

# MIND THE GAP

## INHABITING LAUSANNE'S RESIDUAL SPACES

What if we start raising awareness on gaps? Our cities are full of forgotten in-between spaces - yet those spaces are also brimming with potential in the saturated urban context. A few hours of walking with alert attention is all it takes to realize the multitude of unseen places we pass by every day.

What if we choose to value them? Let's think of a punctual densification within the built fabric, a densification that infiltrates and values the gaps of the city. Then, it is first about finding and mapping those sites.

The in-between spaces we are looking for are nameless places. Poorly-defined, unassigned, neglected, forgotten, they are "blank spaces". They are usually the white areas on our maps. Here however they are precisely the spaces we want to bring to the surface. Starting from the entire surface of the city, it is about removing matter, removing what is already defined. Layer by layer, built matter, but also certain voids - those with names and functions, such as roads, public spaces, gardens - are subtracted until only the anonymous remain.

Thus, the mapping process follows a logic of subtraction and asks to set a few rules. Here are the first ones:

- \*Remove all built matter
- \*Exception: building trapped between higher surroundings
- \*Remove all voids with names (water, forests, parks, fields, main roads, public squares, airfields, railway, sports ground)
- \*Exception: bridges and underpasses, galleries
- \*Remove all voids between two public programs (churches, schools, hospitals...)
- \*Remove all voids with a length greater than 100m
- \*When free-standing, remove all voids with floor area greater than 300 m<sup>2</sup>
- \*When surrounded, remove all voids with a distance to boundaries greater than 8m

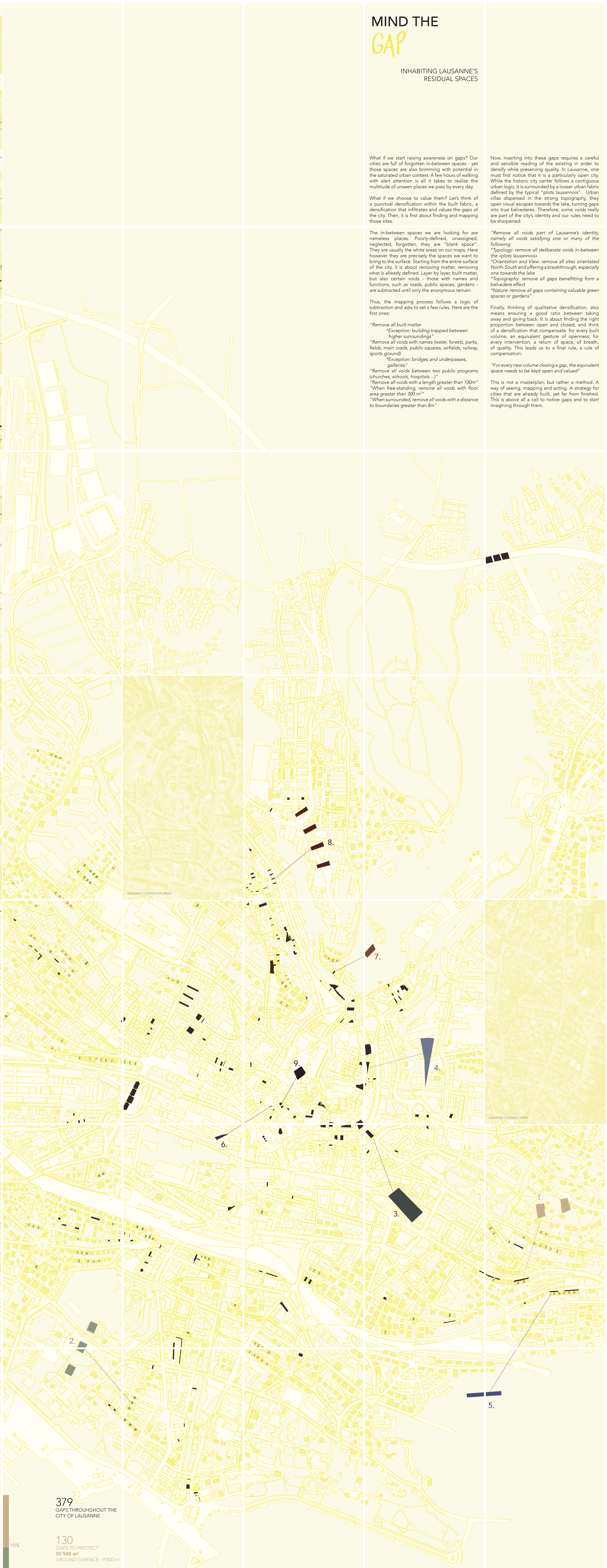
Now, inserting into these gaps requires a careful and sensitive reading of the existing in order to densify while preserving quality. In Lausanne, one must first notice that it is a particularly open city. While the historic city center follows a contiguous urban logic, it is surrounded by a looser urban fabric defined by the typical "plots lausannois". Urban villas dispersed in the strong topography, they open visual escapes towards the lake, turning gaps into true belvédères. Therefore, some voids really are part of the city's identity and our rules need to be sharpened:

- \*Remove all voids part of Lausanne's identity, namely all voids satisfying one or many of the following:
  - \*Typology: remove all deliberate voids in-between the plots lausannois
  - \*Orientation and View: remove all sites orientated North-South and offering a breakthrough, especially one towards the lake
  - \*Topography: remove all gaps benefiting from a belvedere effect
  - \*Nature: remove all gaps containing valuable green spaces or gardens

Finally, thinking of qualitative densification, also means ensuring a good ratio between taking away and giving back. It is about finding the right proportion between open and closed, and think of a densification that compensate for every built volume, an equivalent gesture of openness; for every intervention, a return of space, of breath, of quality. This leads us to a final rule, a rule of compensation:

"For every new volume closing a gap, the equivalent space needs to be kept open and valued"

This is not a masterplan, but rather a method. A way of seeing, mapping and acting. A strategy for cities that are already built, yet far from finished. This is above all a call to notice gaps and to start imagining through them.



379 GAPS THROUGHOUT THE CITY OF LAUSANNE

130 GAPS TO PROTECT  
35'500 m<sup>2</sup>  
GROUND SURFACE : 9'500 m<sup>2</sup>

48 GAPS TO ASSESS  
11'800 m<sup>2</sup>  
GROUND SURFACE : 3'400 m<sup>2</sup>

201 GAPS TO INVEST  
71'700 m<sup>2</sup>  
GROUND SURFACE : 42'900 m<sup>2</sup>

80 GAPS TO KEEP OPEN FOR PUBLIC SPACE

121 GAPS THAT CAN BE CLOSED FOR HOUSING

> 1'100 PEOPLE THAT COULD BE ACCOMMODATED with 37 m<sup>2</sup>/person (average in Lausanne)



Street Name	Type of Gap	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )	Ground Surface (m <sup>2</sup> )
1. AVENUE DE RUMINE	Plot Lausannois	77 m <sup>2</sup>	13 m <sup>2</sup>
2. RUE DES FONTENAILLES	Plot Lausannois	10 m <sup>2</sup>	10 m <sup>2</sup>
3. PONT BESSIERES	Plot Lausannois	27 m <sup>2</sup>	20 m <sup>2</sup>
4. AVENUE MENTHON	Plot Lausannois	14 m <sup>2</sup>	1 m <sup>2</sup>
5. AVENUE EUGENE-RAMBERT	Plot Lausannois	4 m <sup>2</sup>	0 m <sup>2</sup>
6. RUE LLE GRAND SAINT-JEAN	Plot Lausannois	11 m <sup>2</sup>	3 m <sup>2</sup>
7. AVENUE LOUIS-VULLEMIN	Plot Lausannois	12 m <sup>2</sup>	0 m <sup>2</sup>
8. RUE DE LA BORDE	Plot Lausannois	153 m <sup>2</sup>	13 m <sup>2</sup>
9. RUE DE LA LOUVE	Plot Lausannois	93 m <sup>2</sup>	0 m <sup>2</sup>