

The image is a composite of three vertical panels. The left panel shows a street-level view of a city intersection with a small inset map. The middle panel is a faded aerial view of a city grid. The right panel is a detailed aerial view of a city grid with a highlighted pedestrian route in orange. The route starts at a central intersection and branches out into a network of streets, primarily following a diagonal path through the city blocks.

Towards a Walkable Heritage Landscape

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Developing tourist-oriented pedestrian connectivity that contributes to the well-being of the local community within the heritage district of Irbid City Centre in Jordan.

Executive Summary

Introduction

The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities of Jordan proposes regenerating Irbid City Centre and revitalizing selected heritage buildings within the urban core of the city. This study aims to produce a portion of the larger proposed project by incorporating a tourist-oriented pedestrian network within the heritage district of Irbid City Centre, that contributes to the well-being of the local community.

Project Objectives

Three objectives are identified to successfully transform Irbid City Centre into a touristic heritage landscape. The first objective prescribes introducing a tourist-oriented pedestrian network within the site. The second objective requires conserving heritage assets and reusing selected heritage buildings as tourist attractions and community development venues. The third objective addresses socio-economic concerns associated with physical transformations of the site.

Method

Comprehensive principles to guide the development proposal are developed upon identifying and reviewing approaches necessary for successful solutions. The approaches include understanding urban heritage tourism attributes, identifying successful pedestrian tourism criteria, recognizing socio-economic concerns associated with heritage tourism development, and researching appropriate urban heritage management frameworks. The principles are used to realize potential locations and activities that are identified through a site analysis of the natural and built environments of the site, a socio-economic analysis, and case studies.

Analysis

The analysis connects data presented to frame specific solutions within the site. The analysis tackles issues related to pedestrian

connectivity and open spaces, dealing with heritage assets, and understanding cultural and socio-economic concerns.

The Development Proposal

The development proposal presents a plan that satisfies the project objectives and offers a set of recommendations that addresses policy reviews, community development initiatives, and topics that require further research.

The development proposal represents a realistic future vision for Irbid City Centre as a successful heritage tourism destination. A tourist visiting Irbid would experience two different components of the site. The museums experience adds knowledge and represents the living past of the site. Roaming through pedestrian friendly traditional commercial districts, and staying at inns in restored heritage buildings, can engage the visitor in the present and display interesting variations of local traditional life styles.

A distinct heritage character would be identified through well-maintained and protected heritage buildings. The heritage buildings would become venues for community development and economic prosperity for locals, and can accommodate tourism needs. New infill developments would respect the heritage character and the original trail systems that facilitate access to inner block heritage and residential areas. New public open spaces would enhance the site's appeal and serve the local community's psychological needs and social functions.

The future vision also encompasses advantages for the local community, such as new job opportunities to wider sectors of the community, decreased gentrification and displacement of residents and businesses, and better standard of living.

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Figure 1: Aerial photo of Irbid City Centre: 2000 (Project Site). Courtesy of National Geographic Centre, Jordan.

Chapter One: Irbid: Exploring the Potential

Understanding the Project Context

The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities of Jordan, in conjunction with the Municipality of Greater Irbid, propose a project aiming at regenerating Irbid City Centre and revitalizing selected heritage buildings within the urban core of the city. The Ministry proposed project involves examining a site located in the central urban core of Irbid that is heavily urbanized. It requires developing a comprehensive regeneration plan for the city center, while promoting, protecting, and maintaining heritage properties through proposed policies, designs, and community involvement, all within a sustainability framework. This report, however, aims to produce a portion of the larger proposed project. Its aim is to incorporate a tourist-oriented pedestrian network within the urban structure of Irbid City Centre. This network would enhance connectivity and accessibility to potentially significant tourist attractions. The study provides and evaluates suggested options for opportunities to the local community in developing the heritage landscape by recommending new uses, smaller projects, policies, and further research.

The core objectives of the Ministry proposed project is to emphasize:

“the urgent need to solve the current problems related to the urban system, to achieve the vision of sustainability, which includes solving traffic problems for improving system accessibility, and reevaluation of the policies and regulations to achieving a balanced interaction between heritage and modern landscapes within the city”

(Al-kheder et al., 2009, p. 81).

The project must integrate those objectives with a ‘community development’ based approach aiming to strengthen social heritage and values to complement physical and infrastructural upgrade, and achieve an overall sustainable relationship between the different components that are involved.

In order to reinforce the need to introduce a tourist-oriented pedestrian network with associated components, the report will briefly underline the attributes that led the government of Jordan to consider investing in Irbid City Centre through a heritage tourism approach that aims at physical and socio-economic reform.

Framing Heritage Tourism

“The International Cultural Tourism Charter (ICOMOS, 1998), which focuses on managing tourism at places of heritage significance, considers heritage to be a broad concept including the natural as well as the cultural environment. It encompasses landscapes, historic places, sites and built environments, as well as bio-diversity, collections, past and continuing cultural experience” (Daher, 2000, p. 22). Heritage tourism is defined as *“travel concerned with experiencing the visual and performing arts, heritage buildings, areas, landscapes, and special lifestyles, values, traditions, and events”* (Jamieson, 1998, p. 65).

The trend of promoting heritage tourism has increasingly become popular in the Middle East. This region of the world is well known to have a rich history since ancient times, leaving behind a wealth of historic antiquities. Heritage tourism aims at providing new, more recent types of locations and attractions for tourists, beside ancient relics, to spend more time in the country and contribute more hard currency. Further explorations in the significance of tourism to Jordan, and to Irbid in particular, are highlighted in the following sections.

Heritage Tourism in Jordan

“Jordan has gone through several phases of evolution encompassing prehistoric, ancient, classical, early Islamic, medieval, Mamluk, Ottoman, and contemporary periods. This wide spectrum of historical periods has generated a wide range of cultural heritage of diverse types, time frames and natures” (Daher, 2000, p. 17).

The tourism industry contributes 6.9% of the gross domestic product (GDP) in Jordan, ranking it second after Egypt amongst countries of the Middle East and North Africa. Jordan is ranked first for the percentage of job shares of the country's workforce in the tourism industry at 7% (MOTA, 2004). Those numbers demonstrate that Jordan's economy and social development depend highly on the tourism industry, hence necessitating strategic investment and promotion to the field.

Jordan's tourism industry depends highly on important historic sites, such as Petra and Jerash, and natural features, such as The Dead Sea and Wadi Rum. The recent trend to promote heritage tourism to improve the tourism experience and add to the variety of local destinations is part of the government's strategic plan to expand in the field and create new job opportunities for more communities in different places. Heritage townscape regeneration projects initially took place in cities like Madaba and Salt and were funded by international agencies such as USAID and the World Bank. Irbid's project is the first to be fully initiated and funded by the Jordanian government¹.

Several obstacles face heritage conservation practices in Jordan, mainly fuelled by the lack *"of a defined mechanism for conservation and the lack of an infrastructure that supports conservation practice"* (Daher, 1996, p. 66).

Daher (2000) comprehensively examines heritage conservation practices for the



Figure 2: Aerial Photo of Irbid: 1953 (Al-kheder et al., 2009).

tourism industry in Jordan. His observations provide perspective on the importance of the tourism industry, and highlight arguably unsuccessful approaches in previous attempts at heritage conservation across the country. His observations suggest that heritage conservation projects run by wealthy investors become geared towards profit accumulation, not towards community development as initially claimed. He claims that the exploitation of the cultural heritage for its opportunistic developmental value is creating a gap between the host community and its heritage. This happens when the investors tend to promote the past image of the community without giving value to its advancements and present living style. Daher (2000) also stresses the heritage projects dependence on foreign aid, *"which is geared not by the significance of such sites to the wider sector of the society, but by the potential of economic gain benefiting a privileged few"* (p. 21).

The available documented outcomes of examples on heritage tourism in Jordan, along with the scholarly observations of specialized professionals, can provide a basis for understanding the challenges. This understanding can lead to developing workable

¹ The information provided in the above paragraph are part of the data collected from an interview with a representative of Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. The interview is discussed in Chapter 2.



Figure 3: Panoramic view of Tal Irbid from the Northeast side facing west. July 2009

implementation options to avoid previously committed mishaps and tackle the serious concerns associated with developing one element in the tourism industry: in this case, introducing a tourist-oriented pedestrian network in Irbid City Centre that supports the socio-economic development of the local community.

Heritage Tourism and the Case of Irbid

Irbid is strategically located in the north of Jordan. It is surrounded by two major historic tourism destinations: the Roman ruins of Jerash and Umm Qais. The most convenient access road to Umm Qais passes through Irbid. According to the governmental strategy aiming to develop heritage sites to complement the tourists' experience (MOTA, 2004), the central location of Irbid, coupled with its undiscovered heritage value, elevate its chance to become a heritage tourism destination.

The site of Irbid City Centre is filled with clusters of heritage properties. The centre has a unique culture deeply associated with the history of the city. Many of the heritage structures were constructed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. A few date back to the era of Ottoman rule that started around 500 years ago. Most of those heritage houses “are of ultimate importance to Jordan for their strong association with the era of national building in the early 1920s” (Al Assad, 1997, p. 15).

a. Heritage Assets and Value

Key significant heritage features define the project site. The most dominant land

feature exhibiting physical, historic, and cultural significance is Tal Irbid (the Hill of Irbid) (see Figure 3). The Tal dominates the skyline of the city in general. The site of the town's historic core where inhabitants have lived throughout the ages, it was regarded as the command center for the surrounding rural area. It has transformed in the past few decades as the urbanized envelope of the city expanded, and now houses institutional buildings such as City Hall, police headquarters, educational facilities, religious buildings, Museum of Antiquities (formerly an Ottoman prison and command center), heritage buildings, large parking lots, and open spaces that are currently unused. The two available aerial photographs taken at different times during the last century (Figure 1, p. 6, and Figure 2, p. 8) can demonstrate those changes, while the current uses are identified through physical site surveys². The Tal has enormous potential to contribute to the larger objective of the project. This potential can be enforced through planning and adequately connecting the Tal for pedestrians with the other surrounding parts of the urban core. The Tal possesses physical advantages that would allow introducing natural landscaping on parts of it as well as good views in most directions. It has rich heritage and historic characteristics, boosting its high potential to couple heritage and archaeological protection and conservation with an open space network that can serve tourists and the local community.

² Site survey findings are demonstrated in Chapter 3.



Figure 4: slum areas in the site: An abandoned heritage building visible in the back. July 2009

The southern parts of the project site consist of a heavily urbanized heritage landscape. The mix of residential and commercial uses is currently challenging to sustain. Site surveys convey that many of the heritage residential buildings are derelict and abandoned (see Figure 4). Inner city slum pockets occur throughout the site. Modern urban features and structures have obstructed physical and visual connectivity, and pedestrian accessibility that once existed³. This enhances abandonment and neglect. Solutions for these problems are considered necessary in the process of developing options for a pedestrian network and would contribute to the greater purpose of the larger project context initiated by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities.

The Ministry proposed project aims to provide special attention to significant locations within the project site. Those locations have considerable influence on identifying route options for the pedestrian network as possible origins, destinations, and attractions within the overall network. Three of these locations are buildings of heritage significance that were expropriated by the Municipality for the purposes of renovation and reuse. Two of those buildings were formerly residences. The Nabulsi House (Figure 7, p. 11) was selected for its aesthetics, building typology, and locational significance, while Al-Sharairi

House (Figure 6, p. 11) was home to a famous Irbidi politician whose name is often tied to a period of the history of the city. The third, Juma'a Building (Figure 5) is a mixed-use structure. Shops are located on the street level while the upper two levels are residential and were used as an inn for a period of time. These buildings are sought to be pilot projects to emphasize the importance of creating alternate uses of heritage properties and to encourage private heritage property owners to act to protect heritage.



Figure 5: Juma'a Building. June 2009

Two other sites are considered for open space development options. Fo'ara Square (Figure 8, p. 11) is located immediately in front of Nabulsi House and used as a bus station. The bus station is planned to be removed to a different nearby location⁴. The second location hosts the Farmers' Market (Figure 9 p. 11). Observations imply that it is poorly maintained and tends to be an obstacle for proper movement within the surrounding district. It used to serve as a central gathering square that had access to neighbourhoods identified by the names of prominent Irbidi families.

³ The interview with the local historian (discussed in Chapter 3) suggested the changes in the urban fabric structure that are claimed.

⁴ The information was obtained from the interview with the municipal planner. The interview is discussed in Chapter 3.



Figure 6: Al Sharairi House. June 2009



Figure 7: Nabulsi House. June 2009



Figure 9: The Farmers Market Complex structure is to the right of this image as viewed from the top of building to the north east corner of the complex. July 2009.



Figure 8: Fo'ara Square is currently used for car parking and as a bus station. Nabulsi House fronts on it. July 2009.

Other locations and structures within the project site can complement the plan sought. Certain pathways and intersections have the potential to elevate the heritage and aesthetic experience of tourists.

b. Irbid's Community and Social Dimensions

Irbid has a rich cultural history. The city played a major role in the creation and birth of the modern Jordanian nation.

Seven notable Jordanian family names are associated with Irbid's history (Mu'ala, 2009). Many of those names are still recognized within the built environment of the town centre. Notable politicians, military men, poets, and scholars lived in some of the heritage buildings, some now abandoned and neglected. Some of those notable names are used for street names and other urban features (Local Historian). Strengthening the presence of such names and personalities through acknowledging their houses and contributions within the site can help reinforce the cultural identity of the project site.

The current formation of the built environment of the site is considerably different from what it used to be in the past. A site visit indicated that much of the built environment is deteriorating. This decline in the quality of the urban areas results in unhealthy spaces that negatively affect the local community's well-being and chances for maintaining a decent living. Poverty is clearly identifiable in the inner city slum pockets and requires urgent attention.

Introducing a new plan that incorporates a tourist-oriented pedestrian network can benefit the local community. Promoting Irbid as a tourism destination and bringing tourists to the site can enhance the economic status of the business there. This can help create better job opportunities and improve the quality of the built environment to elevate the site appeal; however, evidence shows that gentrification

has resulted from similar projects throughout Jordan and the region (Daher, 2000). Appropriate strategies can help limit the gentrification phenomenon resulting from proposals in this project. "*[H]eritage tourism should be considered as one of the tools for community development in conjunction with other development alternatives within heritage tourism endeavours*" (Daher, 2000, p. 23).

Identifying the Objectives

While the major objective is producing a development plan that defines a framework for tourists' walkability in Irbid City Centre, a set of sub objectives can ensure the sustainability and durability of the proposed pedestrian network. The following discusses those objectives:

- Identify issues related to pedestrian connectivity in Irbid City Centre to understand how the existing urban fabric provides for pedestrian accessibility within the overall network of connections, paths and open spaces.
- Determine appropriate strategies and options for addressing pedestrian connectivity issues within the context of heritage conservation. This mainly incorporates the locations prescribed by the larger project context proposed by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. It includes the three houses (Nabulsi, Sharairi, and Juma'a) and the two public spaces as well as Tal Irbid as possible pilot projects in the heritage tourism industry.
- Provide the client with guidance on suitable strategies, projects, and developed policies for addressing pedestrian connectivity in Irbid City Centre within the context of tourism oriented heritage conservation and community development. The guidance aims to enhance economic prosperity and minimize possible gentrification of residences or businesses on the local community level.



Figure 10: Section of Al-Jame' Street connecting between The Grand Mosque and Al-Hisbeh (Farmers' Market). July 2009

Chapter Two: Framing Approaches for Developing Principles

Dealing with a project entangling pedestrian tourism activity, heritage conservation, and community development issues requires a process of framing the appropriate approaches and developing an understanding of common concerns. Conducting this process prior to proceeding to the data analysis and program development phases can help identify principles that can lead to a good tourism pedestrian system in a heritage area that contributes to the wellbeing of the local community.

Method

The process required literature review of resources on related theories and practices. An interview was conducted with a heritage planning scholar and practitioner¹ who is experienced in projects similar to the context of this study. The interview was designed to draw facts by inquiring about applications of theories and approaches applied for different projects in Jordan and the region. Another interview was conducted with a representative of the client (The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities of Jordan)² to inquire about the Ministry's expectations and purpose for undertaking this project, as well as explaining facts and trends of tourism in Jordan.³

Urban Heritage Tourism

What makes tourists want to come spend time in Irbid? What components of the culture and urban fabric make Irbid a desirable tourist destination? Tackling such questions requires a comprehensive look into functional and aesthetic features likely to enrich the tourists' experience, and understanding the types of narratives of places that attract visitors.

One thing is evident; physical features and aesthetics are not enough. Reinforcing

heritage components of a site with its history and cultural features ensures sustainable tourism. Tourists are attracted to interact with the culture and experience parts of the associated history. Display of cultural features and historic artefacts, and mere beautification of the outer skin of heritage buildings are not sustainable (Daher, 2005; Naser, 2003; Heritage Planner).

Walkability is a major feature in Irbid City Centre. Understanding features and trends of developing pedestrian friendly landscapes for tourists is necessary. Amongst major issues associated with pedestrian tourism are accessibility, safety, orientation, distances, and activities in areas connecting major attractions. (McManus, 1998)

Identifying routes for a pedestrian network requires locating major attractions that are 'worth' visiting. A plan for network routing could follow different concepts; for example, it could go through the site trying to narrate a 'story' of the history along the route (Heritage Planner).

Understanding directions and requirements of urban heritage tourism prior to analyzing the physical status of the site can affect the ability to easily identify potential locations and routes in the urban landscape.

The Pedestrian Tourism Territory

McManus (1998) suggests, "*visitors [to heritage sites] learn and understand about the site as they walk in groups in a pedestrian flow*" (p. 44). Her study suggests that:

"paths at all historic landscape sites need to be designed, firstly, so that they do not damage the landscape and, secondly, so that people feel comfortable, relaxed and open to any interpretation presented to them in the form of panels, hand held leaflets or audio guides" (p. 40).

McManus (1998) also examines behavioural patterns of different situations and settings in pedestrian urban environments. She explores 'Territorial Behaviour' through personal perception of ownership over public spaces. She explores the relationship of

¹ The interviewee is referred to as (Heritage Planner) throughout the report.

² This interviewee is referred to as (The Ministry) throughout the report.

³ The interviews contributed data to other following chapters and sections in the report and to parts of Chapter 1.

territorial behaviour with cultural differences. Communities in pedestrian-oriented townscapes are likely to experience varied feelings of invasion of their self-claimed territory by strangers or tourists. Tourists are likely to *“tolerate having strangers within their culturally and personally defines space or personal territory of convention or the accepted perimeters of social regimentation prevail or allow for the behavior”* (pp. 43-44); however, permanent users and residents of the pedestrian heritage townscape are more vulnerable towards strangers invading their territory. Locals are likely to tolerate visitors in public zones, such as commercial streets and recreational spaces, but intrusions to intimate residential settings, especially in conservative societies, are undesired.

Particular factors must be considered when introducing a pedestrian network for tourists, such as considering personal distances that are related to cultural and personal factors, density on the social and special dimensions, territorial behaviour as in personal spaces in public places, crowding, and behavioural aspects of visitors to recreational and tourism spaces.

Certain features within a project site must be documented to further analyze the criteria and directions of development and paths allocations. Street and path widths, social and cultural behaviours of the local community, traffic considerations, buildings scale, and distances are among the features considered and documented to support a development plan.

Five recurring issues are considered pivotal for developing successful pedestrian networks within heritage townscapes. Identifying those issues requires comprehensive analysis of key references and related literature that investigate tourism movement models, visitors' perception, and physical and psychological comfort (Mitchel & Smith, 2001; McManus, 1998; Kemperman et al., 2009; Lew & McKercher, 2006). The following describes the issues:

Destinations

A heritage site providing two or more primary attractions within walking distances boosts potential for a successful pedestrian network; however, lack of support activities or aesthetic qualities along the routes connecting the major destinations hampers the tourists' experience.

Continuity

Although a pedestrian network can be segmented, a sense of continuity and connection is vital to ensure easy flow and direct accessibility from one segment to the other. Disconnect can often occur due to intersection with major traffic routes cutting through the pedestrian network, and obstructing structures that require following long indirect routes to manoeuvre around obstacles. Resolving discontinuity in the first example can be a clearly identified pedestrian cross walks followed by wider sidewalk that can handle crowding and large pedestrian volumes. Clearly identifying entrance points to the pedestrian network on either side of the street can strengthen the tourists' visual perception of where to go. Identifying indirect routes resulting from obstacles in the network should provide interesting activities along the alternative routes.

Way-Finding

Tourists with limited sense of where they are in the site and where to go next are likely to feel vulnerable and lost. Providing good guidance mechanisms and orientation tools is necessary. Special street signs distributed throughout pedestrian networks are the most common directional tool. Signs dedicated for directing tourists take into consideration language capabilities; therefore, many directional systems use symbols to indicate the location of places; such as a simple drawing of a shopping bag to indicate a shopping district, or a primitive drawing of a castle to indicate the old citadel. Tourist maps are also a common tool. They provide clear orientation to the visitor in relation to the larger surroundings. A map leaflet can also provide descriptions of attractions and locations in the site, giving the visitor the chance to decide and plan the desired walking route.

Distances and elevations

Tourists' of different ages and backgrounds have different physical capabilities to walk distances or ascend and descend stairs. Route allocation should consider distances between destinations and provide locations or facilities for resting if a person became tired. Benches and shaded areas are commonly used. Tourists' retail and services outlets can provide options for the passing pedestrians. Cafes, restaurants, and gift shops are examples of places to stop for a break before tourists continue to desired destinations.

Heritage sites located on sloped terrain require public staircases to navigate between elevations. Old steps that are part of original town heritage assets and protected under conservation acts cannot afford major alteration; however, certain mitigation techniques and minor alterations that can satisfy safety requirements should be permitted (such as installing railings or slip resistant surfaces). New proposed steps should provide landings along their lengths, while ensuring decent distance and elevation differences.

Safety and security

Routes and pathways should provide safe environments. Pathway floor covering should be well-maintained, properly designed for drainage, and free of obstacles. This does not prohibit other common activities; it requires a defined through route.

Extended view planes along routes can induce feelings of comfort and orientation; however, moderate curves can initiate anticipation for 'what's around the corner'. Curves along wide paths help reduce feelings of discomfort or insecurity, while narrow paths with inconsistent street walls elevate discomfort and fear. Well-lit routes and paths are also desired.

Allocating routes that satisfy the criteria for a successful pedestrian network does not have to reject portions that lack desired features. Path allocation criteria can relax to tolerate short less attractive distances that provide better connections and reinforce continuity.

Heritage Tourism and Socio-Economic Development

The emphasis on community development within the project objectives requires research into strategies to couple upgrading the urban structure with reforming socio-economic opportunities.

As the tourist-oriented pedestrian network requires conserving and reusing selected heritage assets and open spaces in the project site, the transformation can have varied effects on the local community. Job opportunities and economic prosperity are possible positive effects while gentrification and cultural clashes would be negative.

Daher (2000) argues that heritage conservation and urban spaces upgrade the socio-economic prosperity of local economies. He demonstrates the argument through two opposing practices. The first suggests that revitalizing heritage structures of commercial uses and upgrading the infrastructure and accessibility is likely to attract tourist activity, leading business owners to gradually transform uses and the types of services and merchandise to serve the emerging clientele. This would provide better income and long-term economic stability. The second approach encourages local business owners to shift towards touristic services and merchandise and use the added income to conserve and upgrade the heritage structures they use and own. This can ensure constant economic growth and strengthen the sense of ownership. Daher (2000) demonstrates that neither theory proved successful, especially in examples from Jordan. He suggests a hybrid method that follows a 'leading by example' approach for successful outcomes. The hybrid approach can demonstrate 'good' examples of heritage conservation for economic prosperity through pilot projects.

The emerging new clientele through tourism means new job opportunities provision. Job opportunities in sustainable tourism businesses contribute to raising the standard of living for many households of the community. As the community realizes that tourism contributes to their well-being and

income, they are likely to become more accepting and welcoming to tourists (Doratli et al., 2004).

Community development can be further reinforced through upgrading urban spaces and creating community and open spaces. Tourist-oriented urban heritage regeneration projects often involve introducing public open spaces such as urban parks, playgrounds and plazas. “[U]rban nature [or urban parks] fulfils many social functions and psychological needs of citizens, which make urban nature a valuable ... resource, and a key ingredient for city sustainability” (Chiesura, 2004, p. 137).

Avoiding gentrification is the greatest challenge in similar projects (Daher, 1999). Gentrification has been occurring in Irbid City Centre due to unorganized commercial activity and relaxation of building regulations for commercial uses, resulting in fragmentation of residential uses in inner-block areas. Gentrification of businesses has occurred due to intruding mobile commercial activity on the streets⁴. Policies and regulations accompanying a plan involving a portion on cultural and heritage conservation are likely to address the issues leading to gentrification in the past; however, other anticipated issues can result in new forms of gentrification in the site.

The ultimate form of gentrification in cultural heritage projects in Jordan is the introduction of large capital investment in the tourism industry. This form of investment is oriented towards “*commodifying and museumizing [sic.] the heritage at the expense of vital relationships between cultural heritage and its associated community. Revenues for such development projects never find their way back to ... the community*” (Daher, 2000, p. 21).

Understanding the community’s culture, traditions, and values can be vital to determine the level of interaction and intervention required with tourists. Irbid’s conservative

culture requires special consideration regarding the level of interaction between foreign tourists and locals. A tourist pedestrian network penetrating deep into conservative residential settings would be considered invasive to privacy and unacceptable (Heritage Planner).

Considering the local community a major stakeholder in the decision making process on the urban level, and providing sufficient education and information on the revitalization process and the ways to contribute positively is vital for successful community development (Daher, 1999).

Urban Heritage Management

‘Urban Heritage Management’ is concerned with leadership and decision-making on the urban scale. “*[It] is a necessary tool to create a balance between the preservation of the character of existing heritage and the change brought by the urbanization process in the context of the overall city tourism planning*” (Al-kheder et al., 2009, p. 82; citing Naser, 2003).

Literature discussing possible approaches to addressing the problems present in the project site suggests an ‘Urban Heritage Management’ approach as a suitable mechanism for implementing and managing the components of the project aside from physical reform. Arthur and Mensah (2006) (cited in (Al-kheder et al., 2009)) conducted research on the ‘Cultural Heritage and Management Program’ that was implemented in Elmina in Ghana. They suggest two possible directions of urban heritage management. The first suggests integrating:

“tourism, socio-economic and ecological factors for sustainable development where urban management must incorporate human practices and actions of the local community into its professional approach to urban development [expert-directed approach, ‘top down’]. It emphasizes the need for actions to activate stakeholders’ participation, urban management and good governance for sustainable heritage development. The second direction develops a community culture-led agenda to achieve sustainability in the

⁴ Description and analysis of this topic are explored in ‘Analyzing the Built and Urban Environment’ section in Chapter 3.

management and planning of heritage places within the urban context [community directed approach, 'bottom up']".

(Al-kheder et al., 2009, p. 82)

'Urban Heritage Management' as a tool does not apply to achieving the direct objectives of the project in this study; however, its methods are crucial to achieve and maintain urban management and to develop policy tools for the heritage landscape protection and the socio-economic viability of Irbid City Centre. Understanding how 'Urban Heritage Management' operates and identifying the methods followed for its application help define a framework for workable components of the development plan. The recommendations of the development plan⁵ suggest developing strategies for 'Urban Heritage Management' of the site during and after the implementation of the plan. The strategies would require policy revisions and variable levels of community/stakeholders involvement. Understanding applicable management methods can help evaluate and provide solutions that facilitate application of those methods (Al-kheder et al., 2009).

Nijkamp et al. (1998) evaluate six methods used in the management discipline that can apply for urban culture and heritage management⁶. Familiarization with those method was helpful in making decisions for possible alternatives in the development plan.

An interview conducted with the heritage planner⁷ touched on the use of the 'Urban Heritage Management' approach for a variety of locations around the world. The interview suggests that the approach tends to be dynamic and adaptive, and can afford tailoring for each individually unique situation. Methods of the approach are evaluated as management tools for the project components and stakeholders during and upon implemen-

tation of physical and infrastructural transformations prescribed in the development plan.

Client Requirements and Expectations

The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities aims to achieve comprehensive urban regeneration for the site of Irbid City Centre within the context of promoting heritage and cultural tourism (MOTA, 2007). The development program and recommendations presented through this study represents a small proportion of the scope provided by the Ministry proposed project. The Ministry indicated that the objectives of the proposal are related and can potentially provide workable outcomes (MOTA, 2009). The study considers the scope defined by the client as a reference to evaluate options and issues, hoping to provide a tangible development plan and resourceful recommendations.

Identifying Principles of the Development Plan

Framing the approaches helps define a set of principles to establish a good tourism pedestrian system in a heritage area, and contributes to the well-being of the local community of Irbid City Centre in Jordan.

A successful development plan considers the following principles:

- Allocate routes and pathways for tourist-oriented pedestrian use within the existing network that satisfy the following features:
 - o Follow routes or trails that enhance the tourists' experience through visiting interesting destinations, places of heritage and cultural significance, and experiencing pleasant sights. The routes and trails offer appropriate walking distances and reasonable changes in elevation, and ensure adequate connectivity and continuity,
 - o Provide routes that are safe by ensuring they are easily accessible, well-maintained, well-lit, protected, and visible,
 - o Connect to sites of respite offering food, beverages, shopping, transportation, and accommodation,

⁵ Demonstrated in Chapter 5

⁶ Appendix A briefly highlights the six management methods and their applications.

⁷ The interviewees' suggestion is based on personal scholarly research.

- Address cultural concerns of the conservative community of Irbid through restricting tourists' access to private areas and intimate residential settings.
- Provide appropriate way-finding, legible routes, and adequate orientation tools.
- Introduce public open spaces and green areas to serve tourists and the local community.
- Conserve the heritage features of the site through:
 - Rehabilitating and reusing selected heritage activities and buildings as pilot projects to serve tourism and initiate community development,
 - Recommending policies and regulations to conserve the heritage landscape, and protect and emphasize heritage assets,
- Contribute to the wellbeing of the local community through:
 - Reinforcing cultural heritage features of the Irbidi society,
 - Providing job opportunities for local people,
 - Avoiding gentrification or displacement of residents and local businesses,

The principles guide the plan proposal. The different components of the development plan aim to satisfy the objectives by following the identified principles.



Figure 11: Derelict and abandoned residential heritage buildings in inner-block locations. July 2009.



Figure 12: Large unorganized shop signs cover sections of heritage facades, disguising the heritage character from street level. July 2006.

Chapter Three: Towards Understanding Irbid

Understanding features of the project site required examining the natural and built environment, researching community and social dimensions, and identifying different options for regeneration and heritage building reuse through case studies.

Irbid: In Depth

Methods

Doratli et al. (2004) provide an illustrated table of analysis topics that can document all aspects of an urban site (See Appendix B). The table provides techniques, methods, and tools that are suitable for acquiring the required data. Selected analysis topics that are necessary and directly related to developing a plan for pedestrian connectivity and the other objectives of this study are examined.

A comprehensive site survey was conducted. The survey involved data collection, on-site evaluation of physical and structural components, and a detailed photo survey of all relevant components in the urban environment. The following lists the examined topics:

- Topographical features,
- Climatic features,
- Locational analysis
 - Urban pattern analysis, including:
 - Solid-void relations,
 - Street pattern; urban spaces in terms of their quality, enclosure, character, activities,
 - Elements of the area such as paths, nodes, edges, landmarks, and districts,
 - The gap sites and vacant plots of land, streets or spaces requiring definition and redefinition
- Architectural evaluation (for selected buildings that are relevant to the study),
- Accessibility / permeability / traffic / circulation,
- Functional distribution.



Figure 13: View from Tal Irbid towards the Northwest. July 2009

The client commissioned a local consultancy firm in the field of social studies to conduct a socio-economic survey of the project site in order to indicate socio-economic status in the area. It aimed to understand the problems and needs of the local community. The survey was acquired and analyzed to provide necessary indicators for this study.

Interviews were conducted with a local historian and a representative of the Planning Department in the Municipality of Greater Irbid¹. The local historian provided verbal descriptions of the historic physical and cultural context² and the changes that occurred in Irbid City Centre. The Municipality employee provided clarifications on policies and bylaws related to the purpose of the study.

Analyzing the Natural Environment

The project site is a dense urban environment. Therefore, only topography, slope aspect, and climatic features analyses were examined. Vegetation and soil on the Tal are also touched upon.

¹ The interviewee is referred to as (the Municipality) throughout the report.

² The interviewee provided data on the period between the late nineteenth Century and present time.

Topography and slope³

Examining the topography map illustrate that Tal Irbid (the hill of Irbid) is the dominant elevated feature within the landscape of the town. Its elevation provides good views towards the north, northeast, and northwest. The slopes in these directions of the hill are steep, adding the advantage of unblocked views if the wall fences on parts of the hill edge were to be modified (Figure 13, p. 21). The slope aspect map indicates that the slopes downhill towards the south are less steep and are more suitable for accessibility. This explains the growth pattern of the city from the hill towards the south. Figure 2 (p. 8) demonstrates the limited urban structures towards the north and the growing urban fabric south of the hill in 1953. (Al-kheder et al., 2009; Local historian).

The topography and slope aspect maps indicate that the remaining parts of the project site are relatively flat, and do not present any problems for pedestrian accessibility.

Climatic features

Irbid falls within the Mediterranean Climatic Zone. The climate is considered moderate; monthly average temperatures range between 15 to 30°C. Precipitation levels are estimated at 470mL annually (Al-kheder et al., 2009). The seasonal climatic change is optimum for tourists visiting Jordan. The high season for tourists from countries of milder weather starts mid-Fall and lasts until early summer. Tourists from warmer countries, especially Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf, often spend the summer months in Jordan (The Ministry). Once Irbid is promoted as a tourism destination, it should experience year round tourism activity. This contributes to the sustainability of businesses and services in the tourism industry.



Figure 14: Vegetation on Tal Irbid. June 2009

Vegetation and soil

Patches of vegetation are located on Tal Irbid. The vegetation is mostly large evergreen trees such as pine and cedar. Trees run along the northern edge of the Tal. Other patches were planted close to buildings and have grown to exceed the height of the adjacent structures. Shrubs and seasonal plants are located in the vicinity of buildings on the Tal, especially around the schools. The top soil on Tal Irbid is identified to be good for agriculture and vegetation (Municipality).

Analyzing the Built and Urban Environment

A comprehensive site survey identifies physical characteristics of the site. The collected data translated into maps identify different pattern in the site's physical structure. A well-documented photo survey of street elevations and places of interest facilitated a better understanding of the identified patterns and their locations.

Land use

Some 41% of buildings in the site are commercial uses, 17% are residential, and 19% are mixed use (residential and commercial). Many of the residential units in the mixed-use buildings of the urban core became vacant with time and are "*used merely as storage areas for various goods, thereby leading to ... deterioration and fragmentation of the historic fabric*" (Daher, 2005, p. 290). The abundance of commercial activity is concentrated in the

³ Appendix C includes topography and slope maps.



Figure 15: Old Saraya Museum. Formerly an Ottoman command centre, it now occupies a central location on the Tal. June 2009.

east and northeast parts of the site, while residential uses are concentrated in the western districts⁴. Tal Irbid houses cultural uses such as museums, religious and educational buildings, and the old City Hall chambers. The concentration of the different types of uses divides the site into three zones (districts): commercial, residential, and cultural⁵. The three districts provide themes for the different urban settings that can be experienced by tourists through the proposed pedestrian network.

Building heights

Although building height regulations specify 15 meters (or four storeys) as the maximum height (LUBB, 1994), few buildings exceed the limit reaching up to eight storeys. Some high buildings cause fragmentation to adjacent heritage structures due to scale variations and partial or complete blocking of street view and public open spaces.

Solids and voids

Site visits convey the existence of open spaces and derelict abandoned buildings in many inner block locations throughout the site. Those locations are accessed through narrow indirect paths in some places within old city blocks. Those locations are identified to examine possibilities of creating public open

spaces or enclosures within the blocks, so as to improve the quality of life in the heavily urbanized derelict quarters and create new places of interest.

The built up area occupies 44% of the total surface area of the project site. Public open spaces and parking lots occupy 20%. Roads, streets, and pathways comprise the remaining 36%. This configuration indicates the possibility for different options for the pedestrian network. It required further examination into land ownership, relationship to the streets and the built form, the quality of the infrastructure, and aesthetic value of the surrounding.

Urban heritage and culture

A plan for tourism requires identifying and documenting heritage and cultural assets in the project site. Once identified and evaluated, the pedestrian network can start taking shape.

Components of the heritage landscape

- Tal Irbid: (Figure 16) The Tal stands as an asset on its own. As the town's original core, the Tal goes back in history to the Bronze Age. Preliminary excavations indicate the possibility of archaeological sites on the Tal (The Ministry). The Tal is governmentally owned and houses institutional buildings. Privately owned properties on the Tal are concentrated on the southern slopes,

⁴ Refer to Appendix D: Land Use Map

⁵ Refer to Appendix E:
Districts and Heritage Clusters Map

where the Tal connects to the town. The ratio of the built up area to the void spaces on the Tal is low. Both the Municipality and the Ministry indicated the possibility of relocating the institutional uses on the Tel to allow for archaeological excavations and any proposed recreational and cultural uses. Vegetation on the Tal plays a role to disguise the large structures. Tall trees adjacent to institutional and educational buildings exceed the height of the buildings and reduce perception of bulkiness (Al-kheder et al., 2009). (Refer also to Figure 3, p. 9)



Figure 16: Tal Irbid: view from the south. In the image: Arar (poet) museum (Centre), Church and Mosque (top right). July 2009.

- Religious Buildings: four significant religious buildings exist in the project site: The Tal Mosque and the adjacent Greek Orthodox Church in Al-Tal Neighbourhood, The Western Mosque (also called the Mamluk Mosque) (Figure 17) in Al-Jame' Al-Gharbi Neighbourhood, and The Great Mosque in Al-Jame' Al-Sharki Neighbourhood⁶.
- Public Buildings: The Old Saraya (Citadel) is an example for this category. It occupies a central location on the Tal. Formerly used as an Ottoman command centre; it now operates as a museum (Figure 15).
- The Old Neighbourhoods: the project site includes the original town neighbour-

⁶ Locations of those buildings can be identified in Appendix D: Land Use Map following the legend indicator.

hoods. The seven original families of Irbid occupied the neighbourhood that were called after the family names (Local Historian). The only neighbourhood still holding the family name of its original residents is the Al-Tal neighbourhood⁷.

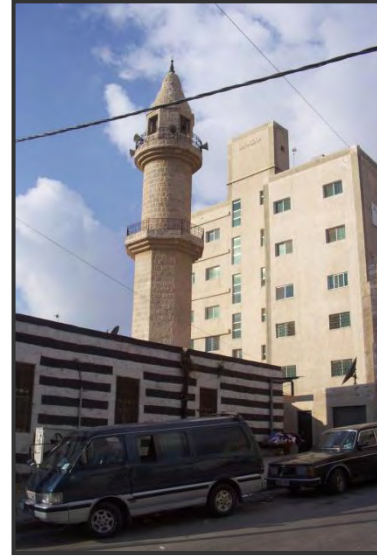


Figure 17: The Mamluk Mosque. June 2009

- The zoning configuration of the urban blocks south of Al-Hashimi Street specifies a commercial strip encircling the circumference of blocks, while residential zones occupy the centre. This configuration still exists in neighbourhoods of the far west of the site; however, central blocks experienced gentrification of residences as commercial uses took over (Local Historian). Preservation of the western blocks is considered to demonstrate the original urban heritage setting.
- Streets, pathways, stairs, and open spaces: The old town is small in area and compact. Irbid City Centre was a place for pedestrians and carriages. The width of access routes vary according to location and function. Some local pathways are less than two meters in width. As the original backbone for the existing urban

⁷ Al-Tal neighbourhood occupies the southern slopes of Tal Irbid. The Tal family were named after the location of their neighbourhood.

structure, the access routes serve as a backbone to the proposed tourist-oriented pedestrian network.

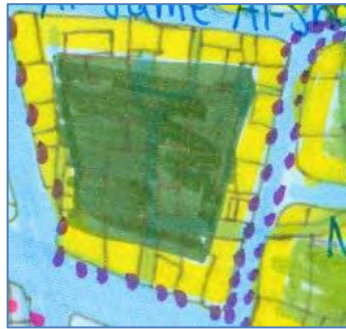


Figure 18: Block zoning configuration: Yellow: commercial, Green: residential.

- Heritage Buildings and Architecture: A map identifying heritage buildings and their location in the site illustrate four clusters of heritage buildings (See Appen. E). Two of the clusters demonstrate examples of residential uses (in Al-Ahnaf and Al-Jame' Al-Sharki Neighbourhood). The cluster on the Tal comprises cultural heritage uses, such as museums and religious uses. The central cluster is commercial uses and the Great Mosque.

There are different types of heritage buildings in the site. The three heritage buildings expropriated by the municipality for the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities' project demonstrate the three dominant typologies. Al-Sharairi house falls in the traditional courtyard house category that dates back to the 1900 – 1920s era. Al- Nabulsi house is an example of the Damascan Courtyard house typology that became common during the 1920s. Juma'a Building is a mixed-use (commercial-residential) town house. This type occurs in the denser inner parts of the old town. It dates to the 1930s. (Heritage Planner)



Figure 19: An example of narrow paths and stairs. July 2009.

Heritage building conditions range from well maintained to derelict: 75% are considered in moderate condition and above; 25% fall within the derelict or abandoned classification.

Heritage building facades fronting on streets and pathways in the commercial district are heavily covered by shop signs and advertisements of different size and colour varieties. Perceiving the form and aesthetics of those buildings is difficult.

Traditional commercial activities

Irbid's heritage character does not only rely on built heritage and physical locations, it draws much of its identity from the variety of traditional and modern patterns of commercial activities (Al-kheder et al., 2009). The urban space morphology and the visual axes framing the commercial activity also reinforce the heritage character. The scale and diversity of the commercial activity components, such as old shop signs and advertising panels must be documented, researched, and in some cases preserved.



Figure 21: Al-Hashimi Street. A major arterial route penetrating the site. A variety of commercial and retail activities run along both sides. Modern large structures emerged (City Hall visible in the centre). Signage and advertisement panels create visual pollution. July 2009.



Figure 20: Street view of Al-Hisbeh District. (June 2009) Fruits and vegetables trade take over the right-of-way while shops and buildings are fragmented and abandoned due to on-street activity. Pedestrian tourist accessibility requires regulating the activity and maintaining the appeal of the everyday lifestyle.

Locations of commercial activity were surveyed. Three locations are considered significant within the proposed pedestrian network:

- Al-Hashimi Street (Figure 21) is a connecting component to the different commercial activities in its surroundings. It provides access to the Jewellers Market, Farmers' Market and the traditional crafts market zone. The continuous commercial strip along both sides of the street offers a wide variety of retail and commercial uses. It is the major arterial road penetrating the project site, separating the northern Tal district from the southern districts. Heavy traffic on Al-Hashimi is an obstacle to crossing pedestrian routes. Addressing this issue is pivotal for improved pedestrian flow between the different districts of the

project site, and enhancing the commercial character.

- Al-Hisbeh (Farmer's Market) and The Great Mosque District: The public space of the access connecting the Farmer's Market with the Great Mosque is being taken over by on-street retail activity, mostly offering consumable goods (Figure 20). The activity extends beyond the existing buildings to occupy the entire pedestrian street. Even if the commercial activity is hampering proper flow of pedestrian movement, it has brought a genuine character to the centre of the city (Al-kheder et al., 2009; Local Historian). The outdoor activity led to fragmentation of the surrounding buildings that transformed into zones that support the main activity on the street. As a result, gentrification of businesses occurred. Accessible urban pockets between the

buildings transformed into restaurants and coffee shops serving foreign labourers. Seeking a balance between solving urban problems and preserving the unique character in the area is considered. (Figure 27, p. 33)



Figure 22: Activity inside the Farmers' Market Structure. July 2009.

- Old Market Area: (Figure 23) the remaining abandoned buildings of this market are located within an urban pocket between Al-Hashimi Street and the Farmers' Market. The narrative history on this location indicates that 'Khan Hiddo' (an old Arabian style inn) was an important landmark. As the growing urban growth patterns swallowed this landmark within an urban pocket, fragmentation led to decline, and later on, abandonment. Some features of the original architecture are still evident.



Figure 23: The abandoned 'Khan Hiddo' in the inner pockets of the old town. July 2009.

Infrastructure

The quality of the physical and infrastructural conditions of the street and pathway network varies at different locations. The municipal government is responsible for maintaining streets. Arterial streets often receive the greatest attention. Major access pedestrian pathways and public steps are also under municipal responsibility, but maintenance is performed less often. Local and inner block pathways are usually looked after by the local residents. Most inner block paths are derelict and neglected. This phenomenon became more obvious as the social structure changed and gentrification became dominant (Local Historian).

Two public stair ways connect the higher elevations of Tal Irbid to the rest of the site to the south. The staircase adjacent to City Hall connects at the bottom to Al-Hashimi Street and ascends approximately 15 metres towards the Saraya Museum Building. The concrete staircase is in good condition (Figure 24). It provides several landings along its length, making it easier for people to use it comfortably; however, it does not provide any activities or special views.



Figure 24: Steps leading to the Tal. Large structures along stairs block views and offer no activity. July 2009.



Figure 25: the second set of steps descending from the Tal. They pass through a heritage cluster, but are narrow and poorly lit and maintained. June 2009.

Streets are generally adequately lit at night. Lighting intensity varies with street hierarchy. Most pathways are served with one public lighting unit each that barely covers the length of the path. This presents safety concerns.

The natural slopes of the site are optimum for drainage purposes. Storm water drainage of pedestrian pathways depends on access to nearby streets that are served with storm water drainage networks, adding pressure to the poorly maintained network, and resulting in increased water flows along the pedestrian pathways. Wet potholes present problems on rainy days (Local Historian).

Traffic and transportation

Pedestrian movement is the major mode of traffic activity within the project site; however, pedestrian routes and pathways are inadequately structured to handle the volume of pedestrian traffic. The network of pedestrian routes is not continuous throughout the site and between different neighbourhoods and districts. Heavy volumes of pedestrians are forced to use narrow congested sidewalks of heavily trafficked streets to travel between the

pedestrian zones in different neighbourhoods. It is obvious that discontinuity of the pedestrian flow would hamper the touristic experience.

Major arterial roads and streets run along the edges of the study area. Al-Hashimi Street is the only arterial road penetrating the mid-section of the project site. Arterial roads experience heavy traffic volumes and congestion, especially during rush hours. Local streets within the sites do not have traffic issues. Some activities on the local streets can cause traffic issues such as parking wide trucks on narrow streets for loading and off loading goods for the commercial activities in the city centre.

Irbid City Centre attracts all kinds of commercial activities serving the population of the larger city and nearby towns and villages. Many of the visitors arrive to the site by public transit. Busses tend to stop upon passengers' requests on right lanes not on bus stops due to the lack of strict regulations. This increases congestion and hampers proper vehicular flow in the streets, especially along Al-Hashimi Street. There are no bus stop signs and stops on the streets.

Irbid's Community and Social Dimensions

Because the proposed project includes a strong component that aims at engaging the local community and inducing community development alongside providing for tourism needs, the plan for a pedestrian network requires a good understanding of the socio-economic status of the local community and the larger community that use the site frequently.

Irbid's population has grown rapidly in the past few decades. According to Al-kheder et al. (2009), two factors affected the growth patterns of the Irbidi population.

"The first factor is represented by the conditions that followed the 1948 and 1967 wars where a great numbers of refugees moved to the Irbid area, causing high population concentration and hence high urban demand. Second, the past few decades have witnessed as well active movement of people, mainly

farmers after selling their lands, from rural areas around Irbid to the city itself, looking for better opportunities. Such active urbanization processes in the study area can be easily seen through comparing two aerial images over the area at two different dates (years 1953 [Figure 2 p. 8] and 2000 [Figure 1 p. 6])” (p. 87)

Daher (2007) has studied various social aspects involved in urban regeneration projects for the purpose of heritage tourism in Jordanian towns and cities. He indicates that in some old cities associated with recognizable family names, it would be effective to encourage members of those families, especially those who own heritage properties within the site, to contribute to the efforts of conservation and reuse of valuable properties as long as they can reinforce their family names. One of the examples used by Daher was the Irbidi Tal family of the Jordanian poet Arar. This family *“had been a continuous supporter of the local art and of the rich cultural life in northern Jordan. They were patrons of several heritage conservation and cultural projects in the city of Irbid”* (pp. 300-301).



Figure 26: The courtyard of an abandoned heritage building becomes a dump. July 2009

Irbid has seven notable families associated with its history in the early 20th century. Many large and significant heritage buildings are still under the ownership of members of those families. The majority of those family members emigrated to Amman, the Capital, following the trend of notable Jordanian families all over the country in the 1950s and 1960s. Abandonment and neglect of the heritage properties belonging to the

original Irbidi families resulted in the deterioration and collapse of many of Irbid's heritage assets (Figure 26) (Local Historian). Research should be conducted on the possibility of involving property owners as active stakeholders in the process of regeneration and conservation of the old town.

The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities commissioned a local consultancy firm to conduct a socio-economic survey of the project site in order to indicate the socio-economic status in the area and understand the problems and needs of the local community. The consultant (METHOD, 2008) produced a comprehensive socio-economic survey of Irbid City Centre. The study represents the community at large, by demographics, gender, and income.

Indicators relevant to the project and potential locations and functions related to the study were identified. The majority of residents in the project site are in the low income groups category. The survey indicated that existing bus stations and markets in the site are conveniently located and easily accessible by the community; however, the quality of the urban space in these locations is poor and requires frequent maintenance and upgrade (especially public transit stations since 63% of the population uses public transit). The survey demonstrates the urgent need of public open spaces and outdoor recreational spaces sought by residents and users of the site. The survey also indicated the urgent need to upgrade and improve the quality of pedestrian pathways for better connectivity and continuity. The majority of female respondents were unemployed outside the home. Job opportunities for females are needed to generate extra household income. Many unemployed females are skilled in traditional tailoring and embroidery. Job opportunities in the public sector (for governmental departments) are desired by the poor community of Irbid City Centre.

The respondents of the survey indicated their preferences for future uses of significant heritage buildings in the site. Uses such as museums, boutique hotels, traditional

crafts workshops, and traditional restaurants and coffee shops are desirable in rehabilitated and reused heritage buildings. The survey indicated that public open spaces should be considered for public parks, playgrounds, and piazzas. The services and location of the Farmers' Market satisfies the community needs, but the vast majority indicated the necessity for urgent rehabilitation and upgrading measures.

Exploring the Options

Upon surveying and understanding significant components and aspects of the site and the community, different options for development, improvements, and upgrades are considered. This requires looking at case studies of different scales. The examined case studies relate to examples of regenerating on the large and micro scales. The large-scale cases contribute to formulating a perspective to deal with issues on the overall intervention on the site. Micro scale examples demonstrate best practices and success stories of proposed reuses of heritage buildings or development of open spaces.

Heritage Conservation and Transformation of Urban Centres

While the main objective is to develop a tourist-oriented pedestrian network in the site, this undertaking is approached through a heritage conservation and community development framework. Three case studies are chosen to demonstrate common trends of both best practices and failures of development and transformation on the urban scale.

"Looking at the political, social, and economic dimensions of cultural ... [and physical] change, and how [they] affects the quality of spatial form is of crucial importance for a better understanding of heritage conservation movements in any geographic and political context" (Daher, 2000, p. 17). The analysis of case studies draws on development strategies, outcomes, discourses, and consequences rather than conservation or physical transformation techniques.

The Case of As-Salt, Jordan

Daher (2005) examines the urban regeneration experiment at Salt City in Jordan. The components of the project are similar to Irbid's project in context; the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), in collaboration with the World Bank (WB), funded the urban regeneration of Salt.

The major objectives of the project were to provide adequate infrastructure for pedestrians within a network of tourism trails and steps, and create open plazas. The project involved restoring a large residential heritage building and reusing it as a museum for local culture and traditions. The building restoration process was a pilot project to encourage local heritage building owners to invest in their properties to provide services for the tourism sector. JICA's policies restricted any intervention to privately owned properties; it only allowed treatments to front facades of buildings, considering them public street walls.

Daher (2005) describes the outcome to be *"an overemphasis on physical aspects of urban regeneration resulting in what can be termed an architectural cosmetic that freezes the cultural townscape and reflects only a banal appreciation of historic form and fabric without serious attempts to address the establishment of heritage tools, systems, or practices that ensure the continuity of urban regeneration and community involvement in the long run"* (p. 306).

The intervention in Salt produced an aesthetically pleasant heritage townscape; however, the majority of shop fronts in the upgraded routes are still shut. Heritage buildings were treated on the outside, but they still suffer from deterioration and run-down infrastructure from the inside. The local culture merely changed since the project failed to attract tourism. The scale and area of the restored museum building is much larger than available heritage buildings and it does not provide an example that can be imitated.

Daher (2005) concludes that it is necessary to include the local community as pivotal stakeholders in the conservation and study process. He stresses pilot examples of

heritage building restoration to encourage and provide inspiration to private heritage building owners.

The Cases of the Bicocca District, Milan, Italy and Nicosia, North Cyprus, Turkey

Doratli et al. (2004) and Sacco and Blessi (2009) elaborate on the successes and failures of culture-led transformations in Nicosia and the Bicocca District. The examples draw on the use of “intangible resources - such as human, social and cultural capital” (Sacco & Blessi, 2009, p. 1116) in bringing about successful urban transformations.

Doratli et al. (2004) use a SWOT analysis to determine characteristics of the Nicosia site. The analysis clearly identifies cultural and social assets under the strengths and opportunities categories. Members of the community representing the different social and demographic dimensions took part in the SWOT analysis process. Acting upon the outcomes of the analysis in the development and implementation phases strengthened the ties between the intangible resources in Old Nicosia. Basing the development on the strong correlation between tangible and intangible resources and assets made the site more appealing to tourists. The outcome is able to attract tourism and sustain the socio-economic status within the project site.

Sacco and Blessi (2009) comment on the culture-led approach in the urban transformation of the Bicocca District, Milan. Although the site context is different than Irbid, the approach demonstrate an alternative to the Nicosia case (Doratli et al., 2004). Capacity building and community participation were major objective; however, implementation followed a top-down approach. The community was consulted at early stages and then left in the dark until the final development plan was released to be implemented. Even though the plan took many of the community’s inputs into consideration, members of the local public showed little interest to get involved

and adopt recommendations offered by the plan (Heritage Planner)⁸.

Sacco and Blessi (2009) conclude that “[c]ulture ... cannot be treated as an instrumental policy variable that may be rationally optimized *ex ante* to achieve certain predetermined goals; rather it is to be regarded as a highly sensitive social asset whose economic impact is the consequence, and not the cause, of its widespread adoption by the local community. ... Culture is a real challenge and it has to be taken very seriously, especially if it interacts in depth with the destinies of people and communities.”

(p. 1131).

Building reuse and adaptation

Heritage building restorations for reuse are components of the project sought in this report. Selected case studies demonstrate best practices and challenges of uses. Varieties of possible uses were explored; only uses that are strictly relevant are presented. Choice of researched uses is based on evaluating inner spaces and locations of heritage buildings to be reused, and indicators offered by the social study and community preferences.

Hotels and Inns

Chang and Teo (2009), and Dincer and Ertugral (2003) explore examples of transforming heritage buildings into hotels or inns.

Dincer and Ertugral’s (2003) observations imply that hotels in heritage buildings in Istanbul, Turkey, “have high demand, encountered heavy financial burdens and bureaucratic impediments both during the restoration and in service. On the other hand, such establishments were preferred by relatively high income and more educated tourist groups, and their rate of occupation was higher and more stable” (p. 23).

Chang and Teo (2009) stress the contribution of vernacular architecture to rein-

⁸ The interview with the heritage planner draws on examples in foreign locations to demonstrate themes and practices that would be involved in the project.

force the cultural identity of heritage townscapes. They document the methodology of conceiving a hotel through the reuse of heritage buildings in Singapore. They claim that tourists wishing to experience ‘first-hand’ the culture and traditions of the host community often desire a heritage themed boutique hotel within the heritage urban setting. They conclude: *“The urban vernacular created in the past met the needs of an earlier generation; retaining the vernacular today requires continued creativity to adapt old forms to new uses, users and needs”* (p. 364).

According to Dincer and Ertugral (2003), *“protecting the old buildings by having them acquire new functions including accommodation with authentic characteristics helps save the historical buildings and benefits the local economy”* (p. 23).

Museums and Cultural Centre

Daher (2005) describes the methodology and process for renovating and adapting the Historic House of Abujaber in Salt City, Jordan, as a museum of local culture and traditions. *“The main idea of the adaptation shunned the idea of the creation of the usual archaeological or even folkloric museum that would generally narrate the story of Jordan and opted instead to grant a voice to local Salti history (the social history of everyday life)”* (p. 304).

The outcome of the museum proved to be a successful experiment as visitors provide positive feedback⁹. Visitors enjoy relating museum displays to elements in the surrounding area. People originating from Salt and members of the local community proudly associate with the museum content. Some have contributed artefacts and family belongings to be displayed in the exhibits.

The designer also insisted on maintaining the street level uses as shops. The shop owners had to relocate for the period of renovations and then return. This ensured that no commercial gentrification happens.

Restrictions were enforced on the design and size of shop signs to ensure consistency with the heritage spirit of the building (Daher, 2005).

Public Open Spaces

Cheisura (2004) and Thompson (2002) provide analytical research on public open spaces and public parks within the urban fabric of cities. Thompson (2002) argues that public open spaces reinforce the perception of democratic societies since they act as social space networks. The information age further facilitates conceiving the notion of democracy through modern features in the open space components and infrastructure. Open spaces also provide refuge and chances for contact with nature within proximity of where people live and work. Thompson (2002) also demonstrate that ‘loose fit’ areas within the fabric of the city do not necessarily have to transform into well-arranged open spaces, instead they can offer informal venues for minorities and the unprivileged to reinforce their sense of belonging and freedom.

Cheisura (2004) concludes that *“urban nature fulfils many social functions and psychological needs of citizens, which makes urban nature a valuable municipal resource, and a key ingredient for city sustainability. ... Parks design and management ... should take into account recreational requirements of all target groups”* (p. 137).

This chapter presented the attributes necessary to formulate a development proposal; it documents the site’s physical and socio-economic features, and considers case studies for guidance and best practices. Conducting a comprehensive analysis of all data in Chapter 4 provide clear directions to proposing precise solutions within the development proposal of the tourist-oriented pedestrian network.

⁹ During a visit to the museum, the museum curator indicated that survey forms filled by visitors reveal satisfactory responses.

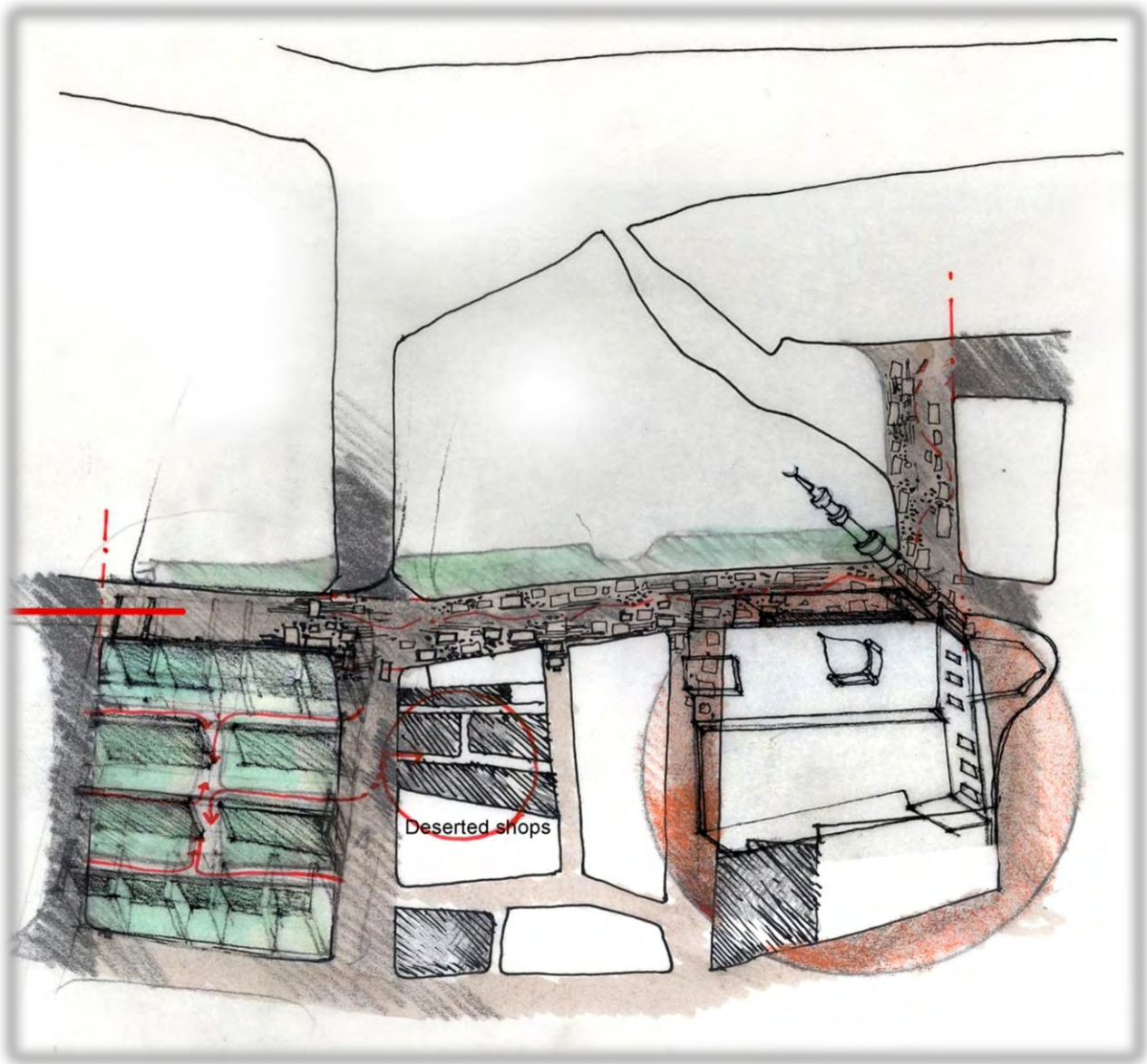


Figure 27: Graphic Analysis of pedestrian and commercial activity in Irbid City Centre. Al-Jame' Al-Sharqi Neighbourhood

Chapter Four: Laying Grounds for Solutions

Analyzing Data

The data analysis is divided into three categories reflecting the objective statements identified in Chapter 1. The analysis draws on analyses conducted throughout Chapters 2 and 3. It connects the ideas and data of different sections under the three themes. The analysis focuses on addressing issues and formulating solutions to the principles at the end of Chapter 2.

Pedestrian Connectivity and Open Spaces

The tourist-oriented network depends mostly on the existing backbone pedestrian network in the site. Developed criteria for paths and routes selection depend on three attributes:

- Identifying major landmarks to specify origins, destinations, and attractions in between. Components of the heritage landscape (pp. 19-21) and traditional commercial activities (pp. 21-23) are considered to identify attractions.
- Satisfying attributes of successful pedestrian tourism (p. 13-15), such as continuity, orientation, and safety and security.
- Finding interesting routes between the identified major attractions to enhance the pedestrian tourism experience.

The major issue affecting continuity is the heavy traffic along Al-Hashimi Street, which separated Tal Irbid from the southern urban core. Crossing this major artery requires pedestrian crossing enhancement measures, upgrading and widening sidewalks to ensure easy flow, and reinforcing visual perception and views of entrance points to the pedestrian paths on both sides. Rehabilitating and upgrading sidewalks along Al-Hashimi also complement the diverse commercial activities.

Resolving orientation issues for tourists in the site requires coupling a developed signage system throughout the site with a tourism map handout that identifies landmarks and attractions, provides descriptions, and promotes locations.

Routes connecting different attractions must be treated relative to distances between the attractions. Longer routes should incorporate respite facilities that range from benches and shaded areas to shops, restaurants, or cafes, where tourists can recharge for continuation and open up economic opportunities to the local community.

The change in elevation between the Tal plateau and the rest of the site requires considering the two connecting stairs. One requires introducing attractive features, while the other needs enhanced safety and security measures such as lighting and infrastructural upgrade.

Altering the existing street network to enhance pedestrian connectivity and introduce new pedestrian paths can obstruct proper vehicular flow in streets and worsen traffic congestions. It is necessary to propose alternative traffic directions to guarantee adequate circulation within and around the site.

The site survey shows the lack of public open spaces and outdoor recreational facilities. The community overwhelmingly demands introducing parks and open spaces in the area. The advantages of green spaces and outdoor public facilities within urban centres are demonstrated¹.

The locational and natural environment analyses identify Tal Irbid as a preferred location to introduce a public park featuring archaeological sites. The client suggests the use. The natural characteristics survey demonstrates physical advantages of the Tal for recreational and landscaping use. The government is willing to relocate institutional buildings from the area, and preliminary archaeological excavations indicate the possibility of archaeological discoveries on the Tal.

Although the social survey indicates that the local community is satisfied with existing locations of bus stations, Fo'ara Square

¹ Demonstrated in 'Public Open Spaces' section, p.32

(currently used as a bus station) (Figure 8 p.11) is considered one example of public open spaces. The client identified it as a possible location for the use, and indicated that the station will be moved. A public square in Fo'ara will complement the heritage value of Al-Nabulsi House and reinforce pedestrian connection with cultural heritage assets on the southern slopes of Tal Irbid. Other empty voids in the site are evaluated for development according to their location on or close to proposed paths, and the type of experience and value they offer.

Dealing with Heritage Assets

Treating heritage components to complement the pedestrian tourist experience requires looking at heritage assets through three lenses: zoning concerns, preserving and enhancing the heritage value of the site, and rehabilitating and reusing selected heritage buildings.

Zoning

The original zoning configuration of blocks is demonstrated in the analysis of the built environment. The land use map (Appendix D) shows that commercial uses overtook residential zones in inner areas of some blocks resulting in decline of residential uses. The original zoning is still intact in the western blocks. Conserving the original zoning in these blocks can help avoid residential gentrification, which in part keeps heritage buildings within block inhabited and protected.

Heritage value

Preserving the heritage landscape and emphasizing the culture are necessary to elevate tourists' experience. Pedestrian tourists look to appreciate appearance of heritage assets and experience the culture of the host community. Visual perception of heritage buildings in Irbid, especially in commercial districts, is hampered by large commercial shop signs and advertisements. Daher (2005) demonstrated that regulating dimensions and appearance of shop signs in Salt complemented the heritage spirit. Special regulations and policy recommendations are

needed to resolve signage that degrade heritage building exteriors.

Heritage buildings suffer due to fragmentation caused by modern over-scaled structures that overshadow the smaller scaled heritage structures and block proper pedestrian accessibility. This resulted in abandonment and neglect. While it is difficult to reverse the changes in the urban fabric of the city centre, it is possible to avoid further fragmentation caused by modern structures. Enforcing by-laws and regulations that deal with scale, height, and setbacks of new buildings should avoid further negative effects on heritage buildings and assets.

The government cannot afford to renovate and protect all heritage assets in the site, especially privately owned heritage buildings. It is necessary to suggest ways to encourage heritage building owners to invest in and rehabilitate their properties. Daher (2000) suggests a hybrid approach featuring pilot projects that demonstrate heritage conservation for economic prosperity. Other incentives through developed policies can complement the 'leading by example' approach, and help improve the sense of ownership of the cultural and heritage identity of the site to the Irbidi community.

The findings illustrate the value of Irbid's heritage commercial activity to complement satisfactory tourists' experience within the pedestrian network. Heritage commercial zones suffer from a variety of problems. The most negative problem is unregulated mobile on-street commercial activity in Al-Hisbeh (Farmers' Market) district; however, restricting such activities result in socio-economic problems in the site. Irbid's community indicate their desire to maintain the existing situation with some regulatory measures. Innovative solutions are considered to enhance proper pedestrian movement through the area, reduce the negative effect of on-street activity to the adjacent commercial uses in buildings, and maintain the heritage commercial spirit of the area.

Heritage building reuse

The client identified three heritage buildings for renovation and reuse. Proposed uses should add value to the tourists' pedestrian experience, reinforce local culture and sense of place, and illustrate examples of community development.

The case studies (Chapter 3) demonstrate the feasibility of proposed uses. Daher (2005) discussed reusing The Abujaber House in Salt as a museum. The innovative approach was successful. Al-Sharairi House was the residence of Ali Khulqi Al-Sharairi; an iconic military commander during the Great Arab Revolution, and famous politician at the early years of nation building. The building provides modest size interiors that can handle exhibits and displays. The building can be a venue for a museum of local political history and the role of Irbid during the Revolution and Jordan's creation.

Al-Nabulsi House demonstrates the dominant residential heritage building typology of Irbid. The two-storey building offers a variety of spaces and rooms that can adapt to different uses. The building can demonstrate local residential heritage and traditions through a museum on the lower level. It also offers spaces for community development projects on the upper level.

Juma'a Building was previously used as an inn. Chang and Teo (2009), and Dincer and Ertugral (2003) illustrate two examples of reusing heritage buildings as inns or hotels. They indicate the feasibility and long-term economic potential of such uses. Juma'a building's proximity to the inner city commercial activities and pedestrian zone elevates its potential for the proposed use. The three-storey building's scale relative to other privately owned heritage buildings in the site is likely to induce the 'leading by example' approach proposed by Daher (2000). It is necessary to avoid displacing commercial uses on the street level of the building. The example presented by Daher

(2005) on the Abujaber Building in Salt is followed².

Other heritage assets in the site, such as Arar (the poet) Museum and the Old Saraya Museum can complement the proposed museums in Al-Sharairi and Nabulsi. The close proximity of the museums offers a unique tourism experience along the route leading between the Old Saraya and Al-Nabulsi. Each museum can demonstrate a different theme; the Old Saraya for archaeology, Arar for poetry and local culture, Al-Sharairi for political history, and Al-Nabulsi for residential heritage and traditions.

Understanding Culture and Socio-Economic Concerns

The culture of Irbid associates to its people. Irbid's cultural identity relates to its original seven families. Daher (2007) demonstrates the advantages of reintroducing family names to the city fabric. This is likely to increase the sense of belonging and encourage people originating from Irbid to contribute to their city through investing, upgrading of heritage properties, and initiating community development projects. The case of the Abujaber House Museum in Salt (Daher, 2005) demonstrates the advantages³. Renaming neighbourhoods to original family names who inhabited them is one example of reinforcing the families' presence in the site.

Al-kheder et al. (2009) demonstrate two directions to manage the heritage site transformation through the 'Urban Heritage Management' Approach. The expert-led approach is the more viable option due to time and resources limitations. The overall development plan is proposed at a 'top-down' approach; however, a culture-led (bottom up) approach is regarded pivotal to involve the

² While the transformation in Salt is considered a failure on the urban scale, the museum experiment is considered successful.

³ As member of the Abujaber Family, the researcher is aware of contributions of artefacts and antique furniture from member of the family to the museum that is dedicate to their family name and re-establishes their status in Salt City.

local community in decision-making regarding their city's future and transformation. Implementing the culture-led approach for this case can happen on the micro level. Vacant and unorganized open spaces occur throughout the site. Determining the appropriate transformation strategy for such spaces is difficult at this stage. The local community members are the best evaluators of the attributes of voids and public spaces, and should lead the decision-making process to develop those sites. Allowing community decision making promotes diversity and strengthens individual and groups identity.

Daher (2000) warned of the negative effects caused by corporate investment within urban heritage sites. He demonstrates the need to develop mechanisms to avoid the common phenomenon and to encourage the local community to invest within the site and make profit. Education and awareness campaigns, and capacity building programs provide the local community with the right knowledge, skills, and tools to manage change. Heritage conservation and reuse incentive programs facilitate to the local community to invest in transformations and reinforce the sense of ownership and belonging.

Gentrification is identified as the major threat in Irbid City Centre. Avoiding gentrification and displacement of residents and businesses requires maintaining and upgrading pivotal places within the urban fabric, such as necessary amenities and commodity facilities. Daher (2000) argues that "*museumizing and commodifying*" (p.21) cultural features and disregarding the modern life style of the community in the heritage site lead to disconnecting the community from its culture and heritage value. Educating the public and potential investors on the negative effects of gentrification and ways to avoid it is important.

The social study indicates that women comprise a large percentage of unemployed

residents. The study also revealed the community's desire to work for the public sector. Since Irbid's Municipality is initiating pilot projects of community development and heritage buildings reuse, job opportunities for females are prioritized.

Irbid's community belongs to a conservative Muslim society. Locals are protective of their privacy, especially in intimate residential settings within the urban fabric. McManus (1998) considers cultural attributes necessary to understand in order to allocate tourists' pedestrian paths in urban tourism sites. Irbid's community are likely to consider tourists walking through their inner block residential pathways as invaders of privacy and cultural clash may occur. Tourists would be interested to experience all varieties of the local culture, including residential heritage. Two major heritage residential clusters are identified in the site. Choosing the right location that demonstrates residential heritage should ensure minimal pedestrian tourists' penetration to inner urban pockets. Al-Ahnaf Neighbourhood cluster west of Tal Irbid (including Al-Nabulsi House) is perceived from the main street. Visitors are not required to manoeuvre through narrow pathways and invade the privacy of residences to enjoy the residential built heritage. Al-Nabulsi House is situated at the Southeast corner of the cluster and would become a museum of residential heritage and traditions. Fo'ara square provides an introductory open space to the residential cluster and ensures easy pedestrian accessibility and flow.

The data analysis presented in this chapter directs and proposes implementation options of the principles in Chapter 2, hence laying grounds to satisfy the objectives of the project.



Figure 28: Development Plan Map: a view of proposed transformations on the larger scale.

Chapter Five: The Development Proposal

The development proposal demonstrates applicable solutions to the set of principles prescribed in Chapter 2. The analysis conducted in Chapter 4 represents the methodology by which implementation schemes are formulated.

The development proposal comprises two sections: the development plan and recommendations. The development plan presents physical transformations and interventions that facilitate tourists' pedestrian connectivity, heritage conservation, and community development projects. The recommendations section addresses policy reviews, community development initiatives, and topics that require further research.

The Development Plan

Figure 28 (p. 38) presents an overview of the interventions and transformations throughout the project site in Irbid City Centre. The development plan map identifies tourism attractions, heritage assets, and the proposed tourist-oriented pedestrian system. It also identifies public open spaces and public parks in the site. It proposes alternative traffic directions that guarantee easy vehicular traffic flow within and around the site.

Further details of the development plan address items of the list of principles individually. The following text quotes each item in the list and provides descriptions of the proposed solutions.

Allocating routes and pathways

The tourist-oriented pedestrian network in Irbid City Centre satisfies four features.

'Follow routes or trails that enhance the tourists' experience through visiting interesting destinations, places of heritage and cultural significance, and pleasant sights. The routes and trails offer appropriate walking distance and reasonable changes in elevations, and ensure adequate connectivity and continuity'.

'Interesting destinations' are identified throughout the site. A proposed tourists' pedestrian trail aims to tell the story of Irbid in a historic chronological order. The Old

Saraya building marks the starting point attraction for the pedestrian route. The Saraya is chosen for two reasons. The first reason is the availability of parking spaces for tourist buses in the vicinity. Secondly, The Saraya Museum houses a large collection of archaeological artefacts from Irbid and its surroundings. A similar route within the museum follows a chronological order to display artefacts from ancient civilizations that inhabited the region. The trail continues to navigate through the Tal archaeological park to the north. No specific routes are identified within the park. Further archaeological excavations are required to determine sites of significance that can help identify any paths¹.

The trail continues west from the Saraya Museum. Arar Museum is an attraction located along the trail. It is a tribute to Mustafa Wahbi Al-Tal (known as Arar); a prominent Jordanian poet. The museum features some of the poets' belongings and displays verses of his poetry. It also presents other cultural components related to Irbid, including a library of local literature and scholarly works on Irbid and the region.

Tourists continue along the trail to enter Fo'ara Square that leads to Nabulsi House. The house includes a museum of residential heritage on the lower level. The museum features the traditional urban lifestyle of the Irbidi society. Displays include furniture, tools, and explanatory display panels. The upper level of Nabulsi House houses a community development project. The project offers local women the opportunity to produce pieces of traditional embroidery for sale to tourists visiting the lower level.

¹ The graphic representation of the Tal Archaeological Park in The development plan map (Figure 28) is conceptual and does not represent actual locations of antiquities.

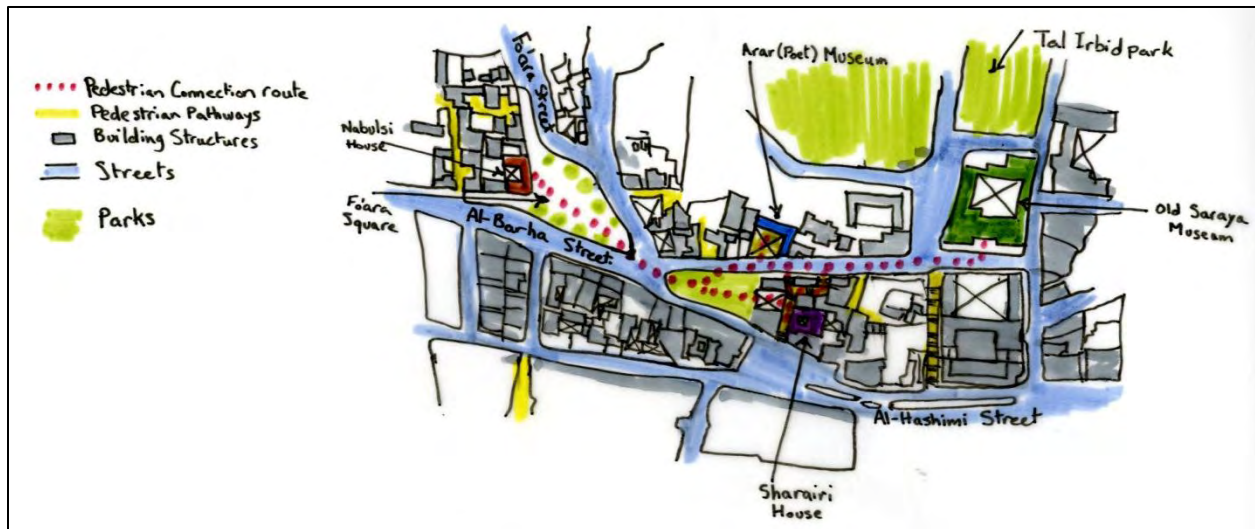


Figure 30: The Museum District. Featuring four museums of different themes; historic, cultural, political, and residential heritage.

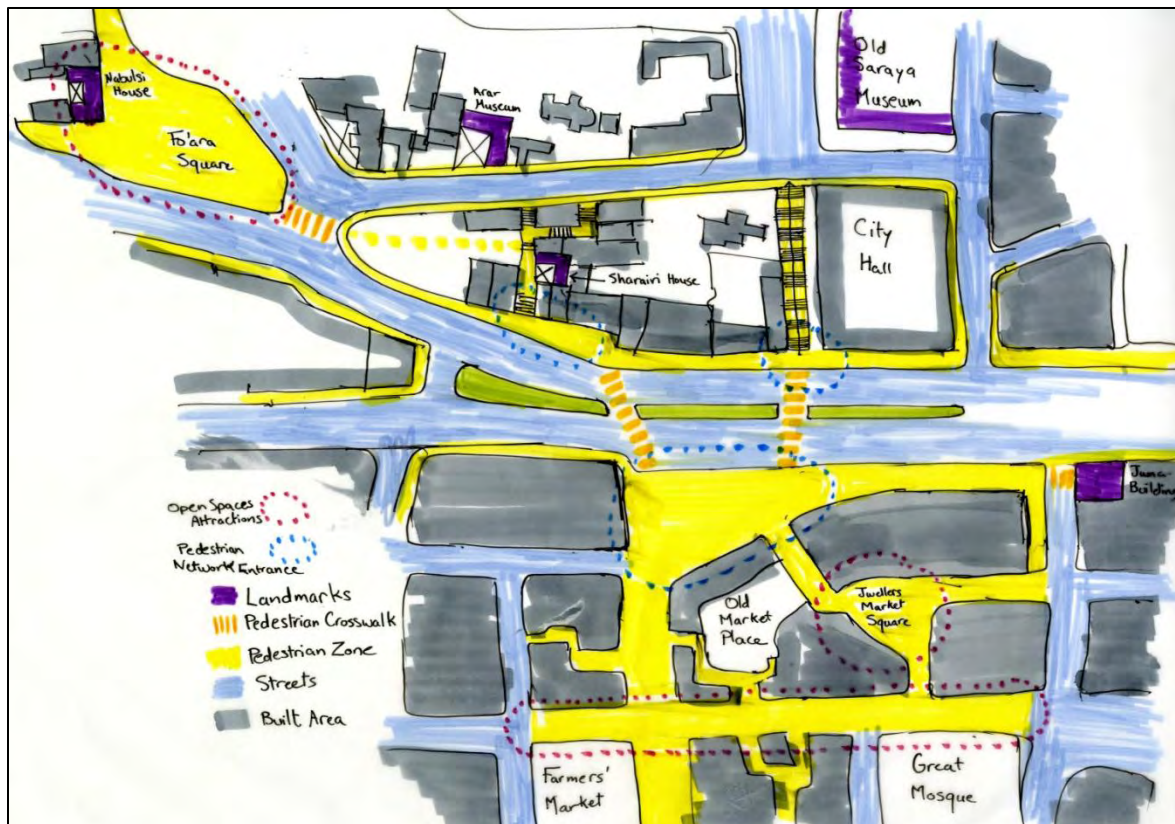


Figure 29: Continuity and Connectivity: physical treatments to facilitate pedestrian crossing arterial streets.

The trail continues to the east towards Sharairi House. The house is a museum of local political history. A section of the house is a tribute to Ali-Khulqi Al-Sharairi, the famous local military man and politician.

Upon visiting attractions in the museum district of the site that present past events and lifestyles (Figure 30 p. 40), visitors cross Al-Hashimi Street to enter the southern urban core of the site. The area south of Al-Hashimi Street represents a combination of heritage and traditional commercial activity. The development proposal map (Figure 28 p. 38) illustrates the network of streets and paths identified as pedestrian zones. The pedestrian network facilitates access to attractions and places of cultural significance. Tourists proceed south on Naim Tal Street towards Al-Hisbeh (Farmers' Market). The trail continues along Al-Jame' Street, passing by the Great Mosque. The trail turns left at the end of the pedestrian zone at Al-Jame' street towards the Jewellers Market, and then moves north back to Al-Hashimi Street. Tourists can witness and experience the variety of commercial activities at the farmers' market, along Al-Jame' Street, and in the Jewellers Market. Pedestrian tourists cross Al-Hashimi and ascend the stairs adjacent to City Hall to reach the original starting point for departures.

The trail is not compulsory for tourists. Visitors to the site might want to wander through other portions outside the specified route. Other allocated paths, steps, and open spaces connecting to the trail require treatment and upgrade to serve tourists and provide better connections for Irbid's community.

The pedestrian tourists' trail is allocated along routes that offer pleasant sights and avoid unsightly locations. The northern edge of the Tal Archaeological Park features look-offs that offer views to the extended horizon of The Greater Irbid Area. The street leading between the old Saraya and Fo'ara Square features beautiful heritage facades. Intervals between buildings offer glimpses of the southern part of the site from elevated viewpoints. Heritage buildings

surround Fo'ara Square, creating a pleasant enclosure to the new public open space. The southern portion of the pedestrian network requires beautification measures and infra-structural treatments.²

The scale of the site is small. Distances between attractions and along paths vary between 25 to 150 meters. The length of the proposed tourists' trail is 280 meters approximately³. The overall length of the trail and its segments are appropriate for different tourists' demographics and physical capabilities. The two set of stairs connecting Tal Irbid with the southern part require different treatments. The concrete stairs adjacent to City Hall have a reasonable slope and offer adequate landings between each set of steps. The stairs require adding streetlights to fully illuminate their length to enhance security. The set of steps near Sharairi House offer a unique experience. They run through narrow corridors of heritage properties. Portions of the stair system require paving and minor treatments. Adding streetlights enhances visibility and a sense of security at night.

Solving continuity and connectivity issues require introducing well-defined pedestrian cross walks on Al-Hashimi Street and Fo'ara Street. The cross walks are located to connect different segments of the tourists' trail. Crosswalks flashing lights can be located to warn vehicular traffic. The crosswalk can be elevated to produce a slight road bump that forces vehicles to go slower. Crosswalks connect to wider sidewalks or public squares to avoid crowding and handle influx of pedestrian tourists. The wider sidewalks help tourists perceive entrance points to the pedestrian network on either side of the street. Figure 29 (p. 40) and Figure 31 (p. 42) illustrates features that facilitate connectivity across Al-Hashimi Street.

² Treatments to private heritage properties within the pedestrian system are discussed at a later stage.

³ The distance excludes trails within the Tal Archaeological Park.



Figure 31: Cross-section of pedestrian crosswalk on Al-Hashimi Street.

'Provide routes that are safe by ensuring they are easily accessible, well-maintained, well-lit, protected, and visible'.

Upgrading pedestrian paths is a primary contributor to safety. The upgrade involves fixing and removing any obstacles, such as swamps, potholes, and remaining of old sidewalks that are unclear to pedestrians. Specifications of the upgrade include, introducing or repairing drainage components of the paths, avoiding sudden change in slope or elevation, and introducing streetlights that illuminate all portions of the pedestrian system.

Good visibility and orientation are primary security features. Irbid's Police already place monitoring kiosks that are constantly attended at different locations, such as Fo'ara Square, on Al-Hashimi Street across from City Hall, in the vicinity of the Farmers' Market, and next to the Great Mosque. Keeping the kiosks enhances a sense of security. The main tourists' trail is allocated to guarantee good visibility and orientation. The Jewellers Market Square is the only portion of the tourists' trail not clearly visible from a public street, therefore; enhanced security measures are required; such as surveillance cameras feeding into the closest police kiosk.

Maintaining sidewalks and pathways of the pedestrian network falls under municipal responsibilities. The municipality must

develop a strategy and allocate regular funds for pathway maintenance purposes.

'Connect to sites of respite offering food, beverages, shopping, transportation, and accommodation'.

Allocating sites and places of respite within the pedestrian network require different strategies. The transportation components require direct allocation. The common modes of transportation for tourists are taxis, private or rented small vehicles, or coach buses for tourist groups. A large parking lot is allocated on the Tal, close to the Old Saraya Museum. The parking lot can accommodate tourists' vehicles. It conveniently connects to the pedestrian network.

Places offering food, beverages, and shopping present chances for economic prosperity to the local community. The analysis indicates visitors seek to experience local culture and traditions. Many local traditional restaurants and coffee shops are interesting to tourists. They are owned and operated by members of the local community. Restaurants offer local delicacies, while coffee shops portray a unique tableau of local culture. Restaurants, coffee shops, and shops can gradually readapt to serve tourists. The adaptation can depend on volumes of tourist activity, types of services and goods tourists require, and the economic feasibility of changes. The commercial activities are abundantly distributed along Al-Hashimi Street and within the commercial district to the South. Those commercial facilities are easily accessible throughout the site. Upgrading sidewalks and pathways within the pedestrian network contribute to accessing commercial uses.

Juma'a Building follows a 'leading by example' strategy. It offers accommodations. Initiating additional accommodation facilities by private heritage buildings owners can be gradual, depending on market demands. Juma'a building is conveniently located on Al-Hashimi Street and it is easily accessible.

'Address cultural concerns of the conservative community of Irbid through restricting tourists' access to private areas and intimate residential settings'.

Tourists wishing to learn about residential heritage can visit Nabulsi House and the residential heritage cluster around it. This cluster is easily visible from Fo'ara Square and the main street. Entering within the inner-block to understand the structure of a residential neighbourhood is minimal and should not cause major invasion of residential privacy.

The residential cluster south of Khaled bin Waleed Street is not considered for tourists. Upgrading pathways within this block aims to enhance accessibility to conserve the residential character and the original zoning scheme, and eventually keep heritage buildings inhabited and protected.

'Provide appropriate way-finding, legible routes, and adequate orientation tools'.

The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities of Jordan regulates tourism signage and orientation tools in public locations. Tourists' street signs must have a brown background and white text, symbols, and arrows. Way-finding sign within Irbid City Centre abide to the Ministry's specifications. Tourists' street and pathway signs should identify the major routes dedicated for tourists' use. They feature street names in both Arabic and English. Larger directional panels located at major intersections within the site feature directional arrows, symbols of major attractions and text.

A tourists' map of the site features attractions, destinations, the tourists' pedestrian zones, and the specified tourists' trail. Tourists' maps are distributed at major attractions. The map leaflet also offers descriptions and explanations of the attractions and some activities on the site. Symbols and attraction names must be in conformity with street signs and panels. Map leaflets should be offered in many languages depending on tourists' preferences.

The tourists' trail is clearly identifiable throughout the site. Tourists wandering away from the trail path should be able to visually recognize when they are back on it. Visual perception of the trail path requires using different materials or colours, such as black basalt stone street paving⁴.

Introduce public open spaces and green areas to serve tourists and the local community.

The area of the Tal Archaeological Park is approximately 6000 square meters. The park offers recreational facilities, such as, playgrounds, benches, shaded areas, and trails through designed natural landscapes. It should offer archaeological sites that will be determined upon excavations. The northern edge features lock-offs to the extended city horizon. The park serves the local community and tourists to fulfil "social functions and psychological needs" (Chiesura, 2004, p. 137).

Two public squares are included in the development plan. Fo'ara Square replaces the existing bus station. The square connects the residential heritage cluster and Nabulsi House to the rest of the site. The Jewellers Market Square is an enclosure along the tourists' trail. Both squares require paving, illumination, and beautification measures. They feature planters, shaded areas, and benches.

The pedestrian zone along Al-Jame' Street is a representation of traditional commercial activities in Irbid. It is part of the tourists' trail and a major attraction. On-street mobile commercial activities obstruct pedestrian movement and hampers connectivity to shops on the street edge. Figure 32 demonstrates proposed zoning regulations to facilitate accessibility and boost the tourists' experience.

⁴ Black basalt was commonly used as a building and paving material in the past. Basalt quarries are located within Irbid Governorate (Local Historian).

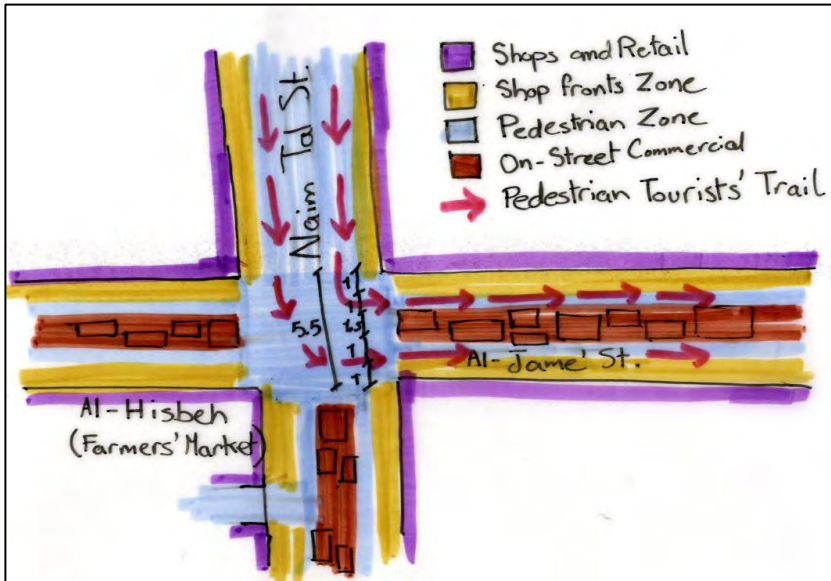


Figure 32: Pedestrian paths zoning configuration on Al-Jame' Street near Al-Hisbeh (farmers' market).

Other voids and spaces within the site are reserved for future upgrade and development. Treatments to those spaces follow a culture-led approach that allows the local community to contribute in decision-making.

Conserving the heritage features of the site:

'Rehabilitating and reusing selected heritage activities and buildings as pilot projects to serve tourism and initiate community development'.

The Client specified three heritage buildings for rehabilitation and reuse. Sharari House features a museum of political history, Juma'a Building is reused as an inn, and Nabulsi house includes a museum of local residential heritage and a community development project. Building rehabilitation should consider minimal intervention to the original heritage structure and components. Selecting newly added components, such as, lighting fixtures, information panels, and doors, should include modern details that does not distract visitors and emphasize the original heritage components.

The client recommends transforming Al-Hisbeh structure (Farmers' Market) into a public open space; however, the analysis indicated negative socio-economic consequences. Rehabilitating the market

structure and regulating spaces and activities within maximizes its benefit and potentials, and can provide additional areas to remove part of the on-street mobile commercial activity.

'Recommending policies and regulations to conserve the heritage landscape, and protect and emphasize heritage assets'.

Conserving the urban heritage landscape of Irbid City Centre requires declaring the entire site as a regulated heritage district. The Heritage District incorporates a set of policies and regulations that govern future development and transformations of the site. Policies and

regulations aim to protect and emphasize the heritage assets.

Regulations aim to prevent further fragmentation of heritage buildings within blocks by preserving existing pathways, restricting large-scale developments, and specifying preservation mechanisms for heritage assets. New developments abide by the original four storey height restrictions and adequate setbacks from streets pathways and heritage structures.

Regulations also include design specifications for shop signs and advertisements. Regulating size, colour and shape of shops signs to complement the heritage facades of buildings can enhance the heritage character and reduce visual disorder.

Commercial activity in Al-Hisbeh District represents traditional commercial heritage. Regulating movement and accessibility in the district is tackled in the 'public open spaces' section and Figure 32.

Further research is required to develop policies that facilitate and encourage renovating and reusing privately owned heritage buildings.

Contributing to the well-being of the local community.

'Reinforcing cultural heritage features of the Irbidi society'.

Reintroducing the original Irbidi families in the site as street, square, and neighbourhood names reinforces the connection of the local community to the city centre and enhances a sense of ownership to public spaces. The community becomes more receptive and supportive to changes and transformations in the urban fabric.

The existing and proposed museum should encourage the local community and Irbidi originals to contribute antiques and artefacts for display. Descriptive panels recognize contributor names, enhancing a sense of belonging and pride.

'Providing job opportunities for local people'.

The new proposed uses open up new job opportunities, especially in the tourism sector. The community development project on the upper level of Nabulsi House reflects the indicators of the social study. Traditional embroidery products made by local women provide income to the women's families and add interesting souvenir items to the local market. The community development project at Nabulsi House and the inn in Juma'a building aim to portray a pilot project that encourages heritage building owners to invest in similar uses and provide more job opportunities.

'Avoiding gentrification or displacement of residents and local businesses'.

Two forms of gentrification are identified; gentrification of residents and businesses. Policies and regulations discussed in the 'heritage conservation' section of this chapter contribute to the preservation of residential heritage buildings, hence positively affecting other residential zones in the site. Preserving the original zoning scheme protects residential zones occupying inner block areas, and reduces displacement of residents.

Figure 32 illustrates regulating and zoning commercial streets to avoid gentrification of businesses caused by unregulated

mobile on-street commercial activities that hamper accessibility and movement.

Keeping commercial uses on the street level of Juma'a building illustrate a good example of rehabilitating heritage structure without displacing businesses. The 'leading by example' strategy encourages local heritage building owners to act accordingly.

Recommendations

Recommendations for policy reviews, community development initiatives, and topics that require further research are presented to reflect the three objective topics.

Pedestrian issues, connectivity and open space

- The proposed pedestrian network negatively affects traffic congestion within and around the site. A comprehensive traffic study should be conducted to determine traffic flow directions and diversions in the project site and the surrounding region to resolve anticipated problems.
- Resolve land ownership and expropriation issues related to widening of sidewalks, vacant sites recommended for development, and proposed public open spaces.
- Irbid's Municipality should develop funding and maintenance strategies and regulations for sidewalks, pathways and pedestrian routes, and proposed public open spaces.
- The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities should facilitate excavations on Tal Irbid to determine significant sites and allow for designing and implementing the Tal Archaeological Park. The park is considered a priority to introduce green spaces in Irbid to serve the local community and tourists.

Heritage conservation and reuse issues

- Develop comprehensive heritage conservation policies and regulations that incorporate all heritage components of the site

and regulate future development and transformations.

- The client should initiate heritage conservation workshops and capacity building programmes for interested members of the community. Spreading awareness of techniques, strategies, and potentials for conserving heritage guarantees better outcomes and rapid transformation of the site.

Community development and socio-economic concerns

- The municipality should initiate and support local stakeholders' participation in decision-making on the urban level. A 'culture-led' approach requires forming community groups that work with the local government to propose changes and make decision to local issues and concerns.
- Further research on the original Irbidi families is required to determine neighbourhood and street names, and understand activities, locations, and events related to each family.
- Avoiding gentrification caused by corporate investment in the tourism industry requires educating the local community on strategies to maintain and develop their small businesses to adapt to the site transformation and contribute to the tourism industry. Further research into policy tools to minimize different forms of gentrification that are occurring and might occur in the site should be conducted.

Conclusion

The development proposal presents a plan that satisfies the project objectives. Proposed solutions address the set of principles to establish a tourism pedestrian system within a conserved heritage site, and facilitate the local community's socio-economic development. A set of recommendations addresses policy reviews, community development initiatives, and topics that require further research.

A realistic vision of Irbid City Centre's future as a successful heritage tourism destination requires implementing the development proposal components. A tourist visiting Irbid will have the chance to experience two different components of the site. The museums experience will add knowledge and represent the living past of the site. Roaming through pedestrian friendly traditional commercial districts, and staying at inns in restored heritage buildings, can engage the visitor in the present and display interesting variations of local traditional life styles.

The site will have a distinct heritage character that is identified through well-maintained and protected heritage buildings. The heritage buildings will become venues for community development and economic prosperity for locals, and will accommodate tourism needs. New infill developments will respect the heritage character and the original trail systems that facilitate access to inner block heritage and residential areas. New public open spaces will elevate the site appeal and serve the local community's psychological needs and social functions.

The future vision also encompasses advantages for the local community, such as new job opportunities to wider sectors of the community, decreased gentrification and displacement of residents and businesses, and better standard of living.

A monitoring mechanism is necessary to ensure proper implementation of the vision. While the implementation timeframe is expected to involve an extended period (likely a ten year plan), review periods within the overall timeframe would evaluate the effectiveness of the plan components and consistency with the objectives and principles. A monitoring committee representing the project's stakeholders, including the Ministry of Tourism, Irbid's Municipality, and representatives of community groups and local businesses, should be formed to periodically evaluate progress and manage issues that arise.

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Appendix A 'Urban Heritage Management' Methods

Nijkamp et al. (1998) in their article 'A survey of methods for sustainable city planning and cultural heritage management', provide comprehensive descriptions of the six assessment methods that are regarded by Al-kheder et al. (2009) to be applicable to a wide range of urban planning problems including sustainability in an urban heritage context. The following are brief descriptions of the methods:

- Benchmarking: *"benchmarking is mainly applied as a management tool. Its aim is to compare the performance of a company with the performance of other companies, and to analyze why these changes occur. In this way it can be analyzed why a company is more successful than another company ... [B]enchmarking is more than simply comparing ratios or achievements of targets. Its aim is to learn where improvements in policies may occur"* (pp.7).
- Spider model: *"The most important future developments may be studied by using a simple, qualitative multi-criteria analysis, which is visualized by means of a Spider Model. Multi-criteria analysis is a method to grasp, classify and analyze different scenarios by means of explicitly formulated criteria (which are put on the axes of the spider). The advantage of this analysis is that the individual assessment criteria do not have to be measured in a single quantitative unit; they may be qualitative in nature"* (pp.9).
- Meta-regression analysis: *"Meta-analysis is a systematic framework which synthesizes and compares past studies and extends and reexamines the results of the available data to reach more general results than earlier attempts had been able to do ... [It] refers to a statistical analysis of a large collection of results from individual studies for the purpose of integrating the findings. It connotes a rigorous alternative to the casual, narrative discussions of research studies which typify our attempts to make sense of a rapidly expanding research literature"* (pp.11)
- Regime analysis: *"is a discrete multi-assessment method that is suitable due to its flexibility in assessing projects as well as policies, and due to its capacity to analyze quantitative as well as ordinal data"* (pp. 14). As a multi-criteria method, it *"is based upon two kinds of input data" am evaluation matrix and a set of political weights"* (pp. 14).
- Flag model: It *"is a methodology that has been developed to offer a broad framework for decision support for regional sustainable development. A major issue in sustainability policy is the question of how to determine a normative definition of sustainability. The flag model has the objective to operationalize the concept of sustainability by defining a multi-criteria approach in which the indicators are represented through ranges of values by using the normative concept of critical threshold values"* (pp. 17).
- Rough set analysis: *"this approach is designed to discover possible cause-effect relationships between the data available, to underline the importance and the strategic role of some data, and to differentiate between irrelevant and relevant data. The intrinsic attribute of rough set analysis is its ability to manage quantitative as well as qualitative data"* (pp.19).

Appendix B Heritage Site Analysis Tools

Analysis Topics				Techniques & Methods	Tools
Analysis of the Natural Environment	Topographical features			Surveying techniques	Maps Tables Charts Diagrams
	soil				
	Landscape – Vegetation Plantation – Flora / Fauna				
	Water				
	Climatical [<i>sic.</i>] features				
Analysis of the Man-Made (Built) Environment	Physical Analysis	Locational analysis		Documentary research	Maps
		Historical analysis		Documentary research	Data collection from books, maps, documents; Inventory forms can also be used to document buildings, streets, etc. Of historic value
		Urban pattern analysis	Form of development	Morphological analysis	Maps 3D drawings
			Solid-void relations	Figure – Ground analysis Linkage theory	Maps, street silhouettes, 3D proportionate or scaled sketch drawings, photographs
			Street pattern; Urban spaces in terms of their quality, enclosure, character, activities		
			Elements of the area such as paths, nodes, edges, landmarks and districts	Lynch Analysis	Maps Photographs, 3D sketch drawings
			The gap sites and vacant plots of land, streets or spaces requiring definition or redefinition	Lost space analysis	Maps, photographs
	Architectural Evaluation		Site Analysis	With sketch and measured drawings and photographing; information gathered on tables, inventory forms for all buildings	
	Functional Analysis	Accessibility / Permeability / Traffic / Circulation		Traffic & transportation survey	Maps
		Functional distribution		Land use survey	Maps presented with appropriate coloring and techniques
Analysis of the Socio-economic Environment	Demographic structure of the citizens, users of / within the area			Questionnaire survey, interviews	Tables Graphs Bar-charts
	The existing economic activities and employment pattern				
	The existing laws and regulations			Documentary research	Documents, laws, regulations
	The current local authority/ government policies				
	The official and non-official stakeholders in the conservation activities			Interviews, questionnaire survey	Tables Graphs Bar-charts

Table 1: Analysis topics, techniques, methods and tools in an urban environment. Source: Doratli et al. (2004) pp.334

Appendix C Topography and Slope Maps

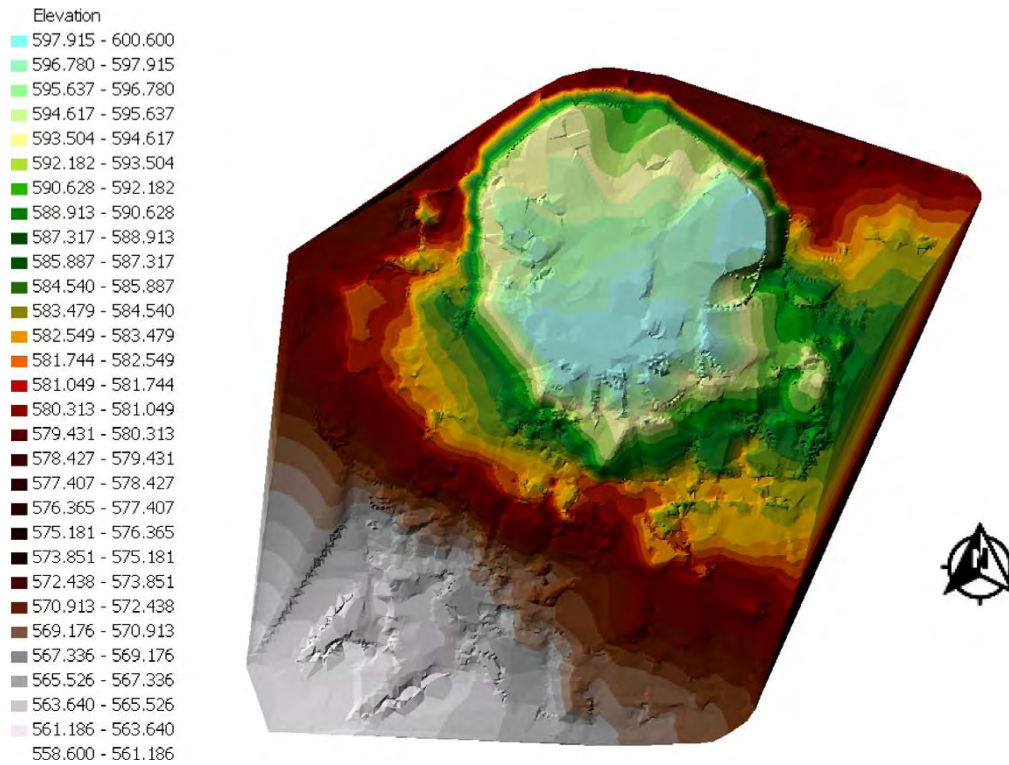


Figure 33: Topography of Project Site. (Al-kheder et al., 2009)

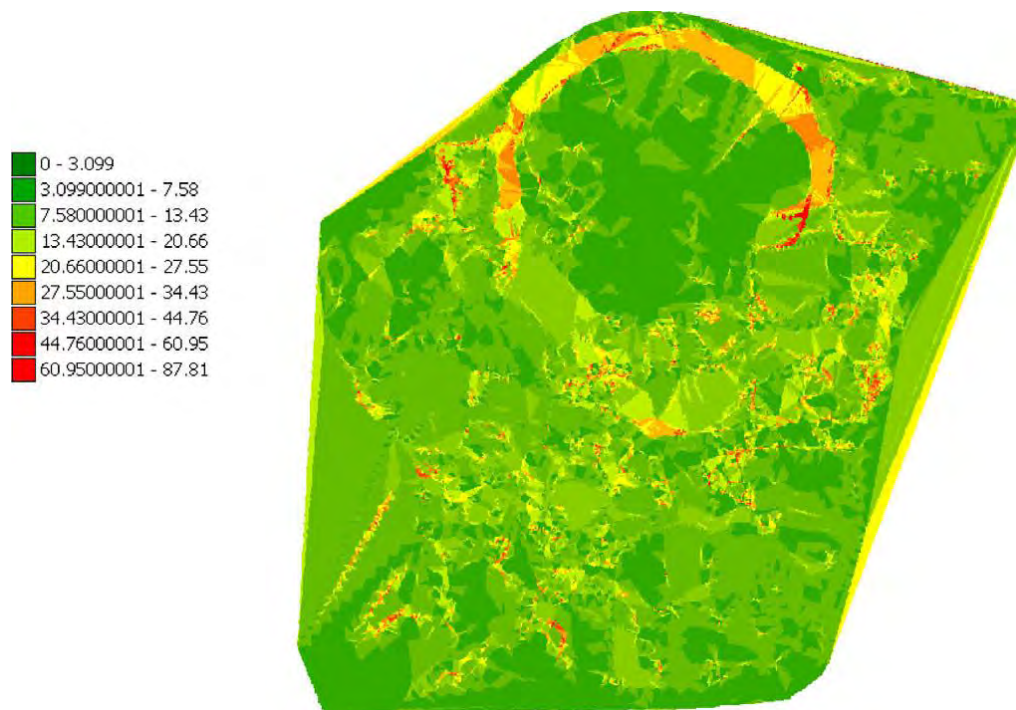


Figure 34: Slope Map. (Al-kheder et al., 2009)

Appendix D Land Use Map



Appendix E Districts and Heritage Clusters Map



