delft university of technology
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spacelab
urban transformations

mentors
alexander g. vollebregt
stephen read
henco c. bekkering
luisa m. calabrese

student
adalberto pacheco
student number b1226290

2CITIES1SPACE
caracas’ multiple urbanity disorder
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GLOSARY

barrios venezuelan word for slum neighborhoods.

boulevard pedestrian strip in the area of sabana grande and introduced when the metro was built, represented in color green. (see p. 39, 43)

buhoneros venezuelan word for a type of informal street vendor that sells diversity kind of products and services (no food).

capture axis north-south oriented zones, represented in color blue. (see p. 67, 71, 90)

casanova, av. avenue part of the main axis, located south from the boulevard. (see p. 51)

centro, el downtown caracas.

flow axis north-south oriented zones, represented in color yellow. (see p. 67, 70, 88)

gran avenida, la avenue that formally occupied the boulevard area, before the introduction of the metro. (see p. 38, 51, 53)

highway the principal national highway running east-west through the city and the physically southern boundary of study area. (see p. 20, 21, 38)

intermediate scale continues network which facilitates longer distance movement across the city, spacelab definition. (see p. 60)

libertador, av. double deck avenue and northern physical boundary of study area. (see p. 38)

main axis east-west circulation and developing corridor, represented in color red. (see p. 36, 51, 57, 86)

my mother representative of the car users. (see p. 05, 111)

perpendicular in this work the term refers to all directions running north-south and perpendicular to the main axis of the city. (see p. 57)

plaza venezuela round-about west of the boulevard, currently by-passed by the main axis and re-activated with proposal. (see p. 53)

river caracas main river “guaire” and physical southern boundary of study area (see p. 36)

sabana grande zone where the study area is located and often identified as the boulevard. (see p. 43)

solano, av. avenue being proposed as part of the main axis, located north from the boulevard. (see p. 51)
FOREWORD
My mom (60) doesn’t go to downtown Caracas (El Centro) as often as she used to anymore. She says that nowadays there isn’t enough space, that she can’t walk on the sidewalks; too many people are selling all kinds of stuff everywhere. She no longer feels comfortable in several areas of the city. As a result she opts “to drive” to other places in the city where she could run her errands (go to the bank, shop for food or house stuff etc.) without so much hassle. As much as I believe that she may be exaggerating a bit too much, at the end I must agree that she actually has a point. Many of the streets and urban areas of downtown Caracas have been witnessing an increase of informal activities, very different from those probably envisioned by the urban planners and designers.

Consequently, a significant number of 'Caraqueños' no longer feel welcome in some particular areas of the city. And I’m not talking about isolated or disconnected neighborhoods like those that one may end up while looking for an address and getting lost. Quite the opposite, rather well accessible and primary locations, that not too long ago where still considered of grand potential for the whole city. Today, these public urban areas appear to be packed with only one type of activity (buhoneros) and users; And if you are not in need for a cheap copy of the latest DVD movie or a karaoke CD, there won’t be much need to go to these places.

While using a central area of Caracas (Sabana Grande) my research work also looks into some significant changes of the city, that may have contributed with these often called “unexpected” informal activities in the area. Finally I propose possible alternatives that could make use of the potentials this area still has, but lately are being overlooked.

I believe we should not give up to these kind of areas and simply assume that they already became zones “out of formal control”. In my opinion this would only contribute to the growing and negative contrast of the polarized reality of Caracas. An area like Sabana Grande has enough capacity and deserves to be enjoyed by diverse type of publics, such as locals, visitors, buhoneros and my mother.

Fausto Maso in: “Sabana Grande era una fiesta”, DEBATE 2004
THEORETICAL RESEARCH
theoretical research
Cities have always been the ultimate meeting point: a place where different activities and people of diverse backgrounds gather, a place where different socio-economical, believes and cultural conditions have found a way to co-exists in one urban space, a place to see and to be seen.

It would appear that this condition (meeting point) where everything goes (trade, business, living, enjoying, study etc.) as a result of this rich diverse mixture, has been a characteristic of our cities right from the beginning, specially back to when the physical size of the old cities were very much limited to the restriction of mobility.

In the past urban space was, as we could imagine not yet defined or specialized per functions or activities. We could visualize their squares and streets as multifunctional spaces (meeting points) where the vital and normal urban activity daily took place. (trade, business, living, enjoying etc.)

“...The Greek agora, the coffeehouse of early modern Paris and London, the Italian piazza, the town square...” “...the physical space often idealized by architects...”

So, why is it that what we used to find more or less normal is now sometimes regarded as uncomfortable?
The contemporary urban space where we now live, have experienced significant transformations throughout the years. The physical size, for instance, of the contemporary cities differs a lot from those of the past. Important developments on technology and mobility (commuting) allow us to imagine and built urban areas that are very much different from those compact ones of the past. Modern cities soon showed that physical proximity and multifunctional spaces were no longer a must, whenever thinking of planning a cities.

Mobility, transportation (public or private) for better or for worse, has been giving us the possibility to carry on with our lives (live, work, study, shop, enjoy, etc.) in locations that a few years ago could have been simply considered as too remote or inaccessible.

The different spatial allocation of functions (zoning) as; live, work and leisure (CIAM) have been suggesting a lack of need for one multifunctional space. Although cities as a whole continued being the location for social diversity and multifunctional activities, now the physical conditions became different. Cities might be the locations where everything still goes, but nowadays not necessarily in the same place.

…CIAM architects responded with a method that would subjugate chaos with a rational, analytical approach to town planning that divided the city into four autonomous sectors or ‘functions’ of dwelling, work, recreation and transportation…

One clear and quite obvious example of this separation or specialization of different functions, can be seen in the clear spatial segregation of many residential neighborhoods inside and around many urban areas. It seems very common and even normal nowadays to imagine pure mono-functional residential districts, in some cases very well connected (or not) to the rest of the city functions.

But this spatial segregation experienced by the cities, only represents one of the many transformation processes in the urban space. This separation or specialization of different functions is not limited to a specific activity (private) or function (living). Public functions, and the space that they traditionally occupied in the cities, have also experienced in the past and present, significant changes.

“…many uses have emigrated, in a process of specialisation, from the public to the private sphere: the arts went to galleries, museums, theatres, sports to sport fields, gyms, car racing courses, information and politics to private tv and radio sets; retail stores are concentrating in indoor malls, funerals to the cemeteries…”
All these transformation processes experienced in the urban areas, obtain a special
dimension when adding the socio-economic and cultural condition of any given
place. In the case of cities where high levels of poverty exist, as a result of lack of
proper governance and economical problems, this spatial and social segregation
becomes even more evident. The social inequality of many developing countries adds
an additional and very important ingredient (catalyst) to this debate.

The city of Caracas, (5 millions) with its current high levels of physical and socio-
economical polarization, could even often give the impression of talking about two
different cities sharing one single urban space.

...Venezuela (population 25 millions) with the region’s most urbanized society is no
exception of this problem. 85% of the Venezuelan population lives in poverty and most
of the poor live in the so-called “barrios” 6. These slums are a very big component
of Venezuelan urban areas, especially in its capital Caracas, (population 4.5 millions)
where they sprawl over the hillsides around the city... 7
We refer to public space to all accessible space, without giving importance to the type of person, nor any kind of activity discrimination, these are not necessarily explicitly determined, with the condition that they (activities) would follow use regulations by public authority.

In other words, in these spaces we are being sold the idea that we could access, do and stay as we will, as long as we behave in accordance with public authority.

...The public sphere is depicted as a “space of democracy” that all citizens have the right to inhabit. In this arena, social and economic inequalities are temporarily put aside in the interest of determining a common good...

Why is it that the city of Caracas is now witnessing an increase of informal activities in many of its public spaces, why many people like my mother feels uneasy about the way that a significant sector of the city use this urban space, why is it that people do not respect “public authority”?
Inequality as we know it in our society has left big parts of its people with no other option than to opt for informal ways of addressing their own problems. Governments or formal institutions in many of the countries of the developing world have been unable to convey with many of the demands of the different type of people, specially the less privileged. This situation has been directly reflected in the increase of informal sectors closely related to our urban field. Informality has become part of Caracas’ daily urban live; we could see it in the housing sector, economical sector and even in the political one.

When it comes to informal appropriation of urban space, the barrios are by far the most physically visible aspect of Caracas informality. Double standards and a contradiction between the formal rules (almost imaginary) and the practice of informality (reality) has been the background of this spatial debate.

On the one hand we have the State who promises the illusion of being capable to solve the problem by means of official laws, while a simple look at the statistic numbers could completely prove them otherwise. And on the other hand, the state itself is recognizing their incapacity to deal with the problem.

This type of land appropriation in the outskirts of the urban space, which has been already taking place in Caracas’ hillsides for over fifty years, represents a big part of “the other” city. A part although quite noticeable, often invisible in the city maps and not printed on the tourist postcards. But the fact of the matter is that these two cites (rich and poor) are actually there, most likely experiencing and using Caracas in different ways but yet sharing the same urban space, public that is.
But everyone does not do the same, at least when it comes to urban and public space appropriation in the city of Caracas. The assumption that two very different sectors of society would respect each other’s individuality on the simple bases of having to share the same urban space has proved to be insufficient. The high levels of socio-economical polarization have confronted the city towards each other promoting respect only for the interest of their own socio-economical sector rather than the whole.

“…The discourse that dominates urban life in Caracas today emerges from a distinctly negative change: extreme fundamentalism and an absence to tolerance of the “other”…”

“…Such absolutism is the city’s greatest enemy, for it makes normal life virtually impossible, precludes any meaningful dialogue and leaves violence as the only avenue of interaction…”

How could we expect the “other” side of the city to behave or use the urban space in the same way if from start the conditions (individual needs) are not even close for all different sectors?

Before I jump into any conclusion about who is right or wrong on this spatial debate, I would like to explore the reasoning behind this “informal” appropriation of public space.

Now, how do they actually do it? Is the notion of public space so powerful or flexible that it could make two very different sectors of the city, with very different individual needs, and think about this place in a collective manner? Is it possible for both sectors of society to understand that we could belong to this place, but it doesn’t belong to us? Is informality indeed with their street vendors, (buhoneros) appropriating streets, sidewalks and squares, simply not respecting these collective rules of public space? Or is it a way of expressing that they are not included?

The minute we step out of our house (or racks) into the city, we understand that our rules of behavior should be in accordance with a collective conduct (public authority). We sort of put our individual thinking aside and start to share the urban space with other people that we don’t even know. But it doesn’t matter, as long as everybody does the same. We kind of assume that this diverse mixture of people in the city is more or less working out.

Individualism needs can exist in a community where individuals respect other individuals.
The way that each of these socio-economical sectors experienced and makes use of the urban space is directly influenced by their own interpretation of what they “believe” are their own rights over the urban space. In principal the law should take care of any discrepancy or difference of opinion between two or more different “believes”, as we previously mentioned, everyone should have the same right over urban public space as long as they behave in accordance with public authority.

But the connection between “what is” and ‘what it should be’ is often fuzzy, especially when talking about socio-economical inequality and lack of proper and clear governance. Here once again, the contradictions between what the official government says and what actually takes place is worth to mention.

According to the Venezuelan Constitution, Article 87 “Everyone has the right to have a job and to work…” (Venezuelan Constitution 1999), but more than 50% of the economic active population of Venezuelans work in the informal sector.

Although the types of informal activities that currently take place in Caracas are very diverse: From economical to housing and from transportation to even political developments. Urban public space may represents only the physical location where a part of these activities occur, but the fact that people are making use in their own way of what they consider their (public) space, seems to me as an interesting process: the polarized social-economical context of the city and the debate over urban spaces.

To what extend is the “public” space (streets and squares) demanding back through informal activities what contemporary cities took away from them? (Or failed to include them) (Meeting point of people and functions) Why is it that “now” we often call this illegal? If cities do create their own space, are cities like Caracas with big levels of informality and therefore accelerating this “self creation” process, representing a model for many of the “poor” city of the future?

It is true that many of the socio-economical problems present in Caracas and described in this paper are primarily linked to economical failures rather than urbanistic ones? But we must admit that the mechanisms currently used by the people (rich and poor) to address their own problem, reflect the increasing gap between official problem solvers (planners and policy makers) and everyday reality. For this particular reason I find it important to not underestimate the natural developments that a city like Caracas has to offer to this debate.

The functional transformations of “public urban space” experienced by the cities throughout the years, in many cases from the outside to the inside or from the public to the private or semi-private spheres, have resulted in many ongoing spatial developments; re-creating or containing in a more “efficient” and often artificial fashion many of our daily activities.

Shopping malls, airports, museums, new “creative” neighborhoods, etc could be seen as one of the many sides of this current development, and naturally that even cities like Caracas, with dramatic values of socio-economical inequality have also not escaped from these “global” progresses.

But what happened to those urban spaces that did not transform, or at least did not receive a “well defined” and controlled city function? How do these socio-economical sectors, share, experience and make use of them? I restrict my discussion to those “residual” spaces, left over by this public-private transformation and now being in between what appears to be “2cities” with very different interests but one space in common.
Everyday Urbanism, John Chase, Margaret Crawford, John Kaliski, The Monacelli Press

50 Years After CIAM/Contemporary Reflections, Annie Pedret


Photo: view of Caracas looking South-East, internet source: Google

Barrios, Spanish word used in Venezuela for Shanty towns


Spatial diagram showing a personal attempt to find a physical meeting point between the two sectors of Caracas.


Everyday Urbanism, John Chase, Margaret Crawford, John Kaliski, The Monacelli Press

It is estimated that up to 60% of Venezuela’s population of 26 million live in barrios, source: Informal City Caracas Case, Prestel 2005

Article 82 “Everyone has the right to a proper home…” (Venezuelan Constitution 1999)

Buhoneros in Caracas’ boulevard Sabana Grande, internet source.

It is estimated that up to 60% of Venezuela’s population of 26 million live in barrios, source: Informal City Caracas Case, Prestel 2005

…housing experts estimate that Venezuela (26.7 million) needs a minimum of 135,000 new homes per year and that there is an accumulated deficit of nearly one million homes, internet source: Venezuelanalysis.com by Gregory Wilpert

2005 the government issued over 84,000 land titles to 126,000 families, benefiting about 630,000 barrio inhabitants, internet source: Venezuelanalysis.com by Gregory Wilpert

Photo: Caracas Cenital, Criteria Editorial C.A., Caracas 2005

approx. 50% of Caracas’ inhabitants live in barrios, source: Informal City Caracas Case, Prestel 2005

Word used in Venezuela to denominate street vendors

Downtown Caracas has approximately 35,000 informal vendors, internet source: http://www.vtv.gov.ve/Reportajes.php, Arrancó Plan de recuperación de Caracas

Personal diagram showing the relations between individualism and collectivism behavior when using public space

Informal City Caracas Case, edited by Alfredo Brillembourg, Kristín Feriéis, Hubert Klumper, Prestel 2005

According to the National Institute of Statistics, 53% of the economic active population of Venezuelan works in the informal sector. The informal sector is composed by not registered entities, entities with less than 5 employees and those professional that are auto-emploied, source: Unidad de Analisis y Politicas Publicas de la Economia Informal (UAPPEI) (personal translation)

Buhoneros in Caracas’ boulevard Sabana Grande, internet source.

Source: Unidad de Analisis y Politicas Publicas de la Economia Informal (UAPPEI) (personal translation)
The oil boom experienced by Venezuela during the 50’s provoked an early urbanization towards its main cities. As a result, Venezuela is today one of the most urbanized countries in the region with approx. 90% of its population living in city areas.
SOUTH AMERICA

VENEZUELA FOLLOWS A SIMILAR URBANIZATION PATTERN AS ITS NEIGHBORS COUNTRIES IN THE REGION, CLOSE TO THE COAST, ALONG THE MOUNTAINS AND AROUND THE AMAZON FOREST.

LOCATED AT THE NORTH END OF SOUTH AMERICA, VENEZUELA APPEARS TO BE THE TURNING HIGHEST POINT OF THE CONTINENT.
THE FAIRLY WELL DISTRIBUTION OF THE CITIES IS LOCATED IN AN EAST - WEST DIRECTION ALONG THE COAST.

POPULATION 26 MILLION
AREA 916,445 km²
DENSITY 27 INHABITANTS / km²
REGION

FIVE STATE CAPITOL CITIES
TWO IMPORTANT SEA PORTS
THE COUNTRY’S MAIN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
FUTURE PASSENGER RAILWAY
NATIONAL HIGHWAY

THE MOUNTAINS ALONG THE REGION STOP ANY URBAN DEVELOPMENT TOWARDS THE COAST.

THE PRINCIPAL NATIONAL HIGHWAY, RUNS LITERALLY THROUGH THE MIDDLE OF THE CITY
CARACAS

POPULATION 3.9 MILLION
5.9 MILLION (METROPOLITAN AREA)

AREA 800 km²

MOUNTAIN VALLEY 20 X 5 km

DISTANCE 10 km FROM THE COAST

HEIGHT 900 m ABOVE SEA LEVEL

DENSITY 5,000 INHABITANTS / km²
The polarized socio-economical reality in the city, the uneven allocation of the population (2/3 living in the west side), the unbalanced distribution of political powers, the contrasting difference between the formal city on the lower valley and the informal barrios on the hills, often give the impression of several cities in one.
CARACAS IS A CITY CURRENTLY DIVIDED BETWEEN TWO COUNTRY STATES
THE EAST SIDE OF THE CITY IS PART OF THE MIRANDA STATE, THE CAPITOL CITY OF THIS STATE (LOS TEQUES) IS LOCATED OUTSIDE CARACAS.
THE SMALL STATE ON THE WEST SIDE, IS CALLED THE FEDERAL DISTRICT WHICH IS THE CAPITOL STATE OF THE COUNTRY.
ALTHOUGH THE MUNICIPAL POWER ON THE WEST SIDE OFTEN ASSUMES THE AUTHORITY FIGURE OF THE WHOLE CITY, A MORE DECENTRALIZED DISTRIBUTION OF POWER HAVE OFTEN BEEN ASKED FOR BY THE OTHER FOUR MORE ECONOMICALLY PROGRESSIVE MUNICIPALITIES
EL CENTRO (DOWNTOWN CARACAS)
GOVERNMENT BUILDING
BARRIOS
2/3 OF THE POPULATION OF THE CITY
LATEST CITY CENTERS
SHOPPING MALL
RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS
THE STUDY AREA IS LOCATED BETWEEN THESE CONTRASTING CONDITIONS
Although the heart of the city was initially located in the west side of the city, the long valley of Caracas (20km) favored the linear urban development of the city, creating right from the beginning an important west-east developing corridor (main axis) that travels right through the middle of my study area.
site, historical relevance
1578 First Plan of Caracas
1573 the Law of Indies was created
1830

1578 First Plan of Caracas
1573 the Law of Indies was created

Sabana Grande 1920

Site, historical relevance
Sabana Grande 1945

Central Railway of Venezuela

RAILWAY

MAIN AXIS

RIVER

site, historical relevance
Sabana Grande (current situation), 2006

Slums in Sabana Grande, 2006

2006
slums
With the introduction of the Metro in 1983, for the very first time Caracas’ barrio dwellers became directly connected to the rest of the city. And while a large number of ‘Caraqueños’ still prefer the auto as their principal method of transportation (high income population is mostly car dependent), many areas in the city began to receive (via metro) significant amounts of pedestrian flows. (approx. 1 million per day)

The boulevard of Sabana Grande alone currently perceives around 150,000 pedestrians through its 3 metro stations. Buhoneros, which very well recognize the potential of these pedestrians flows, often locate themselves at the exits of metro exits, bus station, traffic jams and boulevards.
1980'S BIG AMBITIONS,
THE MAIN PUBLIC MALL OF THE CITY
BUT WHAT MIGHT BE INTENDED FOR THE WHOLE CITY IS CURRENTLY EXPERIENCING ONLY ONE TYPE OF AUDIENCE

EXCLUSION
It’s becoming a victim of its own success

Very dynamic ground street level makes vertical development difficult.
Unlike to the rest of the city, the introduction in Sabana Grande of a new underground circulation system (metro) became a substitution rather than an addition to the main axis.

In total, 1-1/2km of this two way road (Gran Avenida) were closed down to the car and opened up to pedestrians. The virtually uninterrupted car circulation that formally occupied the vertebral spine of the area, was now transformed and off-set towards the south (av. Casanova) to run on one west-east direction and zig-zagged towards the north (av. Solano) to run the other direction (east-west).

The result was a beautiful pedestrian accessability (via metro) but rather difficult east-west car travel, many of which opt now to by-pass the area in order to travel along the city.
CURRENT SITUATION

BEFORE METRO

CURRENT BY PASS

BEFORE METRO

CURRENT SITUATION
CURRENT SITUATION

BEFORE METRO

CURRENT BY PASS

OPTION 1

OPTION 2

PROPOSED OPTION 3

A
B
C
D

river
highway
metro/axis
avenue

by-pass 55
In a city like Caracas, where the physical characteristics of its long valley have logically favored a linear city flow (east - west), any important projects appear to be concentrated along the main axis.

In reality they occur when activated by perpendicular (intermediate scale) roads. For this reason, we often find the entrances of these important projects, located around the corner of the main axis.
CURRENT SITUATION (BY-PASS)  PROPOSED CONNECTION  ACTIVATION
IT TAKES TWO TO TANGO...

THE MAIN AXES OF THE CITY, AS IMPORTANT AS IT IS, DOES NOT DO ANYTHING UNTIL IT GETS ACTIVATED BY PERPENDICULAR MIDDLE SCALE ROADS.
CURRENT SITUATION (BY-PASS)  PROPOSED CONNECTION  ACTIVATION

THESE PERPENDICULAR MIDDLE SCALE AXIS ARE DIRECTLY CONNECTED TO BOTH "THE MAIN AXIS OF THE CITY" AND THE LOCAL NETWORK.
THE MAIN ENTRANCE FOR THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CITY DEVELOPMENTS.

CURRENT SITUATION (BY-PASS)

PROPOSED CONNECTION

ACTIVATION

THE PERPENDICULAR MIDDLE SCALE AXIS AND NOT THE MAIN AXIS BECOMES THE TRANSITION AREAS.

ENTRANCE

EXCHANGE AREAS
Once the current frequencies of these significant perpendicular roads are identified, one could talk about the current rhythm in the area and its effects.

Subsequently came the proposal of a new rhythm, by identifying those roads that by re-connection had the potential to become also significant perpendicular axis.
CURRENT RHYTHM

CURRENT SITUATION

PROPOSED CONNECTIONS

POTENTIAL
The introduction of a new perpendicular flow to the area have been divided into two different but inter-related zones.

The “flow axis” favors car circulation and facilitates big developments, similar to those already in the area. They take place along the introduction of new reconnected perpendicular roads.

The “capture axis” on the other hand, are areas that locate themselves in between these circulation zones (flow axis) and are responsible for the attraction and transition from car to pedestrian and vice versa, by providing different types of extra parking / multifunctional facilities for locals as well as visitors.
MOSTLY LOCAL ROADS CROSS AND STOP AT THE BOULEVARD LACK OF CLEAR HIERCHIZATION
FLOW AXIS

ACTIVATION OF AXIS AND
DISACTIVATION OF IN
BETWEEN AREAS
MAKING USE OF THE DISACTIVATED AREAS AS CAPTURE LOCATIONS

FLOW AXIS

CAPTURE AXIS

INSIDE PARKING

SREET PARKING

IN & OUT PARKING

flow & capture axis
The current overcrowded distribution of formal and informal activities along the same boulevard, could start to change with the introduction of the proposed perpendicular zones (flow and capture axis). The goal is to liberate the congested space by facilitating zones towards these axis in order to rearrange some existing activities in the boulevard.
PERPENDICULAR BARRIER

COMPLETE APPROPRIATION
FORMAL AND INFORMAL ACTIVITIES TRY TO FUNCTION ALONG THE SAME BOULVARD AXIS
LIBERATION AND RE-ARANGE THE CONGESTED AREA
THE BOULEVARD MEETS THE MAIN AXIS
... AND THE PARKING MEETS THE BOULEVARD
The de-construction of the system, has been used to understand the physical profile and nature of each of the designing parts. The allocation of different types of parking, the perpendicular extension of the boulevard towards the main axis as well as the arrangement and redistribution of functions, it is easier understood when analyzed piece by piece.
Not only the parts are different, but the way of combining creates different systems.
CURRENT SITUATION

MAIN AXIS

parts
CURRENT SITUATION

FLOW AXIS
CURRENT SITUATION

CAPTURE AXIS
But what happens when after analyzing the parts (piece by piece) we put them back together again? The kind of result that we obtain will be determined to the way that we arrange the system. Soon we start to notice that the intersection points are primary facilitation locations for development and interaction between the parts and its users.
WHEN RED CROSSES YELLOW
BIG THINGS HAPPEN

CLEAR HIERARCHY BETWEEN THE PARTS
CLEAR DOMINANCE OF BOULEVARD FLOW OVER ANY OTHER TYPE OF MOVEMENT
RECOGNITION

THE CAR AS ANOTHER ACTIVE ACTOR IN THE SYSTEM
WHEN RED CROSSES BLUE
TRANSFORMATION PROCESS BETWEEN ACTORS AND FUNCTIONS
MIDDLE SIZE PROJECTS
PARKING AREAS COMBINED W/ NEIGHBOURHOOD FUNCTIONS
CREATING ZONING LAW

40 TO 50% EXTRA PARKING FOR EXTERNAL USERS

MIX USE BUILDINGS
MID SIZE RESIDENTIAL / OFFICE
LOCAL AND CITY FUNCTIONS

INSIDE PARKING
TRANSITION AREAS
WHERE PASSENGERS BECOME PROTAGONIST
AND LOCALS START TO SHARE THE SPACE
RECOGNITION

PERPENDICULAR FLOW
The very visible dominance of buhonero activity along the virtually all open boulevard space, clearly shows how Sabana Grande is today mostly being visited by two specific type of users: buhoneros and buhonero shoppers.

But the central position of this area inevitably also perceives a number of different type of actors such as residents, local workers, casual visitors and by-passers. The behavior and occupation of the space of these users is less obvious than the dominant buhoneros.
BUHONERO A
USER 1

LOCATION
CLOSE TO PEDESTRIANS HUBS
METRO EXISTS
BUS STATION

ACTION
PASSIVE (SITS AND WAIT...)

TYPE OF USE
APPROPRIATION
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>BUHONERO B</strong></th>
<th>USER 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**LOCATION**
- BUS STATION
- TRAFFIC JAMS

**ACTION**
- SEMI-STATIC (FLOW CHASER)

**TYPE OF USE**
- APPROPRIATION
SHOPPER
USER 2

LOCATION
PUBLIC SPACE (BOULEVARD)
METRO/BUS USER

ACTION
ACTIVE

TYPE OF USE
VISITOR
FRECUENT SHOPPER
LOCAL WORKER
USER 3

LOCATION
GOES FROM A TO B (THROUGH THE BOULEVARD)
METRO/CAR USER

ACTION
ACTIVE

TYPE OF USER
OCCASIONAL SHOPPER
CAR USER
USER 4
(my mother)

LOCATION
BY PASS

ACTION
INACTIVE

TYPE OF USE
DIFFICULT ACCESSIBILITY
LOCATION
PERIMETERS AREAS OF BOULEVARD

ACTION
OBSERVER

TYPE OF USE
ONLY WHEN NECESSARY
TRY TO AVOID THE CROWD
Now that, I have introduced a system of perpendicular axis, boulevard extensions, multifunctional parking facilities and, ultimately, a more diverse and active public into the area, how can I now persuade the dominant users (buhoneros) to share the boulevard more evenly?

It is often perceived in Caracas that ‘buhoneros’ appropriate city space in an uncontrolled and unpredictable manner. No matter how much city authorities try to find alternative solutions or relocation areas, the buhoneros will always find their way back. But, back to where?

I believe the answer is quiet simple: back to wherever pedestrian flow is. Buhoneros occupie the space but without completely stopping pedestrian flow. In other words, they could make a place like Sabana Grande look like they are the only ones there, but people will always have to be walking.

What if instead of concentrating to address the outcome (buhoneros), I start to manipulate the source (people’s flows), in such a way that buhoneros will have to relocate themselves in order to provide a more even use of the boulevard?
ONCE OUT OF THE METRO, THE DOMINANT BUGHONERO ACTIVITIES APPEAR TO BE THE ONLY CHOICE OF THE BOULEVARD.
METRO EXITS (ABOVE THE SURFACE) COULD ALSO FUNCTION AS INTERMEDIATE ZONES AND PROVIDE AN ALTERNATIVE CHOICE BETWEEN THE METRO AND THE STREET ACTIVITIES.
THE APPROPRIATION OF THE SIDEWALKS BY THE BUHONEROS HAS TRANSFORMED THE MIDDLE SERVICE ROAD INTO THE PRINCIPAL PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION AREA.
BY INTERRUPTING THE CENTRAL CIRCULATION WITH FIXED URBAN FURNITURE, PEDESTRIANS WILL NOW HAVE TO WALK ON EITHER SIDE OF THE BOULEVARD. THE AIM IS TO INCREASE THE AMOUNT OF PEDESTRIAN FLOW AND LIMITING THE AREAS FOR BUHONERO ACTIVITY.
"...I believe we should not give up to these kind of areas and simply assume that they already became zones "out of formal control". In my opinion this would only contribute to the growing and negative contrast of the polarized reality of Caracas. An area like Sabana Grande has enough capacity and deserves to be enjoyed by diverse type of publics, such as locals, visitors, buhoneros and my mother..."