

EXPLANATORY NOTE

INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION FOR THE CENTRAL CITY SECTION OF DOBRICH

CONCEPT

In search of a definition of the "best and most livable city", our team is united around the hypothesis that it should be the "charming lively city" - not only technologically "smart", not only historical, safe harbor both for nomads and for those, wishing to live peacefully, multidisciplinary, inclusive in terms of the diversity of its communities and with the clear awareness that it is actually positioned within the planetary boundaries.

In response to the competition brief and in search of the above-described ideal, the original **value system** of our project proposal directs its gaze to **the poetics of the wider territory of the Dobrudja Plateau**, in which the city of Dobrich occupies an important place. We regard the currently unified and without visible relation to the forming it buildings central urban space of Dobrich, as a place to architecturally (not literally) retell the landscape of Dobruja and connect itself more closely with the territory. The architectural language of the project is a narrative about the distinctive for this part of Bulgaria spaciousness of the flat terrain and the colorful pattern of the arable lands, planted with different crops, both geometrically and spontaneously parceled, and about the main and secondary roads, serving them. The project also peers at the natural and artificial tree boundaries between the agricultural lands, controlling the microclimate; the pronounced seasonality in both natural and agricultural living nature; the natural reservoirs and the infrastructure of the irrigation systems; the wind-driven tall and low vegetation and the wind farm silhouettes; the systemic connection between building and territory, house and yard, inherent in agricultural areas.

DEVELOPMENT SOLUTIONS

The historical overlays of the 20th century have almost completely shaped the appearance of the center of the city of Dobrich. The legacy they leave behind is **an impressive in its size system of squares and pedestrian streets**. They are, on the one hand, remote from the scale of the human body and difficult to master, suitable only for organized events of the type of demonstrations and meetings, **formally uniform and non-communicating with the entrances and facades of the buildings** that define them, and often blocked by elements of the spontaneous development, such as the raised planting beds. On the other hand, however, they are extensive, freed from car presence and accessibility problems and **containing a huge potential** to connect meaningfully, in addition to physically, the variety of different scale and type of public and commercial buildings, located in the center of the city.

The project follows the guidelines of the competition brief in regard to all sought functional groups and elements, proposing at the same time a series of additional functional solutions, based on its own analysis and on-site observations, as well as on the results of an anonymous survey, put forward for a discussion in civic forums of Dobrich. What is sought for is a realistic manifestation of the poetic reading of the territory, which can adequately fit into the budget requirements. Thus, the proposed interventions are rarely based on grand architectural gestures, but rather on a careful look at the individual zones and the improvement of urban living in each of them. Borrowing structural and visual devices from the territory of the Dobrudja Plateau, our proposal burdens with new meaning **the relationships between the center and the periphery** of the square and street pedestrian spaces, to uncover their hidden potential. **The center preserves the good connectivity** that the extensive pedestrian areas of the central city currently provide, emphasizing, by analogy with the organization of the suburban territories, the possibility of transit for both pedestrians and bicycles, in the middle most open section of the main squares and streets. It is envisaged to remove the unnecessary physical obstacles, such as raised planting beds around the existing trees and functionally unnecessary terracing and curbs, and in their place, according to the possibilities arising from the way of planting the tree vegetation, which the project preserves in full, leveling of the pavements, smooth hilly transitions in them or new seats under the shade of the trees are foreseen.

The periphery enters a new semantic regime, in which it seeks to account for and affirm the unique identity of the buildings, which set up the life of the central city territory, by shaping a kind of courtyard in front of each of them, or in front of the meaningfully united groups of buildings, with each of the newly created courtyards possessing its own visual identity in terms of pavements and urban furnishings, but also tangibly belonging to the tapestry of the general urban fabric. The courtyards, formed this way, organically make the transition from the human to the large urban scale and at the same time represent a poetic expression of the eternal connection of the people of our lands with land and yard, stability and comfort. The six types of pavements envisaged at this stage in the project, encoding the identity of the center and the periphery, imply both interchangeability and the possibility of recycling building materials and in this sense have both an ecological and an economic effect on the solution.

Both the central and the peripheral spaces are strategically saturated with **micro-climatic accents** - water, zones with new area vegetation, partitions of tall tree vegetation, and streamlined multi-functional pavilions, which simultaneously house the new cultural and commercial transformable function sought by the assignment, serve as an orientation urban design, and as large-scale lighting fixtures in the night scenography of the city. Elements common to all spaces are also the new forms of street lighting and urban furniture proposed in the project, such as seating, children's playgrounds, etc., each of which, by analogy with the elements in living nature, undergoes evolution when entering the different sub-spaces. An important aspect of the design interventions is also their **coloration**, sought as a way of enlivening the adjacent neutral facades in light stone and plasters on the principle of chromatic harmony through contrast.

STAGES OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT PROPOSAL

The proposed staged implementation of the project is dictated by the size, degree of importance, number of problems to be solved and corresponding potential for change in each specific section of the central urban spaces, and at each stage preservation of usable building materials from the destructive activities and their insertion in the mixed pavements is envisaged within the following steps:

- Stage 1 zone B - the system "Svoboda" square - "Vazrazhdane" square;
- Stage 2 zone B: the zone of the current "COOPs", the connection with "Dimitar Petkov" street and the entrance to the Old Dobrich;
- Stage 3 zone B: the southern part of "25th September" street, the area in front of the "St. Georgi" church, the connection to the park;
- Stage 1 zone A: "Demokratsia" square – outdoor art area, new library, gallery and theater connections;
- Stage 2 zone A: "Nezavisimost" street, "Bulgaria" street and "Tsar Boris III" square.

* In addition to the scope of the tasks in the competition brief, the project also proposes additional scenarios, concerning the areas around the "COOPs" and around the shopping center, which the Municipality could offer to the private owners in their role of partners in shaping the appearance of the urban spaces.

ESTIMATED REALIZATION VALUE IN "ZONE B"

• Preparatory activities – incl. demolition, inspection, sorting and storage of recyclable materials	BGN 2 105 656 without VAT
• Paving and landscaping	BGN 4 439 890 without VAT
• Infrastructure and installations - water, electrical, other	BGN 594 520 without VAT
• Pavilion structures - cultural and commercial temporary	BGN 467 500 without VAT
• Urban furniture – seating areas, children's attractions, etc.	BGN 721 700 without VAT
TOTAL ESTIMATED VALUE OF RENOVATIONS IN ZONE "B"	BGN 8 329 266 without VAT
CONTINGENCY 10% OF TOTAL VALUE	BGN 832 927 without VAT
TOTAL ESTIMATED BUDGET FOR ZONE "B"	BGN 9 162 192 without VAT

We provide an extended presentation of the concept and budget estimate for ZONE B in the supplementary materials.