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Miloš Kopic, PhD¹
E-mail: miloskopic@uns.ac.rs
Vladimir Dragičević, PhD²
E-mail: vladopaval@gmail.com

¹ University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Technical Sciences, Trg Dositeja Obradovića 6, 21000 Novi Sad, Serbia

² JP Standard Bačka Palanka, Serbia

URBANIZATION OF THE COAST OF BACKA PALANKA

Key Words

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Abstract

The great potential of the Danube bank needs to be put in the function of a better quality of life for the inhabitants of Backa Palanka, better traffic connections and tourist offer. The introduction of attractive programs and contents, the functional expansion of the city in the context of the pan-European corridor, conditions the need for planned arrangement of the coast with an emphasis on the construction of a regatta center with accompanying facilities. The paper valorizes the potential of the Danube bank through spatial and urban plans and opportunities for further development of the city while preserving the natural environment and respecting environmental standards.

1. INTRODUCTION

The riverbank is the greatest potential of Bačka Palanka. It has great natural and historic value. The landscaping and exploitation of this potential has been a topic of discussion for decades, but there has been no initiative to urbanize this part of the settlement. This area is managed by a municipal public enterprise.

The municipal spatial plan, the general regulation plan and the detailed regulation plan have been drafted for the arrangement of this area. The implementation of these plans has never taken place. A change, in this respect, is a new urban plan for the detailed regulation of the riverbank belt, adopted in 2018. This plan represents the current initiative for the urbanization of the riverbank.

The riverbank area of the municipality of Bačka Palanka implies broad areas on the banks of the Danube, from the Bačka Palanka settlement to the Čelarevo settlement. The subject of this paper is the riverbank in the settlement of Bačka Palanka, which is part of the riverbank of the entire municipality. In this belt, where the Bačka Palanka settlement exits onto the Danube, the area of the banks must be activated through the introduction of programs, content, respect for natural values and adequate transport connections, so that the settlement can functionally exit onto the river. In this way, the inhabitants would get a new quality of life. The settlement would develop a tourism offer which is of both regional and broader importance, as part of the Danube Corridor.

The methodology used in the paper is a comparative analysis of the existing state and planning documentation, on the basis of which it is possible to view the planning process for the activation and urbanization of the Bačka Palanka riverbank. The synthesis of the mentioned results represents a contribution to the concept of arranging the main natural and spatial potential for the development of the settlement of Bačka Palanka.

2. ANALYZE THE EXISTING STATE

The riverbank is connected to the settlement by a collection street. That street leads from the center of Bačka Palanka to the very banks. Its profile has not been adequately resolved. One part of the street is a one-way with no bicycle path, while pedestrian movement has been acceptably resolved on the sidewalk along its length. At the very entrance to the banks area, at the sports hall, there is a large parking lot. Further in within the territory of the riverbank, there is no adequately resolved parking, so that the visitors park on green areas.

Public content includes a sports hall, an Olympic-size pool, water sports facilities with a restaurant and a čarda. In terms of illegal facilities, there are only three unfinished buildings without a purpose. There are no illegal individual housing developments. The aforementioned facilities are not sufficient in terms of adequate use of the banks by residents of Bačka Palanka. In terms of infrastructure, street furniture and landscaping, the space is completely inadequate.

There are three beaches. One beach is located on the Danube, while two beaches are located on Lake Tikvara. For many years, Lake Tikvara has been the center of kayaking in Serbia, with notable results achieved by athletes competing at global competitions. The Lake is also a habitat for a great number of different species of birds.

The whole riverbank area is a third-category nature park. It is under state protection.

3. ANALYSIS OF SPATIAL PLANS

One of the higher-rank plans covering the observed area is the Spatial Plan for the Special Purpose Area of the International Waterway E80 Danube (Pan-European Corridor 7) [1]. It is an extremely broad-encompassing plan that addresses about

588 km of the course of the river. It encompasses the entire course of Danube's flow through the Republic of Serbia. This plan has taken note of the protected natural value of riverbank land running through Nature Park Tikvara. It has also recorded the natural values of the area.

The next plan of significance is the Spatial Plan for the Municipality of Bačka Palanka [2] (figure 1.). This plan foresees the construction of a marina and a passenger bay on the banks of the settlement itself.

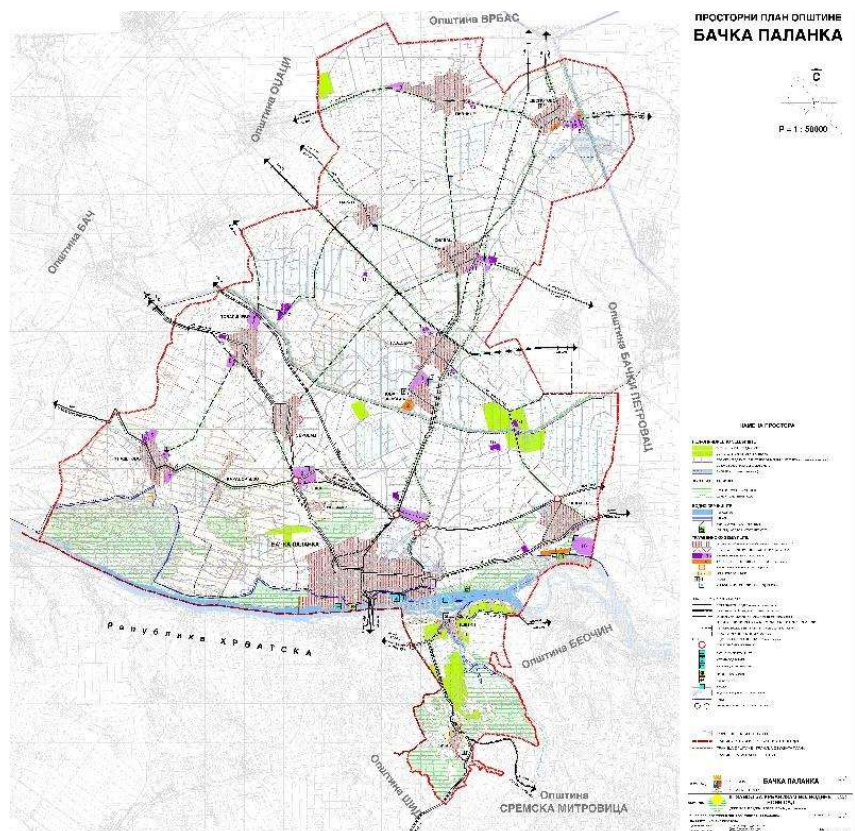


Figure 1. Graphic representation of the Bačka Palanka Municipality Plan

Both are designed to be built along Danube's course and have no physical contact with Lake Tikvara, in the spatial sense. What is not related to the activation of the riverbank area, along the settlement itself, but is planned downstream within the municipality of Novi Sad, is an international port with an intermodal terminal. It is meant to be an industrial zone with terminals for reloading goods and railway lines. Moorings have been foreseen further down, next to the Danube, at the Neštin settlement. In total, this plan foresees four categories for the entire municipality of Bačka Palanka: passenger docks and marinas within the protected part of the Bačka Palanka riverbank (analyzed area), international port and mooring (riverbank for the entire municipality).

At the level of spatial plans, the traffic connection between the center of the settlement and the riverbank itself, as well as the content along the Danube River were not analyzed. Detailed planning for riverbank landscaping was performed in urban plans for Bačka Palanka.

4. URBAN PLANNING ANALYSIS

The next level of planning, addressing the activation of the riverbank, is the General Regulation Plan for the Bačka Palanka settlement [3]. This plan further elaborates on the content to be found on the settlement's riverbank. In addition to existing content, these are: catering facilities, hotels, accommodation facilities, open sports fields. In this plan, the position of the passenger docks and the marina have been specified in greater detail.

The plan does not adequately address the traffic connection between the riverbank and the settlement. The existing collection road, with the existing roads and sidewalks in the existing cross-section, have been retained. No solution for bicycle traffic has been foreseen. The problem of stationary traffic within the riverbank has also not been resolved.

In terms of water traffic, the dimensions of the marina are approximate. Regarding the port for passenger traffic, only the location has been defined.

The remaining, most detailed planning level for the analyzed riverbank area, is the Detailed Regulation Plan for the Bačka Palanka Riverbank [4] (figure 2.). It expands on the sports content. In relation to the General Regulation Plan, this plan defines the regatta path and the ancillary sports facilities (picture 2). It also foresees new catering facilities.



Figure 2. Detailed Regulation Plan for the Bačka Palanka Riverbank

The conditions for environmental protection are in both the General as well as the Detailed Regulation Plans and have been prescribed by the Provincial Institute for Nature Protection. Primarily, the boundaries of protected natural goods of the III category have been defined, Nature Park Tikvara, and protection requirements.

“Within the area of Nature Park Tikvara, what is being limited is:

- change of land use for the needs of revitalizing natural habitats and improving the state of the area;
- arrangement of bathing areas, to the area determined by planning documents;
- construction of hotel facilities, for those that fulfill one of the valid quality certificates from the field of environmental protection, as well as other facilities that are in the function of preserving, protecting and promoting natural goods.” [5]

The localities with a stricter degree of protection, II, are defined These are micro-localities with rare vegetation, trees that should be preserved as monuments of nature of importance. The same plan provides the conditions under which it will be possible to build the planned sports and catering facilities, so as not to endanger the existing natural value.

Surveys of the needs and opinions of the inhabitants, regarding the arrangement of the riverbank, were not performed during the preparation of the aforementioned plans.

5. CONCLUSION

The advantage of a landscaped Bačka Palanka riverbank is reflected in the fact that all lots are owned by the city, so that the arrangement of traffic, green and free spaces, as well as the construction of facilities and infrastructure, will not be a problem.

The greatest value of the analyzed plans is the introduction of new content: ports, marinas, catering facilities and regatta paths. These facilities should enable the activation of tourism, cultural events and service activities for domestic and foreign tourists. It should also enable better use of natural potentials and sports and recreational facilities by the residents of Bačka Palanka. The positive side of riverbank activation is also reflected in providing improved conditions conducive to the development of kayaking, through a new sports infrastructure. Another positive aspect is its contribution to environmental protection through the acceptance of all conditions prescribed by the provincial institute. None of these conditions are in conflict with planning solutions for the riverbank infrastructure.

The traffic issue has been resolved in an unsatisfactory way. This concerns inadequate access, for all traffic, from the city center to the riverbank and inadequate parking within the riverbank complex. Since adequate traffic access is the basis for the functioning, and a condition for tourism development, this issue must be subsequently addressed. Since the purpose of the riverbank has been primarily conceived as sports-recreational and tourist, for a fully functional connection between the riverbank and the settlement, it would be useful to introduce a trim track in addition to roads, bicycle paths and sidewalks of appropriate width. It could extend from the settlement to the sports complex and the riverbank terrain making a circular form around these contents, or around the lake. The bicycle path could also receive a circular form which would, in addition to accessibility, also increase the quality of recreational and sports activities. The trim track, together with the bicycle path, could extend further along the riverbank along the Danube River, within the municipality. The boardwalk along the Danube needs to be adequately landscaped.

Considering that the riverbank is becoming a kind of "gate" for Bačka Palanka, in terms of access from the Danube waterway, in addition to preserving its natural authenticity, we should also work on the representativeness and functionality of this stretch. Functionality implies the introduction of services and content which marina guests and tourists docking at the port consider necessary for a longer or shorter stay.

A survey of the needs and opinions of the inhabitants, regarding the regulation of the riverbank, should be carried out while finalizing the Detailed Regulation Plan for the riverbank. This is necessary in order for a specific space to come to life, to fully fulfill its function, to have all the elements and contents necessary for the majority of the inhabitants of Bačka Palanka, for the space to become an element of identity and identification of its inhabitants. It would be useful to obtain information on the opinions and experiences of users of other marinas and passenger ports along the Danube in the Republic of Serbia.

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