

GOTA 2014-2040

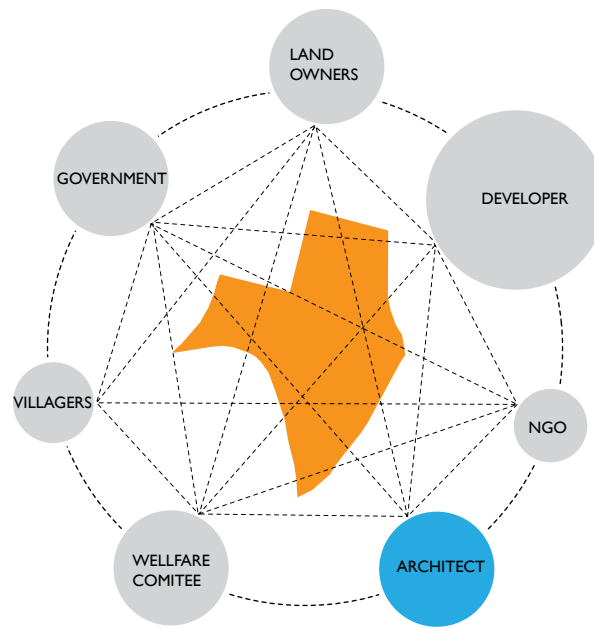
BEYOND THE TYPOLOGY AND THE TRADITIONAL MASTERPLAN IN THE KINETIC CITY



**HABITAT DESIGN STUDIO AHMEDABAD 2014
TEAM GUNDAY**

PROLOGUE

WHAT'S THE ROLE OF THE ARCHITECT?



Alongside meeting local people and understanding the migrant experience, we also used more conventional and objective analytical techniques to understand Gota in the context of Ahmedabad, in the context of Gujarat and in the context of India. Our research, including historical town development, comparisons to other global cities, demographic projections, industrial concentrations and local connections helped to create an overall picture of Ahmedabad as a rapidly expanding, politically complex, thriving city, as well as revealing some particular challenges for the site and at Gota. The stimulating complexity of this picture led directly to our strategies of manifestos and development rather than cute Indian typologies and traditional masterplans.

'The mainstream ideology of planning, its inflexibility, its passion to predict and control, its reliance upon a professional elite and its dependence on aid set it apart from the pluralistic, spontaneous, market-driven, entrepreneurial and serendipitous dynamics which shape cities in practice.'

Nabeel Hamdi in Small Change: About the Art of practice and Limits of Planning in Cities

'Today, Indian cities comprise two components that occupy the same physical space.'

The first is the formal or Static City. Built of more permanent materials such as concrete, steel, and brick, it is comprehended as a two dimensional entity on conventional city maps and is monumental in its presence.

The second is the informal or Kinetic City. Incomprehensible as a two-dimensional entity, it is perceived as a city in motion a three-dimensional construct of incremental development. The Kinetic City is temporary in nature and often built with recycled material: plastic sheets, scrap metal, canvas, and wood. It constantly modifies and reinvents itself. The Kinetic Cities perceived not as architecture, but in terms of spaces which hold associative values and supportive lives. Patterns of occupation determine its form and perception. It is an indigenous urbanism that has its particular "local" logic. It is not necessarily the city of the poor, as most images might suggest; rather, it is a temporal articulation and occupation of space which not only creates a richer sensibility of spatial occupation but also suggests how spatial limits are expanded to include formally unimagined situations in dense urban conditions.'

Rahul Mehrota in Negotiating the Static + Kinetic Cities: The Emergent Urbanism of Mumbai

Team Gunday seeks to explore the changing role of the architect in the expanding city, rejecting nostalgia for the traditional Indian village, embracing the contradictions of contemporary Indian culture and acknowledging a new urban paradigm characterized by strange adjacencies, rapid expansion, form following finance, unreflecting progress, imperfect and irrational. Team Gunday seeks to challenge the traditional role of architect as creator of quaint typologies and charming streets and ultimately raises more questions than it answers.

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PROCESS

The initial weeks of analysis gave an overall picture of Ahmedabad as a rapidly expanding, politically complex, thriving city, as well as revealing some particular challenges for the site at Gota – in this context, we understood that normal rules may not apply. A key characteristic of the city as we saw it were the strange contrasts and contradictions which are fundamental to Indian culture – towers against slums, men in suits kneeling at shrines, a Subway next door to a Punjabi grill, cows and cars sharing the streets, Ganesh next to Hrithik Roshan.

As a literal meeting point between the old village fabric of dense houses (Gota village) and new tower development, the site was understood as contested ground, pulled in different directions by different groups with different (sometime incompatible) visions for the future. Given this situation we felt that a homogeneous masterplan could not be applied and we instead we began to produce manifestos (regularly revised) which gave us some general rules and strategies with which to approach the project.

Having created typologies - our first 'input' as architects - alongside an imagined developer matrix, we were able to propose scenarios which featured a mix of housing for different plots across the site. We created one scenario, criticized it and identified problems: for instance, in the first run through, our masterplan was seen as being too top down with too little integration between housing types – a too-accurate version of what is going wrong in many parts of the city. Each time we created another version of Gota 2040, moving back and forth on the timeline to look at when key decisions could be made, how adequate densities would be achieved, when roads

could be built, how and when settlements might evolve, who could make decisions and what was under threat, postulating mechanisms for its improvement.

In the latest scenario the main owner of the empty site creates parcels of land, sold off at different stages to different developers, who are free to build as they please (as economy dictates). Our second input was via a series of community organizations (with the architect as one consultant amongst many), who protected certain interests – industry, public space, streets, ecology and commerce. Through a series of small gains and adjustments the simple intention is to make the place better. The result is not an ideal city but a robust - improved - version of the city we saw around us.

Unsurprisingly, this approach raises many questions and provides few answers – how far can the architect work? Who builds the roads? How to make architectural drawings of spaces which grow in sequence? What does a CAD-line indicate in the Indian city, which knows no exact boundaries? Who maintains public spaces? What are the limits to expansion? Can shopping malls and slums co-exist peacefully? Can plots be divided in such a way that there are always small residual spaces fit for adoption by a shrine or vendor? Who protects ecologies? Does a plot layout constitute a masterplan? Can small groups ever overcome the powers of big money? Can big developers ever fully subdue the Indian impulse for entrepreneurship and (mis)appropriation? And, ultimately, what are our prospects and duties as young architects in these expanding cities?

GUNDAY MANIFESTO

-

- 1 POPULATION IS NEITHER IMMEDIATE NOR STABLE**
- 2 ACTIVATE THE SITE IMMEDIATELY + INHABIT GRADUALLY**
- 3 MIXED TYPOLOGIES ENCOURAGE MIXED COMMUNITIES**
- 4 STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS WHICH FACILITATE
GROWTH + ADAPTATION**
- 5 PLAN FOR 'MAXIMUM CAPACITY'**
- 6 DENSITY DONE WELL**
- 7 PROTECT + CONNECT OPEN SPACE AROUND FLORA**
- 8 ACCOMMODATE EXISTING FAMILIES**
- 9 CONSOLIDATE EXISTING INDUSTRY**
- 10 COLLECT, REDUCE, REUSE + RECYCLE WATER**
- 11 BUILD CATALYSTS**
- 12 COMMERCE, INDUSTRY, RECREATION + HOMES MAKE
VIBRANT (24-HOUR) HABITATS**
- 13 MAKE NETWORKS WITH + CONNECTIONS TO
NEIGHBOURING COMMUNITIES**
- 14 COST-EFFECTIVE CONSTRUCTION
+ COMMUNITY INVESTMENT**

-

REVISED
GUNDAY MANIFESTO

- 1 POPULATION IS NEITHER IMMEDIATE NOR STABLE
- ~~2 ACTIVATE THE SITE IMMEDIATELY + INHABIT GRADUALLY~~
SITE DEVELOPS IN PARALLEL, GRADUALLY
OCCUR NATURALLY
- 3 MIXED TYPOLOGIES ~~ENCOURAGE MIXED COMMUNITIES~~
- 4 STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS WHICH FACILITATE
GROWTH + ADAPTATION
- 5 PLAN FOR 'MAXIMUM CAPACITY'
- 6 DENSITY DONE WELL
- FOR EACH PLOT, CREATE EXISTING
7 ~~PROTECT + CONNECT~~ OPEN SPACE AROUND FLORA
+ JUSTIFY REMOVING ANY MATURE TREES
- 8 ACCOMMODATE EXISTING FAMILIES
- ~~9 CONSOLIDATE EXISTING INDUSTRY~~
- 10 COLLECT, REDUCE, REUSE + RECYCLE WATER
MAKE SPACES FOR
11 ~~BUILD CATALYSTS~~
- 12 COMMERCE, INDUSTRY, RECREATION + HOMES MAKE
VIBRANT (24-HOUR) HABITATS
- 13 MAKE NETWORKS WITH + CONNECTIONS TO
NEIGHBOURING COMMUNITIES
- 14 COST-EFFECTIVE CONSTRUCTION
+ COMMUNITY INVESTMENT
- 15 ASSIST + IMPROVE DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES
- 16 FOCUS YOUR EFFORTS (ON FIGHTS YOU CAN WIN)
- 17 MASTERPLAN ENSURES SOME SHARED SPACES
(LEAVE SOME PLOTS OPEN)
- 17 SMALL SHARED SPACES COMPLEMENT BIG URBAN SPACES

FINAL

GUNDAY MANIFESTO

(PRINCIPLES FOR WORKING IN THE EXPANDING CITY)

RULES + FRAMEWORKS NOT BRICKS + MORTAR

NO SINGLE FUNCTIONS ON ANY SITE

PROTECT ECOLOGIES

MAKE GOOD STREETS

STRUCTURES FOR FLEXIBILITY + ADAPTATION

STRENGTHEN EXISTING INDUSTRY
(WORKING, LIVING, COMMERCE + RECREATION =
SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES)

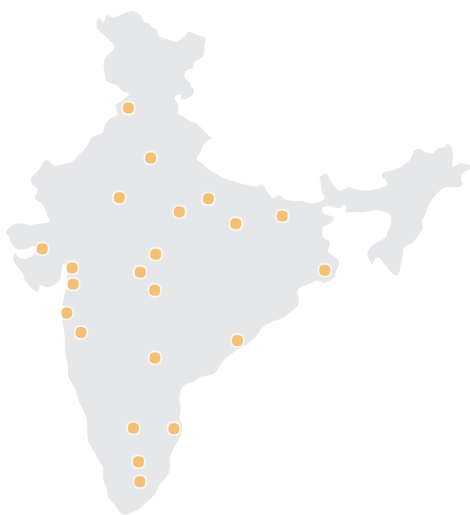
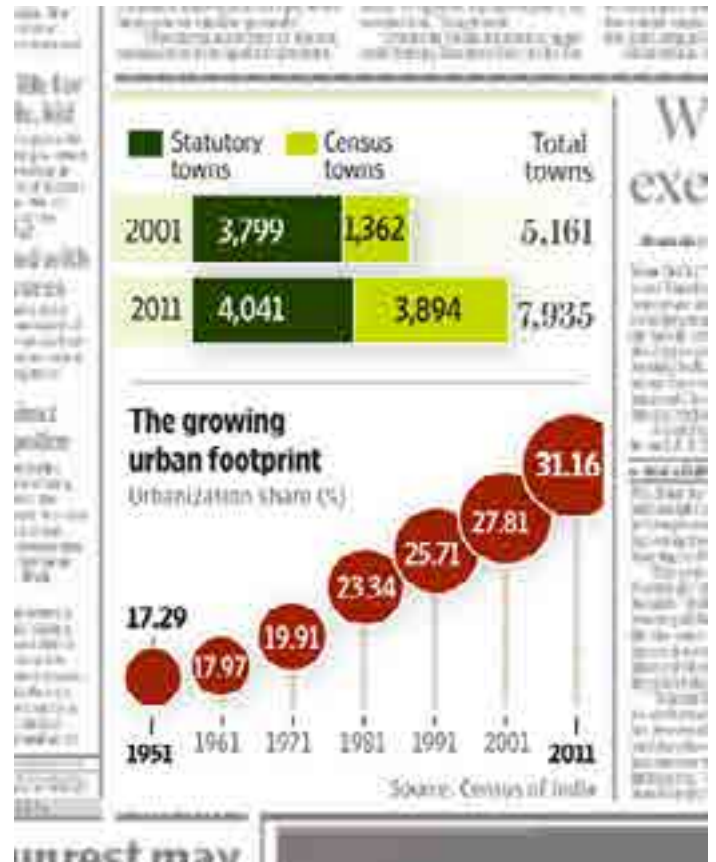
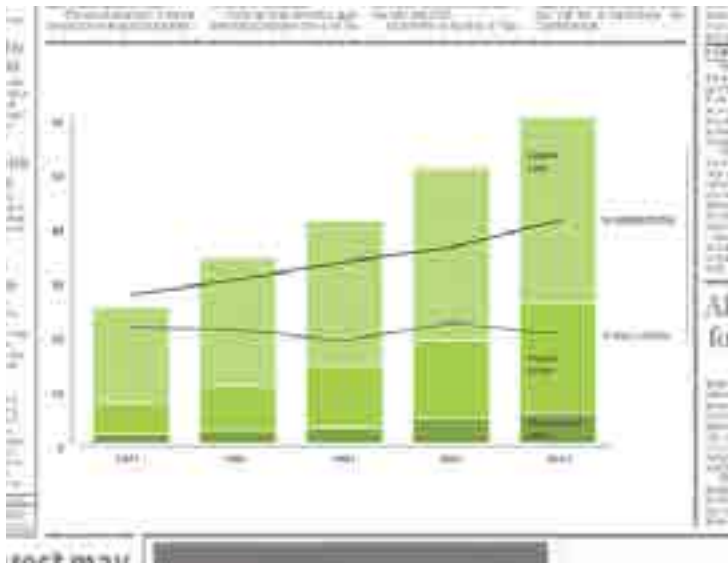
EXPECT + ACCOMMODATE EMERGING
INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

MEDIATE BETWEEN DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES

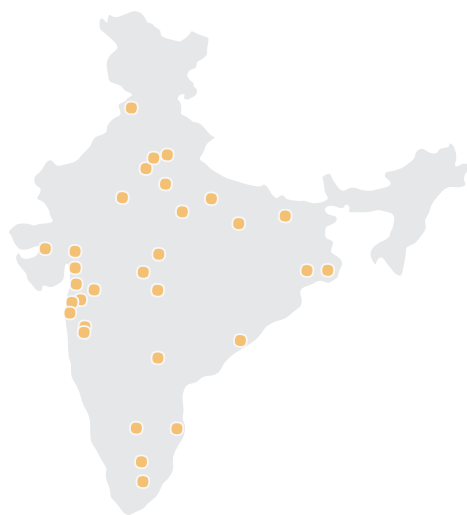
ANALYSIS

INDIA

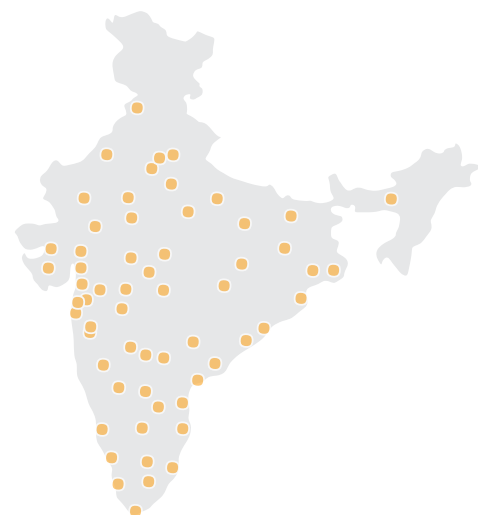
We are working in a time of rapidly expanding urban centers and in a time of climate change. City expansion is simultaneously formal and deliberate - the monotonous cityscape of apartment blocks - and informal and unthinking. The adjacencies and conflicts created where these two urban fabrics meet (and cultures, ideologies) is the key potential of the expanding Indian city.



1991



2001

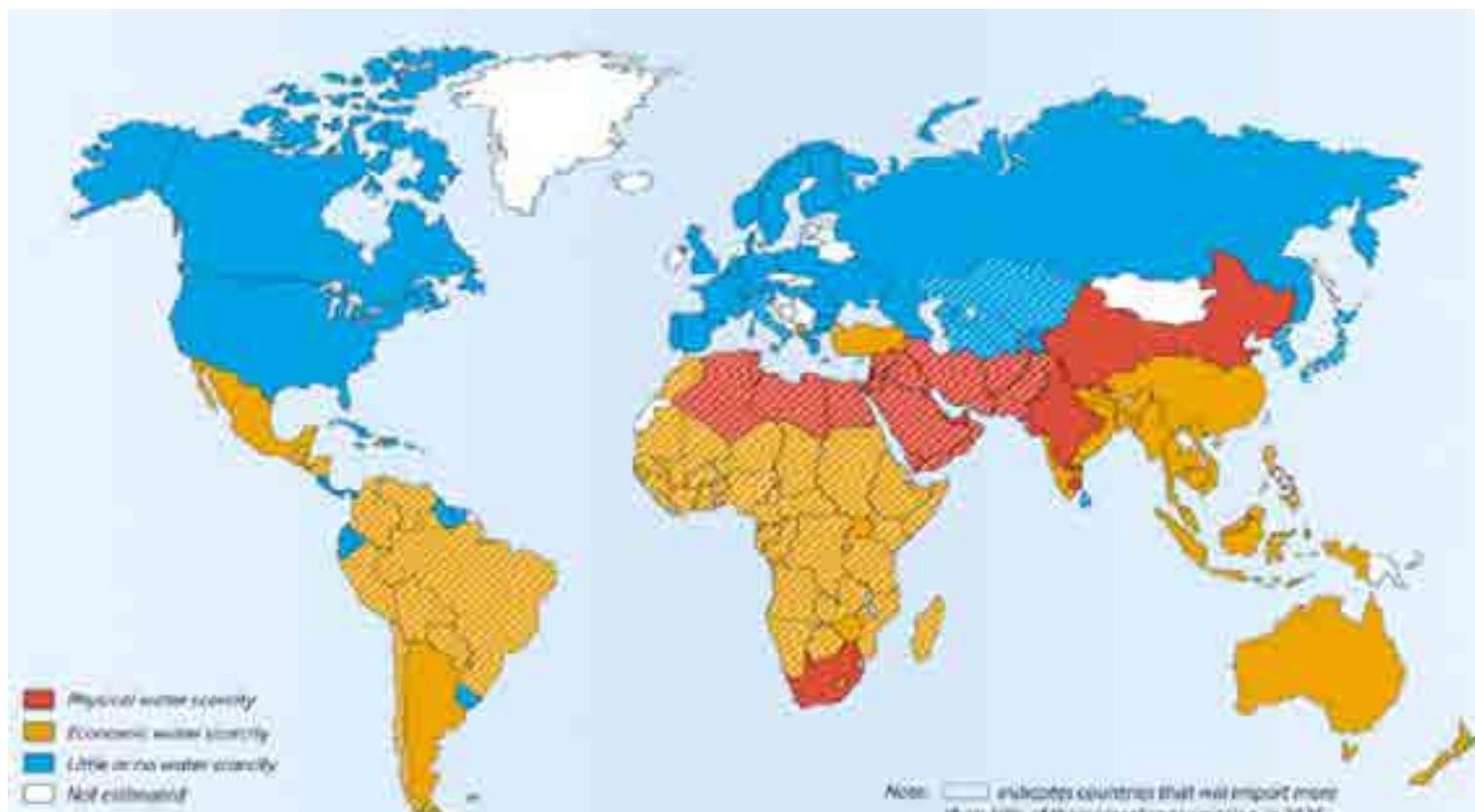


2011

number of cities in India with over 1 million inhabitants

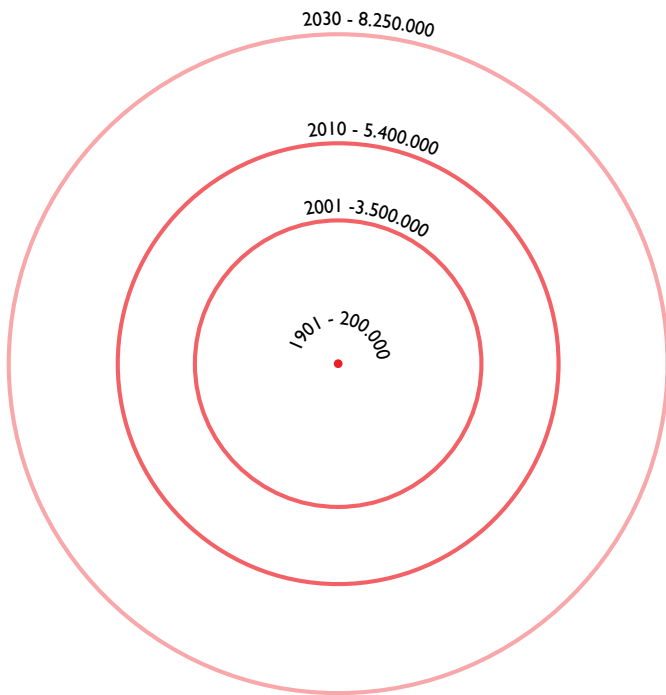


climate change vulnerability

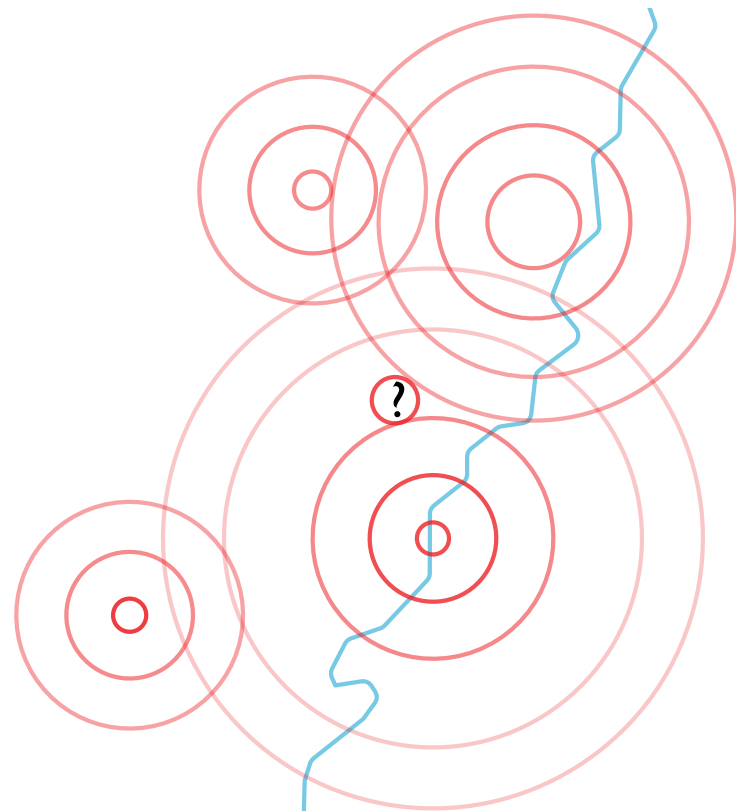


projected water scarcity in 20 years

AHMEDABAD



asia's third fastest growing city



gota situated in a cluster of cities



ahmedabad is historically a city supported by villages



which are being encroached by ahmedabads rapid expansion



expansion of Ahmedabad is developer led

CONTRADICTIONS OF THE INDIAN CITY

‘made manifest in architecture and urban landscape’



tradition versus modernity



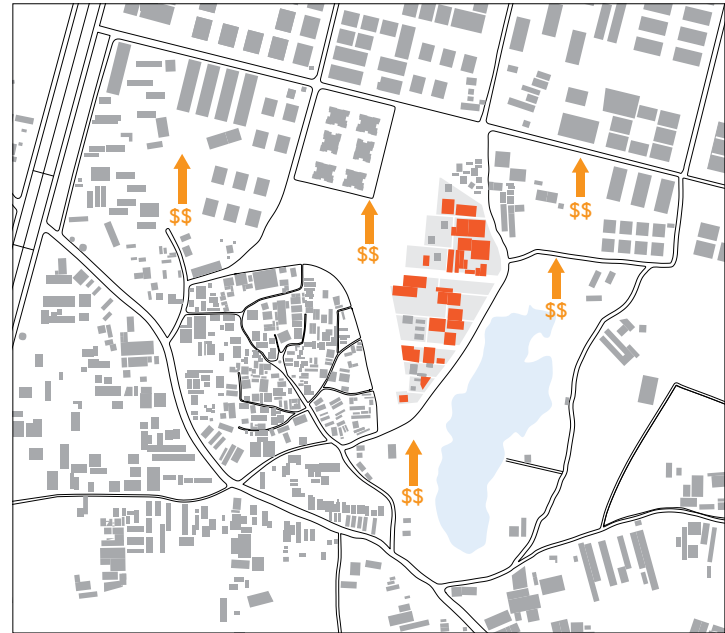
informal versus formal



Mehotra's kinetic city: build form is just backdrop to complex, dynamic, urban life

BATTLEGROUND GOTA

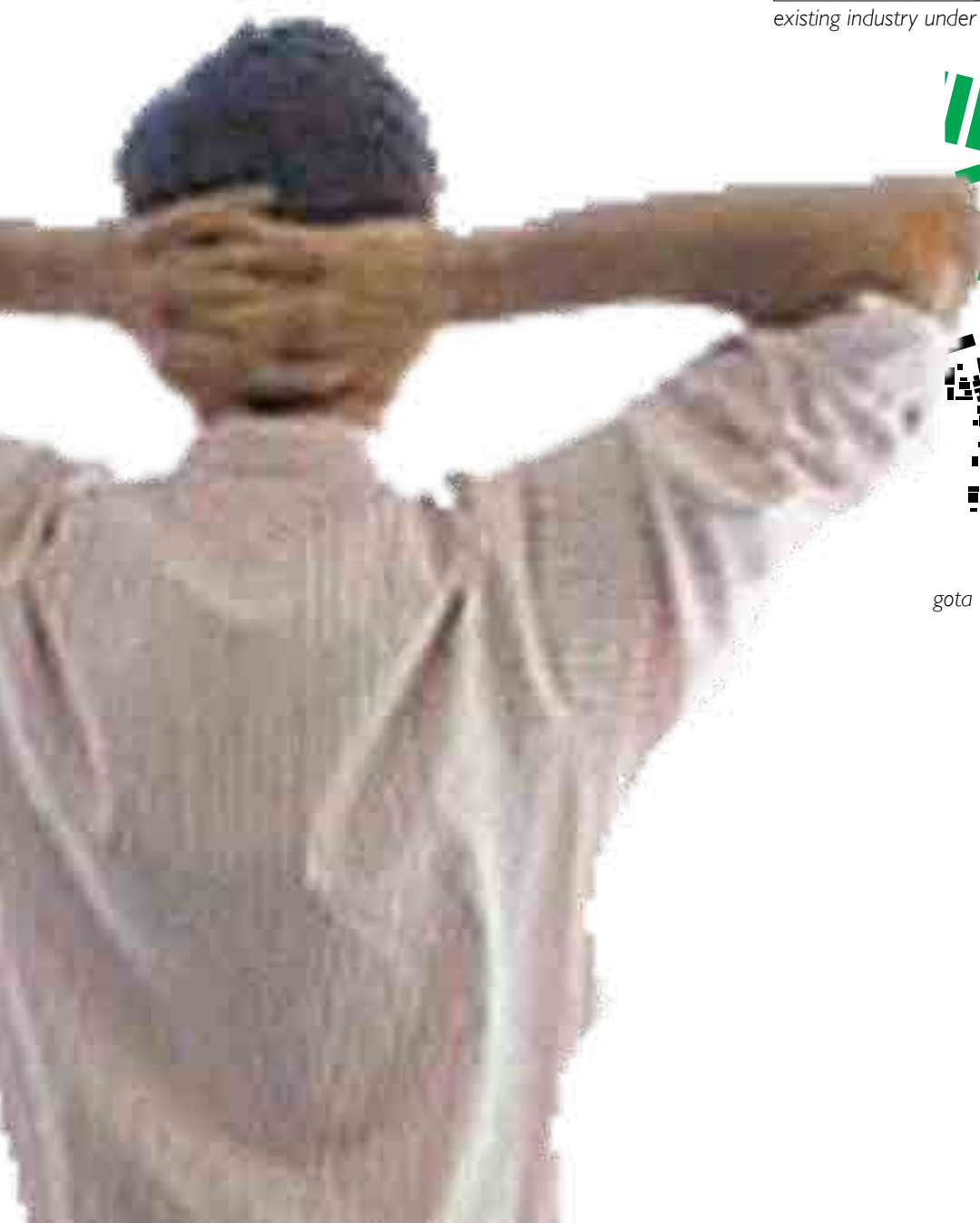
Our analysis of the site at Gota revealed complex ownership systems, industrial and community networks as well as many interested parties (local and municipal) making a single masterplan difficult to impose.

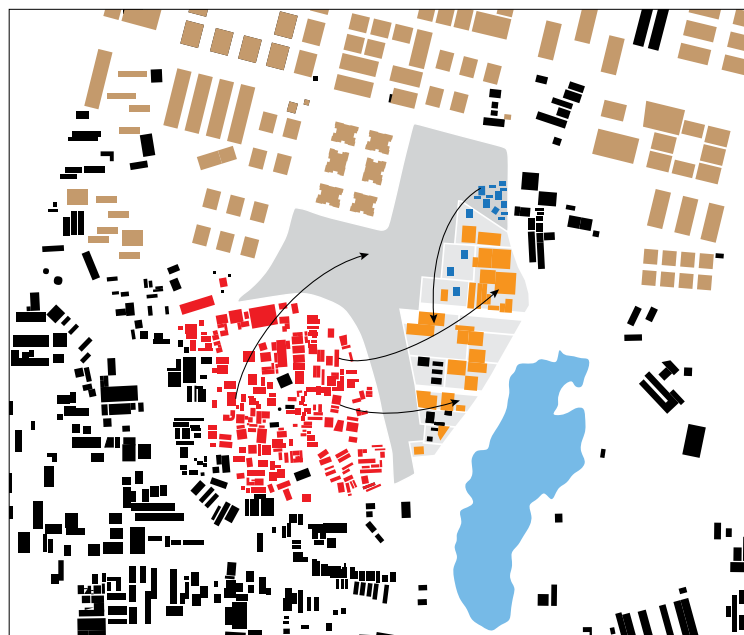


existing industry under pressure because of rising landprices



gota on boundary between old and new developments

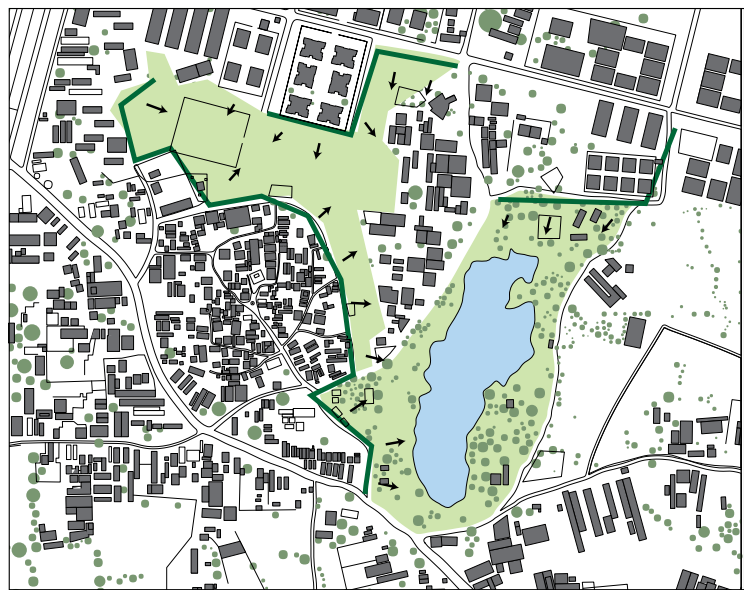




complex power structures, connections and ownership of land



gota lake under (developer) pressure



ecology under pressure



how will this turn out



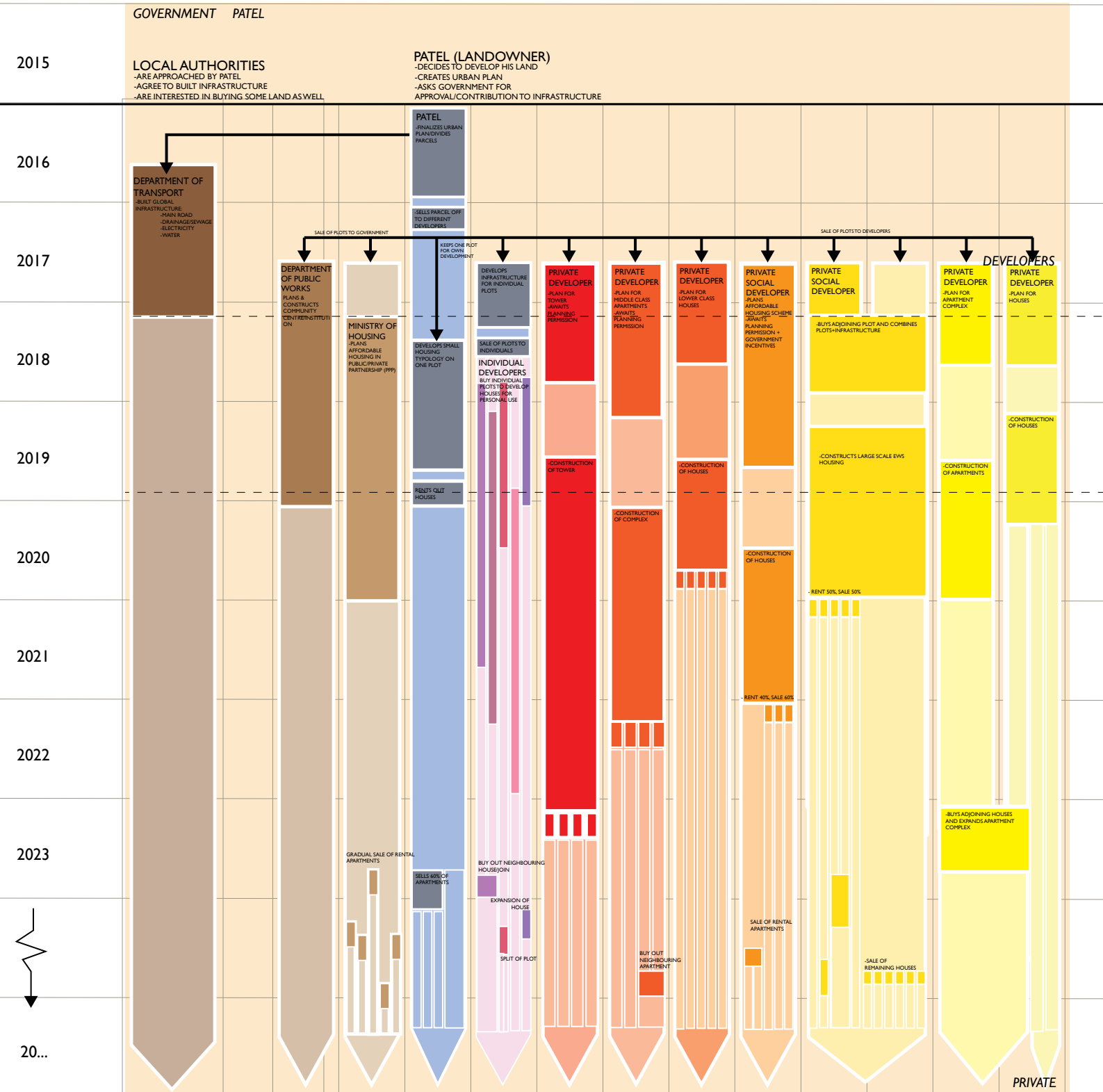
SCENARIO

-GOTA 2014-2040-

**AN (UN)NATURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTORTED BY COMMUNITY
PARTICIPATION, RULES, PRESSURE GROUPS, PROTEST, ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

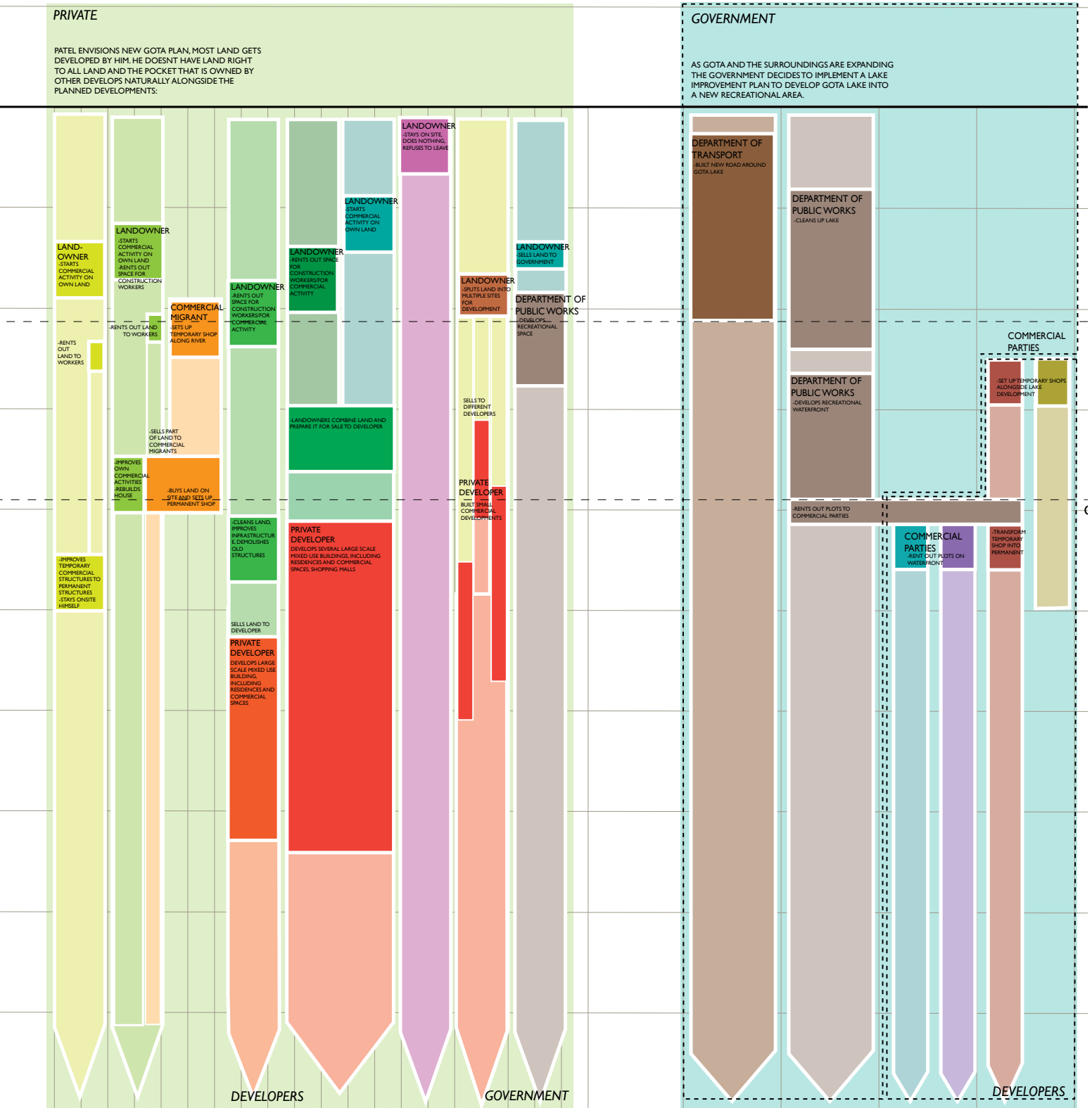
DIFFERENT DEVELOPERS..

NEW GOTA

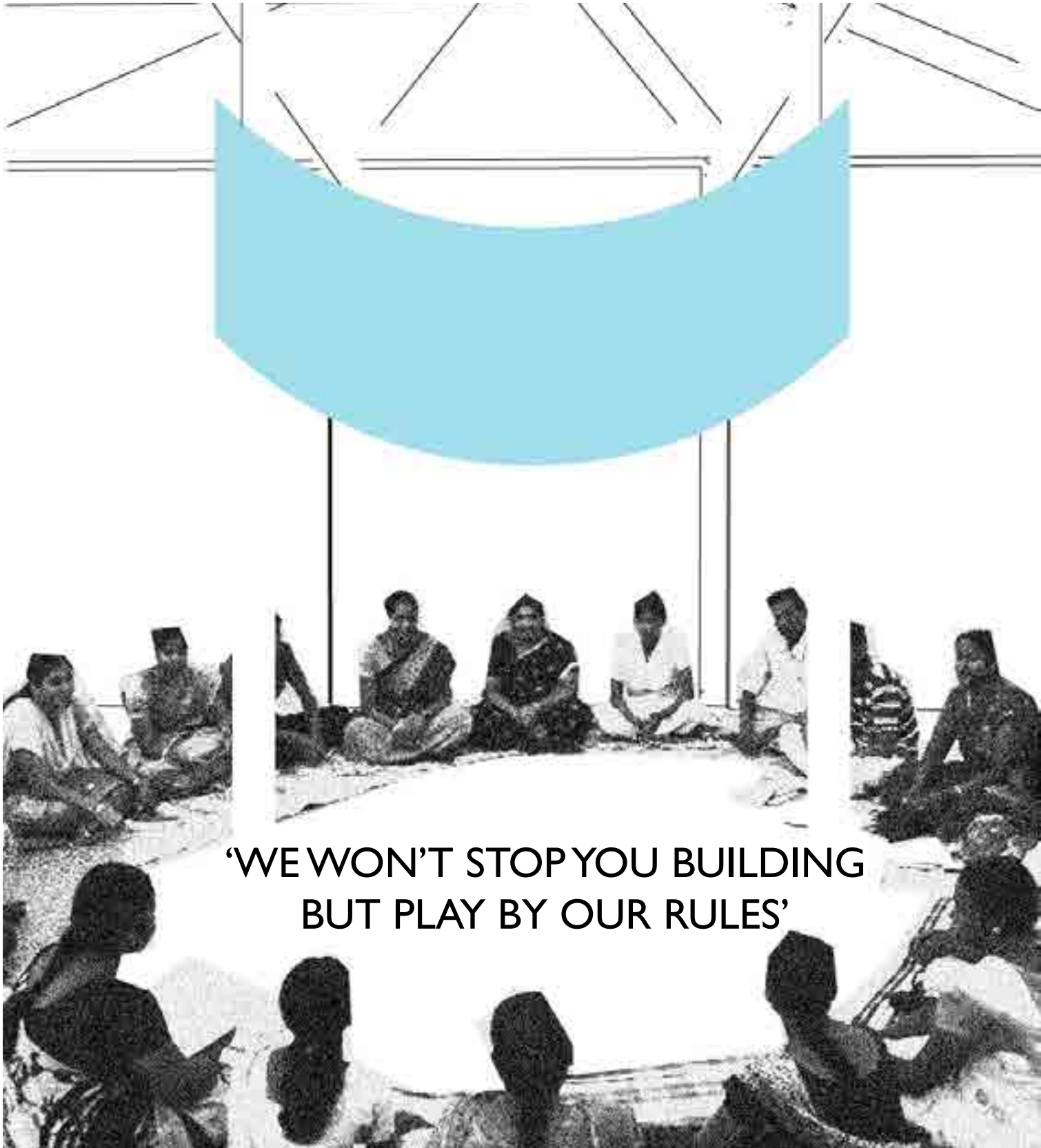


EXISTING DEVELOPMENT

GOTA LAKE

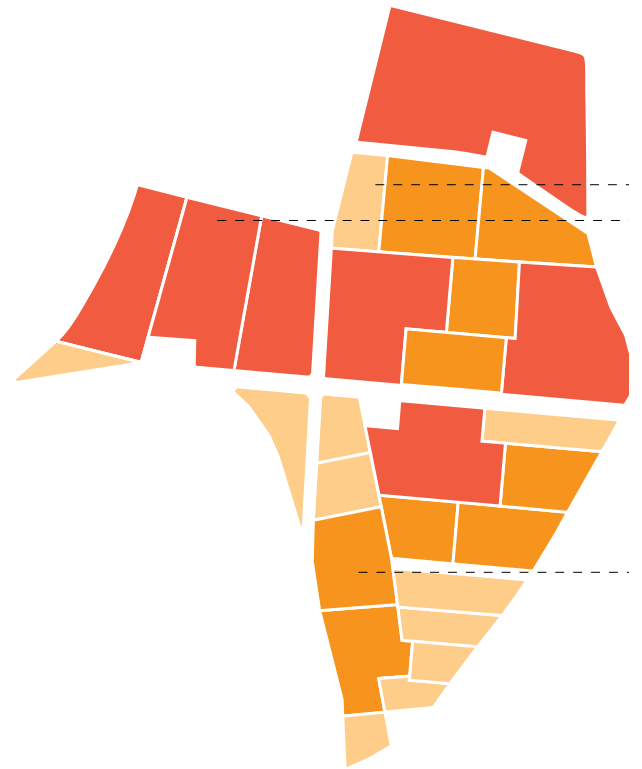
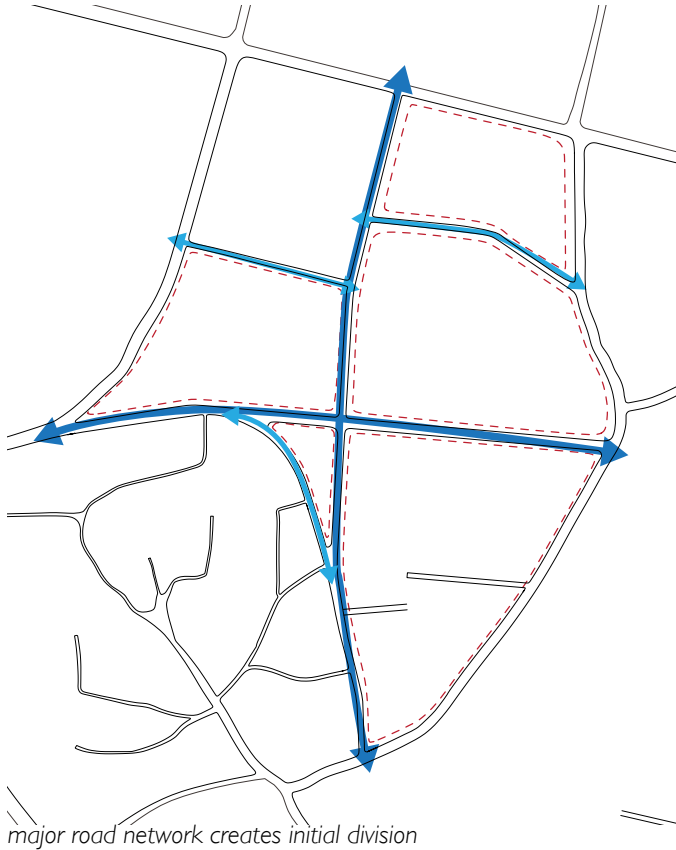


PRESSURIZED BY COMMUNITY GROUPS...

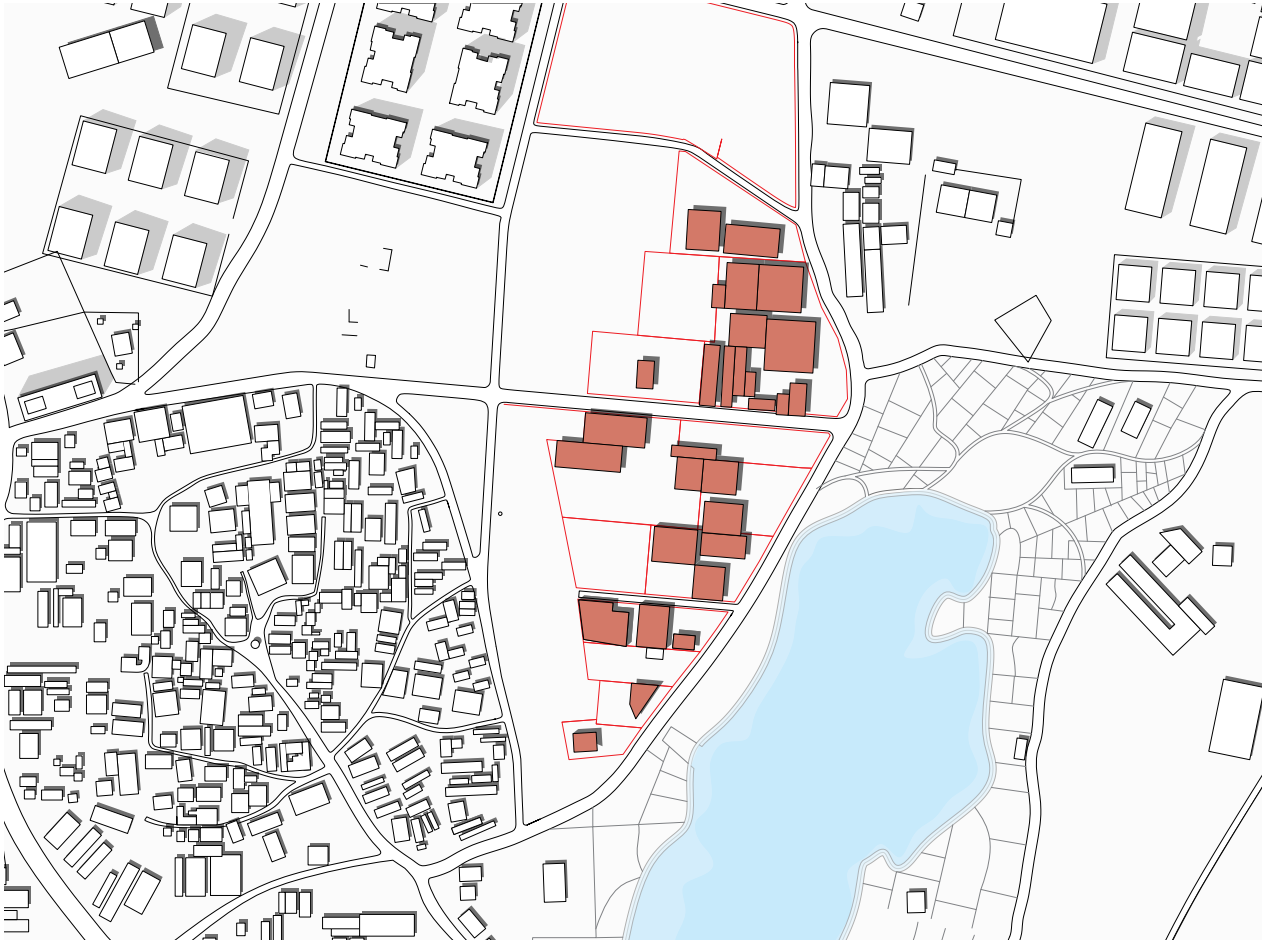


**‘WE WON’T STOP YOU BUILDING
BUT PLAY BY OUR RULES’**

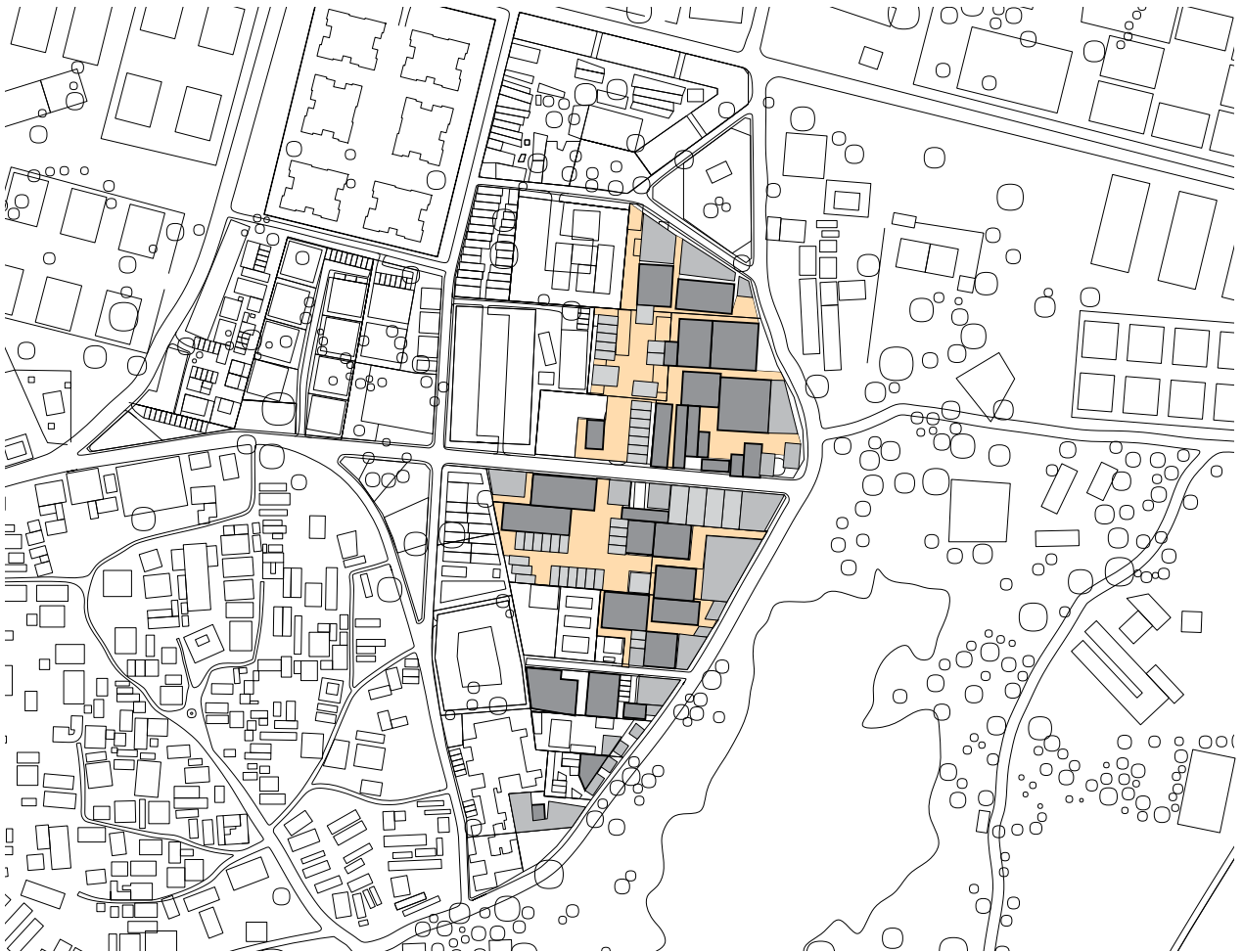
LEAD TO A GOTA 2040 SCENARIO:



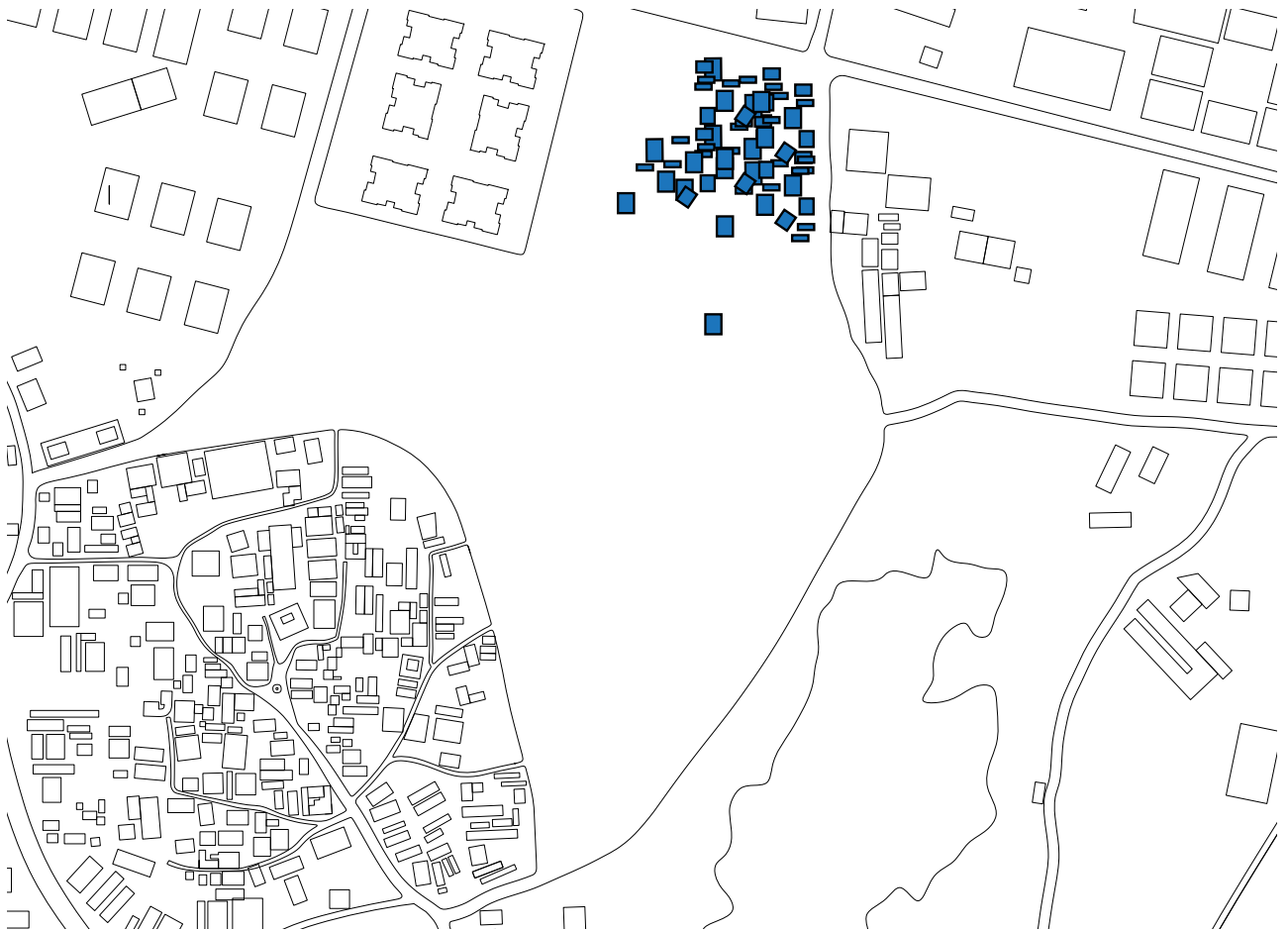
OVERVIEW



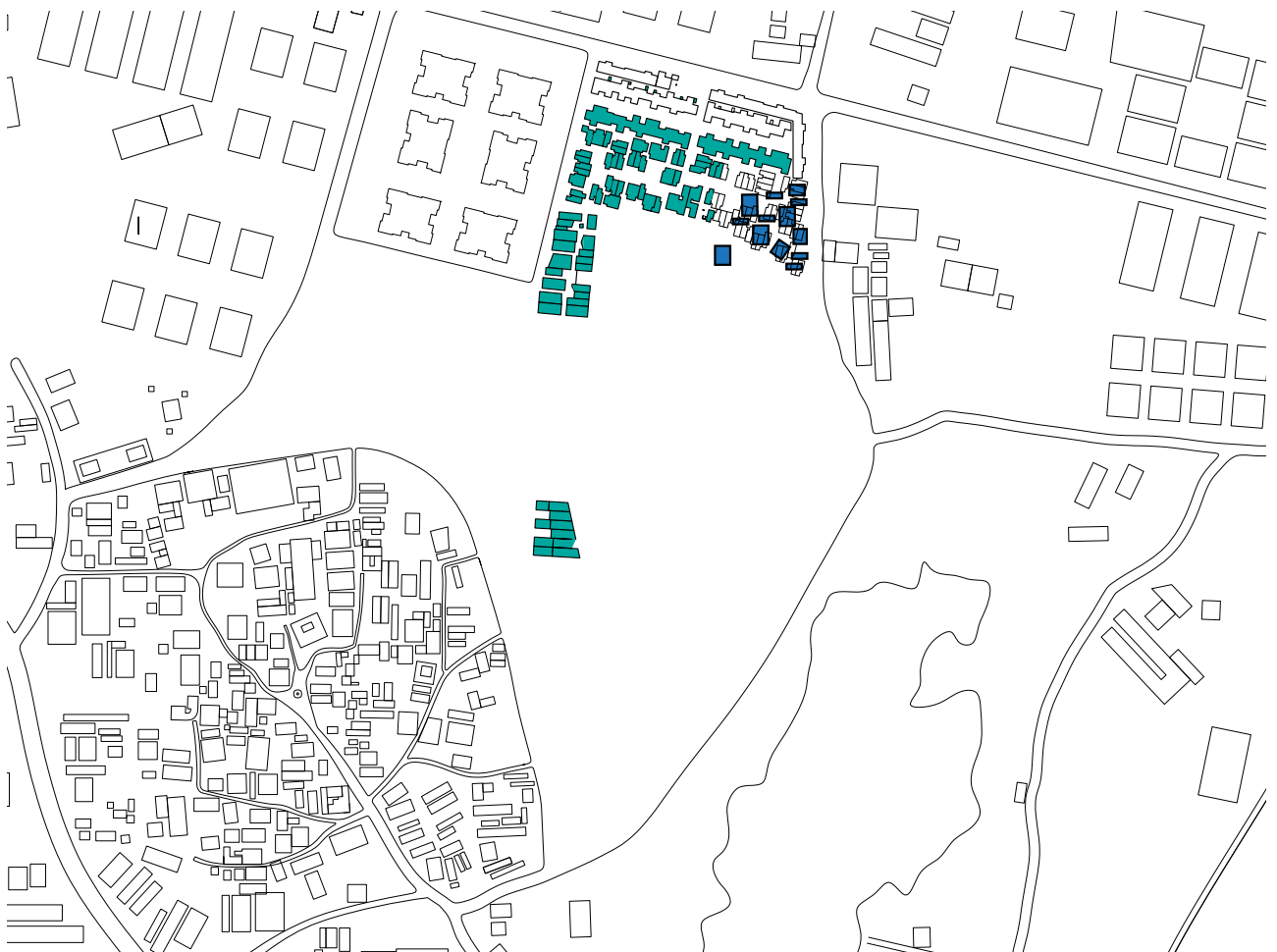
existing industry remains



strengthened and integrated into site



informal housing on site remains



but gets improved or relocated

GOTA 2040



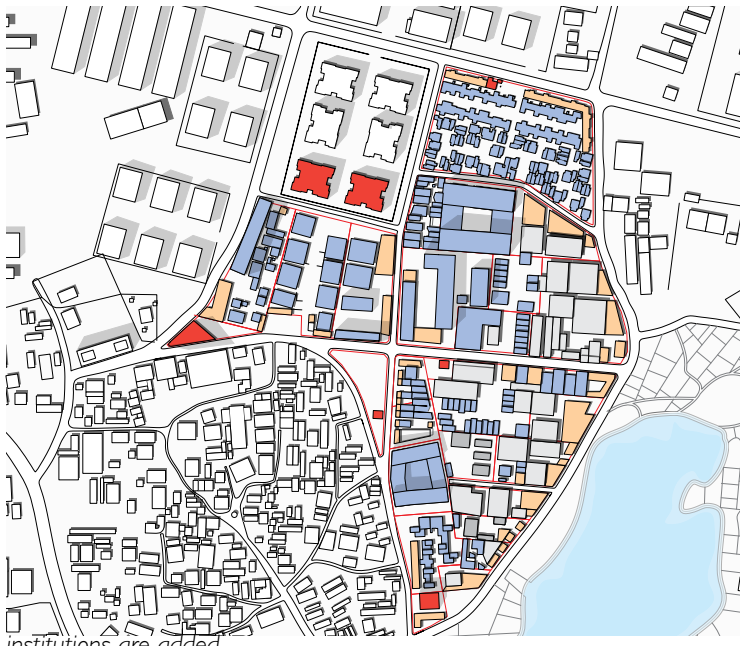




site divided into various sized plots



commercial space added along main roads



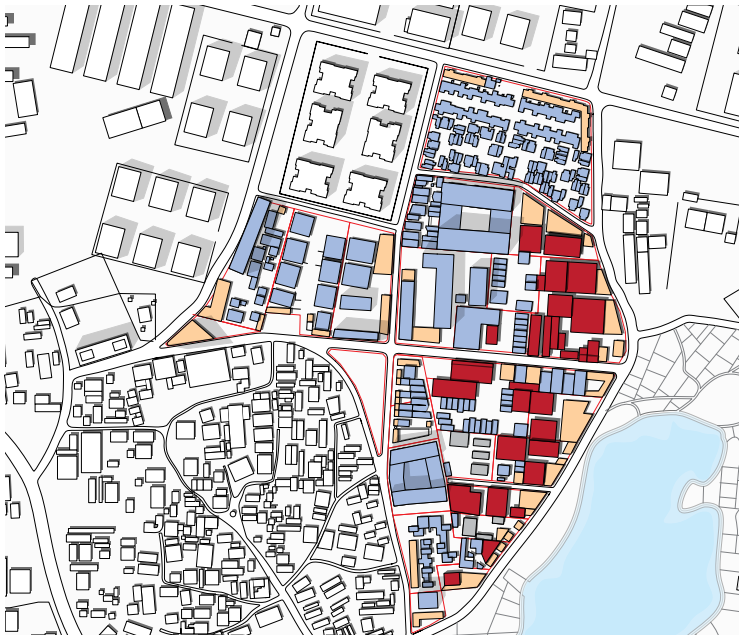
institutions are added



green and public space fill up open space



new residential buildings added



industry improves and remains

CASE STUDIES



GOTA INDUSTRY

In our initial scenario the loose industrial units were entirely displaced due to rising land values adjacent to the lake and a lack of collective organization or modernization. As a way of countering this, we envisaged the creation of a 'Gota Industrial Village,' led by a group of existing business owners and employees. Through the collective action of the group the industrial facilities improve and businesses adapt, whilst rising land values put pressure on the area to densify, thus creating a working-living district on the site.



existing industry on valuable land



industry case studies on site



will be replaced if no measures are taken to retain it



F.G.I.

**‘WE WANT TO STAY,
YOU WANT YOUR JOBS... HOW CAN WE
ADAPT OUR BUSINESSES?’**

STRENGTHENING INDUSTRY



existing industry on site



commercial development on water front, main streets developed



access to expert input, catalyst institute for improvement



pressure on land forces gradual densification



industry connected and integrated on site by network of public spaces, housing developments, commercial activities



industry no longer an obstruction on site



isolated industry on site before improvement



waterfront before improvement



integrated industry after development, mixed with housing and commercial spaces



waterfront after development, a lively street with commercial storefront

AHMEDABADS FIRST SKATE-PARK

AN EXAMPLE OF THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

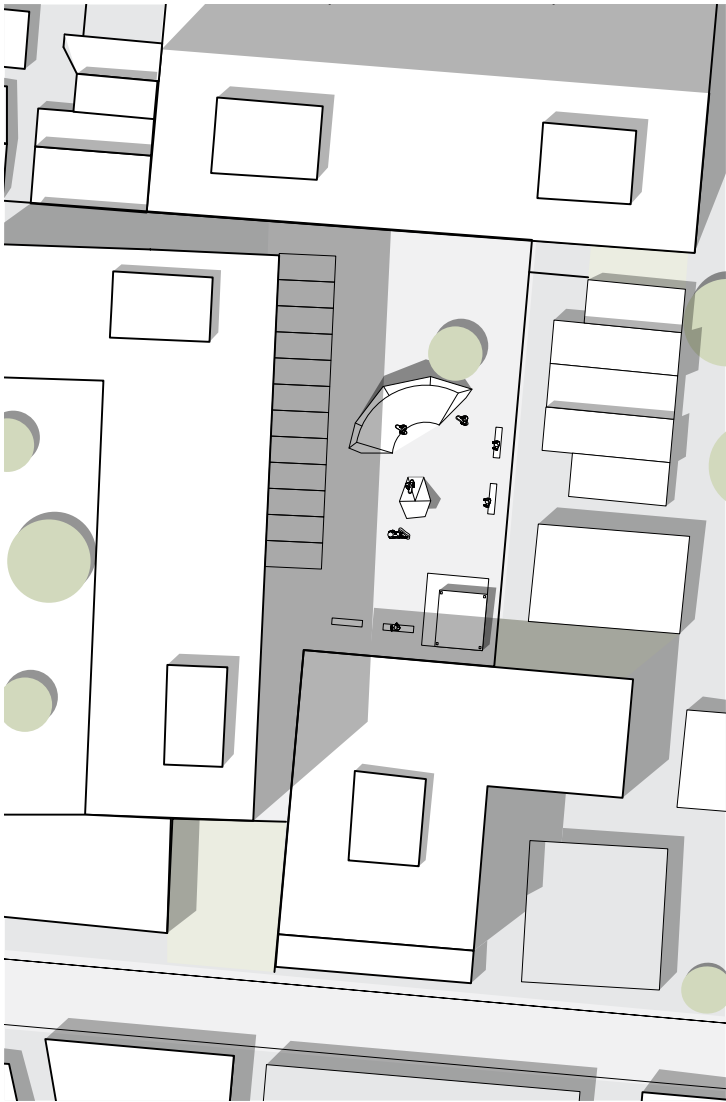
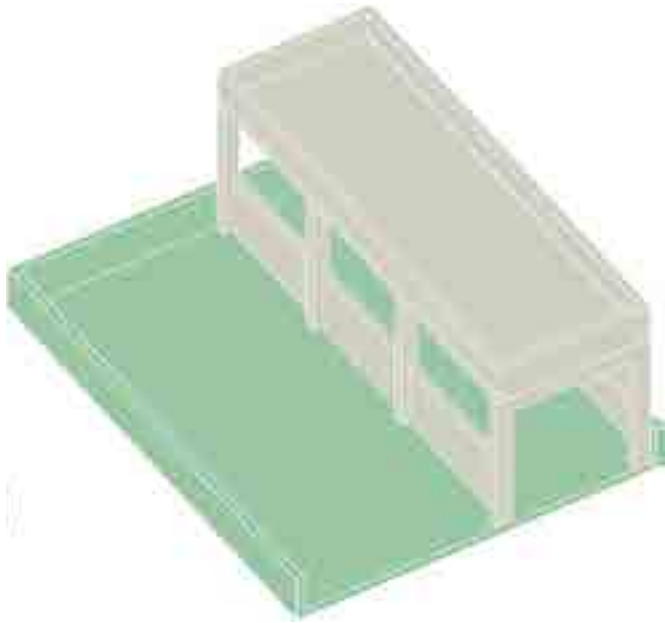
“THE CITY’S SKATE SCENE HAS BECOME AN UNLIKELY REFUGE FOR MORE THAN 100 SKATERS, MOSTLY HAILING FROM TWO OF THE CITY’S LARGEST DEMOGRAPHICS - STRESSED, YOUNG EDUCATED PROFESSIONALS + STREET KIDS LIVING IN MAKESHIFT HOUSING, EITHER IN SLUMS OR IN TENTS SET UP ON CONSTRUCTION SITES OR VACANT LOTS”

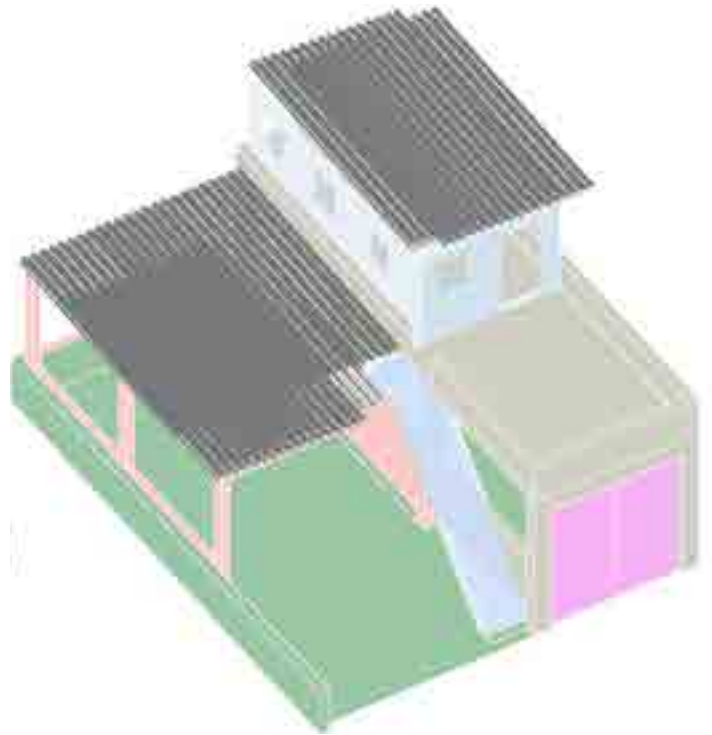
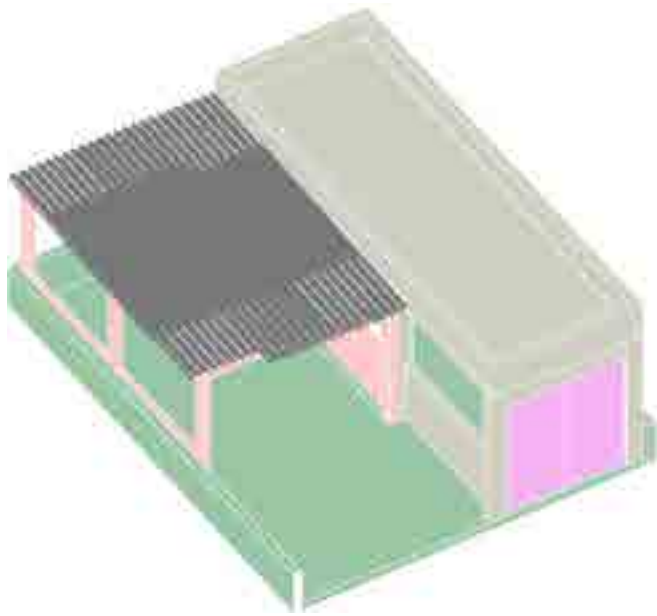
INDIA INK, NEW YORK TIMES, JANUARY 2014





Recognizing a growing culture, two young people buy a plot of land in the industrial village and invest in a small structure in which to produce skateboards, employing local wood craftsman and technical knowledge. The business expands alongside the skateboard, enabling housing to be built for employees and the expansion of the business to fill out the plot.





FLEXIBLE PUBLIC SPACE

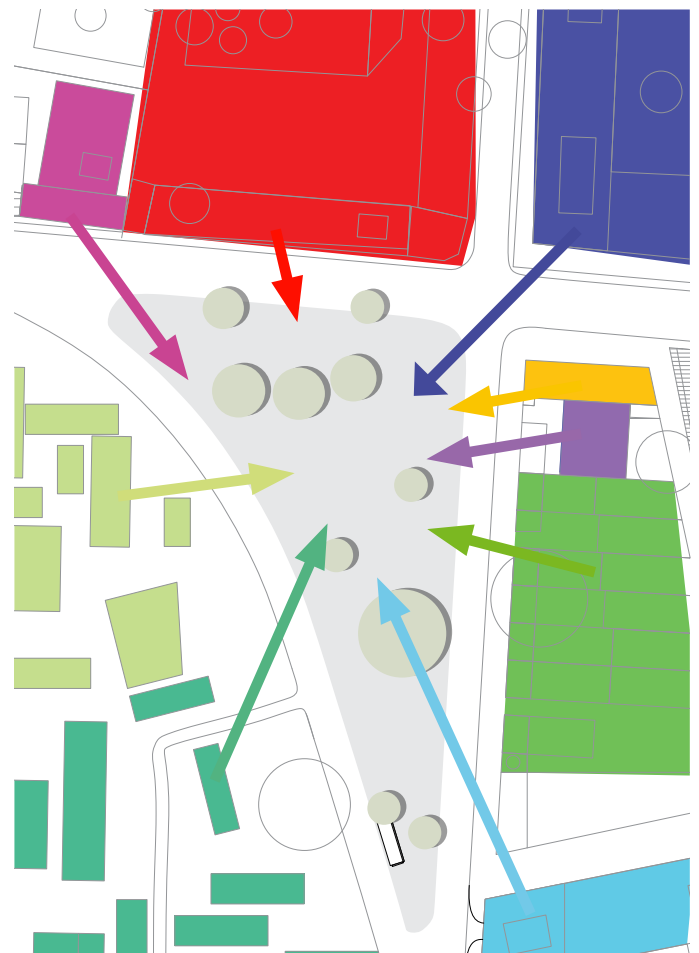
The triangle at the center of the site is a place rendered neutral by different businesses and residents on all sides. The site remains undeveloped as communal green space, with only small and temporary structures emerging and creating a congregation space at the heart of the new town.



temporary construction for a festival



case study fragment on site



empty plot contested and used by many different actors



G.V.G.S.

**‘WE ALL USE THIS SPACE
WHAT CAN WE AGREE ON?’**



the empty plot used informally



retaining space to play + to gather a the centre of the scheme



makeshift-structures to accommodate events



the gota village green after development, a space for everyone to use



evolve into community centre/temple



(+ occasional massed gatherings)

MAKING GOOD STREETS

A group concerned by blank-walled communities lobby the developers to make certain concessions to the public life of the street. Rules concerning the provision of green and commercial space on all streets regardless of size or location encourages developers to create good streets.



case study fragment on site



example of street gone wrong (gated communities)

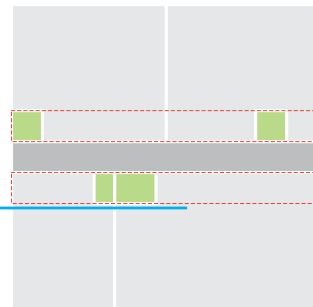


G.Q.S.C.

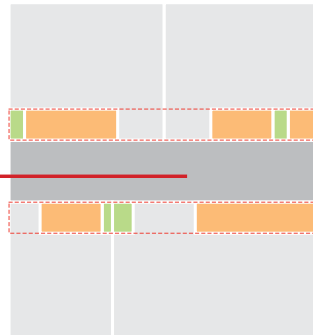
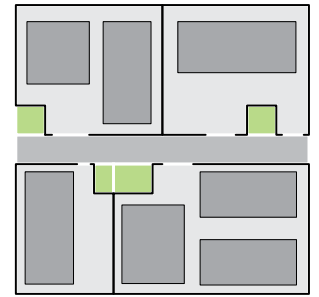
**‘WE DON’T WANT LONG WALLED
STREETS IN OUR DEVELOPMENT!’**



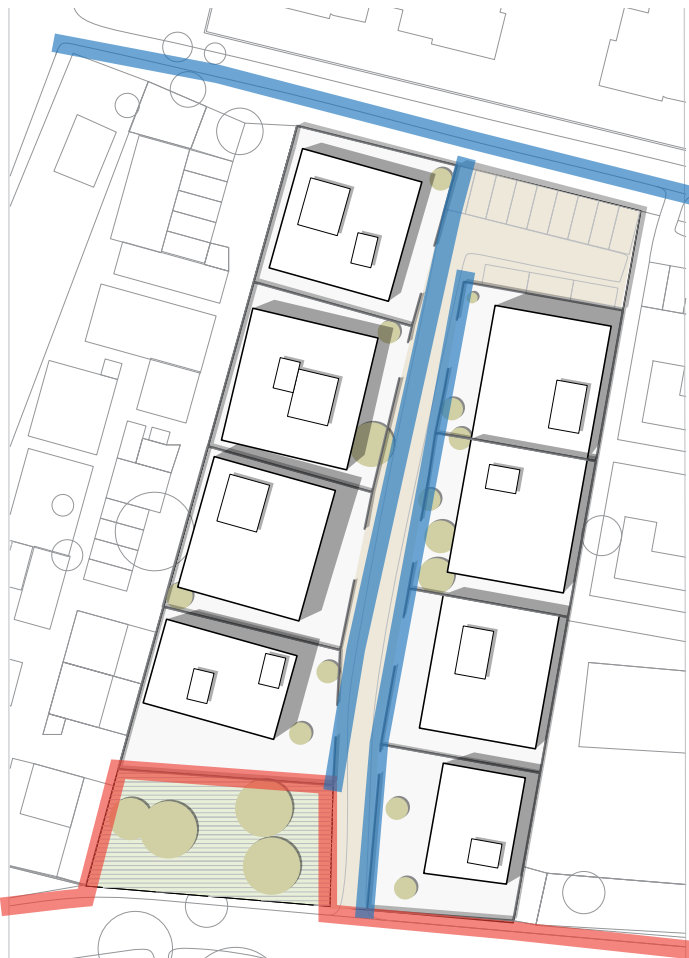
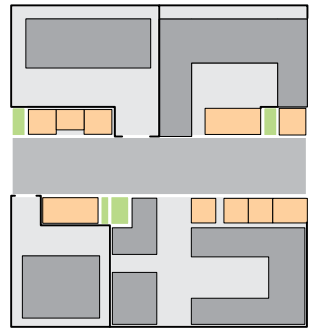
classification of streets



residential streets: 10% street frontage given to public space



main streets: 10% public space, 70% commercial street frontage



classification of streets



improved street after regulations



street before regulations (residential complexes fenced off)



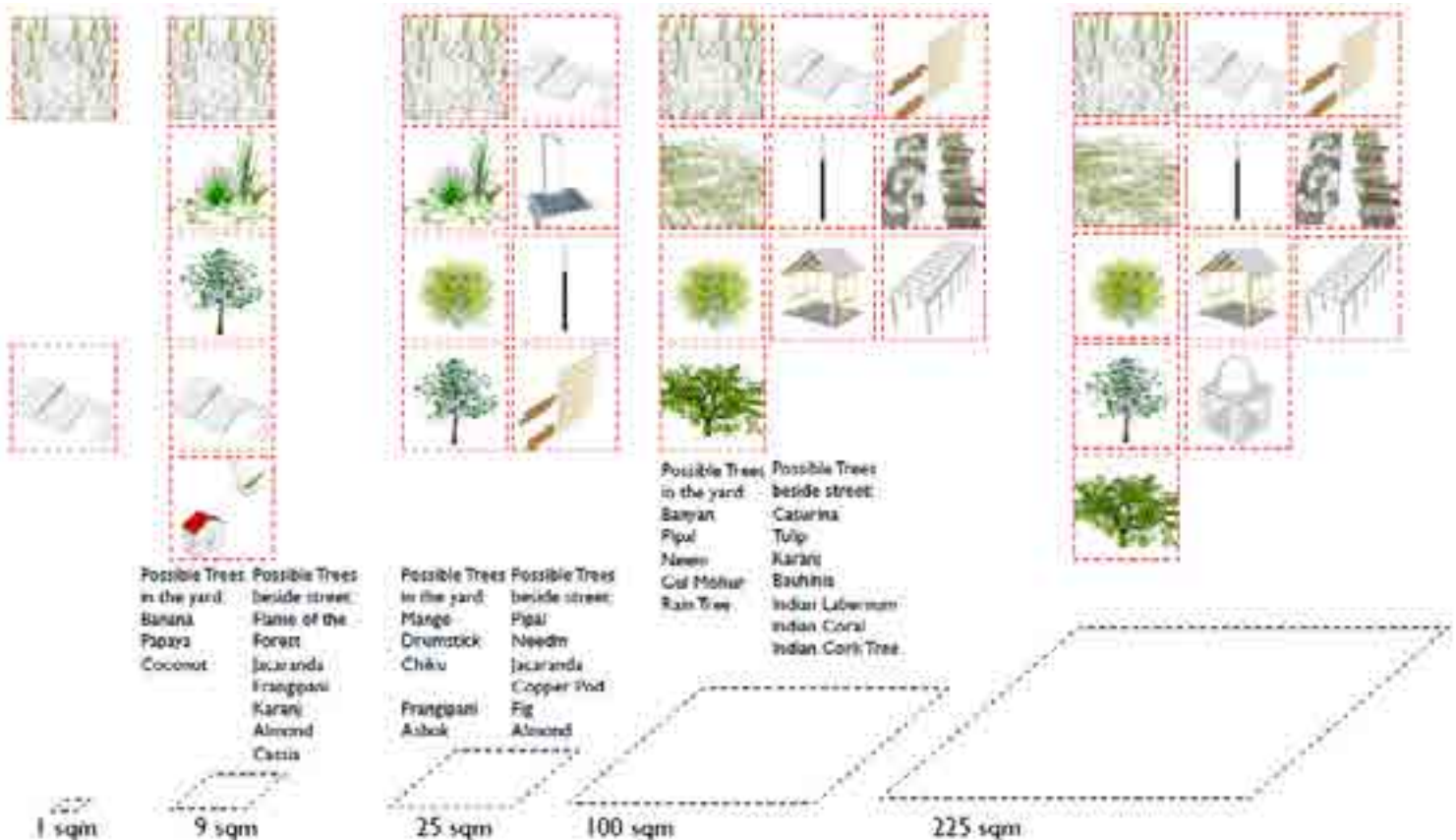
improved street after regulations

NETWORK OF GREEN SPACES

The rules on making good streets creates many green spaces across the site of various sizes creating a ecological network across the site linked alongside the main ecological feature of Gota Lake. These green spaces can then be adopted and used for different functions depending on size.



regulations result in many small public spaces



catalogus of projects possible on the different sized public spaces



G.G.S.N

**‘LET’S USE THESE SPACES FOR
SMALL PROJECTS!’**



crossing with a birdbox (9m²)



gardening, with standpipe (25m²)





ecomarket, farmers produce (100m²)



EDGES

Currently, the site boundaries which create forgotten spaces and poorly designed streets. At two points of the site the typologies are adjusted to create better boundaries which encourage movement between adjacent communities, including those which lie outside our site boundary.



case study fragments



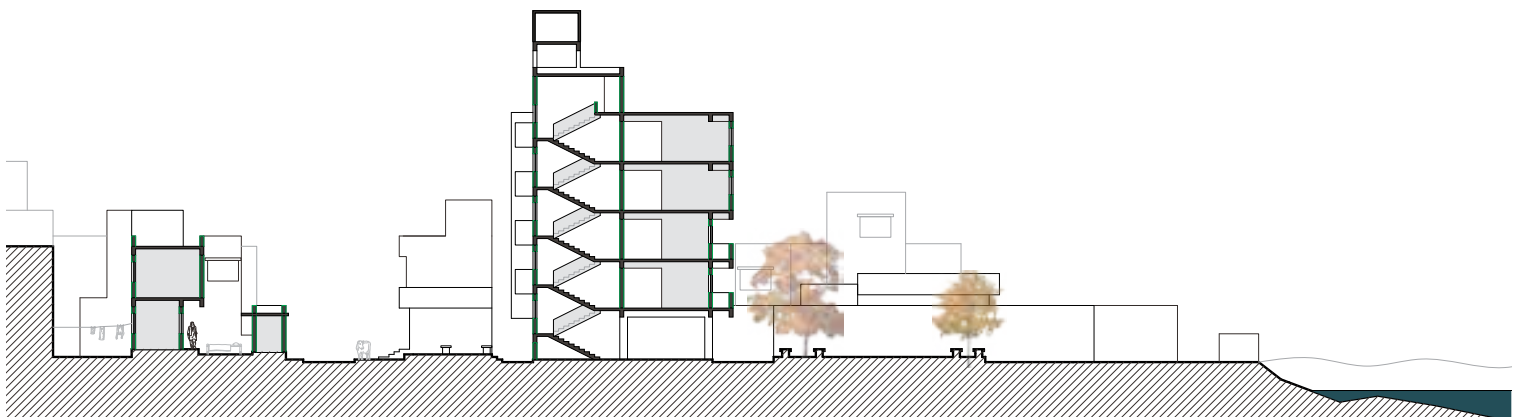
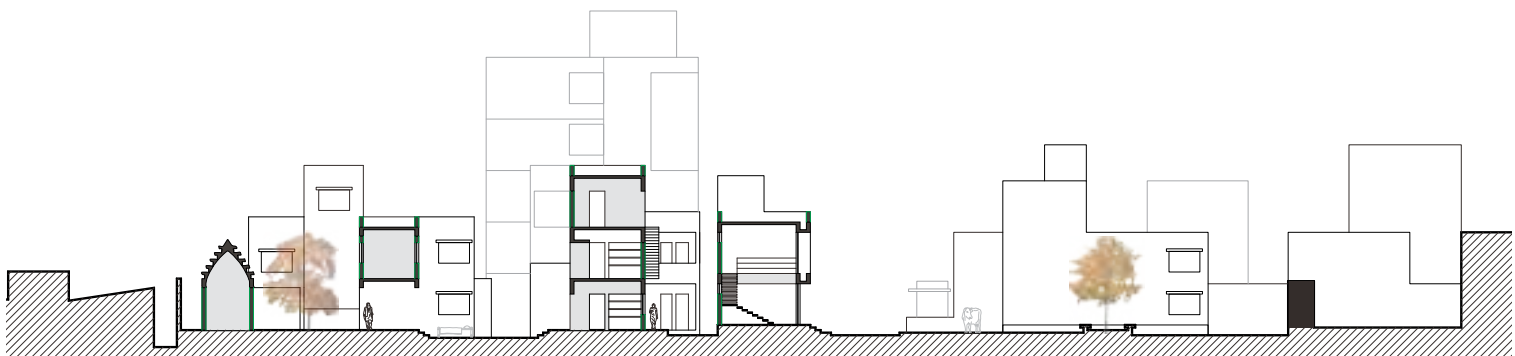
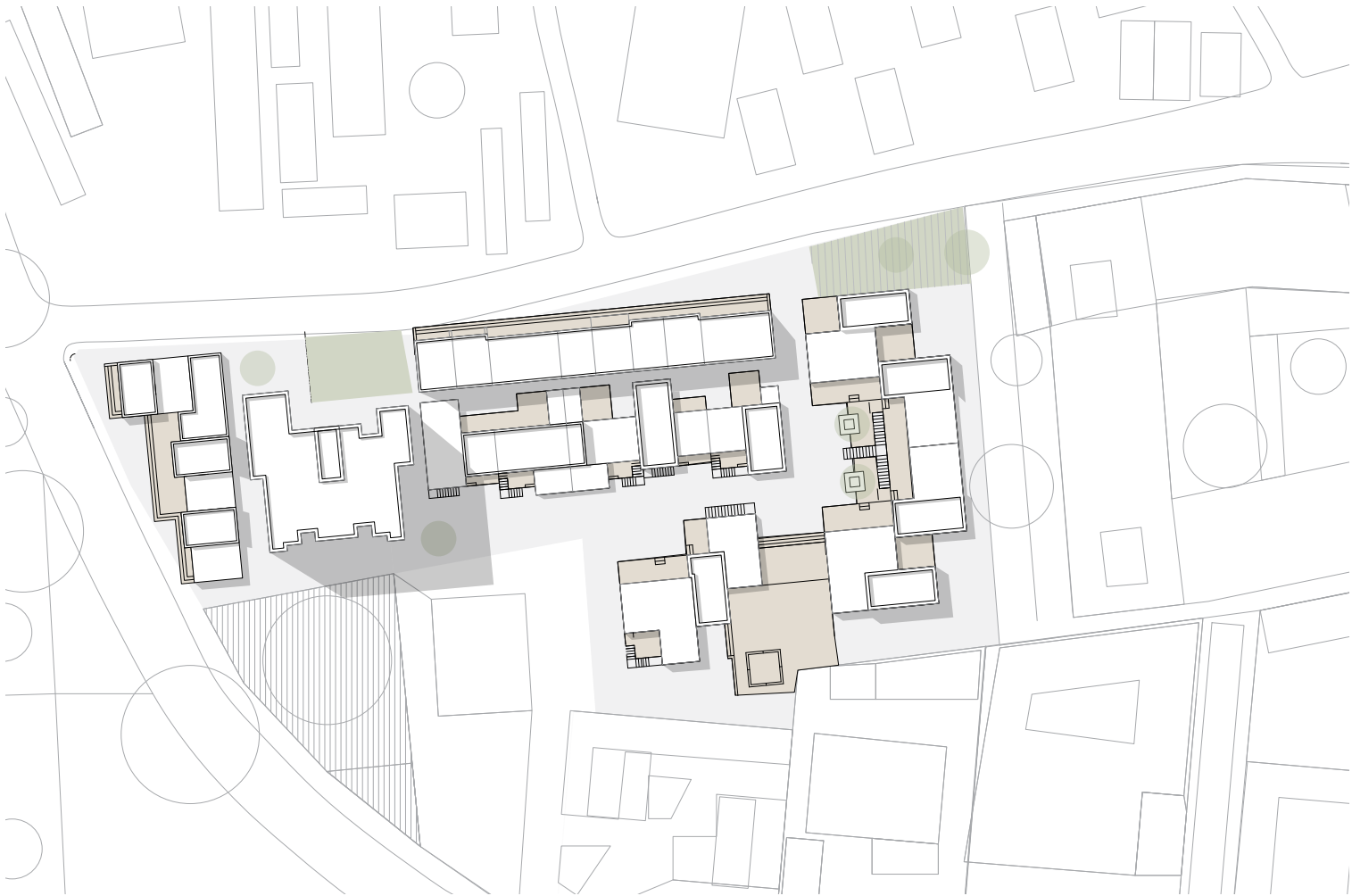
edges on site are ill-defined

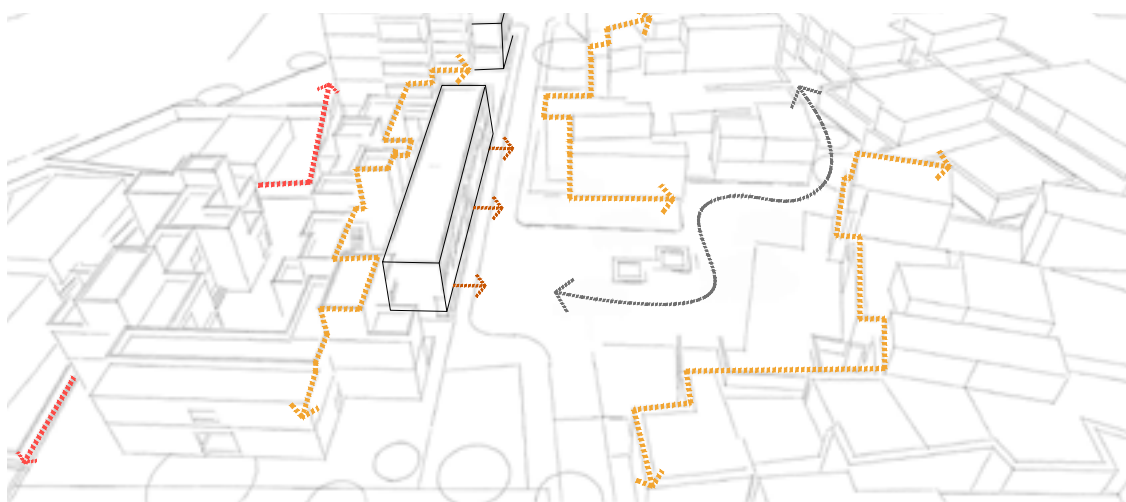




O.G.N.G.T.N.C

**'MY DAUGHTER HAS MOVED
ACROSS, I WANT TO MOVE FREELY
BETWEEN OLD + NEW GOTA!'**







REUSE REDUNDANT BUILDING (INSTITUTIONAL TOWER)

New institutions can have an enormous effect on a community. West Ahmedabad has dozens of educational institutions and is set to build more - in this scenario, two empty high-rises are adopted by the new Gota University.



case study fragment



unrest may more universities needed in gujarat

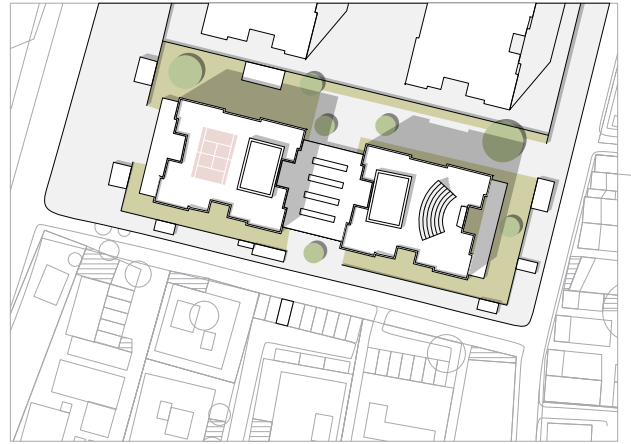


unrest may many developments in Ahmedabad remain empty

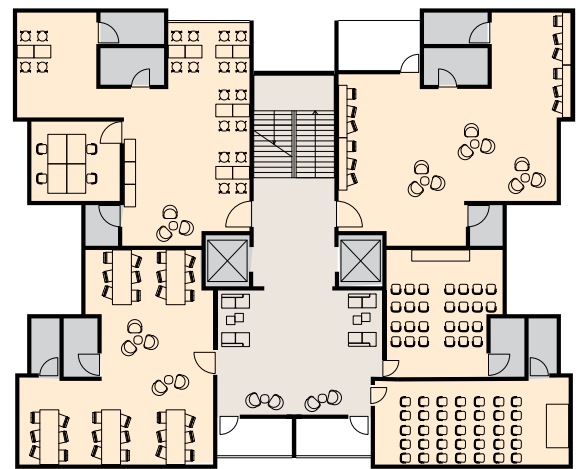


G.U.

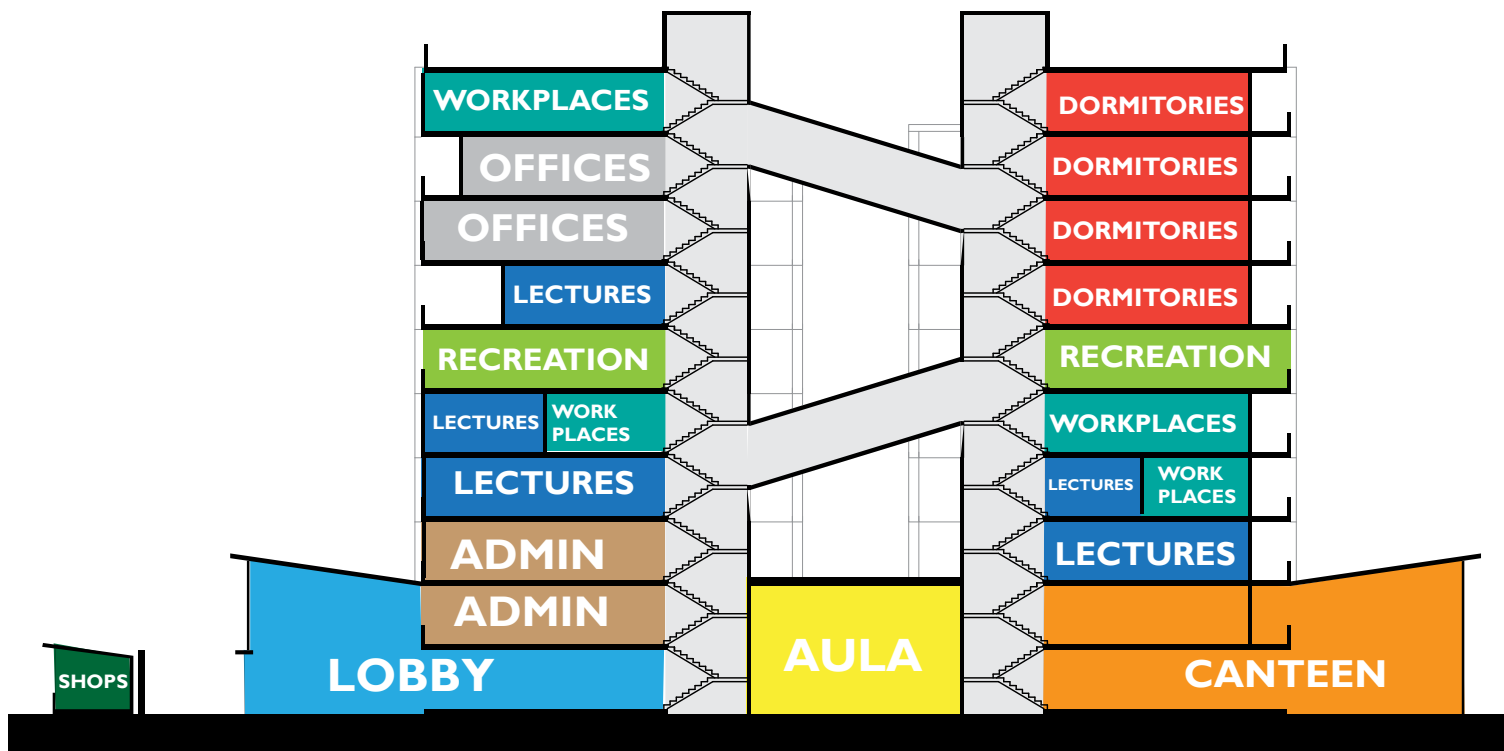
**‘LET’S TAKE THOSE TOWERS +
BUILD A MONUMENT TO
EDUCATION!’**



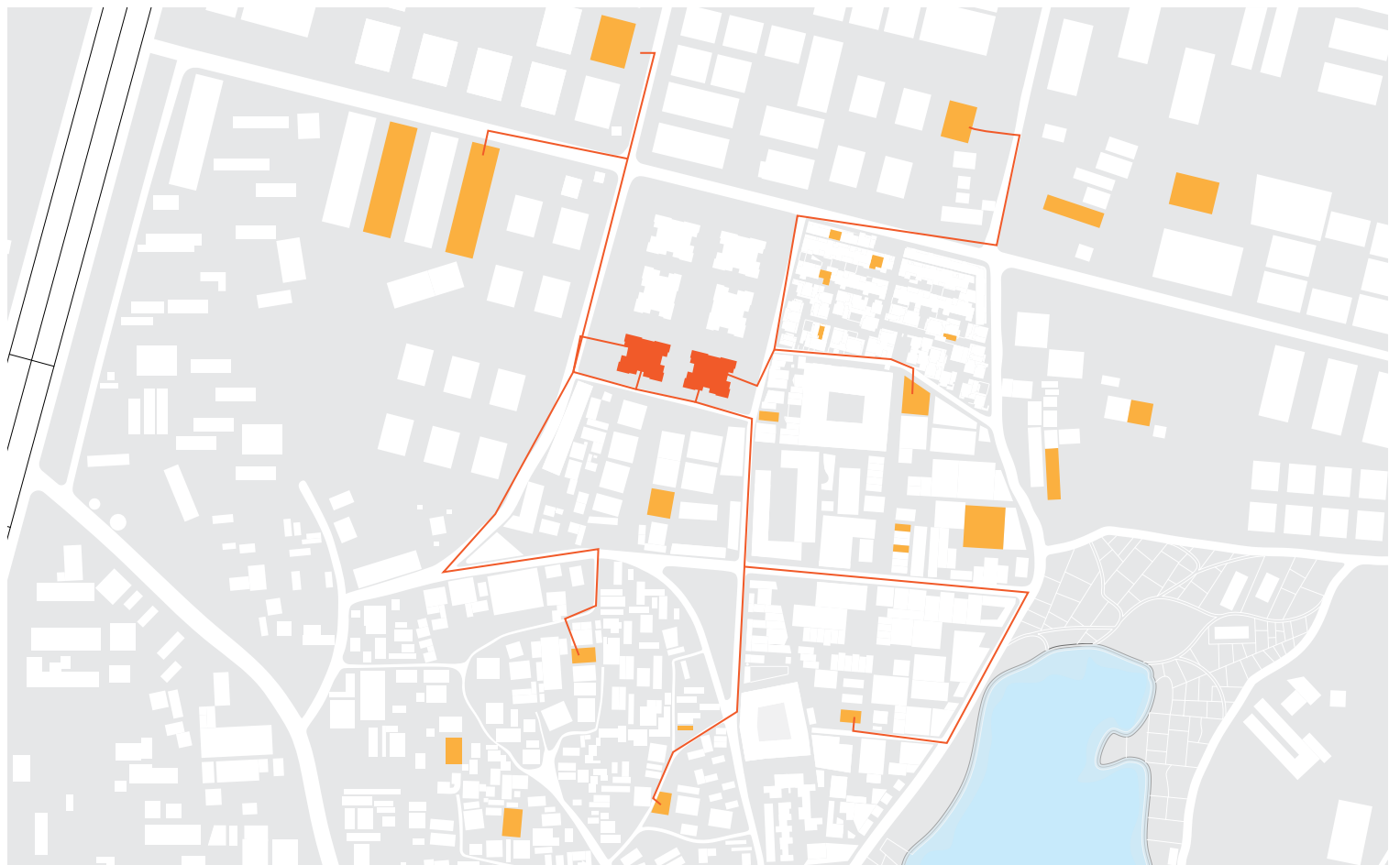
tower development remains empty



refurbished as university



refurbished as university



university towers provide facilities for gota inhabitants

MIXED TYPOLOGIES

Since large areas of single typologies create isolated or homogeneous communities, we sought to encourage mixed communities by lobbying the developer to build a mixture of typologies on sites over a certain size.



case study fragment



low income family
4-6 persons
upgraded from informal housing
work in factory on site



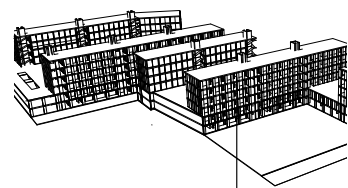
Formation of pattern



low income family
6-8 person
expanded family
work nearby, children study



middle class family
4-8 persons
expanded family
work further away from site



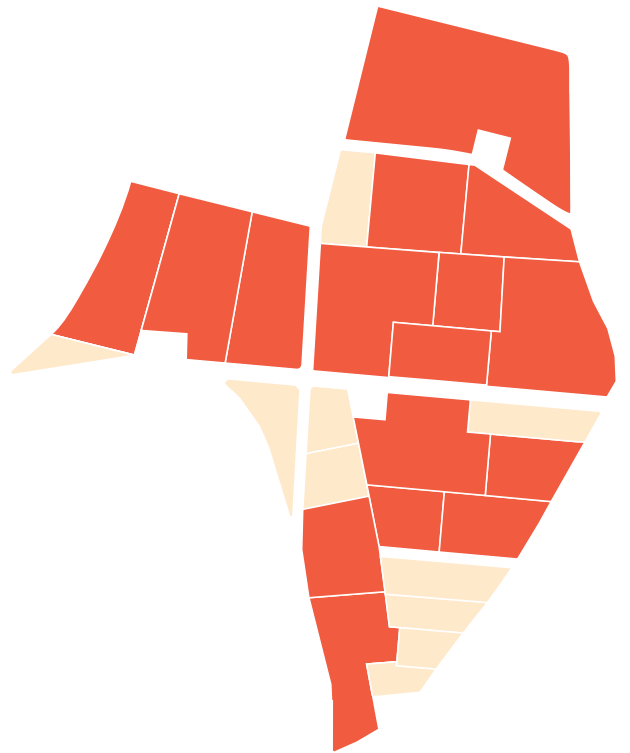
upper middle class
2-6 persons
modern/established
work in city



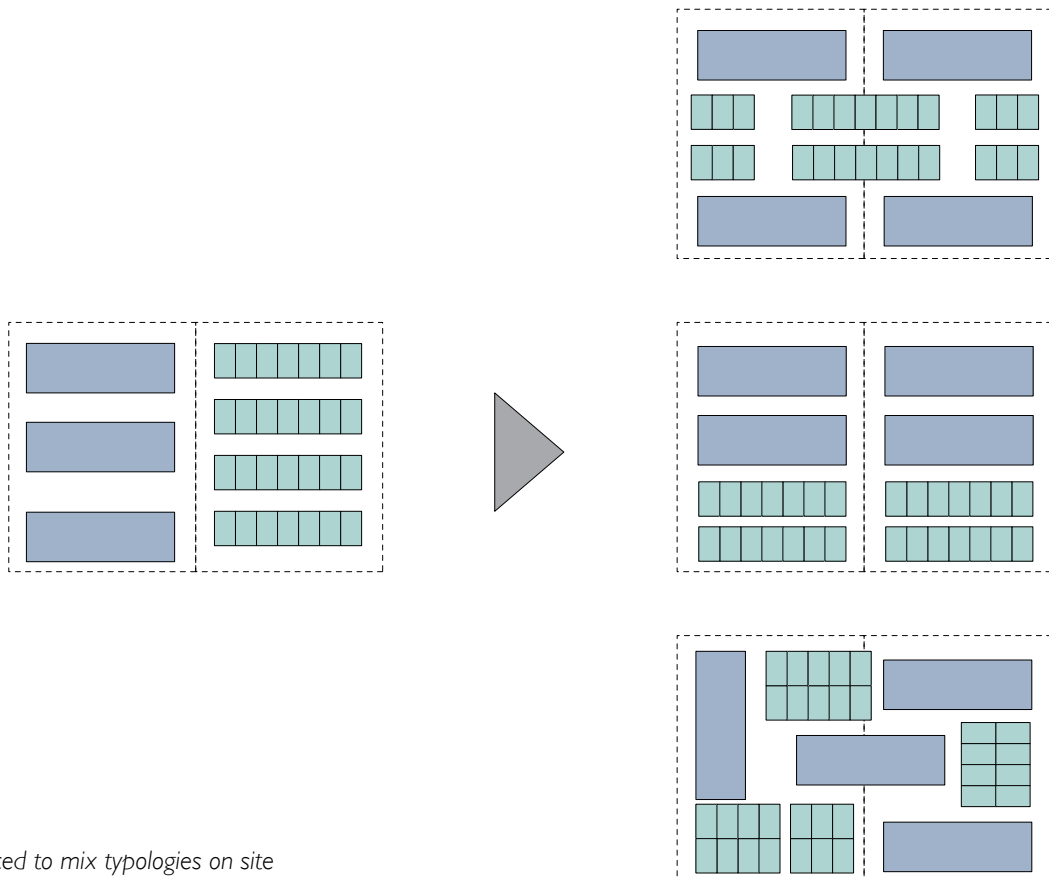
G.C.P.C.C.

**‘WE WANT A MIXED COMMUNITY IN
GOTA.’**

the gota committee for promoting community cohesion



larger plots have to make mixed typologies



developers forced to mix typologies on site



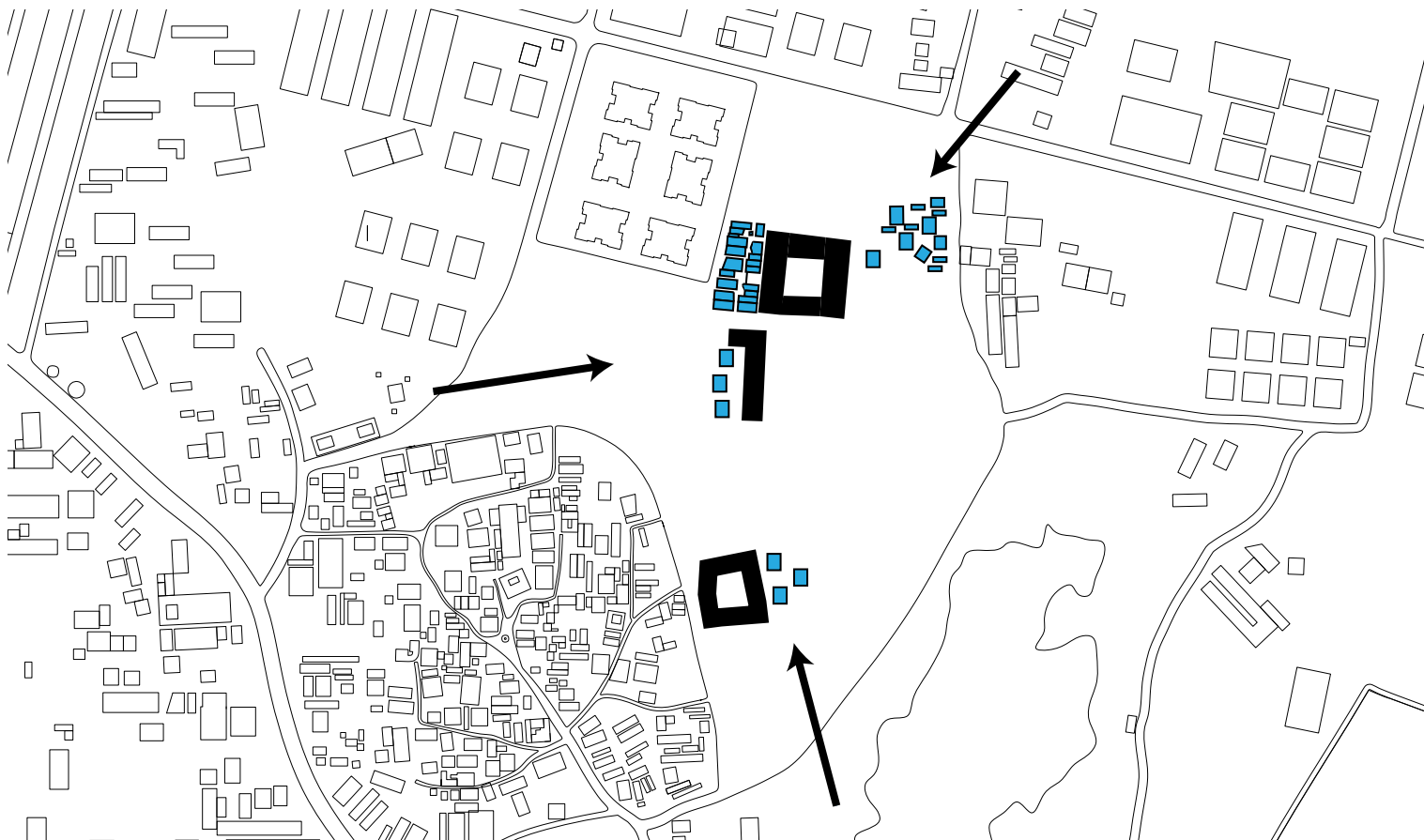
different configurations remain possible for the developer

INFORMAL HOUSING

Existing informal settlements on the site will inevitably expand with the influx of construction workers on site. Facing eviction and harassment, with help from the eviction hotline they organize and start a savings scheme. This commitment creates a form of unity and joint cause which give bargaining power. Some time later, they accumulate sufficient savings for a down payment on the land adjacent. The site is initially developed with basic dwellings which expand and change over time.



case study fragment

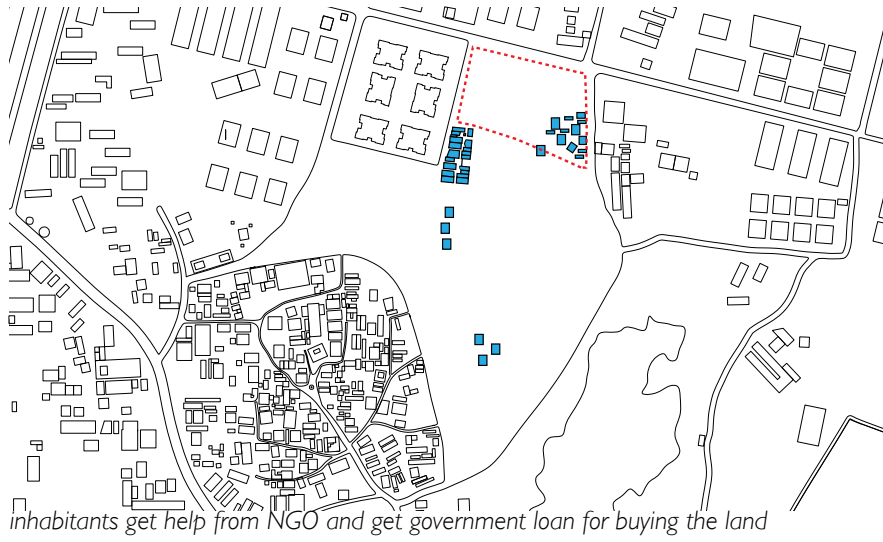


influx of migrant workers result in more and larger informal settlements on site

A black and white photograph of a group of people, mostly women, sitting in a circle on the floor. They are in a room with a high ceiling and visible structural beams. A large, light blue banner is draped across the top of the frame, partially obscuring the ceiling. The banner has the text 'G.C.W.A.' written on it in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

G.C.W.A.

‘IT CAN’T GO ON LIKE THIS!’





initial housing scheme



densified housing scheme

UPGRADE EXISTING SLUM



society for gota construction workers

With huge amount of construction work in the area it is inevitable that informal settlements will occur. In this scenario, a slum development is helped to secure their tenure and upgrade their housing according to Gota vil-lage standards.



existing informal settlement refuses to go



allowed to stay if they follow the rules set by the committees, resulting in organized settlements

ECOLOGY



case study fragment

Given Ahmedabad municipality's propensity to concrete-over the boundaries of the city's lakes, measure are put in place to encourage community ownership and investment in the lakeside as early as possible, alongside major governmental investment in upgrading the water body. Subsequent development of housing on site collects water for reuse and for public spaces, which then feed back in to the lake.



current state of lake



government planned development of lake



community based development of lake

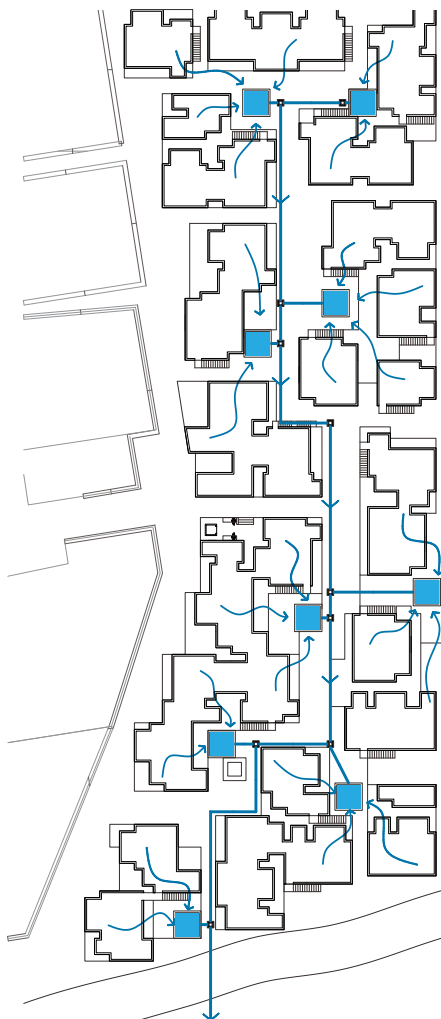


G.U.L.F

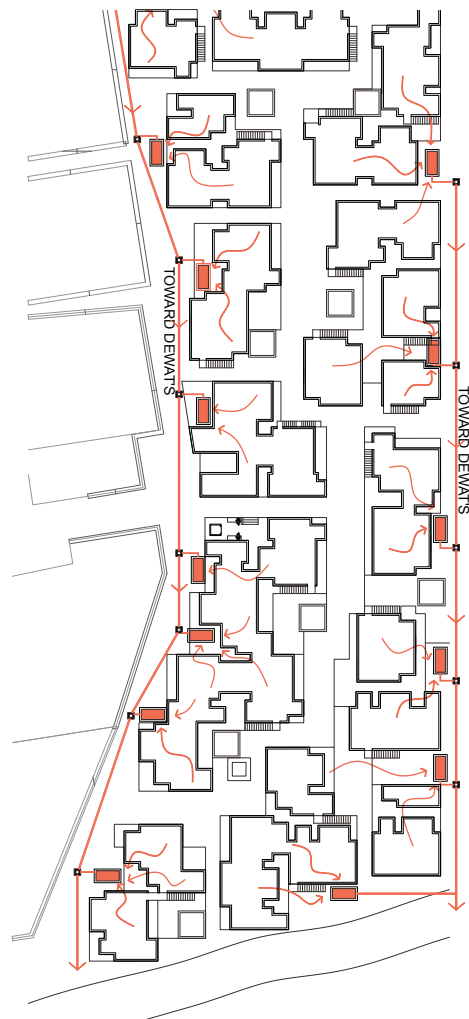
‘We don’t want another
Kankaria Lake in Gota’



development of lake increases water holding capacity, connection to water bodies in gota

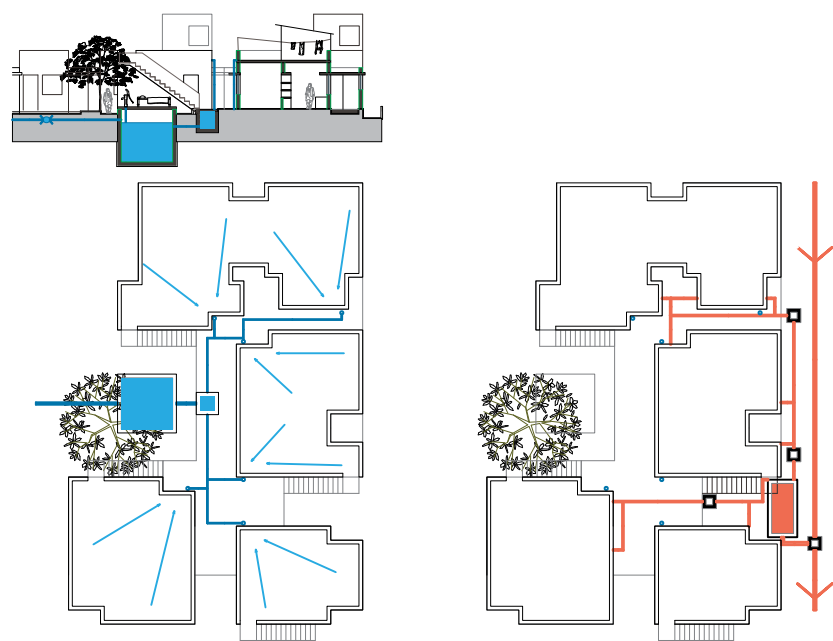


rooftop water collection + grey water recycling





shared space around water supply



typologies clustered for water collection and recycling

Managed by a local organization, three types of plots are created around the lake. Large areas are left for free growth, whilst many small plots are created for low intensity agriculture by families or schools. A small number of plots are designated as building plots for associated (small) businesses. The development of the lake increases adjacent land values, resulting in new shops and a well defined street along its western boundary.



gota lake upgrade foundation



plots reserved for ecological program



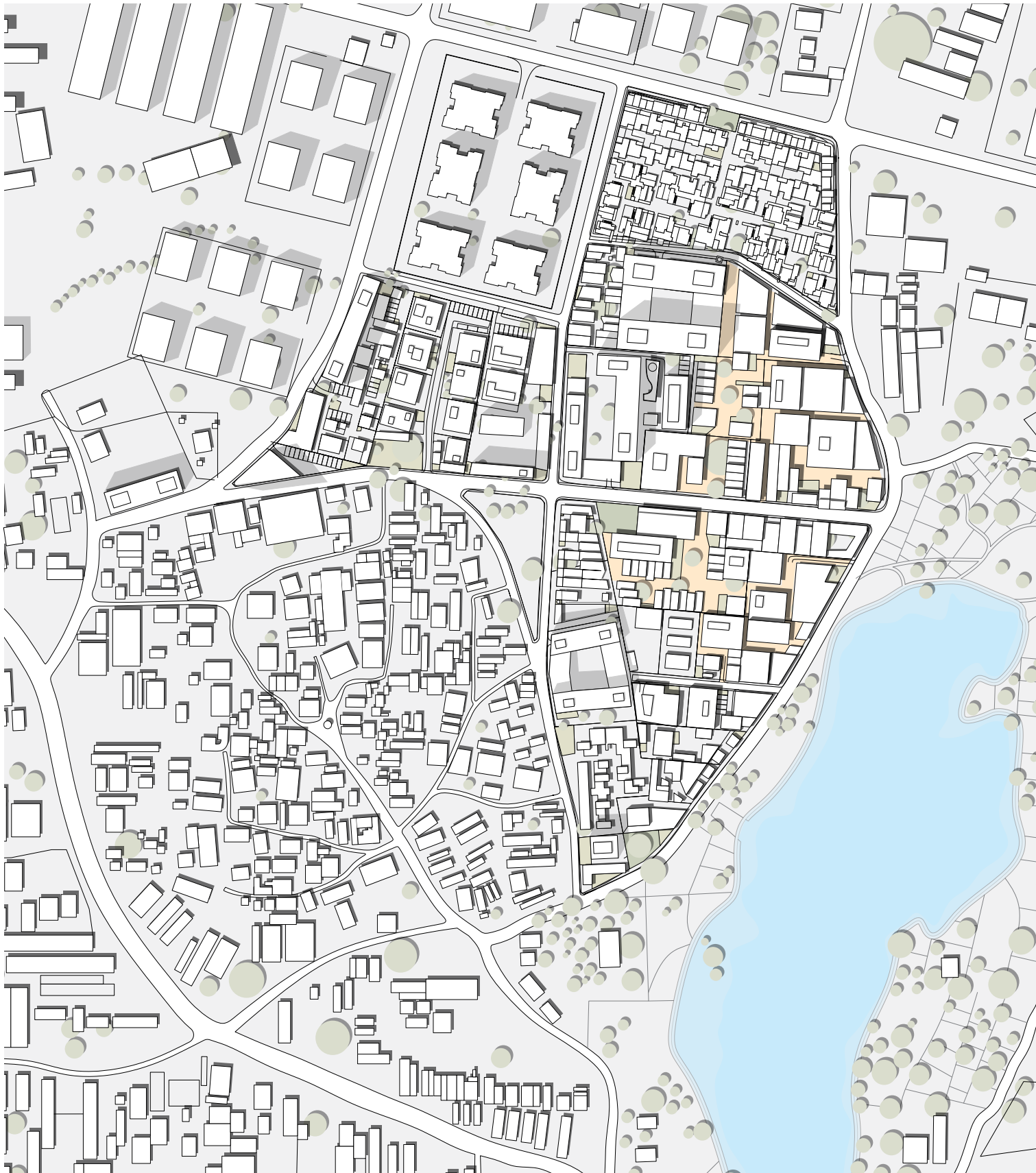
numer of plots available for rent to local families & schools



small number of plots available as buildable sites

CONCLUSION

GOTA 2040



In this scenario, moderation of development is led by pressure groups, who achieve small gains and designate priorities. The urban space remains a contest between all parties where space is continuously negotiated and adapted. Case, social, common action and employment networks, outside the ken of architects, maintain a fine balance, which is occasionally upset.

WHERE WAS THE ARCHITECT?



In this short course it became clear to us that architects in the expanding city must deal with new modes of engagement. At times they sit alongside the developer and sometimes they sit alongside the slum dweller. They can variously be expected to take the role of facilitator, expert professional, agitator, decorator or investor. They are one consultant against many, and must compete with others who believe their own priorities to be equally (or more) valid than an architects design agenda.

