

# Kypseli, Athens

*Fokionos Negri Street*

Fokionos Negri street is in the neighbourhood of Kypseli. It is a long pedestrianised street, which hosts Kypseli Square and connects people with the city centre. The street and square provide one of the few open and green spaces amongst the mixed use, dense neighbourhood and busy streets.

Today, the street is not what it used to be. While it remains closed to cars, the quality of the street environment has deteriorated, and it is no longer sufficient for the number of apartment dwellers and dogs which live in the area. Alongside this, the wider neighbourhood lacks pedestrian corridors and greenspace - placing increased pressures on this area

The rise in Kypseli's population presents an opportunity to revitalise the street and use it as an anchor to drive further upgrades to the other streets of the surrounding neighbourhood streets. Within this competition, students are asked to redesign Fokionos Negri street as a commercial, creative space, which provides a

place for people to rest and enjoy Kypseli. Students should also identify key surrounding streets that could be regenerated and retrofitted as key pedestrian and cyclist corridors to connect to Fokionos Negro Street, and as a means to deliver smaller 'pocket' parks.

Students should consider how upgrades cannot only deliver improved quality of life for residents, but also how the main streets, and supporting corridors can be used to progress climate goals. How can the design of the streets reduce the cities greenhouse gas profile, and increase resident's resilience to a changing climate?

Restoring ecosystems in a way that helps reduce flood risk, the effects of urban heat islands, and sequester carbon will be key. The river which currently runs beneath Fokionos Negri Street could have a strong role to play in achieving this.



## Approx. site area:

The Fokionos Negri Street and Kypseli Square together are about 3 hectares, however, students may also consider surrounding streets.

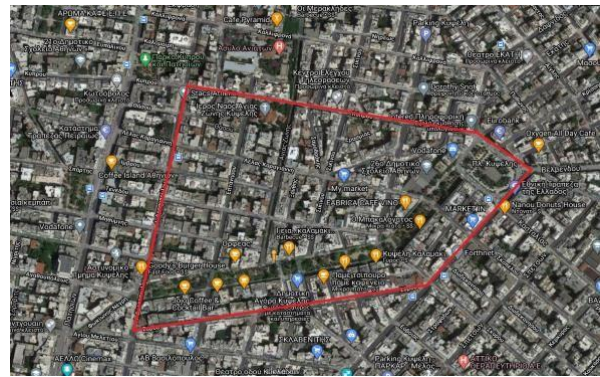
## Demographics:

Kypseli is a very diverse neighborhood, which includes old Athenians, students, artists, creatives, NGOs, innovative entrepreneurs, immigrants, solidarity networks and many community organizations.

## Priority areas & main City expectations:

Fokionos Negri and Kypseli Square, along with the surrounding streetscapes should be, a unified, car-free landscape that transports people into the city in a low emissions way and through maximizing nature Water should be considered as a key resource. Human interaction with natural ecosystems and well designed public spaces can not only improve quality of life, but also enhance climate resilience, commercial activity and security, and also social cohesion.

## Presentation of the site



Kypseli is a highly populated and social mixed area, characterized by an extremely dense urban environment, with limited open spaces. This dense environment often creates traffic and parking problems, while simultaneously hindering the natural lighting and airflow to the narrow streets and lower levels of the buildings.

Fokionos Negri Street is in the heart of the 6th Municipal District of Athens. The street became pedestrianized in the mid-19th century. It was one of the most desirable streets to live on, among upper class Athenians. Nowadays, it is used mostly by residents as a recreational space and hosts many cafes-restaurants and some retail shops. Additionally, significant key areas in the site are Kanari's Square, the Municipal Market of Kypseli and the pedestrian street of Agias Zonis.

By the 1990s residents began to age, and population declined. This coupled with the economic crisis and the Greek recession led to the deterioration of the neighborhood. However, as house prices declined, immigrants, artists and creatives moved into the neighbourhood and population density has once again increased.



Today, the site is not what it used to be. While the pedestrian streets remain closed to cars, the quality of the street environment has deteriorated, and the transport system is no longer sufficient for the number of apartment dwellers and dogs which live in the area.

Traffic in the neighboring streets can be quite heavy. High car dependency has created congestion and with increases in population, people struggle to find places to park. Additionally, poor road quality and minimal pedestrian corridors and green spaces mean many people do not walk and cycle. The metro has not been extended towards the 6th municipal district and public transport is not satisfactory. A new metro station is currently planned for Kanari's square and traffic relief is expected. There is an opportunity to consider how wider investment in the urban realm around this area could help increase uptake by providing essential connections for residents and accommodating increased pedestrian flows.

Worth mentioning is the Municipal Market of Kypseli. It is located on Fokionos Negri. Nowadays mixed-use development has been achieved in the Market, including learning opportunities, food and clothing retail, civilian service and refugee support. Due to its historical characteristics, the Market is a landmark for the whole area. Furthermore, the pedestrian street of Agias Zonis meets the main pedestrian zone of Fokionos Negri. This sidewalk is surrounded by housing blocks, there are some degraded green spaces and also the evidence of a stream which has historically been buried underground.

The densely built urban environment hides the remarkable examples of Interwar Architecture, identified in numerous buildings influenced by the Bauhaus and Art Deco movements. The fading image of historical buildings creates cultural routes needing to be empowered.

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## City climate priorities and specific environmental issues to address

Athens is implementing its Climate Plan which is also currently being updated. Some main goals of the plan include:

- Building resilience to Extreme Heat (Heatwaves plus Urban Heat Island Effects)
- Mitigation of Flash Flooding
- Enhancement of flora and pollinator biodiversity and protection of natural resources
- Sustainable waste management
- Reduction of energy consumption and the production of GHG emissions
- Enhancement of non-carbon and soft mobility
- Protection of public health
- Awareness-raising, information, and mobilization of the civil society
- Promotion of circular economy

Students should look for opportunities to respond to climate mitigation and adaptation goals through the site. Students should consider how improving the urban realm may help to achieve these, giving attention to nature-based solutions, such as creating blue and green corridors in the City by uncovering or enhancing the water elements and using them to mitigate extreme heat and flooding. Revegetating streets and open spaces, creating pollinator friendly green spaces, vertical gardens, and green roofs could be some of the important factors to consider providing shelter from extreme heat.

## Other expectations for the site's redevelopment

A sustainable community acknowledges that environmental, economic and social issues are interrelated and

should be addressed holistically. Thus, some of the wider goals to be addressed through the competition include:

- Support social communities and social groups (Third-aged, youth, immigrants)
- Social integration of minorities
- Value and protect diversity and strengthen cultural identities
- Create business opportunities and enhance small sized enterprises
- Support artists and develop cultural network
- Enhance places, spaces and abandoned buildings to empower mixed-uses
- Emphasize on human health and amenity through safe, clean and pleasant environments
- Highlighting the architectural heritage

The development of a social network that supports economic and cultural values could be considered. Furthermore, connecting open spaces, public buildings, art centers would be significant factors to achieve social interactions.

## Specific city planning rules and regulations

Some general rules/restrictions to take into account are:

- For emergency vehicle access, 3.5m free width on the pedestrian streets.
- Green spaces should not touch the buildings.
- For pavement enlargements, we should have one car lane min 3.5m width for one-way streets and min 6.5m width for two-way streets (without car parking).
- Accessibility for people with special needs.
- Use of playground equipment is not allowed freely in public space. Only in organized groups in a fenced or hedged area.
- Gymnastic equipment can be placed freely in the space.

## Language requirements

Students are invited to submit proposals in either Greek or English.