KSAMIL INTEGRATED URBAN REGENERATION CONCEPT

Urban Partnership Program (UPP) in collaboration with the Project for Integrated Urban and Tourism Development (PIUTD)
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FINANCING
This report was produced with support from the Urban Partnership Program financed by the government of Austria.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report has been financed under the World Bank–Austria Urban Partnership Program in collaboration with the Project for Integrated Urban and Tourism Development.

This report was coordinated by the World Bank Social, Urban, Rural and Resilience Global Practice (GSURR) ECA team including Tamara Nikolic (Operations Officer), Tuo Shi (Urban Economist), and Anita Ellmauer-Klambauer (Junior Professional Officer). Operational support was provided by Odeta Bulo of the Tirana Office and Marco Gallardo in Washington, DC. The team thanks David Sislen (Practice Manager, Europe and Central Asia) for his managerial support and technical advice.

The report was prepared by a team from superwien urbanism ZT OG in cooperation with Technical University Vienna (TU Wien) and the Albanian National Territorial Planning Agency. The preparation of this report benefited immensely from the Urban Design Lab approach and participatory planning exercises that took place in the town of Ksamil, municipality of Saranda, Albania. The report particularly benefited from the discussions with different stakeholders, including schools, students, local businesses, and administration. The team would like to thank in particular Roland Krebs (Urban Planner), technical lead from superwien urbanism ZT OG and his team, including Stefan Mayr, Mara Haas, Kerstin Pluch, Chiara Desbordes, Aknur Zhussip, and Katharina Höftberger. The TU Wien team was led by Markus Tomaselli (Professor) and comprised Mamica Burda and Georgi Kharitonashvili, and the National Territorial Planning Agency team was led by Adelina Greca (Director) and comprised Doris Alimerko, Irola Aldoni, and Mikel Tanini. Nermin Bajrami and Derek Thor Cary provided further contributions to the report. We would also like to acknowledge inputs to the report provided by the following students of TU Wien: Dejan Çoba, Ingo Fenzl, Adil Goletic, Julia-Su Gürsu, Shkëlqim Ismaili, Rubina Kaiser, Nora Lika, Shkëlqim Maliqi, Aiger Rica, Armin Rusiti, and Genita Saliha.

The team thanks the Albanian government for its cooperation in carrying out this research, in particular the team of the National Territorial Planning Agency, as well as Fabiola Mecaj from the Albanian Development Fund; Astrit Alikaj from the Project Coordination Unit in the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy; as well as Valbona Oruci, Administrator of Ksamil; and Ariel Balani, Planning Coordinator of Ksamil. Finally, the team is grateful to many individuals in Ksamil who provided input and shared their insights about the town.
Ksamil is a small town on the southwestern shore of Albania, located at Butrint Lake in the west and the Ionic Sea in the east. Its proximity to the Greek island Corfu and Butrint National Park and UNESCO heritage site, as well as its natural islands, make Ksamil a popular tourism destination during the summer. Dependency on seasonal tourism is one of the main challenges Ksamil is facing today. In combination with a lack of urban planning and coordination, the pristine natural image of the town has suffered from uncoordinated spatial development. These spatial growth challenges have led to the construction of illegal buildings, a dependency on automobiles, and a lack of public spaces, just to name a few issues.

The World Bank Group through the World Bank–Austria Urban Partnership Program and the Project for Integrated Urban and Tourism Development supports the government of Albania in this integrated urban regeneration concept with a participatory and dialogue-oriented planning approach that finds solutions to current challenges.

In the framework of the Ksamil Urban Strategy, which is based on the Development Vision and Development Goals, this concept presents 10 strategic urban interventions as technical recommendations to the government. A new marina would attract yacht aficionados from the Ionic Sea and create new public spaces at Ksamil’s renovated waterfront. A new building typology with activated ground floors for the unbuilt coast would bring life to the northern shore of the town. Public spaces in connection with the historic core of the town would be activated, and “car-free” or “fewer-car” public spaces would be introduced. The local mussel producers would get their own marina at Butrint Lake and have new opportunities for their production facility. Short-term and low-cost placemaking activities could be implemented immediately, such as the Ksamil Box—an iconic beach bar and restaurant integrating facilities such as toilets and showers that might potentially be scaled up to other places in Ksamil.
Introduction

Why the Ksamil Urban Lab?

The main objective of this consultancy is to pilot participatory and dialogue-oriented approaches in Albania by supporting the development of an urban strategy for the town of Ksamil. Ksamil, located in the southern part of the Albanian Riviera and in close proximity to Corfu Island and the mainland of Greece, is a town with high potential for sustainable tourism and cultural development, which is why it was selected to pilot participatory urban planning in Albania.

The main rationale behind testing participatory urban planning approaches in Albania is the potential to support planning processes when facing a scarcity of data and complex, informal towns and villages exposed to high market pressure. The information gathered in dialogue with different stakeholder groups provides valuable local knowledge and can close data gaps. The collected data might sometimes not be statistically verifiable and may contain contradictions and subjective perspectives. Therefore, it needs to be handled with caution and in recognition of the geographical, sociocultural, and economic context. Nonetheless, participatory urban planning is a strong methodology that engages locals in the development of strategies and creates trust and ownership among the participants.

The recommendations and results presented in this document demonstrate a general vision, goals, and strategies for Ksamil and suggest strategic interventions as catalysts for the short- and medium-term development of the town.

This consultancy is part of the Urban Partnership Program and the Project for Integrated Urban and Tourism Development. The Urban Partnership Program aims to strengthen the capacity of local governments in Southeastern Europe in their processes of modernization and reform. The Project for Integrated Urban and Tourism Development seeks to improve urban infrastructure, enhance tourism assets, and strengthen institutional capacity to support tourism-related local economic development in selected areas in the south of Albania.

Looking Back at the Consultancy

This Final Report is the third report of the consultancy and builds upon the analysis of the local context and the main challenges and opportunities, which were previously presented in the Inception Report and the Assessment Report.

The first mission to Ksamil took place in July 2018. Its main purpose was to kick off the planning process and to get
to know the planning team and the town of Ksamil. During the mission, mapping activities with the local planning team, composed of public sector stakeholders, were conducted. "Walk"-shops were organized through the town and its surroundings, and interviews were conducted with relevant stakeholders. The scope of work was defined, along with the main challenges, potential, and areas of interest. As a result, a list of key stakeholders to be included in the planning process was defined. An overview of the first mission and the most important results are presented in the Inception Report.

After the first mission further stakeholder interviews and a survey with tourists and residents were conducted with the help of the local planning team. As preparation for the second mission, a questionnaire analysis and interview analysis were conducted. The results led to the definition of the Emerging Topics (see section 4).

The second mission took place in September 2018. Its purpose was to generate strategies for the development of Ksamil from the perspective of different stakeholder groups. During the mission four stakeholder workshops were conducted. The workshops combined different participatory activities, including emotional mapping, scenario building, and participatory planning tools such as Goals-Grid\(^1\) and SWOT\(^2\) analysis. Analyses of the workshop results led to the definition of the main goals and a common vision for Ksamil’s urban development and a preliminary Urban Strategy. The results of the second mission, as well as the results of the questionnaire and interview analyses, are presented in the Assessment Report.

The Urban Strategy has been reworked and intensified since the third mission to Ksamil, which took place in October 2018. The student workshop in Ksamil kicked off a seminar at TU Wien with the task of developing specific projects at different sites in the town. As a result, six student projects with different ideas and approaches were presented. These student projects (see annex) strongly influenced the final Urban Strategy and the recommended Strategic Interventions as presented in this Final Report.

**Urban Design Lab Methodology**

The Urban Design Lab (UDL) methodology was used for the project “Piloting participatory approaches for urban development in Albania.” The methodology deploys participatory planning tools for the development of inclusive urban strategies and concrete urban projects.

The UDL process involves a simple and easy-to-implement planning methodology that has been tested in 23 projects throughout Latin American and Caribbean cities. The methodology is structured in three phases: The first stage includes stock-taking, field research, good practice research, stakeholder mapping, and analysis with a strong analytical approach aimed at gathering planning material from qualitative research. The second stage deploys workshops and focus groups by applying a dialogue-oriented planning and co-design process. The third and final phase focuses on the elaboration of an Urban Strategy with concrete interventions.

Throughout the UDL process of research, stakeholder dialogue, and project design a variety of tools can be applied for participatory planning and design workshops. The tools in our simple UDL toolbox are obviously not the only possible methods for participatory planning. They are intended to be a launching pad for experimentation with other tools, both existing and newly developed. Exploring and adapting new tools feeds the UDL process, strengthens potential impacts, and makes the methodology more robust.

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1. Goals-Grid is a tool for setting and clarifying planning goals and objectives.
2. SWOT stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
The planning methodology was adapted from the Latin American model to the specific urban situation found in the Ksamil planning area. By partnering with local staff and colleagues from academic institutions the team managed to obtain an understanding of the local planning culture, enabling a close relationship with the stakeholders and securing the successful outcome of the project.

**Quantitative Data: Availability and Gaps**

At the onset of this consultancy, existing data and information were gathered to analyze and evaluate its relevance and value for the development of an Urban Strategy for Ksamil. The initial data inventory was obtained from the National Territorial Planning Agency, the World Bank Group, and open sources. A comprehensive analysis of quantitative data would have been ideal as a basis for the participatory planning process; however, there was some weakness in availability of the data.

The mission obtained vector-based computer-aided design (CAD) data for the municipality of Saranda (including the town of Ksamil), which was necessary for territorial urban design. However, the available digital cadaster was not of sufficient quality. Therefore, digital information about the complex topography of the hilly town of Ksamil had to be extracted from Google Earth, and the missing data from the cadaster was digitalized by the planning team. The quality of such data is not the best but suffices to make the necessary adjustments to the terrain model. Also, three-dimensional models of the planning area were not available, but were created by the superwien urbanism ZT OG team in cooperation with the students of TU Wien as a basis for the design activities. Open source data, such as Open Street Map and information from Google Maps, were also used.

In addition to the weakness of the cadastral data, obstacles were encountered in gaining enough demographic data to make a comprehensive analysis of Ksamil. The only available demographic data are based on the Census of 2011, which can no longer be qualified as reliable. Data about Ksamil’s economic development were not available either, and quantitative data about tourism are missing, which would have been relevant for the analysis since tourism plays an important role in the town’s development. Additional online resources were used, such as reviews, ratings, and comments on hotels and bed-and-breakfast operations at Booking.com and Tripadvisor.com.

Because of the weakness of the quantitative data, the team decided to rely on qualitative data collected during the participatory design process, based on the UDL methodology. The qualitative data were carefully analyzed and verified through local and national governmental institutions. The methods used are described in more detail in the following section.

**Qualitative Data: Collection through Participatory Methods**

During the planning process, a set of participatory planning methods were used to create a comprehensive image of the town, with its challenges and potential, as well as a common vision for future development.

1. **“Walk”-shops**

In the first phase of the process, during the first mission and as preparation for the participatory planning activities, two “walk”-shops through town were conducted to get to know the planning area. . The local and international project team used printed maps to tag observations, challenges, and potential within the planning perimeter. The project team got its first impression of Ksamil by discussing while walking.
MARKETING + BRANDING

WHAT IS THE TARGET?

REACH ARE UNREACHED

YOUNG... UNREACHED

NATURE PARK

NATURAL HISTORY, ITALY

TOURS OUTLINED

NO TRUST

SMALL FAMILY

SMALL COMMUNITY

PUBLIC SPACE

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

NO TRANSPORT
2. Stakeholder Mapping
An important basis for the dialogue-oriented planning process was stakeholder mapping and the establishment of a local support group. This group involved all relevant stakeholders that were to be included in the planning process through workshops and other formats. The list of stakeholders was developed in cooperation with local planning professionals, after conducting two initial interviews with key participants (a local administrator of Ksamil and an entrepreneur and nongovernmental organization [NGO] activist).

The following stakeholder groups were defined as a result of a common brainstorming session:

- Farmers and agriculture: mussel producers, fruit and herb producers
- Community: residents, elderly people, women, community leaders
- Education: youth, pupils, teachers
- NGOs: Ksamil.at, AJMI (a local NGO based in Saranda)
- Culture and art: DEA Art Center, artists, makers of handicrafts
- Private sector: hotel owners, restaurant owners, entrepreneurs
- Tourism: sports, tourism board, tour operators
- Health sector: doctors, health center
- Public sector: municipality, local administration, Albanian Development Fund, National Territorial Planning Agency, Regional Directorate of National Culture Vlora (DRKK Vlora), National Protected Areas Agency, World Bank Group

These stakeholders were included in the further planning process; for instance, they were invited to the public consultation workshops.

3. Stakeholder Interviews
In total, 17 interviews with key stakeholders from different target groups were conducted with the help of the National Territorial Planning Agency. The interviews were based on defined guidelines with a list of questions concerning potential, challenges, and opportunities for Ksamil. The interviews provided a comprehensive overview of the future the key stakeholders envision for Ksamil and what is necessary to realize this vision.

4. Questionnaire Analysis
In addition to the stakeholder interviews, a questionnaire analysis in cooperation with the National Territorial Planning Agency was conducted to get obtain a variety of different inputs from locals and tourists. In total, 21 questionnaires (in English and Albanian) were filled in by tourists and 8 questionnaires (in Albanian) by residents. The survey combined a list of open-ended questions (for example, reasons for visiting Ksamil) with questions with predefined answers that had to be graded from 1 (not applicable) to 5 (excellent). One of these rating tasks aimed to discover more about the qualities of different aspects of the town (for example, public spaces, restaurant facilities, parking facilities, cultural activities). A more detailed description of the questionnaire and interview analysis can be found in the Assessment Report.

5. Stakeholder Workshops
The main part of the participatory planning process, based strongly on the UDL methodology, was the stakeholder workshops, which were conducted during the second mission. Based on the stakeholder mapping, the following focus groups were defined:

- Pupils and teachers
- Representatives from the economic sector (hotel owners, restaurant owners, real estate agents, tourism board, tour operators, mussel producers, and others)
• Local residents
• Representatives from NGOs and entrepreneurs (DEA Art Center, artists, AJMI, community leaders, small family hotels and rooms to let, and others)

The methods used in the workshops were adapted to the specific interests and capabilities of the participants. A very easy but effective method used in the workshop with pupils and with local residents was Social Cartography of Perception (or Emotional Mapping): Each participant was asked to place a certain number of stickers with three different colors on a large map of Ksamil. Yellow dots represented areas that they liked, blue dots represented areas that they did not like, and orange dots meant potential areas for urban intervention. This activity yielded a very quick overview of the planning area and its potential and challenges.

The Situative Interpretation of Significant Urban Areas method was used in the workshop with school children: The participants were asked to draw on top of printed photos what changes they would desire for a particular location, resulting in a variety of different sketches of how Ksamil’s younger generation perceived their town.

During the workshop with representatives of the economic sector, a SWOT Analysis in small groups was conducted on specific topics (marketing and branding, mobility, tourism, as well as public spaces and informality).

A similar method was applied in the workshop with NGOs and entrepreneurs—the Goals-Grid method aimed to develop a collaborative diagnosis and an analysis of different prospects and opportunities for the area. In groups of four to seven people, the participants were asked to answer the questions of What they want / What they don’t want and What they have / What they don’t have and write the results on a flip chart.

Through this variety of methods, a set of qualitative data was gathered to be analyzed by the international planning team. As result of the interview and questionnaire analyses and the stakeholder workshops, Emerging Topics were defined (see section 4). The stakeholder workshops also resulted in a draft Development Vision for Ksamil, as well as a list of goals and a preliminary Urban Strategy for Ksamil.

6. Academic Partnership with TU Wien

Based on the preliminary results, the Institute for Urban Design and Landscape Architecture from TU Wien was invited to conduct an academic workshop over the week October 22–27, 2018. The professors and students conducted additional fieldwork consisting of mapping activities and stakeholder interviews. During this creative week, the students developed preliminary urban design studies for Ksamil based on the preliminary Urban Strategy and Development Goals. At the end of the local workshop in Ksamil, the students presented the seven group work products to members of the World Bank Group and the general public.

From November 2018 until February 2019, the academic urban design projects were further developed in Vienna under the guidance of professor Markus Tomaselli of TU Wien.
Introducing Placemaking as an Innovative Planning Approach

In the context of this methodology, placemaking was introduced as an additional tool for urban development. This planning approach is suitable for short-term and small-scale projects at low cost that have high visibility in public spaces and are led by the community.

Placemaking is a strategy for co-creation, focusing on economic and social well-being and quality of life. It is a strategy for coping with urban problems and dealing with the actions to be taken in a neglected area with the aim of upgrading and revitalizing it. Placemakers achieve their goals by offering concrete tools to incorporate all stakeholders that are involved in a public space and by working toward a solution together with those stakeholders. As both an overarching idea and a hands-on approach for improving a neighborhood, city, or region, placemaking inspires people to collectively reimagine and reinvent public spaces.
This section provides an introduction to Ksamil, its geographical location near Butrint National Park, and its strong ties to the municipality of Saranda. The discussion offers a quick insight into Ksamil’s short but exciting history as an agricultural area and tourism resort. Ksamil’s demography and tourism development are analyzed and two planning documents are presented that are relevant for the development of further plans for the town.

Introducing Ksamil

The small town of Ksamil became part of the municipality of Saranda, the economic hub of a region that is part of the Vlorë qark, in 2015. Ksamil encompasses an area of approximately 1.7 km², and is located on the south shore of the Mediterranean Sea close to the Greek island Corfu (illustration 1). The town is part of the protected Butrint National Park and has access to Butrint Lake in the east. The ruins of the ancient town of Butrint in the southern portion of the peninsula are part of a UNESCO world cultural heritage site.

In the past few decades, the small coastal village has become a popular destination for domestic and international tourists during the summer months. The Ksamil islands in particular are one of the town’s main attractions, and the pristine and crystal-clear water is its primary natural asset. The development of the tourism sector, however, has led to unstructured urban growth and presented the town with some challenges. Tourism nowadays is characterized by informal development patterns causing difficulties regarding parking, public spaces, and urban development. The once-pristine beauty of Ksamil has suffered from the unstructured development.
Short History of Ksamil

Archeological evidence suggests the area encompassing the current Butrint National Park has hosted human settlements on and off from the 10th century BC, reaching its zenith in the period of classical antiquity. Despite offering an ideal environment for supporting human activity, the peninsula remained largely uninhabited during the course of the 20th century. With the redrawing of the map in the wake of World War II along national and ideological lines, the largely ignored peninsula gained renewed strategic importance. As a result, military defense structures were installed along the coast and throughout the region in anticipation of a NATO or Warsaw Pact invasion, which never came.

The close proximity of both the Greek mainland border and Corfu Island looming just two kilometers offshore made the region an important border control point. Fearing an invasion as much as its own citizens trying to escape, the communist regime declared the peninsula a restricted military zone—a status the peninsula and later the town of Ksamil carried during most of the second half of the 20th century. Its former inaccessibility and isolation are underscored by the fact that the main road connecting Butrint to Saranda was first built in 1959. Its construction was undertaken to allow the Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev easy access to the archeological site during his official state visit to Albania. It would be almost a decade later, however, before the town of Ksamil began to take shape.

The founding of Ksamil was the result of a broader, nationwide rural development campaign initiated through the direction of Chinese economic advisors. As the only stable presence on the peninsula, the army was charged with undertaking the first infrastructure projects to support the future community and agricultural production. Priorities included securing water resources and the construction of irrigation canals. The town’s first inhabited structures were barracks built to house a corps of wage-seeking male workers brought in to assist the military with construction.

By 1969 the first families had started arriving, and in 1973 the number of laborers renting apartments and other forms of permanent housing had risen to an estimated 160 individuals. Despite common assumptions among even today’s local residents, the first residents were not forced laborers, or so-called volunteers. A person’s perceived reliability and allegiance to the communist party were important factors in receiving permission to settle and seek employment in Ksamil. Additionally, priority was given to individuals with families. Although the majority of these families settled from southern regions, people were brought to live and work together from various regions across the country. The Ksamil project became an experiment for officials in creating and managing a multicultural melting pot according to Albanian standards.

During the remainder of the communist period, Ksamil maintained a relatively stable population of about 1,000 inhabitants. The town’s population comprised roughly 400 to 500 families making up 700 workers employed in 15 worker brigades in the local state-run farm. At first, citrus products—lemons, oranges, and tangerines—were cultivated in large numbers. Diversification followed with the introduction of olive production as the network of terraced hills was slowly expanded. The third focus of agricultural production was the farming of mussels in Lake Butrint (Illustration 2); the mussels were produced both for domestic consumption in the larger cities and for export.
Daily life in the agricultural town of Ksamil during communism bears little resemblance to today’s beach holiday lifestyle. Access to the sea for local residents was restricted: swimming and bathing were only allowed at three designated points. Ksamil’s three now-iconic islands just off the coast were also strictly off limits for residents. Although there was neither a curfew nor special permission necessary to move freely in the immediate region for residents of Ksamil, access to the town for nonresidents was tightly restricted. Special permits were a necessity. Anyone attempting to enter along the main road was met by a checkpoint located on the outskirts of the town at one of the narrowest points of the peninsula. Thirty to forty soldiers stationed around the community also ensured its status as a restricted zone.

The collapse of former state enterprises in 1994 marked the beginning of a period of fundamental change for the town. Faced with the near-complete collapse of the community’s economic livelihood, outward migration soared. Large numbers of unemployed residents sought opportunities abroad in neighboring countries. Greece, in particular, was the first choice for many because of its proximity and historic ties. Although attempts to develop tourism as a source of employment were immediately made, any small gains in establishing the industry were annulled by the economic turmoil caused by the collapse of the pyramid schemes in 1997. The resulting civic unrest, civil war, and UN troop intervention made the development of Ksamil into a tourist destination impossible until the country was stabilized and economic recovery was achieved at the end of the decade. Considerable private investment in Ksamil by Albanians returning to the country and continued remittances from abroad began in 2000.

Little of Ksamil’s communist-era architecture and infrastructure remains evident in the community today. Most structures have either been masked or destroyed through the rapid and largely unregulated construction boom beginning around 2000. For example, the school was relocated and expanded in phases between 2003 and 2010 as the city rapidly grew out of its former boundaries. It now accommodates 600 students in grades 1 to 12 and fulfills its function as a community center. In comparison, the communist-era school facilities have been reappropriated and now provide housing for low-income families.
Ksamil’s Demography and Tourism Development

The permanent population of Ksamil numbers about 3,000 inhabitants. During the summer, however, the population temporarily increases. Between 2001 and 2011 the permanent population grew from 1,154 to 2,994. Compared with Saranda, the population density in Ksamil is quite high, with 422 inhabitants per square kilometer (332 in Saranda city) (INSTAT Census 2011)³.

Ksamil has a high unemployment rate of 53.2 percent (2011), compared with the entire municipality of Saranda (18.7 percent) or Albania overall (29.3 percent) (INSTAT Census 2011⁴). Ksamil’s economy and jobs are very much dependent on the tourism sector. According to the General National Plan “Shqipëria 2030,”⁵ Ksamil is the center of attention for tourism. In 2016, 383 hotel rooms and family houses were available for national and foreign tourists, operating during the summer season. In total, about 130,000 tourists visit over the course of a year. Seasonal tourism remains almost the only source of income for local residents. Other priority sectors are construction, fishing, and fruit culture—there are 55 mussel cultivation businesses in town. Moreover, the services sector has been on the rise all along the coastline: two-thirds (62.9 percent) of employees are in services, 27.4 percent in industry, and 9.7 percent in agriculture (2011) (Bashkia Saranda 2015).

Tourism’s seasonality is reflected in population numbers: During the summer months Ksamil counts approximately 1,000 more residents than during the rest of the year (3,829 instead of 2,994) (2011). According to the municipality, there are 2,000 tourists in Ksamil every day, on average, in the summer, half of whom are one-day visitors. Ksamil’s tourism is focused on the family: There are 89,450 family tourists all year long—52,120 in July and August and 38,340 during June and September. In addition to an estimated 100 hotels, there are almost three times as many accommodations for families (according to experts from the Ksamil administrative unit, 2016). Some 468 buildings, or 36 percent of the total dwellings in Ksamil, are uninhabited or inhabited by persons not included in the census.

Concerning the quality of tourism and the satisfaction of tourists in Ksamil, the results of the questionnaire reveal that tourists are satisfied with their stay in Ksamil. In particular, the “Friendliness of the people” was rated highest, followed by “Easiness to find information about the site prior to visiting” and “Quality and availability of the tours.” Only two of the aspects are rated with an average grade lower than 3.5: the quality and availability of toilets and sanitation facilities, and the quality and availability of cultural activities (see illustration 4).

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³ Institute of Statistics website: http://www.instat.gov.al/al/temat/censet/censusi-i-popullsis%C3%AB-dhe-banesave/publikimet-censusi-i-popullsis%C3%AB-dhe-banesave-2011/publikimet-censusi-i-popullsis%C3%AB-dhe-banesave-2011/
⁴ Institute of Statistics website: http://www.instat.gov.al/al/temat/censet/censusi-i-popullsis%C3%AB-dhe-banesave/publikimet-censusi-i-popullsis%C3%AB-dhe-banesave-2011/publikimet-censusi-i-popullsis%C3%AB-dhe-banesave-2011/
1. General Local Plan

Although Saranda has adopted a General Local Plan with a strategic vision for Ksamil and proposals for urban development for 2016–31, investment for implementing the plan's vision is still lacking.

The main objectives of the General Local Plan are the following:

- Improving local access. Reorganization and regulation of road infrastructure, asphalt of secondary roads, construction of parking spaces
- Improving public transport and parking. Improvement of local bus service, creation of parking areas in the urban area and for beaches
- Developing “urban accessories” in tourism. Creating an information point
- Preserving and improving Saranda–Ksamil coastline value. Extension of the main panoramic road segments of the Cukes Canal to Ksamil and Butrint, creation of a road for cyclists from Saranda to Ksamil and around the peninsula, standards to control the quality of investment in real estate, reserved area for high-end hotels and secondary home investment
- Protecting the coastal landscape. Preservation of the natural character of the coast along the Saranda Riviera and Ksamil peninsula, allowing only minimal interventions and permitting parking only in designated areas; protection of olive orchards; allowing residential development only in the area determined on the basis of landscape protection criteria
The planned interventions for improving local access and public transport and for developing “urban accessories” are characterized as technical projects or financial initiatives. Two of these technical projects are of high priority: creation of parking areas within the urban area and creation of parking for the beaches. No other intervention has such a high priority. The other planned interventions—preservation and improvement of coastline value and protection of the coastal landscape—are soft interventions or regulatory interventions with medium to low priority.

2. Ksamil Zoning Plan

The zoning geographic information system in Ksamil (Illustration 5) reveals two main zoning areas: First, the land connected to the coast has zoning for services. Second, the rest of the land within the settlement boundaries is dedicated to housing. There is a clear zoning border separating the town from the agricultural and natural landscape. Ksamil, in the zoning plan, has few urban extension areas; thus, the current footprint of Ksamil cannot be extended and Ksamil has to grow inside its settlement boundaries with higher-density typologies.
Three activities from the research and workshop phase of the assignment were most influential on the definition of the Urban Strategy. First, the participants in the Social Cartography of Perception indicated on a map where urban interventions and changes should be implemented to improve the town (“Where to act”). Second, the Situative Interpretation of Significant Urban Areas provided a reflection on the streetscape of Ksamil and how participants envision these public spaces in the future (“How to act”). Third, the definition of the Emerging Topics provided a basis for the urban regeneration concept (“What to do”).

Social Cartography of Perception

The emotional mapping conducted during the workshop week at the local secondary school shows a clear picture of places that young residents do and do not like. It also provides an indication of where potential interventions in public spaces could be implemented. See illustration 6.

Most places that the participants do not like (blue dots) are located on the northern beaches and along the waterfront. The promenade received heavy criticism from participants because of its nonfunctional areas. The participants mentioned the divided foot path, the lack of vegetation, insufficient light during the night, and lack of shade during the day. The promenade is interrupted and not continuous. The beaches are not open to locals because they are fully privatized by restaurants; the sun beds are available for 10 euros a day and therefore are not affordable to the ordinary people of Ksamil. Another negative spot is the mussel farmers’ neglected port. The place is heavily polluted, with no facilities for trash disposal no
proper production facility. Other weak points are the three public spaces on the main road (SH81). There are no sidewalks or benches and no public spaces for locals and visitors.

The places that the young people of Ksamil like (yellow dots) are the natural areas, especially the beaches, the islands, and the hills of Ksamil. The town’s natural lookout points and the restaurants are also attractive. The young people also like the few central public squares because these places have the few services, bars, and restaurants outside of the waterfront.

The potential areas for urban intervention (orange dots) are the central squares on the Backbone, the natural port at the lakeside, and the waterfront, especially the northeastern part with less development and fewer restaurants.

**Situative Interpretation of Significant Urban Areas**

The goal of the “Situative Interpretation of Significant Urban Areas,” also conducted during the workshop week at the local secondary school, was to gather the creative potential of the participants and to understand the needs of the young generation. The various sketches (illustration 7) show a number of similarities: Most of the participants drew additional, wider sidewalks and crosswalks on the pictures because they are insufficient at the moment (“the sidewalk should be wider so that the people can walk there”). Also, many pictures show additional street signs and traffic lights to better regulate traffic. Cars that park on the street seem to be unwanted—some participants struck them out on their sketches. Power supply lines were also struck out a few times, with comments such as “under the road.” Another issue mentioned in many sketches is greenery: the participants expressed demand for more trees and green spaces in public areas: “A square needed with some flowers or trees.”

Illustration 7: Results of the Situative Interpretation of Significant Urban Areas (First Workshop – Local Schools)
Definition of Emerging Topics

Based on the interview analysis, the preliminary Emerging Topics resulting from the workshops conducted during the first mission were revised and enriched.

Table 1 presents the revised Emerging Topics, arranged according to frequency of mention by the interview partners. Tourism was mentioned in the interviews most often (35 times), followed by ecological dimension. The topic with the least mentions was education system. Most of the Emerging Topics contained positive aspects (strengths) and negative aspects (weaknesses), as well as suggestions about how to change these issues (change).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emerging Topics</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
<th>Suggestions for Change</th>
<th>Sum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Sustainable tourism</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Ecological dimension</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Spatial development and urban growth</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Local economic development</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Recreation, entertainment, and sports</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Quality of public space</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Sustainable mobility</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Urban governance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Missing infrastructure</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Local community</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Culture and heritage</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Education system</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Emerging Topics According to Their Frequency of Mention

The topic with the most positive references was tourism, followed by ecological dimension and culture and heritage as strong local identity. The interview partnerships attached no positive impressions at all to four topics: sustainable mobility, urban governance, missing infrastructure, and education system. The topics that earned the most weaknesses were spatial development and urban growth; recreation, entertainment, and sports; and missing infrastructure.

The interviews provide a good impression of how specific topics are perceived and rated by local residents and their importance to Ksamil’s development.

6. In total, 17 key stakeholders were interviewed about their visions for Ksamil’s urban development. The minutes can be found in the annex to the Assessment Report. The interviews were conducted by the National Territorial Planning Agency and delivered in English translation in September 2018
Emerging Topics represent challenges, as well as future potential, relevant for Ksamil’s development and these challenges should be addressed in the further planning process. The Emerging Topics presented in the following discussion resulted from the interview analysis and the additional focus group workshops. Where needed, additional data and further research were added to the topics.

The definition of the Emerging Topics is important in the planning process, because the Development Goals and the Urban Strategy (see section 5) are based on them. The following sections list and review the 12 Emerging Topics. For reasons of privacy, stakeholder statements from the interviews have been anonymized.

1. Sustainable Tourism
The tourism sector is the most important economic driver of Ksamil’s development. According to stakeholders from the tourism sector, family tourism in particular is becoming more and more important. This impression is bolstered by the high number of family tourists: among the 2,000 tourists per day, there are about 750 family tourists (INSTAT 2016).

Tourism in Ksamil is highly concentrated in the warm summer season. The features of the natural environment, such as the beaches and Butrint National Park, attract thousands of visitors, especially from June to September. The rest of the year (October to May), many fewer tourists visit Ksamil: 57 percent of tourists visit Ksamil in July and August, and 43 percent during June and September (based on experts from the Ksamil administrative unit, 2016).

The questionnaires reveal, and local residents confirm in the interviews, that there is a good relationship between tourists and residents. Most tourists are “amazed by [their] hospitality,” according to a retired physician’s assistant. A Ksamil administrator states that “tourists and residents collaborate and live in symbioses together.” Good reviews, comments, and ratings on Booking.com and Tripadvisor.com provide evidence of Ksamil’s good reputation among tourists and the high quality of its hotels.

Despite the positive aspects of tourism in Ksamil, there are some weaknesses. The interview analysis shows that staff working in the tourism and services sector are not properly trained and are badly managed. Moreover, according to some tourists who took part in the survey, not all workers in the sector worked cheerfully or treated their guests fairly.

The workshops revealed that the tourism sector suffers from a lack of standardized and regulated prices between different restaurants and hotels. Especially for tourists from other parts of Albania and Kosovo, prices are too high. One interview partner who owns a rental villa stated that he has “lived in Greece [himself] and a lunch would never cost this much as here.” Regulation of market prices would be necessary to overcome this problem.

2. Ecological Dimension
According to participants in the workshops, ecological aspects, such as the natural environment, climate, and vegetation, are some of the best features of Ksamil and hold the highest potential. Some residents even see these aspects as the only positive elements of the town: “The only qualities of Ksamil are gifted from nature” one of the residents said in an interview. The beach area and Butrint National Park in particular are seen as strengths that should be preserved.

However, the workshop participants claim that these natural resources are not taken care of sufficiently but are instead destroyed by people: one representative example is the pollution of public beaches caused by a lack of waste management.

Also, the uncoordinated construction activities of residential buildings and hotels can be seen as a danger to the natural environment. The participants concluded that the town has much more potential for recreation and tourism than is made use of today.

Mussels as a natural resource are seen as a gift that supports the local economy and the tourism sector. A mussel producer and resort owner highlighted in his interview that Butrint, with its huge biodiversity, “in the best time [...] used to produce 6,500 tons of mussels per year. 90 percent of that was constantly sold all over Europe.” The high economic potential of mussel production would arise from the fact that “it doesn’t require much investment, because it feeds on the natural water of our lake.”

However, according to the mussel producers, the quality of mussels has fallen over the past few years because the man-made Vivari Channel has not been cleaned in 15 years. Other factors, such as the lack of infrastructure (for example, no facility for shell-waste disposal at the natural port), might also contribute to the degradation of the lake, so that not enough fresh water flows into it. However, it is not clear who is responsible for cleaning the canal according to one of the interview partners, so the lake gets asphyxiated and the mussels spoil if the canal gets blocked. One of the mussel producers estimates that an investment of half a million euros would be needed to open the canal if it becomes fully blocked.

Another challenge regarding the ecological dimension is the lack of green space in town, in stark contrast to the natural environment surrounding the city. The workshop with the local school revealed that young people would like more public green spaces and claim that the streets should be shaded by trees.

3. Spatial Development and Urban Growth

The potential for tourism to boost Ksamil’s local economy seems to have led to chaos rather than to leveraged urban development. Ksamil is clogged with vernacular hotel and residential buildings that are constantly being enlarged. Because most of the hotels and homes are family owned, buildings are expanded according to the availability of funding. Building height, construction alignment, density indices, and uses and functions—that is, all aspects that are usually regulated by urban development codes—have not been regulated at all in Ksamil, leading to the current chaotic appearance and nonexistent public spaces. Furthermore, less than 50 percent of the street network is paved with proper asphalt.

There is no documentation of the town’s spatial growth. An urban morphology analysis is hard to undertake because of the lack of historical photographic documentation of the town. However, most construction works are connected to expansion projects taken on by hotels and bed-and-breakfast operations. Although Ksamil’s year-round population is about 3,000 (INSTAT Census 2011), many more people stay in Ksamil during the summer. According to a 2016 census on tourism, 130,000 tourists are served throughout the year in Ksamil (including daily visitors). This ratio highlights the importance that tourism plays in the town’s spatial development.

As the deputy mayor from Saranda pointed out, because of the lack of documentation of urban growth, various property issues (for example, property rights, building codes) need to be considered in the development of urban projects. There are many deteriorating and unfinished buildings in town, which all have property issues. In addition to unfinished buildings, there are also some remains of informal buildings that were demolished by the government. Residents complain about them and think they should be removed.

Spatial development seems to be insufficiently organized, and auspicious planning projects of the past have not come to fruition. Because of this lack of control, many decisions about Ksamil’s urban design are made by private owners instead of professional urban planners. As an example of the results, many buildings are surrounded by unattractive fences and walls.

During the workshops, some of the residents claimed that the town does not have a unified image and suggested painting the buildings the same or a similar color to minimize the chaotic impression. Another idea was that the color of the rooftops should be standardized.

In the co-creation workshop, the participants came up with some potential urban solutions: The hills of Ksamil are not yet developed, although some of them are zoned for construction. This opens up the possibility of creating some high-quality public spaces. Another possible project in Ksamil is rehabilitation of some old houses at the entrance to the city. According to an entrepreneur, these older houses give the city a bad image. Finally, the port and the lake area should be refurbished.

4. Local Economic Development

Ksamil’s local economy has some difficulties. First, the unemployment rate is very high: In 2011 53.2 percent were unemployed in the town of Ksamil9. Unemployment numbers are much smaller in the municipality of Saranda (18.7 percent) and in Albania overall (29.3 percent) (INSTAT Census 201110). In the off-season winter months in particular there are not enough jobs for residents, given that most jobs in Ksamil are connected to the tourism sector and only need to be filled during the summer. Ksamil’s seasonal job market has a negative impact on the town. During the off-season, most of the town is empty, with reduced economic activity in the ground floor zones and abandoned areas. In winter, the number of residents in the town shrinks to a fraction of its peak size, which means that flexible and adaptive structures (buildings, public spaces, public transport, and so on) are needed.

Second, a large number of informal businesses offer goods for very low prices, making it hard for formal businesses to sell their products. One of the hotel and restaurant owners said in the interview that he is “tired of all this informality, of not getting what [he deserves], because of all these ‘ignorants’ holding out handwritten boards on the streets and steal[ing] our clients by offering them ridiculous prices.”

Third, the mussel producers claim a lack of cooperation between themselves and other professions. According to them, there could be synergies with other business sectors, such as fertilizer production from the shells. Another potential avenue for supporting mussel production would be to establish a marketplace where mussel producers could deliver their products so that they do not have to sell them on their own. A center for mussel processing close to the lake would enable the mussel farmers to certify their product and initiate related activities nearby.

The economic focus group workshop revealed that cooperation among local businesses is lacking. The participants would support an association or community of businessmen, where they could raise their voice and demand certain rights. In general, they think that the town lacks a business system that would bring more regulation to the local economy.

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9. These data collected by INSTAT in the 2011 Census are based on the self-declaration of the residents and are not comparable to official unemployment data
The focus group participants revealed that the lack of young people and fresh business ideas is a big challenge, which makes both residents and businesspeople pessimistic. A mussel producer and resort manager put it this way: “In the world there are people that have great ideas. To make these ideas come to life, they should hire young people, because they are energetic. Here is the work for the young people in Albania.” They agree that central public spaces are necessary to keep up the town’s operation and to attract young people to come to live in Ksamil and stay all year long.

The stakeholder workshops that included co-creation activities with the community indicated that development of the seaside harbor has potentially high benefits: Currently there is neither a harbor nor a marina, but if cooperation between Ksamil and Corfu (Greece) were to be improved, more jobs could be created and other types of businesses could be attracted. In addition, inviting schools from outside of Albania to visit, for example, to learn about ancient history and heritage and to use Ksamil as a hub to Butrint, has the potential to bring more activities to Ksamil during the wintertime.

5. Recreation, Entertainment, and Sports
Most of the workshop participants, especially the youth, think there is a general lack of entertainment in the city, especially during the wintertime. Even the bars close down after the summer season. The lack of entertainment and nightlife is driving not only tourists, but also young people, out of the city.

The workshop participants cited a strong need for a cinema or theater in Ksamil. At the moment the DEA Culture Center is the only facility that offers some entertainment. However, it was privatized and is no longer affordable for everyone. The absence of a public library and bookshop is seen as a major problem. “It’s a shame, for a city that is known by the whole world, to not have a single bookstore or library,” a retired physician’s assistant said in the interview.

The workshops also indicated that the absence of a proper public sports field contributes to Ksamil’s unattractiveness, especially for children and youth. The existing field at the schoolyard is inadequate because it is made of concrete. One possibility for making the schoolyard more attractive would be to plant grass or lay grass carpets. In general, more playgrounds for children are needed to increase the activities offered to this age group.

6. Quality of Public Space
In general, there is a huge scarcity of articulated public spaces with benches or other furniture where residents can gather and spend their leisure time in Ksamil. Although there are high-quality open spaces, such as the beach, they are not available to the public because they are rented to the private sector (for example, bar owners and hotels) during the tourism season and are only accessible by paying a fee. Only those who can afford to rent a sunbed are allowed to use certain zones of the beach area for recreation. “The rule of 20% public beach out of 80% private is not respected. If you want to lay a towel, you can’t find a free space to sit. For example, I’ve seen it with my own eyes, an owner dispatching tourists because they had their own bottle of water,” an owner of a rentable villa said. Thus, a lot of potential is being wasted and made available only to a small group of people.

Ksamil’s residents recognize that reconsideration of public spaces could have large benefits, given that they are already very popular. Existing and overused public spaces could be expanded and new ones created. For example, the existing promenade is too narrow and is unattractive. It is not properly lighted and the surfaces are not well maintained. The promenade needs to be revitalized, in harmony with the businesses located there.

The co-creation workshops suggested that creation of public spaces is related to the management of mobility. According to a resident, the “4-Islands street” where the mussel festival takes place (“Coastal Square”) could be used as an attractive plaza if cars could be redirected or strictly prohibited. Also, the waterfront and the lake area have the
potential to be activated and better articulated. Finally, the absence of decent pavement, including sidewalks, on most of Ksamil’s streets greatly influences the sense of security in public spaces. Some residents are afraid to let their children walk outside alone because they might go straight to the street. The lack of sidewalks means there is not enough safe public space for tourists either.

7. Sustainable Mobility
The workshops demonstrated that mobility is poor. The weaknesses are many: First, the town’s inner roads are in poor condition. Street lighting is insufficient and there is no drainage system. In contrast, the main roads outside of Ksamil are well equipped.

Parking private cars is a challenge in Ksamil. According to a private villa owner, parking spaces are lacking in the city: “I have it, but I believe for the others it’s a problem, because all the cars park in the streets.”

On the other hand, some residents propose that cars should not be allowed inside the town anymore and that parking lots could be compensated by bicycle infrastructure. Parking lots could be located outside of town and people could use bicycles to get into town. “You don’t need cars. [...] Where all the parking lots for cars are, they could bring bicycles. The climate here is not so harsh, so that people can’t go out in the sun.”

Public transportation is also an issue for many residents. According to a teacher, the public transportation system is not safe: “They [the municipality] invite us on activities that are organized in Saranda, like the celebration of the children’s day. [...] We take the children there by public transport, in the middle of the heat, with no safety.” Another problem is the lack of bus stops. A resort manager claims, “Also we don’t have bus stops at all. The tourists don’t know where to wait for the bus, left alone in the lack of shade. They wait in the middle of the heat [and] sit on pavements like homeless people.”

Generally, data are available about modal split, but a strong dependency on cars can be observed, whereas tourists usually walk through the town. Also, cycling seems to exist, but is not frequently observed.

8. Urban Governance
Because Ksamil is administered by the municipality of Saranda, decisions are made at the municipal level instead of by the town. Some residents complained that there was little control of public investment made in Ksamil and a lack of concern by the local government, leading to unregulated and uncoordinated development. “The local government is the most influential power here. The biggest problem here is that we are 3,000–10,000 inhabitants registered here and we are letting another town decide for us. Saranda is another town, with its own problems to solve. They’re not going to care so much about us,” some residents stated.

Participants expressed that they sense a lack of transparency and accountability on the part of the government, resulting from insufficient citizen engagement and nontransparent decision making. They claim that they would like to be included in the decision making and propose raising the level of transparency in public investment, potentially in public spaces, walkable connections, the promenade, the beaches, and so on.

The workshop participants stated that large investments are being made by the private sector to improve the quality of tourism in the town. They propose public-private partnership (PPP) models to enable investments to be fast-tracked, especially for projects close to the beaches and the promenade, where the dearth of investment is visible.
9. Missing Infrastructure

The lack of basic infrastructure, such as road infrastructure, is one of the main weaknesses in Ksamil. Some hotel owners say that their visitors need roads, sidewalks, and lighting to be financed by the government to feel safe.

Waste management (wastewater as well as waste collection and treatment) is another infrastructure shortcoming. On the one hand, the local government can be blamed for the shortage of trashcans, especially in tourist areas, and for the garbage being hauled away only twice a day. On the other hand, people bear some responsibility for the lack of cleanliness because residents and tourists just throw everything in the trashcans, even without plastic bags. This issue is relevant because the challenge of waste management was discussed at one of the neighborhood meetings. Waste management is especially challenging on the islands and in the beach areas, where many tourists are.

Another social infrastructure challenge is the lack of professional medical care, which is problematic in an aging community like Ksamil. Data about demographic composition were not available, but participants indicated that elderly citizens tend to live year round in Ksamil, whereas young people move to the capital city Tirana for seasonal jobs.

Finally, the water system does not work properly—drinking water is not available 24 hours a day and does not even have a fixed schedule. Moreover, the electricity network and internet connections are in poor condition.

10. Local Community

According to some interview partners, there was “no sense of community” or the “community [was] dead.” They propose that residents begin to form groups and associations so they would be heard by the government and the municipality: “Firstly we need to raise our voice and people should become aware to gather in a group and go express our complaints and demand what needs to be done.”

As a first step, people need to organize themselves. A tourism manager states, “people [need] to change the perspective of how they see Ksamil. It isn’t just a village, it’s much more than that.” Mistrust within the local community could be observed. People do not talk to each other because they are, for instance, running neighboring beach bars. Ksamil is small and mass tourism leads to intense competition between families.

11. Culture and Heritage as Strong Local Identity

Butrint National Park and the sea with its natural coast and islands define the main qualities and identity of Ksamil. Other cultural and natural monuments, such as the Blue Eye water spring, the Monastery of 40 Saints of Saranda, and Lekursi Castle, are nearby and add value to the location.

A significant part of Ksamil’s identity is formed by mussel production. This natural resource is not only valuable for the economy, but also for the culture of the town. Residents seem to appreciate it greatly. A strong indicator is that the mussel festival, organized by young local entrepreneurs, was a huge success: “The mussel fest coming to Ksamil was a great thing though and we are very glad for this, because it belonged here, not to Saranda. It is produced here. For the mussel farmers it was a great possibility to represent themselves to the city of Ksamil and the tourists. That was the heart of the festival. [...] Around 1,500 people came from all over Albania and other countries were visiting the mussel festival. [The 4-Island street] was transformed into a temporary scenery,” the organizer explained.

With regard to cultural activities, the newly created art center and the Artisans of Butrint association are seen as having great potential because there is a dearth of cultural spaces, especially for young people and tourists. In contrast to the rest of the town, this association conveys a sense of community. It has a positive impact on Ksamil because it will be open to the public and will offer some programing for children, as well as a music school. The existing cultural center, the DEA Art Center, has been privatized and is now too expensive for some citizens. However, the quality of artistic performances at the DEA Art Center is high and appreciated by locals and visitors alike.
12. Education System
The outflow of young people can be traced back to Ksamil’s poor education system. The primary and secondary school educate about 600 pupils. Despite Ksamil’s reliance on tourism, there are no schools specializing in vocational training in, for example, the tourism sector.

Young residents in particular migrate to bigger cities to profit from their school infrastructure. A teacher from the local school makes it clear: “The school infrastructure is poor. The building itself; the lack of the school equipment inside; the sports field. Also, the whole education system lacks a lot; it’s poor.”

Ksamil lacks professional teachers and the profile of the schools needs to be changed. The high potential of working in tourism is not addressed. No professional tourism training takes place, although it would provide young people with a specialized education that would keep them in town.
The Ksamil Urban Strategy was developed in a co-creation process with the national and local stakeholders during the workshop week in Ksamil in September 2018. The project team arrived in Ksamil to conduct workshops after thorough preparation that included an analysis of interviews, questionnaires, and quantitative data.

During several workshops with different stakeholder groups, participatory and dialogue-oriented design tools were used to create a Development Vision and an Urban Strategy. On the last day of the mission, the vision and strategy, including some initial project ideas, were presented in a public event. Approximately 40 people were present at this final presentation of the preliminary findings and results. Through extensive feedback from the public, the project team revised the Development Vision, the Development Goals, and the Urban Strategy, as presented below.

The Urban Strategy was the basis for an academic workshop conducted in November 2018 with TU Wien in collaboration with the National Territorial Planning Agency.

**Development Vision**

Ksamil has great potential to be a vibrant and appealing town where locals and tourists meet and gather. In upcoming years, the town could embark on active steps toward realizing its potential as a family-friendly tourist destination in Albania. Its strong local identity is sustained by its small-scale family economy and local products, as well as the natural and cultural heritage assets of Butrint National Park. Investment in urban infrastructure, in particular improvement of public spaces and road infrastructure, supports a more sustainable urban lifestyle and high quality of living. Ksamil becomes a compact coastal city, with walkable distances and enjoyable public spaces.

Tourism plays an evermore important role in the local economy, but should be harmoniously integrated with other economic activities, such as agriculture and services. Diversification of the local economy enhances the region’s economic resilience and provides new opportunities for doing business all year long. Within Ksamil’s predicted urban growth, agricultural and natural land surrounding the town are protected properly.

11. Watch a video about this mission “A Day at the Ksamil Urban Lab”: https://vimeo.com/303480276
Apart from physical transformations in the town, the social and economic connections are also strengthened through the Strategic Interventions by involving private actors as well as local businesses and communities in the urban development process.

**Development Goals**

The Development Goals are structured within five overarching topics. They reflect and tackle the Emerging Topics defined in section 4.3. The proposed Strategic Interventions in section 6 are directly linked to these Development Goals.

**Connections and Human-Scale Mobility:**

- Connect attractors in the urban scape through human-scale mobility and walkable connections
- Articulate public space and create new accessible public space
- Connect the lake to the sea
- Regulate public parking and remove it from the waterfront
- Improve public transportation (bus stops)

**Urban-Spatial Development:**

- Densify urban space with moderate spatial occupation patterns accompanied by adequate infrastructure
- Create urban attractors at the waterfront with complementary new functions
- Create active ground floor areas, accessible to the public in connection with the defined economic development areas and pedestrian areas
- No further extension of settlement boundaries

**Economy, and Culture as an Economic Asset:**

- Create economic opportunities and jobs
- Improve skills in tourism
- Recognize local culture and identity as an economic asset
- Improve quality and branding of local products (for example, mussels) for the local and regional market
- Create local identity through local products (artisans, mussels, gastronomy)
- Foster local knowledge of sports opportunities, tour guides, bike and hiking guides

**Orientation in Town and Signage:**

- Improve orientation for locals and tourists, so that tourists explore the town and its surrounding areas
- Encourage tourists to visit hiking and biking trails, as well as the lakefront and its productive sector

**Urban Governance:**

- Create trust among the locals with structured urban development projects
- Organize the community in focus groups on urgent topics, for example, a visionary process for usage of the beach and the waterfront
- Diversify the cultural agenda in a joint effort
- Improve inter-administrative management of natural resources
**Ksamil Strategy**

**LOOKOUT POINTS AND PLATFORMS**
- Placed on Saranda road (entrance) and two hills
- Small-scale interventions by locals

**COASTLINE DEVELOPMENT**
- Protection of natural coastline
- 100% car-free zone
- New functions
- Establish four sub-centralities
HUMAN-SCALE STREETSCAPE AND GREEN CORRIDORS
- Pedestrian zone
- Street design
- Parking management
- Green “pocket parks”

LAKEFRONT REDEVELOPMENT
- Foster local identity
- Activation of heritage of mussel production
- Support of economic development in tourism sector, local trade, and retail

BACKBONE TRANSFORMATION
- New central urban space and main navigation feature
- Ground floor activation
- Two main public squares
Ksamil Urban Strategy

The Urban Strategy provides the basis for elaboration of investment projects in Ksamil. Investments ideally would be developed in line with the strategy and always in connection to the Development Vision and Development Goals. The integrity of action is important in this process, because multisectoral project approaches create more satisfactory results. An Urban Strategy is a road map for actions that tackle local problems and try to use the potential identified throughout the participatory planning process.

Of course, this Urban Strategy is based on today’s knowledge, and the highly dynamic urban development process in Ksamil means these circumstances could change rapidly. Thus, the Urban Strategy can be adapted using the same techniques with which it was developed.

The combination and reconciliation of the Emerging Topics and Development Goals provide the foundation of the Ksamil Urban Strategy, as presented in illustration 8. The key elements of the Urban Strategy are the Human-Scale Streetscape and Green Corridors, Coastline Regeneration, Backbone Transformation, Lakefront Activation, Ksamil Lookout Points and Platforms, and finally, a City Marketing and Management plan for the town. These key elements represent recommendations for the future development of Ksamil and are described in more detail in the following sections.

1. Human-Scale Streetscape and Green Corridors
An important element of this strategy is improvement of the general street design, with the aim of offering more space for pedestrians. Today, the excessive space provided for car parking and roads causes traffic congestion in town, dangerous situations for pedestrians, and a huge loss of urban space to parking. To motivate citizens and visitors to Ksamil to favor human-scale mobility over individual car use, walking and cycling must become attractive and safe. Implementation of wider sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and a pedestrian zone could be means to that end. Additionally, the public transport system should be improved.

As a general rule, more than 50 percent of the town’s public space could be walkable for pedestrians and friendly to bicycles. Car use should be restricted to the minimum, and parking in close proximity to the beaches could be forbidden. All streets should be accompanied by greenery (“pocket parks”) and trees that would provide shade and contribute to the green ecosystem, with cooling effects, especially in public spaces.

2. Coastline Regeneration
Ksamil is known for its beautiful natural coastline. Together with the small islands, the coastline is part of the town’s natural heritage and protected as such. To maintain its attractiveness, the environment needs to be preserved, while allowing the coastline to continue to draw high numbers of tourists and residents.

As a long-term strategy, the coastline could be a 100 percent car-free zone with several urban attractors connected by a promenade for pedestrians and cyclists. The redesign and renovation of the existing promenade would be crucial to enhancing walkability and to experiencing the coastline. For better orientation and improvement of public spaces certain hubs along the promenade could offer various functions for diverse urban encounters.

The coastal area could potentially accommodate several functions that are currently underrepresented or lacking in Ksamil, such as health care, cultural events, and other recreational uses. New potential uses that would mostly be located in ground floor areas could include a cultural center, a library or cinema, vocational courses (schools), residential uses, hotels, shops and commerce, social and municipal services, health care, and sports and recreation. The central area of the waterfront could be organized such that the public has access to public beaches. A further recommendation is that sufficient noncommercial zones be created.
3. Backbone Transformation

Public spaces, which serve as important social elements of cities, are rare and in poor condition in Ksamil. The national road running through Ksamil (SH81, or the "Backbone") has the potential to become a central urban space and a main point of orientation. The space for cars could be limited to the minimum needed for driving and parking, increasing the space for pedestrians, introducing a continuous bicycle lane, and adding frequently distributed "pocket parks," which would both provide space for recreation and reduce the speed of traffic.

Trees and urban greenery are ideal elements for upgrading urban spaces because they provide shade during the summer but let the sun come through in the colder winter months. The Backbone could become Ksamil’s main boulevard, accommodating pedestrians and complemented by ground floor activities such as retail, tourist information, recreation, and gastronomy. The boulevard is anchored by Ksamil’s two main public squares, which are only a 15 minute walk apart. The first square is located on the eastern side of the Backbone and could serve as the Entrance Square to the boulevard. The second square is located on the western side of the Backbone and could become the Main Square (see section 6).

4. Lakefront Activation

Ksamil is known not only for its beautiful coastline and islands, but also for mussel production in the lagoon on the eastern side of town. Mussel production has great potential for stimulating the town’s economy and attracting tourists, for example, mussel tours, but currently faces problems. Mussel producers have no place from which to sell their products. The lakefront area in general has been neglected in recent years and should receive attention during Ksamil’s future urban development. Tourism development and shell farming will not compete for the same resources given that the lake has no beaches.

The goal would be to activate the lakefront area and promote the heritage of mussel production to foster the local identity and strengthen the sense of belonging and ownership. The citizens’ relationship to their town would be intensified and their engagement in the creation and maintenance of city spaces would be enhanced. As a result, regional economic development in the tourism sector would be stimulated and local trade and retail on the neighborhood level would profit.

5. Ksamil Lookout Points and Platforms

One of Ksamil’s most important natural assets is its beautiful surrounding landscape. With its three little islands, Ksamil’s coastline forms a unique archipelago. To experience the full richness of this little town and its surroundings, several lookout points distributed throughout the town should become more accessible to tourists. Three potential suitable spots are the northern entrance (on Saranda road) and the two hills of Ksamil. These lookout points would serve as tourist attractors, destinations for excursions, and popular photo spots where people can get an overview of the entire town, the coastal area, and the natural surroundings. Accessibility for pedestrians and bicyclists to these lookout points could be improved through paved and well-marked paths.

Small-scale interventions could make the experience more attractive with the lowest possible impact on nature. Environmental and social assessments (for example, Environmental Impact Assessments, Environmental and Social Management Plans, and others) should to be conducted for all development activities. The lookout points are potential locations for the Ksamil Box, which locals have recommended (see section 6.10).

The aim of the lookout points and platforms would be to make Ksamil’s beautiful natural landscape accessible and visible to everyone through small-scale interventions without harming the natural environment.
6. City Marketing and Management

Ksamil currently has no city marketing and management plan. Hotel owners promote Ksamil individually rather than working together using a comprehensive tourism strategy. For example, Ksamil has no official website with a map of activities and hotels, restaurants, bars, and other information important to tourists. A tourism board could initiate marketing activities for Ksamil and introduce a quality control and management system for the development of tourism products such as events and urban interventions. The board could comprise hotel and restaurant owners and officials from the municipality and other public entities, for example, representatives of Butrint National Park.

For an Urban Strategy to be successful, a common starting point would be necessary. Therefore, this tourism board would define a common future vision for Ksamil and, in a collective discussion process, carry forward the Development Goals. The tourism board would mainly be responsible for city marketing and branding. Among its tasks would be developing and coordinating a cultural program for Ksamil and organizing various festivals that would attract visitors from the region as well as other countries and boost the local economy. The annual mussel festival, which has already proven to be a success, could serve as a model for similar events. Another task of the tourism board could be to provide an information center for tourists and locals that provides information about ongoing activities and events in Ksamil and its surrounding areas.

The tourism board could also make use of new planning tools for urban regeneration. Fast-track investments such as placemaking interventions could be initiated by the board. Private sector participation in placemaking investments could be organized through this board.
Strategic Urban Concepts

The logical combination and adjustment of the previous key elements (except the City Marketing and Management idea, which cannot be spatially manifested) leads to the following Strategic Urban Concepts as a basis for further planning: a) Urban Attractors, (b) Walkable Connections and (c) Green Network and Connections that combine the latter two elements. See illustration 9.

The following concepts show how the key elements of the spatial development of Ksamil structure the Urban Strategy.

a) Urban Attractors
Urban attractors are needed to activate points of interest in a logical network throughout the town. A more diverse economy can emerge if opportunities and spaces for local economic development are created. Attractors are the newly designed squares, the lake marina and the sea marina, and the public beaches.

b) Walkable Connections
All urban attractors are logically combined in a network of walkable routes through the town. The network could be developed as pedestrian zones, shared spaces, and the promenade. Half of the town should be car free in the future, but not all streets need to be pedestrian zones.
c) Green Network and Connections

As a long-term goal, a green network would be needed to enable walkable connections throughout Ksamil. Only some streets currently have trees, but shade and a cooler climate would be needed to cope with climate change challenges. The green elements are complementary to the urban attractors and walkable connections.

The Logical Framework in illustration 10 (see next page) brings together the rationale for the entire project (from left to right): Emerging Topics, Development Goals, Urban Strategy, and Strategic Interventions. All elements in the framework depend on each other and show the integral nature of the project and the multisectoral approach.
CONNECTIONS AND HUMAN-SCALE MOBILITY
- Connect attractors in the urban space through human-scale mobility and walkable connections
- Articulate and create new public space
- Connect lake to the sea
- Regulate public parking, remove from waterfront
- Improve public transportation

URBAN-SPATIAL DEVELOPMENT
- Densify urban space with moderate spatial occupation patterns
- Create urban attractors at the waterfront
- Create active ground floor areas

ECONOMY AND FOSTER CULTURE AS ECONOMIC ASSET
- Create economic opportunities and jobs
- Improve skills in tourism
- Recognize local culture and identity as economic asset
- Improve quality and branding of local products
- Create local identity through local products
- Foster local knowledge

ORIENTATION
- Improve orientation for locals and tourists
- Bring the lake waterfront and its productive sector into consideration for tourists to visit

GOVERNANCE
- Create trust among the locals with structured urban development projects
- Organize the community in focus groups on urgent topics
- Diversify the cultural agenda in a joint effort
- Improve inter-administrative management of natural resources

Illustration 10: Logical Framework for the Project
URBAN STRATEGY

HUMAN-SCALE STREETSCAPE AND GREEN CORRIDORS
• Pedestrian zones
• Street design
• Parking management
• Green “pocket parks”

COASTLINE REGENERATION
• Protection of natural coastline
• 100% car-free zone
• New functions
• Establish four sub-centralities

BACKBONE TRANSFORMATION
• New central urban space and main navigation feature
• Ground floor activation
• Two main public squares

LAKEFRONT ACTIVATION
• Foster local identity
• Activation of heritage of mussel production
• Support economic development in tourism sector, local trade, and retail

KSAMIL LOOKOUT POINTS AND PLATFORMS
• Placed on Saranda road (entrance) and two hills
• Small-scale interventions by locals

CITY MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT
• Cultural program / Festival calendar
• Information center

STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS

1. WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT AND PROMENADE REDESIGN
   • Modest densification
   • Green buffer zones and connections
   • Active ground floor areas

2. SEASIDE MARINA AND RECREATIONAL HUB
   • Provide proper harbor
   • Arrangement of boat tours
   • Small-scale lodges

3. MULTIFUNCTIONAL COASTAL SQUARE
   • Multifunctional area
   • Parking management
   • Redevelopment of street leading to DEA

4. PEDESTRIAN STREETS AND SHARED SPACES
   • Continuous surface
   • Improve street lighting
   • Urban street furniture and trees

5. GREEN FIELD PUBLIC BEACH
   • Small-scale interventions
   • Small forest providing shade
   • Recreational usage

6. KSAMIL MAIN SQUARE
   • Lively public center for inhabitants
   • New zoning and traffic regulation
   • New building at highest point

7. KSAMIL ENTRANCE SQUARE
   • New centrality for lakeside
   • Fruit and mussels market
   • Redesign of public space, new zoning

8. LAKEFRONT MARINA PROJECT
   • Mussel production and visitors center
   • Spaces for restaurants, bars, etc.
   • Access to lake, new pier, paved areas

9. LOOKOUT POINTS AND PLATFORMS
   • First lookout point on northern hill in Ksamil
   • Only small-scale interventions
   • Potential spot for Ksamil Box

10. KSAMIL BOX
    • Trademark or logo for Ksamil
    • Flexible module with different functions
    • Replace randomly distributed stalls
Strategic Interventions

The following design proposals are meant to be concrete, strategic interventions for implementing the Urban Strategy described in section 5. This is a selection of potential interventions that aim to articulate the public space and that have a direct impact on Ksamil’s sustainable urban development (see illustration 11). The logical framework (see section 5) shows the interdependencies of these Strategic Interventions and how they are connected to the Urban Strategy and Development Goals. The Strategic Interventions are an initial package of investments that serve as a basis for further discussion and that potentially can be implemented in different timeframes and would require different investments. The proposed interventions distinguish between (a) fast-track (short-term), (b) medium-term, and (c) long-term interventions. Fast-track interventions could be implemented right away at low cost.

The following list of the 10 selected Strategic Interventions provides a quick overview of how they contribute to the key elements of the Urban Strategy.

Coastline Regeneration:

- Waterfront Development and Promenade Redesign
- Seaside Marina and Recreational Hub
- Multifunctional Coastal Square
- Green Field Public Beach
- Lookout Points and Platforms
- Ksamil Box

Backbone Transformation and Human-Scale Streetscape:

- Ksamil Main Square
- Ksamil Entrance Square
- Pedestrian Streets and Shared Spaces

Lakefront Activation:

- Lakefront Marina Project
The following guidelines provide a framework for these Strategic Interventions:

- The Strategic Interventions do not contain any details about construction techniques or materials but are conceptual designs only.
- The interventions can all be implemented within the existing zoning plan.
- To protect the surrounding environment and nature, all interventions respect the existing settlement boundary and do not extend the settlement area. No reclamation of sea, land, or protected areas is necessary to realize the proposed design concepts.
- Existing buildings are preserved and new construction would be adapted to existing structures. In some cases, replacing temporary, illegally built pop-up restaurants and bars with improved construction is recommended. Environmental and social safeguard assessments (for example, Environmental Impact Assessments, Environment and Social Management Plans, and so on) need to be carried out for each intervention, along with Rapid Assessment Programs.
- To support the local economy and environment, only native trees and plants would be used.

Based on these guidelines, the proposed Strategic Interventions are described in more detail to stimulate further discussion. If these proposals were selected for implementation, they would need to be elaborated in much more detail, taking into account exact measurements of the local topography of the places. A project prioritization process for these recommendations would need to be initiated by the municipality jointly with the national government.

The proposed Strategic Interventions were the result of a dialogue-oriented design process within a strong framework developed using the UDL methodology (see section 2). The workshops with different stakeholder groups provided significant input for defining the Urban Strategy and delivered ideas for potential interventions, for example, the location of the marinas.

This co-design process did not stop after the second mission but continued in November when the student workshops took place in Ksamil. The student group from TU Wien developed a range of different projects (see annex), from which the following proposals were selected as Strategic Interventions: “Lake Port (Lakefront Marina)” by Ingo Fenzl, Armin Rustiti, and Adil Goletic; “Seaside Marina” by Anna Billinger and Rubina Kaiser; and “Public Beach” by Genita Salihaj and Nora Lika. Other student proposals provided valuable ideas that could inspire further development of Ksamil, even though they did not fully fit into the framework of the Urban Strategy. The remainder of the Strategic Interventions were developed by the team of superwien urbanism ZT OG, in cooperation with the TU Wien team.
Waterfront Development and Promenade Redesign

Current Situation
The northwest shore of Ksamil is characterized by vacant land and partly illegal and partly demolished structures, especially on the hill. Part of the area is currently zoned for construction. However, no building projects have been started so far. An integral part of the current waterfront is the promenade, which can be characterized by its poor aesthetic aspect and non-functionality: the promenade is just five meters wide, with a physical separation in the middle. This barrier can cause conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians. The quality of the beaches in the southern part of the intervention area is very good, with pristine sandy beaches; in the northern part there are no beaches, only rocks.

Goals of Intervention
- Continue building on vacant land within the town’s limits and encourage infill development with a combination of housing, hotels, or health facilities, among other uses, within the boundaries of the valid zoning plan
- Enable nature-based green connections to the hill and the sea with a green network and no-construction zones
- Connect this part of Ksamil with the central area via a wide promenade and incorporate the newly created ground floor zones with commercial uses along the promenade
- Activate the waterfront and promenade with a program of public events and placemaking initiatives
- The shoreline remains untouched with its original natural appeal his part of Ksamil with the central

Description of Intervention
The Waterfront Development and Promenade Redesign is an urban development project along the northern hill that would introduce new urban design standards to protect nature and at the same time allow densification in a modest way. By using the existing zoning plan, new green buffer zones could be introduced to enable a visual connection between the sea and the hill. The proposed typology of the buildings is aligned with the topography and should not disturb nature and the hill. Therefore, the proposed buildings are grouped in 10 segments (or blocks) and are no higher than four to five floors. As a rule, the ground floor areas should be connected and open to the promenade with commercial or public functions that add value to the promenade’s vibrant experience. The development could be devoted to either housing or other functions, such as a rehabilitation center for children, a sanatorium for the elderly, or mixed uses. A service road on the higher point of the blocks connects the buildings to the existing roadways. The waterfront and promenade remain car free and completely dedicated to recreational use.

The existing promenade could be redesigned, and the ground floor of the newly developed buildings would activate the area and trigger a high number of pedestrian visits, creating an urban environment in balance with nature. The promenade would be equipped with streetlights, trees, and WiFi hotspots to provide the necessary amenities to young people, locals, and guests.

The proposed design concept does not require reclamation of sea, land, or protected areas. Environmental and social safeguards assessments and Rapid Assessment Programs need to be carried out for each intervention.

Area: Approximately 90,000 square meter urban development site, including 1 kilometer promenade
Cost: $$$
Implementation period: Long term
Waterfront Development and Promenade Redesign

The northwest shore of Ksamil is characterized by vacant land and partly illegal and partly demolished structures, especially on the hill. Partly, no building projects have been started so far. An integral part of the current waterfront is the promenade, which can be characterized by the quality of the beaches in the southern part of sandy beaches; in the northern part there are no beaches, only rocks.

The Waterfront Development and Promenade Redesign is an urban development project along the buildings is aligned with the topography and should not disturb nature and the hill. Therefore, the balance with nature. The promenade would be equipped with streetlights, trees, and WiFi hotspots to

Area:

- Approximately 90,000 square meter urban development site, including 1 kilometer promenade

Cost:

$ represents the lowest cost and $$$ represents the highest cost.
Seaside Marina and Recreational Hub

Current Situation
Ksamil currently has no marina or other facility for yachts or boats to dock. The proposed marina could be located in the north of Ksamil at the existing promenade and within the boundaries of the northern waterfront. The rocky characteristics of the shore mean that no beach area will be lost as a result of the intervention. This part of the promenade has no attractors such as restaurants or bars, which are approximately 500 meters, or 5 to 8 walking minutes, away from the proposed location of the new marina. In addition, the hill is still clear of development although a large part of the hill is zoned for construction. This unique part of Ksamil’s landscape should be protected; therefore, green buffer zones should provide appropriate links between the protected green hill and the sea.

Goals of Intervention
- Activate this part of the waterfront through commercial and noncommercial uses and create a hub of recreational activities a 5–8 minute walking distance to the historic center
- Offer opportunities for fishermen for fishing and short-term storage for boats and fishing equipment
- Offer activities for locals as well as tourists, and welcome visitors who arrive in Ksamil by boat
- Foster Ksamil’s local economic development
- Create noncommercial areas for locals and visitors

Description of Intervention
The Seaside Marina and Recreational Hub project proposes development of a sailing and boat marina with a restaurant and bar and facilities for sailing and boat rental activities. This intervention could create opportunities for international yacht tourism in the Ionian Sea in potential cooperation with Corfu Island (Greece) and other islands in the vicinity. Furthermore, a school for sailing or other watersports could be introduced at the marina. The marina could also host small-scale units that could serve as storage for fishermen or as garages for small boats.

These functions could be supplemented by restaurants, cafés, bars, and small shops that sell fishing gear, sailing equipment, and so on. Urban furniture for a noncommercial public area with shade could be provided, too, so that the hub would serve as an attractor for locals and visitors alike.

Area: Approximately 3,500 square meters
Cost: $$$
Implementation period: Long term
Ksamil currently has no marina or other facility for yachts or boats to dock. The proposed marina could be located in the north of Ksamil at the mean that no beach area will be lost or bars, which are approximately 500 meters, or 5 to 8 walking minutes, away from the proposed part of Ksamil's landscape should be protected; appropriate links between the protected green hill and the sea.

Corfu Island (Greece) and other islands in the vicinity. Furthermore, a school for sailing or other watersports could be introduced at the marina. The marina could also host small-scale units that could gear, sailing equipment, and so on. Urban furniture for a noncommercial public area with shade could be introduced.

Approximately 3,500 square meters

Cost: $$$
Multifunctional Coastal Square

Current Situation
The Coastal Square is one of the most important public spaces in Ksamil. It is currently used as a huge parking area during the summer. However, the site offers spectacular views to the archipelago and the sea. Through a local initiative the mussel festival was introduced in May 2018. The venue was this Coastal Square because it offered one of the few flat and spacious areas in Ksamil. The promenade passes through this square; however, it is in poor condition and a wall separates it from a parallel street. Signage to orientate guests is insufficient. Vacant land zoned for construction surrounds the DEA Art Center.

Goals of Intervention
- Take advantage of this dominant public space more frequently with different activities and cultural events throughout the year
- Encourage infill development to use the zoned land; introduce more uses (other than car parking) to this square with additional buildings, and incorporate the ground floor areas of these buildings into the public space with potential commercial uses
- Improve walkable connections to the promenade and widen the trail for different types of users, for example, bicycles
- Improve signage at the public space for better orientation

Description of Intervention
As a multifunctional area, the Coastal Square could offer space for all manner of events, including festivals, concerts, or a circus, among other activities. The revitalization of the multifunctional piazza could start with a placemaking activity: Painting the surface with different colors to resemble a temporary sports field would encourage younger generations to hang out here, even if there is not much to do except skating, yoga classes, zumba, and other sports activities. When not occupied by public events, the square could be used as a public parking area, serving all surrounding beaches.

The fringes of the square and the street leading from the DEA Art Center could be redeveloped with new mixed-use buildings including active ground floor areas, while the existing building stock would remain untouched. The street leading to the DEA Art Center would be developed as a shared space with priority for pedestrians.

This segment of the promenade should be redesigned with more user-friendly materials, linked to the waterfront in the northern part of Ksamil, and further extended to the south of Ksamil.

Area: Coastal Square: approximately 10,000 square meters; promenade: approximately 300 meters; shared space: approximately 180 meters
Cost: $ to $$
Implementation period: Short to medium term
The Coastal Square is one of the most important public spaces in Ksamil. It is currently used as a huge parking area during the summer. However, promenade passes through this square; however, a parallel street. Signage to orientate guests is surrounds the DEA Art Center.

Public events, the square could be used as a public parking area, serving all surrounding beaches. The fringes of the square and the street leading from the DEA Art Center could be redeveloped with remain untouched. The street leading to the DEA Art Center would be developed as a shared space with priority for pedestrians.

This segment of the promenade should be redesigned with more user-friendly materials, linked to the waterfront in the northern part of Ksamil, and further extended to the south of Ksamil.

Area:
- Coastal Square: approximately 10,000 square meters;
- Promenade: approximately 300 meters;
- Shared space: approximately 180 meters

Cost:
- $ to $$

Short to medium term
- Take advantage of this dominant public space cultural events throughout the year
- Zoned land; introduce more uses (other than areas of these buildings into the public
- Types of users, for example, bicycles
- Improve signage at the public space for
Pedestrian Streets and Shared Spaces

Current Situation
The Rruga Riviera, which was the first street in the history of Ksamil; the adjacent streets leading to the DEA Art Center and the sea; and the street leading to the Main Square are the liveliest and most important streets in the historic center. These streets already offer a great variety of restaurants, bars, and hotels. The streets are currently in poor condition, with potholes and broken asphalt. There are no trees and street lighting, and during dry summer days the streets heat up from lack of shade.

Goals of Intervention
- The historic center should become a meeting place for locals and tourists throughout the year and function as a pilot project for other potential pedestrian zones and shared spaces.
- The image of the town improves by increasing walkability and safety for pedestrians.
- Economic development in the historic center will improve through articulation of the streets, which will foster a sense of “urbanity,” provide incentives for densification, and increase the frequency of pedestrians.
- This redesign would enable pedestrians to experience the street as serving them only, without watching out for cars or other vehicles.

Description of Intervention
The central part of Ksamil can potentially be converted into walkable, human-scale mobility areas. These streets could become the first pedestrian zones and shared mobility spaces, with sidewalks removed to flatten the streetscape to one continuous surface. Urban street furniture could serve as a branding of the street and offer noncommercial spaces for spontaneous encounters. Sufficient street lighting and newly planted trees would provide light and shade when needed. All electrical and other cables would be put underground.

The recommendation consists of (a) a new pedestrian zone approximately 400 meters long, connecting the DEA Art Center with historic Rruga Riviera street and (b) a street with shared space of approximately 200 meters between the Main Square and the pedestrian zone. The pedestrian zone would be open to vehicles for deliveries and services between 5 am and 10 am; in addition, exceptions to reach existing hotels could be made. The shared spaces would reduce the travel speed of cars in the areas that are needed to provide accessibility to hotels and other buildings.

Area: Pedestrian street: 400 meters; Shared space: 200 meters; total area approximately 9,000 square meters
Cost: $$
Implementation period: Medium term
Pedestrian Streets and Shared Spaces

The history of Ksamil; the adjacent streets leading to the DEA Art Center and the sea; and the street leading to the Main Square are the liveliest and most important streets in the historic center. Restaurants, bars, and hotels. The streets are broken asphalt. There are no trees and street heat up from lack of shade.

The redesign would enable pedestrians to experience the street as serving them only, without watching out for cars or other vehicles.

Area:

- Pedestrian street: 400 meters
- Shared space: 200 meters
- Total area approximately 9,000 square meters

Cost:

- $$

Medium term

- Place for locals and tourists throughout spaces.
- The image of the town improves by increasing walkability and safety for pedestrians.
- Economic development in the historic center streets, which will foster a sense of "urbanity," increase the frequency of pedestrians.
- This redesign would enable pedestrians to experience the street as serving them only, without watching out for cars or other vehicles.
Green Field Public Beach

Current Situation
This beach is located about a 10-minute walk southward of Ksamil’s historic center. Here, urbanity draws back and lets nature take over. This beach is located close to Ksamil’s southern boundary and is characterized by green vegetation and trees. It is popular with campers who come in recreational vehicles and stay for some days before they move on. However, the beach also is characterized by its garbage problem and generally poor condition with no infrastructure for tourists. There are pop-up bars in the summertime that negatively affect the environment. Garbage collection does not seem to be active in this part of Ksamil.

Goals of Intervention
- Improve the quality of the beach with clear zoning for bathing areas, spaces for tranquil relaxation, and active sports
- Create a green environment with shade for children and elderly people
- Protect green areas and trees close to the beach
- Implement a management plan for cleaning the beaches, preventing littering, and bringing better infrastructure to this beach

Description of Intervention
The Green Field beach will be restructured into zones for different functions: (a) sandy beach, (b) relaxation zones with shade, (c) sports zones, and (d) urban forest. Basic infrastructure such as toilets, showers, a restaurant, and a bar could be brought to this beach by small-scale interventions.

The green field adjacent to the beach should be protected and enhanced by planting new native trees to form a small forest providing shade and contributing to a comfortable micro-climate in hot summers. Beach volleyball fields, a children’s playground, and hammocks could complement the recreational usage of this area as a place for families, locals, and tourists that like to calm down and relax without the soundscape of the more urban environment of the center of Ksamil.

Area: 3,000 square meters
Cost: $$
Implementation period: Short term
Green Field Public Beach

This beach is located about a 10-minute walk southward of Ksamil’s historic center. Here, urbanity draws back and lets nature take over. This beach is located close to Ksamil’s southern area and is popular with campers who come before they move on. However, the beach also is characterized by its garbage problem and usage of this area as a place for families, locals, and tourists that like to calm down and relax without the soundscape of the more urban environment of the center of Ksamil.

Area: 3,000 square meters
Cost: $$

Short term
• Improve the quality of the beach with clear zoning for bathing areas, spaces for tranquil
• Create a green environment with shade for children and elderly people
• Protect green areas and trees close to the beach
• Implement a management plan for cleaning

Urban forest
Pergolas
Shared space street
Sport zone
Relaxation zone
Beach pergolas
Sandy beach
Basic infrastructure
**Ksamil Main Square**

**Current Situation**
The Main Square is recognized by most residents as the center of Ksamil. Most services, for example, banks and insurance companies, are located here in proximity to the main road (Backbone). There are also bars, restaurants, and small kiosks that serve the public. The Main Square is one of the few public spaces in Ksamil that operates year round. A roundabout currently occupies most of the public space and cars dominate the area. There are some green elements incorporated into this square, but fences protect the small trees. The topography of the Main Square is slightly inclined. The square’s visibility is high given that it is located at the main road.

**Goals of Intervention**
- Create a lively public space that not only functions for tourists in summer but serves as the center for the inhabitants of Ksamil.
- Size and functions as crucial indicators need to be sensibly compiled in cooperation with the locals.
- The square would become the central, vibrant urban public space for Ksamil.
- The square would function as the main entrance point to both the seaside and the oldest part of town.
- Shade and walkable public spaces should dominate and car traffic should be reduced to connections to hotels and housing and to the hill.

**Description of Intervention**
The Main Square should be rezoned to be a pedestrian area to its southern border, with a wide pedestrian zone, trees and other elements providing shade, and a monument. The surface should be flat without elevated sidewalks. The remaining street could be a one-way street conceptualized as a shared space of just 3 meters’ width. Car traffic would be strictly separated from the pedestrian area, and bollards would mark the transit lane that would also be used by bicycles. Crosswalks at crucial spots could increase walkability and safety for pedestrians.

The buildings around this square can potentially be taller and denser, with up to six floors. The buildings should frame the square and initiate ground floor activation. Generally, all building fronts on the public square should have active ground floor areas to increase the public functions of the Main Square.

**Area:** 2,500 square meters  
**Cost:** $5  
**Implementation period:** Medium term
Ksamil Main Square

The Main Square is recognized by most residents as the center of Ksamil. Most services, for example, banks and insurance companies, are located here in proximity to the main road (Backbone). There are also bars, restaurants, and small kiosks that serve the public. The Main Square is one of the few public spaces in Ksamil that operates year-round. A roundabout currently occupies most of the public space and cars dominate the area. There are some green elements incorporated into this square, but fences protect the small trees. The topography of the Main Square is slightly inclined. The square’s visibility is high given that it is located at the main road.

The Main Square should be rezoned to be a pedestrian area to its southern border, with a wide pedestrian zone, trees and other elements providing shade, and a monument. The surface should be and bollards would mark the transit lane that would also be used by bicycles. Crosswalks at crucial spots could increase walkability and safety for pedestrians.

Area: 2,500 square meters
Cost: $$
Ksamil Entrance Square

Current Situation
The Entrance Square is a public space developed in the past five years by the municipality to create articulated public spaces for locals and tourists. The square is currently deserted and poorly maintained. The square is located at the main road to Butrint, about 150 meters from the northern border of Ksamil. This square is one of the few flat public plazas.

Goals of Intervention
- Create an additional centrality in Ksamil, using the existing design but improved with additional uses and elements
- Add new functions and uses to the square to diversify Ksamil’s economy and attract more people to this public space
- Create a new feeling of urbanity and centrality in Ksamil with restaurants and bars and a market for local products
- Trees, shade, and walkable public spaces should be dominant and car traffic should be reduced

Description of Intervention
The Entrance Square is proposed as a redesign of the existing public space to introduce new recreational zones. One part could be a children’s playground, the other a multifunctional square for recreational purposes for young adults (for example, for skating), and the third part could serve as a market area.

A market for fruit and mussels could be introduced where locals could sell their products at a central, well-known, and dedicated marketplace rather than at randomly distributed stands along the main road. Zebra crossings, potentially combined with speed bumps, would slow down passing cars and increase walkability and safety for all users.

New buildings in the north and east could incorporate new functions such as a hotel and restaurant and trigger further development. Building heights around this square could potentially be increased to mark the importance of this welcoming public space.

Area: 4,000 square meters
Cost: $$
Implementation period: Medium term
The Entrance Square is a public space developed for tourists. The square is currently deserted and poorly maintained. The square is located at the main road to Butrint, about 150 meters from the northern border of Ksamil. This square is one of the key public spaces in the town. To increase walkability and safety for all users, a market for fruit and mussels could be introduced where locals could sell their products at a central, well-known, and dedicated marketplace rather than at randomly distributed stands along the main road. This would mark the importance of this welcoming public space.

Area: 4,000 square meters
Cost: $$

Medium term goals:
- Attract more people to this public space
- Create a new feeling of urbanity and central-ness in Ksamil with restaurants and bars and a market for local products
- Trees, shade, and walkable public spaces reduced
Lakefront Marina

Current Situation
Butrint Lake is a water basin with an area of about 18 square kilometers. The lake is used as a production area for mussels. In the past, mussel production was organized by the government, and all installations for mussel production in use today are from that time. Mussel producers rent the installations from the municipality and individually produce the mussels for the local market. The mussels, however, are not sold to a broader market because they do not fulfill the required hygienic standards. The natural harbor has the potential to be converted into a mussel production facility and lake marina.

Goals of Intervention
- Create a workspace for mussel producers
- Support producers in fulfilling minimum hygiene standards so they can export the product to other cities or abroad
- Create diverse uses of the new lake marina with tours and other attractions for tourists to get to know local food production
- Make the natural harbor accessible and create a productive manufacturing space

Description of Intervention
A new lakefront would offer spaces for restaurants, cafés, and bars that could draw visitors to the town. In addition to drawing attention to this part of town, the intervention would enable mussel farmers to standardize production to meet hygiene standards.

Access to the lake could be facilitated by redesigning the lakefront, introducing paved areas with clear zoning for fishing boats, and constructing a new pier. A new mussel processing and visitor center could be located at the new lakefront harbor where mussel farmers could process their mussels, teach others the technique, offer tourists insights into the production process, and thus foster Ksamil’s mussel culture as well as awareness of the importance of regional food for both locals and tourists.

Area: approximately 30,000 square meters
Cost: $$$
Implementation period: Medium to long term
Butrint Lake is a water basin with an area of about 18 square kilometers. The lake is used as a individually produce the mussels for the local market. The mussels, however, are not sold to a required hygienic standards. The natural harbor Access to the lake could be facilitated by redesigning the lakefront, introducing paved areas with clear be located at the new lakefront harbor where mussel farmers could process their mussels, teach others culture as well as awareness of the importance of regional food for both locals and tourists.

Area: approximately 30,000 square meters
Cost: $$$

Medium to long term
• Create a work space for mussel producers
• hygiene sta ndards so they can e xport the
• Create  diverse uses of the new lake marina
• Make the natural harbor accessible and create...
Ksamil Lookout Points and Platforms

Current Situation
One of Ksamil’s most important natural assets is its beautiful surrounding landscape. With its three little islands, Ksamil’s coastline forms a unique archipelago. There are currently no official lookout points or platforms for tourists and residents to experience this beautiful surrounding landscape and coastline. The green hill in the northwest of Ksamil, close to the coast, is underused at the moment but has much potential as a public lookout point. Because this area is protected as natural landscape according to the zoning plan, there are no major structures, but mostly natural surroundings.

Goals of Intervention
- Create attractors for tourists and residents on the hills of Ksamil
- Improve accessibility of lookout points for pedestrians and bicyclists using paved and well-marked paths
- Make Ksamil’s beautiful natural landscape accessible and visible to everyone and allow visitors to experience the settlement of Ksamil and its surroundings from a high vantage point
- Allow only small-scale structures that serve visitors, such as a café or bar, on the hills
- Potential location for testing the Ksamil Box

Description of Intervention
To experience the full richness of Ksamil’s settlement and surroundings, several lookout points distributed throughout the town should become more accessible to tourists. Lookout points and platforms are public spaces offering spectacular views of the town and its surroundings where people can spend time and relax. The first public platform could be implemented on the northern hill of Ksamil, as part of the Waterfront Development project. The lookout point would serve as a tourist attractor, as a destination for excursions, and as a popular photo spot where people could get an overview of the whole town, the coastline, and the surrounding landscape. Pedestrian and bicycle accessibility to these lookout points could be improved through paved and well-marked paths.

Small-scale interventions with the lowest possible impact on nature could make the experience more attractive. A small bar or café could be an inviting place for visitors to gather and enjoy the view. Noncommercial spaces, such as benches and pergolas, should also be provided. For all activities, environmental and social assessments (for example, Environmental Impact Assessments, Environmental and Social Management Plans, and others) should be conducted. The lookout points are potential locations for the Ksamil Box, which locals have recommended be set up (see section 6.10).

Area: Approximately 2,500 square meters including public space around them
Cost: $
Implementation period: Short term
Ksamil Loo out Points and Platforms

One of Ksamil’s most important natural assets is its coastline. The green hill in the northwest of Ksamil, close to the coast, is underused at a lookout point. Because this area is protected as a natural landscape according to the zoning plan, there are no major structures, but mostly natural surroundings.

The hills of Ksamil should become more accessible to tourists. Lookout points and the whole town, the coastline, and the surrounding landscape. Pedestrian and bicycle accessibility to these lookout points could be improved through paved and well-marked paths.

Environmental and social assessments (for example, Environmental Impact Assessments, Environmental Assessments) should be carried out.

Approximately 2,500 square meters including public space around them

Cost:

- Short term
- Long term

- Improve accessibility of lookout points for pedestrians and bicyclists using paved and well-marked paths
- Accessible and visible to everyone and allow only small-scale structures that serve visitors, such as a café or bar, on the hills
- Green hill
- Picnic facilities
- Pergolas
- Urban furniture
- Small-scale café
- Lookout platforms

Green hill
Ksamil Box

Current Situation
The tourism beach infrastructure was developed in an unstructured way by adding new facilities each year. As a result, beaches are licensed to the bar and restaurant operators, who provide the basic infrastructure and rent out sun beds to their guests. All beach installations are temporary and have a poor appearance because they are made of wood and plastic and are locally assembled just to serve for about eight weeks during the summer. In general, these structures as a whole give Ksamil’s beach areas a poor image.

Goals of Intervention
• Create a unified design for beach facilities, using the same color and materials to create an identity for the beach zones
• Bring order to the beaches with facilities such as showers and toilets
• Test suitable locations through a pilot as a placemaking tool and then proceed with a detailed plan for definitive locations on the beaches
• Brand the beaches with the Ksamil Box

Description of Intervention
The Ksamil Box can function as a trademark for the town. In contrast to other coastal towns in Albania, Ksamil still offers a beautiful natural coastline, although recent developments tend to limit access to the public beaches. Aiming to replace randomly distributed stalls, the Ksamil Box module would allow gastronomy and other commercial functions to be colocated at designated locations along the public beachfront. The Ksamil Box is a flexible module system that can be easily rearranged and adapted to different uses. The material is steel and high-pressure laminate panels that can be assembled as a kitchen, bar, toilets, or showers.

It is recommended that the Ksamil Box be owned by the municipality, and locations for installation should be selected under an inclusive planning process. As a placemaking tool and pilot, a prototype could be installed and then the concept could be further expanded to other beaches.

The Ksamil Box could potentially be assembled by locals to enhance the feeling of identification with Ksamil, as well as to raise awareness of the need to protect Ksamil’s greatest resources, the natural landscape.

Area: 20 to 50 square meters; approximately 300 square meters if public space around it is included
Cost: $ 
Implementation period: Short term
The tourism beach infrastructure was developed each year. As a result, beaches are licensed to the bar and restaurant operators, who provide the basic infrastructure and rent out sun beds to their patrons, resulting in a poor appearance because they are made of temporary structures and serve for about eight weeks during the summer. In general, these structures as a whole give Ksamil’s beach areas a poor image.

Aiming to replace randomly distributed stalls, the Ksamil Box module would allow flexibility in how it can be used. It can serve as a kitchen, bar, toilets, or showers. Ksamil Box should be selected under an inclusive planning process. As a placemaking tool and pilot, a prototype could be installed and then the concept could be further expanded to other beaches.

Ksamil, as well as to raise awareness of the need to protect Ksamil’s greatest resources, the natural landscape.

Area:
- Single module: 20 to 50 square meters; approximately 300 square meters if public space around it is included
- Double module: 2 modules, 40 m²
- Triple module: 3 modules, 60 m²

Cost:
- $
Conclusions

To strengthen Ksamil’s image as a healthy, family-friendly town in a beautiful and protected landscape with exceptional cultural value and an excellent climate, it needs a strong, comprehensive long-term vision for development, as well as short-term projects that show quick results. This Final Report intends to inform the town’s planners and decision makers in developing this comprehensive long-term vision for Ksamil.

This report presents a long list of Strategic Interventions as potential investment projects. These projects are expected to positively influence sustainable development, leading toward a more diversified economy, improved performance in the tourism sector, and generally higher-quality public space for residents and guests alike. At the moment, all of the proposed Strategic Interventions are conceptual designs for which technical details will be needed. Additionally, environmental and social safeguards assessments, as well as Rapid Assessment Programs would need to be carried out before implementation of any intervention.

Next steps include (a) prioritizing projects in a further planning process, b) elaborating the selected projects in detail, and (c) immediately beginning the easy-to-implement and low-cost interventions to show quick results. The prioritization and selection of investment projects should be based on strong technical, financial, safeguard, and sustainability criteria.

Potential short-term interventions are the Ksamil Lookout Points and Platforms, the Ksamil Box, and the multifunctional Coastal Square (described in section 6). These interventions follow the principles of placemaking (see section 2.6), which refers to short-term interventions with minimum costs, but within a certain framework and a long-term vision. Their purpose is to test certain functionality and designs in a specific local context. They can be defined as pilot projects that will test the impact and acceptance of an urban intervention.

Immediate actions could be considered with low-cost and high-impact investments such as the proposed placemaking activities. These fast-track investments would keep the project process alive, show that there is concrete action on the ground, and involve people in the further planning process.

The Ksamil Box has the potential to be a fast-track investment with low implementation costs and a short implementation period. It is a placemaking tool that improves public spaces and can be scaled up to different locations at the same time. The module can be adopted and replicated easily and is tailor-made for the town of
Ksamil, so that inhabitants can identify with it. The first location for the Ksamil Box could be the lookout point on top of the hill to the northwest of the town. It could be the starting point for activation of the hill and the Ksamil Lookout Points and Platforms intervention.

Another potential fast-track placemaking initiative would be activation of the Coastal Square as a festival place and arena, with temporary activities such as food markets, music festivals, a public cinema, exhibitions, and other activities.
ANNEX
Combining the data from the Urban Design Lab (Superwien Urbanism), which took place in Ksamil in the summer of 2018, with our own experiences in October 2018, the following topics emerged as the most important:

First, focus on low-level improvements that will immediately enhance life for the locals: improve public spaces, roads, and bike lanes; define pedestrian zones; improve lighting; slow traffic; take care of waste management and initiate a garbage collection campaign; define public beach areas.

Second, create or strengthen Ksamil’s urban identity by using local materials. Create a recurring “corporate design” for public spaces and connecting lanes and paths. Use low-maintenance local plants and trees for green areas. Work within current building structures and use existing resources.

Third, create a Ksamil that can further develop with its own strengths. Point out possibilities that can be applied as a toolkit so the locals can continue to develop the city. Keep in mind that Ksamil in summer is not the same as it is in winter. Try to extend the season in a sustainable way.
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Raw concrete skeletons and partially demolished structures currently characterize the appearance of Ksamil. These already-built structures are not necessarily a problem, but could be viewed as potential resources. They offer the possibility for flexible, more or less temporary, uses and at the same time provide a chance to create a unique image of the place. Simple wooden construction could fill the existing skeletons. As an example, the team selected an existing empty skeleton in Ksamil and created a proposal for use as a hostel. The town currently lacks such accommodations for youthful visitors and backpackers.
The priority to revitalize the Waterfront is to improve the existing conditions for the community and to prevent further procedures outside the public interest. To do so we edited the land-use plan to sustain a eco-friendly and sustainable development plan which conserves the existing SHORE ZONE and extends the NATURE CONSERVATION AREA.

We used the existing borders of the esplanade and the borders of the designed bike lane for zoning the three land-use areas. Small constructions are allowed between esplanade and bike lane but only for constructions which are in public interest. We designed a small bamboo hut as an example for a sustainable construction possibility. Above the bike lane are existing ruins which are revitalized for the youth.
An asthma rehab facility could extend the season as a social and sustainable program that also helps protect the surrounding environment.

In the area between the sea and Ksamil’s nature park, existing buildings situated directly at the shoreline and ruins that cannot be revitalized should be removed. The area needs to be kept clear to maintain the quality of this recreational area. The nature park must not be touched; it has to be protected to maintain a healthy and livable future for the people of Ksamil. Development of the coastline is key to sustaining an intact environment and for encouraging tourism. Because this is a defined building area the authorities should establish strict regulations and demand a sustainable social program, that does not destroy or disturb this special place.
The concept shaping this aspect of the project was the ellipse, inspired by the elliptical form of the landscape around the DEA Cultural Center, which provides a 360° view of the city and the sea. The elliptical paths around DEA take advantage of this particular trait of the terrain. The main focus of this project was to return the beach to the public. By relocating the restaurants to behind the promenade, not only is the beach turned from private to public, but the promenade is highlighted and revitalized by extending it along the entire length of the beach.
One of the biggest problems is lack of pedestrian areas. Rerouting vehicles and turning most of the streets into pedestrian zones leaves a void best used to create a large multifunctional square with spaces dedicated to humans and not traffic.

The greenery added to the area helps attract sports and other relaxing activities and cools the heat of the very warm days. A marketplace would be located close to the DEA Culture Center, situated in a strategic position in the city and easily reachable by most of the inhabitants.
section AA

children swimming pool

visualization main square
The need for public spaces is evident in Ksamil, one of Albania’s many hidden gems, a beautiful beach paradise.

One’s first impression when visiting Ksamil is that this town is neither culturally interesting nor has much offer when it comes to services, transport, or the quality of public spaces, and yet because of the natural beauty of the environment is the perfect place to have a holiday. However, the human factor has not been very kind to it. The town is rife with illegally built structures, and the lack of control means that even the most naturally beautiful parts of the town are being destroyed.

The low quality of public spaces, lack of a defined town center, unorganized service areas, misused or abandoned spaces, undefined functions of seafront
areas, and similar problems have led to dissatisfaction of locals and visitors alike. An even bigger problem is the loss of identity.

The treatment area starts from the backbone of Ksamil—the main street that connects the town with Saranda, the public beach and its surroundings (including buildings and empty spaces), a part of the neighborhood near the “Kater Valletaret” statue, and the main street that leads to the public beach. These areas are heavily frequented, mostly during the summer when thousands of vacationers holiday in Ksamil. But these spaces do not fulfill the needs of users.

Each segment of the design project tells a story. This idea emerged from a combination of our own analyses of the current state of Ksamil and information provided in other sources. The program segments comprise (a) the public beach, (b) the street that leads to the beach, (c) urban forest, (d) pocket parks, and (e) improving quality through densification.
The main objective of the public beach plan is to create a friendly space by designing two different levels and connecting them using multipurpose steps to bring urban activities closer to nature. Wood panels are adjusted to the surrounding natural landscape. To promote the local economy and make the town attractive to its users, the main street that leads to the beach could be redesigned. Locals could sell and promote their own products and the street could be the perfect zone near the public beach to have a drink or enjoy dinner. An urban forest near the beach would create more relaxing and recreational spaces for free use. Trees of a minimum height of 5 meters would provide shade to reduce temperatures, filter the air, moderate the local climate, and slow the wind. The proposed urban furniture is inclusive and safe for all users. It offers multiple ways for users to interact with it, allowing them a sense of customization of the space. Pocket parks are a small-scale project proposed for the urban space. Many empty, unused, and abandoned spaces dot Ksamil. The idea of giving life to these spaces is not only about accommodating people but also improving the quality of everyday life. These green spaces can serve as vibrant community hubs for social interaction and leisure activities.
pockets could be used for anything that people choose: playgrounds, sitting areas, or event places where people can meet, interact, and enjoy the day.

• Because the need for accommodation, especially during the summer, keeps increasing, a strategy to densify and increase the scale of buildings would be a good solution. Building height could vary from three to five floors. Densification would not only offer better accommodation possibilities for tourists but would also improve the architectural aspect of housing design.
KSAMIL Narratives.

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![Typology A](image1)
![Typology B](image2)
![Typology C](image3)
![Typology D](image4)
![Typology E](image5)

Ground floor uses and upper floor uses
Orientation of building units
Expand possibilities and orientation
Street to the beach

Public beach
Urban forest
Green pocket
pockets could be used for anything that people choose: playgrounds, sitting areas, or event places where people can meet, interact, and enjoy the day.

Because the need for accommodation, especially during the summer, keeps increasing, a strategy to densify and increase the scale of buildings would be a good solution. Building height could vary from three to five floors. Densification would not only offer better accommodation possibilities for tourists but would also improve the architectural aspect of housing design.
The focus of this project is to improve the well-being of the citizens of Ksamil by improving the growth of the mussel farming industry. Some of the best mussels in Europe are from Lake Butrint. Developing the lakefront, along with the quality of the mussels, is a high priority. Therefore, this project includes both revitalization of the lake side of the city and a research center for mussels. Other interventions have been suggested to bring citizens closer to the lake given that it is one of the town’s main income sources, by creating a comfortable atmosphere for the public. This particular project, on the other hand, includes a bit of a contrast. The northern side would be a more city-type landscape and the south side a wilder and more refreshing place, especially during the hot summer days. The findings from our stay in Ksamil and the Urban Design overview...
Lab analysis led us to attempt to connect the youth of Ksamil to the lagoon-side as well. This proposal includes a library, which the people interviewed see as a bright spot. The overall assumption was that it would be a perfect spot for them since it is close to the school and is a relatively quiet area. In addition, a bike lane would go around the lagoon all the way to Butrint and promote Albania’s strong olive farming culture. Creation of a few lookout points would allow tourists to get a better view of this beautiful Albanian city. Ksamil’s year-round citizens—the mainstay of the city—are also important, and will benefit from this project as well.
Sustainable Mobility

The main goal of the project is to create a new mobility concept for Ksamil that deals with missing road infrastructure, parking issues, safety, and public transport. The area between the sea and the main road should be a limited traffic area benefiting the nonmotorised mobility, with the seaside promenade functioning as the main artery for pedestrian mobility and the primary road (backbone) for motorized transport. Vehicles could access the limited-traffic area in the early morning hours for delivery of supplies to the restaurants and bars.

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Refresh Ksamil

Ksamil mobility concept

- Primary road (SH81)
- Secondary road (collector)
- Bus line
- Town boundary
- Parking space
- Limited traffic area
- Bus terminal
- Bus station
- 5 min walk area
- Motorised private transport
- Public transport
- Non-motorised mobility
Motorized Transport

The motorized transport system should better cope with the traffic issues during the tourist season. The main element is the backbone (primary road), which carries motorized transport and distributes vehicle flows to the secondary roads. The secondary roads collect the traffic from each area and distributes it to parking lots or back to the backbone.

Car-Free Quarter

The communist-era quarter is well connected to the public transport system. Pedestrians will enjoy the safety of having streets designed for them and the comfort of walking short distances. The main element is the promenade, which crosses the quarter surrounded by an area with restaurants and bars and connects the two urban centralities the center square with the seaside.

The paths in the quarter offer better accessibility and a shorter path through the church park that connects the quarter with the school.
Public Spaces

The renewal of existing public spaces and creation of new ones will benefit both residents and tourists. Three different typologies of free space, each with its own qualities, are connected to each other through a network.

• Urban spaces. The main square and the entrance square, which are connected through the promenade, are where urban life takes place by blending residential, office, and commercial uses, such as restaurants, cafés, and local commerce that attracts people and makes the environment safer and more livable.

• Public parks. Public parks serve as oases offering shade and sitting areas to escape the heat during the summer.

• Semi-public green areas. These areas serve the residents and have a novel feature: urban gardening. Residents can grow different plants in urban areas distributed throughout the quarter, and distributed to maximize their use.

The church park offers better access to the school and also has areas that serve the community.

Julia-Šu Gürsu, Dejan Çoba | Vienna University of Technology

Vienna University of Technology
Building Development

The buildings of the communist-era quarter should be maintained for their architectural style. Because of the extremely bad condition of one of the buildings, it had to be replaced with a public park. The residents of that building will move into the two new residential buildings that will be built opposite the old building. They will also have a new asset at their disposal: the extensive facade. The Ksamil vocational training center will provide job-specific technical training in the fields of tourism, services, and gastronomy. The new multifunctional building will house the new administrative headquarters with good connections to public transport, bringing the town hall and the post office under the same roof.
The location chosen for the bus terminal and underground garage is at the entrance to Ksamil via the SH81 road toward Saranda. This strategic point where vehicles could stop traffic and an underground garage would create an opportunity for development if an urban bus line for Ksamil that would greatly reduce traffic intensity.

Way to Ksamil

Bus Terminal and Underground Garage

Point of reference for detention for transportation vehicles is the center of the city. In certain periods, especially in the summer, traffic is chaotic. This situation led to the idea of choosing a location as the first point of reference for detention, without interrupting normal traffic flow in any season.
Bus Terminal

Tourists and visitors to Ksamil from the countries of the region mainly arrive by bus. Therefore, Ksamil needs a good bus terminal and adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of these visitors. With an area of 4,500 square meters the main terminal could have eight gates for international buses and five short-term parking lots for regional buses (mainly from Saranda) and Ksamil’s urban buses. The ground floor of a building would house a café and bar, public toilet, ticket booth, and information office, and the first floor would include some bedrooms for bus drivers.

Underground Garage

The most frequent users of the garage would be the tourists who arrive in Ksamil for the day. It will also be a great help to nearby businesses, especially hotels, that do not have sufficient parking for their customers and could use the public parking lot. The garage would have 520 parking places.
Public Spaces

Public spaces are necessary for any city, and Ksamil would benefit from them as well. Public spaces should be available to everyone equally, regardless of age, gender, religion, or economic status. They should be simple in form, but encourage maximum use from citizens.

Park

The planned space for the park is near the bus terminal and garage. The park will be easily accessible from various points: it has direct access from the bus terminal, as well as from two streets that host different activities. The park could be used by guests at the proposed hostel.
Sports Area

During the field visit in Ksamil we encountered many illegal and unsuitable things for a tourist town such as Ksamili. Among the many illegal things was also this “hole” which was dug by unconscious people for their own personal purposes. But because there is an obligatory act to halt such construction, this space could be transformed into an attractive area for both tourists and the community. Because the parcel is located very close to the public beaches and has direct access from the promenade, it could be used by everyone for sports.

Amphitheater

Ksamil’s mountain location encourages the creation of spaces with direct sightlines to the crystal-clear sea. An area in one of Ksamil’s hills, which is also near the sports area, could be used to design a space with different levels in the shape of a classic amphitheatre. This area could be used by citizens for relaxation.
The exist situation

Amphitheater Detail 1

Sport Area

Amphitheater Detail 2

Restaurant

Section

Section