

An-Najah National University

Faculty of Graduate Studies

**Towards humane Public Spaces in Nablus Downtown,
a study Inspired by San Diego experience**

By

Fanan Ibraheem

Supervisor

Dr. Hasan Al-Qadi

Co-Supervisor

Dr. Khaled Qamhieh

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**By
Fanana Ibraheem**

This Thesis was Defended Successfully on 7/8/2019 and approved by:

Defense Committee Members

Signature

1. Dr. Hasan Al-Qadi	/ Supervisor
2. Dr. Khaled Qamhieh	/ Co-Supervisor
3. Dr. Salem Thawaba	/ External Examiner
4. Dr. Haithem Ratrouf	/ Internal Examiner

Dedication

I am dedicating my thesis to my beloved parents “Hashim & Amal”, who have been our source of inspiration and strength, who taught us the value of hard work, and who continue to offer their spiritual, moral and emotional support.

To my love, who cheered me on, kept me going strong and watch me succeed “Mutaz”, you are not just a precious husband but a companion.

To those who don’t know how special they are to me, and my world is full of smiles whenever they are with me, my brilliant sisters “Neam, Roa’a” and brothers” Nader, Muhammad and Waseem”.

To my friend ‘Ala’a", having you in my life completes every part of me.

This work is also dedicated to my boys, my little men “Karam, Ameer and Kinan”. You have made me stronger, better and more fulfilled than I could have ever imagined. I can’t wait to find my name in your PHD dedication one day. I love you to the moon and back.

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الإقرار

أنا الموقع أدناه، مقدم الرسالة التي تحمل العنوان:

Towards humane Public Spaces in Nablus Downtown, a study Inspired by San Diego experience

أقر بأن ما اشتملت عليه هذه الرسالة إنما هو نتاج جهدي الخاص، باستثناء ما تمت الإشارة إليه حيث ما أن هذه الرسالة كاملة، أو أي جزء منها لم يقدم من قبل لنيل أي درجة أو لقب علمي أو بحث لدى أي مؤسسة تعليمية أو بحثية أخرى

Declaration

The work provided in this thesis, unless otherwise referenced, is the researcher's own work, and has not been submitted elsewhere for any other degree or qualification.

Student's name:

اسم الطالب:

Signature:

التوقيع:

Date:

التاريخ:

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Dr. Khaled Qamhieh

Abstract

Most of our Palestinian cities have their own places that are called "Downtowns", while it is in fact, just a large cluster of high buildings dotted across the center of the city with high density of forbidden transportation such as cars.

Nablus considered as one of these important cities. This historic city characterized by its own buildings' types and urban spaces, is no longer able to meet people`s needs. Because of lack of attention, change many of its spaces image and the disappearing of the others, without any creation of a new alternative.

The study main problem is about the understanding of what people need in their surrounding environment, in order to help designers to create better public urban spaces for those users.

it provides guidelines of creating human public spaces in Nablus downtown by studying and understanding the successful experience in downtown San Diego.

It explores San Diego Downtown, their successful public spaces for public life, their urban design framework, their development strategies of the city life and their guiding principles in forming the city's open spaces system.

On the other hand, the study analyzes and evaluate the urban transformation of the public spaces in Nablus city in general, and for the Downtown in specific. It also identifies different factors and roles that effect the public spaces there.

It presents a comparative study between the data collection for both cities in order to understand the ideal strategy has been done in the creation of public spaces in San Diego Downtown, and to understand how to create better public spaces in Nablus Downtown. And finally offers ideals suggestion strategies for alternatives in shaping and designing Nablus Downtown Public spaces.

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

1.2 The Problem

1-3 The Purpose of the Study

1-4 Objective

1-5 Research Questions

1-6 Research Hypotheses

1-7 Methodology

1-1 Introduction

“Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody.” (*Jacobs, 1961*).

Cities can be read such as books, and their language has to be understood by people and written by them! Their streets, squares and parks provide the main structure that help cities to be life, and the downtown considered as the lung of this life.

"If the downtown of tomorrow looks like most of the redevelopment projects being planned for it today, it will end up a monumental bore. But downtown could be made lively and exciting -- and it's not too hard to find out how." (*Jacobs, 1961*).

The word Downtown takes us to imagine the densest walkable area of the city, the place where non-car modes naturally used than anywhere else. This what we called the human city. It creates the pleas for those who work there every day, live and play as well as for visitors and passers-by. It also increases the quality and the quantity of the well-planned and designed public spaces for human scale (Walker, 2015).

Most of our cities are car-oriented and Nablus considered as one of these cities. This historic city that characterized by its own building's types and urban spaces with an originality that extends through history, carrying many historic, cultural and civilization meaning, is no longer able to meet

peoples' needs. Due to the lack of attention, to change many of its spaces image and the disappearing of the others, without any creation of a new alternative. (Qadumi, 2001)

On the other hand, , the design for most urban spaces in order to serve the vehicles at the first level caused unavailability for urban spaces in the modern areas of the city, and if founded, they are as abandoned areas or empty lands, which used as public parking or as an ignored playground or even as garbage dumps. This scarcity of the urban spaces in Nablus caused many humanitarian problems, and changed people`s life style in the city. (Al-Fran, 2003)

1-2 The Problem

The study main problem is about the understanding of what people need in their surrounding environment, in order to help designers to create better public urban spaces for those users. Which led to raise the city quality and help designers, planners and decision makers start to rethink in a simultaneous and critical way to understand the importance of the impact of their designs on people`s behavior and experience.

1-3 The Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to discover how to create humanitarian public spaces. This will help public authorities to understand how to support and guide the appropriate development of the current and future growth for the city in general and for the public spaces in specific.

The study provides guidelines to understand how to create humanitarian public spaces in Nablus downtown by studying and understanding San Diego Downtown's successful experience.

In this regard, government and developers must be aware of the areas' need to treat each development separately and guide a framework of the qualities that has to be considered and affects the public spaces development.

1-4 Objective

The major goals of this study are:

- To discover the significance or destructive of public spaces within the physical, environmental and social context.
- To explore and realize the issues that professionals take into consideration during making their decisions and designing of public space's shapes.
- Analyze the human responses to the public space's physical and social setting.
- Recommend an alternative way in designing and shaping the downtown's public spaces in Nablus center by taking into consideration the community participation.

1-5 Research Questions:

Based on the Study, the major research questions had to explore the intersection between public spaces design and human needs, which guide us to the study central question:

- What are the physical and other surrounding features of the built environment that form the human public spaces?

The other study questions are:

- What should we learn to create and design successful downtown's public spaces?
- Who are the public spaces users? What are the patterns of use for these spaces?
- What are the main differences between the rules in shaping the public spaces within Nablus and San Diego context that control the built environment professionals such as public authorities, planners and designers?

1-6 Research Hypotheses:

From previous information, the research tries to prove the following hypotheses. First, there is special aspect of human needs affected by physical and ambient features of public spaces in general and Downtown Public spaces in particular. This physical feature contains different element such as landform, streets and buildings. Where the other ambient features

contain elements such as lighting, sound, and its influence on our Downtowns. Second, the contrary is true, which means that the well studying of the human behavior and needs for the Downtown`s users helps in creating the successful physical and other ambient environment in the city.

1-7 Methodology

The study divided into three major parts, the first part includes define and design the case studies, the second part includes collecting data and analysis, while the third involves the analysis and the study conclusion see (Fig.1).

In the first part, the researcher creates strategies to achieve the main purpose of the study. That's include selecting the two-case studies, and deciding the approaches in collecting the research data. The two case studies selected to be are: San Diego downtown (as an ideal model), one of the successful downtown projects with special characteristics to present good public spaces for human. In addition, the other chosen location is Nablus downtown, one of the most important location in Palestine with a special originality that extends through history but it is no longer able to meet people's needs. In collecting data, both of qualitative and quantitative methods have been used. Qualitative methods are mainly in both sites' observations, maps, photos, interviews and previous studies. The quantitative method consists of surveys and observations in both cities.

In the second part of the study, the collected data were analyzed, and the researcher has written an individual report for each city in general, and for the public spaces in specific. That includes the studying of the urban design elements in both cities and special analysis of the parks, greenways and plazas there. In the studying of Nablus downtown, the researcher relied on the results from the questionnaire which was distributed to a different sample of people.

In the third part of the study, and for better understanding of both case studies, the comparative analysis method has been used in analyzing the data and researcher survey outcomes. The first objective of this method is to explore the opportunities in San Diego downtown. The second one is to identify the main principles and values relevant in both cases that are important in measuring the same problem and the compatible way to resolve it. While the third one is to identify the main problems in Nablus downtown and develop new strategies to make downtown Nablus successful place.

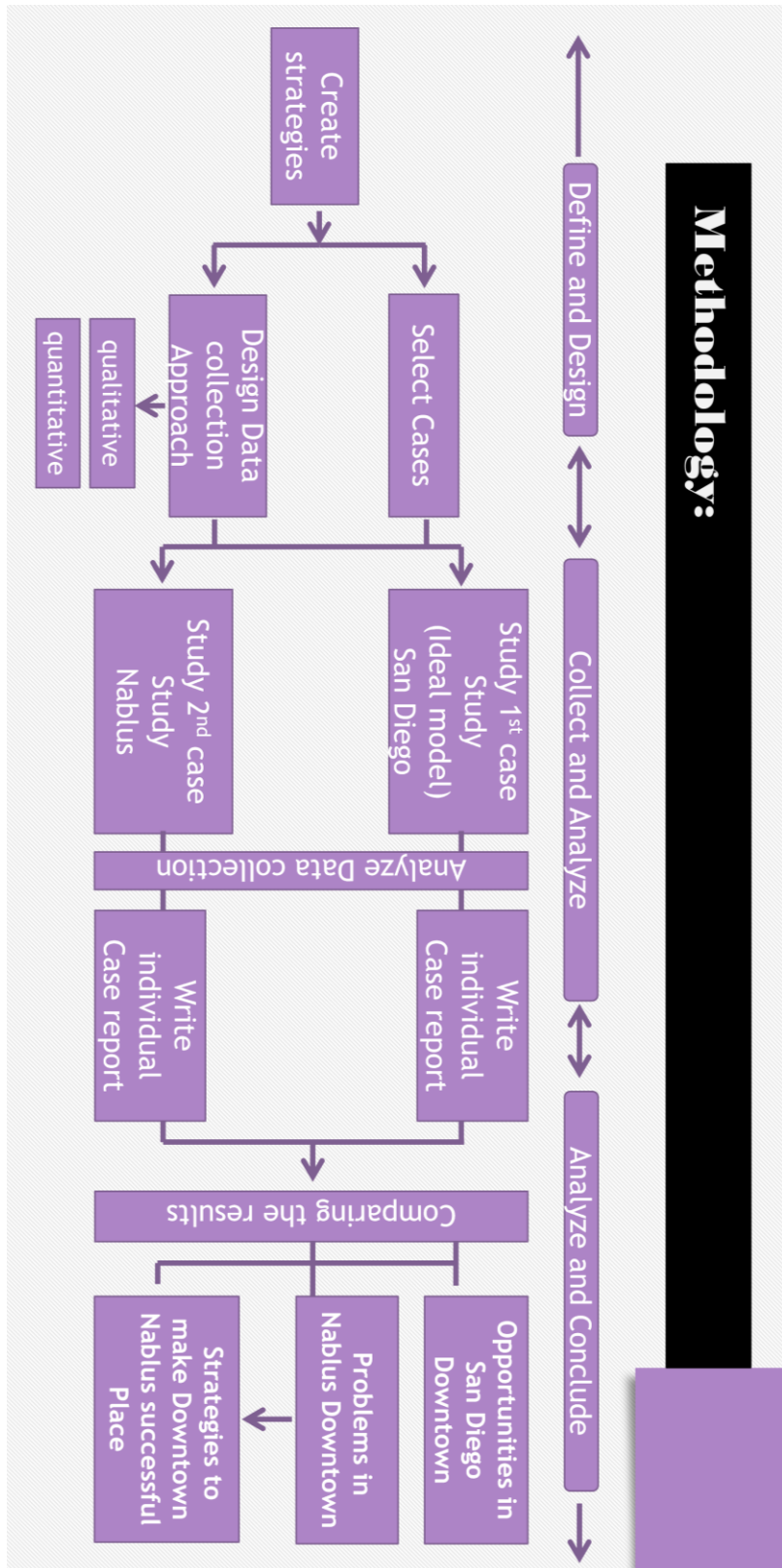


Fig.1: The study Methodology Source: by the researcher

Chapter Two: Public space Conceptual and Theoretical Background (Literature Review)

2-1 Introduction

2-2 Urban design

- **Urban design frameworks**

2-3 PUBLIC SPACE

- **2-3-1 The definition of Public space**
- **2-3-2 Classification of urban public place**
- **2-3-3 Characteristics of Public Space**
- **2-3-4 Conclusion**

2-1 Introduction

The city is the place of both challenges and opportunity, it acts as a center of (education, economy, politics, culture, environment, aesthetics ... and others). In most cities, while the high-quality design of buildings remains the major priority, the well-designed of outdoor spaces (such as public and open spaces) allow these buildings to connect as a part of sustainable, vibrant and functional community.

These days, great cities' designer understand the thoughtful balance between the mass development and the green outdoor spaces, and the suitable design of both led to enhance the quality of life for the residents and improve the sustainability of the whole city, which help to make an investment in something greater than our individual growth and developments.

To discuss the subject of public spaces in the city of Nablus, it is necessary to provide a database covering the subject and studying it in all its aspects. Therefore, the first section of this chapter deals with the study of urban design of the city in general and its elements.

It also deals with elements of visual perception as described by the urban planner (Kevin Lynch) in his book (The Image of the City). And then examine the factors and elements that lead to this visual configuration.

The second section discussed the theme of public spaces in particular. It also deals with the study of the visual and aesthetic characteristics of the

city, and the study here ranges from the highest level, which examines the level of the city's morphology, up to the detailed level that addresses the elements of these public spaces. The design requirements of these spaces are considered in terms of the surrounding blocks, the materials used, the human scale and the design unit.

In general, this chapter aims at understanding the place of public spaces in commercial cities in terms of their elements, components, influences and functions. This is reflected in the study of the public places of the commercial center of Nablus, which helps to design them to achieve the best results for the city and its users.

2-2 Urban design

▪ Urban design frameworks

In the term “the place making”, number of urban planners identified the qualities of good urban form and successful urban place. Kevin Lynch, (1960), identified five keys for urban design dimensions:

- 1- Vitality, the degree of supporting the function of place form the ability of human beings and the biological needs.
- 2- Sense, the degree of being the place perceived clearly by users.
- 3- Fit, the degree to which capacity and the form of place correspond the pattern of user's behavior.

4- Access, the ability of reaching people, services, resources, activities, and different place elements.

5- Control, the degree of creating and managing access to different spaces and activities by users, workers or residents.

Lynch explained that any city has a public image created through the overlapping of different individuals' images, the contents of the city image refer mostly to the physical form, and can be classified into five different elements see (Fig.2):

1- Path, which is the “channels along which the observer customarily, occasionally, or potentially moves” (Lynch, 1960). He clarified that people could observe the city during their movement through it, and this path could be streets, transit lines, walkways, or canals.

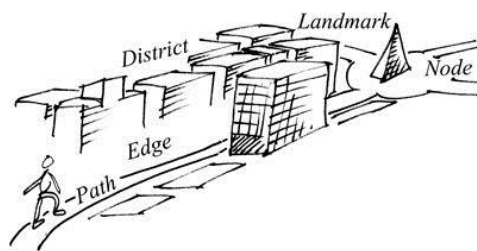


Fig.2 The City Image and it's Elements Source: (Lynch,1960)

2- Edges, the continues elements that are boundaries between tow paths. Such as the edge of development, shores, walls.

3- Districts, the section of the city with medium to large size, characterized by having some common.

4- Nodes, the points of strategic spots with special focus, such as the area of a break in transportations and busy intersections.

5- Landmarks. they are external references points, that are easy to defined such as signs, buildings, stores, etc. (Lynch, 1960).

2-3 PUBLIC SPACE

▪ 2-3-1 The definition of Public space

“Public space relates to all those parts of the built and natural environment where the public have free access. It encompasses: all the streets, squares and other rights of way, whether predominantly in residential, commercial or community/civic uses; the open spaces and parks; and the “public private” spaces where public access is unrestricted”. (Carmona, Heath, Oc, & Tiesdell, 2003)

▪ 2-3-2 Classification of urban public places

There are two main types of public spaces:

1- 'streets' such as ' paths. roads, avenues, boulevards, lanes, alleys, etc.'

2- 'squares' such as ' circuses, plazas, piazzas, courts, places, and others.

streets consider as 'dynamic' spaces with a great sense of movement, while the squares consider as the 'static' spaces that has lower sense of movement.

(Fig.3) shows the width-to-length ratio that helps to distinguish between street and squares. the plan with a ratio of 1:3, is

creating a dynamic movement, which suggests squares, while the width-to-length ratio of 1:5 create movement along the controller axis, and that suggests streets (Carmona, Heath, Oc, & Tiesdell, 2003).

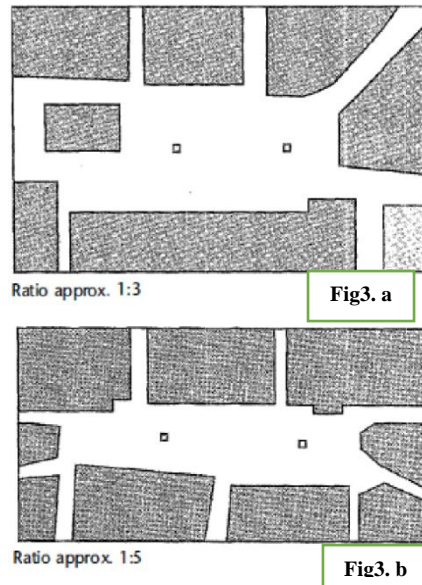


Fig.3: width to length ratio of urban spaces **Source:** (Carmona, Heath, Tiesdell, &Oc, 2003)

▪ 2-3-3 Characteristics of Public Space

Rome, Paris and London, continued for centuries to be great cities, while none of them were great from their inception. They seemed as a culture artifact which reflects the generation growth that made by city's residents, government agencies, businesses and some others.

public spaces in these great cities created to achieve different objectives

- 1- to be open for everyone
- 2- always offer something to everyone
- 3- being attractive

4- offer framework for effective urbanization

5- insure well - habitable environment

6- support and assist the civil community

This leads us to identify and determine the main characteristics in creating good public space:

1- Possibility (Access and linkages)

The first precondition in creating good public space is the existence of people in this place, in another word "access and accessibility" at different scales; on a central broader one "that deals with pedestrian's space image ", on a larger one " that deals with physical, symbolic and visual accessibility to the space"(Carmona, 1992)

The motor mobility had a big impact on the walkability in the urban areas (Carmona, 2008), which led to Urban fragmentation and declining public spaces, due to the proliferation of motorized transportation, the replacement of public places and the traditional landscape by car-dependent areas, because of that, different recommendations for designing the public spaces recognize the importance of addressing these tendencies as a major challenge to urban public life, (Jacobs, 1995)

Possibility has its relationship with the physical, symbolic and visual accessibility to particular spaces. the physical obstacles may be created because of the specific opening hours, the existence of fences, guards or

gates, that may discourage people from getting into the space. symbolic and visual access to the public space are also important, by creating possible perceived access, throughout the special design element, and public art o improve the space image (Whyte, 1990).

2- Motivation (uses and activities)

It's an issue of having " things to do and see" (Gomes, 2011), that intersects GEHL's (2006) idea of dividing the activities in the public place into necessary, optional and social activities. Necessary activities are mandatory for participants, including going to school or work, shopping, and some others, these activities have a strong dependent on the external physical conditions. while the Optional ones are, such activities that are undertaken voluntarily or if place and time allow, and These kinds of activities are especially dependent on the exterior physical conditions.

The social activities are the ones that require other people presence and have been often existing as a result of necessary and optional activities. The physical attribute does not have a direct impact on the quality, significant, and the density of social contact, the planners and architectures can create the possibilities for meeting and connecting between people.

Then the production of public spaces could initially adopt the functional approach, and focus on two main connected functions in public space: access and circulation of the surrounding buildings. This makes the distribution of the necessary activities a mechanism to support the optional

activities, and then the diversity, density and concentration of these activities will play the major role (Stevens, 2007).

The motivation approach could also focus on some needs for people in the public spaces, such as the relaxation, active and passive engagement (Car, 1992). The relaxation is the searching for a safe place to take break from the crowded city life, it has great connecting with the creation of "urban oasis" for people in the urban area which represented in the public spaces. (Marcus & Francis, 1990)

3- Opportunity (Sociability)

Connectivity in the urban fabric allows for the creation of alternative links and paths between different public places. Public space can therefore serve different purposes for users, such as being a place to pass through, or the second or last destination of other users (Alexander, 1965, cited in Stevens, 2007). These spaces, in addition to urban tissues, give rise to individual choice and help to increase the likelihood of chance, and unexpected communication between different activities and people. (Franck & Stevens, 2006).

While the buildings' role and functions help to attract the visitors in the urban area, an interfere transition between public and private realms could encourage the opportunities for the use of public space. This is a transparence and bidirectional relationship, it allows the public space users to perceive the areas behind buildings facades, providing potential points of comfort and interest (Jacobs, 1995). In addition, the public-private

interaction areas density creates different opportunities for space use through the entrances and buildings, therefore, consideration must be given to the design and activities of the first two floors, to insure the most benefit on the use of public space there (Whyte, 1990).

4- Comfort (&Image)

Some of the most powerful conditions for social and optional activities in public spaces are creating physical and psychological comfort there, for short and long period of stay.

In the study of physical comfort, there are many basic dimensions needed to provide this type of comfort:

The weather is one of the basic dimensions for creating physical comfort. It includes design of the public area in the "comfort zone" where people can stay with casual clothing under the shade and provide shelter for very warm situations and others for the protection from the wind. (Marcus & Francis, 1990; Whyte, 1990).

The other dimension in creating physical comfort, is the noise level in and around public places. Using white noise such as water can filter and reduce the impact of bad noise on the area. (Whyte, 1990).

The width of the sidewalk is also an important issue in providing comfortable public space and is directly related to the intensity of traffic, flows and the type of function of surrounding buildings (Moura, 2010).

Psychological comfort has a great relationship with the environment's spatial definition. Space is defined vertically by existing buildings, walls and the height of the trees, while it is defined horizontally by the spacing and extension of existing elements. (Jacobs, 1995).

The second aspect which has a great impact on the comfort of public places is the motorized traffic. The dense and rapid traffic in the surrounding area reduces the level of comfort and limits pedestrian traffic there (Gehl, 2006).

Moreover, the issue of crime-related safety is one of the key parts of creating psychological comfort in public places. There is also a significant relationship between enhancing security and access to public places. (Carmona, 2008).

Jane Jacobs identified another strategy to support public safety which was "eyes on the street". It emphasizes how users in public places and surrounding buildings can play a key role in preventing vandalism and crime. (Jacobs, 1995).

▪ 2-3-4 Conclusion

This chapter addressed the literary study of the public spaces' aspects and the criteria in creating successful one in the city's downtown.

It included various factors that affect people use of the space and create the foundation to study these elements. It also discussed the characteristics of public space and related works which were the influence of this research.

In the following chapters, these theories will be applied to both Downtown San Diego and Nablus to study and compare the efficiency of public spaces in both cities.

Chapter Three: Downtown San Diego

(General Study and Analyses of Public spaces)

3-1 Introduction

3-2 A Brief of San Diego's Planning History

3-3 San Diego Downtown at A Glance

3-4 San Diego Downtown Design Guidelines

3-5 Urban Design Framework⁴

3-6 Urban design elements of San Diego Downtown

3-7 Parks and open spaces

- **Parks**
- **Greenways**
- **Plazas and Pocket Parks**

3-1 Introduction

San Diego has the location and the physical foundation in general for an important, perhaps a great, city. Its people are awake to its needs and are resolved to meet them. ~ John Nolen, 1908

John Nolen, the famous city planner describes San Diego's first grand vision statement of the 20th century with these words. He perceived this young city at that time with a population less than 40,000 and imagined what it would become. (San Diego Historical Society, 1966)

Now, with more than **1.3 million people**, San Diego is the ***eighth-largest city*** in the United States and the second-largest in California; It is a notable California city, on the Pacific Rim adjacent to Mexico as shown in (Fig.4), with an exceptional international, economic and cultural important. In addition to its significance in the nation's defense, this creative city has a special strength in business, education, science and art. (San Diego Historical Society, 1966)

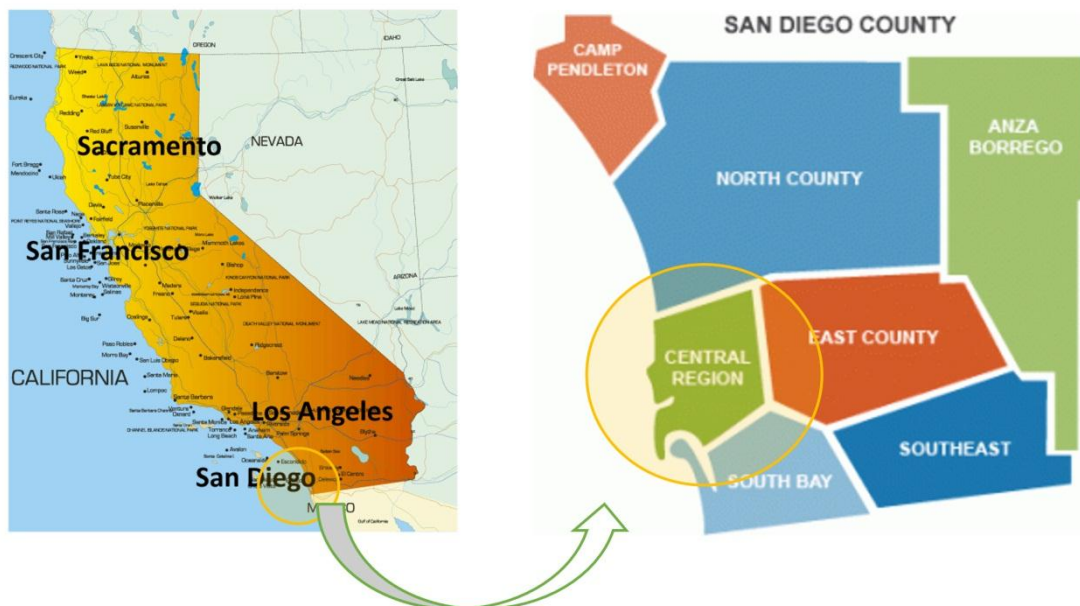


Fig.4 San Diego County, the location of the downtown in San Diego county. Source: (City of San Diego, 2017)

San Diego's specialty is defined by its great climate and location, its beaches and bays, the incredible canyons and mountains, and unique neighborhoods. The most recent city general plan, City of Village, revitalized many open spaces and parks related with the communities on a large scale.

3-2 A Brief of San Diego's Planning History

“If San Diego cannot hope for Los Angeles’ size, it can easily imitate it in other ways spread out its dry suburbs, channel its streams, fill its valleys and lagoons, choke its roads and darken its air, sharpen the social gradient, harden the border. Could we rename it San Diego de Los Angeles?” (Kevin Lynch Temporary Paradise, 1974)

During the 1960s, the city of San Diego start working on a comprehensive planning process to be the first step on preparing the city ***Progress Guide and General Plan***. In 1974, the greatest planning consultants Kevin Lynch and Donald Appleyard produced what has been called ***Temporary Paradise!*** This unique study focused on the city and the region natural resources; it recommended that the city new growth has to be complemented with the landscape to highlight its nature and promote the city's quality of life. ***Temporary Paradise!*** Helped as primary influential on the inclusive update of the city ***Progress Guide and General Plan*** that was adopted in 1979. (City of San Diego archive, 1989)

Over the two following decades, the development of the residential areas reached the city's jurisdictional boundaries. That growth caused by adding

high technology manufacturing and the international trade to the city's economy that was based on tourism and defense.

That growth caused by evolving the city's economic that was based on defense and tourism to include international trade, and high technology manufacturing and research, the reaction from San Diego resident made a big change, through participating in many vision efforts; producing several documents, and different programs including: *The Regional Growth Management Strategy*, *The Urban Form Action Plan*, *the Livable Neighborhoods Initiative*, *Towards Permanent Paradise*, and many others. (City of San Diego archive, 1989)

According to the planning principles and the sharing of common significance in these documents, the *Strategic Framework Element* was adopted by the city council in 2002 to direct the comprehensive update of the 1979 *Progress Guide and General Plan* for the whole city in general and start working on special plans for the city Downtown in particularly.

On February 28, 2006, a new plan for San Diego Downtown was adopted by the City Council - *City of San Diego General Plan*-. This plan envisions the city downtown as a fabric of livable and special neighborhoods, to accommodate 90,000 residents and about 170,000 employees. At the same time all residents could live within a five-minute walk of a neighborhood center, with an easy access to transit, stores and the different facilities in the city center as shown in (Fig.5) .This plan has a Special emphasized on the outdoor living and Public realm with the

provision of the sunlight on parks and street. The plan treated the downtown different aspect including the urban design, land use, streetscapes, historical preservation; it also includes the standard of the design and traffic, transit, and parking.

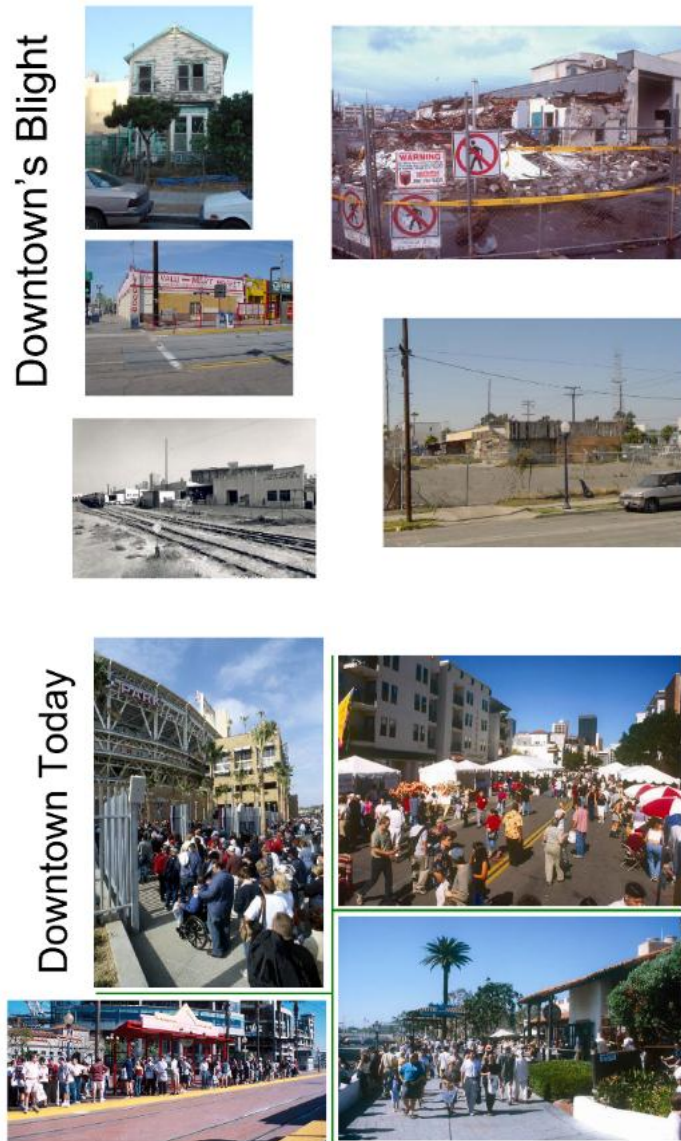


Fig.5 San Diego Downtown before and after the General Plan Source: (City of San Diego,2017)

3-3 San Diego Downtown at A Glance

Downtown San Diego with an average area about 2.2 square miles, (5.6 square Kilometer), enjoys an amazing temperate climate, lovely bayside setting, walkable streets with grid pattern, unique historic architecture, livable mixed-used districts, located in seven different parts, including Little Italy, Columbia, The Gaslamp, Cortez Hill, the Marina, East Village and they all placed around the civic /Core (Fig.6). (*SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES, 2011*)



Fig.6 San Diego Downtown Districts Source: (City of San Diego,2017)

San Diego Downtown is home for about 34,550 people, the population ratio has grown by 97 percent since 2000, and is being planned to be able to be suitable for more than 90,000 residents and 156,000 workers by the year of 2035. (*SANDAG,2016*)

Residents and employees in San Diego Downtown enjoy the high quality of life with an easy access to different parks, Green spaces and plenty of spectacular locations to work out and being active. Downtown is home for more than 20 existing parks, as well as many proposed parks. Number of these have playgrounds specially for children and families.

This in turn has raise the ratio of resident who walk to work into 19 percent. While sixty-five percent commute by using cars, and 6 percent use public transportation. Many also go biking to work, and for them, the Downtown has a location for more than 40 bike-sharing station and more than 20 miles of bike paths around and in Downtown (Fig.7). (*SANDAG,2016*)

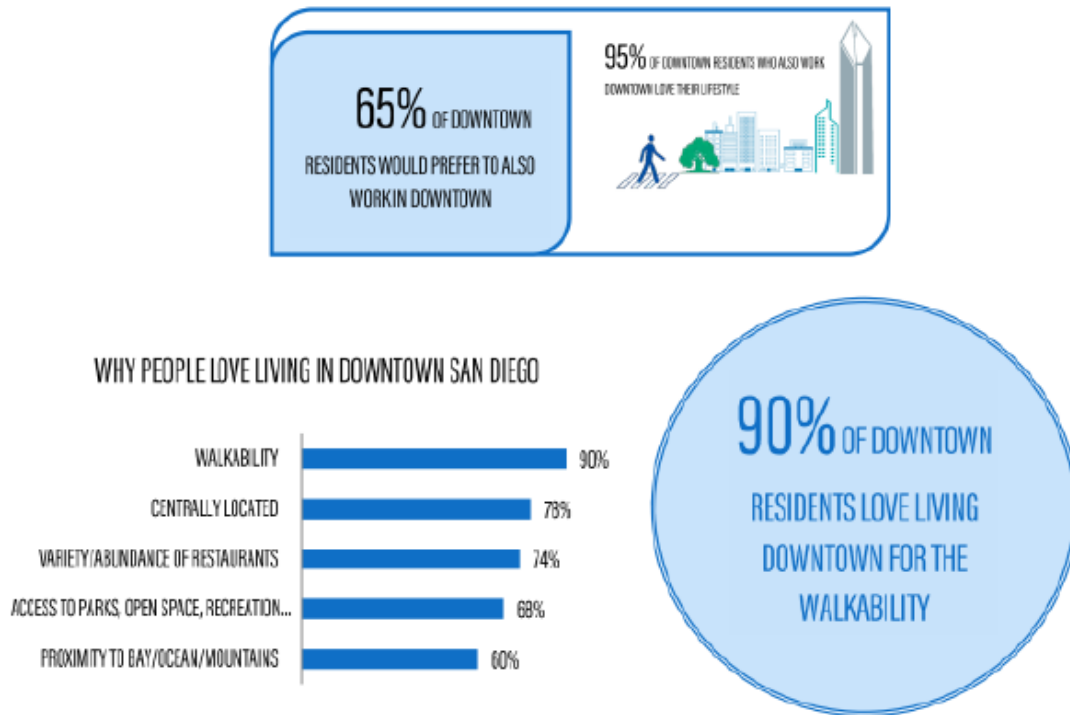


Fig.7 Why people love living in Downtown san Diego Source: (City of San Diego, 2017)

Down Town San Diego is mostly defined by the ***Downtown Community Planning Area*** (CPA), Known as ***Centre City*** historically as shown in (Fig.8). The map of this Downtown CPA, shows the different neighborhoods and the connection to one another.

This 2006 Downtown CPA established the future vision for San Diego Downtown, by surrounding the civic, commercial and cultural core with special neighborhoods connected with green streets network of pedestrian. (City of San Diego archive)



Fig.8 San Diego Downtown community plan Source: (Centre City Development Corporation, 2011)

According to this CPA and its *Guiding Principles outlined* in the introduction, the *Downtown Design Guidelines* are prepared to provide the direction that will develop the physical character, natural beauty and San Diego downtown livability.

3-4 San Diego Downtown Design Guidelines

Four major sections are the main composition of the Downtown Design Guideline in San Diego:

1- Urban Design Framework

This section presents an overall foundation and principles for public and private progress in San Diego Downtown. It is the foundation to study

hierarchy and network interconnection of public open spaces, street corridors, public art and building forms, with a special emphasis on the character and the location of both public and private improvement in San Diego Downtown. (*SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES,2011*)

2- Street Corridor Guidelines

This section focusses on the improvements of the public-realm. It covers the guidance that should be provided in the street corridors; which includes streets, sidewalks, the frontage of the buildings and their interface with plazas and parks. (*SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES,2011*)

3- Blocks and Buildings Guidelines

The guidelines here emphasis on the private-realm improvements. They determine guidance for buildings form and their relationship to the surrounding public realm. Special guidelines focused on address the configuration of the building's ground-floor, the street-wall and their texture. (*SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES,2011*)

4- Public Art Guidelines

The public art guidelines defined the role of public art in order to achieve the framework of urban design in San Diego Downtown. They assign the different types of public art and address the location of arts in the public realm. (*SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES,2011*)

According to the theme of public spaces, the study will focus on the guidelines that proposed to address the urban spaces in San Diego downtown.

3-5 Urban Design Framework

The urban design framework for San Diego downtown create the interconnected communication network for the street corridors, public open spaces, public art and the building forms. It also confirms the character and the location of the improvements for the public and private facilities in the downtown.

This Framework devised to find the highest standards of an excellence projects design through the following Goals and Element.

- **San Diego Downtown's Urban Design Goals**

- 1- Enhance the overall Legibility and Image for the Downtown**

Legibility defined as the character of the place that allows the visitors to easily understand their surrounding through special physical orientation and recognized the place and its features immediately. The Downtown legibility is based on the landmark buildings and the landscape features, streets hierarchy, plazas and parks, and the sense of place for the whole area.

San Diego Downtown characterized by number of landmark buildings and special districts. Urban Design Framework has a goal to promote the entire downtown image and legibility by supporting the improvements of the design for the streetscape patterns and the public realm. (*SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES,2011*)

2- Increase and Enhance the public-Realm Spaces

San Diego downtown have a great realm of public spaces, including streets, plazas and parks. This is in addition to the areas for active and passive recreation, festivals and entertainment and special programing for market organized. These areas designed in a form and function to support the public realm; however, as the population, employment and visitation grow in the downtown, all the opportunities should be embraced to enhance the public realm. That leads to create special design solutions during the process of the design review, and the Guidelines establish the main principles for that. (*SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES,2011*)

3- Inspire High -Quality linkages and pathways for pedestrian

San Diego Downtown has high-quality pathways and linkages that invite pedestrian and support the social and healthy life. It links the downtown features one another such as parks, retails and plazas. It also links the downtown deferent districts one another, to provide easy access for visitors, workers and residents to their workplace, homes and interest places. (*SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES,2011*)

4- Promote the public-private Interface

San Diego downtown has privately- owned buildings that activate the public realm, renovate it and connected with it by plazas, patios and courtyards. They are opened to the public and extend the public realm. They are called Privately Owned, Publicly Occupied (POPO) spaces. The Guidelines focus on making great opportunity movement for public-private connectivity. (*SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES,2011*)

5- Enhance the character of the street facade

The Downtown Street façade relates to the city's historic parceling. The lands width in range between 8-16-meter-wide parceling, which promotes a special rhythm. That would contribute the variety and visual interest at the street and cause overall improvement in the pedestrian experience. The Guidelines promote massing, expression and modulation of the downtown buildings. (*SAN DIEGO DOWNTOWN DESIGN GUIDELINES,2011*)

6- Articulate Legibility and Image of the Skyline

Tall buildings in the great downtowns recognize as the main Landmark to enhance their image and Legibility. Thoughtfully and good designed, allows public/private realm to have their need of air and light at the street level. San Diego downtown urban design succeeded in solving some of these problems caused by tall building in the core. The Guidelines discourage that kind of projects which add to the mass's bulk and reduce the air movement and light to the street level. At the same time the

Guideline encourage well-proportioned buildings, the small floor plate size and suitable placement of the tower see (Fig.9). (*San Diego downtown design guidelines,2011*)



Fig.9 San Diego Downtown skyline Source: (*San Diego downtown design guidelines,2011*)

3-6 Urban design elements of San Diego Downtown

- EDGES
- DISTRICTS (neighborhoods)
- LANDMARKS
- PATHS
- NODES (PUBLIC SPACES)

- **EDGES**

San Diego downtown surrounded by strong edges include Balboa Park and the waterfront with a strong connection to Coronado island through San Diego / Coronado Bay Bridge, while keep the main density of the traffic to be concentrated on the downtown edge (High ways).

Balboa Park is a place with an area that exceed 4 km² (1000 acres), that offer museums, gardens, arts and San Diego Zoo. All these helps to be complementary to the down town features see (Fig.10).



Fig.10 San Diego Downtown map (showing the Downtown edge) **Source:** (City of San Diego, 2017)

- **Districts/Neighborhood identity**

San Diego Downtown consist of eight different neighborhoods; starting from the Core that surrounded by Little Italy and Cortez from the north, Gaslamp Quarter, Marina and Horton Plaza to the south, East Village to the east and Columbia Center to the west. These neighborhoods consider as the heart of entertainment communities, art and business for San Diego City. The latest transformation that occur in the latest twenty years of redevelopment have transformed downtown into an exciting and vibrant place to visit, work and live as shown in (Fig.6, 11). (*Graham,2007*)



Fig.11 Downtown San Diego neighborhoods Source: (San Diego Downtown Centre; City Development Corporation, 2011)

- **Landmarks**

San Diego Downtown Landmarks are monuments, places and things that in some way signify the character and the essence of San Diego. It does not mean the popular and obvious tourist destinations or attraction such as Old Town or Gaslamp Quarter. Here we are also talking about entities which draw your attention while your movement in the Downtown.

For Down Town visitors, it represented by “what’s that”? factor, which means when you see it, it motivates your curiosity to know more about it. And here is a map of San Diego Downtown Landmarks which consider the most attention-grabbing ones.

- **PATHS**

Life in San Diego downtown supported by streets, plazas and parks. Streets provide access, serve economic side and provide places to improve the civic life. They must achieve the needs balance of pedestrian, cyclist, motorists and transit riders. Plazas and parks support the downtown and its neighborhood social life, to provide places for gathering, sitting and playing.

Street corridors have their connectivity with the public realm (Sidewalks and roadway) together with the neighboring private realm as shown in (Fig.12). They also have special connectivity with the Retail & Ground Floor Commercial Use Requirements.

Their success and character specified by the public improvement quality and the linkage between the public and private realm. (*Perkins, Will and Gail, 2011*)

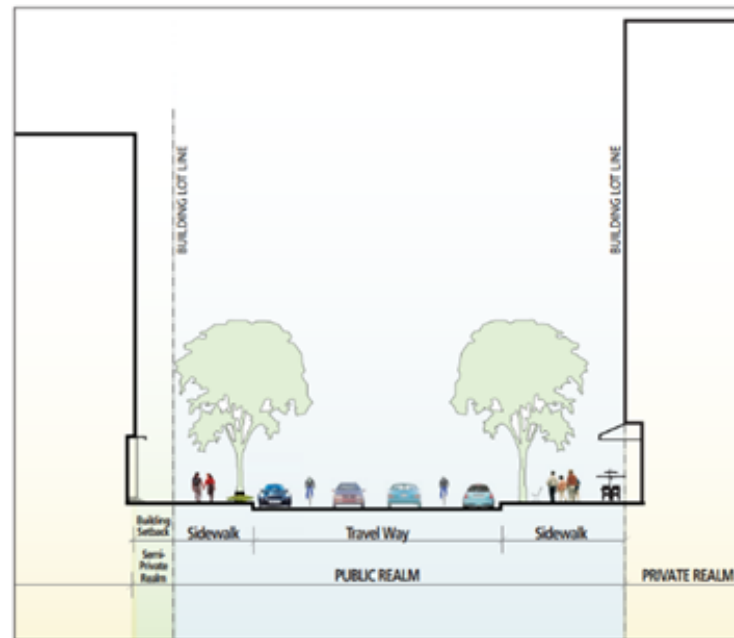


Figure 3.1 Public and private realms

Fig.12 Public and Private realms Source: (San Diego downtown design guideline,2011)

City of San Diego establish principles, concepts and guidelines for the streets in the downtown and public sidewalks through the Downtown Design Guidelines (*Perkins, Will and Gail, 2011*). this Guidelines remain the characteristics of the major streets consistent throughout the whole downtown; and these streets as shown in (Fig.13) includes:

- Boulevards
- Special streets
- Green streets
- Main streets
- Residential streets
- Multifunction



Fig.13 Neighborhood Main Street & Open Space Network Source: (San Diego Downtown web pages; maps, 2017)

● **NODES (City's Parks and Open Spaces)**

Public spaces are the city's living room where people come together to enjoy their city. Public spaces consider as the most important factor that make high quality life in the city, they shape the stage to the city life drama. There range extend from local, small neighborhood parks to great central squares and plazas. (*City of San Diego General Plan, 2008*)

In San Diego downtown, the city provides three deferent categories of recreation areas and parks for both visitors and residents: population-based parks, resource-based parks, and open spaces as shown in (Fig.14).

- Population-based parks (known as community and Neighborhood parks), services and facilities are designed to serve the resident's daily needs in their communities and neighborhood within walking distance. In some situations, they have been attached to schools in order to share facilities.
- Resource-based parks are designed to be in the location of any notable natural or man-made features (beaches, canyons, lakes, habitats and historic areas) and are designed to serve both the citywide population, and visitors.
- Open space lands are lands owned by the city and located throughout special parts of the city such as canyons, hills and another natural landform. This kind of open spaces are intended to protect and preserve native animals and plants, while providing at the same time public access and

special kind of enjoyment through using it for hiking, biking and similar activities.

according to the study scale and purpose, the major highlight will be on the studying of the Population-based parks, how to calculate their area needs for the community and neighborhoods!

According to the general plan standard, a minimum of 2.8 acres (11 Dunam) of public park must be provide per 1000 residents. (which means the per capita green area is estimated at about 11 m² per person).

The recreation center, that shouldn't be less than 17,000 square feet (1.6 Dunam) should serve every 25,000 residents, at the same time for every 50,000 residents, the area must be provided with an aquatic area.

Calculations for parks and recreation facilities in San Diego Downtown from the General plan Standard.

Parks: 34,550 people divided by 1,000= 34.55 x 2.8= 96.74 acres (391 Dunam) of population-based parks

Recreation Center: (17,000 square feet) serves population of 25,000:
34,550 people divided by 25,000 people = 1.38 Recreation Centers =
23,460 square feet (2 dunam) total

Aquatic Complex: serves population of 50,000: 34,550 people divided by 50,000 people = 0.691 Aquatic Complexes. (*San Diego government sites,2016*)

the 2006 Downtown Community plan summon for a total of 125 acres (500 Dunam) of open space in the area. At the same time the priority has been given to develop seven new major public open spaces to be the nuclei for serving different neighborhoods, to give a special advantage for every downtown resident within a five- minute walk from the public open space.

(Civic San Diego website)



Fig.14. parks and open spaces Source: (Dyett & Bhatia, 2007)

3-7 Parks and open spaces

- Parks
- Greenways
- Plazas and Pocket Parks

- **3-7-1 Parks**

Since the area of the downtown that covers 2.2 square miles (5.6 square kilometer) is being planned to be able to accommodate more than 90,000 residents and 165,000 workers by the year 2035, therefore, extra parks and open spaces have been designed in eight different neighborhood that provide a special sense of place in order to make up the diversity in the whole Downtown.

(Centre City Development Corporation) works to complete the Downtown San Diego Need Assessment for Parks, Open spaces and Recreational facilities, in order to provide an overall implementation strategy for the parks in the downtown and their future development. This will provide further detail opportunities for both parks and open spaces throughout Downtown's urban neighborhood. They are in some cases help to serve an additional functionality such as the WATERFRONT PARK, this park helps to cover the underneath parking structure.

Downtown's proposed Parks and Open spaces will include multiple uses full block parks, urban plaza for deferent events and activities, and greenways to provide connections and green extended in the active urban environment. (*Civic San Diego website*)

Waterfront Park

The Waterfront Park and Parking Structure consider as one of the most significant open spaces in San Diego Downtown. It has been awarded as California Best Project for 2014. The existing Landmark County building and the historic landscape form the center of the park, while a new fountain extended into the park from the central building, defining the awesome large open space. Below the park is a new single-level parking structure for about 250 spots as shown in (Fig.15,16).

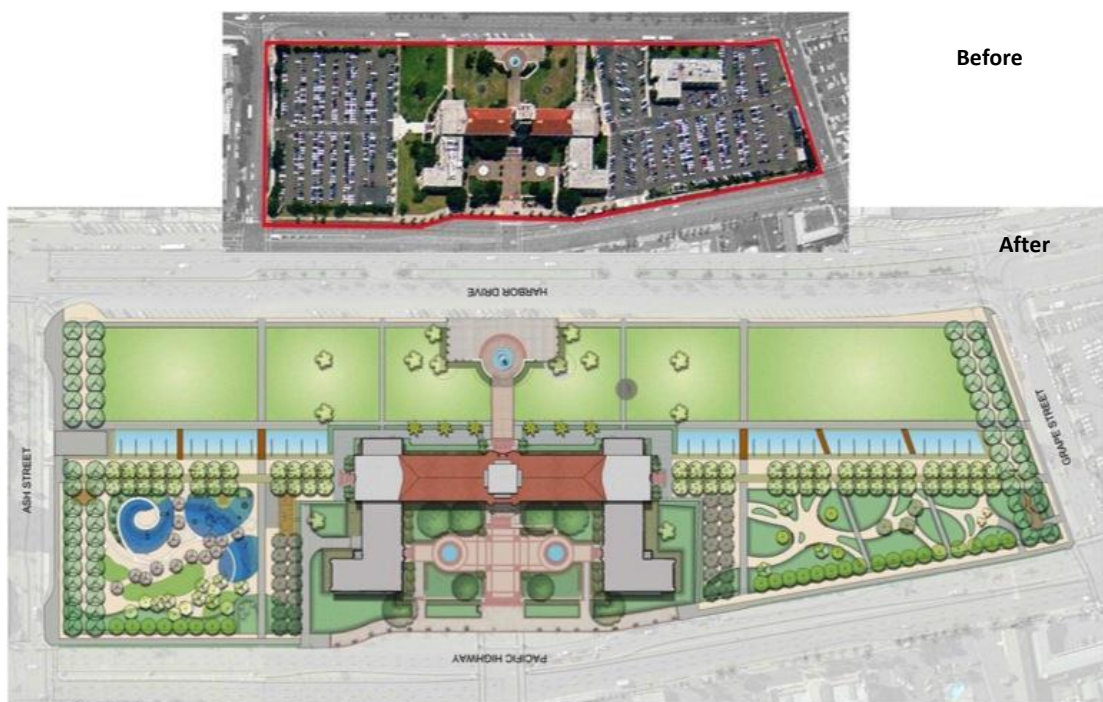


Fig.15 Waterfront Park Project maps (before and after) Source: (City of San Diego maps, 2017)

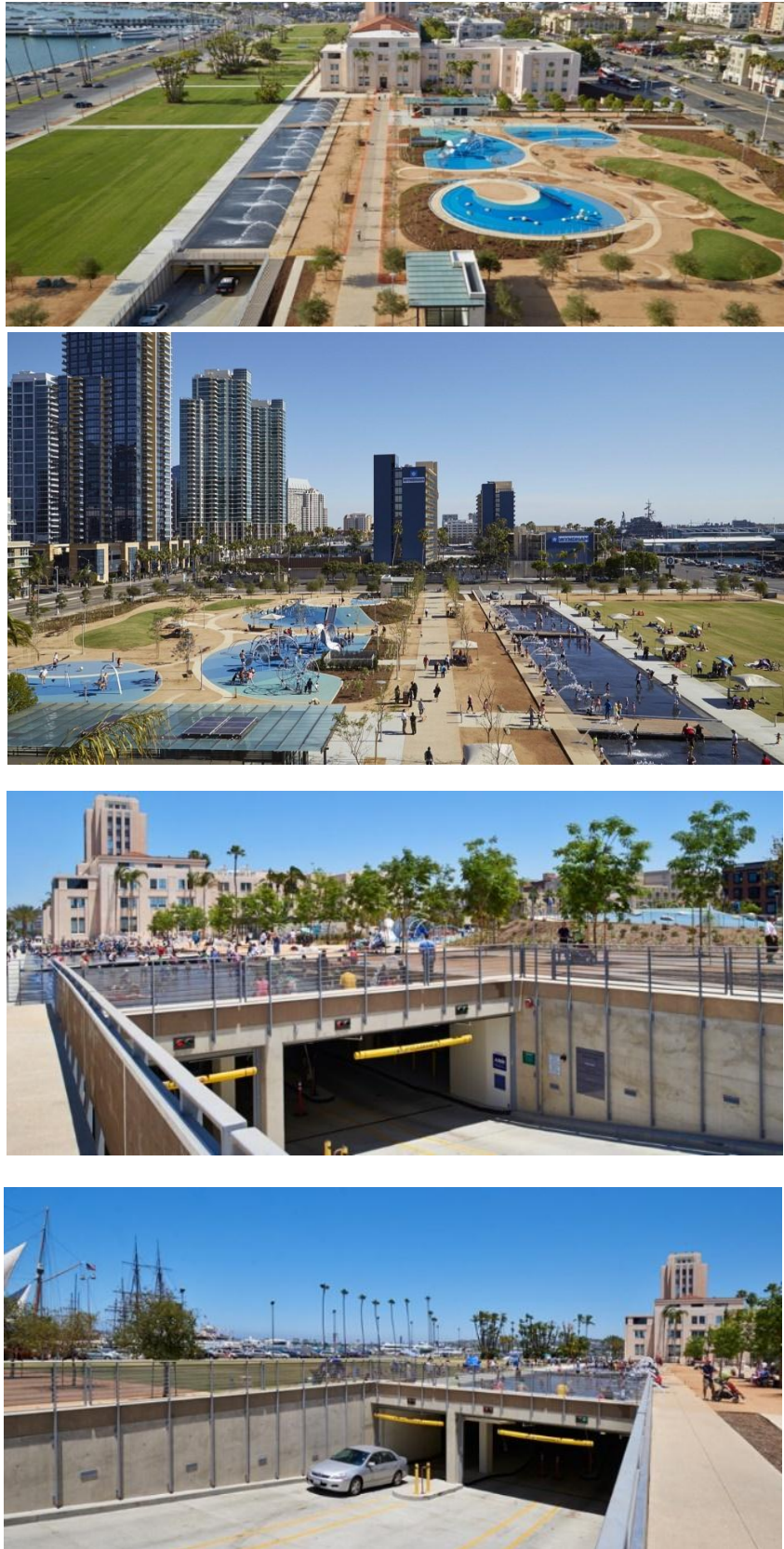


Fig.16 Waterfront Park Project pictures Source: (bing,2017)

- **3-7-2 Greenways**

The Greenways will provide pedestrian promenades and linear parks cross the Downtown from east to west and north to south, connecting the existing and proposed major open spaces and plazas as shown in (Fig. 17,18,19). All these Greenways were identified as a “Green Street” in the Downtown Community plan as shown in (Fig.20).



Fig.17 Horton Plaza Park Source: (SV premier, 2017)



Fig.18 Children's Park Source: (Sandiegometro ,2017)



Fig.19 Fault Line Park Source: (Sandiego metro ,2017)



Fig.20 Greenways in San Diego Downtown (The location for some of them) Source: (City of San Diego maps,2017)

- **3-7-3 Plazas and Pocket Parks:**

The Downtown Community Plan supports the creation of the pocket parks and public plazas, in order to provide and increase variety to downtown's parks and open spaces system.

Flexible plazas and spaces, in an integration with development projects, can serve both, maintained public spaces and privately owned as well. The Centre City Planned District Ordinance give special significance for the development projects that provide public open space in their project, by earning an additional building area, or floor area ratio (FAR).

Piazza Basilone (Fig.21) is an urban plaza in Little Italy, the plaza consists of a statue for whom the piazza is named, and a fountain surrounded by seat walls, it also provides the area with movable seating and tables. (*CIVIC San Diego site*)





Figures. 21 Piazza Basilone Source: (bing,2017) Source for the figures36-49 : 14th Street Promenade Master Plan report

3-8 BLOCKS, BUILDINGS and THE SURROUNDING VOIDS

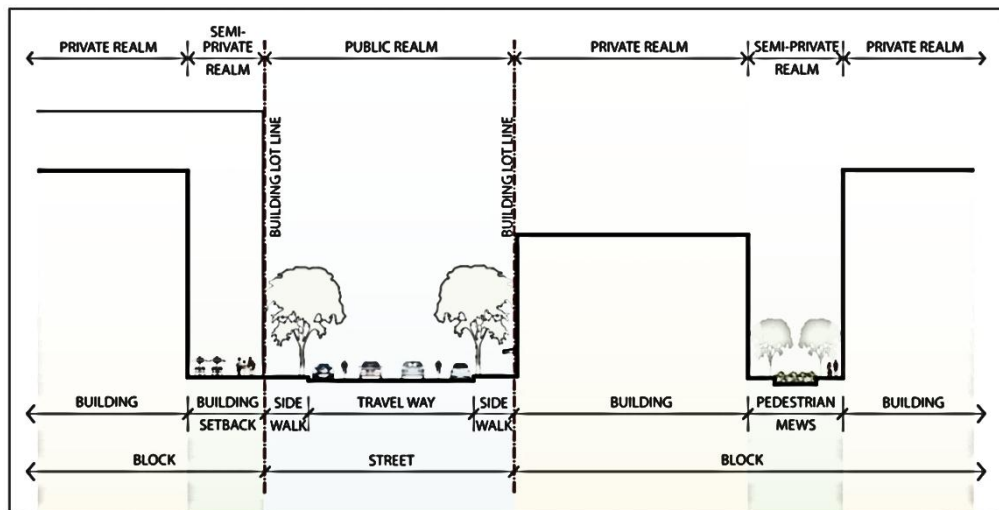
(Fig.22) shows the structure for the designing of the blocks, buildings and the surrounding voids, which is based on:



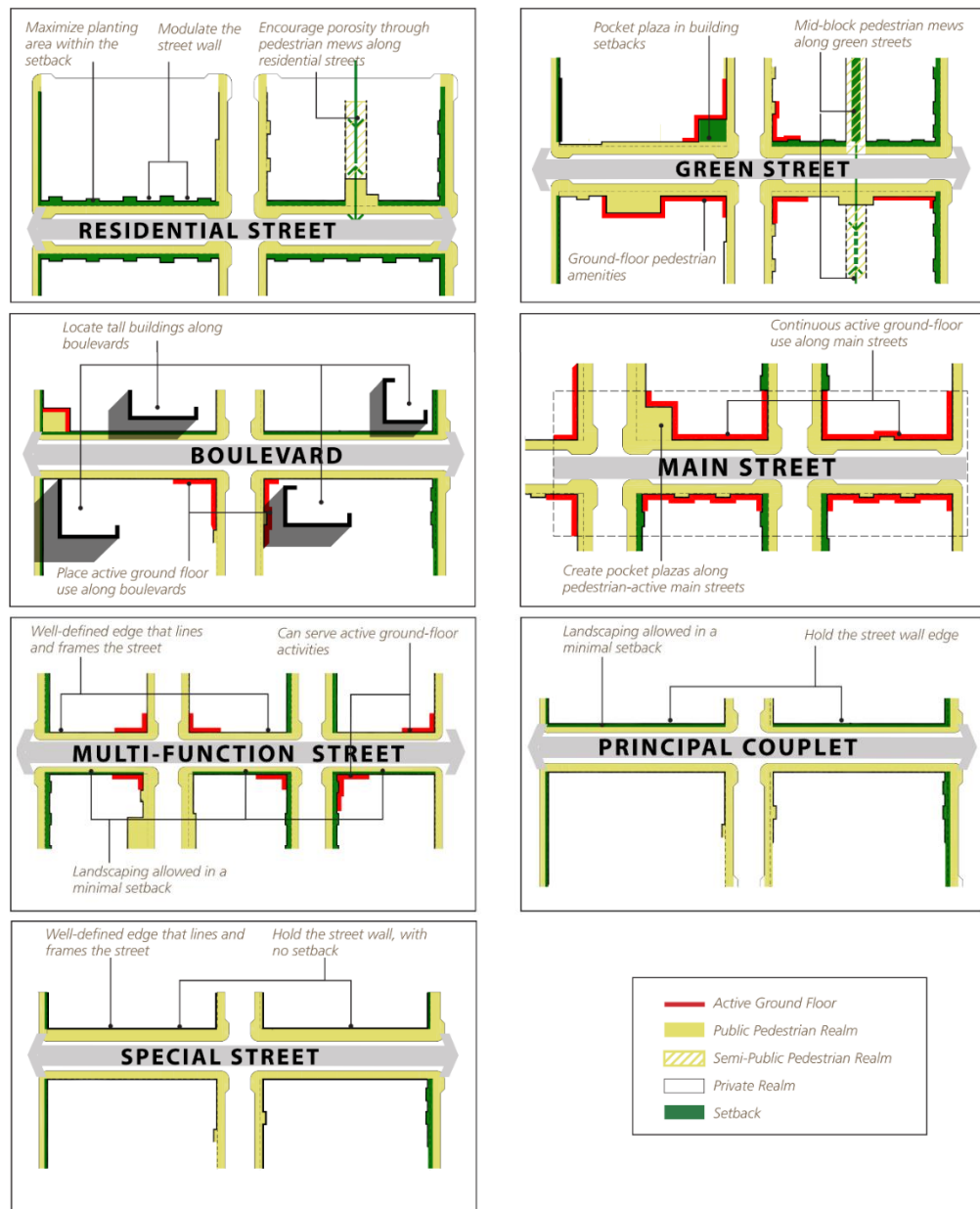
Figures.22 3D View for Downtown San Diego to show the Void and Mass in the area Source: (Dyett & Bhatia, 2007)

• Block Edges and Building Placement

The legibility of the downtown and the framing of the public realm depend on the proper placement of buildings and related open spaces. The public realm should be defined by buildings, their massing and placement should create a street wall and the urban street edge. Buildings should address the street typology, supporting the street's principal character as shown in (Fig.23,24).



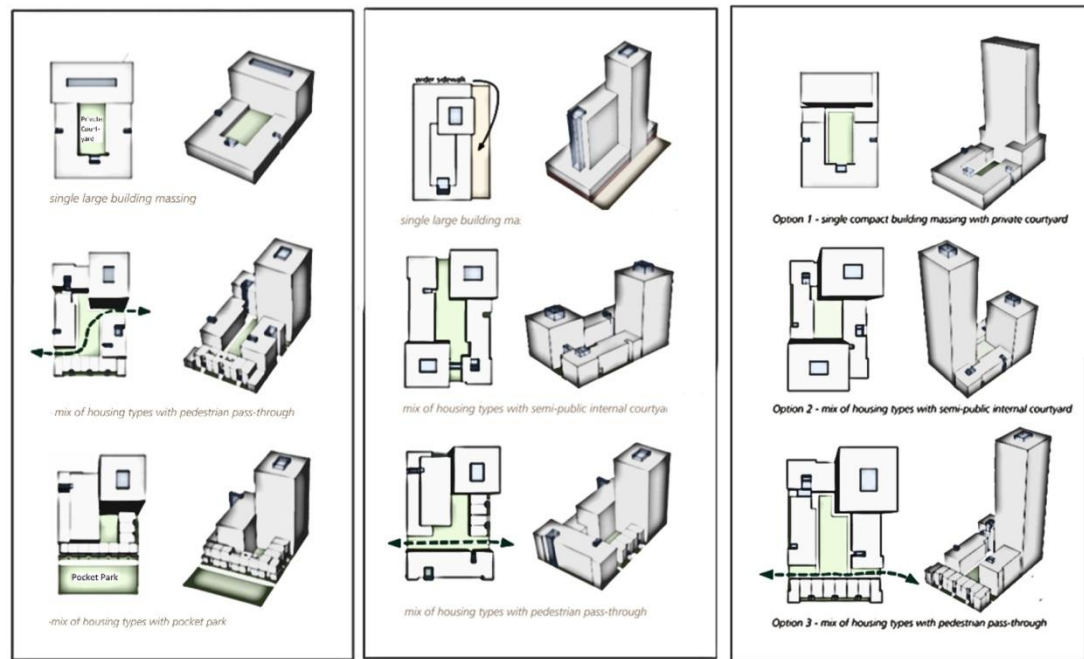
Figures.23 Public, semi-private and the private realm **Source:** (San Diego city documents, 2017)



Figures.24 Downtown Block Edge Conditions Source: (San Diego city documents, 2017)

• Building Massing and Block Modulation

The massing of buildings and the modulation of the downtown blocks significantly affect how the building's size is perceived by the people at the street level. The building's visible mass could be reduced, by breaking up the large mass of the building into smaller masses, in order to form an interesting block (Fig.25). Buildings and façade that front onto public realm should have special design attention, and particular relationship between the buildings. (*Perkins, Will and Gail, 2011*)



Figures.25 Building Massing Options Source: (San Diego city documents,2017)

Conclusion:

The General Plan for San Diego downtown is intended to provide an enlightened strategy for the city future development- a strategy that values the excellence of the communities in the city's downtown while recognizing that San Diego is a major metropolis. This plan was created upon what is good in San Diego's communities, protects the City's canyons and open spaces, strives for a sustainable use of resources, and seeks to preserve a high quality-of-life for future generations.

The General Plan relies upon the community plans to provide the site-specific guidance that will lead to implementation of many of the General Plan policies, and the continued involvement of an engaged citizenry to monitor its implementation.

Chapter Four

City of Nablus

4-1 Introduction

4-2 geographic characteristic

- **Location**
- **Historic Development**
- **Land use**
- **Demography**

4-3 Nablus public spaces

- **public spaces transformation**
- **current reality for the public spaces and the green area in the city**
- **problems and difficulties**

4.1 introduction

Nablus is one the oldest and most ancient cities in Palestine located between the mountains of Ebal and Jerzim. This location gave the city a strategic and economical advantage, since it was and still consider as a transit point in the fourth direction, and its city center is one of the main shopping centers for both the city and the surrounding villages. **(kabloona 1992)** It was established by Canaanites, and they named it Shechem in the sense of shoulder and height. Nablus governorate has 56 villages with an estimated population of 388,321, according to 2017 statistics. The area of the province is approximately 605 square kilometers, while the city area is only 29 square kilometers and the city's urban area is about 8,700 square meters or 30% of the total area of the city. **(Department of Documentation, Nablus Municipality Library)**

4.2 geographic characteristic

▪ location

Nablus has an important geographic location in the middle of the mountains highland in Palestine, in the north area of the west bank, between the mountains of Ebal(940m) and Jerzim(881m). the city located at the intersection of latitude 32.13 north and longitude 35.16 east, It is bordered to the north by Asira al – shamaliah; Jerzim mountain and Kufr Qallail village from the south ; Zawata, Bait iba, Bait wazan and Rafeadia from the west; Balatah, Askar, Al-Badan Valley from the east. **(Palestine's liberation organization 1990)**

▪ Historic Development

The old city of Nablus was established on the ruins of the city of Neapolis, between the valley of Nablus and quarries. see (Fig.26).

The long Ottoman period in Nablus (around 402 years) affected the urban morphology of the city, where was confined to the heart of old city, but was characterized by the development of transportation between Nablus and the rest of urban centers in Palestine. (Kalbunah,1992)

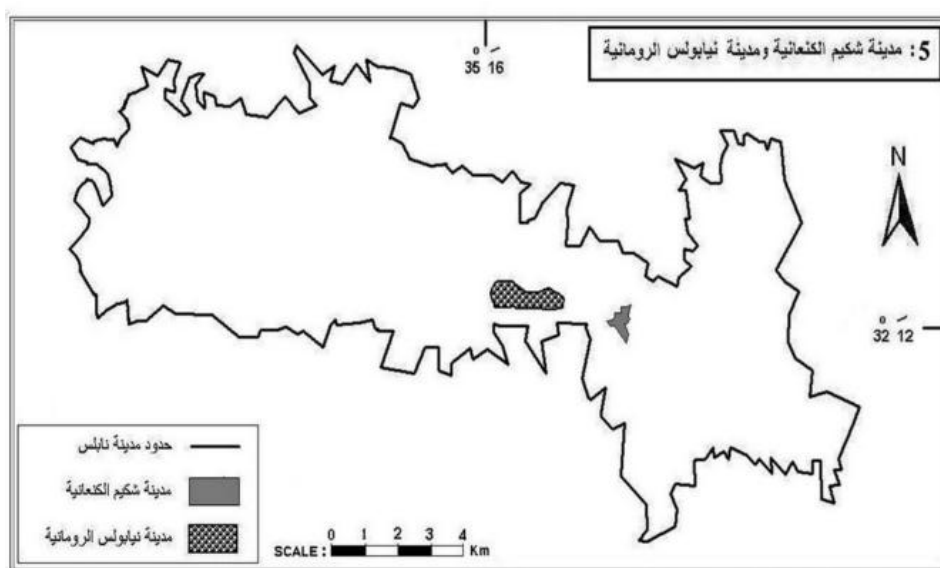


Fig.26 The city of Shechem, Canaanite and the Roman city of Nyabos Source: (Nablus Municipality, 2017)

The year of 1918 was the end of the Ottoman rule in the country and started the British mandate in 1927. In this year a strong earthquake shook the country, destroying a lot of the city buildings, forcing the residents to live outside the old city and start the development of construction outside the border of the old town. This is in addition to the difficult economic conditions experienced by the population during the British mandate and

the strict laws imposed on the municipality, the reduction of the expansion of the structural plan. (Nufal, 1989)

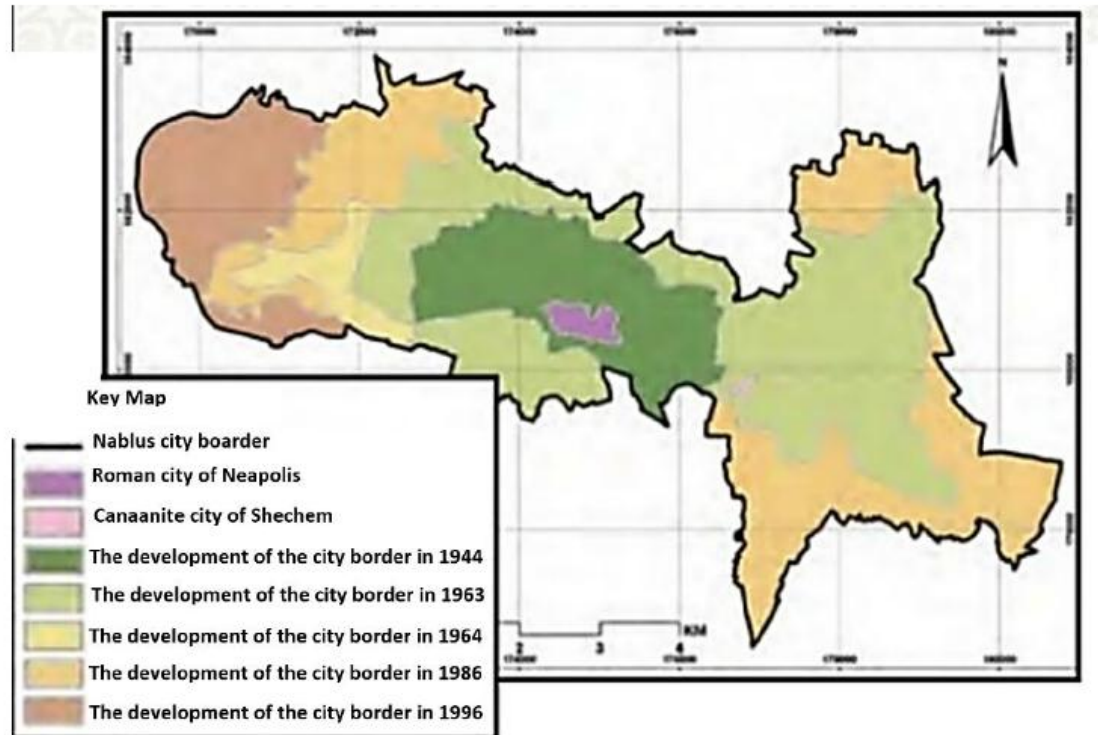


Fig. 27 Plan of the expansion of the borders of the city of Nablus Source: (Nablus Municipality, 2017)

Later, between 1950-1967, the urban expansion in the city of Nablus was affected by the Jordanian rule. Some of its laws limited this expansion while others contributed to the revitalization and extension. The plan of the city was expanded twice in the succession, first, in 1963 from the west and east to include the camps and some villages, second in 1964 from the western side only, As shown in (Fig.27). In addition to the development of law to regulate the land uses. (Kone, Antoni, 1995)

Between 1967-1994, the Israel occupation has their impact on the urban extension of the city of Nablus through these stages, , between 1967-1993 and after 1994.

When the city was under the Israel occupation after 1967 and before Oslo agreement, between 1967-1993, a disaster runs in the area, and it included the urban activity. During that period, the area was expropriated and the Israel settlements were established, this is in addition to the demolition of high number of houses. **(Al-Shinar, 1989)**

When the Oslo agreement was signed between Palestine Authority (PLO) and the Israel side in 13-9-1993, it created many obstacles to the urban expansion, where not all Nablus parts classified as (A) category, the category where the PLO has the regulatory authority, but there are many parts of the city located in (B) category, the which is organized by the Palestinian authority but the security controlled by the Israel forces. At the same time parts of the city lands located in (C) category, where Israel has their control on both; the security and the organizational aspects see (Fig.28). **(Al-Shinar, 1989)**

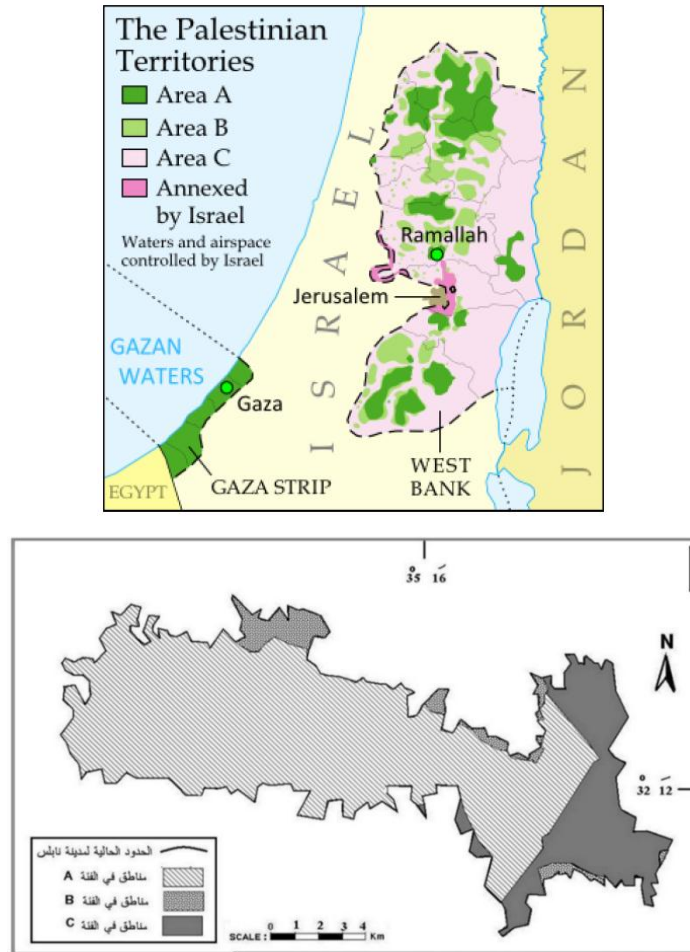


Fig.28 Nablus city according to Oslo Agreement Source: (Nablus Municipality, 2017)

in 1994, The Palestinian National Authority (PNA), took over having a financial deficit, which depends mostly on external subsidies, the provision of the infrastructure services to the cities was limited to municipal and local councils and their diligence in obtaining European and Arab grants and assistance to implement these services. This is what happened in the city of Nablus between 1994-2000, the time when to start working on the road construction, which contributed to the revitalization of the urban movement, but decreased later after Al-Aqsa Intifada. But the urban extension gradually increased after 2005 due to the relative stability of the city. (Abu-Omar, Ziad and others 1993)

▪ LAND USE

The building area in Nablus Governorate is estimated at 5% of the total area of the Governorate. The uses of land in Nablus governorate are divided into a number of classifications shown in (Fig.29): residential areas, planned streets, proposed streets, agricultural and industrial areas, as well as the Old City area. (Department of Engineering, Nablus Municipality)

The following table shows the distribution of municipal lands / Nablus city according to the nature of its use and the percentage of use of the total area of the governorate as follows:

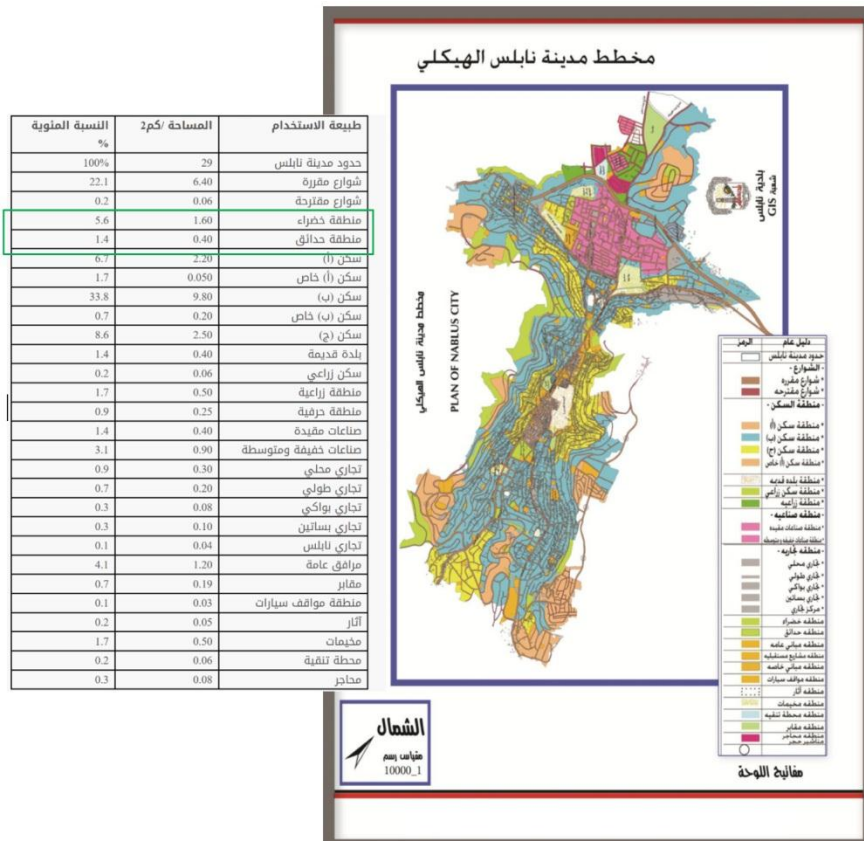


Fig.29 Master Plan for the city of Nablus Source: (Nablus Municipality, 2017)

▪ DEMOGRAPHY

The total population of Nablus Governorate for 2017 is about 387,240 people, "the number of males 196,310 and the number of females 190,930," according to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics see (Fig.30). While the population of the city of Nablus, including the surrounding camps, about 170,069 people.

YEAR	POPULATION
1894	9.000
1911	21.072
1931	17.468
1945	23.250
1961	45.773
1966	53.000
1967	44.000
1980	60.000
1987	106.900
1997	126.472
2007	132.780
2010	133.715
2015	170.096

Fig.30 Nablus Population Source: (Palestinian Statistics Department,2017)

The growth in the population of the city of Nablus is due to several factors, including the migration factor from the countryside to the cities and the results of the wars, which surrounded the city in four refugee camps, as well as the city is qualified population tends to search for new levels of life including the elements of the attractions and incentives life. **(Palestinian Statistics Department,2017)**

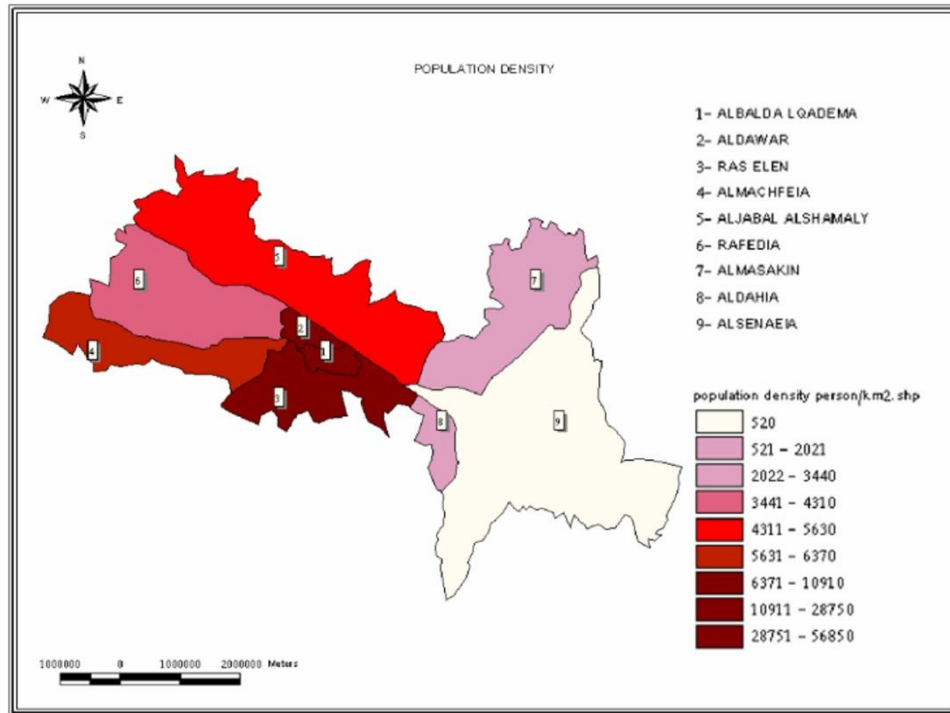


Fig. 31 population density according to Nablus structural plan source: (Nablus municipality,2017)

4-3 Nablus public spaces

▪ 4-3-1 public spaces transformation

The development in the city of Nablus since the Master Plan in 1961 consider as the establishment of green spaces in the city as shown in the map (Fig.32), this plan also shows the land uses of the city, its nature and the location of green areas in that time. (**Alhamooz, 2008**).

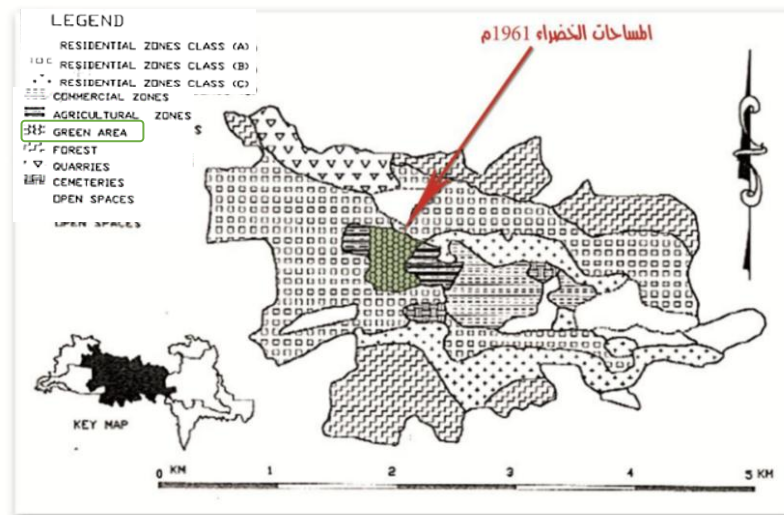


Fig. 32 The Land Use plan in Nablus in 1961, shows green areas Source: (Al-Hamoz, 2008)

The development of the green areas was started in 1961 in the central region of the city, and followed by another development during the period (1971 - 1981) within the western region zone of the city . After that (1981-2000), there were a great slow in the green space's development, because of the neglect in the administrative and planning responsibilities from Nablus municipality. (**Alhamooz, 2008**)

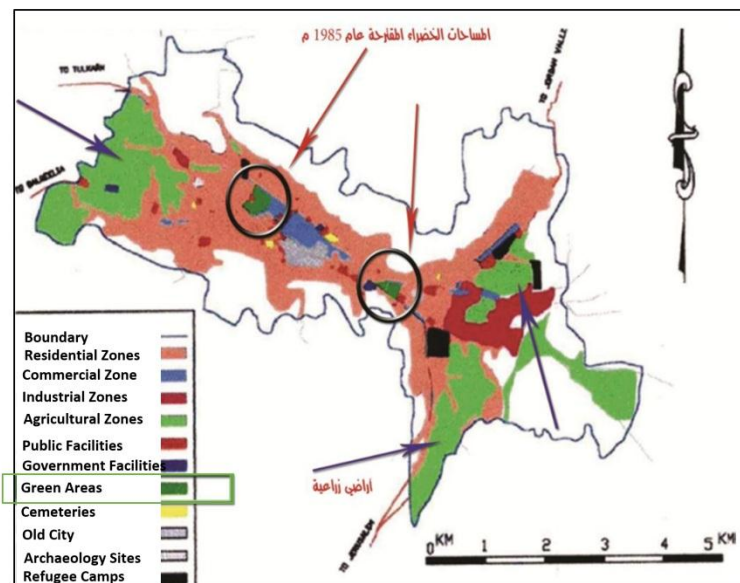


Fig.33 Proposed land use plan for the city of Nablus 1985 Source: (Nablus Municipality,2017)

However, the city is still able to increase the proportion of this green places. The plan of 1985 shows the proposed increase in the green areas in the city see (Fig.33).

Twenty years ago, Nablus had three public parks Only, Jamal Abdel Nasser Gardens in the western region, which has a total area of about 75 dunams, the second park is the King Faisal Park in the eastern region which is currently called as Nablus Childhood Center, which covers an area of 5.13 dunums. And The Family park in the West part with an area of approximately 5.6 Dunums. **(Nablus Municipality)**

Nablus Center for Childhood Happiness as shown (Fig.34), formerly known as King Faisal Park, was established in 1996 through a grant from the Foundation for Cooperation. **(Nablus Municipality)**



Fig.34 Nablus Center for Childhood Happiness Source: (palestineremembered,2015)

The family park shown in (Fig.35) is located next to the gardens of Gamal Abdel Nasser from the south and was established more than seventy years ago, and can be seen from the ages of trees planted by the varieties of cypress, pine, palms and Phoenix of all types, and the area of the park about 5.6 acres.



Fig.35 The Family park Source: (palestineremembered,2015)

In 2009, the Danish Garden was established in the southern western part of the old town. It serves a large area and was previously an abandoned area planted with fruit trees of walnuts, poppies and oranges.

In 2006, a 950-square-meter garden was built in Al-Makfeiah Area, a small garden that barely accommodates a small number of children and families. In 2009, Al-Horsh Park with a total area of about 21 dunums, was established in the southern part of Nablus (Mount Gerizim) (Fig.36).

(Nablus Municipality)



Fig.36 Al-Horsh Park Source: (palestineremembered, 2015)

In 2012, the Sama Nablus Park shown in (Fig.37) was established with a total area of 23 dunums.



Fig.37 Sama Nablus Park Source: (palestineremembered, 2016)

In 2010, Yasser Arafat Park was established and is located in Askar refugee camp. It is about 5.4 dunums. It is a garden that meets the needs of the Askar refugee camp in all its age groups. In the eastern part of the city located the Phoenix park shown in (Fig.38) adjacent to the camp Balata and the project area about 4 dunams.



Fig.38 Phoenix park Source: (palestineremembered, 2015)

In the south-eastern part of the city located Al-Harsh Park as shown in (Fig.39) with an estimated area of about 20 dunums. It was originally wooded areas, but some trees were burn about 20 years ago. The topography of the earth is characterized by extreme and sharp tendencies, the entrance to the garden designed to be from inside the school of Burhan Kamal also because of the topography of the difficult terrain.



Fig.39 Al-Harsh Park Source: (palestineremembered,2016)

Finally, the garden of Al-Ma'ajein, as shown in (Fig.40) located in the northern western part of the city of Nablus. It covers an area of 1.1 Dunums. It is a children's playground and a sitting area in front of the main entrance. It does not contain cafeterias, health units and parking.



Fig.40 Al-Ma'ajein Park Source: (palestineremembered,2017)

▪ 4-3-2 The Current Situation of Green Spaces in Nablus City

In addition to the information and maps available in the municipality of Nablus, the comparison and aerial photography of the city at various periods, and the researcher's modifications, shows the development of green spaces on the City level and in different areas, such as mountains or city limits.

Based on the information issued by the Municipality of Nablus on land use, which indicates that the area of green areas is estimated at about 400 dunam (400.000 m²) which include parks and private parks within the streets and islands and public squares in addition to gardens residential neighborhoods, The per capita share of green spaces at the city level as a

whole is calculated by dividing this area by the population of the city (estimated at 170.096 according to the Central Bureau of Statistics). Thus, the per capita green area in the city is estimated at 2.3 m².

As for the study of per capita green spaces in a particular area of the city, it is noticeable that this percentage varies from place to place, rising to reach 2 m² in some places, while decreasing and falling to zero in other places. Which means that there is a deterioration in the distribution of green spaces and a clear planning failure, the following table shows some gatherings in the city of Nablus and its per capita green areas.

The calculation of per capita in the study area requires additional information not only of the population of the area, but also includes the users of the place, such as shoppers inside and outside the city, in addition to the workers in the area. This number also varies between the age groups used for the place and their needs in this space. Also, between hours of use at night or day.

But what is unanimous is that the city as a whole and the study area specifically is far from the global distribution of green spaces, where the World Health Organization (WHO) has suggested that every city should have a minimum of **9 square meters** of green space per person, and ensuring every person lives within a 5-minute walk to nature (World Health Organization). That was noted in the study of the center of Sandi Gao City, with a per capita green area of the equivalent of 11 m².

where the per capita share in the world over 8 m², and should not be less than that.

▪ **problems and difficulties**

The obstacles and problems of urban public spaces in the city can be summarized by several items:

- 1- The urban spaces distribution in the city has not been done within the basis of a scientific standard, but within random, improvised approach.
- 2- the distribution of the public spaces in some areas is more than other areas, as we can clearly see in the general plan for the distribution of public parks in the city. We also notice the absence of the public parks in some neighborhoods significantly, and density in other areas.
- 3- Lack of exploitation of the vast areas of hills and mountains and forest-free trees.
- 4- Most of the public spaces and public parks designed areas are either rocky or hard terrain, with high costs for their creation and implementation.
- 5- The absence of the criteria and foundations used in the selection of the lands designated as public spaces in line with the city and citizens needs in term of planning.
- 6- complete the planning process without involving specialized bodies outside the responsible planning process organization. (exclusivity decision policy).

- 7- the urban spaces theme in the city was limited to include the domestic, public parks and this framework did not include the green open areas along with the public streets and islands in the urban area.
- 8- The green areas distribution was done after the planning of the separated areas and not the city as a whole.
- 9- The Distribution of public spaces is not linked to an independent budget and financial allocations for the implementation of these projects, but is strongly linked to the special support of donor countries, especially foreign institutions.
- 10- The incomplete implementation of some projects because it is linked to a specific budget such as the absence of lighting or walls or even some of the seats, which consider as essential elements in the process of designing the public spaces.

Chapter Five

Nablus Downtown

5-1 Introduction

5-2 Study of Nablus Downtown

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5-2-2 land Use

5-2-3 Downtown morphological Development

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5-3 Study of the urban design elements for Nablus Downtown

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5-3-2 Districts (neighborhoods)

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5-3-4 Landmarks

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- **Public Spaces and Green Areas**

5-4 Visual characteristics of the study area

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5-4-3 Arts and Streets Furnitures

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5-1 Introduction

The objective of this study is to identify the obstacles and problems facing Nablus downtown in general and the public spaces there in particular, in order to find solutions and future proposals for the area. The field survey and the comprehensive analysis usually precede the stage of development, planning and formulation of proposals. Therefore, it was necessary to study the following aspects:

The Land Use and the Land marks, Buildings Height, their use, their age and the structural condition. It is also necessary to analyze the transportation system, which includes trends, traffic density and street classification, in addition to the need to analyze the architectural character, street furniture and commercial markets in the city center.

After the completion of the analysis process and the previous study of San Diego Downtown, it will become easy to find solutions to the study area to respond to the requirements of development and to create attractions for visitors and provide squares and public spaces needed to revive the area.

5-2 Study of Nablus Downtown

▪ 5-2-1 The boundary of the study area

The boundaries of the study area extend between Hittin Street, which adjacent to the old town of the city, to Mujieb Adin Street which adjacent to Gamal Abdel Nasser Park, and from Faisal and Haifa Streets, which are

the main arteries of the city, up to Granada and Shwaitra streets near the historic area of the city, see (Fig.41).

While the downtown of Nablus is the heart of the city, and while the city nature emphasizes the movement through specific exits and entrances, so this area has emerged as a need to develop, study and meet the needs of the people, residents and visitors. Also, because of its historical, cultural and economic importance, in addition to the cultures inherent to the inclusion of the original inhabitants of the city as well as refugees. Attention was given to the study area as it lacked the public spaces and green spaces that must be available in downtowns.

Fig.41 The location of Nablus Downtown, the boundary of the study area Source: (Nablus Municipality,2017)

▪ 5-2-2 Land Use

The patterns of land use in the city of Nablus has evolved with the development of the city as an important urban center, especially in the commercial aspect, to become the main use within the city.

The area of commercial areas in the city of Nablus amounted to 3990 Dunums or equivalent to 13.8% of the total area of the city according to the master plan for the year of 2006. The study area, which is located within the commercial areas, is about 467 dunums, which formed about 0.6 of the total area of the city, a total of 12% of the commercial areas.

This area includes the built-up areas as well as the non-built areas of roads, corridors, squares and spaces, where the built-up areas covered about 162 dunums, which formed 35% of the total of the study area.

The area of Al-Shuhada Square is crowded with passers-by, private and public vehicles due to the presence of the Public parking in the basement of the municipality structure. It is also crowded with huge commercial buildings with high altitudes and needs to be re-developed and re-planned due to its lack of pedestrian areas and green areas.

▪ 5-2-3 Downtown morphological Development

At the beginning of the twentieth century, and with the increase of the city's importance as an urban center, the commercial use became competitive and dominated than the other uses, especially in the valley area of the city, located to the north of the old city on the main transport east-west, And that what limited the residential use in the area and its spread on the slopes of the mountains of Ebal and Jerzim. (Al-Dabag, 1988)

The closed nature of the city's valley has led to the accumulation of commercial areas and confined to a narrow area in the downtown 'which led to the disappearance of other uses in that region. In light of the problems caused by the overcrowding in the downtown, secondary shopping centers have grown in the west and east of the city, especially on the main arteries, but at the same time it confined to competitive shops and exhibitions in areas far from the main commercial center, which often need large areas. (Al-Aga, 1993)

However, that distributions of the commercial areas around the city center, did not alleviate the trade pressure that the downtown faces. This is due to the limited use of land in the downtown for the commercial use as shown in (Fig.42). Also, the region is free from squares and public spaces that must be available to alleviate this pressure, and limited on the green spaces represented by the gardens of Jamal Abdel Nasser, which is concentrated in one area, and makes an unbalance between the solid and the void in the region. (Al-Aga, 1993)



Fig.42 Nablus Municipal boundaries in 1948 Source: (Nablus Municipality archive,2017)

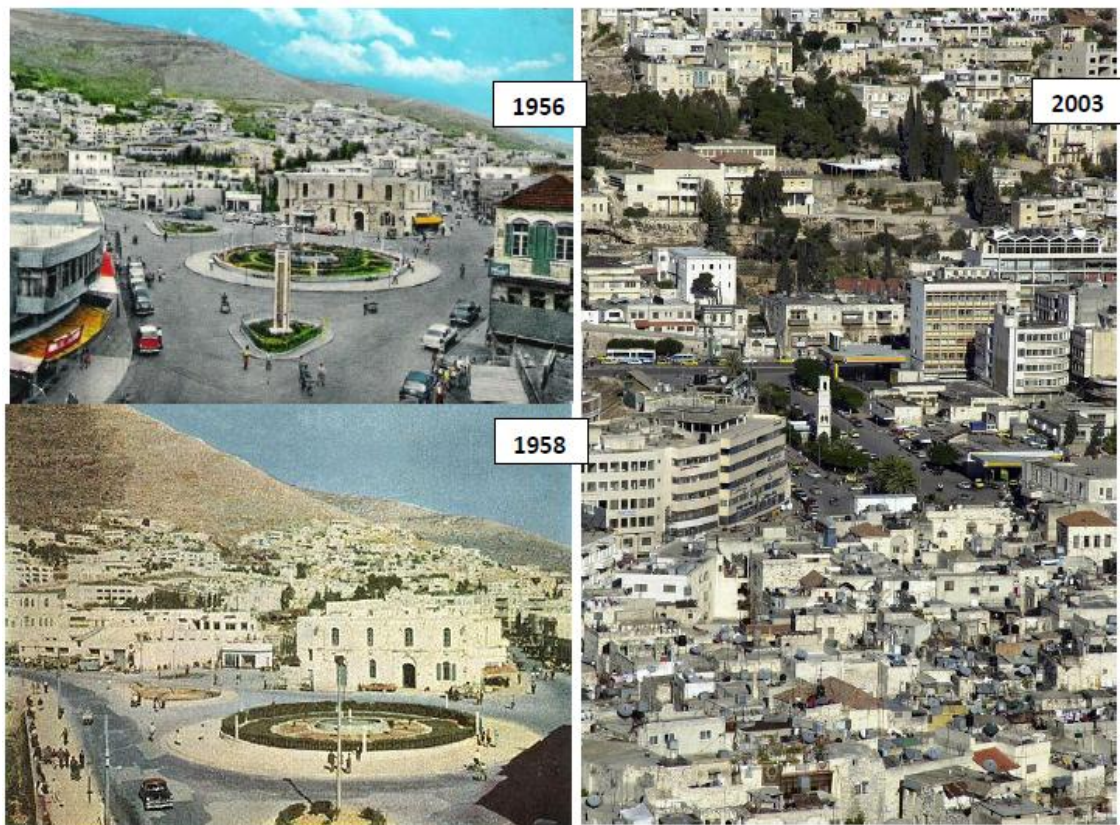


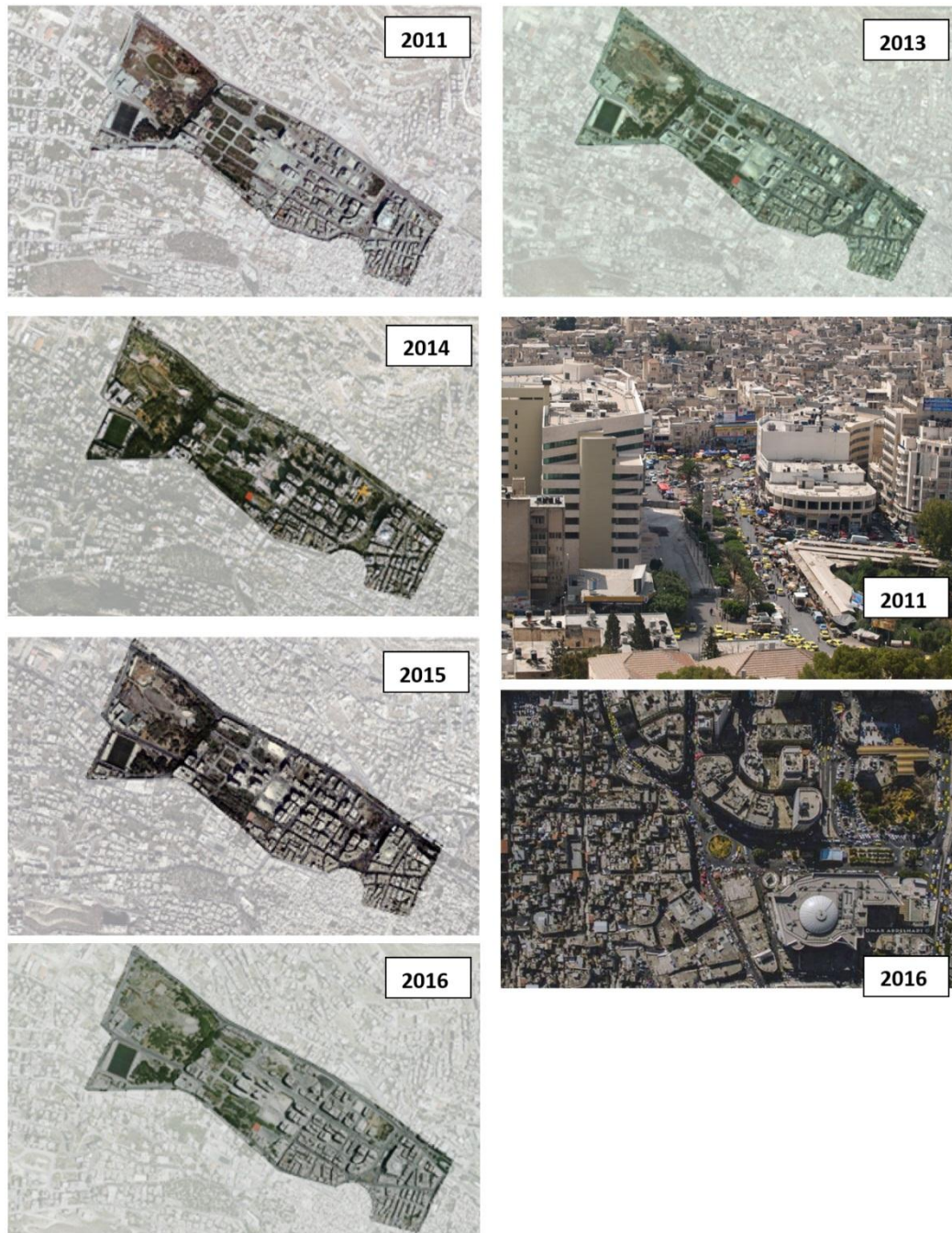
Fig.43 Nablus Roundabout 1958-1958-2003 Source:(Wikiwand, 2018)



Figures.44 Downtown morphological Development maps Maps Source: (geomolg.ps, 2018)
Pictures Sources: (wikiwand, 2018)



Figures.45 Downtown morphological Development maps and pictures Maps Source: (geomolg.ps, 2018)



Figures.46 Downtown morphological Development maps and pictures Maps Source: (geomolg.ps, 2018)

▪ **5-2-4 land Authority**

According to the data taken from the records of the Tabu Chamber, the municipal tax register, the property tax records, and the information collected from the master plan of Nablus city, We note that land with private ownership constitutes the largest percentage and equates to more than 85% of the total area, while the Public ownership (government, municipal, Public institutions) accounts for about 15% of the total area.

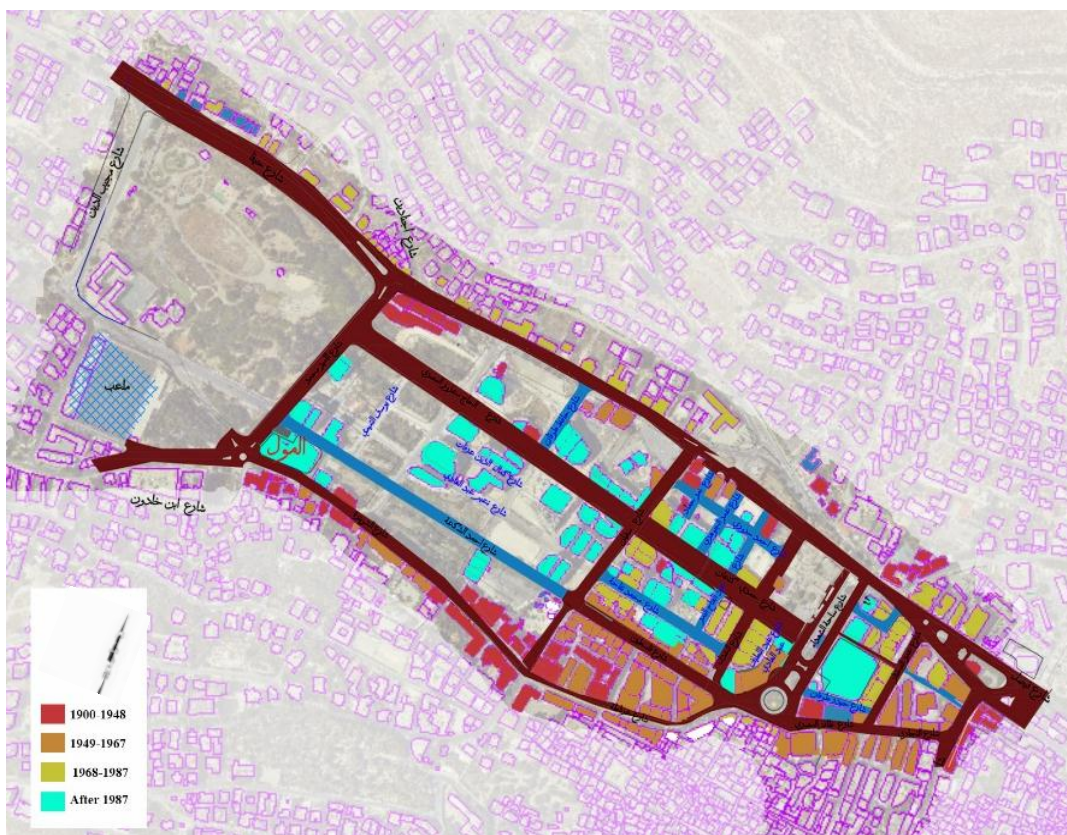
The identification of land ownership helps to find suitable solutions for renting or acquiring land to develop the area. In Nablus downtown, finding solutions for the land authority in the area of the roundabout, proposing the squares and solving the transportation problems is easier than the places with a high percentage of land with private ownership, which require investment or acquisition through agreements between the municipality and land owners in order to achieve common interests between The two parties, because this area consider the lung from where the city breathes.

▪ **5-2-5 The age of buildings**

The importance of determining the age of the buildings in the area of the downtown in order to implement the policy of removal and replacement of buildings, and the deterioration of the policy of restoration and preservation of historic buildings, that help to revive the area of the downtown, As the restoration process is an essential part of the structure of the historic city centers as it is the area that expresses the culture of the place.

The analysis of the buildings in the study area shows that the buildings which faced the old town and the city center are an important part of the old town.

In general, the area is rich in historic buildings such as Toukan soup factory, located in Al-Shuhada Square, as well as the Roman Hippodrome, this is in addition to the many historical residential buildings and public buildings on Al-Shwaitra Street and Granada Street.



Figures.47 The chronological age of buildings Source: (geomolg; edited by researcher, 2018)

5-3 Study of the urban design elements for Nablus Downtown

- 5-3-1 EDGES

The downtown is located in the critical area, because of its intersection with Nablus old town in three major streets, bordering the area from the east and the south which are Hittin Street, Al-Shwaitra Street and Granada Street, see (Fig.48). The northern edge of the area has its particular importance, because of the presence of the two main arteries of the city, Faisal Street and Haifa Street. The western edge of the study area is characterized by the existence of the only lung for the city, Jamal Abdel Nasser Park, with an area estimated to be the vast majority of the green space in the downtown.



Figures.48 The Boundary of Nablus Downtown (Study area) Source: (geomolg, 2018)

- 5-3-2 DISTRICTS

Distribution of public institutions and buildings in the downtown districts

Downtown Nablus has many public and religious functions that serve the city's population, visitors and sometimes extend to serve the entire northern West Bank, such as government offices, banks, health clinics, commercial malls, schools, mosques and fuel stations.

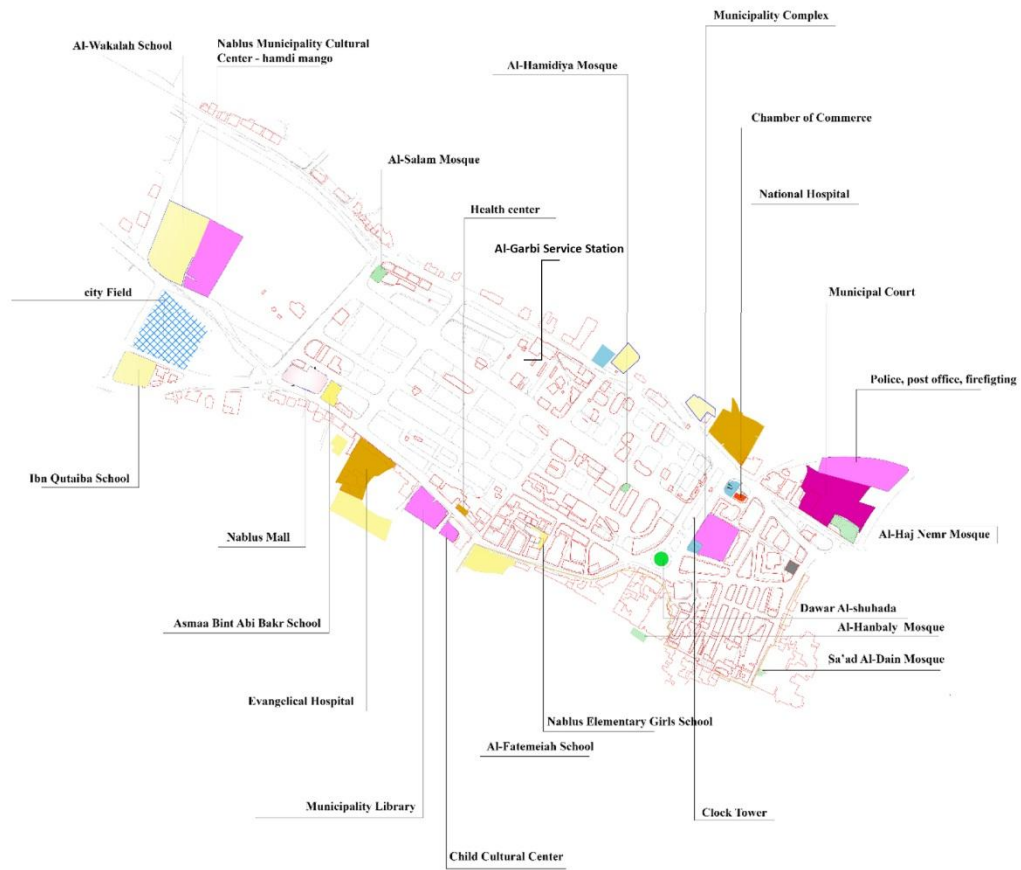
The study of these buildings and their location for the downtown helps in determining the places that differ from each other in character. As we could notice, the commercial mall area (municipal complex) suffocated and crowded with the movement of people and transportation, which needs to study the actual organization of squares and spaces and streets serving the region. As well as the multiplicity of public institutions such as banks, the Public Library, the Municipality, the Magistrate's Court, the Chamber of Commerce, clinics and other general uses in the region, all of These uses were lack of the surrounding squares and spaces, and located within a high building density, which increases the pressure on them in particular, and on the downtown in general.

At the same time, there are nine schools in the region, which are spread along Faisal, Granada and Al-Shwaitra streets. the presence of educational institutions in the Downtown area is unacceptable, In addition to the occurrence of these schools on the streets of major risk to the lives of students in the region, which requires the conversion of these schools to

other uses and the construction of new schools within the residential neighborhoods, see (Fig.49).

- **5-3-3 LANDMARKS**

Since the Landmarks are physical elements varies in popularity and knowledge from one person to another and are more influential if they are famous for their own location and then for the entire city. So, there are many distinctive land marks for Nablus Down Town as the new clock tower, which is characterized by its central location and traditional architectural character. The traditional Tukan soup factory with a special location at the important crossroads in the area, as well as the municipality complex which is currently the most important land mark in the area, Serving as the headquarters of the municipality and Nablus commercial center for shopping, as well as the use of basement floors as a public transport complex for the city of Nablus. There are many other Landmarks such as mosques, schools and hospitals in and around the study area, see (Fig.49).



Figures.49 Landmarks in the study area Source: (geomolg ; edited by researcher, 2018)

- 5-3-4 PATHS

▪ Streets Classification

“Streets and their sidewalks, and main public spaces of a city are its most vital organs”, (**Jane Jacobs,1961**).

The importance of this study lies in identifying the most important streets that penetrate the urban fabric of the Down Town, it also forms the basis for the re-planning process there. The transport traffic should include the balance between different types of transport, whether public transport

(buses, taxis) or private as shown in (Fig.50) . The streets in the study area can be classified into four different categories:

A- arterial streets

Arterial streets represented by Faisal Street, the main transport line linking the cities of the northern West Bank to Nablus with high traffic density passes through it. As well as Haifa Street, which is located near the West Garages complex, and also characterized by high traffic density, linking the city of Nablus with the cities of the north of the West Bank (Tulkarm and Jenin). There is also Prince Mohammed Street, that considered as a main local street that connects the cities high population density area, but it also has the importance of linking two cities (Nablus with Qalqiliya). There is another streets that can be considered as the arteries of the movement in the study area, such as Al-Shuwaitra Street, Sufian Street, Granada Street, Palestine Street, in addition to the streets located on Martyrs Square, see (Fig.51).

B- collector streets

Collective streets are the streets that cross through the Down Town, including Al-Adl Street, Hittin Street and Omar Al Mukhtar Street These streets are very important for the Down Town area as they penetrate and contain shops on their sides, so they have their importance in reducing the traffic in the area so that citizens can shop comfortably and easily, but it is noticeable at the same time the lack of the Pedestrians pathways and

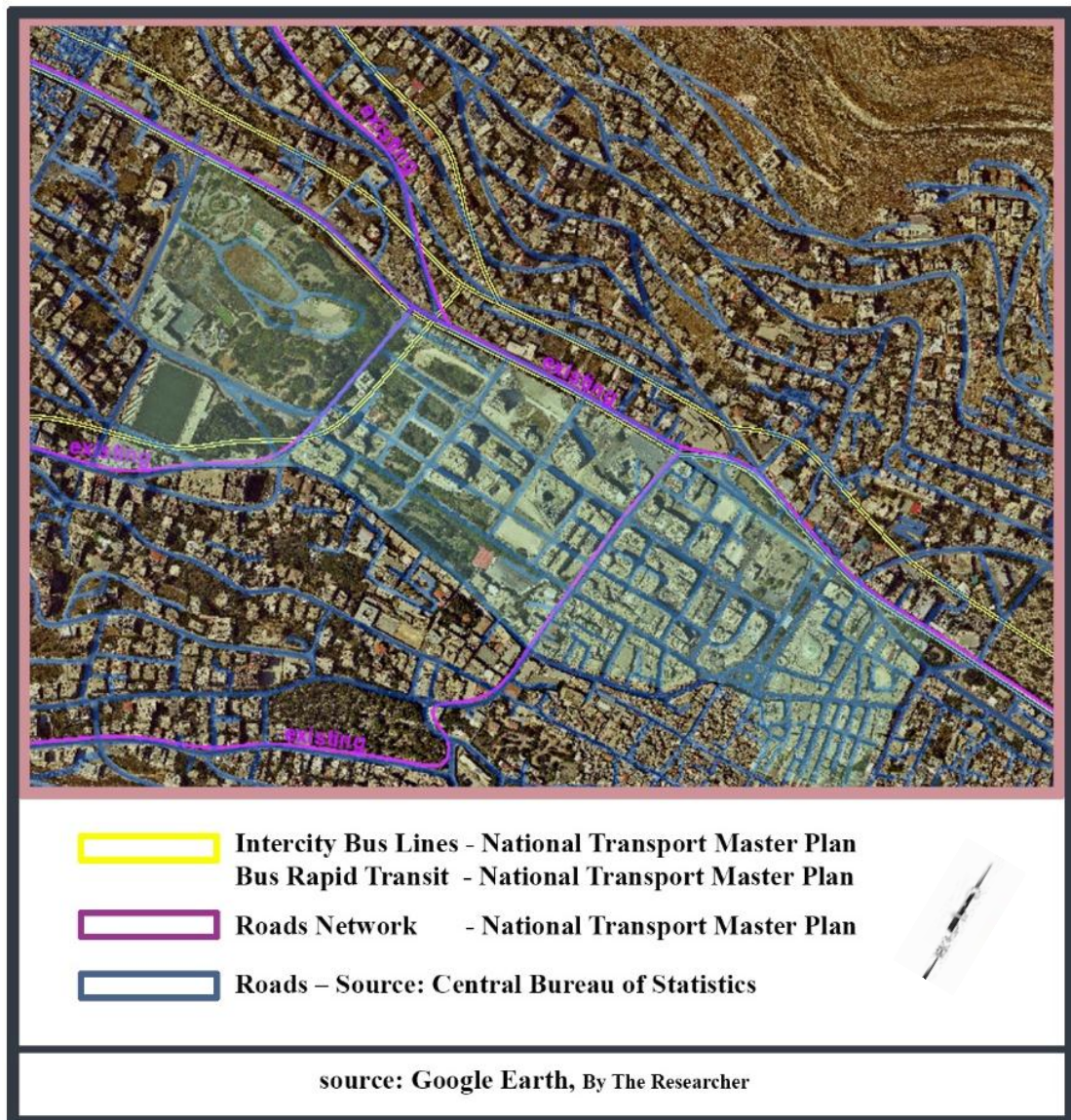
umbrellas in these streets, Which contains many commercial services and adopts most sales movement.

C- Local streets

The local sub-streets, which connect the inner areas of the Down Town with each other , they are one-way streets, with a few of the width, which make it easier to convert part of them in to sidewalks for pedestrians.

D- Secondary streets

including proposed and under construction streets, which have a local importance. There is also the pedestrian streets leading to the old city that can't be passed through by the vehicles.



Figures.50 Streets Classification in Nablus Downtown Source: (geomol, 2018)



Figures.51 Streets Classification in Nablus Downtown Source: (geomolg; edited by researcher, 2018)

5-3-5 NODES (PUBLIC SPACE)

Public Spaces and Green Areas

In the study area located an urban space represented by Al-Shuhada Square, which is the main lung for all surrounded buildings, which contains some green spaces, an aesthetic element (lighthouse) and a water element (city roundabout). While there are some elements of the urban design in this area, but it is not considered sufficient for the study area, Due to its distinctive function as the city center (CBD). This means that there is a movement of shoppers and a large commercial movement, Because of the importance of Nablus between neighboring cities and villages.

In addition, the green spaces are limited to the area of Jamal Abdel Nasser, which is spacious but non-functional, due to its misuse because of the poor design and its lack of urban space.



Figures.52 Public spaces represented by Al-Shuhada Roundabout Source: (booking-tours, 2018)



Figures.53 Green Area represented by Jamal Abdel Nasser garden Source: (bing, 2018)

5-4 Visual and aesthetic effects of the study area

- 5-4-1 Architectural Character

According to the studies of the architectural character of Nablus downtown, two types of buildings could be observed: historical buildings and modern buildings, the historical buildings are characterized by a traditional architectural character and have a distinctive structural system. It is also having an artistic architectural detail features such as the arches that we see in the entrances and doors. Perhaps the oldest of these buildings is the facade of the old town which overlooks on the commercial center area, but at the same time it was distorted by the restoration operations and modern additions that have distorted the landscape of the region and did not include the treatment of the arches and the entrances to the Old City. One of the most important buildings in Downtown Nablus that needs maintenance, restoration and rehabilitation is Touqan Sabana, which is still working so far and form a unique part of the unique architectural heritage that characterized Nablus in a specific period of time.



Figures.54 Facade of the old town which overlooks the commercial center area Source: (wikimedia.org,2010)



Figures.55 Toucan soap factory Source: (palestineremembered, 2017)

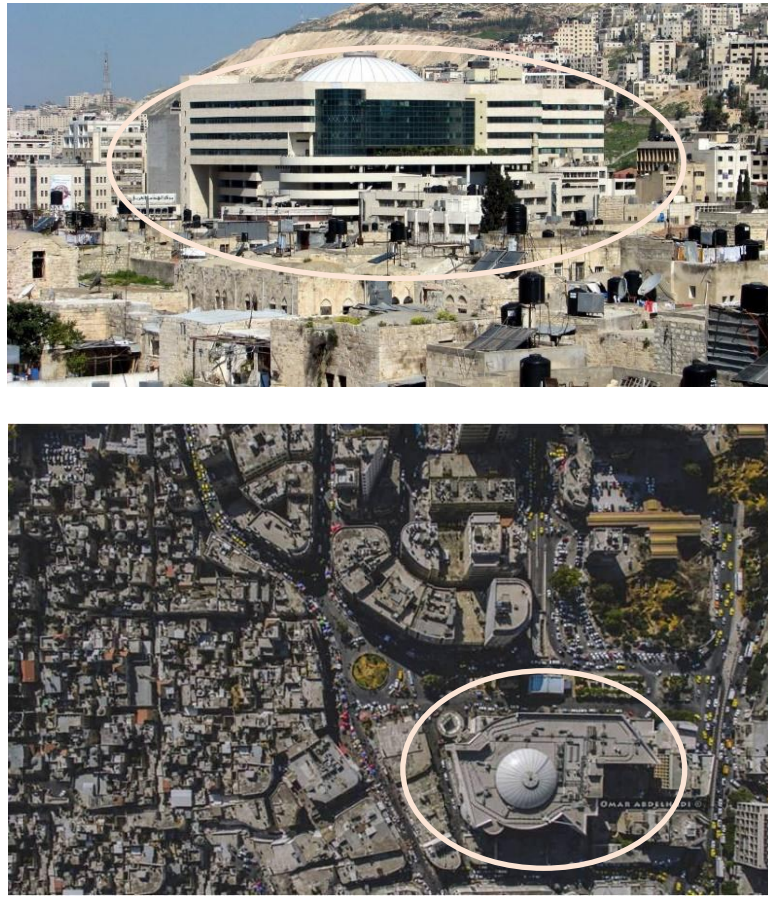
As for the study of modern buildings in downtown Nablus, we notice that they are blocks of buildings with square or rectangular openings in their facades, with no uniform architectural character, and lacks of the mechanism or criteria that define the design of buildings in that area. It should be noted here that there are number of buildings that are considered modern but in a poor construction condition, which requires a mechanism to deal with, which negatively affect the architecture character in the whole area.



Figures.56 New buildings Blocks VS the old city Source: (palestineremembered, 2018)

As for the commercial buildings, the architectural character of them has been varied. Some of them have been designed in a way that harmonizes with the surroundings and is compatible in the design of facades, as well as the use of suitable building materials and modern treatments. While other designs lack the language of harmony with the surrounding area in terms of size, design and the construction materials, and became large blocks invading the Downtown in size and erase the human scale in the region, and this is represented in the municipality complex, which was built in the heart of the city to form a dominant block on the surrounding areas and buildings as shown in (Fig.57).





Figures.57 municipality complex Source: (palestineremembered,2018)

There are buildings with official architectural character such as the old municipality building, the Chamber of Commerce building, the post office and the communications building, which used some vertical and horizontal concrete slices to divide their main facades, or used the arches with square and rectangular openings for doors and windows as in the building of the Magistrate's Court.

But in general, the area of Nablus downtown lacks a unified architectural character, and lacks the valuable urban spaces. Most of its buildings are solid blocks with no spaces, and the owner of the building exploits every square meter due to the high value of land and real estate in the region, so

here comes the role of urban designer in finding a mechanism for the design of buildings and spaces and the establishment of criteria to determine all that. Because the process of attraction to this area depends primarily on the design of spaces as a first step and the buildings as a second one, the process of design here must be appropriate to the area and at the same time works to improve the surrounding environment, To serve the human scale, and to reflect the architectural character of the urban area of the city as a whole. For being the downtown the nucleus from which the city was began its heritage and historical buildings that must be preserved as an attractive element for citizens and visitors.

- 5-4-2 The human scale

The view of the old town, which overlooks the city center, is satisfied with the visual communication, in order to take into account, the human scale of the buildings of and their harmony with each other in terms of measurements, materials and architectural style.

While the Modern buildings are characterized with fairly reasonable scale, and the viewer feels a relative visual connection in some places, it still needs some balance in other places. But the presence of the commercial complex in the study area completely changed the symbols of the equation. Where the urban space in the study area become disproportionately with the size of the commercial complex, the region needs other urban spaces with large areas to balance the huge architectural mass of the commercial complex and the urban space. On the other hand, the commercial complex

has cut off the visual connection, because it is a huge scale that does not fit with the blocks and the surrounding urban spaces.



Figures.58 Absence of Human Scale in the Downtown Source: (Local Photographer, 2008)

- 5-4-3 Arts and Streets Furnitures

The downtown is an important area where different arts meet in different styles such as sculptures, fountains, beautiful private landscapes and well-designed lighting, in addition to furniture and external seats for the streets and the sides of roads to create comfortable atmosphere for pedestrians. Where art plays an important role in city centers in order to enhance people's pleasure and create a positive mental image for visitors when they enter the city.

In a look at the art and street furniture in the downtown area of the city of Nablus, we notice the lack of furniture such as seats for visitors and shoppers, as well as the lack of art and homogeneity in the design of

advertisements and facades of the shops, which leads to the rupture of the facades and distortion of the architectural character there.

As for the use of green elements, they are concentrated in one spot, Jamal Abdel Nasser Gardens (Fig.60), which lack functionality, due to the poor design and the lack of furniture needed to revive such places. While some of the green elements distributed in Al-Shuhada Square shown in (Fig.59) and the Independence (Al- Esteklal) Square, in front of Nablus municipality, although the addition of the fence around it distort the image there in particular and the image of the place in general and adds some of the unnatural to the view.



Figures.59 – Al-Shuhada Square Source: (by the reseacher,2016)



Figures.60 – Jamal Abd-AL Nasser Gardens Source: (by the reseacher,2016)

The area lacks the sidewalks, which attract visitors and prevent them from going under the sun during summer walks. They also lack the elements of art such as fountains, sculptures and statues that improve the image of the city and give it a very positive impression to visitors when they enter the city.

5-5 Conclusion

Nablus downtown lacks the presence of urban spaces, and if we find some of them, they have been abandoned or unorganized areas, and most of them are randomly controlled by owners, used as parking lots, or become a garbage dump.

Therefore, the scarcity of these urban areas in the city of Nablus left many problems for people and create negative image of the city in their imagination, this has also led to the disappearance of the social life in the city and increase the indoor family meetings. On the other hand, the design

of these spaces to serve vehicles primarily brought different health problems through the noise and antiautomobile exhaust.

As for the image of the city, the absence of the public areas and the lack of natural and green elements such as trees and water in addition to the negative impact of garbage containers scattered here and there, all this affected the image of the city in the imagination of both resident and visitors.

Chapter Six

Analyses for the Public Spaces in Nablus Downtown through the questionnaire and the evaluation inspired by the opportunities in San Diego Downtown & according to the urban Design Standard

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3- Comfort & Image

4- Sociability

6-4 Problems and Obstacles in Nablus Downtown

1- Functional problem

2- Environmental problem

3- The aesthetic problem

4- The problem of neglecting historic buildings

❖ 6-1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to identify the problems and obstacles suffered by downtown Nablus in order to facilitate the process of developing solutions and future proposals through two main stages:

- The **first stage** includes the **analysis** of both the field survey and the results of the questionnaire distributed. This includes, first, the Analysis of the public spaces and green areas of Nablus Downtown, and determine the extent of functionality of the space's currently exist, in addition to the study of the situation of the Green areas located in the study area as the gardens of Gamal Abdel Nasser, and assess their current use.

Second, an analysis of the visual elements and characteristics of the study area, through the study and analysis of: the aesthetic value of the visual elements, the historic areas overlooking the downtown and some of its streets, modern buildings in the area, architectural style for facades and buildings.

And third, the studying and determining the reflection of public spaces and its impact on: the aesthetic appearance of the city center, the economic growth of the city, Protect and reduce environmental pollution, providing psychological comfort to people in addition to the tourist movement in the city.

- While the **second stage** included the **Evaluation** for the Public Spaces in Nablus Downtown inspired by the opportunities in San Diego Downtown according to the urban Design Standard, Through the implementation of Gehl's five – rules for designing great cities, and the four key Criteria in Making A Great place (placemaking)

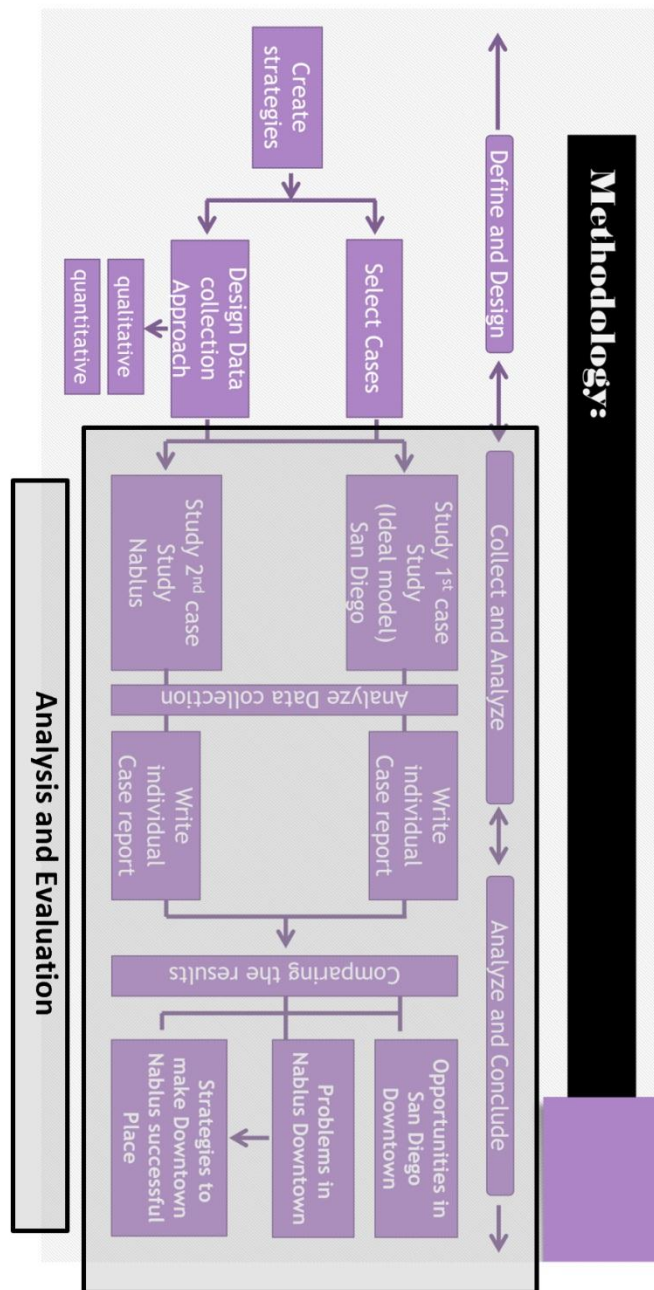


Figure 61. –Analysis and Evaluation part in the Methodology chart Source: (by the researcher,2019)

6-2 Analysis of the public spaces and green areas of Nablus Downtown

6-2-1 First: Analysis for the questionnaire general information

The first part of the questionnaire covered the general information of the participants which includes: The Age, Gender, Social status, Educational level, Place of residence.

This survey covered 158 people including 91 male and 67 female which equivalents to 57.6% male and 42.4% women, and range of ages between 20 and above 50 years old with the parentage shown in the graph. Participants were also asked about the place where they live, their educational level and their social statues with variety of percentage in each graph, see (Fig.62- 66).

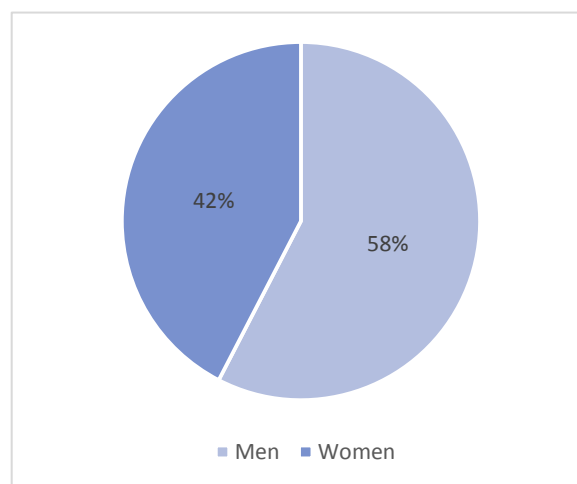


Fig.62 Gender Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

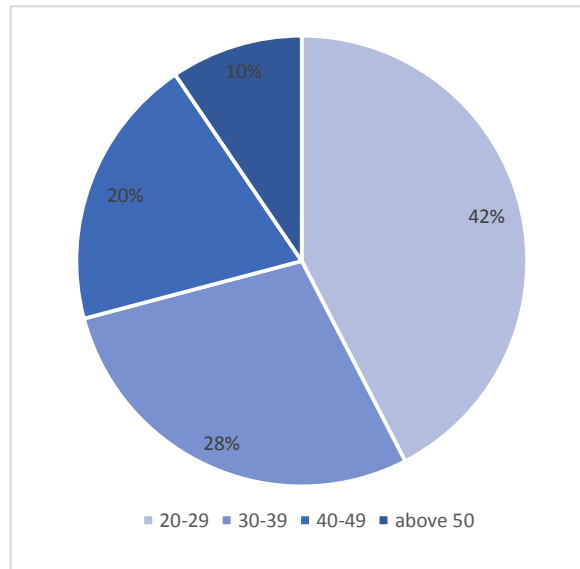


Fig.63 Age Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

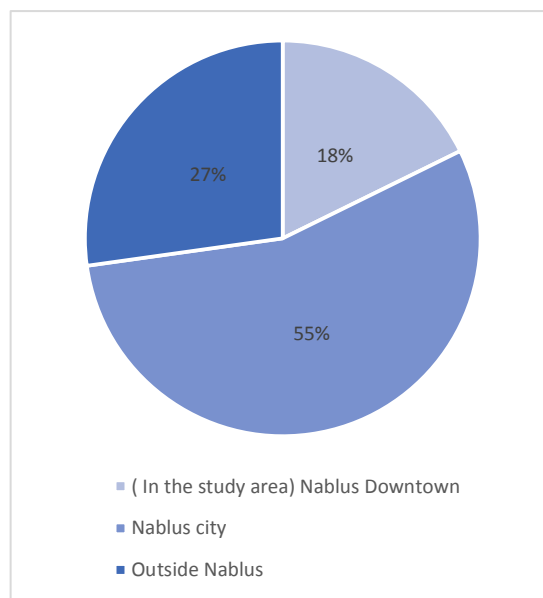


Fig.64.The place of living Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

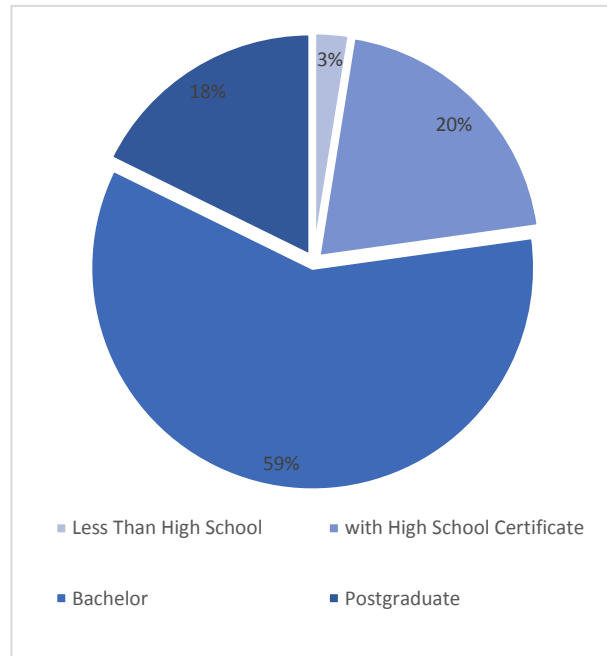


Fig.65. Educational Level Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

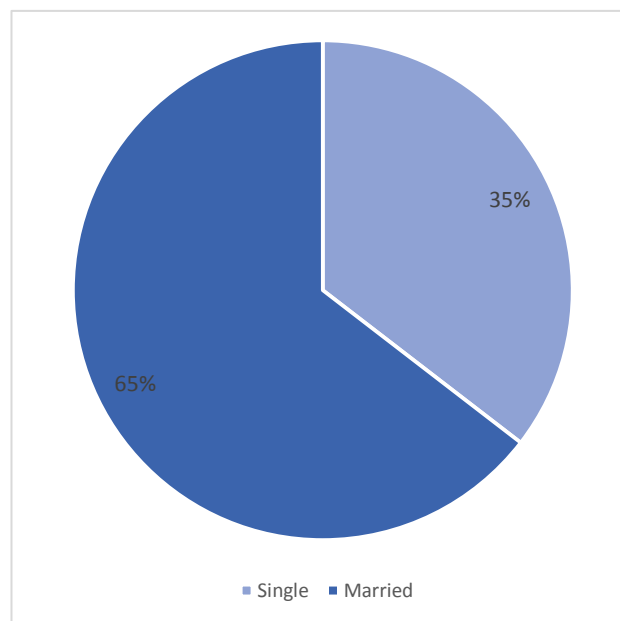


Fig.66. Social Statues Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

The second part of the questionnaire shows the peoples need of public and green spaces in the study area by studying the current situation for them and for their elements.

The questions include the length of time people spend in the Downtown, the reason for being there, and if they have an accessibility to the area, see (Fig.67-69).

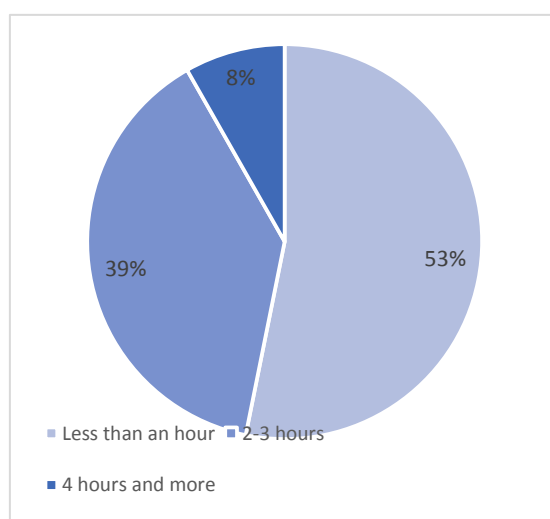


Fig. 67 the length of time people spend in the Downtown

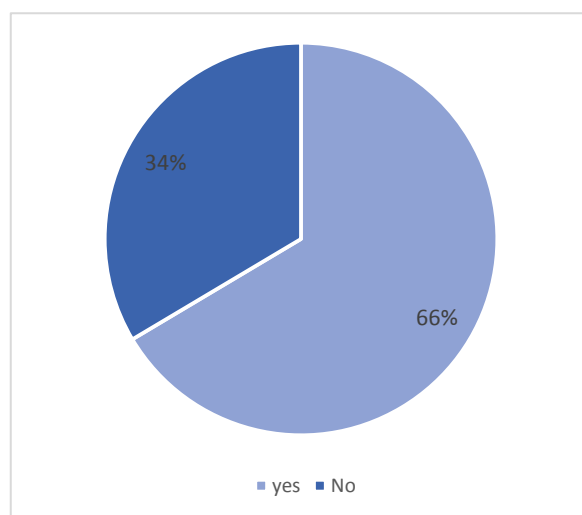


Fig.68 accessibility Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

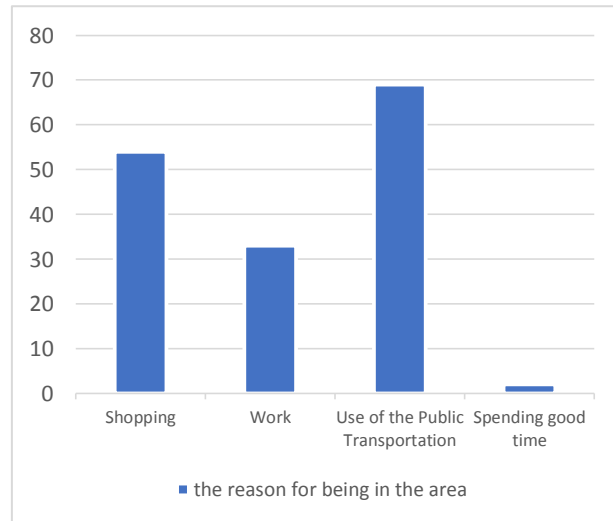


Fig.69 the reason for being in the area Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

the questionnaire also covered the opinion of people about the presence of public places in the area, whether they are sufficient or not, do they contain street and public spaces furniture, include entertainment for children, having special feature such as fountains and statues, and if cultural and entertainment events are held there? See (Fig.70-75).

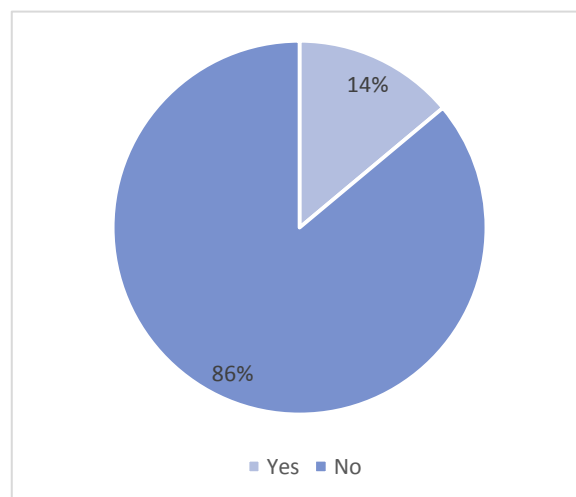


Fig.70 the presence of public places in the Downtown

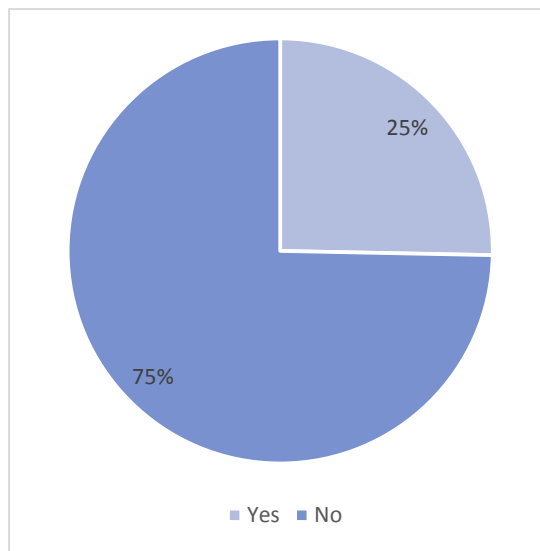


Fig 71 Having furniture in the public places

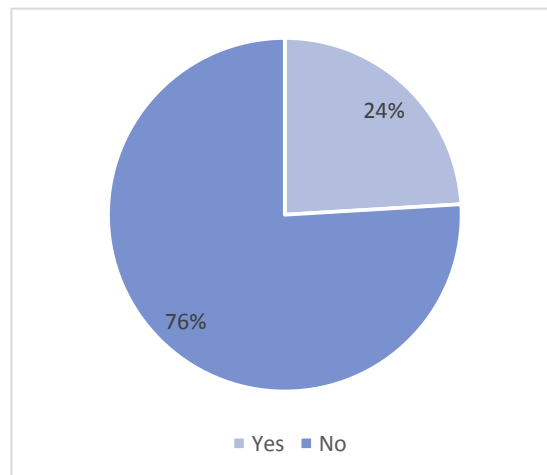


Fig.72 having special feature such as fountains and statues

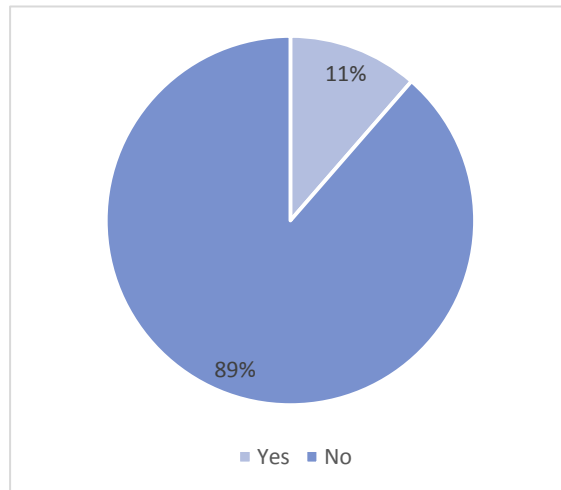


Fig.73 Are The Public Places and the Squares sufficient Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

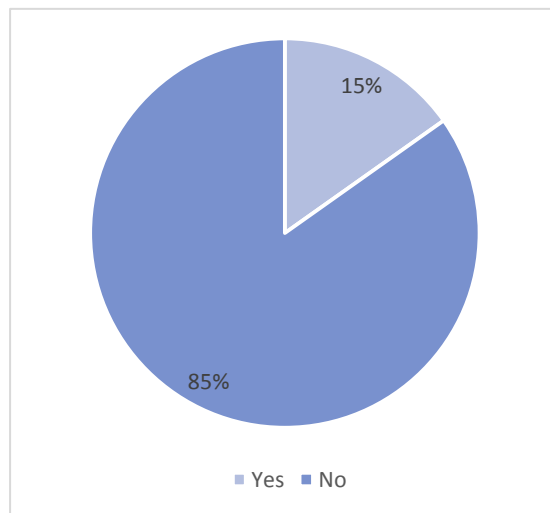


Fig.74 including an entertainment for children

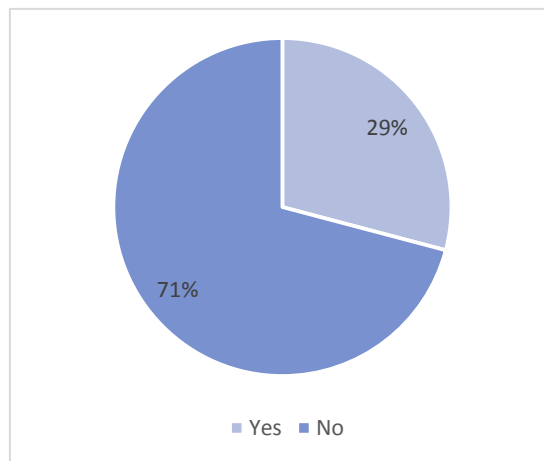


Fig.75 Are there any cultural and entertainment events in the area?

It also asked about the availability of green spaces and gardens in the study area, if they are being exploited properly and the availability of the public restroom in there and in the whole area in general!

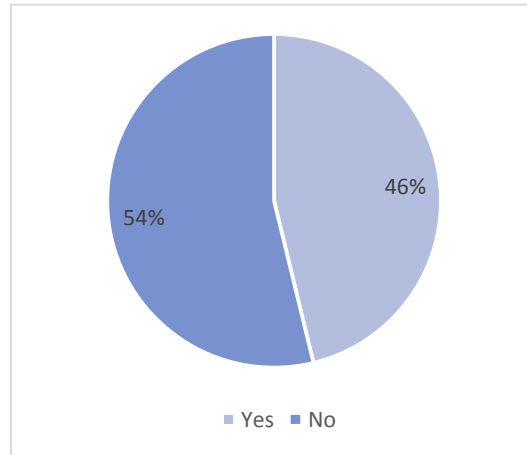


Fig.76 The availability of green spaces and gardens in the study area

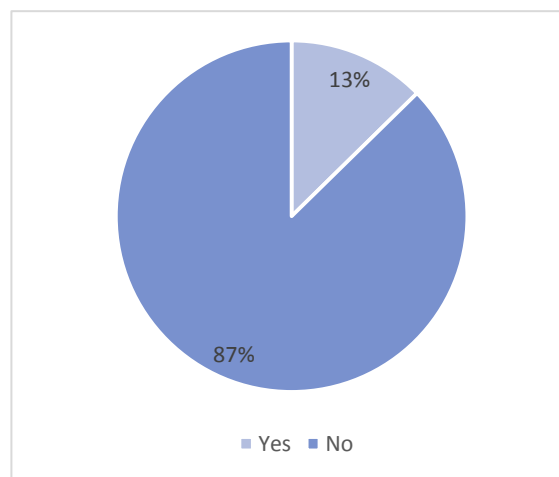


Fig.77 Are the green spaces being exploited properly

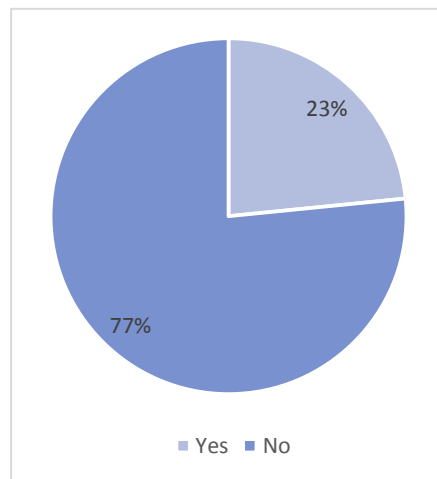


Fig78 the availability of the public Restroom Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

The results indicate that the highest percentage of the responders strongly affirm the importance of the public squares and spaces that include sculptures and water elements in the city center, which give beauty to the area, and help to reflect the heritage and civilization in addition to the aesthetic value to the place as a whole.

The results also indicate that most of the respondents agreed that there isn't an availability of green spaces and gardens in the study area. And if there is some, they don't exploit properly. see (Fig.76-78).

6-2-2 Second: Analysis of the visual and aesthetic elements and characteristics of Nablus Downtown

The analysis of visual and aesthetic elements of the downtown was based on the questionnaire results, and the process can be summarized as follows:

6-2-2-1 The aesthetic value of visual elements

Aesthetic and visual elements are identified in this section as they are in citizen's minds and culture, the aesthetic value of the visual elements in the city center as seen by citizens, reflecting the extent, awareness, culture and taste of citizens for these elements, and the results indicate the perceptions of people about the elements that increase the beauty of the downtown and their mental image.

On the other hand, a comparison has been made between the aesthetic elements in the Downtown area, in order to know the elements that received the highest percentages of people support, which means their love and appreciation and awareness of the importance of this element in achieving the aesthetic side of the city center, and then comes the lower-level elements of people's support.

All these elements can be compared as follows

1- The archeological areas overlooking the downtown and extending along some of its streets

The results of the questionnaire indicate that (85%) of the sample surveyed considered that the old town is the heritage and civilization of the city of Nablus, which makes it a beautiful aesthetic element, due to its architectural character and its importance in people's minds.

But at the same time, they expressed dissatisfaction with the current situation, especially in the façades overlooking

Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

the downtown in terms of the building's construction status and the distortion caused by advertisements .

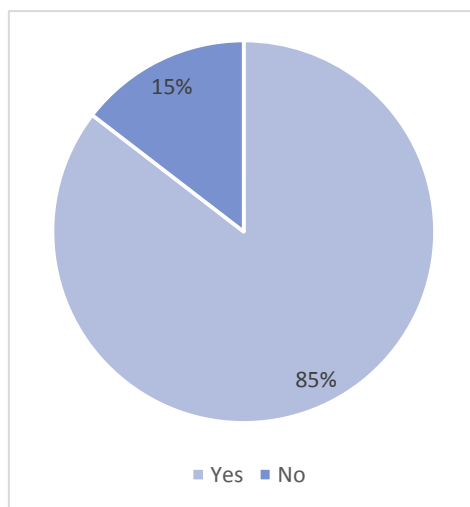


Fig.79 Do you consider the archaeological areas overlooking the city center as one of the aesthetic influences of the Downtown

2- Modern buildings (such as municipal complex and high buildings in Down Town)

The results of the survey indicate that 62% of the sample believe that the appearance of the modern buildings and their architectural style gives the city an aesthetic appearance, under the name of developing the city for the better. see (Fig.80).

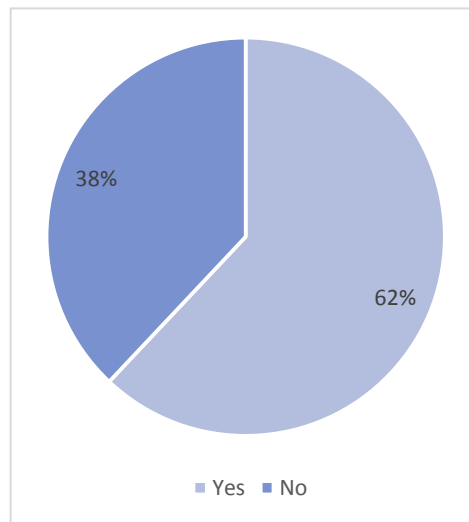


Fig.80 Do you consider the Modern buildings (such as municipal complex) as one of the aesthetic influences of the Downtown Source: (by the researcher,2019)

3- Architectural style of facades and buildings

The results show that (78%) of the sample believe that the architectural style of the facades in the downtown area gives an aesthetic appearance to the area, and this is evident in the architectural style of the old buildings and their cultural and historical significance, while they criticize the randomness that appears clearly in the Advertisements that distort the whole scene, see (Fig.81).

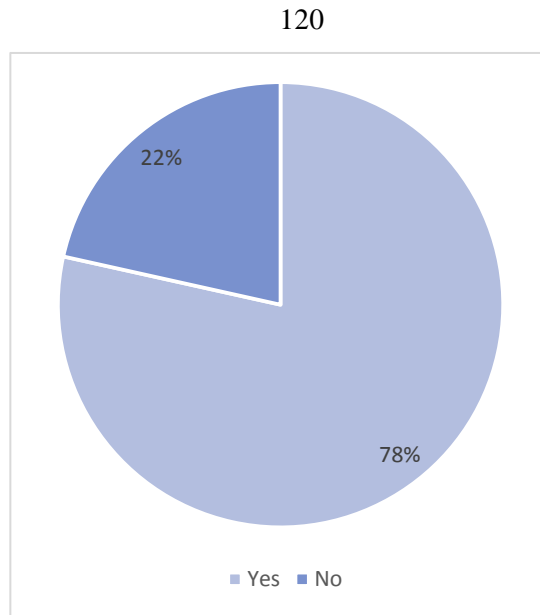


Fig.81 Do you believe that the architectural style of the facades in the downtown area gives an aesthetic appearance to the area Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

6-2-2-2 Determining the importance of furniture elements in the public spaces and streets in the study area

The results of the analysis indicate the lack of special elements in the downtown, or that it is insufficiently available, and at the same time people want their existence for their need. The chart below shows some of these elements and the extent of its lack in the downtown. Thus, the height of the number on the chart obtained by the element means the more lack the area has, and the desire of people to provide it because of its necessity, see (Fig.82).

This analysis indicates that there is a need to provide these elements at rates ranging between (7 - 9.5)

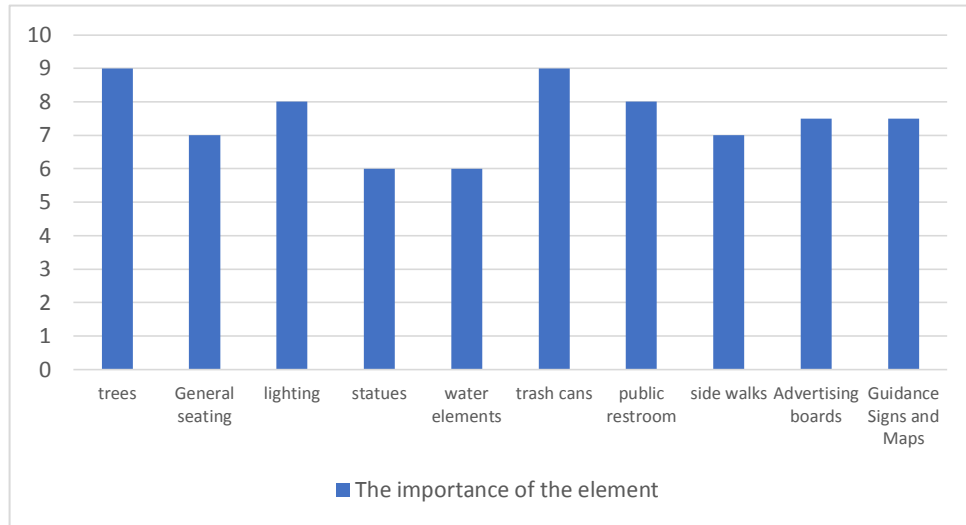


Fig.82 The importance of the element Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

6-2-3 Third: Analysis of the of the transportation and streets condition in the Downtown

1- Streets Width

16% of the respondents believe that the existing streets are suitable for accommodating the movement in the area, while 84% see the opposite, they believe that the streets in the area are in dire need of development and classification to accommodate traffic and pedestrian movement in the area, see (Fig.83).

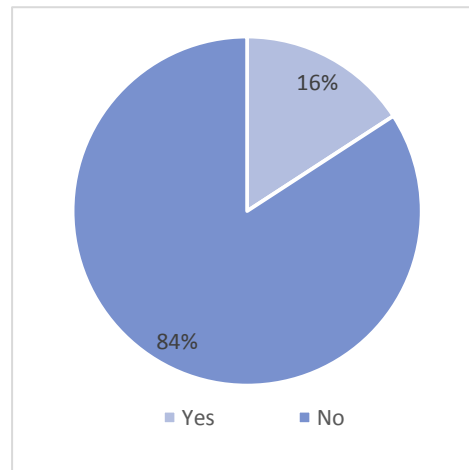


Fig.83 Do you believe that the existing streets are suitable for accommodating the movement in the area? Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

2- Sidewalks Width, suitable for using the wheelchair and kids' strollers,

In the case of the study of the sidewalks, the results of the questionnaire revealed that 21% of the people see that the width of these sidewalks is suitable, while 79% see that these sidewalks do not meet the pedestrian capacity and needs in the area, see (Fig.84).

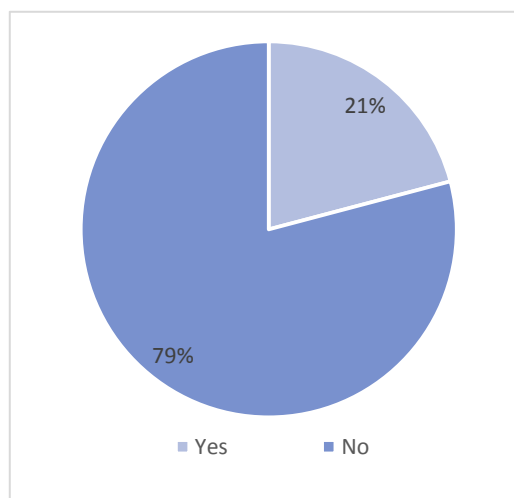


Fig.84 Do you believe that the existing Sidewalks are suitable for accommodating the pedestrian movement in the area? Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

3- Intersection between pedestrian movement and traffic

92% of the respondents confirm that pedestrian movement intersects significantly and negatively with the movement of vehicles in the study area, which creates negative effects on the use of the place by some age groups, see (Fig.85).

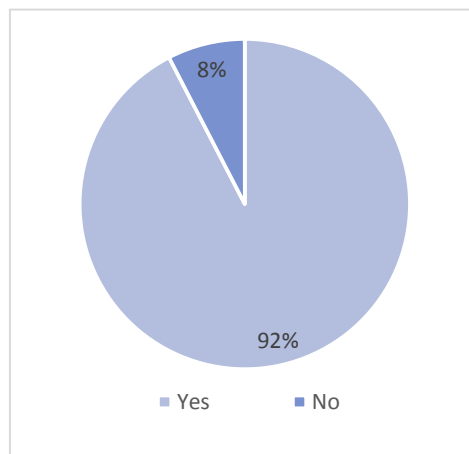


Fig.85 Do you see a great Intersection between pedestrian movement and traffic in the study area? Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

4- parking lot in the downtown

86 %of respondents said it was difficult to find their own parking spaces while they are in the downtown, and they agreed in the presence of the long distance between the current parking lot and the city center, see (Fig86).

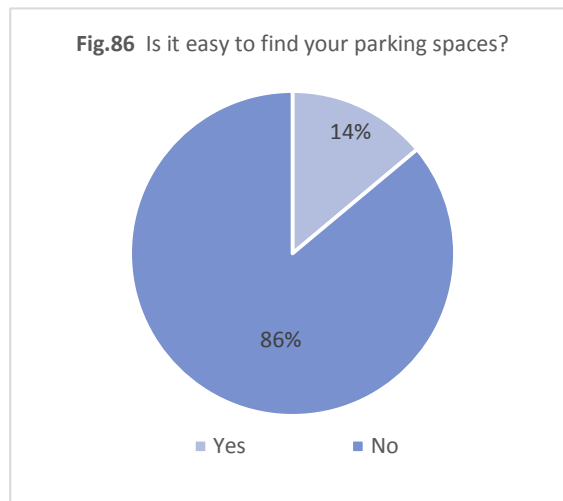


Fig.86 Is it easy to find your parking spaces? Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

5- Allow public transport to enter the city center

71% of the respondents disagree with the presence of the public transportation in all its forms inside the city center, and consider it the main reason leading to traffic congestion in the downtown, see (Fig.87).

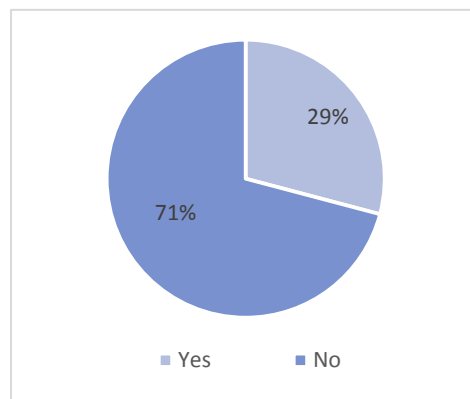


Fig.87 Do you agree to allow public transport to enter the city center? Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

6-2-4 Fourth: Analysis of the aesthetics for the streets in the study area

Since beauty is different from one person to another, the standard of street beauty has been recognized by people who are asked to give each of the streets chosen for the examination a grade of ten, and this sample includes different types of streets to be have a comprehensive comparison, see (Fig.88).

By comparing the founding results, in terms of the percentages obtained by each street in order to identify people's tendencies towards the quality of their favorite street! Is it a commercial street rich with advertisements? Or the wide street? Or the green street? Or the street with historical buildings? In order to analyze the mental image printed in peoples mind:

At the same time, 85% of the sample confirmed that the Green street is the most beautiful street among the city, while others (10%) chose the wider street to be is the most beautiful, while few chose the streets with historic buildings and Commercial streets to be the most beautiful.

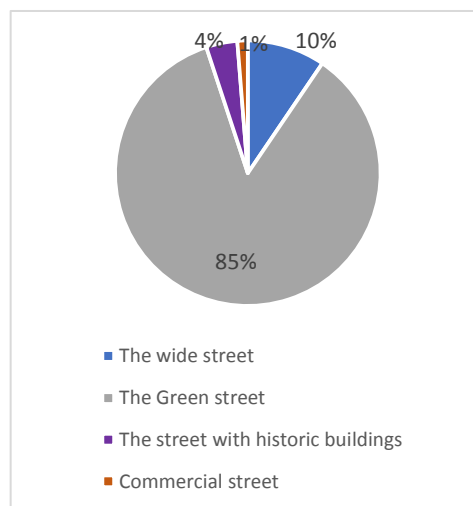


Fig.88 The importance of the street Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

6-2-5 Fifth: Analysis of the architectural identity for the urban spaces and surrounding buildings in Nablus downtown

1- The Design of buildings in the study area

In this section, respondents were asked whether they believed that the design of the buildings in the area is commensurate with the architectural character of the city of Nablus. 77% of them do not believe that these buildings are suitable in their current design with the architectural character of the city, and that most of these buildings distort the image of the city, see (Fig.89).

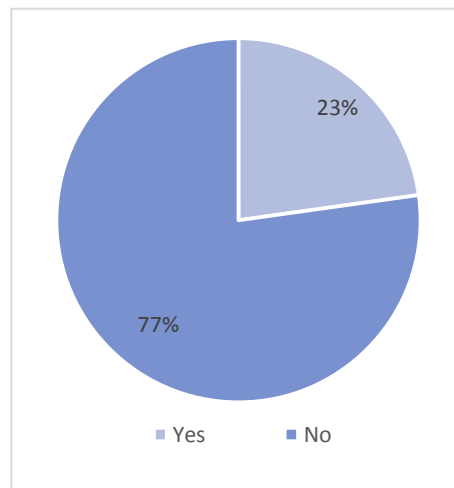


Fig.89 Do you see that the design of the buildings in the area is commensurate with the architectural character of the city of Nablus? Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

2- The height of buildings

The question here is whether the respondent finds that the height of buildings in the area is appropriate for the pedestrian sight. It was found that 82% of the respondents did not see the completion of this in the center of Nablus city surrounding buildings see (Fig.90). It obscures the vision of passers-by as well as does not correspond to the human scale.

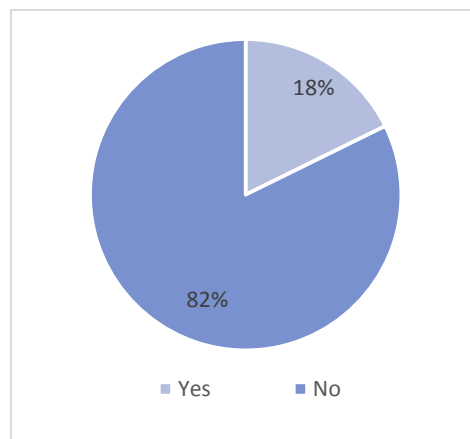


Fig.90 Do you see the Hight of the buildings convenient and comfortable? Source: (by the reseacher,2019).

6-3 Evaluation for the Public Spaces in Nablus Downtown inspired by the opportunities in San Diego Downtown & according to the urban Design Standard

Public spaces play critical role in the urban environment in the city's downtowns, but the key for creating a thriving, inclusive public spaces there depends on two different bodies. First, the design based that depends on the physical factors in the built environment that led to create the successful place. Second, the demographic based, that depends on

removing community barriers to functionalize and equitable public spaces use and access.

In this chapter the research aims to conduct field studies of two different public spaces in order to understand the best relationship between the design, equity and accessibility of use in San Diego downtown in order to find strategies to develop the public spaces in Nablus Downtown.

The methodology that will be used to lead us to those strategies is divided into two parts:

First, since the architect Jan Gehl (1987) is considered the world-renowned expert in all aspects related to urban design and public spaces, in order to create quality of life for people, Gehl discussed five tips about the way to have livable, safe, healthy and sustainable cities. This helps determine the basis to evaluate the Public spaces in Nablus Downtown and discover the opportunities in San Diego.

Second, the researcher will test the four qualities that have to be found in the place to be successful on both downtowns (San Diego and Nablus) and those qualities are, **accessible, comfortable, sociable** and people are involved in **activities** there. We are also going to test the intangible side and the measurement sides for them. This helps to understand the strategies used in San Diego Downtown which have been evaluated as successful place for people.

6-3-1 First: Jan Gehl's 5 Rules for Designing Great Cities:

According to the expert in related to the urban design and public spaces, Jane Gehl, as he explained in his famous books, *Cities for People*, *Life Between Buildings* and *People Cities*,

he discussed the five major rules to go about having healthy, livable, safe and sustainable cities, which are:

1- Stop Building 'Architecture for Cheap Gasoline'

All what we need to do to enhance this goal is to avoid what he said in his famous saying and try to design the opposite, “for 50 years, we made cities in such a way that people are almost forced to sit down all day in their cars, in their offices, or in their homes. This has led to serious situations health-wise.”

2- Make Public Life the Driver for Urban Design

In order to enhance this goal, the area plan has to be structured with three main components: more walking through the area, more time to spend in public space and being out of “private cocoons” more. All that increase the excitement in the city, make it safer, interesting and promoted social life there.

3- Design for Multisensory Experiences

Gehl describe the living in area where the senses are active and more pleasing in contrast to the living in an area without that. Leading to see how living without them have made people lost the opportunity to enjoy their surrounding through their senses, as he says "we have broken all the rules to make automobiles happy."

So, he recommended for cities designer to make the buildings around the body and senses of human, in order to take advantages of the people capabilities, so that they enjoy their cities to their maximum potential.

4- Make Public Transportation More Equitable

In order to promote equality in the city, public transportation has to become efficient, accessible, a good and reasonable alternative to cars.

In this way people from everywhere will have the same opportunity to come to the place, This, in turn, leads to improve the transportation aspects in the area to meet the requirements of urban design.

5- Ban Cars

Gehl determined that using cars is not a smart way of getting around the place, it leads to destroy the free spaces on the streets, even in a dense down town, going walking or using bicycle could be faster and easier. This, in turn, leads to improve the area to meet the urban design standard for pedestrian.

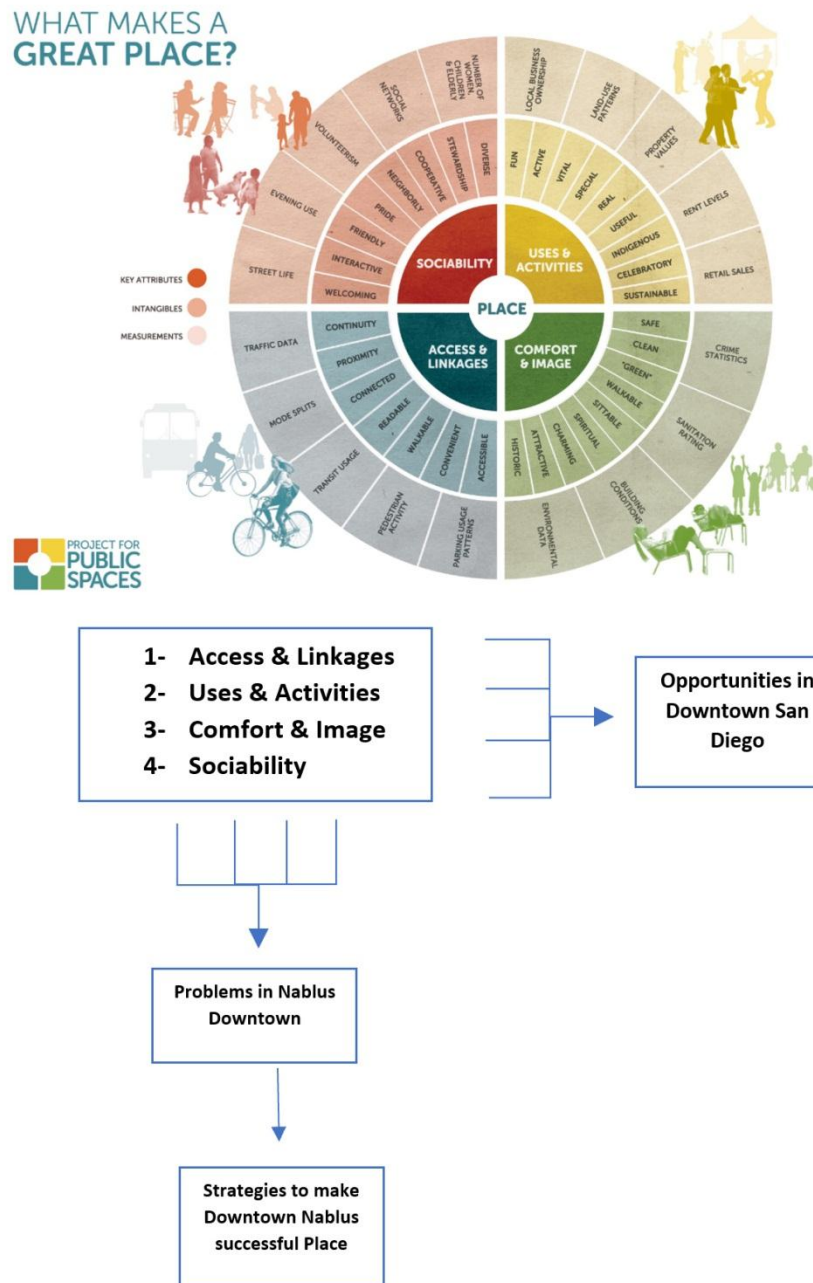
These rules have been implemented in San Diego Downtown through Increase and Enhance deferent aspects related to the public-realm spaces, promote the public-private interface, enhance the overall Legibility and Image for the Downtown, inspire high -quality linkages and pathways for pedestrian and enhance the character of the street facade in the downtown

However, as a result of the analysis for Nablus downtown, we see the lack of study most of these aspects to promote and enhance public spaces of these urban areas and make it necessary to achieve Gehl's rules in the study area.

The city center suffers from traffic problems and unregulated areas dedicated to parks and green spaces, so that they need to be re-planned in a way that ensures their future physical development appropriately, to achieve Gehl's rules to go about having healthy, livable, safe and sustainable city.

6-3-2 Second: The four key Criteria in Making A Great place (placemaking)

After 27 years of experience defining and studying the public spaces, PPS (project for public spaces) has articulated the basic qualities to create a great place, and filtered them into these four basic ingredients as shown in (Fig.91):



Figures.91– What makes a great place? Source: (pps.org,2019)

1- Access & Linkages

In order to judge the accessibility of a place we have to study both physical and visual features and its connection. The successful public space is visible from a distance and close by as well, it is an easy place to get to and through. The edge of this space has to have their own importance. It has to

have high parking structure in sensitive places, Also the accessible space is convenient, ideally to public transit, see (Table. 1).

(Table 1) Comparing the Access & Linkages in public spaces between San Diego and Nablus. Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

Access & Linkages	San Diego Downtown	Nablus Downtown
- Does the space visible from distance?	✓	✓
- is the space used by surrounding building's occupants?	✓	✓
- Is it easy for the people to walk to the place?	✓	x
- Is it easy to get to and from the nearby areas by using the spaces sidewalks?	✓	rarely
- Is it possible for the people with special need to use the space?	✓	x
- Can the people use the paths and the roads in the space to go directly to where they want to go?	✓	rarely
- Is it easy to use the different kind of transportation option, bicycle, car, bus, etc. to get to the place	✓	rarely
- Ae there transit stops located nearby special destination such as parks, libraries, etc.?	✓	x

2- Uses & Activities

Having somethings to do in the place gives people a strong reason to come and to return to the place. While the lack of them, make the place empty and gives a feeling that something is wrong there.

Principles in evaluating the uses and activities of any place:

- The more activities in there, the better.
- The place has to have a good balance between women and men.
- The place has to be used throughout deferent times during the day.

- The place has to be used by people from different ages, such as (children and retired people could be able to use the place when others are working during the day).
- The space could be used by both singles and groups, because that means that this place is more socializing, has many places to sit and to have fun.
- The key determinant of a successful place is how well it is managed.

Table 2 Comparing of Uses & Activities in public Space between San Diego and Nablus. Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

USES & ACTIVITIES	San Diego Downtown	Nablus Downtown
- Does the space empty or used by people?	used	used
- Does it used by people with different ages?	✓	x
- Do the users in groups?	✓	x
- Are there different types of choices to do there?	✓	x
- Does it have different types of activities in there such as walking, playing, eating, reading, relaxing?	✓	x
- Is there a management existence?	✓	unsuccessful

3- Comfort & Image

Comfortability of a space that present itself in a good image, is a major key to its success. Being comfortable space includes perception about different aspects such as being safe, clean, and having availability and variety of places for people to sit.

Table 3 Comparing of Comfort & Image in public Space between San Diego and Nablus. Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

Comfort & Image	San Diego Downtown	Nablus Downtown
- Does the user have a good first impression about the space?	✓	x
- Are there more women in the place than men?	✓	x
- Are seats in suitably located, in both the shade and the sun?	✓	x
- Is the space clean and maintained?	✓	x
- Does the place feel safe?	✓	✓
- Is there an opportunity for taking photos in the space?	✓	x
- Do Vehicles prevent pedestrian from getting to the space easily?	X	✓

4- Sociability

When people meet their friends, their neighbors, feeling comfortable to interact and deal with strangers, they will feel a stronger attachment and sense of place to their community- and to this place that enhanced the different types of social activities, see (Table.4).

Table 4 Sociability in public Space between San Diego and Nablus. Source: (by the reseacher,2019)

Sociability	San Diego Downtown	Nablus Downtown
- Are you going to choose this place to meet your friends?	✓	x
- Does the group have groups of people?	✓	x
- Do people seem to be knowing each other?	✓	x
- Do people get their relatives and their friends to see the place?	✓	x
- Do people in the place having eye contact between them?	✓	x
- Do people use this place by choice?	✓	x
- Does the place have mix of ages and different ethnic groups?	✓	x

6-4 Problems and Obstacles in Nablus Downtown

After conducting the field study and analysis of the Downtown area in Nablus city, and the evaluating based on the scientific basis and the inspiration from San Diego Downtown, that leads us to identify the obstacles and problems that the area suffers from, which are summarized in:

6-4-1 Functional problem:

The commercial activities and services provided by the Downtown include, cultural, entertainment, tourism and social services, the survey found the users feel that the region lacks the services mentioned above and public institutions.

As for the business and shopping, which is the main function of this region, we see the absence of having specialized commercial markets for trading the same good in the same area, which work for the convenience of shoppers. at the same time it was found that most of the downtown users do not feel comfortable during their presence in the area, due to the absence of pedestrian walkways, in addition to the length of the shopping time, which requires the establishment of specialized commercial markets working for the convenience of shoppers and regulates the downtown function.

6-4-2 Environmental problem

The lack of green areas and open areas, the accumulation of waste and waste produced by the vegetable market and shops, and the inconvenience issued by the horns of vehicles and the voices of street vendors. In addition to the lack of shaded areas to protect pedestrians and shoppers from the sun in the summer and rain in the winter, and the area lacks a place to rest when shopping is free.

This needs transportation reorganized and re-planned, transformation of some streets into pedestrian streets, or the restriction of vehicles access at certain times.

6-4-3 The aesthetic problem

The survey found that the buildings and spaces in Nablus downtown did not reflect the urban aspect of the city due to the lack of clear laws about the architectural character, building heights, nature of spaces and lack of cultural and social services. Therefore, an architectural identity must be created for the area and attention should be paid to the art and beauty elements in the downtown area.

The area also suffers from random placing of signs, commercial advertisements, guidance signs and poor distribution of the external lighting, in addition to the negligence for the historical and heritage buildings, and not to restore or reuse them properly, which could lead to make them an attractive place for the whole area.

6-4-4 The problem of neglecting historic buildings

The historical buildings in the downtown suffer from negligence and lack of maintenance, restoration and architectural preservation. Most of these buildings are in a state of deterioration, so strategies must be developed when dealing with them, especially as they consider the cultural and historical heritage of Nablus.

In addition, these buildings are not just materials, but part of the reality of society and history, and must be taken into account when designing the Downtown area, and the denying of these buildings is a denial of history and society.

Chapter Seven

Strategies for the creation and development of the public spaces and their components in Nablus Downtown inspired by San Diego Experiment

7-1 Introduction

7-2 The boundary of the development area

7-3 Development process objectives

1-Organizing the movement of transportation and pedestrian

**2-create a special type of magic that draws people in - again
and again**

**3-Provide an attractive and safe environment in the
downtown**

7-4 Areas of organization and development

1- Development of general land uses

2- Developing the economic planning process

3- Organization and development of places and public areas

4- Development of green areas, parks and recreations

**5- Organizing and developing the street furniture in Nablus
downtown**

7-1 Introduction

The importance of this chapter is in providing strategies, suggestions and solutions that will enhance the role of public spaces, visual and aesthetic elements in Nablus downtown, by studying the strategies that have been applied in San Diego Downtown.

After analyzing the reality of the public spaces in the study area in chapter 6, the role of this chapter is in providing solutions and suggestions for problems and obstacles that emerged during the analysis process in order to achieve the different objectives, such as develop the heart of Nablus downtown, improve the social level and improve the physical environment through the creation of high value's public spaces and new green areas which consider as a breathing space for the whole area. As well as organizing the public transportation, suggestion of private parking spaces and creating pedestrian corridors, in addition to paying attention to historical buildings and drawing up a special policy for rehabilitation and reuse.

7-2 The boundary of the development area

The area to be developed is estimated to be about 420.000 m², it extends between Hittin Street, to Mujieb Adin Street. And from Faisal and Haifa Streets, which are the main arteries of the city, up to Granada and Shwaitra streets near the historic area of the city as shown in (Fig.92).



Fig.92 The boundary of the development area Source: (geomolg,2019)

7-3 Development process objectives

The main objective of the study is to develop the downtown of Nablus through the comparison with San Diego downtown, to make it more accessible, attractive and meet the humanitarian requirements.

This is through the establishment of strategies to guide and solve the problems in the area, through the studying of the different functions there, and create public spaces, squares, pedestrian paths, and surrounded by cultural and social services. as well as the development and reuse of the large green areas in the region, and the addition of other green areas in different places.

Strategies to achieve this goal can be summarized as

- find strategies to deal with land ownership and use, to provide public spaces and squares that lead to the recovery of the whole downtown, while at the same time provide an interest for the owner of the land.
- Organizing the movement of transportation by working to provide parking spaces, bus stations in strategic places in order to reduce the traffic in the heart of Downtown.
- Raising the level of the urban environment through improving the external facades of buildings, creating new public spaces, squares and green areas in the urban environment, in addition to finding design standards for buildings and spaces that attract visitors and shoppers and facilitate their movement.

- Develop policies to preserve historic buildings through restoration and maintenance, or re-use according to special criteria resulting from the need of the area for new uses.
- Improving the level of economic activity through the creation of specialized commercial complexes surrounded by squares and public spaces to work on the attractions of the area.
- add special Attention to the art and street furniture in the whole downtown.
- Encourage the urban development towards the West to reduce pressure on the Al-Shuhada Square, by creating new urban spaces there, and surround it by different functional buildings and services to help revive the area.
- Solving the pedestrians' problems through the creation of pedestrian streets that provide comfort and safety, and lead to attract them toward the downtown.

7-3-1 Organizing the movement of transportation and pedestrian

- How did San Diego Downtown become a place that is EASY TO GET TO AND AROUND?

People in San Diego downtown can get to and around the downtown by walking, biking, driving and riding!

Through working with both, public and private entities, they shaped the Downtown to expect these changing in life style, through emphasized on

providing new streets that accommodate different types of movements, which included

- Offering an affordable parking solution for both visitors and businesses in well-studied places that do not cause traffic density as shown in the (Fig.93).
- Create San Diego downtown Shuttle (Trolley), as a creative solution that allow people to park their cars away from the center and use the shuttle to move around easily.
- Make the downtown more bikeable and walkable, to give the streets in the downtown another function, which is connecting people with each other and with the surrounding environment.
- Enhance and improve the regional public transportation, in order to create an easily accessible way for residents and visitors to get to the downtown and help grow the economy.
- Create Green streets, which identified as the major components of the open space and circulation system. In order to provide high linkage between different resources and provide safe connection for pedestrian to the open spaces and parks, with low traffic speeds and volumes.



Fig.93 Organizing the movement of transportation and pedestrian in San Diego Downtown
Map Source: (City of San Diego, 2017)

▪ Figure.94 shows some ways to ensure downtown Nablus could function as an interconnected place as well as a regional transportation:

A- develop new strategies to solve the transportation problems which includes:

- Encourage the public transportation in and around the commercial center
- Restrict of public transportation by a specific route through the commercial center, and has to be located off the pedestrian streets and doesn't intersect with them, especially for vehicles heading towards the municipality complex (the garages complex) that located in Al-Shuhada square.
- Restricting the entry of private cars into the commercial center area, and limited only for taxis and buses.
- Emphasize the existence of parking spaces in basement floors of the buildings surrounding the commercial center.
- Organize streets by naming and numbering of both vehicle and pedestrian streets.

B- Create a special shuttle rout to transfer people from their cars parking structure in the surrounding area to the CBD through:

- Ensure a special shuttle circulation program to provide a frequent, continues transportation to and from the downtown.

- Work to connect the shuttle to other regional bus station and regional Taxis parking structures.
- Manage and strength a non or simple profits for implementing the shuttle program.
- Develop the policy to reinvest parking profits in a variety of mobility services within the central business district.

C- MAKE Nablus DOWNTOWN MORE WALKABLE, since the street in the downtown should have another function rather than cars movement, but also it should provide a good connection between people and their environment, and encourage the healthy living through:

- Make convenient streets and walkways for pedestrian
- Provide walkways for children strollers and special needs vehicles
- The streets for Pedestrian should be paved with special paving and tiling materials
- Pedestrian streets lighting must be properly lit.
- Providing furniture for pedestrian streets.

D- Create Green streets

- The greenways have to be on one or both sides of the green avenue.
- Design the green avenue sidewalks with at least 3 m wide.

- Identify the green streets by Create special signage.
- Create visual connection between the blocks and the parks by introducing a consistent street tree planting along the green avenue.

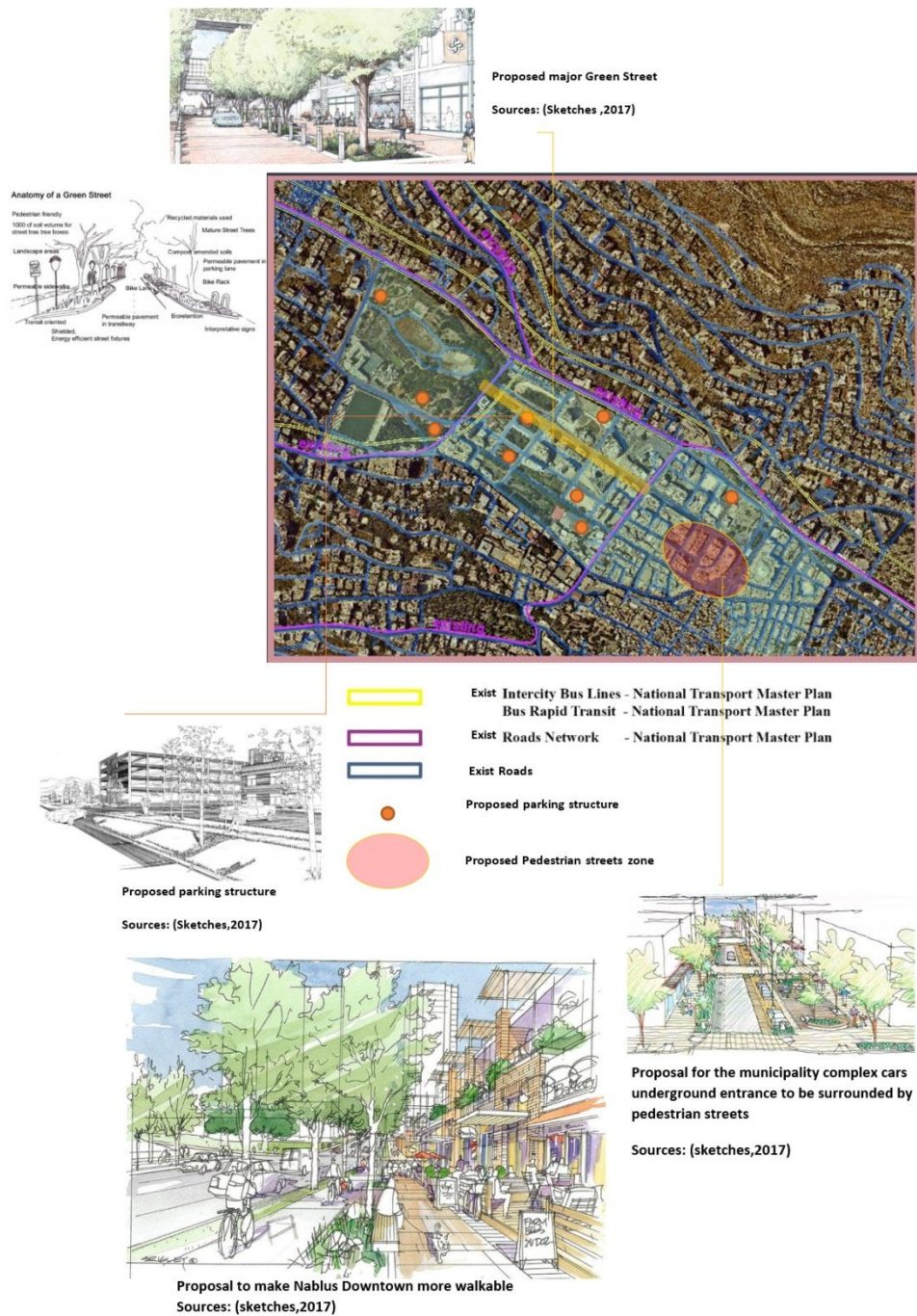


Fig.94 Proposal for Organizing the movement of transportation and pedestrian in Nablus Downtown

7-3-2 create a special type of magic that draws people in - again and again

▪ In order to strengthen San Diego Downton's role as a cultural center for the region, it was important to advance their arts institutions, their local restaurants and retails, as well as support the creation of amenities such as sports mand entertainment facilities as shown in (Fig.95), through:

- Enhancing placemaking and sense of place to build a community,
- Enhancing small Businesses and Improving the retail and restaurant experience

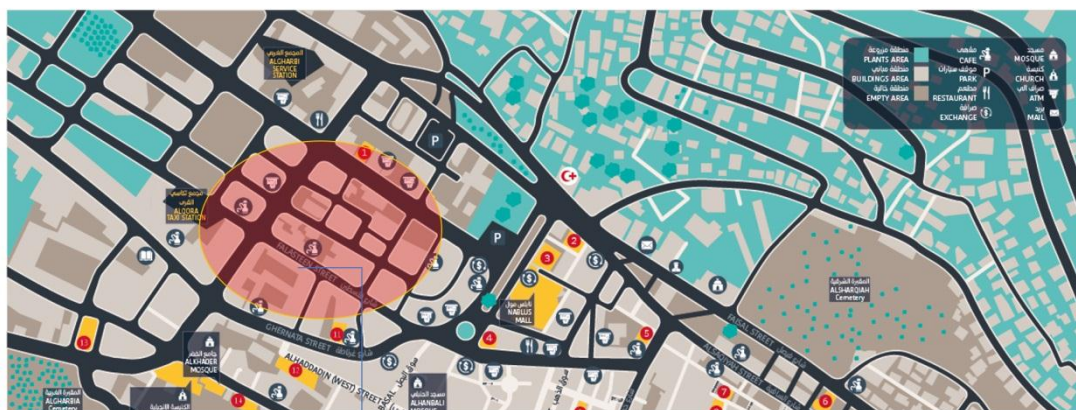


Fig.95 Create a special type of magic in San Diego Downtown Source: (City of San Diego,2017)

■ For developing Nablus Downtown in order to create a special type of magic that draws people in - again and again, and help to enhance the sense of place their, the following strategies must be achieved:

- Design and develop a comprehensive program to reimagine the streets and sidewalks in the area.
- Create different walkable, safe neighborhoods through uses grassroots efforts.

- Promote and encourage the rooftop gardens in Nablus downtown
- Enhancing small Businesses and improving the retail and restaurant experience in Nablus Downtown, in order to raise the urban value of the place through identifying the best locations for the retails and shops according to the type of the product or the service, and improve the outdoor restaurant seats in the proposed pedestrian area, see (Fig.96).



improve the external seating areas
for the restaurant in the proposed
pedestrian area

source: (janablus,2018)

source: by researcher

Fig.96 Current Restaurants and Cafés located in Nablus Downtown and the proposed of the outdoor seating areas in order to create special type of magic in the area.

7-3-3 Provide an attractive and safe environment in the downtown

- In order to ensure the downtown to be the choice for the next generation of residents and visitors, San Diego Downtown offers collection of neighborhood and district – all safe, clean and attractive, including attractive and active open spaces, public spaces and parks, a diversity of affordable living for everyone to make the area lively and safe day and night, see (Fig.97).



Feeling of safety with an empty space and functional public space

Source: (archinect,2017)



Feeling of safety between the old and new public library zone Source: sandiegounified,2017



Feeling of safety in a furnished and unfurnished street Source: smartgrowthamerica,2017

Fig.97. Provide an attractive and safe environment in San Diego Downtown

- Special strategies have to be done in Nablus downtown to keep the downtown safe and clean, such as:
 - Create an active plazas, parks and functional open spaces, in the downtown dense, and its vertical development.
 - Support the diversity of activity in the neighborhood (shopping and markets, business, historic and residential neighborhood, with public spaces and squares inside and between them). So, each one could offer important and different things to the whole downtown community, see (Fig.98).

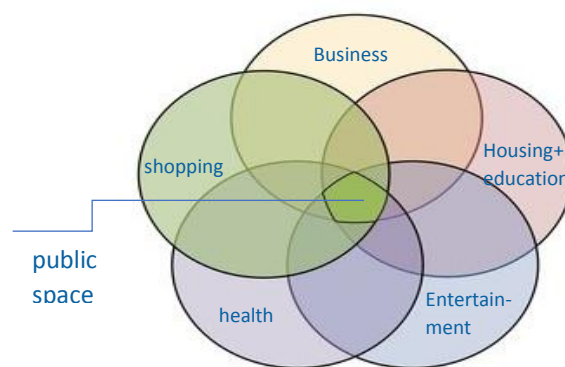


Fig.98. In order to Provide an attractive and safe environment in Nablus downtown **Source:** by the researcher

- The downtown must attract people from all ages, old, young and in-between, in this place, families and individuals from all classes could mix and connect. To achieve this, variety of housing options and educational opportunities for all ages level must be exist.
- Make Nablus downtown beautiful, by stop dealing with the building itself, but also provide a good design for the trees, flowers, lights, and different sides that affect the visual aspects of the area.

7-4 Areas of organization and development:

1- Development of general land uses

- The land uses of the San Diego city in general and in the Downtown in particular can be identified in to seven categories: open spaces, parks and recreation facilities; residential; agriculture; retail, services and commercial; industrial; public facilities and semi-public, and multiple use facilities as shown in (Fig.99). This study also identifies the planned street system that is needed to serve the demand of transportation resulting from the city growth and development according with City General Plan.

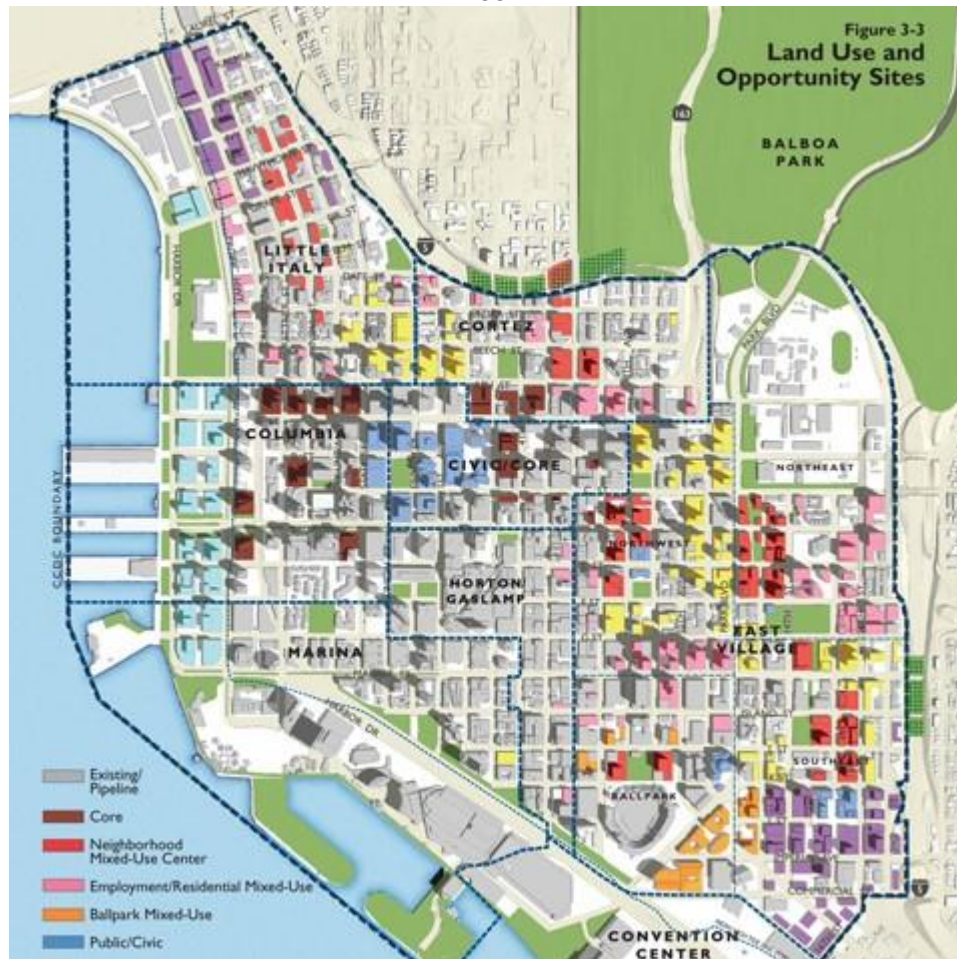


Fig.99. land use and opportunity Sites in San Diego Downtown Source: (City of San Diego maps,2017)

- The proposed land use development strategy in Nablus downtown is based on foundations to improve the overall use of land in the region through raise the level of the urban environment in the downtown to make the place more comfortable and enjoyable in various activities.

This objective is achieved through the following strategies:

- Encourage the Mixed Uses of buildings in neighborhoods with diverse activity and create public spaces between them, especially in Al-Shuada Square, where should be surround by pedestrian streets.
- Create design standards that ensure the development of the facades and pavements of each area, which makes them have a special architectural character and helps in attracting visitors
- Improve and develop the streets surrounding all lands of different uses
- Special Working on the development of the land marks to become more famous and attractive and clear

2- Developing the economic planning process

- Today, the downtown in San Diego is a diverse, livable community with residents, employees, and year-round visitors. It is a regional economic center and the major public transportation spot. Its potential also extends to be the next frontier of the technology and innovation economy as shown in (Fig.100).

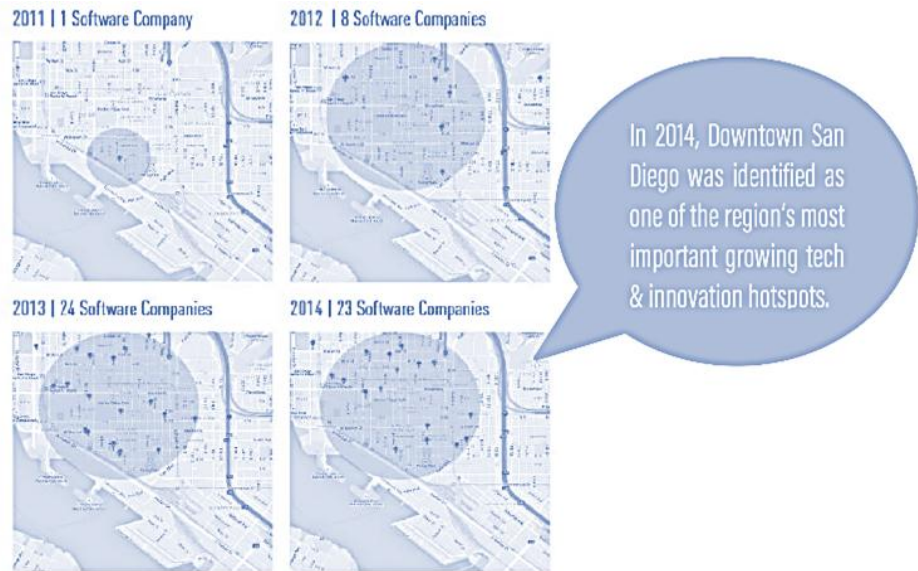


Fig.100 -a Downtown's growing software startup cluster **Source:** connex innovation report,2014

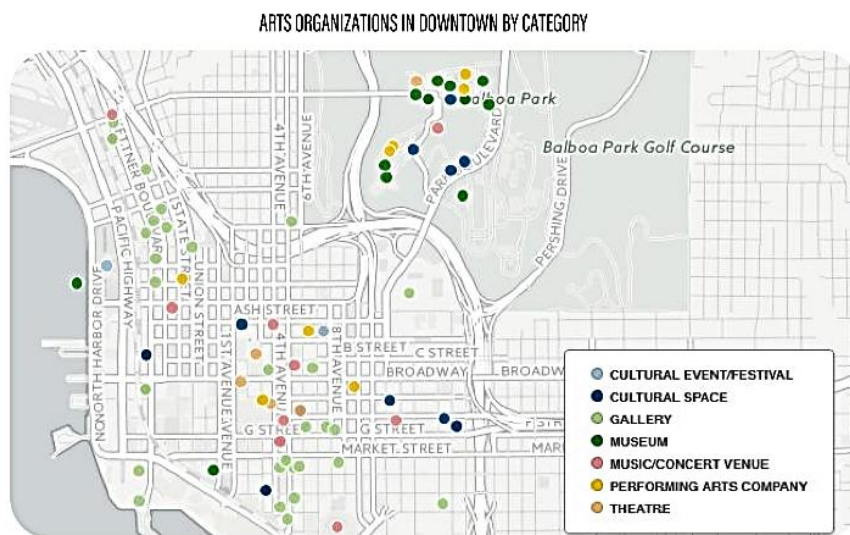
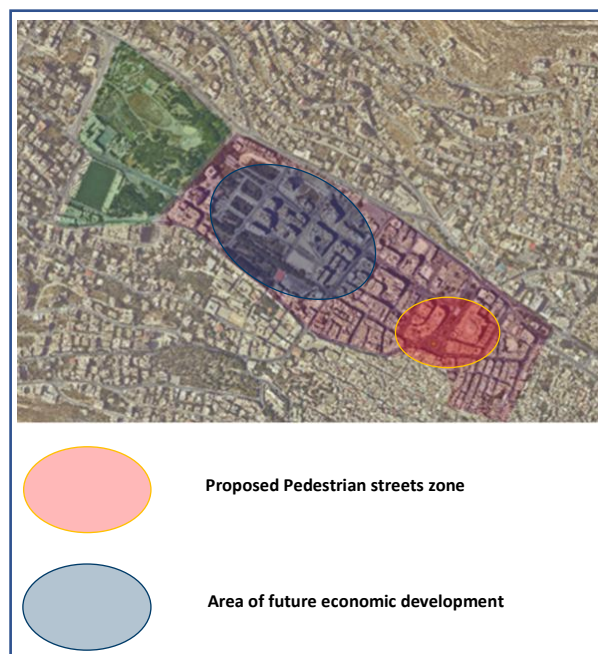


Fig.100-b Developing the economic planning process in San Diego Downtown **Source:** (downtownsandiego,2017)

- In the studying of Nablus Downtown, this process aimed to:
 - Encourage and involve investors, real estate owners and capital in the development process, by improving the vacant and available land to make private investment projects that benefit both, the economic interest of investors in particular, and the city in general.
 - It also helps to promote and sustain economic activities in Nablus downtown through a partnership strategy between the different sectors, private, service and public sectors, contributing to the development of the region as a whole.



Source: (giomolg,2018)

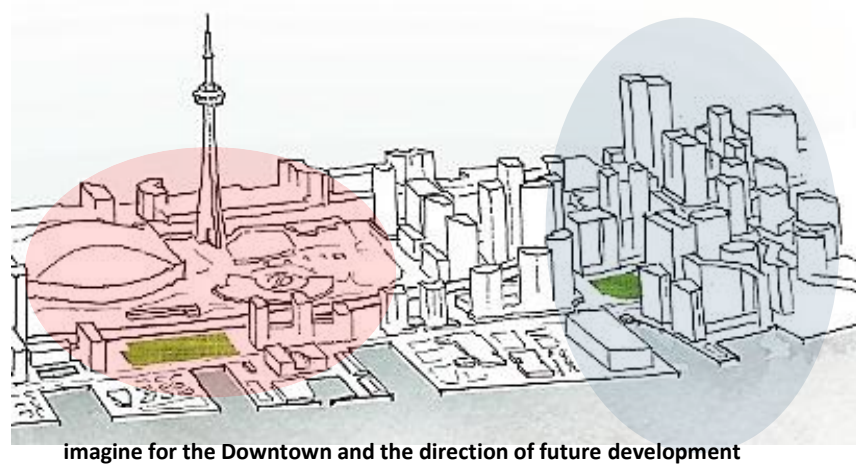


Fig.101. Nablus Downtown and the direction of future development **Source:** by the researcher

3- Organization and development of places and public areas

- Gathering of public spaces in the downtown area (which include plazas, squares, parks and other spaces in each neighborhood) have the potential to strengthen the identity of the neighborhoods and the whole social fabric in the area. The City strategies calls for providing significant public spaces with thoughtfully design in the downtown area which include:
 - Use open, public space and landscape to define and link the downtown communities
 - Locate the public spaces in an accessible location
 - Design and develop the public spaces to create sense of fabric using the landscape, lighting, paving, walls and structures.

- Create a special character of public spaces for each site and use.
- Create public spaces to harmonize a variety of social, recreational, artistic, and cultural opportunities that can be integrated into the space.
- Improve the public space's quality through the use of public art, landscape and hardscape.
- Design the spaces to allow both the sunlight and the shade.
- Surround the public spaces and the plazas in the downtown with buildings which visually provide control into these spaces



Fig.13. Neighborhood Main Street & Open Space Network **Source:** (San Diego Downtown web pages; maps, 2017)



Proposal

Source: (timesofsandiego, 2017)



Implementation

Source: (timesofsandiego, 2017)

Fig.102. Organization and development of public places in San Diego Downtown

- In order to have qualities of good public spaces In Nablus downtown, the four basic ingredients to create a great place have to be applied which include: Activities and uses; Access and Linkage; Comfort and image; and Sociability as shown in (Fig.103 a-b).



Fig.103-a four basic ingredients to create a great place in Nablus Downtown

ACTIVITIES AND USES

In order to develop Nablus downtown and make it lively at all times of the day, it has to have a range of opportunities for people to share in a different activity, from a sidewalk to a park, a playground, a plaza among others.

ACCESS AND LINKAGE

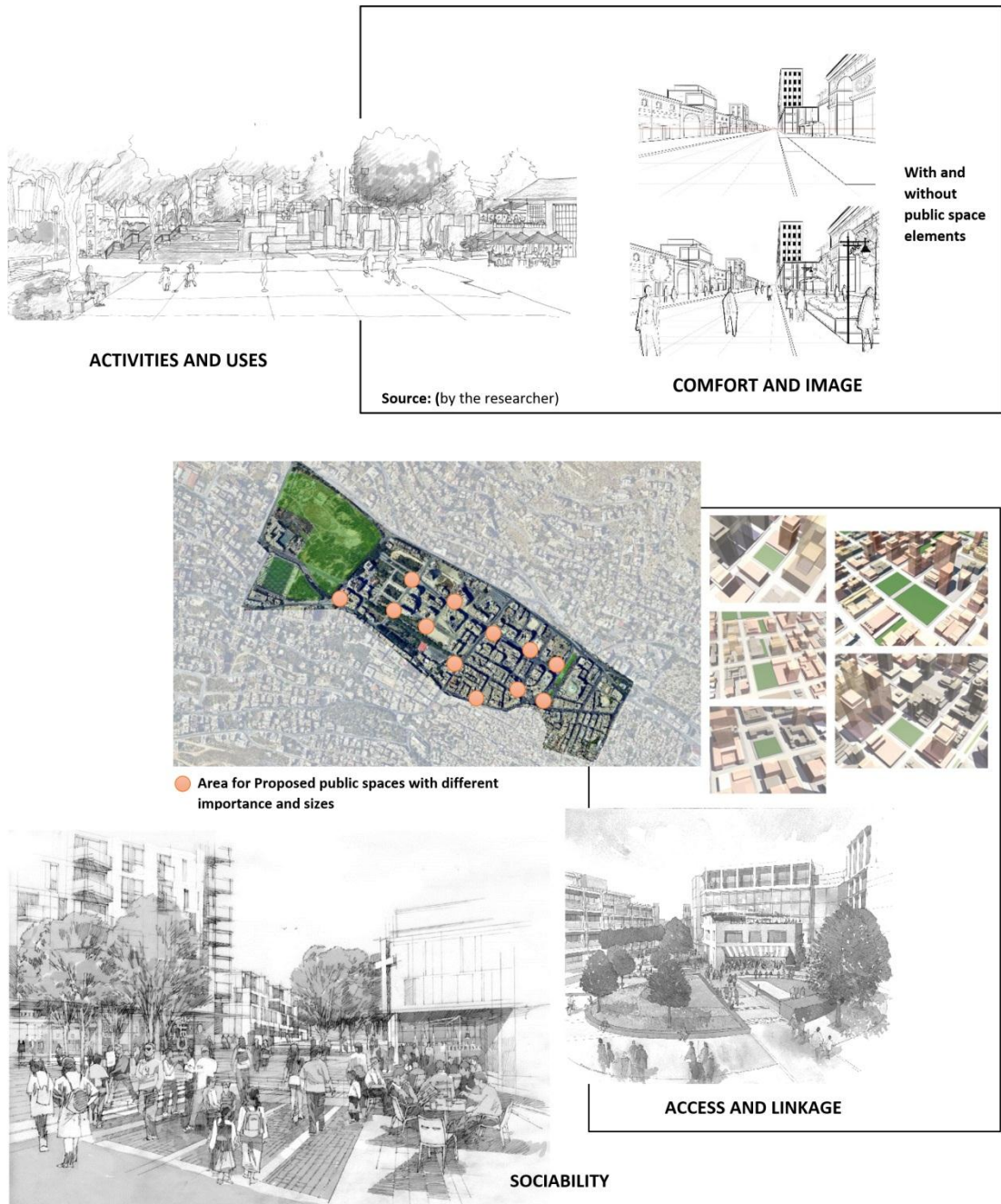
The main objective of the existence of these places is to link the different zone in the downtown area, well, they have to be visible, convenient and easy to get to. Not only in the location of the place, but also in the interior design of this place, to be accessibly for people passing by in cars and on foot.

COMFORT AND IMAGE

The proposed public place has to give the city a unique identity and has to be comfortable to use. Amenities in the place such as shade trees, seats, boards and others have to be in the right place and well designed.

SOCIABILITY

In order to complete the elements that make the proposed public place in Nablus downtown a great place, it has to be a place where people want to go to observe the area sense, meet friends and interact with different types of people.



(Fig.103-b) Four basic ingredients to create a great place in Nablus downtown Pictures

Source: bing.com (edited by the researcher)

4- Development of green areas, parks and recreations

▪ As the downtown of San Diego has developed, so have the quality, quantity and distribution of the recreation elements. New open spaces and parks have been created and expanded in response to population needs through these policies:

- Develop a city scale Park Master Plan
- Use the updates from the community plan to refine the parks and recreation facilities consistent with the Park Master Plan.
- take advantage and reuse recreational opportunities from the natural environment (beach and open spaces)
- establish new facilities and parks provided by not-for-profit organizations
- progress the suitable distribution of recreational facilities such as parks, play grounds, water and green areas.
- Encourage and promote private development to establish the recreation facilities
- Establish new policies to develop and design the parks which encourage the use of sustainable techniques and methods to address energy and water saving, green buildings and so on.



Fig.104 Development of the waterfront parks in San Diego Downtown Source: (bing,2017)

▪ The city of Nablus in general and the downtown in particular are characterized by the existence of Jamal Abdel Nasser Garden, the place where the families sit, with the rest of the green areas in the city, watching their children play in their only space away from the building that occupies the place.

while the region has some strengths, it is at the same time suffers from many weaknesses which considered to be the basic principles that must be available in any entertainment area, including:

Table 5. Strengths and weaknesses of Jamal Abd-alnaser Park and green area

Strengths of Jamal Abd-Alnaser Park and green area	
Category	Description
Diversity of the Recreation area and Park	Jamal Abdu-Al Nasser is a great park with some activities
	Good integration of natural areas with parks
	Participation with surrounding schools and facilities
	Community use as a city park
	opportunity for Habitat protection
	Affordable park for families and kids
Weaknesses of Jamal Abd-Alnaser Park and green area	
Category	Description
Diversity of the Recreation area and Park	Needs more activities
	Has to be an outdoor educational space
	More kids' activities
Maintenance	The park maintenance is very low
	The park is not clean enough
Program and facilities	The staff are not enough
	No kids program
	No diversity of programs for different ages
Paving and trails	Need to develop and expand the trail system
	All Paved need to be maintained and renewal
	Need to develop the bike trails
	Need signage for the trails
Need new Amenities and facilities	More drinking fountains and restrooms
	Multi- purpose sports complex
	Cycling parks
	Indoor court for tennis
Accessibility	Need for Restroom open all the time
	Moe access to the nearby area
Other needs and issues	Need more cooperation between the municipality and developers (Partnerships)
	Need better landscape design
	Additional funding developing and maintenance



Fig.105. proposal for the Development of the Jamal Abdel Nasser parks in Nablus Downtown
 Sketches Source: bing.com (edited by the researcher)

5- Organizing and developing the street furniture in Nablus downtown

▪ Lighting

Provide lighting from different resources at appropriate density through:

- provide human – scale lighting for pedestrian visibility and circulation.
- use efficient lightning for vehicle traffic while not overwhelming the pedestrian lighting quality.
- use lighting to ensure the sense of safety while minimizing contrast and glare.

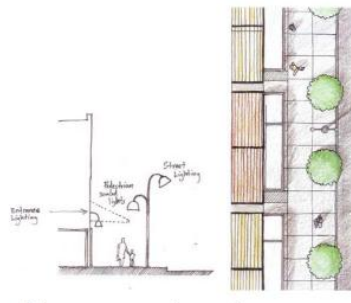


Fig.106. proposal for the lightning to be use in Nablus Downtown **Sources:** (sketches, 2017)

▪ Signs

Create comprehensive sign plan project to effectively use the sign area:

- Create sign design to unified the identity for the downtown
- The placement of these signs has to direct the pedestrian and vehicle circulation



Fig.107. proposal for the signs to be use in Nablus Downtown **Sources:** (sketches, 2017)

▪ public utilities

Transform the overhead utilities poles and wires, for supplying communication, electricity, or other services to underground.

If needed to be located above grade, these utilities should be designed so as not to block a clear path of travel, and located away from the sidewalk pedestrian zone.



Fig.108. proposal for the public utilities to be use in Nablus Downtown **Source:** (pinterest,2017).

▪ **Tree Guards and strips plant**

- Include the tree for commercial areas, gates, areas with different types of pedestrian activities
- Tree gates material and design must coordinate the overall character of the street furniture.
- The location of the street trees has to be within paved area, taking into consideration the provision of a distance between them and the edge of the street, to allow future grow for them.

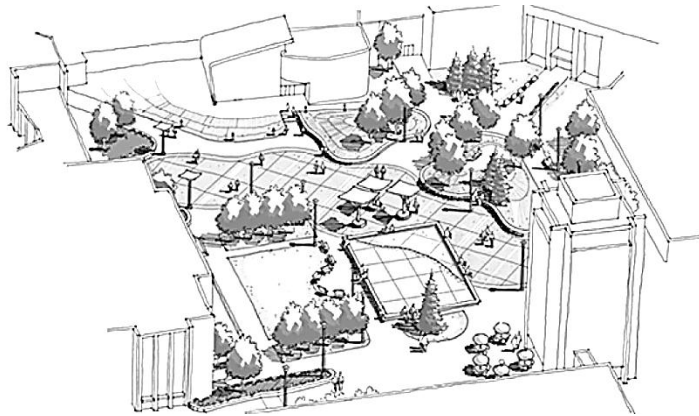


Fig.109. proposal for the tree guards in public spaces in Nablus Downtown **Source:** By researcher

▪ **Public Art**

Variety of public art helps in activation the public realm, because it helps to enrich the experience of the pedestrian in that area, and add more visual interest to the streetscape. Public arts must have an integration with the design of different streetscape elements to make them more interesting; through:

- The location of the public art has to be in areas where it can be visible and enjoyable by a large number of people, including plazas, intersections, sidewalks, and others
- use the public art as a great means to understand the culture and the history for the community.
- Locate the public arts to mark key intersections and gateways.
- Engage the local artist to design and create different illustration for suitable public arts.

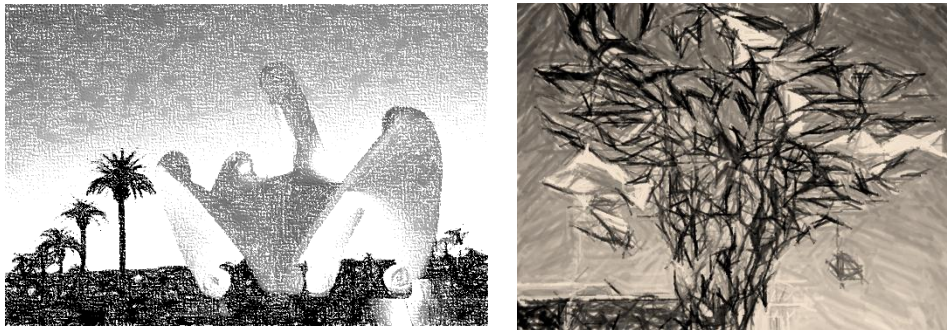


Fig.110. proposal for the public art in public spaces in Nablus Downtown Source: by the researcher

▪ Heritage and historical preservation

Cities should trace and preserve their past, to gain sense of process to achieve their present cultural and form. San Diego cultural and historical recourses include objectives, structures, buildings, landscapes, variety of archeological sites, districts, and cultural properties. The city made different achievements to identify, evaluate, register and protect these

several resources, and preserve the city's past for its present and future residents, see (Fig.111).

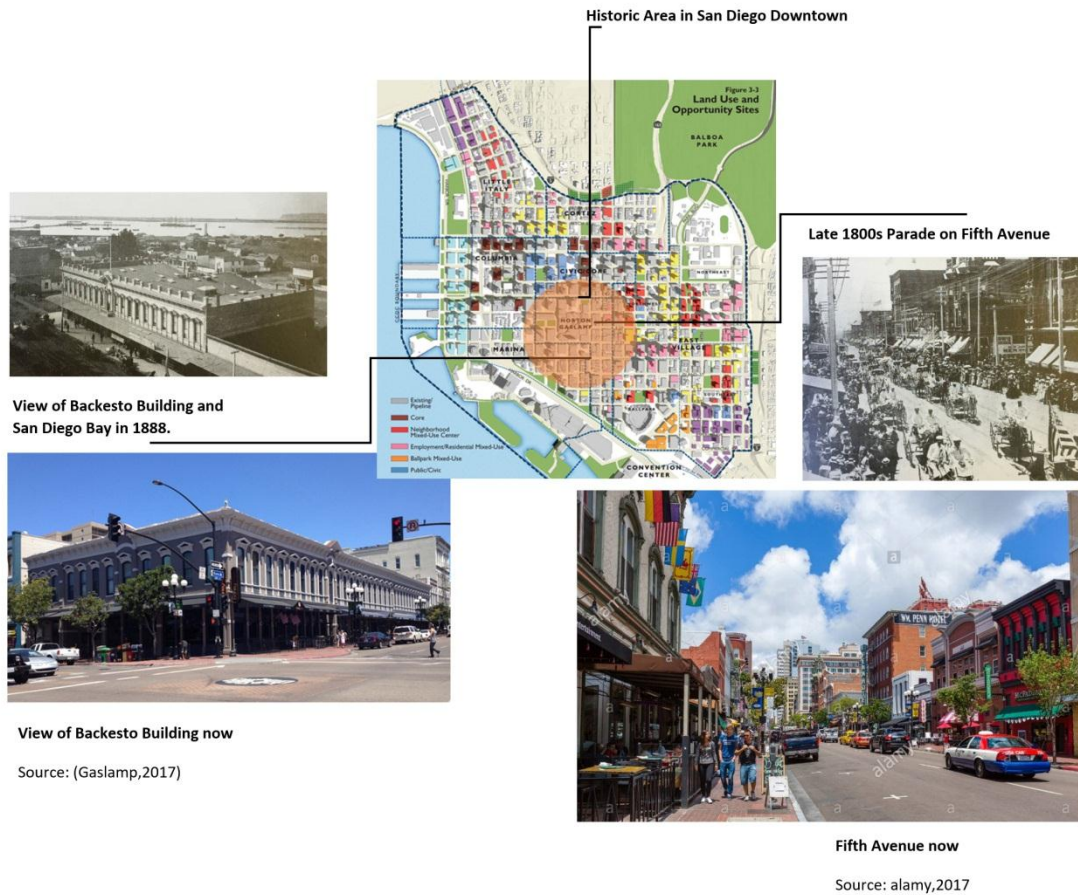


Fig.111 The Historic Area in San Diego Downtown and some Historic Buildings.

The purpose of this process is to guide the protection, preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of the cultural and historic resources in order to maintain the sense of Nablus City. To encourage the respect for the city's culture and history, maintain the community's identity and character, and increase the City's economic contribution through the historic conservation and preservation.

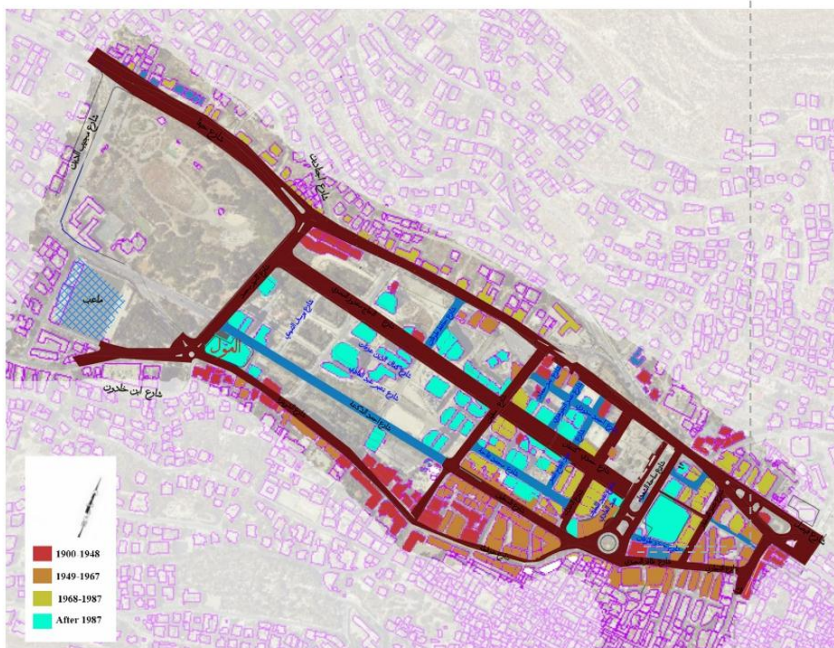
Therefore, the preservation of these areas is the responsibility of all individuals, governmental and non-governmental organizations in this field. The main responsibility lies on the Municipality of Nablus through several measures, including:

- Issuing a law that clarifies the concept and the meaning of the historic and archaeological areas, considering that preserving and protecting them is a public benefit, which makes it possible for the authorities to take appropriate action according to the law to protect them from acts of vandalism, neglect and unintentional additions by the owners.
- Determine the height of the buildings surrounding the historical sites.



Tukan Soap Factory in 1970s

Source: (pinterest,2018)



Tukan Soap Factory in now needs preservation

Fig.112. The Historic Areas in Nablus Downtown and some Historic Buildings Map resource: (geomolg,2018) Source: (Pinterest, 2018)

Chapter Eight

Results and Recommendations

8.1 Conclusion

8-2 Recommendations

8.1 Conclusion

Since the importance of the public spaces and its value of planning and design in order to create them has been established, it is necessary to remember that the design approach to create them should be very specific.

So, through the previous analysis and evaluation of Nablus Downtown and comparing with San Diego Downtown, the following results can be found for the study area:

The Lack of exploitation of urban areas in the downtown, in addition to the negligence, randomness, and use them in an inappropriate way, such as using them as parking lot. At the same time ,Most of the urban space elements in downtown Nablus are randomly distributed, which is not considered to be suitable for the nature and the needs of the area. While many factors have contributed in distorting the downtown, such as unorganized and random advertisements, which are widely distributed on the facades of buildings and on the street sides, which blur the architectural style of the buildings, change their features, and lead to the separation of the city's visual line.

The region suffers from environmental problems and pollution that includes air pollution, from the traffic congestion of vehicles in the downtown area, in addition to the visual pollution caused by the traffic density in the heart of the city. This is in addition to the pollution from garbage and dirt thrown in the streets and sidewalks resulting from insufficient

awareness of such non-civilized behavior, in addition to the absence of adequate waste baskets in the area.

The area lack of urban furniture items such as public seats, statuettes, green and water elements, as well as basic elements such as toilets and trash. It also needs public squares and spaces with simple play structures for children that help to add life to the area.

The area suffers from visual pollution caused by random extension of the networks of plumbing and electricity and telephone wires on the walls and facades of buildings, in addition to the threat to people's lives as a result of the lack of public safety precautions. There is no a sense of safety for women and children at night, due to several factors, the most important of which is the lack of adequate lighting, protection and safety measures. In addition to the lack of various activities, services and the presence of public spaces serving different age groups, which can be provided for the last hours of the day and night to revive the city center.

8-2 Recommendations

The recommendation could be divided in to different category in order to achieve different approaches for the creation of public spaces in Nablus downtown:

- To achieve the bio-environmental and sustainable approach, city of Nablus needs to create green spaces in the area of the downtown and

provide special attention to the process of the gardening and afforestation on the sidewalks, street islands, squares and public areas.

- To achieve the Spatial and Visual approaches, they need to emphasis on esthetic and urban problems, give attention to the physical and spatial dimensions of urban space, and give special emphasize to the visual continuity of different pedestrian movements in the heart of the downtown.
- To achieve the social interactions approaches, they need to emphasis on people presence in the major squares located in the heart of the Downtown (in the area of Al-Shuhada roundabout) surrounded by a multi-use area, with urban spaces elements such as green spaces, street brushes and rest areas, and create other squares in the surrounded area to reduce the pressure located in the heart of the downtown.
- To achieve the movement and pedestrian-oriented approach, the municipality needs to create special motion experience, and consider walking as a suitable criterion in urban design. Expand the sidewalks and the increase the pedestrian corridors to facilitate the movement and shopping in the commercial area. They also need to Impose special laws to regulate the entry of vehicles into the heart of Downtown.
- To achieve the safety creation approach, they need to emphasis on creating safe landscaping and provide the appropriate lighting for the place specially at night time.

- To achieve the human-oriented approach, they need to give special attention to the human scales in the neighborhoods design, urban environment and public space harmony with human scale. They also need to work to find solutions to remove the garage complexes located in the western part of the city center, the building that destroyed the human scale in the area and replace them with public spaces surrounded by services for all ages to attract people to this area and reduce the commercial pressure on the heart of the city.

- To create comprehensive public spaces agenda and have the appropriate design for the study area in general and the public spaces in specific, the municipality needs to work to solve the problems of the study area and create suitable urban spaces, through cooperation with universities and institutions and work with experts.

- To achieve a comprehensive approach to manage, enhance and develop public spaces, the city municipality needs to require a citywide agenda, and some major parts of this agenda are:
 - Creating an honest assessment about the reality of public spaces in every neighborhood and involve the people who live there.

 - This public spaces agenda must be tied to new development project. The municipality should use the advantage of the growing in the city's real estate market by create intensive for the developers to enhance and preserve the public environments in general and public spaces in specific that are so greatly affected by their projects.

- Finally: To achieve the creating of successfully public spaces, municipality of Nablus needs to create a “comprehensive master plan” by developing the important aspects of the downtown environment through the study of:

- The quality of the spaces and buildings and their management
- The way they come together to create a special and unique space.
- Built form in the downtown area in relation to history, culture, landscape and the provision of services
- Engage the users and local people in defining and being involved in the process of change.
- Study the city’s economic and financial realities.
- Engage different agencies in providing investment and change.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

general information

Age

a) 20-29 year	b) 30-39 year	c) 40-49 year	d) 50 and up
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Gender

a) male	b) female
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Status

a) married	b) single
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education level

a) less than high school	b) high school	c) bachelor	d) high educated
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Residential area

a) Nablus downtown	b) Nablus city	d) outside the city
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The current status of Nablus downtown

How long do you normally spend in the downtown?

a) less than two houres
b) from two to three houres
c) four houes and up

The reason of being in the area?

a) shopping
b) Work
c) use transportation
d) have fun

Do you find it difficult to access the downtown?

a) yes
b) no

Are there public spaces in the area

a) yes
b) no

Are the public spaces in the area sufficient?

a) yes
b) no

Do the public spaces have seats and streets furniture?

a) yes
b) no

Does it have recreational area for children

a) yes
b) no

Does it have (land marks - fountains)

a) yes
b) no

Are there cultural and entertainment events in the area?

a) yes
b) no

Does it have green areas and parks?

a) yes
b) no

If the answer is yes, do you see that part of this green areas is being exploited?

a) yes
b) no

Are there public restrooms in the area?

a) yes
b) no

Aesthetic aspects that affects Nablus downtown

Do you consider that the archaeological areas overlooking the city center influences the aesthetic aspects of the downtown?

a) yes
b) no

Do you consider that modern buildings as the municipal complex and tall buildings affects the aesthetic aspects of the downtown?

a) yes
b) no

Do you consider that green spaces affect the aesthetic aspects of the downtown?

a) yes
b) no

Do you consider that the presence of water elements and monuments affect the aesthetic aspects of the downtown?

a) yes
b) no

Status of transportation and streets in the area

Do you see that the width of the streets in the region is enough to accommodate the movement of cars?

a) yes
b) no

Is the width of the sidewalks appropriate to accommodate the movement of pedestrians?

a) yes
b) no

Are sidewalks and streets ready to use strollers and wheelchairs?

a) yes
b) no

While walking in the area, do you notice an intersection between the movement of pedestrians and the movement of cars?

a) yes
b) no

Do you own a car?

a) yes
b) no

If you own a car, is it difficult to find a parking lot in the commercial center of the city?

a) yes
b) no

Do you support allowing public transport to enter the center?

a) yes
b) no

The architectural identity of urban spaces and the surrounding buildings in the city center

Do the public spaces in the downtown reflect the urban development of the city?

a) yes
b) no

Do you think that the design of the buildings in the area is commensurate with the architectural character of the city of Nablus?

a) yes
b) no

Do you see that the height of the buildings in the area is convenient and comfortable?

a) yes
b) no

جامعة النجاح الوطنية

كلية الدراسات العليا

نحو فراغات حضرية انسانية في مركز مدينة نابلس، دراسة مستوحاة من تجربة مدينة سان دييجو الامريكية

إعداد

فنان هاشم ابراهيم ابراهيم

إشراف

د. حسن القاضي

د. خالد قمحية

قدمت هذه الأطروحة استكمالاً لمتطلبات الحصول على درجة الماجستير في الهندسة المعمارية،
بكلية الدراسات العليا، في جامعة النجاح الوطنية، نابلس - فلسطين.

2019

ب

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د. خالد قمحية

الملخص

معظم مدننا الفلسطينية لها مناطق ذات اهمية خاصة هي "وسط المدن"، في حين أنها في الواقع، مجرد مجموعة كبيرة من المباني العالية المنتشرة بكثافة في مركز المدينة وطرق للنقل المحظورة مثل السيارات.

نابلس والتي تعتبر واحدة من اهم هذه المدن، المدينة التاريخية التي تتميز بأنماط المباني الخاصة بها والمساحات الحضرية، لم تعد قادرة على تلبية احتياجات الناس بسبب غياب الاهتمام، وتغيير الكثير من مقومات الصور الذهنية لمواطنيها وزائريها واختفاء جزء اخر منه، دون خلق أي بديل جديد.

تتمثل المشكلة الرئيسية للدراسة في فهم ما يحتاجه الناس في بيئتهم المحيطة، من أجل مساعدة المصممين على إنشاء مساحات حضرية عامة أفضل لهؤلاء المستخدمين. لذلك تقوم الدراسة بتوفير إرشادات حول إنشاء مساحات عامة انسانية في وسط مدينة نابلس من خلال دراسة وفهم التجربة الناجحة في وسط مدينة سان دييغو الامريكية. وذلك تطلب القيام باستكشاف الوسط التجاري لمدينة سان دييغو، وساحاتها العامة الناجحة للحياة البشرية، وإطار تصميمها الحضري، واستراتيجيات تطويرها لحياة المدينة اضافة الى المبادئ التوجيهية في تشكيل نظام الساحات المفتوحة في المدينة.

من ناحية أخرى، تقوم الدراسة بتحليل وتقييم التحول الحضري للأماكن العامة في مدينة نابلس بشكل عام، وفي وسط المدينة بشكل خاص. كما تحدد العوامل والأدوار المختلفة التي تؤثر على هذه الأماكن العامة.

وتقدم الدراسة مقارنة بين جمع البيانات لكلتا المدينتين من أجل فهم الاستراتيجية المثالية التي تم القيام بها لخلق ساحات عامة حضرية في وسط مدينة سان دييغو، وفهم كيفية إنشاء مثل ناجح في وسط مدينة نابلس. وأخيراً الخروج بالاستراتيجيات اللازمة لاقتراح بدائل ناجحة في تشكيل وتصميم فراغات عامة انسانية في وسط مدينة نابلس التجاري.

