

## BALÇOVA MARKETPLACE “SOCIAL INTERACTION CENTER BASED ON A MARKETPLACE”

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**ABSTRACT.** The Balçova Marketplace Project in Izmir addresses urban and social challenges in Balçova, offering a solution to the lack of green spaces, building density and the need for a social space, where locals can interact, socialize and also do their daily grocery shopping at the same time. Designed with a strong commitment to sustainability principles, the project integrates into the cityscape, while enhancing the green areas and balancing the dense concrete blocks of structures. Beyond its commercial role, the marketplace evolves into a social space, featuring children's parks, green spaces, a greenhouse, and accessible walkways, helping for community interactions.

**Keywords:** *marketplace, sustainable design, landscape design, permaculture*

### INTRODUCTION

This project was designed under the supervision of Asst Prof. İpek Kaştaş Uzun, in the course, titled “An Introduction to Contemporary Architectural Landscaping, IAED 460” in the department of Interior Architecture and Environmental Design in the Faculty of Fine Arts and Design in Izmir University of Economics. The main aim of the course is to introduce the basic theories landscape design, to give an understanding of the process of landscape design, to examine the psychological and sensual effects of plants, to make students familiar with indigenous garden design, to introduce the history of gardening/ landscape design in Anatolia and to make students familiar with important ecological and sustainability issues related to landscape design. The project was designed as the final project of the course as a conceptual landscape design, which implements the abovementioned subjects in the form of conceptual design.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

The Balçova Marketplace focuses on a comprehensive approach to the urban and social challenges, which are prominent in the city life by enhancing the quality of life with the help of the sustainable design and integrating a social interaction place in a marketplace. The project optimizes green areas while considering environmental sustainability, using the local materials in the design, waste management, rainwater harvesting, accessibility, community engagement and organic agriculture. Functioning as more than a commercial center, the marketplace offers a dynamic social space by incorporating a project that supports the local economy by generating job opportunities and encouraging organic agriculture. The project as a model for an eco-conscious urban

space, contributes not only to commercial or social problems but also the goals of environmental sustainability and biodiversity preservation of local plants.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Balçova Marketplace Project stands out as an innovative design that offers a solution to the crowded city life and density of apartments and shopping malls in Balçova, one of the popular districts of Izmir. The project, which was developed in response to the general lack of green areas and the excess of building structures in Balçova, adopts a market approach based on sustainability principles. Focusing on environmental harmony, social interaction and livability, Balçova Marketplace offers special solutions to the needs of neighborhood residents.

The project not only presents a structure integrated into the cityscape by increasing green spaces and balancing the building density but also includes social areas and various shopping opportunities to seamlessly integrate into the daily lives of the neighborhood residents. Additionally, the design adheres to environmental sustainability principles by prioritizing energy efficiency, waste management, and the use of eco-friendly materials.

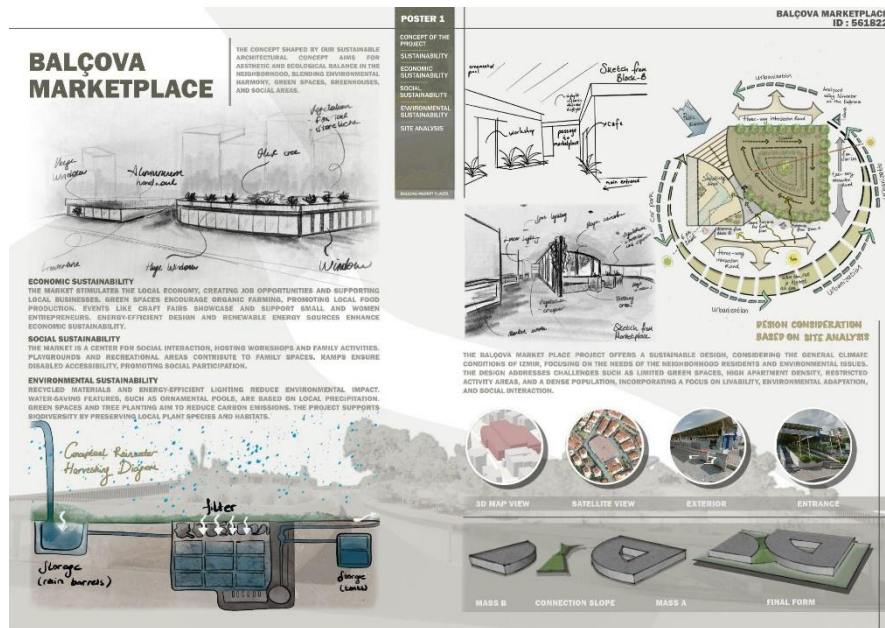
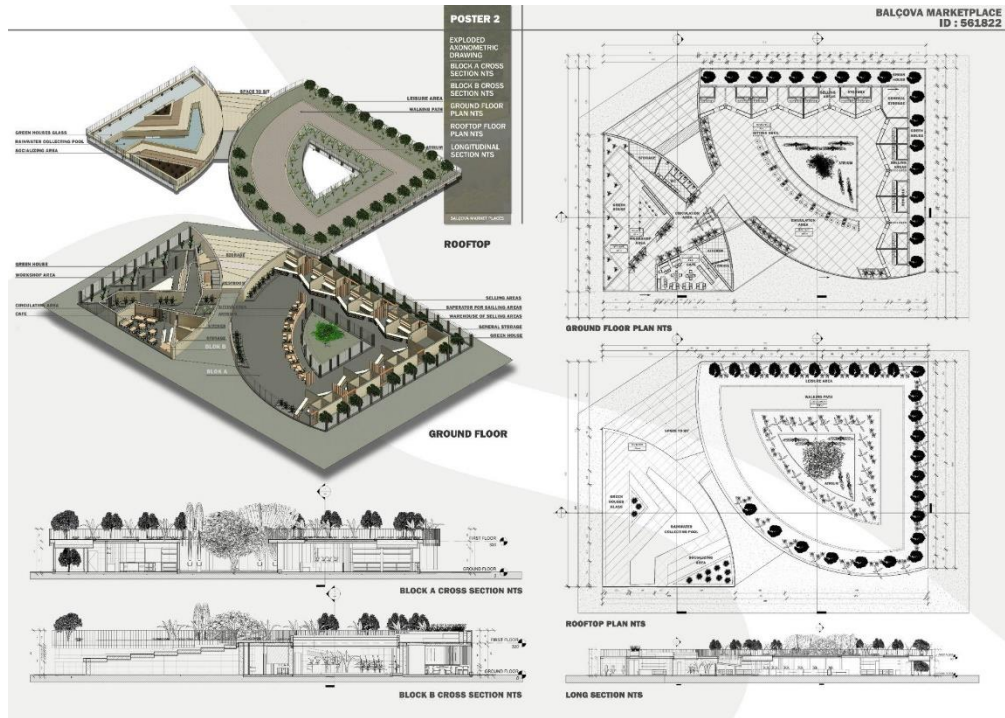


Fig. 1. First board of the project showing the site analysis.

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*Fig. 2. Second board of the project showing the technical drawings.*

Balçova Marketplace goes beyond being just a commercial center; it emerges as a social space. Enriched with elements such as children's parks, green areas, a greenhouse, and walking paths, the project aims to promote social interaction through regular workshops, exhibitions, and events. Furthermore, the design incorporates features facilitating access for disabled visitors, encouraging societal participation and accessibility.



Fig.3. Third board of the project showing the renders.

The project also revitalizes the local economy, providing new job opportunities for neighborhood residents and local businesses. Greenhouses and green areas that encourage organic agriculture support local food production, while prioritizing environmental sustainability with features such as recyclable materials and energy-saving lighting systems. The Balçova Marketplace Project aims to contribute to the sustainability of local living spaces by preserving the biodiversity in the regions. Balçova Marketplace Project is a project that offers solutions to the challenges of city life, adopts environmental and social sustainability principles, supports the local economy and aims to offer a quality living space to the residents of the neighbourhood.

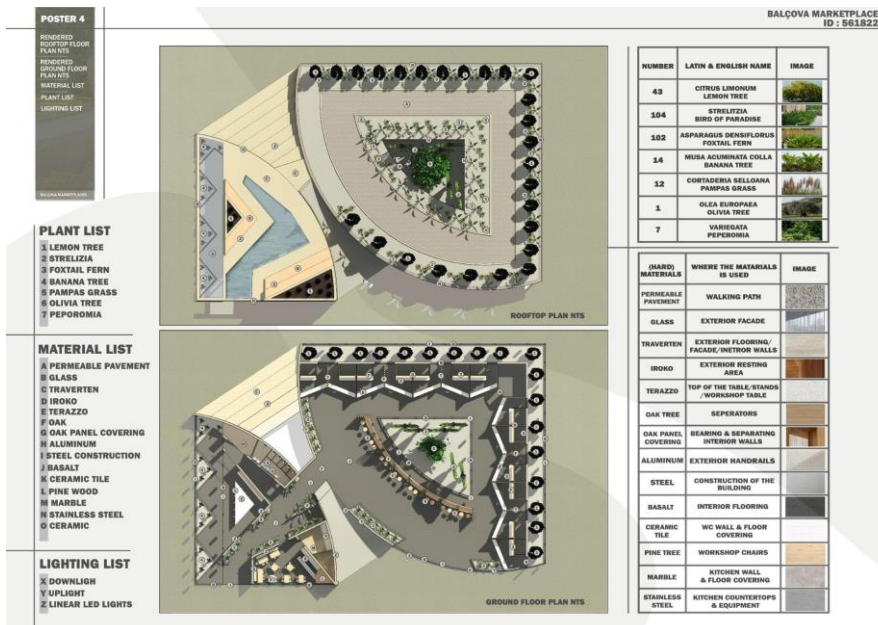


Fig.4. Fourth board of the project showing the material and plant choices.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion the Balçova Marketplace Project in Izmir is an innovative approach to the marketplace design, which focuses on sustainable design while addressing the problems related with the current city life in Balçova, which can contribute to the further designs to create a more social and interactive public spaces, which provides different spaces to socialize. The design not only enriches the social life but also embraces the holistic approach that focuses on environmental, social and economic sustainability.

**Acknowledgement.** We would like to thank Asst. Prof. İpek Kaştaş Uzun for everything that she taught us.