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PRESS RELEASE

23 JUNE 2024

KAMRA TAL-PERITI UNVEILS PROPOSAL TO CONVERT MSIDA CORE INTO PARK

The Kamra tal-Periti, in collaboration with *Periti Studio* and *designprinciple*, has unveiled a new conceptual proposal that addresses concerns about Infrastructure Malta's (IM) current plans for Msida creek, dominated by new roads and flyovers which would increase traffic flow through Msida. Indeed, IM's project, which was approved by the PA late last year, aims to construct two 175-meter-long flyovers, with the objective of significantly increase the junction's current capacity of over 4,500 vehicles per hour.

The IM proposal focuses on increasing vehicle throughput, radically contrasting with the international trend to remove motorways from city centres. In fact, there have been a number of successful international urban transformations over the years, some of which include:

- In 2019 Düsseldorf, Germany: Major roads were relocated underground, creating a pedestrian and cyclist-friendly environment in the old town and shopping areas.
- In 2020 Utrecht, Netherlands: The restoration of the Catharijnesingel canal prioritized pedestrians and cyclists, reconnecting the area with Zocheerpark and improving public space and biodiversity.
- In 2021 Toulouse, France: The renovation of Daurade Port resulted in lush green spaces, enhancing the area's appeal and ecological health.

In line with international best practice, the Kamra's proposal seeks to strike a more sustainable balance between the competing interests and users. Transport infrastructural needs are still met through its proposal, arguably more effectively, while also enhancing the local community's quality of life.

The Kamra's vision is to transform Msida's core into a 20,000 square metre park, providing the densely-populated local community a much-needed public space for leisure and recreation. The proposal also reorganises two other junctions in the area such that the transport needs are concurrently addressed.

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KTP's proposal aligns with European Commission's sustainability policies and climate targets such as Fit455, Green Deal, New European Bauhaus, and the Commission's repeated recommendations under the European Semester process. It is indeed unfortunate that Malta is the only EU member state that saw an increase in transport-related emissions since 2005.

"Transforming Msida into a vibrant, people-centred, sustainable town, reflecting our broader vision for sustainable development in Malta. By prioritising public open space and accommodating various modes of transport, we can enhance the quality of life for our community and set a benchmark for future urban development., said Perit **Andre Pizzuto, President, Kamra Tal-Periti**

KTP's new proposal aims to redirect traffic away from Msida, prioritize public transport routes with dedicated cycle lanes and freeing up space for urban greening. This reimagined area would significantly improve air quality, conserve the environment, and stimulate the local economy.

The proposal includes:

- Preserving an uninterrupted public open space from Msida church to the newly proposed bus lanes, creating approximately 20,000 square meters of public open space and woodland.
- Vehicular traffic will be diverted to the existing junction at the end of Valley Road, making it the primary North bound route to and from Valletta.
- Two-way dedicated bus lanes throughout,
- A dedicated bus lane from Msida to University skatepark.
- Uninterrupted two-way single carriageway for private vehicles in Msida with traffic lights only for pedestrian crossings.

Perit Nicholas Mallia, one of the architects behind the redesign, stated that "our proposal reimagines Msida as a pedestrian-friendly, green space that improves air quality and offers a higher quality of life for its residents. This is about creating a sustainable future for Malta, one that prioritizes people over cars."

KTP is committed to promoting thoughtful urban development, influencing government decisions, and educating the public on sustainable town-centre strategies. This proposal is a significant step towards making Malta more environmentally sustainable for future generations. Pizzuto also stated that "we look forward to discussing our proposals with the government, the opposition, the newly elected Local Council of Msida, and any other interested parties. It is not too late to revise the project to better serve the public good."

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For more information visit kamratalperiti.org/msidapark

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127, Sliema Road
Gzira GZR 1633
Malta

t. +356 21314265
e. info@kamratalperiti.org
w. kamratalperiti.org

Kamra
tal-Periti