

PART IV

ACTION PLAN (2005)

16 ACTION PLAN FORMULATION

16.1 Candidate Programs and Projects

16.1.1 Identification of Candidate Programs and Projects

Out of the component plans identified in the Master Plan, candidate programs and projects recommended to be implemented by the year 2005 were identified through further detailed investigation and discussions with the government officials concerned. For the identification of candidate projects, the following aspects were duly considered:

1. projects or programs to be implemented by the public sector;
2. contribution to attracting foreign tourists;
3. possibility of introducing foreign assistance;
4. projects not committed by other international agencies; and
5. programs to be implemented by MOT.

The candidate projects identified above are classified into two categories, priority programs and priority projects. The former includes specific programs for institutional and organizational improvements, while the latter includes specific projects for improving basic tourism infrastructure in Syria.

16.1.2 High Priority Programs

(1) Improvement of Marketing and Promotion for Syrian Tourism

- P-1 Formal Creation of the Public and Private Joint Promotion Committee
- P-2 Improvement of Media Exposure
- P-3 Improvement and Development of Promotion Materials
- P-4 Opening Overseas Representative Offices for Tourism Promotion

(2) Improvement of Better Tourist Satisfaction

- P-5 Improvement of Immigration Control and Customs (CIQ)
- P-6 Improvement of Foreign Currency Exchange for Tourists
- P-7 Improvement of Visitor Service through Inter-Ministerial Collaboration
- P-8 Training for Information Office and Visitor Center Staff

(3) Improvement of Air Access to Syria

- P-9 Promotion of Additional International Flights
- P-10 Improvement and Expansion of Syrian Airlines Services

(4) Improvement of MOT Functions

- P-11 Organizational Improvement of MOT
- P-12 Launching of Public Awareness Program

(5) Encouraging Private Investment

- P-13 Provision of further incentives for private investment
- P-14 Provision of one-stop information office in GCETP

16.1.3 High Priority Projects

(1) Damascus Zone

- D-1 Green Promenade along Barada
 - construction of a green pedestrian walk along Barada River including landscaping and construction of new pedestrian crossings
- D-2 Old Damascus Tourist Trails
 - provision of attractive tourist trails with tourist signs and tourist amenity connecting the existing and planned tourist attractions in the Old City
- D-3 Visitor Center and Tourist Information Upgrading
 - establishment of Old Damascus Visitor Center and upgrading of the existing tourist information office
- D-4 Hijaz Railway Exhibition
 - provision of interpretation of Hijaz railway and Hijaz station
- D-5 Access and Amenity Upgrading for Cultural Sites
 - candidate sites: Seidnaya, Shahaba, Qanawat, etc.
- D-6 An Nasr Street Redevelopment
 - landscaping and development of An Nasr Street which is one of the main access to the Old City
- D-7 Mt. Kassioun Lookout and Cable Car
 - upgrading of lookout facility at Mt. Kassioun and construction of cable car
- D-8 Rabweh Valley
 - upgrading of the attractiveness of Rabweh valley by providing environmentally friendly tourist facilities such as trekking trails, camping grounds, clean toilets, etc.

(2) Aleppo Zone

- A-1 Old Aleppo Tourist Trails
 - provision of attractive tourist trails with tourist signs and tourist amenity connecting the existing and planned tourist attractions in the Old City
- A-2 Visitor Center and Tourist Information Upgrading
 - establishment of Old Souq Visitor Center and upgrading of the existing tourist information office
- A-3 Access and Amenity Upgrading for Cultural Sites
 - candidate sites: Ain Dara, Idleb, Ebla, Dead Cities, etc.
- A-4 Idleb Museum Upgrading
 - display improvement of Idleb museum
- A-5 Baron Hotel Expansion and Improvement
 - renovation and expansion of historical Baron Hotel

(3) Homs and Hama Zone

- H-1 Old Hama Tourist Trails
 - provision of attractive tourist trails with tourist signs and tourist amenity connecting the

existing and planned tourist attractions in the Old City

H-2 Visitor Center and Tourist Information Upgrading

- establishment of Visitor Center in the MOI-owned Khan Rustam Pasha and upgrading of the existing tourist information office

H-3 Noria Park and Museum

- provision of interpretation of water wheels in Hama and provision of observation place for the largest wooden water wheel in the world

H-4 Bridge Expansion and Construction

- improvement of walking network along Orontes River by expansion and new construction of pedestrian bridges

H-5 Apamea Museum Improvement

- display and facilities improvement of Apamea museum

H-6 Access and Amenity Upgrading for Cultural Sites

- candidate sites: Apamea, Sheizar, Dead Cities, Salamiyeh, etc.

(4) Coastal Zone

C-1 Old Tartous and Arwad Tourist Trails

- provision of attractive tourist trails with tourist signs and tourist amenity connecting the existing and planned tourist attractions

C-2 Visitor Center and Tourist Information Upgrading

- establishment of visitor centers and upgrading of the existing tourist information office

C-3 Access Improvement to Arwad

- upgrading of passenger boat service between Tartous and Arwad

C-4 Solid Waste Management Upgrading in Arwad

- improvement of solid waste management in Arwad Island

C-5 Access and Amenity Upgrading for Cultural Sites

- candidate sites: Salahdin Castle, Ugarit, Jableh, Marqab, Amrit, etc.

(5) Nationwide

N-1 Tourist Site Access and Amenity Improvement

- provision of tourist traffic direction signs for all major tourist sites in the country, and provision of interpretation panels and tourist amenity for selected remote sites

16.2 Selection of Projects

16.2.1 Criteria for Selection

Regarding the priority program, all of the candidate programs are highly desirable to be implemented for the tourism development of Syria by the year 2005. Therefore, all of them are included in the Action Plan for the year 2005.

For the selection of the short term priority projects, the following criteria were used to evaluate the candidate projects:

1. conformity to the development strategies formulated in the Master Plan;
2. urgency and expected quick effect for increasing tourist arrivals;
3. suitable size for foreign financial assistance;
4. expected high economic return; and
5. less negative socio-environmental impacts expected from the project implementation.

The selected projects were further combined to form an integrated and internally reinforcing project group within each zone.

16.2.2 Selected Priority Projects

Names of the priority projects finally selected and integrated are:

1. Project A: The Damascus Great Heritage (combination of D-1, D-2, D-3 and D-4);
2. Project B: Old Hama of Norias (combination of H-1, H-2, H-3 and H-4);
3. Project C: Historic Tartous-Arwad (combination of C-1, C-2, C-3 and C-4);
4. Project D: Latakia Cultural Circuit (combination of C-2 and C-5);
5. Project E: Aleppo the Silk Road (combination of A-1 and A-2); and
6. Project F: Tourist-Friendly Syria (reformation of N-1).

Through the implementation of the above projects, the attractiveness of the tourism cores and tourist sites along the targeted figure 8-shaped circuit of the Syrian tourism will be substantially improved and the targeted increase in foreign tourist arrivals will be realized.

17 PRIORITY MEASURES

17.1 Short Term Tourism Promotion Initiatives

17.1.1 Necessity for Short Term Promotion Initiatives

In this study, an Action Plan was prepared with the target year 2005 on the selected priority programs and projects for boosting tourism in Syria. However, it will take at least a few years before this Action Plan will be completed and start contributing to the sector in full.

In order to fill this gap and to derive short term benefits, implementation of a few tourism promotion initiatives is quite necessary for the tourism development of the country.

As explained in the Master Plan, cooperation between the private and public sectors is essential for tourism development and will become more important in the future. At present, mutual cooperation is still quite limited. These initiatives will no doubt enhance the cooperation through joint work.

17.1.2 Formulation Process

In November 1997, the Study Team advised MOT to form a committee comprising representatives of private tourism companies and MOT for the above objectives. MOT understood this concept and took quick action for inviting representatives from the private and public sectors. Invited are those of tour operators and travel agents who are major members of SATTA, hotel companies, transport companies and later, Syrian Airlines.

Initial meetings were held approximately weekly starting from November 30, 1997 and five meetings were held in total.

In the first meeting, Deputy Minister of Tourism, H.E. Mr. Helwani, made opening remarks explaining the objectives and the expected results of the committee. MOT sent the Director of Tourism Relations and two staff members who worked as secretariat of the committee. A representative of Syrian Airlines also participated in the meeting, who is expected to play a more active role in the state tourism promotion.

In the first meeting, the Study Team explained the present situation of the Syrian tourism and clarified the result of SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat) analysis of the tourism sector. Among the problems facing the Syrian tourism, two major problems, namely, "poor presentation" and "seasonal fluctuation" were taken up to be discussed for urgent solution.

In the second and third meetings, desirable marketing and promotion activities were explained both for the private and public sectors. Special attention was paid to the problem of extreme seasonal peaking. Regarding the required quality of the materials for marketing and promotion, a presentation was made by the Study Team using materials produced in the neighboring countries such as Egypt and Oman, and in Japan.

In the fourth meeting, improvement of the package tour was discussed for reducing major

seasonal fluctuation and increase the number of tourist especially from Japan. For this, introduction of optional tours (additional excursions or short trips) was proposed. Furthermore, the Study Team recommended that a sales manual or guide for Syrian tourism is to be prepared very urgently for the future marketing and promotion. Desired contents of the manual were explained in detail by showing a sample to the participants of the meeting. Participants understood the present situation of tourism and shared views on the problems facing Syria. In the private sector, "poor service quality" is also conceived as the major problem in addition to "poor presentation" and "seasonal fluctuation".

Through these meetings both private and public participants exchanged opinions freely and agreed on the necessity for preparation of a sales manual or guide under joint collaboration, and the creation of optional tours. It was also recognized that the role of Syrian Airlines is very important for tourism marketing and promotion, which is to be expanded further through joint participation in international tourism exhibitions.

17.1.3 Recommended Initiatives

Three initiatives are recommended.

(1) Formal Creation of the Joint Promotion Committee

The importance of the mutual collaboration between the private and public sectors has been well recognized by all the participants of the meetings. This is particularly important for tourism promotion and marketing, considered quite weak in the Syrian tourism sector.

Under this situation, the Study Team advised MOT to create a private and public joint committees as follows:

- major agenda of the committee is international marketing and promotion;
- members of the committee are authorized representatives from:
 - MOT;
 - Syrian Airlines;
 - Syrian Hotel Association;
 - SATTA; and
 - transportation companies (bus and rent a car).
- creation of the committee officially under MOT;
- MOT's contribution is:
 - Director of Tourism Relations be assigned to Secretary General assisted by Co-Secretary General from private sector; and
 - MOT staff be assigned to the secretary of the committee assisted by staff from the private sector.
- meeting be held once a month in principle with invited temporary participation from related ministries and private sectors

The initial talks of the Joint Promotion Committee include the crucial topic of fund raising mechanisms for future promotional activities. They also include promotion of a new Sales Guide or Trade Manual, and creation of optional tours for the Japanese Market, described below. In the more distant future, the Joint Promotion Committee can plan for the creation of

an autonomous, well-funded body designed specifically to execute an international standard marketing and promotion campaign.

(2) Syrian Sales Guide

There exists no comprehensive sales guide or trade guide for marketing and promotion of the Syrian tourism even at present. A Syrian Tourist Guide is planned to be prepared with international standard, which will be used for international exhibitions, tourism fairs and trades as well as for daily tourism promotional activities. MOT has a plan to issue a revised promotional pamphlet and accepted the proposed plan under the collaboration with the private sector. The Syrian Sales Guide is to include necessary information for sophisticated eyes of international tourists and to respond to the interest of the international tourism market with the following specifications:

Contents of Sales Guide

- message from MOT;
- general information of Syria;
- Syrian sales point and recommended sightseeing point;
- travel information (hotel, restaurant, transportation, travel agent, etc.); and
- event and convention calendar.

Language

- English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Arabic, Japanese.

Size

- A4 size with full color of 20 to 30 pages.

MOT plans to invite design companies for tendering the plan and design of the sales guide, that is to be made during February to March, 1998. The final printing of the sales guide is expected to be completed in April, 1998.

(3) Optional Tours (for Japanese Market)

Most of the Syrian package tours being sold by major wholesaler and travel agents in Japan do not include any type of optional tours. This means that all schedule of a tourist is fixed and the tourist should follow an inflexible schedule without getting additional experience at any of the sites.

To increase travel options, development of optional tours is necessary and urgently to be implemented. Samples of the option tours are prepared after the discussion in the committee meeting as presented in Table 17.1.1.

As indicated earlier, the optional tours are not common yet in Syria. However, if this kind of option is added or included in the package tours, the tour itineraries will have more variety, and competitiveness of the Syrian tourism be strengthened.

Table 17.1.1 Samples of Optional Tours

Name of the Tour	Tour Features	Minimum Size	Duration	Tour Price	Incidental Condition
Damascus					
1. Mount Kassioun at night	Panoramic view from the top of the Mt. Kassioun Star watching (darker side) Tea or Soft drink service	15	20.00-22.00	\$20	weather
2. Souq shopping tour	Shopping in the Souq and in the Handicraft Souq with lunch service	10	Half Day	\$20	
3. Folklore dance show	Show with beverages	10	2 hours	\$20	
Palmyra					
1. Palmyra at night	Star watching on top of the Castle Tea at Zenobia Hotel Folklore Music	25	2 hours	\$20	weather
2. Camel trekking	Camel back riding tour with commemorative pictures	5	ad hoc	\$10	weather
Aleppo					
1. Old Souq shopping tour	Shopping in the Souq and Handicraft center	5	2 hours	\$10	
2. Aleppo soap manufacture tour	Soap factory or gold/silver factory visit manufacture with souvenirs	10	2 hours	\$20	

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17.2 Priority Programs for Action Plan

17.2.1 Improving Marketing and Promotion

Improvement of marketing and promotion activities is strongly recommended in Part II of Volume I. Because it is urgent to promote the recognition of Syria as a favorable destination, reversing the negative perception toward Syria, the following measures should be undertaken immediately.

P-1 Formal Creation of the Public and Private Joint Promotion Committee

Establishment of the public and private joint tourism promotion committee is described before in Section 17.1.

P-2 Improvement of Media Exposure

Increase media exposure of Syria as a desirable destination. The major European markets (firstly Germany, France, the UK, Italy, Spain, and secondly Benelux and Scandinavian countries, and later, East Asian countries including Japan) should be covered. It is necessary to hire one or more qualified foreign marketing agencies (one-year term contract for a minimum of two years). Specific measures are:

- to open up media and travel trade dialogue and contact;

- to prepare regular press releases (from quarterly to bi-monthly) and to hold regular press conferences in major European business centers;
- to produce promotion campaigns (TV spots, posters, etc.) and to diffuse it through foreign media; and
- to organize sponsored media and travel trade "familiarization (fam) trip" to Syria from major European markets (firstly Germany, France, the UK, Italy, Spain, and secondly Benelux and Scandinavian countries); two to four fam trip teams of 15 members each annually.

P-3 Improvement and Development of Promotion Materials

Producing the promotion material, examples described in Table 17.2.1 for:

- a variety of sales tools specially focused to the travel trade and organizers (tour operator sales manual, newsletter, theme tour route catalog, video clip, poster);
- motivational materials aimed for the general public; and
- practical, user-friendly on-site materials aimed for the general public.

Table 17.2.1 Example Overseas Promotion, Gateway, On-Site Materials

Title	Category	Size / Format	Language	Target and Content
a) Syria: Cradle of Civilization	general promotion	1 sheet-folds 10 x 21 cm full-color	English, French German, Italian, Spanish, Arabic, Japanese	general public: modified content of MOT's existing "Syria at a glance"
b) Syria Tour Planner / Sales Manual	planning / sales guide for travel trade	A4 full-color 30/40 pages	English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Arabic, Japanese	tour operator: model tour route, service directory (hotel, transport, travel agent), feature events / activities, etc.
c) Syria: Cradle of Civilization	general promotion	A4 full-color 8 pages	English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Arabic, Japanese	general public: condensed edition of existing material, with practical references.
d) Syria Travel Newsletter	promotion	A4 1 or 2 sheets mono-color	English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Arabic, Japanese	travel trade and media for publicity / promotion: monthly or bi-monthly
e) Syria Visitor's Companion (Dual use for Gateway Information)	general promotion and gateway information	10 x 21 cm cover in color, text in mono-color 15 / 20 pages	English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Arabic, Japanese	general public and travel trade: general, but more practical information (transport, hotel, dining, shopping, tourist attractions)
f) Syria Travel Guide (Dual use for Gateway Information)	promotion and gateway information	1 sheet four-folds 10 x 21 cm part-color	English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Arabic, Japanese	general public and travel trade: theme tour routes (antiquities, roman ruins, crusader castles, etc.)

Source: JICA Study Team

P-4 Opening Overseas Representative Offices for Tourism Promotion

Opening Syrian tourist representation offices in major European centers: Paris, Frankfurt and London, utilizing cost-effective contract representation system locally available in each center (one-year term contract for a minimum of two to three-years). It is important to initiate "hands-on" service staff training simultaneously, through dispatch of MOT and Syrian industry personnel (one or two to each location) to work side by side in the above contracted representation offices abroad.

17.2.2 Improving Satisfaction of Tourists

P-5 Improvement of Immigration Control and Customs (CIQ)

The CIQ (Customs, Immigration and Quarantine) procedures at airports and borders give tourists a first and strong impression of the country. Any promotional activities will be in vain if the country failed to guarantee comfortable and sufficiently fast CIQ procedures. It is urgently necessary to make further effort to speed up immigration procedures, such as to shorten time by half for dealing with one person by introducing more efficient procedure, open one more gate when more than 20 passengers queue up. These measures will immediately and greatly improve the image of Syria. It is also recommended to introduce visa free entry from high income countries, which is already done in most of countries in southeast Asia and Latin America. The principle of reciprocity in immigration methods does not apply for tourism.

There is a significant role of MOT concerning CIQ procedures. MOT has information of tourists' impression through marketing survey, direct contact with tourists, etc. In response to negative tourist feedback, tourism authorities in many countries request in procurement in CIQ processing in order to remedy the negative images created by poor service.

P-6 Improvement of Foreign Currency Exchange for Tourists

There are also rooms for improvement in foreign currency exchange as pointed out in Volume I. It is recommended to take following measures to improve present situation. It will greatly improve tourists' satisfaction and image of Syria.

- increasing CBS exchange offices by opening ones within MOT information centers and visitor centers;
- allow cashier of hotels of 2-star and over to exchange foreign currency.

P-7 Improvement of Visitor Service through Inter-Ministerial Collaboration

Improvement of quality and attractiveness at ancient sites and museums is another major and urgent issue to be tackled. Creation of a Visitor Services Unit within DGAM's Engineering Department and to start construction work in major sites and museums are needed. The work will create a more significant effect when it is simultaneously undertaken with priority projects and promotional measures.

A Visitors Services Unit is to contain 4-5 experts from both DGAM and the MOT. Its purpose is to design improvement programs for museums and ancient sites to raise their educational value, to make them safe for visitors to visit, and to safeguard the sites from user abuses. Actual construction work is to be done by DGAM's own resources. This work

includes creation of multilingual signs and displays, creation of restaurant and snack facilities, sanitary facilities, vehicle parking, and marked trails through sites. Experts are to include skills such as a landscape architect, an archeologist, a marketing expert, a museum specialist, and a displays expert. The unit may be operated by the personnel trained under the EU Cultural Tourism Program and other programs provided by foreign donors. Once the eight sites in the EU Program are improved, the unit is responsible for formulating additional site improvement programs through consultations with the travel trade associations, as well as with officials from the tourism, culture and education ministries. Table 17.2.2 recommends museums and sites to be improved by 2005.

Table 17.2.2 Museums & Sites Improvement by Visitor Services Unit by 2005

Museums (signs, facilities)	Damascus National, Damascus Popular Traditions (Azem Palace), Aleppo National, Aleppo Citadel, Latakia National, Tartous National, Arwad (in citadel), Hama, Apamea National, Bosra National (in citadel), Palmyra National
Sites (signs, trails, facilities)	Damascus Citadel, Crac des Chevaliers, St. Simeon, Salahdin Castle, Apamea, Bosra, Rasafa, Palmyra (various sites), Dura Europos, Dead Cities

Source: JICA Study Team

P-8 Training for Information Office and Visitor Center Staff

Several information offices and visitor centers are planned as priority projects. New staff officers must be allocated from other positions of MOT. It is necessary to carry out training program for the staff.

The duration of training is assumed at 3 months and it should include:

- lectures on tourist services and major foreign languages;
- lectures on geography, history and culture;
- operation of equipment;
- educational trip to observe foreign examples; and
- practices of tourist services.

Although the staff for new information offices and new visitor centers should be given priority, the training course should be held every year and should be opened to the staff of existing information offices and visitor centers.

17.2.3 Improving International Air Access

P-9 Promotion of Additional International Flights

The limited international air service into Syria is a factor limiting tourism growth by limiting capacity for tourists and tour operators. International air access is an important indicator of ease of travel. Without effective market opening measures only limited tourism growth can be achieved. For Damascus and Aleppo, the proximity of the airports at Beirut and Amman to Syria also increase the competitiveness of the air travel industry in Syria.

In the field of commercial aviation traffic rights, the liberalized position of "Open Skies" is gaining popularity among nations, including some major European nations. Under such

conditions airlines can operate frequencies and capacity under few or no restrictions. This study recommends that the Syrian government grant less restricted traffic rights to foreign carriers within the limits of existing agreements. It also recommends easing of restrictions on chartered flights

P-10 Improvement and Expansion of Syrian Airlines Services

National carrier plays an important role in the tourism promotion of the most countries. Improvement of Syrian Airlines services on board and representative offices, as well as expansion of destinations are essential.

17.2.4 Improving MOT Functions

Out of what are mentioned in the Master Plan as administrative improvements, measures to improve planning function of MOT should be given priority as well as the implementation of priority projects. The following measures are recommended for immediate action.

P-11 Organizational Improvement of MOT

Strengthening Department of Planning

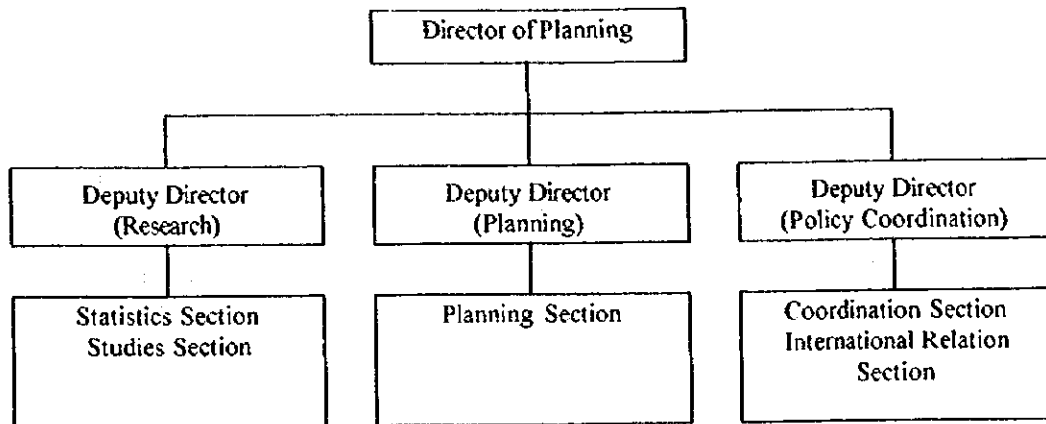
Three deputy directors should be posted as soon as possible for better work at the department of planning and necessary number of staff should be allocated as well (Figure 17.2.1).

- Appointing three Deputy Directors. One for research, study and statistics, one for planning, and the other for policy coordination.
- Deputy Director for Research, Study and Statistics is responsible for analyzing the situation of Syrian Tourism from the aspect of both demand and supply, based on statistical data, foreign publications, etc., also responsible for use of computer described below.
- Deputy Director for Planning is responsible for identifying policy direction, drafting master plan and 5-year plan, investment budget, etc. At least three persons are necessary under the Deputy as staff of Planning Section.
- Deputy Director for Policy Coordination is responsible for the matters concerning the Supreme Council, international organizations, bilateral international negotiations, coordination with other government and private sector organizations, and coordination with other departments of MOT. One area of international relations where this Deputy Director can act effectively is in collaborating more closely with the tourism ministries of Jordan and Lebanon through semi-annual meetings.

Invitation of Foreign Expert

It is also recommended to obtain the assistance of a foreign expert of tourism planning who knows about the situation of tourist market and tourism development of advanced countries. The expert will work as an advisor on overall MOT work, but should put emphasis on planning field. Request to foreign donor agencies for dispatching expert should be sent immediately.

Figure 17.2.1 Proposal for the Organization of Department of Planning



Source: JICA Study Team

Improving Statistical Analysis Using Computers

The first step of the recommendation in the component plans in Part II should be taken up immediately. Specifically:

- Introduce three computers at Department of Planning (Statistics Section) with spread sheet calculation software and database software;
- Create a database of the latest statistics (arrivals, hotel registration card, hotel tourist nights, etc.) by Mohafazat, nationality, year and month, etc., using spread sheet calculation software or database software;
- Create tables and figures for analysis by the software.

It is not recommended to make a order-made software in the beginning. Functions of ready-made spread sheet calculation software and database software are sufficient for the moment.

Creation of A Recurrent Tourist Survey Program

The first trial of a recurrent tourist survey of the kind undertaken for this Study should be undertaken by MOT. This can be initially defined with the help of an experienced tourism survey expert, which can be requested to foreign donor agencies to dispatch as a short term expert. Results of the analysis will be valuable for market research purposes, and are to be widely distributed for the benefit of the Syrian and foreign travel industries.

Production of Visitor Behavioral Data From Immigration Data

The importance of this data analysis is described in Part II of this report. It is recommended to begin discussion with immigration authority.

Staff Training

An in-service training program should be developed immediately. The program should include lectures of private tourism companies, associations, foreign airlines and embassies in Damascus to learn ideas and ways of thinking outside the ministry. It should also include the statistical analysis in general, use of computer, example study of statistical analysis by foreign tourism related agencies. The program should be carried out as soon as possible.

MOT should, at the same time, send trainees to seminars abroad held by foreign donor

agencies. Staff engaging in planning field should be given priority in this kind of seminars. It will give a good opportunity to look at activities and examples in foreign countries, which is a useful way to improve planning ability essential for overall tourism development.

P-12 Launching Public Awareness Program

Importance of Public Awareness Program has already been described in Part II. It should be carried out nation-wide, however, it is effective to make a trial in a smaller area. Arwad Island is a good candidate by its size, its independence and its characteristics as a tourist destination. In addition, majority of obstacles in Arwad Island are environment problems, i.e. litter along the shore and streets. These problems can not be solved unless inhabitants understand the necessity. Therefore, it is recommended to make a trial of the program in Arwad Island, in line with the progress of the priority project.

The program should be carried out in cooperation with MOT, Mohafazat, Municipality and schools in the island. Specific measures are as follows:

- Create a manual of Public Awareness Program for the use of actual personnel in charge at MOT, Mohafazat, Municipality and school teachers;
- Create a brochure for explaining importance of tourism and show what inhabitants ought to do;
- Hold explanation meetings in the island and exchange opinion with them;
- Hold classes to teach about tourism in the school;
- Hold a voluntary activity event for rubbish collection in the shore and street; and
- Plan and carry out the tourism festival in the island.

Table 17.2.3 Example of Public Awareness Program Manual in Indonesia

Volume 1.	1 What are travel, tourism, tourism industry, tourists ?
	2 Classification of tourists
	3 Why do they travel ?
	4 Tourism development and its benefit. Items and obstacles, Economic benefit, Social and cultural benefit, Racial and national benefit, Benefit to surroundings
	5 Possibility of negative impact of tourism development.
	6 Seven magic. Public order, Social system, Cleanliness, Amenity, Beauty, Hospitality, Memory
Volume 2	1 Development of tourism in Indonesia. (number of tourists, tourist receipt, tourism investment, tourism products and its attractiveness, tourist sites, tourism industry)
	2 National Tourism Development Plan. Objectives and Principles, Goals of Tourism Development Plan, Capacity of tourism development, Target of number of tourists
Volume 3	1 Responsibility and roles of public and private sector.
	2 Basic financial sources of tourism development.
	3 Result of 5th National Tourism Development Plan
	4 Goals of 2nd Long-term Tourism Development Plan
	5 Goals of 6th National Tourism Development Plan
	6 Target of number of tourists in 6th Plan
	7 Sector support for tourism development Tourism Law of 1990, List of Tourism Department and Offices

Source: Indonesian Ministry of Post and Telecommunications

Before starting the program, it is necessary to train the staff in charge. Initially, it will be mainly for staff of MOT and local government. It should include directors of Regional Tourism Departments because their understanding for public awareness program is essential. Then it should be opened to related fields such as teachers of schools.

The duration of training is assumed at consecutive two weeks or non consecutive with equal quantity and quality. An example of textbook for training program is shown in Table 17.2.3 above.

17.2.5 Encouraging Private Investment

Encouragement of private investment is extremely important to improve tourist facilities and services both in quantity and quality and consequently to win a rightful place in the world market for the Syrian tourism sector. MOT should make every effort to realize measures recommended in Part II in this regard. However, measures for encouraging private investment such as regulating reform in banking, foreign exchange control and taxation can not be determined without considering their effects on economic and social structure of the country, well beyond the domain of the tourism sector. In this report, therefore, reference is limited to the urgent desirability of encouraging private investment except below.

P-13 Further Incentives for Private Investment

The transfer of profit to abroad is not allowed in the tourism field, although it is allowed in the field covered by the Law No. 10 of 1991. It seriously affect the judgment of investors and is considered as a reason of minimal foreign investment in tourism field. Legislative Decree No. 186 of 1985 should be amended to allow transfer of profit in the tourism sector.

In addition, several incentive measures for encouraging private investment in the tourism sector and in the tourist sites are listed in the component plan of Part II of Volume I. These measures should be made effective after detailed study, step by step.

P-14 One-Stop Information Office in GCETP

It is usually very difficult for especially foreigners to clear the governmental procedures because of language barrier, difference of administrative system, etc. So it is very helpful for investors that MOT helps clearing regulation procedures. Therefore, it is recommended that MOT open a unified window or "one-stop shop" for investors which will show and arrange clearance of all necessary procedure of central and local administration, and to announce it clearly to investors. Specifically, one of the directorate of GCETP should be renamed that everyone can easily understand that is the window section for investors. Similar agencies are found in Egypt, Dubai, Morocco, Southeast Asian countries, etc.

18 PRIORITY PROJECTS

18.1 Priority Project Package

The following table shows an overview of the formulated priority project package composed of 6 projects.

Table 18.1.1 Priority Project Package

Priority Project and their Components	Outline
Project A: The Great Damascus Heritage	
1. Barada Green Promenade	creation of a green pedestrian walk along Barada River
2. Tourist Trails	attractive walking trails connecting attractions
3. Old Damascus Visitor Center	visitor center establishment in a historic building
4. Tourist Information Center Upgrading	upgrading of existing MOT tourist information
5. Taxi Stops and Parking	provision of taxi stops to encourage walking tour
6. Hijaz Railway Exhibition	interpretation of Hijaz Railway and Station
Project B: Old Hama of Norias	
1. Tourist Trails	attractive walking trails connecting attractions
2. Tourist Information Center Upgrading	upgrading of existing MOT tourist information
3. Visitor Center in Khan Rustam Pasha	visitor center establishment in a historic building
4. Noria Park and Museum	theme attraction of wooden water wheels
5. Bridge Expansion and Construction	expansion and construction of pedestrian bridges
Project C: Historic Tartous-Arwad	
1. Tourist Trails	attractive walking trails connecting attractions
2. Tourist Information Center Upgrading	upgrading of existing MOT tourist information
3. Old Tartous Visitor Center	visitor center establishment in a historic building
4. Arwad Visitor Center	theme attraction of wooden boat building
5. Passenger Pier Construction	passenger piers improvement
6. Solid Waste Management in Arwad	solid waste management improvement in Arwad
Project D: Latakia Cultural Circuit	
1. Tourist Information Center Upgrading	upgrading of existing MOT tourist information
2. Access Road Improvement	access roads improvement for 3 major sites
3. Observation Points and Interpretation	provision of interpretation with landscaping
Project E: Aleppo the Silk Road	
1. Tourist Information Center Upgrading	upgrading of existing MOT tourist information
2. Old Souq Visitor Center	visitor center establishment in historic buildings
3. Tourist Trails	attractive walking trails connecting attractions
4. Taxi Stops and Parking	provision of taxi stops to encourage walking tour
Project F: Tourist-Friendly Syria	
1. Tourist Traffic Direction Signs	provision of tourist direction signs for all sites
2. Interpretation Panels and Amenities	interpretation panels and amenities for isolated sites
3. Foreign Promotion Campaign	launching of foreign promotion campaign

18.2 Project A: The Great Damascus Heritage

18.2.1 Project Concept

(1) Objectives

The objective of the project is to enhance the site visit to a satisfactory level, and as a result to increase the number of tourists without increase of tourist vehicles into Old Damascus, by the following measures:

- to improve presentation of the tourist attractions: monuments and historical buildings, town and life of the Old and Modern Damascus, and the historic Hijaz Railway;
- to provide attractive circular walking trails connecting various tourist attractions; and
- to provide taxi stops and parking at major tourist nodes.

(2) Related Projects

DGAM operates most of museums including Damascus National Museum located in New City along Barada river, Science and Medicine Museum utilizing a 12th century hospital building in Old Damascus, Arab Epigraphy Museum utilizing an old school building near Umayyad Mosque, 18th century Azem Palace (Museum of Tradition) in Old Damascus, and Damascus History Museum utilizing an old palace located in Sarouja Quarter. These are all important cultural tourism attractions. In addition, DGAM is now preparing to establish a new museum utilizing 18th century caravansary, the largest in Damascus, located in the heart of Old Damascus.

DGAM is also restoring important cultural sites in Old Damascus including Citadel (Japan donated necessary equipment for restoration) and Beit Sakkamine (one of the most ancient house), etc.

Damascus Mohafazat is also working continuously to rehabilitate Old Damascus by restoring several old Damascene houses located near the candidate visitor center building of this project, and by improving urban infrastructure including stone pavement of alleys, drainage, etc.

EU is planning to provide shortly interpretation panels in Citadel and a few other cultural sites in Old Damascus. The detail of candidate sites has not fixed yet, however the project will surely increase the tourism value of Old Damascus.

This project is complementary to all the above on-going efforts and will support them from the tourism view point.

The Urban Transportation Planning of Damascus City is now being conducted by Damascus Mohafazat and JICA, which will prepare an urban transportation master plan including the area of this project. This Project A aims at upgrading the pedestrian environment in the tourist zone of Damascus. Further coordination will be prepared in accordance with the results of the formulated urban transportation master plan.

18.2.2 Project Components

This project is composed of the following 6 components:

1. Barada Green Promenade;

2. Tourist Trails;
3. Old Damascus Visitor Center;
4. Tourist Information Center Upgrading;
5. Taxi Stops and Parking; and
6. Hijaz Railway Exhibition.

(1) Barada Green Promenade

Creation of a green pedestrian walk along Barada river (from Umawieen Square to Marje Square) in order to enhance the linkage among the Central Business District (CBD), the Cultural District and Old Damascus.

- upgrading of the existing sidewalks;
- landscaping and provision of rest space with shades, benches, taxi stops, etc.; and
- construction of 3 new pedestrian crossings connecting this promenade and the Central Business District (CBD).

(2) Tourist Trails

Provision of comfortable tourist walking trails provided with international standard tourist signs and amenity, and connecting various existing and planned tourist attractions: National Museum, Takiyeh complex including MOT Handicraft souq, Hijaz Station, Qanawat Quarter, Marje Square, Sarouja Quarter, Old Damascus with major gates, etc.

- provision of standardized tourist direction signs and interpretative panels (presentation of Citadel and a few key monuments in Old Damascus will be provided by EU);
- improvement of pavement including underground wiring, piping and drainage, lighting fixture for the selected part of trails (Sarouja street, Amara, northern wall, Badawi street, Mazanet Ash Shahm, around proposed Old Damascus Visitor Center, etc.);
- construction of a new pedestrian crossing in order to re-connect divided Sarouja street, presently split by broad Thawara street;
- cleaning and touch-up of building façades facing with the tourist trails;
- upgrading of existing public toilets including provision of standardized signs (pictograph);
- landscaping and provision of rest space with shades, benches, etc. at appropriate intervals; and
- production of free handout trail map.

(3) Old Damascus Visitor Center

Establishment of the Old Damascus Visitor Center in the Municipality-owned Beit Qouwatli (a Damascene house built during the last century) or MOT-owned Khan Ruz (an old caravansary dealt in rice) to provide necessary and useful tourist information for the visit of Old Damascus. Both candidate buildings are located in the heart of Old Damascus.

- restoration of the candidate building and interior work;
- provision of necessary modern presentation equipment and interpretative devices (panels, models, audio-visual devices, etc.);
- provision of clean toilets suitable for foreign tourists and handicapped people;

- provision of other tourist services: e.g. foreign currency exchange office, exhibition of recommended souvenirs and local products; and
- staff training program (tourist service, operation of equipment, language, inspection trip abroad, practices, etc.).

(4) Tourist Information Center Upgrading

Upgrading of the existing MOT information center at Yousef Azem Square (or at an alternative convenient place) as the gateway tourist information center covering all Damascus zone and all Syria as well.

- provision of necessary modern presentation equipment and interpretative devices (panels, models, audio-visual devices, etc.);
- provision of clean toilets suitable for foreign tourists and handicapped people; and
- staff training program (tourist service, operation of equipment, language, inspection trip abroad, practices, etc.).

(5) Taxi Stops and Parking

Provision of taxi stops in order to encourage tourists to take a walking visit at ease, and tourist coach parking for waiting for the passengers during their site visits. The location of provided taxi stops will be indicated in the tourist map in order to make this component efficient.

- provision of taxi stops with sign and shelter at major tourist nodes; and
- improvement of tour coach parking including pavement, marking, landscaping and lighting (approximately 1,500 sq.m near Bab Sharqi and 750 sq.m near Hijaz Station).

(6) Hijaz Railway Exhibition

Provision of the interpretation and exhibition of the historic Hijaz railway in Hijaz Station including the presentation of historical locomotives and coaches.

- provision of necessary modern presentation equipment and interpretative devices (panels, models, etc.);
- provision of clean toilets suitable for foreign tourists and handicapped people; and
- landscaping.

Figure 18.2.2 Barada Green Promenade (1)

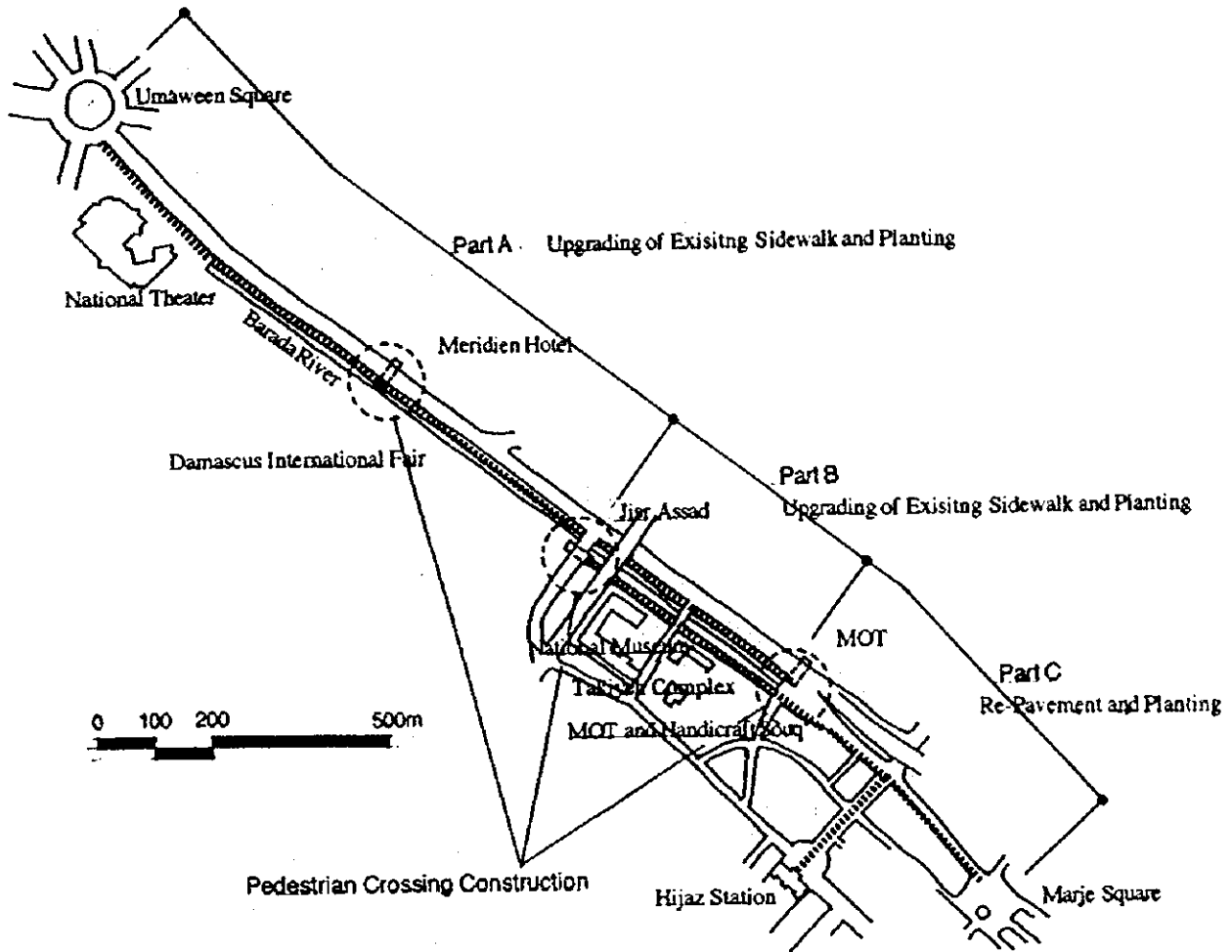
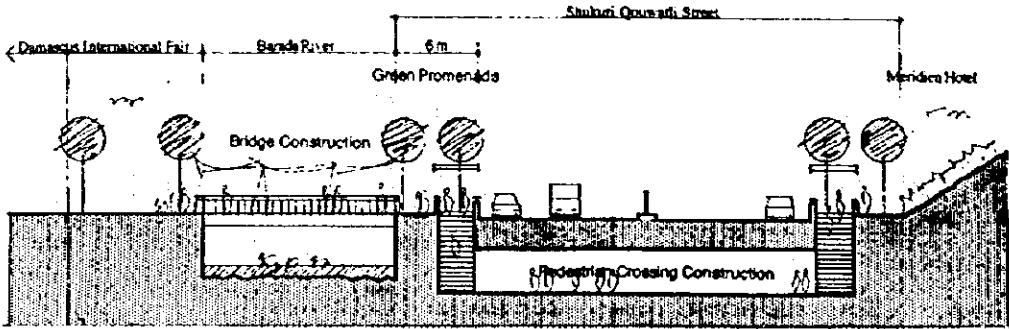


Figure 18.2.3 Barada Green Promenade (2)

Part A Section



Part B Plan

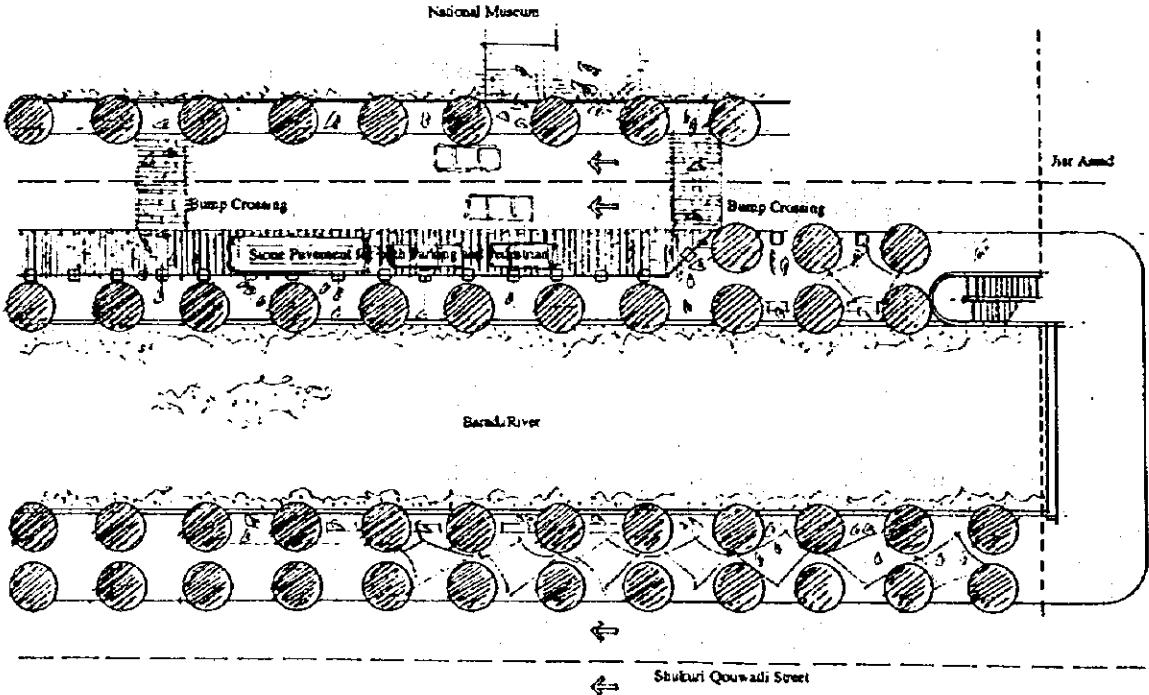


Figure 18.2.4 Tourist Trails - Sarouja Street

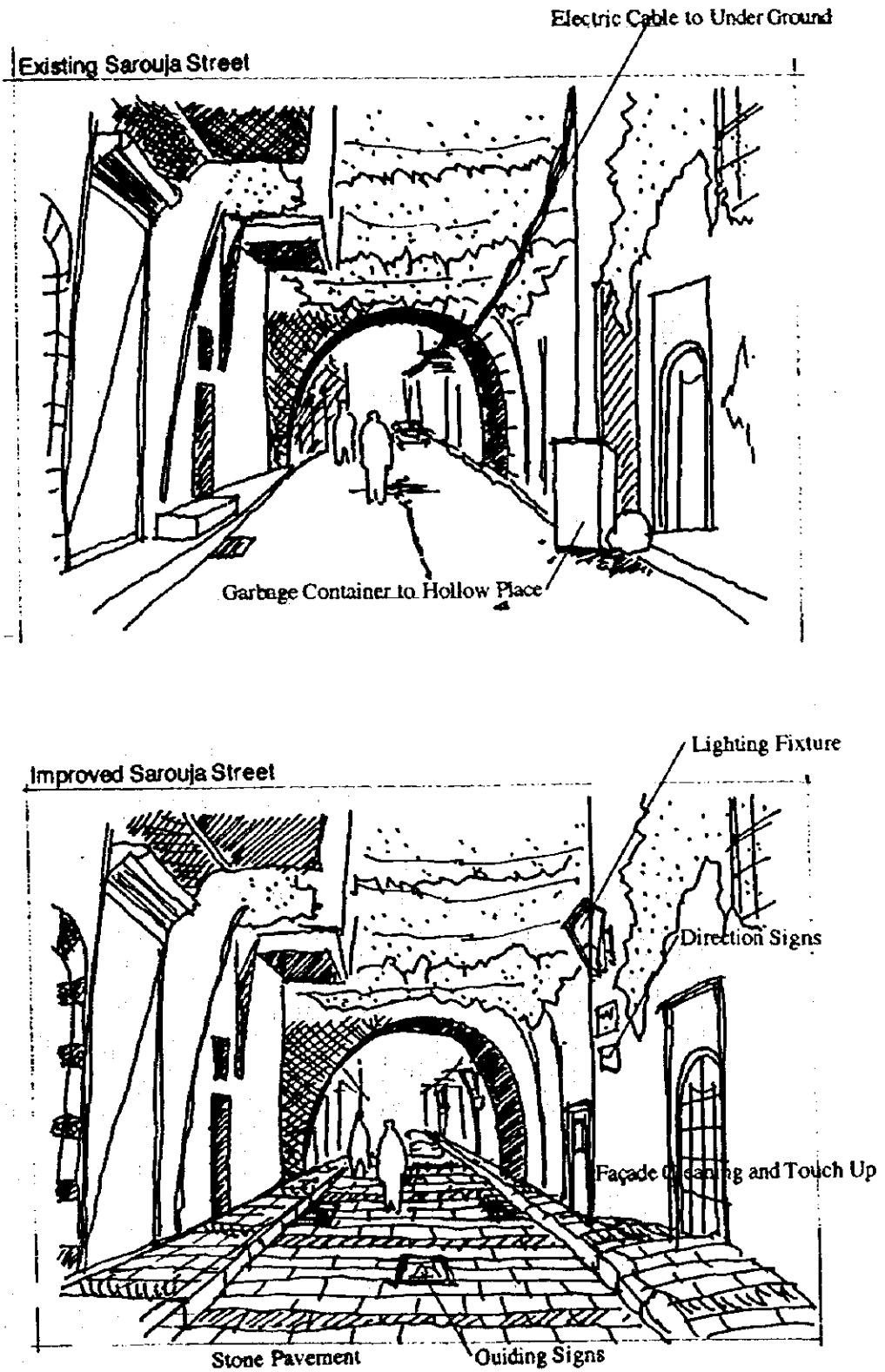
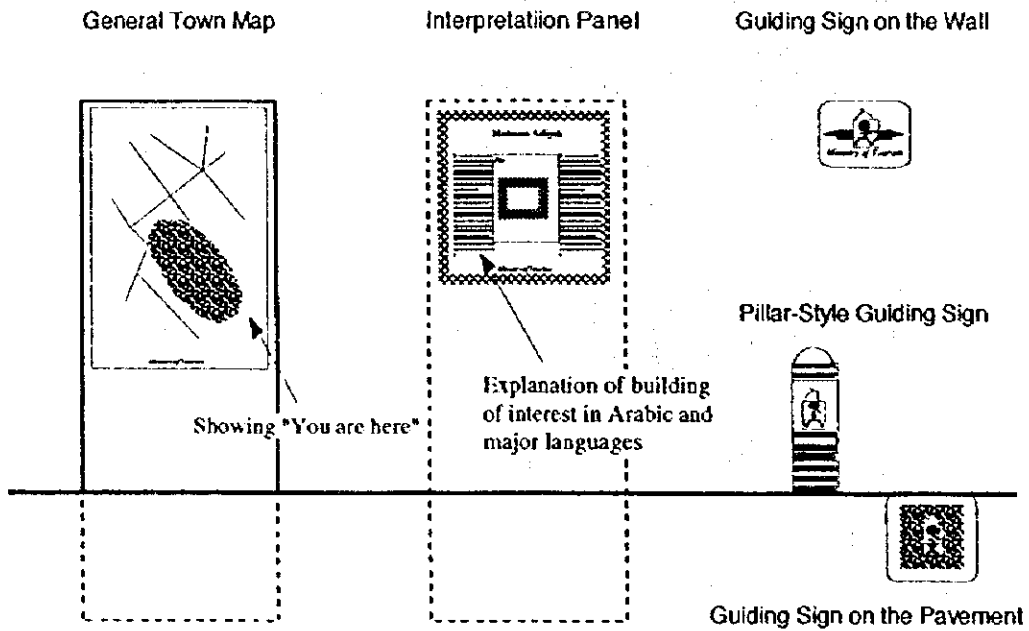


Figure 18.2.5 Tourist Trails Signs and Taxi Stops

Signs for Tourist Trails



Taxi Stop and Shelter

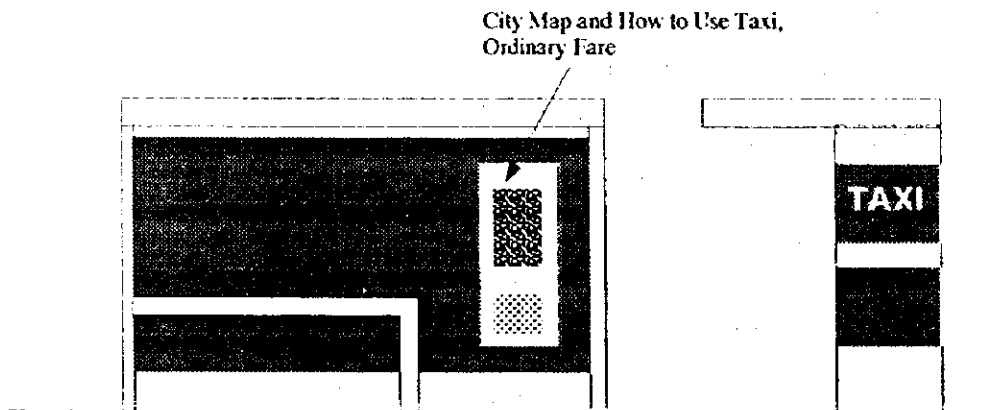


Figure 18.2.6 Old Damascus Visitor Center

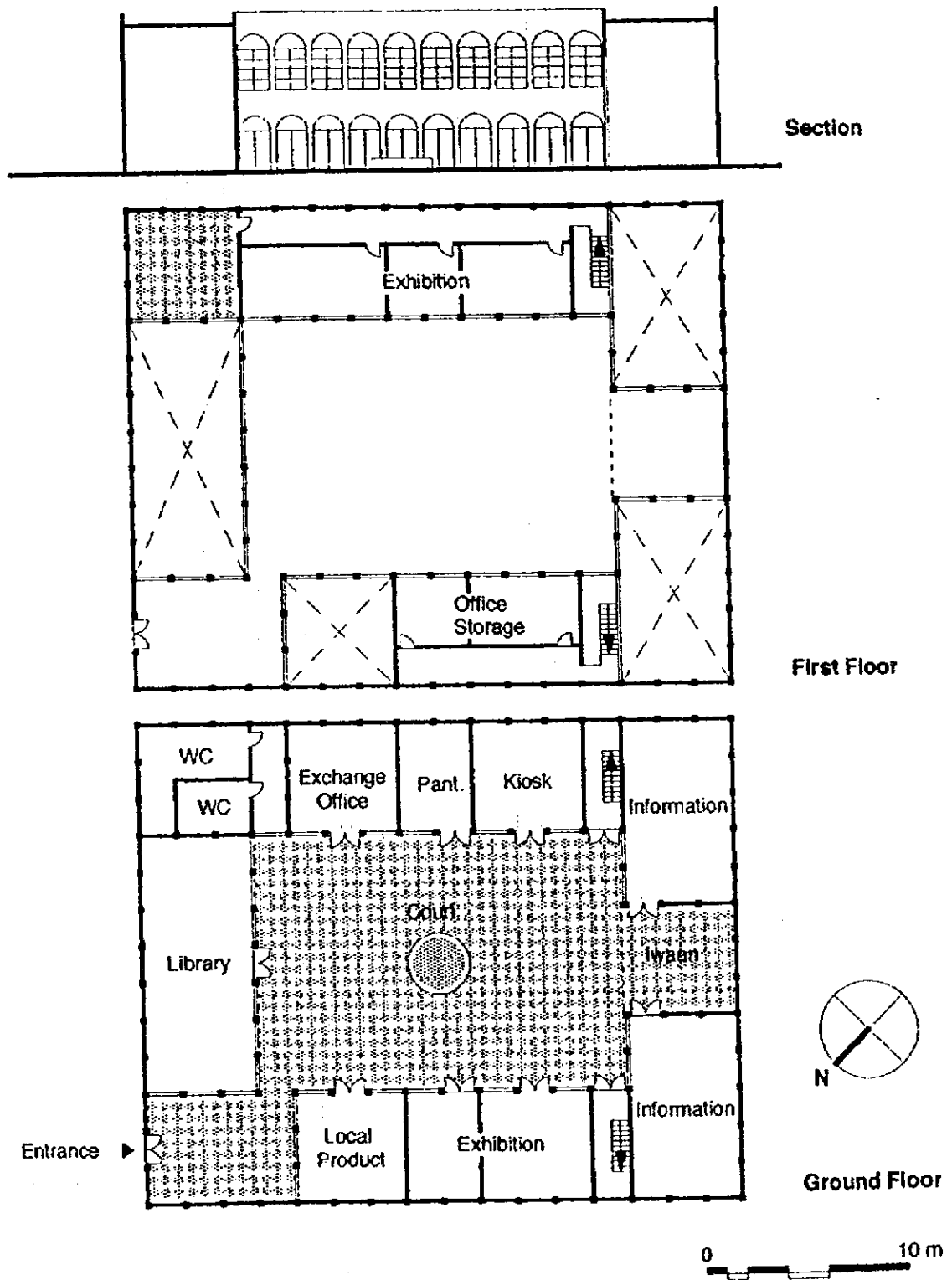


Figure 18.2.7 Hijaz Station Exhibition



18.3 Project B: Old Hama of Norias

18.3.1 Project Concept

(1) Objectives

The objective of the project is to induce present transit tourists to stay longer, and make them spend more time and money in Hama by the following measures:

- to add and create new tourist attractions; and
- to provide comfortable circular walking trails connecting various tourist attractions in the city.

(2) Related Projects

DGAM operates Hama Museum which was converted from 18th century Azem Palace, one of the masterpieces of Syrian architecture. The museum is now being restored by DGAM and expected to increase the attractiveness of the museum. DGAM is also establishing a new museum in a suburb of the city.

Hama Municipality has a specialized directorate for the rehabilitation of water wheels (Norias). They continuously maintain all water wheels and canals in the city, and Orontes river itself. They are also preserving unique technology and skills of large wooden water wheels inherited from fathers to sons.

This project is complementary to all the above on-going effort and trying to support them from the tourism view point.

18.3.2 Project Components

This project is composed of the following 5 components:

1. Tourist Trails;
2. Tourist Information Center Upgrading;
3. Visitor Center in Khan Rustam Pasha;
4. Noria Park and Museum; and
5. Bridge Expansion and Construction.

(1) Tourist Trails

Provision of comfortable tourist walking trails provided with international standard tourist signs and amenity, connecting various existing and planned tourist attractions: Four Norias, Clock Tower and Mohafazat building, Khan Rustam Pasha, Souq Al Tawil, Azem Palace, An Nouri Mosque, Citadel, planned Noria Museum with Noria Bab Al Nahr and Noria Mohamediyeh, etc.

- provision of standardized tourist direction signs and interpretative panels;
- improvement of pavement including underground wiring, piping and drainage, lighting fixture for the selected part of trails (Tawafra Quarter including Hammam Athmaniyeh - Azem Palace - An Nouri Mosque - Jisr Assad, Souq Al Tawil, etc.);

- cleaning and touch-up of building façades related to the tourist trails component;
- upgrading of existing public toilets including provision of standardized signs (pictograph);
- landscaping and provision of rest space with shades, benches, etc. at appropriate intervals; and
- production of free handout trail map.

(2) Tourist Information Center Upgrading

Upgrading of the existing tourist information of Hama in order to provide necessary tourist information of international standards for all tourist sites around Hama.

- expansion of the existing building (approximately 200 sq.m);
- provision of necessary modern presentation equipment and interpretative devices (panels, models, audio-visual devices, etc.);
- provision of clean toilets suitable for foreign tourists and handicapped people; and
- staff training program (tourist service, operation of equipment, language, inspection trip abroad, practices, etc.).

(3) Visitor Center in Khan Rustam Pasha

Establishment of a Visitor Center in Khan Rustam Pasha which was restored by MOT as a handicraft souq, in order to provide necessary and useful tourist information for the visit of Hama city.

- interior work;
- provision of necessary modern presentation equipment and interpretative devices (panels, models, audio-visual devices, etc.);
- provision of clean toilets suitable for foreign tourists and handicapped people;
- provision of other tourist services: e.g. foreign currency exchange office, exhibition of recommended souvenirs and local products;
- landscaping in and around the Khan Rustam Pasha; and
- staff training program (tourist service, operation of equipment, language, inspection trip abroad, practices, etc.).

(4) Noria Park and Museum

Creation of a new tourist attraction which will fully interpret Norias in the history and human life, technology and skills inherited, etc. in the planned Municipal park which is located along Orontes river adjacent to Noria Bab Al Nahr and Noria Mohamediyeh.

- development and landscaping of the Noria Park and Museum in the municipality-owned site (approximately 3.0 ha);
- construction of the Noria Museum (600 sq.m) and two cafeterias (600 sq.m in total), open theater, landscaping and provision of shades, benches, fountains etc.;
- presentation of Noria Bab Al Nahr and Noria Mohamediyeh (the largest wooden water wheel in the world) with provision of interpretative panels and lighting facilities;
- presentation of the existing grind house (tahune) of Noria Bab Al Nahr with restoration and provision of interpretative panels and materials inside;
- restoration of water wheels and canals of major Norias in the city;

- provision of clean toilets suitable for foreign tourists and handicapped people;
- provision of car parking; and
- staff training program (curator, tourist service, operation of equipment, language, inspection trip abroad, practices, etc.).

(5) Bridge Expansion and Construction

Expansion and construction of traditional stone bridges over Orontes river in order to improve walk way network.

- expansion of Jisr Kelani bridge by constructing another adjacent stone bridge of same shape and 6 m width for exclusively vehicles (the existing Jisr Kelani bridge will be exclusively for pedestrian), and ;
- construction of other 2 pedestrian stone bridges of 30 m long each, which will be a part of tourist trails.

Figure 18.3.1 Old Hama of Norias Project Map

OLD HAMA OF NORIAS

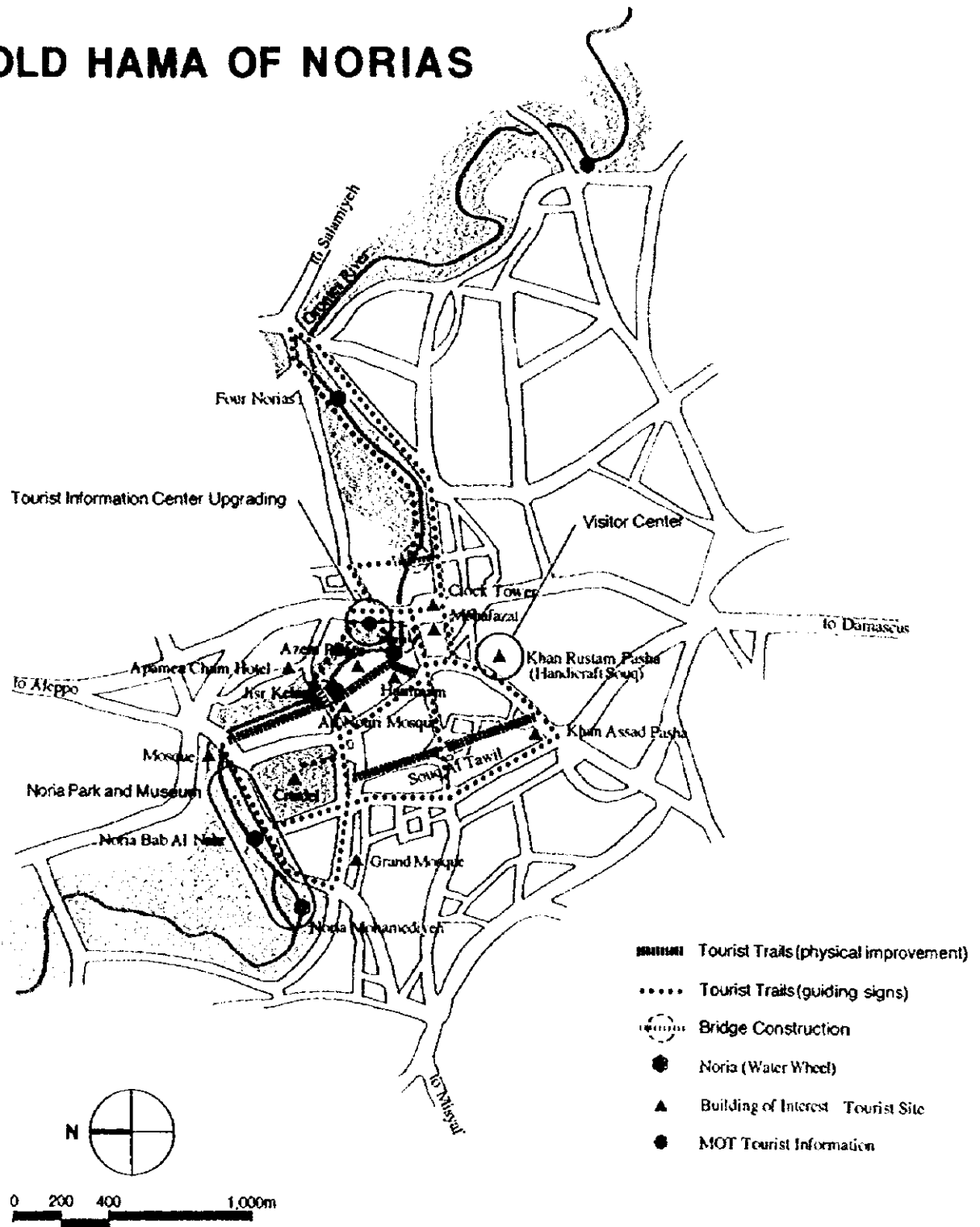


Figure 18.3.2 Tourist Trails - Tawafra

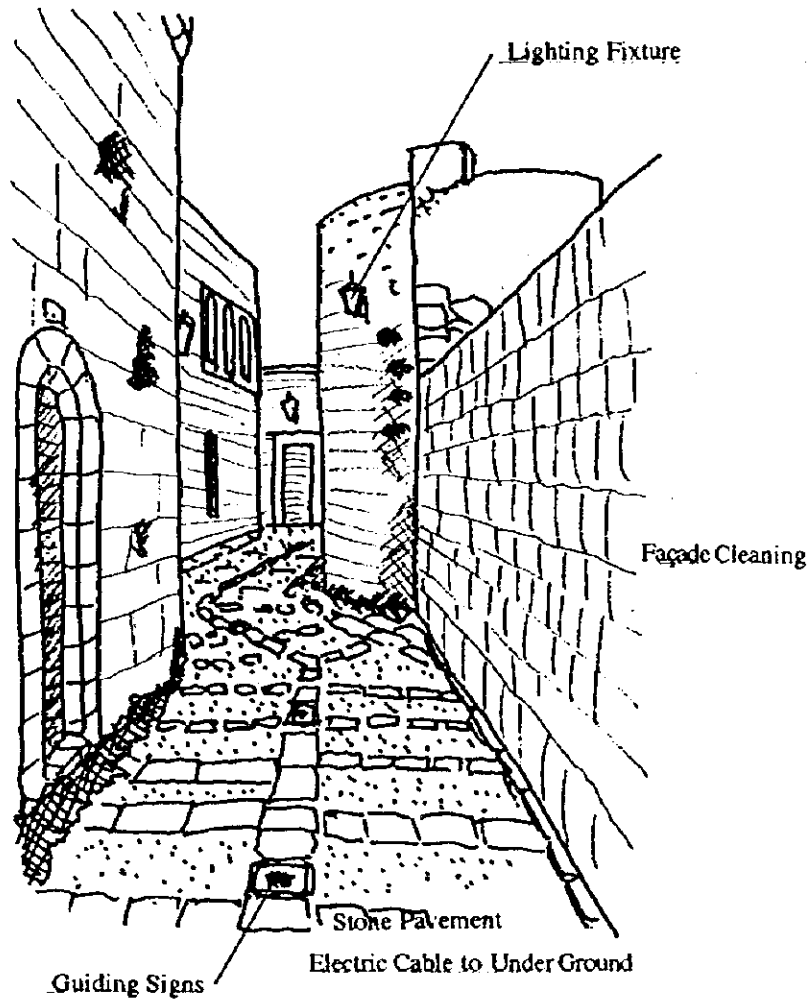


Figure 18.3.3 Tourist Information Center Upgrading

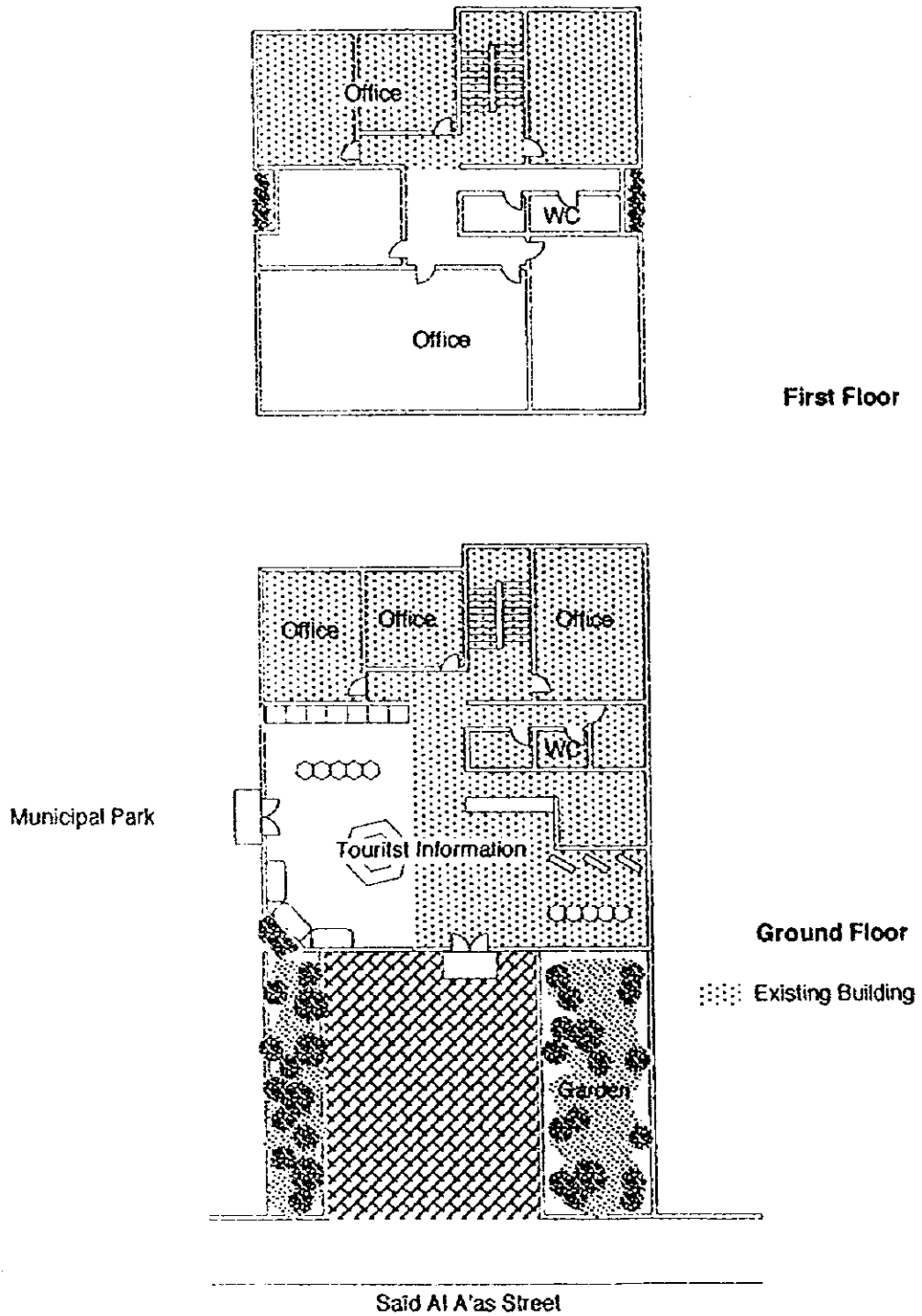


Figure 18.3.4 Visitor Center in Khan Rustam Pasha

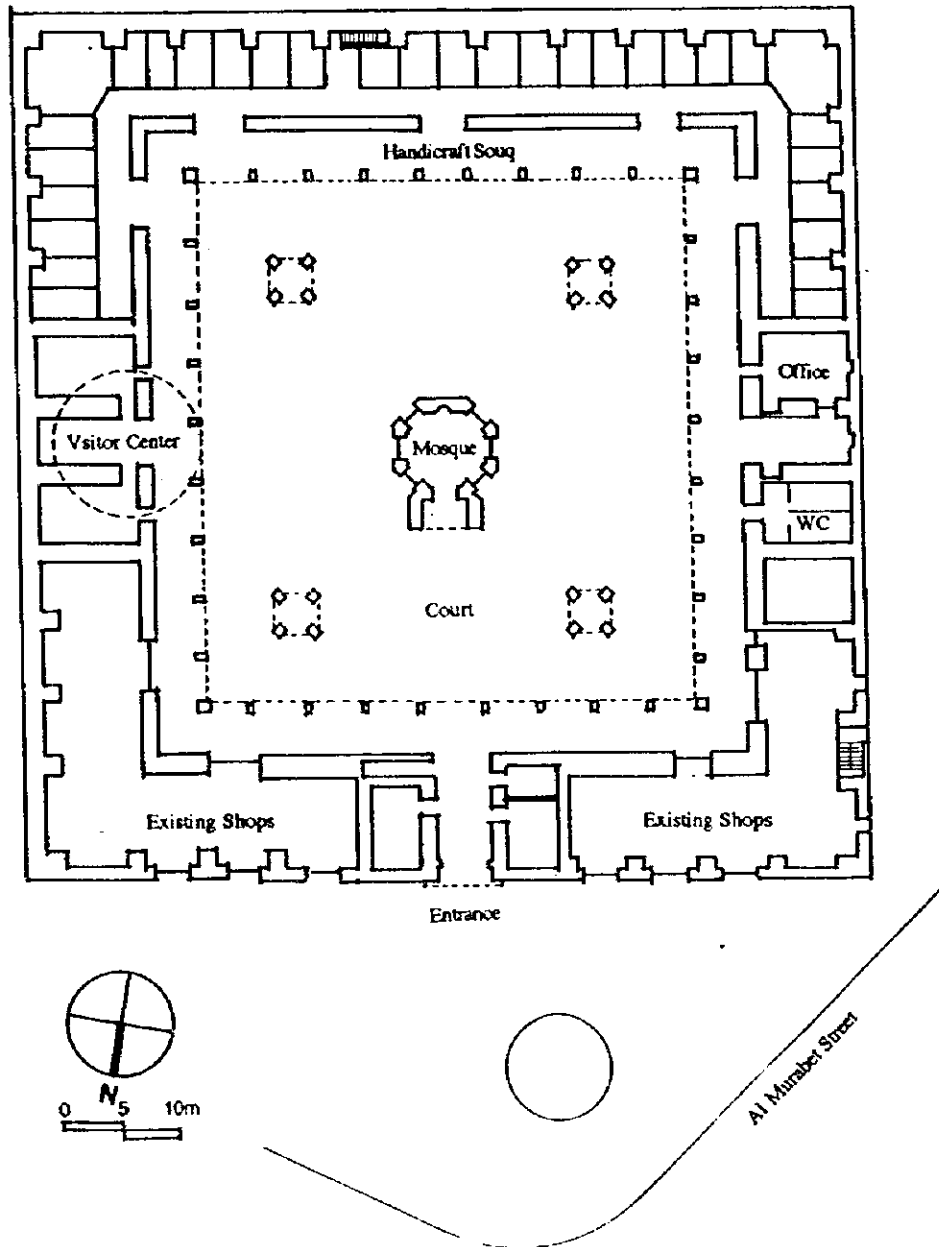


Figure 18.3.5 Noria Park and Museum

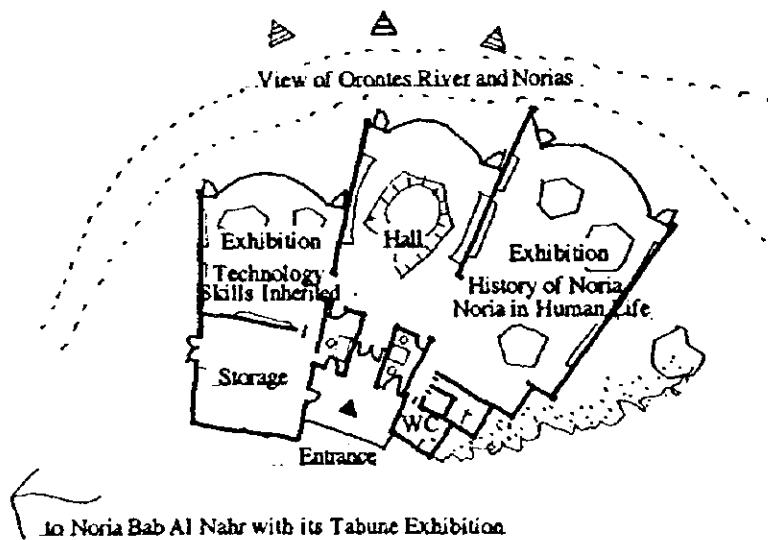
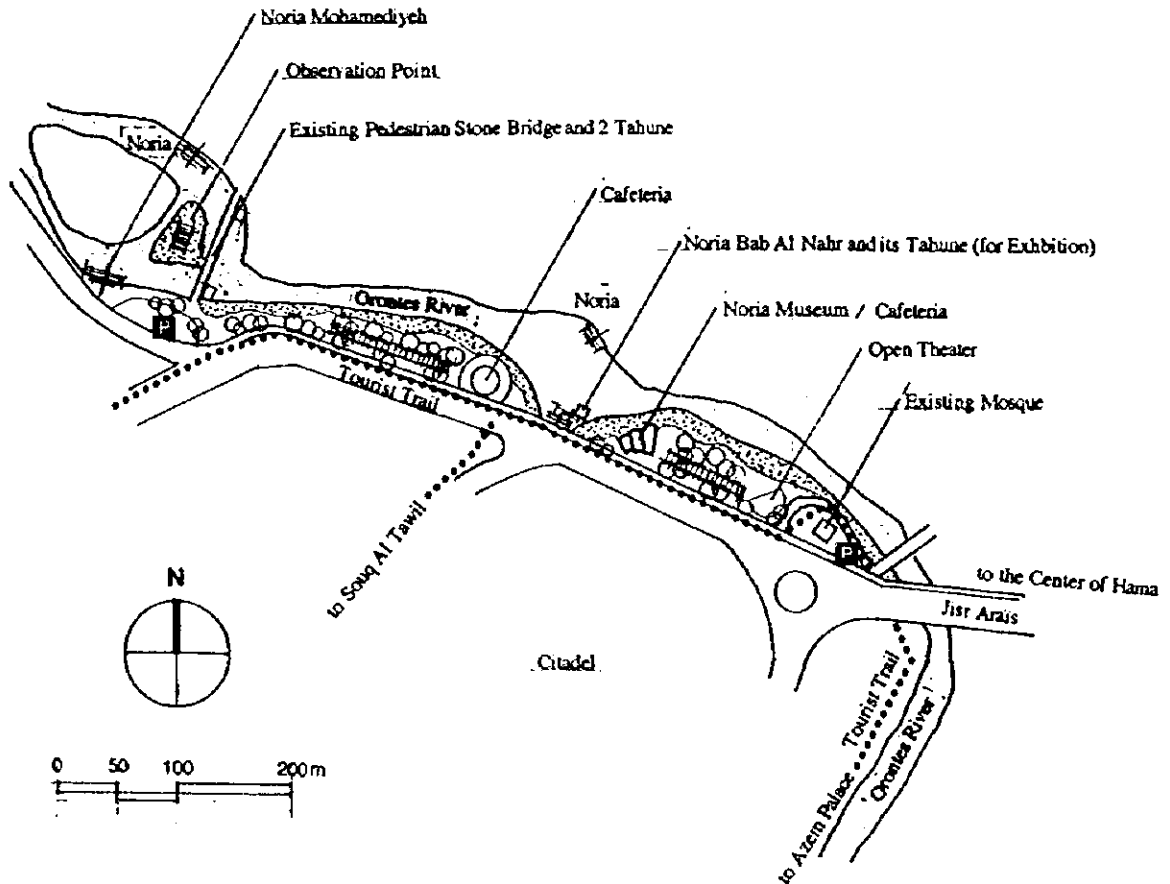
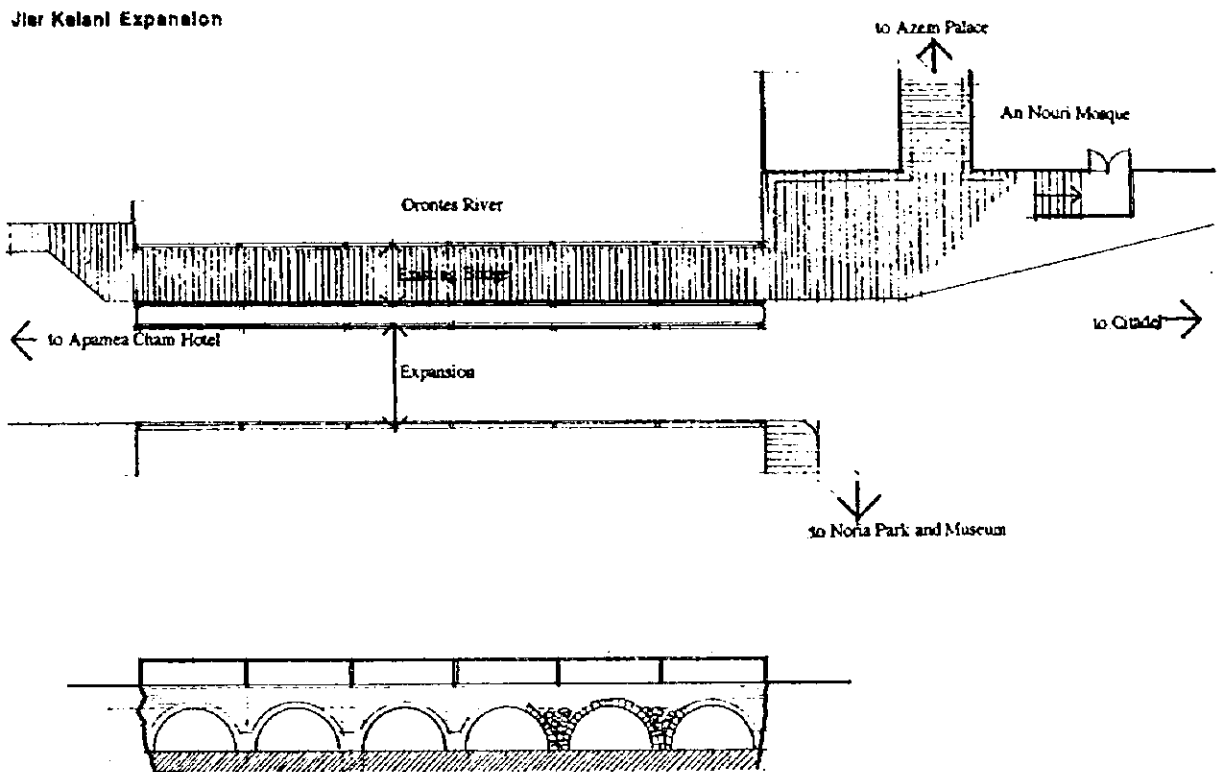


Figure 18.3.6 Jisr Kelani Bridge Expansion



18.4 Project C: Historic Tartous-Arwad

18.4.1 Project Concept

(1) Objectives

The objective of the project is to develop Arwad Island and Old Tartous as a combined tourism product and to attract more tourists to visit the island by the following measures:

- to provide comfortable circular walking trails connecting the various tourist attractions in Tartous and Arwad Island (including boat service);
- to improve the presentation of tourist attractions.

(2) Related Projects

There exists a pre-feasibility study of rehabilitation of Old Tartous by the Union of European Cities prepared last year, and the Municipality is now looking for funding sources. Tartous Municipality has been restoring Old Tartous by own fund in cooperation with MOT and DGAM, providing fairly good conditions. MOT provided light-up facilities for the restored part of Old Tartous. The operation is a part of a long term plan including evacuation of inhabitants, restoration of historical parts, creation of attractive products (e.g. operation of restored Hammam), etc.

DGAM operates Tartous Museum which was converted from an old cathedral of the crusaders, and Arwad Citadel Museum. Tartous museum displays interesting items excavated in Tartous and Amrit. Arwad Citadel Museum possesses Phoenician jars retrieved from the sea by a Japanese mission.

This project is complementary to all the above on-going effort and will support them from the tourism view point.

Regarding the local port in Tartous, there are several plans for overall expansion for the future: the one by MOTR from the view point of sand sedimentation, another one by Municipality from the view point of future urban development with land reclamation. None of them is likely to be implemented soon. The passenger pier construction which is a component of this plan is to fulfill the urgent needs of tourism development in Tartous and Arwad.

18.4.2 Project Components

This project is composed of the following 6 components:

1. Tourist Trails;
2. Tourist Information Center Upgrading;
3. Old Tartous Visitor Center;
4. Arwad Visitor Center;
5. Passenger Pier Construction; and
6. Solid Waste Management in Arwad.

(1) Tourist Trails

Provision of attractive tourist walking trails provided with international standard tourist signs and amenity, connecting various existing and planned tourist attractions in Tartous and Arwad: Old Tartous, Tartous Museum, Old Windmill, Fish Market, Tartous Beach, Arwad Visitor Center, Arwad Citadel, Wooden Boat Factory, etc.

- provision of standardized tourist direction signs and interpretative panels;
- improvement of pavement including underground wiring, piping and drainage, lighting fixture for the selected part of trails (around Old Tartous, Tartous Museum, etc.);
- cleaning and touch-up of building façades related to the restoration of pavement;
- upgrading of existing public toilets including provision of standardized signs (pictograph);
- landscaping and provision of rest space with shades, benches, etc. at appropriate intervals; and
- production of free handout trail map.

(2) Tourist Information Center Upgrading

Upgrading of the newly established tourist information center of Tartous to provide necessary tourist information for all tourist sites around Tartous;

- provision of necessary modern presentation equipment and interpretative devices (panels, models, audio-visual devices, etc.);
- provision of clean toilets suitable for foreign tourists and handicapped people; and
- staff training program (tourist service, operation of equipment, language, inspection trip abroad, practices, etc.).

(3) Old Tartous Visitor Center

Establishment of a Visitor Center in Old Tartous which used to be a fortress since the medieval period and was restored by Tartous Municipality to provide necessary and useful tourist information for the visit of Tartous and Arwad.

- interior work;
- provision of necessary modern presentation equipment and interpretative devices (panels, models, audio-visual devices, etc.);
- provision of clean toilets suitable for foreign tourists and handicapped people;
- provision of other tourist services: e.g. foreign currency exchange office, exhibition of recommended souvenirs and local products; and
- staff training program (tourist service, operation of equipment, language, inspection trip abroad, practices, etc.).

(4) Arwad Visitor Center

Establishment of Arwad Visitor Center in the MOT-owned land (approximately 5,000 sq.m) adjacent to the port, in order to interpret the history and life of Arwad including the traditional wooden boat building presentation.

- construction of a Visitor Center (approximately 600 sq.m) at MOT-owned site;
- provision of necessary modern presentation equipment and interpretative devices

- (panels, models, audio-visual devices, etc.);
- provision of clean toilets suitable for foreign tourists and handicapped people;
- provision of other tourist services: e.g. foreign currency exchange office, exhibition of recommended souvenirs and local products; and
- staff training program (tourist service, operation of equipment, language, inspection trip abroad, practices, etc.).

(5) Passenger Pier Improvement

Construction of exclusive passenger piers in the existing local ports of Tartous and Arwad in order to upgrade the boarding of passenger boats.

- construction of additional floating passenger piers; and
- improvement of local ports: pavement, lighting, landscaping, etc.

(6) Solid Waste Management in Arwad

Upgrading of the solid waste management system in Arwad in order to mitigate the visual impact of litter and to improve attractiveness of the island.

- introduction of a new waste disposal (advanced high-temperature incinerator, annual capacity of 3,500 t (10 t/day), no-fuel and advanced ventilated incineration type);
- education and awareness of new cleaning system; and
- staff training program.

Figure 18.4.1 Historic Tartous-Arwad Project Map

HISTORIC TARTOUS-ARWAD

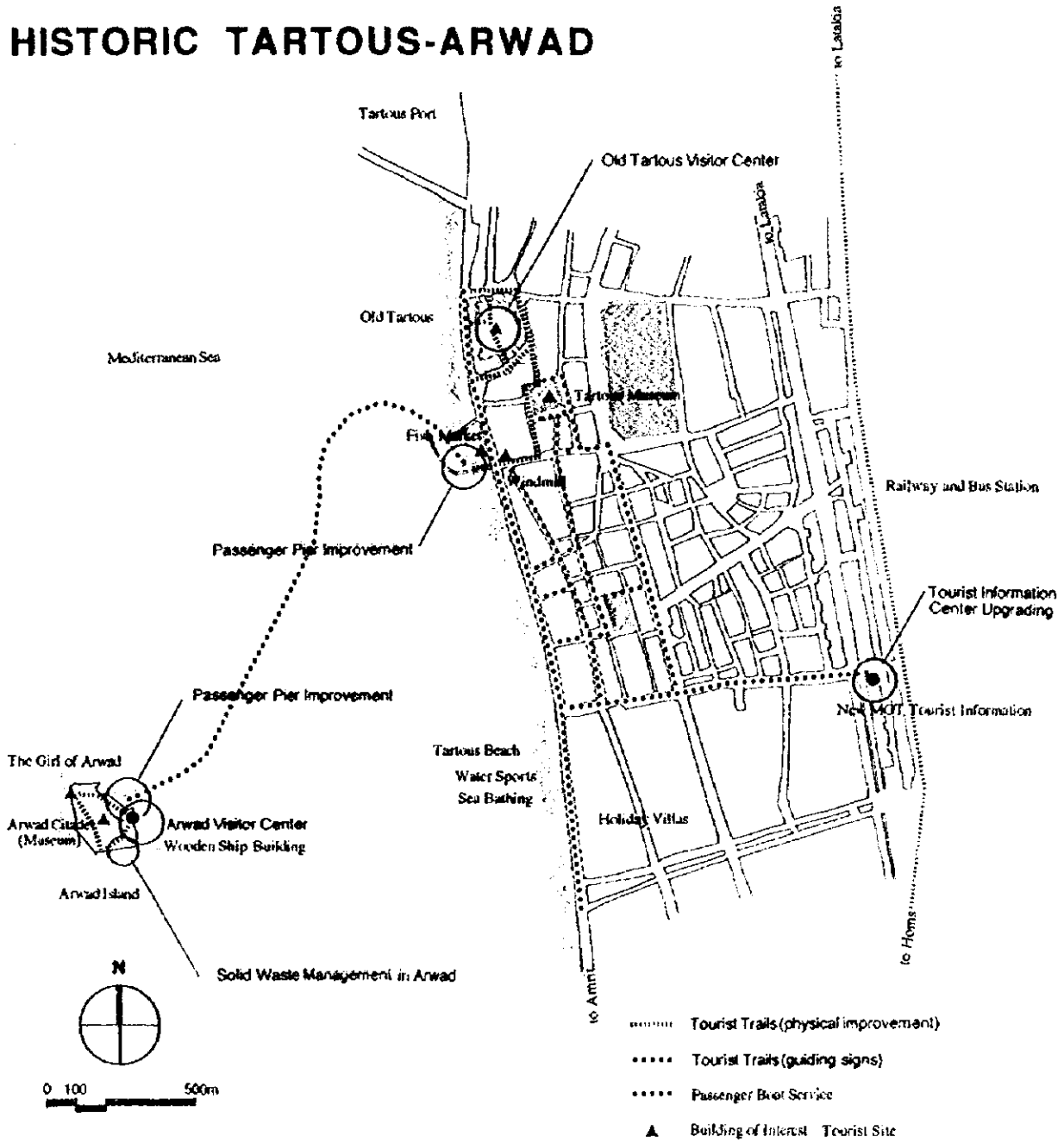


Figure 18.4.2 Old Tartous Visitor Center

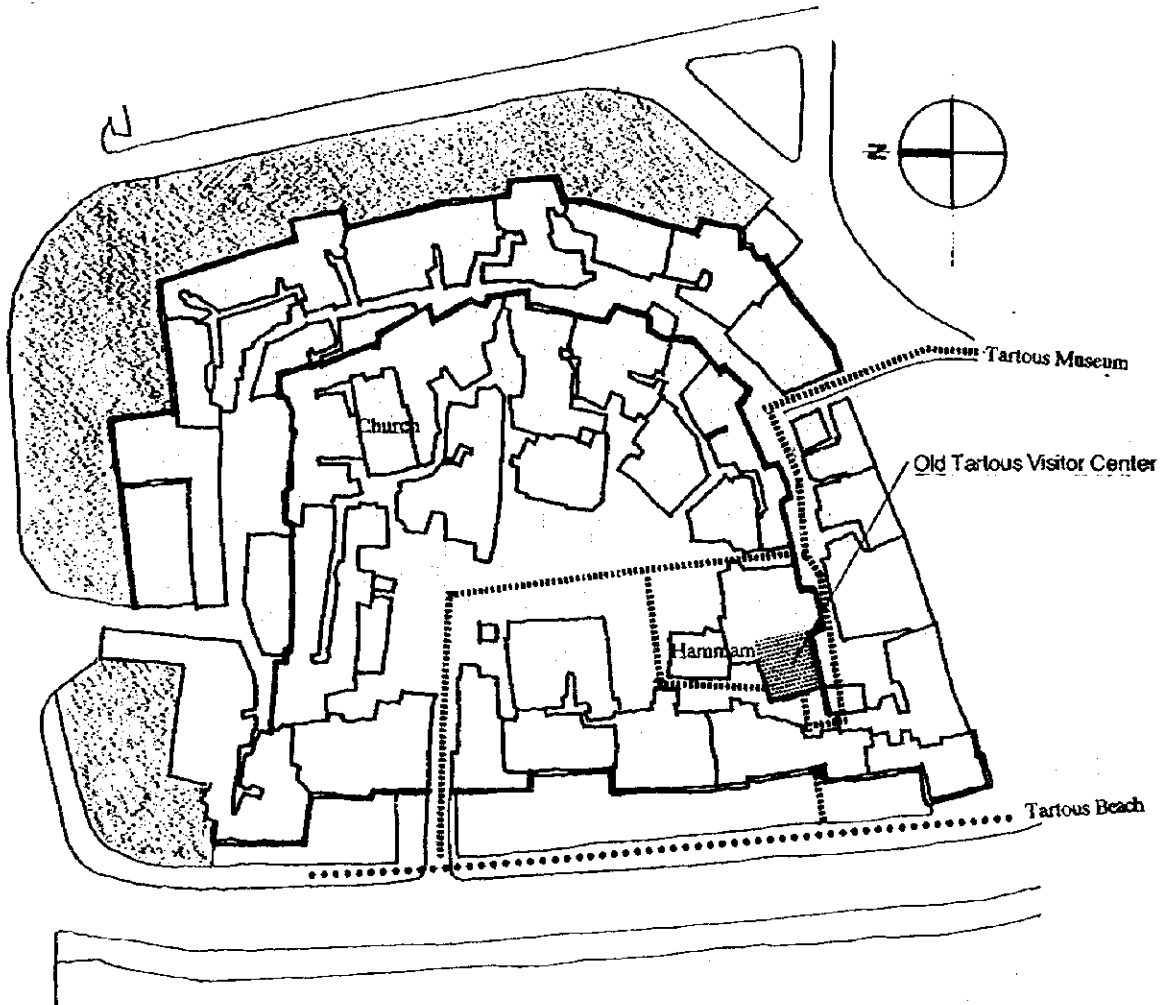


Figure 18.4.3 Arwad Visitor Center and Passenger Pier Construction

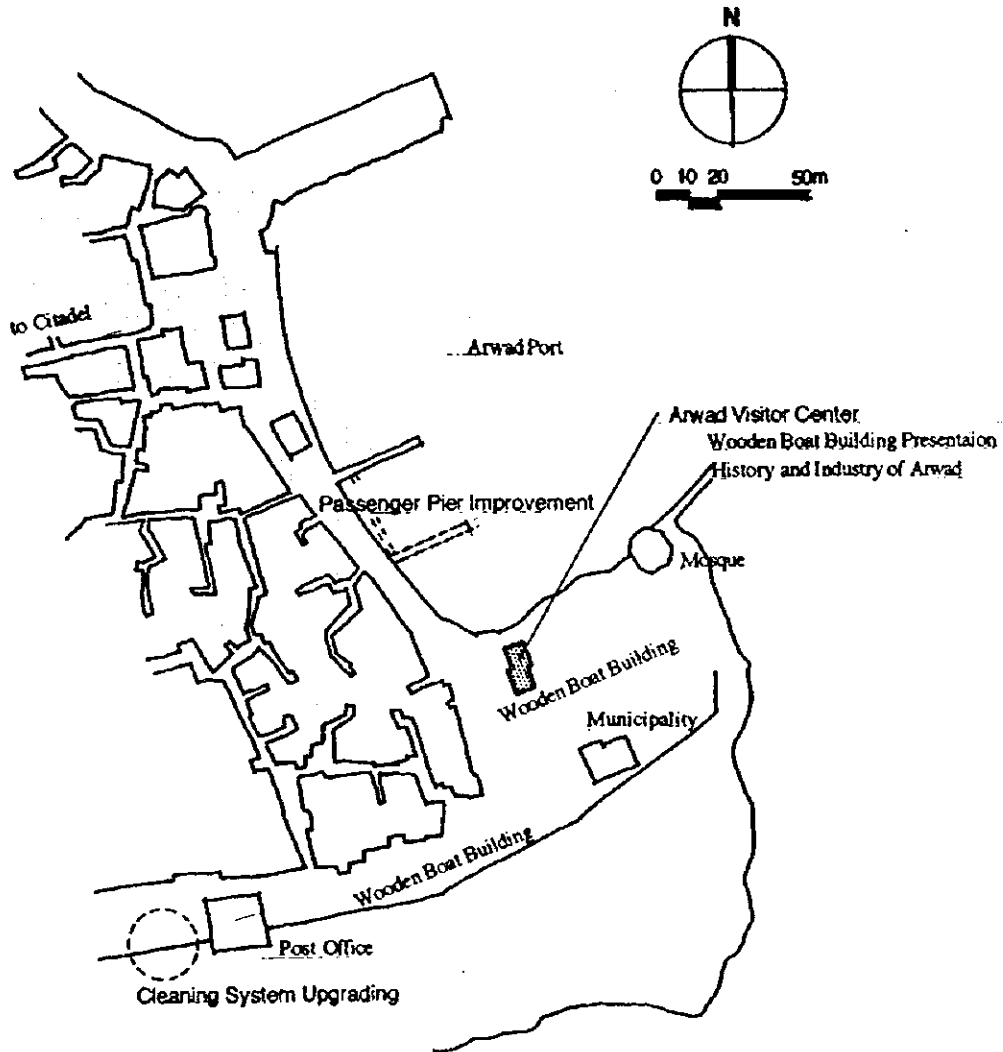
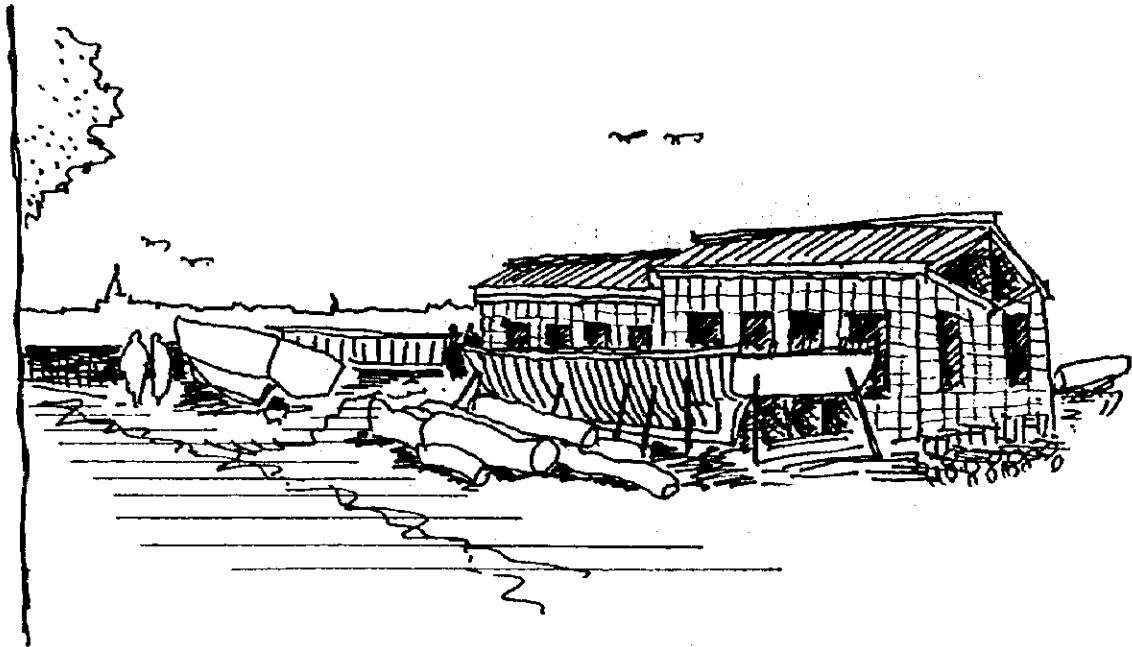


Figure 18.4.4 Arwad Visitor Center



18.5 Project D: Latakia Cultural Circuit

18.5.1 Project Concept

(1) Objectives

The objective of the project is to enhance Latakia's position in cultural tourism by the following measures:

- to upgrade the existing tourist information in the core city of Latakia;
- to strengthen linkage of three important cultural sites around Latakia (Salahdin Castle, Ugarit and Jableh) with the national cultural tour circuit; and
- to provide parking, tourist amenity and observation points at the appropriate points.

(2) Related Projects

DGAM operates Latakia Museum which displays important items discovered in the region including Ugarit, and also puts Salahdin Castle and Ugarit on view to the visitors provided with well informed personnel, visitor amenities (toilets, souvenir shop, telephone, etc.). DGAM is now restoring the amphitheater of Jableh to prepare for better presentation.

Therefore, cultural tourism resources around Latakia are considered to have more potential, if this project will provide better circuit routes.

18.5.2 Project Components

This Project is composed of the following 3 components:

1. Tourist Information Center Upgrading;
2. Access Road Improvement; and
3. Observation Points and Interpretation.

(1) Tourist Information Center Upgrading

Upgrading of the existing tourist information of Latakia to provide necessary tourist information of international standard for all tourist sites around Latakia;

- provision of necessary modern presentation equipment and interpretative devices (panels, models, audio-visual devices, etc.);
- provision of clean toilets suitable for foreign tourists and handicapped people; and
- staff training program (tourist service, operation of equipment, language, inspection trip abroad, practices, etc.).

(2) Access Road Improvement

- access road to Salahdin Castle in the approach from Aleppo-Latakia road (approximately 10 km long): full upgrading of existing road (9 m width of 7 m carriage way, asphalt pavement, safety measures, view points, etc.);
- access roads to Salahdin Castle, Ugarit and Jableh in the approach from Latakia (approximately 80 km long in total): partial improvement of the existing roads (9

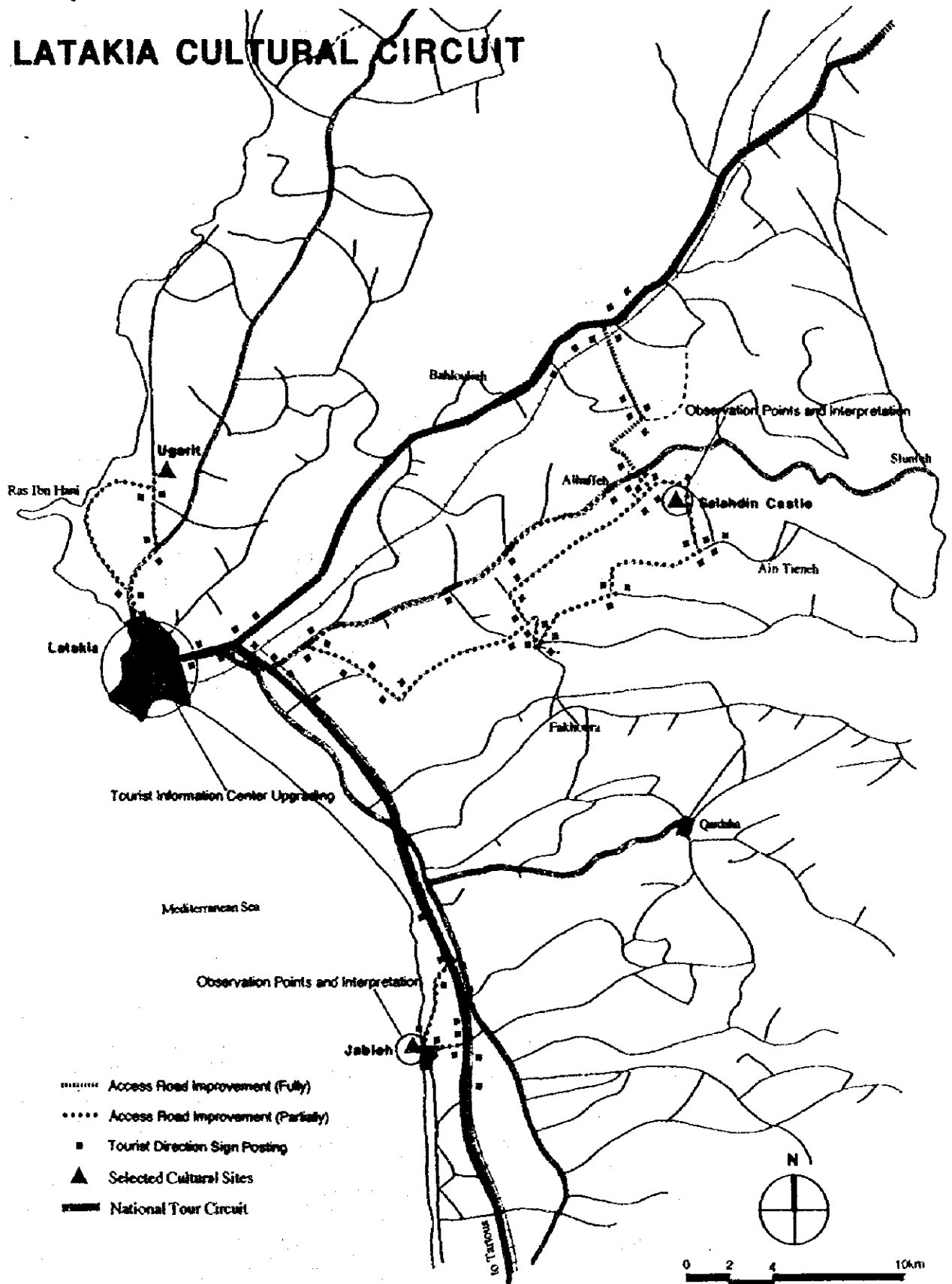
- m width of 7 m carriage way, asphalt pavement, safety measures, view points, etc.);
and
- provision of tourist direction signs under the nationwide "Tourist-Friendly Syria" project.

(3) Observation Points and Interpretation

- provision of a castle observation point with parking where visitors can fully appreciate views of the Salahdin Castle;
- provision of a observation point of the Mediterranean Littoral in Jableh with interpretative panels of its Phoenician history and parking;
- provision of tourist amenity.
(Interpretation facilities of Ugarit will be implemented by EU)

Figure 18.5.1 Latakia Cultural Circuit Project Map

LATAKIA CULTURAL CIRCUIT



18.6 Project E: Aleppo the Silk Road

18.6.1 Project Concept

(1) Objectives

The objective of the project is to upgrade the tourist attraction of Aleppo, and as a result to strengthen the role of the second tourism core in Syria, in collaboration with the ongoing rehabilitation project of Old Aleppo by the Municipality, by the following measures:

- to upgrade tourist information services and presentation of the tourist attractions;
- to provide comfortable walking trails connecting major tourist attractions; and
- to provide taxi stops and parking at major tourist nodes.

(2) Related Projects

Aleppo Municipality is now executing rehabilitation project of Old Aleppo by the assistance of the Arab Fund and German GTZ. They made comprehensive surveys of Old Aleppo and are now focusing on an action area near Bab Qinesrin where the proposed visitor center will be located, to improve urban infrastructure.

DGAM operates Aleppo National Museum which is one of the best museums in Syria and located just in front of the existing MOT Tourist Information Center, and Aleppo Citadel, around which this project will improve landscape, tourist amenities and pavement.

EU is planning to provide shortly interpretation panels in Aleppo Citadel. The detail is not fixed yet, however, the project will surely increase tourism value of Aleppo Citadel.

This project is complementary to all the above on-going efforts and supports them from the tourism view point.

18.6.2 Project Components

This project is composed of the following 4 components:

1. Tourist Information Center Upgrading;
2. Old Souq Visitor Center;
3. Tourist Trails; and
4. Taxi Stops and Parking.

(1) Tourist Information Center Upgrading

Upgrading of the existing MOT information center in front of the National Museum (or at a convenient place) as the gateway tourist information center covering all Aleppo zone and all Syria as well.

- provision of necessary modern presentation equipment and interpretative devices (panels, models, audio-visual devices, etc.);
- provision of clean toilets suitable for foreign tourists and handicapped people; and
- staff training program (tourist service, operation of equipment, language, inspection trip abroad, practices, etc.).

(2) Old Souq Visitor Center

Establishment of the Old Souq Visitor Center in the existing MOT-owned Khan Shuna (an old caravansary now used as Handicraft Souq) and Bimarstan Argoun (an old hospital building erected during 14th century now used as traditional dance presentation house) in combination as a twin facility.

Khan Shuna:

- upgrading of the existing tourist information by provision of modern tourist information devices (touch screen information, panels, audio-visual devices, etc.) in order to provide necessary and useful information for the visit of Old Souq of Aleppo.

Bimarstan Argoun:

- partial restoration and cleaning of façade;
- upgrading of the traditional dance presentation facilities by provision of modern audio and lighting facilities; and
- provision of modern interpretation and exhibition of Old Aleppo (panels, models, audio-visual devices, etc.)

for the both:

- provision of clean toilets suitable for foreign tourists and handicapped people;
- provision of other tourist services according to the availability of space: e.g. foreign currency exchange office, exhibition of recommended souvenirs and local products; and
- staff training program (tourist service, operation of equipment, language, inspection trip abroad, practices, etc.).

(3) Tourist Trails

Provision of comfortable tourist walking trails provided with international standard tourist signs and amenity, and connecting the various existing and planned tourist attractions in Aleppo: Tourist Information, National Museum, Baron Hotel, Jdaidah Quarter, Old Souq with its major gates, Citadel, Hammam Yarbougha, etc.

- provision of standardized tourist direction signs and interpretative panels along the trails;
- improvement of pavement, underground wiring, piping and drainage, lighting fixture, etc. (around Citadel and Bab Antakia street, etc.)
- provision of lighting facilities for the Citadel light-up and landscaping; and
- construction of a new pedestrian crossing at the junction of Bab Antakia street and Ibrahim Hanano street where the traffic is heavy;
- cleaning and touch-up of building façades related to the tourist trails component;
- upgrading of existing public toilets including provision of standardized signs (pictograph);
- landscaping and provision of rest space with shades, benches, etc. at appropriate intervals; and
- production of free handout trail route map.

(4) Taxi Stops and Parking

Provision of taxi stops in order to encourage tourists to take a walking visit at ease, and tourist coach parking for waiting for the passengers during their site visits. The location of provided taxi stops will be indicated in the tourist map in order to make this component efficient.

- provision of taxi stops with sign and shelter at major tourist nodes; and
- improvement of tour coach parking including pavement, marking, landscaping and lighting (approximately 1,500 sq.m near Aleppo Citadel and 6,000 sq.m near Bab Qinesrin).

Figure 18.6.1 Aleppo the Silk Road Project Map

ALEPPO THE SILK ROAD

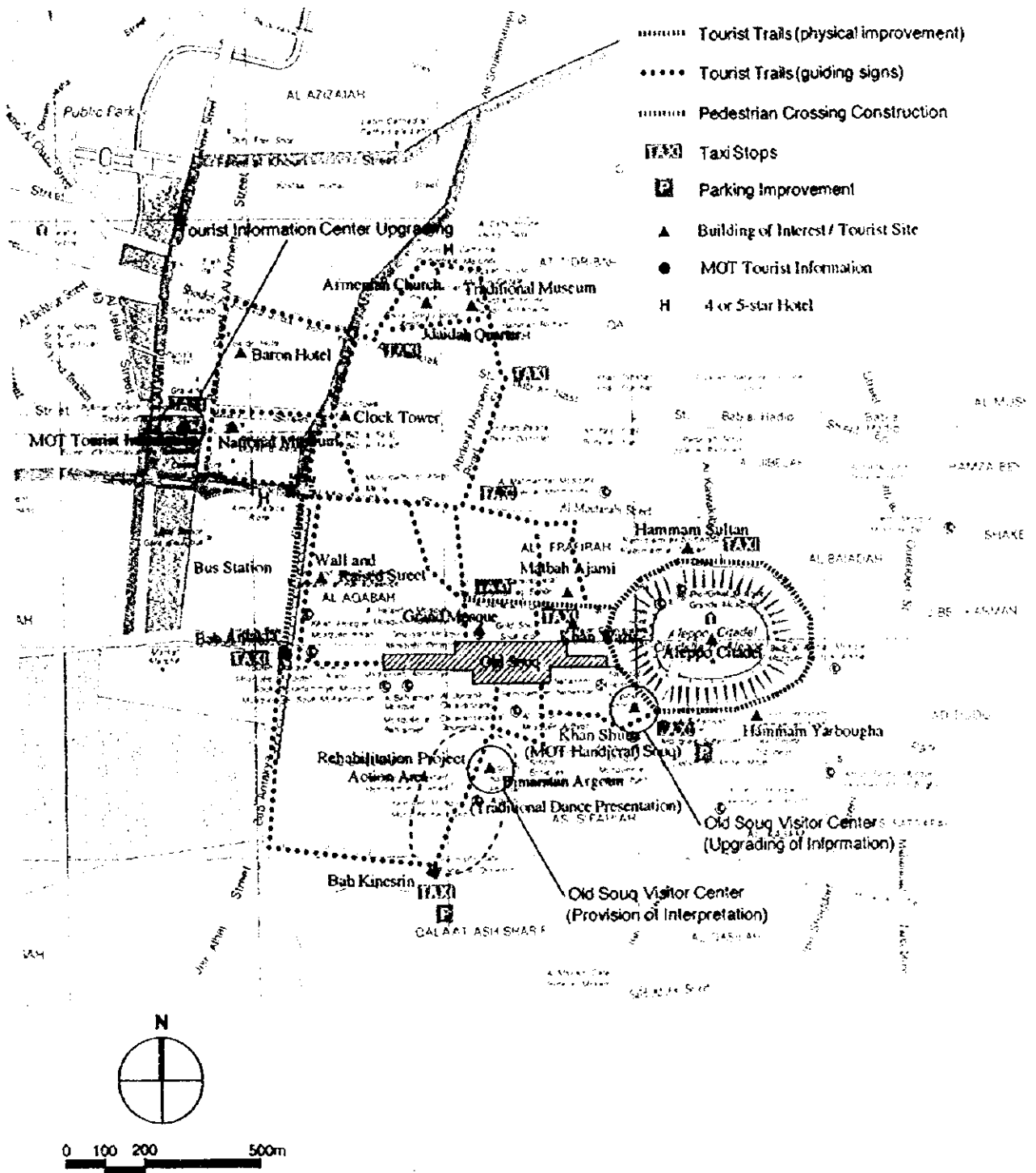


Figure 18.6.2 Tourist Information Center Upgrading

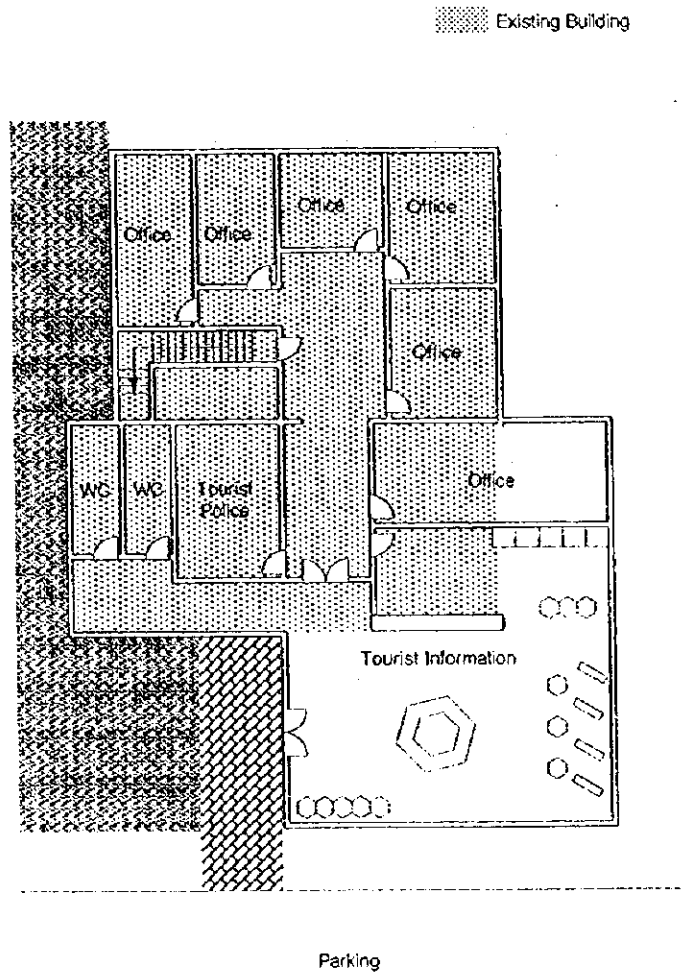


Figure 18.6.3 Old Souq Visitor Center

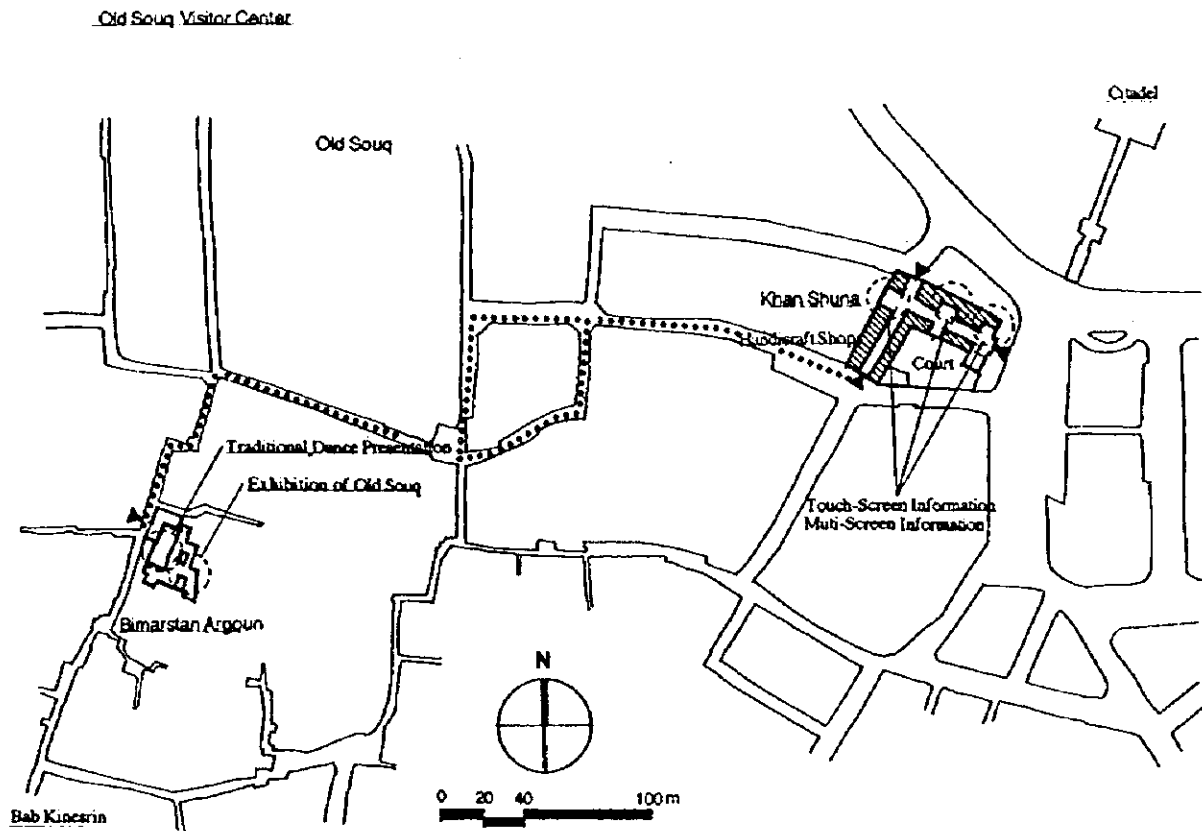


Figure 18.6.4 Old Souq Visitor Center - Bimarstan Argoun

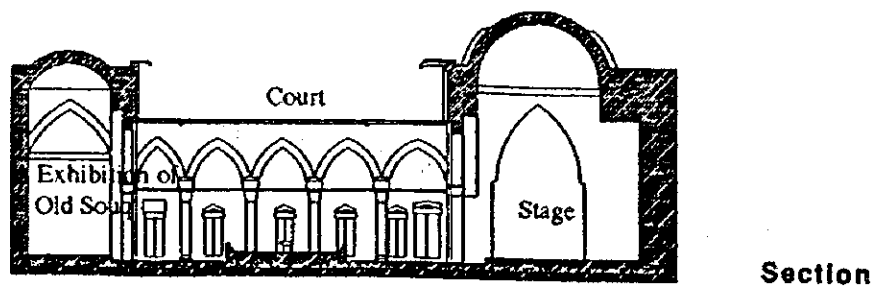
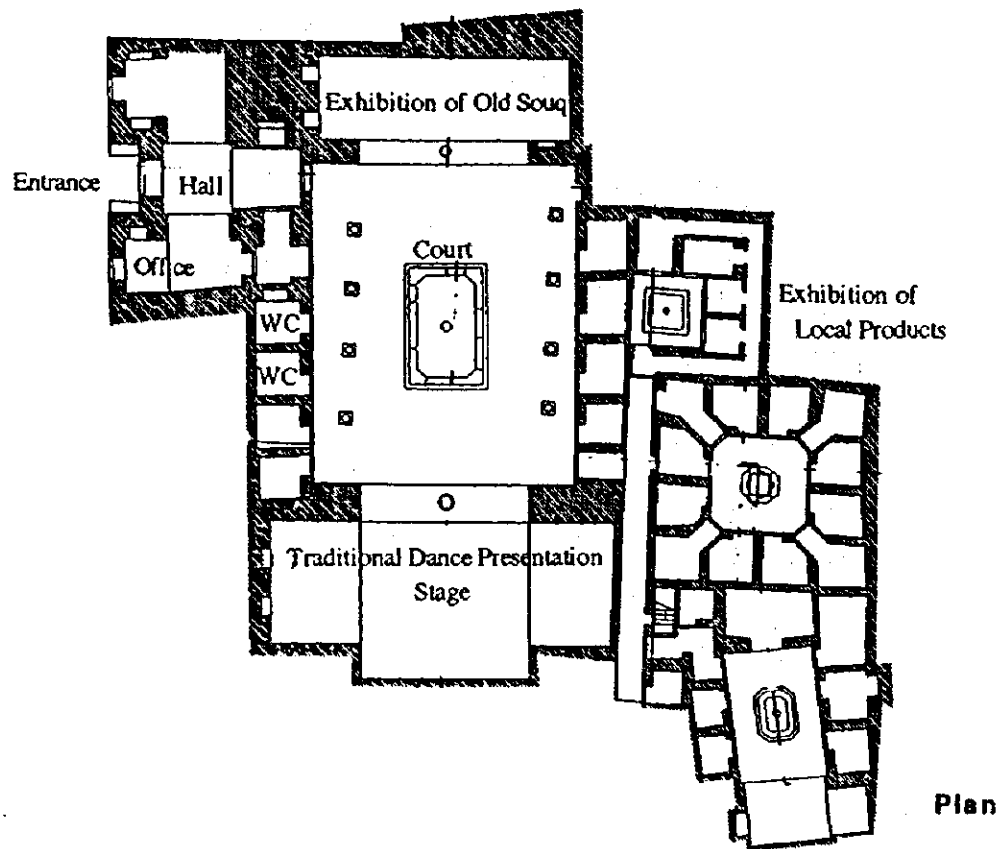
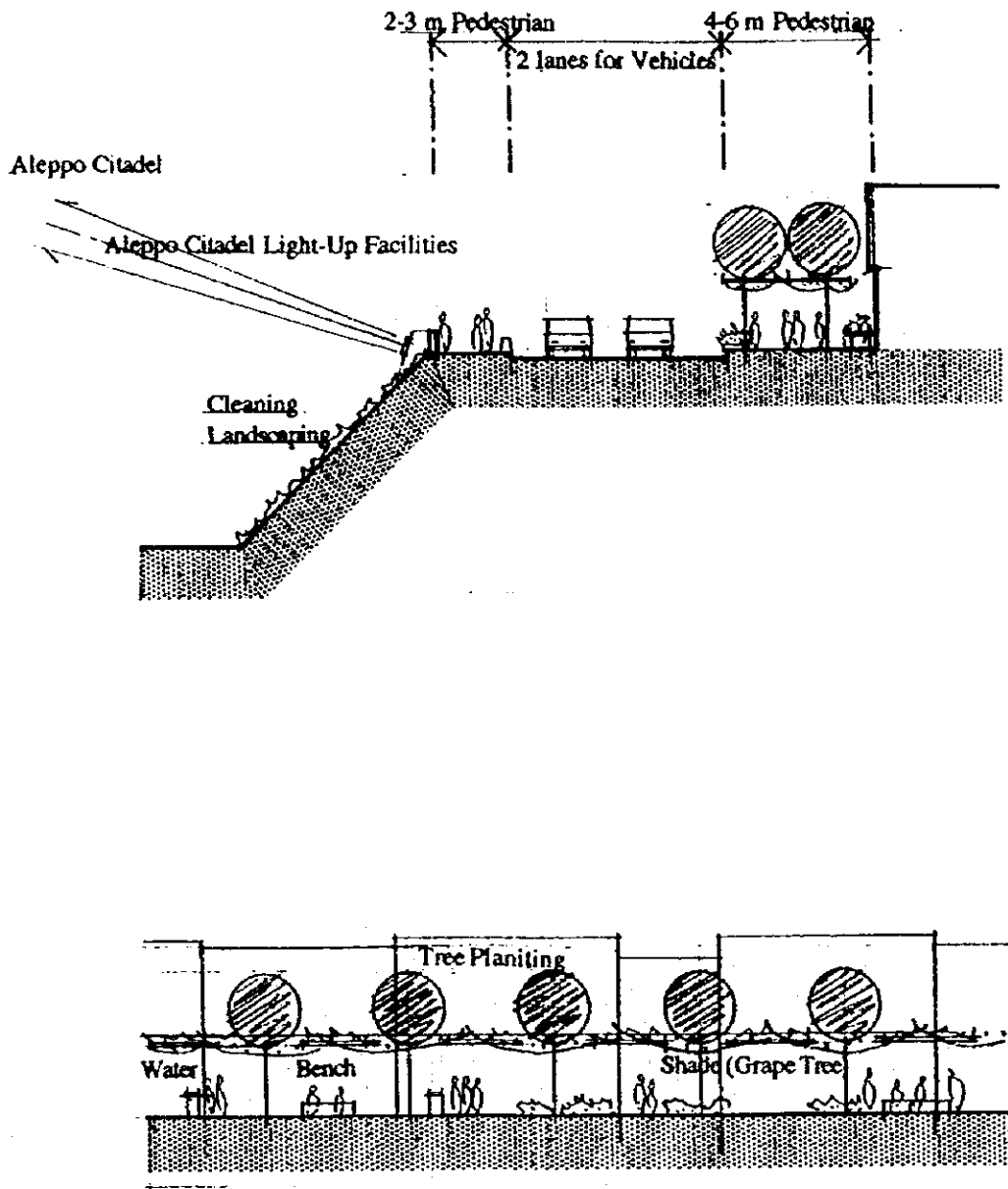


Figure 18.6.5 Tourist Trails - around the Citadel



18.7 Project F: Tourist-Friendly Syria

18.7.1 Project Concept

(1) Objectives

The objective of the project is to make Syria more tourist-friendly to all visitors including Syrian, Arab and foreign by the following measures:

- to provide tourist direction signs for all tourist sites in Syria;
- to provide standardized interpretation panels and tourist amenities at major isolated tourist sites; and
- to implement a promotion campaign through foreign media.

(2) Related Projects

EU is planning to provide shortly interpretation panels at eight tourist sites in Syria. Damascus and Aleppo were described before. In addition, Bosra, Ma'alula, Palmyra, Crac des Chevaliers and St. Simeon will be improved by the EU project.

This project is complementary to the above project.

18.7.2 Project Components

This project is composed of the following 3 components:

1. Tourist Traffic Direction Signs;
2. Interpretation Panels and Amenities; and
3. Foreign Promotion Campaign.

(1) Tourist Traffic Direction Signs

Provision of standardized tourist direction signs with internationally recognized pictograph, color and letters at all the necessary junctions and turn offs on the way to all the major tourist sites in Syria in order to assure tourists of the correct itineraries to the sites. This is for practicality, and for psychological promotion purpose as well.

- provision and posting of standardized tourist direction signs;
- the number of sites assumed tentatively at about 200 (refer to Table 18.7.1).

(2) Interpretation Panels and Amenities

Provision of interpretation panels and tourist amenities such as clean toilets, shelters, etc. at selected major tourist sites, located in isolated and often neglected areas till now.

- provision of standardized interpretation panels at major isolated tourist sites;
- provision or upgrading of tourist amenities (clean toilets, benches, shelters, kiosk, etc.);
- the number of candidate sites assumed tentatively at about 20 (refer to Table 18.7.1).

(3) Foreign Promotion Campaign

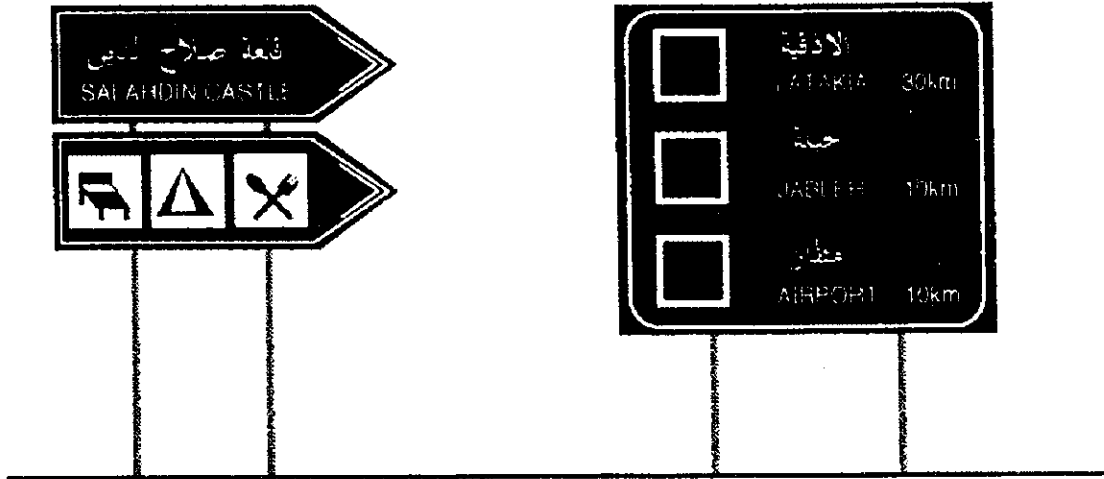
Production of the promotion campaign program (TV spots, posters, etc.) and its diffusion through foreign media in order to produce satisfactory results of all the priority projects and other tourism development efforts in Syria as well.

- production of campaign program (TV spots, posters, advertisement in magazines and news papers, etc.); and
- its dissemination through foreign media and Syrian diplomatic corps.

Table 18.7.1 Candidate Tourist Sites for Direction Sings

Figure 18.7.1 Tourist Traffic Direction Signs

Base color is brown which is applied in the most countries.



Examples in the Neighboring Country

Ordinary traffic direction signs and tourist direction signs.

