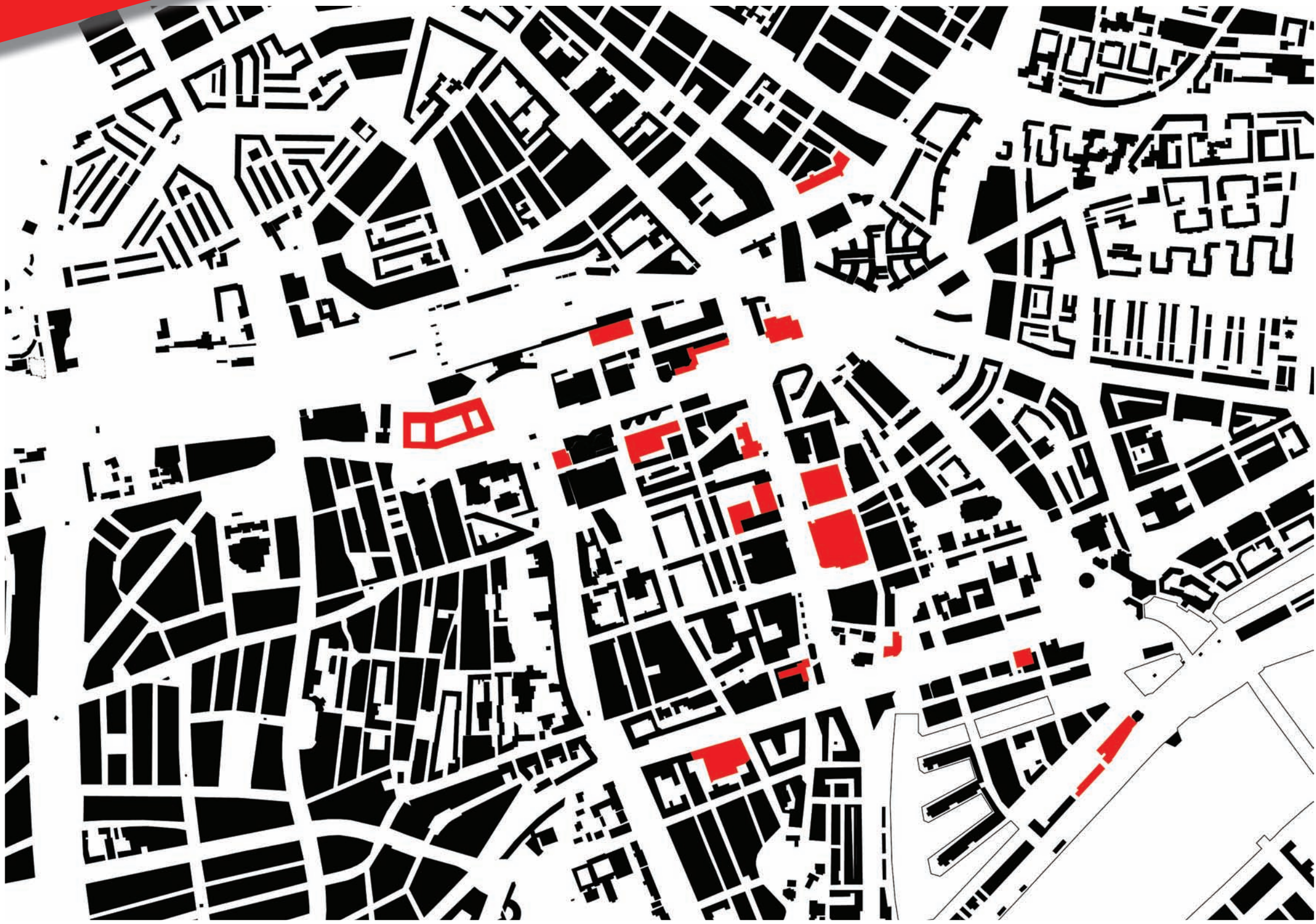




## CONFLICT



The current real estate situation in Rotterdam is not good. The city has to deal with a lot of vacancy. This vacancy is mostly manifested in the office-market. After the War Rotterdam rebuilt its center with huge amounts of offices. This makes the problem of vacant office buildings highly tangible, more so than in other cities. In 2011 the city center had a vacancy of around 330.000 sq meters.

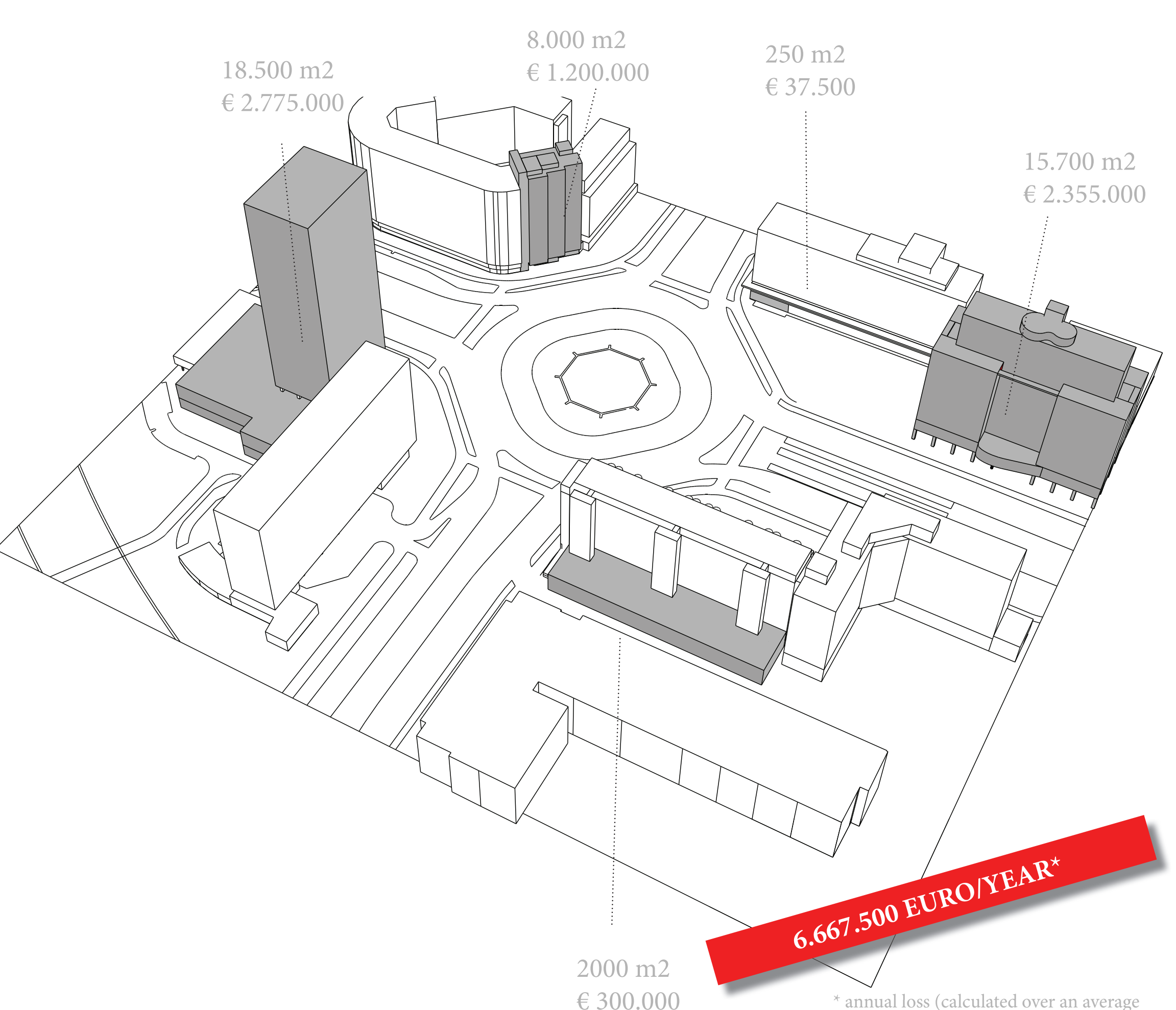
Due to the economical crisis and new ways of working, less space is. But that is not the only reason for the empty floors. Some of the bigger offices tend to move frequently within the city of Rotterdam, keeping the investment and development machine running. This is the dynamic that is responsible for creating the largest proportion of vacancy. For every new high-end office building in the center, an old one is left behind, empty and unrentable.



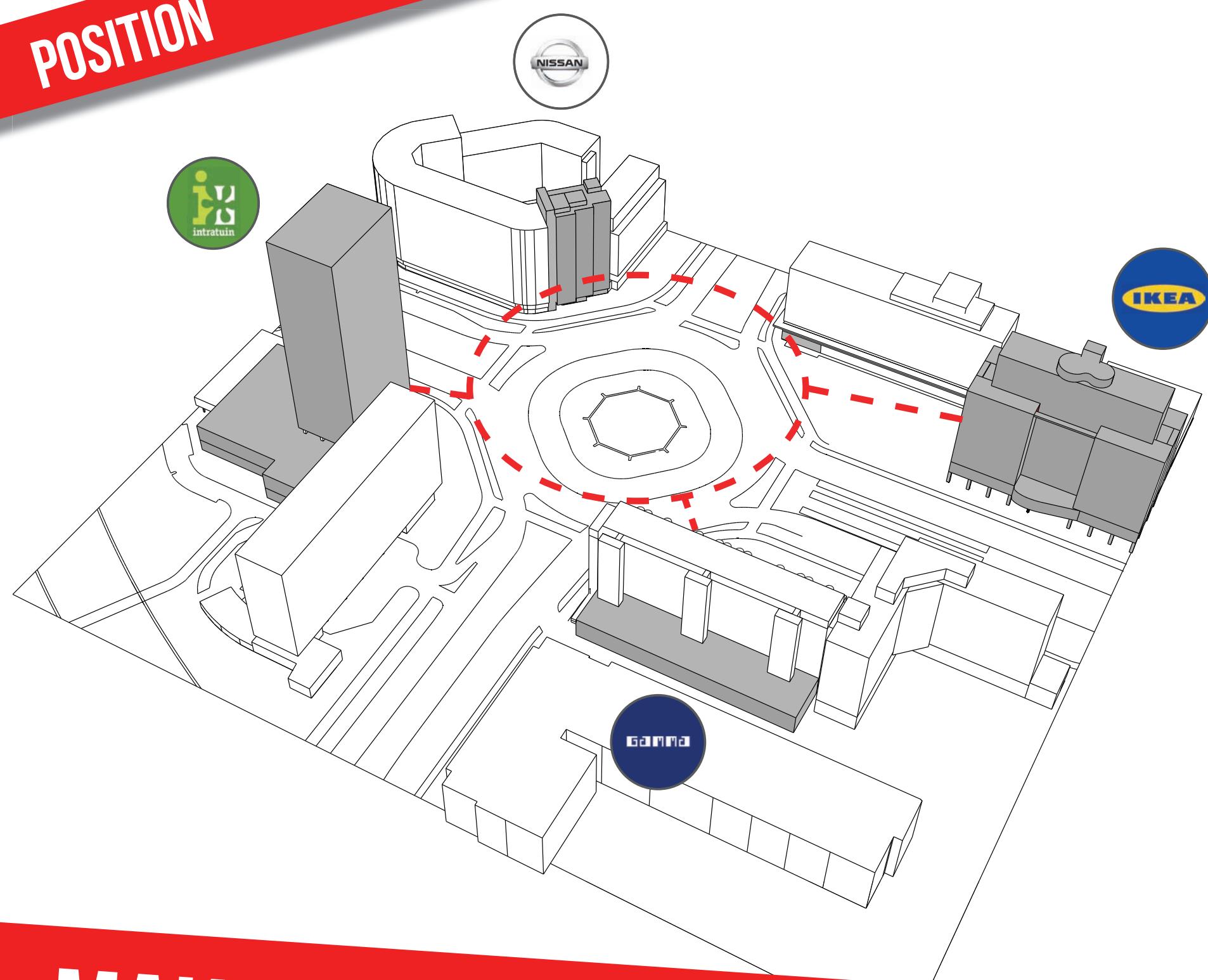
## FINANCE VS. URBAN LIFE

The municipality is conflicted about what to do. It wants to fight the production of vacancy, but also earns a lot of money by exploiting new building sites. Furthermore, the big corporations threaten to leave the city and find building grounds elsewhere, if they are not allowed to lease new buildings. This means that the municipality has no other option than to provide them with an alternative in the center. The quality of the city suffers under this unresolved situation. Does the city support the interests of finance and development or does it favor a vibrant city life?

This project focuses on Hofplein in Rotterdam, once the bustling heart of the city, now a location that blighted by the effects of finance-driven urbanism: that are partially or totally vacant office buildings from the seventies until the nineties. The cost and the amount of the vacancy around Hofplein literally scrapes the sky.



## POSITION



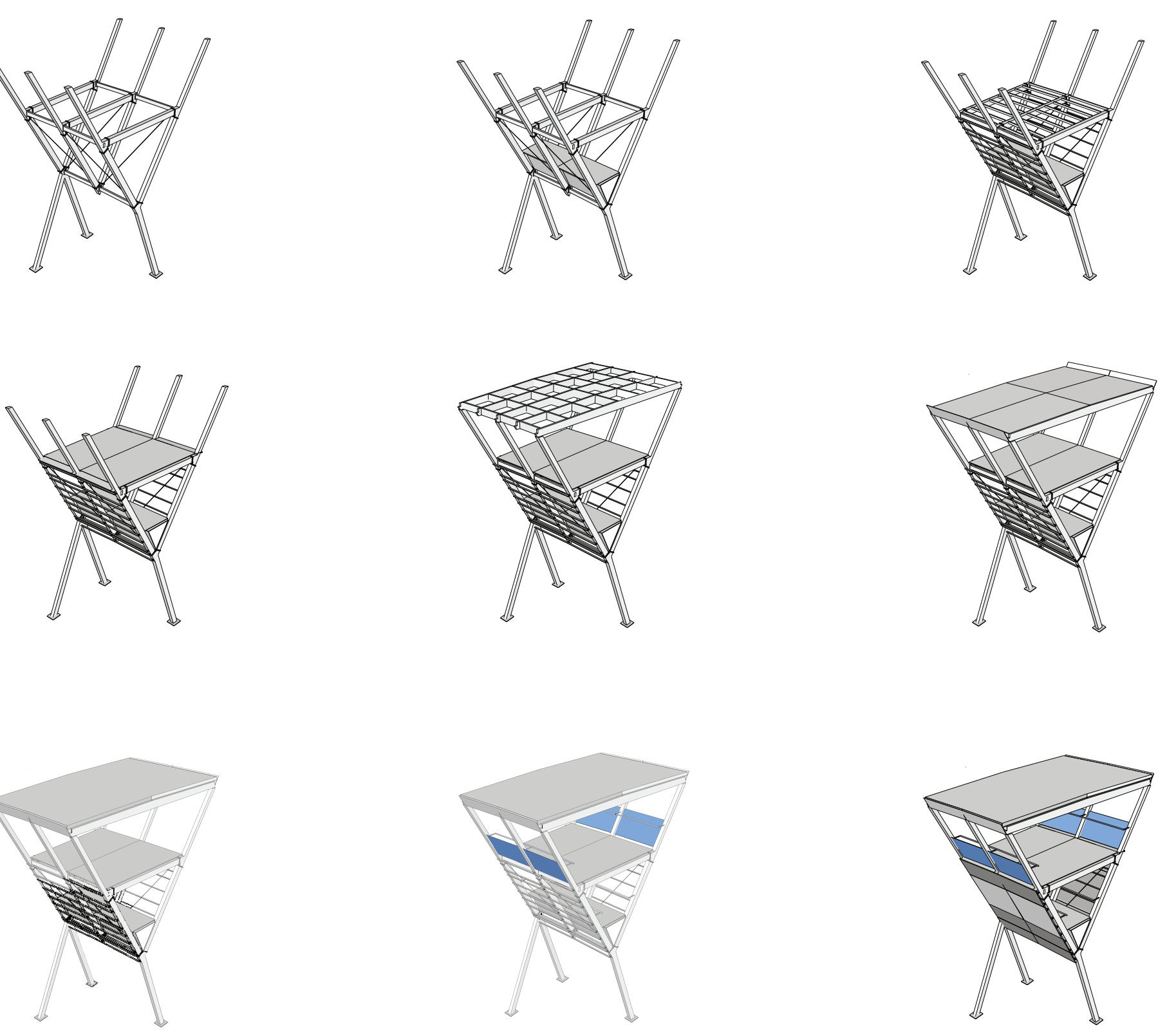
'Make them an offer they can't refuse.' By introducing a new way to fill up the vacancy and invest in the public space both parties, the municipal office and the investors/owners of the real estate can create a win-win situation, if they choose to do so.

The proposal for a new architectural object, that is also a new public space and opens up new program that is as yet not present in the city center.

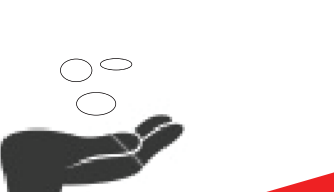


By connecting the buildings their weaknesses can be turned into opportunities. By providing the buildings with a second entrance, access to what happens inside is made easier. Another advantage of this simple operation is that it multiplies the interaction possibilities, adding the upper layers to the mix.

The structure we propose is constructed by the repetition of a triangular steel frame, assembled until it forms a huge elevated circle. Due to the standardization of the segments, the realization is feasible and cost efficient.



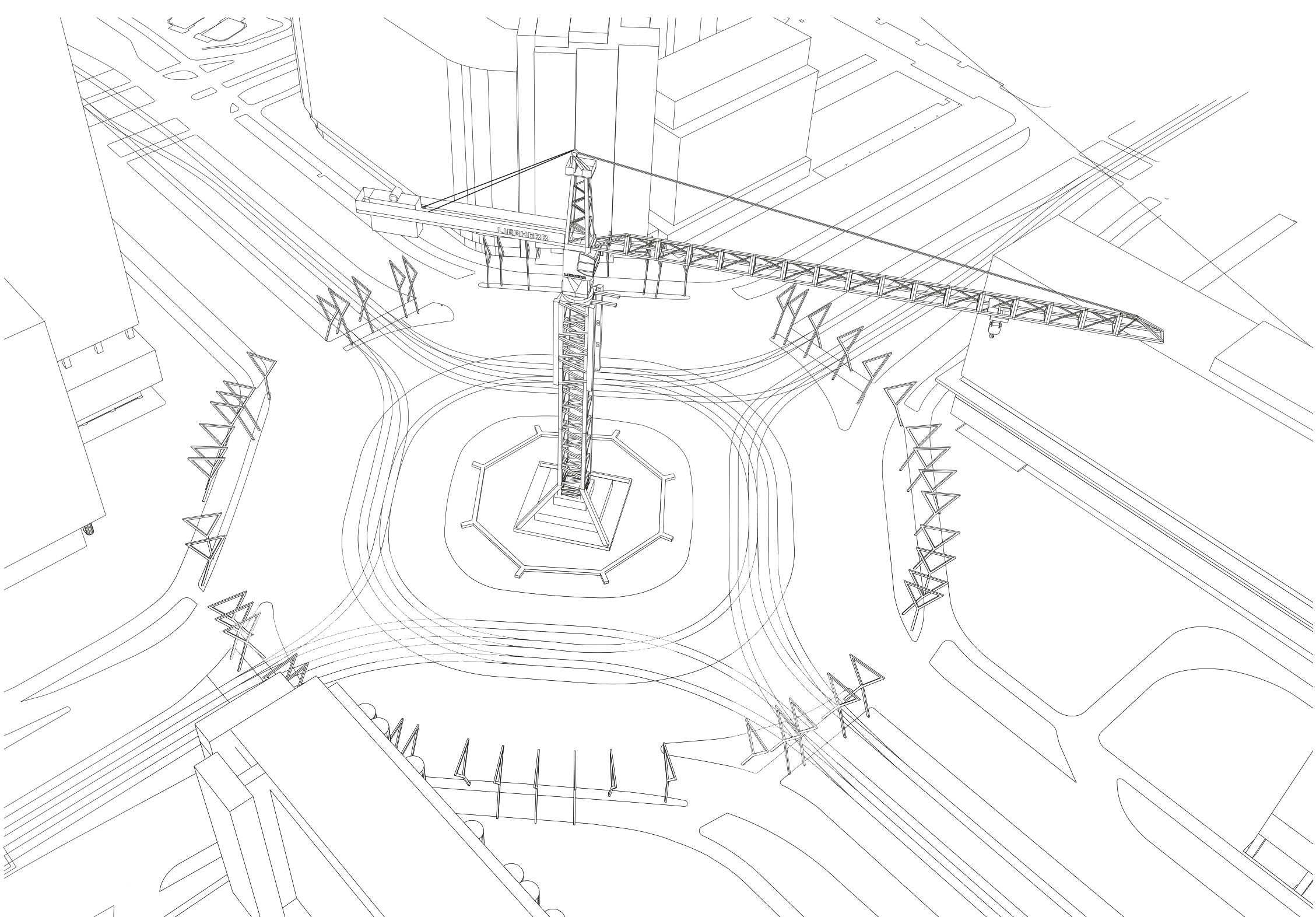
## MAKE THEM AN OFFER THEY CAN'T REFUSE



## PRICE



An approach like the above depends on the investors and/or building owners devaluating their investments, and taking their loss. By downsizing the value in the books, new rental prices can be introduced and eventually large-scale program that needs lower rents to turn a profit can be attracted. In this way inner city real estate can be made to compete with suburban areas. The loss by the owners is relative, since the current owners of the buildings aren't receiving any high-end rents anyway, and will not do so in the near future either.



The municipal office needs to pre invest in the circular footbridge to connect the buildings and to contribute in the quality of the public space, and to get this new dynamic going. They are, together with the new peripheral mega stores, the first investors in the public space, and the main stakeholders in the vibrancy of Rotterdam City Center.



## YOU WANT A LIVELY CENTER? DEVALUE: TAKE YOUR LOSS

