

A WAY INTO THE LANDSCAPE

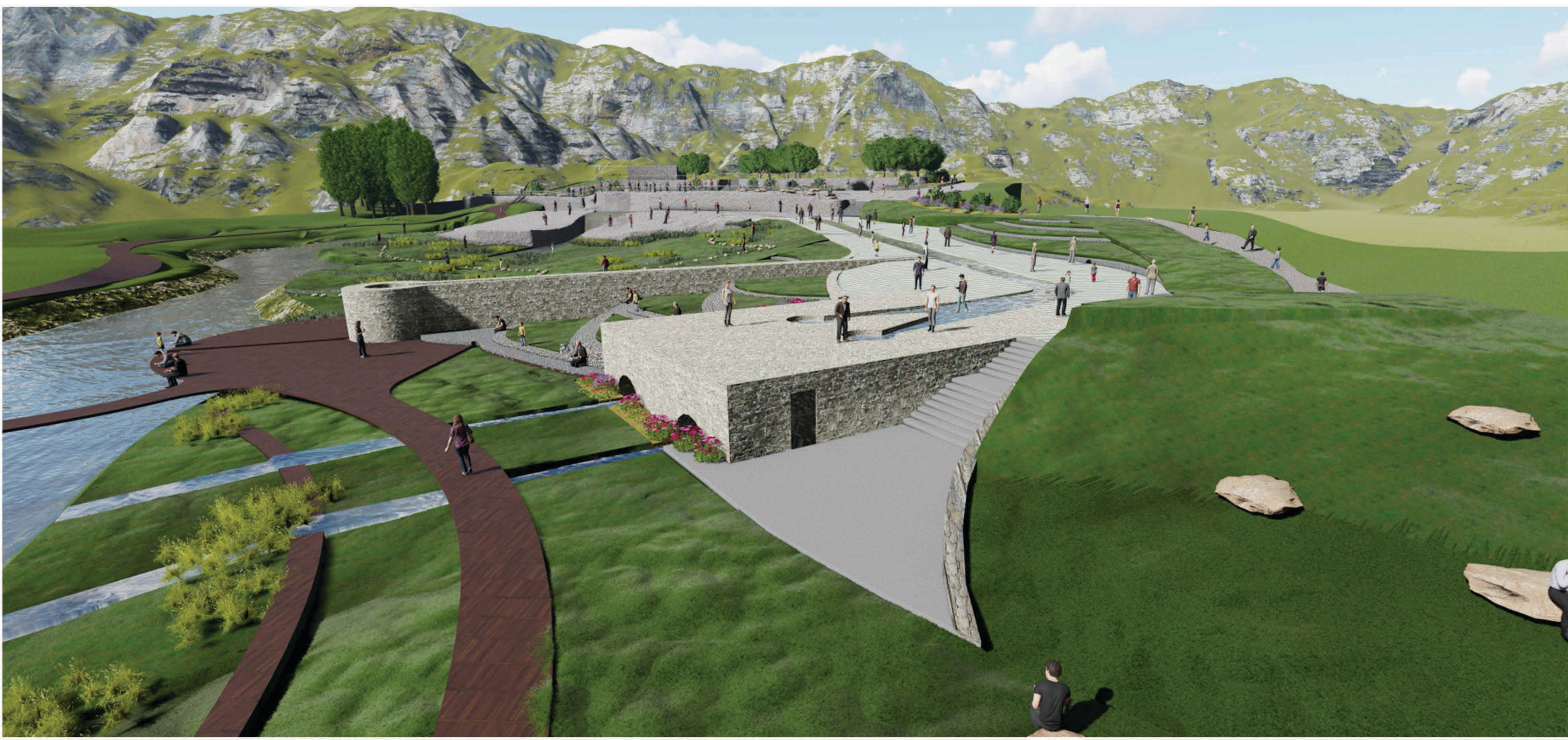
A THEMATIC TRAIL IN SAFITA CITY, SYRYA

Thematic trails are effective tools toward achieving sustainable development as they aim to enhance the economic, social and ecological situations. The proposed trail already holds several tangible and intangible values. Along with it, we can see the castle, which is the core of this city, a spring, which was the main resource for water since the beginning of the city, and a portion of the original forest that used to cover the whole area before the agriculture and urban development. In addition to that, we can find several other points which were built as a response to people's needs throughout history. Therefore, the trail represents a walk through the history of the area. Walking along it is like walking in an exhibition showing the development of the region, and its resources and telling the story of the landscape and the people.

The main problems that the trail suffers from are related to the lack of information and evaluation of the importance of this trail. Therefore, people are dealing with it as a normal road which is leading to the destruction of its values. Besides that, the missing administration also plays a huge role in the bad condition of the trail. Several stakeholders are responsible for different sections of it which lead to a missing united decision making. The proposed design tries to respond to these issues and overcome them using a participatory design strategy in order to bridge the gap between the residence and their nature. The implementation of the participatory design faced several obstacles, the main one was because of my current location as I am unable to keep in contact with the inhabitant and the second major problem was that it is hard to rise people's interest in a hypothetical project. Regardless of these challenges, the participatory process

led to rise the interest of some responsible persons who have the power and ability to make some urgent interventions to stop the degradation of the site. In addition to this, by this process, I was able to introduce the site and the idea of thematic trails to the locals and get some ideas that respond to the needs of the inhabitants.

The proposed strategy of the trail tries to take the best possible advantage of the existing resources whether they are physical or immaterial elements. This strategy works on the three main aspects of sustainable development. The first aspect is the economical one as the strategy proposes some solutions that can enhance the economic situation along the trail and provide a wide market for the local agriculture activities, in addition, to attract more tourists and investors to the area. The second aspect is the social one, as the proposal provides a serviced public space with a wide range of possibilities for various types of social activities, ceremonies, sports in addition to the learning opportunities. Finally, one of the main aims of this strategy is to protect natural resources as they represent the base of the project. All the proposals consider the surrounding nature and try to protect it and bring the residence back into it. The proposed design of the spring aims to provide the best possible experience of the natural resources of the site while fully respecting its original structure. The proposed solutions try to find the balance between all the elements and reactivate them to function as one big site. In addition to that, it tries to revitalize the historical elements of the site while providing information to the visitors so that they will be able to understand the old techniques of the watermills. So, the design is outlined by the existing original natural and historical resources.



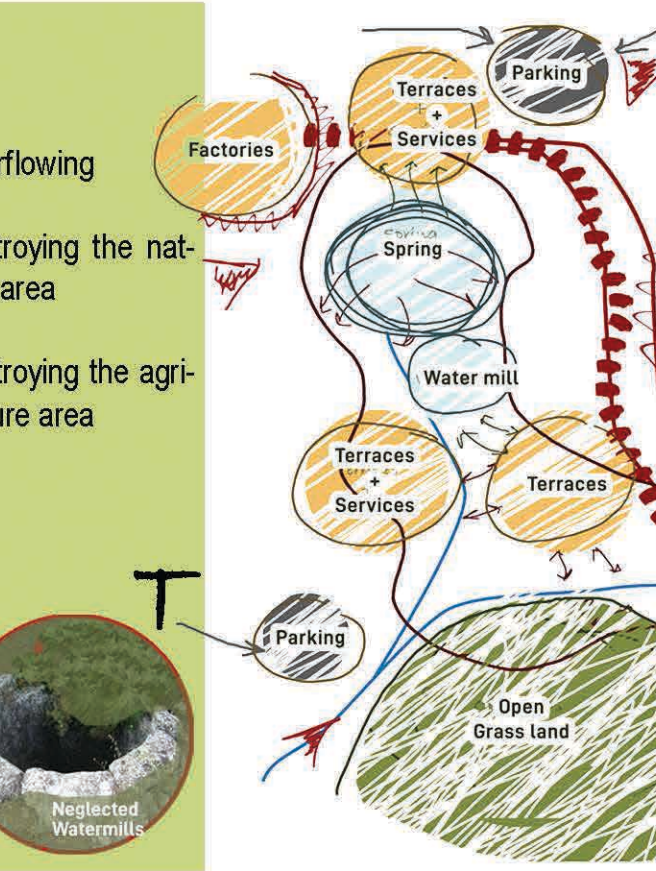
SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE TRAIL

S	O
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Accessible- Continuously active- Full of attraction points- Easy parts and challenging parts- Rich history and cultural values- Different sport activities- Different cultural activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Separated decision making- Lack of maintenance- Lack of services- Separated usage and administration- No safe playgrounds- No safe water-sports- No regulation to protect the spring- Many unrelated functions
W	T
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Attracting the urban sprawl- Revitalizing internal tension- Overflowing- Destroying historical sites- Changing the cultural values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Tourism opportunities- Spreading knowledge- Expansion of the greenway- Revitalization of historical and cultural values- Attracting investments- Economic benefits- Sport and cave activities

SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE SPRING

S	O
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Great values- Historical areas- Hold an identity of the area- Beautiful site- Visual connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Visual conflict- Overflowing- No administration- No parking lots- No Services- Overlapping zones- No safe activities- No protection regulation
W	T
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Visual Conflicts- Overflowing- Lack of maintenance- Neglected watermill	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Sport activities- Camping activities- Cave activities- A starting point for other green ways- Organized religious ceremonies- tourism area

STRATEGY OF THE SPRING



SECTION



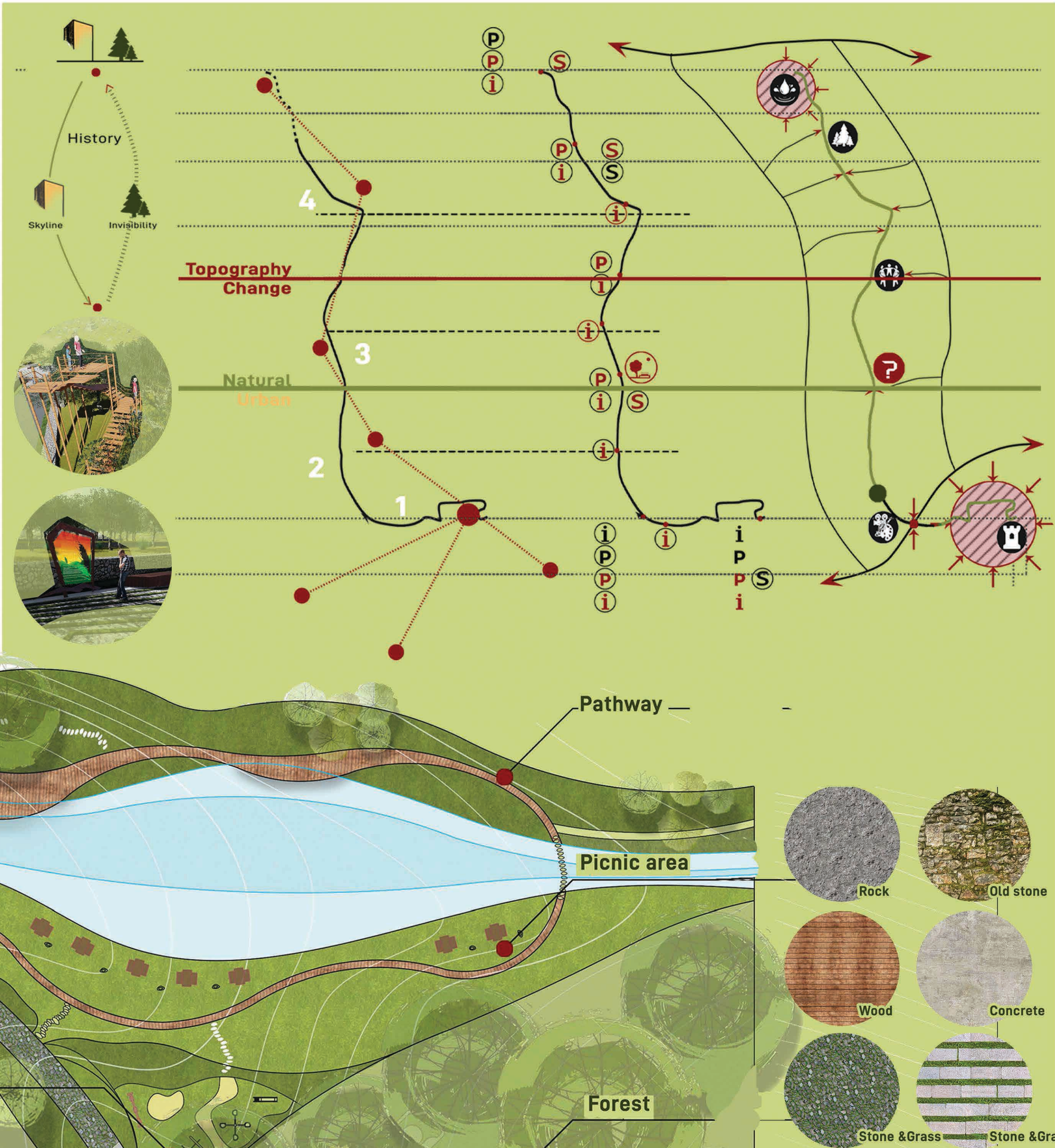
VISUALIZATION



MASTER PLAN OF THE SPRING SITE



STRATEGY OF THE TRAIL



WATERMILLS ZONE



SITTING STONES



THE SPRING ZONE

