



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

REGENERATIVE PLACEMAKING OF DECAYING  
ENTERTAINMENT-RETAIL STRIPS (ERS)  
THE CASE OF KASLIK, LEBANON

by  
JOEYLINE JOSEPH TANNOUS

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by  
JOEYLINE JOSEPH TANNOUS

Approved by:

Dr. Robert Saliba, Professor  
Department of Architecture and Design



Advisor

Dr. Maria Gabriella Trovato, Assistant Professor  
Department of Landscape Design and Ecosystem Management



Member of Committee

Dr. Ramzi Farhat, Senior Lecturer  
Department of Architecture and Design



Member of Committee

Dr. Guillaume Boudisseau  
RAMCO Real Estate Advisers



Member of Committee

Date of thesis defense: June 18, 2020

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# AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Major: Urban Design

Title: Regenerative Placemaking of Decaying Entertainment-Retail Strips (ERS)  
The Case of Kaslik, Lebanon

Between 1975 and 1990, war-led decentralization instigated the relocation of business and entertainment activities to Beirut's suburban expansions and peripheral coastal towns. Kaslik strongly emerged as an exclusive entertainment-retail and tourist destination due to the presence of sea resorts and higher education institutions, i.e., the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik (Bou Lahdo, 1999; Davie, 1993). The last three decades underwent a reverse process of *post-war recentralization*, mallification, and e-commerce, reducing the attraction of *street-based shopping*. Peri-urban Entertainment-Retail Strips (ERS) such as Kaslik witnessed high vacancy rates and a sharp decrease in their commercial activities. This global trend, referred to as the "dying strips" phenomena (Depriest-Hricko & Prytherch, 2013), has been addressed through various regeneration strategies involving *marketing and urban management* (Portas, 2011; Irazábal & Chakravarty, 2007), *catalytic interventions* (Logan and Attoe, 1989) as well as *place-making*, i.e., a people-centered approach in designing public spaces (Southworth, 2005). This thesis is an attempt to learn from international case studies in strip regeneration and to critically assess their adaptability to the local context. It proposes a set of *context-sensitive* economic and urban design guidelines for enhancing streetscape identity, improving vehicular and pedestrian connectivity, and providing a framework for private development aimed at reclaiming the role of Kaslik as a peri-urban shopping and entertainment prime destination.

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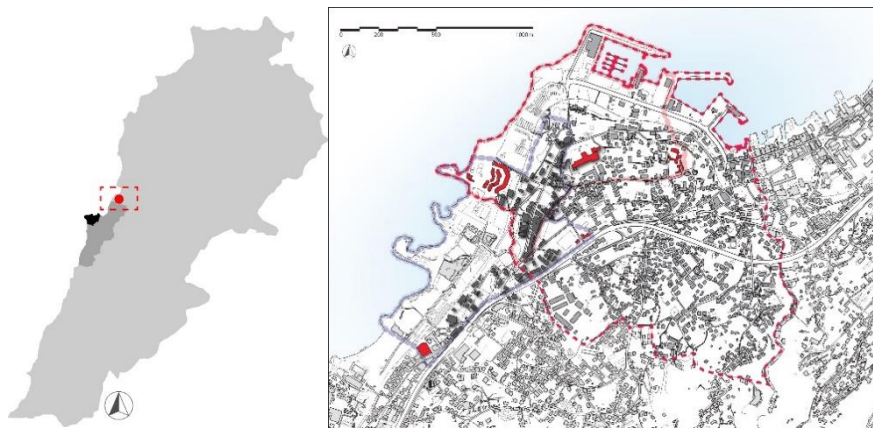
# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Introduction

With the prevalent economic conditions that the country is currently facing, the speed through which businesses have been closing has accelerated within the last few months. However, a similar phenomenon has been ongoing for the last five years along different commercial-entertainment streets, especially in the suburbs of Beirut. The increase in vacancies along these streets is a result of the war-led decentralization, which resulted in accelerated densification of Beirut's suburban expansions and the relocation of business and entertainment activities to peripheral coastal towns between 1975 and 1990, and their recentralization in Beirut post-war. The study aims to explore the case of Kaslik, an eastern extension of Jounieh that strongly emerged as a commercial and high end entertainment center due to the presence of sea resorts and educational institutions such as the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik (Bou Lahdo, 1999; Davie, 1993).

### B. Context definition



*Figure 1: Location map of Kaslik*

As a district overlapping on the municipal areas of Zouk Mikael and Jounieh and bounded by two main institutions- the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik (USEK) from the north and the Automobile and Touring Club of Lebanon (ATCL<sup>1</sup>) from the west (figure 1)- the area's growth during the Civil War caused Kaslik's demand to peak up until the early 2000s as a commercial entertainment district. Between 1978 and 1983, Kaslik was reconfigured to accommodate new commercial trends, while the armed conflict in Beirut accelerated the movement of inhabitants to Sarba. Although this mobility initially seemed temporary, most became permanent. This increase in density and market growth brought an increase in the illegal construction of resorts and buildings. Accordingly, the modest commercial areas grew to form shopping streets and high-rise buildings, with agricultural lands diminishing and beaches becoming privatized (Koobayssi, 2018).

Though zoned as residential, Kaslik is a mixed-use residential, institutional and commercial district, with a coastal zone composed of sea resorts, extending beyond the Jounieh borders and towards the Zouk Mikael area. However, decades after the Civil War, the effects of war decentralization are still present in the shift of demographics and city fragmentations. With Beirut regaining its economic and administrative role, the shops and businesses that had developed the peripheries have started to move closer to the city, resulting in vacancies, mostly due to the high cost of real estate and municipal taxes in Jounieh, either encouraging shop owners to relocate to inexpensive locations such as malls and shopping centers<sup>2</sup> or leading them to bankruptcy.

*Accessibility* to the area is also difficult, since the strip is not visible from the highway discouraging access and egress by cars and public transport. Students commuting to the

---

<sup>1</sup> Automobile and Touring Club of Lebanon attracted elites from all over Lebanon to the Jounieh bay area

<sup>2</sup> Based on conversations with some shop owners

Holy Spirit University of Kaslik also use the strip itself as a shortcut to reach the university, rendering it unappealing in terms of traffic and walkability and thus emphasizing the area as a traffic corridor rather than a destination<sup>3</sup>. Students also avoid spending time in this area, especially with rumors circulating concerning its lack of safety. However, the municipality is hoping that the ongoing touristic port project in Kaslik will help attract people and revive the market in Kaslik and the Kesrouwan region<sup>4</sup>.

Meanwhile, Kaslik's entertainment-retail strip struggles to compete with malls that host a mix of functions, services, and retail under one roof, and coastal towns like Byblos that provide both shopping and cultural experiences. Furthermore, local online retail is becoming a convenient platform for shopping in the region, providing opportunities to have purchases reach the client's doorstep, and which is slowly impacting place-based retail. Consequently, the Kaslik entertainment-retail strip features an ongoing cycle of shops closing and others opening in their place, only to be replaced in a few years.

### **C. Research Questions**

With the economic concerns the country is currently facing, several businesses have permanently shut down, and the few remaining active shops in Kaslik have been on hold for months and are considering closing their businesses.

**In response to the situation, how can decaying entertainment-retail strips regain their vitality in response to mallification and online shopping?**

---

<sup>3</sup> The Kaslik commercial entertainment strip was once considered a destination due to the Cinemas, hotels, and resorts.

<sup>4</sup> Salameh, 2019

With reference to the case study at hand,

**How can Kaslik recover its role as a peri-urban pole of attraction for retail, tourism, and entertainment following the post-war recentralization of commercial activities in Beirut?**

**How can Kaslik define an innovative and competitive commercial and entertainment identity that both complements and competes with new retail trends?**

Building on the concepts of urban regeneration and context-sensitive design,

**How can place-making strategies introduce unique experiences and catalytic interventions to enhance both identity and quality of space in order to attract users and improve their experience?**

The research answers these questions by investigating the global trend, referred to as the “dying strips” phenomena (Depriest-Hricko & Prytherch, 2013) and how it can be addressed through various regeneration strategies involving *marketing and urban management* (Portas, 2011; Irazábal & Chakravarty, 2007), *catalytic interventions* (Logan and Attoe, 1989) as well as *place-making* as a people-centered approach in designing public spaces (Southworth, 2005).

#### **D. Significance**

The thesis is significant on both the theoretical and practical levels of urban design regarding entertainment strips, and expands the limited information available on Jounieh in general and Kaslik in particular. The research examines the role of urban planners and designers in an age where place-based retail is slowly being surpassed by online retail. It also envisions urban regeneration not only as a physical and spatial set of interventions but also as a market-led strategy linked to location and context. The



thesis also sheds light on the conditions and outcomes of urban growth of peri-urban areas as affected by successive waves of war-led decentralization and recentralization with a special focus on economic hubs.

Considering the existing current conditions, public space is an important asset in creating attractive spaces (O'Connor, 2020). The study provides strategies and guidelines in transforming Kaslik into an adaptable space that adjusts and responds to the upcoming changes and different city conditions without compromising its vitality and presents the possibility of replicating these strategies with minor modifications to similar cases.

## **E. Methods**

The methodology focuses on investigating existing activities and retail functions along Kaslik's entertainment retail strip and the related poles of attraction. After a comprehensive literature review on 'dying' commercial districts, and urban regeneration and catalysis, several case studies will be explored for comparative analysis and their relevance to Kaslik. Based on Gillham (2000), a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods will be applied.

Quantitative evidence will focus on secondary sources of information such as topography, zoning, and historical evolution maps; and on professional reports and academic studies on the economic and planning development strategies of Jounieh, Kaslik and their vicinity. Developing ownership maps will help identify the main stakeholders involved in future development with regards to religious waqf, municipal and private properties; and analyzing development patterns and buildings typologies will help assess existing trends in the area and their regenerative potential as compared to international case studies. Current vacancies and uses of closed and open shops along

the strip are then documented with their capture area at local, district and regional scales; and bordering lots are analyzed in terms of their existing and potential development under zoning, concluding with their susceptibility to change.

S.W.O.T. and stakeholder analysis help identify the existing dynamics in the area, while developing different matrices relevant to the research. Maps of accessibility allow an understanding of the circulation and the connections to the highway and other malls and centers. Building surveys and infrastructural mapping, types of open spaces, and comparisons to Kevin Lynch's five elements (paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks) will be used to enhance the urban legibility and identity of the strip.

This thesis also seeks to learn from international case studies in strip regeneration and to critically assess their adaptability to the local context. As a result, the study proposes a set of context-sensitive economic and urban design guidelines to improve the attractiveness of Kaslik as a peri-urban shopping and entertainment destination in terms of connectivity, streetscape identity, open space upgrading, and private development guidelines at different scales.

## **F. Thesis structure and content**

The study is thus divided into five main chapters: the first chapter introduces the case study and the problematic and questions in regards to Kaslik. The second chapter delves into further research on key terms and concepts in relation to the 'dying' entertainment-retail strips and urban regeneration strategies, as well as case study examples that are assessed in relation to Kaslik. The third chapter further analyzes the study area and concludes with a diagnosis that leads to the goals, objectives, strategies, and recommendations in the fourth chapter. Finally, the fifth chapter concludes with an assessment of the intervention strategies and their feasibility.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Kaslik is a dying peri-urban coastal commercial entertainment strip. As such, the literature, which needs to conform to characteristics, elements, and conditions available in the studied area, focuses on several vital terms and possible intervention strategies that reinforce regeneration frameworks and enhance the livelihood of decaying areas like Kaslik. The chapter covers two main aspects: the first part defines entertainment-retail strips and dying streets, while the second part discusses strategies for regeneration, both on a local and regional scale. The chapter concludes with case study examples. The literature serves to provide key terms, definitions, and strategies that guide the assessment of the chosen case study, while providing guidelines in order to accumulate sufficient material to formulate a comprehensive urban intervention strategy.

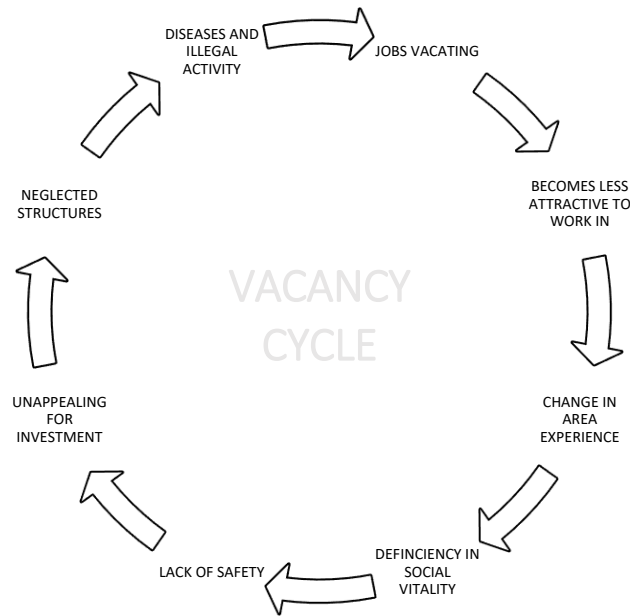
#### **A. Decaying Entertainment-Retail Strips (ERS):**

Entertainment-retail strips (ERS) emerged and evolved when spaces of retail and spaces of social interaction and entertainment were recently merged. The entertainment aspect of these areas includes –but is not limited to– nightclubs, restaurants, cultural centers, and any space that hosts public special events (Irazábal & Chakravarty, 2007). These areas have been known to provide the economic backbone of the city, with streets having noticeably enhanced community spaces and heightened social interactions (Berton, 2003; Southworth, 2005).

In that regard, the areas that experienced a drastically increasing vacancy rate became known as “dying strips” (Depriest-Hricko & Prytherch, 2013). Such decay was especially encountered in shopping and retail strips, when *shopping became more*

*favoured by users in malls* and better managed by retailers/owners under one roof (Poiani, 2008). Moreover, the rise of *online shopping* and the increase in accessibility to any product through the internet, furthered the demise of place-based retail (Southworth, 2005). Thus, commercial-entertainment strips were soon unable to compete. Efforts to revive these streets often focused on partial solutions such as beautification rather than the improvement of the experience as a whole, and generally resulted in uncoordinated planning (especially in post-war periods), making these areas difficult to access and even more difficult to maintain (Culberston, 2010). Such scenarios were most witnessed in peri-urban areas, which, with recentralization, have ceased to be the main interest of investors.

The declining activity of these districts results in increasing unemployment rates, and the tipping point beyond which the abandonment accelerates results in a clear perception of the street as 'dying'. This leads to further abandonment (Brabazon, 2013). Such phenomena change the experience of the area and decrease attractiveness (figure 2), leading to further decline in the social and retail activities in the neighborhood and resulting in the deficiency of social vitality, the lack of safety, and the decrease of quality of life (Rybczynski & Linneman, 1999).



*Figure 2: Vacancy Cycle inspired by the reading*

Nevertheless, Ryan (2012) sees opportunity in the challenge. He states that vacancies provide opportunities for designers and planners to improve the physical environment of these dying areas and adjust them to the city's economic and social needs. Regeneration, however, does not have a specific model to be followed. These districts need to create new opportunities and experiences at multiple scales for them to be reactivated (Ryan, 2012). Knowing that solutions fail to fit under one comprehensive urban design strategy, each area must be considered and studied on a case by case basis in order to determine what effective strategy could benefit the local context (Ryan, 2012). An effective **regeneration strategy** usually involves both an **economic approach**, i.e. marketing and urban management, and a **spatial-experiential approach**, i.e., place-making.

## **B. ERS Regeneration Through Marketing and Urban Management Strategies**

One method of economic regeneration of a city is through creating a *marketing strategy* for the area to promote it as attractive for people to visit. This strategy should be based on establishing the role the district will play on a local and regional level, and then creating action plans to meet these roles along with the needs of visitors, workers, and investors through policy, design, and management of the space (Inner Melbourne Action Plan, 2016).

For a regeneration vision to be feasible, it needs to be a bottom-up approach that incorporates all stakeholders. The property development sector plays a role since regenerating an area depends on recreating or altering its environment. However, it is the people and their interactions with the environment that give areas their meaning, so their current activities could guide and benefit these marketing strategies (Smyth, 2016). Malls and closed shopping centers provide different social interaction opportunities and activities such as sheltered open spaces and functions that cater to different age groups and experiences, thus leading them to be the preferred meeting points for people, especially the youth (Irazábal & Chakravarty, 2007). It is thus essential to understand and learn from the market (Culbertson, 2010). From that logic, entertainment-retail centers (ERCs) emerged through the concept of *invented and reinvented streets* that transformed old retail by turning them into themed spaces that created new spatial experiences and attracted visitors to socialize and shop (Gottdiener, 1997; Irazábal & Chakravarty, 2007). Examples of different retail types that have evolved through time are analyzed and studied in Appendix 1. Nevertheless, the general theoretical frameworks are categorized below.

- **Form follows finance** (figure 3): Finance plays a role in defining the experience, transforming the space, and designing the frontages: market forces have controlled design in a society inspired by economic ambition, thus competing to achieve “distinction” (Frampton, 1985; Ellin, 1999). Prominent landmarks and buildings often become attraction points, and this is a strategy that some designers and business owners use to appeal to customers. Ultimately, consumer demands shape spaces and buildings, and thus transform spaces into spectacles that deflect other problems (Ellin, 1999).

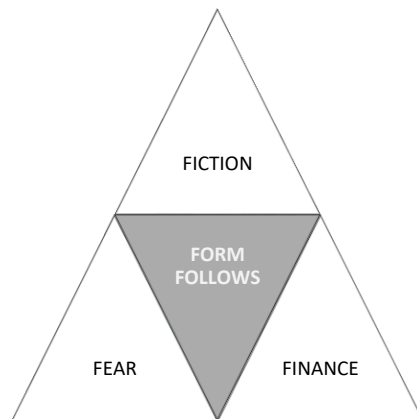


Figure 3: triad of urban form based on lectures and readings

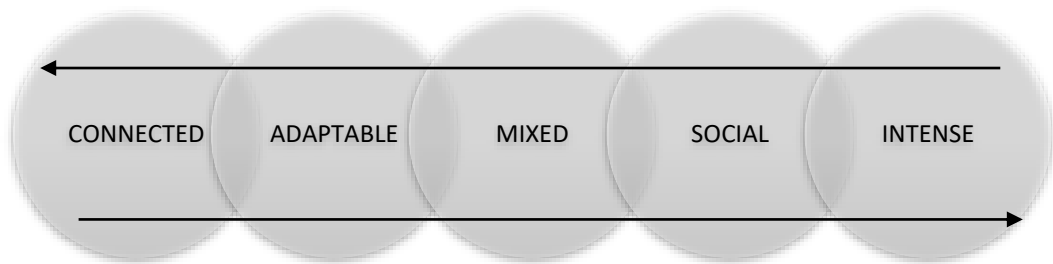
- **Catalysts:** Hence, such interventions need a *catalyst*, which is an element introduced within the urban setting to reshape and activate its context, without devaluing the old and the existing identities. The goal of the catalytic reaction is not a collection of developments that are an end product, but integrated elements that guide further development and contribute to the area’s character, intending to attract users (Logan and Attoe, 1989). Logan and Attoe (1989) have stated that though urban regeneration can be a catalyst, it is not sufficient on its own to reactivate the urban setting and attract users. There should be realistic and achievable visions that can trigger a sequence of other visions that have a

substantial impact on the urban context. The catalyst does not necessarily have to be a physical intervention, but rather an economic process that leads to further investments in the area. For this reason, catalytic urban design works from a **master program** rather than a master plan in order to set **intentions and methods** rather than direct single-minded solutions (Logan and Attoe, 1989).

- **Business Improvement Districts:** Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are one of the efforts to apply the successes of shopping malls into city downtowns/districts. They are connected geographical areas that evaluate property owners and assign special fees to provide the area with additional services such as sanitation, security, uniform design standards, and landscaping. The structure of these districts provides tax revenue for government officials to fund the services needed and requested by business owners on the district base, which also allows business interests more control over their tax payments. BIDs are *centralized management structures* that incorporate successful elements of malls into downtowns through controlled environment and management. Since streets and plazas are still public domains, BIDs have to rely on governmental tools such as zoning, taxation, and fines in order to have the effects of centralized control, but the district's imitation of quasi-public spaces causes some loss of publicness. These projects are usually commercially successful, using designs that trigger nostalgia and visual cues that create continuous themes relating to the area's markets and identity. The appeal of the business improvement districts is due to the available variety, aesthetics, architecture, and cultural opportunities, paralleled with familiarity, safety, and cleanliness. They



host restaurants, boutiques, and specialized stores and activities, thus allowing people to enjoy their time without feeling at risk or uncomfortable (figure 4).

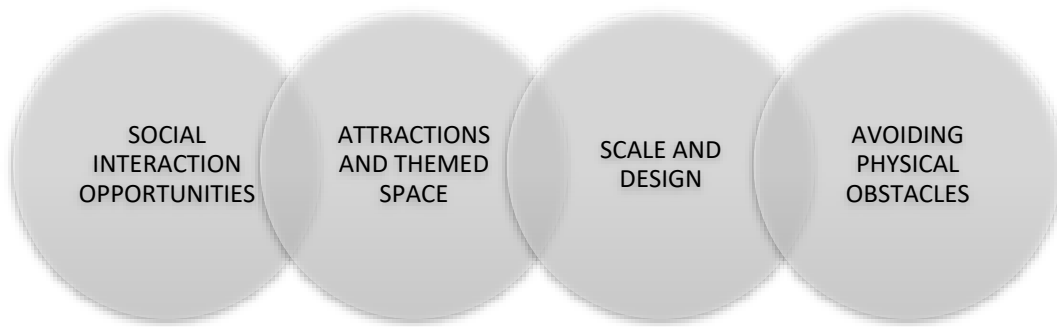


*Figure 4 Five High Street Characteristics (Carmona, Progress in Planning, 2015)*

### **C. ERS Regeneration Through Place-Making**

#### **a) Sense of place/identity**

Stakeholder involvement in the process is at the core of urban regeneration, and place-making follows a similar rationale. Shukran Qazimi (2014), referencing Canter (1977), defines a place as a combination of “physical attributes, human conceptions, and activities”. Therefore, sense of place is the developed emotions from experiences related to space through physical elements, activities, meaning, and place attachment (figure 5) (Agnew 1987; Altman and Low 1992; Montgomery 1998; Arefi 1999; Depriest-Hricko & Prytherch, 2013). Despite the negative aspects linked to dying districts and streets, sense of place remains apparent through emotional connections, and in most cases, these memories and events relate to physical elements such as buildings and architectural character, proximity, and shops (Depriest-Hricko & Prytherch, 2013). However, experiences in a place can be subjective, so the individual meanings and stories of a place create different relationships to space (Hummon 1992; Stokowski 2002; Depriest-Hricko & Prytherch, 2013).



*Figure 5 Place-making elements (summary)*

**b) Public spaces**

**Public spaces** existing between developments and along commercial areas are spaces where users have the opportunity to express, interact, and communicate without having to buy or sell. These spaces make destinations more attractive (Kohn, 2001). Accordingly, once developers acquire such properties, these spaces become controlled environments that alter the existing diversity that animated public space. Nevertheless, the privatization of public spaces is attractive to specific visitors and investors since space gives the perception of safety familiar to the private realm. Regardless, public spaces can still give the perception of safety through improvements and maintenance of these districts; but this requires collective action and visions.

**c) Pedestrianization**

Friedmann identifies the main criteria of place to be of a **pedestrian scale** to allow **unplanned interactions**, inhabited, continuous use, and allowing the users to create special meanings of the space on their own<sup>5</sup>. People like walking outdoors when possible, but that preference is also dependent of the context and types of activities

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<sup>5</sup> Friedmann references Randolph Hester’s term of “sacred spaces” to clarify what he means by “the centrality”

available and offered (Pojani, 2008). Nevertheless, scale and design control pedestrian comfort (Southworth, 2005), taking into consideration the need for creating social spaces versus spaces for retail. Though there are several strategies to create pedestrian-friendly spaces, there are some barriers that require special attention to improve the space as a whole (Southworth, 2005).

#### d) **Context-sensitive design**

Place-making needs to engage with different people and public functions, and urban design can play a role in expressing these experiences and interactions spatially through *context-sensitive design* (figure 6). This enables innovative patterns of urban use, focusing on the social, cultural, and physical identities that characterize a place and sustain its evolution, rather than just encouraging new design.

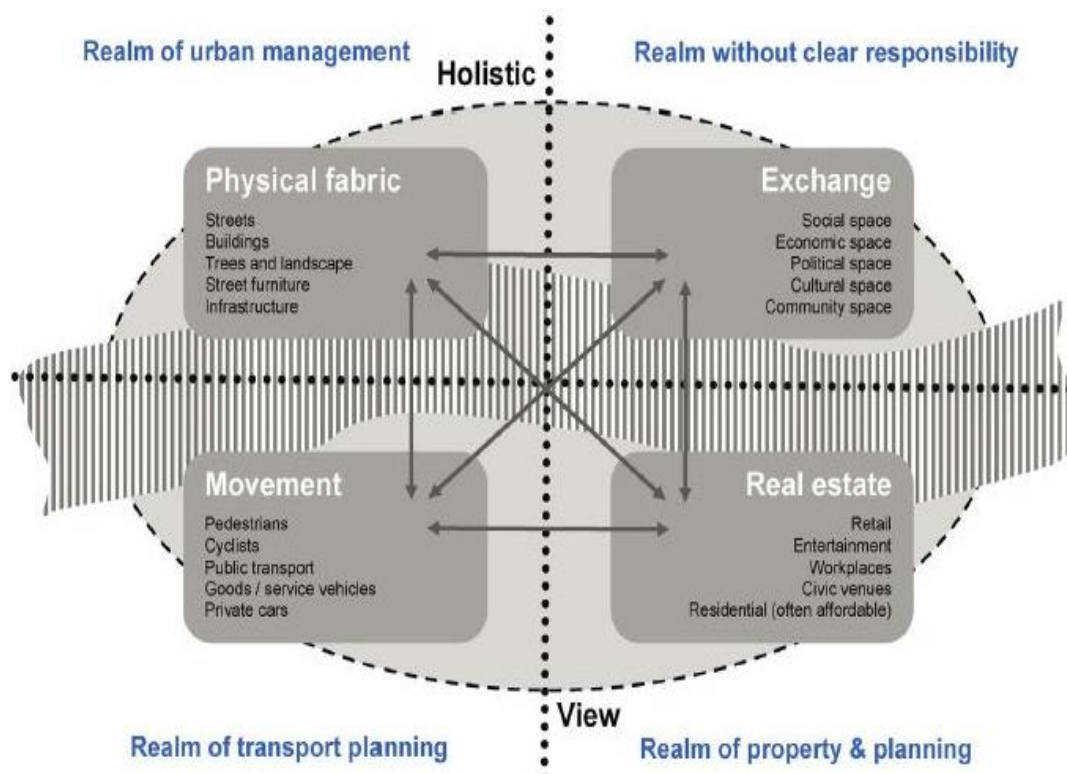


Figure 6: Analysis Framework, Carmona, Progress in Planning, 2015

**e) Destination**

It is essential to create *destinations* that make communities more attractive and give them identities, thus attracting business, people, and investment. These destinations are desirable because they have multiple places within them.

Subsequently, for most places to be attractive, they must have certain key features like access and linkages –that make them easily connect from a central location to the other–, comfort and image, uses and activities, and sociability that marks favored places for people to meet and gather (Project for Public Spaces, 2007).

## **D. Case Studies**

Different strategies can be applied for such theoretical frameworks, and the case study examples below reflect their success within commercial-entertainment strips. Though these examples are of western contexts, the lessons learned can be adjusted and replicable in contexts like Kaslik. These projects encompass programmatic and marketing strategies, design interventions and masterplans, and planning and design recommendations and reviews. The following summarizes each of the five examples and the lessons learned from the approaches used.

### ***1. Third Street Promenade***

Third Street Promenade in Santa Monica is an example of how marketing and design strategies were able to transform the once dying pedestrian mall into a popular destination (figure 7). The change in the program by including entertainment functions that create a distinct *experience* in the area and re-design of plazas and streets that created *places of interaction* has made it not only a destination for the locals of the area, but for tourists as well (Hodgetts, Mangurian, & Keyser, 1980). A report called “*A Design and Revitalization Plan for the Santa Monica Mall*” defined the opportunities and constraints and then developed marketing, financing, and design strategies. The studied area has a locational advantage that had potential as a point of attraction, yet the design of the existing shopping street lacked focal points and was mediocre and redundant, which gave no distinctive identity to the area (Pojani, 2008). Third Street Mall<sup>6</sup> had no connections to the parking structures, and there was no unified vision for the area (Hodgetts, Mangurian, & Keyser, 1980).

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<sup>6</sup> Third Street Promenade in the revitalization report is referred to as the Mall or Third Street Mall, before its name being changed to Promenade later on (as a rebranding strategy of the area)

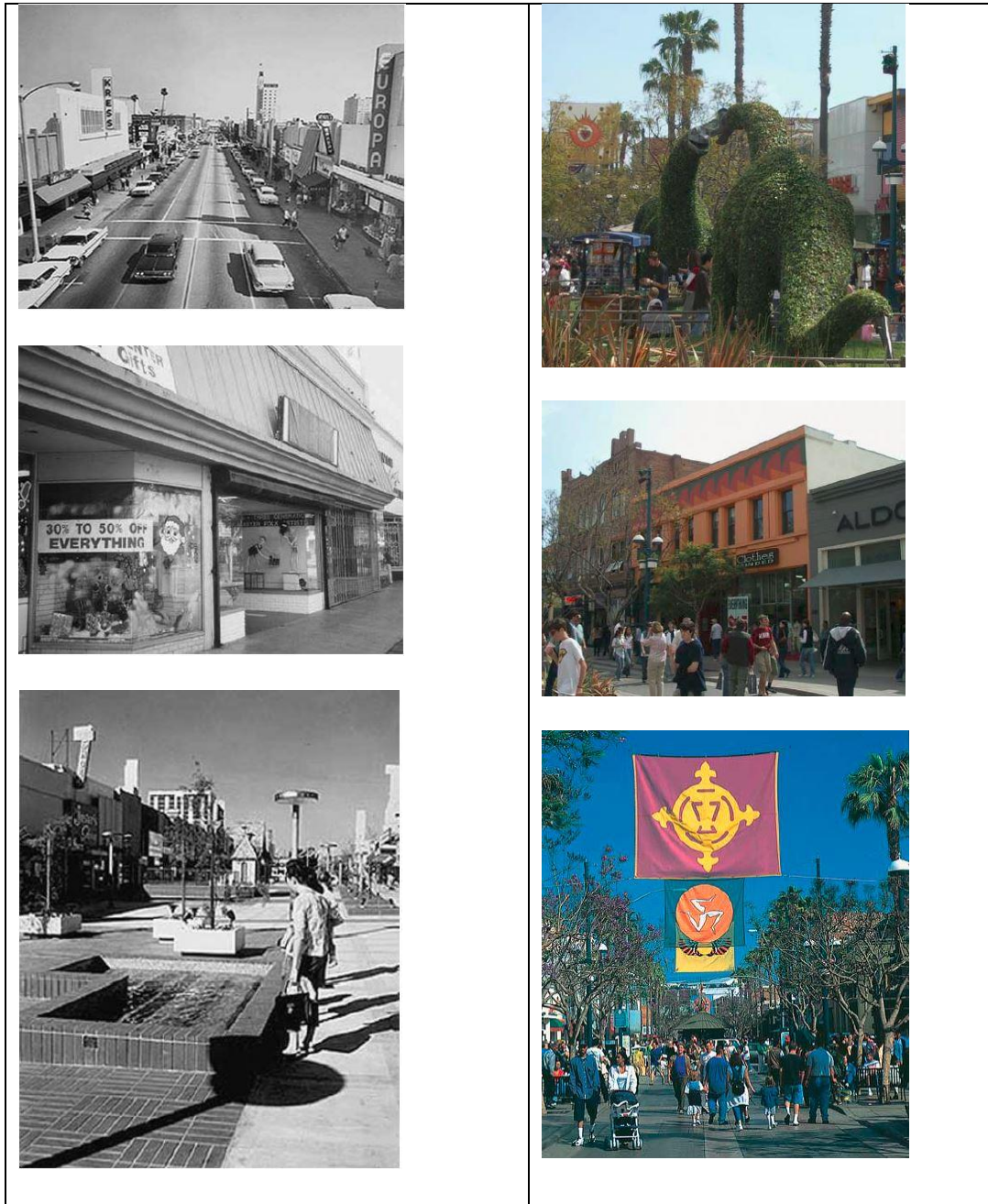


Figure 7: Third Street in the 1960s versus 2008 (Poiani, 2008)

**Main activities for revitalization:** the first strategy upgrades parking structures through a parking program and links them directly to the Mall through walkways, while redesigning the Mall itself to create a comfortable shopping environment and host pedestrian activities. New and diverse activities are introduced

within the buildings and along the street, along with storefront and sign upgrades to make the environment more attractive. On the other hand, a mechanism that involves owners, tenants, developers, and local governance is introduced.

The initial design strategy focuses on creating a pedestrian environment. The design plan (figure 8) introduces several zones that guide developments towards creating urban spaces that have unique characters, ensuring diverse and interesting pedestrian areas with sidewalk cafes, kiosks, and markets. A Mid-Block Plaza Zone creates new access points and plazas from combined public and private land. Bollards and vehicle ramps pedestrianize and create continuity within the Mall. The strip itself was reconfigured and narrowed through expanded storefronts or arcades, and by coordinated identity markers that established continuous visual identity. At the block scale, the walkways establish shopping spaces in the form of plazas. Each block houses outdoor activities, commercial and recreational programs. Pavilions were also found at intervals in the middle of the street, where activities and events were inserted to encourage people to participate and socialize; and to keep people interested in walking (Hodgetts, Mangurian, & Keyser, 1980).

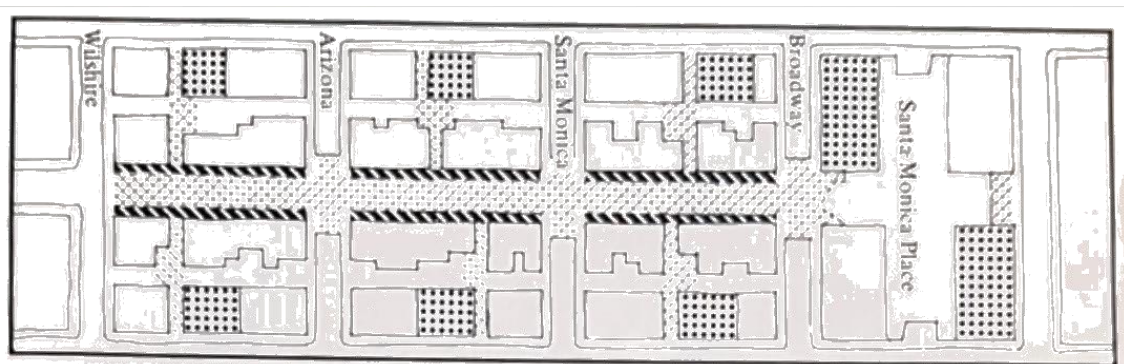
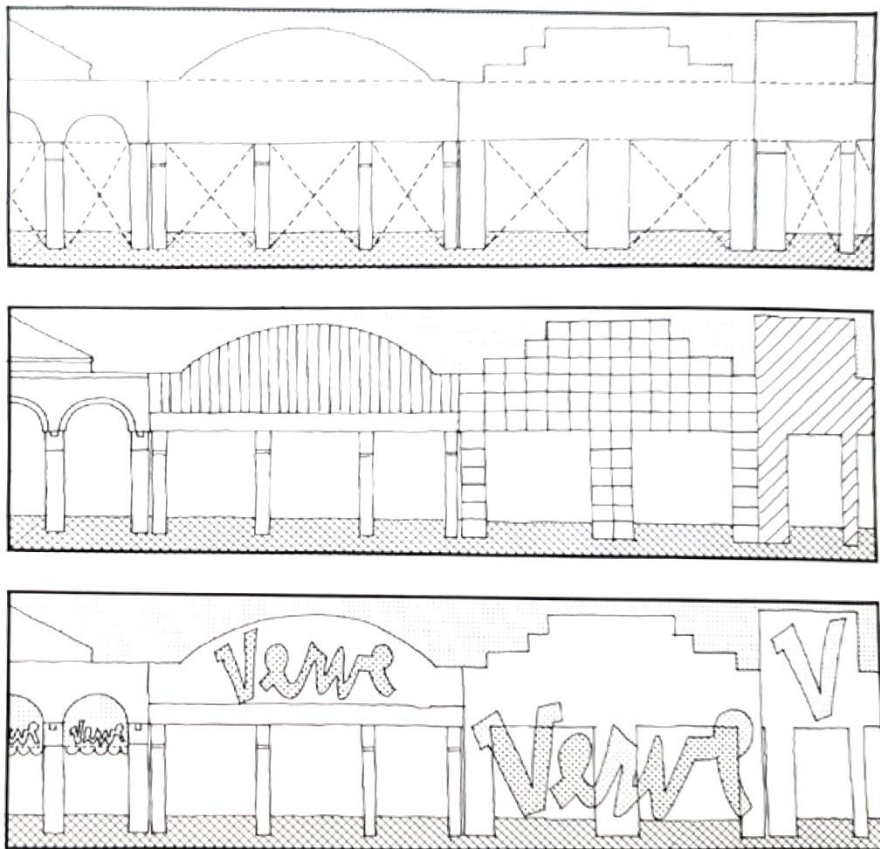


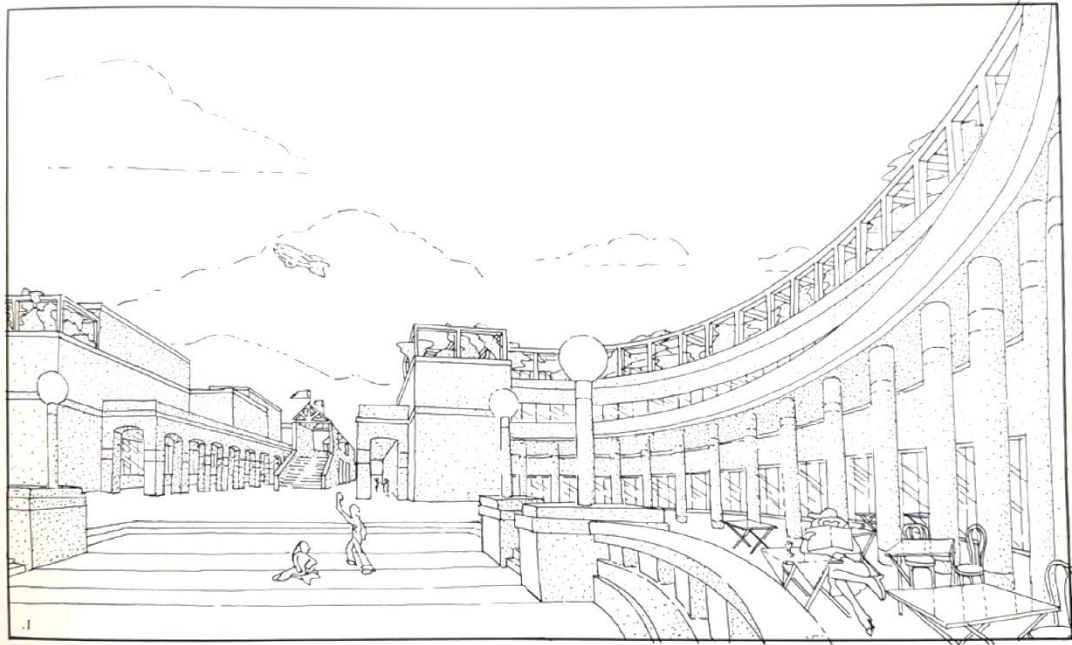
Figure 8: General plan of Santa Monica's Third Street taken from "A design and revitalization plan for the Santa Monica Mall"

Private developments have several possibilities when it comes to program and design: particular uses, such as restaurants, open-air markets, and small specialty shops are found on the ground floor, while upper levels are mixed-use office and residential. Ground floor facades are part of redefining the identity of Third Street Mall (figure 9). These design standards overlap with the existing zoning requirements of the area while still allowing the possibility of creating outdoor and semi-enclosed experiences and activities (figure 10).



*Figure 9: Standards and examples of frontages and relationships in terms of arcades from “A design and revitalization plan for the Santa Monica Mall”*





*Figure 10: Example of how space is imagined in Third Street “A design and revitalization plan for the Santa Monica Mall”*

### **Implementation and Marketing Strategies**

The success of the revitalization strategy depended on the continuous commitment and coordination of both the local owners and the public sector. The public sector uses its legal authority and financial capabilities to help develop, finance, and execute the previously mentioned strategies, as well as introducing benefits and incentives to improve the Mall. In contrast, the private sector roles are through direct investment, involvement, and commitment in upgrading and improving individual properties. On the other hand, the Interim Development Committee has numerous functions that assess, fund, and promote the area. The committee assisted merchants with marketing, promotions, and advertising, regularly altering design in the strip, and creating promotional events (Hodgetts, Mangurian, & Keyser, 1980). Renaming the area

Third Street Promenade was also a branding and marketing strategy that emphasized the walking experience (Pojani, 2008)(figure 11).



*Figure 11: Third Street, Santa Monica, taken from santamonica.com*

## **2. Melrose Avenue**

Melrose Avenue, on the other hand, uses its strategic location to *brand* itself as a design district to target a specific audience. It justifies this brand through both design and program of the streets and buildings, hosting one-of-a-kind stores, leisure and health activities, and famous graffiti along the strip. It has gone as far as transforming **place-based** retail into **experience-based** retail, encouraging shoppers to still visit these stores, even at the age of online shopping (Bell, 2005; Brown, 2010; Cornfield, 2018). Currently, the area has been attracting high-end fashion retailers, hosting diverse boutiques of different themes, as well as several tattoo parlors, restaurants, and coffee

bars (Tschorn, 2005); and its proximity to Melrose Place<sup>7</sup> only adds to its appeal. As an area that combines “hip neighbors”, attractive and diverse retail space and frontages not only attracts pedestrians but vehicular movement. With relatively affordable rents and secure car and parking access, this area has attracted retailers to open their unique stores in Melrose Avenue (Vesilind, 2007), transforming the whole corridor from furniture into a high-end fashion street (Vesilind, 200, Tschorn, 2005).

Nevertheless, what makes it stand out the most is the **brand** perspective. It is not the street that will drive the business like Third Street, but rather the brand itself. In other words, the street combines several **destinations**<sup>8</sup> into one area, all acting as catalysts in relation to a specific clientele. An example of that would be the Marc Jacobs Collection flagship on the corner of Melrose Place and Melrose Avenue that acts as a landmark that attracts people who can afford it (figure 12) (Bell, 2005).



*Figure 12: The Marc Jacobs landmark building at Melrose Avenue, taken by Paul Warchol, 2010*

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<sup>7</sup> The Television series Melrose Place added to the fame of the existing Melrose Place street

<sup>8</sup> The number of designer names that have opened up shops has allowed retailers to understand that Melrose Avenue is destination-driven rather than an impulse shopping area.

Tenants in Melrose Avenue are not only ensuring that the physical stores are relevant, but they are also creating new ways to have these brands and physical adaptations to the digital world (Cornfield, 2018). “Digital-meets-physical” projects in Melrose are creating methods that brands can integrate **experience-based retail** to adjust to internet shopping, like Nike has done, focusing on customer service rather than inventory, and connecting clients with the store through an online application, allowing them to come to the store for new experiences and services (Cornfield, 2018).

The identity and character of the street are factors as well. The Avenue shrinks from a fast-moving street to a smaller, more local one, through the interior design district. Since some visit the Avenue by car, bigger and bolder signs that attract attention to drivers can significantly affect sales (Brown, 2010), while the slower pace includes landscaped sidewalks and popular eateries that ensures a steady flow of foot traffic. The street becomes eclectic, catering to a younger market (Cornfield, 2018) with different specialty stores, boutiques, and leisure spaces (Vesilind, 2007). The West Hollywood Design District Streetscape Master Plan proposed strategies to improve aesthetics and mobility through introducing cycling lanes, locating new public gathering spaces, landscaping, and improving the existing infrastructure to correct traffic and parking issues (figure 13) (Design District Streetscape Project).



Figure 13: Melrose Avenue improvement plan, taken from *weho.org* for the West Hollywood Design District Streetscape Master Plan

Melrose Avenue is managed by the Melrose Avenue Business Improvement District formed by commercial property owners in order to assess costs of operation, revitalize, and provide services such as security, parking, landscape, sanitation, marketing and promotion. (Melrose District, About Us). Apart of the marketing strategy as well, is scheduling hour-and-a-half art tours along the Avenue provided by some of the artists that have been creating these “grammable”<sup>9</sup> murals and graffiti on walls at Melrose, giving insight on how the creations came to be, causing tourists to share these tours through social media, which, in turn, indirectly promotes the area as an eclectic artistic space (figure 14).

<sup>9</sup> The term refers to the popular art and graffiti at Melrose that have become famous on Instagram and social media.



Figure 14: Showing part of the murals through the tour, taken from <https://melroseartsdistrict.com/melrose-street-art-tour-with-an-artist/>

### **3. Pomona Corridors**

On the other hand, the Pomona Corridors in Los Angeles facing vacancies and a decrease of safe spaces led the City to introduce revitalization strategies through the *Pomona Corridors Specific Plan in 2013* (figure 15), which was designed to coordinate public and private investment into revitalization strategies along the Garey Avenue, Holt Avenue, Mission Boulevard, and Foothill Boulevard corridors as main commercial corridors of the area. The strategies and frameworks developed complement existing market trends, improve infrastructure, and ensure sustainability and good place-making. The primary strategy includes implementing the “*Center and Segment*” approach, *transforming the strips into patterns of hubs or centers that include dense market areas of specific identities*, surrounded by segments that complement these centers (Pomona Corridors Specific Plan Review Draft, 2013).

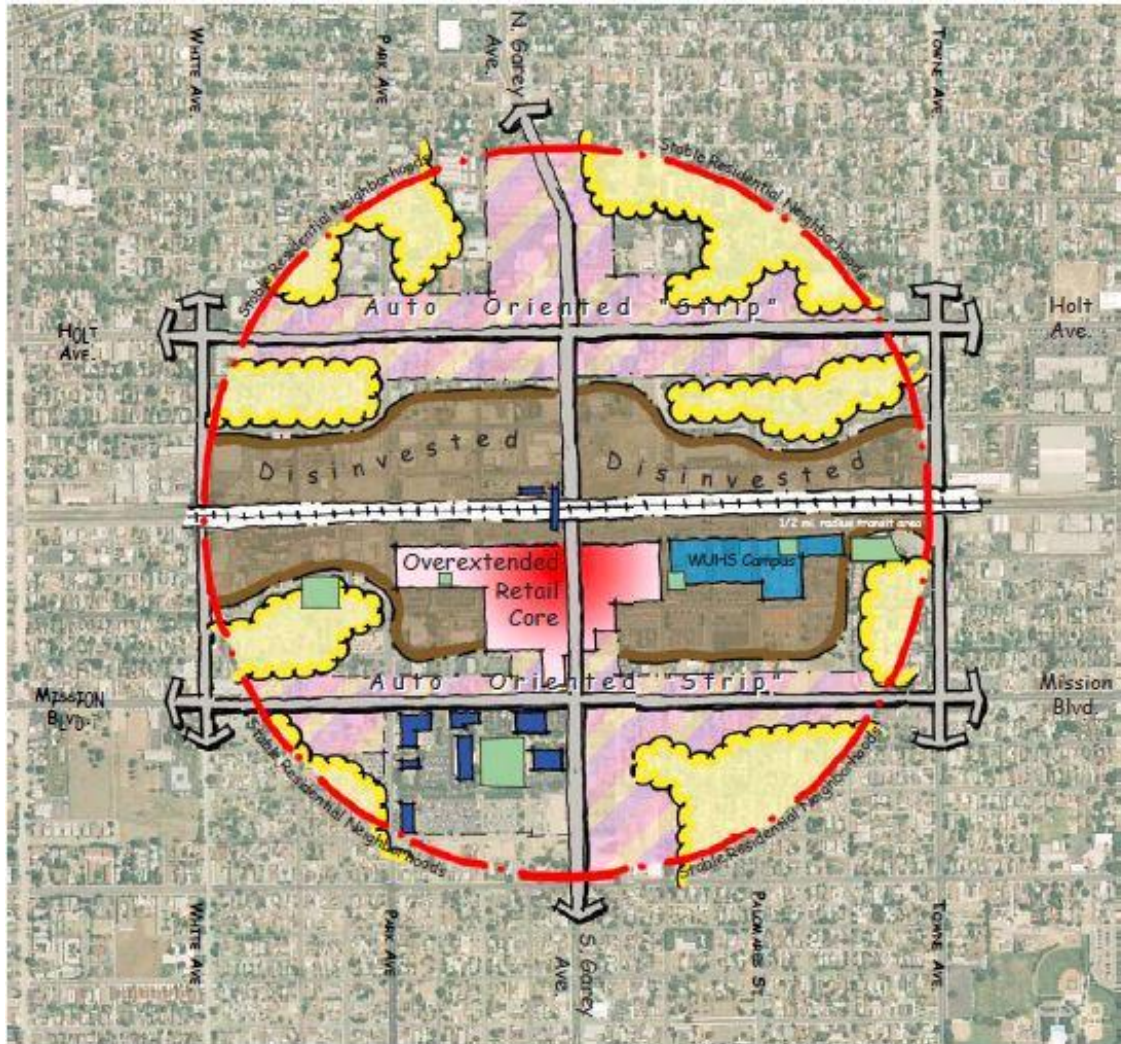


Figure 15 showing the main issues in the Pomona corridors, taken from [http://ci.pomona.ca.us/mm/comdev/plan/pdf/csp/PublicReviewDraft\\_2013-06-24\\_CorridorsSpecificPlan\\_web.pdf](http://ci.pomona.ca.us/mm/comdev/plan/pdf/csp/PublicReviewDraft_2013-06-24_CorridorsSpecificPlan_web.pdf)

The Specific Plan implements the goals and visions and policies acknowledged in the General Plan while integrating community input. Due to the scale of the project, the Specific Plan had to incorporate different strategies at different scales, in order to specify all the necessary details. Hence, it was subdivided into three sections, or books, that specify in explicit and technical details the community intent, development code, and city actions.

### **Book 1: Community Intent**

The goal of the Specific Plan is to produce a planning and design framework (figure 16) that enhances the economy, functionality, and visual perception, which include but are not limited to:

- comprehensive planning with clearly defined frameworks
- beautification and transformation of the corridors into key destinations
- improve and integrate mobility with land use
- strengthen community character
- improve public safety



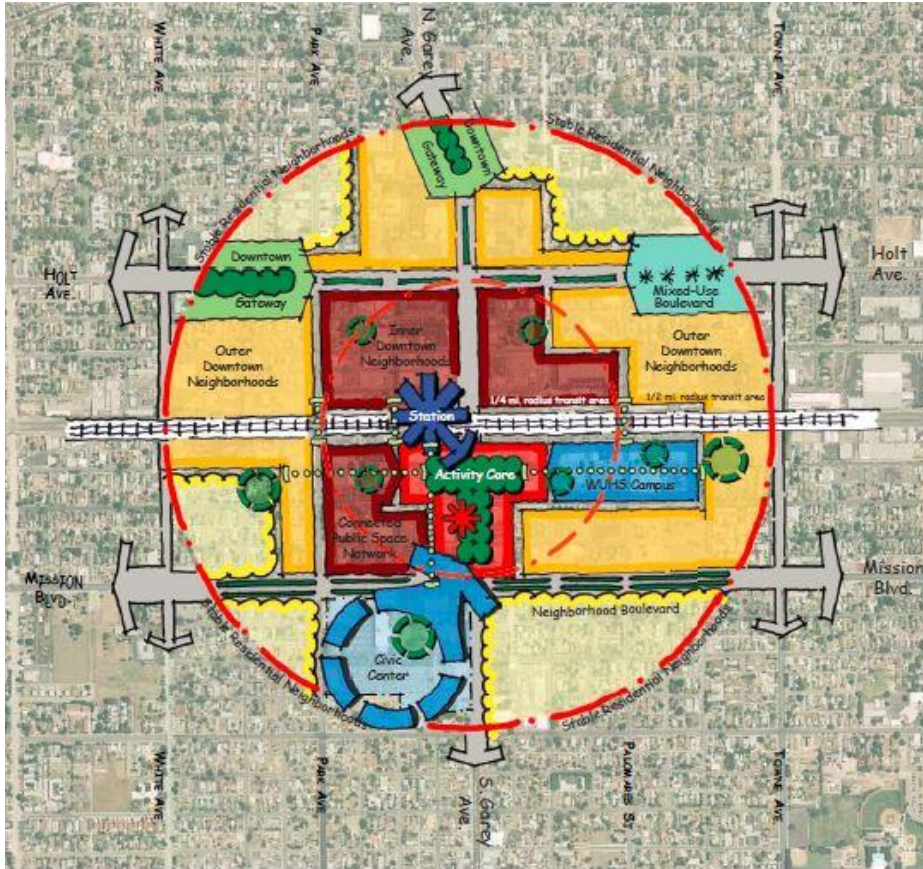


Figure 16 showing the main general strategies in the Pomona corridors, taken from [http://ci.pomona.ca.us/mm/comdev/plan/pdf/csp/PublicReviewDraft\\_2013-06-24\\_CorridorsSpecificPlan\\_web.pdf](http://ci.pomona.ca.us/mm/comdev/plan/pdf/csp/PublicReviewDraft_2013-06-24_CorridorsSpecificPlan_web.pdf)

By understanding the existing conditions of the area, strategies and frameworks are developed in order to complement existing market trends, improve infrastructure, and ensure sustainability and good place-making. The strategies would then be able to adapt to the different changes and guide new investment by:

- harnessing market demand through corridor development policies by clustering workplace uses and introducing open-air retail, mixed-use, and walkable urban environments
- support, improve, and expand the existing commercial developments
- use the existing anchor institutions and gateways to influence development patterns, and land uses to stimulate investment
- **implement “Center and Segment” strategies that transform the strips into a pattern of centers and segments of specific market focus identity, complemented by the land use and development policies**

- enhance corridor identity through place experiences and activities
- provide investment-friendly environments through clear development policies standards and facilitated review process

The Specific Plan thus coordinates individual public and private investments to achieve “**a vision for the future that is sufficiently specific to provide a common purpose, yet flexible enough to respond to opportunities and changes in the marketplace that will inevitably arise.**” The urban design framework thus develops land use and development policies that implement the community’s intent and is thus divided into several districts with their own specifications.

All these districts include **patterns of centers and segments** that are areas transformed from the typical undifferentiated continuous strips of a sequence of redundant commercial buildings into a variety of patterned hubs of periodic clusters of shops and activities (known as centers), and linear series of cohesive buildings landscape and occasional market focus (known as segments). These patterns will build on the existing conditions of each corridor, urban typology, and specific character of the previously identified districts to create broader appeal and establish improved transitions between corridors.

The planning framework in the centers like in the Downtown Core specifies the promotion and the continued evolution of this area into a lively mixed-use shopping district through the addition of daytime and nighttime activity anchors, shopping, dining and entertainment spaces with offices, residential units, and hotels, as well as increasing walkability through a variety of pedestrian amenities and public spaces in order to inspire further investment and housing development. It is transformed into an activity node by introducing ground-level activity. **Downtown Gateway Segments**, on the other

hand, are transformed into gateway “Grand Boulevards” with walkable paths and unique building and site treatments with more efficient land use (figure 17). The segment-specific revitalization strategy implements regulations that support market demands and supportive capital improvements, yet reduce new retail investment in order to catalyze existing developments into visible corridor segments without competing with the Centers.



Figure 17 showing an example of a masterplan to downtown segments in relation to the centers, taken from [http://ci.pomona.ca.us/mm/comdev/plan/pdf/csp/PublicReviewDraft\\_2013-06-24\\_CorridorsSpecificPlan\\_web.pdf](http://ci.pomona.ca.us/mm/comdev/plan/pdf/csp/PublicReviewDraft_2013-06-24_CorridorsSpecificPlan_web.pdf)

## **Book 2: Development Code**

The second part of the report discusses technical standards, actions and zoning at different scales of each avenue in order to obtain the different goals and set in the first part. The Development code evaluates these projects and discusses the importance of phasing plans in case there are exceptions to regulations.

## **Book 3: City Actions**

The revitalization program is supported by a program of community actions and investment, where the project is implemented in phases guided by the goals and strategies in relation to the resource availability of the City and private investment

support. The investment of community resources would accelerate revitalization and make the corridors and centers more appealing and achievable regarding the community vision. The streetscape can be implemented and funded through public and private investment, and private development can contribute to the implementation process along the corridors through their individual property frontages, while the public manages the streetscape improvement<sup>10</sup> (in coordination with the State of California).

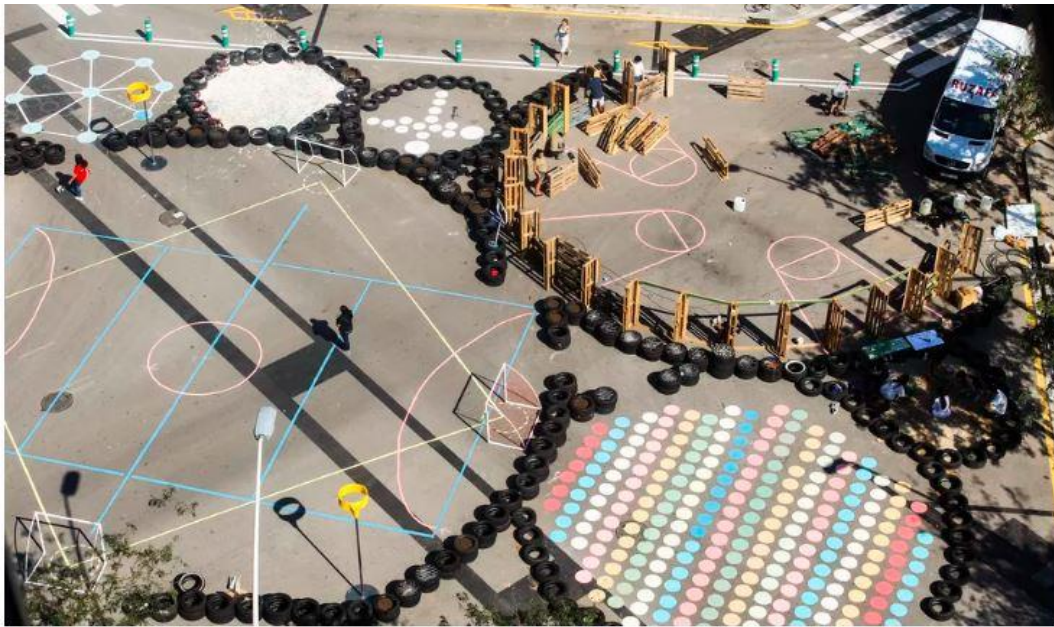
#### ***4. Poblenou Superblock***

Another example is the Poblenou Superblock, the pilot project for upcoming superblocks in Barcelona, made up of nine blocks with 20-meter wide inner streets. This project became a cultural product that reconfigured the outlook on mobility and its relationship to public spaces (Bravo, 2018). Superblocks were already an existing planning concept, known for being flexible, people-centric strategies that aimed to pedestrianize streets and to reroute vehicles to the surrounding networks (Critton, 2019). What differentiated the Poblenou Superblock from the traditional type was the use of two strategies in two phases. The first phase used tactical urbanism, focusing on temporary, fast, and cheap interventions with significant impacts such as changing the traffic direction and turning the street into a one-way street with a looping circulation pattern and reducing the speed limit to 10 kilometers per hour. The project turned the twenty-meter wide inner streets consisting of five-meter footpaths on each side and three-car lanes and parking into one vehicular lane to guarantee access to locals in order to free up the rest of the street for pedestrians. The project then inserted cycling lanes

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<sup>10</sup> The City is also responsible for defining, emphasizing and enhancing high-visibility locations, landmarks and gateways in relation to the Pomona identity, and coordinating with transit agencies and other regional planning organizations to improve traffic and street networks through a detailed transit plan that aligns with the visions and strategies of the project. As for public facilities and infrastructure, they are administered by the City as well, but private developers can contribute, depending on their proportional use of the facilities, otherwise they will be reimbursed by the City.

and painted signs on the street for pedestrians, as well as temporary installations, furniture, and vegetation, along with delineating spaces with car wheels (figure 18). This system allowed constant modifications by the locals and enhancing participation approaches, which resulted in children's playgrounds, sports areas, and temporary markets.



*Figure 18: The Poblenou superblock in its original, temporary-feeling form, BCNUEJ, 2016*

The second phase implements these temporary interventions as permanent structures through conventional construction and engineering (figure 19). Though businesses initially rejected this project, pedestrian and cyclist activities improved the economy of the area, which allowed the shop owners to accept and participate in these interventions. The project was thus able to increase public space and livelihood of the area while also decreasing noise pollution.



*Figure 19: more permanent structures at the edge of the Poblenou, Maysun for Vox, 2019*

### **5. The Portas Review**

The Portas Review<sup>11</sup>, on the other hand, is a report that evaluated the existing dying high streets in the U.K. and lists a series of planning, marketing, and program recommendations in order to revitalize these retail strips. A summary of the general recommendations that may apply to our context and act as lessons learned from the abovementioned case studies are the following (Portas, 2011):

- Establish a “Town Team” in charge of managing the retail strip
- Improve (or establish) Business Improvement districts and allowing landlords to participate and thus invest in the street
- Establish a “Market Day” that encourages a mix of traders and consumers to participate and create social hubs while introducing new opportunities and visibility to new talents
- Improve/ alter regulations to facilitate the process of becoming market traders
- Reimagine the street as destinations for socializing and culture through mixing different commercial and cultural activities with meeting spaces
- Involving local communities as co-creators of place rather than consumers

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<sup>11</sup> The Portas Review is described as “an independent review into the future of high streets” by English retail consultant Mary Portas

- Run these retail strips as businesses focusing on unified strategic visions and decisions
- Improve accessibility in terms of public transportation, upgrade parking, and introduce offers that attract users (in terms of parking) such as free parking for the first hour
- Create incentives that give large businesses responsibility to support and mentor small and local retailers
- Introduce disincentives for landlords to ensure units do not remain vacant
- Introduce “virtual” versions of the street through online platforms managed by the Town Team to showcase the shops and businesses with the updated available offers and products
- Incorporate social experiences and local activities within the shops (such as coffee shop within a bookstore)
- Introduce workshop spaces and hubs that allow small entrepreneurs to work outside their homes and re-appropriate vacant spaces as community units or showrooms
- Insert schools, gyms, and youth centers

## **E. Conclusion**

Urban regeneration has no one solution since cases vary. However, Carley, Kirk, and McIntosh (2001) state that several successful cases do have common factors, and these common factors can be applicable in the studied context of Kaslik. The accumulation of the research can be summarized through the following lessons learned:

LESSONS LEARNED		
Recommendations	Physical Interventions	Marketing and Implementation Strategies
<b>Theoretical Framework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumer demands shaping spaces and buildings</li> <li>• Catalysts as achievable visions that are impactful</li> <li>• <b>Pedestrianization</b> that allows unplanned interactions, continuous use, and pedestrian comfort</li> <li>• Place-making through access and linkages, comfort and image, uses and activities, and sociability</li> <li>• Create <i>destinations</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bottom-up approach</li> <li>• Creating a marketing strategy for the area to promote it as attractive</li> <li>• Districts (BIDs) as centralized management structures</li> <li>• A master program rather than a master plan in order to set intentions and methods</li> </ul>
<b>The Portas Review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reimagine the street as destinations for socializing through mixing different activities</li> <li>• Improve accessibility and public transportation</li> <li>• Upgrade parking</li> <li>• Introduce workshop spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a “Town Team” in charge of managing the strip</li> <li>• Introduce “Market Day” to mix traders and consumers to and create social hubs</li> <li>• Facilitate the process of becoming market traders through regulations</li> <li>• Run strips as businesses focusing on unified strategic visions</li> <li>• Introduce incentives that support small and local retailers</li> <li>• Impose disincentives to ensure units do not remain vacant</li> <li>• Introduce online platforms</li> </ul>

Figure 20: Lessons learned from the theoretical framework and reviews (J. Tannous)

LESSONS LEARNED		
Case Studies	Physical Interventions	Marketing and Implementation Strategies
<b>Third Street Promenade</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-design open spaces as <i>places of interaction</i></li> <li>• Upgrade parking structures and street accessibility</li> <li>• Introduce new and diverse activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce benefits and incentives to improve the Mall along with direct investment, involvement, and commitment in upgrading and improving individual properties</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upgrade storefronts and signs</li> <li>• Create unique urban spaces</li> <li>• Produce outdoor and semi-enclosed experiences and activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interim Development Committee to assess, fund, and promote the area</li> </ul>
<b>Melrose Avenue</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Transform place-based retail into experience-based retail</i></li> <li>• Combine several <b>destinations</b> into one area</li> <li>• Improve identity and character of the street through locating new public gathering spaces, landscaping, and improving the existing infrastructure and cycling lanes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Digital-meets-physical” projects that integrate <b>experience-based retail</b> with online shopping</li> </ul>
<b>Pomona Corridors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the “<i>Center and Segment</i>” approach that transform the strips into patterns of hubs of market areas, surrounded by connecting segments</li> <li>• Cluster workplace uses and introduce open-air retail, mixed-use, and walkable urban environments</li> <li>• Enhance corridor identity through place experiences and activities</li> <li>• Increase walkability through pedestrian amenities and public spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support, improve, and expand the existing commercial developments</li> <li>• Use the existing anchor institutions and gateways to influence development patterns</li> <li>• Provide investment-friendly environments through clear development policies</li> <li>• Implement regulations that support market demands and capital improvements</li> <li>• Implement technical standards, actions and zoning and assessment strategies in phases in regards to feasibility and community intent</li> </ul>
<b>Poblenou Superblock</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change the traffic direction and turn the street into a one-way street with a looping circulation pattern; reduce speed limit</li> <li>• Temporary installations, furniture, and vegetation</li> <li>• Enhance participation approaches and allow modifications by the locals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First phase as tactical urbanism focusing on temporary, fast, and cheap interventions with significant impacts</li> <li>• Second phase as permanent interventions</li> </ul>

Figure 21: Lessons Learned from the case study examples (J. Tannous)

The interventions require attention to what the marketplace needs in the context, leadership in handling the regeneration initiative, public participation and bottom-up approach with a local vision, use of organizations and local investments in the regeneration process, and having environmental and community spaces that

encourage people to see their area as a high-quality attraction point (Carley, Kirk & McIntosh, 2001).

Environmental improvement through design strategies and sustainable design also helps improve the quality of life and not just the market vitality, thus making the area more attractive. Branding, and redefining the identity of the strip, while understanding the market demand and its intended audience play a critical role in bringing users back in.

## CHAPTER III

### CASE PROFILE

#### **A. Situation, Site, and Definition of Study Area Boundaries**

Previously a southern extension of Jounieh, Kaslik was a coastal town and agricultural area adjoining the Northern boundary of Greater Beirut. It transformed into a shopping, entertainment, and beach resort destination during the Lebanese Civil War period. Characterized by its strategic coastal location between Beirut and the Northern region (figure 22, 23), Kaslik witnessed between 1975 and 2005, an exponential spatial growth expanding into the adjacent municipal area of Zouk Mikael. Since 2005, Kaslik has been declining due to the recentralization of significant activities within greater Beirut. However, it is still considered –along with Jounieh– as the administrative and economic center for Kesrouan and the Metn regions.

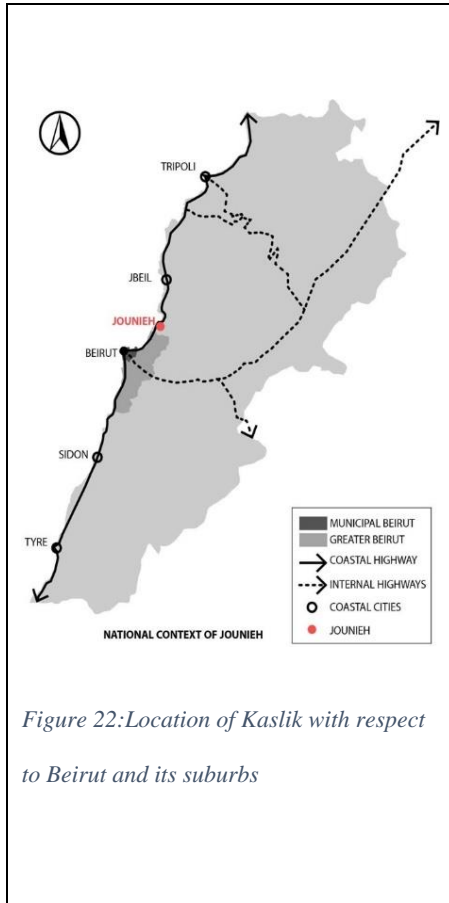


Figure 22: Location of Kaslik with respect to Beirut and its suburbs

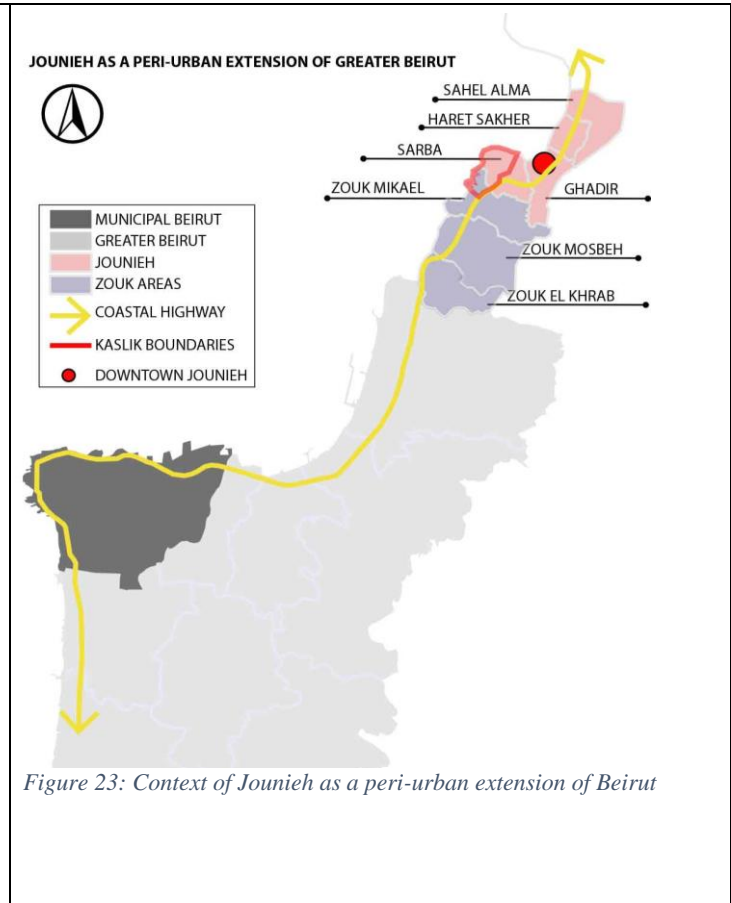


Figure 23: Context of Jounieh as a peri-urban extension of Beirut

Kaslik, as an administrative district, falls within both the adjoining municipalities of Jounieh (to the East), and of Zouk Mikael (to the West) (figures 24, 25). It is bounded to the south by the coastal highway linking Beirut to Tripoli, and by the touristic coastal zone encompassing the Jounieh port, the Automobile and Touring Club of Lebanon (A.T.C.L.), and a high concentration of beach resorts to the North-West. The middle section, which constitutes the area of study, consists of the Kaslik shopping entertainment strip extending between two nodes, one institutional, the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik (U.S.E.K.), and the other infrastructural linking Kaslik strip to the coastal highway (figure 26).

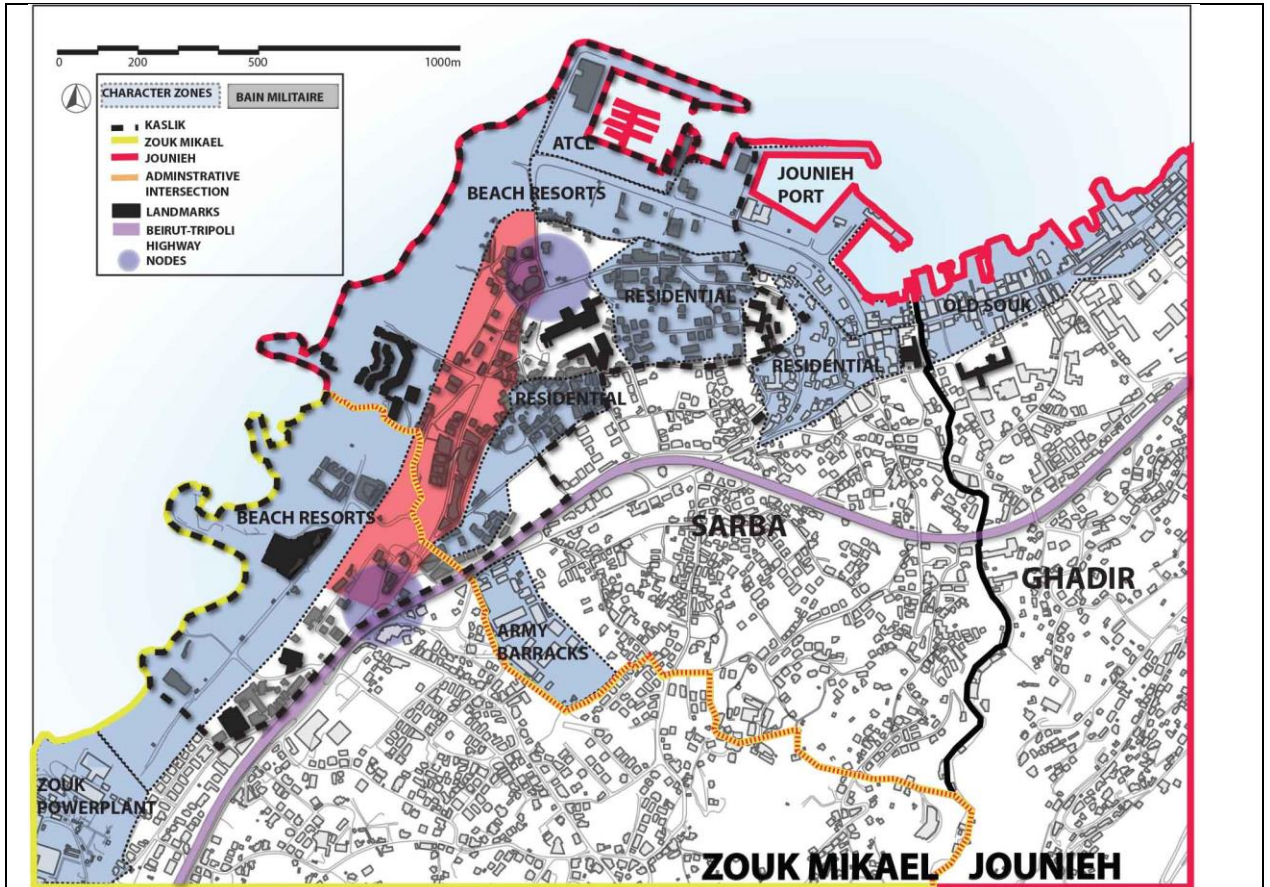


Figure 24: Kaslik in context with the study area highlighted in pink

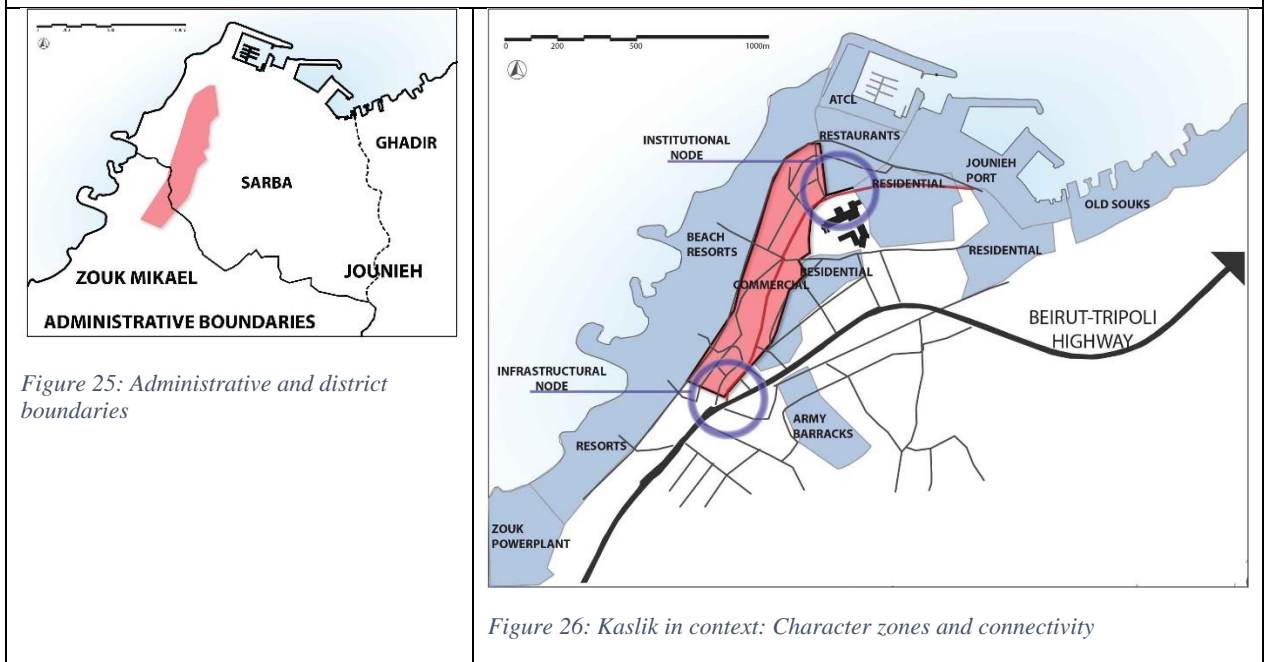
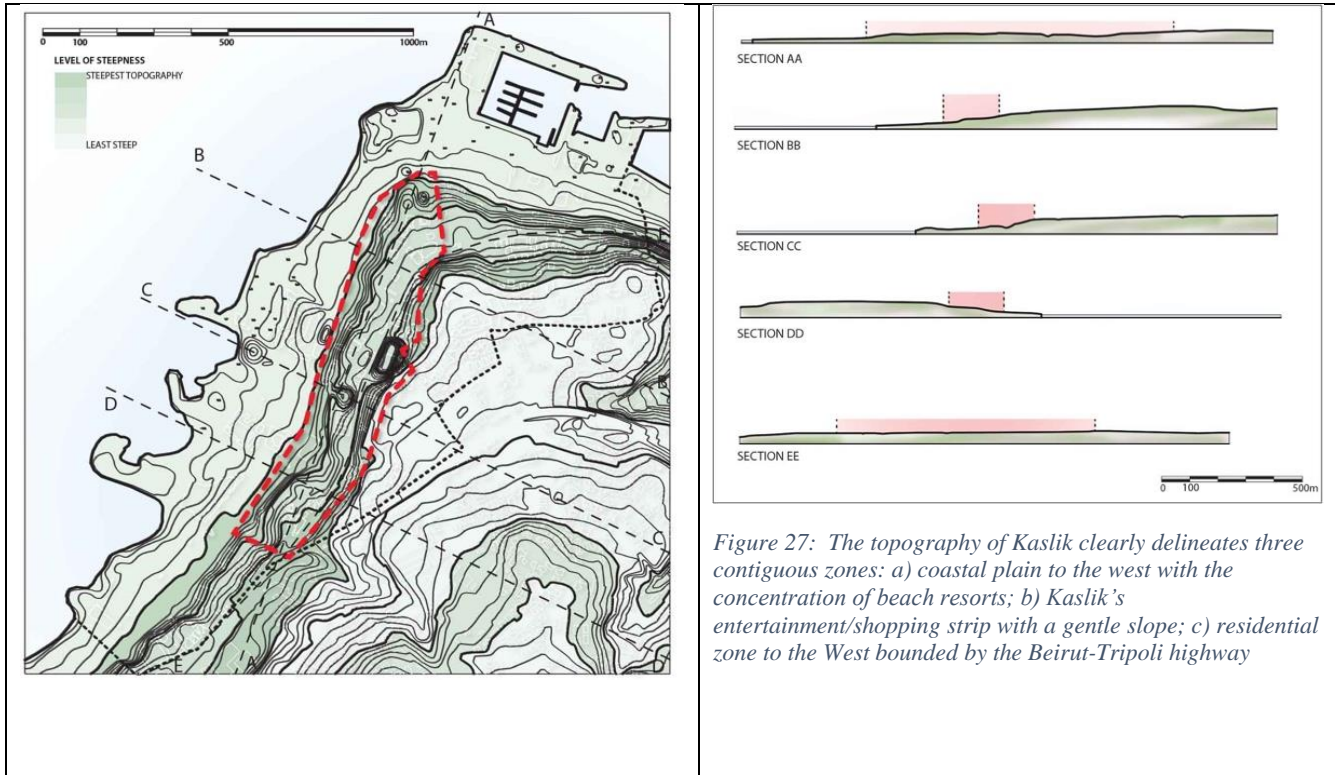


Figure 25: Administrative and district boundaries

Figure 26: Kaslik in context: Character zones and connectivity



## B. Context Appraisal

The context appraisal aims to reach a critical understanding of the *dynamics of change* affecting Kaslik and, more specifically, its entertainment and shopping strip. It then defines both the *opportunities and constraints* for the formulation of an urban design strategy for its revitalization. The context appraisal will be conducted along three complementary tracks:

- 1) Historical and Spatial Development:** This entails the production of a chronological account detailing the dynamics of growth of the study area, the issues brought forward by physical urbanization, and the resulting continuity and change of the urban fabric.
- 2) Market and policy appraisal:** This entails the undertaking of a stakeholder analysis to articulate a development strategy that reflects the views and aspirations of the local inhabitants, businesses, and authorities as well as the interests of investors and

developers. Beyond interviews with concerned individuals and institutions, the appraisal aims to develop a critical understanding of the legislative framework and the market dynamics underlying the current and future transformation of the site. This understanding will allow for the assessing of the *susceptibility to change* at the lot, block, and area levels, and at appraising the strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and constraints in the short, medium, and long run.

**3) Character and connectivity appraisal:** This track revolves around the morphology, townscape and traffic analysis and diagnosis of the area. It brings forward issues of identity, legibility, and permeability, which, in turn, aim is to (1) enhance the quality of the public domain in terms of streets and open spaces, (2) provide a framework for private development, and (3) improve vehicular and pedestrian accessibility.

## 1. Historical and Spatial Development

### a. Kaslik as an agricultural extension of Jounieh (1940-1975):

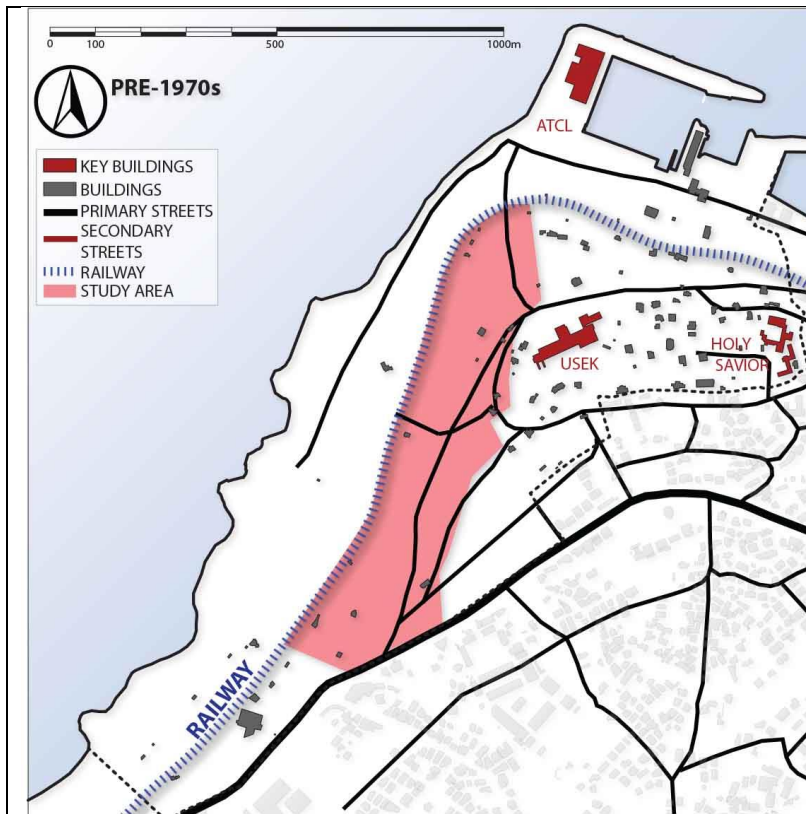


Figure 28: Prewar Kaslik, 1970, based on aerial photo provided by municipality



Figure 29: Kaslik as agricultural extension of Jounieh, (early 1940s) Source: Jounieh municipality.



Figure 30: Kaslik's railway station, (unidentified date) Source: the Fouad Debbas Collection

Kaslik initially consisted of agricultural lands, where farmers from Jounieh would grow different crops of citrus, taro, and vegetables (Bou Lahdo, 1999). The name of the area has been said to originate from different sources, the first stating it derived from the Turkish translation of "barracks" that existed there during the Ottoman period, versus the second, that links the term "Kaslik" to the "Catholic" monks that resided in the Holy Savior Monastery in the area (Saleme, 2019). By 1892, a railway passing through Kaslik (figure 28, 30) connected Jounieh to Batroun (North), and Beirut (South). During the French Mandate Period, the French army took base in Kaslik (Bou



Lahdo, 1999). However, it was not until 1947 when the Maronites established the Holy Spirit Monastery on *waqf*<sup>12</sup> land and introducing the school of theology that urban densification increased to the north of Kaslik near the Holy Savior Monastery (Bou Lahdo, 1999).

This urban growth further expanded during Fouad Chehab's presidency with the introduction of modern city infrastructure, zoning, and the Automobile and Touring Club (A.T.C.L). The coastline became a commercial zone, and the military base was introduced into the Port in 1969 (Bou Lahdo, 1999). In 1973, the Holy Spirit Monastery transformed into the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik.

**b. Kaslik as a regional destination for shopping-entertainment (1975-1990):**



Figure 31: Map of Kaslik's urban growth during the Civil War

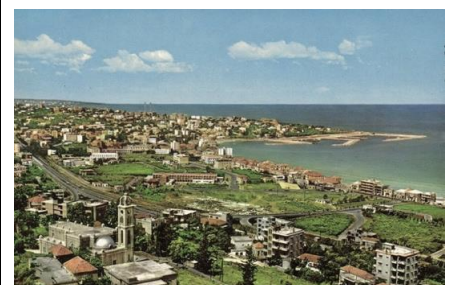


Figure 32: Kaslik bay viewed from Jounieh in the late 1980s, Source: Jounieh Municipality

<sup>12</sup> The waqf land was initially owned by Our Lady of Victory Monastery in Ghosta

Violence in Beirut during the Civil War increased, dividing Beirut, and people fled and settled in safe areas such as Sarba in Jounieh. By 1978, Jounieh had opened a port for commerce, where a branch of the Bank of Lebanon opened in 1979. This period in Kaslik lacked planning, and newcomers tried to invest their money in any form, which resulted in random constructions and opening of shops. The old railway evolved into the lower Kaslik street, known as the seaside road, which allowed investors to develop more buildings and invest in retail and cafés. Between 1978 and 1983, Kaslik emerged as a tourist, entertainment, and shopping destination having several attraction points ranging from resorts and chalets to designer stores, otherwise only present in Beirut (Kashouh, Follis, 2001) (figure 31).

c. Kaslik as a commercial-entertainment extension of Jounieh (1990-2005):



Market growth brought an increase in nonconforming structures. High-rise buildings emerged, with agricultural lands diminishing and beaches being privatized (Koobayssi, 2018) (figures 33). The number of shops in Kaslik continued to increase, where studies reported fifteen new stores between the summers of 2001 and 2002 alone (Chayban, 2002). By that time, Kaslik became an exclusive commercial entertainment street, closely competing with Achrafieh and Verdun. Due to the nature of the shops targeting a more lavish type of retail, Kaslik's activity was dependent on a booming economy and relying on tourists from the Arab and Gulf regions (Kashouh, Follis, 2001).

d. Kaslik in transition (2005-2020):

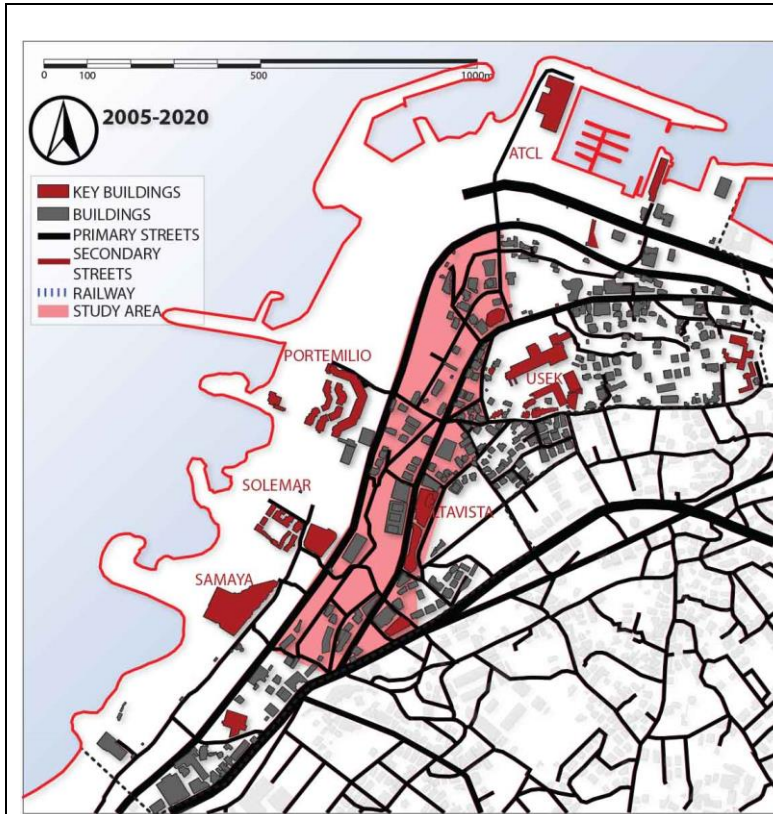


Figure 34: Map of the current growth in Kaslik



Figure 35: Image of present-day Kaslik strip, 2019

Kaslik's role as a high-end commercial-entertainment strip began to shift in 2005. An act of domestic terrorism resulted in physical damage to the AltaVista Tower and 100 out of 250 shops in the Kaslik commercial street (Khalifa, Damlaj, Chamoun, 2005). The municipality was able to clean the debris in the area, but business owners were not compensated for the damages (Khalifa, Damlaj, Chamoun, 2005). Although this incident altered the perception of Kaslik as a safe destination, the commercial and entertainment strip remained active, and the surrounding ports expanded to accommodate more activities (figure 34).

Taking into account that most retail along the Kaslik strip targets luxury brands, its livelihood is highly dependent on tourists and the economic fluctuations in the

country (Kashouh, Follis, 2001). With Beirut regaining its economic and administrative role and the high cost of real estate, rents, and municipal taxes in Jounieh and Kaslik, shop owners increasingly relocated to inexpensive areas such as malls and shopping centers that offer parking facilities and activities that attract shoppers.

As a result, the current economic activity in Kaslik drastically decreased, causing more shops to close. This phenomenon has been ongoing for the past eight years (Wehbe, 2019).

## ***2. Market and Policy Appraisal***

### **a. Economic Activity in Context**

Kaslik's economic revenue mainly relies on the commercial and tourism sectors. Hotels, restaurants, bars, pubs, and nightclubs have a rather significant economic footprint catering to tourists and non-local residents, when compared to the limited presence of retail activities that address the needs of the Jounieh and the Kesrouan and Metn residents. (figure 36, 37) (I.C.M.A., 2008). U.S.E.K, a national educational institution with more than 7000 students, has a minimal role as a major economic activity generator with the absence of food and entertainment activities for university students.

With the amplified economic challenges the country is currently facing, Kaslik is losing its market share as a shopping destination. This loss is due to the competition of multiple malls developing along the Beirut-Tripoli highway such as A.B.C. Dbayeh mall, LeMall, and City Mall catering to the Kesrouan and Metn region (figure 38). Kaslik is also losing its function as an entertainment destination due to the recentralization of touristic, cultural and nightlife activities in Beirut and its immediate

suburbs. This is further compounded by the heavy traffic and the fact that accessibility to the shopping strip is non-direct and possible only through secondary roads (Chamoun, 2019) (figure 37).

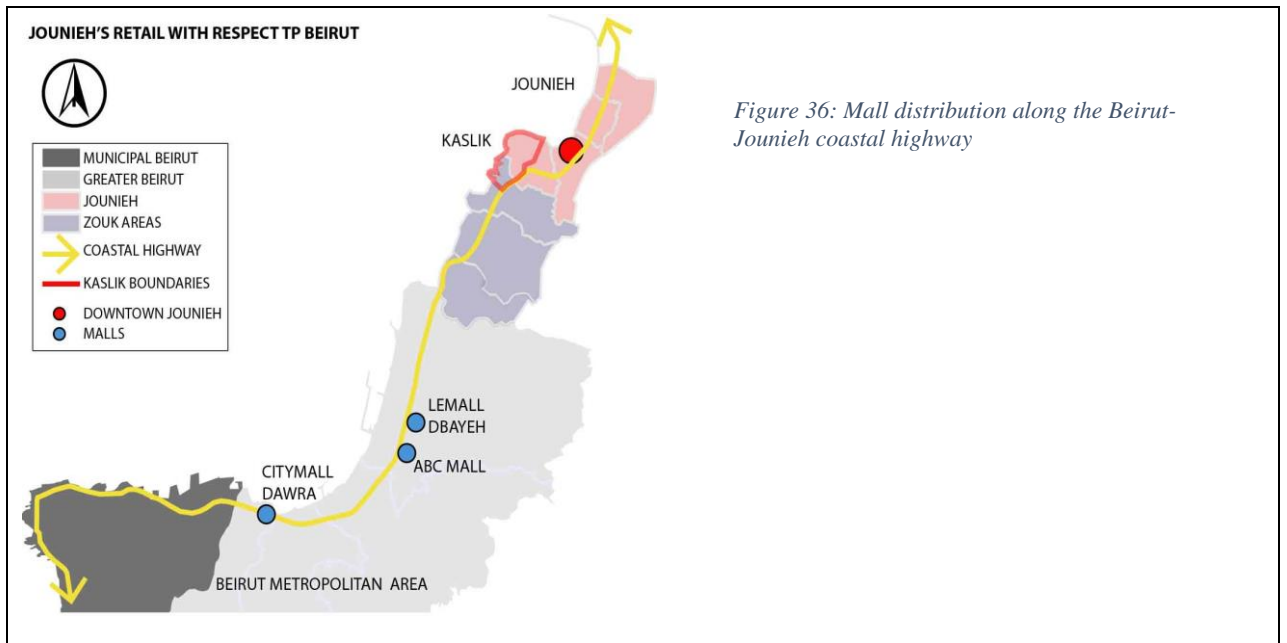


Figure 36: Mall distribution along the Beirut-Jounieh coastal highway

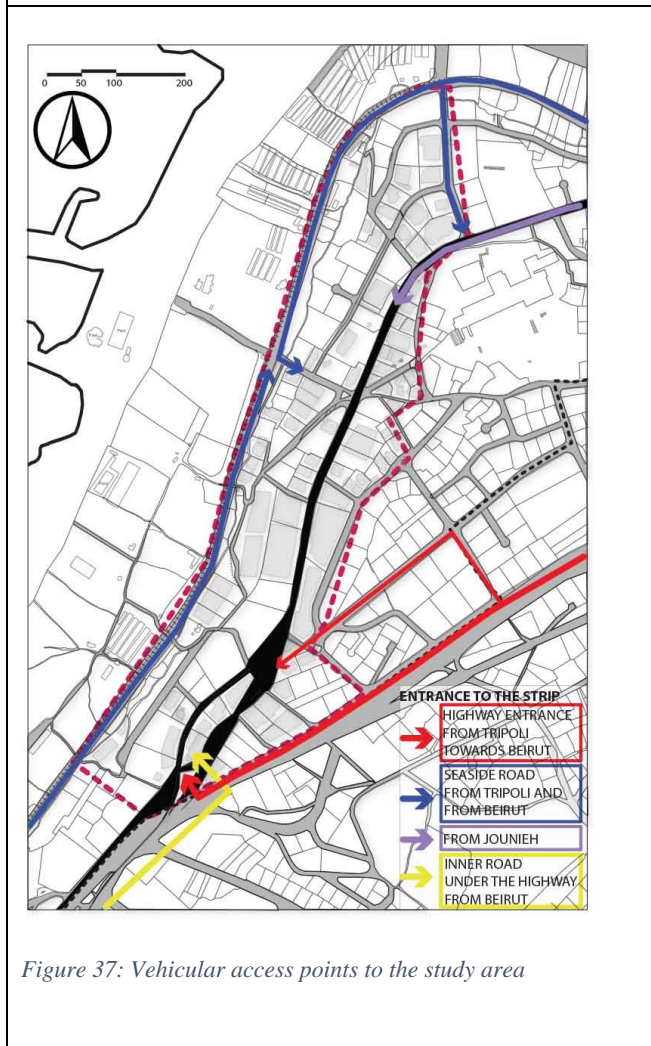


Figure 37: Vehicular access points to the study area

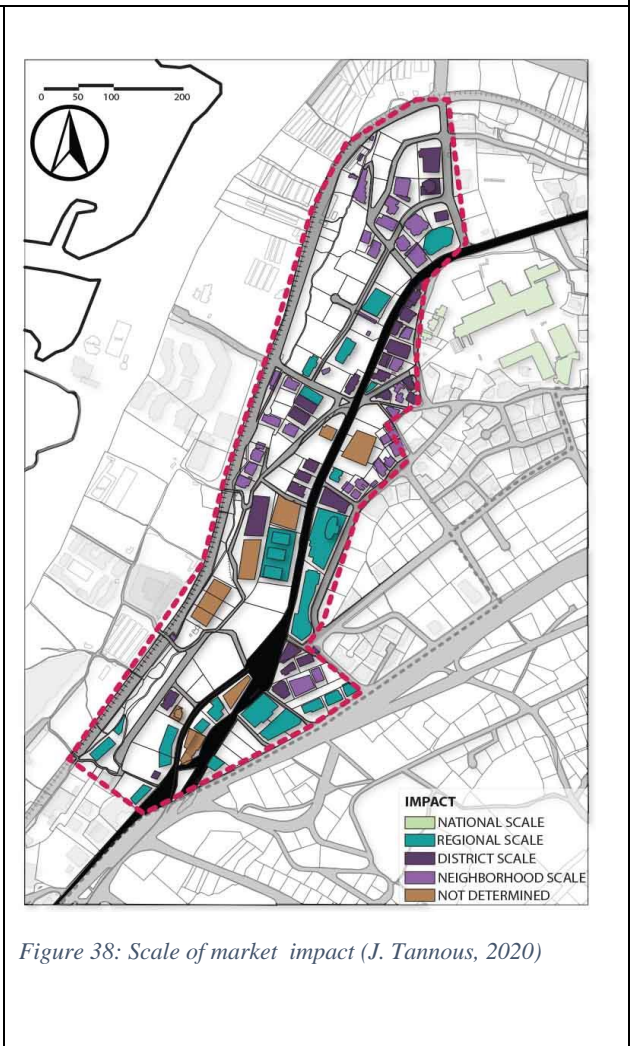


Figure 38: Scale of market impact (J. Tannous, 2020)

## b. Economic Activity Distribution

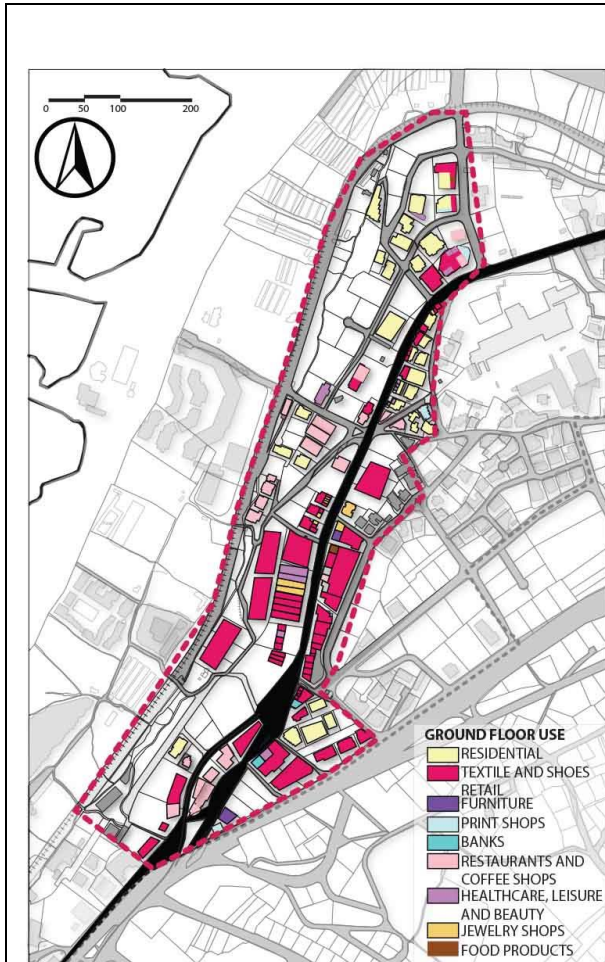


Figure 39: Map showing the ground floor use (surveyed by: J. Tannous, 2020)



Figure 40: Map the upper level land use (surveyed by: J. Tannous, 2020)

The existing functions along the strip vary horizontally at the street level and vertically within each building. At the street level (figure 39), the dominant functions are commercial and service-based, including textile and shoe retail, furniture shops, print shops, jewelry stores, and chocolate shops, as well as banks, healthcare, leisure and beauty clinics, and restaurants, coffee shops, and pubs. Though there are a variety of functions and services along the street level, the mix is limited to certain zones. The retail ground floor is mixed with restaurant and dining services at both extremities of the



strip, especially at the node nearest to the university campus, whereas the remaining middle segment of the strip limits its uses to high-end retail and services.

At the upper levels (figure 40), land use is distributed in the form of commercial and leisure, mixed-use, residential, and educational/institutional. Most commercial and leisure functions focus on retail and services similar to those at the street level, with emphasis on beauty services and clinics, whereas the mixed-use buildings are combinations of office, retail, clinics, and hotel uses. Residential buildings are furthest away from the main strip and are mostly present at the end of the strip around the university campus. The vertical distribution of functions justifies the street-level distribution, where most services provided at the street level near the university, for example, cater to the users of the university and residents. In contrast, the services along the rest of the strip complement the commercial and leisure buildings or cater to office needs and environments.



Figure 41: Map showing the retail density within each building (surveyed by: J. Tannous, 2020)



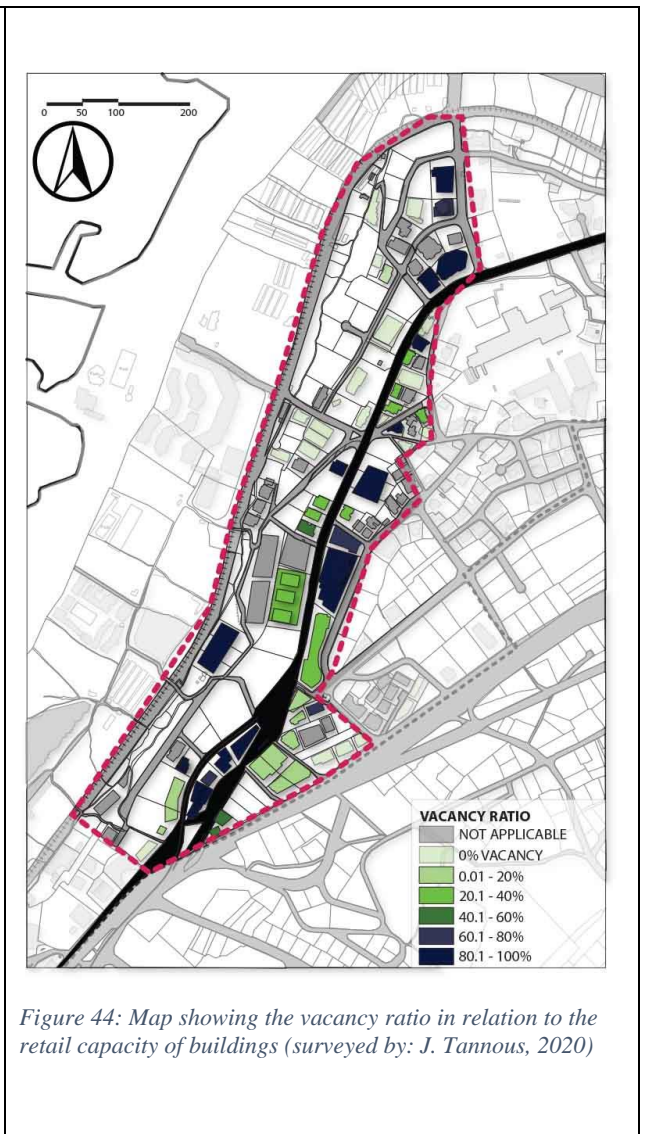
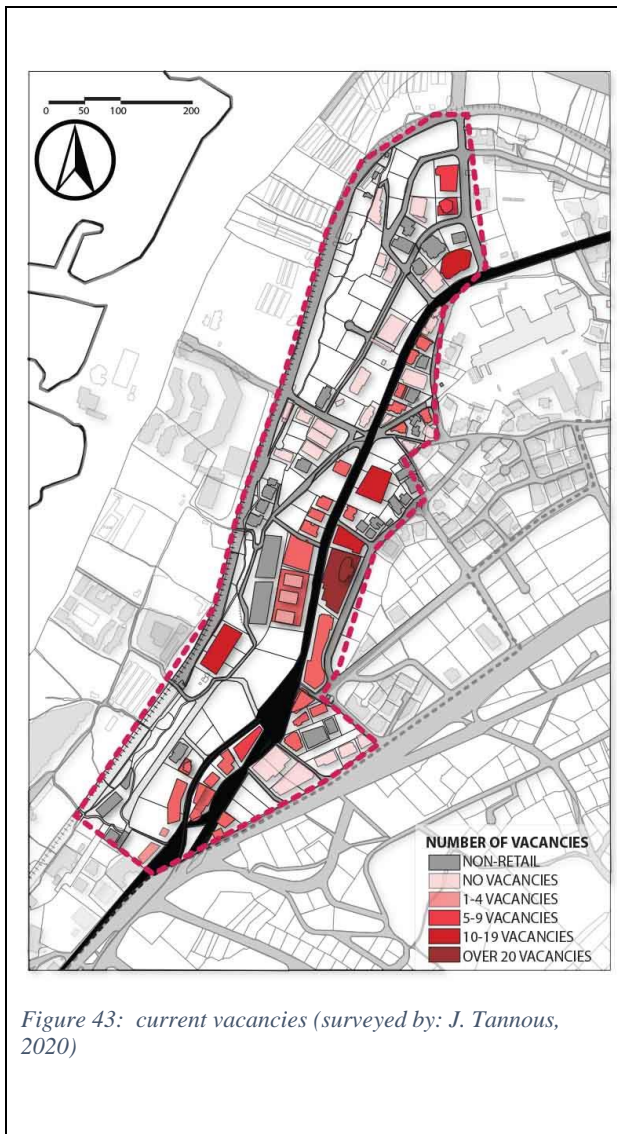
Figure 42: Images of the different retail (J. Tannous, 2019)

### c. Economic Activity Performance

The President of the Merchants Association of Jounieh and Kesrouan has mentioned the decline in Kaslik's economic role, stating that there was a 20% to 35% decline in the market activity in Jounieh in the first few months of 2019, with almost 60 to 70 shops closing in Jounieh and Kaslik, regardless of the efforts in attracting customers throughout the holiday seasons<sup>13</sup>. The decline is mainly evident along Kaslik strip, where numerous owners are offering vacant shops for rent or sale for half their

<sup>13</sup> There have been some attempts to ensure that the remaining shops and enterprises remain in business through substantial discounts and offers to customers (Qaysafi, 2019).

initial values<sup>14</sup> (figure 43). The increased vacancies also affected upper floor office spaces (figure 44), where offices seem too large and expensive for starting businesses and S.M.E.s (Khalik, 2019). Moreover, university students are avoiding spending time outside campus due to the circulating rumors regarding the safety of the area<sup>15</sup>, thus affecting its image.



<sup>14</sup> Though this is no longer a unique case in Lebanon, knowing that around 1500 enterprises closed in 2019, the once existing waiting list to be able to rent out shops in Kaslik no longer exists due to the excessive availability of vacant spaces for rent (Qaysafi, 2019).

<sup>15</sup> Internal Security Forces (ISF) arrested seven people for drug charges in Kaslik in 2019 (Daily Star, 2019)

#### d. Stakeholders Analysis

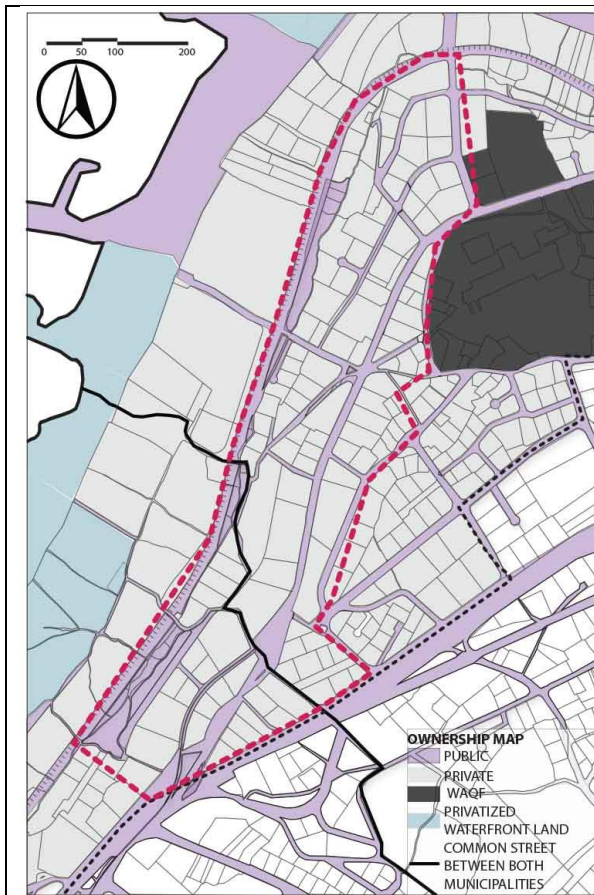


Figure 45: Ownership map of Kaslik



Figure 46: Sidewalk managed along the Zouk Mikael area



Figure 47: The street along The Sarba area

- **Municipalities** (represented through public ownership in figure 45) are responsible for most of the decision-making, with a budget relying on taxes and permits. For Kaslik, however, there are two municipalities involved (Jounieh and Zouk Mikael), and coordination and approval of projects in regards to common intersection areas are mandatory, such as the border between Sarba and Zouk Mikael in Kaslik. This common area lies along a shared street between the two municipalities, where both manage one of the main Kaslik roundabouts along the commercial strip. Whenever specific changes need to take place

regarding this street or this roundabout, approval from both parties is mandatory. Municipalities have the power to administer technical and infrastructural maintenance in their respective areas: this is evident in Kaslik's commercial strip where street characters differ between Jounieh and Zouk Mikael. The Zouk Mikael segment is better maintained in terms of landscape, streetscape, and traffic safety, as opposed to the Jounieh segment. These municipalities also organize annual events to encourage visitors, but the focus mostly occurs in their old souks rather than Kaslik's commercial entertainment strip. On the other hand, the municipality of Jounieh is coordinating with the Ministry of Public Works and Transport of the new tourist port in Kaslik (that will accommodate cruise ships) (figure 48) in the hopes of attracting tourists and reviving the market and economy. That project has been under study since 1998, and the first phase of construction is almost complete. The municipality is also coordinating negotiations for a deep-sea reserve facing this new port in Kaslik.



*Figure 48: the masterplan of the new port proposed by Marco Contracting*



*Figure 49: New constructions along the strip*

- **The Maronite church** owns *waqf* land in Kaslik, most of which is used as the U.S.E.K. campus or for services supporting the campus.

- **Property and business owners and project developers** (private ownership in figure 45) do not have much power in terms of decision making in areas besides their properties. However, they are responsible for most of the physical changes in the area. These developments make up most of the Kaslik commercial entertainment strip. Currently, some developers are using the remaining empty lots in Kaslik to construct shopping centers that include underground parking to compete with areas like Dbayeh. These developers and business owners were once part of the Merchants Association in Kaslik, giving them the ability to coordinate their demands with both municipalities, but this association no longer exists.
- **Residents** fall under two types: permanent and seasonal (residents that live in the resorts). Both have the same amount of input and can affect the livelihood and continuity of some shops in the area: the areas with the least shop vacancies (figure 44) are the ones that depend on residents or are surrounded by residential buildings.
- **Visitors /Tourists** are also stakeholders since they affect the different choices made to the area by their activity within Kaslik. They are also the main contributors to the business economy and its potential regeneration.

#### e. Zoning

Although Kaslik's commercial-entertainment strip is zoned as residential, the strip has been developed as a concentration of commercial mixed-use buildings combining, hotel, retail, parking, transportation, and entertainment (figure 45, 48). Due to the fact that Kaslik overlaps on two municipalities (figure 50), the strip is divided between two zoning segments:

- In the Jounieh segment: the strip is zoned as expansion zone/ residential zone (Zone B).
- In the Zouk Mikael segment: the strip is zoned as commercial (Zone B3-1), whereas the edges surrounding the strip are labeled as residential (Zone B3).

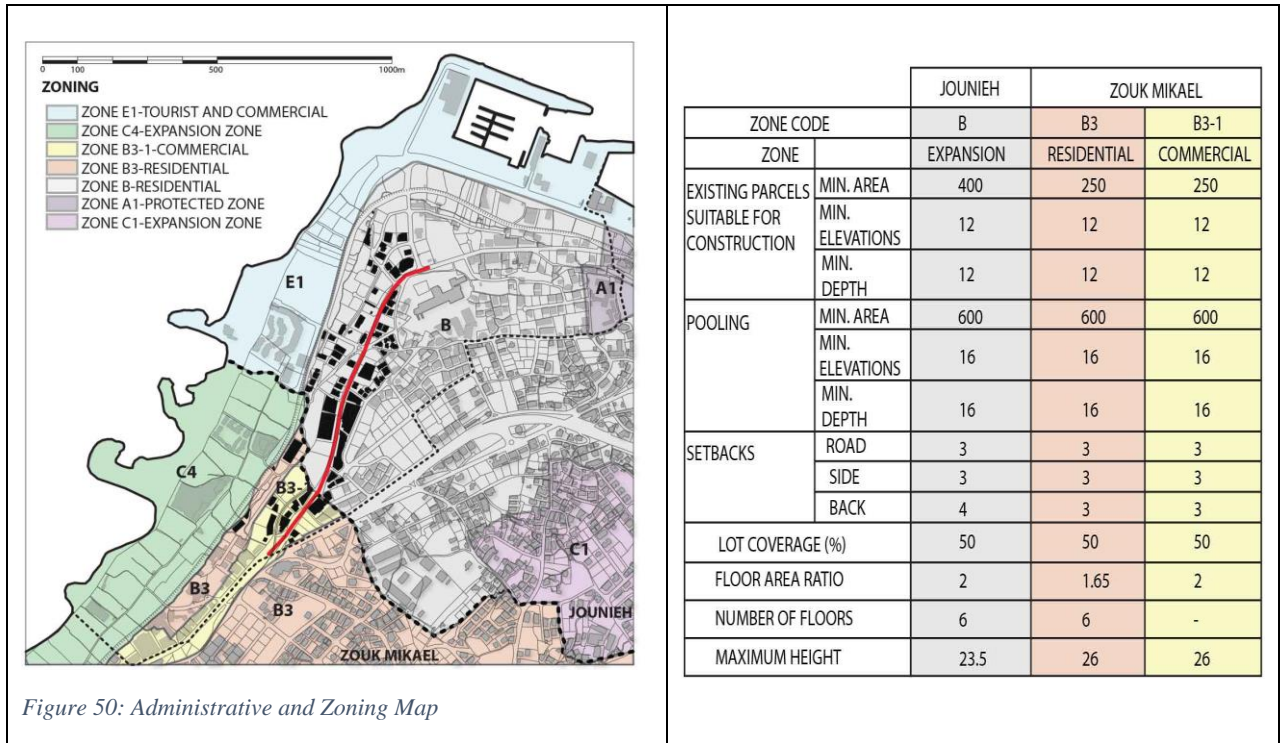


Figure 50: Administrative and Zoning Map

#### f. Susceptibility to Change

Accordingly, in order to assess the susceptibility to change, the existing and potential exploitation Floor-Area-Ratio (FAR) for each parcel was computed and compared. Four categories emerge (figure 51)

- i. high susceptibility parcels have a current exploitation percentage less than forty percent of the FAR allowed under zoning,
- ii. medium susceptibility parcels with a percentage between forty and sixty percent, and
- iii. low susceptibility parcels with a current exploitation potential exceeding sixty percent.
- iv. structures under construction, some are expanding towards the lower Kaslik road (once the railway) that may service the existing resorts along the coast





Figure 51: Map representing the susceptibility to change

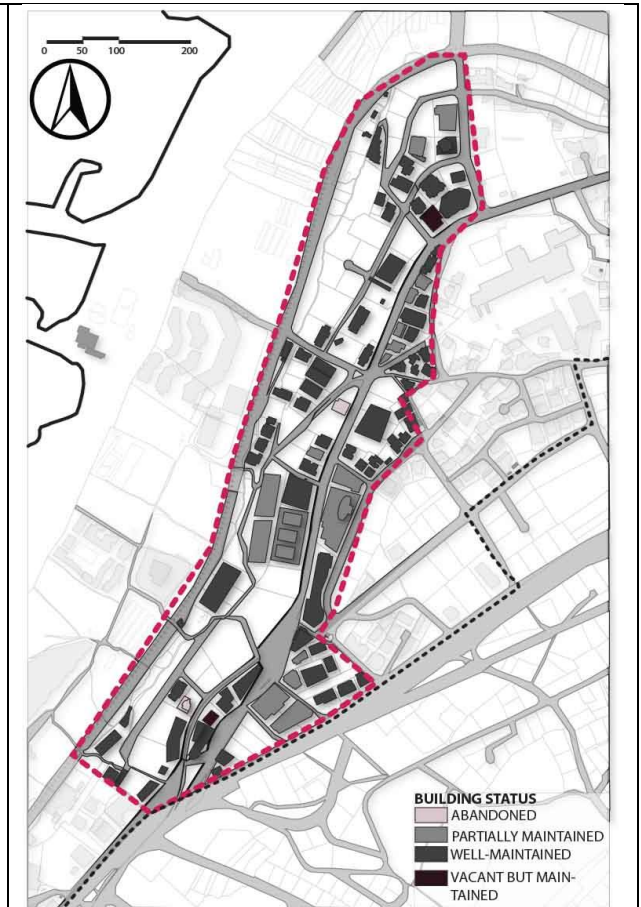


Figure 52: Map identifying building conditions and state of maintenance.

In this regard, susceptibility to change is linked to the building existing conditions in terms of maintenance. Most buildings are either partially or well-Maintained (Figure 51).

### 3. Character Appraisal

Even though Kaslik was still popular in 2001, some store owners and managers were concerned with the decline in commercial activity. They emphasized the need to market Kaslik as a **whole shopping area** (Kashouh, Follis, 2001). Nassib Gemayel, president of the ‘Kaslik Street Merchants Association’ at that time, also expressed his

**intention** to collaborate with the municipality for improving the urban quality of the strip with the provision of more parking, sidewalks, restaurants, and cafés to attract more shoppers and tourists (Kashouh, Follis, 2001).

Along this line, the following section aims at analyzing and assessing three fundamental aspects of the Kaslik strip, its physical setting, identity features, and commercial and social activity patterns. The aim is to enhance the visitor's experience in terms of pedestrian environment and open spaces and provide a framework for private development that promotes lively frontages and proper visual enclosure.

#### a. Character Zones

Character appraisal will start by identifying character zones along the strip that have unifying functional and spatial characteristics regarding:

- **Activity and land use**, i.e., horizontal and vertical distribution of commercial uses,
- **Architectural characteristics**, i.e., predominant building types with respect to their shaping of street frontages and spatial permeability to commercial uses
- **Mobility and permeability**, i.e., pedestrian and vehicular accessibility and conflict,
- **Streetscape**, i.e., visual enclosure, vistas and views, street frontages and porosity, and pedestrian environment in terms of landscape and open spaces, along with analyzed street sections in terms of their edge zone, frontages, sidewalks, and vehicular zone

The above analytical framework and maps (figures 51 to 59) identify three character zones in terms of their general characteristics. For each segment, a detailed analysis will lead to an urban design scheme for public spaces and guidelines for future development.

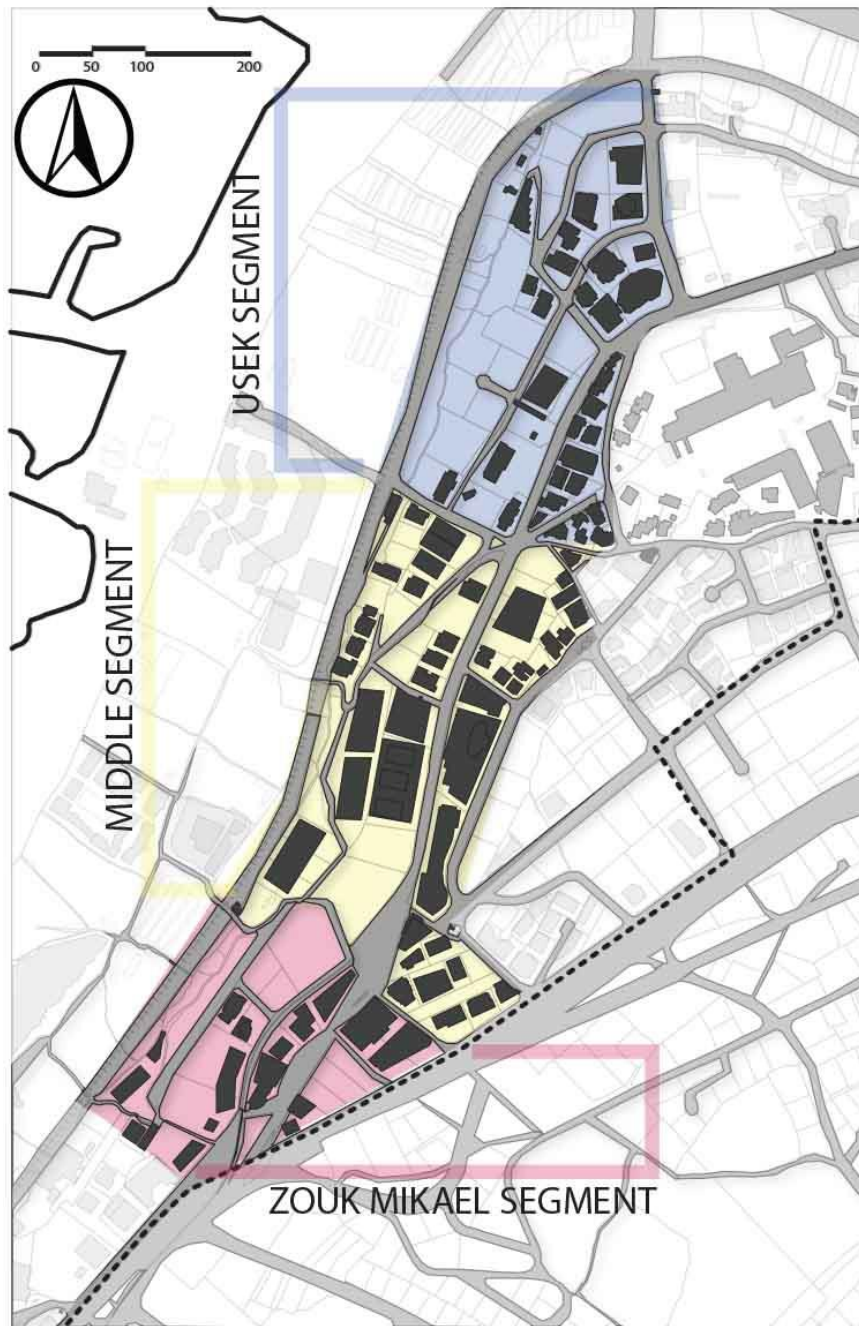


Figure 53: Map identifying the different character zones along the study area

i. Zouk Mikael Segment: Gateway of the Strip

As the southern segment of the strip, this area is defined by the existing infrastructural breaks. This is due to its connection to the highway from the south, and the main roundabout of the commercial strip from the north. In this segment, the strip splits into two parallel streets, one as an entrance and one as an exit, forming a loop. From an administrative perspective, this segment is part of Zouk Mikael, where the roundabout acts as a boundary between it and the Jounieh (Sarba) segments. It is the gateway of the strip since it is the where a direct entrance from the highway to the strip is possible. It is the most active on a pedestrian scale out of all the segments.

ii. Middle Segment: The Strip Segment

This segment is located between the two primary nodes of the strip. Bounded between the northern egress and the southern roundabout, it is the longest segment out of the three and contains the tallest buildings along the strip. Though the segment is dense with retail functions at the street level and office functions at the upper levels, it is the least active area with the most available vacancies.

iii. U.S.E.K. Segment: Institutional Node of the Strip

This segment is defined by the egress roundabout that connects the commercial strip to the surrounding residential neighborhoods and the coast from the south and the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik (U.S.E.K.) from the north. This segment shifts in terms of urban fabric from large buildings to a fine urban fabric with closely compacted smaller buildings.

iv. Analytical table

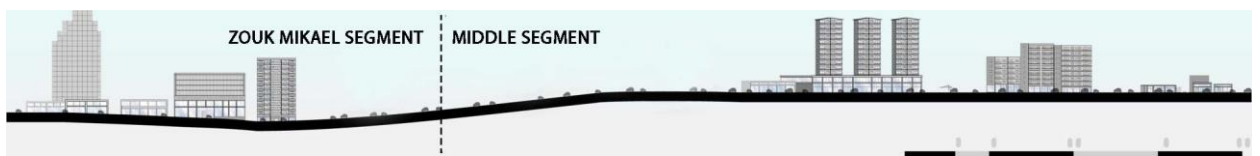
According to these three segments, a comparative analytical table summarizes the different characteristics from both a functional perspective and spatial distribution and streetscape perspective:

		<b>Zouk Mikael Segment</b>	<b>Middle Segment</b>	<b>U.S.E.K. Segment</b>
<b>Administrative Location</b>		Zouk Mikael	Jounieh	Jounieh
<b>Functional Distribution</b>	Horizontally (street level)	Retail, restaurants, cafés	Retail	Retail, restaurants, cafés
	Vertically (upper levels)	Mixed use and offices	Mixed use and offices	Residential
<b>Spatial Distribution and Streetscapes</b>	Visual Sequence	Gateway segment	Strip Segment	Egress Segment
	Urban Fabric	Mix between fine and coarse fabric	Coarse fabric	Fine fabric
	Dominant Building Typologies	-Podium-base mixed-use -Composite -Low Rise/temporary structures	-Podium-base mixed-use -High-rise mixed-use commercial center -Composite -High-rise retail office	-Low Rise/temporary structures -Setback additions -Mid-rise residential
	Building Alignment	Buffers between streets and buildings as open spaces	Aligned to the street	Variation of alignments
	Porosity and visual enclosures	Double-sided visual enclosures	Complete Eastern-side enclosure, Western porosity	Double-sided visual enclosure
	Edges	Hard edges	Hard edge (east) Soft edge (west) due to empty parcels	Hard edge (east) Soft edge (west) since the buildings do not provide closure on the street
	Parking	Outdoor Parking	Outdoor parking with on-street parking	On-street parking
	Vehicular concentration	Moderate	High	High
	Pedestrian concentration	High	Moderate	Low

## b. Street Alignment and Visual Enclosure, Building Typology

The following section shows the range in the different typologies that exist in the area, each generating a different user experience with its context. This was assessed through several survey criteria including, but not limited to:

- Street alignments, gaps and edges (figure 54): The different building alignments and their relationships with their setbacks create variations of edges along the strip that introduce visual permeability that allow vistas and views towards the sea, thus making the visual perception of the strip more diverse.



*Figure 54: street elevation showing building alignment in relation to creating visual permeability*

- Building heights (figure 55): in order to understand the relationship of the building with regards to the human scale. Figure 55 shows the number of floors above the street, where taller buildings appear more intimidating. The area ranges mostly with levels above five floors, making the area less attractive for users, yet this could potentially provide shade along the street as a whole. The Middle segment has the tallest buildings throughout the strip.

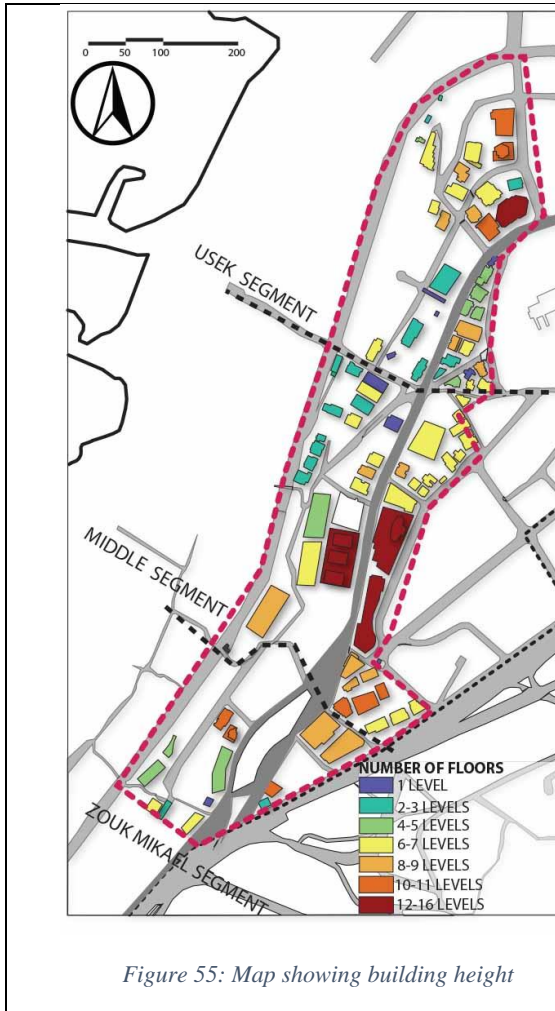


Figure 55: Map showing building height

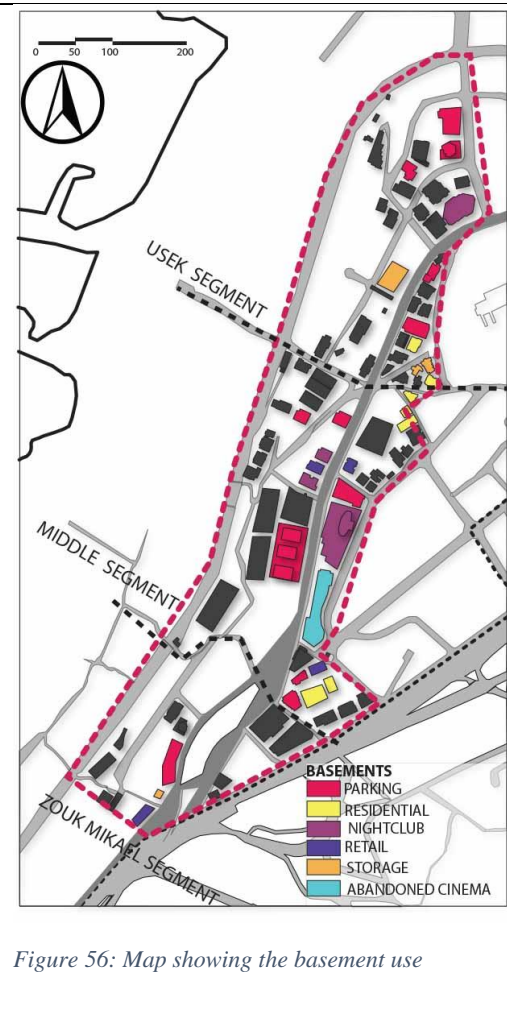


Figure 56: Map showing the basement use

- Basement use (figure 56): spaces that introduce activity through breaking the two-dimension linearity of the street, especially basements that can be accessed directly through staircases or ramps from the street level. Though most underground structures are used as parking, there are several exceptional cases where these levels are used as nightclubs, or even as a cinema at one point, especially in the Middle Segment and U.S.E.K. Segment.



- Atriums and escalators (figure 57) are also an element that is unique to commercial streets in Lebanon, where the atriums and forecourts provide the potential for covered semi-public interactions. On the other hand, the escalators also provide a third dimension to the linear strip and invite users to the upper retail levels, creating porosity at different levels with semi-enclosed spaces.
- Retail levels (figure 58): based on the fact that the ground-level is the most visually perceivable and accessible by users, figure 58 shows the available retail levels, in order to further categorize building typology and to further compare to



vacancy rates and proposed strategies. Most structures in figure 58 show that retail is limited to the ground floor or the first two levels of the building. As a result, the study area includes of seven building typologies (figure 58) along the retail strip, excluding U.S.E.K.'s campus typology and the resort typology along the coastline.

As a result, the following map and table assess the existing typologies along with their main characteristics along the strip in terms of alignment, permeability, visual enclosure, and porosity.

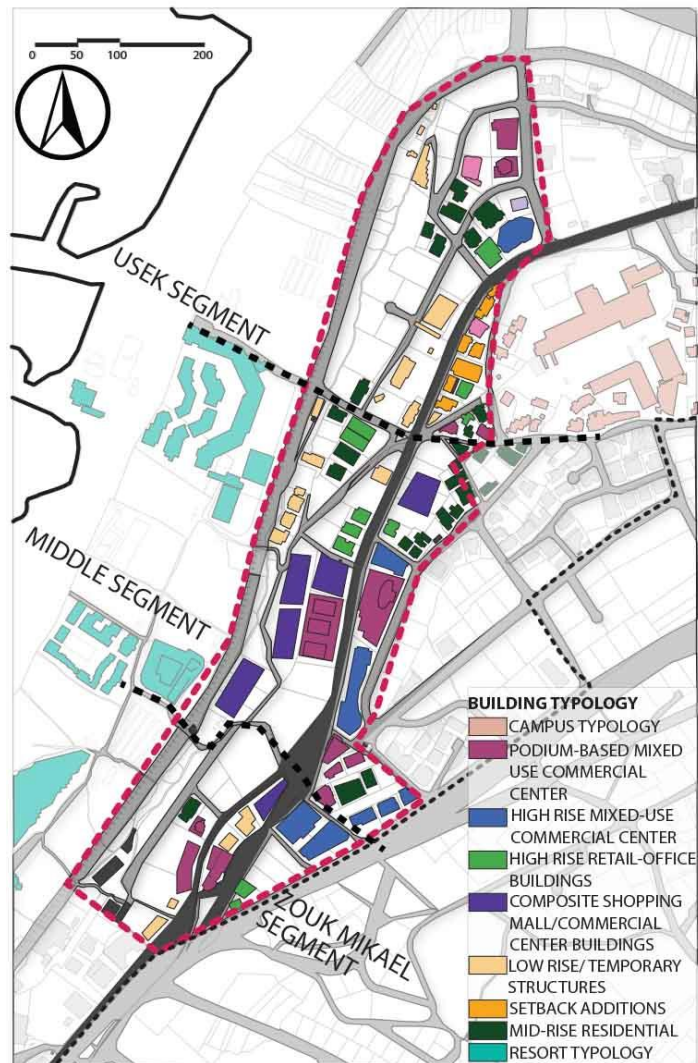


Figure 59: Map showing the different building typologies in the study area

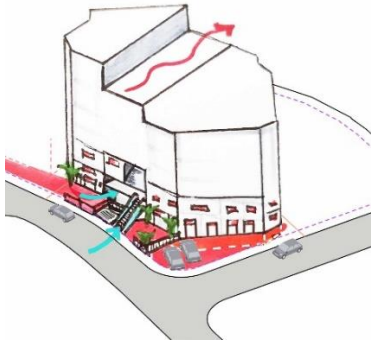


Figure 60: Centers typology



Figure 61: Image of Centre Debs (2015)

### High-rise mixed-use commercial center

Being the earliest retail building type such as Centre Debs and Centre Moudabber, these buildings are large structures that include atriums that allow internal semi-public open space and retail on two or more levels. It is mostly used for internal circulation and gives users a mall experience on a smaller scale with several shops on different levels. The buildings are close to the street, with the shops accommodating open spaces to welcome visitors, with escalators extending from the sidewalks towards upper or lower floors and creating permeability on different levels. They are often either hotels or office buildings at the upper levels.

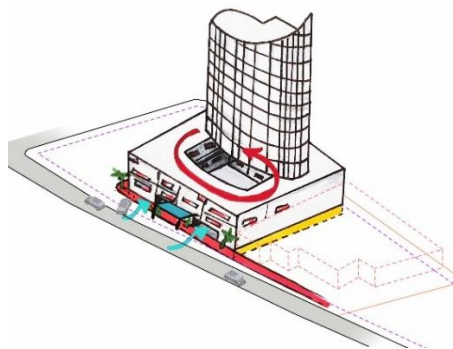


Figure 62: Podium-tower typology



Figure 63: Image of altavista (2015)

### Podium-based mixed-use commercial center

Examples such as the AltaVista tower, are similar, modified versions of the Centers, where a podium of a ground floor and mezzanine host retail and atriums for further shop visibility, with offices or hotels at the upper levels (in the towers). This typology considers the human scale since the towers are set back and only perceivable from afar. In contrast, the podiums are the main visual focus on the pedestrian scale and are closer to the street, with permeability to interior atriums that act as semi-private public spaces. Sidewalks are wide, and some vegetation and lighting are evenly distributed around the buildings.

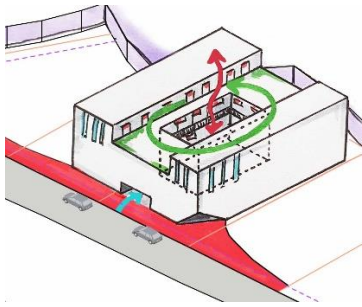


Figure 64: New constructions typology



Figure 41: New construction along the strip (2019)

### **Composite shopping mall/commercial center buildings:**

These buildings are mixed-use buildings, seeming as a modified new combination of the Center typology and shopping malls/ boutique malls. Though much smaller in scale than regular shopping malls, their design advertisements allude to similar characteristics. The buildings position themselves closer to the street and allow both horizontal permeability through their entrances and vertical permeability through skylights and accessible terraces. Indoor and outdoor circulations allow this permeability, even though the building facades lack transparency to the street. Instead, they create intrigue, with angled forms unusual to other buildings along the strip to attract users.



Figure 42: Low-rise typology



Figure 43: le petit café (2015)

### **Temporary structures on empty lots with front parking**

These buildings are on a smaller scale and are usually restaurants or cafés. They are not intimidating in structure and pedestrian-friendly. However, they are usually set back to allow for vehicular parking, with defining parcel limits and entrances either through sidewalks or fences surrounding the lot.

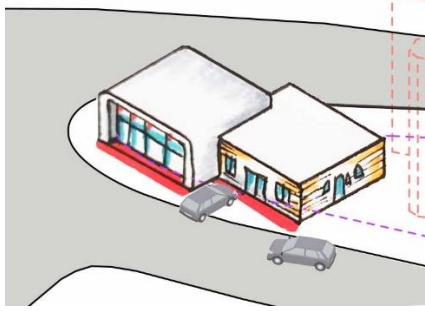


Figure 44: Add-ons typology



Figure 45: image of an add-on taken in 2019. This shop is now permanently closed.

### Set-back additions

These structures are usually traditional houses or old structures that have an additional contemporary structure added to them to become attractive retail. The building additions are within the parcel yet outside setback limits, which limits the presence on sidewalks, especially if on-street parking is available.



Figure 38: Tower typology



Figure 39: Example of a base of a tower typology (2019)

### High rise retail-office buildings

These building typologies host retail functions on the lower levels and offices and clinics on upper levels. Though the upper levels resemble residential typologies, the lower levels are aesthetically more elaborate to signify the type of exclusive retail present. They host smaller atriums that allow entrance to the more exclusive jewelry shops. The buildings are set back enough to allow on-street parking with well-maintained sidewalks, even though the main facade usually does not allow shop entry, but rather act as displays.



Figure 46: Residential typology



Figure 47: example of a residential typology (2019)

### **Midrise Residential apartment buildings with street level commercial**

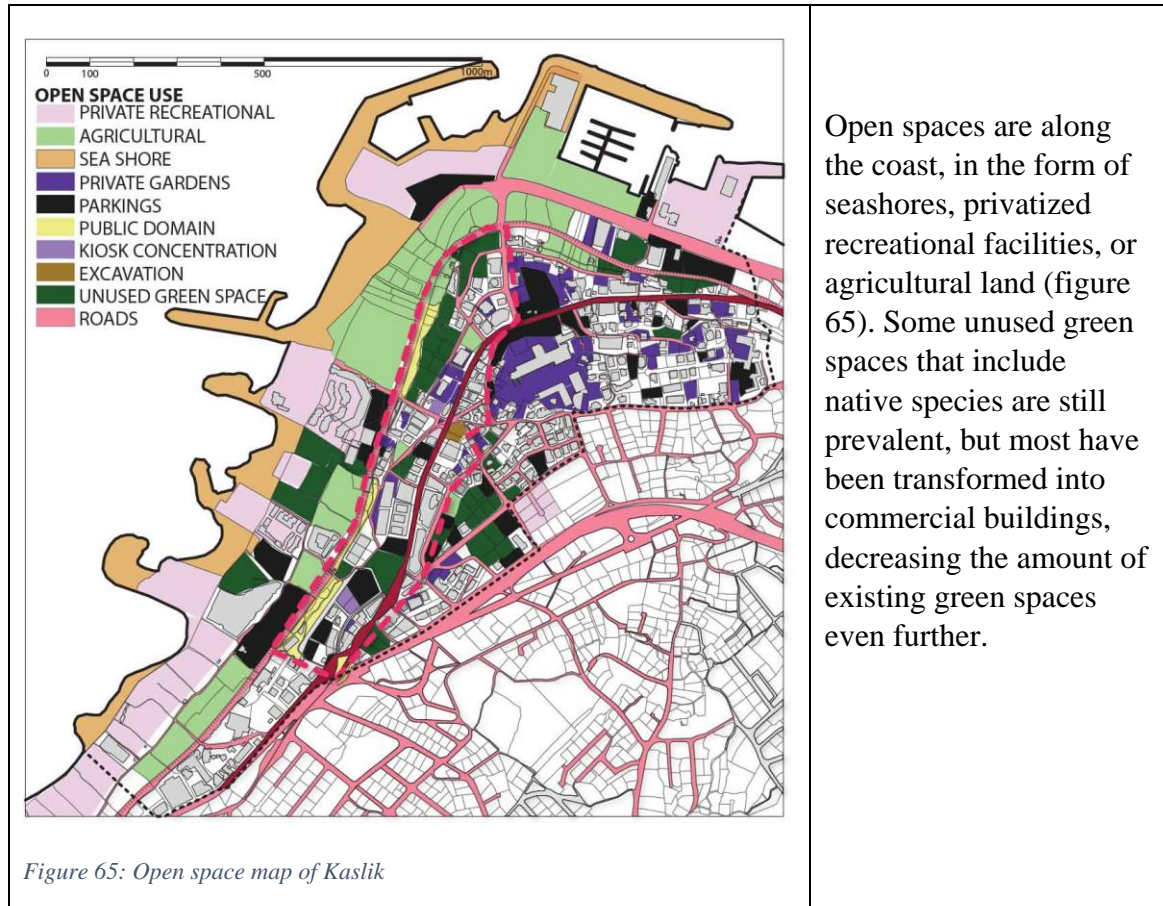
These structures have a residential building typology that is similar to residential buildings all over Sarba. Some may include small local retail or restaurants on the ground floor, while the remaining levels are residential apartments or apartments turned into offices. Most vegetation is present in private units on the upper floor, visible at the balconies. These buildings have relatively narrow sidewalks with clear (yet gated) building entrances. They are positioned furthest away from the commercial strip and lack on-street permeability.

### c. Character and Open Spaces

Kaslik had its own special identity as a commercial hub, rich with beaches, art galleries, and restaurants that give it leisure and high-end entertainment street character. The topography itself dictated the spaces, and some developers used this to their advantage, creating underground nightlife, or even frontages on different levels.

As for open spaces, they are in the form of streets, sidewalks, and parking lots.

Some parking lots host kiosks of different food varieties, giving the space a similar character to food courts.



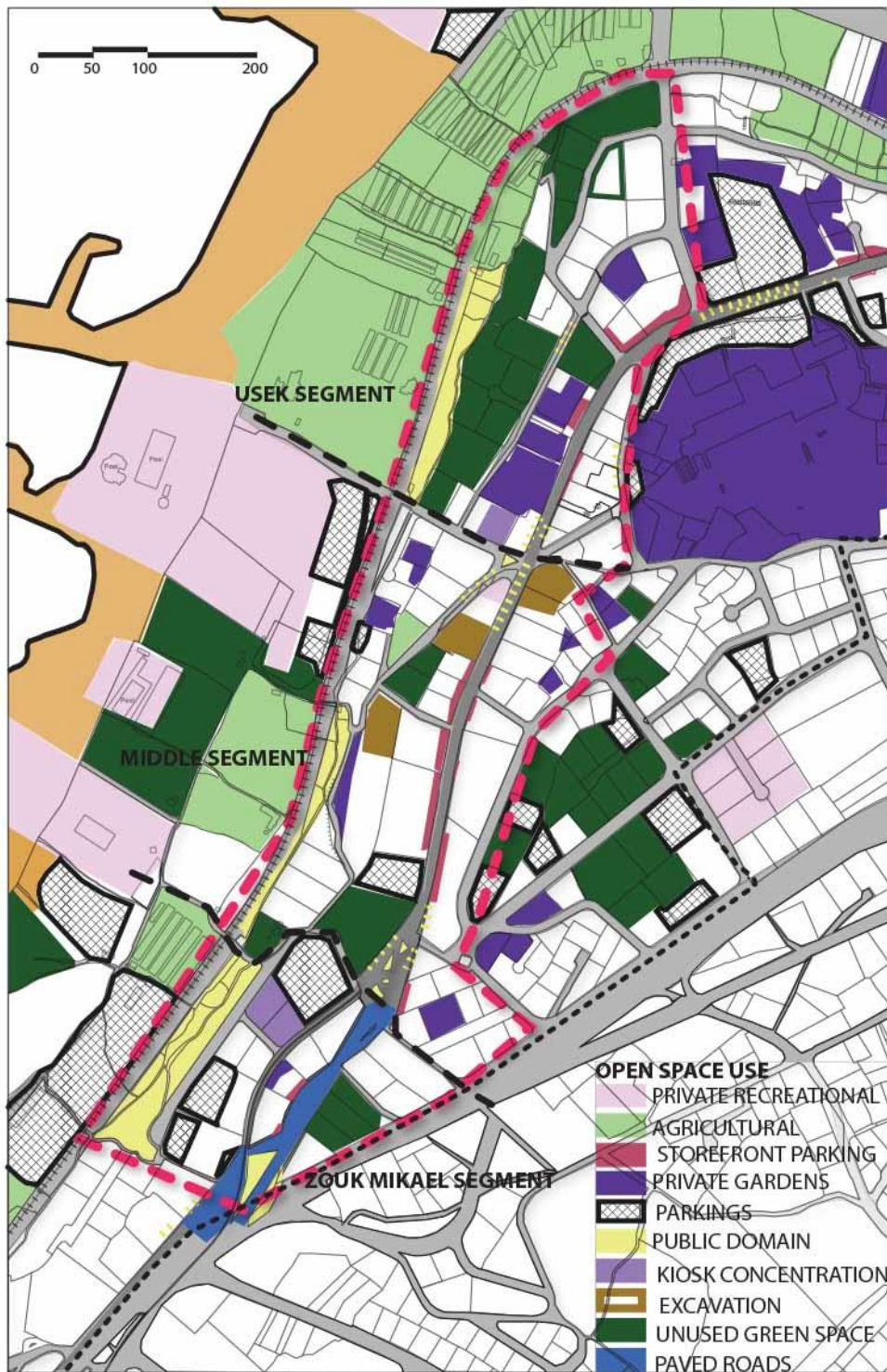


Figure 66: Detailed open space map of the study area

The most prevalent types of open spaces within the study area (figure 66) are parking and private gardens. The buildings along the strip also offer storefront parking

spaces. However, the street itself is used for parking, especially within the Middle Segment, which makes it difficult for users to walk along the street and shop comfortably: this also creates an issue of safety. The lack of open space that caters to users and pedestrians discourages visitors from appropriating these spaces and activating these areas along the strip. Moreover, the existing open spaces in the study area lack green infrastructure, thus making the existing car and noise pollution produced along the strip more apparent and further disrupting the image of the strip. On the other hand, food trucks concentrated in certain parking spaces have created nodes, creating car-oriented food courts.

#### d. Streets, Sidewalks, and Circulation

As for the infrastructure, there is a lack of maintenance, for there are minimal street lights, damaged sidewalks, lack of sufficient parking facilities, which could be affecting the shop cycle concerning its reputation and compared to its competitors. The municipality tends to focus the maintenance in certain regions, but with Kaslik, it claims to be difficult to manage, due to it being a continuous linear strip that might be difficult to close down for maintenance.



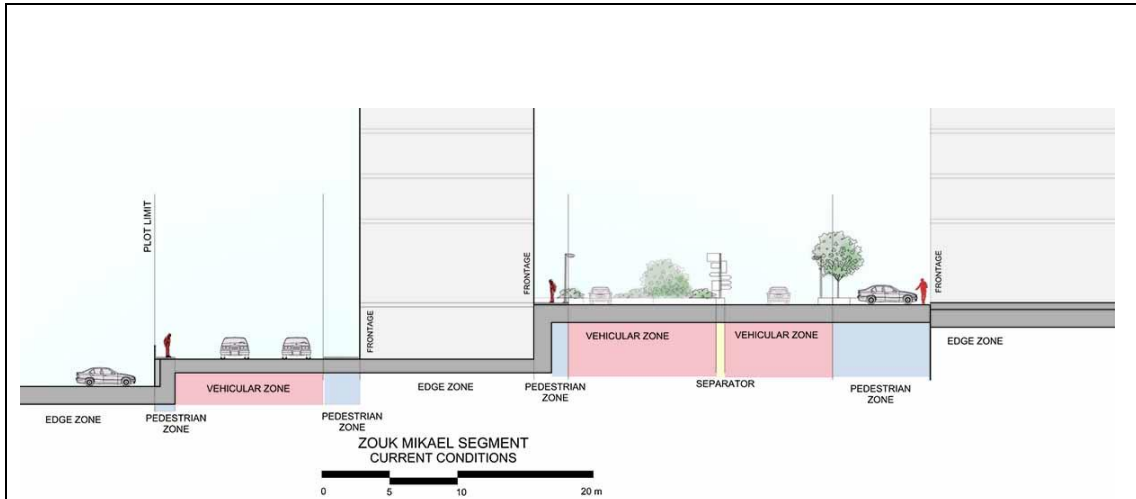


Figure 67: Section in the Zouk Mikael segment

This figure represents the section along the strip in the Zouk Mikael segment, identifying the existing enclosures and edges created by the buildings along with their relationship with the street. The strip is split into two streets, the upper street that is characterized by paved roads wide sidewalks that acts as a gateway to the commercial strip, and a lower strip that marks the return loop of this entrance street.

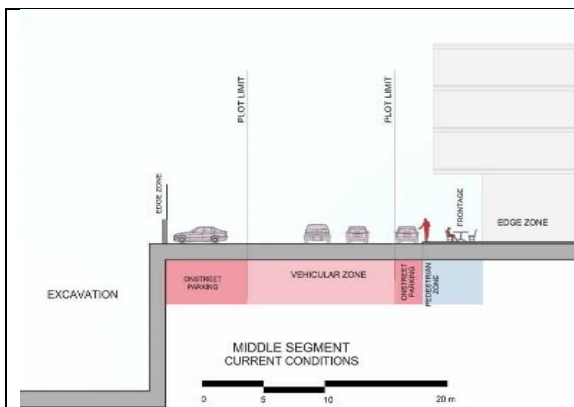


Figure 68: Street section from the north of the Middle segment

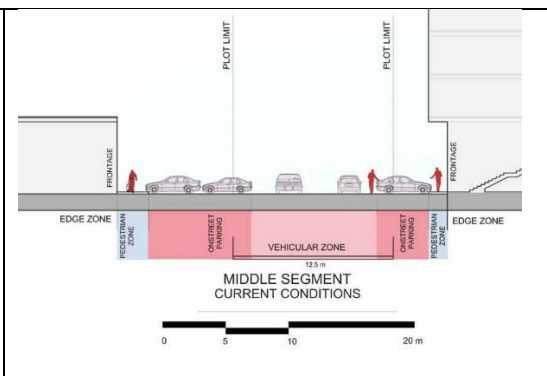


Figure 69: Street section from the south of the Middle segment

Similarly, the Middle Segment created different enclosure spaces and edges throughout, either through hard edges such as buildings and fences, or soft edges that create possibility for views towards the cost. The sidewalks though wide, are interrupted by obstacles such as streetlights and landscape, which makes it difficult for pedestrians to use. On-street parking also interrupt pedestrian flow and create more vehicular traffic.

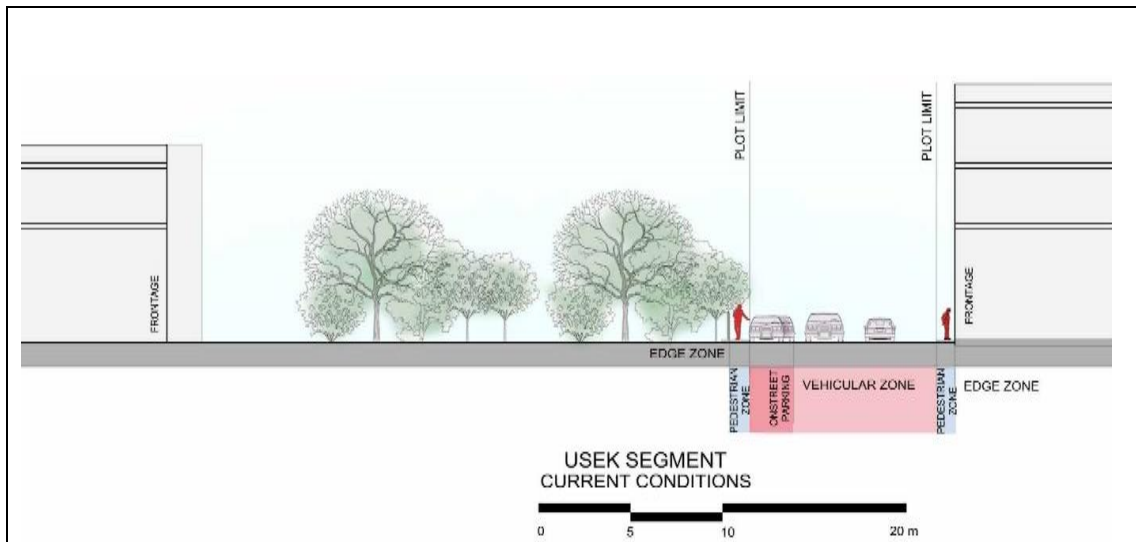


Figure 70: Street section from the U.S.E.K. segment

On the other hand, the U.S.E.K. segment provides softer edges, which is both comfortable for both vehicular and pedestrian activity. However, sidewalks are much narrower since several setback additions are present throughout the segment, thus prioritizing on-street parking rather than wide sidewalks.

### • Circulation

*Accessibility* to the area is difficult, since the strip is not visible along the highway, and the traffic, in general, to reach this area through the highway is discouraging. Students commuting to U.S.E.K. also use the strip as a shortcut to reach the university, causing traffic and making the area unappealing to walk in and thus emphasizing the area as a path rather than a *destination*.

Figure 71 depicts the circulation and traffic direction within the study area in relation to the existing parking spaces: one-way vehicular circulation on paved roads at the south of the strip (Zouk Mikael Segment) has been designed to ensure -to an extent- road safety, and the opportunity to create a vehicular tour around the available shops with minor obstacles. This circulation created two nodes at its ends in the form of roundabouts.

On the other hand, the Middle Segment remains as two-way vehicular circulation, also creating nodes at the roundabouts, which justifies to the strip being continuous for much longer in that zone. However, this circulation allows drivers the opportunity to switch directions in the middle of the road due to the presence of the roundabouts only at the ends of the strip. The issue along the strip is the presence of storefront parking that promotes traffic and also encourages drivers to park directly on the street, which, in turn, affects pedestrian safety.

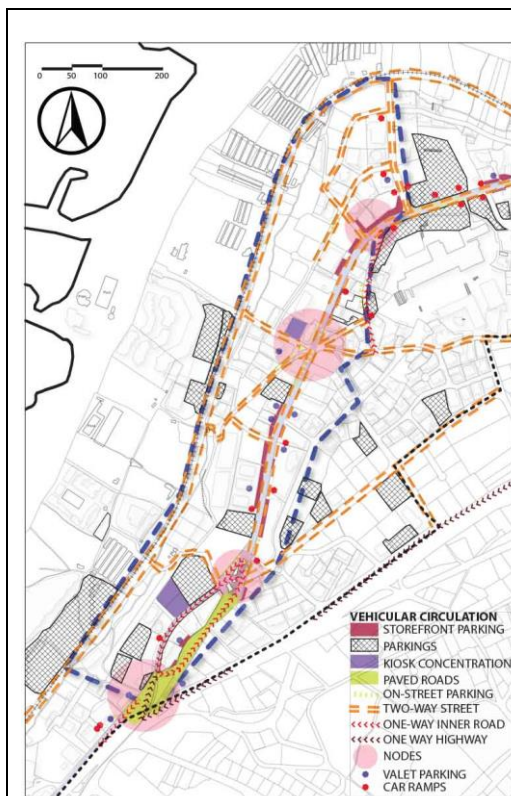


Figure 71: Map of vehicular mobility

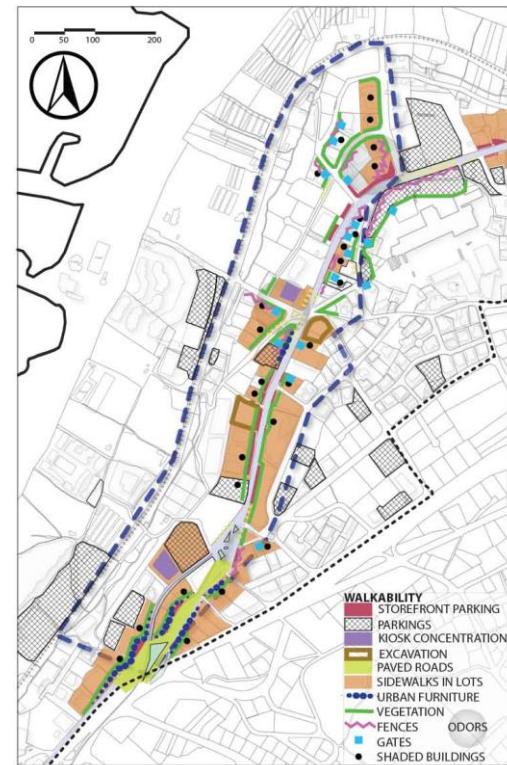
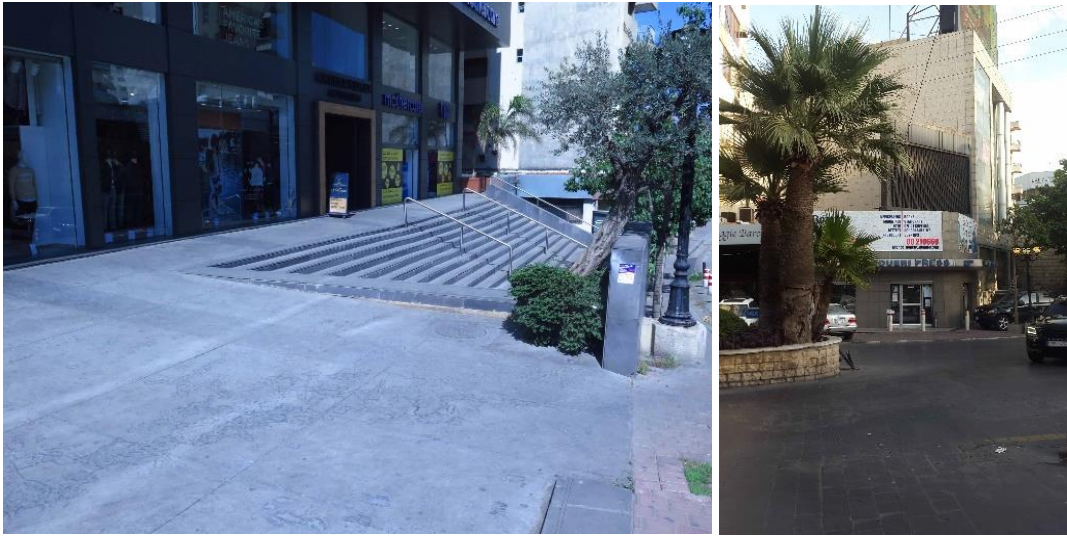


Figure 72: Map of pedestrian accessibility

- **Walkability:**

In this regard, several aspects in figure 51 were surveyed in order to understand what pedestrians face while walking along the strip, such as the presence of sidewalks, road paving, urban furniture, urban landscaping, fences, gates, and shading.



*Figure 73: images of some staircases, sidewalks, pavements, and landscaping (2015)*

While most shops provide clear displays and signage to attract users, accessibility differs between the different segments: the Zouk Mikael Segment offers wider sidewalks, wider staircases, (figure 73), lighting and paved roads to encourage users to walk. Conversely, the Middle and U.S.E.K. segments both offer sidewalks with vegetation mostly introduced by shop owners; there are also several obstacles and obstructions within the sidewalks, as well as fences and gated spaces. Though some lots include sidewalks, they are narrow, while others require maintenance. On the other hand, the main street is difficult to cross due to its width and two-way circulation that lacks signage and pedestrian crossings, disregarding pedestrian safety.

### *C. S. W. O. T. Analysis*

As a result, the following general conclusions can be deduced through a S.W.O.T. (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis in order to result in recommendations:

#### Strengths:

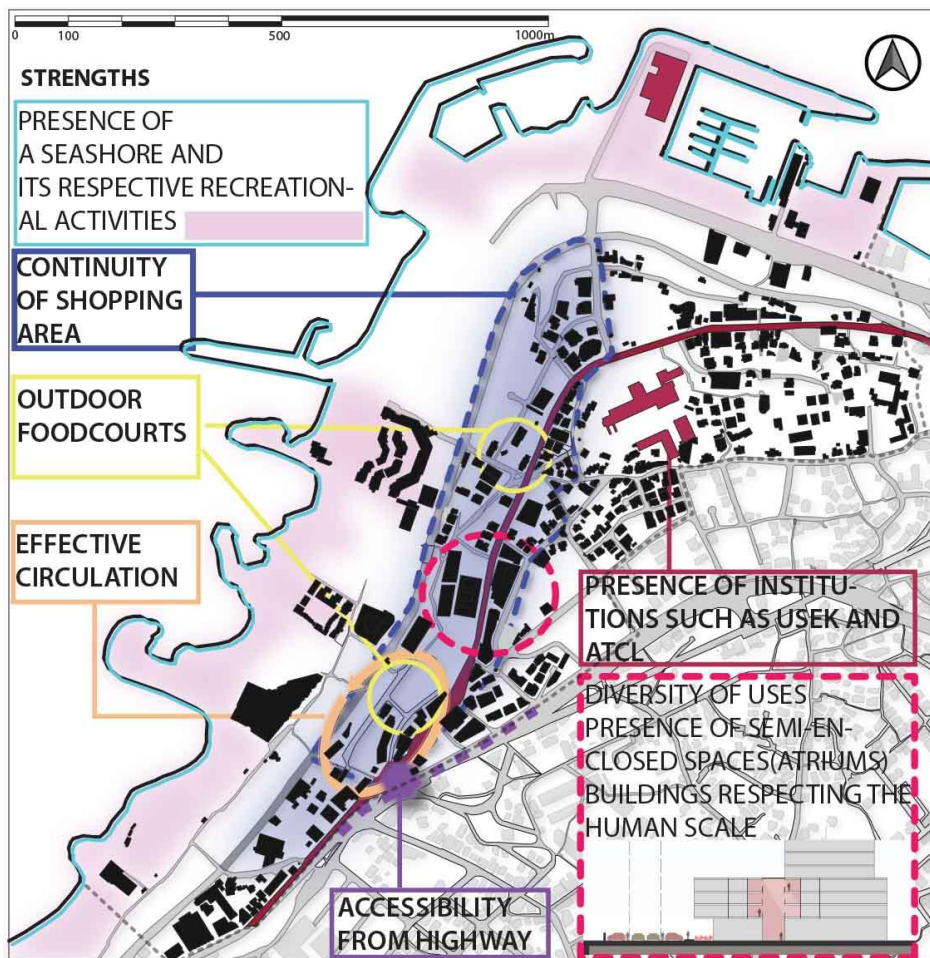


Figure 74: map showing the strengths

**Figure 74** shows the overall strengths of the site, which are, but not limited to, the following:

- Presence of the open food court concept that is attractive to users
- Diversity of the existing uses along the strip

- Presence of building typologies that respect the human scale
- Continuous linearity of the street as a shopping strip
- Presence of important institutions (U.S.E.K., A.T.C.L., Bain Militaire...)
- Diversity of retail is not limited to only the ground floor level
- Vehicular accessibility: strong circulation network strategy in Kaslik-Zouk

### Weaknesses

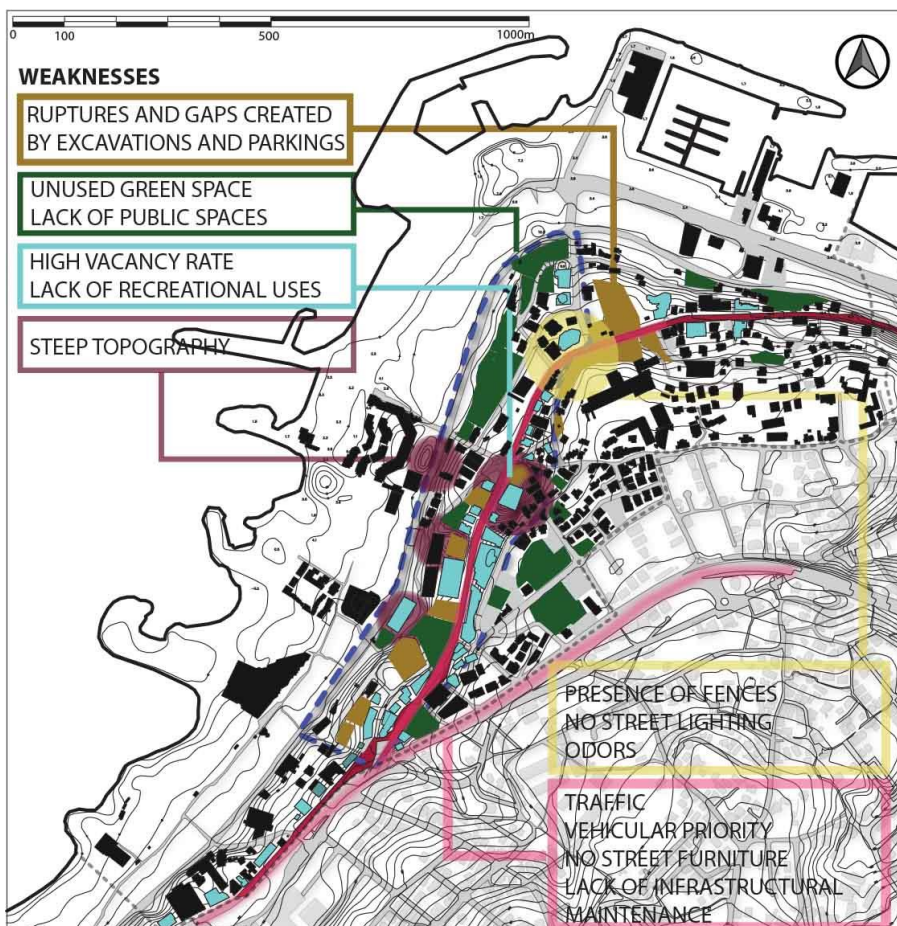


Figure 75: a map showcasing the weaknesses

For the weaknesses the following apply:

- Lack of public spaces, street furniture (including lighting), as well as lack of infrastructural maintenance

- Steep slopes along the strip
- High vacancy rates and lack of recreational uses along the strip
- Ruptures and gaps grated by fences, parking lots and unused green spaces along the strip
- The vehicular priority that makes the strip dangerous for walking or cycling

### Opportunities

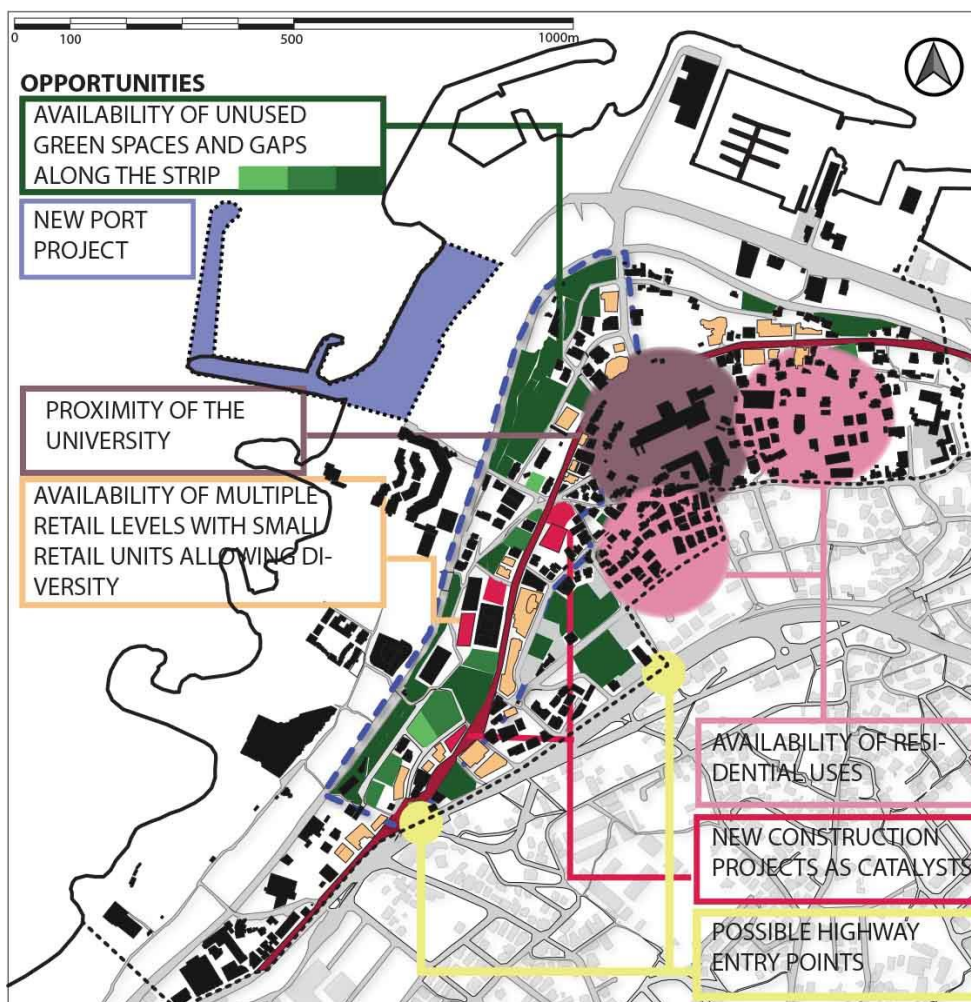


Figure 76: opportunities

The following opportunities are present:

- Availability of green spaces and gaps along the strip that may be used for recreational activities

- The proximity of the university to the strip that may allow opportunities to collaborate
- Availability of vacant retail levels that may host new and unique experiences in the future
- New ongoing constructions that may serve as catalysts and thus destinations to the area
- Presence of two highway entry points

### Threats

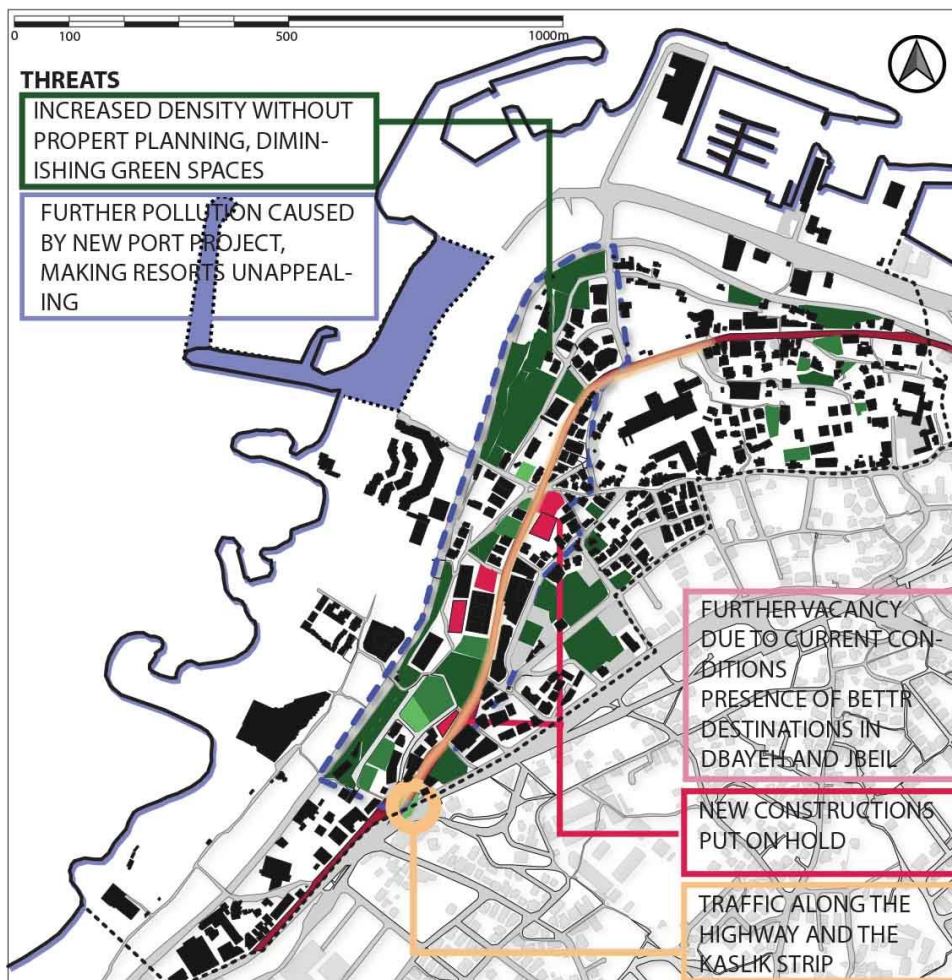


Figure 77: threats

On the other hand, the following threats apply:



- Further vacancy increase with the current economic conditions of the country
- Presence of well-equipped shopping malls/destinations in Dbayeh and Jbeil that compete with the site's vitality
- Increase in pollution as a result of the new cruise port, making the surrounding coast less desirable
- Increase in building density without proper planning in regards to the overall strip, thus diminishing the already limited green spaces in the area
- Insufficient parking for cars that cannot be accommodated
- Increased vehicular traffic along the strip

## CHAPTER IV

### DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

In response to the analysis and synthesis of the study area, the amalgamation of research on urban decay and urban regeneration with the assessed strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the study area provides the foundation for this chapter. This results in defining the goals and objectives that initiate the design intervention strategy through five main layers: mobility and connectivity, identity, public and open spaces, private development, and public management. The general strategy will develop into a series of design interventions and recommendations along Kaslik's commercial entertainment strip.

#### **A. Strategies and Interventions: Goals and Objectives**

##### ***1. Identity***

Initially known as a high-end commercial strip, this project aims to reconfigure the identity of the Kaslik Commercial Street as an inclusive commercial-entertainment street that provides experiences for locals and tourists alike through soft mobility and interactive open spaces (figure 78). Once known for its galleries and cinemas, introducing mechanisms facilitating the establishment and visibility of local businesses, startups, and exhibits allows the chance to re-envision the street as a creative hub with unique retail and activities.

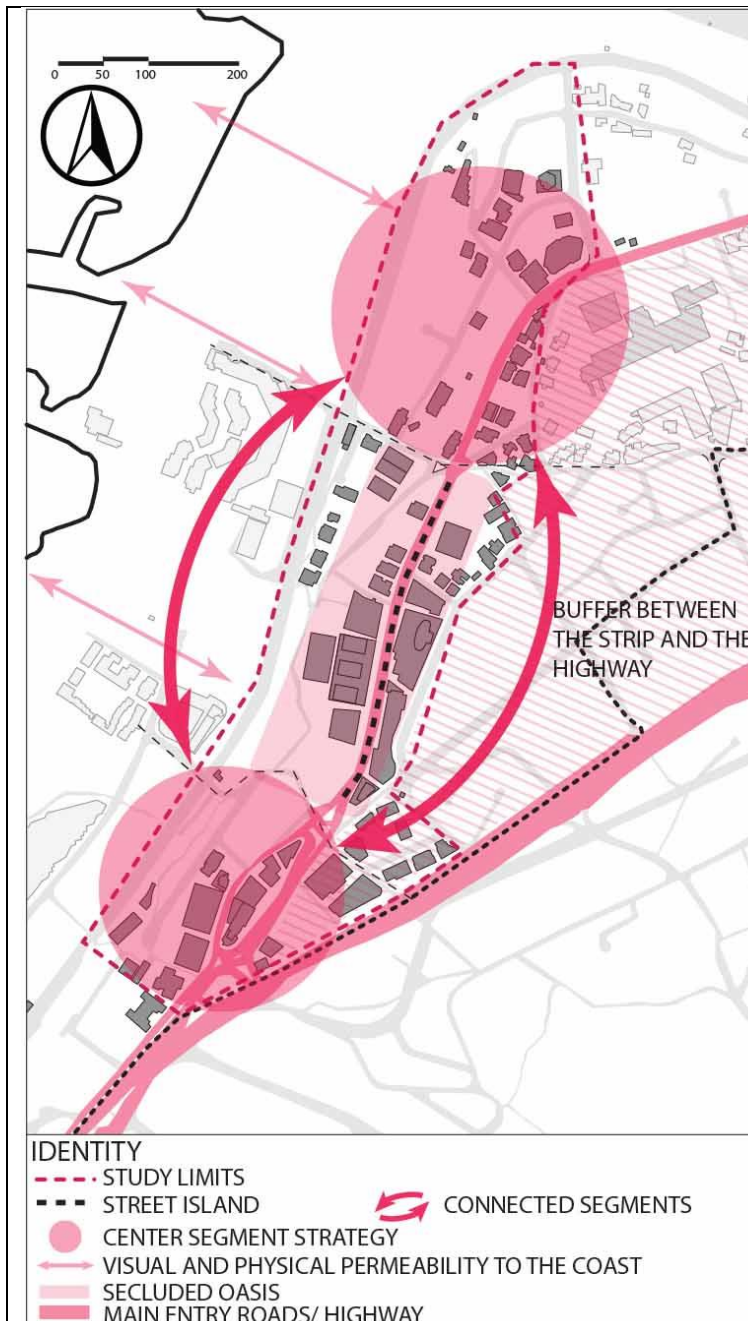


Figure 78: General strategy to improve the identity of the entertainment-retail strip

**GOALS:**

- Reconfigure the identity of the area into a walkable and active commercial entertainment oasis that connects residents and visitors alike through place-making
- Transform the strip into a destination and linking it to the existing coastline and upcoming touristic port
- Enhance the pedestrian experience and visual permeability to the sea
- Convert the street into a place of social interaction and exchange

**Objectives:**

- Urban regeneration through marketing strategies, place-making, pedestrianization and context-sensitive design

- Reconfigure each segment to accommodate the needs of their users: the U.S.E.K. and Zouk Mikael segments become centers, one (U.S.E.K.) providing recreational open spaces, services, and work areas to accommodate the residents and students, and the other (Zouk Mikael) provides retail and dining activities mostly used by visitors and resort residents, while still maintaining its role as the gateway to the strip. The Middle segment becomes a segment that connects these centers together while maintaining its own identity as an experience-based retail segment that combines new markets, destinations, and activities through the public space.
- Transforming the street into a destination through physical and programmatic catalysts (figures 82, 83), and introducing food retail in the centers to accommodate the needs of the residents in the area (such as bakeries and food specialty shops)
- Create social interaction opportunities through attractions and themed spaces, and small scale design along specific focal points in the strip
- Introduce walkable spaces and connections through landscapes and sidewalks
- Upgrade storefronts, signs, and frontages, especially along the Middle segment and the U.S.E.K segments to ensure uniformity and continuity
- Introduce events and activities along the strip, especially the middle segment, and insert open-air markets and specialty shops
- Reconfigure strip edges through setback additions or creating semi-public spaces connected to the street
- Provide the opportunity to establish public spaces along and within the street either through a ‘street island’ (figure 79) that creates public spaces on the street itself, or through ‘expanded frontages and pedestrian spaces’ (figure 80) where

public spaces are on the sides of the road (both strategies will be elaborated further in the following sections)

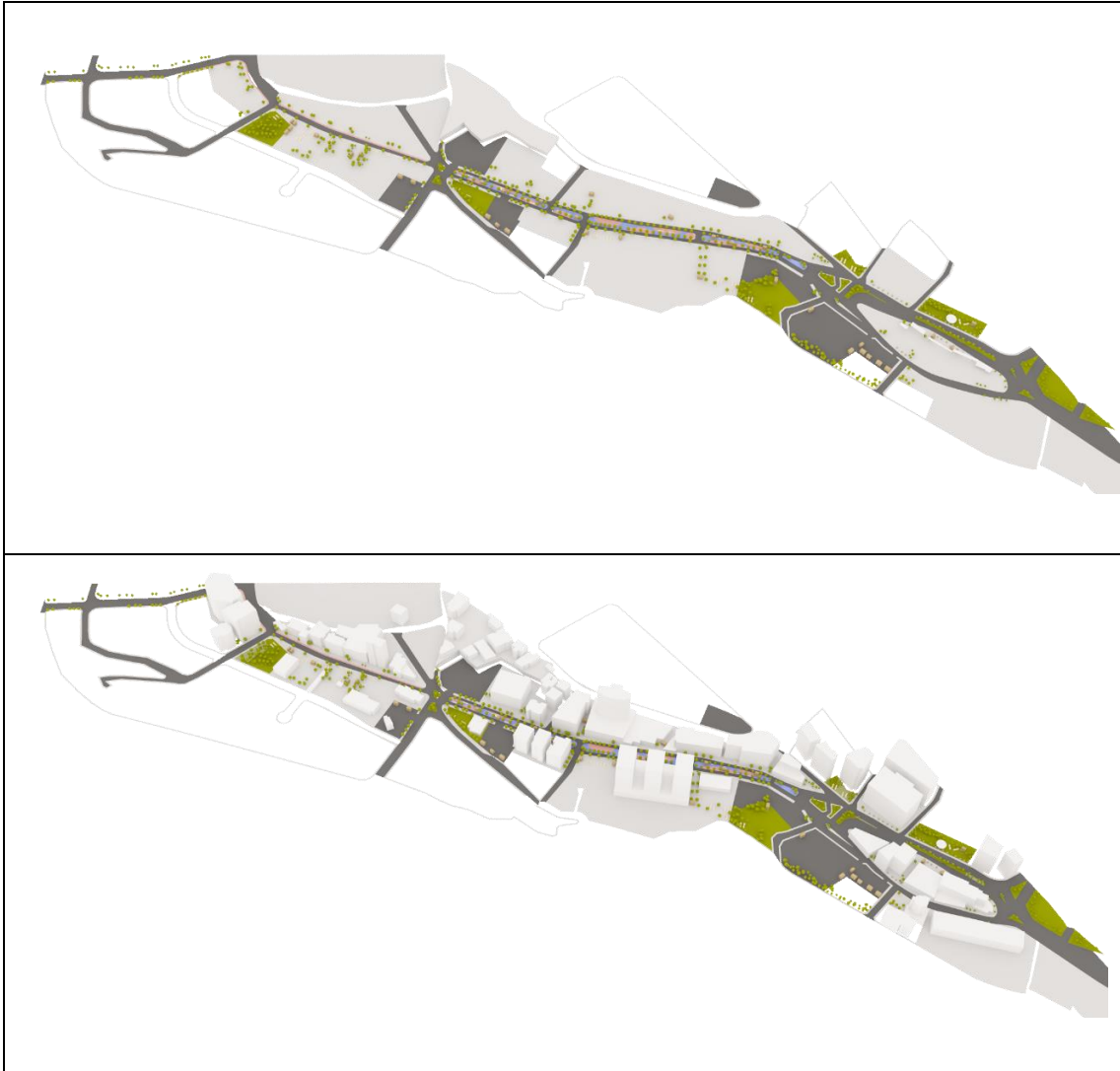
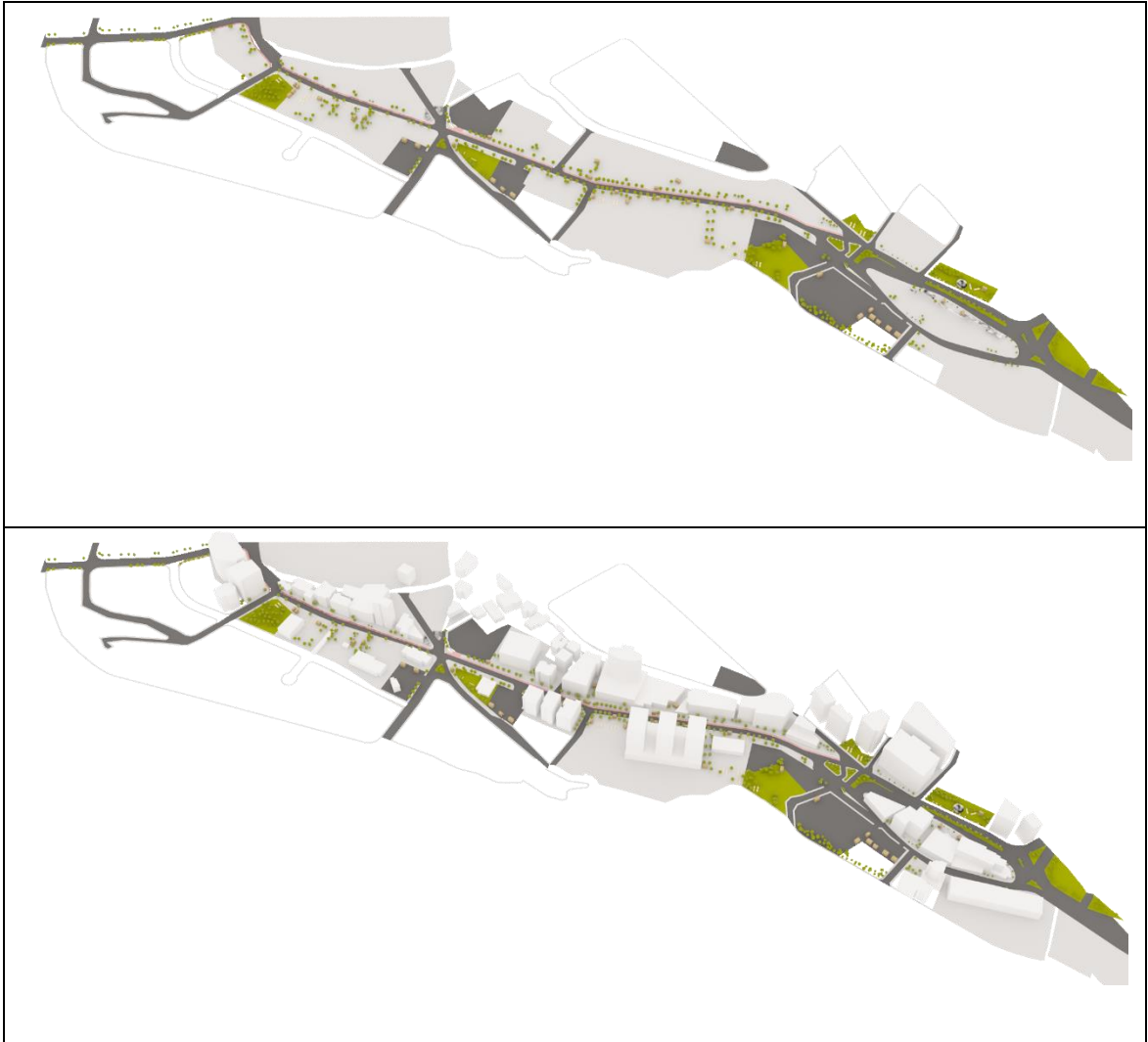


Figure 79: Overall perspective of the 'street island' strategy along the strip



*Figure 80: overall perspective of the 'expanded frontages' strategy along the strip*

## **2. Private development**

Private developers and developments make up most of the commercial strip. For this reason, both physical interventions and intangible incentives would provide opportunities to reduce vacancies, diversify functions, and encourage an active entertainment-retail experience (figure 81).

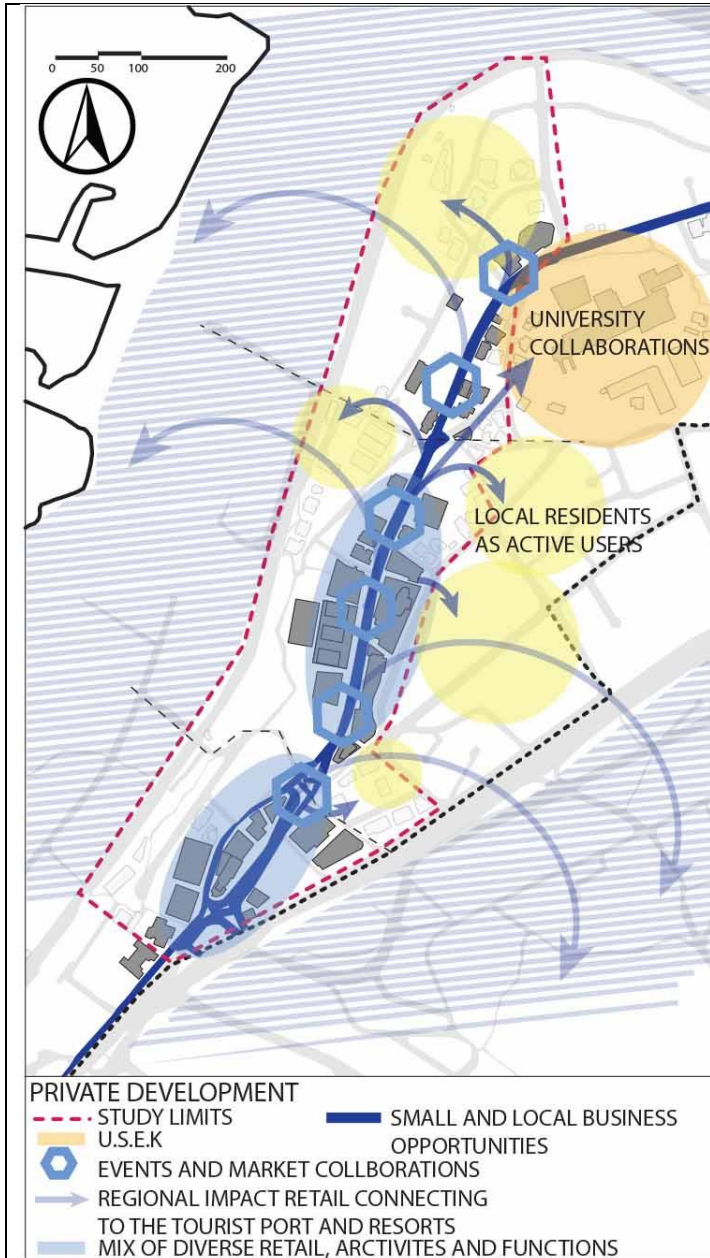


Figure 81: Strategy map for the private developments in Kaslik

**GOALS:**

- Create opportunities for small businesses to thrive
- Reduce vacancies by introducing incentives and disincentives
- Introduce diverse and affordable retail, activities, and workshops that transform retail units into experiences
- Create communal spaces
- Introduce functions that serve the local community and the university

**Objectives:**

- Introduce more diverse activities and functions along the Middle and U.S.E.K. segments, especially experience-based retail activities and indoor entertainment functions in the large centers such as the AltaVista and Debes centers, and reusing

the old cinemas and now vacant pubs as arcades, workshops, studios, or different play areas that are inclusive of different ages and budgets (figure 82, 83)

- Create affordable retail and activities, and insert new programs and functions in vacant ground floor spaces according to the needs of the area (i.e., coffee shops in the U.S.E.K. segments, and restaurants and health services in the middle segment)
- Transform the vacant hotels along the strip (Acropolis in the U.S.E.K. segment, AltaVista in the Middle segment, and Century Park Hotel in the Zouk segment) as dorms, studio apartments, or affordable workspaces for students and visitors
- Transform vacant existing units into either smaller or communal workspaces so they are cheaper to rent
- Expand frontages to the street to become more inviting and encourage social interaction
- Schedule exhibit spaces along the middle segment for events and market days
- Create collaborations between investors, shop owners, and the university to create student-led projects and businesses along the strip



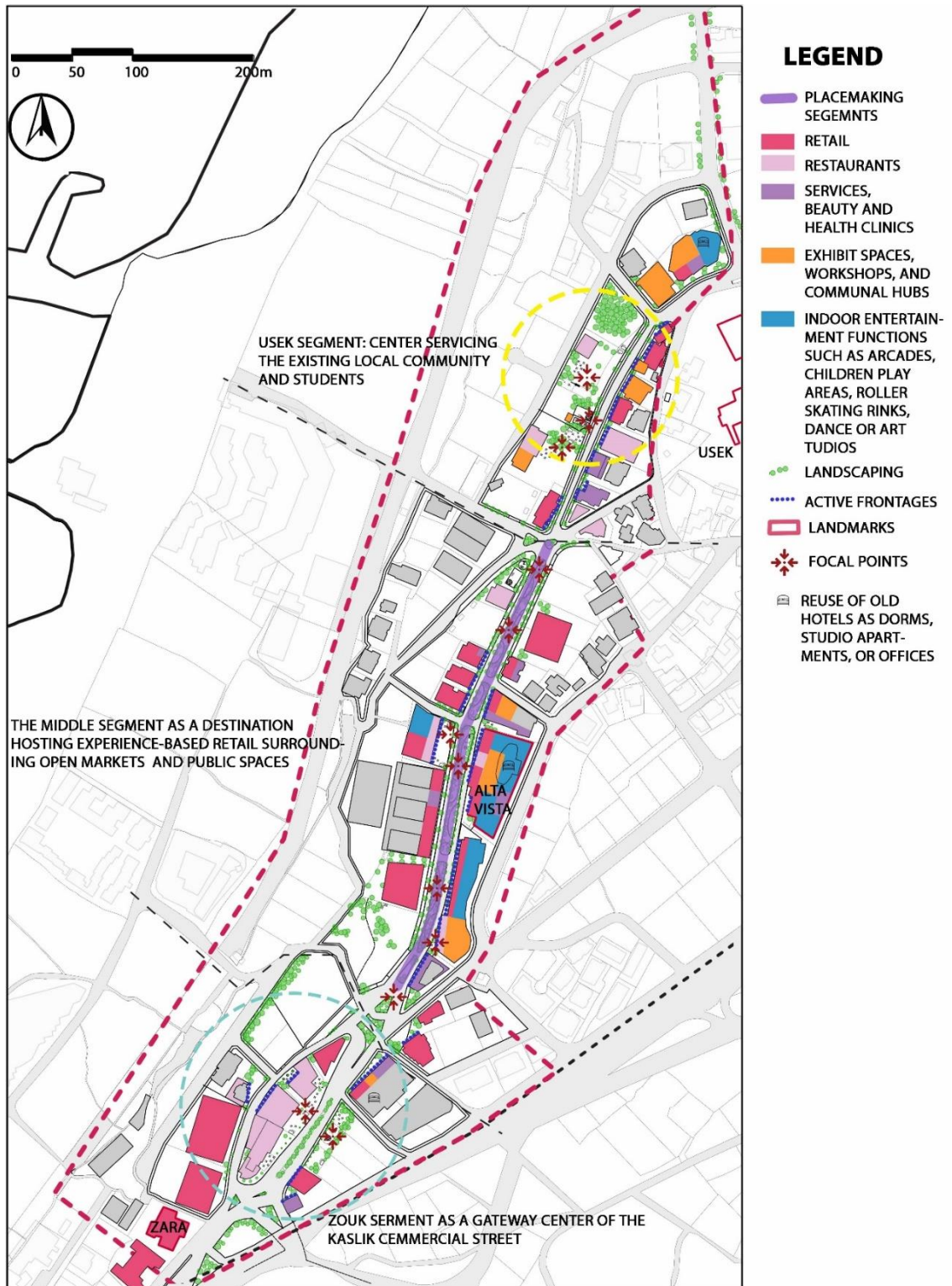


Figure 82: Identity and private development strategies depicting the 'Street Island' strategy

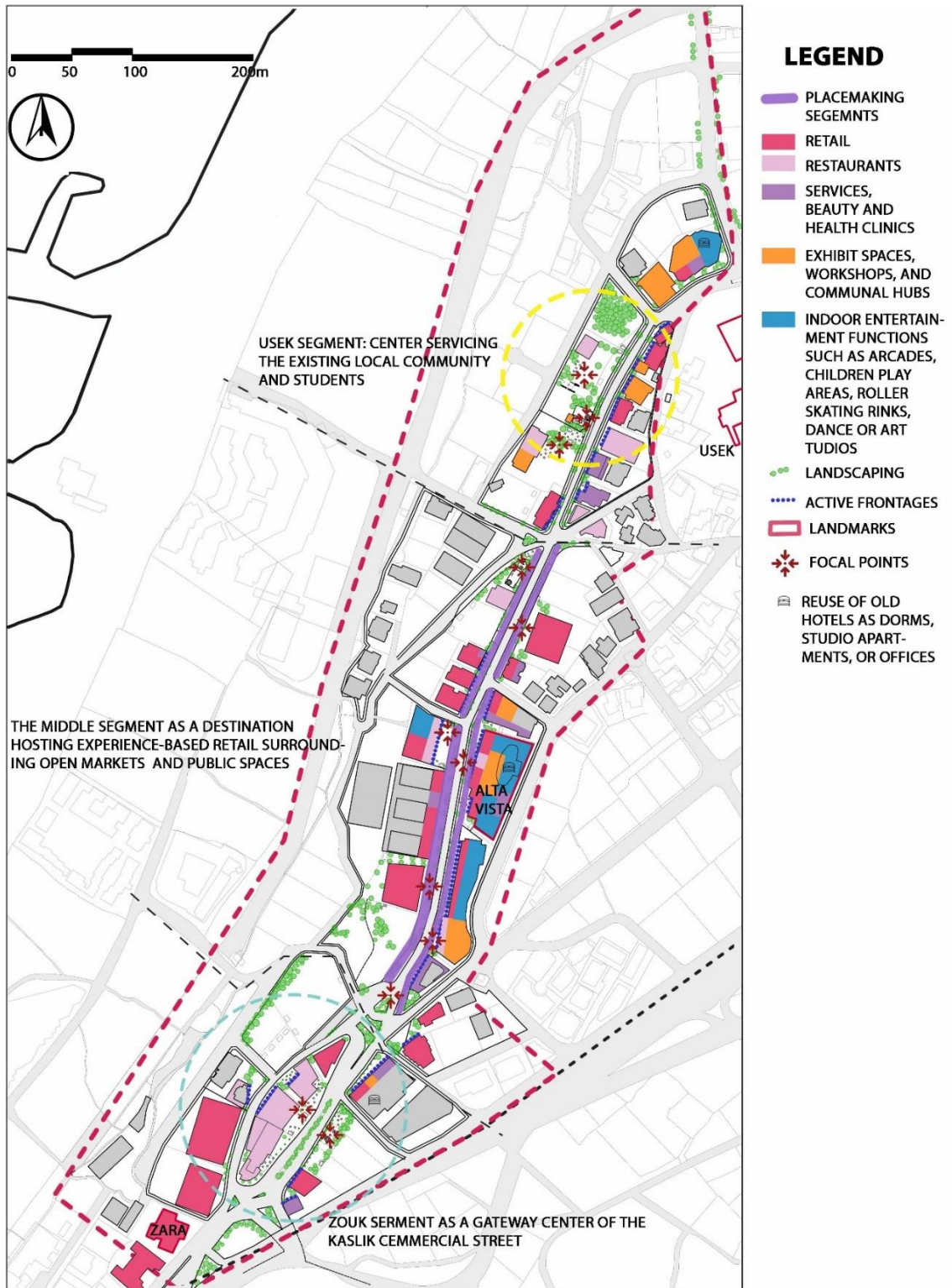


Figure 83: Identity and private development strategies depicting the 'Expanded Frontages' strategy

### ***3. Mobility and connectivity***

Considering the complexity of the existing mobility and accessibility to the study area, along with traffic and traffic management issues that render the site unappealing for users and visitors alike, several goals and objectives are introduced to revitalize the site and transform it into a user-friendly destination (figure 84).

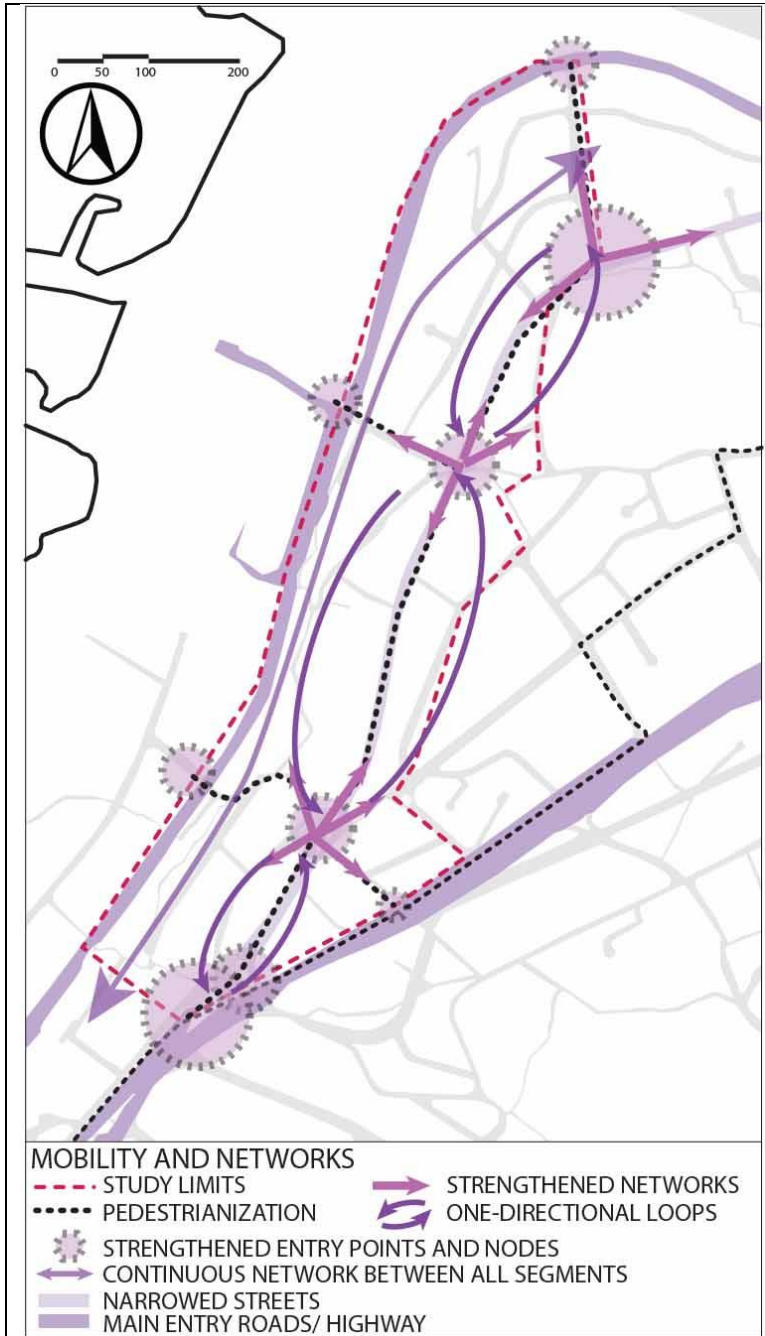


Figure 84: mobility and connectivity strategy

**GOALS:**

- Enhance entry points to the strip
- Strengthen connection and accessibility to the surrounding networks (towards the coast and resorts)
- Ensure connectivity throughout all segments
- Emphasize soft mobility
- Enhance traffic and mobility through loop circulation and slowed traffic

**Objectives and Masterplan (figure 85):**

- Improve accessibility in terms of public transportation and creating bus stops at the ends of the strip; improve the highway entrance to the strip through signage, markings along the highway to define proper lanes that facilitate accessibility to the strip

- Limit entry and exit points into the strip, and define the one-way vehicular circulation through altering existing roundabouts (intersection between the Zouk Mikael segment and Middle segment, between the Middle segment and the U.S.E.K. segment) and widening and reconfiguring the sidewalk curbs at the end of the U.S.E.K. segment (figures 86, 87)
- Upgrade parking areas with proper entry points and parking structures
- Enhance parking connections to the strip through walkways facilitated by sidewalks, crosswalks, and street furniture
- Pedestrianize the strip and reconnect the existing segments through one street direction, following the same vehicular direction that exists in the Zouk segment
- Change speed limit of the strip so the strip becomes safer for walking
- Decrease the width of the streets
- Introduce street safety measures (i.e., traffic lights and signage) and structured traffic management on all segments and their surroundings
- Introduce cycling lanes along the Middle segment and U.S.E.K. segment that connect to the seaside boulevard through secondary networks
- Strengthen soft mobility connections from the strip to the coast and resorts through paving, sidewalks, and landscape
- Improve and ensure cohesive infrastructure along all segments and insert urban furniture
- Create vehicular loops to ensure one-way streets either creating a loop within the middle segment (figure 86), or through and around the middle segment (figure 87)

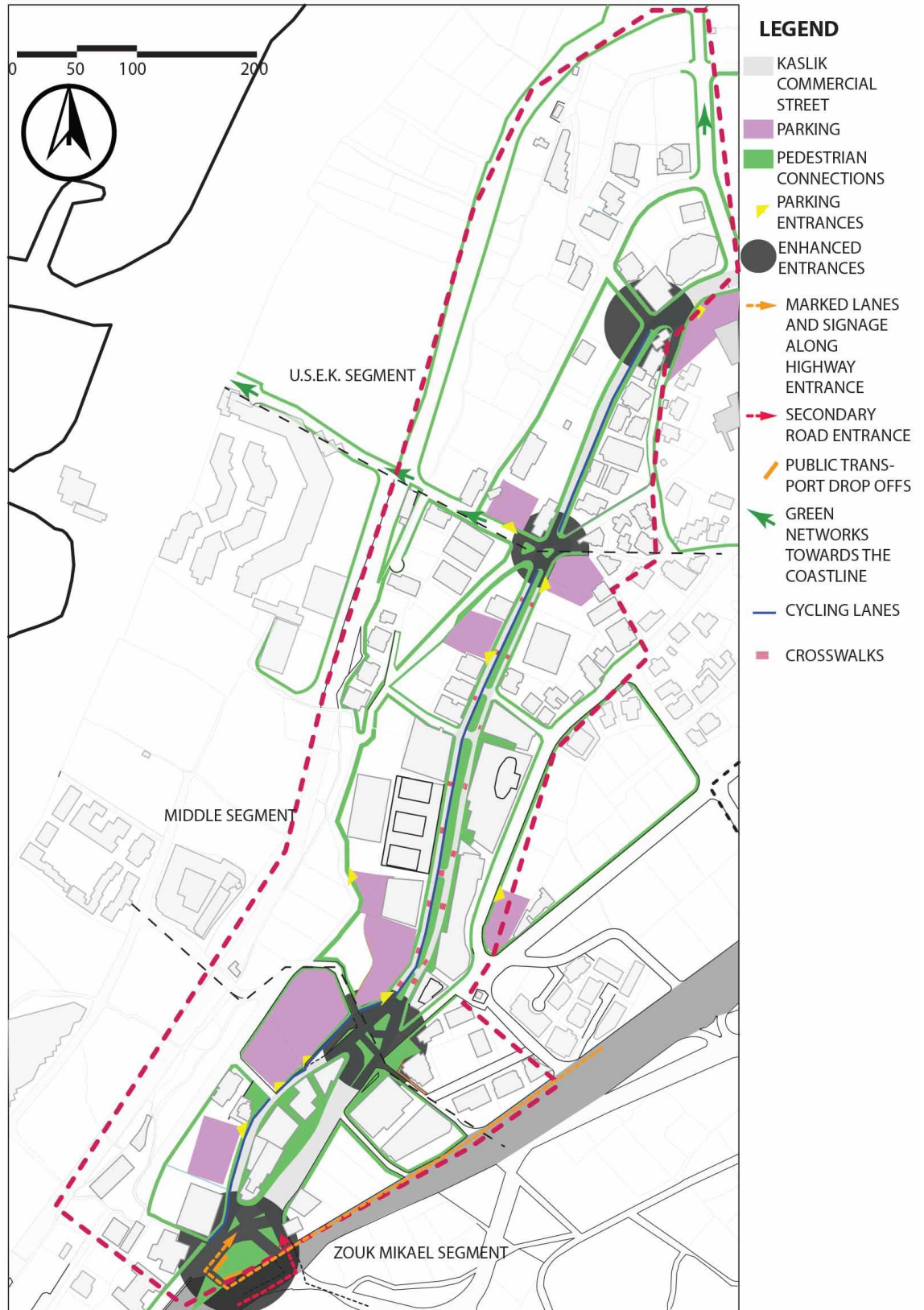


Figure 85: Plan depicting the mobility and connectivity objectives

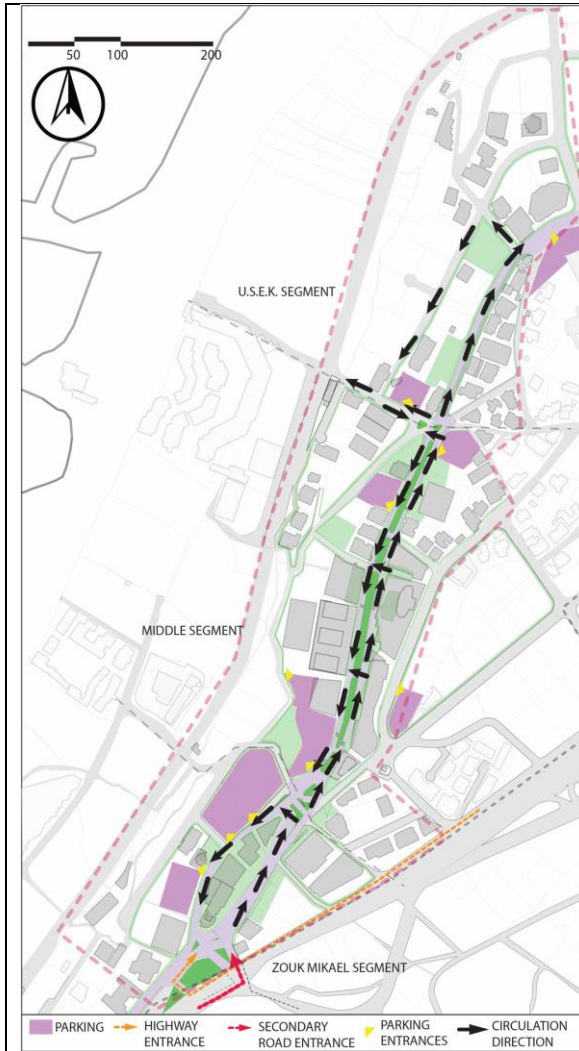


Figure 86: plan depicting one-way mobility option within the street

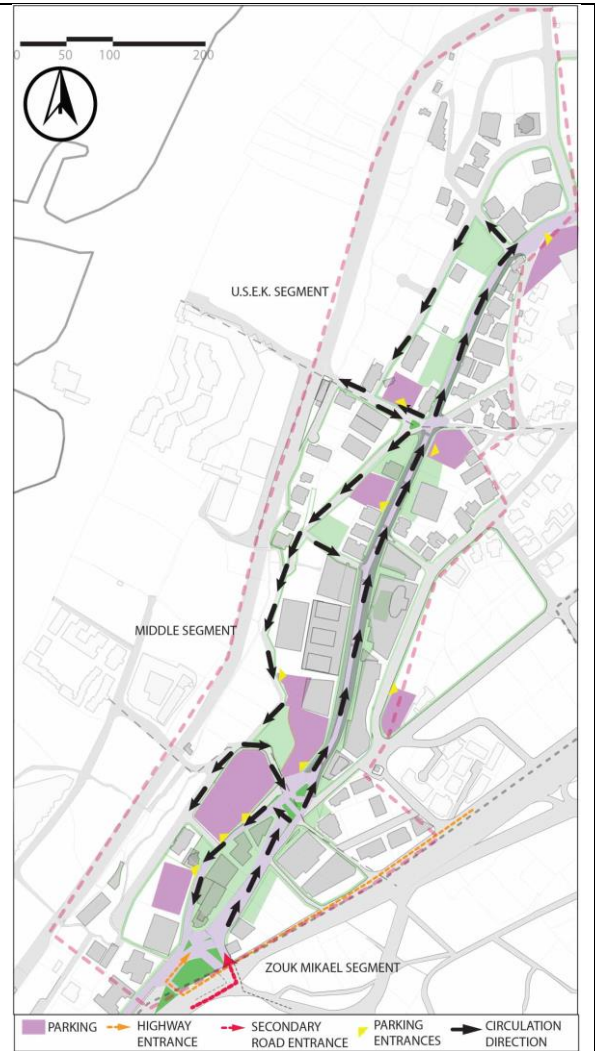


Figure 87: plan depicting one-way mobility option looping through secondary streets

#### 4. Public and open spaces

Public and open spaces have become now more than ever a necessity. These open spaces, though available, are inaccessible. For this reason, the strategy aims to enhance these spaces and allow them to function as the spine of the strip (figure 88).



Figure 88: Strategy map for public and open spaces in Kaslik

**GOALS:**

- Create publicly accessible open spaces and open space networks
- Cultural landscapes that facilitate social interaction and create opportunity for encounters and exchange
- Integrate the main street and store frontages as part of the interactive open spaces

**Objectives:**

- Introduction of flexible spaces that can be appropriated by users throughout all three segments
- Open storefronts to the street to encourage social interaction



- Introduce necessary services such as guiding panels, public toilets, and trash bins and create covered or shaded spaces, urban furniture, landscape and trash bins
- Allocate in each segment green spaces and landscaping in existing vacant lands and transform these lots into recreational spaces or pop-up parks with different functions (i.e., children play areas, outdoor exercise spaces, and dining areas) open to all, enhanced and connected through green networks (figures 89, 90)
- Widening sidewalks in the middle and U.S.E.K. segments
- Create flexible open exhibition and market spaces
- Introduce temporary spaces and adaptable areas, allowing users to adjust spaces according to their needs, and can later be turned into permanent spaces

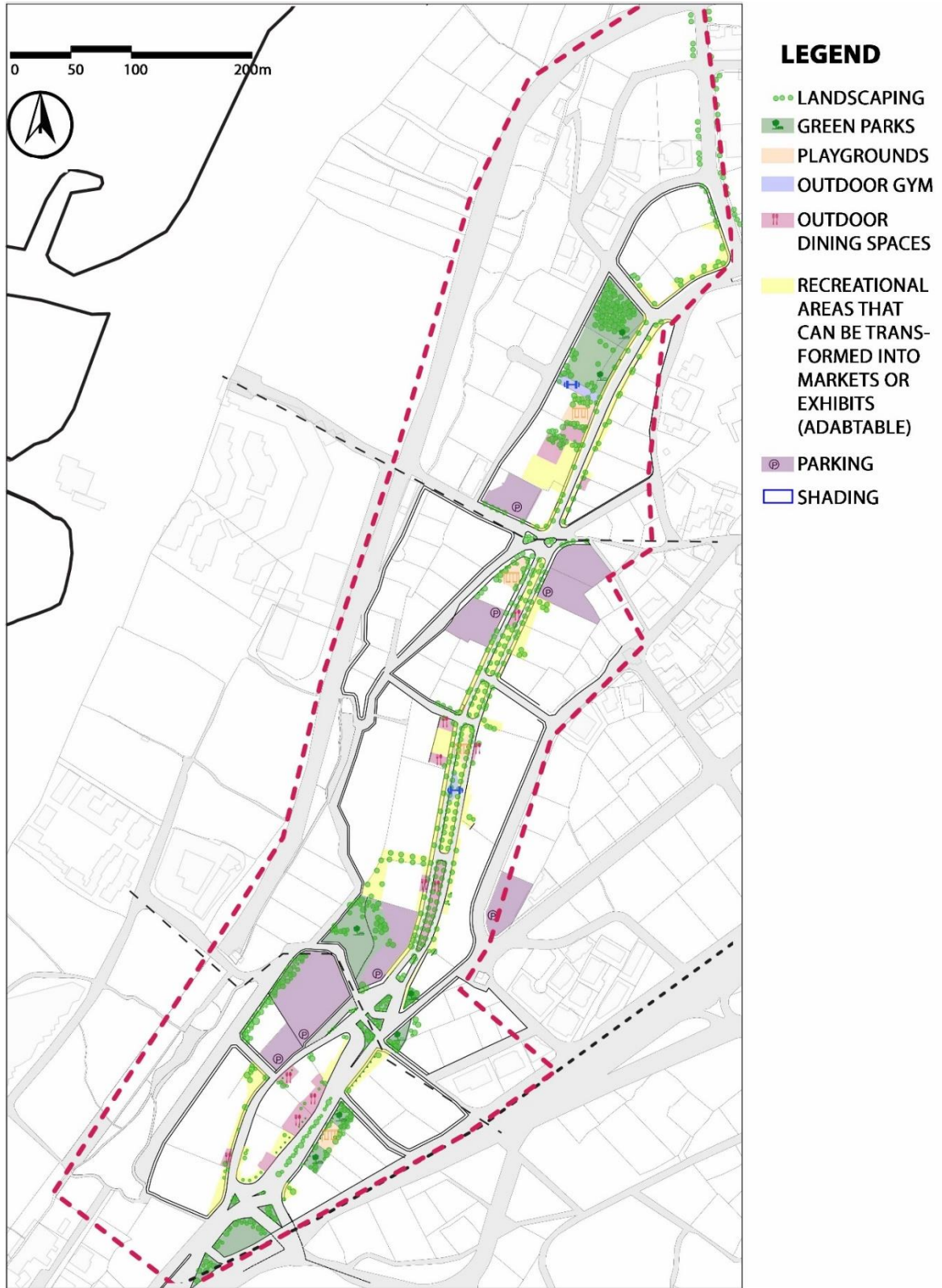


Figure 89: Public and open space strategy depicting the 'Street Island' strategy

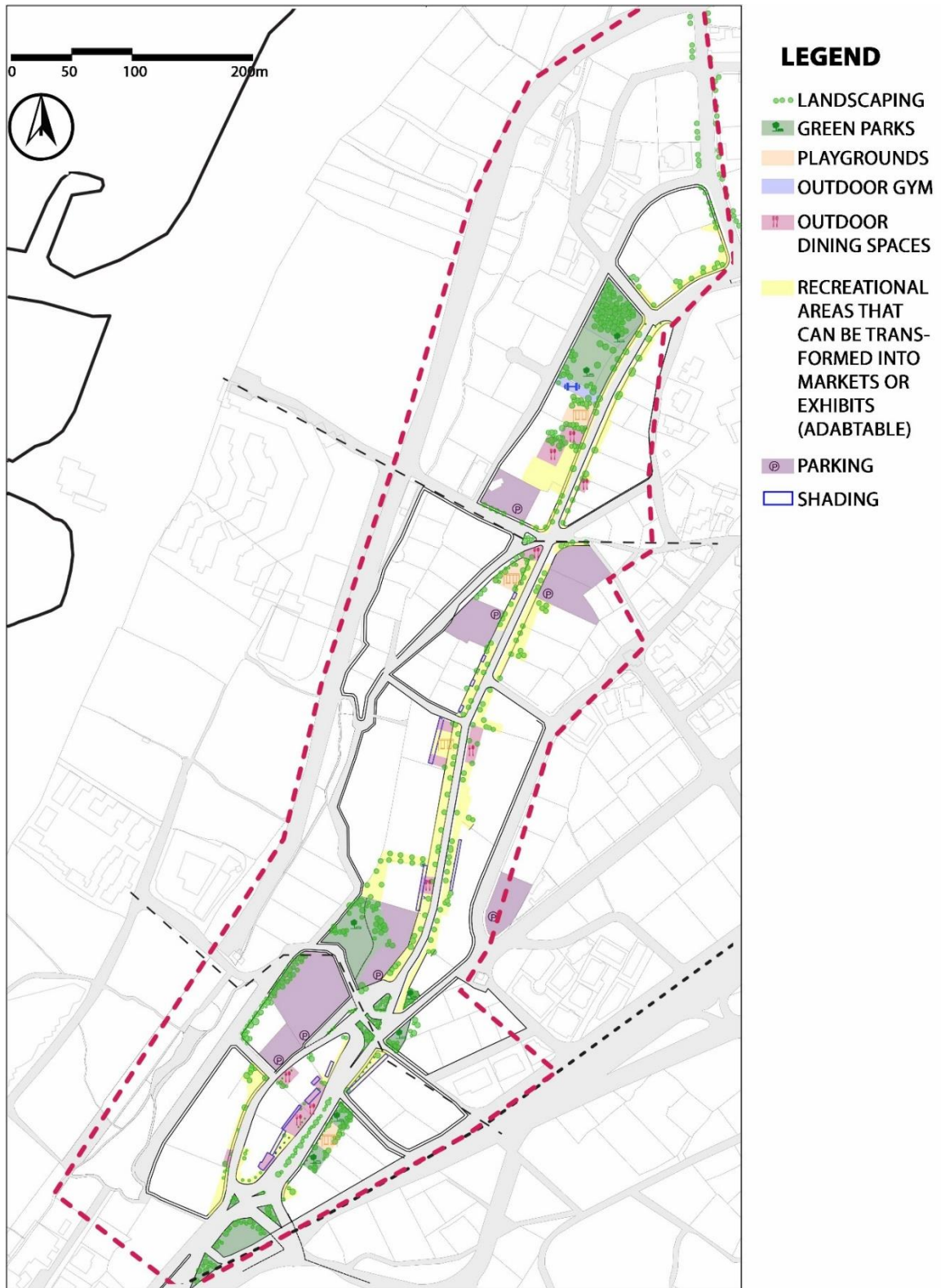


Figure 90: Public and open space strategy depicting the 'Expanded Frontages' strategy

##### ***5. Public management (marketing and management strategies)***

In order to initiate the previously-mentioned goals and objectives, a public management and marketing strategy can ensure the feasibility of the project. Since two separate municipalities manage Kaslik, an association in charge of coordinating and mediating between the municipalities and businesses can facilitate the implementation of different strategies along the strip (figure 91).

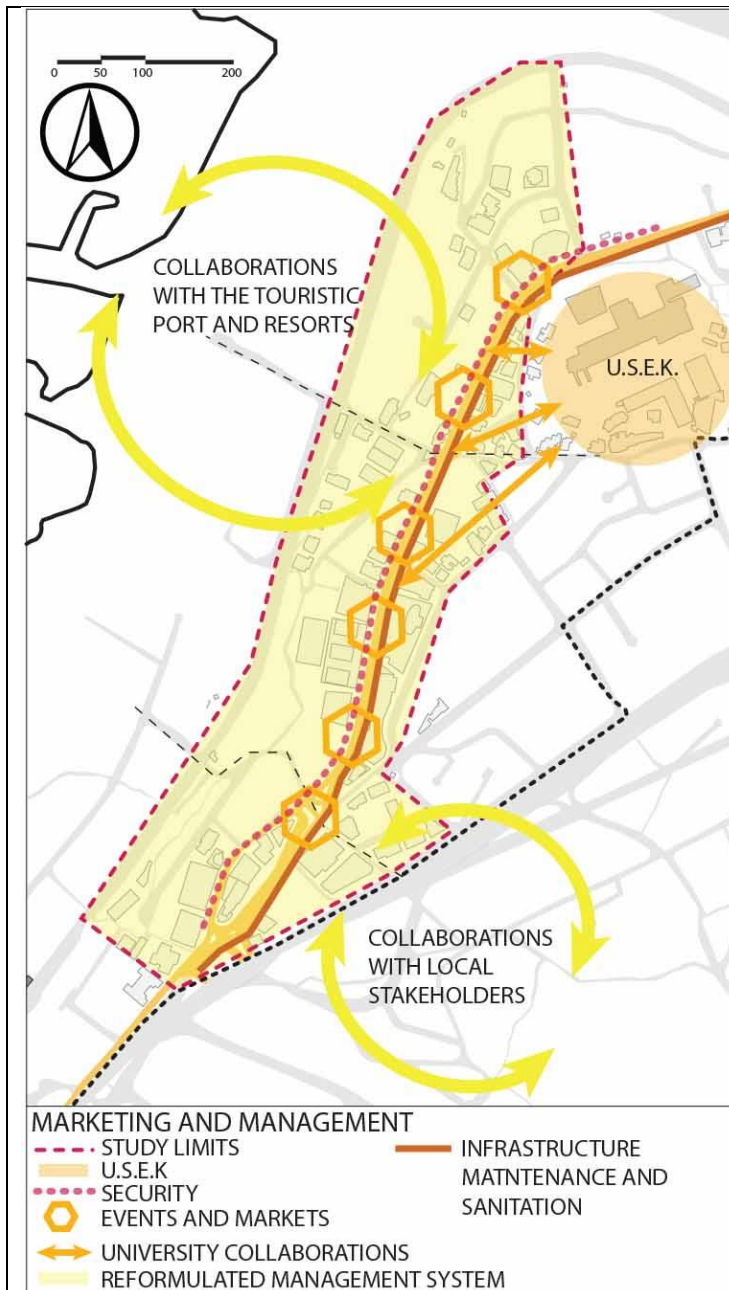


Figure 91: Management strategies for Kaslik

**GOALS:**

- Revive the “Kaslik’s Merchants Association” as a reformulated management system that is similar to BID qualities and functions
- Introduce “Digital-Meets-Physical” projects
- Establish opportunities for events and market days
- Introduce security and safety management
- Involve the university and local residents as stakeholders

**Objectives:**

- Reconfigure the “Kaslik’s Merchants Association” made up of investors, developers, local business owners, landlords, and municipal representatives as a committee in charge of maintenance and proper assessment, as well as to facilitate coordination between the Zouk Mikael and Jounieh municipalities

- Establish the role of the Kaslik strip on a local and regional level:
  - local level: spaces for residents and students to interact and socialize and make profit
  - regional level: a destination for tourists to visit as a pedestrian oasis that introduces different shopping and social activities
- Run the strip as a business focusing on unified strategic visions and decisions
- Impose security management systems and services along the street
- Improve regulations to facilitate the process of becoming market traders
- Insert mechanisms to give incentives to stakeholders to improve and maintain their property based on the previous objectives
- Introduce disincentives so landlords do not keep their units vacant and make units smaller and cheaper to rent
- Create incentives that encourage larger enterprises that exist along the strip to support and mentor the smaller and local businesses, such as providing training sessions, or hosting workshops involving most businesses in Kaslik
- Create offers that attract users such as free parking the first hour and shopping cards that apply to most retail along the strip
- Public domain's right to use the setbacks currently used as building parking for the benefit of the project when necessary (to widen the streets and sidewalks for public spaces)
- Create agreements with owners of empty lots to use parts of the lots as public space

- Enhance experience-based retail that encourage users to visit physical shops, such as shops that provide promotions and workshops and create promotional events
- Introduce thrift stores and outlets that sell unique pieces
- Encourage “Digital-Meets-Physical” projects that give the strip visibility on social media
- Branding the strip as an oasis connected to the coast
- Establish “Market Days” and events that give small businesses and startups exposure
- Establish touristic office that creates excursions towards local tourist sites

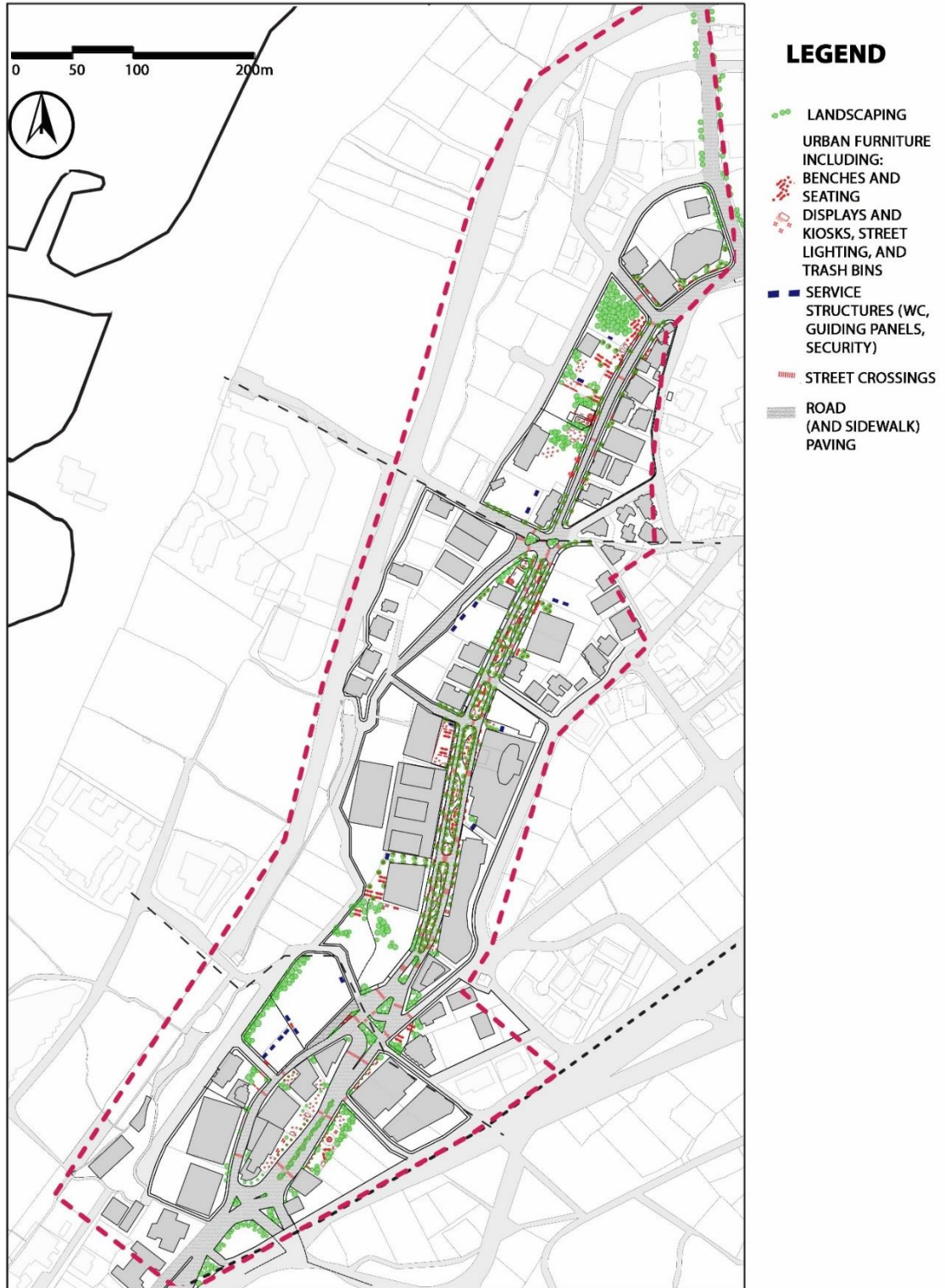


Figure 92: Public Management strategies depicting the 'Street Island' strategy



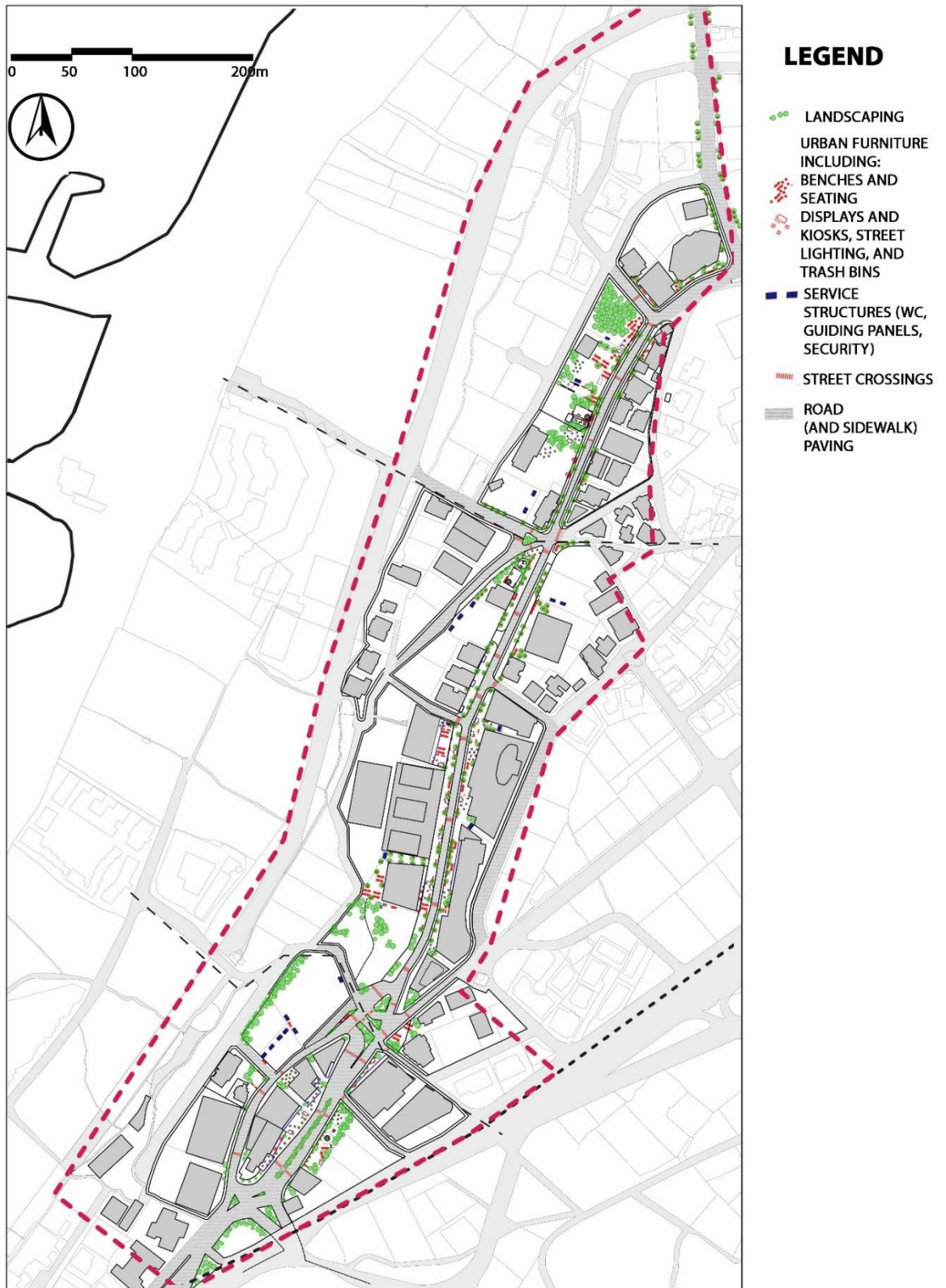


Figure 93 Public Management strategies depicting the 'Expanded Frontages' strategy

## **B. Implementation strategies**

As a result, for both strategies to be implemented on the scale of Kaslik, several tools and actors are involved in formulating a cohesive vision and intervention.

### ***1. Actors, Management and Community Involvement***

The feasibility of the strategy relies on a committee responsible for managing the strip. Twenty years ago, there existed a 'Kaslik's merchants Association' that would propose and coordinate projects to improve the Kaslik commercial entertainment strip. Though little is known about this association's accomplishments, creating a committee to manage and improve the strip is not a new concept in Kaslik. For this reason, a committee in charge of coordinating and managing projects similar to those in Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) can facilitate the implementation of different strategies along the strip. This committee would then be made up of municipal representatives for Jounieh and Zouk Mikael, a representative of the university, and representatives of developers, landlords, local business owners, and an urban designer, planner or architect. The residents, students, employees, and even visitors play a part as community actors by being able to test out pilot interventions, adjust them to their needs and voice their opinions to this committee that would implement assessment reports.

Investors, landowners, retailers of Kaslik are also involved in the implementation strategy since physical change to the strip is a result of their decisions regarding their land uses. They also choose their committee representatives to voice their opinions on different proposals and marketing strategies.

## ***2. Planning Tools and Zoning Regulations***

Several tools and regulations can be implemented by the municipality to reduce vacancies, implement the proposal strategy, and involve actors to contribute through incentives:

- Taxing vacancies which result in lower rent prices
- Creating negotiations with landowners of empty lots to use a certain percentage of the land as public spaces
- Use of the road setbacks as part of the public space intervention
- Use of non-constructible lots as open public spaces
- Incentives to repair and manage their property and introduce covered outdoor spaces
- Detailed masterplan documents that propose recommended building envelopes, wall sections, and street level elevations that complement the character of the strip and maintain the visual permeability of the sea from the strip

The committee could also propose:

- Incentives that encourage larger retail owners to assist and train startups and smaller local retail
- Coordination with the university to allow business students to experiment with innovative markets
- Shopping cards similar to malls that could give parking incentives when used by users, and street vouchers that can only be used at other merchants along the street
- Incentives that facilitate startups

In regards to programs and activities, the committee can create a market analysis for the strip to understand what functions are encouraged to be introduced. These projects can be introduced through events along with the designed public spaces, or by creating incentives based on land use, or by creating attractive offers in certain areas that require a specific land use.

Though zoning rules and regulations specify specific details that are applied along Sarba and Zouk Mikael, a more specific list of regulations issued by the new committee with approval from both municipalities can be applied to give the strip its own physically unique identity. This would include details regarding frontages and facades, streetscapes, landscapes, and urban furniture. These regulations would also include reconfiguration of road dimension regulations specific to the strip.

### ***3. Phases and Community Involvement***

As a result, the project develops in phases with time. The first phase implements temporary interventions such as implementing one-way vehicular lanes and reducing the vehicular speed limit. Furthermore, temporary methods of defining open spaces and landscapes through portable installations and drawings on the street can be transformed into permanent interventions once a consensus between the community and developers regarding these temporary interventions is achieved.

### **C. General Approaches**

The accumulation of all these goals and objectives create a cohesive strategy that can be interpreted in phases through two masterplans: the first masterplan introduces a street island that generates public and open spaces, whereas the second expands the sidewalks along the strip to create comfortable walkable spaces with active frontages. In

the masterplan suggesting the street island as a strategy (figure 94), the street is widened by the use of existing parcel setbacks, removing on-street parking, and widening sidewalks in to create a one-directional vehicular loop around the introduced public open space. This plan allows continuity among all three segments and maintains the identity as a continuous shopping strip

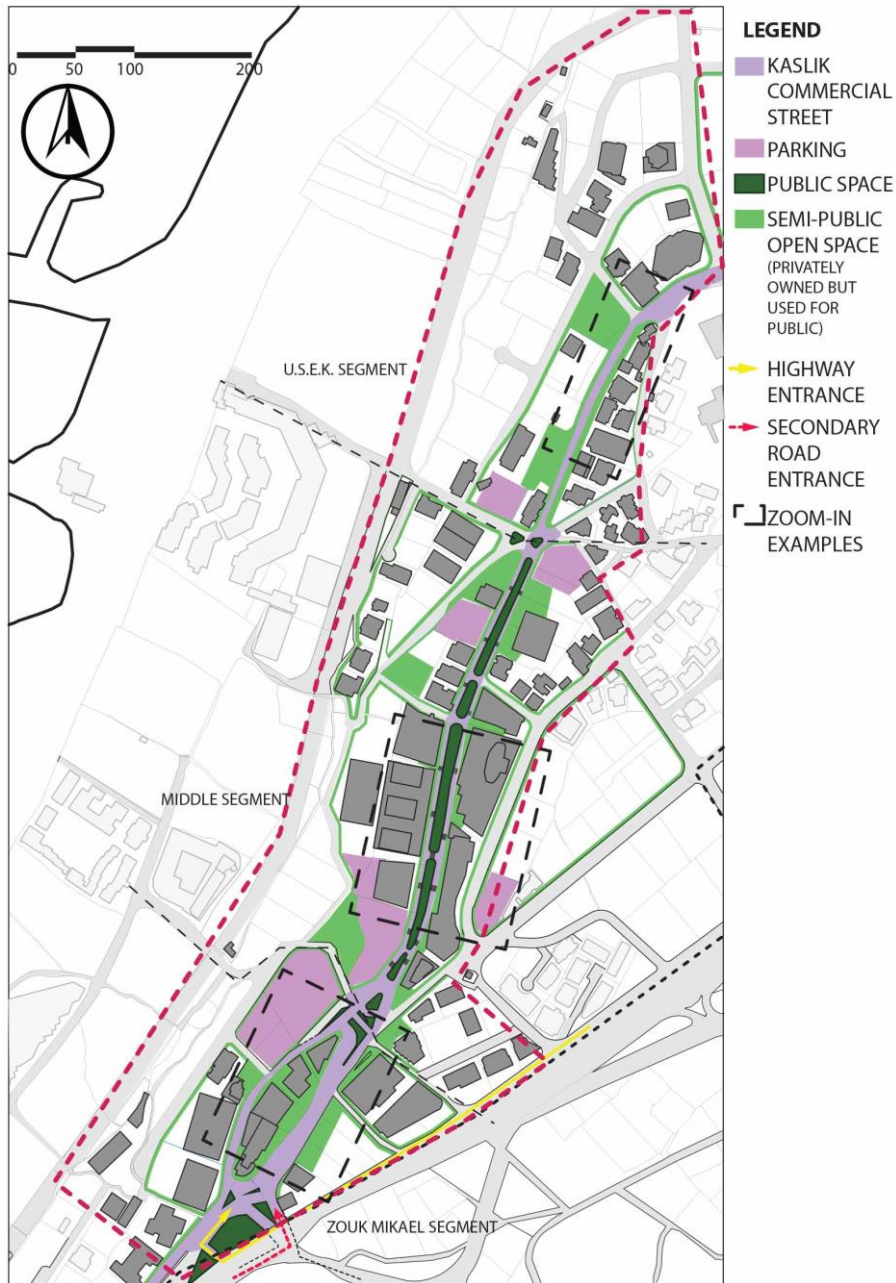


Figure 94 Masterplan representing the 'Street Island' strategy

The second (figure 95) recommends removing on-street parking, where the street is narrowed to create a one-directional street lane that loops into secondary roads. This option allows a direct extension of the ground floor retail frontages as part of the open interactive spaces, as well as extending the retail district into the already expanding western streets near the coast. Both of these options have common implementation strategies, but the approach regarding the middle segment differs based on the stakeholder's needs.

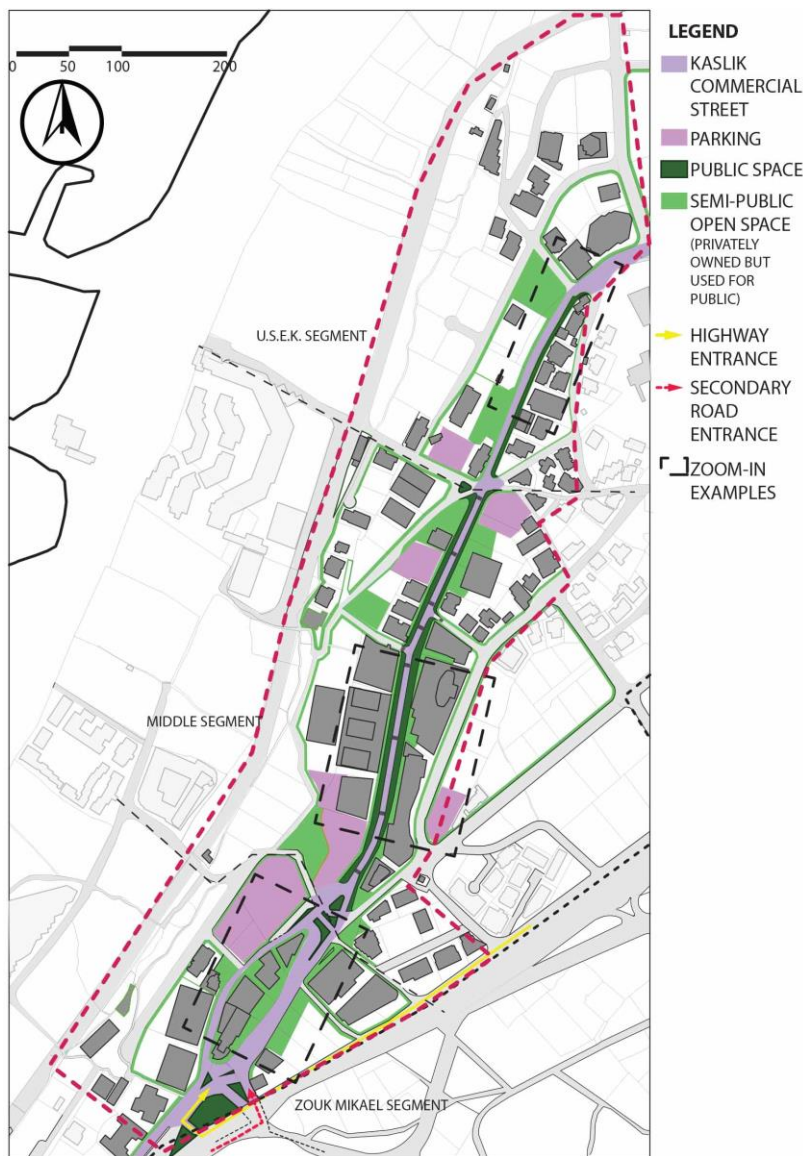


Figure 95: Masterplan representing the 'expanded frontages' strategy

## D. Comparative Analysis

Based on the previous masterplans, a comparative table helps determine which masterplan to implement depending on the future vision for Kaslik’s commercial-entertainment strip with the coast, visibility of shops, identity, and the connection of open spaces to the strip (figures 96 to 99):

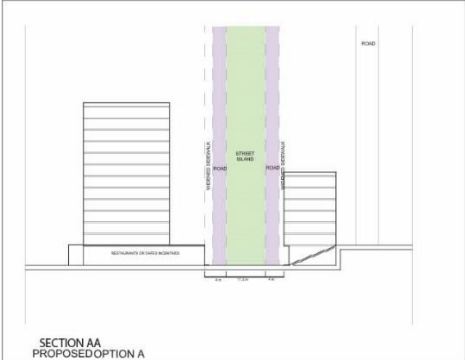
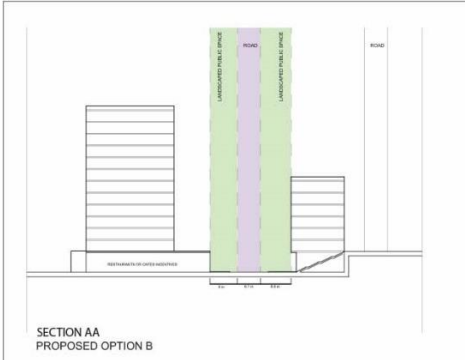
‘Street Island’ Masterplan	‘Expanded Frontages’ Masterplan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensures shops retain direct visibility from the street</li> <li>• Allows informal markets to expand within the island without imposing on existing retail units within the building</li> <li>• Maintains continuity throughout all three segments</li> <li>• The street island itself becomes an opportunity for events and market days as the main destination</li> <li>• Unified identity of the strip, managed by public domain</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitates the expansion of the strip towards the coast</li> <li>• Creates segmental loops (each segment would have its own lane circulation) and thus causes disconnection between all three segments</li> <li>• Allows the existing retail units to become part of the experiences within the open space</li> <li>• Each frontage to the street can be used for incentives if they are maintained by retail owners, which creates diversity in the open spaces</li> </ul>
	
<p><i>Figure 96: Schematic section of how the street island (green) splits the street (purple)</i></p>	<p><i>Figure 97: schematic section of how the street (purple) becomes narrow after frontage expansion (green)</i></p>



Figure 98: masterplan of the 'Street Island' strategy along the strip





*Figure 99: masterplan of the 'Expanded Frontages' strategy along the strip*

## **E. Project Phases**

Noting that physical changes are costly and time-sensitive, selection of starting points is thus established through the least difficult intervention. Since the Zouk Mikael and U.S.E.K. segments are much smaller and are currently in better condition than the middle segment, the first intervention pilots can occur on these segments. Furthermore, implementation first on the extremities of the strip facilitates the one-way traffic mobility strategy since the Zouk Mikael segment has already implemented this strategy, and since the U.S.E.K. segment already has secondary one-way roads surrounding the strip.

For this reason, the focus on these two segments is to entirely remove street parking to make pedestrians comfortable and to introduce pedestrian-friendly outdoor spaces and activities.

### ***1. Zouk Mikael Segment***

Ideally, the intervention would begin from the highway entrance, by first improving the gateway to the strip and highlighting proper signage and delineating a specific lane to reach the Kaslik strip from the highway. This segment caters to shoppers (both local and outside of Jounieh) and employees working in Kaslik. This segment's intervention aims to introduce more outdoor spaces by removing on-street parking and providing urban furniture and outdoor seating areas, crosswalks, and sidewalks. Parts of some empty lots can be used as temporary (or permanent, depending on settlements with landowners) accessible to the users of Kaslik as play areas or small parks (figures 100, 101). Designing interactive frontages and shading devices that are used uniformly along the strip also helps create a cohesive image (figures 102, 103, 104).



Figure 100: Current typical plan of the Zouk Mikael Segment



Figure 101: Proposed intervention on the Zouk Mikael Segment

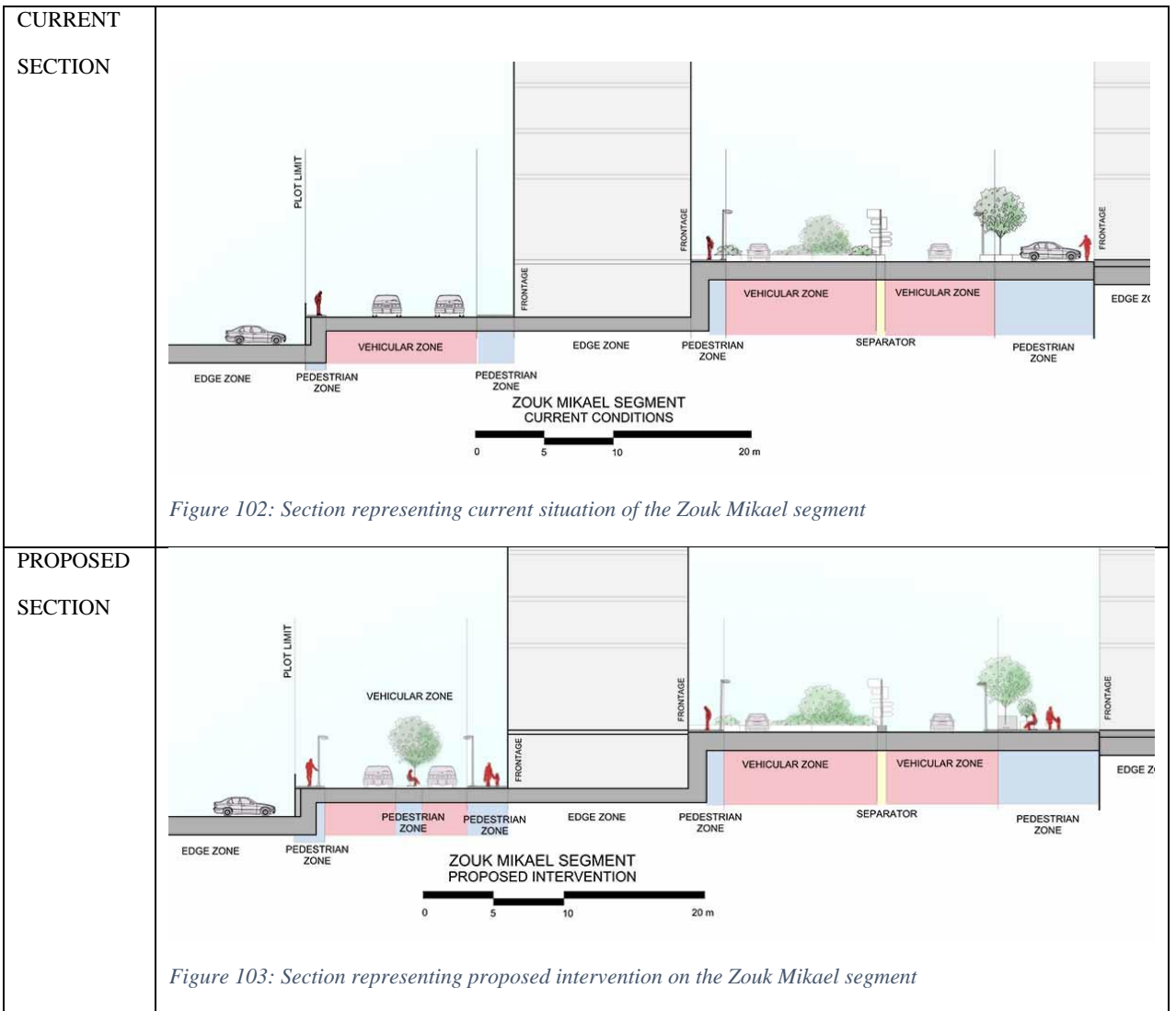


Figure 102: Section representing current situation of the Zouk Mikael segment

Figure 103: Section representing proposed intervention on the Zouk Mikael segment



*Figure 104: Simulated perspective of recreational spaces in the Zouk Mikael Segment (source: J. Tannous)*

## **2. U.S.EK. Segment**

Similarly, residents and students can benefit from the remaining existing green spaces that allow them varying outdoor activities. By narrowing the vehicular accessibility of the street to become a one-way street, sidewalks can expand to accommodate food vendors, services, kiosks, and cycling lanes (figures 105, 106). Non-constructible lots and parts of empty lots can be used as parks that allow different activities such as outdoor food courts, play areas for children, and outdoor exercise spaces. Service structures can accommodate these open spaces to provide security, toilets, kiosks, and food stands. Urban furniture, landscape, lighting, shading structures, bike parking, and street paving and signs are also introduced (figures 107, 108). Vacant units can accommodate different functions to serve the community, such as grocery stores and food-based retail, as well as workshops, clinics, healthcare, and beauty services. Due to the dominant building typology in the area, upper levels can be leased as large office spaces or as student dorms.

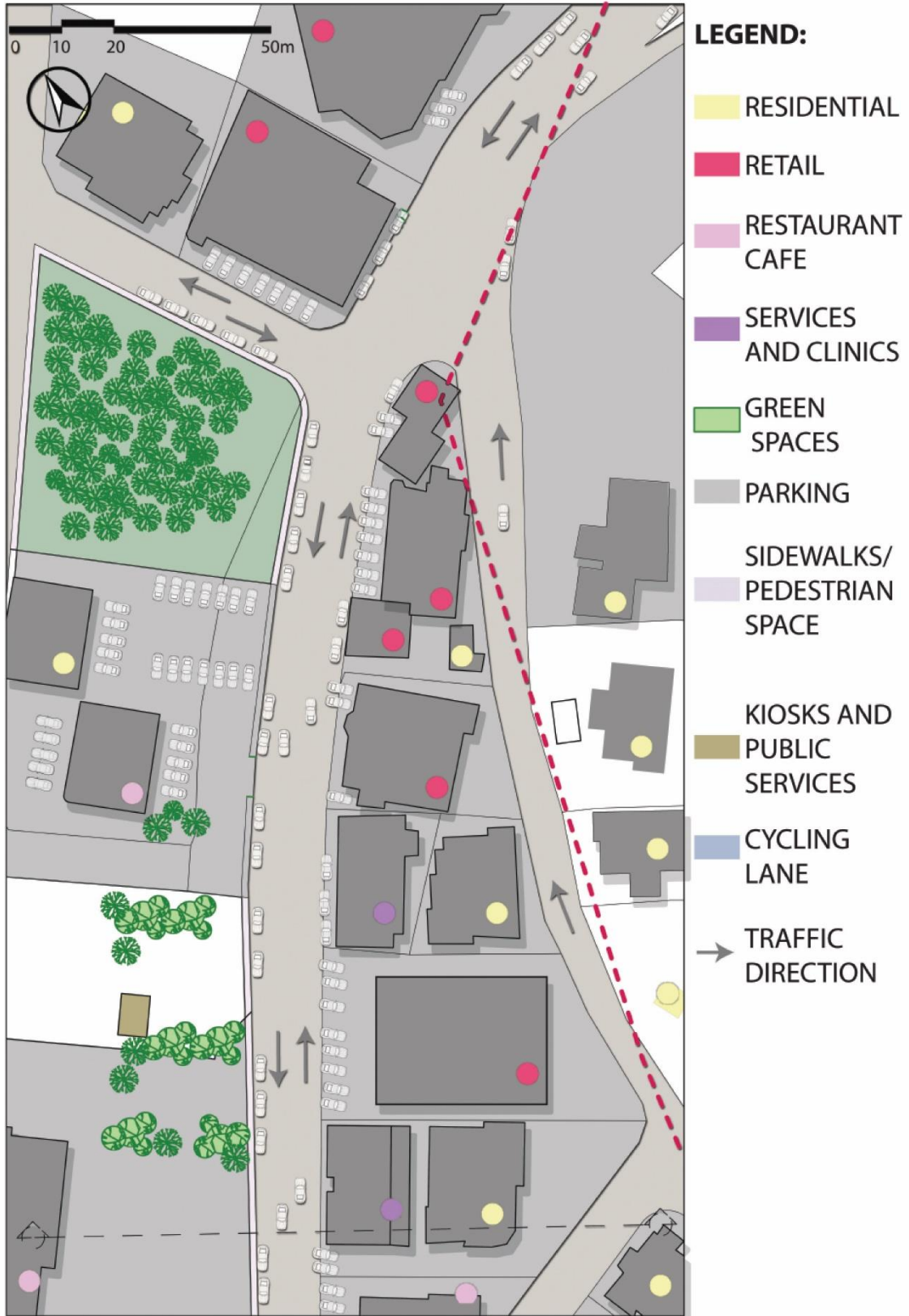


Figure 105: current situation of USEK segment

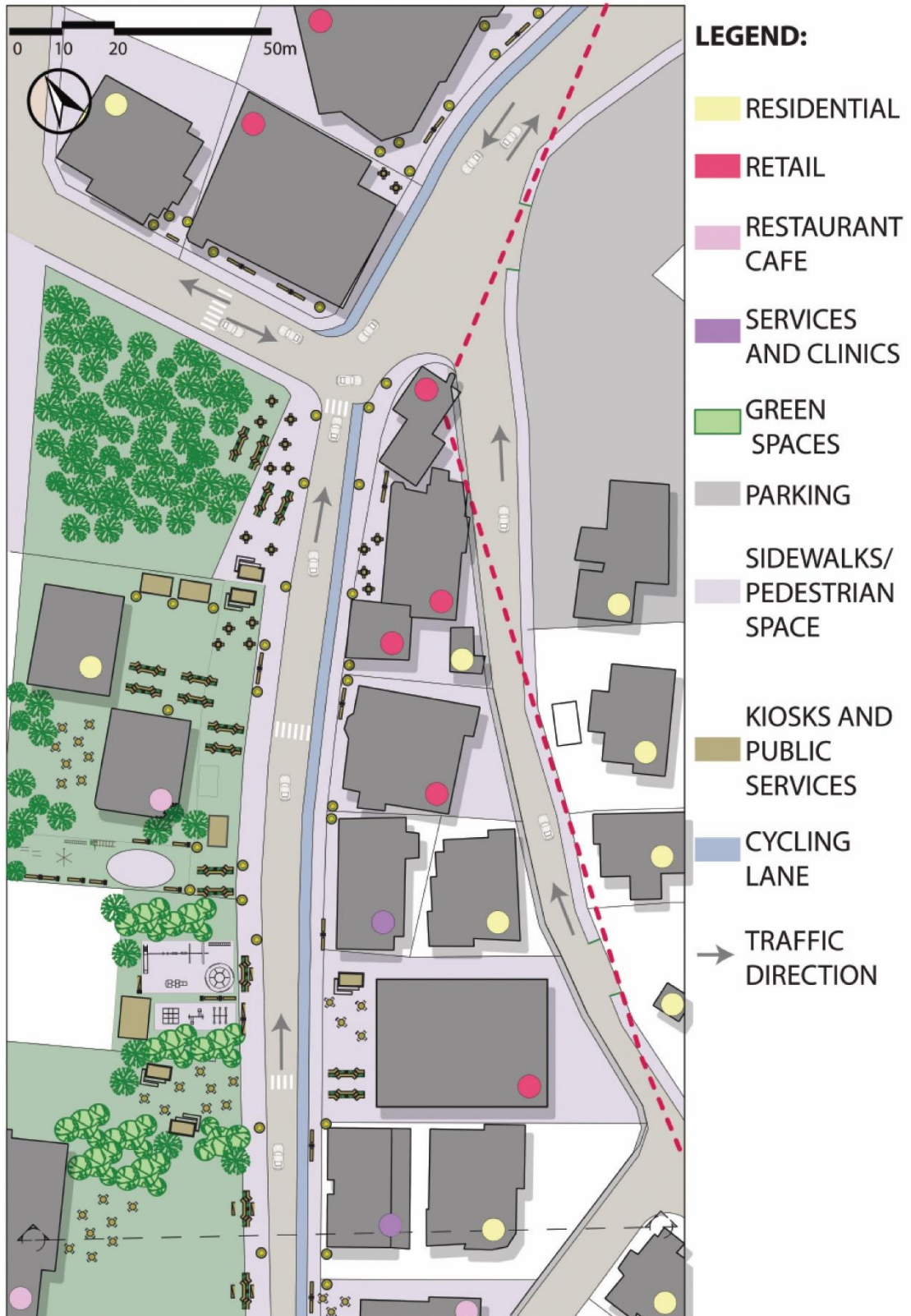


Figure 106: proposed intervention on USEK segment



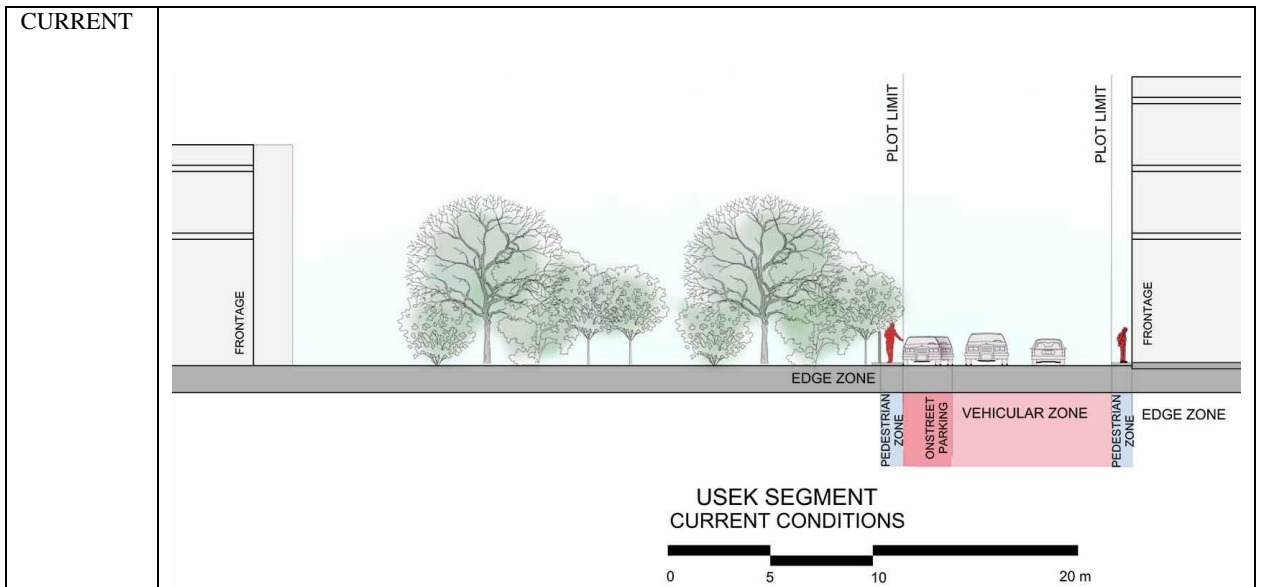


Figure 107: section showing current situation of the USEK segment

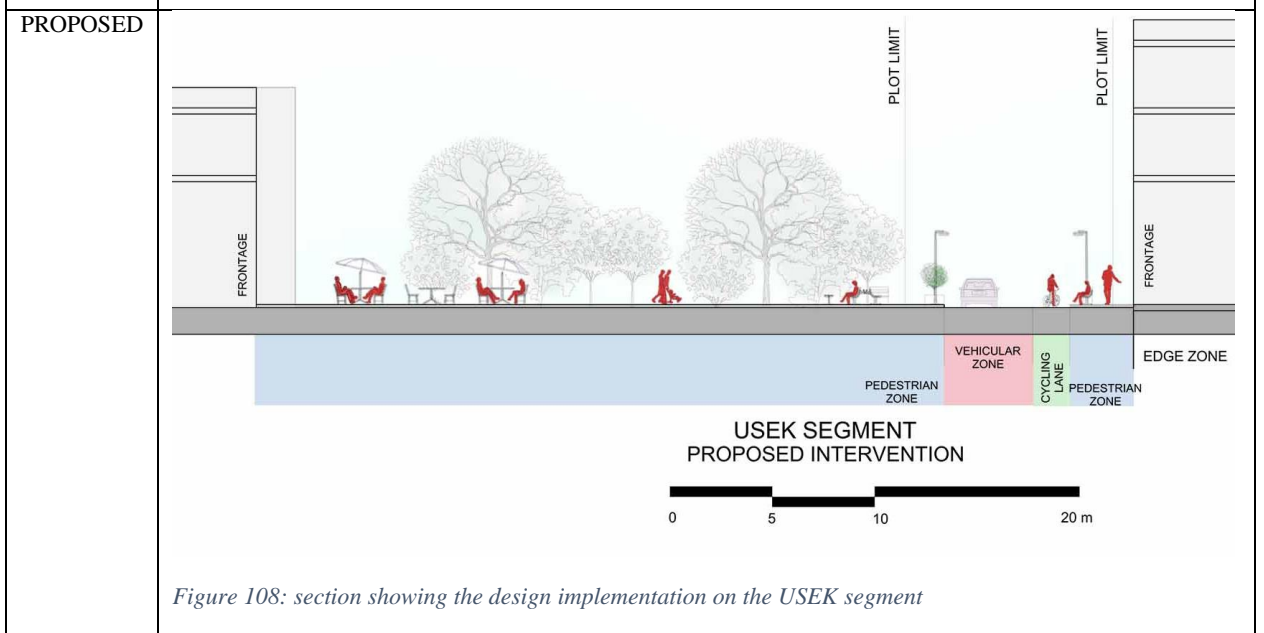


Figure 108: section showing the design implementation on the USEK segment



Figure 109: Simulated perspective of the proposed interventions along the USEK segment

### 3. *Middle Segment*

The middle segment (figure 110) is comprised of several interventions and at different phases as well. The strategy follows the same rationale as the previous segments in terms of creating open spaces with different activities, diversifying the land use, and introducing frontages, sidewalks, cycling lanes, urban furniture and outdoor food courts along the strip to maintain a uniform continuity and connectivity between all three segments that strengthen the physical image of the strip as a whole. However, to implement these interventions, vital changes to the open spaces, mobility, and change of traffic direction are necessary. This can be implemented in **two** ways, **either** through the street island strategy **or** through the expansion of frontages. Strategies require partial expropriation of existing empty lots and the use of all street setbacks along the strip. By doing so, on-street parking is removed, the street is paved, and there is an increase in open spaces.

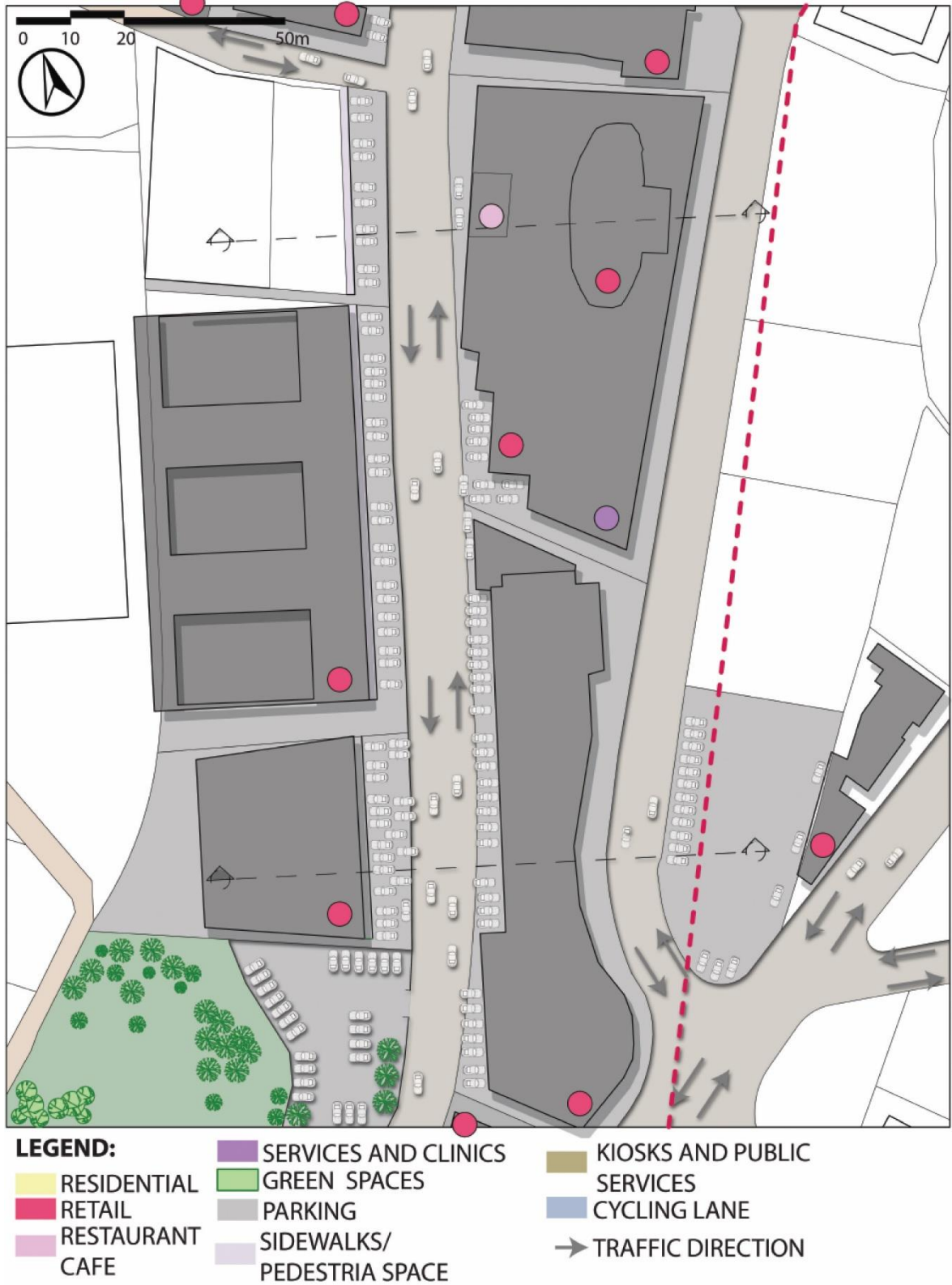


Figure 110: current situation of the middle segment

In the street island strategy (figures 111, 112), obstacles are removed from the existing sidewalks to accommodate pedestrians. The street separates into two narrow parallel streets that are intercepted by open spaces, kiosks, and activities serving all users. These open spaces are delineated by either street paint or temporary installations and landscaping flexible enough to change based on functions and comfort.

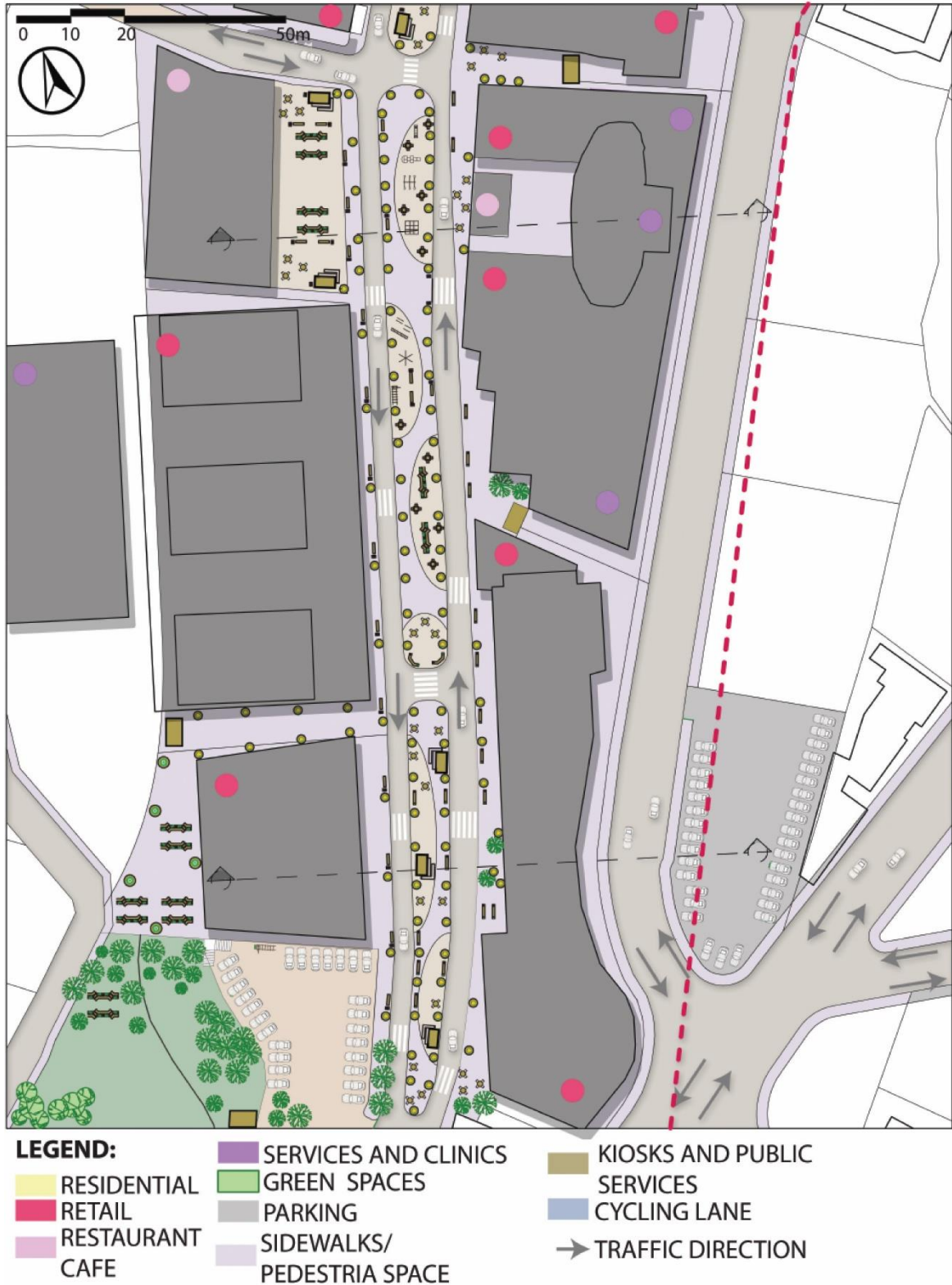


Figure 111: proposed 'street island' strategy on middle segment



*Figure 112: Perspective of the positioning of the "Street Island" on the street*

The strategy that focuses on expanding the existing frontages (figures 113. 114) suggests narrowing the street and delineating open spaces (similar to the street island strategy), kiosks, and activities on either side. The street remains one-way, but it loops to go back to the strip through several secondary roads and the sea-side road.

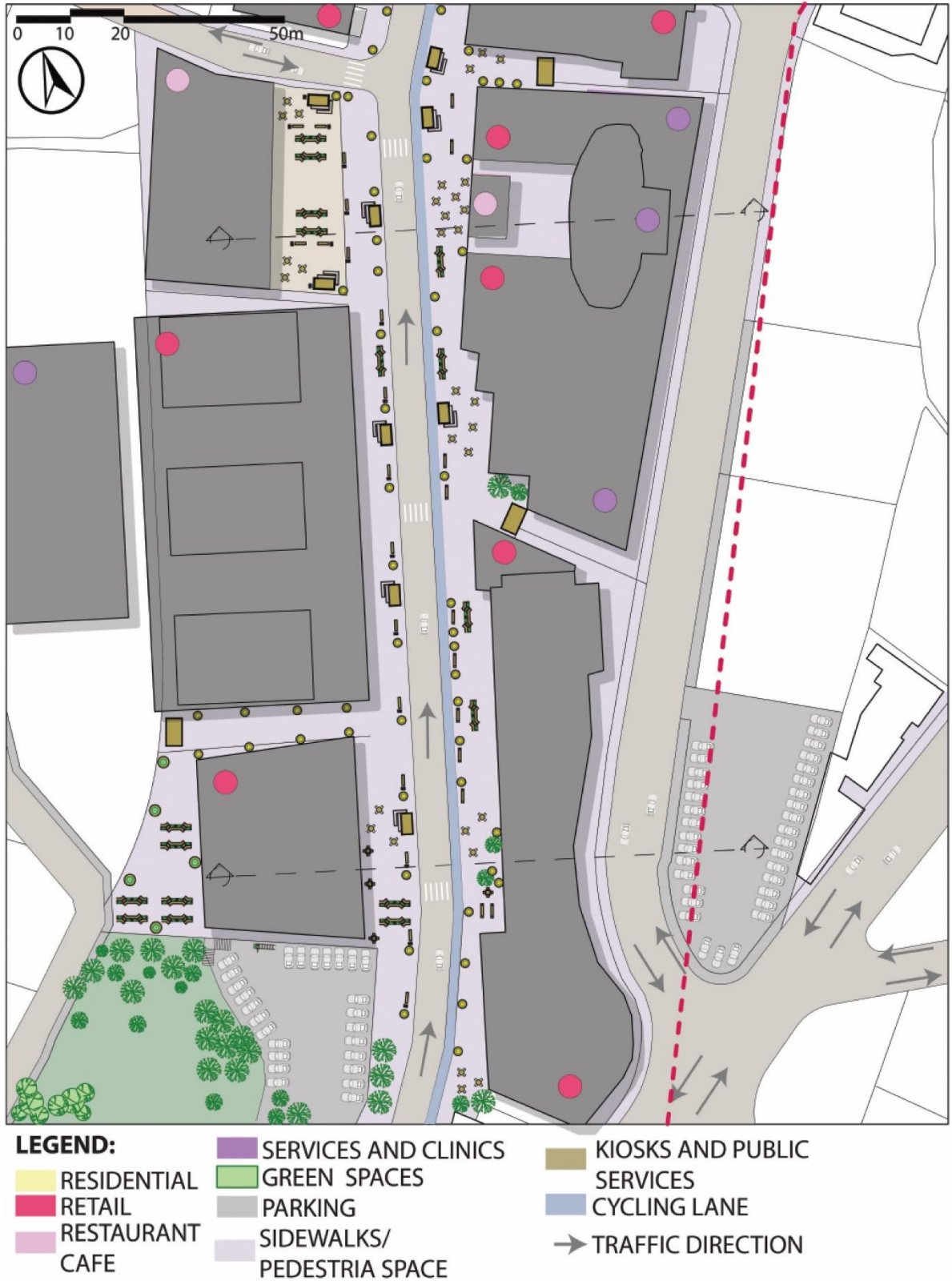


Figure 113: Frontage expansion strategy



*Figure 114: Perspective of the positioning of the "Expanded Frontages" along the street*

Both strategies require the introduction of new functions and activities along the street that complement what already exists, as well as a variation of more local, unique, and affordable businesses and experiences, taking into consideration that the new port will bring in tourists that look for distinctive retail. The existing semi-public open space within the AltaVista tower can also be used to host different workshops and exhibits. Taking into consideration that the only dining experience along the middle segment is Lina's café, which targets specific consumers, it is necessary to introduce several dining options and functions that cater to different age groups at different price ranges.



<p><b>CURRENT</b></p>	<p><i>Figure 115: current typical South section of the middle segment</i></p> <p>MIDDLE SEGMENT CURRENT CONDITIONS</p> <p>0 5 10 20 m</p>
<p><b>STREET ISLAND PROPOSAL</b></p>	<p><i>Figure 116: Proposed 'street island' intervention on the south of the middle segment</i></p> <p>MIDDLE SEGMENT PROPOSED STREET ISLAND</p> <p>0 5 10 20 m</p>
<p><b>EXPANDED FRONTAGES PROPOSAL</b></p>	<p><i>Figure 117: proposed 'expanded frontages' section along the south of the middle segment</i></p> <p>MIDDLE SEGMENT PROPOSED EXPANDED FRONTAGES</p> <p>0 5 10 20 m</p>

<p><b>CURRENT SECTION</b></p>	<p><i>Figure 118: section of the current situation of the middle segment from the north</i></p> <p>MIDDLE SEGMENT CURRENT CONDITIONS</p>
<p><b>STREET ISLAND PROPOSAL</b></p>	<p><i>Figure 119: proposed 'street island' intervention on middle segment from the north</i></p> <p>MIDDLE SEGMENT PROPOSED STREET ISLAND</p>
<p><b>EXPANDED FRONTAGES PROPOSAL</b></p>	<p><i>Figure 120: proposed 'expanded frontages' intervention on middle segment from the north</i></p> <p>MIDDLE SEGMENT PROPOSED EXPANDED FRONTAGES</p>



Figure 121: simulated perspective of the 'Street Island' strategy



Figure 122: simulated perspective of the 'Expanded Frontages' strategy

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is essential to acknowledge the opportunities provided by the area as a non-arterial strip. With the presence of the highway separating the coast from the hillside area of Jounieh, the project focuses the study area on one side (that of the coast), opting to look at the entertainment retail strip as an opportunity to connect both sides of the highway through the created destinations and functions in Kaslik. This also provides the opportunity to introduce a bolder strategy along the strip. For this reason, the 'Street Island' strategy can become a main focal attraction with the activities it presents along the entertainment-retail strip, as opposed to the 'Expanded Frontages' strategy. Though the initial thought process was to pedestrianize the strip completely, the study proposes the 'Street Island' and 'Expanded Frontages' strategies as more feasible since the strip offers vehicular access points that cannot be accessed through secondary roads.

In terms of feasibility, starting with small intangible interventions such as a change in traffic direction may have a significant impact on the street. The Zouk Mikael segment has already implemented a one-way traffic direction along the shopping area, and the municipality of Jounieh has shown some interest in adopting some similar strategies in terms of sidewalks and landscaping (R. Khalil, 2020). Taking into consideration previous endeavors and strategies tested out by the municipality of Jounieh in the past such as 'Tamasha W Sehar' (2001) and the recent 'Bi Noss Jounieh' festival (2019) that closed down the old Jounieh souk for days to accommodate events and concerts, these projects are ongoing pilot projects testing out the transformation of Jounieh Souks as pedestrian-only (Khalil, 2020). Though there are both negative and

positive assessments on these projects, a similar approach learning from previous mistakes can be implemented to the commercial-entertainment strip by creating monthly or yearly' market days' that:

1. Re-introduce the area as a new experience
2. Slowly establish the idea of the Kaslik Commercial Street as a pedestrian strip
3. Facilitate the transition of the middle segment from a two-way street to a one-way street with a decreased speed limit
4. Ensure that existing shop owners and users become accustomed to lack of on-street parking as a profitable strategy and not an obstacle
5. Create an opportunity for social interaction and create social hubs between different consumers and businesses
6. Becomes an open ground for business experimentation and innovation which might encourage new retailers to open shops within the strip
7. By encouraging soft mobility along the strip, especially at a time when people are in search of more public spaces, allows this strategy advantage over enclosed shopping malls.

However, taking into consideration the limited study in identifying the existing active spaces mostly used by people, this study emphasizes the flexibility of such interventions (to an extent) that allows users to manipulate the space according to their needs. It thus allows the project to adapt and change with time. The project is experimental and allows room for trial and error.

Also, by using the street itself as the public space along the street, it diminishes the risk of conflict of interests with lot owners and minimizes interventions that result in financial losses.

The introduction of workshops, local businesses, and S.M.E.s (small and medium-sized enterprises) allows it to become a creative hub, and the area becomes more attractive to visitors and tourists. This slowly re-integrates some aspects of Kaslik's identity as a unique market for creatives, but emphasized through the open and public spaces and becomes a platform for open exhibits and events.

Given that the perception of Kaslik as a high-end entertainment street has been changing drastically, it is essential to look at creating inclusive functions at the level of economic class and from an age perspective. It thus provides the ability to reuse and re-appropriate the existing vacancies as new functions that attract different ages and class groups. For this reason, it is important to acknowledge the actors that impact the strip and how they can contribute.

Furthermore, a key in reconfiguring the issue of vacancy is through the cost of rent. For this reason, the project proposes two steps. The first focuses on taxing vacancies instead of leaving vacant units tax-free, thus leading landlords to lower prices of the existing shop units and apartments to more affordable prices to encourage rent. The second option looks at physical tools, such as dividing larger unit sizes and office spaces to smaller units that might lead to more affordable rents for some tenants who do not need such large spaces to work in.

Coordination with the university through different faculties allows initiation of programs that benefit the students and activate the street (business and marketing departments can manage retail, student workshops open to the public, introduce creative hubs that allow students a place to study, and involve architecture students to introduce their temporary interventions along the strip). However, the project's possibility would

depend on the presence of a knowledgeable management committee that has authority in implementing changes along the strip and can equitably represent all actors of the strip and coordinate among them. This committee would learn from the Business Improvement District model and how it can expand its powers and make the strip more coherent in its identity while ensuring community involvement and participation.

The study has provided an opportunity to explore different flexible and replicable opportunities to transform entertainment-retail strips into more interactive spaces that allow users to participate and upgrade these spaces according to their needs. Now more than ever, people are looking for outdoor spaces that can provide experiences usually present in enclosed buildings. With the acceleration of e-commerce, people look for experiences when visiting retail rather than the necessity for products. For this reason, by strengthening the user experience and upgrading public spaces, the project becomes a destination that adapts to the rapid change in commerce evolution, replicable along streets like Kaslik currently facing the same fate.

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## APPENDIX

### I. Evolution of retail Typologies

The dying strips may have similar causes or outcomes, but it is important to acknowledge the existing typologies of entertainment and retail in order to categorize their special characteristics and identify the existing typologies in order to be able to compare to the case study.

First, it is important to recognize that the street is a public space that provides opportunities for social interaction, accommodating different modes of movement. When retail and entertainment are accessible through the ground floors of these streets, interactions are heightened, especially when civic and cultural uses are added to the mix to enhance community spaces (Berton, 2003; Southworth, 2005). The idea of creating entertainment-retail centers and streets evolved after the recent increase in hybridity between spaces of retail with spaces for social interaction and entertainment (Goss, 1993; Shillingburg, 1994; Zukin, 1998; Beyard, 2001; Irazábal & Chakravarty, 2007). The entertainment aspect of these areas include but are not limited to nightclubs, restaurants, theaters, cinemas, and special events that are normally part of the public realm (Irazábal & Chakravarty, 2007). For this reason, the research also discusses examples of the evolution of commercial and entertainment spaces through time, noting that these types of strips have their ownership mostly limited to specific entrepreneurs and developers intending to create these spaces as destinations, meaning these spaces conform to a more quasi-public typology. These typologies are elaborated through a Matrix (figure 19) that identifies properties and characteristics of **multiuse buildings, suburban and urban regional centers, early malls, reinvented streets, invented streets, centennial entertainment retail centers**, and themed **lifestyle centers** that were designed with the intention to bring back lost 'publicness' through the recreation of sense of place.

Although these different types of entertainment retail centers could be found anywhere, it is important to recognize that this typology creates spaces that are privately owned, whereas the most prominent types of retail strips flow along the public domain such as:

- **Downtown pedestrian malls:** These urban strips are a few blocks of public downtown streets that have been converted into pedestrian-only areas, and are envisioned to bring shoppers back to central cities. They tend to be roofless replicas of suburban malls, but are usually unsuccessful due to the lack of mixity in the existing functions.
- **Main Street:** These retail strips are known for being lively and friendly, designed to have a pedestrian scale. Initially, these spaces were associated with old town centers and downtowns, but now they can exist and be located anywhere without being conceived as downtowns anymore.
- **Main street malls:** These strips are also known as townscape malls, and are usually the reconfigurations of old strip malls by decorating them with various symbolic elements of main streets. They tend to have pedestrian elements, but these elements are only symbolic and are created as part of the theme of the space to attract consumers, since the intention is to get clients to visit as many shops as possible and not to sit and enjoy the public space, so the urban elements are only comfortable to an extent (form follows finance), like those in Victoria Gardens Shopping District in Rancho Cucamonga, CA.
- **High street:** This typology refers to the primary commercial street of towns that is equivalent to the American 'main street'. However, in most cases, these streets are pedestrian. According to Carmona (2015), a high street is a combination of intersecting streets and corridors that bisects the old town, stating that "the idea of high street is associated with the presence of a wide variety of small local shops, ensuring easy pedestrian accessibility to everyday goods and services" (Carmona, 2015).

Retail Type	Date	Commercial Levels		Distribution along the Strip			Building Use			Outdoor Mobility		Accessibility		Character		Publicness	
		Ground Floor	Multiple-Storey	Continuous	Dispersed	Retail	Entertainment	Business	Residential	Pedestrian	Vehicular	Destination	Walk-through	Thematic	Quasi-Public	Public	
Entertainment Retail Centers/ Strips	1930s	X			X	X		X		X					X		
	1950s		X		X	X			X							X	
				X		X	X			X						X	
	1960s		X		X	X		X							X		
	1970s		X	X		X		X						X	X		
	1980s	X		X	X	X		X			X			X	X		
	1990s	X	X	X	X	X		X		X				X	X		
	2000s			X	X		X			X					X	X	
			X	X	X		X			X					X	X	
			X	X	X		X			X					X	X	
Retail Strips	Early 20th century-	X		X		X										X	
	Present	X		X		X			X					X	X	X	
		X		X		X		X		X				X	X	X	

Figure 123: Matrix defining different retail typologies and their characteristics