

## PROBLEMS OF THE DESIGN OF THE LANDSCAPE OF SMALL TOWNS. THE CASE OF FRAMPOL

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**STRESZCZENIE.** Lubelszczyzna posiada bogatą historię współistnienia i przenikania się różnych tradycji, kultur i religii, świadkami wielokulturowej przeszłości tych ziem są miasta i miasteczka. Małe miasta Lubelszczyzny borykają się obecnie z różnorodnymi problemami przestrzennymi, które związane są m.in. z organizacją i rewitalizacją przestrzeni publicznych, postępującym rozproszeniem zabudowy czy zmianami w rozwiązaniach układów komunikacji. Celem opracowania jest przedstawienie problematyki dotyczącej kształtowania krajobrazu oraz rewitalizacji małych miast Lubelszczyzny na przykładzie Frampola.

Słowa kluczowe: Małe miasta, Lubelszczyzna, Frampol, kształtowanie krajobrazu miast

### INTRODUCTION

The Lublin region has a rich history of coexistence and interpenetration of different traditions, cultures and religions, as witnessed by its cities and towns. Since the times of World War II and political transformation, however, many changes have occurred that have degraded the cultural landscape of small towns in this region. As a result of ongoing changes, historic urban layouts have become obliterated, there are fewer and fewer traditional wooden buildings and the once multicultural character of those places is only testified to by remnants of buildings and memories of the oldest inhabitants. Small towns of the Lublin region are now facing a variety of spatial problems which are related to, among others, the organization and revitalization of public spaces, progressive scattering of housing development or changes in the organisation of traffic.

The issues concerning transformation of the landscape of small towns of the Lublin region have been discussed by Przesmycka [Przesmycka 2001], [Przesmycka 2008]. The spatial problems of Frampol, have been addressed by Stelmach [Stelmach 1989] in an article on development planning with the participation of the local community.

The aim of this article is to present the problems of landscape design and the revitalization of small towns of the Lublin region using the example of Frampol.

### FRAMPOL

Frampol is one of the smallest Polish towns and, at the same time, the smallest town of the Province of Lublin. It is located in the southern part of the Lublin, in the district of Biłgoraj (Fig. 1). It currently has just over 1400 inhabitants and is the seat of an urban-rural commune with around 6300 inhabitants<sup>1</sup>. It was founded on a greenfield site at the beginning of the

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<sup>1</sup>Data of the Central Statistical Office of Poland (GUS): the population of the Town of Frampol – 1482 people, the population of the Municipality of Frampol – 6328. [quoted from :] Główny Urząd Statystyczny, *Powierzchnia i ludność w przekroju terytorialnym w 2014 r. Informacje i opracowania Statystyczne*, Warszawa 2014 [Central

eighteenth century according to a design by an unknown author. Its distinctive urban layout was based on the Renaissance model of an ideal city. The original settlement comprised a centrally located main market square (~ 225x225 m), four small market squares located on diagonal plots, and a network of axial and diagonal streets. The whole of the settlement was framed by barn-lined streets, the remains of which have survived to the present day (Fig. 2). At the close of the North-South axis, in the northern part of the town stands the church (Fig. 5). As a result of development of the town in 1852, the main market square was partly built-up by adding a line of urban blocks, which reduced its size to today's ~ 140x140 m. Originally, most of Frampol's buildings were small single-storey wooden houses with a rural character (Fig. 3); in the interwar period, the first two-storey houses were built at the market square. Because the town was one of the region's important weaving centres, a distinctive type of weaving house developed here [Przesmycka 2008]. At the beginning of World War II, on September 13, 1939, the city was bombed, as a result of which 90% of the urban fabric was destroyed. Post-war rebuilding of the town embraced those plots of land that were part of the historical layout, while the new buildings were mostly built of brick. The town lost its municipal rights in 1869, but regained them again in 1993.

Frampol's urban layout, registered as a historic monument in 1967, is undoubtedly a valuable asset of this small town and the local residents and authorities as well as the tourists who visit this place are aware of this fact.. Unfortunately, this awareness has not protected the town against a number of changes that disrupt its precious spatial layout.

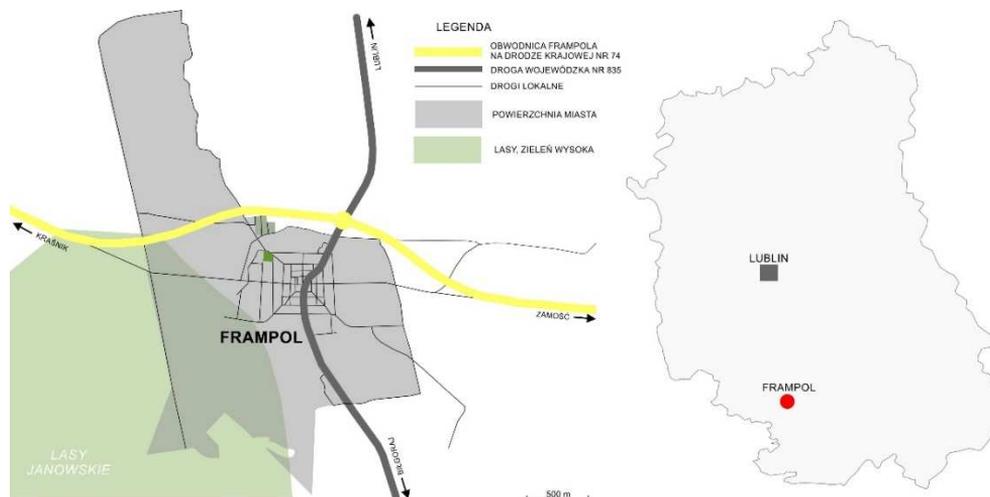


Fig. 1. Organisation of traffic in the town of Frampol and the geographical location of the town in the Lublin Province. Prepared by: Sosnowska.

Ryc. 1. Układ komunikacyjny w obrębie Frampola oraz położenie geograficzne miasta na tle województwa Lubelskiego. Opracowanie: Sosnowska.



Fig. 2. A barn-lined street in Frampol (photo by Sosnowska)  
 Ryc. 2. Ulica stodołna we Frampolu (fot. M. Sosnowska)



Fig. 3. Remains of Frampol's wooden buildings.  
 (photo by Sosnowska)  
 Ryc. 3. Pozostałości drewnianej zabudowy (fot. M. Sosnowska)



Fig. 4. Frampol's market square Source (photo by Sosnowska)  
 Ryc. 4. Zabudowa przyrynkowe we Frampolu (fot. M. Sosnowska)



Fig. 5. Market square buildings and the church at the close of the North-South axis (photo by Sosnowska)  
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## THE TOWN'S SPATIAL PROBLEMS

The spontaneous building development of the town began after the Second World War, and has been particularly intense since after 1989. During that period, the small markets were partly built-up. Currently, only odd fragments of undeveloped space are found here, which are no longer interpretable in the structure of the town as squares. Although the Local Development Plan for the Town of Frampol does provide for more clear delineation of those so-called "side-markets", it does not rule on how to do this, allowing temporary preservation of masonry buildings at these sites [5].

The transformation has also affected the main market square. In its central part, there now intersect two heavy-traffic roads: national road No. 74 (Kraśnik - Zamość) and provincial road No. 835 (Lublin - Biłgoraj), (Fig. 6), which effectively restrict pedestrian traffic in the town's main square, dissecting it into four separate quarters, which play the role of squares. The intersection in the central part of the town obliterates its spatial layout and disrupts the view corridors. The market square has recently undergone a partial modernization: new pedestrian pathways have been paved with concrete and granite bricks, new landscaping elements have appeared and new flower beds and plantings have been added. Nevertheless, the development of the market square gives the impression of being random and chaotic. The need to revitalize

the market square, make its spatial layout more legible and restore pedestrian traffic in the entire market square is pointed to by the residents and authorities of the town as one that requires urgent action, to improve the quality of life in the town.

The town's significant problem is the heavy traffic in its centre. The newly constructed northern ring road greatly relieved the town; however, since traffic still remains heavy in the centre, the construction of an eastern ring road is planned.

The town has been developing spatially despite the falling number of its inhabitants over the recent years. Individual housing development prevails; the only multifamily housing development consists of two three-storey buildings in the northern part of the town. Currently, new housing develops mainly along exit roads<sup>2</sup>, which significantly interferes with the original layout based on a square. In recent years, new streets with detached houses were constructed in western and southern parts of the town<sup>3</sup>, while the development of the city in the north-easterly direction was arrested by a barrier in the form of a ring road on the national road No. 74.

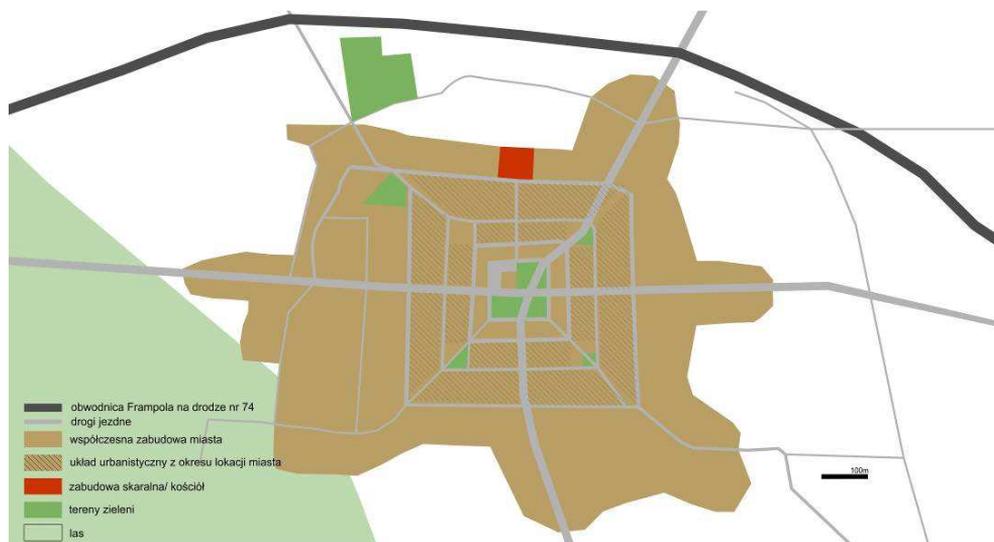


Fig. 6. Housing development in Frampol. Source: Fig. M. Sosnowska  
 Ryc. 6. Rozwój zabudowy mieszkaniowej Frampola. Rys. M. Sosnowska

While there is widespread awareness among the inhabitants regarding the urban qualities of the city, the question of architectural qualities is usually disregarded. Residing in an old building, even if it has been entered in the register of monuments, is perceived by the population as a reason to be ashamed of, hence the frequent modernisation, reconstruction, extension, thermal renovation, or replacement of windows with plastic ones, etc. The emerging, low-density housing development is typical of suburban areas across Poland and it badly matches the architectural and spatial context of a small town. Nowadays, new wooden

<sup>2</sup>Housing develops along Zamojska St. in an easterly direction, along Janowska St. in a westerly direction, along Gorajska St. in a north-easterly direction, and along Biłgorajska St. in a southerly direction as well as in the direction of the village Sokołówka along Polna St.

<sup>3</sup>Łąkowa St., Tysiąclecia St.

buildings are rarely built while existing, old wooden buildings are gradually degraded and slowly disappear from the landscape of the town.

Despite numerous problems, the town has an active policy aimed at protecting the unique urban layout. One of the elements of this policy is planning documentation. In the 1980s, a local plan for the town Frampol was drawn up, co-authored by Stelmach [Stelmach 1989]. Currently, the town has a Study of Land Use Conditions and Directions passed in 2006 and a Local Development Plan drawn up in 2005 for the entire area of the town. At the request of the inhabitants of Frampol, a Town Renewal Plan for the years 2009-2016 was also created.

## DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Frampol was a local agricultural centre for centuries. At present, the agricultural function has become less important for further development of the town. Due to its attractive and scenic location on the edge of the West Roztocze and Biłgoraj Plain, Frampol seeks its growth opportunities in tourism. Following the example of other cities in the region<sup>4</sup>, the authorities are considering the organization of festivals of at least regional importance devoted to eg. local culinary traditions or crafts. Over the last few years, the area around the artificial lake located a short distance south of the city was revitalized and a bathing area, beach, boat hire, marina, bike paths and parking lots were established. The investment project significantly increased the tourist attractiveness of the town and it is a pride of the local community. Still, there is lack of comprehensive revitalization activities in the town itself, which would eg. improve the aesthetics of building development or make the urban layout more transparent. There are no bicycle and trekking paths connecting Frampol with nearby tourist attractions, such as the Janów Forests and the Solska Forest; there is also lack of a tourist information system or accommodation and catering facilities.

## CONCLUSIONS

Issues related to revitalization and landscape design in small towns are complex and varied. The problem of many small towns lies in the unfortunate location of national and provincial roads, which carry heavy traffic and destroy and blur the historical urban layouts. Construction of ring roads or changes in the organization of traffic seem to be a solution to this problem and may constitute both an opportunity for development and a cause of further spatial transformations. Even small towns are currently subject to urban sprawl processes, which are particularly evident in the vicinity of exit roads.

The availability of EU funds significantly revived the processes related to the revitalization of small towns. The acquired funds are allocated particularly often to revitalizations of public spaces, including market squares, as well as modernizations of street surfaces and other road projects. Unfortunately, in the case of market squares in small towns, the revitalization and modernization actions are often exaggerated, as they are often meant to satisfy primarily the ambitions of local authorities, while the investment processes are poorly consulted with the local community. There is a danger that the spaces modernised in this manner will remain empty and the residents and tourists will feel alienated in them.

Many towns of the Lublin region seek their chances of development in tourism. This direction is justified for instance by the cultural richness of the Lublin region and its extremely attractive landscape. Despite the measures already taken, there is still lack of investment projects which could attract tourists, such as construction of walking or cycling paths and

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<sup>4</sup>Bychawa - Dumplings Festival, Hops and Beer Festival in Krasnystaw.

educational trails, extension of accommodation and catering facilities, and organisation of festivals, etc. Villages and towns that have taken the effort to promote their assets experience a growth in tourist traffic.

It is also often forgotten that the local residents are the primary users of public spaces in small towns and that revitalization activities should be thus focused on themselves and their needs. It is of key importance to include the local community in decision-making activities and the creation of urban spaces. The problem of many cities and towns is the loss of population, migration, an ageing population, and low birth rates. Hence, all actions aimed at improving the quality of life and reversing the process of outflow of inhabitants seem to be particularly important.

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## PROBLEMY KSZTAŁTOWANIA KRAJOBRAZU MAŁYCH MIAST NA PRZYKŁADZIE FRAMPOLA

**Abstract.** The Lublin region has a rich history of coexistence and interpenetration of different traditions, cultures and religions, witnessed by its cities and towns. Small towns of the Lublin region are now facing a variety of spatial problems which are related to, among others, the organization and revitalization of public spaces, progressive scattering of housing development or changes in the organisation of traffic. The aim of this article is to present problems connected with landscape design and the revitalization of small towns of the Lublin region as exemplified by Frampol.

**Key words:** Small towns, Lublin region, Frampol, urban landscape design