

Manifesto

Vokieciu Street – one of the oldest streets in Vilnius where merchants and artisans used to live. It was perceived as a central marketplace for the city of Vilnius before the World War II. Many buildings surrounding Vokieciu Street had been severely damaged by the war. A master plan was established for Vilnius city in 1948 after the war had ended. The partial completion of the plan included Vokieciu Street where principles of soviet planning could be recognized. Some of the work included the reconstruction of buildings damaged by the war, further development of the boulevard including the width adjustment of Vokieciu Street and continued construction of Stalinist style architecture. The changes dissolved the common structure of closed spaces which was historically significant to the area. Vokieciu Street became a center of attraction for the locals as well as people from outside the country as the space improved from a recreational perspective with the implementation of flower gardens and outside sitting areas for local restaurants. Centrally located yet not affected by the daily city rush Vokieciu Street is maintaining its popularity as many businesses move their activities outside during the warmer season of the year.

The chosen concept is intended to reflect the dramatic historical events that took place in Vokieciu Street and meet the demands set by today's society. The focus of this concept is the recreational area which would be supplemented by specific markings that would represent the multi-layered history of the location as well as transforming areas without purpose. The outline of the project includes:

1. Distinction and preservation of historical characteristics
Preservation of reconstructed parts of the street including specific markings of previous construction as well as informational tiles which represent and separate each individual building. The proposal includes exposition of artifacts presented behind a lit glass surface which represent fragments of old basement constructions. Implementation is detailed in the masterplan.
2. Maintaining traffic uniformity
One-way traffic is maintained in the older part of Vokieciu Street with inclusion of a bike lane in place of the current automobile parking spots. The newer part of Vokieciu Street would maintain two-way traffic with automobile parking spot style revised to perpendicular parking instead of the current angle parking. No corrections would be made to the placement of public transportation stops. Corrections would be made to Vokieciu Street connection by the city hall and Salomejos Neries school which are presented in the road infrastructure scheme.
3. Composition of the public space structure consists of three visually present public space elements
Public space is driven by the leading structure of multiple benches with green spaces behind them. This spatial attribute of micro-scale architecture is continued along the pedestrian walkway forming independent hubs of relaxation.
The second element located by CAC is an overpass-bridge type of a structure which would integrate with restaurants and provide them with a zone for an outdoor seating space. The multipurpose function of the bridge allows for merchant stool integration. The bridge could also be used as a seating area during events.

The third element is the fountain. This proposal aims to move V.Vildziuno Barboros Radvilaite's sculpture closer to the centre of the Vokieciu Street in order to compose it together with the fountain.

4. Proposed green spaces would maintain the current placement of all trees except for the three that would need to be cut down in order to make space for the overpass-bridge. All of the other trees would be integrated in a composition with the proposed bench-green space structure. This proposal would adhere to Vokieciu Street being perceived as a park-type location attracting the public as a place to stroll around.
5. Current streetlights would be maintained in addition to lighting fixtures that would illuminate the walkways. Another set of lighting fixtures would be placed in the ground in accordance to the placement of the benches in order to achieve geometrical uniformity.
6. The common theme of this proposal aims at meaningful representation of this public space with improved infrastructure and defined purpose. The buildings of Stalinistic architecture surrounding the area make it more challenging to comprehend the spatial distribution of Vokieciu Street. The question of reconstructing the exterior of these buildings by removing the polichromic elements and reverting them to their previous historical state must be addressed, considering authentic color-set of the façades.
7. The majority of the budget would be directed towards ground surface reconstruction including the proposed lighting fixture implementation costs. The proposed elements of design do not require any major construction work that could potentially harm the historical heritage sites in the area.

The first chapter in evolution of the idea – elements that form the characteristics of the street
View towards the Vilnius city hall

