

Freshbrains 2024

Almere Buiten

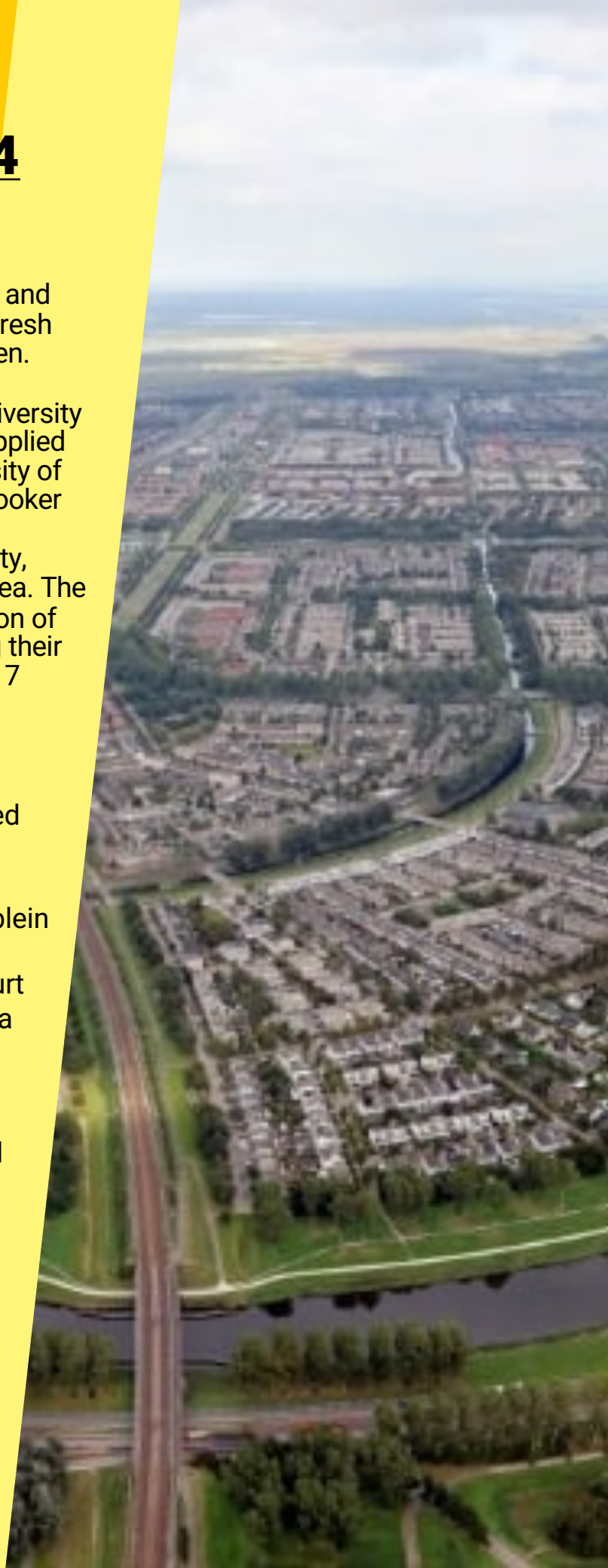
In the first week of June, 34 Dutch and international students came with fresh ideas to help improve Almere Buiten. These students came from Breda University of Applied Sciences, University of Wuppertal, Bern University of Applied Sciences and Windesheim University of Applied Sciences. In a pressure cooker setting these students came with innovative ideas to improve mobility, liveability and accessibility in the area. The following document is the collection of the leaflets they made highlighting their vision and solution for each of the 7 challenges.

7 Challenges:

1. Street level: a human centered Polderdreef
2. Parking management: redevelopment of Baltimoreplein
3. Cycle & walk to new brede buurtschools in de Molenbuurt
4. Placemaking & Greening for a thriving city centre
5. Public green: rethink the Evenaar
6. Foster social connections and inclusion
7. Level up active mobility



Bern University
of Applied Sciences



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Gemeente Almere



REVITALIZATION OF THE POLDERDREEF

Towards a Human-Centered Future
Challenge 1 "Street Level"



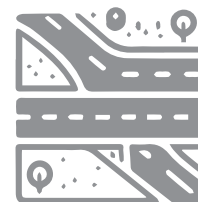
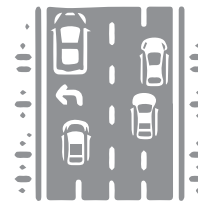
PROBLEM STATEMENT

Towards a Human-Centered Future Challenge 1 “Street Level”

The Polderdreeft is a fully car-oriented street. Due to the unique layout of Almere and Almere Buiten this street is completely disconnected from the surrounding neighborhoods and provides great amount of unused open space. The Polderdreeft is the main artery of Almere Buiten and functions by distributing motorized transport into the “stadsdeel” of Almere Buiten.

The street creates a big barrier between the “Bouwmeesterbuurt” to the west and the “Molenbuurt” to the east resulting in reduced social interaction spaces, and high reliance on motorized traffic. This current layout not only diminishes the quality of life for residents but also hinders sustainable urban development. To increase the livability in the neighborhood and change the overall image, we want to create a more human centered environment and therefore propose strategic changes for the street.

Based on the importance of this road for motorized traffic, it is of great importance that stakeholders and residents' interests are aligned to create transparency and awareness towards a cohesive creation process.



The proposed change of the layout of the Polderdreeft functions as an adaption of the initial idea of the Almere Street layout and applies modern principles of urban planning.

Currently the Polderdreeft is lacking east- west connections, and therefore the connectivity between the neighborhoods is not given and must be improved.

The surrounding densities of population and built-up are low, while the neighborhood centers of Almere Buiten are lacking attractive third places, making the surrounding areas a sleeping city. Thus, the implementation of new functions has to be based on a careful selection to not decrease the attractiveness of the surrounding neighborhood centers and spread out the distribution.

VISION

Towards a Human-Centered Future Challenge 1 “Street Level”

The vision for Polderdreeft is to create a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable urban space that prioritizes pedestrians and cyclists, fosters social interactions, and promotes a healthier lifestyle. This transformation aims to integrate high-quality public spaces, active mobility infrastructure, and community-centric activities to enhance the overall livability and cohesion of Almere Buiten.

The Corridor of the Polderdreeft can become a highly attractive living area, combining new living space, proximity to greenery, new connections and great infrastructure connections. We envision the Polderdreeft as an opportunity to be an integral connection towards the neighborhoods “Bouwmeesterbuurt”, “Molenbuurt” and the city center of Almer Buiten. With measures to ensure the smooth flow of traffic, while designing to change the behavior of users, the Polderdreeft becomes a safe place to travel and becomes an inviting opportunity zone.

The strategic redevelopment of the Polderdreeft bases on three main principles.

1. **Increase the flexibility of the infrastructure**
2. **Break the pattern**
3. **Increase the functions along the Polderdreeft**



STRATEGIES

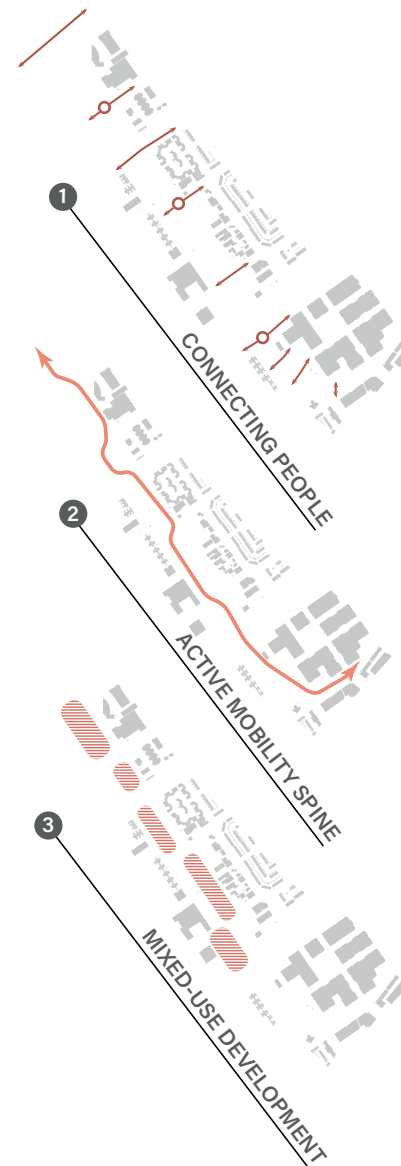
Strategy 1: Increase the flexibility of the infrastructure

By increasing the network of active mobilities (walking and cycling) the distance between start and end of each trip especially in the neighborhoods reduces drastically.

In the first phase of the revitalization, we propose to create active mobility infrastructure parallel to the Polderdreeft. To increase the overall flexibility new crossings intersecting with the Polderdreeft have to be implemented. These must be strategically placed to gradually increase the usage of active mobilities and create a behavioral change of drivers.

Strategy 2: Break the pattern

Currently the Polderdreeft is a straight-lined car street designed for a smooth flow. By breaking the pattern and changing, surface, theme, flora and reducing the vision by greening the edges and roundabouts, drivers unconsciously will slow down, based on the less predictable environment. Hereby a new curved street layout comes to play. While straight lines motivate to speed is the proposed curved layout a traffic calming measure.



Strategy 3: Increase the functions along the Polderdreeft

Along the Polderdreeft we propose a Corridor development, to increase the housing stock of medium density apartment buildings. The creation of missing link developments, will help further densify Almere Buiten, embrace neighborhood cohesion and embrace increased social contacts.

New housing plots will be created staggered along the Polderdreeft, based on the new curved layout to break the straight-lined symmetric pattern.

By the creation of sections with varying design, and natural assets, a clear identity for the new developments can be created, giving the new and current residents along the Polderdreeft a specific opportunity for identification.

SOLUTION

Towards a Human-Centered Future Challenge 1 "Street Level"

The solution creates a completely approach to new urban developments in Almere Buiten. The scenario incorporates a more people oriented and organic and organic approach to creating a diverse city. This will happen by promoting new housing typologies along the Polderdreef – creating vibrant density along the corridor that promotes an increasingly attractive urban lifestyle. The creation of this modern development with higher densities, attracting a diverse range of target groups, it is essential to incorporate the remaining functionality that allows the necessary flow of cars to support the center of Almere Buiten. Along the corridor the creation of more space for living and socializing meeting spaces will enhance social interaction and cohesion. Based on the initial idea of Almere by incorporating public transit into the development, the Polderdreef will allow cars and busses on the street, creating proximity to transit for the residents and being an organic traffic calming measure.



CONCLUSION

The two scenarios will bring more people towards Almere Buiten and gradually increase the attractiveness over time. The two scenarios interact on different levels with the complex dynamics of the city. The first scenario creates a rather feasible solution while the second one creates a greater need for stakeholder alignment and co-creation with the residents.

The single implementation of a cycling lane will have an increased attractiveness an active mobilities and the increasing usage of the street. Drastic interventions effecting the traffic flow must be gradually increased to not loose public support.

Meanwhile the pattern breaking development of the Polderdreef by creating new living space will impact the greater context of Almere Buiten and will bring fresh energy hosted by new diverse target groups.

Based on the existing context of Almere Buiten we propose to begin the renewal in the south of the Polderdreef, where a vibrant density and proximity to the center is given.

The Polderdreef should be branded to increase communal importance by hosting neighborhood festivities and create other social events like community sports events.



Kavel 5 parking management

Problem

To get a better picture of the problem four experts were interviewed and the project group visited the location.

From our interview, we will take away several key points:

First, there's an evident surplus of parking spaces in the city center. Despite this, no one favors the removal of parking lots, even when they are underutilized. While shared mobility is currently marginally used, there is a noticeable shift, particularly in the Kavel 5 area. To build trust and foster engagement, it is essential to involve the people who use these parking spaces through informational events.

We should focus on finding solutions rather than dwelling on the problems. Gathering ideas from the community and involving them in the planning process is crucial. Instead of removing parking, we should aim to improve street and public spaces.

Parking prices are on the rise, currently set at 3 euros per day in Almere Buiten, with the potential for location-specific price increases. Additionally, there is a growing need to increase bike parking to support this transition.



Figure 1 Important information (google maps)

The primary purpose of parking is for shopping, and it's important to note that parking in garages is cheaper than on the streets. Lastly, we should consider multi-purpose solutions that address various needs.

When we went to the project location ourselves, we've also noticed a few things:

Kavel 5 is a very full parking lot, indicating high demand for parking in that area. Conversely, there is very little bike parking available nearby, which may discourage cycling. The Brooklyn parking garage, while used, remains largely empty, suggesting that it has untapped capacity.

Based on these points the following problem can be determined:

There are a lot of Parking Spaces available in the area, who in general are not that expensive, what makes parking and taking the car attractive. Because of that many people come by car to the center of Almere Buiten, which leads to Kavel 5 being full, most of the time. The plans for Kavel 5 are to replace parking, and build appartements, retail or other functions. So, parking possibilities in this area will decrease, but in general there are enough other possibilities left in the parking garages within walking distance. What we must figure out is how do we manage the parking in this area?

But this problem doesn't only expand to the factual needs, but also the social needs. People currently have a mindset in which they are less likely to not own or use a car. This means that there is also a need to change the mindset of the people about how they view a car. At this location especially cars shouldn't be seen as a necessity, because of the high amount of public transport and the amazing infrastructure for cyclists.



Figure 2 Kavel/Block 5 parking lot (own picture)



Figure 3 Parking garage less than 200m away from Kavel 5 (own picture)

Goal/vision

Vision:

To create an Almere where sustainable transportation is a more convenient choice than cars!

Goals:

- Promote parking in the garages
- Add bicycle parking to facilitate the change in modal split
- Make the change without causing too much pushback

Our and the municipality's goal for Kavel 5 is to remove the on-street parking and the parking lot that is the project area. In general, we and the municipality are of the opinion that parking should take place in the Parking Garages, since they are at a low capacity, so many more people could park there.

The vision for the project area is to create an Almere where sustainable transportation is a more convenient choice than cars! With this we want to achieve a priority for active modes of transportation, shared mobility and public transportation, all in hopes to improve the public space and make the streets of Almere Buiten livelier. Furthermore, we hope to create a shift in perspective for the people of Almere Buiten where it will make them see the more sustainable modes of transport in a better light.

For this we have defined different goals. By promoting parking in the parking garages, we want to prepare the community for the removal of on-street parking, by shifting their attention towards the parking garages. By adding bicycle parking, we aim to facilitate the change in modal split by improving the situation for coming by bike. All these measures should be implemented in a step-by-step program, to avoid generating too much pushback from the community. The reason for this is to show the citizens in Almere (Buiten) that we are changing from a top-down development strategy to a more bottom-up development strategy. Which will in turn then help give the citizens and communities of Almere more trust in the municipality.

Solution

Execution Plan

Phased Implementation:

1. Informing community (meeting)
In this step we want to inform the community of the plans to remove the temporary parking lot of Kavel 5, we do this to manage expectations, gather intel and gain the trust of the community.
2. Raise awareness parking garages
This step is crucial because currently finding the parking garages is not very easy currently as we and our supervisors noticed when trying to find those, especially whilst driving a car it's easy to miss them. In this step we want to create first of all improve the signage so that it's easy to see where the parking garages are.
3. Incentivize parking garages
But, now we are at a predicament. Currently people know where the parking garages are, and they know it's about to be removed but they have no reason to yet use them. To help the citizens get used to using parking garages we will make them free for the period after informing them of the removal till the removal of the parking lot.
4. Add bicycle parking & shared mobility
This step encourages residents and other road users to use bicycles or other sustainable modes of transport. It also gives people the opportunity to not have to own a car and be able to get one for the few occasions in which they might need them.
5. Remove outside parking
This measure forces car drivers to use car parks and is intended to encourage them to travel on foot or by bike and otherwise use the parking garages.

Best practices: Koemarkt, Purmerend

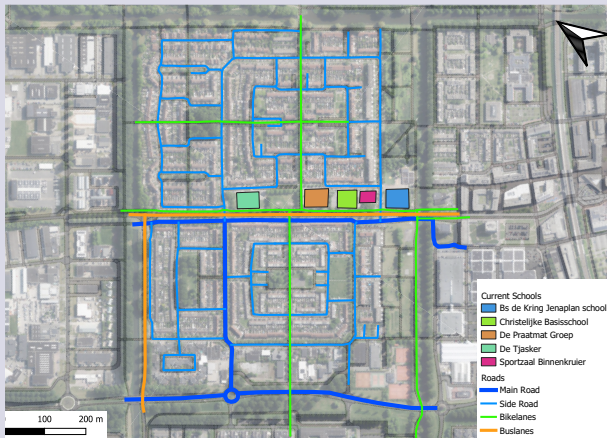


Figure 4 Koemarkt, Purmerend - before



Figure 5 Koemarkt, Purmerend - after

Infrastructure



PROBLEM

A solid foundation, but with a devil in the details

Almere-Buiten boasts excellent bike infrastructure yet falters at crucial points. While navigating through Almere-Buiten by bike is easy, reaching specific destinations is problematic. School entrances are on the wrong side, forcing cyclists onto car roads. Similarly, accessing the center requires crossing a busy street, undermining support for cycling and increasing car usage.

The problematic parking lots

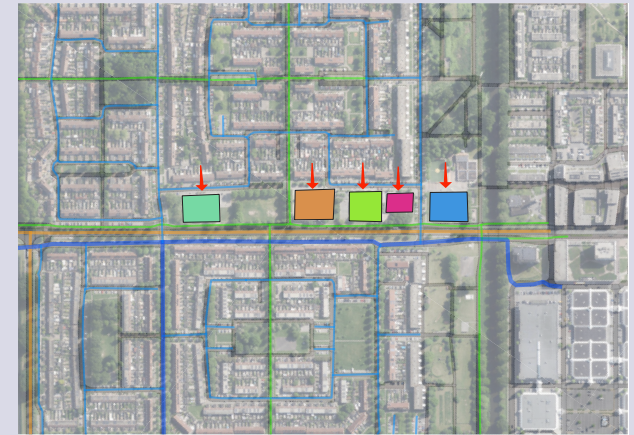
Almere-Buiten has abundant parking spaces, creating induced demand for cars. This cheap paid parking next to the shopping center and free parking next to schools does little to disincentivize car use, exacerbating the issue.

A Cyclable City: Insights from Stakeholders

Despite excellent bike infrastructure, Almere's design favors cycling over walking. With a low population density spread over a large area, facilities are within cycling but not walking distance. This discourages walking, reduces social interactions and contributes to Almere's high loneliness rate.

We consulted stakeholders, including children and their parents, about commuting to school. Most children prefer biking, but parents find it unsafe due to visibility issues with tall bushes near the bus lane, which obstruct children when crossing the road. Additionally, some parents prefer driving their children as it allows them to go straight to work afterward. As a result, the majority of children are driven to school.

Accessibility



Barriers



Safety





- Existing school buildings
- Schoolzone
- Car road
- Buslane
- Bicycle path
- Kiss & Ride
- Schoolzone Road (Only accessible for residents max. speedlimit 15)



0 100m

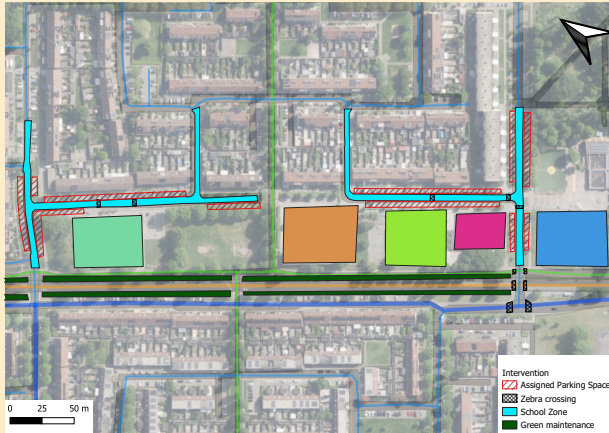
To promote cycling and walking, we have established two strategies. First, we want to create more safe public space around the schools by reducing the attractiveness of driving by creating more barriers for cars. Cars will not be able to access the roads next to the school zone.

Second, we aim to create a safer environment for cyclists and better accessibility by moving the entrances along bicycle lanes and adding more crossing points over the bus lane. To improve visibility for children, the tall bushes will be removed.

In conclusion, these strategies should open up the public space around the school zone, improving safety and create a playground for children.

VISION

Access to schools



Impression



Source: Flakkenieuws.nl

INTERVENTION

School Zones

To manage the transition, temporary barriers and signage are installed, with access for emergency vehicles and deliveries carefully planned. The initiative includes community events and programs to encourage public engagement and usage. Monitoring and feedback mechanisms are established to assess the project's success and to make necessary adjustments. Overall the school zone aims to reduce pollution, enhance safety and foster a vibrant, accessible community space

Brede Buurtscholen

Our new multifunctional Brede Buurtscholen is designed not just for learning but also as a social hub for the community, with a strong focus on cycling. Equipped with safe bike paths and Bicycle parking facilities.

Beyond being a place for education, the school grounds include community gardens, playgrounds and open spaces where locals can socialize. Regular workshops and activities centered around cycling, such as bike maintenance and safety lessons, are held to foster a culture of biking within the community.

The school's design emphasizes green spaces and accessibility, making it a welcoming environment for families and neighbors to come together, reinforcing the school's role as a vibrant, central hub in the neighborhood.

Street Intervention



Source: Google Maps

Behaviour Change



FreshBrains Almere Buiten

The FreshBrains project in Almere Buiten focuses on the city's many difficulties regarding urban planning, design, and mobility. Students from Breda University of Applied Sciences, Bergische Universität Wuppertal, Bern University of Applied Sciences, and Windesheim focus on different challenges in Almere, ranging from creating (recreational) public green to promoting active mobility and social connections.

Different visions and solutions are proposed through the interaction and collaboration between students, stakeholders, the municipality, and the residents of Almere Buiten to improve and promote the city. One of these solutions is discussed in this leaflet regarding public green in Almere Buiten.



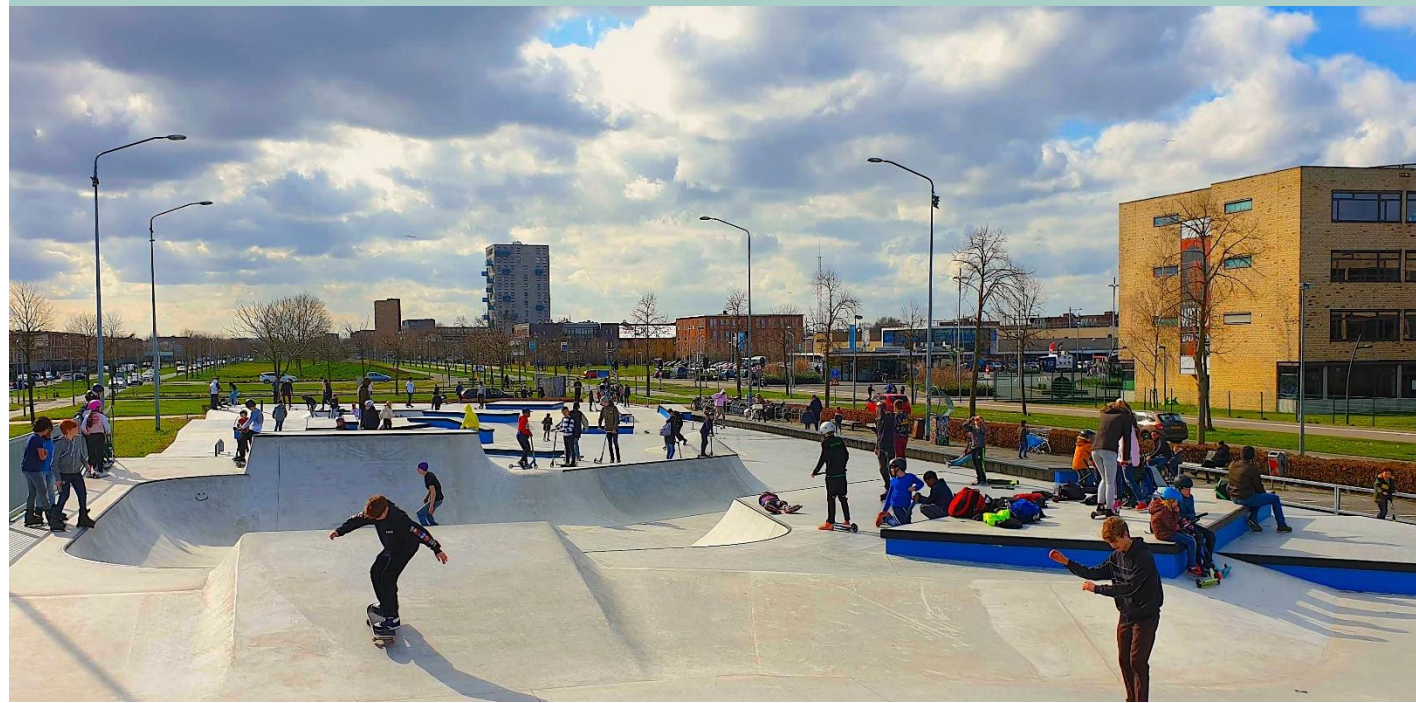
Group 6

Public green's challenge is creating recreational and biodiverse green spaces, within the context of Almere Buiten (focus on the Evenaar)

Britt Klinkspoor (BUAS)
Janne van Bree (BUAS)
Merlijn de Ruijter (Windesheim)
Luzius Müller (Bern University)

PUBLIC GREEN

FreshBrains Almere Buiten





Almere Buiten

Almere Buiten is a modern district of Almere in Flevoland, The Netherlands with a lot of greenery and open space. As a newly built district in Almere, the Buiten neighborhood is purposefully designed to offer both an urban and green lifestyle.

However, the green spaces in the city of Almere, like other urban areas, also have to deal with the problem of inefficient use of green spaces. The transformation of such areas into lively recreational hubs, which are not only nature-friendly but also bring many practical benefits to the local community is the aim of this project.

Evenaar

The street Evenaar in Almere Buiten is considered to be one of the most dangerous streets in Almere. Accidents, unsafe crossings, and cars going faster than 50 km/h bring pedestrians and cyclists into unsafe situations. A petition on the implementation of zebra crossings currently has 103 signatures. Many pedestrians feel like extra zebra crossings will only create traffic jams and delay public transportation.

While the Evenaar is considered unsafe, the green strip in between the lanes has the potential to become a recreational green space for residents and outsiders to enjoy. With a length of 3,2 kilometers and multiple sports facilities already present, the street could become a great place to meet, recreate, and enjoy the outdoors.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

In the design of Almere, the connection between the city and nature is central. This makes Almere a city with special qualities. Water and greenery add value to the identity and economy of the city. Regardless of the efforts of the city of Almere to create (recreational) green for their residents, the concept of 'kijkgroen' (greenery that is purely to be seen, not to be used) is a great problem. These areas add to the visual appeal of urban environments, but because of their restricted use, they are frequently underutilized.

The Evenaar is the focus of our project since it has great potential to become a diverse recreational space.

”

Evenaar in Almere Buiten should be redesigned instead of small adjustments

VVD & PVDA Almere

”

Safety on the Evenaar has not improved at all and the complicated bus-friendly speed bumps do not amount to much

Hans van Dijk, ChristenUnie

City park

The idea behind the Evenaar in Almere Buiten is to create a connected city park by converting unused green spaces and improve the accessibility and safety of the road. The Evenaar offers an opportunity to turn its unused green strip into an interconnected city park that improves locals' quality of life. The goal for the Evenaar is to create a connected urban park that combines community areas, natural features (biodiversity), and a variety of recreational opportunities. As a major spine connecting several communities, this green corridor will make the area cohesive, approachable, and welcoming for all locals.

Examples

Dakpark (Roof Park) in Rotterdam is located atop the abandoned railway zone and the industrial area. The park was created as a lush green area, stretching 1,5 kilometers on the brownfield site. The park is a multipurpose amenity with walking paths, playgrounds, sports fields, and community gardens, which meet the demands of the neighborhood residents lacking in recreational resources. Dakpark also integrates eco-friendly features including rainwater harvesting and solar panels, thereby allowing for revamping the urban rooftops into multifunctional green areas.

The residents, who have been very actively involved in the development of the park from the start, still think along with the municipality about the future of the park and the surrounding area, such as the new housing projects that will be built in the area.

The Dakpark can be seen in the picture on the right.

VISION

The vision for the Evenaar has different recreational and biodiverse spaces. Ecological restoration through introducing wildflowers and native plants, creating habitats for wildlife, and pollinator gardens are good examples of creating biodiverse spaces. Together with recreational spaces to promote social/communal contact, the park will become an important meeting place for residents, tourists, and others.

Active recreation among residents will be promoted through the creation of playgrounds, walking trails/paths, and seating areas. Community gardens could also become an important aspect of communal living, creating a bond between residents and their living environment.

The picture below shows the Evenaar and different pockets of recreational (orange) and green spaces.





Phasing

For phase one, pedestrian and bike accessibility and safety needs to be improved in order to promote and (re)develop the Evenaar. These improvements mainly focus on the current unfinished pedestrian bridge on the Evenaar and the lack of proper pedestrian and cycling crossings. After tackling the safety issues on the Evenaar, the attention can be redirected to the development of the green spaces.

In phase two, the input of the residents is highly valued in order to create a space that fulfils the needs of the locals. In line with the input of residents, the Evenaar can be developed into a vibrant new destination.

Phase three is the design and planning of the development of the Evenaar and the public green. This development can be promoted through funding by businesses who have an interest in the Evenaar. Opportunities for new restaurants and food stands can be an interesting addition to the green spaces.

Phase four is for the execution of the design and planning. The new spaces will be built and promoted through community events such as small-scale festivals, etc. This can also increase the social cohesion of the centre of Almere Buiten and the surrounding neighbourhoods.

Altogether, the Evenaar can become an innovative, recreational, and biodiverse city park, serving as an inspiration for the city of Almere and other cities.

SOLUTION

PHASE 1

Improving the accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists

By focusing on enhancing the accessibility first, we create a safe environment for both pedestrians and cyclists

PHASE 2

Participation with local residents

Identifying the demands and needs of residents

PHASE 3

Design & planning

Design and plan for the development of the Evenaar; promoted through investments

PHASE 4

Execution and monitoring

The implementation of the new design of the Evenaar and promotion through community events

Challenge 4

PLACEMAKING & GREENING

Arthur Langeler – Sanela Pernjak – Iwan Wieffer – Niels Kloosterman



Almere Buiten

Almere Buiten is a district in the city of Almere, located in the province of Flevoland in the Netherlands. Known for its modern, planned design, Almere Buiten features a mix of residential neighbourhoods, parks, and commercial areas. It is characterized by its family-oriented environment, green spaces, and a lack of historical architecture, as it is a relatively new development. Despite its orderly layout and peaceful ambiance, Almere Buiten faces challenges in social cohesion and vibrancy, often described by locals as lacking the cultural and entertainment options found in older, more established cities.

"Social cohesion is the key to a peaceful society." – Nelson Mandela

Problem statement

Social cohesion refers to the strength of relationships and solidarity within a community. In city centres, it creates safe, inclusive, and supportive environments, reducing crime, boosting economic prosperity, and enhancing quality of life. It fosters a sense of belonging, crucial in diverse, densely populated areas, and enables communities to effectively respond to challenges. Social cohesion also encourages civic participation, influencing urban planning to promote interaction and accessibility.

Almere Buiten faces significant challenges in fostering social cohesion due to its design and amenities. Locals describe it as monotonous and overly family-oriented, lacking vibrant night-life, diverse dining options, and cultural activities. This limits opportunities for social interactions, particularly for young adults and singles. The neighborhood-centric design restricts cross-neighborhood interactions, reinforcing social fragmentation. Additionally, the town's artificial and utilitarian design, lacking historical and cultural layers, makes it unattractive and difficult for residents to form emotional connections. These factors collectively hinder social cohesion, highlighting the need for targeted interventions to transform Almere Buiten into a more vibrant and cohesive community.



Leave the city lifeless



Vision

The vision for Almere Buiten's city centre is to create a vibrant and lively hub where people from all over the area can enjoy shopping, events, green spaces, and dining. The goal is to make the city centre a place people love to visit and want to spend time in, both now and in the future.

To attract visitors, both short-term and long-term initiatives will be implemented. The entire centre will be filled with a variety of activities and ample seating. Streets will be lined with greenery, and several parks will be scattered throughout, featuring playgrounds, sports facilities, and spaces for creative expression. The weekly market, held every Thursday, will expand to cover a larger area, drawing more people to the centre.

Events such as food truck festivals, open-air cinemas, and small concerts will be regularly scheduled, with at least one event taking place every two to three weeks at the Rio de Janeiro Square. Additionally, there will be dedicated spaces for creative artists to work and showcase their talents within the centre.

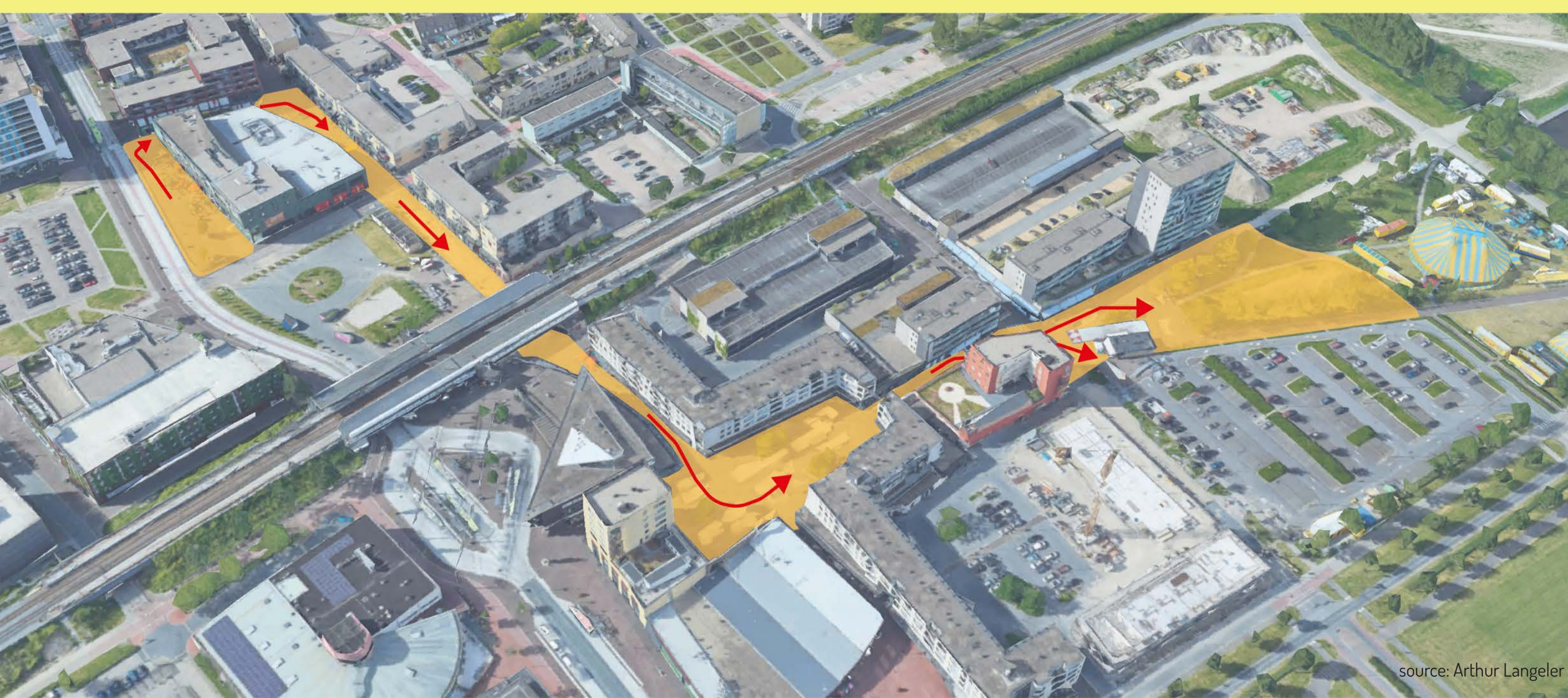
These changes will transform the city centre into a vibrant, welcoming place where people enjoy spending their time.

Bring life to the city

source: Microsoft Copilot



Flow of people/ project area



source: Arthur Langeler

Project proposal

Short term approach

- Organize a food truck festival to draw people into the city centre and offer a variety of culinary experiences. This event will create opportunities for residents to socialize and enjoy diverse cuisines.
- Host movie nights in outdoor settings to provide residents with a communal entertainment experience. This initiative will encourage social interaction and offer a relaxed, enjoyable evening for all ages.
- Implement the "First Friday" concept, where the city centre becomes a vibrant venue with extended shop hours and street performances. These events will attract locals and visitors, fostering community connections and revitalizing the city centre.
- Establish an outdoor graffiti wall to provide a space for artistic expression. This initiative aims to engage younger people, fostering creativity and increasing diversity within and around the city centre.

If these short-term events successfully foster a sense of community and social cohesion, we propose to continue organizing them on a long-term basis. Additionally, if these events attract a larger audience, we will recommend the development of dedicated spaces for such gatherings. These spaces will be designed to accommodate a diverse population, ensuring they attract everyone in Almere Buiten and create socially inclusive environments. These propositions will be detailed in the following chapter.

Awareness

The first strategy involves leveraging existing billboards to advertise these events. These billboards, strategically located in key areas of Almere Buiten such as de Evenaar, Polderdreef, De Hoge Ring, and along the highway, provide excellent visibility to passersby. By utilizing these billboards, we can effectively promote the events and attract the attention of residents and visitors alike. Social media will play a crucial role in reaching younger generations. We will use platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok to spread the word and engage the community. Additionally, we will distribute flyers directly to homes, leveraging the postal service to ensure widespread coverage and visibility.

Long term approach

- Our first solution involves planting new trees as part of a greening initiative and placing benches with wireless charging ports around these trees. These green spaces will serve as inviting hotspots where people can gather, relax, and enjoy their surroundings, fostering social interactions and creating a more pleasant atmosphere in the city centre. This idea was suggested by Jimmy van Vliet, the manager of Almere Buiten's city centre.
- The next step is to create dedicated play areas for children, which will not only get kids out of their homes but also encourage adults to visit these spaces. These play areas will enhance the liveability of the city centre, promote health benefits for children, and create vibrant, family-friendly spots that attract and engage the entire community.





Social Connections and Inclusion

Reinventing the Garden City into the Garden Corridors Almere Buiten

Adelaide Everiss | Kelvin Gutmanis
Bram van der Knaap | Kaloyan Nikolov

Problem

Almere Buiten is facing significant challenges in fostering social connection and inclusion due to rising crime rates, weak social cohesion, and municipal policy deficiencies.



Crime and Safety Concerns

Increasing crime rates, particularly drug-related activities and home burglaries, are creating a pervasive sense of fear and mistrust that hinders community engagement and social cohesion.



Weak Social Cohesion and Community Engagement

Insufficient community activities, demographic challenges, and poor engagement of youth and elderly are undermining the social fabric and preventing the development of a strong, connected community.



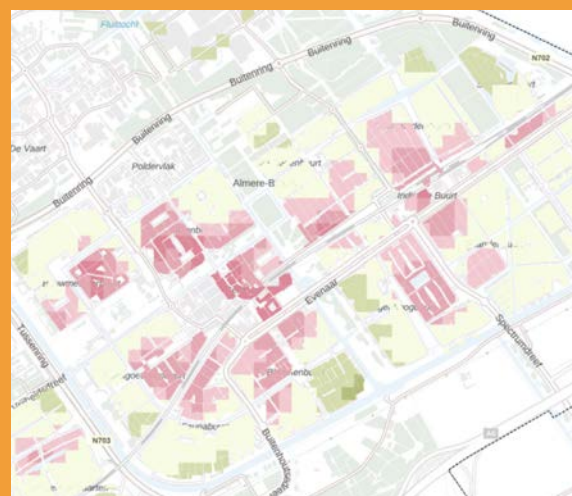
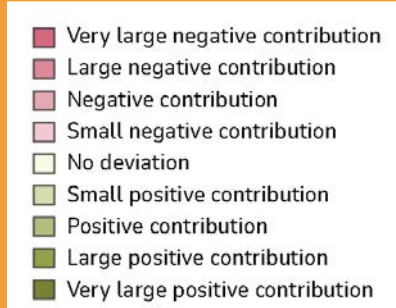
Municipal and Policy Deficiencies

Inadequate communication, inconsistent funding, and short-lived initiatives from the municipality are failing to support sustained community building and integration efforts.

Lower Social Cohesion & Higher Crime Rate in the Centre than the national average

The social cohesion score in the center of Almere Buiten is notably low, primarily due to the high crime rate, including drug-related activities and frequent home burglaries. These safety concerns lead to fear and mistrust among residents, diminishing

community interaction and involvement. The resulting lack of trust and engagement further weakens the social fabric, creating a cycle that perpetuates low social cohesion and continued high crime rates.



Vision

The vision for infrastructure improvement in Almere Buiten is to create a thriving, inclusive community by enhancing meeting places, green spaces, and public amenities, while promoting mixed-use development and natural resilience. This approach aims to foster stronger social connections and a safer, more cohesive environment. Central to this vision is the transformation of the traditional Garden City concept into “Garden Corridors,” where interconnected green spaces link various neighborhoods, promoting accessibility and interaction among residents.

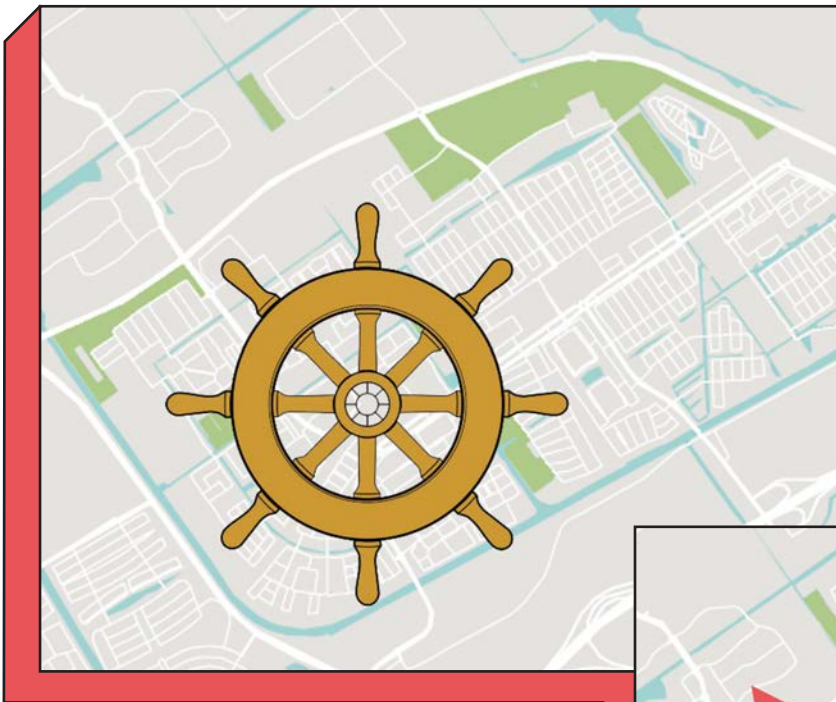
Improving meeting places involves upgrading community centers, parks, and public squares to encourage gatherings and social activities. Enhancing green spaces includes developing parks, community gardens, and recreational areas, providing residents with places to relax, exercise, and interact. Public amenities such as playgrounds, sports facilities, and cultural venues will be expanded and maintained to cater to diverse interests and age groups.

Promoting mixed-use development integrates residential, commercial, and recreational spaces, fostering vibrant neighborhoods where people live, work, and play in close proximity. This reduces physical separation and encourages daily interactions among residents. Emphasizing natural resilience through sustainable infrastructure and green building practices ensures that the community can adapt to environmental changes

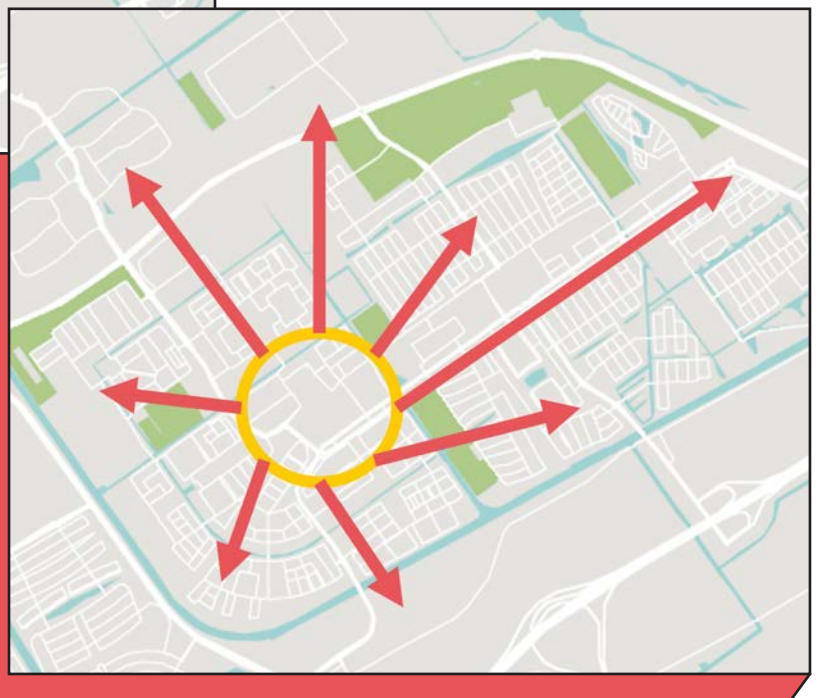
while maintaining a high quality of life.

Fostering community-led initiatives empowers residents to take an active role in shaping their environment, leading to projects that reflect the community’s needs and values. This participatory approach strengthens social bonds and creates a sense of ownership and pride among residents.

By implementing the Garden Corridors concept, Almere Buiten will benefit from



continuous green pathways that connect different areas, making it easier for residents to move around, enjoy nature, and engage with their neighbors. This holistic vision not only enhances physical infrastructure but also nurtures social cohesion, resilience, and inclusivity, ultimately creating a vibrant and connected community.



Solutions

To address the social and infrastructural challenges in Almere Buiten, a multi-faceted approach is envisioned, starting with the creation of urban garden corridors that connect different neighborhoods. These green pathways will seamlessly integrate nature into the urban landscape,



making it easier for residents to move between areas while enjoying the benefits of enhanced greenery. These corridors will not only provide aesthetic and environmental benefits but also encourage outdoor activities and interactions among residents, fostering a greater sense of community.

Renovating and reestablishing community centers is crucial to adapt to the evolving needs of society. By modernizing these spaces, they can better serve as hubs for social interaction, education, and recreation. Updated community centers will offer a variety of programs and services tailored to different age groups and interests, thereby meeting the diverse needs of the population and enhancing community engagement.

Enhancing public spaces by incorporating a variety of urban greenery and benches will transform these areas into welcoming and accessible environments. Green spaces such as parks, gardens, and tree-lined streets, along with ample seating, will provide residents with pleasant places to relax, socialize, and enjoy nature. These improvements will make public spaces more inviting and functional, encouraging more frequent use and fostering social connections.

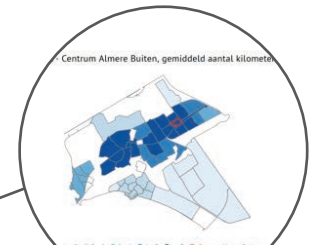
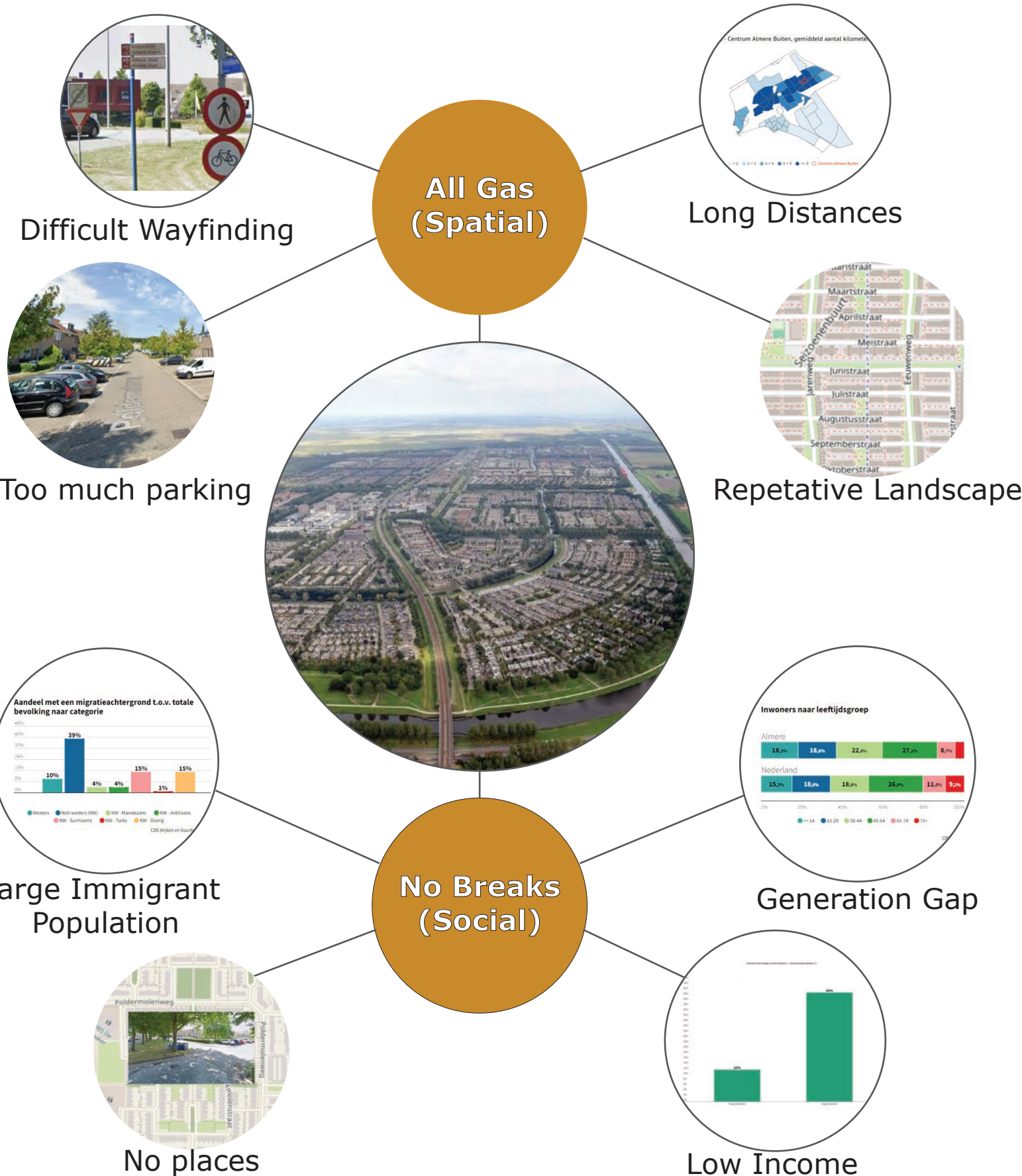
Changing zoning and land-use regulations to accommodate mixed-use development is essential for creating vibrant, multi-functional neighborhoods. By integrating residential, commercial, and recreational spaces,

mixed-use development promotes convenience and reduces the need for long commutes. This approach supports a more dynamic and interactive urban environment, where daily needs are met within close proximity, enhancing the quality of life for residents.

Encouraging the “Eyes on the Street” concept by increasing foot traffic through the urban garden corridors will enhance safety and social cohesion. When more people are present and actively using public spaces, there is a natural increase in surveillance, which deters crime and creates a sense of security. This increased activity will make the corridors lively and well-monitored, further reinforcing the social fabric of the community.

Fresh Brains Challenge 3 Active Mobility in Almere Buiten

In a city built for flow...



Long Distances



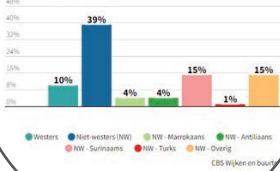
Too much parking



Repetitive Landscape

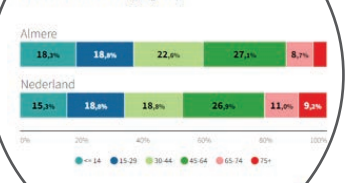


Aandeel met een migratieachtergrond t.o.v. totale bevolking naar categorie



Large Immigrant Population

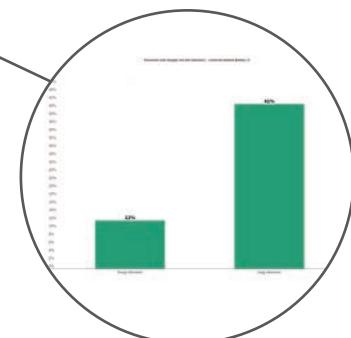
Inwoners naar leeftijdsgroep



Generation Gap



No places



Low Income



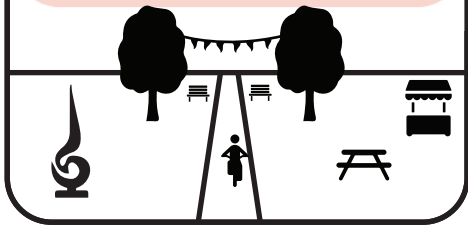
...it's time to stop and smell the roses...

Welcome

Create Local Places

Increase Functions

Neighbourhood Uniqueness



Integrate

Active Mobility Education

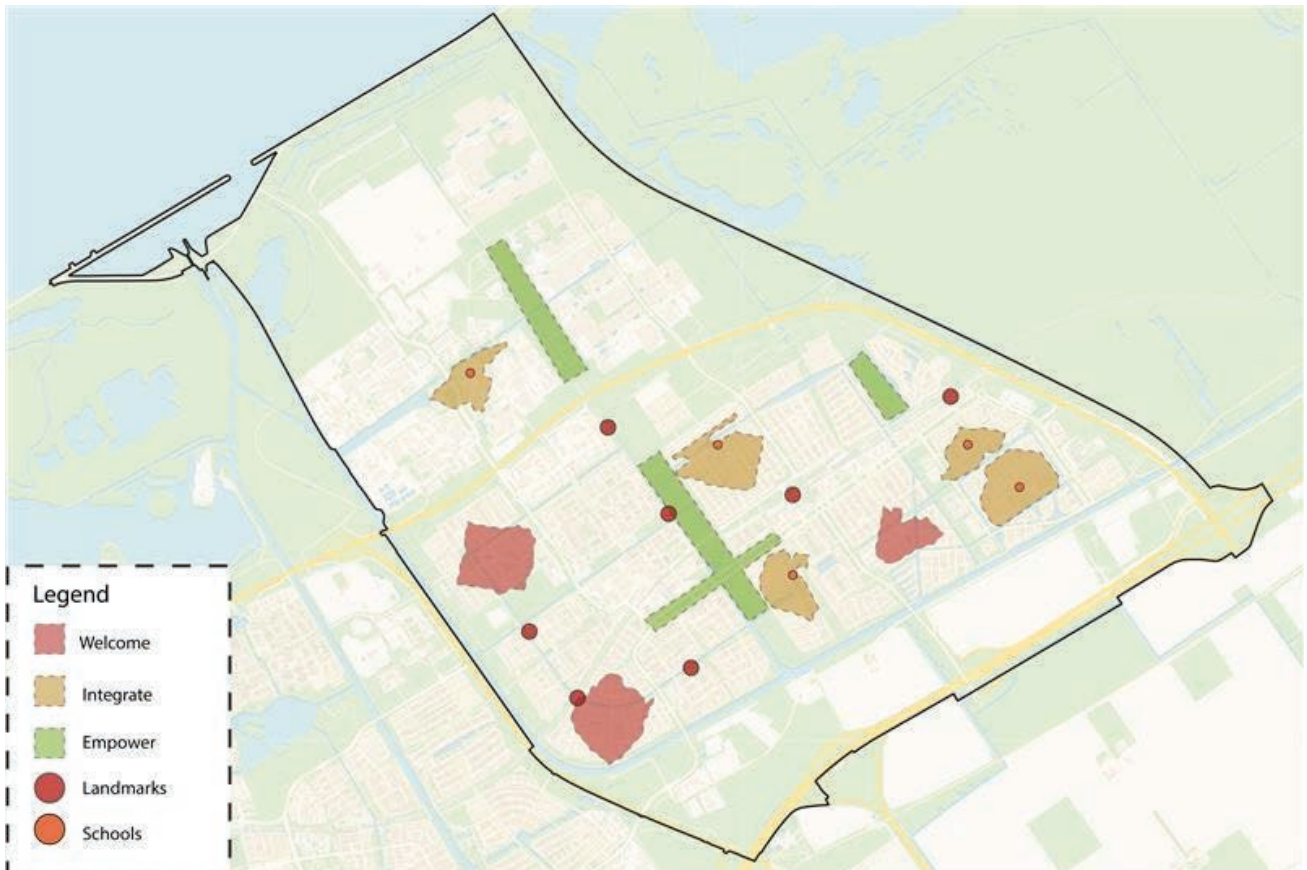
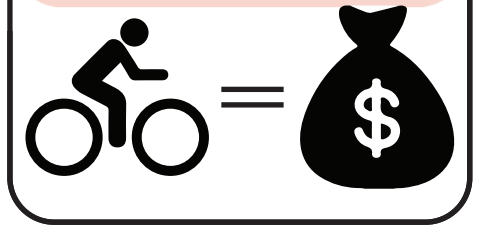
Community Building Events



Empower

Active Mobility Incentives

Local Business Incentives





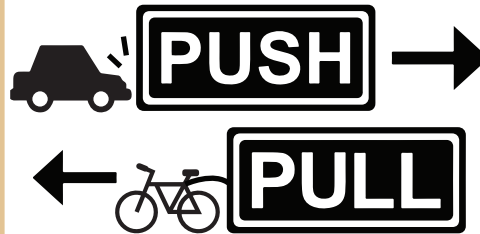
...and give people places to go

Community Education and Participation Plan

Week	Before	1-2	3	4	5	6-7	8	9-10	11-13	After
Days	Before	1-14		15-35			36-70		71-90	After
Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Priorities and budget -- PM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a schedule that is realistic (taking into account holidays /weather) -- PM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft site plan/design, resource/materials list and budget -- PM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify steps for: outreach(e.g. press release packet) volunteer recruitment, space programming, maintenance/stewardship, city processes (e.g. approval, permit, liability insurance) and other needs of space -- SE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formalize partnerships(e.g. MOUs, maintenance/stewardship agreements -- PM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalizing steps for: outreach, volunteer recruitment, partnerships, city processes, site decide needs -- PM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site/concept map finalized -- PM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Materials sourced and stored -- PM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteer/artist communication (2 weeks before the event, 1 week before the event, several day) -- PM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch the project -- ID
Prep and Maintenance Group = PM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify potential obstacles -- PM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose main point of contact -- PM 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin special events permit process -- PM 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Materials list finalized (whenselecting consider both time and effort to install and remove -- PM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One day before installation event, set - up stage items (consider setting up a timelaps and taking photos of the teamwork -- ID 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the impact, collect the same data as before to evaluate change -- SE 	
Story Telling/ Evaluation Group = SE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose a sight -- PM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create communication plan (sharing information at various stages through media/poster/etc -- SE Confirm project vision, measurable goals, roles and key question -- PM 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If needed adjust to meet your city process 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Press release packet finalized -- SE 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate findings to inspire longer-term change; communicate success and failure -- SE Maintain project -- PM 	
Installation Day Group = ID	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assemble team -- PM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss & define key site attributes & challenges -- PM Identify key partnerships needed -- PM 								

Policy Prompting Shorter Commutes

- Remove barriers along bus lanes
- Strict leisure/entertainment zoning
- Rezoning residential to mixed-use
- Quality bike parking quotas
- Children Cycling Education Programs
- School Street Micro Markets
- Cycle to Work Incentives
- Local Business Subsidies



- Remove/obstruct straight aways
- Car park to bike park conversion
- Pedestrianizing neighbourhoods
- Parking lot micro markets
- Parking lot adult cycle education
- Funding business patio conversions
- Higher parking prices

Design Focused on Creating Places

