

## Baia Mare Integrated Urban Development Strategy

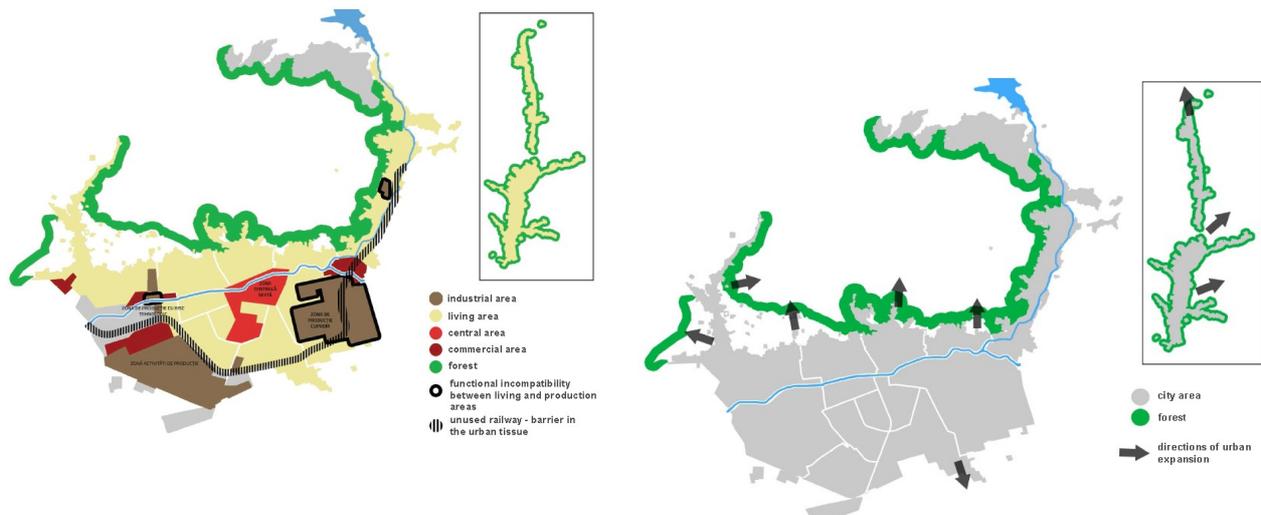
**Baia Mare** (23.347 ha, 135.855 inhabitants according to a 2013 survey) is the capital city of the Maramures county, a very characteristic and unique area situated in the extreme north-west of Romania, near the Ukrainian and Hungarian borders.

What is most characteristic about Baia Mare is its *industrial heritage*, in contrast with the *rich cultural tradition and unique scenery* of the area.



It was a prosperous mining town, even since the Middle Ages, but the industry declined after the 90s. As such, *large plots of unused or even contaminated land* represent today city barriers and a *big part of the working population left the city due to unemployment*. A main city landmark is the tower of the former copper mining unit, the second tallest industrial tower in Europe (352m), with unexploited *touristic potential* mainly due to lack of investment interest and juridic land issues.

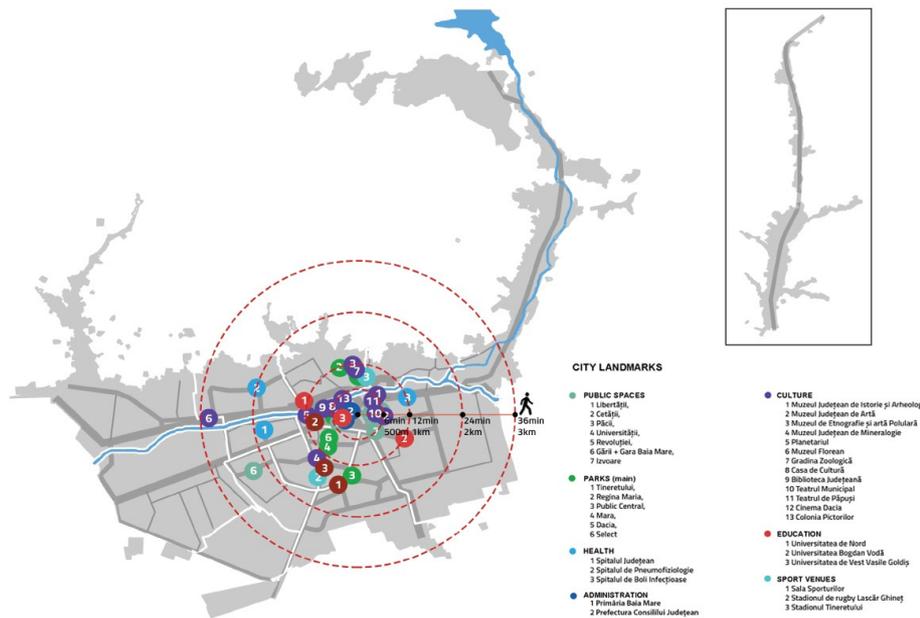
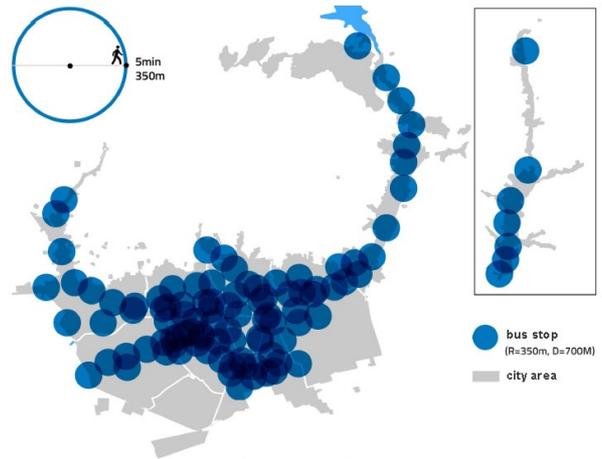
The city developed around the Sasa river, especially on the south bank, the north being dominated by forest. The presence of the river has a positive influence on the micro-climate and a big ambient potential. However, the *lack of pedestrian accessibility on the river banks* and in some parts, the rural organizing of the built tissue (not facing the water) deny the public presence of the river.



Where public transport is concerned, the city has a wide network of bus routes, covering the city needs. This is one of the reasons why Baia Mare does not have the car transit problem found in other cities today. However, it does lack a *contemporary thinking of public spaces* in terms of smart cities, which prioritizes pedestrian and bicycle accessibility and mobility, while creating an attractive city.

Baia Mare has a large pedestrian core representing the old Medieval tissue, the 'heart' of the city. Other than this enclave, it has many public spaces with a big *iconic potential*, presently *unexploited*. The development strategy studies each of these unique spaces, and integrates them in the urban structure by enhancing the *local identity of each of them*.

We will further detail four of the main public space identified in the strategy – 1. *Izvoarelor Market* (the main food market), 2. *Universitatii Square* (the public space in front of the University), 3. *the rehabilitation of the Sasar river banks* and 4. *the Baia Mare Station Square*.

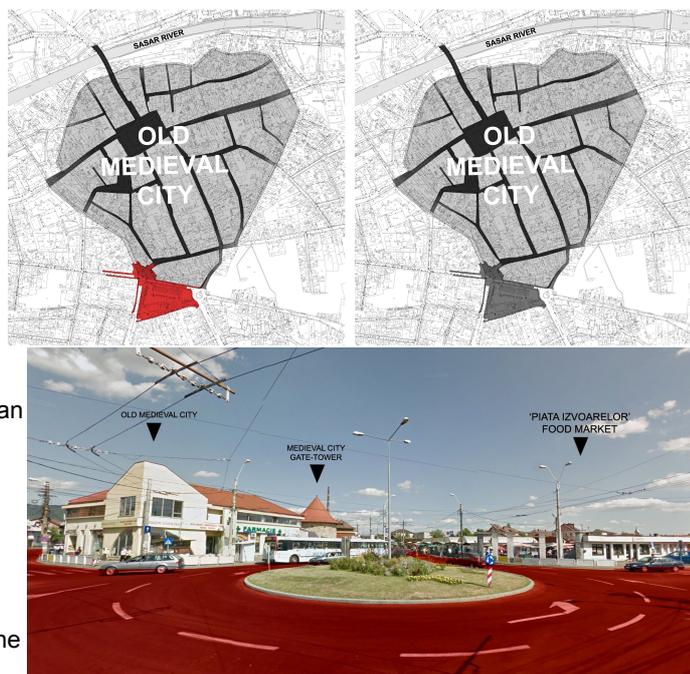


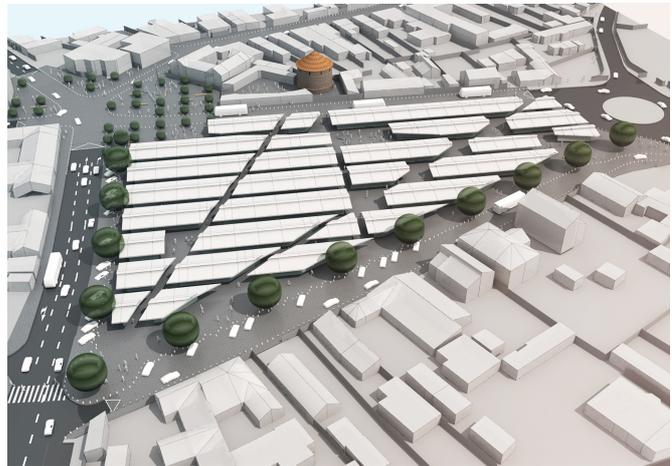
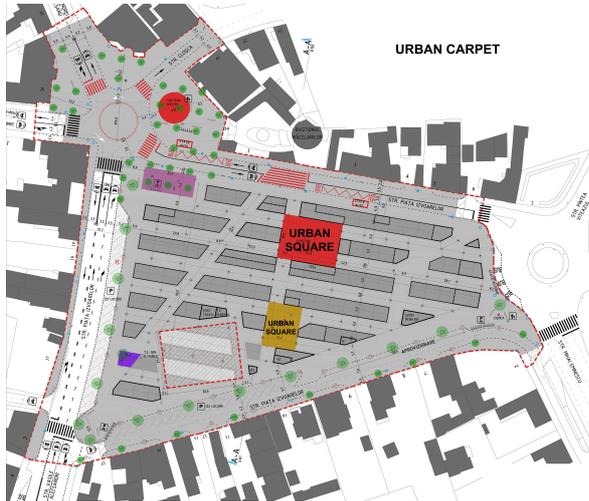
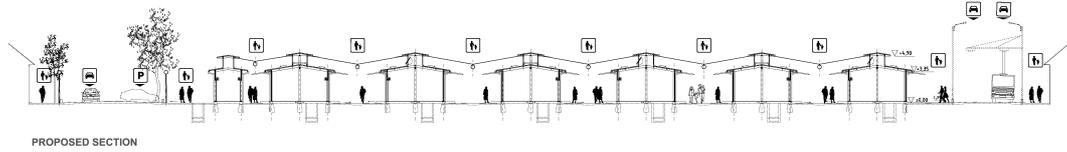
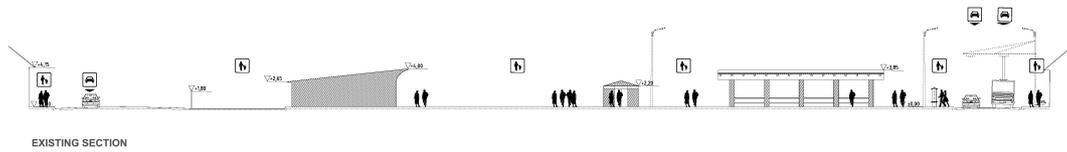
**1. Izvoarelor Market** – envisioned concept: 'food market at the base of the fortress'

This city landmark is located next to the old Medieval City, but this proximity is not perceived, being separated by significant car traffic routes.

By redirecting the transit traffic, this public space can be assimilated to the old urban tissue, enhancing pedestrian mobility and accessibility. The car infrastructure is not eliminated, but reduced to its bare minimum, and the public space is treated at same level as an *urban carpet*, where pedestrian and bicycle transportation are the norm.

The market typology is also changed, the fences are eliminated, and mixed-function (food market and services – cafe, bistro) pavilion routes turn the market into an attractive landmark, and an iconic spot for tourists.

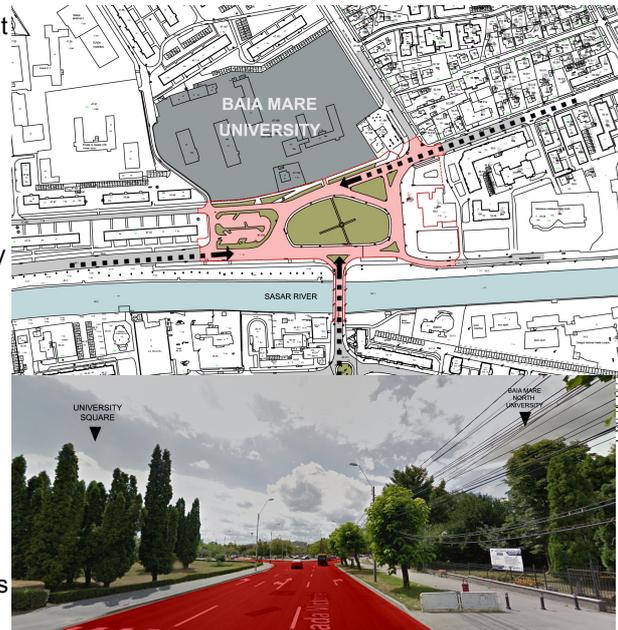




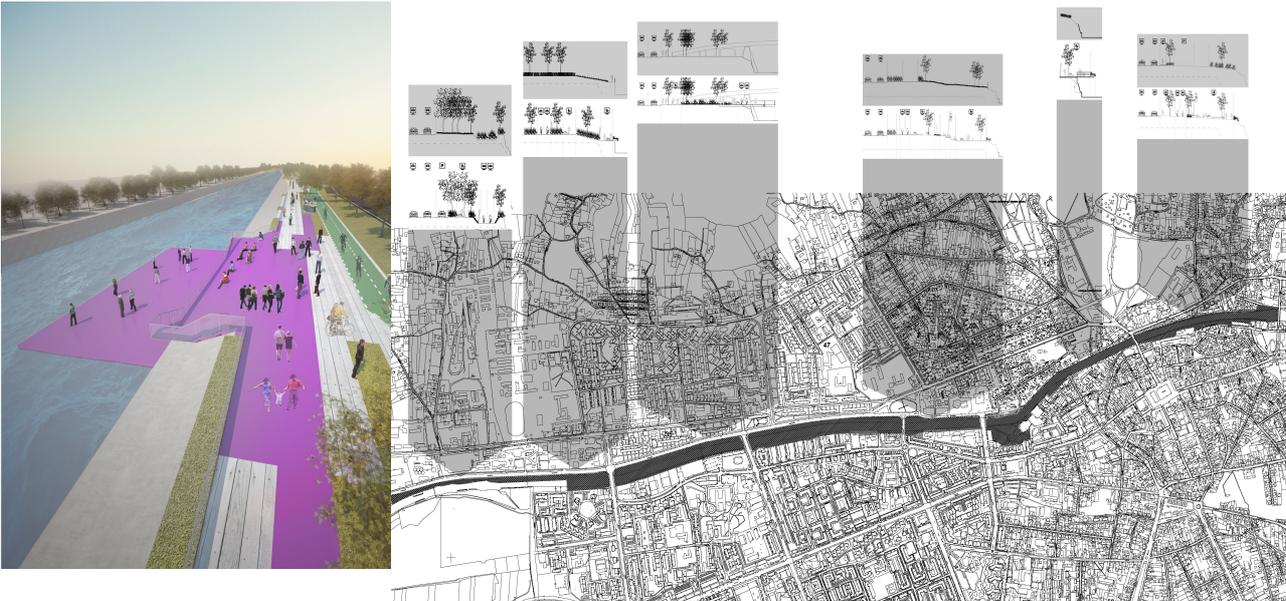
## 2. Universitatii Square – envisioned concept: 'urban student lounge'

This square is located in a very special place in the city, at the junction of two main roads, near the river Sasar, and, most importantly, in front of the main university of Baia Mare (the North University).

What could and should be an *urban living room* for the students is presently a set of green islands surrounded by over-dimensioned car traffic infrastructure, which represents a barrier for pedestrian mobility and accessibility. The local solution involves connecting the campus to the urban space for pedestrian traffic, introducing iconic functional elements (pavilions, urban chaise-lounge, urban amphitheater, a pergola, a clock tower as end of perspective, geyser fountains etc.), reorganizing the green areas perpendicular to the campus fence so that they no longer represent barriers in pedestrian mobility.



### 3. The rehabilitation of the Sasar river banks – envisioned concept: 'creating urban scenes'



Along its course through Baia Mare, the Sasar river has many dysfunctions – the bank is very narrow or non-existent, inaccessible for pedestrians, no bike routes, doesn't have any urban equipment, spontaneous vegetation, not enough pedestrian crossings. The integrated intervention aims at identifying the different characteristic profiles of the river, and has locally tailored solutions for each of them. As a result, attractive public spaces are created, which connect the urban pedestrian network to nature.



A continuous pedestrian promenade will be doubled by bicycle routes and *urban scenes* placed in key spots of the river – meeting points, as well as actual scenes for different open-air representations, pavilions, integrated green areas and plantation. Also, additional pedestrian crossings will increase the river accessibility.

### 4. the Baia Mare Railway Station Square – envisioned concept: 'gateway towards the city'



The public space in front of the Baia Mare Train Station is presently a character-less square, dominated by parked cars, and an oversized car traffic infrastructure. Being one of the main ways inside the city, this space should have an iconic and attractive character, encourage pedestrian traffic and mixed use activities, becoming that urban waiting room that a train station square should be.