

The General View

1. What is your view of the city's development priorities?

Ignoring key principles of the city development for many years led us to the fact that there is actually no field left without pressing problems to be solved immediately. Analysis of the best international practice demonstrates that a real and sustainable development can be achieved only through the integrated and harmonized policy.

Accordingly, the initiatives of our programme are mainly focused on four components:

- Public interest – affordable and high quality education and health care; proper social protection; comfortable housing and modern utility services; safe environment; ever increasing cultural and recreational area;
- Business stimulating environment – continuous retraining based on the technological progress and market demanded professions; availability of the financial resources; support of small and medium businesses; active participation in the public/private partnership schemes for timely implementation of the most important innovative projects; eliminating gaps in the field of supply for Georgian business (and not just for business in Tbilisi) by means of supporting the promotion of relevant suppliers on the market and replacing the function of the import logistic centre with the export logistics; pursue of power self-reliance;
- Healthy environment management, green space management; water resources and solid waste management; energy efficiency orientation; climate change risk management; air quality management;
- Efficient and effective management – reasonable and harmonious urban planning; creation of modern structure and support of easy access to public services; promotion of sustainable development; mitigation of social inequality; active public inclusiveness in city management and transparency of performance; orientation on clear and measurable results; actualization of national, regional and international functions.

At the same time, we understand quite well the current possibilities of the city budget and thus, we consider the dynamic growth of economic potential together with the fiscal optimization as the main core of the programme implementation, which would allow us to turn our projected plans into reality.

Development and Economy

2. Please provide a concise description of your vision/plan (if you have such) for the city's long-term economic development.

Our action plan is based on the development platform coordinated with the programme of “Georgian Dream” and consists of seven key principles:

- Analysis of the international best practices shows that a long term and sustainable development is based on four main components – on progress in social, economic, ecological and governing fields. The principle of integrated approach involves proper coordination of all four components. Thus, ignoring even one of the components could cause the concentration of significant problems. This is very well demonstrated in the performances of Tbilisi acting authorities.
- The past practices have clearly shown what are the consequences of single option and rigidity in politics. The second significant principle of our programme is flexibility, which implies active inclusiveness of the sector professionals and general public on every stage of the management cycle (so called PDCA – Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle). As a result we would get a program that is best fitted to public’s most pressing interests.
- “You cannot improve what you cannot measure” – this famous thesis of the management theory is based on the principle of measurable results. Our aims are expressed in concrete indicators with current and target values – every citizen would have an opportunity to evaluate achieved results objectively.
- The principle of control indicators includes several key indicators evaluating general progress that essentially demonstrates economic success of the Government. These indicators would be selected based on the public demand.
- Necessity of the cultural heritage preservation remains vital in the light of the priority of the city’s economic development. This would be a defining principle in the process of forming the the twenty first century image of the capital.
- Our initiatives include intensive as well as in some cases, extensive measures of the city development. But at the same time, the city growth does not mean the concentration of the whole country in the capital or in one or two agglomeration as it was envisaged by the previous government. We see the national mission of Tbilisi as being the flagship of the country development and contribute to the overall progress of our country.

3. *In your view, what are the main problems that impede the economic development of your city?*

The practice of substituting clear and measurable objectives with abstract TV “achievements” and focusing on forging election results instead of peoples’ interests allowed Tbilisi’s still acting government to care less for the creation of favorable business climate. As a result, we received the reality with no urban development plan, no transparent and equally accessible system for investment activities, no institutions encouraging SME development, no streamlined schemes for accessing operational and venture capital, without the vision on organizing and filling gaps in supply chain, mechanisms for import replacement, technology transfer, retraining in demanded professions and beneficial schemes for Public Private Partnerships.

Moreover, business as well as tourism potential is not effectively utilized at regional and international level. For instance, the fact that South Caucasus offices of international companies are opened in our neighboring countries, not in Tbilisi, can be explained by inactivity of the acting authorities to say the least.

Overall, correct development of actually neglected Tbilisi would be impossible without adequate analysis of its global competitiveness and appropriate revision of the respective policy.

4. In your view, what are the main capacities/advantages of the city which you will be seeking to employ with a view to facilitating economic and urban development?

We are lucky to live in a city with the richest history and culture. The bigger is the burden of regional and geopolitical reality, the greater accompanying opportunities. Therefore, in order to achieve global positioning and adequate competitiveness of the city, we deem it necessary to ensure:

- Actualizing the regional business center function with development of accompanying infrastructure;
- Facilitation of institutional investment activities by implementing transparency and equal accessibility principles as well as through use of the advance and universally approved reporting standards;
- Increasing tourist attraction not only by improving a few streets in Tbilisi but also by building and developing respective infrastructure all over Georgia;
- Attraction of innovative transnational business through offering interesting operational environment and required infrastructure;
- Using the richest cultural aspect for the purpose of increasing the city's international recognition and reputation;
- Extension of academic function by providing active support to educational and scientific centers.

Naturally all of these cannot be achieved in a short period. In some cases formation of human resources with the required professional qualification is required. Our program completely provides for existing challenges as well as the most optimal and effective measures for dealing with them.

5. What are your budgetary priorities? Please provide a concise interpretation of your budgetary policy.

Involvement of population and taking their problems into account at maximum extent will allow us to design a right budget policy. In addition:

- Budgeting process shall be performed by highly qualified professionals in accordance with the methods approved in the international practice, which is going to ensure budget fulfillment.
- Posting the information on budget expenditure, tenders, implemented and planned projects on the webpage of the City Hall will increase the public awareness and confidence in Tbilisi City Hall.
- Reserve Fund of Tbilisi Mayor will be expended in a transparent manner and used for resolution of the most acute issues faced by the Tbilisi residents.
- Setting program funding objectives and goals, as well as defining expected results and efficiency will become the main direction of the Municipality's budgeting policy.
- Implementation of state procurement process in a transparent manner and with observance of the effective legislation will increase the number of entities taking part in tender, on the one hand, and create feeling of justice between the Municipality and Tbilisi residents on the other.

6. What measures will you implement in order to improve the city's business and commercial infrastructure, and to attract investments?

Development of business infrastructure in Tbilisi with consideration of international best practice would be impossible without creation of urban development plan. Our program reflects major principles of this process. Such plan will allow the business to draft the development strategy in an optimized manner, provide harmonized services and correctly assess the investment potential.

Our program covers a wide specter of business supporting infrastructure – vocational education centers, business incubators, institutions facilitating development of cluster organizations, financial and consulting service providers, and other activities for supporting SMEs.

In our opinion, the current level of economic development (and accumulated problems) necessarily requires active co-participation both of the state and local self-governance in economic development process. In addition, we well realize importance of right positioning of the state's role in forming free and competitive business environment in order not to allow negative results of excessive regulation.

Urban development/ City planning/ Housebuilding

7. What measures will you implement to create better housing conditions for the city dwellers?

For Tbilisi City Hall to have a clear position with respect to development of apartment owner partnerships it is necessary to draft development strategy and later action plan for partnerships of apartment owners;

In addition, citizens need to be informed about the apartment owners partnership and their rights, for which various means can be used e.g. active meetings with the population, making videos and distribution I media and etc.;

Effective funding system needs to be developed where the partnership is going to identify problem, select service provider company and make other decisions instead of “Chairman of the Building”.

A far more flexible system can be created for lifts. An electronic payment system can be introduced for using lifts that would help us to avoid corruption transactions and improper expenditure of funds. Payment can be attached to travel (so-called Metro Money) cards, which will ease using lift and make it comfortable. Electronic payment will allow us to account accurately number of moves, paid sums and etc. Also, roof repair program for multi-storey buildings and improvement of common yards will be funded within the framework of apartment owner’s partnership program.

8. What measures are you planning to implement to ensure the street care and cleaning are improved?

The following measures will be taken to eliminate problems with respect to cleaning and waste management:

- The optimum number of bins will be identified so that waste disposal is available to the public at maximum extent. Also special locations will be organized for bins so that they do not hinder road traffic.
- Optimum schedule will be developed for movement of respective vehicles, which will prevent overloading of road traffic.
- Permanent monitoring will be established at Tbilisi landfills in order to minimize environmental contamination.
- An active investment campaign will be launched for attracting investments for processing landfill (closed as well as open) waste.

Infrastructure and Transport

9. What measures are you intending to implement to improve the public transport system?

Tbilisi City Hall is going to increase efficiency of transport, which implies improvement of itineraries, adequate technical condition of micro buses and buses, optimization of their quantity, which will

ensure available, universal and safe transport services for population. At the first stage, traffic flows will be studied, which will allow to re-organize routes.

10. What measures are you intending to implement to improve the road safety conditions in the city?

Some roads and streets in the city are technically outdated, less conductive and require current and capital repair. Therefore, the program provides for current and capital repair of roads. This will improve technical condition of roads, reduce traffic jams and have positive impact on transport infrastructure indicators.

11. What measures will you implement to improve the disabled/impaired persons' movement conditions within the city?

For the purpose of adapting infrastructure for persons with disabilities the following actions will be taken: pedestrian part of roads (including pedestrian crossings and underground passes), recreational zones, public transport parking lots will be adapted for persons with disabilities so that they move independently, use public places, etc.

Culture and Education

12. What programs will you implement to enhance the cultural life of the city?

Major priorities of the Tbilisi City Hall during the coming four years for development of cultural life will be:

- Drafting a long-term strategy for facilitating development of cultural field in the capital and ensuring its accessibility for a wide public;
- Development of strategy and programs for the cultural field and its accessibility for a wide public directly with participation of public focus group representatives;
- For ensuring accessibility of capital's cultural life significant focus will be made on organizing cultural events in peripheral and newly merged Tbilisi districts, supporting various centers and implementing district projects;
- Fair and democratic systematic contests will be organized in various areas: literature, art, classical, folklore and contemporary music, visual and performance art and etc.
- In parallel with establishing new projects in the cultural field the capital will take care of improving and developing traditional projects and their adaptation to modern requirements.

13. Within the limits of your competence, what measures will you take with the aim of improving the quality of education and making it more affordable?

Our main goal in the field of education is to ensure access to quality education. For this purpose:

In the field of pre-school education:

- Strategy for democratization and development of kindergarten management system will be developed and tailored to individual needs of the various students. The process of parents' and various focus groups' participation in the management process will be improved. Working procedures of an advisory body will be revised.
- New kindergartens will be planned and opened based on needs analysis. Long-term inclusive education strategy will be prepared. Infrastructure and the physical environment will be adapted to age requirements of children's development including needs of children with disabilities.
- In the course of children's registration in kindergartens the territorial factor (place of residence) will be considered. The allowed number of children in groups as well as relation of children and teachers will be reviewed and the degree of participation of focus groups will increase in this process.
- Effective system of employee professional development will become operational, the status of employees will be reviewed, as well as social security mechanisms, work remuneration and incentives.

In secondary education:

- Using the mechanism for participation in Supervisory Board of public schools will contribute to enforcement of depolarization and democratization policy;
- Successful implementation of vocational education and career development program will be supported in schools;
- The program for providing adapted transport to children with disabilities will be implemented.
- The program for modernizing physical environment in public school libraries will be implemented while libraries of local importance will be tailored to modern requirements;
- Programs will be funded for acquiring quality education (quality school education).
- Based on needs analysis out-of-school or/and educational/ students' and youth homes will be founded.

In vocational education:

- Local government's strategy and program in vocational education field will be implemented on the basis of respective research.

Education of adults:

- With consideration of continuous educational principles, degree programs for adults will be introduced, among which priority will be given to entrepreneurial and SME business courses.

These programs are to be implemented based on requirements of economic development, civil society and labor market.

Safety and Crime

14. Within the limits of your competence, what measures will you implement to fight against crime and carry out crime prevention activities?

According to the effective legislation, fighting crime is not in the City Hall's competence. In Tbilisi there is no municipal police and this function is fulfilled directly by the central government. However, Tbilisi City Hall will pay a special attention to lighting city squares and gardens, so that Tbilisi residents feel safe during night.

Health Care and Social Policy

15. What will your social policy be like and what kind of social programs will you foster in the city?

Social policy of Tbilisi City Hall will be directed to socially unsecure citizens, retired persons, students, persons with disabilities, children and other categories, so that their hard social position is alleviated. The following main programs are being planned for this purpose:

- Extended health care and social security programs, where hundreds of thousands of people will receive benefit;
- Disburse vouchers for certain amount to purchase baby food and other childcare items for each newborn in socially unsecure families;
- Significant growth of allowance for every 3rd, 4th, 5th and etc. child born in a socially unsecure family;
- Socially unsecure families residing in Tbilisi will enjoy doubled benefits when using the utilities vouchers;
- Travel by Subway for socially unsecure families and socially unsecure retired persons will be free.

16. What measures will you adopt in order to improve the general health care indicators in your city?

Various programs are being implemented every year to support health care. In particular:

- Preventive measures are planned that will contribute to reduction of cardiovascular, infectious and other disease risk factors.
- Material and technical base of Tbilisi Emergency will be modernized.
- A special program is being developed in health care, which is going to contribute to implementation of modern/innovative methods of medical treatment and diagnostics;
- A special program will be developed and implemented for popularization of healthy lifestyle.

17. What measures are you intending to implement to improve the social conditions of the homeless?

We shall provide shelter for homeless citizens where they will be able to meet their basic needs (food, shelter, hygiene). At the same time, they will be provided with the clothes and hygiene items.

Ecology, Recreation and Sport

18. What measures are you intending to implement to improve the city's ecological condition?

The following complex activities will be implemented in Tbilisi to form sound environment in Tbilisi:

- Tbilisi Municipal Service for Ecology and Greenery in cooperation with the other agencies will exercise monitoring of the ecology condition in the city.
- On the basis of monitoring, the ecological condition of the city will be assessed and new concept for the spatial planning of Tbilisi will be developed along with urban-architectural planning and consideration of green line arrangements and designing recreational zones;
- Lawfulness of permits issued by the Government in the past for constructing buildings on so-called “Hot Spots” and cutting green trees will be reviewed.
- Based on studied materials landscape designing of compensational new recreational zones will be conducted (Tbilisi Sea, Turtle Lake, Tsavkisi, Digomi Park, 10 Asatiani Str., Tbilisi whereabouts and etc.)
- A strategy is being drafted to reduce degree of contamination in Mtkvari and small rivers that are flow in Tbilisi;
- A program will be planned on protection of Tbilisi air, the aim of which will be setting ways for resolution of faced problems and municipal policy will be enforced.
- Wind shields on the territory of Didi Digomi, Nutsubidze Plateau and Airport settlement will be arranged.
- Gldani and Lilo landfills will be conserved in accordance with modern standards/norms in order to minimize the degree of contamination of the environment. Modern landfill will be constructed at a certain distance from Tbilisi.

19. What measures will you take to expand and develop recreational areas and parks in the city?

Within the municipal boundaries, in accordance with the general development plan, a new recreational and greenery zones, so called “green lines” will be created. In addition, so-called “Red Lines” for parks and squares will be arranged, where it will be impossible to cut trees and start construction. Their immunity will be protected under the respective legislation.

20. What are you intending to do to develop sports activities and to ensure the enhancement of healthy lifestyle along with the development of recreation and sports infrastructure?

Tbilisi City Hall as a self-governing body is authorized within its competence (according to the Law on “Local Self Governance” Article 16, paragraph 2, subparagraph “S” and paragraph 4 of the same Article) to support the development of the mass sports/ amateur sports, ensure the functioning of sports bases and other facilities and encourage their construction.

Within the limits of its authority and according to sports state policy, Tbilisi City hall would promote the process of sports facility development and their construction, thus, elaborating appropriate strategies in the following directions:

- Sports Infrastructure;
- Sports and Healthy Lifestyle;
- Access to Mass Sport

There is a corresponding potential and tradition for the various types of sports in Tbilisi. This should be taken into account in the process of planning the construction of sports infrastructure.

It would be necessary to develop a network model for the development of sports infrastructure in Tbilisi. The basic principle of this model is to create a network for the whole city in such a way that sports facilities are evenly distributed according to the population number and location.

The network model of Sports infrastructure is elaborated according to the European standards and is introduced to many European countries, for instance, to England, France, Spain, Finland, etc.

Development of sports infrastrucure, promotion of mass sports and great achievements would be the priorities of Tbilisi City hall. It will support the participation of population in sports/ physical activities and ensure the healthy lifestyle.

Tbilisi

21. What measures are you intending to implement for the betterment of the safety and comfort of pedestrians in the city?

To improve safety and comfort of pedestrians, first of all, it is necessary to regulate pedestrian paths. In addition, sidewalks should gradually be freed from car parking. Traffic lights for pedestrians should be fixed. Also, it is planned to make voiced traffic lights for blind pedestrian crossing and adept pedestrian paths and sidewalks for persons with disabilities.

There would be elaborated technical parametres for street numbering and indicators that are easy to remember and understand creating positive mood for pedestrians.

22. What measures are you planning to implement for the improvement of the road traffic environment and the reduction of traffic jams?

It is necessary to take the following measures to regulate traffic and minimize traffic jams, namely:

- Study of the transport flow (vehicles of all kinds) according to the methodology tested in the developed countries (for example, France, Germany);
- Defining traffic intensity, modes of the traffic flow and traffic safety should be further envisaged during the elaboration of Tbilisi General Plan;;
- Inventory and diagnostics of roads and artificial constructions located on the roads (bridges, overpasses, viaducts, retaining walls, etc) to define their actual technical condition;

In addition, currently to improve the existiong situation in the city it is necessary to improve some of the busy transport junctions. In particular:

- Restoring two-way traffic in Pushkin street, extending additional road considering the four-line traffic so that it would not affect existing cultural and archeological monument;
- Constructing two overpasses in the crossing of Tamarashvili and University streets, so that the cars can move without the traffic lights;
- Opening juncture on two levels – in the crossing of Saburtalo and Kartoziya streets;
- Arranging exit at Galaktioni Bridge on the left bank side to pass to the right bank;
- Extending the road near King Tamar’s bridge by means of tunnel;
- Improving traffic by means of regulating traffic lights in Chavchavadze street junction (intersection of Kavsadze street and a newly constructed street ascending from Mziuri);
- Building additional bridge crossings to organize one way traffic on the banks of the River Mtkvari;
- Switching of the incoming transit traffic to the bypass roads of the city to unload the city's central part;
- Building bicycle paths/trails.

At the same time the programme envisages conducting on-going and capital repair of the road surface in Tbilisi as well as construction works.

Wrong parkings also create traffic jams in the capital. To solve parking problems it is essential to arrange underground and multilevel parkings (parking lots) in the city's various districts, which is very efficient in terms of preventing traffic jams on the roads.

Special attention should be paid to the issue that when constructing multy-storey buildings or shopping moles it is important to arrange underground parkings in the above mentioned buildings as it is done in nearly every big city of the world.

23. What measures are you intending to implement for the resolution of the problems concerning stray animals?

The problem of stray animals in Tbilisi will be solved by means of implementing methods tested in many countries of the world, including:

In the first stage all the stray animals will be registered, data base will be created, then permanent monitoring of their condition will be conducted; in the next stage they will be caught and treated, and only in case of incurable and contagious disease they will be put to sleep. At the same time their propagation will be reduced by means of artificial medication;

In addition, we will support the individuals and non-profit organizations involved in the care of stray animals. This includes encouraging mentioned individuals and organizations, assisting them in various forms, for instance, supplying them with the animal food and medicine, building additional cages, etc.

24. What measures are you planning to implement to regulate the problems concerning unfinished construction projects and derelict/damaged buildings?

The issue of damaged and failing buildings is very problematic for Tbilisi. Given the scale of the question, quick solution of it, unfortunately, is impossible, but ignoring the existing reality and having it cosmetically camouflaged (which we had for so many years) is absolutely unacceptable.

Our program is focused on the gradual renewal of housing and infrastructure development. Many countries of the world have gone through the similar stage, so that there is a lot of experience accumulated. It is noteworthy, that even in the countries having much stronger economic potential than Georgia, ignoring of the housing problem have caused creation of mud house settlements. So we quite clearly understand the nature of the problem and recognize its possible positive as well as negative results. For this reason we plan to work intensively on the investment resources in order to resolve the problem in a timely and optimal manner.

25. What measures will you use to maintain the historic aspects of the city?

Cultural heritage of old Tbilisi will be one of the main priorities of Tbilisi City hall. Therefore, first of all, comprehensive plan of Old Tbilisi Rehabilitation will be designed including concrete plans of restoration. For this reason the specialists will analyse the status of cultural heritage of buildings and the process of rehabilitation will be carried out based on it so that on the one hand, the historical image (authenticity) will be preserved, on the other hand, the needs of modern society will be taken into consideration.

Forms of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) will be used and based on it the City Hall will provide investors with the improved infrastructure and communications. As to the investors, they will start rehabilitation on terms and conditions agreed with the City Hall.

26. What is your position concerning the construction of the Tbilisi railway bypass?

We share the project of Tbilisi Railway Bypass to some extent. It is extremely important to move the railway line to the peripheral part of Tbilisi in order to free commercial or public space in the city centre where it could be possible to implement many interesting projects. However, the survey conducted by the consulting company “MS Mobility Consultants” hired by Georgian Railway demonstrated that existing project has significant shortcomings, in particular:

- In June 2010 the project implementation process started without the Feasibility Study and it still does not exist. Whereas 64% of the project cost – 213 million dollars have already been spent. All this is the expression of complete disregard of the rules, negligence and total indifference towards the population;
- The project does not take into account the risks of ecological safety, namely, the risks of possible pollution of the drinking water – distance of the bypass to the Tbilisi Sea is minimal (900 metres) and railway accidents or other technical problems, for example, inclination of the rocky surface in the Tbilisi Sea direction can cause oil product run-off into the Tbilisi Sea;
- The trajectory used by the mentioned railway bypass is a part of strategically important territory for the future development of Tbilisi and its usage for such purposes contradicts the main principle of Tbilisi development;
- The project does not consider the aspects of technical and economic optimization, in particular, locomotive turning section that significantly increases the cost of railway service.

Despite the shortcomings, considering the interest of Tbilisi population, together with the field specialists, with the active participation of all public interest groups, it is absolutely necessary to renew Tbilisi Railway Bypass Project within 18 months (the Government Decree of March 26, 2014) and start its implementation in the shortest possible terms.

Therefore, existing deficiencies should be corrected and project implementation should continue.

27. What is your position concerning the projected construction of a hotel near Vake Park?

One of our priorities is to protect our capital's ecological environment, rehabilitate and extend the recreation zones and create healthy environment for people living in Tbilisi.

Unfortunately, the previous authorities of the city were often neglecting the public interests issuing construction permits without any proper justification. We would control the issuance of construction permits for the buildings that reduce and threaten green areas of the capital.

We have inherited undue constructions from the previous administration that are considered legal today.

When we come to power we'll start negotiations with the owners of current constructions who were granted permission to build in the recreation zones. We will try to find alternative ways (for example, substitution of territory) to avoid the destruction of Tbilisi's green cover.

As far as we know there is an ongoing litigation case against the construction of a hotel in Vake Park. It should be noted that the relevant agencies of the City Hall have used special zonal agreement and increased urban development options for this area, namely: excessive ratio of development intensity that should comply with the regulations of the land use and development in Tbilisi city (Tbilisi City Council Decision of March 27, 2009, N4-13, on "Approving the Regulations for the Land Use and Development of Tbilisi City", Article 24). However, Tbilisi City Hall has not complied with any requirements of the above mentioned regulation up to now.

Mentioned case is appealed in court. It is really interesting to know what will be the Court decision concerning the protection of the recreation zone. We believe that it is possible to negotiate with the investor in terms of substitution of the territory in order to carry out his construction on another spot so that we can save Vake Park.