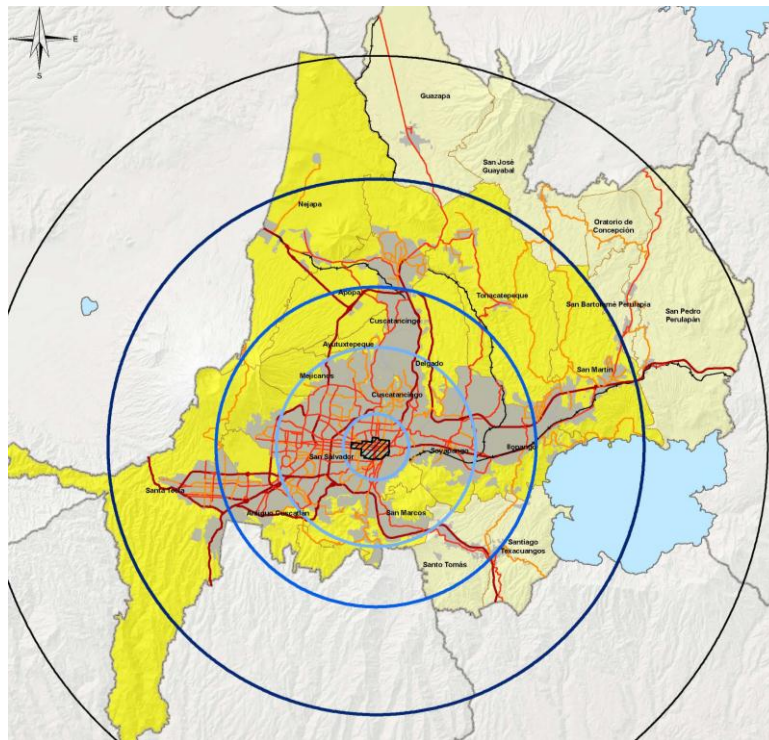


Revitalization of City Center

IUP 2009-10

Maria Eleonora Sol- El Salvador



1. Identification

a. Academic background

- i. Born and raised in El Salvador I graduated CUM LAUDE from a local University, Dr. Jose Matias Delgado, in 2001; immediately after graduation I pursued a scholarship and was awarded with a FULBRIGHT grant for a masters degree in architecture and sustainable design. I successfully graduated in 2004 from the University of Minnesota. Thereafter I have been working for our family business, we have an architecture firm with more than 40 years of experience in urbanism and architecture. At the same time I work for a local university as a professor in architecture design and always try engage in new activities and courses that keep me updated, that is how I came across the SIDA program, Integrated Urban Planning course 2008. This was the most memorable experience up to now, getting to know such a wonderful group of people from all over the world, and most important all the staff working so hard to provide us generously with all the knowledge that comes from the experience in Sweden, an example of urban planning.

b. Home organization

- i. CADES, translates to Architecture Institute of El Salvador, a non-profit organization that works to protect the interest of the Salvadorian architects and most importantly, promotes the improvement of the architecture and urban practice. The board organizes events throughout the year to reach this goal. I have been a member of CADES since graduation in 2001.

2. Background

a. Home organization and Funding

- i. In 2008, CADES asked for our collaboration in a research project about the city center to be presented as the main theme at the annual event for architects. So our firm and 4 students from the local university worked for 2 intense months on a documentary that expressed the state of crisis this historic area is in and some ideas of revitalization. Later on the year, our firm got funding from the central government to create a Comprehensive plan for the revitalization of the city center.

b. Ownership of the Plan

- i. The Plan is owed by the central government (left wing), for the plan to succeed it needs to be implemented by the municipality (right wing), who are happy with most of the work but have yet to invest in capacity training within the institution to jump start the project.

3. Methodology

- a. LFA: we used the Logical framework approach learned in Sweden, during the diagnosis phase, a very useful structure that helped us dissect the problem. Since the document was in English, I translated it and “tropicalized” it and shared with all our team. Ever since I have shared the LFA in Spanish version to many of my colleagues and students.
- b. Field Work, that involved land use documentation for the diagnosis and polls related to the people the live this part of the city.
- c. Direct sources and Indirect sources
- d. Bottom-Top approach: we worked on getting to know what people wanted through public forums and working closely with the municipality.
- e. Consensus: we worked with all the stakeholders identified and reached consensus with most of them.
- f. Multi disciplinary work, we worked with a selected group of professionals in different fields to achieve proposals that were realistic.



LOGICAL FRAMEWORK APPROACH



STAKE HOLDERS



RESEARCH IN GUATEMALA



STUDENTS IN THE PROCESS

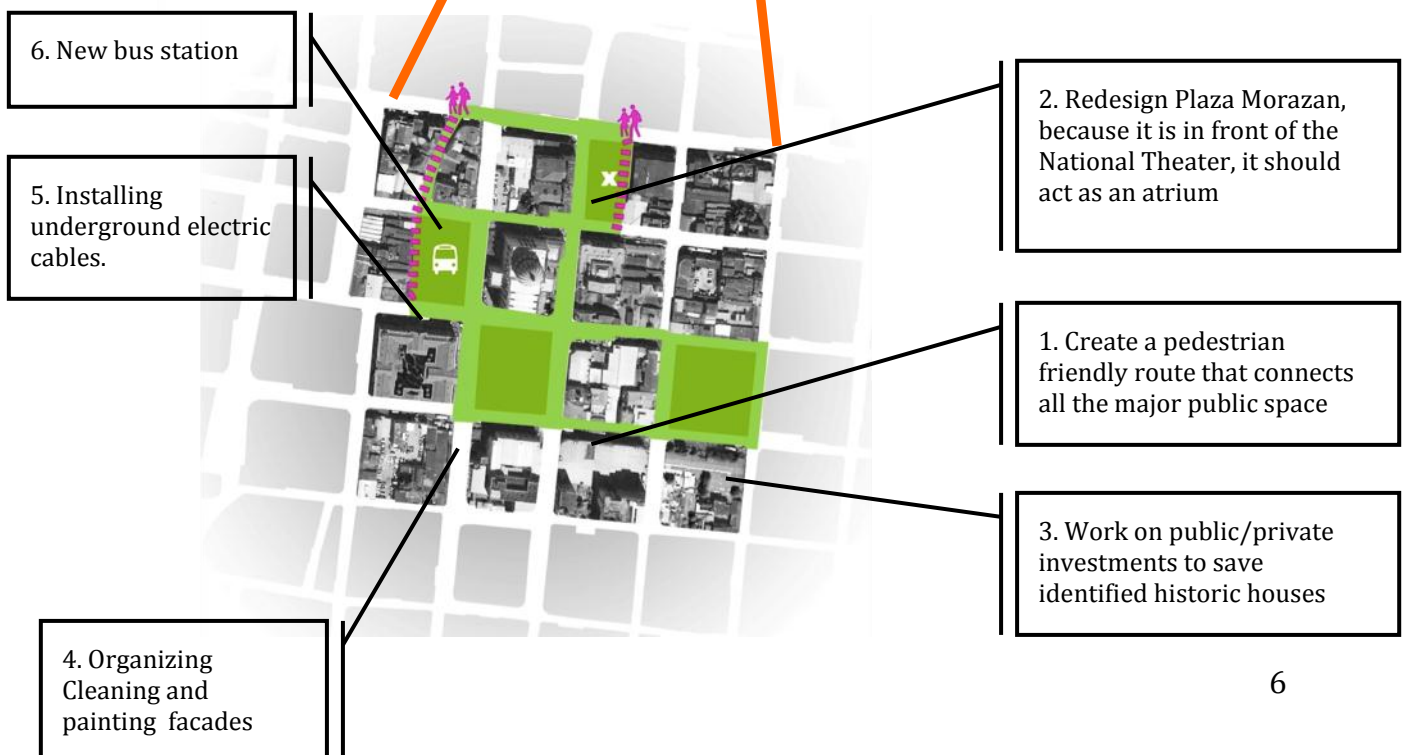
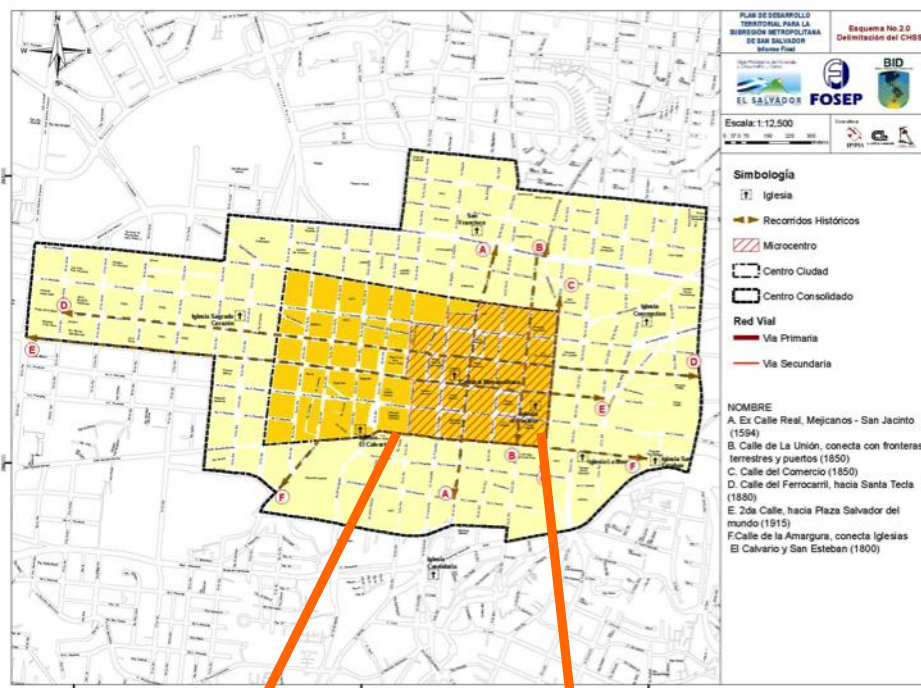
4. Objectives

To elaborate a comprehensive plan for the revitalization of the city center of San Salvador that embraces the following;

- i. To elaborate an Urban Proposal that initiates a socioeconomic revitalization, thus an increase in land demand.
 1. This proposal should also promote historic building preservation by recycling old buildings for new uses and
 2. Most important a sustainable plan that is flexible in land uses and promotes mixed uses, specially promoting housing projects; promotes efficient mobility and organizing street vendors.
- ii. A Land Policy Proposal that is coherent with the demands and needs of the population and regulations for building interventions.
- iii. An Action Plan proposal that initiates negotiations and provides incentives for stakeholders in transforming the city center.

5. Projects that promote Integrated urban Planning

- a. “Revitalization of the heart of City Center”:
- This project is our star project, since it is a relatively small radius project, with low budget and very high impact. We chose this specific area because of its physical characteristics: small area: 9 blocks, it has major historic buildings in good shape; there is low density of street vendors invasion. We expected that concentrating in this small area a series of urban projects it would bring upon other projects.





Proposal





A view on how the
new bus station
could look like

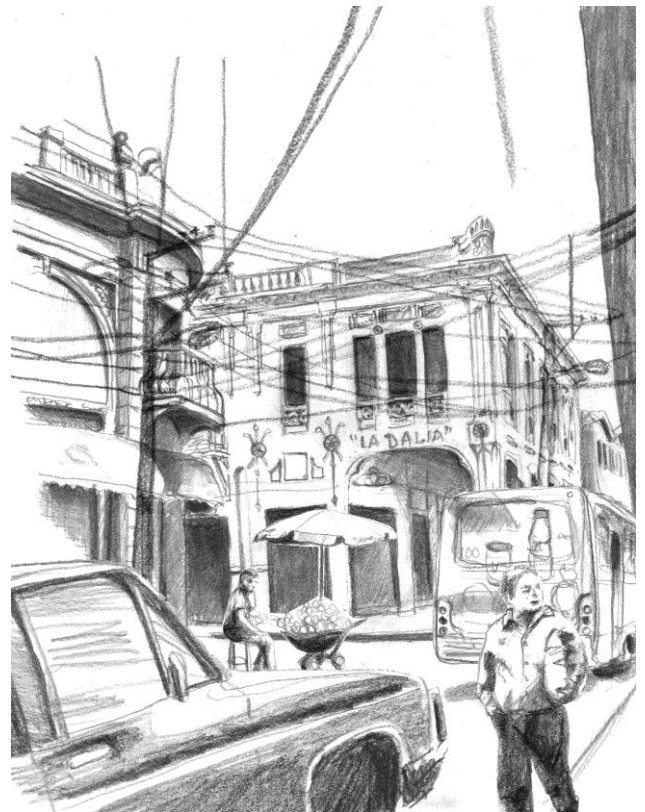
before



after



Note: Sketch done by BTH student Julia Nedersjö, while visiting El Salvador and working on their thesis project.



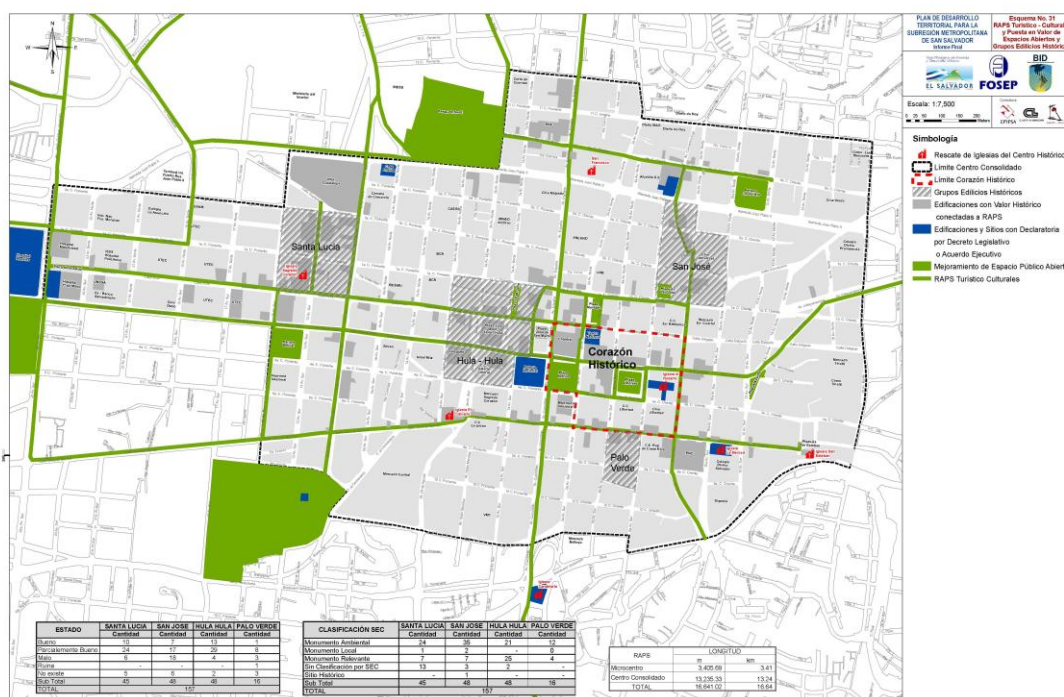
Underground electric cable project

- b. “Re densification of the city center and slum upgrading”
 - a. The success of revitalizing the city center depends on how successful we can be in attracting new investors to the area, especially those interested in housing projects. That is why new projects should be first promoted by the State, and then private investors will be interested. For this to happen we need to create fiscal incentives and other tools that attract new developments.
 - b. We have identified where the slum areas are located and what services are needed to improve the living conditions in those areas.
 - c. Since this area is well know for high delinquency occurrences, measures must be taken to promote safety like, night activities that promote other commercial opportunities, thus creating a new life when usually the area becomes deserted. (donut effect) A safe environment is vital for attracting new dwellers.
 - d. A detailed study must be carried out to evaluate infrastructure and identify what needs to be done to improve the existing systems, especially to assure water provision for new projects.
 - e. Capacity training within the municipality is needed to make informed decisions on new housing projects.
- c. “Investment promotion”
 - a. Continuous research has to be done to keep relevant information available for possible investors. This will require keeping GIS maps updated, based on the historic identified sites cerate drawings that document the architecture for future reference, etc. and most important: keep information handy and accessible.
 - b. Fiscal incentives
 - c. Promoting Public-Private projects or concessions

d. “Reclaiming Pedestrian Priority”

We propose to make the city center attractive and safe for pedestrians by promoting the connection between the public open spaces. Additionally by improving the walkways along the streets marked in the map, tourism and commercial activity will flourish. The most important components:

1. Repaving of deteriorated walkways
2. Constructions of ramps and identifying crossways
3. Speed control bollards
4. Underground cable for electricity and multimedia
5. Equipment: benches, bike racks, trash can
6. Creating shadow with new trees

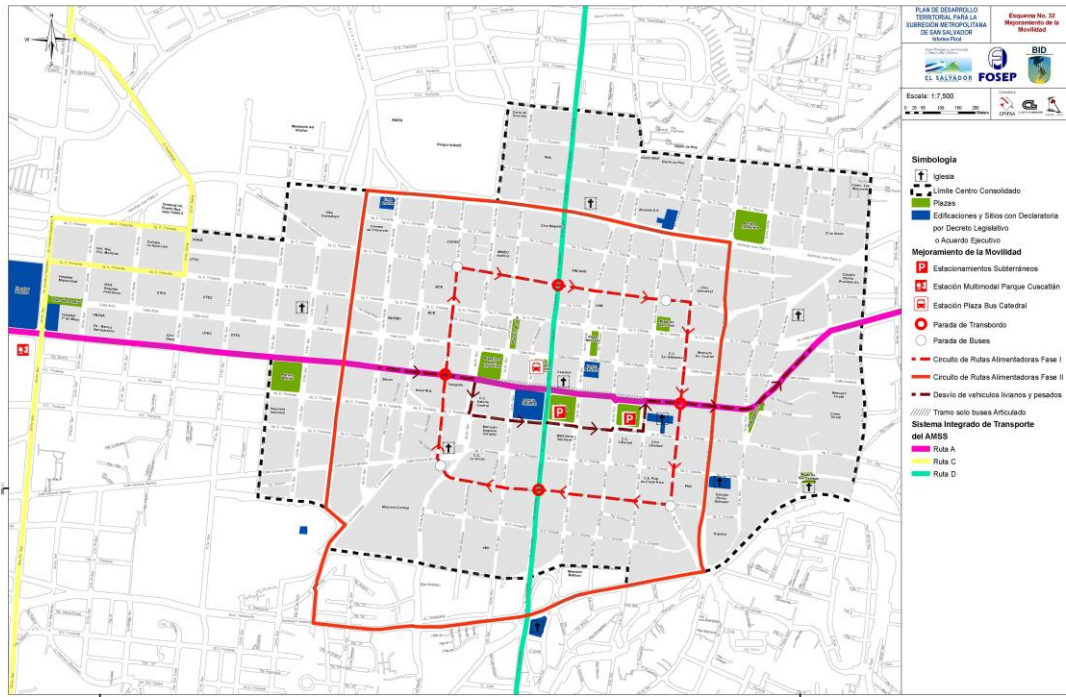


e. “Improving mobility”

The proposal for improving mobility in very simple terms include:

1. Determining a perimeter where old buses will not be allowed to enter, car traffic will be restricted
2. Introducing a new public transportation system that will dignify how people transit through the city.
3. Constructing new underground public parking that will promote walking.
4. Legalize existing parking lots

This proposal is being implemented partially by taking out the old buses, the population was resisting change but now it has some positive reactions, especially because pedestrians don't feel threatened by so much traffic and the streets are cleaner.



f. “Organization of street vendor project”

In order to incorporate the street vendors in the private sector alternatives have to be available for these people to do their business that is both organized and attractive. To do so, we propose the following:

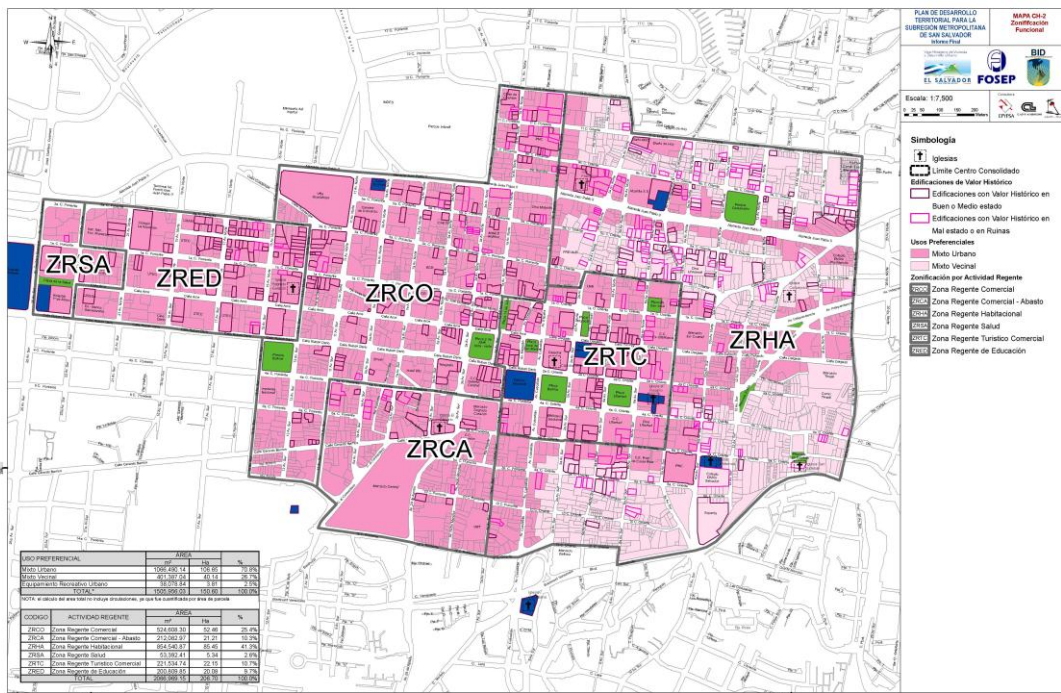
1. Feasibility study for new popular commercial projects.
2. Modernizing the existing Market
3. Implementing a traveling market system

g. "Implementation tools"

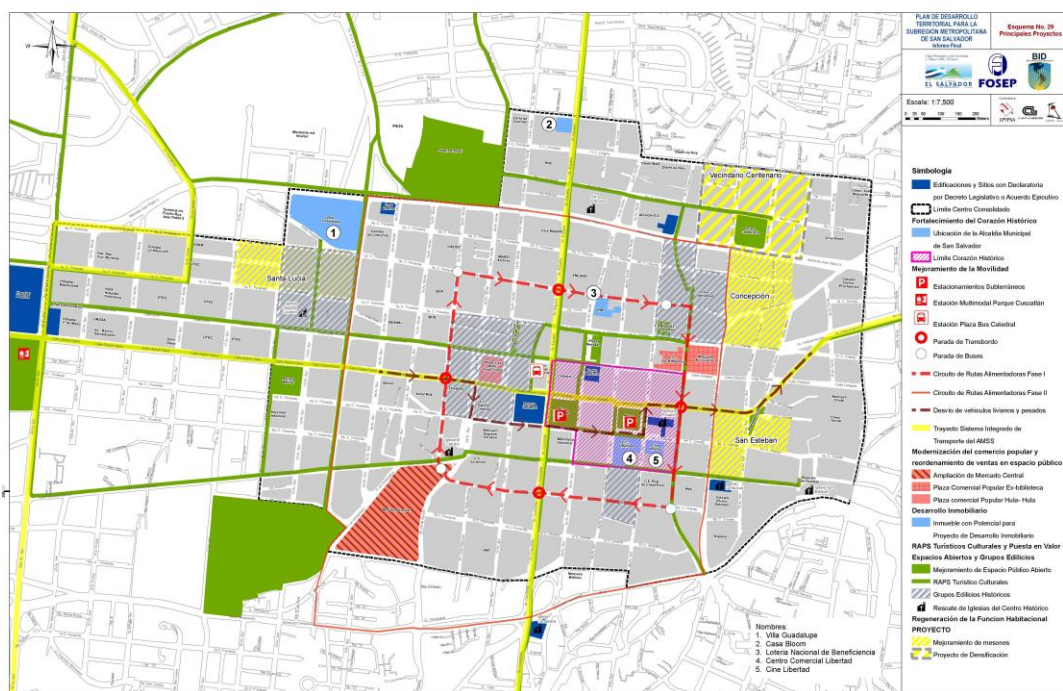
To make this plan work we need some implementation tools that ground all of the projects proposed. The tools are:

1. Capacity training for Municipalities in land use
2. Creating Municipal real estate offices
3. Permit "speed up" for investment projects
4. Promoting and capacity training of new permit process
5. Fund Raising strategies for the municipalities to have and invest in feasibility studies for new projects
6. Implementation and promotion of investment incentives
7. Permanent negotiation with stakeholders for the implementation of this plan.

LAND USE PLAN



h. Summary of Projects



- 6. Results:** We are very proud to inform that many actions have been taken by different stakeholders, weather it was a direct or indirect result of our work, bottom line is that the central government and the municipality are working in the implementation of different projects to reclaim the city center.
- a. Action taken by the Municipality
 - i. New market for street vendors: just recently the new design for a commercial venue has been completed and to be constructed in the following year.
 - ii. Street vendors are slowly being organized in new venues, using and remodeling old buildings. This has been the most problematic process because of the resistance the street vendors have to move, but the Mayor has been very diligent in the process of negotiation. It will still take some time to finish this process.
 - iii. Plaza San Jose: street vendors had invaded the oldest plaza and now successfully reclaimed as a public space.
 - b. No more buses in the city center
 - i. As explained earlier a first step in improving mobility was taken when old buses were reorganized so that they no longer go through the city center perimeter.
 - c. New office for housing projects in Vice Ministry of Housing
The ministry of housing will establish a new office to promote housing projects in the city center.

- d. FUNDASAL, NGO that promotes housing projects has concentrated in the city center and successfully finished 3 projects where they take old houses where many families live in terrible conditions and redesign with individual units. FUNDASAL helps with the building materials and the residents help in the building process.

ANNEX 1- Results in pictures

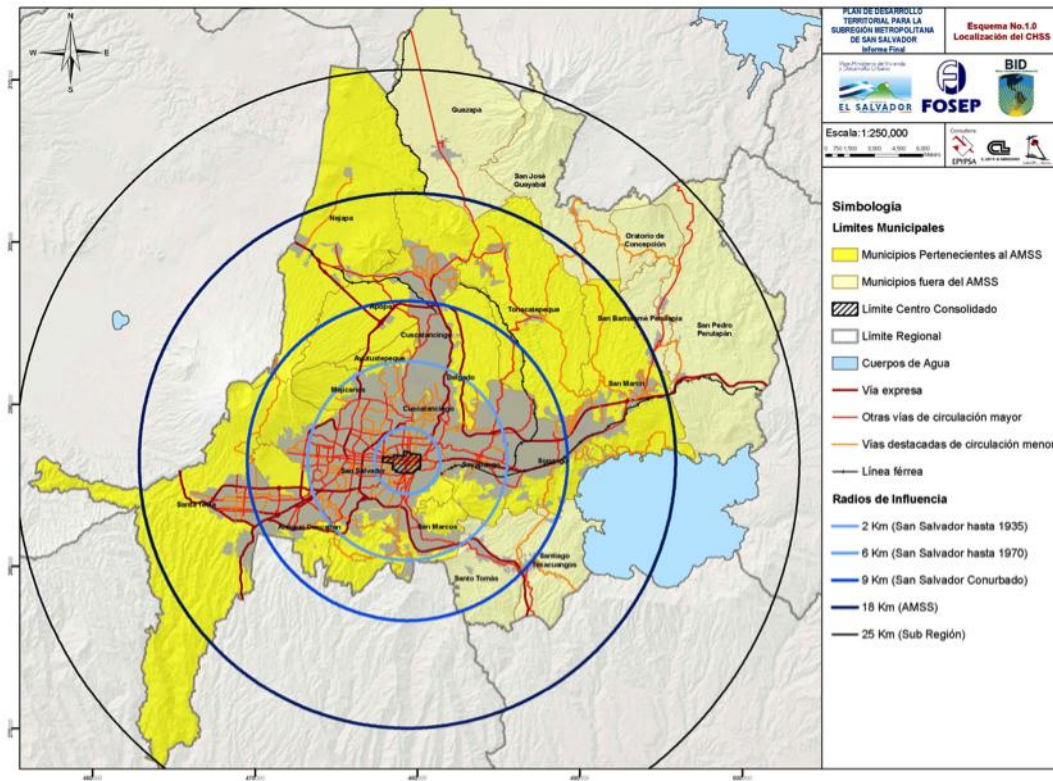


New Commercial venue
to be constructed in
2012 by municipality

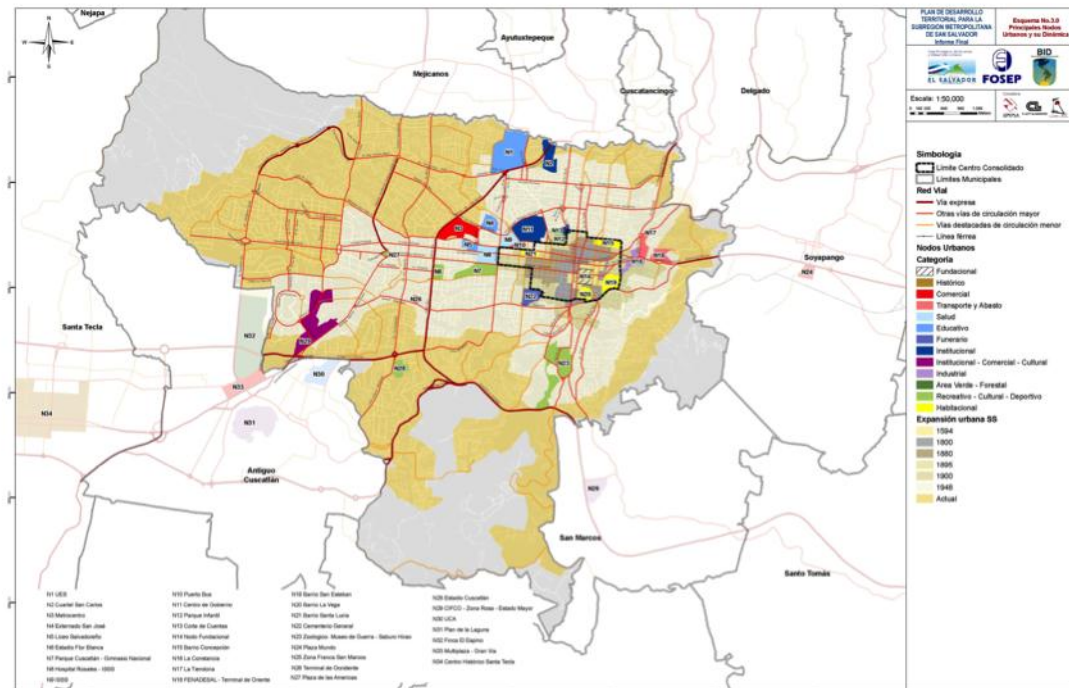


Plaza San Jose, reclaimed
form street vendors

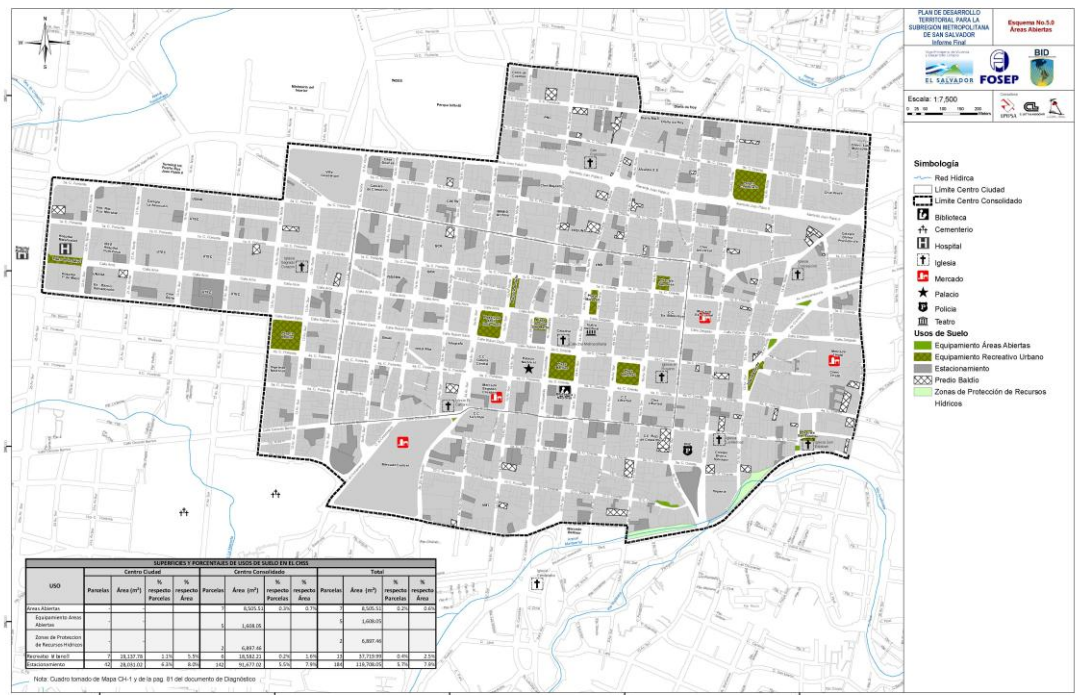
ANNEX 2- GIS Maps used in Diagnosis Process



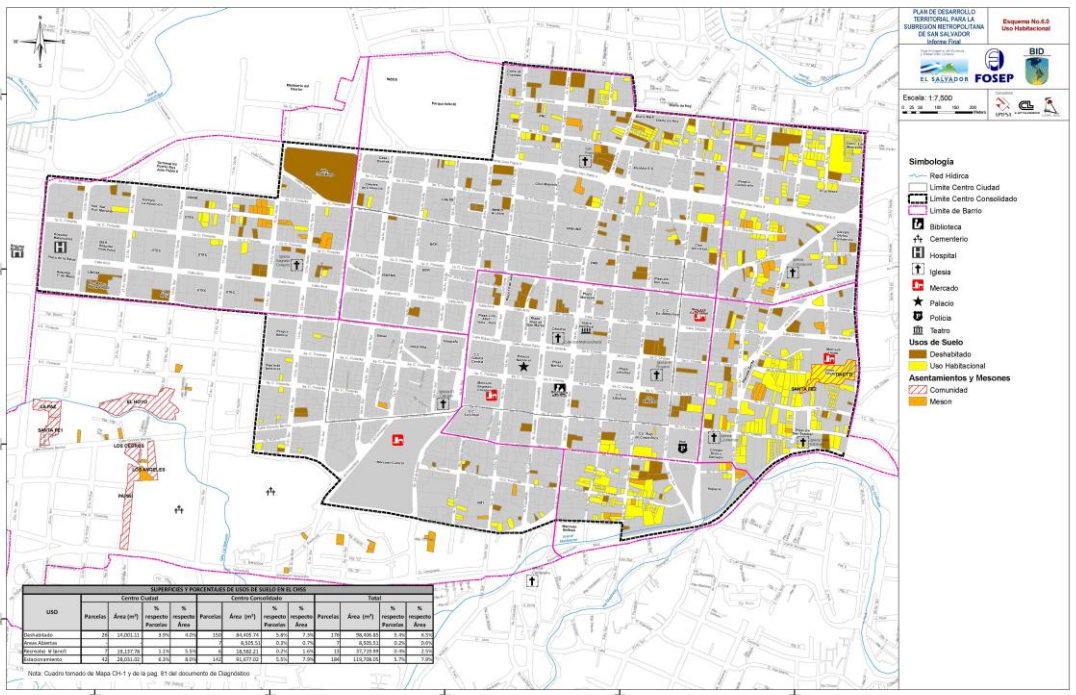
Location of City Center within the metropolitan area of San Salvador



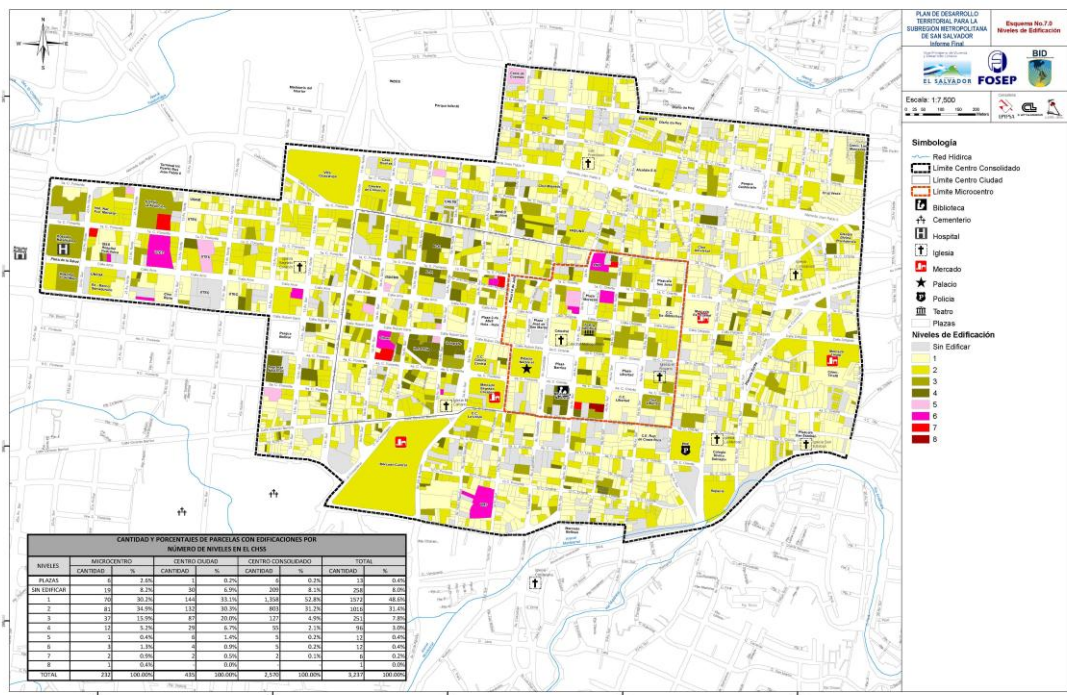
Relationship with structural social nodes



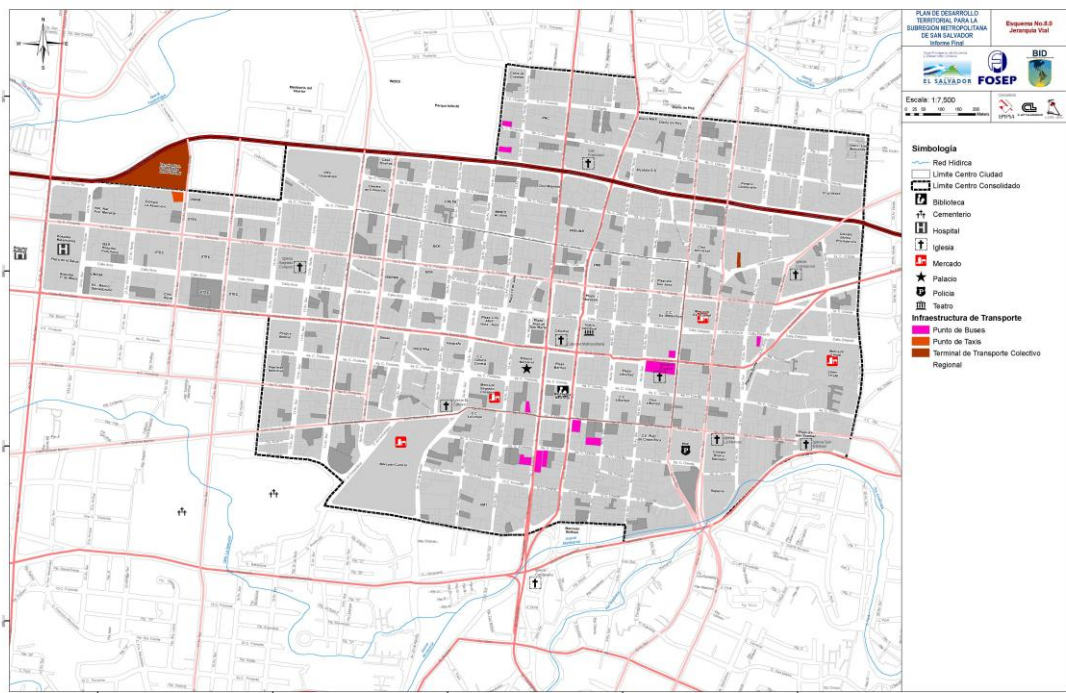
Open Public Space



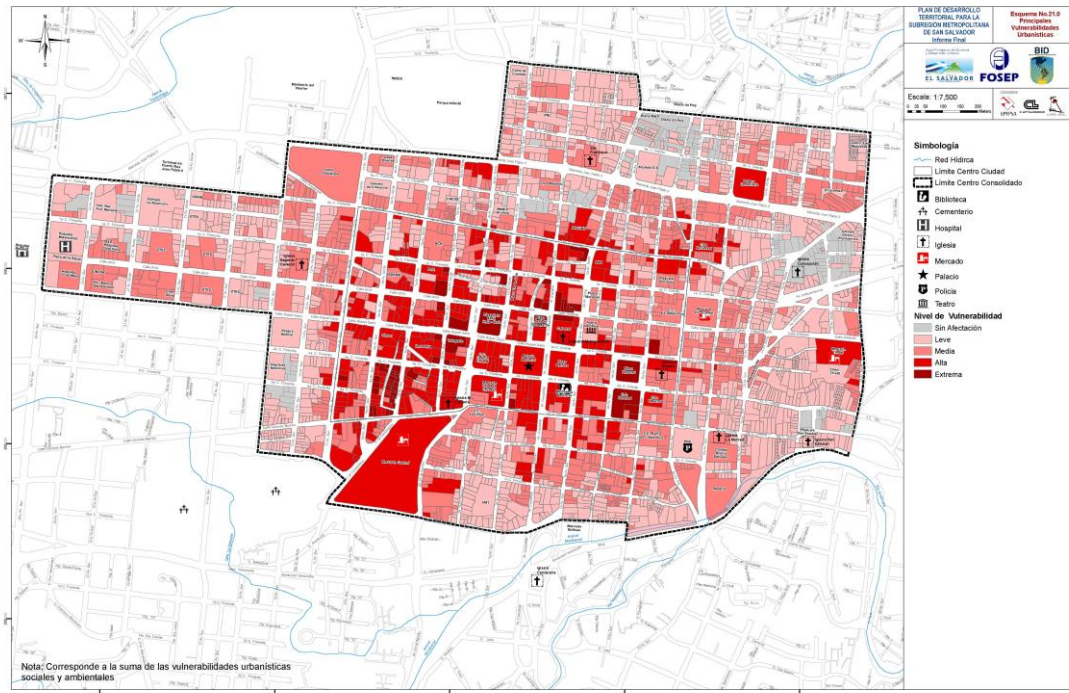
Building Heights



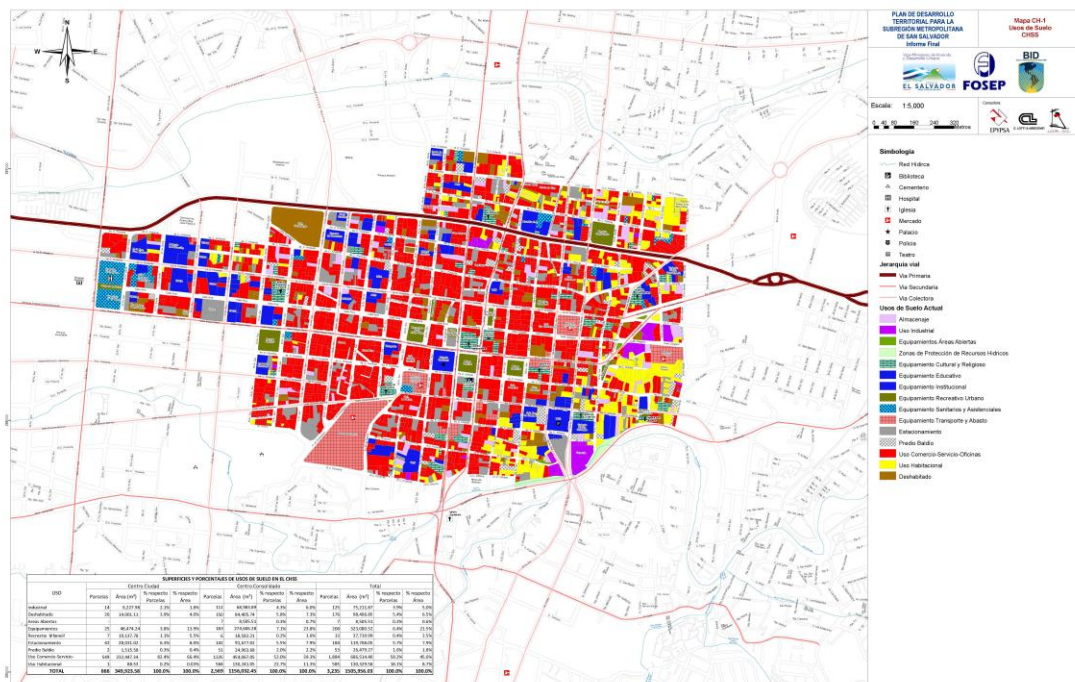
Housing Use today and
Slums



Street System



Vulnerability Maps:
These following maps were created with GIS tool, identifying positive and negative variables that devalue or value the land



Land Use