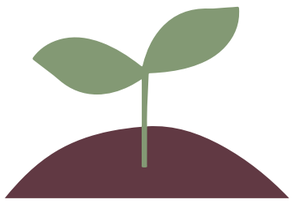


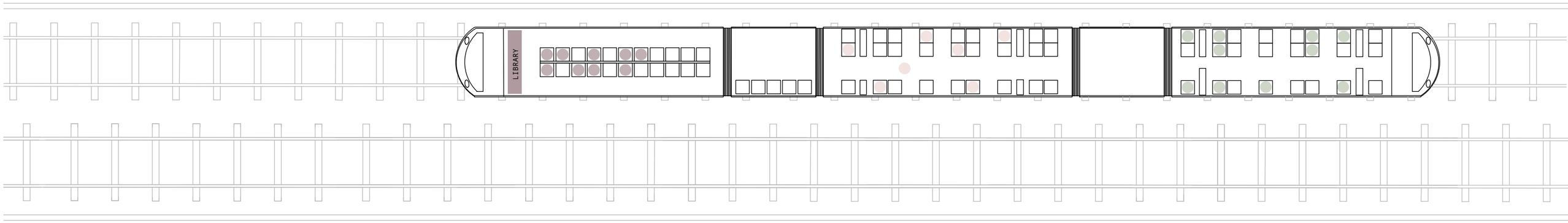
THE THINKBELT
TRAM

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROJECT

by Vanesa Tomažič

WORKSHOP I
EVERYTHING STARTS WITH AN EXPERIENCE

While taking the tram in Alicante, I wanted to realize, what in the experience (for me personally) shows the biggest potential of the ride.
As one of the most sustainable alternatives to urban mobility is definitely good to promote and upgrade the systems in the way of environmentally friendly transportation, for low energy consumption and less air pollution. But in order to make this more efficient and successful, we should not only improve the trams system, but it's function and organization, so people would find more reasons to stay out of their cars. We should make it a form of comfortable, clean, reliable transport, that does not only make you sit and go trough the long ride, but also adapts to your preferences and emotions.
In order to do that we should ask ourselves, if it would be possible, to make a tram ride so complex, that we could accommodate the spatial requirements for different activities?

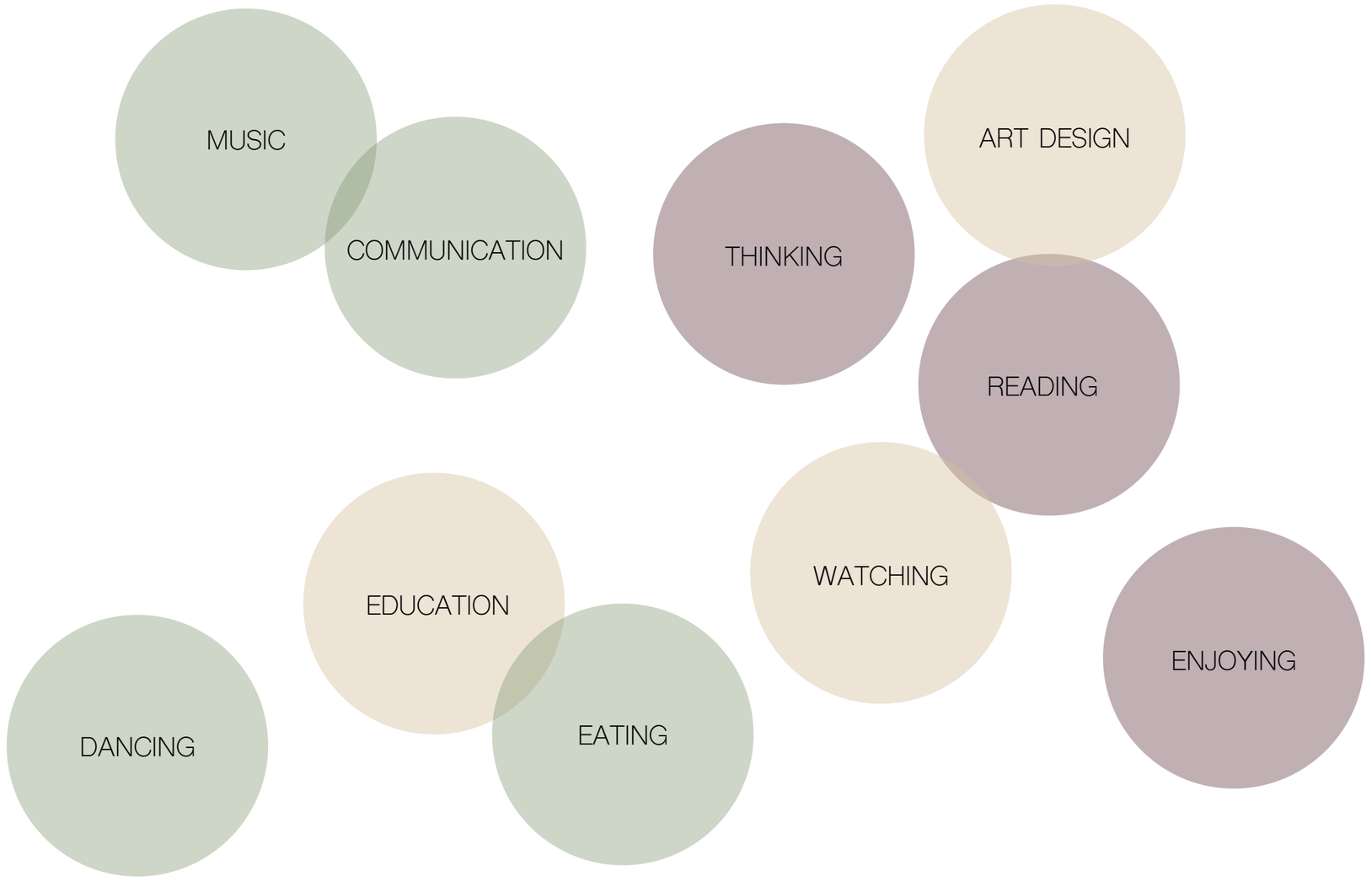


I started imagining, if it would be possible to somehow include all the different programs with various arrangements that would please all passengers, who are struggling with thinking of tram ride as a burden and a waste of time.

Some of the main and most popular activities that I could think of at that moment included: Reading, thinking, education, communication, bussines, art and design

For making all the activities possible, the tram should provide a wider range of spatial requirements with various lightning, privacy, sound, atmosphere…With considering alternative arrangements, we might be able to create a flexible space, to extend and make the logical order of programs and their flow regarding one of the basic requirements- for example: from the purely private into the public realm.

But as I tried to imagine how my ideas would actually work, I was stuck in the basic design of the tram, and the only solution at that moment seemed to be the rearrangement of the interior furniture. What we should try to improve was a very clear and logical idea from the beggining, but the biggest question was:



HOW?

FIRST EXHIBITION

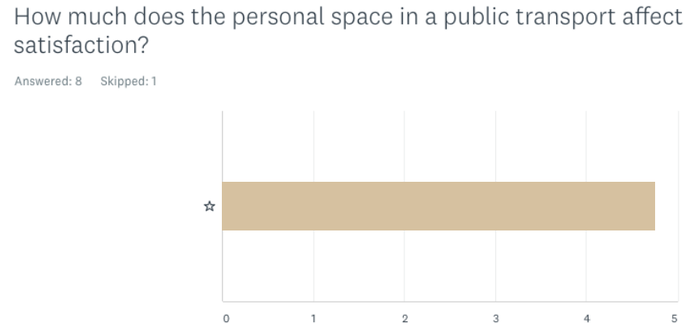
So this was something that I contributed in our first exhibition. How people feel in different situations and sitting arrangements, what different arrangements are even possible and which of them are connected to which programs.

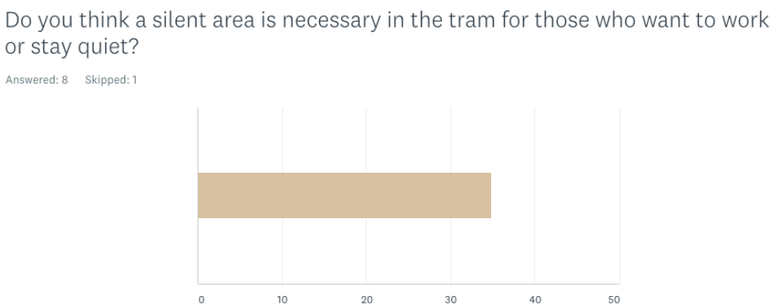
We proposed a system of movable and foldable chairs, that each person could adapt to their preferences and arranged the sitting at the actual exhibition for people to test it. Later we encouraged participants to take a part in our survey, asking them how they feel about personal space and flexible furniture.

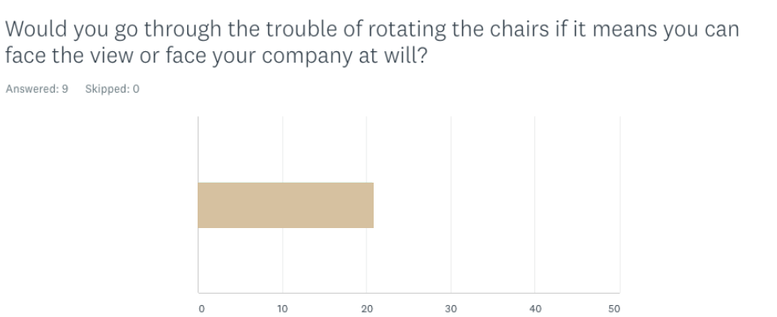
The responses we got made us rethink the project, since we found out that most of the participants wouldn't go trough the trouble of rotating the chairs and also didn't think that the silent area for workers is absolutely necessary.

We felt like all of our ideas were connected to some point. It seemed logical that the design of the interior would define the views as much as invite people to use it, what made sense to extend the tram line to the South and invite workers and tourists to use it.

With using only QR codes at our first exhibition, we stood behind the idea of sustainability, which was from the very begining something that I wanted to raise awarenes about,







LA ZENIA

TORREVEIJA

GUARDAMAR

SANTA POLA

ARENALES

AIRPORT

PALMERAL

SAN GABRIEL

BABEL

SURVEY

START POINT

CHAIR

ROTATE

FLOOR PLAN

VIDEO

BACKPACKS

PROGRAM

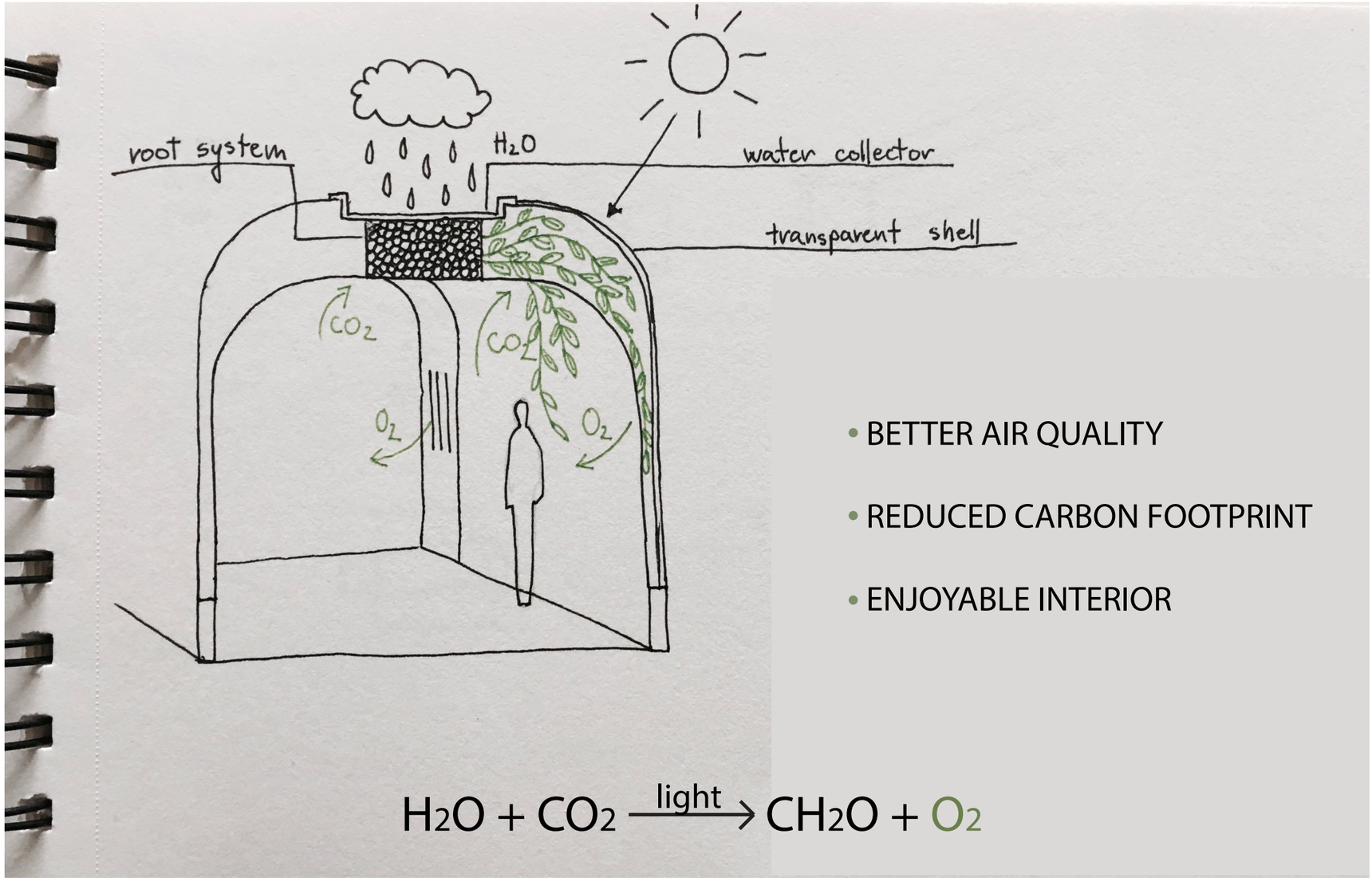
DIVERSE WINDOW FRAMING

WORKSHOP II

GREEN PERSONAL AP-PROACH

With the second workshop we tryed to switch and rethink each others ideas. Since the over-thinking of how to implement the programs and arrangement in the tram didn't seem to be improving I decided to look at the tram from another point of view, but still looking with sustainable eyes. With a little research I got the idea of using plants as transformers of the visual and sensual environment. It would be possible to develop a system, that would use the natural process of plants to transform the indoor air quality of the tram and at the same time reduce the carbon footprint. It would also change the interior of the tram not to be as artificial as it is right now but would make it greener and more interesting to observe. We could include the authentic Spanish species to educate the passengers about the nature.

The ideas of all group members were very unique and creative, such as: backpacks with programs, that attach to the tram and very diverse window framing. All of the ideas were very good, but the question was if we can combine them. It was hard to visualise at first, but as we put all ideas together in one project, they kind off seemed to complement one another.



WORKSHOP II

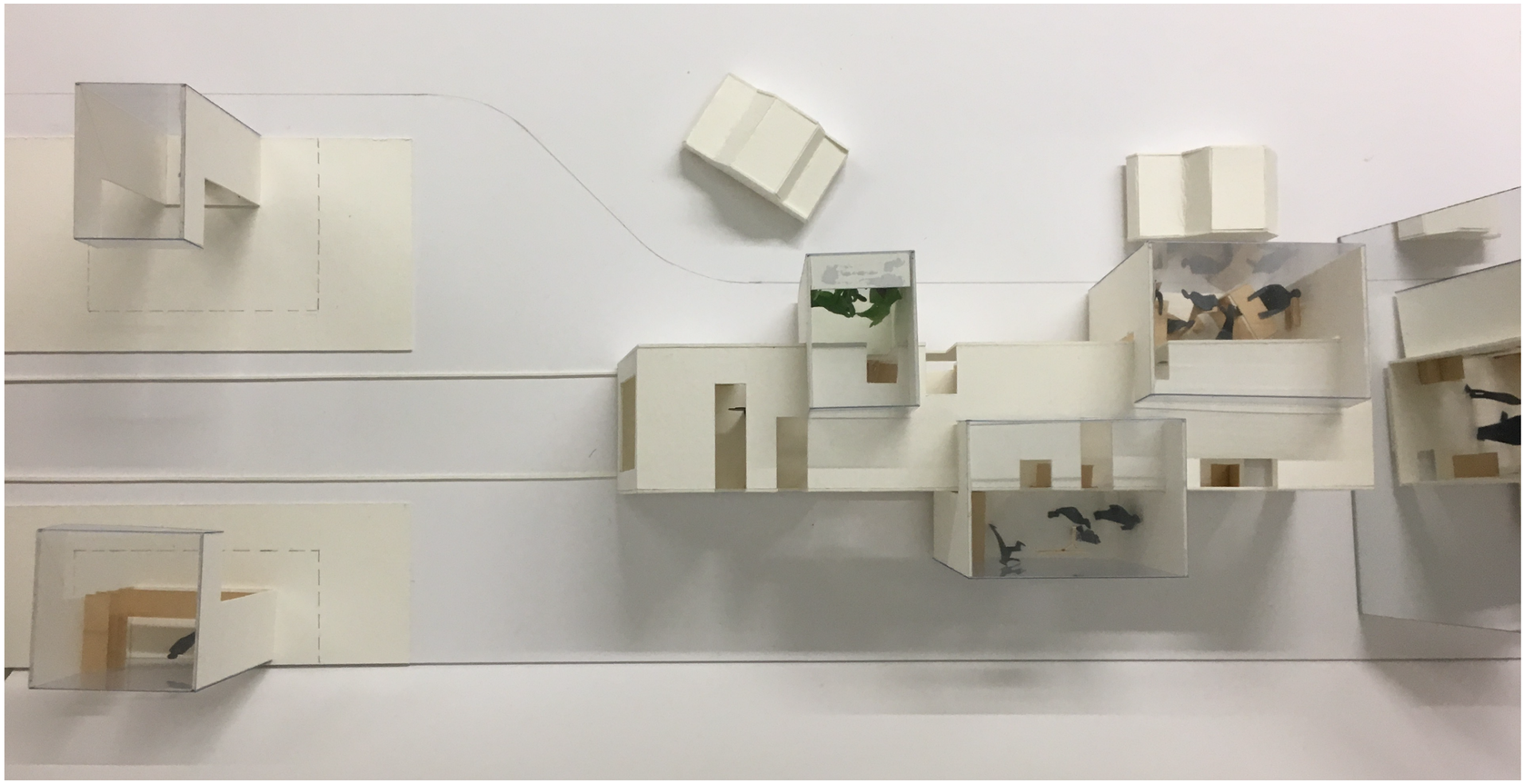
FIRST MODEL -

THE TRAM ITSELF

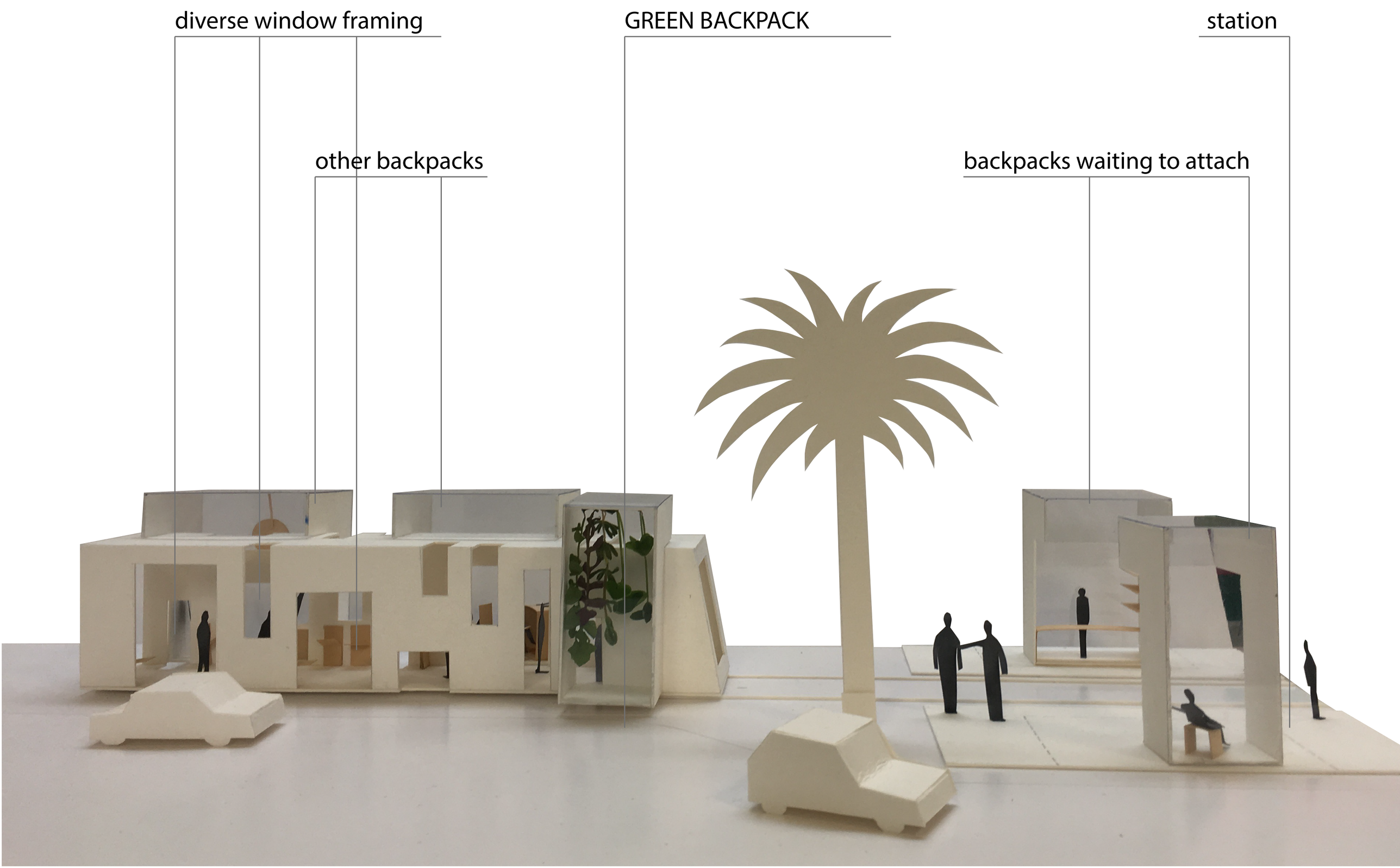
But as we combined all the individual approaches, we designed a very succesful idea of a tram with diverse window framing, that changed the perspective of the view and created entrances into the backpacks that included different programs such as: bar, restaurant, disco, tapas, flea market, flamenco music; that could represent the Spanish culture.

Since my idea was to transform all the tram's shell into a green system, it made more sense to be a part of a backpack, that would attach the air exchanger into the tram whenever necessary and improve the air.

We divided the first model into two different situations: the urban and rural (beach) context. The difference between those two is that in the urban context, the tram works as a cultural landmark, providing different activities connected to the culture and encouraging the passengers to use it. In the rural context, the tram works as a pavilion. It stops for a few minutes to let people enjoy the environment. It doesn't disturb the visitors, as they can walk right trough it without noticing.



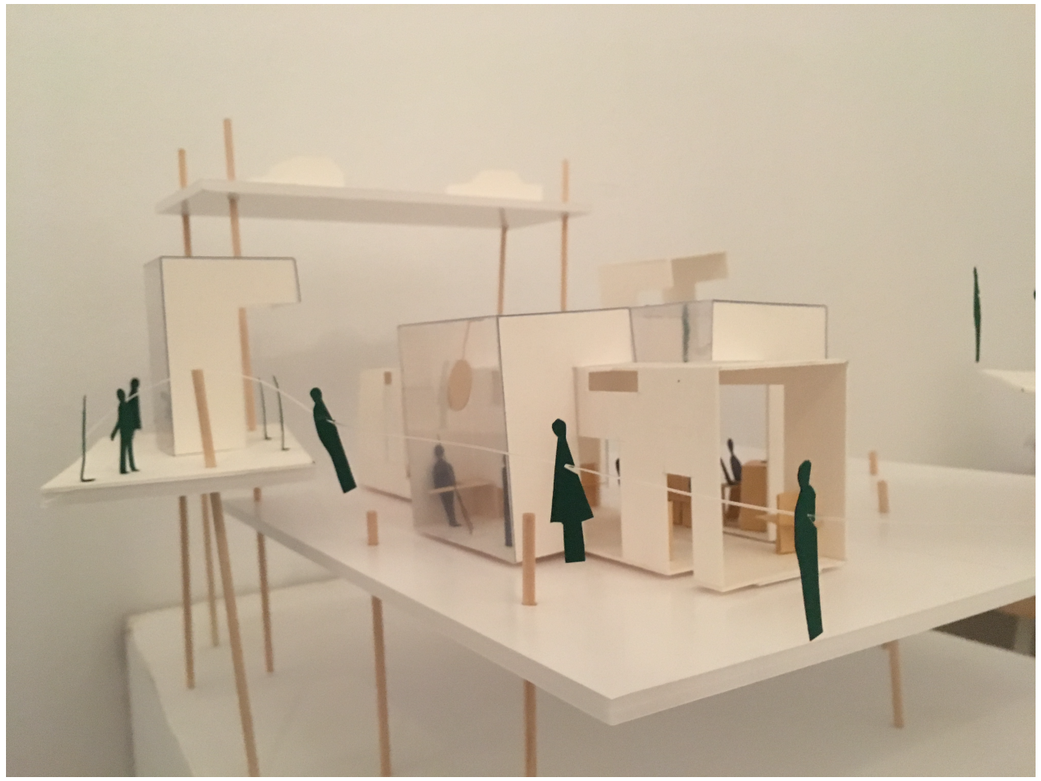
URBAN CONTEXT

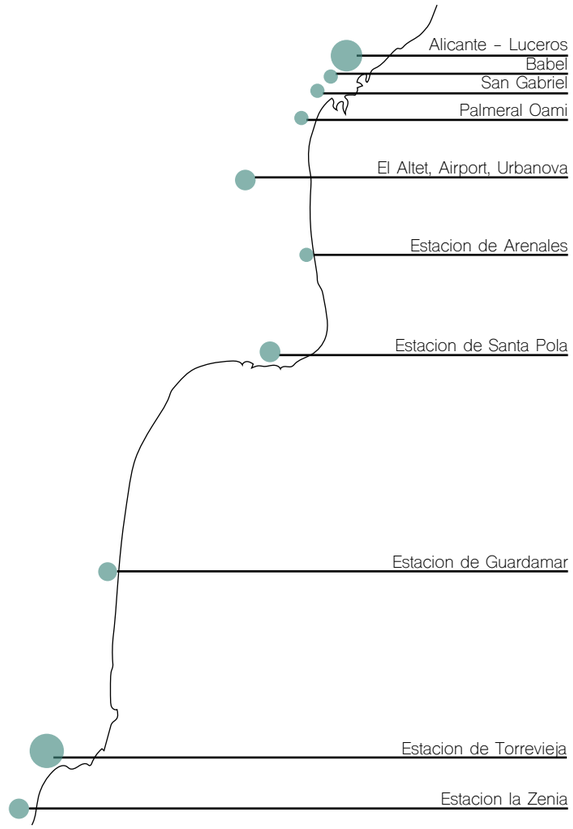


WORKSHOP III

THE HYBRID TRAM

We recycled our first model and tryed to get rid of the boundaries that defined the fist one. We created different situations on many platforms, which show the points of attraction before stepping on a tram. Those are: station, flea market, park, rural environment etc. To present the divesrsity of situations we lifted each of them on a different level, depending on the context. Therefore we created not only one defined space of activities but many different ones that we could connect to our preferences. To upgrade the model we provided a transparent string on which floated the people that were moving from one activity to antoher. The strings are the connections that at the end lead you to the tram, that is from the very beggining the embodiment of everything you have experienced so far.



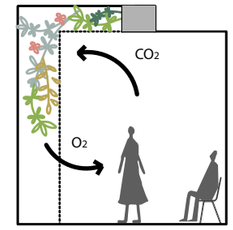


1. EXTENDING THE LINE OF THE TRAM

With extending the line to the south, we encourage people for daily travels to use that tram for working and tourists to discover the areas of the region.

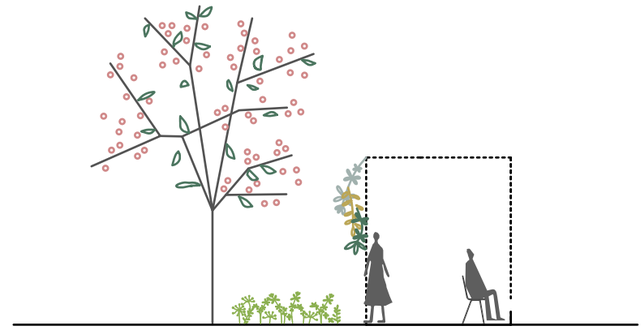
2. GREEN SYSTEM

In order to improve the air quality in trams, I propose a system, that successfully converts CO2 to O2, with the plants, that are incorporated into the glass walls. It also improves the interior of the space and reduces carbon footprint.



3. MAKE A TRAM AS A PART OF THE ENVIRONMENT

With thinking what could be the trams identity, one cannot just forget about the beneficial sides of the coast, that is a part of the tram during most of the ride. With proposing the south line, we decided to make it mostly coastal, made just to enjoy the peaceful environment. Sometimes, on the most popular energetic points (stations) of the area, the tram can also act as a pavilion.



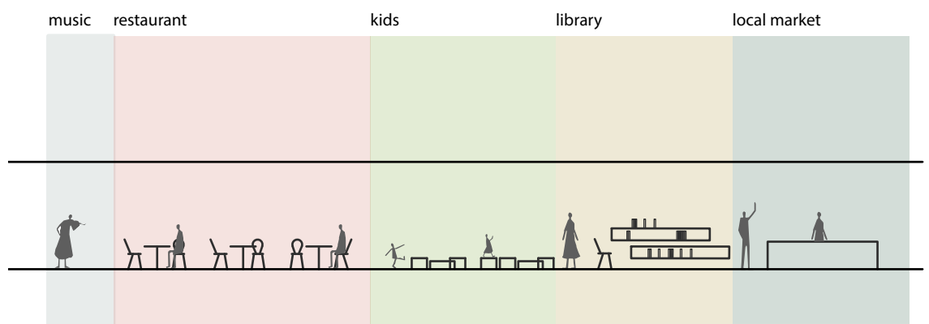
WORKSHOP III

THE MANIFESTO

What we need now, is a new manifesto, for a new age. Like Futurism and the Modern Movement, the Green Movement has arisen in response to a changing world.
It is a open statement of intent. It is also a means of inspiring others. Which is why I introduce 10 values and actions in relation to tram improvement.

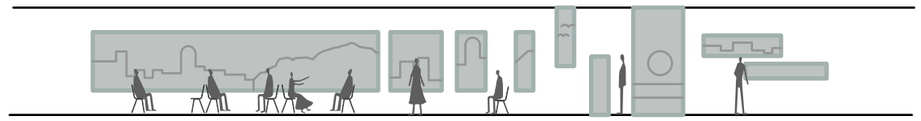
4. PROGRAM EFFICIENCY VS TIME EFFICIENCY

We should need more energy in order to improve the trams speed and availability, so it is more efcient to try to improve the tram's function and program. We should make it a form of comfortable, clean, reliable transport, that does not only make you sit and go trough the long ride, but also adapts to your preferences and emotions. Let's attach different activities that would make the tram ride more fun.



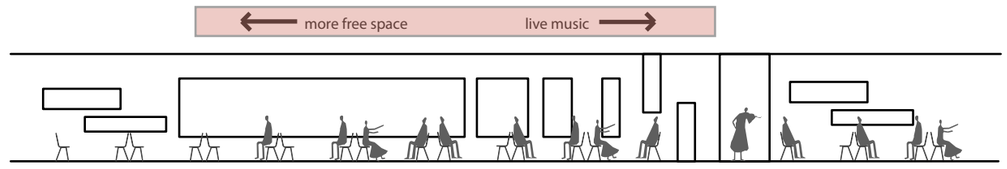
5. DIVERSE WINDOW FRAMING AND LIGHTNING

Proposing a more diverse framing of windows, could break the strict design of the tram into something more diverse and adaptable. Different framing therefore creates a different experience and different lightning conditions. In engages your eyes to see things they didn't before, and make you to be more aware of the surroundings.



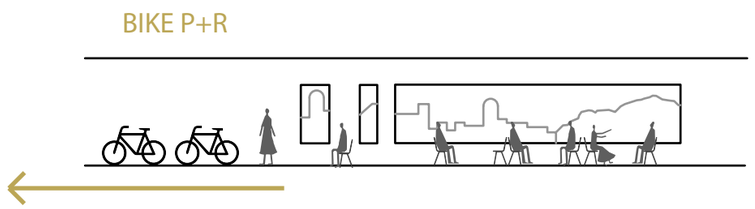
6. IMPROVE IT'S FUNCTION AND ORGANIZATION

In order to lead people trough the tram, we could be more accurate with providing them information about: how many seats are taken in each carriage (with a system that detects when the seats are lifted and when not), where they have the ability to experience programs, and where could they find a more suitable interior environment.

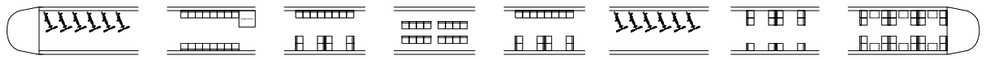


7. CARRYING BIKES AND PROMOTING A SYSTEM SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

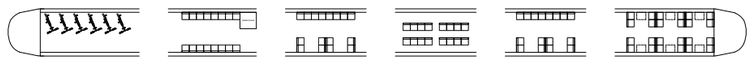
By allowing people to carry their bikes on the tram or providing them enough city rent-a-bikes on each station, they could easily access their preferred locations with the combined transport of tram and bike. This will be beneficial from the sustainable approach, as for the health improvement of people.

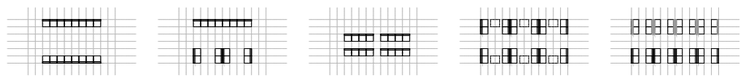


8. FLEXIBILITY OF SPACE



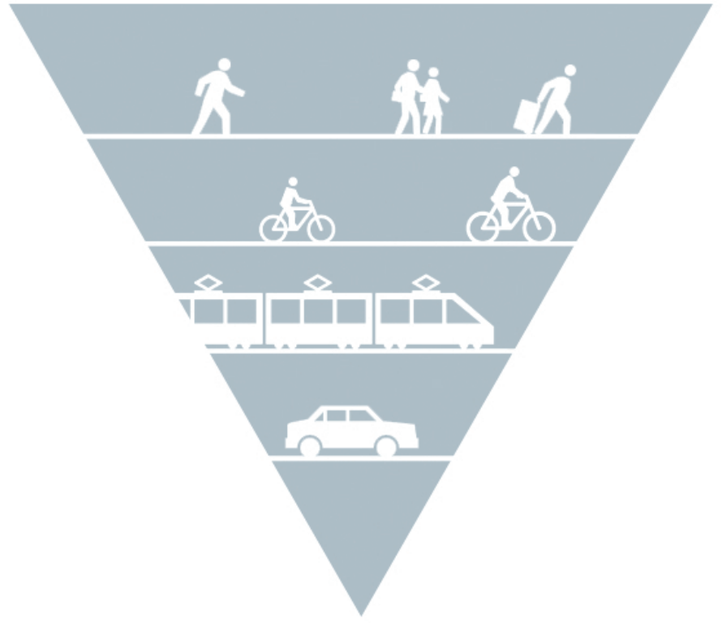
With not making the seats completely definite, we create a flexible seating system, that allows you to rearrange the seatings to your preferences and for ability to make more space for the programs, we are trying to incorporate.





9. NATURAL MATERIALS

In order to make the interior more enjoyable, we should make the transitions from plastic artificial materials to more natrual ones such as wood and recycled materials or furniture.

10. REDUCE THE USE OF CARS BY IMPROVING IT

All of this proposals, if efficient, contribute to the usage of the tram. If we make people more satisfied with the tram ride, we will hopefully make them spend more time out of their cars using the sustainable and fun type of transport, such as a proposed tram.