

URBAN RENEWAL AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONSTRUCTION  
SECTOR IN SAMARKAND REGION DURING THE YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

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*This article examines the processes of construction and urban development carried out in the Samarkand region during the years of independence, focusing on the transformation of urban landscapes and the formation of modern infrastructure. The study analyzes major construction projects, the development of residential areas, social facilities, transport and communication networks, and engineering infrastructure within the region. It also explores the impact of urban planning policies on regional development, as well as issues related to the preservation of historical and cultural heritage in harmony with modern architectural trends. The findings reveal the historical significance of urban transformation and construction development in the Samarkand region throughout the independence period.*

During the years of independence, special attention was given to urban planning as one of the key components of material culture in the process of economic and cultural reforms in Uzbekistan. The procedure for developing master plans for cities was established using state budget funds and local government resources.

In the formulation of urban master plans, the necessity of forward-thinking and strategic planning was particularly emphasized. The President of the Republic, I. A. Karimov, repeatedly stressed this point, stating: *"The master plan of each city must be developed considering its unique characteristics, distinctive architecture, historical traditions, natural conditions, and, most importantly, its future so that it serves generations to come."*<sup>69</sup>.

In 1935, architect M. S. Bulatov developed the first master plan for the city of Samarkand, covering an area of 3.9 hectares and designed to accommodate a population of 139,000<sup>70</sup>. In 1968, the second master plan for Samarkand was developed by T. Kalinovskaya, followed by the third master plan, designed by architects from UzNIIP between 1981 and 1984. The formulation of these master plans was highly complex, frequently encountering various challenges. This was due to the fact that the city center of Samarkand served as a unifying hub connecting both parts of the city. Additionally, the urban planning process had to account for the aesthetic integrity of Samarkand's unique architectural monuments. Given these factors, urban planners bore significant responsibility in designing the city's master plan.

During the years of independence, Uzbekistan's first President, I. A. Karimov, held multiple discussions with architectural scholars to preserve Samarkand's historical character. During this period, a decree was issued for the development of the city's master plan up to the year 2025. In 2005, local architects, in collaboration with V. A. Akopdzhanian, the chief architect of "Tashkentboshloyiha" and an Honored Architect of Uzbekistan, developed a master plan for Samarkand's historical district, intended to be implemented by 2020.

According to this plan, the future development of Samarkand was considered to be closely tied to the preservation of its historical heritage. The restoration projects within the city's historical core required an individualized approach. Furthermore, the master plan aimed to transform the historical district into a tourism hub. It was estimated that if the city's historical continuity was maintained, the number of tourists visiting Samarkand would reach 200,000 by 2010 and increase to 500,000 by 2020<sup>71</sup>.

It should be noted that during the years of independence, several master plans for the city of Samarkand were developed by architectural scholars. However, none of these plans were approved, as they failed to meet the requirements of the city as a major tourism hub.

Currently, the construction and development projects in Samarkand are being carried out based on the decisions, decrees, and orders of the President of the Republic and the Cabinet of Ministers. During the years of independence, significant attention has been given to the socio-economic and cultural-educational development of historical cities in Uzbekistan, as well as to urban planning and architectural progress.

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<sup>69</sup> Халқ сўзи, 2015 йил 15 сентябрь.

<sup>70</sup> Ахмедов М.Қ. Меъморий мерос: Самарқанднома, темурнома. Тошкент: « Fan va texnologiya », 2011.Б.50

<sup>71</sup> Акопджанян В.А. Концепция генерального плана города Самарканда в аспекте сохранения его исторического наследия// Ўзбекистон архитектура ва қурилиш. 2005 йил, №1.Б. 24.

In particular, the scale of construction and development projects in Samarkand has expanded year by year, with an increasing allocation of financial resources to the sector. In the early years of independence, the total funds spent on urban construction amounted to 72.7 million UZS, reaching 14,442.5 million UZS in 2002 and 615,34.5 million UZS in 2008<sup>72</sup>.

During the preparations and celebrations of Samarkand's 2750th anniversary, large-scale construction and development projects were undertaken in the city. All programs outlined in the long-term development plan for Samarkand were successfully implemented.

During this period, architectural and urban planning activities in Samarkand were carried out in several key directions:

**1. Urban Aesthetics and Infrastructure:** The first direction focused on reorganizing the most prestigious streets and squares in accordance with the progress of independence, the ideology of sovereignty, the lifestyle of the population, and the demands of a market economy.

**2. New Social and Economic Development:** The second direction involved the construction and placement of residential and cultural facilities, educational and scientific institutions, and industrial and production sites across the city, based on modern principles of social progress.

**3. Historical and Cultural Preservation:** The third direction aimed at preserving the historical character of Samarkand while considering its global significance. It included restoration, conservation, and adaptation of architectural monuments for contemporary social and tourism purposes, ensuring their preservation for future generations.

**4. Urban Landscaping and Environmental Improvements:** The fourth direction focused on enhancing the city's climate, ecology, and landscape. This involved beautifying open public spaces, establishing new parks, gardens, and boulevards.

**5. Urban Infrastructure and Public Services:** The fifth direction centered on improving the city's infrastructure, utilities, and engineering systems to enhance urban livability.

All these aspects were incorporated into the 2015 master plan for Samarkand's development, which was drafted during the independence period. In recent years, more than 50 modern residential buildings have been constructed in Samarkand, with renovation work carried out on 16 others.

Between 2010 and 2014, 741 social infrastructure facilities across Samarkand region underwent construction and renovation, with total investments amounting to 401.3 billion UZS. Major projects included capital repairs at the Samarkand State Archive, construction of the Sakovat House building, the conversion of the former Chamber of Commerce and Industry building into the Uzbekistan Museum of Culture and History, and the reconstruction of the Infectious Diseases Hospital on Dahbed Street. Additionally, extensive renovations were

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<sup>72</sup> Ўзбекистон Республикаси Статистика қўмитаси. Тошкент, 2014 йил.

conducted at the Samarkand Medical Institute's rehabilitation clinic and physiotherapy center, as well as at the regional television and radio company headquarters, the State Tax Administration building, and other key public facilities.

The number of modern buildings along Samarkand's streets has steadily increased over the years. Between 1991 and 2016, a total of 80 large buildings and structures were constructed throughout the city, with notable developments along Beruni, Jami, Gagarin, Tashkent, Bedil, Dahbed, Nurobod, Kuksaroy, Amir Temur, and Panjakent streets. Furthermore, 13,800 residential and non-residential buildings that did not meet architectural standards were reconstructed or replaced along Mirzo Ulugbek, Beruni, Bustonsaroy, Spitamen Shokh, and Dahbed streets.

By 2016, 76 buildings around Rudaki Street had been renovated and repurposed for commercial and public services, while five multi-story residential buildings were newly constructed. In total, 47 high-rise residential buildings were built in Samarkand that year, improving living conditions for 11,180 residents. In addition, 13 multi-story apartment complexes were constructed for young families, providing 332 new homes. By early 2017, 32 additional high-rise buildings, containing 1,060 apartments, were completed<sup>73</sup>.

Twenty years ago, Tashkent Street, which connects Registan Square and the Bibi-Khanym Jome Mosque in the old city of Samarkand, was one of the busiest streets. As the only surviving urban street from the Timurid era, Tashkent Street had become too narrow for modern vehicular traffic. Additionally, vehicle movement along the street had a detrimental impact on the preservation of historical monuments, creating further inconveniences for tourists visiting the city.

During 2014–2015, extensive construction and redevelopment projects were undertaken. Major landscaping and greening initiatives were carried out in Registan Square. The installation of colorful fountains in the park transformed the area into one of the most comfortable recreational spaces for both local residents and visitors<sup>74</sup>.

Construction and development projects in Samarkand have also been extensively implemented in the social sector. In particular, as part of the 2014 Investment Program, renovation work was carried out in medical treatment and prevention institutions under the Samarkand City Medical Association. The project for the renovation and reconstruction of the branch building of the Central Multi-Profile Polyclinic on the Great Silk Road Street (formerly part of the 4th Children's Polyclinic, located in the Bogishamol district administration building) was designed by the "Samkishlokhoyalikloyiha" LLC with an estimated cost of 475 million soums and was awarded through a tender to "Samtamirsserviceplus" LLC. The project included demolition work, installation of electrical

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<sup>73</sup> Содиков Н. Барча ютуқлар мустақиллик шарофати билан// Ўзбекистон архитектураси ва қурилиши. 2016 йил №4-5.Б. 36-40.

<sup>74</sup> Содиков Н. Барча ютуқлар мустақиллик шарофати билан// Ўзбекистон архитектураси ва қурилиши. 2016 йил №4-5.Б. 36-40.

networks on different floors, plumbing, and plastering, as well as full reconstruction in accordance with SanPiN sanitary standards. In 2015, the Central Multi-Profile Polyclinic and other family clinics on the Great Silk Road Street underwent major renovations.

By 2016, three new general education schools under the jurisdiction of the Samarkand City Public Education Department were constructed, providing 1,230 additional student places. Additionally, 14 schools underwent major reconstruction, adding 7,242 new student places. Furthermore, 31 schools with a total capacity of 24,850 students were completely renovated, while 24 schools, accommodating 21,247 students, received routine maintenance. In total, more than 18 billion 194 million soums were allocated and spent from the state budget for the construction and renovation of general secondary education institutions<sup>75</sup>.

According to the 2016 reports, the total amount of funds spent on construction and contracting work in social sector facilities in Samarkand throughout the year amounted to 624.9 billion soums, demonstrating a growth rate of 127.5% compared to the previous year. Additionally, the total funds allocated for the reconstruction of social facilities reached 9,596.4 million soums, while capital repair works accounted for 5,057.0 million soums<sup>76</sup>.

During the years of independence, the infrastructure of Samarkand has undergone rapid development. As a result of the consistent implementation of special resolutions and state programs, favorable living conditions have been ensured for both local residents and visitors. In 1997, the total residential housing stock in Samarkand covered an area of 5.2 million square meters, which had decreased to 4.9 million square meters by 2006. This reduction in total housing stock was directly linked to the demolition of numerous individual residential houses that no longer met urban planning requirements and the subsequent construction of new facilities<sup>77</sup>.

In terms of per capita housing provision in Samarkand, the total residential area per person increased from 11.1 square meters in 1997 to 12.0 square meters in 2006. This growth was primarily driven by the construction of modern multi-story residential buildings connected to centralized utility networks, which met contemporary urban housing demands<sup>78</sup>.

In 2017, under the directive of the President of the Republic, Sh. M. Mirziyoyev, the construction of a new tourist town fully compliant with modern urban planning standards commenced on the site of the former "Alpomish" factory and its surrounding unutilized land

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<sup>75</sup> Ўзбекистон Республикаси, биринчи Президентининг « 2004-2009 йилларда мактаб таълимини ривожлантириш Давлат умуммиллий дастури тўғрисида » ги 2004 йил 21 майдаги ПФ3431сонли Фармони ҳамда Ўзбекистон Республикаси Вазирлар Маҳкамасининг 2004 йил 9 июлдаги « 2004-2009 йилларда давлат умуммиллий дастурини амалга ошириш чоратадбирлари тўғрисида » ги 321сонли қарори асосида

<sup>76</sup> Ўзбекистон Республикаси Давлат Архитектура ва Қурилиш Қўмитаси материاللари – Самарқандда амалга оширилган қурилиш лойиҳалари ҳақидаги маълумотлар.

<sup>77</sup> Мустафаев А. “Ўзбекистонда урбанизация жараёнлари” – Тошкент, “Фан” нашриёти, 2019.

<sup>78</sup> Самарқанд вилояти Статистика бошқармаси. Самарқанд шаҳар паспорт маълумотлари асосида. Самарқанд, 2017 йил.Б. 5-11.

along Amir Temur Street in Samarkand. This tourism project is being implemented by engineers and architects from the Republic of South Korea.

The construction and urban development carried out in the Samarkand region during the years of independence have played a significant role in the economic and social progress of the region. The construction of new roads, residential areas, industrial complexes, and social infrastructure has improved the well-being of the population and created favorable conditions for the development of tourism. These reforms in the construction sector have turned Samarkand into one of the key centers not only of Uzbekistan but of the entire Central Asian region. In the future, construction projects based on innovative technologies are expected to continue, further enhancing the quality of life for residents.

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