

Site and context

The site is located **directly in the heart of Trenčín**, stretching between the historic city centre beneath the castle rock and both waterfronts of the River Váh. The site boundary and description of the context is illustrated on the enclosed aerial view map :

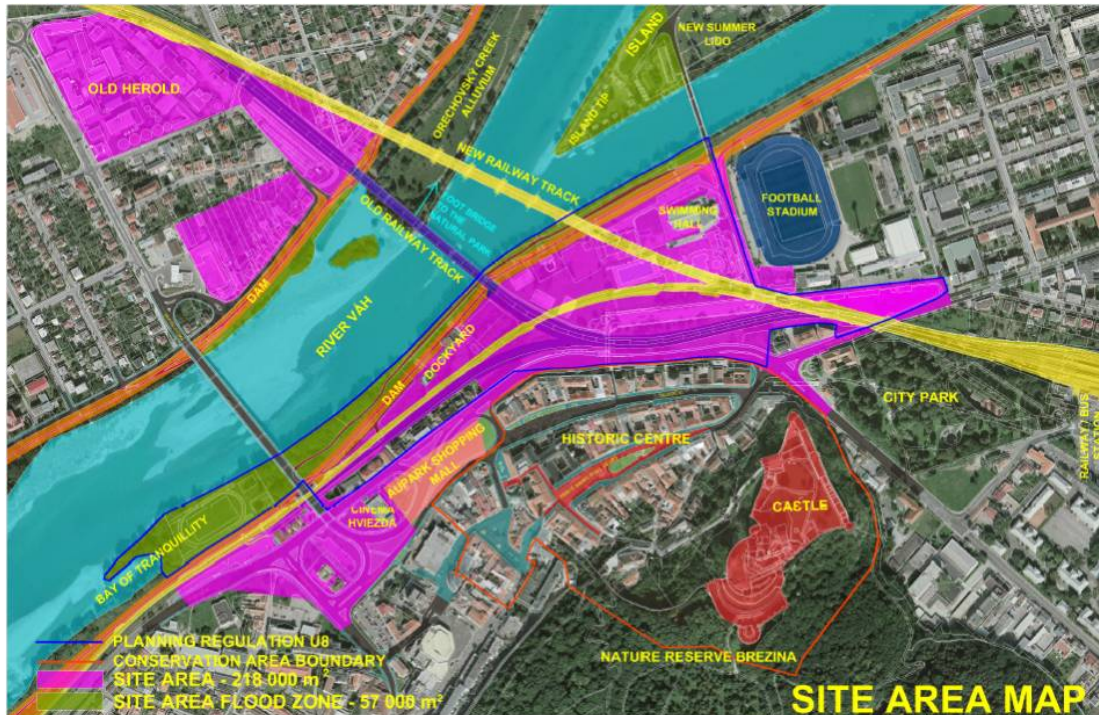


Fig. The aerial map is available to download in high resolution from the section Documentation, appendix (02).

The orange line marks the dam, which delineates the flood zone area (green area), linked through the existing railroad bridge, which is already now partly used as a pedestrian bridge. Its function as pedestrian and cyclist bridge can be expanded with new functions following the completion of the modernization of the railway and relocation of the railway track.

The existing railroad bridge will be the subject of a separate architectural competition, leading to its revitalisation and redesign into a new landmark of the city on the river, retaining its promenade character.

The yellow line indicates the new railway track and new railway bridge. Historic areas are marked in red - the Trenčín Castle compound with adjacent streets and the historic Peace Square (Mierové námestie), and Štúrovo Square. Purple designates a new area, resulting from the on-going development, with the possibility for new urbanization.

The orange rectangle to the east of the road bridge outlines a planned commercial and entertainment centre. The new development on this private property has been approved by the city a while ago under the condition that it can be implemented only after resolving the new traffic arrangement (the road infrastructure is owned by the state - Slovak Road Administration and the Trenčín Region). For this reason and due to the fact that the city wants to obtain a final version of this new intersection integrated into the overall new transport arrangement, the implementation of this project is currently on hold. The current

proposal for the new intersection can be viewed in the section Documentation, in appendix (08) *Preliminary Proposal for Intersection Adjacent to the Bridge.dwg*.

A detailed description of the competition site can be found in the competition documentation which can be downloaded on the Documentation page.

Character and identity

The character of the city stems from **old and new stories**, the **atmosphere**, the **river** and the city's picturesque **setting in a valley** surrounded by green mountains.

Past stories that formed the city's character, have faded away: the city of fashion, engineering, clothes manufacturing, brass band music, army, team sports, boating, the square parade, social gatherings, local crafts and trades, open community and cultural life, markets, folklore traditions, historic celebrations, Trenčín Castle and its legends.

New phenomena: Music - Pohoda Festival, film - ArtFilm Festival, art cinema Metro, communities of various cultural interests (alternative art scene, amateur music and theatre, electronic music scene, graffiti, skater and free-rider community), the migration of shops from the city centre into enclosed shopping malls, new assembly and manufacturing companies, rediscovered natural assets along the riverfront and nature reserve Brezina, new developments - a new road bridge, modernization of the railway and new railway bridge, new buildings, first league football, dragon boats, floorball, Trenčín University, modern dance, children's festival Trenčianske hradosti (Trenčín Games), Gáborík ice hockey camps, introduction of golf...

The River Váh: the river is a constantly present phenomenon, which once used to represent danger (frequent flooding, river regulation, construction of the dam, flood zone area), while also forming an important part of the city's identity, unifying the whole Považie Region (the Váh 'cascades', historic guard points, Matúš Čák - the baron and duke of Váh and the Tatra Mountains, etc.). From this perspective, the river gives the city of Trenčín national importance, which in turn fuels the potential of the city in all areas - as administrative, industrial, educational and cultural centre of the whole region. Despite the fact that the river within its city boundaries serves extensively as an area for recreation (picnics, walking dogs, fishing, swimming, boating etc.), this is not perceived as its main identifying feature. The river resonates in the memory of people merely as a space spanned over by a bridge, subconsciously dividing Trenčín into two parts - the "city" area and the "beyond the bridges" area. The river is not considered as a unique showcase of the city and its overgrown banks, while to an extent serving the local residents, don't offer attractive services that both residents and visitors could benefit from. This should be addressed in the urban design competition, transforming the river and both of its banks into an attractive area also in terms of business and integration into the overall development of the city, as well as the wider region. The same applies in broader context to the **nature reserve Brezina**.

Facts about Trenčín and its character and identity can be found in the Documentation section appendices (11) *Photo-video-documentation.pdf.jpg.mov*, (12) *"Trenčín is YOU - City Planning Inspired by Citizens"*. *The origins of the participatory process, results of surveys and expert discussions from 2012 and 2013.pdf*, (13) *City of Trenčín - Facts.pdf* and (16) *Scale Model of the City Centre - photographs and description.pdf*

Potential and value

The city of Trenčín has undoubtedly a huge potential, repeatedly defined and reflected through its surroundings as well as its **citizens**, who consider the following qualities as the most important:

Geomorphological location with a unique natural setting of the Trenčín Basin, the River Váh and the landmark panorama of Trenčín Castle on the rock.

High quality environment with still relatively pure air to breathe, water to drink, river to swim in, birds and animals living in the immediate surroundings, and the nature that envelopes the city.

The city's compactness, with relatively well accessible living, working, leisure and shopping in comparison to similar size or larger cities. This quality is slowly disappearing due to increasing traffic congestion.

Developed infrastructure and good accessibility– close proximity to the capital city of Bratislava, the Czech Republic and Austria, with convenient transport connectivity, a military airport with individual landing for small civil aircrafts and a good transport infrastructure integrated with the wider region. Industrial park, industrial businesses, a network of schools, cultural facilities (castle, museum, gallery, library, cinemas, theatre stage in the ownership of the Army of the Slovak Republic), shopping centres, administrative centres, sports facilities.

The history, spirit and memory of the place – through people who constitute the former genius loci of the place, the city still preserves a unique atmosphere and is attractive for living and visiting. This quality is gradually diminishing due to the changing generations and uncontrolled new development without an integrated vision.

The potential and values of the city of Trenčín reflected through its citizens are described in more detail in appendix (12) *“Trenčín is You – City Planning Inspired by Citizens”*. *The origins of the participatory process, results of surveys and expert discussions from 2012 and 2013.pdf*

Competition objectives

The City of Trenčín perceives the **connection between the city centre and the river** as a key to its strategic growth. The key result of the competition will be therefore not only to devise a barrier free connection for pedestrians and cyclists between the existing city centre and the site, but also a proposal for further development of programme and functions, which could **catalyse sustainable development** of the city and the region through a sensitive and balanced integration of the urban and natural environment.

The objective is to create Trenčín one of the most attractive, livable and inclusive cities in Slovakia and neighbouring countries for people of all ages and social groups living in or visiting the city.

The leitmotif of the competition aspirations is to develop Trenčín as the most livable city in Slovakia and a city known around the world.

The main priorities for the anticipated competition results and further development of the site are:

1 STRENGTHENING EXISTING QUALITIES OF THE CITY

The competition proposals should :

- preserve the city's **silhouette** visible from afar and prevent radical changes of the spatial perception of the city within its original urban grain and proportion,
- emphasise the value of **good quality environment** as a basis for sustainable growth and apply **innovative ideas** for energy efficiency and tackling of climate change through using the natural potential of the site,
- enhance the potential of the city as an **attractive creative destination for investors** and providers of job opportunities,
- envision and implement the universal quality of a **compact city** with a **cosy and relaxing atmosphere** and a natural integration of the **river** into the organism of the city,
- discover and enhance the potential of local people and communities, **motivate** their development and permanent settling in the city and **inspire new stories** for the city,
- apart from the new generation, consider also the departing generation and create good conditions for the development of **trans generational**, integrating and volunteering programmes, social programmes for dignified old age stimulating people's motivation to be useful and similar initiatives.

Note : The adaptability of new functions to priority defined in point 1 is the key task of the assignment.

2 SETTING A NEW IDENTITY OF THE CITY ON THE RIVER

The current searching for a new identity of Trenčín is accompanied by a sense of nostalgia for the old times and stories mixed with a desire for a new vision and new stories. The competition proposals therefore should also :

- develop a **creative concept** to enable the searching for and creation of a new identity and new stories for the city,
- draw the **new identity** of the city also from the natural potential of the **river** and demonstrate it through the symbolism of a bridge (connection between the old and the new, bridging over the two riverbanks, connecting people and stories),
- retain the **old railway bridge**, which should be transformed into a **promenade bridge** and a natural **new landmark** of the city as a modern counterpart to the historic city centre.

3 PROPOSAL FOR A COMPREHENSIVE FINANCIAL AND TIMESCALE MODEL FOR RESTARTING THE CITY CATALYSED FROM THE SITE

From this point of view the competition proposals should :

- offer the citizens **new creative opportunities** for living and working through a new urbanistic proposal that will add value and enhance the attractiveness of the city and the wider region (as well as revalue the land plots),
- propose **phasing** of the urbanisation with an economic argument for the proposed steps, identifying **acupuncture points** with the possibility of immediate low cost interventions, which would **catalyse** further development within the area - **the site considered as an incubator for the city's growth**.