

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

BETWEEN SEA AND CITY:
REVITALIZATION OF A MEDITERRANEAN COAST
THE CASE OF BATROUN

by NAMITTA A. MERCHAK

A thesis

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for the degree of Master of Urban Design
to the Department of Architecture and Design
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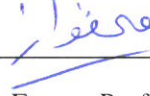
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AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Namitta A. Merchak

for Master of Urban Design

Major: Urban Design

Title: *Between Sea and City: Revitalization of a Mediterranean coast – the case of Batroun*

Batroun presents the typical urban problematic of a Mediterranean city in proximity to a world heritage site. Owing to an urban expansion that developed around the transport infrastructure, Batroun can be roughly described to have grown into four parallel spatial entities: the coastal entity delineated by the old coastal road, the old residential fabric extending to the International road, both of which are part of the old archeological site; the mixed new dense residential fabric reaching the highway; and the agricultural fields to the east of the highway. Each of these entities operates according to different spatial, economic and sociocultural modes, constituting settings that are weakly connected and mostly turning their back to the sea. The old town is gradually disconnected from the coast, detached from the inland developments, and abandoned by its residents. In addition, the local population is losing hold of the economy: large scale supermarket chains are opening, while local, small scale stores are closing. This disconnection triggers negative spatial, social and economic outcomes. To counter these trends, the thesis seeks to articulate an integrated urban design strategy for the city which targets specifically the city's coast and its old market artery.

The thesis builds on the hypothesis that an integrated sustainable tourism strategy that (1) capitalizes on the city's heritage value, (2) restores the integrity and continuity of the coast, and (3) reintroduces connections between the coast and the old city – particularly its commercial streets- has the potential to pull people back towards the sea and channel recreational development while revitalizing the old town's economy and maintaining its population in place. The thesis hypothesizes that such an intervention would also control the ongoing undirected development, which is threatening the natural and built heritage and displacing businesses and people.

The thesis translates this tourism strategy into an integrated connection between the coast and the old city, introducing spatial, economic, and cultural lateral linkages along the old market, the historical site, and the resorts, all stitched by the horizontal spine of the old coastal road. The thesis further zooms in to articulate an urban design intervention that converts the vehicular old coastal into a vibrant urban corridor, intersecting with three vibrant nodes: (1) the market place and its public square as a starting node; (2) the end of Bahsa alley as a central node, along with the former creating by this a pulsating loop around the archeological/historical site, and (3) the resorts node as an end point. By adopting such a strategy, Batroun rebuilds its potential as a city where visitors and locals intersect and interact in different seasons for different communal and spatial urban experiences and a city celebrated as a whole in its beautiful coast and cultural heritage.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Batroun is one of the most ancient cities of Lebanon. Located on the coast at the southern gate of the North Governate of Lebanon, within the casa of Batroun, the town boasts a lush coast and important archeological sites including the well-known Phoenician wall (figure 1). Over the past two decades, the town has also come to be known for its growing recreational importance: hotels, bars, and beaches have begun to attract visitors, particularly in the summer months. Yet, the coastal city is in an alerting danger. The old town is being abandoned (figure 8) because of the lack of economic opportunities, as residents leave after selling their properties to a handful of powerful developers. The coast is neglected and encroached on (figure 7), and urban development is haphazardly expanding. Furthermore, the city's expansion has been powerfully impacted by road development that has shifted its center and encouraged sprawl.

Since Batroun is my hometown, I feel concerned about this negative downturn and responsible to intervene with my urban design skills and prevent the ongoing destruction. This thesis is a testimony to my commitment. I aim to propose an integrated revitalization strategy that builds on the historical relation between the city and its coast.

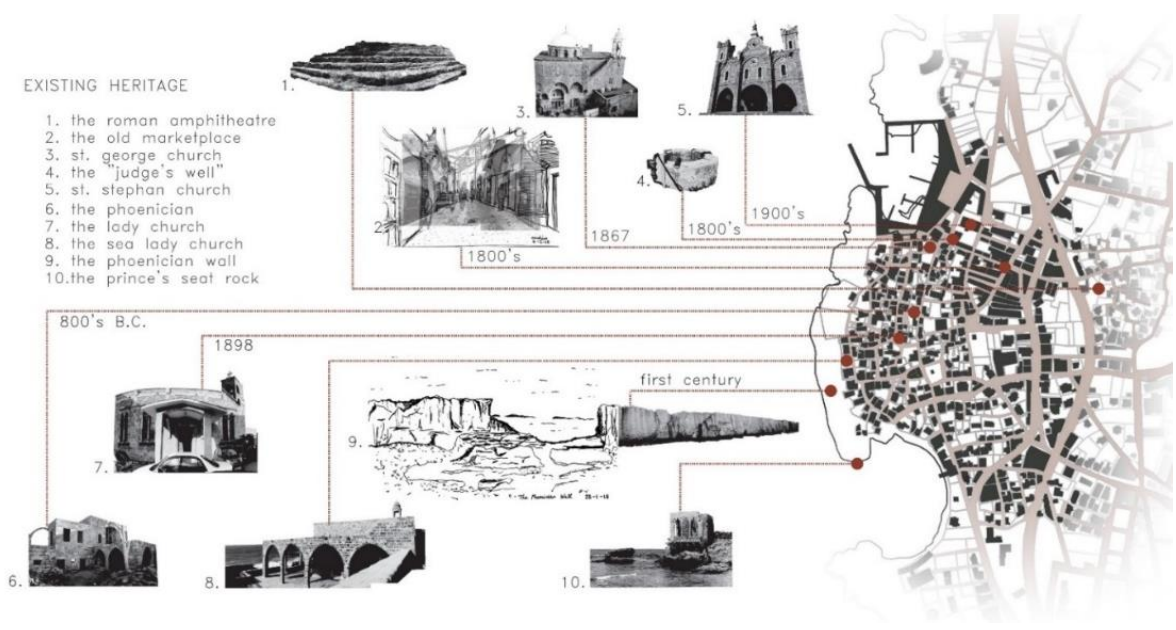


Figure 1: Existing Heritage



Figure 2: Batroun International Festival



Figure 3: Villa Paradiso Rooftop



Figure 4: Wicker Park Concert



*Figure 5: Water activities by the Colonel
(Aquarium behind)*



Figure 6: Colonel Beach



Figure 7: Neglected coast featuring the Phoenician wall



Figure 8: Abandoned Old Town

1.1 Problem Statement and hypothesis

Batroun's coast attracts visitors from all over Lebanon because of its significant historical significance with hotspots such the Phoenician wall, the fishing port, Bahsa Bay and the Colonel beer brewery.



Figure 9: Hotspots

However, due to a number of factors such as deteriorating service infrastructure, property development interests, the general national economic downturn, road development, and the lack of integrated planning, the city's urbanization is developing in parallel to the coast rather than in relation to the seafront. In addition, Batroun urbanization has occurred along main vehicular arteries that encouraged city growth along the cars' needs and independently of the lateral relation to the city's coast.

The Old Town is gradually isolated: It is disconnected from the coast, detached from inland urbanization, and abandoned by its users: one third of the stores are closed. The old city is consequently losing life and spatial qualities. Conversely, the coast is developing as a tourist area, separate from the Old Town. It is suffering from illegal encroachments on public spaces, and haphazard development that threatens historical/archeological remains and ecological value.

To counter these trends, the thesis seeks to articulate an integrated urban design strategy for the city which targets specifically the city's coast and its old market artery. To this end, it builds on the numerous experiences of cities around the Mediterranean and beyond that have managed to reinvigorate their coastal development through integrated tourist strategies over the past two decades.

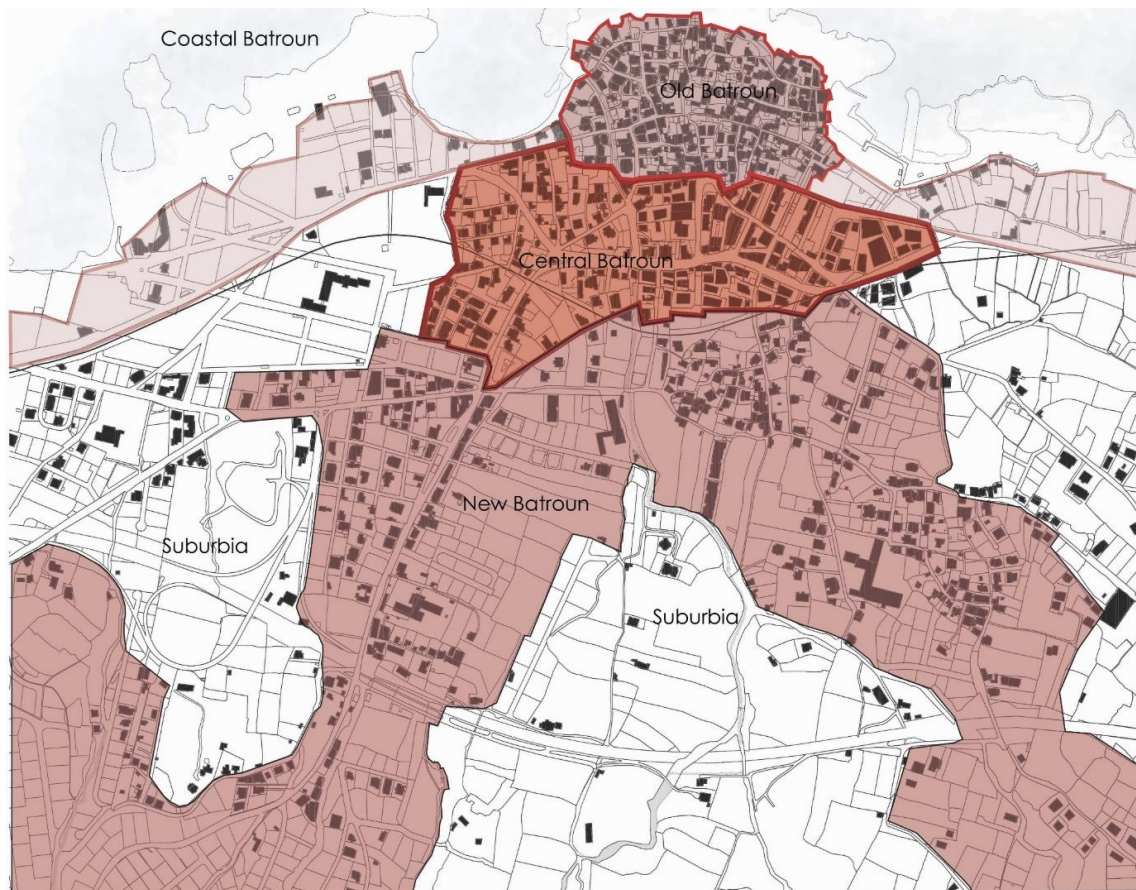


Figure 10: Batroun Expansion



Figure 11: Old Souks



Figure 12: Old Souks



Figure 13: Bahsa Bay along the coast neglected



Figure 14: Aerial View of the Phoenician Wall

1.2 Research Question and Hypothesis

How can a strategic urban planning and design intervention (e.g. targeted projects, regulations and zoning revision) along the coast animate and protect the city's coast, reconnect the coast to the city, restore its continuity, and capitalize on its heritage value? Can the coast be a catalyst to encourage an economic and social activity in the town?

The thesis builds on the assumption that an integrated tourism strategy could provide long-term sustainable development for the town. Such a strategy would depart from the current context where individual locations and/or venues attract tourists momentarily to swim, dance, or visit archeological sites and adopts instead a holistic understanding of tourism to expand to the entire town.

My hypothesis is that an integrated urban design strategy that spans across the old city and the coast can capitalize on the city's natural and built heritage to generate an integrated urban core that is the basis of a tourism strategy developed holistically to benefit the town. Such an intervention would have to (1) articulate a holistic vision for the city's old core and coast as a first step towards imagining a city-wide integration strategy that integrates the multiple assets of the city within one framework, (2) restore the integrity and continuity of the coast, recognizing the specific character of each of its zones and building on this character to foster multiple relations between each section of the coast and the nearby city, (3) reintroduce connections across the sections of the coast and between the coast and the old city –particularly its commercial streets, and (4) enhance “nodes” within the old city that could act as important intersection within/across the city and in its relation to the sea.

1.3 Thesis Significance

The significance of this study is two-fold: Locally, the plan could initiate a conversation in the town about possible development strategies. This is particularly important because Batroun has benefited from the energy and investments of numerous young groups who have strived to build on its potential with entrepreneurial tourist initiatives. Their integration within a general framework would hence be highly beneficial.

In addition, this thesis provides important insights about the case study of Batroun that could potentially inform the investigation of neglected old cores and coasts along Mediterranean cities and the role that urban planning and design can play in the process.

1.4 Literature Review

Given that my project is based on the principle of relying on tourism to reinvigorate urban development, I begin my literature review here to outline the elements of a sustainable tourism strategy.

Tourism is recognized as a big industry worldwide which is a key sector of development in several countries and a major source of income, jobs and wealth creation and also influencing complementary investment and domestic policies. The main attractions for tourists could be sandy beaches, the nice weather, and tourist infrastructure. In addition, some tourists seek clubs and some others are attracted by the presence of world heritage sites. I begin by defining what an integrated sustainable tourism strategy means and where urban design fits within its articulation. Given the importance of Batroun's built and natural heritage to the town's tourism sector, I include a discussion of ways in which tourism builds on heritage for urban revitalization.

1.4.1 Sustainable tourism along coastal zones

Since the 1960s, a large debate about sustainable tourist development has focused on coastal areas where a lot of this development has occurred. Indeed, coastal areas are globally known as densely populated making the environment increasingly vulnerable. Given that they also are strong attraction points for social and touristic

activities, coastal areas are strategic and sensitive spaces and their conservation, development, and the management of their territories is imperative.

During the 1970s, numerous coastal areas were overwhelmed by artificialization, intensive building development driven by large-scale tourism (Cetin, 2016). These trends are now widely decried as sustainable tourism has gained great importance, with researchers and practitioners emphasizing the importance of protecting the initial equilibrium of the coasts and preventing their degradation (Marafa, 2008). The vulnerability of such environments is a result of many activities of which tourism is a key element. Therefore, sustainable tourism should be encouraged and promoted in order to protect the coast and enable the existence and the continuity of these activities.

What is sustainable ecotourism? According to UNESCO, “sustainable tourism” is one that respects locals and travelers as well as cultural heritage and environment (UNESCO, 2010). Similarly, the World Tourism Organization defines sustainable tourism development as one that meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. The WTO further emphasizes the importance of managing all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems (World Tourism Organization, 2011).

Given the importance of sustainable coastal tourism development, scholars have attempted to define a framework for its implementation. Thus, Marafa and Chau (2013) outlined a framework for Sustainable Tourism Development on Coastal and

Marine Zone Environment where the industry would exert low impact on the environment and culture of the hosting community, while helping them generate income and employment. The framework also outlines the importance of conserving the local ecosystems and cultural heritage that constitute attractions to visitors. Such needs, the authors argue, should integrate and manage coastal areas' needs while considering the vulnerability of the coast. Marafa and Chau argue that there is a need for an integrated approach in order for marine and coastal tourism to develop and to continue to attract tourists. This approach should be translated into a sustainable coastal tourism development that will ensure no over exploitation and no excessive pollution. It should as well prevent irreversible damage from over exploitation, overdevelopment as well as tourism activities (Marafa, Chau, 2013). Others have emphasized the need for sustainable coastal development to promote greater livability and a just equitable distribution of resources and opportunities in the coastal zone (Beatley, et al., 1994). However, Marafa (2008) argues that sustainable tourism borrows heavily from the theme of sustainable development. Thus, Sustainable tourism if accepted and implemented should be along the premise that tourism is firstly an economic activity which is desirable to most economies. In addition, whether tourism is implemented or not, the physical and cultural environments have intrinsic values which outweigh their values as tourism assets particularly where such environments support a population on coastal areas. The scale and character of tourism development should respect the character of the area; and finally, tourism development should be sensitive to the needs and aspirations of the host community.

Along the same vein, in his chapter "Frameworks for Tourism as a Development Strategy", Pedersen (2016) argues, that to the extent a community

explores and then incorporates its cultural and historic values into its tourism decision-making strategy, a wider dialog on community needs and desires may be fostered, beyond solely the economic. Activities where cultural values and considerations come into play can complement the more usual exclusively economic-focused interests. Pedersen (2016) affirms, though, that economic interests are generally the primary drivers and these interests can hold the greatest sway over the final outcomes. Initiatives that have the ability to advance the social and the cultural and historic but also have ties to the business community and economic constituencies would seem to stand the best possibility of success in exploring the full range of tourism potential. Several approaches that tie cultural and historic considerations to economic interests that may enable communities to reflect upon, identify, and prioritize the full range of tourism's potential are suggested. One of the approaches proposed in the chapter is the "Cultural Events".

A strategic use of cultural events could help trigger a look at tourism's larger purpose further enabling constituencies to explore the question of what is tourism to sustain. Research has shown that it's possible for public sector marketing efforts to utilize events strategically to bring long-term economic and social benefits to the location and its community. Events can become an integral part of the collective communities' psyche in terms of celebration of culture and as a demonstration of civic pride providing social as well as economic benefits. The social benefits accrued are likely to include, yes, enhanced civic pride, and also higher levels of community involvement (Pugh and Wood 2004). With cultural events, it could also be thought that these benefits would be able to be used to explore other spin off activities, such activities as enhanced educational programs for schools and adult learners adding to

their utility of purpose. One of the ideas ultimately generated with the Palau initiative was an idea to reintroduce the idea of a Taro Festival to the islands. The Festival had been a one-time event and had taken place several years ago as a fair promoting local culture and pride. Taro, a food staple in the Pacific islands, was consistently listed as a cultural icon that had to be recognized in a tourism product. Eventually, there was a look at tourism's larger purpose and discussion of the usefulness of the festival as a vehicle for generating cultural pride but also for promoting marine conservation issues; grown in coastal wetlands the taro crop cover can aid the protection of the coral reefs at the World Heritage site. In tandem, this triggered a discussion on the use of taro products in a variety of food stuffs that could be developed as commercial products. Interestingly, the introduction of this festival theme also introduced the issue of a Palau cultural copyright law now being debated by government officials.

1.4.2 Integrating Heritage as part of the tourism experience

Heritage preservation is brought to the fore as a strategy to improve urban economies, generate employment, and improve livelihoods. Thus, cities worldwide are trying to transform their image, improve their infrastructure, and to recover and reinterpret their history, heritage and traditions by way of marketing distinctive local identities for global consumption. According to Khechen (2004, p.196), Beirut and Shanghai decided on selective preservation while carrying major infrastructure improvements that would renew their urban image and boost their economic development and growth. Other ancient cities, mainly those with uncompetitive economies on the global scene, such as Byblos, found in tourism an opportunity to promote themselves.

Yet, this approach is not without its critics. Thus, Orbasli (2000, p.154) points that tourism is portrayed as a force of global capitalism, turning places into theme parks or commodities. In this context, Orbasli expresses strong concerns about historic cities and heritage being gentrified or turned into "Disney experiences". Thus, planning should be able to revive the heritage, enhance the local economy and respond to tourism without drifting to mimics and Disney-like interventions. Orbasli deems necessary the importance of planning in ensuring the sense of place, the local distinctiveness and societal fabric that should be conserved along with the built heritage. According to Khechen (2004), heritage can only be preserved if city life is able to remain a part of it, and if the functions and meanings, which are favored and compatible with the city's characteristics, through the "adaptive" reuse of its various features.

It is also clear that tourism is not a constant, and not all visitors are the same. Thus, it is very important to understand the city's inhabitants' reactions toward a new plan aiming at channeling tourism into the historic center where they reside. For instance, the city of Zagreb does not have the problem of mass tourism. A plan was thought up to stimulate this zone and make it attractive by opening spaces for businesses and cafes. That plan, however, was not well received by inhabitants who prefer to maintain a quiet lifestyle. In Zagreb, people almost never leave the historic center because it is a pleasant, peaceful, a place with a calm atmosphere.

The objective of Zagreb's experience was to prevent mass tourism from happening. The city of Zagreb is attentive to its citizens and should remain so; the day-to-day life of the city's inhabitants should not be perturbed. It would also aim at continuing with projects that are welcomed by the population, with calls for public tendering to find the best urban solutions to be financed by the city. Thus, this case

study opened my eyes to the need of understanding my city's inhabitants' reactions toward any plan that I might suggest and at taking into consideration their frustrations at channeling tourism into the historic center where they reside.

In "The Inventory of the Historic City of Sana'a, a Tool for Urban Conservation", the UNESCO- World heritage center (2008) argues that a new planning approach should consider the historic heritage of the different urban fabrics not as a "constraint" to modernization but as a "resource" for a more sustainable urban development - an asset to be preserved not only to keep alive the "deep roots" of the city's cultural identity, but also to promote activities which can improve the economic and social conditions of its inhabitants.

One of the approaches suggested by Petersen (2016) that tie cultural and historic considerations to economic interests and that may enable communities to identify, and prioritize the full range of tourism's potential is the Mapping of Heritage Assets.

If a destination, its associated protected areas and supporting organizations and businesses, have an interest in heritage tourism-led development, an initiative that could help to facilitate a wider dialog on community needs and desires could be the process of identifying, prioritizing, and mapping regional cultural and natural heritage tourism-related assets. This initiative, using a region's or community's tangible and intangible heritage assets, brings together diverse interests in a region wide reflection to define their goals and objectives and help to see where practical linkages and overlaps might be encouraged. Experiences in the Douro Valley of Portugal and several areas in the US, Mexico and South America using the National Geographic Map Guide initiative

have shown the process as a useful one to make connections to a variety of constituencies. In these cases, the initiatives formed stewardship councils generally using existing tourism associations and protected area management and then through surveys identified and prioritized community-based heritage attractions and their related products. One of the hooks for businesses is the marketing benefits of being associated with a particular attraction identified and described on the National Geographic paper and digital Map Guide. One of the hooks for protected areas is the distribution of visitation – if protected areas are well-managed for visitation. Aside from the economic, the community interest is linked to the element of building community pride in the tangible and intangible heritage assets identified by community members. While the National Geographic experiences are mentioned, a community or region could organize similar initiatives and promote the heritage assets using their own paper or digitized map and website. An objective of the initiative might also have a small percentage of the profits from those businesses, associated with the heritage assets on the map, going back into a fund to aid on-going efforts the community deems appropriate.

1.5 Methodology

This research will rely on a case study of the city of Batroun to investigate a strategy for the revitalization of the coast and reconnect it the old city.

First, I spent time in the city and talked to people to understand their perceptions and derive an actual problematic of the town. I conducted field observations to investigate the urban setting within its spatial entities. During this exercise, I focused on the daily practices, social structures, and the physical conditions of buildings and public spaces. I visited the field in different timing during the day and in different

seasons and events. I also interviewed: 1- Owners who left and others who stayed, and documented through observations allowing me to observe, note and analyze the routine of their daily practices. 2-Fishermen at the port, and 3- Shop owners and residents coast to further understand their needs and their opinions about urban interventions along the coast.

Second, in order to develop character zones, through mapping tools, I documented the historical evolution of the city to show its path of growth and locate heritage areas. Then maps of zoning and land use were extremely useful to understand the distribution of functions (e.g. residential, commercial, educational, and religious). Those were followed by road hierarchies' maps to illustrate connectivity and accessibility. Moreover, those latter were reinforced by mapping shoreline continuity, visual obstructions, and urban permeability and accessibility. To identify the urban character, I had to illustrate three of Kevin Lynch elements: paths, landmarks, and edges. Socio-economic activities- walking, sitting, gathering, playing, fishing, swimming- taking place along the coast were explained in a separate map in order to analyze how people are using the space and to be able to propose adequate spaces for these practices.

In addition, landownership and stakeholders along the coast and the violations of property are very important to be understood in order to identify the ways of intervention. Based on the previous findings, character zones along the coast were derived allowing us to further intervene.

In the third phase, I was able to articulate an intervention that responds to the vision on the basis of the character zones and urban analysis. This phase also involved a visualization exercise based on images, sketches and 3D representations that

constituted different interventions which I will propose to official stakeholders in the Municipality of Batroun. This method will help me discuss with them my ideas and improve my intervention based on their vision and knowledge about the city.

Building on the sustainable tourism framework where the local community is to be empowered and engaged in the everyday place making, and adapting the method developed in Beirut on Batroun, this research extends this method to bring in the element of archeology and historical town that distinguished Batroun and tries to capitalize on them to create character zones.

In order to revitalize the coast, part of the issue is to improve the internal circulation of the city and to create a node as a strategy to connect the two together. This thesis does not consist on looking about it as zoning but about creating connections across the coast and the city.

CHAPTER 2

EXPLORING THE SITE

This chapter explores, in its first section, Batroun throughout history in relation to its larger context; and exposes its urban growth in relation to changing socio-economic factors. According to Wallace (2013), "Our forefathers created their urban environment, either by an evolutionary and often intuitive processes over time, or by a conscious single-minded design effort, in response to the needs and aspirations of their time". The objective is thus to comprehend the original assets of the place and their evolution into modern history prior to setting a revitalization strategy, and hence a design scheme for the city, and more specifically to the coast.

2.1 Context

2.1.1 The site and name

Batroun is a coastal town of North Lebanon lying 50 km north of Beirut and 30 km south of Tripoli. The Old City extends round a circular bay with its characteristic port of classic form; there is a sheltered roadstead to the north of the town and another to the south, close to which is the "Pool of the King's Daughter" called by the locals as Birket Bint el-Malak, the shipbuilding yard and the "Throne of the Prince" also called Maqaad el-Mir. It is thought that it is this Maqaad el-Mir that gave its name to the town (Merchak, 2013), as *bet trouna* signifies "the place of the chief" or "locality of the prince" (Hobeika and Armalé). After the conquest of Alexander the Great, the Greeks called it Botrys, signifying

bunch of grapes, seemingly because of the vineyards which covered its own soil and that of the surrounding region.

It kept this name under the Seleucid kings and under the Romans and Byzantines who came after. Batroun remained famous for its wines till the time of the Ottoman conquest. The Arabs called the town Bathroun. The Crusaders gave it the status of a seignory (feudal fief) under the Count of Tripoli and called it Le Boutron (Merchak, 2013)

2.1.2 Boundaries & population

The city has an approximate area of 4.88 km² with its municipal boundary surrounded from the Northern side by Koubba, Selaata and Jabal Hamat, from the Eastern side by Ijdabra and Ibrin, from the Southern side by Fadous-Kfaraabida and from the Western side by the Sea.

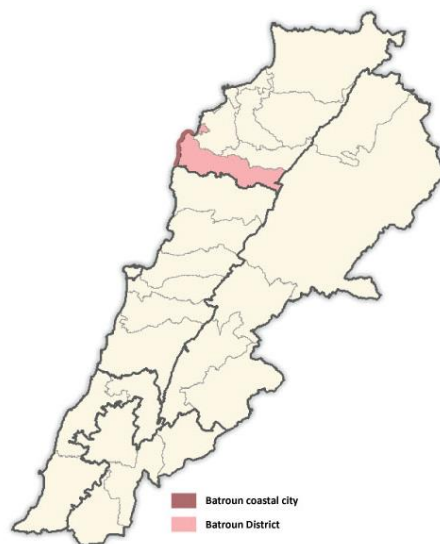


Figure 15: Batroun on the Lebanese Map



Figure 16: Satellite view of Batroun town (source: Google map)

According to Mekhtar Ghalbouny (2018), Batroun registers officially around 13 000 citizens, of whom 9 500 are permanent residents. The latter inhabits an approximate number of 1 500 houses. Those citizens originated from a mixed population namely local fishermen/farmers, some bourgeois families, mostly middle-class families, and a few displaced people who left Akkar during the civil war. There is no significant diversity reflected in the religious group, the majority are Christians, and Sunnites' are a minority.

2.2 Historical Evolution

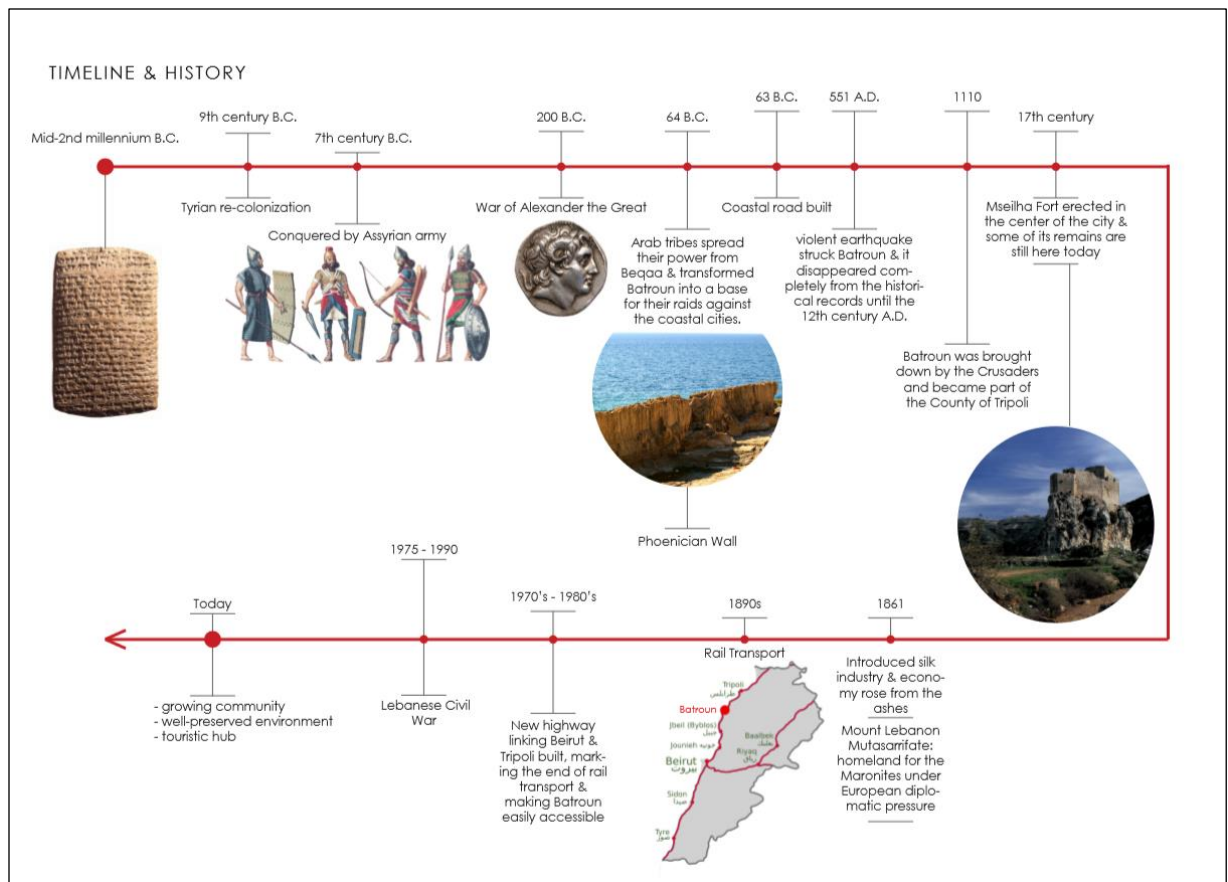


Figure 17: Timeline and History (reference: historian Joseph Merchak)

2.2.1 Prehistory (500,000 years ago to 3,300 B.C.)

According to the historian J. Merchak (1997), prehistoric man in and around Batroun has left us a rich store of artifacts made occasionally in bone but more often in flint, basalt or obsidian. He lived as a hunter-gatherer nomad during Paleolithic times but became sedentary during the Neolithic period. He left us various kinds of tools such as chipped pebbles, bifaces, hand axes, scrapers and chisels.

2.2.2 Historical times

Batroun reflects the stratification of multiple historic eras (the Phoenicians, the Romans, the Byzantines, the Crusaders, and ending with the Ottomans), each shaping the urban fabric incrementally.

a. The Phoenician Period (3,300 B.C. to 64 B.C.)

It was during this time that the name Batroun first appeared in history, for example in the letters of Tal el Amarna, dating from the first half of the 14th century before Christ. A votive statuette of about 2,000 B.C. gives us an idea of the antiquity of the city (Merchak, 2013). From the sea bottom around Batroun, fishermen sometimes bring up pieces of the pottery in which the Phoenicians used to carry their food products.

Several sarcophagi have been exhumed from the Phoenician cemetery situated south of the town. The two docks of Batroun Port are separated by the Phoenician wall 225 m. long. The 9th century B.C. Phoenician citadel built by Ittobaal king of Tyre (approx. 887-856 B.C.) as a fortification to impede the advance of the Assyrian armies is the oldest surviving vestige of a building in the town (Merchak, 1997).

b. The Roman-Byzantine Period (64 B.C. to approx. 636 A.D.)

About the year 47 B.C. Julius Caesar gave the people of Batroun the right of Roman citizenship and then after 31 B.C. Augustus gave the town the right to strike its own coinage. The town enjoyed this privilege up to the middle of the third century A.D. The Roman theatre situated to the east of the Phoenician town

was the local artistic and cultural center. In 1977 a marble statue of a boy mounted on a dolphin and a simple mosaic were discovered.

c. The Crusader Period (1104-1289 A.D.)

After being made a seignory fief of the Count of Tripoli, Batroun was governed by the Agout family from Provence in Southern France and after their extinction by Plebanus, a merchant from Pisa. This fief was called the Seignory of the Holy Mountain. The Crusaders used the citadel (largely destroyed by an earthquake on 9th July, 551 A.D.) as the seat of government for the dependency. At Koubba they built St. Saviour's Church (middle of the 12th century) and also St. James's Church, of which only a part of the wall and traces of the apse remain.

d. The Mutassarriiate (1861-1918)

This is the best-known period in the history of Batroun. Batroun was a small port and center of government for the caza (sub-prefecture) of the same name.

Although the coast line of this district did not extend far, only from Selaata to Madfoun, the hinterland was extensive, covering the localities of Douma, Besheyleh, Tannourine, Qnet, Hadath el-Joubbeh, Hasroun, Bsharry, Ehden, Zgharta and Hermel and its surroundings. The prosperity of Batroun at this time had various reasons, religious, cultural, artistic, architectural and economic. As local capital with its mills, olive-presses, shops, hostelries and schools, it attracted a mixed population. The prosperity of the town was reflected in the wealth of its population, as shown by the rich villas decorated with painted murals, the Greek Orthodox church of Saint George and also the church of Our Lady of the Square and St. Stephen's Cathedral, both Maronite.

During this time, Batroun and its surroundings prospered from the culture of mulberry trees, whose leaves provided the staple food of silkworms (19,200kg. of cocoons in 1906), olive trees (7,500 kg. of olive oil in 1906), vines, almond trees, fig trees, wheat, barley, maize and tobacco. The sea made a considerable contribution to the diet of the people of Batroun. Industry was generally on the artisan level as in the case of the treating of tobacco, the production of salt, the cleaning of sponges and the unravelling of the silkworm cocoons.

Batroun also played an important cultural role, being the birthplace of a certain number of poets and writers and having a printing-press which produced newspapers, reviews and books.

Its archaeological remains are enough to provide a hundred years' work for specialists in research, archaeological excavation, restoration, urbanism and other branches of study. (Merchak, 1997)

2.3 The environment

This section tackles the hydrologic aspect of the environment.

- « El-jawz » river is spilled along Batroun banks, thus irrigates its orchards and is dry during summertime.
- Saint-Pierre channel is a winter flow that crosses through the city reaching from the valleys toward the bank of “Bahsa bay”. This channel is dry during summer and it is very polluted by the spill of wastewater from adjacent residences.

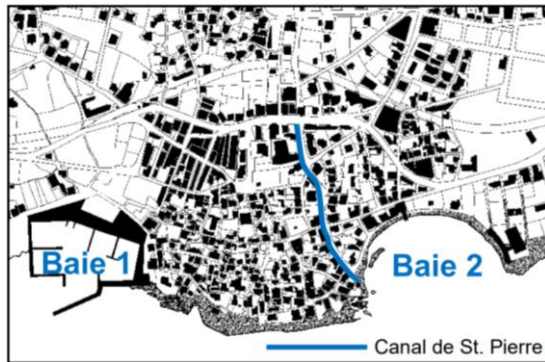


Figure 18: Hydrology Map (Batroun Municip., 2015)



Figure 19: St.Peter Canal (Batroun Municip., 2018)

- Two bays:

- 1- The port: It is reserved for fishing activities and leisure. Recently renovated into 4 basins. The port has prospered during the 19th century with commercial activities, fishing, the sponge, and salt production.
- 2- « Bahsa bay»: Commonly known by "Ma'aad el Mir" or "The Prince's seat", it is located in the old part of Batroun. Widely known by the locals, this beach is their favorite. Delineated by a tight road, the vehicles are forbidden to use it during summer. It also includes a very tight side walk and a pebbled and sandy beach, protected by a flattened rock in the sea forming a natural swimming pool.



Figure 20: Fishing Port (Author, 2019)



Figure 21: Bahsa Bay (Author, 2018)

2.4 Urban Structure

Batroun reflects the stratification of multiple historic eras, each marking and shaping the urban fabric incrementally. Due to these distant periods of Batroun's history from the Phoenician period up to the twenty-first century, four spatial entities can be identified in the urban structure of Batroun today, while being constantly reshaped by various socioeconomic factors.

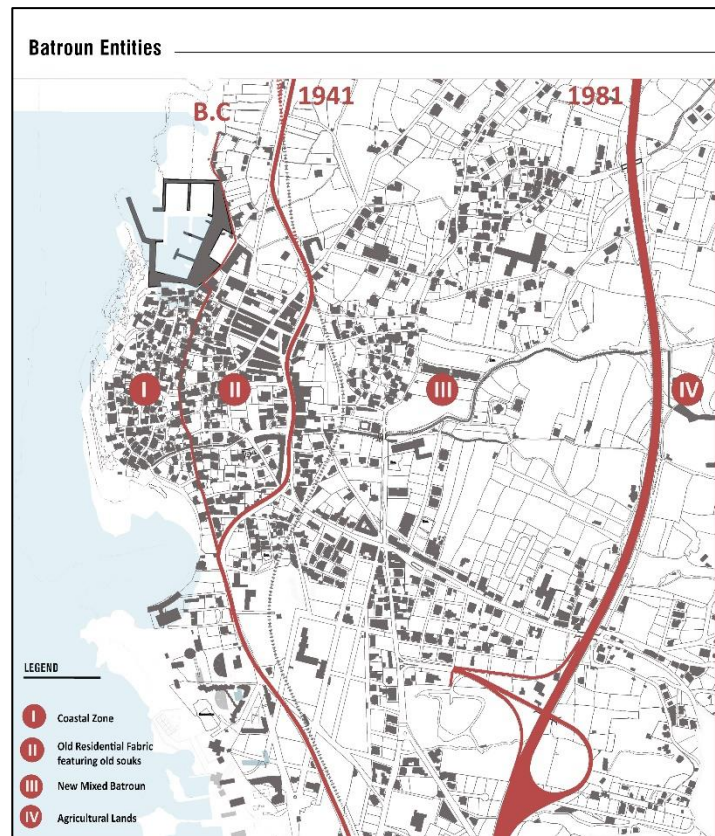


Figure 21: Batroun entities (Author, 2018)

First, the coastal entity shaped by the coastal road. Second, the sandwiched entity between the coastal road and what used to be called the International Road linking Beirut to Tripoli. Those two entities are both parts of the old town that contains the old souks and many other historical landmarks. Third, the dense residential fabric extending beyond the international road and reaching the highway. Fourth, the hinterland and the green agricultural area beyond the highway.

This section aims at understanding this urban structure in terms of heritage, physical characteristics, and the social, economic and political dynamics of the site. It is

considered as a comprehensive analysis on which I can base an intervention that responds to the existing context, its people and its dynamics.

2.4.1 The coastal entity

The area is shaped by a set of narrow streets by the sea, bounded to the North by the fishing port, to the South by the Southern Bay known as Al-Bahsa Beach, to the West by the sea and to the East by a longitudinal street forming a belt and boundary to the Old City. Walking around, I could feel the intimacy of the narrow streets contrasted with the open view sheds, the beauty of the vegetated front yards and backyards and the valuable ruins left behind several civilizations. In the heart of this old city lie remnants of the Phoenician fort, which is now subject to a renovation by the municipality in order to transform the area into a future fossil museum. Batroun is characterized by views on its coastal road, open scenic landscapes and breathtaking views. This coastal street was a major road in the city 2000 years ago until 1941, when the British generated the infrastructure of the new commercial street market, the International Road. The main features of this old neighborhood are: the Phoenician Wall located on the coastal stretch separating the two bays, the old fishing port, the traditional Bahsa beach, the Phoenician fort ruins (currently under renovation by the municipality to transform the site to a fossil museum), and most importantly the character of the neighborhood highlighted by the street typologies, the charm of the old houses and churches built on Crusaders' ruins. In addition, the southern part of the coastal entity includes a strip of recreational functions such as resorts, restaurants, and Colonel beer brewery.



Figure 22: Fishing Port



Figure 23: Bahsa Bay



Figure 24: Streets along the Bahsa Area



Figure 25: 2.6 tons Seafood to enter the Guinness book



Figure 26: Aerial View of the Coast



Figure 27: Narrow streets (source: Fadi Yachoui)



Figure 28: Open Sheds (source: Fadi Yachoui)



Figure 29: Sea Lady Church

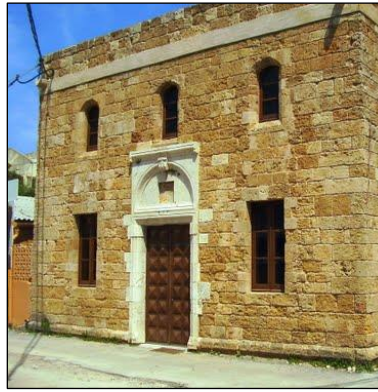


Figure 30: Saha Lady Church



Figure 31: St Georges Church

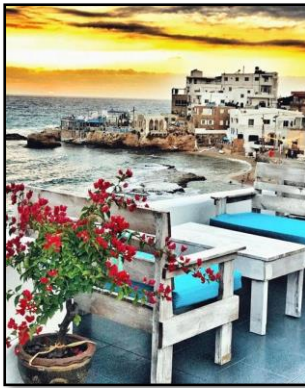


Figure 32: Titans Roof Top



Figure 33: Bistreau Restaurant



Figure 34: L'auberge de la Mer Hotel



Figure 35: Le Marin Restaurant



Figure 36: Ray's Coffee Shop



Figure 37: Villa Paradiso Boutique

2.4.2 The second entity featuring the old souks

The second entity is also located in the old town of Batroun and is sandwiched between the old coastal road and the international road that became today the new souks of Batroun. This entity is mostly residential, breached some archeological and historical landmarks such as St.Stephan cathedral, a 19th century well, and most importantly the old souks. The Old Souks (Al Aswaq el Qadima) is the result of the achievements of a rich social class; bourgeois tradesmen and industrialists. Its economic activity was very prosperous during the Ottoman period when it used to host a great number of shops, stores caravanserai, hotels and firms, above which were the dwelling-places of people.

The market started to recess when the city started growing east, and this was done through different stages: after the introduction of cars, after assigning Beirut as capital to which all the production was shifted, and mainly after the introduction of the international road. Today, it became stagnant with few intermittent activities, and most of its shops are closed. The old city as a whole is almost abandoned. The old souk is mainly used by elderly to sit and play chess, the fishing port arena by youth to gather and talk, and Saydet el Baher and other churches by Sundays' after-mass gatherings.



Figure 38: Old Souks- View 1



Figure 39: Old Souks- View 2



Figure 40: Old Souks- View 3



Figure 41: Stagnant Old Souks



Figure 42: Seafood Festival (once per year)



Figure 43: Vacancies in Old Souks (Author, 2019)



Figure 44: Ownership in Old Souks (Author, 2019)

The international road separating the second entity from the third imposes itself as a vibrant street market during the day: mostly small shops such as grocery, clothes, pharmacies, bookshops, cafes, gym, and administrative bodies such as the municipality, the Serail (the tribunal, general security, etc...). Ten years ago, it was also an extremely animated street at night sought by people from neighboring cities, extending to Beirut from the south, and Zgharta from the North. Today the influx is primarily coming from one side, the North. Every year, following the international festivals of Batroun, an open-air party is held all along this strip.



Figure 45: Functions along the new commercial Souk (source: F.Yachoui, 2012)



Figure 46: Night Life- View 1



Figure 47: Night Life- View 2

In addition, the extension of this artery towards a neighboring coastal town Fadous-Kafarabida (located to its South) includes many resorts that are extremely vibrant and busy with tourists and expatriates during summer time. This is also, why the economic activity of the old souk was almost completely transferred to this part of the city.



Figure 48: San Stephano Resort



Figure 49: Taiga Cafe

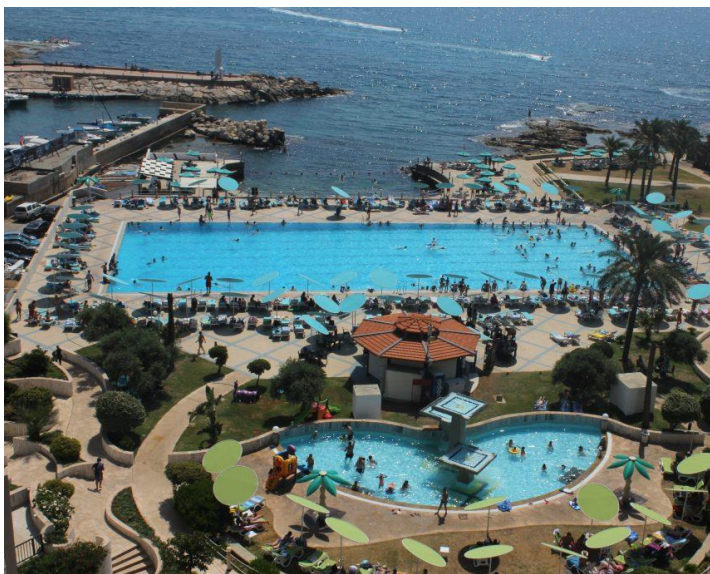


Figure 50: Aqualand Resort



Figure 51: Aqualand Resort, exterior view

2.4.3 Third entity

The new mixed Batroun is sandwiched between the international road and the highway. The dense residential fabric, was reinforced during the civil war in 1975. During that period, there was a large influx of people from Tripoli and Akkar resulting in a brutal expansion of Batroun toward the eastern part of the old town. This dense residential fabric

is breached with some educational institutions, and two supermarkets serving the city and killing the small shops.



Figure 52: Saint Joseph School

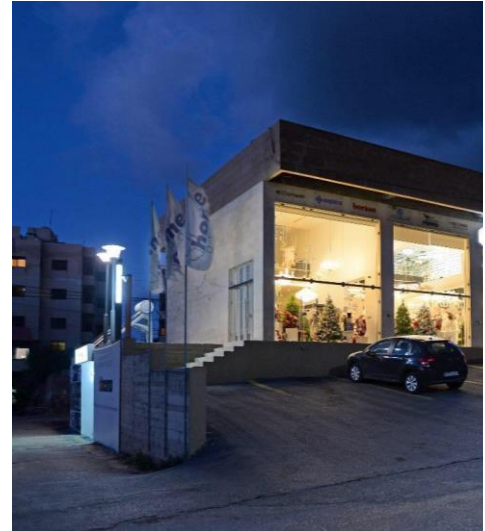


Figure 53: Batroun Home Depot



Figure 54: New Batroun



Figure 55: Marche du rond point Supermarket

In 1981, the highway imposed itself as a new infrastructure cutting through the city. Around this eastern edge, an urban expansion is ongoing. For instance, a big mall is now under construction. However, a lot of empty green spaces located at its east are still untouched.



Figure 56: Highway in Red (source: google map, edited by author, 2019)



Figure 57: Batroun Highway



Figure 58: New Shopping Mall Along the Highway

2.4.4 Fourth Entity: The Agricultural lands and greens spaces

To the east of the highway, connecting Batroun to its hinterlands, enormous agricultural lands and green spaces are extended.



Figure 59: Agricultural Lands 1



Figure 60: Agricultural Lands 2

CHAPTER 3

ANALYSIS OF THE COASTAL STRIP AND DESIGN INTERVENTION

Batroun has undergone many transformation processes, where both planned and unplanned growth patterns have taken place, and where socio-economic struggles have generated a disorganized built fabric. Today, Batroun counts numerous abandoned spaces, infrastructure rupture and a disjointed seafront. In order to analyze the urban fabric and the coast, the thesis builds on two approaches:

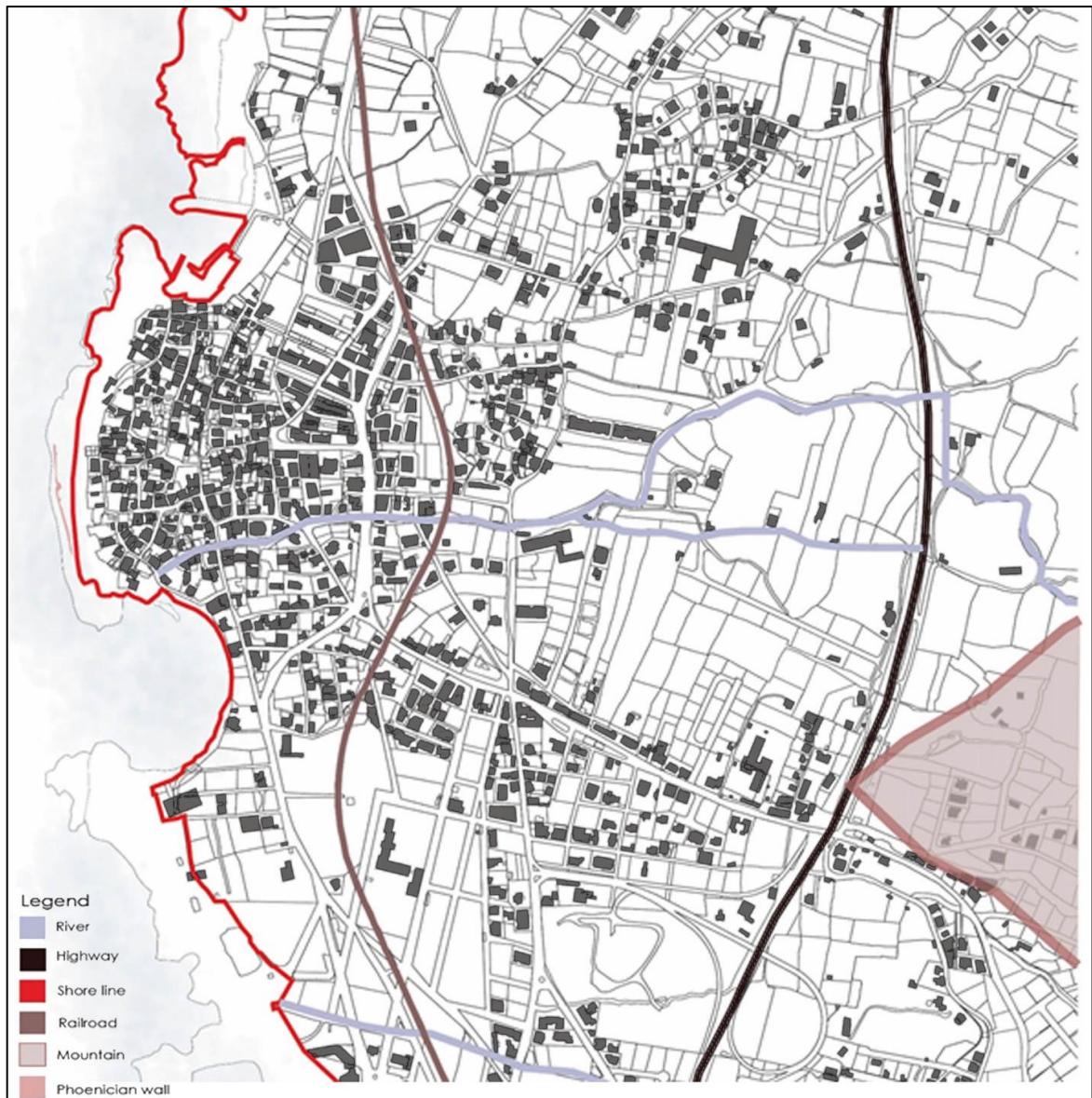
1. An analysis of the urban fabric that adopts the Lynchian approach of urban design analysis,
2. An analysis of the coast/ city-coast relation that adapts the approach developed in Beirut zone 10 study (Beirut Madinati/SJC 2018)

3.1 The Urban Fabric

In order to analyze the urban fabric of Batroun, I relied on a Lynchian analysis of the town's scape. In his book *The Image of The City*, Lynch identified five basic elements that people use to construct their mental images of a city. These are: edges, pathways, nodes, districts, and landmarks. These five elements have been widely adopted by urban designers. In this thesis, I rely on three of Lynch's elements to analyze the urban spaces of Batroun.

3.1.1 Edges

Lynch defines “Edges” as boundaries between two phases and linear breaks in continuity (p.46). As shown in map 1, the edges in the Mediterranean city of Batroun vary between the shoreline of the city, St. Peter’s river, the railroad, and the highway.



Map 1: Lynchian analysis, Edges in Batroun (source: Author, 2019)

3.1.2 Pathways

In addition, Lynch affirms (p.96) that the paths, the network of habitual or potential lines of movement through the urban complex, are the most potent means by which the whole can be ordered. As illustrated in figure 23, the paths are divided into a main route, the highway; into primary roads typically wider and well used, and secondary roads that distribute traffic in the town. Finally, the railway which is abandoned and more often, encroached on and built over. The main primary roads are: The International road linking Tripoli to Beirut and the road extending to the Batroun caza. Secondary roads include tighter roads within the old town and the rest of the city.

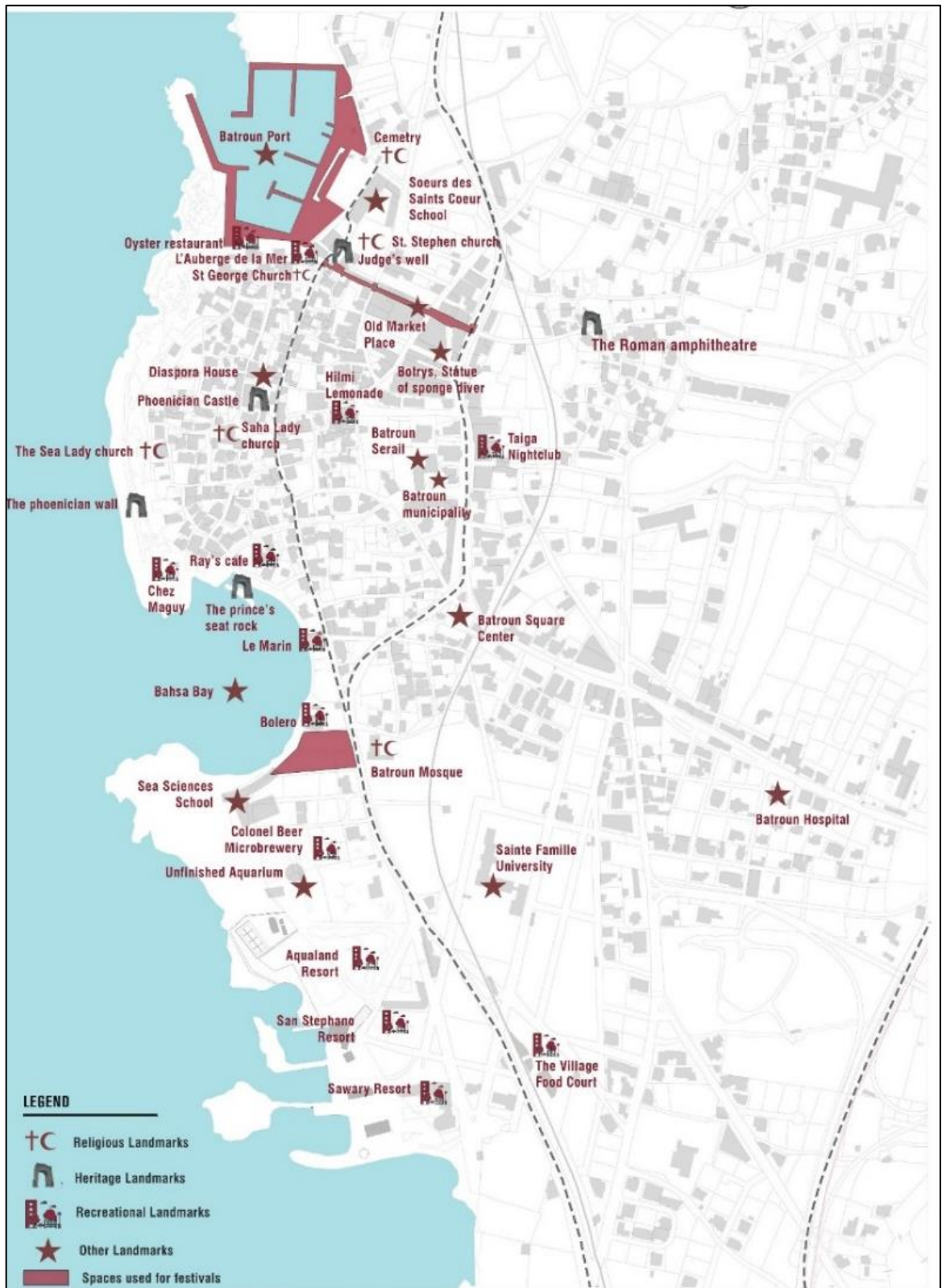


Map 2: Lynchian Analysis, Pathways in Batroun (source: Author, 2019)

3.1.3 Landmarks

As defined by Kevin Lynch, *landmarks* are external points of orientation, usually an easily identifiable physical object in the urban landscape.

To adapt Lynch's approach, I classified landmarks as religious, heritage, recreational, and "other". One last category is to be added covering the spaces used for festivals. Map 4 shows landmarks along the coast, where the Fishing port and Bahsa Bay stand out as two important landmarks. On the other hand, heritage landmarks are located in the old part of Batroun where the remains of the Phoenician castle are found along with multiple religious landmarks: the churches. Moving South, the map shows a concentration of recreational landmarks such as resorts. The map reflects the active life of the coast as well as its numerous cultural and social landmarks that give the city its current character and can be a potential attraction for visitors and tourists.



Map 3: Lynchian Analysis, Landmarks (Source: Author, 2019)

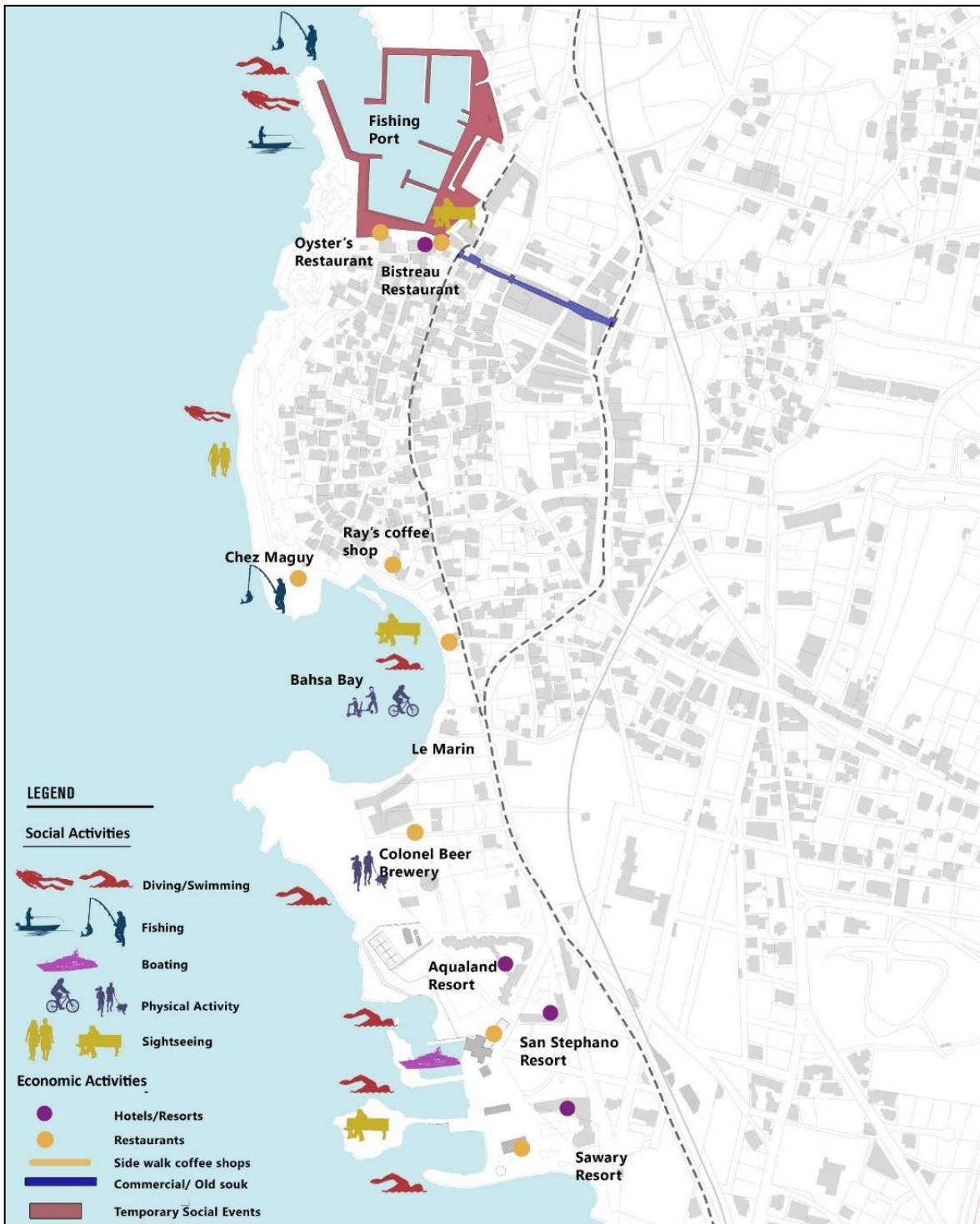
3.2 THE COAST

Based on the approach developed for Beirut's coast to analyze its relation to the city and to support a vision for an open, free, and accessible seafront, this thesis extends this approach to include one additional dimension: the archeological layer. In Beirut, the public practice along the seafront is being threatened by privately owned lands, resorts at some instances, by the port facilities and industrial zone at others. Beirut is gradually losing its seashore's openness and continuity: "public access is cut-off in innumerable locations while over half the seafront boulevard is visually and physically blocked from the sea" (Mona Fawaz). In this framework, a series of mapping has been completed in order to identify character zones, areas of distinct social, economic, ecological and spatial characteristics, each of which form the basis of an urban design reading. This "character zone" map results in a synthesis and then, a vision map for the imagined seafront. Likewise, this section analyzes a series of maps and focuses on the coastal entity as a whole in order to generate a vision map and a design intervention that emphasizes on the node between the Old Souks street, lying in the core of the old town, and the fishing port. This street was one of the city's main artery along which an exchange in products between the sea and the Souks took place. Yet, today, activities that stretch along the souks and the fishing port are plagued with failure. To further understand the problematic of disconnection between the coastal entity and the rest of the city, I mapped the current zoning and land use across the city to understand the distribution of functions (e.g. residential, commercial ...), road hierarchies to illustrate connectivity and accessibility, edges and the different cultural and social landmarks to identify urban character. Furthermore, I examined the socio-economic activities taking place along the coast, as well

as analyzed the land ownership and the violation of properties through the coast. Additionally, I highlighted the concentration of the archeological findings since Batroun is very well known as an archeological site. Besides, a study of the shoreline continuity, the urban permeability and accessibility of the seashore, in addition to the visual obstructions is a necessity in order to reach a deductive character zones map. In this context, a synthesis map is produced summing up all the previous maps. A strategic intervention along the whole coast covering all the character zones is generated. Finally, a design proposal for a magnet node connecting the old souks to the fishing port is presented.

3.2.1 Socio – economic activities

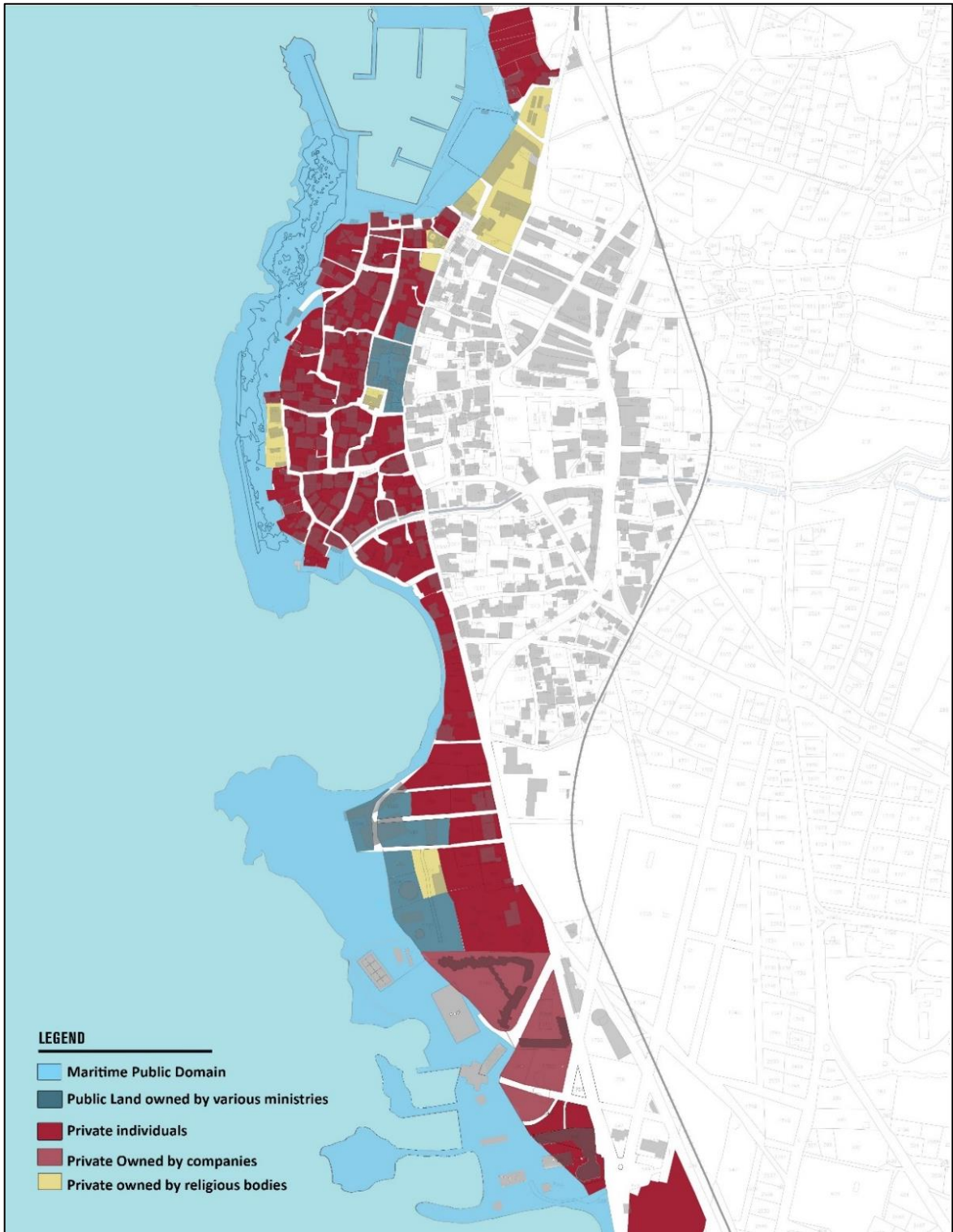
Batroun's coast is rich in social, economic, recreational and sports activities (Map 4). Fishing, swimming and diving are practiced all along the coast. However, the economic activities, including restaurants and resorts, are mostly concentrated in the North around the fishing port. Only a few recreational venues are located around the Bahsa Bay and several others are located in the resorts area South of the city.



Map 4: Socio-Economic Activities (Source: Author, 2019)

3.2.2 Ownership

In Batroun, all the frontal coastal zone is public. Map 5 shows patterns of land ownership. The map reflects the private nature of property in the old town. These properties are claimed by individuals' landowners or private companies. Private individuals' properties are concentrated in the center and consist of residential buildings owned/inhabited by local residents of Batroun. As for the resorts, they are partly owned by private companies like San Stephano and Aqualand and the remaining one- Sawary- is owned by a private individual. Public lands are also indicated on the same map and are owned by two different ministries. The first is the ministry of agriculture owning the Agricultural Institute that used to be the aquatic institute but has been moved to the north of the fishing port. The ministry of Culture also owns the "diaspora house" where the Phoenician castle lies. This lot used to be a private property but was expropriated by the Ministry of Culture after they found the remains of the Phoenician castle there. Today, the diaspora house offers a location for Lebanese immigrants to meet whenever they are visiting the country. A few lots are also owned by religious institutions (Waqf).



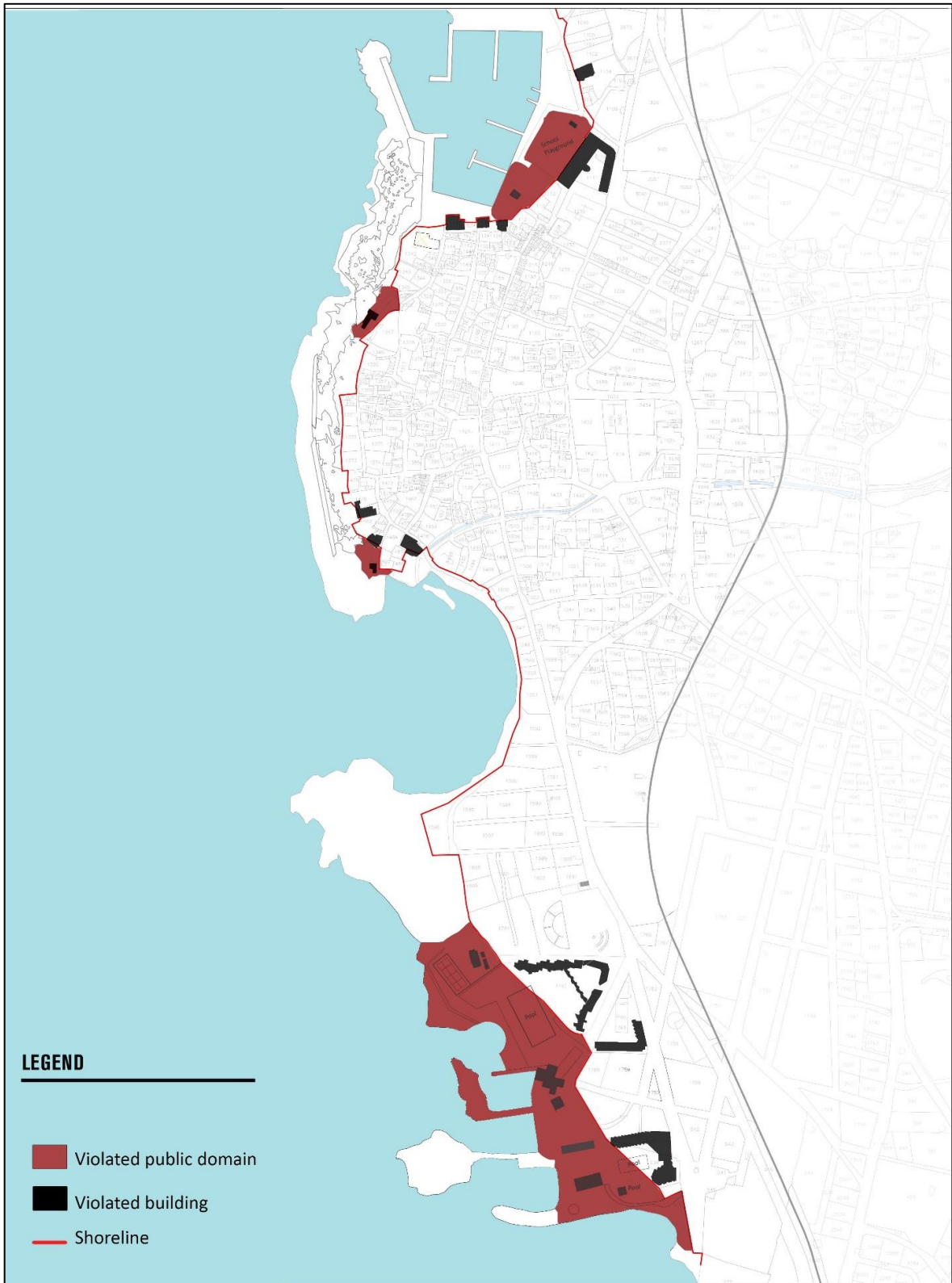
Map 5: Land Ownership (Source: Author, 2019)

3.2.3 Violations of property Rights

Based on the survey of the Ministry of Public Works, a handful of land owners along the coast are violating the maritime public domain as shown in map 6. To the north, the religious body that owns the Soeurs des Saints Coeurs Batroun has built the school's courtyard in the maritime domain. In addition, a few privately-owned residential properties were developed along the fishing port. Moving South, a slaughterhouse encroaches on the rocks. Today, it is widely said that it has been privatized by the head of the municipality, sold to a foreigner and transformed into a chalet. Moreover, at the corner between the Phoenician wall area and Bahsa bay, Maguy's restaurant is a privately-owned property and a huge violation of the maritime domain. Many trials to reclaim the coast and remove this specific violation were opposed by a powerful political body said to protect it. At the end, the resorts at the southern part of the coast are not only monopolizing the access to the sea but also encroaching on this public property.

Owner	No of violating parcels	Area of violating parcels (m2)	Landuse
San Stephano company for tourism & investment	1760- 547- 1761	8,848	Touristic
Directorate General for transportation	1081 till 1106	—	Maritime Institute
Soeurs des Saints Coeurs school	1110 - 1111	2700	Private School
Company for touristic investment (Aqualand)	1763	7236	Touristic
Khalil Frangieh & Sayed Azize (Sawary)	539 - 540	3104	Touristic
Antoine S. Khawaja - Moussa Y. Merheb	1488	278	Touristic
Amin Hanna Mansour El Mhaves Sons	1479	293	Residential
Waqf St. Georges for Orthodox, Yaacoub Moubarak	1128	112	Coffee shop
Elias Bassil heirs	1481/1482	193	Residential
Elias Badran	1137	326	Residential
Adel Elias Haddad	1135	157	Residential
Estephan N. Moubarak	1104	1218	Residential
Nadia & Maurice Chlela	1102	874	Residential

Figure 61: Violations, (source: Ministry of Public Works, Survey 2012)



Map 6: Violations of Property Rights (source: Author, 2019)

3.2.4 Shoreline Continuity, Urban Permeability, Accessibility to the seashore and Visual Obstructions

In violation of zoning and coastal regulations, more than 25% of seafront continuity is interrupted by private development (Map 7). However, in the Phoenician wall section, this continuity is altered by physical obstructions. Conversely, if we look at the lateral urban permeability and accessibility to the seashore, one would notice that more than 50% of the seashore is obstructed. As shown in Map 8, only two major non-disrupted connections from the city to the coast are noted. In addition, a few narrow coastline passages infiltrate the urban fabric along the coast, either through stairs, ramps, or a simple path.

3.2.5 Current Zoning and Ground Floor Land Use

Batroun's zoning was adapted since 1973. It was, then, amended during 2005. Map 9 shows the current zoning of the city. In the selected frame shown, Batroun is divided into three major zones A, B and E. Zone A delineates the city's old town. The maximum number of floors is limited to two floors with a total height of 10 m and a general exploitation factor of 1. As previously mentioned, Zone A covers the old part of Batroun, which consists of the archeological and historical part of the city. In Zone A, several restrictions are imposed on finishes such as: sandstone cladding or cement with ivory color, set back from maritime domain should be 3 meters, and the brick roofs should be pyramidal in form.

Moving inland to the East, lays Zone B, comprising of a commercial and residential area. Therefore, the maximum number of floors is increased to four floors instead of two with a total height of 15 m and a general exploitation factor of 2. Lastly,

Zone E covers the touristic zone to the South and lies as well on the coast. Covering a touristic area, Zone E embraces recreational facilities from resorts to hotels and restaurants and therefore has almost the same zoning limitations as Zone A with the maximum number of floors limited to two floors, a total height of 10 m but a general exploitation factor of 0.4. In this context, the importance of different land use in the city cannot be neglected.

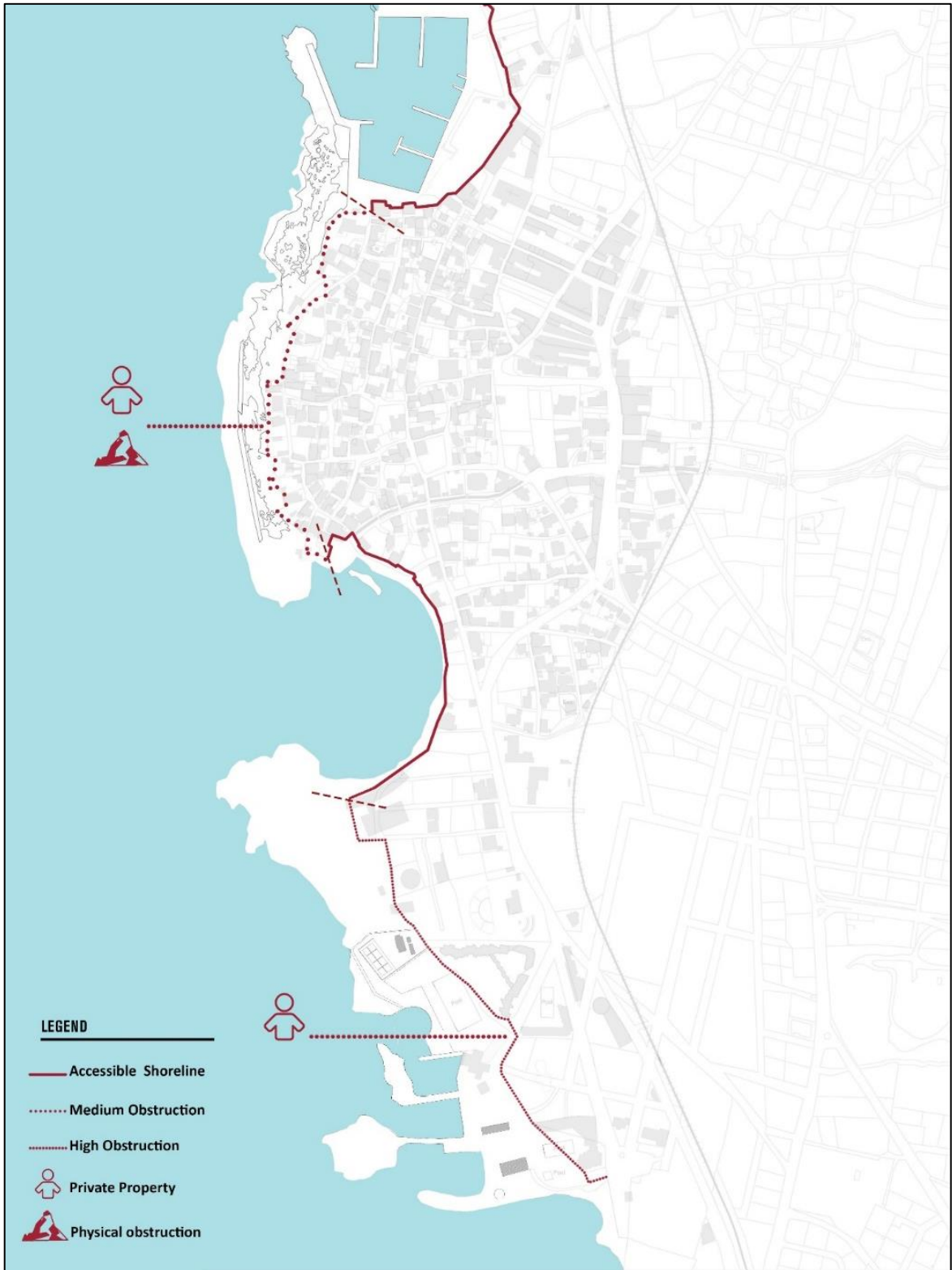
Map 10 highlights the different types of land use from residential, commercial and institutional to recreational and religious areas. Based on the ground floor land use map carried out partially by Batroun municipality, and mostly by personal observations and knowledge of the city, we notice that the residential district is concentrated at the western part of the city and extends toward the coast. This district mostly includes residential buildings with some projects under construction, three churches, a dozen of empty parcels, few old abandoned houses and many private gardens. Close by, the diaspora house is shown where the remains of the old Phoenician castle lie. The old souks are built in the 19th century and renovated at the beginning of 21st century. The shops in the souks still maintain some original functions: grocery, butchery, fishmongers, etc. The Decumanus Maximus passing across the souk and forming the 5-meter street is delineated by the shops, accessible through large wooden doors. The residential function on top of the souks are open to the same street via small old balconies supported by either some wooden beams or by corbel stones. Both the old souks and the old residential houses are built with sandstone. The new commercial street is today a major spine of the city outlined by clothing shops, coffee shops, night clubs and banks. Today, the municipality just finished the pavement of

this road using basalt tiling and has started with the renovation of its facades sponsored by Francois Bassil, chairman and general manager of Byblos Bank.

The governmental buildings are at the center of this street, including the municipal palace, the serial, the prison, the call center, the state security and three gas stations. In this zone, a parking problem exists despite the presence of a private parking because the spaces between these buildings are not accessible by public due to security reasons.

The empty lots or agriculture are located at the North East and include lemon trees and greenhouses. These orchards are irrigated by “El Jawz” river that passes through. The resorts, on the other hand, are concentrated in the Southern part of the city, along with a good number of restaurants along the coastal road.

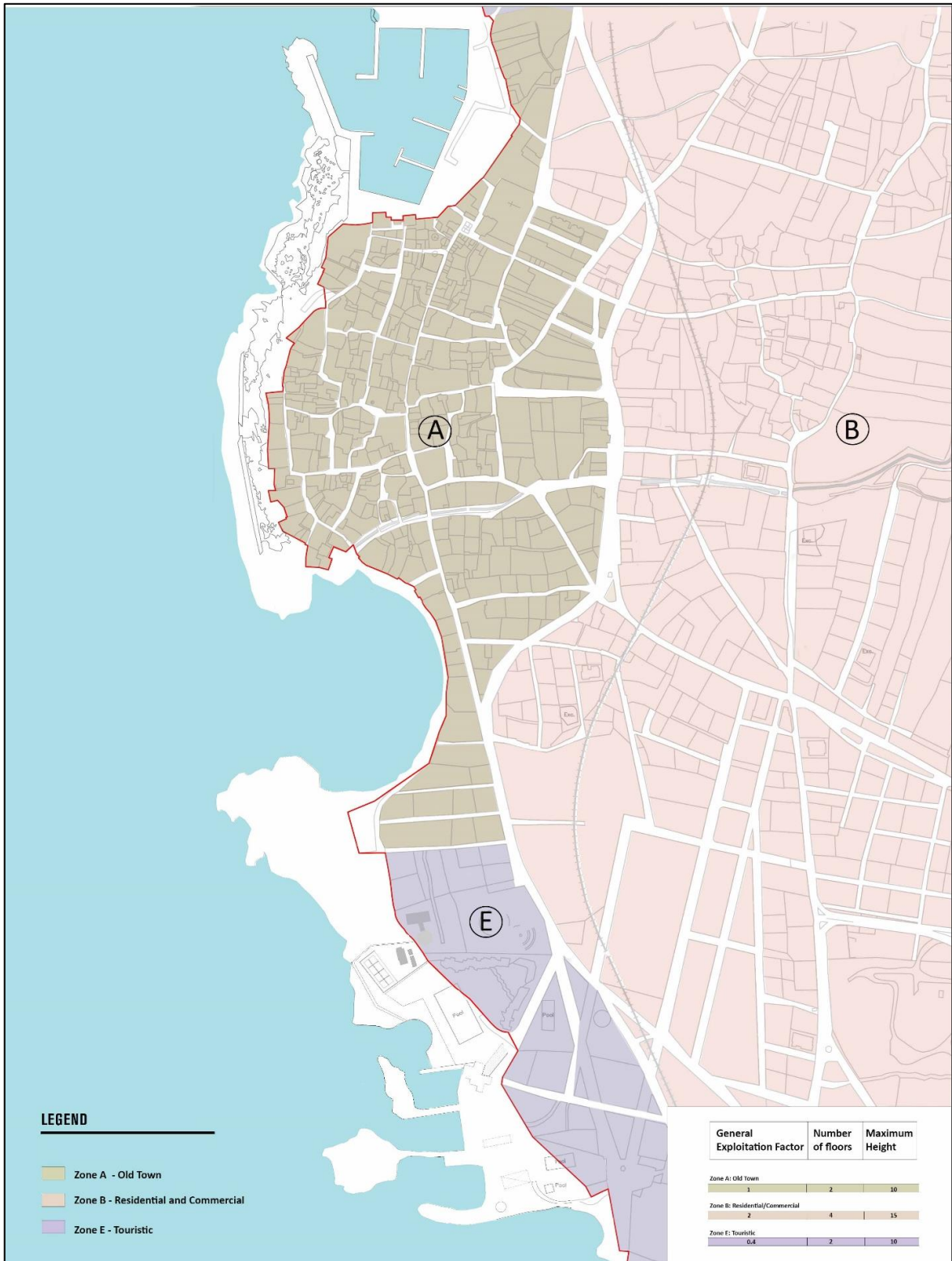
In addition, looking at the upmost north, next to Batroun fishing port, a new uprising hotel is shown, L’Auberge de la mer of recreational function, as well as few restaurants around, Oysters and Le Bistreau. Finally, moving south, the area comprises of the agricultural institute, the sea sciences school, the colonel beer microbrewery as well as a touristic zone enclosing resorts and restaurants.



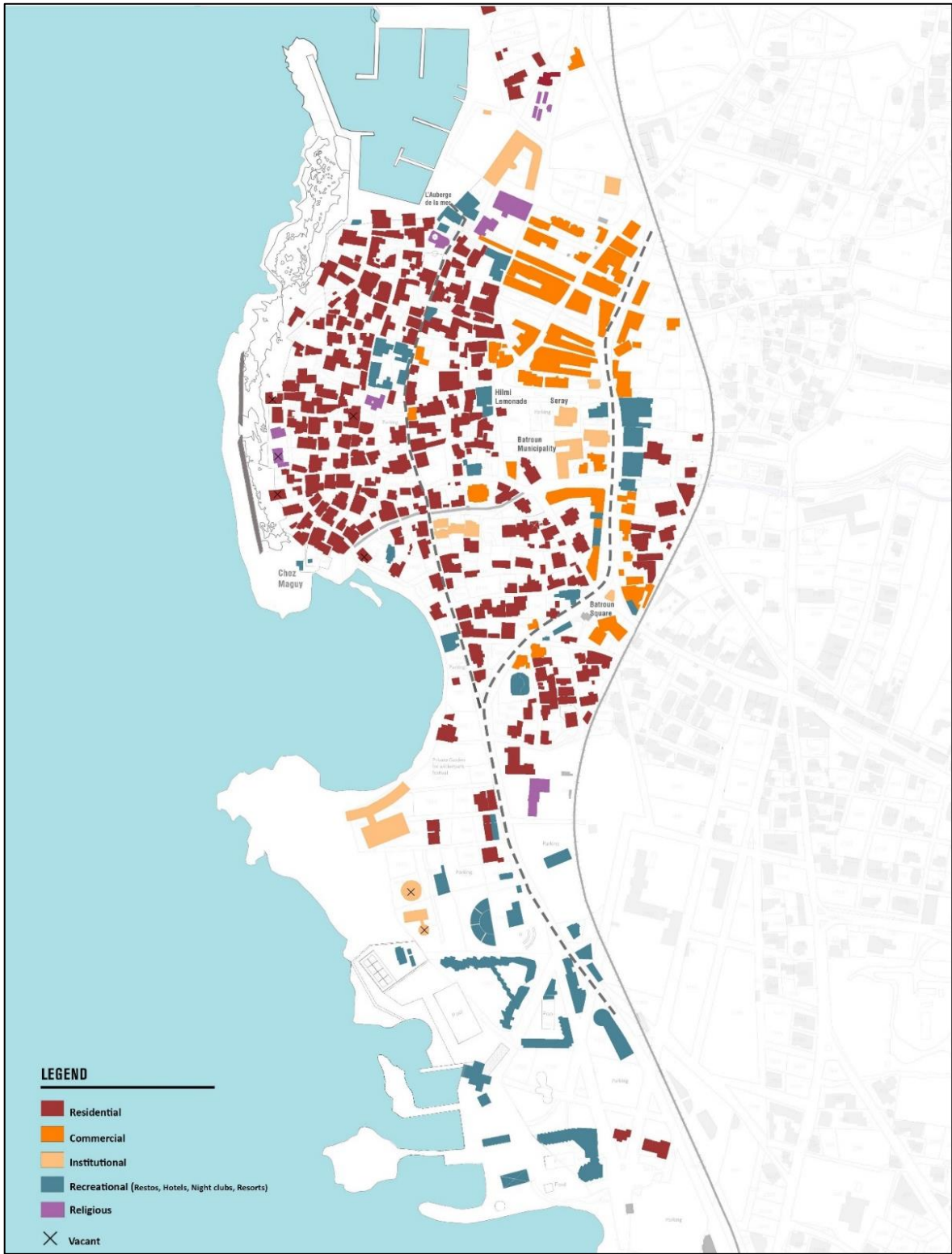
Map 7: Shoreline Continuity (Source: Author, 2019)



Map 8: Urban Permeability, Accessibility to Seashore and Visual Obstructions (Source: Author, 2019)



Map 9: Current Zoning (Source: Author, 2019)



Map 10: Current Ground Floor Land Use (Source: Author, 2019)

3.3 THE CHARACTER ZONES

My design strategy integrated the multi-layered findings of the research and translated them, first, by identifying character zones, each of which reflects the multiple social, natural, archeological and economical potentials of the area.

Based on this analysis, I propose to divide the coastal strip and the first inland areas into five lateral character zones. These character zones are defined according to the collected characteristics listed in the previous maps.

The first Zone A is the fishing port zone. A remarkable historical landmark, this port goes back to the Phoenician era. It prospered mostly as a trading spot during Phoenicians, romans, and crusaders occupation. A residential zone delineates the port along with intermittent recreational functions such as restaurants and hotels, and with religious and educational institutions such as St.Stephan Church, St.Georges church, L'Auberge de la mer, Oyster's restaurant. Today, the port is used as a recreational hub for fishing, social gathering for local fishermen, as a social space for town residents and as a tourist venue. A pedestrian pathway along the port makes it easy to reach the sea.

Zone B is the archeological and historical zone. This section of the coast is the eldest development along Batroun's coast. The wall was originally sand dunes (Pleistocene) that was hardened by the clayish material from the sea. Ecologically, the area is rocky with important vermetid reefs and hard underwater bottoms. Soft bottoms are found at greater depths. During the Phoenician era, the rocky structure was chopped and the wall was erected to protect the city from the waves. Later, residents chopped it further in

order to build religious buildings, houses, shops, hotels, schools and convents. The area beyond the wall is mainly residential constructed with sand stones. It includes four churches and a very few commercial and recreational functions. This zone has a huge historic and archeological value since many sarcophagi dating since 9th century B.C were found, along with many other archeological findings going back to the Hellenistic era. The lateral physical accessibility to the wall is difficult despite some infiltrations leading to it, such as a stair in between houses or an easily accessible paved path. As for the visual accessibility from the coastal road to the wall and sea, it seems easier than the physical one but not totally open. It is blocked by the dense residential fabric along the road and only breached intermittently.

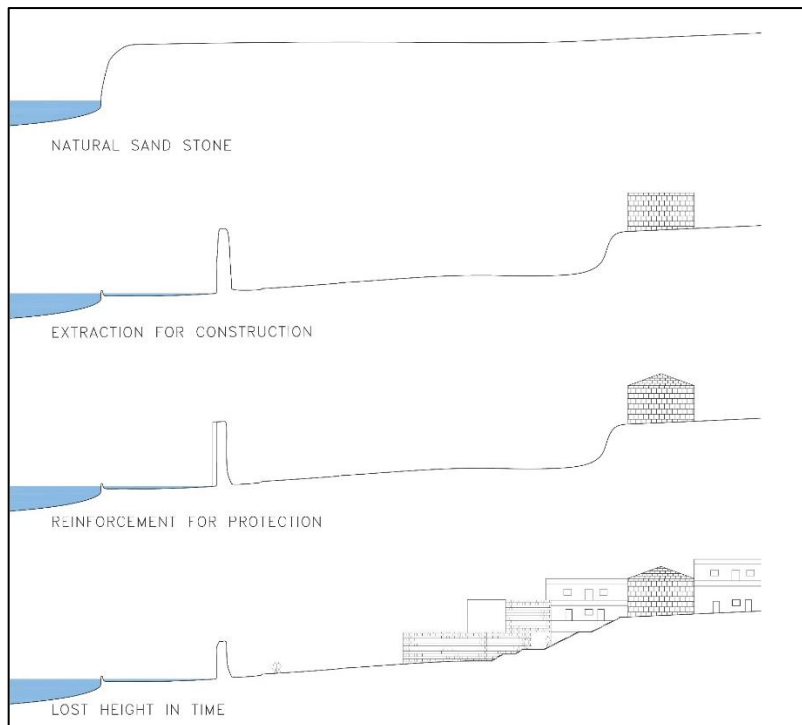
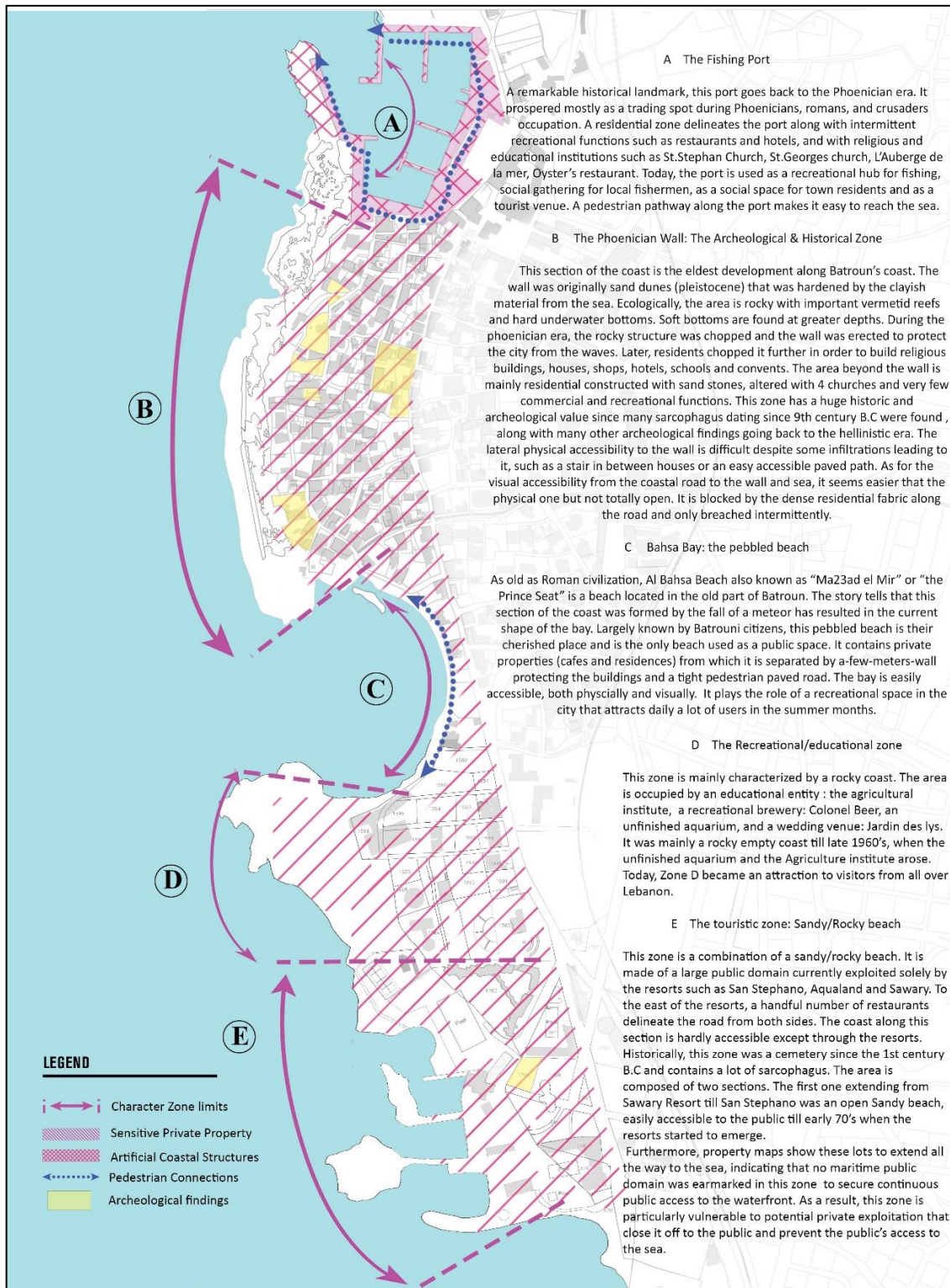


Figure 62: Zone B, The Phoenician Wall (Source: Author, 2019)

Zone C covers the pebbled beach of Bahsa Bay. As old as Roman civilization, Al Bahsa Beach also known as “Ma23ad el Mir” or “the Prince Seat” is a beach located in the old part of Batroun. The story tells that this section of the coast was formed by the fall of a meteor has resulted in the current shape of the bay. Largely known by Batrouni citizens, this pebbled beach is their cherished place and is widely used as a public space. It contains private properties (cafes and residences) from which it is separated by a few-meters-wall protecting the buildings and a tight pedestrian paved road. The bay is easily accessible, both physically and visually.

Zone D is the recreational/ educational zone. This zone is mainly characterized by a rocky coast. The area is occupied by an educational entity: the agricultural institute, a recreational brewery, Colonel Beer restaurant and brewery, an unfinished aquarium built in the 1960's by the Lebanese Public University, and a wedding venue: Jardin des Lys. The area was mainly a rocky empty coast till late 1960's. Today, Zone D became an attraction to visitors from all over Lebanon.

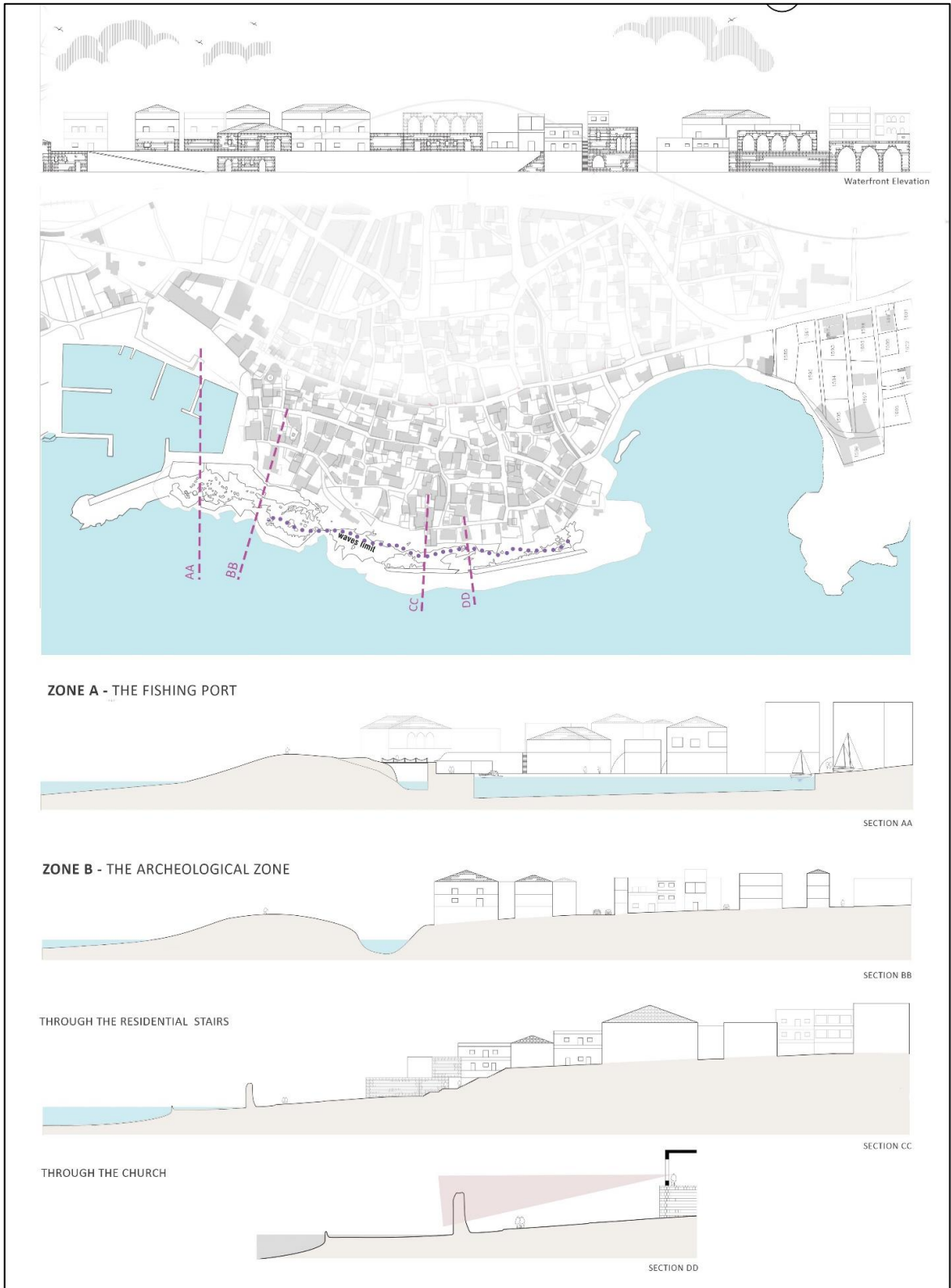


Map 11: Description of current character zones (Source: Author, 2019)

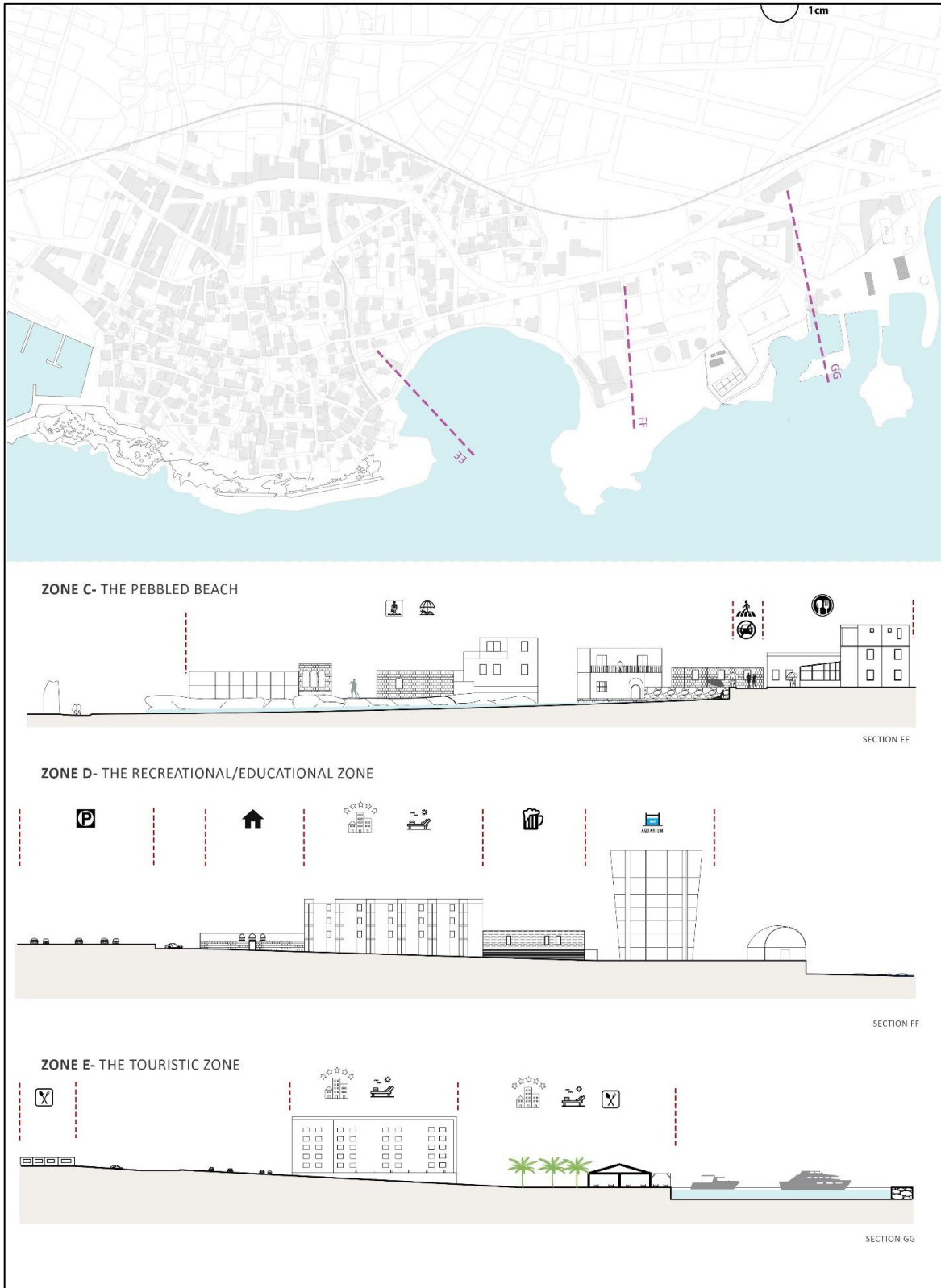
Finally, Zone E is the touristic zone: Sandy/Rocky beach. This zone is a combination of a sandy/rocky beach. It is made of a large public domain currently exploited solely by the resorts such as San Stephano, Aqualand and Sawary. To the east of the resorts, a handful number of restaurants delineate the road from both sides. The coast along this section is hardly accessible except through the resorts. Historically, this zone was a cemetery since the 1st century B.C and contains a lot of sarcophagus. The area is composed of two sections. The first one extending from Sawary Resort till San Stephano was an open Sandy beach, easily accessible to the public till early 70's when the resorts started to emerge.

3.3.1 Sections through the character zones and waterfront elevation

Map 12 and Map 13 illustrate the existing relationship between the city and the coast at different sections along the coast and at each character zone.



Map 12: Section Map Through Character Zones and Waterfront Elevation (Source: Author, 2019)

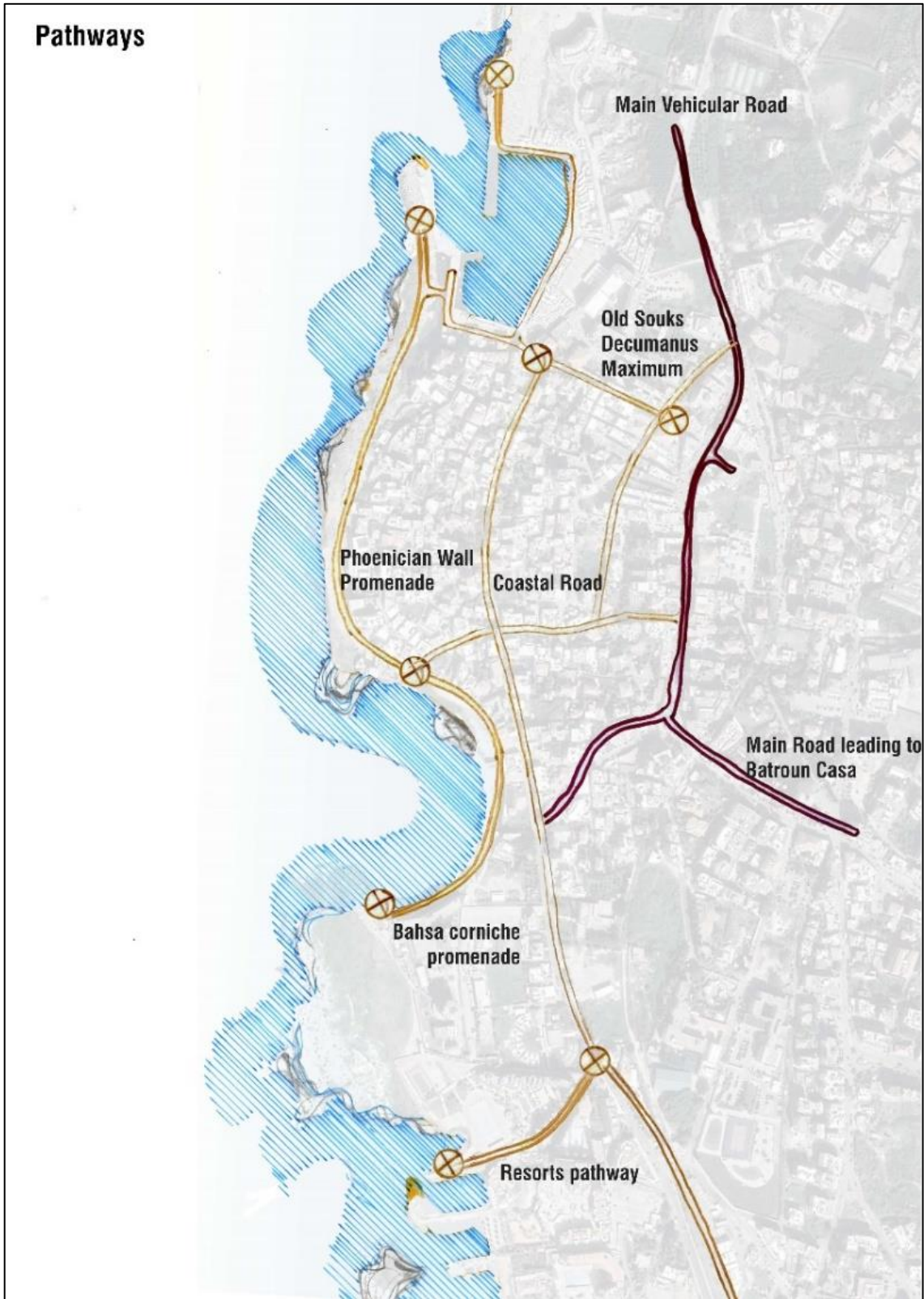


Map 13: Section Map through Character Zones (Source: Author, 2019)

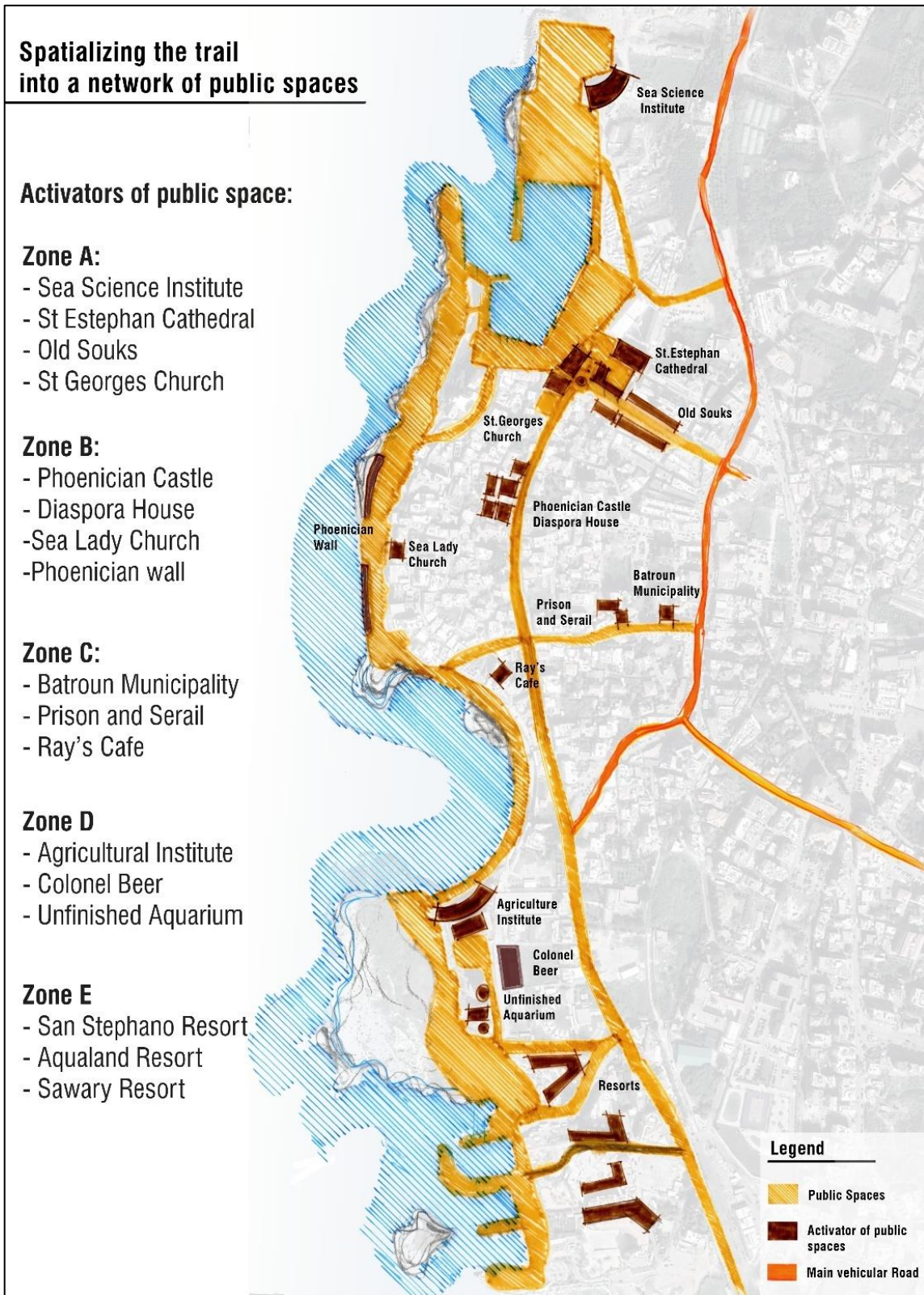
3.4 Overall Vision, Design Principles and Intervention

The coast is a main asset connected to the city through multiple lateral streets, each with a different character that respects the natural and social assets of every area through which it intersects. I started by mapping the trail beginning from the sea science institute platform all the way to the fishing port, passing by the stairs connecting this first zone A to the archeological zone B. The trail extends through the form of a sea front promenade to reach the Prince's rock in Bahsa Bay. The trail also includes the Bahsa bay promenade. The path is connected laterally to the inland city through Map 14. A linear pedestrian parallel trail, the coastal road, creates an "echo" to the coast within the city facilitating in/out movements between seafront and urban old core. The nodes, at the intersection between the pedestrian trail and the lateral connections are to be reinforced so that they can act as magnets.

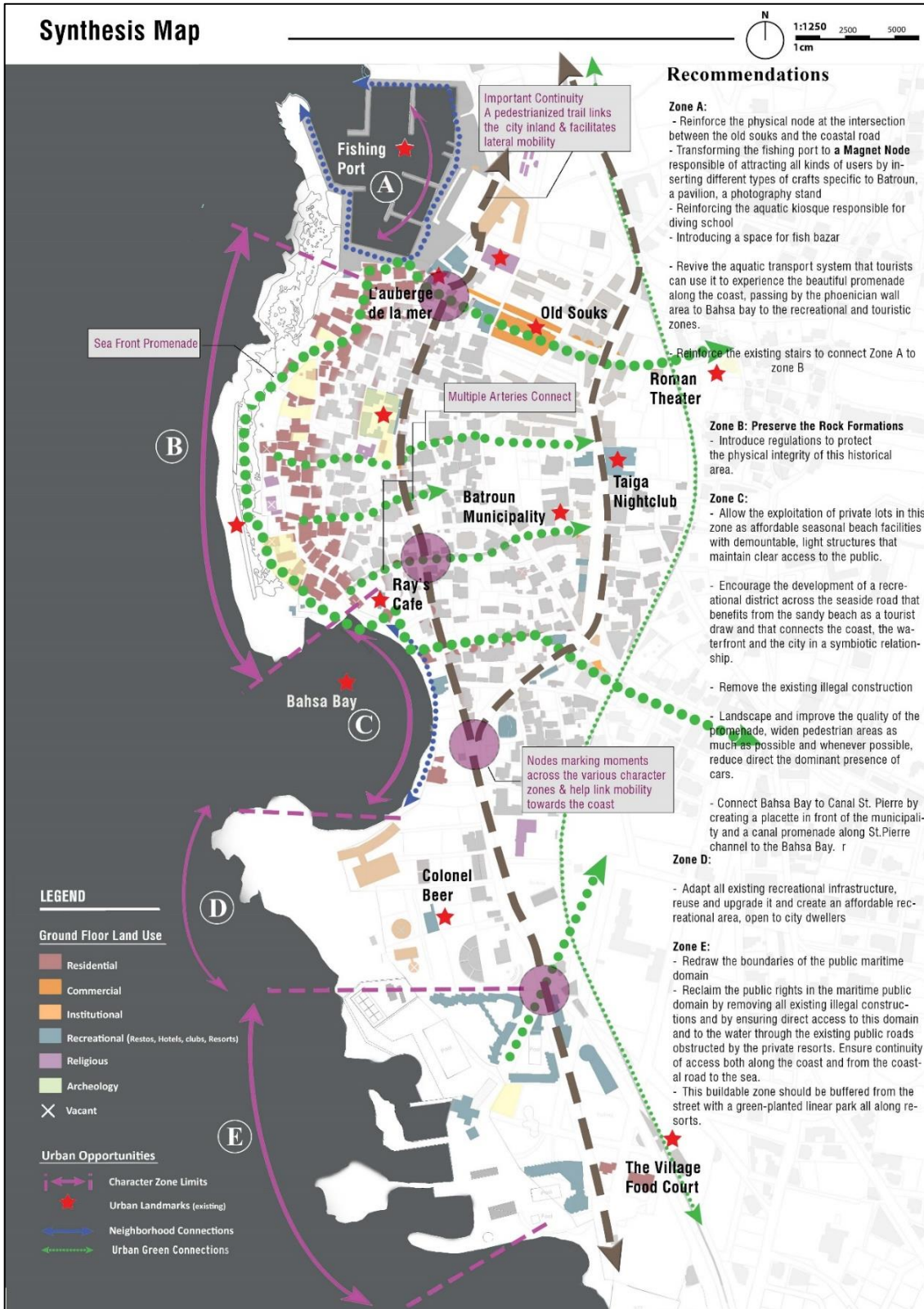
The trails are spatialized to a network of public spaces. As shown in Map 15, these public spaces are triggered by activators (different activators for each zone) without which the spaces would have been inactive. These publicly accessible spaces are open spaces, object to intervention.



Map 14: Trail (Source: Author, 2019)

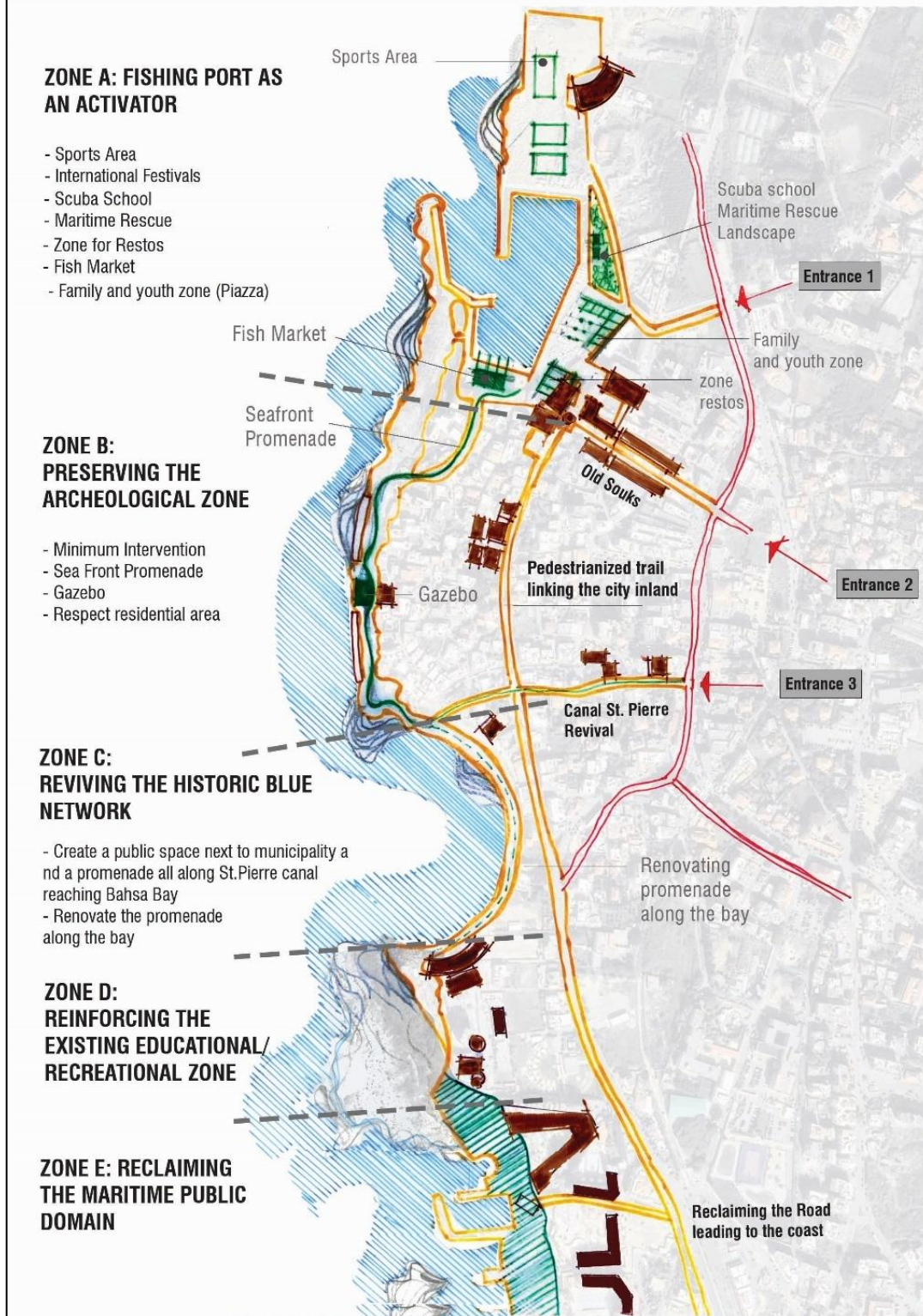


Map 15: Spatializing the trail into public spaces (Source: Author, 2019)



Map 16: Design Principles (Source: Author, 2019)

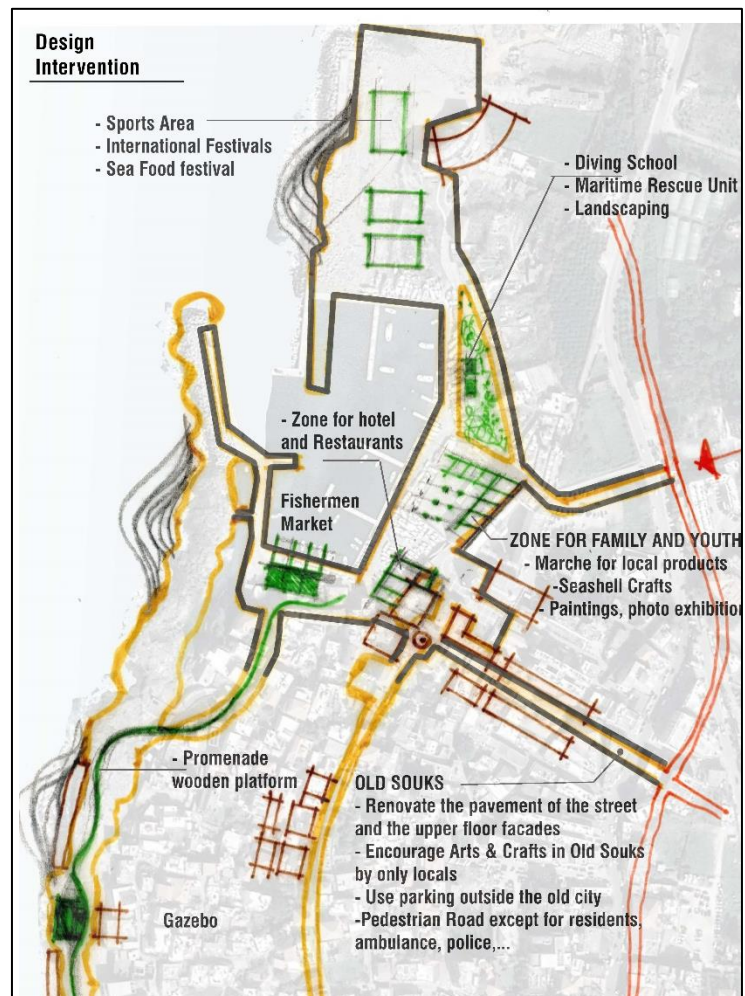
From publicly accessible spaces to Open Spaces



Map 17: Vision Map (Source: Author, 2019)

Each character zone will have its own design approach in relation to the coast, supported by a sequence of open spaces and activators as shown in Map 17, to further enhance the character spatially, economically and socially. Building on the characteristics of each character zone and on the overlay of different layers (natural, urban, ecological, social and spatial), I produced a synthesis map, Map 16, proposing recommendations for every zone starting with: (1) vision, (2) type of principles and (3) translation into design intervention by zone.

Zone A is the fishing port zone that has always been an activator. Revitalizing the port as a multifunctional space and reviving its memory as a recreational spot is very important. This can be done by dividing the fishing port into four areas. To the extreme north, in front of the sea science institute, a very big platform is to be dedicated to sports lovers. In addition to the courts, this area is to host the different types of festivals (international, beer,



Map 18: Close up to Zone A and Zone B Intervention

seafood). The second area, which is a left-over area, is to include a landscape surrounded by public toilets, a scuba diving school, a maritime rescue unit, and a parking for the boats. Also, the playground of Soeurs des Saints Coeurs School, violating the maritime public domain, is to be reclaimed and opened to the public. This zone is to be a gathering area dedicated for families and youth, where different artisanal and local products are to be sold (seashell crafts, photography stands, paintings and lemonade). The space connecting the cathedral to the sea will be left as a transitional open space, enhancing the visual connection between the piazza of the cathedral and the sea. In addition, at the corner, in front of Bistreau restaurant, the zone is left as an outdoor restaurant's area. The lateral connection of the old souks leading to this zone is to be revived physically through the renovation of the road and the upper floors along the spine but also economically and socially by encouraging the opening of creative spaces that will be, in turn, channeled toward the fishing port. The road becomes pedestrian with very limited vehicular access (police, ambulance, residents). Finally, fishermen should be given a space to sell their fishes properly through the establishment of a fish market. Right behind the market, an existing stair should be renovated and used as a linkage between this zone and the archeological zone of the Phoenician wall.

I have zoomed in to zone A and to the node at the intersection between the old souks and the fishing port.



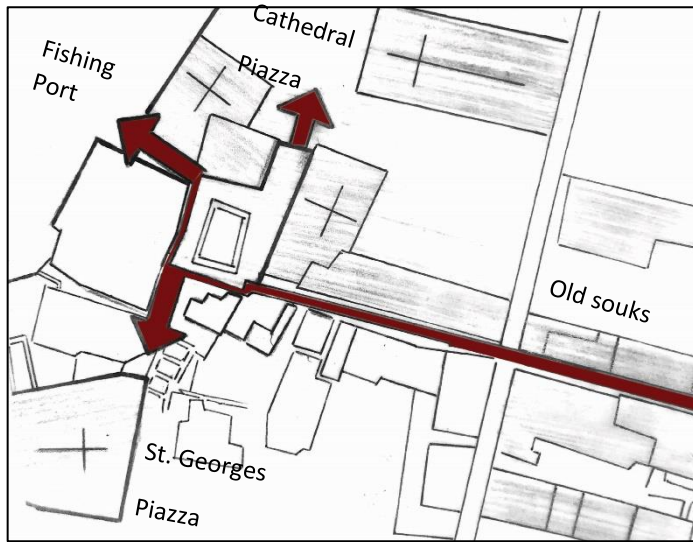
Figure 63: Actual Condition of the Fishing Port- View 1



Figure 64: Actual Condition of the Fishing Port- View 2



Map 19: Land Use around the Node (Source: Author, 2019)

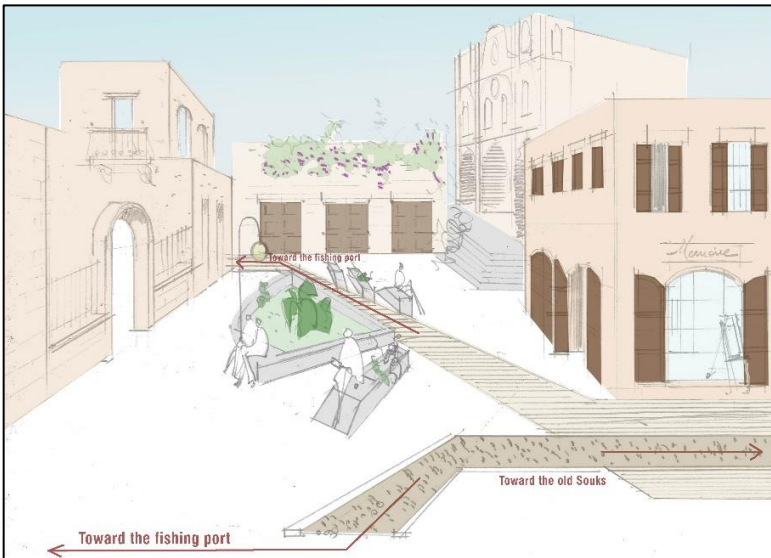


Map 20: Node Connectivity (Source: Author, 2019)

As seen in maps 19 and 20, the node is connected to the city through the decumanus maximum axis which consists of the old souks, to the sea through a small pathway passing by L'auberge de la mer hotel, north to the piazza of the cathedral by another narrow path and south to the other piazza of St. Georges church.

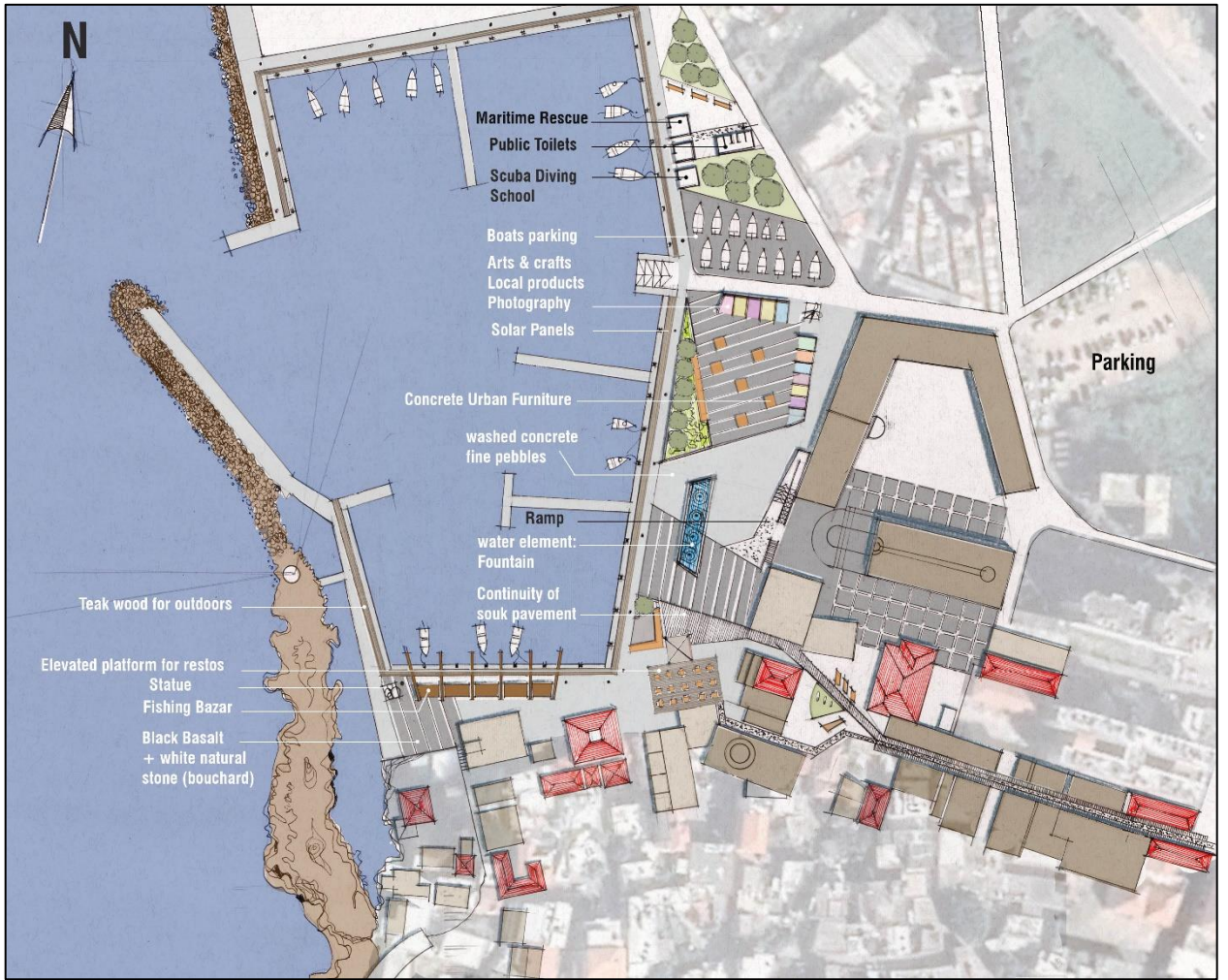


Map 21: Node Design (Source: Author, 2019)



Map 22: Magnet Node (Source: Author, 2019)

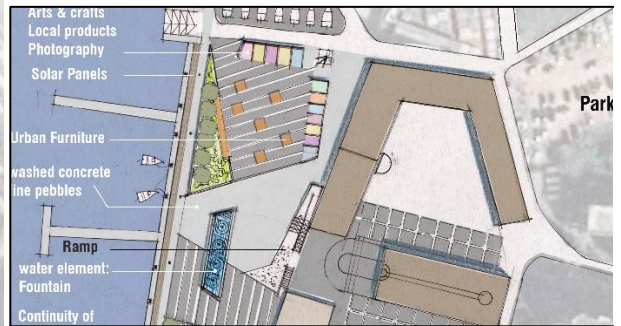
This node pulls people from the old souks toward the fishing port. It becomes a point of interaction where people can sit and interact before reaching the coast.



Map 23: Zone of Intervention (Source: Author, 2019)



Map 24: Boats parking, Diving school & Maritime Rescue unit (Source: Author, 2019)



Map 25: Families and Youth Zone (Source: Author, 2019)



Figure 65: Section Through the Open Space Connecting Visually the Cathedral to the Sea (Source: Author, 2019)

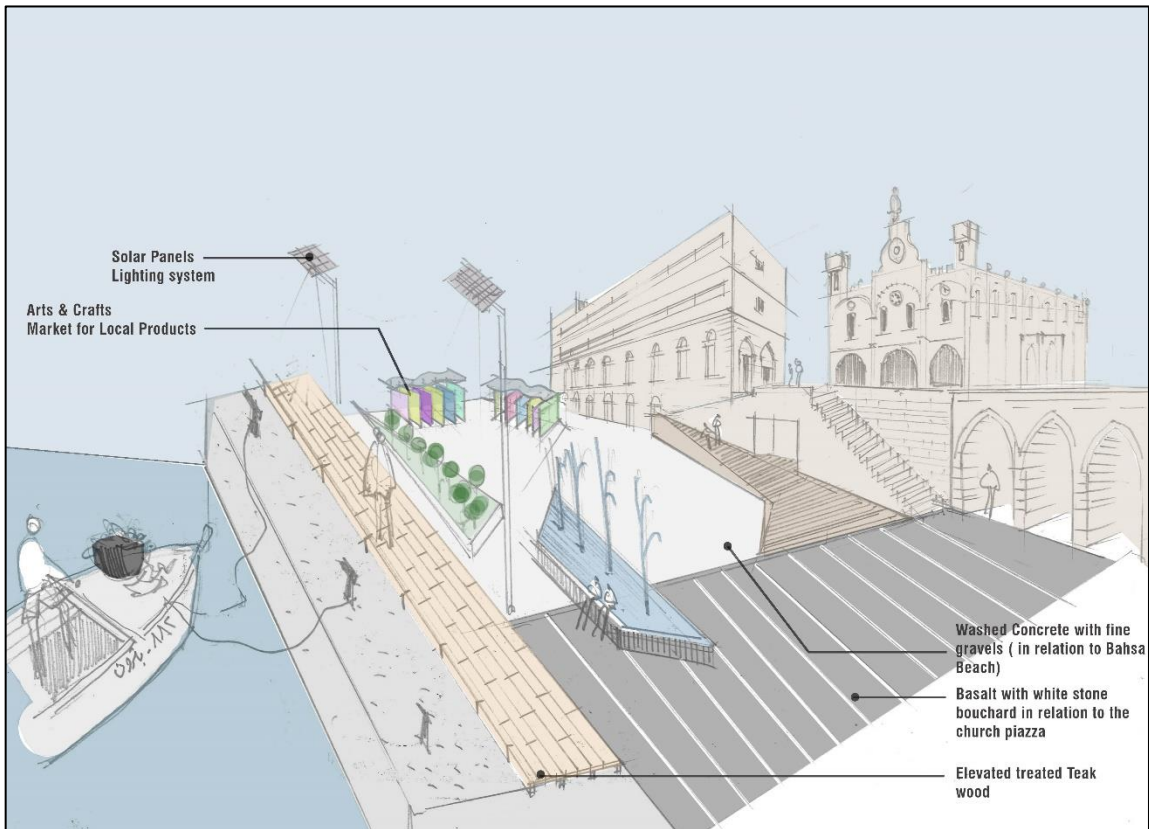


Figure 66: 3D Visualization of the Design Intervention (Source: Author, 2019)

The materials used are the teak wood (treated for outdoor) for the pedestrian path along the fishing port. Delineating this path, the solar panels lighting system is installed. As for the other materials, a washed concrete with fine gravels from the Bahsa bay is applied all along the grey area in map 20. As for the striped zones, the black basalt recalling the same material used in the piazza of the cathedral is used with white striped stones.



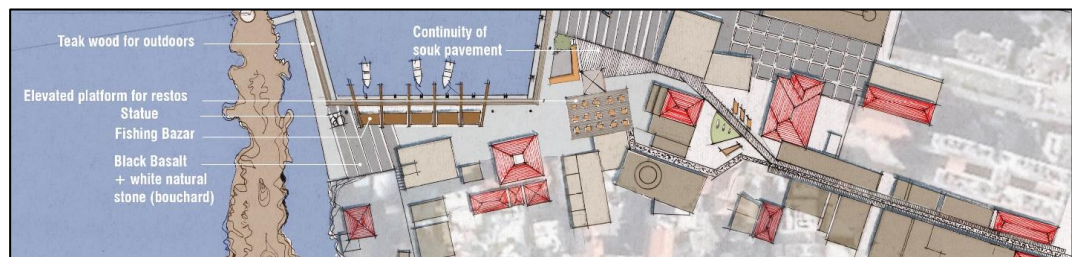
Figure 67: Washed Concrete



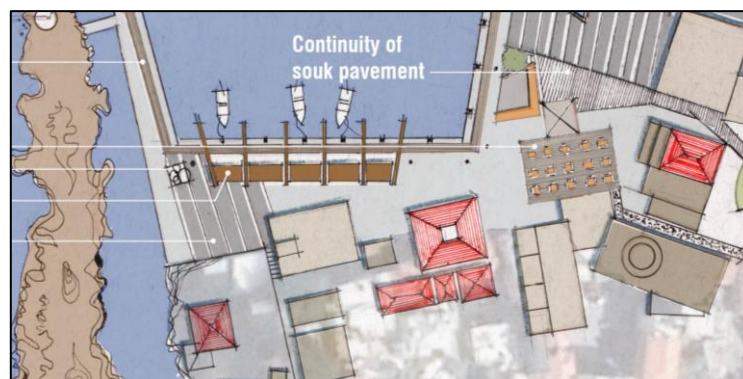
Figure 68: Black Basalt with White Stone



Figure 69: Teak Wood



Map 26: Node, Zone of Restaurants, Fish market (Source: Author, 2019)



Map 27: Fish Market Corner (Source: Author, 2019)

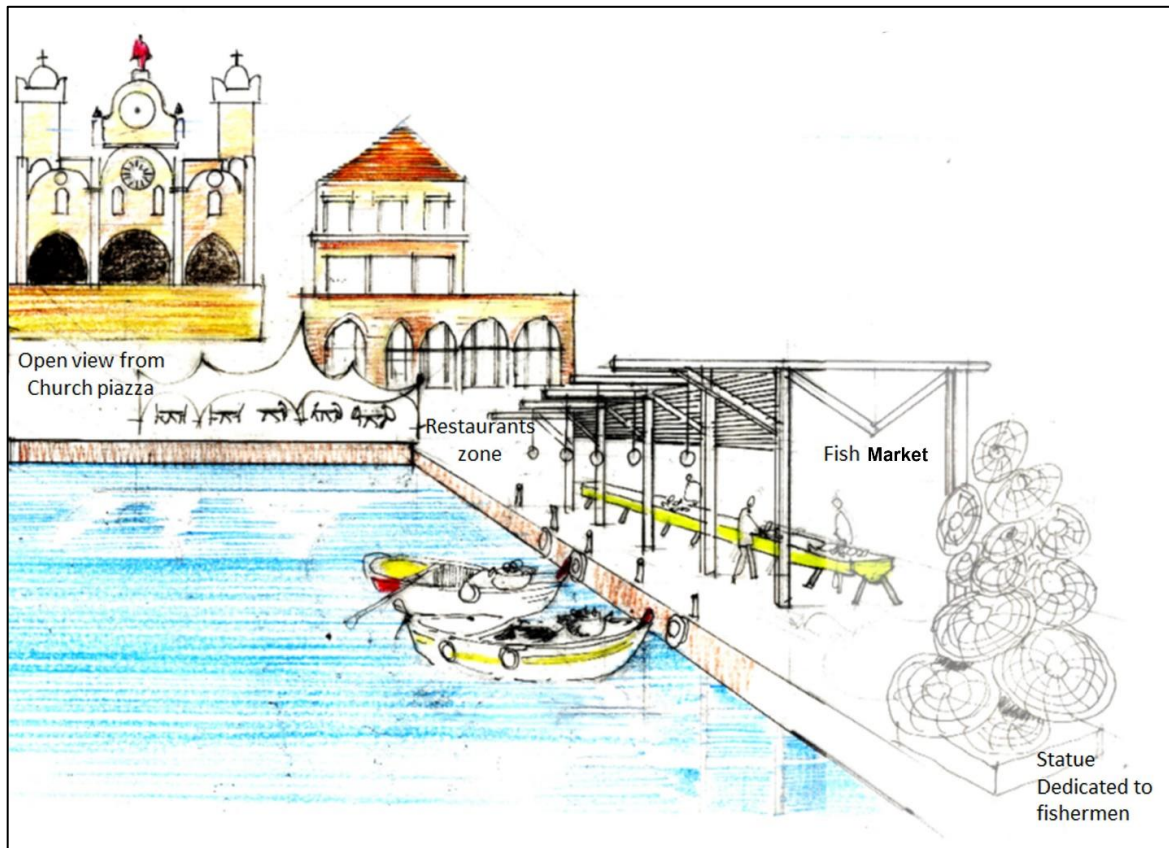


Figure 70: Fish Market (Source: Author, 2019)

Zone B is an archeological/historical zone therefore the intervention along this area should be minimal in order to respect the history of the place. Thus, it is crucial to introduce regulations to protect the physical integrity of this historical area and to respect the residential character by only allowing few connections. A narrow road extending from the stairs, mentioned in Zone A, will be prolonged along the coast. This will be accomplished through a wooden trail, providing a beautiful seafront promenade along the wall. A discontinuity is seen at midspan of the Phoenician wall allowing the wooden trail to open to the sea through the form of a gazebo. Both, the trail and the wall, will be lightened up at night to highlight the value of this archeological/historical area. Due to its historical

importance, the intervention is minimal and light. No major lateral connection should pass through the residential fabric of this zone in order to respect its privacy.



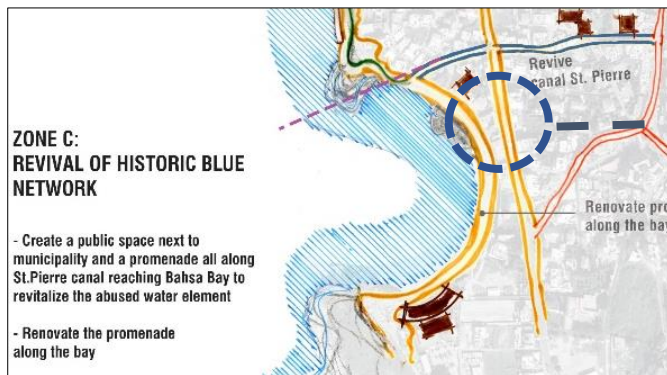
Figure 71: Wooden Seafront Promenade



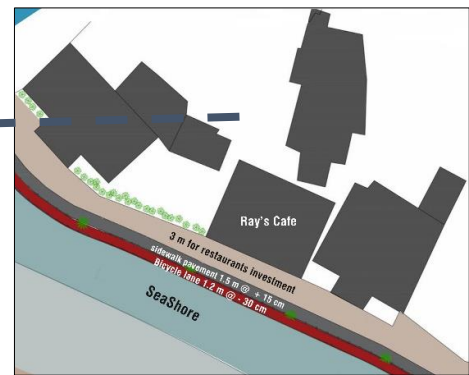
Figure 72: Lighted Phoenician Wall

Zone C is the only public beach along this section and is intersected by a lateral water element, Canal St. Pierre that extends from the international main road, passing by Batroun municipality to dissolve at the end with Bahsa Bay. Unfortunately, the canal is being misused as a sewage canal. Thus, I recommend to revive this historical blue canal

that connects the main road to the coast, and that is delineated by important public landmarks such as the municipality building, the prison and the Seray. I also encourage the development of this district as a recreational district that can benefit from the beach by improving the quality of the promenade along the bay. This can be done through creating a public space next to the municipality and connecting it to Bahsa through a promenade along the canal. This promenade will be divided into a vehicular, a sidewalk and a canal division. The sidewalks will be delineated by some plantations and pebbles all along recalling the texture of the Bahsa bay where the canal discharges. Circular openings through the sidewalks, covered by compact glass, allow us to have a visual contact with the water underneath. In addition, the sea front promenade of Bahsa bay along the existing cafes should be renovated as illustrated in Map 29. It will be divided into a pedestrian trail, a bicycle trail and a space reserved for restaurants.



Map 28: Bahsa Promenade in Plan (Source: Author, 2019)



Map 29: Zoom in to Bahsa Promenade



Figure 73: Bahsa Promenade (before)



Figure 74: Bahsa Promenade in Section (After)

Zone D is both a recreational and an educational zone where the colonel brewery, the agricultural institute and the unfinished abandoned aquarium are located. It is important to reanimate this area by the adaptive reuse of the abandoned aquarium. In addition, it is necessary to reinforce the educational and recreational character through encouraging events (such as St.Patrick's day and wicker park) and bringing in scholars for educational workshops open to the city dwellers and to visitors.

Lastly, Zone E is a touristic zone to be reopened for public use. The accessibility to the coast is to be reclaimed by the re-appropriation of the public roads that have been privatized by the resorts, and by removing all the illegal constructions encroached on the maritime domain. To connect all these character zones, a pedestrianized trail should link the city inland and facilitates lateral mobility. The trail should be designed to allow limited vehicular access. The nodes that are formed at the intersection between this trail and the lateral accesses along each zone should be revitalized to act as a magnet node, pulling people, life and activities toward the coast.

3.5 Implementation of the project

The stakeholder analysis informs the study and the design intervention, by offering a better insight into the power relations and interests of various stakeholders on different levels. This analysis induces four key subjects. First, which stakeholders influence what type of development; second, which stakeholders can be involved in the development process and how; third, which stakeholders will be affected positively or negatively; fourth, what is the strategy to adopt to enable the participation of all stakeholders.

The stakeholders in Batroun are divided into three categories: public, private and nonprofit bodies.

3.5.1 Public Bodies

The public bodies are divided into central (agencies and legislatives) and local bodies, and include:

A- Municipality: (local)

The municipality has an executive role in the public domain concerns (gardens, sidewalks, roads...). It is the actor that is mainly responsible of infrastructural works. The municipality seeks, by all means, to enhance the image of the city and neighborhoods of the ancient city and more particularly the archaeological sites and the fishing port.

The municipality works in coordination with associations and committees interested in works related to the city. The members of the municipal committee and the municipality try to launch some projects responding to the needs of the city, improving its

image, stopping the chaotic urban development that started during the period of war, and raising the standard of living of the inhabitants, despite the insufficient financial means.

The municipality has never made, though, a master plan of the city.

Several projects have been carried out by the municipality: Touristic, cultural, environmental, urban, infrastructure, and others ... Some projects are in progress, and others are waiting for funding to be realized.

The most important project is the restoration of the main street which aims to improve the level of the economic and tourist sector, to attract tourists and promote the rich heritage and socio - cultural Batroun. The responsibilities of the municipality consist of:

- Establishment of sanitation and rainwater drainage networks.
- The work of civil engineers (retaining walls ...).
- The construction of public places.
- Lighting work.
- Installation work of urban furniture and plantations.
- Security.
- The expropriation of parcels intended for public use.
- Cleaning and garbage collection.
- Support associations that carry out activities in the service of the city.

B- The Union of Batroun Municipalities:

It is the actor that seeks, by all means, to enhance the image of all the cities in Batroun. It has a large funding budget and takes part in carrying out the interesting projects at the region level.

C- The Ministries:

i. Ministry of Public Works

This actor's role is the development of roads, infrastructure, paving, planting ... in collaboration with other ministries. The latest of its work was asphaltting the roads.

ii. Ministry of Tourism

This ministry still supports the annual Batroun festival financially and morally, which takes place along the fishing port and in the old souks.

iii. Ministry of Finance

The Ministry of Finance through the Lebanese Tobacco Board is currently proposing funding for a project aimed at solving the St. Pierre Canal ecological problem.

iv. Ministry of Agriculture

v. Ministry of Energy and Water

This ministry has implemented a water network project throughout the city, which provides better drinking water, but has resulted in poor quality of roads.

D- The Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR) – Central

Linked to the Prime Minister's Office, the CDR has an operational and financial role. It has an administrative autonomy and proposes major projects to the federations of municipalities. It recently developed and expanded the Batroun port, sanitation networks and some infrastructural works in the city.

E- The Directorate General of Urban Planning (DGU):

The general direction of urbanism generates the master plan of the regions on the Lebanese territory. The municipality must work according to the proposed scheme.

The relationship between the DGU and the municipality is a two-way relationship: the DGU submits its proposal to the municipality responsible of taking action. One example is the "zoning" project in Batroun, prepared by the DGU and presented to the municipality. A committee of engineers had studied the project; which results in negotiations between the DGU and the municipality, followed by a series of visits to the site to consult the areas damaged by the proposed zoning scheme. Series of proposals have been submitted to the DGU to adapt the project to the needs of the region.

F- The Directorate General of Antiquity (DGA):

The DGA is related to the Ministry of Culture, and has a regulatory and operational role in relation to classified sites. Any project related to archaeological, historical and heritage sites must be approved by the DGA, such as the project for the rehabilitation of the old souk of Batroun. Taking the initiative, the municipality of Batroun was able to realize the restoration project of the old souk. The detailed architectural studies prepared by the Association of the Protection of Sites and Old Mansions served as a starting point for the restoration project. The file was, then, submitted to the Directorate General of Antiquity for approval, as stipulated in the Antiquities Act of 1933, because Batroun is classified as a historic city.

The DGA intervenes on private and classified sites, then informs the municipality of the use of these sites, like the new explorations at the Roman amphitheater which is

located in a private property, and the common cemetery found during the excavations for the construction of a tourist project. The DGA has helped financing the restoration of some old houses.

3.5.2 Private Bodies

The private actors consist of:

A- Committees: Initiated by the Municipality

- The Municipal Cultural Committee

This committee runs the cultural center and the public library. The cultural center is recently located in the Batroun Municipal Palace. It organizes the work of the public library, encourages cultural and artistic activities in the city, prepares sessions to teach foreign languages. It also aims to develop the digital library and increase the number of books.

- The Batroun Festivals Committee

This committee is related to the touristic projects of the city of Batroun. It organizes the festival that takes place in August of each year. The festival had a shy and amateurish beginning in the early 90s, until it acquired international standards and earned its place among international cultural festivals. In 2009, the Batroun International Festival was created and began hosting leading local and international artists from around the world. This festival plays a very important role in attracting tourists, changing the image of the city during the month of August. Usually, it takes place along the fishing port and is accompanied by several recreational and cultural activities in the old souks. Channeling

tourism in the city is the main goal. The municipality helps this committee and provides a share of funding, while the other part is from the "Sponsors", such as banks, insurance companies, companies, television channels, ...

- Local private sector of the youth

This section should work in partnership with the municipality. The latter would give them incentives to open the closed stores and revitalize the area.

- Politicians

Politicians have a popular base and have internal and external relationships that allow them to provide financial assistance and speed up projects in the government's administrative routine and bring development projects to the city.

B- Associations

Associations in Batroun are active, and participate in urban planning, tourism, trade, etc

These associations include: The traders association of Batroun, fishermen association, Rotary, Lions, Scout of Lebanon, Caritas

- The Trader's Association of Batroun

This association works to boost the commercial sector of the city. It works in collaboration with the municipality and takes part in the decision-making of some proposed projects for the city like the paving of the main street, the spring festival, activities like the event of Guinness Book for the largest seafood displays at the port of Batroun ... Other activities are being conducted, such as the "sales month", to encourage purchases and boost the economy.

- Fishermen Cooperative Association

This association constitutes a link between the fishermen and the government.

- Lions Club and Rotary Club

These associations are non-political and non-sectarian organizations that provide humanitarian services with no profit in return. They participated in the financing of the restoration of the old souks and the development of the entrance of the city.

In order to achieve its full potentials, the strategy and design intervention should ensure continuous community participation in the revitalization process and implementation process. The public (municipality, DGA) and private (retailers, residents) stakeholders are invited to cooperate and share their different interests and perspectives, to achieve economic, social and spatial revitalization.

The municipality with the support of the development branch in CDR would approach donors to fund the project implementation and the municipality and NGO's training given that they would manage the development. The donors can be either international or local. The European Union and the World Bank finance the urban projects proposed in the city by the municipality, within a framework of the development program and control the execution of these projects. Some of these projects include: The project of the sewage treatment station, the paving of the streets of the old souk with the black basalt stone ...

The grants would cover the following:

- i. The urban design intervention along the different character zones and the pedestrian trail connecting them, including the pavement, the landscape, the lighting and shading devices.

ii. A promotion and marketing strategy i.e. brochures, websites, advertising campaigns to cater for the events that would occur along the fishing port and hence promote local businesses i.e. local products selling events, handicrafts exhibitions, food festivals.

iii. A training and an institutional strengthening for the municipality managing the space as a public domain, and the NGO's assigned to manage the events.

Locals in Batroun are very attached to the city that it would be impossible not to let them participate and empower them. However, there is no doubt that the municipality is the body that should take the lead for the implementation of this thesis' project. In partnership with existing private youth, the revitalization process would be more efficient. The municipality can suggest incentives for the young private sector to invest in the old abandoned part of the city, and to open the closed shops, and for the fishermen to reinforce this sector. It can also apply taxation against empty properties to change the current sad condition, but at the same time, make sure that there will not be a transfer of property that will make the locals leave. The municipality can also impose taxation on large scale stores, and urban design guidelines for signages to keep the character of the town. In addition, if the economy of the recreational activities, in particular the pubs and nightlife, is what makes Batroun alive, then the actors on ground should be strengthened. As for the resorts, the municipality should limit, contain and control the illegalities and the violations of the maritime public domain and impose a tax on these violations, if they are not to be removed.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

Title: Conclusion

Thesis Summary

This thesis sought to respond to the challenges posed for the City of Batroun whose ongoing haphazard urban development has led to severe deterioration of the city's main assets. Beginning with the analysis of the city's overall fabric, the thesis showed the way in which growth led by vehicular infrastructure led to unbridled sprawl, abandonment of the old town, damage to the ecological, historical and natural assets of the city. The thesis specifically focused on the city's coast in its relation to the old city, looking for ways to connect them.

The thesis proposed a detailed analysis of the coastal areas of the city in relation to the historic core and the old coastal road. Based on a detailed analysis of the environmental, property, social, and archeological layers of the coast, the analysis proposed the identification of "character zones" along the city's coastal strip: five areas each with its individual natural and social characteristics. These are: The fishing port zone, The Archeological/Historical zone around the Phoenician wall, the Pebbled beach of Bahsa Bay, the recreational/educational zone that includes the Agricultural institute and Colonel Beer brewery, and finally the touristic zone that contains all the resorts.

Given that my position as an urban designer consisted of enhancing the public nature of the coast and encouraging the circulation of people from/to the coast and the old city, my vision for the city of Batroun and its coast consisted of reconnecting the coast to the old city by integrating and restoring the continuity of the coast, and creating magnet nodes that would channel the flow of people from the city toward its coast, reviving by this the whole city. My vision and its translation to an integrated tourism strategy that provides a long-term sustainable development for the town would also solve the problem of an abused city's coast due to tourist development and lack of continuity from one hand, and of the abandoned old town that has lost its function in relation to the city, on another hand.

Building on the assets/strengths of Batroun, the city was found to have many, namely the existence of archeological sites and cultural centers in the old quarter, as well as very old craft activities. My integrated urban design strategy capitalizes on this natural and built heritage to generate an integrated urban core, the basis of a tourism strategy developed holistically to benefit the town.

The vision translated into an urban design strategy that relied on:

- (1) Enhancing coastal continuity
- (2) Enhancing circulation from/to the coast, in relation to the old coastal road by facilitating the through circulation and enhancing the pedestrian circulation along the old artery.
- (3) Enhancing the internal fabric of the city through an urban design intervention that emphasizes a number of nodes that form a pattern/landmarks within the city;

(4) Strengthen the character of each of the zones...

It was also very crucial to my intervention to reintroduce connections across the sections of the coast, and between the coast and the old city, particularly its old streets, and tie these connections altogether through reviving the vertical spine, that used to be the old coastal road. Finally, I strategically intervened on the “nodes” to enhance them within the old city that would act as important intersection within/across the city and in its relation to the sea.

The thesis further delved into one of the areas, the fishing port zone and the node connecting it to the old souks

This detailed intervention targeted different types of users, from locals, to visitors and tourists, from youth, to families. It included everyone and specifically the fishermen and the traders of Batroun. The blend of families in my city has provided a social unity and this population was found to be extremely attached to their properties, lands, and city, and couldn't but be a major part of its making.

To rebuild the harmonious map of the city, my proposal couldn't be a one-dimension goal. Thus, my vision in imagining a city-wide integration strategy had to target the economic, social and spatial dimensions of the city. I hope it will be successfully informing the stakeholders about possible development strategies in the town, since Batroun has benefited from the energy of the young private sector who endeavor to build on its opportunities along with tourist initiatives. It also has the potential to enlighten the

investigation of neglected old cores and coasts along Mediterranean cities and the role that urban planning and design can play in the process.

This thesis sought to reinforcing Batroun's character as a recreational historical city, as a whole experience where both locals and visitors would come and want to stay. My thesis nonetheless only tackled the coastal area of the city, which forms an important yet small section of the city. The challenge is to set in place on the long term a more comprehensive strategy that expands to the modern and new sections of the city where the problematic would extend to the infrastructural breaks, traffic, haphazard urban development, lack of public spaces, and much more than this. These would be the scope of another research.

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