National Strategy Document on Revitalising, Upgrading, Renovating and Enabling Deteriorated and Underutilised Urban Fabrics

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In the Name of God
1. Introduction
Introduction

Prepared by

The Ministry of Roads and Urban Development
(Urban Development and Revitalisation Organisation)

In coordination with

The Ministry of Interior and
the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organisation

Based on

Article 16 of the Law on Supporting Revitalisation, Upgrading, and Renovation of Deteriorated and Underutilised Urban Fabrics,

and approved by the

Honourable Cabinet by virtue of Article 138 of the Constitution
Introduction

Aim:

at securing the collaboration and participation of all relevant agencies in the process of sustainable regeneration of urban areas and neighbourhoods targeted by urban revitalisation, rehabilitation and renovation plans with the purpose of protecting citizen rights, enhancing living quality, regaining urban identity, effecting local governance, and moving towards the establishment of leadership, integrated management and unified procedures concerning all relevant agents at national and local levels through an approach based on Iranian-Islamic urban planning and architectural guidelines.
xi. **Problematic:**
Areas in need of revitalisation, rehabilitation and renovation:

*areas located in historic urban districts*
xi. Problematic:
Areas in need of revitalisation, rehabilitation and renovation:

irregular inner-city zones built up in recent periods
xi. Problematic:
Areas in need of revitalisation, rehabilitation and renovation:

city zones created by municipal incorporation of rural settlements through urban sprawl
xi. Problematic:
Areas in need of revitalisation, rehabilitation and renovation:

informal settlements found within city limits
Definitions

xi. Problematic:
Areas in need of revitalisation, rehabilitation and renovation—areas located in historic urban districts, irregular inner-city zones built up in recent periods, city zones created by municipal incorporation of rural settlements through urban sprawl, and informal settlements found within city limits—are targeted by revitalisation, upgrading, and renovation plans.

The prominent characteristics of these areas are as follows:

- Residents have lower per capita incomes and higher unemployment rates as compared with the city averages.

- As compared with the city averages, housing units are not durable, population density is high, and there are also environmental problems.

- Residents have inadequate access to urban services and infrastructure.

- As compared with the rest of the city, social aberrations are apparent and further encouraged.

- Historic and cultural identities have been neglected—social dignity and social esteem have declined in these areas—giving rise to an underclass substitution effect.

Current trends indicate that if preventive measures are not taken and policies, plans and initiatives of the Government and mayoral administrations on urban revitalisation, rehabilitation and renovation remain small scale, occasional, and indifferent to social, economic and environmental dimensions of the issue, we will witness further growth of these areas as well as exacerbation of their problems.
Vision

Improving socioeconomic and environmental conditions for the residents of target areas and neighbourhoods in such a way that:

- Housing standards and per capita public space, urban service and infrastructure will have been realised on a par with city averages.

- Physical and functional transformations will move toward improvement, upgrading and sustainable development.

- Households’ sense of hope and comfort will become evident, so that they can mobilise themselves, in material and spiritual terms, and advance toward a better future.
Central Goals
6. Strategies & Policies
Strategies & Policies

Policies for each strategy and for the realisation of its goals are given below:

Strategy 1: Carrying out revitalisation, rehabilitation and renovation measures within a coordinated urban development policy framework—giving priority to ‘Endogenous Development’

1. Creation of appropriate institutional and legal frameworks for managing target urban areas and neighbourhoods as part of the country’s integrated urban management;
2. Emphasising ‘endogenous development’ by taking account of existing capacities inside city boundaries and preventing urban sprawl that leads to destruction of natural resources with devastating environmental impacts;
3. Exploitation of under-utilised plots or problematic land-uses as reserve land for urban revitalisation, rehabilitation and renovation initiatives in the framework of urban development plans;
4. Emphasising poverty reduction and creating links between physical and socioeconomic development initiatives in the context of strategic plans for urban development;
5. Providing low-income households with affordable living spaces by taking into account settlement patterns—giving attention to necessary car parks and observing lot size requirements in preparing and implementing urban development plans;
6. Improving capabilities and capacities of mayoral administrations and Islamic City Councils (in terms of financial budgeting, human resources, organisational structure, and institutional development) in order to improve urban services and infrastructure in target urban areas and neighbourhoods;
Strategies & Policies

7. Making construction regulations as well as issuance of construction permits simple and transparent;

8. Emphasising accurate and complete observance of building codes with the purpose of strengthening construction and retrofitting existing buildings against earthquakes in target urban areas and neighbourhoods;

9. Taking account and utilisation of existing physical possibilities with the aim to realise the required land use through supportive programmes and incentive packages;

10. Preparation of draft guidelines by provincial General Offices of Roads and Urban Development for designing and using suitable construction materials and its submission for approval to legal authorities in charge of building codes—taking into account climatic, architectural and urbanisation characteristics of target areas and neighbourhoods.
Strategies & Policies

**Strategy 2: Addressing real estate and capital market failures in response to demand by low-income urban strata**

1. Emphasising timely implementation of land development plans within city boundaries in order to supply urban land according to demand and affordability;
2. Preparation of low-cost, quality housing plans by MRUD—and paving the way for their implementation based on earlier experiences and capacities of municipalities, cooperatives, the private sector, local institutions and beneficiaries—under the *Law for Organising and Supporting Production and Supply of Housing*;
3. Promoting utilisation of modern construction technologies in order to build low cost, standard and affordable housing units for low-income groups as quickly as possible;
4. Creating appropriate mechanisms to render required technical and consulting services to residents of target urban areas and neighbourhoods for quality construction in the process of revitalisation, rehabilitation and renovation of their housing units;
5. Formulating required interventions with the aim to encourage and support large-scale builders to construct homes in target urban areas and neighbourhoods.
Strategy 3: Preparing revitalisation, rehabilitation and renovation programmes and projects based on residents’ actual demands—commensurate with the socio-economic and physical characteristics of each target area or neighbourhood—in order to improve quality of life and strengthen and nurture the identity of target urban areas and neighbourhoods

1. Avoiding designs and plans for large-scale intervention that lead to the disintegration of physical, social and economic fabrics and extensive displacement of residents in urban areas and neighbourhoods targeted for revitalisation, rehabilitation and renovation;
2. Policy-making and planning for target urban areas and neighbourhoods through city-wide approaches;
3. Recording and prioritising residents’ needs—through participatory planning approaches—based on their actual demands;
4. Planning measures for amalgamating or subdividing lots as necessary in order to address problems faced with small-grained urban fabrics and to motivate reconstruction on the scale of urban blocks in target urban areas and neighbourhoods—while protecting the identities and financial stakes of local communities;
5. Prepare plans to address inaccessibility problems in old urban areas and neighbourhoods through upgrading the street networks with minimal destruction while observing relevant regulations;
6. Planning measures needed in revitalisation, rehabilitation and renovation plans to ensure the satisfaction of those residing next to major reconstruction sites and requiring temporary resettlement;

7. Complying with obligations to produce new housing spaces that are affordable to owners and tenants in the target urban areas and neighbourhoods—on the basis of upstream urban plans and prior to the implementation of revitalisation, rehabilitation and renovation initiatives in deteriorated and under-utilised urban fabrics.

8. Making use of new technologies, methods and equipments as well as mixed or dynamic land-uses with the aim to avoid unwarranted street widening in target urban areas and neighbourhoods;

9. Protecting urban landscape and preventing visual pollution by making use of local and indigenous elements.
Strategies & Policies

Strategy 4: Securing the participation of residents and employed persons in revitalisation, rehabilitation and renovation activities across target urban areas and neighbourhoods

1. Facilitation by Islamic City Councils of neighbourhood councils, community-based institutions, local renovation offices, cooperatives, and other renovation actors;
2. Delivery of educational programs—in order to nurture a culture of citizenship and encourage community participation—by the implementing agency and local authorities with the support of mayoral administrations;
3. Giving priority to target urban areas and neighbourhoods in the allocation of government resources for financing urban infrastructure and basic services as catalytic initiatives;
4. Supporting the establishment of cooperatives—for those urban blocks that need land amalgamation and readjustment—as representatives of real estate owners to public legal offices, such as real estate registry departments, in the process of land readjustment, aggregation and parcelling;
5. Giving priority to local CBO (especially cooperatives) projects and benefiting from the legal framework facilitating the formation of County Development Cooperatives.
Strategy 5: Facilitating investment and creating appropriate incentive structures aimed at the private sector, especially residents and real estate owners in target urban areas and neighbourhoods

1. Facilitating the allocation of state-owned land for public use (institutional, athletic, medical, cultural) in target urban areas and neighbourhoods through a variety of methods—such as sale through instalments or rent-to-own;
2. Laying the grounds for granting necessary low-cost banking facilities and discounts on construction permit duties to residents and builders of residential, commercial, administrative, or service units as well as to buyers—within the framework of the Law on Organising and Supporting Housing production and Supply and other relevant regulations and guidelines;
3. Facilitation of new titling by county real estate registry departments based on Article 10 of the Law;
4. Supporting the establishment of systems by mayoral administrations that provide up-to-date information to the public on construction guidelines and recent changes in urban master plans—comprehensive and detail—as well as revitalisation, upgrading, and renovation plans across target urban areas and neighbourhoods;
5. When private customers exist, avoiding procurement of real estate in target urban areas and neighbourhoods by mayoral administrations and executive agencies that are subject of Article 5 of the Law on Management of National Services—except for approved public and service land-use.
Strategy 6: Improving economic, social, and environmental conditions for residents of target areas and neighbourhoods

1. Preparation of specific programmes for the provision of public education, health, and medical services as well as recreational facilities by relevant agencies and submitting them for approval to county and provincial taskforces;
2. Expanding technical-vocational and basic skills training and creating small and sustainable enterprises in order to enhance the economic wellbeing of resident households;
3. Preparation of integrated databanks by relevant agencies for job-seekers residing in target urban areas and neighbourhoods in order to facilitate their employment;
4. Supporting collaboration and pooling of small capitals among residents through legal financial institutions with the aim to generate employment and reconstruct, upgrade and renovate homes in target urban areas and neighbourhoods;
Strategies & Policies

Strategy 7: Identifying, preserving, strengthening and leveraging the physical, social, economic and environmental capacities of historic-cultural places and areas in revitalisation, rehabilitation and renovation of target urban areas and neighbourhoods

1. In each city/region’s cultural or historic areas (as designated by the Cultural Heritage, Handcrafts and Tourism Organisation), specific guidelines for intervention (physical, economic, social, environment, etc.) and supervision will be prepared (with an approach entailing the protection of cultural and historic heritage and enhancement of quality of life for area residents) with the collaboration of MRUD and the respective mayoral administration based on ‘approved regulations for protection of national historic fabrics’. The guidelines will be approved by the Supreme Council of Architecture and Urban Planning of Iran.
2. Combining urban design with urban revitalisation in historic and cultural sites through an approach that aims to preserve their physical–environmental identities as well as their effects on other urban elements while allowing them to assume new functions;
3. Promoting tourist/historic attractions of target urban areas and neighbourhoods through a socioeconomic revitalisation approach as well as physical improvement of their public spaces and by attracting investment and designating appropriate land-uses in compliance with relevant guidelines and regulations;
4. Avoiding large-scale physical interventions and emphasising the preservation of unity in the physical-structural and social systems by making use of an approach aimed at regaining community identities through shared social memories, maintaining and optimising population densities, and protecting neighbourhood centres with the participation of residents in target urban areas and neighbourhoods;

5. Revitalising historic-cultural sites in target urban areas and neighbourhoods through redefining their roles and functions and by taking into consideration urban economic needs;

6. Planning for the conservation and revitalisation of historic landmarks—individual, complex, area or site—located in target urban zones, as well as elements directly related to them, with a focus on integrating their economic structures with those of their respective cities;
Strategy 8: Formulating an appropriate financial system to realise revitalisation, rehabilitation and renovation projects and plans for target urban areas and neighbourhoods

1. Creating a specific line for development of target urban areas and neighbourhoods in the capital budget of mayoral administrations—to be financed through municipal taxes such as renovation duties;
2. Creating an independent budget line in annual budget laws—based on Article 13 of the Law on Supporting Revitalisation, Upgrading, and Renovation of Deteriorated and Under-utilised Urban Fabrics (approved in 2010)—for urban development in target urban areas and neighbourhoods;
3. Using tax revenues and proposing revisions to guidelines and regulations;
4. Issuing participation bonds and making use of other legal financial instruments;
5. Benefiting from existing capacities of legal financial institutions.
Means to Realize the Document

1. National Taskforce

Sustainable revitalization of neighborhoods and zones that are targeted for revitalization, upgrading and renovation initiatives

Duties:
• Creating synergy among and synchronizing government/public sector initiatives
• Preparing analytical report on performance of the government and mayoral administrations toward realizing the goals, strategies, and policies of the Document together with the necessary proposals in the final year of Five-Year Development Plans to be provided to the relevant authorities
• Presenting annual reports to the Cabinet

Secretariat: Ministry of Roads and Urban Development (Urban Development and Revitalization Organization)

Members:
President (Chair); Minister of Roads and Urban Development (Secretary and Acting Chair in the absence of the President); Minister of the Interior; Minister of Energy; Minister of Petroleum; Minister of Intelligence; Minister of the Justice; Minister of Cooperatives, Labor, and Social Welfare; Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance; Minister of Health, Treatment and Medical Education; Vice-President for Planning and Strategic Supervision; President of the Supreme Council of Provinces; Director of the Radio and Television; Director of National Registry Organization; Director of the Environmental Protection Organization; Director of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization; President of the Central Bank of Iran; Head of the Police Force
2. Provincial Taskforces
Provincial counterparts of the National Taskforce

Duties:
- Formulating, prioritizing, and ratifying plans and programs for revitalization, upgrading, and renovation
- Inter-agency coordination
- Supervising implementation and fulfillment of duties by relevant agencies
- Presenting semi-annual reports to the National Taskforce
The End