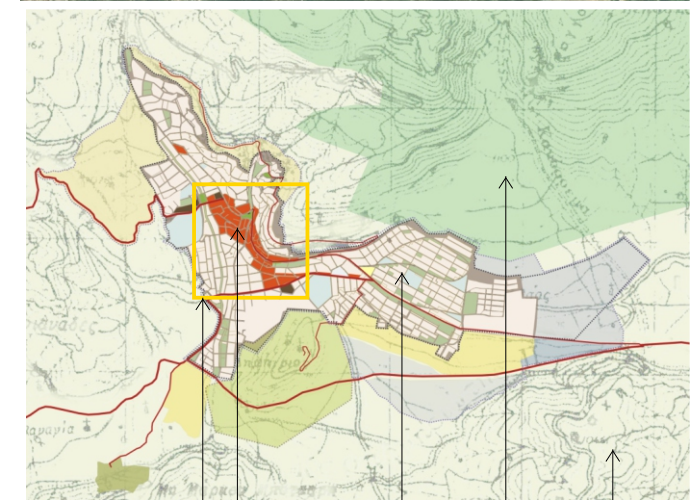


Karpenisi is a remote town in central Greece --population 15,000, average altitude 1,000 m. It is the urban center of Eurytania, a mountainous, inaccessible region characterized by the lowest income in Greece and perpetual underdevelopment. Yet the almost alpine environment retains exceptional and precious virtues. Just outside the city, forests teeming with natural life, along with a large network of old villages and traditional settlements of outstanding architecture constitute a high quality environment extending throughout the mountains. However Karpenisi pertains little to these qualities. The city has been destroyed repeatedly during the WWII -and the subsequent civil war- and redeveloped over its ruins hastily and without consideration of the local advantages in urban traditions and natural environment. In the after-war decades the town lost its human-scale tranquil urban properties, and deprived from its charming vernacular architecture. Devastating incompatibilities --such as tasteless concrete buildings compressed into the narrow streets and the unrestricted use of automobiles-- weaken the vitality of the public spaces and challenge the cultural and human dimensions of the urban fabric. Confined by the sloping terrain the public spaces network consists mainly of streets and stairways, leaving place for only one substantially functional town-square. There is also only one transversal street --a so called avenue 10.00 m wide-- connecting the city to the national road system --towards the east and west coasts through the mountains. This main central street, being the lone transportation axis, bears, along with the traffic, the most of the commercial and



land uses: center intervention area residential rural natural life resort

social activity. For many years it was the hub of the hustle-and-bustle, and the epicenter of an unregulated fierce competition between urban factors such as car transportation vs pedestrians, and public vs private space. Conflicts like these resulted in a dysfunctional and aesthetically impoverished city scape. For the things to be worse, in the resent years the financial crisis hit the fragile economy of the city -based mainly on tourism-- adding a sense of devaluation and desolation into the confusion of the place.



2010

2016



Ευρυτανικά Νέα