

↳ LANDUSE  
AS MEASURE

17TH INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURE EXHIBITION  
LA BIENNALE DI VENEZIA  
PAVILION OF TURKEY

ALEXIS A.  
ŞANAL

Architecture<sup>12</sup> as<sup>2</sup> Measure<sup>7</sup>  
Ölçü<sup>4</sup> Olarak<sup>6</sup> Mimarlık<sup>8</sup>

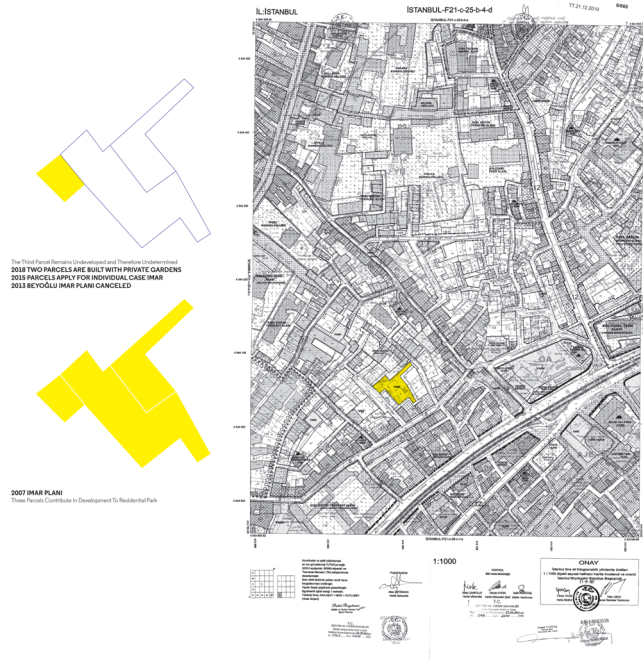


Image by the author.

Central Planning Agency issued a land-use plan for the Hacımimi District<sup>1</sup> in Ankara in 2013 and under the Administration of the Landmark Commission prioritized a residential neighborhood future. The priority of the land-use plan is to discourage any other facilities other than residences. The plan expropriated the lands for parks and infrastructures and would be returned to public lands during the new developments. At that time, the make-up of residents ranged from affluent residing in a few historic buildings to the most vulnerable of urban squatters as well as minority communities dwelling in with low rents. Between these two demographics were art studios, micro-manufacturing, and elderly housing run by foundations as well as many derelict parcels long vacant.

In 2013, the many parcels simultaneously went under re-development with a cooperative group of property owners, developers, architects, and builders. In the process, many landowners were anxious about the neighborhood character being lost because of new residents, and several public parks were planned adjacent to their properties. The new plan offers that 10-40% of their property would be returned to public lands. By 2015, residents succeeded in canceling the land-use plan by claiming that the İmar Durumu (zoning) did not provide enough green space for the number of planned residents.<sup>2</sup> With a new land-use plan in 2016, each property owner had the right to apply for an independent land-use for their individual property. The standing to provide for wider streets remained. That meant that all the public facilities were no longer required for the parcel's redevelopment.

1 Hacımimi is a historic neighbourhood in Galata District. In the 19th century, the land was used for edible trees, ship making, blacksmiths and tobacco storage. It was the settlement between the bustling trading docks along Bosphorus' Genoese shoreline in Karaköy and the international merchants and embassies located at Galata's upper hilltops.

2 See the 2015 permit plans for land-use from the 2013 İmar Durumu.

## Paperwork<sup>42</sup>

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By 2021, five parcels were permitted and realized. This final drawing is a comparative measure of what could have been public land and what is now public land. So, the district still does not have an İmar Durumu as a whole. Due to economic and political pressures of economic contraction, developers ultimately neither coordinated their parcels nor shared resources; thus, the majority of the project remains privatized for residential short-term rental and long-term rentals. As the buildings were specifically designed for residential life, they are heavily surrounded by balconies, verandas, and on-site gardens. Creating a robust urban micro-ecology with trees and facades covered in vines and habitats with access to deep soil, having interconnected human-scaled parks for human connectivity and community making, and streets as the tissue that connects these living systems remains afar. Land-use is a bureaucratic document seemingly deterministic on property hegemony and urban form, yet it measures the parameters of how a nation, a city, the built environment professionals values community, social infrastructure, economic priorities, ecological stewardship. Land use is a dynamic document that demands our attention with what it measures.

## About the author

Alexis Şanal is a co-founder of SANALarc's knowledge-centric studio focused on civil and civic architecture, research and city-design based in Istanbul. Her passion is exploring living culture and built environments that blend contemporary urban realm with timeless physical and natural contexts to create imaginative and meaningful experiences. She holds a Bachelor of Architecture from SCI-Arc and Master of City Planning from MIT.