

The Heart

The project is located at the urban heart of **Elin Pelin**, an area defined by the coexistence of public, residential, and commercial functions but lacking a clear spatial hierarchy. Although major urban axes converge here, the existing amorphous city structure prevents the center from fully expressing its importance. The proposal responds to this condition by introducing clarity through hierarchy, scale, and repetition—creating a legible and meaningful public realm without imposing rigid order.

At the urban scale, the project is structured around a sequence of squares with varying sizes and degrees of intimacy. These spaces are framed and connected by green belts that act as soft boundaries, organizing circulation while allowing visual continuity. Movement entering from the southern main axis is deliberately divided into two paths: one leading toward the main public plaza, and the other following a quieter route adjacent to surrounding buildings. Between them, intermediate green spaces slow down circulation, encourage pause, and create opportunities for encounter. Smaller squares around key public buildings act as transitional zones, gradually guiding users toward the central public space.

Nevazimost Square is treated as the primary focal point of the project. Its relationship with the municipality building and the church is clarified through spatial separation and soft landscape buffers, allowing each element to retain its presence while contributing to a coherent whole. Changes in elevation, lawns, steps, and an elevated green area above the car park introduce much-needed topographic variation, enabling seasonal and everyday uses—from informal amphitheater seating to winter play—within a town that otherwise lacks vertical diversity.

Conceptually, the project draws inspiration from literature and poetics, particularly the idea of repetition as a tool for connection and meaning. This principle informs both the spatial design and the graphic identity of the town. Urban elements are composed of repeating components with subtle variations, creating unity through difference. A restrained material palette—wood, yellow-toned concrete, and reddish perforated metal—anchors the physical environment, while the graphic language embraces a richer palette inspired by the colors of **Bulgaria** and the town itself. Together, spatial structure, materiality, and graphic identity form a cohesive system that reinforces Elin Pelin's character while offering a clear, humane, and adaptable urban center.