

Living Cities: Transforming from the Infrastructures

The assignment calls for the transformation of the following parts of Klagenfurt into a lively, mixed-use neighbourhood: the old bus terminal, a car dealership, the swimming pool terrain and the makerspace. Today, the project location is a closed-off bundle of various buildings, sheds and structures that are not clearly defined, inviting nor connected. These entities don't communicate with the rest of the city either: instead of creating a link between the central station and the city center, they block off pedestrian access with fences and walls causing disruption to the networks of public and green spaces in the city. Lack of porosity is a clear issue that has to be addressed, but the existing urban fabric is also fascinating and inspiring in its own ways. It has a unique character and a collection of typologies not often found in the hearts of cities. The transformation of the site offers new potential — with the arrival of a fast train connection to Graz, opportunities and networks are intensifying and calling for a future district to become an important node in the bigger Carinthian region.

The development of a city is a continuous process — even in times of radical transformation, it is important to preserve the identity and found qualities of the site. Layered cities, with parts that are old, parts that are renewed and some that are new, offer spatial diversity that attracts various users and encourages exchange and interaction. The question becomes how to create a structure that is embedded in the site but still provides clear spatial definitions and connects to the rest of the city.

Tracing found domains, complementing them and intensifying becomes a new strategy to revitalize several plots and transform them into one new lively district. Domains are anchored in the identities of specific plots and embedded in their context, offering a diversified series of public, collective and private urban interiors. The site is porous and open to the rest of the city, completing the existing networks of green and public spaces.

New green network for pedestrians and cyclists

We propose a clear new structure for the strategic site, defining it as four quadrants connected by a green cross of streets where car parking is replaced with rows of plants and flowers, and the road is covered by a canopy of trees. With a priority for

pedestrians and cyclists, the connections between city center and the train station are strengthened and transformed into green boulevards and alleys.

The introduction of several large mobility hubs allows for the removal of the parking in the interior of the site. These buildings are not simple parking lots, but flexible shelf-like structures filled with boxes of diverse programs in-between parking. They provide space for shared electric cars, scooters and bicycles and as well as workshops and tools to maintain vehicles. Photovoltaic canopies covering the roof level provide energy used to charge electric vehicles, the batteries of which can be networked as an electricity buffer. In this way the need for cars in the interior of the quadrants is greatly reduced and restricted for destination traffic only.

On the south-end, the Südbahngürtel road is cut in two pieces to make room for a station square. Although cars can easily reach the square from both ends they won't be able to pass in front of the station anymore, prioritising pedestrians in order to create the most pleasant entrance to the city. From the station square you can stroll to the city center uninterrupted along the Bahnhofstraße. The vertical axis of the green cross is a linear park where there's no motorised traffic apart from the occasional bus. Designated bike lanes on both sides make a comfortable connection for cyclists reaching the city center.

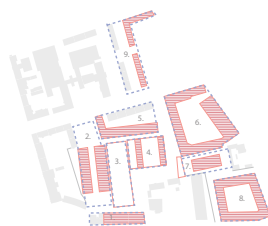
Crossing the site horizontally is Gabelsbergerstraße, the only preserved traverse connection. However, all parking is replaced by fields of flowers pierced with trees, extending the existing green canopy from the west to the east. The new narrower profile of the street ensures more space for pedestrians and bicycles.

Alongside the train tracks a buffer is created by a unifying segmented wall of glass. The space in-between is reserved for logistical programs alternated by walled parks. On the opposite side an irregular, jagged edge of green infrastructure encourages you to infiltrate the city fabric.

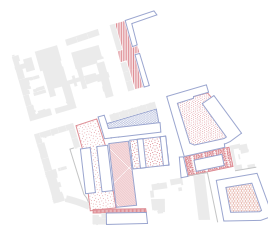
A new pedestrian bridge connects the train platforms and links the north and the south side of the city, allowing for direct access from the train towards the new network of interconnected domains - the main pedestrian spine of the project site. In that way the domains reach out, not only towards the train station, but also towards the south of the city.



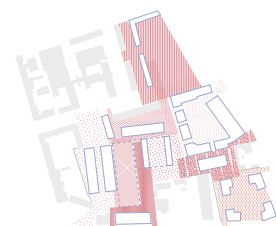
Existing plan
A fenced-off amorphous urban fabric



Defined domains



Contained interiors
Well-defined public interiors
Diverse urban typologies



Unlocked interiors/Connected domains
Opened clusters
Overlapping spaces of interaction
Porous urban fabric

New growth strategy and anchors of activity

The project site comprises nine overlapping domains that define an entirely car-free urban interior. This is where interaction and exchange happen.

The perimeter of the site is largely reconstructed with careful consideration of the remaining buildings, responding to their height and keeping respectful distance. Apart from the main points of entry to the site, lots of small openings are kept as well, optimally incorporating it with the surroundings. Taller buildings are situated only deep inside the block in order to minimise their impact on the surrounding fabric.

A lot of the structures that are present on the site are kept. They're renovated, adjusted and repurposed. The structural rhythm is then expanded and becomes the typological grain for newly constructed buildings, establishing a continuity between the existing and the new. On top of that they provide the project with an authenticity you could not recreate. Identity is also found in materiality and architectural details – seemingly ordinary characteristics of each domain become part of the new proposal.

A large new greenhouse is situated within one of these structures serving as one of the programmatic anchors at the heart of the site. On a mezzanine there's a primary school with a focus on playing outside in the garden. Around the vegetable garden, there's advanced education on farming and next door people are taught how to use them in the preparation of food. The grown produce can then either be sold at the market square in the adjoining warehouse or be consumed in the tram depot, turned into an indoor street of restaurants and bars.

Underneath the market, the existing basement is occupied with buffer tanks and installations for a proposed system of district heating and cooling. By implementing this sustainable energy alternative on a larger, neighbourhood scale, far greater efficiencies can be achieved than when this was done on building level alone.

The makers' court, already present at the site, is the other anchor of activity. To further develop the education of contemporary making the court will be renovated. Newly added apartments offer the possibility to house artists in residence, making it part of an international creative scene. Makers' court and greenhouse labs help with integrating the project into a larger network of surrounding training academies.

Public programs are present throughout the site and are often distributed vertically. Roofs covered in water retaining vegetation become elevated, publicly accessible parks or spectacular viewing platforms.

To be able to offer public facilities that are meant to benefit not only the inhabitants and visitors of the area but improve the liveability of the entire city on a larger scale, we propose to mediate the FAR and redistribute the program between the individual plots. This way we're able to create a park that is large enough to house diverse activities of sport and leisure for a great number of people and draw them into the neighbourhood.



Found elements that inspired the project.

In the middle of the park a remnant of the swimming pool is kept. The pool is repurposed as a multi-purpose pond. In warm weather, it's a place to cool down, when there's an event the pond can be drained and transformed into a submerged stage and in extreme weather conditions it can serve as a water retention buffer. The existing basements of the pool are used for the installations needed for water management.

A mobility hub is tucked under the park on the north side, creating an inclined field directed towards the sun. It's ideal for sunbathing or in case there's a performance in the pool, higher ground for a better view.

Nine domains and a public realm

The project consists of nine interconnected domains — each clearly defined with its own identity and set of functions that support each other. Landing, Remise, Greenhouse, Market, Collective Garden, Makers Court, Quiet Garden, Forest and Park. Each domain is diverse in itself and allows for various typologies to come together. Various types of housing from affordable apartments with glazed outside spaces - a Jahreszeitenzimmer; single room apartments (Reminiscent of Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky's Wohnung Einer Berufstätigen Frau) to family housing become parts of different domains. Groundfloors host a diversity of functions: shared neighborhood libraries, workshops, shops, restaurants and more.

Porous public network

However, the project is not a bare collection of differentiated domains. The crucial aspect of it is its porosity with each assembly of buildings remaining open towards the surroundings and towards each other. Public spaces float freely, changing their sizes and character, inviting inhabitants and visitors to explore diverse connections, squares, passages and alleys in between various programs, to interact and learn from each other. There are no more sealed closed spaces, the network continues towards the city.

Strategy for the future development

The first step would be to initiate the educational program by renovating the existing structures of the tram depot. After building the greenhouse, education of vegetable farming can commence and a little later the restaurants and kitchens, that educate in the preparation of food, will follow. Combined with the present makers' court, which is already up and running, there will be two consistent active attractors to the site.

Next, the site is further unlocked by improving its connection to the railway station and the southern side of the city by constructing a new pedestrian bridge with a building next to it. This will make the site more accessible and attract more people.

The growing potential of the site will make it more appealing for people to live there and with the improvements of the railway connection, easier to commute, and work elsewhere. New housing and offices are built, fully incorporating the buildings of the tram depot in the larger city fabric.

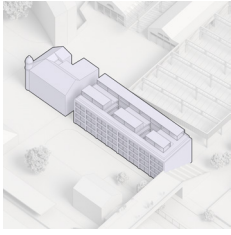
Now, with an adjacent centre of high activity, the maker court can grow, expanding their educational capacity as well and offer residencies for artists and makers.

At this point, the site will become a vibrant new part of the city. It can support the development of affordable housing on a larger scale, replacing the car dealership.

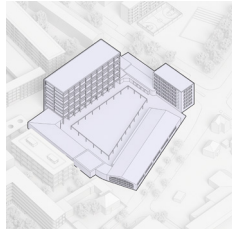
With the numbers of inhabitants now increasing at a fast pace, adequate facilities need to be built. The creation of the park, combined with more surrounding housing, is the final step in the execution of this scheme.

Joined new city district

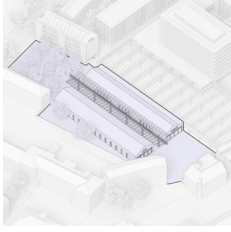
The idea of traced domains is to learn from the existing while continuing the logic and character of the site, of various buildings' constellations and of each individual building block. New domains are derived from the found urban structure, interpreted and transformed to house new programs and to connect to the city's fabric. The concept of traced domains allow for every plot to be transformed separately and for many various typologies to coexist in close proximity. At the same time it proposes one clear framework and a strategy for transforming several plots into a new interconnected neighbourhood. Porosity and diversity are in the project's DNA and create fertile grounds for a growing interaction between many different groups.



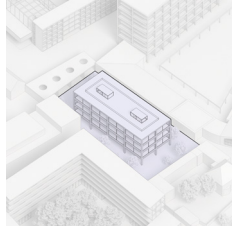
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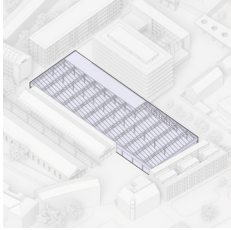
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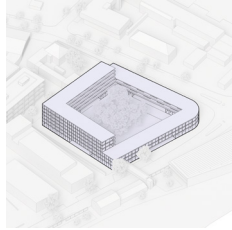
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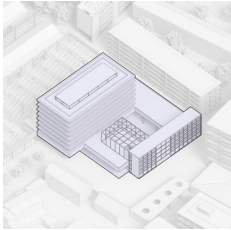
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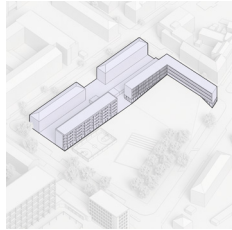
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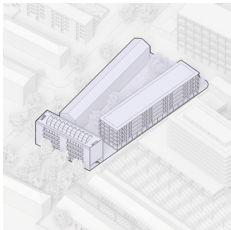
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			GFA	GFA per floor	# floors	Outside GFA
1 Landing	Housing mix	GF	928			
		#F	2466	822	3	
		TF	387			
2 Remise	Hall 1	GF	1262			
		Mezzanine	631			
	Hall 2	GF	1262			
		Mezzanine	631			
	Passage					880
Garden					809	
3 Greenhouse	Greenhouse	GF	4809			
		Mezzanine	729			
4 Market	Market	UG	2880			
		GF	2457			
	Orangery		338			
	Tower	#F	6894	985	7	
		TF	406			
	Office	UG	384			
		GF	384			
#F		1536	384	4		
5 Collective garden	Orchard housing	GF	458			
		#F	1831	458	4	
		TF	211			
	Long housing	GF	1152			
		#F	4608	1152	4	
6 Makers court	Existing	GF	4975			
		Mezzanines	1008			
	Office	GF	402			
		#F	2010	402	5	
	Tower	#F	9922	1240	8	
7 Quiet garden	Office	GF	1001			
		#F	3003	1001	3	
		TF	64			
	Pop-up gallery					462
	8 Forest	Social housing	UG	4730		
GF			1966			
#F lower			6464	3232	2	
#F upper			4053	1351	3	
9 Park	Swimming pool	UG	953			
		Pond				750
	Apartments	GF	561			
		#F	2244	561	4	
	Studio housing	UG	2717			
		GF hill	998			
		GF	722			
#F		2165	722	3		
Total built		86602				
Total plot area		58703				
FAR		1,5				

	Built	Area	FAR
Plot 1	36257	26630	1,4
Plot 2	18317	10277	1,8
Plot 3	21218	11854	1,8
Plot 4	10359	9941	1,0
Total	86152	58703	1,5