

Case Report

**Transition from Master Plans to Participatory Strategic Plan,
A Case of Mashhad Metropolis**

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, we can understand from the urban development plans and assessments of their concrete and tangible results in the past decades indicate lack of adequate success of our urbanization system to responding needs of our citizens. So, in the new age of urban plans in Iran generally and in Mashhad city especially, a modern kinds of urban plans have replaced with old master and comprehensive plans. In order to, the aim of this paper is transition from master plans to participatory strategic plan in Mashhad city. Applied methodology is based on descriptive and analytical methods. We were obtained through library sources, field observations, internet resources and SWOT model related to the subject. Results showed that the master and comprehensive had fail experiences to Iranian cities and strategic planning can play a positive role in access to citizen's participation in urban priorities and projects. Two main problems of master plans in case study region are consist of wrong calculations about the current situation of urban structure's and fail to attract the people participation in implementation of urban plans.

Key Words: Master Plan, Strategic Plan, Mashhad city, Urban Plans

1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

While investigating the urban planning process in Iran and its outputs, we have to observe that it is obvious to everyone ranging from ordinary citizens to experts that the current urbanization system suffers from stagnancy and is incapable to meet the qualitative and quantitative needs of citizens due to fundamental problems. This system suffers from major legal, structural, organizational

and managerial problems and shortages. Environmental pollution, slums and illegal accommodation, poverty, social inequity, lack of infrastructures, inflation and unemployment, Traffic, poor servicing, loss of identity, unpleasant urban views, etc., and the most critical of all, an accelerating growth of urbanization have made life difficult for citizens. If we create a report table

of urban development plans in developing countries such as Iran, we realize that their performance has not been good enough; In addition, in these countries, local and national governments have limited ability to provide accommodation, infrastructure facilities and other services; and today, a revolution in the system of urban development management is considered a critical requirement. In the last years of 1990s, international organizations have declared a policy called “good governance”; a prerequisite for sustainable development.

In new solution-finding strategies, development and promotion of urban governance and a boom in its authorization was considered a precondition for sustainable development; in addition, these countries need to gain a better and deeper knowledge of various solution-finding strategies, methods and procedures in regard to active and efficient governance (Otchere and Amanoo, 2006; Seyed alhosseini, 2001).

While dealing with differences between regional and national, frameworks and practices, many similarities were found. Regardless of culture, region or language, mayors and local authorities that committed to strategic development are using the strategies as a powerful instrument for communication and negotiation with other government spheres, communities, and the private sector.

Many cities have been guiding their development through innovative and participatory approaches to make strategic decisions, build consensus, monitor performance management and raise investment. Planning practices in the different regions revealed the following trends:

- ❖ In Africa, where the decentralization process has yet to be completed in many countries, the strategic participatory plan plays a frontrunner role for institutional responses.
- ❖ In Latin America, local competences and capacity have increased in the past few decades, many local governments have tackled inequality through inclusive strategies that put participative local democracy into action.

- ❖ In Europe, consolidation of urban regions, drastic changes in labor markets and different ways to fund services have led to new definitions of competitiveness and strategic plans helped to build long-term and local responses.
- ❖ In Eurasia, strategies helped to create confidence with stakeholders as the region makes the transition from centralized planning systems.
- ❖ In Asia, after some success with economic development climate change and social dialogue are of utmost importance in strategic plans.
- ❖ In the Mediterranean region urbanization has negatively impacted on the coastline and the environment. While private investment is increasing, a more (social and environmental) balanced development model requires better intergovernmental cooperation.
- ❖ In Northern America, financial and infrastructure crises as well as increasing poverty have revived comprehensive planning and community development (United Cities and Local Governments, 2010).

So, the opinions of both practitioners and planning theoreticians are considered in the craft of urban planning in Iran with, Upper-Middle income economies and rapid urbanization country in the Southwest Asia (World Bank, 2011). In recent years, rapid urbanization as a global challenge has raised Iranian cities’ urban population of the 70 percent (Statistical Center of Iran, 2006). Furthermore, in Iran the land plays a significant role for the built environment, habitation and settlement development due to geographical restriction for people living.

Iran has experienced 10 national development plans since 1942, including country visions in major aspects of the education, health, construction, energy, economy, social related issues, and national security’s development. By the end of 1972, a requirement to reinstate urban planning as a instrument to manage urban development was introduced in the country (Tang,

2011) as the Iranian society was moving towards an increased modernization and industrialization under the effects of varied policies of national development plans (Ferdowsian, 2002).

A master plan was introduced in the 1960's through the second national development plan. Earlier master plans were prepared for various Iranian cities in the third national development plans (1963-1967) based on the comprehensive planning method (Kamrava, 2007). Initial master plans had not considered all aspects of the cities' growth, consequently promoting urban land speculation, physical expansion, and the development of suburbs (Clark, 1981). Organizationally, urban development's control has been considered as a more remarkable situation in the administrative hierarchy's process, mainly sustained by the oil income which had initially contributed to three quarters of the annual government's budget, and was then injected into the cities' expenditures (Karshenas, 1990; Ziari, 2006).

Concisely, Pahlavi monarchy has emphasized on urban planning conducted by using master plans, when the results of governmental policies towards industrialization and modernization caused instead evident major structural defects in the cities (Ferdowsian, 2002; Madanipour, 2003; Maghsoodi Tilaki & et al, 2014). Iran is known as one the oldest civilizations in the world and a home to some of the oldest cities such as Shoush from the Elam era (2700 B.C.), Hegmataneh from the Median Empire (670 B.C.), Pasargad and Takht-e-Jamshid from the Achaemenid (550 B.C.) and Neishabour from the Sassanid (224 to 650 A.D.) dynasty.

All these Old Iranian cities were well developed as the origins of urban planning and urban settlement during the ancient time. These ancient cities show strong evidences of urban planning from the ancient era in Iran the Islamic conquest of Iran (633-656 A.D.) (Rasoolimanesh & et al, 2013). In order to, the aim of this paper is transition from master plans to participatory

strategic plan in Mashhad city using descriptive and analytical methods.

2. Case Study Area

The city is located at 36.20° North latitude and 59.35° East longitude, in the valley of the Kashafrud River near Turkmenistan, between the two mountain ranges of Binalood and Hezar Masjed Mountains (Wikipedia, 2015). Also, Mashhad is the capital of Khorasan Razavi Province in Iran. It is one of the most important cities due to its religious, historical and economic values that attract a large number of people from all of the world as pilgrim each year.

In 1986, its population was 668,000 whereas its current population is about 2.8 million. Since 1987, built-up areas in the city have expanded significantly (Rafiee, 2009); the city has witnessed a rapid growth in construction which it has caused destruction of green spaces areas. This trend in the urban park is in sharp contrast with the rules governing improvement and establishment of new urban parks within the current boundary and the projected future of the city.

In addition, the provinces of Iran are all under extensive land use evaluation and planning, the results of which will be available in near future. The land use is mostly environmentally oriented giving high value to public urban parks and aims to upgrade the per capita green areas in the newly built regions. However, there are other players in the field including major private stakeholders who have influence in deciding the physical and biological properties of built-up area development plans (Iranian Statistical Center, 2014).

The Natural Step Framework is a methodology for successful organizational planning. It is based on systems thinking; recognizing that what happens in one part of a system affects every other part. The vast majority of Mashhadian peoples are ethnic Persian, who form over 95% of the city's population. Other ethnic groups include Kurdish and Turkmen people.

The people of Mashhad who look like Asians are of Turkmen or Hazara descent. Among the non-

Iranians, there are some population of Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan. The Afghan immigrants have several neighborhoods around

the city. One of the districts inhabited by Afghan immigrants is Golshahr.

There are also over 20 million pilgrims who visit the city every year (Mashhad Municipality, 2015).

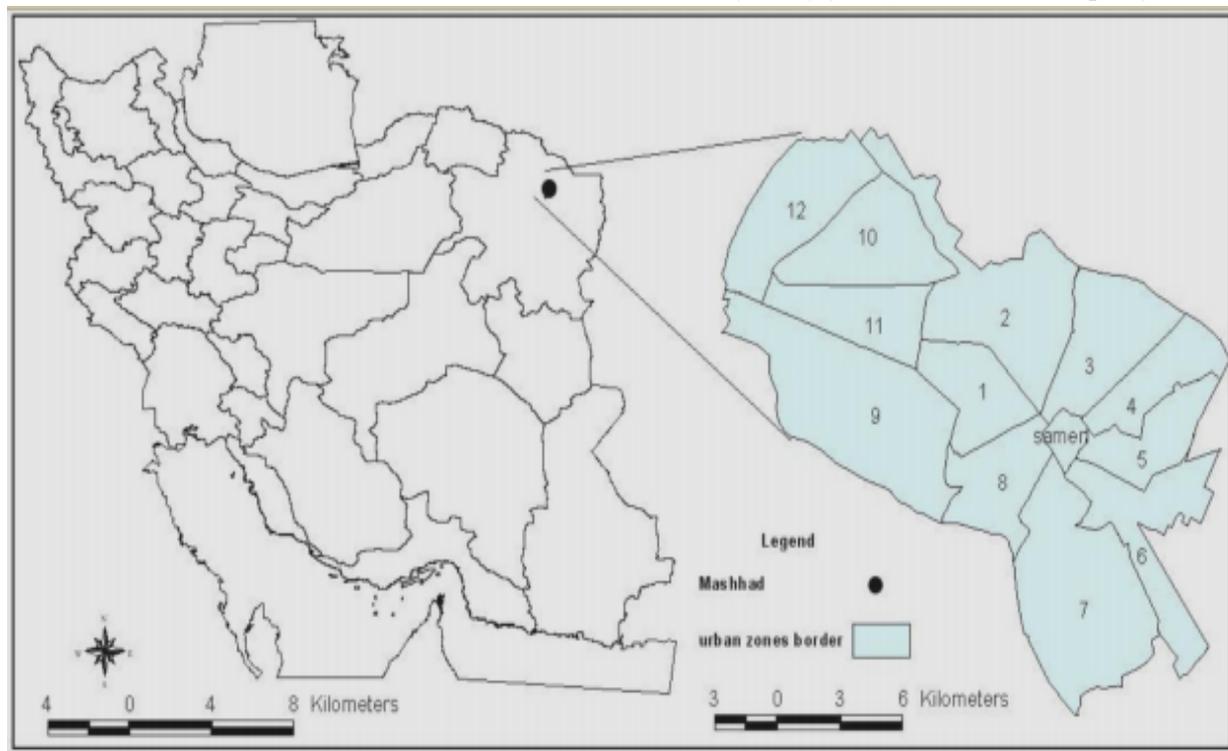


Fig.1. a view of stuy area.

Sorce: Ajza Shakohi & Akbari, 2013.

3. MATERIAL & METHODS

Applied methodology is based on descriptive and analytical methods. We were obtained through library sources, field observations, internet resources and SWOT model related to the subject.

In frame of SWOT, we have analyzed the strength, weakness, opportunities and threats to both kinds of urban plans in case study region. In continuous, we have presentation some basic suggestions to play an important role to attraction citizens participation in implementation of strategic plans.

4. RESULTS & FINDINGS

The Mashhad City Council is the legislative or parliamentary body, representing the city's citizen interest. The Council is composed of 15 members, elected every 4 years by the citizen of Mashhad. Even-though by the constitution, the council has the full responsibility over the city operation and management process; in reality the council is more engaged with the municipality operation.

A city as a complex and dynamic organism is always changed and transformed, it's a place that forms human's ideals and experiences and has a serious role in providing its resident's welfare, health and relaxation.

Our today's urbanization is a product of ideas, thoughts, experiences and actions that has been obtained by different generations at historical period (Habibi, 1996).

Table (1) Population density and its change in different zones of Mashhad city in 2014

Mashhad Regions	Total population	Male to female ratio	Mean age (years)	Family size	Population density (thousand sq.m)
1	176104	94.8	35.3	3.2	11.76
2	485833	98.8	28.7	3.2	14.98
3	322018	100.3	28.2	3.4	93.929
4	244944	100.2	27.6	3.4	144.107
5	168876	100.1	27.2	3.4	12.03
6	253963	99.9	27.3	3.4	17.32
7	206968	102.2	28.2	3.4	4.24
8	940040	97.8	33.5	3.2	5.84
9	300246	100.4	31.4	3.4	6.77
10	246523	109.7	29.4	3.1	12.2
11	192223	103.6	33	3.6	12.2
12	39636	97.1	26.6	3.5	1.84
Samen region	16884	106.7	32.3	3.4	4.72

Source: authors. 2014 with adoption to Ajza Shakohi & Akbari, 2013.

Discontinuity of spatial and social structure of Mashhad city in the wake of unbridled accelerated urbanization in the recent decades is clear. This imposes serious consequences to the Mashhad city body. These factors led to the accumulation of the asymmetrical urban population in the case study region. The formation of informal settlements, with abnormal tissue and nonstandard text leads to inefficient of urban projects and as a result urban health system is facing with serious challenges.

Massive volume of 1.2 million marginalized peoples in the study area makes it necessary to political and municipal authorities to pay more attention to the crisis and the demands of citizens. Therefore, they have to make purposeful decisions to empower urban residents and secure equilibrium that are important issues (Nucci & et al, 2016).

The capacitive master plan has been very useful and effective in compact topic. Nevertheless, in the proposed capacitive master plan, the vast areas of agricultural component are considered as lawful part of city, and the city has a horizontal expansion but on other issues, such as unit density per acre and mixed zone offered has had better relative performance. Despite the fact that Mehrazan master plan has determined most of the proposed population for the city of Mashhad, but it has not succeeded to achieve providing intensive development pattern for city.

So, preparing a master plan for the city of Mashhad in comparison to other urban development projects are considered in a wider pattern. Despite city domain in the project horizon being smaller and also the proposed population had a 1.5 equal growth, in other intensity schemes has not acted as well as other plans. From different points of the in progress master plan and west central pattern we can conclude that the necessity of synchronization of preparing the urban development plan for the city of Mashhad, the metropolitan area to the area of micro-scale town planning was raised and in regard to this fact, the sustainable development indicators and criteria will be attainable with the lowest cost and highest level. The hierarchy of planning in Mashhad city can be categorized into four levels, namely national, regional or provincial, sub-regional or county and local level.

Each level of the hierarchy consists of a number of plans, which are discussed later. The urban plans are placed at the local planning level, which is at the bottom of the Iranian planning hierarchy.



Fig.2. The hierarchy of planning system in cast study area (Rasoolimanesh, Jaafar and Badarulzaman, 2013).

At the local level, a number of plans are applied to conduct the development of a city. The comprehensive (master) plan which is prepared for the cities with a population of more than 25000 people is a long-term physical plan. This plan depicts the land use map; sectors such as residential, commercial, administrative and industrial zoning; the road networks; facilities and public services; rules and regulation for construction of private and public buildings; as well as the criteria for protecting historical sites and monuments. The focus of comprehensive plans is very much on the physical development, at the expense of the social, cultural and economic development, which are lacking in this planning approach¹. According to this, we can compare the traditional master plans and strategic plans benefits with each other as table (2).

Table (2) Compare traditional master plans and strategic plans

Traditional Process	Strategic Process
Decision making processes and decision-making are apart from each other.	Integrated decision making processes and decision-making
Comprehensive plans goals are physical principle and giving order to the city.	Integrated social, economic and physical process
It is attendancy to result and its process	It is believed to cycling process to access to results
Analysis are comprehensive and purposeless	Define purpose according to citizens needs
In this planning, we have only one option to city development	There is different options to city development and decision making
Attention to linear decision making process	Attention to cycling decision making process
It has ten years review	Flexibility in determining and executing threads and implementation
Final conclusion is maps and linear planning	Determine the project priorities
Attention to many details	Policy production and implementation to ways

Source: Ziari et al, 2009.

In this section, we will final discussion in frame of SWOT model. A SWOT analysis is a method commonly used to assist in identifying strategic directions for an organization or in practice. The SWOT model is a classic strategic analysis tool for strategic management, first proposed by Ken Andrews in 1971.

¹ Rasoolimanesh, Jaafar and Badarulzaman, 2013.

The benefits of such an analysis tool are that it can better balance all internal and external aspects of enterprises, ensuring that analysis is more comprehensive. The strengths and weaknesses of a system are determined by internal elements, whereas external forces dictate opportunities and threats. Strengths can be defined as any available resource that can be used to improve its performance. Weaknesses are flaws/shortcomings of any system that may cause to lose a competitive advantage, efficiency or financial resources (Wang and Hong, 2012). In order to explain the subject, to provide policy (SO, competitive/aggressive) relying on internal strengths and external opportunities; (ST, diversity) relying on the strengths of internal and external threats; (WO, strategy) and defensive strategy (WT) will be presented some solve ways.

Table (3) The optimal strategies for stategic participatory planning

ST	SO
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. provide a strategic planning to attract people participation; 2. make its general polices and its priorities; 3. The creation of citizen participation in urban management practices for the city development; 4. give diversity to city activities (economic & etc). 5. monitoring to urban land use to smart urban growth. 6. attention to immigration and marginalization subjects to organizing the laws. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Using strategic situation of case study area to use people participation to access its goals; 2. Identifying and organizing the strategic areas and plan for them; 3. attention to private sectors in planning to use their capacities and facilities; 4. participatory urban management; 5. varying options to making strategies and implementation;
WT	WO
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The governing bodies of meritocracy in urban specialist recruitment; 2. Create the appropriate substrates for better accountability and transparency in the management of urban citizens; 3. Optimal management for urban areas; 4. Removing environmental pollutants; 5. Attention to participatory urban strategic planning. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. need to attractive capacity of study area in this different aspects such as economic, cultural and etc. 2. giving training to citizens about their duties and their needs and conformity of their tools; 3. Expanded an education excellent system; 4.

5. CONCLUSION

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countries such as Iran, we realize that their performance has not been good enough; In addition, in these countries, local and national governments have limited ability to provide accommodation, infrastructure facilities and other services; and today, a revolution in the system of urban development management is considered a critical requirement. So, the opinions of both practitioners and planning theoreticians are considered in the craft of urban planning in Iran with, Upper-Middle income economies and rapid urbanization country in the Southwest Asia. In recent years, rapid urbanization as a global challenge has raised Iranian cities' urban population of the 70 percent. Despite the fact that Mehrazan master plan has determined most of the proposed population for the city of Mashhad, but it has not succeeded to achieve providing intensive development pattern for city. So,

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