

U R B A N A C U P U N C T U R E

Transforming Vacant Urban Spaces for Community Gathering
Suwon, South Korea

Jiyoung Park

A thesis

submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

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Committee:

Jeffrey Hou

Daniel B. Abramson

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Landscape Architecture

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University of Washington

Abstract

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Chair of the Supervisory Committee:

Jeffrey Hou, Daniel B. Abramson

Department of Landscape Architecture

This design thesis applies the concept of "Urban Acupuncture" through the lens of Landscape Architecture within a UNESCO-designated historical community in Suwon, Korea. Due to the historical fabric of the area, development is highly restricted and the neighborhood community is facing difficulties, including the restrictions on redevelopment, pressure to accommodate increased tourism, increasing vacant spaces, and an imbalance of development. To address these issues, this thesis proposes utilizing urban vacant spaces and enhancing existing open space to address community needs identified through community involvement. To identify specific developable outdoor sites for residents and visitors within this neighborhood, the thesis draws

on the results of two community meetings, held in the Haenggung neighborhood in 2018 and 2019. Based on the community needs identified at these meetings, the thesis design focuses on appropriate sites within the neighborhood to ease the growing tension. The specific focus of the design is four spaces including a multifunctional open public plaza, community p-patch park, and open public seating area for residents and visitors. The methods and concepts developed and demonstrated in this thesis can be applied throughout the entire Haenggung neighborhood and can create a better sustainable community within Suwon City in the future.

This document is best viewed as a two page spread with this page on the right.



Figure 0.0
Hwaseong Fortress and Haenggung Neighborhood

URBAN ACUPUNCTURE

Transforming Vacant Urban Spaces for Community Gathering
Suwon, South Korea

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

..... 13

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

I. Background 17

II. Thesis Question 19

III. Methodology 21

IV. Literature Review 27

V. Examples (Case Studies) 39

Chapter 2

URBAN ANALYSIS

I. History 51

II. Urban Context 59

Chapter 3
CHALLENGE

I.	Problem Statement	60
II.	Argument	68

Chapter 4
DESIGN STUDY

I.	Design Concept	73
II.	Design Process	75
III.	Four Spaces for Designs	83

Chapter 5
CONCLUSION

.....	116
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End Notes
Bibliography
Appendix

LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 0.0 Hwaseong Fortrees and Haenggung Neighborhood, <https://blog.naver.com/freetime47/220425978023>
- Figure 1.1 First English Signage in Suwon City, 1950s Suwon Historical Museum, "100 Years of History in Suwon", 2008, p.38.
- Figure 1.2 Hwaseong Fortress, UNESCO World Heritage, http://lview.m.ezday.co.kr/app/view_board.html?q_id_info=156&q_sq_board=8246348
- Figure 1.3 Arial View of Haenggung Neighborhood in Suwon, South Korea © Jiyoung Park
- Figure 1.4 Thesis Framework: Urban Issues in Historical District and Research Methods
- Figure 1.5 Photos of Community Meeting in Haenggung Neighborhood © Jiyoung Park
- Figure 1.6 Two Different Routes of Physical Trace in Haenggung Neighborhood
- Figure 1.7 Tactical Urbanism Example, Chair Bombing, <https://cargocollective.com/popupinfrastructurewrl/chair-bombing>
- Figure 1.8 Tactical Urbanism Example, Park(ing)day in Sanfrancisco, <http://plannersweb.com/2014/01/tactical-urbanism-public-vandalism/>
- Figure 1.9 Tactical Urbanism Example, Pavement to Plaza, "Time Square", NYC <https://rekuwait.wordpress.com/2010/02/23/sam-street-winter-only/>
- Figure 1.10 Urban Acupuncture Example, Chunggye cheon, Seoul, South Korea <https://news.joins.com/article/14265803>
- Figure 1.11 De-fencing project, Gwangju, South Korea, <http://www.namdonews.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=393036>
- Figure 1.12 De-fencing Porject, Gumi, South Korea, <http://www.snakorea.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=65264>
- Figure 1.13 De-fencing Project, Seongnam, South Korea, <http://m.snillbo.co.kr/19568>
- Figure 1.14 Hanpyeong Park in Wonso-Dong, Seoul, South Korea <https://blog.naver.com/sehub/150190058631>
- Figure 1.15 Hanpyeong Park, Chang-Dong, Seoul, Seoul Korea <https://blog.naver.com/sehub/150190058631>
- Figure 2.1 Wash Place in Haenggung Neighborhood, Suwon Historical Museum, "100 Years of History in Suwon", 2008, p.45.
- Figure 2.2 Commercial District in Haenggung Neighborhood, 1950, Suwon Historical Museum, "100 Years of History in Suwon", 2008, p.81.
- Figure 2.3 Historic Map of Haenggung Neighborhood, © National Archive of Korea
- Figure 2.4 Historic Map of Haenggung Neighborhood, © National Archive of Korea
- Figure 2.5 Community Marcket in Haenggung Neighborhood © National Archives of Korea.
- Figure 2.6 Destroyed Janganmun by Korean Way © National Archives of Korea.
- Figure 2.7 Illustration of Geographical Information in a Gradual Scale (from left to right: Korean Penninsula - City of Suwon in Kyunggi Province - Haenggung Neighborhood)
© Google Map
- Figure 3.1 Photo of Site Visit in Haenggung Neighborhood © Jiyoung Park
- Figure 3.2 Arial Photo of Haenggung Neighborhood © Jiyoung Park
- Figure 3.3 Diagram of Development Gap within the Haenggung Neighborhood © Jiyoung Park
- Figure 3.4 Increasing Vacant Buildings and Spaces © Jiyoung Park
- Figure 4.1 Initial Concept Collage © Jiyoung Park
- Figure 4.2 Diagram of Design Concept, Urban Acupuncture © Jiyoung Park
- Figure 4.3 Design Framework: Community Engagement for Finding Potential space for Design © Jiyoung Park
- Figure 4.4 Photos of Community Meetings © Jiyoung Park
- Figure 4.5 Example Images of Residents' Needs
<https://www.hok.com/about/news/2017/04/21/hok-plan-for-san-franciscos-iconic-ghirardelli-square-wins-asla-award-for-historic-preservation/>

Figure 4.6	http://www.seouland.com/arti/society/society_general/2058.html Example Images of Potential Programs https://www.ci.oswego.or.us/lofm , http://www.newstnt.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=3941 http://www.gycitizen.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=9522 https://www.contractortalk.com/f50/3-tier-deck-current-river-140401/ https://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/parks/osplanning http://www.sgilbo.kr/news/articleView.html?idxno=14902
Figure 4.7	Four Spaces for Design within the Neighborhood © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.8	Surrounding Context Map © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.9	Aerial View of the First Design Site © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.10	Site changes through the time changes © Google Map
Figure 4.11	Site Context Diagram © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.12	Potential Programs of the First Site Design, Open Public Plaza © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.13	Perspective Rendering of Observation Deck at Night © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.14	Plan of the First Site Design, Open Public Plaza © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.15	Perspective Rendering of Temporary Events Space © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.16	Perspective Rendering of Open Public Space with Pop-Jet Fountain in Summer © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.17	Aerial View of the Second Design Site © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.18	Site changes through the time changes © Google Map
Figure 4.19	Site Context Diagram © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.20	Potential Programs of the Second Site Design © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.21	Plan of the Second Site Design, Community P-Patch Park © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.22	Perspective Rendering of Community P-Patch Park © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.23	Aerial View of the Third Design Site © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.24	Site changes through the time changes © Google Map
Figure 4.25	Site Context Diagram © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.26	Potential Programs of the Third Site Design © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.27	Plan of the Third Site Design, Community P-Patch Park © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.28	Perspective Rendering of Community P-Patch Park © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.29	Aerial View of the Fourth Design Site © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.30	Site changes through the time changes © Google Map
Figure 4.31	Site Context Diagram © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.32	Potential Programs of the Fourth Site Design © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.33	Plan of the Fourth Site Design, Open Public Seating Area © Jiyoung Park
Figure 4.34	Perspective Rendering of Open Public Seating Area © Jiyoung Park

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I was born and raised in Seoul, the capital of Korea. Also, I was born in a house of a landscape architects, from my grandfather to my father and mother. Because of that upbringing, I have always been able to naturally think about the meaning of life as a landscape architect and the meaning of landscape in our lives. This is why the concept of "Landscape Architecture" has played an important role in my life.

During college, I entered the Department of Landscape Architecture Design at Kyung Hee University in Suwon. It was there that I discovered a different approach to landscape than the one I had grown up with. The landscape architectural concepts I learned at Kyung Hee University considered not only the creation of a beautiful city but also solutions for the fundamental problems of the city, which are constantly occurring. This led me to apply for my graduate degree at Kyung Hee University. During my graduate degree at Kyung Hee University, I read various American theses related to Landscape Architecture, which in turn led to my decision to study at the University of Washington. There are many people who have helped me over the years at.

First, I would like to express my appreciations to my chair advisor, Jeff Hou and committee advisor, Dan Abramson. I have really appreciated their thoughtful support throughout the whole thesis process. Also, I would like to thank Professor Julie Johnson who helped me to organize the thesis, and the thesis reviewers, Clayton Craig, Laure Healand, and Audrey West. Lastly, but most importantly, I really appreciate Professor Jeffrey Karl Ochsner who was my review from the beginning to the end of my thesis and helped me stay on the right track.

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Jiyoung Park

2년 동안 함께 해주신 모든 분들께
진심으로 감사드립니다.



Figure 1.1

First English Signage
in Suwon City, 1950s

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

"History is a novel for which the people is the author."

Alfred de Vigny



Figure 1.2

Hwaseong Fortress,
UNESCO World Heritage

I. Background

Korea is a country with a 5,000-year history. Historical remains exist in many city centers and communities. At the present time, some residents who live in the historical areas face conflicts within their daily life between preservation and development. Whether to develop around the historical sites to improve each resident's quality of life or to preserve the historical remains to respond to tourism has become a continuing dilemma. As a way to resolve these conflicts, Suwon City has attempted to lessen various legal restrictions on building heights and redevelopment; unfortunately, these compromises have become a catalyst for new urban development and have forced many residents of older neighborhoods to move to outskirts of the city.

From the beginning of the 21st century, the Suwon City government has tried to restore cultural properties. The city established cooperative programs such as the "Suwon Revitalization Project" and "EcoMobility 2013" for residents. Although these projects helped residents to strengthen solidarity, most of the projects nonetheless focused on attracting tourists rather than solving residential environmental issues. More recently, since 2017, Suwon started considering changing the historic Haenggung neighborhood through the urban regeneration. However, this approach also supports a more substantial proportion of tourism activities such as revitalizing commercial areas in the streets and for the influx of younger generations, rather than addressing the needs of current residents. Therefore, the future improvement of the quality of life for local residents of the Haenggung neighborhood still remains unresolved.



Figure 1.3

Aerial View of Haenggung
Neighborhood in Suwon,
South Korea

II. Thesis Question

This thesis begins with limitations on redevelopment which are aimed at protecting the historical fabric of the neighborhood. The various legal sanctions and regulations tend to impose limits that make it harder for current and long-time residents to remain. This design thesis addresses the issues of inconvenience and structural problems of the area by listening to the local people's voices, particularly as expressed through their participation in community meetings.

The first question that this thesis addresses is how residents' life in this restricted area can be improved, given the protected historical fabric of the neighborhood. This thesis also considered a second question, namely, how space can be selected to provide the necessary programs local people want through the lens of landscape architecture.

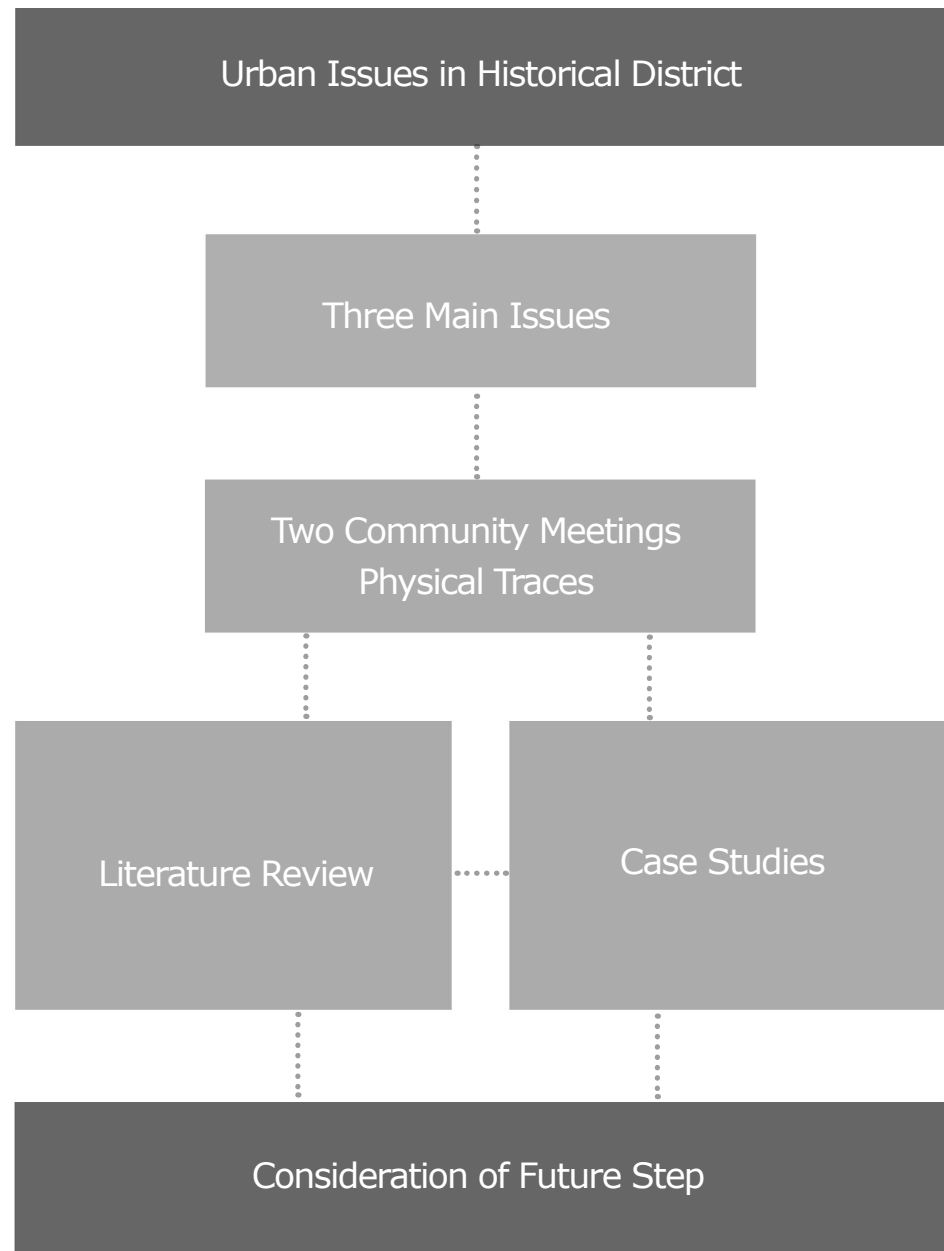


Figure 1.4

Thesis Framework:
Urban Issues in
Historical District and
Research Methods

III. Methodology

The methodology of this design thesis includes four parts: (1) Thesis background based on three main issues; (2) On-site research: Two community meetings and physical traces; (3) Design proposals; and (4) Consideration of future steps.

First, the thesis focuses on the three main issues of the site's problem statement as the basis of the thesis. Second, this thesis draws on two community meetings in Haenggung neighborhood. I attended the first community meeting on December 21, 2018, and I participated in the second meeting on March 19, 2019. During both visits, I also examined physical traces on-site with a community representative. This allowed me to observe the site issues and learn the opinions of the residents relative to the design of gathering spaces in this dense area.

The theoretical framework for the design draws on the literature and case examples of "Tactical Urbanism" and "Urban Acupuncture"; this became the design concept for this thesis. Throughout this process, I applied the opinions of the residents to the design sites. Based on the design proposals, I discuss future steps, which generated general standards and modules for a pilot program within the neighborhood, which could even become applicable throughout Suwon city.



Figure 1.5
Photos of Community Meeting in Haenggung Neighborhood (12/21/2018, 03/19/2019)

Two Community meetings

The Haenggung neighborhood of Suwon City is currently undergoing a rehabilitation project, which is focusing on improving the appearance of the building, revitalizing the streets and restructuring the facilities for the influx of tourists. Since the beginning of 2018, various community meetings have been conducted in Suwon City to contribute to the progress of this project. As part of this thesis, I contacted the project manager to get the permission to attend the community meetings and obtain information about the progress of current projects. I was able to participate in two community meetings on December 21, 2018, and March 19, 2019, where I had the opportunity to ask the residents questions related to this thesis. At the first community meeting in December, I heard about the general residents' opinions, and complaints, as well as the requirements for the neighborhood. At the second community meeting, I received detailed feedback on my designs. I developed the final design proposal based on the results of the second meeting.

Figure 1.6

Two Different
Routes of Physical
Trace in Haenggung
Neighborhood



Physical traces

The first purpose of the on-site field investigation in December 2018 was the direct identification of the problems of the site, and the observation of the behavior of people using the area. It was very helpful to observe practical problems that can only be witnessed in the field. The second purpose was to find suitable vacant urban spaces that could be designed to address the needs expressed by the residents.

As shown in Figure 1.6, the on-site investigation was divided into two different routes. The first route focused on the residential area and the second route focused on the commercial area. The three main goals of this research regarding physical traces are listed below:

- (1) Observe and experience the community's everyday life;
- (2) Observe and analyze how the community has formed; and
- (3) To directly listen to community members' opinions.

*"Tactical Urbanism demonstrates the huge power of thinking small about our cities.
It shows how, with a little imagination and the resources at hand, cities can unlock the full potential of their streets."*

Janette Sadik-Khan

IV. Literature Review

1. Tactical Urbanism

"Tactical Urbanism" is an approach to neighborhood activation using short-term, low-cost, and scalable interventions and policies.¹ Tactical urbanism is used by a variety of actors, including governments, businesses, and nonprofit organizations, civic organizations, and individuals.

Tactical Urbanism can be used for initiating projects in new locations or helping to repair existing sites. Examples of the potential sites for Tactical Urbanism are highway underpasses, vacant lots, surface parking lots, overly wide streets, empty storefronts, and other underused public spaces.²

Tactical Urbanism projects vary significantly in scope, size, budget, and support. Projects often begin as grassroots intervention, such as direct participation of the citizen in the creation and activation of their neighborhood. These projects can spread to other



Figure 1.7

Tactical Urbanism
Example,
Chair Bombing

cities and are in some cases adopted by municipal governments as best practices.³ Overall, the concept of tactical urbanism demonstrates that short-term actions can become a long-term change.⁴

(1) Better block initiatives

The better block initiatives are temporarily transforming local retail streets using cheap or donated materials by volunteers. Spaces can be changed by proposing food trucks, carts, temporary bike lanes, sidewalk tables, and narrowing of streets.⁵

(2) Chair bombing

The chair bombing is the act of removing salvageable materials and using them to build public seating. The chairs are placed in areas that are quiet and that lack seating places for people.

(3) De-fencing

De-fencing is the act of removing unnecessary fences to break down barriers in the neighborhood and to encourage community building.

(4) Depaving

Depaving is the act of removing unnecessary pavement for transforming parking lots and driveways into green spaces.⁶ These remodeled areas can play the role of absorbing rainwater and beautifying the neighborhoods.



Figure 1.8

Tactical Urbanism
Example, Park(ing)
day in Sanfrancisco

(5) Food carts/trucks

Food trucks/carts are used to attract people to utilize public spaces and offer local business opportunities.

(6) Guerrilla gardening

Guerrilla gardening is activated on abandoned sites, private property, and areas that are not being cared for. The people do not have the legal rights to utilize these spaces as gardeners; however, this action has the potential to be used for gardening, which can be a long-term goal for the neighborhood.

(7) Open streets

These open streets provide safe spaces for social activities, walking, and bicycling temporarily. This act can improve local economic development and build awareness in terms of operating cars in urban areas.

(8) Park(ing) day

Park(ing) day is held once a year where on-street parking is converted into park-like spaces.⁷



Figure 1.9

Tactical Urbanism
Example, Pavement to
Plaza, "Time Square",
NYC

(9) Pavement to plazas⁸

Pavement to plazas have been popularized in New York City, and this concept involves transforming space on streets to public gathering areas such as Times Square in New York City.⁹ It was a low-cost conversion to an open public pedestrian plaza.¹⁰

(10) Pop-up cafes

Pop-up cafes are temporary events built in parking spaces to provide overflow seating for nearby commercial operations or pedestrians, as most of the sidewalks are narrow and there is not enough room for seating.

(11) Pop-up parks

Pop Up Parks use the underused spaces/vacant spaces in the green area for community gathering temporarily or permanently.

(12) Pop-up retails

Pop-up retail is a temporary retail shop, which is set up in vacant properties.

(13) Protected bike lanes

Protected bike lanes are done by putting plant boxes and making physical barriers such as painted lanes to make people safe.

"The notion of restoring the vital signs of an ailing spot with a simple healing touch has everything to do with revitalizing not only that specific place but also the entire area that surrounds it.

...

Intervention is all about revitalization, an indispensable way of making an organism function and change."

Jaime Lerner

2. Urban Acupuncture

Acupuncture, which is a staple of traditional Chinese medicine, involves the insertion of fine medical needles on the human body to relieve symptoms and body tension. In a parallel way, "urban acupuncture" is the theory of manipulating the urban city through small scale interventions to affect high social/environmental/economic phenomena, which will promote the city's development and alleviate tensions in the city.

The term "Urban Acupuncture" was used by the Spanish architect/city planner, Manuel de Solà-Morales for the first time.¹¹ Sola-Morales combined the urban regeneration strategy with the concept of Urban Acupuncture.¹² Regarding the site selection of urban acupuncture, Cheng and Qian state that successful urban acupuncture strategies involve the choice of the location and the urban catalyst.¹³ The catalyst of the urban acupuncture is related to social, ecological, economic factors, which can interact through appropriate material conditions. As he mentions, the keys to the success of urban acupuncture seem to involve important placement/use, and the "bottom-up" approach for community participation. Sites for urban acupuncture can be selected based on community involvement, site analysis, and data gathering.



Figure 1.10

Urban Acupuncture
Example, Chunggye
cheon, Seoul, South
Korea

According to Jaime Lerner, “the Urban Acupuncture is an approach to revitalize a sick or worn out area and its surroundings through a simple touch of a key point.”¹⁴ Also, he notes that intervention in urban spaces can involve revitalization and transformation, and a way of making changes.¹⁵ This intervention of the Urban Acupuncture approach will cause a positive chain-reaction, with a goal of curing the whole community. This approach has the potential to influence current methods of planning on a large scale. This could be an incremental approach, which uses targeted, well-planned, and often temporary strategies to address social issues, designs, economic problems, or transportation.¹⁶ This small, fast, and effective nature of this approach mimics that of acupuncture. Public small spaces can be turned into event spaces, parks, and gathering spaces for people.¹⁷ Clogged streets can be designated as pop-up parks and temporary event spaces such as pedestrian malls.

In the article, “Pocket Parks as Urban Acupuncture,” Ashley D Penn argues that pocket park can be one of the ideal tools to consider in urban acupuncture. Also, she mentions the impressive/positive results of using derelict land for greening, which is the research from the University of Pennsylvania; when vacant spaces were greened, residents in low-income neighborhoods reported “significant decreases” in lower cholesterol levels and feeling depressed.¹⁸

Literature Review Conclusion

Tactical Urbanism is a cost-effective approach that aims to benefit communities in the short-term through methods of small intervention, but has the potential to become a long-term plan. Similarly, Urban Acupuncture manipulates the structure of the city by implementing small-scale interventions throughout the neighborhood.

Both of the Tactical Urbanism and Urban Acupuncture approaches focus on creating modest methods of intervention and reclaiming underutilized spaces within the community, which revitalizes neighborhoods. Through these strategies, an intricate community can fix its common local problems in the long-term. Tactical Urbanism is used by various actors such as governments, business, and non-profit organizations. However, both Tactical Urbanism and Urban Acupuncture rely on the participation of citizens.

I think that Tactical Urbanism and Urban Acupuncture are effective ways of relieving the tension of dense areas. These approaches can be effective in providing solutions for the benefit of citizens and communities.

V. Examples

1. De-fencing project, South Korea
2. Depaving project, "Hanpyeong Park project", Seoul, South Korea

Examples 1

De-fencing project, South Korea

The De-fencing project began in October 1996 in Daegu, South Korea when the city demolished the property wall of their city hall.¹⁹ According to the 2001 survey that studied citizen satisfaction, more than 80% of Daegu City residents replied that they are willing to participate in the de-fencing campaign. Also, 94.6% of residents replied that Daegu had increased its sense of pride and identity, and 89.3% of respondents said the city's environment also has improved.²⁰ As citizens' reactions improved, this de-fencing spread to the citizens' movement. Until now, more than 1,000 organizations and civic groups from Seoul, Busan, Incheon, Seongnam, Bucheon, Gwangju, Daejeon, Gumi and Ulsan have visited Daegu to learn about the de-fencing movement. By 2017, there were 362 places occurred including 104 public offices, 113 housing units and apartments, 49 commercial facilities, 60 welfare, childcare, and religious facilities, 16 public and medical facilities, 18 schools and two other various locations, which have a total length of over 17km.²¹

Through this campaign/project, concrete was replaced by a small park, resting area, and gathering green space. However, there were many difficulties in promoting this movement; the main concern of citizens focuses on the invasion of privacy and increased crime rate. Therefore, the anxiety surrounding the elimination of the walls was an obstacle to the spread of the movement in the early days.



Figure 1.11
De-fencing project, Gwangju, South Korea

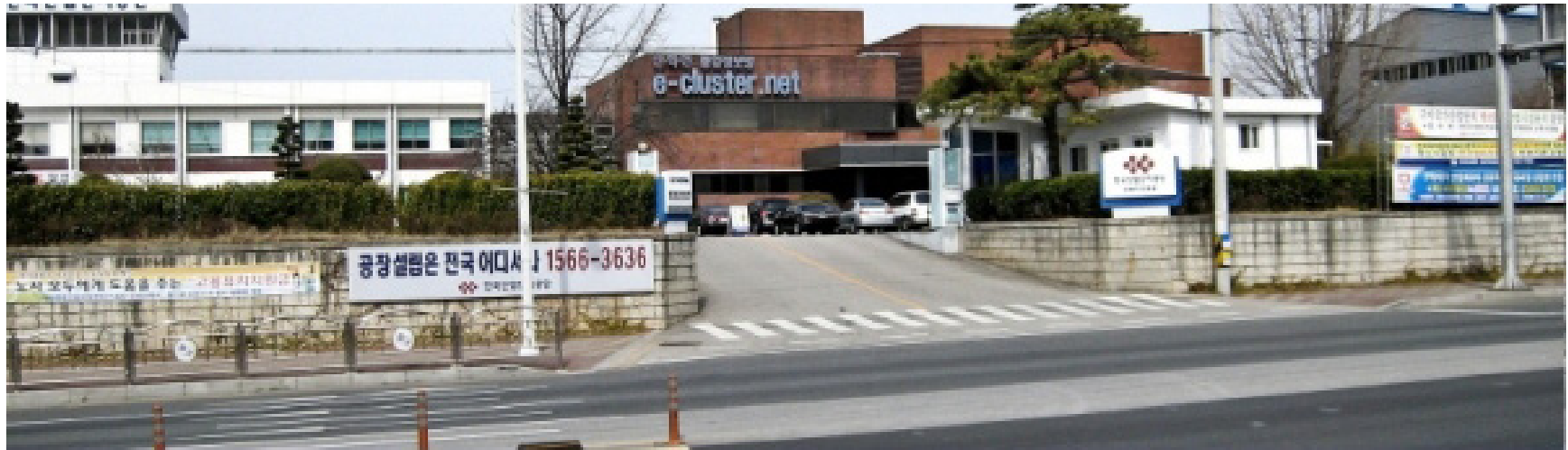


Figure 1.12
De-fencing Project, Gumi, South Korea



Figure 1.13
De-fencing Project, Seongnam, South Korea

Examples 2

Depaving projects, “Hanpyeong Park Projects”, Seoul, South Korea

In Hanpyeong Park, Hanpyeong means a small area of 1m² in Korean, and Hanpyeong Park usually means a small space park like a vest pocket. Besides, Hanpyeong Park in Korea is a concept not only for the simple urban beautification of the abandoned space but also for reviving the vacant space within the neighborhood with local people.²² This Hanpyeong Park Project was first implemented in 2002 as a public consortium of the “Green Seoul Citizens Committee” and was conducted in conjunction with the Citizens' Solidarity for “Creating a City to Walk”.²³ The project started to plant trees and flowers using the abandoned land in the neighborhood with the residents. This project started in Seoul in 2002 and has been applied to various spaces. Until now, there are over than 45 Hanpyeong Parks in Seoul.²⁴ Through this project, the city continues to make efforts to change the space that has not been well managed into a green space, which plays an essential role in improving the environment in the neighborhood. In addition, since it is built through the participation of local residents, it has the advantage of eliminating their anxieties of the district and improving the walking environment together.



Figure 1.14
Hanbyeong Park in Wonso-Dong, Seoul, South Korea



Figure 1.15
Hanbyeong Park, Chang-Dong, Seoul, Seoul Korea

Case Studies Conclusion

The “De-fencing Project” and “Depaving Project” were implemented as solution for the problems that had been established in the city since the mid-90s. Both the demolishing wall and depaving projects started with the active intervention of the government, but gradually became a citizen movement over time. Citizens actively started to express their opinions regarding the neighborhood, and through this proactive effort, the space transformed to reflect their needs and opinions. Most projects in Korea deal with small intervention and have gained a great deal of influence through changes within a small space. This movement has increased citizens' satisfaction with the community and has shaped the identity of the area.

The significance of these two projects in Korea contrasts with the main steps of the government’s plan to create new towns and large-scale housing complexes. These projects do not focus on the new city, but rather on solving the problems of the community in which local people live.

As with the previous examples, I will actively reflect the opinions of the residents in resolving local problems in this design thesis. Beyond reflecting the views of residents in transforming small improvements, I argue that this movement can be extended beyond the thesis site to surrounding areas in the long term.

Chapter 2

URBAN ANALYSIS

"If you want to understand today, you have to search yesterday."

Pearl Buck

Figure 2.1

Wash Place in
Haenggung
Neighborhood,
1950

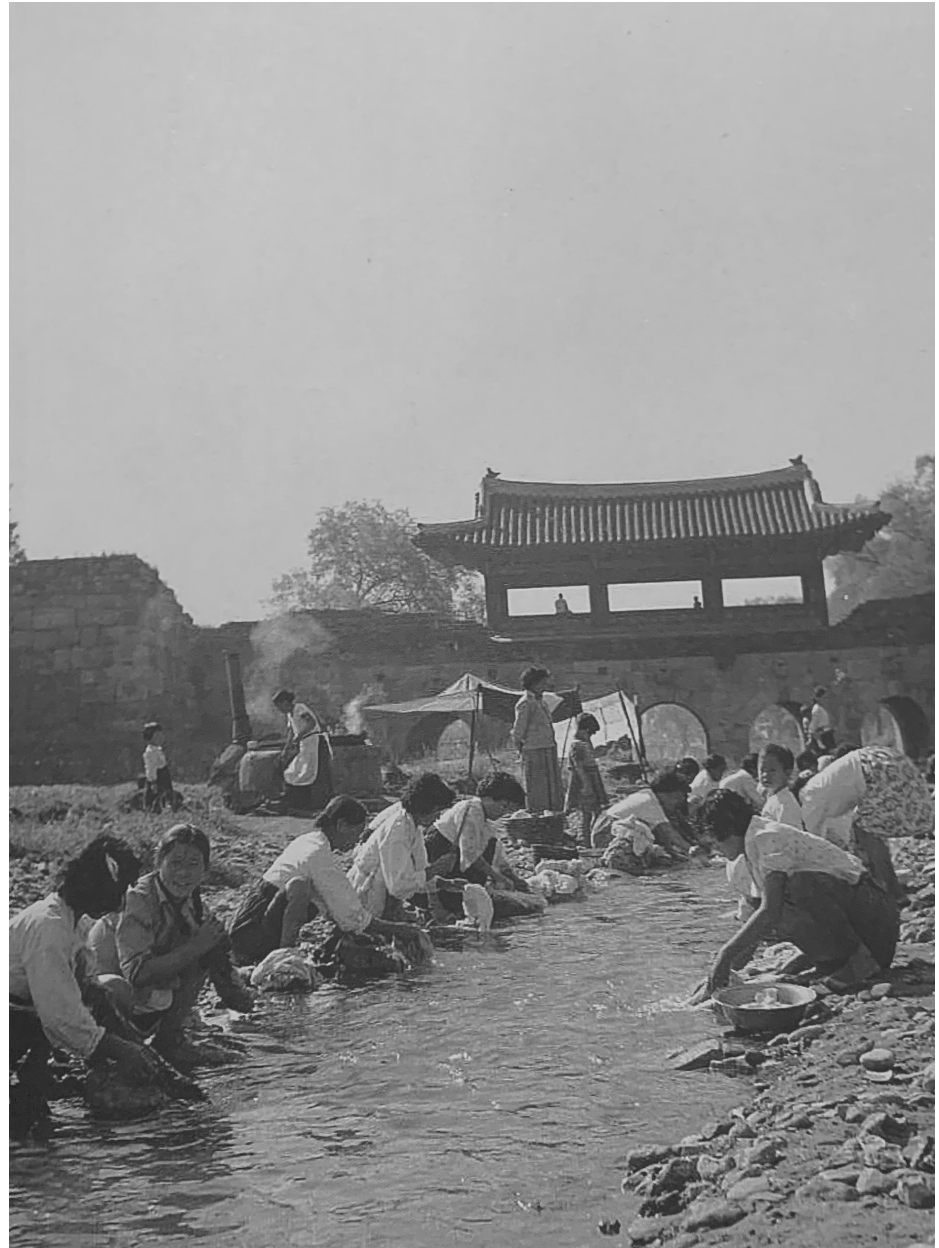


Figure 2.2

Commercial District
in Haenggung
Neighborhood,
1950



I. History

Hwaseong Fortress is an iconic structure from the latter part of the Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910) and is currently regarded as a representative fortress in Korea. The fortress was constructed from 1794 to 1796 by King Jeongjo with prominent scholars in Joseon era. The Scholars, Hyeong-Won Yu (1622-1673) and Yak-Yong Jeong (1762-1836), designed the fortress in what was considered a scientific way at that time. Jeong invented a Korean style crane—"Geojunggi" to lift up heavy stones, greatly reducing construction time.²⁵

The fortress walls stretches for a total of 5.52km (3.43 miles) and consists of a variety of facilities that support a military purpose. There are four gates to the Hwaseong Fortress—Janganmun (north), Paldalmun (south), Changnyongmun (east), and Hwaseomun (west)—as well as the seven-arch style Sumun (sluice gate). The sluice gate straddles the point where the nearby stream reaches the fortress. Above the Sumun gate, there is a pavilion called Hwahongmun, which is one of the sites discussed in this thesis.

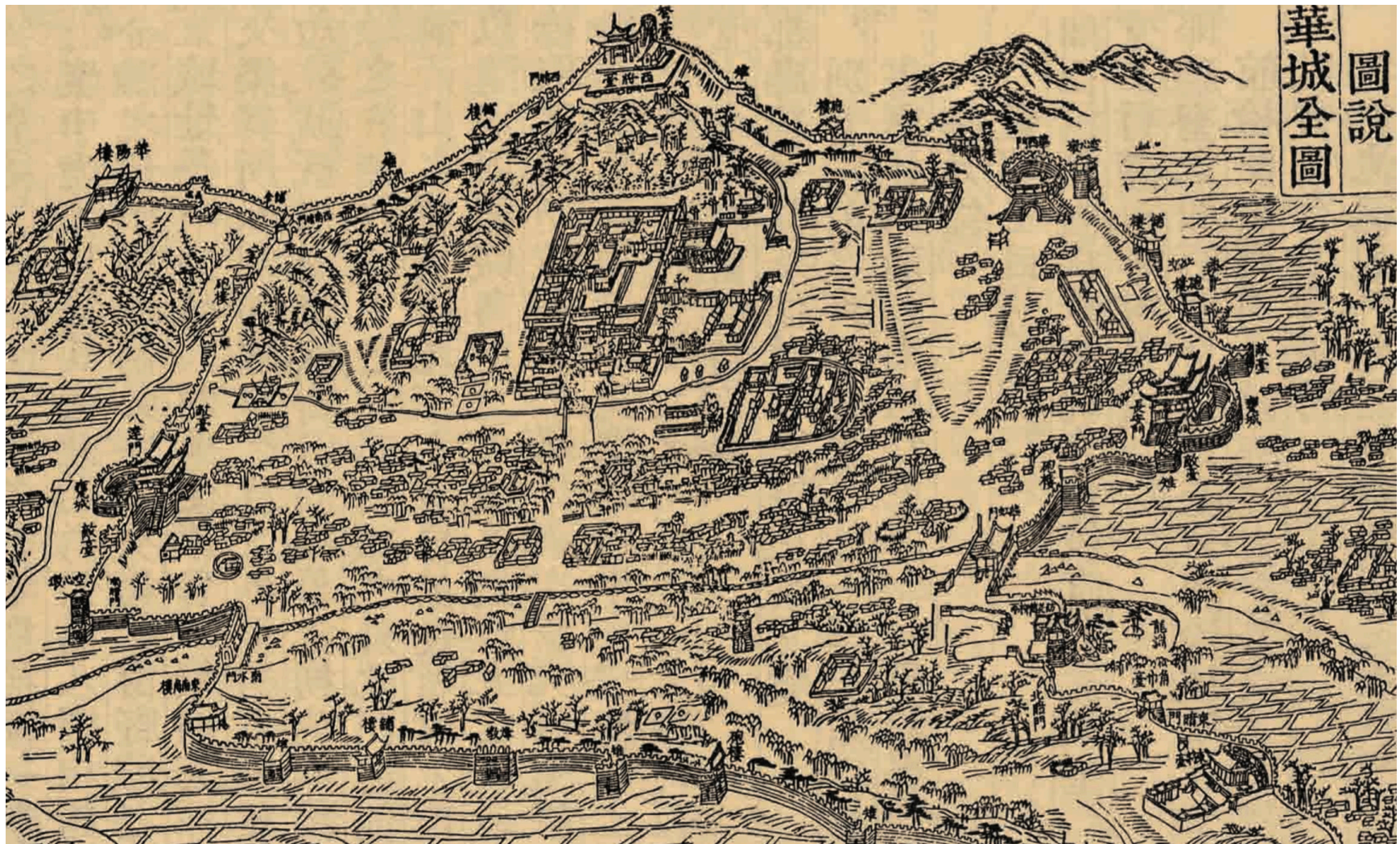


Figure 2.3
Historic Map of Haenggung Neighborhood, © National Archive of Korea



Figure 2.4
Historic Map of Haenggung Neighborhood, © National Archive of Korea



Figure 2.5

Community Market
in Haenggung
Neighborhood
© National Archives
of Korea.

As shown in Figure 2.4, City of Suwon has changed throughout the history of Korea.²⁶ When King Jeongjo planned Suwon as the very first satellite city in Joseon Dynasty in the late 17th century, Hawseong Palace and its fortress were built to secure Joseon from invasion of other countries.²⁷ He recognized the importance of geographical conditions, and the fact that Suwon was the ideal location for the plan.²⁸ The City of Suwon was able to become a significant city in political, economic, social, and cultural contexts.

Furthermore, the city had a role in economic development by vitalizing national markets. The project was the most representative accomplishment of King Jeongjo's reign.²⁹ This large-scale city project dredged a up Suwon stream and forged new streets. Through the establishment of this urban infrastructure, local people were able to gather, creating community through social and economic spaces such as wash places and markets.³⁰ The city of Suwon thrived the most during this period.



Figure 2.6

Destroyed
Janganmun
by Japanese
Occupation and
Korean War
© National Archives
of Korea.

However, as shown in Figure 2.6, this beautiful fortress was damaged by Japanese Occupation. Generally, in the Japanese occupation period (1910-1945), key materials of Korean traditional buildings were taken to build new Japanese buildings or to modernize the city.³¹ After that period, the Suwon Hwaseong Fortress suffered from enormous damage during the Korean War in 1950. The Fortress was destroyed again and became irreparable.

In 1960, when the Gyeonggi Provincial Office moved to Suwon, the city and its remaining historical heritage received enough attention so that restoration projects were considered. The restoration project started in 1974, starting from the damaged main gates and stone walls, and it was completed after four years.

Suwon Hwaseong was designated as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1997. Since then, the Korean government has developed this city into a cultural heritage site based on its historical fabric, and it has become one of the famous tourist attractions in Korea. Recently, increasing tourism and historical protections have caused some issues for local people and their daily lives.



Figure 2.7

Illustration of Geographical Information in a Gradual Scale (from left to right: Korean Peninsula - City of Suwon in Kyunggi Province - Haenggung Neighborhood)

II. Urban context

The city of Suwon is located in the northwest side of the Korean peninsula, which is part of the Kyunggi Province (Figure xx). The population of the city is 1,197,648. The area of the city is 121.04 km²(46.73 sqmi).³²

Suwon city shows the coexistence of new cities with the historic city. Suwon City's representative historical administrative district, Haenggung neighborhood, is located in the center of Suwon city, which gives people a sense of Korea's past and present in Suwon. The area of the Haenggung neighborhood is 1.57 km²(sqmi)³³

The geographical feature of the Haenggung neighborhood is the Suwon River, which flows through the center of the neighborhood. Also, there are landmarks such as the fortress and main gates and five schools around it. This neighborhood mainly includes commercial, residential areas, and tourism sites around the landmarks. The population of the neighborhood is 4616--54% men and 46% women. The age portion is that from 0 to 5 years is 7%, 21 to 65 years is 74%, and over 65 is 19%.³⁴

Chapter 3

CHALLENGE

"What is history? An echo of the past in the future; a reflex from the future on the past."

Victor Hugo



Figure 3.1

Photo of Site Visit
in Haenggung
Neighborhood



Figure 3.2

Aerial Photo
of Haenggung
Neighborhood

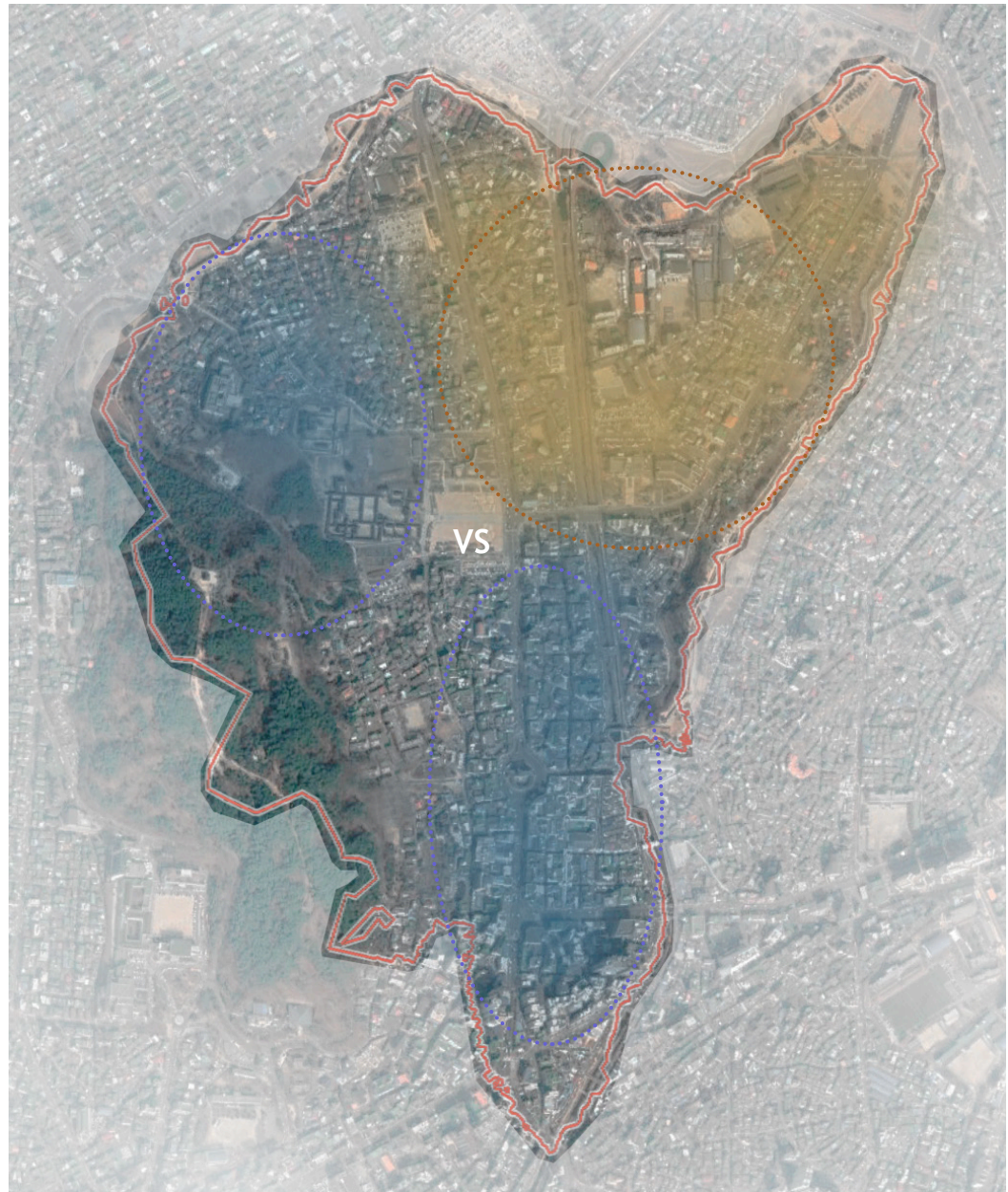
Issue 1: Development Restriction Policy

The Hwaseong Fortress was designated as Historic Site No. 3 in January 1963, and in December 1997, it was designated a World Cultural Heritage Site by UNESCO. After it was designated as such, Haenggung neighborhood has had restrictions in redevelopment, such as the limitation of the height of a building in order to protect cultural property. The maximum height of the building construction is between 8 to 14 meters, and administrative procedures have become complicated when new buildings become constructed.³⁵ These procedures require permission from the Cultural Properties Management Administration in Suwon City.

Due to strict regulations on new building construction, only 9.2% of all buildings in this neighborhood have been constructed since 2000; 85.7% of all buildings require redevelopment.³⁶ At the same time, 57% of residents who have their own land and buildings in this area are linked to income generated by tourists.³⁷ Therefore, such a development restriction policy limits the tourism industry.

Figure 3.3

Diagram of
Development Gap
within the Haenggung
Neighborhood



Issue 2: Imbalance of Development

Although Haenggung neighborhood is regulated as a zone of redevelopment due to its historical and cultural fabric, not all areas within the neighborhood are restricted by this restriction. Historically the traditional markets, such as Paldalmun market and Youngdong market, were located in the Southwestern part of the neighborhood. A variety of tourism-related programs and projects have been carried out to attract tourists such as "Making Chicken Street" in order to activate the traditional market. Through this commercial activation project, the south part of the neighborhood could be developed by introducing "chicken," which is the most typical dish in Suwon city. Moreover, the Eco-mobility pilot project was conducted in the northwest of the neighborhood in 2013 by building pedestrian-friendly walkways. As a result of this project, the buildings, pedestrian roads and bicycle roads in the northwest side were improved, and this part of the project site developed naturally.³⁸

However, Namsu-dong and Buksu-dong (one of the administrative districts), which are located at the north side of the neighborhood, are still not developed, even though they include a mixture of schools, residential areas, and commercial areas.³⁹ Therefore, as time goes by, the developmental gap in this neighborhood between the northwest/southside and the upper side grows gradually, and the quality of life for people who are living in this area is deteriorating.



Figure 3.4

Increasing Vacant
Buildings and Spaces

Issue 3: Increasing Vacant spaces

The third issue of the Heangung neighborhood is the increasing number of vacant buildings/spaces.⁴⁰ The reason for the period of decline in this neighborhood is the new city development around the Suwon city, which has made people move to the outskirts of the neighborhood. The development of large-scale residential areas in Suwon city involve the locations of Yeongtong, Gwanggyo, and Homaesil, which have stimulated the outflow of the population. This movement results in a steady decline in population inside the Haengung neighborhood.

Despite these developments, Suwon City has been carrying out the restoration and maintenance of cultural properties since 2012, which resulted in more than 170 migrants.⁴¹ This situation has become a factor in the phenomenon of an aging population, which has been a problem since 2014. The migrants, vacant buildings, and spaces are constantly emerging within the neighborhood since the residents are not free to build new buildings and redevelop their properties due to the restrictions.

Argument

Architectural space has the power to heal negative history, culture, and directly impacting the emotion of people. The impact may result from the volume of space, sunshine and daylight through space, materials, smells, or even the flow of the wind that can stimulate nostalgia. The built fabric remains as the evidence, but given a new story, wounds can slowly heal. In this regard, the proposed design in this thesis presents a spatial solution that responds to the urban and architectural scale of the city. Simultaneously, it will also redefine the meaning of legacy of colonial architecture in the city.

First, from the urban perspective, the current planned Historic District in Gunsan needs to be considered in terms of block scale rehabilitation and revitalization. In order to address the disconnection of the tourist route to the fragmented landmark buildings from the rest of the district, public space should be provided along with tourist infrastructure such as a visitor center and managing the local provision of commercial space by local residents and owners. Specifically, the proposed intervention will support tourist attractions such as outdoor space, gardens, public restrooms, and visitor information center. Due to the relatively small size of the parcels of the block, small infill interventions will be appropriately created in current outdoor spaces. The identification of the hidden architectural resources of vernacular housing will reveal the historical values of the buildings.

In terms of program, the role of architectural space in the design is to create the place for symbiosis between local people and tourists. To strengthen identity of city and support cultural tourism, accommodation spaces such as a guesthouse or temporary residential space will be provided. At the same time other programs including an educational program and spaces addressing local people's needs are included.

In conclusion, this thesis argues for an architectural approach to the colonial legacy in the architecture of Gunsan, South Korea. It argues for an approach to confront this controversial past through a strategy of weaving and stitching, not to erase the past and not to preserve it. It deals with both urban and architectural scale and serves both locals and visitors in a way to educate and provide cultural space for catalyzing activity in the city.

Based on the previous analysis, the argument of thesis is, first, integrate ideas about the history remnants from the colonial period in city fabric. Second, recognizing modular order, develop "kit of parts" so the intervention merges into neighborhood and serves the local people, opening a possibility to intervene incrementally to serve the residents. Third, intervention can be compatible in scale, but of modern materials and design. This concludes that architecture of colonial period is not imitated; rather, its fabric informs the new interventions.

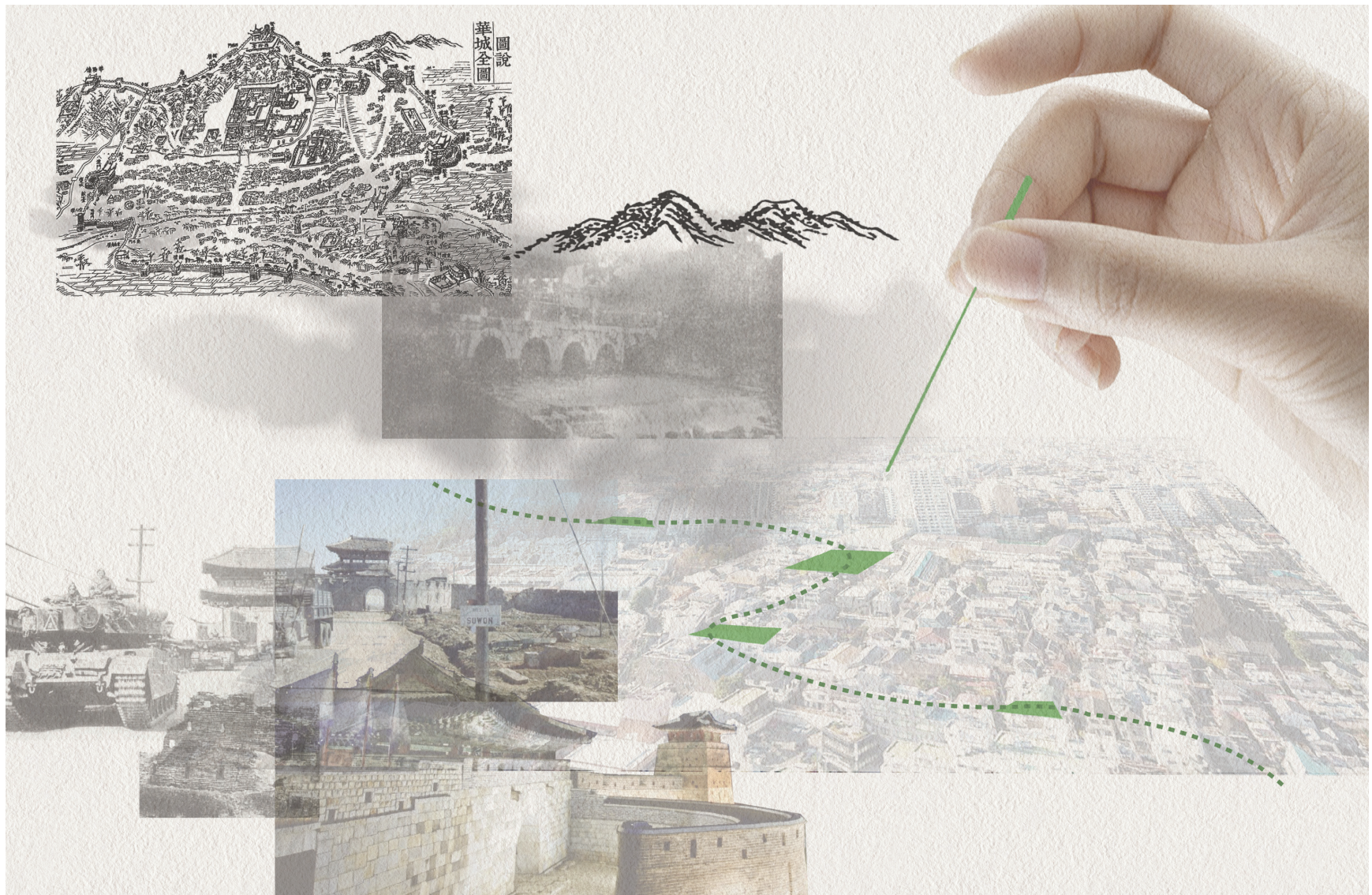


Figure 4.2
Initial Concept Collage

Chapter 4

DESIGN

"History isn't about dates and places and wars. It's about the people who fill the spaces between them."

Jodi Picoult

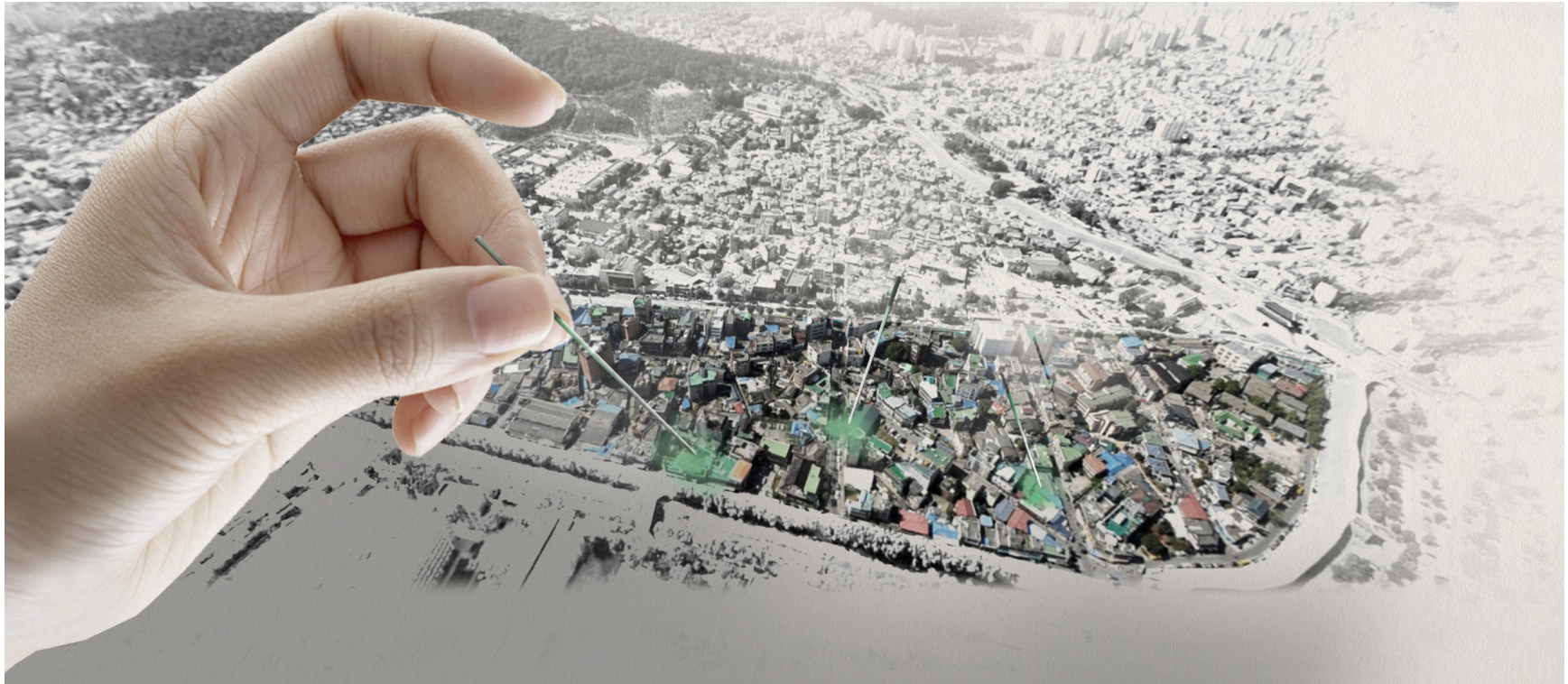


Figure 4.2
Diagram of Design Concept, Urban Acupuncture

I. Design Concept

As stated in the title, the design concept of this thesis is "Urban Acupuncture" which consists of two primary considerations. The first approach to the spaces for Urban Acupuncture was finding vacant urban space suitable for reuse. Depending on which program will be used for space, the criterion of selecting the best space among several vacant spaces varied. The second consideration was taking account of the surrounding context. Through analyzing the building use, the natural environment, and the main circulation around the space, it was possible to pick the space that can be appropriately selected.

Inserting green spaces and open space for gathering within the neighborhood can relieve the tension of the city and make this area breathable through nature.

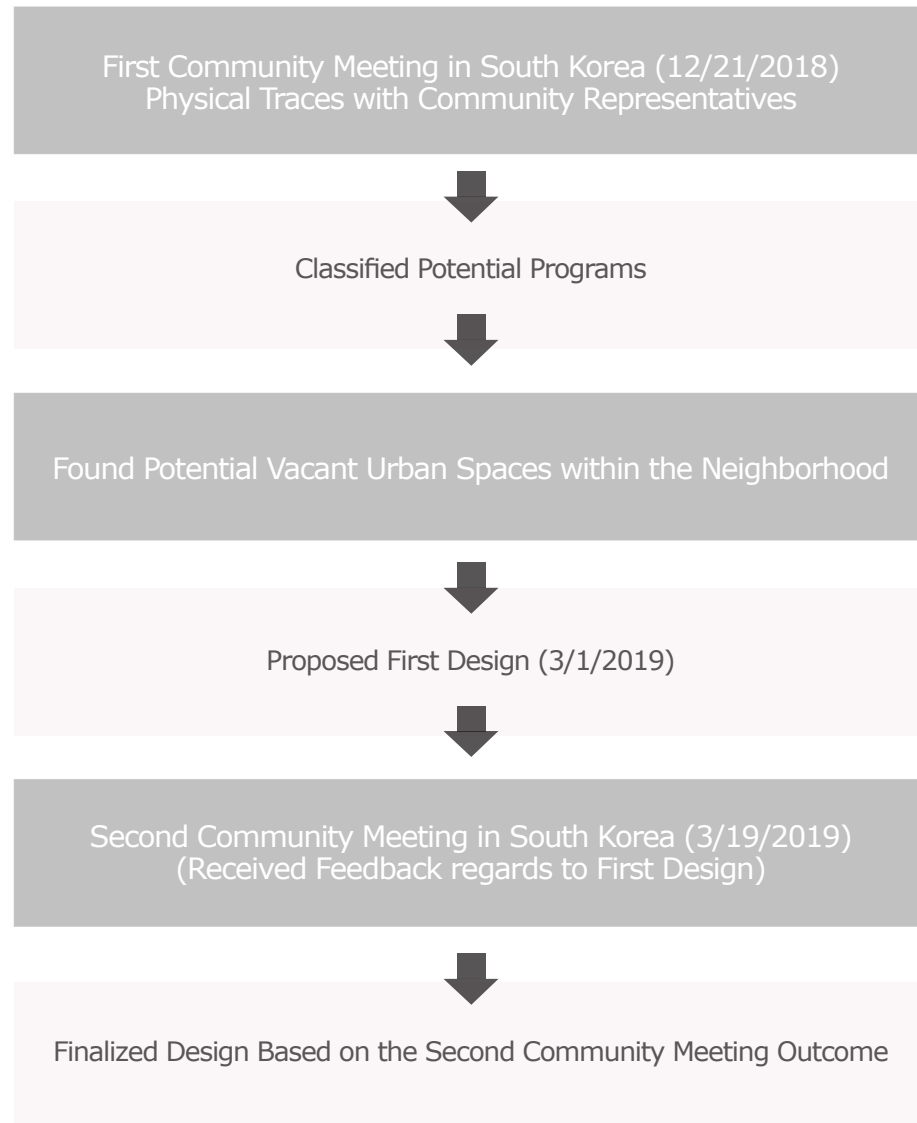


Figure 4.3

Design Framework:
Community
Engagement for Finding
Potential space for
Design

II. Design Process

The design process took place through a series of six stages. (Figure 4.3)

The first stage involved attending the first community meeting on December 21, 2018, to hear about the general residents' opinions, complaints, and the requirements of the neighborhood. Based on the data collected, the next stage classified potential programs which led to the third stage to find potential vacant urban spaces within the site. Proposed design options were presented during the fourth stage of the design process and fifth stage necessitated the second community meeting, on March 19, 2019, to receive feedback in regards to the first design. The design was refined and finalized based on these steps.



Figure 4.4
Photos of Community Meetings (12/21/2018, 03/19/2019)

Results from Community Meetings

Each meeting related to my thesis was conducted for 50 minutes after the presentation of Suwon city, which was discussed with the project manager in advance.

The goal of the first community meeting, which was held on December 21, 2018, was to look at the problems that residents experience within the neighborhood. A total of 23 residents attended the first meeting, and I was able to hear about the issues of the neighborhood that they brought up, the potential programs they wanted, and their opinions regarding specific locations of vacant urban space.



Figure 4.5
Example Images of Residents' Needs

However, there were some debates regarding the process of addressing the overall problems of the neighborhood. Most of the residents mentioned only the problems near their houses when referring to the site problems. Everyone was in a hurry to focus on the issues pertinent to where they live and all of the residents thought that the areas most relevant to them should be developed first. Also, the difference in the residents' ages was another challenge. Because people of different ages had different perspectives on problems in the neighborhood, the meeting was endeavored to find a mutually agreeable solution. As shown in Figure 4.5, the community residents provided feedback regarding the Haenggung neighborhood's problems.

They mentioned the following items:

- Need gathering spaces for residents/visitors
- Lack of community spaces
- Too dark to go around within neighborhood at night
- Urgent matter to develop Northeast area of neighborhood
- Want to have gardening opportunity
- Need some programs to increase visitors
- Want to develop around Suwon stream(Suwoncheon)
- Want to have periodical festival for visitor and residents



Figure 4.6
Example Images of Potential Programs

The second community meeting was conducted on March 19, 2019. The goal of this meeting was to receive feedback on vacant space designs I created, which were inspired by the first meeting. A total of 12 residents attended, and I was able to hear not only their overall comments on the design but also comments on the program and their recommendations on additions to the program. Potential program ideas mainly include activities that residents want to engage in at some point in the future, as well as some activities that are not occurring within the neighborhood. Additionally, these programs played a role in conceptualizing the future state of vacant spaces.

Potential programs that residents mentioned at community meetings are:

- Temporary market/pop-up store
- Farmer's market
- Small group event space
- Observation deck
- Community green open space
- Community P-patch(gardening opportunity)
- Open public plaza for residents/visitors

Figure 4.7

Four Spaces for
Design within the
Neighborhood



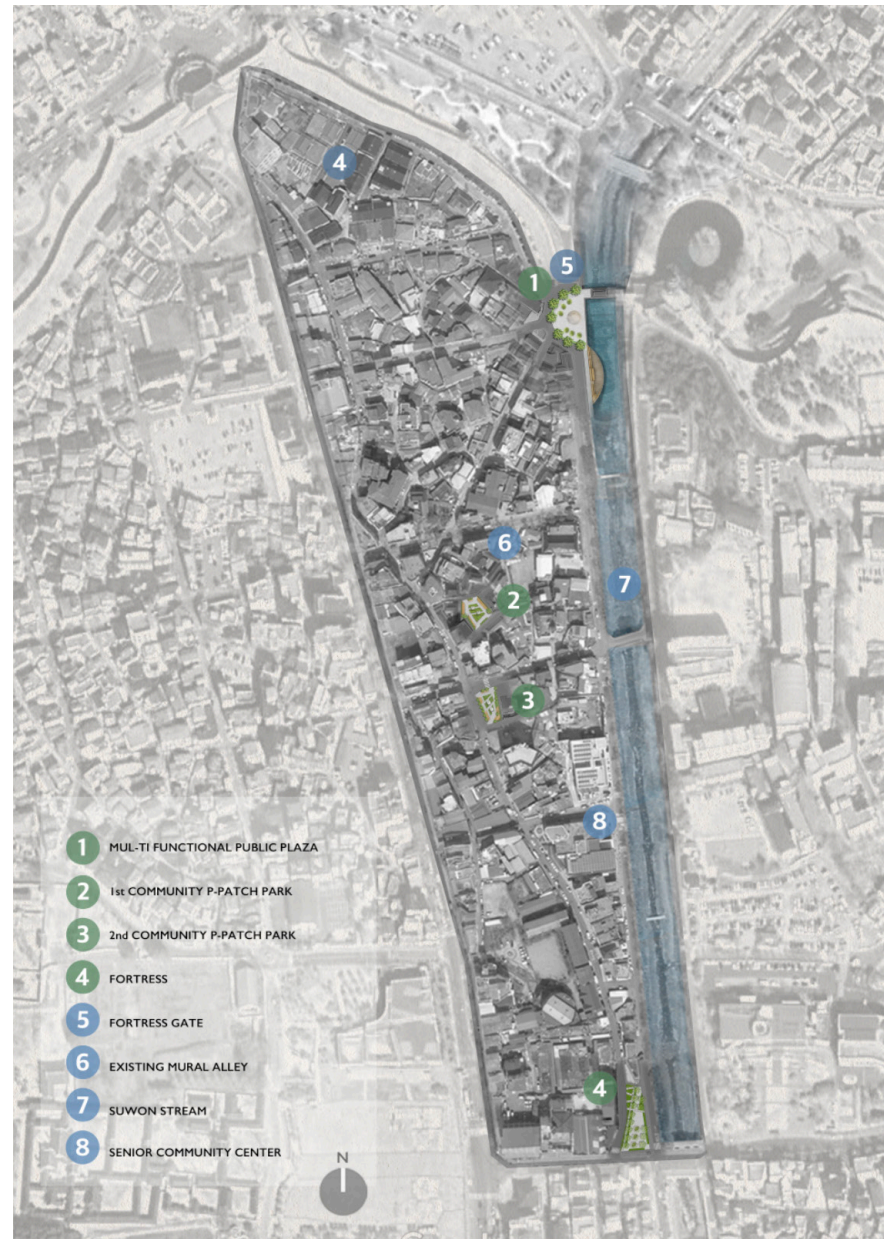
III. Four Spaces for Design

To resolve the issues through design in regards to that most people mentioned in the community meetings, I first listed the issues. Through this listing, I was able to understand that the issues vary depending on different residents' ages. People in their 50s and 60s had a high demand for gardening opportunities, but people in their 10s, 20s, and 30s had a higher need for public open area, pop-up stores and temporary events.

To accommodate these needs as much as possible, I selected three different types of specific spaces for multi-functional open public plaza, community P-Patch park and open public seating through the community meetings and potential program ideas. Also, considering that the ages of the residents who attended the community meetings were mostly between 50-60 years old, I selected two spaces for the community P-patch park. Therefore, four vacant spaces were selected among nine potential spaces within site (Figure 4.8) to implement three types of chosen programs.

Figure 4.8

Surrounding Context
Map



Considerations of Space Selection

The following criteria were considered to implement certain programs to each selected vacant spaces.

Multifunctional Open Public Plaza(Figure 4.8, Green circle number 1): Main entry of connection between in and outside of the Hwaseong Fortress. (Figure 4.8, Blue circle number 5)

Community P-Patch Park(Figure 4.8, Green circle number 2,3): Mainly residential area, close proximity to an existing Senior Community Center (Figure 4.8, Blue circle number 8), near school to provide short educational field trip opportunities.

Open Public Seating Area(Figure 4.8, Green circle number 4): Starting point of the administrative neighborhood, main circulation

First Site

The first site was selected for a multi-functional open public plaza. This space was located directly in front of the historical landmark, Hwahong gate. This gate serves as a main vehicular and pedestrian entry and as a sluice gate.

As shown in Figure 4.8, this site was a vast empty area from 2003 to 2011. However, as illegally parked cars increased on site, Suwon city decided to make this area as a floating island on the street in 2016. From then until now, this space had been a vacant space.

The overall surrounding contexts of this space are cohesive of mixed-use, commercial, residential, and natural environment--the Suwon stream. (Figure 4.9) The primary uses adjacent to the first site are commercial buildings and the Suwon stream.

Potential programs which can be implemented on this site are temporary market/pop-up store, farmer's market, small group event space, open public plaza for residents/visitors, seasonal in-ground pop-jet fountain with led, and amphitheater deck near the Suwon stream. (Figure 4.14, 4.15) Various small events can be held within this plaza (Figure 4.14), and majority of the time, residents or visitors can enjoy this open public plaza. (Figure 4.15) The newly designed observation deck can be used for smaller events, and both the plaza and the deck will be illuminated for night time use as well. (Figure 4.14)



Figure 4.9
Aerial View of the First Design Site



2003
2016



2011
2019



Figure 4.10
Site changes through the time changes © Google Map

- SITE BOUNDARY
- MIXED-USE
- COMMERCIAL
- RESIDENTIAL



Figure 4.11
Site Context Diagram

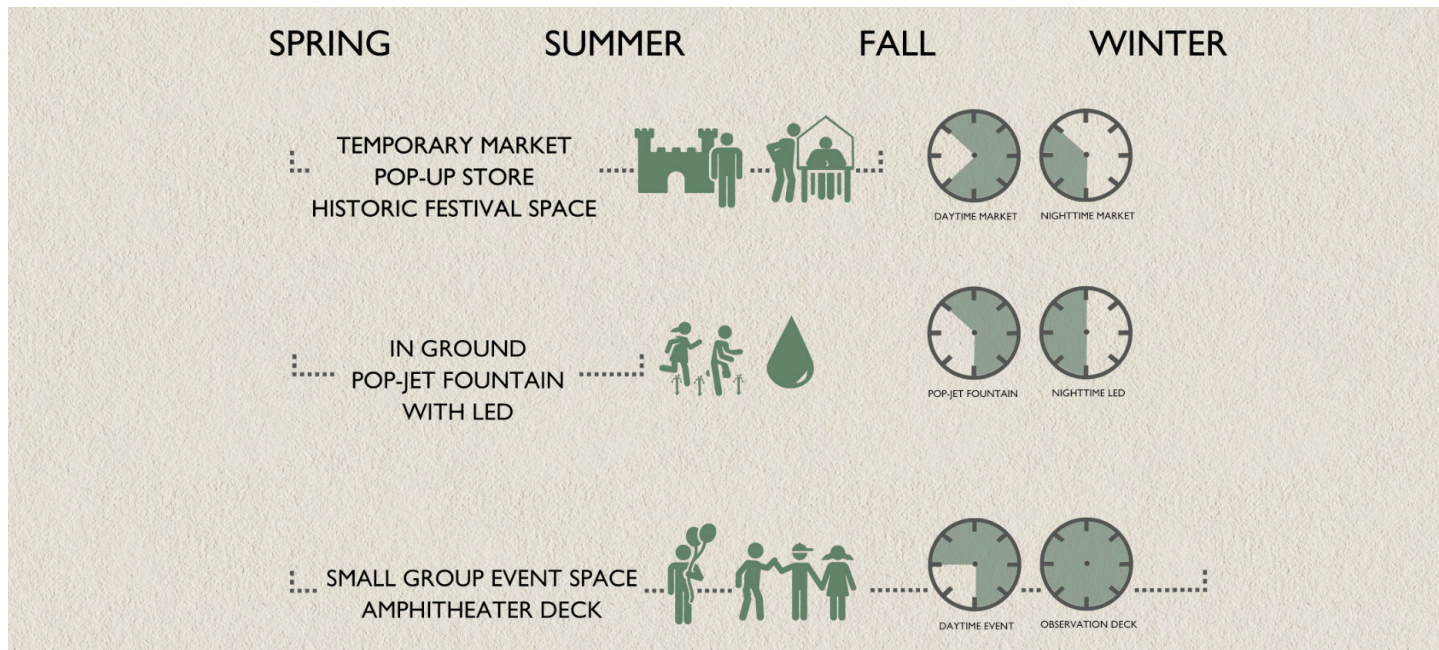


Figure 4.12
Potential Programs of the First Site Design, Open Public Plaza

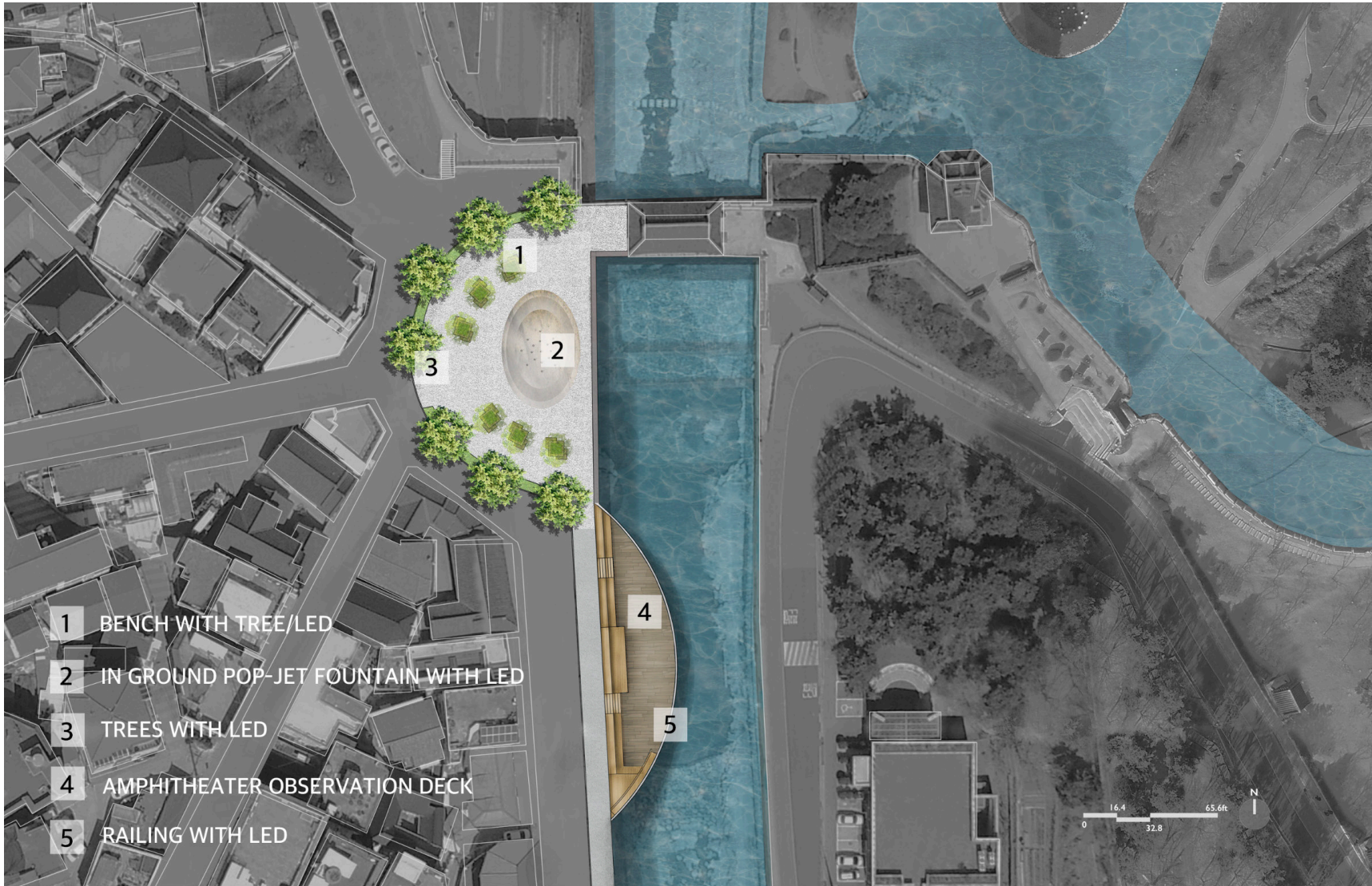


Figure 4.13
Plan of the First Site Design, Open Public Plaza



Figure 4.14
Perspective Rendering of Observation Deck at Night



Figure 4.15
Perspective Rendering of Temporary Events Space



Figure 4.16
Perspective Rendering of Open Public Space with Pop-Jet Fountain in Summer

Second Site

The second site was selected for community P-patch park. This space was located in the residential area. As shown in Figure 4.17, there were two residential houses on this site from 2003 to 2014. After the owner moved out to outskirts of this neighborhood, these buildings were demolished (Figure 4.18). Since then, this space had been a vacant space.

The nearby context is primarily residential. (Figure 4.19) The potential programs that can be implemented on this site are community gathering space, farmer's market, and P-patch garden. (Figure 4.20) Residents can sunbathe and rest at platforms, gather under pergolas, and raise their own crops. (Figure 4.21)



Figure 4.17
Aerial View of the Second Design Site

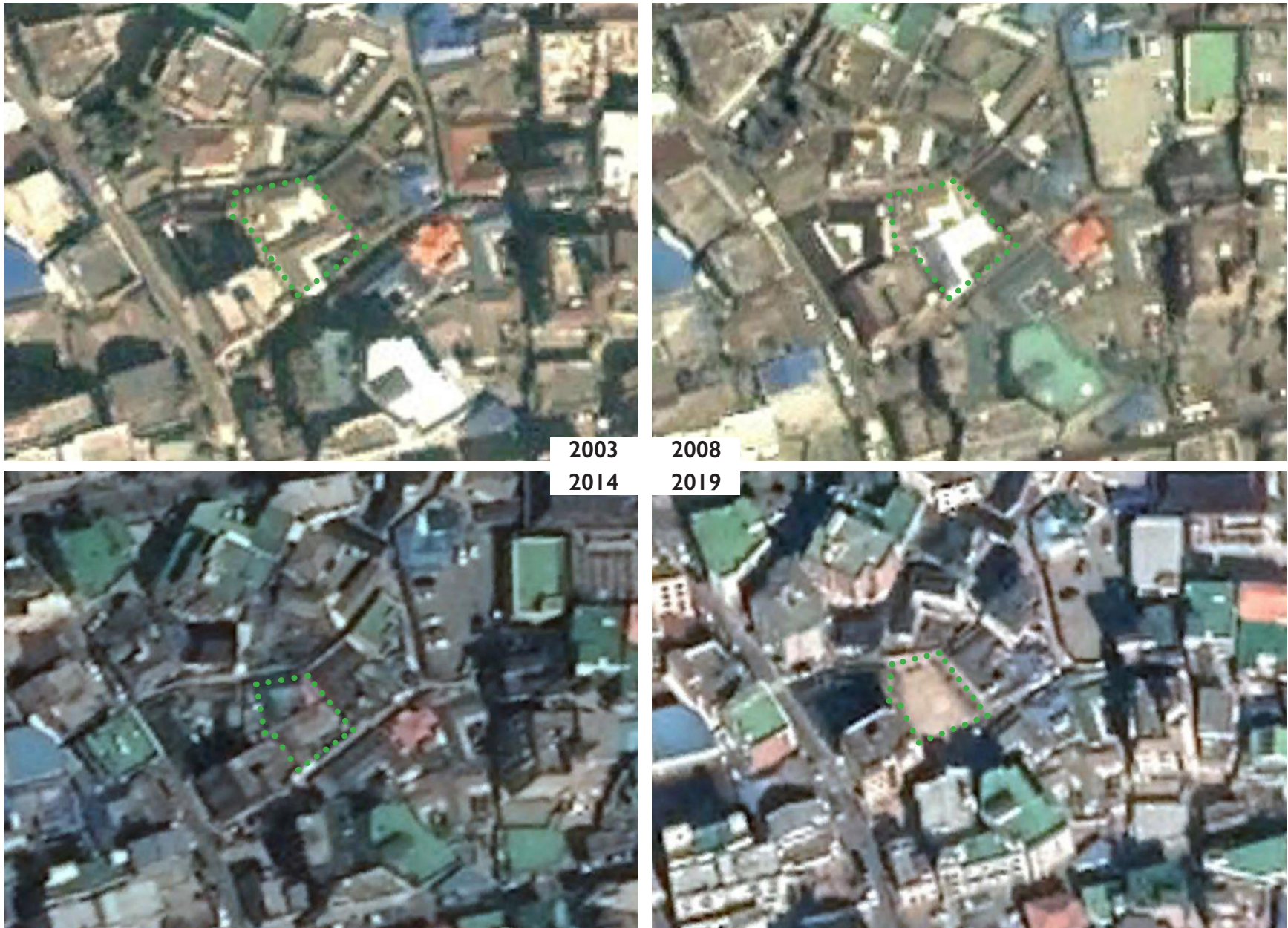


Figure 4.18
Site changes through the time changes © Google Map

- SITE BOUNDARY
- MIXED-USE
- HOTEL
- RESIDENTIAL

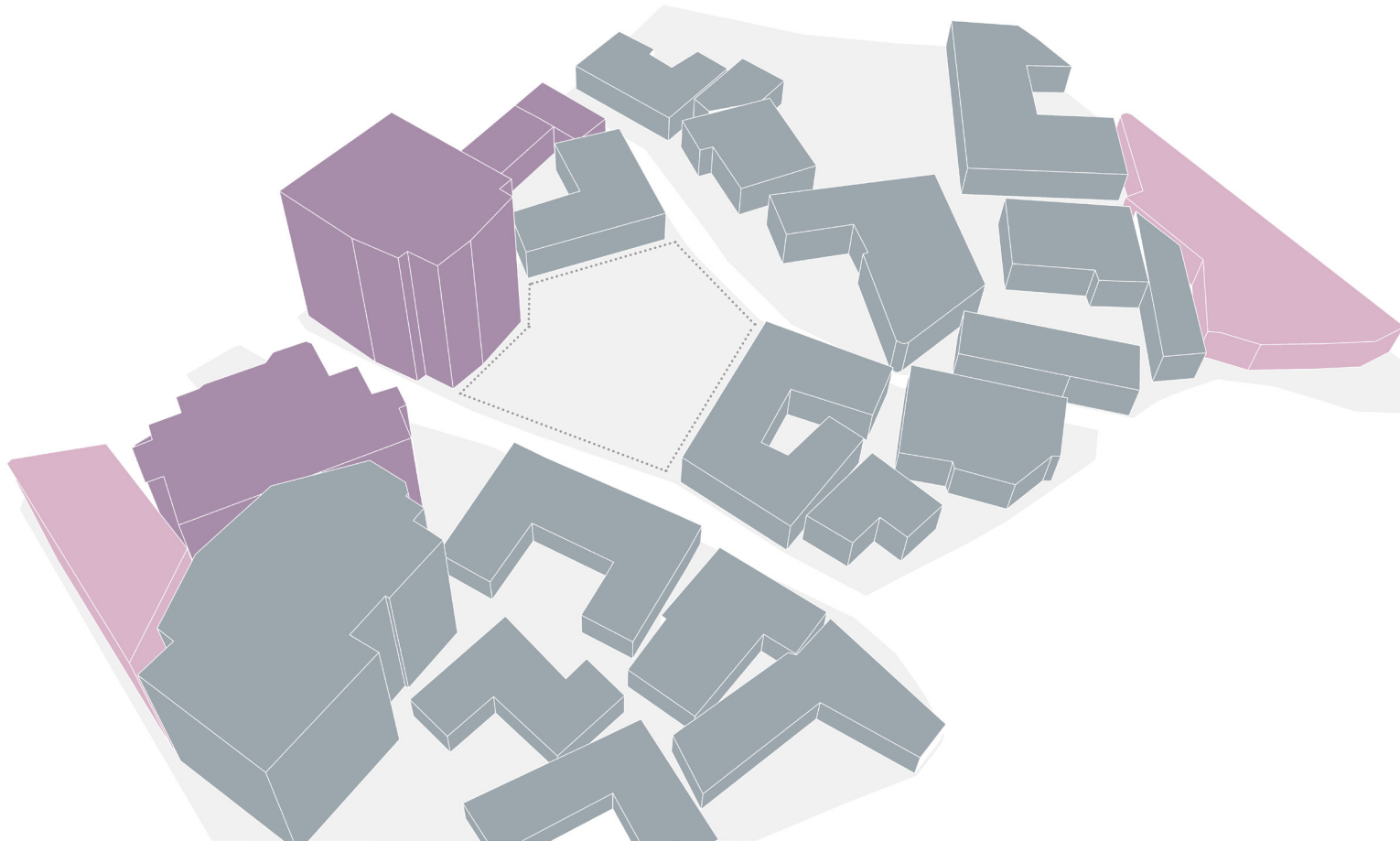


Figure 4.19
Site Context Diagram



Figure 4.20
Potential Programs of the Second Site Design

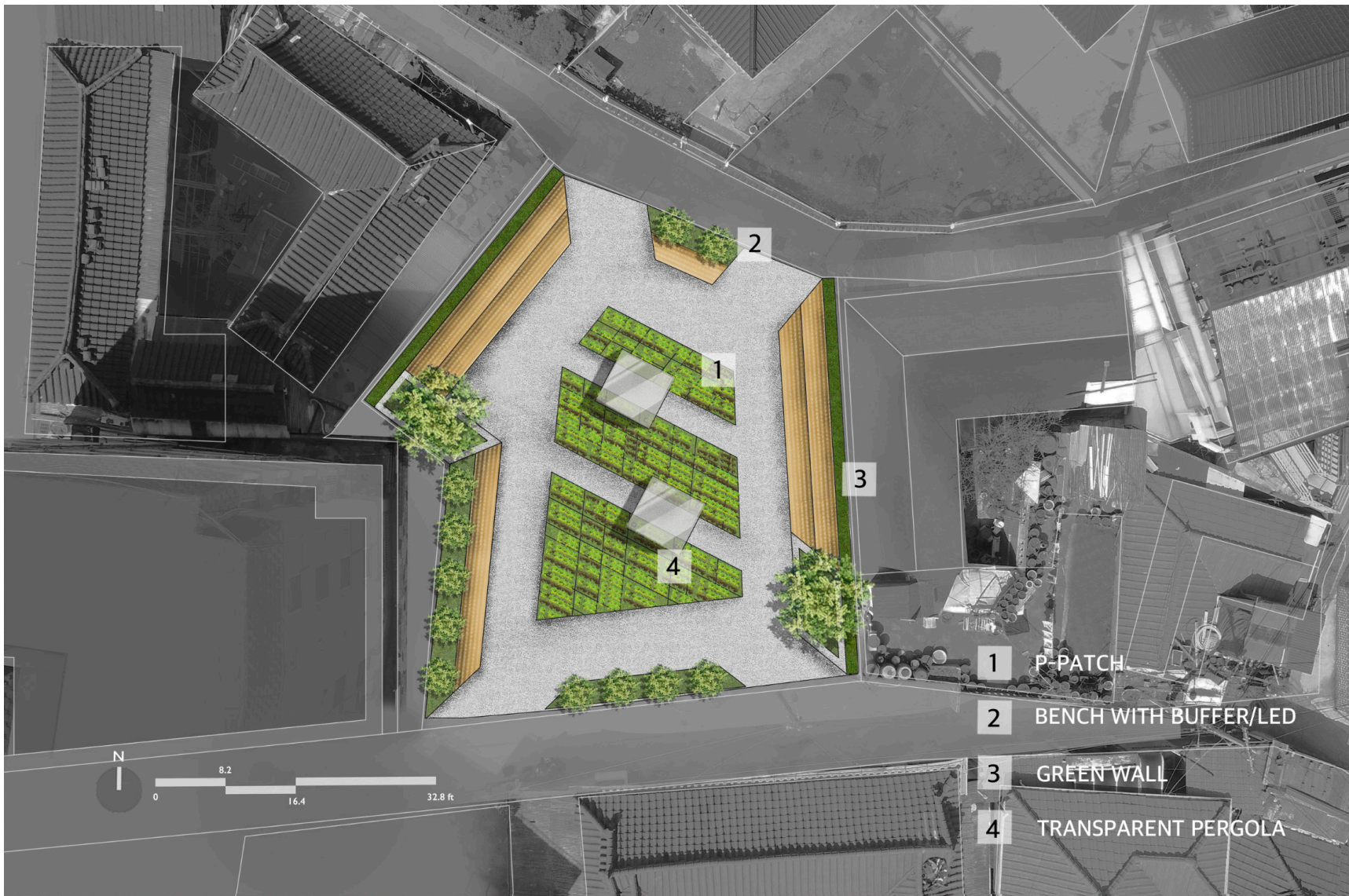


Figure 4.21
Plan of the Second Site Design, Community P-Patch Park



Figure 4.22
Perspective Rendering of Community P-Patch Park

Third Site

Along with the second site, the third site was also selected for community P-patch park as high importance of gathering places and gardening was mentioned during the community meetings. This site is not located within a residential neighborhood; rather it is a mixed commercial and residential area. (Figure 4.25)

However, this site was located adjacent to the main road along which the most of the seniors walk to and from the senior center and a majority of the community members who attended the meeting agreed upon that this was the best place to have a community P-patch park. This space has been a temporary parking lot from 2003 to present. (Figure 4.24)

The potential programs can be implemented on this site are similar with the second site, which are community gathering space, farmer's market, and P-patch garden. (Figure 4.26) Residents can enjoy green open space within their neighborhood. (Figure 4.28)



Figure 4.23
Aerial View of the Third Design Site



2003
2014



2008
2019

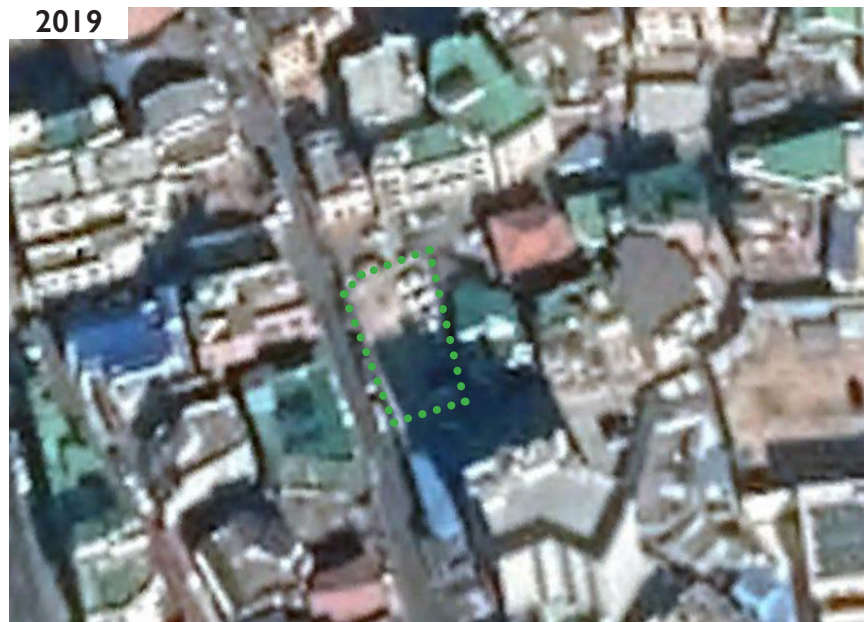


Figure 4.24
Site changes through the time changes © Google Map

- SITE BOUNDARY
- MIXED-USE
- COMMERCIAL
- HOTEL
- RESIDENTIAL

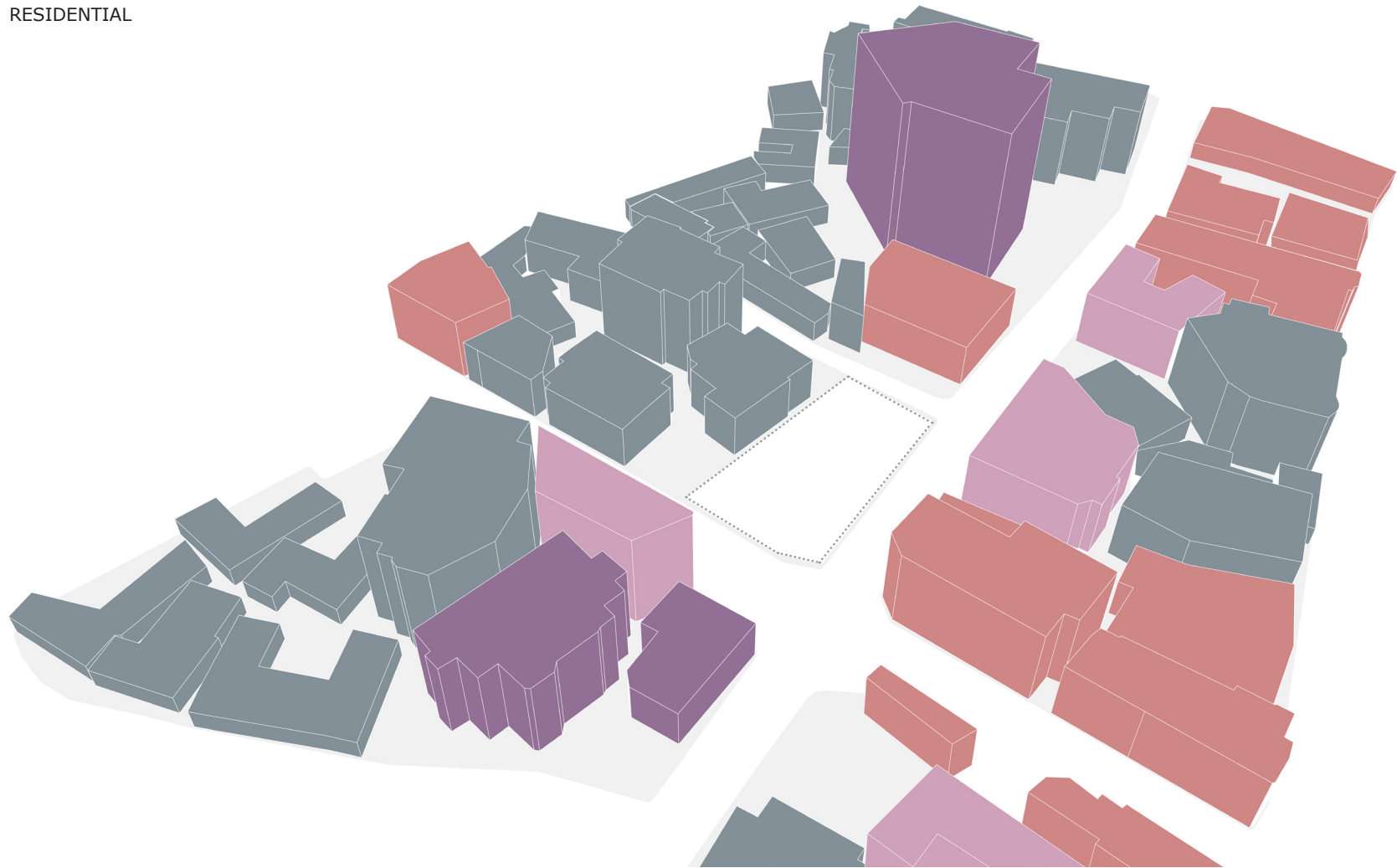


Figure 4.25
Site Context Diagram



Figure 4.26
Potential Programs of the Third Site Design



Figure 4.27
Plan of the Third Site Design, Community P-Patch Park

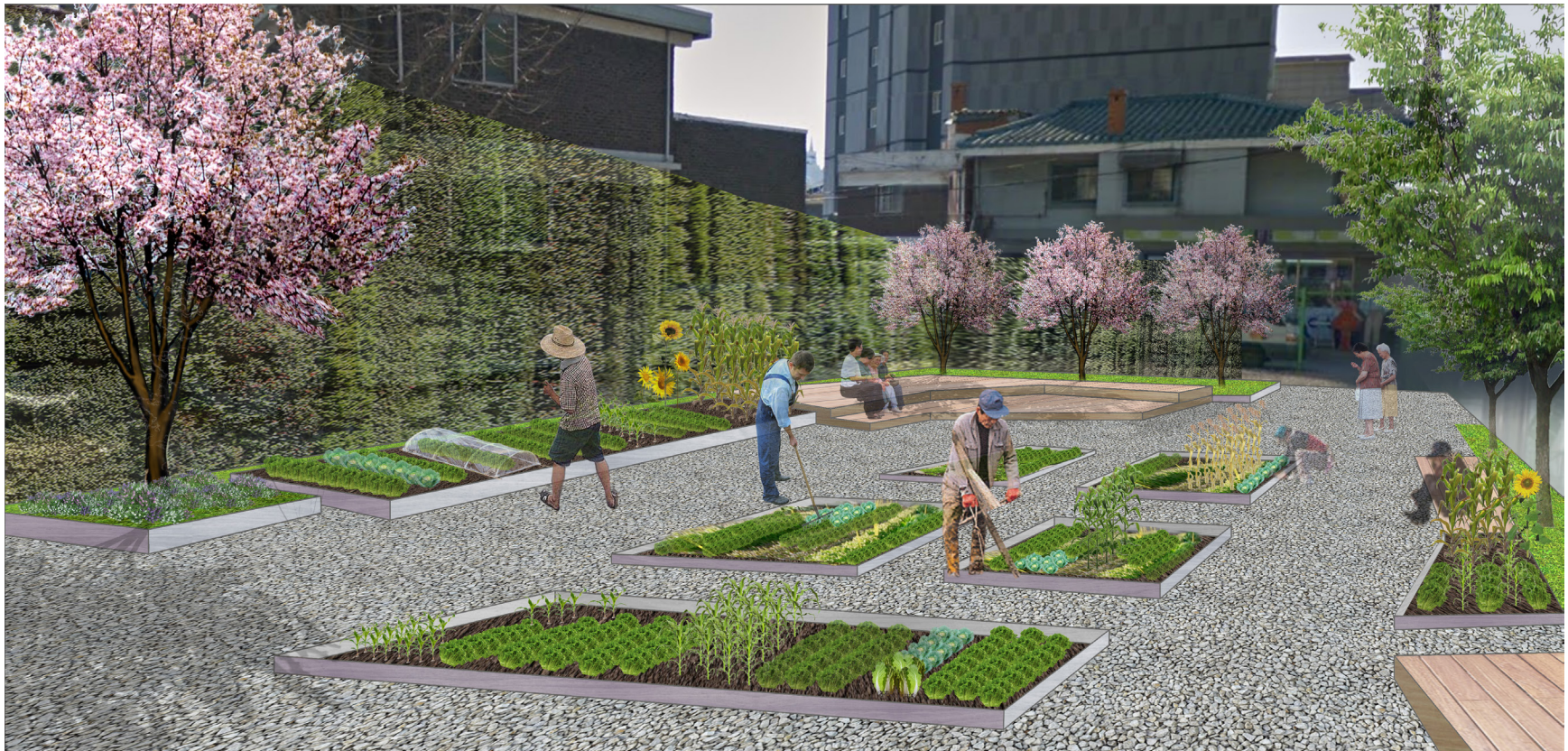


Figure 4.28
Perspective Rendering of Community P-Patch Park

Fourth Site

The fourth site is an existing pocket park within the neighborhood. It is located next to a major vehicular intersection within the neighborhood and it was also considered within a major pedestrian pathway. (Figure 4.29)

However, the site itself is currently underutilized, not maintained and community especially did not think it was a functional place. Not enough seating was provided within the park and it does not provide convenient circulation to connect major nearby destination points. There were four buildings on this site in 2005. This space was changed to a pocket park by 2011 and has continued to present. (Figure 4.30)

The potential programs can be implemented on this site are community gathering space, public seating area for commute students/visitors, and cultural events space (Figure 4.32) People can use this space as a public seating area. (Figure 4.34)



Figure 4.29
Aerial View of the Fourth Design Site



2003
2011



2005
2017



Figure 4.30
Site changes through the time changes © Google Map

- SITE BOUNDARY
- MIXED-USE
- COMMERCIAL
- EXISTING POCKET PARK
- STREAM
- RELIGION

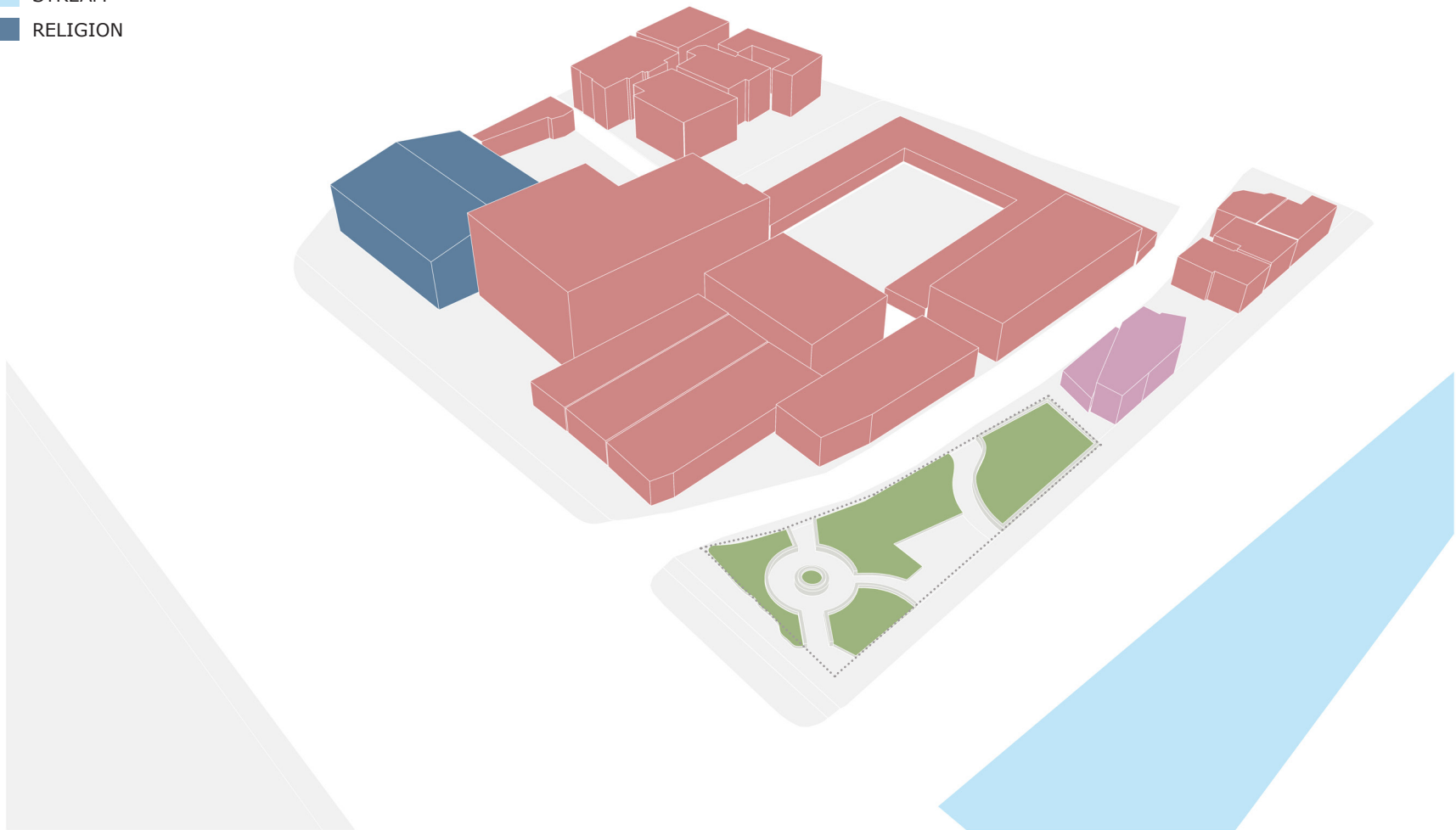


Figure 4.31
Site Context Diagram

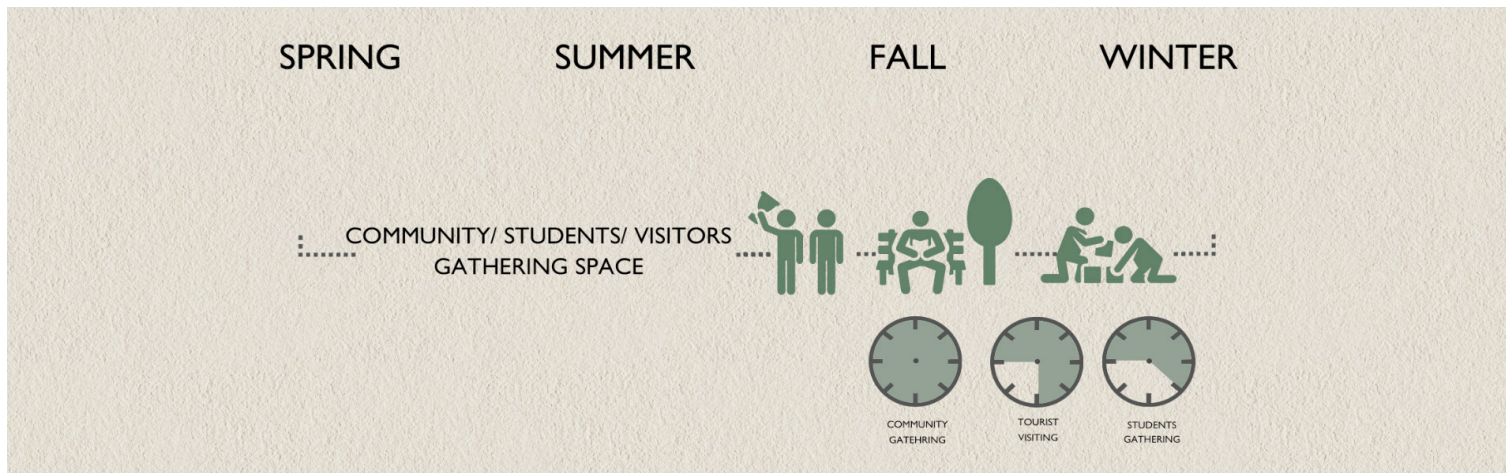


Figure 4.32
Potential Programs of the Fourth Site Design



Figure 4.33
 Plan of the Fourth Site Design, Open Public Seating Area



Figure 4.34
Perspective Rendering of Open Public Seating Area

Chapter 4

CONCLUSION

"History never looks like history when you are living through it."

John W. Gardner

The starting point of this thesis emphasizes the limitations of redevelopment the residents face within their daily lives due to various legal sanctions and restricted redevelopment regulations. This design thesis identified the major issues living in the Haenggung neighborhood through the data collected by participating community meetings and listening to local resident's voices.

The thesis design addresses the local residents' needs by selecting appropriate sites and implementing the correct programs through community engagement. Also, this thesis draws on the ideas of Tactical Urbanism to address the limitations of the site. It also considers how to relieve the tension in this historic district through the design concept of Urban Acupuncture based on community engagement.

The first question that this thesis considers is how to improve residents' life in this restricted area and what can be improved due to the historic fabric of the neighborhood. This thesis proposes that the quality of the residents' lives can be enhanced by designing spaces where the community voices are accommodated. Unlike past projects that concentrated on preserving cultural properties and attracting tourists, this thesis focuses on utilizing vacant urban spaces through the concept of Urban Acupuncture to improve the neighborhood.

This thesis deals with a second question: namely, how space can be selected to provide the necessary programs that local people want, as seen through the lens of landscape architecture. Based on my data collection on community engagement, I classified potential programs which led to finding usable vacant urban spaces within sites. Various criteria which were used to implement specific programs in selected vacant spaces.

In regards to community engagement, the primary goal is to have an opportunity for residents' needs to be viewed through the perspective of the community. Residents of various ages participated in the community meetings. However, since most participants were in their 60s, there were some challenges in coordinating different opinions. For example, the people in their 50s and 60s had a high demand for gardening opportunities, but people in their 10s, 20s, and 30s had a higher need for pop-up stores and temporary events.

Considering that the ages of the residents who attended the community meetings were mostly between 50-60 years old, as well as the fact that the Haenggung neighborhood is gradually becoming an aging society, I tried to reflect the demands of the aged people actively. Thus, two of the final four designs could be the P-patch parks that were mentioned mainly by residents of more advanced ages.

Lastly, as a pilot program, this design paper utilizes four vacant spaces as a way to improve the quality of life for the residents within the area without losing the characteristics of the tourist sites. This project needs to consider opinions from a broader range of age groups, so that this pilot program can be applied to other places around the Haenggung neighborhood.

Due to the existence of five schools around the neighborhood, community engagement of a broader age group could be important for future research. Also, when considering the proliferation of projects in the region, the connections between these newly designed spaces also need to be considered. This connection can become a green corridor within this neighborhood. This connection process could become a general standard/module within the whole district, which could even become applicable throughout the entire Suwon City.

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APENDIX

- 1 Suwon Stream, 1930 and 1970
- 2 Historical Map of Haenggung Neighborhood
- 3 Historical Map of Suwon Hwaseong, 1872



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Another great milestone accomplished at University of Washington, Seattle

{ September, 2017 - June, 2019 }

Thank you all for being part in my journey.

Jiyoung Park