

# THE GREENERY AROUND THE OLD TOWN OF TORUŃ IN AN ALTERNATING PROCESS OF CHANGE

Aleksander Filip Furmanek, *Bydgoszcz University of Science and Technology, Department of Architecture and Town Planning, Al. Prof. S. Kaliskiego 7, 85-796 Bydgoszcz, Poland; Corresponding author: aleksander.furmanek@pbs.edu.pl*

## Introduction

The prevention of historical values of the medieval old-town centre of Toruń has a strong basis nowadays, especially after it was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1997. Like many other historic cities, it has experienced a lot of transformations throughout the centuries. The old town of Toruń still has an authentic urban structure, but the prevention of its neighbourhoods needs relevant considerations on how to conduct with this unique tangible cultural heritage.

A modern idea of creating a green belt around the city centre of Toruń, which evolved in the first half of the 20th century, challenges nowadays' needs today, which provide for discussion on its further development. The public space outside a ring of former city walls meets increasing investment pressure. Can it be called sustainable development? It becomes difficult after taking a closer look at what has happened during the last decades. It seems that also in the discussed public areas there is a strong temptation to use free space to build it.



## Material and Methods



A central part of the historic map of Toruń in the years 1816-1829.



Areas around the city centre of Toruń in photos



## Results

Capital pressure hasn't been a significant problem before 1989 but in the conditions of a free market economy, in the 1990s and later, it turned out that the downtown areas, which include the surroundings of the historic centre, are very valuable due to the possibility of building them up with new investments. The surroundings of Toruń's old town have generally changed favourably in recent decades, although there have been individual unsuccessful investments or demolitions, or felling of old trees. The general trend regarding development in this area is to continue the idea implemented by Engineer Ignacy Tłoczek in the interwar period. The basic road communication routes have maintained the same for decades and were only slightly modified, e.g. by running transfer junctions for general communication. The problem that was not foreseen almost 100 years ago is the insufficient number of parking plots. Meanwhile, Toruń has also become an important place on the tourist map of the country. The city faces these and other challenges today.



## Discussions & Conclusions

This historic town is indeed pretty and delightful in many places. The process of gradual transformation of heritage is within the management of change doctrine which is in line with sustainable development. Changing the built environment should be preceded by reflection and evaluation so as not to destroy its various values. Thanks to a wise, comprehensive planning procedure and high-quality urban and architectural design, including landscape architecture, the further process of changes around the historic old town of Toruń can bring many benefits to the city, its inhabitants, tourists and everyone interested in a long indefinite time. The green belt around the city, incl. the riverside boulevard and former fortifications should not be damaged, much more built-up and obscured. Instead, the unique dignified historical character should be preserved. However, it is also important to keep the high quality of the cultural public space or bring it to a satisfactory state, if it is not already so. There is a possibility of developing the already existing greenery there, as it will increase the tourist and recreational potential of this place, of course with moderation, so as not to obscure monuments by high trees or new buildings too much.



## Acknowledgements

This article/material has been supported by the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange under Grant No. PPI/APM/2019/1/00003