Revitalization of an historic, symbolic and vast urban space located right next to the Old Town of Tallinn. Urban restructuring of Vabaduse square and integration of archaeological assets in the project design process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SIZE OF THE CITY:</th>
<th>410 050 Inhabitants</th>
<th>15 920 ha</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SIZE OF THE PROJECT:</td>
<td>A square</td>
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**PRINCIPAL FUNCTION(S) OF THE CITY:**
National capital, administrative centre, tourism, harbour, digital city

**PRINCIPAL FUNCTION(S) OF THE PROJECT AREA:**
Central public space, car park, symbolic and historic place (site of the War of Independence Victory Column)

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The origins of Tallinn date back to the 13th century, when a castle was built there by the crusading knights of the Teutonic Order. It developed as a major centre of the Hanseatic League, and its wealth is demonstrated by the opulence of the public buildings (the churches in particular) and the domestic architecture of the merchants’ houses, which have survived to a remarkable degree despite the ravages of fire and war in the intervening centuries.
### Diagnosis/Status
The main square of Tallinn located in the World Heritage property, was used as a mere parking lot. Pedestrians had to elbow their way through the cars to visit one of the most important symbols of the Republic of Estonia. Need to embellish public space.

### Problems/Issues
How to create an underground parking space and reclaim the land for pedestrians in order to transform the square into a modern public space for traditional festive events and new urban activities? How to integrate heritage assessment and archaeological studies in programming? How to review transport plan and car use?

### Objectives
- Increase of the space of the public square to minimize traffic and parking
- Creation of a flexible and uninterrupted urban landscape, in accordance with nowadays sense of life
- Creation of a comfortable transport hub for public transport flow, parking and pedestrians in accordance with archaeological layers
- Development of an attractive design for the city space located in the Old Town
- Direct benefit for citizens, and the environment, as well as nearby architectural monuments

### Partners/Process

#### THE INITIATIVE
City of Tallinn

#### THE PROJECT DRIVERS
- City of Tallinn
- Government of Estonia

#### THE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION
Tallinn Municipal Engineering Department
City of Tallinn

**ACTION PROGRAM**  
REVITALISATION OF VABADUSE SQUARE

**Design Process**
- Choice of the best planning scheme: open architectural competition
- Elaboration and approbation of a detailed plan: several public discussions

**Implementation - Phase 1**
- Embellishment and reconversion of the square: granite and green cover, cars placed under the ground, implementation of recreative activities
- Conservation of the historic and archaeological fabric of the square: completion of the triumphal column, archaeological excavations, researchs and exposition

**Stakeholders/Actors:**
- Public local
- Public regional
- Public national
- Institutions/NGOs
- Public international
- Private
- Mixed
- Civil Society
SITE MANAGEMENT TOOLS

- Heritage Conservation Act, Estonian Parliament
- Development Plan of Tallinn Old Town, 2008
- Thematic Plan "Location of High-Rise Buildings in Tallinn", 2008
- Thematic Plan “Regulation of Tallinn Central City Milieu Protection Areas, Boundaries, Protection and Usage Conditions”, 2008
- Tallinn Comprehensive Plan, 2001

DETAILS ON PUBLIC FUNDING

City of Tallinn, Government of Estonia
Full budget: 18 321 714 €
Archaeological excavations and supervision: 41 506 €
Programming: 1 148 461 €

Government of Estonia – Reconstruction of the smaller square and erection of the column
Reconstruction of the area: 504 902 €
Erection of the column: 7 995 098 €

TOTAL PROJECT AMOUNT
26 821 714 €

STATE OF PROGRESS

The project is located within the World Heritage property in a transition area between low density and high density zones.
Located next to the bastion area, the Vabaduse square is symbolically important and also rich for its historic layering.

The project contributes to enhance a specific area, to improve knowledge of the history of the city via the archaeological findings, and address city planning issues such as city transport plans and the access to cars in dense historic areas.

RELATION BETWEEN THE PROJECT AND THE VALUE OF THE PROPERTY

Phase 1 completed
August 2009
Opening ceremony
Implementation – Phase 1
2005
Approval the detailed plan / Part II
Design process
1998
Architectural competition
2001
Approval the detailed plan / Part I

Phase 2 ongoing
August 2009
Opening ceremony
Phase 1 completed
The project had immediate and longer term impacts:
- new function creation of the biggest public space in Tallinn, visual impact and improvement,
- general public approval of the project,
- acknowledgment of design quality of the square at the national level (Best 2009 project Estonian Cultural Endowment prize),
- contribution to understanding the history of the city,
- enhancement of archaeological heritage: conservation and integration of archaeological findings,
- cooperation between National institutions and City institutions,
- cross cutting and integrated approach: urban planning and study and conservation of cultural heritage,
- project design and implementation timeline adapted to archaeological findings,
- design in several phases. Phase II: extension to be yet defined.

The project brought together modern urban development (public square) issues and today's challenges of urban traffic and transport planning issues (traffic facilities) and access to the World Heritage site with heritage values conservation and enhancement issues (conservation area, archaeological remains).

It underlines the importance of an integrated cooperation between the municipal departments and expert councils. The City of Tallinn managed the revitalization of the main square including archaeological studies and digs and the Government of Estonia was involved in the reconstruction of the smaller square and the erection of a column.

The project brought into light the indisputable need to consider the archaeological layers at an earliest stage in any project programming and design concerning the conservation area and the overall need to better acknowledge the earthen strongholds as a whole. Much of the earlier underground constructions are still to be studied.

The project brings to light the need for a commitment to protect all urban heritage resources, and study the historical and cultural layers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAYOR</th>
<th>Edgar Savisaar</th>
<th>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER</th>
<th>Kais Matteus</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mandate</td>
<td>2007-2013</td>
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<td>Raekoja plats 12</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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