

Urban Minded



How can the design of urban spaces contribute to the mental well-being of teenage girls?

A Design Guide

Henning
Garsen

RAMBØLL
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A Design Guide 2023

This project is a collaboration between Henning Larsen and the National Institute for Public Health at the University of Southern Denmark. The project is funded by Henning Larsen and the Ramboll Foundation.

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A Consequential Point of Departure

The design of our cities can have a significant effect on our well-being and mental health. This design guide explores this relationship by presenting design strategies to approach this complex subject, with a focus on the particular perspectives, preferences, and needs of teenage girls.

As a pillar of the socially sustainable city, the well-being of urban residents is incredibly important to generating social impact and deconstructing social structures that limit certain groups. And while the mental health of girls and young women continues to decrease⁽¹⁾, the link between the design of our urban environments and the promotion of mental health amongst this group remains unclear. As a result, the diverse needs of girls and young women are, at best, generalized within the field of urban design – an issue that this project has set out to address.

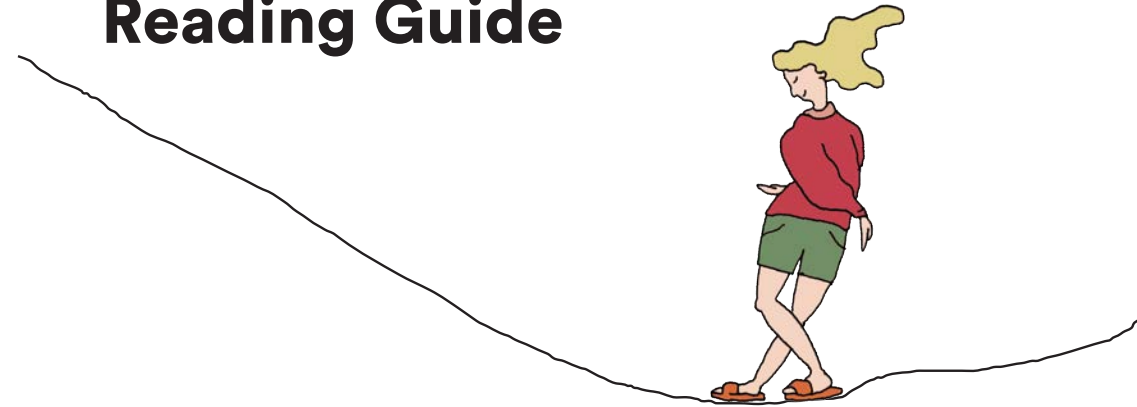
A collaboration between Henning Larsen and the Danish National Institute of Public Health, with the support of the Ramboll Foundation, 'Urban Minded' is a research project that was carried out in Copenhagen over the course of several months in 2022 and 2023.

Resulting in a nuanced grasp of teenage girls aged 14-16 and their needs within the city, the project bridges early user involvement and intersectional perspectives to inform design strategies that are aimed at inclusive public urban spaces.

Having translated the collected data from our research, the booklet you have in front of you is the result of a multidisciplinary collaboration between landscape architects, urban designers, and anthropologists at Henning Larsen.

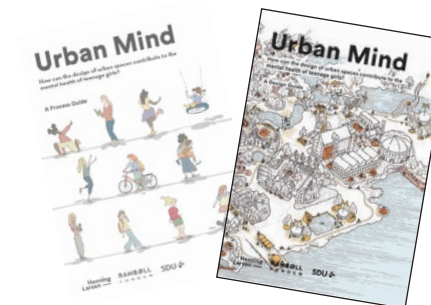
⁽¹⁾Agenda Alliance, Women's Mental Health Facts, <https://www.agendaalliance.org/our-work/projects-and-campaigns/womens-mental-health-facts/>

Reading Guide



This Design Guide is the second of two booklets that are the product of Henning Larsen's research and design project 'Urban Minded'. The two publications can be read separately or together, with the second building upon the first. The first booklet focuses on the project's approach, research design, and methodology, while the one you have in your hands presents design proposals informed by the study.


These booklets are intended for anyone interested in reimagining public urban spaces or anyone who works with urban design and planning.




Whether municipalities exploring urban development, designers working on masterplans, or consultants engaged in urban strategies - we hope these booklets can support anyone wanting to promote inclusive spaces.

Enjoy reading!

Reading guide:

 'Findings boxes' presenting some of our findings from the project.

 Quotes from our expert group that support the findings and concepts.

 Quotes from girls who participated in the project.

Process Guide at a Glance

Our first booklet covered a lot but here is a quick overview of our process!

With the question of ‘**how the design of urban spaces contribute to the mental health and well-being of teenage girls?**’ as our point of departure, and the following three challenges (listed to the right) guiding us throughout, we set out to gather the lived experiences of 25 teenage girls in relation to their urban environments through interviews, video diaries, and workshops.

When processing our data, we drew upon a framework that identifies 6 psychological needs within one’s spatial experience to approach the complex matter of mental health and well-being. Combining these with our nuanced collected data, we were able to identify several key focus areas that were then translated into design drivers to guide the design process.

To dive deeper into this and much more, refer to our Process Guide!

- 1 How do we make urban spaces more attractive for girls?**
- 2 How can we design urban spaces in ways that contributes to teenage girls' mental well-being?**
- 3 How do we avoid falling into stereotypes?**



Stimulation

Sensory input affecting one's thinking or feeling processes. Can generate excitement, interest, discomfort, etc.



Sense of Safety

Condition of feeling secure, feeling that one is not in harms way or in danger of physical/emotional hurt, injury, loss, etc.



Visibility & Recognition

Seeing and being seen, understanding and being understood, recognizing and being recognized.



Levels of Privacy

Varying states of being apart from company or observation of others.



Social Interaction

Processes of reciprocal influence of individuals over one another during social encounter.



Sense of Identity

Perception of the collection of characteristics that define a person or place.



IN BETWEENESS



TO FLOW in the city



TO BE in the city



TO PLAY in the city

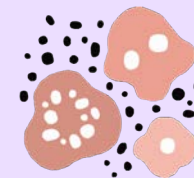
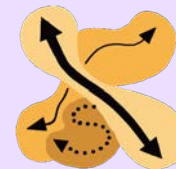
Unfolding our Design Drivers

User engagement provided us with a lot of inspiring data to process and analyze, exemplifying how diverse lived experiences and needs actually play out within an urban environment.

A key finding in our research and central concept to understanding the experiences and perspectives of this user group, is a notion of 'inbetween-ness'. Inbetween-ness acts as an overarching principle in our design strategies and proposal.

Next are three design drivers that highlight the important realms within the girls' spatial experiences in the city: 'To FLOW', 'To BE', and 'To PLAY'. Though presented separately, these feed into and build upon each other in levels of comfort and self-expression - with FLOW relating to a rather basic aspect of using the city; BE reflecting a desire and means to spend one's time in urban spaces; and finally PLAY, tapping into an ability to let go and be playful in these spaces.

Extracted from the interviews, workshops and talks with both the girls and the experts, the three design drivers, along with the principle of inbetween-ness, are all here to guide us in designing elements and spaces that orbit around the lived experiences, preferences and spatial needs of teenage girls.



Inbetween-ness

An experience of straddling childhood and adulthood simultaneously. This notion envelopes our findings, acting as an important concept and consistent red thread throughout the project.

To FLOW in the city

Being part of the flow of the city is both central to the girls' urban experiences and a basic aspect of using the city. Far beyond simply 'getting around', this includes notions of exploration, discovery, observations of urban life, and more.

To BE in the city

Being in the city refers to the experience of feeling drawn to urban spaces as spaces in which to spend time. Whether being with your friends or being on your own, a positive experience of urban space is one that attracts and enables you to be and be comfortable in the city.

To PLAY in the city

This concept was extremely present in the girls' experiences but the word 'play' has childlike associations and is not the word they would use. That said, using one's imagination, inventing stories or games, being silly, and toying with what it might be like to be an adult, all these and more culminate in an expanded notion of play enabled by the city.

Getting Creative, Together

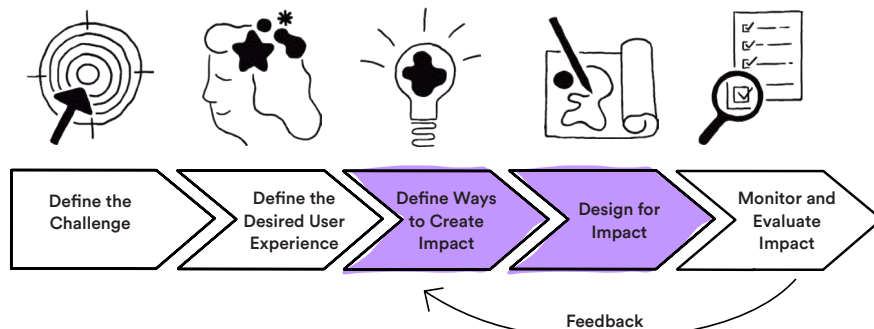
By seeking their perspectives directly, we were able to involve the girls in our process, allowing their insights to inform our designs.

This was especially true of our workshops where together they reflected on how they use the urban spaces available to them, and got creative thinking about what better urban spaces could look and feel like in future. Their inputs and feedback really helped us in shaping concrete design ideas!

It would be nice to have a long shared table next to some existing sport fields in order to be part of the place, but still be able to do our own things or hobbies... Like our homeworks, have lunch all together with the class or meet new people maybe...



Remember our Impact Driven Design process? (If not, see pages 24-25 in our Process Guide.) Below we have marked where the design workshops took place in our process.



Disclaimer: Design Alone Won't Solve It All

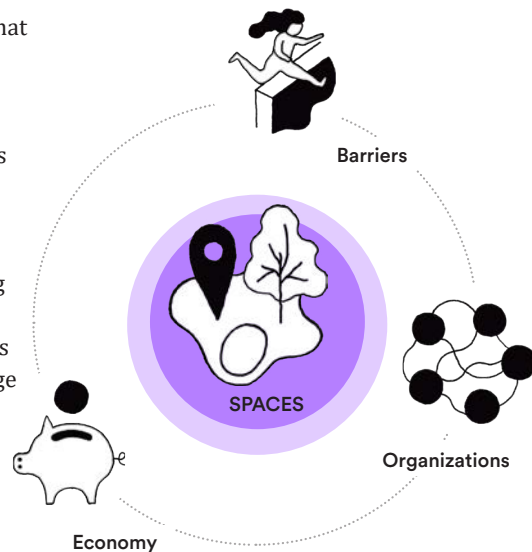
We don't expect to solve the issue of mental health amongst teenage girls in this project, or think that we can design a solution to the many challenges that young people face. We do, however, wish to design spaces that indicate to them that they are invited and welcomed into public space and that the city is theirs to experience.

In order to create spaces that are attractive for teenage girls, the design needs to go far beyond the aesthetics of the space.

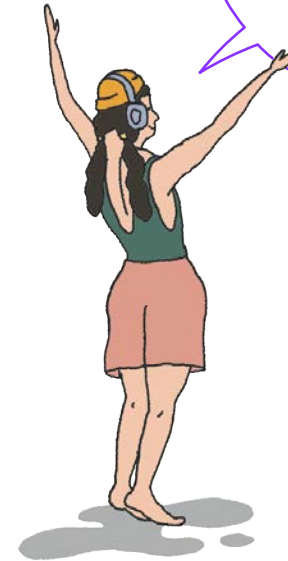
For starters, we need to consider the barriers, whether physical or symbolic, that exist for using and accessing urban public spaces. It could be as simple as elements that feel too big or don't work for all body sizes and as complicated as narratives around who should be active and who should be passive in urban spaces. For some, barriers are all around.

Secondly, organization is another factor that should be taken into account. Creating intentional connections between urban spaces and the everyday lives and activities of teenage girls could be a way to encourage their usage of them. Facilitating the use of spaces through invitations to organized activities is another way of achieving this.

Finally, money can play a big role as well. For various reasons, many urban spaces are centered around commercial practices and form an additional barrier for those with a limited budget, such as teens. Additionally, design solutions for the public realm are often cut down to meet a project's limited budget, making it difficult to rethink conventional ways of doing things.



But more things need to be free, or at least it helps if things are free. We don't have very much money so we're always looking for free things to do.



Sometimes it just feels like things are for younger kids, like there's an age restriction or something.



Abstract Vision - Concrete Actions

Homes, schools, stations, squares, boulevards, parks, plazas... these are all elements that can be found in most of the urban contexts around us. Using a representation of an abstract city as the backdrop, the following pages will dive into our design drivers in greater detail. Combined they showcase a vision of a city - a city designed and informed by the perspectives and preferences of teenage girls!




Exploring each of the design drivers - 'To FLOW', 'To BE', and 'To PLAY' - separately, each section will start by unfolding the significance of each driver as well as its relation to mental health (through the psychological needs corresponding to it). To follow, we show the diverse ways in which each concept could present itself as a strategy in the broad context of this abstract city (using the words and perspectives of the girls we engaged with).

Lastly, we present some closer views of this urban landscape to show how design solutions relating to each design driver can emplace themselves in this vision. Zooming in will help us explore the integration and impact of these solutions on the urban context alongside the connections they offer.

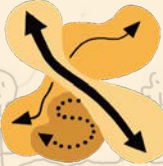
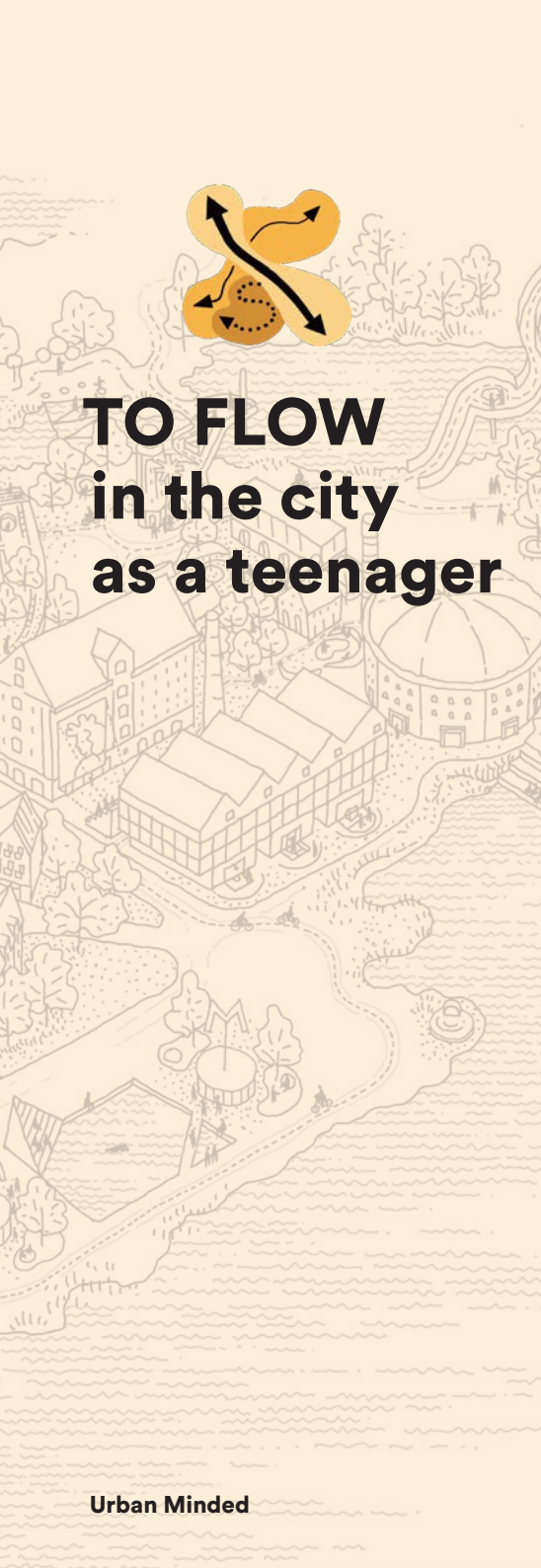
Cities are sites that combine the old and the new, the traditional and the fresh. That is why these design solutions can all be integrated in existing urban landscapes, between buildings, and in leftover spaces, but they can also be part of new developments or transformed spaces.

While the presented design solutions focus on the perspectives of teenage girls, they embody truly exciting potentials within inclusive design, with benefits that extend far beyond this user group.

That said, these design solutions aim to inspire and bring light to some important principles and ideas, but should not be seen as generic solutions to apply in any setting. They are informed by the involvement of teenage girls in a particular context that is tied to its geography, culture, climate, etc., and so, they evidence the potential of unfolding similar projects elsewhere.

 To FLOW!
 To BE!
 To PLAY!

THE CITY IS
NOW
OUR PLAYGROUND!
LET'S GET TO WORK...



TO FLOW in the city as a teenager

Whether alone or with their friends, teenage girls are explorers of the city. Finding a new and exciting place to meet or revisiting familiar favorites, they gather experiences of discovery and adventure, embarking on some of their first independent urban journeys.

As their relationship with the city continues to evolve, the spatial experience of 'FLOW' relates to their sense of freedom but also their sense of comfort at the urban scale. Can I move easily, freely, safely in this space? Is it accessible? These are such important considerations from the perspective of a teenage girl.

Sometimes flow is all about proximity, about getting from one place to the next quickly and easily. Where is the park nearest to the school? Where is the closest kiosk? But besides this, for some, to FLOW in the city can be an attraction in itself, a thrill even. Just walking at the city's pace amongst a crowd of strangers can be an exciting urban experience to actively seek and look forward to.

Design solutions informed by the spatial experience of FLOW have to keep in mind the concepts of fluidity and ease, while at the same time, offering identifiable urban surprises that can help with orientation, stimulation, and a growing feeling of ownership as the city becomes increasingly familiar.

How does this relate to their psychological needs?

Safety

Feeling unsafe is a big deal. Offering safe ways to move around will improve the girls' (and their guardians') perceptions of safety and boost their sense of freedom to explore.



Stimulation

Urban journeys are filled with stimulating sensory experiences. Colors, sounds, scents, they all line the urban experience.



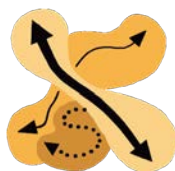
Sense of Identity

Flowing through familiarity and discovery is an experience of being part of the city and promotes a sense of ownership.



When you're a kid you're just following your parents but when you grow up you get to see and know the city more and explore it for yourself. You can always find hidden things or secret places.





TO FLOW IN THE CITY

TEENAGE GIRLS' SENSITIVE MAPS

I like the anonymity of the city. I like that most people don't know me. I could be anyone. I could even be much older.

It's so nice when a bridge or a bike lane gives you enough space to also have some fun on the way.

I don't really stop and sit too much. There's just so much movement in the street and I like being part of it instead of just watching it...

That big tower over there helps me find my way when I don't want to use my phone. I like feeling that I know my way around the city.

We just pass by here on the way, we have some quick fun here and then we keep moving on. It's just a nice place to stop through on our way to meeting our friends!

I love running in this park. Some paths feel a bit hidden and I like that because it can feel like an adventure, like a secret run in nature, almost like being in a forest.

I often choose the way that is the most lit, not necessarily because something will happen, it is just something I'm used to doing...

I like that in the city you can get small glimpses into people's lives. I'll do this thing where I look at people and then I imagine stories about their lives.

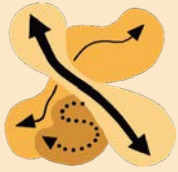
Obviously, there's lots of others around but it is our city!

Something about all the people and it being busy really calms me down. Almost like a sense of relief when I get here...

You can just explore things, you'll always find something new and some nice small streets. It's nice because it means that you're not seeing the same boring things all the time!

During summer it's so nice to just bike around, stop and jump in the water, and then keep going

* Quotes taken from the different talks with the girls over 2022-23.



PLACES TO FLOW

1 Engaging journeys

While moving in the cities, different interventions and elements can increase the feelings of both safety and discovery. These can encourage and empower the girls as they explore their surroundings and familiarize themselves with their city.

Offer flexible space that is easily connected to the main flow axis for temporary events like flea markets, food markets, and more.

Space in Transition

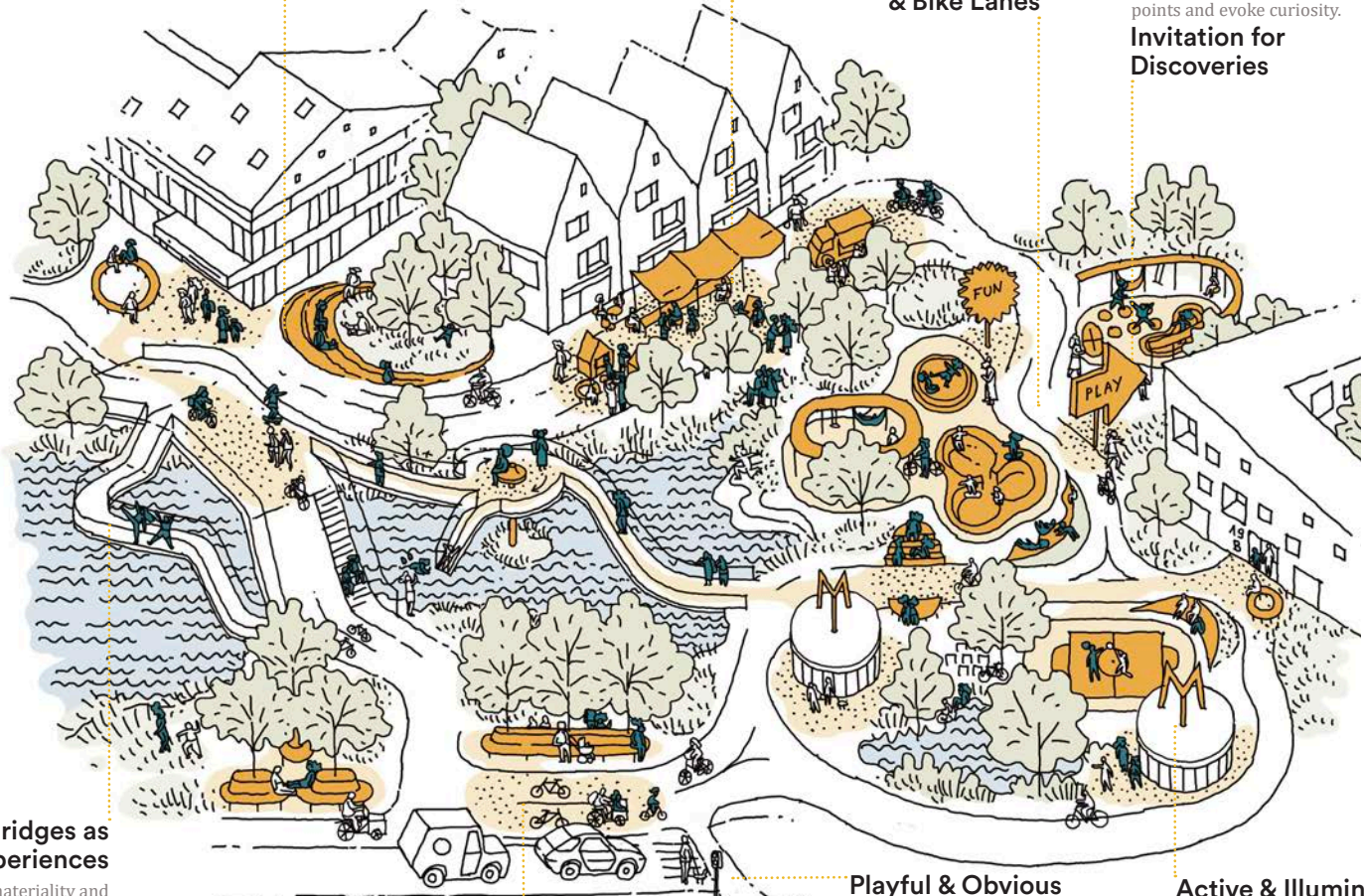
Diversity of activities & open ground floors invite social interactions and offer lively stimulation along the way.

Active & Lively Streets

Colorful paths and bikelanes highlight easy and fun ways to move in the city, away from car traffic.

Notable Paths & Bike Lanes

Artistic wayfinding elements along the main axis highlight gathering points and evoke curiosity. Invitation for Discoveries



Bridges as Experiences

Shapes, materiality and heights can turn bridges into playful elements and allow you to see the city from a different angle while on your way.

Clear & Wide Bike Lanes

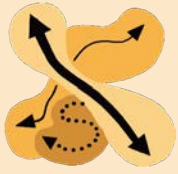
Extra-wide bike lanes make the journey safer and also give friends the opportunity to talk or cycle side-by-side.

Playful & Obvious Crossings

Colors or materiality create easily identifiable crossings between the main axis and lanes, increasing the feeling of safety and strengthen the identity of the place.

Active & Illuminated Transport Stations

Metro and bus stations act as active gathering and orienting points in the city landscape.



PLACES TO FLOW

2 Surprises along the way

Surprises, or physical elements that might seem out of the ordinary can enrich personal experiences and relationships with our urban surroundings. Whether colorful walls, fun roads and paths, creative lighting, or unexpected and exciting materials - surprises offer intrigue and showcase the liveliness of a dynamic city.

Safe & clear paths through parks and natural spaces offer a sense of escape as well as calming sensory stimulation.

Alternative & Sensory Paths

Lighting elements as urban landmarks strengthen a place's identity & create safe and enjoyable atmospheres.

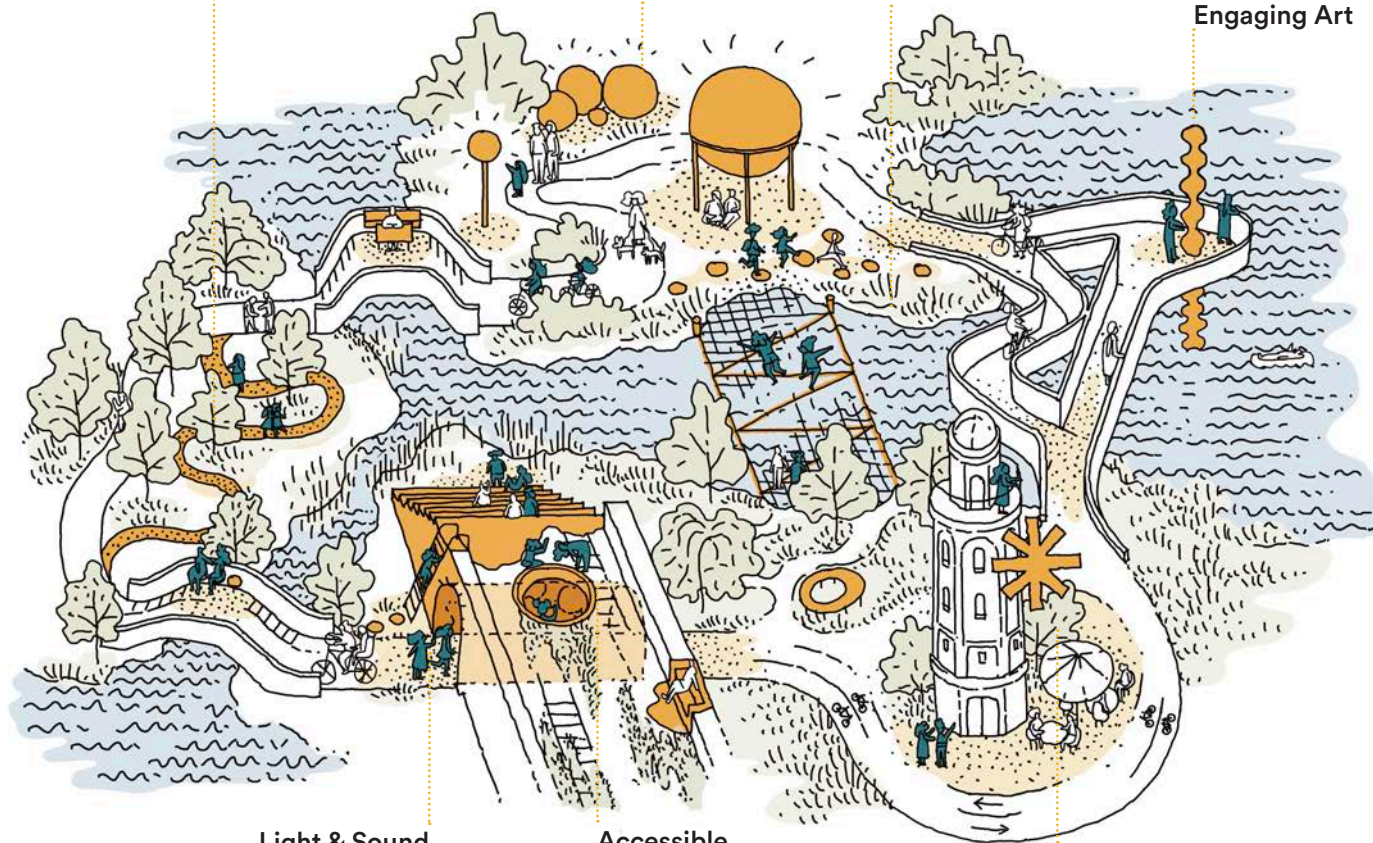
Creative Lighting

Stepping stones or paths to play with your balance offer some quick and low stakes fun along your way.

Gravity Paths

Art installations along the way can act as orientation points and engaging elements in the city.

Orienting & Engaging Art



Light & Sound Tunnel


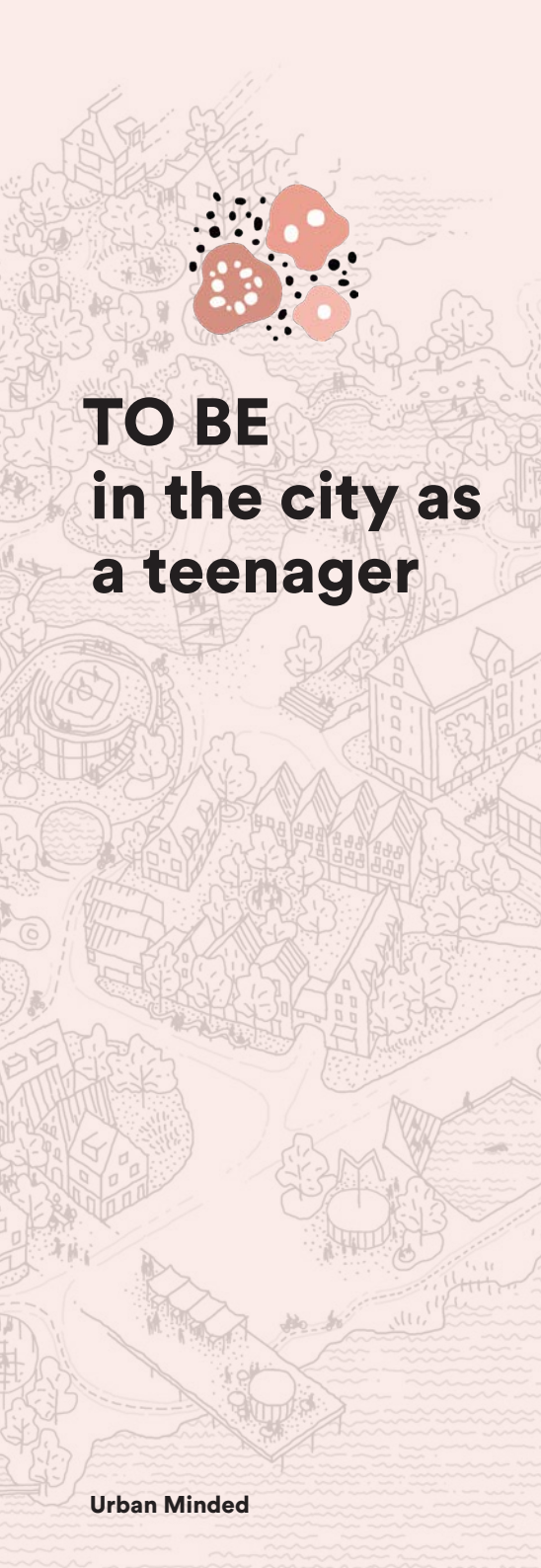
Underground spaces are opportunities to have a creative & playful moment; through colors, music & materiality.

Accessible Rooftops

Public rooftops expand public spaces, creating elevated ways to move in the city.

Find your Stars

Identifiable landmarks are part of the city skyline and can act as an 'urban North Star' during urban-explorer adventures. Old or new, clocktowers or water tanks, anything can become a personal landmark, and without being designed for this purpose.



TO BE in the city as a teenager

To BE in the city is about being drawn to urban public spaces and feeling comfortable to spend time in them. Whether a favorite park or a bench by the water, this means providing spaces to meet the changing needs of the girls. BEing alone, BEing together, BEing able to escape, BEing discreet, BEing visible, BEing active, BEing lazy...

Design solutions informed by the spatial experience of BEing, aim to rethink and diversify the free and open spaces that a city has to offer. By making them more welcoming and better suited to teenage girls, urban spaces can encourage a sense of ownership fostering the notion that the city is in fact theirs.

Introverted as well extroverted spaces, public restrooms, affordable food and drink, flexible spaces, modular urban furniture, varying levels of visibility, all these and more can support in accommodating the user group and promote a sense of ownership over their urban surroundings.

*There needs to be room
for us in the city!
That's really important
that we can always find
at least one space that's
right for us.*



How does this relate to their psychological needs?

Safety

Designing with feelings of safety in mind is about providing the right balance between connected and isolated spaces.



Levels of Privacy

Privacy can be about being away from the gaze of parents and teachers. Varying scales allow you to decide how visible to be and with how many people.



Identity

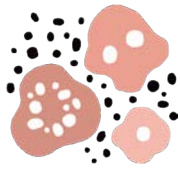
Providing the experience of finding "your" place in the city, a place to relate to and identify with.



Social Interactions

Spaces for varying types of gatherings offer the right setting at different times.





TO BE IN THE CITY

TEENAGE GIRLS' SENSITIVE MAPS

We like to gather where we can have as many people as we want and where we can also organise the space as we want... it's good because everything about the situation can change all the time.

For me, it's nice to be in a place that you can feel part of, and at the same time you can isolate a bit with your best friend and have your own space too.

We just need some grass, a good bench under some trees, and we are good to go. I could spend hours like that with my best friend.

Sometimes you're really stressed out and you want to scream but you can't just scream randomly so we come here and go on the rides so we can scream as much as we want.

I like this hidden corner in the library where I can move the furniture around and just read.

I'm usually really busy so sometimes I just want to be on my own. If the weather's good, I'll get an iced-coffee and bring my headphones and find a bench in my favorite park.

THINGS NEED TO BE FREE !

Sometimes, I just need to be in nature or by the water. It helps clear my mind, if I am stressed or tense...

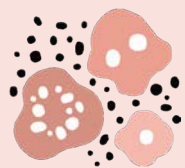
My friends and I like going to places that look like they have a past. And it's nice to feel like we can make them our own as well.

Hidden spots with cosy and flexible seating are really nice places to meet others.

Public bathrooms are so important! It's seriously so frustrating when you end up having to go to a mall just to find one...

It's just nice to hang out around the water... And it's even better if we can be a bit higher than the rest, then we can get a good view.

* Quotes taken from the different talks with the girls over 2022-23.



PLACES TO BE

1 Finding the right places

Finding the right place at the right time is a tough task, at any age. Diversity, flexibility, and accessibility of places are key to encourage and attract teenage girls to public urban spaces, while never losing sight of sense of safety and comfort!

Small outdoor 'decompression' spaces give room for moments between destinations, whether after school or before an activity.

Inbetween Moments

Free & flexible spaces near common gathering points for teens, like a cheap kiosk or shop.

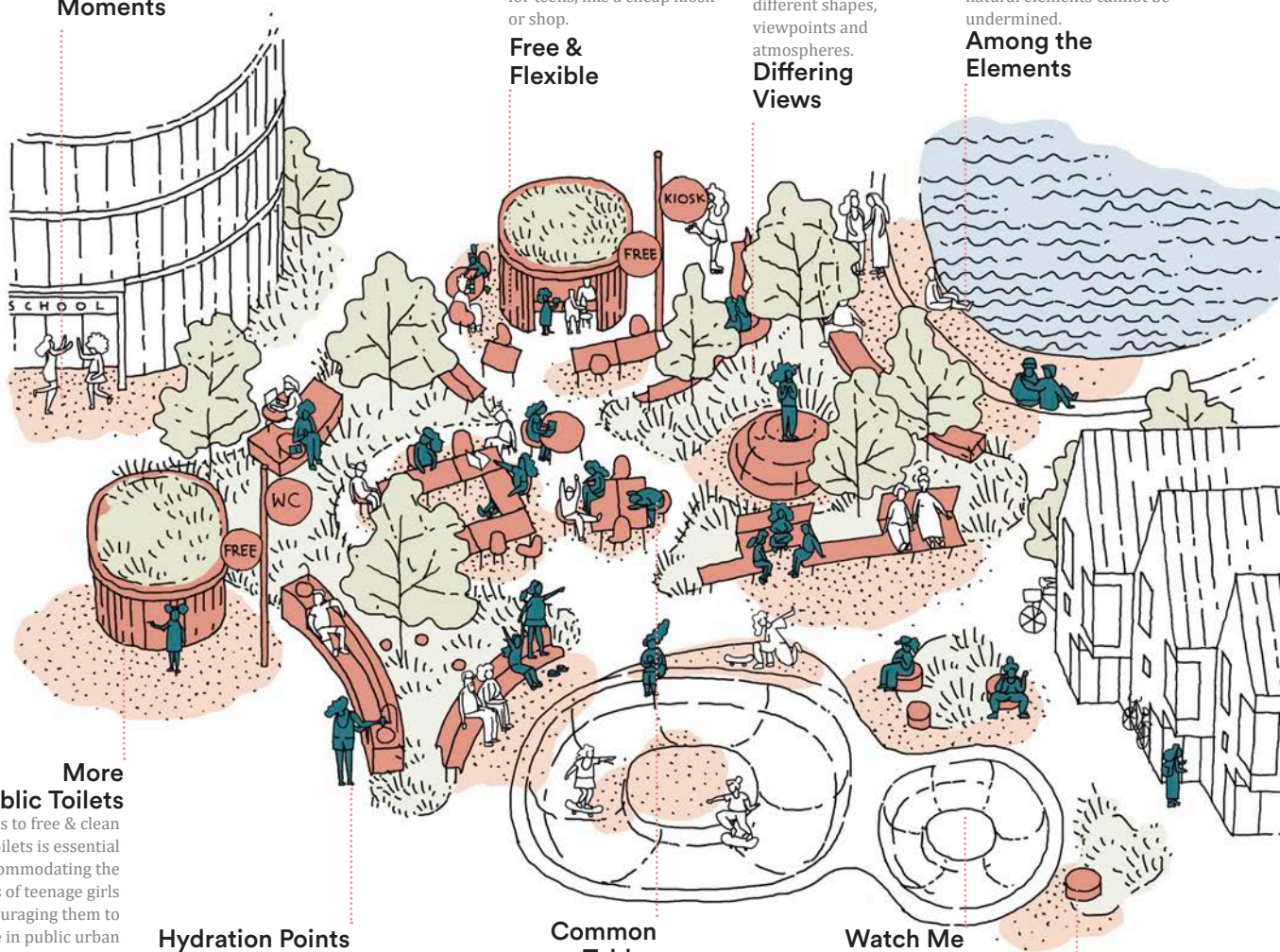
Free & Flexible

Offer more than one way to seat together or alone, by giving different shapes, viewpoints and atmospheres.

Differing Views

Whether under a tree, or next to a river, the value of spaces connecting with natural elements cannot be undermined.

Among the Elements



More Public Toilets
Access to free & clean public toilets is essential to accommodating the needs of teenage girls and encouraging them to spend time in public urban spaces.

Hydration Points
Teenagers, active or not, depend on free facilities to be able to enjoy outdoor spaces throughout the day.

Common Tables
Tables allow for spontaneous interactions, picnics or even outdoor study sessions.

Watch Me Closer
Seating areas integrated into existing sport areas, like skateparks and basketball courts, connect between players & observers by mixing the roles.

(Re)use of Leftover Spaces
Utilizing spaces in the existing and sometimes dense urban context, can provide the varying levels of privacy that teens seek.



Varying shapes, materiality, dimensions, and atmospheres create a sense of intrigue in public spaces and offer a range of experiences. A swing that fits you and your friends together, the ability to lie down or to play with gravity, a circular form to invite social gatherings... integrated next to existing facilities or spread out as small interventions along your way, these provide diverse ways of being and enjoying urban space, while also making it your own.

Integrate simple and natural based material into spaces to hang out in the park, the more grass and wooden surface, the better.

Invitation to Nature

An elevated point in a plaza or a park offers space to isolate in without disconnecting from the city's rhythm.

Urban Lighthouse

More seating places along the main active streets or boulevards allow teens the sense of being part of city life just by observing others.

People Watching

Sharing table

An oversized table invites people to extend the habits of home into the city.

Invitation to Dream

Lighting & art installations provide spaces that allow you to dream and stimulate your creativity or emotions.

Reinterpreting the Swing

With materials & heights that make you play with gravity, simply sitting becomes an engaging activity.

Sensory & Aromatic Experiences

Smells can stimulate feelings of comfort in an outdoor space, especially when natural elements are incorporated.



TO PLAY in the city as a teenager

Are we ever really done with play?
PLAY in the city is about feeling comfortable enough to let go, to be active or silly, to have fun without fear of judgment or societal expectation.

Between playgrounds for young children, outdoor exercise equipment for adults, and traditional sports facilities predominantly used by boys, where can teenage girls shake their urban encounters with age and gender barriers to really be active and play in public space?

At an age when playing might seem childish and your self-consciousness can keep you somewhat restrained, designing for the spatial experience of PLAY is about integrating elements throughout the city that encourage playful attitudes and activities for all!

Design solutions informed by this driver must acknowledge the barriers that keep individuals from being active in public spaces. They aim to expand the notion of PLAY by going beyond conventions to encourage curiosity, creativity, imagination and playfulness at any age.

*I love it when I get a chance
to be silly and joke around. It makes
me feel like a child again!
I think a lot of people really miss
that feeling... and not just people
my age, also adults.
We don't have to be responsible
and mature all the time.*



How does this relate to their psychological needs?

Visibility

Giving more visibility to the diverse hobbies and activities that young girls enjoy doing means inviting them into spaces through representation.



Stimulation

To feel welcome in an active urban space, it's important to offer stimuli that differs from the 'spatial codes' (physical or social) that can keep individuals away.



Identity

Introducing diverse ways to be active and diverse representations of interests or hobbies in public spaces can signal to users that their identity is welcomed and supported by the city.



Social Interactions

Mixing ways to be active outside can encourage interactions, between teenage girls, but also with other generations and user groups.





TO PLAY IN THE CITY

TEENAGE GIRLS' SENSITIVE MAPS

Sometimes it just feels like things are for younger kids, like there's an age restriction. Like if I were to go on those swings, there would be no one around my age. It's like I'm too old for that.

It would be nice to have a place that feels like a stage, but that is also not officially one... Then we could do theater, or dance, or play music. Maybe I would read out my poetry... could be nice, just a space to express ourselves.

It would be so cool to have like a tunnel or something, or just a wall where you could paint whatever you want. I would love that.

Like a place where you can be creative every day and it changes every day!

I like sitting on these swings and seeing the skaters over there doing all their tricks. It's so cool. They're so good at it and I like that they also look out for each other. Like helping each other up after a fall.

I like to feel that the place has been used by many people before me, that it has a past.... It makes me more relaxed about making something there, like we won't make it look more or less worn by using it.

There doesn't have to be an activity for us to start doing something. We can come up with a game ourselves...

Graffiti and street art are great in a city, it's amazing to see how people express themselves this way.

I also like going to museums and galleries, just to see what's there. And look at beautiful things. And there you can also use your imagination and create your own stories...

Sometimes we invent our own games, other times we skate or longboard. But sometimes we do crafts, or play music, or just get creative...

It could be cool to have more stuff in the city for doing our hobbies or 'our kind of fun', other than just football or basketball..

I love seeing the boats and kayaks and stuff like that. There's just so much to do by the water. Like the water is an actual activity and not just something to look at.

* Quotes taken from the different talks with the girls over 2022-23.



PLACES TO PLAY

1 Infinite ways to be active

Once the notion of play is expanded and urban spaces are arranged to support this, the city in its entirety becomes a site for playful experiences! By creating unconventional opportunities or invitations to use spaces freely, and by having diverse activities and hobbies visibly represented, we can spread **PLAY** beyond the playground, extending it far beyond early childhood.

Create fields mixing sports and non-sport activities, to encourage people to take part, without the pressure of being any good at it.

Just Fun, No Pressure

Spread out playful elements in the city, along the main pedestrian or bike paths. The city is a playground!

Pieces of Playground

Playing with the topography of a plaza allows spontaneous & unnamed activities to take place. A stone hill becomes a temporary stage, or perhaps a skating ramp...

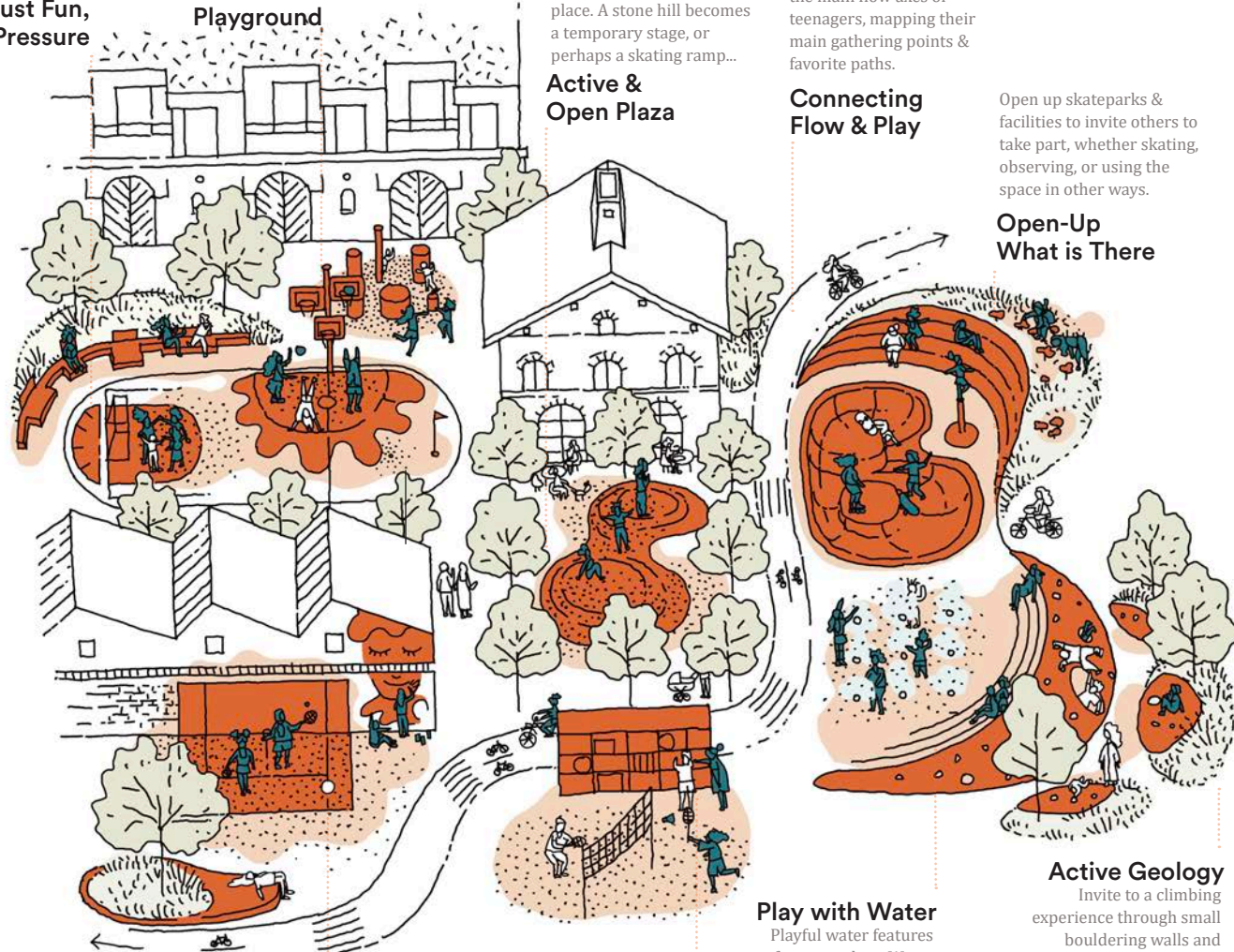
Active & Open Plaza

Spread & place any playful elements along the main flow axes of teenagers, mapping their main gathering points & favorite paths.

Connecting Flow & Play

Open up skateparks & facilities to invite others to take part, whether skating, observing, or using the space in other ways.

Open-Up What is There



Expression walls

Add small activities on existing walls with simple signs, graffiti, wall-tennis, dance... be active with your body and imagination.

Curiosity Cabinet

Provide free or cheap rental equipment. Ping-pong paddles, dance equipment, balls, frisbee, and more...

Play with Water
Playful water features for warm days. Water invites everyone closer.

Active Geology

Invite to a climbing experience through small bouldering walls and adapted floors.



Creating inclusive invitations for play means deconstructing the typical coding of activities that can often be found in our cities. Simply integrating new and somewhat unexpected shapes, heights, colors, and materials into public spaces can stimulate the imagination, inviting everyone in the city to reinvent and reinterpret play for themselves.

Provide flexible urban elements along waterfronts or rivers, whether fishing spots, viewpoints, jumping & swimming areas..

**Playful
Interface
With Water**

Open & free spaces allow users to be as loud as they want, whether playing with a band, singing with your friends, or screaming to release frustration.

Soundbox

Invitation to nature

Interface With Water

Scale-Up

Soundbox

Take Hobbies Outdoors

Update existing or new playground installations by adding other hobbies

Active Lines

Simply marking the floor with lines, colorful or not, can spark the imagination for more activities and games to happen.

Artful Playground

Let art in public space act as an unnamed and unexpected playground, whether for teenage girls,

Active Watching

Create opportunities for different activities by simply offering another point of view of the city you live in.

Active Lines

Simply marking the floor with lines, colorful or not, can spark the imagination for more activities and games to happen.

Artful Playground

Let art in public space act as an unnamed and unexpected playground, whether for teenage girls, adults or anyone!

Active Watching

Create opportunities for different activities by simply offering another point of view of the city you live in.

Next Steps

Having read through this design manual (whether you're a designer, municipality, consultant, foundation, social organization, developer, or anything else), we imagine that, like us, you are interested in improving urban spaces for girls and young women, and making our cities more inclusive for all!

A first step in opening up the imagination for design solutions informed by the needs, preferences and lived experiences of teenage girls, this guide has shown how these could be implemented in an abstract urban setting. These concepts and design ideas are not meant to be adopted as generic solution for any context, instead they demand to be adapted through a return to user engagement, and to be tailored to both the spatial and cultural contexts, resources, and stakeholders involved.

So, what are the next steps?

If you're feeling inspired by this project, do get in touch to share your ideas, continue the discussion, and find ways to work together to make these ambitions an urban reality, step by step!

AND secondly, let us continue to seek opportunities to design our cities with care and consideration for the lived experiences of diverse user groups.

We're looking forward to crafting a more inclusive urban future, we hope you are too!

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