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# Academia Open



*By Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo*

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# **Unveiling Baghdad's Urban Identity: A Comprehensive Study on the Dynamics of Urban Imprint**

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## **Abstract**

This research examines the "urban imprint" from an environmental and architectural perspective, focusing on Baghdad, Iraq. Analyzing Baghdad's urban evolution, considering social activities, ideological concepts, and economic factors, it aims to delineate characteristics contributing to the city's unique imprint. It underscores urban sprawl, population growth, and modernity's impact on the urban landscape, emphasizing the need for standards aligning with the city's identity. Findings reveal a dynamic process influenced by fixed and variable factors. Implications stress physical form assimilation to reflect local values, promoting sustainable urbanization. The study calls to halt Baghdad's urban deterioration, emphasizing the importance of regularly updating city-specific requirements for urban imprint. This research informs the global discourse on urban identity and design.

### **Highlights:**

- This research explores the concept of "urban imprint" with a focus on Baghdad, analyzing its historical evolution and factors shaping its unique urban identity.
- It highlights the ongoing dynamics of urban imprint influenced by urban sprawl, population growth, and modernization.
- The study emphasizes the need for tailored urban design standards to preserve local identity and promote sustainable urbanization.

**Keywords:** Urban Imprint, Baghdad City, Urban Identity, Sustainable Urbanization, Environmental Factors

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## Introduction

As the effects of human-induced activities are increasingly concentrated in city centers, calls have been made to reconsider defining and using indicators of a city's urban identity to create its own urban footprint in light of the changes that cities are experiencing on a global scale as a result of natural processes and human activity. The urbanization process, which began alongside industrialization, is without a doubt the first of these activities. The Industrial Revolution's shift in the mode of production caused a rise in population, which congregated in urban areas where agricultural and non-agricultural production, distribution, and control functions are concentrated as well as where class heterogeneity and cultural differentiation are evident[1].

Urban growth has emerged primarily for economic and demographic reasons, but it also has social, political, and economic repercussions, including traffic congestion, rising land, and rent costs, population overcrowding[2], rising crime rates, and unequal access to urban services among the population. In addition to altering the climatic conditions in the city, it also affects biodiversity, energy flow, and ecosystem structure at the local and regional levels[3].

With the main differences primarily resulting from the significant changes in industry and technology that have taken place over the past 150 years, modern urban sprawl is not significantly different in scale and impact from ancient suburban cities. Our modern-day suburban sprawl and suburbia are a result of the Industrial Revolution in the nineteenth century, which gave rise to Factories, mass production, and new modes of communication and transportation that have brought us to where we are today, the modern suburb [4].

The idea of identity also plays a significant role in how we view and interact with the urban environment in which we live. In addition to its characteristic of architectural innovation, urban and urban identity is connected to the specificity of place, its imitation of the local climate of each city, and its connection to the factor of time as well through its selectivity and imitation of local heritage. It is possible for identity to innovate architecturally because it is influenced by time, making it dynamic and moral. The climate was also a significant factor in its birth, and this is how it distinguishes itself from others [5].

Aside from its connection to the meaning factor, identity is what distinguishes a place from other places while also making it familiar [6] so imitating the local heritage after understanding it is another way to achieve it.

The English occupation and the emergence of global and Western architectural and planning trends, which carried new concepts that were completely different from the context in which they had previously followed, marked the beginning of the factor of friction with contemporary civilizations. Due to the uneven urban interaction between the two and the lack of a thorough understanding of these concepts, this in turn had an impact on our current urban reality or authentic urban environment. Due to this, we are no longer able to ensure that the Arab urban identity stays true to its original course and instead vacillates between slavishly copying Western and modern culture or completely transferring the old.

The lack of a correct understanding of both and a sound strategy in the process of balancing between them is the primary cause of the state of confusion that Arab architects experience regarding dependence on the past or copying from the West. Due to the reference of urban identity, this is what caused the Arab city to enter a state of pluralism, which resulted in... In turn, it is a state of both visual and intellectual dispersion [7].

## Method

The descriptive method is employed in this study. It first explains the relationship between the city's identity and its urban footprint before explaining how the city's identity changes can have an impact on the city and reflect its urban footprint. The development of new roads, alterations to the building skylines, shifts in the character of the city, and other changes all affect the urban footprint of the city.

### **The concept of urban identity :**

In modern literature, the word "identity" is used to convey the definition of the word, which expresses the quality of conformity: a thing's conformity to itself or its identicalness to its counterpart. Identity is defined as "the absolute reality of a thing or person that includes its essential characteristics, which distinguish it from others, and it is also known as the unity of the self" in modern dictionaries.

The general meaning of the word, which includes differentiation from others and conformity to oneself, remains the same whether we use the linguistic concept of the word "identity" or rely on the modern philosophical concept. That is the privacy of the self and the qualities, traits, values, and components that set the person or society apart from others [8].

The current use of the term identity has resulted in widespread intellectual confusion, which can be included in the



following two issues :

The initial problem As if identity were to be the modern Arab city that resembles, if not is a copy of, the traditional Arab city that first appeared in the first era of the emergence of the Arab city, identity is frequently understood in an absolute sense, isolated from all other conditions or circumstances. All of this is predicated on the idea that nothing from (others) should be quoted, even if it is claimed that the good and useful things are in opposition to what Arabs strive for in terms of distinction and difference if not superiority. The likelihood of preserving the city's social formation and urban structure increases with decreased external quotation and interaction[9]

Regarding the second issue: It has become common to connect identity to the past and the accomplishments made in it, as well as to what is fixed, does not accept change, and is not intended to be transformed. This is done to ensure that the characteristics that maintain a country's continuity over time do not vanish and that its authenticity is not studied because of the difficulties of the successes of the present. otherwise modern. Identity in this sense ultimately comes to mean isolation from the truth and stagnation in the present. The nation's ambition and hopes for the future are more closely related to identity than it is to the past[10]

In conclusion, a nation's cultural and civilizational identity can be summed up as the consistent, necessary, and universal collection of traits that set this nation's civilization apart from other civilizations. To preserve the urban imprint of the city, it is preferable that it be rarely quoted from outside the country.

### **Urban im print concept :**

Linguistically; The term fingerprint comes in the contemporary Arabic dictionary as “the trace of the finger on something, the trace of a stamp with the finger.”

Fingerprint [singular]: plural of fingerprints and fingerprints. It is stated in the Al-Munajjid dictionary of the contemporary Arabic language: The word fingerprint (noun) and its plural form (prints), which are: seal-trace, mark, stamp. As for “fingerprint”: the trace left by the fingers, a mark that enables one to establish the identity of a person.

It was stated in the Al-Waseet Dictionary that: “Fingerprint: the trace of a seal with a finger” and likewise in the Al-Ra'id Dictionary the meaning of the word (fingerprint) was identical to what was stated in the Al-Waseet Dictionary as “the trace of a seal with a finger”. In Al-Munajjid's book on language, it comes with the meaning of the sign, which is common speech

In the English language, the Oxford English Dictionary indicates that the definition of imprint :

A great effect on something so that it cannot be forgotten, changed, etc.

Print or press a mark or design onto a surface.

In the English dictionary (Merriam-Webster), the term “imprint” is mentioned as follows:

1. A mark or depression made by pressure, the fossil imprint of a dinosaur's foot.
2. An identified name (as a publisher) placed conspicuously on a product, also: the name under which a publisher issues books.
3. An indelible distinguishing effect or influence.

The first known use of the Imprint 15<sup>th</sup> century, in the meaning defined above

The International Arab Encyclopedia has defined fingerprinting as a process used to determine identity and is based on impressions taken of the ends of the fingers and thumbs. These impressions consist of line shapes that closely cover the tips of the fingers (The International Arab Encyclopedia, 1999).

### **The relationship of identity with the urban im print :**

Identity means the absolute reality of a thing or person that includes its essential qualities, and that is attributed to (it) (Al-Munajjid, 1975, p.875). In contemporary literature, the word identity is used to convey the meaning of (Identity), which expresses the characteristic of identification and uniqueness. “As a separable entity, not in the sense of equality with something else, but in the sense of individuality, or oneness” [14], and in this case identity expresses the fact that the thing remains single and alone, despite the multiplicity of its names and despite Of the changes that occur to it and its quality [11].

The concept of identity comes in the sense of distinction (distinctiveness of a thing), that is, being unique to it, and it is used as an accompanying term to the word (distinctiveness, privacy), which is a word of Latin origin meaning (Absdure Sameness) and was used in English to mean (Identity) [12].

The cultural and civilizational identity of a nation is the fixed, essential, and shared amount of general



characteristics that distinguish the civilization of this nation from other civilizations, and which give it a national character. Identity is not necessarily linked to the past more than it is linked to the future and the aspirations and completion of the nation.

Every city has a historical, geographical, economic, and planning background that gives it a cultural character and identity highlighted by its distinctive architectural details, whose presence is felt by simply walking in the streets and observing the style of construction and the occupation of spaces. It does not mean similarity as much as it is a reference for the details, the unity of the architectural style, the style of building used, and the way in which the historical blends with the modern, which gives cities The social/human depth that affects the societal structural characteristics of the residents[13].

Lynch defined the concept of urban identity by saying[14].

The simplest form of sense is identity, in the narrow meaning of the common term (a sense of place). Identity is the extent to which a person can recognize or recall a place as being distinct from other places as having a vivid, unique, or at least a particular character of its own. This is a quality often sought by designers and warmly discussed among them"

That is a person's capacity to recognize a place as a result of its distinction from other places in terms of its distinctive qualities and characteristics sums up identity. The environment's reliance on a particular use or activity for identity is very strong, and this is because users frequently engage in and interact with such distinctive activities. The ability of the environment to make people recognize it through their participation in its use and various activities gives it a unique identity and character, in addition to the ability to imprint its visual distinctiveness in their memories. As a result, the following definition of urban imprint can be developed:

#### **Levels of urban identity embodiment in Baghdad include :**

Four key areas were identified that aid in creating a physical identity in the city: land use planning, policies and laws, public participation, and financial resources. The concept of physical identity was discussed, and the effective components of creating physical identity were distinguished. Urban identity has changed as a result of the need for identity brought on by migration to cities and the cultural forms, beliefs, and practices that go along with it. As a result, work, social activities, lifestyles, and the physical characteristics of the urban form have all changed. What distinguishes identity is a difference, this is significant in defining identity when it is shared with the rest through nature, topographical characteristics, and site features. The characteristics of identity are in terms of the duality of similarity and difference in the concept of physical identity. As for differences, they can arise from various aspects of society and an individual's life, for instance. A dynamic and living structure, the city is.

Urban identity can be embodied at the following main levels:[15]

- The planning level includes (connection networks, paths, streets, and squares in terms of their relationship with buildings and in terms of their penetration of the topography).
- The design level includes distinguishing buildings (configuration style, building characteristics, and the effect of facades on people's perception).

The identity of the city of Baghdad can be inferred through awareness of the entire environment and everything that affects it. Methods of evaluating the environment differ according to local communities, as they are inherently linked to the needs and values of each community. Culture has an effective role in enabling communities to express themselves. In addition to the tools of expression that are used in every city, such as science and technology, which in turn affect economic factors [16]

The levels of embodiment of urban identity in the city of Baghdad were determined, and urban identity is achieved on three levels:

1. The planning level, such as determining land uses, street planning, space utilization, and housing distribution.
2. The level of the urban landscape, integrating people with their environment by giving priority to pedestrians, and being suitable for climate and technology in addition to its suitability for vehicles.
3. The design level: designing the residence in a way that achieves privacy, and security, and providing a garden to enhance communication with nature, and that the shapes used in the facades, for example, suit the local climate and heritage shapes in a way that preserves their intrinsic value to create continuity and a sense of belonging, and that shapes achieve unity through diversity.

Urban identity, which is defined by a duality of similarity and difference, is the distinction of a place with distinctive characteristics that reaches the collective level as a result of its assimilation of the variables of social life. At two levels (the planning level, which includes the configuration of city streets and how they interact with buildings, and the design level, which includes building types and characteristics), urban identity is embodied and expressed in the built environment .

## Criteria for evaluating a good city identity :

Identity and personality are two terms for the same thing, and recognizing personality depends mainly on physical characteristics. This is especially true of historical cities. Urban identity was defined as a city meeting the highest standards for identifying physical and urban characteristics and maintaining identity despite internal change. It was also noted that since the fundamental features and characteristics of a city's formations will crystallize similarities with other cities, these features must be the strategy used by the city's elements during change. A cohesive whole is created through development over time. To gauge the city's strong sense of identity in terms of architecture and urban design, three criteria have been identified. These are as follows:

1. Distinction from others and similarity to its essence (main principle).
2. Adaptation and dynamism during change and development.
3. Unity through diversity and pluralism.
4. The urban environment is considered one of the components of urban identity and includes (local activities, culture, and social forces), and that identity depends on the relationship between these elements, the type of organization, and the characteristics of describing the urban form such as (the location of the element, the type of organization, the boundaries of the form, the pattern, the complexity of the components)[17].
5. A city's identity plays an important role in shaping it as a place. However, in modern times due to changes in some
6. Basic Concepts Understanding the components of a city's identity has become a fundamental question. The answer to this question can be a solution to many problems, and in "Criteria for Defining and Evaluating the Physical Identity of Cities," three criteria are presented to determine these elements:
7. Differences and similarities: distinction with outsiders and similarity with insiders.
8. Endurance and change: a sense of connection to the past (continuity of values and concepts of the self) combined with appropriate innovation and creativity (changing circumstances, not the self).
9. Unity and pluralism: which indicates a connection between disparate and even contradictory elements, such that together they can form a whole.

According to the aforementioned, we can conclude that the distinctive urban identity is most expressively embodied by the physical aspects of urban identity and the characteristics of the location. The study provided specifics on how to evaluate identity using its traits, including differentiation through difference and similarity, adaptation through continuity and evolution, diversity within unity, and multiplicity .

## Study status :

### The city of Baghdad and its historical center :

(The city of Baghdad is described, specifying its importance and most of the problems it suffers from.) The historic center of Baghdad has been subjected to deterioration and decay in all its urban, social, economic, environmental, and urban aspects. This city still includes its most important markets, buildings, and historical monuments, some of which date back to the Abbasid era. It extends over a length of more than three kilometers on the Tigris River on the Rusafa side and is interspersed with Al-Rashid Street, which connects the two gates of the historic city, Al-Bab Al-Sharqi from the south, and Al-Bab Al-Muadham from the north, while it is bordered by the River. Tigris to the west and Muhammad Al-Qasim Road to the east. It represents a historical facade of the city of Baghdad, as it includes several heritage sites, including the Al-Qashla Building, the Saray Market and Mosque, the Abbasid Palace, the Baghdad Museum, and other historical sites, in addition to its distinctive view of the Tigris River. The study area is shown in Figure (1), which is represented in the area enclosed between Bab Al-Muadham Bridge, Al-Shuhada Bridge, and Al-Rashid Street overlooking the Tigris River. It includes most of the historical and heritage sites and also includes major historical markets. After the field study, it became clear that the most important problems that appear on the site and that caused it to be chosen are :

- *The urban fabric of the city center was torn apart and not integrated, it lost its distinctive identity and urban effectiveness and was completely isolated from the riverfront extending along its length .*

- *Heritage places in the region, such as the Al- Qashla Building, the Abbasid Palace, the Governor's House, and others, were neglected without exploiting the open spaces for activities that could revitalize the place .*

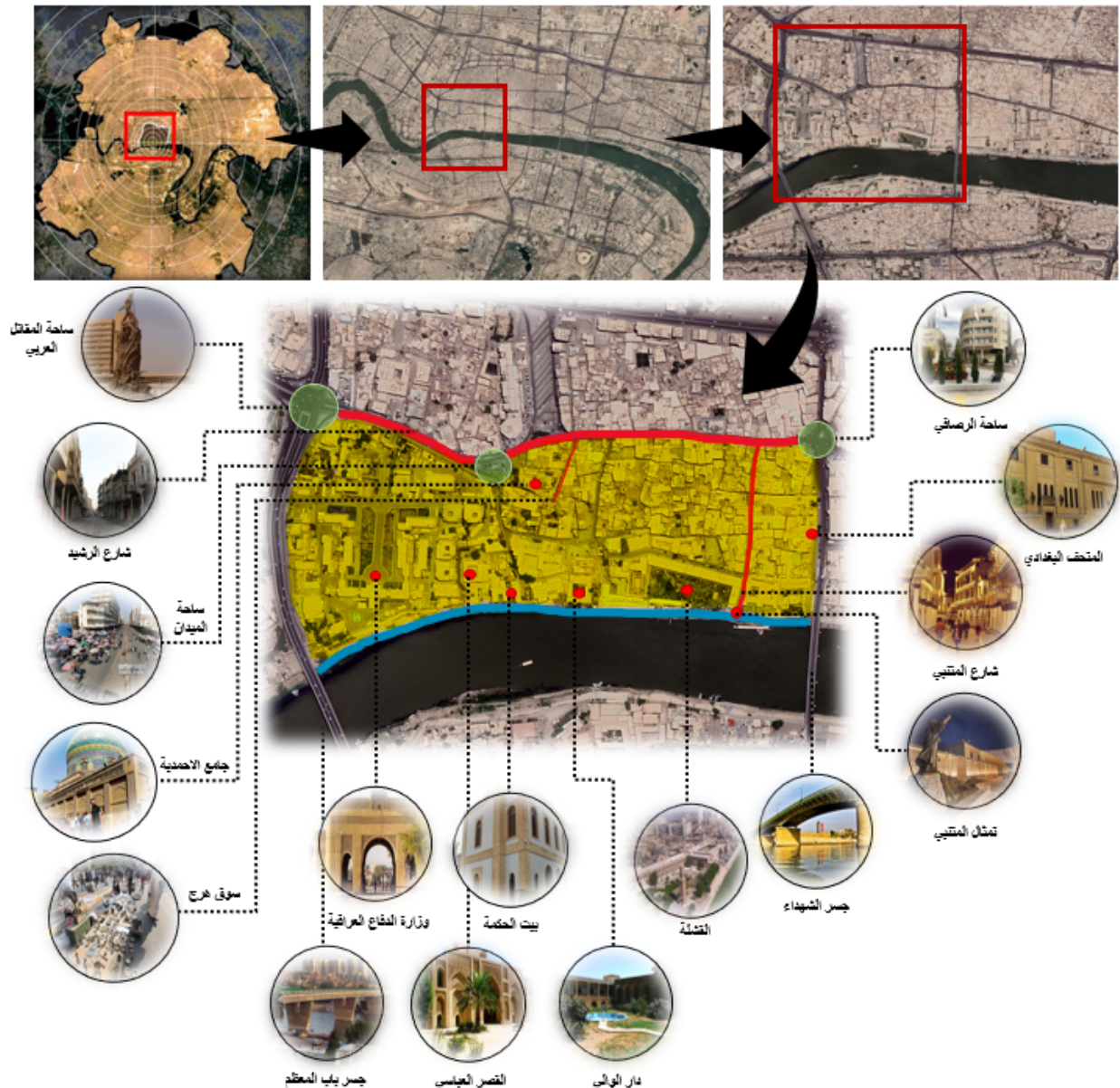
- *The decline of pedestrian routes from the city center, their absence by the river , and the lack of recreational and cultural activities negatively affect the historical identity of the city .*

- *Dilapidation of infrastructure, which causes poor and outdated services, various environmental problems and pollution, frequent fires and the losses resulting from them, and discourages investment attraction .*

*The deep arterial cut caused by the construction of modern roads led to the dismemberment of the urban fabric of the old city, the disruption of its urban functions, and the loss of its prestige and historical and heritage character .*

- *Diversity and overlap in land uses (residential - commercial - recreational - religious - cultural) .*

- *The vitality of the area and its crowded activities .*



**Figure 1.** shows The location of the study area in relation to the city of Baghdad, its borders, and the most important features surrounding it. Source: Author based on Google Earth maps and the field visit to the site

*Through reviewing previous literature, it was noted that there is a lack of studies that dealt with defining or clarifying the urban footprint in the historical center of Baghdad .*

- The absence of urban planning, represented in regulating the spaces between pedestrian and car traffic, due to car traffic dominating the street and exploiting a large part of the street as parking lots, and this in turn causes the loss of the advantage and value of the area .

*The construction of Al-Rashid Street at the beginning of the last century represented the first demolition of the urban system of the Old City, which continued throughout the first half of the twentieth century in a way that ended the features of the urban structure of the Old City. The rapid urban expansion witnessed by the city of Baghdad in recent decades has created enormous social and economic challenges, especially in this part of the city, as it has been exposed to accumulations of deterioration and decay in all its social, economic, environmental and urban aspects [18] . Fig. (2)*





**Figure 2.** shows: The gradual disappearance of the old city and how the urban structure of the old city changed and its urban structure was dismembered during seven decades through the construction of modern roads through its interwoven urban fabric. Source: Author based on [18]

### **Evolution of Al-Rashid Street historically (historical description)**

**The study provides a description of the neighborhood chosen for the study, known as the Al-Rashid Street neighborhood, which constitutes a sizeable portion of Baghdad's historical center:**

Al-Rashid Street was first established in 1915, making it one of Baghdad's oldest and most picturesque streets [19]. When the Ottoman Empire ruled, the street was known as (Khalil Street). To make it easier for the Ottoman army and its vehicles to move around, Pasha Jadice was given its name in honor of Khalil Pasha, the governor of Baghdad and head of the Ottoman army. As a result, construction on this street was urgently undertaken despite opposition from Baghdadi scholars and clerics. When paving, putting in ground services, and obstructing the road to the mosques, curves had to be made. Due to these issues, I'm on the streets. The Al-Hussein Pasha Mosque and the Heydar Khana Mosque, both built by Davut Pasha in 1819 AD, as well as a number of former markets like the Souq Al- Haraj , Souq Al- Saray , Bab Al-Agha, and Al- Shorja , are located on this street [20] , Al- Midan Square and Hafez Al-Qadi Square are just two of the most significant squares that can be found on this street. The announcement that the traffic system would switch from right to left in the early 1920s caused significant chaos on the streets. The traffic system used in Britain, and the steering wheel was on the right. The paving of Al-Rashid Street, the first street built within the city's historic urban fabric, began in the middle of the 1920s. The buildings overlooking the street were designed in Figure ( 3 ), in a distinctive architectural style, in their historical context, to form an important cultural heritage in Baghdad [21].



**Figure 3.** *shows the scene of Al-Rashid Street in 1945*

*Source: (Stefano, 2000)*

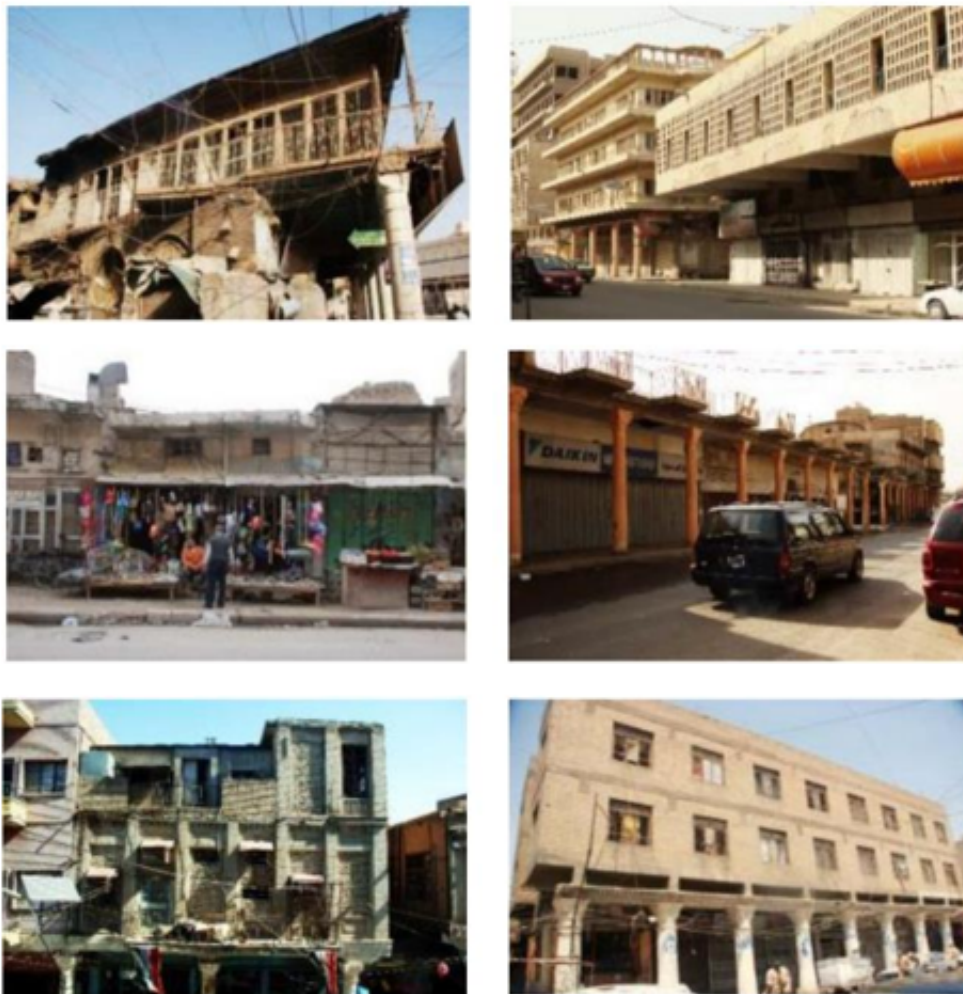
### **The following phase:**

The spread of modern architecture (also known as the international style), which is characterized by One of the most obvious changes in Baghdad's architecture was the use of clear lines and simple shapes as well as reliance on the functional principle. Sometimes, though, it seems as though its insertion into the urban fabric without a justification for it disrupts the cohesiveness of the city. When Midhat Ali Mazloun's administrative building (Soufir) on Al-Rashid Street first appeared in 1946, the Baghdad skyline changed due to the addition of multi-story structures[22]. The division of each era of the urban landscape was made possible by carefully examining the reliable sources that provided the following details: Baghdad changed from being a circular, fortified city to one with an organic layout. The city maintained its compact layout until the beginning of the British colonial period in 1917[23]. The Greek design companies Minoprio, Spencely, and Doxiadis Associates created the general master plans for Baghdad in the 1950s. Strong European influence encouraged modernization; Al-Rashid Street, a road that ruthlessly disrupts a pattern and affects significant historical buildings, is one example[24]. The Rusafa stage, which included four historically significant areas in Baghdad, can be divided into three stages: the old Rusafa stage (when the Rusafa wall was demolished by Medhat Pasha in 1869), the stage (when a dam was built in 1917), and the stage (when it was rebuilt in 1917). Al-Rashid Street was finished in 1918 to protect Al-Rusafa from flooding, and Martyrs' Bridge was built to create connections between Al-Rusafa and Al-Karkh before the final phase, the Municipality of the Capital (1984), expanded Al-Rusafa and brought it into the modern era[25]. The region was divided into four distinct stages, the first of which began in 1853 with the construction of the Caliphate Palace, the market, and some neighborhoods surrounded by the city wall. This was followed in 1908 by the urban expansion of the old fabric, and the third stage involved the building of new roads for movement within the city (the old traditional fabric), which represented The Karkh and Rusafa sides were joined by these axes until 1950, keeping them straight and parallel to the river. The first stage marks the beginning of the path and the influence of Western philosophy, whereas the fourth stage, which is the current stage, is marked by the erosion the area is undergoing and the beginning of projects to widen Haifa Street. Along with the opening of new, broad streets with uniform heights and the presence of city landmarks, it also contributed to the development of those. These streets were reminiscent of those in the European Renaissance.

### **The third stage (the reality of the situation):**

The region suffered significant deterioration as a result of conservation decisions on the one hand and neglect on the other, which led to the decline of the city's visual landscape. warning signs of eye neglect (Al-Hink awi, W.S.,

Zedan S.K., 2021, p.3) were exemplified by the deterioration of the urban environment and spatial organization brought on by the aging of many urban areas and old buildings. (Al-Hinkawi, Hasan, Zedan, 2021, p. 631-640) and is exemplified by government interventions, poorly thought-out decisions, the loss of numerous traditional homes and pieces of heritage architecture, as well as the neglect brought on by these events. Additionally, some of them have been turned into shops and stores, which is contrary to their significance. This is one of the reasons for the visible signs of neglect, such as the removal of the historic floors and a large portion of the old Al-Murjan Mosque to straighten Al-Rashid Street [26]. The state of visual deterioration worsened as a result of the uneven distribution of activities and changes that followed the confusion in law and regulation in 2003. The use of the land and buildings, as well as the mixed-use of those buildings, is one obvious example of this deterioration, as is Al-Rashid Street [27]. Currently, Al-Rasheed Street has a number of structural and urban issues. For instance, randomly placed buildings, replacing hastily constructed buildings, incomplete buildings, Dilapidated buildings, buildings without columns or corridors, buildings added missing architectural elements to match the predominate architectural elements in the area in question, neighboring buildings, and distorted buildings, which led to distorted visual diversity in the facades of buildings as shown in the image below [21]. Figure (4)



**Figure 4.** shows: *Scenes from Al-Rashid Street at the present time*

Source: Author during the field visit to the site.

## **(Morphological description of Al-Rashid Street)**

All or the majority of buildings with street views now consistently use the corridor design. A series of five-meter-tall columns form a corridor that offers cover and protection. Most of the time, the street is no wider than 12 meters, which contributes to the human scale effect. Between nine and fourteen meters is the range of its height. A colonnaded passageway measuring roughly 3.5 meters wide and 5 meters high is formed by arcade buildings, which make up 70% of all street buildings. These 45 cm-diameter round columns give the street a sense of coherence and continuity. So it serves as its defining characteristic. The age, design, elevation, and purpose of street buildings vary greatly. Several of these buildings need to have their facades restored [28].



Al-Rashid Street's buildings have a ground floor with a one- or two-story arcade, giving them a height of between 9 and 14 meters. Due to the bridges that have been built since 1939, Al-Rashid Street is now formally divided into five separate areas. And the JCP study [29] Al-Rashid Street is divided into five sections: Al-Midan area, Al-Haydarkhana area, Al-Souq area, Al-Murabbaa area, and Al-Sinak area [28]. The main character of the street is threatened by the columns' susceptibility to corrosion and damage as well as the sporadic demolition operations that take place on them as a result of the construction of buildings without columns, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s. On both sides of Al-Rashid Street, there are 1,124 columns with a diameter ranging from 38 to 55 cm, the majority of which have cylindrical stems. When it comes to the capitals that adorn the columns, three different types—Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian—can be distinguished. These three types account for about half of all capitals, while the other half take the form of distinctive shapes that do not fit into any of the recognized traditional shapes. On two-thirds of the street's length, colonnaded arcades serve as Al-Rashid Street's official markers and serve as functional shelter from the sun and rain for onlookers. The arcades are still missing on the remaining one-third, though, for a variety of reasons, including adherence to modern structures built in the third quarter of the 20th century or incompleteness. Building. The balcony varies in width from 2.40 to 3.20 meters, and occasionally there is a 3 to 5 meter gap between the columns that form the arch [27].

### **Tools and measurement technique:**

The following techniques were used to gather the data needed for the case study:

1. Gathering information from existing documents obtained from the relevant agencies and divisions (the Capital Secretariat) about Al-Rashid Street and the area around it.
2. The research organizes and processes the information to concentrate it and analyze it using qualitative descriptive analysis (description and analysis) in the form of texts and images as well as in accordance with a historical sequence for each time period. The data collected in various forms of analysis are sorted and classified into specific groups, rearranged, and processed in this way.
3. Direct visit to Al-Rashid Street, measurement of the theoretical framework's indicators, and numerous photographs were taken as part of the actual observation of the city's urban landscape.
4. Using information gathered from the scenes and field interviews, graphs, and photographs, through descriptive analysis of the selected urban area's scenes, the data was processed. Within the constraints of the proposed theoretical framework, the gathered data was examined, and the analysis's findings were then assessed.

**According to the previous description (historical and morphological), the historical urban area of Al-Rashid Street is thoroughly analyzed for the formal stages of reading the urban cityscape that Al-Rashid Street passed through .**

### **Tracing the Renaissance era in the urban landscape of Al-Rashid Street :**

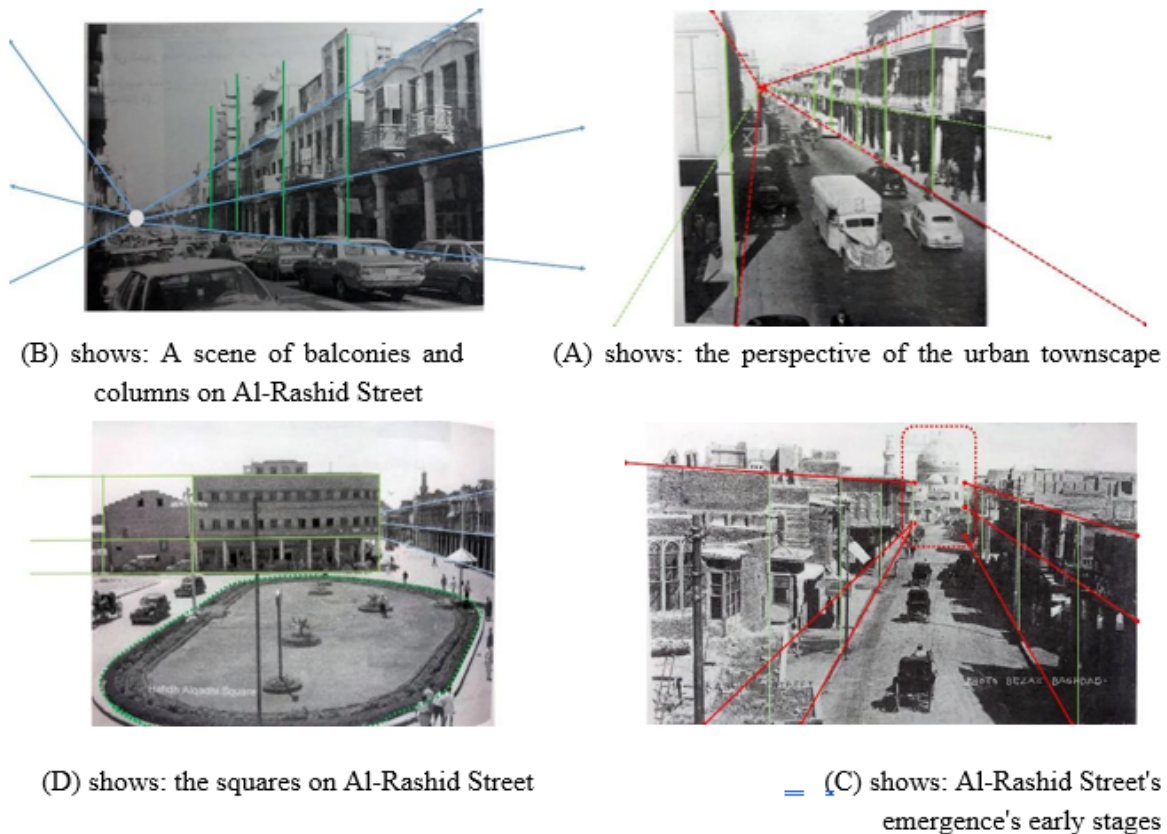
Al-Rashid Street initially shared characteristics with the streets that were created during the Renaissance era, Aesthetics are provided by the circular columns that create a sequential rhythm of shadow, light, emptiness, and mass and divide them, as well as other factors like the perspective scene, the unification of height and human scale, the presence of corridors that emphasize unity and continuity, and these factors. a sound and visual diversion from noise from traffic. The street's architectural details clearly illustrate the concept of human aesthetics. The majority of the buildings have unified architectural elements, despite the fact that the urban styles of the buildings vary. Due to the fact that most buildings have two floors and are embellished with balconies and other decorative features, the scene is made more exciting and consistently beautiful.

The market area and Al-Rashid Street, where the fabric includes architecturally distinctive buildings, are where we find the characteristics of the Renaissance scene (between the extension of the Martyrs' Bridge and Al-Ahrar Bridge). The most uniform and intricately designed facades are those between Abdul Karim Qasim Square and Hafez Al-Qadi Square. It also contains several notable landmarks and locations, such as the Abdul Karim Qasim Monument, Al-Murjan Mosque, and Al-Rafidain Bank. The idea of arenas is also present in the visual environment; Hafez Al-Qadi Square is the most noticeable example. Following the square comes significance in terms of recognizable architecture, visual coherence, and all-around aesthetics. The most significant landmarks of the Al-Rashid Street scene are the Al-Azbek Mosque, Al-Muradiya Mosque, and the Sultan Qaboos Mosque. If Al-Rashid Street is a (linguistic text), then its presence of monuments and squares, as well as the availability of the concept of the idea of man, the perspective of aesthetics, and its distinct presence, can be read as Renaissance architecture.

### **At the visual level, harmony and consistency can be seen in two ways:**

One can be found in the design and the other in the specifics; the former is concerned with details like color, scale, texture, style, architectural details, and building materials used (relationships at the part level), which are connected and provide overall formal unity and external harmony to the visual appearance. The first deals with context, composition, urban fabric, and appearance (relationships at the general level) [30] Figure (5)





**Figure 5.** shows: Urban scenes from Al-Rashid Street in the Renaissance era

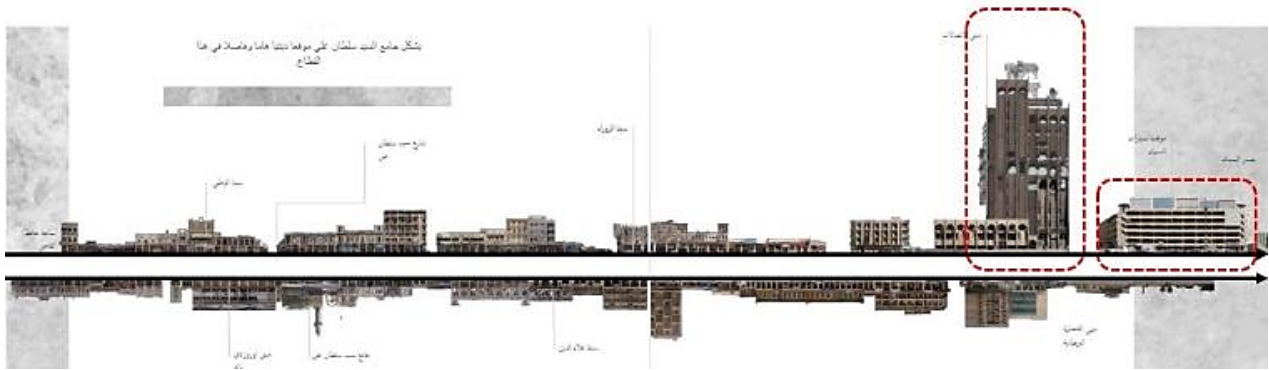
Source: [20]

## Tracing the modern era in the urban landscape of Al-Rashid Street:

The founding years and the spirit of the place, also known as the stages of modern architecture's spread, are two significant phases in Baghdad's development of the international style.

- The early twenties to the early forties comprise the first stage.
- The second phase, which spanned the years after World War II until the 1950s' end.

The second stage, as shown in figures (6) and (7), was the focus because it captured the essence of modern Baghdad and was a crucial and foundational stage in Iraq's development of modern architecture. Modern building techniques and materials are widely used, and efforts are being made to integrate complex engineering services. For the first time, buildings have integrated systems like electrical, elevator, air conditioning, water supply, and sewage systems. There are numerous factors that hastened this sudden and dramatic change in Baghdad's architectural landscape, including, Among them are the expansion of the nation's resources as a result of oil extraction activities and the adoption of modern architectural principles by numerous nations outside of Europe. It also helped to speed up this change by increasing the number of foreign architects hired at the time while decreasing the number of Iraqi architects. All of this led to the presence of numerous distinctive architectural works on Al-Rashid Street, including the Deftardar Building, Building of the Rafidain Bank, and Building of the Damarji, in addition to the urgent need to address the severe building shortage that Iraq has experienced for decades. which were distinguished by understated architectural treatments, both in their plans and Their facades, even the materials employed, are not entirely new, but the way they are built and implemented is more in line with traditional construction methods than with modern construction methods. These structures, along with others, The concept of the star architect first materialized when creating a panorama of architecture for the second phase. The Baghdadis romanticized their city because of their height and appearance [30]



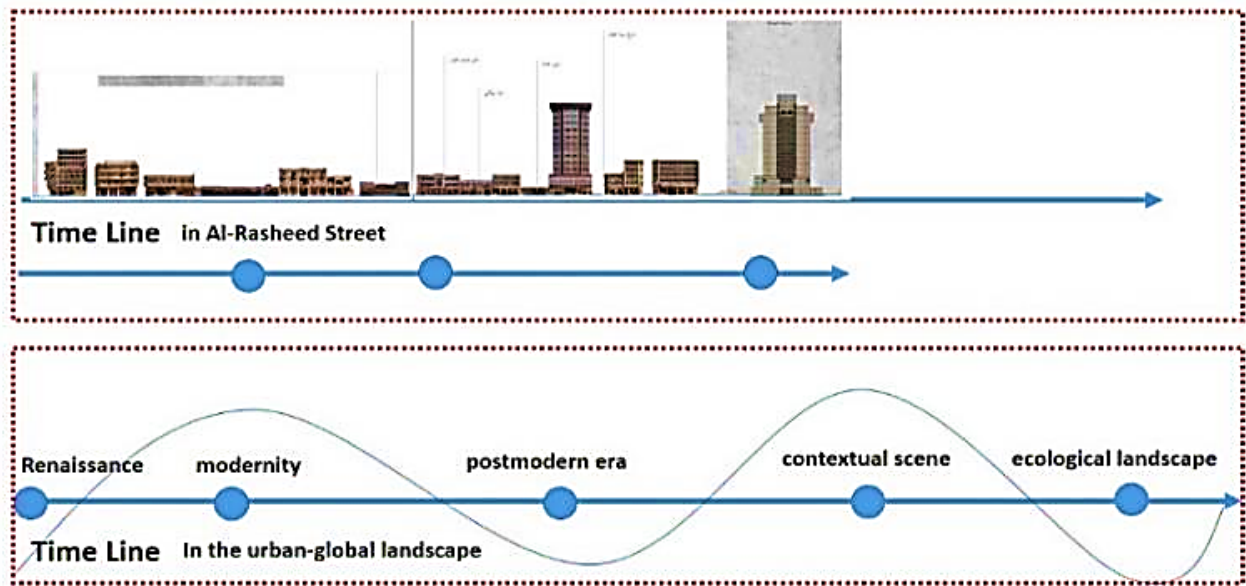
**Figure 6.** shows An integrated urban view of the region demonstrating the variety of structures and the arrival of modern architecture

Source: [27]

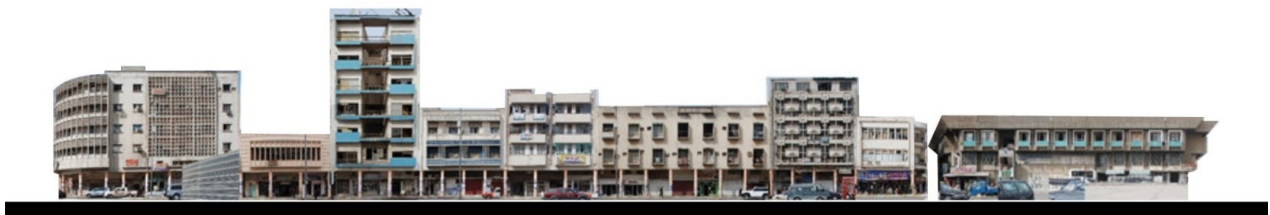


**Figure 7.** shows Al-Rashid Street and a visual disruption of the urban landscape through modern buildings.  
Source: [27]

On Al-Rashid Street, between the 1950s and the 1970s, The use of interlocking buildings on the historical fabric, with high heights that consistently violate the skyline, is a blatant example of modern architecture (the International Style). and in box shapes, and typically constructed of reinforced concrete. This is particularly evident in the Al-Senak area of Al-Rashid Street, which is the newest part of the street and where the majority of the buildings date from the post-1950s (between Al-Senak Bridge and the Republic Bridge). The communications building designed by engineer Rifaat Chadirji, as depicted in Figures (8),(9), is one instance of this.



**Figure 8.** shows Al-Rashid Street's timeline and the global urban environment. Source: [22]



**Figure 9.** shows The current situation of the facade of a part of Al-Rashid Street.

There is a discrepancy and disturbance in the height of the buildings to the street wall

Source: [18]

## Results and Discussion

The descriptive analysis shows that the early Ottoman era, when Al-Rashid Street's urban cityscape was characterized in a coherent and proportional manner as a sequential scene until the introduction of modern architecture in the early 1950s, carried Renaissance architectural aesthetic and perspective values. which resulted in high-rise buildings made of reinforced concrete that were box-shaped, rupturing and interrupting the naturally occurring landscape. The urban city then descended into a state of extreme visual chaos as a result of numerous economic, urban, and social factors influenced by different societal values, as well as wars, where old buildings were obviously neglected and allowed to deteriorate. The city's urban landscape deteriorated as a result of the architectural and urban destruction, which altered the city's identity and left a negative imprint on it.

## Conclusion

As a result of At the beginning of the 20th century, the idea of the urban townscape first emerged clearly as a result of the interaction between social activities, ideological concepts, economic, material, and other factors that can be regarded as changing factors based on social, spatial, and cultural conditions. consistency in the definition of the city's urban identity and in its personality. The cooperation of enduring environmental factors, such as climate and terrain, aids in the development of the city's personality and the establishment of its urban identity. The result of the interaction between fixed and variable factors in an urban cityscape is a change in scenes over time because social behavior evolves over time.

The city of Baghdad's urban townscape has undergone several stages as a result of the radical changes in its morphology and following the Ottoman conquest, British occupation, and changes brought about by the twentieth revolution, an urban context was created. The city has expanded considerably since the time of the monarchs.



The wave of modernity had an impact on the loss of the connection between built forms and streets and the disruption of the cityscape as a result of the shift in ideals and aesthetics in intellectual currents during various historical periods and their effects on architecture and its relationship with context. The old urban landscape and its formation, whether formally or informally, was later replaced by the new urban context. Cities that have a storied past. Due to Iraq's entry into the war, the researchers were able to confirm time stopped in the 1980s in the modern view of Al-Rashid Street and that we never arrived at a sustainable environmental scene. Although urban townscapes are constantly changing, the rapid growth and transformation of urban structures suggest that Iraq could see a wave of technological and environmental sustainability. Ghalib noted that "change is still intensifying, and its impact is becoming more and more apparent day by day. As a result, occasionally architectural ugliness rises above the surfaces of what is left of a rapidly disappearing urban heritage, while other times the banners of modernity rise. The depressing truth motivates us to call attention to the need to stop the deterioration of this urban fabric, the foundation of modern Baghdad was built on a variety of meanings and memories, and as a result, the historical city's identity changed, left a different urban imprint, and eventually became a detriment to the city.

The study came to the conclusion that the urban footprint, which is a continuous and changing process rather than an endpoint, is what sets a city apart from others in terms of design, horizon, urban planning, and the concept that describes the physical and moral properties and characteristics of the city. Finally, depending on the variables to which the urban context is exposed, the dynamics of the urban system vary.

Urban sprawl and rising populations have caused cities to become more urbanized, which has resulted in increased urbanization, particularly vertical urbanization, which alters the urban landscape of the city and alters its urban imprint.

In order to achieve the urban footprint, dealing with the physical forms in the city necessitates the process of assimilation, either by giving the hybrid physical forms a specific meaning that is compatible with the fundamental values or by altering the forms to suit the meanings present in the city.

Setting unique standards for each city that are adopted and developed in accordance with the needs of the community and the city, which reflect its unique local identity, allows for the assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the city and its position.

Urban imprint requirements differ from city to city, and each city has its own set of requirements. Both the requirements and the procedures for applying them are routinely updated and reviewed.

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