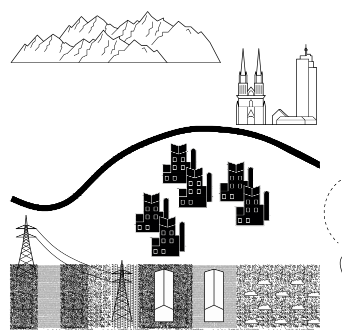
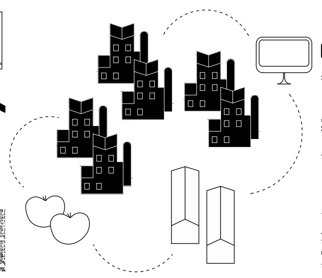
— *SOFT PROSPECT* —
affordable futures in Klara Nova



—between the rural and the urban —

In Klara Nova, *Soft Prospect* imagines a hybrid territory between the rural and the urban. The project proposes a system of social housing that supports the creation of self-organized residential communities. Artificial hills, generated by the redistribution of soil from construction, sculpt a gentle topography while enhancing the identity of the landscape. Rainwater is harvested through carefully designed roof structures, contributing to local water resilience and supporting ecological cycles. This approach balances housing needs with environmental responsibility, establishing a new urbanity rooted in proximity, resource efficiency, and shared responsibility.

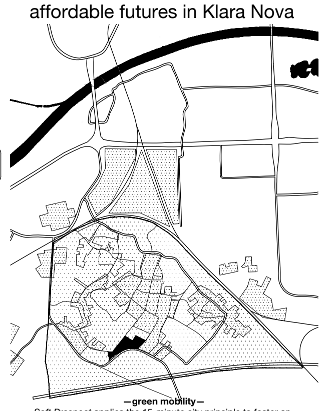
1



—new productive ecologies—

Nearly 48% of the housing in Klara Nova consists of studios and one- or two-room apartments, revealing the need for diversified forms of collective life and production.The project integrates public interests with emerging technologies and green entrepreneurship. Productive programs are inserted within a business zone and connected to multi-functional communal spaces. Commercial areas are directly linked to the modes of production found in surrounding rural landscapes—agriculture, crafts, and services—bringing them into the urban sphere. This creates new productive ecologies where domestic life, work, and sustainability are deeply intertwined in a flexible and inclusive urban model.

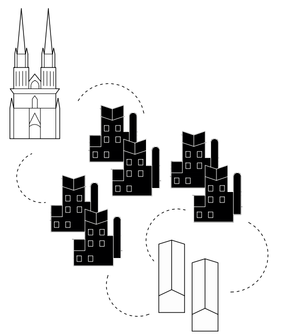
2



—green mobility—

Soft Prospect applies the 15-minute city principle to foster an inclusive, low-carbon neighborhood. A network of smaller, dispersed public and green areas—each equipped with urban furniture and pedestrian paths—supports everyday needs within walking or cycling distance. These micro-spaces are designed to encourage spontaneous encounters, collective use, and seasonal adaptability. By avoiding urban centralization, mobility becomes an ecological and social infrastructure. The neighborhood gains not only physical permeability, but also a rhythm of life aligned with slowness, health, and proximity, reshaping daily movement into an act of inhabiting together.

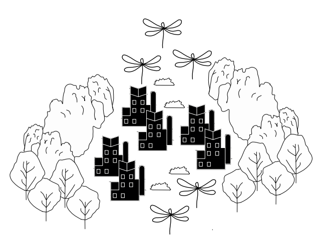
3



—networks of proximity—

The project encourages closeness and solidarity through a spatial model that binds domestic and productive life. Ground floors house commercial and workshop spaces linked to local food production or artistic activity, while upper floors provide housing. This vertical integration activates the street as a place of exchange, fostering micro-economies and vibrant public life. The design revalues the identity of the area by preserving existing spatial qualities and enhancing them through new programs. These networks of proximity, based on short distances and human relationships, become the core of a sustainable and culturally rooted urban environment.

4



—architecture and biodiversity—

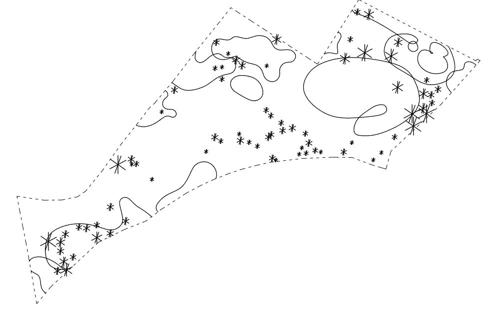
Biodiversity is not an afterthought in *Soft Prospect*—it is the foundation of its architectural vision. A pond in the recreational zone supports aquatic ecosystems while serving as a public amenity. Insect habitats and pollinator shelters are embedded in the urban fabric, supporting microfauna often forgotten in city-making. Natural soil reserves and new tree plantings enhance existing vegetation, fostering continuity and regeneration. The project proposes a manufactured nature that affirms local ecosystems and introduces new thematic semi-natural attractors. Through sustainable management of green and water surfaces, the plan envisions a greener Zagreb, where architecture becomes a vehicle for ecological care.

5

— gerenal view 1:1ooo —

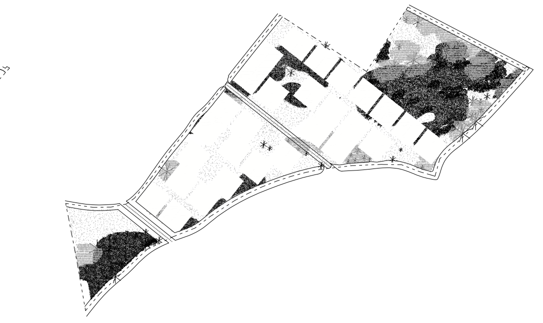
—preserved natural soil —

The main aim places the preservation of natural soil at the core of its planning strategy. Instead of erasing the existing landscape, the project takes its spontaneous vegetation—the so-called "third landscape"—as a starting point. The layout of plots and paths adapts to this terrain, ensuring that construction responds to what already lives and grows there. Artificial hills, wetlands, and new vegetation reinforce these ecological dynamics, creating continuity between built and unbuilt spaces. This approach affirms the unique character of Klara Nova's terrain and embeds architecture in a larger ecological logic. Natural soil is not residual—it is a spatial, environmental, and cultural asset, guiding development toward coexistence.



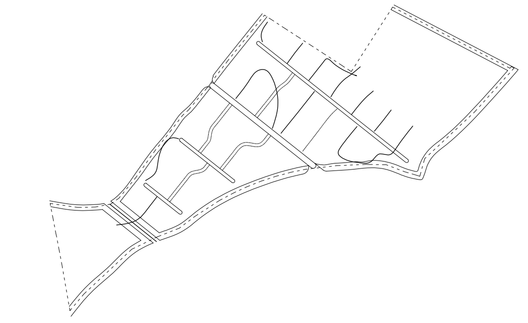
—porous distribution—

The project proposes a porous distribution system, using a geometric, orthogonal grid to organize free-standing apartment buildings set within generous green areas. This format draws from the historical southern expansion of Zagreb, marked by the replication of rectangular blocks and grids. Yet *Soft Prospect* subverts this model by injecting openness and interconnection. The scattered parcels allow for a multiplicity of transversal paths and visual connections between units, enabling both privacy and community interaction. This porosity ensures flexibility for future development while maximizing the land available for neighbors. The result is a breathing urban structure that privileges spatial generosity, social life, and environmental performance.



—minimal paving, maximum connection—

The idea begins by questioning how we assign value to land. The first and most effective way to reduce construction costs is to avoid unnecessary transformation of the terrain. The project minimizes the addition of new pavement, avoiding large excavations and eliminating underground parking unless strictly required. A single 15-meter-wide vehicular avenue provides primary access, while the rest of the roads are low-impact lanes reserved for residents, blending into green space. This strategy not only reduces soil sealing but also liberates a substantial portion of land for communal use. In doing so, the project affirms that connection does not require concrete, and that affordable housing begins with a respectful, intelligent use of the ground itself.



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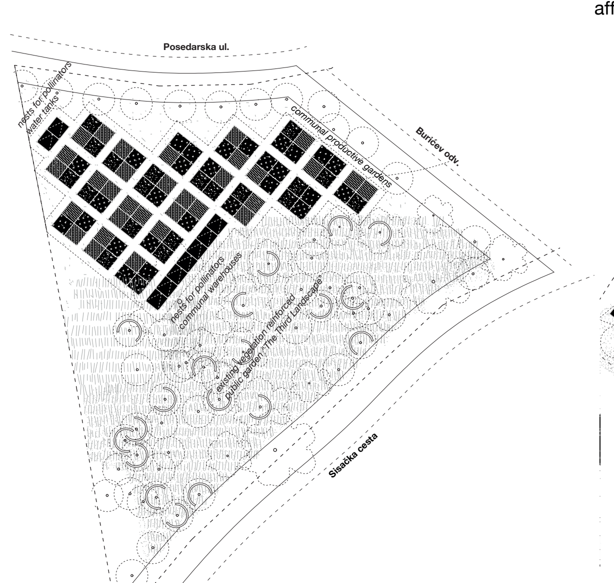
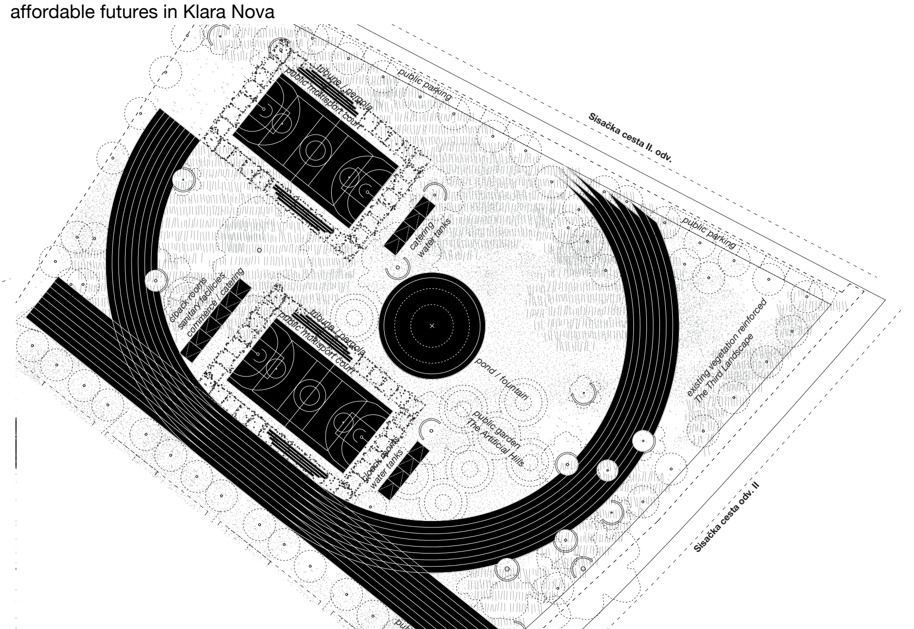
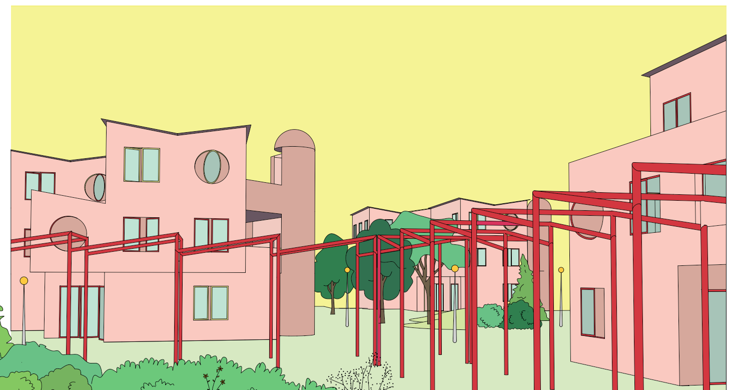


—public park zone 1:25o—



— recreation zone and square 1:25o—

— residencial zone 1:25o—



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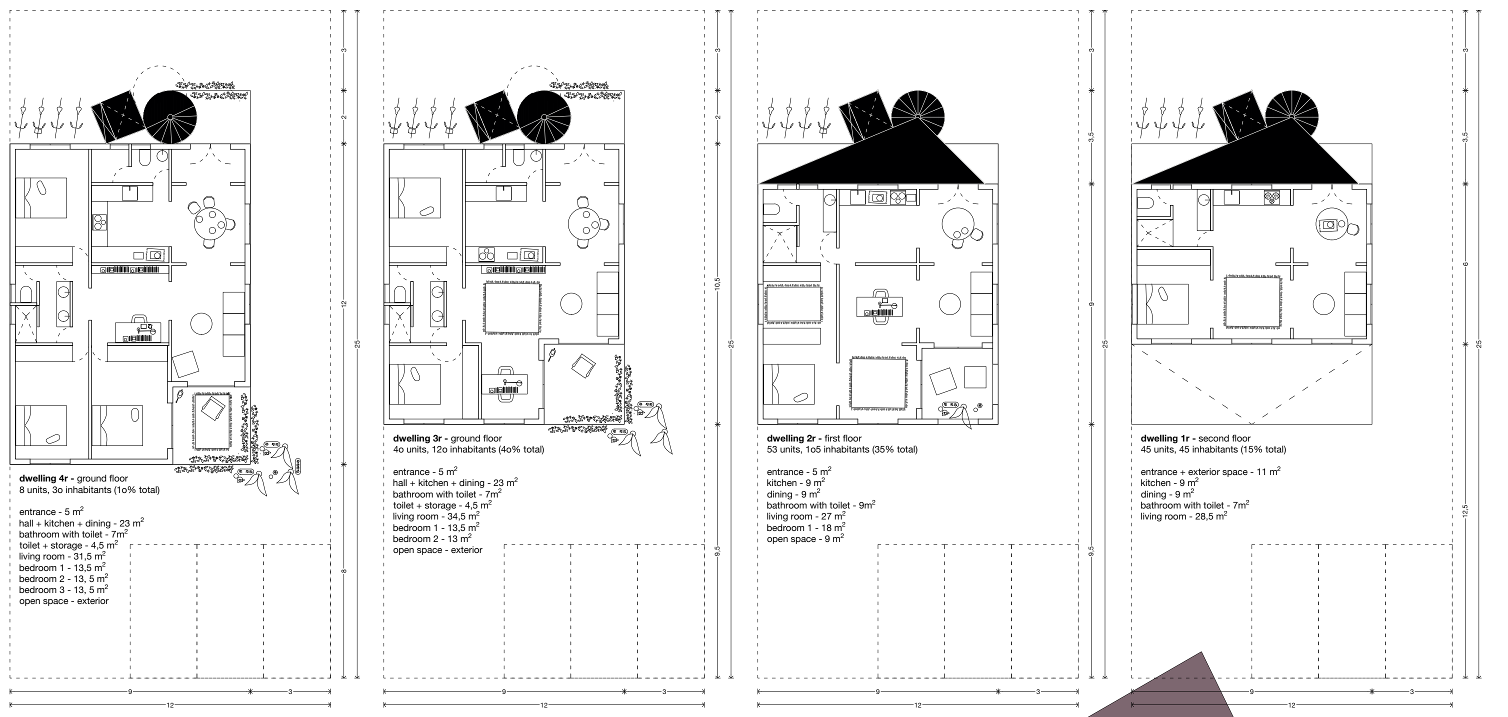


dwelling 4r - ground floor
8 units, 3o inhabitants (1o% total)

entrance - 5 m²
hall + kitchen + dining - 23 m²
bathroom with toilet - 7m²
toilet + storage - 4,5 m²
living room - 31,5 m²
bedroom 1 - 13,5 m²
bedroom 2 - 13, 5 m²
bedroom 3 - 13, 5 m²
open space - exterior

dwelling 3r - ground floor
4o units, 12o inhabitants (4o% total)

entrance - 5 m²
hall + kitchen + dining - 23 m²
bathroom with toilet - 7m²
toilet + storage - 4,5 m²
living room - 34,5 m²
bedroom 1 - 13,5 m²
bedroom 2 - 13 m²
open space - exterior

dwelling 2r - first floor
53 units, 1o5 inhabitants (35% total)

entrance - 5 m²
kitchen - 9 m²
dining - 9 m²
bathroom with toilet - 9m²
living room - 27 m²
bedroom 1 - 18 m²
open space - 9 m²

dwelling 1r - second floor
45 units, 45 inhabitants (15% total)

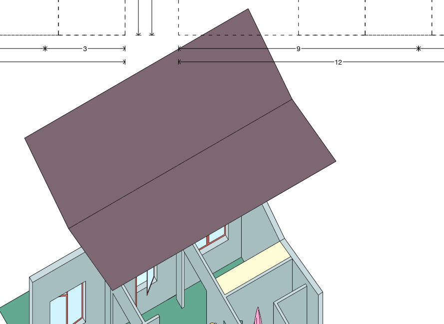
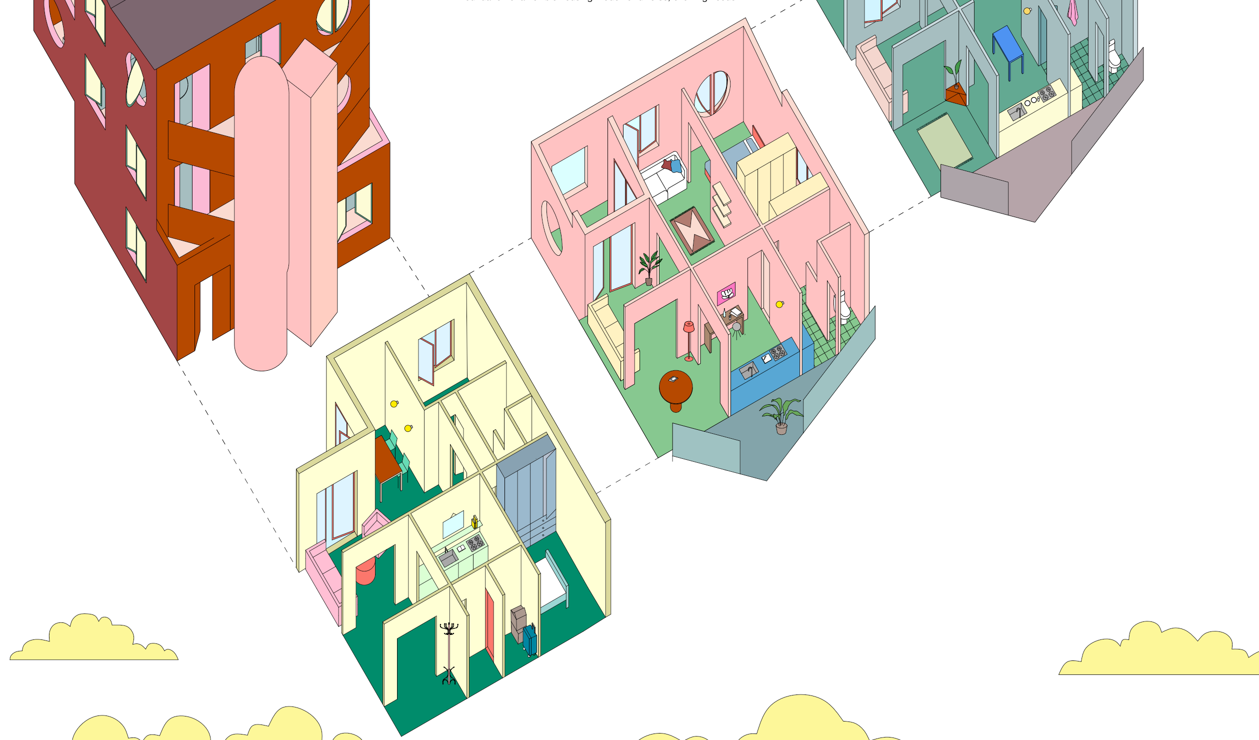
entrance + exterior space - 11 m²
kitchen - 9 m²
dining - 9 m²
bathroom with toilet - 7m²
living room - 28,5 m²

—soft typologies—

Soft Prospect adopts a strategy of soft typologies: rationally modulated housing units built with low-tech methods and high spatial efficiency. Constructed entirely in brick using traditional techniques, these dwellings reduce costs and support local labor, making them both affordable and replicable.

Corridor-free layouts maximize usable space, while a clear modular grid guides construction and allows for long-term adaptability. Rooms can shift in function over time—sleeping, working, gathering—without structural changes, supporting flexible living within compact, efficient footprints.

Instead of free-standing buildings, homes are arranged in pairs: they share a party wall at ground level and touch lightly at a corner above. This configuration preserves the benefits of paired plots—economic and spatial—while offering qualities of detached housing, such as better light, ventilation, and privacy.

These soft typologies prioritize simplicity and flexibility, avoiding rigid domestic models. Their robustness and adaptability make them resilient to change, extending their life cycle and usefulness. Minimizing unnecessary complexity and maximizing everyday utility, they support long-term affordability in both construction and occupation.

Within Klara Nova, these units are part of a broader system of soft infrastructures—social, ecological, and spatial—that shape a dignified and inclusive urban future. Soft in means but generous in capacity, these typologies form the foundation of a flexible housing model for diverse, evolving needs.