

new ideas for
OLD BUILDINGS

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STORY OF THE PROJECT

“NEW IDEAS FOR OLD BUILDINGS”

The New Ideas for Old Buildings project focuses on improving public property management to help municipalities increase real-estate occupancy through public participation.

The project is co-funded by the Europe for Citizens Programme of the European Union and comprises of 7 small and medium-sized towns from 6 countries from the Baltics to the Balkans (Latvia, Germany, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, and Montenegro) that are facing economic and social decline. They are motivated to find solutions for revitalizing their towns and enhancing the quality of life.

The project aims to increase public involvement in the decision-making of public property management and sustainable urban development. Furthermore,

it identifies concrete solutions for better utilizing property, and develops a long-term platform for public property management in small and medium-sized European towns.

In Maribor, we are faced with empty industrial spaces on the outskirts, and empty commercial and residential spaces in the elite streets of the city center. Under the project entitled New Ideas for Old Buildings, we explored the potential of our city and even we were very surprised.

Maribor is a real home to a few new and exciting ideas for buildings that were left alone. In the next pages of this brochure, we want to share with you how some “oldies” in Maribor already became “goldies”.

PROJECT PARTNERS



Co-funded by the
Europe for Citizens Programme
of the European Union



GT22

Art community / Educational laboratory

Right in the heart of Maribor, on the Main Square, there is a wonderful story of how an art community and educational laboratory was born.

It is all thanks to the Oset-Puppis family, who are the owners of this space of more than 1000 square meters. In 2013, the family generously offered the spaces for use to the Sonda foundation, which is a foundation that consists of different institutes that operate within GT22.

In the past, GT22 used to be a factory, storage facility, clothes shop, and night club. On the other hand, today it contains a wide range of different organizations including: an association for the development of film culture, photographic platform "MišnicaGT22", Kud Moment, Photography Museum

Modrinjak, YoureupRadio ... along with new collectives, teams, and individuals.

The beautiful thing about this space is that it was renovated with voluntary work, using the foundation's own investments as well as the support of the Municipality of Maribor and the Government of Slovenia.

Glavni trg 22, 2000 Maribor

- info@gt22.si
- +386 (0)31 761 914
- www.gt22.si



GT22



HOTEL MARIBOR & GOSTILNA MARIBOR **MARIBOR RESTAURANT**

Hotel / Restaurant

The model used for the renovation of this space is one that is omnipresent in Maribor.

This house used to be known as “Restavracija Koper” (Koper Restaurant) and it closed down around 20 years ago. It was empty for all that time with only an occasional program during the Lent Festival and other cultural installations.

A local entrepreneur saw this building as the perfect place for an indigenous Styrian restaurant and hotel. However, when he wanted to purchase it, the first thing he had to sort out was the ownership of the individual parts of the house. So, in order to get ownership of the building, he had to buy it piece by piece from multiple owners, including the Municipality of Maribor.

The next thing that had to be taken care of was the renovation of the house, as it was in a very bad

condition. This was done in careful coordination with the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Heritage, so that any cultural heritage of the building was preserved.

As the renovations were being done, many interesting things were found in the building, influencing its architectural design and brand story.

This is an example of a building where a private investor with a clear vision and a new idea transformed an old building.

Glavni trg 8, 2000 Maribor

- info@gostilnamaribor.si & info@hotelmaribor.si
- +386 (0)2 23 45 606 & +386 (0)2 23 45 606
- www.gostilnamaribor.si & www.hotelmaribor.si



KPD

Developmental agency / Dance studio / Coworking

The story of KPD is a story often seen in Maribor. An old building with many owners, and each wants to do their own thing. Thus, the whole building lacks a common concept and story.

The whole complex is divided into five legs that were once used for different sections of a prison. The node of these five legs was used by the guards to have an overview of what was happening in each part of the building.

One of these legs is now owned by the Maribor Development Agency, which received European funds to refurbish part of the building.

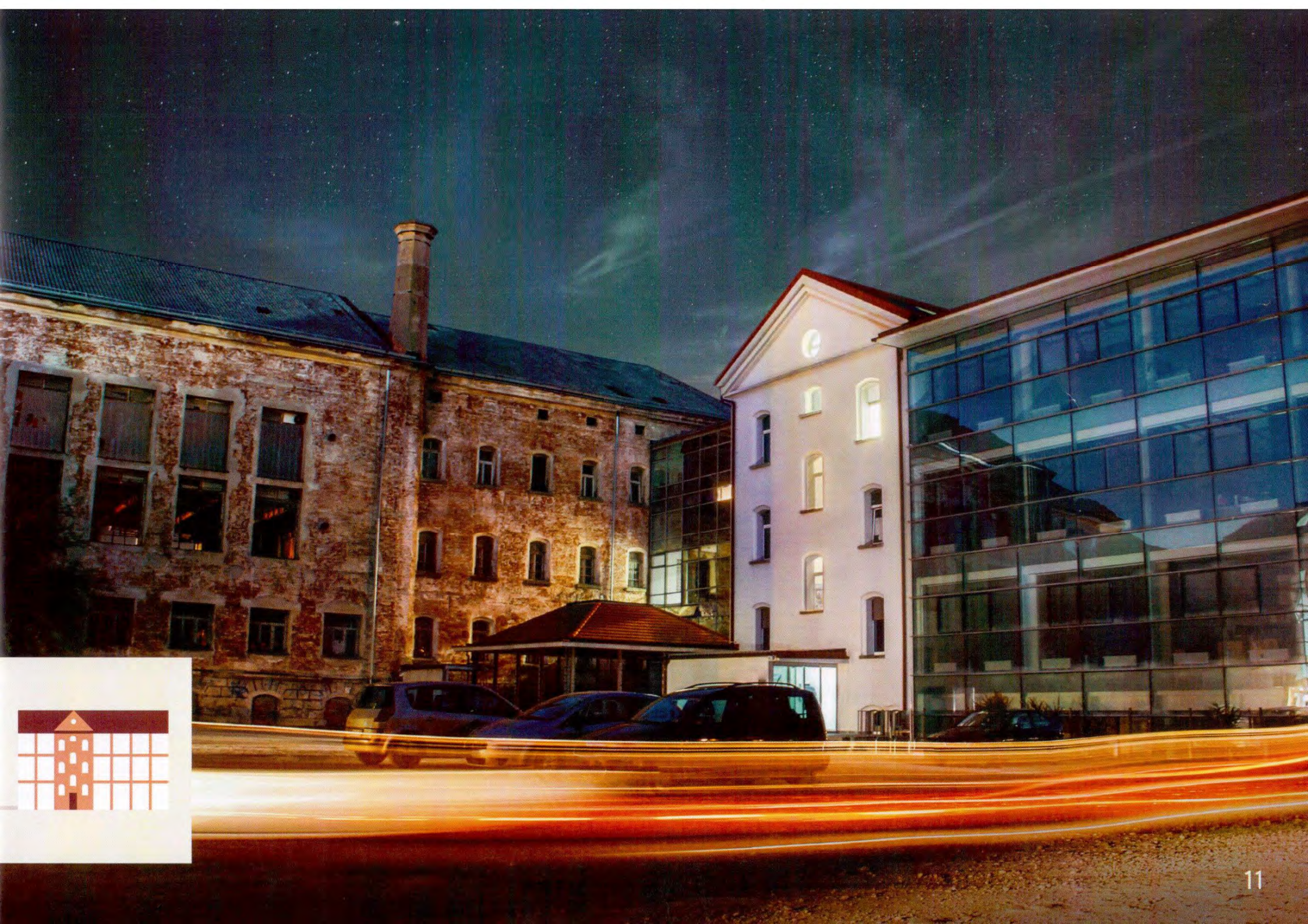
Other parts of the building are still up for discussion, and there are plans starting to take shape that will refurbish the building holistically.

An interesting aspect of this building is that in the past, Josip Broz Tito was a captive in one of the cells here. Afterwards, the complex had hosted a print shop, a butcher's, and a rubber factory.

KPD is not yet fully renovated. For this purpose, the Municipality of Maribor is working on a project called URBACT III that will refurbish this architectural wonder with European funds as well as public participation.

Pobreška cesta 20, 2000 Maribor

- info@mra.si
- +386 (0)2 333 13 00
- www.mra.si



LUTKOVNO GLEDALIŠČE MARIBOR PUPPET THEATRE MARIBOR

Culture / Theatre

An interesting thing about Maribor is that along with the Slovene National Theatre, it also has a respectable Puppet Theatre.

The Puppet Theatre was founded in 1973 and was located on the Rotovž square, above Maribor's public library, for a long time. But this space was getting too small as Maribor's puppetry flourished. A new solution had to be found.

On the other hand, right next to the Drava river, in the vicinity of the oldest vineyard in the world, the Minorite monastery was an important cultural monument that had only been partially renovated since the 13th century. Before the renovation, the building was occupied by apartments and residents who were relocated in order for the Municipality of Maribor to start the renovation process.

Today, the theatre can be found in a refurbished building that is an architectural marvel. The main

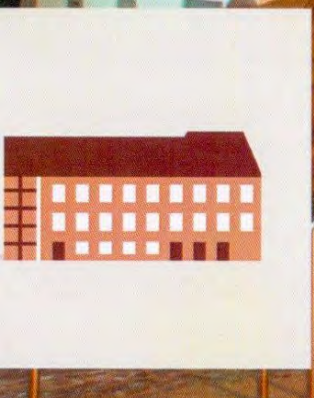
attraction of the building is an innovative stage that can be opened to both the inside of the building as well as to the outside, with a 200-person stand in the backyard, appropriate for summer shows.

The architects behind the wonderful renovation are the renowned prof. Jurij Kobe and architect Rok Žnidaršič. For their work, they received the most prestigious Slovenian award in the field of architecture, the Plečnik Award.

The process was started by the Municipality of Maribor. Furthermore, the renovation was co-financed by EU funds.

Vojašniški trg 2a, 2000 Maribor

- info@lg-mb.si
- +386 (0)2 228 19 70
- www.lg-mb.si/en/







PEKARNA THE BAKERY

Art / Youth culture center / Antique book store / Hostel

A significantly different approach is what brought together the urban culture community that has been building in Pekarna since the 90s.

Pekarna (The Bakery) is a fascinating building that is part of a larger complex that today represents the urban cultural scene of youth culture and different non-governmental organizations.

Throughout history, this building was mainly used for military purposes, as a bakery (hence the name "Pekarna") and as a stable for two armies, both the Austro-Hungarian Emperor's royal army and later by the Yugoslav People's Army. After Slovenia gained its independence in 1991 and the Yugoslav People's Army left, the complex was abandoned, so civil initiatives seized this opportunity and started taking over the empty abandoned spaces, using them for their own purposes.

Most buildings in Pekarna are in poor shape and in need of refurbishment. The only one that has been recently renovated is the building of the Pekarna Hostel, where the Youth Cultural Centre of Maribor and the management of the complex have their space.

The process was started by the Municipality of Maribor. The renovation of the Pekarna Hostel building was co-financed with EU funds.

Ob železnici 16, 2000 Maribor

- info@mkc.si
- +386 (0)2 300 29 93
- www.mkc.si



SALON UPORABNIH UMETNOSTI SALON OF APPLIED ARTS

Café / Nightlife

One of the forgotten stories of Maribor is the one about a duty-free shop that financed the development of an enormous part of the city.

It sounds like a bizarre tale, but that is exactly the story behind what is today known as "Salon uporabnih umetnosti" (the Salon of Applied Arts). A local entrepreneur by the name of Krešimir Čabrian got a concession to start a duty-free on the border of Slovenia and Austria. Now in those times, Slovenia was not yet in the European Union, so since there was no tax, the products in the duty-free shop were very cheap.

The entrepreneur used that money and invested it back into the city of Maribor. He renovated "Fontana", he renovated hotel Habakuk and added a conference center to it, and finally he renovated and transformed the building of the once "Great Cafe" (Velika Kavarna) into a Casino, among other things.

However, the good times didn't last forever, and a series of unfortunate events for the duty-free shop

business, including the death of Krešimir Čabrian, led to the demise of his company and liquidation of all assets. Thus, the Casino building was abandoned for a number of years.

The Salon of Applied Arts occupies the ground floor as well as the 1st floor, where it runs a cafe and an exhibition of applied arts as well as an event space, while the floors above are used as apartments.

This occurred when a civil initiative took up the abandoned space following great efforts and turned it into the Salon of Applied Arts. This new idea, along with great service, led to a very successful relaunch of this space.

Glavni trg 1, 2000 Maribor

- salon.peron@gmail.com
- +386 (0)51 382 663
- www.facebook.com/SALON.maribor/



TKALKA THE WEAVER

Social entrepreneurship / Coworking

In the spaces of a building that stood abandoned for six years is where Tkalka developed with a typical bottom-up approach in 2014.

The old industrial building, owned by the municipality, was refurbished very spontaneously when different initiatives realized they had similar ambitions. They joined forces and their volunteers, together with their own resources and donations from nearby companies, renovated the old 2500 square meter building. The building was named “Tkalka” (or “The Weaver”), which is a wordplay based on the street it is located on: “Tkalski prehod” (“Weaving Passage”).

Today, Tkalka is home to a range of organizations, companies, and individuals with the common goal of creative development of the city and region, creating new jobs, as well as raising the quality of life. Tkalka’s inhabitants include a variety of persistent and creative people, especially initiatives in the field of social economy and local development. In the first year alone,

more than 55 organization/companies, entrepreneurs and creators accepted Tkalka as their home.

The stories that come out of Tkalka are ones with a focus on social innovations, cooperative society, social entrepreneurship, sustainable tourism, modern fabrication, co-operation, and co-creation. With this, they want to raise and develop Slovenia’s social economy and make it be a bigger part of the Slovenian economy than the current 1% of Gross Social Product.

This building is owned by the Municipality of Maribor and was mostly renovated with the voluntary work of its members.

Tkalski prehod 4, 2000 Maribor

- tkalka@tkalka.si
- www.tkalka.si



VETRINJSKI DVOR VETRINJ MANSION

Culture coworking / Bar / Nightlife

The story of the renovation behind the Vetrinjski dvor (Vetrinj Mansion) is one of necessity. It was necessary to renovate the building and then as it was being built, a program was found that needed the space.

For a long time this mansion, partially owned by private owners and partially by the Municipality, was in a very bad shape and deteriorating fast. The first step was to take care of ownership, so the municipality bought all the remaining real estate and provided all tenants either other apartments or other business spaces.

A tender was made by the Municipality, and Maruša Zorec won with her design proposal. The architect created wonderful office spaces based on a co-working model and a lecture hall on the top floor, along with an exhibition space, smaller individual offices and a bar on the ground floor and in the basement. For her work, she received the most prestigious Slovenian award in the field of architecture, the Plečnik Award.

After it was finished, the space was first used as the headquarters of the European Culture Capital project team and later passed on to Narodni dom ("National House"), which created a cultural incubator, where those who work in culture can get a desk.

Another interesting thing about the Vetrinj Mansion is that if you go around the back, you will actually see the remnants of the medieval wall around Maribor, which is part of the building.

The process was started by the Municipality of Maribor. Furthermore, the renovation was co-financed with EU funds.

Vetrinjska ulica 30, 2000 Maribor

- vetrinjski.dvor@nd-mb.si
- +386 (0)2 228 12 50
- www.vetrinjski-dvor.si



CONCLUSION

After concluding the project “New Ideas for Old Buildings”, we can now say that Maribor has examples of how new ideas and great engagement from different stakeholders – private investors, NGOs, civil initiatives, the public sector – can transform old buildings into innovative and creative environments. We also realized that there is a common problem facing city centers of many European cities. With the advent of shopping malls and commercial zones, most shops are moving away from city centers and into areas on the edge of cities where, in combination with other shops, they create huge shopping areas. However, this means that city centers suffer. It creates an abundance of buildings that are left behind and abandoned. Buildings that used to be architectural wonders are now completely empty and left to the mercy of time.

But, there is hope. As it turns out, this can also create an environment where new and sometimes unconventional ideas thrive, mostly due to a strong wish of citizens to socialize, grow, and develop. Therefore, the Municipality of Maribor will continue to follow one of the main aims of the project – to increase the involvement of citizens in the decision-making of sustainable urban development and public property management, even after the project “New Ideas for Old Buildings” ends.

LITERATURE

PIIP - GT22

— <https://www.piip.si/navdihujemo-se/gt-22>

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— www.gostilnamaribor.si

Hotel Maribor

— www.hotelmaribor.si

CAAP

— <http://brazde.org>

Bukvarna Ciproš v Mariboru

— <http://kid.kibla.org/~bukvarna/vmb.html>

Tkalka

— <http://tkalka.si/tkalka/>

Vetrinjski dvor

— <http://www.vetrinjski-dvor.si/o-nas/>

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AUTHORS

Simon Sovič, dr. Martina Rauter

EDITING AND COORDINATION

Dr. Martina Rauter,
Office of culture and youth, Municipality of Maribor

PROOFREADING

Teja Rebernik

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

Jernej Gračner, gentlegiant.me

PHOTOGRAPHY

Jure Bauman, Limited production

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MUNICIPALITY OF MARIBOR
UNIVERSITY CITY OF MARIBOR

MAP OF MARIBOR

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