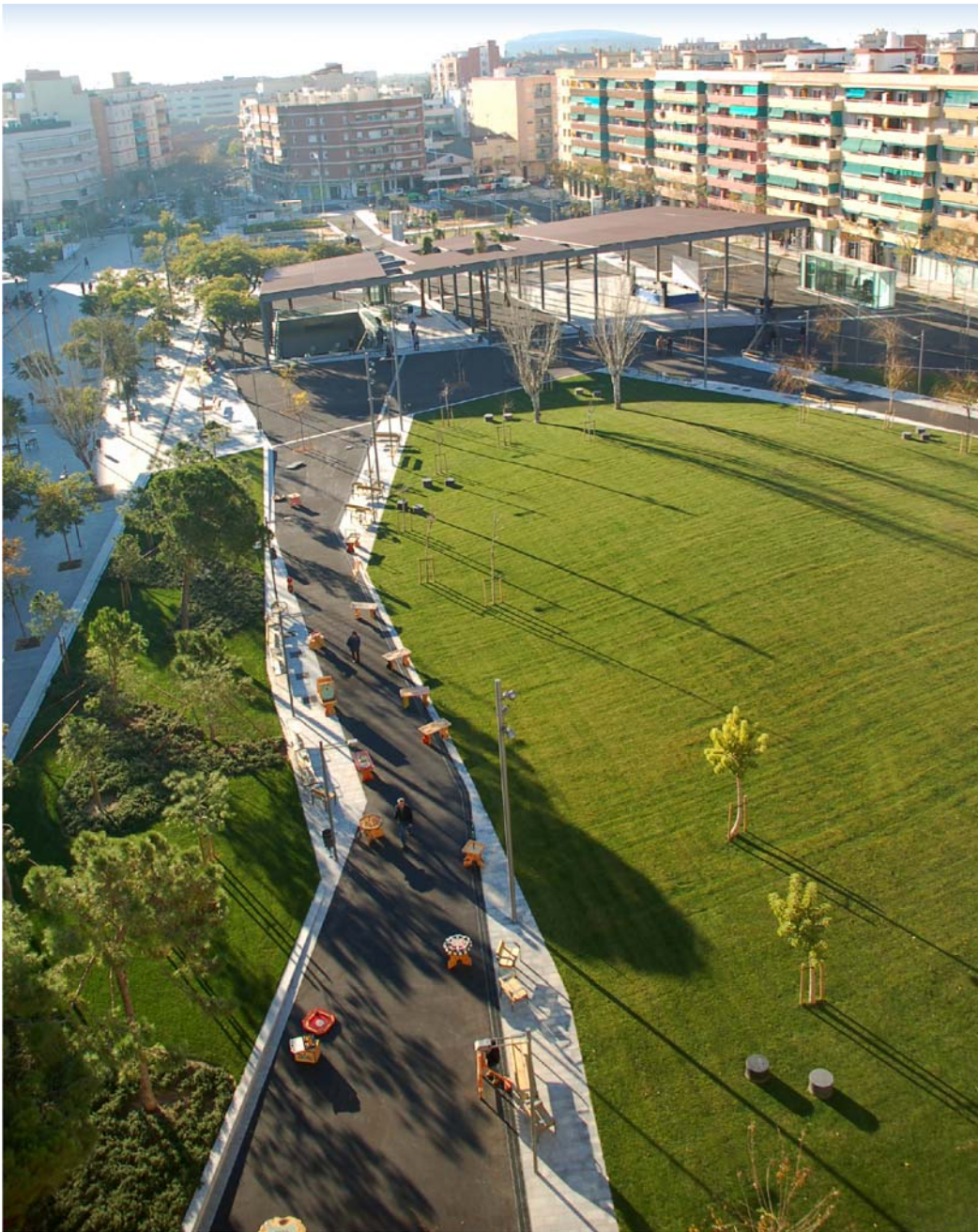




AERIAL VIEW, FROM "CENTRIC" CULTURAL CENTRE



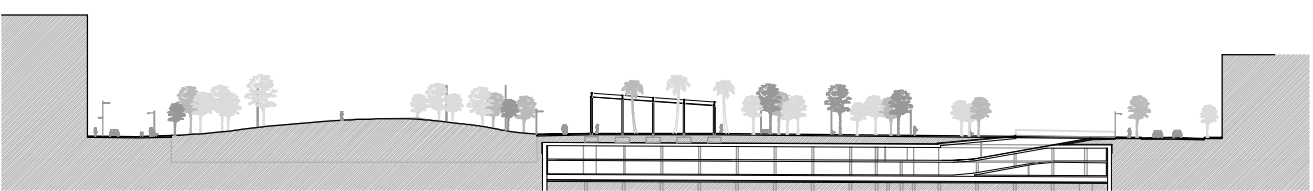
AERIAL VIEW, FROM NORTH

AIMS

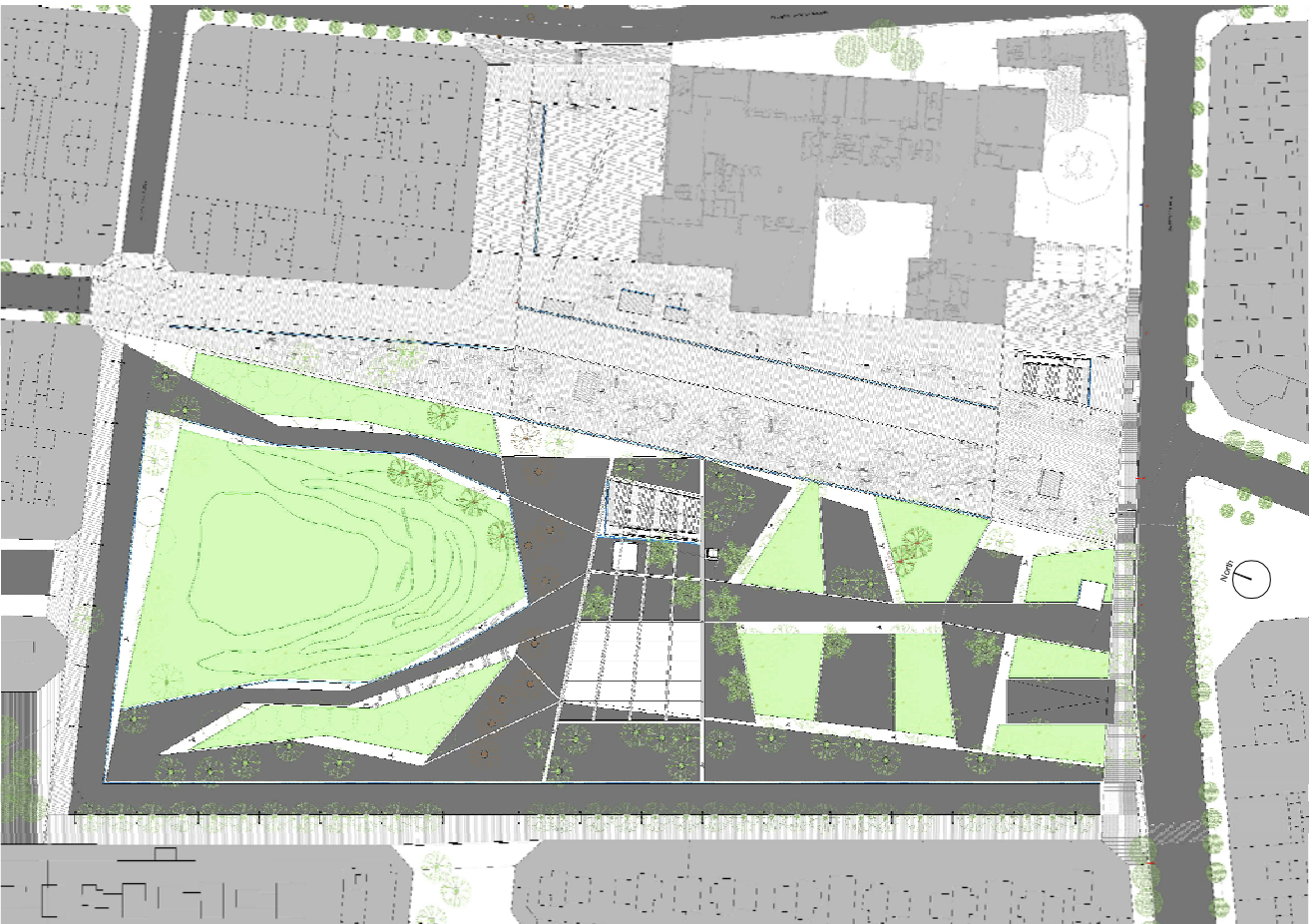
Creating a new city center without losing the historic and direct relationship with its surrounding neighbors was the main goal of the intervention. Connecting to the city by means of the recognition of its main guidelines was a very important issue when thinking of the new area. Incorporating the north-to-south axis from Avinguda Bunyola and Avinguda Canal, and allowing continuity to Avinguda Doctor Gallart i Monés, which already housed a large urban and relational activity. Giving continuity to the east-west axis from the Plaça de Mestre Estalella to the streets of Pompeu Fabra and Estany de Sant Maurici was also important. Reinforcing the new access to the new L9 underground station was a goal of the new space, considering it the link from the new town center to Barcelona. The need of the new link between the metro station and the square itself lead to assuming a real center in the new urban space. The integration of the metro and car-park accesses and ventilation towers was clue to guarantee a new unit.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVENTION

Putting in relation the scale of the square with the city that surrounds it was a basic aspect of the project. The new void to rethink occupied 2.5 hectares, which represents 1.6 times the size of Piazza San Marco in Venice or four times the Barcelona's Plaza Real. Creating such large space for a town of 64,000 inhabitants meant considering it a square as well as a park. The gardening areas occupy almost half of the total area (1.3 ha), and thus regain their original use. Despite this formal and functional differentiation, the park is understood as a part of the street and building alignments, aiming to blur boundaries and recover the unity of the whole. The layout of the park is attentive to the visuals from the Cultural Center and its most frequent routes avoiding where possible the front view of the building and supporting diagonal visions that help to minimize its volume. The park is divided into two parts: On the northernmost side, a small grass dune that rises, as an unusual item in the city that hides and shows elements around, adding complexity to the flat site. On the south, there is a series of small and more intimate gardens that allow a more quite stay. These two garden systems meet in the canopy, which occupies about 1,100 m2 and embodies the access to the subway station. These metal structure acts as a center point and hinge of the different circulations and areas of the square. It may become a visual reference, and a meeting point, a qualified sheltered surface that may host events and social activities. The granite paving is placed in contact with the building of Céntric, acting as an outside hall boulevard and restoring the South- North connection. The north recess by the Cultural Center hosts a new sculpture by the artist Enric Pladevall. The new access to the parking underneath seeks integration by means of its geometry and chromatic treatment of Corten steel. The entire surface of the Plaça Catalunya is closed to traffic and it only serves to maintenance vehicles and neighborhood urgencies. Paving with granite and asphalt responds to the language used in other areas of the city. Granite paving that varies in dimension helps to adapt to different dimension geometries and those discontinuities resulting from the vents of the subway station and underground parking. The accuracy of granite paving dimensioning solves limits with the asphalt, tree grates and other urban elements. Granite areas support every urban element of the park: benches, lights, paper baskets, wiring, ducts, and sewage systems. This strategy frees the asphalt areas from elements. Maintenance will mainly affect to granite areas, which pieces can be easily changed, avoiding asphalt repairation. The new canopy consists of a trapezoidal inclined plane that offers various perimeter heights. It hosts the metro access and it may serve as a meeting point, visual reference or host different public events. Its structure consists of standard profiles. The covering slats are made of a mix of wooden micro composite and a polymer matrix, requiring no maintenance. Vegetation criteria are based on maximum conservation of existing species (pines, grevillea, poplars) being the base of the square and surrounding streets vegetation, such as tipuanas, pagoda trees and jacarandas. The vegetation of the dune is mainly ashes; willow trees and ombus. Washingtonian palms and glycine have been chosen in the canopy area and intense flowering and bushes in the small gardens.



LONGITUDINAL SECTION 1/1500



PLAN 1/1500



THE CANOPY, FROM NORTHWEST



UNDER THE CANOPY, SEEN FROM WEST



ENTRANCE TO UNDERGROUND STATION, FROM SOUTHEAST