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PROJECT ANALYSIS

INTERNAL CONNECTIONS

REDEFINING PUBLIC & PRIVATE SPACE
AS A PLACE FOR SOCIAL INTERACTION



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This report is made in fulfillment of the requirements of the course 'Urban Plan and City Analysis', (AR1U080), in MSc2 in Urbanism, at the Field Academy in Charlois, Rotterdam. The subject concerns an intervention in Oud-Charlois sub-district in Rotterdam. The analysis of the area was made in collective co-operation and concerns the current situation of the region in relation with the neighboring districts and the city. The following text analyses the intervention proposal made in the context of a specific theme which is internal connections.

The structure of this report is the following: firstly the conclusions of the analysis are being introduced. This is necessary in order to define the problems and the potentialities of the area according to the theme. The main body of the project, which refers to the intervention program, is organized in two topics that represent the main axes of the approach. Lastly, in the conclusion, the outcome and the side-effects are pinpointed, along with a timeline of the intervention, in order to elaborate on the phasing of the program.

INTRODUCTION

As mentioned before, the main theme of the intervention, described forward, is internal connections. Although this topic refers to physical aspects, the intervention is concentrated primarily on the social ones. This happens due to the conclusions of the analysis, carried out in the first part of the project, that highlight the problematic social condition, due to the presence of various ethnicities in the area.

The project's goal is to offer people the opportunity to interact with each other and to be more responsible regarding their direct environment. The reutilization of public space will also encourage people to create a functioning area that will address them locally through social interaction, while new job opportunities will ameliorate their income.

In other words, the interventions aim in the integration of the different social groups (especially the immigrants) as well as the interaction between them. However, the proposal's aim is not to change the character of the area, but to enhance its qualitative characteristics and further on its image.

CONCLUSIONS OF ANALYSIS AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

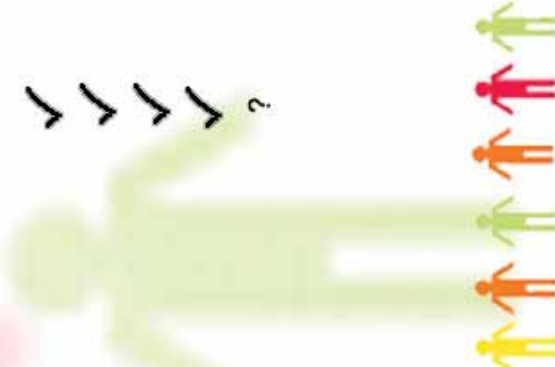
Before analyzing the strategy, it is of significance to highlight the conclusions that compose the basis for the intervention. In order to make them more comprehensive they were summarized in the following three topics, which concurrently represent the problems of the area.

To begin with, there is lack of social interaction between the different groups, visible especially during the site analysis. This is also represented in the adjacent map which illustrates the meeting points between social groups



Meeting spots of different social groups

CORRELATION BETWEEN MEETING SPOTS

	Artists	Native dutch	Immigrants	Prospective inhabitants
Studio	✓ 			
Sports field	✓	✓	✓	?
Restaurant / Cafe	✓	✓	✓	?
Community Center		✓	✓	?
Church		✓		?
Mosque			✓	
School		✓	✓	?
Immigrants' shop / bar			✓	?
Park / Playground	✓	✓	✓	
?	?	?	?	?
TARGET Socialize all groups 				

in the area. Although there are several common meeting spots between the native Dutch and the immigrants (shown also in the diagram), the artists seem not to interact with either of the rest of the groups. However, segregation strongly exists with language and culture seclusion. As a result, social isolation is eminent and phenomena of drug dealing and violence (increased in the area) inevitable.

Therefore, an intervention at this point seems necessary. The reason why this interaction between social groups is essential is because it will enhance the integration of the locals, especially the immigrants, to their living

community. It is also a way to boost social control and encourage people to take a more active role in the safety of their environment.

In addition, there is a characteristic under-use of public space something which represents a general problem since it does not embrace its primary role as a place for social interaction. This fact is derived both from site analysis and the lack of overlapping of meeting spots. In the analysis map regarding meeting spots, public space is rarely used as one. The adjacent photographs also give an impression of the absence of people. Therefore, an intervention on public



Public
space
evaluation





Site analysis proved the under-use of public space and the low quality of public and private space in specific locations

space in accordance with the interventions regarding social interaction is critical, in order to make it more accessible and attractive to the locals and to encourage their socializing.

The third topic regards the fact that there is a large amount of unused building stock. A combination of analysis maps (vacancies, quality of public space) has proved that this amount is a result of the low quality of living space. What is more, buildings are a source of income something which does not happen due to the low quality. It is evident that in specific locations where there is poor quality of public space, there is also low quality of private space, a fact which can also occur vice versa.

If the building stock is not being used, then it becomes useless and there is a load of side-effects following, such as poor maintenance. This can be extended to a poor road image, especially if the facades of a road are in a bad situation. On the other hand, the low quality of private space results in the cheap housing, which encourages low income classes as well as immigrants to move in the area, something which enhances the image of the area as a low income one.



Private space quality

Vacancies



Income in the district

POTENTIALITIES

At this point it is important to stress the potentialities that will provide the basis for the interventions. For instance, the policy of the municipalities, such as the new expropriation law, will set the legal part of one of the interventions. This law states that if the owners do not maintain their property for a long period of time (which is already happening), then the municipality will have the right to expropriate the property.

Another advantage is the future plans of the municipality of Rotterdam regarding the port (Waalhaven)¹. These include the intensification of short-sea, the update of the port functions and the attraction of port-related knowledge and services. As a result, it is tangible that the harbor represents an opportunity for the region as it will not only provide people with job opportunities, but it will also attract people from the rest of Rotterdam who will be working in the port to live in the area.



Rotterdam vision for the port areas¹

¹ Stadsvisie Rotterdam Ruimtelijke Ontwikkelingstrategie 2030, Gemeente Rotterdam, P.113

INTERVENTION PROGRAM

The concept concentrates on the local inhabitants and especially in the youth group, as they will shape the future of the area. Future local social groups are also addressed with specific interventions. However, the proposal will not be comprised of radical elements in order not to provoke other groups.



Current and future local groups are addressed

The proposal can be described as *redefining public & private space as a place for social interaction*, as the main concept is being summarized this way. Two main axes were also defined which are:

- Programmatic and aesthetic changes in existing building stock
- Redesign of public space together with additive functions of social character

In this context, each topic will be analyzed and specific actions will be laid out. The scale of the interventions is focused on the local level, realized with small and punctual ones on the urban fabric.

Strategic plan



Legend

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| public space to be redesign | existing social facilities | physical design project limits |
| buildings to be restored | additive social facilities | |
| tree screening | roads to be aesthetic improved | |

The strategic plan of the previous page illustrates the strategy defined by the above mentioned axes. Specific locations that will take place are the northern part of Oud-Charlois which already is a coherent neighborhood center and the longitudinal green axis west of the area. However, the physical design will focus more on the northern part (indicated with the red dashed line) where most of the additive functions will be situated.

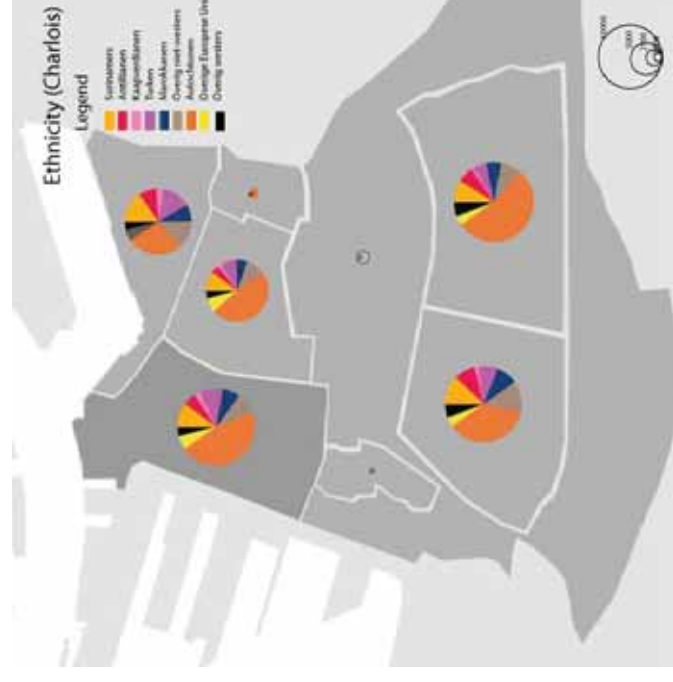
Programmatic and aesthetic changes in existing building stock

The proposals being associated with this topic are significant because they connect directly with the image of the area. In particular, deteriorated buildings are planned to be functionally renovated. The latter is divided into two methods, the first of which refers to heavy renovation and the second to a light restoration of specific buildings. On one hand the heavy renovation regards structural and programmatic changes in the building stock such as unification of internal spaces, individual houses to family houses, update of electromechanical equipment etc. On the other hand, the light restoration concerns the aesthetic value of the buildings, especially the facades. For instance, removal of satellite TV plates, maintenance of window frames, redesign of the front facades in order to prevent them from being monolithic etc.

As indicated in the potentialities of the area, the new expropriation law will also prove to be useful as many of the low quality buildings are a result of poor maintenance. The quality created will be the initial step for the attraction of specific people that work in the port. These people might be

native or even immigrants appealed by the cheap cost of housing.

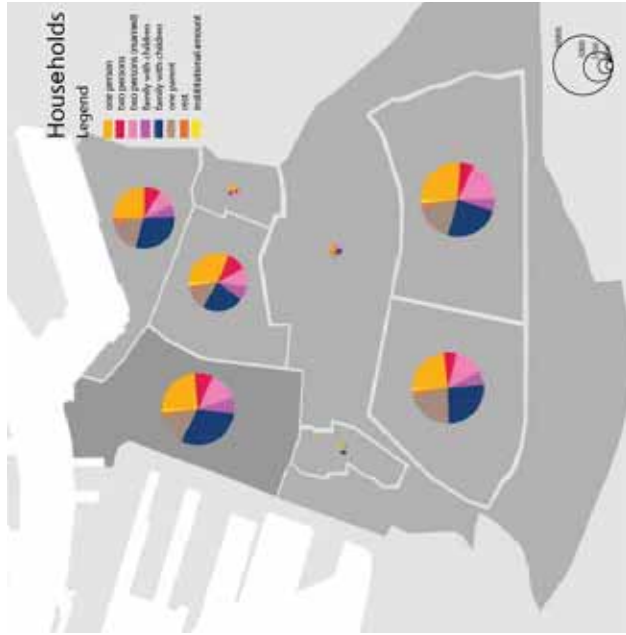
As described in the analysis map the population of Oud-Charlois consists of immigrants of different ethnicities with the group between 20-39 years old being the most numerous. Furthermore, there is a decrease trend for the Dutch autochthones with a concurrent increase in the immigrants' number. However, the population of the area does not appear to have particular variations. In addition, a general overview of the household map show that $\frac{1}{4}$ of the total households consists of one person, $\frac{1}{2}$ of families with children and the rest of two persons. The structures proposed for renovation will be apply to the existing households and population.



Ethnicity map in Charlois district



Up & down respectively: Age & households, district level



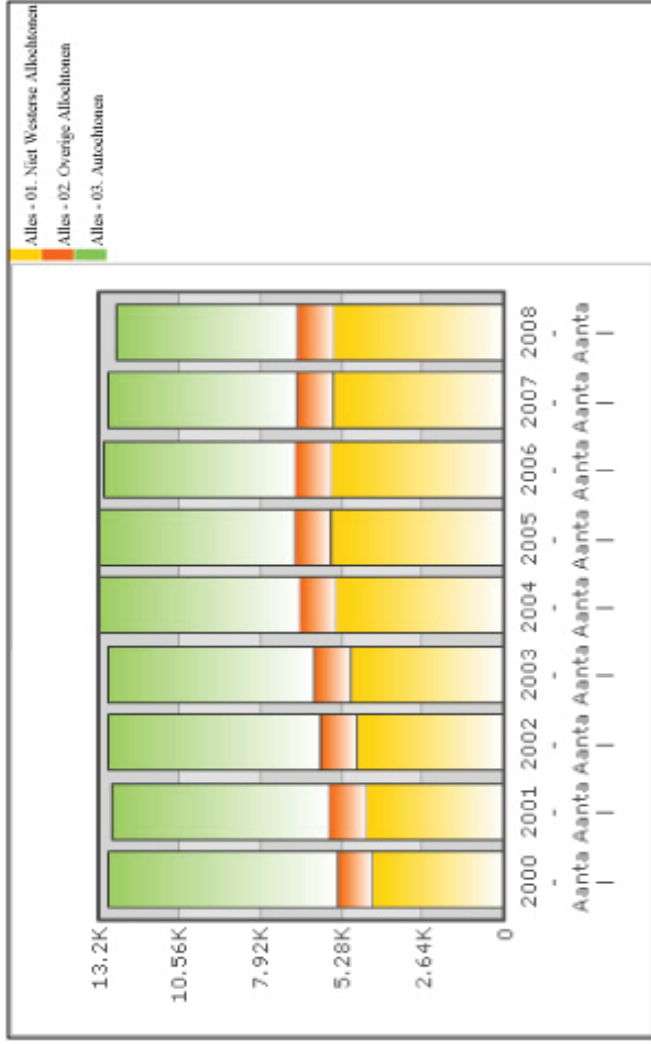
Inwoners

Aantal personen per 1 januari 2000, 2008, naar diverse kenmerken

Bron: Publicatiedaten Rotterdam

Bewerking: COG

Baartman: Oud-Charlois



Aandachtswijk-gebied	Emigratie kort	2000		2001		2002		2003		2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
		Aantal	Aantal	Aantal	Aantal	Aantal	Aantal	Aantal	Aantal	Aantal	Aantal	Aantal	Aantal	Aantal	Aantal	Aantal	Aantal	Aantal	Aantal
Alles	Alles	12884	12757	12890	12933	13178	13188	13049	12910	12595									
	01. Niet Westerse Allochtonen	4296	4490	4793	5020	5472	5654	5607	5579	5541									
	02. Overige Allochtonen	1141	1199	1215	1187	1185	1165	1186	1188	1199									
	03. Autochtonen	7447	7068	6880	6726	6521	6369	6256	6143	5855									

Population number & composition from 2000 to 2008. The changes in the total population number during these years are insignificant.

Source: <http://cos.rotterdam.nl>

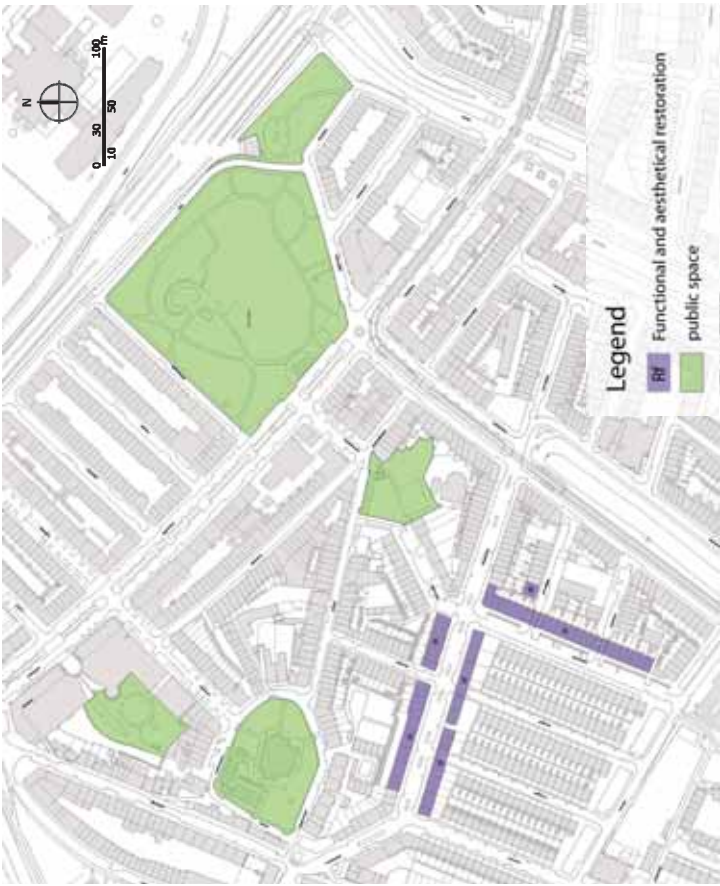
Buildings for light restoration are located around the Karel de Stouteplein square, around the square with the church and along the Frans Bekkerstraat and the Schilperoorststraat (see map: yellow colour). Regarding the structures which require heavy renovation, they are situated along other parts of the Frans Bekkerstraat and the Schilperoorststraat (see map: purple colour).

An example of calculations regarding the renovation of such buildings is shown in the following tables. The area of specific buildings as well as the net area represents the 75% of the total area of the building since the rest is occupied by communal spaces (table 1). There is also a division in the type of the apartment in 60, 80 and 100 m², as they represent the basic space needed for households for 2, 3, 4 and more persons, indicating the desirable amount

Table 1

Building No.	Number of floors	Footprint area (m2)	Total area (m2)	Net area of apartments
1	4	718	2872	2154
2	3	700	2100	1575
3	4	962	3848	2886
4	4	531	2124	1593
5	4	1732	6928	5196
6	4	120	480	360
TOTAL		4763	18352	13764

(table 2). In effect 186 apartments can be renovated in this area, which can accommodate a minimum of 582 persons. However, this number does not represent the total of the prospective inhabitants as some of the existing apartments are already inhabited.



Plan of interventions regarding changes in building stock

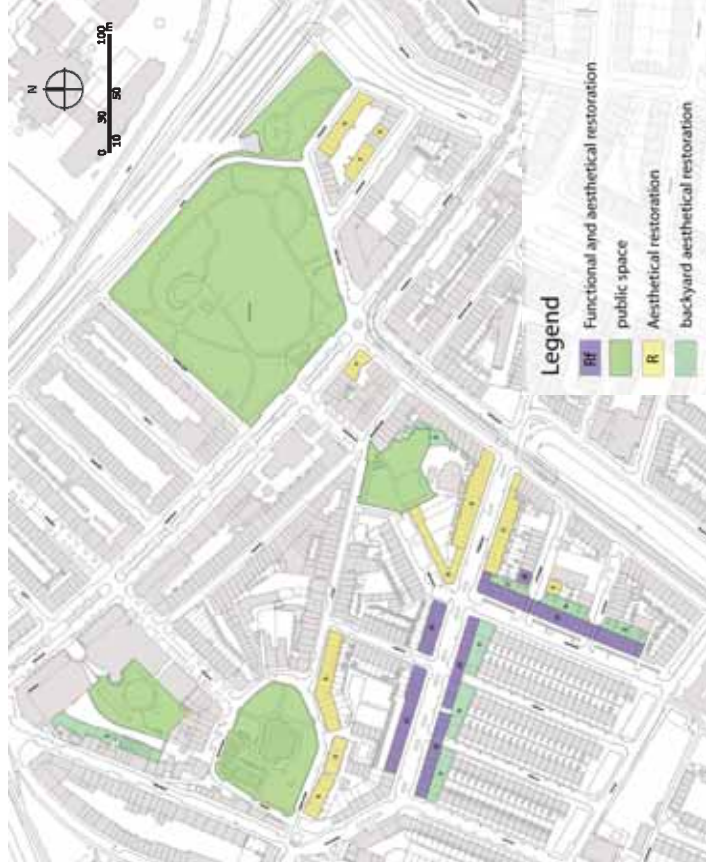
Table 2

Type of apart. (m2)	Members of household	% of type of apartment	Total area/type (m2)	No.of apartm. /type	Number of occupants
60	2	20%	2752,8	46	92
80	3	40%	5505,6	70	210
100	4	40%	5505,6	70	280
TOTAL		100%	13764	186	582



Location of the buildings proposed for functional renovation and existing situation (photographs)

A sub topic of these changes will be the aesthetic and view of the road. This means that by renovating the facades of the buildings, not only the quality of private space is improved but also the quality of public space. Except the improvement of the front and rear facades of buildings, the renewal of bad-shaped backyards is also emphasized. Specific improvements include cleaning from trashes and abandoned material, gardening, removal of deteriorated supportive buildings, removal of barbires, lowering of fences etc.



Up: Plan of interventions regarding changes in road aesthetic
Right: The photographs represent a characteristic example of deteriorated backyards, proposed to be aesthetically improved



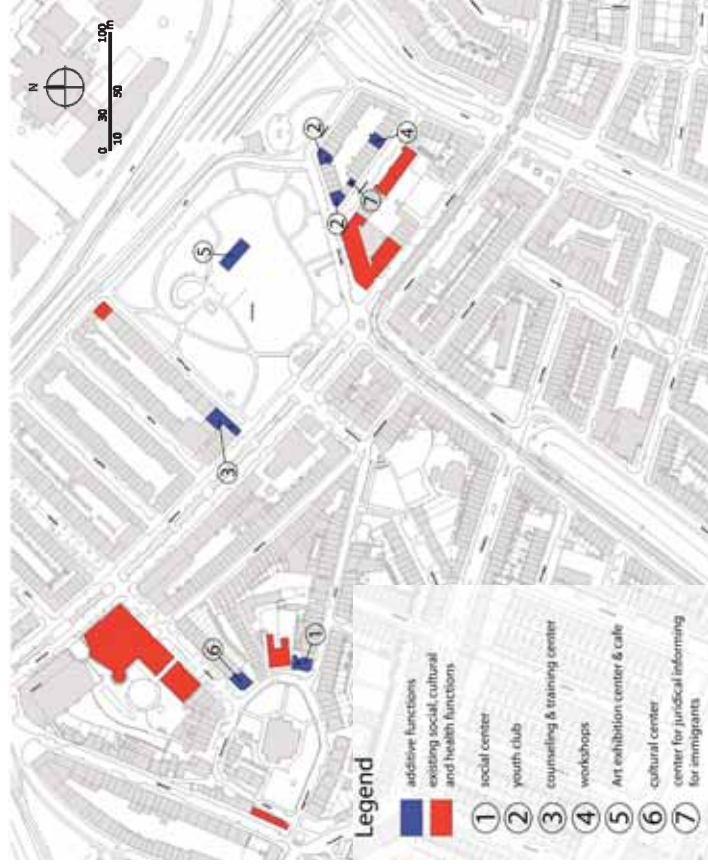
This way both private and public space quality is upgraded, thus it will become more attractive to prospective inhabitants. Nevertheless, this intervention does not aim to increase the cost as much as to create a more attractive quality of space. This improvement applies also in Frans Bekkerstraat and Schilperootstraat.

Redesign of public space combined with additive functions

The main proposal regarding this topic focuses on new functions of social character which will be located next to existing public space, in order to utilize it. These functions are represented by social centers, cultural facilities, counseling and training centers. More specifically the social centers will consist of youth clubs, health care, meeting places/restaurants, center for domestic violence. The idea is that these facilities will be managed by the users themselves with little attendance by the municipality, while they will co-operate in order not to have duplicated functions.

The counseling and training centers will provide the local youth with the opportunity to be enabled to work in

the existing and new functions of the port. In addition, the activities of the youth clubs will be proposed by the youth (e.g. vehicle workshop), in an attempt to make them responsible and to socially control the space. Lastly, works of the artists can address the rest of the locals with the municipality's contribution offering them a working/exhibition space in the proposed cultural centers.



Plan of interventions regarding the location of the new functions

Main areas for such functions will be around Karel de Stouteplein, and around the square with the church. Based on the analysis there are many vacant spaces in those locations which will be utilized along with the adjacent public spaces. Specific buildings were pinpointed by further

site analysis. However, before any attempt is made, they will have to be renovated.

In particular, two of the facilities proposed are situated around the Kersingel specifically the social center and the cultural centre. In addition two youth clubs, the juridical information office and the workshop are located north-east of the Karel de Stouteplein, whereas the counseling and training centre west in the place where the old cultural centre has been. Lastly the art exhibition centre and café is located in the centre of the square making the relation between the public space and the new function direct.

Both social and cultural centers which concern all the various age, ethnic and economic groups are located in a central spot. This is implemented in order to better spatially relate these facilities to the neighborhood. The counseling and training centers are both situated in this location because the buildings are large and capable to host this type of use. They are also directly related to the square and the boulevard. The rest of the functions are grouped and sited in that block due to its spatial relation to Karel de Stouteplein but also due to the high number of vacancies in this area.

These facilities are significant not only to provide the means for the local groups to socialize, but also to revitalize public space. As social activities will be transferred from indoor to outdoor (art exhibitions, workshops) they will act as an interaction medium. In other words, there is need for such kind of functions because they can stimulate social interaction. Moreover, locating them beside public space and encouraging their functions to be moved to it will enable people to interact and use the public space. It will constitute a functional extension of the inner space depending on its use.

Worth mentioning is the fact that such methods of social interaction have already been implemented, such as the Poortgebouw in the Kop van Zuid area of Rotterdam² which is a social center (squatted building) that hosts occasional free concerts, discussions, film nights, a café-restaurant twice a week as well as a free shop and an info-shop called 'the autonomous library'. Other examples of social centers are the Eurodusnie³ (non-profit volunteer-run centre) and the Overtoom 301⁴ in Amsterdam. The latter is a more characteristic example because it's hosted in a former film academy building which was in bad-shaped building. Nevertheless, they managed to keep a low rent price and transform it into a place where artists can grow and experiment without commercial interference.

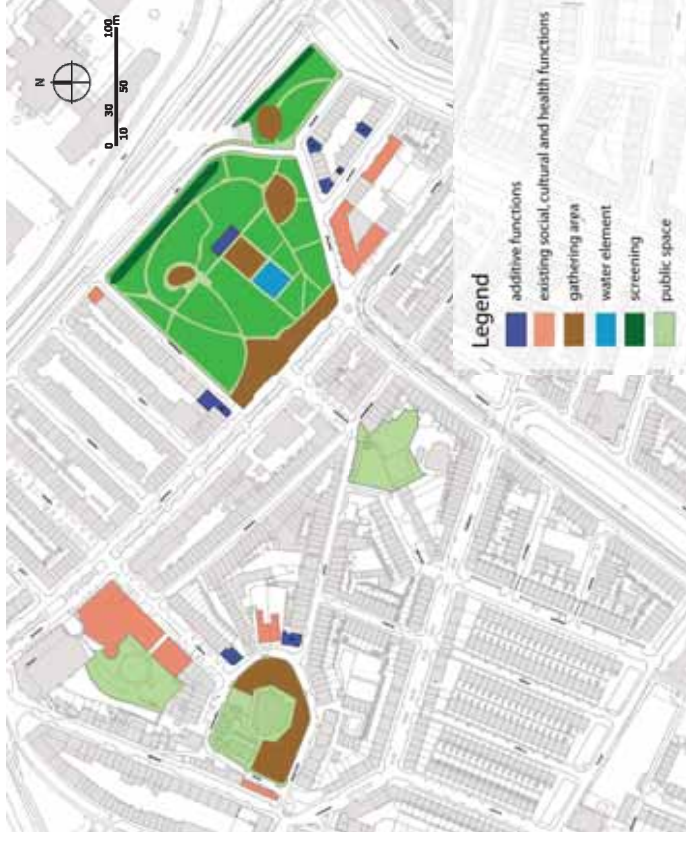
Except from the additive functions, there will be punctual improvements in public space. These interventions aim on making public space more attractive to the local inhabitants and are concentrated especially in the main square of the area, Karel de Stouteplein. In particular, it is considered of significance first to create a plantation 'wall' between the green space and the highway with the incinerator behind it. The screening effect will not only isolate the park visually but will decrease the noise coming from the highway.

Furthermore, a redesign of the pathways is realized in order to make it more accessible by key points, whereas the water element takes also place in the new design. Water personalizes public space formulating a sense of belonging, something which will improve the impression of the square to its visitors.

² www.poortgebouw.nl, www.wikipedia.org

³ www.eurodusnie.nl,

⁴ ot301.nl, www.wikipedia.org



Plan of interventions regarding social and cultural centres and punctual improvements in public space

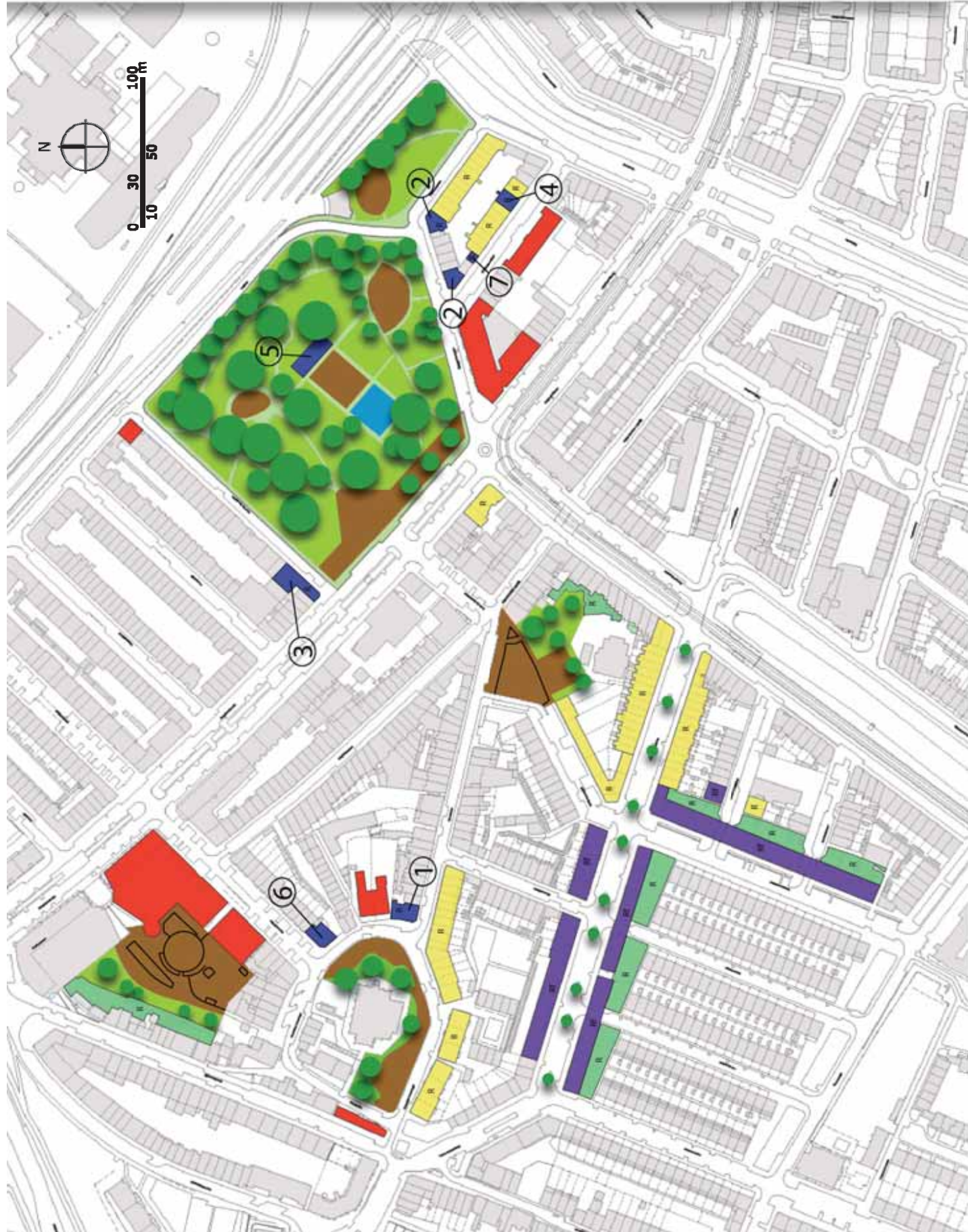
Punctual interventions are also proposed in the square with the church (Kersingel). Currently the area surrounding the church has closed boundaries leaving a large green area unused. By removing the fences, the area opens and a small neighborhood park is created, that will enhance the position of the church as a landmark and will provide the opportunity to be utilized by the new functions.

The following pages contain two 3d designs which are aiming to illustrate the form of the public spaces after the redesign proposal and also the final plan summarizing all the interventions in a single map.



3D Illustrations representing the area after the implementation of the redesign proposals.





Legend

- additive functions
- existing social, cultural and health functions
- gathering area
- water element
- screening
- public space
- functional renovation
- aesthetic renovation
- backyard renovation
- 1 social center
- 2 youth club
- 3 counseling & training center
- 4 workshops
- 5 Art exhibition center & cafe
- 6 cultural center
- 7 center for juridical informing for immigrants

Masterplan

LOCAL BENEFITS & SIDE-EFFECTS

The two axis described constitute the context of the intervention, while there are results both in the social and physical aspects. The economical aspects will be affected as well, but it will be as a side-effect of the interventions and not one of the main outcomes. First of all, the main result is that there is an opportunity for social interaction between different social groups and for active involvement in matters of the area, which in the long run will reduce social segregation. The management model for the additive functions of social character is going to involve in a drastic way the local community. This measure is going to increase social control over these facilities and make people responsible for them (see diagram in the next page).



Existing flow of people in the northern part of the area. Public spaces are not utilized.

Secondly, public space is reutilized (diagram below) as well as the building surplus. In effect, there are new inhabitants attracted in the area by the newly made quality of space added to the job opportunities offered in the port by the municipality of Rotterdam. In addition, the local youth who have participated in the training programs have now the chance to work in the port.

The question at this point would be whether the aim of the project is achieved or not. Public and private space is indeed redefined, with new values given to them that enhance their quality. Social interaction is also encouraged, especially with the new functions proposed. They constitute an essential aspect of the proposal, since they are situated besides public space and they address primarily the youth group.



Future flow of people in the northern part of the area. Public spaces are utilized, especially Karel de Stouteplein and Kerkingel.

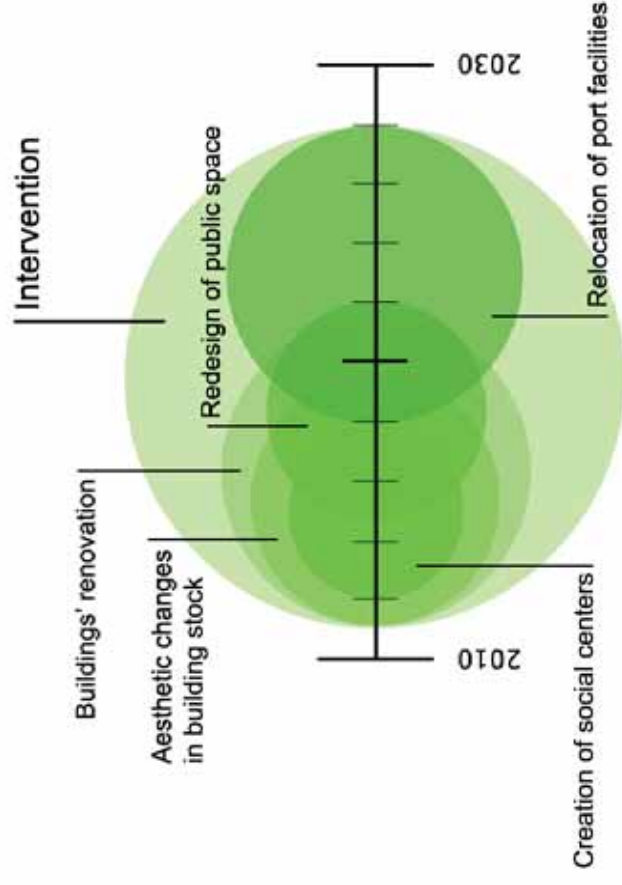
EXPECTED CORRELATION BETWEEN MEETING SPOTS

	Artists	Native dutch	Immigrants	Prospective inhabitants
Studio	✓ 	 	 	 
Sports field	✓	✓	✓	✓
Restaurant / Cafe	✓	✓		✓
Community Center		✓	✓	✓
Church		✓		✓
Mosque			✓	✓
School		✓	✓	✓
Immigrants' shop / bar			✓	✓
Cultural Centre	✓	✓		✓
Park / Playground	✓	✓	✓	✓
Youth Club		✓	✓	
Counseling/Training center		✓	✓	
Workshops	✓	✓	✓	✓
Art exhibition	✓	✓	✓	✓
Social Centre		✓	✓	✓

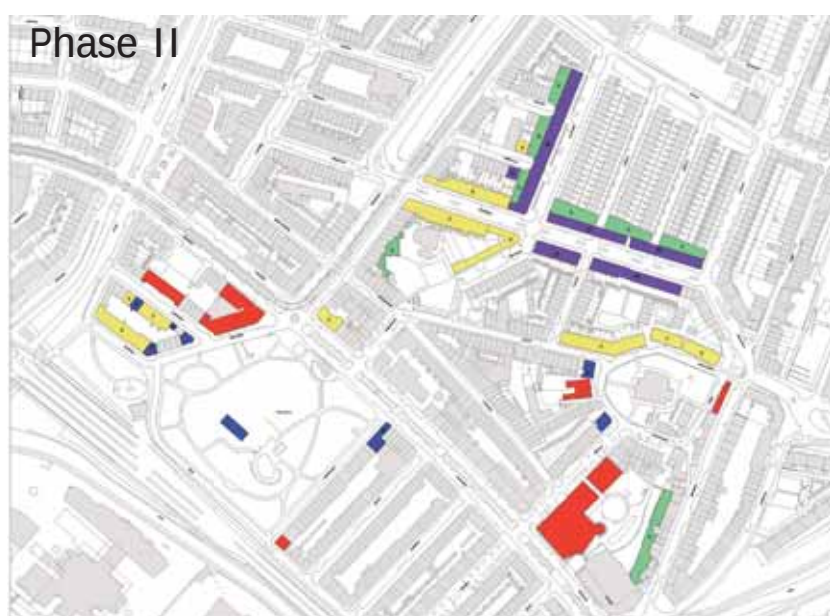
As a result, the image of the area (both mental and aesthetic) will be improved, and the quality of local living ameliorated. As a side-effect of the above mentioned changes, local income will increase both by exploiting the job opportunities and by the new inhabitants who will boost the local economy. Due to the change of the district image it might even attract small scale entrepreneurs to invest in the area stimulating the local economy even more.

PHASING

A final notice to the intervention is also its timeline. Most of the proposals are planned to be implemented at an early time. The one which will take longer is the renovation of the building stock. Following is the creation of the social and cultural centers which will initiate the interaction between social groups. On a further basis the redesign of public space will be realized transforming it into a more attractive place. The intervention remaining is the relocation of the port facilities which will be realized at a time when people will have started to integrate and will be able to seize the job opportunities offered.



Timeline diagram



Legend

- additive functions
- existing social, cultural and health functions
- gathering area
- water element
- screening
- public space
- Rf functional renovation
- R aesthetical renovation
- R backyard renovation

