institutional and regulatory framework to change a neighbourhood. The rules of negotiation also need to be negotiated to become operative *and* fair, especially for the communities already living there. In concrete terms, this “negotiation of the framework” proved to be urgent for the resolution of two potential problems that require special attention: the risk of unethical speculation and the tensions among “unequalised equals”.

For the first one, it soon became evident that the framework requires a clear set of parameters for the management of the newly “unlocked” areas of opportunity. Without it, these areas could become ground for unethical real estate speculation, and this would mean a return to square one. Different tools can be useful to deal with this problem: for example, limiting the places where market operations are allowed, ensuring the right of first offer to residents, or creating a public programme of subsidies for the funding of some of the developments.

As for the second issue, the main challenge is the mediation of the tension between the residents living in the centre of the block and those who live in the edges. The introduction of the framework gives a new leverage to streets that favours those who are close to public space. This unbalance, which might be a natural condition of the open city, is a strange thing to have in gated developments, one that might be perceived as a generator of inequality among residents that used to be equals. The proposed antidote for this issue is to counterbalance the streets’ leverage by redirecting all the compensations “paid” by edge transformations towards the block centres.

As a final, more metaphysical, remark, the testing also showed that, despite any prevention or constrain, the framework will always run the risk of produce excessive results by allowing to build too much in too little space. This realization led to another: that to build over what is built means to become conscious of the fragility of inhabited places. Whole lives are cyphered into bricks and mortar, regardless of how cheap they are, and no regulation will ever be able to enforce the preservation of those fugacious moments that, together, make up the memory and daily life of the city. Those moments, and the structures that support them, are something that each community, designer, and developer must learn to identify *by heart*; because what is fragile is undefinable, and what is undefinable cannot be instructed. Only when this is clear will closed cities have the chance of becoming gardens of public delights.



A garden of public delights



Source: El Sushi Negro collective

9

Conclusions

9.1 Conclusions

9.1.1 Main question

MRQ How can a new institutional and spatial framework allow for the negotiation of social and economic complexity, within the closed environments of low-income gated communities in Bogotá?

Any attempt to negotiate complexity in low-income gated communities must grow from the contradiction that lies at the core of this urban phenomenon, that is, that life in a self-sufficient and closed type of housing is an unsustainable endeavour for a population that cannot pay for a privatised life. Although this paradoxical nature is a source of daily tensions and conflicts within these communities, it is also what has impeded them from becoming entirely close. Therefore, any new framework should allow for a negotiation of certain values that residents see represented in this closed model (for example security, community, or class), but it should also create the spatial and institutional platforms for the consolidation of overflows, which are the complex forms of openness that residents already produce to fulfil their economic and social needs.

Furthermore, this framework should always be adjusted to the local conditions of Bogotá and, even better, of each neighbourhood where it is to be used. If something became evident during the research phase of this project, was that academic literature tends to see gated communities as a homogeneous global phenomenon, disregarding some local variations that can dramatically change the conditions of any strategy intended to transform them.

9.1.2 Sub-questions

RsQ1 Which are the typological conditions of gated communities?

When studied from a purely spatial perspective, low-income gated communities show little differences with any other mid- or high-income example. Thus, it can be said that they all share typological conditions. These shared characteristics can be observed at two scales. At the scale of architecture, all gated communities share the same four attributes: they are residential projects, with collective spaces of private use, that establish an antiurban relationship with public space, and are enclosed with walls and fences. At a larger scale, an exercise of mapping allowed to conclude that gated communities tend to produce urban environments that are closed. These areas of the city show four

characteristics: 1) Strictly programmed uses and coarse grain plot structures that tend to concentrate uses in large, mono-functional blocks; 2) Shapes that are complete, meaning that regulations treat these areas as worthy of being consolidated as they are; 3) Commodification, in the sense that gated communities are mostly owned by residents who see their houses as an investment; 4) Have excluding public spaces, especially streets surrounded by fences.

Furthermore, gated communities in Bogotá also share an institutional background. Their growth and popularity were driven by the change in housing policies of Colombia, which from the 1970s transferred all the housing provision responsibilities to the private market. This political change, accompanied by a very compelling advertising campaign, allowed privates to transform gated communities into the ultimate problem solver, first for the elites and then for the low-income segment, to the point in which today social housing in Bogotá is a synonym of gated communities.

RsQ2 Which conditions are specific to low-income gated environments?

In principle, the characteristics of low-income gated communities are not to be found in their built form (although some changes, as unit size, do vary), but in the characteristics of the residents who live in them. A spatial, statistical, and regulatory analysis identified four unique traits of these residents. First, they have low incomes. This is true regardless of the criteria used for defining low-income, be it the monetary poverty line of the statistical authority (DANE), the income thresholds to access social housing programmes or the socioeconomic strata used for subsidizing public utilities. Second, they depend on public infrastructure and services, meaning that they still make constant use of public or publicly subsidised transportation, schools, and health services. The third characteristic is that there is a high mix of formality and informality within those gated communities, at least from the perspective of work conditions, with informality amongst women being disproportionately higher than in men. And finally, there is overregulation, which is produced by the condominiums' internal regulations, which try to impose order either by being more strict than public law (restraining) or through the unnecessary prohibition of behaviours that are already punished by law (redundant).

RsQ3 How do low-income residents adapt and transform gated environments?

Residents of low-income gated communities are constantly negotiating their living environment and their spatial, institutional and governance structures. These actions of “overflow”, as called by Pinto and López (2020), were studied in detail in a study area (Campo Verde). At the scale of the neighbourhood, this study showed that the gap between the promise of an advertised plan and the reality of an unfinished neighborhood is a generator of overflow. In Campo Verde, this means that residents have to come up with replacements to missing or insufficient infrastructures for transportation, recreation, or education. These “solutions” can either be a parallel informal service (as for transport) or a constant movement to other neighborhoods that would offer these services (as for education and recreation).

Furthermore, several interviews with residents revealed them as agents of overflow who permanently negotiate the triple tension between their life experience (defined by informality), the expectation of a formalised life (to be achieved through homeownership), and the disappointments of a communal life (in a condominium). Apart from confirming the observations made by Hurtado-Tarazona (2020; 2018), who also describes this tension between the “desire of a grid” and a residential experience that must be unlearned, these observations also led to the classification of two types of overflow (productive and social). The main conclusion of this classification is that, although public space is still needed by residents, they have also learned to live far from it. In return, this has led to a broken relationship between the interior life of the block (the Back of House) and the interface with public space (Front of House) that has made appropriation of public spaces harder (and even suspicious to some). In the case of productive activities, this split has promoted the growth of a street and online commerce that acts as a fragile front of what happens behind fences. For social activities, this rupture has put and immense pressure on private collective spaces, which are preferred over public spaces (which, in any case, are insufficiently equipped).

RsQ4 Which strategies could allow for the growth of complexity in low-income gated environments?

For this purpose it is useful to think about a “framework for negotiation” that integrates three types of strategies (community, regulations, institutions).

First, there is community organization through private governance structures. Today, the system for deliberation within condominiums is monolithic, thus impeding any agility for the physical transformation of gated communities. The strategy is to subdivide this structure into smaller nested entities, called

committees, which include all residents of a defined spatial level (building, street, and condominium), that also have a certain spatial agency for transformation. This could be summarised as a strategy for the reduction of “deliberation density” (i.e. number of people involved in decision-making within a defined space), which is a concept that is worth further exploration in the future.

A second strategy has to do with urban regulations. The new regulations for the negotiation of gated communities must have two aims. First, identifying those physical places where future development and transformation of gated communities *can* or *must* happen. These “areas of opportunity” do not have an intrinsic value but need to be integrated into a larger whole that “substantiates” them. The second goal of the strategy is to define this larger whole, or area of influence, in such a way that it allows for a certain locality without losing its capacity of having large-scale impacts. To achieve this, it is recommended to have a division of land based in streets (and not blocks), which then can be classified into different types, each one defining the occupation parameters, uses, and development tools to be implemented in each area of opportunity.

Finally, the third strategy is related to public institutions, which must have two roles. First, coordinating the transformations of public spaces that the new street-based regulations demand. For this, it is proposed to have Spatial Public Space Plan (SPSP), which must be agreed upon by all the actors involved (including the community) in a specific site. Second, there is the procedural dimension. Any transformation of a gated community would require a costly procedure that is unaffordable for low-income communities. To avoid this, the proposal is to adapt the Social Public Curatorship, an entity of recent creation in charge of providing free-of-charge technical and legal assistance for construction works in informal housing areas, to also work in formal neighbourhoods with spatial and infrastructure deficits.

RsQ5 How could low-income gated environments perform and evolve under those strategies?

The framework of coexistence allows for an “opening up” of low-income gated communities. This means that they would become programmable, incomplete, negotiated, and including. Although these changes would be perceived in both the interior and the exterior of the projects, the possibilities for the transformation of public-private interfaces would be especially rich and varied. In fact, three levels of transformation are possible, as well as a special programme for the development of corners (which have a crucial relevance for public life). For residents, this would mean more spaces for work and public socialisation

within their neighbourhood, as well as the chance of new synergies with strangers (who, so far, have been excluded).

It is important, though, to acknowledge the limitations and weak spots of the framework, and work towards their improvement. On the one hand, new areas for development can be synonym of unethical speculation. This requires carefully deciding when and where to allow for-profit developments, as well as ensuring that residents have low-cost access to the newly created spaces. On the other, the possible tensions between residents living in the centre and edge of the block, arising from the higher opportunities that street-based regulations create for the latter, are to be balanced through a fair system of development rights and burdens, with a special focus on the mandatory compensations that edge developments must provide.



Source: El Sushi Negro collective

10

Reflection

10.1 Reflection

10.1.1 Societal relevance

Although predicting the relevance of a thesis like this one is an exercise that belongs more to the field of speculation than to that of certain science, I feel confident enough to discuss its social pertinence. For this, I would like to make a brief detour and mention one of the key findings of this thesis, which engulfs but is not only related to gated communities. I am talking about how, at least in Colombia, formality has now become a commodity. Because it is not a tangible quality, it is sold “infused” in certain products, which are then purchased by poor Colombians as “entry tickets” to a formal world that has historically escaped from their reach. In this logic, “formal” is that one who *owns*, but more importantly, is that one who has the *approval to own* from an institution. This means that low-income residents in search of formality would pay for *anything* that seems to fulfill this desire.

It is within this phenomenon that gated communities have acquired their value among low-income residents, even if they are sometimes incapable of matching their needs, as well as those of a democratic city. It could be said private institutions, and the apparent stability of ownership they offer, have supplanted the role of a State that struggles to create a social “safety net” for everyone. Willingly or not, the market has managed to turn the absence of the State in a business opportunity. I hope this thesis has managed to clearly expose that the undisputable success of the housing market has not been corresponded by the undisputed wellbeing of residents (and the city they inhabit.)

In that same direction, in the design-focused chapters of this thesis I hope to have proposed an alternative to the property-based notion of formality. The notion of negotiation was key in doing this. Compared to a market transaction between an anonymous entity and an individual, the outcome of an agreement between parties has many more chances of being relevant for everyone involved. But if formal property is reached through the purchase of a product, societal formality can only be reached when the “form” of such product can be redefined through discussion and confrontation. In this sense, I’m confident that the exercise of reimagining formality as a form of appropriation has great relevance in the Colombian context.

10.1.2 Methodology and data collection

The chosen methodology presented many problems and challenges along the way. For the sake of brevity, I will only discuss two issues.

The first one has to do with the gathering, processing, and visualization of quantitative data, which I later visualised in maps. Most of the analysis was based in two data sources: a dataset coming from the *Rejalópolis* research of Fernando de la Carrera (2014, 2019), and the data from Bogotá’s Multipurpose Survey of 2017 (DANE, 2017). In both cases, data processing proved challenging. Therefore, although I still stand behind the results, I decided to include a table where I explain every decision and filter applied to data in the annex. In that way, anyone can review my process and find any problems (or virtues.)

The second issue is related to interviews. For the Scenes of overflow chapter, I conducted 11 online interviews with residents and associations from different neighbourhoods. To my surprise, I managed to have lengthy interviews with different residents, who very generously showed me their houses and told me about their lives. During this process, there were moments in which managing expectations proved difficult. In many cases, residents seemed to understand my presence as potentially instrumental for their businesses and political revindications. My reaction was always to clarify the limitations and lack of (economic) resources of my research, as well as the academic nature of all the institutions I was representing.

10.1.3 Ethics

The main ethical issue deriving from the proposal of this thesis has to do with land management. In the design stage, I propose to “unlock” some of the land of gated communities, which cannot be built upon today, for future development. Although I leave possibilities open to low or high densities, as well as for for-profit or non-profit actions, there is a risk of unwillingly encouraging speculation and excessive crowding. This is especially sensitive in places where those phenomena have already caused undesired results. As I propose a negotiation mechanism, I trust the power of dialogue between community, state, and developers to be the main “safety mechanism” to avoid these issues. Although this is where the power of the proposal lies, it is also where its main source of weaknesses. Any unbalance in power that cannot be compensated or counteracted could derive in excesses, of either unethical development, bureaucracy, or distrust. It would be pretentious to believe that planning or other tools can overcome these issues. Although I recognise the political nature of tools, and in that sense the what I have designed is a product of my own political and ethical views, one can only go so far in planning how those tools can be used, or the unexpected results they might produce. In the end, this thesis proposes an exercise of trust, and trust cannot be planned, only built through dialogue. Perhaps it is Pepe Mujica, former president of Uruguay, who better summarises this: “In Latin America there are not solutions, only searches” (Kusturika, 2020).

10.1.4 Academic relevance and transferability

This thesis was developed as a part of a larger research on gated communities in Bogotá, carried out by the *Ciudad Isla* collective, which also involves researchers from the Universidad Nacional in Bogotá and the ETH in Zurich. This means that the results contained in this thesis will become part of the “core” body of contents of the group, which will then be presented in lectures, exhibitions, and publications. For me, it was always important to know that the content could be a coherent part of a larger whole: not only did I reuse some of the work done by other members, but I also made sure that the graphic and written standards could easily match those ones of previous research outputs. I hope these efforts help ensure the academic transferability of this thesis.

Regarding the “jump to practice” of this research, I am glad to say that during the elaboration of the thesis I was able to take part of the first stages of a pilot project that is trying to make an “opening-up” of low-income gated communities in the municipality of Soacha (not far from Parques de Bogotá, the testing ground of this thesis). The project is founded by a Family Welfare Fund (a non-profit organization that is also in charge of providing social housing) and is being led by the *Ciudad Isla* research team in the National University of Bogotá. This meant that while I was studying the low-income gated communities’ phenomenon, I was also being part of talks with the developers of those communities and their residents. This presented a very interesting opportunity to apply some of my discoveries in a “real” scenario. Although the project still has a long way to go, I believe that this thesis can be a valuable input for it. Towards the future, the *Ciudad Isla* team also aims to have an incidence in policy making. This year is the right time for that, as the new Land Management Plan of Bogotá is being elaborated as this is written.

10.1.5 Studio theme and research by design approach

This thesis is coherently integrated into the Complex Cities studio theme. For instance, the analysis part of the thesis focused in exposing an urban phenomenon that is defined by conditions of economic poverty, institutional indifference and social exclusion, thus coinciding with the studio’s focus on “how spatial planning, territorial governance, and participation shape the development of cities and region” (Planning Complex Cities Studio, 2021). Furthermore, the design chapters propose new ways of addressing this issue through strategies that integrate spatial planning, governance structures and public entities into a framework for negotiation. In this sense, the project coincides with another goal of the studio, which is that “Conclusions from projects recommend institutional change and demonstrate, by means of design, how this leads to new development patterns.”

On the other hand, the relationship of this research with the Master’s in Architecture, Urbanism and Building Sciences, and the programme of the Faculty of Architecture in general, is evident in the research-by-design approach it proposes. This is especially true for the last chapter, in which a theoretical framework was tested in a real setting to understand its virtues and shortcomings, and then propose complements and improvements that would make it viable.

11

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11.2 Credits and attribution

Except for the images captioned otherwise, all visual documents (pictures, schemes, plans and sketches, etc.) were produced by the author.

I would like to give my special thanks to El Sushi Negro collective (Maria Luisa Cervantes, Federico Chaparro and Santiago Beaume), who generously allowed me to use all the black and white images in the chapter introductions. These were originally produced for the *Ciudad Isla* exhibition, which took place in the Museo de Arquitectura Leopoldo Rother of the Universidad Nacional de Colombia, between August and September of 2019.

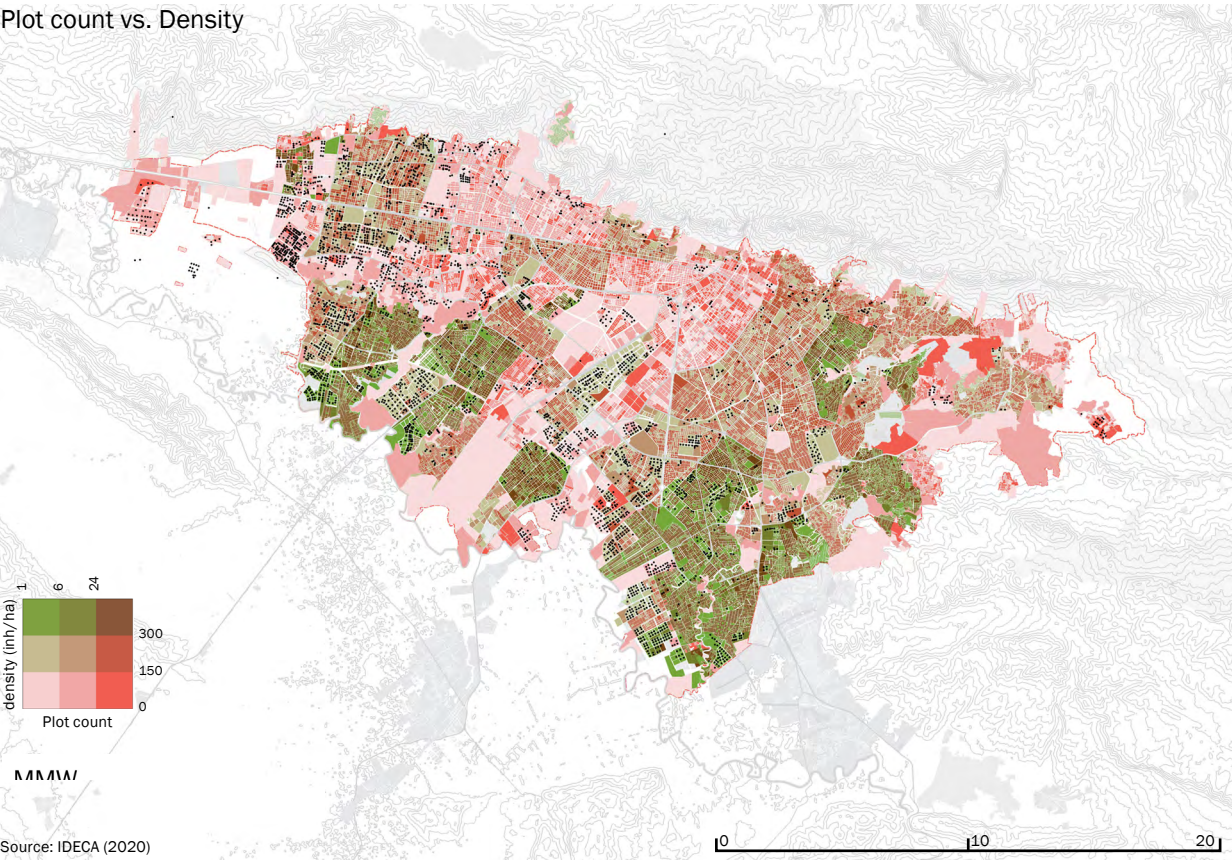
I also want to thank Arquitectura Expandida and Golpe de Barrio for coming up with the idea of “overflow”, which proved crucial for this work. I also owe them for many of the images of Campo Verde I used, which were taken for the *Toque madera* and *Mapeo al pedazo* projects. I hope they keep producing more of this amazing work.

Finally, I thank Adriana Hurtado for sharing her papers and PhD dissertation. In many ways, this thesis is nothing more than a graphic version of her work.

12

Appendix

12.1 Maps

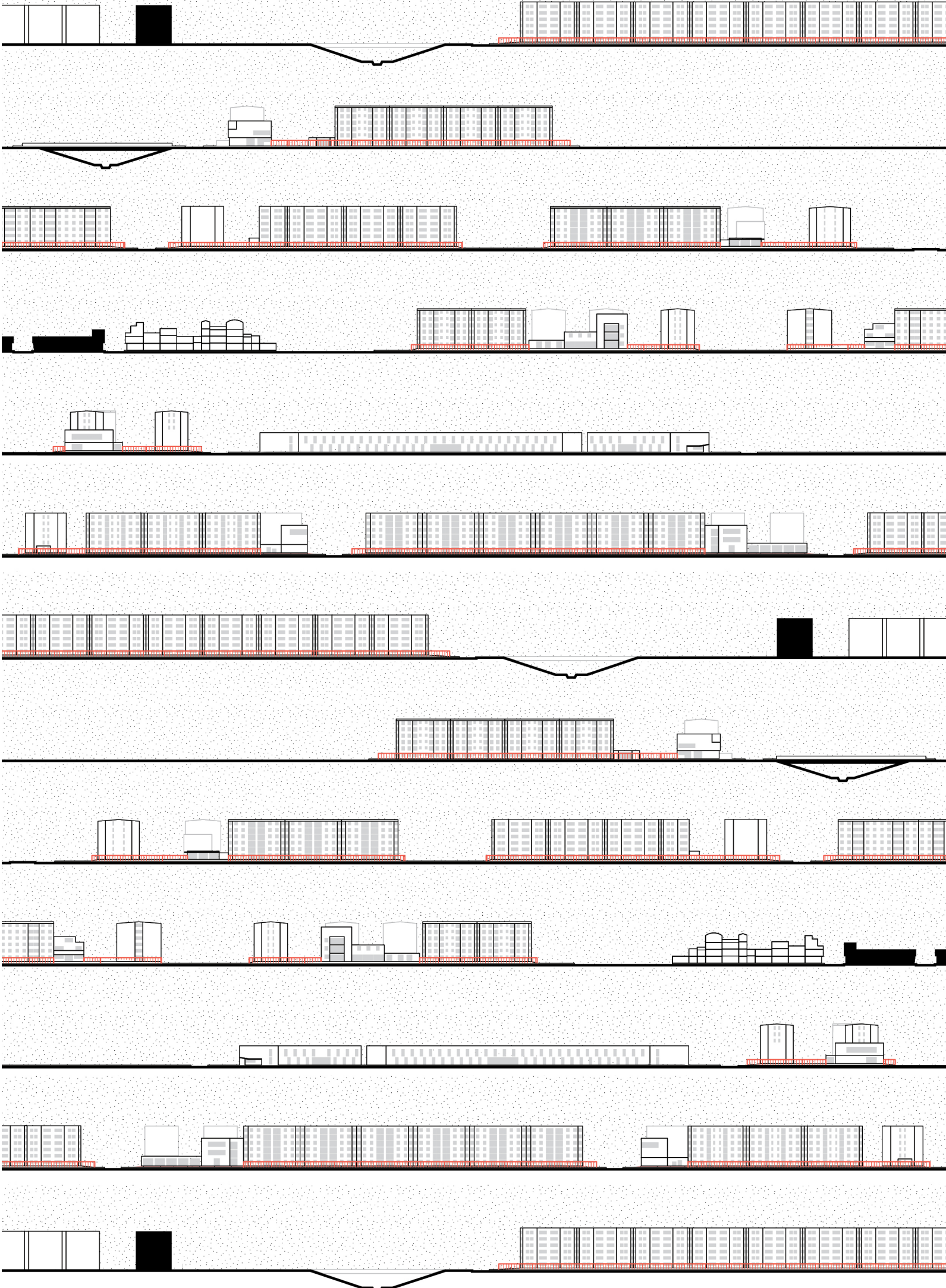


12.2 Criteria for data analysis

Processing of multipurpose survey data (DANE, 2017)	
Field / Map	Processing
Occupation	Occupied people were defined as ones who were working, who did house work or had other occupations (values 1,4 and 6 in NPCKP1).
Informality	People were considered informal if they were occupied (see above) and met any of the following criteria: a) they did not have a written contract (NPCKP19= 1 or 9); 2) They did not have a healthcare provider (NPCFP1= 2 or 3) They were not contributing to a pension fund (NPCKP50= 2 or 3).
Means of transportation	<p>Only positive answers provided to questions NPCKP45 (type of transport used to go to work) and NPCHP18 (type of transport used to go to study to both schools and universities) were considered and then added. The option 8 of the answers to NPCHP18 was considered as the same category to positive answers to NPCKP45H, while positive answers to NPCK-P45N were left as categories of their own.</p> <p>Transport categories used for map of public transportation were defined as follows:</p> <p>Public: 1,2,3,10</p> <p>Private total: (private motor: 4,5,6,8,11) + private clean (7,9,13)</p>
Income and expenses	<p>The monthly income, debt and expenses of households were calculated by adding all relevant values in title K (for income) and titles C, D F H, I and M (for expenses and debt). Before being added, values were divided by the number of months corresponding to each answer: if the reported value corresponded to 12 months, it was divided by 12, if it was 6 months it was divided by 6, and so on.</p> <p>Income per capita was calculated by dividing the total income of the houshold over the total number of members of that household.</p>
Monthly Minimum Wage	The survey's answers corrspound to 2017. Therefore, the calculation of MMW was done according to the value set by law that year (737719 COP base and 83140 COP of transport allowance). For access to housing, MMW were calculated without the transport allowance.
Monetary poverty	<p>The line of poverty used was a reprojection to 2017 of the 2019 line of poverty calculated by DANE (448749). An online calculator of inflation/deflation was used to do this. The value was set at 418000 montly income per capita. The same procedure was followed for extreme poverty, with a result of 159000 monthly income per capita.</p> <p>The 2019 value was used as reference because it was the first one claculated after an update in the criteria for measuring poverty. This is why the line of monetary poverty originally calculated for Bogotá by the DANE in its Bulletin of monetary poverty 2017 (DANE, 2019), which was set at 275884 COP, was not used.</p>

Data processing for maps			
Dataset	Author	Processing	Source
Reference map of Bogotá (different layers)	Unidad administrativa especial de catastro (UAECD) -Special administrative unit of district cadastre	The layers used correspond to basic urban elements, as blocks, plots, water bodies, road network, public transport stations, as well as some related to specific uses, as schools and hospitals. They where used as the bases for further processing and joining with other layers.	https://www.ideca.gov.co/recursos/mapas/mapa-de-referencia-para-bogota-dc
Dataset Rejalópolis	De la Carrera (2015, 2019)	This layer is the product of master thesis research by Fernando De la Carrera (2015), and was updated with data from 2017 by that same author (see De la Carrera, 2019). He used the layer of plots from the reference map and crossed it with data from the Construction unit dataset (see below) from the Department of cadaster. After several attempts, he defined 3000 m2 as the minimum plot size for a housing project to be a gated community. Although this method leaves some smaller gated communities out, it is backed up by a solid statistical and spatial analysis, and therefore I take it as the main reference for this work. The city government has made some attempts in the last two years to come up with a similar classification, but they are not precise enough.	Personal communication
Encuesta multipropósito 2017 / Multipurpose survey	Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística (DANE) / National Administrative Department of Statistics	This survey is divided into three datasets (house, household and person), and is only georeferenced at the scale of UPZs (Zonal planning unit), which usually contain several neighborhoods each. Nonetheless, the questionnaire contains two variables that allowed for a more specific location of the survey's results, which are socioeconomic strata (defined by the government and anssigned to each urban block) and wheter the house is located in a gated community or not. This two variables where integrated into a code that allowed to "break down" the results into smaller units than the UPZs; the code had a structure XXX-Y-Z, where XXX stands for the UPZ code, Y for the "gated community" variable (1=yes, 2=no), and Z for the strata assigned in the electricity bill. After having assigned the code to each entry in the three datasets of the survey, the process was repeated with the layers of the Reference map for Bogotá, which has the data of UPZ and strata. For the "gated community" variable, the data from De la Carrera (2019) was used: this is, perhaps, the step that could produce more inconsistencies, as in the survey the determination of whether or not a project was a gated community was left to surveyers, while in the case of De la Carrera's dataset it is defined according to spatial and statistical analysis. Nonetheless, the author is confident that the projects identified by De la Carrera are very similar to what a person familiar to Bogotá, as the surveyers must be, would visually identify as a gated community. The results are consistent, but some areas that where not surveyed are missing in the maps generated from this dataset: they mainly correspond to industrial areas or natural reserves, so their absence is also consistent with the data.	http://www.sdp.gov.co/gestion-estudios-estrategicos/estudios-macro/encuesta-multiproposito/encuesta-multiproposito-2017
Construction unit dataset	Unidad administrativa especial de catastro (UAECD) -Special administrative unit of district cadastre	This dataset has information about each property unit of the city. One block can contain several plots, and each plot can from 1 to more than 1000 property units inside it. Each entry has data on the areas, uses and quality of each unit. In order to make it readable, this data was classified according to uses (10 categories defined by the author) and then aggregated to the scale of the block. The functions where then mapped according to the percentage of units dedicated to each use over the total of units in each block.	https://www.datos.gov.co/dataset/Unidad-de-Construcci-n-Bogot-D-C/2cvh-3jme
Multidimensional poverty	Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística (DANE) / National Administrative Department of Statistics	This shapefile has the multidimensional poverty index (IPM in spanish), which cosiders 5 variables and 15 subvariables that allow to measure the non-mone-tary poverty of households at the scale of the block.	https://geoportal.dane.gov.co/visipm/
Open Street Map	Open Street Map	This data source was used when official data was missing.	

Life after fences



La velocidad es enemiga del conocimiento.

Low-income gated communities have become increasingly popular in Bogotá, despite the contradiction that lies at their core: that life in a self-sufficient and closed type of housing is an unsustainable endeavour for a population that cannot pay for a privatised life. To navigate through this paradox, residents constantly negotiate those regulations that keep communities closed (which they cherish as source of order and tranquillity) with their own experience and needs. This negotiation derives into actions of “overflow” that challenge the planned space and, under current conditions, are destined to remain unrecognised by formal institutions.

This research explores the ways in which these actions can be translated into and enhanced through a spatial and regulatory “framework for negotiation.” The goal is to create the conditions for the growth of open living environments through actions that prioritize horizontal interaction and spatial flexibility. In this scenario, residents become the main agents of production of social, political, and economic complexity of their neighbourhoods.