

Sustainable Touristic path toward cultural identity

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Abstract: Historical streets are considered as the main spines of the city, it provides cultural knowledge and great income from cultural tourism. Alexandria is one of the most important cities around the world where it embraces a big number of monuments with different styles and history, while the city has witnessed different cultural periods. By studying the map of Alexandria, El-Nabi Daniel street was found as one of the oldest spines in the city which made it rich in history by holding many different significant buildings. All this leads the researchers to introduce a designed proposal for a cultural touristic tour in this special spine. This paper aims to enhance cultural tourism in the oldest street in Alexandria “El-Nabi Daniel street” and to revive the street’s heritage buildings. The proposed cultural path will present a new experience of Alexandria’s Downtown, exploring its multiple points of interests and heritage sites.

Keywords— Touristic cultural path, sustainable tourism, Historical street, Urban development.

1. Introduction

Cultural tourism is an important potential source of tourism growth. It attracts foreign visitors with minor damage to the environment or local culture while contributing economic growth and support for the local resident. (Richard, 2003)

Tourism has major impacts on environment, ecosystems, economy, societies and culture. Good management of tourism system can contribute significantly to regional development.

El-Nabi Daniel street in El Raml station district, is considered one of the oldest streets in Alexandria. It was known as the "Street of the Soma". It is the linkage between the Alexandrian main train station south “Misr station” to Mediterranean Sea north.(Dimer, M., 2013) It is one of the important commercial, religious and cultural axis in Alexandria, where it contains many important Institutions, The French Cultural Center, Al-Ahram organization and library, etc... It also includes some religious historical sites, Masjid El-Nabi, Church, Jewish temple. The street is considered as a cultural icon in Alexandria as it contains a large number of libraries that are located there and also many street vendors who stand in lines to sell all kinds of books from all languages, new and even used ones. Designing the street to be one of the main tourist attractions, planning community-based arrangements for maintaining the site for cultural tourism, and improving pedestrian pathways to allow tourists to visit all sites. It recognizes the city’s monumental boulevards, and rich apartment buildings, while exploring the everyday experience around its books stands, food stalls and mobile vendors. All these enable the city to improve the local’s income level which in turn improves the city’s value.

2. Scope of the research

The main aim of the research is to create a successful sustainable touristic path in Alexandria historic downtown, that serves in the development upgrade of urban and social level and in the same time help visitors to discover all significant elements of the city to enhance their knowledge in an entertaining media; to examine the potential of Cultural Routes for promoting sustainable tourism.

Research will introduce analytical study of different types of paths whether it is institutional controlled or managed by private company in relation to sustainability main pillars, environmental, social and economic. Thus, will conclude some specific indicators to help creating the most effective path design. The study focuses on historical significant points of attraction that could help in raising the income level of the government cultural institution in cooperation with the individuals, which in turn should use the locals potential skills and enhance their social and economic levels.

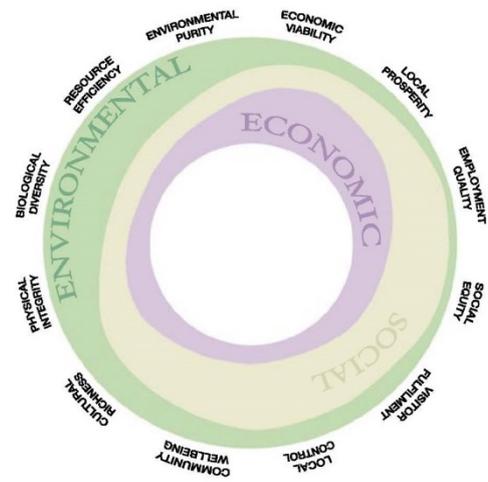
3. Theoretical framework

3.1. Sustainable tourism

Sustainable tourism is defined by the World Tourism Organization as “Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities”. (World Tourism Organization, 2005).

It is the type of Tourism that sustains local economies without damaging the surrounded environment. This also give opportunity to develop easily with time taking into consideration the current accommodation capacity, the local population and the environment. In saturated and high capacity areas, Sustainable tourism should be well planned and managed. (Butler, R.W.,1993)

The sustainable tourism integrates three main goals of the sustainability: environmental preservation, economic profitability, and social equity and it aims to: Economic Viability, Local Prosperity, Employment Quality, Social Equity, Visitor Fulfillment, Local Control, Community Wellbeing, Cultural Richness, Physical Integrity, Biological Diversity, Resource Efficiency, and Environmental Purity. (World Tourism Organization, 2005).



Transportation is one of the major elements that has impact on tourism. Other facilities like accommodation, infrastructure, energy, water, health care, education, etc... are very important target to reach a successful tourism aspect. Tourism is considered sustainable also by improving the economic position of an area while protecting the environment. Historical areas are considered direct financial contribution by conservation projects which are supported by tour operators and other tourism providers. Healthy and aesthetic natural environment are highly appreciated by tourists while polluted destinations are rejected. Tourism plays a major role in educating the residence with environmental problems and motivate conservation activities and planned management. The improvement of economic aspects reduce the emigration of local population by providing jobs opportunities and improve their income. (UNESCO,2005)

Sustainable tourism is mainly characterized by enhancing the well-being of communities, supporting the protection of the natural and cultural environment and recognizing product quality and tourist satisfaction. It should reach tourists satisfaction and propose educational experience to visitors, it should also raise awareness about sustainability issues. Thus, to eliminate the negative impacts of tourism on society and the environment while maximizing the positive contribution to local economies and enhance the residence cultural level and quality of life.

3.2. Touristic cultural path

Walking tour offers a unique experience to discover the cultural identity of a city. All kind of tourists and visitors who seek to enhance their knowledge about history of the place visited and understand more its identity, are targeted by city Cultural tourism, which is one of the most powerful type of tourism. This includes tourism of the urban historic areas, significant buildings and sites which are relate to intellectual, spiritual and emotional features of a society that includes arts, architecture, historical and cultural heritage, literature, music, folklore crafts and the local lifestyles and traditions. (Richards, G. ,2003 ; UNWTO, 2017)

The definition of a touristic path refers to “a connected route which is characterized by having specific historic functionality”. This type of path reflects the intimate connections between people and all living activities, it also respects the values of peoples, countries, regions or continents over time. A cultural path can be expressed as the main axis for geographical representation of the historical and cultural value of the place. cultural paths could be presented into different scales from regional level to international and multi-national level. This path is not limited to physical paths but can be a network of sites or urban areas sharing a specific historical theme. (Council of Europe, 2013 ; Council of Europe, 2015)

Three main types of cultural paths were classified as follows: Linear paths which depend on one or a numerous beginning points and one end point - the physical route itself is frequently the thematic interest. Network paths are generally focused on a single theme and present a variety of experiences or elements associated with that theme, rather than offering physical continuity with a specific start or end. Territorial paths where the cultural paths involve a large geographical area sharing a theme based on components of civilization and how these are integrated into the region’s culture and identity. (European Institute of Cultural Routes 2016)

The path should be set as network connecting all significant historic attractions. Cultural tourism is not limited to visit historic sites or buildings, all visitors have the passion to discover and feel the identity of the built territory, its history, local attractivity and specifically its unique identity. (Majdoub, W.,2009). As for example, it is well known that cultural tourism represents 40% of all European tourism with 4 out of 10 tourists preferring their destination based on its cultural offering (European Commission, 2018). The significance of culture path as part of the European tourism experience is perceived and the European Commission improves the areas of cultural tourism which have the highest potential for growth (NPC, 2016).

Upgrading the quality of life for the local residents help to plan a successful touristic route that can meet all tourists demands and needs. Development plan should be designed to the minimum pressure level, to conserve the local resources and prevent any negative impact on the residents. It also should involve the locals’ participation by training and employing them and enhance their economic level; by encouraging them to participate to the tourism business. Strengthening the connectivity between preservation of cultural assets and traditions of the people, should be one of the major roles for the cultural tourism. (J. Bernstein & A. Kudat, 2011)

3.3. Outcomes

As a result for the theoretical study it is concluded that sustainable cultural touristic path should include the following:

- use of all available environmental resources that could be used in tourism development, maintenance and save the natural heritage and biodiversity.

- Respect the local socio-cultural authenticity, save their cultural heritage and traditional values with the contribution to intercultural understanding and tolerance.
- provide socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders, including job vacancies and the upgrade of income level and the development of social services that contribute to residence.

4. Analytical study:

4.1. Rome walking tour, Italy

Example for this type of walking tour was the Walking City Tour in Rome, Italy. It goes from Piazza di Spagna till Castel Sant’Angelo, passing by Saint Peter’s Square and Saint Peter’s Dome in the Vatican State. It also hosts a big number of historical sites and museums.



Significant buildings’ pictures. Source: <https://www.romefreewalkingtour.com/en/book-morning-city-tour-vatican/>

Some significant buildings on Roma Path



Significant buildings’ pictures. Source: <https://www.romefreewalkingtour.com/en/>

By studying the path of this tour, it creates a major impact on visitors spotting the cultural identity of the place by presenting the transformation of the Roman Empire over centuries.

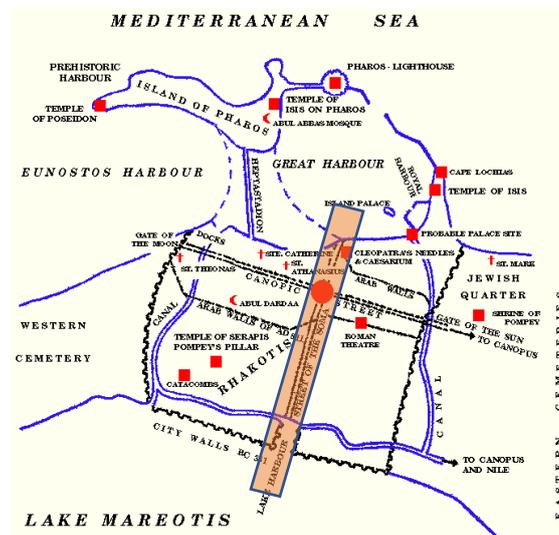
This city walking tour host lots of information and mapping services about the historical and religious sites in Rome. It offers many jobs to the community, provides investment opportunity and enhance the quality of life. There are many streets elements and materials that respect the environment. This route provides friendly architectural design & theming. It creates multi-use destinations and cultural tours, offering choices, and developing cultural understanding. The path improves the sensory experience and promote a safe trip for visitors. It is a great way to discover the city’s cultural identity considered as one of the biggest open-air museums in the world. The historic buildings along the path have been maintained and conserved that give the tourists an understanding of the magnitude of the buildings’ work in old Roman times.

The D-tour provides interaction with real people and engagement with the local culture and creative practices. It offers the chance to visit a variety of both built and natural attraction. Along the route, the path provides enjoyable experiences for tourists to visit many heritage buildings and the Old city center which are well maintained, they have the opportunity to take part in festivals. The route includes many restaurants that serve Egyptian meals. These tours provide sources of income to local community and encourage creativity. Investments opportunities have been included into the development plan by creating a cooperation between private companies and the government. They promote comfort walkability with emphasis on variable activities and traditional Egyptian arts. The streets are designed by sustainable streetscape amenities & landscaping which reduce negative impacts on the environment.

5. Case study: El Nabi Daniel street, Alexandria, Egypt

5.1. Historical background

El-Nabi Daniel street is the linkage between “Misr Station” in the south and the Mediterranean sea in the north, it is considered one of the oldest streets in Alexandria. Its history dates back to the emergence and founding of the city in 332 BC. When Alexander the Great ordered the construction of Alexandria, which was built according to the layout of the “Hibodami”, the form of grid or chessboard, where the city was divided into two main streets, one longitudinal “Soma street” and one transverse “Canopic street “, creating a large field in the middle, It is believed that El-Nabi Daniel Street is part of the main longitudinal “Soma street”, which ran from the north of the city to the south.

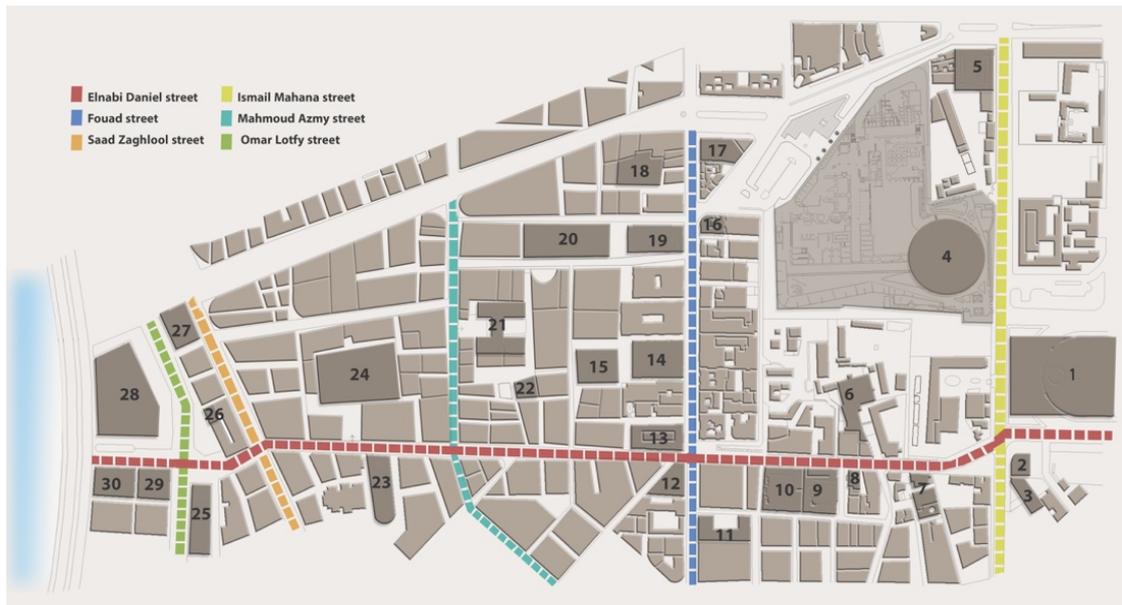


Map of ancient Alexandria , the intersection of the two main thoroughfares of ancient Alexandria.

Source: Dimer, 2013.

5.2. Significant buildings

The street path has many historical and heritage buildings and sited that have been living since the birth of Alexandria until our day. Although there are many shops that sell clothes, shoes and electrical appliances in the street, the cultural character is mostly where it is a destination for students, researchers and writers in Alexandria, they go to buy books they need from both old and used booksellers located on both sides of the street, starting from the intersection with Fouad Street and even “Misr station”, or from the libraries like Akhbar Al-Youm, Dar Al-Hilal and others.



Map representing main streets and the location of significant buildings in the area. Source: by the researchers,2019

Monumental buildings and Hotels



1-Misr train station



4-Roman Theater



5-Fire station



18-Old court



19- Stanly site



21-Old Greek hospital



22- Chamber of commerce



28-Saad Zaghloul square



29-Acropole hotel



30-Steigenberger Cecil hotel

Residential buildings



2- Residential building



6-Residential building



12-ElAhram building



13-Residential building



14-Kerdahy building

Entertainment buildings



3-Aldrado cinema.



16-Rio cinema



17-Amir cinema



26-Delice café



27-Trianon restaurant

Religious buildings



7-AbdelRazek mosque



8-Elnabi Daniel mosque



20- San Saba church



23-San Marc church



24-Jewish temple

Cultural buildings



9-Italian center



10-French center



11-Alexandria center of arts



15-Sayed Darwish opera



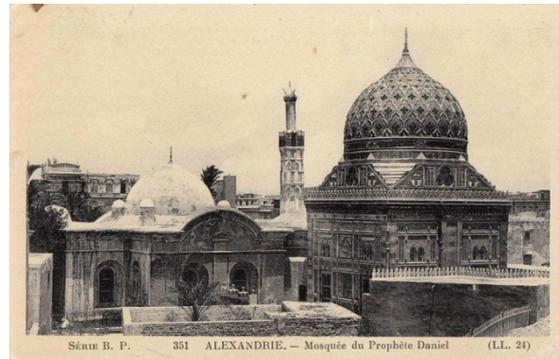
22-Cavafy museum

Significant buildings' pictures. Source: by the researchers, 2019

The street is crossed by four perpendicular Omar Lotfy street, Saad Zaghlool street, Mohamed Azmi street, Fouad street and Ismail Mahanna street. These ones also lead to major significant spaces that could not be neglected, such as the historical site for roman amphitheater, the historical fire station building, Alexandria opera house “Sayed Darwish theatre”, the old court house, Old Greek hospital, Saint Saba church, etc... Some of these buildings still have their original use, others are reused but in an unrespectable way to their historic aspects and others are totally neglected and almost deteriorated but with a level able to be restored and adaptively reused.

El-Nabi Daniel mosque

The present El-Nabi Daniel mosque was built at the end of the 18th century and restored in 1823 by Mohammad Ali pasha. Under the mosque an Egyptian astronomer and engineer, Mahmoud Bey el Falaki, found a crypts around 6 meters down, which helped him to draw a map of the ancient town. The paved crypts have inclined corridors with four entrances with different directions. It was constructed with marble and granite which might indicate the connection to Alexander the Great’s tomb (Egyptian Ministry of planning, 2019).



Pictures representing El-Nabi Daniel mosque in Alexandria. Source: Egyptian Ministry of planning, 2019

Sidi Abdel-Razek mosque

This large mosque with a medium-height minaret, which is a ground floor and an upper floor with an islamic architectural design. Its walls are painted in a light yellow color with dark brown wood, with a number of windows Designed as “mashrabiya”. it has a small private entranceway connected to a small ladder. Its interior is designed as a wide rectangular area, divided and separated by columns connected to the high ceiling, and on the north side there is the Mosque Library. The prayer house consists of a rectangular area divided into 4 entrances with 9 columns,



Pictures representing Sidi abdel-razeque mosque in Alexandria. Source: By the researchers, 2019

behind that the mihrab is located, the eastern wall opens with a rectangular door opening that leads to the shrine (Egyptian Ministry of planning, 2019).

Jewish temple “Eliyahu Hanavi Synagogues”

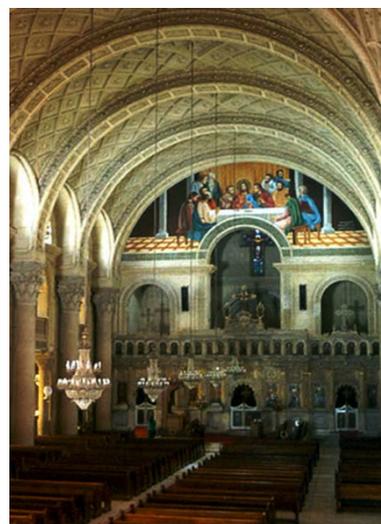
It is the oldest and largest synagogues in the Middle East. Originally built in 1354, destroyed by Napoleon Bonaparte’s expedition in 1798 when he built a defensive wall from the Kom al-Dikka area to the Mediterranean Sea. It was then reconstructed in 1850 by the Mohamed Ali Pasha family. The building has as Italian architecture style, with an interior that includes many marble columns and can host more than seven hundred people. A women space is separated with extra seating in the second floor (Egyptian Ministry of planning, 2019).



Pictures representing Elyahu Hanavi Synagogue in Alexandria. Source: Egyptian Ministry of planning, 2019

Saint Marc church

It is the formal church where the Pope of Alexandria, the head of the Coptic Orthodox Church, lives. Founded by St. Mark the Evangelist in AC 60, who was buried under the church. This church has a great history with many times of destroying and rebuilt again over years. The building was replaced by a larger one built with reinforced concrete structure with a Basilique architecture style in the year between 1950–1952. The building includes many iconic mosaic elements. During this renovation historic and valuable. Element were restored and relocated into the new building by being cut into numbered parts and then reinstalled into their original places, six marble pillars were transferred into the outer entrance of the new building, two bell towers



Pictures of Saint Marc Church in Alexandria. Source: Egyptian Ministry of planning, 2019

are kept in place as they were built originally with reinforced concrete and decorated with iconic Coptic engravings (Ministry of planning, 2019).

Cavafy Museum

Cavafy was a Greek poet who lived in Alexandria. His apartment was transformed into a museum for his work and his personal belongings. The apartment is located into a street named “Lepsius” during Cavafy's life, then renamed Sharm El Sheikh street, after his death and the opening of the museum, it was then renamed again to be Cavafy Street. The small-size museum displays letters, notes and poems written by Cavafy, Many portraits, drawings and photographs of Cavafy



Interior pictures in the museum. Source: By the researchers, 2017

Cinema Alderado

This building was first built as a cinema called “Alderado”, then transformed to be used as multipurpose hall called “theatre el Habayeb” and then currently rented from the ministry of culture to “el Nasr group” for stationary. The building has a very unique ceiling design which was once used as a sound control for the cinema. Everything is still as it is in the building with a restorable condition; except for the very bad new use that disrespect the space.

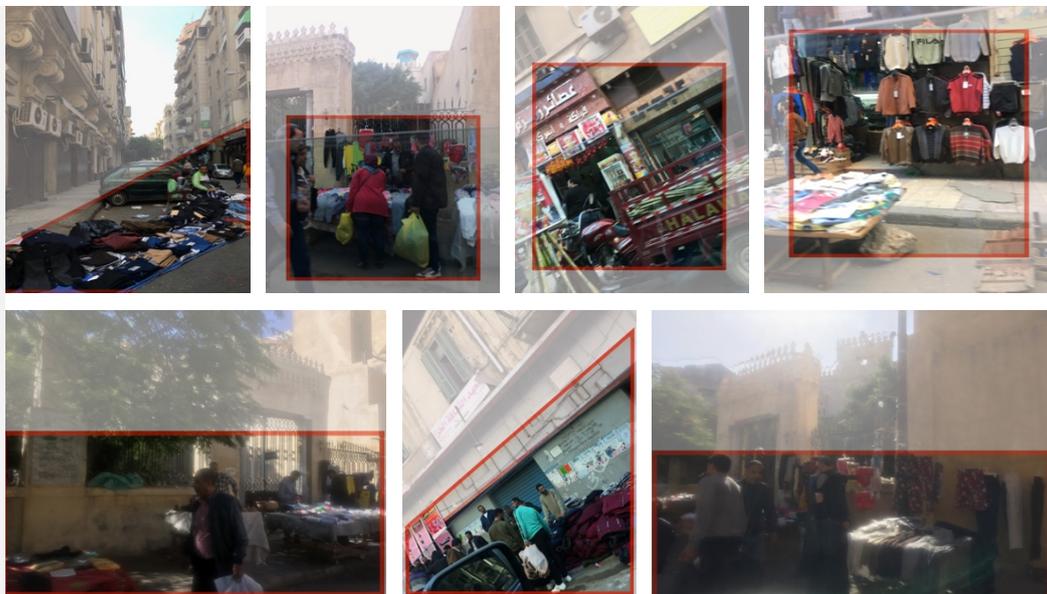


Interior pictures in Cinema Alderado of Alexandria. Source: By the researchers, 2019

5.3. Local activities

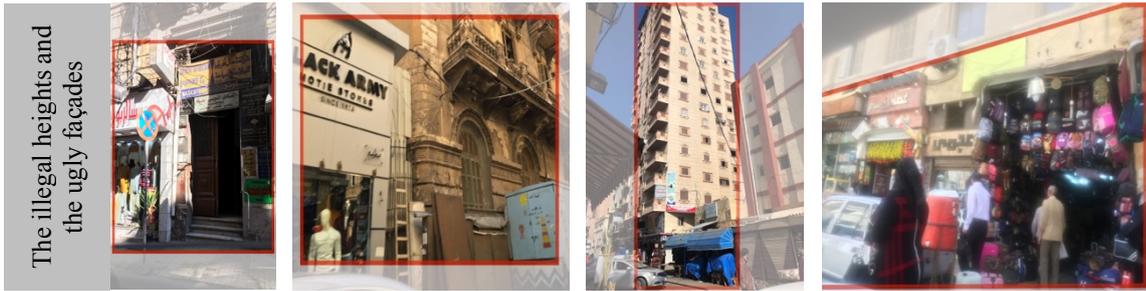
The street includes different local activities mostly commercial, part of it contains a series line of book vendors who are selling all kind of books educational or leisure, old used and new books are available; those vendors are centralized in the zone facing the French cultural center and the opera house where it serves by providing educational goods. There is also a very rich zone for electronic commercials which provides all kind of electronic products, this zone is very well known for all Alexandrian citizen and considered as heritage use for this particular place. Also, we can find cloth and footwear available in other part of the street. All these uses are working in harmony in the street path without feeling any disturbance or loosing of directionality in the place. But also, not being well organized, this causes many traffic problems and some visual pollution for the visitors of the place, that's why its highly recommended to redesign the outlets of all these goods to work properly.

The vendors occupy the street



The kiosks exist randomly in the street



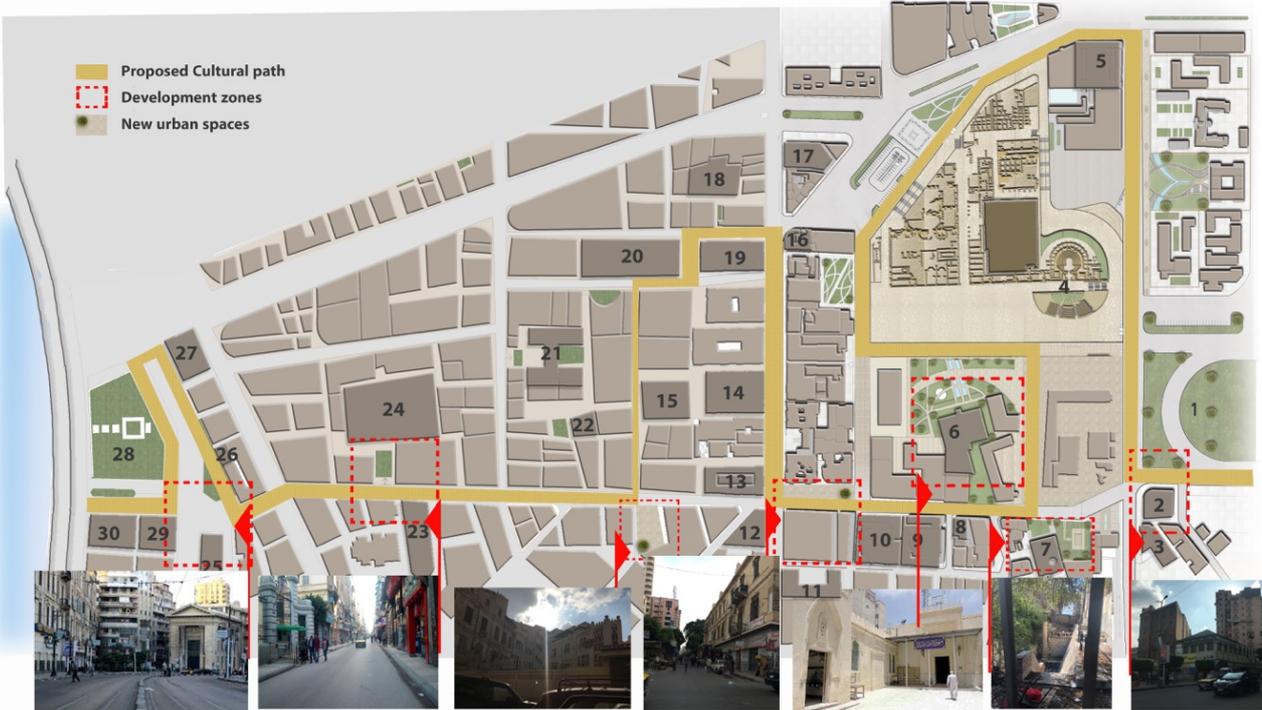


Local activities and problems analysis. Source: By the researchers, 2019

6. S.W.O.T. analysis for El-Nabi Daniel spine

STRENGTH	WEAKNESS	OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The street accommodates many significant buildings and sites. It is one of the oldest vertical spines in Alexandria city that has special historical identity. The street connects one of the master gates to Alexandria city “Misr train station” to the most attraction point “the Mediterranean Sea”. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic in the area is not well planned and need minor modification. All attraction points in the street and surrounding are not well connected. Local residence of the place need upgrade for income level and this could be achieved by involving them into development project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Street contains many local activities that can be great attraction for tourists and local visitors. The availability of cultural centers and journals houses gives addition to the cultural identity of the place. The street exists in Alexandria downtown district which make it accessible from a wide range of residence and visitors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Street vendors occupied the street and the sidewalks and the pedestrians have to walk on the driveways Many kiosks to sell books exist randomly in the street Many buildings are deteriorated Some heritage buildings are in bad condition The façades of the ground floor of buildings are ugly designed by the owners of the shops, they didn’t take into consideration the architectural style of buildings.

7. Alexandria touristic cultural path proposal



El-Nabi Daniel cultural path proposal. Source: By the researchers, 2019

Considering all the studied historical and heritage buildings and sites, a touristic path is proposed starting from the “Misr station” train station, as one of Alexandria’s main gates, passing by all significant elements and going to the famous Alexandrians’ Mediterranean cornice. This path aimed to enhance the cultural awareness and urban character about Alexandria history through ages for tourists and residence. This new path will attract visitors from all over the world, thus shall improve the life style and well-being of the locals. On this walk, visitors will be introduced to the area’s rich cultural heritage by passing through old traditional rehabilitated buildings and re-used adaptively into new cultural and commercial uses to serve the locals and visitors. The route is enhanced by some proposed urban open spaces also the availability of cafés and restaurants that extended all along the street route. The path ends with hotels where tourists can enjoy their stay near the place while enjoying the sea view. The suggested adaptive re-use for heritage buildings are selected according to certain criterias and a vision for the development plan. These criterias are: Buildings which are mostly vacant or abandoned; therefore, easier to buy or rent, Buildings that are mostly in poor condition despite their significant architectural style; thus the project will lead to their sustainability, Buildings that are stacked successively on the street, representing a characteristic façade, well oriented to the street; to possibly turn them together into new functions. As for example, hotel or commercial building or cultural center. In addition, the suggested open spaces are selected according to some areas which are occupied by the illegal kiosks and the street vendors and open areas that are surrounded by some important heritage building.

The reason for such action is to pull the development of the street and also insure the conservation of some important heritage buildings, thus enable the visitors to walk around and discover the authentic ambiance of this area.



Left picture presents a suggested valuable building to be reused as a commercial center where to replace the book vendors. Picture on the right presents a proposed building to be reused as a hotel. Source: By the researchers, 2019

Conclusion

Cultural tourism is one of the most successful projects for challenging areas. This type of development activity is easy to be supported by government and donors. Funds should be managed through public participation and community-based process, which develop public awareness of the funding process and projects outcome. Supporting cultural tourism and heritage protection investments provides an important opportunity to improve local incomes, even for households that are not directly involved in the sector. It also helps the local craftsman and the

merchants marketing crafts. Creating a touristic path in an important cultural heritage site provides higher levels of visitors' income which help protection of the area and improve the opportunities for its maintenance.

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Principles</i>	<i>Available</i>	<i>Not Available</i>
<i>Environmental</i>	Energy efficiency & renewable energy	√	
	Provide environmental friendly architectural design & planning	√	
	Reduce negative impacts to the environment	√	
	Promote walkability with emphasis on variable activities		√
	Improve the sensory experiences		√
	Safety and comfort	√	
	Theming and placemaking		√
	Infrastructure improvement		
	Preserving heritage materials		
	Water efficiency	√	
	Reduce air pollution	√	
	Create streetscape amenities & landscaping	√	
	Provide protection information		
	Sustainable use of natural & local resources		
	Waste management		
<i>Social</i>	Create multi-use destinations and offering choices	√	
	Provide enjoyable experiences for tourists & local residence	√	
	Enhance Quality of life		
	Developing cultural understanding		
	Retaining population & reduce residence immigration		
	Support the protection & maintenance of the cultural environment		
	Ensure the social and cultural well-being of the communities		
	Built cultural awareness and respect	√	
	Conserve cultural diversity		
	Revitalize traditional arts & handicrafts		
	Respect the cultural aspects in design		
	Enhance heritage resources		√
	Encourage respect between tourists & hosts		√
Meet social needs		√	
Encourage creativity		√	
<i>Economic</i>	Maximize economic benefits	√	
	Increase land prices	√	
	Old city center management plan		
	Supports the economic well-being of the communities		
	Applying adaptive management and monitoring		
	Recognizing product quality and tourist satisfaction		
	Financial improvements and Investment opportunity		
	Increase jobs opportunities		
	Reduced the costs and consumptions		
	Availability of information and mapping services		
	Serve meals containing fresh food locally produced		
	Reduce Economic cost of building & construction	√	
	Provide sources of income to local community	√	
	Use appropriate economic cost of services & maintenance	√	
Increase number of "cultural tours"			

TABLE I ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSED CULTURAL PATH

Table I summarizes the main criteria and the principles concluded from the literature review and implemented in the examples to achieve a successful sustainable cultural path. By analyzing the results of the table, it concludes that the proposed path achieves most of the suggested criteria and actively contributed to urban development by respecting the identity and image of urban places, contributing to urban diversity and addressing social and economic problems.

8. Recommendations:

Some steps should be followed and achieved in order to create a successful cultural touristic path that serves the community, while protecting the heritage value of the place.

- Developing local skills to improve incomes
- Create a relationship between craftsmen, the staff of formal cultural institutions, and the artisan community.
- Providing support for heritage preservation studies
- Improving the artisans' skills to improve the flow of tourists and enhance income level
- Support private investments in cultural tourism
- Encourage the collaboration between local governments and local civil society organizations.
- The path should serve as spiritual journey.
- Support public participation with the development project.
- Developing a planned marketing program.
- Creating a planned maintenance program for the path.
- Requiring building facades maintenance and sustainable streetscape.
- Removing the street vendors and relocate them in a reused commercial building
- Providing accommodation for tourists into place to be easily accessed.
- Developing recreational and resting nodes to encourage visitors to take time out.

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