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L,M,S

Buenos Aires, San Telmo, Avenida Independencia

Master's Thesis

to achieve the university degree of

Diplom-Ingenieurin

Master's degree program: Architecture

submitted to

Graz University of Technology

Supervisor

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Institut für Wohnbau

Graz, September 2015

STATUTORY DECLARATION

I declare that I have authored this thesis independently, that I have not used other than the declared sources / resources, and that I have explicitly marked all material which has been quoted either literally or by content from the used sources.

Graz,
date

.....
signature

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INTRODUCTION

Before starting with the main topic of this master thesis there are some things one must know about Argentina and the City of Buenos Aires. The best way to summarize and to quickly create an image about Argentina or its capital and to get the idea of the current social-economic state which has also strongly influenced its architecture and its urban growth is to use key words like: multiculturalism, colonization, inflation, immigration, residential segregation, private education, gated communities, villas of misery, security,... As well as antonyms such as antique-modern, rich-poor, old-new, public-private.

The city of Buenos Aires is most definitely not to be described with the word calm or boring. Things are happening, everything is in motion, millions of people are pouring in and out of the city every day. The city is so multicultural that sometimes putting information into boxes, recognizing a pattern, setting a scale for it can be hard or even impossible.

Picking the topic of the thesis in Austria and then coming to Argentina to experience it all first hand helped me a lot to evaluate and observe from both sides - my European stand of view and also relieving it the Southamerican way. Interacting with people, getting their ideas about the area of San Telmo by interviewing

them and also working with the Faculty of architecture or University of Buenos Aires really broaden out my thinking.

Deciding to focus on San Telmo, first and the oldest neighborhood of the city, the place where it all began, helped me understand the evolution of the city and all the stages of it right from its core. Today the area's beautiful colonial architecture, always crowded Sundays market, street tango, old conventillos,.. still attract thousands of people and tourist, but there are also places of San Telmo that haven't been properly taken care of by the city for many decades and this is what consequently brought new-age problems to the area which once settled are also hard to get rid of.

WHY L,M,S?

In Buenos Aires, like probably in the other cities as well, one needs to understand the bigger picture in order to specialize in smaller things. Not only the matter of inflation but also the language, the culture and other things make Argentina a country different from any other. To understand the problems of San Telmo I decided to investigate from the bigger scale L as in 'Large' - area of Buenos Aires, all the way to S 'Small' - Avenida Independencia, the avenue that in my opinion needed an urban intervention.

Although the S part is the most largely represented chapter of this thesis it would not exist without the M and the L.

Writing the thesis included a great part of Spanish-English translation work which led to an idea that parts of the thesis like the main titles could be listed bilingually, helping to link the pictures with the content also for non-English speaking people, referring to the people who were included in the investigation part.



L

Buenos Aires

AUTONOMONOUS CITY AND CAPITAL OF ARGENTINA

The City of Buenos Aires is the capital and main city of the Republic Argentina. It is located in the pampas, limiting with the county of Buenos Aires, and the Río de la Plata (River of Silver) that ends in the South Atlantic.

Population

The city has a population of almost 3 millions that added with those of the Great Buenos Aires, a group of districts outside of its limits, is extended to more than 12 millions, a third of the total population of the country. The population is mostly white European, due to the great immigration, but there is also a great number of Criollos (Creoles), mix of native and Spanish. There are also other ethnic groups in smaller quantity, as oriental.

There is a historical tendency to people's mixture, giving little importance to the race, religion or nationality.

Government

The country is a republic of federal character, with the structure of 3 powers: executive, legislative and judicial. The city of Buenos Aires is from 1994 an autonomous city, before it was a national territory and the national executive power administered it directly.

Language

The language is the Castilian, although a lot of people have basic knowledge of English.

Economy

The city that possesses a high unemployment index, lost its strong industrial character with running of the

years, moving its activity to the tertiary sector, with a great diversification in the area of services and a lot of administrative employment.

Established

1536, 1580

Independence

1816

Chief of Government

Mauricio Macri

City area

203 km² (78 sq mi)

Ethnic composition

75% Spanish or Italian ancestry;
25% other, including Russian, Jews, English, French, German, Lebanese, and Syrian

Time zone

ART (UTC-3)

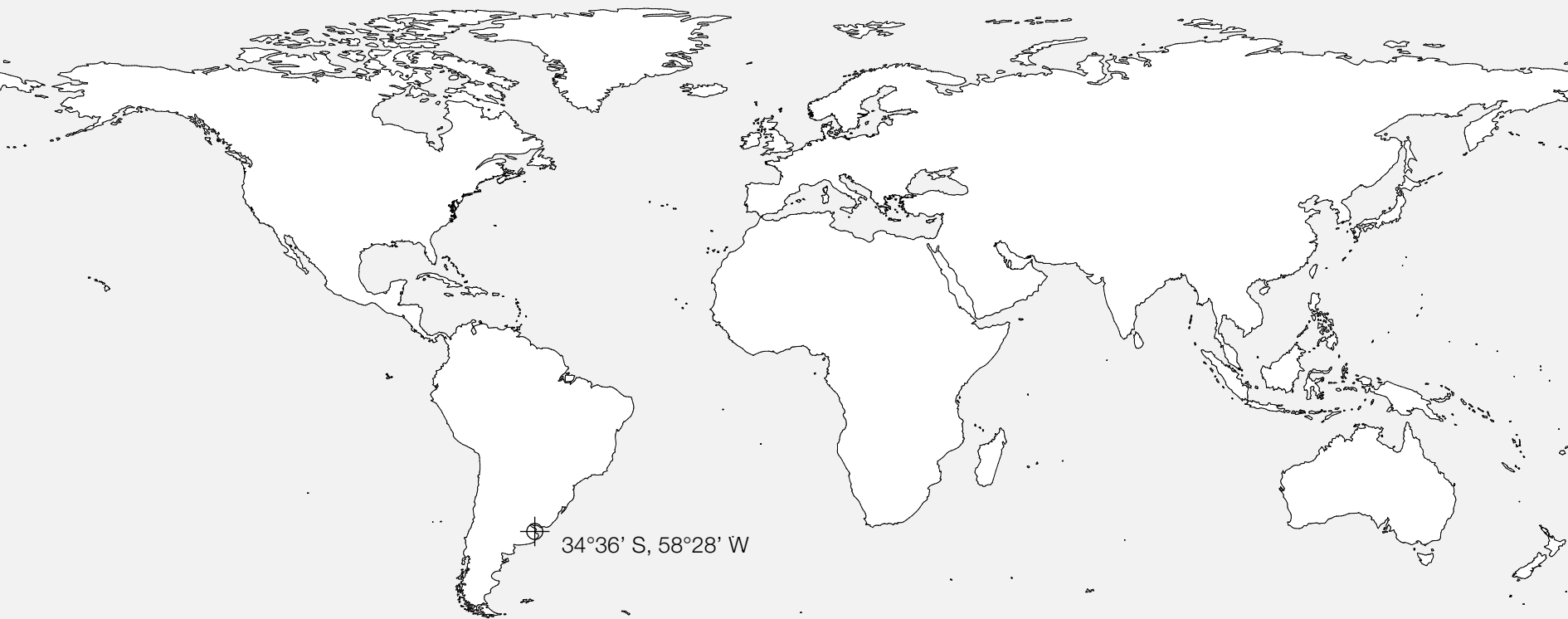
HDI (2011)

0.889 Very High

Currency

argentine peso¹

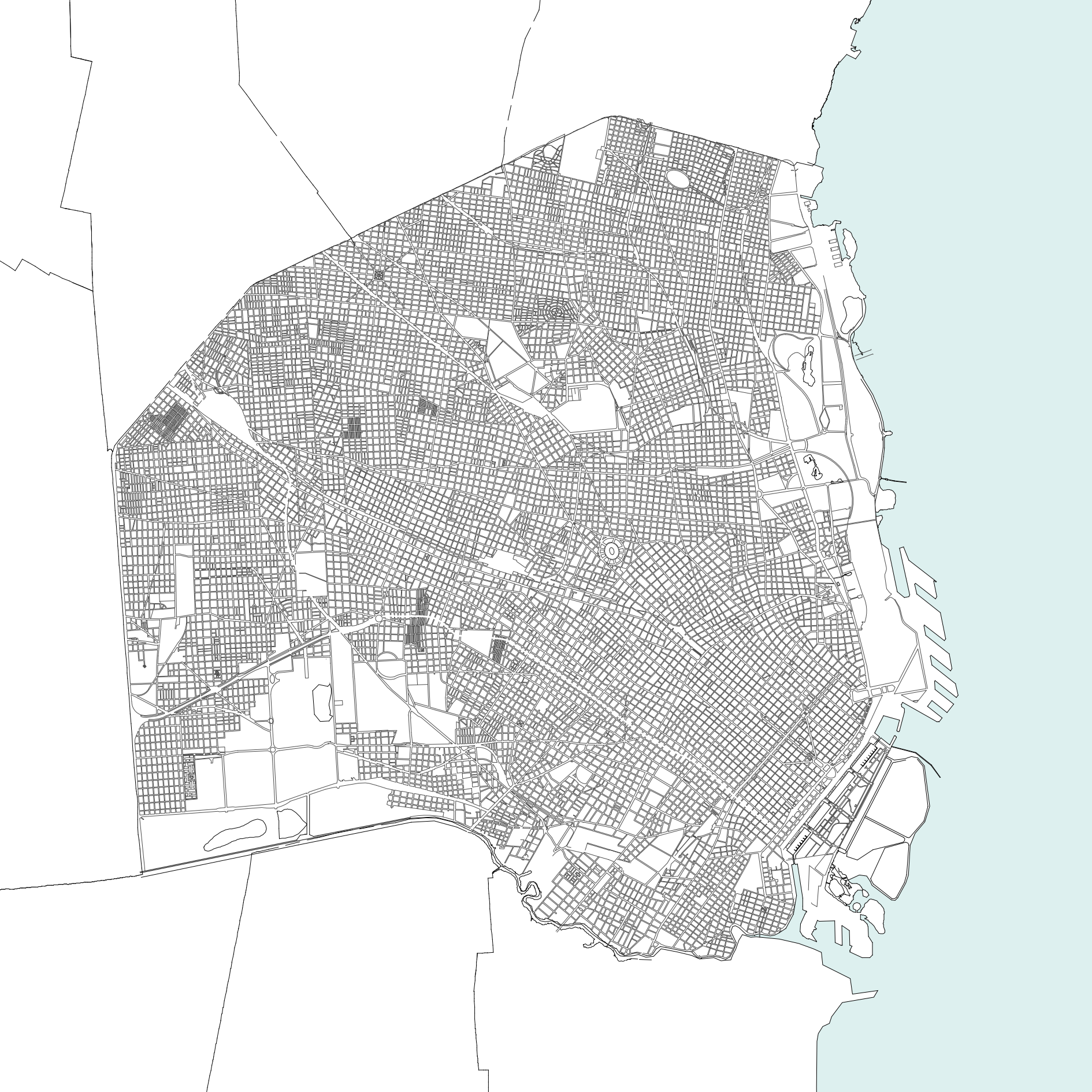
¹ General Description - Buenos Aires, Argentina , online: <http://www.buenosaires54.com/english/descripcion.htm>, in: <http://www.buenosaires54.com/>, accessed: 3rd of May 2015.
Buenos Aires, online: https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buenos_Aires, 3rd of May 2015.



34°36' S, 58°28' W



*multiculturalism, colonization, inflation, immigration, residential segregation,
private education, gated communities, villas of misery, security...*



URBAN LAYOUT

The urban space is constituted starting from the layout in dame table - typical for Spanish foundations, with a city that grew around the main square. The whole rest of the city, in spite of its enormous dimension, is guided toward this sector: The roads and the systems of transport leave from this center toward all the places. To compensate the damages of this system, there were created several circular roads among the capital and the great Buenos Aires that unite the diverse points. The layout of the diverse neighborhoods generally respects the dame table structure, but it doesn't sometimes coincide in its orientation with the original layout. There also appear some blocks of atypical shapes.

The city is very modern, with all the advances of any big First World city, but at the same time has characteristic problems of underdeveloped cities, as deficiencies in infrastructure of many of its services, of the systems of **control of the natural phenomena**, as the system of **pluvial drainage**, and in the **transport**. All this is due to that the improvement of these systems, some of which responded appropriately in some moment, many times it didn't accompany to the growth of the city. With regard to the history, the city grew fast in the last two centuries, what can turns comparing it with other cities of the world, and many times this growth was not accompanied by a **preservation character**, very present in these days. ¹

¹ General Description - Buenos Aires, Argentina , online: <http://www.buenosaires54.com/english/descripcion.htm>, in: <http://www.buenosaires54.com/>, accessed: 3rd of May 2015.

LE CORBUSIER

In 1929 the Swiss architect Le Corbusier visited Buenos Aires to give a series of lectures, at that time he was already very well known back in Europe. The city of Buenos Aires captivated him.

“Buenos Aires, southern capital of the new world, gigantic agglomeration of insatiable energy, is a city in error, in paradox, a city that has not a new but an old spirit.”

Such an old spirit in a relatively young city was undesirable to him. It meant Buenos Aires was going the way of historical European cities like Paris – not just in its charm but as well in dirtiness, industrial sprawl, and unromantic poverty (‘villas of misery’). But Le Corbusier as well thought that Buenos Aires had all the natural elements to become an attractive modern city.

“sea and port, the magnificent vegetation of the park in Palermo, the wide blue Argentine sky”

He started to work on the urban plan for the city with his ideals of “space, light, and order”. Some of the bigger changes were skyscrapers in the south of the city, a new highway cutting through it laterally, and the relocation of an airport.

None of these plans were unfortunately realized. The government who was

planning a commission from his plan, was suspicious of a foreign architect. Even if he had gained political support Le Corbusier’s solutions of tearing down existing buildings to create new streets failed to address the large immigrant population, mostly Italians and Spaniards, who arrived to Buenos Aires in the late 19th century and were now an established lower class. Moreover, his plans would probably eliminate the villas as part of the project of revitalization.

Carolina Muzi wrote in an article for Clarín, that many of Le Corbusier’s proposed changes were in fact later implemented:

The skyscrapers that Le Corbusier proposed for the riverbank finally flourished in Puerto Madero.

The Ciudad Universitaria today occupies the space he had planned for it in 1938.

The proposed Avenida Norte-Sur was completed between Retiro and Constitución.

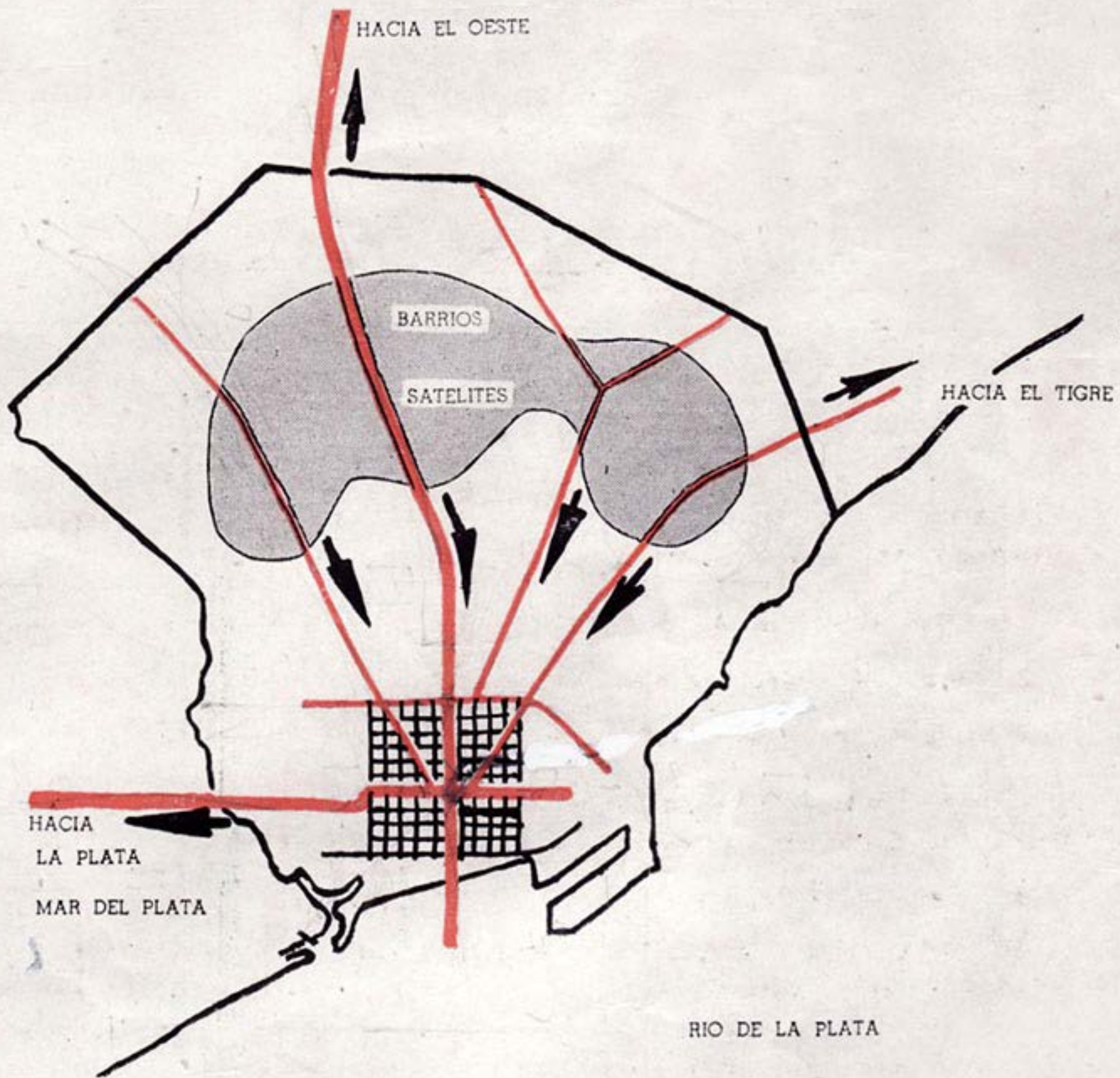
A crystal tower was added to the Congreso building.

A network of highways was constructed just as Le Corbusier had planned.

The relocation of the Aeroparque to the coast of Avellaneda – revived in 1995 by politicians – had already been proposed by Le Corbusier in 1929 and 1938.

All these innovations clearly represent the ideas of Le Corbusier. and are still present in the city of Buenos Aires maybe not in architecture itself but in its ‘spirit’.¹

¹ Sequeira, Jessica: Castles in the Air: Le Corbusier’s Dreams for Buenos Aires, in: The Argentina Independent (31st of January 2012), online: <http://www.argentinaindependent.com/life-style/thecity/castles-in-the-air-le-corbusiers-dreams-for-buenos-aires/>, accessed: 27th of February 2015.



BARRIOS

The city of Buenos Aires is formally divided in 48 barrios (neighbourhoods), which are grouped into 15 comunas (communes). All of them have distinct characters.

Villa Crespo

Villa Crespo is the barrio just southwest of Palermo, today in the real estate business also called 'Palermo Queens.' However, Villa Crespo hasn't been 'Palermofied' just yet, making it a great time to stay there, live there, or just go there for a stroll around or a night out.

Caballito

The neighborhood maintains a low profile, despite being in the exact geographic center of the city.

Almagro

Directly west of the Microcentro, just after Balvanera (informally split into and known as Congreso, Once and Abasto). It lies between Avenidas Independencia and Cordoba, and is split in two by Avenida Rivadavia, one of the city's main arteries.

La Boca

One of the most touristic places of the city known after the football stadium 'La Bombonera' and El Caminito, the colorful artists' street by the water.

San Telmo

The oldest barrio of the city. Known by its cobblestone streets, antique markets and beautiful architecture.

Barracas

Laying next to San Telmo, extending it's character. Although not as

popular, less touristic, known to be a bit dangerous.

Puerta Madero

The port of the city with the newest skyscrapers. Calatrava's bridge.

Palermo Soho

Sub-barrio of greater neighborhood of Palermo. Full of cafés, restaurants and boutiques. Trendy, creative, chic, young, cool.

Palermo Hollywood

Palermo Hollywood, is the colloquial name for the section of Palermo Viejo that lies between Juan B. Justo and Dorrego. The name comes from a large number of radio and television studios in the area. Today also known for its nightlife, which includes some of the best restaurants, bar and clubs in the city.

Recoleta

Lavish homes and hotels. Recoleta is considered by many to be the most elite neighborhood in Buenos Aires. It is also an area of immense historical interest, namely the impressive Recoleta Cemetery.

Nuñez

Nuñez is the northernmost barrio of the Capital Federal zone of Buenos Aires, after which begin the northern suburbs of Buenos Aires Provincia.

Belgrano

Besides ever-burgeoning Palermo, Belgrano is one of the largest barrios in Buenos Aires spanning an area of 6.8km. Although not instantly recognizable for its tourist attractions, it is a pleasant neighborhood for walking and admiring the residential homes.

Colegiales

Covering just over two square kilometers, Colegiales is one of Buenos Aires' smaller barrios and a largely residential one at that. It is also known for its green spaces.

Retiro

Retiro was once known for being one of the wealthiest neighborhoods in Buenos Aires and is home to many of the city's five star hotels. Today is known as one of the busiest neighborhoods in terms of transportation.

Constitución

Constitución is somewhat of an anomaly amongst the barrios of Buenos Aires. On the one hand it is home to some impressive architecture dating back to colonial times, yet on the other hand its streets are blighted by drug trafficking, sex workers, 24-hour nightclubs and noise pollution.

Mataderos

Mataderos is a large and populous

barrio situated in the southwest corner of Buenos Aires Capital Federal district that offers a mix of both city and rural life. Tradition runs deep here and visitors can often stumble across improvised lyric battles, known locally as payadas, taking place in the bars and on the street corners.

Montserrat

Home of Casa Rosada - the government house and other significant public buildings.

San Nicolás

Often referred to as El Centro, San Nicolás plays host to a great part of Buenos Aires' financial district. With major streets such as Avenida 9 de Julio, Avenida Corrientes and Florida passing through it.

Balvanera

Although it is one of the official barrios of Buenos Aires, Balvanera is more commonly referred to as three separate sub-barrios: Abasto, Congreso and Once. Balvanera is a heavily populated neighborhood that blends commerce and residential living.

Boedo

Boedo is traditionally a working class barrio situated in the mid-east area of Buenos Aires Capital Federal. The barrio is known for its influence

in tango culture and its cafés were important meeting places for writers and musicians.

San Cristóbal

Since its early beginnings, San Cristóbal has been the nucleus of numerous important historical events in Buenos Aires. Traditionally, a fusion of local aristocratic families and foreigners, the barrio is recognized for its tango culture.

Flores

Sprawling across almost 8 km², Flores is one of the largest barrios of Buenos Aires and sits in the center of the Buenos Aires city area. Classed as part of Buenos Aires Province until 1888, Flores claim to fame is that Jorge Mario Bergoglio, who became Pope Francis in 2013, was born and raised in the barrio.

Saavedra

Perched on the border of Capital Federal and Buenos Aires Province, Saavedra is a quieter city neighborhood and a largely residential one. Its main attractions are two large recreational parks – Parque Saavedra and Parque Sarmiento – and DOT Baires, the largest shopping center in Buenos Aires.

Chacarita

Known by even bigger cemetery than Recoleta.

Agronomía

Agronomía is a small barrio in to the west of the city Buenos Aires.

Villa Urquiza

Highly residential area. Middle-upper class neighborhood with beautiful old homes and modern apartment buildings.

Nueva Pompeya

Nueva Pompeya is a barrio situated southwest of Microcentro that provides an important transitory link between Capital Federal and the south. Its southernmost border is split between Avenida 27 de Febrero and the Riachuelo river, after which are towns of Buenos Aires Province.

Parque Chacabuco

Parque Chacabuco lies to the southwest of Microcentro and is named after the park that is situated in the heart of the barrio.

Villa Devoto

West of Buenos Aires Centro and on the border of La Provincia is the barrio of Villa Devoto. A quiet residential barrio, it is locally known as 'El Jardín de la Ciudad' (The Garden of Buenos Aires) due to its collection of tree-lined streets. In fact, Villa Devoto famously

possesses more trees than any other barrio of Buenos Aires.

Alto Palermo

Although Palermo has been a popular barrio since its modern inception in the 1830s, Alto Palermo is a relatively new addition to the sub-barrios of Buenos Aires' largest neighborhood. The area takes its name from shopping mall Alto Palermo opened in 1990. The introduction of the mall led to the area becoming one of the busiest shopping districts of the city.

Palermo Viejo

This is the oldest part of the barrio and occupies its southeastern corner. It incorporates both Palermo Hollywood and Palermo Soho.

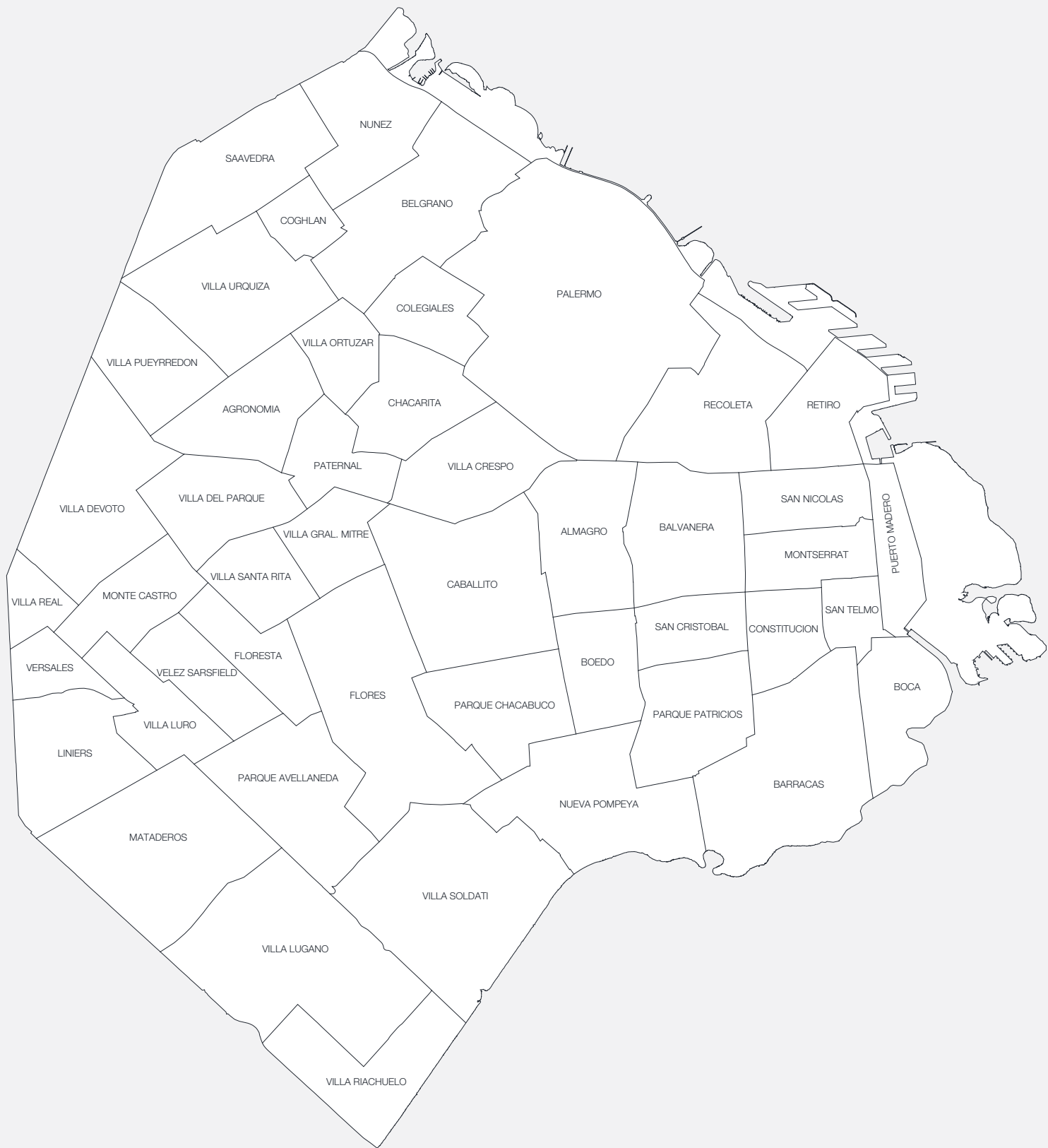
Palermo Chico

Characteristic of Palermo's many aliases; the barrio is also referred to as Barrio Parque. This is the place of millionaires and ambassadors, local television and sporting celebrities.

Las Cañitas

Las Cañitas is famous for possessing one of the biggest concentrations of bars and restaurants in the city. A consequence of this is a large number of foreigners and vacationers residing in the area.¹

¹ Neighborhood Guides, online: <https://www.gringoinbuenosaires.com/neighborhood-guides/>, in: <https://www.gringoinbuenosaires.com/>, accessed: 2nd of June 2015.



ARCHITECTURE OF BUENOS AIRES

The evolution of urban architectural landscape of the city of Buenos Aires can be divided into 4 periods, through which we can appreciate the changes that were occurring in adaptation of space to the needs of man.

These changes were given by different factors: political, social, economic, have influenced the architecture and through them, the neighborhoods started to evolve their own identities.

1536-1810 Founding Process

The first founding of the city's layout looked like a checkerboard: 16 squares parallel to the river and 9 squares perpendicular to it, in grid-traced blocks.

Public architecture was mostly directed by the king's authority and had a lot of freedom in the construction and design.

The first houses were very primitive, until new elements were discovered, such as adobe and terracotta. Windows were covered with leathers, floors were of ground soil, and the roofs thatched.

Later, clod walls, wooden doors and carved wooden gates were added.

During the colonial period, new technologies appeared such as ironworks, ceramics, animal fat (to isolate moisture) and cow's blood for painting walls.

Finally, the latest incorporations were rooftops, rain tanks, ceramic pipes, carriage yards, driveway gates and decorative elements of Italian Classicism.

1810-1880 Pre-Modern Process

The environment of 'Revolución de Mayo' (May Revolution) had a Neoclassical and Romantic tone. The "Recova" and the "Pirámide" are built, and the Law Palace in the "Manzana de las Luces" in San Telmo.

In 1821 Bernardino Rivadavia regulates the urban tiling, the Circunvalatoria Avenue (nowadays Entre Ríos - Callao) and the 8 avenues from East to West (4 North and 4 South). Public spaces are created, The Recoleta Cemetery is built and the New Port is projected.

This whole process transforms Buenos Aires into the "Great Village".

In 1871, during a **yellow fever epidemic**, wealthy families who had their houses in the Southern areas, like San Telmo, were forced to migrate to the Northern areas of the city and these abandoned buildings give rise to the "conventillos" (tenements).





BIZCOCHOS

1880-1920 The Modern Metropolis

Considered as a period of greatest economic development, city growth and extension in infrastructure of services and public transport.

Important public works were initiated: **House of Government, The Congress (Law Palace), The Colon Theatre, The Water Company Palace.**

The wealthy families who used to live in the Southern Area started building big palaces in the Northern neighborhoods (Retiro and Recoleta) displaying their power, good taste and creativity of foreign architects, who designed the luxury palaces in French style.

Towards 1894 an anti-academic modernism exploded: Art Nouveau and Art Decó.

In the housing area the Petit Hotel appears, distributed in 4 levels: basement, ground floors, first and second floor.

In the same context, the lift is invented (1898), pronouncing even more social classes.

1920-1990 Evolution of Modern Metropolis

A period marked by political and social events: **economic crisis and revival of the popular classes.** Neighborhoods start developing their own identities.

Towards 1930, after Le Corbusier's visit to the country, a new architectural movement begins, derived from School of Chicago and others, known as Rationalism, which gives priority to the harmony of spaces, the shapes resolved by the functions without adopting unnecessary ornaments. An example is the **Kavanagh Building** (1935).

From 1945 it is intended to give a sense of powerful state, through solidness and monumentality of public buildings. For example, Law University, Social Sciences University, Eva Perón Foundation which would then be Engineering University, and buildings with a new structural element for facades known as 'curtain wall' which would change the monumental image for transparency, such as in Mercado del Plata.

Then a coexistence of different constructive typologies appeared that renewed the urban landscape, such as the Master Plan of Recycling Puerto Madero, that intended to recover old custom warehouses (bricked English architecture) and the complex Catalinas Norte (Sheraton Hotel, 1972).

Since 1980 towards today, the city was invaded by new trends and ideas, including commercial architecture for shoppings and urban renewal such as highways and extensions of routes. Bordering the area of Puerto Madero, offices are built in 'intelligent buildings' for example Bouchard Tower (1994), Fortabat (1993) and República Building (1994).¹

¹ Arquitectura de Buenos Aires, online: http://www.conozcabuenosaires.com.ar/arquitectura/arquitectura_evolucion.htm, in: <http://www.conozcabuenosaires.com.ar/>, accessed: 29 of January 2015.

GLOSSARY

A

Avenida / Avenue: *a street or road, usually a thoroughfare running at right angles to the streets on a grid pattern*

B

Baldío / Wasteland: *Land or unoccupied or vacant lot. No construction.*

Boulevard / Boulevard: *A broad city street, often tree-lined and landscaped.*

C

Cochera / Garage: *Building for the temporary custody of cars.*

Conventillo / Tenement: *Family house by a variable number of tenants. Housing characterized by overcrowding and poor quality of services. Overall occupying degraded ancient houses. Exceptionally buildings were constructed to give such use. Tenement as housing had its peak in the late 19th century, with the massive European immigration.*

Cuadra / Block: *Linear space spanning between the two corners formed by the intersection of a street with another until two corners formed by the next junction. Usually 100-150 meters long.*

E

Edificio / Building: *Any structure built to host people, animals or any type of goods and is fixed permanently to the ground.*

Ejido / Communal Land: *The area of land that surrounded the urban layout itself, which was owned and used to meet certain needs of citizens of one community.*

G

Galería comercial / Shopping Mall: *Building to house commercial premises.*

Geriátrico / Retirement Home: *Place to house elderly, generally with a physical or mental impairment.*

I

Intendencia / City Administration: *form of political administration of the city of Buenos Aires until 1996 autonomy declaration.*

Intendente / Intendant: *highest authority of Intendencia*

L

Línea Municipal / Municipal Line: *An imaginary line that determines the separation between public space*

(sidewalk and street) from a plot of land (private area).

Lote (Parcela) / Plot: *Sector of privately owned land. Several lots or plots form a urban block (manzana).*

M

Manzana / Urban Block: *Lot of urban land bounded by streets.*

Medianera (Pared mediana) / Common Wall: *Common wall of two buildings or houses.*

P

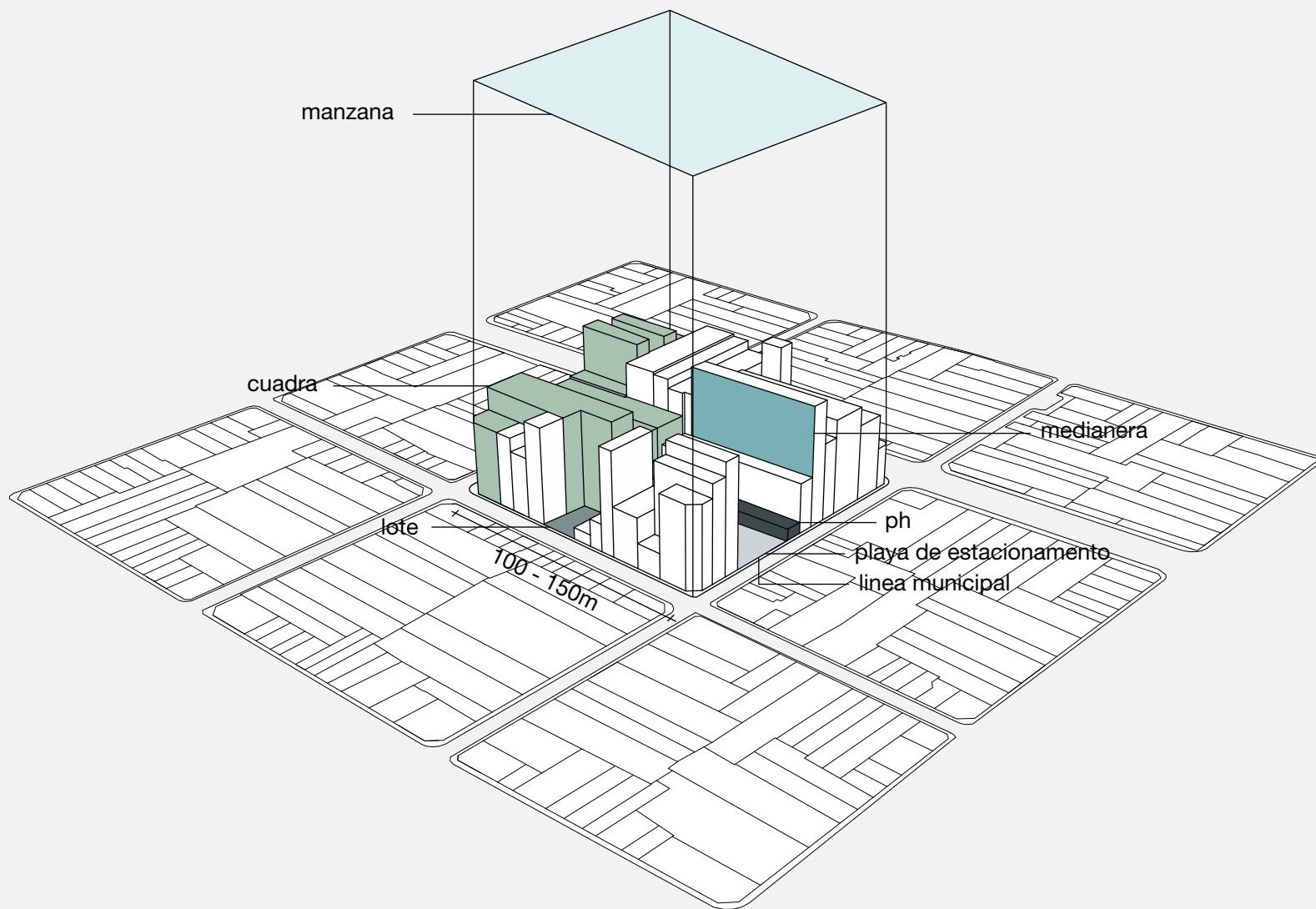
Partido / District: *Used in the sense of part or place. It is each of the political and administrative sectors which divides the territory of the Province of Buenos Aires, bordering the territory of the City of Buenos Aires. This form, along with a number of geographically fixtures, is what is called "the Suburbs".*

PH (Propiedad Horizontal) / Horizontal Property: *Building of several apartments on the ground floor with a common hallway.*

Playa de estacionamiento / Open Air Parking Area: *Open air space intended for temporary custody of cars. Usually generated from the demolition of existing buildings on the lot.¹*

¹ Código de planeamiento urbano, Pub. 09/12/2000.

The Free Dictionary, online: www.thefreedictionary.com, accessed: 25th of March 2015.
Wikipedia, online: www.wikipedia.org, accessed: 25th of March 2015.



manzana

cuadra

lote

100 - 150m

medianera

ph

playa de estacionamiento

linea municipal



LEPOR
VE
4

M

San Telmo



NEIGHBORHOOD

San Telmo lies six blocks from Plaza de Mayo, bounded to the north and south by the Microcentro and La Boca, and to the east and west by Puerto Madero and Avenida 9 de Julio.

Limits

Chile, Av. Igr. Huergo, Av. Brasil, Av. Paseo Colon, Av. Martin Garcia, Defensa, Av. Caseros, Piedras

CGPC

CGPC 01

Surface in km

1,2

Density (people/km²)

19.331,7

Total Population

23.198

Women	12.470
Men	10.728

Anniversary

9 de julio

“The heart of colonial Buenos Aires, lovely San Telmo is the city’s most romantic neighborhood with its cobblestone streets, colonial houses, Spanish churches, and antiques stores. It was first inhabited by elite families who fled during a yellow fever outbreak in 1871, their mansions becoming tenement houses or conventillos for poor European immigrants. San Telmo soon became a melting pot of cultures, a working-class stronghold, and later, a Bohemian quarter synonymous with tango. Newly fashionable and sprinkled with slick loft apartments, chic restaurants, and boutique hotels, it retains an engagingly gritty feel.”¹

¹ Eyewitness: Buenos Aires top 10, online: <http://travel.brainmeasures.com/Content/Ebooks/Buenos%20Aires.pdf>, accessed: 3rd of June 2015, p. 18-19.

Gobierno de la Ciudad: Barrios: San Telmo, online: <http://www.buenosaires.gob.ar/laciudad/barrios/santelmo>, accessed: 10th of June 2015.



SAN TELMO PAST

HISTORY

Known as 'San Pedro Heights' during the 17th century, the area was mostly home of dockworkers and brick makers and that is how San Telmo became Buenos Aires' **first "industrial" area**, home to its first windmill and most of the early city's warehouses. City's exports of wool, hides and leather were prepared and stored here in colonial times what led to residential settlements in this part.

The area was formally incorporated into the city in 1708 as the "Ovens and Storehouses of San Pedro." The neighborhood's poverty led the Jesuits to found a 'Spiritual House' in the area called 'the Residence'. However, due to their suppression in 1767 it needed to be closed.

In 1806, after the Jesuits left, there was established the Parish of San Telmo, named in honor of the Patron Saint of seafarers.

With declaration of national independence not much changed for the neighborhood of San Telmo. Social institutions were still missing, 'the Residence' was restored to a clinic which was closed in 1821.

In the next 30 years San Telmo saw no public works except a Black Infantrymen's Quarters and the construction of the dreaded Mazorca Dungeon by Governor Juan Manuel de Rosas.

San Telmo began to improve despite these challenges, particularly after Rosas' removal from power in 1852. The establishment of new clinics, the installation of gas mains, lighting, sewers, running water and cobblestones and the opening of the city's main wholesale market led to increasing interest in the area on the part of the well-to-do and numerous imposing homes were built in the western half of San Telmo.

This promising era tragically ended when the **epidemic of yellow fever** struck the area in 1871. It claimed over 10,000 lives, and this led to the moving of San Telmo's growing middle and upper classes into another area that later became Barrio Norte.

At first hundreds of properties became vacant. A few of the larger lots were converted into needed parks, the largest of which is Lezama Park, designed by the renowned French-Argentine urban planner Charles Thays in 1891 as a complement to the new Argentine National Museum of History. Most large homes, though, became **tenement housing** during the **wave of immigration** into Argentina from Europe **between 1875 and 1930**. San Telmo became the most multicultural neighborhood in Buenos Aires, home to large communities of British, Galician,

Italian and Russian-Argentines. The large numbers of Russians in San Telmo and elsewhere in Buenos Aires led to the consecration of Argentina's first Russian Orthodox Church in 1901. Expanding industry to the south also led a German immigrant, Otto Krause, to open a technical school here in 1897.

San Telmo's bohemian air began attracting local artists after upwardly, high-class immigrants left the area. Increasing cultural activity resulted in the opening of the Buenos Aires Museum of Modern Art by critic Rafael Squirru in 1956, as well as in the 1960 advent of the "Republic of San Telmo," which organized art walks and other events. San Telmo's immigrant presence also led to quick popularization of **tango** in the area.

The 1980 restoration of the former Ezeiza family mansion into the **Pasaje de la Defensa** ("Defensa Street Promenade"), led to the refurbishment of numerous similar structures, many of which had been conventillos (tenements) since the 1870s. ¹

¹ San Telmo, Buenos Aires, online: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Telmo,_Buenos_Aires, accessed: 2nd of June 2015.

Gobierno de la Ciudad: Barrios: San Telmo, online: <http://www.buenosaires.gob.ar/laciudad/barrios/santelmo>, accessed: 10th of June 2015.

SAN TELMO PRESENT

CONVENTILLOS / Tenements

***Conventillo** (coming from the word convent) is the name given to a type of collective urban housing, also known as tenancy in Argentina, Uruguay, Chile and Bolivia. It is a home where every room is rented by a family or a group of single men. Services (such as dining room and bathrooms) used to be common for all neighbors.

They tended to have poor sanitary conditions, overcrowding. In general, they were structured in galleries around one or more courtyards, walls and ceiling were of metal sheets and wooden beams structure affirmed with stones or bricks.¹

¹ Conventillo., online: <https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conventillo>, 2nd of June 2015.

Nowadays, Conventillos present some kind of connection between the old and the new San Telmo.

The whole area of Buenos Aires is today very much related to so called 'hipster' movement, culture, style, however you want to call it or whatever it might be. If we take an example of Palermo Soho - an area of the city that has been neglected for several years and was now brought to life by a culture, that actually appreciates graffiti, everything that has to do with underground, vintage design, 'artesanal' or handmade products,...

Today, the entire area of Palermo Soho is filled with coffee shops, with 'the eco', 'the bio' and 'the freshly squeezed'. And it works.

The same is now being applied to other areas of Buenos Aires, like San Telmo, where the little rooms of conventillos that used to host immigrated families are turned into vintage stores, with some old and some new 'old-looking' clothes or other clutter.

In my opinion San Telmo needs something else. It can't be treated as an area with a history of a few decades that with any kind of modern interventions can only get better but it needs to be kept in mind that we are talking about an area worth of preservation, an area where it all started. The movements trough out the years will change, the graffiti will be in, the graffiti will be out, but the history will stay. It needs a simple revival that will preserve what is worth preserving but at the same time make it comfortable and in some way modern for the present time and for the people who still live there.



LOCAL 11

SALIDA →

LOCAL 10

NO
REPAR!

INTERVIEWS

QUE DICEN LOS VECINOS DE SAN TELMO?

/ What do the neighbors of San Telmo say?

30 people currently living or who used to live in San Telmo were asked what do they like about San Telmo and what they dislike about it.

The purpose of interviewing the locals on the street was to get information about the neighborhood first hand. The interviewees turned out to be very cooperative and extremely friendly.

As we found out, we were not the only ones trying to get their opinions on a matter, there were also youngsters stumbling in front of the supermarket, belonging to a certain party on the Argentine 2015 mayor or president elections, that wanted to get their attention as well.

We approached people by explaining them that we were doing a research for the university on how to better the area of San Telmo and by this wanting to get the information of people who actually live or work there, or know the area a bit better than us, foreigners. If it was possible and no one asked about it, we tried to avoid mentioning the word 'architecture studies' because as the practice showed, the interviewees had trouble

thinking beyond the 'architecture' aspect, once mentioned.

Most of the people were comfortable enough showing their face on camera, so besides the pictures now exists as well approximately 5 minutes long video with the summary of, in my opinion, their most relevant answers on the topic. The video was produced and directed by me, Taja Tadeja Rampih and co-produced by Juan Btsh, a local friend, who also made the great part of translating work and without who the communication with the neighbors probably would not be as easy as it was.

On the following pages there are written down only the significant quotes of the neighbors that were used for the video.



ANGEL, 43 years, pastry chef

„...I used to live 20 years in the area. What I like about it is the tourism. Sundays here get really crowded. But not only Sundays also during the week San Telmo is full of tourists. What I don't like about it is the amount of trash that is left after every Sunday market. People leave their trash everywhere. I don't think the area needs more security. There is a lot of police circulating around the area also during the nights. If someone knows how to walk the streets he will be fine...”



NESTOR, 77 years, retired

„...The neighbourhood is abandoned. Sundays when there is a market here, I don't leave my house. This shopping crowd is driving me crazy. They leave everything laying there, broken. The neighbourhood is very dirty and it needs more green spaces...”



EZEQUIEL, 24 years, business graduate

„...I live in Montserrat but I work in the area for the last month. What I like about San Telmo is the style of the houses, old houses. There are new buildings but also older houses. What bothers me is the traffic and the noise that it produces, especially the Avenue of 9 de Julio. Of the infrastructure or culture I don't think there is missing anything, the only thing I could think of is the security...”

„...In the past the best part of San Telmo was it's market on Defensa street, it used to be beautiful. Now it got very dirty. Many streets and sidewalks are destroyed. ..and this strange tourism...“



HILDA, 83 years, retired

„...I live in the building overlooking the Avenida Independencia. From the old days San Telmo has changed a lot. Before the streets were much safer, now in the night it can get dangerous. I think it needs more security, people are stealing a lot. What also bothers me is the noise every Sunday that is coming from the Sunday's market. Loud music, a lot of people. What is also bad about it is the trash and the grafitti. They are everywhere, not necessary nice ones. What is nice about San Telmo is the historic part of it that should be preserved. The traffic on Avenida Independencia is making a lot of noise...“



JOSE ENRIQUE, 70 years, banker

„...The neighborhood is very dirty. There is lack of trees and sidewalks. It is a neighbourhood with narrow streets. It is hard to plant trees here. They should plant them on Avenue Independencia. There is enough space to put them...“

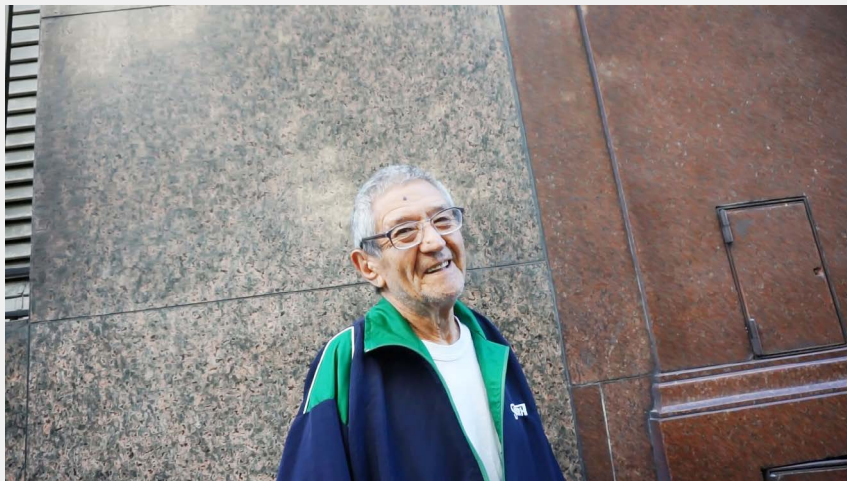


OSVALDO, 62 years, employee



WANDA, 25 years, journalist

„...Honestly, I don't like the neighborhood. I live here but I don't like it...“



ALBERTO, 71 years, doorman

„...There are also many squatted houses. There is a lot of insecurity, but that is the only negative thing cause in the end, San Telmo is San Telmo!...“



CAROLA, 39 years, lawyer

„...Honestly, I don't like the neighbourhood. It is very dirty. The streets are damaged. There are a lot of drunks. And green spaces... For green spaces I go to Puerto Madero...“

„...What I like about the neighborhood is that it keeps the sense of old. It has something unique that other areas of Buenos Aires don't have. I also like how they restored the buildings. What bothers me is the amount of trash. I think in San Telmo this issue is even bigger than in the rest of the city...“



MICHELLE, 22 years, photographer

„...I am from Brasil and I am visiting San Telmo as a tourist. I really like all of the libraries. What I find negative about it is that the streets are very narrow, very small...“



EDUARDO, 22 years, student tourist

„...We all grew up in San Telmo. The neighborhood is beautiful, we really like it. The only negative thing is, on the weekends when the tourists come everything gets more expensive...“



DARDO & CO, 78 years, architect



MATIAS, 32 years, graphic designer

„...I would appreciate it, if they removed some of the squatted houses. Green areas are missing...“



NESTOR, 56 years, doorman

„...I work as a doorman in San Telmo for the last 5 years. San Telmo is not missing anything. What bothers me is the amount of busses and traffic that passes through here, which is making very much noise. In the future I wouldn't built anything new in the area, I think it needs to be preserved as much as possible...“



„...They should clean more of the dog shit up...“

„...Formally everything is restored, but when you go walking around the neighbourhood you will see that it is not like this. I wish it would be real. There are also not a lot of trees here...“



NATALIA, 41 years, professor

„... Everyone, from the grocer to the butcher, know each other by name. That is very neighbourhood-like. The matter of garbage is very important. There is a lot of trash because there are a lot of restaurants and bars. It is pretty much abandoned. The negative thing about it is that they just started to revitalize it now...“



CARLOS, 58 years, artist

„... What bothers me is the dirt. There needs to be more trees, playgrounds for children...“



AGUSTINA, 35 years, political sciences graduate



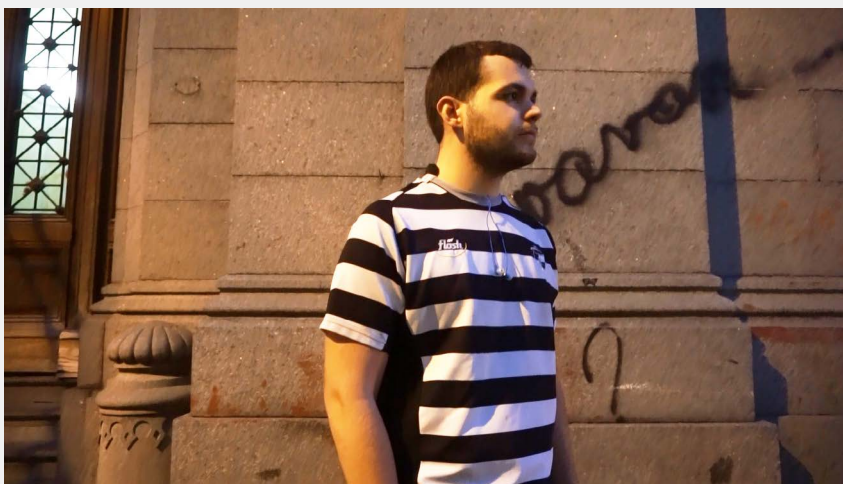
ROBERTO, 55 years, construction worker

„...There are many squatted houses, this is the negative thing about San Telmo. The security is missing, like everywhere else. There needs to be more parks and squares where people could go. I had a dog that I needed to take for a walk to the Province of Buenos Aires. I don't like that the dogs make the sidewalks dirty. What I find positive is... The cultural level it has. The businesses. It is also very pretty and picturesque. Even more at night. To modify the neighbourhood? No, for me it's ok. I would accept the changes, such as paint the facades, improve the lighting...“



CECILIA, 33 years, administrative employee

...What I would improve about San Telmo is the distribution of the traffic. Both Avenue Independencia and Avenue Belgrano are always full of traffic, it is even worse when there is a construction. What bothers me as well is the number of squatted houses. For example, they needed to close this school because there were people sleeping on the stairs in front. Monday mornings it was full of trash and broken bottles...“



PEDRO, 20 years, student

„...at the moment I live in Constitución, the area next to San Telmo. But I know San Telmo pretty well and I plan moving here in the future. I like the social life here. As in the other areas of Buenos Aires I think the trash is the biggest issue, it's very dirty. From the cultural point of view I can't think of anything right now that San Telmo could be lacking on...“

DATA INTERPRETATION

Before going into the interviews I had no concrete hypothesis on what the outcome might be.

I was wanting to get as much information about what are the needs of people living in the neighborhood, how could the area be improved, which facilities might be missing and how to complete the cultural agenda of the barrio that is already packed with activities and events that the government is promoting on their 'Agenda Cultural' but doesn't seem to be of a great interest.

I also anticipated that the results of the interviews were going to answer the question: How different is Argentine culture from others and what is special about people's wishes here in changing their environment and what they don't like about it. But at the end it turned out that the overall view on the comfort of living in a nice neighborhood, not wanting too much traffic noise, wanting clean sidewalks, trees and parks, does not vary that much no matter on which continent one lives.

The interviewees were really focused on the basic needs, that were not fully fulfilled in their neighborhood and could eventually be fixed with few interventions.

They also did not only complain about San Telmo but had some nice things to say about its beautiful colonial architecture, the antique spirit, some even appreciated all the tourist crowds that were pouring into the neighborhood from Plaza de Mayo all the way down to Defensa street in order to visit the famous San Telmo's street market and to see the old antique shops.

The graphic on the following page shows the interpretation of the data of all the interviews, exposing the most relevant issues or advantages on the topic of living in San Telmo.

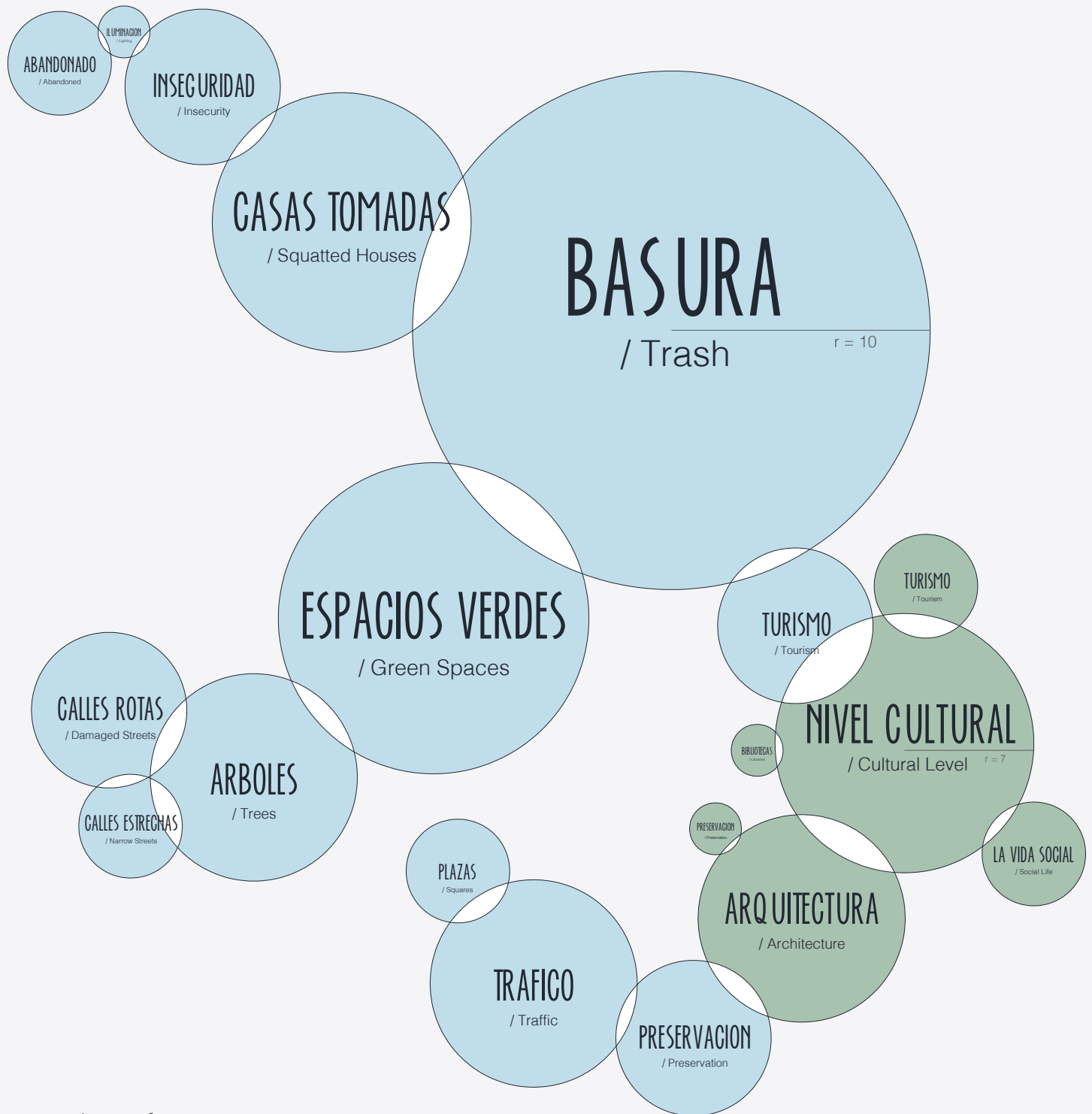
The size of the circles represents the **relevance of an issue** and the 'overlapping' the **connections** between them.

Putting the information side by side made it easy to find 'cause and consequence' relation between them.

Blue circles represent the **negative** matters and **green** the **positive** ones. Some of them happen to appear twice (like tourism), because some of the interviewees saw them as something positive and the other as negative.

The biggest issue turned out to be the trash or **garbage** (mentioned by 10 people) and the most positive thing about the neighborhood was the **cultural level** (mentioned by 7 people).

In the next few chapters every issue or a positive matter will be analyzed first on a larger scale referring to the city of Buenos Aires and then on the scale of the neighborhood of San Telmo or even a specific street.



r = number of answers

ESPACIOS VERDES

/ Green Spaces

"If cities have souls, the Argentine capital's is turning more and more gray. Real estate speculation, the fencing in and paving of parks, and the installation of private bars and restaurants in public squares have changed the face of the city. Green spaces with carefully tended flower beds? Today they're found mainly in the nostalgia brought on by a classic tango song.

Buenos Aires used to be green, and springtime was bursting with colors, thanks to all the flowering trees.

That is what you see in photos from last century, in parks like El Rosedal – the Rose Garden – and in verses from songs like the one immortalized by legendary tango singer Carlos Gardel about "the little path that time has erased...lined with clover and flowering reeds."

Time has erased the little paths – and the green spaces they crossed. Things have changed so much in the so-called 'Paris of the pampas' since the era – 1880 to 1930 – when the city parks, inspired by those in the French capital, were created.

The soul of Buenos Aires used to be the identity of each neighborhood, where families would sit in chairs outside, where there was a sense of trust in the streets, where the street, the squares and the entire city were

like a continuation of the home... things have been diluted now into a kind of city where everything is sort of the same, pretentious and exclusive."

Massuh, Gabriela: Hubo una vez Buenos Aires (Once upon a time there was Buenos Aires), in: "Ñ" magazine, November 2014.¹

1 Frayssinet, Fabiana: The Soul of Buenos Aires Is Turning Grey, (5th of February 2015), in: Inter Press Service Agency, online: <http://www.ipsnews.net/2015/02/the-soul-of-buenos-aires-is-turning-grey/>, accessed: 14th of July 2015.



World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that cities should have at least nine to **11 sq meters of green space per capita** “per person”.

For the city of Buenos Aires this would according to Gabriela Massuh’s calculations mean about approximately 70 new plazas or squares

Total green areas San Telmo:
92.592 m²

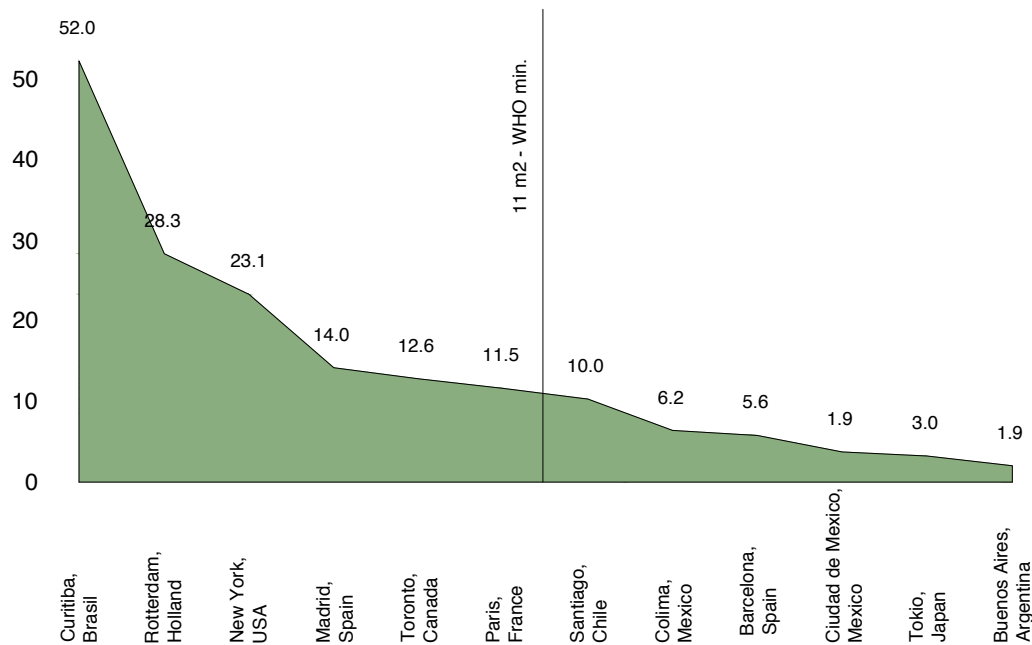
Total inhabitants San Telmo:
23.198

i= **4m² of green area per capita**

It is hard to seriously talk about the statistics in Argentina, because most of them are ‘adjusted’ to represent the country better on the international statistics charts.

Like the official plan of San Telmo’s green areas, where Plaza Dorrego, a paved square, is listed as a green area and a piece of grass on the sidewalk crossing the street Paseo Colon counts as well.

Despite everything, if we consider all this areas as “green” and calculate the square meter of green area per person, we will see that in San Telmo neighborhood we are still missing 7 m² of green space per person, to reach the minimum of 11 m² per capita recommended by the World Health Organisation.



“...For green spaces I go to Puerto Madero...”

M² OF GREEN SPACE PER PERSON IN THE CITIES OF THE WORLD¹

¹ online: <https://plusnetwork.wordpress.com/2011/07/13/how-many-metres-of-green-space-does-your-city-have/>, accessed: 14th of July 2015.



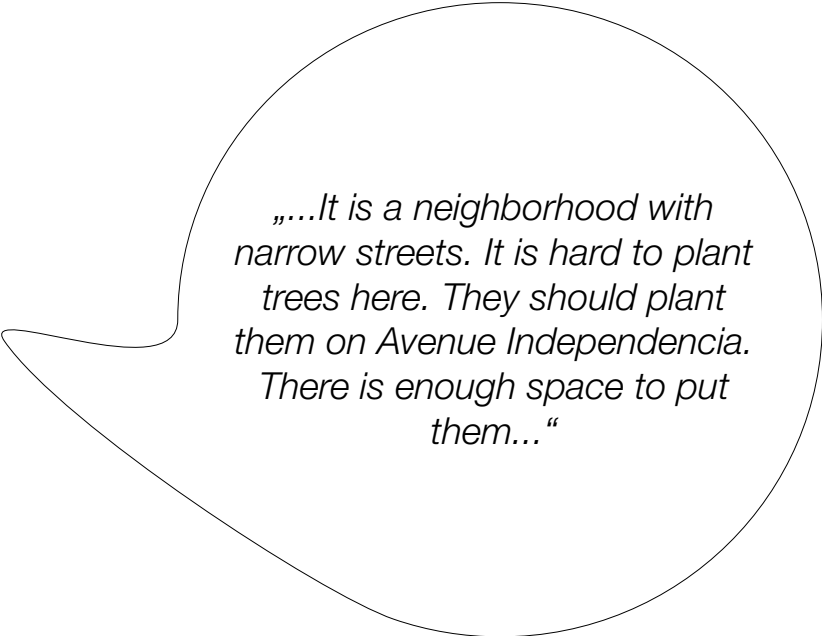
ARBOLES

/Trees

Although Buenos Aires does not have a lot of green spaces, they do have a lot of trees. There are about 400.000 planted trees. Some brought from abroad, like the palm trees, the others authentic native ones, like jacaranda.

Many ‚vecinos‘ of San Telmo mentioned that their neighborhood is lacking trees. And they are right. The cobblestoned streets and narrow sidewalks of this old quarter are not the best conditions to plant trees. Many sidewalks of the city are broken under the pressure of growing roots.

It is not only important where to plant the new trees but as well which sort of trees. Some keep their leaves green almost the whole year around and the others lose them as soon as the winter cold appears. There are trees of which the crown tends to grow in the height, of some others in the width and they do not fit into every little corner that has a few centimeters of soil left. They also require maintenance.



„...It is a neighborhood with narrow streets. It is hard to plant trees here. They should plant them on Avenue Independencia. There is enough space to put them...“

6th floor winter view through Platanus tree



CALLES ROTAS

/ Damaged Streets

There exists a legend that the stones covering San Telmo streets were brought there by the European conquerors. They used them to weight the ships, and on their way back replaced the weight with silver which they gathered from the surroundings of Río de la Plata also called “The Silver River”.

There is a street in San Telmo named “Piedras” meaning “Stones”.

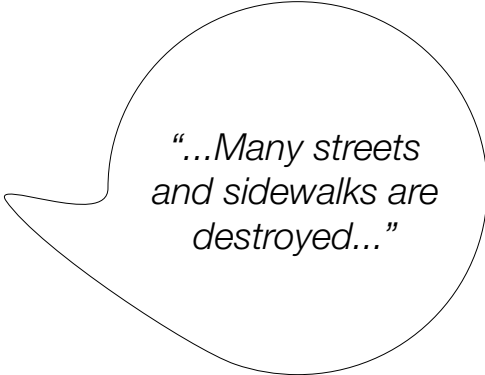
There is still a lot of streets left in Buenos Aires and especially in San Telmo that maintain the original cobblestone paving, which helps the city and the neighborhoods to keep their antique feel.

But the stones do not only represent the ‘feel’ of the neighborhood but as well its status. Cement-covered sidewalks and roads are not as appreciated as the one covered with some kind of stone placed to join in a specific pattern.

Walking through San Telmo many sidewalks, paved or not, are damaged. Usually the damage is caused by the growing roots of trees planted in too narrow places.

Other damages to the sidewalks are just there, cause they got broken and no one bothered to fix them.

Researching about the issue I was surprised to find out that there exists a call line that receives complaints about broken streets or sidewalks and manages their reparation in a few days. The problem is, that it is badly advertised and none of the people that we spoke to apparently knew about it.



“...Many streets and sidewalks are destroyed...”




BASURA

/ Garbage

Interviewing on the streets of San Telmo we hardly managed to find people that weren't bothered by the problem of trash on the streets of San Telmo and it turned out to be the most frequently brought up issue.

Walking through the area it is not hard to spot that the neighborhood is very dirty, plastic bags are laying on the sidewalks, dog's poop everywhere. It gets worse on Sundays when all the tourists come to visit the street market and leave all their trash behind. The people who most suffer in this process are the locals and the neighbors who live there.



*„...Honestly,
I don't like the
neighborhood.
It is very dirty...”*

Trash container on Defensa street



B

VOLICARIA

4308-6585

4941-3282

FOURS & TICKETS OFFICE


FOURS



The current Macri's government did start a project called '**Ciudad Verde**' ('Green City') that is not only creating new green areas in the city but also represents a beginning of environmental awareness. However, many porteños agree that the project is not evolving as well as it should and that it's execution mediocre, not paying much attention to details and the distribution of poorly designed 'Puntos Verdes' ('Green Points'), that are in reality not even green but yellow, representing the color of PRO political party, around the city is not optimal. Recycling as a topic in Buenos Aires and the people's awareness still has a long way to go.

Talking about trash and recycling there is worth mentioning a unique Argentinian recycling phenomena of 'cartoneros' .

Cartoneros are people, usually from a lower class, who collect only cardboard and paper from the non-recyclable trash bins, very often also making a huge mess around it during the process, and then reselling it to bigger companies currently for the price of 1 Argentine peso / kg (0,6€ / kg). Basically, they are the workers of the city, some kind of 'recyclers' without an appropriate uniform for the job, but at the same time do a great part of recycling job, at least of paper.



„...They should clean more of the dog shit up...“

CASAS TOMADAS

/ Squatted Houses

A squatted house in Spanish „casa tomada“ („taken house“) refers to a house that has been occupied by people without any legal claim or papers for it.

Passing through the area of San Telmo one might notice many beautiful colonial houses which doors and windows are being seized by brick walls.

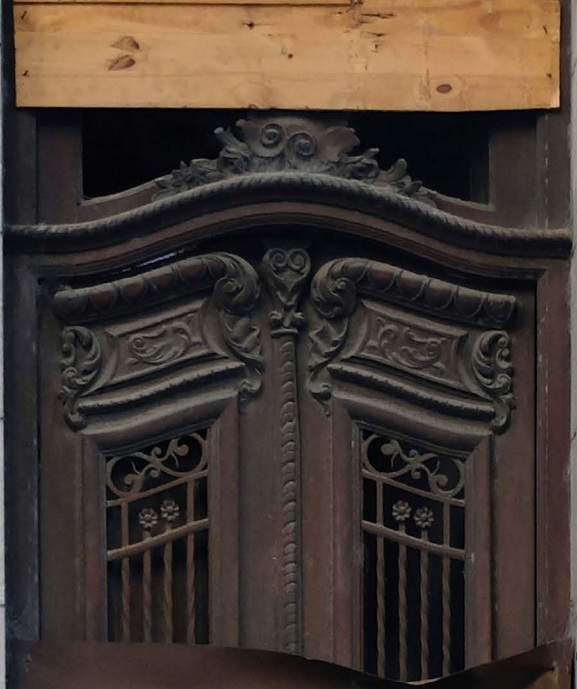
The specific purpose for this is to keep the uninvited guests from entering and with that preventing turning a private ownership house into a „casa tomada“.



„...I would appreciate it, if they removed some of the squatted houses...“

Bricked up entrance door of a house on Piedras street in San Telmo


TRIO
ARIA
.com.ar
2053



1455

1453



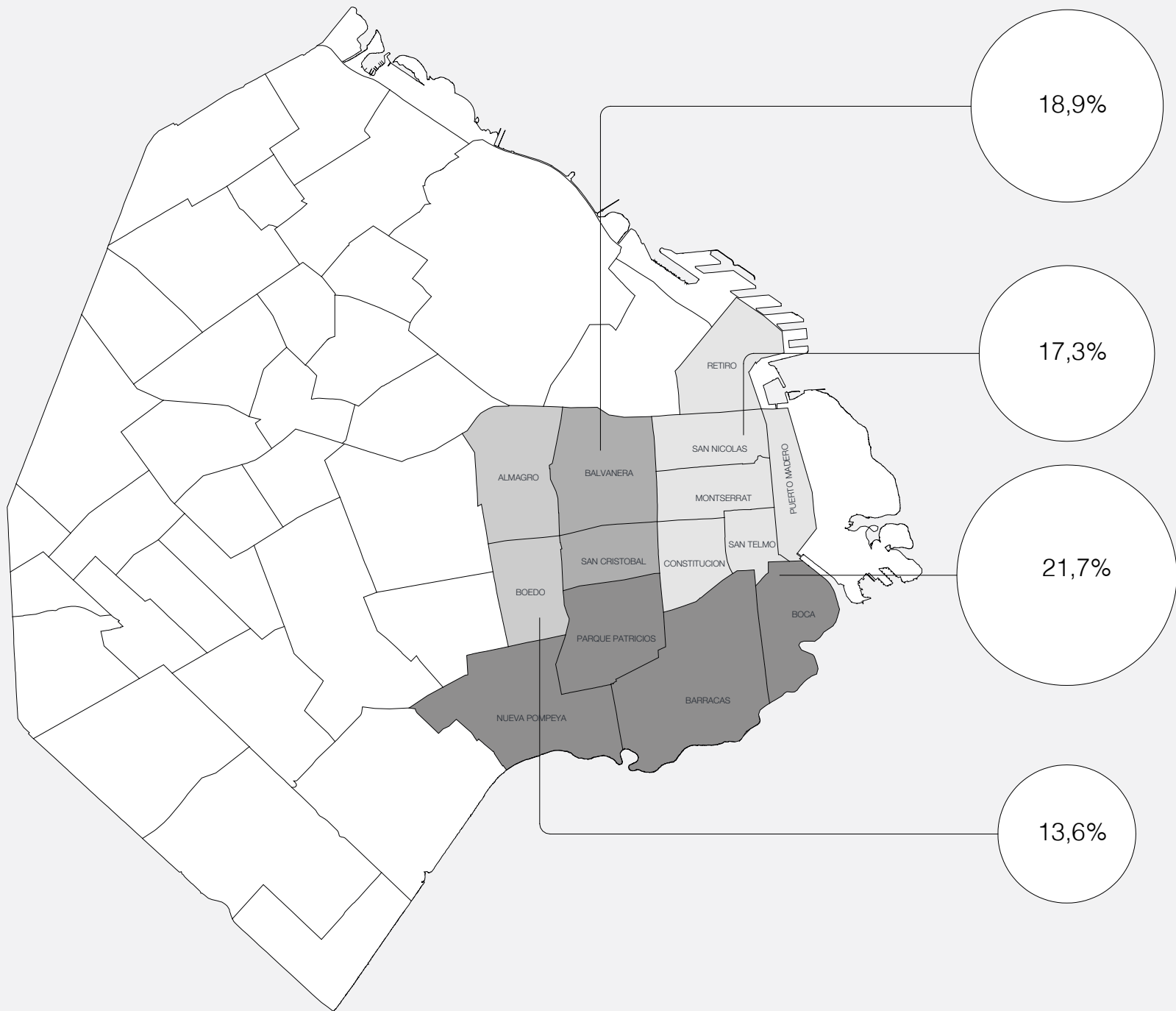
The problem of squatted houses in Buenos Aires exists already for decades.

*According to the Department for the statistics findings from the year 2008 there are currently around almost **4000 families** living in squats. They are mostly concentrated around the old historic center, as we found out from the interviewees there is also a lot of them in the area of San Telmo.*

***17,3% of total population** of the Comune 1 (that consists of Montserrat, San Telmo, Retiro, San Nicolas, Puerto Madero and Constitución) lives in squats.*

The issue is also directly connected with the insecurity. The illegal occupation of properties has its counterpart in the growth of the legitimate complaints of property owners, who claim the eviction and the reimbursement of these.¹

¹ Castro, Angeles: Viven 3738 familias en casas tomadas, (11th of May 2012), in: La Nacion, online: <http://www.lanacion.com.ar/1472209-viven-3738-familias-en-casas-tomadas>, accessed: 24th of June 2015.



INSEGURIDAD

/ Insecurity

The matter of security in Argentina is a big deal. Maybe for the number of thieves or just all over paranoia. It is true that stealing on the streets is not something unusual here.

It is almost impossible to spot a window in the city without looking through its metal bars first.

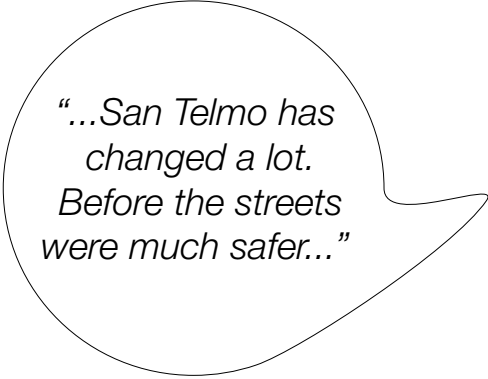
Most of the buildings also have a "portero". This is usually 24-hour security.

Coming to Argentina as a foreigner I was told that the safest neighborhood of the city is Palermo. And I was warned from going alone to La Boca, which supposed to be one of the most dangerous areas. Also the business center called Microcentro is known as one of not particularly safe areas.

When mentioning San Telmo, I got mixed responses. Most of the people advised me not going there by night and to keep all my valuable belongings away from sight.

Argentiniens say that not taking into account all the stealing, Argentina is a pretty safe place.

The neighbors, usually the older ones, did mention insecurity as an issue of the area. Or at least that the streets used to be much safer when they first moved to San Telmo.



"...San Telmo has changed a lot. Before the streets were much safer..."



POLICIA FEDERAL ARGENTINA

POLICIA FEDERAL ARGENTINA

Red graffiti on a green door, possibly reading "MORON" or similar.



TURISMO

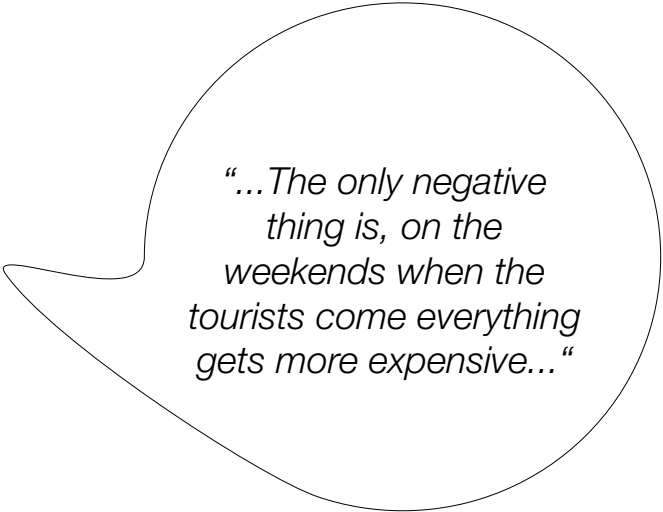
/ Tourism

The topic of tourism was in the interviews mentioned many times. Not only as positive but also as something negative.

People currently living in San Telmo were complaining about the prices, that were increasing since the explosion of tourism, especially on Sundays, when the market attracts thousands of tourists.

Some were bothered by all the noise the shopping crowd was making the others were disturbed by the amount of trash that is left behind every time when the market finishes.

On the other hand, we met 'vecinos' that actually appreciated all the tourism and listed it as something unique, that other neighborhoods of Buenos Aires might not have.



"...The only negative thing is, on the weekends when the tourists come everything gets more expensive..."



Exclusivo
"El Zanjón
de
Granados"



San Telmo might be one of the most touristic neighborhoods of Buenos Aires. There is a lot of variety in what one can see or visit.

Sunday Market

First on the list must be the Sunday Market. Open every Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm. Plaza Dorrego and the outlying streets fill up with tonnes of craft and antique booths, supplementing the numerous antique shops, collectives, and malls in the area. You can get stamps, tins, clothing, office equipment, chandeliers, furniture, paintings, etc.

Manzana de las Luces or “Illuminated Block”.

This block is home to many of the most important traditional educational, religious and cultural institutions of Buenos Aires, dating back to the 17th and 18th century. The name of this block comes from the number of intellectual institutions that were present in the old days. One of the most interesting attractions is subterranean network of tunnels that connect all of the buildings.

San Telmo Market

Daily market housed in a huge hall. Everything from fresh basil to antique shoes and coins is on display in this permanent marketplace.

Plaza Dorrego

The second oldest plaza in Buenos Aires, six days a week the plaza is a relatively quiet, shady space lined with restaurants and cafes. On Sundays an antiques market takes over and you can hardly see the plaza for the people and market stalls.

Tango in the streets

San Telmo is one of the rare places, where tango is still danced on the streets. Some dancers come for the show and others just for pleasure.

Pasaje San Lorenzo

Walking along Balcarce street, before arriving to Av. Independencia, you’ll see the street “San Lorenzo”. One of the interesting things to see, is the narrowest house in the neighborhood, among the street itself, which is very pleasant. Also, between San Lorenzo and Av. Independencia, in Balcarce street, you’ll find the Almacen Don Manolo. For those who know Mafalda, almacen Don Manolo is where Mafalda used to go for shopping.

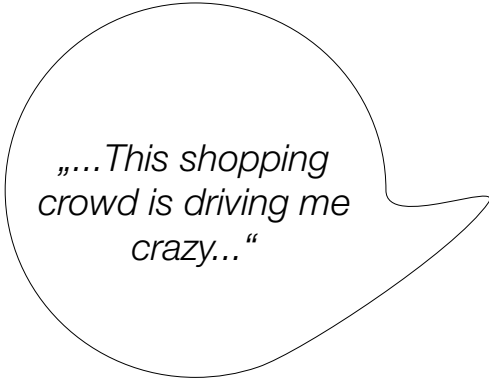
El Zanon de Granados

The most important architectural building in San Telmo and one of the most important of the city. It has nearly 500 years of history.

MACBA

Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Buenos Aires¹

¹ San Telmo neighborhood – A walk with history, online: <http://www.qualitarapartments.com/attractions/san-telmo-area-tourist-attraction-best-places-to-visit-in-buenos-aires/#tab2>, in: <http://www.qualitarapartments.com/>, accessed: 12 of July 2015.



„...This shopping crowd is driving me crazy...”



TRÁFICO

/ Traffic

Like in most of big cities, Buenos Aires is no exception when it comes to problems with traffic.

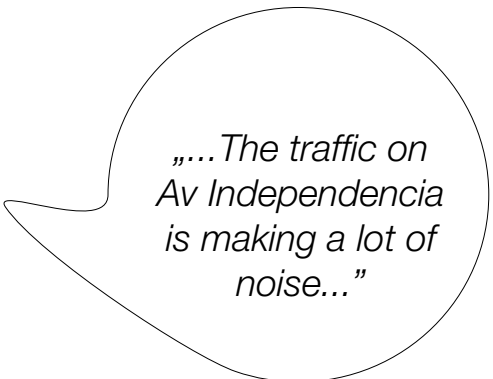
The streets, especially main avenues are packed with cars. Rush hours are usually every working day before and after working hours (9 am - 5 pm) and on the weekends, Fridays when people escape to their country houses - ,quintas' and then late Sundays when they return to the capital.

The public transport in the city is there, but it could work much better. There are metro lines, trains and many buses going through the autonomous city. The positive thing about public transport of Buenos Aires is, that a large part of it is subventioned by the state. So for a ride with the bus you usually spend around 3 peso which currently represents about 18 cents of an euro.

To reduce the car traffic and promote the public transport there are Metrobús lines, being built all over the city, starting with the Avenida 9 de Julio.

In the old San Telmo most streets are really narrow, paved with cobblestone, not meant for frequent traffic.

The modern age forced San Telmo to built ,real streets'. There are 5 Avenues, one of them is Avenida Independencia, going through San Telmo and even a highway 25 de Mayo crossing the neighborhood on its south.



„...The traffic on Av Independencia is making a lot of noise...”

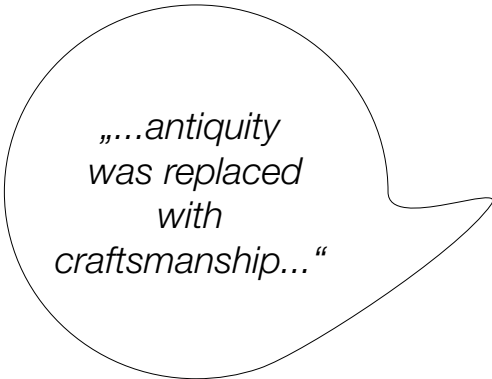
NIVEL CULTURAL

/ Cultural Level

General offer on the cultural activities in San Telmo is pretty vibrant. With the exception of La Boca, San Telmo is one of the last neighborhoods where tango can still be seen danced on the streets. Besides there is many museums, churches, exhibition places, antique shops and other cultural programs that attract people to visit the neighborhood.

7 neighbors out of 21 mentioned cultural level as the one advantage that distinguish San Telmo from the other neighborhoods and with that making it unique to any other place in the city.

During the years the famous antique shops with the long tradition lost their value to the craftsmanship products that are being sold on the Sunday market for much less value, so the owners of the shops complained that the culture is changing, unfortunately into their disadvantage.



*„...antiquity
was replaced
with
craftsmanship...“*

Shopping window of an antique shop



PINGUINOS

DIODAN GASOIL

VITROLA

RUECA

ATRIEL

CATONES COMPACTOS

ARTICULOS EXCIBIDOS
MEDIANTE MUESTRAS FOTOGRAFICAS
...CONSULTE AQUI...

TARRAS LECHERO

ARTICULOS DE CAMPO

JUQUETES

VARIOS

TODO...

BO...

PASE y VEA

POSTALES. FOTOS

JAZZ

ROCK
NACIONAL

ROCK
INTERNACIONAL

VARIOS

COCA-COLA

CASSET

ALMANAQUE 1955
(EVITA - PERÓN)
- CompletiSimo -





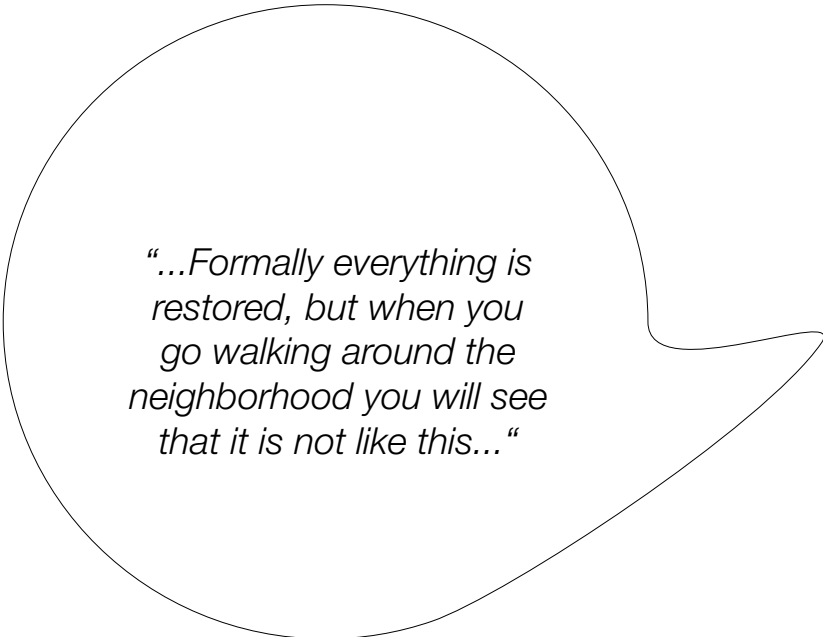
CONSERVACION

/ Conservation

For the last 30 years San Telmo has been dealing with the issue of conservation. It is the oldest neighborhood and therefore has also some of the oldest examples of the architecture in the city.

Neighbors believe the area should be restored as much as possible. Tall apartment buildings built not more than 50-60 years ago along Avenida Independencia are ruining the image of the neighborhood and neighbors are afraid that there is a chance that the damage can't be undone.

Every now and then there are organized protests or marches to preserve a historic building that is about to be demolished in order to build bigger, modern structures. There is also vandalism being present and some failed attempts of graffiti art.



"...Formally everything is restored, but when you go walking around the neighborhood you will see that it is not like this..."



Avenida
Independencia
300 - 400
Comuna 1

 McDonald's





Avenida Independencia

AVENIDAS DE BUENOS AIRES

/ Buenos Aires Avenues

Asking the neighbors of San Telmo about what they want to change about the area they live in, Avenida Independencia was brought up numerous times. Some complained about the amount of noise it produces, the others had the ideas about planting trees there,... It is also the street with most residential buildings. So the ones who can not afford buying a house in the area, they most likely live in one of the towers on Avenue Independencia. And one does not need to live in the area to notice that the avenue is not particularly attractive. The buildings are already aged, the few trees along the sidewalks are almost not noticeable, there is no green areas near by, meaning no place for small children or pets. And most of the unbuilt areas are reserved as parking spaces, covered with aluminum roofs or the typical blue canvas.

Before focusing on Avenida Independencia it is worth mentioning a few of the most notable avenues of the city of Buenos Aires that do have something that does not serve only for transmitting cars from A to B, but as well a factor that attracts people to stay there.

The areas reserved for cars and transportation and the areas for pedestrians especially in big and dense cities like Buenos Aires can't even be completely separated.

Because the luxury of large green areas in cities like Buenos Aires is limited, the ones that do exist are appreciated even more.

Green areas are usually in direct connection with the city mechanisms like transportation, so in urban planning the two should work in a homogeneous way.

The avenues of Buenos Aires not only serve for the transportation and reaching the desired destination but they represent as well some kind of landmarks of the city.

Some of them are known as touristic highlights, the others offer good shopping spots, public transportation, theatre, cinemas,...

They are not placed in a specific order or maintain the same length.

They also vary in their appearance and what they have to offer.





AVENIDA 9 DE JULIO

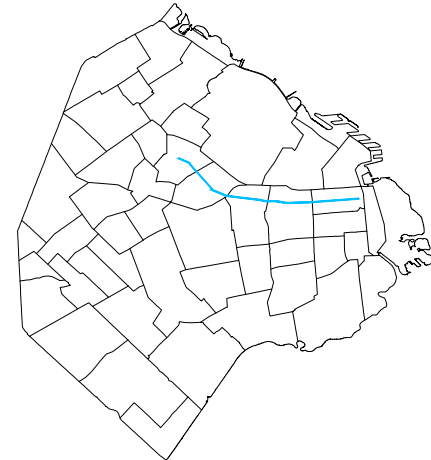
Av 9 de Julio must be one of the most important arteries of the capital. It is 140 meters wide and with that considered as the widest avenue in the world. It is named after the Argentinian independence day, 9th of July 1816. It is the only avenue in the city that doesn't change its name after crossing Av Rivadavia.

It runs all the way from the embassy of France in the North towards Plaza Constitución on the South. It is about 1 km long. Its northern point is the start of the highway Aruto Illia and on the south it is directly connected to the highway 25 de Mayo.

The width of the avenue occupies the width of a whole block.

A recent addition to the avenue was the Metrobus line of public transport opened in 2013.

The main monuments to be spotted on the avenue are: teatro Colon, the Obelisk and Plaza de la República and the building of the Ministry of public works with Evita's images on the northern and southern facades.¹



Landmark of the City

Metrobus

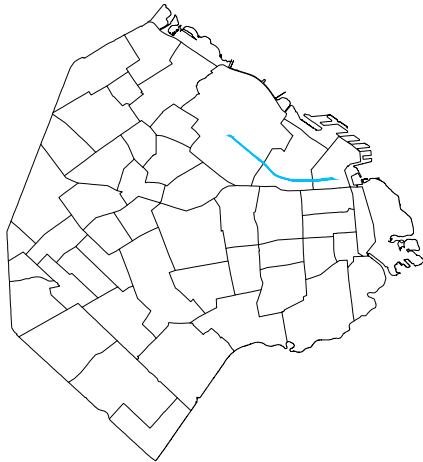
Connects the North and the South

Obelisco as the Middle Point

Building of the Ministry of Public Works with Evita's images on the northern and southern Facades

¹ Avenida 9 de Julio, online: <http://www.visitingargentina.com/avenida-9-de-julio/>, in: <http://www.visitingargentina.com/>, accessed: 25 of July 2015.

AVENIDA SANTA FE



Lower floors: Shopping

Higher Floors: Residential

Public Transport

**Connection between City Center
and Residential Area of Buenos
Aires**

Avenida Santa Fe is known to be one of the main shopping centers of the city. It is also called ‚Avenida de la Moda‘ or the ‚Fashion avenue‘. The name comes from one of the provinces of the state.

The avenue starts at a crossing with Avenida del Libertador at Plaza San Martin at a neighborhood called Recoleta and dies 40 blocks west in the neighborhood of Palermo where it changes the name to Avenida Cabildo.

It is a 5-lane avenue, one of the few avenues of the city that include two-way traffic. This change was applied in 2011.

It is also known for public transport including buses and metro lines.

Besides shopping one can enjoy its nice offer on colonial architecture.¹

¹ Avenida Santa Fe, Buenos Aires, online: <http://www.visitingargentina.com/avenida-santa-fe-buenos-aires/>, in: <http://www.visitingargentina.com/>, accessed: 25 of July 2015.





CINE
LORCA

PIZZERIA

teatro
Apolo

Sube

Diós Mio
Esta TEMPORADA!
SI
MALES

Sube



AVENIDA CORRIENTES

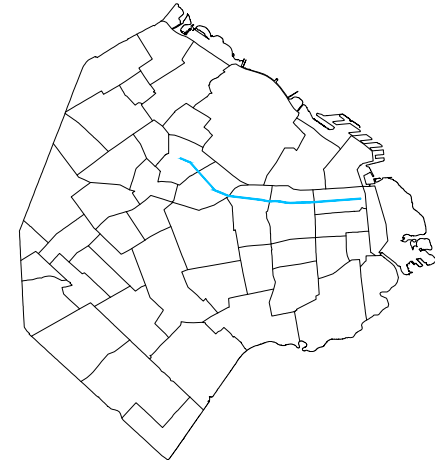
Avenida Corrientes is known as Broadway Street of Buenos Aires. There is a high concentration of show business spots from cinemas, theaters, stand-up comedies, Broadway plays, you name it. The avenue becomes alive by night and is one of the top attractions of the city.

Its name derives from another province of the state, the same as the parallel avenues Santa Fe, Córdoba and San Juan. In this case Corrientes.

It starts in Puerto Madero and extends 69 blocks all the way to the neighborhood of Chacarita. Under the surface the avenue is followed by subway B line.

Already in the 50's it was renowned as 'the street that never sleeps' and since then it serves as one of the most touristic spots in the city. It is full of neon signs, billboards and it is unlike any other avenue in the city.

In 40 block corners are placed memorial 'cartooned' figures of tango.¹



Broadway of Buenos Aires

Entertainment

Billboards, Neon Signs

Passages

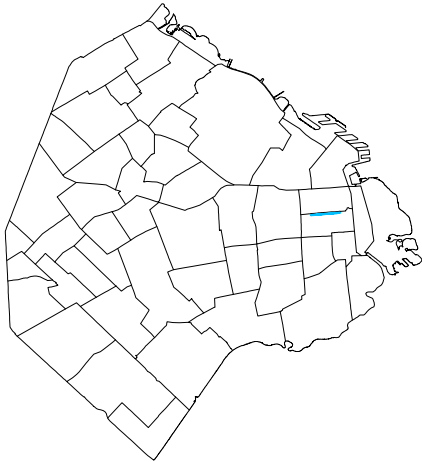
Focal Point: Obelisco

Top Attraction

Lit Up at Night

¹ Avenida Corrientes, Buenos Aires, online: <http://www.visitingargentina.com/avenida-corrientes-buenos-aires/>, in: <http://www.visitingargentina.com/>, accessed: 25 of July 2015.

AVENIDA DE MAYO



Of Historic Importance

**Connecting Government House
with the Congress**

**Avenue of Demonstrations and
Marches**

Public Transport

City Center

Beautiful Architecture

Avenida de Mayo connecting the Congress with Government house has always been of historic and political importance. It was also the first boulevard of the city of Buenos Aires.

Its planning found inspiration in the boulevards of Paris but also shows typical Spanish character with its theatres, cafés,...

In the beginning of 20th century it converted into grandiose scenery of public life with its sophisticated buildings built in style of art nouveau, neoclassical and eclectic style that reflected the existence of many different cultures and influences in the city.

Nowadays, most of the marches and political protests take place exactly on this Avenue, when people block this four-lane street for traffic in order to speak out and be heard. ¹

¹ Avenida de Mayo, Buenos Aires,
online: <http://www.visitingargentina.com/avenida-de-mayo-buenos-aires/>, in: <http://www.visitingargentina.com/>, accessed: 25 of July 2015.



PIEDRAS

SOLDADO
JP
COMU



AVENIDA DEL LIBERTADOR

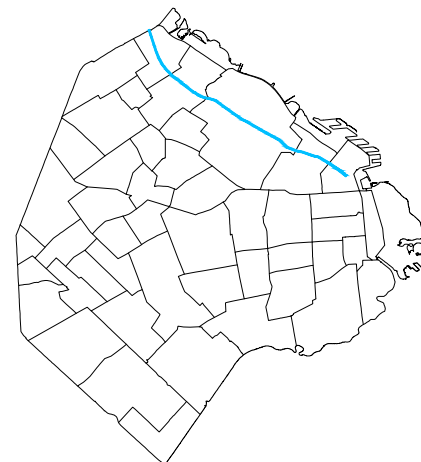
Avenida Libertador is one of the principal Avenues of Buenos Aires. The apartments overlooking the Avenue and on the other side the Park are rated as the ones of top places of the capital that only the richest can afford.

It is not popular only by its “high-class” status but as well for the connection to the northern parts of the city all the way to San Fernando. It starts in the neighborhood of Retiro and dies 35km later in the channel of San Fernando in the province of Buenos Aires, crossing San Isidro and Tigres.

The avenue gets especially crowded on the weekends, when it also changes the traffic directions allowing people to leave and return to the city faster.

The focal point of the avenue in the neighborhood of Palermo is the Monument to the Carta Magna and Four Regions of Argentina or ‘Monumento de los Españoles’

It shines in its beauty when the spring comes and the jacaranda trees blossom with their purple flowers.¹



overlooking Palermo Gardens

Focal point: “Statue of the Spanish”

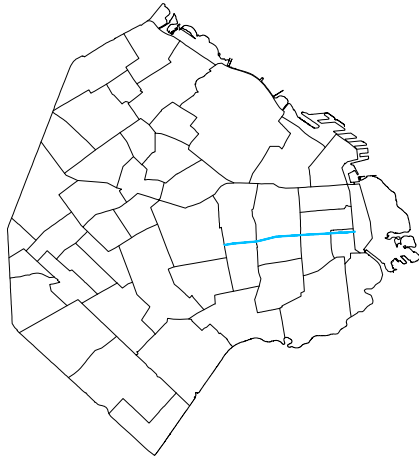
Connection to the northern parts (San isidro, Tigres, San Fernando)

Continuos paving stones on the sidewalks

“Rich” Avenue

¹ Avenida del Libertador, Buenos Aires, online: <http://www.visitingargentina.com/avenida-del-libertador-buenos-aires/>, in: <http://www.visitingargentina.com/>, accessed: 25 of July 2015.

AVENIDA INDEPENDENCIA



No focal points

Lack of greenery

Many abandoned places

Lack of maintenance

Parallel to highway 25 de mayo

6 one-way lanes

Avenida Independencia, compared to all the other avenues named earlier, does not seem to be particularly attractive for any specific reason. It does have some beautiful examples of colonial architecture, but other than that, seems to be kind of neglected and abandoned.

Avenida Independencia used to be a narrow street of a village in Buenos Aires until Bernardino Rivadavia, Argentinian politician, proposed to change it into an avenue in 1822. Later it was widened a bit more to its current width.

It runs east to west, parallel to avenues Belgrano and Rivadavia, first crossing the neighborhood of San Telmo and then continuing on the borders of the neighborhoods Montserrat and Constitución, San Cristóbal and Balvanera and Boedo and Almagro.

It starts at the crossing with Av Ingeniero Huergo, with the Faculty of Engineering, and finishes about 5 kilometers later touching Av La Plata.

Entering the neighborhood of San Telmo right after crossing the Av Paseo Colon the view is disturbed with all the medianeras at sight that were left exposed after demolition of buildings with insignificant depth in their design. Many lots and terrains

are left unbuilt, currently hosting open air parking lots.

There are few historical buildings left that survived the demolition, but the neighbors of San Telmo still need to fight for their existence, because of disregard of the preservation laws.¹

¹ Avenida Independencia (Buenos Aires), online: [https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avenida_Independencia_\(Buenos_Aires\)](https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avenida_Independencia_(Buenos_Aires)), accessed: 25 of July 2015.



to BOULEVAR DE INDEPENDENCIA

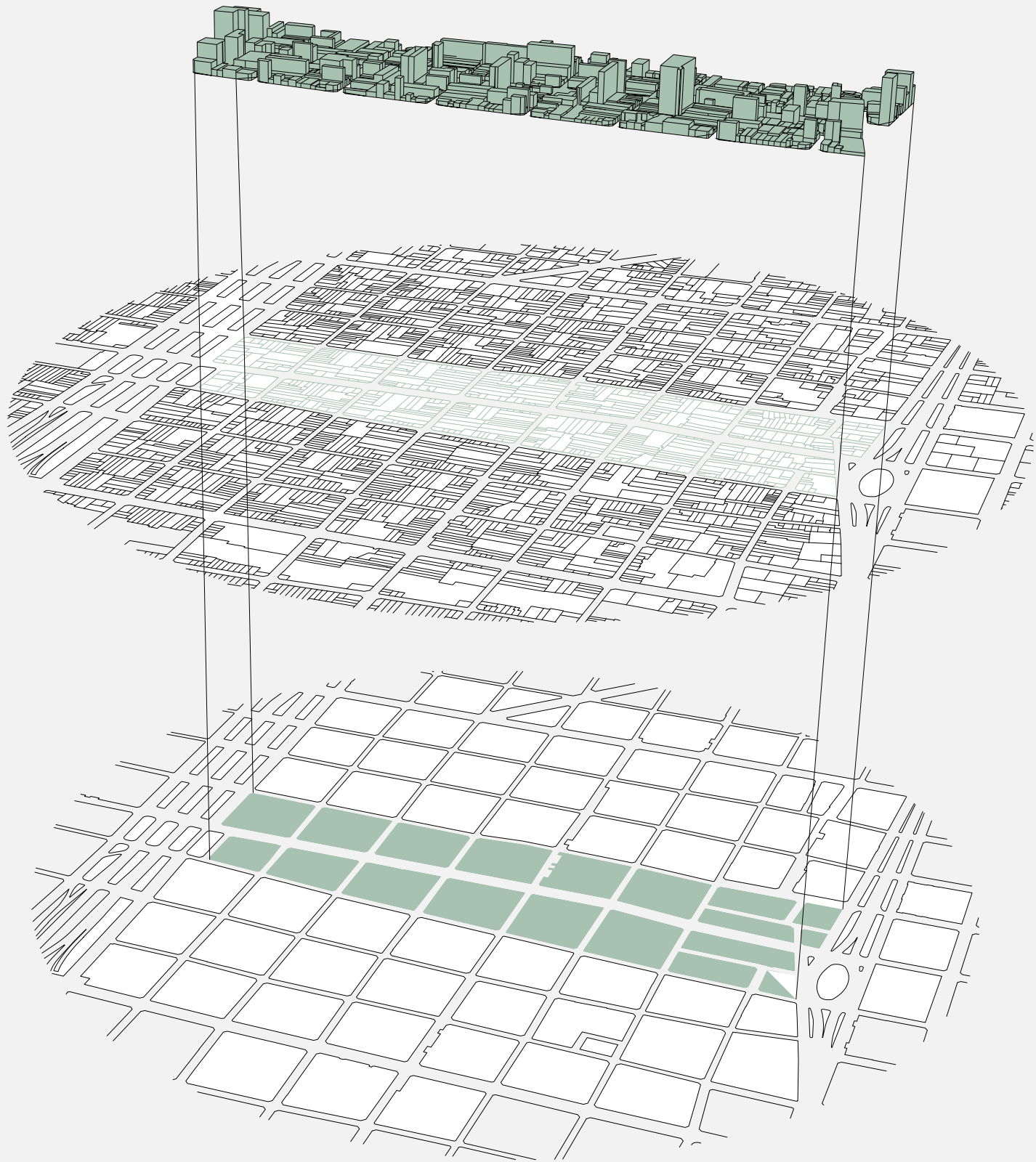
Starting with the thesis, I was thinking of choosing one lot in the neighborhood of San Telmo and designing a building there. But with doing all the research about the area I realized that the problem is much more global. Placing one building in the area with many issues is not going to solve much.

Analyzing the area I was moving from the north - from Microcentro and Montserrat to the south toward the highway 25 de Mayo and the neighborhoods La Boca and Barracas. Neglect of urban surroundings also seemed to be increasing in the way of my movement. Heading from Plaza de Mayo, one of the most iconic places of the capital through the crowded Defensa market, the first obstacle to hit is Avenida Independencia. Not very attractive avenue, with cars and buses rushing through it, broken sidewalks, generally very pedestrian unfriendly.

Because Avenida Independencia not only represents geographical division of the neighborhood but as well a cultural one, that divides more attractive part of it from a bit less attractive one, I decided to make a urban proposal for it.



Neighborhood limits



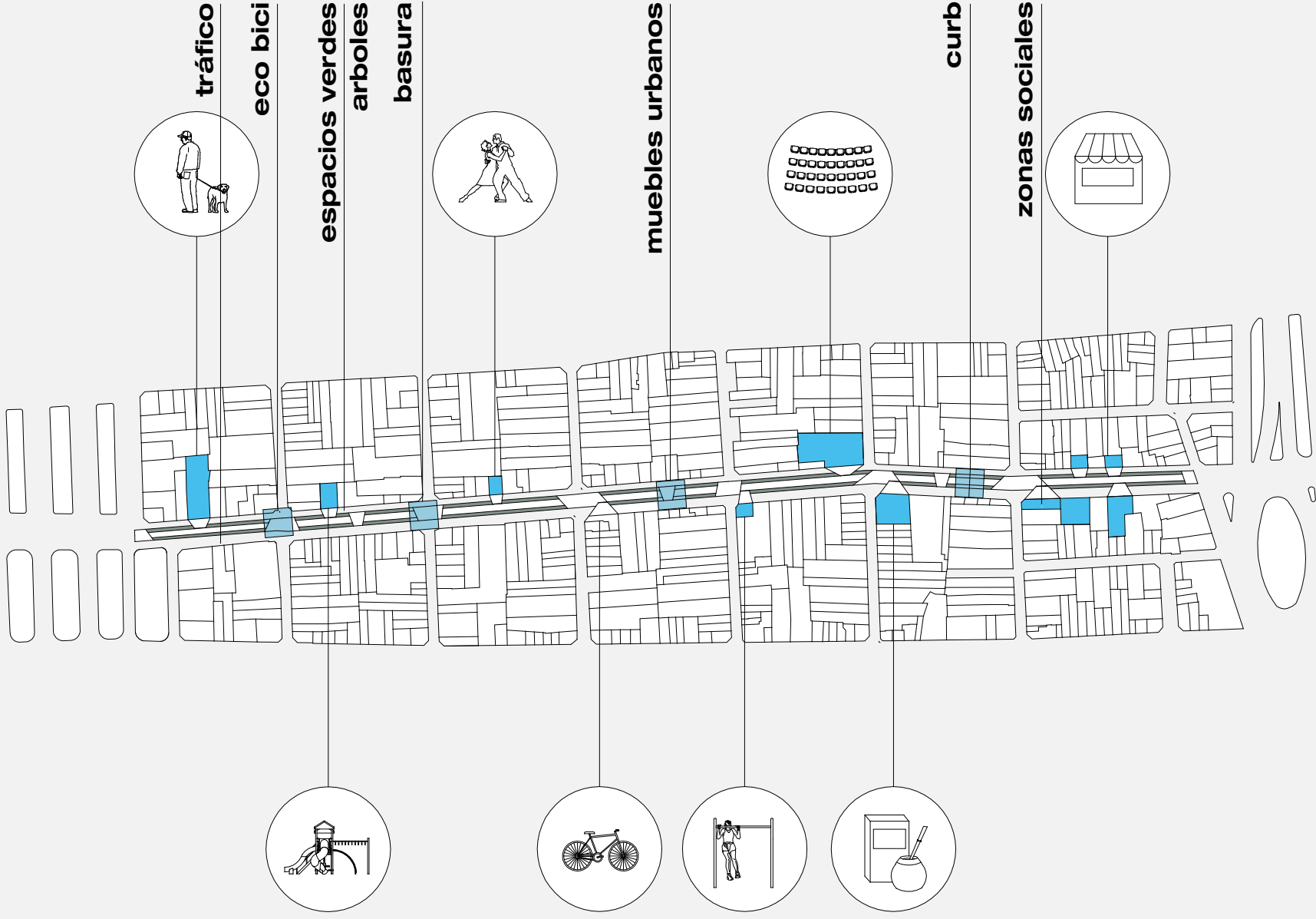
The part of Avenida Independencia I wanted to focus on the most is the one crossing San Telmo starting at the cross section with Avenida Paseo Colon all the way to Avenida 9 de Julio. The last four blocks already belong to two other neighborhoods. The northern ones belong to Montserrat and the southern ones to Constitution neighborhood. Still I included them in the project.

In Código de Planeamiento Urbano (Urban Planning Zone Norms) this part of the Avenue belongs to the Comuna 1 and sustains of the parts APH1 and APH1 14.

The aspects of the avenue included in the proposal:

- **traffic**
- **eco bike lane**
- **green spaces**
- **trees**
- **garbage**
- **urban furniture**
- **curbs**
- **social zones**

dog park
children's playground
milonga area
eco bici station
fitness station
screening medianera
mate area
extension of the market



tráfico

/ traffic

Most of the avenues of Buenos Aires are one-way streets with from 2 to 10 lanes.

Because of their one way orientation they are usually paired up. One avenue heads in one way, toward the center for example, and few blocks away, parallel to it, has its pair, which is leading away from the center.

The system works pretty well and also serves for the orientation in the city.

So if I was considering closing down the Avenue Independencia, that would mean that Avenue Belgrano would lose its pair.

But not all avenues work like this. For example Avenue Santa Fe was in 2010 transformed from one-way avenue to two-way avenue. Which means that two lanes in one way were shut down.

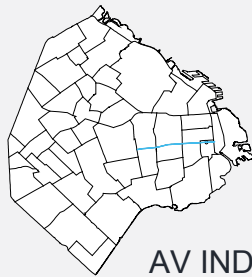


Avenida
Independencia
600 - 500



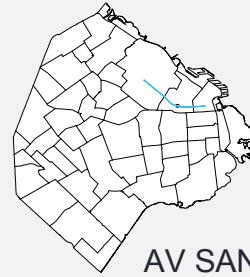
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AV INDEPENDENCIA

Avenue with 6 lanes in one way



AV SANTA FE

Avenue with 2 lanes in one way

4th of Aug 2015 Rush hour: 5.10 pm - 5.30 pm

Observation: 20 min	1h	PCE Passenger Car Equivalent	PCE / h Passenger Car Equivalent (US)
7	21	0,2	4,2
22	66	0,5	33
542	1.626	1	1.626
1	3	3,5	10,5
10	30	3,5	105

= 1.778,7

= 296,45 per lane

Observation: 20 min	1h	PCE Passenger Car Equivalent	PCE / h Passenger Car Equivalent (US)
2	6	0,2	1,2
19	57	0,5	28,5
205	615	1	615
4	12	3,5	42
59	177	3,5	619,5

= 1.306,2

= 653,1 per lane

Leaning on the example of Avenue Santa Fe, I decided to compare the two avenues by counting traffic and as a result getting the total traffic volume numbers.

I wanted to know how many bicycles, motorbikes, cars, trucks and buses drive through each avenue at a certain time laps.

*For the counting date I chose a regular working **Tuesday, 4th of August 2015**, and the time of the **rush hour 5.10 pm - 5. 30 pm**, when people get off work, because I expected that there would be the maximum traffic of the day passing through the avenues.*

*With the help of one more person we counted traffic at the same time on two different locations. First location way on the crossing of **Avenida Santa Fe** with street **Larrea** and the second one on the crossing of **Avenida Independencia** with street **Chacabuco**.*

*We counted traffic for **20min** and then applied the pattern on one hour. I multiplied the numbers with Passenger Car Equivalent taking 0,2 for bikes, 0,5 for motorbikes, 1 for cars and 3,5 for trucks and buses.*

The total numbers I divided with number of lanes and I got the traffic

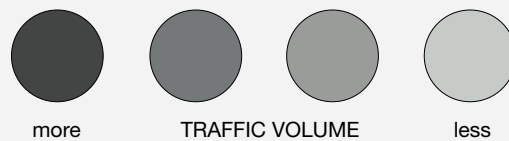
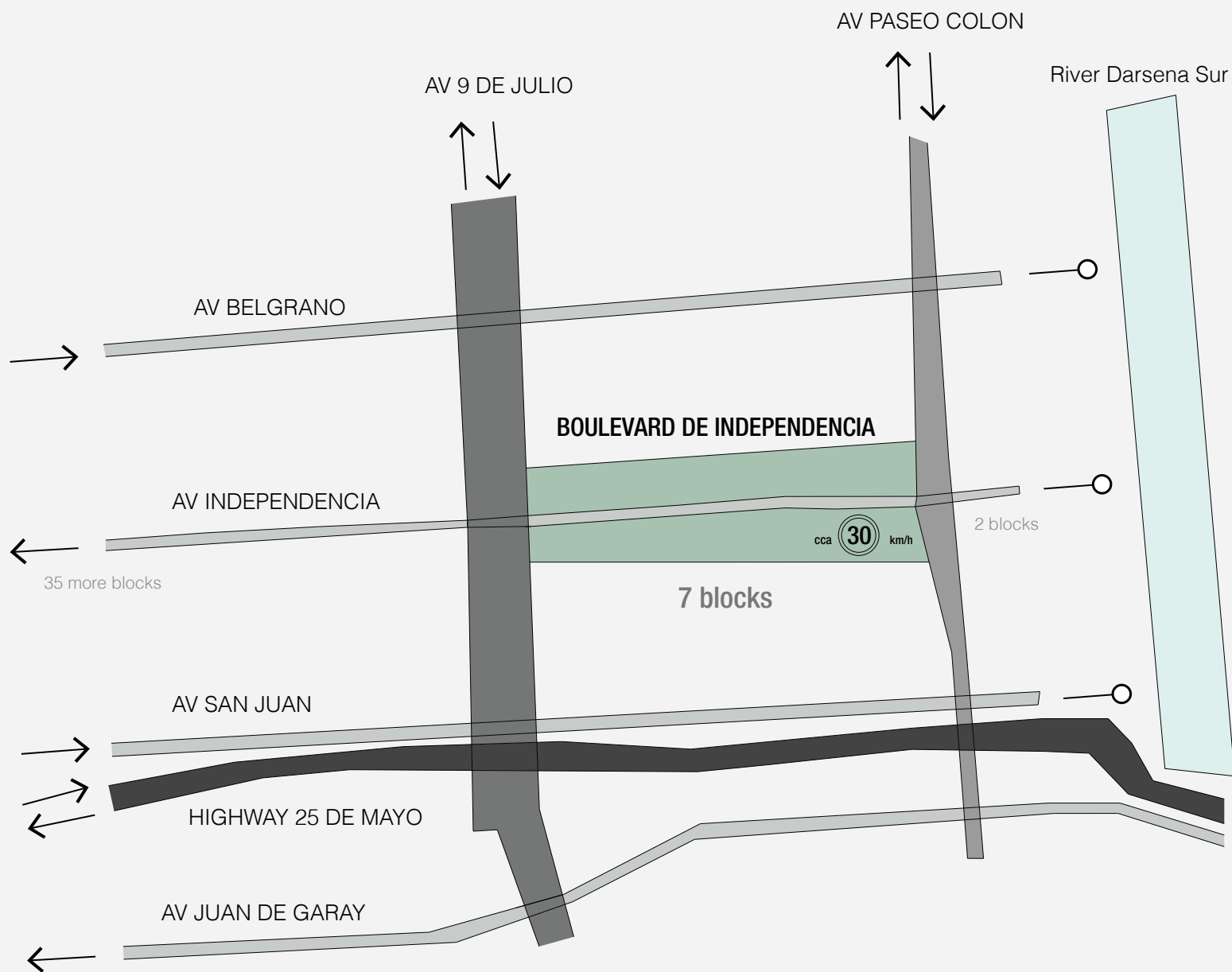
flow per lane on each of the analyzed avenues.

The results show that the traffic volume on Avenue Independencia after closing down 2-3 car lanes would be comparable to the traffic volume of Avenue Santa Fe.

Because the Avenue basically starts on the crossing with Av Paseo Colon I was able to close down 3 car lanes between Av Paseo Colon and 9 de Julio, in total 7 blocks, and then on the connection with 9 de Julio, where there is more traffic expected, again transfer to former width of 6 car lanes.

The 'closed down area' will still be open for car traffic, 2 car lanes and one lane exclusive for buses, but with the maximum speed of 30 km/h.

There will be no traffic lights, the traffic speed will be regulated exclusively with speed bumps, signs of speed limits and pedestrian crossings that will force the drives to be more attentive to the pedestrians.



3,5
PEDESTRIAN

18
TRAFFIC

3,5
PEDESTRIAN



building facade

street lamp

trash bin

curb

PLANTING SOIL

PLANTING SOIL

COMPACTED EARTH

Currently there is about 18 meters of the total width of 25 meters of the Avenue Independencia reserved for traffic. For pedestrians there is 3,5 meters sidewalk on each side of the road.

Each sidewalk has a 50cm stripe of planting area left, where there are unevenly planted different trees. Turns out half a meter planting soil isn't enough for most of the trees' roots, which are already spreading to the paved part of the sidewalk lifting up the paving stones.

The trash bins are attached to every second street lamp.

Per each block (about 150 meters long) there are 5 streets lamps spreading medium strong light.

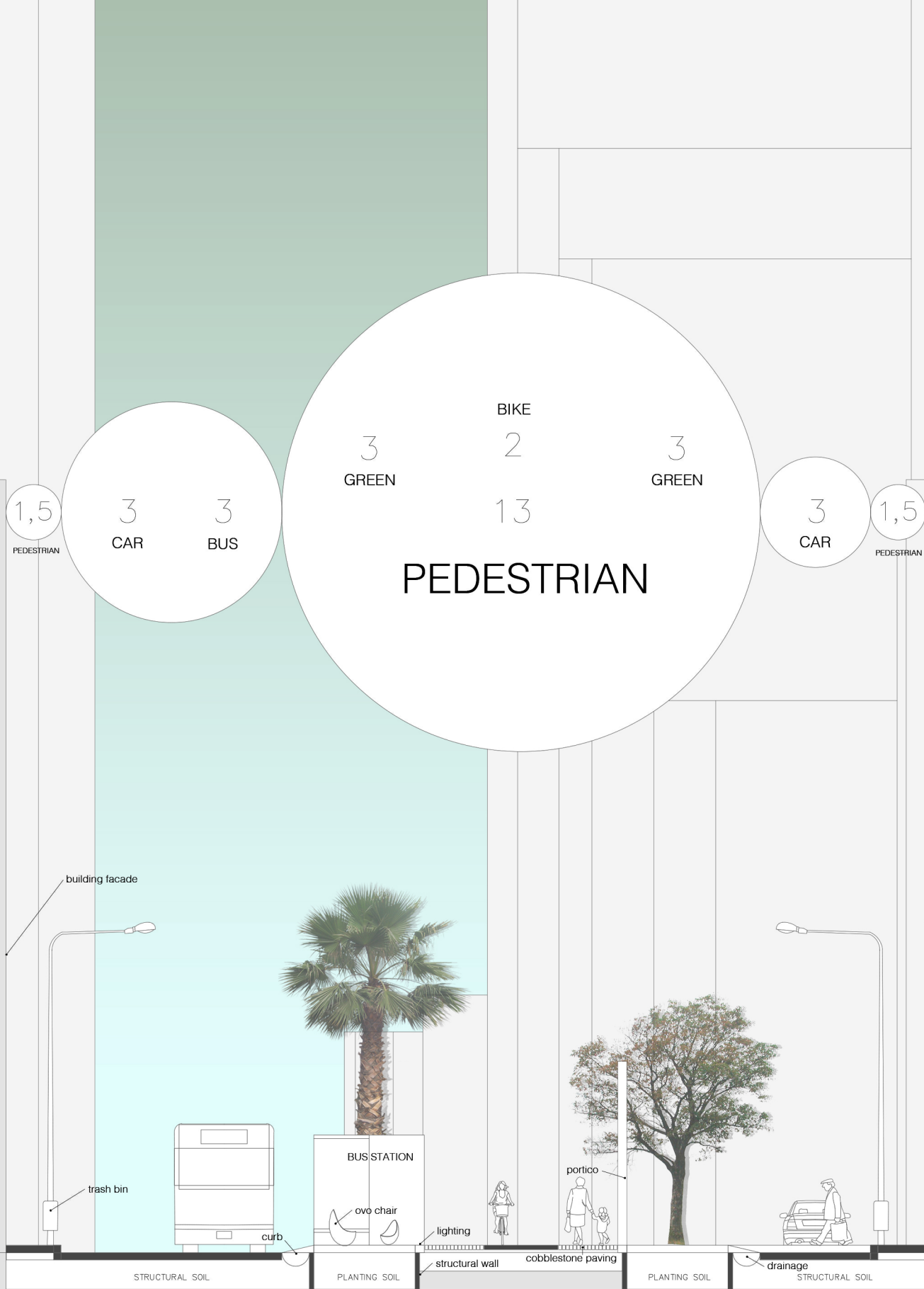
After every block there are traffic lights with pedestrian crossings.

Changing the area from traffic to more pedestrian meant **closing 3 car lanes** and creating green spaces that the area is desperate for, which in the practice means designing a **boulevard** that creates some kind of synergy between the cars and the people.

Drastic change from 18 meters for traffic to only 3 lanes (one reserved only for buses). There is about 16 meters fully pedestrian width left.

All the pedestrian services are now placed in the middle of the streets. By services meaning **vegetation, bus stops, walking path, biking path, garbage disposal.**

There are still 1,5 meter wide sidewalks on each side of the avenue for the pedestrian accesses to the buildings.





eco bici

/ eco bike

'Ecobici' is a recent project of the government of Buenos Aires. Starting in 2010 the city is now offering about 80 bici stations where one can borrow a bicycle any hour of the day and leave it at any other station in the city. Although the system of the bicycle-reserved roads is still very unconnected.

To encourage the program I decided to include in the proposal a bike lane, following the ecobici standards, that will connect Av Paseo Colon with Av 9 de Julio and eventually continue all the way along the avenue.

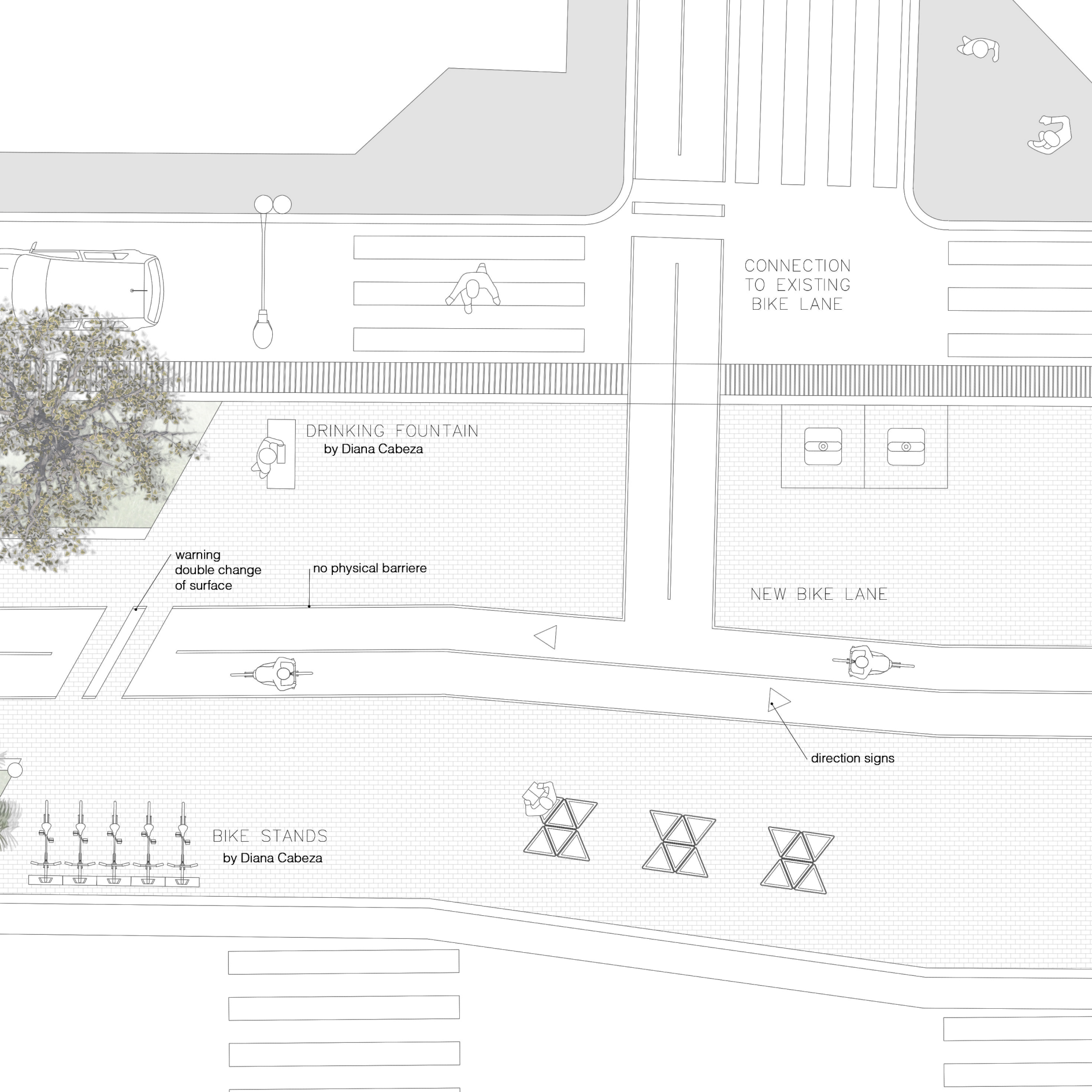
There are certain restrictions to follow in placing a new eco bici lane, like planning only 2-way circulation lanes, keeping the width of 2 meters, in the case of bordering to a car traffic lane placing it on the left side and leaving additional 35 centimeters for division poles.

The new bike lane is placed in the middle of the board walk so it can flow continuous from Av Paseo Colon all the way to Av 9 de Julio.

*It is two way bike road, 2 meters wide, according to the ecobici regulations. It is **connected to existing bike lines** or the ones that are listed as planned in Av 9 de Julio, Tacurí, Perú and Av Paseo Colon.*

*In the cross section areas of the boulevard there are bike stands by **Diana Cabeza's design Cobra** and in some of the areas there can be found drinking fountains and sitting areas.*

*Entering the cross section points there is a **double change of ground surface**, between the cement and cobble stones, warning the bikers to slow down entering the zone of mostly pedestrian movement and crossings.*



DRINKING FOUNTAIN
by Diana Cabeza

CONNECTION
TO EXISTING
BIKE LANE

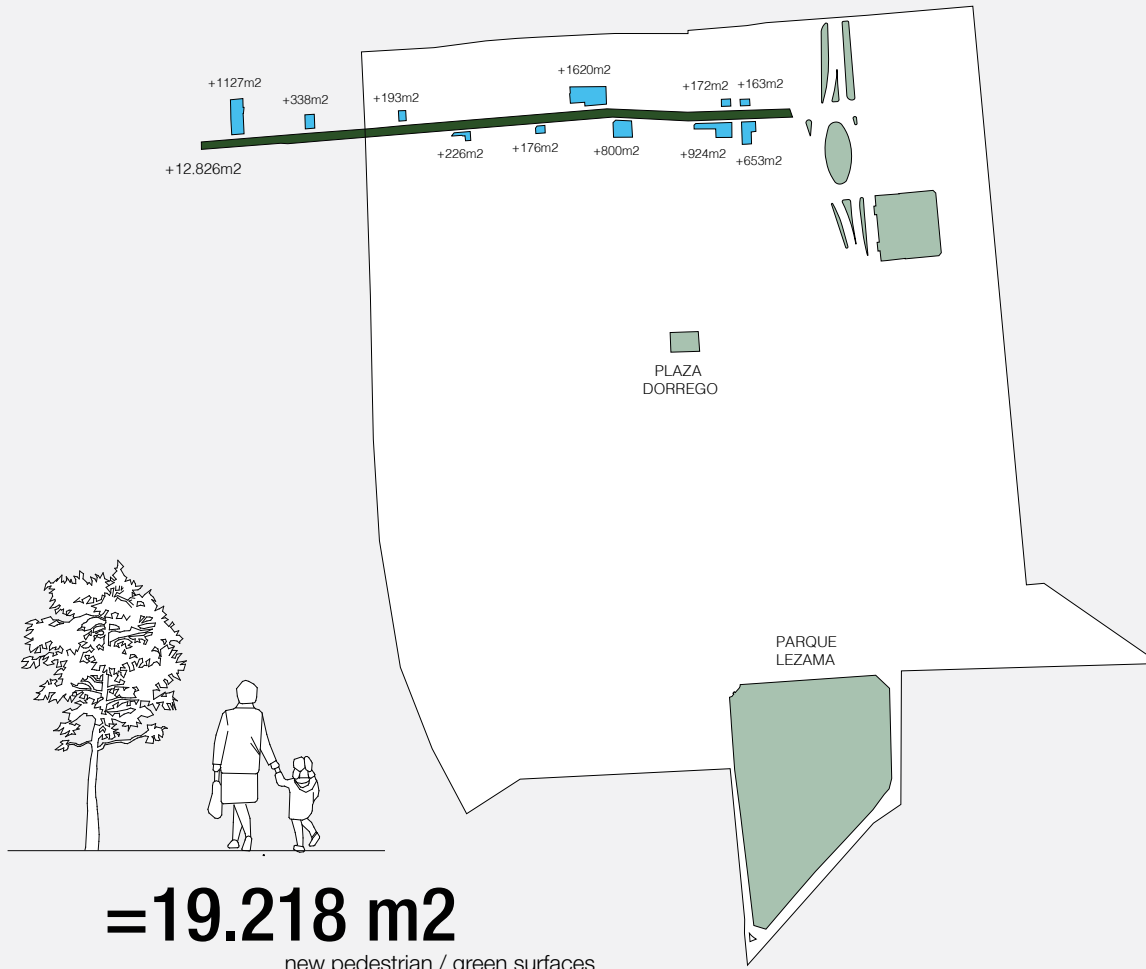
NEW BIKE LANE

warning
double change
of surface

no physical barriers

direction signs

BIKE STANDS
by Diana Cabeza



espacios verdes

/ green spaces

As an urban planner, designing a park in Buenos Aires is not as simple as it might seem. Especially in San Telmo, when people already need to deal with squatted houses, people sleeping in front of schools and other public houses, designing comfortable green areas with nice benches, roofings and other urban furniture will only attract the homeless even more.

The practice of placing green areas in the city of Buenos Aires nowadays, is enclosing the areas with high fences and locking it down at night time.

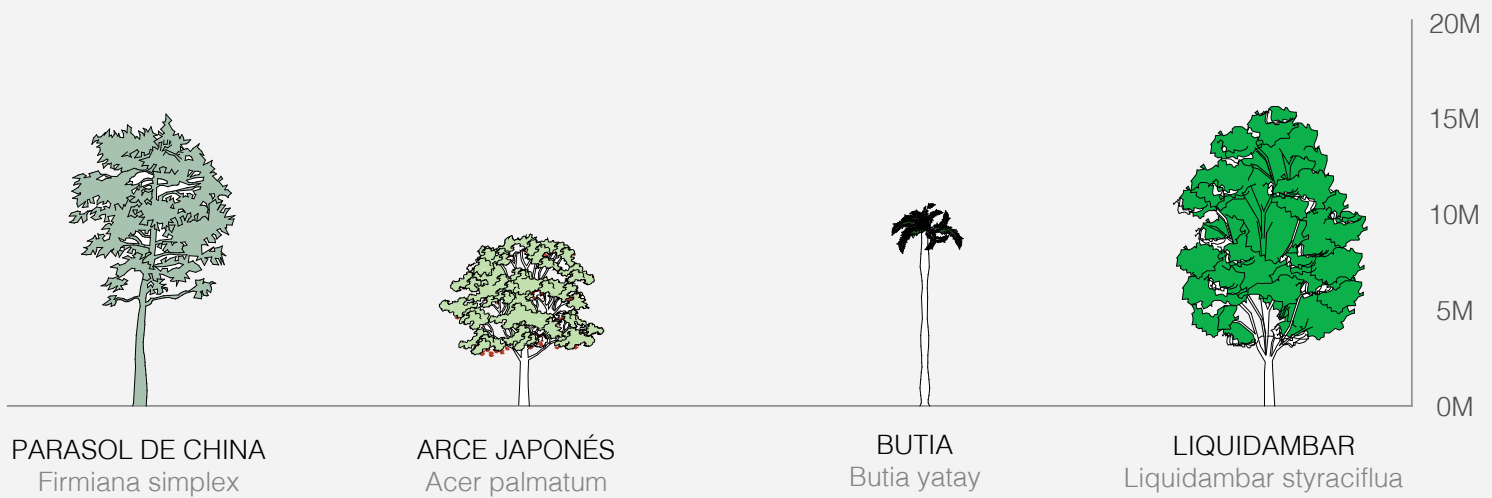
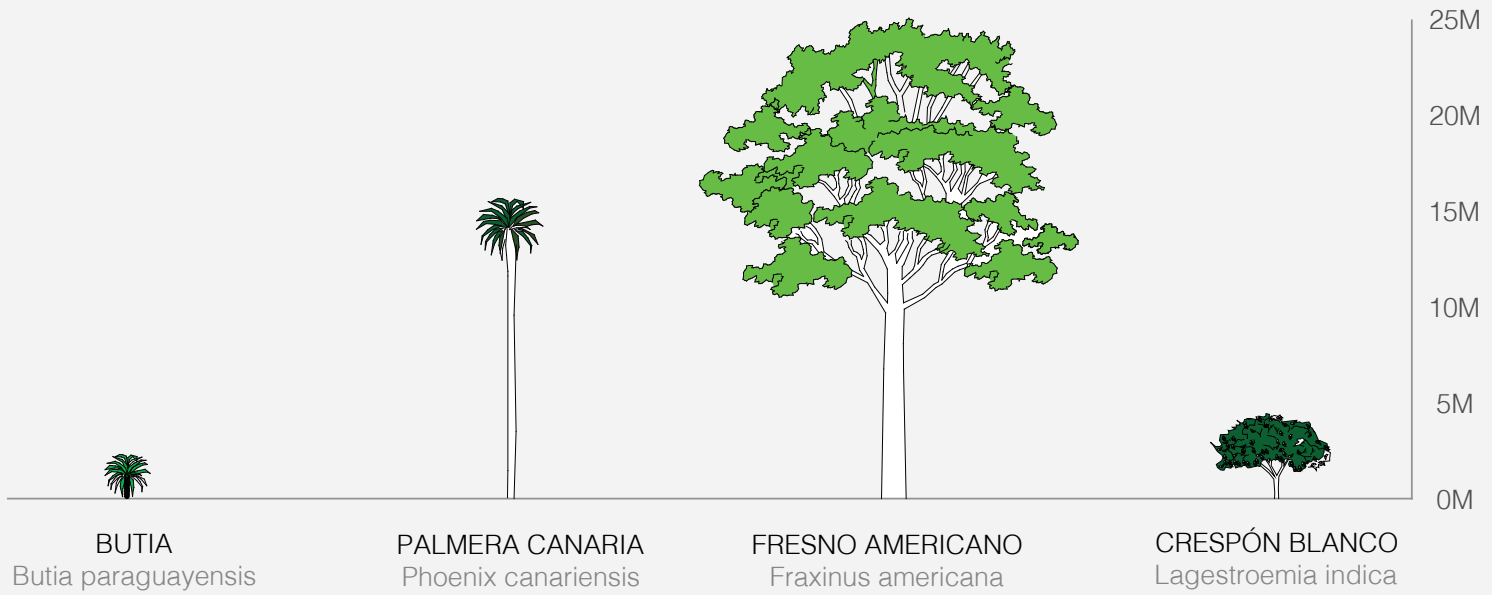


arboles

/ trees

There is huge variety of tree species to be found in the city of Buenos Aires. Reasons for that can be found also in the pleasant climate conditions throughout the year. There are trees imported from Europe, China, Japan, other South American countries.

*Mainly because the trees turned out to be the main destroyers of the sidewalks, especially by the lack of space for their roots to grow, I tried to prevent it from happening again, so I decided to go with smaller trees, not smaller in their height in particular, but I chose the ones that don't grow roots too extended and by the **urban planning law** of Buenos Aires need up to **maximum 5,5 meters** of width of planting soil when planted on a sidewalk.*



*I didn't decide for only one specific sort of tree that would be repeating in a certain order but I went with different species coming from different places and cultures, cause at the end the **variety** is what represents Argentina the best.*

*Also by doing that, spontaneous **meeting points** on the boulevard can be formed, otherwise every block would have the same distribution of trees, colors and urban appearance.*

Another advantage of placing not too tall trees is letting the light in. Already the buildings create a lot of shadows, by placing big bushy trees the green area, like in many other parks of Buenos Aires, would become grass-less areas with only few trees or plants.

*Making sure that the roots do not reach the walking path or the traffic road I placed the growing soil in the middle of two **concrete physical barriers** and also used the **root director** - firm foil that keeps the roots penetrating the barriers and direct their growth.*

*The trees are placed on the boulevard in repetitive order - every **10 meters**.*

basura

/ trash

The issue of the trash in the area of San Telmo needs to be taken seriously. The dirtiness of the streets does not only lay in the 'don't care' attitude of the people passing through the neighborhood but also in the design of urban space.

*Although the city of Buenos Aires is trying to promote the 'Green City' program that includes also the environmental awareness, walking through the streets of San Telmo, the environment is everything else but clean. Not only due to the laziness of the people but as well in the **lack of trash containers and disposal bins**, so the waste can with the slight impatience easily land on the ground.*

Because the trash turned out to be the biggest issue of the neighbors I interviewed, I included it in the proposal plan.



Formerly, or should I say currently, the big trash containers are placed directly on the street, in front of the sidewalk, blocking one of the 6 car lanes. The smaller trash bins are usually attached to the traffic lights with the frequency of 2-3 bins per block.

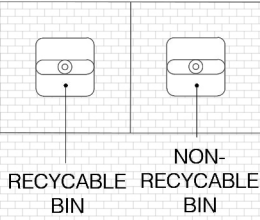
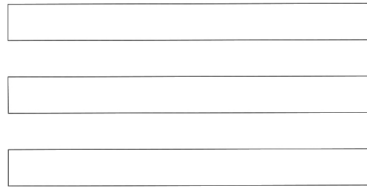
For the proposal I moved the trash containers from the street directly on the boulevard. As already in practice in some parts of Microcentro, I went with the sinking containers, that have many advantages in helping to reduce the bad smells, they occupy less space, they are not movable and are visually much more attractive. They are conveniently placed near the pedestrian crossings and close to the road, for easy access of the trash collecting trucks.

There are 4 trash containers per block, 2 of 'black ones' for **non-recyclable** trash and 2 'green' ones for **recyclable** disposal.

Additionally to the big trash containers, there are smaller **trash bins** attached to every street lamp and on every crossing point of the boulevard and near a bus station there is at least one more trash bin.

Meaning one has at every point on the boulevard **less than 30 meters** walking distance to the **next trash disposal point**.

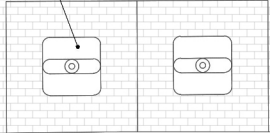
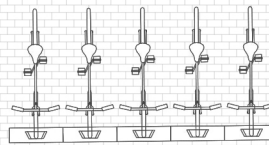
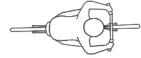
TRASH BIN



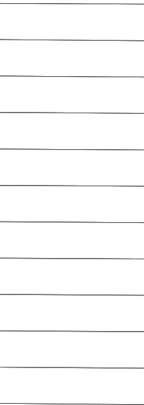
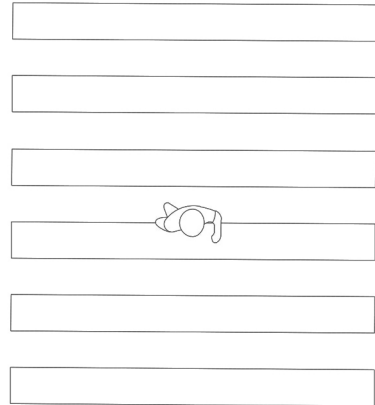
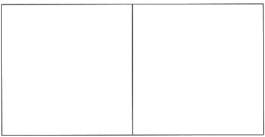
SINKING TRASH CONTAINERS

- reduce bad smells
- occupy less space
- visually less disturbing

TRASH LITTER BIN
by Diana Cabeza



FORMER POSITION





muebles urbanos

/ urban furniture

'The old with the new' theme of San Telmo tends to repeat in every aspect of looking at neighborhood. Referring to architecture, to the cultural offer, modernization.

*By choosing the materials for the proposal I decided to go with the combination of the **old cobblestone** with **the new concrete**. One then and the other now, but both very typical for the city of Buenos Aires.*

*To make it even more typical I decided to implement in my proposal also some of BKF2000 concrete designs for urban furniture. The three architects (Bonet, Kurchan, Ferrari) belonging to the Grupo Austral (latinamerican association of architects and designers formed after 1930's), formerly working in Le Corbusier's studio, together designed in Buenos Aires a world known chair called **BKF chair**, or 'butterfly' chair, that became a symbol of Argentine design.*

Today the firm BKF2000 designed a new modern urban version of it, not using metal and leather as the original one, but concrete. The chair can be seen in many urban public spaces of Buenos Aires and seems to be very comfortable as well.

*I also used some furniture, like trash bins, designed by Argentinian designer **Diana Cabeza**, who also participated in recent urban projects, like designing stations for the new Metrobus line in the capital.*

Choosing furniture and placing it in urban environment, especially in Buenos Aires, turned out to be a rather difficult task.

*Making the furniture too comfortable, can easily attract homeless and make it their permanent stay. That cruel fact forced me to go with the **single concrete chairs**, that will be placed in groups, still able to accommodate larger groups, but not being too comfortable for one to stay.*

by BKF2000:

Tope
Monobanco Premolar
Barril
Dado
Ovo
Mesa tipo 90x90
Systema ternario
BKF

by Diana Cabeza:

“Chafariz” Urban Drinking Fountain

Body: 17x40xh=113,5cm

Base: 60x150xh=27cm

Hojitas Litter Bin and Ashtray

Ø32x98cm

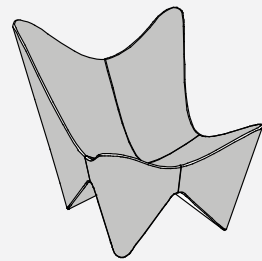
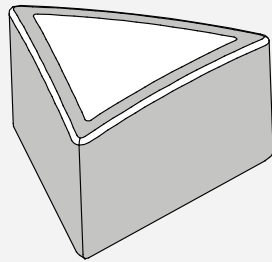
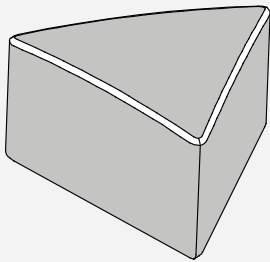
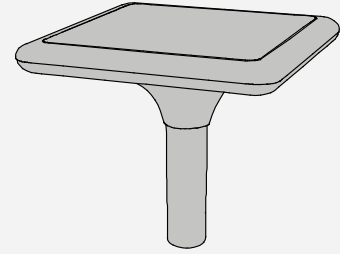
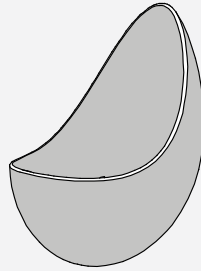
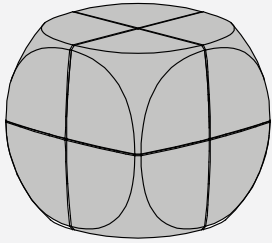
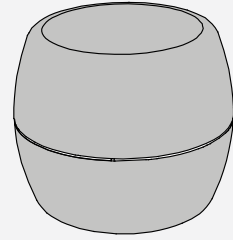
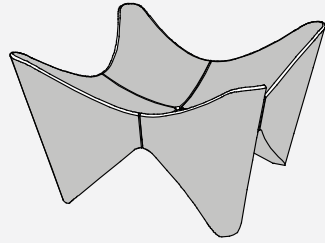
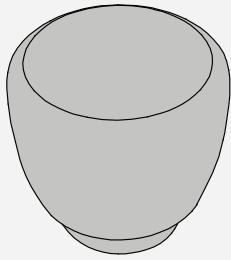
Trash litter bin

Ø36xh=101cm

Bike stand Cobra

+ PORTICOS

+ BUS STATION



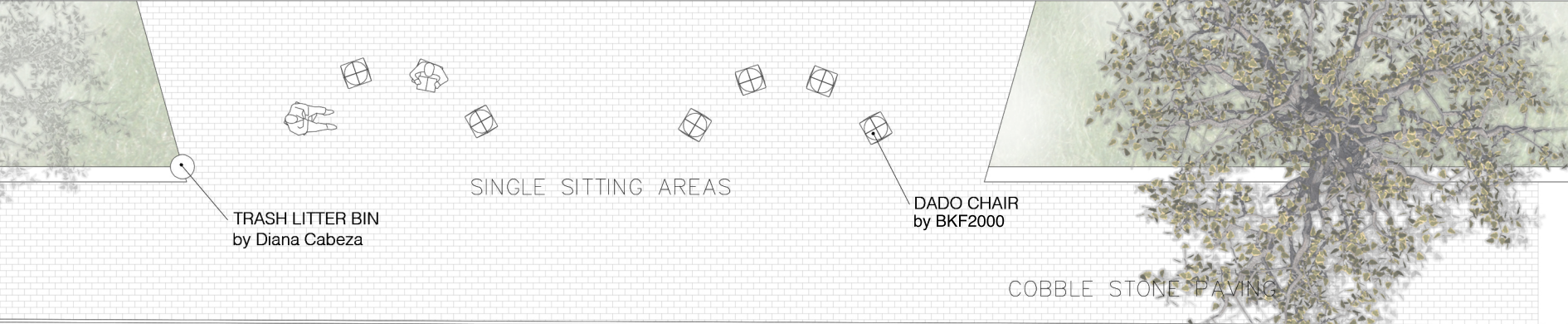
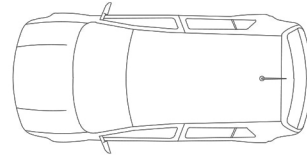
Besides the BKF concrete elements there are Diana Cabeza's designs of drinking fountains and trash bins included. As well as her bike stand.

My own addition were the concrete '**porticos**' leading to the social zones and the all concrete **bus station**, which can be found every second block, complimented with the waiting area in the back equipped with BKF2000 design furniture.

The furniture styles change on every block again, as well as the trees, creating different meeting point.

The **paving** off all the walking paths on the boulevard consist from the **original cobblestones**, that give the neighborhood back the feel of the old San Telmo.

The bike lane surface is covered with soft cement, as well as the car and bus lanes. The paving of the sidewalks stays unchanged.



TRASH LITTER BIN
by Diana Cabeza

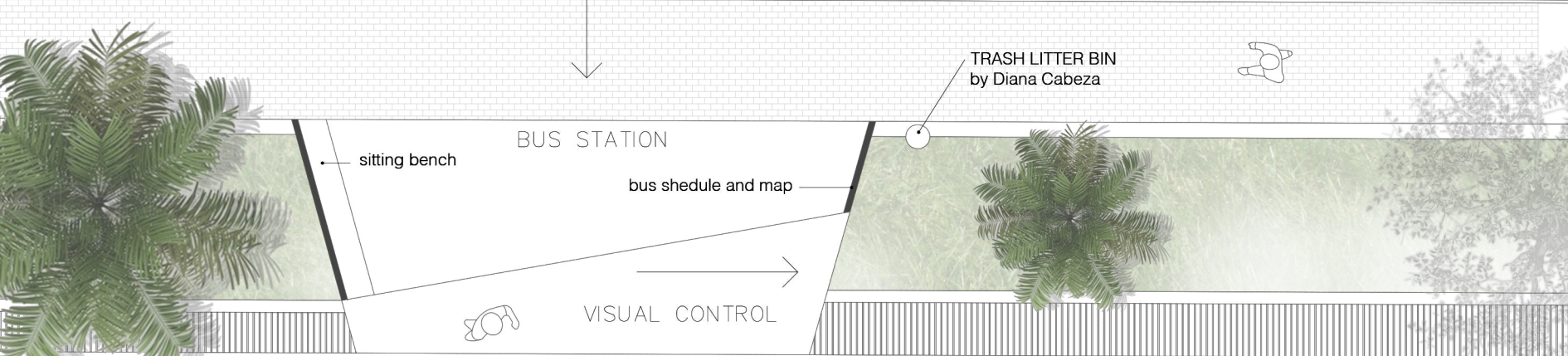
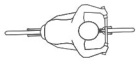
SINGLE SITTING AREAS

DADO CHAIR
by BKF2000

COBBLE STONE PAVING

VISUAL CONTROL

SOFT CEMENT BIKE LANE



TRASH LITTER BIN
by Diana Cabeza

sitting bench

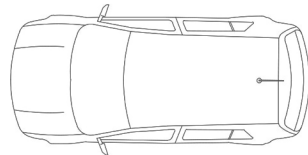
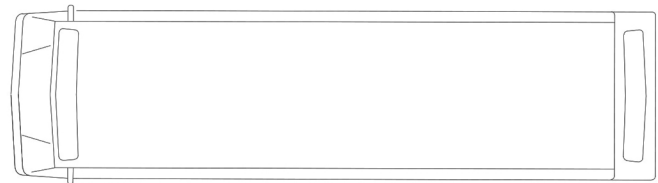
BUS STATION

bus shedule and map

VISUAL CONTROL

WAITING PLATFORM

BUS





curb system

*Geographically laying so close to the river Plate, the city of Buenos Aires and even more the province have often needed to deal with growing water and **floods**.*

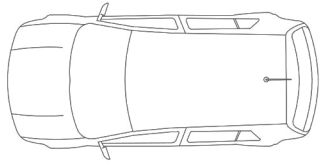
*The city still hasn't found a good drainage system yet so in the rainy periods of the year many parts of the city get flooded. From preventing it I developed a **curb**, separating the so called pedestrian area from the traffic and also including a **drainage system**.*

The curbs overcome over a 87cm long ramp a 20cm difference between the car and pedestrian level. With not more than 13% inclination the ramp is appropriate also for disabled people, easily reaching the boulevard level.

The curb also works as a **speed bump**, reducing the velocity of the cars where people try to cross to the social zones.

Because of the frequency of these speed bumps the driving speed is reduced to 30 km/h, allowing the zone to be traffic lights free.

On the inside of the inclined curb there is a **lighting stripe** that **increases the security** of the area by night and also **direct** people from the boulevard to so called 'social zones' that lay on the former parking parcels that have been transformed into common areas with all kinds of purposes (dog parks, flea markets, mate drinking area, screening area, milonga area,...).



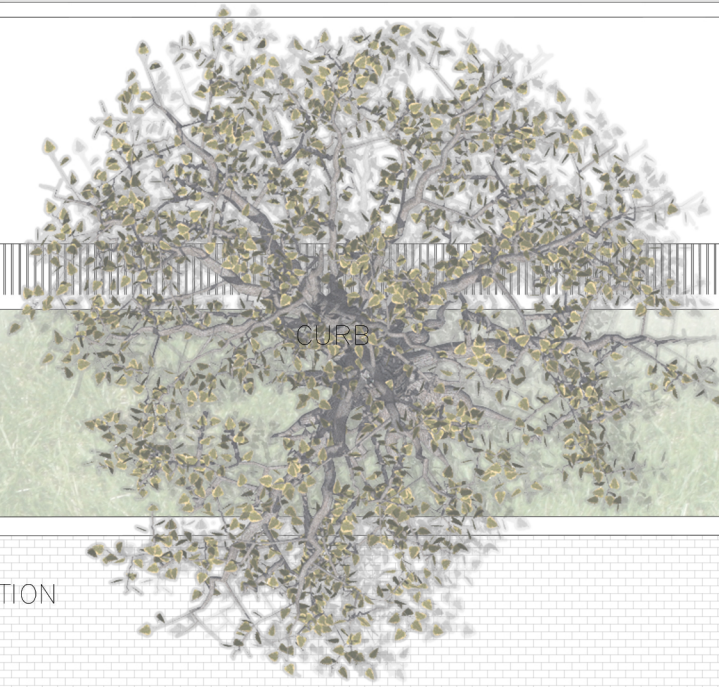
INCLINATION

1%

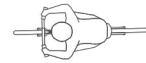


1%

INCLINATION



CURB



1%

INCLINATION

portico to social zone



CURB

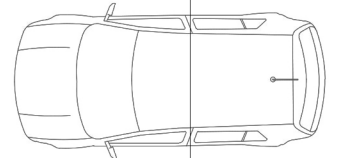


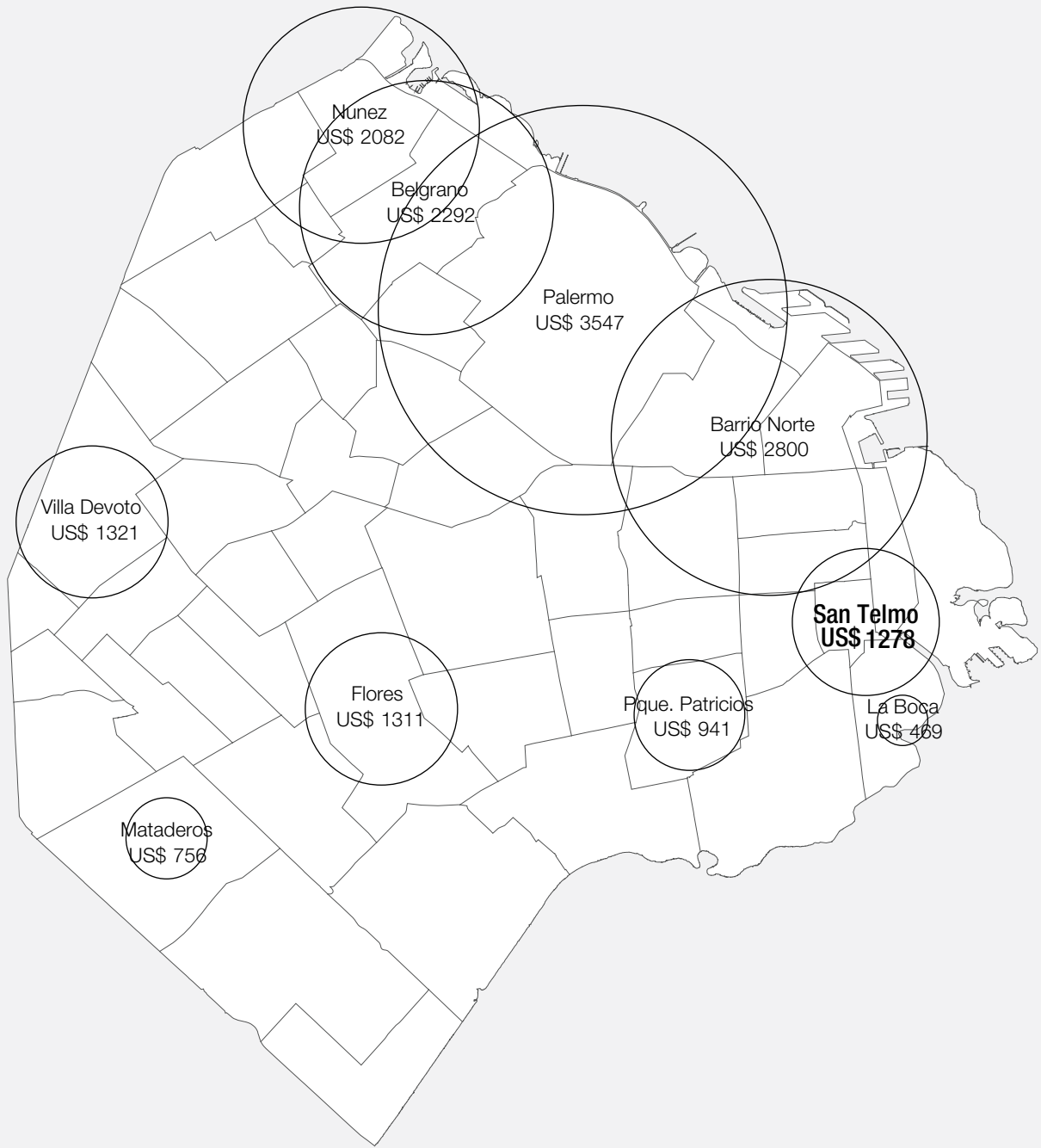
INCLINATION

1%

ACCESS TO SOCIAL ZONE

CURB AS A SPEED BUMP





zonas sociales

/ social zones

***Playa de estacionamiento** / Open Air Parking Area: *Open air space intended for temporary custody of cars. Usually generated from the demolition of existing buildings on the lot.*

*Around San Telmo there is a number of free, or better said **unbuilt parcels**, that are used as open air parking lots. Because of their high frequency, they are mostly to be found empty or only half occupied.*

Looking at a map of prices of the square meter per neighborhood from 2011, shows that buying a land in San Telmo does not represent that big of a cost. With Buenos Aires having a pretty large government budget, the idea was to purchase the parking parcels along the Avenue Independencia and transform them into so called 'social zones'.

There is about 10 of that kind of parcels looking towards Avenida Independencia and many more including the whole blocks bordering the avenue.

Each of the areas will be transformed into an area with a unique program that seems to be missing in the neighborhood and will also compliment the new 'green' boulevard.

*Due to the quite good weather conditions throughout the year in Buenos Aires, most of the activities taking place in the proposed areas will be **open air** and could be in use all year long.*

The reasons for choosing exactly the parking lots are diverse.

*First of all, transforming this parcels and changing their program does not include any **demolition**.*

San Telmo's residents are afraid of the modern age that points toward destroying the colonial treasures of the neighborhood for building tall buildings with cheap materials and therefore short existence period.

There exist as well many laws that prevent any new construction in the area. Therefore creation of new urban spaces without demolition and vertical construction seems ideal.

*The second reason is **reducing car reserved surfaces** and giving them to pedestrians.*

The lost also enable creating new green surfaces, that seems in a city with such density without demolition almost impossible.



ESTACIONAMIENTO

TARIFA	
FRACCION C/10 Min.	\$
PRIMERA 1/2 Hr.	\$
ESTADIA COCHE	\$60
ESTADIA PICK-UP	\$84
HORA COCHE	\$20
HORA PICK-UP	\$28
MOTO	\$18
BICICLETA	\$
COCHERA Estn.	\$100

No se permite el uso de motos y bicicletas en el estacionamiento.
© GARAJE DE ESTACIONAMIENTO DE GARIBAY.

New outdoor programs replacing the open air parking lots:

continuation of the Sunday market

4 parcels with market stands will help the overcrowded Defensa street to reduce the tourist volume.

yerba mate area

A place with comfortable sitting areas for drinking the traditional Argentine drink called 'mate' with hot water machine (working on coins) and free Wi-Fi. Chill out zone.

film screening area

Medianera as a screening surface and sitting areas in front of it arranged in a theatrical half circle.

outdoor fitness area

Already in use in other parks of Buenos Aires, there will be outdoor working out equipment available with water drinking fountain.

bici point

Bicycle rent and repair area.

'milonga' place

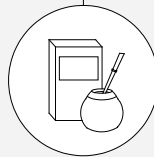
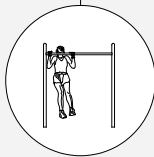
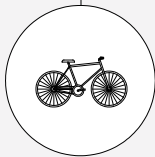
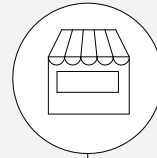
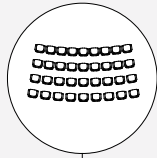
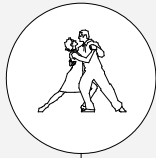
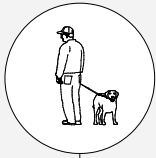
Several multipurpose podiums built for any kind of cultural performances. One of them traditional dance tango that is finding its new modern versions which are still making it popular in the present day.

children's playground

Low fenced area for children with single sitting areas for the parents, trash bins and greenery.

dog park

Area reserved for dog walkers. Urban furniture, trash bins, greenery.





*As already mentioned at the social zones there will be **no mayor constructive interventions.***

The plan was to simply remove the cars from the parcels and change their program.

The addition will be the path going under the 'entrance portico' leading to the edges of a specific lot.

The portico will stay a repetitive element along the boulevard, which size and shape will not change. Changing variables are the diagonals connecting the edges of the porticos with ending point of different parcels.

*The lots will be transformed quickly, exclusively with **placement of urban furniture, paving and planting of vegetation.***

If the areas will then truly come to life and serve their purposes depends on the visitors.

The concrete 'porticos' represent the doors or entrances leading to the social zones, former parking lots and also form some kind of urban landscape.

The boulevard itself lays on a 20 centimeters higher level than the car traffic lane and maintains this height all the way from Av Paseo Colon to Av 9 de Julio.

All the paths leading under the porticos are paved with the same cobblestone as the walking path on the boulevard.

Additional directional signalization can be found on the edge or the walking path, which is the floor lighting stripe. Because the tall trees cover most of the light coming from the street lamps, the lighting stripe provides completely uncovered illumination from below.

On every crossing of the boulevard or close to the bus station are placed single sitting places, usually forming a group of at least two seats.

At crossing point there can also be found bike stands, trash bins and drinking fountains.

The trees along the avenue are of diverse species, forming interesting meeting points and making the boulevard more vibrant.

In the middle of the boulevard there is a two-way bike lane, continuously passing through all 7 blocks of the boulevard and connecting to already existing lanes.

Every 2 blocks there is a bus station equipped with a covered waiting bench and bus map and schedule.





OBRA

/ Construction

At the moment the construction in San Telmo basically stopped. Architecture that was built in the last decades around the area of Avenida Independencia clearly shows that every intervention in this kind of neighborhood should be thought through twice.

The tall residential towers that replaced the historic buildings are today not very flattering image to see, and the medianeras are ruining the view of what once used to be a pretty decent avenue.

The urban planners are in the perception whether to preserve or construct and with that the neighborhood stays unchanged and also every time more unattractive for the current residents.

CONCLUSION

Dealing with such a delicate topic of designing something between preservation and modernism was a constant struggle throughout this project.


The questions and issues of the preservation in San Telmo will not be answered any time soon, so I tried to find the way around them and create something for the present, something for the people I had the chance to speak to.

Taking seriously their concerns and their prepositions I tried to join their ideas into a common solution, that could revive at least a part of their neighborhood and create social places and choosing them over traffic roads and mobility.

Green spaces, clean streets and safe environment are for people living in neighborhoods like San Telmo considered as privileges when in fact they should be their rights.

The leading thread through the project was respecting the neighborhood's historic essence but at the same time leaving the preservation and history aside and focusing on now, solving its current issues and thinking about the future.

Project solves the major present problems of the area by placing some of the needed urban elements and at the same time lets the area to evolve with the socialization that will take place in the newly proposed areas and with that helps the neighborhood to find its own identity.



*“...in the end,
San Telmo
is
San Telmo!...”*

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