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## GreenMove Project:

Transforming rural mobility for a  
sustainable future



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# Transportation infrastructure, adopting a holistic approach to societal progress

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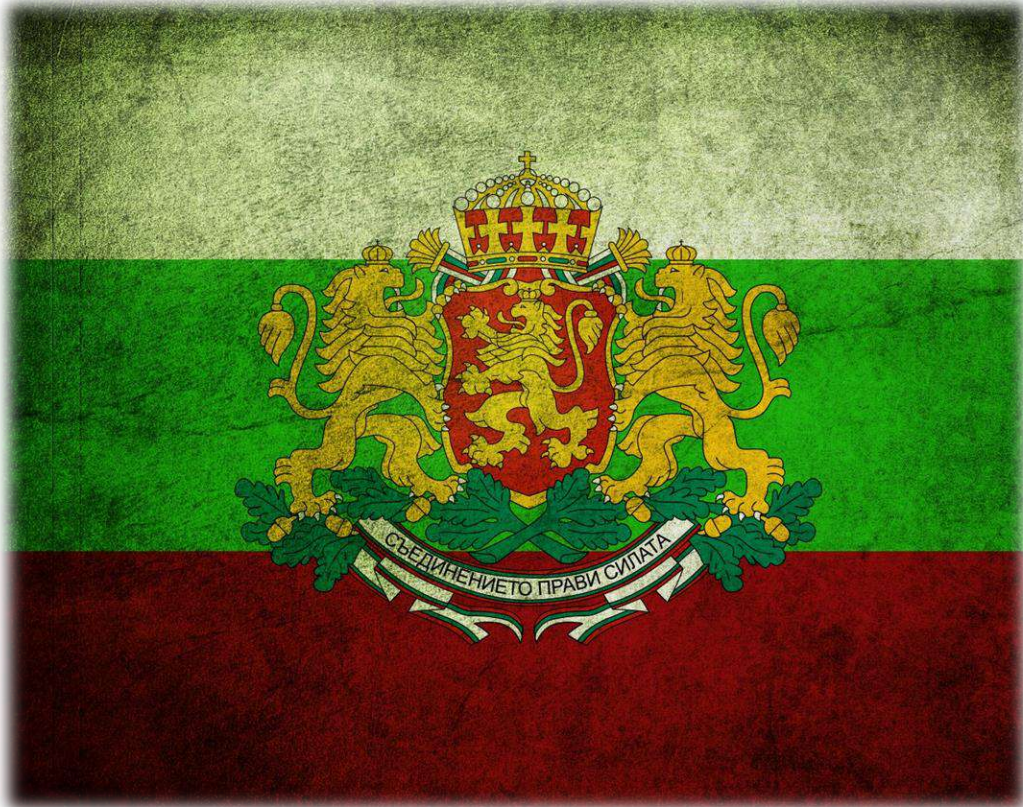
Gotse Delchev Municipality, Bulgaria

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# National holiday for the liberation of Bulgaria



The national slogan is UNITY MAKES THE STRENGTH

Today is the national holiday and a symbol of the restoration of Bulgaria as a country. On this date in 1878, the Treaty of San Stefano was signed, ending the Russo-Turkish War of Liberation and Bulgaria gained freedom after nearly five centuries of Ottoman slavery.

The holiday is dedicated to the memory of those who died for the country's freedom.

Today, March 3 is celebrated with grand ceremonies, laying flowers at monuments, military rituals and official celebrations throughout the country. The day is an occasion for national pride, gratitude and respect for the historical memory of the Bulgarian people.

# National holiday for the liberation of Bulgaria

Drawings by the famous Russian artist Alexey Popov –  
***Defense of the Shypka Pass during the liberation war***

And

***Attack of the Moscow formation on the Turkish positions at Arabakonak***



# National holiday for the liberation of Bulgaria

Gotse Delchev solemnly celebrates several holidays during the year, dedicated to the liberation wars from Ottoman slavery, as well as the liberation of Pirin Macedonia in the period 1880 - 1912.



Celebration in Gotse Delchev - inspection of the heroically deceased with the participation of the president



# National holiday for the liberation of Bulgaria

Gotse Delchev town is named after the **great Bulgarian revolutionary Gotse Delchev** – one of the brightest figures in the national liberation movement of the Bulgarians in Macedonia.

He is an ideologist and organizer of the struggle for freedom, an activist of the Internal Macedonian-Odrin Revolutionary Organization, who dedicated his life to the cause of national liberation.

With his self-sacrifice, moral strength and vision for a free Macedonia, Gotse Delchev remains an eternal symbol of patriotism, courage and selfless service to the people. He was killed in battle with Ottoman soldiers and did not live to see Macedonia free.



One of the many monuments to the revolutionary

# Today`s topic - **Transportation infrastructure, adopting a holistic approach to societal progress**

## **How transportation infrastructure specifically works to reduce socio-economic and territorial inequalities in Gotse Delchev region?**

The region of Gotse Delchev and Blagoevgrad has **a specific geographical isolation** (mountainous terrain, smaller towns/villages and further from large economic centers). In order to reduce socio-economic and territorial inequalities, transport plays a key role by improving connectivity with larger markets and cities (Sofia, Blagoevgrad) through national roads - e.g. II-19, which connects Gotse Delchev with E-79 and the Ilinden border checkpoint to Greece.

This connection facilitates access to work, services and trade, which increases economic opportunities for people in the region.

An example of a project aimed at reducing inequalities is:

ROADS (Cross-border project).

The project "ROADS – Re-enforce Optimal Actions and Development Strategies" is a European cross-border project between Municipality of Gotse Delchev (Bulgaria) and the Municipality of Oraikastro (Greece).

## ROADS (Cross-border project)

Its main objective is to improve the condition of the road network in the area of Gotse Delchev and Oraiokastro as a measure to strengthen the economic development and competitiveness of the region.

The objectives include **better road connections** between remote villages and cities; facilitating the transport of people and goods; creating more equal opportunities for economic development in peripheral areas.

The results - 2.58 million euros invested for improvement and expansion of the secondary road network.



**Before**

# ROADS (Cross-border project)

After

Successfully implemented interventions that facilitate access to major roads for people in more remote villages create conditions for better economic exchange in the cross-border area, supporting connectivity between communities, which is a key for social and economic cohesion.

The project is a real example where transport infrastructure is used as a tool to reduce territorial and economic inequalities, especially in critical cross-border regions, where historical isolation is an obstacle to development.



# ROADS (Cross-border project)

Before



After



# Today`s topic - **Transportation infrastructure - a holistic approach to societal progress**

## **Example of specific case for transforming deeply-held stereotype about who uses public space, which neighbourhoods are "dangerous" within a mobility project**

Finding a documented case from a small Bulgarian towns where transport planning has been used specifically to break down stereotypes about communities is difficult, because in Bulgaria many urban planning projects are not yet widely documented in public online sources.

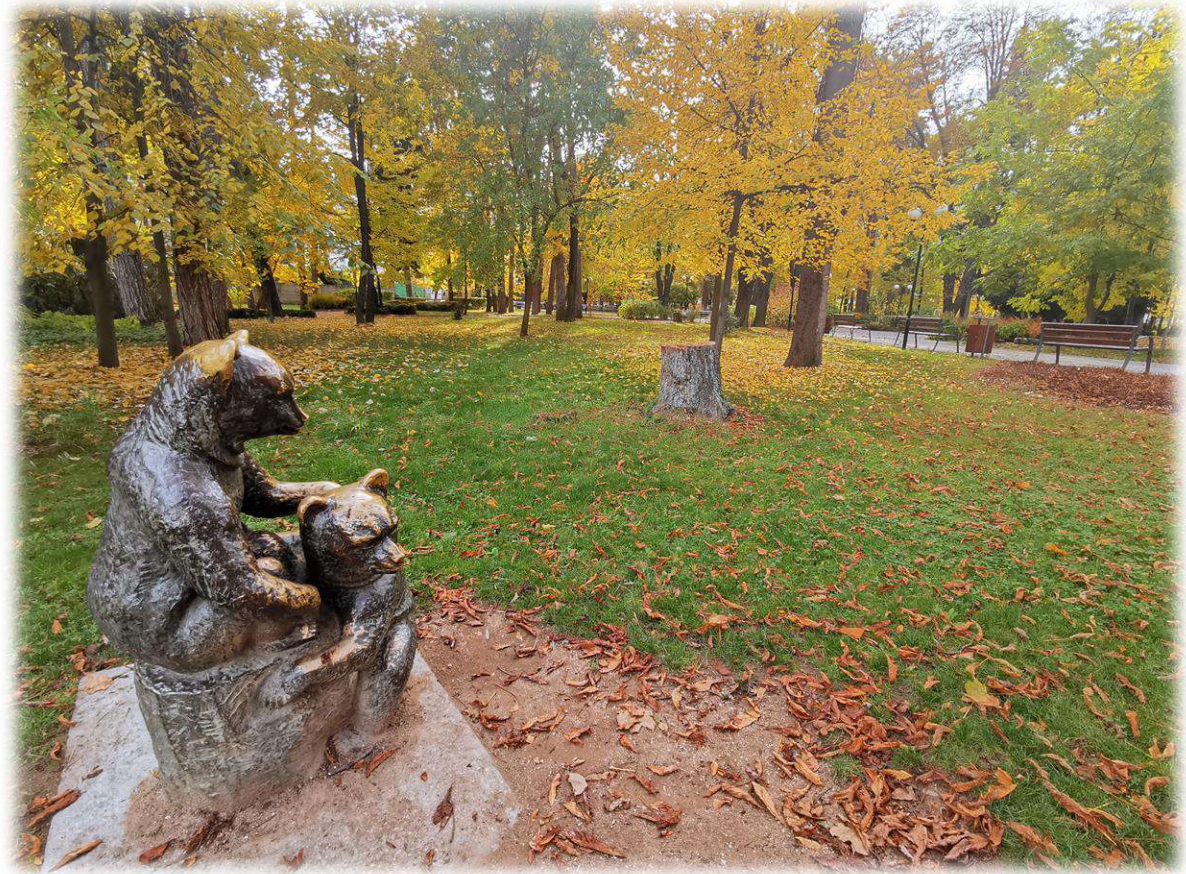
### **Conceptual design for the reconstruction of a city park**



# Today`s topic - **Transportation infrastructure - a holistic approach to societal progress**

## **Example of specific case for transforming deeply-held stereotype about who uses public space, which neighbourhoods are "dangerous" within a mobility project**

However, there are practical examples that show the participation of local communities in rethinking the environment, including transport and public spaces, and through which stereotypes are indirectly challenged and a more inclusive approach is built.



# Today`s topic - **Transportation infrastructure - a holistic approach to societal progress**

## **Our project “Improvement of street and park infrastructure in the town of Gotse Delchev – rehabilitation of 25 streets and green areas”**

### **Before**



The project includes complete rehabilitation of asphalt and sidewalk pavement on 25 streets and a complete rehabilitation of the **City Park - alleys, green areas, new lighting and a new irrigation system, new benches, gazebos, pergolas, fountains, playgrounds and sport facilities**, reconstruction of a fountain and park entrances, creation of bike paths; new trees and shrubs were planted to improve the landscaping.

This renovation turned the city park **from neglected and overgrown poorly lit place into a more pleasant, safe and functional place for leisure, sports and social contacts** for the residents of the municipality. It is example of how to change the perception of spaces that were previously neglected or “dangerous” into an active public area, or creating accessible and safe places for people with different abilities.

# Our project “Improvement of street and park infrastructure in the town of Gotse Delchev – rehabilitation of 25 streets and green areas”

Before



After



# Our project “Improvement of street and park infrastructure in the town of Gotse Delchev – rehabilitation of 25 streets and green areas”

Before



After

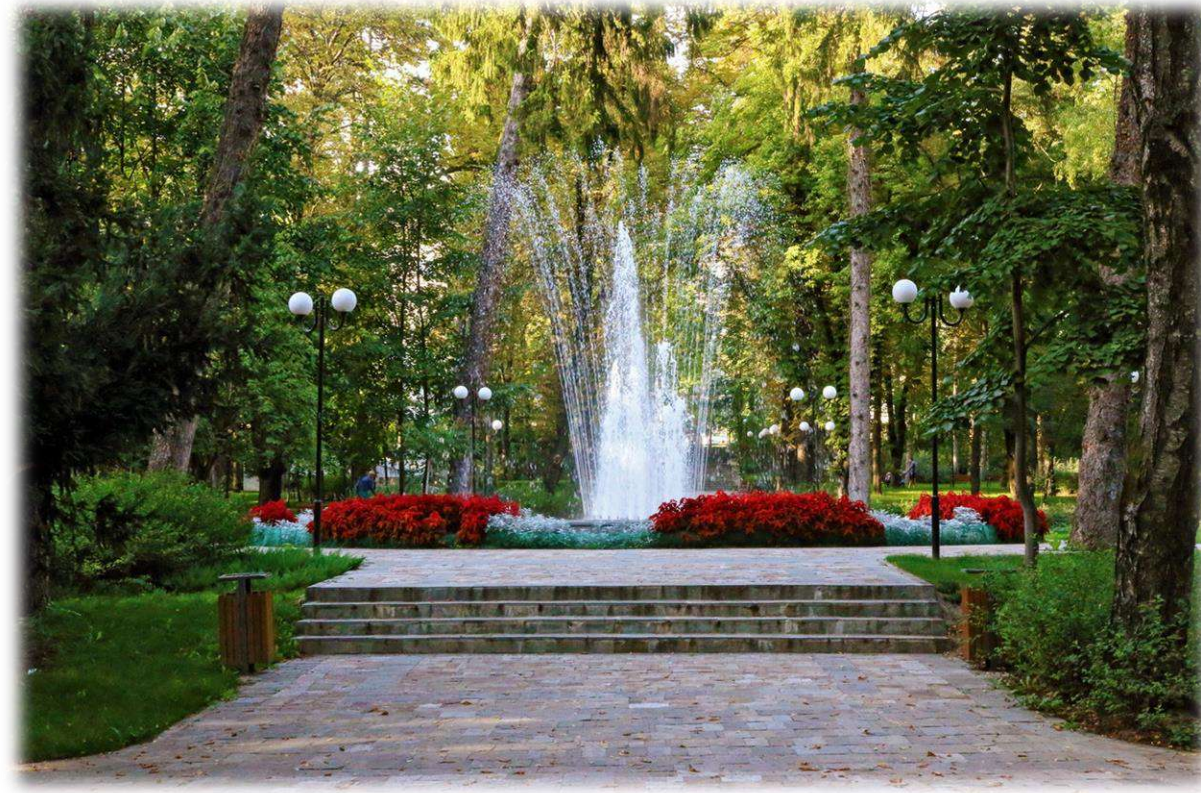


# Our project “Improvement of street and park infrastructure in the town of Gotse Delchev – rehabilitation of 25 streets and green areas”

Before



After



# How transport infrastructure is integrated into other spheres of life in Gotse Delchev - healthcare, energy, emergencies



In Blagoevgrad region, integrating transport infrastructure planning with other critical systems is becoming a key element for building a sustainable and adaptive community in the face of climate change and economic uncertainty. This approach requires a shift from sectoral management to systemic, cross-sectoral planning, in which transport functions as a connecting infrastructure between vital public systems.

A connection with healthcare is achieved by providing accessible transport corridors to hospitals, medical centers and emergency care, as well as by integrating mobility into models for prevention, elderly care and access to services in remote settlements. Thus, transport becomes part of health sustainability, and not just a logistical service. **In Gotse Delchev, there is a working helicopter air line, which is used to transport many emergency patients to an emergency center in Sofia.** The helicopter comes from the emergency center, lands at the city stadium or on the parking, which is 8 minutes away from the hospital, and transports the patient many times faster than by ambulance. This saves lives.

# How transport infrastructure is integrated into other spheres of life in Gotse Delchev - healthcare, energy, emergencies

Integration with the energy system is expressed in the development of low-carbon mobility, electrified transport, local energy sources and sustainable street infrastructure, which reduces energy dependence and increases the autonomy of the region in crises. **The Municipality of Gotse Delchev has two electric cars that are used by employees in their daily work and is currently in the process of purchasing two more along with two more charging stations.**

In the context of food security, the transport network plays a role in connecting local producers to markets, ensuring access to food in vulnerable neighborhoods and maintaining logistics chains in the event of climate or economic shocks. Social home patronage, financed and supported by the Municipality, delivers daily hot meals to vulnerable and marginalized people both in remote neighborhoods and in villages. The first electric car is use by this service.



# Looking beyond the current project, upskilling and continuation of the GreenMove initiative over the next five years (2025–2030) for Gotse Delchev

Gotse Delchev Municipality is involved in all initiatives that would contribute to its development through a new perspective on contemporary trends in local governance. We follow a comprehensive national policy and focus on European and national development and governance strategies.

During the current programming period, the municipality is committed to a complex process of sustainable development, which encompasses social, environmental, infrastructure and governance priorities.

In the short term (2024–2026), the municipality is implementing and planning several key projects with national and European funding, which have a direct effect on the quality of life and institutional capacity



**Construction of a ring road to relieve traffic in the center**

# Looking beyond the current project, upskilling and continuation of the GreenMove initiative over the next five years (2025–2030) for Gotse Delchev

Recently renovated cultural center

Over the next five years (2025–2030), these commitments will develop in three key areas, consistent with national policies and trends in the development of small municipalities:

1. Sustainable and integrated urban development – we have ongoing projects for circular economy, reducing air pollution, repairs to urban areas, construction of a second ring road, repairs to community centers, town halls, strengthening rivers as a prevention against floods and natural disasters.
2. Social and economic transformation – through the implementation of educational, social and cultural infrastructure projects that support employment, reduce social inequalities and strengthen human capital.
3. Capacity and governance – through institutional strengthening of the municipal administration and partnerships (national, cross-border and European) that will improve the ability to attract and manage resources, integrate good practices and sustainable planning, including participation in local development strategies and projects under operational programs.

**Current ongoing and upcoming projects worth a total of nearly 40 million euros**





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**Thank you!**

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