



RIPE NCC

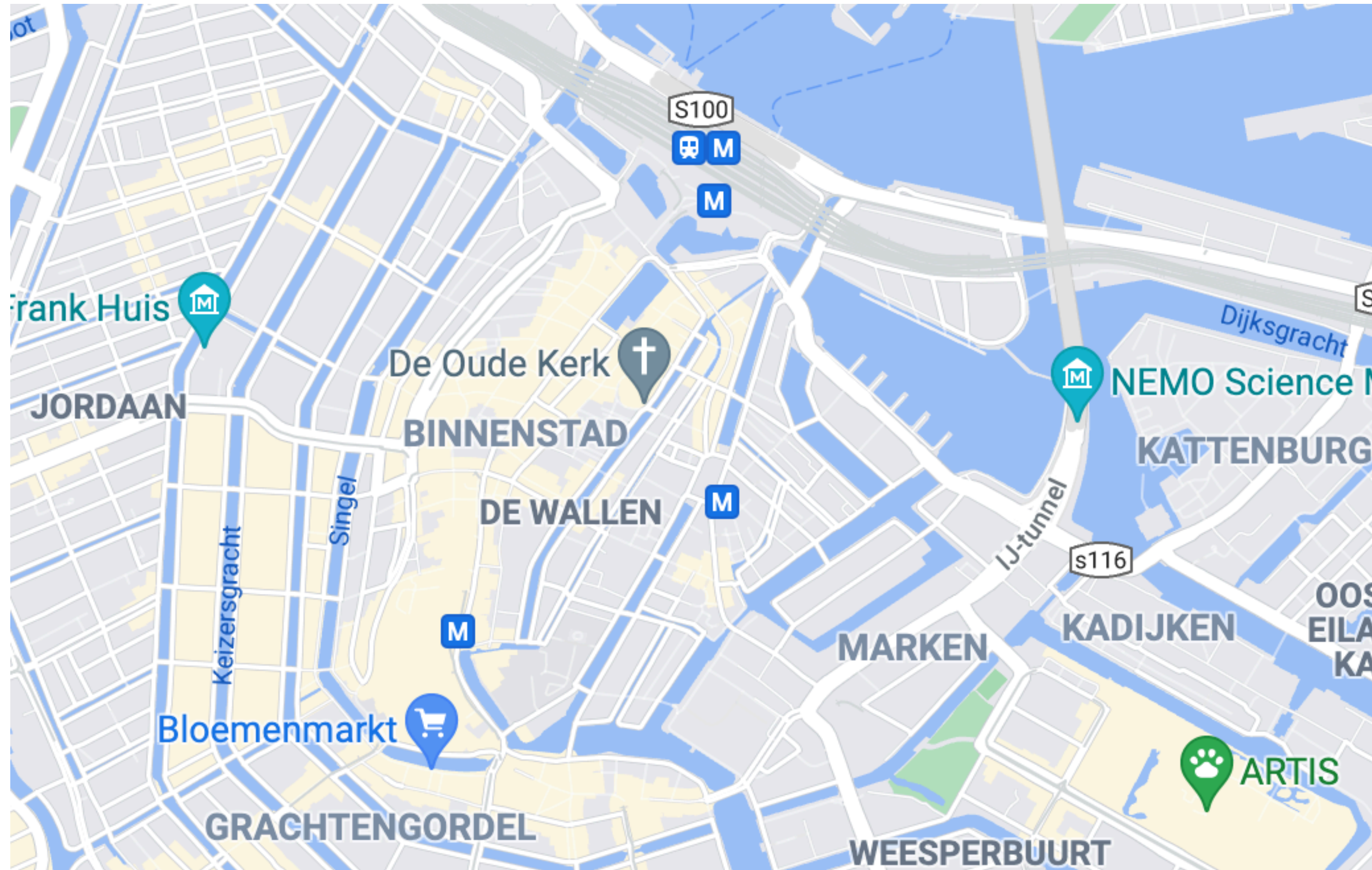
RIPE NETWORK COORDINATION CENTRE

There's a hole in the middle of this square!

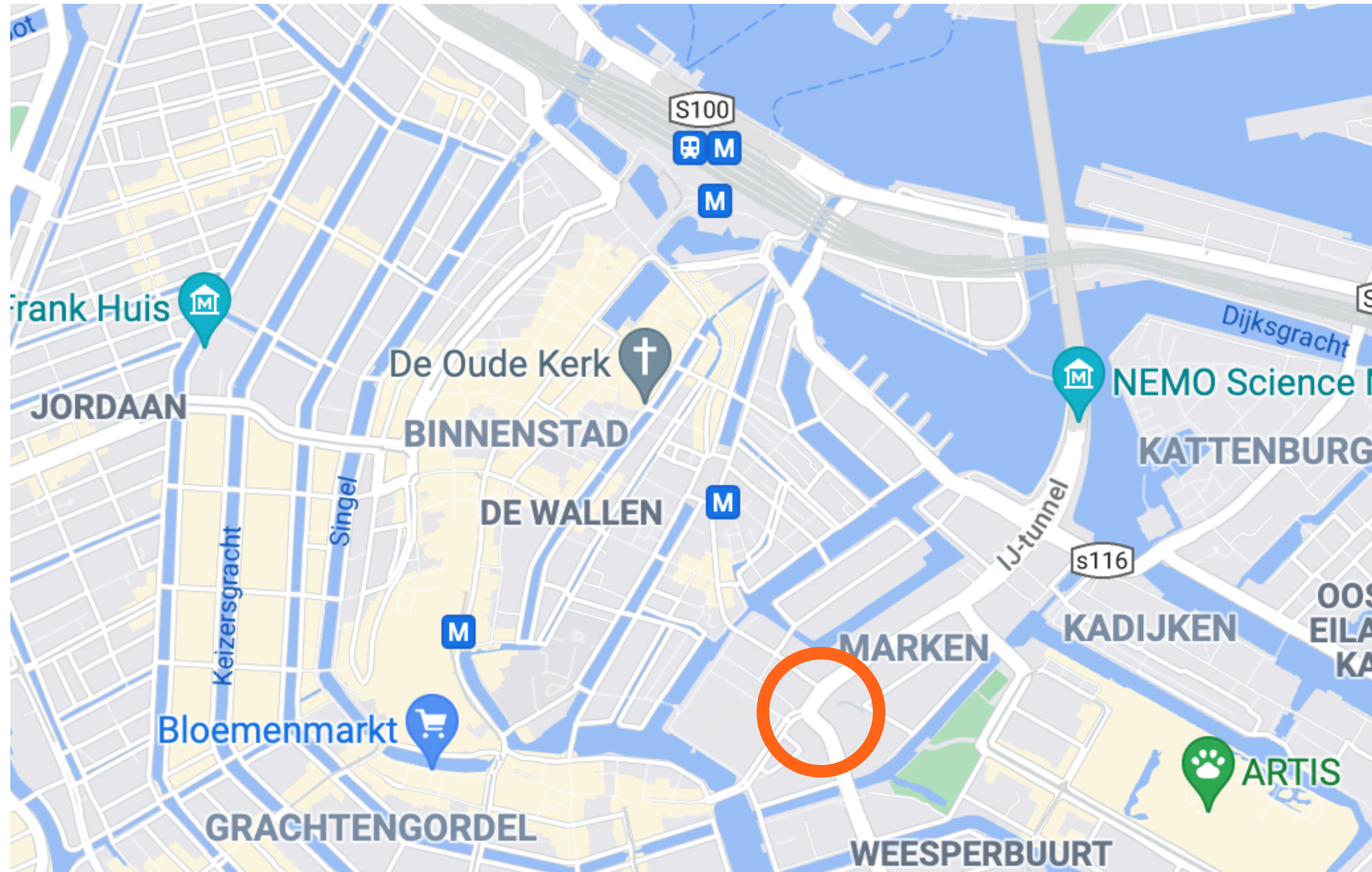
Story of bridges #85, #157 and #158
in Amsterdam

Ondřej Caletka | 5 October 2021 | NCC Sevens

Meester Visserplein, Amsterdam



Meester Visserplein, Amsterdam



Meester Visserplein, ca. 2020



- Not a nice place
 - Huge car traffic to/from IJ-tunnel
- What are those green things in the middle?
- What is the thing tram is going through?



Actually, there are three *bridges* on this picture

The car-centric history of The Netherlands



- Post–World War II **economic expansion**
- Automobiles **more and more affordable** and reliable
- No ***need*** for anyone ***to cycle*** anymore
- Medieval cities require ***some adjustments*** for cars
 - **fill up canals** to create wide enough streets
 - **car-only infrastructure**, like *de IJ-tunnel*, opened in 1968
 - former Jewish quarter seemed to be an **easy place to start** the transformation

Meester Visserplein, 1970

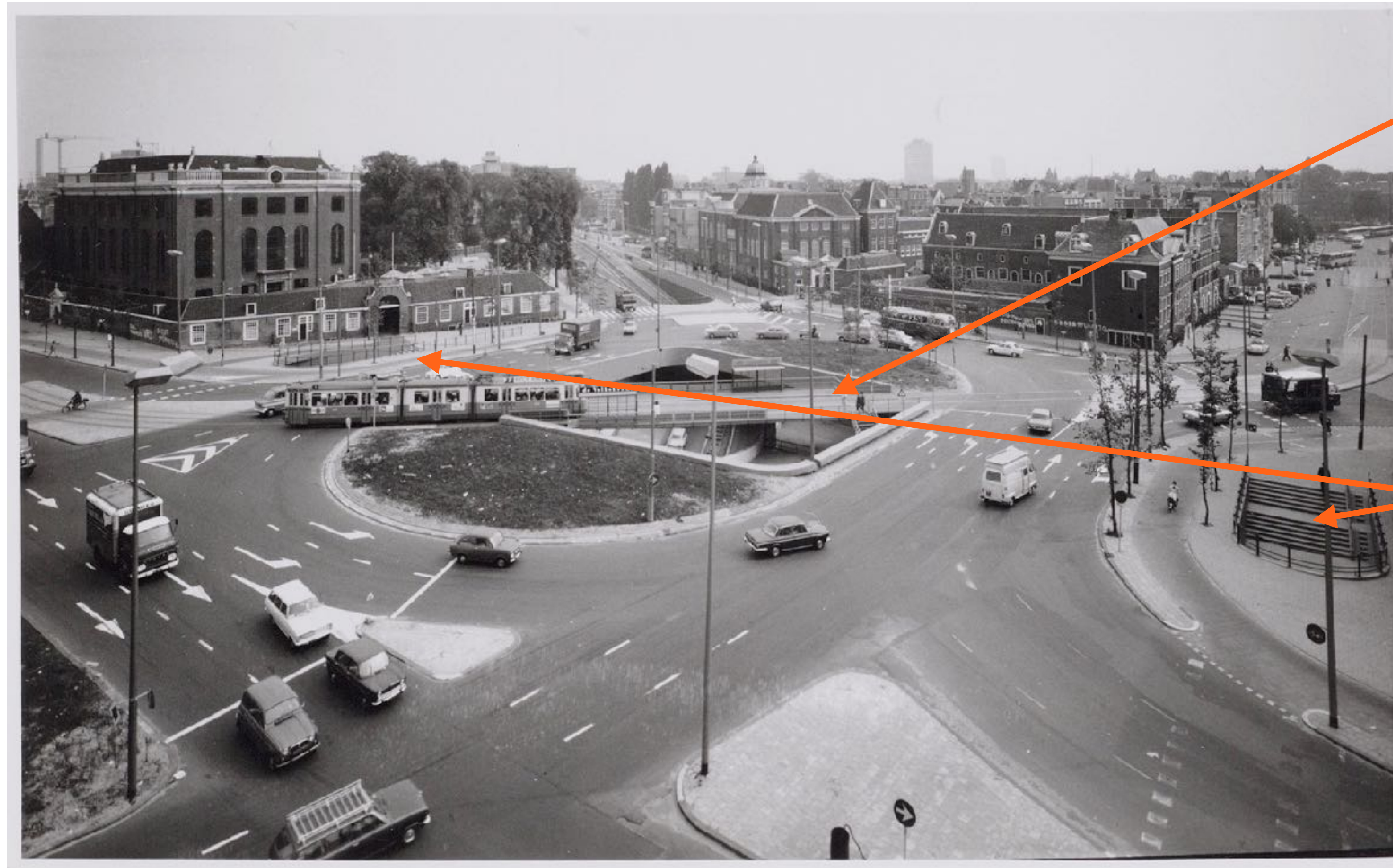


Meester Visserplein, 1970



Brug 85
tram bridge
with a stop

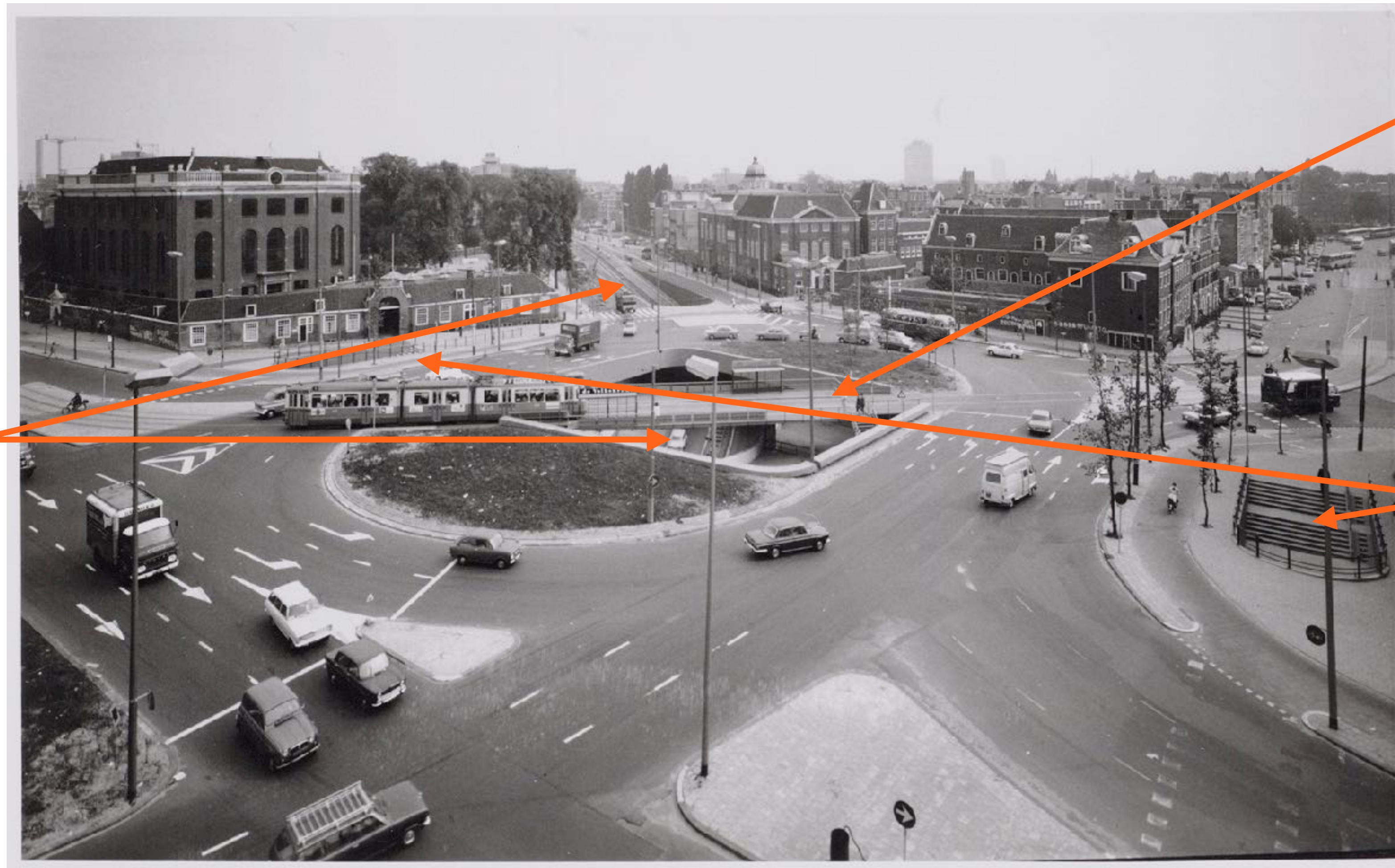
Meester Visserplein, 1970



Brug 85
tram bridge
with a stop

Brug 158
foot tunnel to
access the
tram stop on
bridge 85

Meester Visserplein, 1970



Brug 85
tram bridge
with a stop

Brug 157
car tunnel directly
connecting
Weesperstraat and
Valkenburgerstraat

Brug 158
foot tunnel to
access the
tram stop on
bridge 85

The change in 1973



- Protest movement *Stop de kindermoord* established
- First oil crisis
- Car-free Sundays
- People claiming back the space previously taken by cars
- No further development of city highways



Aside: induced demand



- You cannot solve traffic congestion by adding more lanes
- Better traffic infrastructure **attracts more users**
- The supply of cars is *almost endless*: there will never be **enough lanes** to accommodate them all
- You can make traffic better only by **making the infrastructure worse**



What happened to Mr. Visserplein

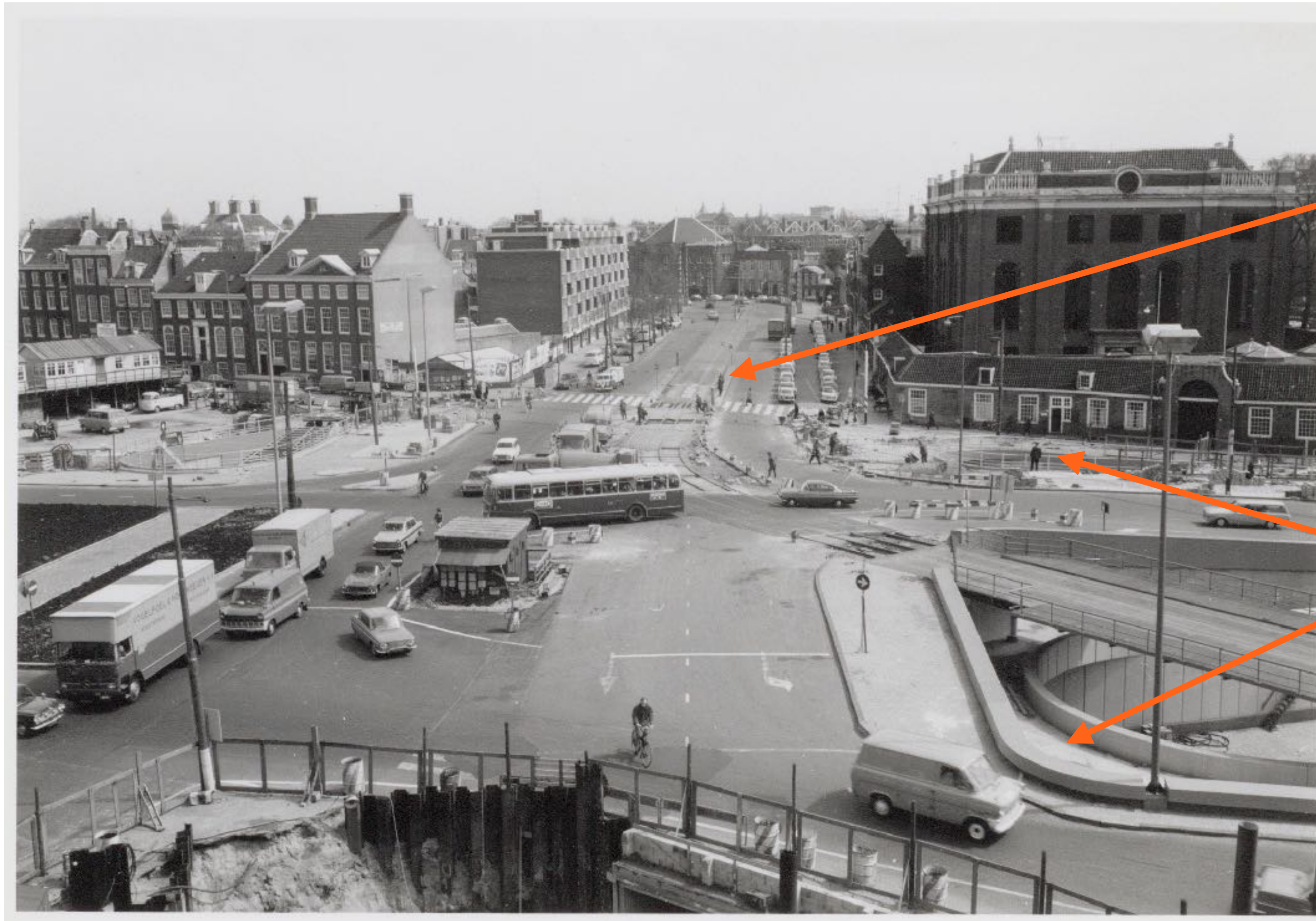


What happened to Mr. Visserplein



Muiderstraat became car-free, tram stop moved there

What happened to Mr. Visserplein

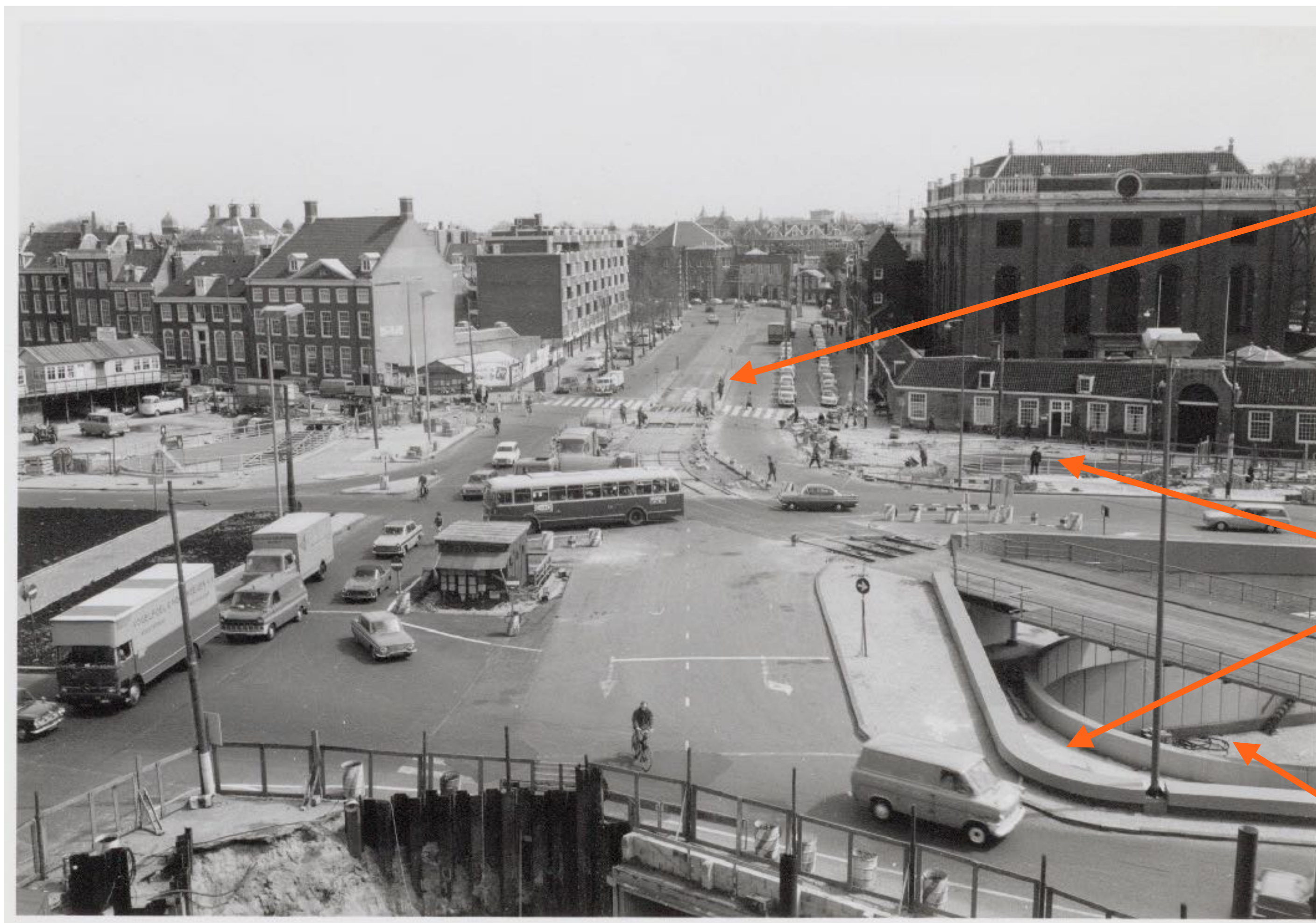


Muiderstraat became car-free, tram stop moved there

Brug 158 (foot tunnel) closed in 1985

**Not popular for pedestrians
Too popular for homeless people,
drug abusers and dealers**

What happened to Mr. Visserplein



Muiderstraat became car-free, tram stop moved there

Brug 158 (foot tunnel) closed in 1985

**Not popular for pedestrians
Too popular for homeless people,
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Brug 157 filled with sand

Meester Visserplein



- Not a nice place, but **much better than it used to be**
- Former foot tunnel 158 and parts of car tunnel 157 **repurposed as indoor playground TunFun**
 - unfortunately **out of business**
 - I wish I visited it in those few days in 2020 when it was still open



**Situation around 1993: tunnels closed, no roof yet
(view from the opposite side towards Waterlooplein and Zuidkerk)**

Meester Visserplein

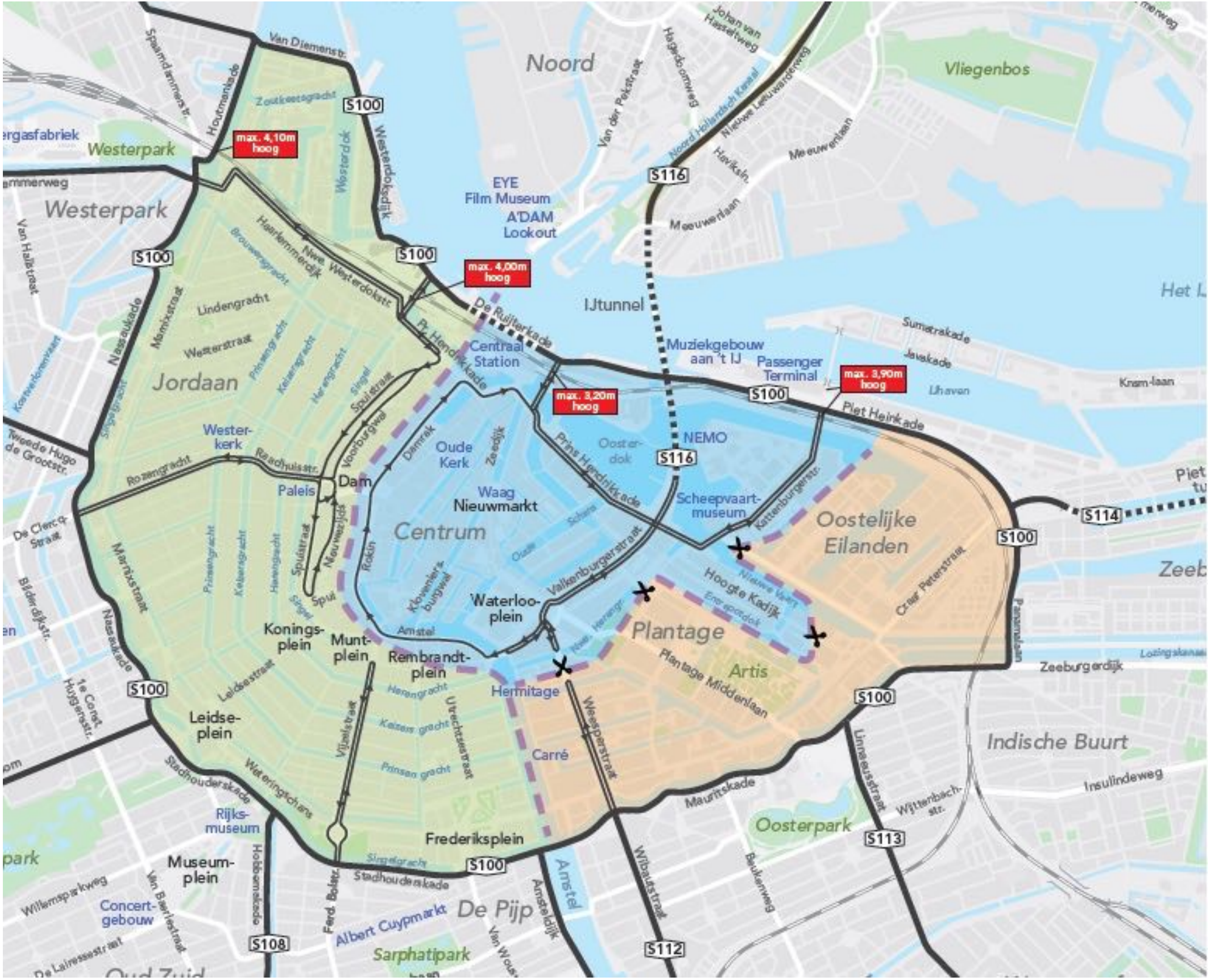


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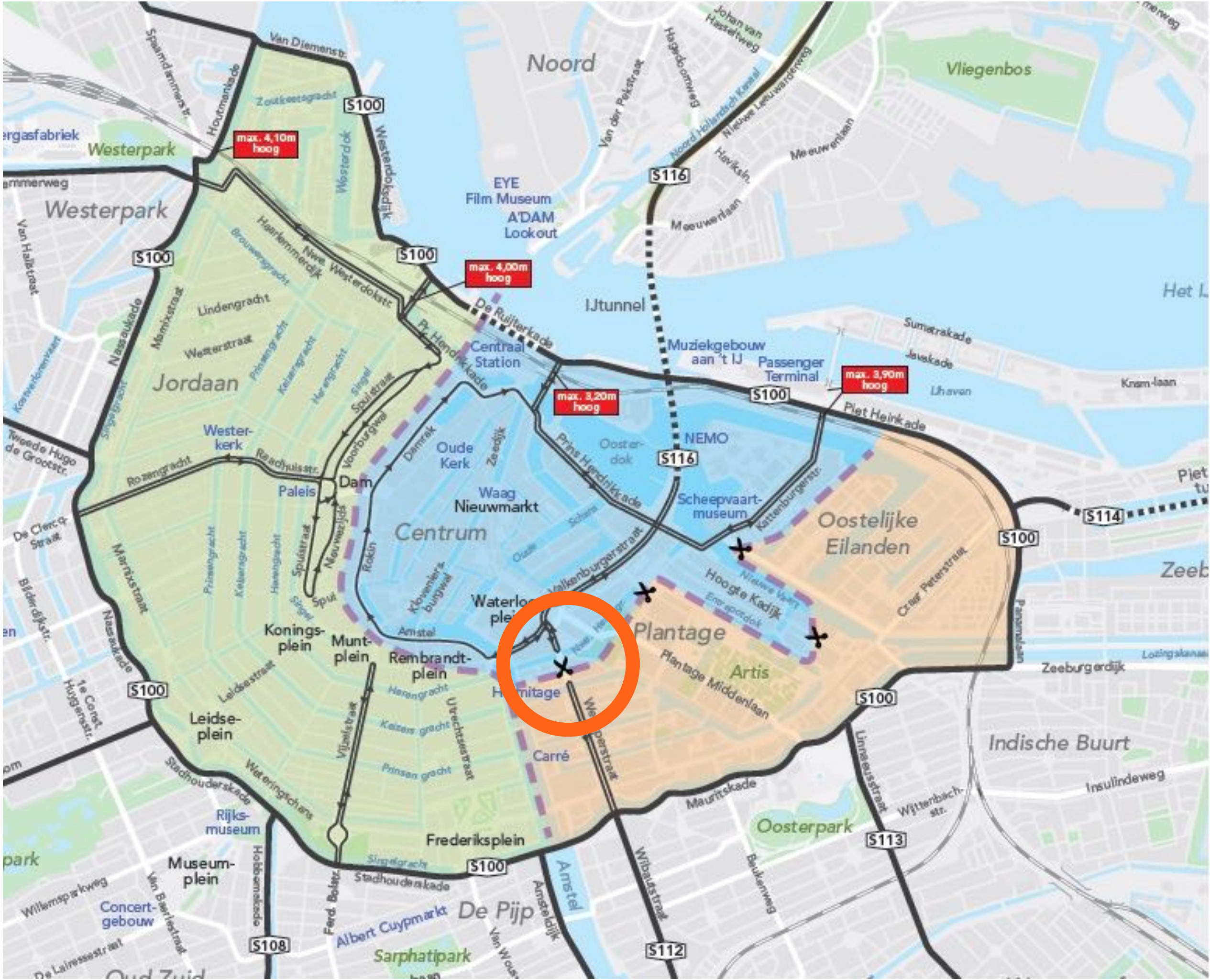


Situation in January 2005: roof is there, but the square is still an ugly roundabout

2023: more calming measures planned



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Questions



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