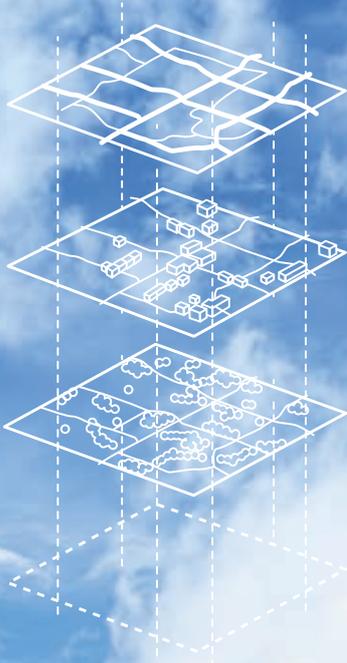


TRANSFORMING URBAN CURACAO

COMMUNITY AND EXPERT VISIONING FOR
LOCALIZING THE NEW URBAN AGENDA

February 2019, Curacao



MINISTRY OF
TRAFFIC, TRANSPORT AND
URBAN PLANNING



UNOPS



IMPLEMENTING
THE NEW
URBAN AGENDA

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This report summarizes the process and results of the adaptation of the New Urban Agenda to the local context in Curacao between 2017 and 2018. The process - with involvement of communities, citizens, stakeholders and experts - generated meaningful input for the policy making process to transform urban Curacao. The results give some clear indications to the Government of Curacao on what could be its future spatial planning initiatives, supporting the development of resilient infrastructure on the island and generating social and economic progress.

Ranging from policies to concrete projects, from urban squares to high quality public transport, the suggested interventions, eventually, contribute to an improved quality of life for the inhabitants of Curacao.



Ms. Zita Jesus-Leito
 Minister of Traffic, Transport
 and Urban Planning
 Government of Curacao

Curacao is at a crossroad. Our economy and government finances are in a delicate situation. In addition, we face tough challenges, for instance with the illegal use and occupation of land, the lack of affordable housing, the depopulation of the Inner-City, the urban sprawl and in some cases, the limited coherence in spatial developments. Furthermore, important projects, such as the new Curacao Medical Center and new touristic developments will need special focus because of their impact and geared attention to transform them into even bigger opportunities for our island.

The Curacao journey of the New Urban Agenda began in 2016, shortly after the Habitat III conference in Quito. With the support of UNOPS we carried out various activities for our New Urban Agenda. Based on the inclusive philosophy, Community-Based visioning workshops were held and a team of local and international planning experts were asked to draw up an Expert-Based vision. Their inspiring contributions are bundled in this booklet. With the results of all beforementioned activities, significant input was obtained for the policymaking process on the New Urban Agenda and to start transforming urban Curacao.

We wish, together with all parties involved, to ensure that our development goals are aligned towards sustainable economic growth and prosperity, and for this purpose spatial planning is highly needed. We need a shared vision about what we want to achieve where. Some elements proposed by the community and the experts for the urban, the sub-urban and rural Curacao must be further explored to refine them. Therefore, we need a roadmap with concrete actions and initiatives. No matter how good the plans and visions are, without actual implementation, no change will occur. We are confident that we can realise change, together with all stakeholders, for the benefit of the people of Curacao.



Mr. Fabrizio Feliciani
 Regional Director for Latin
 America and the Caribbean
 United Nations Office for
 Project Services (UNOPS)

UNOPS implements projects on behalf of governments, the UN family and international donors. Through this work, we are continuously planning, designing and constructing infrastructure, in support of government strategies. In Curacao UNOPS has pledged, in cooperation with UN Habitat, to coordinate approaches to working with donors and the private sector in support of implementing the New Urban Agenda and the SDGs, especially Goal 11, to 'make our cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable'.

As part of the Curacao Resilient Infrastructure Programme we help the Government of Curacao in adopting an evidence-based approach to infrastructure-investments, which will underpin an informed decision-making process. This approach can strongly support the re-planning of urban and rural territories along the sustainable development qualifiers, as advocated in the New Urban Agenda, specifically when addressing climate and disaster resilience, as well as cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder planning.

The challenges of Curacao in the field of sustainable social economic growth and the optimal use of scarce space are not unique, but that does not make the challenges any less. We are delighted that the Government of Curacao, and specifically the Ministry of Traffic, Transport and Urban Planning trusts us to support them on their journey towards effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda.



Mr. Elkin Velasquez
 Regional Director for Latin
 America and the Caribbean
 UN-Habitat

There is a lot of enthusiasm in the Caribbean region to advance with the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. Curacao's approach and results can become an example for countries in the region. I am sure that Curacao will be able to advance with the application and implementation of the very key principles of the New Urban Agenda.

The New Urban Agenda is proposing human settlements and cities to be more compact, connected, integrated and more inclusive. Regarding inclusivity, I noticed the very participatory approach that you are taking in Curacao. I encourage you to continue in this way. It is important to make sure that everybody on the island, all sectors interested in the prosperity of your society, can take part in the discussions and the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

Curacao has a great potential. There is a great opportunity to help the Inner-City become more liveable, as the New Urban Agenda is proposing, and more vibrant. Offering a diversity of opportunities for people living, working or visiting there.

It is important in Curacao to treat different what is different. Whether it is urban territory, suburban territory or the rural territories. They are all part of a continuum and at the same time they need a very specific treatment. I believe Curacao is advancing in the right direction. Curacao is showing that the New Urban Agenda can be applied to the local level when all the right elements are observed and transformed into policies, concrete actions and fostering a participatory approach.



1 CURACAO AND THE NEW URBAN AGENDA

Penha building and the Queen Emma Bridge, pontoon bridge across the St. Anna Bay ©iStock/Joel Carillet

The New Urban Agenda, a new global standard for sustainable urban development

Aligned with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals 2030, the New Urban Agenda (NUA) has its main objectives focused on a more sustainable and better planned urbanisation. The NUA is about dealing with the global process of urbanisation - a net-migration from rural to urban areas - and anticipating on the forecast that between 60-70% of humanity will be living in cities by 2030²⁵.

The New Urban Agenda advocates policies to prepare for further urbanisation by the timely production of city-expansion plans, to prevent more unplanned informal settlements and slums, which are currently hosting more than 800 million of urban people in often inhumane and environmentally unsustainable conditions. Really new in the NUA - compared to the previous Habitat Conference declarations of Vancouver (1976) and Istanbul (1996) - is that both developing and developed countries and cities are being challenged to provide more sustainable and climate resilient urban living. Including prioritizing infill before expansion, public transport over cars, urban regeneration over new towns, creating more green and public spaces, and creating new functions for cultural and natural heritage buildings and sites, etc.

UN-Habitat's International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning (IGUTP)²⁴ is acknowledged by all UN-member states as a key tool to implement the planning component of the NUA. The IGUTP advocates re-planning urban and rural territories along five sustainable development qualifiers:

- More compact and mixed used urban development.
- Better connected cities and neighbourhoods with a shift to non-motorized transport.
- More socially inclusive settlements against the trend of (segre)gated communities.
- Climate and disaster resilience.
- Through integrated and multi-stakeholder planning.

For more information on the New Urban Agenda visit the website of UN-Habitat: unhabitat.org

Implementing the New Urban Agenda in the Caribbean and Latin America

The Action Framework for Implementation of the New Urban Agenda (AFINUA)²³, prepared by UN-Habitat and adopted in April of 2017 by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the Assembly of Ministers and High Authorities on Housing and Urban Development of Latin America and the Caribbean (MINURVI), defines five categories of actions to support implementation of the New Urban Agenda:

1. National urban policies
2. Urban legal frameworks
3. Urban planning and design
4. Urban economies
5. Local implementation

The Framework seeks to "outline the basic ingredients for the implementation of the NUA, who should lead each, how they might be measured and how they link to the provisions of the NUA". The Framework defines key items for action and establishes core principles and values related to inclusion, innovation and integration, making explicit links to the SDGs and the indicators already developed to evaluate progress toward implementation. The Framework represents an important step toward implementation of the New Urban Agenda in the region. Nevertheless, the adaptation of these to local realities, as initiated in Curacao, is required in order to ensure successful implementation processes within the local contexts.

The Curacao journey of the New Urban Agenda started in 2016 shortly after the Quito Habitat III conference

During the Habitat III Conference the NUA was adopted by the Member States. On December 7, 2016 the Curacao Council of Ministers approved the implementation strategy for the New Urban Agenda, complemented by a roadmap drafted in January 2017.

Community-Based and Expert-Based vision input for NUA implementation

With the support of the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the Curacao Ministry of Traffic, Transport and Urban Planning organized several activities in 2017 on the NUA. These included two Community-Based visioning workshops, one island wide in Otrobanda, one for (and in) the area of Banda'bou, and three presentations in the neighbourhoods in Montaña, Otrobanda and Banda'bou for the validation and the accumulation of additional feedback on the formulated vision and goals²⁰.

These workshops were complemented with an Expert-Based visioning workshop. Aimed at exploring the typologies and policy options along the urban-rural continuum, and at a 'deep visioning' for three strategic focus areas across the island: the World Heritage Site in the urban core, Montaña in the eastern suburbs, and Barber in the western rural part of Curacao. As such, the main goal is to unlock planning structures and potential transformational projects that could be implemented in the focus areas. A group consisting of both local and international planning experts were tasked with this objective, while considering the outputs from the Community-Based visioning workshops and consulting with relevant stakeholders.



Figure 1-1
TIMELINE OF ACTIVITIES NEW URBAN AGENDA IN CURACAO

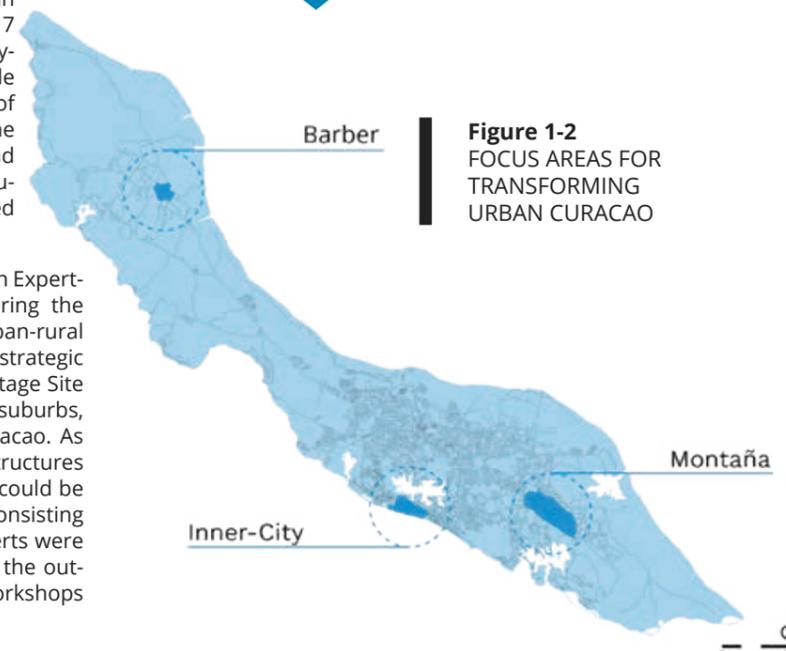


Figure 1-2
FOCUS AREAS FOR TRANSFORMING URBAN CURACAO



2 UNDERSTANDING URBAN CURACAO

Bredestraat, Otrobanda ©VWRP

Curacao is a Lesser Antilles island in the southern Caribbean Sea, about 65 kilometers north of the Venezuelan coast²⁶. Its territory is marked by a sprawling urbanisation and an enviable way of life based on single house unit for housing and car for mobility. Nevertheless, land-use management faces several challenges when looking at the future sustainability of the current land consumption trends¹.

Curacao has a population of just over 160,000 in an area of 444 square kilometer⁴. With a density of 342 inhabitants per square kilometre, Curacao has an average density for Caribbean standards. Aruba, Barbados and St. Maarten have much higher densities, whereas Bonaire, Dominica and Antigua count much lower ones.

Looking at the population densities, an urbanized middle-section around the historic Inner-City of Willemstad can be observed, the only 'real' city of Curacao. Around 75% of the total population lives in that 'urban area', covering around 25% of the total surface of the island (the 'Greater Willemstad area'). That means that barely 25% of the population remains 'rural'. That would put Curacao in the league of highly urbanised countries/island-states. Since people from the eastern and western peripheries daily commute to the city centre, one could argue a nearly 100% urbanisation rate in Curacao.

For Caribbean standards, Curacao has a medium population density

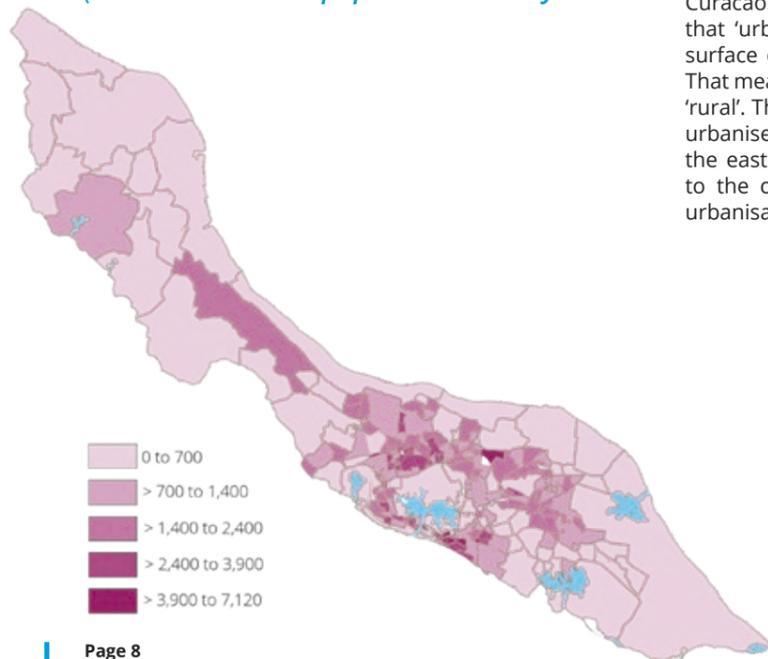


Figure 2-1 CURACAO POPULATION DENSITY (PERSONS PER KM²)

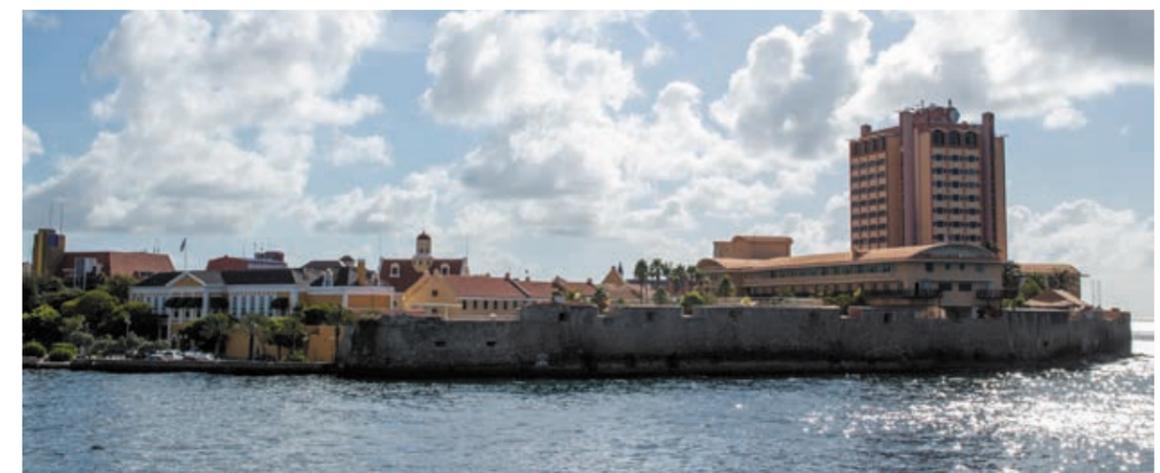
The historic Inner-City, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is rich of monuments

The history of Willemstad reads like a book. It all started in the 17th century as a Dutch mercantile colony around Fort Amsterdam and a settlement called Punda, which extended to the east with Pietermaai and Otrobanda to the west, 'on the other side' of St. Anna Bay¹⁰. These core neighbourhoods were unified as the old Willemstad, including smaller neighbourhoods such as Scharloo and Fleur de Marie. Until the 20th century, this core city has mainly expanded as a linear city along the south coast¹². The housing typology was a combination of large 'Dutch' styled houses for the rich and locally adapted small houses for the less wealthy. The city had mixed uses with Punda (and Otrobanda) as the main commercial centre.

That all changed dramatically with the development of the Shell Oil Refinery and related harbour activities in Schottegat, Willemstad's safe and large natural inner-harbour, combined with the popularization of the car. Over the last five decades many, if not most, residents of the Inner-City moved to the outskirts, joining the suburban pioneers. Today, less than 2% of the Curacao population is still living in the historic Inner-City of Willemstad. The latest estimation is that less than 50 persons are still residing in Punda, the oldest nucleus of Willemstad.

< 2% of the population is living in the historic Inner-City

Governmental and private investments to renovate monuments and improve the streets and public spaces, helped by the UNESCO nomination of the Inner-City as World Heritage Site (since 1997), haven't been able to reverse this trend so far. Moreover, increased city-tourism seems to cause some gentrification effect on remaining low-income residents in the Inner-City. This is mostly visible in Pietermaai and Punda, but also Otrobanda, albeit at a slower pace.



Fort Amsterdam, Punda ©VWRP

The Outer-City has little structure and drains the Inner-City

Combined with a spike in immigration in the pre and post World War II period, new housing units were initiated outside the Inner-City by both private and public developers, including Royal Dutch Shell and (later) KLM. The import of cars and provision of a basic road network paved the way for a massive suburbanisation with a few medium to high-income villa-neighbourhoods, mostly middle-class detached and semi-detached average houses as well as a growing number of low-income self-built houses.

Not much research has been found on the socio-spatial structure of the Outer-City. This socio-spatial structure is not necessarily clearly delineated - rich, middle-class and poor neighbourhoods seem to be randomly distributed. The neighbourhoods impacted by the emissions of the Isla Oil Refinery are mostly lower-income.

In the road infrastructure layout, the ring road around Schottegat's inland-harbour has a structuring impact, with the Queen Juliana Bridge over St. Anna Bay as a landmark of the industrial-era development. From this ring a number of radial roads are the main (and increasingly congested) arteries for the suburban neighbourhoods.

The harbour remains the largest structuring zone in the Outer-City, with a size more than tenfold larger than the adjacent Inner-City, creating a defining 'clash of scale'. Other structuring single use zones in the Outer-City are industrial zones on the outer-side of the harbour-ring road and more remote industrial zones such as Brievenegat on the north-eastern fringe. The Sambil Shopping Mall and its surrounding parking area is a relatively new type of large area. Dedicated tourist zones - such as gated holiday and golf resorts - mark the south-eastern edge of the Outer-City, with Jan Thiel and Spaanse Water as the largest zones. The remaining open spaces inside and outside the sprawled city are mostly natural or agricultural areas.

In many cities a suburban university campus usually has a defining impact on its surroundings. This does not seem the case with the campus of the University of Curaçao dr. Moises da Costa Gomez, located halfway between the Inner-City and the airport. While the campus in the Outer-City is currently stand-alone without any spin-off activity around it, also the Inner-City does not benefit from the presence of students and related cultural activities. Because of the above trends, the Outer-City lacks the 'togetherness' that was common for the Inner-City – the family life outweighs the communal life in the Outer-City.

The rural areas of Curacao are less and less rural

Rural Curacao goes back to pre-colonial times and its original population of Amerindian Arawaks. When the Dutch West India Company laid claim in 1634, it soon established plantations on the island, each with its famous plantation housing-structures that can still be seen. The plantations foundered in various forms of agriculture, only some were successful in growing peanuts, maize, and fruits. Some found their niche in the production of salt, dried from the island's saline ponds. Within a few years nevertheless, trade of slaves quickly took over food-production. Rural development stagnated and most jobs were created in Willemstad as trade-centre. This was reinforced on a large scale when the oil refinery was created.

It took until early 20th century to repopulate rural areas in mainly western Curacao, structured around hamlets or villages connected to a system of parochial churches, such as Barber, Westpunt and St. Willibrordus.

While over time rural areas in Curacao have benefitted from a steady increase in rural and natural heritage tourism, most rural dwellers remain highly depending on the urban labour market and certain services in and around Willemstad/Schottegat.



Rural living, Barber ©VWRP

There is currently approximately 2,000 ha of agricultural land, which represents 5% of the total land area of Curacao, whereas rural residential areas represent 8% of it. Some 12 to 13% (i.e 5,000 ha) of the island is thus available for agriculture, and 30% is designated as conservation area.

The spatial layout of rural Curacao is – similar to the Outer-City – not very articulated. There is no clear hierarchy of rural towns, villages and hamlets; even within rural villages such as Barber, there is no articulated spatial layout that is typically characterised by a dense village core around the commons including e.g the church, school, community/health/sport centre, local retail and a public village square.

The quality of green spaces has deteriorated in several parts of the island. Some neglect is compounded by different impacts of climate change, including drought. Large green spaces are mostly available outside the Outer-City, of which some are protected as nature reserve. Except for properly restricted nature reserves, remaining green spaces in Outer- and Inner-City are not always accessible to public as private property or due to their remoteness and/or challenging terrain conditions.

Inner-City blessed with open water space, green spaces are precious

The Inner-City is still blessed with a number of open water spaces. The number of sizeable green parks on both sides adjacent of St. Anna Bay, where urban dwellers can recreate under the shade of indigenous trees, is limited. The former natural and large Rif water has been largely reclaimed and developed, with a fragmented and contaminated part remaining. The recreational walkway between the mangroves and the seashore is one of the open spaces. In the eastern section of the Inner-City, at Marie Pampoen, recently a small but meaningful new leisure park has been established, which gained quickly in popularity beyond the immediate neighbourhood, indicating the need for green spaces.

Also, the green areas around Fort Nassau became a popular venue for weekend and late afternoon recreation, despite its relative remoteness vis-à-vis the downtown centre.

In the downtown core areas of Punda, Otrobanda, Scharloo and Pietermaai there is hardly any well-shaded green park; it is limited to some small-sized and not optimally maintained pocket parks, often encroached by parked cars. Rural Curacao and Banda'bou certainly remain blessed with the islands' best green and natural spaces, including some remarkable nature reserves and 'green beaches'. Also, green spaces are available within the rural villages.

Mobility is dominated by the car

Created in the years before 1960, no major extension has been made to the main road network since then. Except in 1974 when the Queen Juliana Bridge was established, some roads widening, and the creation of a few roundabouts. Meanwhile, car mobility has continued to grow steadily with for example the number of four-wheel vehicles (cars, trucks, pickups, etc.) growing from approx. 23,000 in 1971 to more than 88,000 in 2017. The number of passenger cars per 1,000 inhabitants amounts to 473 in 2017, which is equivalent to the European figures (average in EU = 503) and superior to most Latin American and Caribbean countries. Many Caribbean islands standing between 200-250, with exception of Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago where the motorization rate is respectively above 400 and 300.

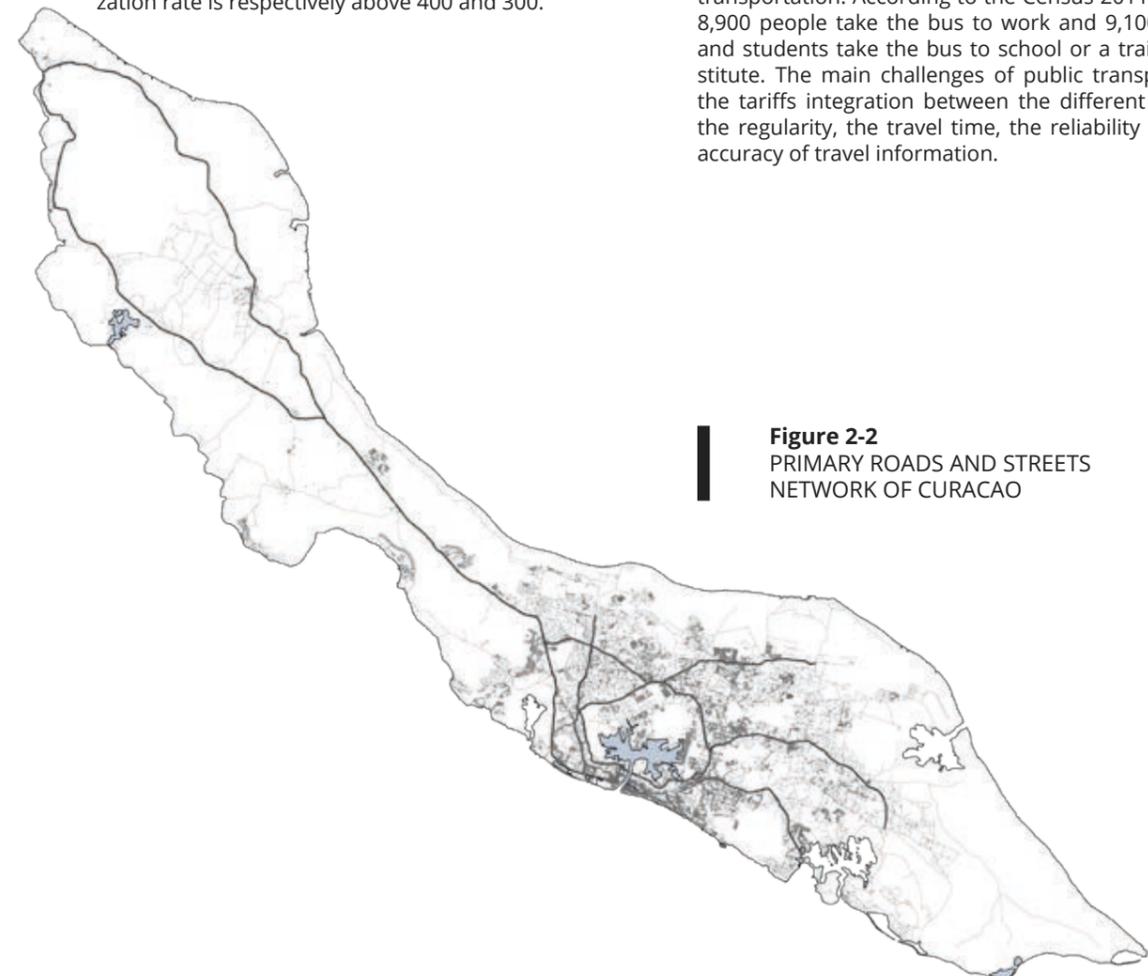


Figure 2-2
PRIMARY ROADS AND STREETS
NETWORK OF CURACAO

The strong orientation on the city centre, as evidenced by Curacao's road pattern, was a phenomenon that continued until the 1960s and 1970s. The growth of the urban area of Willemstad after that period caused accent shifts in the spatial structure of Willemstad: suburbanisation of housing, services and enterprises. This shift in emphasis has led to significant changes in the direction of traffic flows. Traffic movements are no longer exclusively oriented towards the city centre but have become more diffuse.

The deficiencies of the spatial planning implementation have led to the use of some roads with a different function from its primary functions, leading to a discrepancy between the structure of roads and the traffic they should be able to support.

Rush hours are characterized by commuting traffic. They mainly occur on weekdays, before and after working and school hours and at the beginning and end of lunch breaks. At these times practically on all major roads of Willemstad there is a very high traffic intensity.

Public transport is limited

Public transport consists of 21 large and 16 medium buses of the public company Autobusbedrijf Curacao (ABC) and approximately 400 private minibuses⁸. The use of public transport is rather limited in terms of modal share. Nevertheless, public transport in Curacao is, after the car itself, an important means of transportation. According to the Census 2011 around 8,900 people take the bus to work and 9,100 pupils and students take the bus to school or a training institute. The main challenges of public transport are the tariffs integration between the different modes, the regularity, the travel time, the reliability and the accuracy of travel information.

Walking and cycling in Curacao could be enhanced

While cycling in the Outer-City can be demanding due to topography and climate, the flat Inner-City and its extension along the coast has a great potential for cycling. Yet, as cars are dominant in both the Outer- and Inner-City, and due to the lack of bicycle lanes, most cyclist feel too unsafe to cycle, compounded by intimidating large-size vehicles and driving behaviours with little considerations to cyclists and pedestrians. Hence, using the bicycle for commuting purposes is nearly non-existent and hardly considered. Contrary to cycling, walking the Inner-City is much more attractive and popular among both residents and visitors. But outside that area, walking is rather limited to very short distances, recreational walking, fitness or to persons not being able to afford private vehicles.

The Curacao housing market is not meeting the demand

Successive generations of Curacaoan families have aspired decent housing conditions, but low-income groups often had to settle for small working-class houses in the Inner-City and (improved) informal shelters in the Outer-City and the country-side.

The current offer for housing does not seem to accommodate sufficiently the demand and some market segments have difficulty finding an affordable answer to their needs, such as young people starting their career. According to the Curacao Bureau of Statistics there were 4,957 vacant houses in 2011, houses that were previously inhabited⁶. Combined with houses under construction and still uninhabited houses this number goes up to almost 6,000, being around 9% of the housing stock.

Specific housing needs of vulnerable groups in society such as elderly, disabled people, singular families, migrants and refugees have received more and more attention.

Social housing is mostly handled through the public social housing company Fundashon Kas Popular (FKP). The main challenge lies in the financing of these houses, especially regarding the characteristics of those on the waiting list (e.g. low income single mothers). The same occurs for the government land managed by the department of Land Management (Domeinbeheer), part of VVRP, whereby a waiting list of circa 2,500 persons is hoping to lease government land to build their house on.

While some housing in the past was provided to workers by their employers, most of the housing is created through private initiatives. Suburban houses are usually much larger than Inner-City housing and rural housing. While most houses in the Inner-City are attached, detached houses are the norm elsewhere in Curacao, comparable with other Caribbean islands.

Despite a worldwide trend to differentiate housing types and offer more Inner-City and brownfield mixed-use housing options, Curacao's private developers still mainly aim at greenfield one-size fits all monofunctional housing projects on inexpensive lands outside the Inner- and even Outer-City, along the main grid of roads. At present, there are no legal instruments available to counteract this.

A special type of housing, but not insignificant, is the housing for visitors and tourists. Traditionally, tourists stay in hotels or on cruisers. Over time, new typologies have developed including tourist resorts with attached or detached houses and more recently domestic houses partially or entirely rented out through house-sharing platforms. The once clear spatial and functional distinctions between domestic and tourist housing are blurring and an additional upward pressure on real estate prices is effective.

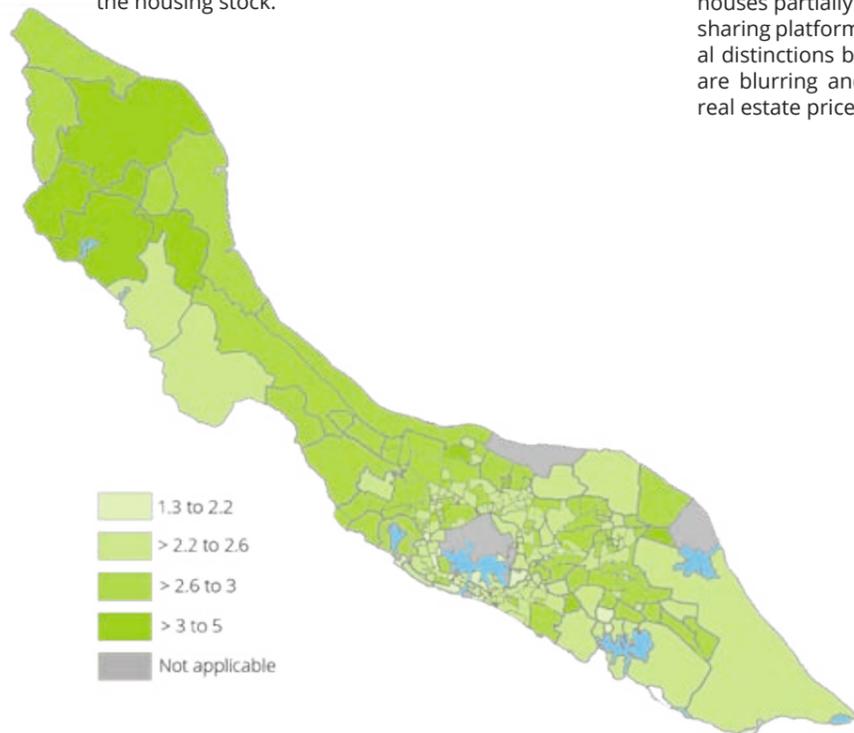


Figure 2-3
AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE IN CURACAO

What does the New Urban Agenda means for Curacao?

Curacao does not bear the brunt of extensive impoverished slums, such as some other countries in the Caribbean. Uncontrolled large rural-urban migration is also not at stake in Curacao – both urban and rural areas have declining populations – with no slums and a flat urbanisation rate, an overall high human development index and a favourable geographic location in the southern fringe of the hurricane belt. Still, Curacao has a serious urban problem to solve. Some key challenges are summarized in the textbox.

Many of these trends are not unique in the Caribbean region and on similar islands elsewhere. What makes Curacao rather unique is its inland harbour with its related industrial and trading activities, including the Isla Oil Refinery complex, one of the largest in the region. While this has been the main magnet for Willemstad's sprawled expansion around the Schottegat inland-harbour, providing direct and indirect employment to thousands of households from Curacao and beyond, it is now – 100 years later – largely reducing its operation and questioning Curacao with an economic, social and environmental legacy that is very hard to turn around towards a post-oil and carbon-friendly reconversion. While this is a too complex issue to include so far in the debate, future urban scenarios will need to relate to this 'elephant in the room'.

This also goes for the 'dolphin in the room', the expanding tourism sector in Curacao. While cruise and airborne mass tourism has been favoured to diversify the island-economy, it has also led to a parallel urban system of large and smaller tourist resorts along the southern coast, including an expanding international airport for the largest carriers and new mega-piers to attract ever-growing cruisers. These developments cast an infrastructural and real estate shade over the seaside of the historic centre.

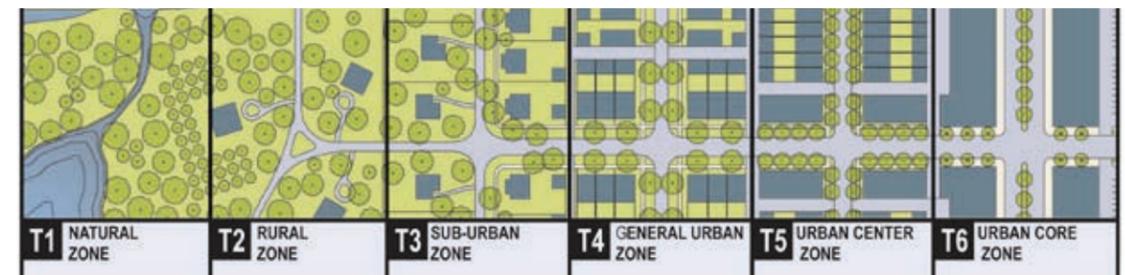
Key challenges for Curacao:

- How to address a looming 'housing-crisis' in a rather holistic way as part of the overall urban planning strategy and of a new housing policy that is currently under preparation?
- How to ensure that urban development is resilient and that climate change adaptation measures, especially on the coastal areas, are planned ahead?
- How to address the tools for implementing the spatial visions, bridging the gap between the plan(s) and it (their) implementation?
- How to strategize on spatial scenarios and interventions to vitalize a selective number of Outer-City neighbourhoods as future nodes of what is often referred to as the multi-nodal 'network-city'?
- How to turn the tide of hollowing out the Inner-City, both on residential and economic matters?
- How to reduce dependency on car with regard to mobility for 'long', average, and short distances?
- How to create more compact and liveable urban areas?
- How to maintain a rural identity and its associated basic functions in the remaining rural areas?
- How to ensure protection of natural areas?

Tentative human settlement typology for Curacao

To analyse the human settlement typology currently in Curacao, a tentative reference analysis grid is used: the urban-rural transect. For a simplified over-view of the transect see figure 2-4. This transect is used as a guidance, and the Curacao typology should not be seen as a strict transcription of it. For instance, the gradient of density of the sub- typologies of the 'sub-urban city region' is not necessarily decreasing from the Outer-city to the resort City.

Figure 2-4
SIMPLIFIED URBAN-RURAL TRANSECT



Tentative urban-rural settlement typology: characteristics and challenges for Curacao

In the table below the typical urban-rural transect has been modified to the current local circumstances in Curacao. With a tentative settlement cluster typology in the second column, spatial characteristics in the third and challenges for each cluster in the fourth column.

Transect	Cluster	Characteristics	Challenges
URBAN-CORE CITY	1) Inner-City	Medium/high density. Historic district with Punda (first urban nucleus), Otrobanda, Scharloo, Pietermaai and Fleur de Marie. The historic district can be defined by the bufferzone-perimeter of the UNESCO World Heritage Site, thus including all World Heritage sub-sites. Largely walkable human-scale city impeded by roaming and stationary cars. Bus-end-terminals on both sides of St. Anna Bay. Limited green spaces, some landmark public squares and inner bays such, e.g. Brionplein and Waaigat.	Preservation of architectural heritage, re-population, walkability, traffic circulation, parking management, urban economy, gentrification.
	2) Coastal-City	Medium/high density. Extended Inner-City with historical urban extensions along the southern coastline between Piscadera Bay in the west and Caracasbaai in the east. This linear city is structured around southern sections of the ring road (including the Queen Juliana Bridge over St. Anna Bay) and the main road parallel to the coast on both sides of St. Anna Bay. It also includes the mega-cruise terminals and thus overlaps with the Inner-City at its west-end. Also, it includes the remains of the urban mangrove forest and lake adjacent to the desalination plant, as well the highly popular Zakito sea-boulevard; mirrored by a similar but smaller-scale sea-park in Marie Pampoen neighbourhood at the eastern-side of the Coastal-City. Most neighbourhoods are reasonably walkable, and busses run most frequently through these neighbourhoods. Travel time to the Inner-City by bus or car is around 5-15', often longer in rush hours.	Coastal defence and mitigation of expected climate change impacts; co-existence of the large-scale mega-pier terminal and adjacent (mixed-use) areas with the fine-grained Inner-City; Complementarity and connectivity with the entire Inner-City; Great potential for walking and cycling along the sea-boulevards; Co-existence of the tourist-resorts with the residential neighbourhoods, urban upgrade of the poorest neighbourhoods; Halting or mitigating the emissions over the neighbourhoods in the western side of the Coastal-City; Preserving and improving the green and open spaces.
	3) Harbour/Ring-City	Low/medium density. Urban and suburban neighbourhoods developed within (e.g. Emmastad) and around the Schottegat inner harbour area and the ring road around Schottegat (hence the double-name). The Harbour-City includes all harbour-related and industrial functions and installations, partially out of order or eroding. Harbour/Ring-City overlaps with Inner-City with Queen Juliana Bridge, St. Anna Bay, Fort Nassau and the harbour-marina as the main dividers/connectors. Many and large-sized commercial functions along Ring-City, undermining the economic vitality of the Inner/Coastal-City. Partially walkable but largely car-dependent residential neighbourhoods impacted by harbour-related cargo-transport and traffic unsafety. Travel time to Inner-City around 10-20', often longer due to persistent traffic congestion.	Partial redevelopment of harbour area depending on future use of Isla Oil Refinery; Co-existence of harbour and residential road-traffic; Exploring potentials for harbour-trails and events; co-existence of large-scale Harbour/Ring-City with fine-grained Inner-City; Harbour/Ring-City traffic management; Improving accessibility and recreational quality of Fort Nassau green space and industrial site on the other side of St. Anna Bay.
SUBURBAN-CITY-REGION	4) Outer-City	Low-density. Suburban neighbourhoods along the main radial roads of the ring road. Some of these neighbourhoods are triangulated by main roads such as Buena Vista, Jongbloed, Joonchi, Seru Lora, Santa Rosa and Montaña Abou. They provide good opportunities to develop complementary sub-centres in the Outer-City/city region. Many and large-sized commercial functions along main-roads, undermining the economic vitality of the Inner/Coastal-City. Hardly walkable, often gated and largely car-dependent neighbourhoods. Travel time to Inner-City around 20-30', often much longer due to persistent traffic congestion during rush hours.	Need for urban redevelopment and quality densification around selected sub-centres that are complementary to the Inner-City and selected subcentres in the other urban clusters; Well connected by safe roads and performing public transport; Need for improved quality, quantity and accessibility to green and open spaces in the Outer-City, well connected through a green leisure network; Halting commercial and residential ribbon-development and large-scale shopping malls.
	5) Edge-City	Low density suburban neighbourhoods at the edge of the Willemstad city region, largely overlapping with the Outer-City and with Montaña Rey at the eastern edge, Brievegat and Fortuna in the northern edge and Julianadorp, Jan Doret, St. Michiel and Boka Sami in the western edge. Hardly walkable, often gated and largely car-dependent neighbourhoods. Travel time to Inner-City around 30-40', often longer during rush hours. The Edge-City compensates the disadvantage of its periphery vis-à-vis the Inner-City by a proximity to remaining open spaces outside the Edge-City.	Urban redevelopment needed oriented towards the selected sub-centres in the Outer-City that are complementary to the Inner-City and selected subcentres in the other urban clusters; Potential for improved urban quality and densification; Well connected by safe roads and performing public transport; Need for improved quality, quantity and accessibility to green and open spaces, well connected through a green leisure network; Halting commercial and residential ribbon-development and large-scale shopping malls.
	6) Airport/Univer-City	The international airport zone and adjacent but not-functionally related suburban neighbourhoods (Souax, Gato, Zegu, Mahuma). The Airport-City could be described as a wedge-city with its base parallel to the runway and its tip entering the extended Inner-City (Colon). This wedge includes the University of Curacao dr. Moises da Costa Gomez and the large Sambil Shopping Mall in the Veeris neighbourhood. Hardly walkable and largely car-dependent neighbourhoods. Travel time from the airport to the Inner-City is around 30-40', often longer during rush hours.	Urban redevelopment of neighbourhoods and strengthening of a densified urban corridor needed with either functional relation with the airport or with the university campus, that is currently stand-alone and not well integrated nor linked with any other part of the city region; Sambil Shopping Mall could be the centre of a mixed-used subcentre as third gravity point within this urban wedge; Need for a complementary blue-green network and performant public transport system in this urban corridor.
	7) Resort-City	Large tourist resorts have been developed around Caracasbaai – with Jan Thiel as compact core – and around and in the Spanish Water, including the luxury Santa Barbara Beach & Golf Resort, edging the largely excavated Tafelberg and the small Newport settlement. Also Mambo Beach at the eastern end and Piscadera at the western end of the Coastal-City are typical tourist-resorts but are better connected with the Inner-City. The Resort-City is also present in western Curacao, on the west-side of Piscadera Bay, in Boka Sami, south of Willibrordus and some smaller villa-settlements along the southern coast. While most resorts are typically walk-friendly, they are also largely car-dependent and often gated.	Coastal defence and mitigation of expected climate change impacts; Need for mixed use and opening-up of gated all-in tourist resorts and better coexistence and connectivity with surrounding urban and rural communities (shared space concept); Consolidation of existing settlement before development of new green fields; Conversely, resort-tourist should have sufficient incentives to trade their resort for cultural activities in the Inner-City.
	8) Tera Cora Ribbon	The 'new town' ribbon development along the road to Westpunt, including Grote Berg, Daniel and Tera Cora are essentially urban satellites of Greater Willemstad. While their cores are walkable, these settlements are largely car-dependent and partially gated. This Ribbon is well connected by buses running between Inner-City and Westpunt. Travel time to the Inner-City is around 30-40', often longer during rush hours.	While these settlements are located in rural area, they should be considered and treated as urban satellites of the city region. Their growth should be strictly limited to infill. Same goes for the more remote villa-park of Fontein.
RURAL-NATURAL	9) Barber-Town	Barber is geographically in the centre of the Banda'bou area north of Tera Cora. It is currently the largest village in western Curacao. The built-up area is divided by the main road from Willemstad to Westpunt. The town-centre is not very dense and rather sprawled towards its edges and neighbouring villages such as Soto. Residents are largely depending on Willemstad for jobs, education, health-care and other basic services. Travel by bus or car to the Inner-City can take up 40-60' or more during rush hours.	Barber could be designated as the main village of Banda'bou/western Curacao, and gradually develop a denser town-centre with all basic services for Barber and the other Banda'bou villages and hamlets. Investment in local food-production and processing is critical for both the rural and urban sustainability. More jobs locally will also reduce the need for daily commuting.
	10) Banda'bou-Villages	St. Willibrordus, Soto, Santa Cruz, Westpunt, Lagun are the main villages but there are also some other smaller hamlets. While most villages have some local jobs in mainly tourism, many of the villagers commute on a daily basis to the city region and even the Inner-City for work, education, health-care and leisure. Travel by bus or car to the Inner-City can take up 50' or more.	If Barber is developed as a main centre, all Banda'bou villages would be less depending on Willemstad and could focus more on farming and rural tourism.
	11) Eastern Villages	Seru Grandi is the largest settlement just east of Montaña. While Montaña is still considered as part of the urban city region, Seru Grandi needs to be addressed as a rural settlement with suburban characteristics. Travel time to Inner-City is 45' or more.	If Montaña provides better services as a Willemstad city regional subcentre, Seru Grandi could become less depending on Willemstad and focus more on farming and eco-tourism.
	12) Eastern & Klein Curacao	The Eastern wedge of Curacao is the only uninhabited part of the main island, but in private hands and not accessible for the public. Klein Curacao is a small uninhabited island south-east of the main island.	Maintaining the unbuilt rural/natural character of these areas is vital for Curacao's ecosystem and urban sustainability. Climate resilience and a greening strategy of these areas are critical for the entire island.

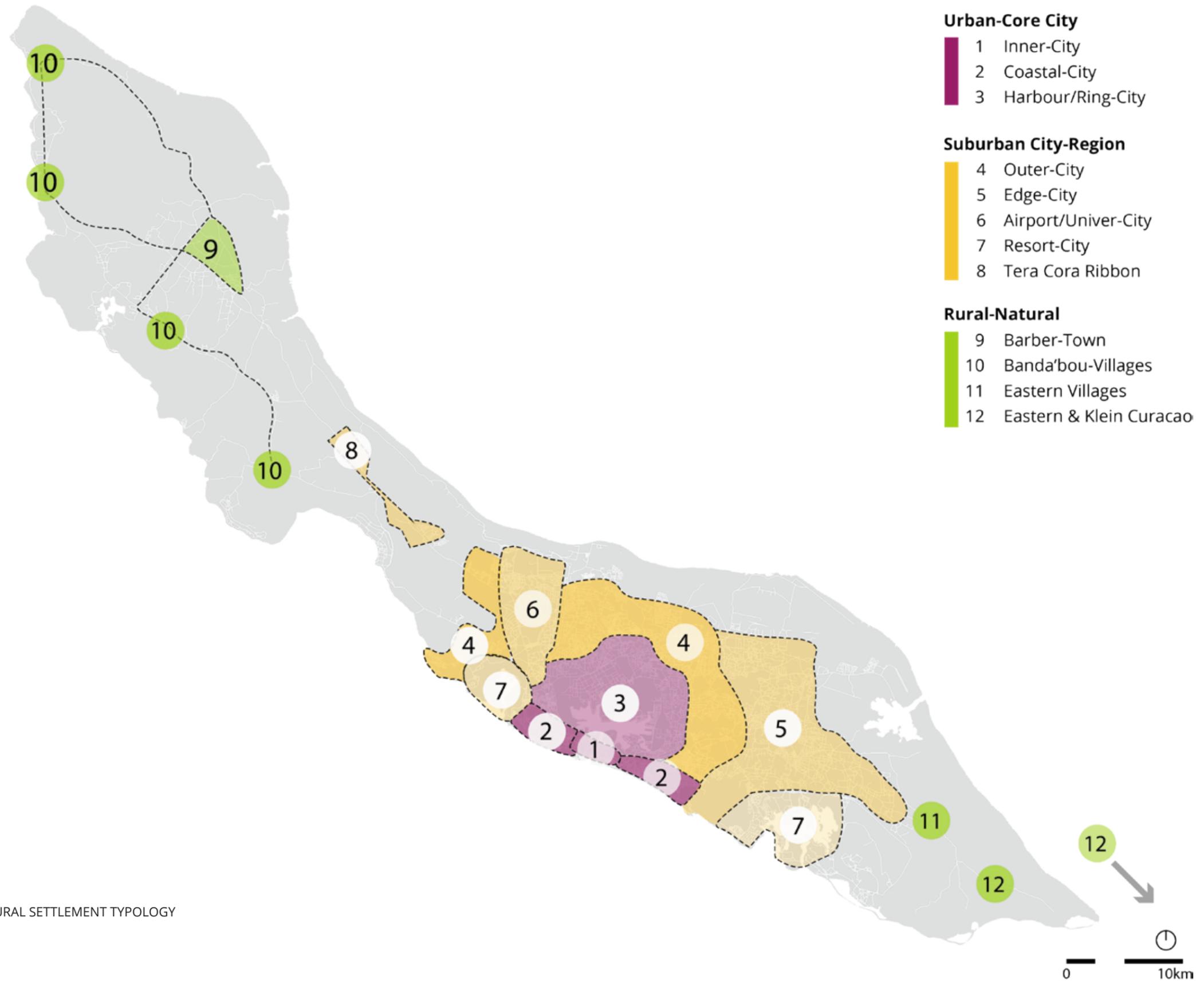


Figure 2-5
TENTATIVE URBAN-RURAL SETTLEMENT TYPOLOGY
FOR CURACAO

3 FOCUS AREAS

Christoffel National Park ©iStock/CircleEyes

Barber, the meeting spot in Banda'bou

Barber is a village situated approximately 25 kilometres north-west of Willemstad¹⁴. Situated at the crossroad of the main road connecting Westpunt with Willemstad and a secondary road, Kaminda Prospero 'Popo' Rojer, that connects the town with the south coast of Banda'bou. Barber is close to the Christoffel National Park. Main sights of Barber are the 800-year-old kapok tree, the oldest in Curacao, and the Sunday market, where vendors sell local delicacies. Barber was part of the network of 'church villages' founded by bishop Niewindt around 1840. The name 'Barber' refers to a former plantation with the name 'Plantage Barbara', which derived its name from its founder in the 17th century, whose name was 'Barbara Exteen'. This name changed in the course of time into Barber. Barber has an approximate surface of 9 km².

Barber is informally considered as the main village of Banda'bou, thanks to its location and cluster of services and facilities, which are also used by inhabitants from the rest of Banda'bou. It however lacks some services, such as accessibility to a pharmacy in the evening and weekends, health care and a sports facility.

Although the main road's condition has been improved, some inner streets are not paved, have no sidewalks, and are dark at night due to the lack of street lights, increasing the perception of unsafety.

Barber is relatively more accessible than other areas in Curacao due to the various bus lines that reach the Banda'bou part of the island, however infrequent.

In 2011, Barber's population counted 2,412 people (+87 inhabitants since 2001). Nearly 90% of the houses are privately owned, while around 10% are rentals. Barber counts around 650 liveable homes with an average of 3.6 inhabitants per house. Most of the houses are in a good or acceptable condition, but as a result of migration to the city and neglect of the houses when the owners pass away, there are more and more abandoned deteriorating houses.

Due to a lack of work and leisure opportunities, inhabitants mostly commute daily to the east. Poverty exists but is mostly prevalent in the surrounding countryside, where other social problems also occur. In 2001, 19% of its inhabitants were unemployed, above the island's average of 16%. It also had a higher number of teenage mothers (13%). Furthermore, the population of Barber is ageing.

Montaña, the suburban eastern edge of Willemstad

Montaña is a cluster of low-density residential suburban neighbourhoods in the far east of Willemstad and Schottegat^{15 16}. The name is of Spanish origin, and the neighbourhood includes both Montaña Abou and

Montaña Rey. Montaña Abou has an approximate surface of 1.8 km² while Montaña Rey has a surface of approximately 3.6 km². Spread over this area is a population of 5,307 in Montaña Rey and of 4,382 in Montaña Abou in 2011.

As well as Barber, Montaña was part of the network of 'church villages' founded by bishop Niewindt around 1840. Montaña only really started to develop after the industrialization of the island by the Shell Oil Refinery. It was then that it started to lose its agricultural activities and rural character. The biggest population impulse came in the 1970s when 513 social houses were built. Between 2001 and 2011 Montaña Rey has seen among the strongest populational increases on the island.

Montaña has a typical suburban residential character. Its houses are detached and consist of mostly one floor and exceptionally two floors. Many of them are social housing. There is a strict separation of uses, as residential areas are mostly strictly residential, while the commercial activities are largely found along the main roads. Within the neighbourhood, the Kaminda Venancio F. Isenia also has a concentration of functions, especially close to the area's main church, where there is a police station, a school, a bank, a supermarket, snack bars, and a small triangular square and spacious parking lot in front of the church. As such, the area around the church shows characteristics of a physical centre of Montaña, even if underused.

Montaña is accessible by public transport – both large and mini-buses coming in from Punda – but the frequency is low and buses are late during rush hours, without any notice. There is neither a bus station nor sheltered bus stops. The average traveling time to Punda can be more than 40 minutes.

Montaña is not far away from touristic and natural areas. In the north and north-east, there is the large St. Joris Bay, with its natural landscape, important ecosystem and practices of water sports. Close to the St. Joris Bay is also the aloe vera plantation and the Ostrich Farm. To the east, there are the rural parts of eastern Montaña Rey, Seru Grandi and the still natural land of Oostpunt. To the south lies the recreational areas of Spaanse Water with the Tafelberg at its side.



Example of housing in Montaña ©VVRP

Historic Willemstad, the struggling heart of Curacao

The historical Inner-City of Willemstad consists of four neighbourhoods: Punda, Otrobanda, Pietermaai and Scharloo, all with a distinct character and recognized as UNESCO World Heritage. It is still the historical, political and commercial heart of the island, and it counts no less than 760 monuments protected by law, and listed for their authenticity in design, material and workmanship.

The Inner-City faces various challenges, being mainly its population exodus, car-dominance and its decline, processes which are related. Decline is apparent in its neglected historical monuments, public spaces and economic activities²². The continuous suburbanisation, 'touristification' and absence of a clear vision and related joint actions are additional threats to the future.

In 2011, around 2,020 people lived in the Inner-City, (1.3% of the island's population), a decline of 69% since 1972 when it counted 7,665 inhabitants. In contrast, there are 960 bedrooms in both Punda and Otrobanda for tourists. According to the Curacao Tourism Board, currently an estimated 70% of stay-over tourists visit the city centre of Willemstad. As for accommodations, an estimated 35% of tourists go to alternative accommodations like via house-sharing platforms⁷.

The population exodus from the Inner-City resulted in many abandoned houses, which have been increasingly deteriorating. Empty buildings became shelters for the marginalized homeless, often suffering from drug addiction. Due to the high maintenance costs of preservation and renovation, owners often deliberately let buildings decay or demolish with the hope of ensuring a more profitable use of the land, such as paid parking lots. Furthermore, the underperformance of the public spaces, such as dirt and waste on the streets, the overstimulation by advertisement, the visual pollution of air conditioning and the poor state of the pavements, further undermine liveability. The historic city centre area of Willemstad has been altered and 'de-characterized' in the 20th century through the widening and construction of new roads, the 30 May 1969 revolt, and neglect.

Punda, the depopulated cradle of Curacao

Punda, the oldest urban area of Curacao, has experienced the greatest population loss on the island. While Punda's population in 1839 consisted of 2,097 inhabitants - 31% of the Inner-City then - currently less than 50 residents populate Punda, with residences covering only 5% of floor layers of all buildings in 2016¹¹. In contrast, 14% was empty space, 10% storage rooms and 16% of floor space as part of hotels (at least three times the number of residences)¹³. Some hotels have been in great difficulty, such as the former Plaza Hotel, the landmark-tower of Punda, closed for several years². There are around 18 building units empty, 10% of the buildings in the area. Punda is still the biggest shopping district on the island, even though seriously threatened by suburban shopping malls and its lack of diversity, with most stores only selling clothes, souvenirs and jewellery, of which 70% is in the lower and middle segment²¹. After closing time, Punda is mostly nearly void of people and life, except on Thursday evenings during the Punda Thursday Vibes.

The exodus of its population and the commercialization of the area also resulted in architectural transformation in the 20th century. Some of Punda's 18th and 19th century unique architecture has been replaced by modern functional buildings. The attractiveness and liveability of its alleys are diminished by long bricked-up walls, obstructed by air-conditioning and some by gates, and absence of human activity.



Alley district, Otrobanda ©VWRP

Otrobanda, a rougher and more hidden authentic gem

Otrobanda is the largest and relatively best-preserved heritage area of Willemstad, and is the most-populated neighbourhood in the Inner-City, having preserved to a certain extent a lively, authentic local culture. It houses a large migrant population as one out of six inhabitants was originally from the Dominican Republic in 2001. Otrobanda is also considered as one of the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods of Curacao. It has experienced a significant population loss: declining from around 6,000 people (1970) to a mere 1,369 (2011).

More than half of the households live beneath the island-poverty line. Many inhabitants do not have sufficient means to renovate houses, especially if they are higher-maintenance historical monuments. As a result, several houses, of which some were occupied and functional until recently, are abandoned and are consequently decaying. Inhabitants from Otrobanda also have a significantly lower education level than the average level of the island. In 2007, youth unemployment was around 46%, above the island's average of 38%. Furthermore, the neighbourhood suffers from social problems such as criminal activities, e.g. related to drugs and prostitution.

Otrobanda also suffers from the same commercial challenges as Punda, as 73% of stores sell clothing where the lower segment is also over-represented (80%). In the Breedestraat in Otrobanda, nine buildings were empty in 2016. The former Howard Johnson Hotel at Brion square is closed, and the Kura Hulanda resort was in a very unstable situation at the time of compiling this report.

Its opportunities lie in Otrobanda having the largest and most interesting ensembles of Curacaoan-Dutch architecture on the island, housing a lively Curacaoan and Latino population and relatively authentic folk culture.



Bars, restaurants and student apartments, Pietermaai ©VWRP

Pietermaai, the gentrified extension of Punda

Pietermaai is the neighbourhood in the Inner-City that has transformed the most in the last decade³. From being labelled as a no-go zone in the past, entrepreneurs saw opportunities in its then low real estate prices and historical heritage to convert it into what is now considered the hippest destination in the Inner-City. Between 2000 and 2017, four new boutique hotels with more or less 129 rooms/apartments, eight apartment hotels with more or less 35 apartments, 147 rooms for students, ten restaurants, two bars, a fashionable barber, consultancy, trust office, lawyer, a dive shop and a renovated Nieuwstraat have changed the area.

Since 2000, economic development in Pietermaai has brought \$27.5 million in total governmental revenue, \$3.6 million annually and 640 positions in total employment. The safety of the area has also improved partly by closing off public alleys ('steegjes'), a heavily debated issue. However, the process has induced gentrification that has been pushing locals out of Pietermaai and closed off former access to the coast. The area has become too expensive for most Curacaoans. The price per square meter in the neighbourhood has increased from \$75-100 to \$275-425 in 2017, and at the waterfront from \$250-300 to even \$800-1,000 - a staggering increase of 225%. Even though some 147 rooms for interns / students and some luxury houses have been built, the population of Pietermaai has continued to decline, from 383 in 1981, to 222 in 2001 and to a mere 81 in 2011. There is no 'sentro di bario' or community organization of importance which unites and protects the interests of the community.

Scharloo, offices and poverty among hidden neo-classical glory

Like elsewhere in the Inner-City, Scharloo saw a decrease in population, from 760 inhabitants in 1992 to 523 in 2011. The area's typical historic mansions suffer from vacancy and neglect, although many have been restored and transformed into offices for both private and public functions. As a consequence, activity at the Scharlooweg is predominantly car-centred and consists mostly of commuting during the day, resulting in empty streets and sketchiness especially after working hours. At the Waaigat and St. Anna Bay part of Scharloo, port related activities still remain next to the water.

Scharloo is also among the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods on the island. Scharloo had the second lowest income in Curacao. Some 30% of its inhabitants is of foreign origin, with the majority being Dominicans. The area is also home to many homeless and drug addicts. Recently, areas within Scharloo such as Fleur de Marie and Sint Jago have received refurbished streets and improved water and electricity infrastructure. However, one of the sub-neighbourhoods of Scharloo, called Zwaan, still has severe slum-like conditions, being insecurely built informally on governmental terrain lacking basic necessities and infrastructure⁹. The neighbourhood profile of 2011 also mentioned a need for local schools, recreational and sport facilities for the youth.

Barber, the meeting spot in Banda'bou



1 Sunshine & Fresh Minimarket located on one of the main roads.



2 Local businesses. At Pagafasil people can pay their bills and buy (prepaid) energy.



3 A popular Chinese eatery located on one of the main roads of Barber.



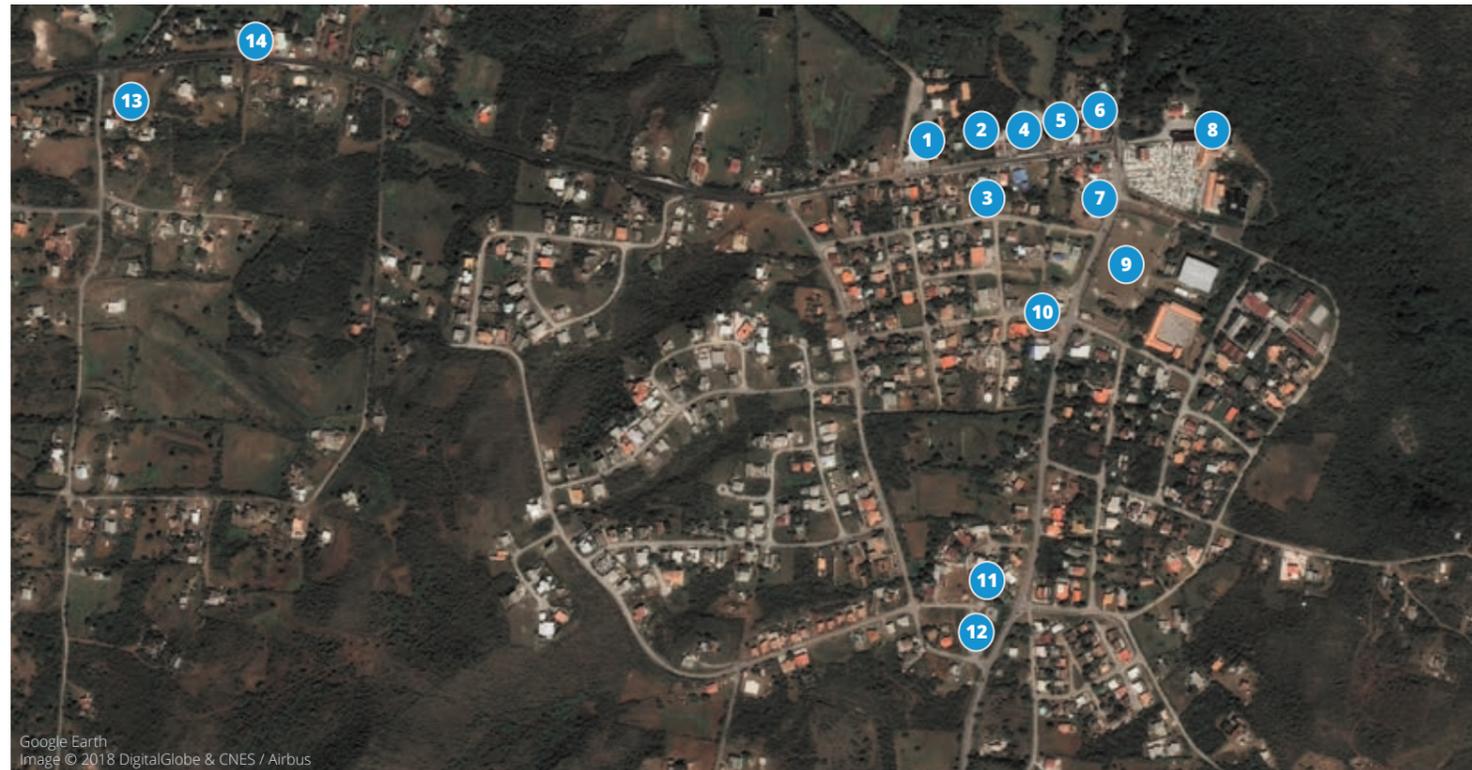
4 The Marshe, the local market with a variety of local delicacies are available.



5 Typical vernacular-heritage 'kunuku' house, common in rural villages.



14 Minimarket, bakery and lottery in Barber located on Kaminda Popo Rojer.



Google Earth
Image © 2018 DigitalGlobe & CNES / Airbus



6 The Maduro & Curiel's Bank and its ATM along the main road.



13 Typical Barber house, with two or three bedrooms and plot size > 500m².



7 The Red cross, located on the main road in Barber, serving entire Banda'bou area.



12 Volunteer Fire station in Barber, serving entire Banda'bou.



11 Police station in Barber, serving entire Banda'bou area.



10 Gas station in Barber, one of two for entire Banda'bou area.



9 The soccer pitch, location for much desired sportcomplex for Banda'bou.



8 Roman Catholic church of Barber, main landmark of Barber.

All used images ©VVRP

Montaña, the suburban eastern edge of Willemstad



1 Kaya Reginald Recordino is characterized by commercial activities and services.



2 Poverty is visible in the poor state of housing and the various trash piles.



3 Local snack opstap opposite of the church.



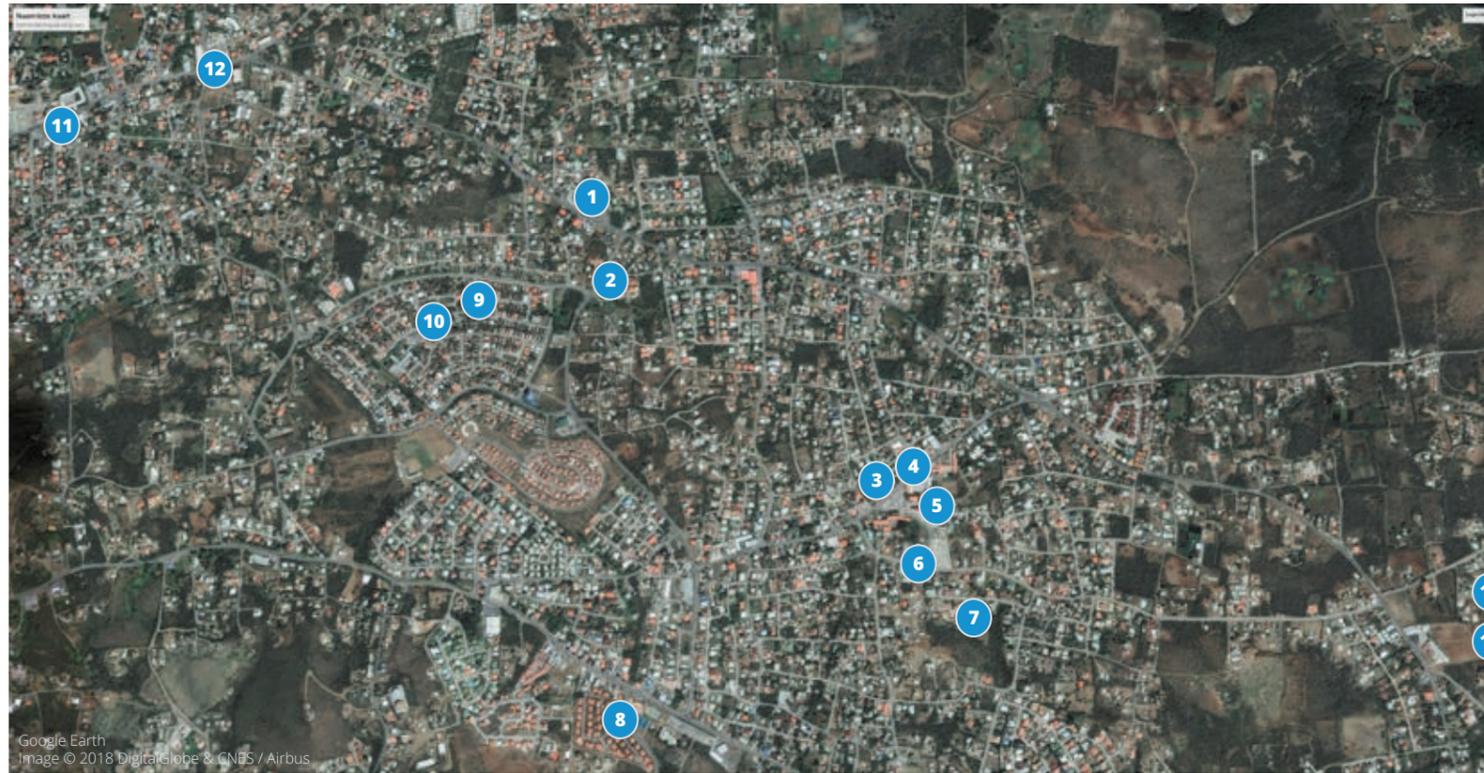
4 Truck di Pan, local food truck, popular selling point for food and drinks.



5 The church of Montaña Rey, Kaya Venancio F. Isenia.



14 Museo di Tambú dedicated to local culture, Montaña Rey.



Google Earth
Image © 2018 DigitalGlobe & CNES / Airbus



6 Sentro di bario, Kaya Peper, Montaña Rey.



13 Rural landscape and agriculture in the eastern part, strong contrast with the suburban.



7 Various older traditional houses placed along the main roads.



12 Kaya Reginald S. Recordino. The streets are designed for cars only.



11 A sidewalk provides safety for pedestrians on small part of the main road.



10 An underutilized space in a cul-de-sac of Kaya Mabi, Montaña Abou.



9 Social housing in Kaya Choromi, Montaña Abou.



8 Various gated communities located along the road.

All used images ©VVRP

Willemstad, the historic heart of Curacao



1 Niewindtstraat. Walkability suffers due to the high presence of cars and the car-oriented design of streets.



2 The alley district is one of the best-preserved historical ensembles, with a human-scale urban design inhabited and used by a lively local community.



3 Frederikstraat shows a typical street with dense, human scale and charming architecture which invites social interaction.



4 Highroads imposed on the historically dense neighbourhoods, resulting in physical and psychological barriers in the areas.



5 Sebastopolsteeg is a lively alley in Otrobanda with a local atmosphere.



14 Large open spaces and parking lots leave gaps in the urban fabric, creating psychological barriers.



Google Earth
Image © 2018 DigitalGlobe & CNES / Airbus



6 18th Century mansion being prepared to become new office for foundation.



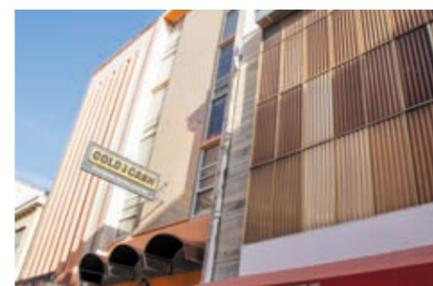
13 Out of style and scale modern buildings clash with historic monuments in Pietermaai.



7 View on former Plaza Hotel in Punda, one of various empty hotel buildings in the Inner-City.



12 Prinsenstraat. Underused area, with large open plots and deteriorating modern functional buildings.



11 Heerenstraat, modern functional buildings clash in style and scape with original historic cityscape.



10 Some alleys in Punda are characterized by long walls and visual pollution by air-conditioning installations.



9 Some alleys in the Inner-City are blocked by fences or gates, diminishing accessibility and liveability.



8 Kuiperstraat, lost most of its historic character and liveability.

All used images ©VVRP



4 COMMUNITY-BASED VISION

Garrick Marchena mural. Photo ©Jan Kok Lodges



Figure 4-2
MEMORY MAP BANDA'BOU, CURACAO

With the support of the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the Curacao Ministry of Traffic, Transport and Urban Planning (VVRP) organized several activities in 2017 and 2018 on the New Urban Agenda. The main purpose of the Community-Based visioning was to create awareness and commitment and to engage in a public debate to localize the New Urban Agenda for Curacao.

The activities included two Community-Based visioning workshops, one island wide in Otrobanda, one for (and in) the area of Banda'bou. The aim of the workshops was to set common priorities and gather strategies and ideas for the future of these areas in the context of the New Urban Agenda. Then three presen-

tations were held in the neighbourhoods in Montaña, Otrobanda and Banda'bou for the validation and the accumulation of additional feedback on the formulated vision and goals. The focus of the workshops was on the past, the present and the future. A total of 75 participants took part in the Community-Based visioning workshops; a broad rise of inhabitants, district representatives, experts, civil servants, and people working for universities, foundations, youth organizations, the transport union, women's organizations, monument conservation and churches. The New Urban Agenda was openly and interactively discussed from various perspectives.

Curacao, memories from the past

Spatial planning is not just about structures. It concerns the use of space and the interaction between us and this space during the different stages of our life. It also implies our nostalgia when urban quality, nature or freedom is lost as a result of too narrow urban and economic developments. In other words, there is a strong bond between ourselves and our environment.

A collective memory of the city region and the rural area of Banda'bou - and eventually the island as a whole - was created by combining the individual memories of the participants and connect these memories to specific locations.

Figure 4-1
METHOD USED FOR COMMUNITY-BASED
VISIONING WORKSHOPS

Past	Present	Future
Storytelling	Selecting Key Issues	Thematic Vision Statements
Memory mapping	Thematic SWOT Analysis	Thematic Vision Designs
Shared Memory Map	Thematic SWOT Strategies	Shared Vision Statement

Banda'bou, a rural area centred around social life, nature and history

For the memories in the rural area, social solidarity, peace and security are recurring concepts. Banda'bou is memorised as an area where mainly agriculture and livestock farming were practiced. The connection between the rural area and the city was also discussed, whereby the city functioned as a trading area for the products from the countryside. It is remarkable that the historical and cultural awareness in the Banda'bou area is very high.

Banda'bou, memories from the past

The nostalgic memories of Banda'bou express itself most strongly in the beautiful memories that are linked to social solidarity, youth sentiments, the feeling of peace, safety and a lot of appreciation for nature, agriculture and animal husbandry. Solidarity and togetherness between local residents used to be stronger.

The people spent weekends on the several beaches in the company of their family, went to church on Sunday and enjoyed the fresh air during walks in nature.

As a child they had a lot of fun at school, walking in the caves on the north side, looking at the drawings of the Indians, listening to the stories of their ancestors, breathing in the history of Banda'bou, such as the freedom struggle of the slaves at Landhuis Kenepa.

In the past they used to go fishing and picking fruits, such as tamarind. Farming and animal husbandry were frequent. During harvest time, people from Banda'bou went to Otrobanda, on foot or with their donkey, to sell their agricultural products.



Community-Based visioning workshop Banda'bou ©VVRP

Our Inner-City used to bring people together

The memories of the participants were mainly connected with the core city of Otrobanda and Punda, an area recognized by UNESCO as World Heritage. The function of the city to bring people together in the context of socializing, entertainment, reflection, sports and recreation, as well as celebration is prominent in their memories. The different iconic buildings, squares, alleys and streets in Punda and Otrobanda play a central role in the memories. The entrepreneurship shown by Curacaoan people used to be an important part of the identity of the core city. With regard to the port area, there are fewer memories. The aforementioned places and memories are important when formulating the vision for the future.



Community-Based visioning workshop Inner-City ©VVRP

Inner-City, memories from the past

There are many nostalgic memories among the population of experiences that have taken place in the city centre. These memories testify to the great cultural-historical value of the Inner-City, which is part of the World Heritage List of UNESCO. Walk, enjoy the colourful buildings at the Handelskade, eat great local food at Plaza Bieu, buy a cup of coffee and a 'pastechi' at Café Klein Kwartier in Otrobanda, buy treats and clothes from female entrepreneurs such as Tan Veve, Shon Ros and Shon Bea. Shop in Punda, work as an altar boy in the cathedral of Pietermaai, visit the 'West End' cinema, enjoy the fireworks shows at 'Van der Valk Hotel' on New Year's Day. Remember the romantic encounters at Fort Nassau and Trupiaal Inn? Enjoy the excitement and sensation of baseball matches at Rif Stadium. There are so many beautiful memories.

The times spent at the St. Agnes Kindergarten in Pietermaai, the St. Albertus College and the Maria Immaculata Lyceum, the school excursions to the Curaçao Museum, meeting with friends at the Gomezplein and Brionplein, swimming lessons at the pier at Marie Pampoen and cultural activities, such as Simadan at the Willelminaplein, Carnival in Otrobanda and not to forget the celebration of 'Dia di Bandera' in Nieuw Nederland, are indispensable.



Figure 4-3
MEMORY MAP INNER-CITY

Community-Based vision statement

The basis of the common future vision for the neighbourhoods of Curacao is formed by the desire to have more and better open spaces, public city spaces, playgrounds for the city region and the inhabited core areas. Meanwhile, preserving the peace, culture and nature of the rural area and restoring natural and slow connections within the wider urban environment.

The vision map reflects the future vision for Curacao drawn-up in collaboration by the participants of the Community-Based visioning workshops. By combining their ideas and thoughts their vision for the future of Curacao is visualized.

COMMUNITY-BASED VISION STATEMENT

CURACAO 2030'

"In 2030 Curacao is characterized by a liveable Willemstad, being the capital and World Heritage City, with more urban characteristics within a functional city region. The city region is surrounded and complemented by attractive rural and natural areas, with restored and preserved unique natural and cultural heritage. The rural area consists of a functional network of well-maintained rural villages. Sustainable urban and rural settlements, combined with ecotourism, is the key to economic resilience.

In 2030 the Government uses a people-oriented approach, aimed at a more inclusive society with a fair distribution on the island of, and access to, (job) opportunities and services. Available and accessible for everyone, including the most vulnerable in society. All citizens have access to well-functioning, affordable public transport, supporting the reduction of car dependency and related carbon dioxide emissions.

In 2030 the citizens of Curacao are committed to reduce their carbon foot print, they care for the nature of the island and have developed a robust coastal protection. All necessary for our climate resilience and the restoration (and preservation) of the island's terrestrial and marine ecosystems."



Figure 4-4
VISION MAP CURACAO 2030



People shopping and eating in Inner-City. There is a statue of dr. Moises Frumencio da Costa Gomez, the first Prime Minister of the former Netherlands Antilles ©iStock/wdstock

The Community-Based vision has been translated into 15 objectives for 2030:

1. The city centre must be safe, vibrant, economically thriving and sustainable.
2. The people, especially the Curacaoans, are central, they make the city the city, and are inclusive by everyone.
3. The city is climate-proof, with well-maintained buildings.
4. The Inner-City is well connected with the rural and natural areas through a reliable public transport system. The transport system is easily accessible to everyone, including the vulnerable groups.
5. The Government involves residents in the decision-making process through inclusive participative processes.
6. Government services are digitally accessible.
7. Services and other common buildings are accessible to everyone, including for people with disabilities.
8. Everyone feels connected to a location on the island, having a 'sense of place', regardless of their cultural background, gender, age and religion.
9. Wi-Fi is available on squares and meeting places in the neighbourhoods.
10. The necessary basic services are clustered at central key points on the island, with good connections to the surrounding neighbourhoods, particularly in the rural areas.
11. New neighbourhood economy, small industries and ecotourism are encouraged.
12. Our coastal areas are protected and our ecosystems are resistant to extreme weather.
13. We use as much as possible renewable energy sources.
14. Our drainage system, and wastewater collection and treatment system functions are optimized and integrated in a sustainable water management cycle.
15. Our natural assets are conserved and not removed.



Brainstorming during planning charrette © Caspar Tromp

5 EXPERT-BASED VISION

During a five-day 'planning charrette', held between 12 and 16 November 2018 in Curacao, three international and four local independent urban planners looked at innovative approaches to Transform Urban Curacao.

Building upon the outcomes of the Community-Based visioning workshops and public consultations, a planning brief, field trips, and consultations with stakeholders, the planning experts went to work.

The Expert-Based vision aimed at a deep visioning for three strategic focus areas: the Inner-City, Montaña in the eastern suburbs, and Barber in the western rural part of Curacao.

The results of the planning charrette have been showcased during a presentation at the University of Curaçao dr. Moises da Costa Gomez on 16 November 2018 and are summarized in the following sections.

Rapid planning is first needed in emergency cases, by quickly responding to natural disasters such as hurricanes or man-made disasters such as warfare and related conflicts. However, there is also a growing need to fast-track planning in countries and cities that do not have the resources needed for standard planning procedures or cannot cope with the pace of urbanisation or climate change threats by abiding to

the statutory planning system or practice in place. Although fast-track planning is not meant to bypass the regulatory planning system, it might certainly open discussion and provide ammunition to review, improve and reform the planning system. However, the most convincing argument in favour of rapid planning might simply be to create and keep a momentum of a shared spatial vision translated into a limited number of strategic territorial projects and interventions.

A planning charrette is a collaborative event that usually lasts four to seven days, in a series of meetings and design sessions that would traditionally take months to complete. This time-compression facilitates creative problem solving by accelerating decision-making and reducing unconstructive negotiation tactics. It also encourages people to abandon their usual working patterns and think outside the box. The goal of the charrette is to produce a feasible plan that benefits from the support of all stakeholders through its implementation. A multidisciplinary 'charrette-team', consisting of a wide range of planning experts, designers and sponsor staff, produces this plan in co-production with the community and key stakeholders.

The focus on feasibility brings a level of seriousness and rigor to the process for everyone involved. Design is a powerful tool for establishing a shared vision. Drawings illustrate the complexity of the problem and can be used to resolve conflict by proposing previously unexplored solutions that represent win-win outcomes.

The planning charrette is an innovative methodology to produce new ideas in a short period

The planning/design-brief, a set of instructions given to the planning or design team, was a crucial component of this charrette. It provided aspects such as the policy base and legal framework, specific numerical requirements, communicates opportunities and constraints, contains rules for drafting goals, objectives, targets and assumptions, rules for designing (colours, symbols, etc.), methods to engage a broad range of stakeholders and clarifications of 'rules of play'. The most relevant parts of the planning brief have been integrated in this report.

Many municipalities around the world develop long term city plans or visions through multiple charrettes, both communal and professional. Notable international examples are the following:

- The Urban Planning Advisory Teams (UPAT), organised by the International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISOCARP) was one of the international pioneers.
- The Urban Planning and Design Lab ('the Lab') initiated by UN-HABITAT, which, although not conceived, initially as rapid planning initiative as such, shows a lot of similarities with the planning charrette concept.
- Les Ateliers Professionals Workshops, with a methodology developed since the 1980's and applied internationally since 2005.

Team of planning experts

The expert team consisted of the following local and international planning experts:

Mr. Cees van de Sande Architecture and Urban Development graduate at the TU Delft in 1977. Since 2009 co-director of Pro-Gaya and director of VanDe-SandeProjects, specialized in consulting for urban planning, design, and development.

Ms. Danique Zimmerman True native of Banda'bou, graduated in Architecture, Urbanism and Building Sciences at the TU Delft. Since 2013 working for the Curacao Department for Urban Planning.

Mr. Derek Martin Graduated in Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Amsterdam. Worked with the Dutch Ministry of Housing and Spatial Planning, the European Commission and was Secretary-General of the International Federation for Housing and Planning. Currently works in various projects on strategic planning.

Mr. Ergün Erkoçu Graduated in Architecture at TU Delft. Worked as an architect specialized in pluricultural urbanism. Started in 2013 to teach Civil Engineering at the University of Curaçao and became the Dean of the Faculty of Engineering in 2015.

Mr. Tjark Gall Graduated from the IHS Rotterdam, currently writing a master thesis for Architecture and Urban Design at the Technical University of Brunswick. Currently works at the headquarters of the International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISOCARP).

Mr. Yann Martineau Holds an Engineer's degree of the Ecole Polytechnique in France, a PhD in Ecology, and a Master's degree in Regional and Urban planning. Has strong references in the Latin and Caribbean region, with long term collaboration in Venezuela and assignments in Haiti. Currently working for his own consultancy company Oryzhom.

Ms. Zarja Rojer Graduated in 2000 at the TU Eindhoven. Worked for seven years in the Curacao Department for Urban Planning. After started Zarja Architecture and currently also collaborates with Cees van de Sande in ProGaya.



Cees Danique Derek Ergün Tjark Yann Zarja

Overall assumptions

Curacao's current urban challenges are influenced by global trends and forces, but some also have a strong local impact, such as climate change and the growing impact of tourism. To embrace these challenges, a sound common vision is needed.

The experts have used different starting points for formulating their vision. For instance, the Sustainable Development Goals, the New Urban Agenda, as well as the results of the Community-Based visioning workshops. Furthermore, it is also assumed that the population size remains reasonably the same in the coming years. Although many scenarios are currently considered in Curacao, the realistic assumption is that the total population size will remain basically stationary, but with a shift to an ageing population, possibly exacerbated through emigration of youth and brains unless youth unemployment can be reduced. Finally, the experts considered, especially when starting with the implementation, to allow enough flexibility to absorb as yet unknown challenges.



Main church of Barber ©VWRP

Assumption: Five key principles embraced by successive governments and majority of the people

The vision and interventions proposed by the experts have been developed through the lens of six key principles, expressing the hope that they also will be embraced by the people of Curacao and their successive governments for now and the longer term. These principles are as follows:

1. Improving civil responsibility and the involvement of citizens in the development of their island, their city and their neighbourhood.
2. Improving accessibility, physically by public transport (where necessary by car), by foot and bicycle, and improving (access to) travel information.
3. Improving social cohesion by encouraging people to meet and interact in a natural way by a socially and community-orientated urban design.
4. The absolute need to implement a policy directed at strengthening environmental sustainability, especially by reducing pollution, and strengthening resilience to the threats of climate change, especially flooding.
5. The need to implement an integrative approach to territorial development and land-use management based on retaining, and where possible increasing, the physical and cultural diversity of the island. Integrative development is the recognition that you cannot develop one place without taking into consideration its effect and impact on both the immediate areas nearby, but also on areas further away, and on the spaces and flows elsewhere.
6. Despite the urgency of many issues, the process of transformation is recommended to be pragmatic, based on facilitating bottom-up, step-by-step behavioral change amongst the people, rather than on top-down imposition by government or experts.

Barber

Barber, the largest village in the western part of Curacao with most facilities in the region, has its own identity. Within Banda'bou, Barber has the highest potential to become the central meeting place. It is a necessary point of passage on the route to Westpunt and the Weg naar Lagun, and forms a gateway to nature - such as Christoffel Park (a national park), Hòfi Pastor and Boka Patrick - and forms the gateway to the rural experience.

Boundaries and Connections

The boundaries towards nature, rural areas, or land dedicated to agriculture should be more clearly delineated and respected in order to protect the green areas of Banda'bou. Urbanisation should be targeted towards what is identified as the 'urban residential core', and if necessary, in the future, towards the southern part of the existing urban nucleus. The special places such as the central market place, the church, and the schools, need special attention and need to be highlighted.

The Future of Barber: Targets and Opportunities

The principal target for Barber is to enhance the community with extra functions and the upgrading of its public spaces. Due to its central position in Banda'bou and its physical and social connection with other villages, Barber also has the potential to provide facilities for the whole area. Sport facilities and vocational training are much needed in Barber, as these services are lacking in the whole Banda'bou region. Those could be developed in medium term horizon. Upgrading the quality of the public spaces would strengthen this central position. The creation of an attractive walkable space at junction of the two main roads (Weg naar Westpunt and Kaminda Popo Rojer) could be implemented as a significant upgrade of public space.

There are many opportunities in Barber for agri- and eco-tourism development, such as the rural experience, enjoying its landscape, agriculture activities, a bed and breakfast in a farm-setting and to learn more about the agriculture in Curacao. Having local agricultural production strongly supports further agritourism development. Currently, there is a lack of awareness among locals and tourists of the beautiful natural and cultural sights in and around Barber. Promoting the nature experience by e.g. informing the public about its parks, hiking possibilities and even possible future biking possibilities might be key to attract more visitors. Barber can be the gateway to the nature trails going to the north and the west.

Figure 5-1 BARBER, BOUNDARIES AND CONNECTIONS

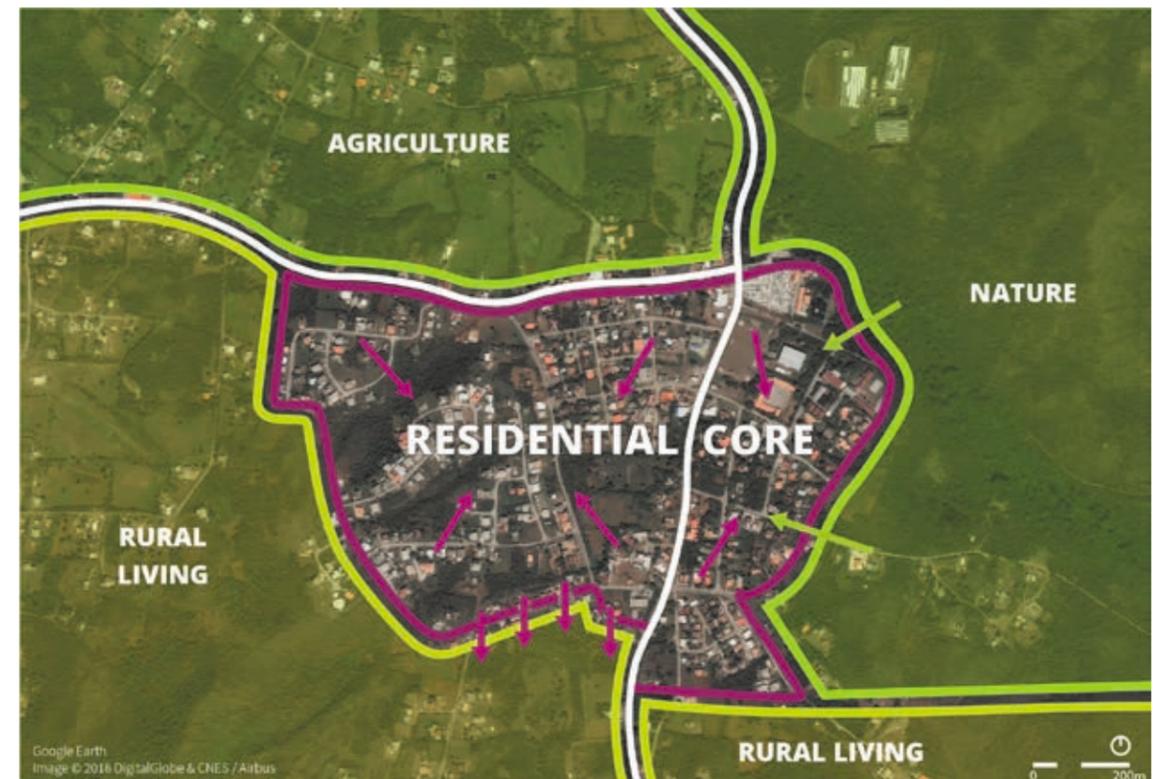




Figure 5-2
BARBER,
TARGETS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The creation of a transit-oriented development, where different activities are centralized, would significantly improve accessibility to services and promote the quality and use of public transport. For example, postal services, banking services, government services or other services for the inhabitants could be located here. As an illustration of transit-oriented development, the redesign of the Parke Himno I Bandera Barber into an urban square with a service building is illustrated in figure 5-3. Another example of a quick win intervention is the placement of information boards, on the main square or public space in Barber or at several other parts in Banda'bou. Boards providing event information, orientation for visitors, public transport information, etc. Digital variants, for instance with an app, could also be developed.

To develop Barber as the centre of services for Banda'bou it is vital to have a critical mass of people. It is thus important to have a concentration strategy for housing and population in Barber in order to reach this critical mass. The development of inclusive housing projects could also be supported to further strengthen Barber.

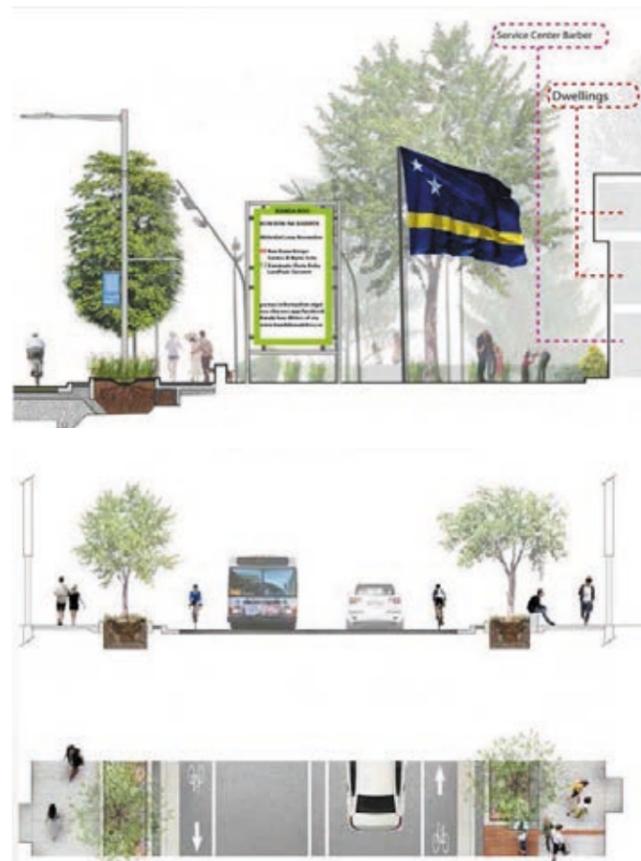


Figure 5-3
ILLUSTRATION OF TRANSIT-ORIENTED
DEVELOPMENT IN BARBER

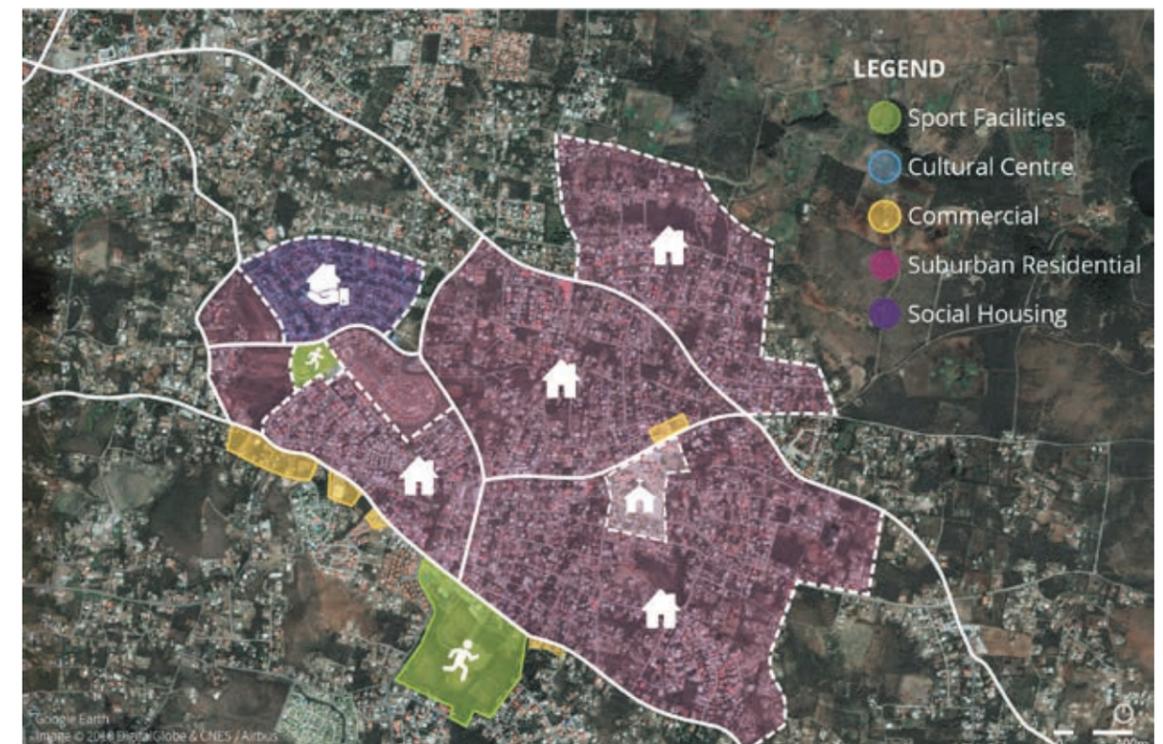
Montaña

Montaña is an organically grown urbanized living area, typical for the Curacao suburban sprawl, and belonging to the 'edge city' typology that has been introduced earlier. It forms an integral part of Banda'riba. The current urban typology of Montaña consists mostly of residential suburban development. There is a lack of well-designed public spaces, streets and buildings. As a result, contrary to Barber, Montaña does not have a strong own identity. There are nevertheless some points of interests, such as the church of Montaña Rey and the Kaminda Willems J Cratz.

Boundaries and Connections

Most commercial facilities are concentrated around the Weg naar Fuik and Kaminda Willems J. Cratz. Although there is no obvious boundary that delimitates the neighbourhood, the rural and agricultural lands in the north-east and east form a clear boundary with built up areas. The two main roads, Kaminda Willems J. Cratz and Kaminda Venancio F. Isenia, are the main connections to the axes leading to the areas outside of Montaña, the Weg naar Fuik and Kaminda Jose Papa Liberia, and contain most commercial facilities. The Weg naar Fuik was refurbished a few years ago. It gave a certain quality impulse to the area – paving the way for further steps in the improvement of public spaces. Eventual development projects in Oostpunt will have an impact on Montaña, but the consequences or side-effects are not yet known. Places such as the central market place, the church, and the schools, need special attention to further improve their quality and added value as orientation points and public meeting places.

Figure 5-4
MONTAÑA, CURRENT SITUATION



- Sport Facilities
- Cultural Centre
- Commercial
- Suburban Residential
- Social Housing



Figure 5-5
MONTAÑA,
BOUNDARIES AND CONNECTIONS

*The Future of Montaña:
Targets and Opportunities*

Contrary to some other areas in Bandariba, Montaña does not have the potential to be considered as a suburban centre. Nevertheless, Montaña could be given more identity and some areas have potential for attracting more social and community life. The main vision for Montaña is to upgrade what is already there. Central to this vision is the upgrading of public spaces for its inhabitants, with a focus around main inner roads and some potential place-making spaces, as illustrated in figure 5-7. The existing facilities would largely benefit from the public space upgrading. The inner streets of the Kaya Girasol, Kaminda Willems. J. Cratz and the Kaminda Venancio F. Isenia could become green corridors, refurbished to be greener and more pedestrian friendly, improving accessibility and connectivity within and between Montaña Rey and Montaña Abou. Within the neighbourhoods, a network of interconnected paths and bike lanes could also improve the connectivity to nature areas within and outside Montaña, allowing more people to have the possibility to walk from one point to another.

New developments are planned to take place on the west-side of Kaminda Willems J. Cratz, where mixed-used buildings will come with shops on the ground floor and residences on the upper floors, enabling the area to become the new heart and connecting point of Montaña, thereby introducing a degree of structural hierarchy which would help improve the area's facilities and the feeling of community and identity.

The interventions the experts suggest for Montaña are not necessarily big-scale interventions as the area is already mostly built.

In the short term, community activities could be developed in some open spaces, such as the vacant plots at the cul-de-sacs in suburban areas within Montaña Abou which are underutilized and could give space to urban farming and pocket parks. These quick-wins would enhance the community cohesion of the neighbourhood. The provision of Wi-Fi hotspots in main public spaces would also attract more people. Placing indicating signs for the various Montaña areas would also enhance a local sense of place.

In the medium term, the public space around the church area of Montaña Rey could be refurbished and developed with facilities and mixed-use buildings to enhance the area's potential as a meeting place. In the west of Montaña Abou, the hill of Cadushistraat could be developed as a 'mirador' with accessible green space where people could enjoy the view on the surrounding areas. In addition, a linear park would connect sport facilities, green spaces and pocket parks. Improved water management in the area would also mitigate the threats of flooding in flood prone areas, increasing the resilience to extreme rainfall.

In the longer term, projects for sustainable energy could also be devised by providing 50% of the houses with solar panels. The redesign into walkable streets of the Kaya Girasol, Kaminda Venancio F. Isenia and Kaminda Willems J. Cratz, as already mentioned, could be implemented by then.



Figure 5-6
MONTAÑA,
PROPOSED INTERVENTIONS



Figure 5-7
MONTAÑA,
PROPOSED NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

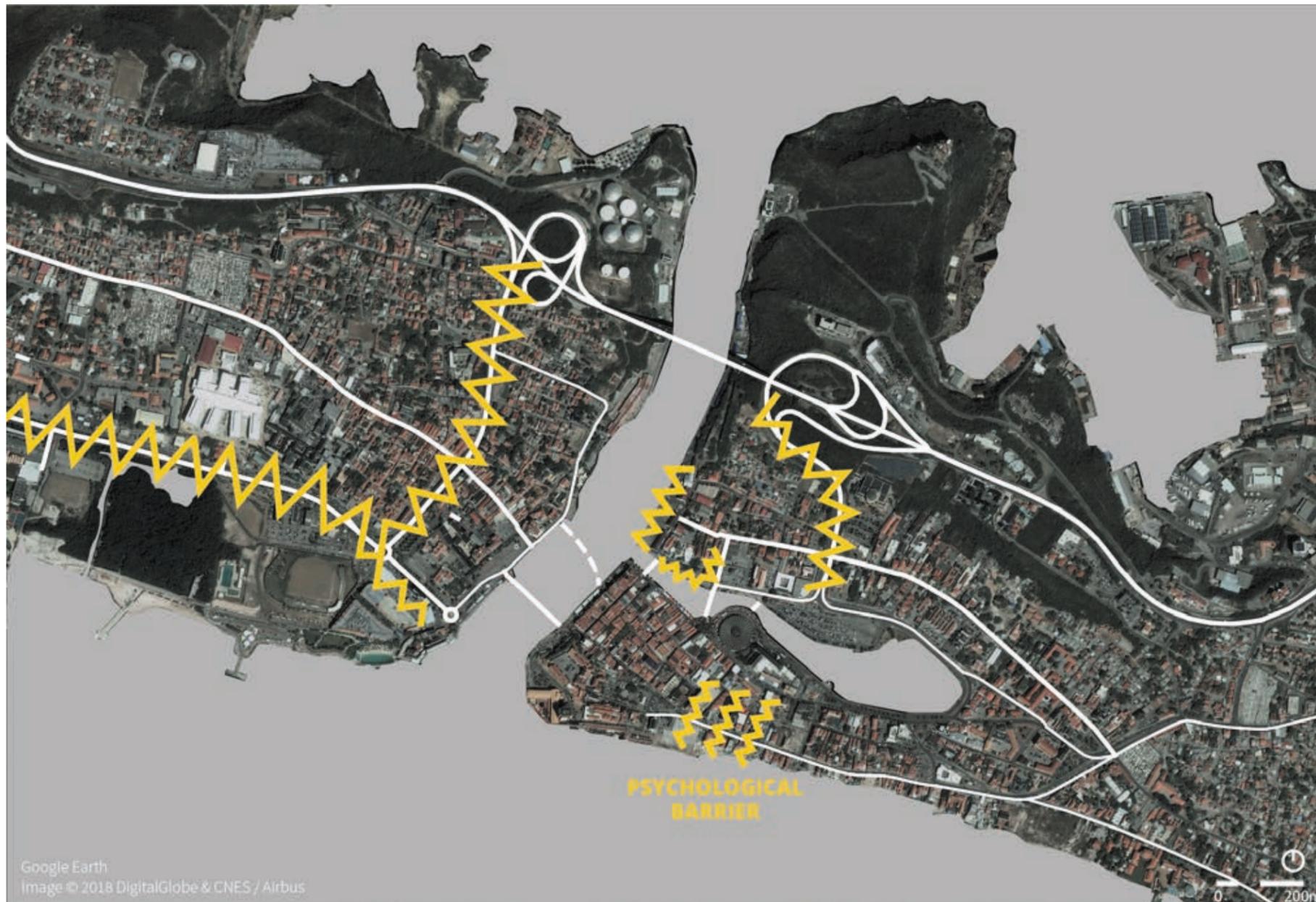
Inner-City

The historical Inner-City of Willemstad consists of the four neighbourhoods: Punda, Otrobanda, Pietermaai and Scharloo, all with a distinct character, and recognized as UNESCO World Heritage. It is still the historical, political and commercial heart of the island, and it counts no less than 760 monuments protected by law, and listed for their authenticity in design, material and workmanship.

Decline, barriers, sustainability and resilience form the main threats and challenges

The Inner-City of Willemstad surprises the visitor by its amalgamation of unique heritage with the superb natural location surrounded by water, offering scenic views. Nevertheless, various threats are also clearly observable when exploring the Inner-City. Three main concerns are identified: the decline, the existing barriers, and the coupled issues of resilience and sustainability.

Figure 5-8
BARRIERS DIVIDING THE INNER-CITY



Decline

Decline is apparent in the physical deterioration and abandonment of houses, monuments, and public spaces. It is also visible by the numerous empty buildings.

Barriers

Currently, the Inner-City faces various barriers that diminish its attractiveness and accessibility within and between the neighbourhoods, as illustrated in **figure 5-8**. Barriers are limits, obstructions or obstacles that

inhibit accessibility and use of spaces. A distinction can be made between physical barriers and psychological barriers, even though to a certain extent most physical barriers are also psychological and vice versa.

The physical barrier is typically an obstruction, and come in the forms of walls, fences, gates, pedestrian-unfriendly roads and sidewalks, highways, an abrupt division that split urban neighbourhoods, construction works, water ways and hills, lack of infrastructure for the disabled, etc.

Psychological barriers are rather perceived than physical, and might even be relatively walkable. These barriers are rather formed by perceptions of unsafety, signs of physical deterioration, a sudden lack of interesting sights, a transition from a pedestrian to a car-oriented space, absence of human activities, spaces and streets that are too large in scale, unstimulating streets and alleys with long closed walls, absence of street lighting, dirt and bad smell, among others. Even though psychological, these barriers are still highly related to the physical environment and its design.

The barriers in the Inner-City of Curacao are created by highways, large parking spaces/lots, open spaces, empty areas or areas that create a feeling of unsafety, fences, walls, obstructions that take away views on cityscapes, and other unattractive and unwalkable spaces. Those barriers give the people the perception that the city stops beyond the barrier, while it actually continues. The barriers prevent people from exploring what is beyond, and as such diminish accessibility and human activity in a large part of the Inner-City. Barriers also result in the loss of neighbourhood identity.

Important examples of barriers in the Inner-City are, among others, the Arubastraat in Otrobanda, the waterfront and highway in Scharloo, and the transitional area between Punda and Pietermaai Smal where there are a lot of empty plots where buildings have been demolished and there is no architectural bond.

Sustainability and Resilience

Finally, the suburban way of life, largely perceived as comfortable and pleasant, is questioned on its sustainability. The city and its activities become more spread out, plots for (single) houses are large, including a private garden, and shopping takes place in more distant shopping malls. This makes people more and more car-dependent. Since oil reserves are finite and urgent action to reduce carbon-emissions are needed, it poses the question about the sustainability of this model. Also since traffic jams and accidents hinder sustainable social economic development. What can Curacao do to become more resilient, to become less car-dependent?

Attract more people in the Inner-City and prevent urban sprawl

The main strategy to counter these challenges is to attract more people to live in the neighbourhoods of the Inner-City. To support this main strategy, interrelated strategies have to be implemented. Strategies to increase housing opportunities, to enhance culture, to improve the public transport system, and to stimulate the local economy. The continuity and connectivity of the different areas within the Inner-City should also be enhanced to ensure attractive and accessible neighbourhoods where people want to live and work and spend time (and money).

Building on diverse identities and offering a large scope of opportunities

For its size, Curacao has a relatively large historic Inner-City with four main neighbourhoods: Punda, Otrobanda, Pietermaai and Scharloo. Each neighbourhood has its own history and identity, but all could be subdivided in different sub-neighbourhoods which also have or could have their own identity. Possible identities, based on and enhancing an identity that is already present, are proposed for these neighbourhoods in figure 5-9. Future identity building or government policies can be based on these names and descriptions.

Otrobanda: 'local history'

Otrobanda's identity as a whole is envisioned as 'local history'. The word 'local' refers to two matters. Firstly, it recognizes Otrobanda as traditionally inhabited by a working-class population with a rich, authentic local culture and history. It envisions the preservation and strengthening of this popular Curacaoan culture, such as lively streets, traditional bars, artisanal crafts, Curacaoan music and celebrations. Also 'local' envisions the protection and the maintenance of its existing communities living in its heritage, simultaneously offering new affordable housing. Its spaces are used, inhabited, cared for and shaped by empowered locals. 'History' refers to Otrobanda having preserved most of its historic cityscape. It envisions also that future urban developments will respect and enhance Otrobanda's historic character and culture.

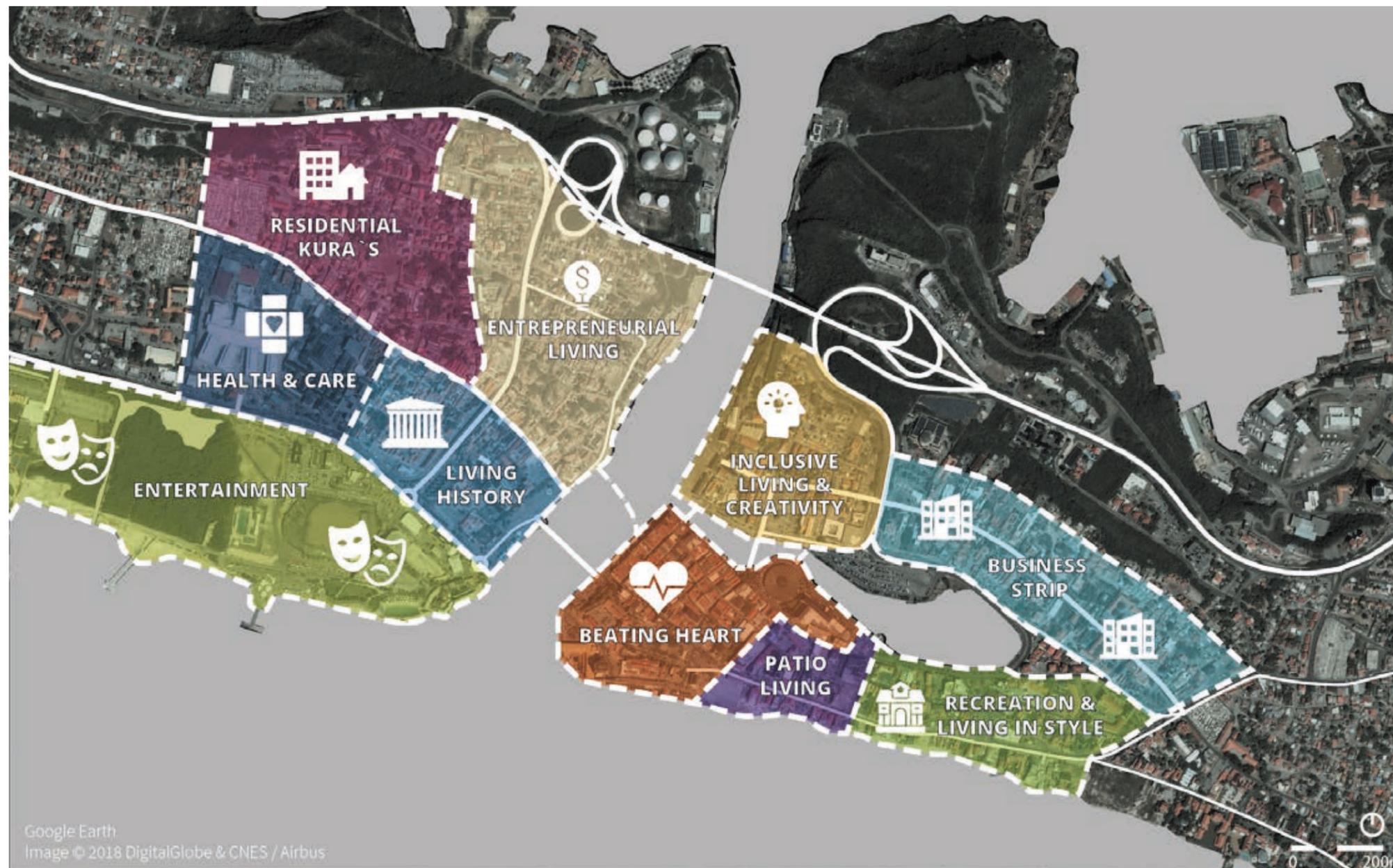
Within Otrobanda, residential kura's refers to an area characterized by the large historic mansions with yards while being an area where people live affordably. It envisions the recovery of its stately historic mansions and its important role in the identity and cityscape of the area. The courtyards surrounding the kura's provide well-maintained public greenery for the inhabitants of the area and visitors. **Entrepreneurial living** points to the development of creative offices in Ser'l Otrobanda while it remains an area of local residences and where entrepreneurs live close to their work. **Living history** refers to the alley district being among the best-preserved ensembles of colonial architecture while still being an area inhabited by a population following local traditions. It envisions the restoration of its historical houses and strengthening of its historical character, while maintaining its community, enhancing its residential function, and improving liveability and liveliness. **Health and Care** envisions the area of the old and new Hospital as an area to look after and care for each other. 'Care' particularly refers to a symbiosis in living between young adults and the elderly, where through innovative housing projects young adults could live affordably in exchange for the care and accompaniment of the elderly. **Entertainment** builds upon the already existing activities surrounding the Rif Fort, the Renaissance Curacao Resort & Casino, and the presence of the cruise terminal and Mega Pier.

Punda, Pietermaai and Scharloo enhance the city vibes

In Punda, the envisioned identity of **beating heart** refers to being not only the historic heart of Curacao, but also being the centre where all people and functions - such as residential, commercial, entertainment and political - balanced and symbiotically come together. As such it is sustainable and vibrant every day and night.

The **patio living** envisions a residential area in the transition area between Pietermaai and Punda with a new housing typology around a semi-public inner courtyard. It forms a lively and smooth connection between Punda and Pietermaai Smal. **Recreation and living in style** builds upon the process that already has taken place in Pietermaai, while also enhancing its residential use. It envisions a balance between the catering industry and permanent living in and among the stately historical houses close to the sea. It is a place where a bohemian lifestyle is equally shared among visitors and local inhabitants. In Scharloo, the **business strip** refers to the consolidation of the area as a cluster of offices by renovating the remaining neglected large mansions for office purposes. **Inclusive living and creativity** refers to the improvement of local communities while also providing affordable housing in the area. 'Creativity' further envisions the stimulation of creative activities that are already taking place there.

Figure 5-9
DIVERSE IDENTITIES FOR THE INNER-CITY



Facilitate the access to the Inner-City and enhance the shades and scenery along the paths that innerves it

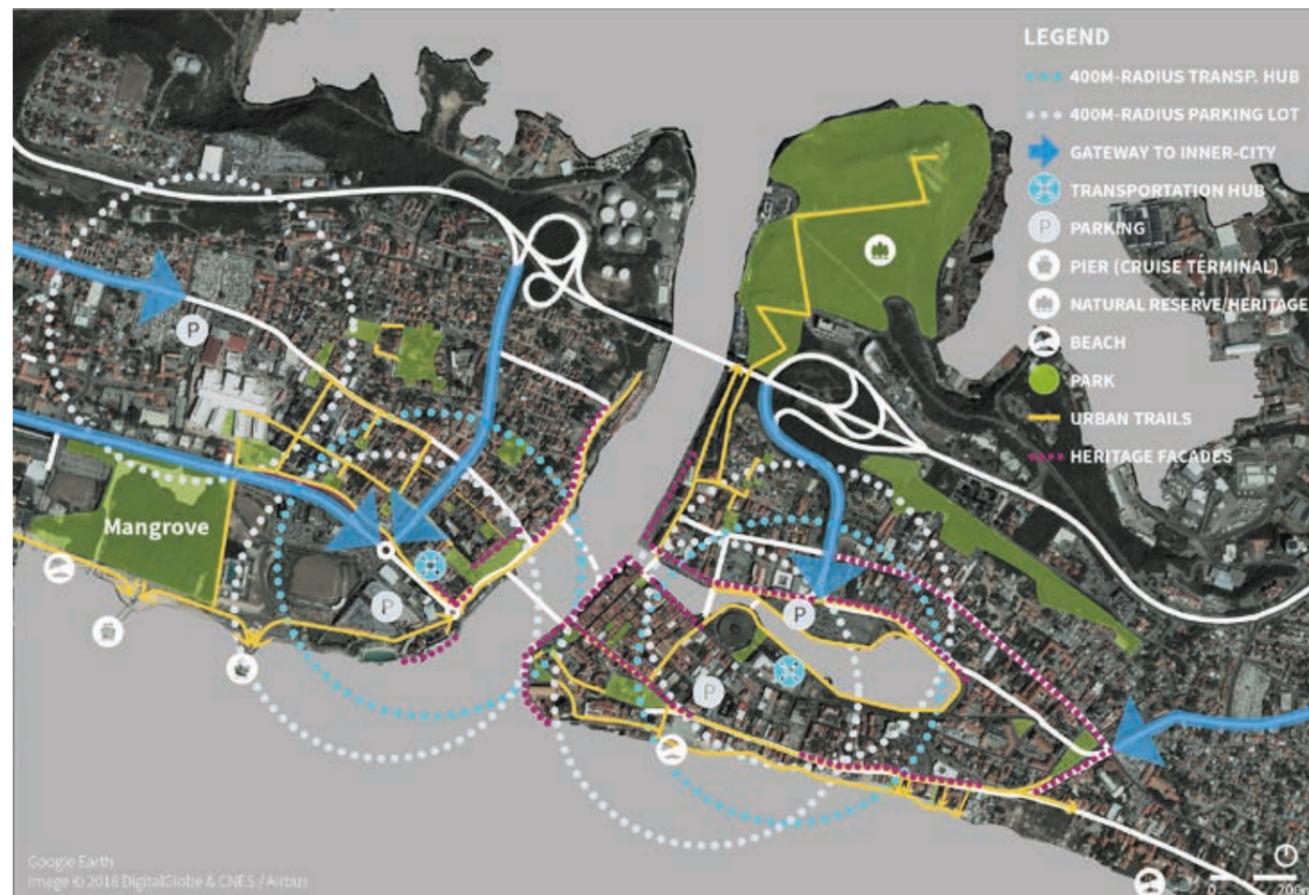
The access to the Inner-City is proposed to be maintained and enhanced through the two public transport hubs in Otrobanda and Punda and four main car access points. Two access points that come together in Otrobanda - the Roodeweg and the roundabout at Pater Euwensweg - one access point in Pietermaai, Berg Altena, and one access point in Scharloo, being the highway that reaches the parking of Plaza Mundo Merced. Even though it is expected that cars remain an important mean of transport, public transport access should be improved strongly to improve accessibility and connectivity.

As for parking, it is proposed to strongly concentrate parking close to the access points, in order to improve parking for visitors and people working in the Inner-City, and to limit it to its minimum in other areas (mainly reserved to residents).

Points of concentration for visitors are the big parking lots, such as the multi-storey parking at the Renaissance Parking in Otrobanda, one close to the new Curacao Medical Centre, the parking of Plaza Mundo Merced in Scharloo - which capacity could be lifted up to 1,450 parking spaces, if going to multi-storey - and the existing multi-storey parking lot called Pietermaai Parking. From there, the Inner-City could be mostly a pedestrian experience. From the access points, in a radius of twice the length of the Queen Emma Bridge (350 to 400 meters), most of the amenities of the Inner-City are accessible within a five to ten-minute walk, as suggested by the dotted circles in figure 5-10.

The walking experience needs to be improved to incentivize walking. For instance by developing shade to protect pedestrians from the sun (and rain), by offering more green areas in the Inner-City that at the same time protect it from the 'urban heat island effect', the effect that certain areas are significantly warmer than its surrounding due to human activities. Walking can also be incentivized by favouring scenic or animated views through landscape, visuals, shops, etc. Greening the Inner-City and offering shaded places to relax are essential to enable this strategy.

Figure 5-10
FACILITATING ACCESS TO THE INNER-CITY



Suggested interventions:

- Construct a new pedestrian bridge, crossing the Waaigat to improve connectivity and accessibility of the parking between the Plaza Mundo Merced and Pietermaai.
- Redesign the parking on Plaza Mundo Merced, create more shaded places.
- Plant trees on designated parking lots, creating shade and shelter for people and cars.
- Make the Kaya Wilson Papa Godett more pleasant and appealing for pedestrians, include small-scale provisory solutions with green, arts and 'truck di pan' (food trucks).
- Enhance the existing green at the Julianaplein in Punda.
- Create a park at the St. Elisabeth Hospital, connecting the areas of the new and former hospital.
- Create, among others, a park around the 'Kura di Shon Ki' in the Koralen district.

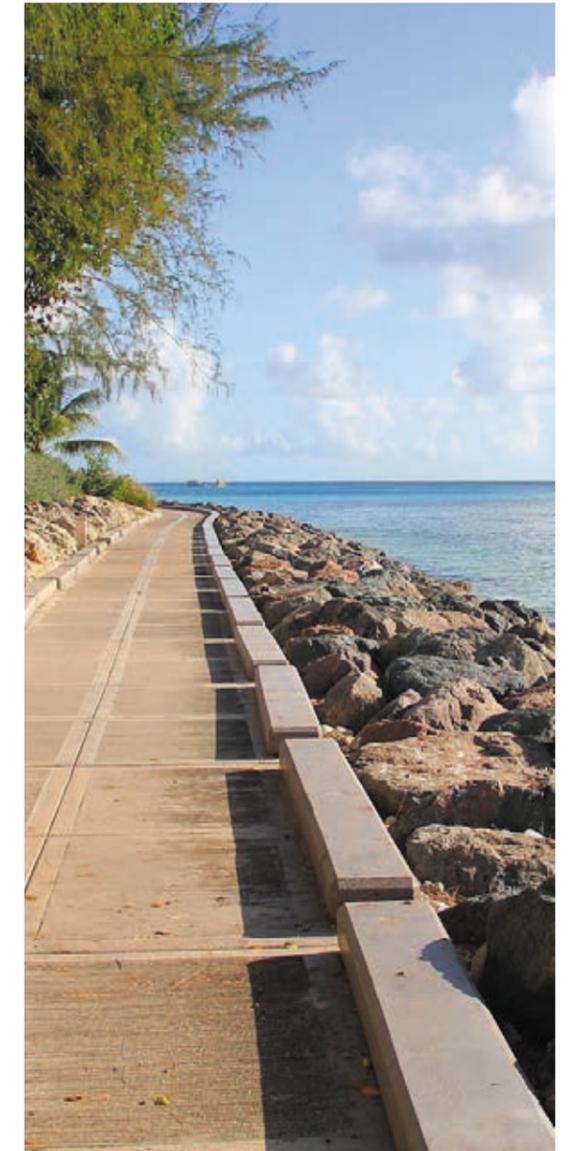


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Make the coastline protective and accessible

Sea-level rise exposes the coastline of Curacao to greater risks of flooding and erosion. To face this threat and mitigate risks, the southern coastline - for the Inner-City in particular Punda and Pietermaai - should be strengthened and further protected. Dealing with this risk gives Curacao the opportunity to develop not only a typical sea barrier, but to develop a dual-purpose infrastructure. An infrastructure not only to protect the coastline, but also to give pedestrians and cyclists, inhabitants and tourists, more ample access to the coastline and the sea, also because current access is limited to a few spots. This will also create more economic activity in the 'back side' of the city.

Figure 5-10 contains the suggested interventions to facilitate access to the Inner-City and enhance shades and scenery.



©Barbados Tourist Board

Suggested interventions:

- Construct a multifunctional seawall and boardwalk to improve coastal protection for the southern coast and provide access to the coastline and beaches. A boardwalk will also attract economic activity and stimulate leisurely walks and runs, benefitting the health of the people.
- In the longer term, a coastal infrastructure programme could be implemented for the coastline and the coastal streets connecting to Inner-City from the Sea Aquarium in the East to Piscadera in the west, renovating these areas along the same principles of coastal protection and accessibility.



Figure 5-11
PROPOSED INTERVENTIONS AND TRANSFORMATIONAL
PROJECTS FOR THE INNER-CITY OF CURACAO

Restore Punda as the beating heart of the Inner-City

Punda, the oldest part of Willemstad, should be made attractive again for everybody so it can reclaim its original position as the beating heart of Curacao - reinforcing the commercial dynamic of the Inner-City. This could be done for instance by promoting pop-up stores in a relatively short time-frame. Integrated apps and a dedicated website that provide easier access to information about shops, activities and sights of interests in the Inner-City, treating the Inner-City as one big shopping mall and promoting it like one, alike the Sambil Shopping Mall, could attract more visitors.

Bringing offices, especially related to administration, into Punda. This would generate greater occupancy of currently underused buildings, such as the buildings of the postal services. It would bring in more workers and make the area more dynamic. The accessibility of these offices would be of great importance, which could be addressed through the interventions (for instance on parking) as described earlier.

Furthermore, the residential function of Punda should be stimulated to ensure continued liveliness in the neighbourhood. Although not necessarily restricted to certain streets, particularly the alleys of the Kuiperstraat and Keukenstraat have the potential for a more residential function due to being quieter and slightly away from the busier streets.

Punda being a dense area, not allowing for private gardens, the (re)introduction of housing with open galleries in front of the façades - which is a traditional feature of the oldest houses in Punda - could be highly beneficial.

An important strategy to attract more housing in the

Improve living conditions in Scharloo

The emphasis for Scharloo is on social inclusivity for the residents. A particular vulnerable group lives in very precarious conditions in the area of Zwaan. In this area, quick wins can be made by providing public amenities, such as a public drinking water, free plug-in electricity, Wi-Fi hotspots, and public toilets and showers, which would ease the access to such services and directly improve their livelihood.

With providing more greenery, while taking advantage of the landscape scenery, the green areas around the St. Anna Bay and Fort Nassau could be developed into a botanical garden, accessible from the waterside in Scharloo. Such a botanical garden would include native species, and could showcase the cacti that grow on the island.

A large pedestrian alley within the garden could reconnect the office buildings on top of the hill to the city centre through Fleur de Marie. Furthermore, the parking of Plaza Mundo Merced could be densified so that other current parking places in the Inner-City could be liberated and given a new function like housing or offices.

Inner-City would be the renewal of the transitional area between Punda and Pietermaai Smal.

The area which is currently dominated by large parking and underused spaces, could be transformed by introducing a new housing typology - courtyard buildings. This typology consists of various plots encircling a green patio, which would be a semi-public space due to its seclusion from the outside and provide intimate spaces for its inhabitants. This innovative form of housing could also be the hybrid way of living between urban housing and the suburban 'one house with a garden' types. Transforming this area could also remove the current psychological barrier between Punda and Pietermaai Smal.

Suggested interventions:

- Reshape the transitional area between Punda and Pietermaai Smal, with among others, the creation of innovative forms of housing.
- Reconfigure the Plasa Wilson 'Papa' Godett - situated between the post office and the round market - to make sure that the surrounding area is lively during day and night. It also can be made possible that the market could have a leisure function during the night, including staging special cultural events.
- Create (temporarily) pocket parks - a small public park - on empty spaces, in for example the Kuiperstraat.
- Reopen all alleys in Punda and Otrobanda that are currently closed and inaccessible.

Planting trees at the parking could provide more shade to pedestrians and cars. Public lighting could be used to improve the perception of safety at night, as it could be used in other areas for safety or aesthetic purposes.



Public drinking water ©iStock/Chuyun

Revitalize Otrobanda

To attract new inhabitants to Otrobanda, a new way of living could be created in for example the St. Elizabeth hospital area as this area has been identified as the 'Health and Care' area. Intergenerational living introduces a symbiotic living between the elderly, who need care and to live close to medical services, and the young adults or professionals, who can take care of the elderly while having the benefit of living in more affordable housing.

Unlocking the alleys from the old hospital area to Breedestraat and to the alley district would also improve accessibility and connectivity of the area.

As Otrobanda features many underutilized open spaces, infill with affordable and quality housing is key to attract more residents in this area of the city.

In the alley district, around the area of the Conscientiesteeg and behind the Brionplein, deteriorating houses could be restored and open areas could be filled in with houses, including social housing, that respect the design and scale of the heritage area, similar to the new housing typology for Punda.



Adding trees to Breedestraat, Otrobanda ©Flickr/RogerW edited - trees added on original

Main principles for interventions in the Inner-City of Curacao

1. Intervene with projects of different scale, and start small.
2. Think of transitional urban planning and developing, realize temporary use of empty spaces.
3. Create new ways of living and housing in the Inner-City.
4. Establish easy access by car and public transport, and centralize parking.
5. Make walking and cycling in the Inner-City more pleasant and appealing.
6. Green the Inner-City.

Key messages to transform urban Curacao



Urban Centres



Establish an Urban Centre Curacao and Neighbourhood Development Centres. The idea is to enable citizens to be informed of, and become involved with the development of their city and neighbourhoods. The key word is transparency. The centre could be an information centre, a community hall, a meeting place, a cultural centre, a place for think tanks and exhibitions. The centres would be staffed by a City Officer or Neighbourhood Coordinator or representative, who would be the channel of communication between the citizens and the Government for providing information and coordinating the different functions. For the Inner-City, this will improve the management of its revitalization, strengthen the communication between the public sector and civil society, and allow for greater civil involvement in decision-making and projects.

Red and Green contours



There is a need to work with so-called 'red' and 'green' contours. This implies preserving conservation and green areas more emphatically, and better utilising gaps in existing urban areas. This enables the protection of Curacao's scarce natural areas and intensively improve urban sustainability.

Innovative forms of housing



Provide innovative forms of housing, such as 'inter-generational living', 'patio city houses' and houses with galleries. 'Intergenerational houses' in the old hospital area provide affordable living for young adults while taking care of the elderly. 'Patio city houses' involve housing around a semi-public patio which provide a green meeting space for its inhabitants. Housing with galleries reintroduce an old tradition and provide an alternative for houses without gardens in denser areas, such as Punda.

Improve accessibility



- Facilitating access to the Inner-City by strengthening the public transport system and improving parking areas on strategic locations.
- Facilitating walking and cycling in all areas of the Inner-City, ensuring a safe and pleasant experience for locals and visitors.
- Making public transport more extensive, comfortable, shaded, reliable, safe and informed with both on- and offline information. It is well connected to a strategic hierarchy of transportation nodes and used by all layers of society.
- Consider reduced fares (or even free) for public transport on special days or at certain times.
- Making spaces more accessible by developing a trail network (urban and rural trails). Connecting these trails on the hubs of transportation.

Urban Platform

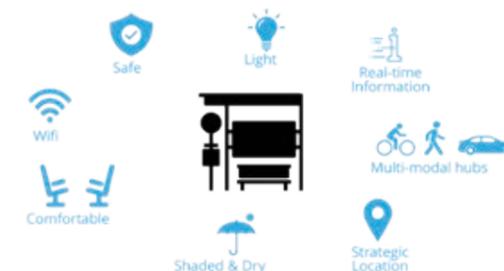


Set up an Urban Platform of major stakeholders in urban planning and development, with both governmental and non-governmental stakeholders involved, such as business or sector representatives and the neighbourhood officers. The aim of this platform is to establish regular consultation on and coordination of proposed, or ongoing, development activities.

Greening the City

The city should become greener by gradually building up a 'green infrastructure' both in the Inner-City as in sub-urban areas such as Montaña. This consists of providing more plants and trees in public spaces, and resilient infrastructure to climate. It improves eco-systems in urban areas, cools down the city, gives shade, and provide more attractive & healthier spaces.

Hierarchy of nodes



Build up a hierarchy of nodes. This is an interconnected network of strategically located urban nodes or centres with a higher density of population and services. This provides a basis for improving public transport, while allowing the city to become more efficient and compact through a more sustainable land-use.

Climate resilience & sustainability



Improve climate resilience and environmental sustainability by, for example:

- Dealing more effectively with the waste (waste segregation, recycling).
- Consider innovative ideas such as plastic to ride, swapping plastic bottles for free public transport tickets (like practised e.g. in Singapore).
- Increasing (decentralised) sewage treatment, or water management in general.
- Expansion of renewable energy, such as solar energy.
- Making the coastal line more accessible through a boardwalk whilst improving its protective function.

Strengthen communal spaces



- Identifying public (and underused) spaces to be developed, in the short term and possibly temporarily with a view to the longer term.
- Think also of small-scale patios and courtyards.
- Strengthening existing public spaces, by for example creating Wi-Fi hotspots, providing urban furniture, introducing the idea of closing streets to traffic for a day per month and organising activities there.

Establish an integrated strategic development vision for Curacao

By developing a strategic overlay over the island development plan (EOP), it effectively means you can guide developments in the different zones according to their own needs and plans but also according to the overall function of those zones in the total Curacao space.

The strategic overlay could function as a longer-term, flexible guidance for refining and detailing the development projects in the different EOP land-use zones. At the same time, it will reinforce the cohesion of the island's places, spaces and flows.

This strategic overlay is the longer-term, general territorial development vision for Curacao: to reference Amsterdam - a 'Structuurvisie Curacao 2040'. It is important that its general principles are agreed on by all stakeholders to ensure long term support.



Figure 5-12
EXAMPLE: MAP OF 'STRUCTUURVISIE' FOR THE AMSTERDAM REGION FOR 2040

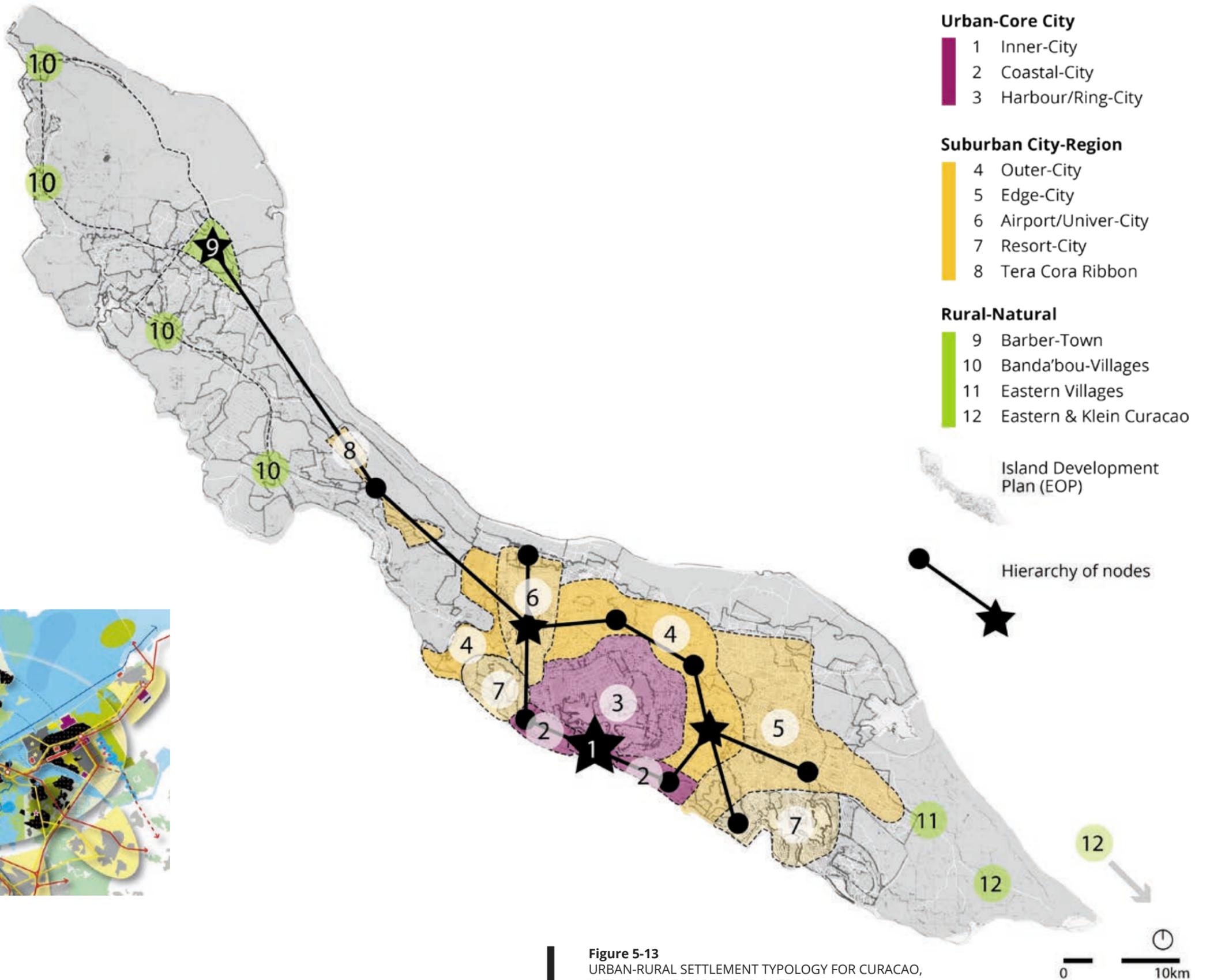


Figure 5-13
URBAN-RURAL SETTLEMENT TYPOLOGY FOR CURACAO, HIERARCHY OF NODES, EOP OVERLAY

6 ROADMAP TO TRANSFORM URBAN CURACAO

Urban planning and development is a complex process, involving multiple stakeholders and multiple themes, actions and projects. It usually takes time to crystallize a common vision within the society, even though some catalysers can accelerate the creation of shared visions. The Community- and Experts-Based visioning workshops are of those catalysers. These participative workshops opened up the way of many paths to further localize the New Urban Agenda and refine the shared urban planning vision(s) for Curacao.

The elements of the roadmap as described below can be carried out parallel, jointly, complementary and do not have necessary a strict chronological order. The elements form the options that are currently available for the Curacao Government, citizens and stakeholders to build further on the process that started two years ago.

Consolidate a shared vision with the different stakeholders

Some key principles have been proposed along the Community-Based and Expert-Based workshops on land-use principles, transport, housing, green areas, and climate change resilience. Those principles should be refined and further agreed with the main stakeholders to reach a large societal and political consensus beyond short term horizons on spatial planning. These could be a widely accepted common basis for

project developments, policies updates and steering of private initiative. Once agreed, the shared vision should be widely communicated to the public and shared within society.

Develop an Inner-City action plan for the next five years, based on multi themes and area-based interventions

The Inner-City is a priority for the island socio-economic development, and for its cultural heritage. The development of a well-articulated multi themes actions plan, for the next five years, encompassing housing, economy, retail, transport, resilience, and public spaces should become a priority. This plan could combine public and private actions, and needs to be supported by a communication and marketing strategy to reach a wide range of public and private stakeholders that are interested or are part of the Inner-City development.

An implementation strategy is needed, contemplating the ripple-effect that area-based interventions can have. A strategy with a strong focus on successive key transformational areas composed by a handful streets and a few housing blocks. Moreover, actions should be clearly developed through a logical framework, with definition of respective action owners, outputs, outcomes, time-frame, and budget.

Eventually, the plan needs to be coordinated through mechanisms such as a dedicated coordination team, in charge of regular coordination between project owners, reporting to a board of main stakeholders. The coordinating team can also serve as a focal point for information and stimulate participation and inclusiveness for the specific concerned areas.

Create new forms of governance for fostering public-private partnership in urban development, such as the creation of special purpose vehicles

To leverage intervention of the government in urban development, and in order to channel private investments, the creation of 'special purpose vehicles' to implement projects in certain areas, especially of the Inner-City, should be evaluated. The possibility of associating within the same structure all the economic agents involved in a development project can be a determining factor for the success and coherence of the actions undertaken.

Implement transformational projects

Identifying and prioritizing strategic, transformational and pilot projects are key for a shift from 'passive regulation' towards an active sustainable development. Strategic projects not only achieve fundamental spatial changes but also transform social relations, create new social fabrics, empower people, change decision-making mechanisms and power relations.

In areas with potential for transformation, temporary interventions, or quick wins, can deliver short term outcomes, triggering a virtuous circle of city transformation that does not need high capital investments or long-term process decision making. Quick wins demonstrate successes to the constituency, rally support and ensure political commitment to the process, at the same time motivating the administration. Bottom-up and pragmatic approaches are strongly recommended here. Examples are pocket parks and public spaces in Punda and Otrobanda, place making under the Arubastraat viaduct, etc. In the meantime, preparation for wider scale intervention can lay the ground for projects leading to more structural changes.

Establish an Urban Platform to formalize dialogue and strengthen partnerships

The creation of a regular and formalized dialogue between governmental and non-governmental urban actors is essential for consensus-building for a shared vision on sustainable urban development for Curacao. Furthermore, this platform can engage and collaborate with similar urban platforms on small island states in the Caribbean region and beyond.

Update spatial policies based on evidence

Updated policies are the pillars to support the implementation of the vision and justify transformational projects. Instrumental policies to further support sustainable urban planning in Curacao are, amongst others:

- A housing policy - with approach on social housing, housing typologies, housing programming within spatial framework - and instruments for retrofitting and recuperating empty or fragile buildings, especially in the Inner-City.
- A transport and mobility policy - with focus on public transport improvement, parking - accessibility of the Inner-City, and the improvement for walkability within neighbourhoods.
- More detailed urban planning instruments ('uitwerkingsplannen'), this to provide a solid legal framework for new buildings development or buildings renewal, and as a safeguard for all interests involved.

Plan the further developments and visualize through design

Whether it is through the development of a 'Structuurvisie Curacao 2040', a specific 'structuurvisie' for the Inner-City, detailed zoning plans for focus areas, or the detailed design and place making for transformational projects, all should be unfolded to further develop the concepts and visions that Government, stakeholders and project owners want to realise. Further visualization through design is a compulsory tool in the creation of a long-term vision, as well as planning initiatives such as masterplans or land-use plans.



Sander van Beusekom mural. Photo ©Haley Plotkin

MAP CURACAO



MAP DETAILED MAP OF CURACAO INNER-CITY



LEGEND

- | | | | |
|------------------|---------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| 1 St. Anna Bay | 7 Pietermaai | 13 Renaissance Curacao
Resort & Casino | 19 Fort Amsterdam |
| 2 Schottegat | 8 Scharloo | 14 Arubastraat | 20 Handelskade |
| 3 Waaigat | 9 Zwaan | 15 Breedestraat | 21 Queen Juliana Bridge |
| 4 Otrobanda | 10 Zakitó | 16 Brión Square | 22 Plasa Bieu – Old Market |
| 5 Punda | 11 Curacao Medical Center | 17 Queen Emma Bridge | 23 Plaza Mundo Merced |
| 6 Fleur de Marie | 12 Rif Area | 18 Plaza Hotel | 24 Nieuwstraat |
| | | | 25 Fort Nassau |

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Edited by Caspar Tromp (intern at UNOPS), Frank D'hondt (UNOPS), Gautier Rouhet (UNOPS), Sabrina Luciano (intern at UNOPS), Wilfred Muller (UNOPS), Pedzi Girigori (VVRP), Juleyma van Heydoorn (VVRP) and Miriam Jonker (VVRP).

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United Nations Office for Project Services
Marmorvej 51 PO BOX 2695
2100 Copenhagen Denmark





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IMPLEMENTING
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