

Managing Urban Growth and Development in the Riyadh
Metropolitan Area, Saudi Arabia

By

Mr. Shaibu Bala Garba

College of Environmental Design
King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals
Dhahran, Saudi Arabia

Corresponding Address:

Mr. Shaibu Bala Garba
King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals
Box 1219, Dhahran 31261
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Tel. +966 (3) 8602503
E-mail: sbgarba@kfupm.edu.sa

Abstract

The paper examines public sector management of urban growth and development in the Riyadh Metropolitan Area, Saudi Arabia. The focus of the paper is on institutional capacity building and development intervention. The paper traces changes in public sector management structures and development activities over the history of the city with the aim of assessing development impact and identifying forces that have shaped the evolving state of urban management. The paper notes that urban management has significantly improved with time but the persistence of urban problems coupled with projections of future growth point to the need for further improvements. The paper in conclusion, while acknowledging the utility of the Metropolitan Development Strategy (MEDSTAR) being formulated for the city, point to the need for broader administrative reform to improve the ability to cope with long-term challenges of growth in the city. Some issues that reform could address are suggested.

Key words: urban management, management problems, institutional development, urban development policy, urban development planning

INTRODUCTION

Urban growth, especially when it is rapid, is usually associated with tremendous challenges of management for the public sector. The challenges stem from the need to ensure that services are expanded to meet the needs of a growing population and that growth and development is taking place in an orderly and sustainable fashion. The effectiveness with which the public sector is able to address these challenges is tied to its ability to develop appropriate management capacity. Such a capacity has to support the ability to understand development problems, and to initiate and implement appropriate intervention measures to improve living conditions. The monitoring and examination of public sector urban management is part of a bid to seek for ways to improve effectiveness in management. Such examinations could provide valuable information to support reform aimed at enabling the public sector to better deal with the challenges of managing growth.

The paper examines the management of urban growth and development in the Riyadh Metropolitan Area, Saudi Arabia. Riyadh is one of the fastest growing cities in the Middle East. The city, with a population of less than 15,000 people at the turn of the last century, now has a population of about four million people and it is projected to expand to about 10 million by the year 2020. The rapid expansion of the city has made the management of growth a central issue in discussions on its development. The paper examines the evolution of urban management in Riyadh with the aim of assessing impact on physical development patterns and also identifying the forces that have shaped the evolving state of urban management in the city. The focus of the paper is on institutional capacity building and development intervention actions and practices. Sources of data used in the research include national government

documents, master plans, municipal regulations and reports, journalistic accounts and recent research reports. The paper is divided into three parts. The first part presents a review aimed at establishing the framework for examining urban management, the second part examines the historical development of urban management in Riyadh and the third part examines the forces that have shaped the evolving state of urban management and their impact on the future management of growth in the city.

PUBLIC SECTOR MANAGEMENT OF URBAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

The principal challenge for the public sector in managing rapid urban growth stems from the need to ensure expansion in the provision of services to meet the needs of a growing population and that urban development is taking place in a planned and sustainable manner. The public sector usually provides two types of urban services; benefactory services and regulatory services (Caraley, 1977). Benefactory services are provided to sustain or improve the conditions of living in cities. Benefactory services include: basic infrastructure services such as fire protection, water supply, garbage collection and disposal; amenities such as educational facilities, libraries, recreation and cultural facilities; and services that address problems such as poverty, unemployment, and blight. Regulatory services enforce restrictions on all kinds of behavior to ensure the maintenance of law and order and for the protection of the general public. The ability of the public sector to meet the service needs of growing cities depends to a large extent on their management capacity. Management capacity is a factor of both resources available for management and the development of appropriate institutional structure and practices in management. Funding for development intervention is usually extracted in the form of taxes, user chargers,

levies and fines. Institutional building for urban management is usually focused on establishing an inter-organizational management setup. The unique nature of urban management means that it is usually carried out by several government agencies, with each overseeing an aspect of the process. Figure 1 presents a generalized model of the public sector urban management system. The public sector urban management system may be conceptualized as being made up of three interacting subsystems (Figure 1); the policy formulation system, the inter-organizational system for policy implementation and the urban development pattern. Policies and strategies are defined at the level of the policy system mostly by the political leadership. Policies are usually formulated at the different hierarchies of the political system. Policy implementation is carried out at an inter-organizational level where various government agencies oversee different aspects of management translating policies into plans and programs of action. Policies once implemented impact on development patterns and generate a new cycle of policy and planning efforts. Capacity building for urban management focuses on how to organize collective thoughts and action within the inter-organizational management framework where no one person, group, or organization is in charge, but in which many are involved, affected, or have partial responsibility to act (Bryson & Einsweiler, 1988:2).

Four factors appear to play a dominant role in influencing the capacity for effective action in public sector urban management. The first is policy guidance. An urban management system cannot operate in a vacuum. There must at all times be clear policies which specify objectives in addressing problems and provides a framework of action by public agencies. Because of the multiplicity of development objectives and the mutative nature of urban problems, there is always a need to ensure that policies

are coordinated and that they are continuously revised in tune with the changing problems of a city. The second factor has to do with inter-organizational structure and the capacity of agencies. Because of the multiplicity of government agencies and departments involved in urban management, there is a strong need for clear institutional responsibilities and mandates, as well as a framework for cooperation in order to ensure that action is concerted (Alexander, 1993:328). Also the ability of agencies to undertake development action is tied to their institutional resources. Institutional resources include well trained staff and the availability of adequate information to sustain development activities. Information is a critical necessity in any effort to understand and address urban problems (Rivkin, 1983:175). The third factor deals with organization behaviors and practices. Even when urban management systems have the necessary inter-organizational system and capacity, they will only be effective if it is backed by appropriate organization behaviors and practices. Certain behaviors and practices such as the acceptance of change as a constant, aspiration to a high level of efficiency and effectiveness, continuous monitoring, assessment and improvement of activities, practices and procedures, and establishing feedback mechanism to policy and decision making are necessary for effectiveness in urban management. The last factor deals with the wider context for management. Inevitably, management systems are only as effective as the wider context in which they are situated. The political philosophies of countries, the social orientation of its citizenry, the attitudes towards administration and the system of governance all affect the ability of city governments to effectively manage urban development (MAuslan, 1985:105).

The paper examines the management of growth in Riyadh historically, from the early establishment of modern Saudi Arabia as a country in 1900 to the present. The period

of interest has been divided into four phases of development, the pre-establishment phase (1900-1930), the establishment phase (1930-1970), The oil-Boom Phase (1970-1990), and the Post-Oil Boom phase (1990- Present). The focus in examining each period is on identifying urban problems in that period, examining public sector reaction to the problems in terms of institutional building and development intervention, and the impact of such intervention on development patterns. In reviewing management over the history of the city, it also becomes possible to identify and isolate forces that have shaped the evolution of urban management and to examine the likely impact of these forces on future management. The position of Riyadh as the capital of Saudi Arabia and the significant participation of the central government in local urban development and management means that it is impossible to isolate actions in local governance in Riyadh from actions at the central level of government. Actions at both levels of government are examined in as much as they contribute to addressing development problems in Riyadh.

<INSERT FIGURE 1>

MANAGING GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN RIYADH

Pre-Establishment Phase (1900-1930)

Riyadh started its development as a modern city in 1900 with the initiation of a movement by King Abdulaziz that ultimately led to the establishment of Saudi Arabia as a country (Figure 2). Riyadh began its development as the capital of the nascent country. Riyadh, though having a long history, was by the early 1900s a small tribal enclave. The city had a population of 14,000 and 27,000 in 1910 and 1930 respectively. The spatial coverage of the city was less than 1 square kilometer in

1916. The people of the city were living a tribal lifestyle which they, more or less, have been living for a very long time, with the city's economy focused on small scale agriculture and nomadic livestock husbandry (Alkhedeiri, 2002:74). The fundamental development challenge for the government of the new country during the Pre-Establishment phase was how to transform the tribal lifestyle of the people and improve living conditions. There was also a need to develop Riyadh as the capital of the new country (Malik, 1976:4). Other than space, however, everything else was in scarce supply for the nascent administration. Complementing the scarcity of resources was the complete lack of institutional structures for local and national governance. The government was therefore handicapped and could not undertake any significant development intervention. Actions were, however, initiated to create a governance framework through issuing basic regulations, creating national ministries and also developing programs for manpower training. Some intervention actions were nonetheless implemented, which were to later have serious consequence for the growth of Riyadh. These actions included the construction of a wall around the city, which limited initial spatial growth, and a program for settling Bedouins in settlements known as *Hijar*, which proved very successful and created the army of migrants that were to later fuel the rapid growth of Riyadh.

<INSERT FIGURE 2>

Establishment Phase (1930-1970)

The establishment of Saudi Arabia in its modern form was completed in 1932 with the unification of the Hijaz region. Riyadh remained as the capital of the country, though some national government activities were stationed in Jeddah. From 1930, the

dynamics of growth changed as Riyadh started growing faster and its population increased significantly. The city grew at a rate of about 5% between 1930 and 1950 and at about 7 to 8 percent between 1950 and 1970. The population of the city was estimated at 46,000, 160,000 and 350,000 in 1940, 1960 and 1970 respectively. The spatial coverage of the city was about 85 square kilometers in the 1960s. The increasing pace of growth made the provision of services and the control and guidance of growth preeminent development challenges. The provision of portable water to support such a large and growing population was particularly problematic in view of the desert location of the city (Daghestani, 1983:100). Also, growth started in the absence of established national and local institutional frameworks for managing development. Additionally, the ability to intervene at both the national and local levels was handicapped by the lack of resources prior to the commercial production of oil in 1953 (Alkhedeiry, 2002:75). The fundamental development during the period became how develop institutional frameworks for management in the face of rapid growth and increasing demand for services.

Action during the early part of the establishment phase (1930-50) was focused on creating structures of national and local governance along with improving the resource situation of the government. Action centered on creating management agencies and on regulatory reform. Nationally the creation of ministries which had started during the previous phase of development continued. A Directorate of Municipality was created in the Ministry of Interior in 1953 and in 1962 it was elevated to the Department of Municipal Affairs and charged with, among other things, developing municipal services, assisting the municipalities to acquire manpower, and to prepare master plans and associated regulations for the

development of towns and communities (PRD, 1974:5). In the same year, the position of a Deputy Minister for Municipal Affairs was created in the ministry of interior. A Supreme Planning Board was also created in 1961, charged with the responsibility of planning, organizing and coordinating economic development (Mubarak, 1993:123). Regulatory reform led to the issuance of several laws reorganizing local governance (PRD, 1974:62). A law issued in 1932 established Riyadh as a municipality. The Capital and Mayorship act of 1937 specified the responsibilities of municipal administrations. The Emirate Act of 1939 re-ordered the administration of local areas nationally, dividing the Kingdom into emirates headed by administrative governors representing the central government. Riyadh was one of the designated 13 emirates and the city also became the capital of the emirate. Improvement in the resource situation of the government after the beginning of the commercial production of oil in 1953(Alkhedeiry, 2002:75) led to the awareness of the need for further reform of the institutional setup to improve management effectiveness. Institutional building shifted from creating institutional structures to improving the workings of the institutional system and the development of a framework for planned intervention. The change was initiated as a result of the failure of the Supreme Planning Board to perform the duties assigned to it. The failure of the board led to the invitation of foreign experts to reassess and recommend the reorganization of government agencies and institutions in order to fasten progress in planning and decision making (Mubarak, 1992:123). The work of the foreign experts culminated in the creation of the Central Planning Organization and subsequently to the beginning of five year development planning. The first five year development plan was prepared and approved by the council of minister in 1969. The plan identified national development objectives and established targets for the sectors of the national economy. The invitation of foreign experts also

marked the beginning of an interest in the local planning and guidance of growth in Riyadh. In 1968, a planning firm, Doxiadis International, was commissioned to prepare a comprehensive master plan to guide the development of the city (Alkhedeiry, 2002:120).

The lack of institutional structures and resources precluded any significant development intervention during the early part of the establishment phase. Policy, planning and programming action was therefore ad hoc and short term in orientation, limited to yearly budgeting or to addressing visible problems. Action, in respect of local development in Riyadh, was focused on improving service delivery. Towards the end of the establishment phase, service provision improved in Riyadh, and significant projects were initiated which also impacted on the city's physical development. These included the construction of palaces, government buildings, an airport, internal city roads and a rail link with the eastern province. In 1953, the government ordered the movement of all ministries from Jeddah to Riyadh. This led to the construction of the Al Malaz residential area. The adoption of the villa and grid iron pattern of development in the construction of Al Malaz was to have a significant impact of the development of Riyadh and other cities in the kingdom, as they became the standard pattern of urban physical development in the country (Alkhedeiry, 2002:115-117).

By the end of the establishment phase Riyadh had witnessed substantial improvements in its management. Institutions for the management of national development had been established. The structures of local management had also become established and a framework for the planned development of the city had

been initiated with the hiring of Doxiadis Associates to prepare a master plan for the city. Despite the improvements in management, urban problems were still prevalent in the city. The period was generally characterized by a faster rate of population growth to the expansion of services and the capacity to manage. As a result different types of problems manifested. These problems included the spread of slums and squatter settlements, lack of servicing for substantial portions of the city, increase in demand for housing, land and transportation problems, inequality in settlement characteristics and the division of the city into high and low income areas (Malik, 1976:60; Al Ankary and El-Bushra, 1989:11). Distorted land and housing markets had made shelter beyond the affordability of many families (Malik, 1976:61-62). Squatters, mostly impoverished migrants from the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula, were found in the city living in tents next to modern houses without electricity, gas, water and other amenities.

The Oil-Boom Phase (1970-1990)

By the oil boom phase of development, Riyadh was growing at a rate of more than 8 percent per annum. The population of the city had crossed the one million mark in the 1980s and the spatial coverage of the city increased to 1600 square kilometers in 1986. Riyadh had also become a major target for migration (Al-Ibrahim, 1992:359). The continued expansion of the city translated into an expanding demand for services. The period started with a backlog of service demand thereby compounding the service situation and pointing to the need for improvements in delivery capacity. Other development problems included haphazard growth and lack of a defined city structure, traffic congestion and housing problems (Doxiadis, 1968). Housing

provision was particularly problematic as demand was increasing faster than the ability to supply thereby fueling inflation.

By 1975 the basic structure for local and national governance in Saudi Arabia had become well established. This structure consist of the Ministry of Planning (MOP) in charge of national development planning, The Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs (MOMRA) in charge of spatial planning at the national, regional and local levels in addition to the provision and management of infrastructure, and municipalities at the lowest level, involved in the everyday management of urban development (Alkhedeiri, 2002:105-7; Almotairi, 1995:165). Few additional changes were made to the national structure for municipal administration. One of the few changes was the reorganization of local governance in 1977, giving municipalities a corporate status, financial and administrative independence, and also placing the municipalities under the direct control of MOMRA. The greatest improvement in development intervention in Saudi Arabia occurred during the oil boom phase. The availability of enormous resources resulting from the oil-boom resulted in massive development action with Riyadh as one of the major beneficiaries. Development planning was formalized as an approach to addressing problems (Al Ankary and El Bushra, 1989:11). Four national development plans were implemented during the period. All the plans identify the aim of government intervention as being to raise the standard of living and ensure equitable distribution of wealth and welfare of the citizenry. Within the framework of national development planning, several problems affecting urban areas were addressed. These included land and housing development, physical development patterns, social, economic and environmental problems and the need for qualified manpower to manage development activities. The approach to

solving the land and housing problem in urban areas utilized various policy approaches including direct construction, the provision and grant of thousands of serviced lots to citizens, and the establishment of a Real Estate fund to disburse interest free construction loans. Several ministries, government agencies and public enterprises also contributed to local development in cities through their activities. Riyadh was a significant beneficiary of these activities and it witnessed a huge investment in services provision during this period (Al-Ankary & El-Bushra, 1989:12). Government investment and development activities in Riyadh, while serving to improve service provision also contributed to enhancing the attractiveness of the city to migrants. This contributed in increasing the pressure of growth in the city.

The Oil-Boom phase marked the beginning of the planned management of the development of Riyadh. Doxiadis associates submitted its plan of the city in 1971. The plan was approved and adopted as official policy for managing the city's development. The plan projected the city's population at 900,000 by 1985 and 1,050,000 and 1,400,000 by 1990 and 2000 respectively. The plan identified two planning goals; the need for a flexible structure to cope with any rate of development in the absence of any physical constraint, and the need for balanced, equitable and effective distribution of facilities and services. The growth of Riyadh far outpaced the recommendation of the master plan, however, and so in 1976 another firm, SCET, was commissioned to review the master plan. The revised plan produced after four years focused on implementation and action. The plan, with a lifespan of 12 years, concentrated on detailing guidelines for action that is to take place in the medium to short term.

By 1985, the development actions and policies of the central government coupled with rapid growth produced a haphazard pattern of development in Riyadh and other Saudi Cities (Alkhedeiri, 2002:78). Cities were sprawling as a result of leap-frog development thereby increasing the cost of service provision and reducing efficiency in their utilization. Riyadh's growth at this time was characterized by a random expansion of subdivision, dispersion of services and facilities to sparsely populated areas, and a lack of coordination between service agencies (ADA, 1993:13). In reaction to the problem the council of Ministers ordered a two year freeze on all urban expansion in the Kingdom in 1985. The ministry of municipal and rural affairs was mandated to prepare a plan for urban expansion for cities for the next 50 years in phases conforming to economic development plans (Rai, 1986:26). By the end of the Oil-Boom period, Riyadh had witnessed substantial improvement in management capacity and development intervention. Despite the improvements, management was still unable to keep pace with growth. So the city was still facing management problem, particularly of regulatory control. The imposition urban boundary in 1989 was a tact acknowledgement of the difficulties in controlling and managing physical growth. Services were also provided in the city with a high level of subsidy, which limits that ability to recoup development expenditure and to replicate development programs.

The Post-Oil Boom Phase (1990-Present)

Riyadh is still growing at a phenomenal rate of about 8 percent per annum. The population of the city is estimated at 2.8 million in 1992, 3.1 million in 1997 and 4.4 million in 2002. It is projected to expand to about 10 million by the year 2020. The

city now covers an area of 1782 square kilometers, made up of 1150 square kilometers of phase one urban boundary and 682 square kilometers of phase two urban boundary. The phenomenal growth of the city's population along with spatial expansion has made improvement in service delivery a continuing fundamental development problem. Despite tremendous improvement in service delivery, universal coverage is still elusive. Recent estimates show that only about a third of the developed area of Riyadh has fully developed infrastructure – water supply, electricity, sewerage, drainage and roads. Over 80 percent of the city is serviced by water supply and roads, with just under 80 percent also having reticulated electricity. In terms of population served, in 1990, it was estimated that 52 percent of the population was fully served with all services, 97 percent with water and electricity, 85 percent with roads, 72 percent with telephone, 56 percent with sewerage and 52 percent with storm water drainage (ADA, 1993:143). Other persistent problems include speculative subdivision, uncontrolled growth and sprawl, lack of land ownership records, transportation and environmental problems (ADA, 1993:43; Alkhedeiry, 2002:101). The problem of portable water supply is one that is gearing up to assume a critical dimension. The bulk of the city's water supply comes from desalinated water that is transported over a distance of 460 kilometers (Al-Mudaiheem, 1985:233). The desalinated water is mixed with water from 8 well fields and supplied to the city. Water production and supply has lagged behind demand since 1991 and some of the ground water wells have suffered from excessive withdrawals and declining water levels (HCDR, 1997A:10; Al Mudaiheem, 1985:232). The high level of subsidy in the supply of water compounds the water problem, encouraging waste and limiting the ability to expand production at a time

when fluctuations in oil prices and increasing demand on the public sector is limiting availability of resources (HCDR, 1997A:31; Alkhedeiry, 2002:78).

The current institutional structure for the management of Riyadh is constituted around five complementary organs. The city is the seat of the Governor of the Central province who has jurisdiction over certain affairs of the city including law and order, education, economic affairs and agriculture. The city also has the High Commission for the Development of Riyadh (HCDR), which is in charged of overseeing the planning and development of the city. The Arriyadh Development Authority (ADA), an organ of the High Commission for the Development of Riyadh, is in charge of planning the development of the city. ADA provides the plans that serve as a guide for development in Riyadh. There is also the Municipality of Riyadh which is responsible for the everyday running of the city including providing services, approving developments and managing the implementation of the plans of the city. There are several sub-municipalities that perform complementary functions to the Municipality of Riyadh. Several other government ministries are also usually involved in development activities or in the provision of services in the city. The prevailing institutional challenge is how to concert action within such a diversity of actors, considering the evolutionary nature of the management system and also the associated regulations and ordinances which guide the agencies in their activities. The local management of Riyadh's growth continues to take place within the framework of development planning at both the national and local level. The introduction of the urban boundaries as a national policy led to the designation of phase 1 and 2 boundaries for the city beyond which urban services will not be provided. With the expiry of the SCET plan in 1990, The Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs

initiated a project for a Metropolitan Development Strategy (MEDSTAR) for the city. Work on MEDSTAR was started in 1996 by a team of specialist from ADA, the Municipality of Riyadh, and internal and external consultants under the umbrella of the Arriyadh Development Authority (ADA). MEDSTAR aims to “identify Arriyadh’s existing and potential problems and opportunities, develop a dynamic development strategy and to institute an implementation mechanism” (HCDR, 1997A) The strategy, which is to be undertaken in three phases, is expected to include a 50 year vision, a 25 year strategic framework and a 10 year implementation plan. The first phase dealing with the collection of information, identification and analysis of critical issues, and formulation of a vision for the city was completed in 1997. The outcome of the phase is a 20 volume report listed in Table 1. The next phase is expected to commence soon.

<INSERT TABLE 1>

Table 2 summarizes the evolution of urban management in Riyadh. During the Pre-Establishment phase, Intervention was minimal with no defined development approach because of the absence of management structures. The Establishment phase focused on capacity building, with limited ad hoc intervention usually to address visible problems. The Oil-Boom phase saw the introduction of planned intervention and massive expansion of service provision. The Post Oil-Boom phase is witnessing a continuation of development planning at the national level and the adoption of the strategic approach in managing Riyadh’s growth and development.

<INSERT TABLE 2>

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE EVOLVING STATE OF MANAGEMENT

Certain factors appear to have played a significant role in shaping the evolving state of urban management in Riyadh. These factors could be broadly categorized into three; contextual issues, the decision making and policy framework, and institutional problems. Among the contextual issues is the rapidity of the transformation in the society. From 1900 to the present, Saudi Arabia and Riyadh have experienced a massive transformation. Riyadh has transformed from a tribal settlement of about just a square kilometer to a 4 million size city occupying an area of more than 1600 square kilometers. Such a rapid transformation is always difficult to predict, understand and effectively manage. Also, the transformation started in the absence of institutional structures and necessary resources for managing and guiding the transformation. To a large extent, institutional building and improvements in capacity for development intervention was taking place along with the transformation of society. The development of urban management in Riyadh was, therefore, an exercise in learning by doing. Mechanisms and practices introduced with modern management were sometimes also in conflict with prevailing cultural attitudes and ways of life and in some cases led to subversion. The introduction of planning and land use controls, for instance, conflicted with cultural notions of individual rights in land and so resulted in the subversion of land use measures (Daghistani, 1989:117)

In terms of the decision making and policy framework, Saudi Arabia has witnessed significant improvements in the capacity for both national and local governance. The management system has, however, evolved in such a way that decision making and policy guidance is centralized at the national level while local management is restricted to implementation. The centralized structure burdens the central

administration and its agencies with decision making on issues that are of limited national importance. This leads to delays in formulating policies, carrying out necessary reform and in general decision making. The situation limits local initiative in management and has also resulted in resistance to change in administration. Additionally also, there is an inherent lack of clarity in the definition of the fundamental role of local governance. In most countries, development issues are addressed in a complementary form by both national and local governments. National governments usually establish the framework for the operation of local governments, identifying issues of national concern, issues that are common to both levels of government and issues that left to local governments to handle. Within such a framework, local governments are then free to evolve their approach and practices in local governance and to address issue of local development importance or concern. In Saudi Arabia, the evolution of local governance has concentrated on codifying structure and establishing the framework for their management rather than on defining their fundamental role in national development. The reforms so far carried out by the laws enacted evolved local government as the agent of national ministries rather than as independent development agents. This limits their capacity for action and their ability to evolve more effective urban management systems that proactively addresses the problems of growth. Another problem with the decision making and policy framework is the lack of coordination in policy formulation. From observation, it appear that policies, especially national government policies are formulated without due assessment of impact on the spatial development of local areas. As a result, some of the policies have exacerbated or generated urban problems. During the period of acute housing shortage, for example, the central government adopted a policy of giving interest free loans through the real estate development funds and also giving

land to citizens free of charge. The two policies because of lack of coordination with the management of spatial growth, ultimately fueled urban expansion, encouraged speculation in land and contributed to sprawl in cities such as Riyadh. The policies also ultimately led to inefficiencies in the utilization of public investment in land development.

The institutional framework for managing growth in Riyadh suffers from the lack of a clear definition of the roles of agencies involved in management. The function and responsibility of agencies has evolved and remained unchanged for the last 20 years (HCDR, 1997B). The institutional structure is characterized by operational independence, overlaps in function and activities, and fragmented participation in development activities (HCDR, 1997B:135). Thus the agency that oversees the planning of the city is completely independent of the agency that is in charge of implementing the plan. Procedures and processes in development intervention are also not always defined and formalized, making implementation, especially of control, difficult to implement. In some cases also, the management agencies have to do without or with inadequate enabling laws to support their operation. Many of the laws that guide intervention and management of urban development have been the result of fragmentary evolution of multiple statutes, technical resolutions and directives (Alkhedheiry, 2002:106; HCDR, 1997B:132). The laws are usually not comprehensive enough and, in many cases, do not address vital issues necessary for effective management. The planning laws, for example, are cumbersome, outdated, do not address several planning issues or equip agencies to address problems. They do not also embody any clearly identified process for plan approval (Robert & Hugh, 1979:102; HCDR, 1997B:xvii). Management of development in the city also suffers

from a poor coordination of activities by the various participating agencies. There is a problem of both horizontal coordination among local agencies managing growth and vertical coordination between the local agencies and agencies of the central government. There is poor coordination between the agency planning the development of the city and the agency responsible for the development and subdivision control process (HCDR, 1997B:132). Also most ministries and other central government agencies are involved in delivering one form of service or another in the city without adequate coordination with the local management agencies. The combined result of the lack of coordination is wastefulness in spending, duplication of activities, and general inefficiency in resource utilization. The local management agencies also lack adequate resources necessary to effectively manage a city of the size of Riyadh. The agencies suffer from a lack of trained and skilled manpower needed to support a regime of active management (HCDR, 1997B:137). The lack of appropriate local manpower has led to a reliance on imported labor and foreign expertise; both sources that do not cater for the long term sustainable management of the city. Riyadh also lacks a comprehensive planning intelligence information database to support the planning and management activities of agencies. The Arriyadh Development Authority has recently established the Urban Information System (UIS) to support its planning activities. The database is however not linked to the activities of the Municipality, which is responsible for overseeing development activities and subdivision control. Information for monitoring growth and development necessary to support management is therefore not readily available (HCDR, 1997B:133). In addition to the lack of information, certain activities such as development control and planning enforcement are reported to be under funded thereby limiting the ability to establish an effective control regime (HCDR, 1997B:xvii). Problems of agency

funding are complicated by the level of subsidy in the supply of services which reduces the capacity of the public sector to replicate development activities.

A general examination of the factors highlighted appears to suggest a fundamental structural problem with the institutional system. The rapidity of Riyadh's growth suggest the adoption of a flexible management approach, where change is accepted as a constant, decision making is flexible and rapid, and the management system is able to adapt its structure, intervention instruments and strategies to suit the evolving nature of the problem being addressed. Somehow, the structural nature of the problem of the institutional system appears to inhibit the transformation to a flexible regime management. How would the situation affect the management of future growth in the city? It is apparent that population growth will remain the most relevant contextual issue for the future management of Riyadh. Riyadh is expected to continue growing, reaching a population of about 10 million by the year 2020. A city of such size will present very challenging problems of management and will require significant improvements in current management capacity to be able to sustain or improve living conditions. The future state of management will to a large extent depend on the willingness to undertake a radical reform of local management to address the shortcomings of the institutional system and improve capacity for proactive intervention and management

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The paper examined public sector management of urban growth and development in the Riyadh Metropolitan Area. Riyadh has experienced a phenomenal rapid growth in its history, moving from a small tribal settlement to a large metropolitan area. The city

is expected to continue growing at a fairly rapid rate. The growth of the city has been associated with problems of management relating mostly to increasing demand for services, urban sprawl and the need to control and guide development. Institutional structures for management had to also be developed concurrently with the growth process. Urban management has in general improved over time, resulting in improved service provision and coverage. Despite improvements, the city is yet to achieve universal coverage and some problems still persist. Projections of substantial future coupled with the persistence of problems point to the need to further improve management in order to cope with long-term challenges of growth. Factors influencing the state of management in the city were examined.

In general, it is acknowledged that MEDSTAR would lay a foundation for improving the management of Riyadh's growth. It, however, appears that forces limiting effectiveness in the city's management system are structural in nature and would inhibit the ability to substantially improve effectiveness through planning. Strategic planning without broader administrative reform to address the structural issues may not lead to the level of effectiveness necessary to cope with the challenges of managing future growth. It is therefore suggested that improving urban management in Riyadh will require broader administrative reform to address the structural issues. Specific issues that reform should address include decentralization of decision making to local management agencies to enable and support a proactive regime of management, the clear definition of agency roles and the general reworking and improvement of the institutional system to improve capacity for action, and the search for sustainable sources of development funding.

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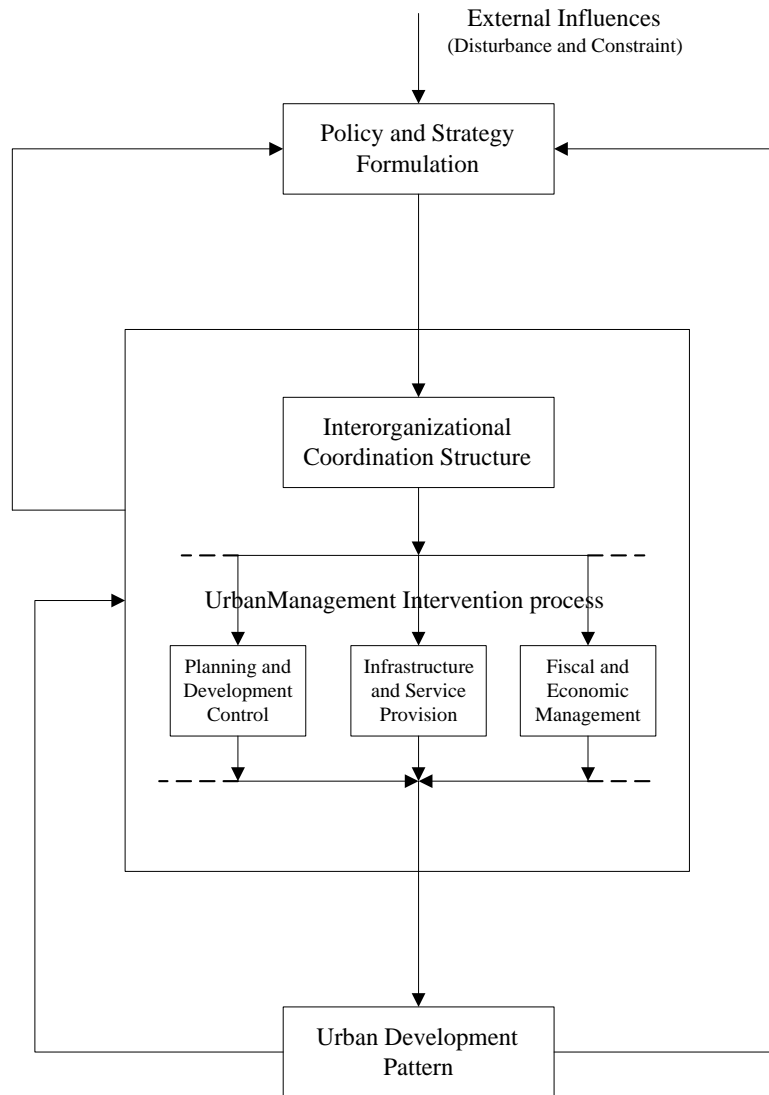


Figure 1: A model of the public urban management system

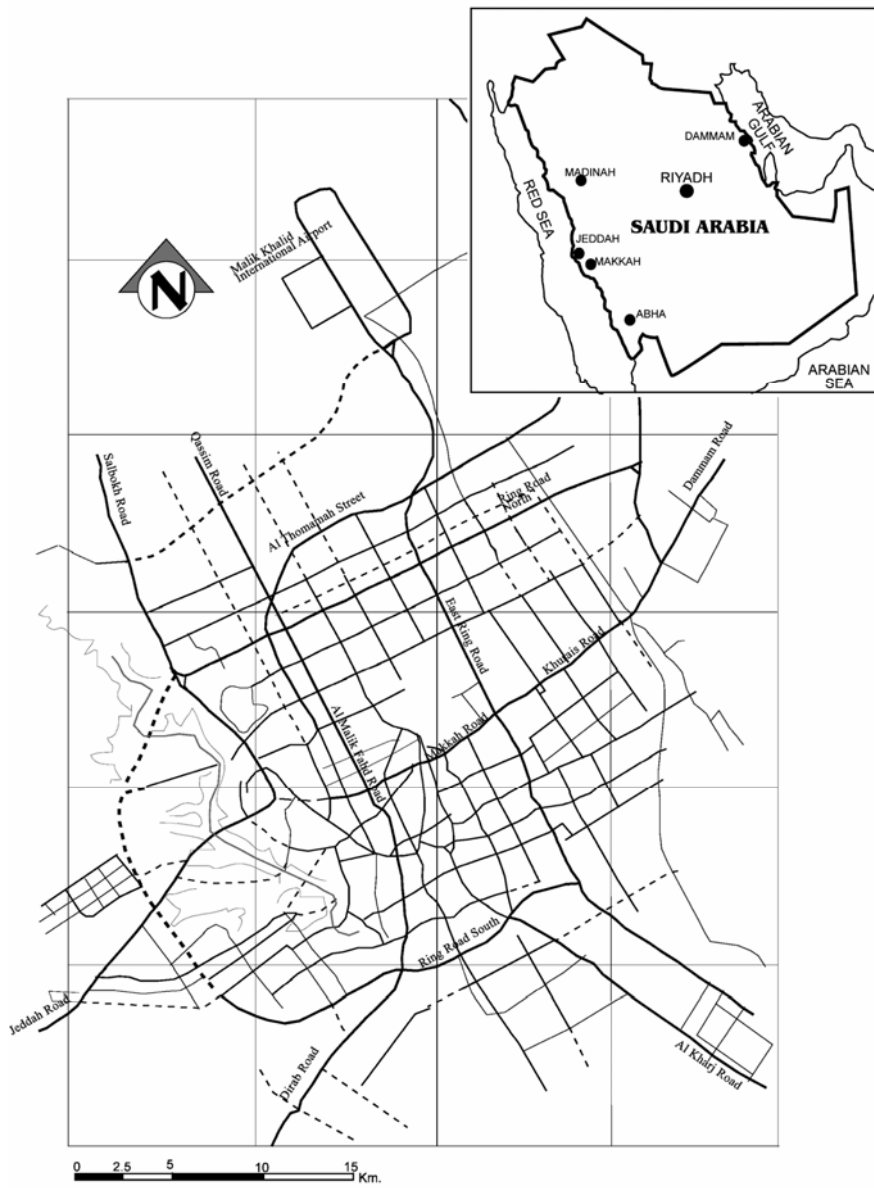


Figure 2: Location and Road Map of Riyadh

Table 1: Reports from the First Phase of MEDSTAR

| Volume | Title |
|---------------|---|
| 1 | Social Characteristics of Riyadh |
| 2 | The Economy in Retrospect |
| 3 | Land Use |
| 4 | Existing Urban Form and Structure |
| 5 | Identification of metropolitan Area Specific Studies |
| 6 | Housing |
| 7 | Industrial Development |
| 8 | Environmental Resources |
| 9 | Public Facilities |
| 10 | Open Space |
| 11 | Infrastructure |
| 12 | Transportation System |
| 13 | Regional Context |
| 14 | Socio-Cultural Profile |
| 15 | Design Specification for Interactive Graphical User Interface and tools |
| 16 | Status Report and Recommendations – UIS/MEDSTAR |
| 17 | A Vision for Riyadh |
| 18 | Existing Regulatory and Management System |
| 19 | Proposed Interim Development Control Framework |
| 20 | Summary Report |

Table 2: Evolution of Urban Management in Riyadh

| Period | Development Action | | Management approach |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|--------------------------------|
| | Institutional Capacity Building | Policy, Planning and Program delivery | |
| Pre-Establishment Phase (1900 – 1930) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manpower training programs • Initiation of local governance framework • Establishment of national machinery of governance • Issuance of basic government | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erection of wall around the city • National policy of sedentarization of Nomads | No identifiable approach |
| Establishment Phase (1930-1970) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of national ministries and council of ministers • Establishment of economic planning organizations – SPO, CPO • Law establishing Riyadh as a municipality • Establishment and reform of structures for municipal governance • Initiation of institutional review to improve effectiveness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning of infrastructure investment in city • Consolidation of the city as capital • Initiation of review to define national development objectives • Initiation of a master plan for Riyadh | Ad hoc approach |
| Oil-Boom Phase (1970-1990) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of High Commission for Development of Riyadh • Creation of Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs (MOMRA) • Municipality and Rural act | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five year national development planning is instituted • Adoption of Doxiadis Associate Master plan • Revision of the Doxiadis Master Plan by SCET • Massive investment in services and infrastructure • Public Housing Construction • Public Land Grant • Public Real Estate Loans | Comprehensive master planning |
| Post-Oil Boom Phase (1990-present) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No significant change in structure of local and national management of growth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuation of national five year development planning • Introduction of urban boundaries • Programs of infrastructure development and maintenance • Initiation of MEDSTAR | Proactive strategic management |