CHAPTER V
Urban Development and Planning

While analyzing urban development and planning in Uzbekistan, two elements should be taken into account: its history, and its varied landscape and climate. These elements account for the contemporary geography, morphology and societal composition of Uzbekistan’s cities.

The country has a very diverse landscape and a rich and ancient culture: the Great Silk Road crossed Uzbekistan, and its cities were important international centres of commerce and cultural exchange, with mutual enrichment of culture and language. Some of the major cities in Uzbekistan are more than 2,500 years old, including Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, Shahrisabz, Khiva and Termez.

Historical and natural conditions in different regions of the country have led to the development of different kinds of settlements. These can be described as follows:

- Old developed areas, with intensive urban development and high-density settlements, widely ranging in size (for example, Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara region, the Ferghana Valley), but with a relatively uniform distribution
- Ancient irrigation areas such as Khorezm and Karakalpakstan, with a network of small rural settlements concentrated in favourable climatic zones and serving as communication nodes
- Newly irrigated land of the central part of the Ferghana Valley, Karshi, Jizzakh and Mirzachul steppe, with sporadic rural and urban settlements
- Mountain areas with small rural settlements in river valleys
- Desert areas with small rural settlements and pastures

As of 1 January 2014, Uzbekistan had 119 cities. Most towns are in regions with more favourable environmental conditions (see Annex 5).51

Having been a part of the former Soviet Union, the Republic of Uzbekistan inherited a complex hierarchical planning system, and urban planning remains highly centralized. Goskomarkhitektstroy 52 manages the development of major cities by planning and approving administrative and residential buildings, engineering infrastructure and communications. This is done in accordance with the Town Planning Code, which is also used by khokimiyats of cities and viloyats to standardize planning documentation at various levels.

Planning documentation has a pyramidal hierarchy, from the Master Scheme of Settlement, to schemes of territorial planning, down to the master plan of an individual settlement.53 This addresses long-term development based on economic growth, demography, geography, climate and social requirements. Categories include residential, public and business, manufacturing, engineering, transport, recreation, special-purpose and suburban areas.

Where applicable, planning documentation also includes:

- Planning documents for development of the territory and parts of the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan
- Planning arrangements of the districts of the Republic of Karakalpakstan and viloyats
- Planning arrangement projects for districts or groups of districts

51 Goskomarkhitektstroy.
52 The Committee was established in 1928 and has delivered plans for almost all the cities of Uzbekistan.
53 Urban Development Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Chapter V, Article 29-39. Building Regulations No. SHNK 1.03.02-04 “Instruction on the composition, development, coordination and approval of urban planning documentation on development planning and development of territories”.

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• General layouts of settlements
• Projects of urban and township boundaries
• Development schemes for settlements or parts of settlements
• Project documentation for the construction of buildings and other facilities

The Master Scheme of Resettlement and the development plans for parts of Uzbekistan’s territory are 50-year plans, with a particular focus on the next 10 to 25 years. Other urban planning documents cover 25 years, with a focus on the first phase of construction. All planning documents are subject to revision 10 years after their adoption.

The master plan of an urban settlement takes into account the main provisions of the previous master plan and accomplishes the following tasks:

• Determining prospective economic development and forecasting population growth
• Defining the main development direction of a settlement
• Developing proposals on the settlement’s functional zoning and architectural design
• Identifying reserved land for further development
• Providing the principles for equipment systems and land development

Urban development in Uzbekistan is based on the concept of compact cities, with the territory divided into planning districts and central or peripheral planning areas. Bigger cities are conceived as polycentric systems.

According to Article 41 of the Town Planning Code, master plans must ensure:

• A favourable living environment
• Protection of areas from the effects of natural and manmade disasters
• Prevention of excessive concentrations of population, industry or pollution
• Protection and use of specially protected territories and objects of cultural heritage

Two procedures exist for urban plan preparation, namely, one for cities with more than 50,000 inhabitants, and another for cities with fewer. Both types of cities have standard elements in their plans:

• Government appointment of a State Committee (cities needing a new urban plan are chosen annually, and in 2014 nine cities were chosen)
• Field visits by State Committee experts to assess the specific needs of the city and its territory
• Prior analysis by sectoral experts
• Preparation of three draft master plan options
• Technical analysis of the three drafts, along with consultation with the mayor, governor and local specialists, for amendment and decision
• Analysis and refinement of the chosen draft by the State Committee, with in-depth examination by a national commission of State Committee experts

At this stage, the procedure diverges. For larger cities, a plan must undertake a long session of approvals by all relevant Ministries and State Committees, while for smaller cities; only a direct approval by the State Committee of Architecture is needed.

For the largest cities, with a population of more than 250,000, the plan is divided into two stages:

1. Technical and economic study (feasibility study) of the master plan of the city and its suburban areas
2. Draft of the master plan for the city
All remaining settlements, including resorts and recreational areas, have a master plan developed in a single step, with the feasibility study comprising a section of this.

In 2005 cities needing new master plans for 2005-2010 were approved by Presidential Decree. In 2010, meanwhile, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the cities needing master plans from 2011-2014, to be covered by the State budget. An investment programme is approved annually, which includes funding for master plan development.

Currently, master plans for rural settlements are being developed across the country. A total of 1,080 master plans are needed, according to the design and research institute Qishloq Qurilish Loyiha Ltd., and 70 per cent of the work has already been completed. Once created, these plans are sent to district khokimiyats and architects, and are used to develop rural settlements.

Drafting master plans involves industry experts at national and local levels, as well as requires coordination with Ministries, city and viloyat administrations. A master plan draft is not published or publicly discussed, and the public is not involved at any stage. Only once the plan is approved, a makhalla organizes public conferences to explain the plan’s impact on local neighbourhoods. Thus, makhallas have great potential for public involvement, given that their decentralized structure could be used to improve public participation in urban and environmental planning.

**Urban development of the city of Tashkent**

Tashkent is the capital of Uzbekistan, with a population of more than 2.4 million people. This makes it, not just the largest city in the country, but the largest in Central Asia.

During the Second World War, Tashkent saw a sharp increase in economic development. Most evacuees from western and central regions of the Soviet Union came to the city, as did large industrial enterprises and educational institutions. Tashkent consequently became one of the largest centres of Soviet heavy industry, especially the aviation and engineering industries, and for several decades the city's population grew rapidly. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, Tashkent developed more metropolitan functions, leading to intense population growth and development of residential areas.

In 1989, a feasibility study of the Master Plan of Tashkent until 2010 was approved, which projected population growth of up to 3 million and a corresponding significant expansion of the city. The plan envisaged the demolition and rebuilding of more than 3 million m² of dilapidated housing, as well as expansion of some areas.

Currently, the city of Tashkent has a relatively compact shape: 25 kilometres north-south, and about 22.5 kilometres east-west. On 1 January 2014, the territory of Tashkent was 33,378 hectares, divided into 11 administrative regions (see Figure XIX).

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56 State Committee on Statistics.

57 Goskomzerngeodezkkadastr.
During the period of 1990-2010, new territories were also added to Tashkent (see Figure XX).

Later, the amended Master Plan of Tashkent and its suburbs through 2015 was adopted and was finalized in 1997. In 2011 the research and master plan design institute SUE “ToshkentboshplanLITI”
completed a feasibility study of the Master Plan of Tashkent and its suburbs, which, in line with the planning procedure described above, offered three options for urban development.

The plan’s main characteristic was to use internal territorial resources, a notable change from extending the borders of the city in favour of internal restructuring and regeneration. It envisioned more orderly growth, taking into account planned long-term development parameters, creation of reserve land for flexible planning, and sustainable city development. Managing industrial development to restructure the economy, plus modernization, reconstruction and establishment of integrated scientific and industrial areas, was intended to make it possible to reduce non-residential territories and residential areas.

A particular focus of the project has been the functional and spatial development of the city centre.

**Figure XXI**

**Master Plan of Tashkent through 2030**

Tashkent is distinctive for its broad streets, with wide green separation zones – sweeping lawns separated from the road with walkways. There are 911,100 kilometres of these green strips, in streets, roads and driveways. The total area of green corridors and plantations within city limits is 9,579.2 thousand hectares, or 28.6 per cent of the total area. In addition, there are about 5.5 m² of parks and gardens per inhabitant in Tashkent, which, with the street greenery and the greenery of the individual housing, adds up to 50 m² per inhabitant.

By proportion of industrial area, Tashkent is definitely a post-industrial city; the city administration intends to reduce this further, redeveloping former industrial “brownfields.” Office land share stands at only 2 per cent, although this figure may be a result of categorization (i.e., small businesses may be located within residential buildings). Motor road area appears significant, at 21 per cent, but is similar to the proportion found in other international cities (see Table 7).

On 1 January 2014, the housing stock in Tashkent stood at 45.7 million m². This has resulted in an average housing supply is 19.5 m² per inhabitant.
Table 7
Land use in Tashkent, by function

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land use category</th>
<th>Area, hectares</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>16,479</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7,004</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor road</td>
<td>3,867</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>2,869</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated green areas</td>
<td>1,145</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rail and other transport</td>
<td>989</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>715</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>33,068</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Tashkent Master Plan of 2012.

In all, the capital’s residential development covers more than 16,000 hectares. Residential density is generally quite low at 2,689 m²/hectare, because 67 per cent of the developed area is occupied largely by individual single-storey houses, home to 45 per cent of the population. The density of individual housing is 1,703 m²/hectare. Indicators of housing density for multi-storey buildings are quite high at 4,772 m²/hectare, which corresponds to an average of four storeys per building.

Table 8
Dynamics of selected Master Plan indicators in Tashkent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>As measured in 1985</th>
<th>As measured at the end of 2013</th>
<th>Percentage of change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>2,083,000.0</td>
<td>2,352,896.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area, thousand hectares</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing floor area, thousand m²</td>
<td>27,536.0</td>
<td>43,645.0</td>
<td>58.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing floor area, thousand m², in 1-/2-storey houses</td>
<td>9,302.0</td>
<td>17,138.0</td>
<td>84.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing floor area, thousand m², in 4-/7-storey houses</td>
<td>14,973.0</td>
<td>21,986.0</td>
<td>47.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing floor area, thousand m², in 9-/16-storey houses</td>
<td>3,261.0</td>
<td>4,520.0</td>
<td>39.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing density, m²/hectare</td>
<td>998.0</td>
<td>1,320.0</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Selected Master Plan indicators in Tashkent reveal some interesting trends (see Table 8). In almost 30 years, the population has grown by 10 per cent but the urban area has expanded by 20 per cent, taking into account only legal expansion; actual urban growth may be even greater. This is consistent with global trends for urban area expansion at a rate of several percentage points annually.

The Tashkent Master Plan of 2012 incorporates this as a policy, and some positive trends can be seen: For example, buildings are being built higher, meaning that the density of housing floors (m²/hectare) has increased by 32 per cent. However, the picture for Tashkent is mixed – while high-rise floor area (4-/16-storey houses) has increased by 45 per cent, low-rise floor area (1-/2-storey houses, predominantly individual homes) has increased by almost twice as much, at 84 per cent. Overall, these figures are a positive development for housing provisioning policy, but they also are evidence of urban sprawl and will undermine the “compact city” policy if the trend continues.

Photo IV

Examples of residential buildings in Tashkent


Tashkent housing stock is varied in terms of types of buildings, floors, structural systems and degree of comfort. Residential buildings can be grouped as low-rise, with 1, 2, and 3 floors, or high-rise. The
latter category subdivides into 4- or 5-storey buildings with no elevators, and 6- to 16-storey buildings with elevators. However, apartment buildings with elevators account for only 16.55 per cent of multi-family housing stock area and 10.86 per cent of total housing stock area.

In all, housing stock has been shaped by policy swings. Initially high-rise housing was favoured, motivated by the need to save land, but this changed to providing urban land for low-rise individual buildings.

Low-rise housing is much desired but leads to urban expansion, absorbing valuable agricultural land; in addition, it is more expensive to develop and supply with infrastructure. In spite of this, in coming years the volume of low-rise individual dwellings is expected to increase significantly. This will be due to the inclusion in previous city plans of large areas for rural-type buildings, as well as implementation of previous decisions on allocation of land plots for individual housing development.

Tashkent’s population is projected to grow by 442.6 thousand people between 2012 and 2030, according to the State Institute of Forecasting and Macroeconomic Research. People of working age currently comprise 61.3 per cent of the total, although this is expected to drop to 58 per cent in the future.

Overall, the future development of Tashkent is based on earlier feasibility studies under the 2011 Master Plan, except for development on the left bank of the river Chirchik up to the Tashkent bypass road. The growth area will be 6,109 hectares, and the total city area will reach 39,177 hectares.

Figure XXII
New areas of expansion in Tashkent

Source: Goskomarkhitektstroy.

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For environmental and security reasons, the international airport will be moved outside of the city and placed 8 km to the south. A system of recreational parks also is planned within city limits, along the river Chirchik.

**Urban development of the city of Samarkand**

Samarkand is the second-most populous city in Uzbekistan (after Tashkent), with 509,000 citizens. It is located in the great oasis on the edge of the Kyzyl-Kum desert, in the valley of the river Zarafshan, southeastern Uzbekistan. For an analysis of urban planning, it provides a good example of a type of city with substantial historical background.

As one of the oldest centres of civilization in Central Asia, Samarkand is included in the UNESCO World Heritage List, with the historic town of Samarkand defined by UNESCO as a crossroads and melting pot of the world's cultures.59

Figure XXIII

**Sketch map of historical development of Samarkand**

![Sketch map of historical development of Samarkand](image)


The territory of Samarkand is divided into concentric zones of central and peripheral. The central zone is the most “valuable” part of the city, consisting of both the old and new city. Industrial and warehouse facilities are being eliminated from this central zone.

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The 1980 plan defines the peripheral zone as the region between the inner ring clearway highway and the projected boundaries of the city. The middle belt of the peripheral zone, adjacent to the central zone, acts as a reserve for the development of the centre as land is freed from old and reconstructed buildings. Building complexes in the city centre, combined with green spaces and pedestrian linkages, create a system of architectural groupings that dominate the urban landscape and remain an organic element of the urban system.

The historical and cultural significance of Samarkand are the main factors determining the prospects for its development. Nonetheless, although the historical centre of Samarkand plays a key role in shaping the architectural appearance of the city, it must coexist with the development of modern system functions, reconstruction of residential buildings, improvement of street networks, and provisioning of the whole area with an engineering infrastructure.

Photo V
Registan Square in Samarkand

Source: C. Batac, July 2014.

Challenges that a historic city such as Samarkand currently faces are related to very high migration to the city, and with that, the need to provide new residential buildings. Furthermore, cultural and historical issues exist in replacing old buildings. At the same time, the city’s population density compared with other cities suggests that Samarkand appears to have ample reserves of inner land for further development; in all, the population density is only 5,351.1 per m².

In 2004 a master plan of Samarkand was developed, aimed at regulating urban sprawl. To decrease the migration pressure on Samarkand, the establishment of satellite-settlement cities was considered, as well as the enlargement of existing ones. This plan foresaw the completion of public buildings in
the administrative centre of the city, as well as the replacement of dilapidated housing with higher-
standard new apartment buildings.

The reconstruction of residential buildings of the “old city” of the Timurid era is focused on
preservation of the buildings' structure while providing new living standards. Meanwhile, in the “new
city,” the main focus is on housing stock renewal, along with provision of facilities and local services.

Because of their central location, both the “old” and the “new” city are involved in the development
and commercialization of tourism-related services. An integrated tourism development programme is
based on a unified system of tourist concentration zones, connected by transport routes. This provides
a full range of tourist services within 15 minutes’ walking distance, including accommodation,
services, entertainment, information services and transport. The master plan further provides for
possible locations of such facilities, taking into account the city’s rich historical and cultural heritage.