

Strategic Analysis of Urban Development Plans in the Metropolis of Mashhad in Order to Improve Urban Development Management by the SWOT Method

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Abstract:

Urban development plans are plans that define the directions and priorities of urban development and various dimensions of physical - spatial, functional, economic, social and ... They help implement the city's construction projects better, as well as better time and cost management. These projects have undergone major changes in Iran over the past half century. The current study sample is the city of Mashhad, which, due to its large size and population, requires the use of the most comprehensive and complete principles of urban planning to guide and control urban development, and over the past few decades has witnessed the drafting of three comprehensive plans of khazeni, mehrazan and farnahad in three different time periods from before the Islamic Revolution to after. This research has analyzed the strategic analysis of three comprehensive projects of khazeni, mehrazan and farnahad in relation to civil management and urban development of the city of Mashhad using the descriptive - analytical research method and relying on the SWOT analytical method. The most important results of the strategic analysis of the urban development plans of the city of Mashhad include: controlling the horizontal development of the city fabric and directing the city towards intrinsic development, social, economic and religious tourism development of urban centers, development of open and green urban spaces in connection with and connecting with different parts of the city of Mashhad, strengthening and per capita development of service spaces in different parts of the city, improving the structure of urban management and realizing integrated and coordinated management within and around Mashhad, development of public transport network especially around the city and preserving the old fabric of the city and its demographic structure in order to preserve historical and identity functioning it's the big city of Mashhad.

Key words: strategic analysis, urban development plans, metropolis of Mashhad, SWOT method

Introduction:

Today, one of the most important methods of managing and directing urban development and construction projects is the use of various urban development plans, which can help to better implement city development projects by specifying the directions and priorities of urban development, as well as better management in time and cost.

On the other hand, the nature of the implementation and feasibility of urban development plans in different cities has faced numerous challenges due to factors such as: poor quality of implementation, poor management of project progress, long implementation time, and even sometimes the failure to implement a large part of the goals and proposals of the plans. This ultimately leads to a waste of time, numerous resources, and the cost of the urban management system and citizens. This is why many projects related to urban development are either abandoned half-finished or sometimes require a longer time than the specified time to be implemented; which also causes the formation of numerous physical, functional, movement and access, and social and economic problems in the cities of the country. Therefore, strengthening and guiding urban development management through the management of urban development plans implementation can create the necessary grounds for achieving urban development goals and improving the quality of the urban environment.

The most important challenges facing urban development plans in terms of managing and guiding urban development include: weak management of plan preparation (needs assessment and inappropriate definition of projects, poor guidance and supervision of project preparation), preparation of parallel plans, etc., weak management of plan implementation, inappropriate interaction with the departments preparing and implementing the plan, inefficient supervision of the quality of plan implementation, incompleteness or non-implementation of plans, or differences between the implemented plan and the prepared plan, etc. (Safavi, 2011, 5).

Based on the above, the present study is trying to conduct a strategic analysis of urban development plans in the Mashhad metropolis in order to help improve urban development management in this metropolis. For this purpose, the concept and nature of urban development management and urban development plans are first examined. Then, by identifying the most important elements and indicators of urban development management that are effective in urban development plans, it summarizes the theoretical content of the research and presents the conceptual model of the research, and then conducts a strategic analysis of the content of urban development plans in the Mashhad metropolis (specifically, three comprehensive plans: Khazani, Mehrazan, and Farnhad) based on the SWOT analysis method.

Review of the research background:

This section reviews the background of research conducted in relation to the two main concepts of the research, namely the study and evaluation of urban development plans and the conceptual study of urban development management.

A) Review of the background of research related to the study of urban development plans:

Habibi and Sheikh Ahmadi (1402) in a study to examine the content of urban development plans and the causes of their inefficiency, have concluded that the criteria of participation and community orientation have an undesirable status in urban development plans. Also, the stages of formulating goals and evaluating the current situation are in a better position than the stages of decision-making and implementation and evaluation after the implementation of the plan. Also, ignoring the basic concepts in urban development plans does not solve any problem, but also leads to a loss of time. Daneshvar (1402) in a study conducted to evaluate the efficiency of land use of urban development plans in the Mashhad metropolis, has concluded that overall, in terms of location, the rate of realization of the proposed land use of comprehensive plans in peripheral areas and new developments is significantly lower than in the central areas of the city. Tavangar and Farhadi (1400) in a study aimed at evaluating the effects of implementing urban development plans on the destruction of valuable places in Mashhad city have concluded that the urban policies and plans implemented in the central part of Mashhad city have seriously damaged its historical identity and have caused depopulation and defunctionalization of the historical textures of Mashhad city and the loss of the concept of neighborhood in these old areas. Khoshab et al. (1400) in a study aimed at diagnosing the pathology of urban development plans from the preparation process to implementation for the comprehensive and detailed plan of Mashhad metropolis have concluded that inter-institutional parallelism, product-oriented design, policy selection, lack of specialized personnel in municipalities and ignoring social issues are considered the most important damages of urban development plans of Mashhad metropolis. In a study to explain the components of the process of preparing and approving urban development plans, Daneshvar (1400) concluded that different discursive structures play a role in the three areas of political capital, social capital, and intellectual capital at both national and local scales in Iran, which resulted in two different views of decision-making tools and decision-making methods for urban development plans. For example, discourses on a long-term

national scale are idealistic and focused, but on a short-term local scale, they are project-oriented and influenced by the participation of actors. In a study, Karami et al. (1395) evaluated the development and construction planning periods of Mashhad using smart growth components and concluded that the strong endogenous development index and direct development towards existing communities is the most important smart growth index in the development plans of this metropolis, and also that the Mehrazan master plan planning period in the period 1349-69 was more consistent and aligned with smart growth indicators. In a study conducted on the factors of feasibility of comprehensive urban plans in the study sample of Tabriz Region 6, Zangiabadi et al. (2014) concluded that the comprehensive plan has not been realized in this area and faces challenges such as: incorrect calculation of population changes, failure to realize the hierarchy of urban centers, failure to realize the population potential of urban areas and neighborhoods, and consequently failure to realize the proposed densities. Saberifar and Falahat (2014) concluded in a study aimed at evaluating the success of urban development plans in achieving sustainable development that the detailed plan for the western central area of Mashhad city has achieved the highest level of compliance with the compact city indicators compared to the Mashhad development and construction plan.

B) Review of the background of research related to the concept of urban development management.

In a research, Akbari (1401) considered the factors: balanced spatial distribution, urban development infrastructure, and social justice as the most important effective indicators in urban development and sustainable urban development. Accordingly, he introduced the most important urban planning issues related to the above indicators as fire stations, garbage trucks, the number and size of public parks, and the number of public and intercity transportation vehicles. In a research to examine project management methods in municipal development projects, Ab Roshan (1400) considers the most important factors for success in implementing development projects to be a systematic approach in planning, achieving goals and final products, the method of project implementation, implementation time, and its costs. Van Buren et al. (2017) have studied the past, present and future of urban development management in the Netherlands in a book and consider the most important effective measures for urban development management to include: the advancement of information technology and services in the city, increasing internationalization and the formation of competition between cities, increasing the residential and administrative market of cities, and increasing facilities, infrastructure and public spaces within and between cities. Safavi (2011) has presented the most important management challenges for the realization of urban design at different levels by analyzing the effective factors in the urban development system. Therefore, he introduces the most important of these challenges at the macro level including: macro structural issues, and legal and regulatory challenges, at the intermediate level including: institutional and organizational relations, social and economic participation and technical and engineering challenges, and at the micro level including: urban development microsystems and urban development management in the specialized and academic sector.

Theoretical literature of the research:

Urban development and construction plans:

City planning thinkers, and in particular Peter Hall, explain three distinct stages in the evolution of urban planning. In the first stage, which lasted until the middle of the twentieth century, urban development plans were prepared with a traditional comprehensive approach. In the second stage, which began around the 1960s, a systemic perspective and comprehensive rational approaches became popular, and since the early 1970s, urban development plans have been prepared based on strategic ideas (Danshūr, 1401, 1).

The most important part of urban development plans is land use planning. The method of land use is such that urban land is allocated for residential purposes, open spaces and public services and parks, related areas for urban regeneration, industries, health, education, and cultural facilities. For this purpose, steps should be taken to control architectural features, zoning regulations, and development proposals (Marudachalam & Jothilakshmy, 2010, 66).

In a report by the Tug Hill Commission on the necessity of preparing an urban development plan, the following points were mentioned:

- Determining the role of the city in a comprehensive vision for the future
- Providing a legal basis and creating order in uses
- Coordination in the implementation of large projects

- Determining the path for citizens to find loans or grants
- Informing representatives and different levels of government about the demands of the people
- Simplifying and effective state environmental quality reports
- Promoting the identity of the community through the plan (Tug Hill Commission, 2008).

In Iran, about five decades have passed since the preparation of the first urban plans in the form of a comprehensive plan, but despite the goal of this plan, which was to prevent uneven and irregular development of cities and provide solutions to regulate urban development, they were not successful in practice, and the first criticisms and suggestions for amendments to these plans were raised in the mid-1970s and continue to this day. These criticisms have mostly focused on the legal processes of preparing, approving, and implementing plans (Zangiabadi et al., 2014, 48).

The transformation of the content and intellectual system of urban development plans during the 20th century, from the traditional comprehensive approach, the product of which is the final plan and detailed specifications of urban uses and densities, to strategic-structural plans with the main product of development guidance policies and strategies that create adaptability to time and space conditions, has introduced a more logical and practical path in urban planning. However, a major part of the reasons for the failure to implement urban plans not only stem from the weakness of the planning theory and approach, but also from the shortcomings of the executive and legal system of urban development plans (Tian & Shen, 2011, 11).

Types of urban development plans:

A comprehensive urban plan is the result of comprehensive planning that fully and partially implements the current and future land use status with the help of detailed maps and precise regulations. This "comprehensive plan" or "master plan" is almost definitive and unchangeable, as a legal and binding document that is the basis for public and private sector actions in the city. Among the most important features of comprehensive urban plans are: it has a commanding and prescriptive nature and leads to the expansion of bureaucracy, it has a mostly physical and economic aspect and is indifferent to social qualities, it has a complete, detailed and definitive aspect and the possibility of change and amendment in it is limited and it has a mostly ideal and abstract aspect and does not match the implementation facilities (Danshour, 2011, 39).

City structural plans are plans that replace development and construction plans and the city's sphere of influence, which are prepared within the framework of the programs, strategies and policies of the county's structural plan to guide the spatial development of cities with a population of more than 50 thousand people and its immediate urban area. The city's structural plans specify the spatial development framework of the city and its surrounding area for a long period of time, avoid addressing minor issues, and are considered a basis for preparing local plans (Danshour and Bandarabad, 2011, 3).

Strategic-structural plans in Iran indicate that first the economic, social, and physical development structure of the city is determined, and then the necessary strategies for realizing the above structures are presented. However, in examining the characteristics of structural plans, especially in the practical examples prepared, despite the differences between these two models, we see many commonalities in the characteristics of structural and strategic plans (such as realism and feasibility, attention to balance and sustainability in social, economic, and environmental conditions, attention to environmental qualities, participation, and institutionalization of decisions). However, citing existing documents, these common characteristics are considered to be among the characteristics of strategic planning (Majedi, 2010, 93).

Urban Development Management:

Urban development management is a set of various types of tools to improve the chances and success of urban development projects, which include documentation templates, planning and design records, audit checklists, and review forms. It is also a set of planned activities to achieve a specific result that must be carried out within a specific time scale and using a specific budget (Ab Roshan, 1400, 4). In urban development projects, as in other development projects, the success and satisfaction of all stakeholders is the most important thing in project management (Kazemiini et al., 1401, 1).

Urban development infrastructure and urban services are considered one of the important and vital elements for increasing the level of welfare and quality of life of citizens (Akbari, 1401, 107). Pugh (1995) points out that the main focus of policy reforms after 1986 is to influence and improve the urban economy and increase investment in the urban development sector. The main goals of these reforms are to create a suitable environment in cities in a way that not only improves living conditions in cities, but also increases the participation of private sector investors, people and non-governmental social organizations in the development process.

Urban development management is a multidimensional category and does not only include physical urban measures. In a general sense, urban development management is an attempt to show the comprehensive deficiencies of the city in relation to the physical construction of cities. The important aspects of urban development management as a comprehensive urban map include the division of neighborhoods, the creation of green spaces, urban sewage networks and urban facilities and services (Heidari Nisar, 2014, 77).

Urban development management generally includes four criteria: product, place, person and process. The term product refers to the physical result and can include an urban development based on the project area, namely real estate, infrastructure or public space that the project seeks. The term place refers to geography and the status of a project is determined in spatial and spatial plans and related documents and contracts. Person-based reform is concerned with the individuals involved and interveners in projects. These individuals act either for themselves or for a larger group or organization such as government agencies, real estate developers, investment and business companies, or public-private partnerships. The term process refers to the decisions and actions of project actors and stakeholders, as well as the negotiations between them, as an ongoing, dynamic, and interactive process (van Bueren et al, 2017, 5).

Urban management:

Urban management as an organizational framework for city development refers to policies, programs, and plans that can match city growth with access to basic infrastructure such as housing and employment. This type of urban management has a certain dependence on factors such as political stability, social integration, economic prosperity, and the skills and motivations of politicians and individuals implementing these policies (Razaviyan and Azad Ranjbar, 2015, 5).

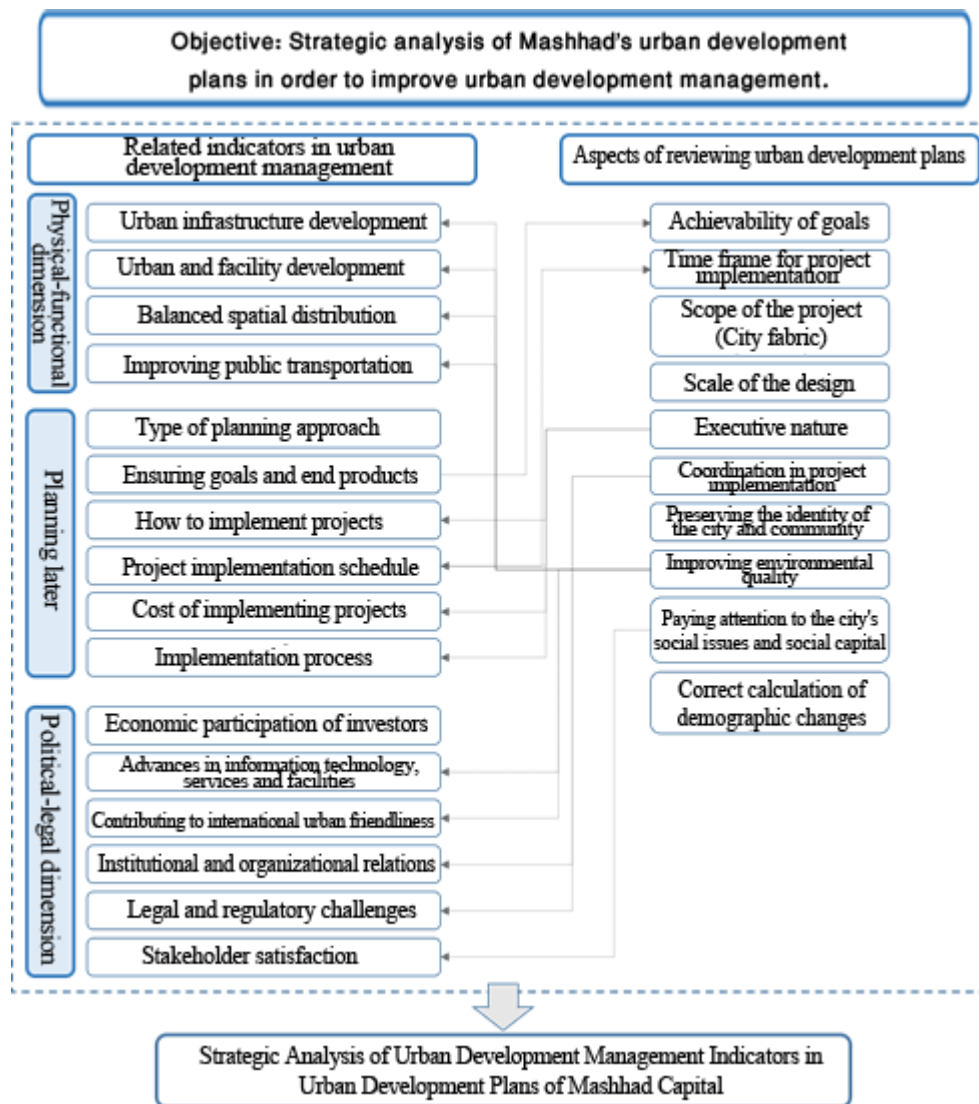
Urban development:

Urban development in its historical-social sense is actually a reflection of socio-economic development on a national scale (Khoshab et al., 1401, 2). This development as a spatial concept can be defined as changes in land use and density levels to meet the needs of city residents in the field of housing, transportation, leisure, food, etc. (Ashnavar et al., 1400, 5). If we consider urban development as a spatial concept that leads to changes in land use to meet human needs or to increase densities, then from a social perspective it will be a sustainable development that creates homogeneous and cohesive communities in which city residents have a sense of citizenship and the existence of justice and equality, and social gaps are repaired (Rabieifar, 2013, 39).

Literature summary and presentation of the conceptual model of the research:

Regarding the main objective of the research, which is a strategic analysis of urban development plans in Mashhad metropolis in order to improve urban development management; We are faced with two main components in this research: urban development management and urban development plans. Based on the literature and concepts reviewed, each of these two main components has dimensions and indicators to investigate the subject. The urban development management component can be investigated from three dimensions: physical-functional, planning, and political-legal, each of which has indicators that can be investigated. Also, the urban development plans component also has indicators that can be investigated related to the goals, feasibility, and different natures of these plans. The diagram below, as a conceptual model of the research, shows the relationship between the components, dimensions, and indicators of the research.

Figure 1: Conceptual research model



(Source: Research findings, 2024)

Research Method:

The present research method is descriptive-analytical. Because, according to the main objective of the research, it first describes and examines the characteristics of urban development management and then analyzes them related to urban development plans of the Mashhad metropolis. Also, the present research is applied in terms of purpose. Most of the data of the present research has been obtained through documentary studies such as books, articles, dissertations and the study of urban development plans of the Mashhad metropolis. In this research, the data required for the strategic analysis of urban development plans of the Mashhad metropolis in order to improve urban development management is collected through a detailed study of the three main comprehensive plans of the city of Mashhad, namely the Khazani, Mehrazan and Farnhad master plans, as well as the study of analyses and reports related to them. Also, after completing the documentary and theoretical data, the research deals with the strategic analysis of these plans in the form of SWOT analysis.

SWOT analysis is a strategic planning method that is used to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats related to a project or a business activity. Many experts and business owners believe that using the SWOT matrix can be considered a great guide to success in today's competitive market. SWOT analysis can be used for various decision-making in achieving the ultimate and desired goals. It can also be used in pre-crisis planning and preventive crisis management. SWOT analysis can be used to create organizational or even personal

strategies. The steps required to implement a strategy-oriented analysis include identifying internal and external factors using the popular two-by-two matrix, selecting and evaluating the most important factors, and identifying the relationships between them (Hosseini, 1402, 5). In this method, based on the goals identified for the area, precise implementation suggestions are presented to achieve them, in a way that builds on the foundation of strengths and overcomes weaknesses. In addition, these opportunities are used and external threats are reduced. It is better to propose actions that respond to all four aspects of the issue: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (Hill & Westbrook, 1997).

Introduction to the research study sample, Mashhad metropolis:

Mashhad is a metropolis in northeastern Iran and the capital of Khorasan Razavi Province. With 13 urban districts and an urban area of 351 square kilometers, this city is the third largest city in Iran after Tehran (with 735 square kilometers of urban area) and Isfahan (with 551 square kilometers of urban area). The population of this metropolis is 3,001,184 people according to the 2016 census. Due to its special importance in terms of religion, pilgrimage and tourism, Mashhad has gained special importance in terms of economy, society and politics in the country.

All these cases show that Mashhad metropolis, due to its large size and high population, needs to apply the most comprehensive and complete urban planning principles to guide and control urban development. Mashhad metropolis currently faces many and diverse issues and problems in quantitative terms, many of which have been prepared and implemented in order to manage and organize urban development plans such as comprehensive, detailed, thematic and local plans.

Since the beginning of its existence, the Mashhad metropolis has experienced two horizontal growth scenarios: one scenario is slow horizontal growth or organic growth, which dominated the physical development of the city until the Pahlavi era and especially before the land reforms of the 1940s, and its main characteristic was the internalization of the city's population. In this process, structural changes have generally been content-related. The other scenario is rapid growth or inorganic growth, which is approximately related to the past 40 years. In this process, the city's horizontal growth has been much faster than the growth of the population and the city's real needs. The latter scenario has caused the city numerous problems (Karami et al., 2016, 43). The most important document guiding the development of any city is the city's comprehensive plan and its subsequent detailed plan. Due to its rapid growth and development, the Mashhad metropolis has witnessed the development of three comprehensive plans in three different periods from before the Islamic Revolution to after it, each of which has proposed scenarios and goals for the growth and development of the city. In the following, we will examine the generality of each of the three comprehensive plans of Mashhad, namely: Khazani, Mehrazan and Farnhad.

Urban development plans of the Mashhad metropolis:

The first comprehensive plan of Mashhad, called the "Khazani Comprehensive Plan", began in 1968 and its program was for the years 1971 to 1991. In this plan, predictions regarding the amount and manner of expansion of the city in relation to population growth and the factors guiding development were examined, and suggestions were submitted to the Supreme Council of Urban Planning in order to guide construction and physical activities over a 25-year period in the form of the Mashhad Comprehensive Plan in 1971. This plan has led to horizontal development, considering the current conditions. However, the increase in population has exceeded the development of the city. Therefore, the city has expanded more than expected. Therefore, this approach was an example of an "expanded city" due to its high population density. The population density in this plan was 75 people per hectare (Rahnama et al, 2013, 210).

The second comprehensive plan for Mashhad, prepared by Mehrazan Consulting Engineers, began in 1998 and was approved by the Supreme Council in June 1993. The plan was planned for the years 1991 to 2001. According to the projections of this plan, the population of Mashhad would reach about 5.4 million by 2014. According to the future development model of the city, between 1.2 and 1.5 million of this population will be settled in three satellite cities within a distance of about 40-60 km around Mashhad, and 3.9 to 4.2 million people in the current city, and its limited continuous development. The "Mehrazan Comprehensive Plan" was more successful than the first plan in planning to achieve sustainable development strategies due to the reconstruction of old parts and the maximum use of empty capacity to fill the development. In this plan, the growth of Mashhad was horizontal (Ethiman Shargh, 1401).

In 2006, a contract was signed with a consultant to prepare the third comprehensive plan of Mashhad, known as Farnhad, and a joint institution was formed between the Road and Urban Development Department and the Mashhad Municipality, called the Mashhad City Development and Planning Studies and Planning Institution. In 2009 and 2010, this comprehensive plan was approved by the provincial Urban Development and Architecture Working Group as the first authority to approve the comprehensive plan. However, in total, one land use map and two volumes of reports were approved from the third comprehensive plan. In this plan, a population of 81 people per hectare was proposed for the Mashhad metropolis. The most important goals of this comprehensive plan include: giving a unique religious, historical and cultural identity to the Mashhad metropolis, realizing the principles of sustainable development with a globalization approach, improving the quality of the urban environment, and maintaining the health and security of residents (Farnhad, 2010).

Also, in 2008, studies of detailed plans for Mashhad began based on 7 planning areas. Until 2019, due to the lack of high-rise construction criteria by the General Directorate of Roads and Urban Development of Khorasan Razavi Province, new detailed plans were developed based on the general high-rise construction criteria of the country's metropolises.

Explanation of the most important internal and external factors of the research:

In this section, by examining the content of the nature and goals of the urban development plans of the Mashhad metropolis, and specifically the three comprehensive plans of Khazani, Mehrazan, and Farnhad, we will develop a SWOT table using the most important internal factors, including strengths and weaknesses, and the most important external factors, including opportunities and threats.

Table 1: SWOT table and explanation of internal and external factors

Internal factors		External factors	
) Strengths() Weaknesses() Opportunities() Threats(
S1: Success in the issue of urban density (Khazni) S2: Forecasting the development of the city center (Khazni) S3: Connecting the structure of open and green spaces in (Khazni) S4: Providing the highest proposed population for the city of Mashhad (Mehrazan) S5: Increasing the proposed building density (Mehrazan) S6: Utilizing empty capacities and internal development facilities of the city (Mehrazan) S7: Connecting the structure of open and green spaces (Mehrazan) S8: Visibility of the position of citizen participation in the design process (Farnahad) S9: Desirable per capita green space in the Mashhad metropolis (Farnahad)	W1: Horizontal expansion of Mashhad metropolis, especially to the west (Khazni) W2: Population increase exceeding the rate of city development (Khazni) W3: Unrealizable more than 40% of proposed uses for different areas of Mashhad city (Khazni) W4: Low level of realizable recreational and green space uses (Khazni) W5: Unrealizable about 40% of proposed uses for different areas of Mashhad city (Mehrazan) W6: Low level of realizable sports and recreational uses (Mehrazan) W7: Lack of coordinated management of peripheral development centers of Mashhad metropolis with the city development and construction management (Farnahad)	O1: Possibility of examining the future issues of the city in the areas of population, development, use, access, etc. (Khazni) O2: Leading the Mashhad metropolis towards industrialization and creating new tourism centers (Mehrazan) O3: Possibility of realizing the indicators of the highest level of sustainable development due to the type of its approaches (Mehrazan) O4: Ownership of the Holy Shrine is an opportunity to maintain the structure and order the development of the city (Khazni and Mehrazan) O5: Possibility of transforming the Mashhad metropolis into the most important religious city of the country and one of the	T1: Expansion of the Mashhad metropolitan area beyond the predicted amount (Khazni) T2: Risk of sprawling expansion of the city area due to considering a large part of Mashhad's agricultural areas as the legal city limits (Khazni) T3: Damage to the historical identity of the city's central urban area by the implementation of comprehensive plans for Mashhad (Khazni and Mehrazan) T4: Depopulation and de-functionalization of Mashhad's historical urban areas due to the implementation of urban development plans in the last few decades (Mehrazan) T5: Increasing risk of collapse of the old neighborhood and urban structures in the central

S10: More attention to the structure of the urban management system in the Mashhad metropolis (Farnahad) S11: Paying attention to the development of public transportation expansion plans (Farnahad)	W8: Existence of widespread social, economic, cultural, physical and spatial inequalities (Farnahad) W9: Lengthy process of approving and implementing the plan (Farnahad)	most important cities in the Islamic world (Farnahad) O6: Utilizing the economic and religious tourism capacities of the Mashhad metropolis in order to develop this metropolis (Farnahad)	areas of Mashhad (Mehrazan) T6: Extensive environmental destruction and loss of natural resources of Mashhad such as water, soil, etc. (Farnahad) T7: Lack of visibility of the intercity public transportation network between Mashhad and nearby cities (Farnahad)
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Formulation of SWOT matrix and presentation of research strategies:

After identifying strengths and weaknesses (internal factors) and opportunities and threats (external factors), we will formulate the most important defensive (minimum-minimum), adaptive (minimum-maximum), contingency (maximum-minimum) and offensive (maximum-maximum) strategies in relation to the strategic analysis of urban development plans of the Mashhad metropolis in order to improve the urban development management of this metropolis. In the table below, the SWOT matrix has been formulated based on the two-to-two relationships between internal and external factors, and the final strategies have been extracte

Weaknesses	Strengths	
W1: Horizontal expansion of Mashhad metropolis, especially to the west (Khazni) / W2: Population increase exceeding the rate of city development (Khazni) / W3: Unrealizable more than 40% of proposed uses for different areas of Mashhad city (Khazni) / W4: Low level of realizable recreational and green space uses (Khazni) / W5: Unrealizable about 40% of proposed uses for different areas of Mashhad city (Mehrazan) / W6: Low level of realizable sports and recreational uses (Mehrazan) / W7: Lack of coordinated management of peripheral development centers of Mashhad metropolis with the city development and construction management (Farnahad) / W8: Existence of widespread social, economic, cultural, physical and spatial inequalities (Farnahad) / W9: Prolonged process of approving and implementing the plan (Farnahad)	S1: Relative success in the issue of urban fabric compaction (Khazni) / S2: Forecasting the development of the city center (Khazni) / S3: Connecting the structure of open and green spaces in (Khazni) / S4: Providing the highest proposed population for the city of Mashhad (Mehrazan) / S5: Increasing the proposed building density (Mehrazan) / S6: Utilizing empty capacities and internal development facilities of the city fabric (Mehrazan) / S7: Connecting the structure of open and green spaces (Mehrazan) / S8: Visibility of the position of citizen participation in the design process (Farnahad) / S9: Desirable per capita green space in the Mashhad metropolis (Farnahad) / S10: More attention to the structure of the urban management system in the Mashhad metropolis (Farnahad) / S11: Paying attention to the development of public transportation expansion plans (Farnahad)	Internal factors

		External factors
<p>W1, O2, O4: Control the horizontal development of Mashhad metropolis in order to maintain tourism and recreational centers around the city</p> <p>W4, W6, O5: Improve the per capita status of sports and recreational uses in all parts of Mashhad metropolis in order to increase tourism capacities</p> <p>W7, O5: Proper management of the development process of Mashhad metropolis in order to transform it into the most important city in the Islamic world</p> <p>W7, O6: Establish coordination between the urban management of Mashhad metropolis and the</p>	<p>S1, S6, O4: Utilizing the ownership of Astan Quds Razavi on the internal lands of the Mashhad metropolitan area in order to control sprawl and guide urban development towards endogenous development</p> <p>S2, O6: Developing urban centers of the Mashhad metropolitan area in order to improve economic development and religious tourism development</p> <p>S7, O3: Developing the structure of open and green urban spaces of the Mashhad metropolitan area in order to increase sustainable environmental development</p> <p>S10, O1: Improving the urban management structure of the Mashhad metropolitan area in order to properly</p>	<p>Opportunities</p> <p>O1: Possibility of examining the city's future issues in the areas of population, development, use, access, etc. (Khazni) / O2: Leading the Mashhad metropolis towards industrialization and creating new tourism centers (Mehrazan) / O3: Possibility of realizing the indicators of the highest level of sustainable development due to the type of its approaches (Mehrazan) / O4: Ownership of the Holy Shrine is an opportunity to maintain the structure and order the development of the city (Khazni and Mehrazan) / O5: Possibility of transforming the Mashhad metropolis into the most important religious city in the country and one of the most important cities in the Islamic world (Farnahad) / O6: Utilizing the economic and religious tourism capacities of the Mashhad metropolis in order to develop this metropolis (Farnahad)</p>

management of peripheral development infrastructure in order to enhance the tourism and economic capacity of Mashhad metropolis	manage development, population, access, and... issues	
<p>W2, T4: Maintaining the demographic structure of the old and central parts of the Mashhad metropolis in order to preserve the historical function of the urban centers of this metropolis.</p> <p>W3, W5, T6: Realizing the service uses proposed in the comprehensive plan, especially green space, in order to preserve and develop the natural infrastructure of this metropolis.</p> <p>W8, T4, T5: Developing urban services in less developed areas of the Mashhad metropolis in order to achieve spatial justice.</p>	<p>S1, T1, T2: Applying legal restrictions to control the scattered development of the Mashhad metropolitan area</p> <p>S8, T3, T5: Expanding citizen participation in the implementation of urban development plans in order to preserve the cultural and historical identity of the Mashhad metropolis</p> <p>S3, S7, T6: Creating spatial connections and connections between open and green spaces of the Mashhad metropolis in order to preserve natural resources</p> <p>S11, T7: Developing the public transportation network of the Mashhad</p>	<p>Threats</p> <p>T1: Expansion of the Mashhad metropolitan area beyond the predicted level (Khazni) / T2: Risk of sprawling expansion of the city area due to considering a large part of Mashhad's agricultural areas as the legal city limits (Khazni) / T3: Damage to the historical identity of the city's central urban area due to the implementation of comprehensive plans for Mashhad's metropolitan area (Khazni and Mehrazan) / T4: Depopulation and de-functionalization of Mashhad's historical urban areas due to the implementation of urban development plans in the last few decades (Mehrazan) / T5: Increasing risk of collapse of the old neighborhood and urban structure in the central areas of Mashhad's metropolitan area (Mehrazan) / T6: Extensive environmental destruction and loss of natural resources of Mashhad's metropolitan area such as water, soil, etc. (Farnahad) / T7: Lack of visibility of the intercity public transportation network between Mashhad's metropolitan area and nearby cities (Farnahad)</p>

Discussion and Conclusion:

Urban development plans are plans that help to better implement urban development projects by specifying the directions and priorities of urban development, as well as better management in time and cost. The most important urban dimensions that are planned and guided through urban development plans include: determining the direction and method of urban development, the distribution of various urban infrastructure and services, the physical-spatial and functional dimensions of cities, the development of transportation routes and networks, maintaining the identity of cities, and in particular the economic development of cities.

Urban development plans in Iran have undergone major changes and developments over the past half century. So that initially, comprehensive urban plans with a comprehensive, traditional, and inflexible structure were considered the main document for guiding cities and metropolises. This plan only paid attention to the physical and economic dimensions of the city and did not include the social dimensions of cities. Then, in the following years, due to the weaknesses of traditional comprehensive plans, structural and strategic plans were put on the agenda. These plans are more flexible in all social, economic, physical, etc. dimensions than traditional comprehensive plans.

Considering the main objective of the present study, which is a strategic analysis of urban development plans in Mashhad metropolis in order to improve urban development management; the main components of this study include urban development management and urban development plans. The urban development management component has three dimensions: physical-functional, planning, and political-legal, each of which has indicators that can be examined. Also, the urban development plan component also has indicators that can be examined related to the goals, feasibility, and various natures of these plans.

The study sample of the present study is Mashhad metropolis. Due to its size and high population, Mashhad metropolis requires the application of the most comprehensive and complete urban planning principles to guide and control urban development. Due to its rapid growth and development over the past few decades, this metropolis has witnessed the formulation of three comprehensive plans in three different time periods from before the Islamic Revolution to after, each of which has proposed scenarios and goals for the growth and development of the city. The present study was conducted using a descriptive-analytical method and is applied in terms of purpose. The data required for this study was obtained specifically by studying the comprehensive plans of the study sample, namely the Mashhad metropolis, including the three comprehensive plans of Khazani, Mehrazan, and Farnhad. After completing the documentary and content data of the study, a strategic analysis of these plans was conducted in the form of SWOT analysis. Thus, first, internal factors, including strengths and weaknesses, and external factors, including opportunities and threats related to the Mashhad metropolis, were extracted based on the three comprehensive plans of this metropolis related to the main objective of the study. Then, various defensive, adaptive, contingency, and offensive strategies were explained based on the SWOT matrix.

Accordingly, the most important research strategies related to civil engineering management and urban development of the Mashhad metropolis, based on a strategic analysis of the urban development plans of this metropolis, include: controlling the horizontal development of the city's fabric and guiding the city towards endogenous development, social, economic and religious tourism development of urban centers, developing open and green urban spaces in connection and connection with different parts of the Mashhad metropolis, strengthening and developing per capita service spaces in different parts of the city, improving the urban management structure and realizing integrated and coordinated management in and around Mashhad, developing the public transportation network, especially around the city, and preserving the old fabric of the city and its population structure in order to preserve the historical function and identity of the Mashhad metropolis.

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