We set out to analyze the soaring aspirations and the illuminating realities of Modernist New Towns, with a specific emphasis on Chandigarh. Our studio collectively created a New Town Field Guide analyzing and comparing several of these intriguing urban instances. We then paid a visit to Chandigarh to see what we could see and learn what we could learn.

People adapt and appropriate. The conventional architectural representational toolbox may be insufficient to grapple with the vastly complex reality of the city.

I classified Chandigarh’s parks according to four sets of variables: use type, use intensity, maintenance level, and physical context. The classification scheme attempts to make sense of the complex and dynamic place of open space - space that is often mobilized in ways very different from those envisioned by the city’s makers.

I then created the beginnings of a “Reclaim Your Park” catalog, offering an icon-based radial flowchart to suggest interventions in Chandigarh’s parks: for type of park A, with perceived problem B, consider intervention C, for result D. Ideally the catalog would be available for public use to address the condition of Chandigarh’s parks.