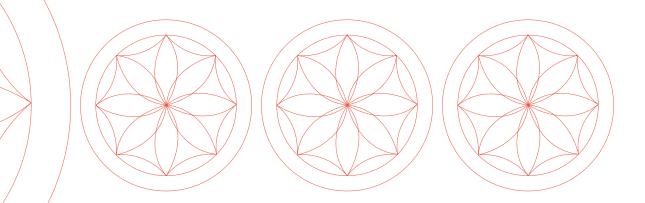
Global Palestine Connected Gaza

A Spatial Vision for the Gaza Governorates



A Palestinian Private Sector Initiative

Supported by:

Consolidated Contractors Company Palestine Investment Fund Bank of Palestine Paltel Group Foundation Palestine Real Estate Investment Company

> In cooperation with: The Portland Trust

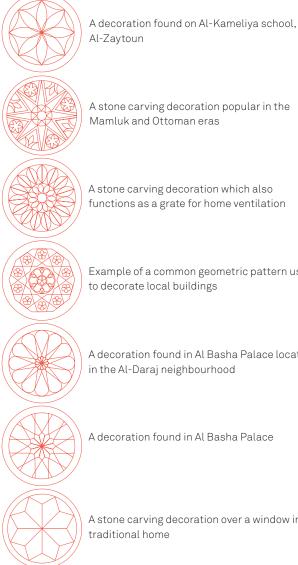
Executive Summary, April 2016

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The below icons have been inspired by a series of local decorations in Gaza. Each symbol has been assigned to a different chapter in this report to aid reader navigation.



A stone carving decoration popular in the Mamluk and Ottoman eras

A stone carving decoration which also functions as a grate for home ventilation

Example of a common geometric pattern used to decorate local buildings

A decoration found in Al Basha Palace located in the Al-Daraj neighbourhood

A decoration found in Al Basha Palace

A stone carving decoration over a window in a

Sourced from "In the Shadow of Sorrows", published by Jawdat Al Khoudary. Text credited to Nashwa Alramlawi and photos credited to Serge Negre.

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Challenges

Major **risks** to Gaza, with broader **implications** for Palestine and the region.

Power supply **less than 45 percent** of estimated demand.

Coastal aquifer on the verge of **collapse,** with extraction at nearly **four times** the sustainable rate.

Sewage solutions and increased supply of drinking water urgently needed.

Unemployment over 40 percent, youth unemployment over 60 percent.

GDP per capita **30 percent lower** than in mid-1990s.

Housing supply **less than 60 percent** of total needs, with a deficit of more than 140,000 units.

Total **population** of 1.8 million, **growing at 3.4 percent** annually.

Demographic imbalance, with 73 percent of population under the age of 30.

Imagine Gaza

Accommodating **3.5 million people** by 2050.

Part of an **independent Palestinian State**, contributing to an emerging transnational **city region**.

Providing **4 times** more employment, or **1.1 million total jobs**.

Multiplying **GDP 25 times,** with GDP per capita reaching middle-income economy standards by 2050.

A modern economy focused on **trade and exchange**.

Global Palestine, Connected Gaza

A **Palestinian private sector initiative**, focused on Gaza but linked to national efforts.

Produced by a team of **20 international experts**.

Prepared in close consultation with over **300 local and international stakeholders** in Gaza and the West Bank.

Focused on implementation, it identifies over **70 Catalytic Projects** to encourage investment.

Foreword by the Coordinating Committee

Gaza is not only a part of Palestine geographically or in terms of political boundaries: it is profoundly rooted in the heart of the Palestinian nation and its people; emotionally, socially and economically.

Should Palestine thrive and compete in an increasingly globalised economy, it will need an empowered Gaza. Should Gaza revive once again after years of wars and a punishing blockade, it will need strong integration with the West Bank and connections to the world: a truly *global Palestine* requires a *connected Gaza*.

Responding to a sense of collective responsibility and understanding the need for a shared approach with the Palestinian public sector, we as members of the Palestinian business community have sought to help develop a long-term vision for Gaza. To that effect, we commissioned AECOM, a world-leading spatial and urban planning firm to lead the technical work, in conjunction with The Portland Trust.

The work recognises Gaza's pressing priorities in terms of reconstruction and provision of housing, energy, water, and basic economic needs, and proposes a long term plan, up to the year 2050, as part of a holistic vision for Palestine. We hope that this vision, together with the comprehensive set of projects identified as part of the work, will provide the inspiration and framework to guide short and medium-term action and investment to address some of those urgent needs. Such efforts need to be guided by best practice planning and respond to the spatial optimisation of Gaza's constrained land to accommodate its large population.

In approaching this initiative, we have prioritised inclusiveness as a key component of a representative vision. The work reviewed and took into account past national and international planning efforts for Gaza, and, importantly, engaged in its preparation representatives of the Palestinian private sector and civil society both in Gaza and the West Bank, the Palestinian Government and the international community. The technical teams conducted extensive field work, consulting hundreds of individuals and organisations, including youth and women groups, technical experts and academics.

The forward looking nature of the work can change the perception of Gaza and help redefine its role in global Palestine, based on economic specialisation, leveraging its entrepreneurial and energetic youth, and serving as Palestine's gateway to the world.

We offer this report to all stakeholders working on planning at the national and local levels, to Palestinian local and diaspora business leaders, to the civil society and the international community.

As members of the private sector we are ready and committed to work and invest to see the vision become a reality, for Gaza and for Palestine. To this effect, we make a call for action to all stakeholders to work together, including the leadership of all Palestinian factions, all levels of government, the international community and the wider private sector.

We dedicate this work to the next generation of Palestinian youth in Gaza and across Palestine, as it is they who will continue the work after us and ensure the vision is realised. We thank all those who have participated in the preparation of this initiative and hope we can continue to work together to pave the way for a brighter future for Gaza, its children and the region as a whole.

We can develop a global Palestine by building a connected Gaza.

Samer Khoury, Consolidated Contractors Company Dr. Mohammad Mustafa, Palestine Investment Fund Hashim Shawa, Bank of Palestine Ammar Aker, Paltel Group Nabil Al Sarraf, Palestine Real Estate Investment Company Zahi Khouri, National Beverage Company Samir Hulileh, Palestine Investment & Development Company Dr. Mohammed Abu Ramadan, Wataniya Mobile Jawdat Al Khoudary, Sakka and Khoudary Company Azzam Shawwa, Palestine Monetary Authority Dr. Samir Abdullah, Palestine Economic Research Policy Institute (MAS)

Acknowledgements

Gaza deserves our full attention. This simple statement motived a group of Palestinian private sector companies to support and fund this comprehensive study as a gift to Gaza.

This report stands to recognise the following entities for their financial contribution to enable the work:

- Consolidated Contractors Company
- Palestine Investment Fund
- Bank of Palestine
- Paltel Group Foundation
- Palestine Real Estate Investment Company.

The report would not have been complete without the advice, guidance and in kind support of the following entities:

- Palestine Development & Investment Company
- National Beverage Company
- Sakka & Khoudary Company
- Wataniya Mobile
- Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS).

An exceptional acknowledgment goes to The Portland Trust who helped initiate, facilitate and drive this work. We thank particularly Nicola Cobbold, Suzanne Jacobs, Kamel Husseini and Sebastian Welisiejko, who led the preparation of this report.

We are also grateful to the AECOM team, led by the visionary Christopher Choa, for their effort and determination in producing this strategic plan.

The report also benefited from technical support at the planning level of key people at the Palestinian National Spatial Planning Unit (NSPU), the Office of the Prime Minister and other governmental bodies:

- Dr. Ali Shaath, NSPU and PIEFZA
- Dr. Ahmad Saleh, NSPU
- Dr. Tawfiq Budeiri, NSPU and Ministry of Local Government
- Dr. Bashar Jumaa, NSPU and Office of the Prime Minister
- Ziad Obaid, Ministry of Transport.

We would also like to thank and salute:

- All stakeholders in Gaza and the West Bank who generously contributed their time and efforts to inform the preparation of this work: planners; academics; business people; youth, women and other civil society groups; economists; industry leaders; chambers of commerce and trade associations
- All members of the international community in Palestine.



A Palestinian private sector initiative

Global Palestine, Connected Gaza

is a private sector-led initiative proposing a Spatial Vision for the Gaza governorates, as well as a platform to help guide its practical implementation.

Whilst focused on, and spatially limited to Gaza, it is above all **a Palestinian initiative**, seeking to complement and build on **national efforts** to help guide strategic thinking around the country's immediate and long-term development.

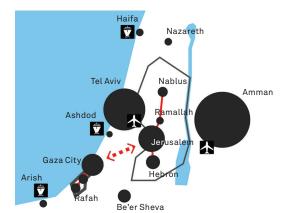
Funded by the private sector, the initiative anticipates trends that are **shaping urban regions worldwide** and recognises particular conditions that are relevant to the **Palestinian context**.

Several broad plans and visions for Palestine, and for Gaza in particular, have been proposed in the past. However, many of these precedents lacked practical recommendations for their implementation. Conversely, numerous projects have been put forward but most lacked the framework of a comprehensive plan. For the first time, **Global Palestine, Connected Gaza** introduces a range of relevant, transformative projects that are coordinated with, and can help deliver a long-term, holistic Spatial Vision.

Conceived and designed through a distinctive participatory approach, *Global Palestine, Connected Gaza* is a living initiative, proposing a framework to help coordinate wider multi-stakeholder efforts. The Palestinian private sector intends that the vision will also help strengthen relationships between Gaza and the West Bank as part of an **integrated**, **independent Palestinian State**.



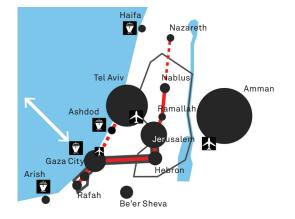




From current challenges to a wider vision

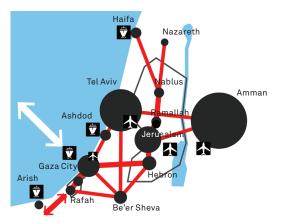
Today

Global Palestine, Connected Gaza recognises current challenges and urgent needs, most notably in relation to reconstruction, water and energy, housing, environmental degradation and socioeconomic stagnation. The work acknowledges political and security conditions in the definition of its immediate and short-term principles.



Looking forward

In the understanding that the status quo is unsustainable, **Global Palestine, Connected Gaza** assumes that the multilayered system of restrictions hindering development in Palestine, and in Gaza in particular, will be progressively lifted. Specifically, the work assumes sustained progress towards greater openness and connectivity, including strategic links between Gaza and the West Bank. The main assumptions guiding the work are discussed in detail in Chapter 2 of this report.



Long-term

Global Palestine, Connected Gaza anticipates that by 2050 the Gaza governorates could accommodate a population of around 3.5 million people, based on detailed population growth modelling (including assumptions on refugees). The work envisages a modern economy specialised around trade and exchange, functioning as part of an independent Palestinian State and working within an emerging transnational city region (comprising core urban centres in Palestine and neighbouring countries).



Building on precedents, working together

Global Palestine, Connected Gaza

acknowledges and builds on previous local and national planning efforts, including the 1998 and 2005 Regional Plans for Gaza and the successive National Development Plans put forward by the Palestinian Government, as well as other local plans. At the same time, the work was informed by an extensive body of research and analysis on Gaza's current conditions and future prospects. A comprehensive list of relevant references is available in Appendix 1 to this report.

Global Palestine, Connected Gaza was prepared by AECOM and The Portland Trust in close coordination with a wide range of local and international stakeholders, including the Palestinian National Spatial Planning Unit (NSPU), which is advancing national planning work for Palestine. The work also factors in other ongoing national planning efforts for Palestine, including the National Transportation Master Plan commissioned by the Ministry of Transport.

Global Palestine, Connected Gaza was produced over eight months during 2015/2016, incorporating seven international missions to the region and involving more than 50 consultative meetings with over 300 individuals.











Why a Spatial Vision? And why now?

Palestine faces a set of severe longstanding challenges that hinder economic and social development, negatively affecting both its current population and the generations to come.

In Gaza, issues are particularly acute. A stagnant economy; high unemployment; major deficiencies in the provision of housing, energy and water infrastructure; demographic imbalances; profound internal and regional inequalities and environmental degradation are just some of the most pressing.

These issues reflect decades of instability, recurrent conflict, internal division and external constraints, exacerbated in Gaza by the imposition of a de facto blockade by the Government of Israel since 2007 and the partial closure of the Rafah crossing from 2013. The war in the summer of 2014 brought further devastation and imposed new challenges that are yet to be overcome.

Looking forward, it becomes clear that the current status quo cannot be sustained. In the absence of meaningful progress towards greater openness, conditions in Gaza will inevitably continue to deteriorate, most likely leading to a profound humanitarian crisis and resulting in renewed conflict – effectively having adverse implications not just for Gaza, but for Palestine as a whole and the broader region. An easing of current restrictions, coupled with major investment in housing, infrastructure and economic development is required to help promote sustainable growth, address the most pressing challenges and change the conversation around Gaza's future.

As emergency and urgent recovery still remains a priority, it may seem counter-intuitive to plan for the long-term. However, best practice proves that short-term interventions need a long-term vision to guide their delivery, to reduce mis-coordination and to avoid inadvertent provision of services and solutions in the wrong place or at the wrong scale. The major investments required now will influence the shape of Gaza for generations to come. Without a long-term perspective, these urgently needed investments can unintentionally be made in ways that are inefficient or compromise longer term opportunities.



Turning challenges into opportunities: building on Gaza's assets

Strategically located at the heart of the Levantine corridor, Gaza has enormous potential to leverage its truly unique assets, including a rich cultural and trading history, a beautiful coastal setting and an entrepreneurial, skilled and resilient population.

A thriving Gaza would play an integral role in a sovereign Palestinian State, acting as its maritime gateway to the world and working symbiotically with the West Bank.

Interestingly, there is great scope to realise Gaza's potential by approaching challenges as opportunities. For example, high population density, usually referred to as one of Gaza's most daunting issues, creates the critical mass necessary for successful economic and urban development, as well as allowing more efficient infrastructure and service provision. The table below shows other examples of this principle, which are further developed in this report.



Challenges

- Disproportionately young demographic profile
- Economic imbalance with hinterland
- Limiting boundaries and high population density
- Degraded infrastructure

Opportunities

- Foundation for a knowledge based economy
- Comparative wage and cost advantages
- Basis of a successful city
- Potential to leapfrog to next generation technologies.

From vision to implementation

Global Palestine, Connected Gaza

proposes over 70 Catalytic Projects, intended to help deliver the Spatial Vision across different timescales.

The projects, ranging from major infrastructure developments to softer community driven undertakings, anticipate engagement from both private and public sector entities as well as from the international community.

The proposed projects, identified and defined in close consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, aim to create diverse opportunities, and, most importantly, provide the maximum benefit for the community.

Being defined at the conceptual level within the scope of this work, the detailed design and feasibility assessment of each project will need further work. A comprehensive list of projects, arranged by type and geographic area, is presented and discussed in Chapter 4 of this report.

Appendix 3 introduces governance principles for implementation.



Anticipating socioeconomic trends

The Spatial Vision is informed by a comprehensive economic strategy which charts a pathway for Gaza to thrive in the future, stressing integration with the West Bank and opportunities for specialisation within the wider region.

The strategy, aligned with the overall assumptions on future conditions described in Chapter 2 of this report, aims to anticipate the future shape of Gaza's productive structure. This work was based on in-depth analysis and benefited from broad consultation with local and international experts and stakeholders from across a wide range of economic sectors.

Global Palestine, Connected Gaza envisages that Gaza will develop into a globally relevant, knowledge-based and resource efficient economy pursuing opportunities in high value added services and niche manufacturing, trade and transportation, with tourism and agriculture activities expected to play an important, yet subsidiary role.

At the same time, the envisaged economic strategy informs job creation and growth modelling. It is estimated that by 2050, the Gaza governorates could support up to 1.1 million jobs, with GDP per capita reaching levels corresponding to a middle income economy. The expected level of growth and economic opportunity in turn informs projections of Gaza's future population. A comprehensive overview of the assumptions on economic conditions and demographics are discussed in Chapter 2 of this report.

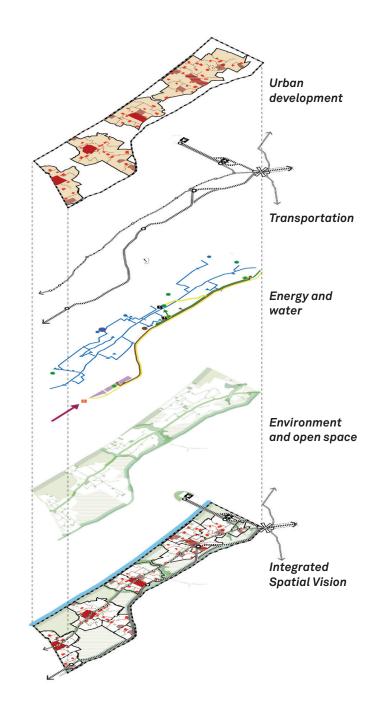


The Spatial Vision

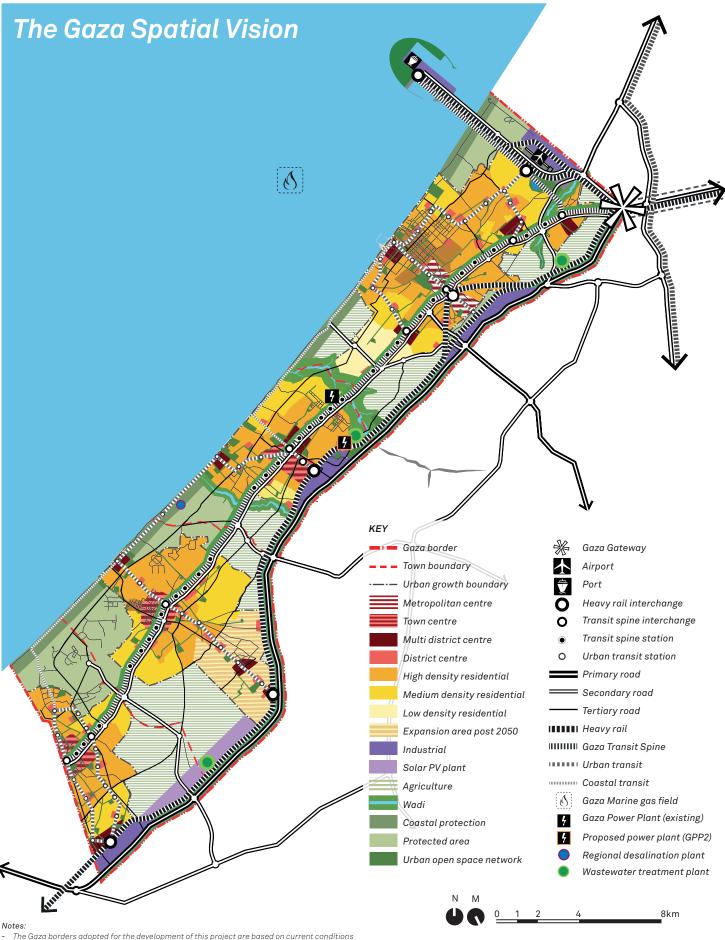
The Spatial Vision proposes an integrated approach to four key elements. These, in turn, provide an overarching framework for the implementation of Catalytic Projects.



Environment and open space: Promotion



Global Palestine, Connected Gaza



The Gaza borders adopted for the development of this project are based on current conditions and do not imply a position on future final borders, which are subject to political agreement. The sum bound of the physical subscription of the subject to political agreement.

The town boundaries shown were solely used for planning purposes and do not imply a
recommendation on governorate arrangements. See Section 3.2 for further explanation.



Key aspects of the Spatial Vision elements



Urban development

Contain urban development within strategically identified and clearly defined areas - maximising accessibility to facilities, services and employment, while preserving Gaza's precious environmental and agricultural land.

- Gaza City and Deir Al Balah would accommodate the greatest share of growth, creating a nearly continuous urban area with the economic and social critical mass to serve as a global city for Palestine.
- Investment would be focused around a coordinated network of urban centres, from major centres with large concentrations of transport and employment through to smaller centres providing daily facilities and services within walking distance.
- Economic activity would be focused in the urban centres as well as a series of major industrial areas along Gaza's border.
- Growth in earlier phases would be focused within major centres, building on existing critical mass. Creation of new centres and urban expansion into new areas would occur over time.



Transportation

Promote strategic connectivity between Gaza, the West Bank and the regional hinterland. Within Gaza, provide a transport network that is coordinated with and supports urban growth and sustainable movement.

- Transportation initiatives would include a port, a regional airport (complementing a primary airport in the West Bank as per existing plans), and a new multi-modal transport interchange (envisaged as the main connection point with the West Bank).
- The proposed colocation of these major pieces of transport infrastructure in the north (with the port proposed on an offshore site) offers an optimal response to technical, environmental and land use considerations. These include proximity to the West Bank and major urban and productive centres in Gaza, as well as the protection of environmental assets and harmonisation of traffic flows. The technical reasons underpinning these recommendations are discussed in detail in Chapter 3 of this report.
- A multi-modal transport network within Gaza would support urban growth. This would include a heavy rail line along Gaza's eastern boundary (connecting major centres and industrial areas), the Gaza Transit Spine (a major north-south light rail system running along the Salah Al-Din corridor), and local light rail networks within urban areas.
- In the long-term, a new primary road would be developed along Gaza's eastern border, with secondary connections into urban areas. This new road would efficiently connect major industrial areas and serve cross-Gaza and regional traffic, keeping these movements out of urban centres.
- The traffic function of Salah Al-Din Road would be downgraded from its current highway status, allowing it to function more effectively within urban areas (as a light rail corridor and urban boulevard).



Energy and water

Establish a reliable and sustainable supply of energy and water as a crucial prerequisite for all other proposals in the Spatial Vision.

- The Gaza Power Plant (GPP) would be restored and expanded, fed by a new gas pipeline (as well as increased supply of diesel as an interim measure). Further increased power supply would be met by expanding developments in renewables and integration with the broader regional grid (supported by enhancements to the transmission and distribution system). In the long-term, a new power plant would be built as the existing GPP reaches the end of its design life.
- Key water supply proposals would bring aquifer extraction within sustainable levels to avert permanent damage and meet Gaza's future water needs. These would include completing the planned regional desalination plant, promoting the use of treated waste water for agriculture and shutting down illegal wells. Over time, Gaza's network would be progressively integrated into a wider regional network, allowing for the sharing of water resources to balance demand and supply within the region and increase supply resilience.
- The renewal of Gaza's wastewater treatment infrastructure, including the completion of three new treatment plans and the decommissioning of existing plants would meet future wastewater requirements. The new plants would treat wastewater to a much higher quality, enabling treated wastewater to be used for multiple purposes, including agricultural irrigation and restoring the water flow in Wadi Gaza.



Environment and open space

Protect, restore and enhance key natural systems in Gaza.

- The environmental function of key natural systems would be protected and restored, and their recreational and amenity value enhanced for future generations. Key systems include the marine environment (beach and coastal zone), terrestrial landscapes (e.g. the Mawasi), and riparian corridors (the wadis).
- An integrated network of open spaces would provide a variety of active and passive recreation opportunities within accessible distances of populations. Urban green spaces within this network (such as parks or squares) would be linked via connective green spaces (such as green streets or linear parks), acting as corridors for recreation and wildlife migration.
- Agriculture would remain an important part of Gaza's character and identity. While available agricultural lands would reduce to accommodate future urban growth requirements, key areas would be preserved and compact forms of urban agriculture encouraged. A shift to irrigating with high quality treated wastewater would help ensure a sustainable water supply.

Imagine Gaza

Global Palestine, Connected Gaza defines productive industrial and employment areas, key infrastructure developments, attractive environments and desirable places to live.

The Spatial Vision represents both the long-term plan for the future of the Gaza governorates and also a coordinated series of Catalytic Projects.

As part of the overall Spatial Vision, regeneration of large areas within the Gaza governorates would create astonishing transformations of the territory as we know it today. These transformative areas incorporate a wide range of foundation, integrated and local projects.

Each of these transformative areas are comprehensive developments, economic engines that would allow Gaza to specialise in ways that contribute to the economy of Palestine as a whole.

Aerial view of Gaza in 2050 artist's impression

1



Executive Summary

Imagine Gaza: core areas











Catalytic Projects

Global Palestine, Connected Gaza

identifies a list of over 70 Catalytic Projects which are intended to help deliver the Spatial Vision.

These are deliverable on a range of different timescales, with many critical projects beginning now and focusing on the period through to the medium-term (2030). The proposed phasing aims to ensure that urgently needed investments build towards the larger long-term vision.

The proposed projects range from large-scale infrastructure developments to grassroots, community-driven undertakings, and anticipate engagement from both private and public sector entities as well as from the international community. They are intended to complement existing reconstruction plans and development projects by these parties.

The identified projects are not intended to form an exhaustive list. At the same time, given the scope of this work, they do not go down to the detail of specific buildings or facilities (such as schools, mosques and hospitals). Rather, they are larger in scale, helping to create the places and communities within which smaller investments would fit.

The Catalytic Projects are listed in the tables on the following pages. To give structure and help establish hierarchy and priority, they have been organised into the categories described in the box to the right, and presented according to their envisaged delivery period.

Foundation projects

Major investments in specific sectors, which span across Gaza and/or are of strategic significance to Gaza as a whole. They provide the building blocks upon which other development can be undertaken. A number of the projects identified in this category require urgent implementation to prevent environmental and economic collapse.

Integrated projects

Large-scale, complex efforts involving more than one sector, which are also of strategic significance to Gaza as a whole. Given their complexity, they should be planned and delivered in an integrated manner by a dedicated managing authority, co-ordinating efforts within different sectors.

Local projects

Smaller initiatives which support the Spatial Vision. These are further organised into:

- Non-location specific investments which are not in a specific place or could be implemented in a variety of places across Gaza. Some of these could be implemented easily and quickly, helping improve quality of life and build momentum for larger, more complex projects.
- Location-specific projects, defined as key urban development projects in specific locations.

Project	Delivery period			
	2016-20	2020-25	2025-30	2030-50
Foundation projects				
GPP upgrade and gas pipeline connection				
Regional power connection enhancements				
Power transmission and storage upgrades				
Large scale solar PV				
Rooftop solar PV				
Energy-from-waste plants				
Water desalination plants (regional and small scale)				
Water recycling				
Regional water connection enhancements				
Water network and storage improvements				
Wastewater collection				
Wastewater treatment				
Wastewater distribution				
Housing				
Centres and social infrastructure				
Heavy rail line				
Gaza Transit Spine / Salah Al Din Road improvements				
Urban / coastal transit systems				
Local bus network				
Major road network				
Integrated water management strategy				
Environmental protection areas				
Coastal and beach protection and restoration areas				
Integrated green infrastructure				
Agriculture				
Solid waste management				
Construction sector capacity building				
Education and skills development				
Gaza: open for business (organisation supporting economic development)				
Data connection (high-speed broadband connectivity)				



Project	Delivery period			
	2016-20	2020-25	2025-30	2030-50
Integrated projects				
Gaza-wide implementation and delivery framework				
Gaza Port Precinct				
Airport and associated development				
Gaza Gateway				
Core Gaza redevelopment authority				
Wadi Gaza redevelopment authority				
Beach Gaza redevelopment authority				
Local projects (non-location specific)				
Local markets				
Cycle network / bicycle share scheme				
Car share scheme				
Agricultural technology programme				
Tree planting programme				
Outdoor gyms				
Community and work spaces programme				
Fab labs / open source manufacturing programme				
Heritage conservation programme				
Arts programme				
Neighbourhood painting programme				
School participation programme				
Cultural diplomacy outreach programme				
Financial technology programme				
Project based financing schemes				
Youth creative skills development programme				

Project		Delivery period				
	2016-20	2020-25	2025-30	2030-50		
Local projects (location specific)						
Deliver housing in Gaza City						
Gaza City water front regeneration (MD 1.1)						
Omar Al Mokhtar Street upgrade (metropolitan centre)						
Gaza City regeneration (metropolitan centre)						
Gaza City eastern extension (metropolitan centre)						
Gaza old city regeneration						
Gaza city southwestern extension and multi-district centre (1.5)						
Beit Hanoun multi-district centre (MD 1.3)						
Jabalya multi-district centre (MD 1.2)						
Residential development adjoining Wadi Gaza (Gaza City)						
Northern industrial area						
Eastern industrial area						
Deliver housing in Deir Al Balah						
Deir Al Balah town centre						
Residential development adjoining Wadi Gaza (Deir Al Balah)						
Deir Al Balah coastal multi-district centre (MD 3.1)						
Deliver housing in Khan Yunis						
Khan Yunis town centre						
Khan Yunis waterfront multi-district centre						
Khan Yunis low-intensity tourism						
Deliver housing in Rafah						
Mawasi tourism development						
Intensification within and around Rafah town centre						

