

GOOD CONSERVATION AND RESTAURATION PRACTICE FICHE

Composed by working party of:

Docomomo Serbia

**Name of building/ group of buildings/ urban scheme/ landscape/ garden
& picture of before and after**

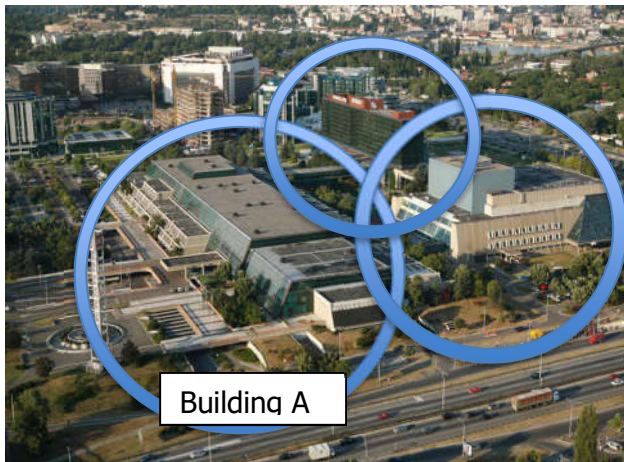
Before conservation/ restauration

Sava Center Complex: 1. Building A (a large indoor public space, small offices, shops & meeting rooms), Building B (a congress hall and a concert hall) and Building C (Hotel Intercontinental)

After conservation/ restauration

Sava Center Complex: 1. Building A (large variety of commerce spaces and a congress hall) 2. Building B (a congress hall and a concert hall) and Building 3 (Crowne Plaza Hotel)

Building C and Building B



Depicted item: Sava Center Complex (A, B, C buildings) before and after reconstruction
Sources: <https://beogradskonasledje.rs/aktuelnosti/sava-centar-kulturno-dobro-2>

Dates: 1977 2,3. Sava Centar, New Belgrade
Sources: <https://beobuild.rs/nova>
Dates: 08.05.2018.

Depicted item: 5,6,7,8,9,10,11 Sava Centar, New Belgrade
Sources: Delta Real Estate, foto credit: Aleksandar and Vesna Anđić
Dates: 06.04.2024

0.1 accessibility

opening hours/ viewing arrangements: Identity of building/ group of buildings/ group of buildings/ landscape/ garden

Opening hours: Mon-Fri: 09-21h, Sat: 09-21h, Sun: 09-21h

Data for identification

current name: Sava Center

former/original/variant name: Sava Center

address/ number(s) and name(s) of street(s): Milentija Popovića 9

town: Belgrade

province/ state: Serbia

post code: 11070

country: Republic of Serbia

geographic GPS coordinates: 44°48'32"N 20°25'52"E

current typology: **COM - REC** performing and congress center, exhibition spaces, educational and office spaces, restaurants, shops and hotel

former/original/variant typology: the same

comments on typology: The social crisis at the end of the nineties of the last century, sanctions and avoidance from congressional movements affected the Sava Center, which slowly declined for decades. Delta Holding (2021) takes over the Sava Center and initiates a comprehensive and thorough reconstruction with the intention that the building, which was created as a kind of technological miracle, will once again become a new center through the implementation of the latest construction standards, using innovative technologies and a large number of energy sustainability systems.

Status of protection

protected by: Republic of Serbia

grade: national importance

date: 2021

valid for: the designated area of protection including Buildings 1, 2 and 3

1. History of building(s)

Chronology

Commission/ competition date: 1976-78

design period (s):

start of site work:

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completion/inauguration: 1978

Relevant persons/organizations

original owner(s)/patron(s): City of Belgrade
architect(s): Stojan Maksimović (1976-1978)
Ivana Letić, Delta Real Estate (2021-2024)
landscape/garden designer(s): Centropjekt project documetation
other designer(s): Centropjekt project documetation
consulting engineer(s): Armont -fasade, Zoling- technical control
building contractor(s): Delta Holding, Delta Real Estate

Other persons or events associated with the building(s)/site

name(s): Hotel "Intercontinental" transformed to Hotel "Crowne Plaza"
association: Mašinoprojekt, Delta Holding
event(s): The complex Sava Center and Hotel "Intercontinetal" was done by architect Stojan Maksimović. Sava Center was connected to Crowne Plaza Hotel via an underground hallway in 2012-13.

Summary of important changes after completion

type of change: restoration and recostruction
date(s):2023
circumstances/reasons for change: covering the concrete cracks, concrete finishing
effect of changes: fasades similar to the original but not the same materials due to new codes
persons/organisations involved: "Mapei" concreete façades materials

Summary of important changes after restoration

type of change: underground part of the basement of Building 2
date(s): 2022
circumstances/reasons for change: small height making the space unusable according to current standards
effect of changes: providing more functional space
persons/organisations involved: "Centropjekt"

2. Description of building(s)

Site/building character

*Summarize main character and give notes on surviving site/building(s)/part(s) of area.
If a site: principle features and zones of influence; main elements in spatial composition.
If a building, main features, construction and materials.*

Current use

of whole building/site:

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of principal components (if applicable):
comments:

The “Sava Center” in Belgrade is a complex of buildings constructed between 1976 and 1978 according to the design of the chief architect Stojan Maksimović and his associates, shaped in the contemporary architectural style of the eighth decade of the 20th century. The articulated complex consists of: the main office building, a congress and concert hall, and the “InterContinental” Hotel (Crowne Plaza), while pedestrian bridges connect the first building with the congress hall and the hotel.

Featuring an original spatially cascading design and a distinctly organic structure, the complex is successfully integrated into the ambience of the wider riverbank area. It was built using a combination of reinforced concrete structures and steel frames, with extensive use of glass as a façade material. The design is based on highly refined contemporary forms—predominantly slanted green-blue glass façades, deep cascading terraces and gardens with horizontal brise-soleils, as well as concrete façades with smaller window perforations.

Within the predominantly horizontal composition of the complex, the cubic volumes of the Sava Center congress and concert hall and the hotel stand out. The center includes numerous conference and meeting halls, a congress and concert hall, a restaurant, café bars, shops, and also houses a post office, banks, a press center, and originally a clinic, printing house, television facilities, and other amenities. The “InterContinental” Hotel (today “Crowne Plaza”), through its position, architecture, forms, and materials, is harmonized with the other buildings in the complex.

Present condition

of whole building/site: ALL BUILDINGS in the complex RECONSTRUCTED according to original use/typologies

of principal components (if applicable):

of other elements (if applicable):

of surrounding area (if applicable):

comments:

3. Evaluation of restoration/conservation

Give the scientific reasons for selection for Docomomo documentation.

The renovation of the building's envelope, which at first glance seemed straightforward, represented an incredible challenge. The outer shell of the Sava Center, a brave and progressive element of its time, very quickly showed systemic defects, characteristic of new technical solutions, which led to inexorable deterioration. The inclined glass facade without proper breaks, dilations and details, quickly gave way and became another problem of the building that most affected the destruction of the building. Although at first glance it seemed that the glass facade was the biggest challenge of the reconstruction of the building envelope, at the end of the construction work, it was still a concrete facade. One large and strong form has completely lost its original aesthetics over time, due to the large retention of water, and has influenced the significant devaluation of the object. Modern methods of protection and restoration of concrete are topics that clearly have great possibilities for development, especially in terms of achieving the effect of natural - concrete, and especially in the area of achieving certain natural tones of concrete color, specific to the Sava river gravel, which was an integral element of concrete prefabrication applied at the Sava Center. The desired effect of the reconstruction of the facade was achieved with many iterations, and it made the building look - strong, permanent and impressive. Thanks to new technologies, the glass facade finally provided a

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view into the fascinatingly complex inner world of the Sava Center, thanks to the low reflection of the glass without jeopardizing the building's energy efficiency, which was one of the imperatives of the reconstruction.

The energy rehabilitation of the concrete facade was carried out from the inside, with the aim of installing the current extremely efficient triple glass facade, which is tensioned with cables on the existing three-band facade steel supports, which is a kind of innovation in the installation of the facade. Originally a light soft roof with almost no bearing capacity, now the energetic and static spatial element has been rehabilitated for the needs of new modern systems, primarily solar panels as an alternative source of energy.

External rehabilitation and restoration of the "old shine" to the outer shell was the first, but far smaller challenge compared to the others that awaited the builders in the interior. At the time of takeover, the Sava Center was a building that had survived a major, natural transformation, and in some way degradation in terms of functionality and interior design. The recognizable entrance foyers and main communications, the Main Congress Hall and the Blue Hall have been preserved. All other spaces in the building have experienced a partial or complete transition into spaces that can be rented out. Many years ago, there was an expansion of „unsightly“ shops built without any plan that sprung up spontaneously on the concrete interior facades of the building, formed inadequately in relation to the original interior of the building, canceling the original aesthetics of the space. Long after the initial successes of the 1980s, Sava Center struggled for survival, until the current reconstruction of the building.

Intrinsic value

Technical evaluation: The building itself is functionally divided into two units – building A, which houses the congress and business part, and building B, which houses the famous Blue Hall – the largest plenary hall in Southeast Europe.

With the reconstruction of the Sava Center building, it gained 46 congress halls, an Immersive hall, a green atrium, twice as many commercial and business spaces, without losing its identity and purpose. The overall picture clearly illustrated the basic postulates of the reconstruction concept - a clear separation of the functions of the congress and the business-commercial part, strengthening the support for the congress and concert purpose, the complete preservation of the spaces that have overcome the challenges of time and proved that the top spaces resist everything - the Main Congress Hall and the Blue Hall , a completely clear relationship to both the new and the old, and what was most important - to create new value. Although the reconstruction of the building started with the basic idea of maintaining the original recognition of Sava Center, it was extremely important to restore the new quality of the space. „Competing“ with the original solutions of Sava Center in terms of materialization and aesthetics was inappropriate and pointless, so all new forms in the renovated building are a balance to strong concrete - transparent, reflective surfaces that are light and sparkling - as a perfect relationship to the weight and strength of concrete.

In addition to technology, an important element of the Sava Center has always been nature - greenery, „streams“ gave softness and life to the original space. This is also the case in the new Sava Center, in addition to the impressive trees in the main hall, there is a completely new space - an oasis between buildings A and B that clearly and integrally connects the two buildings and creates a unique environment filled with trees, modern systems of green walls, directly and openly connected to the foyer and the Amphitheater hall, where these two spaces will form a dynamic unit for organizing events on multiple levels.

The entrance halls are still originally identical, and the elements that could not be saved have been given a new purpose, such as the machine-made stainless steel channels in the halls that were part of the cooling system, which did not function for a long time, and could not be used in that function, they have become chandeliers that follow their original form. For the first time, the Sava Center received numerous systems that today make it a completely modern building that can respond to the very complex requirements of congress organizers.

For the first time, there are sprinklers, complete heating and cooling, security systems, fire protection, state-of-the-art congress systems, lighting and sound systems. The system of round canals has been preserved,

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and even for the purposes of the distinctive visual appearance of the longitudinal corridors, a central green canal was installed, although as such it was not necessary for the heating and cooling system in that position. In the central hall, communications through the building are reinforced with two panoramic elevators, which blend in with the aesthetics of the central hall to give the impression that they have always been there. The six new staircases are designed so that they do not obstruct the views of the space, discreetly hidden in a mirror coating.

Sava Center is one of the few centers of its kind with a BREEAM certificate. There is hardly any multi-purpose building like the Sava Center that has this certificate.

Social evaluation: Through the reconstruction, Sava Centar gained the largest cinema hall in this part of Europe, equipped with the most advanced 3D screen in the region. Around the hall, new spaces have been created, such as the Amphitheater Hall and the Atrium, a winter garden with green walls and nearly 5,000 plants. The Sava Center is now a smart building that not only uses energy efficiently but also generates it. Since its opening, the Sava Center has hosted 55,000 visitors (2024), more than half of whom are foreign delegates, and with the opening of the Blue Hall it is expected that this number will triple by the end of the year. "The Sava Center is the hub of congress tourism in Belgrade and Serbia. Only now, after the renovation and expansion of capacities, with the increase in the number of halls from 16 to 46..."

Cultural and aesthetic evaluation: The cultural monument represents a unique complex in Belgrade of exceptional architectural and urban-planning value. It is one of the most successful and expressive examples of contemporary European architecture of the 1970s and the most functional congress-hotel, business, and cultural center in Belgrade. The complex simultaneously stands as a masterpiece of architect Stojan Maksimović. For this achievement, the chief designer and his collaborators were awarded the October Award of the City of Belgrade for Architecture in 1977.

The reconstruction led by architect Ivana Letić, Delta Real Estate of the Sava Center underline and showed that art and utilitarianism do not have to be in opposition to each other; that commercial business and monumentality can go hand in hand; that in the age of different values there is still a desire and a way to create values for a better future without canceling the heritage - just as it was said at the opening of the renovated congress and business part: "Sava Center was built to last forever".

4. Documentation

Archives/written records/correspondence etc: (state location/ address)

Principal publications (in chronological order):

0. Miloje Popović, *Sava Centar: hrabrost i avantura*, Beograd: Socijalna misao 2007
1. Ljubica Slavković, "Kako je propao Sava centar: arhitektura i sećanja," *Before and After*, November 20. 2020 <https://www.beforeafter.rs/drustvo/kako-je-propao-sava-centar-arhitektura-i-secanja/>

Visual material original visual records/drawings/photographs/others:

Fishe of the original Sava Center complex before reconstruction done by Docomomo Serbia: in the supplementary dossier.

Post restoration photographs and survey drawings: in the supplementary dossier

Sources:

film/video/other sources: none

List documents included in supplementary dossier

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Original photos, post reconstruction photos, plans

5. Fiche report

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e-mail: bina.jelenaiv@gmail.com
date of report: February 11, 2026

Examination by DOCOMOMO national/regional section

approval by working party co-ordinator/registers correspondent (name):
sign and date: Tanja Conley February 11, 2026

examination by DOCOMOMO ISC/R

type of ISC Registers/Urbanism/Landscape/Gardens:
name of ISC member in charge of the evaluation:
comment(s):
ISC approval:
Sign and date:

Working party/ID n°:
NAi ref n°:

date:

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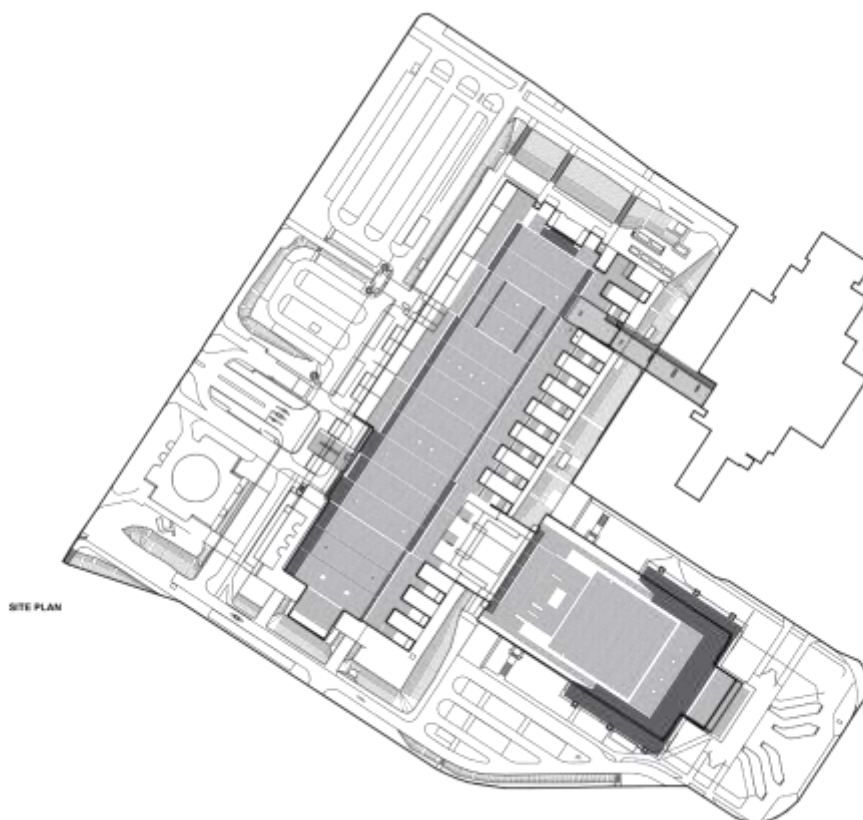
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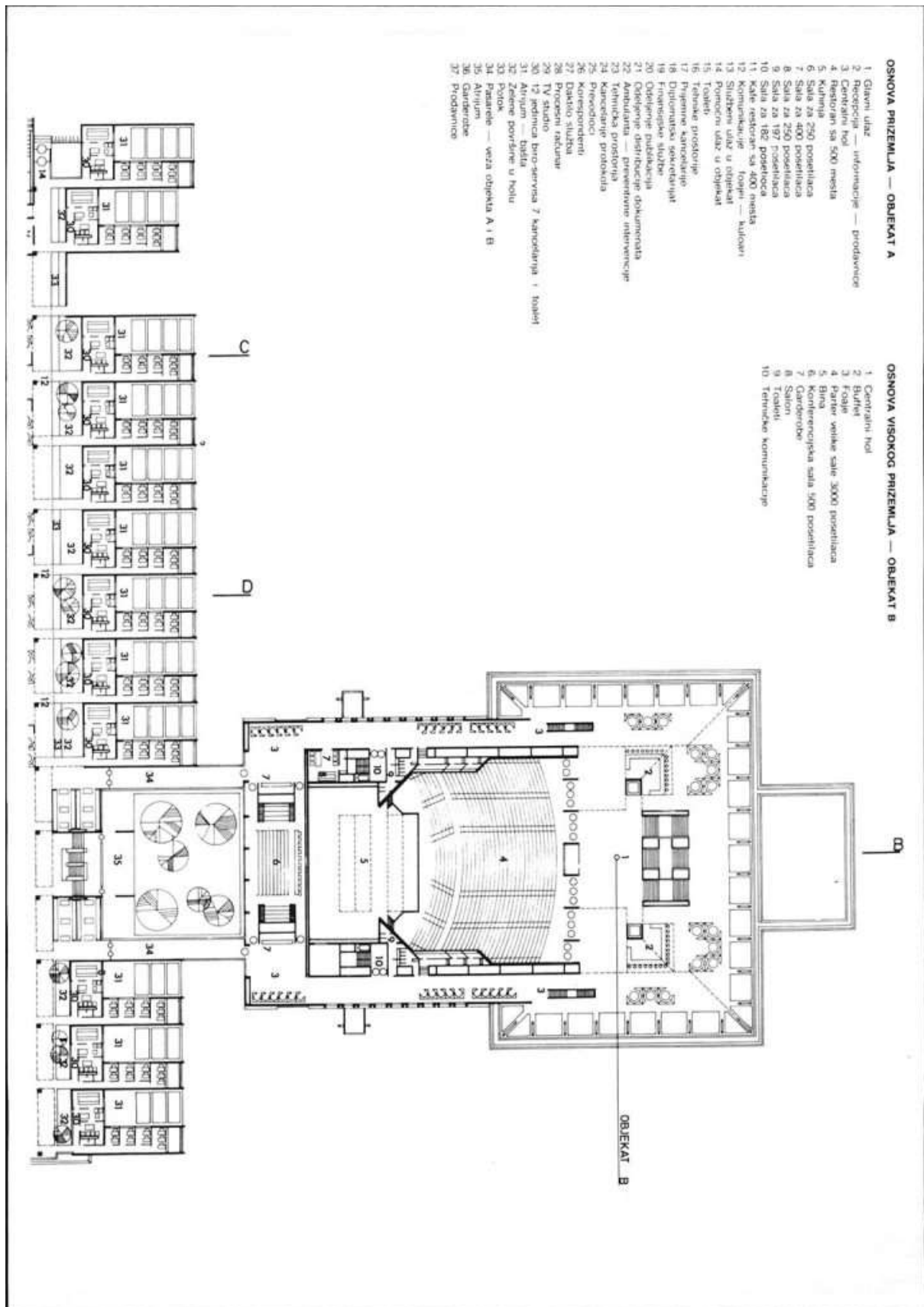
1.Sava centar photo <https://main.archi/work/sava-centar-facade/>



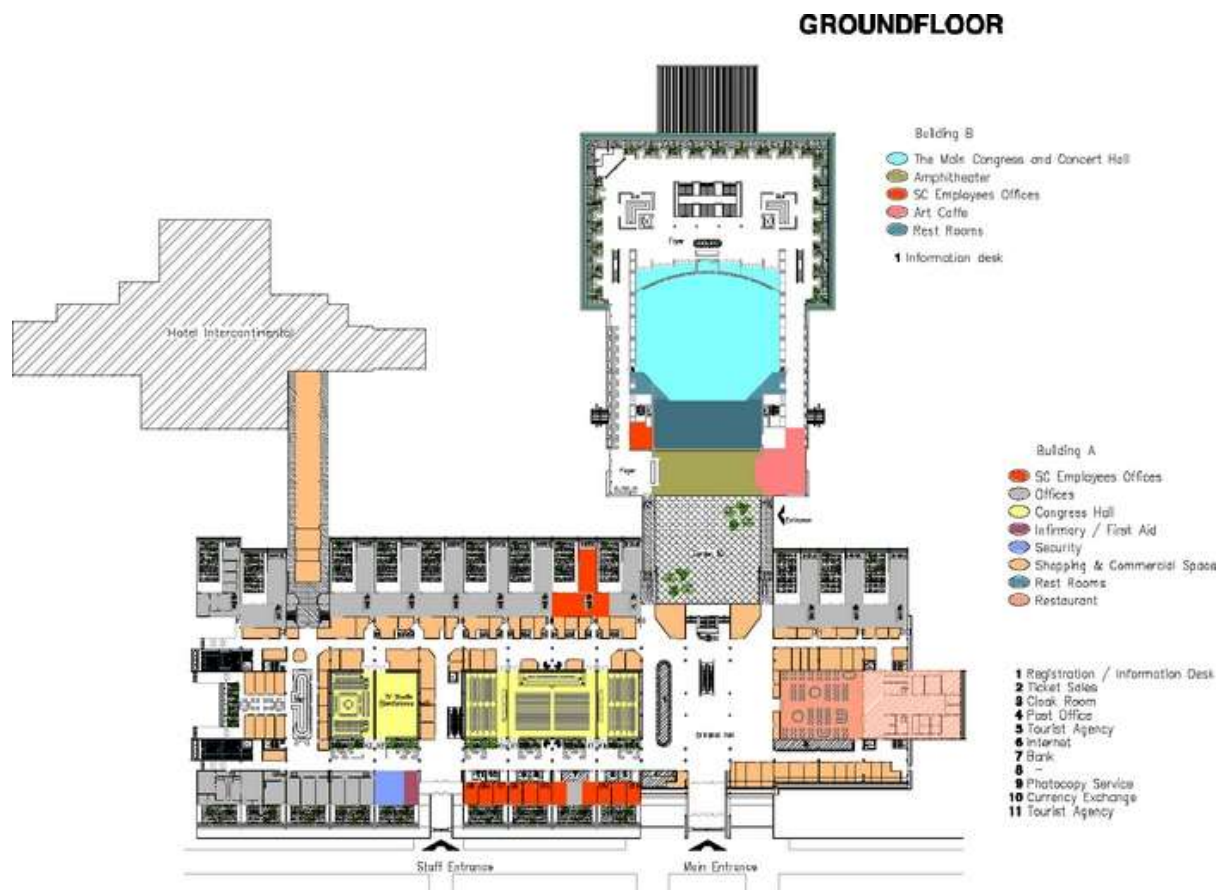
2.Sava centar site plan <https://main.archi/work/sava-centar-facade/>
Building A, Building B and Building C



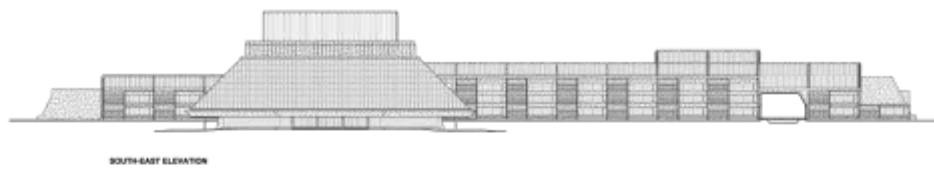
3. Sava centar ground floor , Zavod za zastitu spomenika kulture grada Beograda



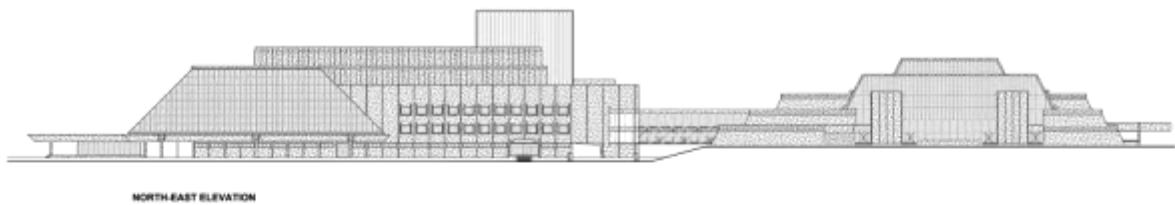
4. Sava centar ground floor plan <http://pedjamarkovic.com/sava-center-linking-architecture-and-politics>



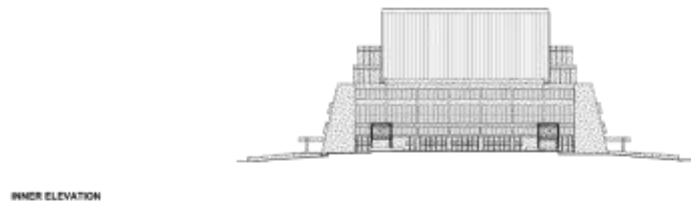
5. Sava centar plans <https://main.archi/work/sava-centar-facade/>



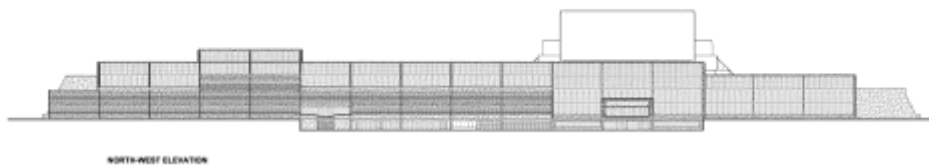
6. Sava centar plans <https://main.archi/work/sava-centar-facade/>



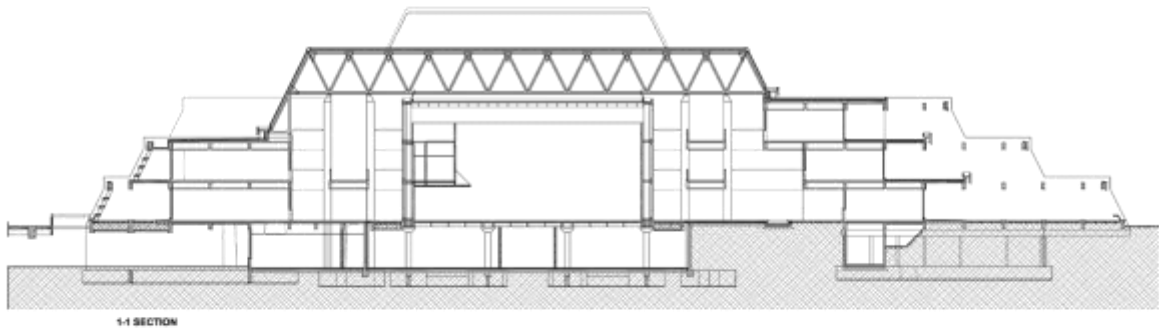
7. Sava centar plans <https://main.archi/work/sava-centar-facade/>



8. Sava centar plans <https://main.archi/work/sava-centar-facade/>

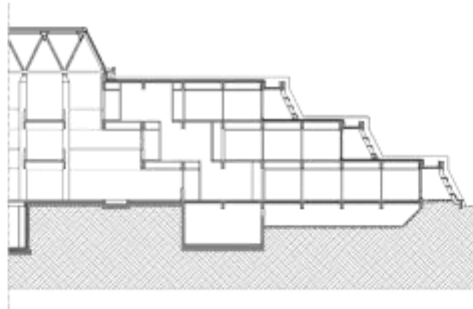


9. Sava centar section <https://main.archi/work/sava-centar-facade/>

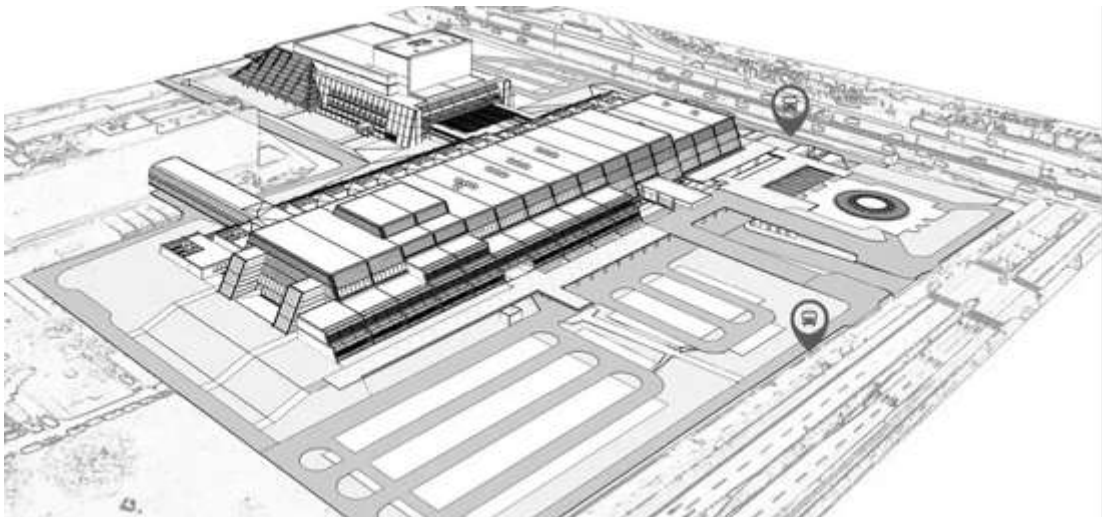


10. Sava centar section <https://main.archi/work/sava-centar-facade/>

2-2 SECTION

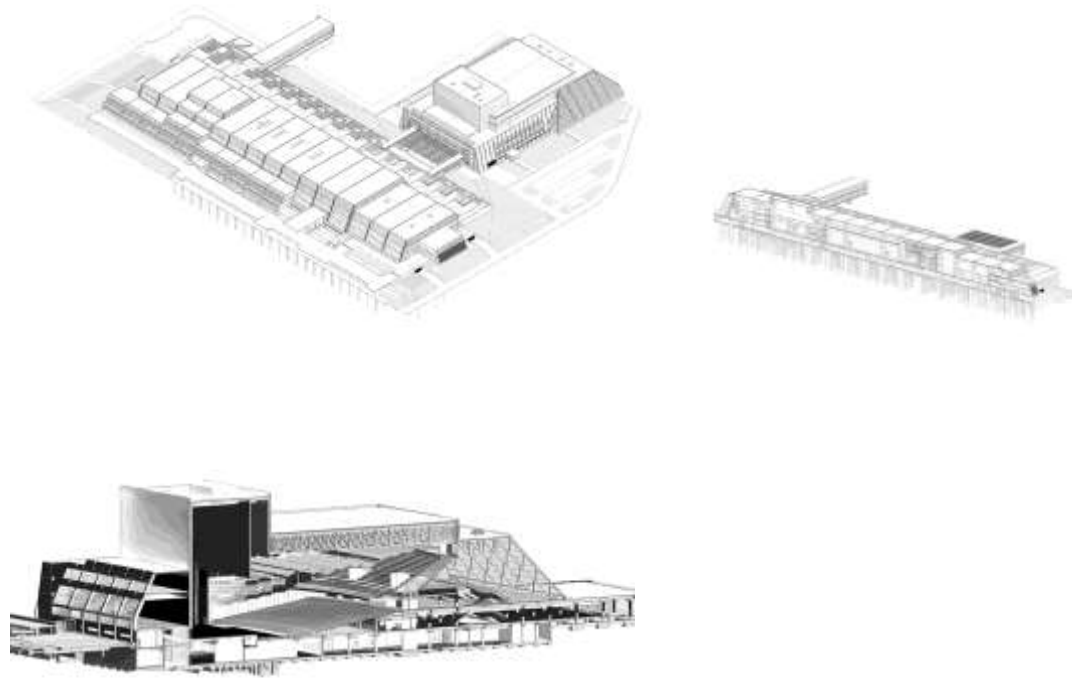


10. Sava centar axonometry, <https://main.archi/work/sava-centar-facade/>



11. SAVA CENTAR

<https://www.worldofbim.com/portfolio-item/sava-centar/>



axonometria



details



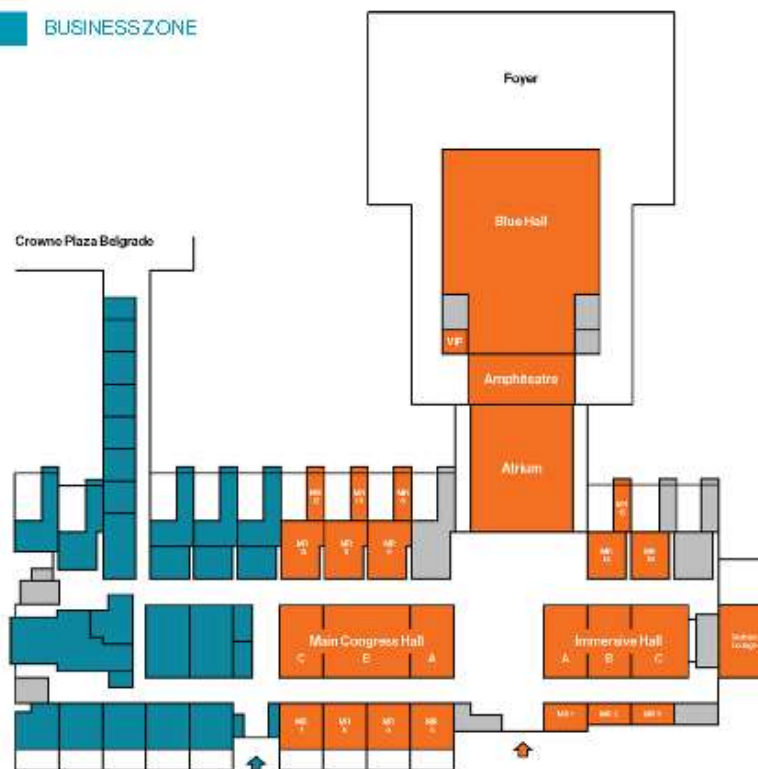
section



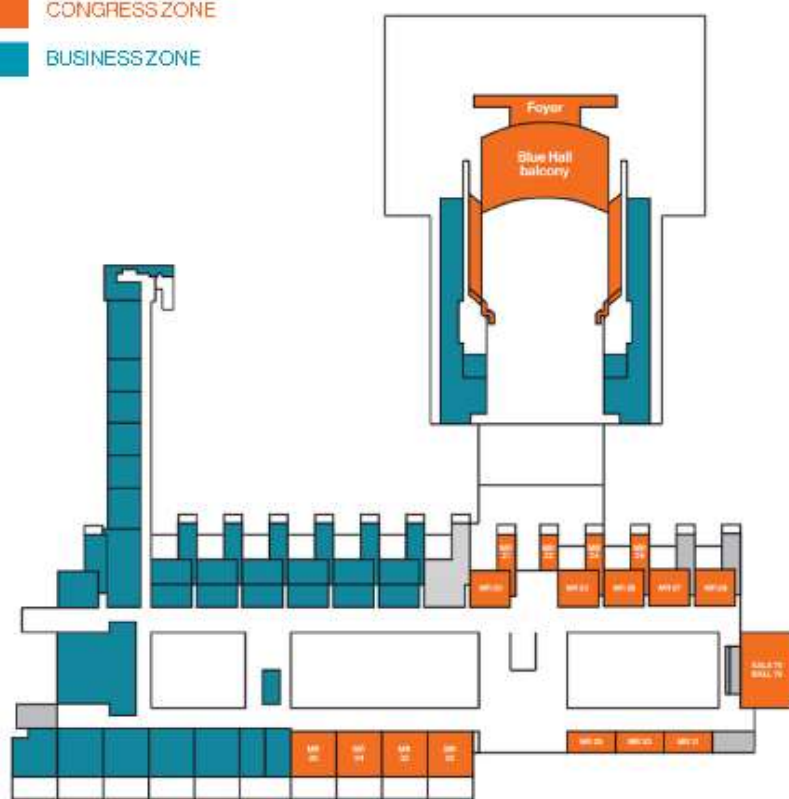
fasade

SAVA CENTAR: LAYOUT-GROUND FLOOR

CONGRESSZONE
BUSINESSZONE



SAVA CENTAR: LAYOUT - FIRST FLOOR



13. SAVA CENTAR <https://deltarealestate.rs/projekti/kongresni-segment/sava-centar/>