

ANNEX 12 - Predictions for an Integrated Plan for Urban Reconstruction and Development of the City of Sofia

The vision promoted in the Integrated Plan for Urban Reconstruction and Development of Sofia corresponds with the set parameters of the strategic documents from a higher hierarchical level in European, national and local aspect. It is in line with the need to integrate horizontal policies, Sofia - Green City, Sofia - European Capital of Culture 2019, and their goals form an important part of the vision for the development of the city by 2020.

The defined vision for the development of the city by 2020 in the Integrated Plan for Urban Reconstruction and Development combines and builds the visions in the existing strategic documents for regional and spatial planning and brings together their priorities in 4 short messages - a combination of key words with a complex urban and multi-layered sense of the city's development¹:

- **Sofia - City of People and for People:** The Integrated Plan for Urban Reconstruction and Development of Sofia has a unique character that puts people living, working, creating, investing or visiting the city first. Sofia in the 21st century will offer them a beautiful, inspiring, safe and friendly environment that will build a sense of belonging, empathy, identity and pride.
- **Sofia - Intelligent and Creative City:** Sofia is not only an administrative but also cultural capital of the country, with enormous human potential, high quality educational and research institutions, cultural centers and traditions. This can bring the city to the level of leading centers of innovation and modern technology, art and culture.
- **Sofia - Authentic and Vibrant City:** Sofia is a city with a rich cultural stratification preserved over the centuries with a harmonious stylistic, religious and aesthetic coexistence of cultural heritage and traditional tolerance that we want to turn into an integral part of its life.
- **Sofia - A Green and Attractive City:** Sofia in the 21st century will preserve not only the green system and the connections with the mountains but will further develop those associations, ideas and initiatives for "green planning", "green construction" and "green economy", with which will enrich the principles of "green cities" in Europe.

The strategic priorities for the development of the public service area of high public importance O1-center are:

Priority O.1: Humanization and urban regeneration.

Priority O.2: Developing a knowledge-based economy, innovation and creativity.

Priority O.3: Preserving the authenticity and increasing the vitality of the city center.

Priority O.4: Preservation and efficient use of natural resources.

The specific objectives and measures relevant to the object of development (the space around "Sveta Nedelya" Church) are presented in *Table 1*:

Table 1: Specific objectives and measures in the Integrated Plan for Urban Reconstruction and Development related to the object of the assignment - the space around "Sveta Nedelya" Church

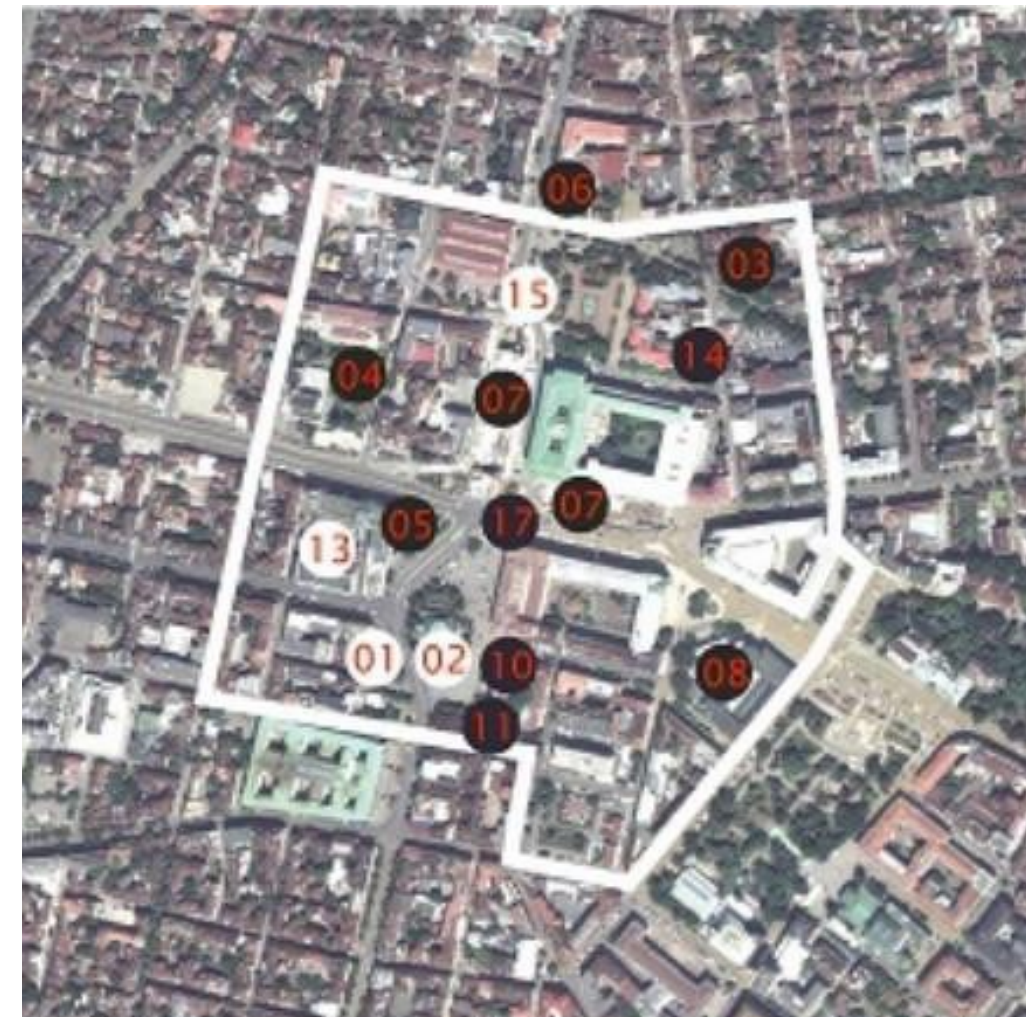
Specific objective O.1.1: Stimulate active citizenship. Measure O.1.1.1. Establishment of systems for informing citizens and their inclusion in the development of the city.
Specific objective O.1.2: Introduction of e-governance and modern administration. Measure O.1.2.1. Building an integrated city system for current electronic information. Improvement of O1 Zone Management and Planning capability based on e-administration.
Specific objective O.1.4: Stimulation of pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Measures: O.1.4.1. Creation of conditions for tying in a pedestrian, cycling movement system to improve accessibility. O.1.4.2. Implementation of a system for administrative / managerial measures to support non-motorized mobility. O.1.4.3. Phased construction and development of non-motorized transport infrastructure and its inclusion in the Intelligent Mobility System.
Specific objective O.1.5: Creating a comfortable, accessible and safe living environment. Measures: O.1.5.1. Building of urban environment while respecting accessibility standards for people with disabilities. 1.5.2. Construction and maintenance of security and safety systems for the occupants of the area.
Specific objective O.2.1: Creating conditions and incentives for attracting and retaining intelligent, educated and creative individuals. Measures: O.1.2.1. Stimulating creativity and raising attitudes towards the urban environment among adolescents and young people. O.1.2.3. Thematic and content enrichment of cultural institutions and their opening to the general public.
Specific Objective O.2.2: Stimulating the Arts, Culture and Creative Industries. Measure: O.2.2.1. Raising public awareness of cultural and natural values and the advantages of civil responsibility and commitment to Sofia.
Specific objective O.2.3: Development of science, innovation and high technology. Measures: O.2.3.1. Implementation of information technology in informing residents, citizens and tourists. O.2.3.2. Implementation of high technology in infrastructure development and integrated management of cultural heritage.
Specific Objective O.2.4: Implementation of innovative approaches and urban renovation instruments. Measure: O.2.4.3. Encourage investment, preserve local business and create opportunities for its development by providing the necessary infrastructure.
Specific Objective O.3.1: Conservation of traditions, cultural diversity, religious and ethnic tolerance. Measures: O.3.1.1. Preservation and promotion of the development and promotion of intangible cultural heritage. O.3.1.2. Preserving the heritage of minority and immigrant communities.
Specific objective O.3.2: Socialization of cultural heritage Measures: O.3.2.1. Conservation, restoration, exhibition and socialization of the cultural heritage. O.3.2.2. Applying a new aesthetic vision and a suitable and green environment for exhibiting archaeological sites.

¹ http://sofiacouncil.bg/content/docs/c_f30604.pdf

<p>Specific objective O.3.3: Development of public spaces and pedestrian zones, renovation of the city center.</p> <p>Measures:</p> <p>O.3.3.1. Justify the possibilities and create a system of hierarchically connected pedestrian spaces with its own identity.</p> <p>O.3.3.2. Large-scale investment projects for the reconstruction and renovation of the city center.</p>
<p>Specific objective O.3.4: Global branding of the city and development of its tourist potential.</p> <p>Measures:</p> <p>O.3.4.1. Development and promotion of urban tourist thematic routes and the accompanying infrastructure.</p> <p>O.3.4.2. Building a system for virtual presentation of cultural and tourism objects.</p> <p>O.3.4.3. Establishment of a tourism management system in the area, an integral part of the system at regional and national level.</p> <p>O.3.4.4. Marketing of the Municipality of Sofia, certain areas, attractions, events and personalities.</p>
<p>Specific objective O.3.5: Management of cultural heritage and preservation of the identity of the city center.</p> <p>Measures:</p> <p>O.3.5.1. Improvement of the real estate management system for immovable cultural heritage.</p> <p>O.3.5.2. Developing projects and plans and adopting legislative changes aimed at preserving the authenticity of the city center.</p>
<p>Specific objective O.4.1: Conservation, maintenance and development of the green system and connections to the mountains.</p> <p>Measures:</p> <p>O.4.1.1. Improving the ecological efficiency and sustainability of urban green spaces.</p> <p>O.4.1.2. Applying innovative approaches to overcome the deficit of green space in the city center.</p> <p>O.1.4.3. Preserving and highlighting visual links to the mountains.</p>
<p>Specific objective O.4.2: Use of mineral waters and water resources for sport, health and recreation.</p> <p>Measure: O.4.2.4. Creative and efficient use of water to improve the quality of public spaces.</p>
<p>Specific Objective O.4.3: Stimulating energy efficiency and renewable energy sources.</p> <p>Measures:</p> <p>O.4.3.1. Implementation of actions to improve the energy efficiency of buildings - measurement and evaluation, norms and control.</p> <p>O.4.3.2. Improving the energy efficiency of part of the urban networks.</p> <p>O.4.3.3. Increasing the energy efficiency of green infrastructure.</p>
<p>Specific objective O.4.4: Improvement of city cleanliness and development of a modern waste management system.</p> <p>Measures:</p> <p>O.4.4.1. Expansion of the separate collection and recycling system.</p> <p>O.4.4.2. Raising public awareness and responsibility related to the collection and management of waste.</p>

Sveta Nedelya Square is located within the public high-profile area of high importance (O1) - Center, Integrated Plan for Urban Reconstruction and Development of Sofia O1 of Integrated Plan for Urban Reconstruction and Development of Sofia (fig. 1). The boundaries of the zone coincide with the second ring of the transport-communication scheme to the Sofia City General Site Development Plan.

The area covers the territory, limited by railway area and following urban boulevards: Skopje, Gabrovo, K. Velichkov, Acad. Ivan Geshov, Bulgaria, Evlogi and Hristo Georgievi and Prof. Milko Bichev. There are also two city parks connecting the city with Vitosha: Lujen (South) Park and Borisova Gradina along with Loven (Hunt) Park and the Zoo.



Source: Integrated Plan for Urban Reconstruction and Development of Sofia Expert assessment within

Expert assessment within the development of the Integrated Plan for Urban Reconstruction and Development of the City of Sofia. O1 - A public service area of high public importance

Fig. 1. Projects within O1 zone.

According to the Integrated Plan for Urban Reconstruction and Development of Sofia for the protection of the immovable cultural assets in Zone O1, it is important that the identified activities be linked to an overall concept that defines the time and territorial parameters of the research related to immovable cultural values (archaeological, etc.). Such a concept should ensure the normal running of archaeological and conservation-restoration works in the most dynamically functioning part of the capital and, at the same time, use the creative potential of objects from the socialist period and recent times by emphasizing on the preservation and presentation of the complex historical stratification in the underground public spaces of the central parts of the city and makes sense of the immovable cultural values sites as part of the cultural infrastructure of Sofia and as a resource for the development of different types of tourism.

All this necessitates the elaboration of a Plan for Conservation and Management of the Historical and Archaeological Reserve Serdica Sredets and its protection zone, and the elaboration of a General Conservation Plan for the immovable cultural assets sites. The scope of these documents exceeds the current scope of the Concept Architectural and Urban Development Project for Sveta Nedelya Square and requires serious spatial and temporal coordination and concentration of resources.

Table. 2: Significant investment projects spatially connected with "Sveta Nedelya" Square, within the scope of project group 01-06, Public Key Area of Public Importance O1 Center in Integrated Plan for Urban Reconstruction and Development of the city of Sofia, Source: Integrated Plan for Urban Reconstruction and Development of Sofia

	NAME OF PROJECT	CONTENT AND TERRITORIAL SCOPE OF PROJECT	PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT
1.	Conservation, restoration, exhibition and socialization of the Antique Communication Complex "Ancient Serdika and Medieval Sredets".	The areas around "Knyaginya Maria Louisa" Blvd. and Largo / "Nezavisimost" Square.	Completed in 2015
2.	Conservation and restoration of Archaeological complex "West Gate" of Serdika and socialization of the space around it.	Archaeological complex "West Gate".	Completed in 2016
3.	Conservation, restoration, exhibition and socialization of the medieval church "Sveti Spas" and the archaeological substance over "Serdika" metro station and under "Todor Aleksandrov" Blvd.	The church "Sveti Spas" and the archaeological substance over "Serdika" metro station and under "Todor Aleksandrov" Blvd.	Planned realization: 2018
4.	Conservation and restoration of "Bojuk" Mosque	Conservation and restoration of a national architectural and building monument of culture and building of the National Archaeological Institute with a museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.	Planned realization: 2016
5.	Exhibition and signage of the fortress wall of Serdica.	Exhibition of the visible and invisible fragments of the fortress wall of Serdika, total length - about 1800 m.	Planned realization: 2016
6.	Conservation and restoration of the building of the Faculty of Theology of Sofia University.	Faculty of Theology of Sofia University at 19 "Sveta Nedelya" Square.	Planned realization: 2018

7.	Conservation and restoration of the building of Sofia Holy Bishopric and improvement of the adjacent green areas.	The building of Sofia Holy Bishopric and improvement of the adjacent green areas.	Planned realization: 2018
8.	Renovation and implementation of energy efficiency measures, equipment and furnishing of buildings.	Covers the buildings of: Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Healthcare, Ministry of Culture, Sofia Directorate of Cadaster, Ministry of State Policy on Disasters and Accidents.	Planned realization: 2018
9.	"The Tolerance Square"	Signage of the area of the temples of world religions - orthodox churches, catholic cathedral, synagogue, mosque.	Planned realization: 2018
10.	Signage of the area of the temples of world religions - orthodox churches, catholic cathedral, synagogue, mosque.	Information center within the former restaurant area in the underpass to the church "Sveta Petka Samardzhyska".	Planned realization: 2016
11.	Significant infrastructure projects related to the area of "Sveta Nedelya" Square set in the Integrated Plan for Urban Reconstruction and Development of Sofia with a total estimated value above BGN 8 000 000	Rehabilitation and reconstruction of a secondary street network - pavements, pedestrian alleys and sidewalks, creating an accessible environment; rehabilitation of water supply and sewerage; street lighting with energy-saving technologies.	Planned realization: 2018

In August 2012, a Sofia representative survey of the adult population of Sofia aimed at supporting the targeted and problematic analysis in the development of the Integrated Urban Recovery and Development Plan of the city of Sofia was organized by "Sofia XXI" Association. The area around "Sveta Nedelya" Square is mentioned in the answer to the question "Which are the most emblematic places in the center of Sofia?". Without answers listed in advance with an option and requirement for the respondents to indicate up to three places, the area around "Sveta Nedelya" Square ranks seventh out of a total of 69 places, with 13,3% of the respondents choosing this area and 34,6% choosing the area around the Largo - Presidency, Council of Ministers, CUM, "Yellow Pavers". (fig.2)

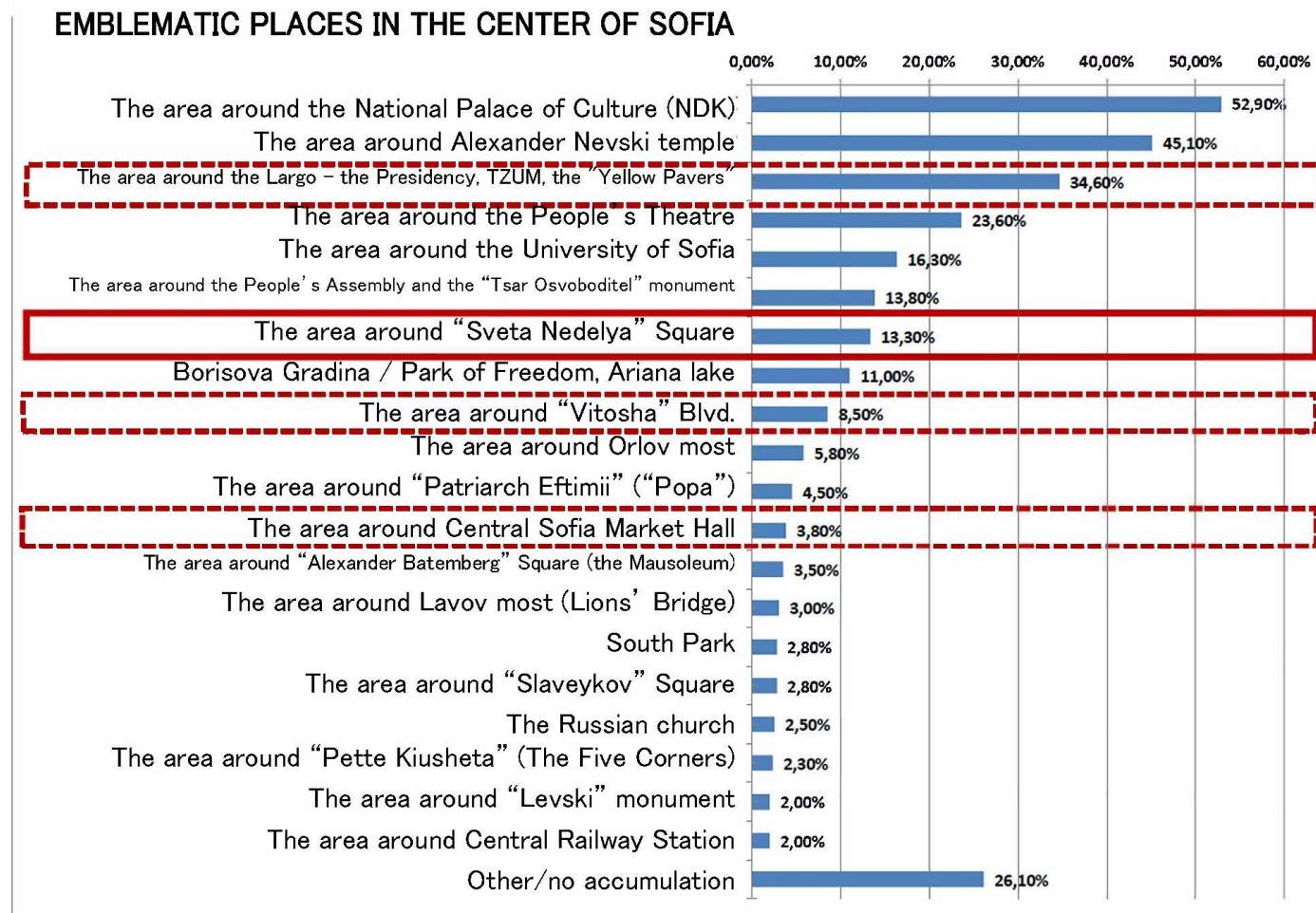


Fig. 2. Emblematic places in the center of Sofia.

Source: Integrated Plan for Urban Reconstruction and Development of Sofia

It is noteworthy that the listed public spaces are located along the north-south axis, and a significant territory to the southeast of "Knyaginya Maria Luiza" Blvd. to "Evlogi and Hristo Georgievi" Blvd. and "Vasil Levski" Blvd. has been defined as "the face of Sofia" (fig.3). By applying a scientifically based methodology, the municipal administration and the experts developing the plan identify and define "significant objects, sites, spaces and generating territories with potential" that are located in these territories. (Fig. 4)

To fully disclose the potential, it is essential to have a sustainable policy for its promotion. The results of the same survey show that the majority of the citizens of Sofia are not aware of its cultural heritage and do not adequately assess it. Moreover, for the majority of citizens, cultural heritage is an obstacle to the realization of various investment initiatives, with cultural values not being perceived as an opportunity but as a hindrance. In order to overcome these problems, it is necessary to activate and implement different forms of popularization and pedagogy of the heritage - an activity that covers the different age and target groups.



Fig. 3. Emblematic places in the center of Sofia.

Source: Integrated Plan for Urban Reconstruction and Development of Sofia

Summarized data from a survey carried out among 400 residents of Sofia City in August 2012 as part of the development of the Integrated Plan for Urban Reconstruction and Development of the city of Sofia.



Fig. 4. Public spaces defining the identity of the city of Sofia.

Source: Integrated Plan for Urban Reconstruction and Development of Sofia

Expert assessment within the development of an Integrated Plan for Urban Reconstruction and Development of Sofia.

The answers to the question about the most problematic places in the center and, the problems in them, there are more than 90 places, which are described in detail in Table 3.

Table 3. Problems and problematic places in the center.

Source: Surveys within the Integrated Plan for Urban Reconstruction and Development of Sofia

PROBLEMS			
URBAN ENVIRONMENT	SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC	ECOLOGICAL	ADMINISTRATIVE/ MANAGEMENTAL
CUM			
underpass			crowded, construction works
THE GARDEN NEXT TO CUM			
dilapidated	homeless		
SOFIA CENTRAL MINERAL BATHS			
no WC	drug addicts	dilapidated	dilapidated
old ugly buildings	prostitution	no WC	not working
	crime		to be a museum
	beggars		
CENTRAL SOFIA MARKET HALL			
unsatisfactory state of pavement	gypsies, drug addicts		construction works
transportation	crowded	dilapidated	dilapidated
poor condition of buildings	prostitution	crowded	crowded
no distinctive environment	crowded		
THE MOSQUE			
parking	crowded		
THE UNDERPASS OF "SERDICA" METROSTATION			
	beggars		
"T. ALEXANDROV" BOULEVARD			
crossing the street at night			
old buildings			
communications			
THE COURTHOUSE			
parking			chaos
traffic jam		traffic jam	
inaccessibility, fences			
stops of public transport			
lack of public space			
sidewalks			
streets		dirty	
"VITOSHA" BOULEVARD (before repairs)			
parking	beggars		traffic management
unsatisfactory state of pavement	lack of security		
lack of nice pedestrian area			
construction works			
old dilapidated buildings			
sewage - amortized			
SOFIA HOTEL BALKAN			
accessible environment			
"SVETA NEDELYA" SQUARE			
	beggars	lack of maintenance	lack of maintenance
LARGO			
parking	street merchants	traffic jam	congestion, repairs, lack of conditions for pedestrian traffic