ARCHIS INTERVENTIONS

ARCHIS INTERVENTIONS IN PRISHTINA

WORKSHOP OCTOBER 5-8, 2009

PRISHTINA - DYNAMIC CITY

KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATION:
KEY FACTORS FOR THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF PRISHTINA

IN COOPERATION WITH THE MUNICIPALITY OF PRISHTINA
WITH THE SUPPORT OF HACKENBROICH ARCHITEKTEN

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Problem identification
and main activities 2005-2009

Since 1999, unauthorized construction (erecting or extending structures without first obtaining a construction permit) has seriously affected the urban structure of Prishtina and given rise to social, infrastructural, and safety problems. More than 70% of the urban fabric has been transformed due to the lack of law enforcement, and the absence of mandatory planning and building standards. Public awareness of the fundamental problems caused by illegal construction is still rather limited.

During two workshops (2006/2007) held in Prishtina, Archis Interventions (a group of local and international experts) developed strategies that combine various approaches in order to raise public awareness of and sensitivity to environmental qualities and architectural values. An analysis of the problem in Prishtina – which took account of social and safety aspects, and its impact on the future of the city – was published and presented locally and internationally in combination with a strategic development concept for the regulation and improvement of construction. This raised awareness among the citizens of Prishtina and the policymakers responsible for these issues, as did various public presentations in Prishtina in 2007, including the students’ “Workshop and Exhibition of the Prototypes Studied”, and articles in the local press about the Archis Interventions project. Moreover, qualification of illegal buildings became part of the program of Prof. Dr. Isa Mustafa, the Mayor of Prishtina, and consequently, in 2008, the project for the legalization of unauthorized buildings was incorporated in the “Mid-term Development Strategy of Prishtina 2008-2011”.

In March 2009 Archis Interventions developed together with local and international experts and with the support of the Municipality of Prishtina a «MANUAL on the legalization of structures built without a construction permit», which became the basis of the resolution on legalisation by the Assembly of Prishtina. This supports the legalization process launched in November 2009.

Results of the workshop – strategic concept for the future development of Prishtina based on knowledge and education

As part of the upcoming legalization process, the future prospects of Prishtina and how they can be supported by planning have been discussed with representatives of the Urban Planning Department, Municipality of Prishtina, and local and international experts.

It is necessary to offer future prospects to citizens by developing a realistic strategy that takes the current situation into account but also establishes the principles of viable future development. This is strategic planning based both on a vision and on reliable information, and can therefore offer a solid foundation for consensus and negotiations. The workshop developed a key concept by analyzing Prishtina’s potential as the capital of Kosovo, and identified knowledge and education as the key factors for future development. The workshop focused on the latter’s spatial implications and formulated the major principles of future urban development.

The workshop result is a preliminary study on the future development of Prishtina and forms a basis for discussion and for a future urban study to be worked out.
Planned development

The aim of the analysis of existing conditions in the urban zone is to identify the most significant developments of the last ten years and to compare them with the Strategic Plan from 2004, in order to formulate recommendations regarding the future development.
Traffic

In general, the streets in the urban zone Prishtina do not meet the requirements and the expectations for a capital city in terms of the street hierarchy and connections needed to overcome the traffic jams, especially in the central zone of the city.

- Central ring road should be completed soon in order to direct the traffic out of the center of the city, and therefore to solve the problem of big traffic jams in the very center.

- Connections of the central ring road with adjacent neighborhoods around the ring road should be improved/created in order to secure better distribution of traffic flows. This means that the main connecting streets, which are planned with Regulatory Plans (almost all Regulatory Plans for adjacent neighborhoods are adopted) should be implemented.

- Traffic management tools should be introduced in order to prevent the usage of urban zone streets by transiting vehicles and to limit certain types of vehicles’ access to the central zone.
Natural conditions

The city area encloses a forest (Regional Park Germia) of almost half of the entire area. This natural resource is well preserved and has to be protected. Therefore the future urban development will be not towards the East.

Agricultural land around the city area should be also protected from scattered development and the villages nearby should be encouraged to develop rural economy.
Natural conditions and traffic infrastructure

Central ring road needs to be developed as soon as possible according to the plans in order to create the belt around the central urban zone of Prishtina and to direct the traffic towards the peripheral urban zones of the center. This would help to reduce the congestion of traffic jams in the very center and to redefine the center as a mainly pedestrian and representative area.

The inner ring road needs to be also developed very soon, especially the segment towards economic development zones and towards New Prishtina, in order to get stronger connection with main development directions of Prishtina, that is: economic zones towards airport and Skopje (were majority of incoming traffic occurs) and New Prishtina (where the new center shall be developed).

There is a need to regulate by law/plan the protection of the Regional Park Germia and create the green belt around the inner ring road in order to protect the City boundaries.
Major developments

In general three major developments can be identified:
1. Economic development towards the Southwest along the road to the airport. (see also Spatial Plan on Kosova)

2. Governmental institutions forming a second city center in the South of Prishtina with a spatial impact on the urban development, which can be used to connect the City better to natural resources and the lake in the Southeast (as suggested by the Strategic Plan 2004)

3. A possible urban development towards the Northeast, connecting and activating natural resources in regard of wellness and recreation
II. Urban Zone Prishtina

Recommendations regarding the Strategic Plan from 2004

- The SP suggests a «backbone» from the city center towards the East – we estimate that two city centers will emerge. Therefore a strategy to connect beyond its governmental functions the new second city center with overall urban development will be necessary.
Major development areas

There is strong economic growth towards the Southwest, even beyond the city’s boundaries. It will need strategy to improve in the West of the city abandoned areas for a future economic development (as SP already suggests) together with the improvement of the traffic system. This means also a better connection to the inner city and a strong connection.

There is a possible urban development towards the North / Northeast by developing wellness facilities which will have a positive impact on the economic situation of this area. Although the construction of a third ring road would help in create better connections between the periphery and the city area, at the moment it seems not to be a priority.
Major developments and areas

The map shows in the urban zone Prishtina the two major developments.

- Regarding economic development a connection to the abandoned areas in the inner city as in the West of the city across the second ring road is needed.

- The new city center in the North of Prishtina with its governmental functions has to be better embedded into the overall development and gives the chance to strengthen the connection of the city to the lake in the Southeast.

- New development towards the Northeast by using the natural qualities of Prishtina to accommodated wellness facilities should be investigated.
Traffic

In general, the streets in the urban zone Prishtina need to be further developed in terms of the street hierarchy and connections needed to overcome the traffic jams.

- It is highly needed to improve or create the main streets of the central urban zones that directly connect to the central ring road. This will have a positive impact on the quality of central urban zones, as it shall also secure better distribution of traffic flows throughout the city.

- Organized parking spaces within the central zones and introduction of traffic management tools shall contribute in softening of traffic jams in the center of the city.
Open Spaces

There are few open spaces, which in general should be regenerated and restructured. Apart from the city park, a few green areas and small parks in the collective housing neighborhoods, squares in front of a few public buildings, and the pedestrian boulevard “Mother Theresa”, other potential spaces are either abandoned or not developed.

- Existing open spaces should be regenerated and maintained, and better connections should be created in order to provide good and easy access for citizens.

- New open spaces should be created, especially in the central areas covered by regulatory plans. This also means that the City should find means to negotiate with private owners to build parks/squares in privately owned properties in cases there is no public land, in order to secure proper distribution of open spaces in the urban zone.

- Abandoned areas should be regenerated as open spaces of high quality in order to soften the high density problem wherever possible in the city.
Culture and Leisure

The number of cultural facilities in Pristina is quite limited, in terms of museums, art galleries and especially multifunctional facilities which are open to public. On the other hand, there are numerous cultural activities that take place throughout the year and need better accommodation and media coverage.

Leisure mainly consists of open spaces (which are mainly frequented during the day) including the Germia park, and café/restaurants inside the city center. There are only few sports and recreation facilities, and very few playgrounds for youth and children.

New cultural and leisure facilities should be created and new types of activities should be introduced along with new facilities in order to create stronger urban life.
Streets, open spaces, culture and leisure - combined

Creation of new open spaces, new cultural facilities and leisure spaces not only in the center but throughout the city is a high necessity in order to advance the values of Prishtina as a young capital. Also, in terms of physical impact, strong connections through pedestrian paths and public transport is important to make those spaces qualitative.
As a young capital, Prishtina needs to pursue its development strategies, reinvent its identity as a Capital City and reevaluate its potentials in order to create a strong and sustainable grounds for future prospects and become competitive vis-à-vis capitals of the region.

As a young capital, Prishtina has a lot of underdeveloped potentials, which shall be identified and used as a main principle for urban development. A clear focus on potentials in future urban planning processes is crucial if Prishtina is to become a unique and viable city.
I. What are the potentials?

HISTORY / ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE
The importance of the architectural heritage (from all periods, including the socialist era) for the identity of the City is enormous and is also the key to boosting tourism as an economic factor. Therefore Prishtina shall improve the existing architectural potentials, and in this respect, the historic zone and archeological sites such is Ulipiana should be top priority, in order to highlight the city’s specific values and increase its competitive edge in the region.

CULTURE
The development and improvement of all cultural facilities is a must for a capital of a nation. Here it will be needed to find out and highlight what special cultural qualities Prishtina has, in order to be distinct and to compete successfully with other cities in the region.

SPORT
Sport is a big economic factor if a city can host international events. Here too, there is need for a clear focus on what kind of sport activities might have a distinct profile, so that they can get support and thus have a positive impact on overall future development.

KNOWLEDGE
With an average age of 23, Kosovo’s population ranks the youngest population in Europe. Therefore its future very much depends on creating viable prospects for young people, who can then contribute to their country.
A focus on education and knowledge is key for the future prospects of the city and of Kosovan society.
II. What is needed?

GOOD ENVIRONMENT:
There is a need to provide good and attractive living, studying and working conditions for young people. Good environment for young people in Prishtina means good connections with other centers of knowledge, variation of housing and affordable accommodation, more possibilities for sports and leisure, safety and clean environment. Prishtina is a quite safe and vivid city, but it will need to seriously engage in providing more qualities and become attractive for local as well as international youth.

STATE PROVIDED FACILITIES AND SUPPORT:
Apart from advancing the existing education facilities and programs, new facilities should be built in order to meet the requirements of the schools' networks. For university purposes, Prishtina must provide and structure the space for more educational and research facilities and programs, as well as housing for young students wanting to live in Prishtina. Prishtina should also support youth initiatives, be it sports, culture or academic initiatives, in order to reach strong cooperation and create partnership with its youth.

EXCHANGE:
Competitive curricula, exchange programs, summer universities, professional laboratories, etc., should be regarded as initiated. In recent years, many European students have come to Prishtina on their own initiative for research purposes, and such connections should be institutionalized in order to gain mutual benefits.

SKILLED PROFESSIONALS:
Involvement of skilled professionals in decision making, in administration, designing and producing attractive projects, competitions and other form of stimulation of young people is crucial in order to obtain good solutions, creative approaches to problem solving and professional outcomes. By ensuring qualitative and sustainable developments for the city, Prishtina shall become competitive with the cities of the region.

IDENTIFIED URBAN AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT:
Prishtina should clearly identify urban areas for improvement and development of spaces and facilities which shall improve the image of the city in general, and create good environment for youth in particular. Such urban areas should be developed with standards strongly and should have strong connections within the city and robust perspective.
Existing education structure
The Youth is the future

The young nation with its highly significant symbolic spaces and buildings in the inner city is the backbone of future development. The youth is the future – investment by the nation and the City in developing knowledge among its young citizens will be returned to the nation by the development of a knowledge based economy.
Spatial Interaction of History, Nation, Education and the Economy

Pristina is fragmented into parts with different functions – how to connect them to improve interaction between different parts of the city?
Inner City Development – Strategic map

Map with the locations of government, university, economic areas and history (maybe) as zones and with icons and indication of important parts like the pedestrian area on Mother Theresa boulevard, the competition for the Independence Square area etc.

Interaction of education facilities and areas mainly frequented by youth with the general development of the city: strategy

By indicating the existing places of interest within the center of the City, and pedestrian areas which are frequented by youth, three major urban areas have been identified as the most important development areas, which shall serve to create a better environment for youth.
SECTION B - FUTURE PROSPECTS

Strategic areas

- NEW PRISHTINA
- BUS TERMINAL, VOCATIONAL SCHOOL
- UNIVERSITY
- MEDICAL ZONE
- ECONOMIC AREA
- PARLIAMENT
Strategic areas

The interaction of the education facilities with the general development of the city: strategy.
Interaction of strategic areas

The interaction of historical, governmental, educational and economic spaces has to be articulated throughout an urban strategy.
Interaction of strategic areas
V. What are the Tools?

For students as lecturers and professors and for future knowledge-based-economies a good environment and close spatial connections are needed – clustered and well-connected. For that, specific catalysts to improve the situation will be needed.
Public Community Center newly erected or installed in abandoned public buildings shall combine different functions which are attractive to students and other citizens interested in information and culture.
In Prishtina students have to rent (mostly expensive) private apartments or can live at the dormitory – a specific housing typology with small affordable apartments is lacking. An investment in this specific housing with also public and commercial functions integrated at ground level could be implemented strategically in the core zones of an education related spatial development.
Business Incubator

The City can support new start up-enterprises in the knowledge economy with specific «space incubators» in which office spaces and information centers are concentrated. Specific economic programs could support young entrepreneurs.
Start-Ups
where new businesses are created

Multinational companies like Apple, Microsoft or Hewlett Packard started their business in – a garage! New businesses need creative set up, a spatial interaction with other businesses and an environment, which is flexible to use and has low running costs.
Spatial incubators

Spatial incubators are designed to attract young professionals by offering business space with low running costs, subsidised by the City, by bringing together different forms of new knowledge-based businesses to form a creative atmosphere and combining this with public functions to enable interaction with other citizens.

Due to this combination spatial incubators give positive impulses to urban development and become the nucleus of urban regeneration and future economic prosperity.
**Spatial impact of catalysts**

Possible locations of different spatial catalysts to be implemented

- STUDENT HOUSING
- PUBLIC COMMUNITY CENTRES
- INCUBATOR
- SMALL PARKS TO BE IMPROVED BY ACTIVITIES
- EXISTING EDUCATIONAL STRUCTURES
Extension of the pedestrian zone

A continuous pedestrian zone can use the Mother Theresa boulevard as a backbone and will connect the different parts of the city: the historical part, the governmental zone, the university campus and the new economic area in the inner city. It will literally and with high symbolic meaning connect the nation to its history, to the youth and to the economy.
**Areas to be redeveloped and regenerated**

The urban structure of the center of Prishtina is very fragmented. Only the street fronts (especially the fronts of the M. Theresa boulevard) consist of building blocks from the socialist era, which are in somewhat good shape. The inner parts of the urban blocks still have old and underdeveloped structures. Also open spaces in between are abandoned or underdeveloped.

Therefore, there is a need to focus on robust planning and development of the center in order to make strong connections between existing and new attractive buildings and spaces.
New attraction points

By introducing new typologies (incubators, public community centers, students’ housing) in the Center, the recommended connection of high symbolic meaning between the nation, its history, economy and youth shall gain enormous quality. Those new typologies should be developed as new buildings in mainly abandoned areas, or should be accommodated in existing buildings suitable for such typologies.
New pedestrian zone and attraction points
Skanderbeg Square and Adem Jashari Square

Integration of Adem Jashari Square and Skanderbeg Square with clearly marked pedestrian paths which then connect to the Mother Theresa boulevard shall enhance the space and make this central area a focal point of Prishtina.
New community center behind the Skanderbeg monument
Fragmentation of pedestrian area shall be overcome. A robust connection of the city center shall be provided by furthering the pedestrian paths from the Boulevard Mother Teresa Boulevard westwards to the New Born monument, and by redeveloping the open space behind the Grand Hotel.
Recreated public space and business district behind sport hall

A recreated public square leading to urban regeneration, small business and larger business development.
District behind sport hall

New recreation triggering small business and larger business development
Future tasks – work schedule

URBAN STUDY - PRISHTINA
On the basis of the strategic concept «PRISHTINA – DYNAMIC CITY»

Overall concept for Prishtina - guiding urban vision
- Analysis of city identity and problems and potentials
- Development of city identity and overall concept for Prishtina (“urban vision”)

Municipal Level
- Analysis of regional relation orientation of the City of Prishtina and strategic development
- Development of strategic development orientation of Prishtina in relation to the overall concept for Prishtina (urban vision) with the following focus:
  - economy
  - culture
  - education
  - recreation

- Identification of important strategic locations for the implementation of the overall concept for Prishtina (urban vision)

City of Prishtina
- Analysis of important strategic locations in Prishtina, such as:
  - inner city area
  - new business zone
  - new government zone

- Development of implementation strategy for the overall concept for Prishtina (urban vision) in the strategic location, considering the following urban elements:
  - public space
  - squares
  - significant buildings
  - circulation
  - functions and activities
  - recreation
  - green areas

Conclusion / Extrapolation
Based on the developments for the strategic locations, we set of rules and principles for prototypical issues and situations will be developed, such as:
- public spaces
- street profiles
- parking principles
- semi public spaces
- green areas
- recreations areas
- cultural areas

General basis of the study: Analysis
Each analysis needs to consider the actual built urban condition as well as the planned and projected urban condition, i.e. the regulatory plans, drafted and announced competitions and private developments. The planned conditions need to be considered for the development of each part of the work and also the developed work will lead to recommendations for the existing planning.
APPENDIX

WORKSHOP FACTS

About us
Archis Interventions, a not for profit branch of the Archis Foundation (also known for its magazine Volume) has set itself the task of providing cities with clues and concepts to revive the public domain, re-energize their urban spirit, and renew their trust in dialogue as the essence of civic life. These were the ideals that led Archis Interventions to start its activities in Prishtina in 2005, when it established a local NGO – Archis Interventions/Prishtina – with the aim of developing and proposing solutions for the (re-) structuring of urban development.

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Archis Interventions/Prishtina in cooperation with Archis Interventions/SEE (Project Office Berlin)

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