

*Translation from Romanian*



# TULCEA CENTRAL AREA "URBAN REGENERATION OF THE CENTRAL AREA OF TULCEA MUNICIPALITY"

## DESIGN COMPETITION

---

### ANNEX 1

### COMPTETITION BRIEF

# CONTENTS

<b>1. GENERAL DATA</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1. Contracting Authority and competition organizer	3
1.2. Competition purpose and opportunities	3
1.3. Competition stake	4
<b>2. INFORMATION REGARDING THE SITE</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1. Setting and importance in the city	4
2.2. Brief description of the study spaces	5
2.3. Historical landmarks and identity elements	6
2.4. Current spatial configuration and specific issues	12
<b>3. COMPETITION BRIEF</b>	<b>14</b>
3.1. General design principles	14
3.2. Recommended directions of intervention	15
3.3. Specific requirements	16
3.4. Functional requirements	19
3.5. Identity requirements	19
3.6. Landscape requirements	19
<b>4. REQUIRED MATERIALS</b>	<b>21</b>
4.1. Written materials	21
4.2. Drawn materials	21
<b>5. AWARD CRITERIA</b>	<b>23</b>

## 1. GENERAL DATA

### 1.1. CONTRACTING AUTHORITY AND COMPETITION ORGANIZER

**The Contracting Authority** of the competition is Tulcea Municipality, the owner and administrator of the public spaces that will be the subject of the investment, which will become the beneficiary of the contract resulting from this competition.

**The organizer** of the competition is the Romanian Order of Architects (OAR), the professional organization whose mission is to increase the quality of the architectural-urban product and to appreciate this service towards society, as an act of culture of public interest. In this sense, OAR promotes policies and professional practices that valorize the built heritage and favor the production of valuable architecture, which are fundamental areas for the quality of life.

The competition is organized in accordance with the international provisions for Architectural and Urban Planning Competitions as mentioned in the *OAR Guide of Good Practices in Organizing Architectural and Urban Planning Competitions*, published in 2018 and revised in 2022, and in compliance with the provisions of the legislation in force regarding the award of public procurement contracts.

The Design Competition is organized as an independent procedure according to art. 105 letter a) of Law no. 98/2016 on public procurement, and subsequently, based on the provisions of art. 104 paragraph (7) of the same law, the Design services contract will be awarded to the winning bidder of the competition, following a negotiation procedure without prior publication of a participation announcement.

### 1.2. COMPETITION PURPOSE AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Mircea cel Batran Square represents the social and administrative center of Tulcea Municipality, easily accessible from all sides of the city and directly connected spatially and historically to the Danube embankment. The competition aims at a high-quality contemporary redesign of this space in the context of the urban regeneration of the city center and the strengthening of pedestrian connections with the Danube embankment, through the pedestrian transformation of Unirii Street and the restoration of the Trei Fantani (Three Fountains) area.

These objectives are the result of the Zonal Urban Plan (PUZ) for the regeneration of the central area, initiated by Tulcea City Hall and approved by HCL (Local Council Decision) 150 of 25.04.2024, a document that regulates the studied area from an urbanistic point of view. (see [Annex 3.4](#)).

At the same time, by achieving this objective, the opportunity to develop the city's central area and improve the pedestrian network, and to restore connections with its historical areas and built heritage is created, highlighting the specificity of the place, the ethnic and

cultural diversity of the city. These can contribute in the medium term to improving the quality of life and economic well-being of the Tulcea residents.

### 1.3. COMPETITION STAKE

The competition stake is to formulate a public space design proposal that considers the current built heritage and the layers that history has deposited here. The participants in the competition should take into account all the needs of the studied area — housing; public administration; restaurants, cafes and confectioneries; small commercial spaces; leisure and entertainment; culture and civic life, etc. — to enhance and situate them in an urban platform for the subsequent coherent development of the entire central area of Tulcea. The urban space proposed for design restores and strengthens the pedestrian connection of the city with the Mircea cel Batran Square area, the adjacent historical districts and the Danube Embankment - "Ivan Patzaichin".

The proposed designs should take into account the way of thinking and using current public space, following contemporary needs generated by climate, social, and economic changes.

In line with these objectives, proposals must integrate measures to increase shading by planting additional trees in existing deficient spaces or in newly proposed areas.

Sustainability is another important factor in the design of contemporary public spaces, thus ensuring, from the very beginning, the right calibration of the investment and the sustainability of the proposed designs, resulting in reduced resource consumption in the medium and long term.

## 2. INFORMATION REGARDING THE SITE

### 2.1. SETTING AND IMPORTANCE IN THE CITY

Tulcea Municipality is the seat of Tulcea County, being located in the northern extremity of Dobrogea, on the right bank of the Danube River. Tulcea County overlaps the historical province of Northern Dobrogea, the archaeological discoveries from Hamangia and Ceamurlia dating from the Neolithic period, attest to the existence of an intense circulation of material and spiritual goods in the area that came from the South to the mouths of the Danube and vice versa.

The basic structure of the town, formed on the territory defined by the Dealul Monumentului (Monument Hill), Dealul Mahmudiei (Mahmudiei Hill), and the Platoul Morilor (Mills Plateau), will expand over time to the West, along Babadag Street. The shape of the town is the result of the negotiation between the specific relief conditions and the succession of stages of evolution carried out based on development projects starting from the 18th century. This resulted in a system of well-defined urban spaces, with regular geometries and clear functional and compositional hierarchies, placed in an amphitheater on the slopes of the hills. This urban and natural development of the town receives a major spatial reconfiguration in the central area starting from the 1960s



through the implementation of modernist urban interventions, specific to the socialist period. These operations will involve demolitions and redesigns of public spaces that will significantly modify the relationship of the historical districts with the civic center as well as the relationship of the town with its natural area.

The intervention targeted by this competition aims to rehabilitate the city's historical and natural connections by restoring a system of public spaces and creating an urban promenade in the north-south direction, re-establishing functional and expressive connections with the adjacent historical urban structure and with the other major landmarks in the city's structure. (fig. 1)



**fig.1** Emplacement plan

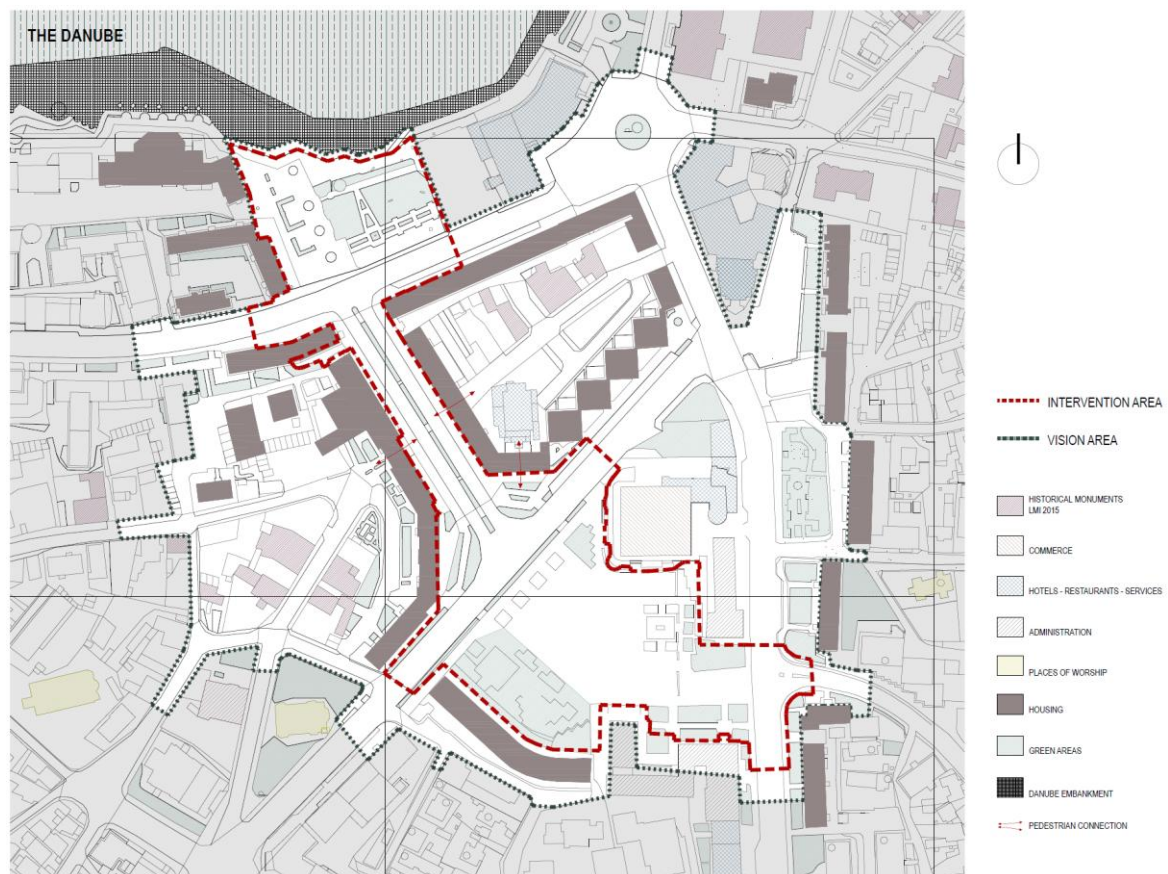
## 2.2. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY SPACES

**INTERVENTION AREA AND VISION AREA** - The area of implementation of the competition results includes the public domain fragments shown in the plan below (fig. 2), respectively:

- A. Mircea cel Batran Square (former Civic Square)  $S \cong$  approx. 14,500 sq m
- B. Unirii Street  $S \cong$  approx. 8,300 sq m
- C. Trei Fântâni Area  $S \cong$  approx. 8,200 sq m

The approach will be unitary and integrated using the wider area, **the vision area** (fig. 2), for better contextualization and integration at the level of the central area of the city. This wider perimeter aims to bring back into discussion the historical context of the center and the less visible or disappeared layers of the city.

Interventions for this area will be treated by competitors at the concept level, with a spatial and temporal integrative purpose, they are not subject to the implementation contract of the winning design.



**fig. 2** Vision area and intervention area

### 2.3. HISTORICAL LANDMARKS AND IDENTITY ELEMENTS

**HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF THE CENTRAL CITY AREA** - Mircea cel Batran Square, Unirii Street, and the Trei Fantani Area are part of the City Center-Embankment neighborhood, initially a floodable area of the Danube until the mid-19th century. Maps from that time represent a bay that extended to the Russian Church in the South and stretched between Mahmudia Hill to the east and Babadag Hill to the west, so that part of the current route of Babadag, Pacii Streets and Mircea cel Batran Square was covered by water. After the damming operations carried out by the European Danube Commission (1856) - the drained territory will be part of the neighbourhoods that will be formed or will expand: the Romanian neighborhood, the German neighborhood (to the West) and the Ceair neighborhood (to the East) (for more information see historical study excerpt in Annex 4.1.1).

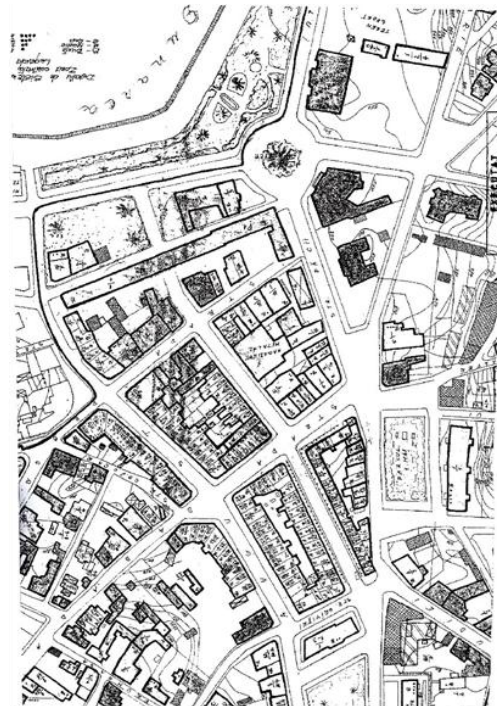




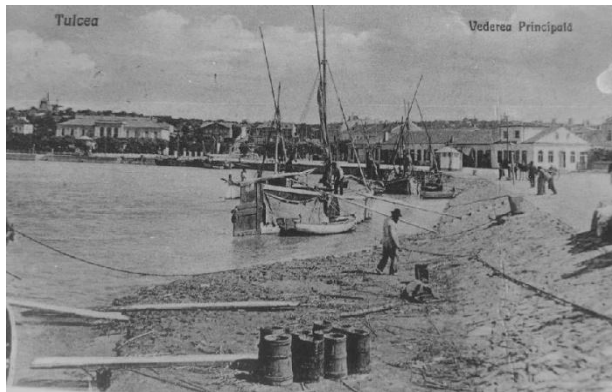
**Fig. 3 European Danube Commission, survey 1870-187, corrections until 1895**



**fig.4 ORTHOPHOTOPLAN - military flight 1940**



**fig.5 Tulcea city plan 1962**



Trei Fantani Area in the 1920s



Regina Elisabeta Street - 1918



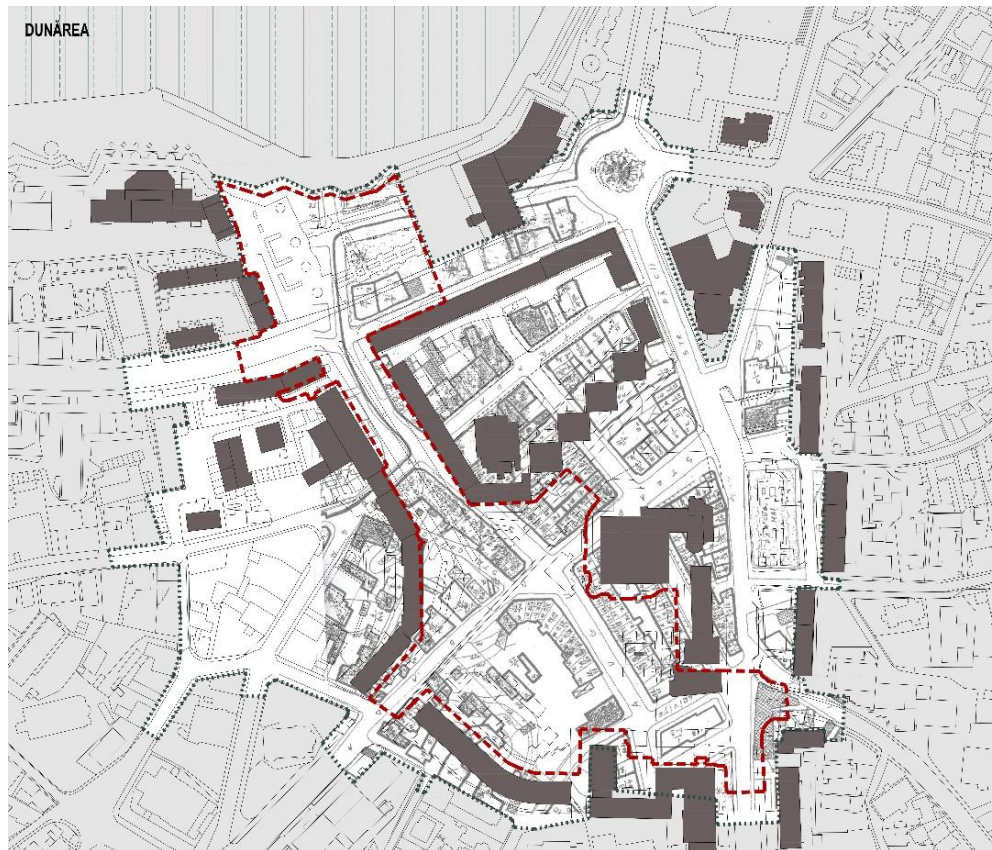
Progresului Street (former Sf. Nicolae Street) - pre-war



The bazaar on the former Stefan cel Mare Street (now disappeared) - pre-war

Because the new site was closer to the bustling activity of the Old Port, warehouses for storing cereals, cafes, and agencies began to be built here, becoming the commercial center of the city. Between 1851-1865, a building was built in the Ceair neighborhood, modeled after the oriental bazaars, that would become an important urban landmark and mark the image of the city, the architectural ensemble with commercial purpose known as the "Turkish Bazaar". The bazaar was built of brick, with a commercial ground floor and housing on the upper floor, the building included a portico made up of 72 oriental columns, placed in 2 rows, on either side of Stefan cel Mare Street. Inside and in its vicinity, an intense commercial activity was carried out, totaling 41 shops, various stalls, and an agri-food market (fig.3-5).





**Fig.6** The current Tulcea city plan superimposed on the 1962 plan



Zona Trei Fântâni după sistematizare



Strada Unirii după sistematizare



Piața Mircea cel Bătrân după sistematizare



Piața Mircea cel Bătrân după sistematizare

The ensemble disappeared from the Tulcea landscape in 1963, following its downgrading and demolition to make way for new constructions and systematizations specific to the urban planning of the era.

The Civic Square and the fronts of the apartment buildings on Unirii and Babadag streets were built in the 1960s-1970s, constructions that will introduce another scale to the structure of the city, unrelated to its historical evolution and specificity, and the former Regina Elisabeta street, the current Unirii street, will stop at Isacsei street, without preserving the original route that reached the Danube embankment.

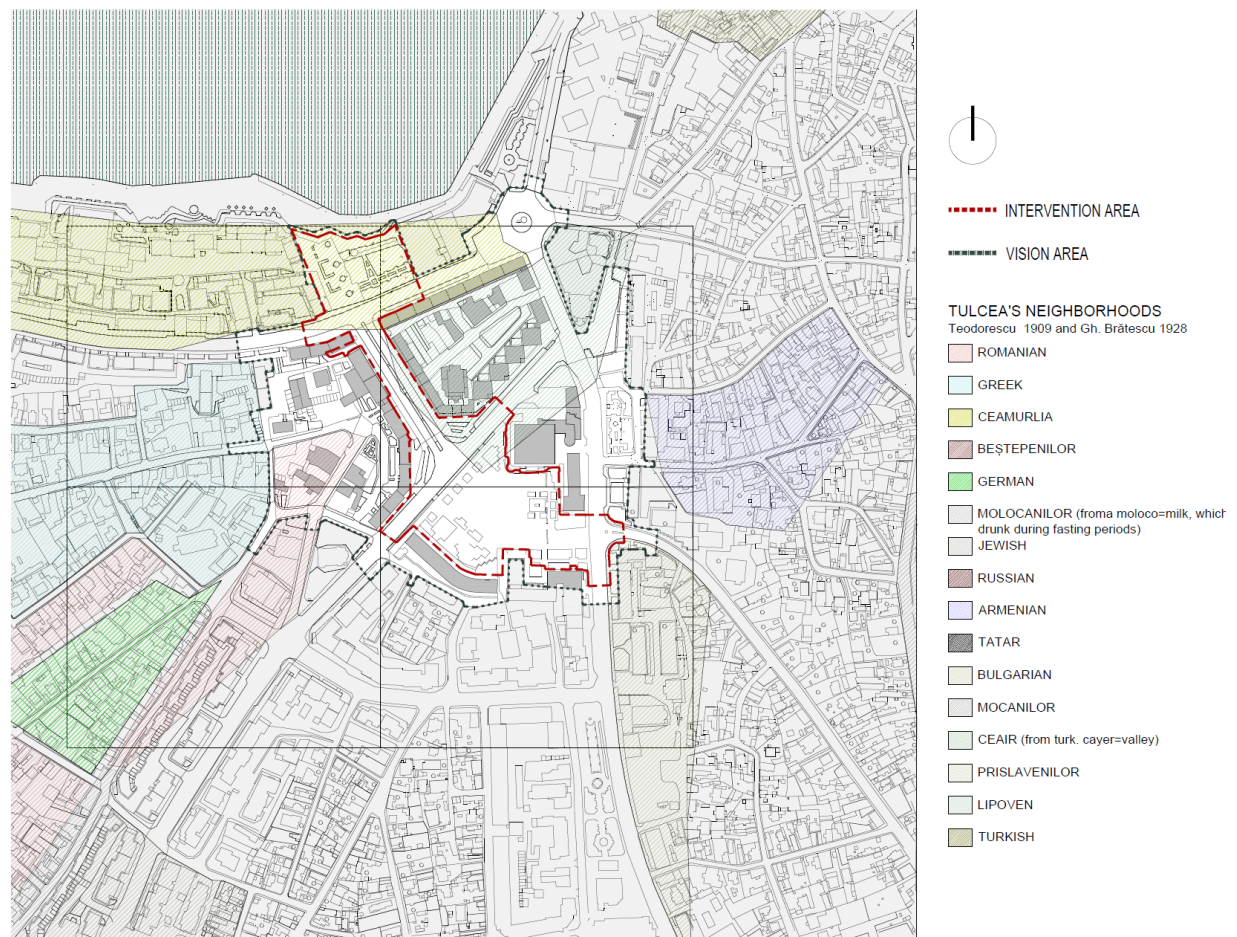
**BUILT HERITAGE** - The intervention area of the competition does not include any objectives with historical monument value listed in the 2015 LMI, but in the former Civic Square, the current Mircea cel Batran Square, there is the equestrian statue of the Mircea cel Batran ruler, a work of the sculptor Ion Jalea, one of the prominent personalities of Romanian monumental art. Adjacent to Unirii Street, which represents a major urban axis in the studied territory, in the vision area of the competition, there are both valuable urban fabric sites (ensemble, urban site) and architectural monuments, which form according to the PUG Tulcea Municipality 2015 two proposed protected built areas - ZCp II and ZCp IV. These objectives are important as testimony of the urban structure and the typology of urban housing from the end of the 19th century, being some of the rare examples preserved following the systematization operations from the mid-20th century.

CODE	NAME	LOCATION	DATING
TL-II-s-B-05989	The urban ensemble "Progresului Street" (both fronts)		
TL-II-s-B-05990	Urban site between Pacii Street and Unirii Street		
TL-II-m-B-05974	Orthodox Church "Buna Vestire - Annunciation"	str. Buna Vestire, nr.2	1869, 1848-1854
TL-II-m-B-05975	House	str. Buna Vestire, nr.11	end of the 19th century
TL-II-m-B-05976	House	str. Decebal, nr.2	mid-19th century
TL-II-m-B-05977	House	str. Decebal, nr.9, corp C1	end of the 19th century
TL-II-m-B-05986	House	str. Mircea Voda, nr.4	1870-1880
TL-II-m-B-05987	House	str. Mircea Voda, nr.6	second half of the 19th century
TL-II-m-B-05991	Lichiardopol House	str. Progresului, nr.26	1860-1870
TL-II-m-B-05992	Motomancea House	str. Progresului, nr.28, corp A	1870-1875
TL-II-m-B-05993	Garrison Command Headquarters	str. Progresului, nr.31-33	1905, 1896
TL-II-m-B-05994	Avramide House	str. Progresului, nr.32	1890-1893, late 19th century
TL-II-m-B-05995	Orthodox Cathedral "Sf. Nicolae- St. Nicholas"	str. Progresului, nr.37	1862-1865



\*according to Article no. 10 of Law no. 5/2000, the protection area of historical monuments is at least 100m in municipalities and cities, 200 meters in communes, and 500 meters outside localities.

**MULTICULTURAL COMPONENT: Cultural and ethnic diversity** - A specific feature of the demography of Tulcea, which should not be ignored, is the ethnic mosaic of its population, historically recorded by foreign travelers in their peregrinations through this area. The diversity of ethnicities determined the construction of churches for the different religious confessions and the opening of schools for the more numerous ethnic groups - Romanian, Turkish, Bulgarian, and Russian schools, where there has always existed a spirit of tolerance and inter-ethnic collaboration. Most of the ethnic communities of Tulcea have their own associations and locations where meetings between community members take place, their presence in the life of the city being continuous and always active.



**fig.7** Plan of the central area of Tulcea city with the historical neighborhoods (based on the map of Tulcea populations from 1830)



## 2.4. CURRENT SPATIAL CONFIGURATION AND SPECIFIC ISSUES

The current spatial configuration of the central area is the result of urban transformations from the second half of the 20th century, which aimed to create a "modern" civic center in the urban and political spirit specific to the era, similar to other such interventions in the city centers of Romania and beyond. These systematizations erased identities, forced functions with a new character, and severed historical ties through demolitions or insertions on an urban scale. Thus, the resulting public spaces give the impression of a city different from the historically constituted one, a city that influenced and transformed the character and urban practices of the local population.

**The Mircea cel Batran Square**, the former Civic Square, has the vocation of being the main public space of the city, being delimited on the perimeter by the presence of local administrative structures (the County Council, the City Hall, the Prefecture) and national services (Post Office, Universal Store) as well as the favorable location of Belvedere apartment building, a building with collective housing originally intended for local dignitaries. The urban modernization program of the city in the 1960s aimed to create a civic center and a new centrality by creating a generously sized urban space and gathering the public functions in direct relation to it, and the placement of the statue of Mircea cel Batran to give it historical legitimacy.

In fact, Mircea cel Batran Square and the original statue were located at the intersection of Isacsei and Pacii streets, in front of the current Delta hotel. The current urban space, created following the systematizations of the 20th century, was initially called the Civic Square, being renamed after 1989 to Mircea cel Batran Square.

Currently, Mircea cel Batran Square continues to function as the center of local administrative power but also as a location for numerous cultural and commercial events.

The vast space of the square lacks structure, coherence, and attractiveness. Its zoning is imperceptible, the square being lightly used as a leisure area except for the periodic events (fairs, concerts, etc.). The large urban fountain built in the early 2000s is inaccessible and incorrectly located. The green and shady areas are few in number, the pavement finish is predominantly mineral and deteriorated, which causes excessive temperatures in the square during summer periods and during periods of heavy rain it collects excessive amounts of water from the slopes and adjacent streets, making it impossible for the recently modernized sewage system to drain them over. The impression it leaves on the visitor is that of a vast, de-structured space, populated by disparate and contextless objects - the equestrian statue of Mircea cel Batran, a stage for events, an artesian fountain, an urban garden with a playground, all of which are delimited by buildings as isolated in presence and significance (on the North and South sides) or by streets with major car traffic (on the East and West sides). The periods of fairs and concerts are the ones that bring life and intensity to the place, which although popular, lack a clear spatial organization strategy, usage scenarios, and an adequate infrastructure for their organization, so in the end they only contribute to reinforcing the image of the square as a temporary fair.

**The Unirii Street**, located partly on a segment of the former Elisabeta Street, represents an urban corridor connecting Mircea cel Batran Square and the Danube Embankment. The street in its current form is the result of the 20th century systematizations through which a large part of the buildings in the central area were demolished and the historical districts were isolated and destructed. Currently, Unirii Street is lined on both sides with collective housing buildings and ground-floor commercial spaces, hiding behind them fragments of the historical neighborhoods of the city center.

Although it has the potential to become an important commercial artery, at the moment, car traffic is prioritized over pedestrian traffic, contrary to contemporary European practices. The sidewalks are narrow, bordered by public parking lots and green areas are few, and some are even inaccessible (located between car lanes). The connections with the historic area or adjacent public spaces are too weak - too wide intersections, unattractive passageways, damaged stairs, etc. As in the case of Mircea cel Batran Square, excessive sealing of the soil with bituminous asphalt or other types of pavements collects excessive amounts of water during periods of heavy rain, making it impossible to be drained over by the recently modernized sewage system.

**The Trei Fantani area** represents a fragment of the former Carol I Park, designed at the beginning of the 20th century on the Danube quay, of which the Delta Park area and a recently refurbished square behind the hotel of the same name are still preserved. The area is bordered on the East side by the parking lot of the Delta Hotel and on the West side by a series of collective housing buildings with commercial spaces on the ground floor. To the South the area is adjacent to Isacsei Street and to the North to the Danube Embankment.

The Trei Fantani area makes the transition from Mircea cel Batran Square through Unirii Street to the Danube embankment. This axis has a minor slope, with the minimum point on the south side of the park. The transition to the cliff is made with a series of recently installed ramps and stairs that take up the upward slope necessary to overcome the flood protection dam located on the north side, and then descend with the help of stair sets onto the Danube embankment.

The western area is predominantly mineral, redeveloped in 2015 based on a project requested by the City Hall, and features, as attractions, three artesian fountains, and a chess area that has become a popular place among amateurs. The Delta Park area, to the east, is predominantly green with several alleys with cubic stone and a high density of trees, within it there is a collection of sculptures from the camp organized here in the period 2007-2009. Also here is the brass band pavilion that preserves original metal elements.

In the **vision area**, represented by the public spaces and the streets adjacent to the intervention area, there are a series of **architectural monuments**, squares, and fragments of urban sites, with valuable paving elements, placed in a destructured and sometimes abandoned fabric, testimonies of a little-known city. Most of these spaces are found behind the buildings bordering the intervention area, disconnected from the city and its functional and formal civic center, as a result of the antagonistic evolution of the city's development.

### 3. COMPETITION BRIEF

Tulcea City Hall wants to develop Mircea cel Batran Square, Unirii Street and the Trei Fantani Area and transform them into the most significant public space in the city, resonating with its historical layers but also with the economic, societal, and ecological changes that are currently taking place.

To this end, in accordance with the requirements of the Contracting Authority and the participants in the public debates hosted by it, competitors are invited to create a series of quality contemporary urban spaces that will contribute to increasing the quality of the built environment in the city center, stimulating social and commercial activities as well as strengthening the community and identity character. Interventions must find solutions for the current problems of the central area but also for future ones, taking into account the ongoing climate crisis, which they must address.

At the same time, the objectives proposed through this competition are regulated from the urban planning point of view with the help of the ZONAL URBAN PLAN for the regeneration of the central area, initiated by Tulcea City Hall and approved by HCL (Local Council Decision) no. 150 of 25.04.2024 (see Annex 3.4).

The designs proposed by the competitors must offer adequate and sustainable solutions for the rehabilitation of urban spaces in the intervention area while taking into account the relationships with its immediate surroundings: the recently rehabilitated Danube embankment and the adjacent historic areas.

#### 3.1. GENERAL DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Competitors are invited to think about their interventions in relation to the immediate neighborhoods in the vision area, and as part of a larger system at the city level. The importance of neighborhoods in the present approach is significant to the successful implementation and functioning of the solution in the medium and long term.

As it results from the public consultation carried out on several levels – citizens, institutions, professional associations, and riverside residents – the intervention in the central area of Tulcea must seek to reconcile the historical, urban, and natural context in order to obtain a significant and attractive space for Tulcea residents and visitors alike. The aim is to create a new spatial identity of the civic center through which its pedestrian, contemporary, and integrative character at the city level will be enhanced.

Participants are invited to envision the redesign of the studied urban spaces in a way that facilitates unhindered access for all residents and visitors to quality public spaces, generating socio-cultural activities and economic well-being.



To pursue these goals, a series of general planning principles are proposed:

- categorically changing the balance of traffic flows in favor of pedestrians and facilitating central pedestrian traffic to and from the city towards the embankment for all categories of users;
- reintegrating the nearby architectural heritage areas into the city;
- reorganizing existing green areas and expanding them into an ecologically appropriate landscape concept;
- a considerable increase in unsealed areas, dendrological fund, biodiversity, and volume of green space through the diversity of proposed landscape designs;
- proposing contemporary and sustainable solutions for surface water management, such as SuDS (sustainable urban drainage systems), essential in preventing floods due to current climate change;
- calibrating the proposed interventions so that they are economically viable in construction and operation;

### 3.2. RECOMMENDED DIRECTIONS OF INTERVENTION

For an adequate approach to the community's requirements, we would like to list below some directions considered appropriate:

- Restricting road access exclusively to residents, supplies, and emergency vehicles, in a "*shared space*" regime;
- Eliminating surface parking of vehicles in the intervention area and finding compensatory solutions in the vision area;
- Creating generous crossing possibilities on Isaccai and Babadag streets for pedestrians and cyclists from Civic Square to the Danube Embankment;
- Maintaining and highlighting the existing pedestrian gangway connections on the ground floor of the apartment buildings bordering Unirii Street, the main pedestrian connections with the historic area of the city.
- A contemporary, critical, and coherent approach with the integration of historical and identity elements, without hypothetical reconstructions of previous states;
- The fair functional zoning of present and proposed activities in public spaces to create varied qualities and necessary privacy;
- Creating temporary operating scenarios (concerts, exhibitions, fairs, etc.) and the infrastructure necessary for their implementation (stage, display systems, furniture and temporary structures, etc.), in order to make the most pleasant use of the studied spaces;
- Making extensive use of porous paving to allow rainwater to infiltrate in the soil;
- Considering the richest possible typology of urban planting, from squares and alignments to urban forests and from lawns to "rain gardens" (self-sustainable gardens that collect rainwater);
- Rethinking the presence of the water element in the configuration of public spaces;

- Designing public lighting in such a way as not to disturb the biological rhythm of birds that nest in the foliage of trees;

The competition aims to restore spatial coherence in the intervention area and its fair reporting to the urban and historical context of the city. The success of the project is given by the complex and balanced approach to the area, which manages to carefully resolve the current situations from a functional, identity, and landscape perspective.

### 3.3. SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

Due to their specificity, the intervention area was divided for this exposure into three zones, as follows:

**Area A** - with an area of approximately 14,500 sqm - Mircea cel Batran Square.

**Area B** - with an area of approx. 8,300 sqm - Unirii Street.

**Area C** - with an area of approx. 8,200 sqm - Trei Fantani Area

Their differentiated treatment here has a descriptive role, for a better understanding of the specific requirements, and in no way means introducing fractures into a spatiality that is intended to be continuous in its diversity.

#### **Specific design requirements and recommendations for the three areas:**

##### **Area A – Mircea cel Batran Square**

It is the spatial, functional, and symbolic center of gravity of the intervention area. The urban slab that defines the square and the buildings that border it are the result of urban planning operations from the 20th century and subsequent interventions, a vast, unstructured space that leaves the impression of an unfinished commitment. Despite its generous dimensions, the square does not offer quality spaces for spending free time, being more of a transit space for residents, and the lack of organization and structuring of the space makes the numerous events organized here seem to be spontaneous, unscheduled events. At the same time, although there is a large concentration of local institutions and commercial activities that create an active and dynamic area around the square, there are few elements that identify it with the character, specificity, and history of Tulcea or make it memorable.

##### ***From competitors are expected:***

Innovative solutions for programming and structuring the complex functions of a contemporary urban square. The proposed design must individualize the space and restore the importance it deserves at the level of the city of Tulcea. To propose a design of the public space in accordance with the needs of the city, prioritizing major pedestrian connections and creating a flexible functional zoning, which provides a balance between mineral and vegetal areas, between open and intimate spaces.

To consider the community's need to benefit from flexible spaces that can accommodate temporary functions and to propose possible scenarios for using the market (exhibitions, concerts, etc.).

The functionally necessary permanent or temporary architectural structures will have to be subordinated to the ensemble, also having the function of architectural landmarks (stage, public toilets, urban furniture, lighting fixtures, signage, etc.). For the area of the existing public toilets, their total restoration is desired, on-site or in another location proposed by the competitors, while preserving the currently built surfaces. The sanitary groups must meet contemporary functional, aesthetic, and sanitary requirements, in accordance with the legislation in force at European level. The design of the square must take into account the marking of existing valuable landmarks (the statue of Mircea cel Batran) and will study the possibility of placing new, specific identity elements, with a particular emphasis on history, heritage, and local multiculturalism. The method of realization and placement of these elements in relation to the square will be researched in placement studies.

For landscaped areas, it is recommended to use species specific to the area, with minimal maintenance and low water consumption, as much as possible. It is necessary to maintain and expand areas of vegetal shade through tree planting and the creation of "urban forest" areas. Like any urban planted space, they must be able to be maintained in optimal conditions, which involves rainwater management and storage systems using modern and sustainable surface water management concepts.

The design of public lighting will be treated with special attention, the systems used will be adapted to the specific area and function, different lighting scenarios can be used by area, season, etc. The entire lighting system must be studied so that it has low energy consumption and reduced light pollution with minimal impact on the natural habitat.

As a whole, the civic square must acquire structure, character, atmosphere, and identity, becoming a landmark on the mental map of residents and visitors.

### **Area B - Unirii street**

The artery is the result of 20th century urban planning operations and currently functions as a connecting link between Babadag and Isacsei streets, used predominantly by cars and for parking vehicles. The commercial spaces located on the ground floor of the apartment buildings that border it are poorly served by the small size of the sidewalks and the difficult pedestrian access.

Also, the corridors and passages on the ground floor of the apartment buildings, which connect with the streets in the adjacent protected areas, are poorly maintained and do not signal in any way the remarkable character of the architectural and urban heritage 'hidden' behind them.

The value of the artery as a major urban axis in the direction of Mircea cel Batran Square - Danube Embankment is not supported by the way it is designed, nor by the generated car traffic.

### ***From competitors, the following are expected:***

Achieving functional continuity between Mircea cel Batran Square and the Danube Embankment by transforming the artery into a major pedestrian and commercial area,



with car traffic restricted to a shared-space lane with restricted access for residents, supplies, and interventions.

The proposals must strengthen and support the Square - Danube Embankment axially as well as the formal continuity of the three urban spaces proposed for the intervention.

Treating the pedestrian area as a leisure and promenade space with a commercial function that can support temporary activities or small-scale events. The solutions at the scale of the finishing details, plantings, and urban furniture must support and mark the access towards the nearby protected areas, as well as the historical value of the central area of the city.

Landscaping is intended to rehabilitate existing green spaces and preserve valuable vegetation with the possibility of expanding them where deemed necessary. It is desired to plant trees (local species recommended) in different typologies to create shaded areas or to create squares and urban alignments.

### **Area C –Trei Fantani Area**

Part of the former city garden, the park now represents the area that borders and facilitates access to the Danube embankment, having been recently redeveloped. Although relatively small in size, the park is treated in two distinct areas: a predominantly mineral area to the west, with a succession of ramps and stairs leading to the embankment, water mirrors and a chess area, and a second area to the east, towards the Delta Hotel parking lot, predominantly vegetal.

Also located in this vegetal area are the sculptures of the camp from 2007-2009 and the kiosk with original metal elements of the old city garden.

#### ***From competitors, the following are expected:***

The planning of the Trei Fantani area must bring coherence and continuity to the designs of the three spaces in the intervention area by rethinking its configuration and its relationship with the Danube Embankment and the urban axis created by Unirii Street. The Trei Fantani area must become a landmark for integrating the Danube embankment into the city, for renegotiating the boundary of the embankment and the transition from the embankment to the city.

The creation of design solutions for a contemporary urban garden that integrates and enhances the existing historical and public art elements, is attentive to preserving valuable vegetation, and to finding a fair balance between mineral and vegetal.

The landscaping must function both in the park area, as a transit and leisure space, but also as a structuring and integrating urban element of the adjacent areas - Isacsei Street, Unirii Street, the Danube Embankment.

### 3.4. FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The proposed projects must reflect the current European trend in sustainable urban development to reduce the use of cars and to return as much public space to pedestrians as possible. Given climate change and its imminent effects, an innovative approach to urban planning principles is needed, prioritizing pedestrian mobility, functional adaptability, and sustainability of interventions.

In this case, the transformation of Unirii Street into a pedestrian axis connecting the Civic Square with the Danube Embankment will trigger a major urban transformation in the central area of the city and beyond. Thus, the expansion, connection, and fluidization of the central pedestrian spaces will create the premises for a spatial and structural reevaluation of the area, offering multiple possibilities for use and crossing. By carefully studying the specificity and vocation of each space and its component elements, places with multiple frequentation possibilities and operating scenarios will be developed in different configurations: pedestrian, social and cultural events, exhibitions, temporary commercial terraces, etc.

The optimal functioning of public spaces at night is essential in ensuring their attractiveness and frequency level. In this case, ensuring adequate lighting will play an essential role in achieving a safe and pleasant nighttime experience. At the same time, the solutions must be energy efficient and reduce light pollution, integrating harmoniously with the existing lighting in the area.

### 3.5. IDENTITY REQUIREMENTS

An essential issue of the studied spaces is their identity and character, and their ability to generate strong, memorable images for residents or visitors.

The disconnection of the studied area from the history and the context of the city, as well as the lack of identification of the population with these spaces, are both the result of massive urban systematizations in the second half of the 20th century and of subsequent negligence in their administration.

By intervening in these spaces, we aim to restore the meaning of Tulcea's urbanity, a careful reconnection to previous layers, to the heritage and the local multiculturalism represented by the mosaic of populations that have lived here over time. In this sense, we encourage the search for contemporary forms that can restore the historical, spatial and cultural links of the city, reconnecting the present and reimagining the future.

### 3.6. LANDSCAPE REQUIREMENTS

In this case, landscape design can be divided into three levels of intervention:

- Urban composition - the careful analysis and selection of plant elements as well as their "volumetry" are essential in defining and structuring the new urban spatiality. Thus, the proposed designs must be correlated with the existing built and plant environment and compositionally related to the street, the square and the perimeter buildings.

- Use - as shown by the public consultations carried out, the attractiveness of urban spaces is conditioned by the presence of natural elements as a major comfort factor. When developing design solutions, it is necessary to take into account the shading of public spaces, the creation of areas of privacy and tranquility, and, last but not least, the careful selection of plant species so that it is as well staggered as possible by seasons.
- Sustainability – when approaching landscaping designs, the preferential choice of indigenous species, especially those with low maintenance, should be taken into account. It is also recommended to identify and recompose valuable plant elements existing on the site.

At the same time, pedestrian circulation surfaces must be permeable, as much as possible, made with sustainable, natural, or recycled materials. Soil unsealing together with surface rainwater management solutions represent one of the available solutions to prevent the effects of imminent climate change - extreme weather phenomena, and excessive precipitation.

**NOTE.** *The norms that must be respected are those provided for by European legislation and integrated into Romanian law. They are not listed in the topic, their knowledge and compliance being the responsibility of the competitors.*

### **Recommendation for forming the participant team**

Given the complexity of the competition and the future responsibility, it is recommended that multi-disciplinary teams be formed in the design development, in order to generate complex planning proposals that not only aestheticize the area but also demonstrate that the proposed design can transform the central area and the perception of the city through this intervention.



## 4. REQUIRED MATERIALS

### 4.1. WRITTEN MATERIALS

1. Financial offer for the design – competition material, drafted according to the model provided in Annex 2.3 – Annex 2.3.1 – Financial Proposal.

2. Text included in the sheets:

- Brief description of the architectural-urban-landscape concept; the conceptual bases of the proposed design will be explained, and specific decisions for one solution or another will be motivated: integration into the central area of the city, contribution to restoring the character and identity of the place, civic and social vocation, etc.
- Vegetation management plan:
  - proposed planting strategy
  - brief motivation for the chosen vegetable assortment.
  - attitude towards existing vegetation and sustainability.
- Surface water management concept with description and argumentation of the chosen solution.
- Sustainability concept of the initial investment, its management, and evolution over time.

### 4.2. DRAWN MATERIALS

The projects will be presented on 3 sheets, 841x1189 mm format, on white paper, paginated vertically (*portrait*), unbound on rigid support, indicating the north, the scale of the representations, and the title of the presented elements.

The materials will be grouped as follows:

#### **Sheet 1: Highlighting the big picture**

- General plan scale 1:1500 which should include: explanation of the conceptual elements underlying the intervention on the spatial ensemble; integration strategy at the city level in general and at the vision area in particular, connection to nearby historical and cultural heritage elements, planting strategies, etc.;
- Sketches, schemes, diagrams that contribute to supporting the design:
  - usability and accessibility concept
  - planting concept
  - surface water management strategy
  - lighting concept
  - other information and sketches deemed necessary to support the design, at the competitors' choice
- Aerial perspective towards Civic Square from the Danube (NW-SE), highlighting the general concept.

## Sheet 2: Detailing the intervention area

- The design plan of the intervention area, with marking of all proposed elements (surface treatment, urban furniture items, public monuments, planting plan, vertical systematizations, storm water management solutions, etc.) - scale 1:500
- Two sections, transversal and longitudinal, for each of the three designed spaces: Mircea cel Batran Square, Unirii Street, Trei Fantani Area - scale 1:500
- An area of approximately 100 square meters will be detailed at the competitor's choice - plan and section - scale 1:50
  - the vertical systematization details with specific pavement finishes and connections for a characteristic situation in each space will be highlighted: the western areas of Mircea cel Batran Square and Unirii Street, and the direction towards the Danube in the Trei Fantani area
- Sketch-level location studies of existing or proposed public monuments.

## Sheet 3: Details of operation and urban-architecture-landscape atmosphere

- A representative atmospheric perspective, at eye level, for each of the three spaces;
- Architectural and landscaping details regarding proposed temporary or permanent structures - scale 1:50 or 1:100, for:
  - stage, shading systems, exposure systems, etc.;
  - proposed public toilets;
  - elements that bring water (water mirrors, artesian wells, fountains, etc.);
  - surface storm water management solutions such as SuDS (sustainable urban drainage systems).
- Scenarios for temporary operation of the three spaces in different possible configurations, such as: concerts, temporary exhibitions, Christmas markets, etc. with specific furniture and element placement.

\* other elements considered necessary to support the proposed solution can be detailed: lighting fixtures, signage, etc.

### NOTE:

- *All drawn materials can be represented by any 2D and 3D graphic means.*
- *The explanatory text (as clear and concise as possible) that supports the concept must be integrated into the 3 sheets.*

## 5. AWARD CRITERIA

In assessing the designs, each criterion will be awarded points between 0 and a maximum expressed for each criterion. The maximum score is 100 points, the weightings of the criteria being explained in detail, as follows:

### **A Meeting the functional architectural-urban-landscape needs 60 points**

#### **A1 Functional criterion 25 points**

The following will be scored:

- the synergistic solution of the proposed functions for the intervention areas and their relationship with the vision area, from an urban, architectural, and landscape point of view;
- the correct sizing and relationship of the various existing and proposed functions, the quality of the design, and the strengthening of the urban center character of Tulcea municipality;
- careful management of its predominantly pedestrian connections with the neighborhoods.

#### **A2 Ecological and landscape criterion 20 puncte**

The following will be scored:

- the proposed urban plantation typology, from the perspective of sustainability and biodiversity, functional concept, and integration into the architectural ensemble;
- using local species and preserving/reusing valuable plant elements from existing green areas;
- ensuring the highest possible permeability of the landscaped surfaces;
- solving the collection and reuse of rainwater for the maintenance of landscape designs.

#### **A3 Sustainability and economic efficiency criterion 10 points**

The following will be scored:

- the feasibility of the proposed solutions, their durability and sustainability by proposing designs with low maintenance and a reasonable use of local materials;
- reusing, where possible, existing elements and materials using specific contemporary concepts (re-use, recycle, up-cycle) or other designs to increase the degree of sustainability of the



intervention;

- using innovative technical designs for the collection and management of surface rainwater, such as SuDS (sustainable urban drainage systems)

#### A4 Financial criterion

5 points

The following will be scored:

Compliance with the investment and cost estimate indicated in the competition documentation.

**\*Failing to meet the maximum cost estimate will lead to the project being disqualified.**

For falling within the indicated cost estimate by the lowest price, the maximum score (5 points) is awarded; for other prices, the score is awarded proportionally.

$$P(n) = [\text{Price}(\text{min}) / \text{Price}(n)] \times 5 \text{ pts}$$

The score  $P(n)$  = max. 5 points) is awarded as follows:

- For the lowest of the offered prices (denoted Price min.) 5 points are awarded.
- For the other prices offered (denoted Price(n)), the score  $P(n)$  is calculated proportionally, as follows:

$$P(n) = [\text{Price}(\text{min}) / \text{Price}(n)] \times 5 \text{ pts}$$

#### B The expressive - environmental attributes of the intervention — the added value of the proposal

40 points

##### B1 The development vision and civic vocation of the central urban area

15 points

The vision and strategic dimension proposed for the development of the central area of Tulcea will be evaluated, both in terms of the compositional correlation of the different spaces and the enhancement of social activities and relations. The creation of public spaces dedicated to activating the central area of the city by facilitating pedestrian access, interpersonal communication and socialization, and continuous, unrestricted and varied use of the area throughout the year is appreciated.

The following will be scored: spatial-urban value, compositional value and civic value.

**B2 Finding identity and the general atmosphere of the design**

**15 points**

The poetic value and atmosphere of the proposal will be highlighted by creating a design in accordance with the context, identity and history of the place, elements that can contribute to enhancing the character and attractiveness of the central area.

The creation of an articulated, complex, and memorable public space will be appreciated by rediscovering and reimagining the city's identity and multiculturalism, without hypothetical reconstructions of previous states; a contemporary approach to space, developed around environmental and ecological adequacy.

**B3 The quality and clarity of the representation of ideas**

**10 points**

The graphic expressiveness of the drawings will be scored, so as to reflect the competitor's ability to implement the proposed project.

The calculation algorithm used for the final evaluation of the projects is as follows:

**Calculation algorithm for criterion A**

$A=A1+A2+A3+A4=25+20+10+5=60$  maximum possible points awarded

**Calculation algorithm for criterion B**

$B=B1+B2+B3=15+15+10=40$  maximum possible points awarded

**Calculation algorithm for the final evaluation:**

$A+B=60+40=100$  maximum possible points awarded

Professional advisor  
Arch. Sorin Istudor

Approved by the Contracting Authority  
Ștefan Ilie – Mayor

Arch. Andreea Matache – Chief Architect

The Competition Brief was prepared based on the foundation studies and on the requirements provided by the Tulcea Municipality City Hall.