

‘WE GREW UP TOGETHER’

Collaborative Teenscapes Built by Succession



Public spaces have been described as the common living spaces in our societies, where we are meant to spend time freely and on equal terms. Groups like children, young parents, elderly or professionals are usually catered to in different ways via public space design - examples include playgrounds, dog parks and convenient infrastructure for commute. However, one age group stands out in comparison to others. In the state between childhood and becoming an adult, we are in constant change - meaning that our wants and needs are highly unpredictable. For this reason, public spaces rarely cater to the age group teenagers, as the configuration of space that suits this group a certain day, month or year may be different in a short while. This may seem sensible, however we consider the lack of public spaces directed at youth and teens to be of great concern and to have dire consequences. Without all the virtues of public space that feels directed towards you, a sense of being left out may start to creep in. Furthermore, the extremely important aspects of socializing, exploring the world around you and moving your body in these years may be stumped when the only spaces that feel inviting to you are at home or in commercial places like a mall. This may lead to a lack of pride, engagement and sense of belonging to your home and as the teenager grows up, these feelings are never forgotten.

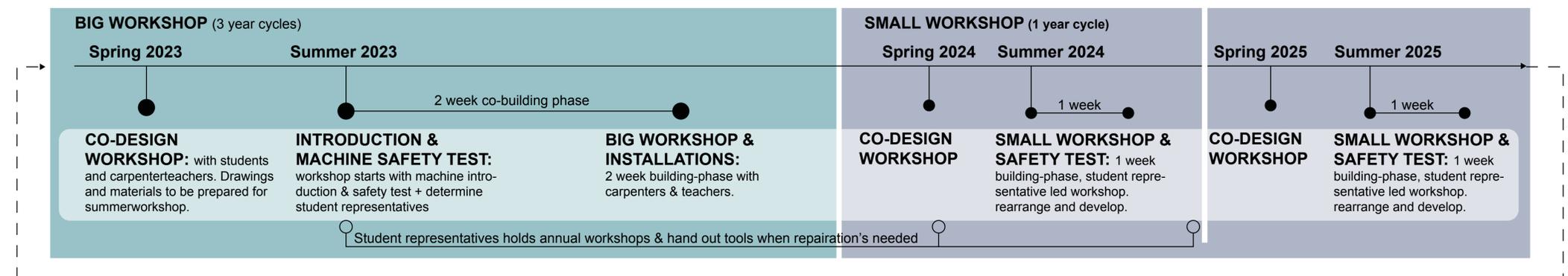
With this project, we want to consider the ever-changing quality of the teenage years as a strength and match this strength with a physical manifestation through time as well as space. By creating opportunities to engage, build on each others creativity, meet and develop a public space specifically for teenagers, but with close ties to other important places in Mark, we hope to contribute to a shift in the current perspective on teenagers’ role in public space.

Upon researching the intersection between teenagers and space, we came across some very interesting findings. We found that teenagers have different social and spatial needs than adults, and that these needs are rarely met, discussed or explored in contemporary public space development projects. We used these findings to create some principles for what to achieve in our project, while collaborating with the municipality to find an appropriate site. As we reached an agreement to work in the area around Viskan and build on a project already proposed by the municipality, a key project for making Mark more attractive for youths starts to take shape. Before we started designing the project however, we also made sure to create opportunity for the local teens to participate in our process and through in-depth dialogue we were able to further nuance our principles and goals for the project.

The expressed wishes for social space, lack of attractive public spaces and things to do were synthesized with plans and wishes from the municipality - resulting in our proposal: Along a public nature path that provides social and recreational space, interventions with a focus on youth participation, engagement and activity shapes a space for Mark’s teenagers over time.

Combining a public nature path with teenager-focused interventions is a way to integrate different groups spatially, while simultaneously providing more intimate places to spend time with friends. Furthermore, time and the idea of the project growing with its users is considered a strategy to be used within the project, through continued participation with the target group. We have created implementation suggestions for this co-creation project, and propose a collaboration with the local high school curriculum through several workshops that can create a common thread for many years to come, and opportunity for the youth in Mark to build on each other’s creativity.

Based on our dialogue and research, the goal of our project is to provide a sense of pride, belonging and ownership in Mark over time. In this way, we hope to promote a culture of participation and stronger ties to the municipality, whilst simultaneously giving the forgotten group of teenagers more places to explore their relationship with nature, themselves and each other.

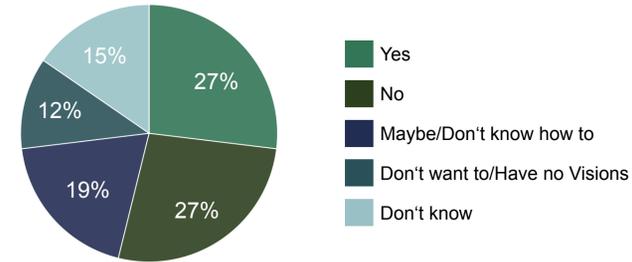


Dialogue & Workshop

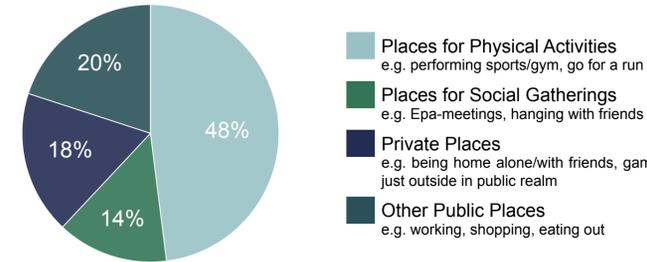
Our target group is teenagers in upper secondary school (age 15-19) so we arranged a workshop at Marks Gymnasieskola to talk to the youths and get valuable input as a base for our following design process and decision making.

Results

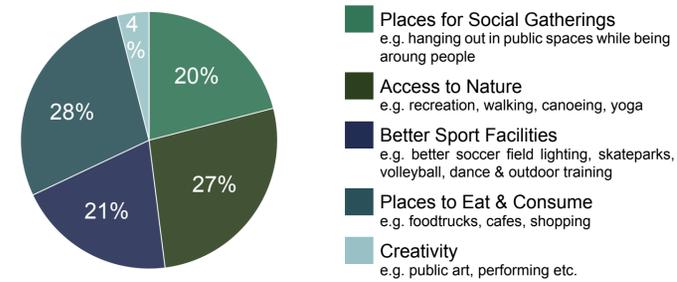
Do you feel like you have the possibility to impact your surrounding public spaces?



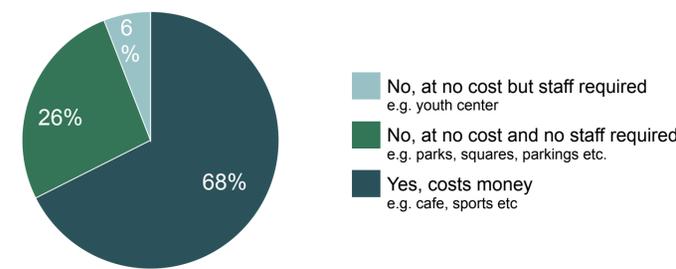
What do you do on a daily basis? Which places in the municipality are important to you?



What do you want or miss in your municipality?



Does your activities cost money and does it require supervision from staff/adults?



Conclusion

- General perceived lack of public spaces & meeting places for teen-use
- Common to stay at home (alone or with friends)
- Moped / Epa-Meetings (perceived as problematic, from external parties)
- A lot of sport's activities, therefore sport's facilities
- no idea of how to integrate themselves in development of their environment
- Wishes for access to nature, hangout places for socializing
- Majority of activities is on costs

► Importance of creating a space for them, free from commercial realm

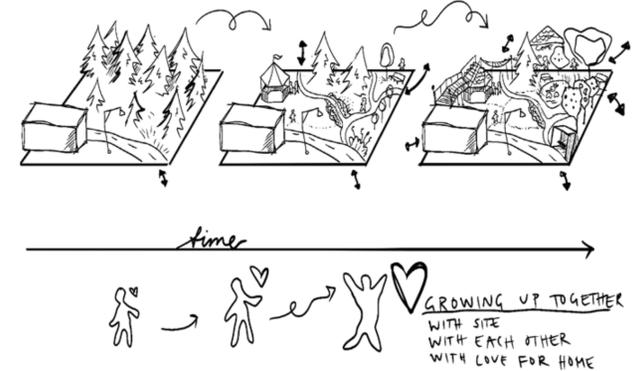
Project Strategy

General Aims & Motivation

- Providing space and experience for young adults to grow with a co-created site
- Promoting the sense of being part of something that is valuable to yourself and your community
- A place that is partly shaped by the planners and constantly re-invented by the users
- Provide a possibility to impact your living environment
- Create a space that is formed by time and changed after needs, a "never ending project" reminiscent of the natural phenomenon of succession
- Functions based on what people want at a specific time, but adaptable for the future

Methods

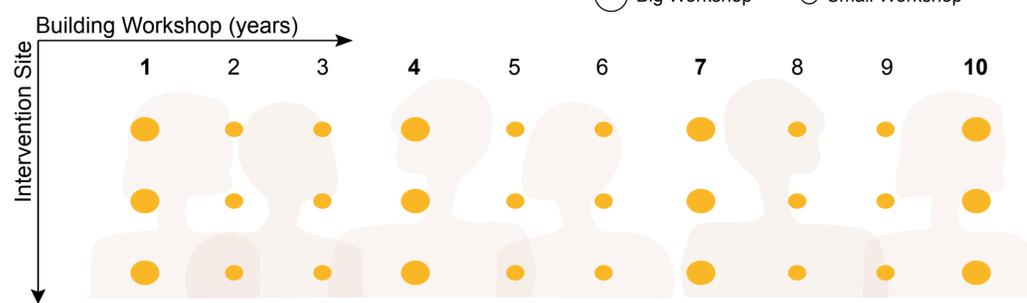
We have been inspired by the landscape concept of **succession** - relating to systems development and inter-species dependency over time. We would like to consider the merits of this natural process and translate it to the social situation of teenagers growing up together with each other and their co-created space. By building on each other and leaving space for future change, the whole system benefits as well as the individual.



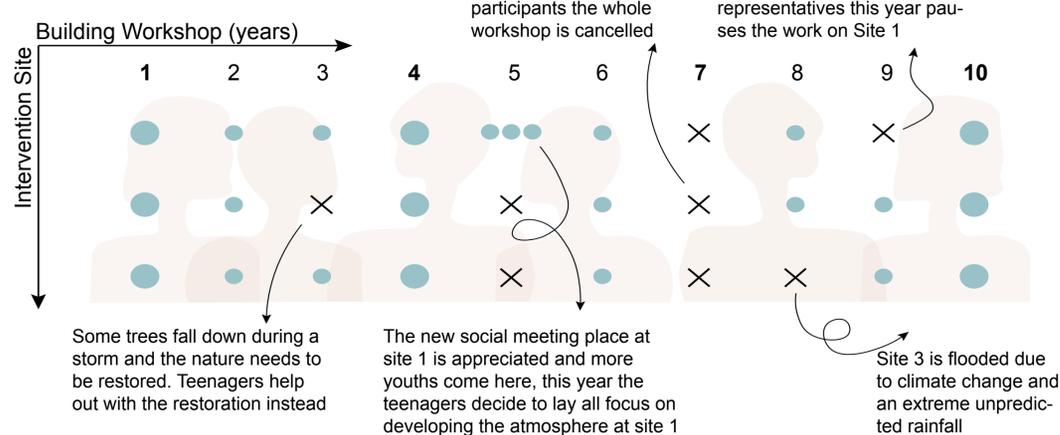
Resilience Philosophy

Taking into account a future that is unforeseen, resilience is an important aspect, here shown as examples of possible events and outcomes.

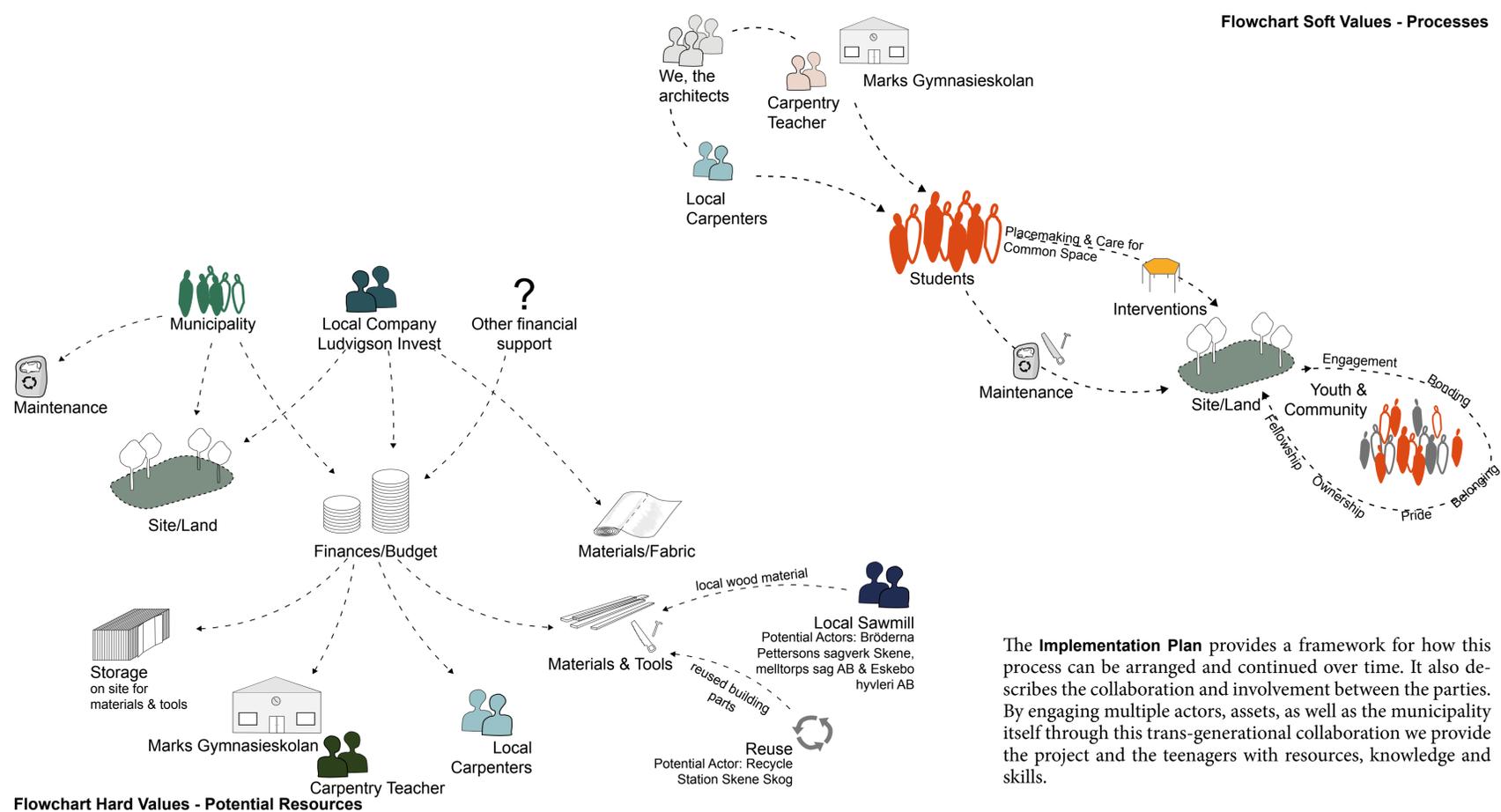
Even Development (Predicted)



Uneven Development (Possible)



Implementation Schemes

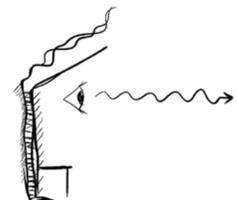


Design Principles

As a result from dialogue and research, we synthesized six Design Principles for the site and the exemplary intervention designs.

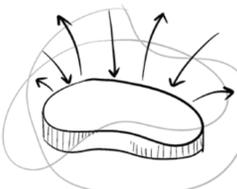
1 From My Corner

- providing places to rest and observe
- teenagers get to relax & still take part in social situations



1 In The Spotlight

- feel like the center of attention
- places that are an opportunity to perform or be observed



3 Restorative Wilderness

- need for contemplation and reflection
- nature has beneficial qualities for this process on teenage brains



New Ways To Sit

- teenagers require different spatial configuration to feel relaxed in their bodies
- considering secondary seating or new ways to sit



Not Quite Playing

- teenagers tend to use playgrounds they played on when they were little (for other activities)
- need for physical challenge together with social opportunity



A Room Within A Room

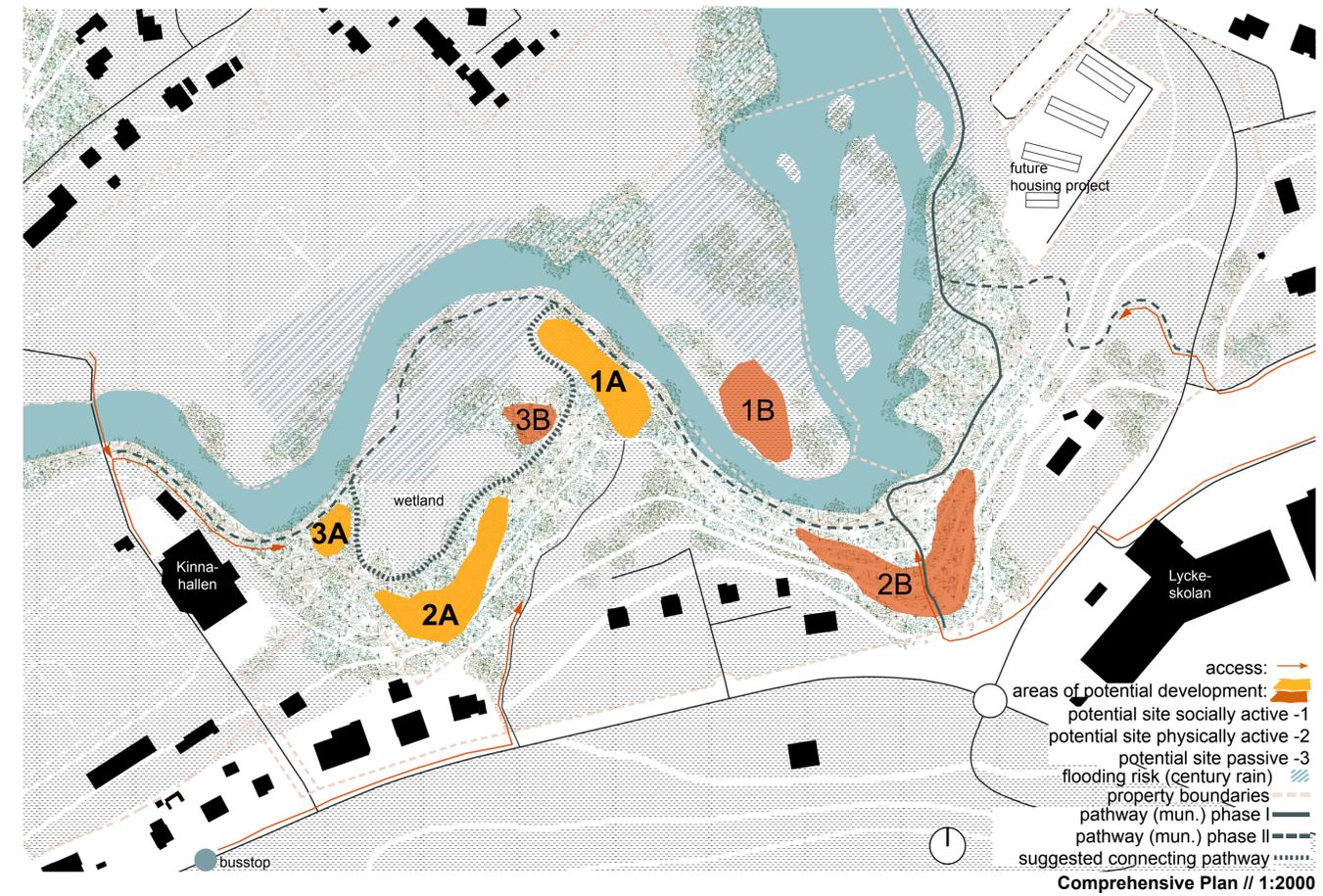
- confiding to a friend
- building strong intimate relations
- creating intimate zones within a larger active context
- sense of safety that allows interactions



1, 2, 3

2

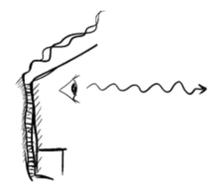
2, 3



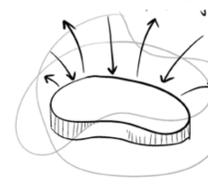
Applied Design Principles:

1A Socially Active Design Example

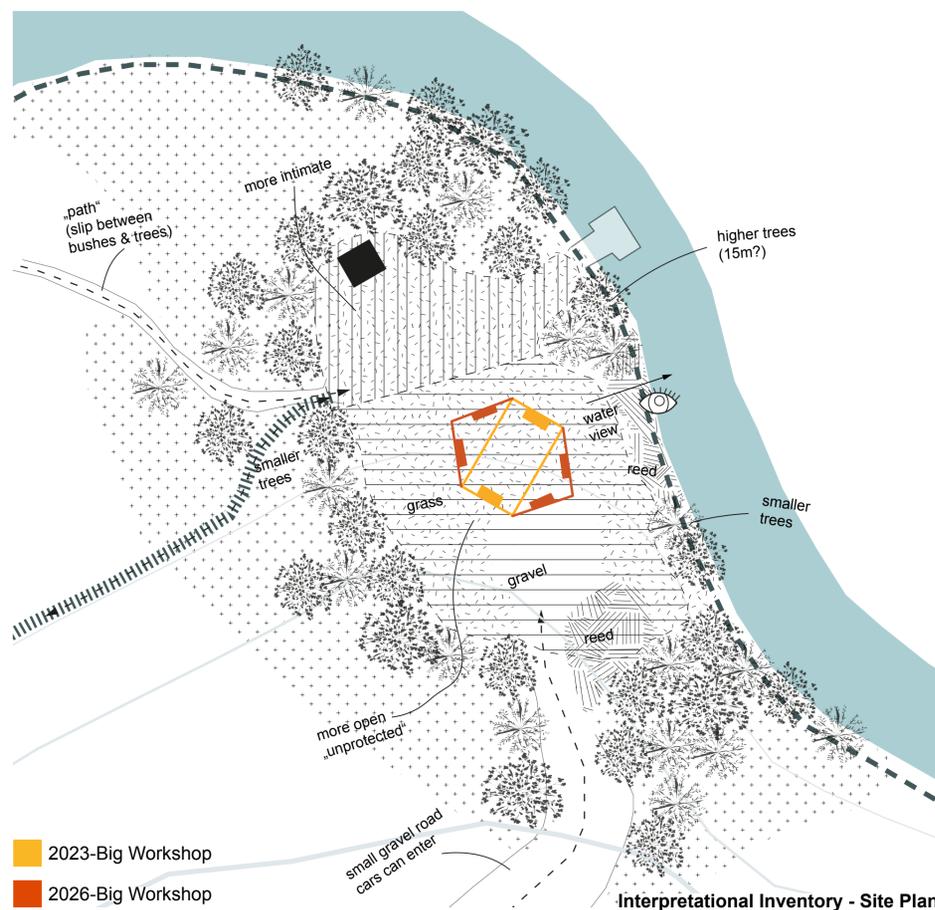
From My Corner



In The Spotlight

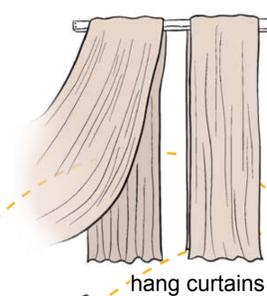


New Ways To Sit

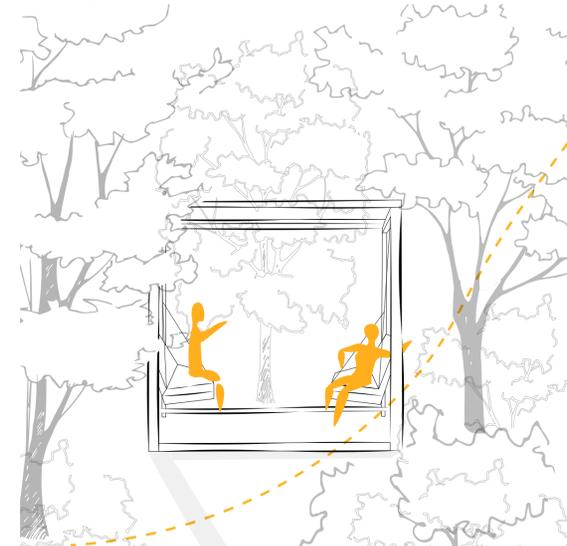


Summer 2026 - Big Workshop

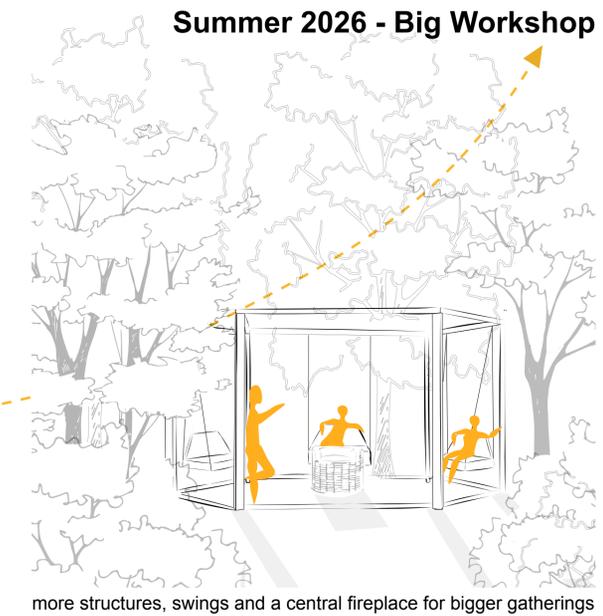
Summer 2024 - Small Workshop



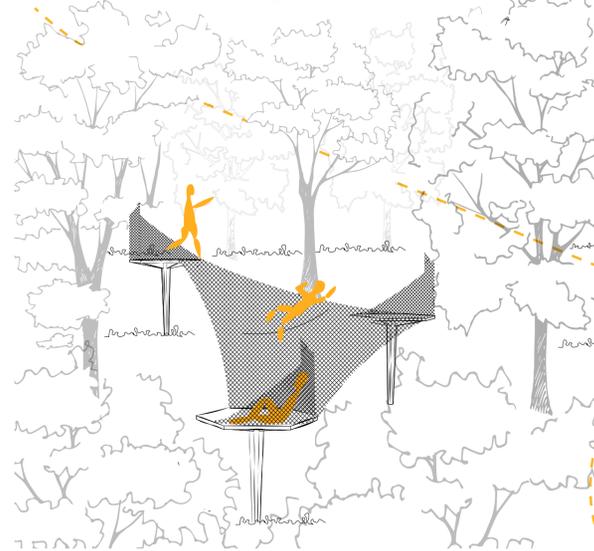
structure, placed in the center of the site with parallel seating to encourage conversations



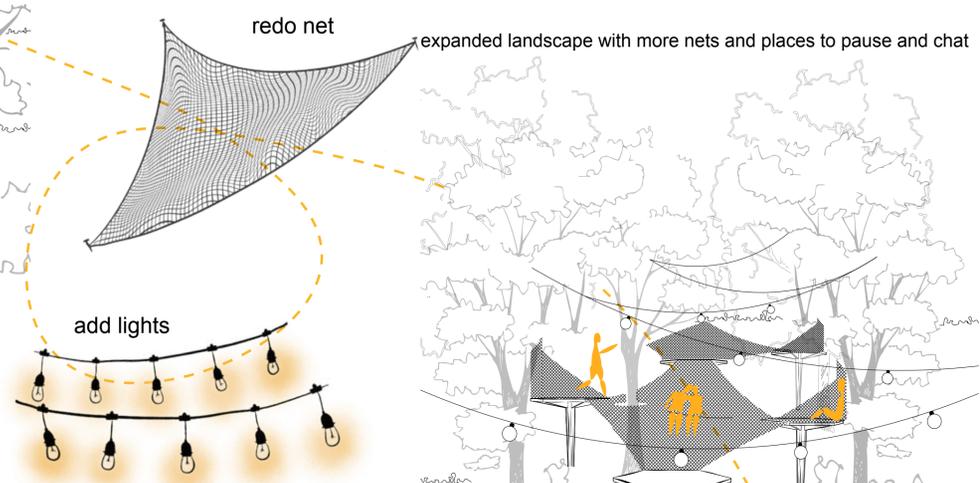
Summer 2023 - Big Workshop



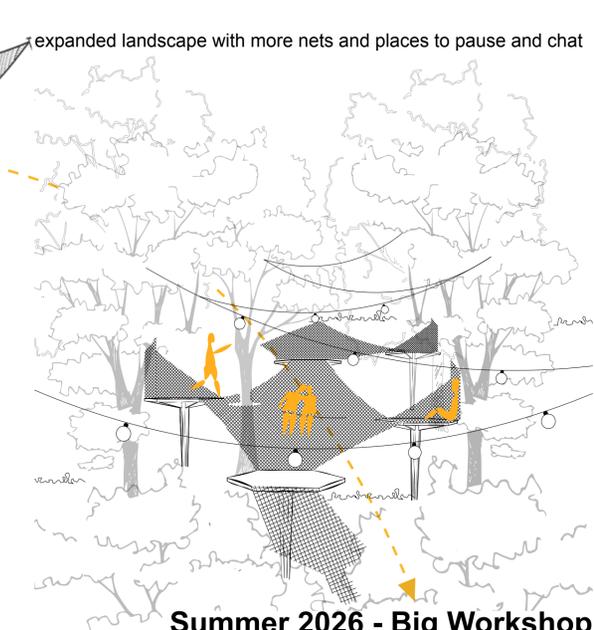
Summer 2023 - Big Workshop



a structure of pillars, a stable net and wooden shavings on the ground that together form a "floating landscape"

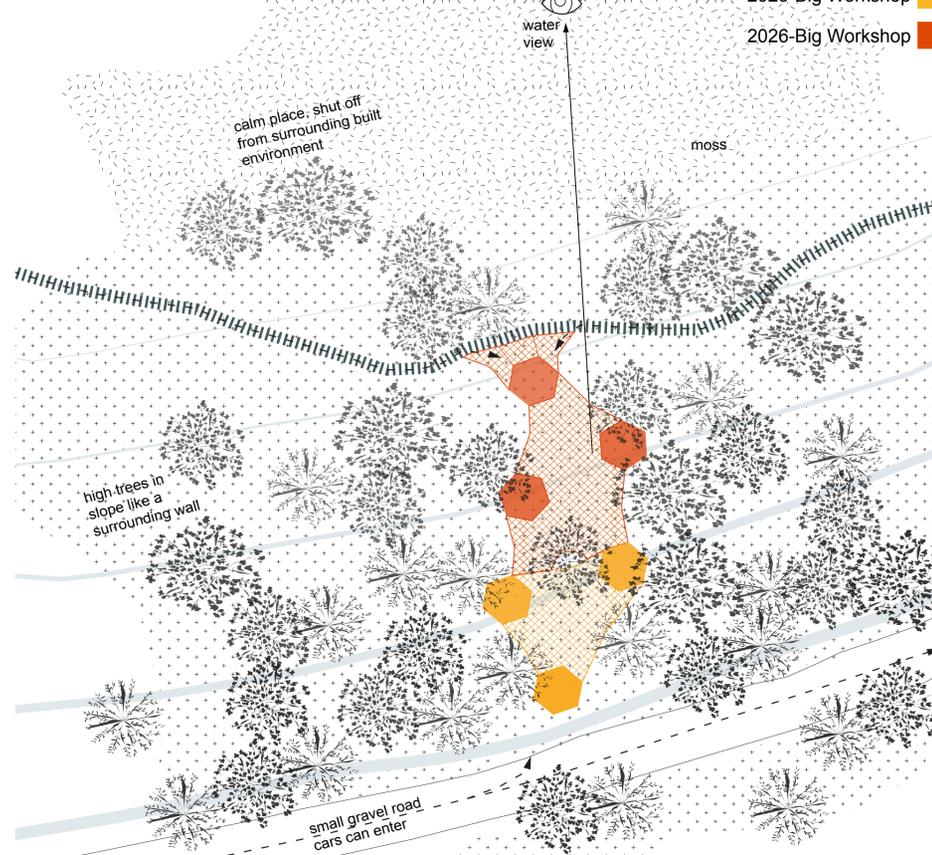


Summer 2024 - Small Workshop



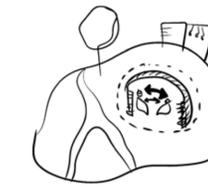
Summer 2026 - Big Workshop

Interpretational Inventory - Site Plan



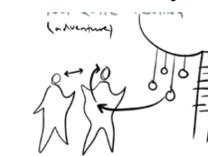
2023-Big Workshop ■ A Room Within A Room

2026-Big Workshop ■



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Not Quite Playing



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New Ways To Sit



Applied Design Principles:

3A Passive Design Example

Restorative Wilderness



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A Room Within A Room



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New Ways To Sit



■ 2023-Big Workshop
■ 2026-Big Workshop



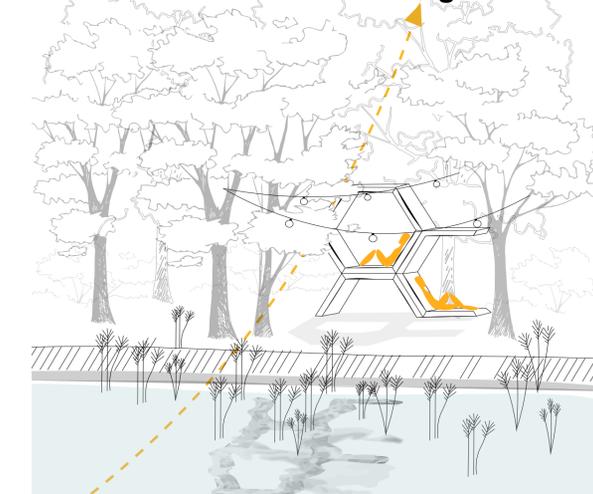
Interpretational Inventory - Site Plan

Design Example 2A

Physically Active 2A

Applied Design Principles:

Summer 2026 - Big Workshop

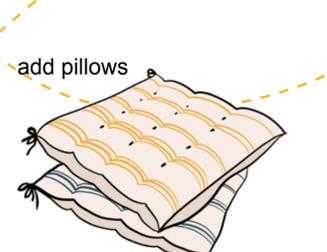
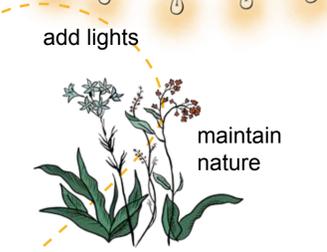


Summer 2024 - Small Workshop

module-based design as a piece of furniture in the woods - made for experiencing nature and to invite for intimate conversations



Summer 2023 - Big Workshop



Reflection

This has been a speculative proposal, investigating some ways to work with and for a public teenscape in Mark. We hope that our proposal can be of use for Mark municipality and that the project can be interpreted and translated into further settings in the future.

