
A Park & Town Hall for an Informal Settlement

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Panama City is facing rapid and expansive sprawl. Among the many problems that this causes is the production of dormitory neighborhood without basic institutional, cultural and recreational services. The significance of such services is abundantly clear in maintaining a healthy and vibrant city.

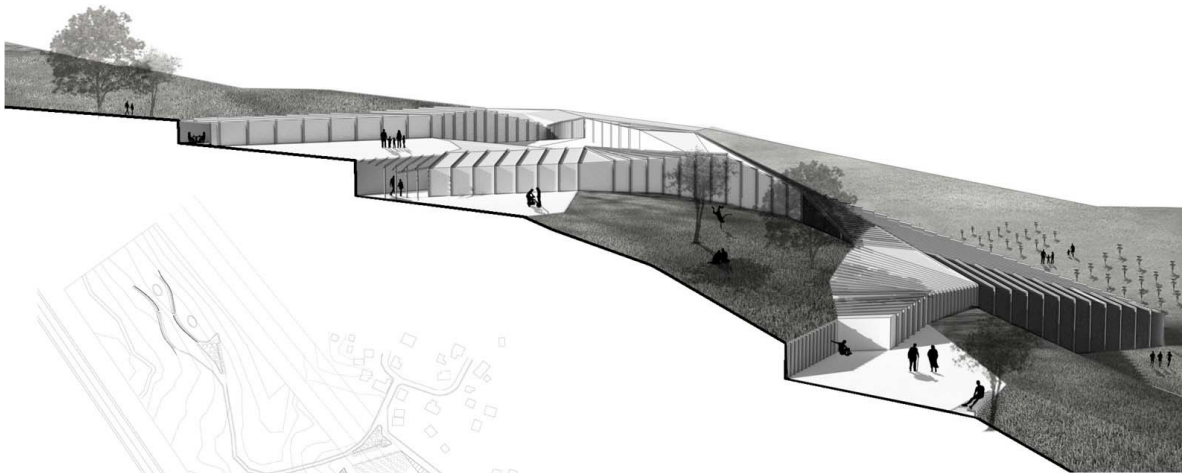
A regional and district park at once, this park purports to operate as public space, recreation and leisure facility, nature park, and will include municipal service facilities such as a cemetery and other possible institutional uses. A survey of the surrounding areas indicates that much of the area consists of informal settlements, which face a fundamental lack of institutional and cultural facilities. The park must address this need.

The municipal building acts as the entry point to the park from the neighboring community of Chilibre. The building houses a variety of cultural and institutional services, alongside commerce. The building's generous frontal position is intended to portray the building as a town hall for the residents of the nearby Chilibre, an informal settlement without a town hall or community center to this day. This formal entry plaza and the strong presence of the building will give identity to a neighborhood. Acknowledging the complicated topography and relatively steep slope of the landscape, the building provides a vertical connection to the upper levels of the park and terraces, eliminating the necessity of having

to climb the slope. Those from the community could take an elevator or stairs up to the terraces.

While Panama City is embedded in one of the world's most diverse ecologies, with immense potential for growing green, the growth of asphalt and concrete in recent years has completely taken over its natural habitat. The park presents the potential to become a major attraction point. Introduction of a sports facility, or a facility for teaching and exhibiting art, or a controlled amount of retail space could mark the park as a destination point for the surrounding areas. Furthermore, the introduction of such services outside the city center will reduce some of the pressure on the center and could help alleviate - even though in a small way - some of the congestion problems that the city faces.

This project is a collaborative effort, produced as the result of a workshop sponsored by a Fulbright Specialist Grant. The collaborators included participants from the Municipality of Panama City, The Ministry of Housing, and students from Universidad Católica Santa María La Antigua.

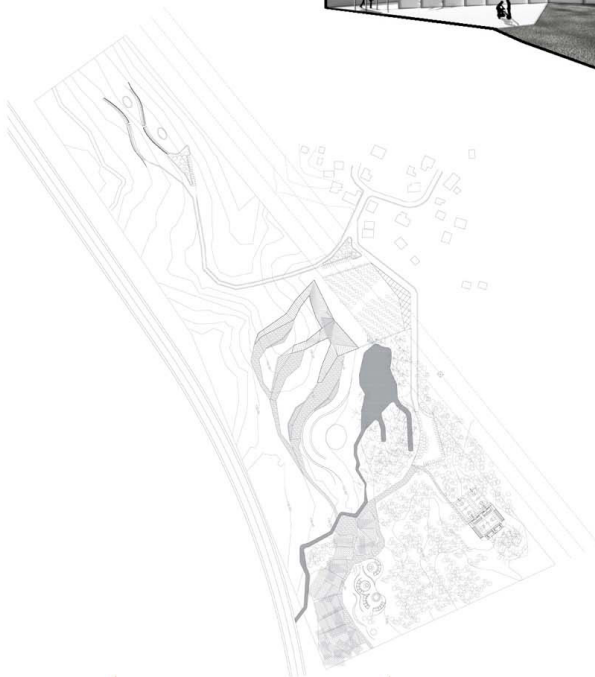


A Park & Townhall for an informal settlement, Panama

...in Chilibre, a nature park, a regional park, a neighborhood park, a town hall, sports facility & market

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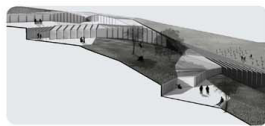
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Panama Colon Expressway



Nature Walk & Market



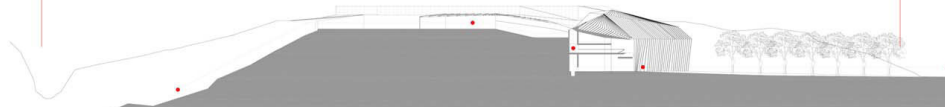
Multi-Purpose Terraces



Plaza & Town Hall



Chilibre Community



Program

Municipal Offices, Library, adult education center, Art Education and Exhibition Sport courts, Commerce: Market, food stalls, restaurant, Nature walk, Educational garden plots, Water feature, Detention Basin, Cemetery

Municipal Building and Entry Plaza: The municipal building acts as the entry point to the park from the neighboring community of Chilibre. The building houses a variety of cultural and institutional services, alongside commerce. The building's generous frontal position is intended to portray the building as a townhall for the residents of the nearby Chilibre, an informal settlement without a townhall or community center to this day. This formal entry plaza and the strong presence of the building will give identity to a neighborhood.

Community Link - Addressing the topography: Acknowledging the complicated topography and relatively steep slope of the landscape, the building provides a vertical connection to the upper levels of the park and terraces, eliminating the necessity of having to climb the slope. Those from the community could take an elevator or stairs up to the terraces.

