Amersfoort - Amicitia (NL) | **old walls, new ties** | 1
Amersfoort - Amicitia (NL) | **old walls, new ties** | 2
Amersfoort - Amicitia (NL) | **old walls, new ties** | 3

intro

Everything is Heritage

Assessing Qualities and Misfits

Restoring Urban Scale: 1'=4'

Old and New as a Complementary Whole

Dissolution of Backs for New Fronts

Cohesion-Oriented Programation
Leisure · Production · Sports · Shared · Public · Cultural · Housing · Culture

Stronger Connections for Extra-Public Spaces

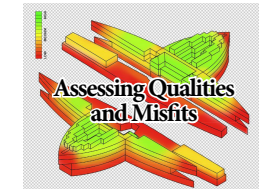The Green Belt : a Garden Assortment

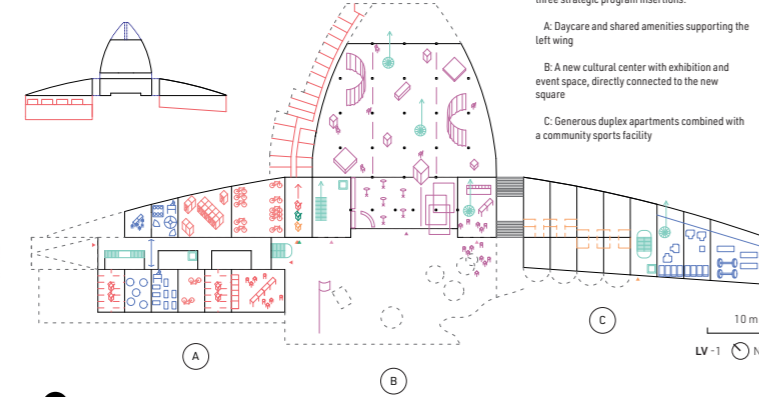Should this Site Bear 15,000 sqm ?

weaving the urban fabric

Through careful observation, we add, remove, and imagine layers of use and movement across the site.
Thread by thread, the process reveals hidden patterns and exposes new possibilities, gradually stitching together a **renewed urban narrative.**

4 cuts, 2 additions

At a constructive scale, we retain most of the existing structure. With a series of precise cuts, the site becomes more accessible and porous. Each wing receives an addition to enhance new spatial qualities – two distinct stitching strategies: **a twin** and **a plug.**
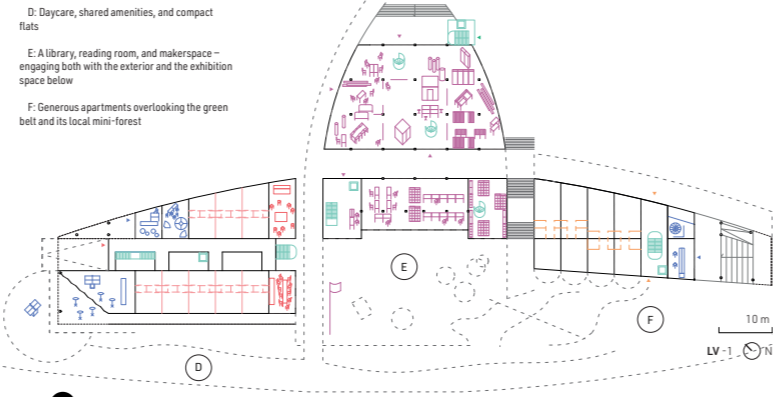
D. Daycare, shared amenities, and compact flats

E. A library, reading room, and makerspace – engaging both with the exterior and the exhibition space below

F. Generous apartments overlooking the green belt and its local mini-forest

re-programming

As a softer form of intervention, we propose a phased reprogramming – open, accessible, and in equal dialogue with both the front and back of the site. The refurbished wings are reactivated through three strategic program insertions:

A. Daycare and shared amenities supporting the left wing

B. A new cultural center with exhibition and event space, directly connected to the new square

C. Generous duplex apartments combined with a community sports facility

softening borders

Making the new building(s) more accessible through simple, targeted interventions, while gradually unpaving the rear to create pockets of biodiversity. Little by little, the back transforms into something new.
A canopy, a kiosk serving the community, light, and places to gather – these simple elements activate the space.
The newly opened back facade strengthens the connection to the building and reinforces a cultural and productive axis across the central part.

a room for the city

Like stepping into a new room, the transformed rear of the site is gently furnished to let the neighborhood flourish. A canopy, light, and places to gather act as intermediaries – turning leftover space, but as an active, evolving landscape.
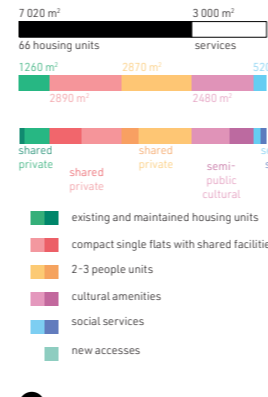

a productive city

A neighborhood-based productive axis emerges at the ground floor – open, accessible, and in equal dialogue with both the front and back of the site.
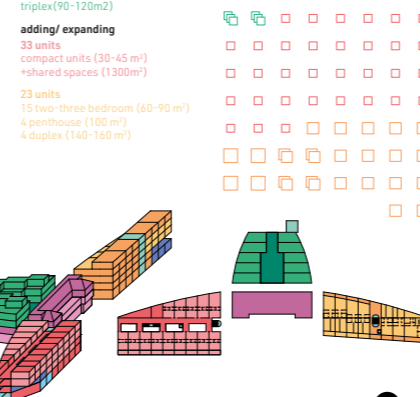
a garden assortment

Expanding the green belt establishes new relationships between the existing and the new.

At the rear of the site, the main landscape intervention unfolds through unpaving – a quiet act that opens space for biodiversity and public life.

This extension of the green belt invites a layered exploration of the city-nature connection, offering distinct spatial experiences across the site.

A – A seamless continuation of the green belt, with the potential to extend beyond Amicitia in the future

B, H – Existing spaces are preserved in character; targeted unpaving expands them, marks a change and the new entrances

C – A more urban-scale park with paths closer to the street edge, playing with different ground treatments

D – A bridge and a flag signal the presence of new spatial relationships between front and back

E – Overlooking Amicitia Square, a slightly sunken row of fruit trees softens the edge to the street

F – Amicitia's neighborhood square – a sunken, informal space in between everything

G – The local forest comfort : a rewilded zone that marks the edge of the green belt and introduces a dreamy softness into the dense urban context

expand and diversify

10 020 m²
total

7 020 m²   3 000 m²

66 housing units   services

1240 m²   120 m²
2370 m²   2680 m²

shared private · shared private · semi public · cultural · sports

- existing and maintained housing units
- compact single flats with shared facilities
- 2-3 people units
- cultural amenities
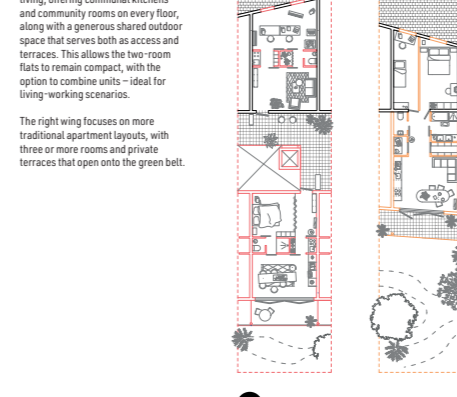- social services
- new accesses

housing

The neighbourhood should stay accessible for a variety of people and household constructs.

maintaining
10 units
triplex (90-120 m2)

adding/ expanding
33 units
compact units (30-45 m²)
+shared spaces (1300m²)

23 units
13 two-three bedroom (90-90 m²)
6 penthouse (190 m²)
4 duplex (140-165 m²)

two distinct neighbours

The separation of the historical building from its lateral extension allows the site to breathe, creating voids that invite passersby to reshape the estate. New perspectives are introduced, fostering a better understanding of where the passerby situates themselves within the space.

Furthermore, the fragmented whole offers an opportunity to reconsider facade variations, enabling a gentler scale across the site. In response to site conditions, the two new neighboring extensions are shaped as follows: since the back of the left wing is narrow and its front deeper, the left wing extends 14 meters forward at the same height. Conversely, as the right wing's back street is deeper and its front narrower, the building extends 8 meters forward and dares to rise higher than the existing structure.

The depth of the left building allows for a longer wall to accompany a footpath that bridges the front and back programs of the estate, framing the new address: Amicitia Square.
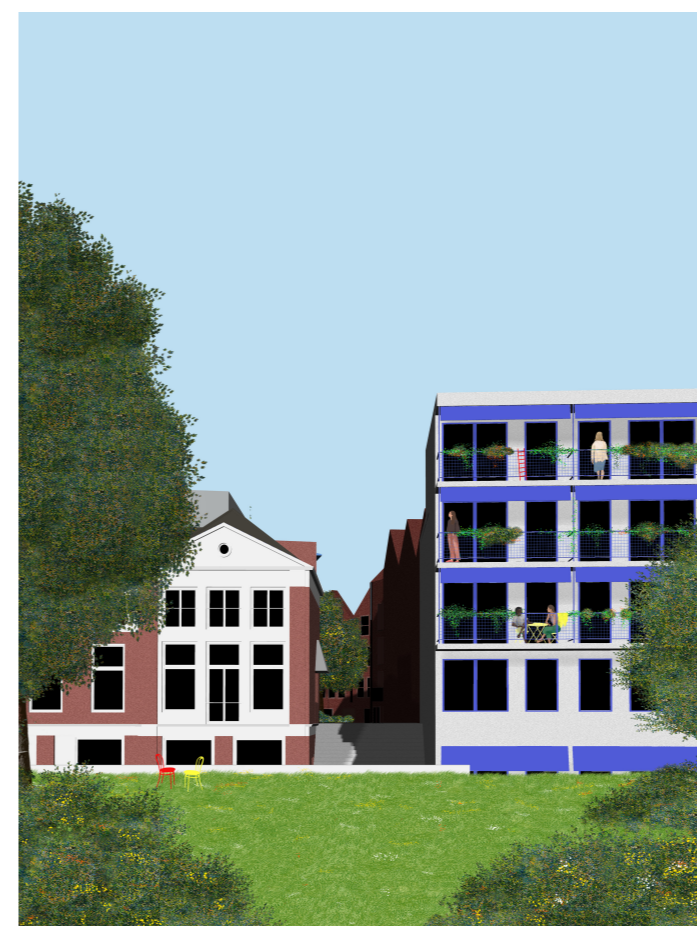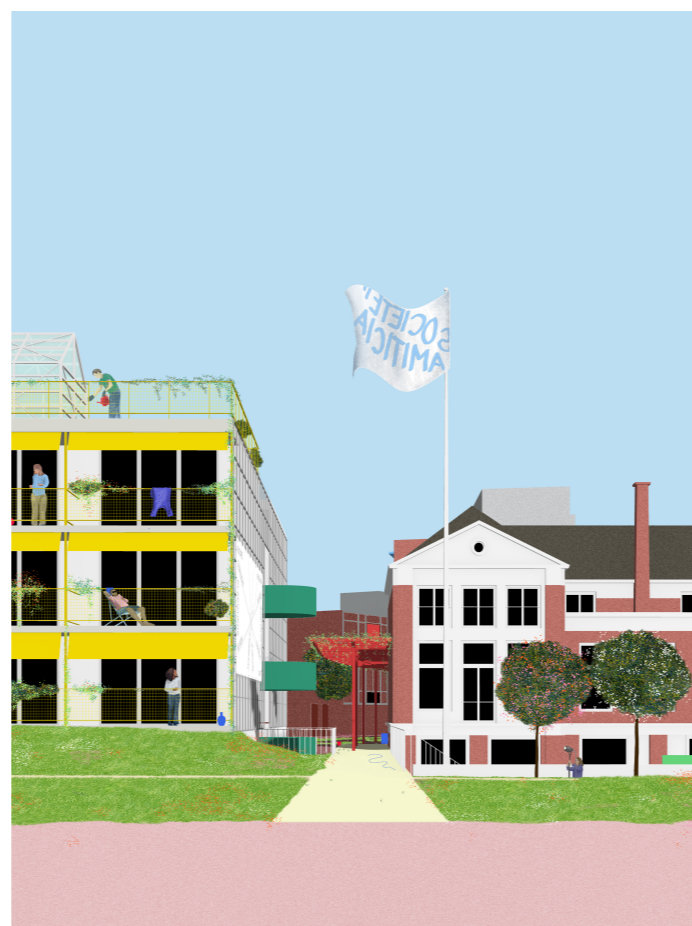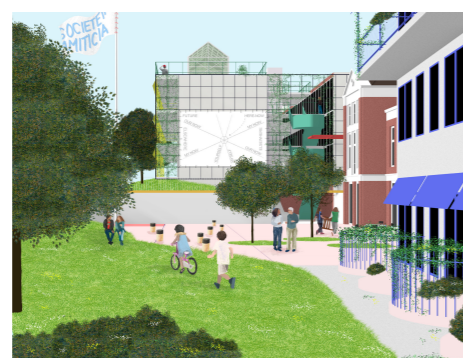

zoom in

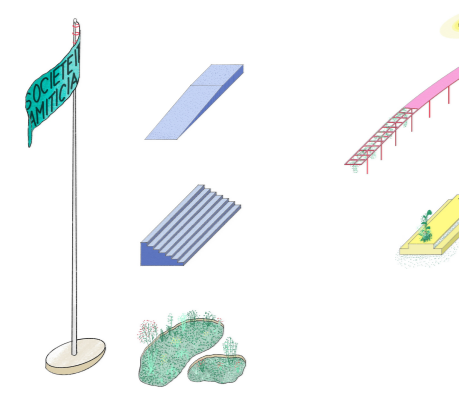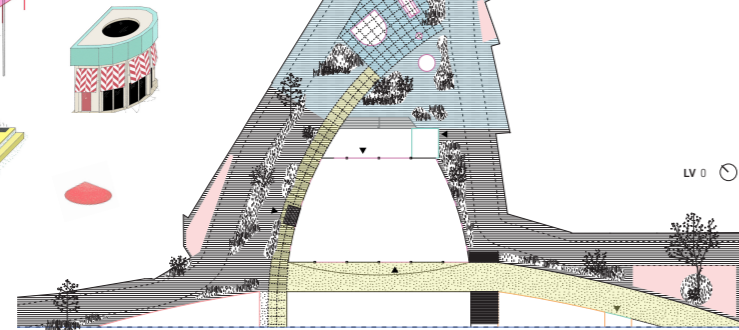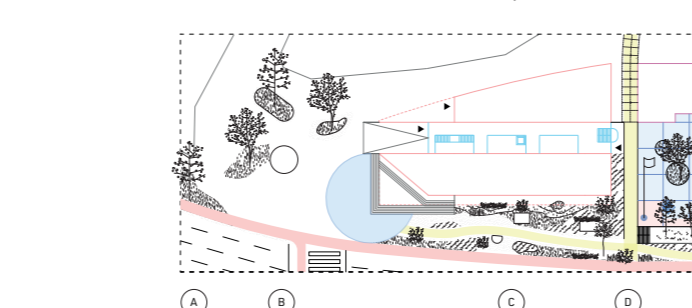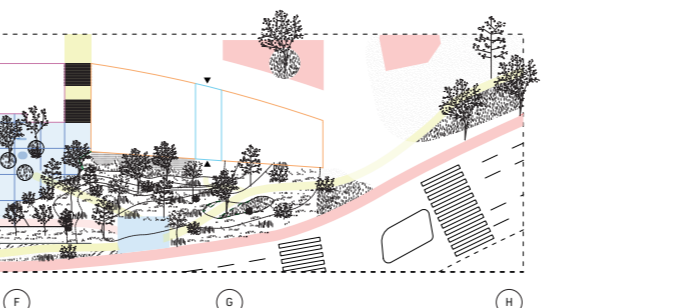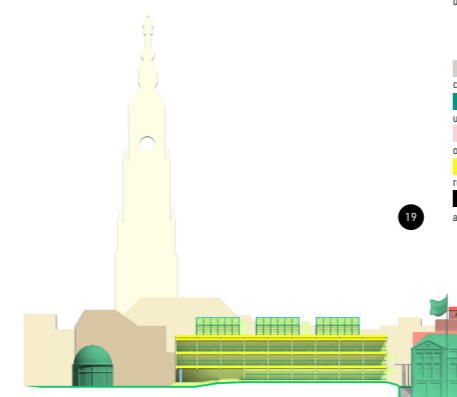The two additions create compact yet high-quality living conditions.

The left wing emphasizes shared living, offering communal kitchens and community rooms on every floor, along with a generous shared outdoor space that serves both as access and terraces. This allows the two-room flats to remain compact, with the option to combine units – ideal for living-working scenarios.

The right wing focuses on more traditional apartment layouts, with three or more rooms and private terraces that open onto the green belt.

new relations as an outcome of precise interventions

outro

After working on the Amicitia site, the team is convinced that a productive framework can be established. We invite you to connect with potential partners to accompany us in shaping the new life of this fragment of the city – engaging institutions, individuals, and organizations such as nearby museums, daycare administrators, local workshops, and youth and social associations.

To offer broader perspectives since we believe the site has the potential to gain momentum beyond its boundaries and even beyond the initial scope of reflection the team has initiated speculative explorations that continue the project's trajectory. This approach reflects a long-term mindset, as the key site should be supported through its incremental development. Regular assessment will be essential to adapt the plan to the evolving needs of the future. Thinking further is allowing to think different scenarios, ultimately acknowledging the site's openness for potential extensions.
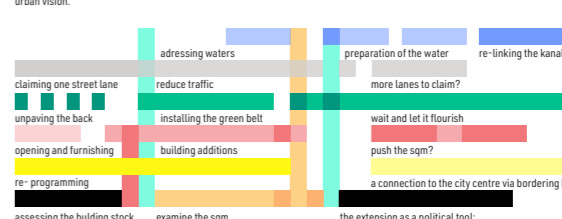
a gateway to the city

By softening edges and opening space, we create the conditions to imagine a future silhouette – one that marks the entrance to the historic city center.

It emerges in quiet dialogue with the existing skyline, forming a gateway rooted in continuity, while still allowing contrast.

phases, actors, actions and the architect as a mediator

Step by step, this development is imagined as a collaborative process between diverse actors and layered actions – some soft, some more pronounced.
Rather than imposing a fixed solution, the project proposes a framework that allows for evolution over time.
The city and the developer must work together, not just as counterparts, but as co-authors of the site's transformation.
Within this dynamic, the architect acts as mediator – shaping possibilities, aligning interests, and maintaining the integrity of the urban vision.

claiming one street lane · reduce traffic · preparation of the water · re-linking the kanal?
unpaving the back · installing the green belt · more lanes to claim?
opening and furnishing · building additions · wait and let it flourish
re- programming · push the green?
a connection to the city centre via bordering buildings?
assessing the building stock · examine the sqm · the extension as a political tool; water for sqm?

The Last Link to the 5 Squares

A Fourth Facade for an Attractive Multi-Use Heart

From Amicitia Square to Amicitia Banks

Negotiating Waters : a Potential for Housing

Towards the Inhabited Green Belt ?

introvert - extrovert
creating a front, activating the back