

2011

Implementation of Renewal of Nenkalaja

Urban Design Guidelines for Nenkalaja



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I am Artnet Haskuka, born on 10.10.1973 in Prizren/Kosovo. The primary and secondary school I finished in Prizren. In 1992 I started studies in University of Pristina – Faculty of Engineering and Architecture, sector of Architecture. I am continuing the master studies in field of “Urban and Environmental Management”. During the 2007 I had opportunity to attend Integrated Urban Planning training in Sweden and second phase in Laos.

As a graduated engineer of architecture I used to work for 5 years in reconstruction of houses - Kosovo (destroyed houses during the war-1999).

During the 2005 I was engaged in restoration of the Sultan Murad Tomb in Mazgit/Pristina.

From 2006 I am working for UN HABITAT, Prizren office which supports Municipality of Prizren, directorate of urbanism - spatial planning sector. The projects within Municipality of Prizren intends to further accentuate the city’s heritage values as well as enhancing quality of life of the urban population and contributing to sustainable development in Prizren.

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Background information

During the first phase of the IUP-training in Sweden I worked with and presented the urban planning project titled Renewal of Nenkala-Prizreni. The area of Nenkalaja has a good location, near to main square of Prizren called Shadervan. It is easily accessible to public facilities and the "bridge" between Shadervan and Fort (see picture 1).

Unfortunately, during the demonstration on 2003 Nenkalaja was burned. The area which tells the long history of the city, it is desolate place with destroyed physical environment and cultural heritage.

With the renewal of this area the following will be achieved:

- Protection of cultural heritage
- Animate place; generate the **soul** of the place
- Improvement of the spatial condition of the area: roads, public service
- Improve quality of life
- Positive impact on the visual appearance
- Enhanced the physical quality of housing by undertaking appropriate improvement works;
- Employment opportunities for local unemployed people
- Social Integration

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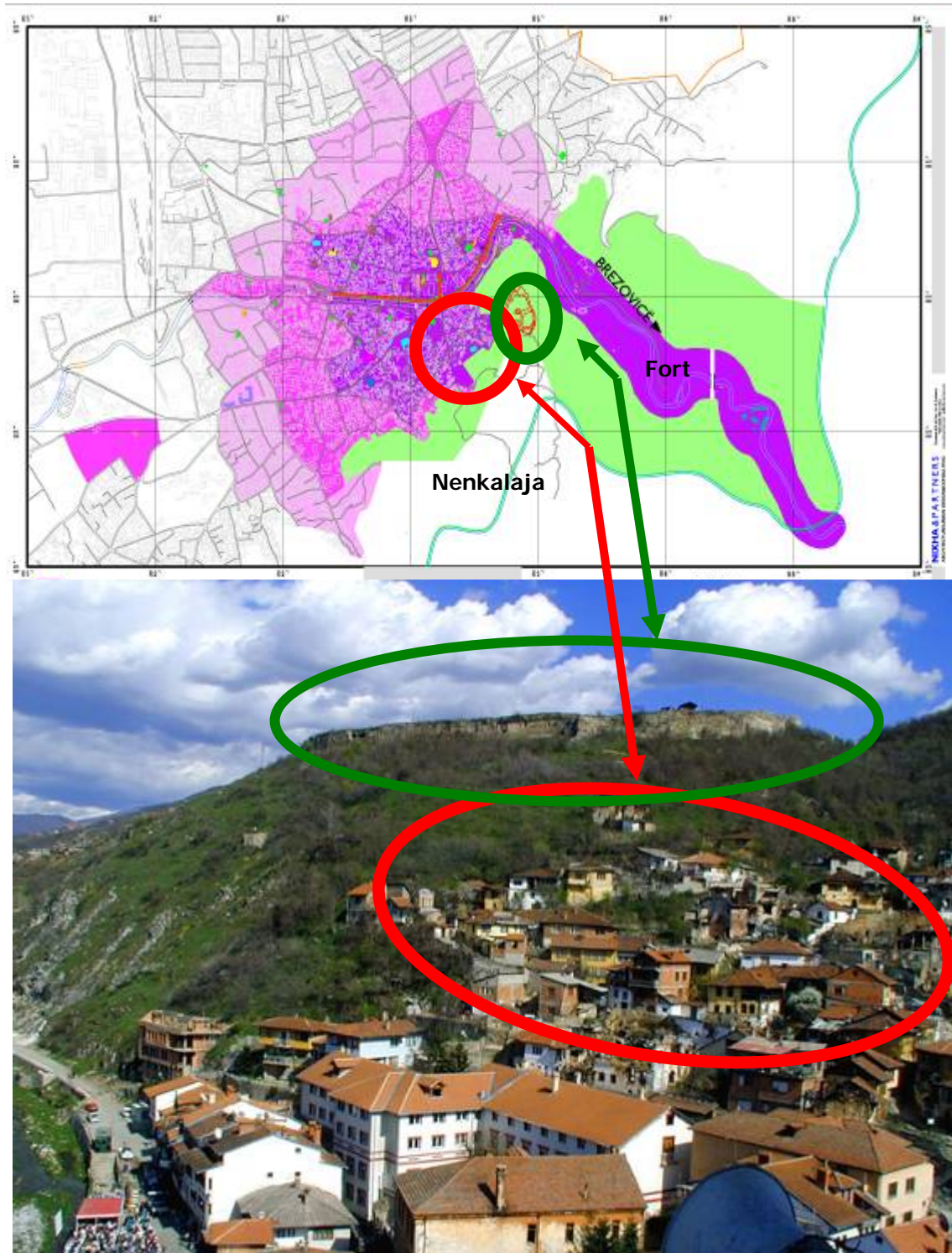
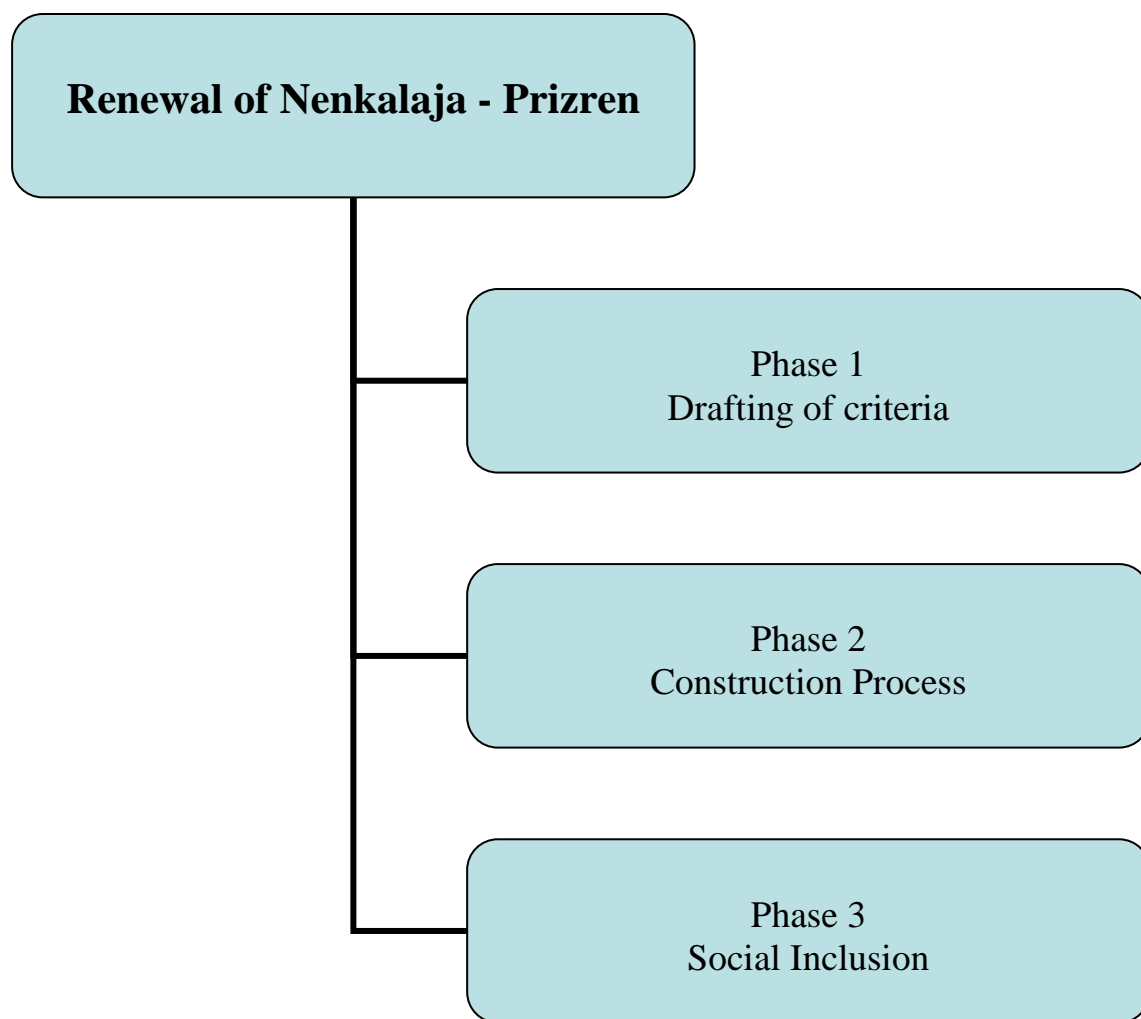


Figure1.

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For successful achievement of above mentioned objectives the project should be developed in three phases like shown in diagram.



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It is important to notice that for the development of this project there was not sufficient basic information, like: guidelines or criteria which could be translated into real actions (except for the conservation plan that includes the general criteria). Due to the high importance of the criteria' in the renewal of the area, I decided to present the project proposal in the second, phase 19-29 August 2007 in Laos, the project which will include the urban design detailed guidelines.

My project, was presented in Laos 2007 (phase 1) is implemented already.

Implementation

The Municipality of Prizren solicited the assistance of UN-HABITAT in implementing the draft Conservation Plan. The request was in line with the programme of encouraging sustainable development of the cities in Kosovo through the rational use of investment for strategic capital projects that will improve living conditions and help reduce poverty.

The document is called the Prizren Historic Area Development Guidelines. The existing Prizren Historic Area Conservation and Development Plan is one of the first concrete steps towards planning for the protection of any historic area in Kosovo. This document aims at further these steps, by adding to the Plan a practical document containing criteria based policies and development guidelines, which are both comprehensive and inclusive of all current related planning legislation. This document then provides the detailed development control measures necessary to ensure that the objectives of the Plan are met at a practical scale; in assessment of planning applications for new development, alterations of existing buildings, change of use and demolishing of buildings within the Prizren Historic Area.

Within the Conservation and Development Plan for the Historic Zone of Prizren, the Historic Zone is divided into eight sub zones (See Figure 1):

1. Traditional Market Zone
2. High Building Blocks Zone
3. River Bank Zone
- 4. Nën / Pod Kalaja Zone - (Project)**
5. Commercial Axe Zone
6. Mixed Use and Housing Zone
7. Housing Zone (Organic)
8. Housing Zone (Construction)

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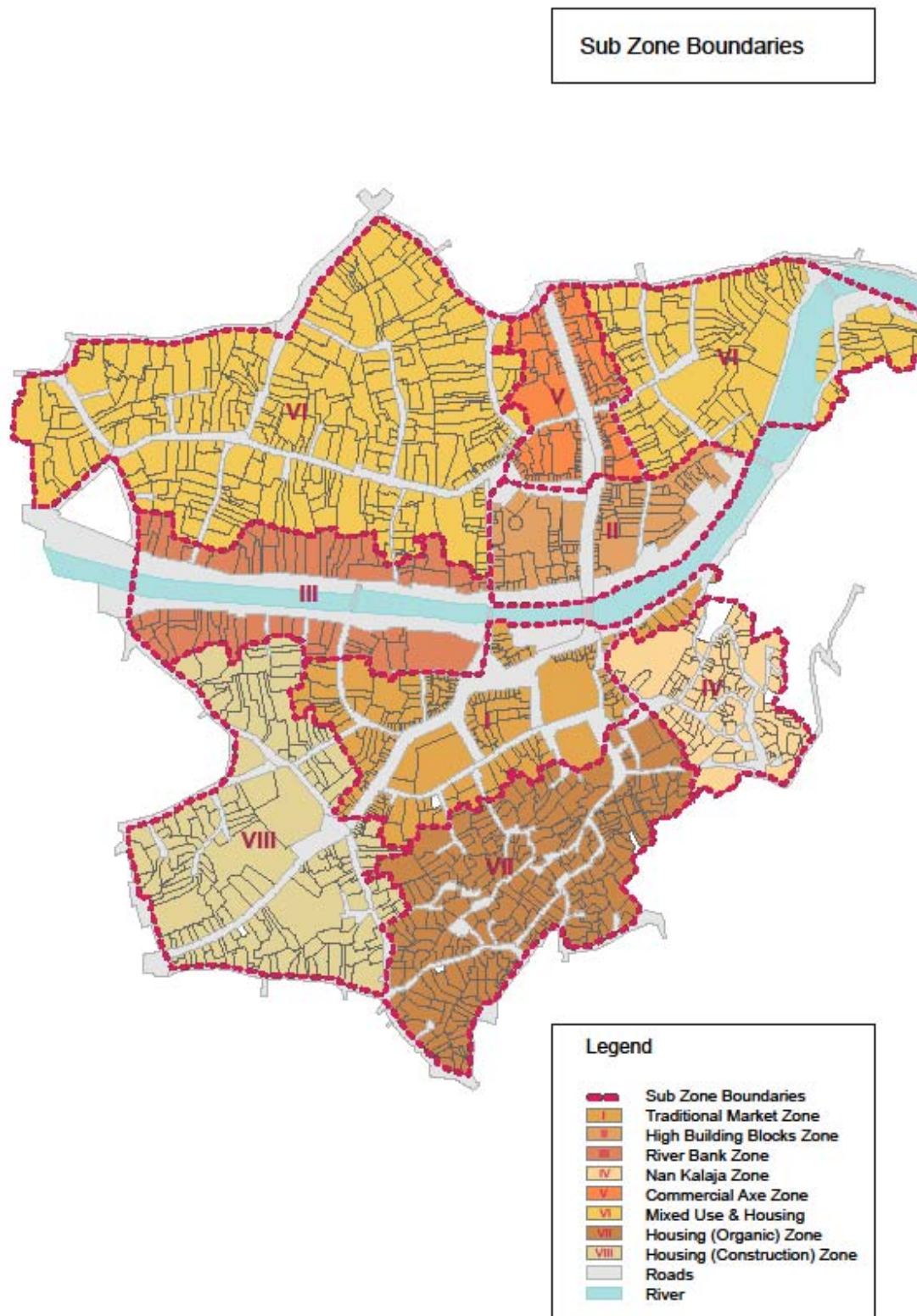


Figure.2. Historic Zone of Prizren

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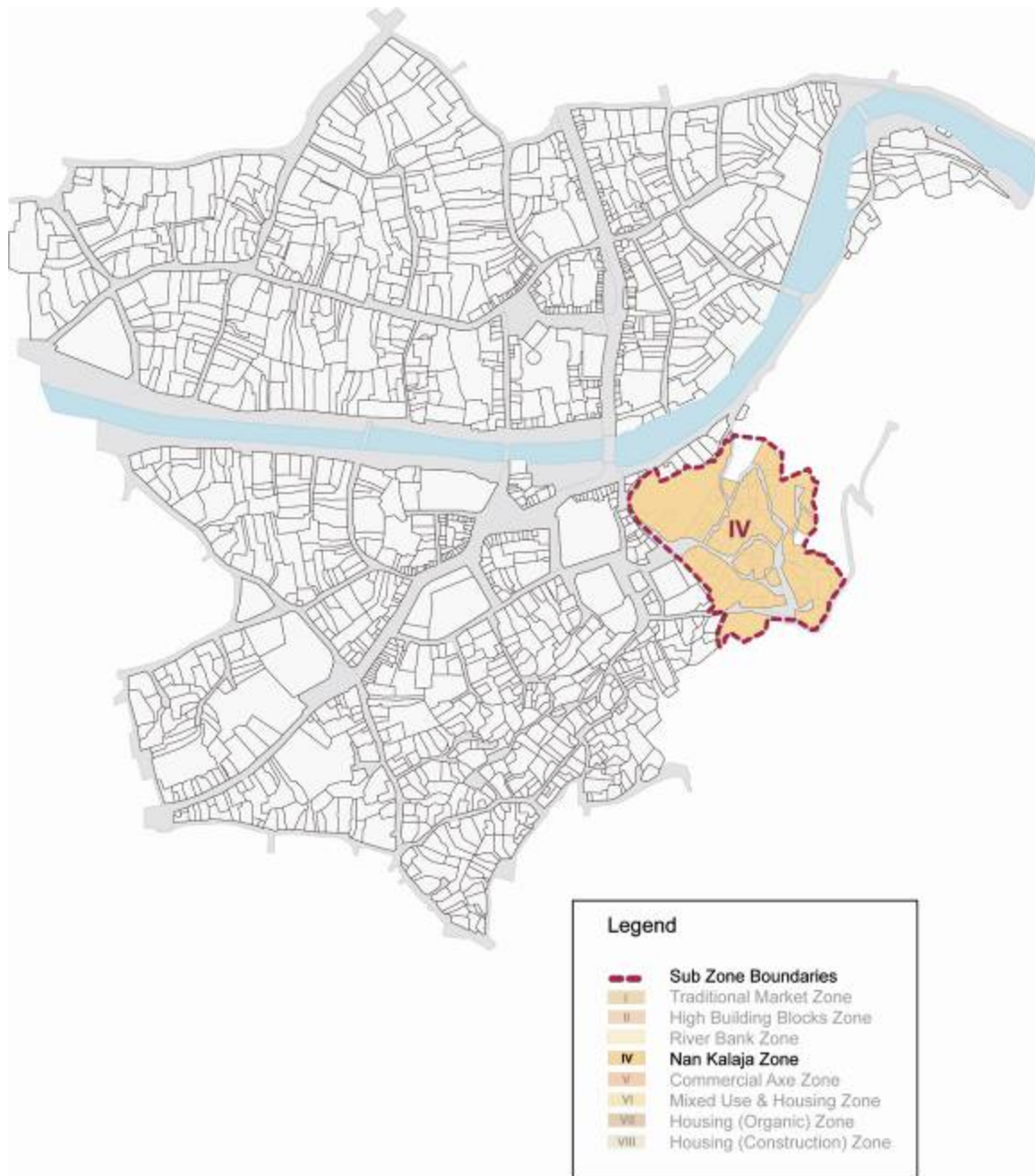


Figure.3. Position of Nenkalaja Zone within the Historic Zone

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Our office decided to draft the development control document, which will specify the detailed criteria for the development of each of above mentioned sub zones by:

- *Establishing an overall development objective for each subzone*
- *Defining development guidelines that respond to, reflect and reinforce the established objectives for each subzone. These guidelines cover Volume, Facade and Detail & Ornamentation Characteristics.*
- *Defining development guidelines that respond to, reflect and reinforce the established objectives that are consistent throughout all subzones. These guidelines cover Townscape and Streetscape Characteristics.*

The Document defined the objective for zone as follows:

This zone demonstrates the unique winding street patterns of Prizren, as well as numerous examples of traditional architectural character. The current physical state of much of the zone needs to be addressed as soon as possible. This includes restoration of the many unoccupied, damaged or ruined buildings. It is also a high priority to carry out reconstruction of civil buildings, significant monuments and their surrounds. Increased pedestrian permeability/connectivity of the area and introduction of tourism and accommodation ventures will help to revitalise the zone.

In this zone architectural style is VERNACULAR and functions: commercial, cultural, tourism, accommodation and residential.



Vernacular style

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Within this document, as 4th sub zone – **Nenkalaja** were included with the following criteria:

Volume Characteristics

Development in this zone should seek to provide restoration / reconstruction of damaged and ruined buildings to the general building height of the zone. The unique urban pattern of parcel size and coverage must be maintained. New infill applications must ensure that building heights and location do not detract from vistas towards this zone and its important monumental buildings; especially when viewed from the town centre and other zones. In keeping with this context all development in this zone should adhere to the following criteria:

- BUILDING CODE
- BUILDING HEIGHT
- BUILDING COVERAGE
- BUILDING PARCEL

Facade Characteristics

There is an urgent need for restoration and/or reconstruction of the existing/former facade frontlines and silhouettes of ruined buildings. New infill applications must display harmonious materials, vernacular style, size and shape. This is particularly important due to the position of Nën/Pod Kalaja, which forms a significant vista within the Historic Area. In keeping with this context all development in this zone should adhere to the following criteria:

- CHIMNEYS
- ROOF PITCH
- FACADES (OR EXTERNAL WALLS)
- OPENINGS
- SHOP FRONTS

Details and Ornamentation Characteristics

Existing vernacular decorative elements and other traditional details are unique to the Historic Area and must be preserved and restored if necessary. In keeping with this context all development in this zone should adhere to the following criteria:

- DECORATIVE ELEMENTS

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Townscape and Streetscape Characteristics

Throughout the Historic Area the townscape and streetscape are of primary importance as they are what unify the Historic Area as an area of unique cultural heritage and high quality built environment. For this reason street furniture, commercial street furniture, lighting, road and pavement materials must be chosen to preserve, enhance and provide harmony with the traditional character. A consistent high design quality of these elements is necessary.

Furthermore, pedestrian access and circulation routes need to be improved so that there is accessibility, connectivity and safety throughout the Historic Area for all citizens. Efficient, limited vehicular circulation and appropriate provision of car parking only in designated areas is an important factor in improving the townscape and streetscape of the Historic Area. Signage proportions and style that is in harmony with the traditional character of the Historic Area is to be used at all times. In keeping with this context all development should adhere to the following criteria:

ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

ROADS AND PAVEMENT

STREET FURNITURE

COMMERCIAL STREET FURNITURE

LIGHTING

SIGNAGE

YARD WALLS AND FENCES

LANDSCAPING

PUBLIC ART, MEMORIALS AND STATUES

VISUAL AMENITY

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The document included the pictures, drawings that will give clear illustration of the criteria like using of consistent material and accessibility, example:



is very important

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Inclusiveness during the drafting

It is important to notice that process of drafting was transparent and comprehensive. The working group included the representatives from: UN HABITAT (leading), Municipality of Prizren and Institute for the Protection of Monuments and CHwB (Prizren office). Many technical meetings have been organised and the suggestions and proposals from each member were included in the document.

During the drafting of document the presentation was organized regarding to purpose and content of document where Civil Society and other stakeholders have been informed.

Inclusion of central government level - Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning- Spatial Planning Department and Institute of Spatial Planning was important for our organization, where they had opportunity to provide us with suggestion and remarks, which were incorporated to document.

The representative of Municipality of Prizren had the view that this document can be used as a tool for the issuing construction permits, which will improve all area.

Information process

It is important to notice that for our organization it was important a information a wider group of stakeholders as well. This was achieved by drafting of brochure where was described summery of document, criteria' etc.

In one of the Conferences for Cultural Heritage (Kosova wide) where all institutions and NGO s dealing with cultural heritage were present, we used the opportunity to deliver brochures and sensitize all stakeholders. The idea of drafting of document and the document itself was highly appreciated from participants.