CIP Award 2010

Summary Submission
The Amman Institute for Urban Development: **Building Capacity in a Tough Neighbourhood!**

**Summary:**

In 2008 the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) recognized the Amman Master Plan with an Honourable Mention in the International Development category. It inspired us to excel beyond the plan!

Preparing a plan in a developing country is a challenge; perhaps the bigger challenge is building the institutional capacity to implement such a plan; particularly in a small and poor country such as Jordan. The geo-political position of Jordan creates an extra-ordinary layer of complexity, because it ‘...lives in a tough neighbourhood!’

Fortunately, Jordan’s leadership has focused on the right things; a top priority has been education – a strategic decision considering half of Jordan’s population is under 25. Unfortunately, the country’s biggest export has been qualified people! As in many developing countries, the bright young talent can’t wait to leave, study abroad with intentions to gain residency and immigration status. This brain drain is having a devastating effect on many developing countries, Jordan being no exception. As a result, Jordan is not realizing the full potential of the investment it is making in its youth and the potential demographic dividend it could gain!

This submission is about an initiative that has tackled this challenge of building local capacity in an innovative and fast-tracked way related to urban planning, sustainable development & urban governance: The Amman Institute for Urban Development (Ai). It’s an initiative that has proven successful at different levels:

- It created an institutional environment for bright young minds to grow and to make a significant contribution to the development of their country, retaining talent and enticing those who left to return home!

Within 18 months an Arab urban knowledge center was established, the Ai has grown to include over 50 Jordanians in such disciplines as urban planning & design, sustainable development, social planning, economics and governance. Many have returned from abroad to contribute to its vision. In many ways, it’s become a comfortable landing pad for those living abroad to come home to. It has a collegial and learning culture, with a commitment to working hard & smart with a single focus to affect positive change and build indigenous capacity and then to share knowledge with communities. Ai employees come from such notable institutions as MIT, UoT, London School of Economics, Arizona State University, University of Illinois & University of California at Berkley to name a few.

The Amman Institute (Ai) grew out of the Amman Plan, but is now active in many Jordanian communities and has been invited to share its experience & knowledge in such places as Palestine, Yemen, Abu Dhabi, Iraq, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

The Ai has established strong relationships with such prestigious institutions as Harvard; MIT; University of California at Berkley; Ghent University, Columbia University and the World Bank Institute.

The Ai has established an internship program to nurture young Jordanian talent and blend it with international students – last year it hosted 15 domestic and international student interns. It is now beginning to ‘harvest’ this young talent.

The Ai has established a Fellowship Program and this year scholars from the University of Chicago and University of Waterloo will reside at the Institute to undertake research and share knowledge with Ai residents.

The Ai has established a Children’s and Youth Outreach Program to build community citizenship within Jordan, a country with strong tribal traditions that now need to blend with urban living.
The Ai has institutionalized citizen participation in planning, hosting community forums that have been attended by thousands of people throughout Jordan, probably a first in the Arab region.

The Ai has tackled the issue of transparency in urban governance by translating the book Corrupt Cities and co-hosting a meeting of Arab Mayors regarding this subject. The Ai is now working with the World Bank Institute to provide training and to Arabize an e-learning program to tackle corruption in cities. The Arab version of the Corrupt Cities book can be downloaded for free from the Ai Website.

The Ai has established greater transparency by providing public access to information by creating www.MapJo.com which ‘mashes’ Google Earth with municipal data and making it available to citizens and the business community; it also makes GIS available to smaller communities who could otherwise not afford it – they are given training by Ai and have authority to edit municipal data on the Ai servers.

The Ai is drafting a new City and Citizens Charter for Amman that will pledge service delivery standards for its citizens, again a first in the Arab region.

The Ai has prepared a Smart Growth training program for planners within the Arab region. The program adapts international best practices to local conditions using Ai’s projects as case studies; Ai is establishing a training center in Amman and has agreements to train planners in Jordan, Palestine and Iraq. The program will be delivered in Arabic by Ai planners and associates and will be turned into an eLearning module this year.

The World Bank has recognized the Ai as one of its knowledge hubs to deliver its new Urban Sector strategy in the Arab region.

What is important to note is that the Ai doesn’t want to establish itself as ‘a government bureaucracy outside of government’, so it has made special efforts to ensure institutionalization of capacity within the government organizations it works with. For example, the Greater Amman Municipality now has a whole new organizational structure to streamline the administration of its 23,000 employees, including a new Planning & Economic Development Business Cluster... the leadership within this division grew out of the Amman Plan and continues to be supported by the Ai.

The Ai is also incubating an Economic Development Agency for Amman – and has attracted talent from the private sector to build capacity within the public sector – this initiative now has projects in the pipeline that are valued over $2billion; including a mixed use development that will cluster Central Government Agencies in a community setting with residential and commercial development with an emphasis on developing a ‘green’ community...including a 40% saving on water consumption, critical in a country that is the third water poorest in the world. Ai is expected to spin-off an Amman Economic Development Agency before July of this year.

The Ai, with the help MIT educated social media experts, is building an Arab Urban eKnowledge Exchange: its aim is to become the urban network for dialogue and knowledge exchange in the Arab world. It will be bi-lingual and include an extensive multi-media eLibrary, eLearning Center and an interactive urban translator.

In essence, Ai is a special place that incubates talent and acts as a change agent, sharing its knowledge to empower communities to excel! The Ai has a motto: independent, global thinking, adapted locally...a borrowed concept from the Rio Summit a few decades ago and applying it in a very pragmatic way.

Columbia University recently released a Case Study of the Amman Plan and the Ai and credits these initiatives as having established some new international best practices.
The Amman Institute for Urban Development: Building Capacity in a Tough Neighborhood!

Explanation of Submission

Executive Summary

Preparing a plan in a developing country is a challenge; perhaps the bigger challenge is building the institutional capacity to implement such a plan; particularly in a small and poor country such as Jordan. The geo-political position of Jordan adds an extra-ordinary layer of complexity, because ‘...it lives in a tough neighborhood!’

This submission is about an initiative that has tackled the challenge of building local capacity in an innovative and fast-tracked way: The Amman Institute (Ai) for Urban Development! Although a young organization, created in 2008, the impact of the organization has caught the attention of international organizations, and various Arab countries have requested help to replicate this capacity building model. The World Bank recently announced that the Ai will become one of its urban knowledge hub to help deliver the Bank’s new Urban Sector Strategy.

The Ai Story

The Ai has accomplished a lot in a short period, but the Institute had an advantage: strong leadership that is committed to change and that recognizes the importance of investing in human & knowledge capital.

The story began in May 2006 when King Abdullah II appointed a new mayor to lead the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM). In an open letter published in all newspapers the King directed Mayor Omar Maani to prepare a master plan and asked him to establish this as an example for others.

Since that time, the Amman Plan has received recognition abroad including the International Leadership Award in Town Planning from the World Leadership Forum and, of course, the 2008 CIP Honorable Mention in the International Development category.

More recently, independent bodies have reviewed this initiative, such as Columbia University’s Amman 2025: From Master Plan to Strategic Initiative Case Study (see background materials), who indicate this work can an example for others because of the innovative way it was undertaken, particularly the integration of capacity building as an outcome of the Plan.
The idea of a not-for-profit organization to institutionalize the knowledge gained from the Amman Plan was first brought up with Mayor Maani in the fall of 2007 by Gerry Post, a Canadian planner who spearheaded the Amman master planning project. At that time the Mayor told Post to ‘…forget about it and focus on completing the Plan!’ Post was working as a Senior Manager for BearingPoint, a large international management consultancy who had the prime contract to prepare the Amman Plan. It should be noted that Post brought in the Canadian Planning firm planningAlliance as a major subcontractor to undertake much of the technical planning work. From the outset Post and the principal of planningAlliance, John VanNostrand, made the commitment to build local capacity and Post began to aggressively recruit Jordanian talent both in Jordan and abroad to build an integrated team of local and expat planners with a culture to transfer knowledge within the team.

A Local Need & International Recognition, the Catalyst for Ai

With regards to the idea of an institute, everything changed with the Amman Plan winning of the World Leadership Award in Town Planning. This spawned two key events: firstly, HM King Abdullah II requested the Mayor to help other municipalities in Jordan in their master planning efforts. And secondly, Mayor Maani was one of two mayors invited to speak at the World Bank's annual Sustainable Development Week in February 2008. This is essentially an annual homecoming of World Bank staffers to share experiences. The other Mayor invited was New York’s Michael Bloomberg. New York was the headliner, but Amman’s story resonated with many of the World Bank staffers who were facing similar challenges in similar conditions around the globe. At a cocktail party that evening Post broached the subject again of a non-for-profit institute to share Amman’s experience in the Arab region. It received a very favourable response from senior World Bank representatives. On the plane ride back to Amman a concept paper was drafted and a few months later the Amman Institute for Urban Development was born as a not-for-profit Jordanian corporation. It is currently wholly owned by the Greater Amman Municipality, but operates independently with its own board of directors.

To fast-track the Institute, an agreement was reached with BearingPoint to transfer the Jordanian project team working on the Amman Plan into the Institute with Post leaving BearingPoint to become Ai’s first General Manager. And the planningAlliance’s subcontract with BearingPoint was transferred to Ai, and to this day this Canadian consultancy remains a major subcontractor to the Ai and working with the Institute in other municipalities.

Sharing Knowledge to Empower Communities

The Mission of the Institute is simple, building indigenous capacity and sharing its knowledge to empower communities to excel! To ensure an institutional culture that incubates talent and shares knowledge freely, the Ai has spent considerable effort developing its ‘corporate’ values, which management monitors on an annual basis through an independent assessment called Living Our Values: the fist occurred last fall. The Ai also has clear corporate KPI’s which are monitored by its Board Directors. For many Jordanian organizations these are new concepts and, this in itself, establishes an example for institutional governance to be replicated. Some of Ai’s clients have since requested that it help their organizations develop their corporate values, governance and project/program management systems.
The Ai sustains itself through contracts for advisory services, training and research. Last year the Ai had an income of approximately CAN$6M from such clients as the Amman Municipality and the Jordanian Government. The Ai now has a staff of 52 employees and is beginning to replace Jordan’s reliance on expat consultants, reducing cost to local agencies and attracting local talent back to Jordan. Ai is now replicating this brain gain by expanding into its two other strategic areas (see diagram below): Municipal Governance, and Sustainable Development with an emphasis on Climate Change in Cities. The current core competency is in Community Planning.

Breaking the Gender Barrier

What is interesting to note is that approximately three-quarters of Ai’s staff is female; which represents a major breakthrough in the gender barrier for professionals in Jordan. Many of Ai’s staff has been educated in the West at such institutions as MIT, University of Toronto, London School of Economics, University of California at Berkley and other well known places of learning. In many ways, Ai has been able to attract the ‘cream-of-the-crop’ because of its strong ‘developmental’ mission and its collegial corporate culture.
Re-Building Bridges-of-Trust through Citizen Participation

Perhaps the biggest impact Ai has had in its short history has been to normalize the engagement of citizens in the Jordanian urban governance. This started with the Amman Plan and has since rippled throughout the country wherever Ai is active. Thousands of citizens have been engaged through community forums the Ai has organized. What is important to note is that this has been implemented in a way to complement rather than compete with the local municipal administrations. But there is an additional layer of complexity: in most cases the bond and trust between the community and the municipal administration is broken because of corruption, nepotism and cronyism. The climate for community engagement is therefore not easy. On top of this, municipal staff is often demoralized because of low pay, poor working conditions, lack of empowerment and are deeply affected by the general disdain the public has for municipal employees. As a result, Ai has indirectly inherited the role of helping to rebuild the bridge-of-trust and to rebuild morale within the municipal administrations. A daunting, but necessary task well beyond traditional challenge of community planning, but managed in a pragmatic way.

Firstly, when Ai becomes engaged in a community it facilitates a Forum of Municipal Employees. This is done for a number of reasons: to explain the planning process; to receive feedback on what they consider the main ‘community’ issues to be (a ‘heads up’ of what to expect in the larger Community Forum); and, to identify the competent ‘leaders’ within the municipal administration. These leaders are then nominated by Ai to the Mayor to join the planning team and become fully engaged and are trained to become facilitators at the Community Forums. This way there is ownership of the process by the municipal administration, and perhaps most importantly key staff is now provided with a sense of civic responsibility and empowerment. The transformation that we’ve witnessed of these staff members is close to miraculous and infectious with other staff. They no longer are ‘watch-watchers’ to monitor when they can go home, they are now working late hours alongside the Ai, which not only helps build capacity but also a establishes a strong sense of purpose and ownership of the planning process which is crucial for the longevity and institutional sustainability of the plan.
Key events in the planning process are the Community Forums; they are well advertised through popular media (print media, radio and television), banners are put up throughout the community, and Face book is often used to promote such events. The turnouts have been overwhelming, in some cases close to a thousand citizens have shown up, it’s often been the first time they have been asked their opinion regarding their community. We also encourage children’s groups to attend. These forums are largely facilitated by the local staff which begins to rebuild the bridge of trust between the community and the administration. It also helps to build a broad based constituency necessary for the longevity of community plans. In the past planning was a top-down approach with virtually no community ownership; this has all changed!

Corruption: Bringing it out of the Shadows

One of outcomes of citizen engagement has been a clear message from the public regarding their concern about lack of transparency in urban governance. Ai has tackled this sensitive issue by fully exposing it and initiating an open and constructive dialogue on the subject. It first translated and gained copyright of the book *Corrupt Cities: A Guide to Cure and Prevention* and made it available free of charge to be downloaded from its website and copies were sent to all municipalities. And it hosted a Public Forum on the subject with one the Corrupt Cities authors and co-hosted an Arab Mayors Forum where the approach outlined in the book was presented to over 25 mayors from the region. The Ai is now working with the World Bank Institute to establish a training program, including the Arabic translation of an eLearning module on the subject matter. The reaction has been remarkable; a week after the forums the Jordan Anti-Corruption Commission announced an increased focus on fighting corruption at the municipal level.

A related activity is providing citizens, including corporate citizens greater access to information. As a start, Ai has created [www.MapJo.com](http://www.MapJo.com) which ‘mashes’ Google Earth data with municipal data, such as zoning and property information. It is in beta testing right now for three communities, but which cover nearly 70% of Jordan’s population. In the past this information was very difficult to access and at times funny business needed to conducted to obtain the information. MapJo also provides smaller municipalities with GIS capabilities, Ai in cooperation with the Amman Municipality trains staff to access and edit their web-GIS which is hosted on Ai servers. One does not need to be a GIS technician to do this because it is very user friendly.

Building Citizenship: A Focus on Youth

Over 50% of the Jordanian population is under the age of 25. This provides for both a tremendous challenge and opportunity to benefit from this demographic dividend. And with the leadership’s focus on education, there is much opportunity for a massive and constructive country transformation within a relatively short period of time. One of the critical issues Ai has spotted in its work is a lack of sense of ‘community citizenship and civic responsibility’. This could be contributed to Jordan’s strong tribal tradition which has become a challenge to integrate in an urbanizing society. As a result Ai has established a pro-active program to engage both children and youth in its planning and governance initiatives, with a focus of building citizenship and leadership skills. This includes given youth a platform to voice their concerns to the leadership; again a Youth Forum was organized where university students presented to the civic leadership their concerns and vision, over 600 people attended. This will become an annual event, with youth presented a report card on the
leadership’s performance. As well, there is a Children’s City Council in Amman that Ai is supporting; these are kids between the ages of 8-15 that were elected by over 70,000 students. Some of the activities include workshops on map making and neighborhood planning; an interactive web map for kids; the development of a book about cities where an author & artist are working with an editorial committee of 8 kids to develop the story; and the creation of a City Passport of Discovery for children to explore their city beyond their neighborhood. The private sector will be sponsoring some of these initiatives.

The Ai is also active with the Jordanian university community, sharing information and judging student projects. It has also established a Student Internship Program, which last year hosted 15 students, with a sprinkling of international students. This is being expanded. It helps to expose bright young minds to real world project, and it helps Ai recruit the best and the brightest well before they graduate. This year an Ai Fellowship Program will be launched to bring scholars to Ai to share their knowledge and to undertake urban research in Jordan. Scholars from the University of Chicago and the University of Waterloo will be Ai’s first ‘fellows’. Strong research and capacity building links have also been established with Harvard Kennedy School of Government, Ghent University, Columbia University, MIT and the University of California at Berkley.

Beyond the Borders: Helping and Partnering with Others

The Ai has been approached by various governments in the region, such as Palestine, Yemen and Qatar to help them with their urban planning and governance challenges. In addition the World Bank has approached the Ai to establish it as an urban sector knowledge hub in the Arab Region. As a result, the Ai continues to expand and may be establishing satellite offices in other countries. They will be bound together by Ai’s unique corporate culture and an infrastructure currently being built that will act as an Arab Urban Knowledge Exchange that will integrate and take full advantage of social media platforms and other technologies. It will be bi-lingual, with plans to add French...and have such features as a Multi-Media eLibrary; an Urban Translator that will begin to standardize Arab/English terms; and a City Matching Service, essentially a dating service for urban practitioners struggling with issues to help them find counterparts who have dealt with the issue successfully.

It’s been a fast ride, Ai was established in June 2008!
P.O.C

Gerry Post

Founder/ General Manager

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E-mail: g.post@Ai.jo
Business Strategy & Plan 2009-2011

Outline for Board of Directors Discussion & Direction
Agenda

♦ Mission
♦ Vision
♦ Values
♦ Organizational Structure
♦ Strategic Focus
♦ Delivery Strategy
♦ 3 Year Development Program + KPI’s
♦ 3 Year Financial Financial Forecast
A Not-for-Profit Think-Tank and Independent Advisor and Advocate focused on sustainable community development applied through citizen centered governance.
Our Mission

Empowering Arab Communities to Excel through independent global thinking adapted and applied locally and implemented through citizens centered governance
Establish a Regional Knowledge Hub that retains, builds & incubates talent, develops & shares knowledge capital. That empowers Arab centers. To build sustainable communities.
Our Values

- An Independent & Professional Voice in our fields of endeavor
- Excellence in what we deliver
- Honesty & Integrity in the way we undertake our work
- Team work & Collaboration in the way we work within the organization and with our stakeholders
- Freely Sharing our knowledge to empower others
- Value of Diversity as a means to strengthen the organization and the solutions we develop
- Building Capacity by encouraging continuing learning for our employees and acting as an incubator to build capacity within the broader community
Our Strategic Focus

The Urban Sector within the MENA Region through a Tri sector Focus
Tri-Sector Focus

- Community Planning
  - Urban planning
  - Regulatory Reform (i.e. Zoning Modernization)
  - Urban design

- Sustainable Development (SD)
  - Climate Change (CDM: Clean Development Mechanisms)
  - Community Economic Development

- Governance
  - Institutional reform
  - Organizational reform
  - Participatory governance
  - Citizens centered service delivery
Delivery Strategy

- Ai Knowledge Center
- Core Strategic Activities
- Delivery Plan
Ai Knowledge Center (Jabal Amman)

Bookstore, coffee shop & gallery
Delivery - 4Core Strategic Activities

- Advisory Services - Technical Assistance:
  - Providing independent advice in our areas of focus
    - Example: MoMA Master Planning Work

- Capacity Building
  - Providing educational and training services
    - Example: Traffic Impact Study Training, with JEA and development of eLearning Program
Outreach
- Proactive activities to facilitate community awareness & involvement in governance
  - Example: Youth Forum & Publications Program

Research
- Undertaking applied research relevant to our stakeholders
  - Example: Transit work with Berkley and Amman Real Estate Market Analysis
Our Delivery Strategy

- Establishment of 3 Integrated Knowledge Hubs within the Ai

- Delivery of Activities through:
  - Hub Programs & Projects
  - People
    - Staff & Associates
  - Partner ships
    - International Financial Institutions (IFI)
    - Private Sector
    - Academia
    - NGO’s
    - Other
  - Ai Knowledge Center:
    - Virtual Knowledge Center
    - Physical Facility
Discussion underway with World Bank to establish the Ai as their regional “knowledge hub” to assist in the delivery of the WB Urban Sector Strategy, which is under development.

Delivery (in Arabic & English):
- Dissemination of Information
- Technical Assistance
- Capacity Building
Our Delivery Strategy

Outreach
Advisory Services
Research
Capacity Building

Governance
Sustainable Development
Community Planning
3 Year Strategic Plan
AI Strategic plan

- Institutional Development
- Hub Program
- Expansion Plan
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>People</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Recruitment of VP Advisory Services</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Recruitment of VP Corporate Services</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Community Planning Lead (Director)</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Governance Lead (Director)</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Sustainable Development Lead (Director)</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>- # of Ai Staff Certified Project Managers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Student Interns</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Minimum Staff Retention Target</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Establish International Advisory Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Formalize Relationship with World Bank</td>
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<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Establish Relationship with World Renowned Urban Governance Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Establish Relationship with World Renowned Sustainable Development Org</td>
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## Ai Institutional Development Program

### Activities & KPI’s

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<tr>
<td>- New Office Completed</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Ai Knowledge Center Completed</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>- HR Policies, Procedure &amp; System</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- IT Strategy, Policy &amp; System (web service)</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Financial Mgt System (ACCPAC web enabled)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Project Management Office (PMO)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- PMO Web-enabled</td>
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<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Ai Branding &amp; Design Manual Complete</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Bi-lingual Web Site</td>
<td>100%</td>
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### Activities & KPI’s

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<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Community Planning Program Development</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Community Planning Methodology Documented</td>
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<td>- Model Master Plan Documented</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>- Model Zoning Bylaw Developed</td>
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<td>- eLearning Program Defined</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- 1st eLearning Module Completed</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Full eLearning Program Implemented</td>
<td>75%</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Virtual Knowledge Center Established</td>
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### Ai Capacity

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Capacity for 30% of work done by Ai Staff*</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Capacity for 40% of work*</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Capacity of 60% of work*</td>
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* Remainder rely on partners based on project hrs
### Hub Program Development: Governance

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<th>Activities &amp; KPI’s</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Governance Program Development</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Program Definition</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Transparency Program</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Citizen Centered Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Organizational Reform Program</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 1st eLearning Module Completed</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Full eLearning Program Implemented</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Virtual Knowledge Center Established</td>
<td>75%</td>
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**Ai Capacity**

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<th></th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Capacity for 30% of work done by Ai Staff*</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Capacity for 40% of work*</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Capacity of 60% of work*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
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*Note: X indicates completion.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities &amp; KPI’s</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Dev. Program Development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Program Definition</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Urban Climate Change Program</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Community Economic Devmpt Program</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- eLearning Program Defined</td>
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<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 1st eLearning Module Completed</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Full eLearning Program Implemented</td>
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<td>25%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Virtual Knowledge Center Established</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ai Capacity</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Capacity for 10% of work done by Ai Staff*</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Capacity for 20% of work*</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Capacity of 40% of work*</td>
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## Expansion Plan

<table>
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<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sectoral Market Expansion</strong>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95% Community Planning, 5% Other</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75% Community Planning, 25% Governance &amp; Sustainable Development</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60% Community Planning, 40% Governance &amp; Sustainable Development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Geographic Market Expansion</strong>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90% in Jordan, one small project in Palestine</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80% in Jordan, one major project in Palestine + at least one project in another</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>country</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60% in Jordan with projects in at least 4 other countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on revenues
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❖ Project Initiatives:
  ❖ Major Technical Advisory Projects
  ❖ Research
  ❖ Outreach

❖ Institutional Infrastructure
GAM Planning Program

- **Major Components:**
  - Downtown Revitalization
  - Urban Strip Re-development
  - National Capital Parkway
  - Community Plans
  - Zoning Modernization
Downtown Revitalization

- Expansion of office buildings, official and institutional facilities
- Expansion of tourism and domestic local commercial activities required by new neighborhoods of Wadi Amman
- Expansion of residential and small scale traditional recreational and cultural activity
- Bring people and businesses to the heart of the Downtown to create a diverse market
Philadelphia District Components & Investment Opportunities

- Hashemite Plaza
- Raghadan Terminal
- Old City Hall
- Amphitheatre
Philadelphia District: 
Amphitheatre & Hashemite Plaza Component

• GAM Action plan:
  ➢ GAM commenced the rehabilitation works.
  ➢ Envisioned as the main outdoor event center of Jordan.

• Investment Methodology:
  ➢ Event management.
Zoning Modernization

Triggered income-based segregation

Left many streets & buildings vacated at night

Didn’t take into consideration the different types & needs of industrial operations
### National Capital Parkway

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Area</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governmental Use</td>
<td>100,000 m²</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mixed Use</td>
<td>155,600 m²</td>
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<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>50,900 m²</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>6,580 m²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Space</td>
<td>65,000 m²</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Planning Area**: 613,000 m²
Community Plans
Growth Concepts: Applying Densities

Status Quo (Expansion only) @ 4 people per donum

Intensification & Expansion @ 10 people per donum

Densification + Intensification & Expansion @ 15 people per donum

● =16,000 people

● =40,000 people

● =70,000 people
Growth Plan
Research

- Univ of California at Berkeley Bus Rapid Transit Modeling
- Rent De-Control Impact (downtown Amman)
- Computer Aided Mass Appraisal (CAMA) - modernizing property tax regime
- Proposed Ai Fellowship and Internship Programs
Dedicated Bus Lanes with UC Berkeley

- Connector
- Intermittent Portion of bus lane (shown with light shading)
- Permanent portion of bus lane (located upstream of connector bottleneck shown in darker shading)

Highway Link

Signs:
- **CURB LANE BUS LANE**
  - **BUSES ONLY**
  - **6-9AM 3-7PM**
  - **EXCEPT SAT-SUN-HOL**
- **RIGHT TURNS PERMITTED**
- **NO STOPS**
  - **6-9AM 3-7PM EXCEPT SAT-SUN-HOL**
  - **TOW-AWAY ZONE**
  - **PHONE 684-5444**
Downtown Rent De-Control Impact Analysis

Brief Description
This project is concerned with the effects of the elimination of rent stabilization on the commercial sector in Downtown Amman.

The Study will primarily answer two questions:

- To what extent the commercial character will be affected?
- What can be done about it?
Property Tax Modernization: CAMA

Brief Description
Prototype Model - The establishment of the CAMA Model for three pilot areas within GAM to achieve higher revenues and greater equity

Approach and Outcomes
- A prototype model, including software, to be rolled out to the rest of Amman
- A report detailing the development process and the impact analysis
- A strategy and a work plan for full implementation
- Trained local staff at GAM, DLS, and Ai for full implementation
Proposed Fellowship and Internship Programs
Outreach

- Children Initiative
- Arab Urban Knowledge Hub
- Community Mobilizing and Public Narrative
- Amman Resource Center
- MapJo.com
Children’s Interactive Map

- Making the map of Amman more understandable for children that will be converted into a map and a coloring book and to include in the interactive website.
Childrens Workshops

- Urban design workshops for under privileged children in collaboration with the Children Museum and Start Foundation
Children Book and the passport

• Dedicated to teach children about their city and context
Ai Knowledge Center: Arab Urban Exchange

This map of the Arabic blogosphere produced by Bruce Etling, John Kelly, Robert Faris, and John Palfrey for their paper, "Mapping the Arabic Blogosphere: Politics, Culture and Dissent."
MapJo.com

A Public Web Mapping Clearing House (bi-lingual)

Leveraging the Data Created by the Various Master Planning Initiatives

A Service to Smaller Municipalities to have GIS

Establishing a Standard for Jordan
Michael is a New York–based architect, urban planner, educator, and the author or editor of more than a dozen books.
Community Organizing and Public Narrative

Telling Your Public Story

ACTION BARRIERS
- INERTIA
- FEAR
- APATHY
- SELF-DOUBT
- ISOLATION

ACTION CATALYSTS
- URGENCY
- HOPE
- ANGER
- YCMAD
- SOLIDARITY

Leadership Poor
Leadership Rich

SELF
US
NOW

Ai Status Report
Institutional Infrastructure

- **Finance**: Web Enabled Financial Management System (ACCPAC) being implemented
- **HR**
  - Manual completed
  - 360 performance appraisals initiated
  - Training program for the year established
- **Project Management Office (PMO)**
  - System design completed and implemented
  - Staff training completed (PMO certification)
  - Full automation expected by July 2010
- **Branding**: Graphic Design Manual completed
- **IT**: Ai Servers and corporate e-document filing system being implemented & web site being re-designed
AMMAN 2025:
From Master Plan to Strategic Initiative

Robert Beauregard
Andrea Marpillero-Colomina

Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
MIDDLE EAST RESEARCH CENTER
INTRODUCTION

In May of 2006, the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM) set out to replace its out-moded and largely ignored 1987 Greater Amman Comprehensive Development Plan. In doing so, the municipality aimed to develop a vision for and create the policy tools to control the city’s long-term growth. This initial goal, however, was quickly reformulated. In the face of numerous, large-scale development projects that threatened to change radically and irrevocably the built form and image of Amman, then-Mayor Omar Maani directed his planners to shift their focus from a twenty-year master plan to a strategic growth initiative. Mayor Maani wanted GAM to have the capability and flexibility to respond immediately to unavoidable development pressures. His decision led the planning team to diverge from the traditional approach to comprehensive planning and to embrace significant innovations in the way that plans are usually done in Jordan and elsewhere.

Amman 2025 is distinguished more in process than substance from how most cities approach master plans. Instead of separating the planning phase from implementation, for example -- with a long period of research, analysis and plan-writing preceding the adoption and effectuation of the plan -- the two phases were conflated. Analysis and legislative interventions were brought closer together in time and practice. And, unlike previous planning efforts in Amman, engagement with the professional community and with municipal staff was central to the process. The planning team solicited public comments and tested its ideas with the government personnel who would be responsible for implementation.

In order to increase the probability of effective planning, the planning team and its spin-off organization, the Amman Institute for Urban Development (Ai), focused on capacity-building within GAM and the empowerment of its employees. The Mayor and key personnel within the planning team recognized that the plan could not be effective unless the municipality itself was re-organized. GAM thus embarked on a major restructuring of its entire administration, including the planning function and supportive activities from licensing to public transit in order to improve its ability to regulate and guide development. In these various ways, Amman 2025 became more than simply a master plan; it became a wide-ranging initiative to anchor a planning mentality in the minds of residents and corporate citizens and establish planning as a guiding force in local government.

The purpose of this report is to document the process that produced Amman 2025 and the innovations that it spawned. The intent is two-fold. The first objective is to add to the institutional memory within GAM. Such memory serves as an important touchstone for crafting future government policy. The second objective is to offer these innovations as best practices that can be emulated by other planning organizations around the world. In this way, the report can serve as a resource for planners from other cities faced with rapid growth.1

Downtown Amman
source: A. Marpillero-Colomina

1 For a description of the research on which this report is based, see Appendix A.
BACKGROUND

In February of 2007, the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM) released the first phase of its Interim Growth Strategy (IGS). The primary purpose of this first stage was to regulate the development of high-rise buildings in the city. Before the calendar year had ended, and in rapid succession, the next three phases of the IGS were announced and approved by the city council: the Corridor Intensification Strategy, the Industrial Lands Policy, and the combined Interim Rural Residential Policy and Airport Corridor Plan. The various stages were then combined into a strategic growth document, the Metropolitan Growth Plan (MGP). Nine months had passed since GAM had officially begun the process of developing its new master plan. From initiation to completion on May 12, 2008 when Mayor Omar Maani officially presented the Amman Master Plan to His Majesty King Abdullah II, two years had elapsed. That a master plan was produced in such a short time and was shaping the growth and development of the city even before it was fully formulated testifies to the investment pressures that were confronting Amman. It also captures the willingness of the planners to re-think the typical master planning process and the Mayor’s commitment to do so.

The innovative way in which GAM approached the master planning process was reflected in the substance of the plan. As part of the goal to respect the unique physical form of Amman while making the city accessible, investor-friendly, and environmentally sustainable, the plan put forth a wholly new approach to high-density, mixed-use (HDMU) development, made a fundamental decision to resist sprawl and encourage compact growth, and adopted a regional perspective by amalgamating over 1,000 sq. km. to control “spill-over” development. Except for the regional perspective, these concerns were unaddressed by Amman’s current land development regulations. In short, Amman 2025 responded to prevailing conditions while simultaneously pursuing best practices in urban design and planning.²

The Amman Plan responds to two foundational but assumed conditions: a projected growth of approximately four million new residents by 2025 and the continued flow of foreign capital into real estate development.³ For the first, the aim was to absorb the new population without incurring the infrastructural costs attendant to sprawl. To do this, the Plan emphasizes intensification (also known as in-fill), densification of existing areas, and the limiting of perimeter expansion to a few designated areas. Density targets are set for different zones arrayed from the highest in the core to the lowest in the periphery with the range of densities varying between 10 and 15 persons per dunum.⁴ Development, moreover, is to be concentrated within the Urban Envelope, an area that encompasses the development extant in 2008. The objectives are to limit urban expansion so as to minimize new road construction and to preserve agricultural land as well as natural heritage sites.

As regards the second condition (that is, large-scale foreign investment in real estate), the Plan addresses this through the designation of three high-density areas. The tall buildings that have been increasingly appearing on the skyline will be concentrated in these areas. In addition, mixed-use, mid-rise buildings will be sited along ten transportation corridors that emanate from the central core and reach to the city’s peripheries. In this way, GAM hopes to protect cultural heritage areas within the city.

³ The population of Amman in 2008 was estimated to be 2,265,100 people. Twenty years earlier, in 1987, it was estimated at 960,000 and in 1948 it was approximately 200,000. Much of Amman’s and Jordan’s population growth has consisted of refugees from Palestine and Lebanon and, more recently, Iraq. See A.M. Findlay, “Migrant’s Dreams and Planners’ Nightmares,” Cities 2, 4 (1985):331-339 and Nurit Kliot and Arnan Soffer, “The Emergence of a Metropole Core Area in a State – The Case of Jordan,” Asian and African Studies 20 (1986):217-232.

⁴ A dunum is a unit of measure that originated in the Ottoman Empire. Jordan uses the metric dunum adopted in 1928 which equals 1,000 square meters or 10,764 square feet.

² The Amman Plan was published in three versions: (1) a large format, glossy paper, boxed document with numerous photographs and maps, (2) a summary report titled The Amman Plan: Metropolitan Growth, also in paper, and (3) a boxed set of 5 DVDs containing the contents of five phases of the Amman Plan.
The planning process was divided into eight phases with each phase representing a functional issue and its corresponding planning document. The phases are:

I. Amman Plan for Tall Buildings  
II. Corridor Intensification Strategy  
III. Industrial Lands Policy  
IVA. Outlying Settlements Policy  
IVB. Airport Corridor Plan  
V. Metropolitan Growth Plan  
VI. Area Plans  
VII. Community Plans  
VIII. Planning Initiatives

The first phase was the Amman Plan for Tall Buildings meant to address the most pressing issue facing the city; that is, the undesirable impact of large-scale, HDMU developments on the city’s traditional landscape. The latter phases represent the three scales that were used to organize the planning process: (1) the metropolitan scale of 1,662 square kilometers, (2) eight planning areas that comprise the metropolitan area, and (3) a community scale consisting of 228 neighborhoods. In terms of master plans, the Metropolitan Growth Plan lays out the overall vision for the GAM region and is thus the phase most deserving of that label. The final phase involves specific planning initiatives such as housing and heritage plans.

Built into the Amman Plan are tools which will enable the Plan to be implemented. The focus is on three policy mechanisms: (1) land use regulations that more precisely designate the types and densities of development permitted in different areas and in special zones, (2) new infrastructure provision, particularly roads and transit lines as well as water and sewer connections, and (3) development charges and incentives that return to GAM some of the financial benefits created by the impact of densification and the designation of special zones. While GAM has had land use regulations for many decades and has built roads and other infrastructure, exceptions have characterized the regulatory process and infrastructure has proceeded without any overall plan.\(^5\)

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Not surprisingly, in 2006 Amman had a master plan. However, the plan was not being followed and lacked the complementary regulatory tools to deal with contemporary developments. As Samer Abu-Ghazalah, a professor of architecture at the University of Jordan, commented in 2007: “The current master plan is unable to accommodate the new and large investments in real estate or other industrial and commercial kinds.”

When that plan was officially adopted in 1988, the municipality was half of its current population and one-third of its current land area. Moreover, it was a traditional master plan; its preparation was based on many months of in-depth analysis of socio-economic and demographic conditions and of the spatial form of the city. The Greater Amman Comprehensive Development Plan (GACDP) provided a framework for the development of the Amman 2025 plan, but it had its drawbacks.

The major drawback, which the Amman 2025 plan strongly addressed, was the failure to conceptualize the master plan as a living document to be used in the municipality’s daily practice.

The GACDP was initiated in 1983, the year in which the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) loaned Amman US$31 million to improve infrastructure and services, a project which also involved Britain’s Overseas Development Agency. At the same time, USAID allocated funds for the development of a comprehensive plan for the Amman region. To do this, a Joint Technical Team comprised of planners from the Municipality of Amman and Dar Al-Handasah Consultants, an international consulting firm from Beirut, Lebanon, was created. The Team was headed by John Calder, a British planner with the consulting firm. Calder worked closely with Kamal Jalouqa, the municipality’s Director of Planning and the team built on studies produced by the Amman Urban Region Planning Group put together in 1987. The Group was externally-funded and included planners from the central government’s Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs, the Municipality of Amman, and Cornell University (USA).

Also significant at this time was the creation of “Greater Amman.” In 1985, then-Mayor Abd al-Ra’uf al Rawebidah proposed to the Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and Environment that Amman and its surrounding lands be amalgamated into a single governmental entity, thus realizing an idea that the Council of Ministers had had twenty years earlier. This governmental reorganization introduced a regional perspective into the city’s planning process.

The Joint Technical Team had two tasks. One was to designate the infrastructure to which the USAID loan would be dedicated, while the other was to develop a comprehensive plan for Amman. The latter was
championed by the municipality’s planners whose goal was to strengthen government control over development. Of primary importance was (1) the curtailment of the suburban and peripheral growth that was burdening infrastructure and (2) the rising land prices brought about by over-zoning areas beyond the municipality’s boundaries. Zoning had increased the value of peripheral land and this not only caused inflation throughout the area’s land markets but also made land too expensive for building low-income housing or for providing public buildings and open space. At the same time, the municipality wanted a plan that would lead to a more compact city. To do that, it needed a more detailed investigation of and designs for already built-up areas.

The resultant GACDP had two geographic foci. One was the city center and the other an industrial area 10 kilometers to the southeast known as Al-Ragib. The Central Amman Action Area Plan, a component of the GACDP, focused on transportation improvements in the downtown district, a national museum to complement the near-by Roman amphitheater and the Roman ruins known as the Citadel, and the development of a civic center within a central park. The Al-Ragib plan was aimed at attracting foreign investment in industrial activities and creating an employment node outside the central area supported by residences and services. The pursuit of new investment, the provision of employment for excess labor, utilization of the city’s cultural heritage to attract tourists, and the mitigation of the detrimental effects of sprawl and unplanned development would later appear as objectives in Amman 2025.

The GACDP had the support of then-Mayor Al-Rawabidah and in 1990 was officially adopted by the National Assembly. However, Mayor Al-Rawabidah left office soon thereafter and his successor, Ali Suhaymat, was less interested in the plan and it subsequently languished. While a number of its ideas were eventually realized, the plan was not used to guide development. To this extent, the 1987 plan was a point of contrast and a measure of the extent to which the planners in 2006-2008 were doing a different type of master planning.

GACDP was not the municipality’s first comprehensive plan. In 1954-1955, a plan for the city’s future extension and growth was prepared with the assistance of Mack Lock and Partners, a United Nations’ consulting organization. The issue then, as in 2006, was the rapid growth of the city. The plan was partly responsible for Jordan’s first building regulation law, but it was not adopted for implementation. The plan thus had little impact. The 1955 plan had been preceded in 1938 by a roadway plan – not a master plan -- for the city. It was prepared by Andrew Park Mitchell, a British military officer, at the behest of the British-appointed mayor of Amman. And nine years earlier, in 1929, the British had established a central Department of Lands and Survey to organize land ownership within the country. Again, this was hardly the

equivalent of a master plan. Only after Jordan declared independence from the British Mandate in 1946 did comprehensive planning for Amman (rather than Jordan as a whole) begin.  

The comprehensive plan of 1955 was followed in the early 1960s by the establishment of a Planning Division within the Jordan Development Board (JDB), an entity that had been created with the assistance of the U.S. Point Four Program and Ford Foundation consultants. The Division produced a seven-year economic development plan for Jordan and recommended that a new town and country planning ordinance be adopted. That occurred in 1966 with the passage of local law 79, Law of Planning of Cities, Villages, and Buildings. This Law enabled the issuance in 1979 of the Buildings and Zoning By-Law for the City of Amman which regulated the construction of high-rise buildings. The new law was drafted with the assistance of Vernon Newcombe, a British planner who had previously worked with Jordanian planners on a number of development schemes. Newcombe was later replaced by Victor Lorenz, a Czech regional planner who participated in the development of an administrative and technical framework for physical planning in Jordan.  

In 1968, the Jordan Park Planning Team, comprised of various design professionals, undertook the Civic Center Development Plan (CCDP) for Amman. The Team, headed by an American, Robert F. Gibbs, produced a physical plan for the city’s commercial area that was coordinated with the Lorenz plan. The emphasis was on tourism. All of these initiatives came out of the Planning Division of the JDB.  

A number of significant planning decisions were made in the 1970s. In 1977, a committee was established by the central government’s Ministry of the Interior to develop a comprehensive plan for the Amman-Balqa region. The next year, as previously mentioned, the Amman Urban Region Planning Group was formed to head the study. It collaborated with the municipality and USAID on infrastructure and comprehensive planning. The release of the Amman-Balqa plan in 1979 led to the creation of the central government’s Urban Development Department which was given responsibility for building low-income housing throughout the country, including in Amman. That same year, a new local law (Law No. 67) regulating high-rise buildings in the city was passed.  

Twelve months earlier, in 1978, the government of Japan had commissioned a development plan for the central area of Amman after the municipality had invited the Japanese to invest in new projects there. The plan focused on traffic congestion, the expansion of business and commercial facilities, and the boosting of municipal revenues. It included a proposal for a ring road around the city’s center with “parking bridges” that would span the wadis and connect to the commercial area. The plan was written by International Engineering Consultants Association, a Japanese consulting firm. Five years later, the municipality would embark on its first major master plan, the GACDP.  

In short, the Amman 2025 Plan was preceded by a number of attempts to gain control over the development of the city. In each instance, the planning was done either by consultants from outside Jordan or by planning teams of outside consultants and local planners. And, prior to independence, planning for the city was done by the British Mandate in the region. In most instances, these plans were financed mainly with foreign aid.  

The reliance on expertise and finance from outside the country reflects the fact that Jordan is heavily dependent on external sources of capital to manage its economy. Jordan is one of the major recipients of foreign aid from the United States, draws on foreign assistance (particularly from the United Nations) to support its large refugee camps, and relies on remittances from Jordanians working in the Gulf States.
and elsewhere to maintain its economy. With a GDP of approximately US$12.6 billion in 2005, remittances of approximately US$2.0 billion and foreign aid from the United States of just under US$0.5 billion, external funds comprise approximately one-fifth of Jordan’s economy. Moreover, Jordan has become increasingly dependent economically on Gulf state investors and the large-scale real estate developments that they finance, particularly in Amman. The last played a pivotal role in motivating His Majesty King Abdullah II and the Mayor of Amman to undertake Amman 2025.

ORIGINS OF AMMAN 2025

A number of factors contributed to the decision to embark on a new master plan for Amman, all of which emanated from the combination of rapid population growth and the surge in commercial real estate investment which began in 2003. Whereas Amman had had fewer than one million residents during the writing of the 1987 plan, by 2000 the city’s population exceeded 2 million people. Fueled by Iraqi refugees from the Gulf Wars of 1990-1991 and 2003 as well as the continuing influx of Palestinian returnees, the city grew so rapidly as to defy tight regulation. The resultant low-density development strained existing infrastructure and required the municipality to extend roads, water and sewer systems, and public facilities. Existing regulations were inadequate, while government expenditures could not keep pace.

With residents more and more reliant on automobiles for movement about the city and jobs and private services de-concentrating, the city suffered from traffic congestion. In addition, population growth put additional pressure on fragile water supplies. Moreover, Amman is one of the most expensive Arab capitals; its high cost of living coupled with relatively high unemployment and inflated food prices, impoverishes many poorer families. Government officials and municipal planners were thus in agreement regarding the need for greater control over growth and development, if not the need for a new master plan that would protect the character of Amman from being diluted by unregulated growth. As Mayor Maani commented in November of 2006, “Amman does not have a master plan and real estate development is guided by regulations that were prepared over 25 years ago.”

At the same time, Amman was experiencing an influx of investors from the Gulf States interested in turning their large sums of capital into high-density, mixed use commercial real estate projects. For these investors, Amman was one of the most attractive cities in the region and, as the CEO of one of Jordan’s real estate brokerage firms noted in November of 2008, was a “virgin market ready to take on both local and foreign investment.” It had an under-developed commercial sector, particularly in office space and luxury residential apartments, and it was a growing city with a relatively undeveloped retail sector (at least by international standards). Land prices were also relatively low and the city is located in one of the region’s most politically stable

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24 Amman has lacked primary grade office space with most such space being in owner-occupied, low-rise buildings. High-income, high-rise apartments are scarce and the retail sector has traditionally been small independent stores with street-facing shops. See “Amman,” Jordan Property, November 2008, pp. 24-27.
In addition, given the fragile nature of its own economy, Jordan was and is highly desirous of attracting inward investment, while the Amman municipality’s development regulations were relatively developer-friendly.

As Gulf money flowed into commercial developments such as malls, international-standard hotels, luxury apartments, and office buildings, the central government and the municipality began to imagine Amman as a regional capital of finance and business services. It would soon become apparent, though, that this new commercial development came with a price. That price was a change in the low-rise, indigenous character of the city and the possibility that Amman would be transformed into a paler version of Dubai, a city whose recent and rapid growth made it an international wonder which Amman’s civic leaders believed lacked a “real” identity.

The first signs of this discontent emerged in 1996 with the approval of the construction of Le Royal, a five-star hotel in the luxurious Zahran district. With approximately 118,000 square meters of hotel space, retail, recreational facilities, and parking, the Le Royal became the tallest building in the city at 33 floors with a 45 meter tall podium and the overall building height of 101 meters. This was well above the more common 30-50 meter height of most commercial buildings in the city. Out of scale with the neighborhood, poorly sited in terms of handling the increased traffic it would generate, designed to resemble a ziggeraut and thus at aesthetic odds with every other building in Amman, and in violation of many of the municipality’s zoning regulations, Le Royal was the first sign that the lack of a master plan, weak planning controls, and GAM’s traditional indifference to public opinion were going to be major problems in a new era of development.

25 Public violence is rare in Amman; the most recent terrorist bombings occurred on November 9, 2005. Three hotels were bombed, 57 people killed, and 110 wounded. See Hassan Fatlah and Mihael Stackman, “3 Hotels Bombed in Jordan; At Least 57 Die,” The New York Times, November 10, 2005.
26 See Robertson, “The Grand Plan,” where she claims that investment in mega-projects in 2006 represented 42% of the country’s GDP.
28 The developer dealt with the zoning issues by paying a fine of US$1.5 million

Soon after the Le Royal project was announced, the central government created the state-owned but financially-independent National Resources Investment and Development Corporation, widely known as Mawared. The initial purpose of Mawared was to redevelop three former military areas in Jordan: one in Zarqa (the second largest city in Jordan) of 2,500 hectares, another in Aqaba (12 hectares), and the third in Amman (80 hectares). The idea was to develop the site so as to attract foreign investors to build there, with Mawared engaging in joint partnerships with the investors.

In Amman, Mawared’s project is known as the Al Abdali Regeneration Project and was begun in 2004 as a partnership between Mawared and Oger Jordan, a Jordan subsidiary of a Saudi real estate firm. Later, the United Real Estate Company from Kuwait joined which then led to the Prime Minister’s approval to build.
30 By 2009, Mawared had begun to work outside of Jordan (for example, in Tarfaya, Morocco) and in 2008 created the Urban Workshop, a non-profit independent consultancy.
the team. Still under construction in late 2009, the overall plan is for 1.7 million square meters of office space, luxury apartments, retailing, and cultural and entertainment facilities costing over US$1.5 billion. Government buildings, a transportation hub, and a national museum will be located on 55 hectares adjacent to the site. At build-out, the projection is for 40,000 residents, 15,000 jobs, 50,000 daily commuters, and 25,000 parking spaces. The project will consist of seven skyscrapers (one being the Capital Bank of Jordan) ranging from 100 meters to 220 meters in height. The goal is a “new downtown for Amman” that, for the first time, provides Amman with a defined central business district. Spread across a large and contiguous site, this is the biggest redevelopment project in Amman’s history. Abdali not only consolidates office space, high-end retailing, and luxury housing but brings to Amman a wholly different urban form and set of architectural styles.

Jordan Gate is the third commercial development project featured in the story of what motivated the municipality to undertake a new master plan. The JD$210 million project consists of twin, blue-glass-clad, 42-story identical towers connected by a multi-story podium. It sits on a high point in Amman and thus looms over the city. When completed, it will include executive offices, a conference center, a five-star hotel, and retail shops. Construction began in 2005 and as these towers rose above the low-rise surrounding neighborhood, architects, planners, and officials from both the municipal and central government became increasingly alarmed.

It was not just its physical intrusion on the skyline that was so bothersome, the project was also beset with safety problems and accusations of official arrogance. In August of 2006, a fire broke out on the 8th floor of the North tower -- no injuries were reported. The next month, in September, three floors of the same tower collapsed -- four workers were killed and another 16 injured. Then, in May of 2009, one of the cranes used to lift materials and machinery onto the rising building suffered a catastrophic failure and fell to the street. No one was

injured, but the project was halted.

Even prior to these events, Jordan Gate had engendered public opposition. The then-mayor, Nidhal Al-Hadid, created a partnership between GAM and the Gulf Finance House to build the project and had sold the land on which to build. The land, however, previously had been expropriated by GAM for open space. The towers signaled an insensitivity to the needs of the community as well as self-serving behavior on the part of the then-mayor. In addition, no attention had been given to the resultant traffic congestion or the impact of the project on the water and sewer infrastructure. Here was a project not only out-of-scale with its neighborhood and antithetical to the visual history of Amman but also one which exposed the problems inherent to how the municipality regulated and engaged with commercial development projects.33 One commentator noted that Jordan Gate “can be seen as one of the worst decisions taken by the Municipality of Amman.”34 In December of 2006, Mayor Maani announced that it was selling its 10% stake in the project to the Kuwaiti Bayan Holding Company and that the height of the towers was to be reduced from 42 to 36 stories.35 Maani felt that there was an inherent conflict of interest in GAM being both the regulator and investor in a commercial real estate venture.

None of these factors and events, as a number of informants suggested to us, should be considered in the absence of the importance of Amman to the nation and to the central government. Amman is the country’s dominant city and its gateway to the outside world.36 It is the site of the central government and where almost all of its officials live. And, the mayor of Amman reports directly to the Prime Minister. Thus, as we were told, the advisors to the King pay quite close attention to Amman. Because they view Amman as the city which represents Jordan globally, the King and the Royal Court are sensitive to its growth and development.37 In fact, up-dating the Amman master plan was one of the objectives of Jordan’s Development Plan 2002-2006 written in conjunction with the World Bank.

More anecdotally, Samir Subhi, the current planning director of GAM, commented that back in 2004, a number of advisors from the Royal Court visited his office and saw an image of a plan for a future Amman on his wall. They commented that this was what they wanted Amman to be like. He advised them to think about supporting the writing of a new master plan. A slightly different comment was provided by Mayor Maani who responded to the question of why the master plan was undertaken by stating “it was time; it was needed.” In fact, GAM was already working with the World Bank to overhaul its “out-dated” master plan as part of the Cities Development Programme. The purpose of this effort was to address municipal management and governance as well as the up-grading of squatter settlements and refugee camps. It was supported by a US$200,000 grant from the Cities Alliance. And just prior to this, GAM was working on a five-year strategic plan focused on making Amman a regional transportation hub.38

On May, 3, 2006, His Majesty King Abdullah II wrote a letter to the newly appointed Mayor Omar Maani in which he directed the mayor to “embark on a serious and comprehensive project of city planning in Amman.” Citing the rapid growth and expansion of the region, an economic boom fueled by inward investment, and the need for Amman to protect its rich heritage and social diversity as well as to embrace innovation, he called for equal attention to the city’s continued modernization and to its resident’s quality of life. His Majesty specifically mentioned the need for a “well-considered master plan” supported by

36 Amman’s population in 2008 was 40% of the country’s population and in 2002-3 it accounted for 80% of the country’s industrial and service activity. In 2007, Jordan’s estimated population was 5,723,000 million with a household size of 5.4 people. The country was 82.6% urban. See www.dos.gov.jo accessed October 30, 2009. The GDP was JD$11.2 billion which was JD$1,785/capita. See Potter, “Ever-Growing Amman, Jordan,” p. 89.
37 The purpose of the Royal Court is to assure the smooth functioning of the central government and includes, among others, the chief financial officer, the chief administrator, and the head of protocol. See www.kinghussein.gov.jo/royal_offices.html accessed August, 2009.
38 Mahmoud Al Abded, “King Examines GAM’s 5-Year Plan,” Jordan Times, October 19, 2005. At that time, Nidal Hadid was mayor.
land use regulations and encouraged the Mayor to “invite experts from all over the world to contribute to this effort.” King Abdullah II further expressed his hope that this initiative would “provide a template and example that can be replicated and evolved in our other cherished cities in Jordan.” The letter was published in the local newspapers and, at the behest of His Majesty, the Greater Amman Municipality embarked on a new master plan.  

**THE PLANNING TEAM**

To manage the master planning process, Mayor Maani turned to BearingPoint, an international management and consulting firm based in the United States that was already working in Jordan.  

BearingPoint had been involved in a well-received project in Aqaba and its senior manager for land management, Gerry Post, met with Mayor Maani and the Amman Commission to formulate an approach to the plan. Mayor Maani and Post agreed to emphasize transparency and participation and to build Jordanian capacity as part of the planning process.  

Post then hired Tamam Mango and, soon after, Hania Maraqa, both bright young Jordanian professionals and MIT Planning graduates. They became the nucleus of the Jordanian planning team. He also scouted talent within GAM and recommended to Maani that he appoint Samir Subhi, the Director of Zoning and former member of the 1987 Master Plan Team, to spearhead a GAM Master Plan Project Management Unit (PMU).  

Subhi was asked to begin building the future GAM planning department under the PMU as the plan was being prepared.  

Post also recommended that the consulting firm planningAlliance (pA), an international planning and design firm from Canada, be retained to provide planning expertise. pA had done projects in Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates and thus had experience working in the Middle East. At the time, it had approximately 75 professional staff that included architects, planners, urban designers, engineers and social scientists.  

John Van Nostrand, its founding principal, then began detailed discussions with Post regarding the preparation of the Plan. By coincidence, both Post and Van Nostrand are Canadian planners with considerable international experience and a commitment to community engagement.  

After the PMU was formed, Post and Samir Subhi became co-directors of the team. planningAlliance provided two people at the beginning of the project and at various stages had between 10 and 12 international consultants involved. Post and Subhi insisted that most of the work be done in Amman, in part to ensure that there was ample knowledge transfer from the international consultants to the Jordanian personnel and to ensure that the “Amman Plan was made in Amman.” GAM provided approximately 20 staff to the project from various agencies within the municipal government. Financing for the project came from GAM and, after about a year, was supplemented by funds from the French government’s Agence Francaise de Development and with technical assistance from the World Bank, particularly as regards public transport planning.  

The original intent was to develop a master plan for Amman that did not involve extensive socio-economic analysis. However, Van Nostrand suggested that Amman did not need a new master plan as much as it needed a growth strategy, thereby shifting the focus away from specification of what the city should look like in twenty years to the development of guidelines and regulations which would enable the municipality to control real estate investment and public infrastructure projects. This would require a sense of what Amman might become, but it would not entail the urban design of specific projects, such as a civic center plan. As the process unfolded, area plans were included, but slotted to be developed after the growth strategy was written.  

The various contractual relationships and the way in which

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39 The letter was titled “His Majesty King Abdullah’s Letter to Amman Mayor Mr. Omar Maani on a New Amman City Development Plan”. A copy can be obtained from the web site of the Royal Hashemite Court at www.kingabdullah.jo.  
41 The Amman Commission was previously known as the Beautification Commission. It was a group of selected advisors originally appointed by the Queen and comprised predominately of architects to assist in beautifying the City. This Commission became the Mayor’s key advisory body for the plan.  
the PMU operated were drastically changed in June 2008 when GAM established the Amman Institute for Urban Development (Ai), a not-for-profit “think and do” tank. As the PMU matured and GAM’s planning capacity improved, the decision was made to end BearingPoint’s involvement in the planning process, for it was only an intermediary, and simultaneously to institutionalize the Planning Management Unit. The Amman Institute replaced BearingPoint and planning Alliance becoming a consultant to Ai. Ai was now to coordinate the team of consultants and the GAM staff in the master planning process and work with GAM’s planning division. In addition, it was to provide research, outreach, and advisory services to other cities in Jordan and around the Middle East and North Africa, including Palestine. Ai was to be owned by the municipality and headed by a board of directors with the Mayor as chairman of the board. This was approved by the City Council. As Maani indicated, “…we want to become a learning city, sharing our success, and learning from others; it is part of the Amman Vision to become a knowledge center within the Arab region and to reverse Jordan’s brain drain. Instead of exporting our people, we aim to export our knowledge!”

Drawing on multiple sources of funding including GAM and the Jordanian Central Government (through the Ministry of Municipal Affairs), Ai began to manage the master planning process as a consultant to GAM and also work outside Amman with a mission to ‘empower Arab communities to excel’. By late 2009, it had produced growth strategies for Rusaifa and New Birin and master plans for, among others, Irbid and Salt. These initiatives emulated the Amman experience through a rapid planning approach and citizen involvement and by making the building of local capacity part of the planning process, including capacity within the Ministry of Municipal Affairs.

Ai emphasizes planning, sustainability, and institutional reform with a specific emphasis on involving youth in the planning process -- over fifty percent of the Jordanian population is under the age of 25. For example, it has held forums with university students and young professionals to identify their aspirations for the city and their visions of the future, undertaken training and executive education, and conducted research on the local real estate market, developed a web-mapping clearinghouse (MapJo.com), and engaged children through an animated book, a three-dimensional map, and a city passport (voucher) program. In addition, Ai has a “soft” advocacy role within Amman. This entails providing newspaper and magazine articles as well as radio shows that publicize planning and urban governance issues within the region. Mainly, however, Ai’s goal is capacity building and promoting citizen-centered governances.

Along these lines, Ai mounted a forum, complemented by radio and TV shows, focused on transparency in urban governance. It acquired the Arabic translation and distribution rights to the book *Corrupt Cities: A Practical Guide to Cure and Prevention* written by Robert Klitgaard, Ronald MacLean-Abaroa, and H. Lindsay Parris. The translated book was released in the summer of 2009 at the US-Arab Mayors Forum co-hosted by Mayor Maani and Mayor Richard Daley of Chicago. The Ai is now working with the World Bank Institute to turn this into a program to assist Arab cities to fight corruption.

By late 2009, Ai had 50 staff and 12 student interns that included international students to encourage inter-cultural dialogue and learning. In addition, discussions were underway with the Bank to make Ai a regional urban knowledge hub as part of the World Bank’s Urban Strategy.

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43 This discussion of Ai is drawn from our interviews as well as two PowerPoint presentations that were shared with us: “Business Strategy & Plan 2009-2011” and Status Report June 2009.

44 The Municipal Council is comprised of 68 members, half of whom are elected and half of whom are appointed.

45 Planning services for smaller municipalities in Jordan are provided by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs while housing services are provided by the Housing and Urban Development Corporation of Jordan. The Ministry of Planning focuses on development plans for the country as a whole. See [www.moma.gov.jo](http://www.moma.gov.jo) accessed August 8, 2009. In addition, the Urban Workshop, a “spin-off” from Mawared, offers planning and redevelopment services to municipalities on a contractual basis. See [www.urbanworkshop.jo](http://www.urbanworkshop.jo) accessed August 19, 2009.

46 Ai’s forum on Transparency in Urban Governance focused on “corrupt cities” and the economic costs of corruption. The main speaker was Ronald McLean Abaroa, former mayor of Le Paz, Bolivia.
The early intent was to do a traditional master plan, albeit one without intensive socio-economic investigations. To that end, Post and the PMU put together a two-year program for the Mayor. However, the Mayor, the Royal Court, and many of the planners were worried about the impact of large, mixed used development projects on the image and form of the city. They were particularly concerned about the tall towers, with Jordan Gate being the prime example of how a high-density, mixed use project could change the city and tarnish Amman’s image. The municipality lacked the regulations and guidelines that would enable it to have both global investment and retain the “sense” of Amman. In a public speech, the King expressed his concern that the skyline of Amman was being destroyed. Developers were putting buildings “anywhere and anyplace,” as one of the planners from planningAlliance commented. With approximately 23 development applications currently under review by the municipality, the city was about to undergo a major physical change. The issue of tall buildings was too important and too immediate to wait for the two-year development of a master plan.

Consequently, Mayor Maani approached the Royal Court and asked that a development moratorium be imposed. With 25-30 percent unemployment and approximately JD$5 billion investment at stake, Jordan’s leadership was uncomfortable with a long-term moratorium. Instead a 90 day moratorium was granted, less than the planners wanted. As a result, the PMU turned from producing a growth strategy to “tackling the towers.” The planners had a very short time period in which to produce and adopt the appropriate regulations. While doing so, moreover, they had to keep in mind that whatever they decided could not undermine decisions about development that would have to be made in future phases of the planning process.

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47 This would have been one-half the time it took to do the 1987 plan.
48 The actual number of applications under review is unclear. Most people told us 23-25, but 40 was also mentioned.
The planning team subsequently began an intense period of study, review, and consultation. During this diagnostic phase, approximately 15 specialists met almost continuously and put in, as one informant offered, 19,000 person/hours. The team “tackled the towers” by analyzing building envelopes in relation to Amman’s topography, investigating tall building policies in other cities (such as Vancouver, San Francisco, and Rio de Janeiro) with a similar topography, and “testing” proposals through various visual techniques. A sub-group of the team even visited Jerusalem to assess planning policies there. Consultations were set up with developers and the Mayor was a frequent participant in meetings.

Central to the process was the Amman Commission which provided advice directly to the Mayor. Expanded and re-named the Mayor’s Roundtable, it was chaired by the Mayor and met every Wednesday, often until late into the night to meet the demanding schedule. The Interim Growth Strategy (IGS), which addressed the towers, was released at a public meeting on February 18th 2007 in the “home” of the development community: the Construction Association of Jordan meeting hall. The meeting was packed with over 600 people, mostly investors and developers, plus the press and was also simultaneously webcast to interested parties outside of Jordan in an effort to ensure complete transparency and fairness. The announcement of the IGS was well received, the only major complaint was that the presentation was in English. The planners simply did not have time to translate. This was corrected in subsequent phases of the plan.

Broad public involvement during the IGS was difficult because of the sensitive nature of selecting tower areas. Many people were consulted to establish the vision for Amman and the planning principles, but the actual selection of the HDMU areas was done in secret to reduce turbulence in the land market. All of those involved, including the Mayor and Amman Commission members, were required to sign a comprehensive non-disclosure agreement and the PMU monitored activity in the land titles office to ensure there was no leakage of information. Records indicate that during the moratorium the land market essentially froze until the announcement was made. This was a tribute to the integrity of the process. This fact was made clear during the announcement when several investors stood up and complimented the Mayor for the fairness with which the process was handled. The only interest the IGS serviced was the “community.” This was a significant milestone in GAM’s governance history.

The announcement focused primarily on the designated locations for tower development, primarily luxury commercial and residential projects. Four locations were set aside: Abdali (Amman’s new central business district), the Central parkway area, the Northern Gateway area, and the Southern Gateway. Within these areas, developers were allowed a certain height “as of right,” though they had to adhere to guidelines regarding the building envelope and the relationship of the massing and height of the building to the surrounding topography. In addition, these zones were further overlaid with new regulations including fees charged to the developer for infrastructural improvements and a “purchase of development rights” payment. The former was stipulated in the new Article 47 of the Planning Law and the latter in the new Article 52. By late 2008, Article 52 had generated JD50 million in revenues, 25% of the land value increase brought about by the zone designation. It

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49  This is likely an exaggeration, but one that signals the uncommon effort that went into this phase.
50  The Amman Commission was dissolved in early 2009 and replaced by a Design Review Committee that meets weekly and includes Ai representatives.
became known as GAM’s Robin Hood Policy. Since it was applied fairly and equitably, it was broadly endorsed by stakeholders. The revenues generated are being used for “greening” the city and heritage preservation.

In addition, the Mayor announced the creation within GAM of a “one-stop-shop” to expedite the approval process for large projects. It was designed to be “more efficient and investor friendly.” To this was added a new mechanism to enable public comment on tower project design and the establishment of a Special Projects Department to focus on “investor and community relations.” This Department was also slated to undertake recruitment throughout the region to bring back Jordanian talent that had taken employment in neighboring countries.52

The HDMU policy was based on belief that towers are “an essential component of thriving, modern cities.” It encouraged intensification rather than sprawl, represented smart growth, and addressed market demands and the needs of investors. At the same time, GAM wanted to protect the existing, mainly four-story urban form and character of the city as well as manage the burdens that high density developments place on infrastructural and transportation systems. To this end, the planners not only addressed the relationship of tall buildings to Amman’s topology but also considered natural and cultural heritage, views and landmarks, street networks, and the desire to have a continuous public realm, compact and stable neighborhoods, mixed-use streets, and uniformity of building forms and materials.

The IGS fed into the development of the broader Amman 2025 Plan. This meant expanding the Amman Commission to include a broader constituency. Out of this grew the Mayor’s Roundtable on the Future of Amman. It was established to gather public support for what was becoming a major initiative which would affect Amman’s development for decades to come, have momentous impacts on the city’s built environment, and reconfigure the mobility and lifestyles of its residents. In addition, opening up the planning process to experts from outside the municipal government and the planning team would provide even more ideas. Thus, the Roundtables were born.

Approximately forty individuals from government, universities, civil society, including the children, and the private sector were invited to listen to and comment on the plans being developed by the planning team. They included representatives from the ministries of Environment and Land Survey as well as a representative from the Housing and Urban Development Corporation, an environmental activist, the mayor of the Jordanian city of Salt, local architects, and public utility representatives. Five roundtables were held, each on a different topic and all of which were attended by the Mayor. The meetings were held weekly and lasted between 3 and 4 hours. Attendees were sent briefing materials prior to the meetings and the team “followed-up” after the meetings by e-mail. The planning process was transparent. One informant stated that the government was “listening for the first time and that it helped build a bridge between GAM and the community.”

**PLANNING INNOVATIONS**

The pressure for innovation and the intensity of the IGS phase of the master planning process led the planning team to adopt a number of relatively non-traditional planning practices. One of these practices was the roundtables. Although not unique to Amman, this mechanism for public engagement was new to Amman and Jordan. Here was the municipal government consulting on a “real time” basis with key stakeholders and even critics. The planning team searched out individuals who could improve its ideas and offer suggestions and points-of-view that had not been considered. And, by having the Mayor chair these meetings, GAM signaled to the participants that these meetings, and what participants had to say, was meaningful and would be taken into account, as it was when follow-up messages were sent to those who had attended. As later phases of Amman 2025 unfolded, the roundtables were replaced by public forums and meetings with designated stakeholders. The intent of engaging the public was transformed but did not fade away; planning in Amman was significantly changed.53

The quotes in this paragraph are from the CD-ROM version of Interim Growth Strategy Policy.

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52 Workshops had been held earlier as part of the Cities Development Programme initiative. As an indicator of the public impact of the master planning process, a GAM analysis of press coverage of the City between April 2007 and October 2007 found 157 mentions of the master plan, 149 of them favorable. The next most mentioned item was “cultural activities” at 61 mentions.
A second mechanism of importance was “planning by PowerPoint.” With the time from analysis to implementation severely foreshortened, the planning team made the decision to focus not on producing reports but on producing presentations that could be used to obtain public input and publicize decisions to stakeholders. This has continued into the next phases. Analyzed data and emerging ideas were immediately put into PowerPoint and presented at weekly meetings. These presentations evolved as the thinking of the planners changed. This allowed various individuals, such as GAM administrators and outside consultants, to be informed immediately of the most up-to-date ideas on various aspects of the plan that the planners were addressing.

As each phase was completed, the most recent PowerPoint became the basis for the final report – the Amman 2025 Plan itself. Consequently, the CD-ROM is not so much a copy of the paper version of the Plan as the actual basis of the paper version. The paper Plan, with its bullet point approach, numerous images, and paucity of long textual explanations, seems to be a compilation of PowerPoint presentations and indicative of this particular style of argumentation. The benefits of such an approach are clear: the planners can move quickly from analysis and public engagement to final report, and, the amount of time traditionally spent on producing a paper plan can be, if not drastically reduced, reallocated to the thinking through of PowerPoint presentations. This approach to “representation” and documentation persisted because it fit into the strategic nature of the plan and with the commitment to closing the traditional gap between planning and implementation.

The integration of planning and implementation in Amman 2025 is the third novel mechanism used by the PMU. The IGS is a prime example of this. Instead of announcing the plan, as is normally done, and then following up weeks or months later with the regulatory tools and bureaucratic procedures for implementing the plan, both were announced simultaneously. The development of the IGS included the development of the tools necessary to implement it. Three new items were added to Amman’s planning process: a one-stop access point was established to expedite the regulatory process for developers, a new GAM department was created to manage community and investor concerns as they pertain to large-scale development projects, and a Design and Site Plan review procedure has been set up to scrutinize the design of projects with significant local or citywide impacts and to ensure that these projects are in conformance with urban development policies and objectives. In addition, two new planning fees were stipulated, one dealing with infrastructure and the other with development rights. Developers and other interested parties listening to the presentation did not have to anticipate how the policy would be implemented. They were told at that public meeting. The time between planning and implementation was drastically reduced.

The fourth element was a strong commitment to build local capacity as the plan was being developed. This would ensure that there would be local expertise to implement the plan and reduce the reliance on external consultants. This put an extra burden on the consultants in that they were required to manage, mentor, train, and advise. This created a bond between the local teams and the consultants, thereby transforming the Planning Department within GAM.

These four mechanisms – community participation and public consultation, planning-by-PowerPoint, the integration of planning and implementation, and capacity building – were carried into subsequent phases of the planning process. For example, during the corridor intensification study and after the planning team had developed their analyses, the planning team arranged meetings with property owners and developers along each of the city’s ten planning corridors. Eight meetings were held in June and July of 2007. The number of attendees ranged from 10-20 to 200-300, with some developers attending more than one corridor meeting. (The Mayor even attended a number of these events.) At the meetings, the team made a formal presentation for about 30 to 40 minutes and then took questions and responses from the audience. All of the comments were recorded by GAM’s Public Relations Department and that department also sent descriptions of the meetings to the local newspapers.

A similar outreach strategy was employed for the Downtown Action Area Plan and Revitalization Strategy that was initiated in late 2009. Early in the process, the planning team set up community meetings with approximately 70 downtown stakeholders: business owners, residents, shop owners, architects and engineers, government employees working in the area, and heads of non-governmental organizations. The meeting began with the planning team informally presenting their task
and defining areas of interest. Maps were displayed on the walls of the meeting space to provide a basis for the discussion. The attendees were then asked what they liked and disliked about the downtown and what they wanted changed. The result was a list of issues to consider.

In late 2009, the downtown planning team was preparing for a follow-up meeting, contemplating a design survey and a one-day “open house” at offices in the downtown area, and working with GAM’s district manager to arrange one-on-one conversations with key stakeholders. The team had initially wanted to relocate to the downtown to have a presence there, with an office open to the public, but that had not been possible. More generally, the downtown planning team hoped to develop procedures that could structure public engagement in future phases of the planning process. Still, the planners lamented that the pace of the planning process allowed too little time for consultations with stakeholders and communities and that community participation was not as widespread across groups as they would have liked.

The emphasis on implementation also occurred in later phases. During development of the Corridor Intensification Strategy, it became obvious that unless GAM could increase its control over public transportation, it would not be able to manage mobility within the city and reduce automobile traffic congestion. At a late night meeting of the Amman Commission, Mayor Maani came to the conclusion that he could not make a major policy commitment to the Corridor Intensification Strategy without having control over public transportation. The following day, the Mayor went to the Royal Court and requested that regulatory power over buses and taxis be transferred from the central government’s Public Transport Regulatory Commission to GAM. This was done. Thus, even before the corridor studies were complete, the Mayor had acted to insure control over one of the key aspects of corridor management.

Subsequently, in early 2008, GAM created a Transportation Planning Department to provide input into the master plan and to develop a comprehensive public transport system that would include bus rapid transit, a light rail network, regular buses, and a mini-bus feeder system. Even as it planned, GAM reorganized itself to do planning and to implement its policies. Obtaining public transit control from central government was not easy, but the clarity of GAM’s argument that land use and transportation planning must be fully integrated and controlled by the same institution was compelling to the country’s leadership. The arrangement also had support from the World Bank and the French government’s Agence Francaise de Development (AFD), which subsequently funded the development of a major Mobility Master Plan to implement Amman 2025.

The procedures developed during the making of the Interim Growth Strategy and the Corridor Intensification Strategy were used in the other phases of Amman 2025 as well: the Industrial Lands Policy, the Outlying Settlements Policy, the Airport Corridor Plan, and the Metropolitan Growth Plan. By 2009, all of these phases had been completed and the PMU had embarked on more specific area plans (e.g., the Downtown Area Action Plan). Later, it planned to more closely investigate individual communities and undertake more specific studies of housing and cultural heritage among other topics. One future goal was to develop strategic plans at various spatial scales that would guide and manage development. Other goals included: (1) using AI and the planning process itself to reorganize GAM, (2) build capacity within the municipal government, and (3) establish an identity for Amman. In short, Amman 2025 was not just about planning; it was also about enhancing municipal government and making Amman more prominent in the lives of residents and more comprehensible to outsiders.

GAM REORGANIZATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Whereas traditional plans are seen as “ends in themselves,” Amman 2025 was conceived early on as an opportunity to reorganize the municipal government. GAM had been working with BearingPoint, the consulting firm, to review and restructure various components of the government. With a JD$400 million budget and 23,000 employees, GAM was a large organization with too little capacity. It lacked sufficient professional personnel with high levels of expertise, had a fragmented management regime with out-moded division of functions and traces of nepotism and corruption, and an inadequate information system.
With the city undergoing rapid change, not just in terms of the influx of residents and population growth but also the surge in inward investment in large real estate development projects, the city government needed to be more flexible and to plan more. To do this, it had to build its base of expertise. The Plan offered an opportunity to re-think the relationship between various departments and the management of the development process. Consequently, it was not just implementation that was brought into the planning process but government reorganization as well.

Planning-related reorganization began with the volunteer Beautification Commission that Mayor Maani re-named the Amman Commission and used as a basis for the roundtables. The Commission was subsequently dissolved in early 2009 as GAM’s planning capacity improved and as the PMU became more adept at involving stakeholders. The IGS led to the establishment of the Special Projects Department (the one-stop shop) within the Licensing Department. There, developers could find less onerous and less time-consuming assistance with government regulations. By late 2009, it had approximately 20 staff. And, the development of the corridor intensification studies led to the creation of a Transportation Planning division.

In addition, GAM began consideration of the out-sourcing of various functions. For example, the Public Works Department in 2009 was planning to separate its vehicle maintenance function from GAM, creating an entity that would bid on public contracts from GAM and other municipalities and also bid on private sector contracts. All contracts would be performance based. The new vehicle maintenance entity would hopefully become self-supporting. The argument was that this would improve services as a result of competition and provide a new source of revenues for the government. This idea was one of the motivations behind Ai, a non-profit, self-funding, quasi-governmental agency with contracts with GAM and other municipalities in Jordan and with the ability to generate revenues from outside the city that could then be channeled back into Amman, either to GAM itself or to redevelopment and social projects. In fact, Ai is one of the most important of the planning-related reorganizations.

Most significant in this regard has been the reorganization of the planning function within GAM. It has not only included the creation of Ai but also the restructuring of the planning department. Central to this has been Samir Subhi, currently advisor to the Mayor and Director of the Amman Master Plan Project. Subhi has been a voice for planning within GAM since 1985 and in 1987 worked on the GACDP that preceded Amman 2025. He served as an architect and engineer within the municipal government until 1994 when he was appointed head of the section within the Zoning Department concerned with the planning of un-zoned areas. Subsequently he was named director of and reorganized the Zoning Department. During that time he attempted to provide a vision, a strategic intent, for zoning and planning and in 2004 proposed that GAM re-do its master plan. A new plan would serve the municipality for the next 20 to 30 years. In 2009, Subhi was named the Executive Director of Planning within which is housed the Departments of Planning and Zoning. He has 10 staff members to work on the master plan. Two of his staff competed successfully for the Director positions in both the Planning and Zoning Departments. By coincidence, both

55 Like many planners in Jordan, he received his post-graduate planning degree from outside the country – Italy.
these ‘graduates’ of the Amman 2025 planning process were women, a badly needed boost to closing the gender gap at the GAM management level.

Over the years, and particularly for the Amman 2025 planning process, Subhi has provided institutional memory, personal connections and experience with the various departments and divisions within GAM, planning expertise, and (as numerous informants commented) skill at explaining planning proposals to stakeholders and community members. Of these contributions, most important for reorganization has been the continuity that he has provided throughout a very dynamic re-thinking and restructuring of planning within GAM. Gerry Post’s tenure has been not as long but is no less central to the planning process. He brought the Ai idea to the attention of the Mayor and was influential in forming the PMU and managing the process from its inception; Subhi provided the experience and stature to legitimize the process both within and outside the municipal government.

The third person who has played a pivotal role in the reorganization is Mayor Omar Maani. Without his support, and the support of the Royal Court, none of this would have happened. In fact, Maani is quite unlike past mayors. His predecessors were characterized as care-takers and thus content to manage the bureaucracy, with the exception (as mentioned regarding Jordan Gate) of forays into real estate development. Maani, a former businessman and engineer, came into office in April of 2006 by appointment of King Abdullah II.\(^{56}\) His central mandate was to create a strategic plan for the future development of Amman. However, his vision extended beyond the plan to the reorganization of GAM and the development of an identity and vision for the city. His backing of the planning team was necessary for launching a novel planning approach within Jordan and his engagement with and support of reorganization has catalyzed the transformation of GAM. Along this latter dimension, the focus has been on the organizational re-shaping of functions, capacity-building, and the city’s identity.

Under the slogan “Citizens First, Employees Empowered,” GAM launched its reorganization. One major goal has been to build the knowledge and skill capacity of its labor force. A combination of low municipal salaries and more lucrative opportunities in the Gulf States and Europe has meant that many Jordanian professionals avoid working in Jordan’s public sector. Consequently, efforts have been made under Mayor Maani to raise salary levels as well as to provide more training opportunities for employees. The approach has two components: one component is aimed at attracting new people into GAM and the other at up-grading the skills of existing employees.

Capacity-building has been a central concern from the beginning of the master planning process and one of Ai’s major objectives. Our informants estimated that there were probably only 16-20 urban planners in Jordan in the early 2000s, in part a function of the lack of an urban planning degree program in any of the local universities but also a reflection of the dominance of urban planning by architecture and the lack of planning jobs. Ai, in fact, was created as a way of attracting planning talent to GAM; it can pay higher salaries and also offer more challenging responsibilities to younger professionals.

Publicizing the plan and its accomplishments has also been part of the strategy. Publicity suggests the opportunities available to professional planners to have an impact on the growth and development of a major city, and the excitement of doing so. The hope is that recruits will work first either for Ai or GAM and then move to other municipalities within Jordan, thereby strengthening planning nationwide. Not only planners are needed, however. GAM, we were told, also lacks sufficiently trained building inspectors, zoning specialists, and other personnel essential for administering development regulations. This is being addressed with internal training programs as well as increases in salaries for various positions. In doing this, GAM has made a commitment to avoid reductions in existing personnel.

As for the establishment of an identity for Amman, three, small initiatives are particularly important. One was Mayor Maani’s introduction of new regulations to reduce the excessive presence of advertising billboards, despite opposition from the advertising industry. A second was the naming of streets and the placement of street signs throughout the city. In the past, many streets had names but movement around the city was a matter of knowing where one was going and using various visual cues (e.g., a particular mosque or landmark) to go from

\(^{56}\) During the previous twenty-five years, he managed Maani Ventures, a group of industrial and engineering companies. His university education was at the University of Birmingham (UK) and the University of Southern California (USA) in engineering and construction management respectively.
one area to another and eventually to one’s destination. The posting of street signs was accompanied by the placement of street numbers on the facades of buildings. As one informant commented, the naming of streets gave “more texture to Amman’s identity.”

The third initiative was the re-designing of the city’s logo, part of the “branding” of Amman. The logo represents four central elements that infused the planning process. The first is the seven hills on which Amman was originally founded, thereby noting the importance of these hills to the self-image of the city and thus the need to protect them from being over-run by high-rise development. A second element concerns the diversity of peoples within Amman; this is represented symbolically by the different colors of the hills. The third is the visual suggestion of houses on the hills carrying the symbolic weight of Amman as a city with a high quality of life for its residents. And the fourth is the ‘shaddeh’ above the letter ‘meem’ in Amman that symbolizes peace and openness thereby suggesting the political and social stability of Amman. Although small relatively to the billions being invested in HDMU projects, these three activities are central to constructing an identity for Amman and part of the central government’s and Mayor Maani’s initiative to make Amman the recognized capital of Jordan.

As part of the development of Amman 2025, one single phrase came to characterize the “identity” of Amman – “Amman is a city with a soul.” This phrase captures the desire of the municipal government and many of its residents to retain the social inclusion, tolerance, and cultural heritage that had ostensibly characterized the city prior to the onset of large-scale real estate developments. It is also a reference to east Amman, a part of the city relatively untouched by HDMU projects and one where the working and poor people of Amman reside. West Amman is the Amman of a globally-connected, middle and upper class, but east Amman is the city’s valued past.

This desire does not stand alone but is positioned in relationship to the commitment on the part of many leaders and business and professional elites to make Amman into a modern city that has a regional if not global presence. In the early decades of the 20th century, Jordan defined itself as a nation in relation to Britain and, later, in relation to Israel and the Arab nations that surround it, a process fraught with conflict in the latter instance. National identity was effectively de-territorialized. In the early 21st century – that is, in a world of global cities – Amman has become the key to Jordan’s international status. It now represents Jordan politically and economically, and increasingly culturally as well, with the latter represented by plans to build the country’s first national museum there. The articulation of, and thus commitment to, protecting, the “soul” of Amman makes sense only against the background of the costs and benefits of the modernization spurred by foreign capital investment.

WORLD LEADERSHIP AWARD FOR TOWN PLANNING

Attesting to the quality and uniqueness of Amman 2025 was the presentation of the World Leadership Award in Town Planning to Mayor Maani in London on December 6, 2007. Selected first out of approximately 400 invited entries, the World Leadership Forum recognized Amman for a plan designed to improve the quality of life in the city through a variety of planning innovations including its emphasis on a knowledge-based economy and its designation of special Prestige Business/Industrial Zones. In his acceptance speech, Mayor Maani commented on the community engagement and leadership that had guided the plan and noted that GAM was “honored to see the Amman Master Plan evolve to become a source of inspiration for global


audiences.” GAM also received from the Forum the “City of the Year – Asia Pacific Award” for the excellence of its leadership and progressive policy initiatives.

When the Town Planning award was presented, the PMU was still in the midst of its planning process. The IGS and other phases had been announced, but the planners had yet to begin in-depth work on area plans, the transportation system, cultural heritage, and the management of sprawl. These tasks were still on the agenda. In undertaking them, the PMU would utilize many of the innovations that came out of the early phases that had won such worldwide recognition. Even as we write this report in late 2009, Amman 2025 is still being elaborated and refined.

One of the goals of Mayor Maani and Ai is to establish the commitment within GAM to a “continuous” planning that is constantly re-thinking the city as it goes through its many changes. In 2025, 4 million more residents are expected to be added to the region. Those people, and the investments that support them with jobs and stores and offices, will be best served, GAM and Ai believe, by a “master plan” that is strategic in intent and flexible. The era of writing a master plan and then following its guidelines for 20-30 years was ended.

The Amman Master Plan was presented to His Majesty King Abdullah II on May 13, 2008. In responding to King Abdullah’s wish that GAM attend to the needs of the residents of east Amman, Mayor Maani commented during the presentation that the municipality was “currently rehabilitating massive areas in east Amman as part of an integrated development project.”

In doing so, the Mayor referred obliquely to the need to balance inward investment in HDMU projects for the middle- and upper-income groups in Amman with the preservation of the “city with a soul” as represented by the low-income residents of east Amman.

By late 2009, the threat to the “soul” of Amman had diminished. A global financial crisis, over-building, tightened bank lending, and dampened investor interest in the city were all contributing factors. Moreover, the mega-projects that had threatened the city’s urban fabric were significantly slowed if not halted altogether. Still, a large, projected population increase means a future demand for housing, retail, and public and private services of various kinds. Consequently, the need for a strategic – if not “master” – plan remains and GAM and its planners are continuing their efforts to develop a vision for the city and the tools to manage Amman’s changing landscape of people, buildings, infrastructure, and open space.

APPENDIX A

DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH

The core material for this report was gathered from interviews with individuals directly involved in developing the strategic growth initiative: GAM planners, staff members of the Amman Institute, and consultants from planningAlliance. In addition, we talked with a number of professionals tangentially involved in the process. These interviews were conducted between August 2 and August 10, 2009 and by telephone and in person in New York City in late August, September, and November of 2009. In addition, less formal interviews occurred during an earlier visit in early February of 2009. The interviews were open-ended and focused on the motivations for the plan, the organization of the planning team, the connections made to the public and other government entities within GAM, and the overall flow of activities and events. Attention was paid to the substance of the plan only to the extent that it was important for the process. All interviews were conducted in English. And, in accordance with human subjects guidelines required by Columbia University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB), all interviewees were advised of their right to confidentiality. A list of interviewees appears in Appendix B.

In addition, we conducted an intensive search of a number of English-language publications in Jordan -- Jordan Times, Jordan Property, JO Magazine, and Jordan Business – with the focus mainly on the years from 2000 to 2009. To this we added reports and other documents (e.g., press releases, PowerPoint presentations, archival material) collected during the visit to Jordan in August of 2009, secondary material from academic books and journals, and information from the various web sites of developers and central government agencies. Lastly, we drew upon demographic, investment, and economic data from central government agencies. Because none of the researchers on this project read or speak Arabic, only English-language texts were consulted.

The research plan for this project was approved by the IRB on July 14, 2009.
APPENDIX B

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Unless noted by an asterisk (*), all interviews were conducted face-to-face and in Amman. Those with an asterisk were conducted by telephone in November. The interview with Dr. Shami was conducted face-to-face in New York City in September.

Dr. Nabil Abu-Dayyeh, Professor of Architecture, University of Jordan

Samir Subhi, Executive Director of Planning

Dr. Shadi Anani, Project Manager, Transportation and Traffic Management

Ruba Asi, Architect and Urban Planner, Amman Institute

Rasem Badran, Architect, Appointed Member of the GAM City Council, and Roundtable Member

Rami Daher, Architecture/Urbanist/Heritage Specialist and Roundtable Member

Sandra Hiari, Urban Designer and Planner, Amman Institute

Steve Karam, Urban Sector Strategy, World Bank

Dr. Fuad Malkawi, Project Director, Planning Alliance

Mayor Omar Manni, Greater Amman Municipality (GAM)

Hania Maraqa, Vice President for Research and Development, Amman Institute

Dr. Yusuf Munsur, CEO, Envision Consulting Group and Roundtable Member

Fawzi Musad, Deputy City Manager, GAM

Rima Odeh, Director of Planning, GAM

Gerry Post, Project Director, Amman Plan Project; founder and General Manager, Amman Institute

Nuha Quteish, Director of Zoning, GAM

Abeer Saheb, Senior Planning Advisor, Amman Institute

Chris Searles, Project Manager for Planning Alliance

Dr. Seteney Shami, Social Science Research Council (New York City)

Dr. Ayman Smadi, Director, Transportation and Traffic Management

Hazem Zureiqat, Project Manager, Transportation and Traffic Management
## APPENDIX C

### TIME LINE: PLANNING IN AMMAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>Circassian tribes (Moslems) from Russia settle in Amman with help from the Ottomans</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>Law No. 79 enacted regarding planning of Cities, Villages, and Buildings</td>
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<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>Hijaz Railway reaches Amman</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>Large number of refugees from the Arab-Israeli (Six-Day) War, June 5 to 10, enter the city; approximately 550,000 from 1967-1976</td>
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<td>1909</td>
<td>First Municipal Council of Amman established</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Ministry of the Interior for Municipal and Rural Affairs introduces a plan to guide Amman’s development</td>
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<td>1928</td>
<td>Emir Abdullah declares Amman the capital of Transjordan with passage of Jordan’s Organic law</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Committee established by Ministry of the Interior to develop a comprehensive plan for the Amman-Balqa region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>British Mayor proposes a basic scheme for land use for the city</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Japanese government commissions a City Center development plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan’s Declaration of Independence from the British Mandate</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Passage of regulation no. 67 of the Buildings and Zoning By-Law for the City of Amman By-Law which included the article regarding the regulation of high-rise buildings; initial findings of 1977 Development Plan released which led to establishment of Urban Development Department in the central government which became responsible for development of low-income urban housing</td>
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<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>Influx of large number of refugees from Palestine as a consequence of Arab-Israeli conflict</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Establishment of the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Municipality of Amman introduces the first comprehensive plan for the city’s development</td>
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<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Planning Division set up in the Jordan Development Board by American “Point Four” program and Ford Foundation consultants</td>
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<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>GAM approves the Comprehensive Development Plan for Greater Amman</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Construction begins on US$1.5 billion Abdali district, a mixed-use, private and public project with 7 skyscrapers planned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Approximately 400,000 Jordanians return from Kuwait and Iraq as a Result of the Gulf War</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Part of North Tower of Jordan’s Gate collapses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>GAM relocated from Ministry of Municipalities and Rural Affairs to the Prime Minister’s Office</td>
<td>2006 (April)</td>
<td>Mayor Nidal Hadid leaves office and is replaced by Omar Maani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Abdullah II becomes King</td>
<td>2006 (May 3)</td>
<td>His Majesty King Abdullah, in a Royal address, appoints His Excellency the Mayor of Greater Amman to develop the Master Plan for Amman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>GAM approves construction of Le Royal, a five-star luxury hotel in Zahran district. The hotel opens in 2003 as the tallest building in the city at 33 floors.</td>
<td>2007 (February)</td>
<td>GAM announces first phase of Amman 2025: the Interim Growth Strategy that allocates high-rise tower development to four designated areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>National Resources Investment and Development Corporation (Mawared) formed to redevelop three former military areas in Jordan</td>
<td>2007 (June)</td>
<td>GAM announces 2nd phase of Amman 2025: the Corridor Intensification Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002 (February)</td>
<td>Abdali site vacated by the military</td>
<td>2007 (August)</td>
<td>GAM announces the 3rd phase of Amman 2025: the Industrial Lands Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Mawared announces the Abdali project</td>
<td>2007 (October)</td>
<td>GAM launches the 4th phase of the Amman 2025: the Interim Rural Residential Policy (also known as the Outlying Settlements Policy) and the Airport Corridor Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Approximately 1 million Iraqis refugees arrive in Jordan; approximately 750,000 of whom resettle in Amman</td>
<td>2007 (December)</td>
<td>Amman receives the World Leadership Award for Town Planning for the Amman Master Plan from the World Leadership Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Construction begins on Jordan Gate, a project consisting of twin, glass-clad, 39-story identical towers</td>
<td>2007 (December)</td>
<td>Amman awarded title of 2007 City of the Year for the Middle East and Asia (Asia-Pacific Region) by World Leadership Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005 (October)</td>
<td>GAM works with World Bank and the City Development Program to overhaul Amman’s “out-dated” master plan with US$200,000 grant from Cities Alliance</td>
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</table>
2008 (May 12) Mayor Omar Maani presents the Amman Master Plan to His Majesty King Abdullah

2008 (June) GAM establishes the Amman Institute (Ai)

This report was funded by Greater Amman Municipality in conjunction with the Amman Institute for Urban Development and Columbia University’s Middle Eastern Research Center in Amman and its Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation in New York. Any opinions or factual errors contained herein are solely those of the authors.

February, 2010
New York, New York   USA
March 7, 2010

Canadian Institute of Planning, 2010 Award
141 Laurier Avenue West, Suite 1112
Ottawa ON, K1P 5G3

Subject: Submission for CIP Award for Planning Excellence
International Development Category

Dear Madam/Sir,

We are pleased to submit our application for the CIP Award in the category of International Development. Our submission is entitled: Amman Institute for Urban Development: Building Capacity in a Tough Neighborhood.

As indicated in the CIP award criteria, the International Development Category recognizes the importance and special challenge of building capacity in emerging economies.

‘International development refers to the planning, development and implementation of capacity building initiatives in developing countries. Emphasis is given to the improvement of living conditions, in particular to projects that build local capacity through training of local populations, reinforcement of traditional values, establishment of healthy living conditions and improvement of essential infrastructure.’

We feel fortunate to have been working with the strong leadership in Jordan to establish a model for building capacity in urban planning and governance that has become recognized as an example to be replicated. We’re also proud that much of this was led and supported by Canadian planners. It has fostered a strong bond between Canada and the Jordanian urban community.

Thank you for considering our application.

Warm Regards,

Gerard (Gerry) Post, MCIP
Amman Institute
Corporate Profile
Established in June 2008, the Amman Institute is a regional think-and-do-tank, with a focus on community planning, sustainable development and citizen-centered governance in the Arab region.

Ai grew out of the successful Amman Master Plan initiative which won the World Leadership Award for Town Planning in December 2007. The institute incorporated the members of the Amman Plan team and attracted talents both locally and from abroad. A year later the institute has expanded to become a home to the largest group of Arab urban planners and urban designers within the MENA region.

The Ai genesis grew out of HM King Abdullah the II’s vision for Amman which he outlined in a letter to HE Omar Maani, Mayor of Amman, highlighting the need to share the Amman master planning experience with other communities in Jordan:

> I, along with my fellow Jordanians, will look forward to seeing the outcome of this effort. Although the GAM will lead us along the path of cherishing and nurturing our Amman, it is the responsibility and duty of each and every citizen to lovingly navigate that path. We all must stand behind you in caring for our dear city. My hope is that this effort will provide a template and example that can be replicated and evolved in our other cherished cities in Jordan so that our country will continue to grow and flourish and itself be an example for others in the region and the world.

Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein
5 Rabi’ Al Thani 1427 Hijri
3 May 2006

Our mission is to empower Arab Communities to excel through independent global thinking adapted and applied locally, and implemented through citizen-centered governance.

Our Vision

Our vision is to establish a regional knowledge hub that retains, builds, and incubates local talent; develops and shares knowledge capital; and empowers centers in the Arab World to build sustainable communities.

Our Values

- An Independent and Professional Voice in our fields of endeavor
- Excellence in what we deliver
- Honesty and Integrity in the way we undertake our work
- Team work and Collaboration in the way we work within the organization and with our stakeholders
- Freely sharing of our Knowledge to empower others
- Diversity as a means to strengthen the organization and the solutions we develop
- Building Capacity by encouraging continuing learning for our employees and acting as an incubator to build capacity within the broader community
Our Team

Our team is an array of talents with expertise in a number of issues including urban governance, community development, land use planning, transportation, housing, and environmental planning.

It is our aim to achieve our mission by cultivating an interdisciplinary team of Arab talent who value change and believe in their role in advancing their country and region; to attract, develop and retain professionals who are knowledgeable and competent; to graduate a number of Arab specialists in all areas of urban governance.

Our Focus

Our focus is on issues related to Community Planning in areas such as urban planning, regulatory reform, and urban design; Sustainable development in areas such as land sustainability, climate change and environment (renewable energy, energy conservation, carbon capture and emission management), and economic community development; and Urban Governance including institutional and organizational reform, participatory governance, and citizen centered service delivery.

Our Work

The Institute has 4 main strategic activities:

- Advisory services and technical assistance: providing independent advice in areas of focus
- Capacity building: providing educational, training, and mentoring services
- Outreach: organizing proactive activities to facilitate community awareness and involvement in governance
- Research: undertaking applied research relevant to our stakeholders
The Amman Plan is a unique initiative to create Amman’s first legally binding, participation-based plan to govern the City’s growth over the coming twenty years. The Amman Plan builds on, and is defined by, the character of the historic and contemporary city that is, by what makes Amman Amman, including topography, natural and cultural heritage, views and landmarks, public spaces, stable neighborhoods, mixed-use streets, emerging variety of scales, uniformity of buildings, as well as the City’s ongoing growth. The Plan seeks to extend the City’s unique character into the future realizing that Amman is not afraid of modernity but seeks to ensure that it complements the beauty, serenity and civility that the existing City is known for.

The Amman Plan is a pragmatic exercise in which five phases have been completed. These are mostly community plans that responded to an urgent need for planning. They include the Interim Growth Strategy for High-Density Mixed-Use Areas, Corridors Intensification Strategy, Industrial Lands Policy, Outlying Settlements Policy, and Airport Corridor Plan. As planning in each phase is completed, actual development commences.

The Amman Plan is a work in progress – being built and refined as different layers of planning in Amman are contemplated – and will remain so through to its 18-year horizon and beyond.

The plan features sequential scales of planning and corresponding levels of planning details within an overall plan hierarchy:

1. Metropolitan scale: encompassing the entire area of Amman’s 1,662 kilometers, and is termed the Metropolitan Growth Plan.

2. Planning Area scale: the metropolitan planning area will be split into 8 planning areas to provide a finer scale of planning detail.

3. Community scale: covering 228 existing neighborhoods that can be reduced to smaller planning blocks.

The Amman plan represents a somewhat unorthodox approach to metropolitan, urban, and community planning. The planning occurs simultaneously on all three scales, which are being created both from the top down and the bottom up. Each scale will be informed by and in sync with the other layers, and the implications and impacts of each scale on the other two can be examined back and forth.

There are several reasons why this approach has been adopted: the first is that a plan for a city like Amman can take up to five years to complete and is often out of date by the time it is approved; the second is that conventional plans are usually informed by decisions made at the larger scale level without consideration for their implications at the community level; the third reason is that structuring the plan in this way would ensure rapid response to immediate problems on the ground; the fourth reason is that the plan is divided into stages to facilitate ongoing and uninterrupted urban development.
The Interim Growth Strategy came as a response to intense pressure for high density, mixed use development. It identified four growth centers within the city as High Density Mixed Use (HDMU) development areas to divert pressure away from Amman’s historic and stable neighbourhoods.

The principles of the Interim Growth Strategy were set so that High Density Mixed Use development adheres to the protection of the city’s heritage, urban fabric and topography, public views of landmarks and vistas, stable neighborhoods; ensures land-use compatibility with adjacent neighborhoods, efficient services, access to public transit, high quality urban design and development guidelines; promotes mixed use, and green environmental standards.

The four growth centers have been identified as follows:

- The Amman Central Business District (Abdali development site in Shmisani), the Central Parkway (the Wadi Corridor extending from the Abdoun bridge to the Princess Basma and Prince Ali Bin Al Hussein crossroads), the Amman Northern Gateway (located in Al-Jubayhah along the Jordan Road, north of Al-Shaheed Ring Road and east of the Queen Rania Road), and the Amman Southern Gateway (located in Al-Jubayhah along the Jordan Road, north of Al-Shaheed Ring Road and east of the Queen Rania Road).

The rationale behind the selection of these four areas was to address a cross-section of urban conditions through regeneration of inner city areas, intensification of periphery areas, and expansion of the external city boundaries. The closeness to existing and planned future Public Transit was also taken into consideration, as well as the balance in development between the northern, central and southern areas of Amman. New public spaces and green areas will be built in conjunction with new towers, with proper access. The impact of new towers on existing neighborhoods will be reduced. At the same time high quality urban and architectural design will be encouraged.

The process for obtaining approvals for investment projects was streamlined, and a special project department was created to deal with large and complex projects; a one stop shop was established to consolidate the approval of 7 different agencies through one Window at GAM; in addition a USAID funded SABEQ project helped GAM in establishing this new process, including a web-enabled approvals tracking system.

A new policy was formulated during this phase to estimate the capital infrastructure required to service new development and to allocate it based on the intensity of use. A second policy known as the Robin Hood Policy requires landowners who benefited from a significant increase in land value as a result of the Master Plan to purchase these rights at 25% of the increase in value. The fees collected are deposited into a community development fund to pay for parkland development, re-fitting the city for the disabled, and other public projects that benefit the wider community.
The Corridor Intensification Strategy is the second phase of the Amman Master Plan. The objective of this strategy is to intensify development along 40 kilometers of Amman’s major corridors in a manner that respects the character of the City.

The Corridor Intensification Strategy will encourage a variety of densities, but within strict guidelines to ensure adequate transportation, urban design and that other considerations such as creating a pedestrian and green city, are adhered to.

An important component of the Corridor Intensification Strategy is to improve public transit throughout the City. A modern transit system is a cornerstone of the Amman Master Plan, and a necessary component for the sustainable growth of Amman. This represents a shift in transportation policy away from accommodating vehicles to accommodating the movement of people and goods with an emphasis on public transit and pedestrianization of the City.

Another important component of this phase is the introduction of mixed use development. to create self sufficient and pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods, through zoning strategies.

A major part of the Corridor Intensification Strategy is to transform the character of some of the City’s major corridors into streets that will 'define' the city. One of these corridors is Zahran St., a main throughway that crosses Jabal Amman.

The plan promotes the heritage and green character of Zahran from 1st to 5th circle. The height of development will be restricted to four stories with special programs to conserve the most prominent heritage buildings and working with land owners to accommodate adaptive uses that will bring life back to the street. The segment of Zahran between 6th and 8th is envisioned for major revitalization into a green boulevard lined with mixed use residential, commercial and retail development.

Other corridors selected during this phase are Arar, Al Hussein bin Ali, Shaker bin Zeid, Al Kindi, Mecca, Queen Rania – Queen Alia (University Corridor), Abdullah Ghosheh – Queen Alia Airport Road, and King Abdullah.

![Zahran St. Before](image1)

![Zahran St. After](image2)

![Mixed Use Zoning: Building Height](image3)
Interim Industrial Land Policy

In 2025, Amman will need to accommodate a population of 6.4 million people up from the current population of 2.2 million. A million new jobs will have to be created, a significant part of which is in the industrial sector. The intensification of industrial development in adequately located areas, will offer a competitive environment for industrial development. An environment where the existing industrial base can consolidate and high-tech and other value-added industry can flourish thus encouraging new job creation. The offer of flexible industrial areas sustained by improved infrastructure will ensure that Amman continues to be a magnet for pioneering development projects and improves its position in the global economy, acting as a driving force for the national growth.

The lack of appropriate land use control has always been a major concern, residences and cleaner-industrial users are often located next to more environmentally harmful industries. The interim industrial land policy introduces a new industrial classification system which provides greater land use control over where different types of industries can be located and built according to specific design guidelines. The industrial areas themselves can be appropriately buffered offering protection for themselves and surrounding communities and areas of public use.

Following an analysis of industrialization in Jordan, and the changes in the industrial sector, a new category was designated as Prestige Industrial Zoning to satisfy the demand for knowledge based business parks. Another special category for transitional industries was created to accommodate small family enterprises that offer much of the traditional employment in Amman, along with the more classical Light, Medium and Heavy industrial zoning categories.

The Interim Strategy also allocated additional industrial lands and zoned them in accordance with the new categories. The strategy employed in this expansion was to rationalize the existing clusters, particularly in South Eastern Amman, which is becoming the industrial heartland of the Metro region, several areas were identified for industrial development:

1. Sahab – Al Mouwaqer Corridor: medium and light industrial uses to provided sufficient buffering from existing settlements in Al Mouwaqer and Nqeeba

2. Qastal Industrial Area: prestige industries, and planned industrial uses for business, research and development parks. Medium to light industry will provide a buffer for these prestige uses.

3. Al Jeezah Industrial Area: a mix of medium and light industries, serving as an employment anchor for the southern growth of Al Jeezah community with the proposed Tameer affordable housing project east of the area.
Outlying Settlements Policy
(formerly Interim Rural Residential Policy)

The Outlying Settlements Policy comes as a response to increasing interest in residential developments, particularly large scale compound and gated community developments in Amman's urban fringe and rural areas. Unguided growth of these developments threatens the unique rural landscape and agricultural land prevailing in the Expansion Area, creates inefficient infrastructure and transportation services, and, limits opportunities for inclusive communities.

In order to tackle these challenges, the Amman Master Plan has designated four rural growth areas around which future developments will be clustered. Located around existing villages, these future centers rationalize previous subdivision approvals, facilitate greater community self sufficiency and allow for greater coordination of infrastructure.

The four designated rural growth areas are located in the villages of Um Rumana, Manja, Al Kutayfa with a population of a total of 30,000 inhabitants.

The fourth phase of the Master Plan includes the release of Amman Metro-Growth Principles and Metro- Growth Conceptual Plan. The Amman Metro-Growth Principles are a set of planning principles that will direct the healthy growth of the City over the coming twenty years. The Principles strongly encourage a compact urban growth that will allow for the best use of existing services, and will promote increased transit use and improved pedestrian accessibility. The Principles direct future growth of existing built-up areas and designates new greenfields communities located close to the urban Airport Corridor Plan and Interim Rural Residential Policy core. They protect valuable agricultural lands, support traditional lifestyles, and create a connected natural heritage system. The Principles will also promote a healthy mix of residential and employment uses including the retention of existing employment areas.
The fifth phase of the Amman Master Plan is the Airport Corridor Plan. The Amman Airport Corridor is the primary spine of the Capital Region – linking it with the Queen Alia Airport as well as the new Amman Development Corridor. The Corridor has been under enormous development pressure to accommodate new residential, commercial cultural and recreational facilities. The Airport Corridor will provide Amman’s residents with safe and easy access to all parts of the City. It will serve as a primary traffic and transit corridor, while retaining its green character. It will also create new open spaces that will preserve and celebrate agriculture and conserve Amman’s forests.

The purpose of the Airport Corridor Plan is:

1. To provide connectivity between different transportation modes for moving both people and goods.
2. To link places of employment with places where people live and to provide access to a mix of metropolitan facilities.
3. To offer a balance of transportation choices that will reduce reliance upon automobile movement and promote public transit.
4. To encourage the most financially- and environmentally-appropriate transportation modes possible.

The Airport Corridor Plan proposes land use plans for five nodes that will be developed in a phased fashion from north to south, in addition to the expansion and development of the new metro-park. The five suggested phases are: Arafat Node (Southern Gateway), South Park, Al-Yadouda, Metro Gateway and Alia International Airport.

For each of the phases, an in-depth study has been conducted tackling many issues including, landmarks, natural heritage system, cultural heritage, developed areas, parcel subdivision, pending development applications, and transportation network.
The Metropolitan Growth Plan (MGP) is a physical planning and policy framework that will guide the growth and development of the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM). As the sixth stage of the overall Amman Plan the MGP steps back from the detailed planning undertaken to date and answers some fundamental questions: “Where will Amman grow? And how?” Spurred by GAM’s recent annexation, which almost tripled the City’s land base, the MGP is a strategic response to these questions presented in ten component plans.

As the primary component of the Amman Plan, the MGP provides the overall framework that unites and coordinates all other component plans. This framework is not only spatial and structural in nature but is also policy-and-process-based.

The Metropolitan Growth Plan covers 1,680 square kilometers and consists of a detailed land use plan, natural and cultural heritage plan, transportation and servicing plan, and a metro housing plan. The MGP addresses the potential impacts of rapid growth within the region by delineating an urban growth boundary, creating a network of urban growth nodes and corridors, and fully integrating the metropolitan area within a regional transportation network and phased servicing plan. The MGP creates Amman’s first natural heritage system plan and cultural heritage districts, and includes a new metropolitan zoning bylaw that equips the plan with a strong implementation mechanism.

The Metro-Growth Conceptual Plan is the first draft for a city-wide land use plan that respects the locality of Amman while enjoying cutting-edge international best practices. The Plan exhibits a clear distinction between urban areas including built up areas and green fields, urban fringe, and agricultural lands in the rural areas. It highlights the urban growth centers, cultural and natural heritage systems including water courses and major parks and open spaces. The Plan shows a solid conceptual framework for transportation including metropolitan roads and major urban roads.

In addition, the Metropolitan Growth Plan abides with a number of Smart Growth Principles that include: plans for complete communities, compact urban growth, development of existing built up areas, designation of new Greenfields areas, promotion of mixed use in general, delineation of a clear distinction between urban, suburban, and rural communities, promotion of public transit, and creation of a connected Natural Heritage System.
Modernization of the Amman Building and Zoning By-law

The current Building and Zoning By-law is revisited to provide city planners with a set of tools that act as an enabler for Amman’s planning practice to move ahead and meet the demand of its residents for growth. The by-law aims to be a user friendly document that emphasizes the creation of a more compact urban form by encouraging densification in existing and future neighborhoods. In addition, the by-law encourages mixed use while at the same time introducing the idea of urban agriculture as a form of inner-city land development. Urban design is stressed through presenting guidelines that guide all forms of development and includes the areas of landscaping and lighting provisions. The by-law acts as an important implementation tool of the Amman Plan and is a key regulatory tool for implementing its planning policies.

The Building & Zoning By-law will be reviewed on a regular basis to reflect any changes in planning policies or in the Master plan. The zoning regime is a dynamic document that will evolve according to changes in the community and emerging development trends. Discretionary Urban Design Guidelines based on local best-practices feature prominently within the regime, to direct site design and Amman’s new development review processes.

The zoning regime includes expanded residential development categories that offer a range of housing types and thus greater consumer choice and most importantly affordability.

It also includes zoning categories such as Open Space, Commercial, Mixed Use Corridor, High Density Mixed Use, Industrial, Agricultural, Hazard Land, City and Regional Infrastructure, Quarries and Mineral Extraction Natural Heritage. The zoning regime adopts sustainable design initiatives such as xeriscaping (landscaping in arid areas) and transit-oriented design. Modern parking and loading requirements emphasize flexibility and build upon GAM’s commitment to public transportation and mixed use development.

Several new categories will be introduced in the new by-law such as the Holding Zone that allows GAM to prevent development until certain conditions such as infrastructure services and site remediation are met. The Special Planning District is another new category that covers unique areas that require special zoning, urban design and land use policies, such as Downtown, Abdali, and new communities. A third category is the Hazard zone that prevents development in areas with unsafe topographic or geologic conditions; and a fourth category is the Overlay zones that include Natural Heritage areas to protect environmentally sensitive areas, and Cultural Heritage areas of cultural and historical significance.
The Capital Parkway is one of the City’s key corridor developments in the execution of its long term vision for the City. It is a mixed use development over an area of 1,530 dunums, with major clusters for institutional uses. The project advances the vision established for Amman as a city that is:

- efficient, inclusive, and multicultural
- a destination for investment and visitors
- a center for heritage and arts, green and sustainable, and friendly to pedestrians,
- advancing citizen centered governance.

The Capital Parkway is based on Amman’s character as a city and builds on its role as a mediator and connector between East and West Amman and between the High Density Mixed Use areas (A-C). The site represents the continuity of the implementation of the Master Plan strategy in those areas at all levels. The project is designed to respond to the topographic nature of the site and makes best use of its extreme slopes while preserving Amman City panorama. The project also takes into consideration the homogeneity of the design with the surrounding areas in terms of scale and harmony with the urban fabric and its movement and open space networks.

Project Objectives:

1. Reducing time and effort required to complete any institutional transaction since most transactions require referring to more than one department.
2. Easing the load on the road network, transportation and infrastructure resulting from the intensive use of public and private transport as a result of the need to travel between different parts of Amman.
3. Contributing to the improvement of the urban fabric of the city of Amman.

Abdoun Corridor passes through Capital Parkway and is placed at the bottom of the valley. It is then split and distributed to produce a weaving network that responds to the natural topography and links to the adjacent neighbourhoods. The core zoning designation for the land along this valley will be institutional uses and mixed use areas. Mixed Use Residential / Commercial areas will be used as infill between the institutional clusters to create a 24 hour populated corridor. Land use designations for the hill slopes allow for more private use leading to residential areas occupying the top of the hill slopes, blending with the existing surrounding neighbourhoods. This will enhance the appeal of Capital Parkway as a choice location for living. Affordable housing can also be integrated with other residential schemes to produce a highly diverse community.

Transit and transportation systems will be designed to help optimize the expected growth and development in Capital Parkway and the surrounding areas in the City. Throughout Capital Parkway, a series of open and green spaces run along the bottom of the valley to form a linear park that includes two main water bodies, an urban pond and a wetland. The valley park compliments the public spaces of the institutional buildings in addition to improving the quality of life of those who will live and work in Capital Parkway and the surrounding areas.
The Action Area Plan for Downtown Amman and Revitalization Strategy ("The Plan") will guide the development of Downtown Amman for the next 20 years and beyond. The Plan will lay out a vision for the Downtown's future and in doing so; the Plan provides downtown Amman with a context for its investments, a continuity of improvements, and a consistency in its efforts toward integrating planning, with the goal of creating a critical mass of activity downtown.

Throughout the planning process, stakeholders from both the public and private sectors are involved, and ideas from the public are being solicited through public consultation forums. Planning will be geared towards creating an overall revitalization strategy but at the same time focusing on specific action areas that will set a detailed framework for implementing action oriented projects.

The Plan will complete component plans and strategies for the overall study area and revitalization projects for downtown action areas. Subsequent phases will overlap to ensure that conditions understood at one scale are applied at another.

The Plan is to be completed over four general phases as follows:

**Phase 1** Preparation of the Situation Analysis Report at the community planning level. This initial phase will provide an information baseline for existing conditions in the downtown area.

**Phase 2** Facilitate the creation of the community's Vision for the downtown and develop alternative development strategies, evaluate alternatives, and select a preferred development concept.

**Phase 3** Preparation of a Draft Master Plan that will provide a draft land use concept for the Downtown in a comprehensive Plan which combines spatial or physical plans and policy. Specific Action Areas as identified in Phase 2 will be detailed into revitalization projects.

**Phase 4** Preparation of Final Master Plan which will provide final land use and policy for the study area as well as detailed revitalization strategies and projects for targeted Action Areas. Action Area Briefs will be prepared including detailed design, policy, guidelines, and zoning regulation, which will provide precedents for developing full urban design guidelines and a downtown zoning regulation in 2010.

The first phase of the Plan is scheduled to be completed by January 2010.
In the fall of 2008, the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM) completed the consolidation of lands immediately northeast of the City’s historic downtown area. Known collectively as the "Wadi Amman", these lands serve as a major gateway to the downtown core of Amman and various residential, business and administrative clusters and destinations within Amman. The Wadi Amman will be developed on the basis of a comprehensive plan to ensure that this area is coherent in design and accessible to the public.

Wadi Amman re-establishes the city's historical core. Flexible building regulations, harmonious designs and educational programs will accentuate Amman's unique topography and rich cultural heritage. Through the introduction of contemporary designs and technologies that complement Amman's existing heritage, Wadi Amman will introduce a new geography of centrality which will reposition the city's historic centre from a once neglected core.

The city centre will be revived through the introduction of educational programs and job opportunities facilitated through high-speed light-rail transit penetrating Wadi Amman's centre and connecting the neighboring districts. Tourism will be induced through outreach events and programs that will encourage pedestrian experience of different attractions and historical landmarks.
Following the success of the Amman Plan, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MoMA) initiated a project for the development of Master Plans for a number of municipalities that include: Greater Irbid, Greater As-Salt, Mahis, Fuhays, Ayn Al-Basha Al Jadida, and ‘Arda Al Jadida, and Growth Strategies for Ruseifa and Birin Al Jadida.

The project also includes an advisory/capacity building component that would assist MoMA and the concerned municipalities to implement the Master and Growth Plans in the different cities.

The Plans will guide the development of a large portion of the Governorates and Municipalities for the next 20 years and beyond. They will take into account a number of aspects: balancing nature with culture, tradition with growth, and historic preservation with modernization.

They contain a Vision in 2030 derived from public forums and consultations held with the partner municipalities and authorities. The Plans provide a policy and regulatory framework to contain, direct and focus growth and development for the benefit of residents and workers. In doing so, the Plan contains a number of component plans that address planning at different scales: Regional, Metropolitan and Community.

The overall planning framework has been guided and developed by the Planning Team, consisting of municipal partners, Amman Institute and with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MoMA).

These Plans are not conventional “top-down” Master Plans, but rather they are a series of component plans that respond to critical development issues faced by the municipalities and the Ministry. The component plans are developed according to overlapping project phases and based on the communities’ vision and aspirations.

**Greater As Salt/ Shafa Balqa Master Plan**

The Shafa Balqa Masterplan is a regional plan for five different municipalities including Greater As Salt, Fuheis, Mahes, ‘Arda Al Jadida, and ‘Ayn El Basha Al Jadida. The main purpose is to create a vision for the year 2030. The plan provides answers to the following questions: In what direction will the city expand? How will it absorb the increase in population and at what densities? What is the cost of expansion, priorities and programs for service provision?

The Master plan is being planned on various levels: regional, municipal and local. Its main purpose is to determine growth challenges facing the region, and designating non urban land use areas, thus providing potential investors with guidelines for development.
The Amman Real Estate Market Report has been prepared by international and Jordanian real estate development experts. It is based on a thorough study of the Real Estate Market in Jordan and Amman. The study involved a number of extensive interviews with members of the development community; an analysis of economic and population projections, including demographic profiling; and a review of projects under construction and ‘in-the-pipeline’. The study drew on a comprehensive database that the Ai has established in collaboration with the Greater Amman Municipality, using sophisticated Geographic Information Systems technology.

Amman Real Estate Market

The real estate and property market in the region is worth an estimated USD 200 billion making it one of the most progressive sectors in the world with Jordan playing a major part in this boom.

Since 2003, Amman has had a significant population and credit market growth that changed the face of the city radically. These changes developed as a result of both national and international factors like the soaring fuel prices in the GCC countries which have directed many of the investors to Jordan, especially those from the Gulf countries. Another factor was the political instability in neighboring countries like Iraq, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria and Iran which led investors to search for a safe haven such as the one found in Jordan in order to secure the future of their capital and returns. In addition, the influx of migrants from Iraq and other neighboring countries who decided to settle in Amman and eventually invest their money in the capital’s businesses developed the city further. The market-friendly setting Amman offers that ranges from modified Landlord and Tenant’s laws to the flexible credit facilities was another important reason that appealed to developers and investors.

The real estate sector in Jordan has been gradually expanding with land transactions increasing by 28%, and building transactions by 3% between 2006 and 2007. In 2007, investments in the real estate sector grew by 40% to reach a value of USD7 billion, compared to USD5 billion in 2005. In addition the real estate sector represented around 4% of the gross domestic product in 2006 and 2007 compared to 3% in 2005.

It is predicted that the real estate industry in Jordan would benefit from more than JD 13 billion worth of investments in the near future. If impending and ongoing infrastructure projects are considered as well, this number would likely increase to JD 15 billion.
Centennial Forums

A series of public forums have been organized as part of Greater Amman Municipality’s Centennial celebrations. The first forum was held in February 2009 and focused on the Role of Youth in the City, the second forum which was held in June 2009 was entitled Transparency in Urban Governance, the third and last forum which will be held in January 2010 will tackle Community Organizing.

Centennial Youth Forum

In February 2009, the Institute held a youth forum which was sponsored by the Greater Amman Municipality and moderated by the architectural magazine Interruptions. The Forum hosted the Mayor of Amman, his Excellency Omar Maani, and provided the youth of Amman with the opportunity to interact with the Mayor and exchange views regarding their vision of Amman.

The forum revolved around three major themes:

1. Citizen Governance: the first theme discussed the role of citizens in the public decision making process. Two examples were discussed as case studies; the first was the Rainbow street, where the city of Amman took an active role in including citizens in the planning process; the second example was that of Al Harah Al Wardieh (Rose Neighborhood), where citizens approached the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM) and proposed new development.

2. Transportation: the second theme attempted to answer some questions related to Amman such as: What are the means of transportation in Amman? How are they organized and managed? Who uses the different types of transportation? What are the problems? What can we do and how to solve these problems? Transportation solutions from other cities in Brazil and France were also explored during the forum.

3. Amman post 2025: the third theme discussed the hopes and aspirations of Amman residents for their city. A video of 50 interviews with Ammani citizens was shown. During the interviews residents of Amman were asked what they would like to see in 2025 and what are their perceptions and aspirations. The interviews reflected some of the needs in Jordanian society, mainly a better educational system, more gardens and pedestrian routes. The main aim of the research was to compare citizen aspirations and needs to the aims and the goals of GAM and discuss whether strategies implemented are leading to the desired outcome.

The presentations were followed by an interactive and lively discussion between the audience and the Mayor. The forum was attended by 600 people.
Centennial Forums

Transparency In Urban Governance

The second forum dealt with transparency in urban governance: the diagnosis, investigation and prevention of various kinds of corruption. The forum also focused on requisites for good governance, and how institutional building and reform, when done properly are the main ways to tackle corruption in a public sector institution. In parallel the Arabic Translation of the book "Corrupt Cities – a practical guide to cure and prevention", by Robert Klitgaard, Ronald MacLean Abaroa and Lindsey Parris was launched.

The Forum's keynote speaker was Ronald Mclean Abaroa, a Bolivian politician and leading international expert in anti-corruption programs. MacLean Abaroa was the first democratically elected mayor of La Paz, Bolivia, and was reelected four times between 1985 and 1991 to this office.

The forum was attended by more than 400 civil servants, intellectuals, and members of the general public.

Community Organizing

The third and final forum in the Centinnial Forum series will include a keynote lecture and a two day training of community organizers. The forum will be led by Harvard University Professor Marshal Ganz a well known community organizer for 16 years with United Farm Workers a movement led by Cezar Chavez. Professor Ganz was president Obama’s advisor on community organizing in the last US presidential elections. The training will target environmental activists, and members of Ahl Al Himeh, Jordanian community leaders and activists from the Nature Preservation Groups and Ahel Al Himmeh Crowd an initiative to recognize activists who have impacted their communities. The training workshop will focus on two aspects: Community Organizing and Public Narratives within Islam and the Jordanian culture/history/folklore.
Corrupt Cities


Corrupt Cities is a practical guide to assist in the diagnosis, investigation and prevention of various kinds of corruption. Bringing together both a conceptual and practical framework, the publication is designed for citizens and public officials, especially at the municipal level. The approach presented discourages more controls, more laws and more bureaucracy, while focusing on systematic corruption and its preventive measures. It encourages consideration of the economic costs of corruption, rather than moral or ethical factors, as the driving force behind anti-corruption efforts. It also emphasizes that “fighting corruption should not be considered an end in itself, but an orienting principle for reforming urban administration.”

The arguments put forth are supported by examples of anti-corruption strategies used in cities such as New York, Hong Kong, and La Paz/Bolivia. The publication also includes practical tips to adapt these strategies to difficult scenarios, for example, in cities/communities characterized by political indifference, bureaucratic inertia, and where citizen support may exist but is yet to be mobilized. The book was circulated to a number of civil servants, politicians, and universities.

Knowledge Hub

The Amman Institute is planning to host an online platform that supports dialog, education, action, and partnerships towards sustainable urban development in Jordan and in the Region. The platform will broadcast authoritative content and research from the Amman Institute as well as support and foster user-generated content from city planning practitioners, students and researcher in the Arab region. The platform will be designed in a way that would be scalable and flexible, able to grow and evolve with its target audience. The goals of the hub are to foster collaboration; information sharing and knowledge management in the urban sector, to shape how communities approach urban development and to build an online platform that is relevant and useful, that the target audience among others will incorporate it into their everyday lives.
The program’s main goal is to develop a sense of attachment, ownership and responsibility towards the city, to reinforce the sense of citizenship and identification with Amman among the next generation. It has several objectives:

1. Orienting the children with their city (through a child friendly map, a coloring book and a puzzle): children will learn the names of streets, street types, landmarks, neighborhoods and map reading in general.

2. Teaching children about the formation of the city, its history, geography and identity. Acquainting children with city planning practices (by developing a narrative for the story of Amman to be told to children using one or several story books).

3. Enhancing the relationship between, children and their parents on the one hand and the city on the other to get them more involved in the geography, history and social life of Amman (producing a city wide passport that children will use to visit landmarks, archeological sites, and events).

4. Reducing the gap that has been formed during the years between West and East Amman. By showing and teaching the children about Greater Amman and revealing the city is managed, and planned, and explaining how everything is connected (through using the map, the children story books, the passport).

A child friendly map has been designed of the city of Amman. The map aims to build on children map reading and possibly drawing skills to make them better understand and analyze their neighborhoods spatially. It will also teach them to learn how to navigate maps, how to identify locations, and routes.

The Ai is also working on establishing an outreach initiative called the “Children passport” the initiative was introduced to bridge the gap between East and West Amman, whereby a passport will be issued to children. The passport will include maps and information on various iconic sites in Amman, the program is designed to introduce children to different elements of the city, whereby the Ai will organize “free” or subsidized visits for passport holders to main landmarks in the city.

The third main product the Ai is planning for children is one or several children’s books that would deal with various aspects of the city, its geography, history, and identity in an illustrated story book format that would be suitable for different age groups.
Training and capacity building

Partner Capacity Building

The capacity building program for partner organizations occurs during the implementation of the planning projects. Ai has developed a methodology to train and coach client staff, by teaming Ai staff with client/partner team members. This method has been successfully implemented during the Amman Plan process, where a number of planning skills were transferred to the Greater Amman Municipality Staff. A capacity building program for the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and concerned municipalities is underway, it involves on the job-training in urban planning.

Transportation Impact Studies Training

The Ai has designed a training course on undertaking Transportation Impact Studies, a requirement for development projects in Amman. The course was cosponsored by the Jordan Engineering Association. Around 37 professionals from the public and private sector participated in a five day course.

Internships

The Ai has an internship program for university students. The program is implemented in partnership with a number of local universities including the University of Jordan, the German Jordanian University, and the Jordan University of Science and Technology, and regional and international universities such as the American University of Beirut. The interns are supervised by Ai urban planners, and architects, who provide training and mentoring. Interns are involved in research, surveys, and urban design projects. Twelve interns have so far completed their internship at Ai, a number have been asked to join Ai staff upon graduation.
Sarah is currently the Team Leader for the Amman Downtown Revitalization Plan. She worked previously on the Capital Parkway Concept Master Plan and was the lead designer for the concept and master plan formation.

Sarah has previous work experience as an urban designer at EDAW Plc. in London where she was part of the landscape team for the design of the 2012 Olympic Park. She also worked as a landscape urbanist at Groundlab London on various urban and landscape projects including competitions such as the Longgang City Masterplan Competition, China (Winner), Alcazaba de Baza Competition: a design competition for the layout of public space, Spain, Brickbottom Ground n. Somerville Competition, Boston, US; and exhibitions such as the 2007 Hong Kong- Shenzhen Biennale- AA Landscape Urbanism exhibition.

During her studies at AA Sarah also took part in the Digital workshop on Generative Components, the Barcelona Biennale and Exhibition, and the ‘Sensitive Systems’ Exhibition in Mexico. She also received an honorable mention for her project submitted to the Great Egyptian Museum Competition.

Sarah holds a Master’s degree in Landscape Urbanism from the Architectural Association School of Architecture (AA) and a Bachelor’s degree in Architecture from the Jordan University of Science and Technology.
**Ai Team Profile**

The Ai harnesses substantial intellect, and capabilities. Our fully bilingual team of local professionals includes diverse global experience on a variety of urban development issues and is guided by the concept of providing independent, global thinking that is applied locally.

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**AL ASMAR, YOLLA**

**GIS Engineer**

Yolla is currently responsible for the GIS data management for the MOMA Project (Ministry of Municipal Affairs).

Yolla’s previous experience has been as a GIS Technician at the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) in Amman, where she provided support and project management for the GIS division of the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA), and other projects under the umbrella of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation. She has also provided support in the restructuring and the institutionalization of GIS in the Jordanian water sector.

Yolla holds a Master’s degree in Photogrammetry and Geoinformatics from Stuttgart University of Applied Sciences and a Bachelor’s of Surveying and Geomatics Engineering from Al- Balaqa’ Applied University, Jordan.

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**AL FAQIH, ROWAN**

**Research & Outreach Specialist**

Rowan has over ten years of experience working with NGOs in various sectors including health, education, and community development, on project design, fundraising, and monitoring and evaluation. Rowan has also worked as a researcher on various projects dealing with ICT, local government, and civil society for organizations such as Birzeit University, Bisan Center for Research and Development and ARUJ.

Rowan is a recipient of the Fulbright and Haniel Foundation Scholarships. She is also a documentary filmmaker.

Rowan holds a Master’s degree in City and Regional Planning from the University of California, Berkeley and a Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration from the American University of Beirut.
Ai Team Profile
The Ai harnesses substantial intellect, and capabilities. Our fully bilingual team of local professionals includes diverse global experience on a variety of urban development issues and is guided by the concept of providing independent, global thinking that is applied locally.

Al Habash, Lina
Architect & Urban Planner

Lina is currently working on the Shafa Balqa master plan. She previously undertook extensive work on the Area Plans, as well as housing density analysis in the Amman Plan.

Lina took part in the Amman Master Plan initiative as a trainee. She also worked with Architect Muhannad Herzallah- Point Design. Lina participated in a course on “Researching the City & Contemporary Issues in Urban Design and Transformations”.

Lina holds a Bachelor’s degree in Architecture from the University of Jordan.

Al Hussein, Basma
Urban & Environmental Designer

Basma is currently working on the Amman Downtown Revitalization Plan. She was previously involved in the Abdoun Capital Parkway – Amman Project.

Basma has previously worked as an Urban Designer Consultant at S333 Architecture + Urbanism in London. Basma also worked as an urban designer and architect at Symbiosis Designs Ltd., an urban planner and researcher at the Amman Commission and at Habitat for Humanity International in Amman.

Basma is the recipient of the RCUK (Research Councils UK) Award for Academic Excellence.

Basma has a Master’s degree in Architecture (with distinction) from the University of Nottingham, a Master’s in Housing and Urbanism from the Architectural Association School of Architecture (AA), and a Bachelor’s degree in Arts & Design from the University of the Arts, UK.


**Al Betawi, Yamen**

**Architect & Urban Planner**

Yamen is currently working on the Irbid master plan.

Yamen has experience working as an architect for BITAR Consultants Architects Engineers & Project Managers and Jadarah Consultant Engineers. He worked on a short term consultancy with the World Bank’s Transport and Urban Development Department on their Community Infrastructure Project in Jordan. In addition, Yamen has experience teaching courses such as Architectural Design at the University of Science & Technology.

Yamen has a Master’s degree in Urban Planning and a Bachelor’s degree in Architecture from the Jordan University of Science & Technology.

**Al Jalamdeh, Alaa**

**Architect & Urban Planner**

Alaa is currently working on the Amman zoning bylaw, focusing on new height policy, and community plans along the Airport Corridor. She was previously involved in the preparation of the Community Plan in Muqabalain – Amman.

Alaa is a specialist in 3D Studio Max. She participated in a course on “Researching the City and Contemporary Issues in Urban Design and Transformations”. Alaa also participated in the Arab Women Leaders Training Institute training.

Alaa Al-Jalamdeh holds a Bachelor’s degree in Architecture from the University of Jordan.


**Alkhalili, Nura**

Community Outreach Planner

Nura is currently managing the participatory planning process (community engagement) in the Downtown Amman Revitalization Project.

Nura has previous work experience as an urban planner with UNRWA, in the Camp Improvement Program (CIP) with the community participation within the refugee camps in Palestine.

She also worked as a technical assistant for the preservation of the cultural heritage at the UNESCO office in Ramallah, and as a media monitor with the European Union Office in Ramallah. She was an intern at Ammar Khammash Architects in Jordan.

Nura is a recipient of the ANIMP OICE award for her final masters’ dissertation.

Nura holds a Master’s degree in Urban Planning and Policy Design from Politecnico di Milano (Graduated with distinction), and a Bachelors degree in Architecture from Birzeit University.
Marah is currently responsible for the program with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. Prior to that she worked on the preparation of the Cultural Heritage Plan within the Amman Master Plan.

Marah has held many senior positions at different government agencies, including Planning and Development Director of the Technical Development Department at the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, and Director of Projects’ Studies Directorate and Head of Studies Section at the Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDC). During her 17 years of work at HUDC, Marah was engaged in numerous multi-disciplinary projects in urban planning and development, with a focus on low income housing and urban squatters in Jordan.

Marah was also involved in the evaluation and documentation study of the East Wehdat Upgrading Project, which received the Aga Khan Award for Architecture in 1992.

Marah holds an MBA and a Bachelor’s degree in Architecture, from the University of Jordan.
**AL KHUR AISAT, ASMA**  
**Architect & Urban Planner**

Asma is currently working on the Irbid master plan. She was previously involved in the Participatory Planning and Vision Development for the Irbid, As-Salt and Rusai fa master plans.

Asma worked as an intern at the Davis Wince Architecture office in Ohio preparing architectural and construction drawings for retail projects. She also worked at the Center for the Study of the Built Environment as a researcher, and at the Dar Al Omar as a City planner/ Urban designer where she took part in a team working on the Master Plan proposal for Al Shamiyyah in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. She also worked for Jamal Malhas office in Amman designing residential and mixed use commercial buildings.

Asma also served as an appointed member of the Columbus City Council and became the first Muslim woman to hold such a position in Ohio.

Asma holds a Master’s degree in City Planning from Ohio State University, with a focus on Environmental Behavior and Urban Design, and a Bachelor’s degree in Architecture from the University of Jordan.

**AL MHURABI, ABEER**  
**Urban Planner**

Abeer is currently working on the Rusai fa and Birin Al Jadida master plans. She previously worked on Participatory Planning and Vision Development for the Balqa master plan.

Abeer has participated in preparing a comprehensive plan for Jerome, Arizona and a preliminary study for Grant Road corridor project.

Abeer holds a Master’s degree in Urban Planning from the University of Arizona, with a focus on environmental and land use planning, where she did her thesis on ecotourism in Jordan. She holds a Bachelor’s degree in English / Arabic translation from the Applied Science University in Amman.
AL-NEMEH, IBRAHIM
Architect & Urban Designer

Ibrahim is currently working with the AI as an Urban Designer on the Amman Downtown Revitalization Plan, part of the Amman Master Plan.

Ibrahim received his work experience in architecture and interior architecture in Amman, Jordan as well as London. He has worked on historical buildings restoration projects at Marta Nowicka Studios in London, while in Amman he was part of Maisam architectural and design team and engaged with multiple projects such as the New City of Lahore Master Plan, the Coral Bay Island in Jeddah and the Living Wall Project By Foster in Jordan.

Ibrahim holds a Master's degree with a distinction in 'Cities, Design and Urban Cultures’ and an Honor Bachelor degree in Interior Architecture and Design from London Metropolitan University.

AL-ZAKARIA, RASHA
Architect & Urban Planner

Rasha is currently working on the Amman Downtown Revitalization Plan.

Rasha previously participated in the Master Plan Initiative as an intern, providing support to the affordable housing initiative and providing research and design services for the Area and Community plans within Amman.

Rasha took part in a student project to document select historic buildings in Karak, in cooperation with the Municipality of Karak. She was also shortlisted for the “ABDALI INNOVATION AWARD” a competition for innovative thinking and design quality in graduation projects.

Rasha holds a Bachelor's degree in Architecture from the Jordan University of Science and Technology.
Asi, Ruba
Architect & Urban Planner

Ruba is currently working on the Amman Downtown Revitalization Plan, she was previously involved in the Area Plans and Base Zoning of the Amman Master Plan Project.

Ruba has previously worked with Khamash Architects. She participated in a course on “Researching the City and Contemporary Issues in Urban Design and Transformations”.

Ruba took part in the “Just Jerusalem 2050” Competition hosted by MIT’s Department of Urban Studies & Planning and the Center for International Studies, with a project proposal entitled “102 Winters in Exodus”.

Ruba is also a contributor to “Interruptions”, a non-profit architectural publication and has had several articles featured in Al Ghad and other newspapers. Her graduation project thesis “The Old City Centre of Salt: A Case of Urban Stratification” was published by the Ministry of Culture and the Municipality of Salt.

Ruba has a Bachelor’s degree in Architecture from the University of Jordan.

Attour, Rawan
Senior Architect & Urban Planner

Rawan is currently working on the Shafa Balqa, Rusaifa and Birin Al Jadida master plans, and on the community plan component for the Shafa Balqa master plan. She was previously involved in the Area Plans and Base Zoning of the Amman Master Plan Project.

Rawan has work experience as a senior architect and interior designer with several architectural firms including the Urban Workshop, 2K and Fourth Dimension Architectural. She has been involved in the development of various master plans for the Jordan Valley Development, Zarqa City, Dead Sea, Azraq, Maan, Mafraq, Irbid, and Aqaba.

Rawan is the co-founder of Turath Heritage Conservation Management and Environmental Design Consultants. Rawan has a Bachelor’s degree in Architecture from the Jordan University of Science and Technology and a Bachelor’s degree in Environmental Design from Texas A&M.
DABABNEH, RANA
Local Economic Development Specialist

Rana is currently working on the Amman Downtown Revitalization Plan, as well as the Shafa Balqa, Irbid, Rusaifa and Birin Al Jadida master plans.

Rana has worked as a consultant developing a 3 year strategic plan for the Development Zones Commission. Prior to that she worked as a senior consultant at Al-Jidara Development Consultants in Amman, where she was involved in Local Economic Development Strategies and the establishment of community councils for Karak and Madaba governorates.

She was also in charge of designing and populating an investor information system, developing area regeneration strategies for Al Abdali and Rift Bay Projects. Rana also worked as a research analyst for the Community Development Group on a small and micro business survey, research on women’s participation in Information and Communication Technology sector, assessment community consideration in a major affordable housing project.

She co-authored a publication entitled “Mindset, Environment, Conditions & Responsibilities for Jordan to Flourish as a Hub for Entrepreneurship”, for the Young Entrepreneurs Association in Jordan.

Rana holds a Master’s degree in Local Economic Development from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), a Master’s degree in International Trade from the Jordan Institute of Diplomacy and a Bachelor’s degree in Economics from the University of Jordan.
Farhan, Bilal  
Senior Transportation Planner & GIS Advisor

Bilal is currently working on the Situation Analysis, Growth Strategies/ Traffic and Transit for the Irbid, Shafa Balqa master plans as well as preparing the Situation Analysis for the Rusaifa master plan. Bilal was responsible for GIS data management for the Irbid and Shafa Balqa Master Plans.

Bilal worked for the Transport Authority in Dubai developing plans and prioritizing transportation projects. During his stay in the US he worked as a GIS analyst for JP Morgan Chase in Ohio. He also worked as a Transportation Planner for Mid Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC). Previously he was working for six years as a civil engineer at the Greater Amman Municipality (GAM) enforcing zoning laws, and supervising construction projects.

Bilal has experience in transportation planning, engineering, location modeling, spatial data processing, GIS analysis, research, and teaching. He has undertaken research related to GIS applications in transportation planning, business, and health. His work has been published in various journals.

Bilal has a Ph.D. and Master’s degrees in Geographic Information Systems and Transportation Planning from Ohio State University. He received a Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Jordan.

Ghadbhan, Rony
Architect & Urban Designer

Rony is currently working on Community Plans along the Airport Corridor.

Rony has experience working as an architect for several firms including HOK International Limited – London, where he was involved in a Master planning project in Abu Dhabi (Al-Ain Masterplan), Ralph Appelbaum Associates where he took part in designing a big monument and museum in Bahrain’s capital Manama. He also joined The Urban Workshop in Jordan that manages major development sites around Jordan (Amman, Mafraq, Zarqa, Irbid, Ma’an…), as a consultant and design developer and was hosted by Urban Exchange London while he was working on some of these projects. He also worked for Al Nasser Architects, Faris and Faris Architects and as a graphic designer for Team Young & Rubicam.

Rony plays in the Jordan National Rugby Team, and is a committee member of the Jordan Rugby Football Club (JRFC). Rony holds a Bachelor’s degree in Architecture from the Applied Science University in Jordan.
HALASA, DANA
Architect & Urban Designer

Dana is currently working on the Shafa Balqa master plan. She was previously working on the Model Housing Community in Amman.

Dana worked at Symbiosis Design Ltd. in Amman where she was involved in the conceptual design of various mixed use commercial project. She also worked at Dar Al Handasah in Beirut.

Dana has participated in several exhibitions including “Architecture of Jabal Luweibdeh Exhibition” at the French Cultural Center, and “Exhibit08: The Nottingham declaration” at the London Festival of Architecture.

Dana is a recipient of the Karim Rida Foundation Scholarship. She was also awarded CMPG Architects’ prize for excellence in urban design.

Dana holds a Master’s degree in Architecture in Urban Design from the University of Nottingham and a Bachelor’s degree in Architecture from the Jordan University.

HAMDAN, SHAHIRA
GIS Engineer

Shahira has previous experience working as a GIS software engineer for the Ministry of Public Works and Housing on the Master Plan study-Amman Development Corridor; for NAVTEQ - Navigation System for Jordan; and General Computers and Electronics Co.

She also received technical training at the Natural Resources Authority and the Department of Lands and Survey in Amman, Jordan.

Shahira has a Bachelor’s degree in Surveying and Geomatics Engineering from Al-Balqa Applied University in Jordan. She graduated from the Jubilee Schools- King Hussein Foundation, a secondary school for students with exceptional academic ability.
HIARI, SANDRA
Architect & Urban Planner

Sandra is currently involved in the development of the Amman Zoning Bylaws. She worked on the Community Plan along King Abdullah II Street in Amman, and has been involved in Ai’s outreach program. She is a regular contributor to JO magazine on urban related issues in Jordan.

Sandra’s previous work experience has been as a research assistant at the City College Architecture Center on community-based plans in New York City. While pursuing her master’s degree she was part of a team developing the waterfront of Wuhan City in China. Sandra has also worked as a research and coordination officer for the Center for the Study of the Built Environment, and as an architect with Sahel Al Hiyari & Partners. Sandra managed the publication of the book "Sahel Al Hiyari | Projects" sponsored by the Rolex Mentor and Protégé Arts Initiative Program. She also provided editorial support to “Architecture Criticism and Journalism: Global Perspectives”, published by the Aga Khan Award for Architecture.

Sandra holds a Master’s degree in Urban Design from the City College of New York, a Master’s degree in Urban Planning from the Jordan University of Science & Technology with a focus on Urban Law, and a Bachelor’s Degree in Architecture from the University of Jordan.

ISTATEYIEH, ISBAH
Architect & Urban Planner

Isbah is currently working on the Shafa Balqa master plan. She was previously an intern with the Amman Master Plan Project working on neighborhood density analysis.

Isbah has work experience as an architect for ManTech Engineering Co. designing residential, commercial and recreation facilities; she was also involved in an international competition organized by Architecture for Humanity to design “the classroom of the future”.

Isbah’s graduation project was selected to “The Fourth Architectural Conference” in Amman and was featured in Mi’marioun magazine.

Isbah has a Bachelor’s degree in Architecture from the Jordan University of Science and Technology.
MARAQA, HANIA
Vice President for Research & Outreach

Hania is currently the Amman Plan Project Manager. She was Senior Planner Advisor to the Amman Master Planning initiative since 2007 working on Corridor Intensification Strategy and Industrial Lands Policy. She was also engaged in the outreach program of the Amman Plan.

Hania’s past work experience has been as Associate Director of the Center for the Study of the Built Environment, based in Jordan. She has also worked with SM Dudin Architects and Engineers in Amman, Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation in Boston, and Ziad Akel and Partners in Beirut.

Hania has been the recipient of several awards including the American Institute of Architects award, the Harvard Kennedy School of Government Executive Education Scholarship for Leadership in the 21st Century, the Fulbright Scholarship, and the Fulbright Development Grant, and the Carroll Wilson Award.

Hania holds a Master’s degree in City Planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, with a focus on international development and regional planning, a Master’s degree in Architecture from the University of Arizona at Tucson with a concentration in housing and community development, and a Bachelor’s degree in Architecture from the University of Jordan.
POST, GERRY
Founder/ General Manager

Gerry is currently in charge of the overall management of the Amman Institute. He has been involved in the Amman Plan since its inception in 2006.

Gerry has over 30 years of experience in Urban Management. He has worked in more than a dozen countries advising both governments and the private sector in the areas of urban planning & development; housing, land management-including GIS, property taxation and land titling; environmental management, and public sector reform.

Gerry received several awards including the Nova Scotia (Canada) Export Growth Award and the Award for Innovation in environmental management presented by the Consulting Engineers Association of Canada.

Gerry has a degree in Urban and Regional Planning from Ryerson Polytechnic University in Canada. He is a registered Professional Planner and a member of the Canadian Institute of Planners.
RABADI, MARIA  
**Director of Projects**

Maria is currently the Director of the Project Management Office (PMO) at Ai. In addition, Maria worked on the Sustainable Model Housing Community, Abdoun Capital Parkway and the Amman Resource Center as part of the Amman Master Plan.

Maria was the Amman Commission Manager at the Greater Amman Municipality from 2005-2008 where she managed various development projects of the city, regeneration of special sites, and the creation of model public spaces in the City of Amman. These urban regeneration projects included Raghdan and Hashemite Plaza, Sweifieh Commercial District, Faisal Street, and Ashrafieh regeneration projects, in addition to architectural projects such as Darat King Abdullah II Performance Center. Maria’s previous experience includes Human Resources Assistant Manager at DHL- Amman, and Project Coordinator at the Jordan Intellectual Property Association. She also worked for three years as an Architect at the Hamameh Engineering Office, Amman, Jordan.

Maria holds a Bachelor’s degree in Architecture from the University of Jordan.

SHREIDEH, YAZAN  
**Senior Advisor, Investment & Development**

Yazan is currently spearheading the implementation of large strategic real estate projects in Amman, such as the Wadi Amman (Urban Strip) and the National Capital Parkway Projects.

Yazan has over 10 years of experience in the investment and real estate development sectors. He has served as Director of Real Estate Investment at Social Security Investment Commission, Director of Real Estate & Development at Aqaba Development Corporation and was most recently Chief Investment Officer at Jordan Dubai Properties.

Yazan holds a Master’s degree in Financial Services and Banking and Bachelor’s degree in Finance from Suffolk University in Boston, USA.
**TARWEH, DARYA**

**Research and Outreach Officer**

Darya is currently working on the Children’s Planning Initiative. Darya has work experience as an architect with Mawshour Architects and Consultants on projects such as the memorial of the late King Hussein. Darya also worked as an interior designer for Kayyali & Sons Ceramics, Nassons Entertainment Studios on the Cross Road Project, and O2 Design Office.

Darya is co-founder of Interruptions an independent architectural/cultural magazine that is distributed in Jordan and Syria.

Darya has a Bachelor’s degree in Architecture from the Jordan University of Science and Technology.

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**TORO, ELENA RODRIGUEZ**

**Environmental Planner**

Elena is currently working on the Birin Al-Jadida and Ruseifa master plans, she was previously working on the Shafa, Balqa, and Irbid master plans.

Elena has worked as a Senior Environmental Consultant at ECO Consult in Amman, a Climate Change Technician at Repsol YPF in Madrid and an Expediting Technician at the Tecnicas Reunidas SA in Madrid. Elena has been involved in the Environmental Impact Assessment of a number of projects. She has also worked on a Financial Analysis for Solid Waste Management and the Environmental Management Plan.

Elena holds a Master’s degree in Natural Resources Management from the International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation, and a Bachelor’s Degree in Environmental Science from the Universidad Europea de Madrid.
ZATARI, SAWSAN
Urban Planner & Sociologist

Sawsan is currently working on the Shafa Balqa, and Irbid master plans. She has previously worked on the cultural heritage plan for the Area Plans and on developing model housing community in the Amman Plan. Sawsan has previously interned at UNDP Syria.

Sawsan graduated with distinction from the American University of Beirut with a Master's degree in Urban Planning and a Bachelor's degree in Sociology. During her studies at AUB, she won the UNESCO workshop competition for the best University Initiative while President of the UNESCO Club.