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GENERAL SCHEME
OF
TOWN PLANNING OF HOMS

by

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CHAPTER 1.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

HOMS

Homs, being the heart and center of all communications in Syria, occupies a very important position in the economic life of that country.

It flourished marveleously in recent years and so the number of its inhabitants jumped in the last twenty years from 50,000 up to 100,000.

It is an old city dating back at least 1000 years before Christ. Many nations have occupied it, among them Hitites, Phinicians, Persians, Arabs and Turks. Every one of these nations left its particula remains as a witness of its characteristic civilization.

All these factors interacted, depriving this historical city from the dominance of any particular aspect or specific feature. The famous Citadel of Homs stands as one of the most gigantic samples of these magnificiant remains.

The social life of the city was progressed considerably in recent years. The family life can be taken as an example of that progress.

Not very long ago, a single house used to contain the head of the family with his wives, sons, daughters, his daughters-in-law, grand sons and grand daughters. While the modern houses now a days are very much similar to the European ones. Each one occupied by a small family, composed of a man his wife, and his children.

The economical standard of the town, specially in the field of industry has made wide steps of progress. New factories have been built and different companies were consequently urged to build houses for their workers outside the city and near their places of work.

It is easy now to conceive why the number of the inhabitants augmented so rapidly during the last few years. The position and climate of Homs together with its wealth in raw materials are apt to hasten their transformation.

The fertility of its soil and the abundance of water have been the important factors of its progress as an agricultural city in the past and they are expected in the near future to play a similar role in its transfer into an industrial city.

The Scope of the Thesis

When I first thought about the subject of my thesis I hesitated for a while, I wondered whether I should undertake the building of a movie house, (an Opera house) or any such subject.

At last I decided to take the problem of the city as a whole and concentrate on its replanning on a scientific basis taking into consideration practical applicability of the whole scheme at the same time keeping its cost within certain limits.

I treat in thesis the following subjects:

1. The city is to be surrounded by a general ring of streets so that vehicles travelling from Aleppo to Damascus, or from Tripoli to Aleppo, etc.. can pass without entering the business center thus causing congestion of traffic. The business center of the city is to be surrounded by a ring of streets also in order to facilitate the traffic, the business center should be in the heart of the city in order to be equidistant from all parts.
2. The city of Homs is growing westward, the fact which urged the municipality of Homs to try to put a general town planning scheme for new western districts, so that the buildings and streets will be best situated for its future as a residential quarter, this subdivision, is called "New District".

- The City Plan -

City and town planning is a science, an art, and a movement of policy concerned with the shaping and guiding of physical growth and arrangement of town in harmony with their social and economic needs.

I pursue it as a science to obtain knowledge of urban structures and services and the relation of its constituent parts and process of circulation. As an art to determine the lay out of the ground, the arrangement of land uses and ways of communication and the design of buildings on principles that will secure order, health and efficiency to our principles.

City planning means also getting ready for the future in city growth, it is the guidance in to proper channels of a communities impulses towards larger and broader life.

On the face it has to do with things physical - the laying out of streets and parks and rapid transit lines.

City planning is the firm base for the building of a healthy and happy community.

CHAPTER 11- The Elements of New District -

1. Streets,
11. Parks,
111. Play-grounds and play-yards
- IV. Residential and Business properties.
- V. Water supply and sewage disposal

1. Streets

1. Type of street patterns
2. Width and cross section
3. Surface drainage.
4. Street intersection and traffic control.

1. Type of street patterns.

In my thesis there is many types of streets.

- a. Meandening; or irregular type with streets freely turning this way and that way.
- b. Concentric arrangement - of streets for the much desired the city and cross town communication.
- c. Perpendicular type - of streets with which we are more familiar
- d. Cul de sac - The large blocks of which the city will be composed are bounded by major ways, but the blocks instead of facing upon the streets are arranged along cul-de-sac that open off the main highways.

2. Width and Cross-Section

When speaking of street width, the distance from property line to property line is meant and not from curb to curb.

It is well to remember in this connection that there may be narrow road-ways on wide streets and wide road ways on narrow streets the width of streets will vary according to the service they are performed.

I have designed four types of streets.

Type 1

Streets of 9 meters in width divided into the following parts:

- a. Two side-walks, each of 1.5 meters in width
- b. A road way of 6 meters in width carrying two lanes of traffic

Type 2.

- a. A road way of 11 meters in width carrying four lanes of traffic
- b. Street trees on both sides of road way each of 2.5 meters in width.
- c. Two side walks each of two meters in width.

Before discussing the third type of streets I would like to stress the advantages gained by the presence of street trees.

- a. The street after the trees have been set out, will make a picture of great beauty.
- b. The trees are of prime importance for the hygenic point of view.

- c. The trees should be planned between side-walk and road way in such an order so as to protect the pedestrians with respect to traffic.

Type 3

Streets of 25 meters width divided into the following parts:

- a. Two side-walks each of two meters in width
- b. Two road-ways allowing traffic in opposite direction every road-way can carry two lanes of traffic.
- c. Two street trees each of 3.5 meters in width.

Type 4.

Streets of forty meters in width divided by a canal in to two symmetrical parts:

The canal runs through the new district bestowing on it a divine beauty.

The cross section of the canal is trapesoidal, and it is lined with plain concrete.

The detailed width, of streets, however and the treatments of the pavements, sidewalks and other features of thorough-fare will be governed, by two things:

- a. The amount and nature of the traffic to be accommodated from the areas tributary to it. The right of way of moving car is 2.6 meters. The right of way of a parking car is 2.3 m.
- b. The beauty of the finished work and the manner in which the various parts combine to form a well composed picture. -

The pavement is made of the following materials:

- A. Three centimeters of asphalt.
- b. Ten centimeters of broken stones.
- c. Twenty centimeters of Debsh.

The curbstone is 15-25 c.m. in width and it is carried by a masonry foundation whose cross section is 40 X 50 centimeters.

The middle of the pavement is raised to form a crown so that rain water will not stagnate but will drain down to the gutters. The elevation of the crown is $\frac{1-2}{100} \frac{L}{2}$ (L width of the Pavement)

3. Surface Drainage

The surface drainage is located in such a way so that it receives the rain water easily.

The surface drainage box is 80 x 80 x 100 centimeters and it is lined with plain concrete on three sides, but at the top it is lined with reinforced concrete in order to carry tension.

4. Street Intersection and Traffic Control.

Not only must the character of streets be determined and planned but their use must be vigilantly regulated, directed and controlled. Even well designed streets subject the traffic over them to confusion, delay and accidents.

It is at the intersections that the most confusion and the greatest number of accidents occur, the simplest form of intersection is that of the right angle.

For such a type of crossing and for others of greater capacity and complexity, a central island is sometimes advantageous, in that it invites an orderly circular movement around it. The central island is about 15 meters in diameter.

The streets should meet with curves, the radius of the curve is ranging from 10-15 meters.

11 Parks

There is nothing in the city plan that may contribute more vitally to this richer life of the people than appropriate provision for recreation .

The advantages to the new district that accrue from well-planned recreational areas affect so vitally the life of the community that they cannot be neglected.

Although parks may be said to serve as breathing spaces and attractive areas for refreshment to both body and mind. They are subject to considerable variation in size, purpose, location and character and therefore are amenable to a variety of classification.

Parks may be small or large,

Parks may be recreational or educational.

Parks may be formal in character or informal

Parks may be isolated and scattered or they may be tied together

The parks are occupying 8-10 % of the area of the New District

111. Play Grounds and Play Yards.

Although the evolution of areas for play grounds in the city has taken place in the last half century.

Play is promotive of health, morals, and the happiness of the community.

The release of additional spare time for the people makes play increasingly important. No longer can I speak of areas for such purposes as luxuries but must list them among the prime necessities of community life.

We must be aware not only of the importance of the opportunity for play but also of the need of making suitable provision for it in the plan of the city.

The names of sports organized in my new district are;

Basket Ball

Tennis

Foot-Ball

Volley Ball

They are shown in plate No. V.

IV. Residential and Business Properties.

The design of streets cannot proceed intelligently without an understanding of the blocks of buildings around which the streams of traffic are to flow. The sizes and shapes of these blocks will depend upon the topography of the country, the requirements of the traffic, the use for which the blocks are intended, and the economic considerations involved. The dimensions of the block is 96 times 200 meters.

Each block is divided into 16 lots maximum. The dimensions of the lot is 25 times 48 meters maximum. In my thesis the area of the lot is ranging from 800-1200 square meters.

Good shapes of the lots facilitate the advantageous use of the streets and public utilities, the survey of the lots and their description for purposes of record, and the maximum use of the lands and offer the best sites upon which the buildings can be erected.

Irregularity in the shapes of the lots prevents the best use of the property. The lots in the (New District) are either rectangular or trapesoidal in shape.

The New district is only a residential Quarter, for this reason the business shops are only to supply the needs of the inhabitants living in this Quarter.

The house occupies only from 20-30% of the area of the lot.

V. Water Supply and Sewage Disposal.

The utilities of water, sewage be regarded as an essential feature in the plan of the city:

1. The reservoirs and distribution systems of the "New District" are a part of the whole project applied in the whole city, "Homs".

2. I didn't design the sewage disposal system of the new district because I didn't have the contour map of it, and professor Manasseh informed me not to design the sewage disposal system of the new district.

CHAPTER 111.

Business Center.

1.- General Discriptions.

11.- Elements of the Business Center.

1. General Discription.

The business center is situated in the heart of the city and it is surrounded by a ring of streets to facilitate the traffic.

The boulevards or the ring itself is 25 meters in width and it is planted with two rows of trees in the middle. These trees will contribute to the beauty and hygiene of the place. The shape of the business center is hexagonal, it is connected to the city by six streets, each one striking one corner of the hexagon. The grouping of the business center is advantageous in that, it will permit the concentration of business buildings.

The public buildings, in the heart of the business center, is to facilitate the conduct of different affairs and to give an added dignity to the city and make a favourable impression upon visitors.

11. Elements of Business Center.

1. Business Buildings.
2. Public Buildings.
3. Parking Places.
4. Parks.

1. Business Buildings:

The business center is divided into blocks 40 x 30 meters each. Every block contains one business building which is surrounded by a side walk, 2.5 meters in width which protects pedestrians against dangers of traffic.

Every block is surrounded by four minor streets, every one of which is 15 meters in width, this plan affords a maximum number of shops in every business building.

2. Public Buildings.

In the classification of public buildings are included not only those in which the business of the community, or the city may be conducted and such buildings as public libraries and museums, which are frequented by the public but also buildings constructed and

maintained for the exercise of any of the functions performed by any public authority.

In this last group are schools, charitable institutions, hospitals, Police, and fire houses etc....

But Homs is not a big city which requires so many isolated buildings. In the heart of the business center, the following buildings are only required.

1. Public Building
2. Municipality Building.
3. Library.
4. Justice Building.

The elementary schools are outside the region of business center because the students are below 18 years.

3. Parking Places.

Not with standing the fact that the fundamental purpose of a street is to provide access and egress of movement, necessity and practice have tended to make of it a place of storage for cars. So generally has this practice of parking cars along the curblines of the streets in business center has been seriously curtailed.

The parking space in the business center is situated in four places in order to facilitate congestion of traffic. The parking places are located near the public buildings with very good arrangement. The ribbon is planned along the sides of the parking places for the esthetic point of view.

3. Parks.

If there is to be a real park system, it must be designed comprehensively, to fit in with all the other elements of the plan, such as the transportation system, the street system etc...

The parks are also part of the master plan of land use, in which, the port-rail road and in destrial locations will probably have the greatest limitations. The parks must serve the people and so must be related to the business district.

The isolated parks are situated at the corners of the business centers, and the inhabitants use them as sitting places because they cannot change their characters very rapidly. Isolated parks, with business and heavy traffic treets around them, lose much of their beauty and a large part of their possible utility, but what shall I do with the character of the inhabitants of the middle-East.

5. General Scheme of Homs,

Damascus road, Hama Road, Tripoli road, are existing roads, the width of these roads are ranging from 15 - 20 meters, but the proposed streets are the tworings which surround the whole city and the business center.

The new district and the business center are planned by me and for this reason all the lots and streets and parks etc..... are proposed and not existed. The streets are occupying about 15-20% of the whole area of the new district and business center.

The plates of "new distric" and "Business center" are colored with different colours, to ^{be} easily read by the engineers.
