

INTERVIEW: IBRAHIM HADZIBAJRIC, STARI GRAD MUNICIPALITY HEAD

"I Will Try to Employ Young People in the Municipality"

The Head of Stari Grad Sarajevo Municipality, Ibrahim Hadzibajric, speaks in the interview for ONASA Independent News Agency, inter alia, over planned projects for this year, development of tourism at the area of this Municipality, as well as over internal organization of the Municipality

What are your expectations in this year, respectively which projects will you realize and what will be the priority in the work of the Municipality?

We planned the project of construction of the road on Trcivode, for citizens who have been in very difficult situation in the past 30 to 40 years. That road will not resolve their problems 100 percent, but it is sure that it will unburden their life and general situation in that area. Complete procedure regarding issuing of urban-construction license, as well as audit of project documents was finalized, since that project already existed. Financial resources for realization of this project were provided and I hope that we will head into realization of this project for two months, probably in April. Contractor was selected on tender, and that is a company "Sarajevo putevi", which confirmed that it will finalize the works within 60 days. Resources for rehabilitation of complete Mjedenicki stream, for which complete documents have been finalized, were also provided, and contractor was selected, so we will approach to realization of that project in this year. Reconstruction of Bravadziluk Street, in which works started on January 20 of this year, is ongoing. It was agreed with contractor that works will be finalized for 75 days, so we expect that this job will be finalized till beginning of April.

Works on the project of hydroflex facility of "Sedrenik" Local Community are planned during the summer, respectively below location of "Spicasta stijena", where we have a lot of facilities which have been devastated during the war and in a post war period. The value of this project is 550,000 BAM. Construction of bridge on Obhodza, worth some 170,000 BAM is also planned. We have indications that Government of Turkey could assist in construction of this bridge, with which easier communication for citizens of Obhodza would be provided.

Construction of "Sedrenik" primary school is a permanent project, on which people are working since 2007. Last year we have allotted more than 1,200,000 BAM for this purpose, and Government of Sarajevo Canton (SC) should participate in cofinancing of the project. Quadrant 12, which is known as so-called "Ceker pijaca", is the future business facility in the ownership of Stari Grad Sarajevo Municipality, which is located between Mula Mustafe Baseskije street and Dzenetica cikma street. We have initialized the procedure, and tender for selection of contractor is being brought to an end. Financial resources were provided by selling of municipal business premises.

Will the realization of project of underground garages start soon?

The procedure of building the garages in the street Tekija cikma was launched last year and agreement was signed with Vakuf directorate, because they are the owners of the land. Construction company "Suncokret" is the investor, we will soon start the construction of underground garages, with approximately 170 parking lots. However, property legal issues have not been solved yet. It is important to emphasize that we did not sell it to the investor, but we gave it on long lease; I think the contract will be signed for 12 or 15 years, but only once property-legal relations are resolved.



Ibrahim Hadzibajric

The garage near the City Hall and Sehercehajina ćuprija will also be under lease. We launched the biological testing of soil, preliminary project was drafted, design project will be done upon obtaining geological findings, and then calling the competition will follow. **Will you continue with street reconstruction as in the past year?** Street paving will be done in smaller scale than last year, considering that last year we completed the reconstruction of 22 streets. It will also depend on the financial resources and because it should also include SC Directorate for Roads, which will do the reconstruction of a part of the street Hamdije Kresevljakovica this year. How much funds will we be able to allocate for street reconstruction will be known in the course of the year, because it belongs to the so-called current maintenance and depends on the amount of the budget.

Besides, I have to mention projects related to social needs, veterans population and fallen soldiers family. These are categories of people whom we have not forgotten also when plan-ning a budget. We are one of the few municipalities which did not change budget items and I hope we will be able this year to meet that part.

You showed bravery when you started fight against those who are not paying their obligation regularly. What are the results of such action?

Collection of rents for business premises in the last three months is very good. The payment in January

this year amounted to 522,000 BAM, while at the same period last year 228,000 BAM were paid. If we keep this trend, we would reach more than the planned for this year. I think that the payment should be even greater, regardless of the economic crisis, because the debts are debts and they must be acquitted.

What is the situation in the Municipality related to the employment of young staff?

Internal structure of the Municipality was completed last year, although certain things still has to be done. I will try to employ young people in the Municipality, because 69 percent of employees are 45 to 60 years old. Data are accurate and relentless, and we will have to give a chance to the young people. I'll try to do that in the coming period, even if that means increase of administration and reduction of wages. I am ready to do so, because it is time to break this rut, which 'governs' not only the municipality, but then other institutions too.

Recently the initiative Stari Grad Municipality to be one of the main carriers of the development of tourism in the Sarajevo Canton (SC) and BiH, was launched. Do you think this will attract more tourists to this Municipality, and to Sarajevo?

Within this initiative we will accommodate a foreign delegation in April this year. It is about 160 tourist operators from around the world, which will be, in the professional way, informed about Bosnia and Herzegovina, so that they could adequately present the tourist offer of BiH in their countries. Stari Grad Municipality is the most visited in the SC, and according to official data in BiH too. That visit should bring closer the BiH tourist capacities to these countries in order to keep the tourists staying longer than only two or three nights, and instead being only a transit destination, to become a holiday destination. The Government of Turkey, together with Turkish Airlines, will provide the return tickets for all tour operators, 160 of them, which will come from 70 countries. Stari Grad Municipality will support the organization and most likely provide, in cooperation with other municipalities, transportation for the participants of this meeting

Mirza Hadzijušufovic