



For: **JP Ventures**

Arquitectos

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## **Introduction**

The project consists of a proposal for a sustainable adventure colony of thatched roof, water front cabanas in Playa Burica in the South West of Panama. It will be developed by JP Ventures.

## **Playa and Punta Burica**

Punta Burica is a privileged location that few have had the opportunity to get to know and it is perceived as a key location during the next tourism boom in Panama.

It is a small coastal relief protruding from the Burica Peninsula on the Pacific Ocean. It is located in the far west of Panama, in the Chiriquí province ( the border with Costa Rica lies beyond the point) further south is the small island of Burica.

At the point, Burica Island can be reached on foot once a year, being one kilometer from the mainland (this happens as the sea parts on the low tide allowing foot access. This happens twice a day for a few hours every day for over a week).

Across the water from the point, there is a rock, 1 and a half miles away approximately (2 kms), this is called *la viuda* the widow and known in many legends.

In the town of Bella Vista there is a hill which can be climbed in close to 30 minutes and from it all of Punta Burica can be seen ( The island, la viuda, the coast of Costa Rica and even the *parida* islands.



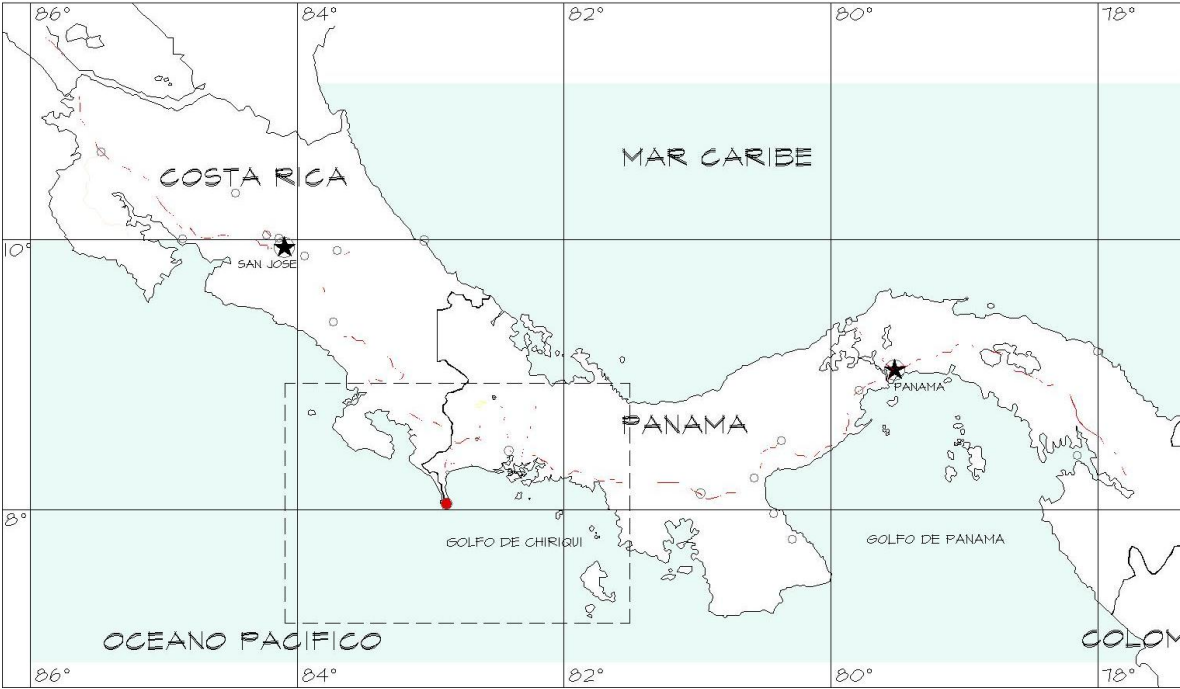


Image 1. Geographic Location



## **Image 2. Satellite Image of Burica Peninsula**

### **General Objectives**

The project is intended to satisfy a demand for water sports, adventure, and ecological interest tourism in the area, which is rich in attributes and attractions.

### **Specific Objectives**

To sustainably construct the cabanas with locally produced materials. And to do so in a sustainable way, with materials and activities that will be friendly and harmonious with the environment while enabling the enjoyment of nature.

### **Project Scope**

The project consists on the development of a 2.86 acre (11,954 sqm) site into a complex of 30 Cabanas in parcels of approximately 1 half acre (2,023.42 sqm), the general layout will include common areas, trails, landscaping and facilities as described in this report.

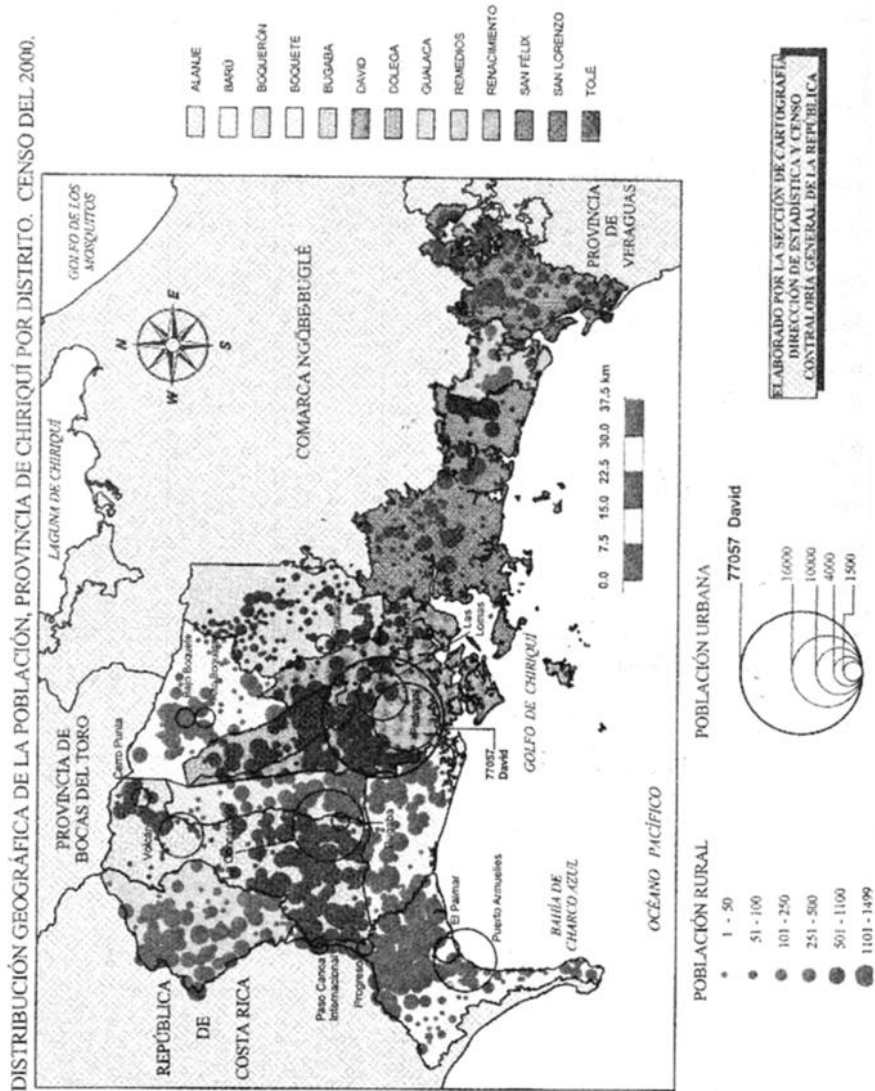
## **Existing Conditions**

### **Population**

In a 7Km radius from the souther tip of the point there is a population of 2,034 people.

According to the 2000 census, the economically active population 10 years and older for the district of Barú is of a total 20,946





**Image 3.** Population distribution in the Province of Chiriquí. Source Contraloría de Panamá.

### Biodiversity

The vegetation is widely diverse and the fauna includes a wide variety of forest and beach birds which are not afraid to let themselves be seen. Marine fauna is plentiful at plain sight, with mollusks, crustaceans, and all types of marine invertebrates that are difficult to spot in other Panamanian coasts.





**Images 4,5.** Red Spider and Squirrel Monkeys

**Landscape**



**Image 6.** Punta Burica waterfront





**Image 7.** Geological formations

“The peninsula is mainly a sedimentary formation. Due to the small width of the continental platform in this region and the sharp slopes that rise from the bottom of the ocean to form the peninsula, there are peculiar and beautiful sedimentary rock formations that are characteristic to this place and that are visible during low tide. The geological structure of the peninsula is composed of three different sediment layers; the oldest one, the La Peñita Formation, is an estimated 3.5 million years old, the following one, the Burica formation is estimated at 3 million years and the most recent, Armuelles formation, between 1.7-1.9 million years old.”<sup>1</sup>

A drive through the beach to the site during low tide adds to the visitor’s experience, allowing the visitor to appreciate the coast from the petrol terminal to Punta Burica. Which will add value and potential to the zone, for the three different environments to be enjoyed (ocean, shore and land).

The sea, the sand and the breaking waves are beautiful when seen above and below the water. There are coral, spectacular rocks and large fish can be spotted while diving.

### **Lodging**

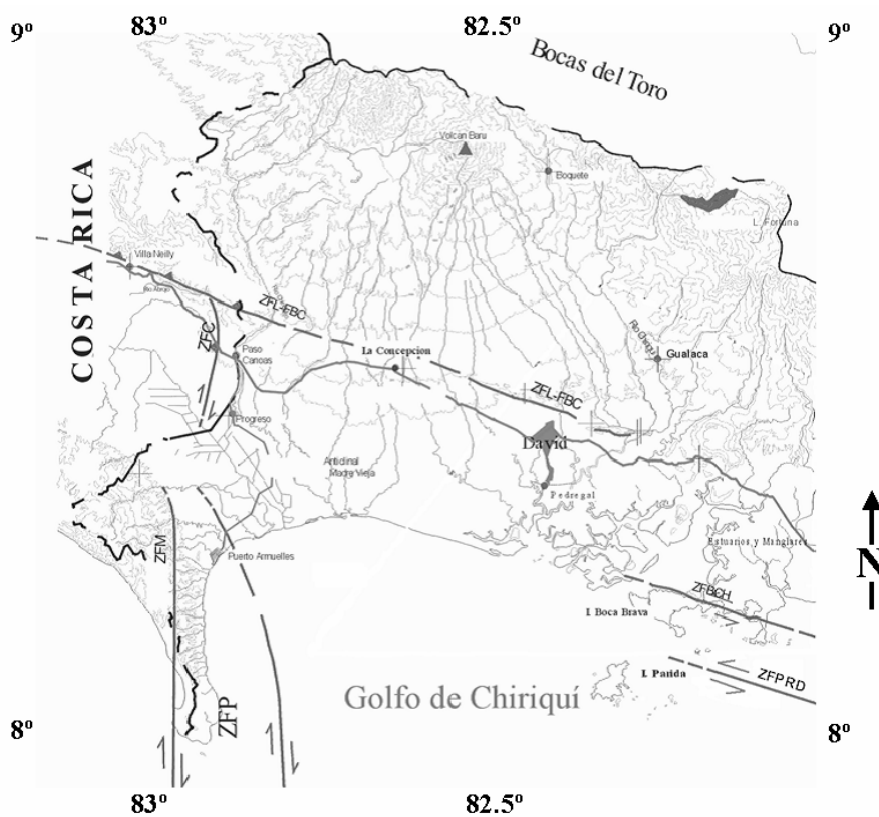
In Punta Burica, Lodging can be found in *Mono Feliz*, Happy Monkey and *Tigre Salvaje* Wild Tiger, small



lodges for tourists.

### Seismic and tectonic activity

In the southern tip of the border between Panama and Costa Rica there is a point where the Caribbean, Nazca and del Coco tectonic plate coincide and it has been suggested that this point is below the Burica Peninsula or south of it on the intersection of the subduction zone of Central America and the fracture zone of Panama. This is one of the most active seismic zones in Central America and the most active in Panama. The nearest faults are the Media Fault Zone (ZFM), Panama Fracture zone (ZFP), and Boca Chica (ZFL-FBC).



**Image 8.** Tectonic Faults in Chiriquí Province



## Accessibility

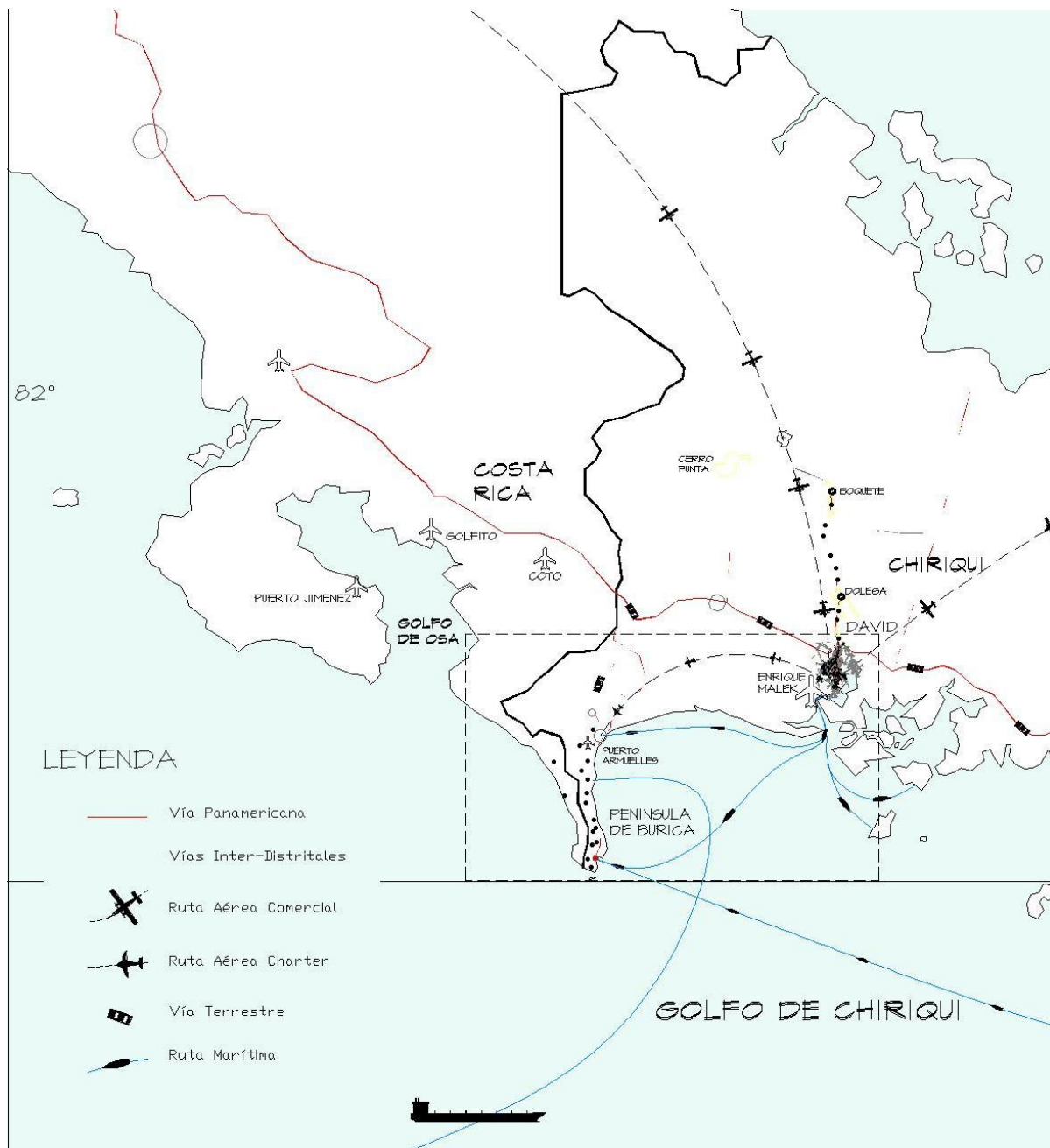


Image 9. Accesibility diagram



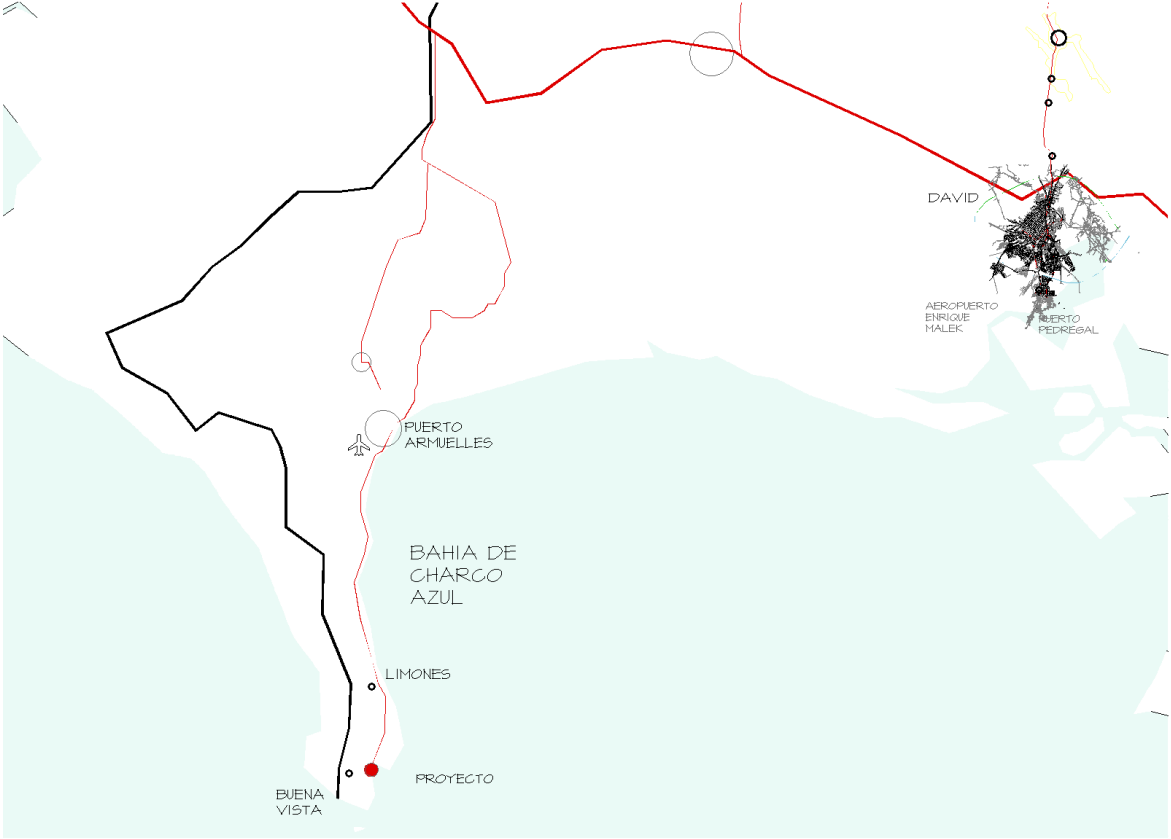
Most visitor access to Playa Burica today is by 4x4 cars that drive through the beach, however there are nearby landing strips on both the panamanian and costa rican sides of the border

David is an important service and access hub with the Enrique Malek Airport, which receives passengers from Costa Rica and the port of Pedregal, from which sea access to the point is possible, making an interesting possibility of visitor experiences.

#### **Nearby Airports and Landing Strips**

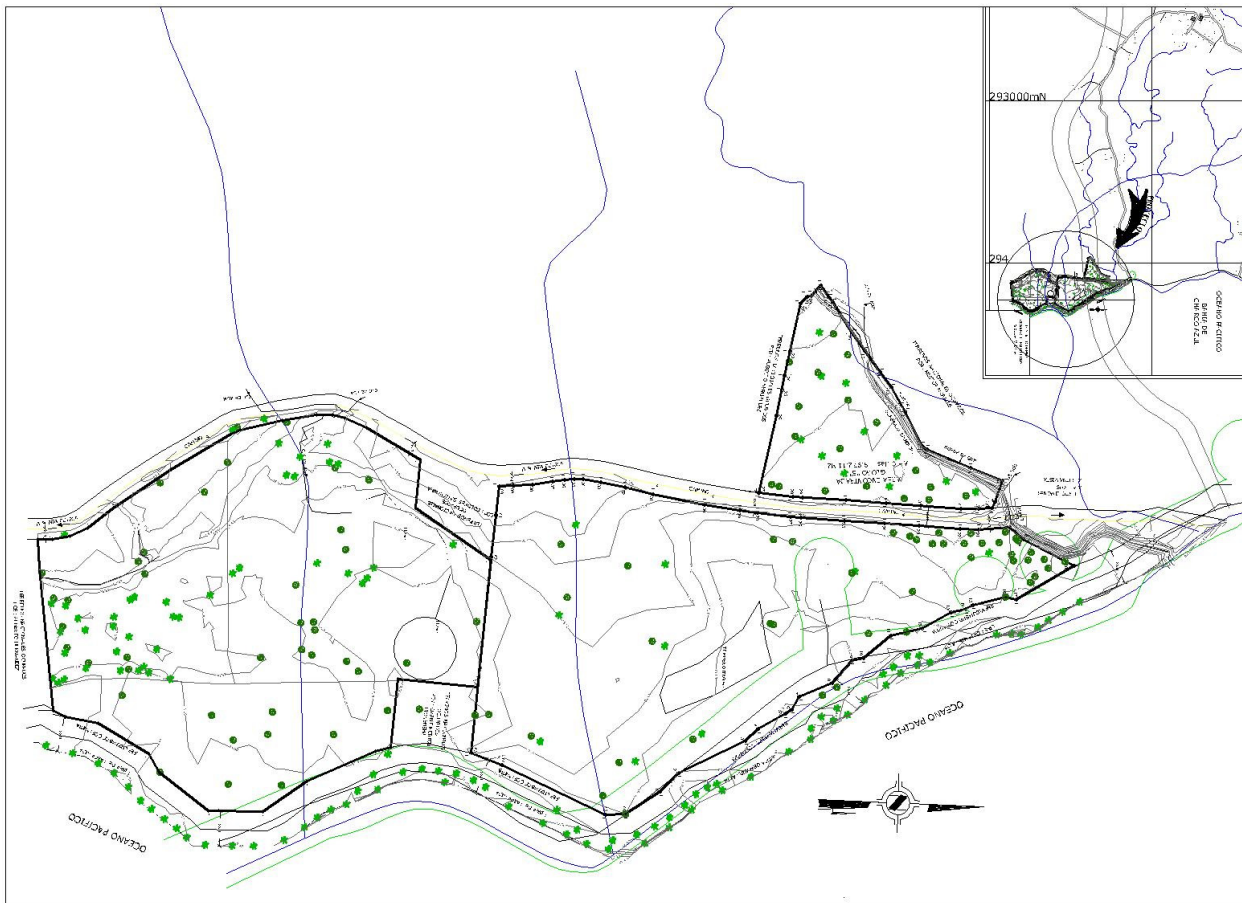
<b>Code</b>	<b>IATA</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Distance</b>
<a href="#">FR4479</a>		PUERTO ARMUELLES		14 nm N
<a href="#">FR4482</a>		FINCA CEIBA		19 nm N
<a href="#">MRCC</a>	OTR	COTO 47		34 nm N
<a href="#">MPDA</a>	DAV	ENRIQUE MALEK INTL	David	33 nm E





**Image 10.** Diagram of larger towns, road and airports along Burica Peninsula Specific Site





**Image 11.** Existing site and topography

The site is made up of three plots of land, two of which have direct waterfront access and the third lies across the road. It is relatively flat terrain with recent secondary growths including some palm and fruit trees, and some bamboos of ornamental value. The site's grassy flats have caused some water to accumulate in moist or slightly flooded, grassy patches which must be drained to best take advantage of the site. It must be noted that despite puddles and small marshes it is not an area troubled by mosquitoes.

## Site Layout



Stage development plan

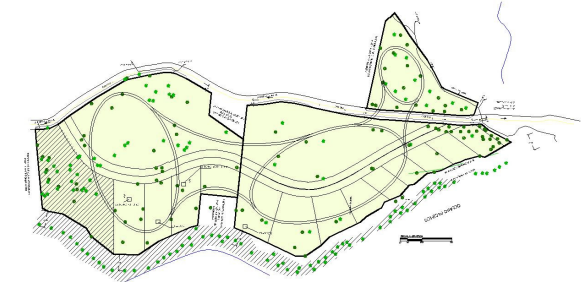




ETAPA INICIAL



ETAPA 2



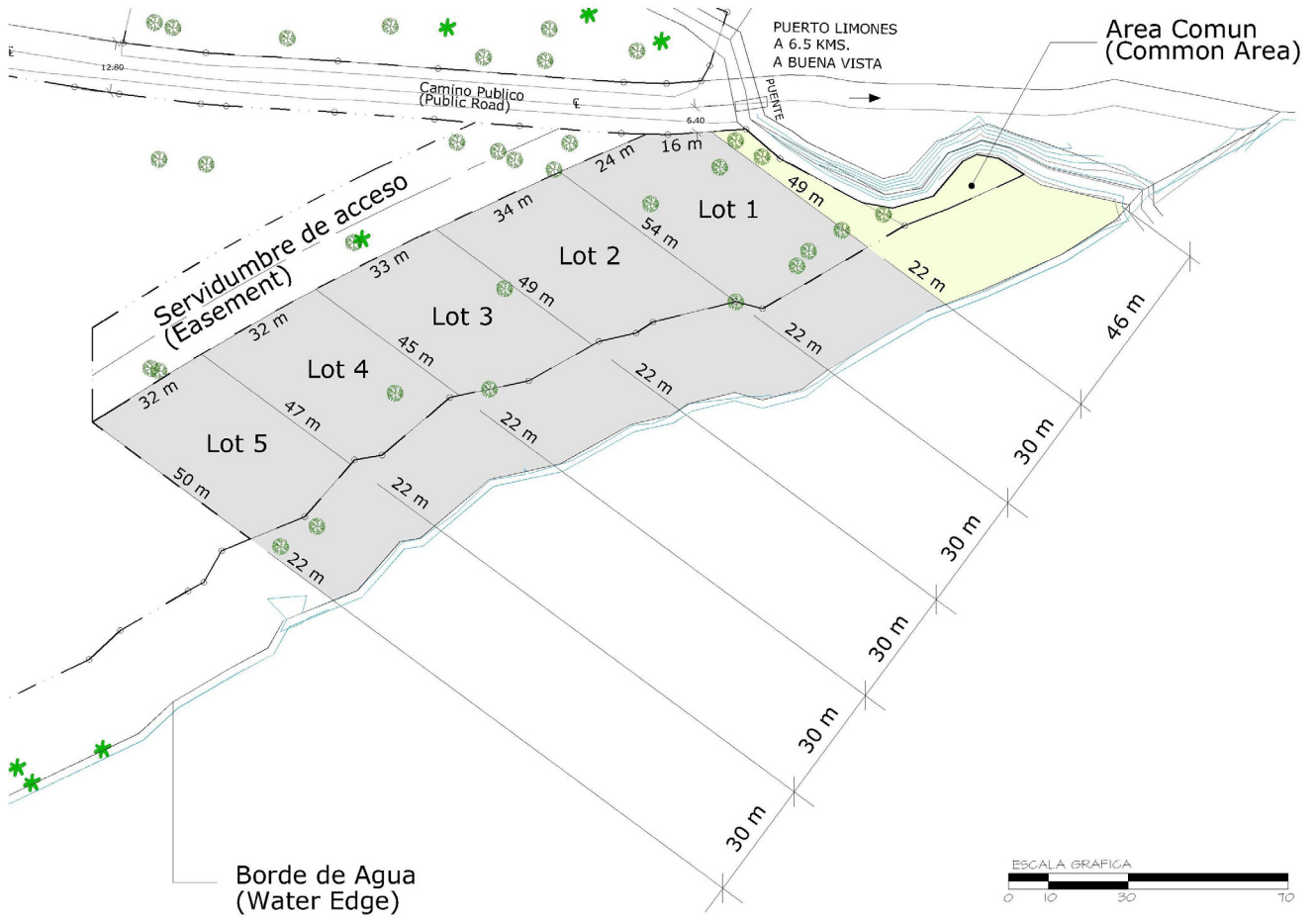
ETAPA 3



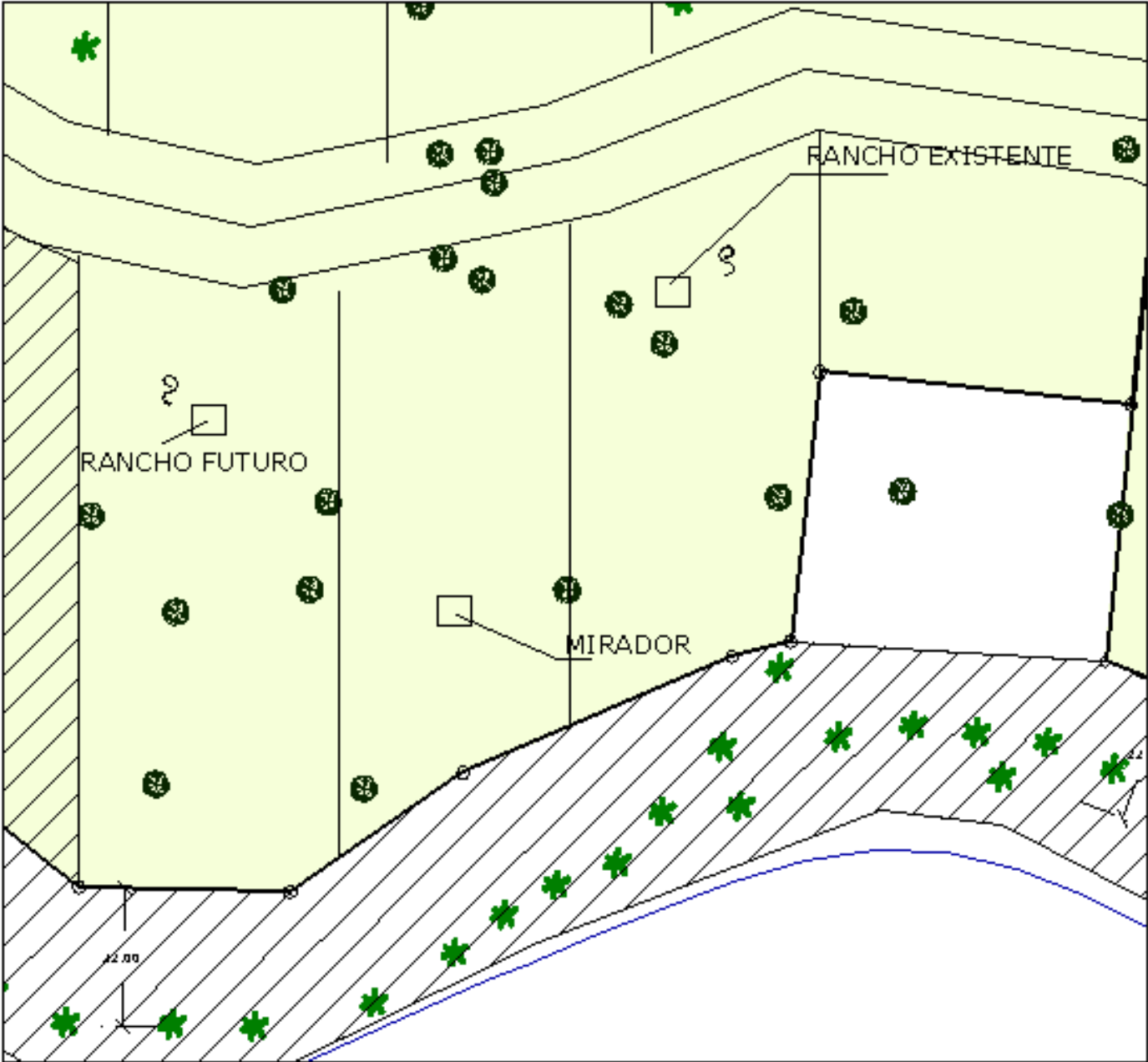
ETAPA 4



First 5 lots



First Cabanas and lookout lounge



## Existing Studies

The new tourism development plan identifies 26 tourist destination zones in the country as opposed to the 9 zones of the earlier one. The province of Chiriqui is now considered as five distinct destinations as opposed to one in the old plan. The new listing includes , Boquete, the highlands, Puerto Armuelles, the Ngöbe-Buglé community and the Gulf of Chiriqui which includes Punta Burica.

The Jaime Lehrner plan, commissioned by the public and private sector in David Chiriqui proposes a plan to develop and manage the city of David and the hillside landscape leading to Dolega, Boquete and also Cerro Punta. It proposes a north/south axis of tourist service stopping points (*rendezvous* villages) along the road to Boquete. It is considered that an important strategic complement which would be very beneficial, both to the Chiriqui Province and to Punta Burica, and particularly to the province would be to extend this axis all the way south to Puerto Pedregal and to establish a tourist ferry transport service to the nearby islands and marine national parks and Punta Burica and beyond to Costa Rica. This would also favorably impact the Pedregal community and its economy.

It will be necessary to coordinate with tour operators to facilitate the establishment of these marine linkages.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

### General Strategy Points,

#### Playa Burica Project.

- Avoid conflict with Ministerio de Vivienda (MIVI) codes, and general development regulations in order to keep open the possibility of eventual titling of the land and other permits.
- Mostly keep basic principles such as individual lot access, density, and public spaces around 7.5% which are already contemplated in the development. These will be taken into account in the phasing plan. Note to self: Check whether *sevidumbre* 22 meters counts as public space.
- Due to remote accessibility and scarcity of health care and emergency services nearby it is recommended to provide some kind of health, emergency or first aid presence on the project. It is possible to create synergy with the surrounding community for this purpose which may extend to other things such as reforestation and even maybe education projects. There is a [helicopter medical rescue service](#) in Panama. Space requirements for a Helipad may be available within the public areas of the project or in the project area while undeveloped.
- Punta Burica is one of the places of Panama with the most seismic activity. We will look into reinforcing the ranchos accordingly.
- There should be a strategy to make best use of the undeveloped land during the period before it is developed and leading up to it. Trails,
- One possible use, as mentioned above is a helipad. We will look into what this may imply. Other uses



include some organic farming which may be carried out through agreements with locals and it can be an attractive feature for the project. Social Responsibility. Also the tree plantings and landscaping for the general site can begin early on in order to bring up the value of the land for subsequent development. Groups of native tree species can be planted in the areas designated for future public use and also along the limits of the proposed new plots. These landscaping and tree planting strategies must be low maintenance and pasive to some degree, use of native species requires less care and some species like the *periquito* tree will attract birds to the land which will scatter seeds of diverse species. This is a strategy used by the [Native Species Reforestation Project \(PRORENA\)](#). [Consider bringing in a reforestation / sustainability expert.](#)

- Water transportation connection to puerto pedregal as catalyst to further accessibility and interest for visitors and investors. How to set this up? Maybe through agreements with local fishermen or boat owners, maybe project's own boat or line.
- Recent relevant documents include New Tourism master plan that has 26 zones in the country, 5 are in [Chiriquí Province](#). David is the local tourist service hub, where cars, planes and boats come through, also has hotels. Make use of this for regional all around strategy. Lehrner plan for David integrates a corridor going north to Boquete and Dolega for tourist services development if we can help bring this corridor south to puerto pedregal we can bring in an extra 'audience' of retirees and vacationers who live and visit in Boquete. You will be provided the Lehrner plan .ppt file and general information about the Tourism Master Plan.

#### Links:

1. [http://www.lifeflightpanama.com/es\\_services.php](http://www.lifeflightpanama.com/es_services.php)
2. <http://research.yale.edu/prorena/home.htm>
3. <http://www.ipat.gob.pa/archivos/pdf/potencial/chiriqui.pdf>



## References

1. <http://aaronjojo.com/science/ODeaetal2007panamapaleo.pdf>

## Interesting Links (Some are in Spanish).

Punta burica (interesting):

<http://www.almanaqueazul.org/punta-burica/>

[http://www.fallingrain.com/world/PM/2/Punta\\_de\\_Burica.html](http://www.fallingrain.com/world/PM/2/Punta_de_Burica.html)

Punta burica monkeys:

<http://www.amigosdelosmonos.org/animals.html>

Google Maps of the Region:

<http://www.xeno-canto.org/maps.php?lat=8.03333&long=-82.86667&loc=Punta%20Burica,%20Chiriqui>

Geology of Panama:

<http://pubs.usgs.gov/of/1998/ofr-98-0779/ofr98-779.pdf>

Seismology:

<http://www.igc.up.ac.pa/upcampus/sen.pdf>

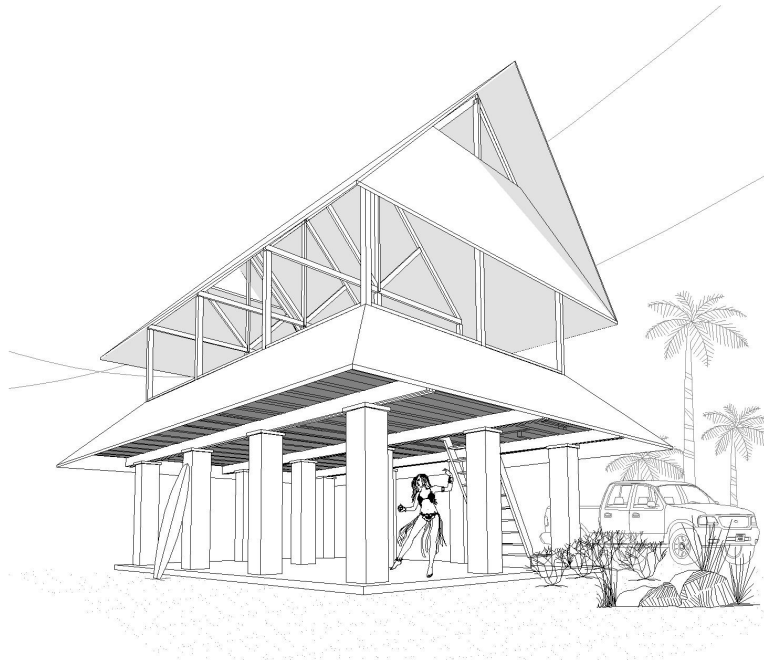
Types of faults:

<http://www.indiana.edu/~g103/G103/week9/wk9.html>

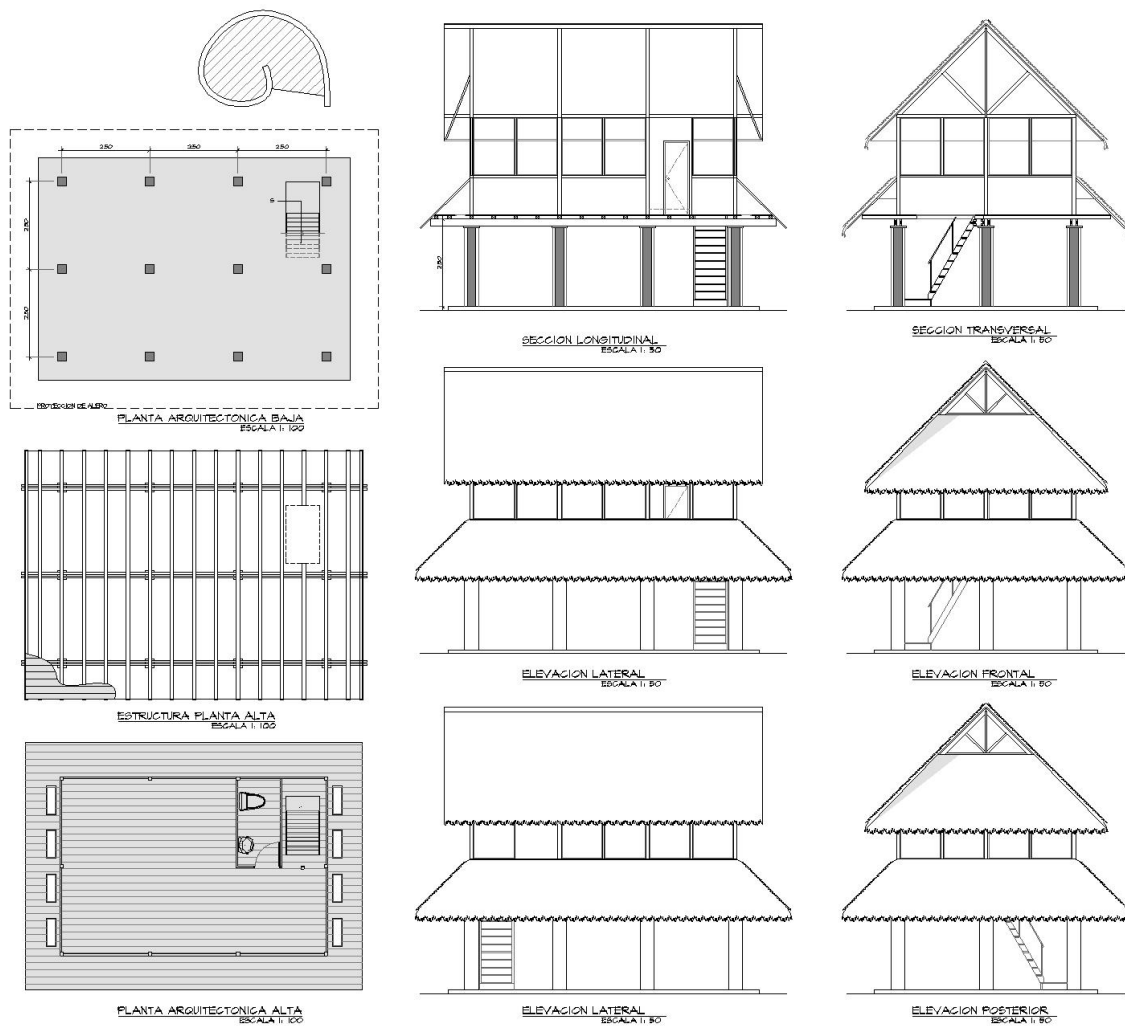
History of the Coto war:

[http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guerra\\_de\\_Coto](http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guerra_de_Coto)

<http://charcoazul.wordpress.com/tag/guerra-de-coto/>



**Images 12, 13.** Views of proposed new cabanas



**Image 14.** Schematic plans of proposed new cabanas

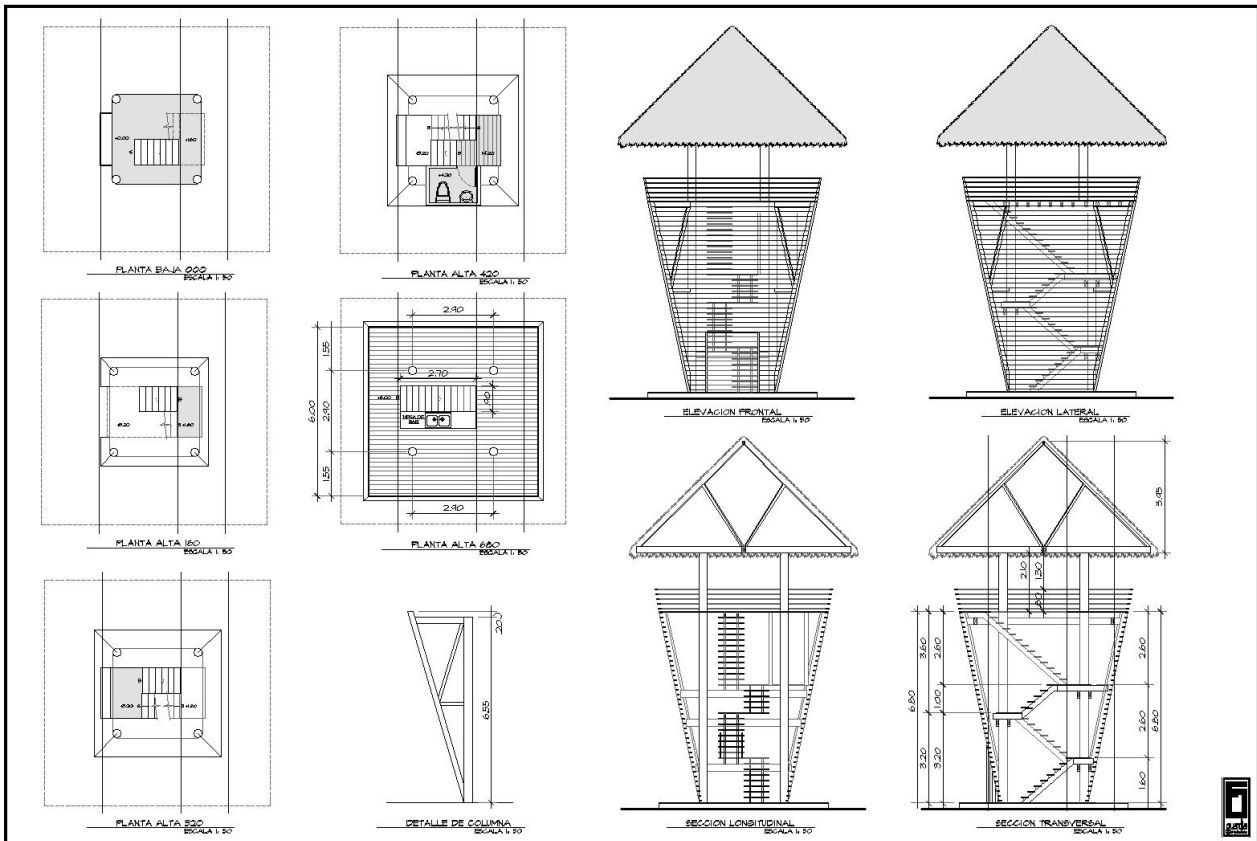
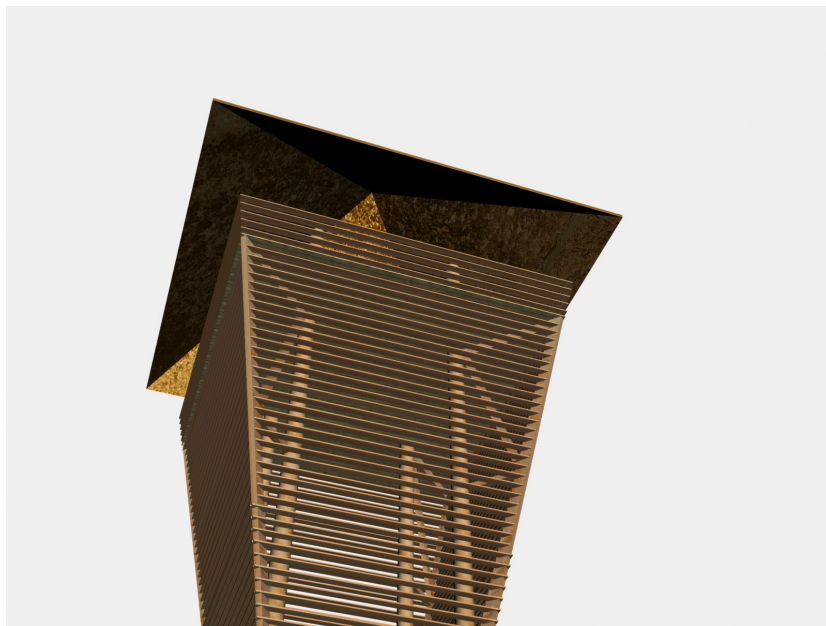
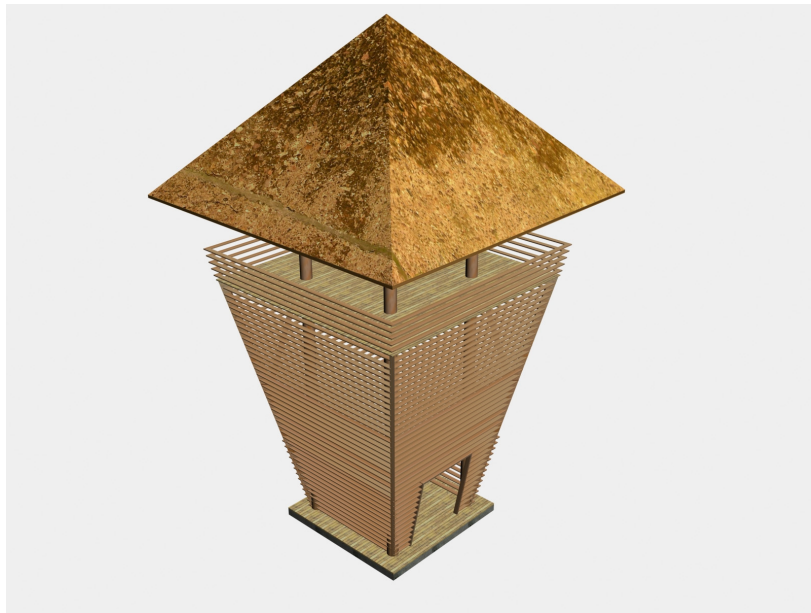


Image 17. Schematic plans of Proposed lookout lounge



Development Guidelines for an Adventure Colony in Playa Burica



**Images 15, 16.** Views of Proposed lookout lounge