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## Polarized Vienna

Democracy and public space in the urban periphery

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# ABSTRACT

The urban periphery of Vienna is becoming increasingly dense and its population increasingly diverse. These rapid changes contribute to new conflicts and political polarization. Inclusive spaces can help democratic and diverse societies to deal with these challenge. However, no comprehensive model of centrality has emerged in the periphery until today. Therefore, this project investigates today's structure of public space and centrality in the district Donaustadt in the context of theories on social cohesion and democracy. Moreover, it takes a look at policies and planning processes to understand how space is currently being developed. Based on the results, potential strategies and interventions for the consolidation of public life are explored. The focus for these proposals lies on the axis Kagran-Stadlau as this area is under-represented in research as well as planning documents. Through this approach, the project aims at contributing to the challenge of adapting the outskirts of European cities to the changing requirements of their societies, a topic with relevance for many other locations outside Vienna.

Keywords: Urban periphery, Donaustadt, Vienna, Democracy and public space, Centrality

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I also want to thank my brother for his motivational words and critical questions. The conversations with you inspired me to think more critically about my own work.

Finally, I want to thank my parents and my girlfriend for being patient with me, even in stressful situations, and for staying interested in my work throughout the process. Multiple times, you reminded me about my own motivation for this topic.

# PREFACE

This document is the final report of my graduation project. It developed over the course of the second year of the master studies of urbanism at TU Delft.

The project was embedded in the Graduation studio *Planning complex cities* that focuses on spatial planning and strategy development. Additionally, the project was embedded in the courses ARU040 Methods of Urbanism and AR3U023 Theories of Urbanism. The theory essay in the appendix is the result of the latter



# TABLE OF CONTENT

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>9</b>
1.1	Problem Field	13
1.2	Problem Statement	18
<b>2</b>	<b>THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK</b>	<b>21</b>
2.1	Democracy and Space	22
2.2	Characteristics of Democratic Space	25
2.3	Theoretical Conclusions	27
2.4	Definitions	28
<b>3</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>31</b>
3.1	Research Question	34
3.2	Research Approach	38
<b>4</b>	<b>RESEARCH RESULTS</b>	<b>43</b>
4.1	Socio-spatial Structure	45
4.2	Corridors of Integration	59
4.3	Local Public Life	69
4.4	Lines of Division	93
4.5	Planning and Governance	99
4.6	Research Conclusions	113
<b>5</b>	<b>VISION AND GOALS</b>	<b>115</b>
5.1	Vision	118
5.2	Goals	124
<b>6</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>139</b>
6.1	Democratic Donaustadt	142
6.2	Axes of Urbanity	150
6.3	Project 2: Corridor of Daily Life	182
6.4	Implementation strategy	203
6.5	Generalization	208
<b>7</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>211</b>
7.1	Conclusion	212
7.2	Reflection	213
7.3	Discussion	216
<b>8</b>	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>219</b>
8.1	Table of Figures	220
8.2	Bibliography	222
<b>9</b>	<b>APPENDIX</b>	<b>227</b>





# 1 INTRODUCTION

After one and a half years, restrictions on social life due to the covid-19 pandemic become a potential threat for democracy. The lack of confrontation with other opinions in parks, streets and cafés shows significant effects on the trust in democracy. This is a central conclusion from the Austrian “democracy radar”, a biannual survey about the views on democracy that was presented in June 2021 (ORF Online, 2021). The results show that the share of inhabitants who believe that democracy in Austria functions well has reduced by ten per cent in comparison before the pandemic (ibid.).

But covid-19 is not the only development effecting the “common world” of public discourse, as Hannah Arendt (1998, first published in 1958, p. 58) called it in 1958. Since Arendt first addressed the issue, our cities have become spatially even more fragmented and socially polarized (Mory, 2021). Moreover, the power of social media increases the political division and threatens democratic processes through “filter-bubbles” (Zuboff, 2019). All these developments give renewed urgency to questions what role public space plays for democracy.

This project looks at the spatial aspect of this question by analysing structures of public life in the urban

periphery of Vienna. Due to social and spatial changes the city’s outer areas become focal points of contemporary developments. However, attention for public spaces in the periphery is still lacking in research and policy making.

The following question guides this inquiry: How can public spaces in the urban periphery of Vienna become more integrated, inclusive, and diverse in a democratic process? It combines research on the current spatial and governance structure of public space with a strategy for democratic public spaces for the future.

In seven chapters, this report summarizes the results. The introduction gives an overview over the problem field. The second part covers the theoretical background of the work. The presented theory ranges from a definition of democracy and democratic spaces to the spatial elements a public space should contain to fulfil its democratic role. In the third part, the methodology of this thesis project will be explained. A mixed methods approach will be used to get a deep understanding of the studied phenomena. In the fourth part of this work, the research results will be explained. These are translated into a vision and strategic goals in chapter 5. Chapter 6 looks at a potential development strategy the axis Kagran-Stadlau and the final chapter 7 reflects on the methods, results, and their relevance.





# MOTIVATION

My motivation for this project lies in my interest for the relation between society and space. At the beginning of my master studies, I wanted to write my thesis about the role of social infrastructure for society.

The democratic importance of spaces of public life interested me in particular. I understand the word democratic as a broad term, including the right of everyone to participate in the production, appropriation, and interpretation of space. Moreover, I believe that interaction between people is crucial for a society,

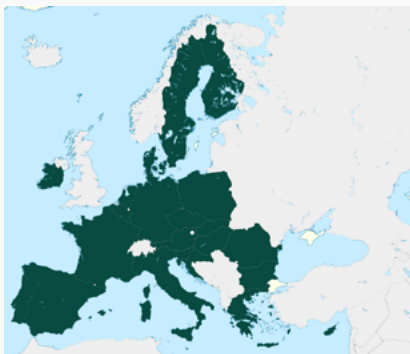
especially democratic ones. Therefore, enabling communication and the confrontation with difference are crucial purposes of space.

While developing this project, the fascination for democratic space merged with the realization of the relevance of development in the outer parts of the city. Modern society often focuses on the central areas. In the peripheries, however, contemporary urban structures are being built. Hence, these are the spaces where contemporary planners can influence how democratic the outcome will be.

# INTRODUCTION TO VIENNA

## City Facts

- Capital of Austria
- Population: 1.92 million
- Metropolitan region: ~2.6 million
- Density: 4,326.1/km<sup>2</sup>  
(City of Vienna, 2020a)



European Union  
Countries of the Warsaw pact

Fig. 1: Austria within Europe until 1989  
(By the author. Basemap source: Wikimedia Commons, 2010)

Fig. 2: Austria within the EU in 2020 (By the author. Basemap source: Wikimedia Commons, 2010)

## Districts of Vienna

- |                 |                           |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Innere Stadt | 13. Hietzing              |
| 2. Leopoldstadt | 14. Penzing               |
| 3. Landstraße   | 15. Rudolfstheim-Fünfhaus |
| 4. Wiedenn      | 16. Ottakring             |
| 5. Margareten   | 17. Hernals               |
| 6. Mariahilf    | 18. Währing               |
| 7. Neubau       | 19. Döbling               |
| 8. Josefstadt   | 20. Brigittenau           |
| 9. Alsergrund   | 21. Floridsdorf           |
| 10. Favoriten   | 22. Donaustadt            |
| 11. Simmering   | 23. Liesing               |
| 12. Meidling    |                           |

Grey box: Outer districts

For decades, it was located at the edge of western Europe, right next to the iron curtain (Fig. 1 and Fig. 2). As a result of this geopolitical position and the trend towards suburbanization, the city's population was stagnating or even shrinking until the end of the 1980s (MA23, 2014, p. 13).

This has changed since then. With the fall of the iron curtain, Vienna shifted from the edge to the centre of what was perceived as Europe.

Today, Vienna has a good international reputation and has shifted into the focus of the international economy. However, it has in large parts preserved its traditionally strong social welfare system. The city is frequently praised for its planning and housing policies. It is leading quality of life rankings

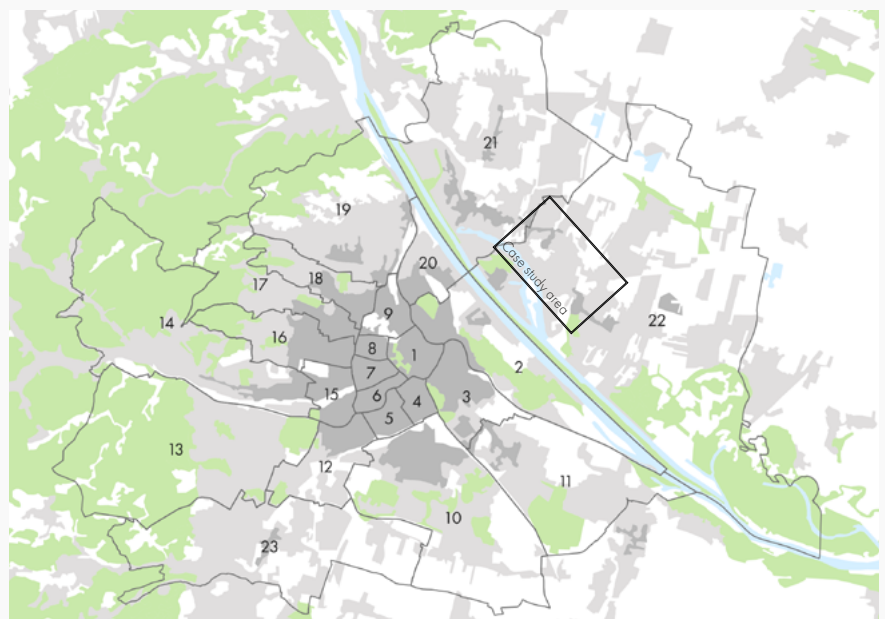
for most of the last years (Quality of Living City Ranking | Mercer, 2019). It is famous for its well preserved historic housing stock and rich imperial history and celebrated as an “affordable housing paradise” (Forrest, 2019). This final point is mostly a result of the city's social housing tradition.

Nonetheless, the city seems to be divided into inner and outer parts. This contradiction to the good reputation makes the city's urban periphery worth studying.

Fig. 3 shows the city's structure. 23 districts are often differentiated into inner and outer ones. This report will focus on the case study of Donaustadt (district 22) in northeast Vienna.

- Densely built up historic cores
- Lower density areas
- Green spaces
- Rivers and Lakes
- Case study area

Fig. 3: Vienna's spatial and administrative structure (by the author. Data source: Umweltbundesamt, 2018)



# 1.1 PROBLEM FIELD

## THE URBAN PERIPHERY IN A PLURALIZED SOCIETY

The societal and economic changes of the last decades have changed the requirements for space in the urban periphery. Changes of the economy and the society raise the question if existing spatial structure are still adequate.

### Social diversification

The urban periphery of Vienna, as in many parts of Europe is ethnically and culturally diversifying,. Fig. 4 shows how the percentage of inhabitants that were not born in Austria has changed between 2008 and 2020 in different parts of the city. It makes clear that although the share of people not born in Austria grew all over the city, the change of the population structure is stronger in the outskirts. In many parts of the 22nd district, for instance, these numbers have more than doubled. Of course, this needs to be put in the context that the peripheries of Vienna are characterized by a relatively homogeneous population and that the percentage of migrants is generally higher in historic inner-city working-class areas. However, even in this context it is obvious that the population of the urban fringe is becoming more diverse.

The ethnic pluralization is correlated with a general population growth in the outer districts. Fig. 5 visualizes the areas that are growing strongest. These are especially the large brown and green field developments. Much of the population growth of the last years took place in former low density, suburban, residential areas. The new neighbourhoods are mostly characterized by higher densities (usually 5-8 floors). But there is also a

Change of the number of inhabitants that were not born in Austria from 2008 to 2020 in percent by census district

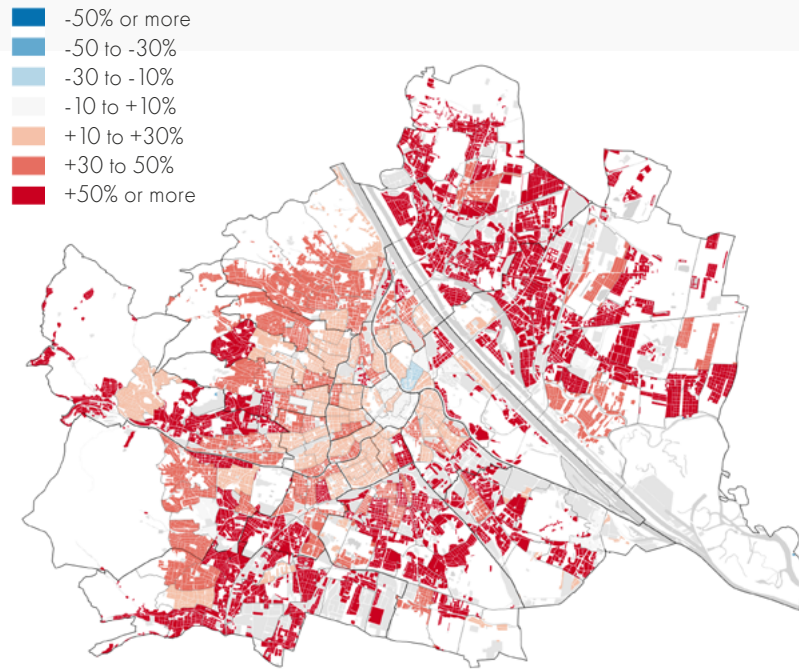


Fig. 4: Areas with increasing and decreasing number of inhabitants not born in Austria since 2008 (by the author. Data: City of Vienna, 2020d; Basemap: City of Vienna, 2018b)

Change of the number of inhabitants from 2008 to 2020 in percent by census district

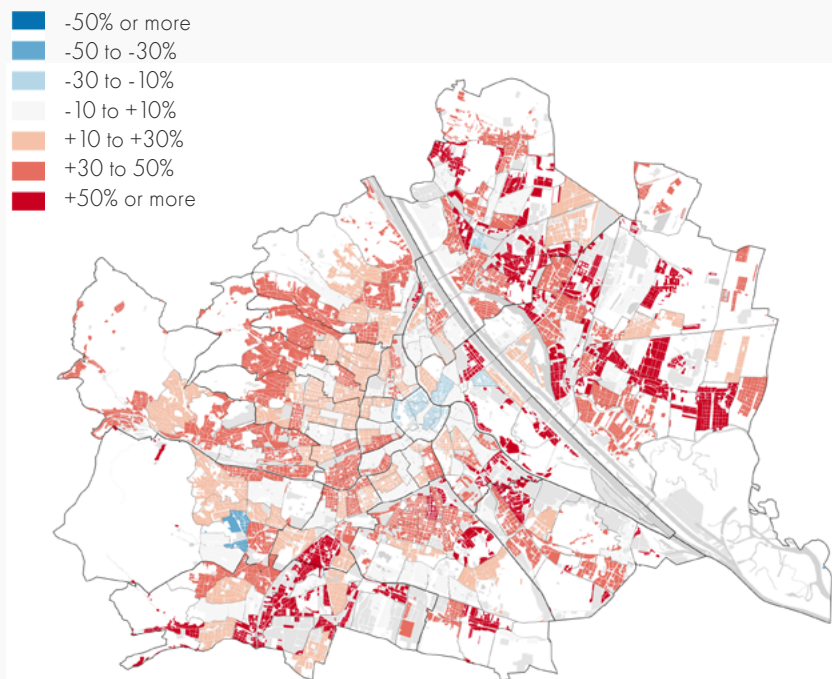


Fig. 5: Areas with increasing and decreasing total number of inhabitants since 2008 (by the author. Data: City of Vienna, 2020d; Basemap: City of Vienna, 2018b)

## POLITICAL POLARIZATION

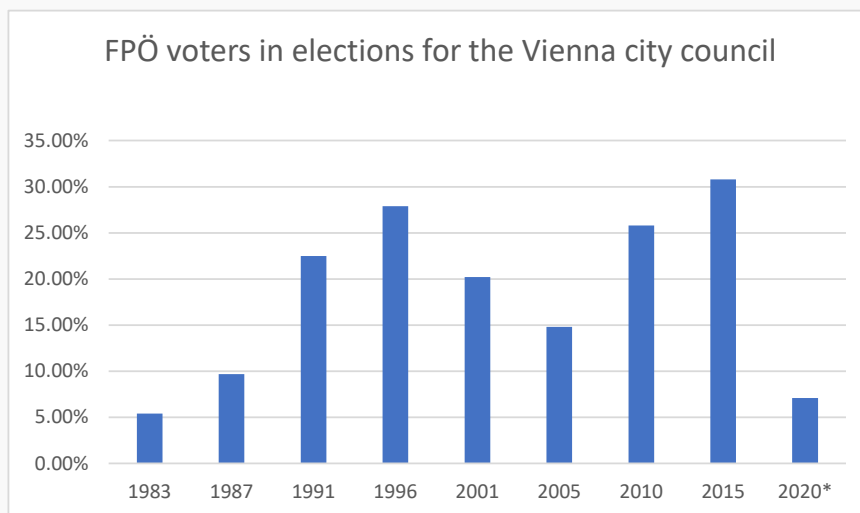


Fig. 6: Percentage of votes for the FPÖ in the elections for the Vienna city council 2018 (by the author. Data: 'Ergebnisse der Kommunalwahlen in Wien', 2018)

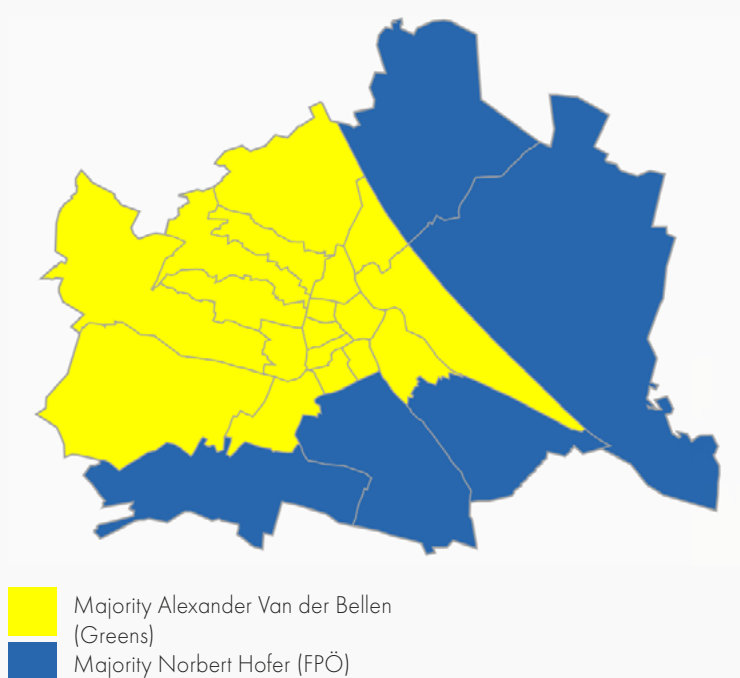


Fig. 7: Results of the national presidential election 2016 (Minar, 2016)

trend towards new high-rise buildings at the edge of the urban core and the periphery. Hence, the urban form of the outskirts is changing at least as rapidly as the population.

### Political polarization

However, the societal and physical changes seem to provoke resistance among parts of the population. The

social democratic party SPÖ, that governs the city since the fall of the Nazi-regime in 1945, has just won another election for the city council in October 2020. However, since the 1990s the right-wing populist party FPÖ has become a significant force in the city as well as in national politics (Fig. 6). It traditionally stands in strong opposition to the politics of

the SPÖ and takes a hard line against globalization and migration. As one of the FPÖ's slogans "the social homeland party" shows, the party often states that the social democrats are not truly social anymore and do not care for "their people". And the election results show that in some years more than 30% of voters support this view (Böhm, 2016). Hence, at some point in the last decades the opinion of a large part of the Viennese population started to diverge from the statements of international media and rankings.

During the last elections, the Freedom party's voter base shrank tremendously due to a corruption scandal. Nevertheless, the structural conditions that led to its rise in certain areas are still present. Especially since the majority of FPÖ voters did not attend the last election instead of voting for a different party (Standard Verlagsgesellschaft m.b.h., 2020). Hence, this does not indicate that satisfaction with the current development of their surroundings increased.

On the other side of the political spectrum, the Greens rose to an important power in city politics. The green-left party advocates environmental sustainability, for example through policies to reduce the use of cars in the city. Moreover, it stands for a more open line on migration. Hence, it stands in strong opposition to the FPÖ.

The voting behaviour in the city clearly has a spatial component. The comparison between voters of the FPÖ and those who vote for the Green party illustrate the spatial patterns of political orientation (fig. 6). While most FPÖ voters live in areas that



lie further outside, Green voters live primarily in central locations. The polarization of society became most evident in the presidential elections of 2016 (fig. 5) when the candidate of the FPÖ won the first ballot on most outer districts while the candidate of the greens became the strongest candidates in the inner-city districts and the bourgeois outskirts in the west of the city.

This pattern indicates that the perception of ongoing developments is vastly different in the central areas of the city from that of people living in the more peripheral neighbourhoods. In the words of Hannah Arendt, Vienna is losing its “common world” of political discussion.

### Conflict over integration and demarcation

On the level of national politics, a new line of conflict emerges between the proponents of open borders and those who favour national demarcation (J.-W. Müller, 2016, p. 110). On the level of public space, a similar conflict emerges between integration and exclusion (Charim, 2013).

One of the conflict lines in contemporary politics concerns the access to public space. Populists have an exclusive understanding of which claims to public space are legitimate. Populist parties claim, for instance, that they will “take back the city” for the “true” citizens (FPÖ Vienna, 2020). The right to public services like social housing become a question of having “Viennese blood” (Rosenberger & Permoser, 2013, p. 445). Stronger policing is not only proposed as a solution for crime but

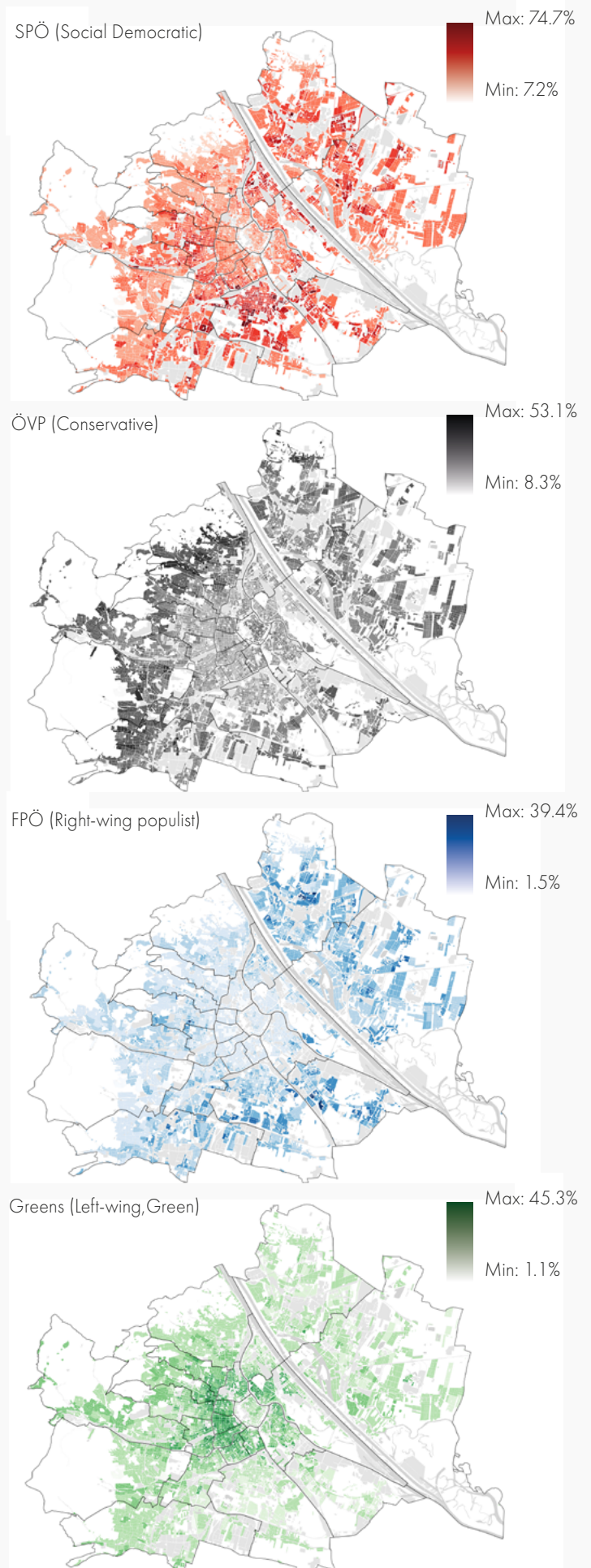


Fig. 8: Election results of the four biggest parties for the national elections 2019 (by the author. Data: City of Vienna, 2020e)

## CHANGING REQUIREMENTS TO SPACE



### Post-war housing structure

Large parts of the housing stock in the urban periphery was built after the second world war in the fordist economy. This period was characterized by top-down governance structures, a strong social welfare state and a relatively homogenous society (Astleithner & Hamedinger, 2003).

Urban development was car-oriented and focused on individual neighbourhoods. Neighbourhoods are often little integrated with each other. Public spaces were primarily built for the community within neighbourhoods with predefined functions. But for modern societies, public spaces are important. They can function as a common ground where different social groups are confronted with each other (Breitfuss et al., 2006).

In the last years, public space became more central in public discourse (Madanipour, 2019). However, it is questionable if contemporary developments really fulfil the requirements of modern public spaces. Public space has become a valuable asset for the post-fordist economy (ibid.). As a result, its diversity is at risk of becoming a pure rhetoric (ibid.).



Fig. 9: Residential complex from the "fordist" period (by the author.)

Fig. 10: Contemporary high-rise development (by the author.)

also for "foreign troublemakers" in general (FPÖ Vienna, 2020, p. 5).





## 1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The pluralization of society increases the need for public spaces in the urban periphery of Vienna. The lack of these spaces can reinforce the tendency of political polarization and threaten social cohesion in the whole city.

However, comprehensive central spaces that attract all parts of society are a scarce resource. Public space in the urban periphery has been adapted to mobility and consumption. Although increased recognition for public space can be observed since the 1990s, it is at risk of becoming a rhetoric that serves the post-fordist economy.

To approach these urban challenges, public space the urban periphery needs to be understood in the context of a diverse, modern, and democratic society. This way it can help to keep Vienna livable for all inhabitants.





## 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Space and democracy are linked in many ways. Space affects human life and therefore democratic processes. This chapter looks at theories on how urban space can contribute to democratic processes as a way to solve conflicts in a peaceful manner. Of course, this topic is usually approached on the local level of human interaction. However, as I will show, these interactions also depend on processes on higher scales, larger socio-spatial structures, as well as city-wide decision making.



## 2.1 DEMOCRACY AND SPACE

### DEMOCRATIC FUNCTIONS OF SPACE

Many scholars have written about the relationship of democracy and public space. First it is important to make clear what democracy is.

#### Democracy

Democracy goes beyond the official democratic institutions. It depends on a society with a democratic mindset. But what is democracy in this broad sense?

According to John Parkinson (2012), “democracy is one of the ways we sort out conflicts; it does not provide all the answers” (p. 201). Hence, democracy is not just the rule of the majority but a way to deal with diverse claims that might stand in conflict.

For this process, it is an important question who has the right to make claims. Democracy requires “a sense of ‘we’” (Parkinson, 2012, p. 49), a definition of whose claims are legitimate, even if they stand in conflict to each other. Richard Sennett describes this form of identity as the belief in a “common destiny” of a society (Sennett, 1995, p. 455). In reference to the ancient roots of the term democracy, Parkinson (2012) uses the term *demos* to describe this group of legitimate claim-makers.

#### Democratic aspects of space

Space fulfils multiple functions for a democratic society. Firstly, spaces influence the way we interact and how we deal with diversity. Secondly, spatial development can increase or reduce social inequalities. Finally, space is a subject of democratic processes.

#### Interaction, identity, and diversity

Daily interactions are crucial for a democracy as it influences who we see as legitimate claim makers (Parkinson, 2012, p. 177). Democracy requires “a sense of ‘we’” (ibid., p. 49), a shared impression of whose claims are legitimate, even if they stand in conflict to each other. The lack of this common identity can make societies prone to populist tendencies. Jan Werner Müller (2016, p. 42) defines populism by the claim to be the only legitimate representation. It is likely that this claim is more attractive if voters already have an exclusive understanding of the society. Hence, a public space that facilitates the presence and interaction of different social groups is an important asset for a democratic society.

#### Equity

However, interaction and discourse is not enough. Existing inequalities need to be considered as space can reinforce them (Fainstein, 2014). Of course, equity is a high value in itself. But, moreover, democracies that are perceived as just are arguably more stable than more unequal ones (Piketty, 2013). Additionally, equal access to spaces of public life is a precondition for interaction and therefore important for the peaceful coexistence in diverse societies.

#### Democratic processes

Finally, democratic processes decide about spatial forms and functions. As many authors highlight the importance of giving a voice to the citizens of governance for achieving just outcomes (Fainstein, 2014;

Sennett, 2018; Swyngedouw, 2018).

### Layers of democratic functions

The pyramid above describes the three functions of space for a democracy in different layers. The bottom layer is the basic layer. Its conditions are the first that need to be fulfilled in a democracy.

### Democratic space I

Representation is usually fulfilled through the election of representatives, who make decisions for the population.

Access to public functions is fulfilled when everybody can access a space or a public service. However, it does not say much about the quality of the space and if every user has the same rights and chances.

Presence can lead to the visibility of different social groups in space. This is what Parkinson (2012) describes as the moment when a “sense of ‘we’” emerges. It is, however, questionable if mere presence without interaction can really facilitate an inclusive sense of the “the people”. Studies on the “contact hypothesis” (Gordon Allport, 1954, as cited by Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008) have shown that the presence of different social groups in a neighbourhood does not increase acceptance. Interaction between them is necessary to have a positive effect (Savelkoul et al., 2017).

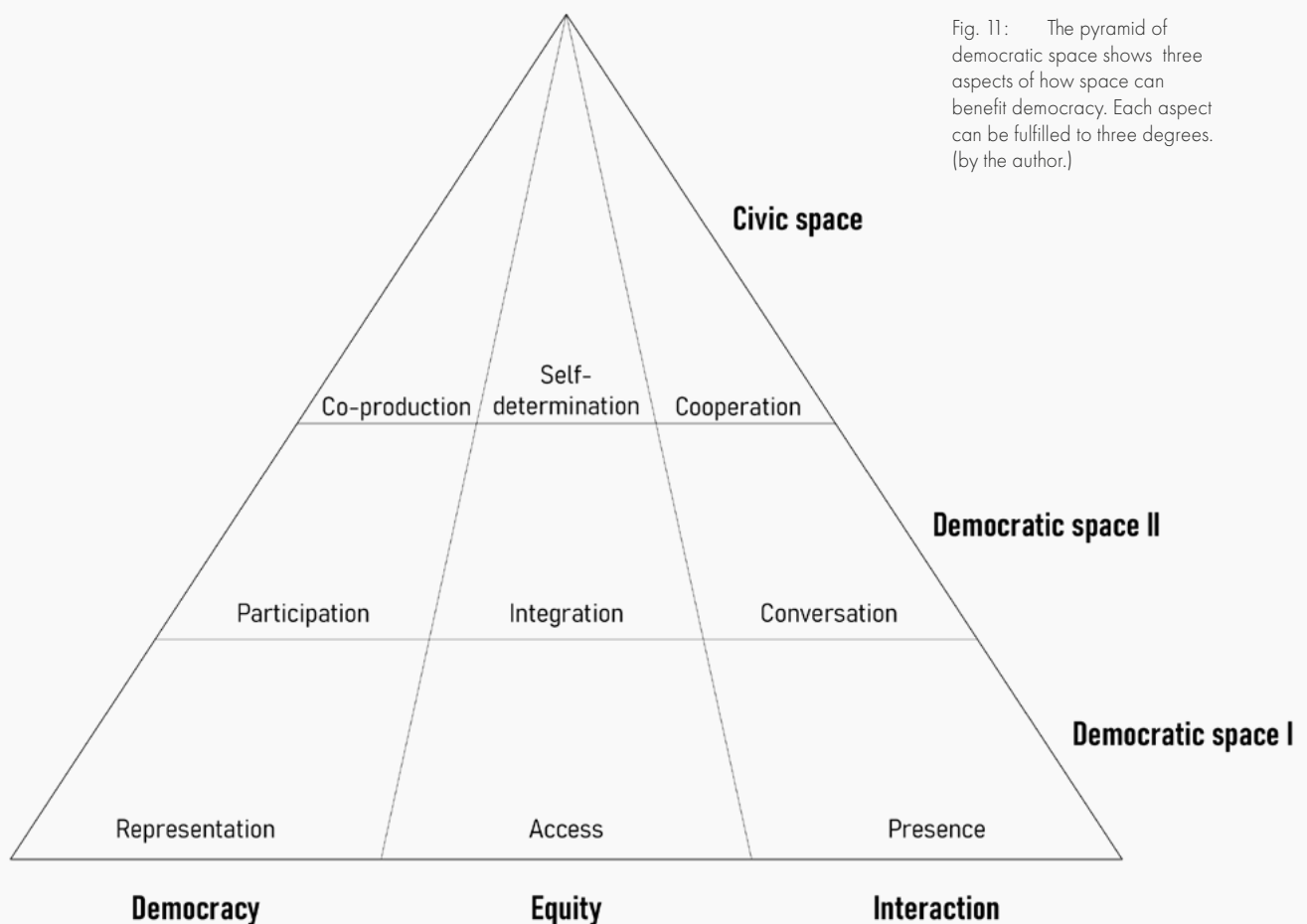


Fig. 11: The pyramid of democratic space shows three aspects of how space can benefit democracy. Each aspect can be fulfilled to three degrees. (by the author.)



Fig. 12: Icons centrality (by the author)

Fig. 13: Icons identity (by the author)

Fig. 14: Icons accessibility (by the author)

## Democratic space II

The second layer shows processes that are more democratic. These are contemporarily often used in planning. Inhabitants increasingly have the chance to participate in decisions. Integration of different social groups is a common goal. And the aim public space on this level is to facilitate conversations between strangers to make co-presence more peaceful.

This layer can, for instance, be achieved in the redesign of a square. Different groups might participate in the process and the design can make the place more inclusive and invite people to interact.

## Civic space

The final layer is the highest degree of democracy. It is based on the idea of co-production as the best way to achieve peaceful coexistence in a diverse context and the most democratic way to build a city.

According to Richard Sennett (2018) the one of the most valuable forms of interaction for a society is cooperation because it leads to sociality, a form of “limited brotherhood” (ibid., 321).

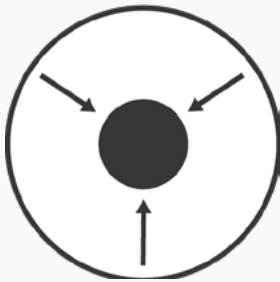
Similarly, Hannah Arendt argues that common action brings people together (Arendt, 1998). To be part of a society it is necessary to actively perform, since otherwise each of us are only individuals.

The goal of this level of democracy is to build civic spaces, where an inclusive understanding of citizenship emerges.

## 2.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF DEMOCRATIC SPACE

The elaborations above raise the question what criteria space needs to fulfil to foster democracy. Because of the variety of potential correlations, I can only give an overview of them without claiming to be exhaustive.

### Centrality



Central spaces play an important role for the development of a common identity as well as for interaction between different social groups (Sennett, 2018; Talen, 2008).

The form of centrality makes a difference. Streets can, for instance, give space to more diverse functions. Moreover, they are places of movement, while squares are destinations (Hall, 2017). However, streets also function as barriers when there is a lot of car traffic (Appleyard, 1980).

Richard Sennett (1999) uses another distinction of centres as the *Agora* and the *Pnyx*. The agora is a place where many things happen synchronously, while the pnyx is where democratic decisions are made. These terms come from the ancient Greek democracies and need to be understood more abstractly today. The agora can be interpreted as the daily life that shapes political opinions. The pnyx can be understood as the realm of political decision making, in which a focused and ordered debate needs to be possible (Sennett, 1999). This

highlights that a democracy needs both, diverse spaces of daily life and democratic and inclusive decision making processes.

### Spaces of Identity



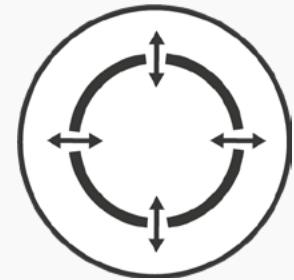
Centres can, among other things, create a sense of identity. These spaces of identity can help political narration and representation (Parkinson, 2012) and “keep a diverse neighbourhood together” (Talen, 2008). Besides centrality, special places, symbols, or spatial entities like neighbourhoods can convey identity.

Today, spatial identity often needs to be reconceptualized. Due to increasingly extra-local interactions, local identities might often get lost (Castells, 2011; Martin, 2003). Moreover, the loss of local commercial functions and institutions in many neighbourhoods can result in the erosion of micro-publics and lead to perceived decline of the neighbourhood (Pinkster, 2016).

Eroding neighbourhood identity can have far reaching implications. As Savelkoul et al. (2017) found, worries about the neighbourhood status in relation to an increase of migrant population are an important reason for radical right-wing voting. Hence, neighbourhood identity and interaction might reduce these tendencies. This might be explained

by the potential instrumentalization of eroding feelings of belonging through radical right-wing parties (Rosenberger & Permoser, 2013).

### Accessibility and Connectedness



The urban fabric can also have an impact as it can facilitate or limit interaction and the integration in the society.

First, access to public life is important as it defines who can participate and who not. But access is not only a question of legal rights or physical boundaries, it can also be defined by soft incentives, attractiveness for certain groups, or symbols of appropriation (Parkinson, 2012). A shopping centre, for instance, can attract many people but the predefined purpose of consume does not facilitate other purposes of public space (Sennett, 1995). It is not truly accessible for all functions. Other examples are bridges over major roads that make clear that public space is dedicated to cars and private space to pedestrians (Graham & Marvin, 2001; Parkinson, 2012).

Secondly, well connected streets and porous borders facilitate interaction and reduce exclusion (Sennett, 2018; Talen, 2008). Studies have shown that spatial barriers can reduce social contact and have negative impact on the social status of the surrounding population (Tóth et

al., 2021). Moreover, a well-connected street network can improve walkability (Jacobs, 2011) and, therefore, increase feelings of safety (Foster et al., 2010).

#### Diverse functions and spaces



Interaction in public space depends on the reasons for going there. Therefore, public life depends on diverse functions that can happen simultaneously (Sennett, 2018). A diverse mix of commercial and non-commercial incentives for parallel uses for all financial segments in an active plinth is beneficial for social inclusion (Breitfuss et al., 2006). Moreover, a mix of small-scale functions facilitates interaction better than large-scale blocks (Talen, 2008).

Moreover, the available public spaces should be diverse. “Seed-like planning” makes social diversity possible (Sennett, 2018) and increase the visibility of vulnerable social groups (Breitfuss et al., 2006). However, public spaces should be integrated in a bigger network (ibid.). “Urban Depth” can facilitate larger variety of social and economic functions (Hausleitner, 2021). This means that not only centrality but also less central urban edges are important for a diverse city (ibid.).

#### Social Infrastructure



Finally, social infrastructure can strengthen diverse, democratic societies. As important places for different parts of society to interact, libraries or schools play a central role for social cohesion (Klinenberg, 2018). The diversity of their users is central (ibid.) but can only be covered to a limited degree in this project.

This project can contribute to the location and integration of social infrastructure. An integration with other functions can increase the chance of interaction (ibid.).

Also, daily supply, like markets, can count as social infrastructure. The “foundational economy” (Novy et al., 2019) plays a central role for social cohesion.

#### Theories of Urbanism Essay

The following essay goes deeper into the argument that space has an influence on political leaning. In detail, it argues that right-wing political leaning is reinforced by the erosion of micro-publics and opportunities to meet people with other opinions and from other backgrounds.

Fig. 15: Icons diversity (by the author)

Fig. 16: Icons social infrastructure (by the author)

## 2.3 THEORETICAL CONCLUSIONS

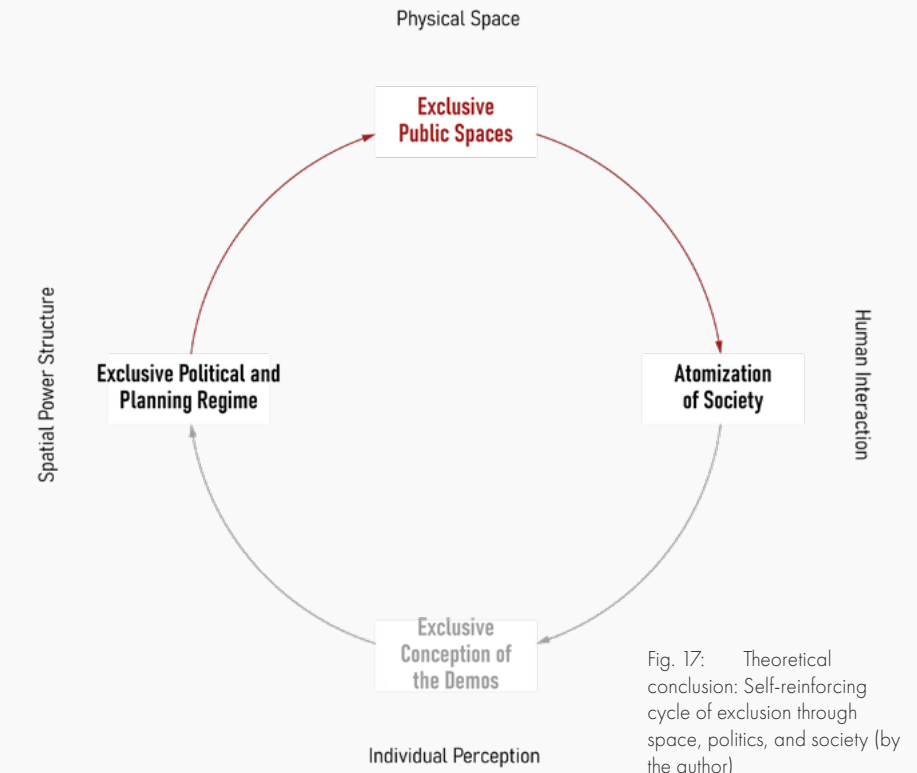
The theories described above can be understood as part of a self-reinforcing cycle (Fig. 17). Each relation in the diagram is subject to one or multiple scientific disciplines. S

Starting from the top, physical space influences human interaction. This is the argument is elaborated above in section 2.2. This core subject to urban sociology is the base of many design interventions.

As a next step, human interaction affects individual conceptions of society and different social groups. This relation can be described along the contact hypothesis (see Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008). The idea is that human interaction with people of other groups changes the individual conception of that group and “otherness” in general. As described above this is a complex process that psychologists and sociologists are investigating.

As political scientists like Parkinson (2012) describe, individual conception of the society or the demos affect political power structures. In elections, power is transferred from the demos to partys, political actors and institutions. In the context of this project, the important power structures are those that affect the production of space. These are, for instance, authorities that make planning decisions or individuals who take part in participation processes.

In the last step, spatial power structures shape physical space. Through planning and design, spatial form is being constructed and regulated. The inclusiveness of decision making processes define how equally space can be used. It is questionable if inclusive access to



space is enough for a democratic society as long the processes that produce space are not inclusive.

This project focuses on the processes that shape space and what interaction spatial forms facilitate. This focus can be summarized as the top part of the cycle. Positioning urban planning and design in the bigger structure of society makes clear that a spatial project can only tackle fractions of the big picture. However it can contribute to a larger societal change.





# 3 METHODOLOGY

In this chapter the methodology of this project is introduced. I elaborate the research aim of understanding the structure of public spaces in the urban periphery. Furthermore, I present my research question and sub-questions, and, finally, I describe the methods I have used to answer this question.





### Research aim

The aim of this project is to understand the structure of public spaces and social infrastructure in the urban periphery of Vienna and how it facilitates or inhibits interaction between citizens. The project tries to highlight the importance of this common object of urbanism research by looking at it through the lens of political and sociological theories on democracy.

Consequently, the project's first aim is to understand the performance of public space for democracy. However, as a project in the field of urbanism, the focus lies on the form and functions of space. I analyse the current spatial and socio-spatial structure of north-east Vienna. For the interpretation of this structure, I rely on the insights that come from other disciplines. I use literature to understand what forms of interactions a diverse, democratic society needs and how space can foster them.

The second objective is to understand the processes that shape public spaces in the periphery of Vienna. Using the case study of Kagran, I look at how public space is being developed in the context of the current planning regime. This aim is important for two reasons. Firstly, it aims at understanding if the processes of spatial production are inclusive and just. Secondly, it is necessary to understand the production mechanisms to implement proposals. Through this understanding, the proposals can be made more precise and achievable.

### Design Assignment

Based on research, this project makes spatial and institutional proposals that aim at making public life in the urban periphery more inclusive and democratic. The task is structured in to the following three parts.

Firstly, a set of spatial and institutional goals for the urban periphery define the general direction for urban development. These aim at drawing conclusions from the research results that can be used by decision makers.

Secondly, a spatial vision proposes a new direction for the development of public spaces. It translates the conclusions from literature and research into space.

Thirdly, a strategy aims at proposing ways of implementing of the envisioned spatial changes in a democratic process. This strategy will be based on the results of researching the "processes of spatial production". The aim is to propose new processes and policies that can support central actors in the implementation of the proposed changes. Moreover, the strategy will aim for a democratic process that goes beyond the forms of participation that are already in use in the chosen area.

## 3.1 RESEARCH QUESTION

Spaces of public life where different parts of society interact and where political opinions are formed and articulated. This includes legally public and private spaces

Parts of the city that are characterized by low degrees of centrality and building density and were significantly shaped in the post-fordist economy

How can public spaces in the urban periphery of Vienna become more integrated, inclusive, and diverse in a democratic process?

Spatial characteristics that are described in literature as facilitating equal and peaceful forms of co-presence and interaction of different parts of society

Processes that are transparent and integrate all affected stakeholders on an equal basis

The main research question can be understood through two components. Firstly, it asks how the structure of public spaces can be further developed in a way that facilitates democratic and equitable forms of social interaction. The concepts of spatial integration, inclusiveness, and diversity summarize spatial characteristics that can foster this social exchange. Simultaneously, the concept of inclusiveness highlights that spatial solutions must be socially just and must not lead to exclusion of

certain groups.

Secondly, the question asks about the processes that shape public spaces in the periphery of Vienna. This part of the question is crucial to highlight that spatial form alone cannot lead to socially just results if the processes behind them are not democratic and do not consider the needs of all stakeholders.

To the right, a set of sub-questions summarizes subjects of research that need to be explored to answer the main

research question. While the main question is formulated normatively, many of the sub-questions have descriptive character. These are important because it is necessary to understand current conditions before making normative proposals.

## SUB-QUESTIONS

### Current social structure

- How diverse and mixed is the society in the urban periphery?
- Which patterns of social fragmentation can be identified?
- Which spatial elements influence patterns of social fragmentation?

### Centres and public spaces

- Which spaces are the centres of public life in the urban periphery?
- How diverse, inclusive, and integrated are spaces of public life?
- Which areas lack spaces of public life or are little integrated in public life on the district scale?
- Which spatial elements inhibit public life and social interaction?

### Development processes

- How do plans, vision, and projects shape the development of public spaces today?
- Which actors are involved in contemporary development processes?
- How democratic and equitable are the processes that shape public space today?

### Strategy

- What forms of public space can contribute to the peaceful and inclusive coexistence of a diversifying society in the urban periphery?
- How can a development strategy foster the implementation of democratic public spaces?
- How can participation processes facilitate the stronger involvement of local inhabitants from all social groups?

### Design

- How can public spaces better facilitate the interaction between inhabitants of different neighbourhoods?
- What larger spatial structures can foster an integrated development of local public spaces?
- What guidelines for the development of public spaces can be derived from design explorations?

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

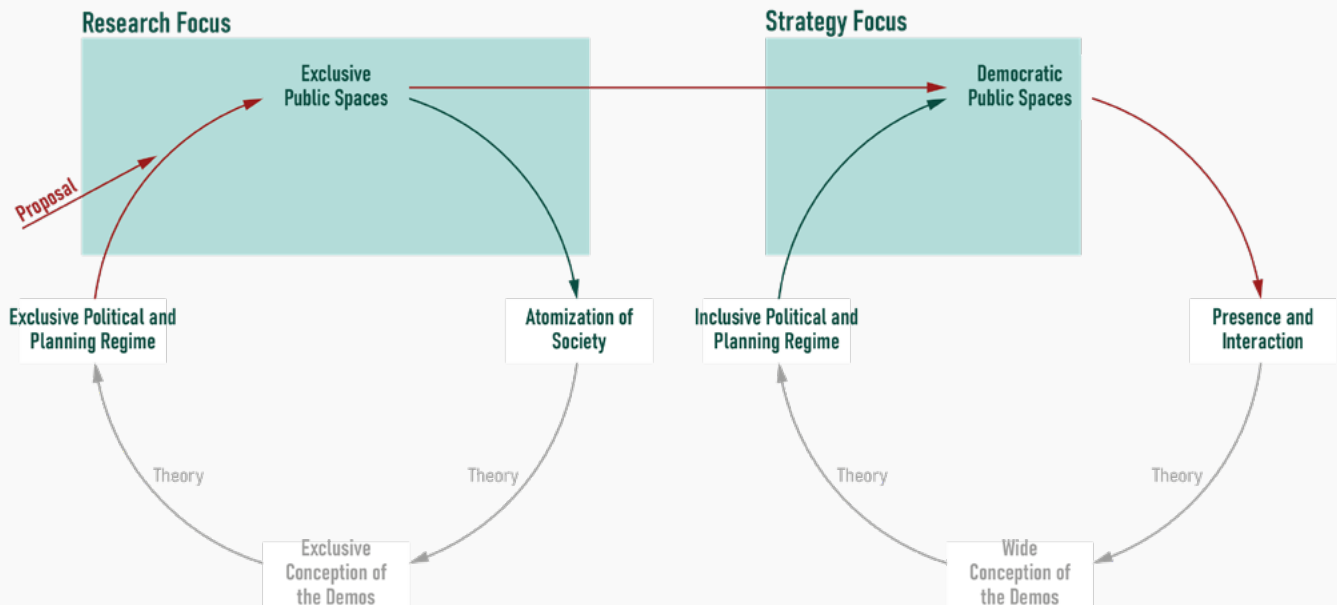


Fig. 18: Conceptual framework. (Made by author.)

The conceptual framework brings together theories and observations about the current situations with the general idea of approaching the problem. The left cycle shows the current process of production and effects of public space, derived from theory, while the right cycle shows an envisioned positive cycle. The proposals that will be the result of this project will aim at interrupting the current cycle through the changes in the production of public space. The resulting network of open and democratic public spaces can facilitate the presence of different social groups

and the interaction between them. Assuming that these interactions facilitate inclusive conceptions of the public and enhance mutual acceptance, this intervention can have an impact on the political and planning regime.

Of course, many other factors influence these cycles. The effect of a single project and spatial form in general might be limited. However, the ideas presented might function as an element in a bigger process. Furthermore, they might improve the conditions of some inhabitants and therefore are worth to be considered.



The Project focuses on the district Donaustadt as a case study but takes the bordering district Floridsdorf into account. Within this wider focus, in-depth research and design will be conducted on the axis between the sub-centres Kagran and Stadlau.

These areas are worth further exploration for multiple reasons. Firstly, the Donauzentrum as a commercial sub-centre has an economic and social impact beyond the borders of the district. Nevertheless, the area has not developed towards a comprehensive sub-centre that is comparable with the centres of the districts (City of Vienna, 2015). In its spatial diversity it is therefore unique in Vienna.

However, the individual spatial elements can be compared to other

locations. Structures like the major roads, the historic core of the village, or the shopping centre can be found in other parts of the city. This might make it possible to mainstream the results from this project in adapted forms.

Finally, the area is in a process of transformation. The surroundings are rapidly densifying. This might put increasing pressure on the area as a centre of the district.

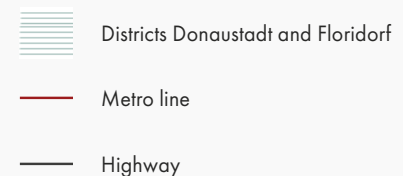


Fig. 19: Research focus area  
(by the author Basemap source:  
City of Vienna, 2018b)

## 3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

### Mixed methods approach

In the field of urbanism, problems need to be approached from multiple perspectives. Social, economic, spatial, and governance aspects need to be considered. Therefore, this project makes use of multiple methods that range from spatial analysis, over interviews, to design methods.

### Literature review

As the first step, an in-depth literature review was used to define the general problem and the research topic. The problem field and the research area were approached through a combination of literature and mapping. Readings on democracy, public space, and urban peripheries showed that the combination of these topics was an under-investigated subject.

Moreover, literature was used to put research into the context of an interdisciplinary knowledge base. Besides planning literature, I consulted publications from sociology and political science.

Finally, literature is consulted to critically reflect on the work that was done for this project.

### Spatial and socio-Spatial analysis

#### Mapping

Mapping is the central research method of this project. It is used to understand spatial structures on different scales. This method does not only depict existing spatial elements but can also help to uncover patterns that underlie their structure. These patterns can later be used in design explorations.

GIS-data, spatially located statistical data, and satellite images are complemented by information from google-street-view images and observations from field trips.

#### Mapping economic structures

The functions that surround public spaces are highly important for how it is used. Therefore, the local economic structure is analysed in this project. The aim is to gain a general understanding of how space is being used economically, where economic functions concentrate, and how the economic structure is changing. The focus lies on Kagran, with the main shopping centre and the historic street Wagramer Straße. However, larger economic structures are taken into account.

#### Infrastructure analysis

Another important motivation to enter public space is mobility. In this step, the important transport infrastructure is analysed. This comprises, for example, tram lines, metro stations, or pedestrian routes. For a deeper understanding of the flows that underlie mobility and how they create potentials for spatial use, a

space syntax analysis was conducted.

### Site visit

The goal of visiting the spaces in person is to understand the characteristics of different parks, squares, and streets. Because of the restrictions due to Covid-19 the possibilities to observe local public life were limited. However, field trips helped to understand spatial relations and to see the local manifestation of larger structures and transitions.

### Socio-demographic data

With a quantitative socio-demographic analysis I analyse the districts Floridsdorf and Donaustadt. I look at features like ethnic composition or educational levels. The aim of this step is to understand what social groups concentrate in certain parts of the districts and if there are strong boundaries between districts with a different social composition. This step can help to identify areas where action is necessary.



## Governance Analysis

The analysis of development processes and actors in the focus area is an important step towards a development strategy. The focus lies on projects and processes in the sub-centre Kagran. However, a wider context of policies and historic development is considered.

### Document and Policy analysis

As a first step, I analyse documents about objectives and processes as well as policies that shape planning in the area. The goal is to understand the actions of public actors and the legal context. It can also help to gain an idea of who has not been involved in the process and how other actors could be integrated.

### Actors mapping

As a second step, an actors mapping helps to get an overview of the actors and their relations. A power-interest matrix is a useful tool to understand what decisions are being made and which stakeholders could potentially be activated. It is based on the existing documents as well as expert interviews.

## Design Methods

Through a design approach, I explore potential spatial developments on different scales. Using the spatial patterns and systems that were identified in research, I test options for redensification, new connections, and public space redesign.

### Vision making

The development of a general vision and its translation to the local scale illustrates a potential future for the area. This approach guides the development of strategic interventions and spatial changes. It sometimes goes beyond changes that currently are realistic to highlight the potentials of existing spaces and to trigger a debate about how space is being used.

### Exploration of design alternatives

For parts of the project, I explored multiple alternatives. This approach highlights minimum developments that are necessary to achieve the envisioned goals. This helps to gain some distance from normative statements. For decisions that go beyond this minimum development, design alternatives leave space for debate. Therefore, this approach is particularly interesting in the context of democratic design.

## Expert Interviews

Semi-structured expert interviews were conducted to evaluate and contextualize the research results. Furthermore, they aimed at gaining additional information about actors and planning processes in Vienna.

### Sabine Knierbein

Prof. Dr. phil. Sabine Knierbein is the head of the Interdisciplinary Centre of Urban Culture and Public Space at TU Wien. She is an expert on political and social aspects of public spaces. She has conducted research on how policies shape public space in Vienna. Moreover, she has written about the relation between democracy and public space, for example as an editor of “City unsilenced: Urban resistance and public space in the age of shrinking democracy”.

The interview helped to better understand the spatial processes in the urban periphery. It gave insights in how global transitions influence local life. Moreover, it helped to understand the role of different actors in planning processes of Vienna and how those processes influence everyday life.

### Victoria Matejka

Victoria Matejka, BEd. is responsible for project management, supervision of implementation processes, and public relations at LA21 Donaustadt. Through working on projects together with the local population she knows about resident’s concerns and interests in relation to local urban development. Furthermore, she is an expert on participation processes and how they are applied in the district.

The interview contributed to an

understanding of local social and spatial challenges. Additionally, it brought valuable insights in formats of participation and challenges in their application.

### Johannes Suitner

Univ.Ass. Dipl.-Ing. Dr. Johannes Suitner is a researcher at the research unit of Urban and Regional Studies at TU Wien. He is an expert on planning theory, planning politics and planning history and has worked on projects about spatial development of north-east Vienna.

The goal of the interview was to gain insights about the spatial history of Donaustadt and Floridsdorf and to evaluate today’s development in the context of the historic background. Moreover, Suitner’s expertise about the Viennese planning system helped to position the project within the local planning and governance structures.

### Interview Anonymous

One interviewee did not want to be recognized by name.





# SCHLOSSEREI CHYTIL

Sehr geehrte Kunden!!  
wir sind übersiedelt!  
**FRANZ**  
am Ende  
22. Genochplatz 9

16



EING

# 4 RESEARCH RESULTS

This chapter summarizes the results of the research that was conducted for this project. The first section looks at socio-demographic conditions and how it relates to the spatial structure. The second part investigates the structure of centrality in the two districts and shows that there are three central corridors. Most public functions as well as economic and urban development cluster along these axis.





## 4.1 SOCIO-SPATIAL STRUCTURE

The urban periphery in north-east Vienna is spatially fragmented. Neighbourhoods from different time periods and with different spatial forms are often located right next to each other. But in many cases these neighbourhoods are separated through major roads, train tracks, functional gaps or the morphology itself.

As the results will show, the spatial fragmentation correlates with social fragmentation. The socio-demographic structure of neighbourhoods differs drastically. The dividing infrastructure corridors, in many cases, limit interaction between different neighbourhoods.

These results suggest that space in the urban periphery facilitates little interaction between neighbourhoods and therefore between social groups.

## THE EVOLUTION OF PUBLIC SPACES



Fig. 21: Image of Kagranner Platz around 1900 (Frey, 2021)

Fig. 20: Map of Kagrán 1912 (by the author, basemap: City of Vienna, 2020b)



Spatial artefacts of different historic periods shape the urban periphery until today. Historic villages still shape the centrality structure today. However, the most rapid growth took place after the second world war, a time of radical technological and economic changes (Suitner et al., 2018, p. 22).

The case of Kagrán illustrates this development. The settlement started out as a village in an area that was, at the time, separated from Vienna by the Danube river. Like many Villages in Lower Austria, Kagrán was structured around a central “Anker”, a square that emerges from the increase of the street width (Fig. 21). This square was a place with many functions like public meetings, conducting legal trials or being a grazing ground for life stock (Spektrum der Wissenschaft, n.d.). While the public of the village was relatively homogeneous (consisting mostly of farmer), it was clearly defined as a community and had a flexible public space as a centre.

The settlement structure changed radically with the construction of the tramway line to Floridsdorf in 1889 (City of Vienna, 2020a). The stronger infrastructure connection marked a starting point of the village’s integration into the city of Vienna. It officially became part of the city in 1905 (ibid.). Until 1912, the settlement expanded along the major roads and the tramway (Fig. 20). Instead of the central square, the street became the centre of public life (fig. 9). The tramway as the primary infrastructure drew people into public space and since the connection to Vienna improved, the former village became stronger attached to the bigger, more



diverse society and economy.

Urban development in the first half of the 20th century was strongly characterized by the social housing projects of “Red Vienna”. Large social housing complexes were constructed. Also housing corporations were supported by the city government. Fig. 23 shows these developments. It is visible that the new neighbourhood was conceptualized with its own public squares and streets, around which social and economic functions were concentrated.

Urban growth in the periphery of Vienna accelerated after the second world war. However, social and institutional infrastructure did not keep up with the decentralization of housing and the outer districts remain strongly dependent on the city centre of Vienna (Suitner et al., 2018, p. 22). With the aim to reduce the lack of centrality, the Donauzentrum (Fig. 25) is opened in 1975 (City of Vienna, 2017). It became the biggest shopping centre of the city and the centre of the district. Due to the concentration of shops and services in this private space, public spaces in the area are mostly used for mobility. In many parts of the area, this results in fragmented public spaces that are barely used, like the square in the



Fig. 22: Image of Wagramer Straße in the 1930s with the Café Falk and the tram line (Loub, n.d.)

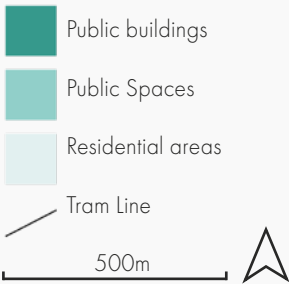
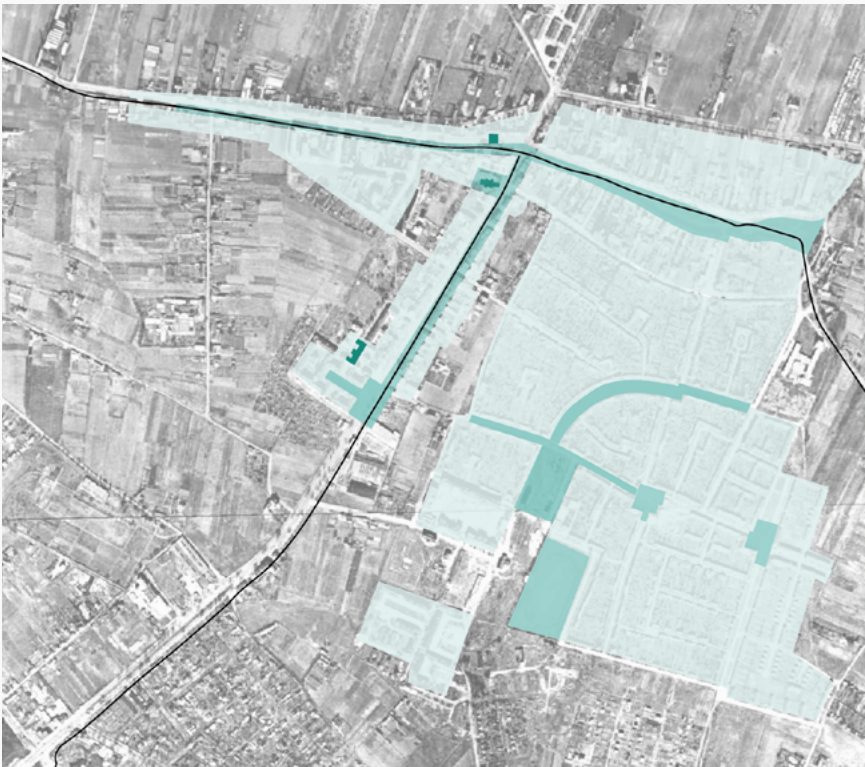
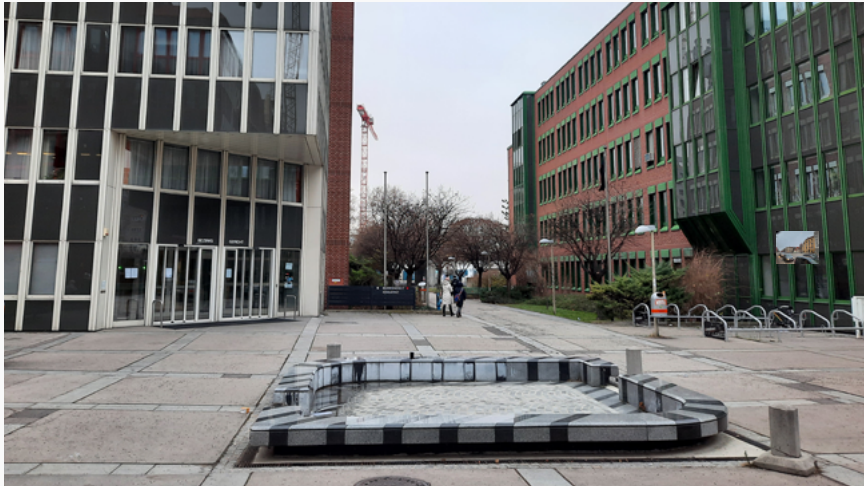


Fig. 23: Map of Kagran 1956 (by the author, basemap: City of Vienna, 2020a)







Prandaugasse (Fig. 24). Until today, there is a lack of a comprehensive public centre in the district (City of Vienna, 2015).



The development over decades has led to a complex pattern of neighbourhoods. Fig. 33 depicts the neighbourhood types as defined by the city of Vienna. It shows large parts of the district are dominated by single family houses. In the central area, however, housing complexes from 1961-1980 are dominant. The clear edges between these areas indicate some degree of spatial fragmentation. As will be showed below, these structural differences correlate with social fragmentation

Most neighbourhoods can be categorized in one of the six types to the right.

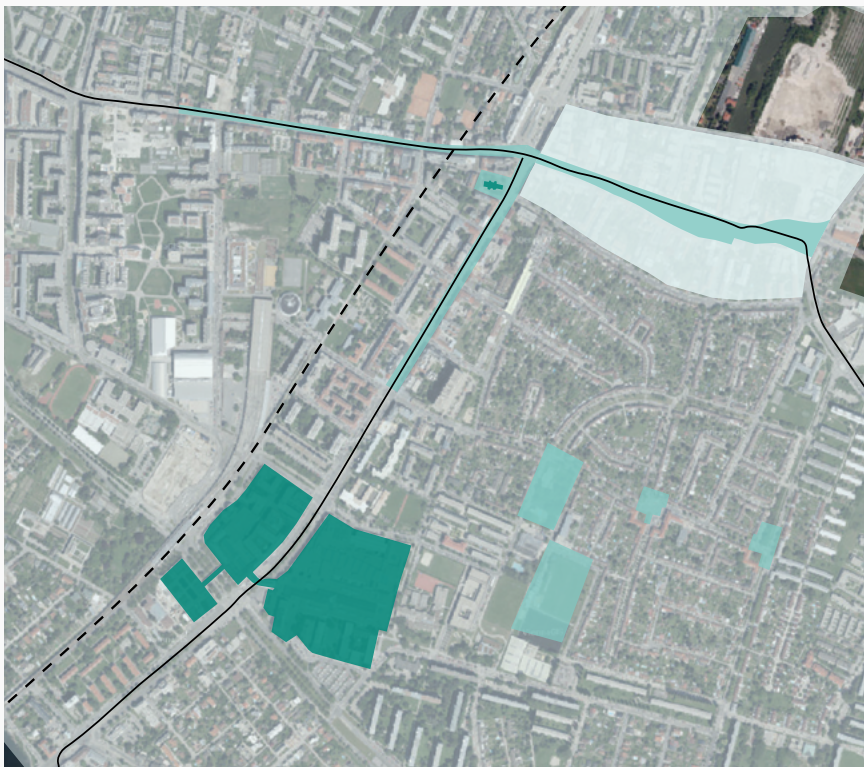


Fig. 24: Prandaugasse, a central square in the district centre that is surrounded by important institutions (by the author.)

Fig. 26: Wagrainer Straße and Café Falk in 2020 (by the author.)

Fig. 25: Map of Kagran 2019 (by the author, basemap: City of Vienna, 2021)





## NEIGHBOURHOOD STRUCTURE

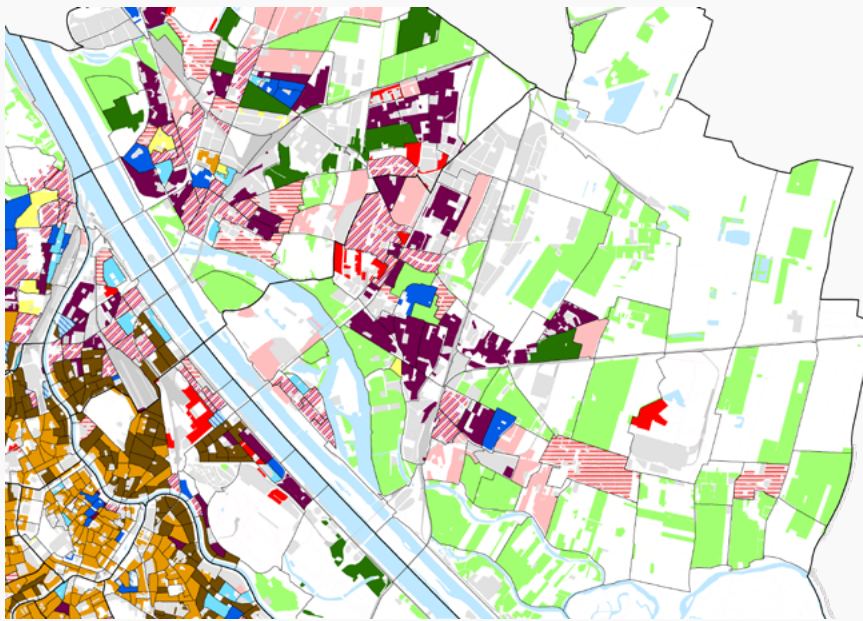


Fig. 33: Types of residential areas in Vienna  
(Source: City of Vienna, 2016)

- Single family houses
- Mixed: single family houses and multi-storey buildings
- Historic: High population density
- Historic: Medium population density
- Historic: Low building density
- Inter-war period 1919-1944
- Mixed: 1919-1960 dominant
- Reconstruction period 1945-1980
- Economic miracle 1961-1980
- Mixed: 1961-1980 dominant
- Built 1981-2000
- Mixed: after 1981
- Built after 2001

### Historic village



Fig. 27: Historic Kagran (Source: City of Vienna, 2021)

### Historic high density



Fig. 28: Blocks along Erzherzog Karl Straße  
(Source: City of Vienna, 2021)

### Post-war housing complexes



Fig. 29: Blocks along Siebenbürgerstraße  
(Source: City of Vienna, 2021)

### Inter-war rowhouse area



Fig. 30: Row house area "Freihofsiedlung"  
(Source: City of Vienna, 2021)

### Single family housing area



Fig. 31: Blocks along Siebenbürgerstraße  
(Source: City of Vienna, 2021)

### Contemporary development area



Fig. 32: Blocks along Tokiostraße (Source: City of Vienna, 2021)

## MOBILITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

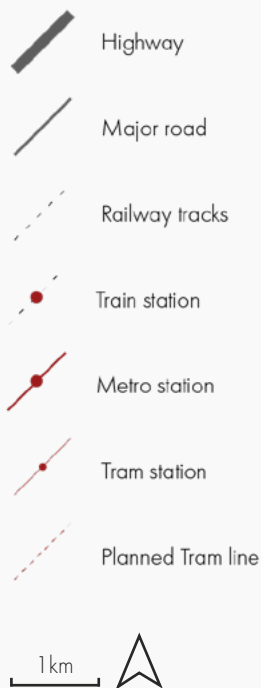
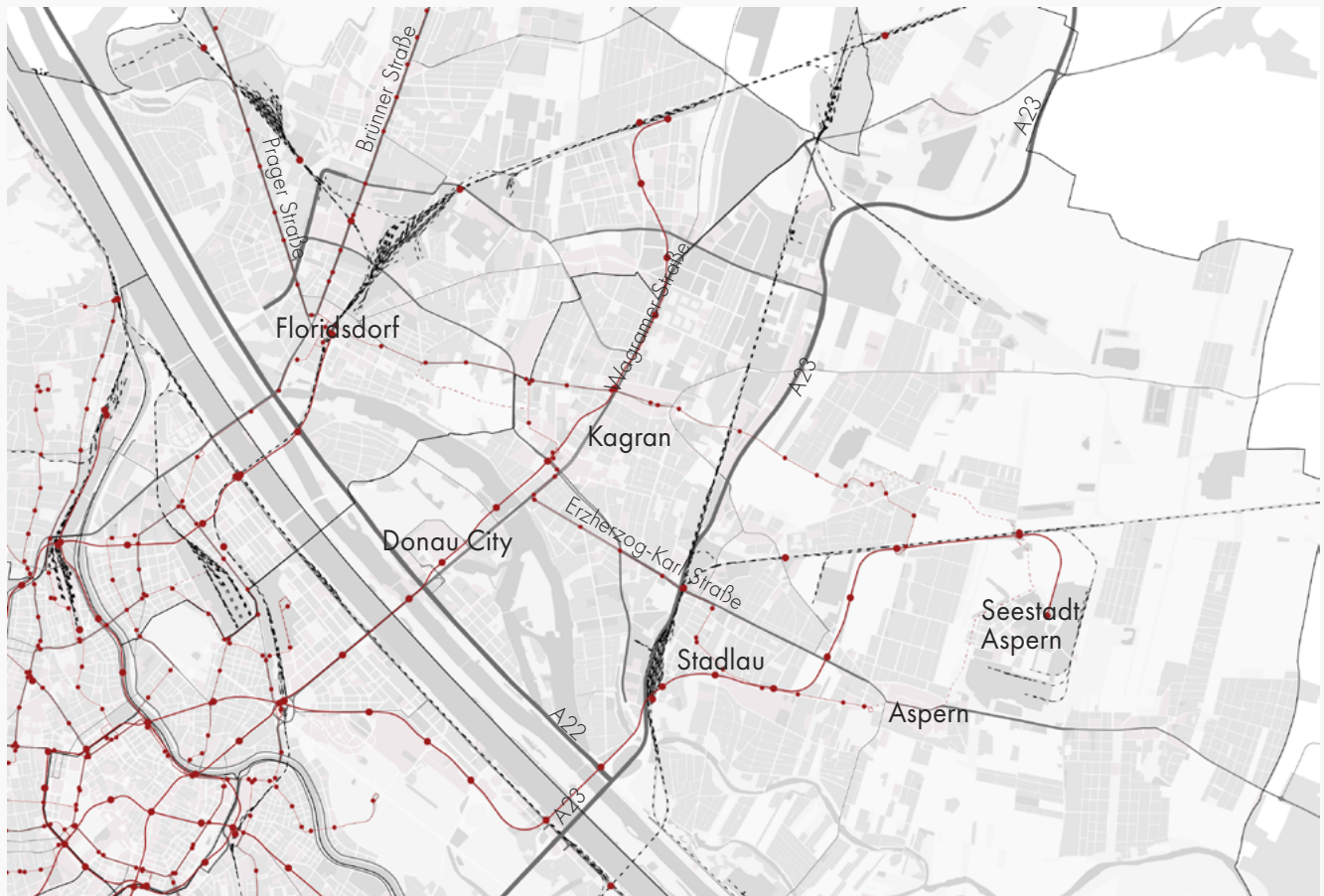


Fig. 34: Infrastructure networks (By the author. Data sources: Wiener Linien, 2020; Basemap source: City of Vienna, 2020)

The infrastructure corridors of north-east Vienna have a strong influence on the area's urban development. Therefore, they are critical for the understanding of urban fragmentation.

There are three metro lines crossing the Danube. These integrate the districts Donaustadt and Floridsdorf with the inner city.

The major train lines that run through the area date back to the Austrian-Hungarian empire and connect Vienna to the neighbouring countries.

The highway A23 comes from the south and crosses the Danube close to Stadlau. It connects to the A22, another highway that runs along the Danube.

Additionally, multiple major roads connect the area but at the same time divide it. The Wagramerstraße

connects Kagran to the city centre of Vienna. The Brünner Straße and Prager Straße run from Floridsdorf outwards. And the Erzherzog Karl Straße connects Kagran and Stadlau.



The map to the right where car-ownership rates are highest. It shows a clear correlation with neighbourhood types, economic status and public transport infrastructure.

Fig. 36 depicts a block that has relatively low car-ownership (310-363 per 1000 inh.) rates. However, the design is still car-oriented. It has large parking spaces between the buildings and the walking distances are relatively far. This might indicate the need for a more pedestrian-friendly design.

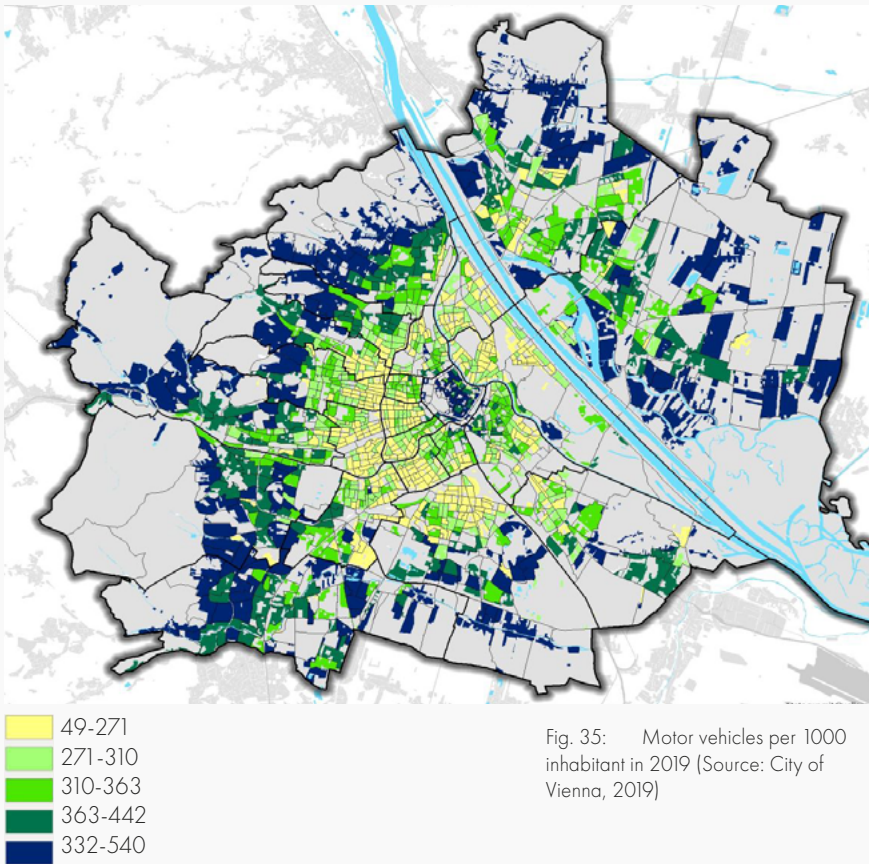
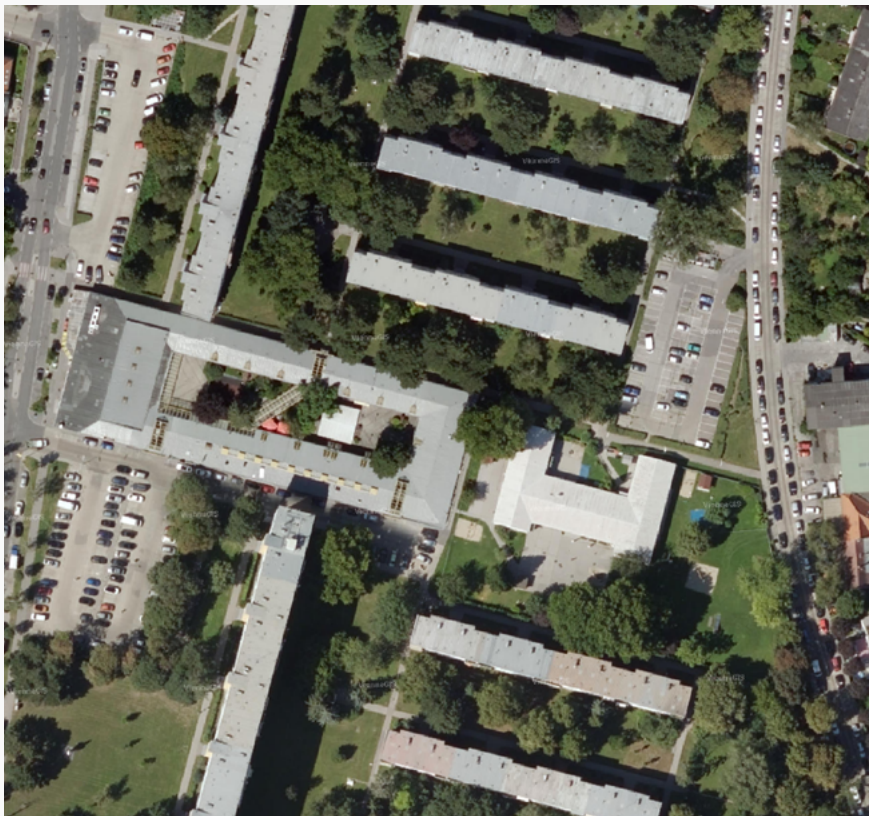


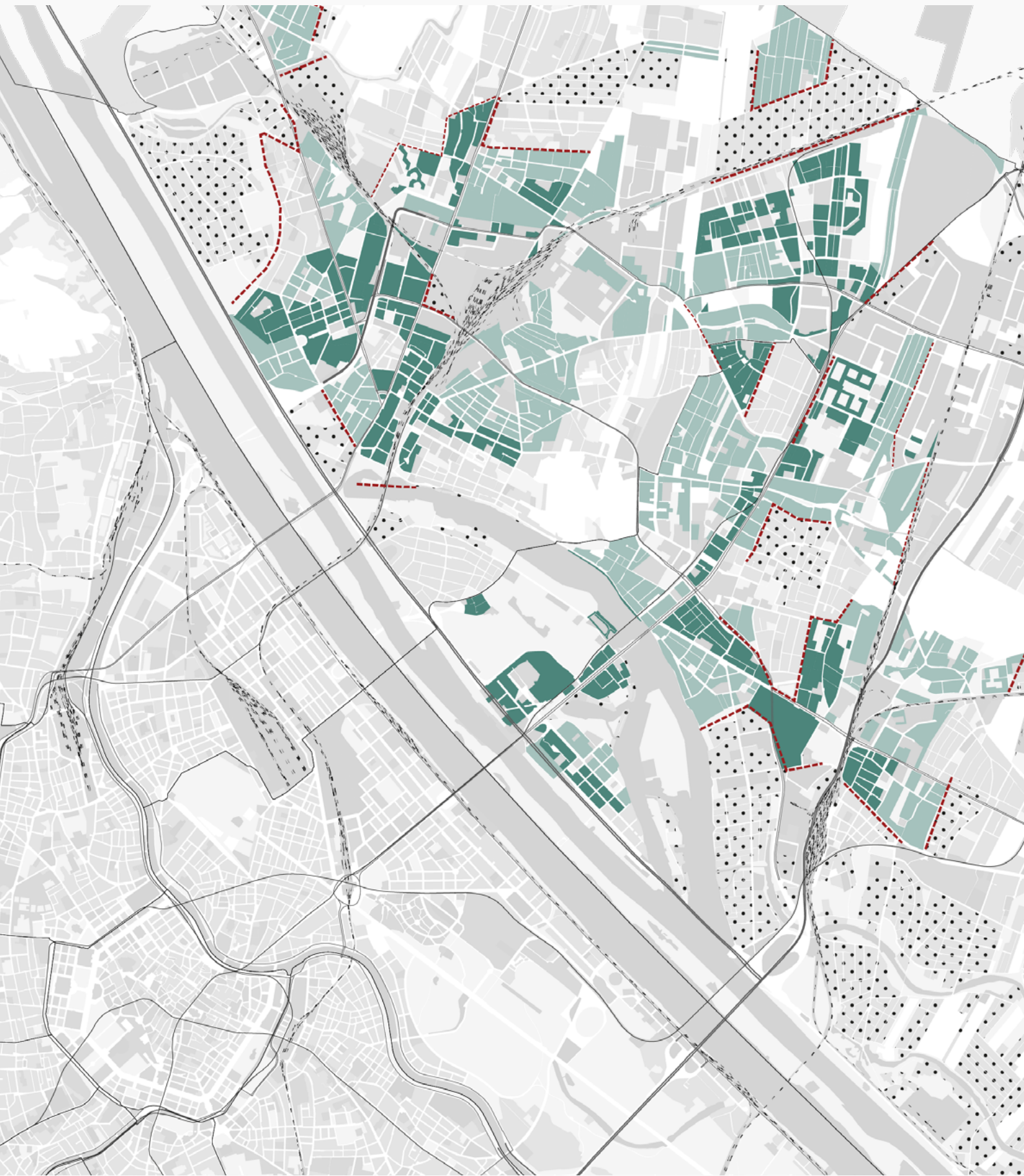
Fig. 35: Motor vehicles per 1000 inhabitant in 2019 (Source: City of Vienna, 2019)

Fig. 36: Blocks along Siebenbürgerstraße (Source: City of Vienna, 2021)





ETHNIC DIVERSITY





## Conclusion Ethnic diversity

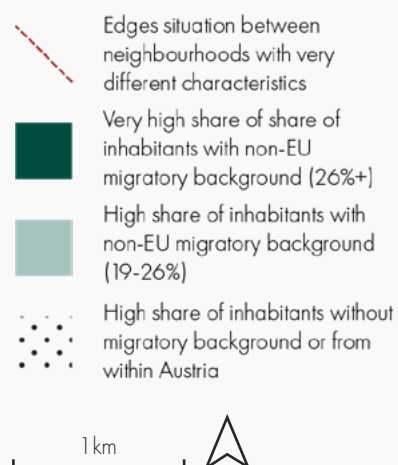


Fig. 37 draws conclusions from the analysis above. The red lines symbolize edges between neighbourhoods with very different characteristics. These edges might be interesting for interventions in public space with the goal to facilitate interaction between different social groups.

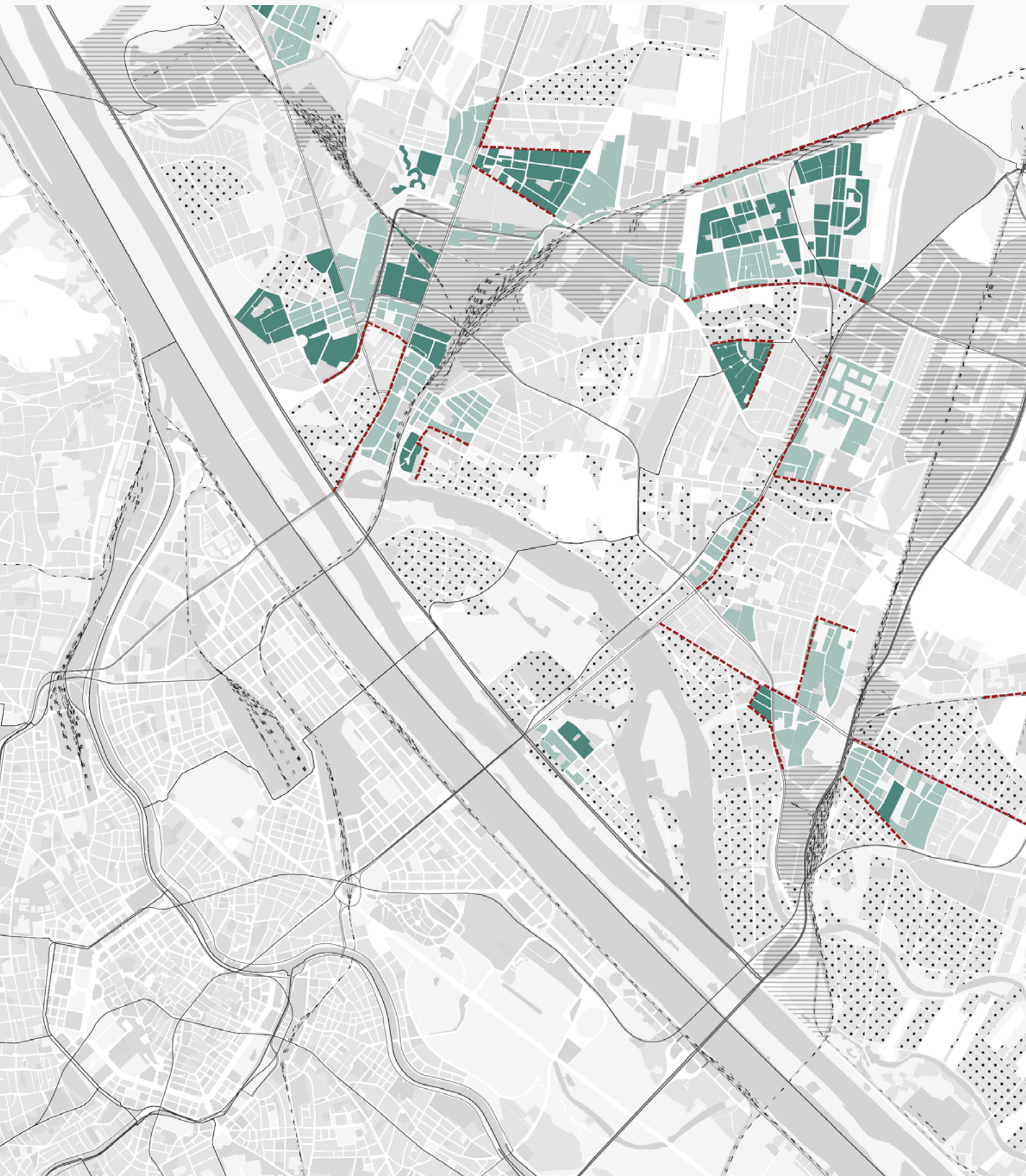
Areas with a growing share of inhabitants with migratory background indicate the potentially increasing conflicts for public space and of anti-migrant sentiments. This might be even stronger if these neighbourhoods were predominantly inhabited by inhabitants with no migratory background.

More details about the socio-demographic analysis can be found in the appendix.

Fig. 37: Conclusions from migratory background analysis (by the author. Data source: Statistik Austria, edited by City of Vienna, Municipal department 23)

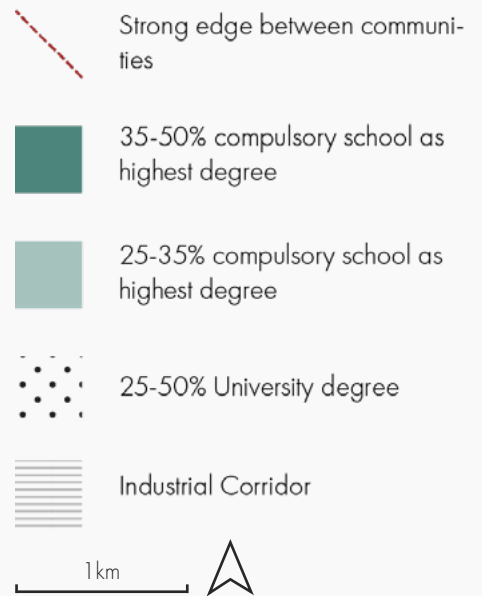


EDUCATIONAL LEVELS





## Conclusion Educational levels



The analysis of educational levels shows where social groups concentrate. This map shows the strong edges between neighbourhoods with high shares of inhabitants with lower education and those neighbourhoods where highly educated inhabitants concentrate. A conclusion from the analysis is the location of strong edges between neighbourhoods with a very different social structure.

Fig. 38: Conclusion from Educational analysis (by the author. Data source: Statistik Austria, edited by City of Vienna, Municipal department 23)



## POTENTIAL FOCUS AREAS

The socio-demographic criteria described above are related to spatial neighbourhood structures. The neighbourhood types symbolize the most common structures in the districts. The table in Fig. 40 shows what areas might be particularly interesting for spatial interventions. An important criterion are edge situations between neighbourhoods with very different social structures.

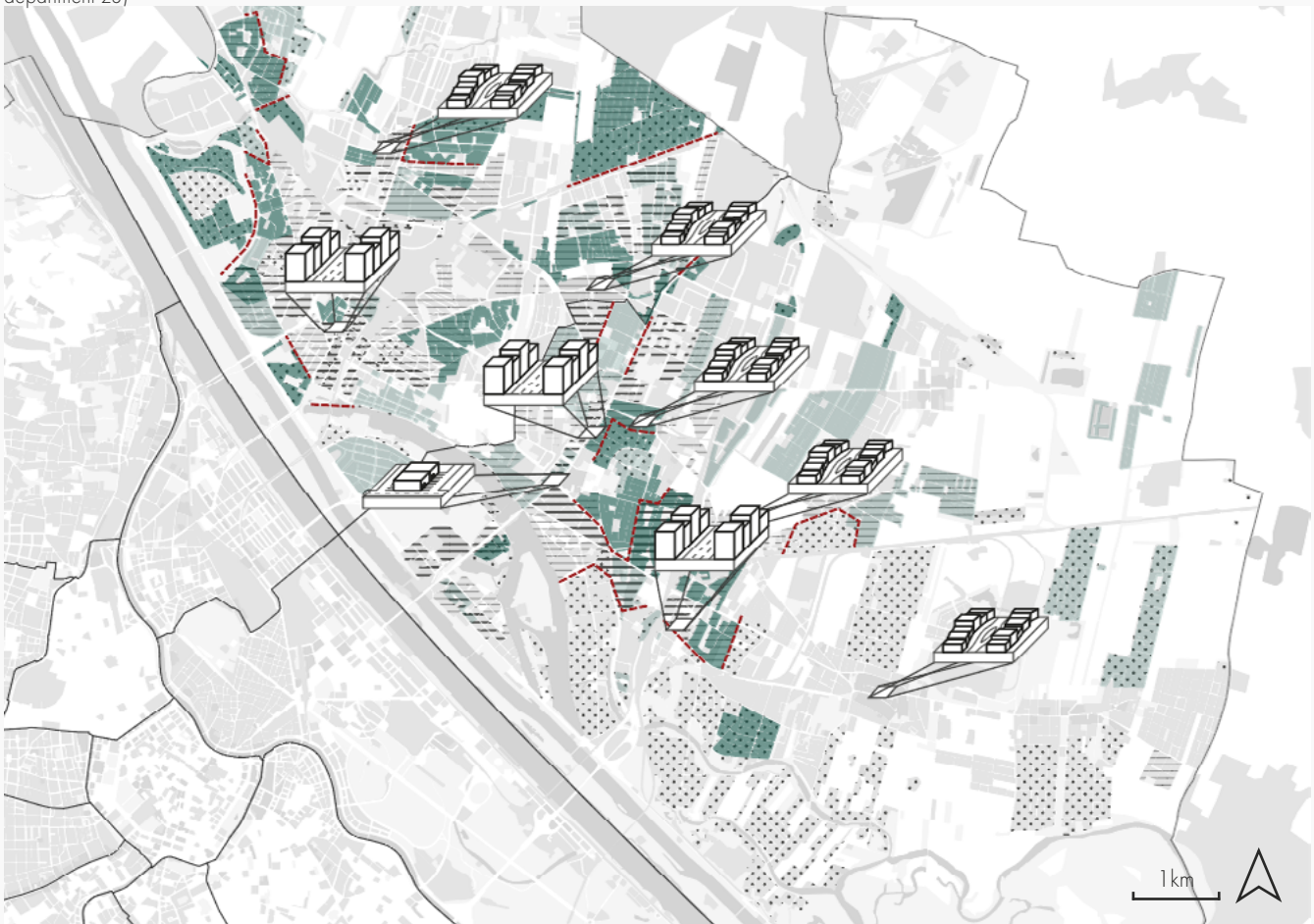
The share of inhabitants with migratory background has increased the strongest in single family housing areas. This might be related to the currently low shares of migrants in these areas.

Row-house areas are the most homogenous neighbourhoods, followed by detached family housing areas.

These are particularly interesting if they are in an edge situation.

Finally, the more densely populated areas and post-war housing complexes often have a more mixed population. These areas also show higher concentration of groups that are threatened by deprivation.

Fig. 39: Conclusion: Neighbourhood types and edges (by the author. Data source: Statistik Austria, edited by City of Vienna, Municipal department 23)



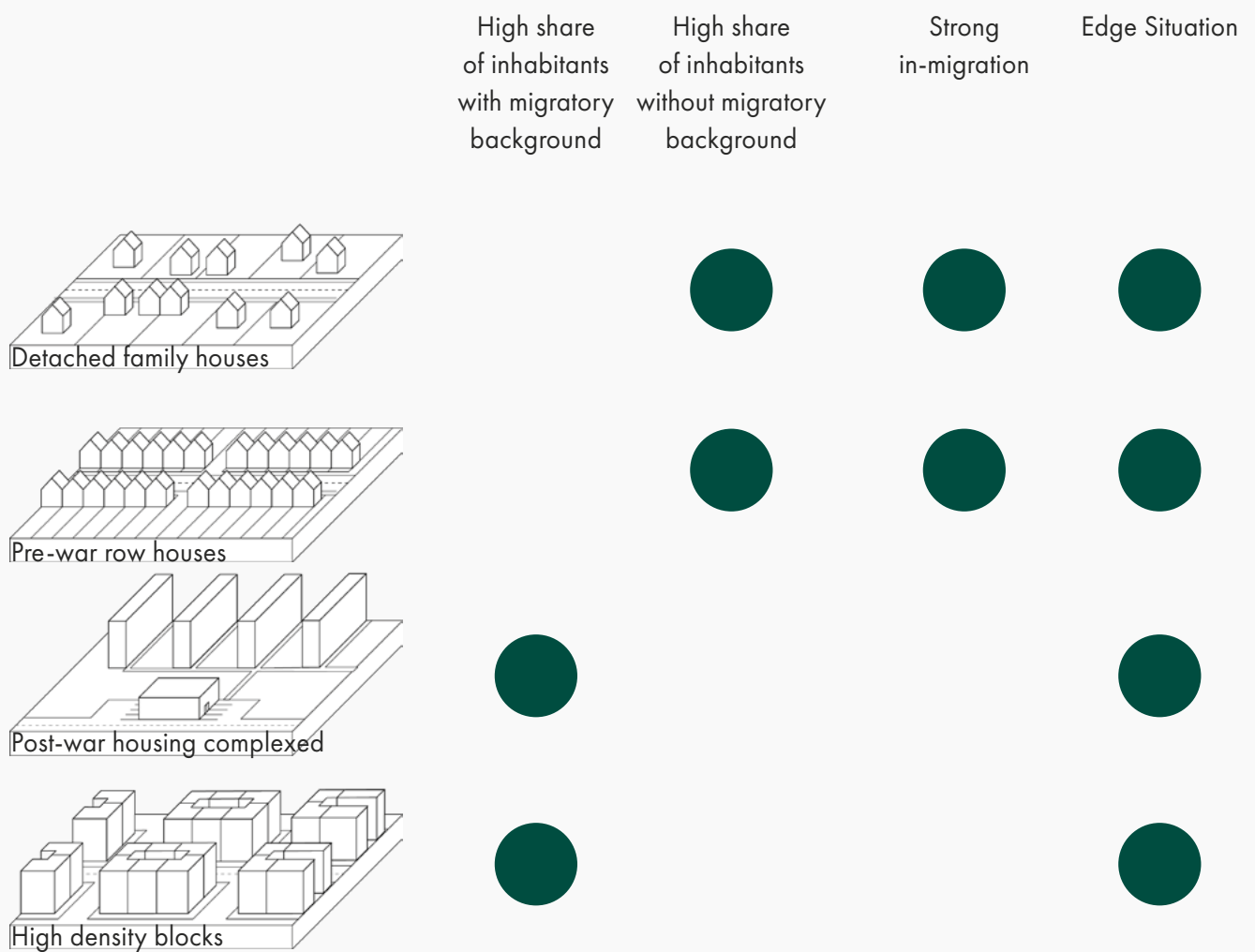


Fig. 40: Conclusion:  
Neighbourhood types  
by spatial and social  
character (by the  
author.)



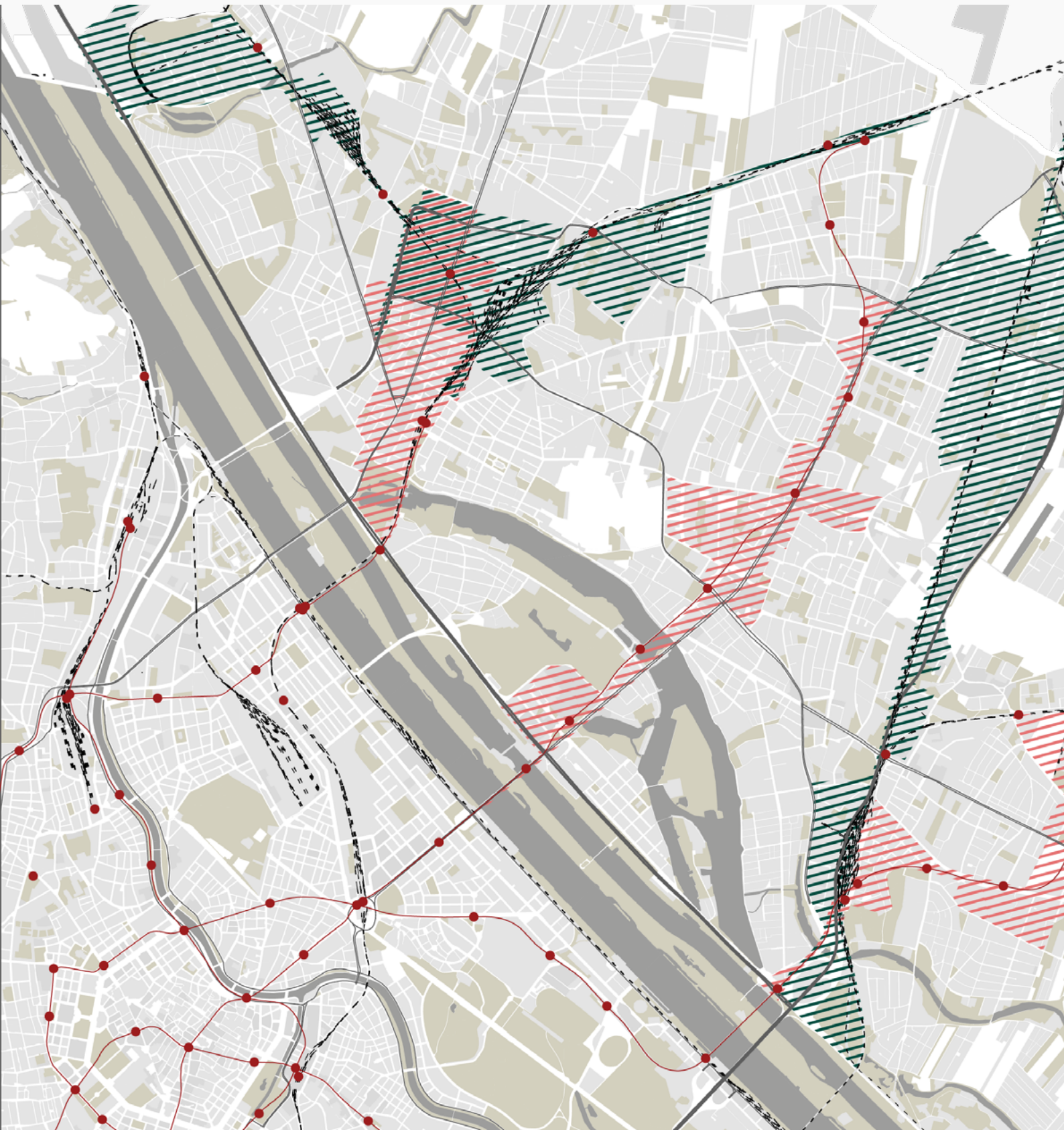
## 4.2 CORRIDORS OF INTEGRATION

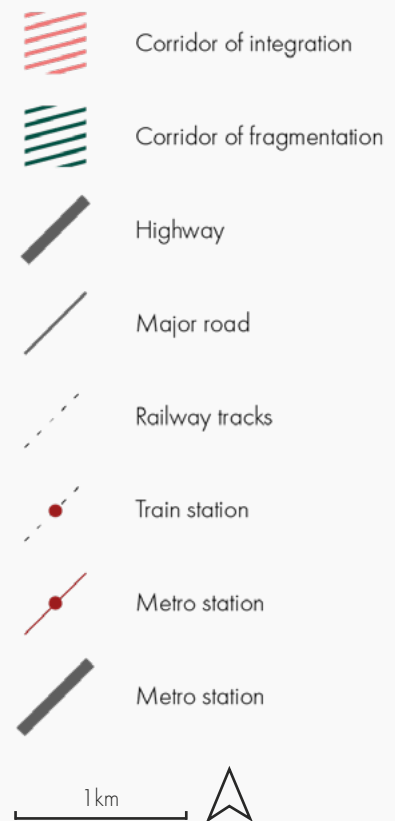
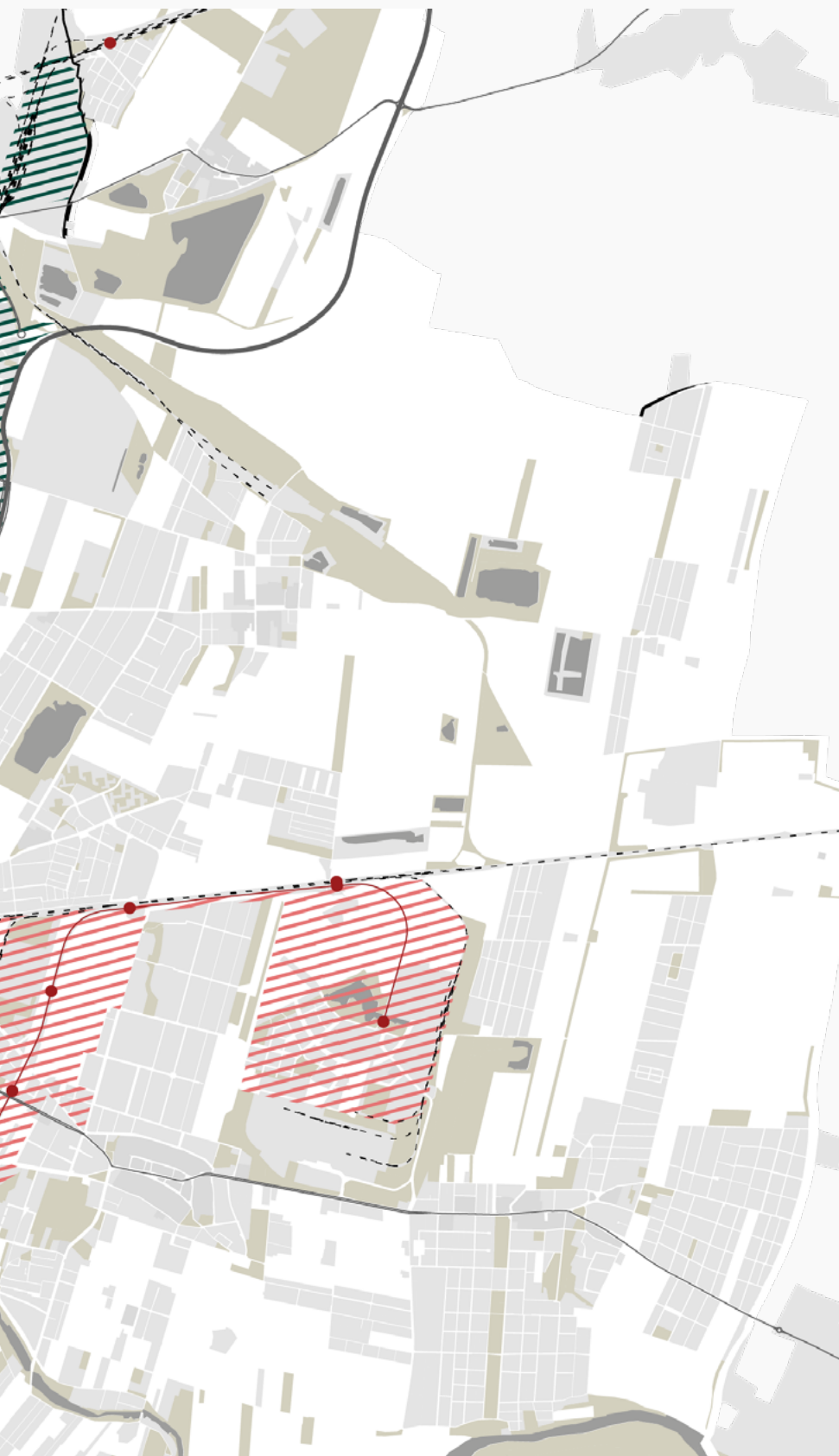


This section analyses the centrality structure in the two districts. There are strong central areas. However, most of them are monofunctional and mainly economic.

Moreover, most public functions in north-east Vienna cluster along three corridors. These dominate existing public functions as well as contemporary development.

## CORRIDORS OF INTEGRATION AND FRAGMENTATION



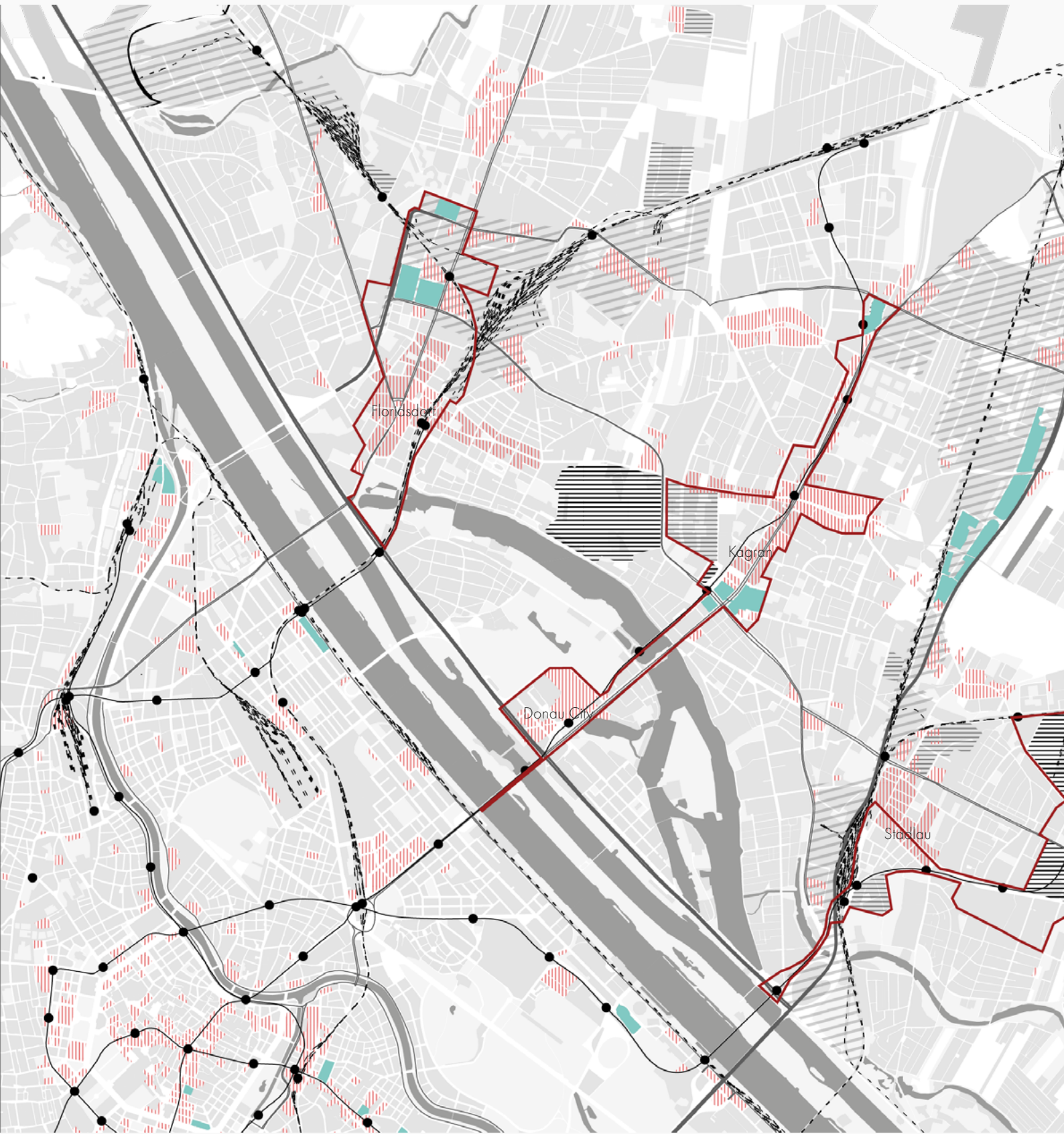


North-east Vienna is dominated by multiple corridors that both contribute to its fragmented structure. On the one hand, there are well integrated corridors that cluster most public functions and urban development projects. On the other hand, industrial corridors divide the districts and separate local communities.

Fig. 41: Corridors of integration and fragmentation (by the author based on satellite images. basemap source: City of Vienna, 2018b)



CORRIDORS OF INTEGRATION





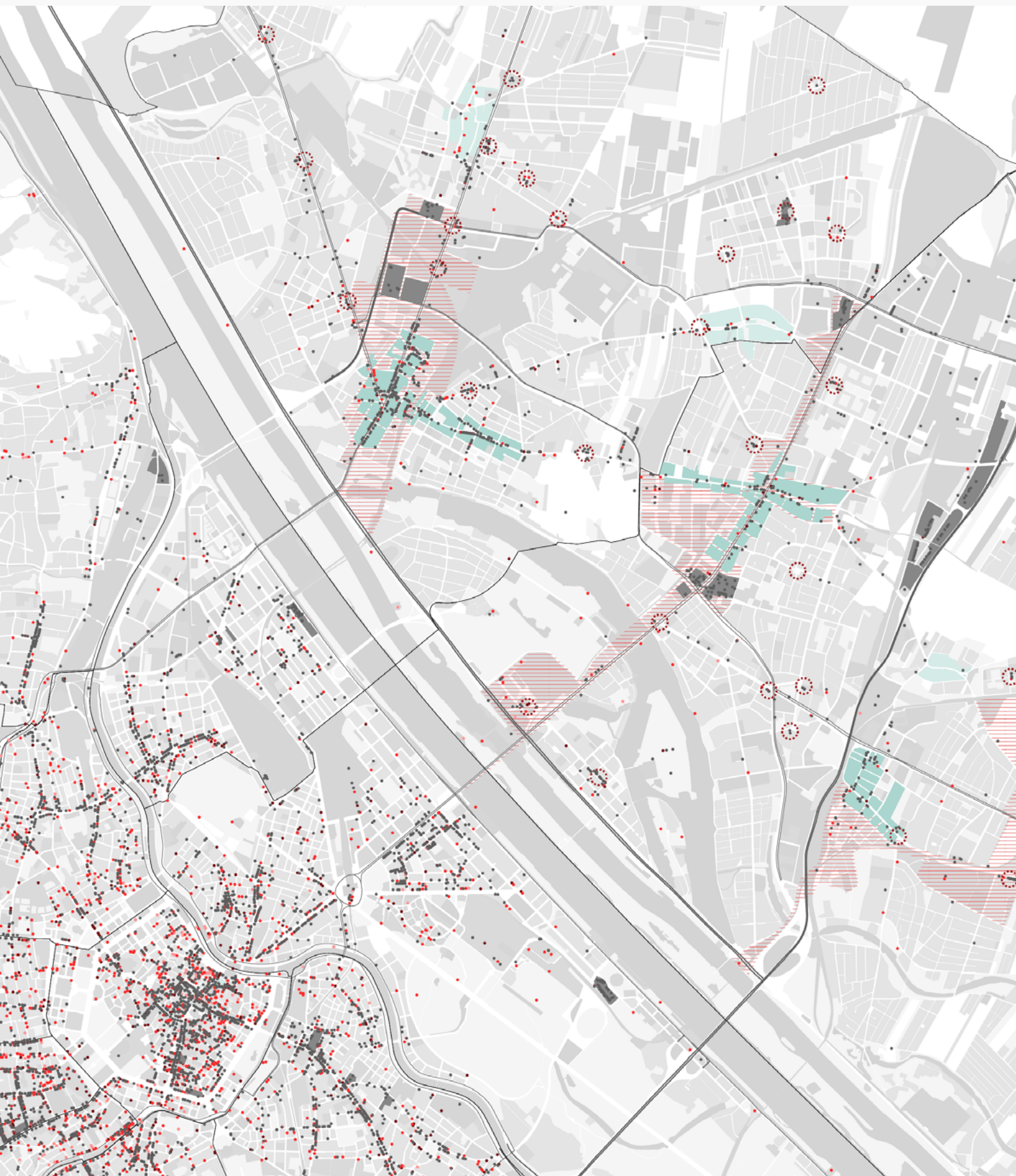
The three well integrated corridors around Floridsdorf, Kagran, and Seestadt Aspern dominate public life and urban development. Each of these corridors is connected to a metro line and the high-order street network. Most high-order functions and commercial centres are located along these corridors. Moreover, most large-scale residential development takes place in their surroundings. Especially the newest corridor along the U2 in the east is under rapid transformation.

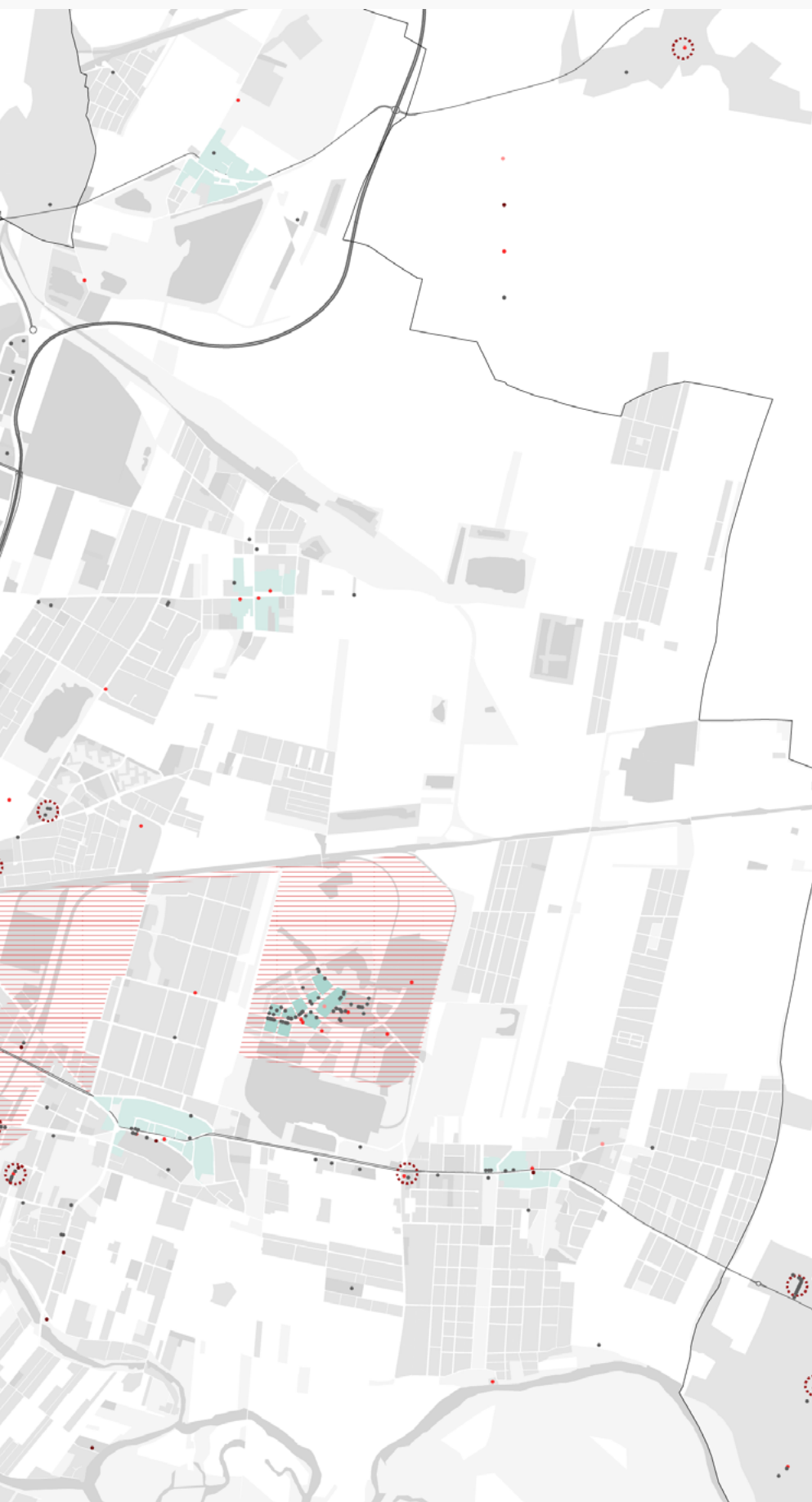
However public life in these corridors is still fragmented and in some ways the corridors increase this fragmentation. Moreover, shopping centres in strategic positions dominate public life and inhibit the consolidation of other centres.










Fig. 42: Urban development areas, commercial centres and central corridors of public life (by the author. Data source: City of Vienna, 2018)

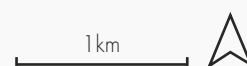


CENTRES AND SUBCENTRES





-  Central Streets
-  Historic Villages
-  Local Sub-centres
-  Shopping Centres
-  Shops
-  Restaurants
-  Cafés
-  Bars
-  Central Corridors



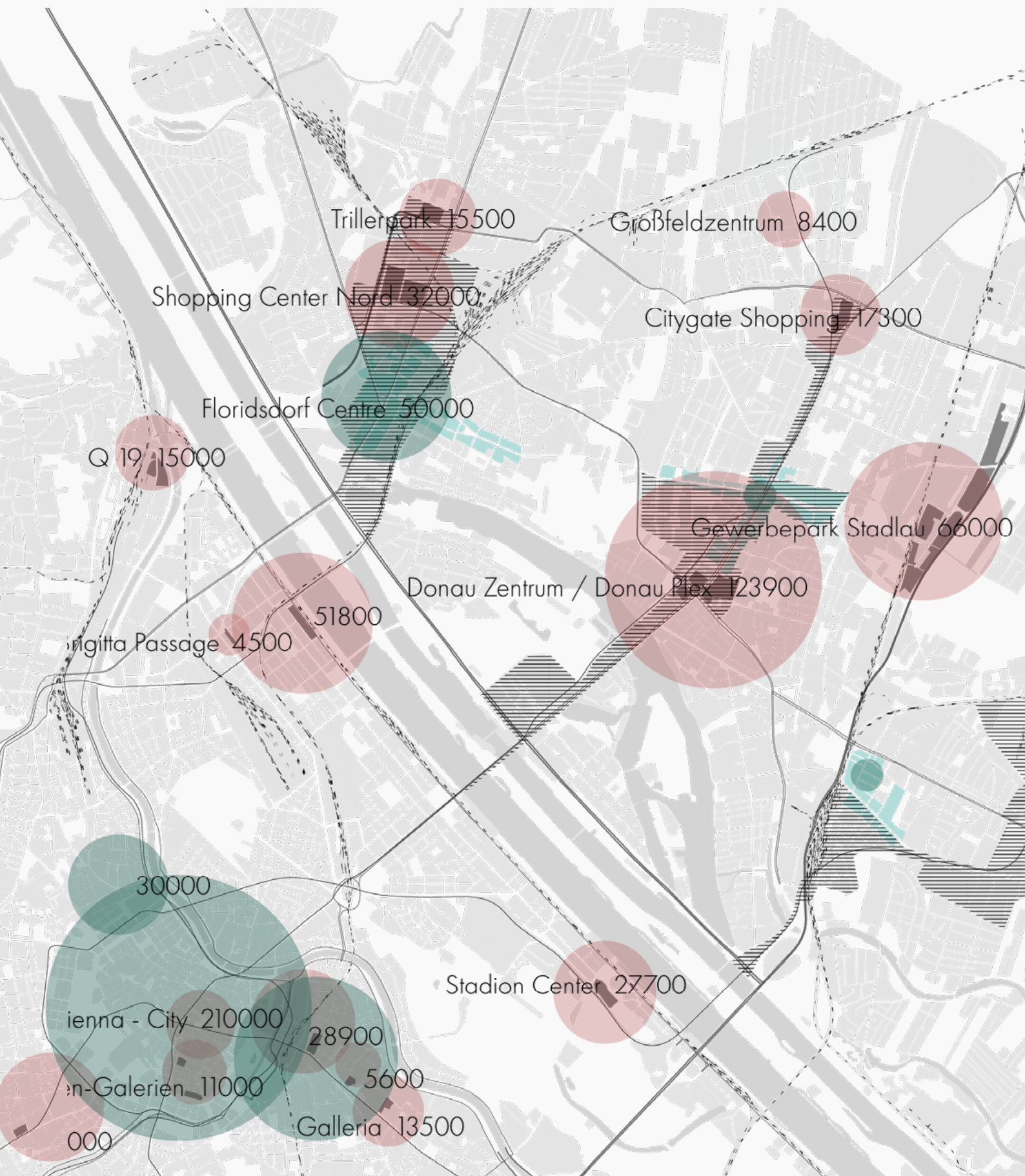
### Centres and Subcentres

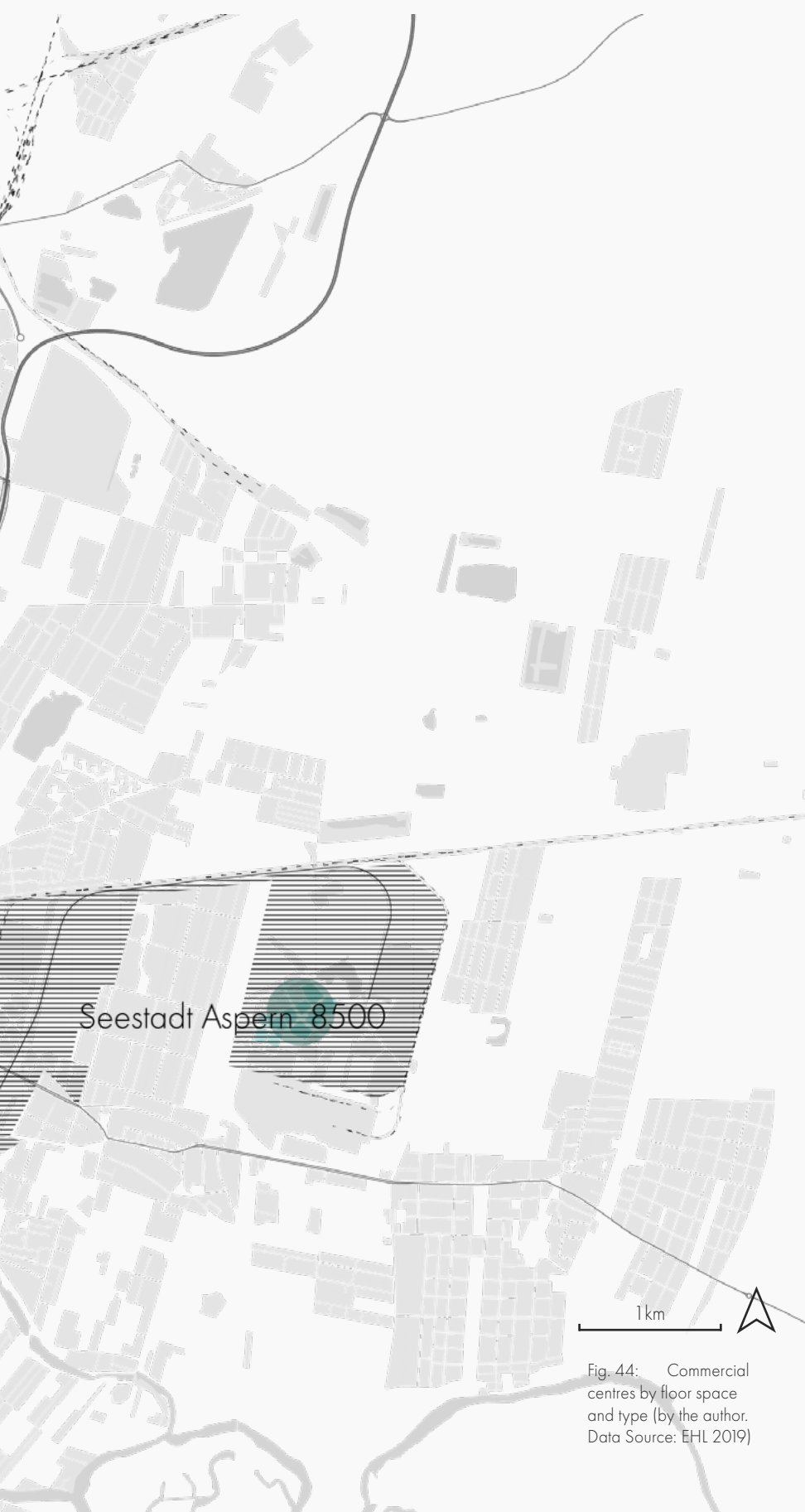
There are multiple historic and modern sub-centres spread over the districts. However, the smaller sub-centres are often mono-functional spaces and often serve only one community. Hence, they do not bring different communities together. Also the central streets are struggling with the dominance of shopping centres (see next chapter) and lack attractive public spaces.

Fig. 43: Centres and sub-centres (by the author. Data source: Open Street Map; City of Vienna 2018b)





## 4.2.1 CONCENTRATION OF COMMERCIAL FUNCTIONS








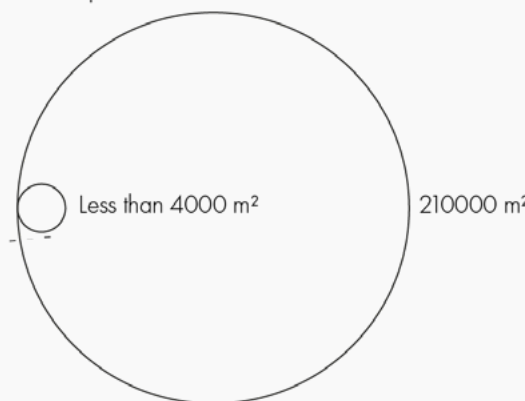
#### Commercial Centres

-  Shopping Centre
-  Shopping Streets

#### Commercial Centres by Retail Space

-  Shopping Centre
-  Integrated Shopping Centre
-  Shopping Street

#### Retail Space



This map depicts economic centres in the districts. It differentiates between shopping streets, integrated shopping centres and non-integrated shopping centres. Integrated are those that are part of the urban fabric and can be reached by foot. As economic functions are an important reason for using public spaces, the concentration in private complexes can weaken public life.

It highlights how dominated Donaustadt and Floridsdorf are by shopping centres. Because of the high levels of car-use, the historic centres of Floridsdorf as well as Kagran currently have little chances to attract visitors from the shopping centres.

Fig. 44: Commercial centres by floor space and type (by the author. Data Source: EHL 2019)



## 4.3 LOCAL PUBLIC LIFE



The third section looks at the public spaces on the local level. It focuses on the centre of Kagran as this area is often seen as the centre of the district Donaustadt.

The local supply in many neighbourhoods eroded. Existing sub-centres are often mono-functional or struggle due to new shopping malls. This means, that sub-centres do not fulfil their potential to connect neighbourhoods and to create spaces of co-presence.



Fig. 45: Entrances at Wagramer Straße and Donauzentrum (by the author. Data sources: Google Maps; Aeneas Beteiligungsgesellschaft mbH, n.d.)



The Donau Zentrum is the biggest shopping centre of Vienna and functions as the core of Donaustadt. This raises the question how shopping centres affect the democratic performance of space.

Fig. 45 highlights entrances to shops and other functions on the Wagramer Straße and in the Donau Zentrum. It shows the concentration of shops in the shopping centre and how much they are oriented to the inside. Inner spaces are full

of commercial functions (Fig. 47) and do not offer much space for communication between customers or even appropriation of space.

The spaces outside the shopping centre, on the other hand, are mainly characterized by plane walls, very few entrances, and car traffic.

The Schrödingerplatz can be described as the district's main square,. However, more public life could be observed at the entrance of the shopping centre toward the metro

station Fig. 48. The district council and a complex of labour union and public library is located on its western side.

However, it attached to the south of the shopping centre and most pedestrians use it to get from parking lots to the mall.

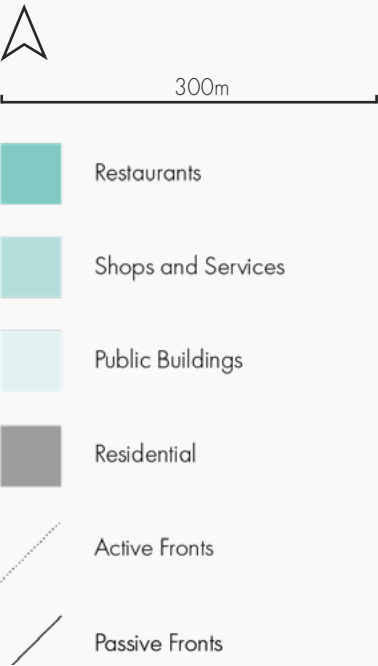
Fig. 47: Interior of Donauzentrum (by the author)



Fig. 48: The square between Donau Zentrum and Metro station Kagran was the only place where a large and diverse accumulation of people could be observed during field trips (by the author.)



Fig. 46: Street-scape in front of Donau Zentrum (by the author)





## WAGRAMER STRASSE



Fig. 49: Wagramer Straße (by the author)

Fig. 50: Wagramer Straße (Source: Google Street View)

### Plinth activity

The Wagramer Straße is a historic axis towards the city centre of Vienna and the expansion of the historic village of Kagan. Multiple historic buildings (see Fig. 50) are still present in the street.

Today, the street is dominated by traffic as it became one of the major corridors for through traffic.

Moreover, the Donau Zentrum gained economic dominance over the street since the 1970s. This is illustrated by Fig. 51.

As a result, many shops are vacant or disappear due to redensification. Fig. 50 shows the difference between historic buildings with public functions in the plinth and new residential buildings that often do not offer retail spaces.

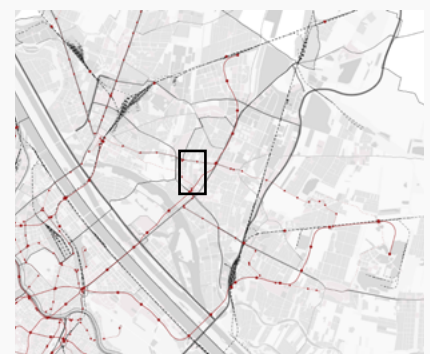




Fig. 51: Functions at Wagramer Straße (by the author. Data sources: Open Street Map and field work)





### Building age

During the last years, many historic buildings have been demolished and the street's character has changed radically. Fig. 53 illustrates which buildings have been replaced since 1997.

The replacement of historic buildings does not only impact the local character, it is also accompanied by the loss of active plinths. Fig. 54 shows the building ages and where plinths are active. In a clear pattern it becomes visible that almost all buildings that were constructed after 1990 lack functions in the plinth. It also shows that already more than half of the historic street's building stock has been replaced.

Fig. 52 shows how the emerging space looks like. The street seems to be at risk of becoming a traffic axis with purely residential functions.



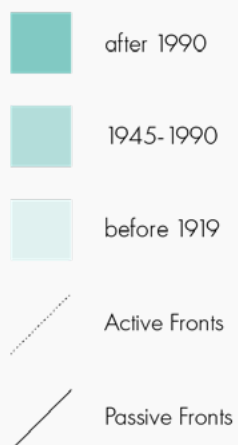
Fig. 53: Demolished and reconstructed buildings since 1990 (By the author. Source: Scherer, 2020)

Fig. 52: Wagramerstraße (Source: Google Street View)

Fig. 54: Protected areas in Kagran (Source: (City of Vienna, n.d.-a))

However, progress in protecting the historic ensemble has been made. Since 2017 parts of it have been declared as protected area (Fig. 54). This means that demolition becomes more complicated, but is still possible (Suitner et al., 2018). Considering the large improvement of value that is generated from replacing two-storey buildings by up to seven storeys, investors will put a lot of effort in circumventing the new regulation.

Fig. 55: Buildings on Wagramerstraße by building age (by the author. Sources: City of Vienna, n.d.-b)



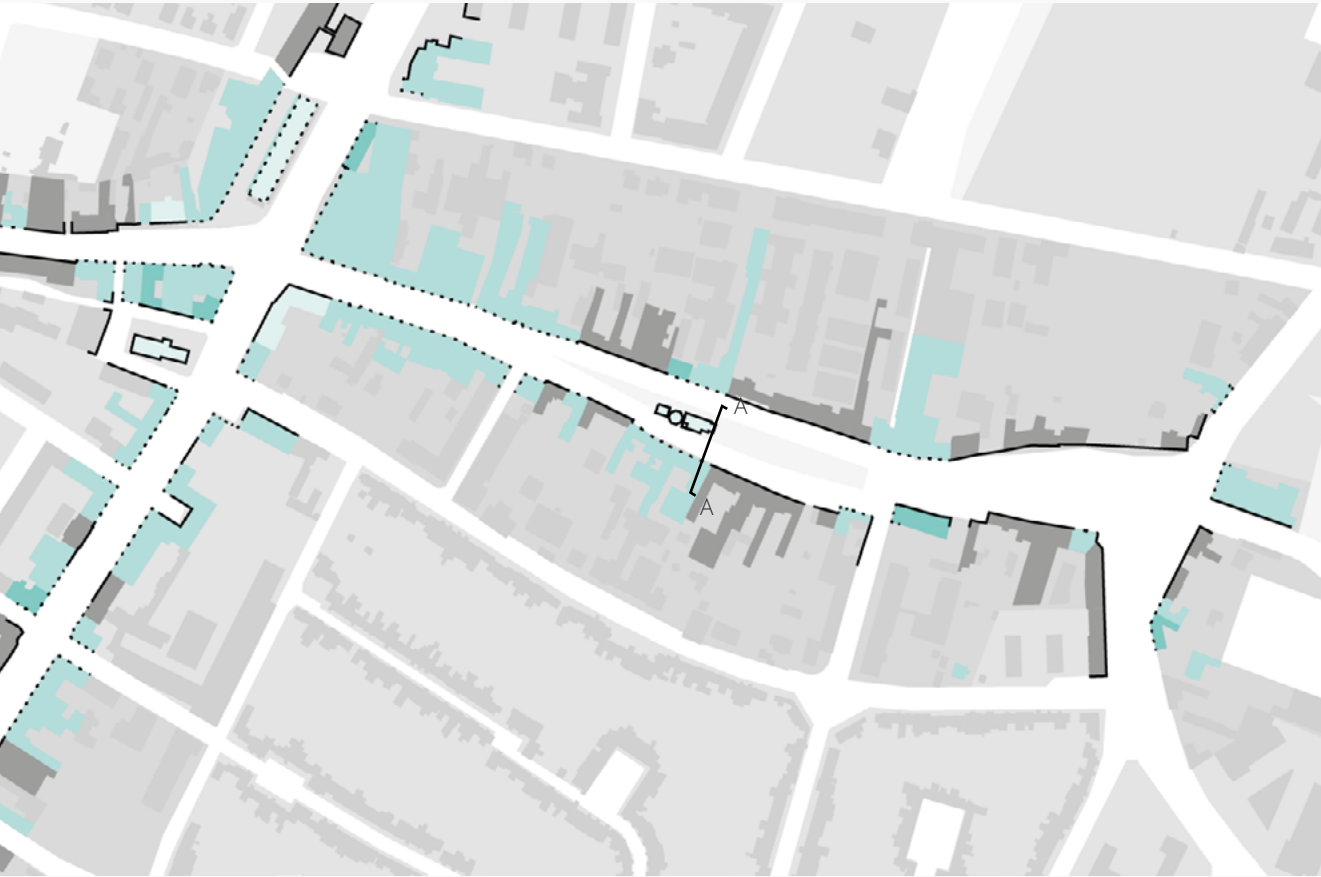
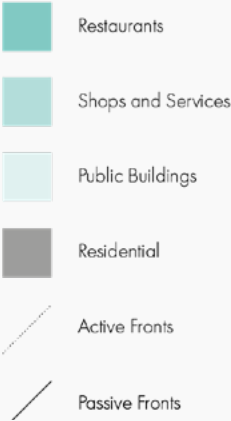
# KAGRANER PLATZ



Fig. 57: Demolished building on Kagranner Platz (Source: Google Street View)

Fig. 56: Functions on Kagranner Platz (by the author. Sources: Open Street Map and field work)

The Kagranner Platz is the oldest part of the area. Although also on this square many old buildings have been demolished (Fig. 57), it has preserved much of its historic character. Nonetheless, most of the public space is used for car parking, the tram line and car lanes. The square could have potential for revitalization.





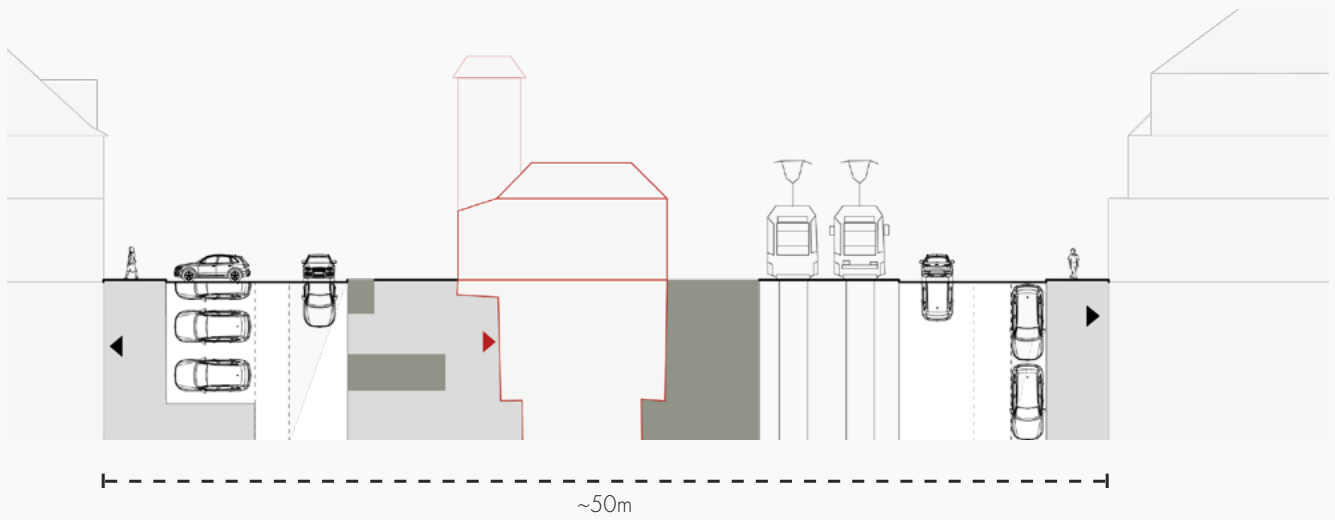


Fig. 59: Section Kagranner Platz A-A (by the author.)

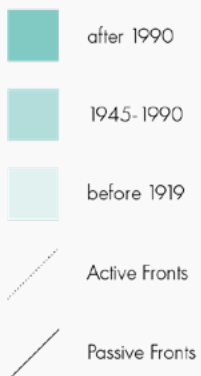
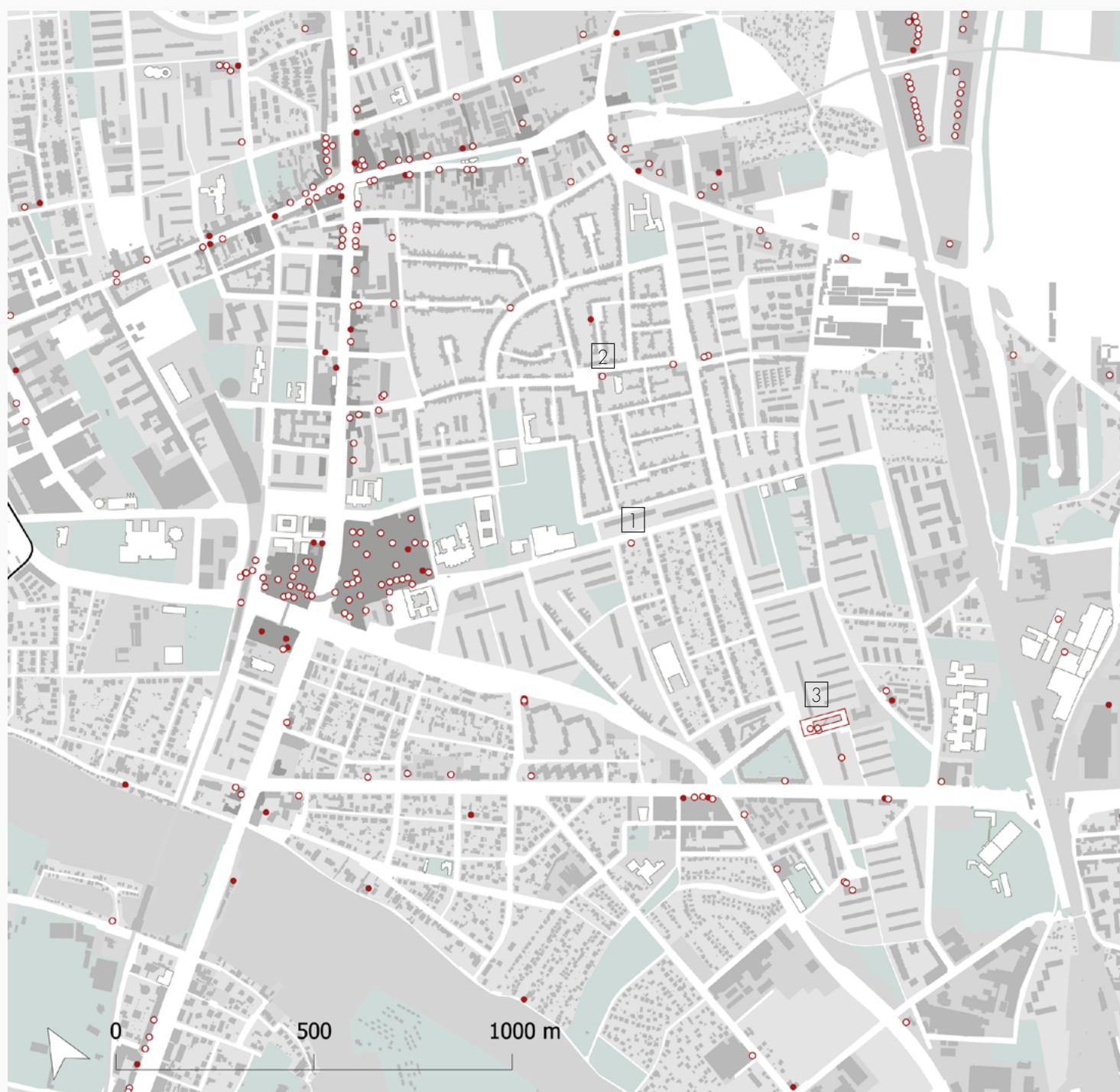


Fig. 58: Building ages Kagranner Platz (by the author.  
Sources: City of Vienna, n.d.-b)



## 4.3.1 SHOPS AND HOSPITALITY IN LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOODS



- Shops
- Cafés, bars, and restaurants

Fig. 60: Distribution of shops and hospitality functions along the axis Kragan-Stadlau (by the author. Sources: Open Street Map and field work)

The analysis of shops, cafés, and restaurants clearly shows the concentration of most functions in the centre of Kragan and Stadlau. Functions in-between are mostly neighbourhood-oriented. For instance, there are some shops for local daily supply (Fig. 61) or neighbourhood restaurants. Other

functions concentrate in small shopping centres that are oriented towards a single neighbourhood (Fig. 63).

There are also indications that many functions in the neighbourhoods have closed down (Fig. 62). The increasing commercial concentration might be a reason for this.





Fig. 61: Tobacco shop at Bernoullistrasse (by the author.)

Fig. 62: Vacant bakery in Freihofsiedlung (by the author.)

Fig. 63: Shopping centre Siebenbürgerstraße (by the author.)



## 4.3.2 SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

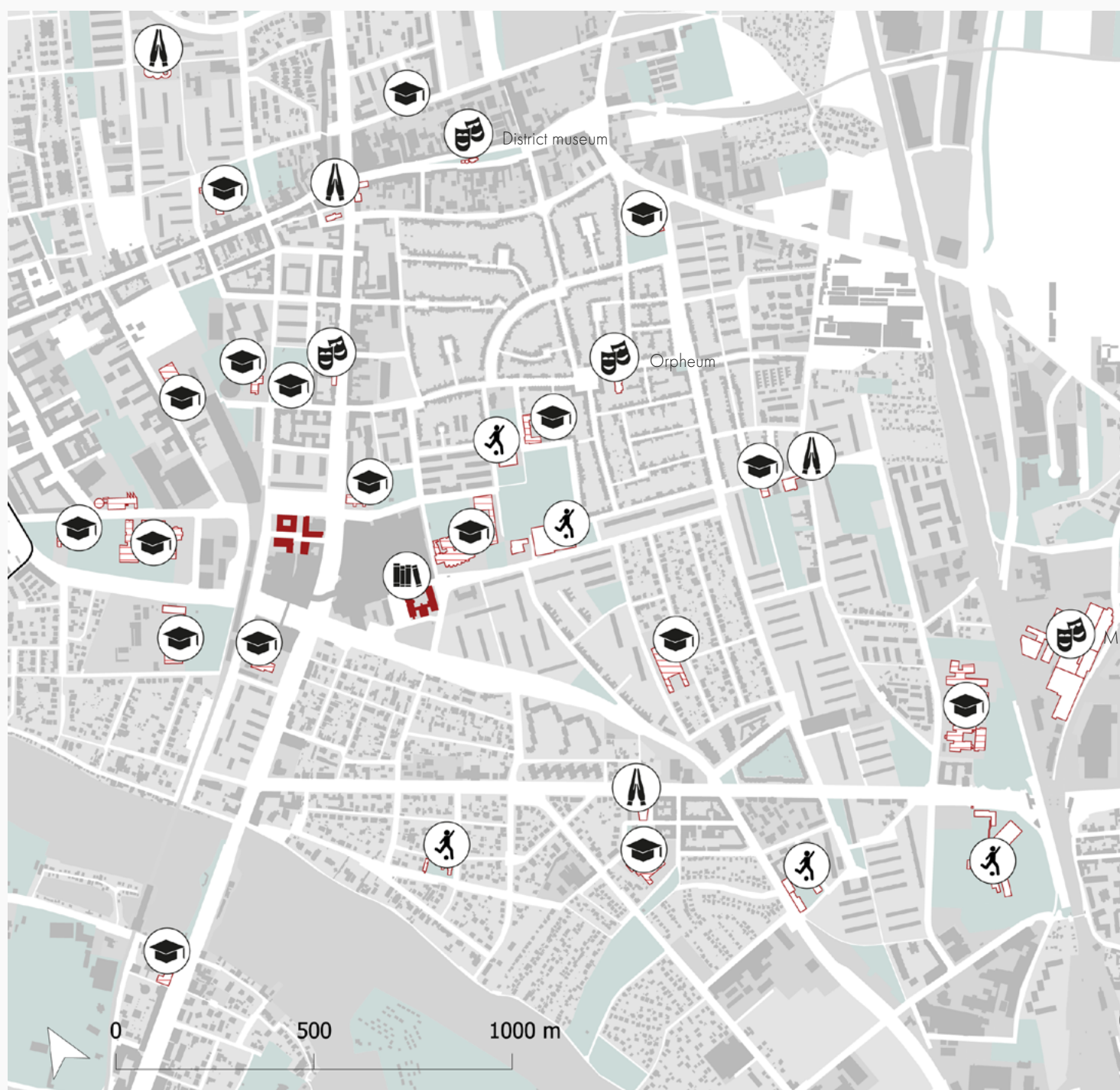







Fig. 64: Social institutions in Kagran and Stadlau (by the author. Sources: City of Vienna, Open Street Map, Google Maps, and field work)

-  Schools
-  Sport facilities
-  Weekly market
-  Culture and event space
-  Religious institutions





Many people, even planners, in Vienna only think of the Donau Zentrum when they hear about Kragran (interview anonymous). However, a variety of social infrastructure is located around the district centre.

Multiple schools cluster around the metro station Kragran to the west of Wagramer Straße. Others are spread between Kragran and Stadlau. Moreover, to the east there is a cluster of sports clubs. More sport facilities can be found to the south of Erzherzog-Karl-Straße.

There are religious institutions of different religions in the area. These are relatively well distributed between Kragran and Stadlau as well as the neighbourhoods in-between.

Finally, there are cultural institutions and event spaces. There is METAstadt, which functions as an event space and flea market in a former factory. The industrial ensemble could have a lot of potential for more social functions. The Orpheum is a theatre in the Freihofsiedlung that attracts visitors from beyond the district. Lastly, the district museum can be found on Kragraner Platz.

In Stadlau a weekly market is held at one of two locations every week. According to Victoria Matejka (see expert interviews), this institution improves neighbourhood community in the neighbourhood.

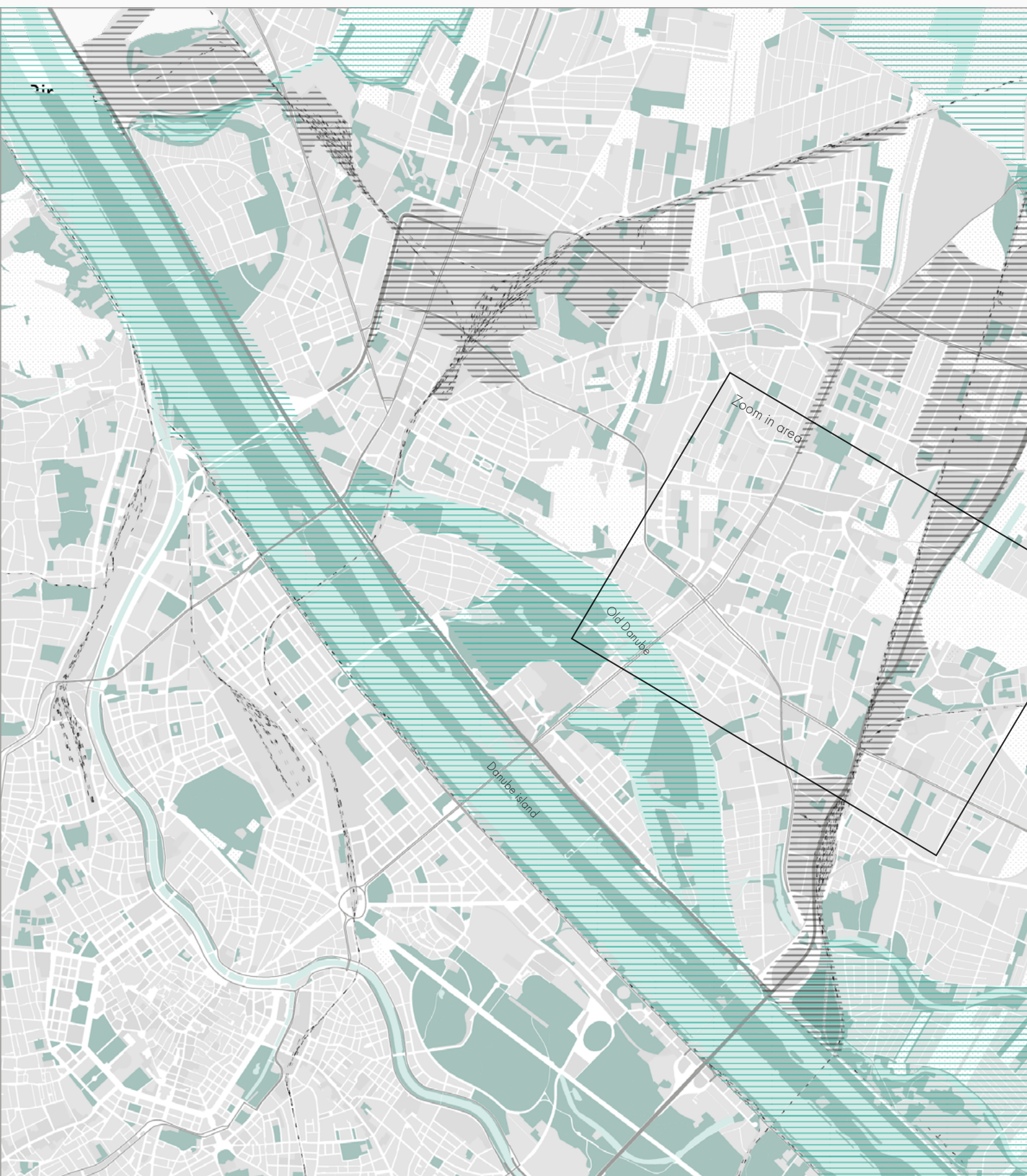
The LA21 office has also tried to implement a market at Schrödingerplatz in Kragran but it did not sustain (ibid.). Reasons for this difference, Matejka states, could be the lack of a central location in Kragran. Also the stronger engagement of local actors in Stadlau plays a role (ibid.). While the district council and local schools supported the initiative, the Donau Zentrum that dominates the centre Kragran did not show much interest in such a market in Kragran.

A more detailed analysis on library locations can be found in the appendix.

### 4.3.3

## PARKS AND GREEN SPACES

### URBAN SPACE STRUCTURE







Multiple regional green spaces shape Donaustadt. In the south-west, the Danube Island and the Old Danube form large-scale recreational areas. In the south, the Danube connects to the Lobau, a major national park. In the north-east, the city of Vienna is planning to establish new regional parks, together with the bordering municipalities. The 'Regionalpark Drei Anger' is meant to connect multiple existing green spaces.

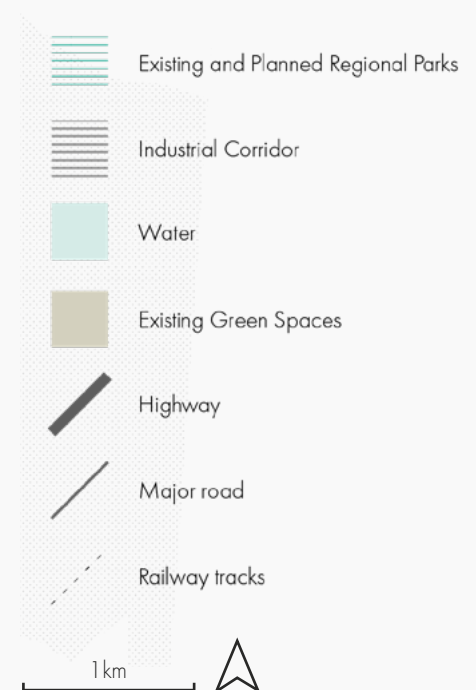
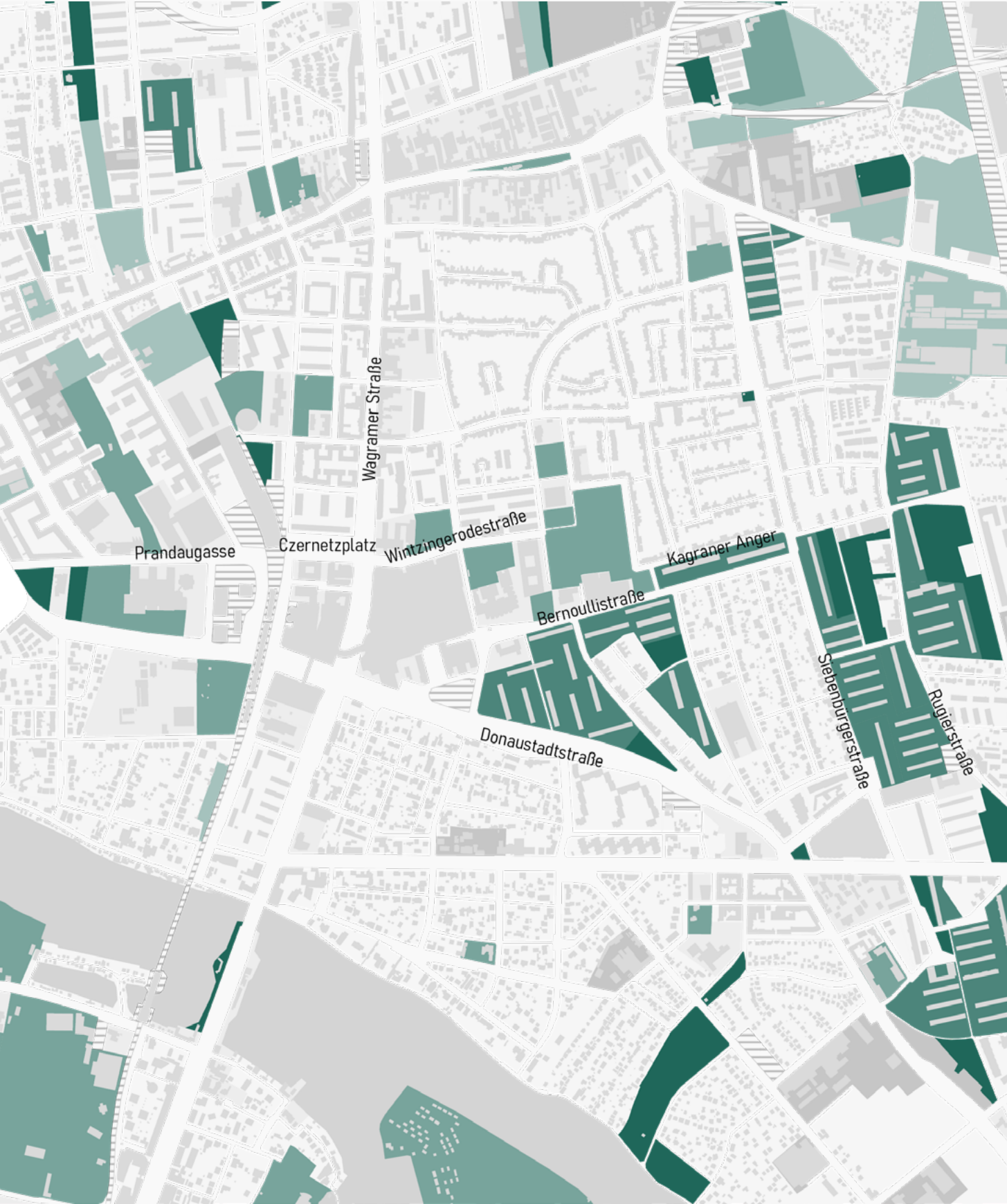
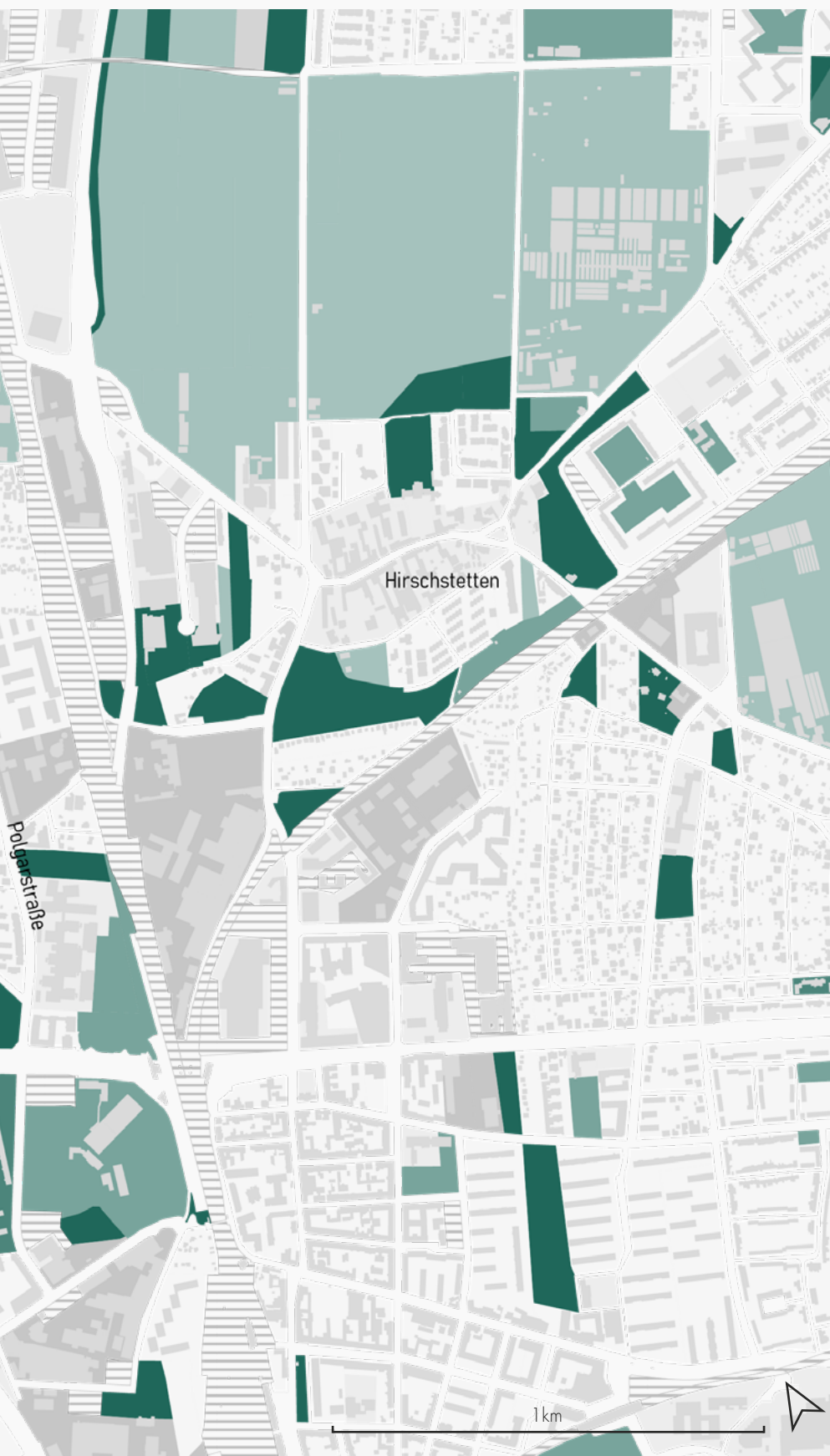


Fig. 65: Green space network (by the author. Data source: City of Vienna, 2018b)

LOCAL GREEN SPACE STRUCTURE



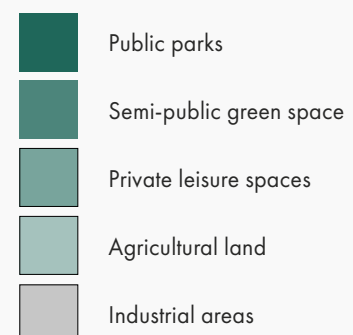




The axis Kagran-Stadlau offers a variety of green spaces. Many of them function as distance areas between buildings. Often these spaces could be better connected. Especially the infrastructure corridor in the east separates green spaces in Hirschstetten from those in eastern Kagran.

It is visible that green spaces are concentrated in the core area between Wagramer Straße, Donaustadtstraße, and Kagraner Platz

Fig. 66: Green spaces in eastern Kagran (by the author. Data source: City of Vienna, 2018)



LOCAL CHARACTER OF GREEN SPACES







The pictures illustrate the variety of accessible green as well as the connections between them (images 2, 5, 4). It becomes visible that many green spaces show little interaction with the surrounding buildings. Lacking spatial depth leaves some of them underused (images 3 and 8). Some streets between these spaces are also not defined by the surrounding buildings (image 4). Private and public spaces, therefore, merge into one space. This can lead to a lack of spatial diversity and therefore limit some forms of interaction.

Fig. 67: Character of green spaces in eastern Kagran (map and images by the author. Data source: City of Vienna, 2018)





## 4.4 LINES OF DIVISION



The final result is that the districts are divided by corridors of industry and infrastructure. These corridors have impact on the surrounding spatial structure, but also affect the districts' socio-spatial structure. Moreover, they have strong impacts on the integration of certain neighbourhoods and subcentres into the overall network.

However, they are also productive corridors. Industry and commercial areas are located along them. They add more diverse functions to mostly residential surroundings. Therefore, these corridors might have the potential to help activate the neighbourhood at their edges.

As Fig. 69 illustrates, there are two major industrial corridors in north-east Vienna. One in the north of Floridsdorf and the other one between Kagran and Stadlau. The map shows how these corridors divide the districts. Because of the large distance between crossings and their low attractiveness, the corridors function as barriers for pedestrians.

This is also visible in the case of Vienna. The map shows that the shares of deprived social groups are higher around the industrial corridors.

Infrastructure corridors often divide neighbourhoods. Fig. 68 shows this along the example of Stadlau. The centre of Stadlau and the metro station can be seen on the right side. There is only one bridge that connects Stadlau with the neighbourhood on the other side. This lack of connections fosters the use of cars since pedestrian routes are complicated and unattractive.

Moreover, these barriers have

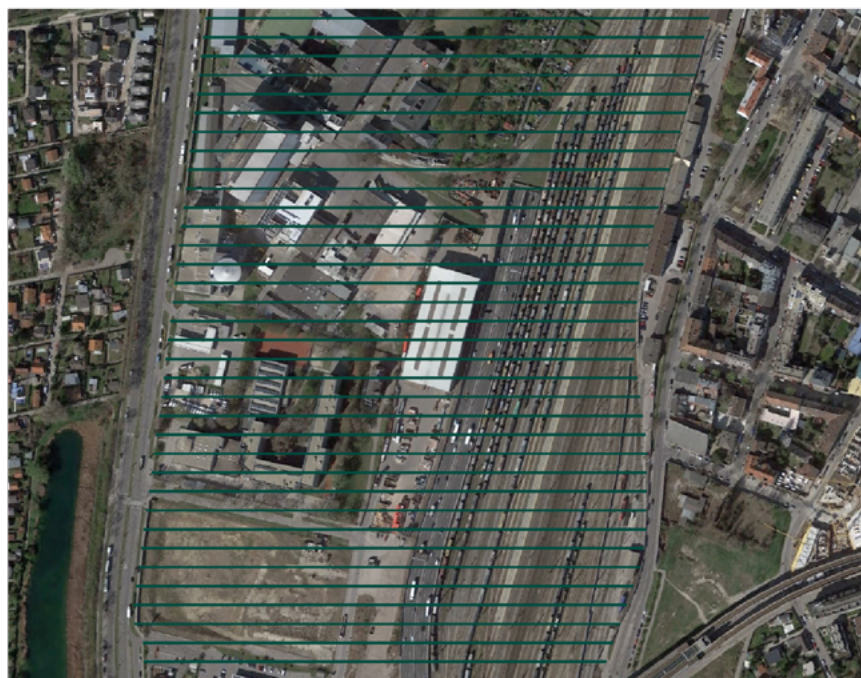


Fig. 68: Satellite image industrial corridor (Source: Google Earth)

social consequences. As a recent study has shown, industrial corridors can reduce social contact and increase social inequalities in areas around them (Tóth et al., 2021). Hence, impermeable industrial areas and infrastructure corridors do not only have impacts like noise or emissions. They also reduce the likeliness of inhabitants around them to interact and have negative impacts on their economic status.

Moreover, it can be assumed that these boundaries limit the economic development of the sub-centres Kagran and Stadlau as they reduce the integration of these centres into the street network.







Fig. 69: Infrastructure Corridors, Industrial Areas and neighbourhood concentrations of under-privileged social groups (by the author. Data source: City of Vienna, 2018, Statistik Austria, edited by City of Vienna, Municipal department 23)





## 4.5 PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE

The final section of this chapter looks at the governance structure in the district and planning processes that shape it. It focuses on the development of central Kagrán in the last years. Moreover, it takes a closer look at the project Forum Donaustadt that is planned to become a new centre for the district.

### Viennese planning system

The fact that Vienna is the only state of Austria that is also a municipality (Fig. 70) is important for the understanding of its planning system. The zoning and development plans of other municipalities need to be confirmed by the federal state institutions (Gruber et al., 2018, p. 131). Vienna, however, is exempted from the obligation to legally examine planning decisions (ibid.).

Vienna also does not have legally binding development plans. The city development “STEP” and the specific functional concepts (“Fachkonzepte”) are strategic tools and do not have legal consequences (Gruber et al., 2018, p. 95). This lack of a higher-level controlling instance explains why constructions are not always in line with higher documents (Seiß, 2013).

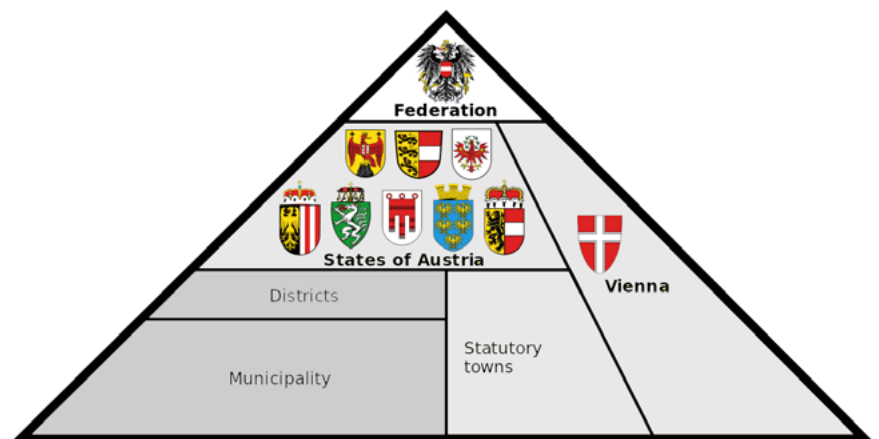


Fig. 70: Administrative System of Austria (Source: Wikimedia Commons, 2011)

## EXISTING PLANS AND VISIONS

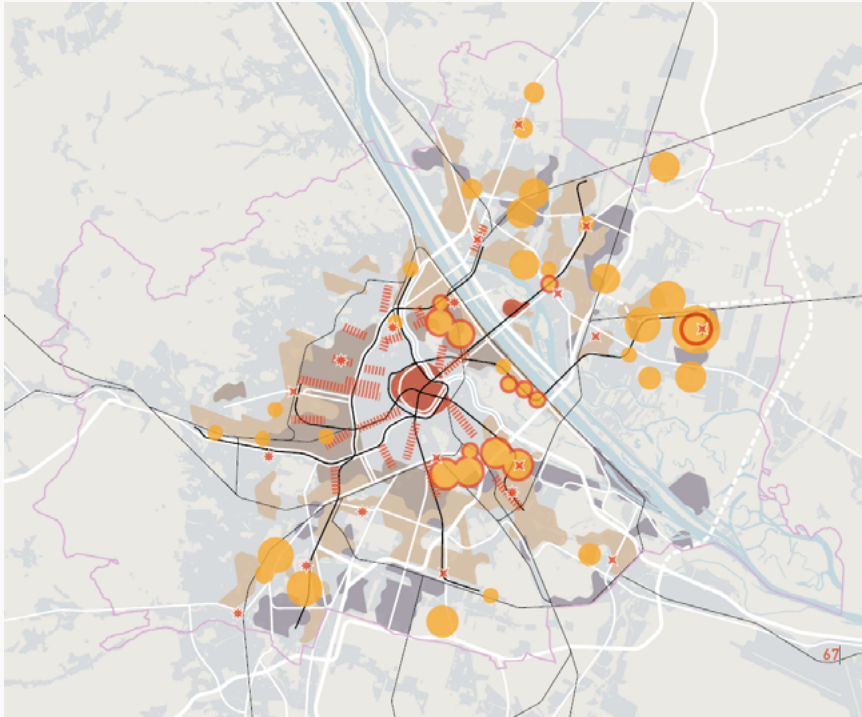
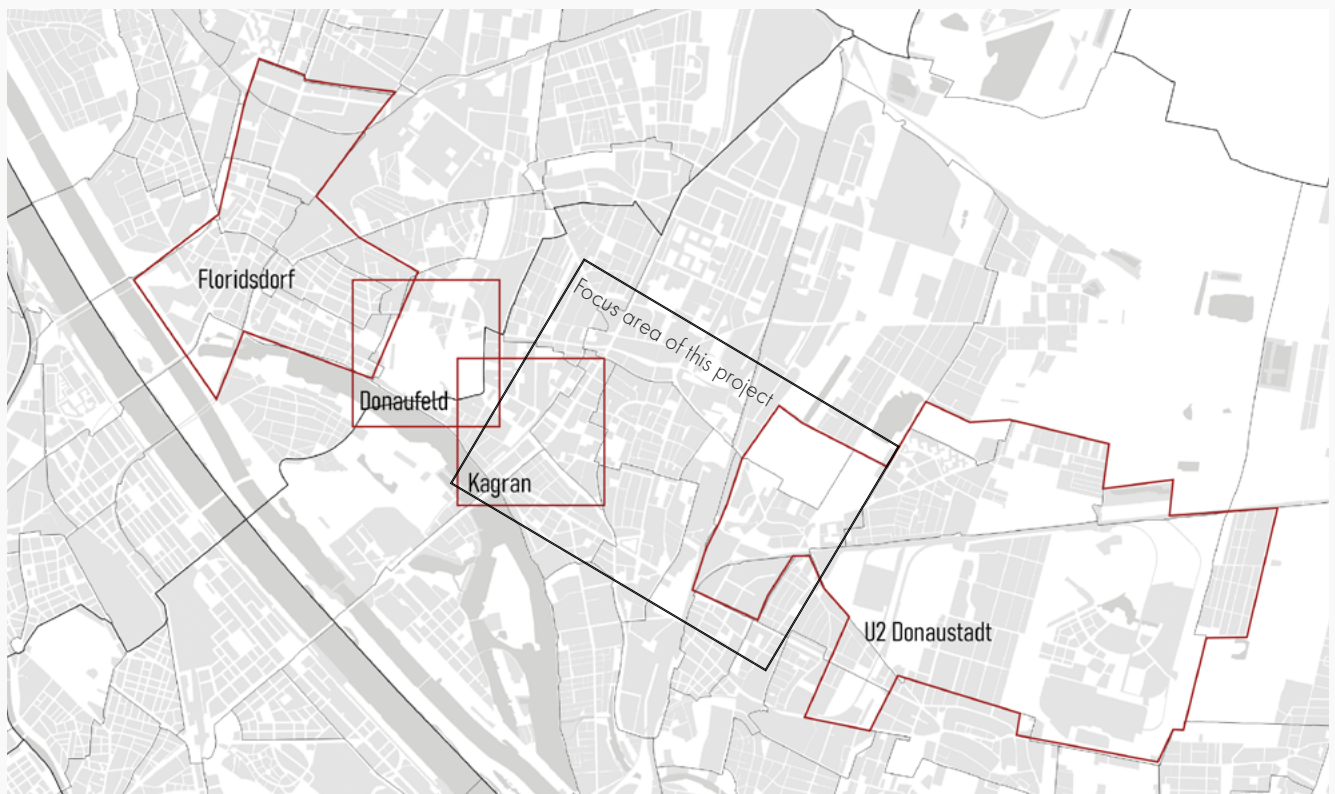


Fig. 71: Mission statement map STEP 2025 (City of Vienna, 2014, p. 67)

Fig. 72: Target areas of urban development (by the author. Source: City of Vienna, 2019b)



### STEP 2025

The 'STEP 2025' is the urban development plan for Vienna. It is a non-binding strategic document that gives guidelines for the city's future development.

The STEP 2025 proposes eleven target areas for urban development. These are areas of strategic importance for the overall city (City of Vienna, n.d.-c). Four target areas are located in north-east Vienna. On the following pages, I focus on the target area Kagran Centre.

The target areas Donauefeld and U2 Donaustadt are also relevant for the project since they are adjacent to Kagran. The Donauefeld is a green field development area. Due to its location between the centres Floridsdorf and Kagran, it has potential for residential development with high reachability.



The focus of the target area 'U2 Donaustadt' also lies on the development of new residential and mixed-use neighbourhoods along the U2 metro line. Part of this area is the Seestadt Aspern, one of the biggest urban development areas in the city and a prestige project that attracts international interest. As Fig. 73 illustrates, a network of green spaces, urban axes, and sub-centres is planned.

To sum up, large parts of the districts are not covered by the target areas. Especially existing residential areas and smaller sub-centres do not stand in the focus of the development. The centre of Stadlau, for instance, is little mentioned in the plans for the target area U2 Donaustadt, although it is strongly affected by the extensions of the metro line U2. A strategy on the scale of the one in Fig. 73 is missing for Kagran. Therefore, this project focuses on the zone between the target areas Kagran and U2.



Fig. 73: Strategy Map U2 Donaustadt (Scheuvsen et al., 2013, p. 90-91)

## DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE TARGET AREA CENTRE KAGRAN

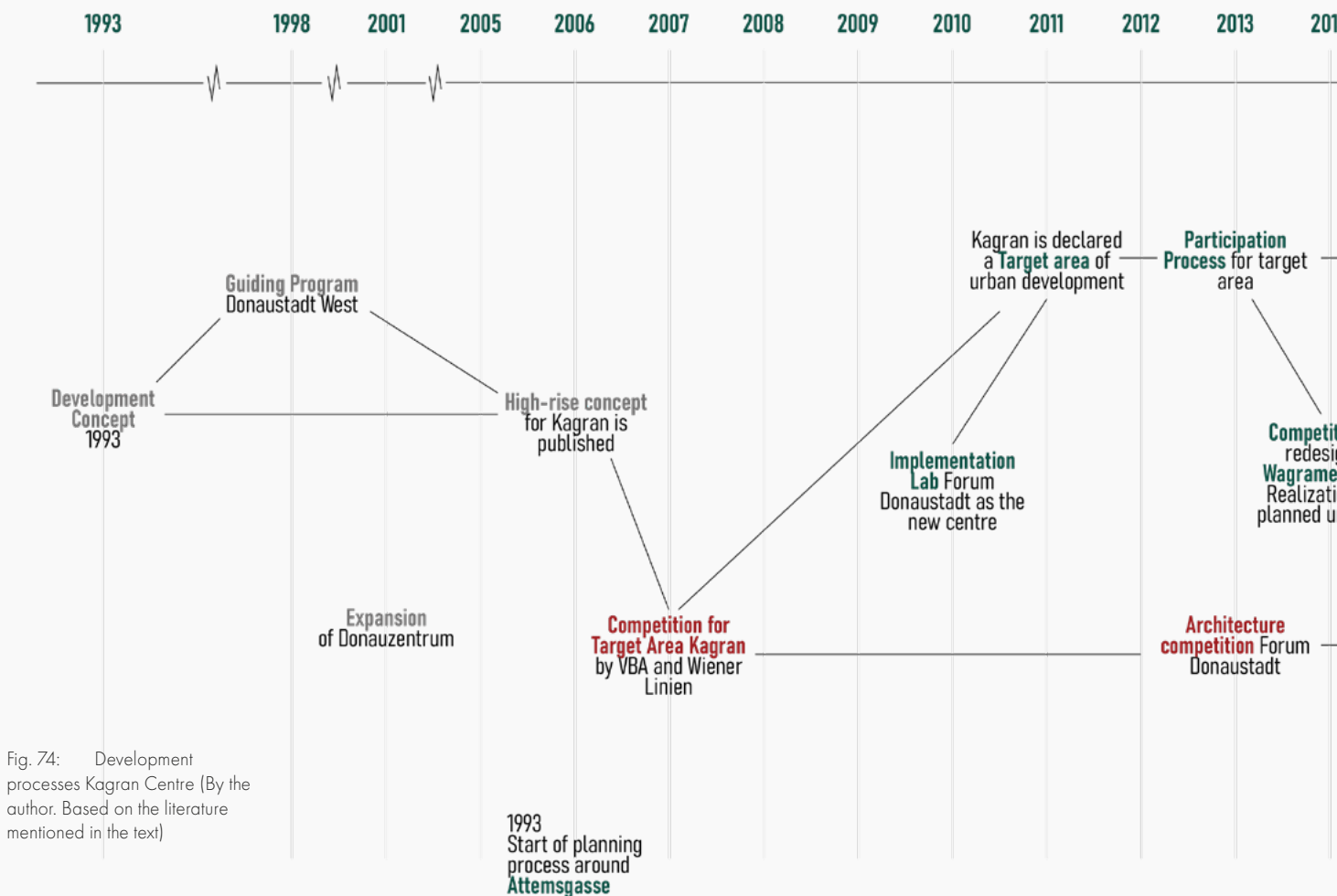


Fig. 74: Development processes Kagrán Centre (By the author. Based on the literature mentioned in the text)

Fig. 74 shows a timeline of urban development in the area of Kagrán. It shows that there are two branches of development that took place at the same time. The analysis of documents for this project shows that the development processes are not only driven by double-standards but that one can talk about two different processes that shape the area.

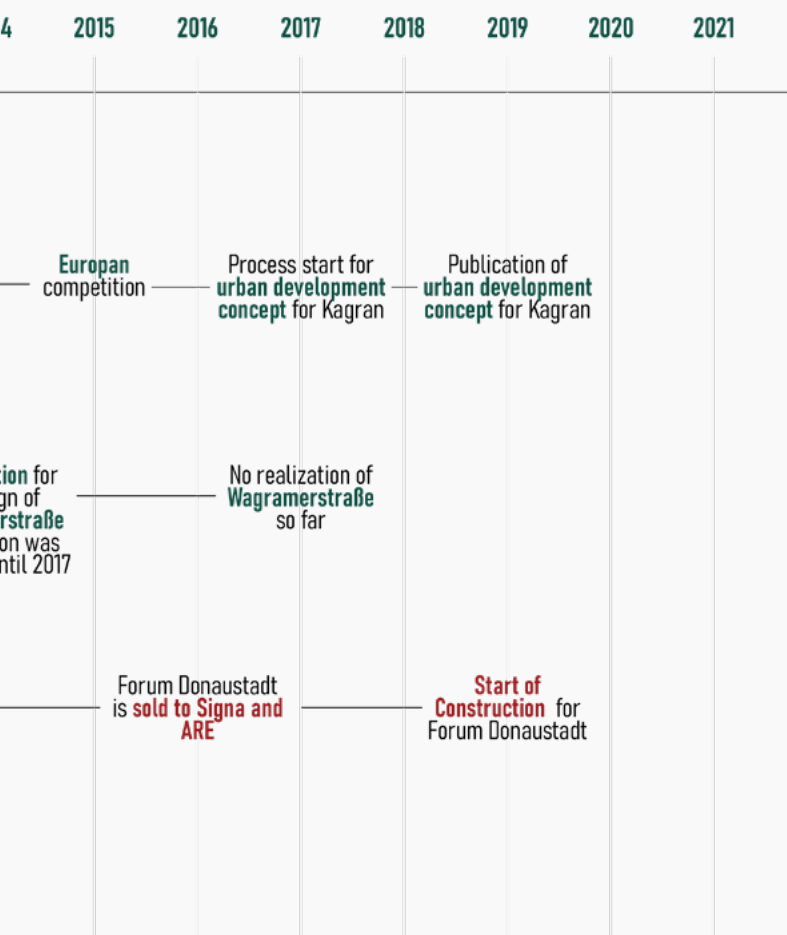
### High-rise concept

One of the starting points of today's development was the

publication of a high-rise concept for the area in 2006 (City of Vienna, 2018b). Before that many plans were made for other areas that shape the spatial setting of Kagrán today, like the area Attemsgasse 1993 (City of Vienna, n.d.-d).

### Urban planning competition

Based on the high-rise concept an urban planning competition was conducted by the Vienna Business Agency (a semi-public institution for the promotion of the city's economy,



forms in the newer concept. It seems that even after the broad participation process of 2013 little has been changed about the plans for the area.

### Implementation Lab

In 2010, a group of experts was consulted in the “implementation lab” (City of Vienna, 2010). In the document about the process, it is mentioned that Adolf-Schärf-Platz is meant to be the new centre.

### Target area Kagra

In 2013, Kagra is declared to be a target area of urban development (City of Vienna, 2018a). This timing is interesting as many decisions seem to have been taken before this year. For instance, the Forum Donaustadt, as the new centre of the area, has been taken out of the further process of developing the target area. At this point two processes happen at the same time. On the one hand, intensified participation takes place for the target area and more transparent concepts are being developed. On the other hand, the Forum Donaustadt is already being planned during the participation process and sold to a developer before the publication of the development concept Kagra.

see below for more information) the Wiener Linien (the city’s public transport company and Vienna’s city planning department in 2008 (ibid.). Besides officials by the Wiener Linien and the district chairman, a representative of Rodamco Central Europe (the company that owns the Donau Zentrum) was present as a subject-judge in the competition (Rießland, 2008).

The winning proposal is already characterized by many elements that are still present in the urban

development concept of 2019. For instance, the envisioned new passage at the location of Schrödingerplatz or the Boulevard character of Donaustadtstraße (Rießland, 2008). However, the only part that is implemented twelve years later are the first towers in the Forum Donaustadt.

In general, many changes that were later described in 2019’s concept seem to have already been planned in 2008. The high-rise towers, for instance, can still be found in similar



In 2012 the city of Vienna started a participation process for the area of Kagran (see City of Vienna, 2013). Three formats of participation were chosen: a citizen-council, a citizen-café, and a citizen-workshop.

Under the name citizen-council a two day's workshop was conducted in March 2012. In moderated discussions, 32 citizens had the chance to talk about their opinions and wishes. The participants were chosen out by lottery out of 70 people who responded to the invitation that was sent to about 900 residents. The results of these workshops were presented to and discussed with a public audience in the "Citizen-café". In January 2013, another round of discussion took place in the "citizen-workshop".

The main results of the participation process were the importance of attractive and pedestrian-friendly public spaces, the ambivalent role of Kagran as a centre, the area's identity as well as the wish for more participation in more detailed planning processes. The public spaces that were mentioned most were Wagramer Straße, the St. Wendelin-Platz around the historic church, the Adolf-Schärf-Platz, and the Alte Donau, a local recreation area. In general, the citizens wish for more attractive public space and more places to meet others, especially places of inter-generational interaction. They highlight the importance of wider sidewalks and better crossings of the Wagramer Straße. However, some also highlight that car traffic should be possible on the street. Moreover, more shops should be located along public streets. This goes hand in hand with

the wish for the Donau Zentrum to open up to its vicinity. A new market is seen as important for local supply and as a meeting place. Its location should facilitate other activities in public space.

The role of Kagran as a centre is also an important topic. In the document it becomes clear that the residents do not see the Donau Zentrum as the centre or a place of identity. This centre is imagined to be colourful and diverse. The Wagramerstraße is mentioned as an important location. The Adolf-Schärf-Platz is also seen as a potential centre. It is important for the resident that it becomes a societal centre rather than only a space of mobility. However, many citizens are sceptical about the construction of high-rise buildings.

Finally, citizens claim to be integrated in further steps of urban development. They wish for a grassroots democracy approach should be used in specific projects to strengthen identification and self-responsibility of the residents. Moreover, in the citizen-café residents claimed that an overall masterplan for Donaustadt is necessary that integrates main centre with multiple sub-centres.

## TARGET AREA "CENTRE KAGRAN"



Fig. 75: Focus of the development concept for the target area Kagran (by the author.)

Kagran was declared a target area of urban development in 2011 (City of Vienna, 2018a). Although the area was under repeating reorganization for decades, this step can be seen as the starting point of today's development process. An important result was the urban development concept published in 2019 (City of Vienna, 2019c). This document is based on the earlier concept "positions for Kagran" (City of Vienna, 2013b). As mentioned above, this strategic document has no binding effect for further planning processes. This document will be analysed on these pages to get a better understanding of the contemporary goals for the area.

The first thing that stands out about the concept is its spatial focus. The target area "Zentrum Kagran" is defined as the vicinity of the Donau Zentrum (see Fig. 75). Hence, the historic Kagranerplatz and large parts

of the Wagramer Straße are not part of this focus. Unquestionably, this area is the economic and functional centre. However, this focus does not fully overlap with the results of the participation process of 2013 (City of Vienna, 2013a). In this process, residents said that the Donau Zentrum should not be seen as a landmark and they highlighted the role of the Wagramer Straße as a central axis.

The concept's overall goal is to develop a strong district centre and to attractivate public space. It is subdivided into the topics, open space, buildings, life, mobility, and smart city development.

### Open space

The map for open space (City of Vienna, 2019c, p. 6) indicates which open spaces should be redeveloped. The focus lies on the Adolf-Schärf-Platz, on the one hand,

and the area around the Schrödingerplatz, on the other. Although the map indicates that the Wagramer Straße will be redesigned, the main pedestrian axis seems to lead from the metro station at Adolf-Schärf-Platz through the Donau Zentrum to the Schrödingerplatz. This path crosses the Wagramer Straße through a bridge between the two parts of the shopping centre. Hence, although the redesign of public space is put central it is reasonable to assume that the private space in the shopping centre would even gain more importance.

The strategy suggests a second bridge over the Wagramer Straße. This would probably strengthen the pedestrian routes through private space. Moreover, it would most reduce the need for visitors of the shopping centre to enter the public space of Wagramer Straße and would, therefore, weaken the street's importance rather than strengthen it. This point stands in conflict with the citizen claim of opening up the shopping centre to its surroundings and bringing shops onto the street.

### Buildings

The focus for new constructions lies on the Schrödingerplatz and the old metro outbuilding ("Remise") in the north. The proposal for the area around Schrödingerhof shows an interesting new connection from Bernoullistraße to the corner Wagramer Straße-Donaustadtstraße. Multiple high-rise buildings would surround the shopping centre and the Forum Donaustadt neighbourhood. Consequently, a high-rise cluster would emerge that can be seen as a continuation of the close-by Donau



Fig. 76: Green space concept target area Kagran (Source: City of Vienna 2019c)

City. Though this connection and the good accessibility by metro, the location seems to be adequate for high-rise development.

However, many citizens argued against high-rises and worried about the character of the area. Hence, residents should have the chance to participate in detailed planning processes. Moreover, the concept could indicate other parts of the area better. For example, the existing office centre around Prandaugasse could be better integrated and redeveloped. Also the central role of the shopping centre is not questioned. This massive building structure inhibits a more integrated development of the area. Of course, its redevelopment is hard without the interest of its owners in

such a project.

Finally, the concept suggests more large-scale block development. This stands in contrast to the need for small-scale uses as well as social and functional mix. These characteristics could better facilitate diverse forms of interaction and inclusivity of the spatial structure (Sennett, 2018; Talen, 2008). In this regard the concept can be seen as a continuation of the area's historic development, as described by Suitner et al. (2018).

To sum up, the strategy suggests to redesign the two forecourts of the shopping centre but takes little notice of the Wagramer Straße. It could lead to improvements of public space and to a better integration of the shopping centre to its north-western

and south-eastern vicinity. However, the Wagramer Straße does not seem to become better integrated. It rather seems to be separated from private space even further through an additional pedestrian bridge. The Donau Zentrum would still at the heart of the public space and pedestrian network.

## Life

Under the title “life” actions are described that aim at facilitating functional mix and life on the streets. In this map the activation of the shopping centre's plinth is indicated. It shows that there is awareness of this complicated task. Nevertheless, it does not indicate further actions that would integrate this plinth space into the street.

More divers functions are planned to be implemented south of the shopping centre. If implemented properly, this plan would create a small mixed use area. The Donau Zentrum itself would stay monofunctional. Also the large monofunctional blocks in the surroundings would not change. Hence, the envisioned program could lead to an improvement but would not change much about the monofunctionality and fragmentation of the area on the larger scale.



Forum Donaustadt, also called Vienna Twentytwo, is a highrise development complex in the centre of Kagran.

Construction works have started in 2019 (ARE, 2019). According to a report of the city administration, the location of the project “Vienna Twentytwo” is meant to be the new centre of the district (City of Vienna, 2010, p. 52). It is located directly next to the existing Donauzentrum and will offer a mix of housing, hotels, offices, and shops (Fodo Holding, n.d.) in an ensemble of six towers with up to 155m (Schenk, 2020). Besides, the district council will move into one of the buildings and rent it from the private developer of the project for at least 15 years (red, 2020).

According to the city’s plans, focus for the location should lie on public space and the creation of a new centre (City of Vienna, 2010, p. 52) but the process of how the area is being developed raises the question if it can provide the public space that the district needs. By renting a building in an existing private project, the municipality misses the chance of shaping the form of a new centre through the location of public facilities. Fig. 77 shows the future entrance of the new complex with a new shopping mall (in front of the existing Donauzentrum) on two floors. The brown building on the right will become the new district council. In front of the entrance, a new square will be constructed. Currently, the square functions mostly as a transitory space since it contains an important bus and tram station as well as the entrance to the metro. It shows that the condition of public space



Fig. 77: Construction works on “Vienna Twentytwo” (by the author)

is meant to be improved. However, the centre of the new development is a shopping centre, similarly to the existing Donauzentrum. This focus on commercial activities raises the question if space will be the meeting space that is necessary.

Moreover, the available sources suggest that no public participation was conducted. This stands in conflict with the claims that were made in participation process of 2013. The strong involvement of private investors might limit the chance for local residents to participate.

To sum up, current development processes aim at improving the quality of public space in Kagran. However, the power of economic interests and the lack of participation might inhibit the development of democratic public spaces.

## ACTORS "THE NEW CENTRE" - FORUM DONAUSTADT

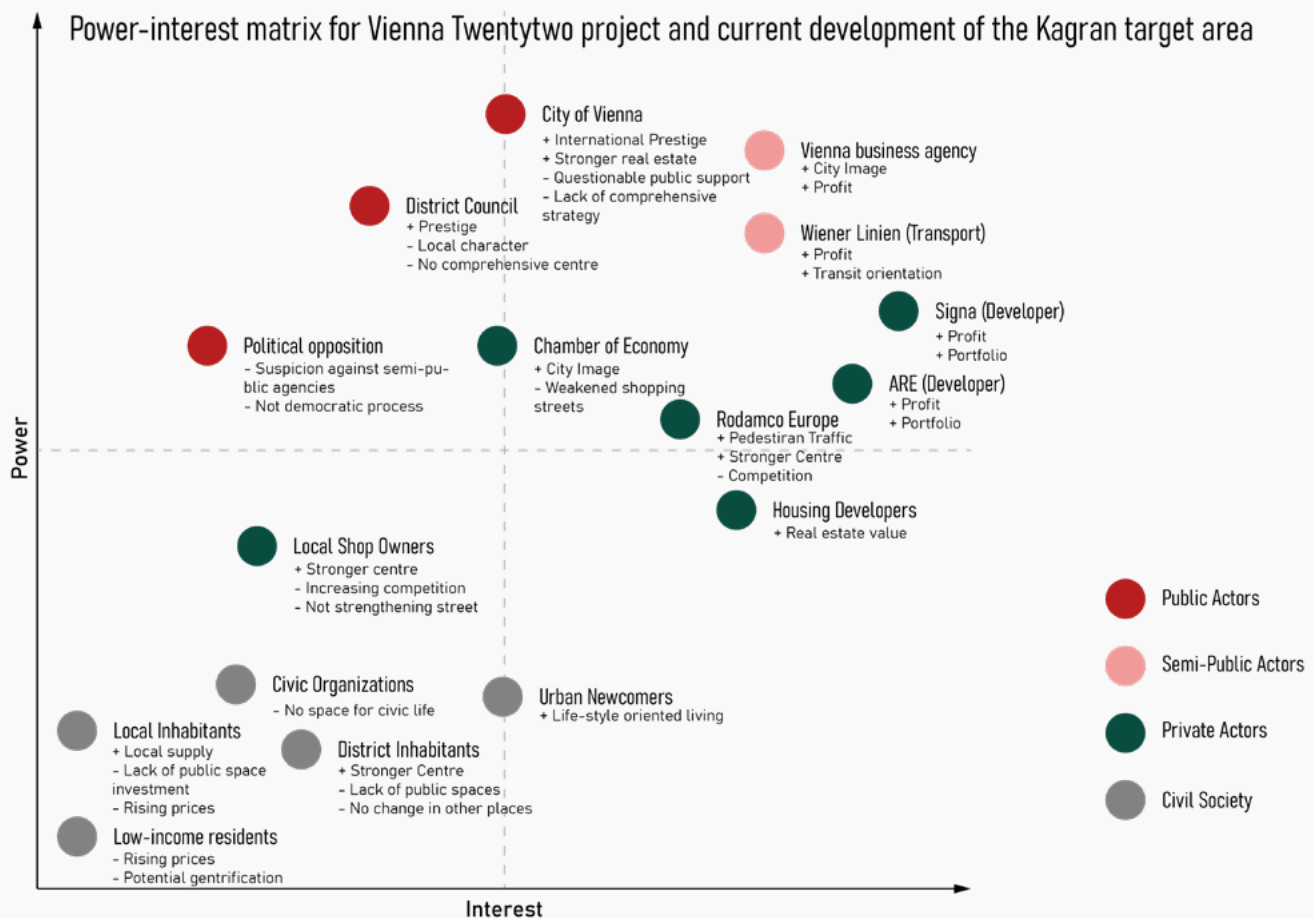


Fig. 78: Actors mapping for the development process Forum Donaustadt (by the author.)

The actors of planning processes in the area will be explored along the example of the development of the Forum Donaustadt. This process seems to tell a lot about the development of the overall target area. The actors mapping is based on assumptions about the interests of certain actors.

The strongest actors are the City of Vienna and the Vienna business agency. The business agency is a semi-public company that was founded by the city to promote the local economy. It also helps international companies to find investment locations in the city and invests itself into real estate. As described, this agency was a driving actor in the processes of developing the

Forum Donaustadt. This is interesting because the project is meant to be "the new centre" for the district. However, instead of investing in public spaces the city leaves it to one of its agencies to develop a process.

In the middle field of power are economic actors like the investors in the project and the owners of the Donau Zentrum. These actors were integrated in the process of developing the area. Moreover, as the project is implemented by private investors, their interests must have been considered in the conceptualization phase.

At the bottom of the diagram are local inhabitants and civic organizations. Since there has

been no participation process, local inhabitants did not have much influence on the project. Moreover, the participation process for the whole area was conducted after the Forum Donaustadt has been planned. Hence, the results could not really be integrated in the implementation. This diagram highlights an imbalance of power. Of course, this project is an extreme example and the city authority had the power to avoid negative outcomes. But for a project that is meant to implement a new district centre, more power could be given to the inhabitants.







## 4.6 RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

Action in the urban periphery is necessary

This research chapter has shown that attention for public life in the urban periphery is necessary. The spatial and social structure of Donaustadt is changing. Population growth and diversification can reinforce political polarization and, therefore, affect the whole city. Moreover, inequalities between inner and outer districts can increase discontent in the urban periphery.

Shifting focus of interventions

This analysis has also shown that the authorities have recognized these challenges and are taking action. However, current actions concentrate on prestige projects and new development areas. Public spaces in the most challenged areas have seen little change. While many public spaces in the city's central target areas are being redesigned, projects in the urban periphery are often delayed or not implemented. Therefore, more emphasis should be put on the implementation of envisioned changes in existing areas and the results of participation processes. Urban development and redensification should come with improvements for the local population.

Diverse, inclusive and integrated public spaces

Another result is that the existing public spaces are often exclusive for certain social groups, not diverse enough for the diversifying population, and not integrated with each other. Current development processes lead to new and more diverse public spaces, like those in the Seestadt Aspern.

However, these are mostly located in new neighbourhoods. Therefore, a stronger focus on diverse, accessible and integrated public spaces in existing neighbourhoods is necessary.

Permeable boundaries

Boundaries between neighbourhoods can be an obstacle for the implementation of such a public space network. They can inhibit pedestrian flow and have negative impact on the lives of residents. Therefore, boundaries need to be put more into focus and should be better integrated.

Democratic processes

Finally, development processes need to be democratized. This is a great challenge for planning in our time and there are many attempts of integrating the population in the processes. Vienna is taking a lot of action in this field (participation processes, LA 21, Gebietsbetreuung). However, the results show that the wishes of inhabitants are not always implemented. Paternalistic planning approach still seem to be strong, a result that can be observed in other cases (Novy, 2011, p. 247). New instruments of democratic planning would be useful.





# 5 VISION AND GOALS

## 5.1 VISION

## 5.2 GOALS

In this chapter, the conclusions from analysis are translated into a vision and goals for the future development of north-east Vienna.

Firstly, I will describe the vision for democratic space in the urban periphery of Vienna.

Secondly, five strategic goals will be introduced. These goals combine the results of the literature review with the insights from the research chapter. Each goal summarizes a set of interrelated design and planning tasks. Also the five goals themselves are interrelated. Hence, a regional strategy needs to take all of them into

account as will be described in the implementation chapter.

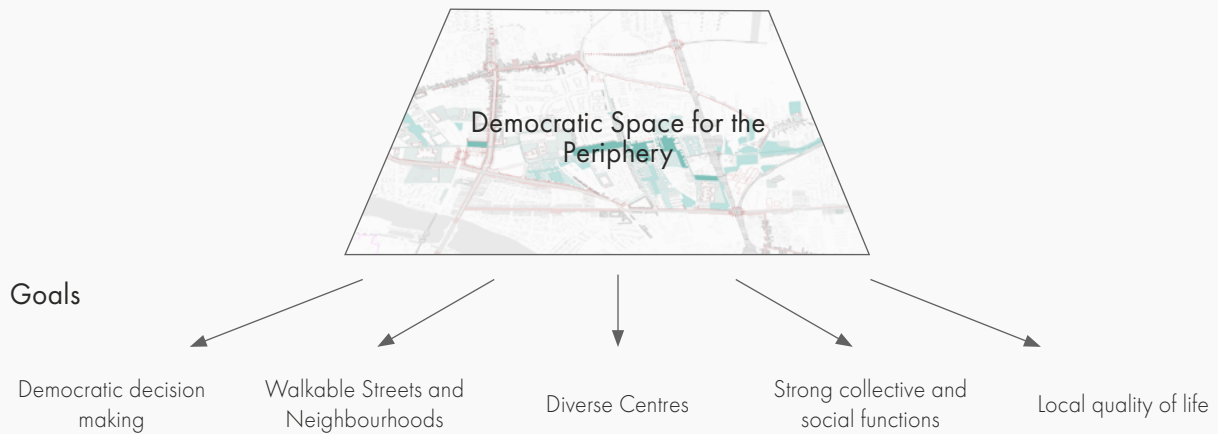
The icons below are used to indicate which characteristics of democratic space each goal covers. A detailed description of these characteristics can be found in chapter 2.

## STRATEGY STRUCTURE

The strategic part of this project is structured in two chapters. In the first chapter, the vision and goals are explained. In the second chapter, possibilities of achieving these goals in the case study area are explored.v

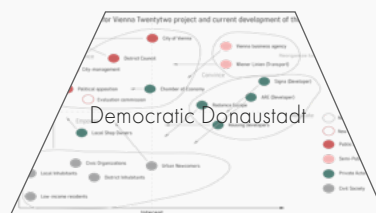
## 5. Vision and Goals

### Vision



## 6. Implementation

### Governance Suggestions



### Projects



### Implementation strategy

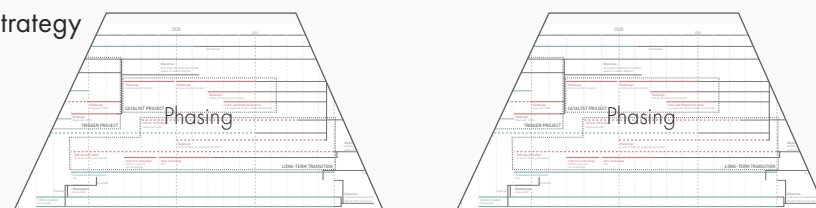


Fig. 79: Structure of the strategy (by the author.)





## 5.1 VISION

The following vision is a spatial interpretation of the theoretical conclusions and the insight of the research that was conducted for this project. The vision is a suggestion from someone who looks at the area from outside. Of course, for the future development local inhabitants would need to be engaged. The output of a truly democratic process might therefore look different. Therefore, the aim of this vision is not to state how things should be. It is rather to illustrate a future that is different from the current development path and to inspire people to think how they imagine the future of Donaustadt.

## DEMOCRATIC PUBLIC SPACE IN THE 21 ST CENTURY

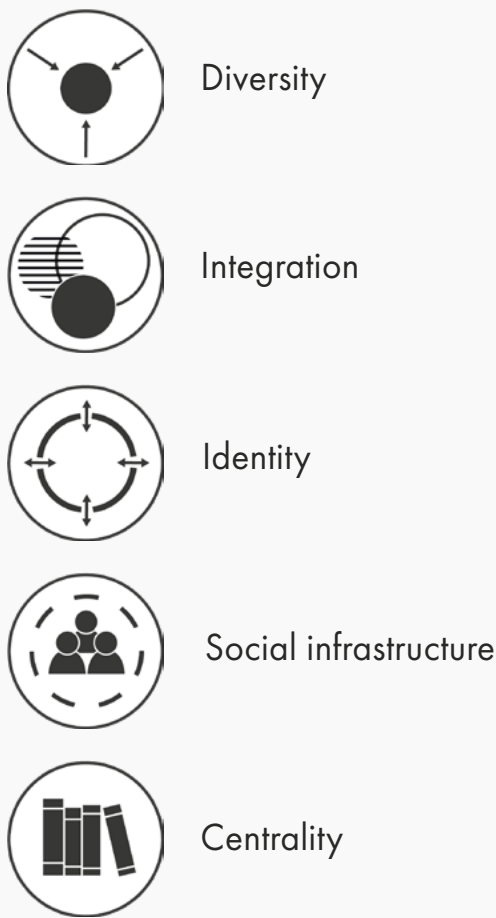


Fig. 80: Visualization: Wagramer as a space for public claim making (by the author. Image sources: Google Maps,; Javanaud Emdén, n.d.; Purepng.com; Janssen, n.d.; Murphy, 2012)



### Vision Statement

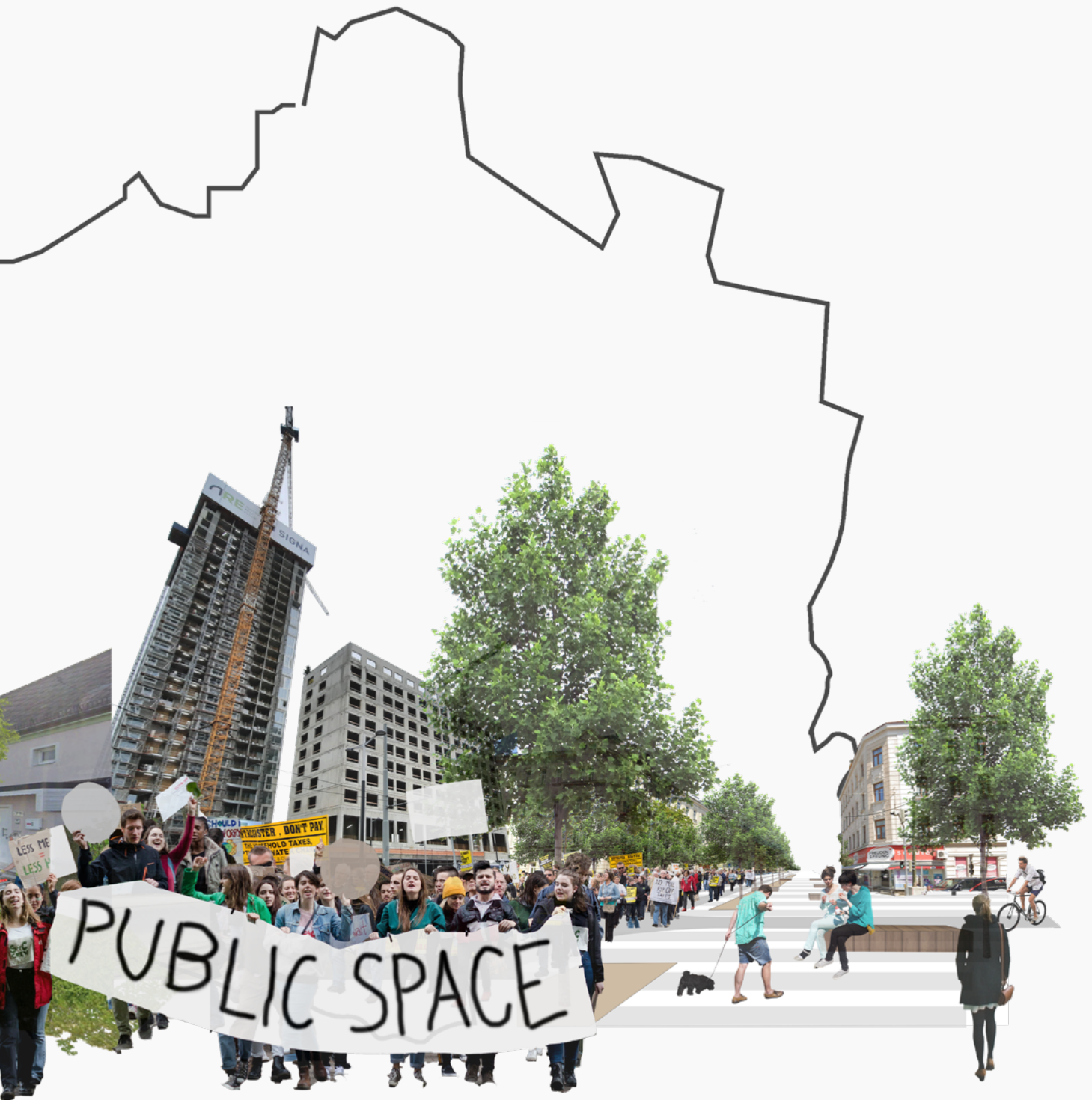
By 2040, the district of Donaustadt will be a diverse and active part of the city that is characterized by a strong public life and offers a space for the needs of all parts of society. They will offer a wide variety of local functions that cover all daily needs and facilitate interaction between different parts of society.

Investments in the foundational

economy will reduce the costs of daily life and therefore contribute to the equal distribution of the benefits of economic prosperity. Social infrastructure will give access to knowledge and productive spaces on the height of contemporary technology for everyone. Neighbourhoods will be well integrated with each other and diverse functions within them will ensure the prosperity of micro-publics

and local character short paths. Plinths and public spaces will be adaptable to different needs and every inhabitant will have the possibility to find a space for commercial or non-commercial initiatives.

All these spaces will be connected by a network of public spaces and pedestrian routes. Therefore, neighbourhoods will be well accessible by foot and public transport. Moreover,



the diversity of spaces gives people the freedom to decide how present and visible they want to be in public life.

Finally, the district will develop in a democratic way that gives a voice to the inhabitants and integrates as diverse interests as possible. Central decisions and investments will be taken by public actors or the population itself in a transparent process. Comprehensive participation

ensures the democratic legitimization of the decisions. Economic activities will be guided by clear goals, plans and regulations of the public and therefore benefit the residents as well as the developers. Moreover, there will be more space for civil initiative to self-organize projects and spaces. A diverse variety of civil activities will give inhabitants the chance to get active and shape their daily

surroundings themselves.





## 5.2 GOALS

### Goal 1: Democratic decision making

Democratic forms of decision making should be strengthened. On the one hand, this means to make sure that central decisions are subject to democratic discussions. Hence, they should be made by elected authorities in a transparent way. On the other hand, the people who are affected by decisions need to have a voice in the process. Therefore, central projects should be accompanied by participation processes and the results of the participation need to have a visible impact. In these processes, it is crucial that the diversity of the population and unequal preconditions of citizens are considered. Moreover, more space could be given to civil initiatives that want to self-organize processes.

### Goal 2: Walkable streets and neighbourhoods

The conditions for pedestrians in the district should be improved. This does not only mean to redesign public spaces but also to activate local edges and building fronts, to increase spatial depth, to make boundaries more permeable, and to improve local supply. This goal can make access to public goods more equitable, especially if the focus lies on lower-integrated and low-income neighbourhoods. It can lead to more meeting spaces between different parts of society and therefore improve the recognition of diversity. Finally, small scale interventions in local public spaces create new opportunities for residents to get involved in the development of their surroundings.

### Goal 3: Diverse district centres

The transformation of existing centres is crucial, since it can give an impulse to the whole district. The goal is to reduce the dominance of the shopping centres and to strengthen central streets and sub-centres. It can strengthen the district's character and increase the independence from the city centre. Moreover, diverse district centres can be points of interaction for the wider district society. Reducing the dominance of shopping centres would have an impact for the whole district, since it brings the opportunity to decentralize public functions. Moreover, public streets can create new possibilities of co-production and unplanned activities, while in private shopping centres the usage of space is more predetermined.

### Goal 4: Strengthen collective and social functions

More space should be given to cultural activities and collective projects by the civil society. Decentralizing public functions and leaving space for self-organization can support local actions. Especially in neighbourhoods where new commercial functions are not adequate, self-organized initiatives could become places of social life. Moreover, co-production is often referred to as one of the most important forms of interaction in a diverse society.

### Goal 5: Local quality of life

Finally, special attention should be put on the inclusive and just character of transformation processes. More vulnerable social groups could benefit from improved local supply and a better integration of their neighbourhoods in public space networks. However, interventions in neighbourhoods with a higher share of vulnerable social groups need to be particularly sensible for local needs. Residents should have a strong voice in transformation processes. Moreover, the social value of existing buildings and spaces should be considered in transformation processes. Actions that might lead to gentrification need to be counterbalanced, for instance through the construction of social housing.

# GOAL 1: DEMOCRATIC DECISION MAKING

## Sub-Goals

### Procedural

- Goals of urban development are clear and transparent (and binding) on all scales
- Citizens have the possibility to participate in decision-making on all scales
- Central projects are coordinated and mainly implemented by the city authority in participatory projects to ensure democratic decisions
- Regulations are open for bottom-up initiatives and self-organized projects

### Spatial

- Urban development leaves “open” spaces that facilitate self-organization also in central areas

The first goal is to make decision making more democratic. Vienna is a traditionally paternalistic city and takes care of most needs of its inhabitants through a well organized administrative body. However, this system often leaves little space for citizens to get active themselves. Moreover, with the implementation of strategic planning and public-private-partnerships, central decisions become intransparent and profit-oriented.

However, the city authority is still strong and there are many innovative instruments to govern urban development in the city. These should be applied in the case of Kagan.

Goals of urban development should be transparent to facilitate public discussion about them. Therefore, comprehensive and binding master plans for the area are important.

Nevertheless, not everything should be predefined by these plans. There should be space for citizens



to get active themselves. Financial funding and organizational support could support such action.

For the coordination of these plans and local initiatives, a City-management for Kagran would be beneficial. These agencies exist in many parts of Vienna and often coordinate the needs of the local population around urban development areas. Although such an office has been recommended by various experts, it does not yet exist for Kagran (Suitner et al. 2018, p.61).v

## Instruments

### Nodal

- Citizen council
- City-wide discussion panel
- City-Management

### Authority

- Masterplan Donaustadt
- Masterplan Kagran
- Evaluation commission
- Participatory budgeting

### Treasure

- Financial and organizational support for bottom-up initiatives

### Organization

- Public investment



## GOAL 2: WALKABLE STREETS AND NEIGHBOURHOODS



Fig. 81: Visualization goal 2 (by the author.)

Making streets walkable and activating public life in the neighbourhoods depends on the design of public space, the form and function in the surrounding buildings, the network size of street, the location of destinations, and many other factors. Hence, this goal depends on an integrated approach.

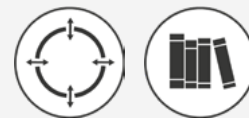
### Sub-Goals

#### Spatial

- Redensify low-density neighbourhoods and street fronts while improving liveability for residents
- Improve walkability and safety for pedestrians of street layouts and furniture especially along main routes and around social institutions
- Diversified and attractive green spaces within and at the edge of neighbourhoods
- Increase permeability of big building blocks
- Protect and increase diversity of buildings and housing types
- Improve quality and quantity of underpasses and crossings over infrastructure corridors

#### Functional

- Strengthen daily supply within walkable reach
- Activate ground floor along high-order streets
- Foster “clusters” of diverse functions within neighbourhoods and around social infrastructure
- Incentivize residents to appropriate streets and sidewalk by residents



To ensure local supply, the City of Vienna has already started the *Supergreißler* initiative. It organizes local shops as meeting spaces in under-supplied areas (Der Standard, 2019). This project could be intensified to bring back functions into local neighbourhoods.

This initiative could be complemented by the walkable redesign of public space to ensure that the paths to local shops are attractive. Not only sidewalks need to be widened, also more crossings over large streets and industry corridors are necessary. Moreover, the redensification of low-density neighbourhoods and street fronts could increase and guide the frequency of pedestrians on the streets and therefore facilitate different forms of social life.

## Instruments

### Nodal

- Expansion of Supergreißler initiative

### Authority

- Implement pedestrian areas and shared spaces
- Zoning regulation for density, permeability and plinth spaces

### Treasure

- Support for local functions

### Organization

- Widen sidewalks
- Improve lightning and open design of streets and underpasses
- Redesigning public space.

## Milestones 2030

- Children can play safely on less frequented streets
- 50% of neighbourhood streets are redesigned in a pedestrian friendly way
- 40% of the street layout can be used for social interaction and recreation purposes (including green spaces)
- 90% of households have shops of daily demand in 15 minutes walking distance
- 70% of households have shops of weekly demand in 15 minutes walking distance
- Every second building on Erzherzog Karl Straße offers an active plinth
- Pedestrian frequency and Erzherzog Karl Straße increases by 30%
- Car traffic reduces by 30% (current number see City of Vienna, 2016)

## GOAL 3: DIVERSE CENTRE

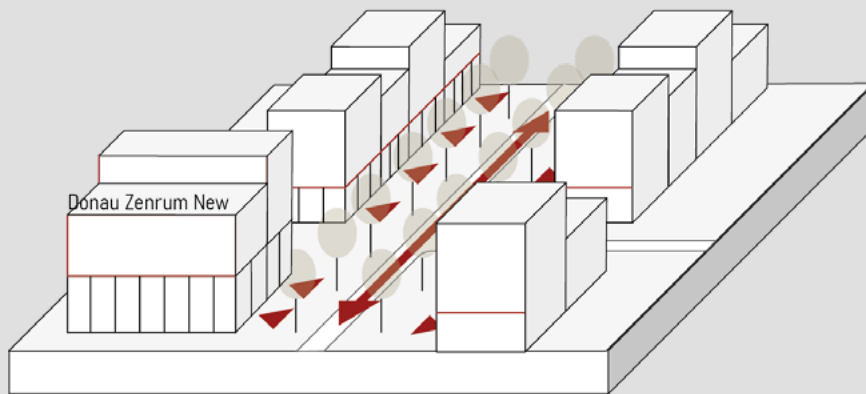


Fig. 82: Visualization goal 3 (by the author.)

The district centre Kagran lacks urban qualities like walkability, integrity and diversity. Especially vivid and attractive public spaces are missing. Solitary building shape the southern part of the centre while the historic northern part is dominated by car-traffic and is gradually losing functions in the plinth.

For the future a more integrated urban development should be achieved. New projects should be more small scale and take more care of the surroundings. Moreover, they should be connected by diverse public spaces.

### Sub-Goals

#### Spatial

- Ensure an integrated spatial development
- Protect historic buildings
- Protect and strengthen symbols of representation of district identity in space
- Set traffic calming measures on central streets and make square car-free
- Improve accessibility of district centres by foot, bike and public transport
- Attractivate public space for pedestrians

#### Functional

- Protect, diversify and mix plinth spaces and local economic functions
- Strengthen cultural and social functions in public and private space
- Open up the Donau Zentrum to its vicinity
  - Activate public space



One of the most important instruments is a masterplan of urban development that looks at the whole central area, not only the Donau Zentrum. Together with the City-management, it could guide the process towards an integrated urban centre that strengthens its local character.

As a district centre, it should bring together all inhabitants of Donaustadt. Therefore, participation processes need to be open for a wide variety of residents and consider the needs of all social groups.

Public investment will be needed, especially in public space. Private projects alone cannot facilitate an integrated area.

## Instruments

### Nodal

- Masterplan Kagran
- Public shopping street management
- City-management
- Cooperation with shopping-centre owner
- Participation workshops for specific projects (temporal)
- Local Citizen council (long-term)

### Authority

- Expansion of protected area ("Schutzzone")
- Zoning regulation for density, permeability and plinth spaces
- "Reservation" of central spaces for cultural institutions

### Treasure

- Support for renovation of historic buildings
- Initial aid for new shops along the street

### Organization

- Public Investment in street and square design
- Festivals in public space

## Milestones 2030

- Kagranerplatz offers a market and some cultural activities
- Pedestrian frequency and time spent on Wagramer Straße increases by 50%
- Car traffic reduces by 50% (current number see City of Vienna, 2016)



## GOAL 4: STRONG COLLECTIVE AND SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

### Sub-Goals

#### Procedural

- Transfer some responsibilities for public goods to civic organizations

#### Spatial

- Give space to civic organizations in more central locations and in public space

#### Functional

- Strengthen cultural activities in local neighbourhoods
- Strengthen local social activities in public and semi-public space (for instance urban gardening)



The key to more social functions and collective activity is coordination and activation. Therefore, a city-management office in the area would be important to support residents who want to get active. There is already a diy-instruction document by the city of Vienna. This could be adapted for the specific location and, for instance, show where citizen-action is possible and who needs to be contacted for it.

Another form of coordination would be to cooperate with housing developers to convince them of new forms of mixed use buildings.

Nevertheless, public authorities can act directly, for example through zoning plans or funding. But also investment in social infrastructure is important in a diversifying and redensifying district.

## Instruments

### Nodal

- City-management
- Cooperation with building developers to implement functional mix
- Space-specific diy-instructions

### Authority

- “Reservation” of spaces for cultural institutions and projects like urban gardening
- Active corners in the zoning plan around schools and libraries

### Treasure

- Public support for cultural initiatives

### Organization

- Investment in new public libraries
- Modernization of existing libraries

## GOAL 5: LOCAL QUALITY OF LIFE IN LESS INTEGRATED AREAS

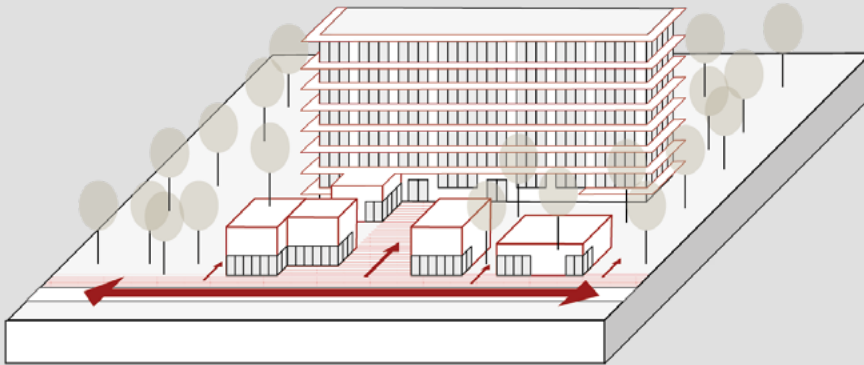


Fig. 83: Visualization goal 5 (by the author.)

### Sub-Goals

#### Procedural

- Small-scale investment in local daily life rather than prestige projects

#### Spatial

- Accelerate construction of social housing especially in well-integrated locations. Social mix should be considered
- Implement more green spaces along industrial corridors

#### Functional

- Foster social and cultural institutions along industrial corridors (especially for young inhabitants)
- Strengthen functional mix in central industrial areas



When working with vulnerable neighbourhoods, participation is crucial to avoid harming the needs of residents. Although especially vulnerable social groups can hardly reach in such processes, it is necessary to take their needs into account. If direct participation is not necessary, the city-management as an organization with local contact can help.

Besides, investment in the less integrated areas might be necessary. On the one hand, some areas can be redensified and affordable housing can be built. On the other hand, small scale interventions could improve liveability and create meeting places for local residents.

## Instruments

### Nodal

- Intensive participation of vulnerable social groups
- City-management

### Authority

- Mixed use zoning where possible in industrial corridor

### Treasure

- Coordinated leasing of public land to housing communities to increase social mix
- 

### Organization

- Investment in new social housing
- Investment in soft redensification of social housing complexes
- Investment in crossings over industrial corridors
- Investment in green spaces in vulnerable areas

## Milestones 2030

- 50% of new apartments in Kagran are publicly supported, 25% are affordable for the lowest income groups
- 30% of social housing complexes have been redesigned in a way that facilitates social and functional mix
- Station Erzherzog-Karl-Straße is redesigned as a multi-modal transport hub with high amenity value
- Two new crossings over the A23 and the train tracks have been constructed
- The existing crossings have been redesigned





# 6 IMPLEMENTATION

## 6.1 GOVERNANCE SUGGESTIONS

## 6.2 PROJECT 1: AXES OF URBANITY

## 6.3 PROJECT 2: CORRIDOR OF DAILY LIFE

## 6.4 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

This chapter outlines an approach for the implementation of the vision.

First, I give some suggestions for more democratic governance structures in the district.

Second, I describe two spatial projects. Each of them translates some of the strategic goals into the local space. I describe some strategic interventions and approaches for how they can be implemented. Moreover, design explorations on the street-scale show what form the spatial implementation could have. In the two projects I use icons from the theory chapter to show which char-

acteristics of democratic space each intervention covers.

The final section outlines what steps could be taken to implement the proposal in the next two decades.

The icons below will be used to indicate to which part of democratic space each action contributes.



Fig. 84: Visualization: Wagramer as a space for public claim making (by the author. Image sources: Google Maps,; Javanaud Emdén, n.d.; Purepng.com Janssen, n.d.; Murphy, 2012))



## 6.1 DEMOCRATIC DONAUSTADT

GOVERNANCE SUGGESTIONS



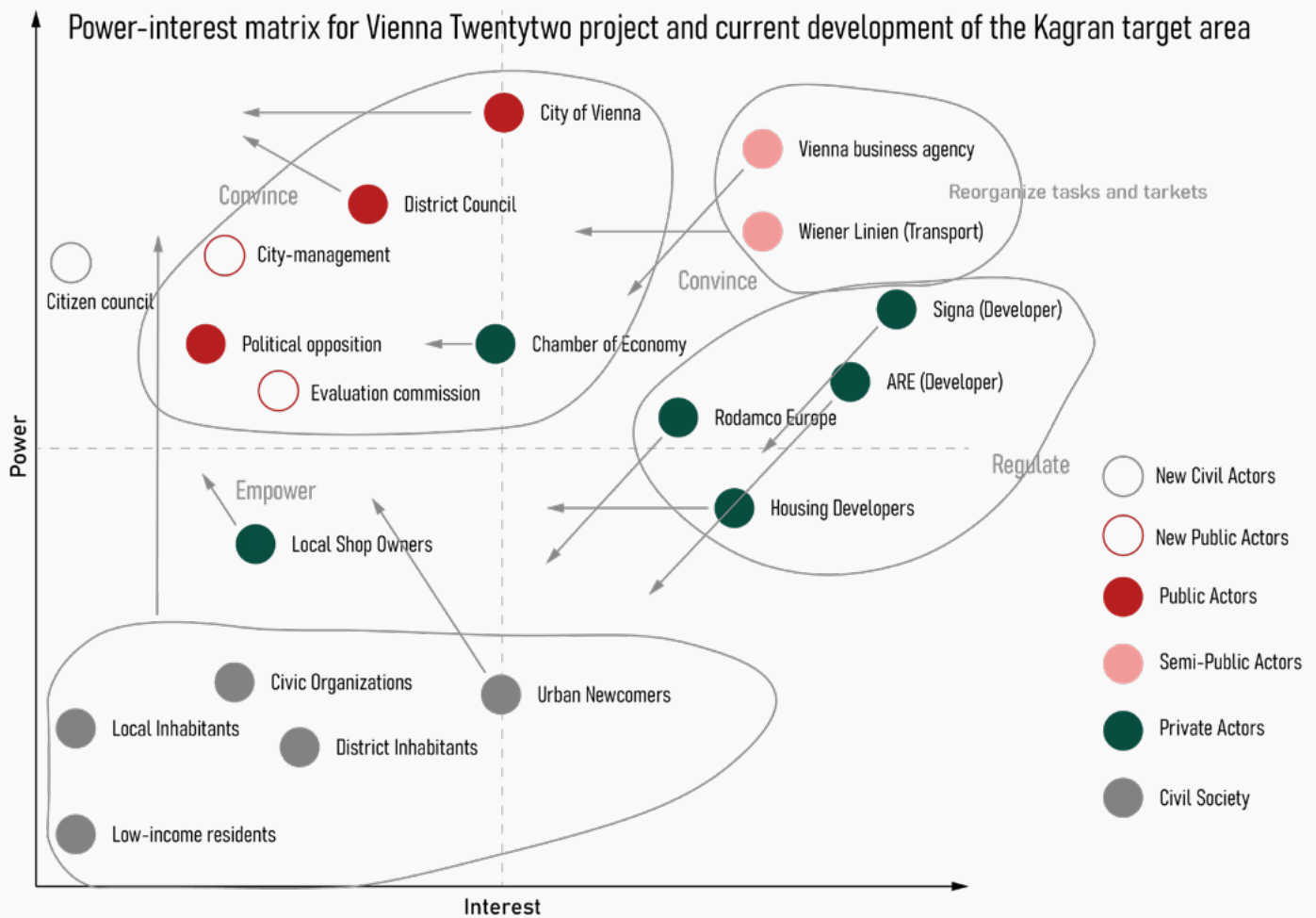


Fig. 85: Proposed reorganization of actors in relation to the process of the Forum Donaustadt. The x-axis refers to the interest in the current planning regime of investor-led solitary projects (by the author.)

This project has shown that the implementation of spatial goals strongly depends on governance structures. Fig. 85 illustrated potential changes in the governance structure along the example of the “Forum Donaustadt” process. Currently, private and semi-public actors have a strong interest in large-scale projects in integrated locations. It can be assumed that public actors also have an interest in these projects, since they show progress in district development through relatively uncomplicated processes and without large public spending. However, local inhabitants seem to have little interest in this form of development.

To achieve a different outcome,

the role and interests of actors would need to change. Firstly, citizens should be empowered to ensure that the implementation of future projects stands in line with their needs.

Secondly, the objectives of powerful semi-public actors should be rethought. If processes are organized by the Vienna Business Agency, the goals should be more focused on the local economy than the interests of the city’s global image. However, a clear distribution of competences would make the process more transparent and democratic. Therefore, public decision makers need to be aware of their power and the long-term consequences of a certain development. Central



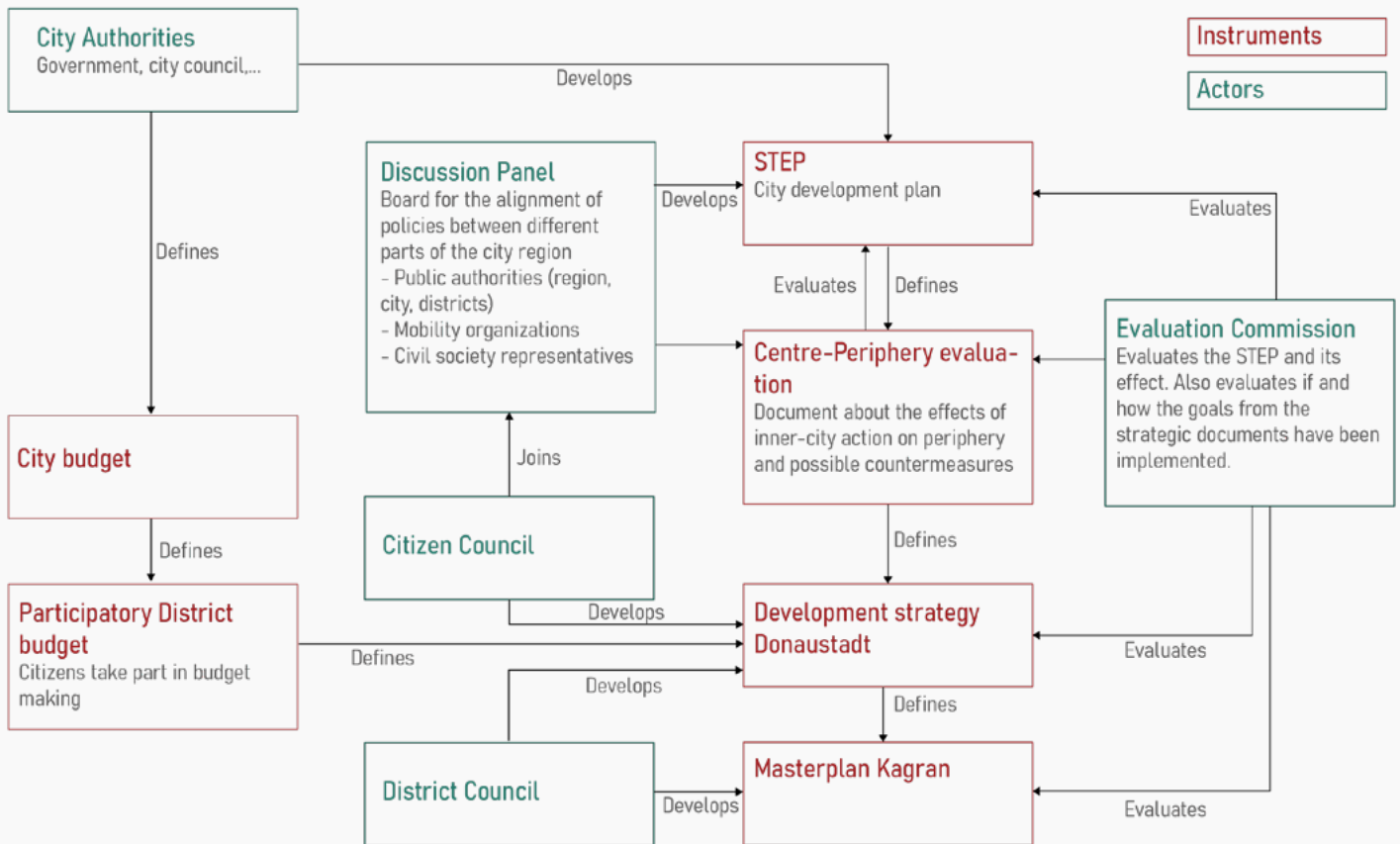


Fig. 86: Potential new governance arrangements on city and district level for a democratization of the planning process. (by the author.)

decisions should be made by elected officials and their administrative bodies in combination with broad participation processes. Participation processes should be put central in the processes and should stand at the beginning of the redevelopment. Public bodies should not be afraid of regulating private actors, especially if their decisions are legitimized through in-depth participation.

### New Governance Arrangements

Central governance issues need to be approached on the city level. New instruments and actor's arrangements could help to democratize the planning process. This would also add an additional level of

evaluation of planning decisions and implementation.

Starting from the local level on the bottom of the diagram, a binding development strategy for the district and a masterplan for Kagan would make decisions more transparent and would guide private actors.

These plans would be partly defined by the STEP, the city development plan. An additional level of evaluation of the STEP, the "City-Periphery evaluation", would report potential negative effects of city-wide decisions on the periphery and propose ways to counterbalance them. If, for instance, measures against car traffic in the inner city make it harder for residents from the periphery to go to work,

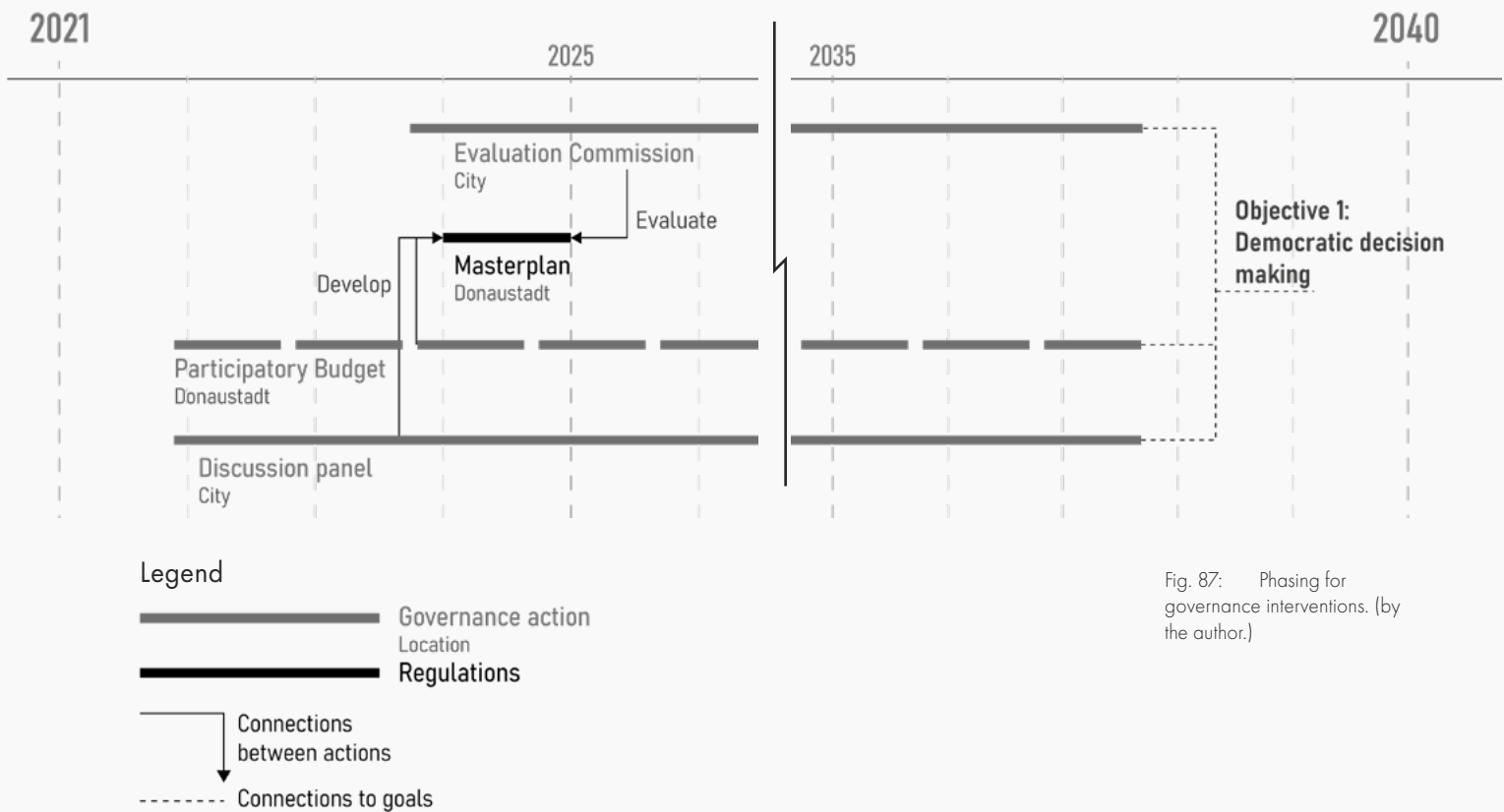


Fig. 87: Phasing for governance interventions. (by the author.)

additional measures could be taken to ensure that other transport modes are available.

The newly founded “evaluation commission” would conduct this evaluation. Moreover, it would evaluate how strategies have been implemented. This institution can be compared to an audit office, only that it evaluates urban development on the local level.

Additionally, the new “discussion panel” would bring decision makers together with representatives of the civil society, and important public or private organizations. Besides contributing to the city-periphery evaluation, this panel could discuss the detailed implementation of

measures and contribute to the STEP.

### Participatory Budget

Participatory budgets (PB) can be applied in diverse forms and scales. In Paris, for example, a participatory budget was made for the whole city with over 158,000 participants and a budget of 100 million€ (Brodach, 2017). The participatory budget in a LA21 project in Vienna, in contrast, focused on the implementation of small scale interventions and had a budget of 1500€ (LA21 Liesing, 2010). Hence, the design of the instrument needs to be adapted to the circumstances.

#### Function of PB

The central functions of a PB is the democratization of decision making processes. On the local scale, citizens can decide over local interventions. This could help to make the distribution of resources more just, increase the identification of inhabitants with the project, and increase social cohesion in a neighbourhood.

On the district scale, PB could help to redistribute resources and to give a voice to the inhabitants in larger scale decisions. On this scale a PB has the advantage that a large group of inhabitants can be involved while the subject is still relatively detailed. In other formats, like workshops, only a smaller group can participate. In large scale surveys, on the other hand, the questions are often broad and have little impact on the final implementation.

#### Advantage of PB

The advantage over other participation methods is that it gives decisive power to the inhabitants. As described above, the visibility of

current participation results in the final decisions by authorities is often limited. The participatory budget, in contrast, it makes sure that the results of the inhabitants are implemented.

Moreover, it can benefit otherwise excluded social groups. Studies have found that poorer neighbourhoods tend to benefit stronger from PBs than richer areas (Marquetti, 2002 as cited by Novy & Leubolt 2005). This is, however, only the case if the number of inhabitants per neighbourhood is a distribution criterion (Novy & Leubolt, 2005).

Another advantage of a PB is that a large group of inhabitants can participate in a PB and still make decisions on a relatively detailed level. In the example from Paris, despite the large number of participants, inhabitants could propose and vote on concrete projects (Brodach, 2017). The example also shows that a digital platform is most suitable for handling this process (ibid.). On the local level, however, in-person meetings like in Porto Alegre could better facilitate debates.

Lastly, PB can help to facilitate governance reforms and to tackle projects that were not tackled before. Through decentralized planning decisions the “design of institutions” could be enhanced (Novy & Leubolt, 2005, p. 2031). Decisions could be taken more transparently and closer to the inhabitants.

#### Implementation

In most examples, the PB takes place in an annual cycle (Brodach, 2017; Novy & Leubolt, 2005). Through a combination of direct democracy with elected representative

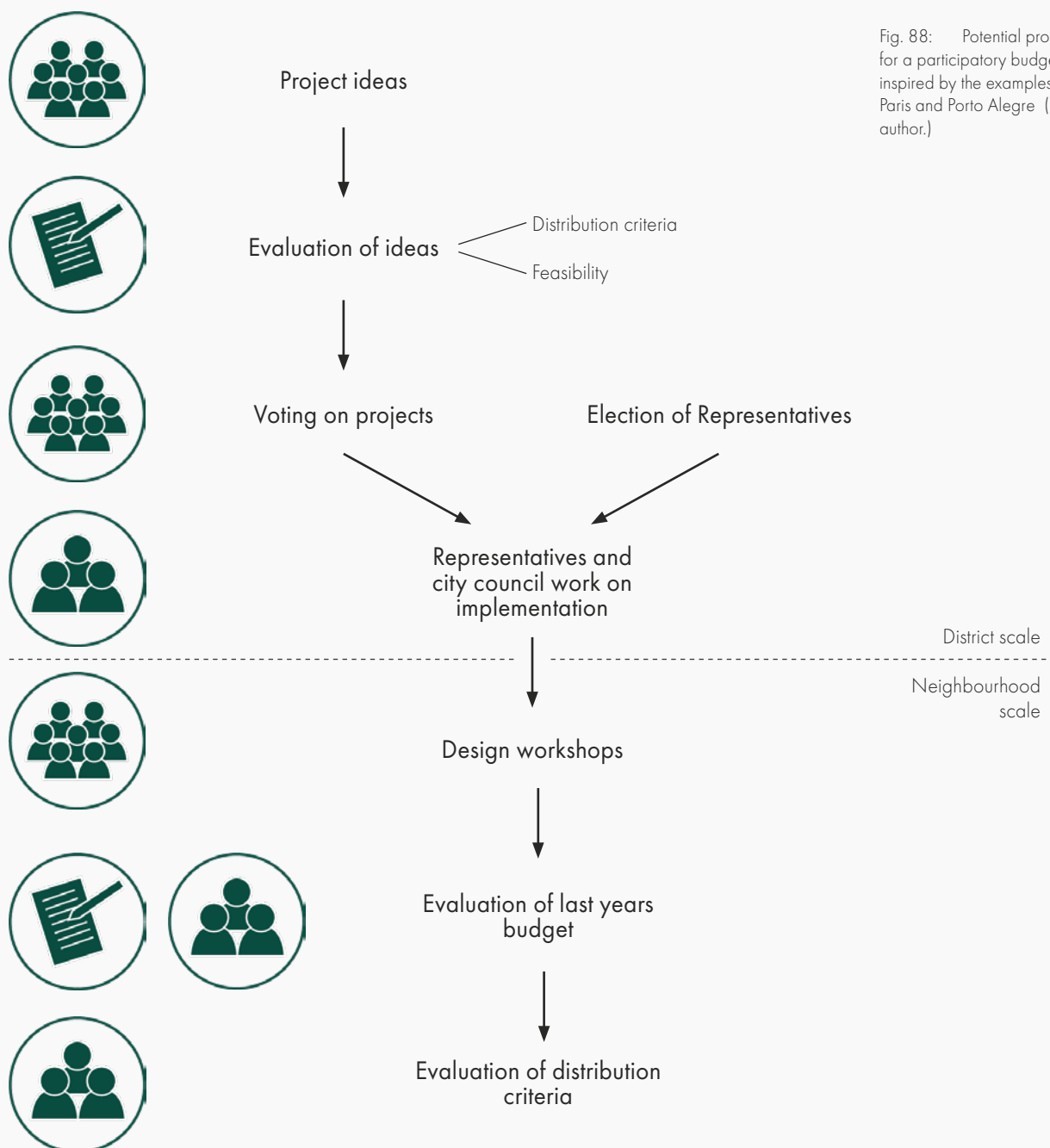


Fig. 88: Potential process for a participatory budget, inspired by the examples from Paris and Porto Alegre (by the author.)

committees it can reach depth in decisions and a large population (Novy & Leubolt, 2005). The following steps could be part of a PB process.

1. Collect and evaluate ideas for projects and policies: Citizens can propose ideas and wishes. An evaluation by experts makes sure that these ideas are feasible.

2. Vote for projects: Depending on the scale, all inhabitants of the city, district, or neighbourhood could have

the chance to vote for certain projects. These could then be ranked in consideration of distribution criteria and voting to ensure that overrepresented groups do not benefit disproportionately. Resources that are not project-based could be distributed based on the distribution criteria and then be further distributed on the neighbourhood scale.

3. Election of representatives who negotiate further: This

#### Central actors



Inhabitants



Elected representatives



Experts



is important to make sure that are also considered in the further implementation (Novy & Leubolt, 2005). These representatives can be a form of citizen council (see below).

4. Definition of distribution criteria: These should be regularly evaluated together with the citizens to keep the process flexible (Novy & Leubolt, 2005).

5. Local implementation: For the local implementation of larger decisions, design workshops could facilitate further participation. In other cases another round of PB could be conducted on the neighbourhood scale.

## Citizen Council

Another form of participation are citizen councils. Many countries have implemented citizen councils on a national level (OECD, 2020). However, they could also be applied on lower scales.

Citizen councils represent the interests of inhabitants in certain topics and usually consult public authorities in decision making. To integrate citizens in all stages of development processes, the council should be a permanent institution. However, the selection of citizens should change regularly

Citizens are often selected by a “civic lottery” in a two-stage selection (OECD, 2020). In this process, a representative group of citizens is selected by criteria like gender or socio-economic factors (ibid.). Among each demographic group, a small number of participants is chosen by lottery.

In contrast to the PB, citizen councils only have the function to

consult decision makers. Nevertheless, the suggestions of the councils should be implemented or at least strongly considered by authorities. Otherwise, the instrument might lose their legitimacy among the population. Suggestions by the council are usually based on long discussion processes that take different perspectives into account (ibid.) and therefore have high value for other institutions.

Citizen councils can be implemented as independent participation format. However, they can also be part of a PB process., as described above.

## Design Participation

Citizens should also have the chance to participate in the design of their environment. This could be done through workshops on specific topics but also the citizen councils could be take part. For these workshops it is important that the results are clearly visible in the implementation.

## Mobilizing the population

A central challenge for participation is the mobilization of inhabitants. Vulnerable social groups can be hard to reach and often only inhabitants who generally have more time get active. In LA21 processes, mobilization was achieved through actions in public space. For instance events in the neighbourhoods can be organized(see expert interview Matejka). However, limitations to who can participate need to be considered.





## 6.2 AXES OF URBANITY

PROJECT 1

Broad streets are a strong characteristic of Kagra. Currently, however, they are mainly used for car traffic.

In the future, these streets could develop into urban corridors. As central axes they could become spaces of interaction for all parts of the district society. As boulevards they could offer spaces to spend leisure time and as shopping streets they could improve local supply.

The primary function of these axes is the implementation of public central spaces. However, it also contributes to walkability and the diversity of public spaces. As central areas, these streets could strengthen district identity. Finally, they could be beneficial locations for social infrastructure and as

Fig. 90 on the following page illustrates the structure of these axes. Three parts can be differentiated: the existing centre Kagra, the axis Kagra-Stadlau, and the development area Kagra east.

The structure is based on a space syntax analysis that can be found in the appendix.

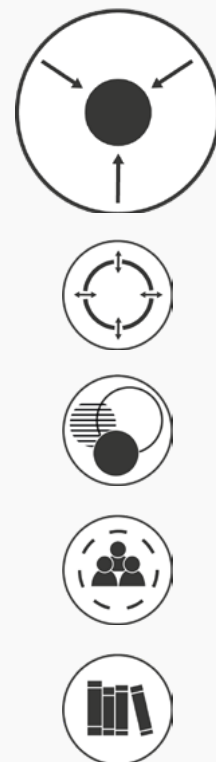
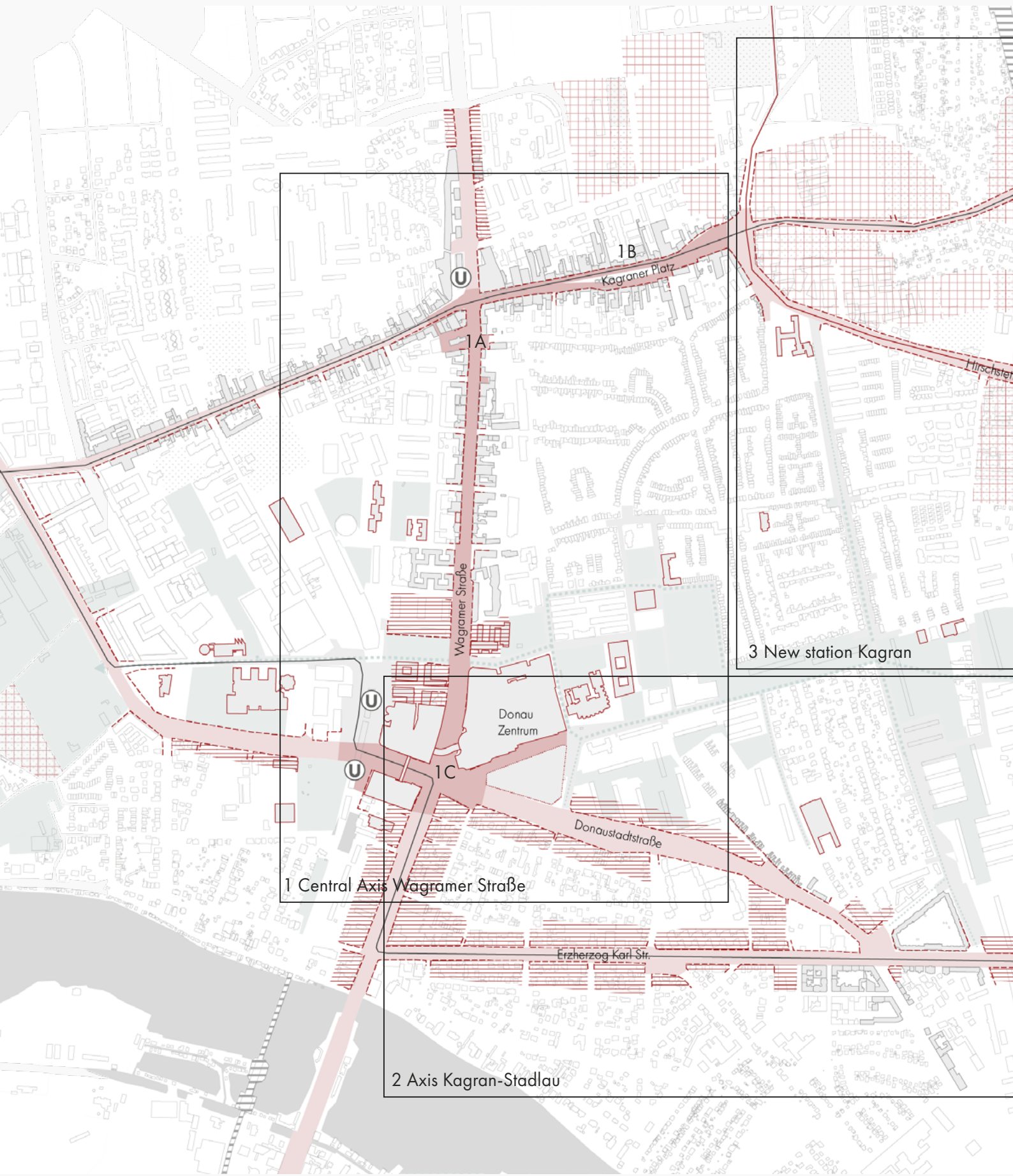
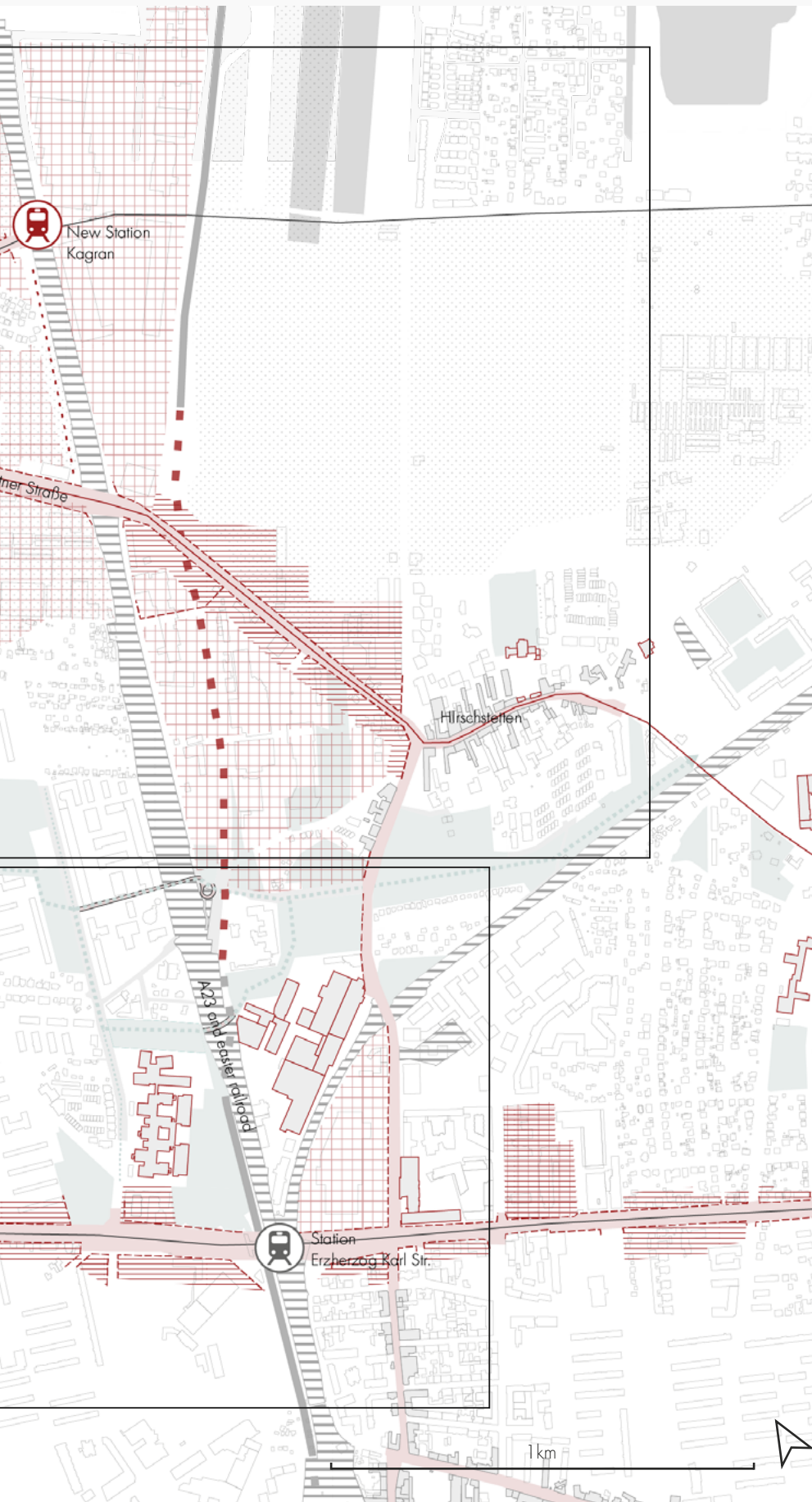


Fig. 89: Chapter cover image: Visualization of the proposal at the corner Wagramer Straße-Meißbaugasse (by the author. Image sources: Google Maps.; Javanaud Emdén, n.d.; Purepng.com)













URBAN AXES NETWORK










## Proposal Urban Axes

-  Public spaces on central corridor Wagramer Straße
-  Public spaces on potential urban axes
-  Street fronts to be strengthened
-  Street front densification
-  Potential redensification areas
-  Proposed tram line
-  Proposed station
-  Proposed covering of A23
-  Public buildings
-  Green corridor (Project 2)

## Existing elements

-  Railway corridor
-  Edge defining buildings
-  Other buildings
-  Highway
-  Existing tram lines
-  Metro Station
-  Train Station

## Sub-projects

- 1A Redesign Wagramer Straße
- 1B Reconceptualization Kagran Platz
- 1C Integration of Donau Zentrum
- 2 Redensification and redesign axis Kagran-Stadlau
- 3 New station and redensification Kagran East



## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

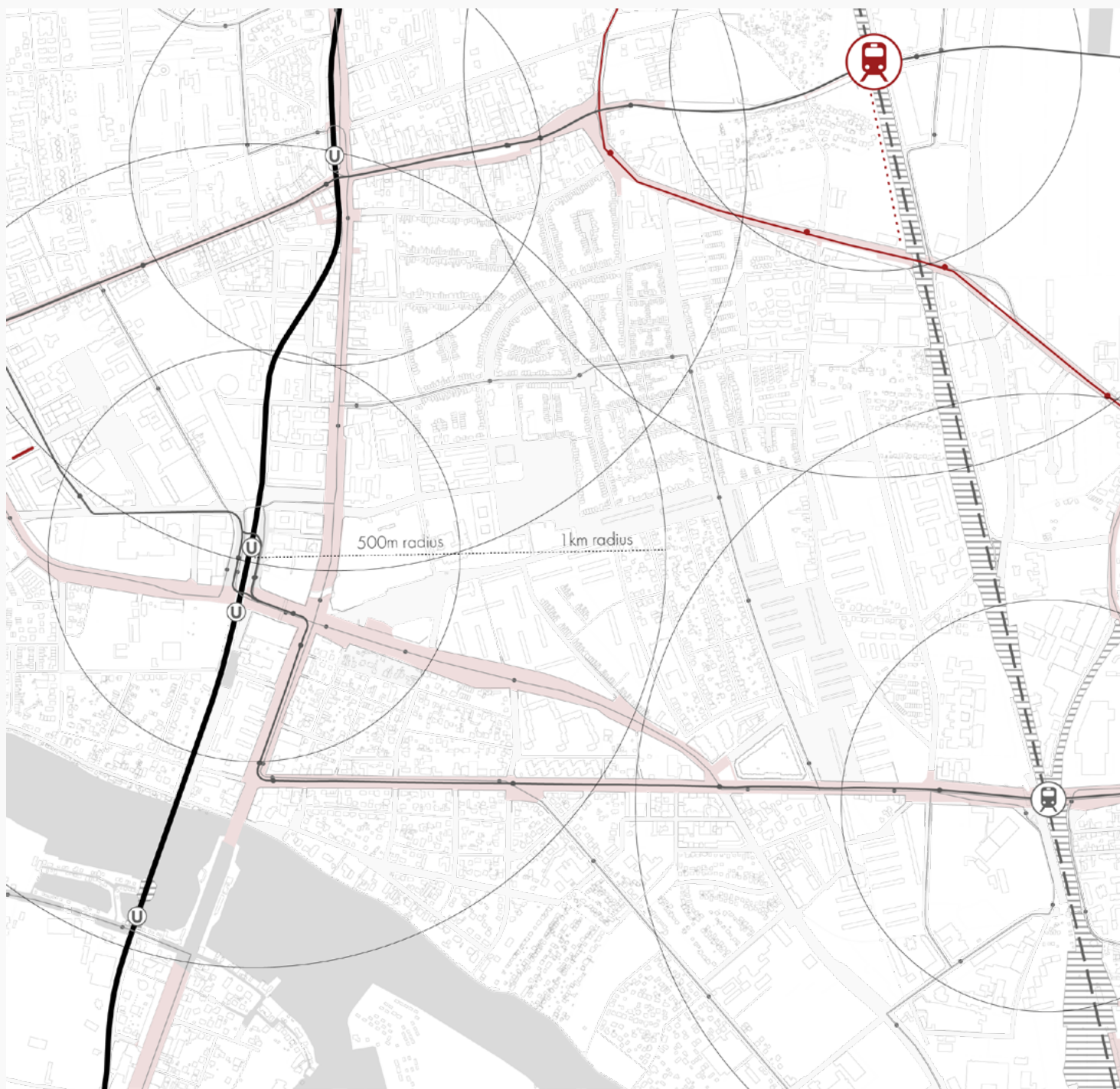
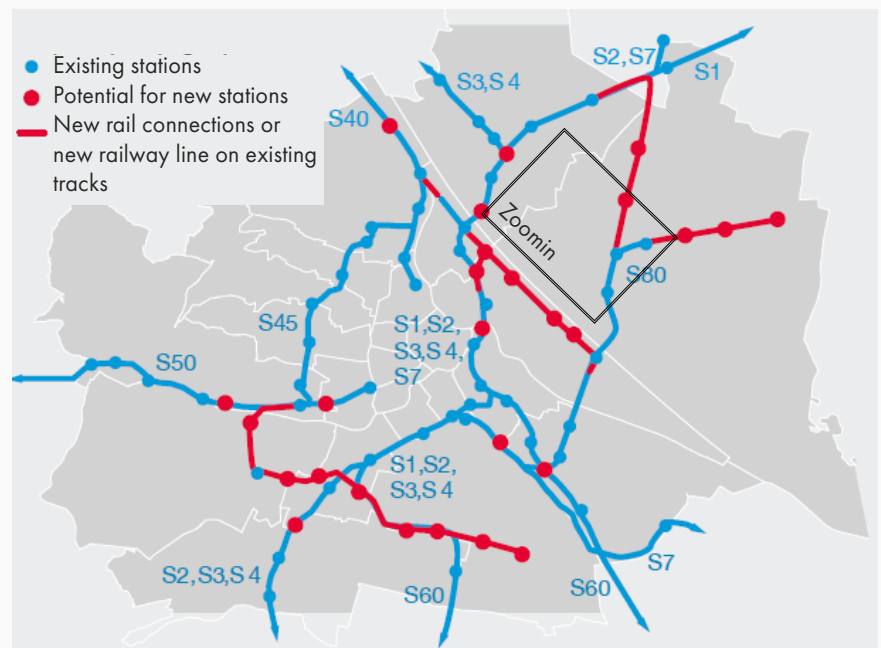
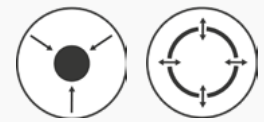


Fig. 90: Proposed changes in public transport infrastructure (by the author.)

The improvement of public transport in the area could have positive effects on the centrality structure. A new station could be constructed in Kagran east on the existing train tracks and become an additional stop on the existing train line.

The new station would increase



#### Legend











-  Proposed station
-  Proposed tram line
-  Tram lines
-  Bus lines
-  Metro lines
-  Railway line
-  Metro Station
-  Train Station
-  Public spaces on potential urban axes
-  Street fronts to be strengthened

Fig. 91: In a study from 2016 the Viennese workers union highlighted the need for improved public in the outer districts. Among other things, it proposed a new station in Kagran. (Source: Wittrich, 2016)

the centrality of Kagraner Platz. It could regain its role as a central square.

Moreover, the new station would close a gap in the network of train and metro stations. In the square of the four station in the area, almost every building would be reachable within one kilometre.



## 6.2.1 CENTRAL AXIS WAGRAMER STRASSE

The goal of the project Centre Kagan is to diversify and integrate the centre. For this goal, the potential of the Wagramer Straße and the Kaganer Platz can be used. By activating the historic street public life could expand from the private space of the Donau Zentrum into the public space of streets and squares. But activating the street is more complex than redesigning public space.

### Three strategic locations

The project can be thought in three steps. First, the Donau Zentrum functions as an existing attractor at the southern end of the central part of Wagramer Straße. The task for this part is to open up to the street and to integrate the solitary building blocks in the surroundings.

The second part is the central part of the street itself. Here, public space redesign, plinth activation and the protection of the housing stock could help to activate the street. There are

already plans for the street's redesign from 2014. Even an architecture competition has been conducted (Verlag Holzhausen GmbH, 2015). The city could start this project by using these plans and adapting them.

As a third part of the project, the Kaganer Platz and the crossing with the Wagramer Straße should be activated. This is crucial because the square could function as a second attractor in the north of the street, complementary to the Donau Zentrum. Consequently, the Wagramerstraße would be activated on two sides and become more attractive for pedestrians. Moreover, the activation of Square and Street would function as a diverse network of public spaces, together with the existing central buildings around the shopping centre. Since the distance between the two ends is less than 1 km, the area could become a walkable centre for pedestrians.

### Existing elements



### Proposal Elements



### Sub-projects

- 1A Redesign Wagramer Straße
- 1B Reconceptualization Kagan Platz
- 1C Integration of Donau Zentrum

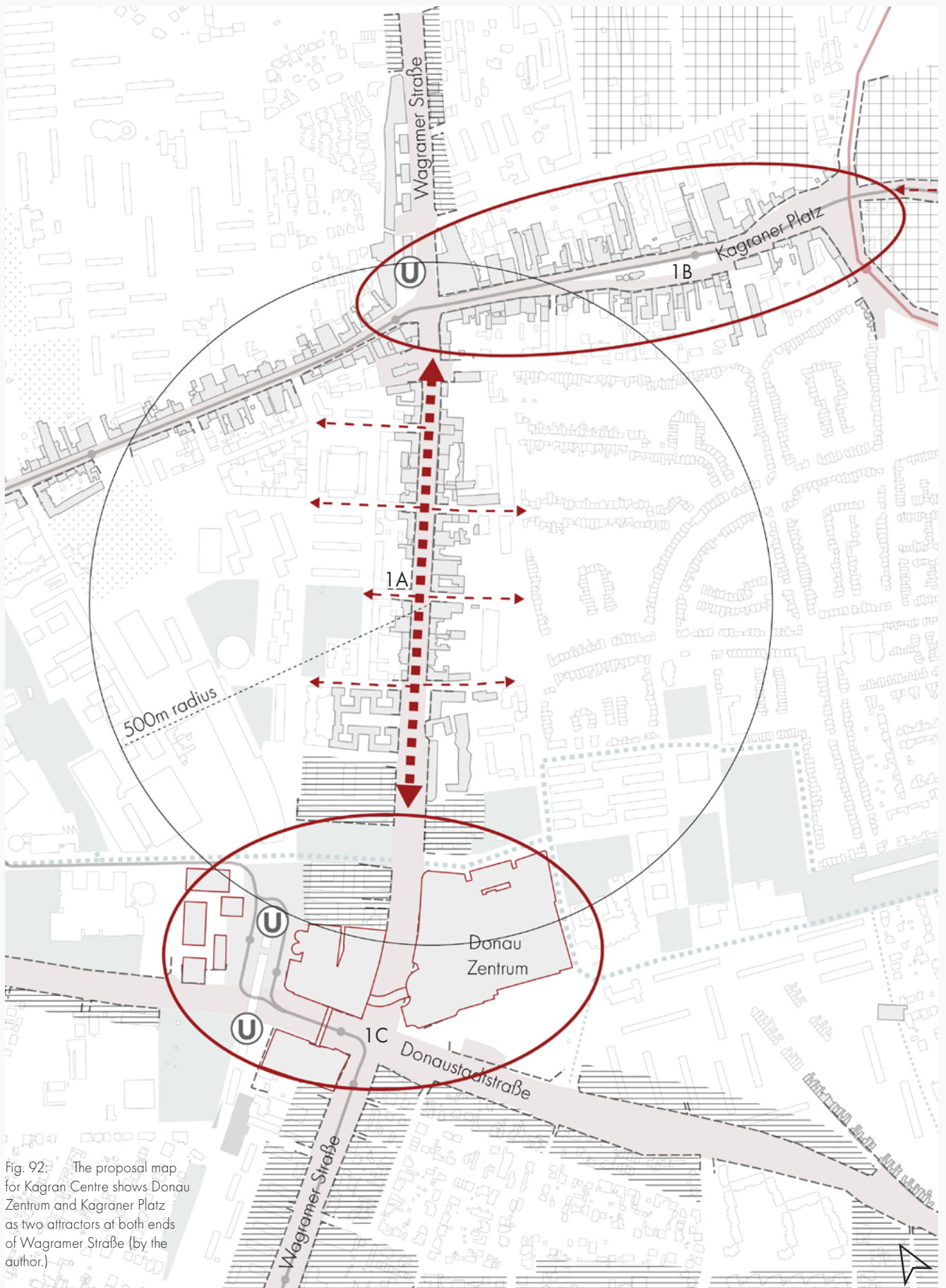
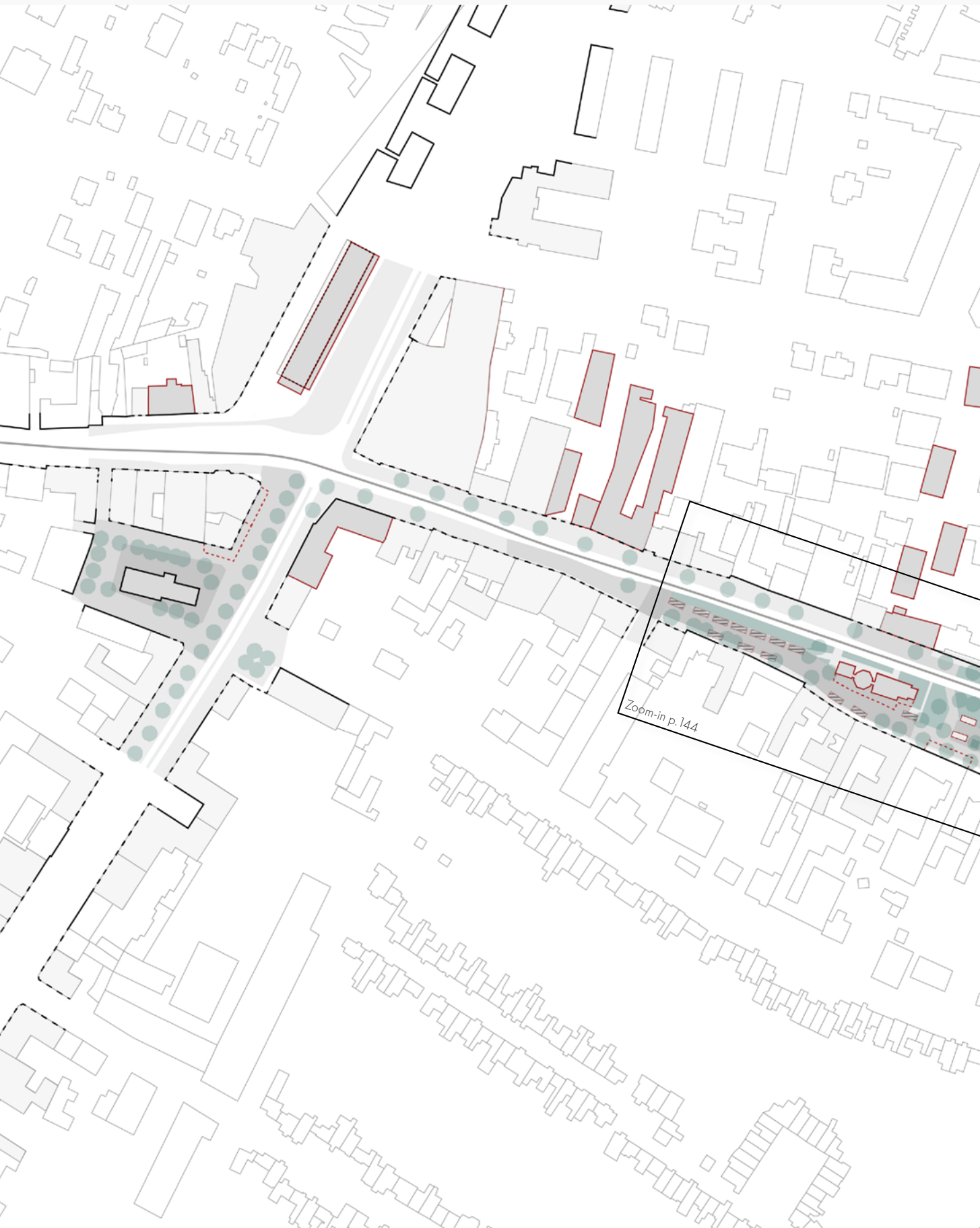


Fig. 92: The proposal map for Kagran Centre shows Donau Zentrum and Kagraner Platz as two attractors at both ends of Wagramer Straße (by the author.)

KAGRANER PLATZ





The possibilities to reuse the Kagranner Platz are limited due to the tram line that goes through it. But if space for cars is reduced, there is enough space for public life. Then, the tram can be an advantage, as it brings frequency to the square

In the central park a permanent and a temporary market could be implemented. This would bring the original function as a village square back.

Currently there are multiple green spaces, most of them could be preserved and in the eastern part even expanded. New terraces for restaurants and cafés could have space in the calmer parts of the square. This way, it would invite to spend time both with consume oriented and non-consume oriented activities.

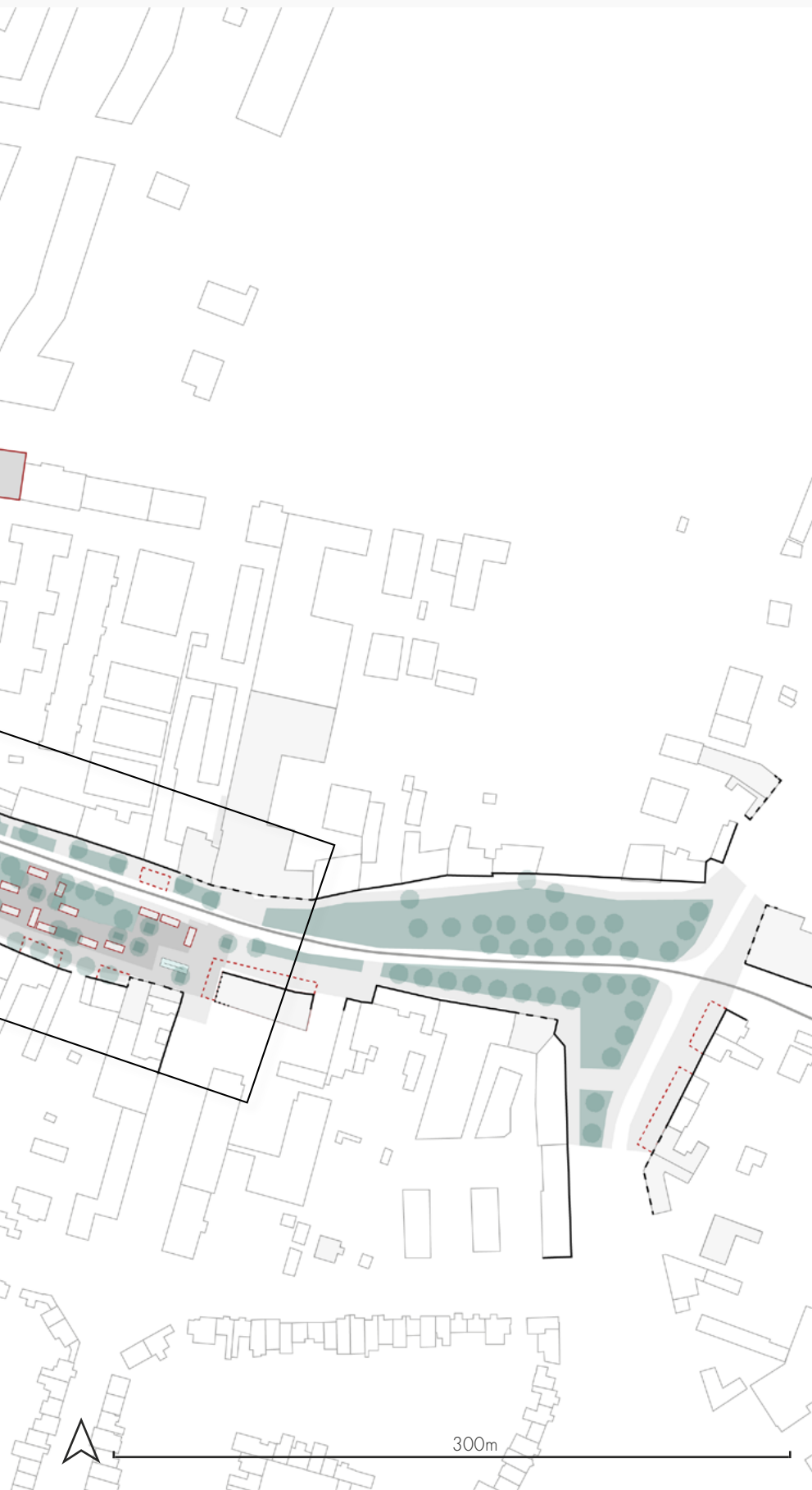


Fig. 93: Masterplan Kagranner Platz (by the author.)





### The Market Kagraner Platz

The “Kagraner Markt” would be located in the central part of the historic Kagraner Platz. But it would not only be a market but a diverse ensemble of different functions.

At the western end of the market, a square functions as the entrance gate from the Kraygasse. It gives more space to the existing restaurant in the west. The square could be used for festivals or other activities .

This is the starting point of the permanent market area. Here, permanent market functions could be located that offer more than the traditional market goods. On its southern side, terraces would invite for enjoying the place with a coffee.

The centre of the Kagraner Platz is the existing district museum. In this proposal, it would become part of an ensemble together with the new cultural centre in the north.

Further to the west, a temporary market could give regional farmers the possibility to sell their goods directly to the customers.

Green spaces are interwoven with the whole structure to create a good micro-climate.

Fig. 94: Market Kagraner Platz (by the author.)

### Cultural Centre

The cultural centre would house a new museum for applied arts. It would not only be an interesting institution for the residents but could be integrated in the activation of public spaces. Art pieces, for instance, could be exhibited on the square or methods of art could be used to design and activate public space together with the inhabitants.

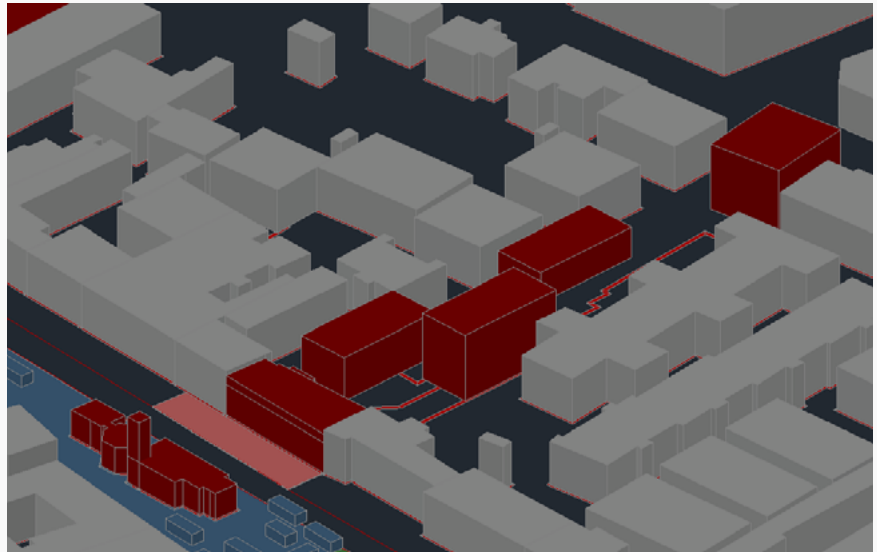


Fig. 96: New cultural centre (by the author.)

### District museum

The district museum is located in the historic building of the fire brigade. It is the centre of the square and would also become the centre of the market. It creates an interest ensemble with the new functions and the cultural centre

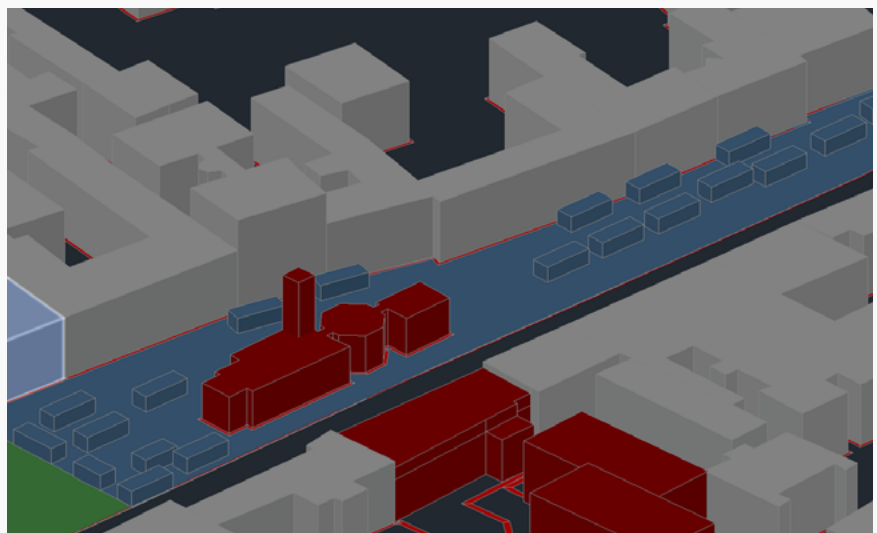


Fig. 95: Market and cultural ensemble (by the author.)

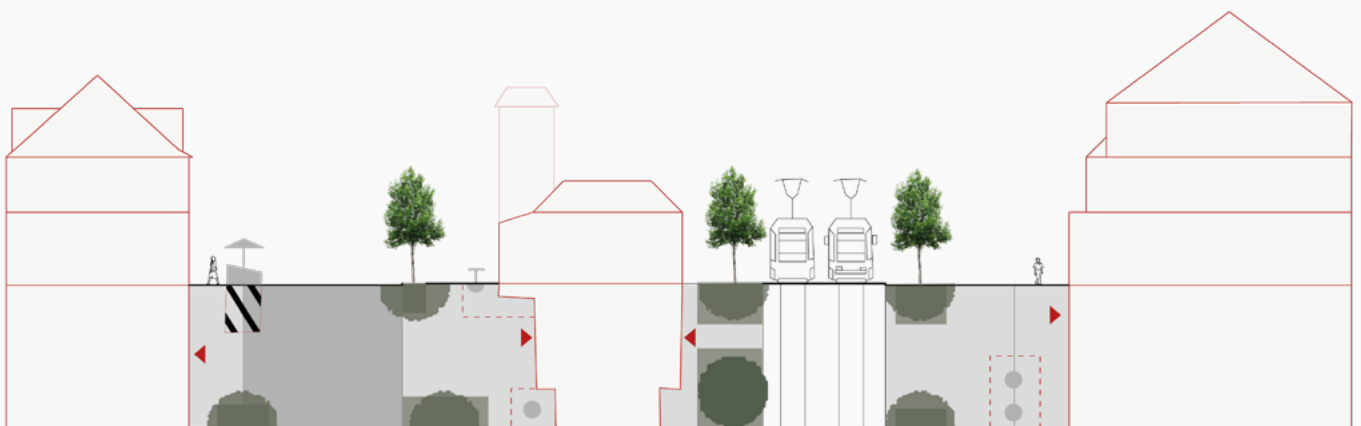
### Instruments

- Pop-up market in cooperation with Gebietsbetreuung to kick off participation process
- Cooperation with district museum, shop owners, schools and other institutions
- Public investment and traffic reorganization
- Public investment in new station

### Design-based guidelines

- Maximum height in line with the existing structure
- Zoning change from Mixed area (GB) as Mixed area - Business area (GBGV)
- Expansion of *Schutzzone* to preserve the historic housing stock

The starting point of the redevelopment of Kagraner Platz could be a pop-up market. This could facilitate a broad participation process. Simultaneously, the construction of the new station could start. Before the station is finished Kagraner Platz could be redesigned. This would bring attention to the new central square.



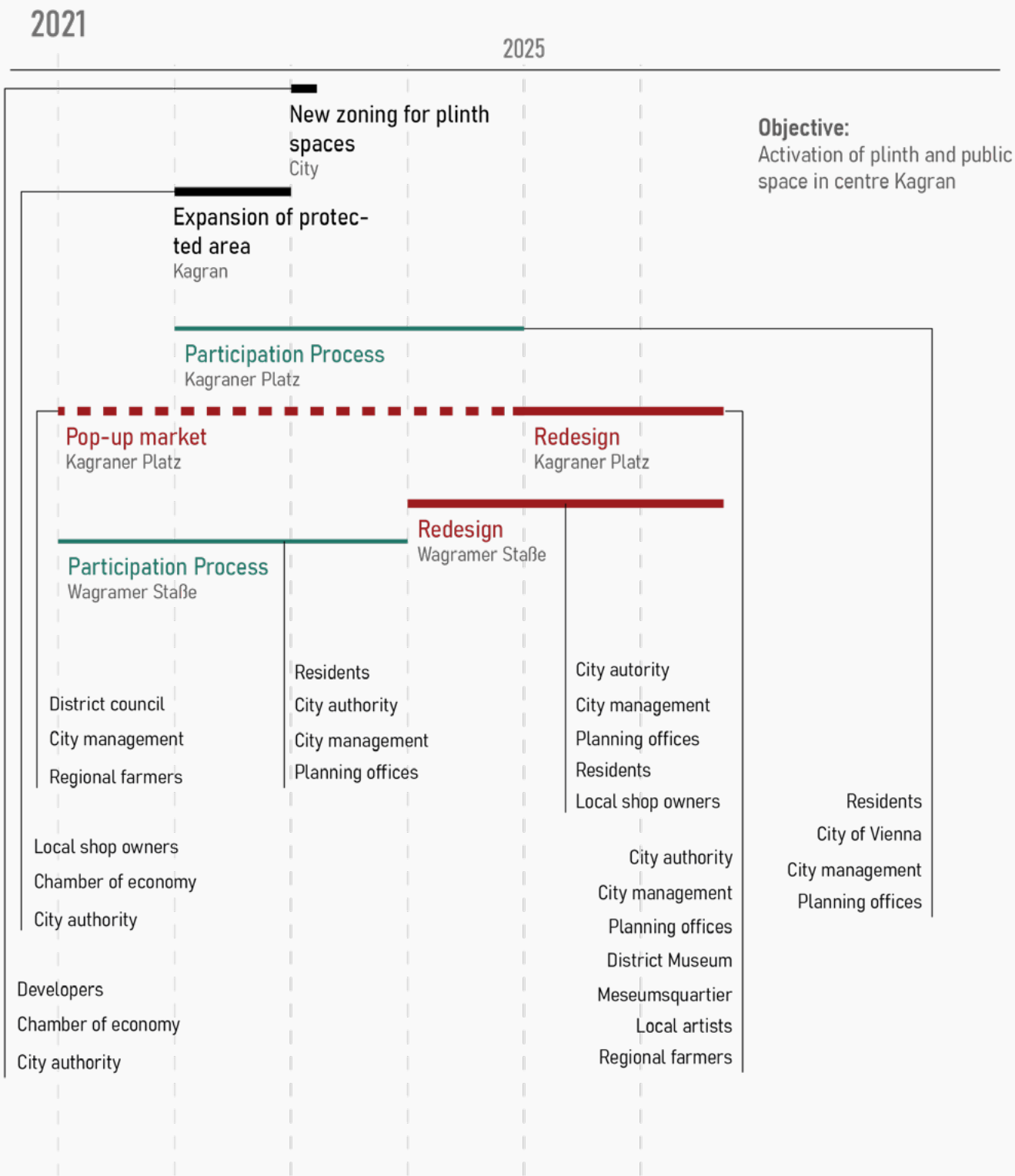


Fig. 97: Potential actors in the redesign Process of Kragraner Platz (by the author.)



## WAGRAMER STRASSE

### Instruments

- Zoning: Expansion of Shutzzone
- Cooperation with shop owners
- Public investment and traffic reorganization
- Shopping street agency that organizes the shops to consolidate the shopping street

There have been plans for the redesign of Wagramer Straße since at least 2014.

This proposal has the goal to highlight the urgency of this measure. The street's built structure and location create the potential for being the district's most urban street. It could be a central meeting place for all inhabitants. However, it currently does not fulfil this function because of its car-oriented design.

Through a reduction of car lanes, more space could be given to pedestrians. A green boulevard could invite people to spend time here. Shops and restaurants could use the new space for terraces and outdoor shop spaces.

The tram tracks that are currently not used could be temporarily covered to preserve them for potential future lines. In the meantime car lanes could be located on top of them.

Fig. 98: Visualization A of the proposal at the corner Wagramer Straße-Meißauergasse (by the author. Image sources: Google Maps,; Javanaud Emdén, n.d.; Purepng.com)

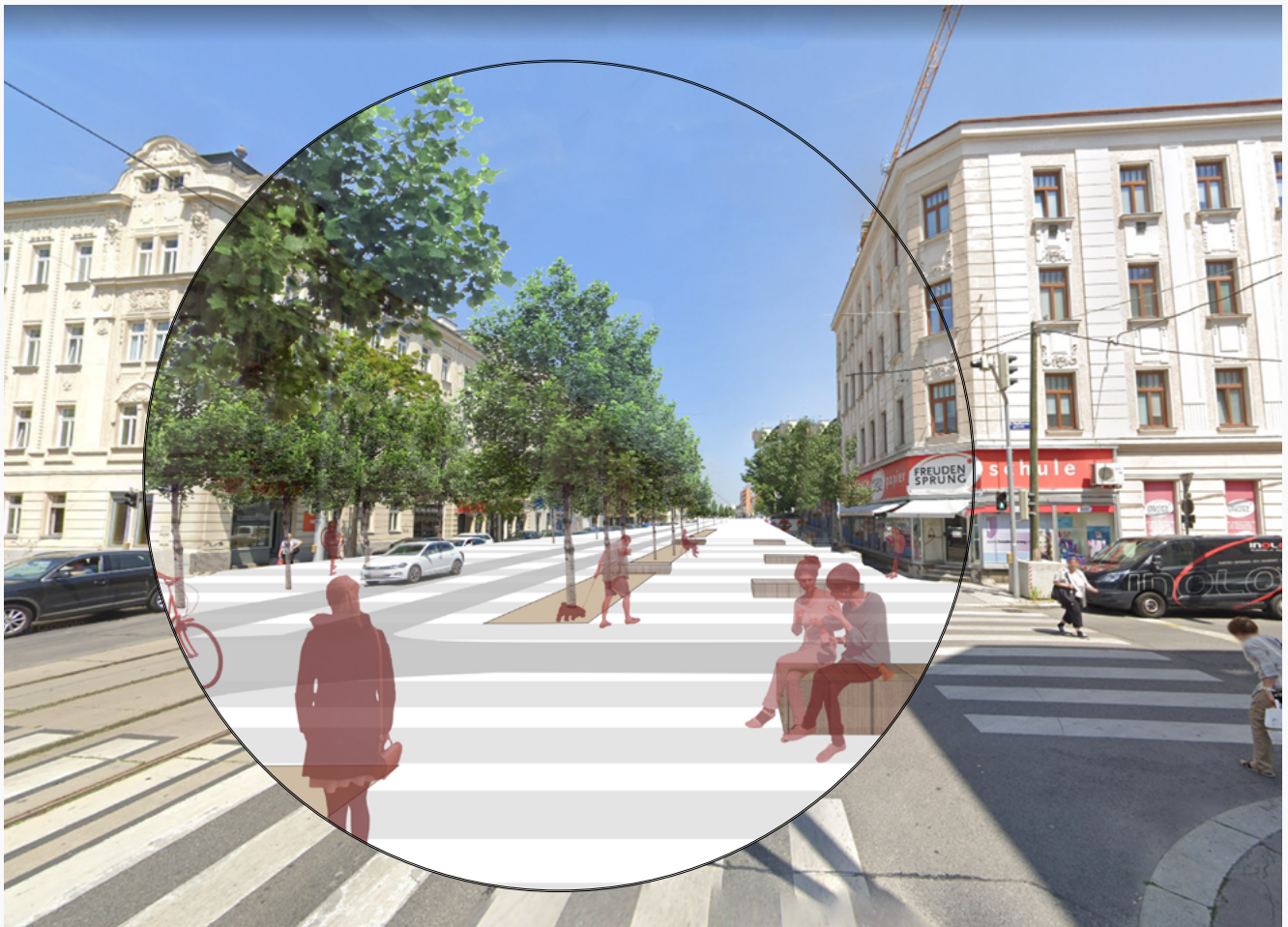




Fig. 99: Proposed redesign of Wagramer Straße (by the author.)





## Design-based guidelines

- Reduced street width
- Compulsory space in the plinth with potential for functions other than living
- Consider transition spaces for appropriation by shops and restaurants
- Provide open spaces for appropriation by local residents (for example through a *Grätzloase*)
- Provide enough spaces to sit and meet
- Greenery should provide shadow and structure public space but it should not block pedestrian flows
- Central spaces should be open for temporary uses like public exhibitions

## Space of protest

Besides interaction, a democratic public space needs to facilitate public protest. Wagramer Straße and the other urban axes could be good locations for this (Fig. 100). It is centrally located. Hence, protest would be visible. If the street is strengthened as a pedestrian space there would also be more people who take notice of public claim making.

Fig. 100: Visualization: Wagramer as a space for public claim making (by the author. Image sources: Google Maps.; Javanaud Emdén, n.d.; Purepng.com Janssen, n.d.; Murphy, 2012))



### Opening the shopping centre

The existing structure of the Donau Zentrum, on the other hand, stands in contrast to the visibility of protest because of the deviation of public and private space. The shopping centre is often criticized for being closed towards its surroundings (Fig. 101).

Fig. 102 shows an extreme example of how the new district centre could look like if the shopping centre would be replaced. Multiple squares could create interesting gradients of public space and give space to more uses than only shopping. A new axis could connect the station with the Bernoulligasse and better integrate the surrounding neighbourhoods with the Wagramerstraße and the new centre.

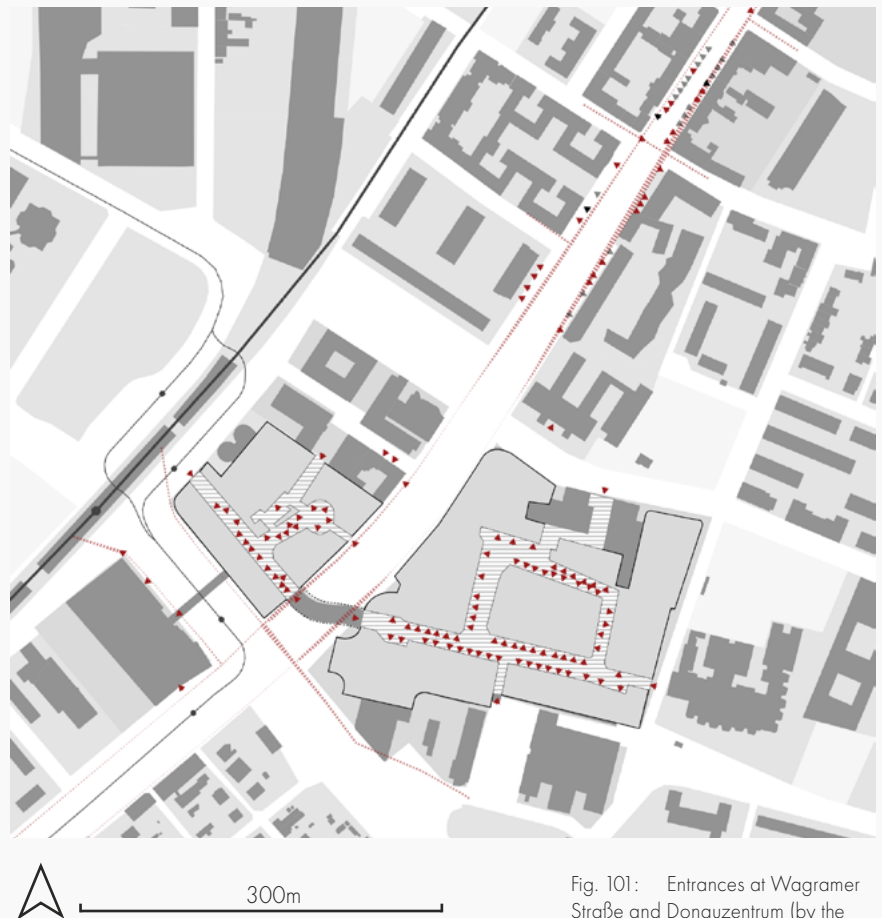


Fig. 101: Entrances at Wagramer Straße and Donauzentrum (by the author. Sources: Google Maps; Aeneas Beteiligungsgesellschaft mbH, n.d.)





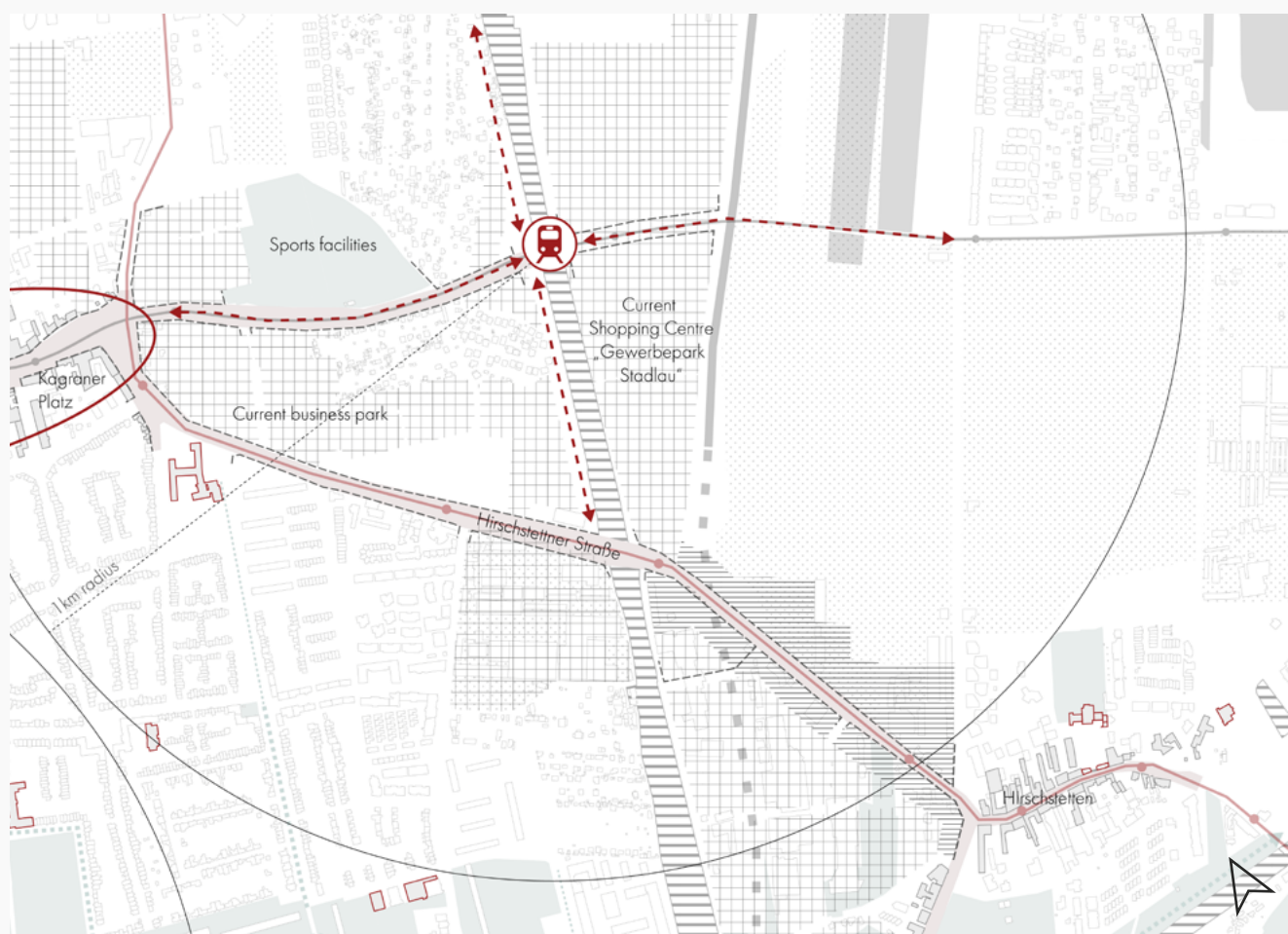
At the northern and eastern ends of the redesigned area, more private public spaces could be implemented. The eastern one is located next to multiple schools and two sports clubs. It could therefore be a meeting place for the students of different schools as well as their parents. It could also be used by the institutions for festivals or other activities. This way, the redesign would foster interaction and bring residents of Donaustadt together.

Fig. 102: Alternative design of Donau Zentrum (by the author.)

### Design-based guidelines

- No additional shopping centre space should be allowed in central Kagran
- Commercial spaces should only be allowed if they are integrated in a pedestrian-friendly urban fabric
- In the design of high-rise buildings special attention should lie on a diverse design, diverse functions, and the contribution to an active ground floor
- The urban fabric should open up in line with the surrounding streets to improve pedestrian flow
- The separation between public and private spaces should be reduced; central paths should be public
- The corner of Wagramer Straße and Donaustadtstraße should be attractivated and strengthened as a central square
- More differentiated public spaces should be implemented








## 6.2.2 STATION DEVELOPMENT KAGRAN



The new station would not only increase the centrality of Kragraner Platz. It would also make the shopping centre Gewerbepark Stadlau more accessible. The area could be better integrated and redensified to reduce the role of the train line as a boundary.

A new tram line could go from Kragran to Hirschstetten. This would strengthen Hirschstetter Straße as an urban axis and better integrate the village Hirschstetten.

### Proposal Elements

-  Sub-centres
-  Main pedestrian routes to the new station
-  Street front redensification
-  Neighbourhood redensification
-  Public spaces on potential urban axes
-  Green corridor (Project 2)
-  New tram line

### Existing elements



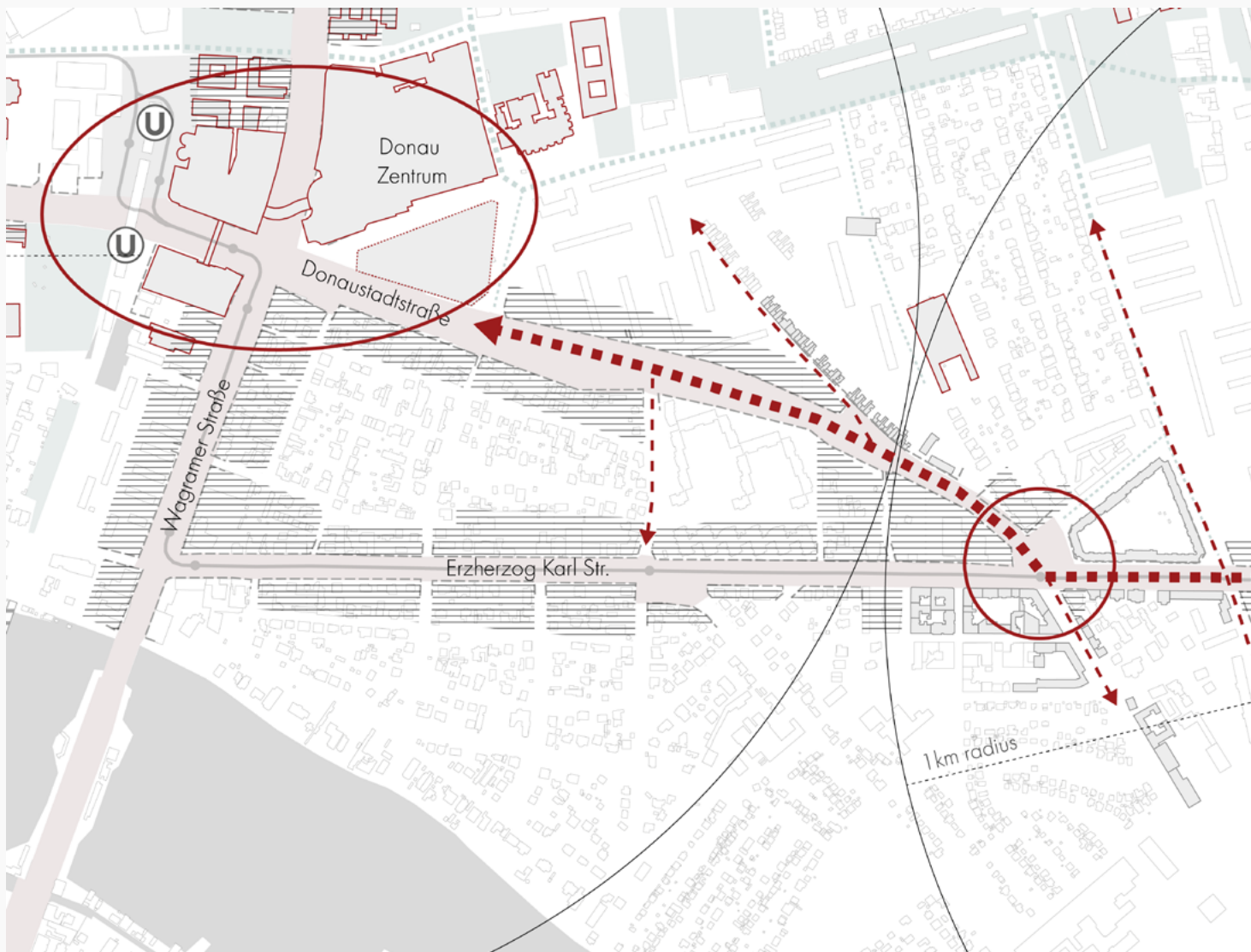
-  Railway corridor
-  Agricultural land
-  Edge defining buildings
-  Public buildings
-  Other buildings
-  Highway
-  Existing tram lines
-  Metro Station
-  Train Station

Fig. 103: Map of the proposed station Kragran, the proposed tram line to Hirschstetten and redensification areas along the new infrastructure (by the author).

## 6.2.3 AXIS KAGRAN-STADLAU







Moreover, dividing effects of the street will be reduced. The goal is to make the area more walkable and to connect communities. This is possible through physical interventions, like new crossings over streets or the pedestrian-friendly redesign of the street.

The central actions for this project are redensification along the street, the activation of plinth spaces, the redesign of public space and the redesign of the Statino Erzherzog-Karl-Straße.





#### Proposal Elements

-  Sub-centres
-  Central Axis Kragan-Stadlau
-  Side streets of the axis
-  Street front densification
-  Public spaces on potential urban axes
-  Green corridor (Project 2)

#### Existing elements

-  Railway corridor
-  Edge defining buildings
-  Public buildings
-  Other buildings
-  Highway
-  Existing tram lines
-  Metro Station
-  Train Station

Fig. 105: Map of the axis Kragan - Stadlau along Donaustadtstraße and Erzherzog-Karl-Straße (by the author).

Fig. 104: Reference Project: Bruno Marek Allee in Vienna (Source: Mosch, 2019)

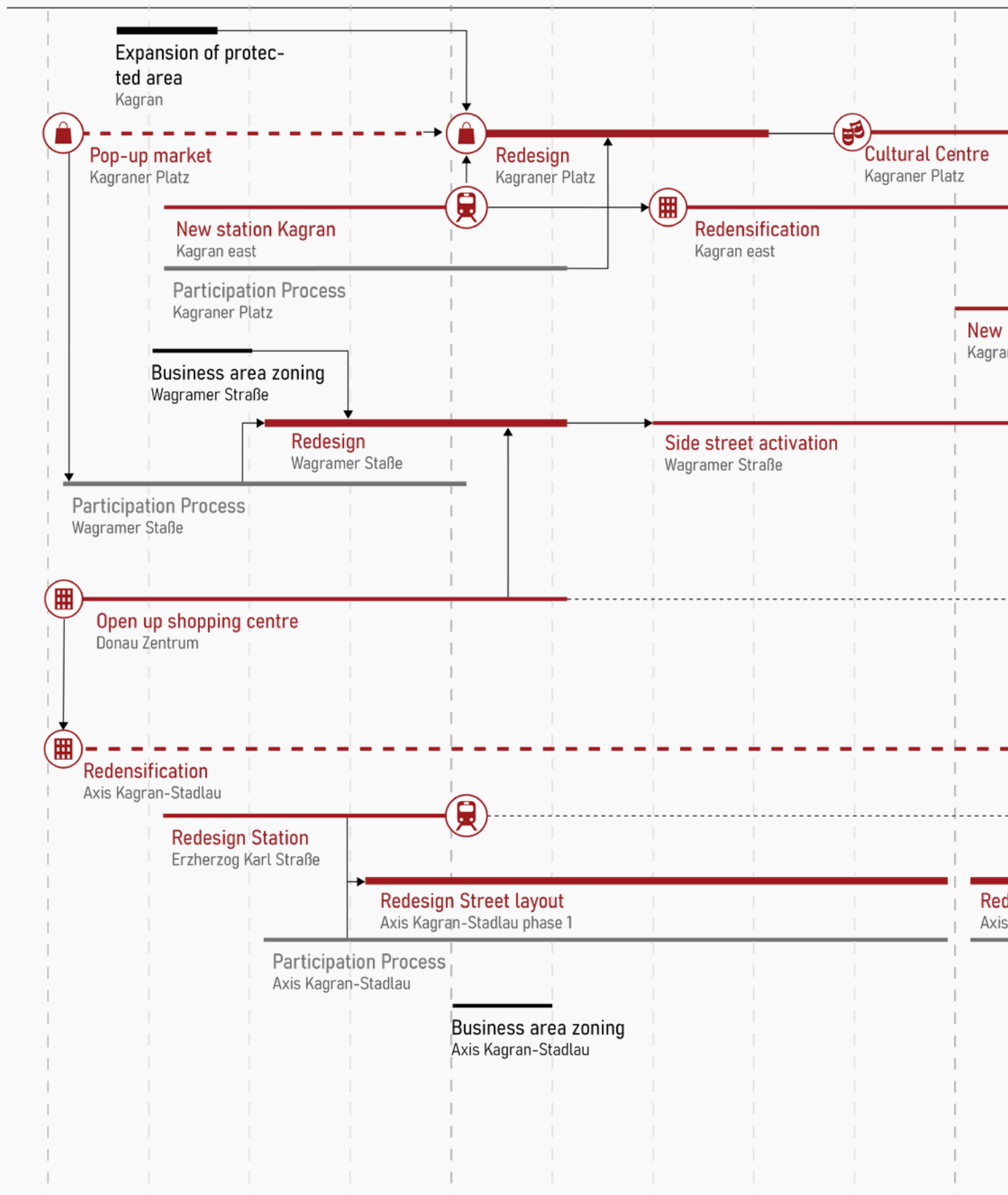


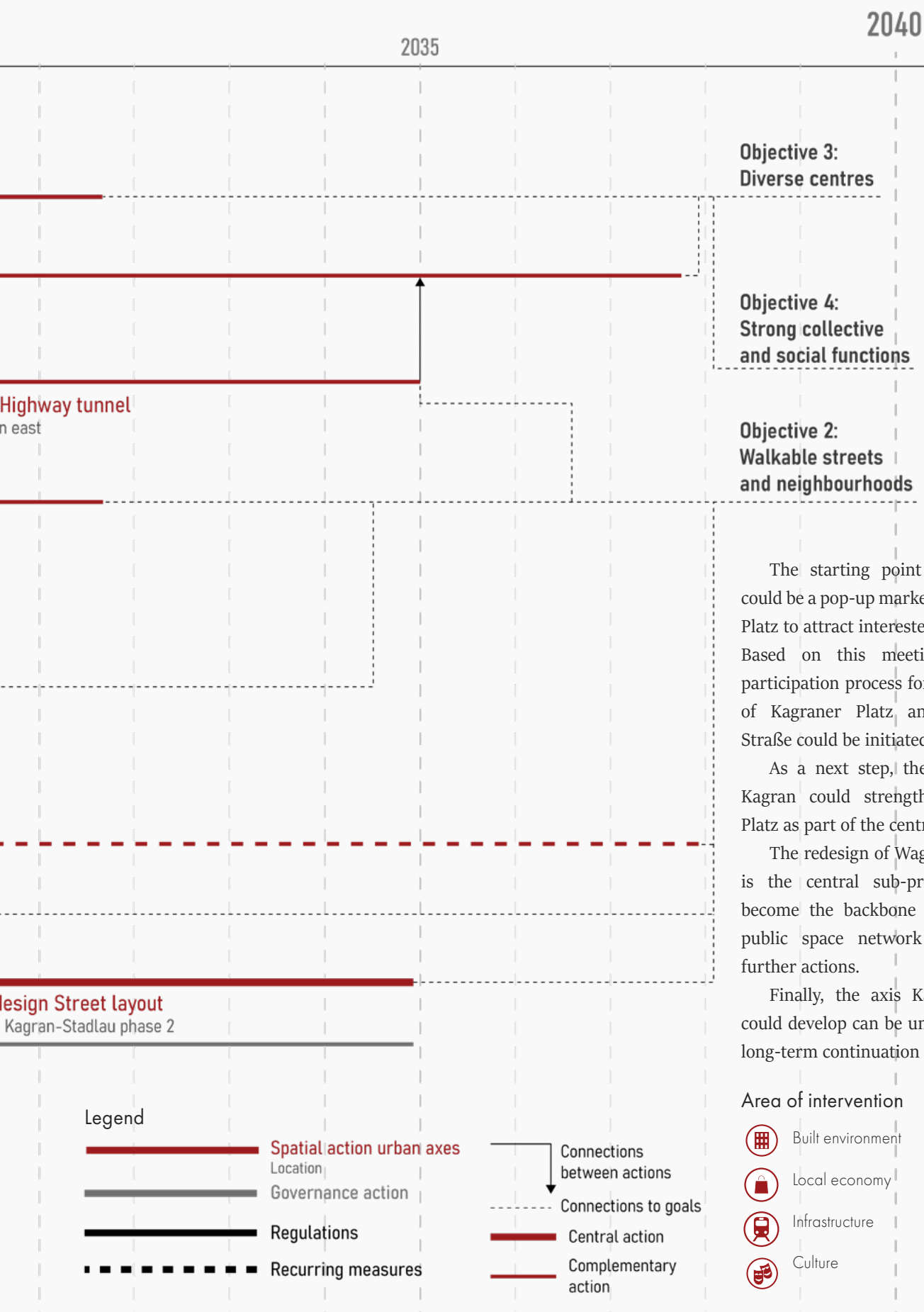


2021

2025

2030





The starting point of project 1 could be a pop-up market on Kraganer Platz to attract interested inhabitants. Based on this meeting space, a participation process for the redesign of Kraganer Platz, and Wagramer Straße could be initiated.

As a next step, the new station Kragan could strengthen Kraganer Platz as part of the centre Kragan.

The redesign of Wagramer Straße is the central sub-project. It can become the backbone of the urban public space network and trigger further actions.

Finally, the axis Kragan-Stadlau could develop can be understood as a long-term continuation of the project.



## 6.3 PROJECT 2: CORRIDOR OF DAILY LIFE

PROJECT 2

With the changes of society and economy, the concept of the neighbourhood has also changed. Local functions and organizations were once the drivers of neighbourhood life. But many of them have moved to bigger concentrations outside the neighbourhoods. Neighbourhood identity was strengthened by common life-stories and collective social advancement. In the last decades, however, the backgrounds of inhabitants are more becoming diverse and large parts of the middle-class are treated by social decline.

In this situation, local public life needs to be strengthened. Collective spaces and institutions are becoming more important for a collective identity and mutual understanding.

However, these spaces must reach beyond the neighbourhood because it is hard to cover the diverse needs of modern societies on the neighbourhood scale. Moreover,

the most local functions are already spread throughout the district and therefore ranges of daily activities have become supra-local. Finally, interaction between different parts of society still functions best between neighbourhoods. Despite the diversification of neighbourhoods many of them are still relatively homogeneous. Therefore, public spaces that connect different neighbourhoods can contribute to a strong democratic society.

This project covers multiple aspects of democratic space (see icons to the right). The focus lies on diversifying public spaces. But also their integration, as well as the consolidation of a identity beyond the neighbourhood and of social infrastructure play an important role. Finally green forms of centrality within and between neighbourhoods are strengthened.



Diversity



Integration



Identity



Social infrastructure

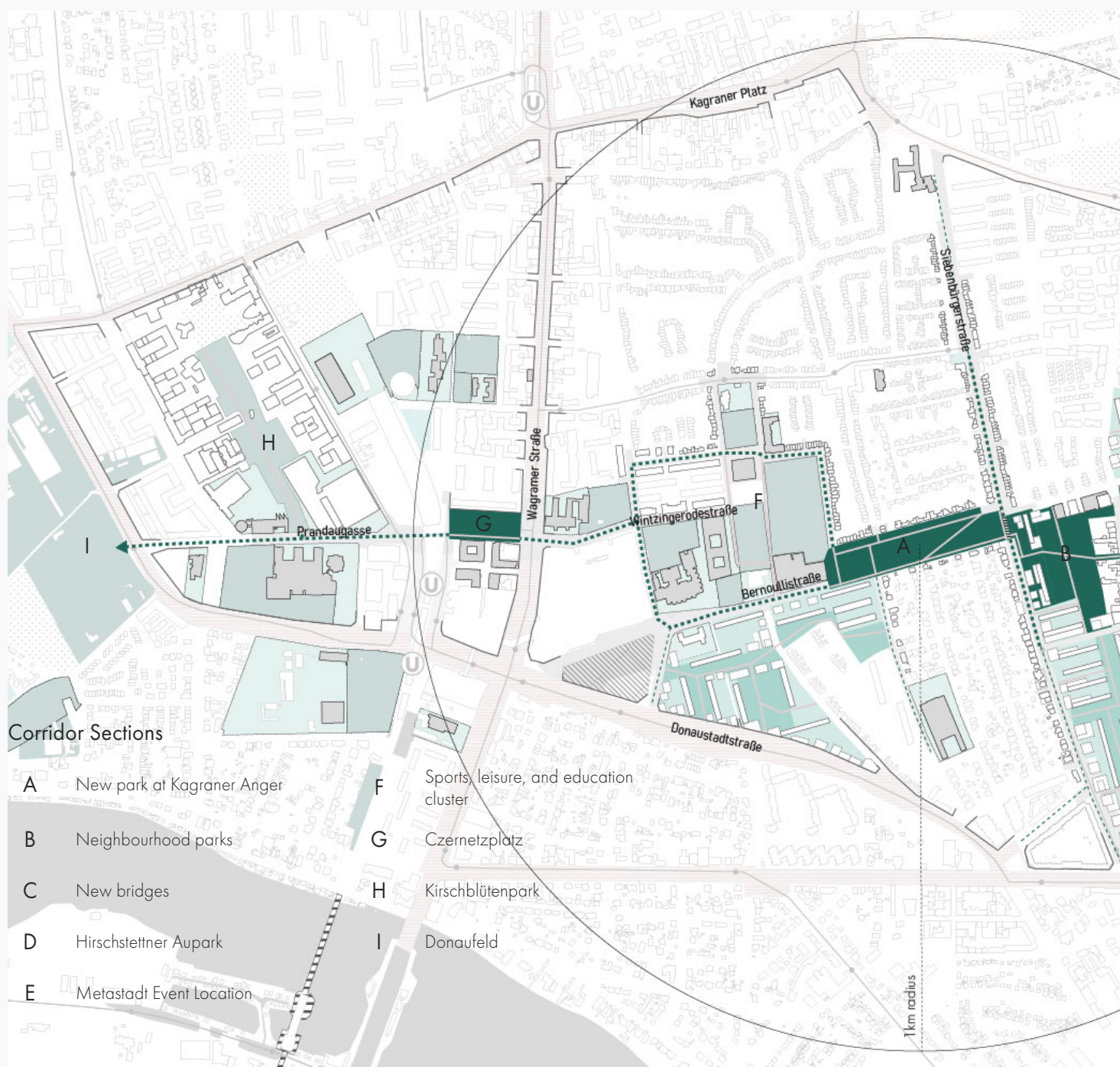


Centrality

Fig. 106: Chapter cover  
image: Visualization green street  
example Natorpgasse (by the  
author. Image sources: Google  
Maps; Javanaud Emdén,  
n.d.; Bailey, 2015; FreePNGImg)



## THE CORRIDOR OF DAILY LIFE

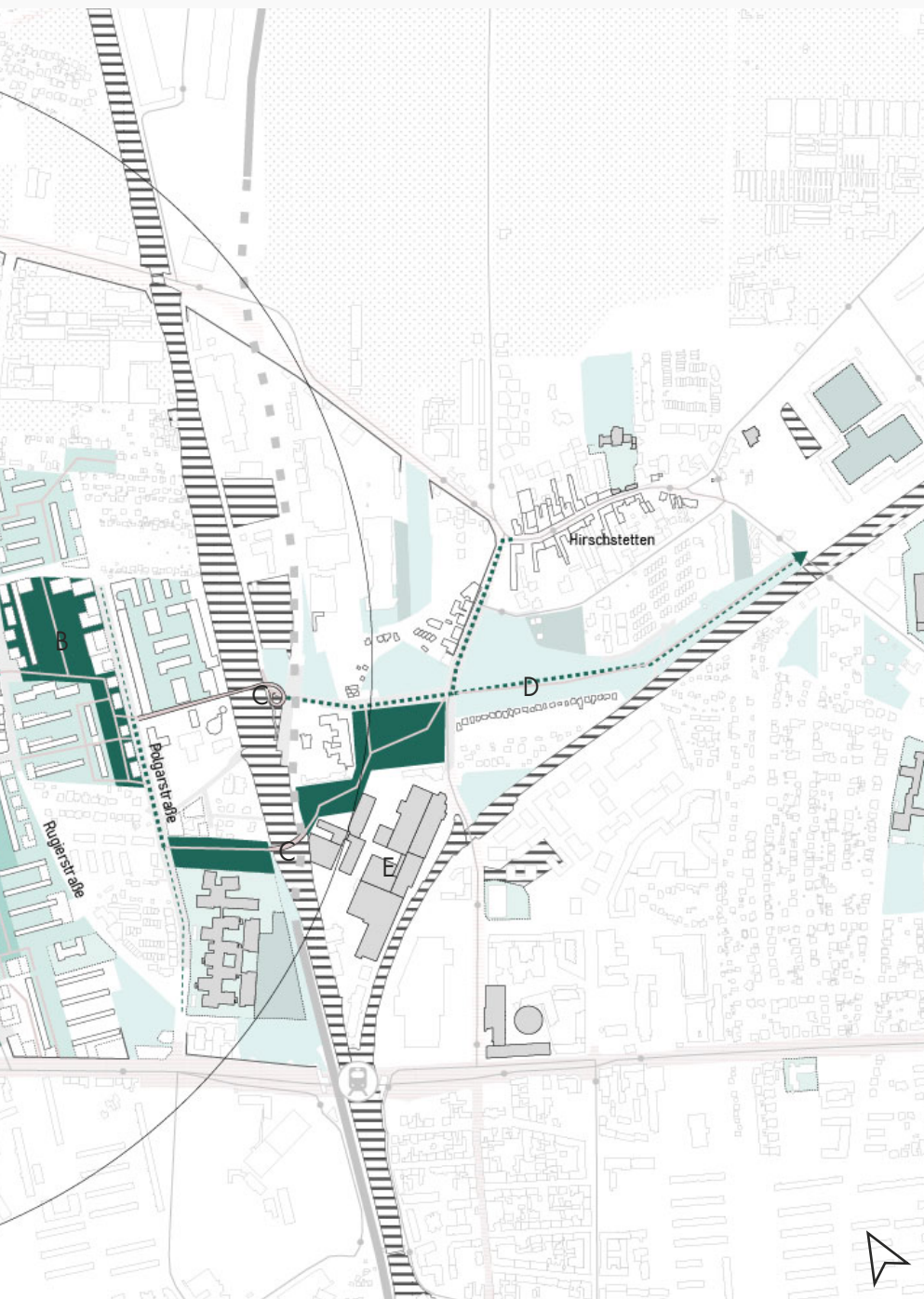


By connecting existing public space potentials, the proposed corridor could function as a green lung and a backbone of the pedestrian-friendly public space network. The corridor would offer calm and green paths through the neighbourhood as an alternative to the more active urban axes. It would connect the variety of existing social functions. Moreover,

the diverse public spaces offer space for different recreational and social activities. It could become part of a regional green space network and contribute to the regional pedestrian and bicycle network.

The map above shows the elements of the proposed green corridor and how they are connected. The heart of the corridor could be a new park between the streets “Kagraner Anger” and “Bernoullistraße”.

In the west, it connects to the existing sports and leisure facilities, as well as multiple schools. Through the Bernoullistraße it would connect



### Green space types

- Central parks in the corridor
- Central block parks
- Local block parks
- Private leisure and recreation facilities
- Open spaces of local institutions
- Central green street
- Smaller green connections

### Other elements

- Public buildings
- Planned public buildings
- Railway corridor
- Buildings along corridor
- Potential new buildings
- Other buildings
- Bus Line
- Edge of urban corridors

to the Donau Zentrum and the new development area around Schrödingersplatz. Through the Winzingerstraße, on the other side of the shopping centre, it could continue towards the Czernetzplatz that could be redesigned as a park. Finally, the Prandaugasse could function as a connection to the Kirschblütenpark and the development area Donauefeld.

Towards the east of the central park at Kagranger Anger, the corridor would connect the inner green spaces of the social housing complexes along Siebenbürgerstraße. Through an existing connection the corridor would lead to Rüdigerstraße and Polgarstraße. New pedestrian and bicycle bridges could create a connection to the green spaces in Hirschstetten and a connection to

the development area Hausfeld.



## LOCAL SUB-PROJECTS

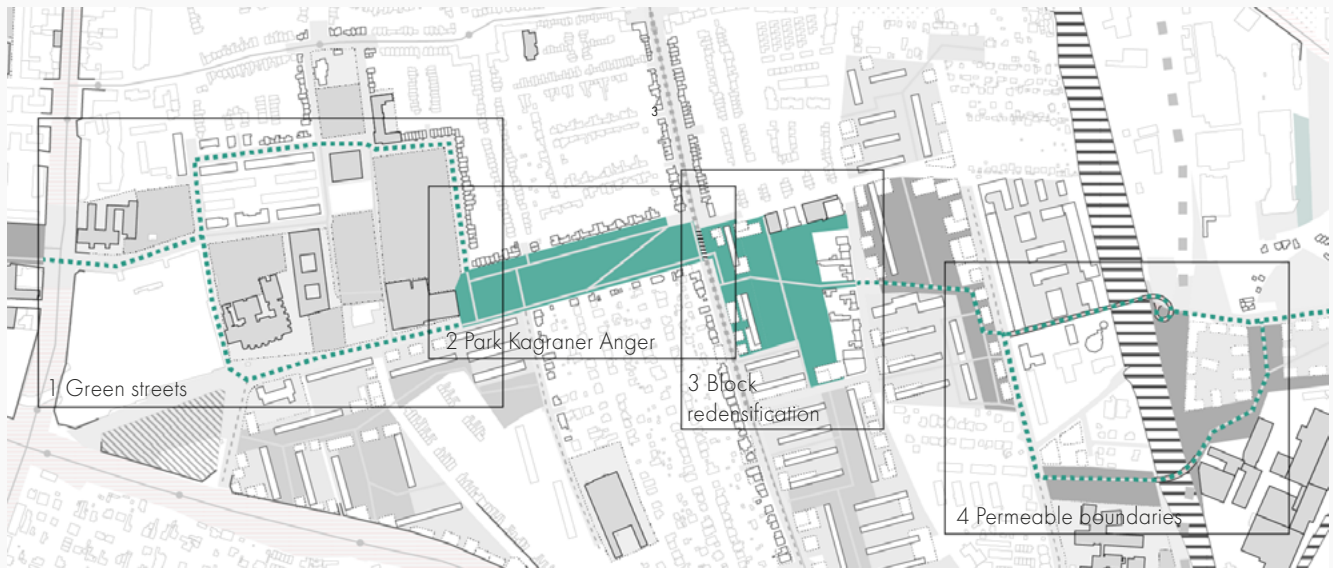


Fig. 107: Four sub-projects  
(by the author.)

The following pages focus on the central part of the corridor. Four sub-projects of the corridor are described in detail. Together, they form the core of the green-space connection and connect diverse neighbourhoods.

The aim of the green streets project is that streets become vivid spaces within the neighbourhoods. As attractive pedestrian routes, they would connect larger green spaces and the local social infrastructure.

The park “Kagranner Anger” is the central project as it could be attractive for inhabitants of all neighbourhoods.

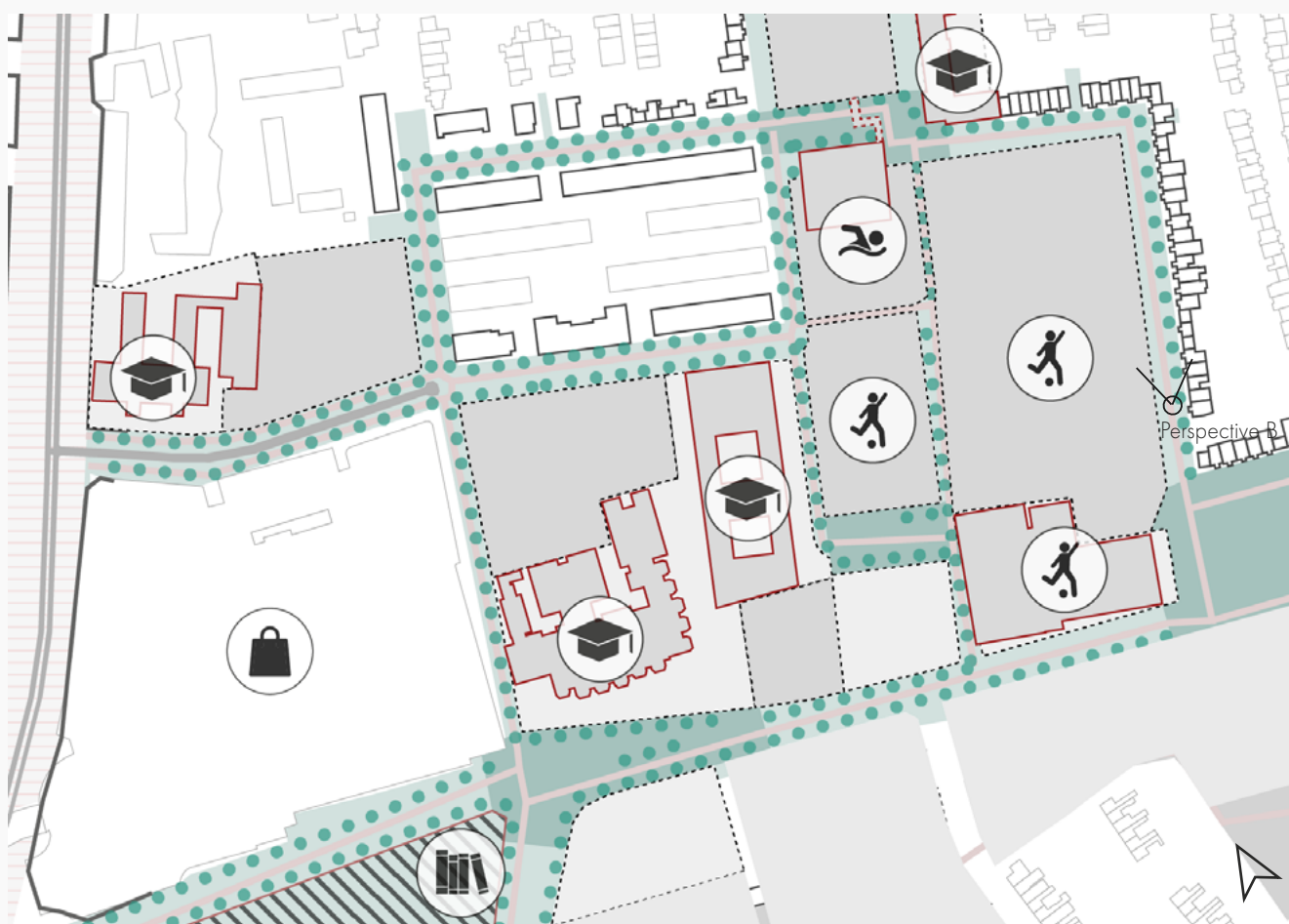
The block redensification project is an example of how the housing blocks in the area could develop.

The final project, illustrates how attention could be put on the permeability of industrial corridors.

### Sub-projects

- 1 Green Streets
- 2 Park Kagranner Anger
- 3 Block redensification
- 4 Permeable boundaries

## 6.3.1 GREEN STREETS



The map above illustrates how a network of green streets could function. Most streets in the corridor would become car free and give space for leisure activities. As there are many schools in the area, students would benefit from the intervention. The streets would function as meeting spaces for them.

The design of the streets should differ between the wider park areas and the narrower streets. The central green streets should become car-free to facilitate the continuation of the corridor's park-like character.

A variety of uses would be possible on the redesigned streets. First, they would be more attractive for walking and cycling. They could also become spaces for interaction with neighbours or be used by students to

### Open space types

	Green street
	Local parks
	Tree line
	Pedestrian and cycling paths
	Road
	Private leisure and recreation facilities
	Open spaces of local institutions
	Social infrastructure

### Social infrastructure






	Schools
	Sport facilities
	Shopping centre
	Public pool
	Potential library location

Fig. 108: Potential structure of green streets in the west of the green corridor and the institutions they connect (by the author.)



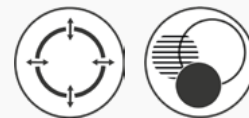


Fig. 109: Visualization B green street example Natorpgasse (by the author. Image sources: Google Maps,; Javanaud Emdén, n.d.; Bailey, 2015; FreePNGimg)

relax in their breaks. Moreover, the newly available space could be used for urban gardening or having lunch with friends.

In total, greener streets could not only create a more attractive environment but also lead to more social exchange.

### Governance Instruments

- Design participation together with local schools, sports clubs, and residents
- Walkability master plan: Evaluating plans in the context of pedestrian networks on higher scales.
- Co-production: As a very local intervention, the streets could be partly designed and appropriated by residents

## 6.3.2 PARK KAGRANER ANGER

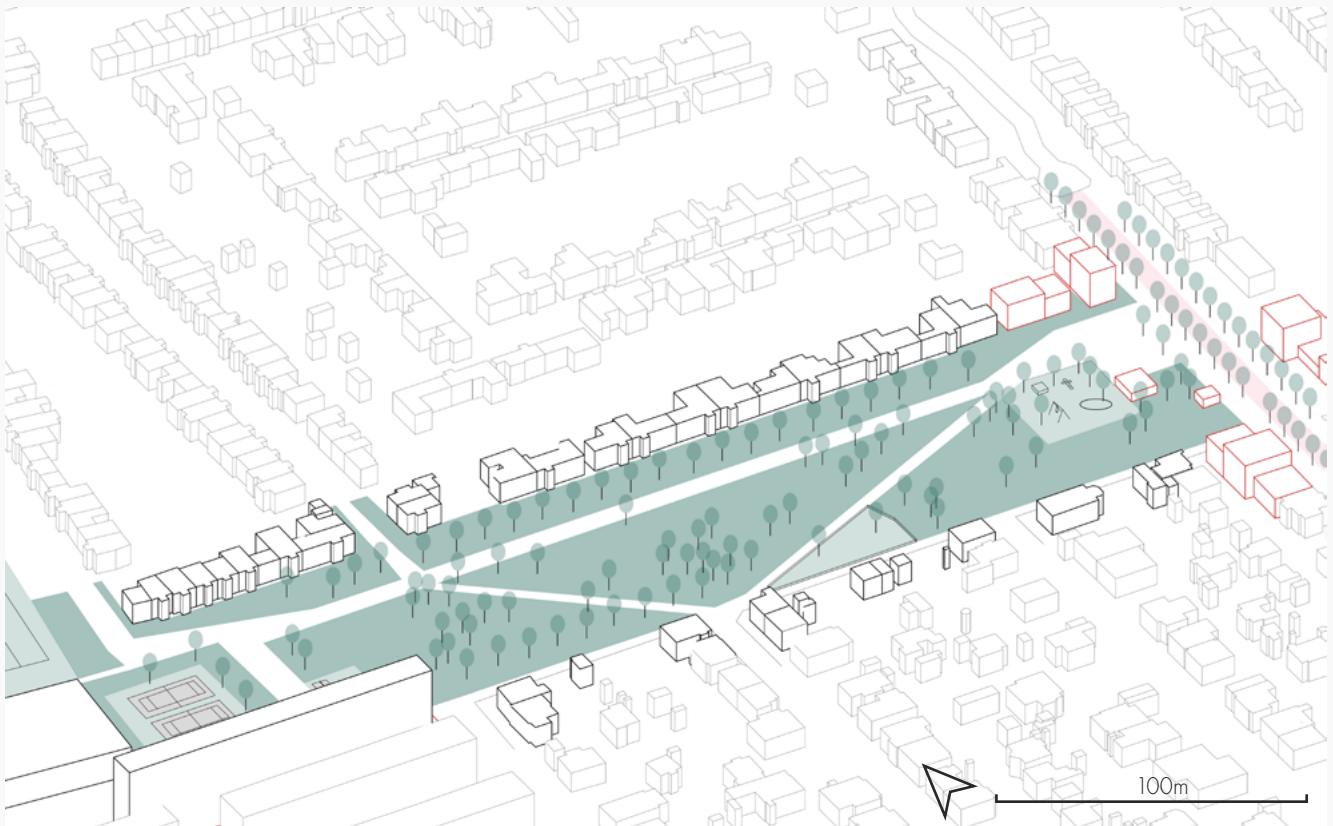


Fig. 110: Park "Kagraner Anger" Alternative 1 (by the author)

Through a more open design and a better integration with the surroundings the park could become the connecting element that the area is currently lacking.

### Surrounding functions

Due to its central location in pedestrian networks, the surrounding of the park could become attractive for commercial functions. Surrounding corners could be redensified to give space to cafés or restaurants in the ground floor.

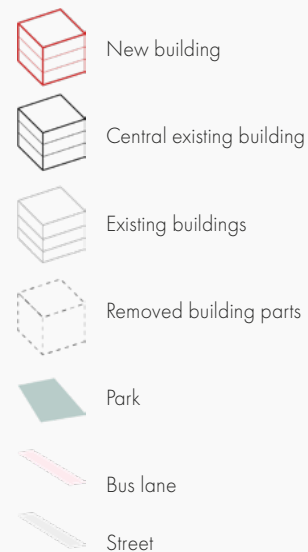
### Implementation

The new park in the centre of the corridor would be based on an existing green space between the streets Kagraner Anger and Bernoullistraße. Currently, two residential buildings stand in the middle of the plot and divide the green spaces. I have explored three alternative approaches improve the park's character.

### Alternative 1

Alternative 1 is the most radical approach. Through the demolition of the two buildings, a large park could be built. This would give space to a higher diversity of functions. Furthermore, a large park could attract inhabitants from a wider area and therefore invite for interaction of a wider society. Different parts of the park could have different characters. The eastern end could function as a square with a concentration of amenities. The central part could be an open meadow for flexible usage. The western end could be more dedicated to sports and activity. Outdoor-training equipment, sports field and playgrounds could be located here.

However, housing for the current inhabitants would need to be constructed in the surrounding blocks. Moreover, public investments are needed to activate the park.





## Design guidelines

Some aspects are common to all three alternatives and should be considered when redesigning similar locations:

- Park on the southern side as connector between east and west
- Park design for diverse activities
- Consideration of surrounding institutions in the design

## Alternative 2

The second alternative comes

- Participation with the smallest changes. Additional surrounding neighbourhood would be added to increase the existing buildings instead of the project; demolishing them. For instance, new balconies or loggias could be that are hard to attach them and the underused
- Residents need to be compensated through social shops, or community disadvantages. Residents of authorities could buy demolished buildings on the southern green strip along be supplied with affordable and redesign it as a close-by alternative and central connection.

## Alternative 3

The third alternative represents the intermediate path. The existing buildings would be replaced by new dwellings on the same plot to make space for a bigger park to their southern side. On the northern and eastern side, the closed street character would be strengthened. This way, a differentiated pattern would emerge that gives space for different activities.

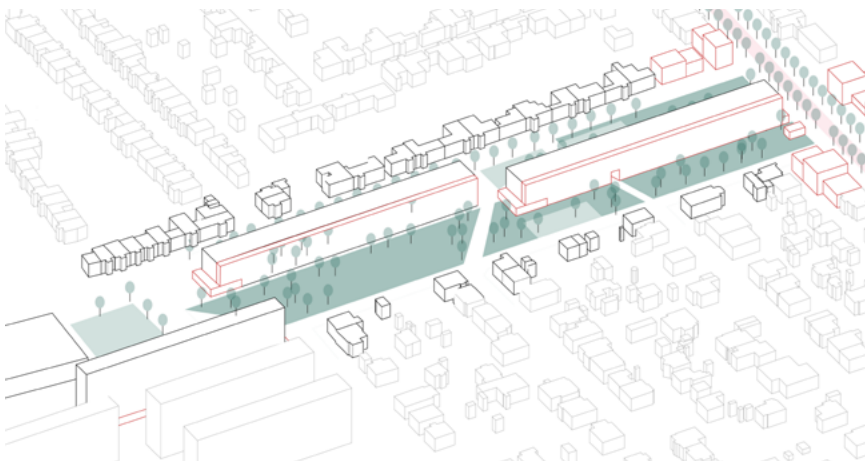


Fig. 111: Park "Kagraner Anger" Alternative 2 (by the author)

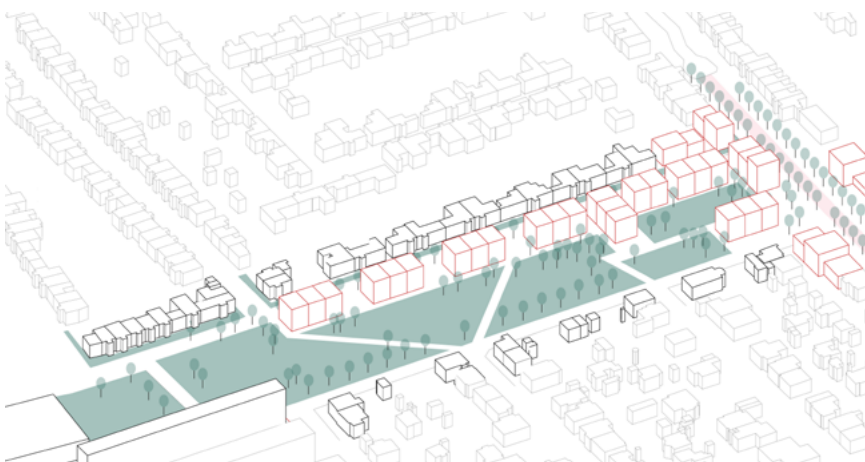
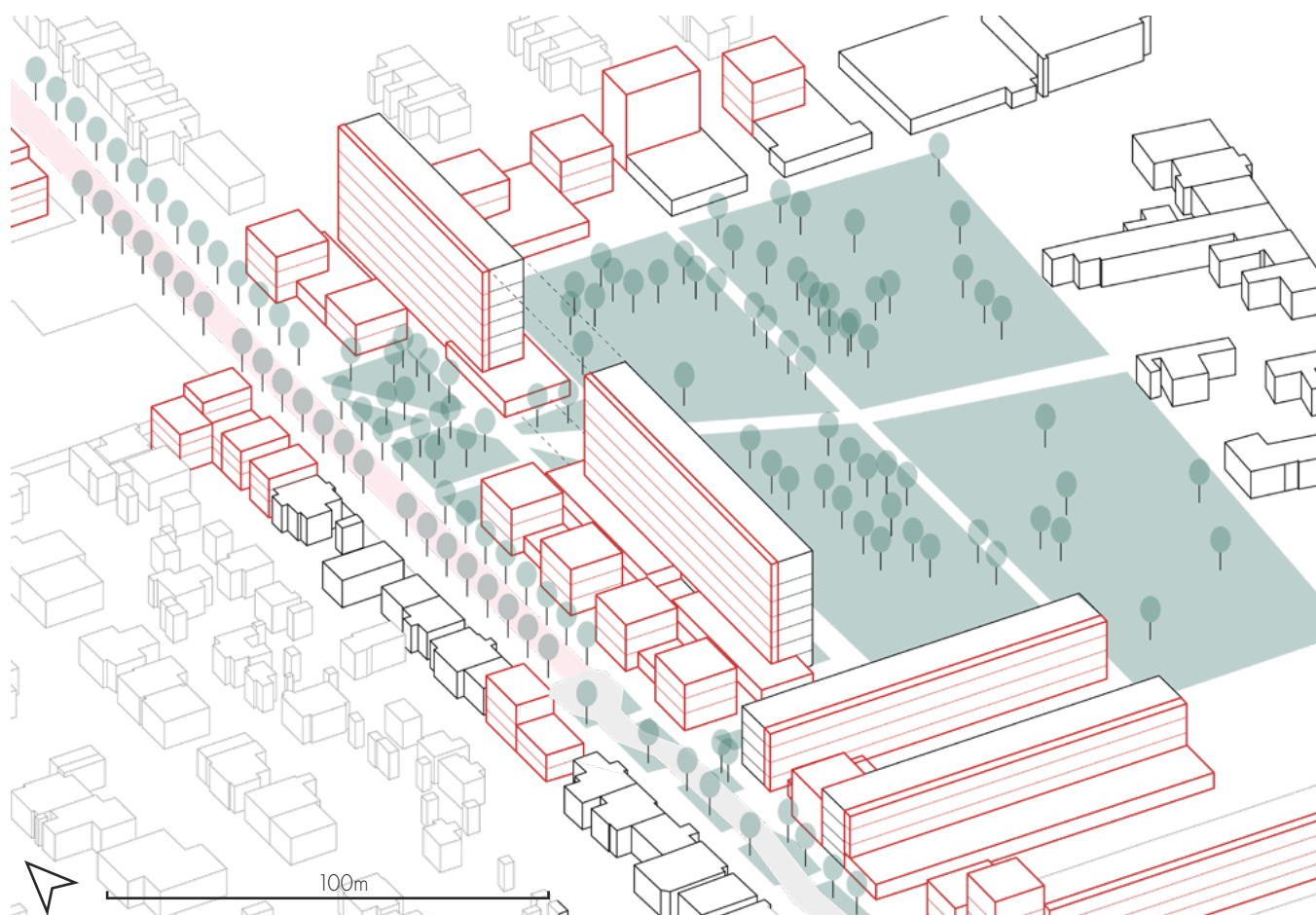


Fig. 112: Park "Kagraner Anger" Alternative 3 (by the author)



## 6.3.3 BLOCK REDENSIFICATION



Through the soft and selective re-densification of residential blocks, a stronger differentiation of public spaces is possible. This could increase the quality of public spaces and facilitate a greater variety of functions.

### The location

As a site, I chose Siebenbürgerstraße because it is at the edge between two very different neighbourhoods. The eastern side, is dominated by post-war social housing complexes with up to 12 storeys. On the western side, there are mostly single family houses. This social and spatial contrast is a typical situation for many parts of the urban periphery.

The street itself could function as an integrative element between the neighbourhoods. Currently, however

there are little functions that attract inhabitants. Moreover, there is little differentiation between different kinds of public spaces.

### Part of the corridor

As part of the green corridor, the block should be well connected to the new park in the west. The street could be closed for through traffic to improve the connection for pedestrians. Only the bus lane 94A still needs to go through.

### Redensification of street fronts

The soft redensification of street fronts could help to develop Siebenbürgerstraße into an attractive neighbourhood street. Plinth spaces could attract local shops or cafés. The shops from the Shopping centre Sie-

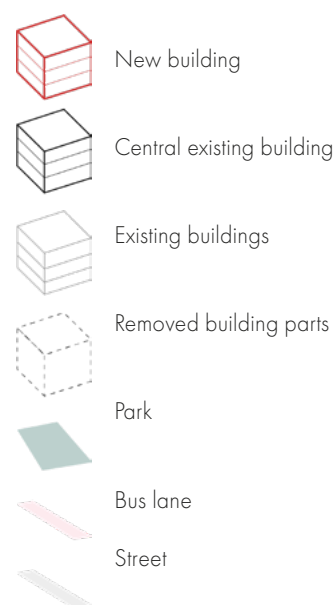


Fig. 113: Potential redensification of a block along Siebenbürgerstraße (by the author)





## Instruments

- Zoning: Changing zoning regulation from residential (W) to residential-mixed commercial area (WGV) along Siebenbürgerstraße would make non-residential functions in the plinth compulsory.
- Design participation: Participation is crucial to ensure that interventions do not have negative effects on residents.
- Housing cooperations: Some of the new buildings could be built in other approaches than social housing to increase social mix.
- Corner activation: Formats like the Super-greißler initiative could activate corners along the street.

## Design guidelines

- Differentiated design: The design of more public spaces should be oriented along the needs of a larger group of users. Spaces within the blocks should offer more intimate corners.
- The building restriction line (bauflichtlinie) could be shifted forward to define the street more clearly
- Active groundfloors; in locations that are not suitable for commercial functions, other interactive functions, like front gardens or community spaces, could be located.
- Permeability: The street front should be opened up in regular distances to improve connectivity

benbürgerstraße, for instance, could spread along the street. This way, they would be more integrated with residential buildings and facilitate unplanned encounters between inhabitants.

New buildings along the street should define the street front a bit more but not close it completely. The structure should be more permeable than on Erzherzog-Karl-Straße, for instance. The latter is an urban axis with more traffic. Since there is little traffic on Siebenbürgerstraße the definition of the street can be more symbolic.

A lot of the redensification could take place on existing parking lots. The number of cars could be reduced through increased walkability and improved public transport. For the remaining cars, central garages would be a space-saving alternative.

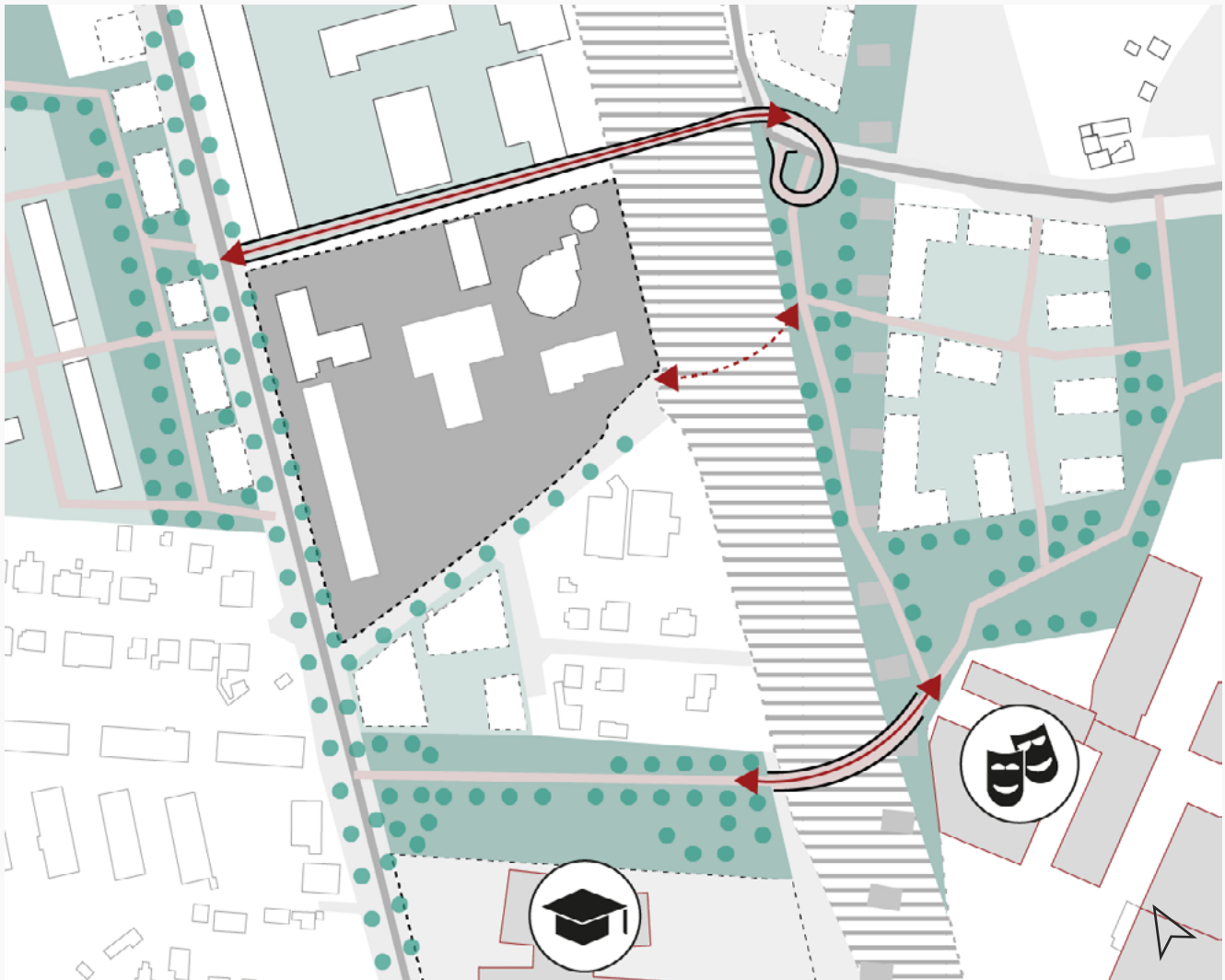
## Spatial depth

Through the defined street front, the block's inner parts would become more intimate. The large park in the centre of the block would still be public but would offer more distance from others than the street. The smaller open spaces between buildings would become clearly differentiated from the public street. This can facilitate a stronger community within the buildings and the blocks.

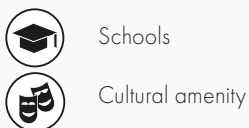
## Existing buildings

Existing buildings should mostly be preserved. This ensures that housing stays affordable. However, attachments to the buildings could improve the living situation for current residents. This could increase their acceptance of redensification.

## 6.3.4 PERMEABLE BOUNDARIES



### Social infrastructure



Schools

Cultural amenity

### Open space types



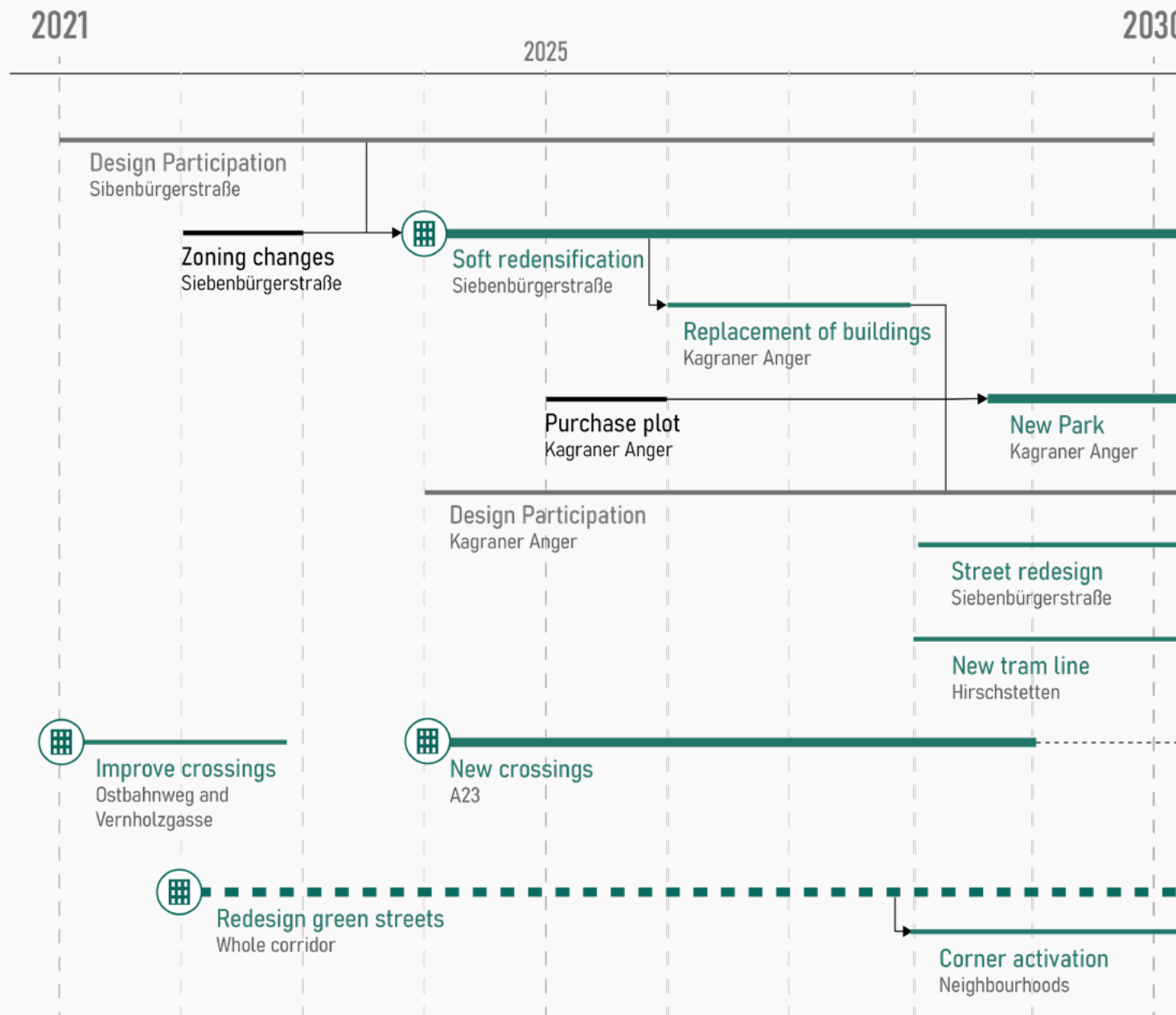
Fig. 114: Potential structure of more permeable train tracks and their surroundings (by the author.)

As shown above, the highway and the train tracks and the highway should become more permeable. New pedestrian and cycling bridges could help to achieve this goal. They would better integrate Hirschstetten and the east of Kagran into the overall pedestrian network. Moreover, the crossing would improve the integration of local schools and of the cultural centre METastadt.

However, new bridges alone are not enough to make the boundary truly permeable. The surrounding areas should become more attractive for pedestrian. This could be achieved through new housing development and an increased mix of functions.

## 6.3.5 IMPLEMENTATION

### PHASING



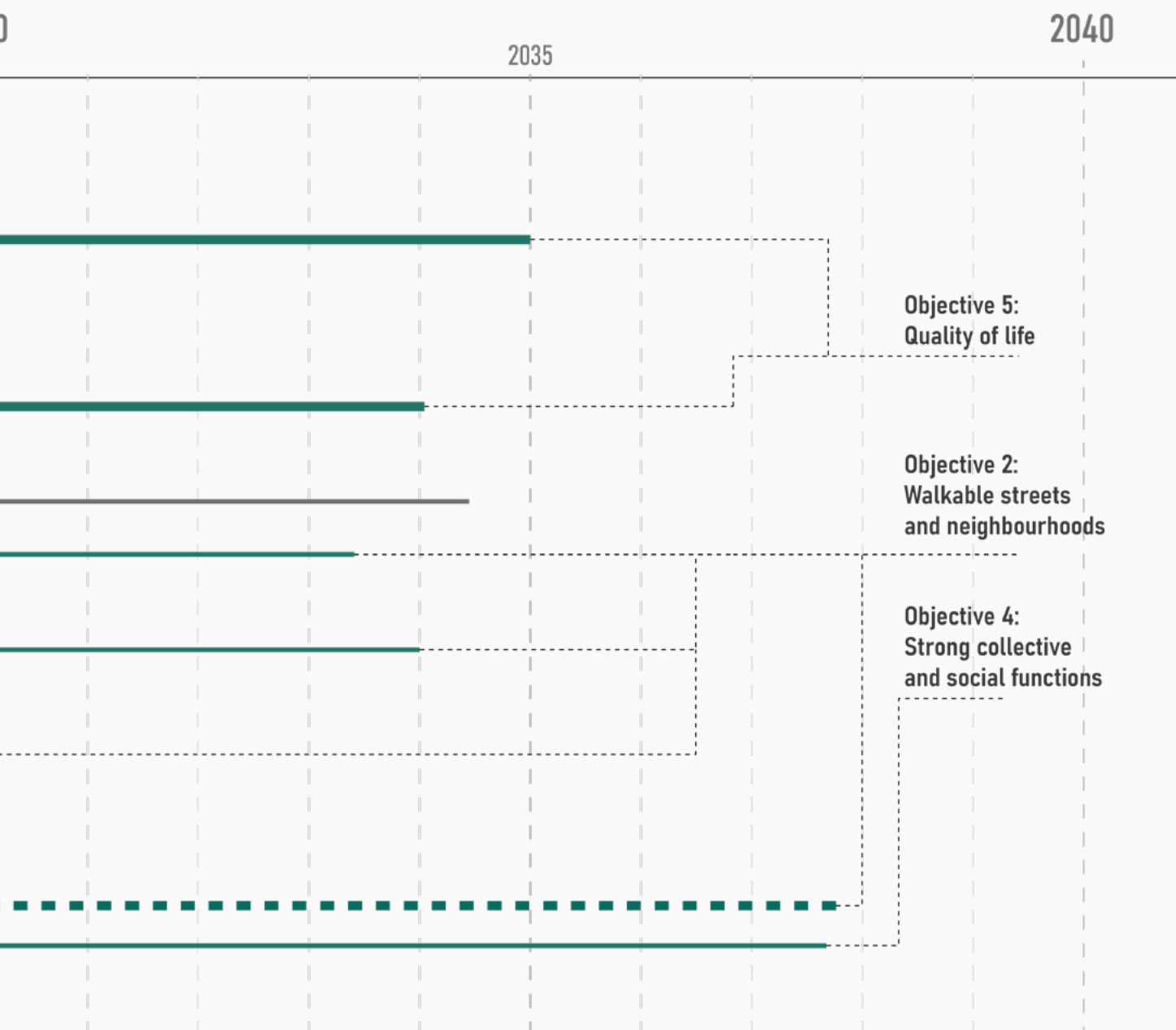
Project 1 brings attention to the area through larger interventions in central locations. Project 2 functions as a continuation of this project, bringing action into the neighbourhood and closer to the local population.

The first step of project 2 should be the redensification in residential blocks, since it is a precondition for the implementation of the new park.

The detailed interventions are developed in cooperation with residents. This participation process

should start a few years before the implementation to ensure that inhabitants have the chance to express their interests.

The new park at Kagranner Anger is a key sub-project, since it connects all other interventions. If existing buildings are being demolished, the park can only be implemented after some redensification on other plots took place. This is to ensure that close-by alternative apartments can be offered to the current residents.



Inhabitants should know about the overall vision in spite of the long process. Therefore, it is important to communicate the role of the park in the concept already in the first phases.

Parallel to these steps, new crossings over the railway and highway could be constructed. A starting point could be the redesign of existing crossings.

The implementation of green streets is a longer process. Due to the many potential locations, decentral

action over a longer period could be beneficial.

Together these steps can lead to an integrated public space structure and contribute to multiple larger goals.

#### Legend

- Spatial action green corridor
- Location
- Governance action
- Regulations
- Recurring measures

#### Area of intervention

- Built environment
- Infrastructure

- Connections between actions
- Connections to goals
- Central action
- Complementary action





# 7 CONCLUSION

7.1 CONCLUSION

7.2 REFLECTION

7.3 DISCUSSION

In the last chapter, I draw conclusions from the results and reflect on the context of my work as well as limitations to it. Moreover, I discuss its societal and scientific relevance of the work.

## 7.1 CONCLUSION

The main research question of this project is: How can public spaces in the urban periphery of Vienna become more integrated, inclusive, and diverse in a democratic process?

To answer this question I conducted a case study of Donaustadt, a district in north-east Vienna. As a first step, I have analysed existing spatial and socio-spatial structure as well as current development processes. Based on this analysis, I used design, visioning, and strategy making to develop a proposal for the area and answer the central research question.

### Socio-spatial structure

The analysis of socio-demographic data showed that parts of the district are socially diverse while other areas are still relatively homogeneous. Some areas are socially fragmented. I found that social fragmentation correlates with construction periods of neighbourhoods. Moreover, the findings show that major roads and industrial corridors spatially divide the district.

### Centres and public spaces

Through the analysis of the structure of centres in the district, I found that most functions cluster along well integrated corridors. These are contrasted by less integrated along major infrastructure lines. In these areas, concentrations of more vulnerable social groups can be identified. Moreover, some of them lack public and commercial functions.

Through the analysis of centres and public spaces on the local scale I found that historic public spaces are eroding, even in the well-integrat-

ed centres. A lack of spatial depth in some residential neighbourhoods, on the other hand, reduces the diversity of public spaces. Additionally, many edges between neighbourhoods lack spaces for the interaction of the inhabitants of different neighbourhoods.

### Development processes

The analysis of existing plans and processes focused on the district's central area Kagran. It showed that the influence of different visions, plans, and paradigms is still visible today. In current planning documents, the focus of development processes lies on the centre of Kagran. This might be related to a lack of attention for an integrated development of Donaustadt on the larger scale.

In the development processes in Kagran Centre, private actors, like housing developers and shopping centre owners, play a central role. Citizens had the chance to participate. Compared to the private actors, however, the civil society still has little influence on central decisions.

### Strategy and Design

Based on these research results, I have elaborated a vision and a strategy for the future for the axis Kagran-Stadlau. This area is under-represented in existing planning documents. Based on research, I have defined the following goals: democratic decision making, walkable streets and neighbourhoods, diverse district centres, strong collective and social functions, and local quality of life for all residents.

The proposed implementation of these goals focused on two projects. In

the second project, the consolidation of urban axes aims at strengthening centralities in the district and making central areas more diverse.

As a second project, a green corridor could connect neighbourhoods and create spaces of interaction between different social groups.

To give inhabitants a strong voice in development processes, I have explored options for the establishment of a participatory budget in the district.

### Answering the research question

The central research question aimed at the exploration of development opportunities in the urban periphery. Inherently, there are many potential answers to this kind of question. As the population of the periphery is diverse, proposals for public spaces should be just as diverse.

This project has shown that integrated thinking is necessary to diversify public spaces in the urban periphery. The focus of attention must not only lie on commercial development in central locations but also on integrated planning approaches. Local inhabitants need to be empowered in planning processes. The results also highlight that comprehensive and transparent planning are necessary for a democratic development.

This project proposes one possibility of how such a development could be implemented. But more than that it highlights that there is a need for discussion about the future of the urban periphery in a broad process.

## 7.2 REFLECTION

### The chosen methodology

In the one-year process of this graduation project, the approach to the topic has shifted. Nonetheless, the aim to understand the spaces of public life in the urban periphery of Vienna and how they can better contribute to a democratic society has remained.

I started out with a much broader research subject of inquiry. The original idea was to investigate if there is a correlation between political leaning and public spaces. But in the process of elaborating the research approach I have realized that the topic goes beyond the scope of this research project and the master studies of urbanism. It would have covered research topics of sociology, psychology, and political sciences. Nonetheless, the line of thought is still relevant for positioning the final thesis in the broader scientific context.

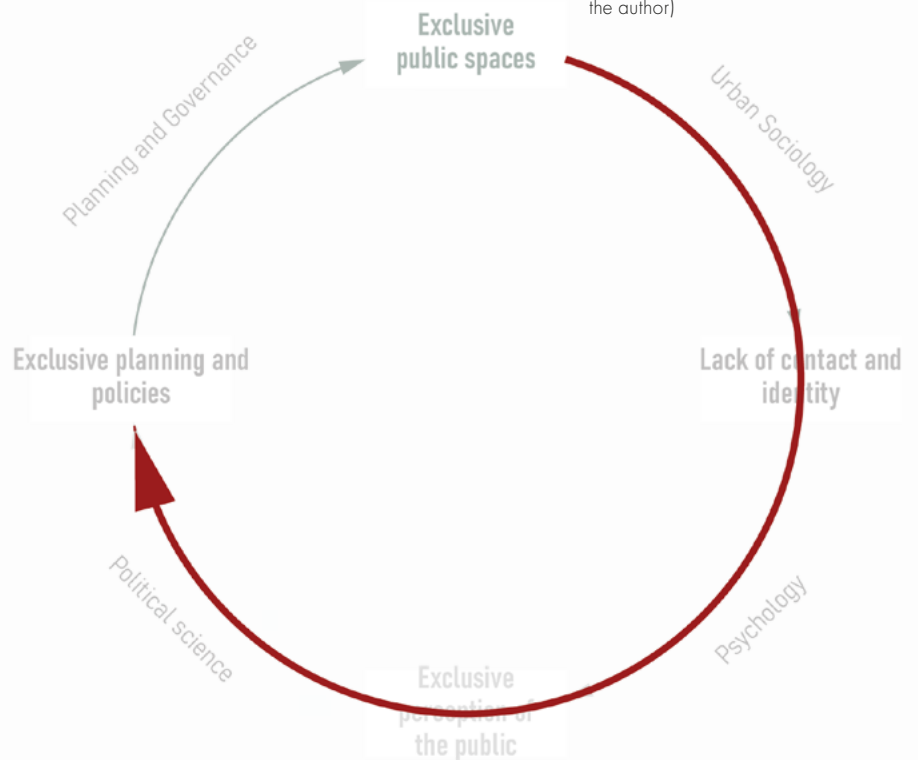
Fig. 117 to the right illustrates this first approach. The red arrow shows the scope of the original research goal. The hypothesis was that public space influences how inhabitants interact. Interaction then affects the perception inhabitants have of other people and these perceptions affect political leaning. As a final step, the elected actors, and the policies they make influence the design of public space.

Fig. 116 illustrates the final project focus in the same diagram. Here, the blue arrows show the research goal. The focus of the project is now on the processes that create public space and the effects they might have on the inhabitant's behaviour. For wider implications I draw on literature from political sciences and sociology. This gives the project a stronger focus on the core subjects of urbanism while

Fig. 116: Wider scientific framework: The production of public space and its effects (by the author)



Fig. 117: Original research idea within the wider framework (by the author)





keeping the larger framework of democracy theory in mind.

### Advantages and limitations of the chosen methodology

The first part of research focused on the district's socio-spatial structure. Spaces of interaction are particularly important for diverse societies. Therefore, the socio-spatial analysis is important to identify where interventions might be necessary.

However, multiple limitations of the approach need to be addressed. First, since I have used existing data that was provided by the City of Vienna, the differentiation of social groups was predetermined. The results are based on certain categorizations that could not be adapted to the purpose of this project. I have addressed this limitation by considering more than one parameter in the data-interpretation. For instance, a combination of data on education levels and ethnic composition gives a more comprehensive image of a neighbourhood's social structure than only one of the parameters.

The second limitation lies in the quantitative approach itself. The quantitative data that was used can reveal the social composition of a neighbourhood but cannot lead to statements about the forms of interactions that take place. Therefore, the results cannot provide evidence for a lack of interaction but can only indicate potentials. For this reason, the second part of the analysis is important.

The second part of the analysis looked at existing spaces of public life and the district's centrality structure. This made statements about potential

places of interaction possible. Centres, sub-centres, and neighbourhoods are analysed regarding their accessibility and attractiveness for different social groups, their functional and spatial diversity and the development processes that shaped them. Mapping, space syntax analysis, and statistical data were used for this purpose. This helped to highlight potentials for public life.

Nevertheless, space syntax and mapping primarily show potentials for public life and interaction. Statements could be strengthened through observations. However, these were only possible under extremely limited circumstances due to the current Covid-19 regulations.

To understand the wishes of inhabitants, I have analysed existing documents about participation processes. However, they need to be interpreted under certain limitations. As they might be used by other planners, there is a risk of reproducing a narrative that has been described by others. However, the content of the mentioned participation documents was not aligned with other strategies. It can therefore be assumed that they convey the results of the participation process relatively directly.

Additionally, the used definition of public space is subject to limitations itself. Some forms of public life cannot be covered by this definition, for instance, informal local conversations in private houses. These knowledge gaps need to be considered when interpreting the results.

Finally, space is only one variable that facilitates public life. Spatial design alone is unlikely to lead to a more democratic society if diverse

and free media, an active civil society or plural political organizations are missing. Democratic space can be understood through the lens of affordances. Space that affords diverse forms of appropriation can be beneficial or even crucial for democratic societies. But it is no guarantee for democracy.

### Learning outcome

These limitations highlight some central lessons from the project. The most important one is that conversation with experts and inhabitants should happen in an early phase. Due to the long process of clearly defining the research theme, I conducted interviews relatively late. Doing this earlier could bring future projects closer to the citizens and put different aspects more into focus.

### Feedback by the mentors

Many aspects of the project emerged in conversation with my mentors. Multiple methods and their application are inspired by their comments. Moreover, their questions on specific aspects helped to increase the coherence of the project. Finally, their knowledge about the theoretical and practical aspects of the relation between social life, democracy and space helped to discover new aspects of the topic.

### Design and research

Design plays a central role of the project. One of the most present applications is using design to make further steps in research. Multiple times, designing potential interventions helped to identify gaps in research.

Another application of design is the implementation of the strategy in the context of the local spatial structures. For the detailed implementation design helped to go into detail on specific aspects of the strategy. Through the exploration of design alternatives, specific aspects of the research results were further evaluated.

### Ethical issues and dilemmas

Since this project deals with the broad societal topic of democracy, it is important for a prospective urbanist to consider his role within the wider society. As the political scientist John Parkinson (2012, p. 204) argues, democracy and politics depend on physical space but the direct influence of spatial form on the conditions of a democracy, alone, is limited. Hence, it is important to consider the wider societal framework in which space is being used and transformed.

Design does not always lead to the intended outcomes. As Richard Sennett (2018) points out, streets that are seen as open and democratic today, were built in undemocratic processes with militaristic objectives. Vienna's Ringstraße is an example for this. Also, the architects that formulated the Charter of Athens did not expect the consequences of their thoughts. Despite their anti-totalitarian ideas, many of the neighbourhoods that were designed based on their thoughts became places of social exclusion (ibid., p. 167). Hence, designing space with a certain idea of society in mind, even if it is the idea of democracy, is a sensible matter.

Nevertheless, some forms of planning are necessary. This project

has shown that a lack of transparent plans can lead to increasing power of private actors and to commercial interests becoming the driving goals of urban development. This reflection therefore stands in line with Sennett (2018, p. 369), who argues that planners need to find a balance between proposing forms that can facilitate openness and being humble enough to admit that one cannot know how these forms will function.

The topic of public space has become particularly sensible in the last years. As Ali Madanipour (2019) points out, the concept of public space has long been used as a critique of neoliberalism. Today, however, it is increasingly being used as a commercial attraction point that boosts real estate value. While "the rhetoric of the public space as a space of interaction has remained" (Madanipour, 2019, p. 45), the risk of expulsion has increased.

This aspect is a dilemma in the project. Democratic spaces might be particularly important in more vulnerable neighbourhoods. Interventions, however, can increase housing prices. This shows that interventions should be oriented along the needs of the local population rather than only the idea of a space of interaction. This means, on the one hand, that small scale interventions might be more appropriate than large prestige projects. On the other hand, it highlights the importance of citizen participation in decision making processes, as this is the best way to ensure that local needs are being considered.

## 7.3 DISCUSSION

### Scientific relevance

The following aspects of the project can be relevant for research and planning in Vienna and beyond.

First, social fragmentation in north-east Vienna seems to be connected to neighbourhood types and infrastructure corridors. This stands in line with Graham and Marvin's (2001) claim that infrastructure connects some parts of society but functions as a barrier for others. This separation is relevant as it can have social implications (Tóth et al., 2021). In Vienna this phenomenon is less extreme than in other cities. However, the fact that this pattern can be observed in a city with strong social policies like Vienna might highlight the need to act for other places as well.

Interventions in this topic demand differentiated approaches. Some of the ideas presented in the strategy chapter could be applied in other areas. However, governmental and cultural differences need to be considered. Further research could be done on less integrated neighbourhoods and how to strengthen them.

Secondly, social functions concentrate in shopping centres. This result is important as the dynamic can lead to the loss of neighbourhood community (Martin, 2003). Therefore, new approaches for urban social cohesion are necessary. Some were explored in this work.

Finally, the analysis of development processes shows that the rhetoric of public space in Vienna is often focused on an economic image. This stands in line with the changing "rhetoric of public space" as Madanipour (2019) calls it. The alleged needs of the international economy are often

used for legitimization of large-scale projects (Grubbauer, 2014). This focus on the city's image might be generalizable for other locations. Also in many other peripheral locations there is a need for more integrated planning approaches.

### Societal relevance

Although this project has focused on the social aspects of sustainability, its relevance for society goes beyond that.

Democratic space is also ecologically sustainable. A strong emphasis of the project was on walkability and public transport since these aspects can be beneficial for a democratic society. But the envisioned neighbourhood structure could also reduce car-orientation and CO<sub>2</sub> output. Action in the urban periphery is not only important from a social but also from an environmental perspective.

Moreover, the proposals would strongly affect the local economy. They might seem to limit economic prosperity. In the long run, however, small-scale local structures could also be economically more sustainable. Smaller structures can protect local jobs. Moreover, mixed-use shopping streets might prove to be more resilient against economic changes than shopping centres.

To conclude, the project covers a wide variety of social aspects. A new vision for life in the urban periphery can benefit society on many levels.







# 8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

# 8.1 TABLE OF FIGURES

Fig. 1:	Austria within Europe until 1989 (By the author. Basemap source: Wikimedia Commons, 2010)	12
Fig. 2:	Austria within the EU in 2020 (By the author. Basemap source: Wikimedia Commons, 2010)	12
Fig. 3:	Vienna's spatial and administrative structure (by the author. Data source: Umweltbundesamst, 2018)	12
Fig. 4:	Areas with increasing and decreasing number of inhabitants not born in Austria since 2008 (by the author. Data: City of Vienna, 2020b; Basemap: City of Vienna, 2018a)	13
Fig. 5:	Areas with increasing and decreasing total number of inhabitants since 2008 (by the author. Data: City of Vienna, 2020b; Basemap: City of Vienna, 2018a)	13
Fig. 6:	Percentage of votes for the FPÖ in the elections for the Vienna city council 2018 (by the author. Data: 'Ergebnisse der Kommunalwahlen in Wien', 2018)	14
Fig. 7:	Results of the national presidential election 2016 (Minar, 2016)	14
Fig. 8:	Election results of the four biggest parties for the national elections 2019 (by the author. Data: City of Vienna, 2020c)	15
Fig. 9:	Residential complex from the "fordist" period (by the author.)	16
Fig. 10:	Contemporary high-rise development (by the author.)	16
Fig. 11:	The pyramid of democratic space shows three aspects of how space can benefit democracy. Each aspect can be fulfilled to three degrees. (by the author.)	23
Fig. 12:	Icons centrality (by the author)	24
Fig. 13:	Icons identity (by the author)	24
Fig. 14:	Icons accessibility (by the author)	24
Fig. 15:	Icons diversity (by the author)	26
Fig. 16:	Icons social infrastructure (by the author)	26
Fig. 17:	Theoretical conclusion: Self-reinforcing cycle of exclusion through space, politics, and society (by the author)	27
Fig. 18:	Conceptual framework. (Made by author.)	34
Fig. 19:	Research focus area (by the author Basemap: City of Vienna, 2018)	35
Fig. 21:	Image of Kagraner Platz around 1900 (Frey, 2021)	44
Fig. 20:	Map of Kagran 1912 (by the author, basemap: City of Vienna, 2020b)	44
Fig. 22:	Image of Wagramer Straße in the 1930s with the Café Falk and the tram line (Loub, n.d.)	45
Fig. 23:	Map of Kagran 1956 (by the author, basemap: City of Vienna, 2020a)	45
Fig. 24:	Prandaugasse, a central square in the district centre that is surrounded by important institutions (by the author.)	46
Fig. 26:	Wagramer Straße and Café Falk in 2020 (by the author.)	46
Fig. 25:	Map of Kagran 2019 (by the author, basemap: City of Vienna, 2021)	46
Fig. 33:	Types of residential areas in Vienna (Source: City of Vienna, 2016)	47
Fig. 27:	Historic Kagran (Source: City of Vienna, 2021)	47
Fig. 30:	Row house area "Freihofsiedlung" (Source: City of Vienna, 2021)	47
Fig. 28:	Blocks along Erzherzog Karl Straße (Source: City of Vienna, 2021)	47
Fig. 31:	Blocks along Siebenbürgerstraße (Source: City of Vienna, 2021)	47
Fig. 29:	Blocks along Siebenbürgerstraße (Source: City of Vienna, 2021)	47
Fig. 32:	Blocks along Tokiostraße (Source: City of Vienna, 2021)	47
Fig. 34:	Infrastructure networks (By the author. Data sources: Wiener Linien, 2020; City of Vienna, 2020. Basemap: City of Vienna, 2020)	48
Fig. 35:	Motor vehicles per 1000 inhabitant in 2019 (Source: City of Vienna, 2019)	49
Fig. 36:	Blocks along Siebenbürgerstraße (Source: City of Vienna, 2021)	49
Fig. 37:	Conclusions from migratory background analysis (by the author. Data source: Statistik Austria, edited by City of Vienna, Municipal department 23)	51
Fig. 38:	Conclusion from Educational analysis (by the author. Data source: Statistik Austria, edited by City of Vienna, Municipal department 23)	53
Fig. 39:	Conclusion: Neighbourhood types and edges (by the author. Data source: Statistik Austria, edited by City of Vienna, Municipal department 23)	

	54
Fig. 40: Conclusion: Neighbourhood types by spatial and social character (by the author.)	55
Fig. 41: Corridors of integration and fragmentation (by the author based on satellite images. basemap source: City of Vienna, 2018)	59
Fig. 42: Urban development areas, commercial centres and central corridors of public life (by the author. Data source: City of Vienna, 2018)	61
Fig. 43: Centres and sub-centres (by the author. Data source: Open Street Map; City of Vienna 2018)	63
Fig. 44: Commercial centres by floor space and type (by the author. Data Source: EHL 2019)	65
Fig. 45: Entrances at Wagramer Straße and Donauzentrum (by the author. Data sources: Google Maps; Aeneas Beteiligungsgesellschaft mbH, n.d.)	68
Fig. 47: Interior of Donauzentrum (by the author)	69
Fig. 48: The square between Donau Zentrum and Metro station Kagran was the only place where a large and diverse accumulation of people could be observed during field trips (by the author.)	69
Fig. 46: Street-scape in front of Donau Zentrum (by the author)	69
Fig. 49: Wagramer Straße (by the author)	70
Fig. 50: Wagramer Straße (Source: Google Street View)	70
Fig. 51: Functions at Wagramer Straße (by the author. Data sources: Open Street Map and field work)	71
Fig. 53: Demolished buildings since 1997 (Source: Scherer, 2020)	72
Fig. 52: Wagramerstraße (Source: Google Street View)	72
Fig. 54: Protected areas in Kagran (Source: (City of Vienna, n.d.-a)	72
Fig. 55: Buildings on Wagramerstraße by building age (by the author. Sources: City of Vienna and field work)	73
Fig. 59: Demolished building on Kagraner Platz (Source: Google Street View)	74
Fig. 58: Section Kagraner Platz A-A (by the author.)	74
Fig. 56: Functions on Kagraner Platz (by the author. Sources: Open Street Map)	74
Fig. 57: Building ages Kagraner Platz (by the author. Sources: City of Vienna; field work)	74
Fig. 60: Distribution of shops and hospitality functions along the axis Kagran-Stadlau (by the author. Sources: Open Street Map and field work)	76
Fig. 61: Tobacco shop at Bernoullistraße (by the author.)	77
Fig. 62: Vacant bakery in Freihofsiedlung (by the author.)	77
Fig. 63: Shopping centre Siebenbürgerstraße (by the author.)	77
Fig. 64: Social institutions in Kagran and Stadlau (by the author. Sources: City of Vienna, Open Street Map, Google Maps, and field work)	78
Fig. 65: Green space network (by the author. Data source: City of Vienna, 2018)	81
Fig. 66: Green spaces in eastern Kagran (by the author. Data source: City of Vienna, 2018)	83
Fig. 67: Character of green spaces in eastern Kagran (map and images by the author. Data source: City of Vienna, 2018)	85
Fig. 68: Infrastructure Corridors, Industrial Areas and neighbourhood concentrations of under-privileged social groups (by the author. Data source: City of Vienna, 2018, Statistik Austria, edited by City of Vienna, Municipal department 23)	89
Fig. 69: Satellite image industrial corridor (Source: Google Earth)	90
Fig. 70: Administrative System of Austria (Source: Wikimedia Commons, 2011)	93
Fig. 71: Mission statement map STEP 2025 (City of Vienna, 2014, p. 67)	94
Fig. 72: Target areas of urban development (by the author. Source: City of Vienna, 2019)	94
Fig. 73: Strategy Map U2 Donaustadt (Scheuven et al., 2013, p. 90-91)	95
Fig. 74: Development processes Kagran Centre (By the author. Based on the literature mentioned in the text)	96
Fig. 75: Focus of the development concept for the target area Kagran (by the author.)	99
Fig. 76: Green space concept target area Kagran (Source: City of Vienna 2019 )	100
Fig. 77: Construction works on "Vienna Twentytwo" (by the author)	101
Fig. 78: Actors mapping for the development process Vienna twentytwo (by the author.)	102
Fig. 79: Structure of the strategy (by the author.)	109
Fig. 80: Visualization goal 2 (by the author.)	120



Fig. 81:	Visualization goal 3 (by the author.)	122
Fig. 82:	Visualization goal 5 (by the author.)	126
Fig. 83:	Proposed reorganization of actors in relation to the process of the Forum Donaustadt. The x-axis refers to the interest in the current planning regime of investor-led solitary projects (by the author.)	134
Fig. 84:	Potential new governance arrangements on city and district level for a democratization of the planning process. (by the author.)	135
Fig. 85:	Potential process for a participatory budget, inspired by the examples from Paris and Porto Alegre (by the author.)	138
Fig. 86:	Chapter cover image: Visualizaition of the proposal at the corner Wagramer Straße-Meißauergasse (by the author. Image sources: Google Maps,; Javanaud Emdén, n.d.; Purepng.com)	141
Fig. 87:	Proposed changes in public transport infrastructure (by the author.)	144
Fig. 88:	In a study from 2016 the Viennese workers union highlighted the need for improved public in the outer districts. Among other things, it proposed a new station in Kagran. (Source: Wittrich, 2016)	145
Fig. 89:	The proposal map for Kagran Centre shows Donau Zentrum and Kagraner Platz as two attractors at both ends of Wagramer Straße (by the author.)	147
Fig. 90:	Masterplan Kagraner Platz (by the author.)	149
Fig. 91:	Market Kagraner Platz (by the author. (by the author.)	150
Fig. 94:	Cultural centre (by the author.)	151
Fig. 93:	New district council (by the author.)	151
Fig. 92:	Market and cultural ensemble (by the author.)	151
Fig. 95:	Visualizaition of the proposal at the corner Wagramer Straße-Meißauergasse (by the author. Image sources: Google Maps,; Javanaud Emdén, n.d.; Purepng.com)	154
Fig. 96:	Proposed redesign of Wagramer Straße (by the author.)	155
Fig. 97:	Redesign of St. Wendelin Platz (by the author.)	156
Fig. 98:	Visualizaition: Wagramer as a space for public claim making (by the author. Image sources: Google Maps,; Javanaud Emdén, n.d.; Purepng.com)	158
Fig. 99:	Entrances at Wagramer Straße and Donauzentrum (by the author. Sources: Google Maps; Aeneas Beteiligungsgesellschaft mbH, n.d.))	160
Fig. 100:	Alternative design of Donau Zentrum (by the author.)	161
Fig. 101:	Reference Project: Bruno Marek Allee in Vienna (Source: Mosch, 2019)	163
Fig. 102:	Map of the axis Kagran - Stadlau along Donaustadtstraße and Erzherzog-Karl-Straße (by the author.	163
Fig. 103:	Map of the proposed station Kagran, the proposed tram line to Hirschstetten and redensification areas along the new infrastructure (by the author.	164
Fig. 104:	Chapter cover image: Visualization green street example Natorpgasse (by the author. Image sources: Google Maps,; Javanaud Emdén, n.d.;Bailey, 2015; FreePNGImg)	171
Fig. 105:	Four sub-projects (by the author.)	174
Fig. 106:	Potential structure of green streets in the west of the green corridor and the institutions they connect (by the author.)	175
Fig. 107:	Visualization green street example Natorpgasse (by the author. Image sources: Google Maps,; Javanaud Emdén, n.d.;Bailey, 2015; FreePNGImg)	176
Fig. 108:	Park “Kagraner Anger” Alternative 1 (by the author)	177
Fig. 109:	Park “Kagraner Anger” Current situation (by the author)	177
Fig. 110:	Park “Kagraner Anger” Alternative 2 (by the author)	178
Fig. 111:	Park “Kagraner Anger” Alternative 3 (by the author)	178
Fig. 112:	Potential redensification of a block along Siebenbürgerstraße (by the author)	179
Fig. 113:	Potential structure of of more permeable train tracks and their surroundings (by the author.)	181
Fig. 114:	Wider scientific framework: The production of public space and its effects (by the author)	191
Fig. 115:	Original research idea within the wider framework (by the author)	191

Fig. 116: Share of inhabitants with a migratory background from within the EU (0=0%,1=100%)(Data source: Statistik Austria. edited by City of Vienna, Municipal department 23)	215
Fig. 117: Share of inhabitants with a non-EU migratory background (Data source: Statistik Austria. edited by City of Vienna, Municipal department 23)	216
Fig. 118: Share of inhabitants with no migratory background or a background from within Austria (0=0%,1=100%)(Data source: Statistik Austria. edited by City of Vienna, Municipal department 23)	216
Fig. 119: Change of share of inhabitants with a migratory background from non-EU countries between 2010 and 2020 in percent (0=0%,1=100%)(Data source: Statistik Austria. edited by City of Vienna, Municipal department 23)	217
Fig. 120: Change of share of inhabitants with a migratory background from EU countries between 2010 and 2020 in percent (0=0%,1=100%)(Data source: Statistik Austria. edited by City of Vienna, Municipal department 23)	218
Fig. 121: Total number of inhabitants with no higher degree than compulsory school	219
Fig. 122: Share of inhabitants with a compulsory school as the highest obtained degree (1.0=100%, 0.0=0%)	220
Fig. 123: Share of inhabitants with a school education higher than compulsory school as the highest obtained degree (1.0=100%, 0.0=0%)	220
Fig. 125: Share of inhabitants with a professional apprenticeship as the highest obtained degree (1.0=100%, 0.0=0%)	221
Fig. 124: Share of inhabitants with a university degree as the highest obtained degree (1.0=100%, 0.0=0%)	221
Fig. 126: Share of households with more than 80m <sup>2</sup> living space per person (Source: City of Vienna)	222
Fig. 128: Number of households with less than 20m <sup>2</sup> per person (by census district)	223
Fig. 127: Share of households with less than 20m <sup>2</sup> living space per person	223
Fig. 129: Districts by library visits per inhabitant (by the author. Data sources: Büchereien Wien, 2020; City of Vienna, Municipal department 13, 2020)	224
Fig. 131: Library Donaustadt (Source Google Street View)	224
Fig. 132: Library Erzherzog Karl Straße (Source Google Street View)	224
Fig. 134: Libraries by visitor group (the size of the diagrams represents the total number of visitors) (by the author. Data sources: Büchereien Wien, 2020; City of Vienna, Municipal department 13, 2020)	225
Fig. 133: Building blocks by distance to next library (the size of the bubbles represents the amount of library media available in each location) (by the author. Data sources: Büchereien Wien, 2020; City of Vienna, Municipal department 13, 2020)	225
Fig. 135: Space Syntax analysis angular choice 3km radius (by the author.)	226
Fig. 136: Space Syntax analysis angular integration 800m radius (by the author.)	226
Fig. 137: Space Syntax analysis shortest-path angle and potential functions	227
Fig. 138: Comparison case Yppenplatz	227

## 8.2 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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# 9 APPENDIX



# THEORIES OF URBANISM ESSAY

## Neighbourhoods, Urban Policy, and Right-wing Populism: The Effect of Urban Planning Policies and Neighbourhood Belonging on Political Leaning of Citizens in European Cities

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### Abstract

Political opinions of European citizens are increasingly polarized between those living in central and peripheral areas of Cities. This becomes particularly visible through the rising popularity of radical right-wing populist parties (RRPP) in outer urban areas. Theories like the contact hypothesis or the “losers of modernity” theory try to explain the rise of populism through the individual fears and motives of voters. A limited amount of literature looks at the local conditions of the affected neighbourhoods. In this essay, I argue that most theories on the topic cannot explain the distinct spatial distribution of radical right-wing populist voters in full depth because they do not consider socio-spatial factors. I will demonstrate that planning processes and urban policy play a crucial role for the rise of right-wing populism in the urban periphery. In particular, the erosion of neighbourhood communities in rapidly transforming cities appears to be a decisive factor for spatial distribution of political discontent. These insights are relevant since they highlight potential effects of urban policy that should be considered by planners and authorities.

**Keywords:** urban planning, urban periphery, right-wing populist parties, electoral geography, neighbourhood dynamics

### Introduction

The society of many European cities is politically divided. Political opinions differ drastically between the urban core and the urban periphery as election results in many cities show (see for instance City of Vienna, 2019; Essletzbichler et al., 2018; W. P. C. Van Gent & Musterd, 2013). In the case of Vienna, for example, the radical right-wing populist party (RRPP) Freedom Party (FPÖ) has reached a remarkably high share of votes in the urban periphery (City of Vienna, 2019). Central urban areas, on the other hand, show a strong trend to left-green and liberal parties (ibid.). A similar pattern can be observed in Dutch cities, where the Partij voor de Vrijheid (PVV) achieves particularly high results in the city’s outskirts (W. P. C. Van Gent & Musterd, 2013, p. 77). Also in other European city-regions, like

France, Belgium, or the UK, the same pattern can be observed (W. P. Van Gent et al., 2014, p. 1776).

This is highly relevant since political polarization can have serious implications on the urban and national scale. Firstly, it can hamper important projects like the sustainability transition, since it is hard to find a common ground to develop the necessary strategies (Gaigg et al., 2020; Hohl & Smekal, 2020). Major parties, like the Social Democratic Party (SPÖ) in Vienna, struggle to fulfil the cosmopolitan and walkability-oriented claims of inner-city inhabitants while contenting the needs of inhabitants of outer, car-oriented neighbourhoods. Therefore, benefits and disadvantages of the sustainability transition are not equally distributed over the city. As a result, sustainability becomes a highly political and emotional question (Hohl & Smekal, 2020) instead of something all parties can agree on.

Secondly, political polarization poses a threat to democracy itself. According to the political scientist Jan-Werner Müller (2016, p. 188) RRPP's claim of representing the "true" people divides the population and delegitimizes opposing opinions. Moreover, spatial segregation of political opinions can further increase the division of society. The "common world" as a "meeting ground for all", as Hannah Arendt (1998, p. 57) calls it, is getting lost.

Lastly, on the individual level, the spatially distinct pattern of RRPP votes highlight issues of spatial justice. As will be explained in this essay, right-wing populism is often related to the erosion of belonging, representation, and economic status. Hence, the patterns of election results indicate that inhabitants of certain parts of the city concerned about their place in a changing environment. Moreover, RRPP often have an anti-urban stance, meaning that they tend to associate cities with crime, immigration, and behaviours that they disapprove (W. P. C. Van Gent & Musterd, 2013, p. 65). This indicates that the political polarization is in parts based on the fundamental questions what a good city is and who should have access to it. For these reasons, the deeper exploration of motives for voting RRPPs in the urban periphery might have high value urban planning and policy making.

The central argument of this essay is that a differentiated perspective on the phenomenon of RRPP voters in the urban periphery is needed and that the spatial context of individual motives needs to be considered. The argumentation is structured into four parts. In the first part, I discuss the contact hypothesis. This section demonstrates that this theory alone cannot explain differences between the share of RRPP voters in different neighbourhoods. In the second section, I explore theories that connect reasons for RRPP votes to socio-spatial neighbourhood dynamics, drawing mostly on quantitative studies. In the third part, I elaborate on the relation between neighbourhood changes, inhabitants' sense of belonging, and RRPP voting, based on qualitative case-studies. In the final section, I relate the spatial and economic processes that lead

to the erosion of local lifestyles to the motivations for inhabitants to vote for RRPPs.

The aim of this essay is to gain a deeper understanding for the concerns and needs of inhabitants that are subject to processes of urban change and how their perceptions correlate with right-wing populist voting. This is not to say that planners should adopt the claims of radical right-wing politicians, but that it is important to understand concerns that move a big part of the population. The aim is also not to judge wrongdoing of voters and or to fully explain the rise of right-wing populist parties. I rather try to gain an understanding for the vast differences in voting behaviour. Understanding the origins of political opinions and their spatial concentrations could help to highlight problems that inhabitants of specific areas are struggling with. These insights could help to facilitate cooperation between opposing political groups, authorities, and inhabitants in the further development of specific areas and therefore help to avoid conflicts and exclusion.

This essay has developed in the context of my thesis project, in which I look at political discontent in the urban periphery of Vienna and its implications for urban planning. I therefore often mention Vienna as an example, although the largest part of literature has been written by Dutch researcher. This is a result of the comparably big amount of work that has been done on the electoral geography of the Netherlands. The limited comparability of countries should be kept in mind when drawing conclusions for other countries. Nevertheless, there are strong commonalities in the political structure and the history of urban development after the second world war. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that other cities can learn from the papers that were presented here.

## The Contact Hypothesis

I will start my argument with a critical reflection on the contact hypothesis, a widely applied theory to explain the emergence of fear and prejudice against members from other social groups. This is relevant,

since anti-immigrant attitudes are the central commonality of RRPPs across Europe (Van der Brug & Fennema, 2009, p. 590). The contact theory was first brought forward by the psychologist Gordon Allport in 1954. In simple words, it states that contact between members of different social groups reduces prejudice and fear between them (Gordon Allport, 1954, as cited by Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008; Savelkoul et al., 2017). Since then, a variety of research has been conducted on this hypothesis<sup>1</sup>.

In a psychological meta-study, Elisabeth Paluck, Seth Green and Donald Green (2019) find that most studies indicate that contact to outgroups reduces prejudice. Nevertheless, they also highlight that Allport's theory is often oversimplified, for instance in the common presumption that the mere presence of different groups in the same place is a sufficient condition for reducing prejudice. Paluck et al. (2019) state that the four conditions for intergroup contact that Allport defined, "equal status between the groups in the situation; common goals; intergroup cooperation; and the support of authorities, law or custom" (Allport 1954, as cited by Paluck et al., 2019, p. 131), are important for the effectiveness of contact (Paluck et al., 2019, p. 153). They come to the result that not every form of contact reduces prejudice, and that contact can also have the reverse effect and lead to increased conflicts<sup>2</sup> (ibid., p. 153). These results suggest that social mix in a neighbourhood is not a sufficient precondition for social cohesion but, nevertheless, needs to be considered when trying to understand inhabitants' sentiments and concerns.

Michael Savelkoul, Joran Laméris and Jochem Tolsma (2017) have looked at the validity of the contact hypothesis in the context of neighbourhoods in the Netherlands. Through an online survey among voters, they found that the degree of support for the radical right populist Party for Freedom (PVV)

increases with the share of non-western migrants that live in the same neighbourhood (p. 218). Furthermore, they found that the central reason for the correlation is the perceived threat from migrants to the native's lifestyle (ibid.). In other words, the results show that ethnic mix tendentially increases the likelihood for native inhabitants to feel threatened by migrants. This is the reverse effect than what would be expected in consideration of the contact hypothesis. Hence, the sole presence of other social groups does not reduce prejudice or fear but can even reinforce these sentiments.

However, Savelkoul et al. (2017) state that contact is not irrelevant (p. 218). They show that the probability of voting for PVV is the highest among residents who do not interact with other migrants although they have opportunities to do so (p. 214). Moreover, a rising share of non-western immigrants in a neighbourhood increases the likelihood of voting for the PVV only among those inhabitants that have little to no interaction with the minority group (p. 218). This indicates that interethnic contact can reduce the perceived threat from migrants.

Finally, Savelkoul et al. (2017) show that changes of a neighbourhood's social structure affect voting behaviour. They found that the perception that "the presence of ethnic minorities leads to neighbourhood deterioration" is one of the main reasons for the correlation between RRPP votes and a higher share of immigrants (p. 218). Hence, political discontent results from concerns of voters for their neighbourhood, not just about their personal life.

## The spatial context of RRPP support

Another common explanation for RRPP voting is the "losers of modernity" theory. According to this model, lower educated inhabitants compete with immigrants for jobs and other scarce resources and

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Pettigrew and Linda Tropp (2008) alone have analysed over 500 studies to find evidence for the thesis that knowledge about outgroups, reduced anxiety and increased empathy as results of intergroup contact help to reduce prejudice.

<sup>2</sup> Also Richard Sennett (2018, p. 168) finds that contact between people who are very different can reinforce

conflicts between them and that it is therefore too easy to simply reduce all boundaries between social groups. However, this does not mean that conflict always needs to be avoided. According to Arendt, a society and its members can only be free in spaces where they can discuss conflicting opinions as equals (Arendt, 1998, p. 53; Tillotson, 2020). In her understanding, conflicts should not be avoided, but are necessary to make societies more equal.

are affected by the outsourcing of productive activities to other countries where costs are lower (Spier, 2010, p. 17). In the theory, some “losers of modernity” tend to compensate the loss of status through radical nationalism and the idea of superiority over other social groups.

However, Wouter van der Brug and Meindert Fennema (2009) show that radical right parties attract voters from all parts of society, hence, they rule out the “losers of modernity” thesis as a single explanation for voting behaviour (p. 603). Drawing on statistical data of European Elections, they show that socio-demographic variables alone are a weak explanation for the success of RRPPs (ibid.).

Van der Brug and Fennema (2009) therefore propose a more differentiated set of explanations by complementing the ethnic competition theory with two other ideas that they derive from literature. First, they explore the theory of social isolation (ibid., p. 591). The idea that the erosion of social networks due to the atomization of society makes voters prone to totalitarianism was first broad forward by Hannah Arendt (1951, as cited by Van der Brug & Fennema, 2009).<sup>3</sup> Drawing on studies from France and Germany, Van der Brug & Fennema (2009, p. 591) argue that voters with weak ties to traditional civic and political organizations tend towards supporting RRPPs. Other studies (Rydgren, 2009) that measure social isolation as the lack of membership to voluntary organizations come to the result that social isolation and social trust have little impact on RRPP support. Anyway, it can be questioned if the affiliation to these organization, really covers the phenomenon in full depth.

Van der Brug and Fennema (2009) label the third theory as the “protest vote model” (p. 592). According to this explanation, people vote for RRPPs because they are discontent with the policies of established parties. These voters might not even aim at changing public policies in line with the goals of

the parties they are voting for but rather want to give voice to their discontent (ibid.).

As Van der Brug and Fennema (2009) suggest, there seems not to be one single explanation for the spatial concentrations of radical right voters in European cities. However, they do not take socio-spatial context into account when explaining the individual motives of voters in their set of explanations.

Therefore, Wouter van Gent and Sako Musterd (2013) have established a connection between socio-spatial neighbourhood types and the three theoretical explanations that Van der Brug and Fennema have collected. In their paper on “The unintended effects of urban and housing policies”, Van Gent and Musterd (2013) evaluate statistical data about the city of The Hague. They analyse the correlation between polling station results and neighbourhood attributes to show the effects of spatial environment have on voting behaviour. Their main argument is that “space matters” (p.68) for explaining the concentration of RRPP voters and that the sources of right-wing tendencies depend on the urban context. They articulate this argument by exploring the spatial context to which each of Van der Brug’s and Fennema’s (2009) three theories is most likely to apply.

First, Van Gent and Musterd (2013) argue that ethnic competition is a promising explanation for the high share of RRPP voters in native Dutch working-class neighbourhoods with a low share of migrants (p. 79). They hypothesise that inhabitants of these neighbourhoods fear the competition from migrants for their jobs and therefore tend to vote for anti-migrant parties (ibid.).

Secondly, they find that the social isolation thesis is most relevant in ethnically mixed areas (p. 80). They argue that changing social structures in the neighbourhoods might lead to the erosion of social networks, particularly those of elderly people (ibid.).

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<sup>3</sup> In today’s society, this process might be reinforced by the rapid advances of communication technologies as Manuel Castells suggests (2011, p. 3).



Finally, their results show that policy protest is a reasonable explanation for political discontent in middle-class suburban areas with a low share of migrant population. They indicate three potential explanations for suburban discontent. First, suburban inhabitants might fear the “suburbanization of urban issues” (ibid., p. 82), meaning that problems like criminality or conflict arises in suburban areas through densification and diversifications. Second, suburban inhabitants might feel the need to reclaim urban space for work and leisure activities although they do not live in the core cities. According to this reasoning, middle class inhabitants might prefer radical right-wing parties since they claim to make urban areas safer for native inhabitants and accessible from suburban areas (ibid.). As a final reason, the low social mix in suburban areas might reinforce political opinions, since there is little interaction with people who think differently (ibid.).

To conclude, Van Gent and Musterd (2013) show that RRPP support in the case of The Hague has a spatially distinct pattern and that it can be found in diverse socio-spatial contexts. Hence, they assume that spatial policies have an impact on RRPP support (p. 83). Moreover, they propose a broad set of explanations for this phenomenon. This diversity of voting motivations suggests that measures that approach the sources of discontent in the urban periphery need to be just as diverse.

### The Neighbourhood as a Political Entity

As described above, both, Savelkoul et al. (2017) and Van Gent and Musterd (2013) highlight the importance of the neighbourhood for understanding voting behaviour. But although these quantitative studies can prove correlations, they can only assume causalities between different factors. Qualitative research at the neighbourhood level, however, can explain in greater depth how inhabitants experience the development of their environment and how this experience, in some cases, translates into RRPP support.

In qualitative interviews, Sieglinde Rosenberger and Julia Mourão Permoser (2013) have investigated how eroding neighbourhood belonging is instrumentalized by RRPPs in municipal housing complexes in Vienna. These neighbourhoods are not located in the urban periphery of the city but have a similar socio-spatial structure as many complexes in the outer districts. Their results show that especially inhabitants who criticise the lack of community in the neighbourhood tend to support right-wing populist narratives and the projection of conflicts on ethnicity (p. 441). Inhabitants who identify more with the overall city than with the neighbourhood, on the other hand, tend to refuse the verbal demarcation of belonging along ethnic lines (p. 442). Consequently, the political divide seems to be less between urban and suburban inhabitants but between those who have a strong sense of belonging to the neighbourhood and those that feel more attached to the city as a whole.

To conclude, Rosenberger & Permoser (2013) point out that inhabitants with strong bonds to an eroding neighbourhood community tend towards the identification with ethnically defined social groups. They therefore indicate that the erosion of belonging to the neighbourhood is a central factor that makes inhabitants prone to vote for RRPPs.

Another qualitative study on the erosion neighbourhood belonging has been conducted by Fenne Pinkster (2016). The paper aims at understanding why residents feel a loss of belonging to their neighbourhood and its community. The case study is situated in a working-class neighbourhood from the 1930s in Amsterdam that has a relatively high percentage of votes for RRPPs.

Pinkster finds that, in general, the inhabitants feel strongly attached to the neighbourhood. Inhabitants connect to their neighbourhood through “feelings of comfort, familiarity and pride and reproduced shared stories” (ibid., p.881). The description shows the importance of the neighbourhood for the inhabitants’ sense of identity. In reference to Deborah Martin (2003), Pinkster highlights the role of the neighbourhood as a local form of identity in the

context of increasingly “extra-local interactions” (Pinkster, 2016, p. 888). In other words, the neighbourhood acts as a counterweight to the changes of social networks in a globalizing world.

Pinkster (2016) also finds that this sense of belonging to the neighbourhood is eroding in the Amsterdam case study. According to the inhabitants, the influx of new social groups and the loss of social and economic infrastructure and local institutions leads to the decline of the neighbourhood’s social status and the loss of neighbourhood community (ibid., p. 886). A variety of shops and local institutions used to make the area almost self-sufficient. However, most of them had been closed which led to a lack of places to meet other inhabitants (ibid.).

Pinkster’s study can help to understand why changes on the neighbourhood scale are often related to RRPP support. Since the drivers of neighbourhood change have their origin in political and economic processes on higher spatial scales, Pinkster highlights the role of the “wider societal and political implications of neighbourhood change” (ibid., p. 889). Since RRPP often represent anti-global attitudes (Van der Brug & Fennema, 2009, p. 590), they might be particularly attractive for residents that experience the processes of neighbourhood change that Pinkster describes. Moreover, RRPP often emphasize national identities. As neighbourhood identities erode, these national identities might become more important, because both are open for the ascription of identity and meaning, as Martin (2003, p. 380) has observed. Due to this reorientation of identity feelings, the neighbourhood becomes a highly politicized entity (Pinkster, 2016, p. 888).

To conclude, the dynamics that Rosenberger & Permoser (2013) and Pinkster (2016) describe can help to explain why the erosion of neighbourhood belonging often leads to the tendency towards nationalist RRPPs that Savelkoul et al. (2017, p. 218) mention. Furthermore, they explain why social isolation and economic status function as mediators in this process, as Van Gent and Musterd (2013) have found.

## The Role of Space

The papers that were reviewed above suggest that changes on the neighbourhood scale are an important factor for the potential of RRPP success in an area. Hence, “space matters” as Van Gent and Musterd (2013, p.68) have stated. In this final section, I will explore certain spatial dynamics that affect the relevant changes on the neighbourhood scale.

First, space plays a role in facilitating contact between social groups and reduce social isolation. As described above, contact can reduce negative sentiments towards an outgroup (Paluck et al., 2019; Savelkoul et al., 2017). However, since social mix on the neighbourhood level alone is not a sufficient condition for this form of contact (Paluck et al., 2019), further measures need to be taken to facilitate an interaction between social groups. Since contact usually takes place in physical space, urban planners and designers play a role in facilitating contact within and between neighbourhoods, especially in areas with increasing social mix.

Consequently, space also plays a role when approaching the issue of social isolation. Van Gent and Musterd (2013) describe social isolation as a result of the influx of new inhabitants. However, Pinkster’s (2016) interviews indicate that declining meeting places, due to the loss of shops, services and social infrastructure in the neighbourhood, might be an important reason for the emergence of social isolation. Even Arendt (1998), to whom the theory of social isolation goes back, mentions the importance of the “space of appearance” where the “other” is considered as an individual that can articulate its interests (p. 198). Hence, the spatial infrastructure is needed for interaction between social groups.

This stands in line with Richard Sennett (2017), who argues that a driver for social isolation is the idea of “making space contingent upon motion” (p. 14) and of separating functions in space (p. 297). As a result, public space loses its role as a place that brings people together (p. 14). Consequently, the lack of social interaction might be a result of spatial planning

policies. After the second world war, strategies strongly emphasised the development of networks on the district, city, and regional scale. But as Rosenberger & Permoser (2013) and Pinkster (2016) have shown, that not all inhabitants were able to keep up with the shifting scale and speed of travel and communication. The social networks of some rather remained deeply attached to the neighbourhood scale. The new spatial structure of the urban periphery, however, seems often not to fulfil the public role that was lost on the neighbourhood scale. Consequently, social isolation and a lack of contact to newcomers are emerging especially in the outskirts of cities.

Also, policy protest might arise from changing social and economic structures in suburban areas. Van Gent and Musterd (2013) have suggested that a main source of discontent in suburban areas might arise from the diversification of living environments and the perceived threat to people's personal lifestyle. Indeed, the periphery of European cities is changing drastically. According to Phelps et al. (2010, p. 373), the process of densification and diversification of suburban areas tends to stand in conflict with the suburban lifestyle and therefore provokes resistance among inhabitants. Although the urban periphery is perceived as losing the advantages of suburban areas, it does not gain the advantages of being truly urban (ibid.). The periphery of Vienna, for example, has been rapidly diversifying since the 1990s (Suitner et al., 2018, p. 22). However, it did not become polycentric, in the way that it provides all functions of an urban centre (ibid.). As a result, inhabitants of suburban areas might have the experience that their environment is being built up and that urban problems arise in the suburban areas (W. P. C. Van Gent & Musterd, 2013, p. 82). If this is the case, the sentiments of the local population should be stronger considered in development strategies.

To conclude, political discontent in neighbourhoods of the urban periphery seem to be based on changing spatial, economic, and social structures on higher scales. Functional mix and mobility structure are two spatial variables that might affect the degree of

intergroup contact and social isolation. Policy protest, on the other hand, might arise from densification and diversification processes. These results suggest that urban planning can have an influence on the likelihood of RRPP support in certain areas.

## Conclusion

In this essay, I have discussed explanations for the strength of RRPPs in the urban periphery of European cities. I have argued that theories about individuals, like the contact hypothesis and the "losers of modernist" theory alone, cannot sufficiently explain the spatial pattern of election results. Furthermore, I have explored more differentiated explanations and found that it is necessary to take the spatial context into account when trying to understand the pattern of RRPP support. Based on qualitative and quantitative studies, I have suggested that different forms of social change on the neighbourhood scale are an important factor for the potential of RRPP success in an area. Finally, I have argued that spatial structures play an important role for the emergence of these changes.

The presented arguments have important implications for urban planners and designers. First, planning can help to facilitate contact between social groups and reduce social isolation. Economic structure and mobility behaviours have the capacity capability to facilitate contact between social groups. Since these factors are affected by zoning regulations, spaces for contact can be facilitated by planning decisions. Implementing spaces where contact under the right conditions (Allport 1954, as cited by Paluck et al., 2019, p. 131) can take place might not be an easy task. Nevertheless, this essay's argument highlights how important it is to consider them in future planning strategies.

Two paths seem possible to approach social isolation of inhabitants that strongly attached to their local neighbourhood. On the one hand, planners and authorities can try to strengthen neighbourhood communities through the re-localization of services and institutions. On the other hand, they could try to

further integrate neighbourhoods into the regional networks in a more inclusive process. This could be realized through participation in development processes, improved accessibility of higher-scale social infrastructure, and the stronger incorporation of benefits for the local population in development projects and strategies.

Besides these implications, the rise of right-wing populism in the urban periphery sheds light on an important challenge for many European cities: The adaptation of their outskirts to a new urban society in a process that integrates the demands of those that

have lived there for the last decades. Especially in suburban areas, the protest against tendencies of urbanization, might be a central explanation for RRPP support. This indicates that the concerns and interests of local inhabitants need to be considered stronger in planning processes. It may be hard to convince inhabitants of the advantages of changes in their surroundings. However, as this essay has argued, some inhabitants will use “the ballot box to rebel” against the mentioned developments, as Rodríguez-Pose (2018, p. 190) formulates it, if their interests are not considered.

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# SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

## 9.2.1 DIVERSIFICATION OF THE POPULATION

Fragmentation is also apparent in the social structure of the districts. Especially in Donaustadt, there are sharp edges between social clusters.

### Migratory Background

This section looks at the social composition of different neighbourhoods in respect to migratory backgrounds. The term migratory background is used for statistical data by the City of Vienna and the Austrian statistical office and summarizes those inhabitants who are citizens of other countries.

The percentage of inhabitants with a migratory background is relevant to evaluate the need for public space because it can uncover conflicting demands to public space.

Moreover, socially mixed neighbourhoods might need spaces of public interaction more than other parts of the city. As Savelkoul et al. (2017) show, interaction between social groups can lead to more peaceful coexistence. Therefore spaces for interaction might be needed in these areas.

Fig. 118 and Fig. 119 show areas with high percentages of inhabitants with a migratory background from within or outside the EU. In Fig. 118 areas are marked where neighbourhoods with very different ethnic compositions are located right next to each other. These areas might be interesting for further research because these edges might limit interaction between social groups.

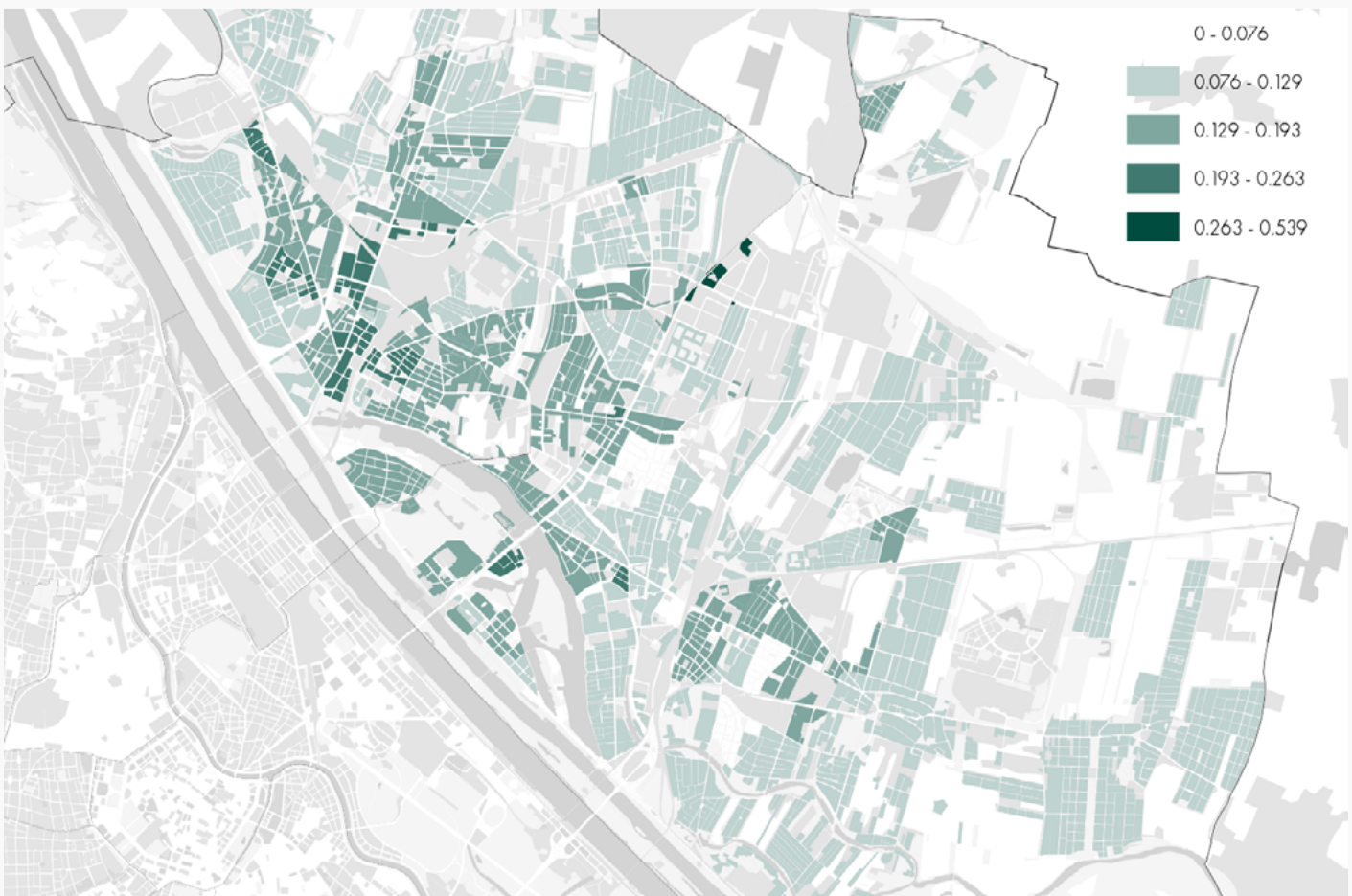


Fig. 118: Share of inhabitants with a migratory background from within the EU (0=0%, 1=100%) (Data source: Statistik Austria, edited by City of Vienna, Municipal department 23)

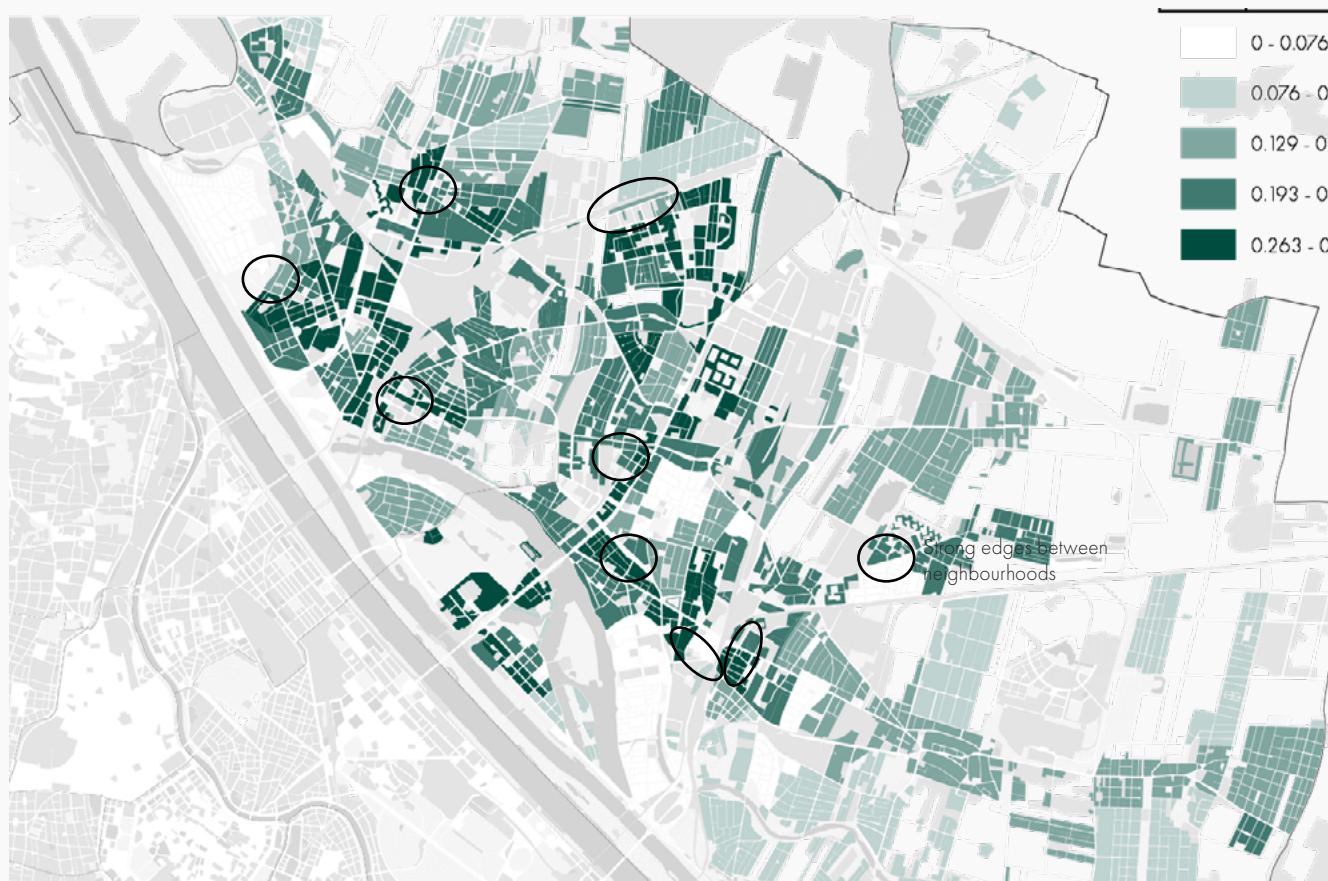


Fig. 119: Share of inhabitants with a non-EU migratory background (Data source: Statistik Austria, edited by City of Vienna, Municipal department 23)

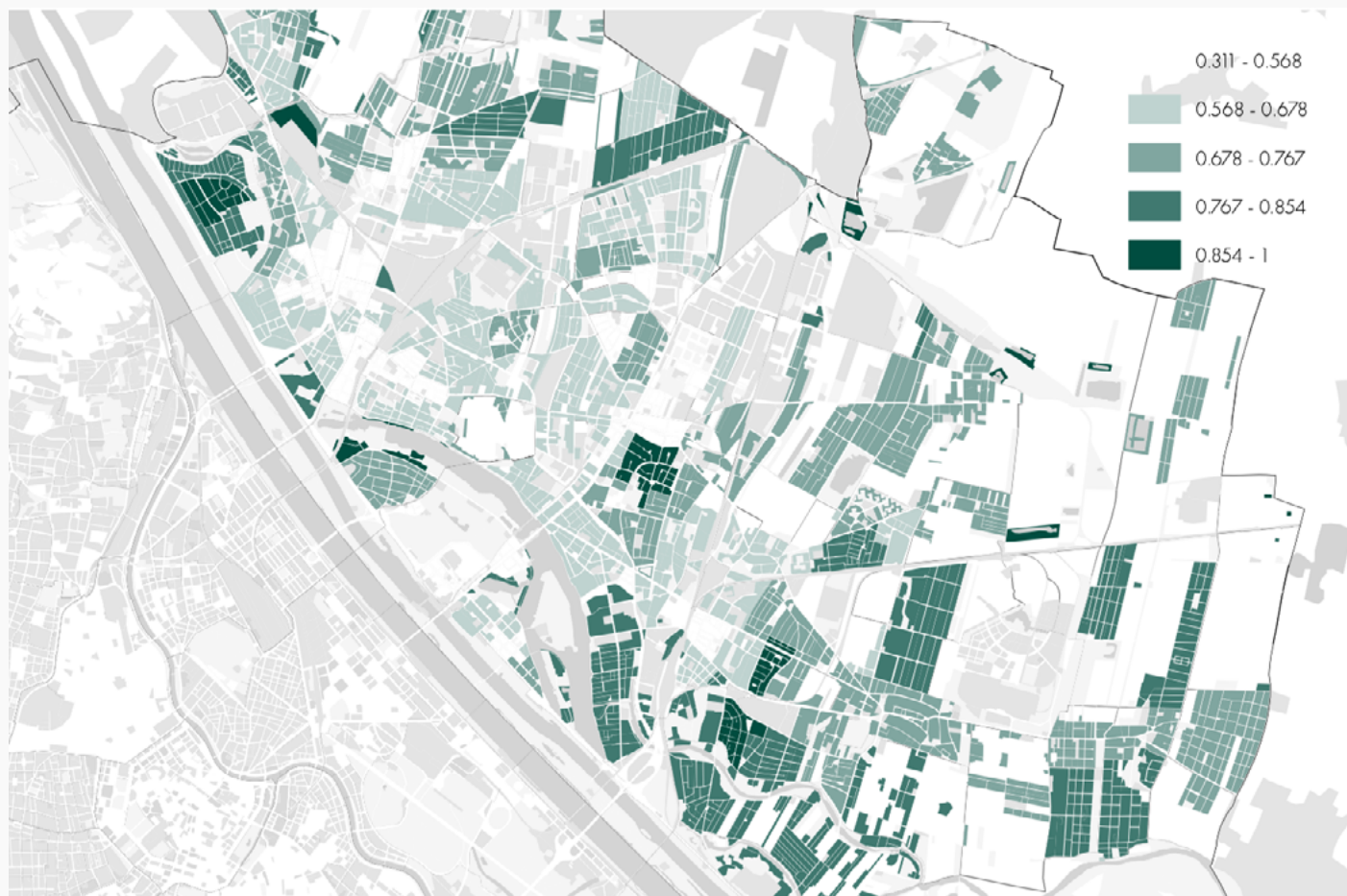


Fig. 120: Share of inhabitants with no migratory background or a background from within Austria (0=0%, 1=100%) (Data source: Statistik Austria, edited by City of Vienna, Municipal department 23)





Fig. 121: Change of share of inhabitants with a migratory background from non-EU countries between 2010 and 2020 in percent (0=0%, 1=100%)(Data source: Statistik Austria, edited by City of Vienna, Municipal department 23)

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Moreover, socially mixed neighbourhoods might need spaces of public interaction more than other

parts of the city. As Savelkoul et al. (2017) show, interaction between social groups can lead to more peaceful coexistence. Therefore spaces for interaction might be needed in these areas.

Fig. 118 and Fig. 119 show areas with high percentages of inhabitants with a migratory background from within or outside the EU. In Fig. 119 areas are marked where neighbourhoods with very different ethnic compositions are located right next to each other. These areas might be interesting for further research because these edges might limit interaction between social groups. Interventions in these areas might be promising to bring people together that otherwise would not interact.

In Fig. 121, those neighbourhoods are highlighted where the percentage of inhabitants with a non-EU



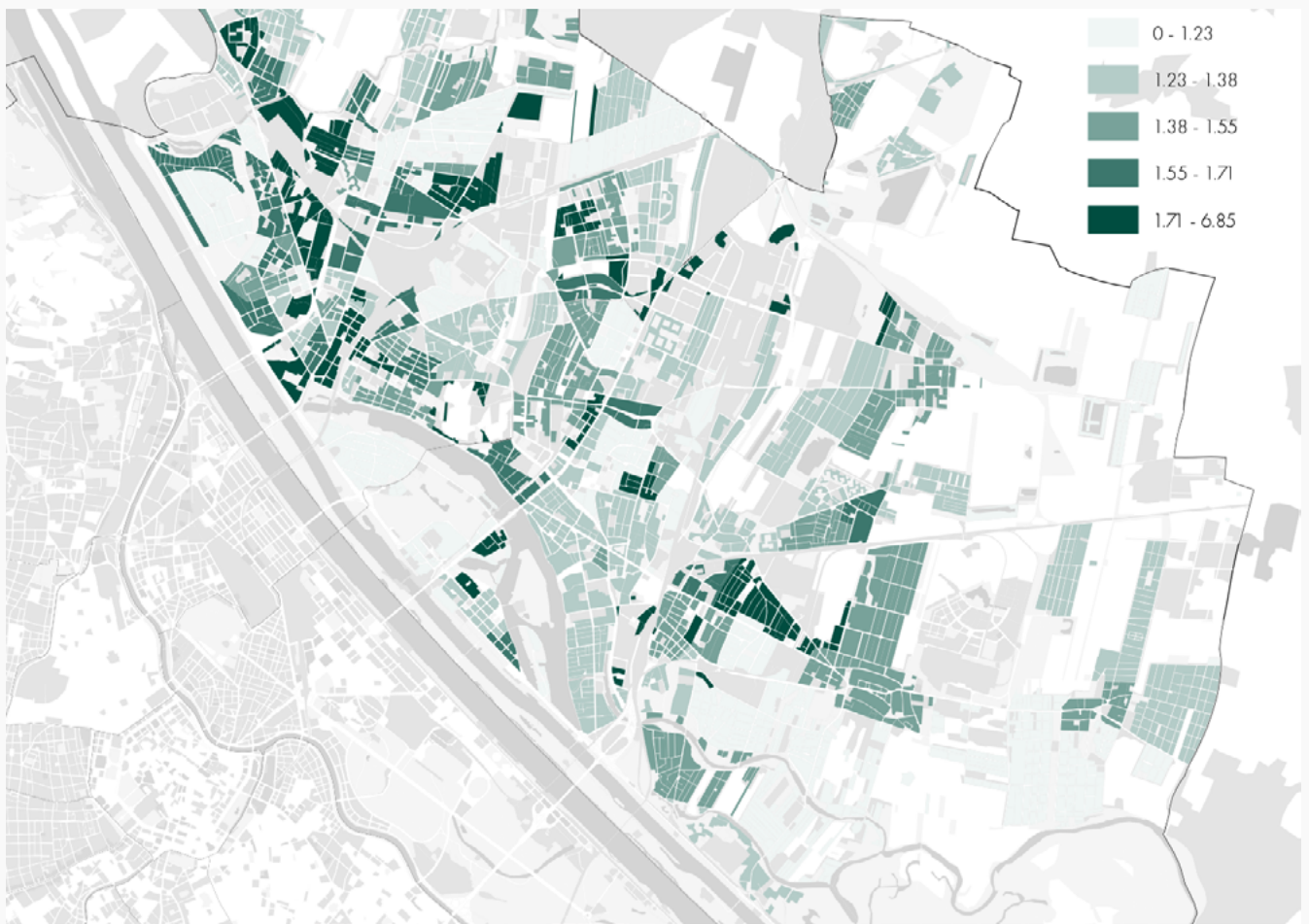


Fig. 122: Change of share of inhabitants with a migratory background from EU countries between 2010 and 2020 in percent (0=0%, 1=100%)(Data source: Statistik Austria, edited by City of Vienna, Municipal department 23)

migratory background has increased the most over the last ten years. They indicate areas where changes in the social structure might lead to higher conflict potentials or the increase of anti-migrant sentiments. These areas, however, might also have high potential for interventions that create or improve democratic public spaces. They are therefore interesting for further research.

## 9.2.2 EDUCATION LEVELS

Educational data is relevant for this project in two ways. First, it can show where inhabitants have a higher risk of social deprivation. Especially inhabitants with lower education have worse chances on the job market and have statistically lower incomes. This means that interventions in these areas need to be particularly sensible in order to avoid further exclusion of social groups, for instance through gentrification.

Secondly, inhabitants with lower education are more likely to compete with migrants on the job or housing market and generally have higher shares of anti-migrant attitudes and voting for right-wing parties (Spier, 2010; Savelkoul, 2016).

Consequently, education is an important factor when thinking about democratic public spaces. On the one hand, public spaces and social infrastructure could improve the chances of excluded social groups to participate in society and can even improve the possibilities to improve one's knowledge (e.g. through libraries). On the other hand, spaces of peaceful interaction might be even more important for inhabitants who compete with each other on job and housing markets.

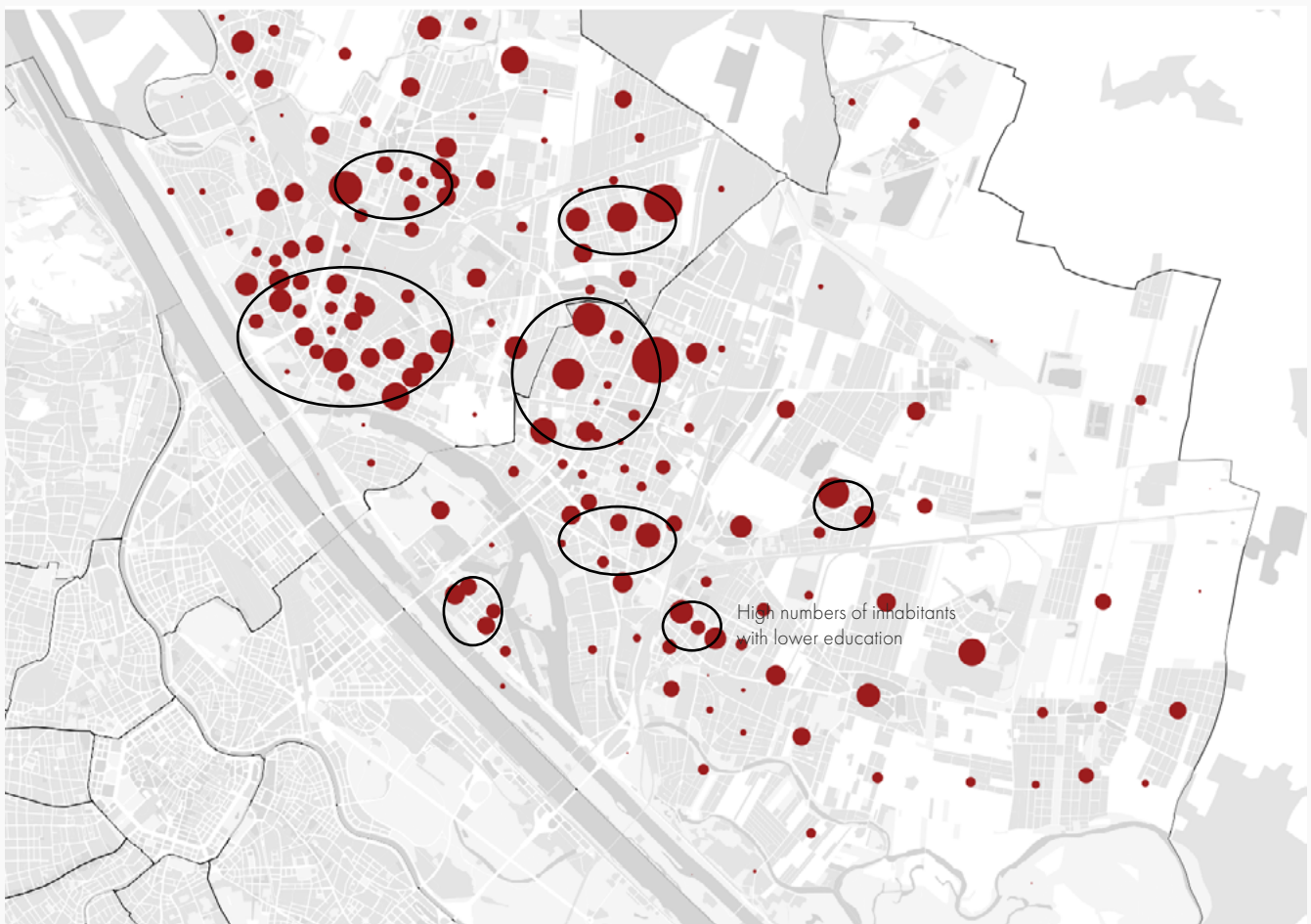


Fig. 123: Total number of inhabitants with no higher degree than compulsory school



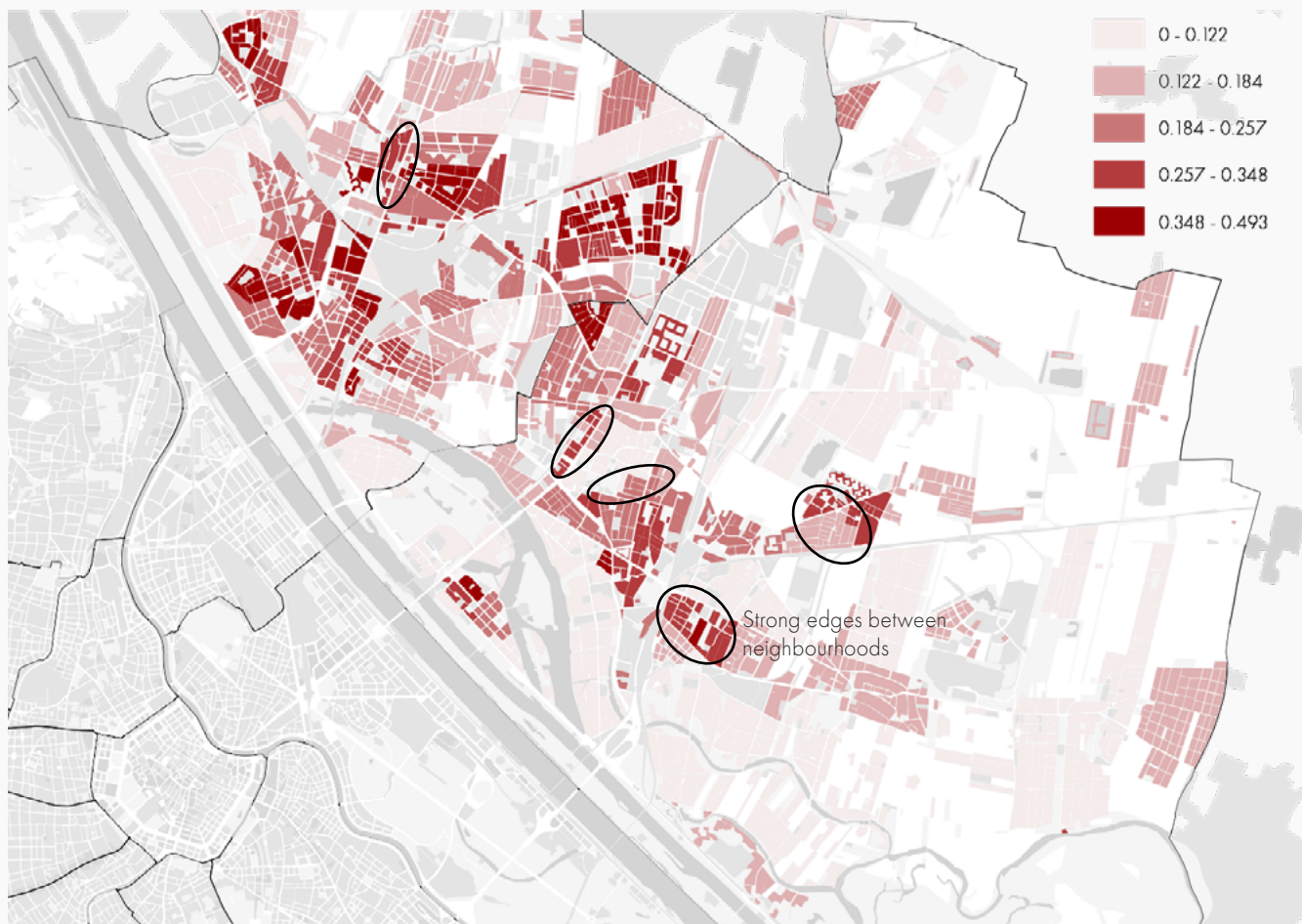


Fig. 124: Share of inhabitants with a compulsory school as the highest obtained degree (1.0=100%, 0.0=0%)

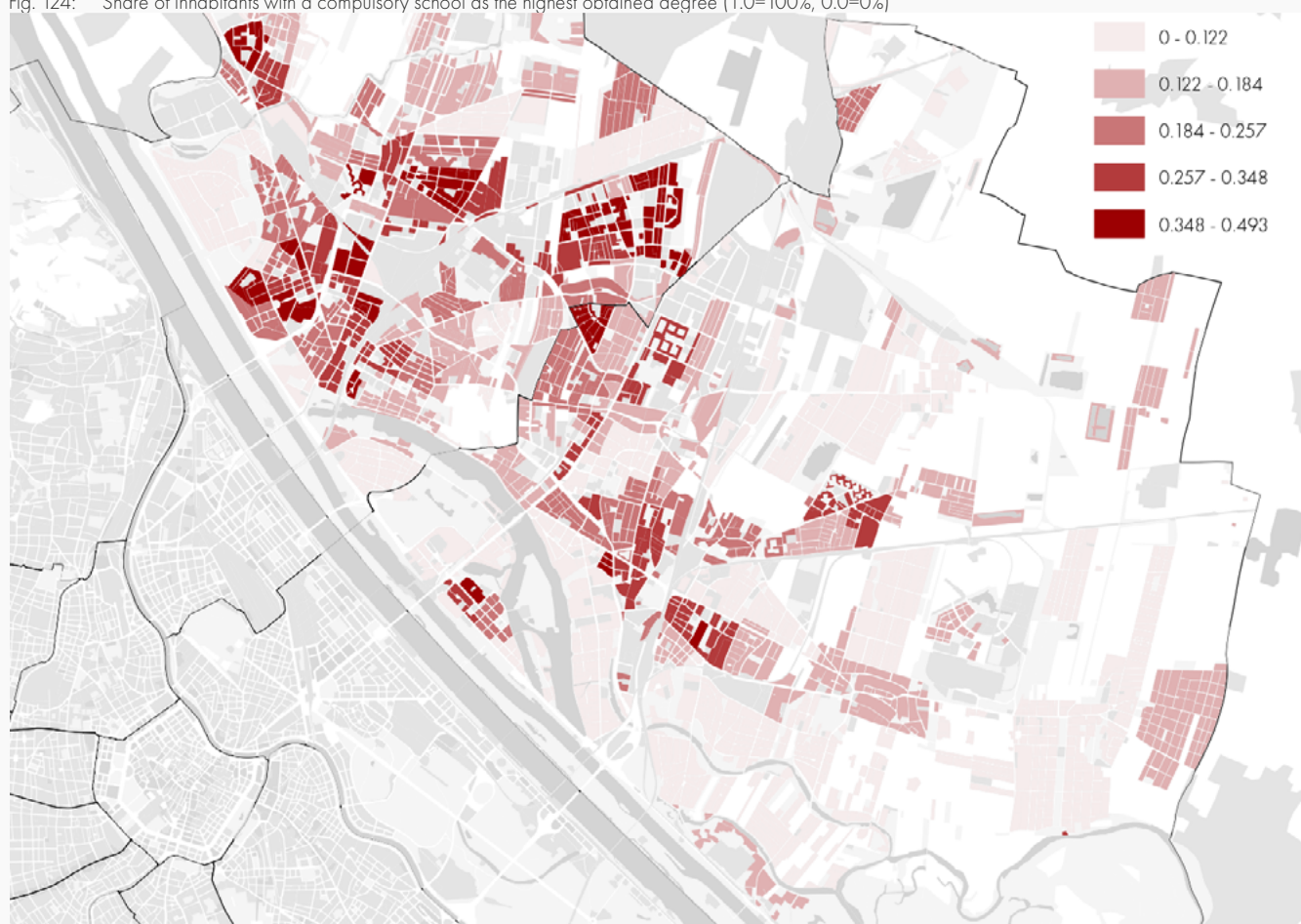


Fig. 125: Share of inhabitants with a school education higher than compulsory school as the highest obtained degree (1.0=100%, 0.0=0%)



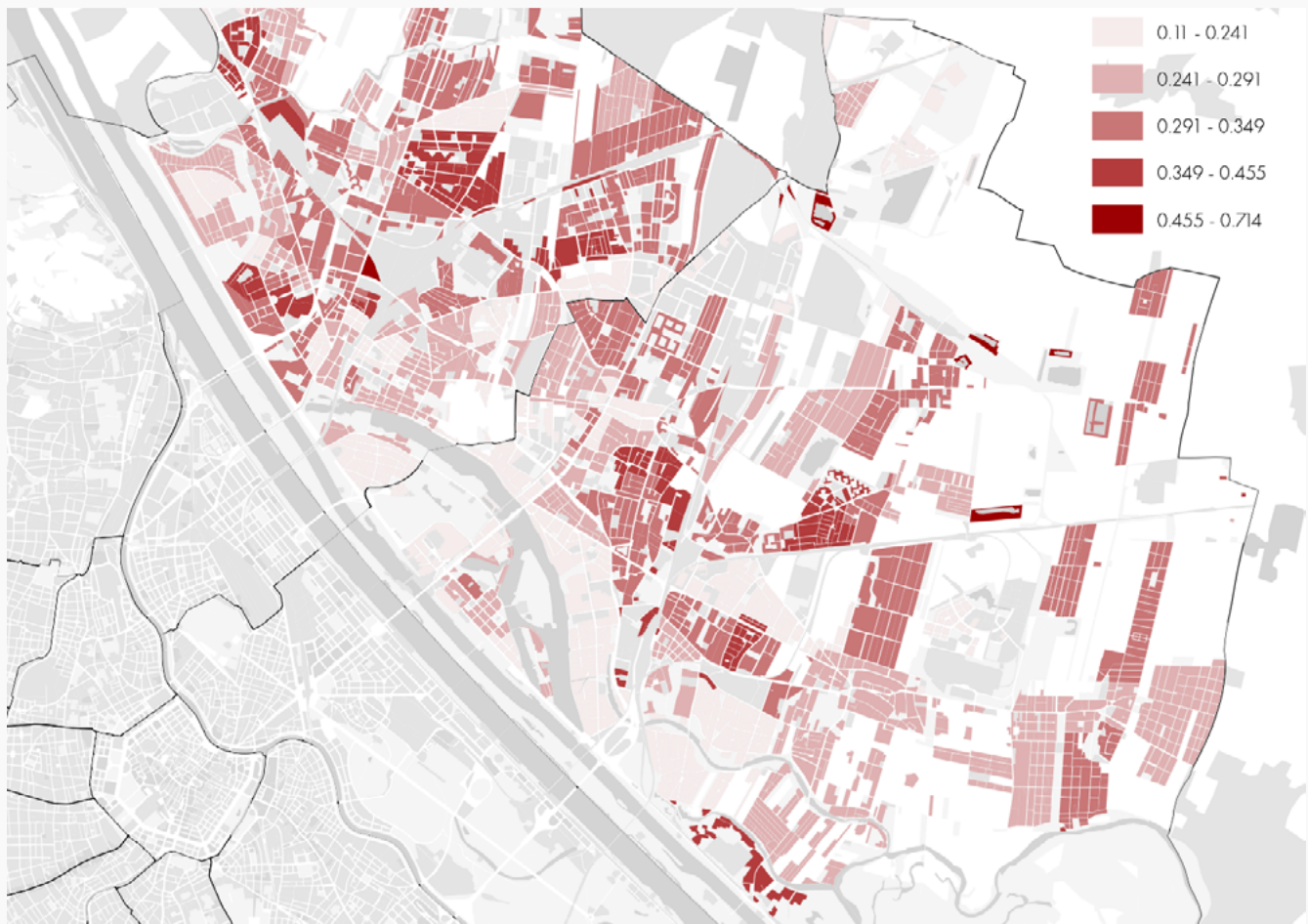


Fig. 127: Share of inhabitants with a professional apprenticeship as the highest obtained degree (1.0=100%, 0.0=0%)

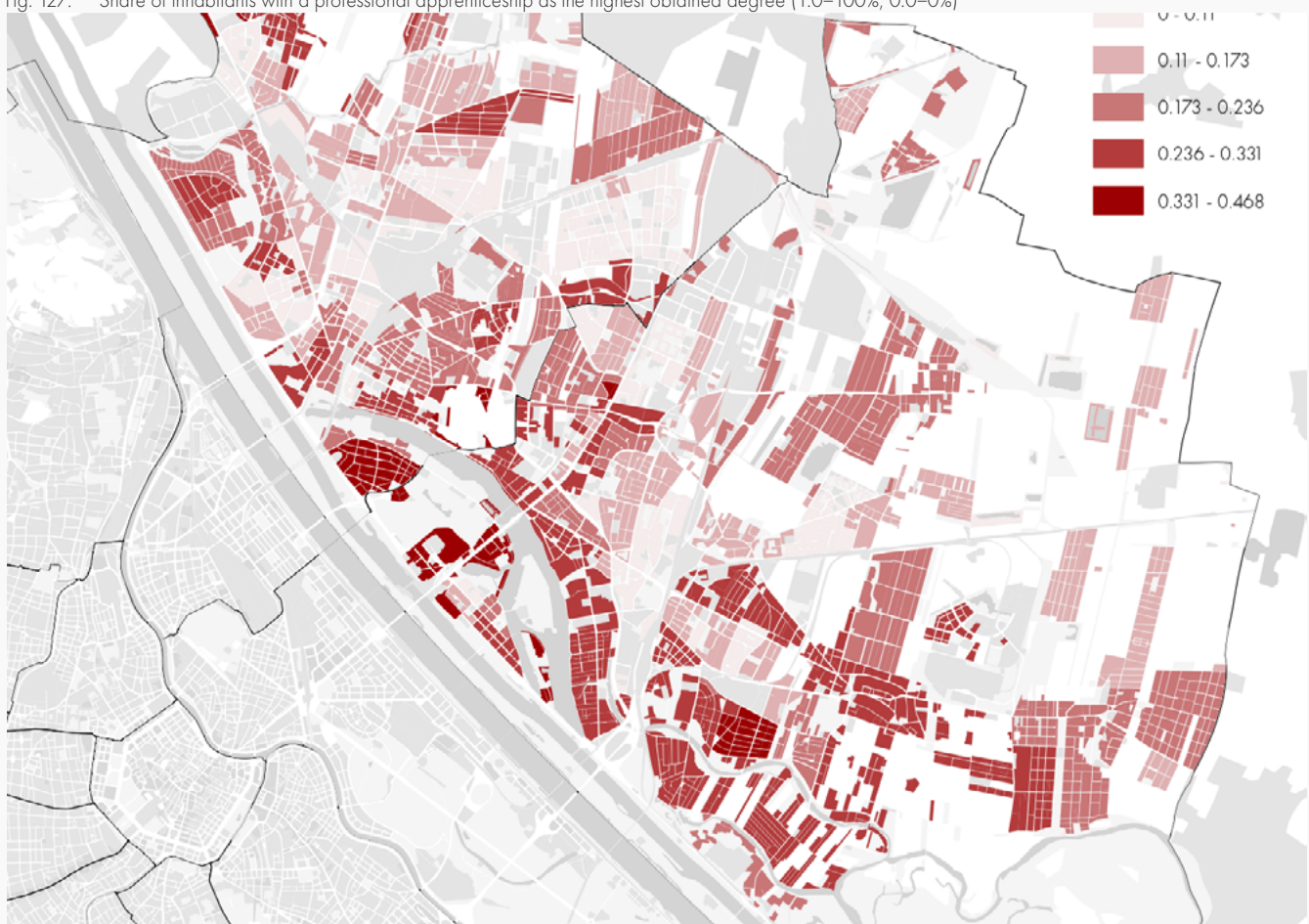


Fig. 126: Share of inhabitants with a university degree as the highest obtained degree (1.0=100%, 0.0=0%)



## 9.2.3 PRIVATE LIVING SPACE

The share of inhabitants with small private living spaces can be an indicator for socially disadvantaged groups, just as education.

Moreover, it highlights areas where people depend on public space, since very little private spaces are available for them.

Inhabitants with big flats or houses, on the other hand, might be less likely to interact with other social groups. For these areas it might be interesting to think about possibilities to integrate people into democratic public space who are not dependent on using it.

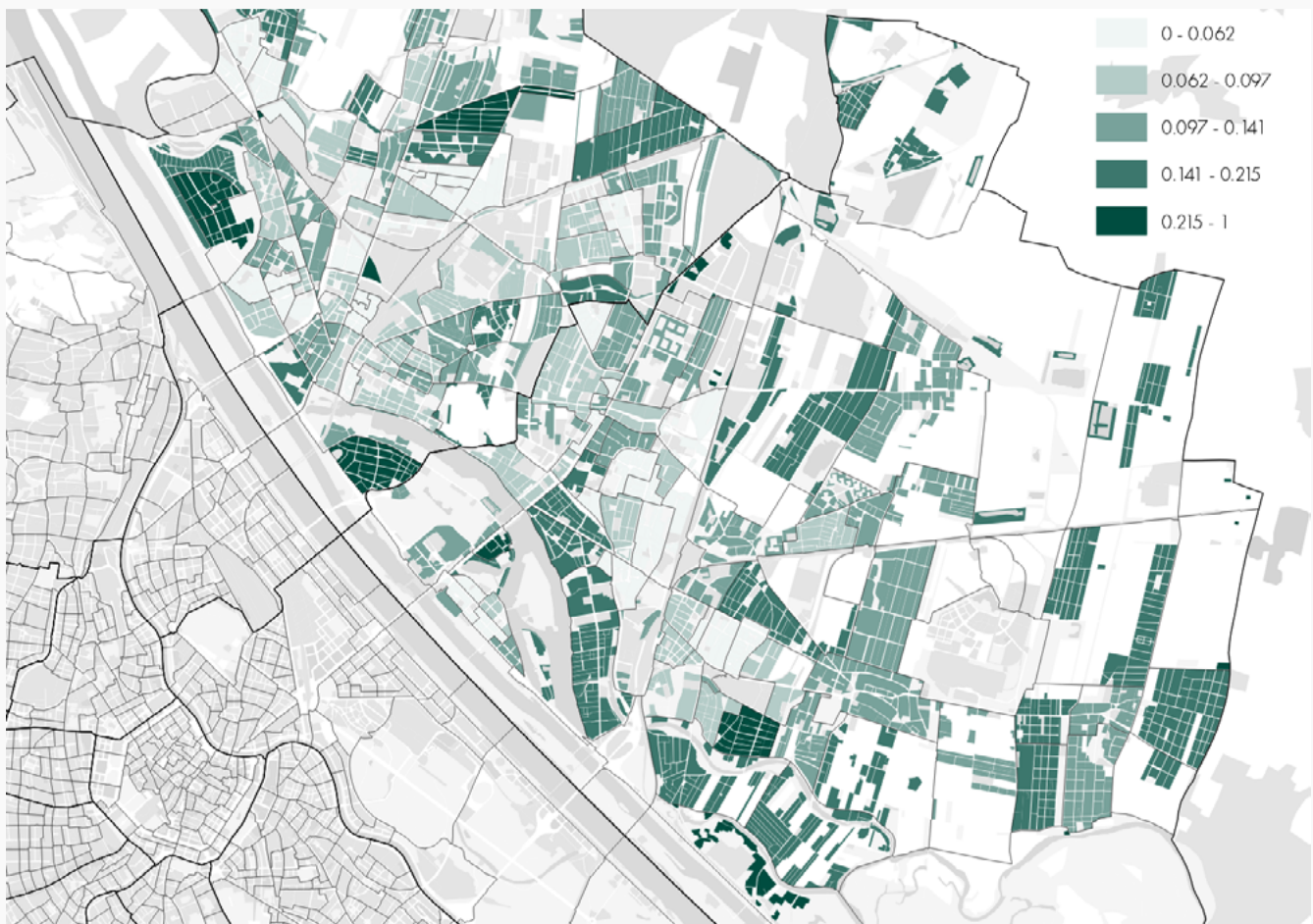


Fig. 128: Share of households with more than 80m² living space per person (Source: City of Vienna)  
208 Thesis project: Polarized Vienna

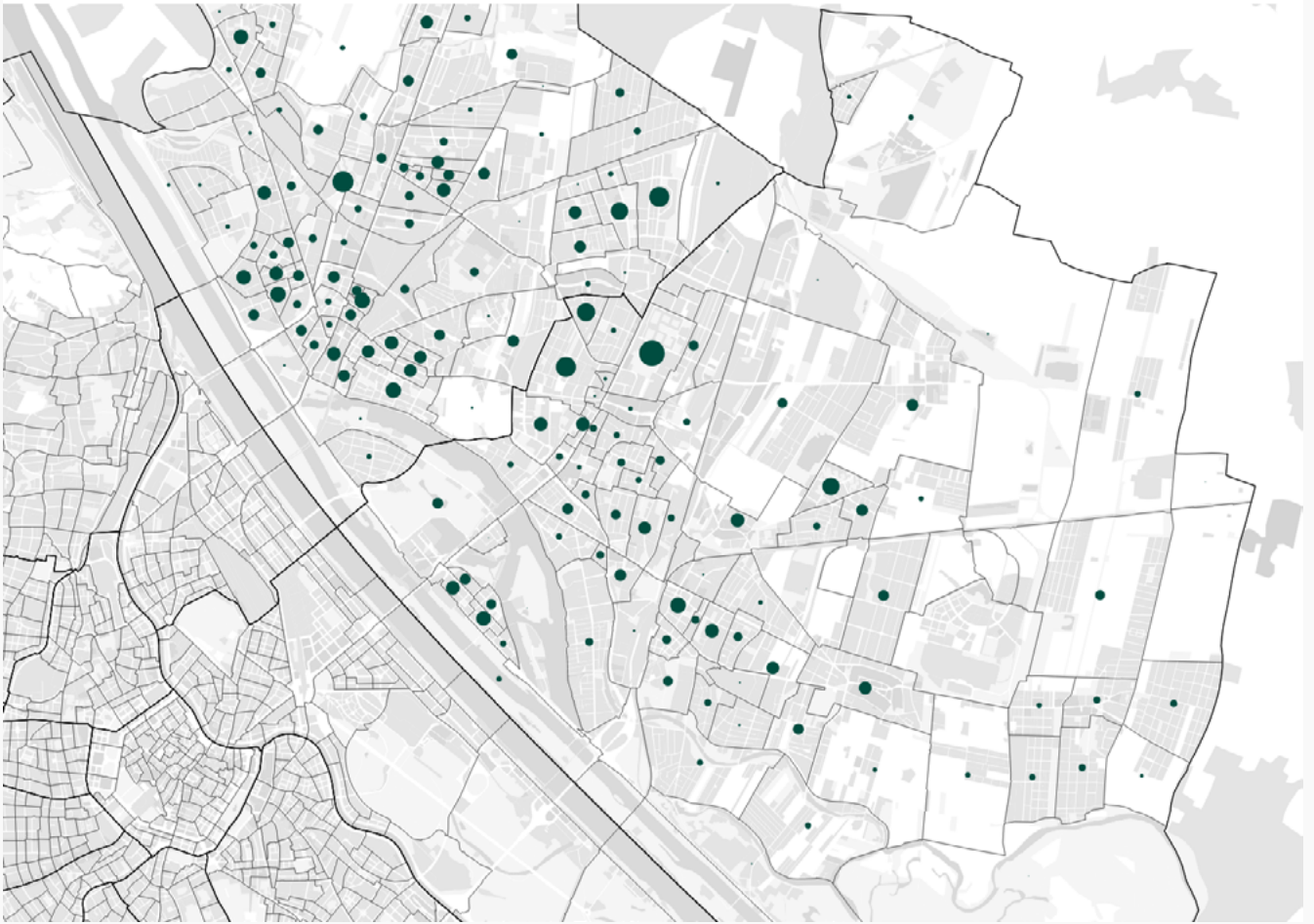


Fig. 130: Number of households with less than 20m² per person (by census district)



Fig. 129: Share of households with less than 20m² living space per person



## 9.2.4 LIBRARY ANALYSIS

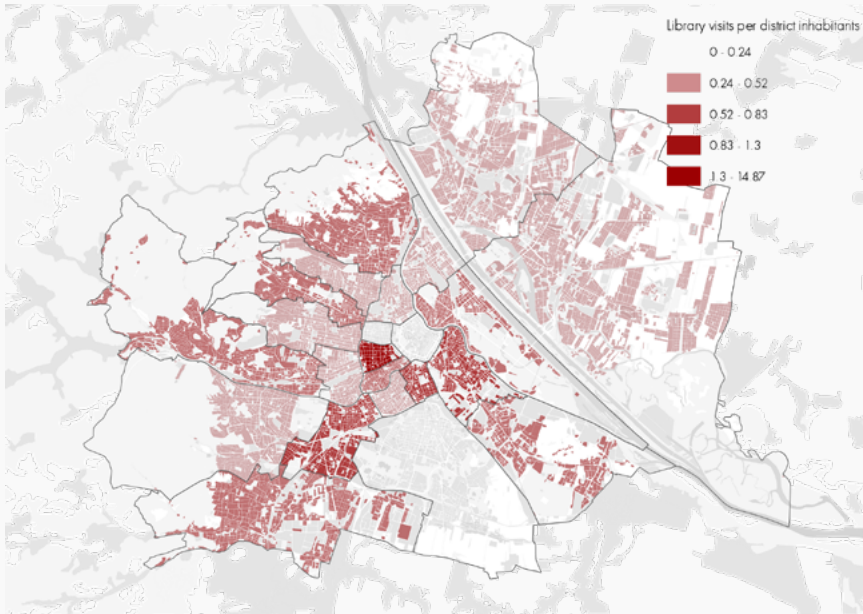


Fig. 131: Districts by library visits per inhabitant (by the author. Data sources: Büchereien Wien, 2020; City of Vienna, Municipal department 13, 2020)

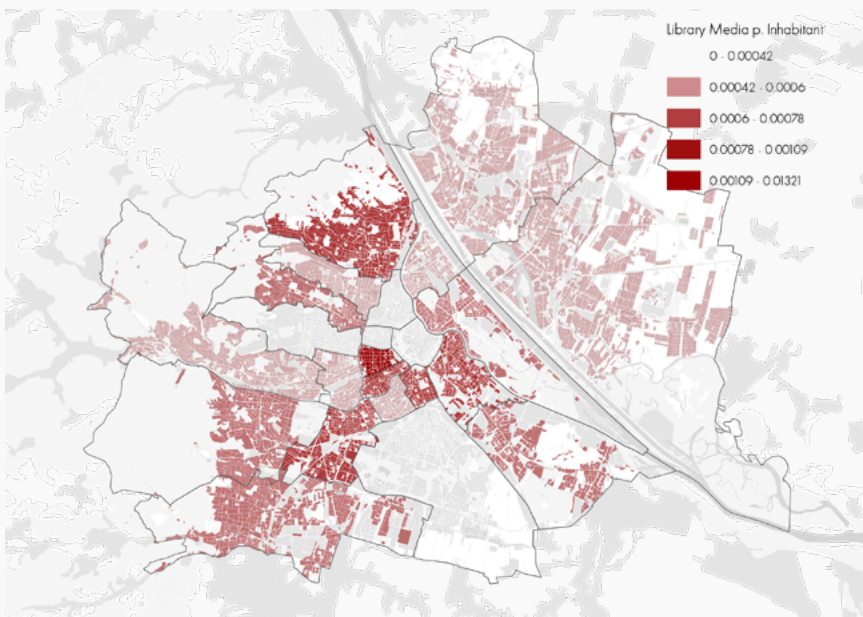


Fig. 132: Districts by library media per inhabitant (by the author. Data sources: Büchereien Wien, 2020; City of Vienna, Municipal department 13, 2020)



Fig. 133: Library Donaustadt (Source Google Street View)



Fig. 134: Library Erzherzog Karl Straße (Source Google Street View)

Libraries are important places of interaction for diverse and political polarized societies and can improve the lives of inhabitants, especially in socially disadvantaged areas (Klinenburg, 2018).

On these pages libraries and the access to them are analysed. It shows that, in contrast to inner-city areas, for large parts of Donaustadt and Floridsdorf no libraries are accessible by foot (Fig. 135).

However, most of the areas of potential conflict (see above) are close to a library. In these areas the attractiveness of the libraries for different social groups could be improved. As Fig. 131 shows, the number of library visits in relation to the inhabitants is relatively low although there are more libraries than in many other districts.

The low number of visits might be related to the equipment of the libraries, as both factors show a strong correlation (Fig. 132).



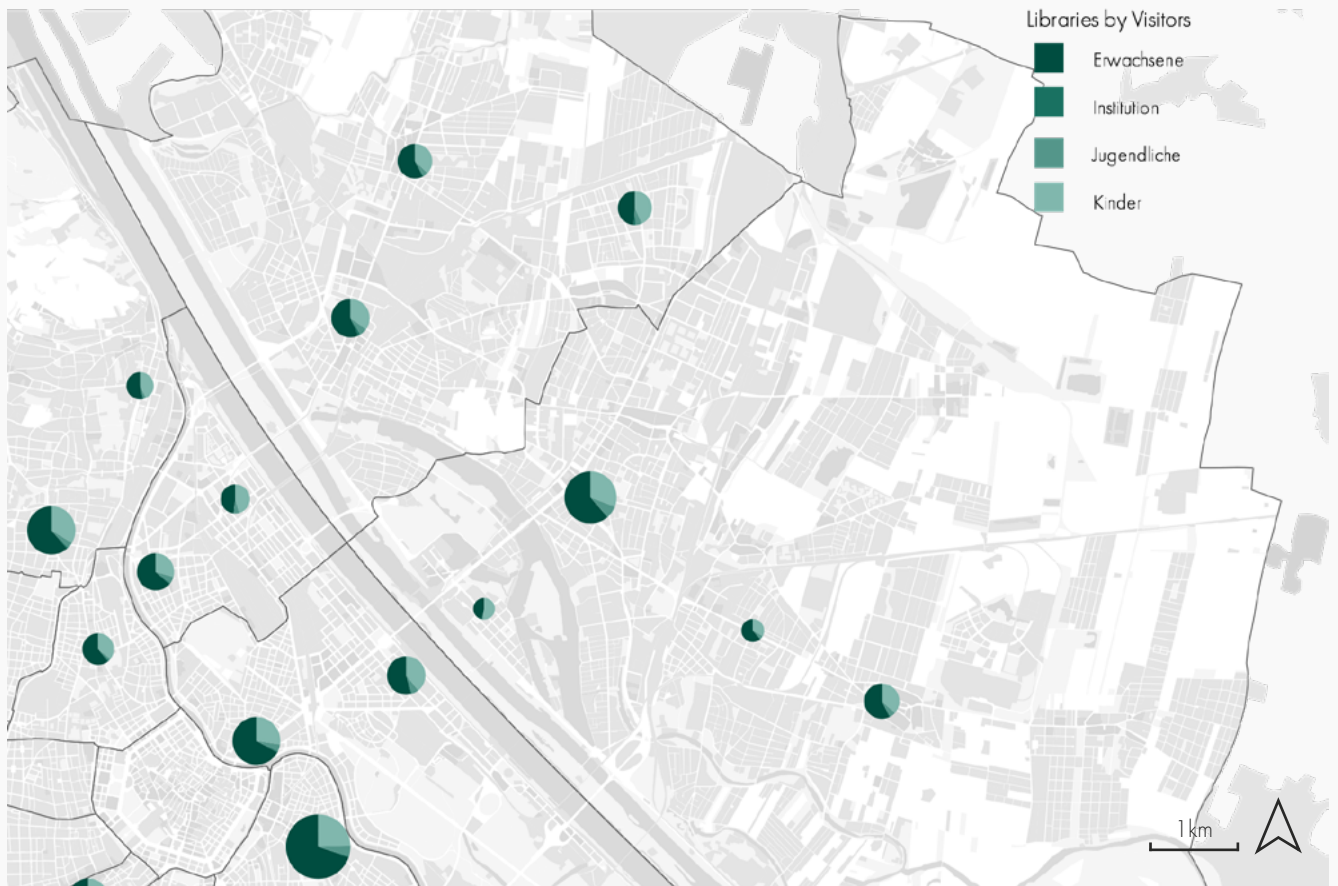


Fig. 136: Libraries by visitor group (the size of the diagrams represents the total number of visitors) (by the author. Data sources: Büchereien Wien, 2020; City of Vienna, Municipal department 13, 2020)

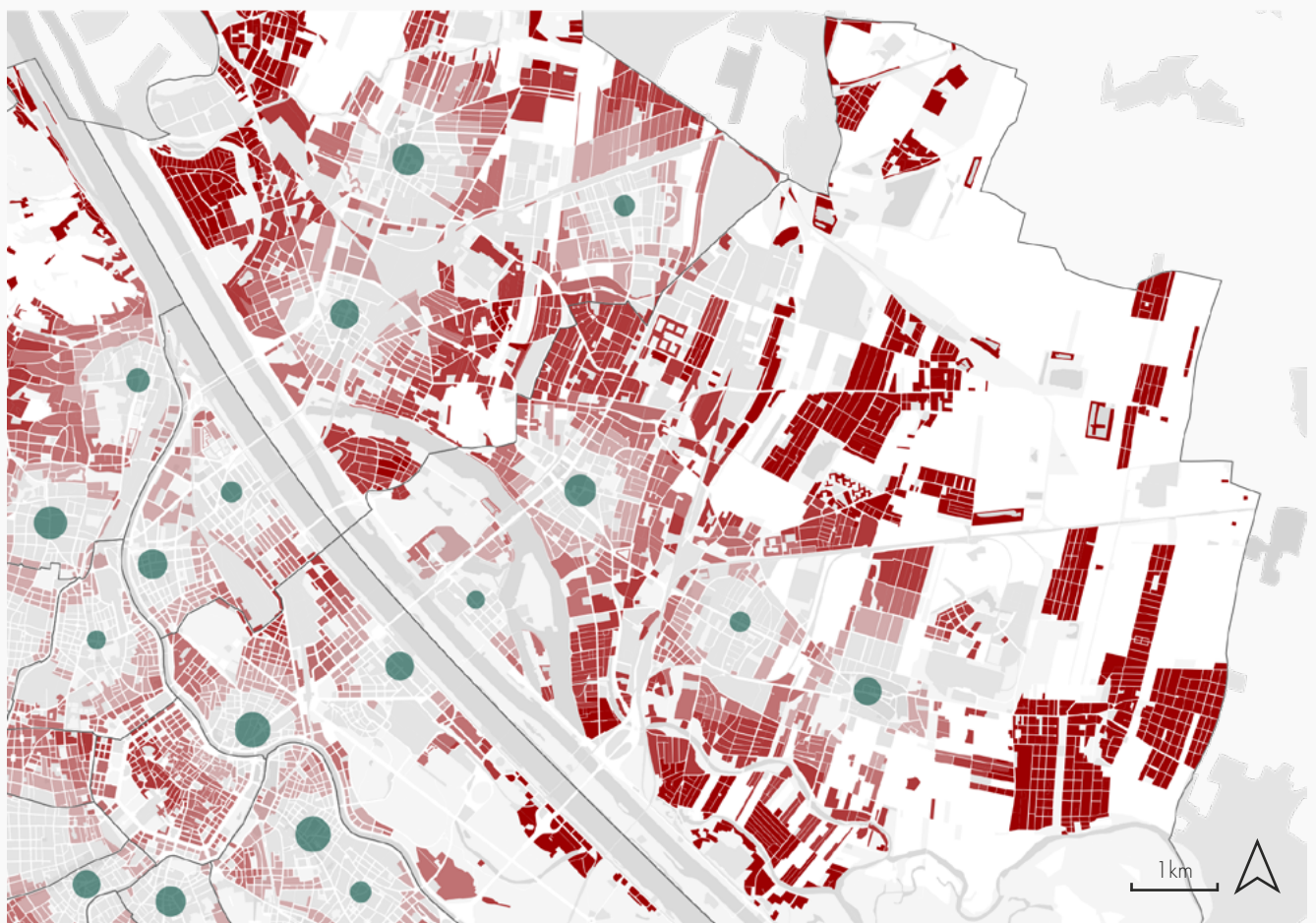


Fig. 135: Building blocks by distance to next library (the size of the bubbles represents the amount of library media available in each location) (by the author. Data sources: Büchereien Wien, 2020; City of Vienna, Municipal department 13, 2020)



# SPACE SYNTAX AS A DESIGN BASE

The space syntax analysis can help to understand where actions could be taken and where the street network needs to be adjusted.

The angular choice analysis shows which streets are used by pedestrians on the way to any other street. The 3km is a very far distance for pedestrians but it shows which streets are well integrated when the whole network is considered.

The map shows that the Wagramerstraße, Donaustadtstraße, and the Erzherzog-Karl-Straße are very important connections. But also smaller streets like the Kagraner Platz or the Siebenbürgerstraße have high relevance for the network. Hence, these streets are the backbone of long-distance pedestrian routes through the district. Along these streets activities should be located that need a lot of by-passer frequency.

The angular integration map, however, shows areas that have potential for functions that attract users. In this map, local neighbourhood centres become visible. But also the area around Donau Zentrum becomes visible as the main centre of the district. This suggests that for other areas, like the Wagramer Straße, to become sub-centres a better integration into the street network would be helpful.

## Space Syntax analysis - The structure of centrality

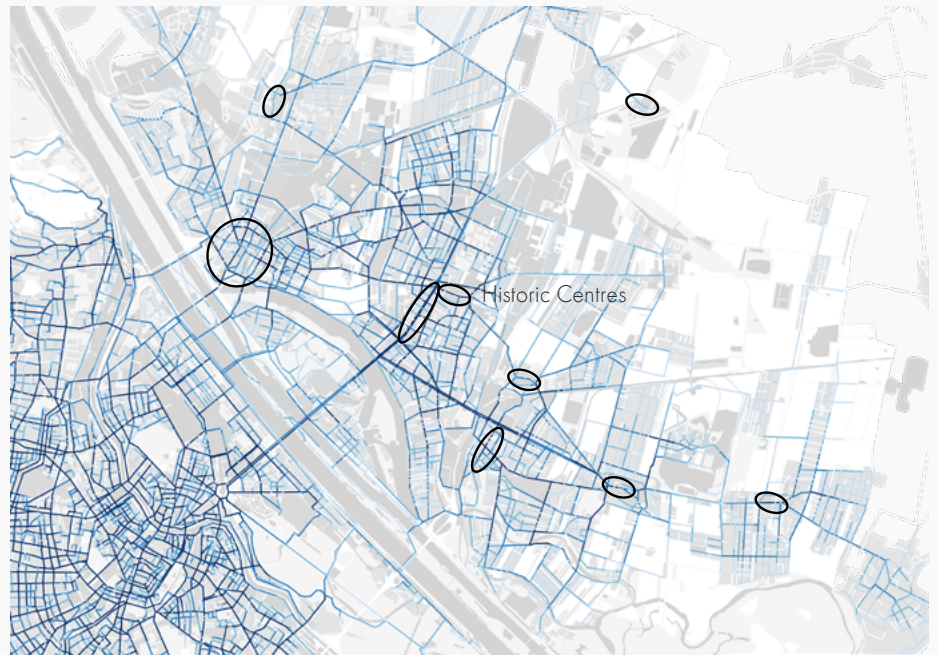


Fig. 137: Space Syntax analysis angular choice 3km radius (by the author.)

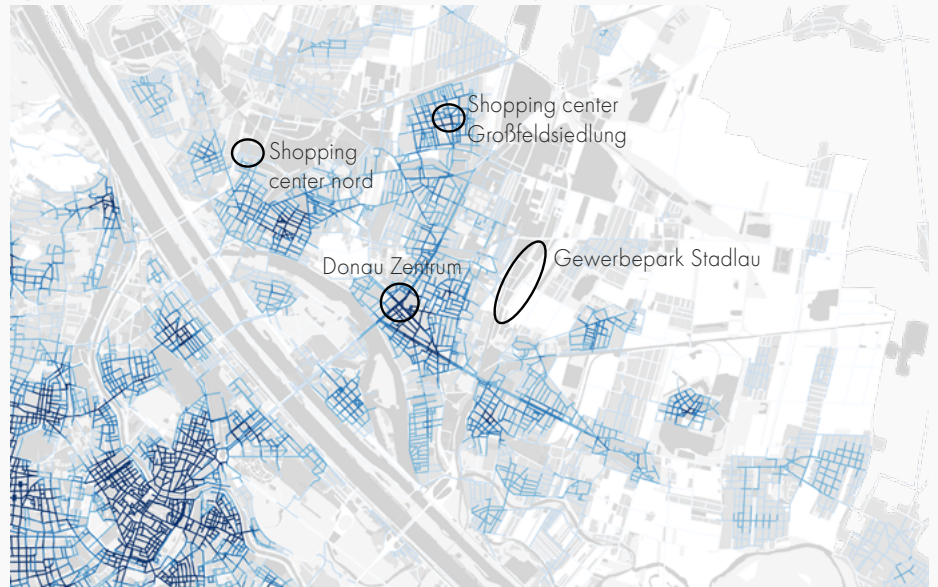


Fig. 138: Space Syntax analysis angular integration 800m radius (by the author.)

## Comparison case Yppenplatz

The Yppenplatz is a square in the 16th district of Vienna is well known for its diverse functions and as a meeting place for the district.

Therefore, it is used for a case study. The blue tones represent the integration of areas, with the darkest blue being the highest integration level. This method assumes that each function depends on a certain degree of integration.

It becomes visible that cafés are mostly located in the less integrated part of the square while the market stands are oriented along the main axis. The functional diversity has been reinterpreted for the Kagranner Platz.

## Design task for Kagranner Platz

As a translation of the patterns of use on Yppenplatz, the new market could be located at the well integrated areas around the corners of the square. In the less integrated areas, cafés with terraces could be located. Since some restaurants and shops need higher levels of frequency, they could be located at the ends of the square in the most integrated areas.

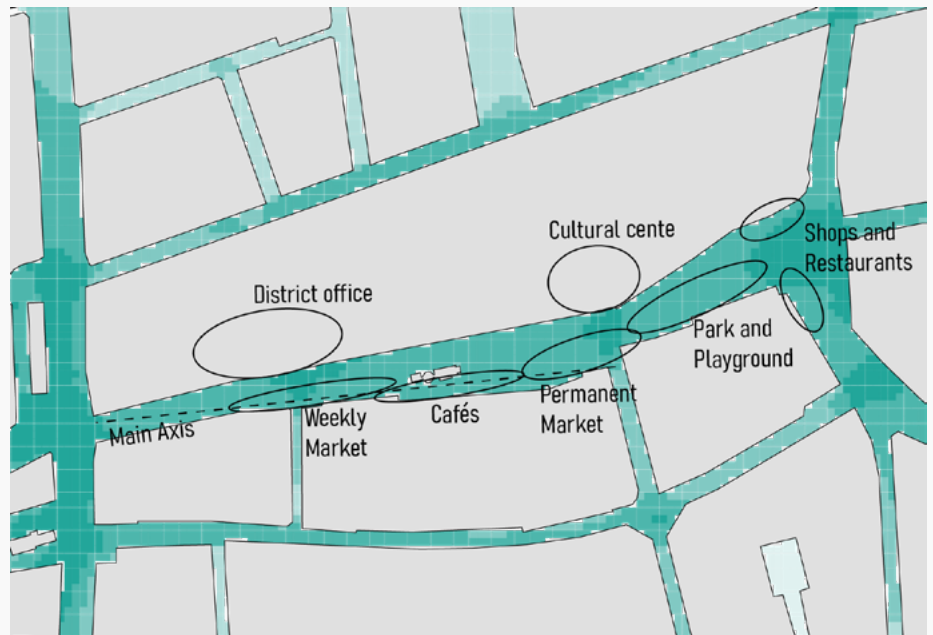


Fig. 139: Space Syntax analysis shortest-path angle and potential functions



Fig. 140: Comparison case Yppenplatz



# POTENTIAL ZONING REGULATIONS

## REDENSIFICATION SIEBENBÜRGERSTRASSE

