

An aerial photograph of a landscape, likely in the Sremski Karlovci region, is shown. The image is dominated by a bright yellow overlay that covers most of the terrain. This yellow area is interspersed with darker, greyish-brown patches that represent forests or other natural features. A network of thin, white lines, possibly roads or rivers, crisscrosses the landscape. In the upper right corner, a body of water is visible, appearing as a light grey area. The overall composition is a top-down view of a geographical area.

THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF SREMSKI KARLOVCI

APPLICATION FOR
THE LANDSCAPE AWARD
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE 2018/2019



Bukovac

Sremski Kartovci
45°12'N 19°58'E



Additional material submitted for
The Landscape Award of the Council of Europe

SPATIAL PLAN FOR SPECIAL PURPOSE AREA
**THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF
SREMSKI KARLOVCI**



**Republic of Serbia
Autonomous Province of Vojvodina
Municipality of Sremski Karlovci**

The project ordered by:
Provincial Secretary for Urban Planning and Environmental Protection

Processing and prepared for the Award by:
Urban and Spatial Planning Institute of Vojvodina

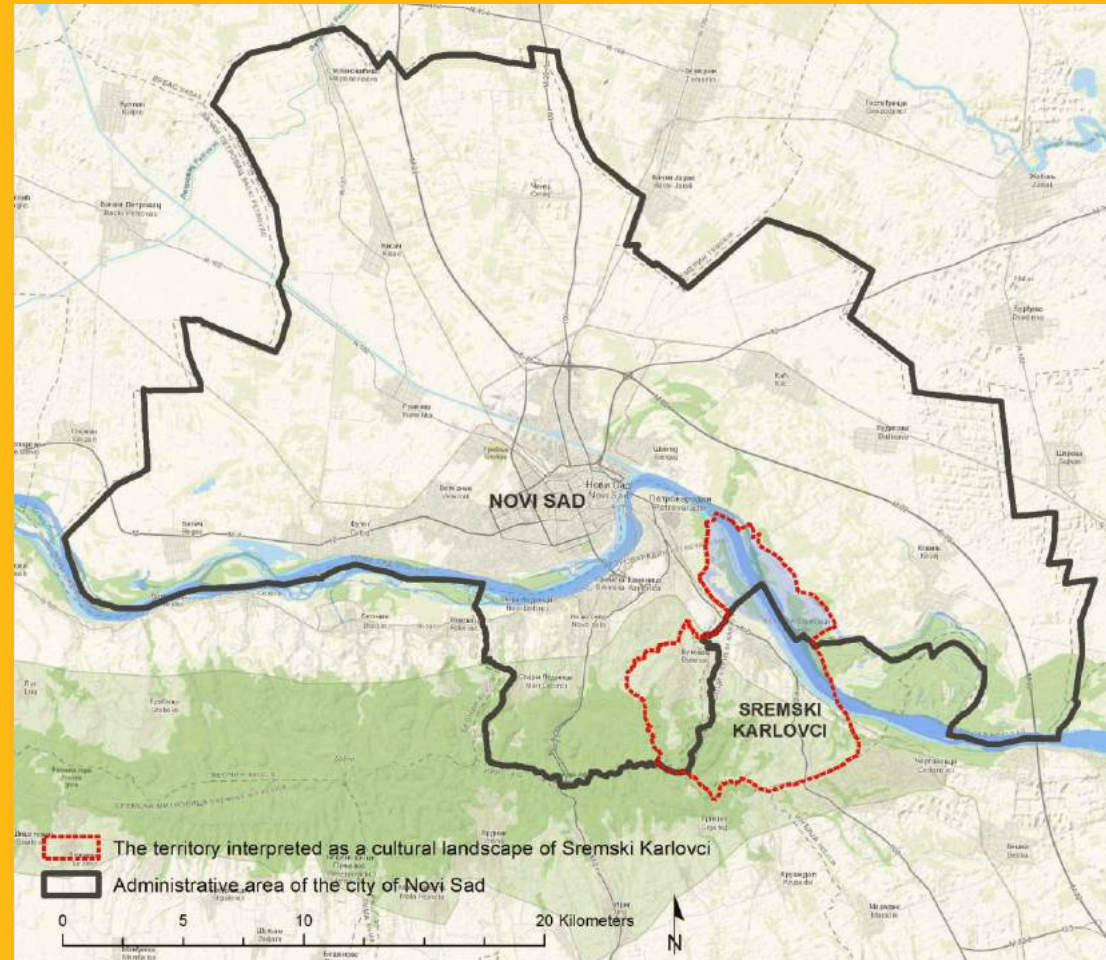
Strategic partners:
**Vojvodina Environmental Movement, Sremski Karlovci
The Society for Heritage Promotion and Development of Sremski Karlovci**

INCORPORATING
LANDSCAPE
THINKING
INTO
THE
SPATIAL
DEVELOPMENT
STRATEGY

Sremski Karlovci is an important historical town on the right bank of the Danube between Novi Sad and Belgrade. The town developed into an important cultural and economic hub after 1699 and the signing of The Treaty of Karlowitz. For two centuries it was the main engine of Serbian cultural, political and religious life. The town developed between the Danube river and the slopes of the Fruska Gora mountains (which today hold the status of a national park), constantly balancing between several natural restrictions such as frequent flooding and landslides.

Besides multi-layered cultural and natural values, the importance of the area rests on the unique insight into the historical processes of migration and settlement within the Hapsburg Empire and the aspirations for disparate groups towards political and religious autonomy.

In the previous century geopolitical changes led the town to decay, causing imbalances in the landscape quality and the overall quality of life. The lack of adequate development strategies and gaps in the national and local legislation further exacerbated this deterioration. Demographic change and the formation of urban sprawl of the nearby city of Novi Sad throughout last decades triggered transformations of the landscape character of Sremski Karlovci and its hinterland. Although the town and its community showed significant resilience sustaining itself through local initiatives, the fear of accelerated deterioration has been tackled by the regional government and most recently the town was strategically designated as part of the area that represents European Capital of Culture in 2021 (together with the city of Novi Sad and two more municipalities).



Acknowledging inherited values and seeking the way to mitigate negative development trends, the decision has been made to create a spatial development strategy that would enhance the image of the wider area prioritizing both city scale concerns and values of its natural surroundings. Local government in collaboration with the regional planning authorities proposed to designate the area as a cultural landscape which borders would be defined through the process of development of appropriate spatial planning document - "Spatial Plan for special purpose area". The purpose for its preparation was to provide directives and measures which would enable clear interpretation of the territory as a cultural landscape.

The objectives defined by the local and regional authorities proposed implementation of the principles established by the European Landscape Convention. The main objective was to identify, valorize and institutionalize the Cultural landscape of Sremski Karlovci through the active communication between experts, civic organizations and local people. In accordance with the definition of landscape quality objectives, the document is intended to provide a planning statements and directives for the affirmation of the territory as a unique entity of a recognizable landscape character.

The area considered by the planning document covered 64,16 km² containing the diverse landscapes of the forested slopes of the Fruska Gora massif and one of the widest alluvial plains of the middle Danube (Special Nature Reserve Koviljsko-petrovaradinski rit). The contact zone between these two dominant spatial entities has determined the specific form of the landscape characterized by the compact morphology of the historical settlements of Sremski Karlovci and Bukovac, the particularities of their agricultural surroundings and vine production. The settlement structure is characterized by a rural matrix, traditionally dependent on the agrarian hinterland and adaptation to the morphology of the erosive relief of the highly fertile slopes of the Fruska Gora mountain.

The project activities were aiming to realise the full potential of landscape characterisation and to identify the landscape quality objectives with the purpose of creating new spatial development strategy for Sremski Karlovci.

The project defined the landscape quality objectives both for the whole area of defined Cultural Landscape and each of the landscape units. General quality objectives that stand out for the whole area emphasize the historical importance of the area, heterogeneity of landscape types and the potential of the area to become well established cultural and eco-tourism destination.

This Project represents the first Spatial planning document in Serbia that provides conceptual framework for spatial planning based on landscape conceptualisation and the first planning document that performs as an application model of the European Landscape Convention.

The adaptation of the spatial planning document The Assembly of Autonomous province of Vojvodina appeared as the final product of comprehensive and collaborative work on those activities.

The central task of the project activities was to develop Spatial Plan for the Special Purpose Area “The Cultural Landscape of Sremski Karlovci” by emphasizing historical importance of the area, its potential to become well established cultural tourism destination and its diversity of landscape types.

With the innovative conceptual framework and methodological approach based on landscape characterisation, it was intended to formulate shared landscape quality objectives through comprehensive communication and create strategic spatial development framework for the establishment of proper landscape management plan.

Accordingly, the central aims were related to two main sections of the Project:

1. Communicative activity aims:

- Raising the landscape awareness both within the community and the activities related to spatial and urban planning.
- The promotion of the importance of landscape characterisation as essential part of sustainable development.
- The establishment of the multi-direction transfer of knowledge between professionals, local people and government bodies.
- Promote landscape planning as the activity of primer public interest and landscape character as major part of cultural identity of the community.
- Formulation of the shared vision for protection and improvement of the landscape character of Sremski Karlovci.

2. Aims related to the framework of strategic spatial development:

- Identification, valorisation and institutionalisation of the Cultural landscape of Sremski Karlovci.
- Identification of certain characteristics of the landscape as strategically important for protection, conservation or improvement.
- Defining strategies to prevent degradation of sensitive landscapes, and ensure the necessary level of protection for the remaining ones.
- Generate central spatial development ideas and align them with the strategies for landscape protection and improvement.

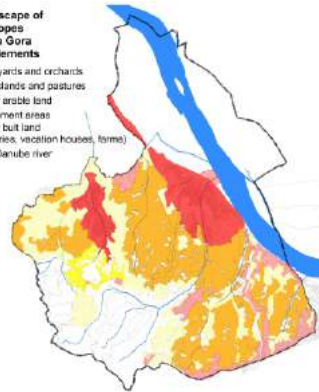


According to the performed landscape character assessment, the Project defined 9 (nine) landscape units as a strategic framework for action. Each unit is the outcome of a group of landscape units which landscape features are repeated in the territory and together form one of 3 identified landscape types at the regional scale. At the local scale, the chosen landscape units are meant to provide a synthetic, but sufficiently detailed view of the region's landscape character and they provide a good reflection of its cultural profile.

Landscape unit and landscape type identification and mapping were the basis for spatial development guidelines. Next to the technical specification for each landscape unit, the project provided systematic development guidelines and protection measures related to the multiple components that form the main landscape character value such as: land use (existing structures, possible alterations, compatible use), building parameters, vegetation, heritage features, morphological aspects of agricultural parcels (size, accessibility), urban parameters (density, heights, regulations, accessibility to hinterland), roads and rural byways, dynamics of change and other relevant spatial arrangement data.

The landscape of arable slopes of Fruska Gora with settlements

- Wineyards and orchards
- Grasslands and pastures
- Other arable land
- Settlement areas
- Other built land (wineries, vacation houses, farms)
- The Danube river



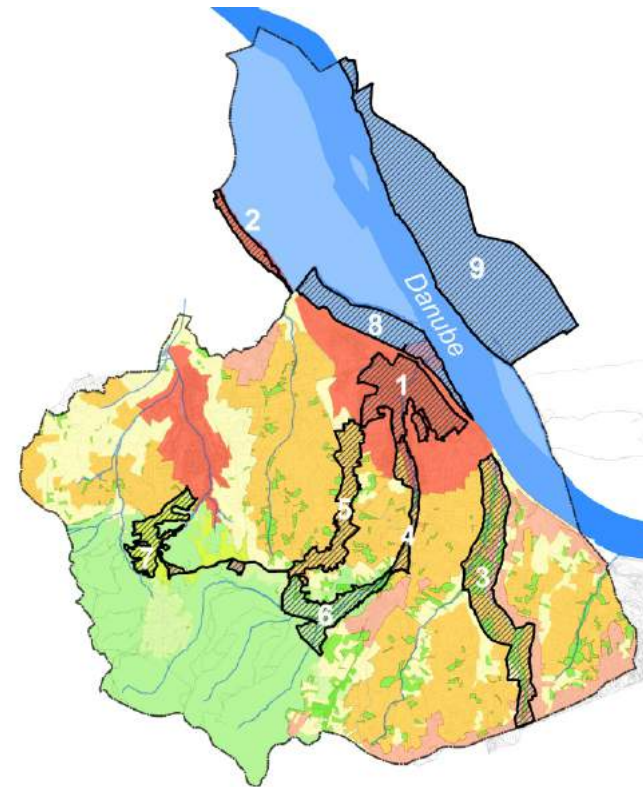
The forested slopes of the National park of Fruska Gora

- The land covered by forest
- The National park of Fruska gora
- The Danube river



The Danube river with its inundation area

- Inundation area
- The Danube river



Representative landscape units

- Representative landscape units
- Wineyards and orchards
- Grasslands and pastures
- Other arable land
- Settlement areas
- Other built land (wineries, vacation houses, farms)
- The land covered by forest
- The Danube river
- Inundation are

Along with insight into the processes of landscape character development, the spatial planning document provided a spatial definition of "cultural landscape" and created a basis for its recognition in the wider area. The territory is seen as an interaction of spatial elements that appear in a broader spatial context, the meaning of which is defined through the integration of spatial entities formed by the dominant landscape character of the Fruska Gora mountain, the river Danube and the specific characteristics of the "Vojvodina-Pannonian-Danube macro-region".

Three identified landscape types – distinctive schemes of landscape elements (Figure) are:

1. The Danube river with its inundation area;
2. The landscape of the arable slopes of the Fruska Gora with settlements;
3. The forested slopes of the Fruska Gora National park;

They are the medium for the determination of spatial planning statements – land use change, development guidelines and measures for protection, construction regulation and development priorities.

The final stage of the project and the major outcome was the adaptation of the Planning document by the regional government (The Assembly of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina). In that way, the planning document became local landscape policy that contains measures for interventions in the designated area.

In line with the presented central aims of the Project, the concept for the spatial development included:

- the preservation of functionality, diversity and the visual experience of the landscape form,
- better articulation of land use to safeguard the area against uncontrolled constructions,
- tourism development strategy and tourism infrastructure improvements,
- arrangement of historical settlement cores,
- continuous multi-functional connections (green infrastructure) between the forests of the Fruska Gora, the settlement and the Danube,
- use of ecosystem services,
- development of recreational areas and educational pavilions in nature protected areas and historical cores.

The adaptation of the Plan defined the border of the Cultural landscape of Sremski Karlovci which is seen as a multifunctional spatial entity, and its formation has been considered as a public interest in the field of culture, ecology and the environment, as well as at the social level. Accordingly, the landscape character as a major part of the cultural identity is seen as a public domain, and its improvement is in the interest of all participants in the planning process. Landscape character assessment, and its valorisation, is seen as an aspect of territorial capital, which significantly affected local development in a sustainable manner.

The project defined the landscape quality objectives both for the whole area of defined Cultural Landscape and each of the landscape units. General quality objectives that stand out for the whole area emphasize the historical importance of the area, heterogeneity of landscape types and the potential of the area to become well established cultural and eco-tourism destination.

Important outcome of the project is also GIS database which has been used as a tool for monitoring the impact on the landscape.

As a consequence of the Project outcomes, the town of Sremski Karlovci was designated as part of the area that represents European Capital of Culture in 2021 (together with the city of Novi Sad and two more municipalities).



SUSTAINABILITY

The new development strategy is focused on directing selective development interventions using landscape particularities and ecosystem services as a driving tool.

The project used the cultural dimension of the landscape as the generator for sustainable economies, improved identity and new interpretation of the territory. Landscape character has been recognized together with society, economy and environment as mutually reinforcing concern rather than conflicting domain.

Tourism development strategy was the one of the main rationales of the Project and an important indicator of the sustainability. It was based on providing the concept for the interpretation of landscape character and its values. The main idea behind tourism development strategy in the Cultural Landscape of Sremski Karlovci is to offer good interpretation of the diversity of landscape types on the relatively small area and attach to them multiple tourist activities.

REPLICABILITY

This Project seen as a process of policy development is presented here in relation to the Serbian spatial planning systems` ability to recognize landscape character assessment and European Landscape Convention as an important framework and a valid approach in guiding spatial development.

The implementation of spatial development policy in Sremski Karlovci based on the landscape conceptualization approach, confirmed that spatial change can be directed through considerations of landscape dynamics where landscape character assessment represents the major medium for collaboration, participation and finally intervention on the local level.

Therefore, strategic application of landscape character assessment in the spatial planning documents in Serbia can be recommended for the proper application of the European Landscape Convention.

The planning process established in the context of Sremski Karlovci can be replicated in a different context within Serbia and in other countries with similar spatial planning systems.



PARTICIPATION

Communication activities about the landscape awareness reassign was one of the main aims of the Project. Procedures for the participation were generally made through the legal process of spatial planning document elaboration. As it was shown not to be sufficient for the purpose of the project, alternative participation procedure was made. It went through the local civic organisations and NGOs with the aim to reach both general public and specific interest groups.

The town and its community showed significant resilience in sustaining itself in the past through developed network of local civic initiatives and NGOs. Through the elaboration of the Project that was shown as inherited value and significant capacity of the local community to successfully tackle different sorts of problems.

That strength of the community has been mobilized for the purpose of the project in its full.

AWARENESS-RAISING

This Project represent contemporary landscape conceptualization that has been read and interpreted in a holistic manner as a multifunctional and multidimensional entity the character of which should be protected and enhanced according to local and regional values and interests.

Landscape character assessment, as a methodological approach used here as starting point for spatial planning elaboration is new conceptual framework in Serbian spatial planning practice.

Therefore, the awareness raising of the importance of landscape through the elaboration of the Project was achieved through two directions:

1. Awareness rising of general public about the importance of the protection of landscape character values and their right to protect it and be asked about it, which was done during public participation sessions.
2. Raising the awareness of civil organisations, public authorities (decision makers) and professionals involved in the elaboration of the planning document (architects, urbanists, infrastructure engineers and other professionals) about both importance of landscape considerations and tools for its improvement.













**URBAN
AND
SPATIAL
PLANNING
INSTITUTE
OF
VOJVODINA**

*Železnička 6/III,
21 000 Novi Sad,
Republic of Serbia*

+381 21 529 444

www.zavurbvo.co.rs

