



**EVOLUTION AND FUTURE OF  
THE HISTORIC CENTER  
OF QUITO:**

**A CRITICAL DESIGN PERSPECTIVE**

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**POLITECNICO  
MILANO 1863**



# EVOLUTION AND FUTURE OF THE HISTORIC CENTER OF QUITO: A CRITICAL DESIGN PERSPECTIVE

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MILANO 1863

Academic year: 2021 - 2022



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The journey was not only arduous but also rewarding. Throughout my two years of studies, I was surrounded by people I wanted to be around. First and foremost, I want to thank Pao, my girlfriend, for always being by my side at the most thrilling and difficult times. She was there at every lecture, task, and test. I could not have imagined going through all of this without Pao. I would also want to thank Celso and Luz Maria, my parents, for their unwavering support of every decision I have taken. They were a crucial pillar in helping me get to this point in my life. Despite the distance, they were incredibly close to each new step and choice. My sister, Katherine, and my aunt, Rubita, were constantly pending about everything since the beginning of this academic procedure. They have my full acknowledgement. Finally, a particular thanks goes to Paola Ortiz and Gonzalo Cordero for their support and advise both before and throughout my studies.

Figure 01. Orthophoto of  
Quito in 2019

Source: Nasa Visible  
Earth. Retrieved from:  
<https://visibleearth.nasa.gov/images/145654/three-decades-of-urban-expansion-in-quito>





Figure 02. Quito in 1870

Source: Anonymous photo. Colored by Quito Fotografias Antiguas 1870-1970.

Note: The evolution of the historic center of Quito is quite related to the urban expansion of the whole city. However, its magnificent topography, where a regular grid was settled in the XVI century, is one of the reasons Quito was declared 'World Cultural Heritage' in 1978 by UNESCO.



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| LIST OF FIGURES  | IX        |
| LIST OF TABLES   | X         |
| LIST OF CHARTS   | X         |
| LIST OF DIAGRAMS   | X         |
| LIST OF MAPS   | XI        |
| ABSTRACT   | XII       |
| INTRODUCTION   | XIV       |
| <b>CHAPTER 1: EVOLUTIVE CONCEPTION OF ‘HERITAGE’ AND ITS CONTEMPORARY APPROACH</b>                   | <b>1</b>  |
| 1.1. Heritage and historic center: a new wave of thinking  | 3         |
| 1.2. Evolution of the conception of heritage in cities   | 3         |
| 1.3. Latin American perspective of Heritage  | 7         |
| 1.5. Contemporary view of heritage and the loss of identity  | 9         |
| 1.6. Five experiences of the ‘historic urban landscape’ approach                                     | 12        |
| <b>CHAPTER 2: EVOLUTION OF A HISTORIC CENTRALITY IN QUITO</b>  | <b>15</b> |
| 2.1. Orographic context of Quito   | 17        |
| 2.2. Damero: a regular grid  | 18        |
| 2.3. The foundation of the urban fabric  | 19        |
| 2.4. Initial political, economic, and social structure   | 22        |
| 2.5. Republican city and its modernization   | 23        |
| 2.6. The exponential urbanization in the first half of the twentieth century                         | 24        |
| 2.7. The historic centrality in the second half of the twentieth century                             | 27        |
| 2.8. Conurbation of Quito and the rebirth of the historic center                                     | 31        |
| <b>CHAPTER 3: PLANS AND POLICY TOOLS THAT MARKED THE COURSE OF THE HISTORIC CENTER</b>               | <b>35</b> |
| 3.1. Jones Odriozola’s Plan, 1942: The first attempt for a polycentric approach                      | 37        |
| 3.2. Urbanism Director Plan 1967: Housing and historic center preoccupations                         | 38        |
| 3.3. Director Plan 1973-1993: The beginning of the metropolitan city                                 | 39        |
| 3.4. Quito as ‘World Cultural Heritage:’ the incentive for conservation                              | 40        |
| 3.5. Plan Quito 1981: Restoration of historic zones  | 41        |
| 3.6. Metropolitan Structural Plan 1993: Administrative decentralization                              | 41        |
| 3.7. General Plan of Territorial Development 2001-2009: Growing concerns                             | 41        |
| 3.8. Especial Plan of the Historic Center of Quito 2003: An opportunity for regeneration             | 42        |
| 3.9. Metropolitan Plan of Territorial Arrangements 2012-2022: The compilation of previous intentions | 45        |
| 3.10. Revitalization of the Historic Center of Quito 2013-2017: Bureaucratic procedures for planning | 48        |
| 3.11. Vision of Quito 2040: Reaffirmation of the centrality models                                   | 48        |
| 3.12. Strategic Plan 2019: A new effort for the inner city   | 52        |
| <b>CHAPTER 4: LATIN AMERICAN THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK</b>   | <b>55</b> |
| 4.1. Reflections about heritage  | 59        |
| 4.2. Polycentric approach  | 61        |
| 4.3. The issue of housing in inner cities in Latin America   | 62        |

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| <b>CHAPTER 5: THE HISTORIC CENTER TODAY: AN ANALYTICAL Perspective</b>   | <b>65</b>  |
| 5.1. Analysis sociodemographic   | 67         |
| 5.2. Socioeconomic situation   | 69         |
| 5.3. About contemporary spatial aspects  | 71         |
| 5.4. Culture and traditions  | 75         |
| <b>CHAPTER 6: TOWARDS AN URBAN CONSERVATION APPROACH: POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE HISTORIC CENTER OF QUITO</b>       | <b>79</b>  |
| 6.1. Governance for the historic center  | 82         |
| 6.1.1. International experience: The case of Mexico City   | 83         |
| 6.2. Social participation, involvement, and active attitude towards the historic center                                  | 85         |
| 6.2.1. International experience: Plan of Urban heritage in Ambalema, Colombia  | 88         |
| 6.3. Beyond the historic centrality: Towards a historic city for its inhabitants   | 90         |
| 6.3.1. International Experience: The paradigmatic experience of Bologna and the ‘Historic Urban Landscape’ new framework | 92         |
| 6.4. Urban regeneration  | 93         |
| 6.4.1. Implementation of public and private housing programs in the inner city of Quito                                  | 93         |
| 6.4.2. Provision of services and public facilities for residents   | 94         |
| 6.4.3. Supporting movement and accessibility   | 96         |
| <i>Pedestrianization</i>   | 96         |
| <i>Bikeways</i>  | 96         |
| <i>Public transport</i>  | 96         |
| <i>Private cars and parking areas</i>  | 97         |
| 6.4.4. Open public space requalification   | 98         |
| 6.4.5. Reuse of empty and vacant buildings   | 100        |
| 6.4.6. International experience: The requalification process of Ciutat Vella in Barcelona.                               | 100        |
| 6.4.7. International experience: ‘Di nuovo in centro: A program for a Bologna city center pedestrian friendly’           | 103        |
| 6.5. After urban regeneration, a possible scenario   | 104        |
| <b>ATLAS OF THE HISTORIC CENTER OF QUITO</b>   | <b>107</b> |
| <b>APPENDIX: NEW MINDSET FACING HERITAGE</b>   | <b>156</b> |
| <b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>  | <b>159</b> |

## LIST OF FIGURES

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Figure 01. Orthophoto of Quito in 2019  | IV |
| Figure 02. Quito in 1870  | VI |
| Figure 03. Le Corbusier's Ville Radieuse 1935   | 4  |
| Figure 04. Welcome sign to the town of Riace  | 10 |
| Figure 05. Confraternity Parade in 2019   | 11 |
| Figure 06. Map of Quito in 1810   | 18 |
| Figure 07. Plan of Miletus around 470 BC.   | 19 |
| Figure 08. Map of Brugge by Braun & Hogenberg 1572 - 1624   | 19 |
| Figure 09. Map of Quito in 1887. Author: J. Gualberto Perez   | 20 |
| Figure 10. Sketch of the grid for Quito in 1573   | 21 |
| Figure 11. Ground floors of the most important buildings of the historic center, 2012   | 22 |
| Figure 12. Right: A colonial Façade. Left: A Republican Façade  | 23 |
| Figure 13. First-class wagon of the Ecuadorian railway  | 24 |
| Figure 14. Panoramic view of Quito in 1901  | 25 |
| Figure 15. Map of Quito in 1931   | 26 |
| Figure 16. Quito's spatial growth and main events   | 27 |
| Figure 17. Map of Quito 1970  | 29 |
| Figure 18. Puerta al futuro in 1971 (Door to the future)  | 31 |
| Figure 19. Map of Quito 1983  | 32 |
| Figure 20. City models in Quito Metropolitan District   | 33 |
| Figure 21. Regulatory Plan of Quito, 1942   | 38 |
| Figure 22. Map of 'centrality' interpretation in 2003   | 42 |
| Figure 23. La Ronda street in 1978 and 2017   | 43 |
| Figure 24. Before and after the displacement of street commerce in La Merced square   | 44 |
| Figure 25. Border project for the historic center   | 45 |
| Figure 26. Left: Concentration of urban facilities. Right: Mono-centric structure of Quito  | 46 |
| Figure 27. Polycentric network for the city of Quito 2012-2022  | 47 |
| Figure 28. Heritage protection for the historic center of Quito 2012-2022   | 48 |
| Figure 29. Left: Identification of centralities in the city of Quito. Right: Development of the centrality n.4  | 49 |
| Figure 30. Management model for the centrality  | 50 |
| Figure 31. Touristic routes for the city of Quito. Connections between the historic center and archeological sites                                    | 51 |
| Figure 32. Transport infrastructure map   | 52 |
| Figure 33. Handmade candy vendor  | 53 |
| Figure 34. Municipal asset rehabilitation for housing   | 54 |
| Figure 35. Representative buildings of modern architecture in Quito. Left: Office building<br>Right: Public Health headquarter                        | 57 |
| Figure 36. Citizen support to the government of Rafael Correa in Plaza Grade or Plaza de la Independencia in front of the governmental palace in 2015 | 60 |
| Figure 37. Photocollage of typical street vendors and religious businesses  | 71 |
| Figure 38. Limits of the Historic Center of Quito with neighborhoods  | 71 |
| Figure 39. 24 de Mayo Avenue  | 73 |
| Figure 40. Metro line with stops in Quito   | 74 |
| Figure 41. Mobility system in the Historic Center of Quito  | 74 |
| Figure 42. Left: Cucuruchos, traditional characters of the 'Procesión del Jesus del Gran Poder.' Right: the procession in the historic center         | 75 |
| Figure 43. Nocturnal running competition in the historic center   | 76 |
| Figure 44. Light Party in the historic center. Church of San Francisco  | 76 |
| Figure 45. Illustration about public markets in the historic center of Quito  | 77 |
| Figure 46. Governmental structure for conservation of the historic center of Mexico   | 84 |

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Figure 47. 'Cuéntame Tu Quito' program for conservation awareness in the historic center of Quito   | 86  |
| Figure 48. Problem tree elaborated for the historic city of Ambalema                                | 89  |
| Figure 49. Congestion in the historic center during Christmas time in 2015                          | 91  |
| Figure 50. Venezuela street, pedestrian path  | 94  |
| Figure 51. Green Corridor proposal winner for Quito   | 97  |
| Figure 52. Hotel Casa Gangotena   | 98  |
| Figure 53. Ex-prison García Moreno  | 99  |
| Figure 54. Recalibrating the inner block. Author: Jenifer Esposito                                  | 99  |
| Figure 55. Different street uses of the historic center of Bologna                                  | 101 |
| Figure 56. Map of bike routes in the historic center of Bologna                                     | 102 |
| Figure 57. Map of public space of the historic center of Bologna. It is included pedestrian streets | 103 |
| Figure 58. View of the historic center of Quito 2021  | 158 |

## LIST OF TABLES

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Table 01. The population density in some areas of Quito in 1974    | 30 |
| Table 02. Family types of the historic center of Quito             | 69 |
| Table 03. Type of Housing property in the historic center of Quito | 69 |

## LIST OF CHARTS

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Chart 01. Population density in Quito (people per hectare)                                     | 28 |
| Chart 02. Population growth in Quito   | 28 |
| Chart 03. Population decrease of Gonzalez Suarez neighborhood                                  | 42 |
| Chart 04. Population decreases in the historic center  | 68 |
| Chart 05. Population pyramid of the years 2001, 2010, and 2016 of the historic center of Quito | 68 |
| Chart 06. Job types in the historic center of Quito  | 69 |

## LIST OF DIAGRAMS

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Diagram 01. Exploded diagram of the historic center and schematic section | 118 |
| Diagram 02. Volumetric representation of the previous map                 | 124 |
| Diagram 03. Basic guidelines for historic units and street sections       | 154 |

## LIST OF MAPS

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Map 01. National territory of Ecuador with natural hydrographic elements and main roads.            |     |
|   | 108 |
| Map 02. DMQ (Metropolitan District of Quito in English) with the main urban footprint               | 110 |
| Map 03. Quito's footprint   | 112 |
| Map 04.A1. Above: Figure-ground map of La Mariscal area   | 114 |
| Map 04. A2. Middle: Figure-ground map of the historic center  | 114 |
| Map 04. A3. Bellow: Figure-ground map of La Villaflora neighborhood                                 | 114 |
| Map 04. A4. Above: Figure-ground map of Solanda neighborhood  | 116 |
| Map 04. A5. Middle: Figure-ground map of La Lucha de Los Pobres neighborhood                        | 116 |
| Map 04. A6. Bellow: Figure-ground map of Cumbaya  | 116 |
| Map 05. Figure-ground map of the historic center with its context                                   | 120 |
| Map 06. Figure-ground map of a section of the historic center                                       | 122 |
| Map 07. Population density of the historic center and surroundings in 2010                          | 126 |
| Map 08. Sociodemographic situation map of the historic center and surroundings' inhabitants in 2019 | 128 |
| Map 09. Ground floor use map of the historic center   | 130 |
| Map 10. Public transport map in Quito   | 132 |
| Map 11. Public transport map in the historic center   | 134 |
| Map 12. Public space and green areas map in the historic center                                     | 136 |
| Map 13. Breaking centralities, urban and natural elements connection                                | 138 |
| Maps 13.1. Exploded maps of the previous map  | 140 |
| Map 14. Hosing recommendation map based on analytical map 07  | 142 |
| Map 15. Recommendation of possible activities map based on map 09                                   | 144 |
| Map 16. Public transport map based on map 11  | 146 |
| Map 17. Transit recommendation map of the historic center   | 148 |
| Map 18. Public spaces and green areas recommendation map based on map 12                            | 150 |
| Map 19. Detailed urban piece of the historic center   | 152 |

## ABSTRACT

The history of cities has depicted us the accumulation of facts that compound the urban space. The processes and proper distribution of this accumulation depend on the capability of management of each city and the identification of urban values that could represent the expression of the society. Nevertheless, it is important the understanding of the continuous change of urban dynamics according to social, economic, and political situations. A city marks trends of development that dictates a constant shift. At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Modern Movement had forgotten the meaning of the initial city that had been degraded because of the industrial developments. After some reflections, this inner-city was put into the urban agenda as a substantial ancient urban piece. The practice of heritage conservation denotes a collective effort to preserve the memory of a civilization without rejecting contemporary urban dynamics.

Urban conservation encounters the responsibility to adapt the accumulation of facts to the contemporary city. Quito, the Ecuadorian capital, has been featured by its high levels of conservation that signified being 'World Cultural Heritage.' Thus, the responsibility to maintain this UNESCO title and its urban development have triggered a series of issues that have directly affected its urban core. For decades, the urban planning of Quito was focused on the decentralization of activities that have produced insular urban areas. Among these fragmentations, the historic center has been presented as the untouchable and most valuable architectural piece that symbolizes the history of Ecuador. It is intended to understand the urban development of Quito and how it has affected the process of conservation of its historic center. The view of a 'historic centrality' and the perception as a 'great urban project' have been the main reasons why this historic urban articulator has been separated from the modern city. Through the 'historic urban landscape' approach, there is a moment of reflection in which Quito ought to be conceived as a whole sphere where the accumulation of urban facts can be properly managed within a constant shift.

*Key words: inner-city – heritage conservation – Quito – historic centrality – contemporary city - historic urban landscape*

## ABSTRACT / Italiano

La storia delle città ci ha raffigurato la accumulazione dei fattori che compongono lo spazio urbano. I processi e la distribuzione appropriata di questa accumulazione dipendono della capacità di gestione di ogni città e la identificazione dei valori urbani che possono ripresentare l'espressione della società. Tuttavia, è importante lo intendimento del cambiamento continuo delle dinamiche urbane secondo le situazioni sociali, economici, e politici. Una città marca tendenze di sviluppo che detta un cambiamento costante. Nei primi anni del XX secolo, il movimento moderno aveva dimenticato il significato della città iniziale che si aveva degradato a causa dello sviluppo industriale. Dopo alcune riflessioni, il centro di città ha posto nell'agenda urbana come uno sostanziale pezzo urbano antico dove la pratica della conservazione del patrimonio denota uno sforzo collettivo per preservare la memoria di una civiltà senza rifiutando dinamici urbani contemporanee.

La conservazione urbana accoglie la responsabilità di adattare la accumulazione dei fattori alla città contemporanea. Quito, la capitale Ecuatoriana, si ha caratterizzato per i suoi alti livelli di conservazione che ha significato essere 'Patrimonio Culturale Mondiale.' Così, la responsabilità di mantenere questo titolo della UNESCO e il suo sviluppo urbano hanno innescato una serie di problemi che hanno affettato direttamente il suo nucleo urbano. Per decenni, la pianificazione urbana di Quito si ha focalizzato nella decentralizzazione delle attività che hanno prodotto aree urbane insulare. Tra queste frammentazioni, il centro storico si presenta come l'intoccabile pezzo architettonico più valutato che simbolizza la storia dell'Ecuador. È inteso di capire lo sviluppo urbano di Quito e come questo ha affettato il processo di conservazione del suo centro storico. La vista di una 'centralità storica' e la percezione come un 'gran progetto urbano' sono stati la ragione principale di che questo articolatore urbano storici si ha separato della città moderna. Attraverso l'approccio del 'paesaggio urbano storico,' c'è un momento di refezione nel quale Quito dovrebbe essere concepito come una sfera totale dove la accumulazione dei fattori urbani possono essere gestito appropriatamente dentro de un cambio costante.

*Parole chiave: centro di città – conservazione del patrimonio – Quito – centralità storica – città contemporanea - paesaggio urbano storico*

## INTRODUCTION

“...Historic city continues to express values that societies strive to preserve because these values are guardians of collective identity and memory, helping to maintain a sense of continuity and tradition, for aesthetic, pleasure, and entertainment.” (Bandarin & van Oers , 2012) The practice of heritage preservation has suffered a series of variations that have echoed according to its social, economic, and even political context. The work aims to analyze the evolutive situation the historic center of Quito has suffered since its creation almost five hundred years ago to understand its current situation, as well as the possibilities this old town has in order to reconnect itself with the modern city. But first and foremost, it is important to comprehend the concept of heritage and its preservation through its different periods and how it has influenced the historic center of Quito.

To understand the evolving urban dynamics of its old town, the current work is divided into six chapters that in which; it is analyzed the evolutive conception of the term heritage and the practice of conservation; the process of transformation that the historic center has suffered; an analytical perspective of the different urban plans that affected the urban condition of the inner city in Quito; a reflection based on the critical voices that have constructed the theoretical approach of the historic center; a description of its current situation; and a vision of its future based on the current theories that can be applied to this historic territory.

In the first chapter, it is discussed the initial appearances of conservation regarding ancient architecture that deserve to be maintained as sense of memory. One of the first theorists that advocated for ancient architecture conservation was Jonh Ruskin. “We have the right whatever to touch them. They are not ours. They belong partly to those who built them, and partly to all the generations of mankind who are to follow us.” (Rusking, 1880) The romanticism of Ruskin of the nineteenth century depicts the first steps towards ancient architecture conservation. Nevertheless, the modern movement proposed new possibilities to preservation and even historic settlements. Through the CIAM (Congrès Internationaux d’architecture modern) some years ago, the movement rejected the idea to maintain the traditional city to make up new urban horizons. This Athens Charter of 1933 demonstrated a preoccupation to safeguard historic settlements due to deterioration. The vision of the charter was a mere aesthetic solution in terms of conservation. Moreover, this chapter passed through a review of the main charters and



congresses that signified the change of heritage conception. Because of the destruction caused by the war, it is established, in 1964, the 'Venice Charter' that not only seek to preserve urban historic monuments but also ancient rural settlements that provide cultural value to societies. This was the backbone to the following heritage conservation concepts under international organizations such as UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organization) that has provided substantial support to the practice of preservation. Later, the 'Washington Charter' recognizes the adaptation of urban traditions to contemporary life through the impulse of heritage. These new ideologies were echoing in Latin America where conservation was taken a fundamental practice within urban development. There were various congresses recognized by UNESCO that helped to compound a theoretical base which includes social and economic affairs as aspects for heritage preservation.

The ultimate theoretical approach is based on the conglomerate of experiences in which UNESCO defines the 'Historic Urban Landscape' (UNESCO, 2011) conception. Heritage is not a moment anymore. It is part of the modern city where the reinterpretation of contemporary activities could be transcribed through our legacy. The discussion regarding this new approach focuses on "living heritage" (Bandarin & van Oers , 2012)

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The second chapter makes an analytical review of the evolution of Quito and its historic center since its foundation in 1534. Firstly, it is described its geographical location in an intricated topography of the Andean region. This military position, under the control of Spanish colonies, contemplated the juxtaposition of a regular grid very similar to Egyptian, Greek, and Roman settlements and different from the organic medieval tissue. The imposition of the 'damero' (regular grid) provided a flexible urban fabric that made up of attached courtyard dwellings. This is the place where the Cristian church started its process of evangelization of natives. Quito did not experience major urban development until the first decades of the twentieth century. The construction of the railway system improved the Ecuadorian economy due to trading efficiency. The city started its urban expansion towards its south and north extremes caused by population transfer. Ecuador, known as an agricultural country, suffered due to the fall of cacao prices that affected rural communities. As a result, Quito experienced its first migratory flow of people from the countryside. The central area was a suitable place to shelter this working class. By the 30s, the city had expanded to the north where the wealthy colonized themselves through small villages and green areas. Thus, in the first half of the twentieth century, Quito became a fragmented city. In the 40s, the 'Regulatory Plan' of Jones Odriozola divided the city into three main

urban dimensions. The north was dedicated to high classes, the south for industries and working classes, and the center (the old town) for governmental administrative purposes. Significantly, that is how the city was shaping its future.

The main concentration of services in the historic center and the north side carried the city towards an unbalanced urban settlement. The 60s and 70s were decades of urban expansion and migration. The oil boom in the 70s improved the Ecuadorian economy and, thus, the emergence of the construction industry in the Ecuadorian capital. People saw labor opportunities in Quito, and its historic center faced its second flow of immigrants from the countryside. The old town was progressively decaying while the modern city was developing through the emergence of modern buildings. The economic crisis and unemployment were the indicators to start the biggest commercial activity in the city located in its inner town. Even though the city was declared 'World Heritage Center' in 1978 by UNESCO, the historic center could not manage informal commerce that was invading its urban space. From this period, depopulation processes were present continuing until today. The new millennium was the time for urban sprawl and the end of urban expansion in a longitudinal way. These new settlements, under wealthy classes, took place in the western valleys made up of gated communities.

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The following chapter, the third one, is dedicated to the different plans and policies that dictated the transformation of the urban environment of Quito and produced direct effects on its historic center. The concurrent strategy used since the first one, 'Regulatory Plan of Quito, 1942,' until the last one 'Vision of Quito, 2040'—is the 'polycentric' approach with the eagerness to decentralize the high concentration of services in the historic center and the subsequent northern neighborhoods. This approach has progressively isolated the historic center, that due to its strong policies of heritage conservation, monumentalism has taken place over social aspect. However, there were important policies that have improved the old town's conditions. The 'Especial Plan of the Historic Center 2003,' for instance, was one of the most important urban plans that changed drastically the social aspect of the historic center. It induced the relocation of the informal street commerce, creating a buffer of urban and natural protection between the historic center and the modern city in which the public space played an important role. Furthermore, it also established the main urban connection from the south to the north through the implementation of the BRT (bus of rapid transit). The initiative to adapt the old town into the modern city has been diluting with the insistence of the 'historic centrality' that was bounded with strict policies and political interests.

Moreover, the urban expansion that later became an urban sprawl has been put on agenda, but there has not been a big impact within the urban territory. This has caused the phenomenon of 'dormitory neighborhoods' in some central areas and depopulation of the historic center.

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In addition, the structure of the work contemplates the theoretical framework that has been built to generate urban tools and policies. This fourth chapter reviews the discussion of Latin American scholars and their influence in the process of urban development of the historic center of Quito. Architecture and urban planning in Quito have had a European influence such as the Garden City, the modern movement, or zoning planning. That is why these were the theoretical base for the development of an urban planning framework in which the city could rely on. In the rest of the twentieth century, there had been empirical experiences that concludes with the exchange of ideas of different scholars. Among the effervescence of knowledge, in 2005, it is born OLACCHI (Latin American and Caribbean Organization for the Conservation of Historic Centers in English), an international organization, with the support of UNESCO, in which it is debated the future of historic centers in Latin American and Caribbean. More than an institution, it is a sort of an urban think-tank. Through the magazine Centro-H, OLACCHI echoed its ideas of heritage conservation that many of which can be reflected in the historic center of Quito.

Among the most important discussed ideas, there are the concepts of 'heritage,' the polycentric approach, and the sensible issue of housing that many historic centers in Latina America have not been able to overcome. OLACCHI's critic starts when there is not a proper conception of 'heritage conservation.' The president of OLACCHI, Fernando Carrión, analyzes the historic center of Quito as a heterogeneous urban area where a variety of activities compound features of inner-city. And this is how it ought to be viewed, as the asset for the city that connects with the modern city and contemporary dynamics. Nevertheless, on the other hand, the contradiction related to the polycentric approach that creates the old town such as an "insular" (Bonfantini, 2012) urban ancient piece—has been the insistent strategy to articulate the city. Furthermore, OLACCHI also concludes that public policies of housing in historic centers had not been well established, and informal commerce has taken territory. In the case of Quito, many of its dwellings are used for storage while others keep empty.

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The freedom the city has had to manage its historic center has been important to guaranty a proper canalization of resources. Quito has created public

institutions dedicated to the historic center's management. Nonetheless, there has not been proper communication and links with other public and private institutions when erecting projects for the historic center. This lack of comprehension resulted in blocked initiatives or even badly channeled ones that affected the condition of the inner city. The main topic of the fifth chapter is to understand its current situation in terms of physical infrastructure, economic situation, and social aspects that identify the old town as a livable area. The historic center of Quito keeps positive aspects that have maintained its tradition over the years. The chapter focuses on the progressive decadence and the opportunities of the inner city for an urban requalification in which heritage could play an important role beyond preservation of monumentalism.

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In the sixth chapter, it is discussed the vision of the historic center's future, as well as its possibilities within the city as a structural asset and not an isolated 'centrality.' Through the development of some recommendations and international examples of each recommendation, it is explained a posture to revitalize the historic center of Quito. The issue of governance is the first factor to consider, especially when valorizing social participation. The structure of the public institution is fundamental for the requalification of the inner city even though it is expected the consideration of bottom-up approaches for heritage management. The presence of all stakeholders throughout the process of requalification and management; is the second discussed recommendation. Not only public and private institutions but also citizens organizations are part of heritage conservation.

Then, the continuous approach of 'centrality' is questioned through the conception of further considerations that can break the barrier of a bounded and protected historic center. However, the old town has been strongly safeguarded. On the other hand, the city is a changing organism that adapts itself, but the historic center of Quito could not. Although its urban plans have considered the 'historic urban landscape' approach, it is not convincingly territorialized. Moreover, there are no clear policies of population recuperation. The historic center, as in the Italian case, 'historic city,' could make up the city through linkages of new heritages providing urban and cultural significance to its citizens. Thus, this is the recommended framework for the old town, an historic center as the main infrastructure that make up a whole city. Considering natural elements and scattered urban pieces, the inner city can develop and connecting itself with the contemporary city.

Indeed, the adaptation to the urban contemporary dynamics dictates the triumph of heritage conservation. That is why it is fundamental the consideration of an urban regeneration in which it could tackle the main issues

that are degrading the inner city. The chapter continues its recommendations through actions of urban regeneration through examples of Barcelona and Bologna in order to nurture the discussion. Firstly, it is taken into account the issue of housing with the suggestion of some policies for the historic center repopulation. Later, services and urban dynamics are considered as part of the dynamism of certain areas. In the topic of congestion and accessibility, it is recommended some actions for a friendly and sustainable movement through pedestrianization, bikeways, and electric car-sharing. Moreover, open public spaces are put over the table as the main structuring element of urban expression. Lastly, the reuse of vacant historic buildings with the implantation of current activities represents the interference between heritage and the contemporary. Thus, heritage is able to reassemble itself by adapting to the change.

‘After urban regeneration’ is the title to understand the possible phenomena, the historic center might face. The global city and the creative class are trends that the city of Quito has been experiencing over the years. Sociologically speaking, high classes and working classes are colliding in the contemporary labor dynamics, and some cases, sharing space. The old town should be prepared to receive these new trends. Sheltering a new wave of population, a creative class, in the historic center could provide a new profile not only for the inner town but also for the entire city.

Therefore, a new mindset about heritage is fundamental in all the dimensions. From the administration to inhabitants, the comprehension of heritage conservation through the ‘historic urban landscape’ rearranges all the possibilities the city has in order to face new developments. A new approach, away from the concentration and bordering, reassembles the way to have a perspective for the future of Quito



# CHAPTER 1.

Evolutionary conception of 'heritage' and  
its contemporary approach





*Over the last 70 years, heritage and historic centers have been strongly linked. However, the concept of heritage has not been well-conceived or territorialized. This section aims to cover the evolutive transformation of the concept from the nineteenth century until today. The review of the theoretical thinking and the true meaning of heritage will further support the understanding of the historic center of Quito. It is also reviewed the meaning of 'heritage conservation' within the Latin American context where Quito had played a fundamental role. Since Quito was declared 'World Cultural Heritage' in 1978, it was considered a model in terms of preservation because Quito had achieved to keep intact its historic center without extreme variations. Thus, the monumental preservation started from this precept of the physical maintenance of ancient settlements where identity is gradually being losing.*

### **1.1. Heritage and historic center: a new wave of thinking**

The relationship between urban planning and heritage of historic centers had not been a topic to consider since the first efforts of urban planning in the nineteenth century, especially with the idea of wiping out entire urbanities because of the issues that the traditional city had presented. Towards the close of the nineteenth century and the start of the twentieth, there had been little appreciation of conservation of selected architectural pieces that would safeguard the memory and symbols of certain ancient monuments. Through experience and case studies, the notion of heritage, particularly historic centers, has been established as a significant urban core for city development and administration. As expressed by some authors: "Urban heritage can no longer be conceived of as a separate reality" (Bandarin, 2015) or "... lets the historic centrality be understood as project and not only as a memory." (Carrión F., 2017) There is a clear effort to reconcile the traditional city with the contemporary one, in which all the efforts should be precisely concord reconnecting the city through the old town. The recent approach 'Historic Urban Landscape' "is not a static object, but a dynamic subject, constantly adapting to changing circumstances." (Corten, Geurts, Meurs, & Vermeulen, 2014) The acknowledgment of urban centers as habitable environments, as well as the consideration of artifacts for city management, has put the reflection of the past on agenda for the city's future.

### **1.2. Evolution of the conception of heritage in cities**

In the chapter 'Paleotechnic Paradise: Coketown' of the book 'The City in History', Lewis Mumford makes a generic description of the European industrial city of the nineteenth century where there was a strong devotion to the mechanisms of production such as the steam engine. The core of the city

had become the new enterprises located strategically to improve production and logistic processes. Based on workforce demand, cities had received their first flow of people from the countryside when started a process of agglomeration: "...once the concentration of factories abetted the growth of towns, the increase in the number became overwhelming" (Mumford, 1961). The perception of physical decay of the city provokes the straightforward solution of wiping some areas of the historic center and even entire historic areas. Haussman's ideas responded to the redesign of entire localities to fulfill modern needs. Even at the beginning of the XX century, the CIAM (Congrès Internationaux d'architecture moderne) sought to destroy old cities to erect the modern city and organize it through a zoning of activities.

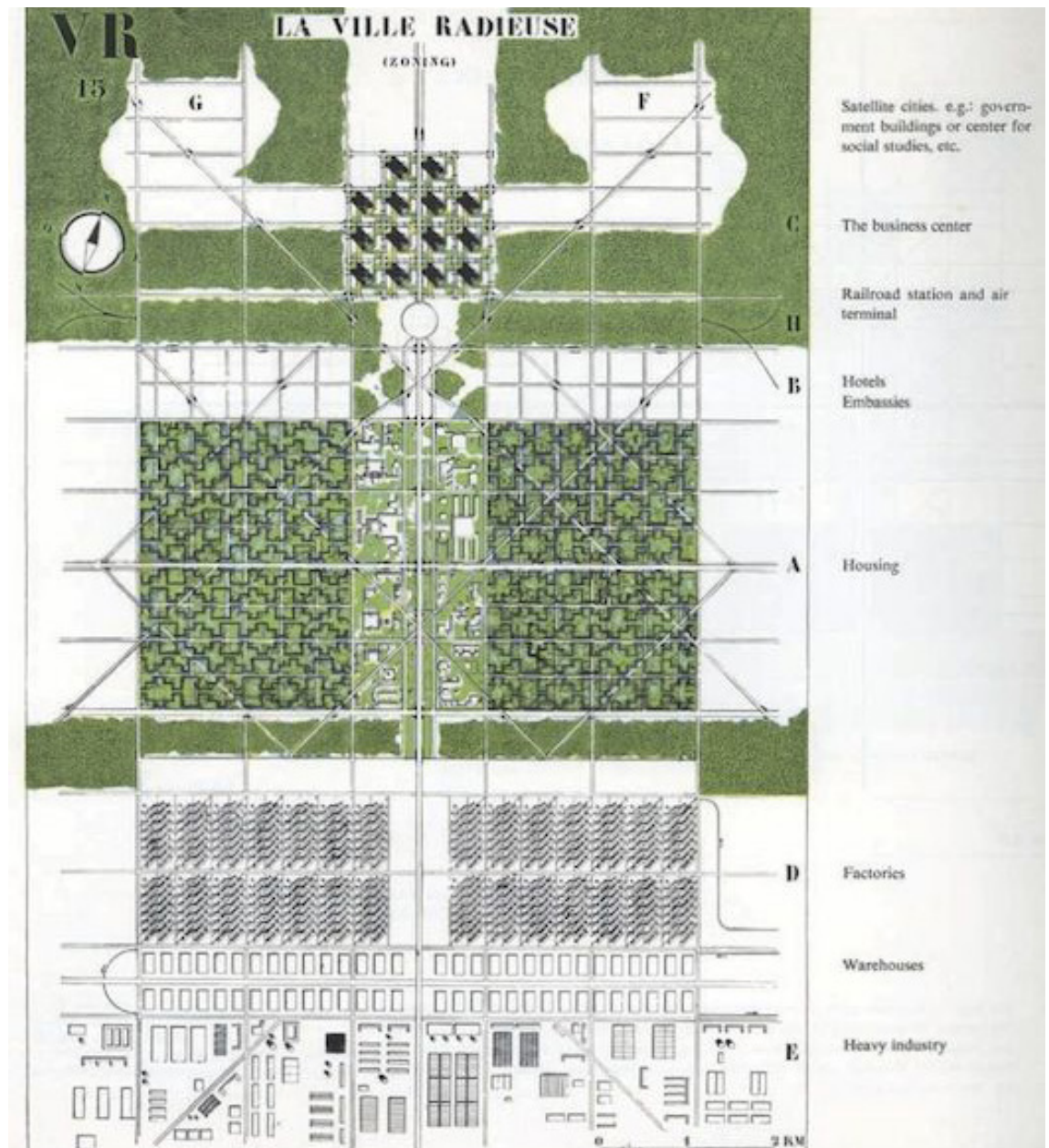


Figure 03. Le Corbusier's Ville Radieuse 1935

Source: Retrieved from: <http://cskylinesx.blogspot.com/2015/11/experiments-in-brutalism-le-corbusiers.html>.

Note: The plan responded to modern urbanism of 'technocratic planning' that tried to impose new precepts for the city such as zoning planning, infrastructure of highways, wide-open public space, and mass densification with proper ventilation. The plan reinvented the way to conceive the city by leaving the traditional one.

Nonetheless, during the nineteenth century not only emerged antagonist ideas of the old town but also romanticism about protection of specific buildings. That is the case of John Ruskin who states that ancient buildings keep the richness of the past. Against restoration, Ruskin states: "...the superinduced and accidental beauty is the most commonly inconsistent with the preservation of original character, and the picturesque is therefore sought in the ruin, and supposed to consist in decay." (Ruskin, 1880) This first attitude of architectural conservation expresses the feeling to maintain important pieces without touching the authenticity of their materials. But he also states: "Take proper care of your monuments, and you will not need to restore them." (Ruskin, 1880) The value of 'memory' opened the doors to broader thinking of preservation of ancient pieces or 'built heritage.'

The modern movement encompassed ideas regarding the improvement of the city that had been maturing towards the last decade of the nineteenth century and start of the twentieth. The 'Garden City' of Ebenezer Howard in 1889, the 'Cité Industrielle' of Tony Garnier in 1888, the 'City Beautiful Movement,' or Le Corbusier's Ville Radieuse in 1935 are instances of urban planning that nurtured the idea of a modern city and a 'technocratic planning' or 'statutory planning.' These modern views do not contemplate historic areas in their plans, understanding that the past should be ignored. (Figure 03) The CIAM exposed this framework during its first three congresses. Nevertheless, through the fourth in 1933, there was developed the Athens Charter in which it is dedicated one episode to conservation of monuments and their value.

'The Historic Heritage of Cities' is the chapter dedicated to the Athens Charter in Le Corbusier's book published in 1941. It was the first time the CIAM paid attention to the values of historic pieces within cities. Not detached from Ruskin ideas, the Athens Charter states in Le Corbusier's book: "The masterpieces of the past show us that each generation has had its way of thinking, its conceptions, its aesthetics, which called upon the entire range of the technical resources of its epoch to serve as the springboard for its imagination." (Corbusier, 1973) The document presents a sort of awareness historical sites' deterioration. The chapter dedicated to the preservation does not go beyond the fact of preserving the urban fabric. As it is described by Bandarin and van Oers: "...its main drive remained an 'aesthetic' vision of heritage, typical of the traditional European approach..." (Bandarin & van Oers, 2012)

WWII brought widespread devastation to European towns. There was needed the construction of new infrastructure and, in some cases, the 'stylistic reconstruction' of historic sites. In 1964, the International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (Venice Charter), considered the concept of 'historic monument' to a broader framework of

'historical urban areas.' "The concept of an urban monument embraces not only the single architectural work but also the urban or rural settings in which is found the evidence of a particular civilization, a significant development of a historic city." (Jokilehto, 1998) The charter provides evidence when recognizing the relevance of historic sites and their importance in cities.

The internationalization of urban historical sites conservation was a crucial moment to establish organizations for heritage conservation. The creation of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Science and Cultural Organization), ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites), ICOM (International Council of Museums), and ICCROM (International Center for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property) substantially supported the process of policy making for heritage conservation worldwide. The principles used by UNESCO had come from the Venice Charter that has had an important influence on this practice.

Additional congresses have been held. Among the most important ones, there is the 'Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas' (Washington Charter 1987). Its references came from the Venice Charter and the 'UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Safeguarding and Contemporary Role of Historic Areas. (Warsaw – Nairobi, 1976) It sets: "... development and harmonious adaptation to contemporary life." (ICOMOS, 1987) According to the later, the Washington Charter not only concerns the conservation of historic urban areas but also recognizes "...the values of traditional urban cultures," as well as "their development and harmonious adaptation to contemporary life." (ICOMOS, 1987) The relevance of the charter resides in these principles of social values which had not been discussed before.

As previously stated, the 'technocratic planning' or 'statutory planning' approach envisioned urban planning as a bureaucratic tool for its development and entire control without leaving room for the traditional city. However, important public figures criticized the modern movement because of the lack of social initiatives in their approaches. The Team X (young architects from the CIAM that later changed the organization's name) renovated their ideas regarding urban planning and urban design. Social concerns started to take place on new urban agendas. The Washington charter, for instance, states: "... the conservation of historic towns and other historic urban areas should be an integral part of the coherent policies of economic and social development and the urban and regional planning at every level." (ICOMOS, 1987)

### 1.3. Latin American perspective of Heritage

In the context of Latin America, the Venice Charter has been the starting point to think about historic urban conservation. In 1967, The Rules of Quito (Las normas de Quito) was an international meeting summoned by the OEA (American States Organization) that discussed heritage from the Latin American point of view (Chateloin, 2008). The core of the congress was dedicated to the reassertion of cultural heritage assets as “economic values and susceptible progress tools” (Chateloin, 2008). It was also also discussed European experiences regarding conservation, in which monumentalism marks the main aim of heritage. Thus, conservation for tourism was widely debated as the future approach for the whole region. Moreover, the meeting also focused on recommendations involving strict selection of boundaries for historic areas.

As a result of this wave of monumentalism of the 60s, some Latin American cities started rehabilitation programs of historic buildings, plazas, and streets. Among the most visible cases, there were the cities of Mexico and Bogota. The latter impacted tremendously within the region with the insertion of modern architecture to its historic center as part of its regeneration. These architectural pieces were positively criticized due to their high capacity of adaptation in the inner-city. Unfortunately, this initiative could not be replicated throughout the region.

In 1972, UNESCO organized the ‘Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage’ with all state members with the purpose of reporting the state of their more representative places and their management system. Then, these places were conducted under evaluation to consider them for the first listing on the ‘World Cultural and Natural Heritage.’ The Colloquium of Quito (Coloquio de Quito) in 1977 echoed the preservation of historic centers as a cultural and livable urban core, where material heritage is not the only aspect to pay attention to. Social groups and their customs are recognized as immaterial legacy of historic centers. Archeological spots and ancient abandoned areas were excluded from this framework because of their lack of life. Furthermore, there was also an awareness regarding the perceptive decrease of historic centers due to the rampant growth of cities.

The first two cities to be listed within the World Cultural Heritage by UNESCO were Quito and Kraków in 1978. This signified an important date for the conservation of the inner-city and its integration as part of urban planning. Further cities were listed during the next decades.

#### 1.4. The 'Historic Urban Landscape' approach

A key moment in the evolution of the concept of urban heritage came from the Vienna Memorandum on the 'World Heritage and Contemporary Architecture -Managing the Historic Urban Landscape' in 2005. Based on the '1976 Recommendations concerning the safeguarding and contemporary role of historic areas,' the Vienna Memorandum recognizes the recommendation of "safeguarding historic areas and their surroundings and adapting them to the requirements of modern life." (UNESCO, 2005) This was a preamble for the development of the HUL (Historic Urban Landscape) approach. The main idea of the concept relies on the "reinterpretation of the values of urban heritage." (UNESCO, 2005) Urban heritage is no longer defined as a bounded old city. Contrary, the approach recommends a detailed recognition of historic patterns and their linkages turning the historic center into the main asset for city development and management.

Though a series of experiences and reflections over the years, the construction of the HUL has served as a new paradigm towards planning and municipal management. This framework conceives preservation as the practice in which heritage functions as city infrastructure and not as an untouchable value. This new frame of urban conservation encounters a wider context of urban management that sets the whole city part of the "living heritage." (Bandarin & van Oers, 2012)

The approach seeks to reflect on the true value of conservation where communities are a fundamental element for heritage preservation. Top-down approaches have been quite concurrent from the beginning of urban planning, in which ideas and theories have been experienced and assessed via practice. The gradual insertion of social organizations within decision-making process has widened the possibilities to think about urban conservation from people. Bottom-up approaches should be the starting point for heritage conservation. Community awareness regarding heritage is essential to formulate and define strategies and tools for management of inner cores.

Heritage conservation has been viewed as a costly endeavor from its inception. Municipalities have been economically supported by central governments and international organizations when conservation relies on agenda.

The new definitions of urban conservations have opened the spectrum to further possibilities for heritage. With the incorporation of bottom-up organizations for making-decision, the historic center drops the perception of a bordered old town that, in most of the cases, works as an island with unique policies

from the rest of the city. The role of the contemporary city and its architecture strongly sustain the argument to think the historic center as a broader way. The creation of linkages and new patterns between the old and contemporary elements establishes more sensible acts of interventions in the urban fabric.

### **1.5. Contemporary view of heritage and the loss of identity**

The holistic conception of heritage has been adapted accordingly to the evolution of humankind's thinking. The view to the past has had different perspectives that satisfy the needs of the current conditions that determined societies are coping with. As seen in the construction of a concept for preservation of urban heritage, there have been various stages when the traditional city passed, from an ignored and obsolete piece of ancient fabrics to the main infrastructure that articulates the present and future of the city. "... The historic city as a resource for the future." (Bandarin, 2015) Today, heritage ought to be an indispensable tool to articulate the contemporary city considering future dynamics which keep the city into constant change. The "...adaptation processes that want to emphasize continuity..." (Bandarin, 2015) is the main approach of the HUL. Nonetheless, the practice has been transgressed due to the misunderstandings of different historical layers that have periodically constructed the city. Protecting inner cities as valuable masterpieces that retain memory and tradition; is a misconception of components that built heritage. As Kevin Lynch argued: "The older towns tend to be richer and more complex, with choices, services, and attachments better fitted to the plurality of needs and values of a diverse population." (Lynch, 1972) This statement reflects the true value of heritage and its function as asset within the living environments. The inner city's dynamisms and socioeconomic position collide with narratives of protection, value, identity, and monumentalism, which establish a sort of social and physical boundaries with the rest of the city. The historic core is the primordial element to consider. "In our concentric programming the insistence on the center as the core of value and meaning, font of all significance is doubly destructive—not only is the ever-increasing volume of dependencies as ultimately intolerable strain, it also means that the center has the constantly maintained, modernized. As 'the most important place,' it paradoxically has to be, at the same time, the eldest and the newest, the most fixed and the most dynamic; it undergoes the most intense and constant adaptation." (Koolhaas, 1995) This is how it is conceived the historic center, that sometimes, has been progressively losing or changing its identity.

Manuel Castells explains the word identity as "the process of construction of meaning on the basis of a cultural attribute, or a related set of cultural attributes, that is given priority over other sources of meaning." (Castells, 2010) Whereas the same author provides three forms of identity. 1. Legitimizing

identity: generated by institutions or dominant social actors; 2. Resistance identity: introduced by 'devaluated or/and stigmatized actors in response opposite principles; and 3. Project identity: the bulging of a new identity that "redefines its position in society." Urbanity speaking, these three arguments can be understood through the different stages and contexts a particular historic center is analyzed. For instance, an old small town in the south of Italy, Riace, had been losing its population that used to live from agriculture. Today, the zone has been revived by the influx of immigrants. In this scenario, refugees brought new dynamics to the community, transforming it into a new African- Arabian village. In the words of Niklas Maak: "It became a space of rediscovery of societal practices long submerged by the market economy and



Figure 04. Welcome sign to the town of Riace

Source: Retrieved from: <https://icongreece.gr/index.php/2016/01/07/global-village-riace-italy/>

Note: The sign depicts the present nationality of Riace's citizens. The town was reinvented and repopulated by foreigners.



its demands, and in particular a space of experimentation with alternative life models and possible future scenarios for dissatisfied urbanities who could work from there...” (Maak, 2020) This urban adaptation of new dynamics is the clear example of the constant evolution of urban spaces and the insertion of new identities. (Figure 04) The third form of identity, ‘project identity’, can be attributed to this Italian town that evolved through placing immigrants.

“We prefer to select and create our past and to make it, part of the living present” (Lynch, 1972) Heritage as part of social identity has become a subjective ideology, and it deeply belongs to the actors that inhabit heritage and its authenticity. Living the authentic historic center is the premise for conservation which dictates that heritage must be permanent. Identity is quite apparent to symbols and memory that marked important facts and events of the past. The authenticity of these elements of heritage is given by the significance they have for society. The HUL approach introduces the historic center as the main infrastructural element of the city where the past is the response to the future and the constant inquire of identity.

So, what is the true meaning of Quito’s identity? Which identity is needed to be maintained? Is it possible historic centers acquire new cultural roots that define their identity? All these questions are going to be answered throughout the further analysis made to the historic center of Quito. (Figure 05)

Figure 05. Confraternity Parade in 2019

Source: Retrieved from: <https://www.eluniverso.com/noticias/2019/11/30/nota/7628237/desfile-confraternidad-fiestas-quito/>

Note: Every December 6th Quito commemorates its foundation, and the historic center is the spot that encounters the most important cultural attractions. For one week, the city celebrates with parades, street parties, and concerts by becoming the inner city’s public space into the popular expression of Quiteños.



## 1.6. Five experiences of the 'historic urban landscape' approach

The 'historic urban landscape' approach encounters some aspects that reinterpret the city according to previous experiences that have resulted positive for urban planning. Over processes of continuing experimentation, the HUL has been able to transmit its framework through urban practices that have grasped the essence of heritage conservation. Even though the approach was recently released in 2011, there have been previous experiences that fulfill the HUL's intentions. There was taken five experiences regarding different aspects of the HUL in order to understand its considerations for heritage management. In chapter 6, these scenarios are going to be thoroughly detailed, as will how the adoption of the HUL has progressed through these five cases. Now, it is important to mention their field of intervention.

The first one is the case of Mexico City in its historic center. It reassembled its governance structure that relied on the decentralization in order to open the doors to participatory planning. Some authors suggest the versatility importance to manage heritage conservation in which public institutions could warranty various mechanisms of decision-making with all involved stakeholders.

Social participation is the backbone for heritage management of the city of Ambalema in Colombia where its historic center has suffered serious issues of urban decay. The insertion of social organizations and citizen participation reaffirm the framework of the HUL through bottom-up approaches. The recognition of historic areas as the main urban structure has been widely received by Ambalema's inhabitants through workshops and citizenship awareness.

The third case is the experience of Bologna that has been able to frame the 'historic city.' According to some authors, it accomplishes the HUL perspective. It breaks the bubble of the historic center towards a broader perspective of heritage. Through the identification of historic pieces and elements, the restructuring approach of Bologna intends to make up a whole urban system that then resulted in 'The seven cities of Bologna.'

As an unintentional output, the Cerda's Barcelona provoked the degradation of its historic center, Ciutat Bella, which had not offered its inhabitants' demands. It was needed its regeneration that propped to housing, service, movement, and public space policies. The HUL demands that historic areas should work in restructuring spaces for livability, making it as the main approach of Barcelona. Today, the requalification of the historic area has created new dynamisms and social phenomena, very typical of the contemporary city.

The last case corresponds to a reinterpretation of the public space of Bologna's historic center through its pedestrianization and reconfiguration of the transport system. Carbon emission has made cities rethink cities by becoming them into friendly systems of transportation, especially for its inner cities where space is scarce. Bologna has developed its plan considering the aspects of population movement and iconic urban pieces for public spaces.

The HUL is the new paradigm of heritage management that prioritizes social aspects over monument protection in order to preserve culture and tradition.



# CHAPTER 2.

Evolution of a 'historic centrality' in  
Quito



*The historic center of Quito is known for its ancient configuration that is still present as in its origins. That is why it is important to move across the urban development the city has experienced since its beginnings. A city that originated in the sixteenth century under the hands of Spanish colonies has expanded its frontiers according to its geographical possibilities and urban planning. Moreover, its particular longitudinal expansion has been the consequence of its original position among the Andes and the juxtaposition of its regular urban fabric which is, today, fundamental for the articulation of Quito. Therefore, considering its historic evolution and inner-city, it is assembled theoretical understandings and linkages based on decisions that made up Quito in order to have an approximation to theirs next urban steps.*

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Quito, founded in 1534, has experienced with various cultural nuances that have been defining a rich place of traditions and customs very characterized of the inner city. Generally speaking, the historic center of Quito can be labeled as a typical urban fabric of a Latin American urban center. However, its geographical settlement, political position, and a strong mix of social ties; have made the city the main Ecuadorian administrative spot that has hosted the biggest social heterogeneity of the country. Among the first urban settlements imposed by the Inca Empire, Quito was positioned as the main link between northern Inca's settlements to southern ones in order to become this place into a new Cuzco. Later, the Spanish conquest shifted dramatically Inca's intends that triggered the imposition of an unknown culture. Moreover, Quito's strategic location increased the importance to introduce the Spanish culture. Most academics and historians coincide that the traditional roots and a significant portion of the Ecuadorian legacy can be attributed to the colonization of the Spanish during the sixteenth century. In a sort of submission, Ecuadorian aboriginals, cataloged as 'Indios' (Indians in English), did not have enough resources and technology to confront Spanish conquerors. From this confrontation and cultural collision, it is born the Hispanic Quito where starts the history of the modern Ecuadorian civilization.

## **2.1. Orographic context of Quito**

Volcanos, mountains, and foothills respond to the ecosystem where Quito was erected. Over the years, this natural environment has suffered some variations due to the city expansion that has occupied sidehills and banned natural creeks. The eastern volcano Pichincha's foothills is probably the best location description where the city was initially settled. "The said city is settled in an almost hillside at the foot of a big, large, and tall Anden plateau, from where the sun is born. It is four leagues away from the equinoctial line (the equator). From the other side, it has some abundant water fountains that are born from

the Andean plateau, from which the city is provided and watered the orchards.” (Aguayo, 1897) (Figure 06) Before setting the Hispanic city, there used to be small Inca villages that could not be considered strong organizations. There were also other population centers of this kind along the northern and southern plateau, which is today the urban conglomerate of the city. In a nutshell, this is the aboriginal Quito where Hispanics rediscovered an administrative and military opportunity to resolve their colonies and “agglutinate and indoctrinate Indians from the proximities.” (Carrión F., 1991) The central zone of the plateau was a suitable place to trace the typical Hispanic grid.

Figure 06. Map of Quito in 1810

Author anonymous.  
Retrieved from: [www.quito.gob.ec](http://www.quito.gob.ec)

Note: This is one of the few maps in which it is visible the ancient settlements over the foothills of Pichincha Volcano and its water springs.

## 2.2. Damero: a regular grid

Urban planning is dated a long time ago when ancient civilizations traced simple grids to organize orderly their population without making an official denomination of the practice. This system was denominated ‘damero,’ referring to a chessboard or checkerboards. As simple as this, Egyptians, Babylonians, Greeks, and Romans developed their societies by tracing grids that allow





them to have efficient models for housing and even military camps. Some did it more successfully than others. This regular formation has the advantage to organize its blocks regularly where plotting can be easily done. (Figure 07) The fall of the Roman Empire produced significant changes regarding design and construction of new cities. Medieval cities did not follow this previous grid. This type of city had typical concentric growing that, much of the time, is evident with the different walling systems imposed for each period. (Figure 08) However, during the next decades, damero system was used again by the Spanish. As Ortiz Crespo expressed: "...from the eleventh century, within the process of repopulation of the territories, the Cristina kings in Spain rescued the regular trace from the antiquity for new populations..." (Crespo, 2007)

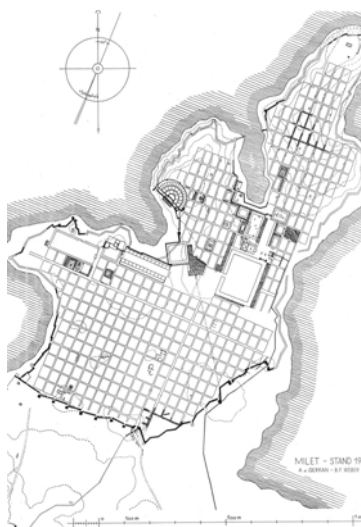
The rediscover of the grid allowed Spanish colonies to use it. There were developed some policies that described very detailed the composition of the grid. Among these, the most important was the creation of plazas and the regularity of blocks. In the book 'Damero', there is a passage where J. E. Hardoy states: "...it has been generalized the idea that all the colonial cities use the regular model..." (Crespo, 2007) And Quito was not the exception, 'damero' model was juxtaposed over the foothills of Pichincha volcano. (Figure 09)

### 2.3. The foundation of the urban fabric

In 1573, the first Quito's map was made by a Spanish official. In the map, it is explained the elements that the new settlement should contain. (Crespo, 2007) (Figure 10) The hand drawing shows a grid where it is visible the information of the main squares, churches, and important buildings for Hispanic officials. The spatial structure of its first years was not significant urbanization, but the influence of the church and its determination to indoctrinate indigenous was

Left  
Figure 07. Plan of Miletus around 470 BC.

Source: Retrieved from:  
hellenicaworld.com



Right  
Figure 08. Map of Brugge by Braun & Hogenberg 1572 - 1624

Source: Retrieved from:  
sanderusmaps.com



relevant for the city's makeup. The first edifications were religious buildings that caused the emergence of a series of monasteries in the foundational core. In fact, the church, the mayor financier, also contributed to the institution of parcels and civil architecture. During the sixteenth century, the city reached a typical conformation of colonial cities where the church and civil buildings occupied the central area, along with squares. Next to them, buildings dedicated to Hispanic officials were settled, and the north and south extremes were left to indigenous working classes. For the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the urban fabric has been consolidated as what it is known today, the historic center of Quito.

Figure 09. Map of Quito in 1887. Author: J. Gualberto Perez

Source: Retrieved from: [www.quito.gob.ec](http://www.quito.gob.ec)

Note: The map is more accurate with the positioning of blocks and dwellings through the damero. It is also visible how the composition of the urban fabric keeps itself until today.

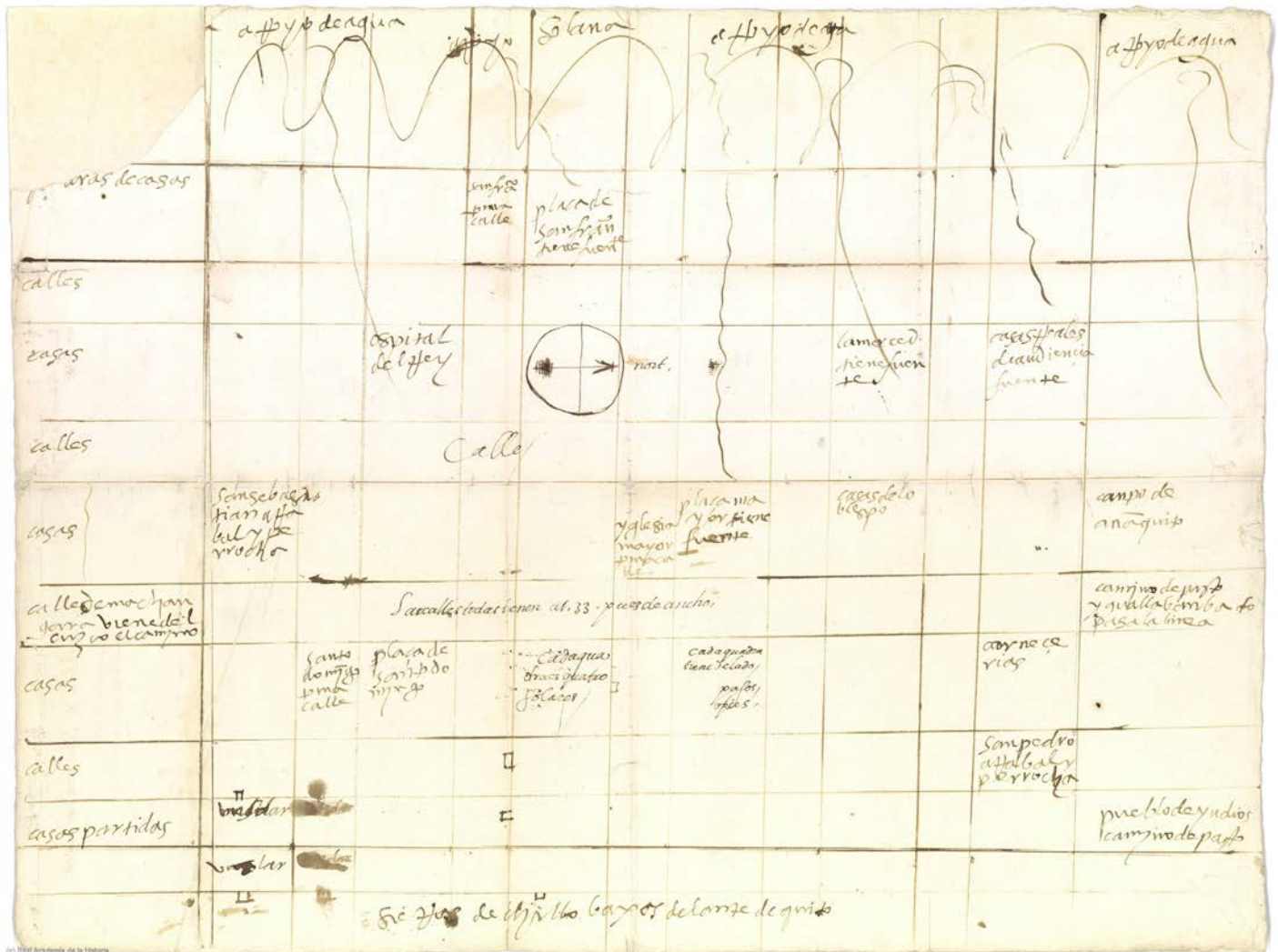
Colonial architecture corresponds to courtyard buildings that integrate the whole structure of the foundational city. Its urban fabric responded to ventilation demands and sanitation purposes. A central yard integration in the typical dwelling has the purpose to ventilate and illuminate its interiors because of building's attached disposition within the block. (Figure 11) Even though the whole urban fabric is quite compact, the interior architecture



presents comfortable spaces. Most of the units were two and three-story buildings. Moreover, there was also social dispositions within the dwellings. The ground floors, for instance, were dedicated to commerce and housing for Hispanic official's servitude. Upper classes used to avoid these spaces because of sanitary issues. Meanwhile, the first floors were disposed of for Hispanic officials and wealthy inhabitants. These areas had all the comforts, very different from the ground floors. Nevertheless, the intention to concentrate on the best architecture and 'best people' was reflected in the urban fabric. The central area had the construction with the best quality while the extremes counted with low-quality architecture.

The conformation of the city brought to the region innovative constructions techniques that used to be unknown by indigenous. The use of stone for foundational buildings, adobe or bahareque for walls, and tile systems for roofs; were dominant technics of the Spanish, that later, were transferred towards indigenous. Indeed, they were the construction workers of the city.

Figure 10. Sketch of the grid for Quito in 1573  
Source: Retrieved from: europeana.eu



## 2.4. Initial political, economic, and social structure

The city head used to be the 'council' who was designated by the Spanish crown. His job consisted of obeying all the orders from the king regarding urban affairs. Although this type of governance was used to control the city, the church played an important role in the territory. Religious orders were the administrators that collected tithes and provide housing to new families. Additionally, the church reached a lot of economic power that allowed it to construct a big religious apparatus, where was used for indoctrination and workshops.

Whereas the economic support of working classes were handmade textiles, agriculture, and imports. Open squares had not been only gathering places but also trading spaces. The first public markets started to function in vacant lots in front of religious buildings, that Later, these lots became squares. As part of the trading and import systems, the Spanish needed to install a port. Thus, Guayaquil was the designated spot where raw material arrived to be transported to Quito and the rest of the colonies throughout the country.

According to anonymous sources, in 1650 there have been around 2.500 dwellings, 3.500 white people, and a total of 35.000 inhabitants. (Achig, 1983) These data show the strong stratification that used to be during the epoch. Natives were the workforce, while whites received the best treatments.

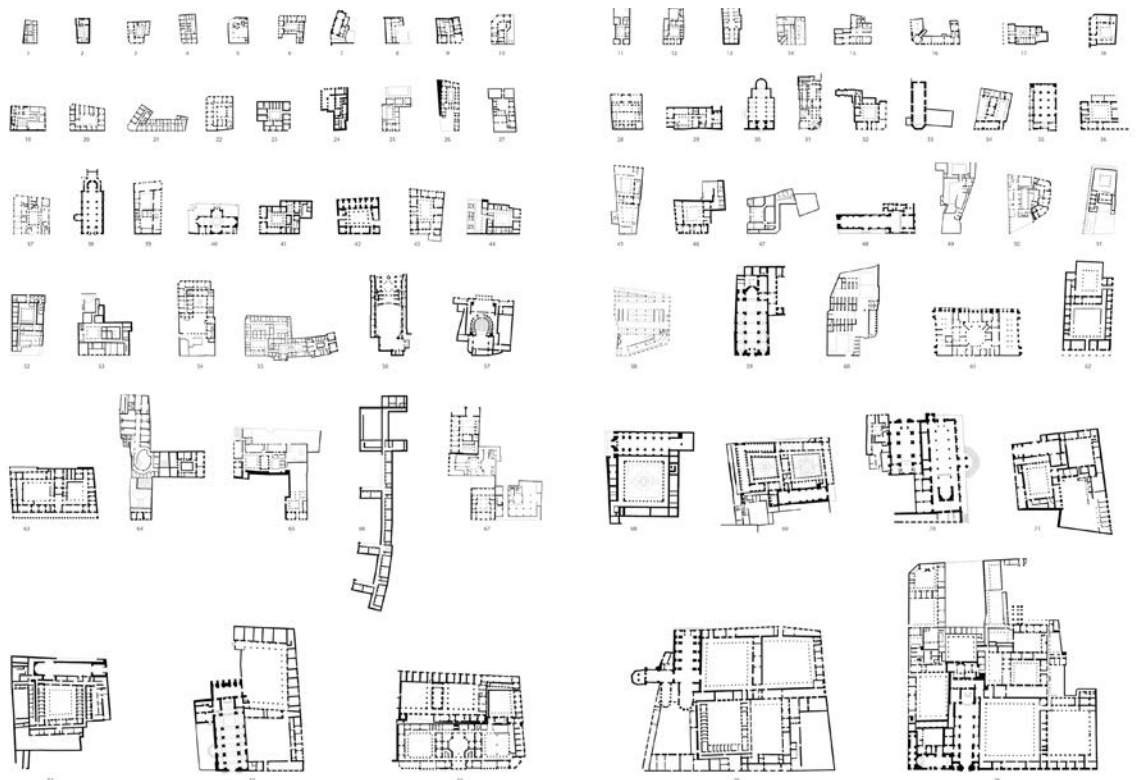


Figure 11. Ground floors of the most important buildings of the historic center, 2012

Source: A line in the Andeans, 2012.

Note: In the image it is visible the architectural structure based on a central courtyard in most of the buildings. Most of the courtyards are surrounded by hallways with columns. This Spanish configuration is very typical within the historic center.

## 2.5. Republican city and its modernization

Quito's urban fabric has been cemented by the end of the second millennium. The 1800s were the libertarian years and the conformation of the Republic of Ecuador. This brought important changes in the economic structure of the Quito. Thanks to the industrial revolution and the improvement of the processes, Ecuador embraced the capitalistic system as a result of the industrial revolution. Though Quito was never an industrial site, the new technologies modernized the Ecuadorian capital which oversaw the country's agricultural the agricultural activities. Additionally, its administrative character was strengthened because of the presence of the whole national governmental apparatus within the city. An important subject for the economic improvement was transportation. The implementation of the first railway system that connected Quito and Guayaquil had been planned since the middle of the nineteenth century and began operation at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Figure 12. Right: A colonial Façade. Left: A Republican Façade  
Source: Retrieved from: casagandotena.com

Note: There has been a debate over the architectural style of the historic center. Ones argue that its architecture is colonial, but others say that it is republican. Initially, the historic center had a Spanish influence very visible in the dwelling's courtyards, but its façades used to be very simple. Later, during Republican times, European baroque was imposed to these austere façades. Thus, many of the historic center's dwellings have this baroque style.

The 'republican city' had had significant changes to its physical structure. The most visible one was the project of facadism implanted in all the city's dwellings. This project aimed to maintain the courtyard structure and improve the incipient facades. These new designs were inspired by baroque European architecture. (Figure 12)

The modernization period coincided with the 'Liberal Revolution' that signified the construction of new infrastructure and services for the city. The railway system's planning process that had taken years to be envisaged was ending by these years. (Figure 13) This new infrastructure located in the southern part of the city triggered a series of trading processes between Quito and Guayaquil and the improvement of the Ecuadorian economy. In 1906, Quito had reached 230 hectares of urban occupation and a population of 51.858 inhabitants.



(Carrión & Flores, 1983) It is undoubtedly that the city was not a big metropolis in comparison to many other cities of the northern hemisphere that had surpassed a million inhabitants by these years. (Figure 14)

## 2.6. The exponential urbanization in the first half of the twentieth century

The first 30 years of the twentieth century were decisive for the urbanization of the city which started to expand along the northern and southern plateaus. (Figure 15 and 16) Two important facts caused the growth of the city through this longitudinal path. The first one was the effects that the railway tracks left. In the south, around the railway main station and its tracks, it was starting the first urban formations that canalized the southern side's growth. The second fact was the construction of villas to the north of the city. Wealthy people from the center began to invest in these new assets that provide them more space and green areas. The compactness, oldness, and presence of working classes in the center made the rich move by expanding the city to the north where the land value also increased. Some of these villages were used for vacation purposes. Indeed, the municipal government describes very well this fact: "... the lands of the north of Quito are only within reach of middle and big fortunes." (Carrión, Rodríguez Alfredo, Carrión, Guayasamín, & García, 1978)



Figure 13. First-class wagon of the Ecuadorian railway  
Source: Quito Fotografías Antiguas 1870-1970

Figure 14. Panoramic view of Quito in 1901  
Source: Quito Fotografias Antiguas 1870-1970.

Note: By these years, Quito was a small city that did not produce a big economic impact on the country. Its advantage was its location and the administrative character that was imposed. This allowed the city to experience extreme urban development during the twentieth century.



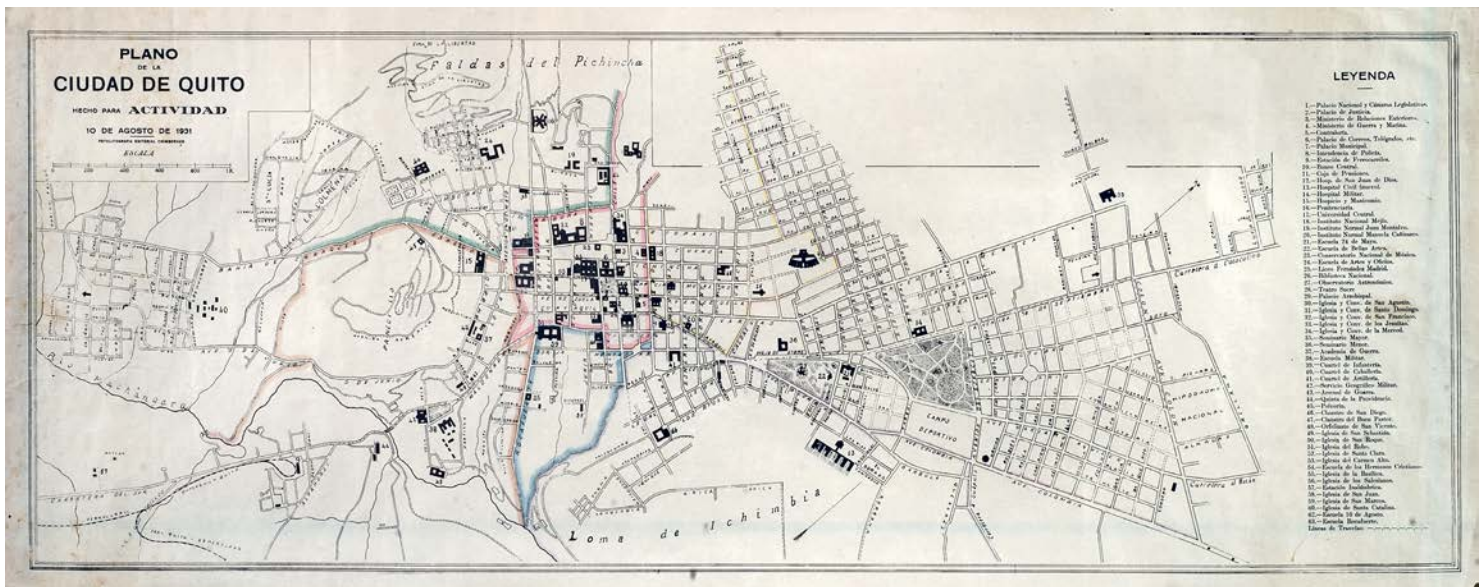
Because of the world economic crisis of the late 20s and 30s, cacao exports decreased significantly, which produced a national recession. Farmers from the cost region lost their cacao productions producing loss of jobs. By these years, Quito had become the national administrative spot and Guayaquil, the main port which was seen as a labor opportunity for the rest of the provinces. Consequently, Quito received its first flow of immigrants from the countryside. Until this time, population density had been decreasing due to the city expansion. Nevertheless, inner city's population density increased to 151,29 pph. (Chart 01) This variation occurred because immigrants looked for shelter in the inner city. The area had become an affordable place for newcomers.

The late 30s had been better years for the Ecuadorian economy. There was a partial economic improvement caused by the exports that allow Quito to continue its expansion, especially to the north. The imminent urban and demographic growth made authorities think about the future of the capital. By 1941, Quito used to host around 180.000 inhabitants. (Figure 18) This was the moment to develop the first 'Regulatory Plan for the City of Quito.' In fact, Quito's authorities contracted the Uruguayan architect, Jones Odriozola, to take over the most important task for the city. The plan aimed to divide the city into three zones: the north was dedicated to residential areas, the center was the administrative and institutional zone, and the south was devoted to the industry and its workers. Further study of this plan and its impact on the historic center will be provided in the next chapter.

'Green gold' was denominated to plantain and its derivatives. Ecuador's economy improved because of the incursion within plantain exports. This allowed Quito to carry out Odriozola's plan, as well as delineate the city. In its immediate north and south sides, next to the center, the plan intended to create green neighborhoods inspired in the 'Garden City' of Howard.

Figure 15. Map of Quito in 1931  
Source: www.quito.gov.ec

Note: Quito initiated its growing process towards the north and south sides, but a big number of its population continued living in the central area.





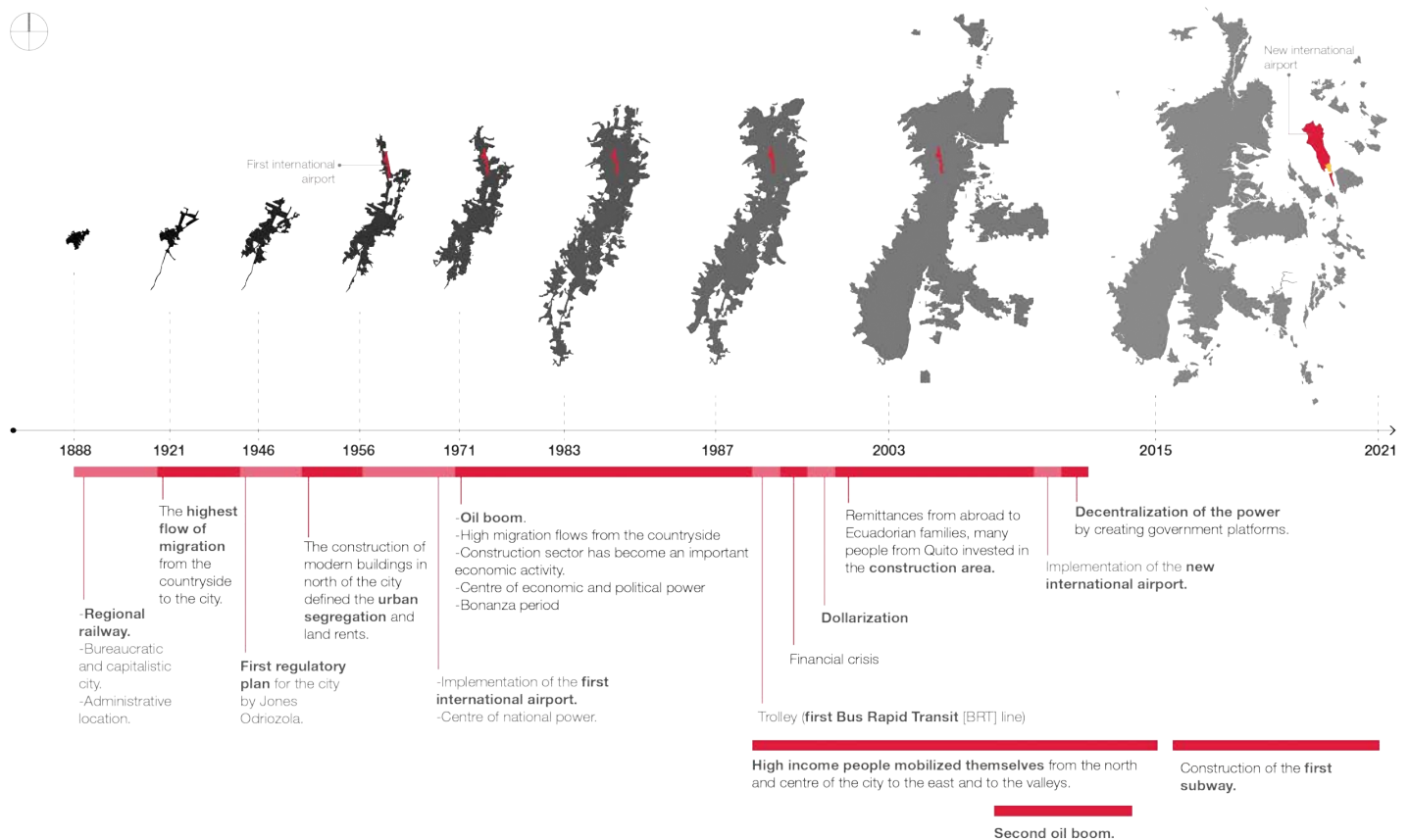
The 40s and 50s were years of urban development, in which Quito tried to follow Odriozola's precepts. As a result of zone planning and the character of the city's expansion, the city started to present a clear demarcation of social strata. The modern Quito was developing towards the north. A series of important projects featured this area. The construction of parks, public buildings, sports complexes, and the first international airport, Mariscal Sucre, in 1956, for instance. In the southern area, on the other hand, it was viewed the consolidation of some industries and working classes.

## 2.7. The historic centrality in the second half of the twentieth century

All the processes of modernization caused a strong land speculation worsening the lack of housing issues due to the continuing flow of immigrants. By the 60s, demographic data show an increase in population. It was 354.746 people living in the capital. (Chart 02) The creation of housing public institutions and cooperatives were needed to safeguard the housing breakdown.

Though Quito was never characterized as an industrial city, its local economy was dynamized by the variety of constructions of all types that has been a strong industry in the capital.

Figure 16. Quito's spatial growth and main events  
Source: Cordero A.; Paredes S.; Nakviroj N., 2020



The most important economic event for Ecuador was the oil boom in 1971. Extraction and its export have become the main economic activity for the country. This epoch of bonanza supported the construction industry in Quito, as well as increased the central governmental apparatus situated in the capital. Moreover, the second flow of immigrants from the countryside was quite visible because the city provided the best labor opportunities. As viewed in the 30s, the old town became, over again, into the shelter of immigrants. The conditions presented by the historic center by the 70s are totally different than the ones in the 30s. Towards the first half of the twentieth century, the inner city was experimenting processes of decay. For the second half of the century, "...the slumming is a consumed reality..." (Carrión & Flores, 1983) where lower classes occupied old shelters left by wealthy society. Population density increased in the historic center. It was 617,3 pph in 1973, while northern areas of the city reached between 20 and 30 pph. (Carrión & Flores, 1983) This denotes a high concentration of people in the inner city. Thus, the agglomerations brought further issues to the center. Most of the slums were located in the peripheral areas, where monumentalism is not as relevant. Insecurity, prostitution, and informal commerce were the main issues that public authorities had to face.

Among the extreme conditions the old city was experiencing, UNESCO declares Quito as the 'World Heritage Cultural Center.' This involved the creation of public institutions dedicated to heritage preservation. The local and central governments had joined efforts to canalized economic resources to the capital. This recognition took much importance for the city when perceiving the old decadent town as a monumental architectural piece that deserves to be preserved.

The zones with the highest population density were situated in the central areas, such as in the historic center. Indeed, the city presented a significant expansion in which underused lands were incorporated into the metropolis.

Left  
Chart 01. Population density in Quito (people per hectare)  
Source: Author's elaboration based on "La Revolución Urbana en Quito," and Census 2010 (INEC)

Right  
Chart 02. Population growth in Quito  
Source: Author's elaboration based on "La Revolución Urbana en Quito," and Census 2010 (INEC)

Note: it was not until the 1980s that Quito overcome one million inhabitants. During the last forty years, its population increased rampantly by becoming, in 2019, the most populated city with 2.700.000 inhabitants.

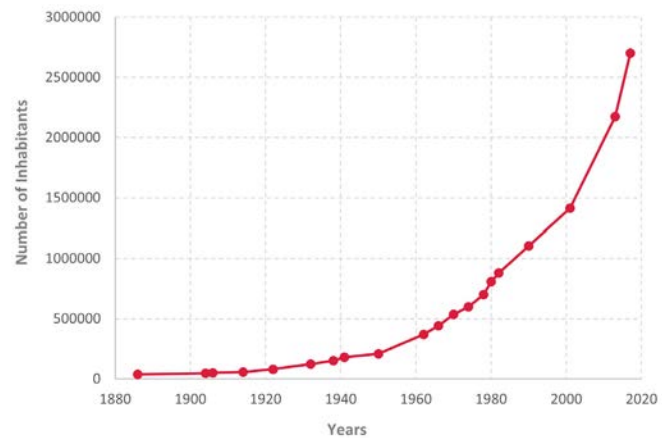
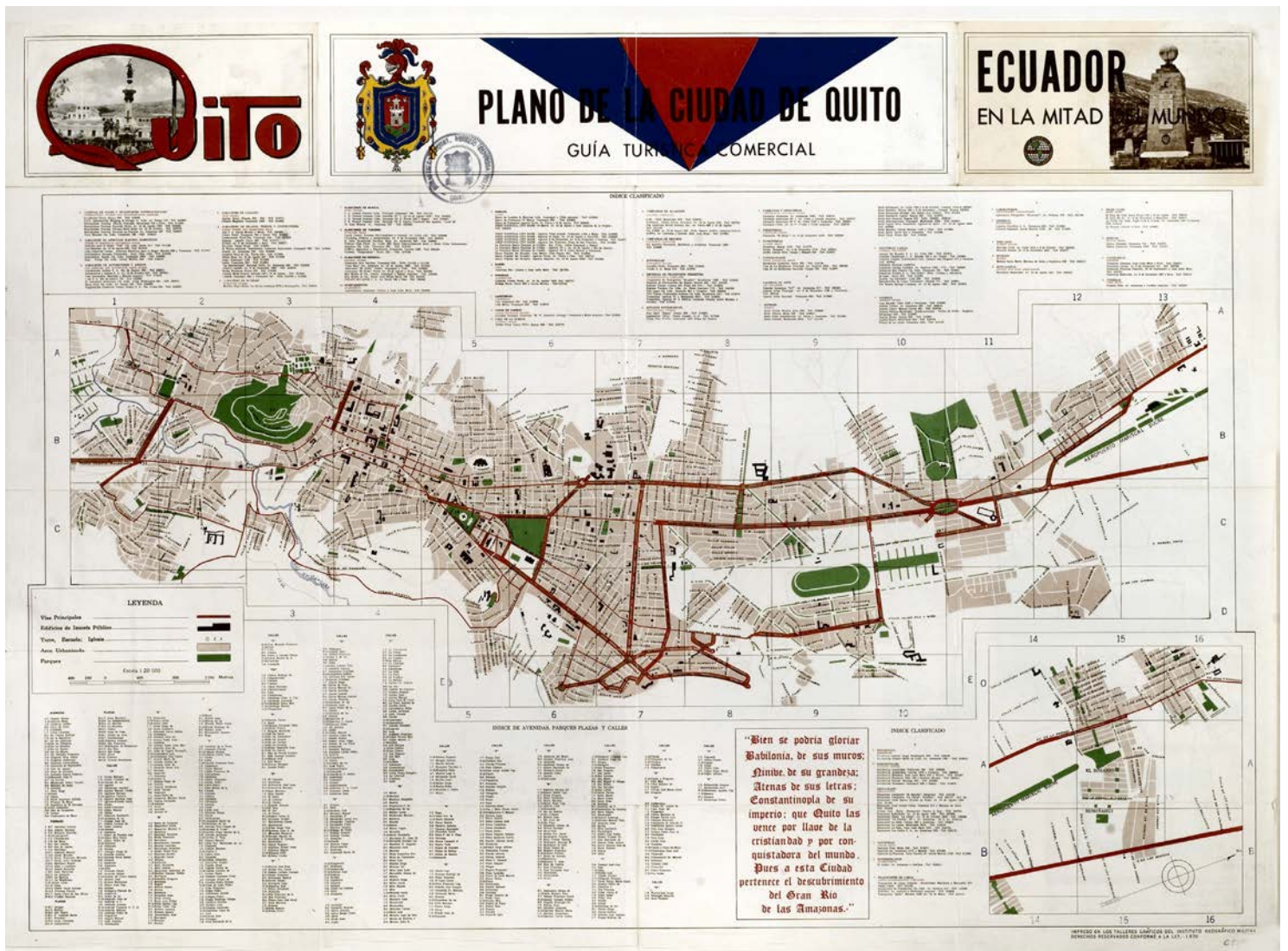


Figure 17. Map of Quito 1970

Source: Retrieved from: [www.quito.gob.ec](http://www.quito.gob.ec)

Note: Even though there is a significant urban development in this map, the reality is that many of the blocks and plots remained empty. The 70s was crucial to consolidate its urban fabric due to oil boom.



“...it can be characterized as a fictitious expansion that does not represent a real social exigence, and that rather assumes a speculative form in a way of ‘fattening lands...’” (Carrión & Flores, 1983) (Table 01) In 1974, the city’s population had nearly doubled in comparison to twelve years before. With 599.000 inhabitants (Chart 02), the urban development was agglomerated in the central areas.

Administrative, health, and education services together with recreation and commerce; were arranged in the central zones. The old town concentrated a big institutional apparatus that nourished this urban agglomeration. As a result, the city had developed “...a ‘centrality’ in which it is inscribed the urban renovation in Quito.” (Carrión & Flores, 1983)

“The generic city is the city liberated from the captivity of center...” (Koolhaas, 1995) This statement describes the situation Quito was experimenting during the 80s. New services, new housing neighborhoods, new ‘sophisticated commerce’ were the topics the city was managing in terms of expansion. Quito’s north extreme was looking to the ‘American style’ where the shopping mall, the highway, and building apartments had appeared to differentiate this modern Quito from the popular ones in the center and south. (Figure 18) Quito had grown exponentially reaching 125.000 hectares by 1982. (Figure 19) It is also evident its demographic increase of 880.971 inhabitants by the same year. (Carrión & Flores, 1983)

The urban expansion had brought some phenomena that influenced the social structure. Towards the first half of the twentieth century, Quito was destined to start a process of polarization and segregation. While for the second half of the century, it worsened producing a sort of differentiation from the modern and the popular. In addition, the concentration of the most important activities had produced an urban unbalanced which caused further issues, such as traffic and congestion in the big ‘centrality’ and marginality in the extremes, especially in the south.

Over the next decades, the city implemented a new transport infrastructure that seeks to improve its mobility conditions, as well as structure the longitudinal expansion the city had experienced.

Table 01. The population density in some areas of Quito in 1974

Source: Authors’ own elaboration based on “La Renovación Urbana en Quito.”

Note: The table shows the highest density of four zones of the historical center (red), and the lower density in two neighborhoods of the north.

| Neighborhoods             | Density |
|---------------------------|---------|
| Centro Historico de Quito | 617.3   |
| San Roque                 | 580.2   |
| San Juan (Medium zone)    | 455.7   |
| San Juan (Low zone)       | 400.6   |
| La paz                    | 37.4    |
| Bellavista                | 24.5    |

## 2.8. Conurbation of Quito and the rebirth of the historic center

The geographical location of Quito's historic center has played substantial role in articulating the city's protracted urban construction. Its presence into Quito's urban planning has made the inner city alive, as well as the most important urban link between the south and the north. More than a physical tool of connectivity, the old town remains as the monumental 'centrality' where memory takes root in the territory. That is why the historic center has never been relegated from the development of the city in terms of connectivity.

For the first time, it was needed to implement a transportation system to fulfill the mobility issues. The longitudinal urban structure has been the main indicator to design efficient transportation schemes. A BRT (Bus rapid transit) was implemented throughout the city in 1995. The system was an articulating electric bus that travels from south to north and vice versa passing through the historic center. This electric innovation had been the solution to agglomeration and traffic. Throughout important areas of the historic center, there were built BRT' bus stops. Heritage conservation had been the practice to consider, meantime the city has been modernized. That is what happened with the informal commerce that had been maturing since the second flow of migrations during the 70s.

One of the qualities that have characterized immigrants in Quito is the impetus to work. Commerce has been the main economic activity for immigrants. Over the years, the old town's streets have been invaded by informal street vendors

Figure 18. Puerta al futuro in 1971 (Door to the future)

Source: Luis Gonzalo Mejía Cevallos.

Note: The photo shows the first mall of the city located at the northern site. It was the beginning of the 'mall culture' the city has been devoted to. After the historic center was turned into a popular commercial site, high classes viewed in the mall the opportunity to differentiate from lower classes.



that, progressively, took a significant area of the historic center. Food, textile, home appliances, and furniture have covered the demands of popular sectors. The historic center was the biggest popular mall where uncontrollable informal commerce had set monumentality into a process of decay. Consequently, local authorities decided to formalize this commerce without expulsing them from the old town. It was necessary to erect a series of buildings where street vendor could have their stores. The process of socialization of the project took years, but in 2003, it was possible. Further projects of urban regeneration were performed to safeguard heritage that has ultimately been aimed as a tourist attraction.

What characterizes the most within this recent period is the peculiarities of the urban growth towards the eastern valleys. The explanation given to this phenomenon relies on the exodus of citizens to the valleys. Specifically, the agglomeration of urban dynamics made a big number of people move to rural areas looking for healthier and more quiet environments. As constant, upper classes were those who have decided to change their lifestyles. This continuing process of exodus has made planners and academics think about these new 'centralities' where new services and activities have been setting up. The city has braked its longitudinal expansion, instead, there is an 'urban sprawl.' (Figure 20) These urban forms have progressively been joining the main longitudinal formation. As Gabellini exposes as a theory of the growth of the European city: "Urban areas are becoming cities of cities. They are a joint presence of different patterns and living conditions, which involve various populations. They bring together urban forms of greater and lesser complexities..." (Gabellini, 2011) (Figure 16) Thus, there is no difference in Quito.

Figure 19. Map of Quito 1983  
Source: [www.quito.gob.ec](http://www.quito.gob.ec)

Note: It is evident, in the map, the difference between the north, south, and center. The composition of the urban fabric in the north side (right) denotes a regular formation with large plots, while in the south (left) the urban fabric is more organic composed of small plots for the working class.



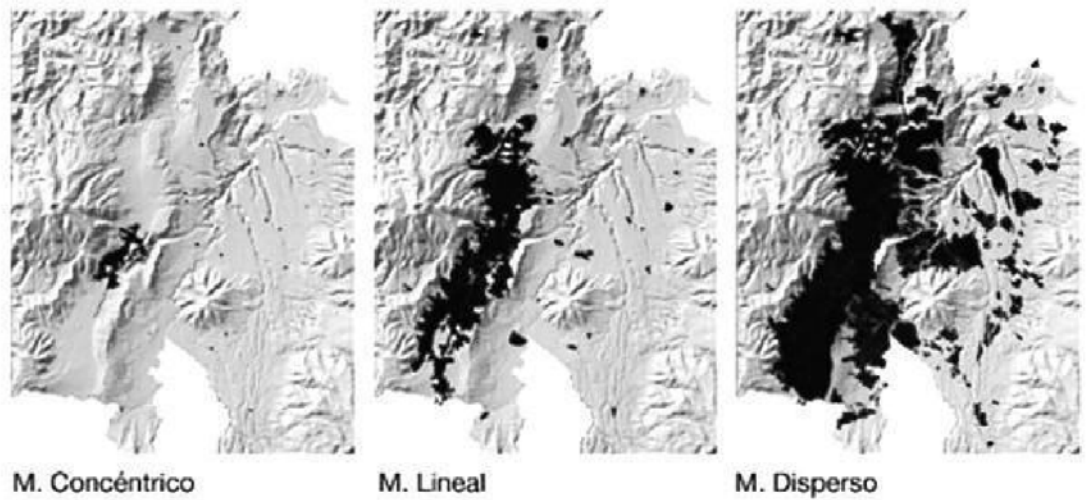
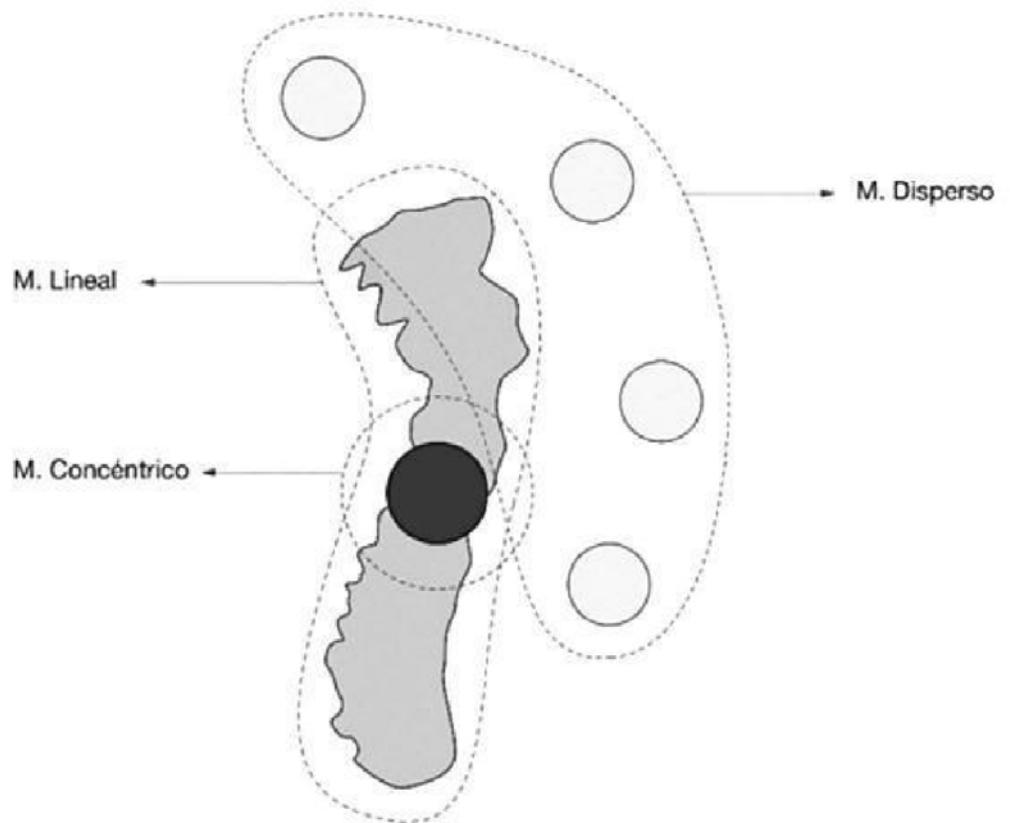


Figure 20. City models in Quito Metropolitan District  
 Source: Instituto de la ciudad-Quito.

Note: It is explained the three types of urban growth. In the beginning, it was a concentric growth. Later, the city experienced a longitudinal expansion towards the north and the south. Today, there is a conurbation towards the eastern valleys. The latest could fit with Gabellini's theory, 'cities of cities.'







# CHAPTER 3.

Plans and policy tools that marked the  
course of the historic center



*Quito has always had a planification that has dictated its urban path, but many of the proposals have not been very well executed. This is how its urban plan and policies have worked over the years. The historic center has gotten special urban plans that other areas of the city have not. Urban tools, thus, are always looking for the best solutions for a proper urban development in which the trend has been a 'technocratic planning' grasping European urban solutions and techniques. It is important to analyze the context of these urban plans and what has been the influence on the historic center in order to understand the causes of certain policies and strategies that have isolated the old town. The critique relies on the insistence of these decisions as well as the pertinence of its continuity.*

The city has always been characterized to have a public interest that has gathered economic, social, and even political efforts to develop previous tools that aimed to see the future of the city. From Colonia times, there have been numerous guidelines that have influenced the arrangement of its urban fabric and its usefulness. The 'republic city' in the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth century were years for urban consolidation and compactness of the historic center. Nonetheless, the undoubted growth of the city made authorities to seek international professionals that can predict and control future developments. This chapter focuses on the study of the most relevant plans, initiatives, and local institutions that have dictated the contemporary Quito. Moreover, modernization initiatives directly affected the old town that, today, is the most sensible urban area to be intervened and regenerated.

### **3.1. Jones Odriozola's Plan, 1942: The first attempt for a polycentric approach**

The 'Regulatory Plan of Quito' developed by the Uruguayan Architect, Jones Odriozola, set the city up towards the future as a modern city based on zoning precepts. There was an awareness regarding the continuing evolution of cities. "Following the clear cycle of the human nature, cities 'are born, grow, and die.' And cities die because they do not evolve and stop in their process..." (Odriozola, 1948) This is how Quito was viewed, as a changing city that should evolve. The first provocation described in the 'technical memory' of the plan was the north-south connection through the historic center. Due to its geographical conditions, the inner city was fundamental for the articulation of the longitudinal settlement.

The proposal was mainly a physical and functional reorganization. This plan was probably the starting point of the 'centrality' strategy as outlining in 'Quito Vision 2040 and its New City Model.' The creation of different 'centers' was

the approach of Odriozola. A civic center for governmental purposes, cultural center, sports center, and university centers were the main activities dedicated to the future modern city in the north. In the next decades, the concentration of these activities provoked an agglomeration. Green neighborhoods with large courtyards were also planned for this area. Whereas the industrial center was designated to the south, together with working neighborhoods. (Figure 21)

Furthermore, the historic center was destined to be the biggest museum in the city. The attention was focused to safeguard the colonial architecture of its churches and some representative buildings. It was also destined the administrative apparatus hosting the municipality and the central government. As had said, the articulation of the city relied on the inner city. Because the historic center's interior streets were too narrow to accommodate large flows of cars and buses, the most significant linkages from south to north should be the periphery. Economic breakdowns have been a constant issue that have directly affected local governments. Consequently, Odriozola's plan was not totally completed due to the huge amount of public space that it contemplated, making the proposal quite expensive for its execution.

Figure 21. Regulatory Plan of Quito, 1942  
Source: arquitecturaecuatorialiana.blogspot.com

Note: The most important facilities were positioned in the north side such as parks, universities, and sport centers. Each one of these facilities represented a centrality turning the historic center into an administrative centrality.

Being the foundational town, the urban core has condemned the entire city to live in two social spheres: the modern city where progress has always been present, and the segregated one where lower classis have imagined and built their surroundings. Thus, every inhabitant has recognized this class distinction which is reflected in the city's urban fabric.

### 3.2. Urbanism Director Plan 1967: Housing and historic center preoccupations

Odriozola's plan focused its attention on the city's reorganization considering the zoning strategy that later triggered the biggest stratification of the city; north for the wealth and the south dedicated to industries and working classis.



Based on the precepts that left the previews plan, the ‘Urbanism Director Plan 1967’ took into account social aspects of the city such as marginality which was more visible in the periphery of the southern areas. As part of the policies of the plan, the establishment of a bank dedicated to providing loans for social housing (Banco de la Vivienda) and housing cooperatives; were substantial for the creation of mass housing for popular sectors. The plan proposed the creation of three types of housing: single-family dwellings, double family dwellings, and multi-family dwellings; together with the implementation of green areas, mix uses, and industry relocation.

Following the same polycentric approach of the plan of 1942, this one continued the redistribution of services throughout the city considering the ‘centrality’ approach in different scales. It was also contemplated the construction of the first interprovincial bus station in the south side of the historic center and the first airport in the northern area.

Furthermore, the plan provided the infrastructure base for the following years. It was built highways and tunnels located in the west and east sides of the historic center to improve and solve the issues that were been generated within the old town because of the automobile market increase.

Regarding the historic center, there was a preoccupation with its mterial heritage. It was a valuation of its current situation in which it was needed its conservation, restoration, and delimitation. From point forward, the historic core started to be treaed differently than the rest of the city. One of the main reasons for heritage conservation was tourism thinking about economic benefits.

### **3.3. Director Plan 1973-1993: The beginning of the metropolitan city**

Because of oil exploitation as well as the country’s economic improvement, Ecuador’s main cities had been experiencing relevant urban expansions. Quito was not the exception. The plan of 1973 started to conceive the city as a metropolitan area in which the vision of the metropolis was wider. The Metropolitan Area of Quito had contemplated a regional city where not only the big urban settlement was important but also its contextual rural areas. For the protection of the later, it was important to consider aspects of urban expansion that could reduce the rampant growth. Densification and decentralization of services characterized the main approach of the plan that later did not have greater repercussions within the urban development of Quito.

As been said, internal migration flows from the countryside were taking place as a result of better labor opportunities the city had offered. Peripheral neighborhoods of the historic center sheltered immigrants provoking serious

urban and social issues. In fact, the plan did not provide special treatment for the conservation of heritage.

### **3.4. Quito as ‘World Cultural Heritage:’ the incentive for conservation**

This is the most important recognition the city has received in its lifetime. There were 12 sites UNESCO decided to list as ‘World Cultural and Natural Heritage.’ Among those, Quito received this declaration together with Cracow’s historic center.’ UNESCO listed Quito establishing some criteria which were fulfilled by the historic center. “...The panorama, Quito’s geographical location, and the quality and quantity of the Colonial art and architecture” (Del Pino, 2010); were the main aspects that UNESCO evaluated to make the declaration. Being the first urban settlement to have this recognition has been relevant to safeguard and include the historic center into the agenda of Quito. Moreira Ortega states that in ‘Plan Quito 1981,’ the old town is defined as an area of historic preservation. The mentioned document gathered punctual recommendations and actions. (Moreira Ortega, 2001) Heritage preservation used to be a national matter, but, in 1984, the ‘National Institution of Cultural Heritage’ gave Quito the possibility to manage its old town. Thus, it was created the ‘Historic Center Commission.’

The earthquake of 1987 evidenced the vulnerability of historic infrastructures, so it was needed the creation of a new institution. The ‘National Congress’ approved the creation of FONSAL, Fondo de Salvamento del Patrimonio Cultural (Cultural Heritage Salvage Fund in English), which administrated architectural and urban rehabilitation funds in the inner city.

Because of the national decentralization, Quito changed its institutional structure, and it is created the ‘Distrito Metropolitano de Quito’ (Metropolitan District of Quito in English) in 1996. “...the recovery of the historic center is tied to the urban and economic dynamic.” (Del Pino, 2010) It means the old town was managed as an enterprise in which tourism arises as an economic opportunity. As a result of the political decentralization, social participation and better urban practices could be integrated into the new ‘Strategic Plan of the Metropolitan District 1999 – 2005.’ However, this plan increased the bureaucratic system of the city with the creation of ‘Historic Center Enterprise’ that aimed to canalized international loans for the conservation of the historic center. This later plan together with ‘The Master Plan for Historic Areas of Quito’ increased the interest not only to economically activate the old town towards a touristic vision but also a social orientation. Moreover, housing recovery was a relevant aspect of the urban agenda. The local institution intended to purchase deteriorated properties to rehabilitate them for housing. This initiative has been practicing over the years that have not echoed substantially to tackle housing issues.

### **3.5. Plan Quito 1981: Restoration of historic zones**

“The formulation of this new plan obeyed to the need to restructure the city through new expressions of micro-regional spatial development promoted in the precedent years due to oil boom.” (Carrión F., and Vallejo R., s.f.) According to the authors, this plan had the same urban approach respecting the previews one with the polycentric planning, emphasizing the situation of border imposed to the historic center. The difference is that this new plan projected policies and recommendations for the development of partial plans of urban design at local level. This also included the legalization of marginal neighborhoods located in the periphery.

Moreover, not only the inner core but also other historic areas throughout the city were recognized such as delimited heritage. This helped to identify the modern city with historic settlements to properly configure the urban centralities. The approach also considered the improvement processes of conservation and heritage restoration. Nevertheless, on the other hand, the plan could not counter the marginality that had been producing in the historic center due to the migration of lower classes from the countryside. Indeed, this triggered the commercial activities at the metropolitan level dedicated to popular sectors.

### **3.6. Metropolitan Structural Plan 1993: Administrative decentralization**

The plan does not present innovative approaches to counter the longitudinal rampant expansion. The insistence on a polycentric strategy continues as an endless decentralization of activities. This plan not only took into account the high concentration of dynamics but also the distribution of the local administration. This concluded that it is fundamental to create administrative zones located throughout the urban area to control properly as well as balance the city’s dynamisms. Furthermore, there was an important advance regarding mobility that directly affected the city. The BRT system intended to longitudinally restructure the city passing through the historic center. This electric system represented the modernization of Quito and the future to mobility sustainable systems. Additionally, it considered safeguarding the natural elements that surround the city and others located throughout the urban area.

### **3.7. General Plan of Territorial Development 2001-2009: Growing concerns**

It envisioned to rescue the existing city through public space improvement, environmental elements insertion, and local participation. The straightening of local centralities and implementation of infrastructure for the periphery were strategies aiming to consolidate the urban area and avoid the growth

of peripheral neighborhoods. Additionally, urban speculation was the issue to encounter. However, the implemented policies did not have sufficient repercussions in the territory because western valley's urban settlements had a strong influence developing neighborhoods made up of gated communities.

Left  
Figure 22. Map of 'centrality' interpretation in 2003  
Source: Plan for the Historic Center of Quito, 2003

Note: The consolidation of the centrality in the central area of the historic center just created a conglomeration of activities at metropolitan level. The rest of the neighborhoods of the historic center could not play the role of centrality due to the lack of services and its strong residential character.

Chart 03. Population decrease of Gonzalez Suarez neighborhood  
Source: Authors' elaboration based on data from Instituto de la Ciudad.

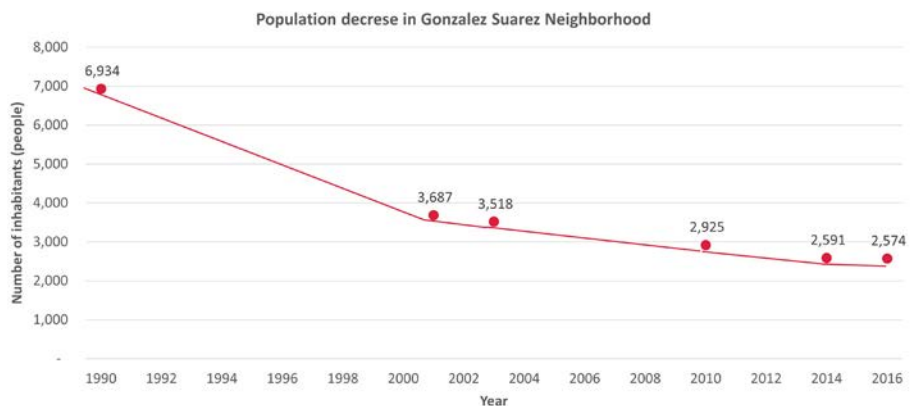
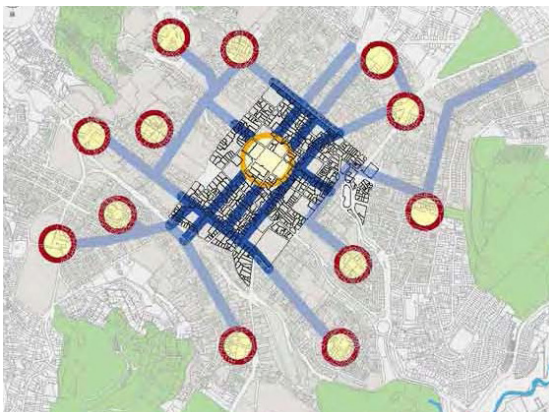
These new trends of urbanization nurtured social fragmentation the city experienced some years ago. This also signified the end of the urban expansion towards a longitudinal way in order to give a step to an urban sprawl where soil consumption was getting out of hand. As well, the plan insists on the regulation of informal neighborhoods.

The historic center did not have a relevant appearance within the plan because there was a special plan for the old town in 2003.

### 3.8. Especial Plan of the Historic Center of Quito 2003: An opportunity for regeneration

The plan identified the inner city as a 'historic centrality.' It is described as: "... there is a centrality derived from urban aspects, and another, that derives from the intangible topics of a social, cultural, and political character." (MDMQ, 2003) Whereas there is another fact to worried about and nurtures the 'centrality's' character, wider areas were used for popular commerce that not only worked as a neighborhood scale but also as a metropolitan scale. On the other hand, the analyses made by the plan also evidenced population decreases, as well as deterioration and abandonment of historic properties. Nonetheless, a positive aspect that was viewed as an opportunity was the natural landscape. This is the first time, its geographic locations surrounded by mountains could work as natural buffers from the modern city. The connection with the rest of the urban formation was fundamental for the plan.

The plan's strategy was conceived over again through the concept of 'centrality' but on a lower scale. The urban analysis resulted in the





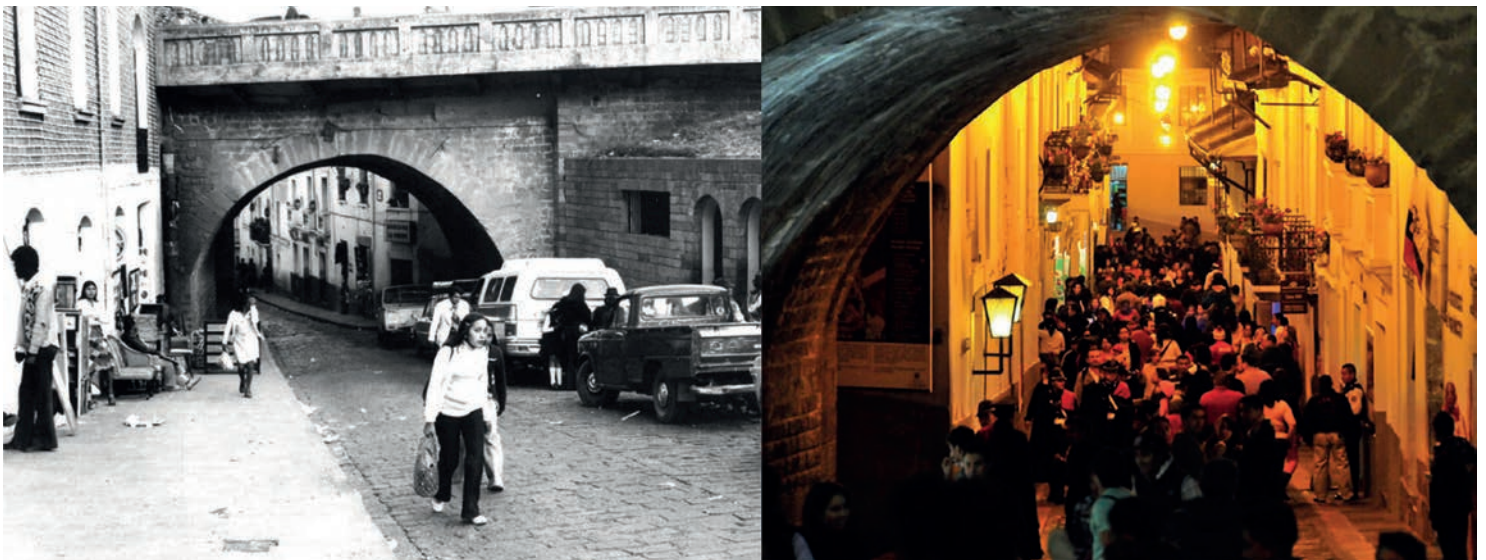
concentration of high valued architecture, activities, and services in the central core, Gonzalez Suares neighborhood. The big ‘centrality’ should dictate and articulate minor ‘centralities’ located throughout peripheral neighborhoods. This is nourished with axes of diverse urban features that connect all the ‘centralities.’ (Figure 22) The following years, the strategy triggered the continuing population decrease (Chart 03), especially in the González Suárez neighborhood where the agglomeration of activities was replacing the housing character of the zone.

The plan suggested generating “studies and projects of supply and demand for new ways of housing...” (MDMQ, 2003), but it did not frustrate a big impact on the residential state of the old town. The issue of population decreases and the lack of supply and demand of housing, have been the major issues that the city could have not encounter until now. The ‘monumentality’ of the old city has played a stronger when planning the future of the inner city.

There had been further plans that were referenced to this Especial Plan of 2003. ‘Plan Equinoccio 21 2004-2025’ (Equinox Plan 21 in English) and ‘Plan Bicentenary 2005-2009’ (Bicentenary Plan) exposed the historic center as the main asset of the city. Its socio-economic activity relied on tourism to take advantage of the ‘historic monumentality.’ The improvement of the public space highlighting architectural, monumental, and urban heritage values– were the main physical components of the plans. Rescue of degraded buildings for housing and other touristic activities were included in the plans. Furthermore, the ‘Heritage Areas of the Metropolitan District’ policy dictates the creation of a minor historic areas network throughout the city generating touristic attractions in 2008.

Figure 23. La Ronda street in 1978 and 2017  
Source: 1978-Archivo/ EL Comercio 2017 – 1000destinos.net.

Note: The neighborhood of La Ronda was eradicated by the imposition of a bohemian zone. The area remains almost empty, while during the night there is high affluence of visitors. The main topic of La Ronda is the ‘traditional Quito.’



Ines del Pino relates that, between 2000 and 2008, there have been important projects that shift the old town's urban quality. La Ronda Street, for example, was regenerated in participation and economic help of local authorities. During the 90s, this traditional street used to be a residential area for tenants that progressively were becoming insecure and opaqued by drug trafficking and prostitution. In 2006, La Ronda was turned into a night bohemian zone with bars, restaurants, and handicraft shops. Today, the area only keeps active at night and receives local and international tourists. Unfortunately, La Ronda lost its inhabitants due to their expulsion, and they were not relocated anymore. (Figure 23)

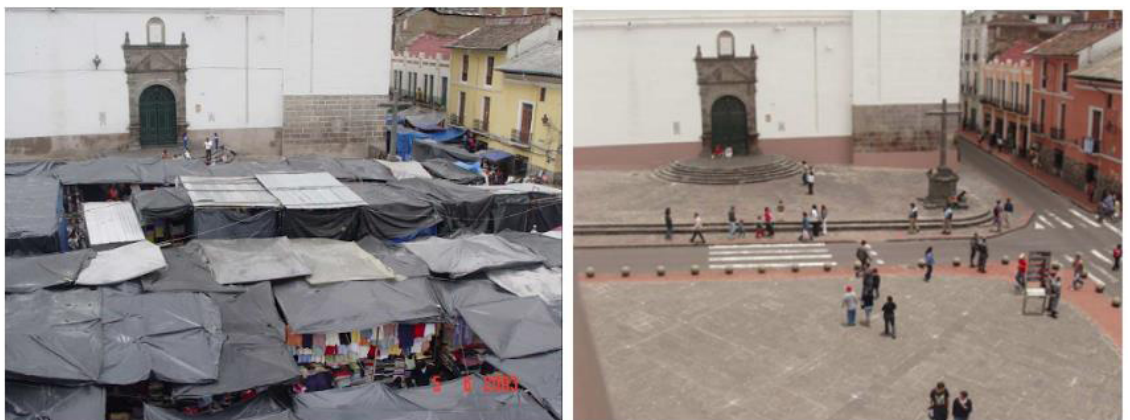
Another significant project of these years was the organization of the informal Ipiales market. According to Del Pinos, around 6,4 hectares of public space were free from 10.000 vendors that used streets and squares in order to build provisional stores made of plastic and wood. (Figure 24) These vendors were reallocated to 11 buildings over the city of which 6 remain in the historic center. Further old buildings were turned into museums that had produced important impact on the recovery of the historic center as well as its presence within the city

The overcome of the inner city's social and economic issues were quite important. "There were direct jobs for more than 2.300 people and indirect employment for 16.000 people" (Del Pino, 2010) Based on the municipal government's registers, tourism in the old town was dynamized, and it was generated 606,7 million dollars in 2007. (Del Pino, 2010)

The 'Especial Plan of the Historic Center 2003' has brought positive repercussions for the old town's quality and its surroundings. The creation of public parks and reorganization of the mobility system were improving the buffer of connection with the rest of the city. (Figure 25) The landscaping projects of reconnection revitalized the image toward the historic center by creating new perspectives and panoramic views.

Figure 24. Before and after the displacement of street commerce in La Merced square  
Source: Repositorio Quito.

Note: There were around 30 years that the historic center remained as a popular commerce spot. The relocation of street vendors produced a significant change within the historic center as well as helped heritage preservation. The new buildings dedicated to this commerce have not had an architecture that does not relate to the historic context.



Assertive actions of the inner town conservation towards the first decade of the twentieth-first century demonstrates the commitment of local institutions together with the central government to maintain consistent progress of evolution favorable for the city. Nevertheless, there were unfinished topics, that due to strong monumentalism conservation, have affected the city's social dimension. One of those is the constant decrease of population. There has not been possible to formulate a strategy to stimulate the permanence of its residents as well as the attraction of newcomers. Indeed, the historic center does not present favorable conditions for new generations of population that is arising. Even though the loss of inhabitants, unlike other historic centers of Latin America, Quito has achieved to conserve its memory through its traditions and its remaining inhabitants. Beyond the quality of the historic center's urban fabric, its social roots condense strong social heritage that keeps an interesting heterogeneity.

### 3.9. Metropolitan Plan of Territorial Arrangements 2012-2022: The compilation of previous intentions

Looking at the metropolitan area of Quito, the plan identifies a dysfunctional characteristic that had been evolving for more than 50 years. It is the concentration of the major activities for public service in central zones. It

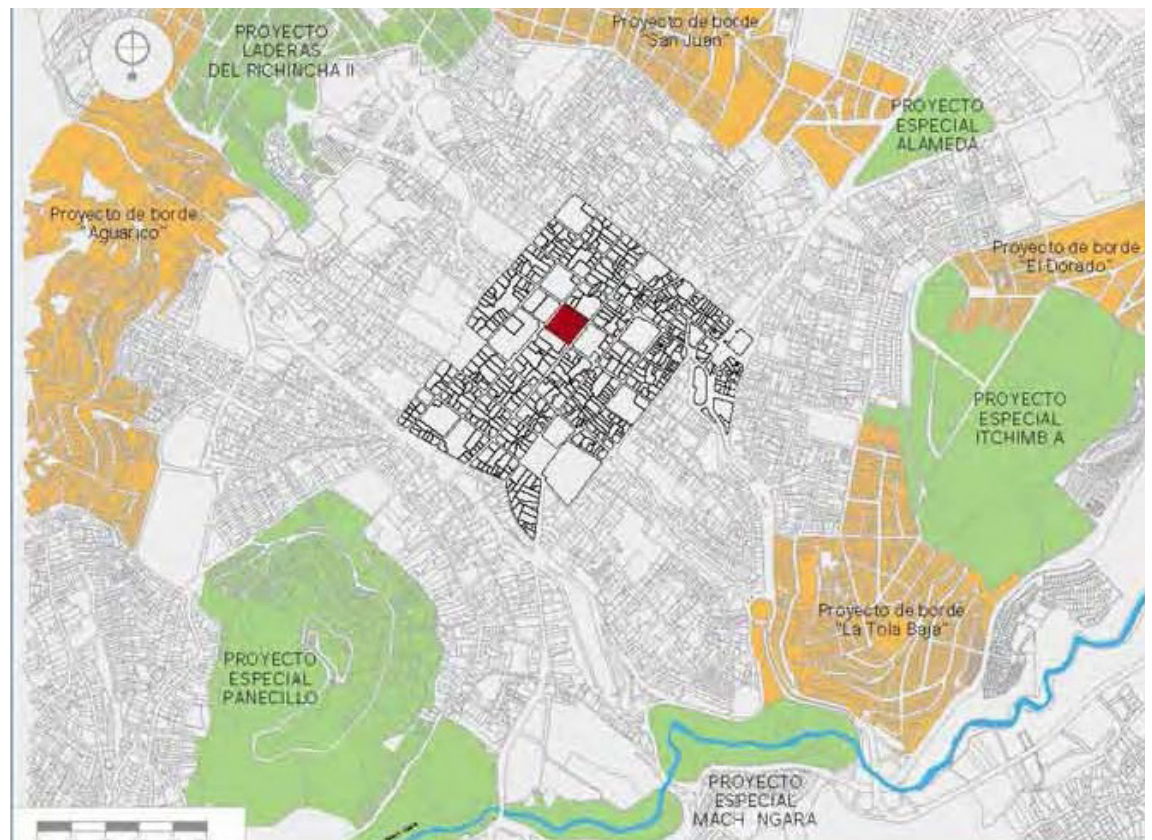


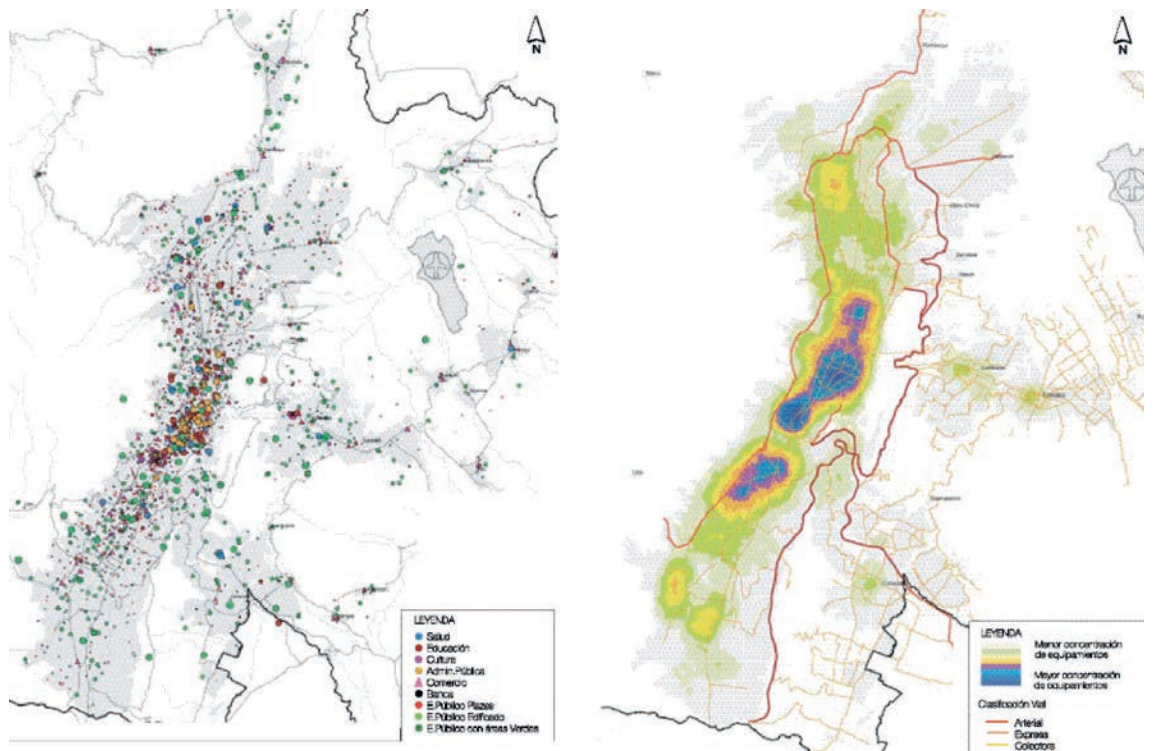
Figure 25. Border project for the historic center  
Source: Plan for the historic center of Quito 2003

is important to notice that the city had growth toward the eastern valleys. In 2011, the agglomeration of activities is called ‘hyper center’ where the major services of health, education, offices, public space, and culture gather themselves. Whereas north and south extremes show a sort of aleatory scattered activities. (Figure 26) One of the reasons of this urban phenomenon was the revitalization of the historic center over the past decade. The improvement of its public spaces and the implementation of new services inside as well as its surrounding areas had helped to conglomerate a significant number of cultural services. The historic center had encounter metropolitan museums, a big governmental and central institutional apparatus, and health services, producing insensate daily flow of 300.000 people. (La Hora, 2018) “...the intensification of the public spaces usage and historic center of Quito’s properties, have generated the wear of the heritage assets and the environmental deterioration of the area...” (MDMQ, 2011) The condition of the old town is viewed a cluster of activities.

The Metropolitan Plan 2012 – 2022 proposes six goals in which is prioritized: Quito’s rampant growth; protection of natural and rural areas; connectivity and urban mobility; public space improvement; sustainable, participatory, and inclusive models of management; and the ‘District System of Urban Centralities.’ The city had become a metropolis that had reached further rural-urban settlement that progressively was attaching to the main urban formation, as Gabellini’s theory: ‘cities of cities’ (Gabellini, 2011) The importance to reconnect the city through interstices was the strategy to adapt it to rural

Figure 26. Left: Concentration of urban facilities. Right: Mono-centric structure of Quito  
Source: MDMQ, 2011.

Note: The urban situation of the city demonstrated the high concentration of activities that were the result of the past policies implemented to the city. Quito was thought to be a medium town with concentration of services, but the urban development overcame the expectancies.



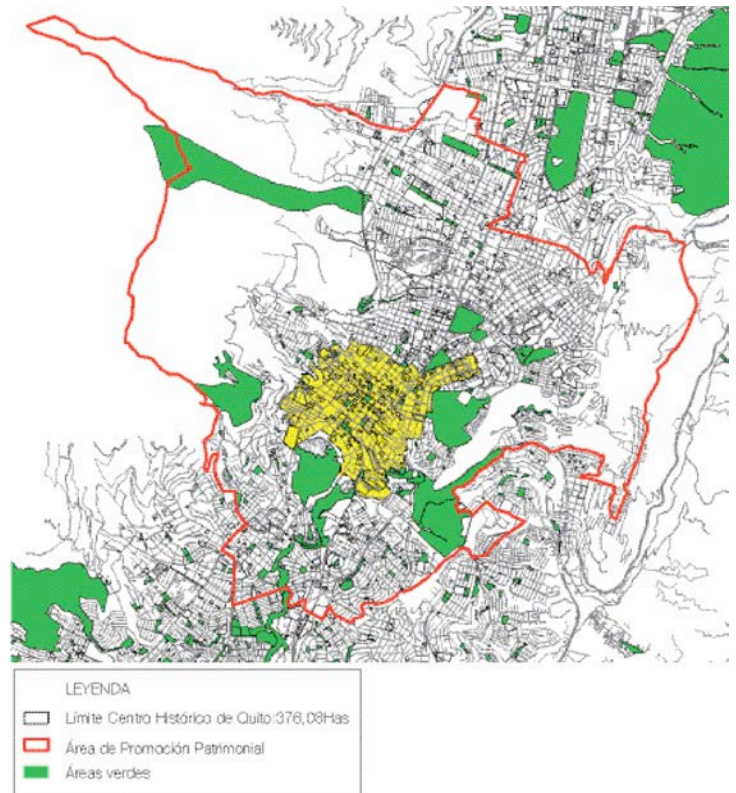
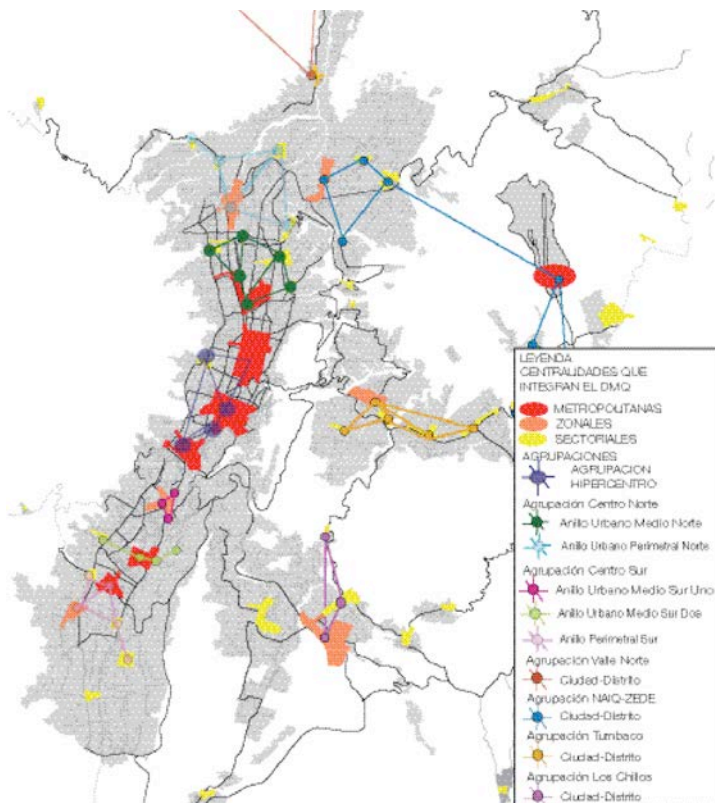
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Figure 27. Polycentric network for the city of Quito 2012-2022  
Source: MDMQ, 2011

Note: For the planning of the city, it is the first time that public authorities consider eastern valleys and the location of the new airport as part of the polycentric approach. Meanwhile, the historic center is considered one of the most important centralities that make up the city connection.

area by creating green corridors of natural protection. In addition, the plan contemplates the reorganization of the ‘hyper center’ by creating a polycentric network distributed throughout the city including rural areas. (Figure 27) With the transfer of the airport to the eastern valleys, it had contributed to lighten the intensive usage of the ‘hyper-center.’ These centralities are featured as “...from a socio-cultural viewpoint, places of social interaction, respect to the differences and knowledge generators in which citizens are represented, identified, and they appropriate them.” (MDMQ, 2011). One of the main ‘centralities’ that consider the plan is the historic center.

Over the years, the old town has taken on a lot of importance for city planning. This plan reaffirms its value by delimiting it with an ‘Area of Heritage Protection.’ The idea was to consider neighboring urban areas for its public space improvement as well as the conservation of intervened edifications. It also reaffirms natural elements such as mountains and the hillsides of the Pichincha volcano. (Figure 28) Besides the connection with the city, their plan includes four axes for the historic center: 1. enhancement of internal mobility through the reorganization of the vehicular circulation to better pedestrian mobility, 2. improvement of its public spaces and properties, 3. rehabilitation and development of services to impulse residential zones, 4. and improvement of urban security by implementing community security systems.



### **3.10. Revitalization of the Historic Center of Quito 2013-2017: Bureaucratic procedures for planning**

This program was carried out by the 'Urban and Housing Development Minister' with the sponsorship of the central government. The revitalization of the old town contemplated a mere bureaucratic procedure that did not have a coherent structure with previous plans or even with the local government. The plan describes the current situation of the historic center that adopts the concept of 'centrality' and its importance in the city.

The document did not present goals or even an urban strategy for its revitalization. Instead, it concentrated its attention to complete a list of requirements based on statistical data. Much of the proposals were generic references that the central government uses: "generation of social housing," or "improve the habitat conditions of the 'Good Living' of the historic center and the socio-economic welfare of its population." (Subsecretaría de Hábitat y Asentamientos Humanos, 2012) Moreover, the program includes the rehabilitation of heritage assets for embassies as well as housing for ambassadors. This later produced negative social repercussions and conflicts with residents.

As had said, the history of Quito has been marked by the public institution initiative. A top-down approach has always framed the future of the city, and the historic center has not been the exception. One of the recommendations that Geurts and Corten provide in the book 'Heritage as an asset for inner-city development' is the "growing civic participation." They also exposed: "... in Latin America, both decentralization and strategic planning trends led to increase civic participation in urban planning." (Corten, Geurts, Meurs, & Vermeulen, 2014) This reflection does not fit within Quito's reality, and this latest governmental program is an example that public power is not the only path for heritage conservation. The latest plans for the city of Quito and its inner core consider this topic that is taking space into the urban agenda. The evolution of the historic center has been referenced by the urban development of the entire city. Thus, this has also allowed the local government together with international organizations interact in pro of the inner city's development and conservation plans. The discussion has been focused on the reflection and experimentation of the urban practice, that step by step has shaped the city.

### **3.11. Vision of Quito 2040: Reaffirmation of the centrality models**

In 2018, the municipality developed a new plan for the city that will last until 2040. Its first lineaments rely on 'sustainability and sustainable development.' It seeks to achieve a sustainable city and reduce greenhouse gases. Its idea is to increase green areas within the urban fabric, ecologic restoration of urban and

In the previous page right Figure 28. Heritage protection for the historic center of Quito 2012-2022  
Source: MDMQ, 2011

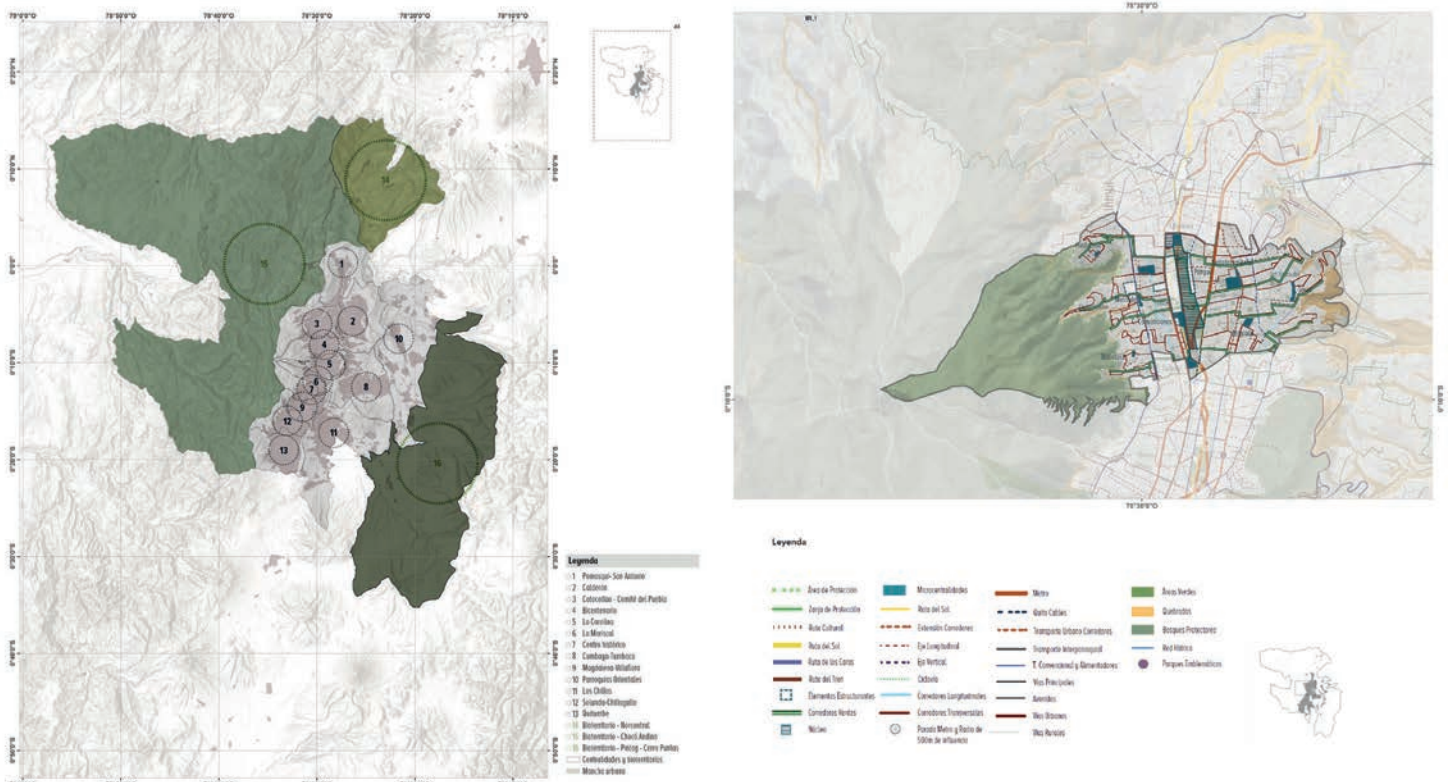
Note: The considered buffer for protection of the historic center is a whole centrality that differs from the initial ideas of Odriozola's plan. This assertive proposal was later rejected by the next plans.

rural ecosystems, and emphasize the green belt the city has been protecting. Further initiatives such as proper management of solid waste, proper water treatment, and generation and conservation of landscape networks at a metropolitan scale; are contemplated. Moreover, the plan reiterates the strategic planning of the 'centrality.' A polycentric organization continues being the solution for the equitable distribution of services throughout the metropolitan area. With the consolidation of new urban settlements in the eastern valleys, north side, and the new airport; it is planned to reduce the rampant use of soil as well as Quito's compactness. (Figure 20) These new 'centralities' had generated a series of urban issues the plan seeks to encounter. A deeper study of the urban fabric in different areas of the city has allowed public authorities to propose more accurate interventions for the different 'centralities' which are composed of health, security, education, and public space. (Figure 29)

Figure 29. Left: Identification of centralities in the city of Quito. Right: Development of the centrality n.4  
Source: Vision of Quito, 2040, 2018

Note: After decades of urban discussion and reflection, the plan proposes the development of some urban centralities as models. This experience has not been well defined during the previous plans.

There have been around 5 years of the construction of the first metro line, and it is not completed yet. The system will follow the city's longitudinal formation from north to south crossing to the historic center. Due to political and economic problems, the underground metro line has two years of delay. Now, it is expected to be finished by 2022. Since 2012 the metro line has been part of diverse planning tools, and the mayor of the studies have been suppositions concerning the metro line. It is important to note that the distribution of 'centralities' was made based on the metro stations' location.



The model of ‘centralities’ is based on different scales. The first one is the district ‘centrality’ that has three main aspects: 1. Participation, 2. Planification, and 3. Management. (Figure 30) The next is a local scale that presents a “model of a sustainable neighborhood,” which is configured through participation, entrepreneurship, habitability, and ecology.

There is a section within the plan that is denominated “Culture: Heritage and Values” that configures a network of ancient settlements through the concept ‘Historic Urban Landscape’ (UNESCO, 2011). The application of the proposal has three aspects: the historic center of Quito, immaterial heritage, and archeologic heritage. The main goals of the historic center’s plan are: “ the increase of the historic center’s livability in order to revert its depopulation as well as revitalize its cultural heritage through the generation of high-quality spaces; and over an integral planification, urbanistic, and heritage management, guarantee a proper urban development to rationalize the investment of public and private resources.” (Quito Alcandía, 2018) This social approach understands the historic center as the ‘cultural centrality,’ a fundamental component for the preservation of heritage. Territorially speaking, the plan is visible through a route system that connects historic and archeological settlements. In a poetic way, these routes mark the connections that encounter the whole metropolitan area. (Figure 31) One of those routes is the historic center that does not have a major influence on the city.

Overall, the plan had made a significant advance concerning previous plans. Nonetheless, the historic center is delicate urban piece for intervention. The strong protection of heritage has reduced the possibilities to ingrate it to the rest of the city. The plan proposes timid actions for its revitalization.

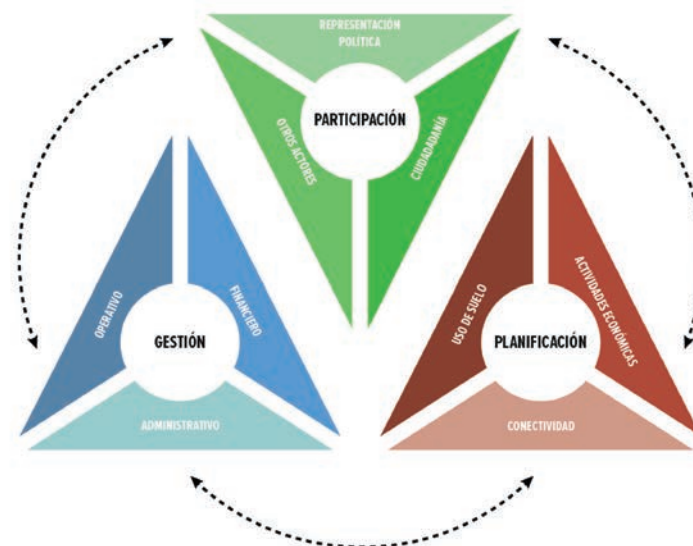
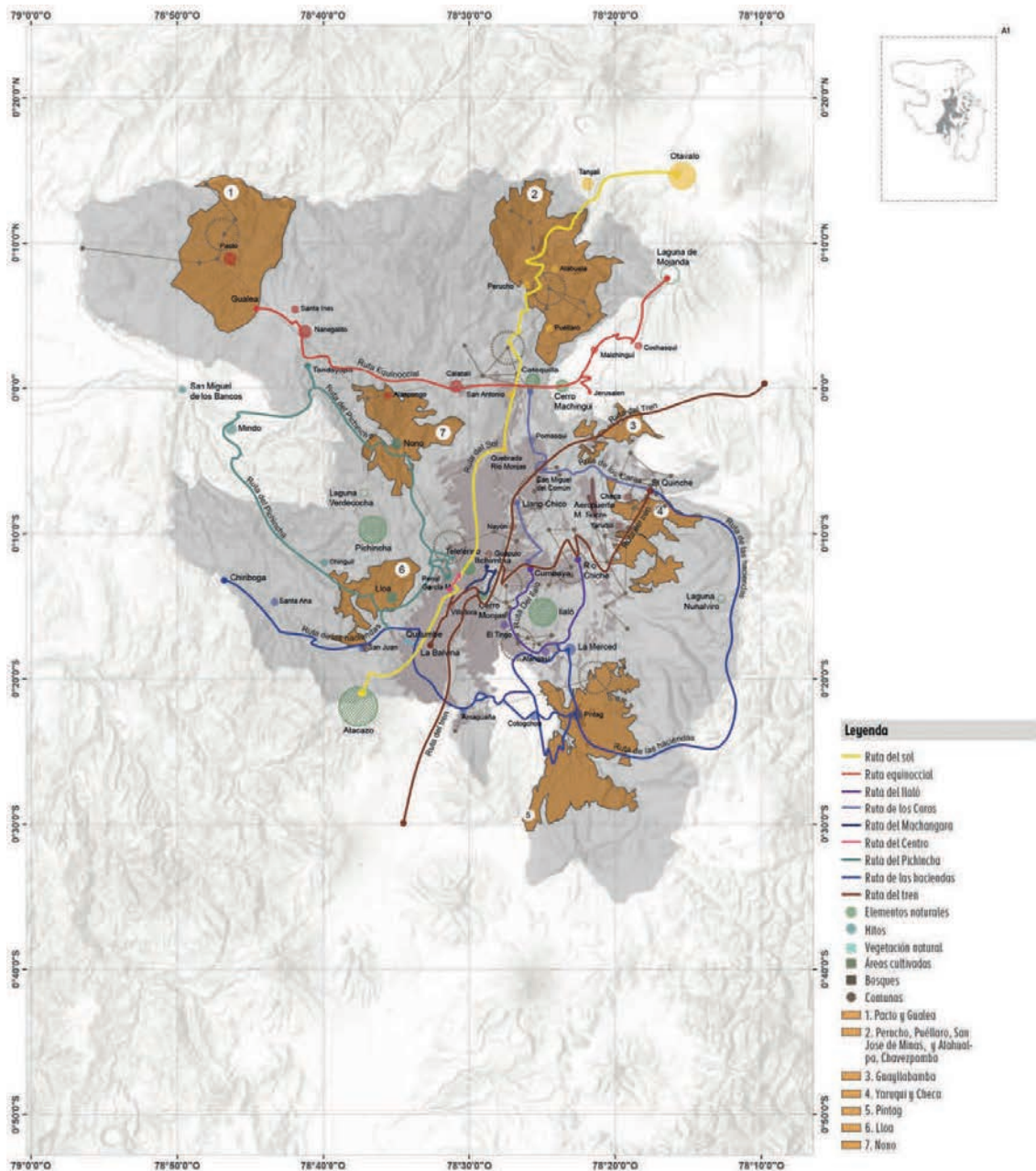


Figure 30. Management model for the centrality  
Source: Vision of Quito 2040, 2018



Figure 31. Touristic routes for the city of Quito. Connections between the historic center and archeological sites  
 Source: Vision of Quito 2040, 2018

Note: the map shows a series of historic and archeologic settlements that are connected by some paths. This urban approach to a historic city is focused to improve the touristic demand of visitors within the city. This strategy would be interesting to apply for social interest in which historic artifacts could dictate the urban development of Quito.



### 3.12. Strategic Plan 2019: A new effort for the inner city

The latest strategic plan for the historic center was the ‘Especial Plan for the Historic Center of Quito 2003’ that formulated strategies until 2010. However, this new plan was developed by the ‘Heritage Metropolitan Institute’ in concordance with the ‘Metropolitan Institute of Urban Planification.’ The plan formulates a strategic proposal to create policies for the historic center and structure a management plan for the next 10 years. The plan considers various methodological concepts. Among those, it is the ‘Historic Urban Landscapes,’ ‘Habitability and Quality of life,’ urban resilience, and citizen participation; which are not very well territorialized.

Five strategic axes structure the plan for the inner city:

1. Mobility intermodal network and sustainable public space conformation
  2. Local population’s capacity impulse, its economic activities, and immaterial heritage manifestations
  3. Vulnerability reduction of Historic Center of Quito’s buildings and housing promotion with mix uses
  4. Conformation of an interaction transversal system and citizen participation.
- (IMP-DMQ, 2019)

As exposed in previous plans, mobility is an integral part of the historic center’s connection with the rest of the city. This current plan focuses on pedestrian

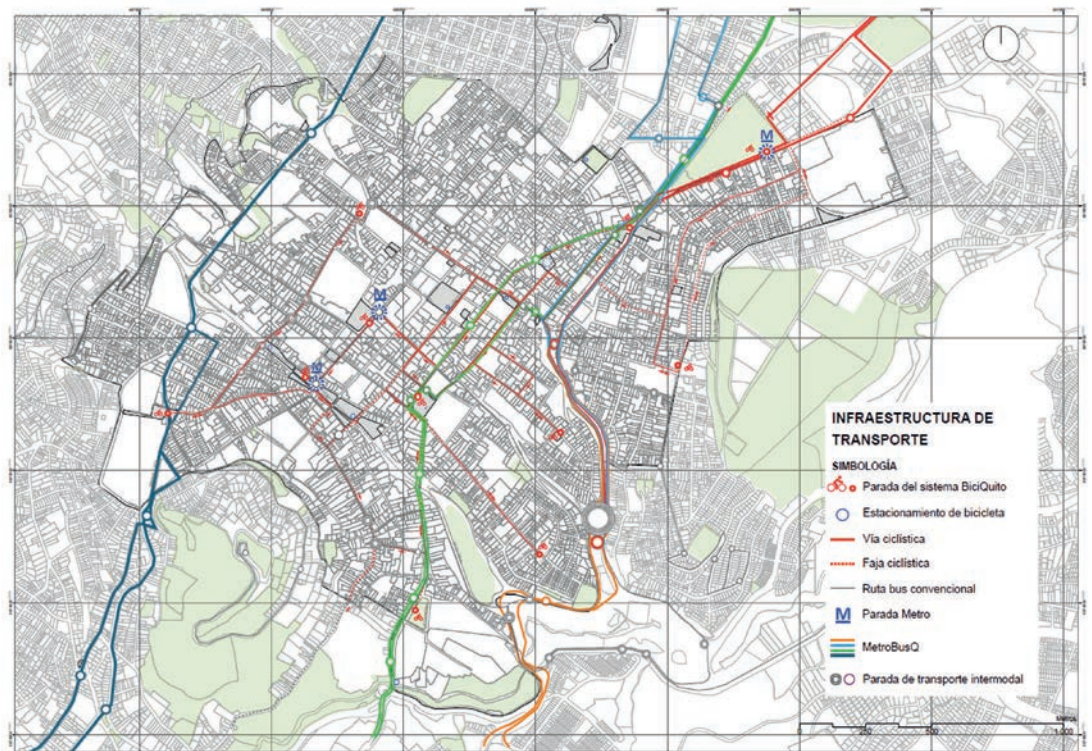


Figure 32. Transport infrastructure map  
Source: Historic Center of Quito. Strategic Plan 2019.

Note: The plan follows the current transport lines by adding the metro stations and cycling paths.

networks through the public space. As Carrion states: "...the historic center is the meeting space of excellence for its condition of 'centrality' that make it a focal spot of the city..." (Carrión F., 2005) For years, there has been a discussion regarding the historic center's pedestrianization. Due to political resistance, it has not made possible to develop a proposal. Nevertheless, heritage protection and monumentalism have encouraged the pedestrianization of some representative streets, especially in the central area. The plan seeks to create a network of pedestrian streets together with squares. It is planned to reduce the use of the car through the public transport improvement and the implementation of cycling lines. (Figure 32)

In addition, the historic center has been always characterized to have an economy based on commerce. The plan takes advantage of the big number of small entrepreneurships that compose part of the immaterial heritage. Traditional shops, small handicraft factories, traditional cafés, and so on; became attractive for tourism. (Figure 33) The idea is to impulse these small businesses by giving them tools and incentives for their continuing functioning.

The most important alignment of housing promotion has been a topic that has not been possible to accomplish resulting in a population decrease. Purchase and rehabilitation of decay heritage buildings for residential purposes is on the urban agenda. This policy has been addressed previously without much repercussion on the territory. Based on some urban scholars and

Figure 33. Handmade candy vendor  
Source: Historic Center of Quito. Strategic Plan 2019.

Note: One positive aspect of the historic center is the presence of traditional commerce which is quite attractive for visitors. The plan seeks to impulse these small businesses as part of the socio-economic improvement of the area.



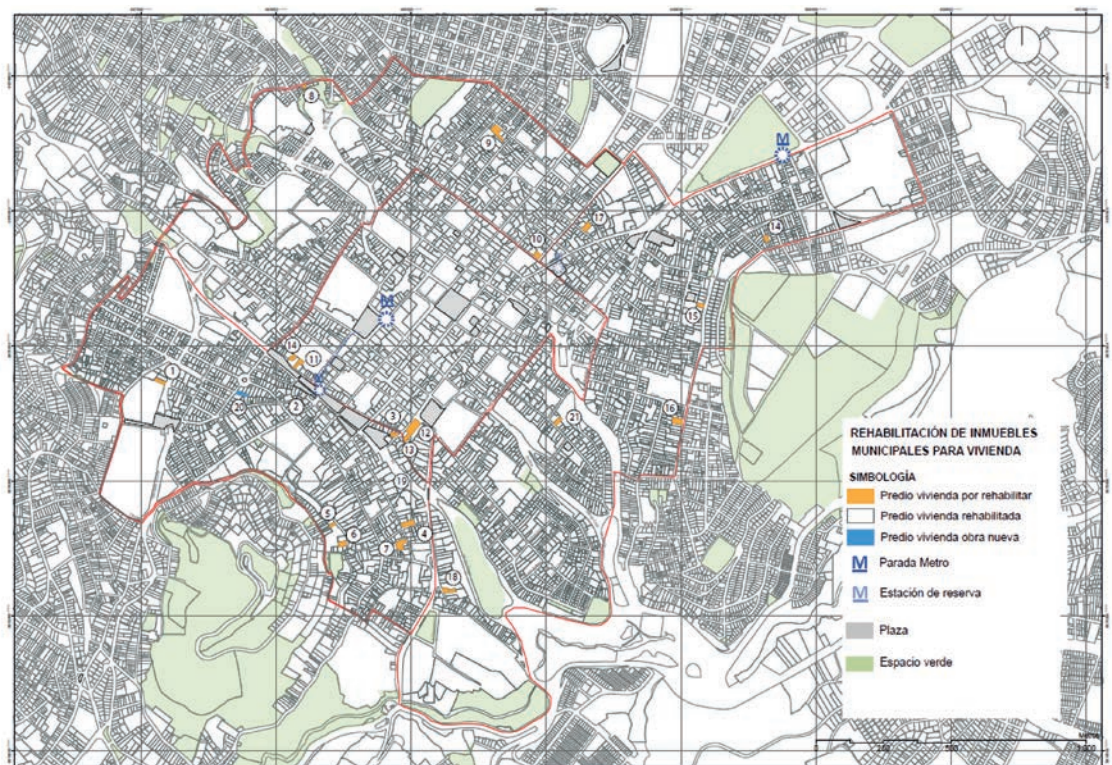
previous experiences, the implementation of incentives and subsidies for the rehabilitation of heritage properties is part of the plan. This practice is not new. In the revitalization of la Ronda Street, before being exposed, was used this mechanism resulted in the expulsion of residents to implement bars and shops. Nevertheless, a new policy to rescue the historic center is set into the plan. (Figure 34) A partnership between public authorities and the private sector regarding housing is new within the historic center's conservation. The presence of the real estate market has been scattered and has not been a substantial influence in the inner city. Rehabilitation of heritage buildings has been an expensive practice that has not been attractive for private sectors. The partnership intends to seek financial support and become attractive for the real estate market in the inner city.

Furthermore, citizen participation's objective is to include neighbors, associations, and other city organizations to formulate a structure of projects that could benefit the community. However, this section of the plan lacks forceful actions.

Therefore, the historic center has a special treatment from the rest of the city, and the plan reflects it. A bounded 'historic centrality' with conservation policies is what the plan presented. The main connection relays on mobility affairs, but the 'Historic Urban Landscape' has not been entirely applied.

Figure 34. Municipal asset rehabilitation for housing  
 Source: Historic Center of Quito. Strategic Plan 2019.

Note: It is not new that the local authorities create social housing for the historic center, the challenge is to create a domino effect where newcomers could feel the inner-city as an attractive spot for living.



# CHAPTER 4.

Latin American theoretical framework



*The theoretical approach used for the historic center of Quito and its intentions of 'heritage conservation' have been forged from university research and international organizations. The content of the chapter focuses on the review of heritage preservation ideas that created a framework for the management of Quito's historic center. Through Latin American experiences and local ones, it has been built the theory that has not widen its horizons to the modern city. Through ideals of international organizations and empiricism of Latina American cases, it is discussed the contemporary conception of heritage beyond monumentalism, the polycentric approach, and the issue of housing that many Latin American historic centers are suffering today.*

As expressed in the previous chapter, the planification of the city has been carried out by public institutions that formulated strategies of preservation as well as development of the historic center. Quito has also received economic support from the central government and international organizations like UNESCO. However, the history of the city shows that Quito has been a planned city where much of the production of urban knowledge has been gotten through its own experience. Its first regulatory plan of 1948 denoted an international influence of different trends that have been practicing during those years., like zoning planning or the 'Garden City.' Moreover, the city of the mid-twentieth century encountered construction techniques such as concrete or glass very characteristic of the European modern architecture. (Figure 35) Since the establishment of the School of Architecture in 1946, the urban production of the city was delimited by high-quality architecture. Apartment and office buildings, cultural centers, university campuses, and housing complexes were part of the modern architecture of Quito. All these international influences

Figure 35. Representative buildings of modern architecture in Quito.  
 Left: Office building  
 Right: Public Health headquarter  
 Source: arqa.com

Note: Besides the historic center, Modern Architecture is the exponent and the architecture of Quito. Its influence was sprawled throughout the north side of the city among office buildings, public and financial institutions, cultural centers, sport complexes, and single-family dwellings. Moreover, many of these buildings are considered architectural heritage of the city.



were configuring the modern city. Nonetheless, urban development reflected empirical knowledge that was transferred to urban documents of planning.

Even though empirical knowledge that public authorities have worked on the planning of the city, there have been important theoretical supports from the university and non-governmental organizations, which both have nurtured urban thinking passing over generations. These theoretical supports establish the intention to follow a coherent urban path and not fall into naivety. Nevertheless, there has not been an official partnership between the public institution and the academy or non-governmental institutions when planning the city. The academic production within architecture and urban schools has reinterpreted the reality of the city through practical and theoretical approaches that have influenced the planning process. The same scenario can be seen when non-governmental organizations have studied the urban condition of the city.

#### *OLACCHI a Latin American organization for historic center conservation*

The conception of the historic center and its preservation encountered a theoretical evolution that echoes international territories by making awareness about historic centers' realities. OLACCHI, Organización Latinoamericana y del Caribe para la Conservación de los Centros Históricos, (Latin American and Caribbean Organization for the Conservation of Historic Centers in English) is probably the most important non-governmental organization dedicated to the study of historic centers and its conservation in Latin America and Caribe. In 2005, both the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ecuador and UNESCO established the international organization, OLACCHI, in the city of Quito. The main approach of OLACCHI has been to determine coherent urban thinking based on historic center's current realities that could help with the conservation as well as the importance of heritage within Latin American and Caribbean cities.

OLACCHI has tried to generalize the condition of Latin American and Caribbean historic centers to generate an urban theory in terms of heritage conservation. The first step that considers is the urban evolution of the historic center. Fernan Carrion, president of OLACCHI, defines the evolution of the historic center, in a general way, into some periods that start with the foundational city. As it was exposed in chapter two, the Latin American city was erected through the imposition of the regular grid, 'damero,' which is quite common among founded cities under Spanish regimes. The second period is defined with the "formation of the urban centrality" (Carrión F., 2017) when it is clear an evident distinction between the old city and the new one. According to Carrión, this period is specified between the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. The third important moment of evolution of the historic center presented itself when there are strong migratory flows from the



countryside to the inner cities as a result of the great depression. This period is featured by population replacement the inner city had been experiencing. Wealthy people started to move on from the center looking for more spacious dwellings while popular sectors started to appropriate the old town. Meanwhile, cities started to grow rampantly because of technological and economic improvement of most Latin American countries. The 80s was the beginning of the fourth period of 'depopulation' when based on Carrión's theory, there were three simultaneous processes the inner city was experiencing: Demographic changes due to migratory flows, state reform (decentralization of the power), and globalization. The periphery became the most affordable zone for popular sectors by producing a process of depopulation of inner cities. Specifically in Quito, this fourth period has last around thirty years when the urban sprawl triggered new defined 'centralities.' Popular sectors have settled in the northern and southern sides, while high classes have moved towards the eastern valleys. In addition, due to the peripheral sprawl, the historic center started to gain attention. International trends of heritage conservation and valuable architecture of the old town produced a sense of awareness among various countries of the region. With UNESCO's declaration in 1978, Quito became a study management model of study for heritage preservation.

Following the theoretical approach to work on the historic center as a fundamental asset for city planning, OLACCHI has been studying different cases throughout Latin America which has supported the conception of historic center and heritage preservation. Through the magazine Centro-H, OLACCHI has echoed three important aspects that made the organization encounter a generic impression of the old town. The presence of Quito as a case study for heritage preservation has been probably the starting point to unfold urban problematics and formulate consistent theories. OLACCHI published three volumes of Centro-H magazine, which presents three main topics: the concept of heritage and historic center, the polycentric approach, and housing in historic centers.

#### **4.1. Reflections about heritage**

The importance of inner-city comprehension starts with the understanding of heritage and its influence on the rest of the city. In the first volume of the magazine Centro-H, Mireya Salgado critic "the discourse on patrimony, one of power and conflict, disciplines and generates a social and cultural construction that, based on established models, attempts to civilize and homogenize. Also, this discourse makes those daily understandings invisible, ignoring them and many times rejecting them." (Salgado Gómez, 2008) The author argues that the practice of heritage conservation has been extremely excluding. The notion of heritage has been widely conceived as a collection of historic representative things that transgress the cultural legacy and do not contribute to the true

meaning of conservation. Salgado also states that the historic center of Quito is encountered into a colonial narrative of the nineteenth century in which the Ecuadorian legacy is reduced to Spanish inheritance. However, heritage should be conceived beyond tangible aspects that apparently keep the Ecuadorian memory. The intangible heritage is the main aspect that carried the historic center of Quito to be one of the first World Cultural Heritage. Towards Inca times, an aboriginal Quito functioned as the divine Andean center that linked the southern Inca territories with the northern ones. Moreover, the description provided in the second chapter about its location and geographic position shows the magnificence of its orographic features that together with archeological vestiges were substantial aspects for UNESCO. In the nineteenth century, the city acquired the connotation of economic and political center of Ecuador. This has also characterized its inhabitants that have been a fundamental aspect of political debates. Quiteños (Quito's inhabitants) have represented the entire Ecuadorian population when defending public interest in front of corrupt governments. Carondelet, the president's house is located in the historic center where has hosted citizenship support, protests and even presidential overthrows during the last twenty-five years. (Figure 36) On the whole, this is the heritage the historic center keeps and has been challenging when conservating.

Figure 36. Citizen support to the government of Rafael Correa in Plaza Grade or Plaza de la Independencia in front of the governmental palace in 2015

Source: Retrieved from: <https://www.presidencia.gob.ec/ciudadanos-de-todo-el-pais-se-concentran-en-la-plaza-grande-para-apoyar-al-gobierno/>

Note: Plaza Grande is the most important public space of the country. The space is considered the Ecuadorian expression where people from all over the country gather. The former president Rafael Correa tried to change the government house to a military complex in the south of the city, but there was a lot of rejection.

Beyond the old town, there are scattered modern architectural pieces that marked the period of the modern city of the mid-twentieth century. Hotels, public buildings, malls, and stadiums are denominated heritage by the municipal government. It is undoubtedly that modern architecture signified a fundamental aspect when modernizing the city and leaving the historic center. Nevertheless, it is open the question at the moment to give the same treatment to these modern vestiges as it is given to the historic center. What are the



used criteria when preserving the heritage of the city? Should it be segregated or collided? Is heritage fulfilling the 'Historic Urban Landscape' approach? Is Quito thinking to integrate properly the historic center into the whole city, or is it just the theoretical approach that cannot be fulfilled because of political interest and economic issues?

#### **4.2. Polycentric approach**

For the second approach, OLACCHI formulates its theory considering the polycentric strategy. Planning Quito has been a constant reflection about the centrality and how it works throughout the entire city. OLACCHI tries to provide this strategy as a solution for the historic center by conceiving it as the main centrality to consider in the context of the urban totality. According to Carrión, it can be identified three types of historic centralities: 1. 'foundational centrality,' that it is identified by the political function where the plaza used to be a symbolic open space; 2. 'functional centrality,' is the high concentration of various functions and services; and 3. 'thematic centrality,' which has the function to connect with its global context of information. Its main aim is to work as an articulating node.

The latest one encounters principles of integration and equality that ought to be applied within the historic center. The theory of the 'global city' of Saskia Sassen manifests that "...the combination of spatial dispersal and global integration has created a new strategic role for major cities." (Sassen, 1991) Moreover, the replacement of the manufacturing sector with a based service economy reinterprets the urban model which transforms the territory to a concentration and compactness. And this is the core of the 'centrality.' The production of knowledge through the adequate integration of activities. The case of the historic center is not too far from the 'global city.' When territorializing synergies are important to produce urban dynamics according to the conservation of heritage. In concordance with UNESCO and other international organizations, one of the main aims is to connect historic centers with international capital links to promote tourism, real estate development, and high-quality commerce.

The historic 'centrality' is the main space of connection and articulation of the urban context. That is why the 'polycentric' approach, according to OLACCHI, builds the city by recognizing agglomerations. The central leadership that Quito plays as a capital, political, and administrative spot is fundamental for the nodal social space of the country. This has made to concentrate the mayor efforts to structure a coherent metropolis through a polycentric approach.

The 'macro-centrality' of Quito in the mid-twentieth century produced an agglomeration of activities that caused its split and decentralization. The idea was becoming stronger with the formation of new urban settlements in the eastern zone. (Figure 20) In the previous chapter, it was explained the use of the polycentric approach through different urban plans, and Vision of Quito 2040 is not the exception. The futuristic vision of Quito is the polycentric structure that is articulated through public space and mobility. In 2019, the new mayor of Quito, Jorge Yunda, initiated a management process to dissuade the structure of 'centralities.' It was launched an urban contest in which the main aim is to create a green infrastructure that connects different urban pieces, 'a Green Corridor'. For the historic center, it is planned to pedestrianize Gonzales Suares neighborhood's streets and use its courtyards for green spaces. The aim is to become the historic center as the biggest public space in the city.

### **4.3. The issue of housing in inner cities in Latin America**

The last topic is housing which has been the most sensitive one, especially in the city of Quito. OLACCHI exposes that monumentality has replaced conservation of social aspects that compound heritage. During the 80s, Latin American's historic centers experienced processes of depopulation that influenced the physical environment dramatically. This depopulation and habitability of popular sectors had been produced by the process of transformation of the old town into the biggest market of cities. The case of Peru is the contemporary example of the predatory agglomeration of commerce in 'Barrios Altos' in its historic center. While it is considered a traditional neighborhood dedicated to popular commerce, a lot of its dwellings are getting empty and used as storage spaces. Every Thursday, for instance, there is a popular fair of shoes produced in the city of Trujillo, the third most important city of Peru. A lot of small companies that produce these shoes settle their business in Barrios Altos where there is a high supply and demand of footwear. According to Gustavo Riofrío, Trujillo responds to 12% of the national shoe production. The importance of this popular fair is becoming Lima's historic center into a market. (Riofrío, 2017)

The commerce topic could be considered a substantial reason for historic center's depopulation. However, OLACCHI also critic public policies of the 80s and 90s which encouraged the construction of new housing in the peripheries. The continuing urban growth of Quito during the last thirty years has responded to these policies and, today, many of them are quite light that do not restrict land consumption. Not only the historic center has been highly affected, but also northern neighborhoods. La Mariscal, for example, used to be a residential area during the 70s and 80s, but the bureaucratic increase of the country with the creation of new office buildings has been depopulating the area. Most of its residents transferred themselves to eastern valleys.

The strong policies of the historic center conservation have not caused the construction and positioning of a new urban fabric like what happened in La Mariscal. There is no doubt that the housing topic in the historic center has been a pure public affair where the private sector has not been able to enter. The social housing policy has not triggered interest among its inhabitants that have decided to leave the old town. Based on OLACCHI, housing policies ought to generate interest among the real estate market as occurred in the 80s and 90s when new peripheral neighborhoods were built. The creation of incentives and subsidies for housing in the historic center is relevant for the interest of heritage conservation. The city of Mexico and Barcelona have created public-private alliances to increase the housing market in their historic centers. These alliances do not only include real estate developers, but also service provider companies that could provide different activities to improve living conditions. However, the attraction of population by the improvement of housing conditions as well as the insertion of services has triggered processes of gentrification as in some neighborhoods of the city of Mexico or Ciutat Vella in Barcelona.

Therefore, the voice of academics and international organizations has been fundamental for the theoretical support of historic center management and conservation of heritage. The topic of 'centrality' has been the backbone of Quito in which the old town has not been envisioned as the urban linkage.



# CHAPTER 5.

The historic center today : an analytical perspective





*Within this last chapter, it is discussed the current situation of the historic center of Quito. Depopulation and abandonment are the most sensible urban issues, that for years, it could not be found solution. Heritage protection has been over anything else, but the city needs more than that. Quito has grown rampantly, especially in the last twenty years, that has not followed the compactness of the planning processes. This has been more attractive for people, and some central neighborhoods are emptying of inhabitants.*

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The understanding of the historic center starts with the study of its evolution from the most important aspects that made it shift through time. Its historic evolution is accompanied by planning tools and policies that have been shaping the urban condition of the historic center. In addition, like in many other cities, the inner city has become a fundamental asset for planning of the whole urban context. The urban life of Quito started in its historic center, and as exposed in the previous chapters, it has been fundamental for the articulation as well as assemble of urban dynamic. Whether planned or not, the historic center has been an asset of infrastructure for the city of the Andeans. Only after the mid-twentieth century, the city started to give importance to the historic center and the conservation of its heritage. Nevertheless, this latest has concentrated its efforts on monumentalism and a timid approach regarding public policies to conserve its social heritage. A historic center full of traditions, political debates, popular markets, touristic attractions, and monuments is what the city of Quito is struggling to maintain. The process of depopulation reflects the light housing policies applied to the old town. There is not a doubt the intention to attract people, but what is the price that the old town must pay? Does population recharge? A new dynamic far away from the traditional ones? This is the question that the historic center must face in the future.

First and foremost, it is necessary to understand the current situation looking in various ways. The sociological, socioeconomic, and physical conditions are important to reflect on the next phases of the old town. The panorama of Quito could not be different from previous practices and what they are confronting. Finally, the question of 'centrality' and how it is manageable in a city that should not continue solving its urban issues through little-shocking policies, especially in its inner town.

*Reflections of the current situation of the historic center*

### **5.1. Analysis sociodemographic**

It is calculated that the historic center has a population of 36.610 inhabitants and an urban density of 182,32 pph, of which 35 % live in poverty conditions

On this page. Upper left Chart 04. Population decreases in the historic center

Source: Author's elaboration based on INEC (1990-2014) and Instituto de la Ciudad.

Note: In 15 years the historic center has reduced 28,19 % of its population. The most affected area is Gonzalez Suarez neighborhood where it is located a lot of public buildings.

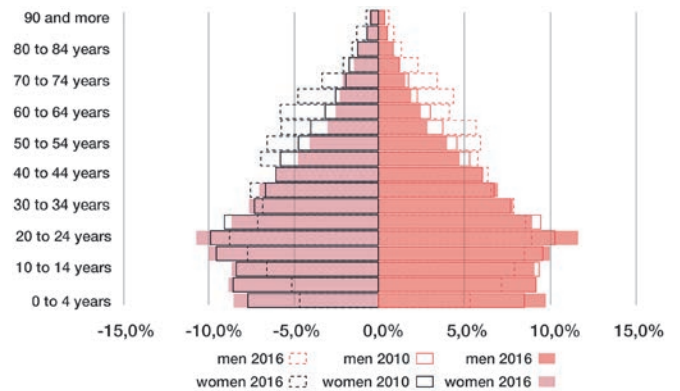
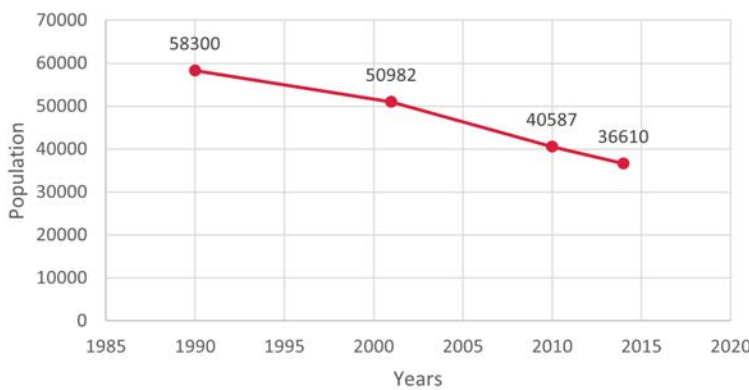
On this page. Upper right Chart 05. Population pyramid of the years 2001, 2010, and 2016 of the historic center of Quito

Source: Instituto de la Ciudad, 2016

and 8 % are extremely poor. (IMP-DMQ, 2019) Its progressive depopulation denotes a lack of interest to live in the inner city. (Chart 04) Its lack of neighborhood services and the presence of city-scale services nurture this condition. When talking about social characteristics of its population, it is an evident change from previous years. A survey carried out by DMQ in 2016 and analyzed by Instituto de la Ciudad, shows the features and circumstances in which the population is living. The survey was made to 1966 homes located throughout the whole historic center with 95% of confidence and 2.1% of sample error.

The historic center shows a drastic change when refereeing its population pyramid. (Chart 05) The analysis shows that the population between 0 to 20 years old has been reduced in the span of 15 years. It means that there is a reduction in newborns. The same situation happens in people between 20 and 40 years old. On the contrary, older inhabitants between 44 and 70 years old have increased their population in relation with the years of 2001 and 2010. This denotes the contemporary shifts the historic center has suffered and the loss of interest in procreation. Regarding the composition of families in the old town, it can be seen in table 02 that around 60 % of the families keep the traditional composition of parents with two or more children and even more family members. Whereas the rest 40 % is configured by couples without siblings, mono-parental compositions, or single people. Education levels in the old town is relatively low. The analysis was made for 24-year-old people and older. This shows that only 28,45 % of this population has completed their

Population decrease in the Historic Center



| Family Types                |        |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| Extended family             | 20.30% |
| A couple with children      | 40.90% |
| A couple without children   | 11.50% |
| Single parent with children | 12.30% |
| Single                      | 14.90% |

| Type of housing    |        |
|--------------------|--------|
| Own house          | 41.50% |
| Inherited property | 6.20%  |
| Rented             | 49.60% |
| For services       | 2.70%  |

secondary studies, 18,93 % has decided to continue with university studies and completed, and only 0,8 % has decided to study for a master's degree. (Instituto de la Ciudad, 2016) Furthermore, this population is also featured by its multiculturalism. The survey presents a historic center inhabited by people from 23 provinces of the 24 that compound the entire country.

Housing indicators show that more than 50 % of the population living in the historic center are tenants, and around 48 % of the people own their property. Thus, it is evident this tendency of leasing. (Table 03)

## 5.2. Socioeconomic situation

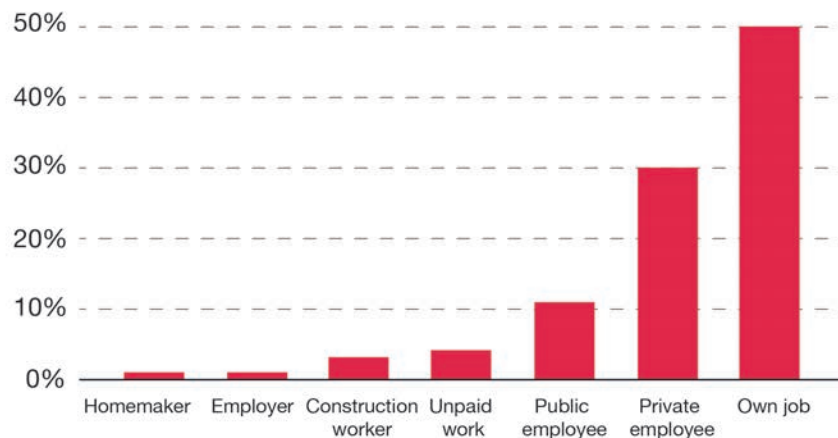
According to the economic analysis made for the historic center, it "...can be classified as a deprived economic zone." (IMP-DMQ, 2019) The study also says that the economic income of its inhabitants is 23 % under the general average of the whole city. Generally speaking, Ecuadorians has been featured as entrepreneurs as a result of the lack of employment as well as the economic recession the country has experienced towards the last six years. In Quito, it is not different, and the historic center is the place where the situation is more evident. (Figure 37) The 70s had been the beginning when commercial activities started to flourish. Following the same analysis of the Instituto de la Ciudad, almost 50 % of labor population has its own business such as commerce, sexual workers, shoeshine boys, small business, intermediaries, among others. (Chart 06) 30 % are employees of private companies, while 11 % works for the public sector. (Instituto de la Ciudad, 2019)

Even though the historic center is the most visited spot of the city, it presents low incomes regarding this economic item. Hotel supply in the old town is 14,1 % under the general average of the city. Just 9 % of the hosting activities are located in the historic center, 10 % of food and beverage, and less than 1%

On the previous page.  
Bottom left  
Table 02. Family types of the historic center of Quito  
Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Instituto de la Ciudad, 2016

On the previous page.  
Bottom right  
Table 03. Type of Housing property in the historic center of Quito  
Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Instituto de la Ciudad, 2016

On this page  
Chart 06. Job types in the historic center of Quito  
Source: Instituto de la ciudad, 2019





of touristic agencies. These paradoxes denote the strong policies of heritage preservation that although streets and monumental buildings are highly concurred by visitors, the supply of services for tourists is low.

### 5.3. About contemporary spatial aspects

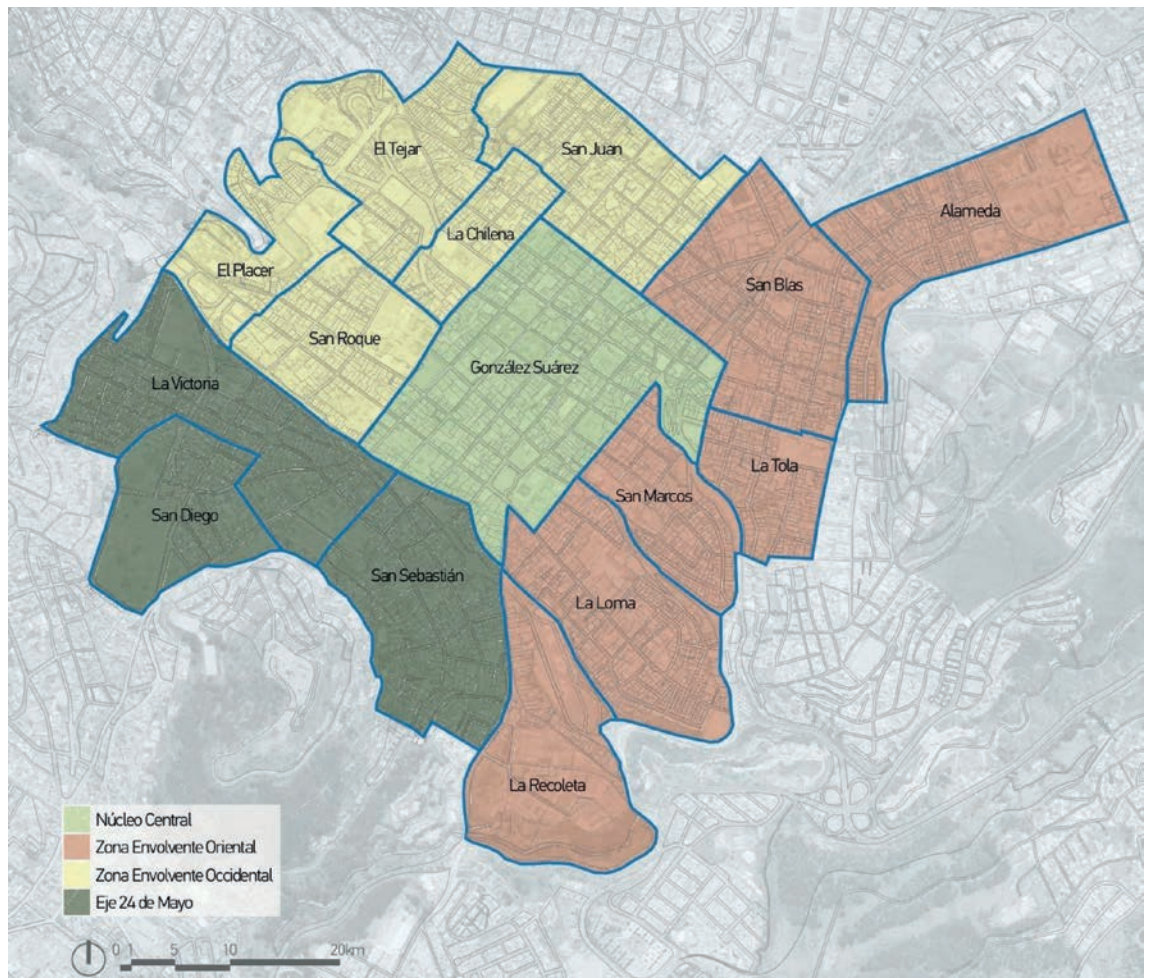
Four aspects are important to analyze when talking about the physical aspect of the urban fabric: its delimitation, state of houses, public space, and mobility.

Even though it has been exposed the location and centrality of the old town, there was not a physical limitation to understand the borders between the old town with the modern city. Thus, it is strictly relevant for the municipal authorities to delimit the historic urban core for heritage protection. As seen in figure 38, there are policies mainly dedicated to conservation control regarding this area of the city. The idea to make cities was always encountered within the municipal boundaries and the jurisdiction this presents for each specific zone. Consequently, the model of zoning planning implemented in the 40s and 50s is still practicing nowadays, and it is the resulting insistence to border the old

On the previous page  
Figure 37. Photocollage  
of typical street vendors  
and religious businesses  
Source: Photo shot by  
Paola Cordero

On this page  
Figure 38. Limits of the  
Historic Center of Quito  
with neighborhoods  
Source: Instituto de la  
Ciudad, 2019.

Note: Technocratic  
planning has been the  
main source of planning  
for the city of Quito. Its  
strict limits have also  
helped to bound the  
historic center that has  
special policies for its  
management.



town. It is clear that there have been efforts to provide a light integration of the historic center to the contemporary city through the implementation of public space, and protection of natural areas. Nevertheless, it has not been sufficient to break the bounded thinking of old town conservation. "...to conceive the historic center as an 'urbanity infrastructure' means to underscore its character as an endowment for the contemporary city..." (Bonfantini, 2012) As expressed in the statement, the old town continues having interventions that do not go beyond its boundaries. And through this historic bounding urbanism, the historic center has developed an urban fabric very conserved but open to some contemporary dynamics.

The intervention and renovation of historic dwellings have turned into a delicate and expensive practice, even for their owners. In the census of 2010 carried out by INEC (Instituto Nacional de Estadística Ecuatoriano), it was counted a total of 15.456 dwelling units which 48,5 % are in regular and bad conditions. Due to this phenomenon, the rehabilitation of houses in poor conditions has been reduced to the maintenance of their facades which is the most visible aspect. Many of these dwellings present bad conditions in their interiors or are used for storage purposes. According to the census of housing made in 2017, 8.375,07 m<sup>2</sup> of the dwellings were destined to storage spaces which is more evident in the core's neighborhoods and commercial western ones.

Together with monumental buildings, public space has been the most cared for and intervened one. Because of the compactness of its urban fabric, public space constitutes 4.7 % of the total area by resulting in 4.24 m<sup>2</sup> per inhabitant. (IMP-DMQ, 2019) Though the versatility of the regular grid, the old town has not been able to provide more than squares in its core area. The major public space that has had various interventions through the years is 24 de Mayo Avenue. (Figure 39) The pedestrian street has the fundamental aim to connect the old Garcia Moreno penitentiary (it is planned to be a cultural center) with Cumandá Park (the old interprovincial bus station) Further public spaces that configure the urban tissue are open stairs. Unlike squares and 24 de Mayo Avenue, the public stairs are neighborhood public spaces located throughout peripheral neighborhoods that provide access, that because of the topography, had been difficult to solve with only inclined streets.

The inner city's pedestrianization had been a long discussion. Today, two avenues have been turned into pedestrian axis dedicated to commercial and cultural purposes. Academics and local authorities coincide with the pedestrianization of the central core, Gonzalez Suarez neighborhood. It is planned to adopt the 'super block' strategy like in Barcelona. Over the last years, however, there have been disagreements among its inhabitants arguing that pedestrian streets have attracted strangers and high flows of visitors.

A relevant aspect of the function of the historic center is the structuring of its mobility. Since the beginning, the historic center has been the obliged pass from north to south by structuring a longitudinal infrastructure of mobility. The implementation of the BRT in 1997 has been fundamental for the north-south connection of the city. Over the next years, there have been further BRT systems that nurtured the public transportation system. Today, it is expected the implementation of the first metro line that will have one station in the historic center. (Figure 40) This mass transportation system has the goal to longitudinally articulate the city. The old town receives around 300.000 visitors daily, and with the implementation of the underground system, it is expected to receive the double of its current visitors (Metro de Quito, 2021)

Moreover, the public transport system is supported by buses that have the same longitudinal trajectory. Due to the facility of the urban fabric, big buses for 90 people have been able to get around through the historic center. In some streets and corners, these buses have difficulties turning by circulating over sidewalks. The agglomeration of buses and particular cars provokes vehicular congestions and contaminations. The speed average of the inner city is 3 km/h while in the city is 25 km/h. Based on the Secretaría de Movilidad, in 2018, 76.038 cars have circulated daily and 1.233 buses which are divided into 65 lines. (Figure 41) In addition to the congestion issue, the lack of parking spaces is another problem. Of the inhabitants that have a car, 76 % do not have a

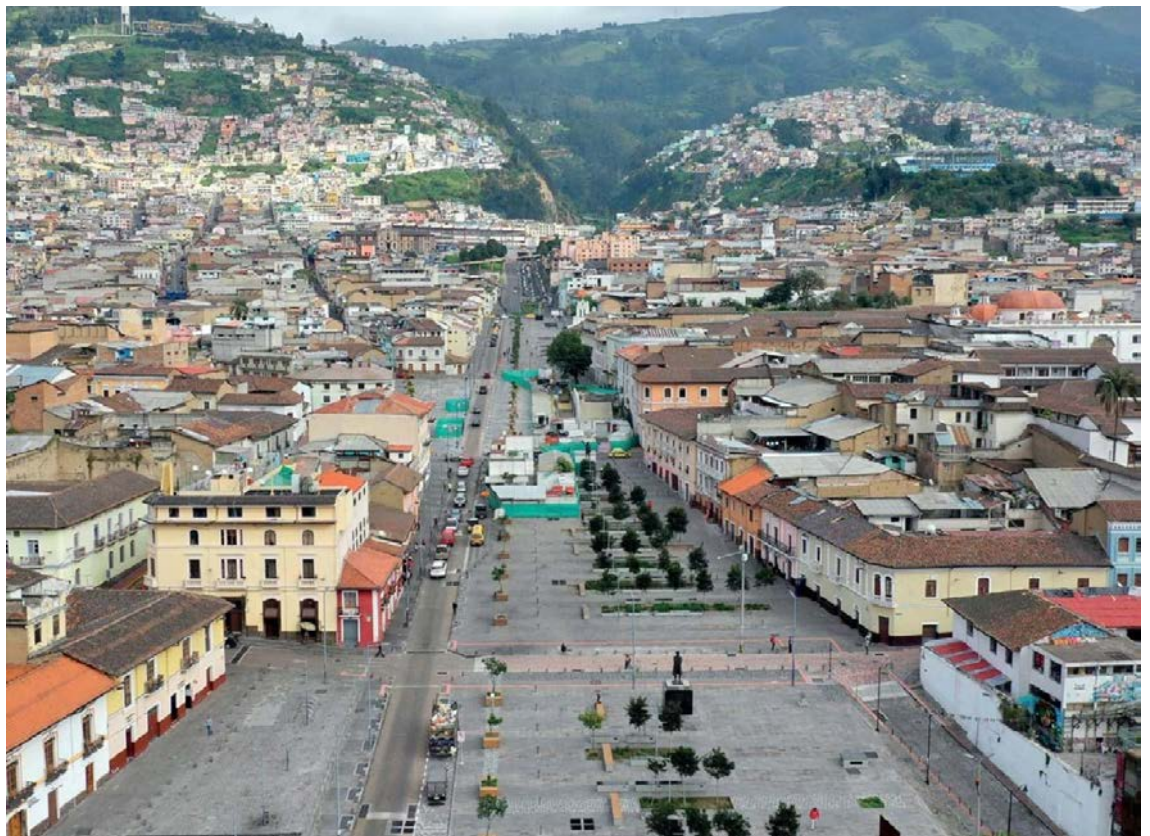


Figure 39. 24 de Mayo Avenue  
Source: Instituto de la Ciudad, 2019

Note: This is the widest open public space that has had various urban interventions due to its high levels of insecurity, drug dealing, and prostitution.

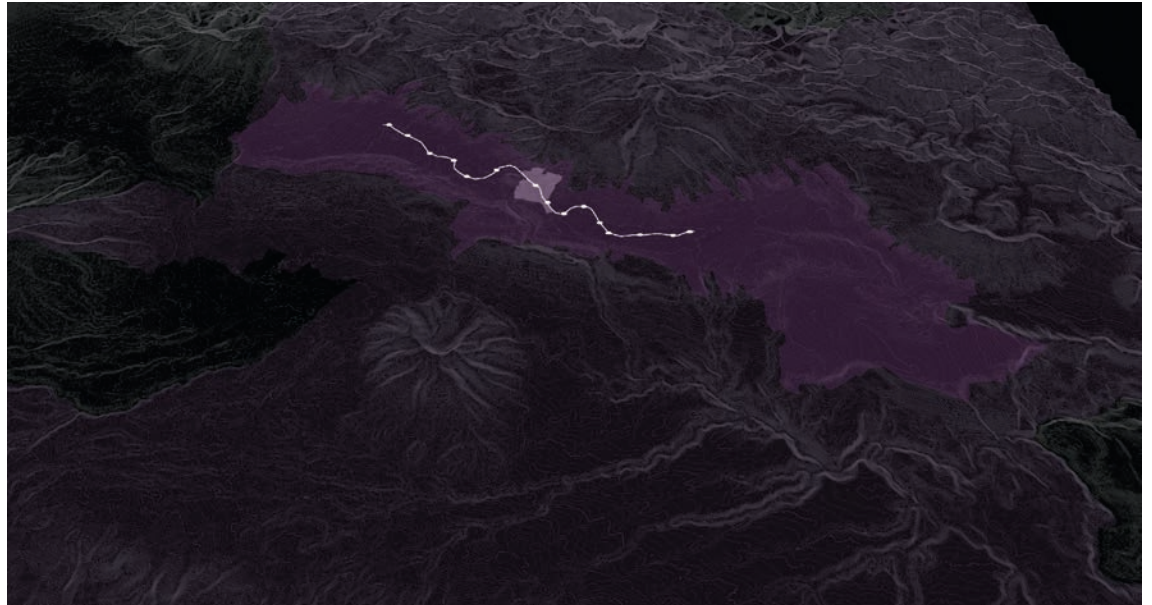
proper parking space, (IMP-DMQ, 2019) that has generated the creation of private parking lots that do not have public permissions.

One of the sustainable solutions for mobility in the city has been working on is the bicycle. There were built bikeways in the north side of the city, where few people have taken advantage of the service. In the historic center, the implementation of biking lines has not been easy because they were destined

Above

Figure 40. Metro line with stops in Quito  
Source: A line in the Andes, 2012

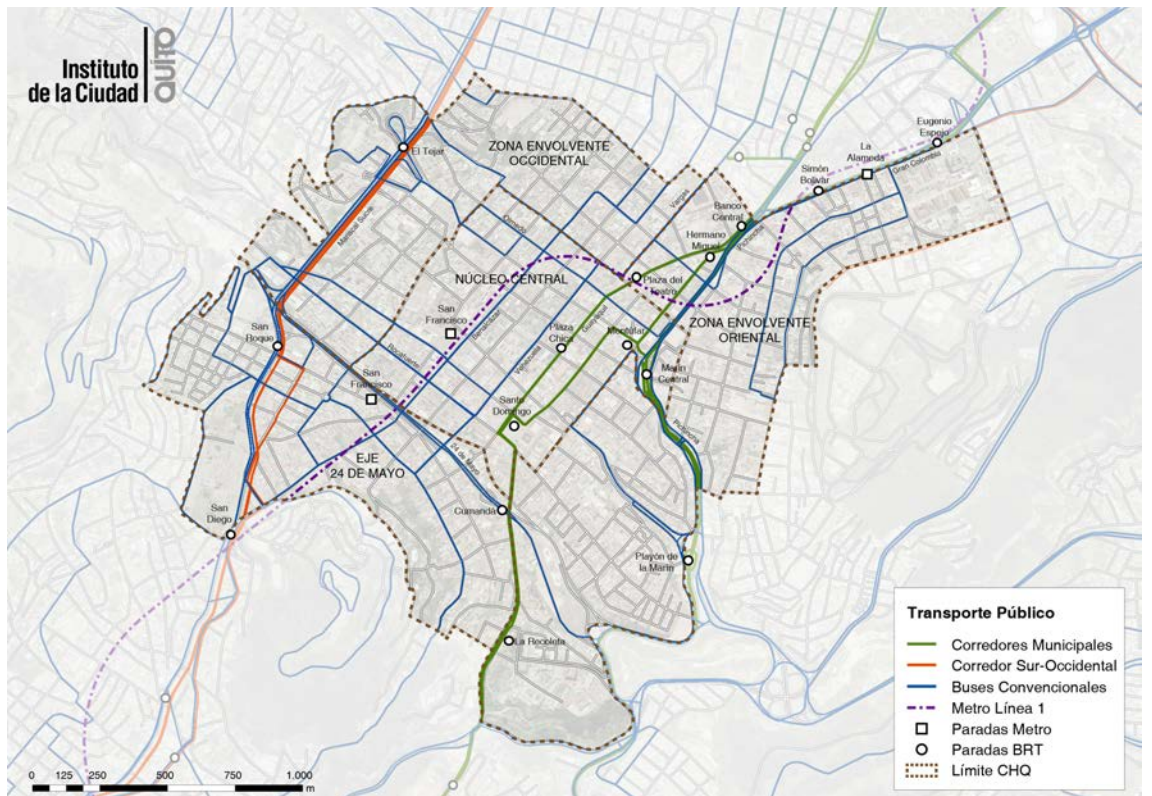
Note: Apparently, the studies and projections for the metro of Quito were ready in 2012, but then there were delays due to political and economic interests. Finally, the metro line started its construction in 2016 and it is expected to start functioning in 2022.



Bellow

Figure 41. Mobility system in the Historic Center of Quito  
Source: Instituto de la Ciudad, 2017

Note: The historic center has been the infrastructure for transport articulation of the city. Throughout history, it has witnessed the implementation of modern systems of mobility such as a tramline at the beginning of the twentieth century, buses that cover north and south routes, the BRT system, and now the underground metro line with one station in San Francisco Plaza.





to share the space with cars and buses. However, bikers have never had preference, becoming dangerous. Some users found the solution through biking on pedestrian streets and even the exclusive lane of the BRT.

#### 5.4. Culture and traditions

It is undoubtedly that Quito is also known because of its traditions and festivities. The high number of catholic churches since colony and republican times encourages public faith and devotion. Mannerist, baroque, and neo-gothic temples beautify the landmark of the inner city where is the scenario of religious rituals. Every Holy Friday before Eastern, around 200.000 people (Klassen, 2018) gather in San Francisco Plaza and its surroundings to start the 'Procesión de Jesus del Gran Poder,' a traditional procession that gets around the historic center and ends in the same square. (Figure 42) It lasts around 5 hours where people pray for Jesus' crucifixion. Further events such as 'Ruta de las Iglesias' which is an athletic race that has a route of 10 kilometers, gets around all the churches of the historic center at night. In its first edition in 2005, there were around 2.000 competitors, and in the last one in 2019, there were around 15.000 participants. (Ruta de las Iglesias, 2021) The competition has opened the interest of the public and has created a sort of belonging towards the historic center. (Figure 43) Recently, the local government has efforted to attract people and rekindle the interest of Quiteños to the old town. The former mayor, Mauricio Rodas, organized some events that helped to make it more attractive. The most relevant one was the creation of the 'Light Party' in August. The most representative churches and public buildings were chosen to project artistic designs produced through digital devices. The event lasts one week every night as part of the commemoration of the national independence, August 10th. During this week, the historic center became a nocturnal public space free of vehicles due to the big demand of people. (Figure 44)

Figure 42. Left: Cucuruchos, traditional characters of the 'Procesión del Jesus del Gran Poder.' Right: the procession in the historic center  
Source: Historic Center of Quito. Strategic Plan 2019.

Note: This is the most important Catholic event in the city. The devotion to Jesus del Gran Poder has increased over the years, that it has even been encouraged by catholic educative institutions.



has supported the idea of insecurity and smelly of the old town. Two big food markets located in the periphery, which are quite visible, are hidden by the imaginary of tourists and visitors. Even though these markets function at metropolitan level, and one of them is center of food distribution throughout the entire city; degradation and uncontrolled commerce caused the rejection of visitors. There has not been a proper management policy that could contribute to the livability of this public markets. (Figure 45)

Typical food, traditional handicrafts, legends, music, art, among others keep alive the traditional Quito within its historic center. The media and municipal government have built an image of Quito that is sustained around the 'inherited city' that preserves the memory of the Ecuadorian society. The millennial city located in the center of the world is, unconsciously, presented as the 'historic city' that is always in the avant-garde of the country. The administrative and political center is, in theory, a whole metropolis, but in practice, its social and economic polarizations reflect the fragmentation of its territory, where the historic center is a valuable piece.



Above  
Figure 43. Nocturnal running competition in the historic center  
Source: Retrieved from: <https://www.ultimasnoticias.ec/futbolero/fiesta-carrera-atletismo-ruta-iglesias.html>



Below  
Figure 44. Light Party in the historic center.  
Church of San Francisco  
Source: Historic Center of Quito. Strategic Plan 2019.

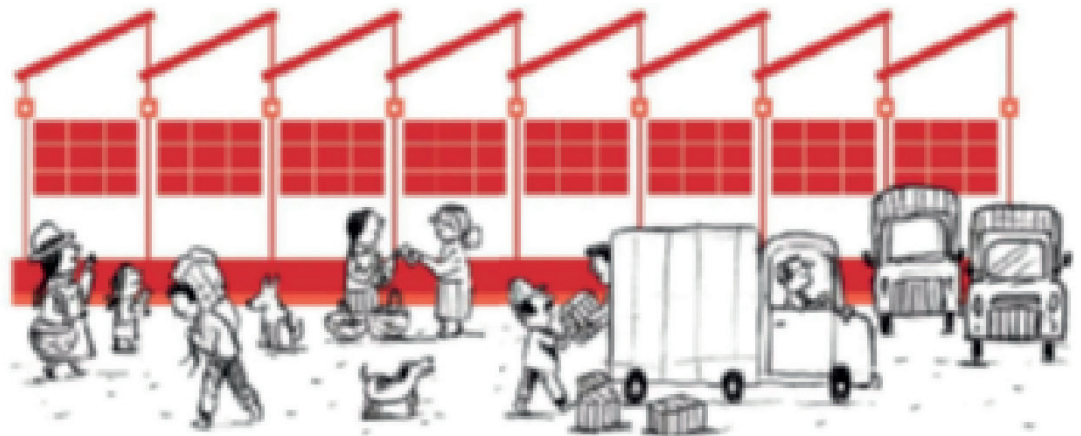


Figure 45. Illustration about public markets in the historic center of Quito  
 Source: Instituto de la Ciudad, 2019

Note: Public markets have been quite important for the city, especially for popular sectors. The illustration depicts the urban dynamics that can be found in the external areas of the markets. Some of these traditional activities which signify economic incomes for many are losing space in the processes of planning. It is important to understand its influences and how relevant they are for the historic center and the entire city.





# CHAPTER 6.

**Towards an urban conservation approach: potential opportunities for the historic center of Quito**



*The chapter is made up of the provision of recommendations for the implementation of the 'Historic Urban Landscape' approach in the historic center of Quito and examples of external experiences for each recommendation section. It is divided into four main segments: governability, social participation, beyond the centrality, and urban regeneration. In addition, it is provided a possible scenario regarding social phenomena that could appear before processes of urban regeneration.*

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Based on the previous analysis of heritage conception, the evolution of the city, tools and policies, voices of scholars, and the current situation of the historic center, its vision towards its future tends to be blur. Local authorities do not have clear strategies of management and conception of policies and projects. Even though the empirical approach has given the practice to provide a theoretical framework when planning the city, there have been important outcomes and reflections which help to guide the city towards coherent urban practices. In order to provide a clear understanding of the future of the historic center of Quito, it is important to review a compilation of experiences and theories of various authors that could nurture the current system of management for heritage conservation within the city. The Historic Urban Landscape approach suggests the implementation of policies and tools to mitigate the impact of effects created within historic areas due to urbanization and globalization. The historic center of Quito has been, in some respects, quite resilient when the city has modernized itself, but other aspects have been substantially damaged needing restoration. The paradoxical alive urban dynamism of the mornings with the passive mournful urban life of its nights demonstrates the unbalance of its activities where heritage is not conceived totally, and 'monumentalism' is gaining over the true meaning of conservation. Indeed, the recognition of heritage through different stakeholders is the first step to consider an urban requalification of the historic center and fundamental aspect of the 'historic urban landscape' approach. Dynamism and continuous shifting of the city are present in UNESCO's framework. Over the years, Quito has encountered heritage as the paradigm that relies on the victim of the modern city from which should be protected in extreme. In effect, this has been the job of public authorities when imposing its statutory planning over almost all the plans for Quito. However, the scholars, Geurts and Corten, talk about the replacement of this orthodox planning by 'strategic planning' that aims to fulfill the 'historic urban landscape approach's' demands. "Strategic planning is defined as: a socio-spatial process through which a range of people in diverse institutional relations and positions come together to design plan-making processes and develop contents and strategies for the management of spatial change; an opportunity for constructing new ideas and processes that can carry them forward; collective effort to re-imagine a city, urban region or region

and to translate the outcome into priorities for area investment, conservation measures, strategic infrastructure investments and principles of land-use regulation.” (Albrechts, 2017) A more fluid process is needed to interpret the different opportunities the historic center of Quito can offer to its inhabitants. It is given some recommendations regarding different issues the inner city is facing: governability, participatory planning, beyond the centrality, and urban regeneration.

### **6.1. Governance for the historic center**

Even though the ‘Historic Urban Landscape’ (HUL) approach does not specify or recommend a governmental structure or type, it has been widely accepted the autonomy of local authorities as fundamental for proper development of the HUL and proper cross-communication with different stakeholders. A basic distinction of governmental levels is quite visible in the case of Quito. Its autonomy, acknowledged in the process of decentralization during the 80s, has been beneficial for the city’s development. The issue lies on the extreme bureaucratization, that over the years, has been creating new public companies dedicated to different aspects creating overlapping zones of interventions and slow down urban processes. The case of the historic center is the clearest one. It is institutionally bounded from the rest of the urban planning of the city. ‘Instituto de la Ciudad’ is the public entity dedicated to conservation and management of the historic center, as well as it has the autonomy to work freely on the old town under national and international regulation standards. Nevertheless, within the governance organigram of Quito, there are further institutions whose aim is heritage preservation, such as ‘Secretaría de Cultura.’ Today, the institutional issue of Quito has been visible since the process of remotion of the mayor and the positional of the vice mayor. According to Carrión, Quito has more than 20.000 people working in the municipal government, while Guayaquil, the second-largest city in Ecuador does not reach 4.000 employees.

Furthermore, the Metropolitan District of Quito is divided into eight administrative zones as part of the process of decentralization. The main goal of these administrative zones is to “guarantee an integral development and citizen participation” (Municipio del Distrito Metropolitano de Quito, 2021) The historic center is also part of one of these administrative zones. In short, it has been a bureaucratic structure that started since the development of the last ‘National Constitution of Monte Cristi’ in 2008 with the eagerness of heritage protection.

The city has followed some precepts of governance for heritage conservation from a national level to the creation of specific institutions for the preservation and development of its historic center. The institutional problem, together with



its intensive technocratic urban development has become a barrier for social participation and heritage recognition, which is highly recommended within the HUL. Instead, the main approach, over the years, has been the economic resurgence of the historic center through the development of monumentalism.

At the national level, executive and legislative powers must provide legal resources for the institutional restructuring of Quito. Some authors also recommend direct involvement of national governments in the regeneration and management processes of historic centers. The central government has provided Quito the complete autonomy that has triggered institutional issues, extreme bureaucratization, and even corruption. Moreover, heritage conservation, at city level, has tried to bound and isolate the historic center from the rest of the city. Although it has always been present within processes of urban planning, the different institutions and policies of heritage protection have limited the incursion of the old town within the whole urban development. A flexible structure of governance and bureaucratization are essential for heritage preservation. Finally, the case of 'Instituto de la Ciudad' has been a positive aspect for heritage management but inappropriate for the historic center's social development. The institution should have the opening to work, firstly with the community, and then different public and private stakeholders. In fact, the intention of heritage recognition and management, for the HUL, is that this should be a bottom-up approach, that through participation and organization could develop tools for heritage preservation.

Furthermore, another aspect that the city ought to pay attention to is the continuity of plans and projects through administrative periods. In Quito, every administrative term has a span of five years in which every elected mayor, democratically, tries to get ahead with their initiatives. The underground Metro line, for instance, is a project that has more than 15 years of planning and execution. Every administration has intended to put obstacles by discrediting and belittling the work of the previous administration regarding planning, financing, and construction of the metro line. All the three administrations that had to deal with the project have tried to appropriate it, producing delays and economic losses.

#### *6.1.1. International experience: The case of Mexico City*

Urban heritage development in the city of Mexico started from the reconfiguration and decentralization of public powers in the country. In 2016, the capital changed from a federal district to an autonomous entity. This altered the government structure that encouraged the interest and participation of private and voluntary sectors within decision-making mechanisms. According to Kaya, "the historic center of Mexico City involves the participation of a

broad range of international, national, federal, and local stakeholders in the management process of different stages.” (Kaya, 2019) This ought to be the main aim of governance when talking about urban heritage. The historic center of Mexico City was listed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1987 (Kaya, 2019) together with a southern colonial town, Xochimilco thanks to a series of revitalization actions taken since the 1950s.

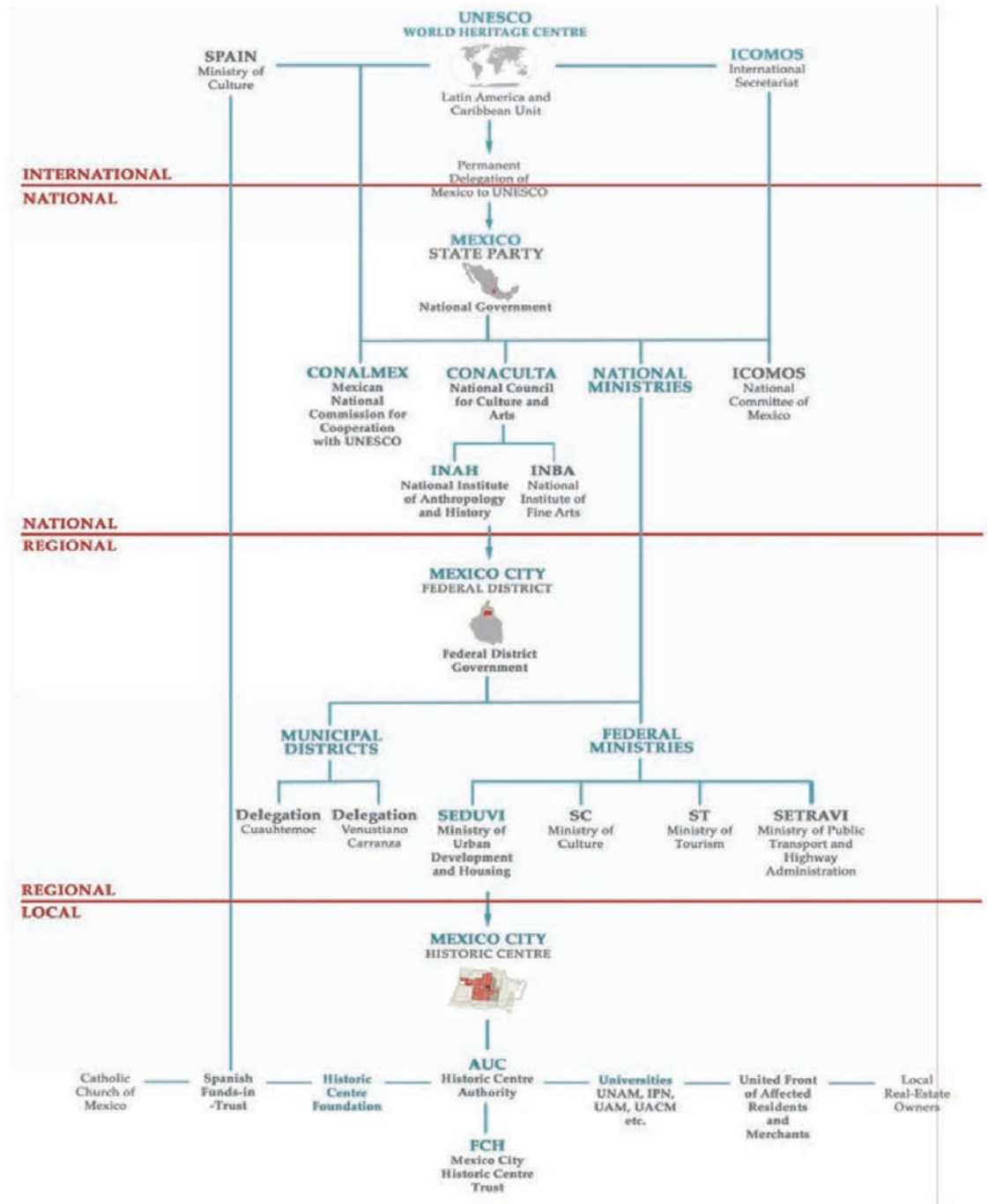


Figure 46. Governmental structure for conservation of the historic center of Mexico  
Source: Kaya, 2019

The decision-making mechanism for the historic center considers four levels. The first one at the international level contemplates UNESCO as the maximum authority that has direct interaction with the rest of the levels. At the national level, it is headed by INAM (National Institute of Anthropology and History) because it has the position to interact with various stakeholders at international and regional level. In the next level, the regional one, the federal government administrates and regulates the territory and has intervened within processes of urban revitalization. The final level, Mexico City represented by the AUC (Historic Center Authority) and the FCH (Historic Center Trust) interact with different bottom-up organizations that together portraits decision-making mechanism for the historic center of Mexico. The bottom-up approach establishes parentship models of participation between different stakeholders. (Figure 46)

This governmental mechanism has been fundamental for the HUL adoption in which local authorities are able to concord with bottom-up organizations for development of management tools: “the integral management plan for the historic center and the innovative partnership models that contributes to the elaboration of the HUL approach by means of documentation, assessment and mapping, community engagement and consensus building.” (Kaya, 2019)

## **6.2. Social participation, involvement, and active attitude towards the historic center**

In the ‘Strategic Plan 2019’ for the historic center of Quito, it is described a process of participation of inhabitants of the historic center before the development of the plan. Instead of a continuing procedure within the decision-making process, it was a checklist to complete as part of the ‘historic urban landscape’ approach. Social participation was the first step to developing the plan, but it ended in that stage. The main aim of the strategic plan regarding citizen participation was to identify urban issues as a resource for the plan’s development. Nevertheless, the strategic plan is not more than a final document where it is exposed the community needs as well as solved by the public administration. The collective effort should be composed through all the processes of urban change. In addition, not only inhabitants should be involved, but also all stakeholders that influence and intervene within the old town. Public institutions with their authorities, neighborhood organizations, private institutions, and investors are the ones to be part of the decision-making process in which every group can express its interest to achieve consensus. The idea of pluralism within planning encounters the interest of all the stakeholders towards the foundation of an “urban democracy” (Davidoff, 2007) to develop urban policies. “Appropriate policy in a democracy is determined through a process of political debate. The right course of action is always a matter of choice, never of fact. In a bureaucratic age, great care

must be taken that choices remain in the area of public view and participation.” (Davidoff, 2007) Public interaction and communication make the historic center management a process of heritage recognition in which every involved stakeholder contributes to the development and preservation of heritage. Based on some authors and international experiences, it was developed some actions to take into account during the making-decision process.

Public discussion: The first step lies on the interaction of stakeholders for the discussion and pertinence of heritage protections. This close-up is important to present to actors the way in which it is important to protect heritage, not only from monumentalism but also from intangible aspect that makes up social order. The identification of the territory and its heritage values initiates a strategy for citizen engagement. This process of identification tries to create a sort of awareness among citizens regarding heritage protection and maintenance.



Figure 47. ‘Cuéntame Tu Quito’ program for conservation awareness in the historic center of Quito

Source: Cuéntame Tu Quito’s Facebook account, 2019

Note: Over the last ten years. Social participation has become a relevant practice for city planning in Quito. Nevertheless, the mismanagement of the projects and its discontinuity due to changes of political administrations; have created citizen disinterest to work with public authorities.

Workshops: Working together with the community is a practice that has been popularized during the last decade in Quito. The initiative of workshops is a powerful tool for citizen participation and involvement within heritage preservation. In 2013, as part of the commemoration for the 35 years as World Heritage, it was launched the program 'Cuéntame Tu Quito' that had the intention to ask citizens about what they consider heritage. It was used various channels to promote the program such as radio, tv, and even social networks. It was also organized workshops in sixteen community centers located throughout the city. Schools and public spaces were also the scenarios for heritage reflections. (Figure 47) Through the project, it was essential that citizens could understand heritage beyond the point of view of architectural values. Unfortunately, the initiative has not had major influence after its launch, and today, it is not more than a Facebook page.

Additionally, workshops are not only tools for outreaching to the community, but they also make people involved within making-decision processes. It is important to include all stakeholders within every project that could affect them. All participants discuss and put over the table what interests them and what are their intentions within processes. This should be applied from planning to management in which different actors could intervene according to the pertinence of the process.

Problem definition: All the stakeholders should understand the main issue that affects a specific zone for its improvement and revitalization. If there is not a consensus about the problem definition, there will be disagreements that could stop the project. The historic center of Quito has some relevant issues to consider, but the main one is the depopulation phenomenon that is not only affecting the immaterial heritage but also monumentalism. It is important inhabitants could agree about program of rehabilitation in which they consider the affections this could cause them.

Collective management: "Urban management is commonly understood as the process that focuses on strategic and operational concerns of urban development. Although urban management is often considered restricted to urban planning, practice shows that it certainly encompasses heritage conservation" (Corten, Geurts, Meurs, & Vermeulen, 2014) The later mainly depends on the efforts of all stakeholders that intervene within the territory. It is an active attitude not only of professionals or public authorities, but also the public in general. The city is a changing organism that always needs the intervention of participants for making decisions.

Public-private partnership: It is clear that public authorities should provide all the main services for citizens, but it is not the only path to follow. Participation of the private sector is quite important for revitalization of urban areas. Even

though historic neighborhoods could be an attractive area for investments, this is could also be expensive. There have been public-private partnerships for the improvement of certain areas in the historic center of Quito that has been destined for touristic purposes. La Ronda Street, before exposed, is a clear example of that, priming the economic aspect over the social one. Regarding social projects, the private sector could sponsor such as the management of public housing in the historic center or the economic support of physical improvement of any historic asset in exchange of public incentives. Thus, a public-private partnership is another way of participation that could strengthen the practice of heritage conservation.

### *6.2.1. International experience: Plan of Urban heritage in Ambalema, Colombia*

The PEMP (Special Management and Protection Plan) is a national plan developed in 2009 that aims to preserve heritage sites throughout the territory. For the plan, it has been important citizen participation for holistic development of heritage rehabilitation. In 2015, there was the need to review some aspects to implement the PEMP in the historic areas of the country.

- a) “The need for PEMPs to be appropriated both by the municipality administrations and by the communities that inhabit the historical city centers.
- b) The importance of formulating and implementing actions that favor the social appropriation of the cultural heritage of historic city centers, in order to assess its values and protect them more effectively.
- c) The formulation and implementation of actions directed at the improvement of habitability of spaces (buildings and public spaces) that make up the historic city centers.
- d) The formulation and implementation of tools that tend to guarantee the sustainability of historic city centers.
- e) The importance of integrating intangible cultural heritage (ICH) as a fundamental component of the PEMP.” (Higuera , Forero , Forero , & Escovar , 2019)

The city of Ambalema is the result of the superpositions of some historic events that have built a natural and cultural heritage to be preserved. Ambalema is located in the department of Tolima, on the banks of Magdalena River which is understood as the historic development of Colombia. Thus, the river is included as part of the PEMP together with the historic center of Ambalema. Its main economic resource has been agriculture and the production of tabaco. That is why the major cultural identity of the city is tied to agricultural labor, workers, and worker tools. These have leaved little space to other economic activities with better benefits. This has provoked economic declines within the city, directly affected its historic center. One of the main problems was the lack of organization and interest within the community.

The first step to revert the situation was the development of a citizen engagement strategy from the presentation of the PEMP, the recognition of historical, symbolic, and aesthetic values of the historic center, and the realization of workshops. A collective work throughout the whole process was fundamental for the projection of urban plans for heritage management. A series of participatory activities were developed in which community engagement was a priority. Mapping, entrepreneurship, public spaces assessment, architectural conservation, constructions techniques workshops have been some of the topics to include citizens within making-decision processes. With the results of the workshop, it was developed a tree of problem definition that helped professionals understand the real problem of the historic center. (Figure 48)

There were identified causes and effects of the main issue that later helped to develop policies and actions that could recognize and reflect citizen needs. The idea was to create an autonomous environment of the decision-making process at local level where the community could foster proper heritage conservation.

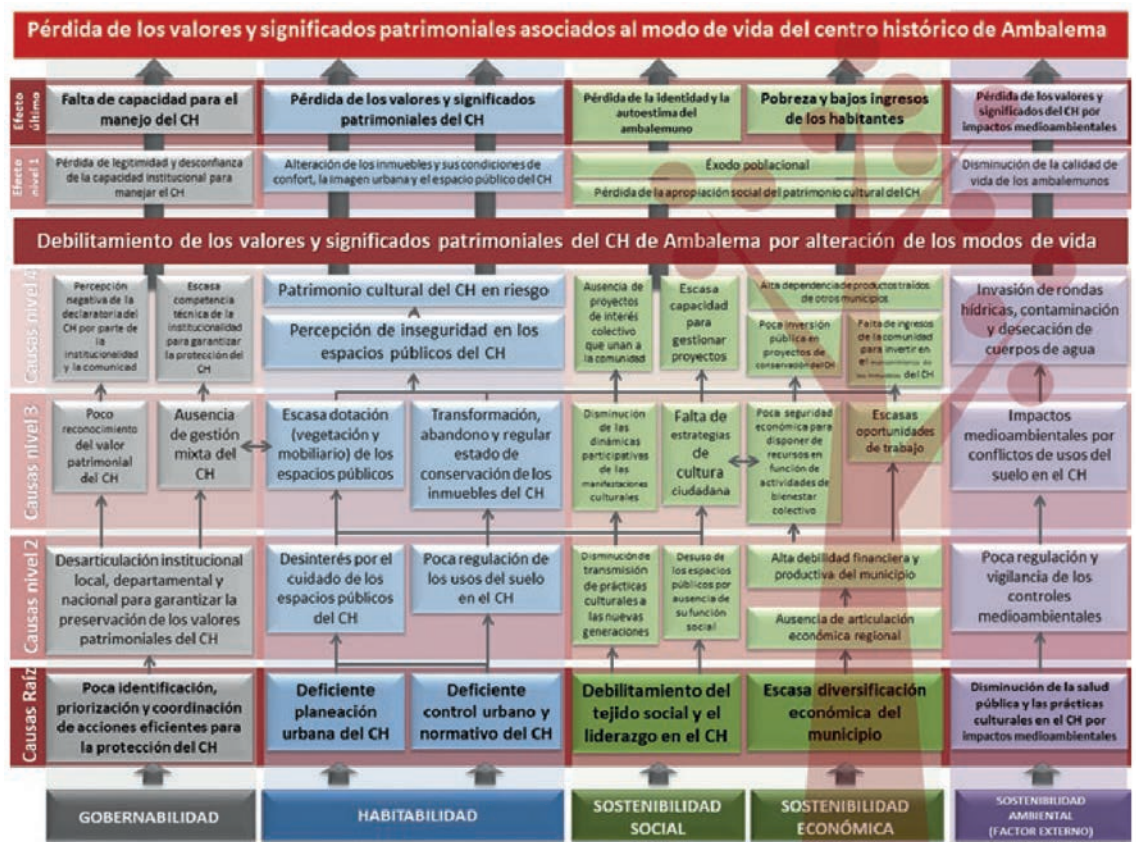


Figure 48. Problem tree elaborated for the historic city of Ambalema  
Source: Higuera, 2019

### **6.3. Beyond the historic centrality: Towards a historic city for its inhabitants**

“...The historic center constitutes a ‘townscape’ that is resilient in its configuration and is nonreplicable.” (Bonfantini, 2012) The monumental city of Quito is entering into a process of insular protection where the admirable and visible are what matters. Through the understanding of its different plans and policies, this conception was changing in theory, but in practice, the territory has been fragmented. At this moment it is important to define the term ‘centrality’ within urban practices.

‘Centrality’ is widely known as the first and more ancient urban area of a city which concentrates vast historic elements and patterns that flourished urban expansion. However, the term, used as a constant proposal throughout the history of Quito, goes beyond this assertion. It was understood as the concentration, firstly of a high number population, and then the presence of facilities that satisfy inhabitant’s needs. Then, it was mainly used as the typical strategy to decentralize a ‘mega-centrality’ to turn it into small ‘centralities’ distributed throughout the urban area by developing a ‘polycentric’ system. The obvious space to implement the strategy has been the historic city center, which its heterogeneity and its diversity of facilities fulfill the features of an ‘urban centrality.’ In a sort of urban manual, Alexander, Ishikawa, and Silverstein; introduce ‘activity nodes’ as urban spaces for community development in which neighborhood facilities distributed closely at ground level—increases urban life and its dynamism. All of this nurtured with pedestrian paths creates the ‘urban centrality’ that works as a small community within urban settlements. Nevertheless, the goal of creating an ‘urban centrality’ is not working in the case of the historic center because of the continuing process of depopulation and the insisting bureaucratism that have isolated it from the modern city.

“There is a clear imbalance of density and intensity of uses between core cities and suburban areas, although the situation is not the same everywhere.” (Mostafavi, 2013) The statement presents an accurate urban reading about what is happening in the historic center of Quito. The concurrent idea of ‘centrality’ and ‘poly-centricity’ for the urban structure has tried to balance the agglomeration in some areas. Nevertheless, the inner city presents two polar phenomena. The first one is its low urban density of 182,32 pph., and the second one is the intensified use of the historic center by the visitor during mornings.

This depopulation ought to be balanced with the second phenomenon which is the intensity. The agglomeration of metropolitan services and its monumental character becomes the historic center into the most visited zone



of the entire city. (Figure 49) With the inclusion of the metro station in San Francisco Plaza, it is expected to almost double the number of visitors. It is important to decentralize the agglomeration of activities of the historic center and spread them throughout the urban territory. Its character of 'centrality' has been a natural urban formation that was later turned into a strategy for city structuring. It is undoubtedly that the inner city has monumental importance, but the 'historic urban landscape' goes beyond 'insular' historic spaces. The integration of the palimpsests restructures new conceptions within the public imaginary. Functions and memories spread throughout the territory make up a correlation between the functioning ancient and modern life where there is a visible continuity.

Recommendation for further strategies for the historic center in Quito is the consideration of a different perspective towards heritage conservation and a sort of deagglomeration. The 'historic city' as a whole is the Italian approach that has responded to current demands of the contemporary city. The reuse of the old city through the implementation of contemporary services and the adaptation to new heritage reinterprets the bounded old city by carrying it to a wider organization of elements. Quito is seen as a "collage" (Rowe and Koetter, 1978) of modern and historic dynamics that should be reconnected where the past is the present and future of the city.

Figure 49. Congestion in the historic center during Christmas time in 2015  
 Source: Retrieved from: <https://ciudadideal.eltelegrafo.com.ec/noticias/quito/1/el-centro-historico-de-quito-registro-ayer-mayor-congestion>

In addition, the type of city we are building is quite rooted in the type of society we are fitting into. The historic center has been the attractor of tourists and an important economic booster for the city. "The fact is that consumption is now the social practice through which persons are drawn into the work of fantasy." (Appadurai, 1996) It is evident that the historic centers are the scenario of concurrent masses of people looking for pleasure. Globalization is the justification that the city has tended to be an economic source. Heritage conservation has not only been a practice for the maintenance of cultural values of a society, but also a focal attractor of tourists. The era

Note: The historic center is the most visited place in the city, especially in December with the commemoration of its foundation and Christmas. This epoch of the year is full of people because of the commerce of gifts and Christmas ornaments. The old town is also famously to provide a big variety of these products.



of consumption expresses itself through the industry of tourism. The critic made by Donovan Rypkema about tourism in historic centers suggests the importance of going beyond tourism. He states that “World Heritage cities are the recipients (for good or bad) of much of the world’s heritage tourism. Some studies have shown that simply being listed as a World heritage city dramatically increases annual visitation.” (Corten, Geurts, Meurs, & Vermeulen, 2014) In many European cities, the spectacular heritage is in constant dispute between traditional residents and tourists. Cases such as Barcelona, Berlin, Venice, Paris, Rome are the main destinations for tourists, where neighborhood associations protest for the excess of tourism. Many of the major policies have been channeled to the improvement and creation of services for visitors and tourists. The shift of urban thinking for the historic center towards social urban planning will focus on heritage conservation based on the immaterial identity that constructs a city.

Quito is not at this point of excess of tourists. Nevertheless, it is important to focus on the making up of an attractive ancient infrastructure not only for visitors but also residents and newcomers. The implementation of services and facilities (explained better in the next section) dedicated to its inhabitants can contribute to the livability of this old urban asset.

### *6.3.1. International Experience: The paradigmatic experience of Bologna and the ‘Historic Urban Landscape’ new framework*

Like other historic centers, Bologna’s presented problems of decadence regarding its housing conditions. During the 60s and 70s, there was a preoccupation to regenerate its historic center and improve its housing conditions. The strategy was to allow property owners to restore their unit dwellings with the supervision of public authorities. However, the policy was cataloged as insufficient to restore the condition of the urban fabric because it was implementing fake construction materials that do not correspond to the original ones. Moreover, its historic center has been reducing its population from 113.000 in 1951 to 53.000 inhabitants until 2007. It also receives around 200.000 people daily among students, workers, and visitors. (Bonfantini, 2015) Thus, during the first decade of the twenty-first, there was a reform to promote stable residency, collective and slow mobility, the balance of land use. In short, it was aimed to decentralize the historic center. To achieve the reform, it was necessary to understand the concept of ‘historic center’ that for years was an ‘insular’ site according to Bonfantini. The concept suffered a shift that contemplates a wider urban fabric beyond the old town. The ‘historic city’ places to further historic elements to compound a livable territory where monumentalism became an urban asset. The new plan for Bologna introduces three dimensions to understand the concept of ‘historic city:’ by elements, that defines individual elements to configure the historic palimpsest;

by recognizable parts, that recognizes whole parts of old urban fabric; and structural, which looks the urban composition by structuring seven strategies known as 'Seven Cities' of Bologna. (Bonfantini, 2015)

Therefore, Bologna as a 'historic city' condensate heritage conservation into an infrastructure. Through public consultant and participation, it was possible the generation of some projects that helped to the city's livability. According to Bonfantini, the 'historic city' approach could certainly match with the 'historic urban landscape' approach conceived by UNESCO in 2011.

#### **6.4. Urban regeneration**

"The Historic Urban Landscape approach seeks to reconnect heritage precincts with the modern city..." (van Oers, 2015) The first attends of conservation were always addressed to preserve the physical environment of ancient sites that, presumably, maintain the cultural inheritance of a particular society. Today, these assertions go beyond the preservation of its urban fabric. Nevertheless, the physical environment that compounds the historic center is conceived as crucial infrastructure for the connection and adaptation with the modern city. Thus, the recommendations are focused on four main aspects for the historic center's regeneration: housing program, provision of services, improvement of mobility, and reuse of empty and vacant buildings.

##### *6.4.1. Implementation of public and private housing programs in the inner city of Quito*

The 'Strategic Plan 2019 for the Historic Center' considers housing as a fundamental aspect to work, however, its intentions are not clear when talking about the type of housing and how it is going to be possible. It is fundamental to understand the type of society that is living in the old town and the type of new society that is coming to fill the population gap. Thus, the preparation of workshops with its inhabitants is needed to socialize the perspective towards the future of a housing program.

Then, the implementation of affordable public housing in the historic city should be an example for further similar projects. It is fundamental to consider financial resources, a proper management plan, and the idoneum site to place this housing, which in the long term could be considered as models of housing in the inner city. Until now, public investments have tried to solve the issue of depopulation, but it has not brought relevant outcomes. Hence, the encouragement of private investment is an effective strategy according to Rypkema. A regulated real estate market could be a possible solution to encourage the proliferation of housing throughout the historic center. With regulated interventions and incentives, private interventions can contribute

to the issue of depopulation. The same author recommends public-private partnerships which could facilitate the management of private and public housing, as previously stated.

#### *6.4.2. Provision of services and public facilities for residents*

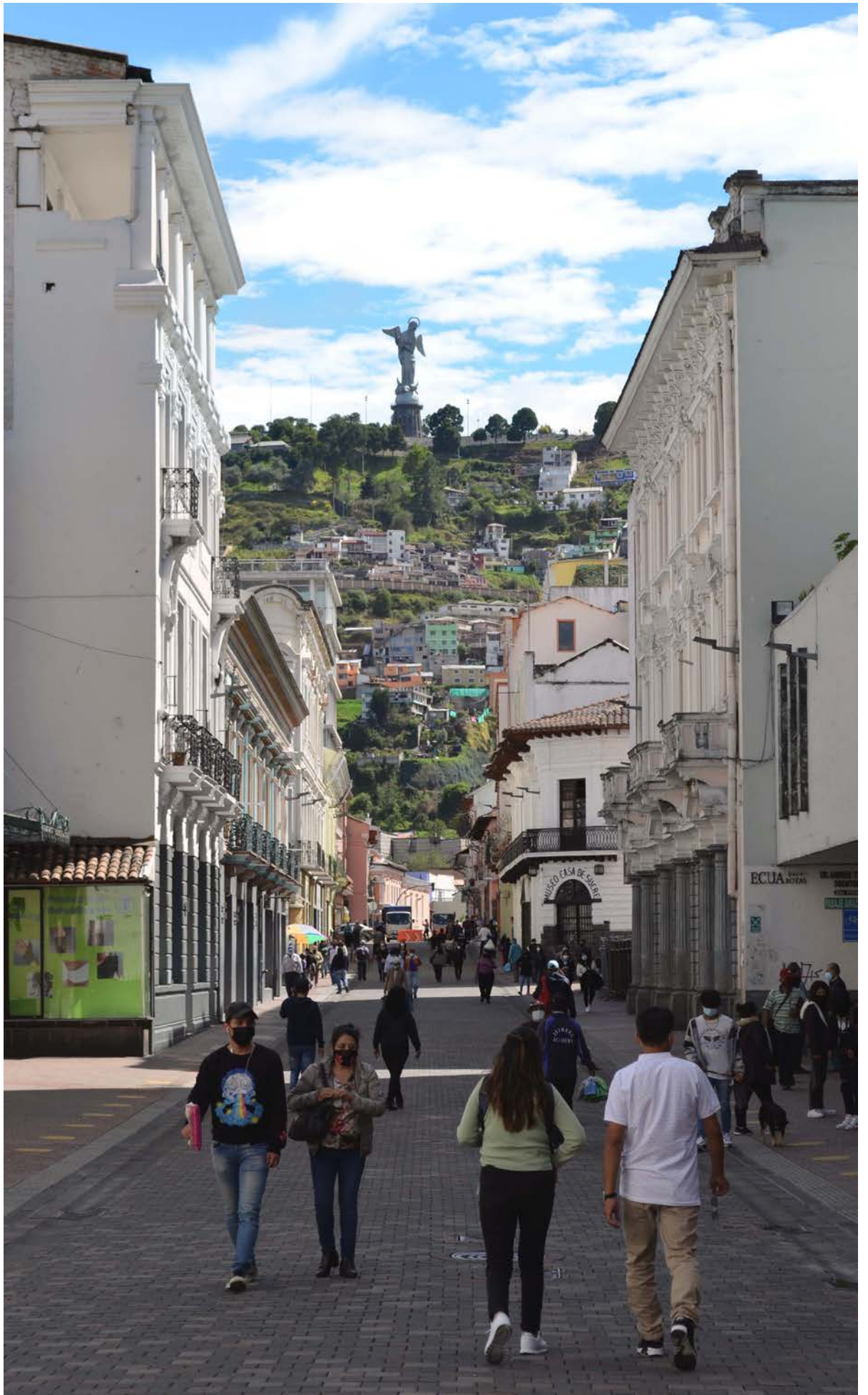
As had been said, it is important the implementation of amenities at ground level in which pedestrians can experience the vibrancy of the historic center. Today, the inner city is full of these ground spaces dedicated to providing services. Nevertheless, most of them are used to satisfy visitors' or tourists' needs. Among them, there are restaurants, cafés, handicraft stores, and cloth stores which are mainly located in the core area, Gonzales Suarez neighborhood, and are mainly for tourists. Whereas peripheral neighborhoods count on facilities for their inhabitants, such as traditional things repair businesses, small grocery stores, bakeries, or carpentries. Additionally, the old town is quite known for its popular commercial activities that attract not only popular sectors but also medium class people. The strong Catholic religion impregnated since the beginning of the city has been transported to the fabrication and commerce of religious figures throughout the old town. There are shops dedicated to the provision of products for christenings, weddings, home appliances, and even school uniforms. All these ground businesses alive the urban dynamics during the mornings, but unfortunately, many of the upper floors remain empty or are used for storage. Thus, it is essential the mix used of buildings that the old town could have activity during the whole day.

Many of these businesses have a date of expiration due to the lack of interest of new generations to continue these traditions and commercial activities. The development of programs that include economic incentives ought to be needed to maintain alive this feature of the old town.

Large-scale facilities are important, but they should receive a proper management plan due to high levels of insecurity of these spaces. The biggest food markets and popular malls, before exposed, remain disorganized because of the excessive number of vendors and its continuing increase. Moreover, there is a deficit of basic services such as financial institutions, schools, and health centers in peripheral neighborhoods. They should be strategically deployed throughout the territory to avoid condensing particular sections areas.

Public institution's apparatus has been a traditional facility in the historic center in which the creation of offices was substantial. Nevertheless, private companies have not considered the inner city attractive for their placement. There ought to be incentive programs to locate these types of amenities that could help to dynamize some passive zones.

On the next page  
Figure 50. Venezuela  
street, pedestrian path  
Source: Photo shot by  
Paola Cordero



### *6.4.3. Supporting movement and accessibility*

This section is divided into four sub-sections that present specific recommendations for the improvement of the mobility system. The historic center's geographical location has been fundamental to longitudinally connect the city, but it has also increased the level of congestions of the inner city. Over the years, various proposals have tried to decongest the old town, nonetheless, the rampant expansion of the city, as well as the increase of population have also raised the levels of traffic and agglomeration.

#### *Pedestrianization*

Through the last ten years, there has been a discussion to pedestrianize the inner city. The initiative has found difficulties among public institutions and inhabitants. The current proposal relies on the pedestrianization of the core neighborhood, Gonzales Suarez, which is the most visited. (Figure 50) Indeed, there should be attention to peripheral neighborhoods that also need this treatment. Studies and experiences have demonstrated that pedestrianizing streets increased the interest of people to enter ground facilities and could be an opportunity for economic improvements. Studying deeply pedestrians' routes and connecting important elements is fundamental to make up a network of public space.

#### *Bikeways*

In 2012, it was the first time that cycling paths were installed in the historic center's narrow streets. The project aimed to include cyclists within the street space. Because of the scarce space of the old town's streets, bikes had to share space with automobiles and buses. However, it was not very well socialized through all the involved that provoked accidents, as well as the failure of the initiative. Today, it was needed to include over again bikers in the historic center's streets due to COVID-19, producing coexistence moments. Moreover, sharing systems are also important to consider when talking about public transport. With the implementation of pedestrian streets, a defined path for bikes, and the street section's redefinition; a clean and healthy system can contribute to the transport system. It will also help to reduce pollution and noise.

#### *Public transport*

With the incursion of the underground metro, it is expected to reduce the number of private cars in the inner city. Nonetheless, there is not a plan to reduce the number of bus lines that enter the old town. They should be reduced in number by creating a sort of continuous circuits that could permit

citizens' internal movement. It is also substantial the reduction of the buses' sizes because their bigness does not allow bus drivers to maneuver. These vehicles ought to be electric bus to reduce carbon emission.

### Private cars and parking areas

Within this regard, private cars are banned to enter the historic center during Sundays because many of the streets are pedestrianized. This policy should be extended during Saturdays too creating of tax for non-residents to enter the old town during weekdays. Moreover, like bicycles, it can be possible to provide sharing electric cars located throughout the historic center. In addition, parking areas are dedicated only for people who visit the core zone. However, the service ought to be focused on residents too providing communal parking spaces in the periphery.

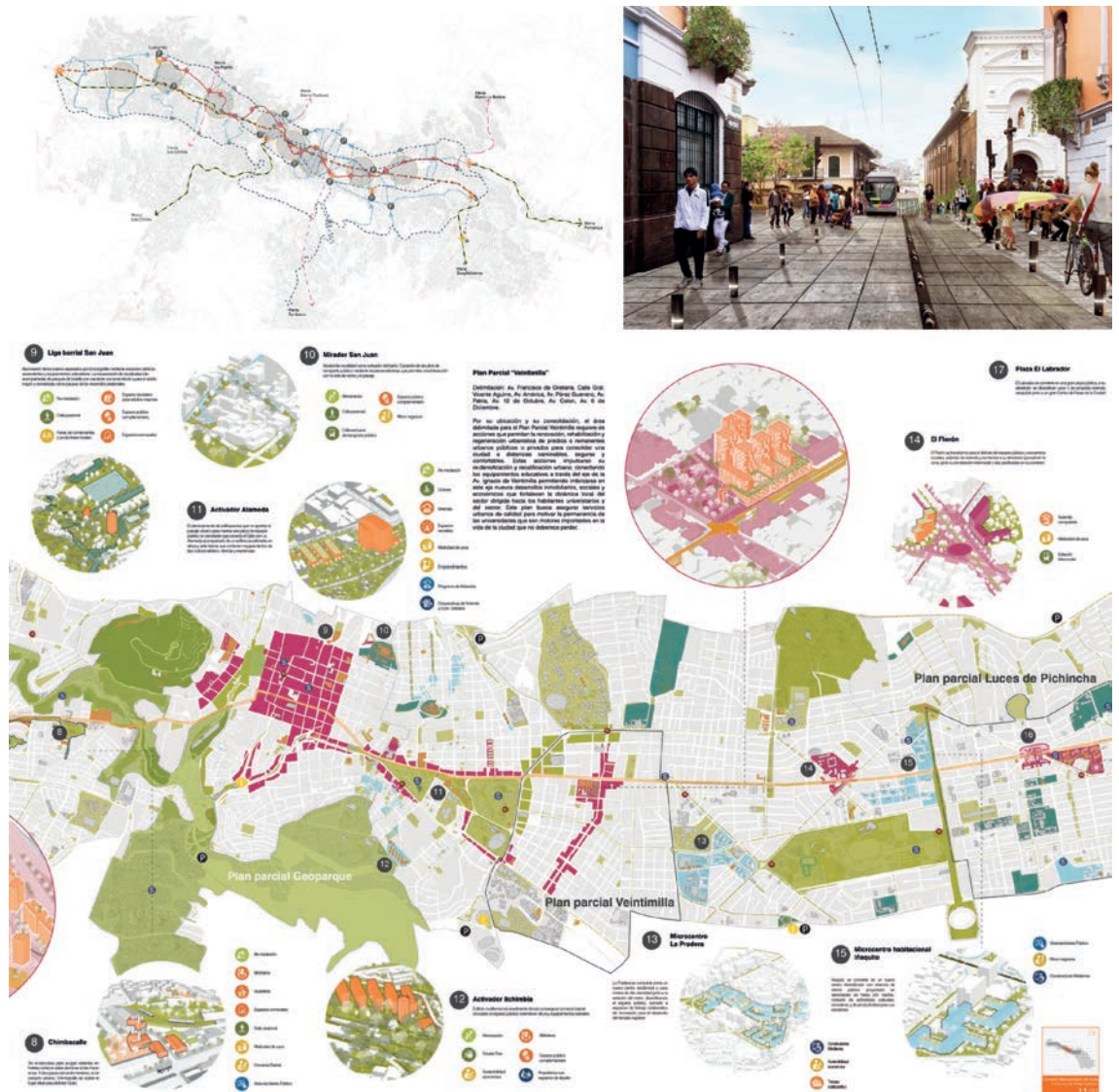


Figure 51. Green Corridor proposal winner for Quito  
 Source: Retrieved from: <https://www.plataforma-arquitectura.cl>

Note: the idea is to create a green corrector along with the city that passes through the historic center. The red areas are the ones dedicated to pedestrians.

#### 6.4.4. Open public space requalification

According to several academics, the historic center can be considered the largest open public space in the city. The importance of open spaces and their safety is quite relevant within processes of urban regeneration. From narrow alleys to large squares, public space is the urban expression of its inhabitants, the place where people gather and express themselves. Plaza Grande in Quito, for example, is the most important public square of the country where the nation expresses its needs and demands. Thus, there are several magnificent squares in the historic center that demand attention and proper management. It is important their continuous care and improvement with landscape designs which could provide adequate materials, urban furniture, proper light, and green elements. Secondary spaces such as pedestrian steers should also have adequate treatments for people's comfort and safety, even for disabled people. It is important the implementation of hygienic services and adequate spaces for garbage management. In short, the main idea of the public space is to make people to feel a sense of belonging, spaces for people of all ages. Moreover, the interpretation of the historic urban fabric as the main public space has influenced the creation of policies and projects for the continuing revitalization. The 'Green Corridor' project proposes the pedestrianization of the central core, implementing alternative slow systems of mobility that could provide efficiency in a more livable zone. (Figure 51)

Figure 52. Hotel Casa Gangotena  
Source: Retrieved from: [www.casagangotena.com](http://www.casagangotena.com)

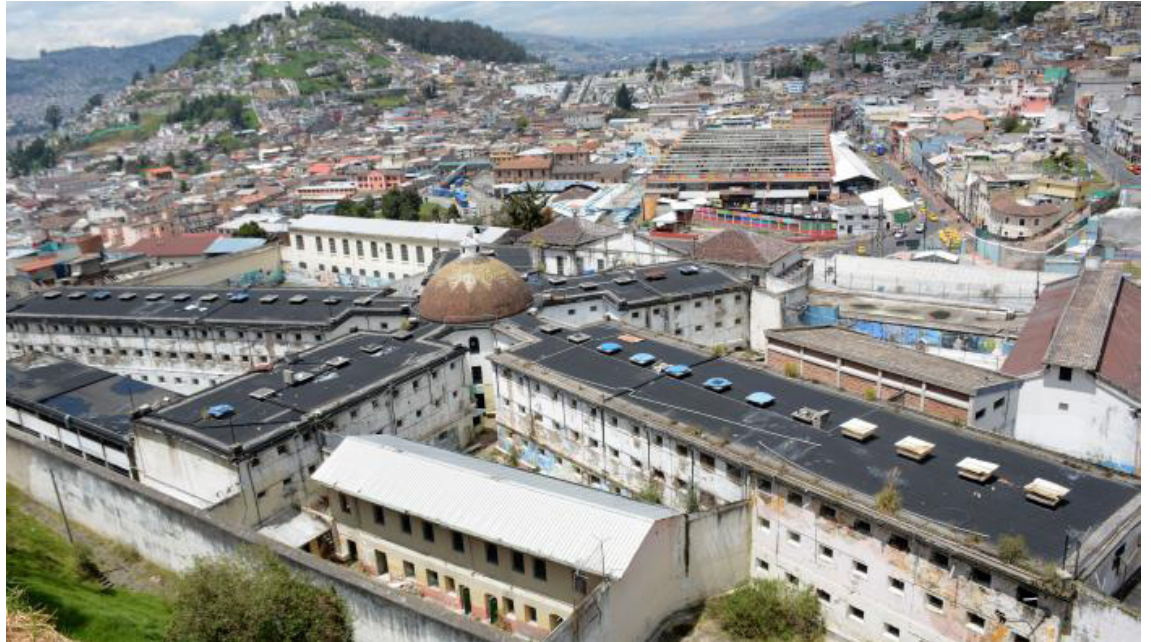
Note: This hotel used to be a tenant house divided into various apartments. However, after the abandonment and degradation of the house, its owners decided to restore it with the help of a private company dedicated to tourism. The requalification of the asset was an example of heritage conservation that made the historic building receive architectural prizes. Now, it is one of the most expensive hotels in the country.





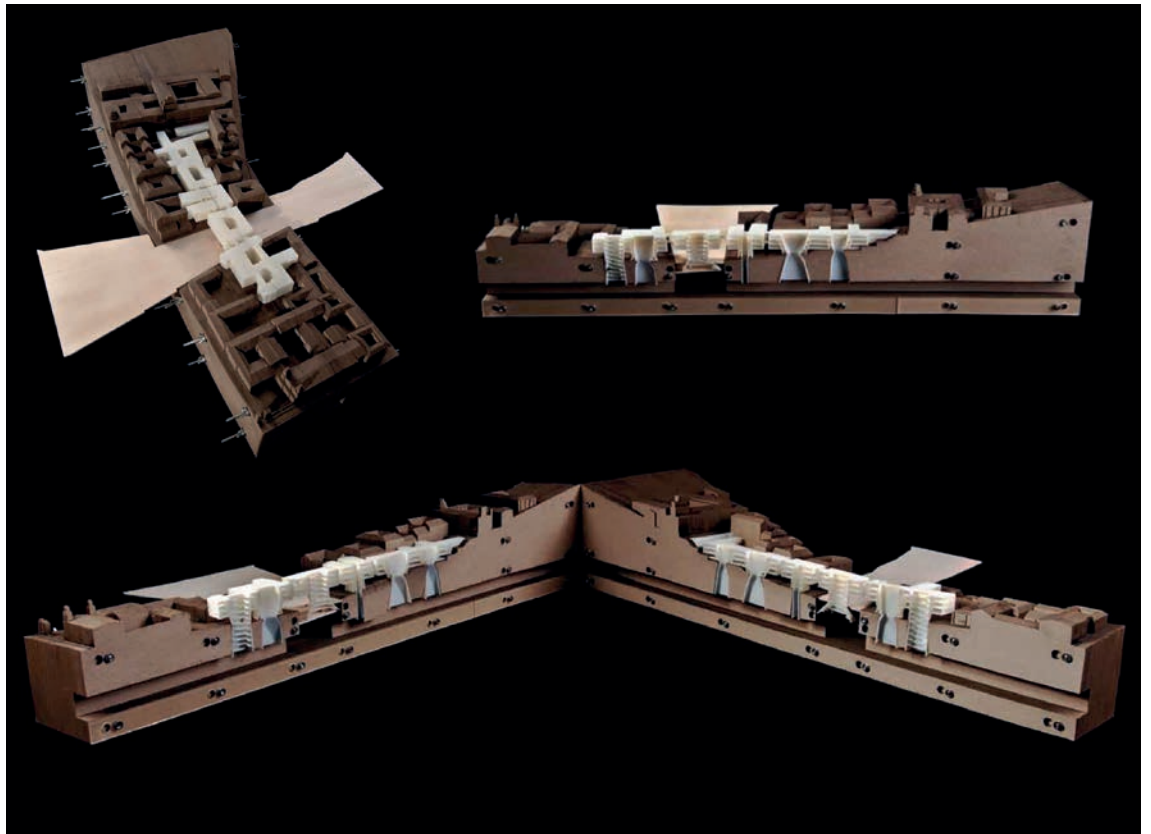
Above  
Figure 53. Ex-prison  
García Moreno  
Source: Retrieved from:  
[https://www.expreso.ec/quito/futuro-incier-to-expenal-garcia-more-no-102408.html](https://www.expreso.ec/quito/futuro-incierto-expenal-garcia-moreno-102408.html)

Note: It was built in 1874 and worked until 2014 when prisoners were transported to a bigger building outside the city. The panoptic is, today, abandoned, and due to lack of resources, it could not be possible to give it another use.



Below  
Figure 54. Recalibrating  
the inner block. Author:  
Jenifer Esposito  
Source: A line in the  
Andes, 2012.

Note: The architectural exploration of the historic center by universities have been an important input for the practice. These reflections about adapting the ancient with the modern support heritage conservation through the values of the space and its use.



#### 6.4.5. Reuse of empty and vacant buildings

The structure of the typical central courtyard dwelling is an advantage to consider when reusing its buildings. The historic center of Quito is composed of a manageable urban fabric where it is not necessary to restructure deeply its infrastructure. Quito could reorganize its historic center through the implementation of contemporary services that can easily be adapted to the infrastructure of the old town. There have been previous projects that have worked very well using the concept of ‘adaptive reuse.’ Hotel Gangotena, for instance, was an abandoned house in poor conditions that was eventually transformed into a hotel. (Figure 52) Further housing projects were erected from old house and dwelling rehabilitation. Moreover, public buildings such as the ex-prison’s building (García Moreno) (Figure 53) is awaiting project to be restored with the expectancy to provide adequate results for its contexts.

The crisis caused by COVID–19 has unfolded some trends that before has been experiencing very shyly. The internet and electronic devices boosted the possibilities to be more productive inside of our homes. Working and studying from home has become a reality, and the experience during the pandemic opens more possibilities to explore different dimensions for social relationships. This is the new target for every city to consider as well.

Additionally, universities have dabbled in the exploration of new adaptive architectural configurations for the historic center of Quito. Among these explorations, there have been significant results that could be considered for the intervention of the old town. (Figure 54) It is important to be more incisive at the moment to understand the plasticity and functions of materials to create modern adaptations with ancient structures. Furthermore, there are empty buildings that need to be reused. Rypkema talks about the concept of ‘adaptive reuse’ and the ‘functional obsolescence’ that occurs when the use building does not exist anymore. (Corten, Geurts, Meurs, & Vermeulen, 2014) This is the alternative to explore new pertinent functions for the contemporary city. “The historic center is a city planning construct designed to select from among the materials of the existing city those that lend themselves – on account of the value attributed to them and the identification of their different qualities – to be interpreted according to profiles of permanence and persistence.” (Bonfantini, 2012)

#### 6.4.6. International experience: The requalification process of Ciutat Vella in Barcelona.

It is a paradox that the recognition and preoccupation of the historic center are starting to be noted just after the decadence and slumming of it. The old town was forgotten when the modern city provided new functions and

dynamics that before were not viewed. In Latina America, this phenomenon happened during the first decades of the twentieth century, but in Europe, this took place one century before. The case of Barcelona is an example of the forgetfulness of the old city. In the mid-nineteenth century, Ciutat Vella was the decadent zone of Barcelona because of Cerdá's new city. The historic center was old, uncomfortable, without basic services or ventilation. The public space used to be desolated, unhealthy and dangerous. In the 1970s, there was a preoccupation and recognition of its current urban condition. Ciutat Vella has a medieval configuration with narrow streets that do not provide good ventilation to its buildings. The historic character of the harbor had caused the construction of factories, workshops, warehouses for logistic activities, which, due to the contemporary city's dynamics, were not functioning anymore. Unit dwellings used to be small, and their use was mainly for tenants rather than for owners.



Figure 55. Different street uses of the historic center of Bologna  
Source: Comune di Bologna

The transformation and requalification took place during the 80s and 90s. The first step for its renovation was the political decentralization of local authorities that allowed the historic center to have autonomy. Then, it was important to reconfigure its urban fabric. It needed to open Ciutat Vella to the rest of the city by creating wider avenues and expropriating some dwellings. Furthermore, the implantation of neighborhood services and improvement of the public space changed its physical aspect by turning it into a secure space that attracts visitors. Nonetheless, a substantial shift occurred with the reform of housing. It was taken empty and degraded buildings of dwellings to rehabilitate them and turn them into public housing. The idea was to encourage the private sector to create new housing and increase land value that causes positive real estate speculation, bringing back newcomers. Over the years, Ciutat Vella has been an attractive space due to the implementation of cultural centers, museums, hotels, and restaurants.

The daring posture of Barcelona of real estate speculation and improvement of the public space has been attractive for newcomers, that through consumption, have invaded the inner city. This has been something that Quito has worked very reserved over the years but has caused depopulation and abandonment of dwellings.

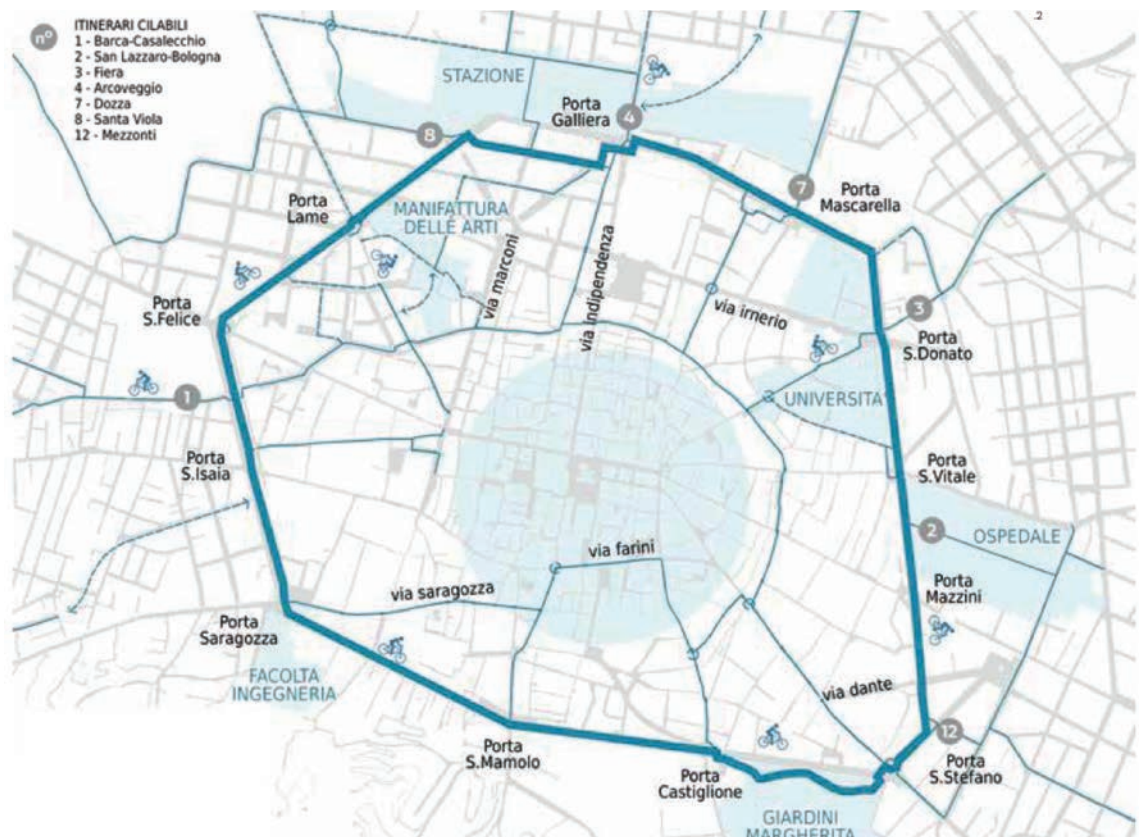


Figure 56. Map of bike routes in the historic center of Bologna  
Source: Comune di Bologna

6.4.7. International experience: 'Di nuovo in centro: A program for a Bologna city center pedestrian friendly'

'Back in the center' is the project to pedestrianize the historic city center of Bologna with the goal "to rescue and develop of the historic city, that precisely is comfortably walkable by foot" (Comune di Bologna, 2011) The historic center of Bologna is one of the biggest ones in Europe with around 400 hectares. As depicted previously, Bologna's inner city is very concurrent and visited. Among residents, tourists, workers, and students, 183.000 people stand every day in the old town. (Comune di Bologna, 2011) Thus, the intense use of the public space had created some conflicts that needed to be treated, such as excessive use of the car, discontinuity of pedestrian paths, air pollutions, noise, etc. That is why the program of the project presents the importance of pedestrianization, as well as improvement and increase of public space to revalorize cultural and commercial vocation. It was also developed a friendly transportation system made up of bike lines, electric care sharing, and public transport. (Figure 56)

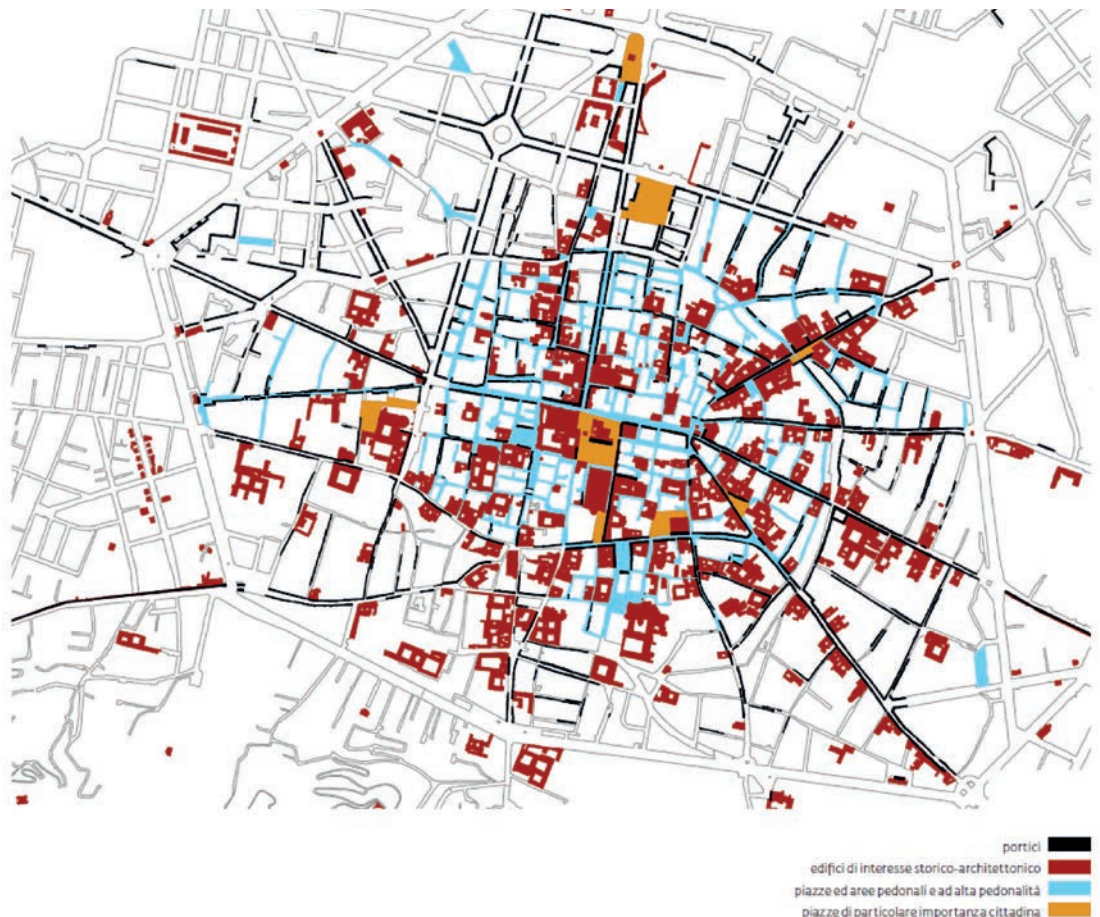


Figure 57. Map of public space of the historic center of Bologna. It is included pedestrian streets

Source: Comune di Bologna, 2011

The proposal encounters pedestrian priority through a holistic use of the spaces. Some areas are dedicated mainly for pedestrians during weekend, while they can be accessible for public transport during weekdays. The plan also contemplates the improvement of transportation, potentiation of electric car sharing, as well as the location for charging. Moreover, bike paths improvement within the historic center, potentiation of connecting cycling paths with the rest of the city, bike-sharing, and the increase of bike parking– are actions to promote the use of bicycles and a friendly coexisting system with pedestrians and vehicles. (Figure 57) Regarding car parking, it was intended mainly to define parking areas for residents and logistic purposes.

Not only the improvement of the transport system was important, but also the requalification of the public space as a hosting component for residents and visitors. The implemented actions relay on ideas of: closeness between transport services, improvement of spaces with high architectural quality, new hygienic services for public use, information points for public orientation, and the implementation of free wi-fi. (Figure 55)

### **6.5. After urban regeneration, a possible scenario**

“The city is itself the result of a historical accumulation of human actions and should be viewed as a living palimpsest of past processes that influence the present and the future.” (Bandarin, 2015) The traditional city suffered a strong decadence due to the industrial revolution which triggered new sociological patterns. The workforce was the main argument that attracts people to cities from the countryside. Therefore, the twentieth century became the moment of modernization and standardization, when urban production exponentially increased. New neighborhoods for workers and even cities were erected. It was more visible with mass production of housing after WWII. After the mid-century, cities started to “retain economic vitality” (Clark, 2009) due to national and international capitals. The industrial city was losing space within socialites and the new “trade and service economy” (Clark, 2009) had been arising. The post-Fordism marked a distinct dynamic than the one presented at the beginning of the century. New economies brought new opportunities and improvements in education levels. Diversified economy, cultural activities, and services have been the new topics of the contemporary city. A different class has been born. The “creative class” (Florida, 2004) is the new social group of educated professionals that sustain based-service economy of cities. According to Florida, the creative class is that group of the society that possesses the knowledge engine to create and solve contemporary demands. They are not the wealthiest, but they are the valuable class of professionals who compose the structure of progress.

Ellen Geurts and Jean-Paul Corten distinguish four trends to foster integration of heritage conservation in their guidebook: 'Heritage as an Asset for Inner-City Development.' The fourth one is 'The rise of the creative class' that explains the importance of the creative class for the inner-city. The new service-based economy and new lifestyles are the dynamics that a lot of historic centers are experiencing around the world. This new class is the opportunity to revitalize the old town through the insertion of services, entertainment, transportation, and a healthy lifestyle. The old town is gradually adapting itself to these new trends and becoming a sort of apotheosis.

The historic center of Quito is merely populated by working classes that in general terms, become a popular area. Marked social classes of Quito have produced a social rejection against living within the inner city because it does not provide facilities that are offered in other neighborhoods. The increase of a creative class with different tastes different to traditional ones, as well as the implementation of attractive facilities; will change the perception that this prospective population has towards the historic center. The inner city's heterogeneity will support the connection with the modern city. Getting back to the historic center is the hardest challenge Quito must face, and the insertion of a creative population could turn the inner city more attractive.

Undoubtedly, the monumentalism is an attractive sphere, even for a creative class that possesses different tastes and higher educational levels. The pertinence of conservation is questioned by Rem Koolhaas that "calls preservation a 'dangerous epidemic' spread by 'clueless preservationists who, in their zeal to protect the world's architectural legacies, end up debasing them,' gentrifying and sanitizing historic urban centers." (Lowenthal, 2015) This assertion also implies that the historic center has received low attention regarding the maintenance of its traditions and the cultural aspects that define its identity.

It is true that historic centers, after a process of qualification and renovation, could be gentrified as happened in some neighborhoods of Ciutat Vella. The contemporary city and its adaptation to the old town are producing this phenomenon. If we strongly protect the historic center from external population, there is not going to be a connection to the current dynamics of a global city. Quito is looking for it and its main attractive global hub should be its historic center. An ancient asset that shelters newcomers as well as new tastes is the key point to recognize new dynamics and issues. Gentrification will be inevitable, but the city should be prepared to deal with it and respond properly without losing its cultural essence.

Moreover, the Ecuadorian capital has been a receiving city of population from all over the country. Over the years, it has been notorious due to the cultural diversity the city experience. This has helped to urban intercultural

relationships and acceptance of new population. Towards the last five years, there have been strong episodes of racism and nationalism against Venezuelan people that have arrived in the city expelled by the economic breakdown their country is living. Intercultural relationships with international immigrants have not been easy to accept within popular societies arguing that immigrants rest labor opportunities to Ecuadorians. However, the central government has the obligation to safeguard this vulnerable population by inserting them into society. Quito has never had a special policy or plans to insert immigrants as an initiative to create multicultural spaces. Nonetheless, in May 2021, there was an international agreement that aimed to protect 4.6 Venezuelan refugees and migrants in Latin America. (Voz de America, 2021) This could be another opportunity to integrate foreigners into the city's daily life, especially using available infrastructure as in the inner city.



# **Atlas** **of the historic center of Quito**

A spatial review of its condition and  
possible reflections for the future

**Map 01. National territory of Ecuador with natural hydrographic elements and main roads.**

Note: This is notable the geographical position of Quito within the Andean region. At the beginning of the Ecuadorian capital, its position was strategically chosen by the Spanish for military purposes.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data of the geoportal IGM. Retrieved from: <http://www.geoportaligm.gob.ec/geonetwork/srv/spa/catalog.search;jsessionid=CCE14C0D234523375570742FF5525027#/home>



COLOMBIA

QUITO

Ecuador

Guayaquil

PERU

100 km

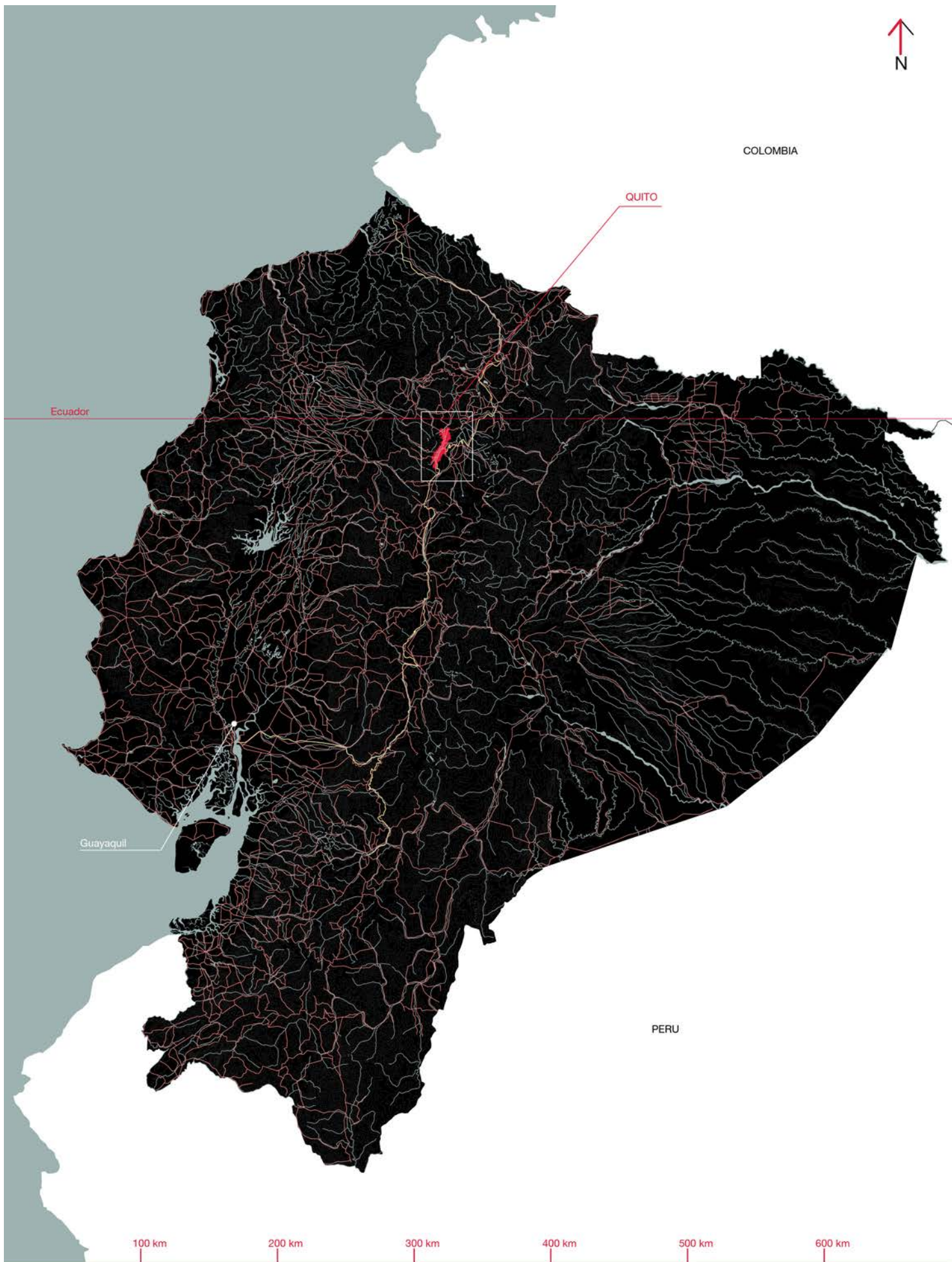
200 km

300 km

400 km

500 km

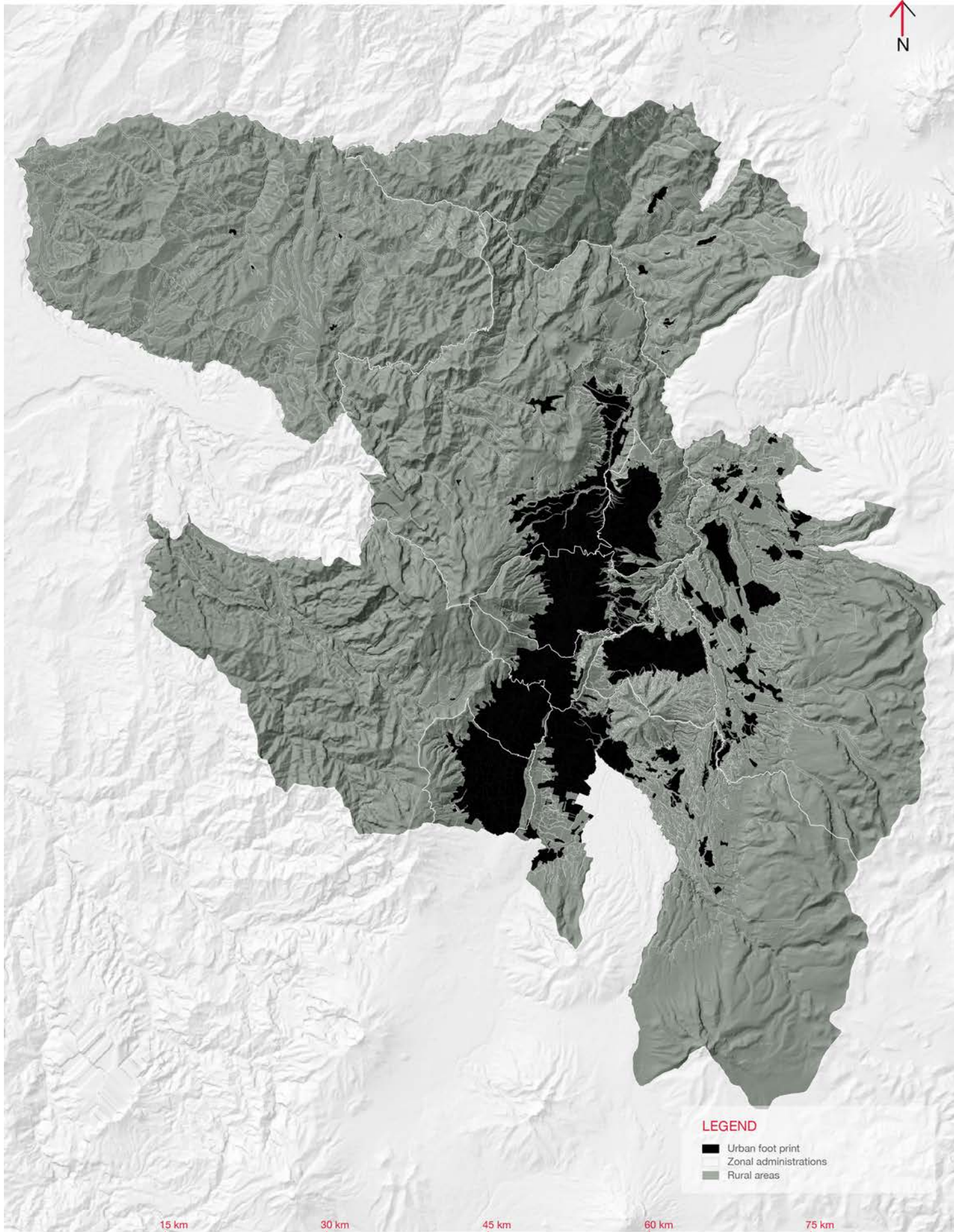
600 km



**Map 02. DMQ (Metropolitan District of Quito in English) with the main urban footprint**

Note: DMQ encounters 4.230 km<sup>2</sup> of the area while the city of Quito occupies 8,04% of this territory. The district is made up of eight zonal administrations that entirely divide without differentiation rural-urban areas. Because of geographic conditions, Quito has been induced to present this south-north urban footprint that later was taking place to the eastern sides.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito.  
Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/>



**LEGEND**

- Urban foot print
- Zonal administrations
- Rural areas

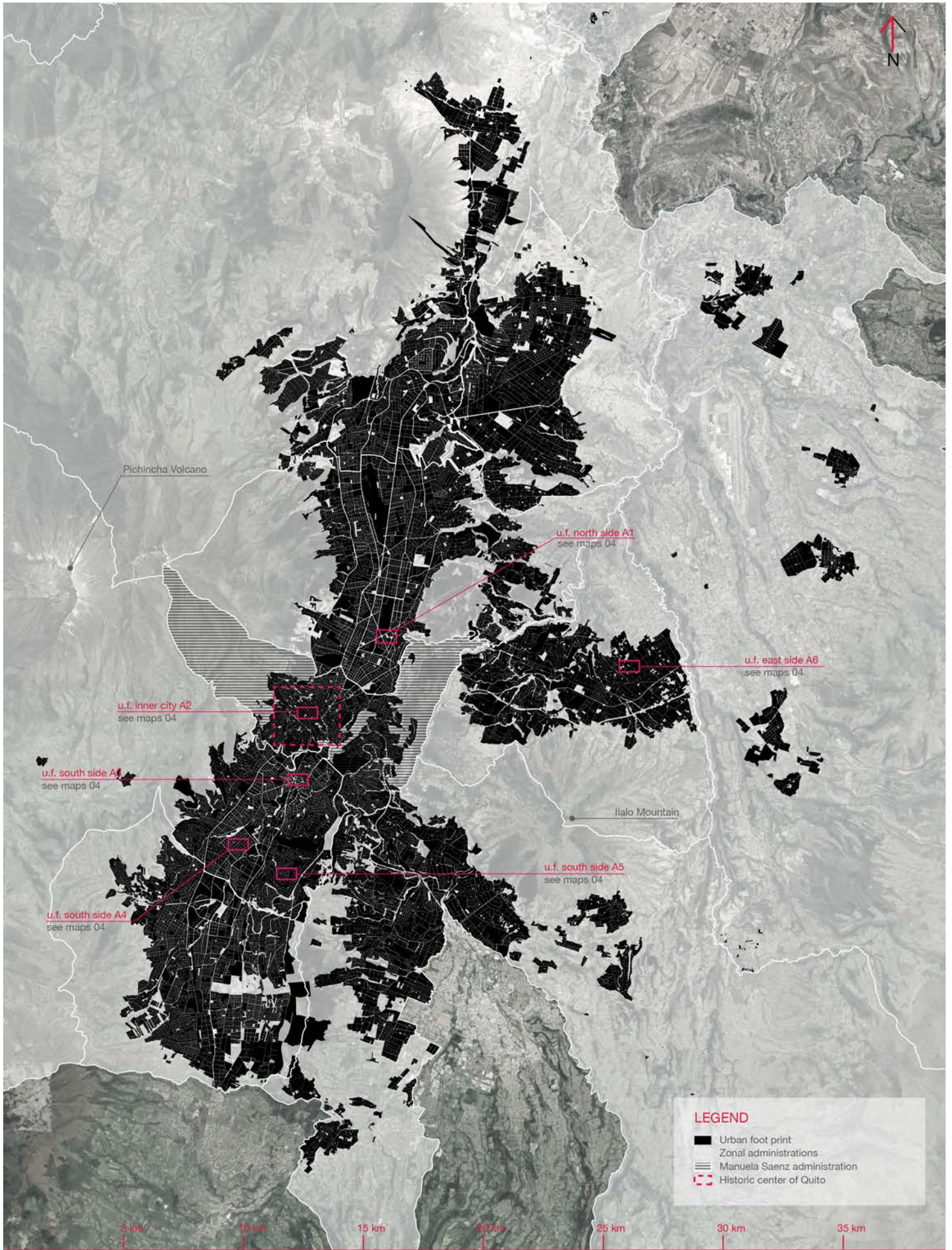
15 km      30 km      45 km      60 km      75 km



### **Map 03. Quito's footprint**

Note: It is shown its urban fabric based on blocks and the main natural elements that limit the urban footprint. The small square highlights are examples of the urban fabric composition of different areas throughout the territory that is better explained in the next two pages of maps 04.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito.  
Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/>



All the next six maps are depicted as figure-ground maps to provide a quick view of the urban fabric of the most relevant areas in the city. All maps have the same scale, and their location is presented in the previous map.

**Map 04.A1. Above: Figure-ground map of La Mariscal area**

Note: The zone is composed of large plots of tall buildings of offices and apartments. The zone is addressed to the concept of ‘compact city.’

Source: Author’s elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito.  
Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/>

**Map 04. A2. Middle: Figure-ground map of the historic center**

Note: The compactness and densification of the urban fabric are quite visible when comparing it with the rest of the city. There are fewer white areas than the other zones.

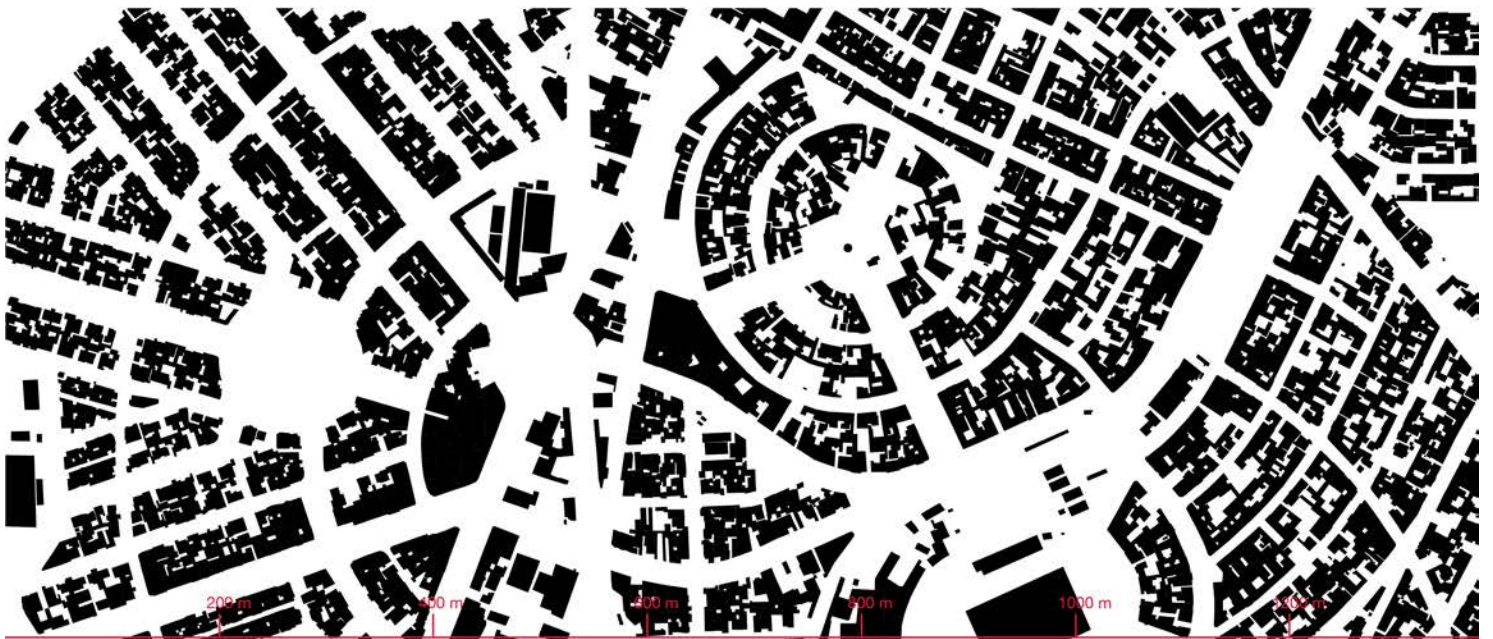
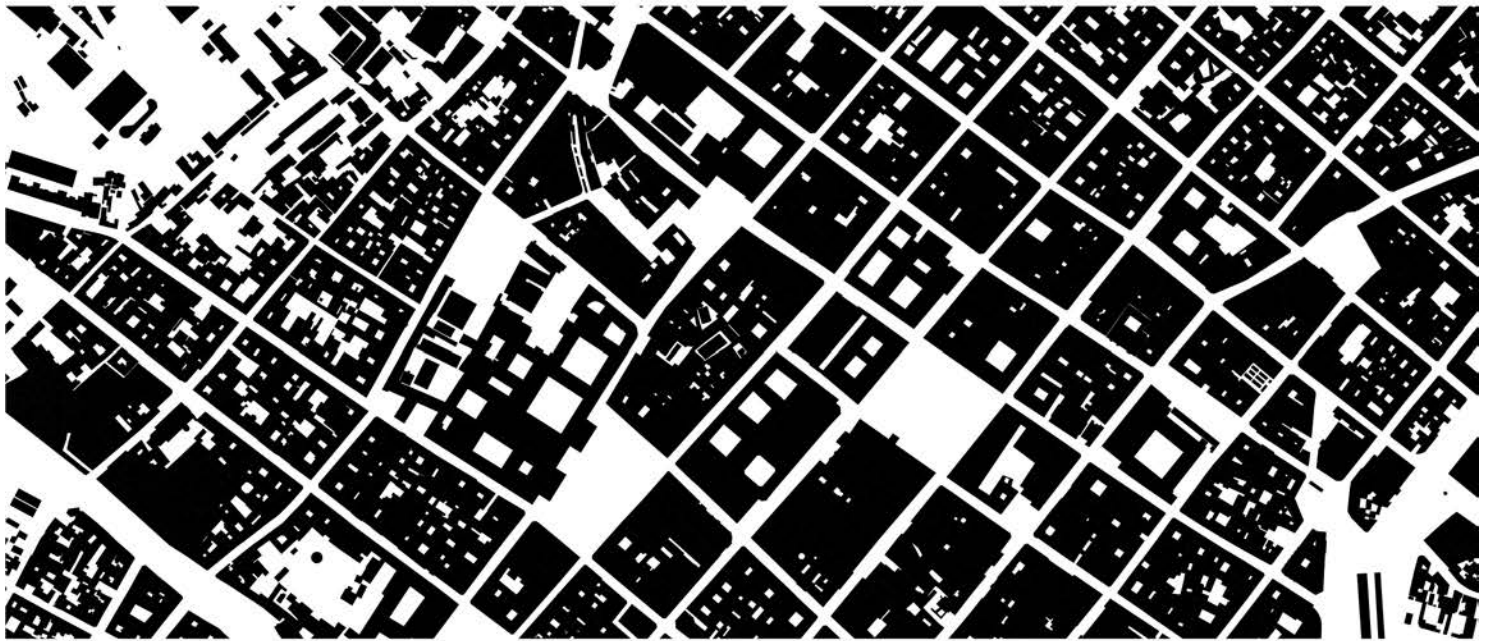
Source: Author’s elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito.  
Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/>

**Map 04. A3. Bellow: Figure-ground map of La Villaflora neighborhood**

Note: This is the first neighborhood of the south, next to the historic center. Its conception was based on the ‘Garden City’s’ ideas with large plots for villas, very similar to English cottages. Over the years, these housing units have been occupying the entire plot due to urbanistic reforms.

Source: Author’s elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito.  
Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/>





**Map 04. A4. Above: Figure-ground map of Solanda neighborhood**

Note: The composition of the neighborhood responded to the need for affordable social housing in the urban area. Its compactness is the result of an incremental approach where housing units' owners have expanded their properties within reduced spaces.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito.  
Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/>

**Map 04. A5. Middle: Figure-ground map of La Lucha de Los Pobres neighborhood**

Note: The area is located on the southeastern sidehills of the main urban footprint where its makeup does not have a visible organization. This kind of marginal neighborhood has been more consolidating itself within the urban formation thanks to processes of regulation of informalities.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito.  
Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/>

**Map 04. A6. Bellow: Figure-ground map of Cumbaya**

Note: This is one of the eastern areas that has been consolidating during the last twenty years. This area differs not only from the longitudinal formation due to its position but also its horizontal enlargement based on gated communities with a lot of open spaces.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito.  
Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/>



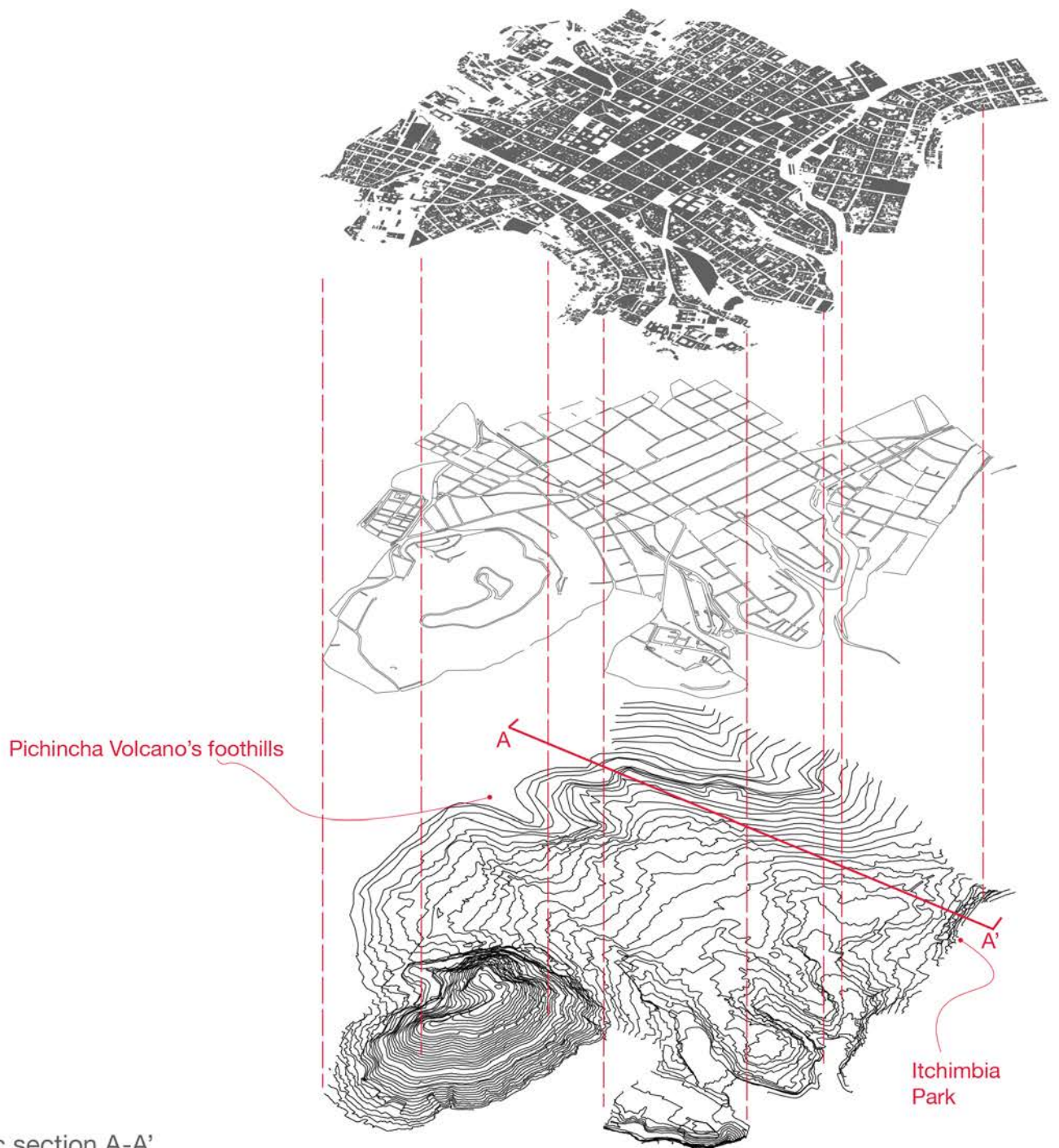


***Analytical maps and diagrams of the historic center***

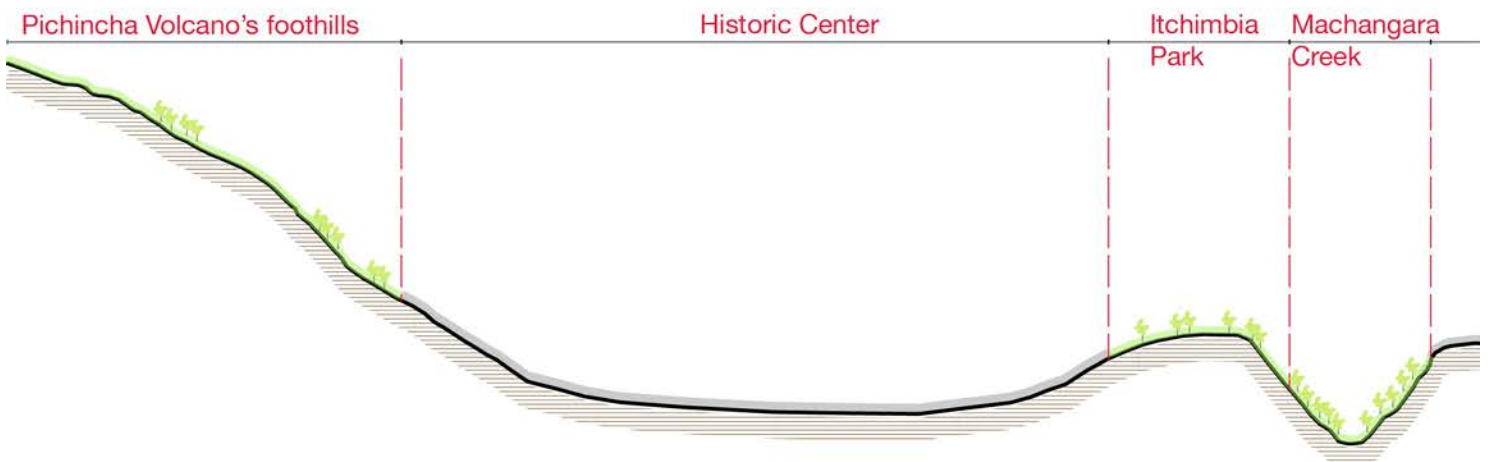
**Diagram 01. Exploded diagram of the historic center and schematic section**

Note: It is shown the juxtaposition of the 'damero' over a pronounced topography. The bottom section represents the natural elements that surround the historic center.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito.  
Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/>



Schematic section A-A'

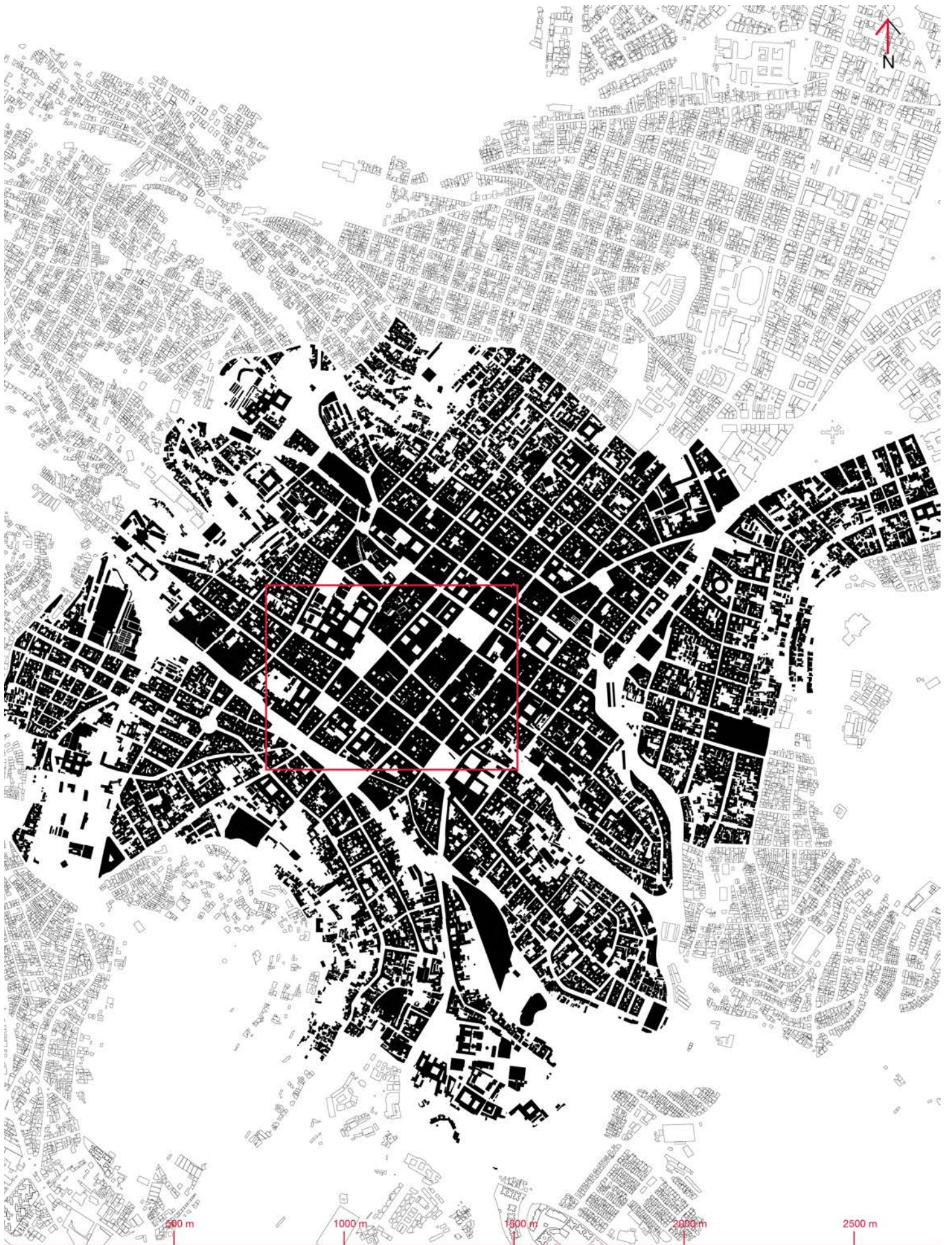




**Map 05. Figure-ground map of the historic center with its context**

Note: The historic center differs not only from the rest of the city by its antiquity but also by the largeness of its blocks and plots that allowed the configuration of courtyard buildings.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito.  
Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/>

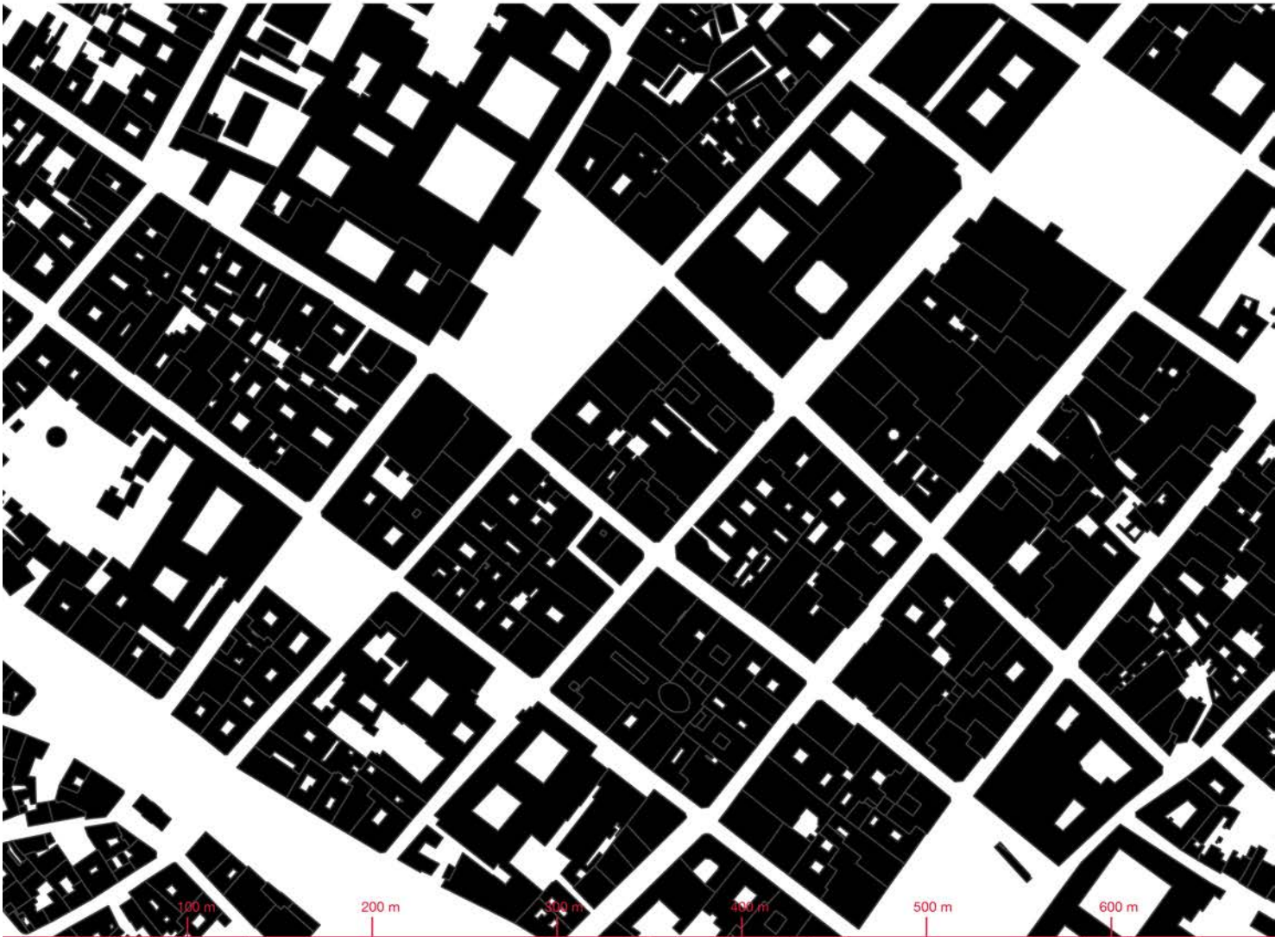


**Map 06. Figure-ground map of a section of the historic center**

Note: Its location is marked on the previous map. In this map, its is visible the composition of the 'damero' through courtyard buildings. Larger Wcourtyards correspond to monasteries, museums, and institutional buildings.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito.  
Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/>

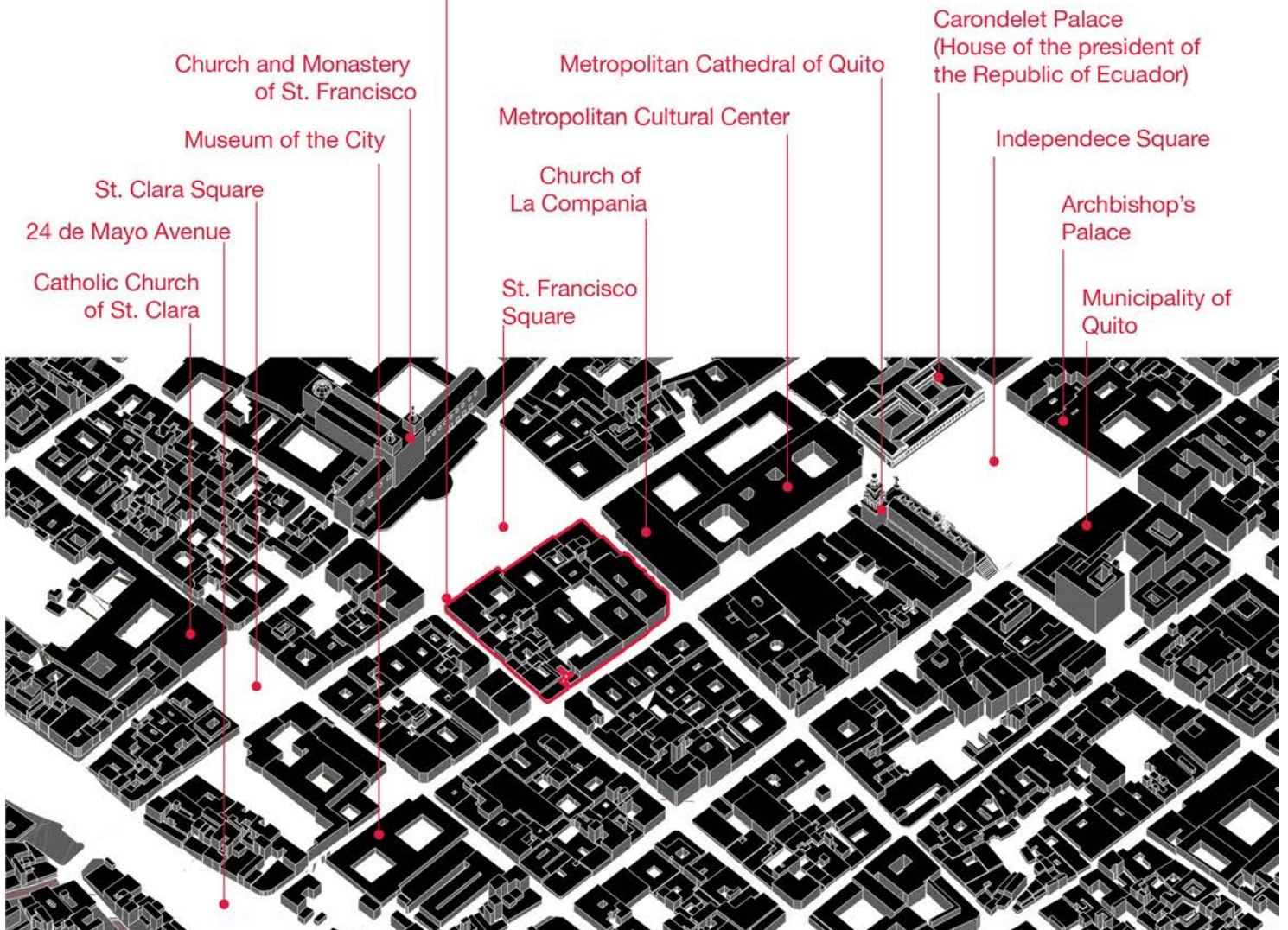
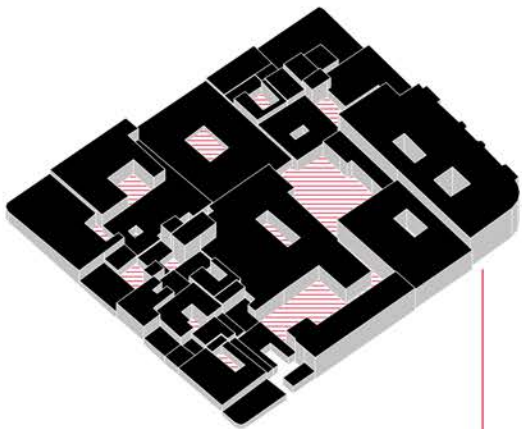




## **Diagram 02. Volumetric representation of the previous map**

Note: It is exposed the importance of courtyard buildings concerning open public spaces such as avenues and squares. The picture shows the interior of the Casa de Sucre Museum.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito.  
Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/> Foto: [https://www.clave.com.ec/museo-casa-sucre/\\_mg\\_2022/](https://www.clave.com.ec/museo-casa-sucre/_mg_2022/)





**Map 07. Population density of the historic center and surroundings in 2010**

Note: The analysis for the historic center is represented by buildings while for its immediate context by blocks. It is evident the low density in the inner area where many of the most important religious and governmental apparatus is located. Peripheral areas present medium and high-density zones.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito.  
Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/>



**LEGEND**

- > 400 pph
- 350 - 400 pph
- 300 - 350 pph
- 250 - 300 pph
- 200 - 250 pph
- 150 - 200 pph
- 100 - 150 pph
- 50 - 100 pph
- < 50 pph
- Urban context

500 m

1000 m

1500 m

2500 m

N

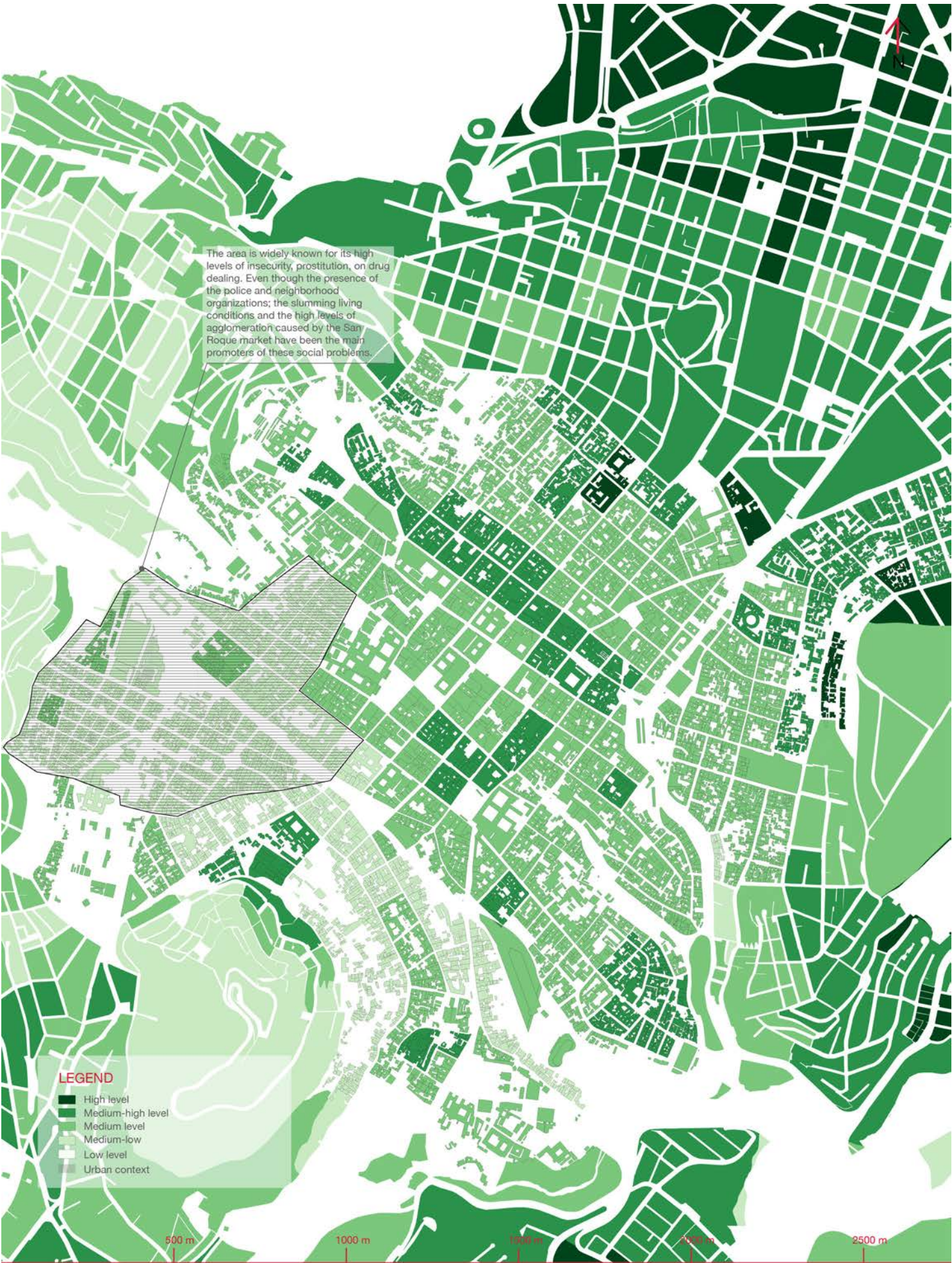


**Map 08. Sociodemographic situation map of the historic center and surroundings' inhabitants in 2019**

Note: As explained in chapter 5, the historic center is a heterogeneous area with different socioeconomic levels quite visible depending on the condition of the area. The central core, for instance, is the most visited and cared zone that hosts people with better economic situations than peripheric neighborhoods.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito.  
Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/>

The area is widely known for its high levels of insecurity, prostitution, on drug dealing. Even though the presence of the police and neighborhood organizations; the slumming living conditions and the high levels of agglomeration caused by the San Roque market have been the main promoters of these social problems.





### **Map 09. Ground floor use map of the historic center**

Note: Due to data availability, the analysis is mainly focused on the historic center. The approximation of the information reaffirms the dynamism in the central core and its depopulation while the periphery denotes more residential areas.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito and OpenStreetMap. Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/> and <https://www.openstreetmap.org/search?query=quito%20#map=15/-0.2194/-78.5128>







### **Map 10. Public transport map in Quito**

Note: One of the weaknesses of the public transport's efficiency has been its management that has not developed a proper ticketing system because many of the lines correspond to the private sector, which does not allow passengers transfer without paying ones.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito.  
Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/>



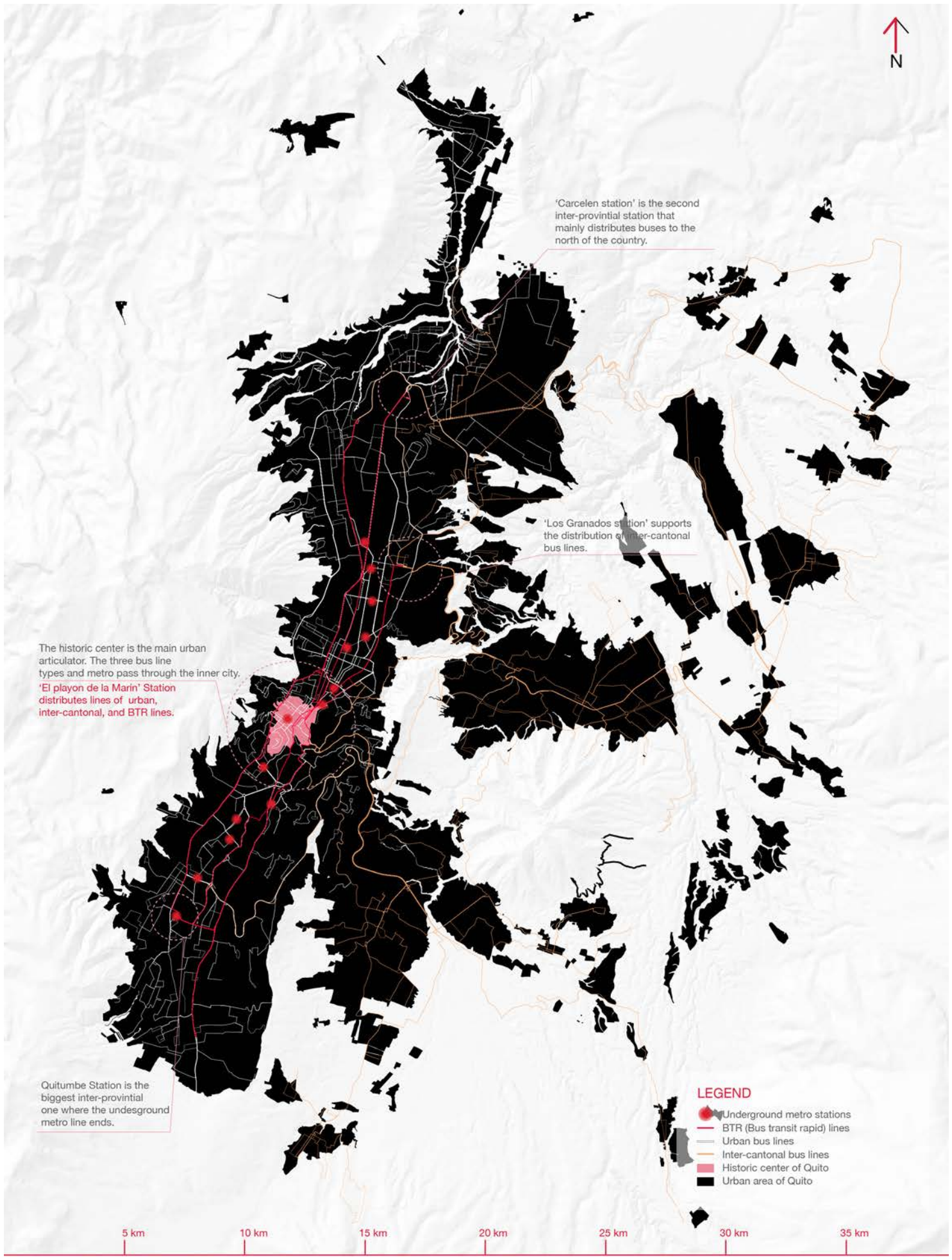
'Carcelen station' is the second inter-provincial station that mainly distributes buses to the north of the country.

'Los Granados station' supports the distribution of inter-cantonal bus lines.

The historic center is the main urban articulator. The three bus line types and metro pass through the inner city. 'El playon de la Marín' Station distributes lines of urban, inter-cantonal, and BTR lines.

Quitumbe Station is the biggest inter-provincial one where the underground metro line ends.

- LEGEND**
- Underground metro stations
  - BTR (Bus transit rapid) lines
  - Urban bus lines
  - Inter-cantonal bus lines
  - Historic center of Quito
  - Urban area of Quito

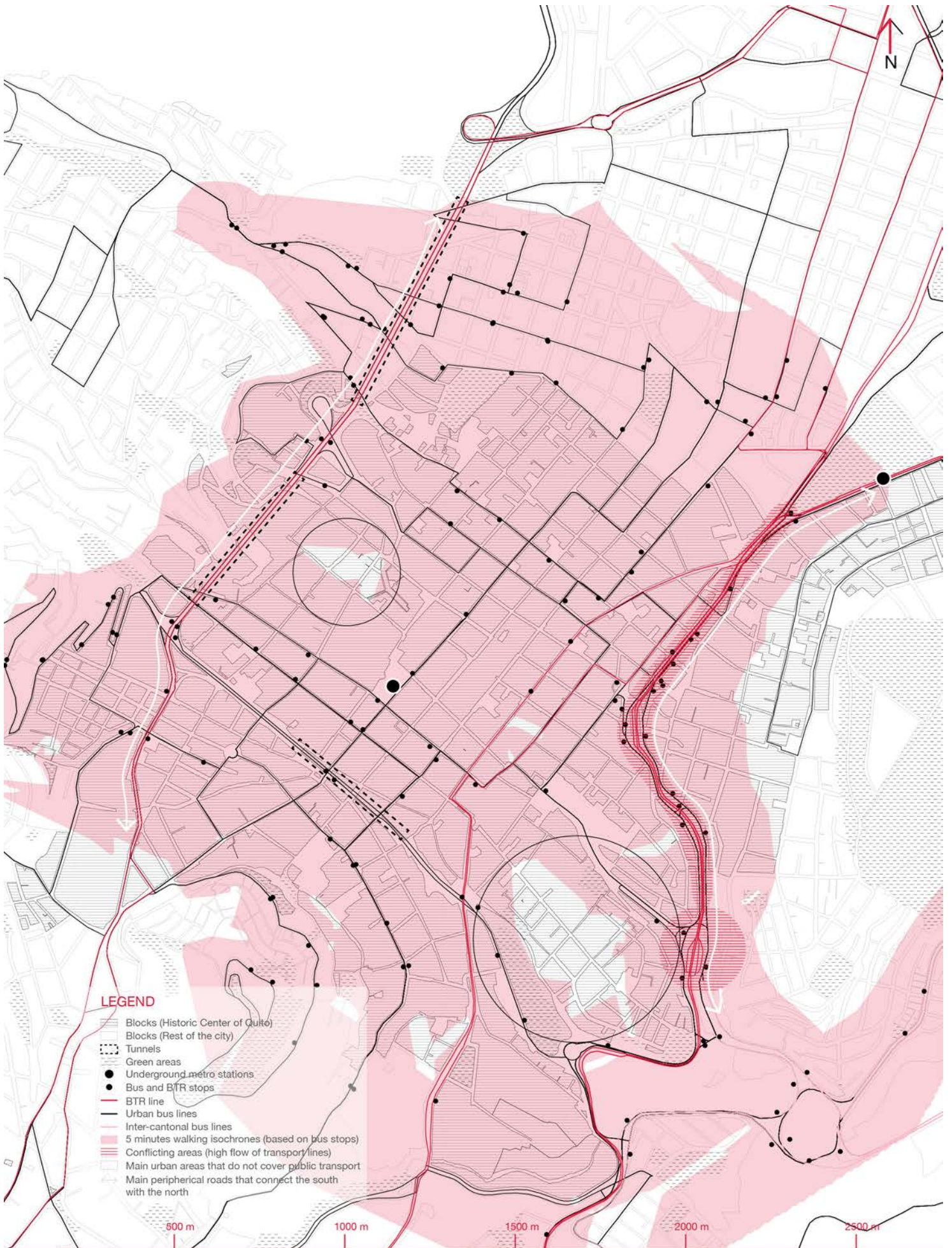




### **Map 11. Public transport map in the historic center**

Note: The inner city has been the urban connector between the south and north side, and with the eastern valleys. That is why many important bus lines pass through the old town. Even though there is visible congestion of transport lines in the historic center, bus stop distribution is not properly distributed as shown in the isochrones analysis.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito.  
Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/>

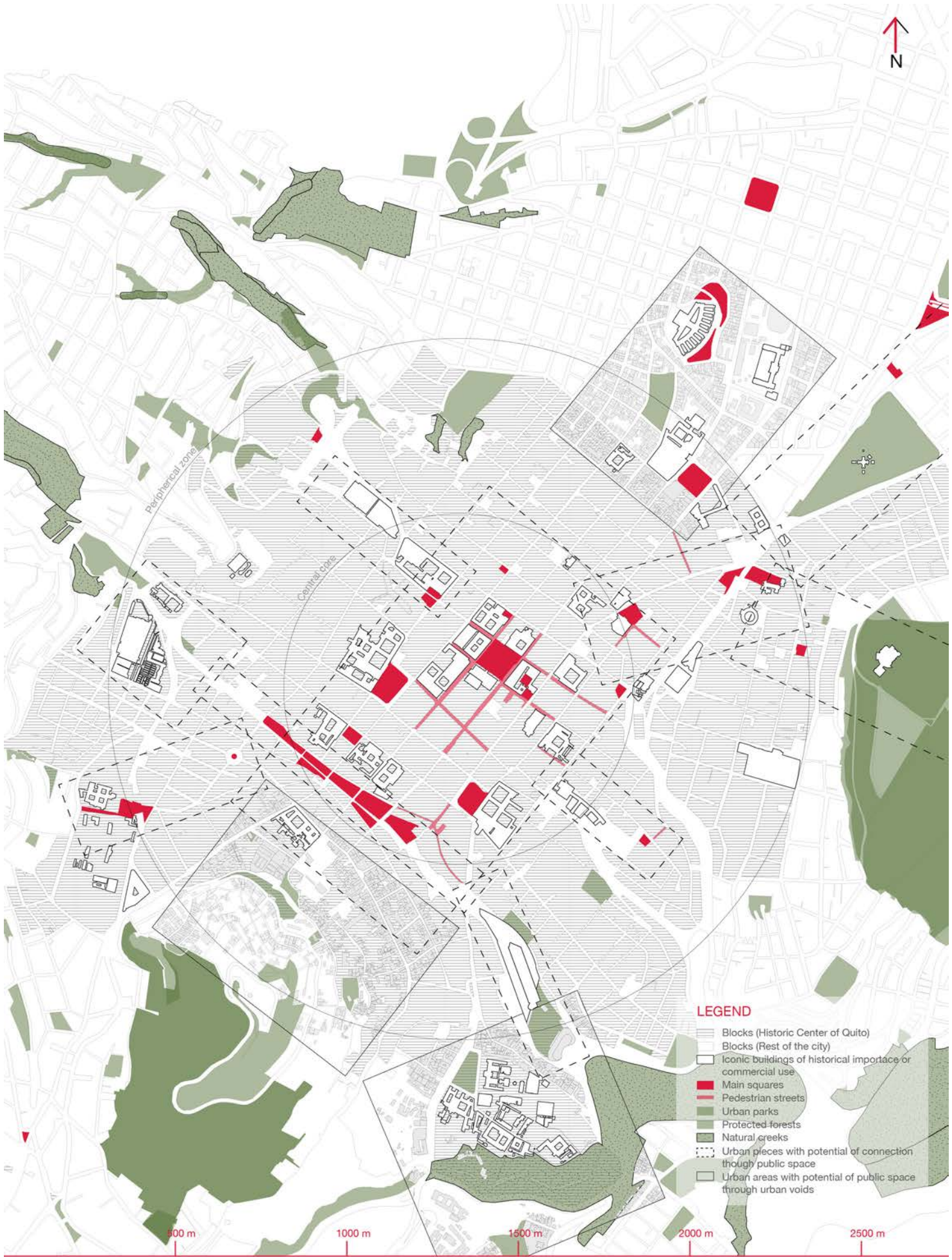




**Map 12. Public space and green areas map in the historic center**

Note: The old town is privileged by all the natural areas that surround it, which together with squares and wide avenues, could provide high-quality open spaces to its citizens.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito.  
Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/>



Peripheral zone

Central core

### LEGEND

- Blocks (Historic Center of Quito)
- Blocks (Rest of the city)
- Iconic buildings of historical importance or commercial use
- Main squares
- Pedestrian streets
- Urban parks
- Protected forests
- Natural creeks
- Urban pieces with potential of connection through public space
- Urban areas with potential of public space through urban voids

0 500 m 1000 m 1500 m 2000 m 2500 m



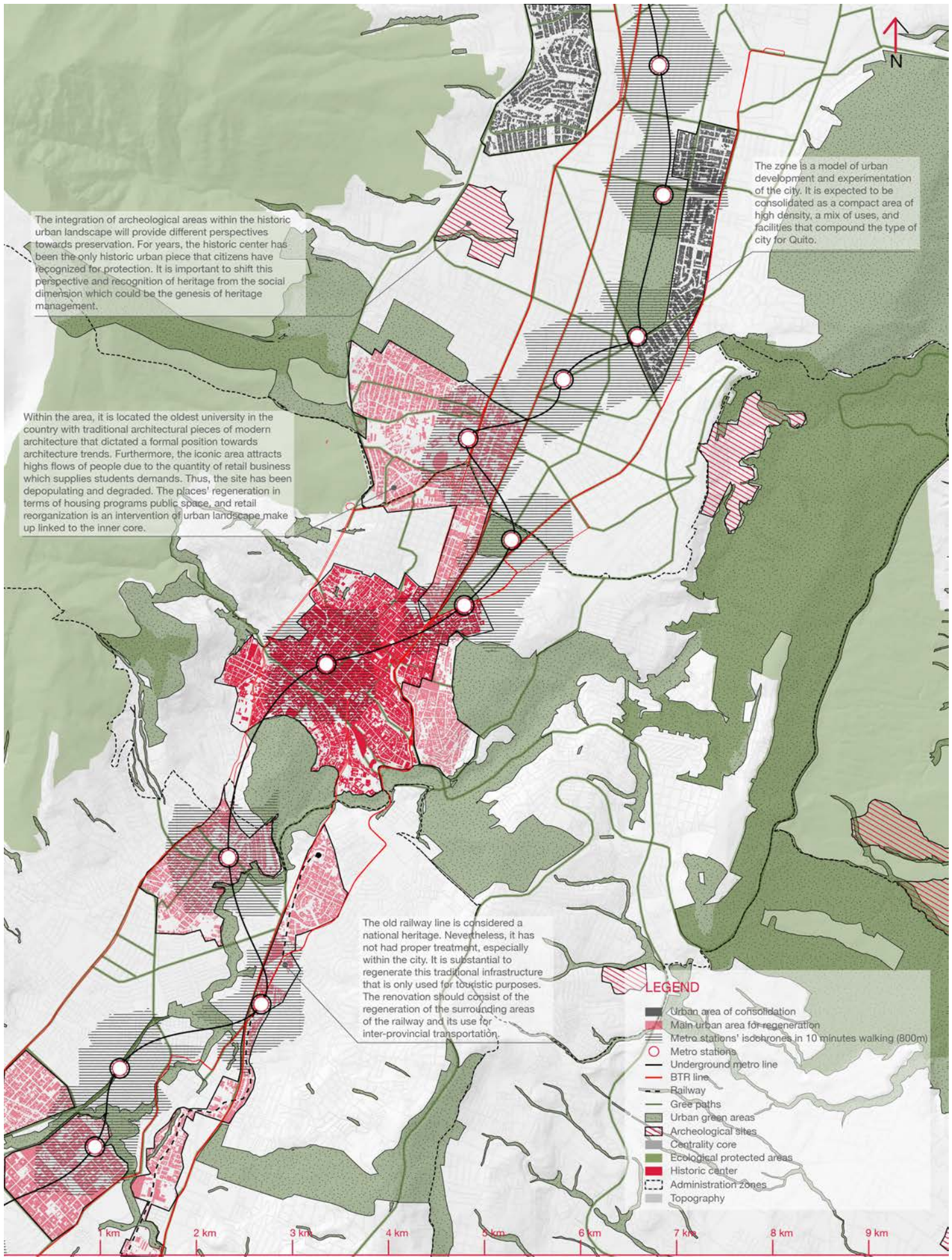
**Representational maps based on the recommendations of urban regeneration previously explained in chapter 6.**

**Map 13. Breaking centralities, urban and natural elements connection**

Note: The taking area was chosen due to the proximities of the historic center and its relationship with the city as an urban composer. It is intended to represent the HUL on a wider view by breaking the barriers made for the inner city. It is considered important pieces that could provide significant identities to citizens. Natural elements, ancient areas, and potential areas for regeneration are the main articulators of HUL. Some elements have been highlighted considering the winner project of the ‘Green Corridor Contest for Quito.’

Source: Author’s elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito and Corredor Metropolitano de Quito. Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/> and [https://issuu.com/yesinnovation/docs/resumen\\_ejecutivo\\_final2](https://issuu.com/yesinnovation/docs/resumen_ejecutivo_final2)





The integration of archeological areas within the historic urban landscape will provide different perspectives towards preservation. For years, the historic center has been the only historic urban piece that citizens have recognized for protection. It is important to shift this perspective and recognition of heritage from the social dimension which could be the genesis of heritage management.

Within the area, it is located the oldest university in the country with traditional architectural pieces of modern architecture that dictated a formal position towards architecture trends. Furthermore, the iconic area attracts high flows of people due to the quantity of retail business which supplies students demands. Thus, the site has been depopulating and degraded. The places' regeneration in terms of housing programs public space, and retail reorganization is an intervention of urban landscape make up linked to the inner core.

The zone is a model of urban development and experimentation of the city. It is expected to be consolidated as a compact area of high density, a mix of uses, and facilities that compound the type of city for Quito.

The old railway line is considered a national heritage. Nevertheless, it has not had proper treatment, especially within the city. It is substantial to regenerate this traditional infrastructure that is only used for touristic purposes. The renovation should consist of the regeneration of the surrounding areas of the railway and its use for inter-provincial transportation.

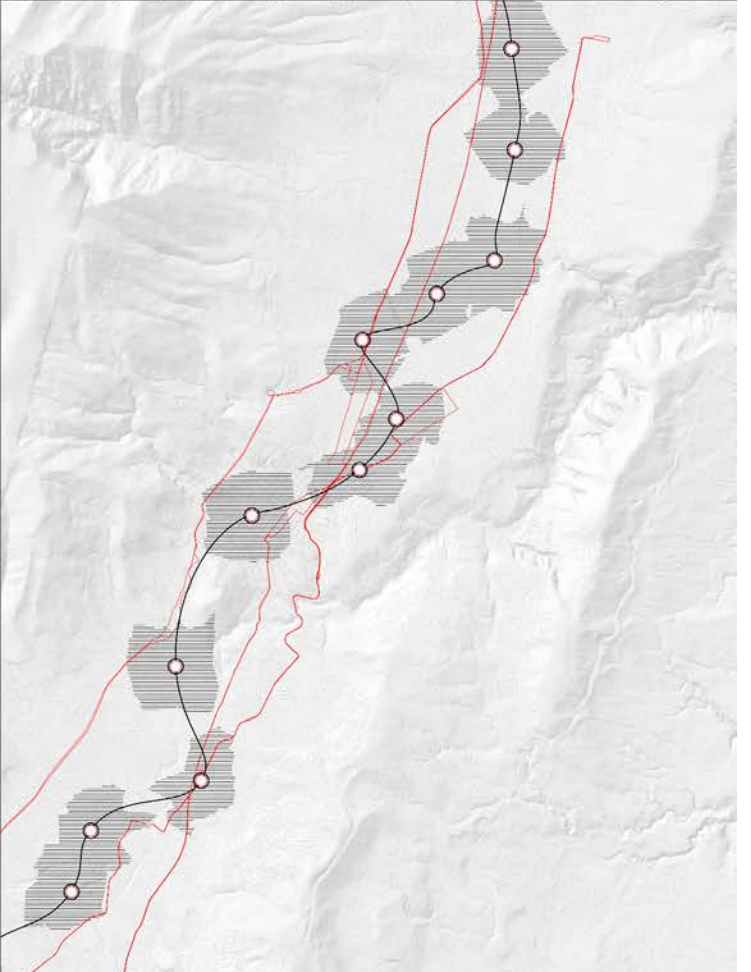
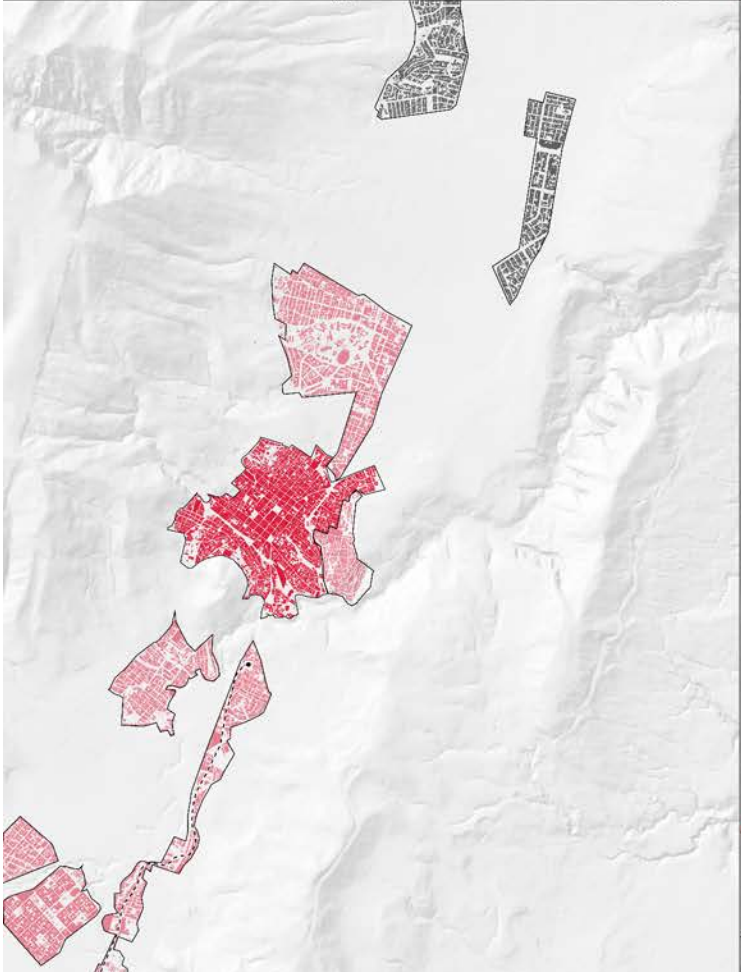
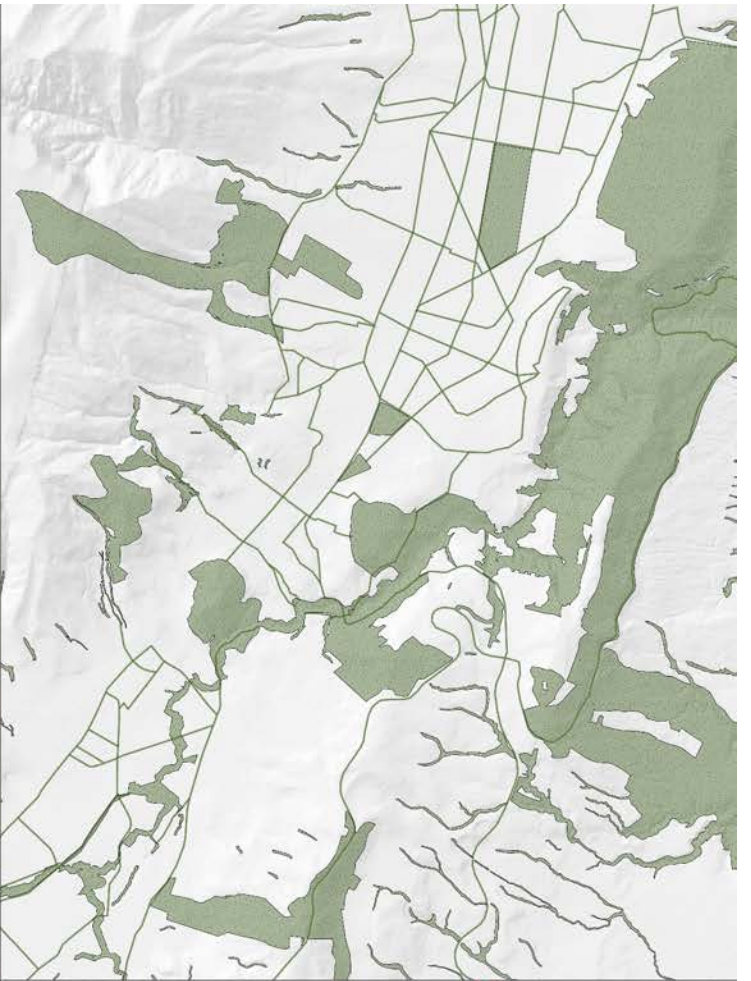
**LEGEND**

- Urban area of consolidation
- Main urban area for regeneration
- Metro stations' isochrones in 10 minutes walking (800m)
- Metro stations
- Underground metro line
- BTR line
- Railway
- Green paths
- Urban green areas
- Archeological sites
- Centrality core
- Ecological protected areas
- Historic center
- Administration zones
- Topography



**Maps 13.1. Exploded layers of the previous map**

Note: Above right: Protected areas and archeological sites. Above left: Urban green areas with green corridors. Bellow right: Urban elements as main catalysts. Bellow left: Public transport with metro station isochrone analysis





**Map 14. Housing recommendation map based on analytical map 07**

Note: It is important to provide not only housing programs but the heterogeneity that characterizes the historic center.

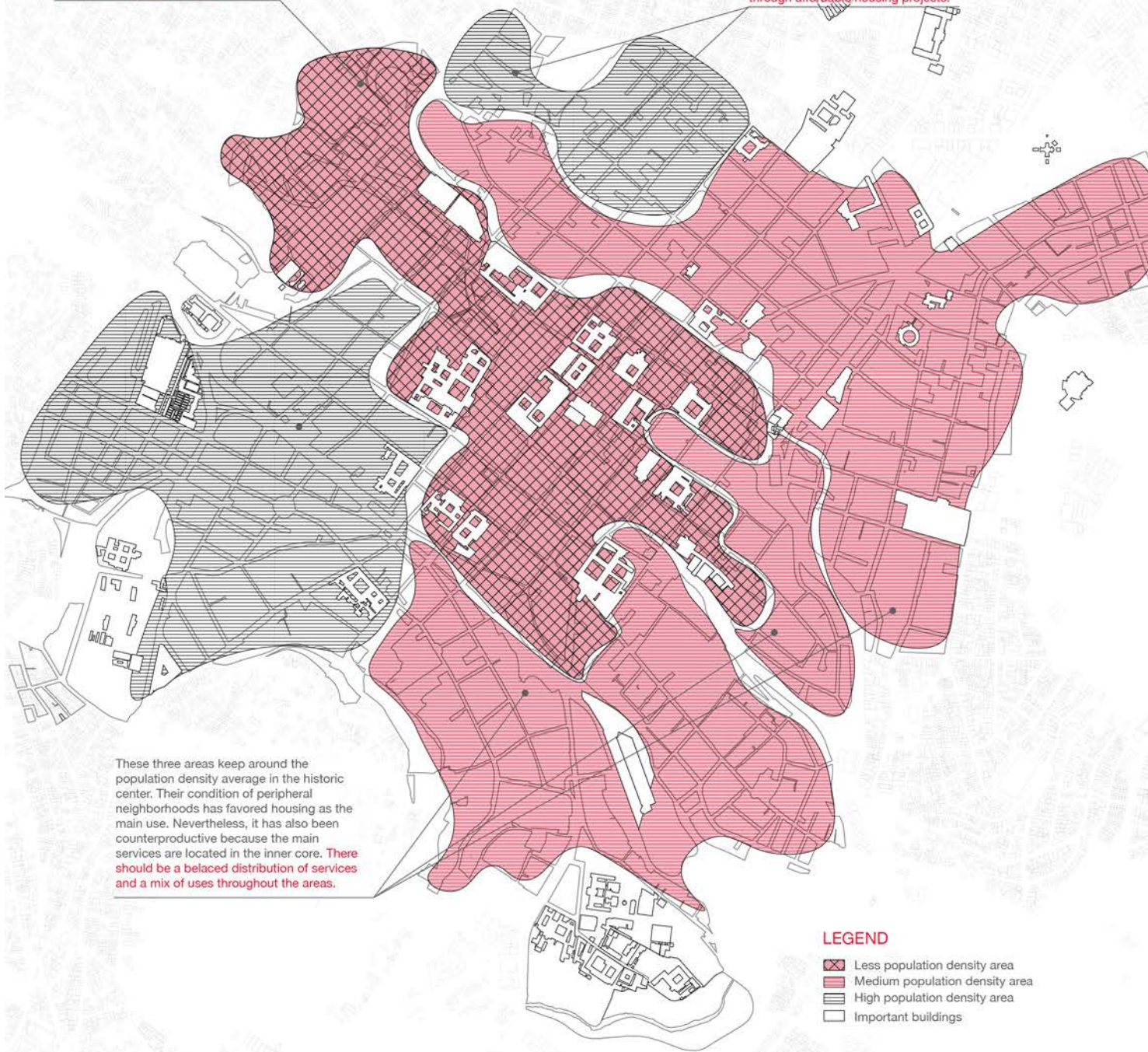
Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito.  
Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/>







The area counts on important historic buildings which are churches, monasteries, institutional buildings, museums, cultural centers, and commercial centers. The largeness of these infrastructures reduces the possibility to increase population density. However, there are other **private and public buildings that could provide services such as education, health, or financial centers that attract newcomers.** Moreover, the aim is to establish a controlled policy of real estate intervention to become attractive affordable housing for this area.

Although the population density is high within these areas, there should be a restructuring program of housing restoration in which owners and tenants could work together with the requalification of the properties. **New housing types should be implemented through affordable housing projects.**

These three areas keep around the population density average in the historic center. Their condition of peripheral neighborhoods has favored housing as the main use. Nevertheless, it has also been counterproductive because the main services are located in the inner core. **There should be a balanced distribution of services and a mix of uses throughout the areas.**



**LEGEND**

-  Less population density area
-  Medium population density area
-  High population density area
-  Important buildings

500 m

1000 m

1500 m

2000 m

2500 m



**Map 15. Recommendation of possible activities map based on map 09**

Note: Ground floors and mix uses are quite important for the reactivation of peripheral areas of the historic center. This together with open spaces and pedestrian paths contribute to the livability and rescue of heritage.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito.  
Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/>



**LEGEND**

-  Main corridors for ground floor activation
-  Zone of mix use encouragement
-  Regeneration zone for ground floor activities
-  Important buildings

500 m

1000 m

1500 m

2000 m

2500 m

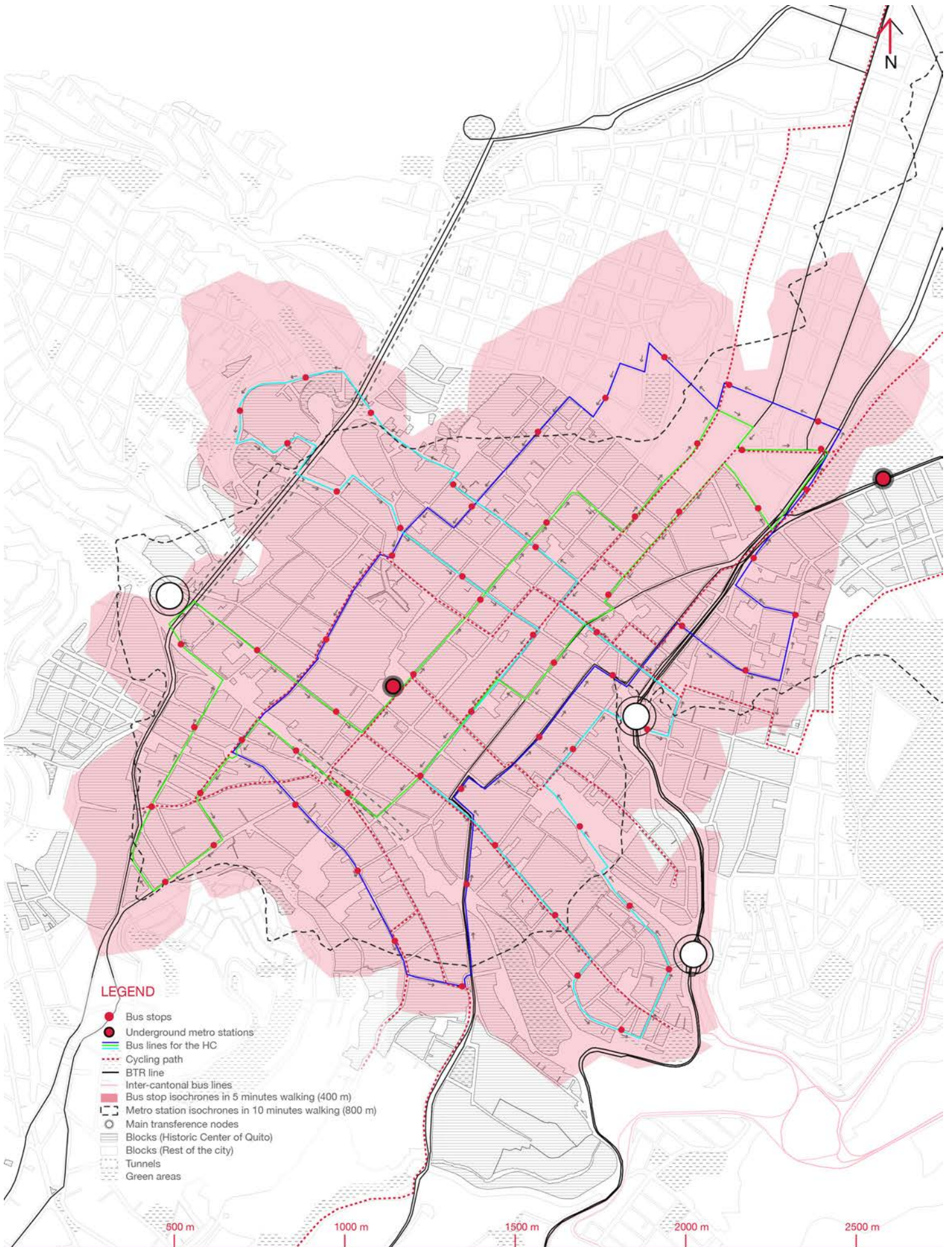


### **Map 16. Public transport map based on map 11**

Note: The chaotic bus lines that pass through the old town should be reconfigured by implemented single bus lines for the internal movement without interfering with pedestrian paths. Existing bus lines could be replaced by the metro line and supported by peripheral bus lines and the BRT. The isochrone analysis is based on the new bus line stops. It is also highlighted bikeways as an important element for transportation.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito.  
Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/>





**LEGEND**

- Bus stops
- Underground metro stations
- Bus lines for the HC
- Cycling path
- BTR line
- Inter-cantonal bus lines
- Bus stop isochrones in 5 minutes walking (400 m)
- Metro station isochrones in 10 minutes walking (800 m)
- Main transference nodes
- ▨ Blocks (Historic Center of Quito)
- ▨ Blocks (Rest of the city)
- Tunnels
- Green areas

500 m

1000 m

1500 m

2000 m

2500 m

N



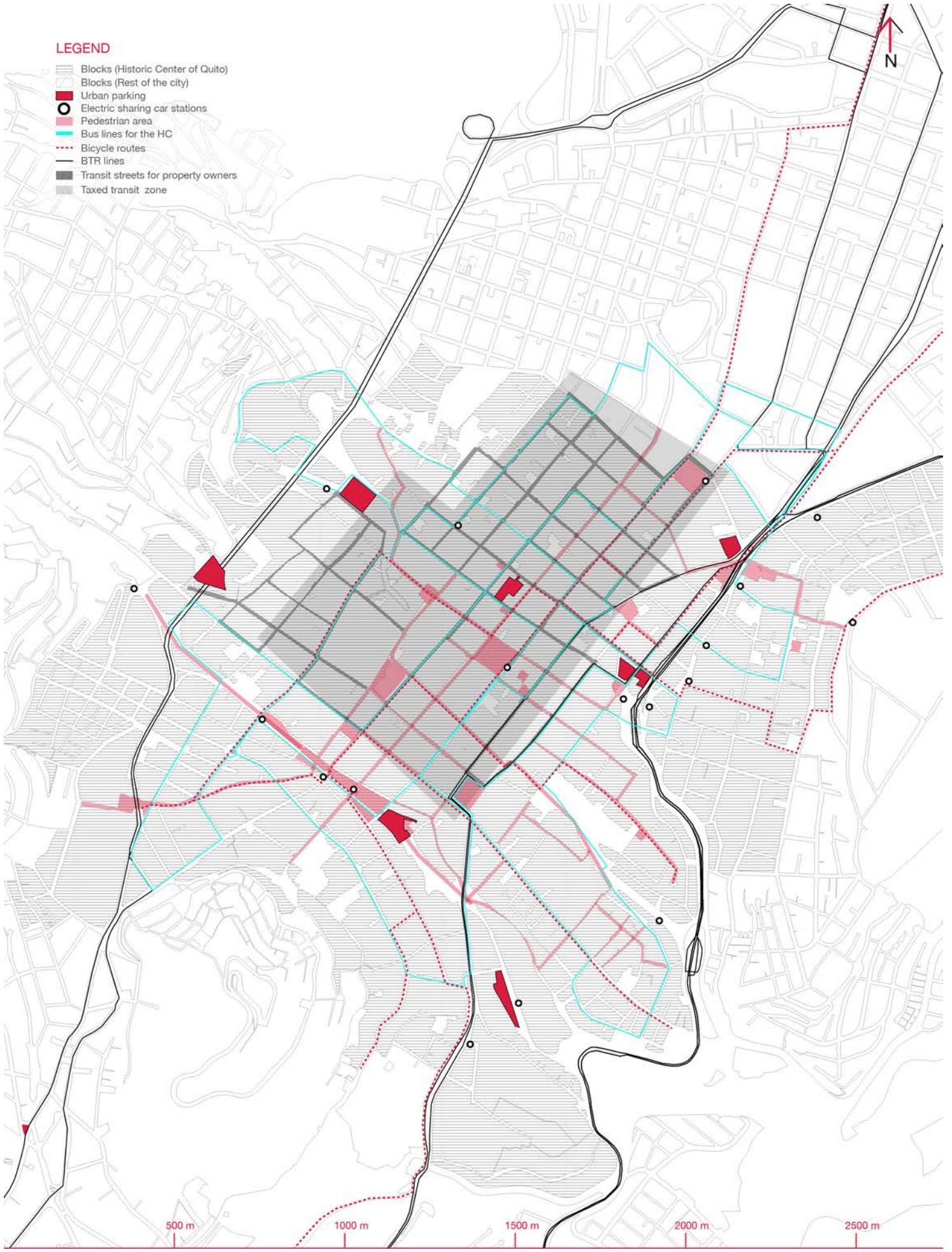
**Map 17. Transit recommendation map of the historic center**

Note: Private cars of property owners can transit freely in the driveways, but visitors' cars should be taxed if they want to enter the inner city. It is also recommended some possible spots for electric sharing cars.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito.  
Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/>

**LEGEND**

- Blocks (Historic Center of Quito)
- Blocks (Rest of the city)
- Urban parking
- Electric sharing car stations
- Pedestrian area
- Bus lines for the HC
- Bicycle routes
- BTR lines
- Transit streets for property owners
- Taxed transit zone





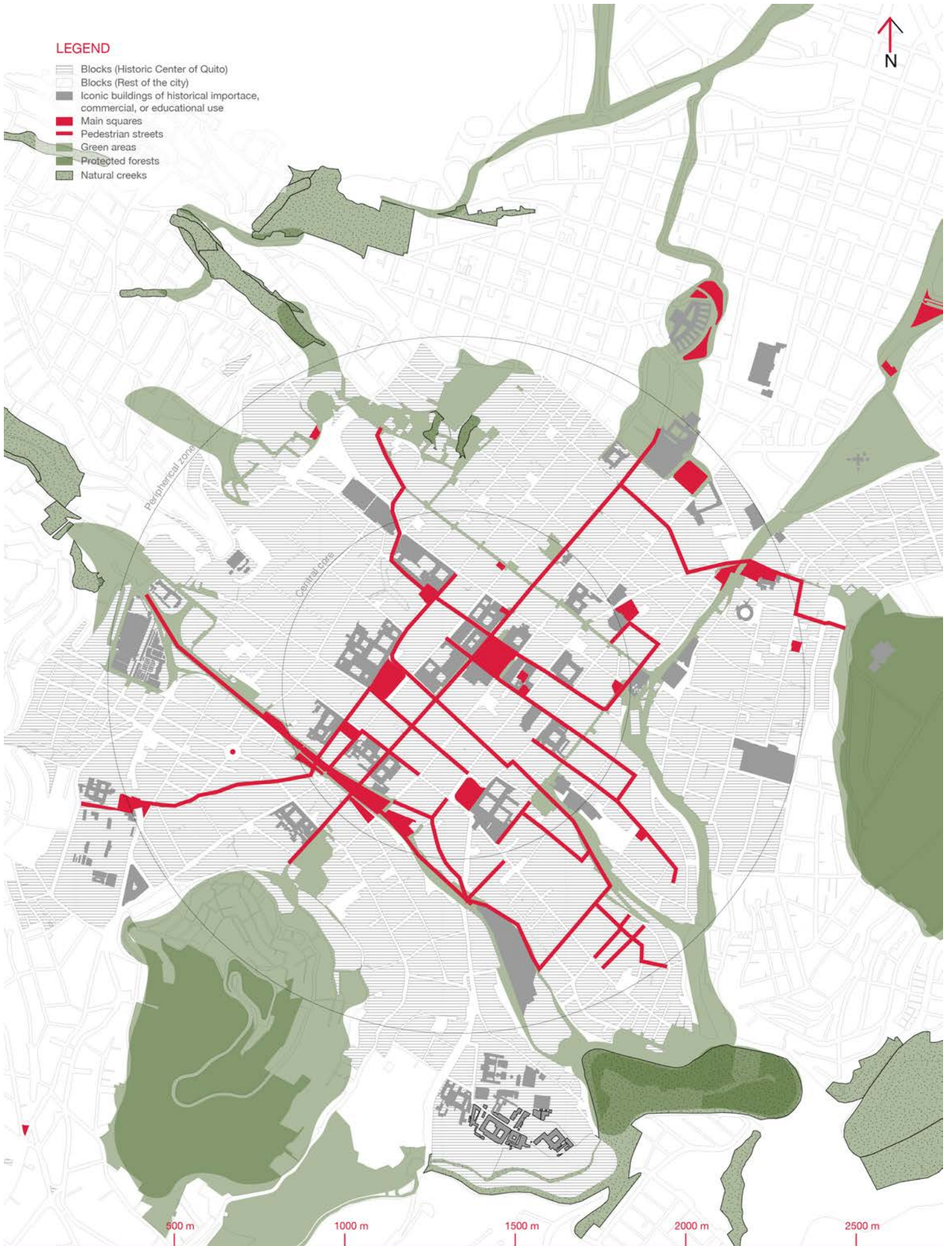
**Map 18. Public spaces and green areas recommendation map based on map 12**

Note: Public spaces and green corridors should be connected by paths that could guarantee safety and livable spaces. Main public and commercial buildings are identifiable to provide them with proper public spaces.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito. Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/>

**LEGEND**

- Blocks (Historic Center of Quito)
- Blocks (Rest of the city)
- Iconic buildings of historical importance, commercial, or educational use
- Main squares
- Pedestrian streets
- Green areas
- Protected forests
- Natural creeks



Peri-urban zone

Central core

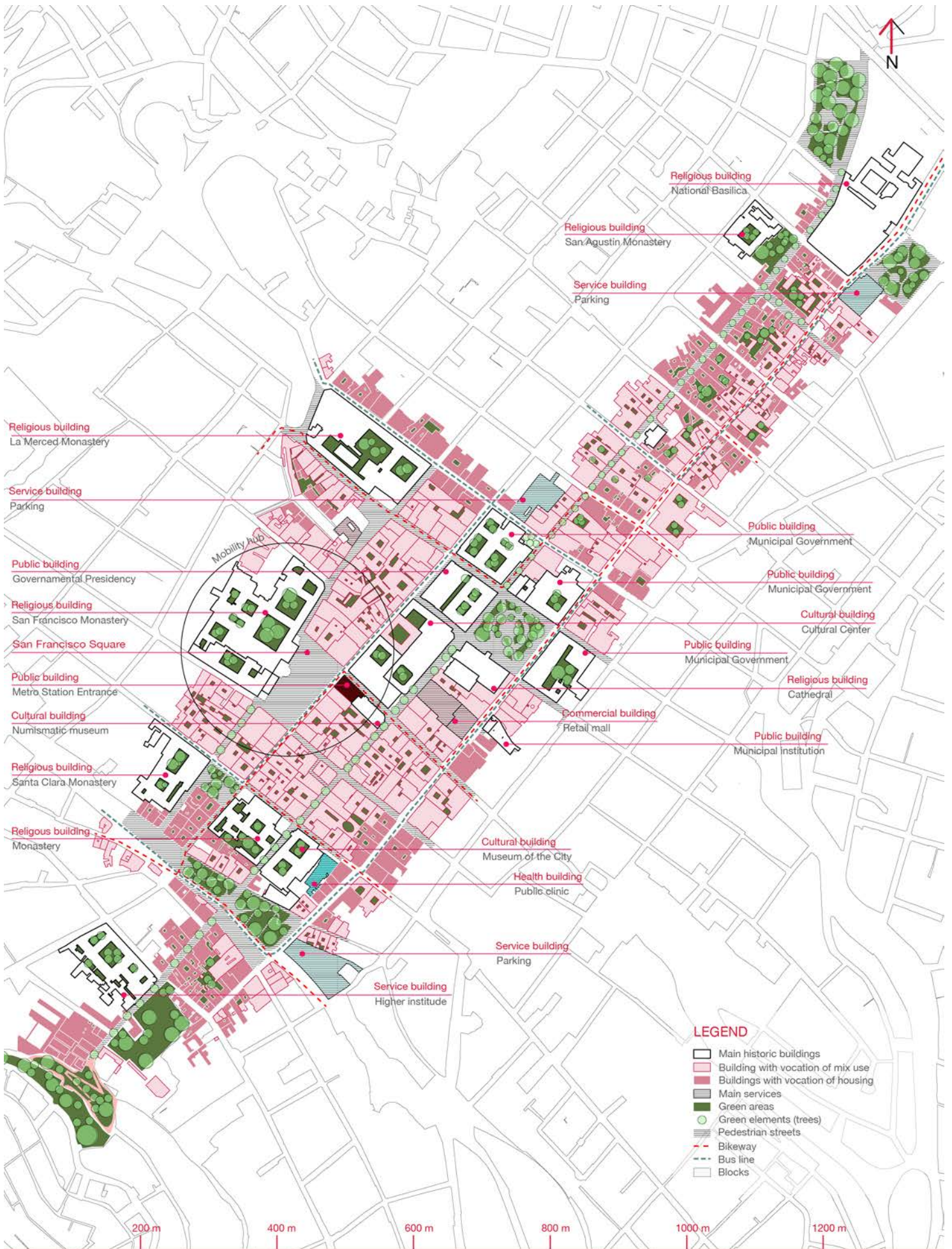
500 m      1000 m      1500 m      2000 m      2500 m



**Map 19. Detailed urban piece of the historic center**

Note: The representation collects all the recommendations provided into a spatial piece. The south-north corridors encounter various urban recommendations that exemplify the intentions of a livable historic asset that should work as important infrastructure and urban component.

Source: Author's elaboration based on data of Gobierno Abierto Quito.  
Retrieved from: <http://gobiernoabierto.quito.gob.ec/descarga-informacion-geografica/>



**Diagram 03. Basic guidelines for historic units and street sections**

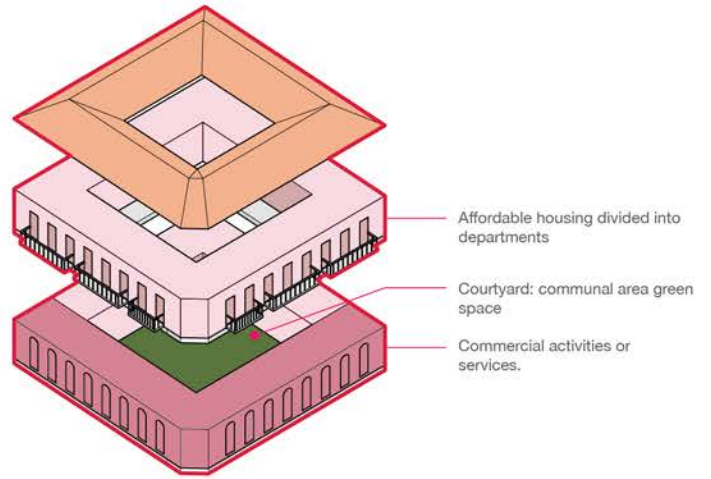
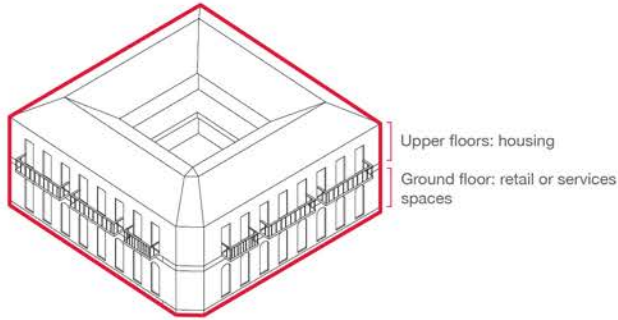
Note: Urban design guidelines are important to understand better urban plans and their purposes within the territory. These diagrams are based on the previous detailed urban piece.



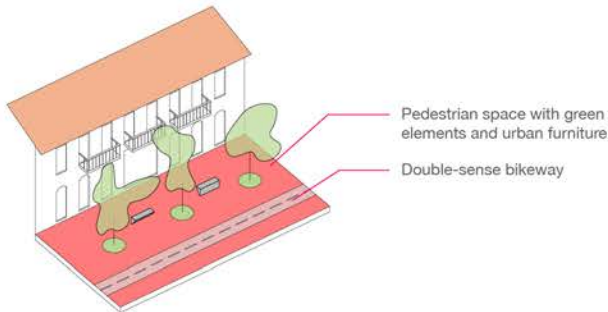
## Basic drawings for urban design guidelines

### Model of historic dwellings dedicated to mix uses

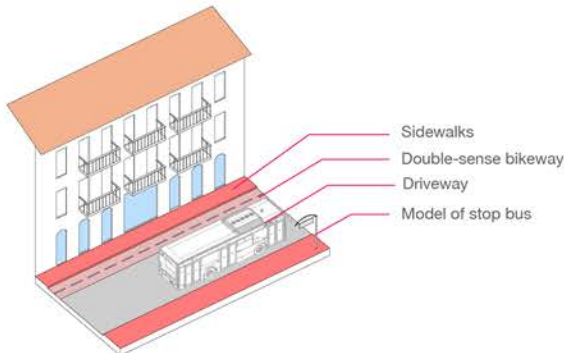
Historic courtyard buildings can be adapted to the current demands of society. The configuration of the buildings facilitates the adaptation of new forms of living. Additionally, the potentiation of ground floors for amenities which alive the urban space.



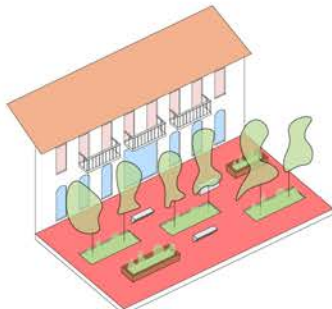
### Model of public spaces (streets)



Pedestrian street with bikeway



Driveway with bikeway



Green corridor

The high number of people that daily visit the inner city is the main indicator to pedestrianize most of the concurrent areas. These streets should be designed responding citizens' demands that could integrate them within the public realm as the scenery of public cohesion and citizenship belonging.

The reconfiguration of bus lines within the historic center comes together with the implementation of a smaller electric bus that could transit easily throughout the inner city, especially through the narrow section of streets.

Green corridors are made up of different green elements such as trees and bushes very typical from the Andean region, as well as urban furniture. These corridors are dedicated to pedestrians that could walk safely the historic area. Their main aim is to reduce carbon emissions.

## APPENDIX: NEW MINDSET FACING HERITAGE

The significant conservation level that Quito's historic center has had over the years; have made it one of the finest preserved in Latin America, which is relevant when we talk about physical heritage. Through this work, the research tackles emerging dynamics that the old town presents due to their relevant role within the city. For this reason, the HUL's framework was considered as the main tool to understand these emergent realities and challenges.

Even though the HUL approach has just a few years under the urban practice of heritage conservation, the different international experiences explained before are instances that the framework could follow within the line of current trends of urban planning. More than a fitted scenario, heritage conservation reassembles different elements through the awareness and incursion of its actors. The present reflection made for the city of Quito highlights the opportunities its inner core has in order to provide not only to the whole urban footprint but also to a metropolitan dimension. Undoubtedly, the historic center represents the cultural identity of Ecuadorian capital's citizens. It is clear that the HUL approach, in Quito's old town, does not start from scratch. Nonetheless, some aspects, particularly those outside its bonds, ought to be reconsidered. Over the years, institutions such as OLACCHI have concorded with the idea of the polycentric approach that has been adapted through the Quito's developed. Since its first 'Regulatory Plan' in the 40s, the centralities' conception has blinded planning from new perspectives. Within this regard, the historic center has been another urban piece with special treatments of heritage protection.

Today, Quito encounters various political breakdowns that disoriented the municipal office from a coherent management plan. Most of these plans have been political slogans during election times, adopting mediatic urban concepts. Thus, the first field to work on is the reorganization of governance in which the historic center could get away from the strong bubble of heritage conservation. Shrinking the political apparatus and defining different levels of governance

will break the imposed barriers to intervene inner city as well as to open it as a making up element of planning. In Mexico's experience, the transition from Federal District to City of Mexico widened the doors of an independent city to communicate with its inhabitants.

This top-down planning encounters the city within a box in which every urban aspect is controlled and managed from the public office. The promising interaction with neighborhood organization during the first years of the 2010s have been fading because of the savage political interest of certain groups. Additionally, citizenship participation has rarely been present within consolidated urban areas, especially in the inner city. Social groups' participation and city awareness does not go beyond the claim when public authorities transgress their rights. Hence, bottom-up approaches should be the genesis for planning. In a city such as Quito that was listed a World Cultural Heritage by UNESCO, citizen participation and belonging ought to be the main and first tools to follow the HUL's approach. In fact, the 'Strategic Plan for the Historic Center of Quito 2019' has followed the HUL's recommendation. However, its interacting approach ended before developing the plan. It is particularly important to underline that more than workshops of intention presentations, the aim is to root a sense of belonging and awareness of heritage conservation, as well as how to move it through the territory.

Moreover, the fragmented and polarized metropolis must break the centrality in which many urban pieces throughout the city have been bubbled without an integral urban connection. The HUL's approach is clear when making up the city through historic and natural elements with special significance for citizens. The scholar, Paladines, suggests a different approach that considers the green infrastructure, which has been transgressed over urban expansion. Indeed, this was the intention of the contest 'Green Corridor' that reinterprets the urban footprint through public space, natural protection, and architectural interventions. According to these concepts, the historic center perfectly fits as the structuring asset of urban development. Actually, regeneration of historic urban areas and their connection's improvement will reassemble the perspective of urban planning in Quito.

Without solving the inner city's internal issues through opportunity identification, the HUL approach cannot be achieved. For this reason, the idea of a living historic center is critical to rescuing traditional urban districts that are extremely significant for inhabitants. This identification is crucial since the primary concern is the integration of newcomers through the implementation of policies of affordable housing that can be generated through public-private partnerships. Besides, service provision and facility reorganization are the main aspects to provide balanced dynamizations to the historic center. Peripheral neighborhoods, for instance, are the main areas to introduce dynamisms which

are condensed within the central core. Moreover, it is fundamental to rethink on the one hand, the connection and transportation elements as sustainable systems according to the condition of its urban fabric and on the other hand, open public spaces as the catalysts of urban cohesion and reception of urban livability that provide to citizens a correlation with the historic environment.

When analyzing the historic center, it is immersed its contextual city because in every new action, phenomenon, and policy towards the city, the historic center could have direct or indirect affections. Indeed, the ‘historic urban landscape’ approach intends to reconcile the old town with the “generic city.” (Koolhaas, 1995) Without the inner city, the other could have not departed. The historic center is not the ‘great urban project’ anymore, it is the main structuring element together with identified new urban heritages that coordinate urban dimensions such as mobility, housing, services, and public space. In fact, a new paradigm that employs urban fabric as an infrastructure for heritage conservation through its livability—submits with the ‘historic urban landscape’ approach. Quito has all the ingredients and resources to comply this new conception of heritage conservation. From its natural geographical location to its traditions, the Andean city has the potential to become an urban example of conservation, considering new challenges that heritage establishes regarding urban life and city composition.

Figure 58. View of the historic center of Quito 2021

Source: Photo shot by Paola Cordero



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