

The Kabul Renaissance Plan: THE CITY OF LIGHT

A PRIVATELY FUNDED DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN KABUL, AFGHANISTAN



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The following broad concept statement, list of goals and summary of ideas is what constitutes the new City of Light, Kabul Afghanistan.

The Concept of the City of Light is based on the economic revitalization through urban development of Kabul Old City while providing the respect and the integration of the Historic Buildings, Mosques, Shrines and neighborhood elements into a viable 21st century urban environment.

The City of Light will require a new engineering of complete infrastructure to reintroduce clean domestic water supply systems, sewage treatment systems, electrical power grid, telecommunications, new and improved road networks, rebuilding of bridges, new public amenities, pedestrian sidewalks and comfort stations, traffic system, transit system with new bus services, and street lighting. The infrastructure engineering team outlined for this project includes prominent Afghan and international groups where companies such as Siemens Asia, Ralph Tyler,

Lochner Associates, and Ralph Gagenhiemer/MIT will be some of the major engineering partners in this project.

The Historic Revitalization and New National Museum, Library and Cultural Center

As part of the City of Light Design the project will include the development of new National Museum, Library and Cultural Center. The National Museum complex is being introduced through joint efforts with the Ministry of Culture and Information and the National Geographic Society.

In addition, the City of Light will introduce the Necklace Public Park and Green Space System with new areas of vegetation to include reintroduction of trees, grass areas, flower beds, water fountains, family areas, as well as the integration of a revitalized Kabul River open park system. This park area will also be developed around the existing historic monuments and structures, thereby linking the public park system with the local cultural and historic buildings.

Type of Facilities

The development will be made of various mixed-use facilities that will include hotels, office buildings, retail malls, outdoor markets, medical facilities, low middle and high cost housing, cultural buildings such as concert halls and movie theaters, pedestrian malls, parking and public transit system.

The Land

Upon extensive effort to work

with local business leaders, the designer of this project has commenced an effort and formed relationships to work directly with the local business community and business owners along Meywand Avenue and the surrounding areas.

It is recognized that there will be a change in land use in this area and that the land distribution and reconstruction will require a fair and sensitive system of equity distribution and investment opportunities as well as the preservation of local Historic landmarks. The plan will call for the formation of local investment groups where the equity will be shared by members of the groups as well as each group will be assigned responsibilities for the maintenance and improvements of their physical buildings and structures.

These groups will share access to major roads, public parks, infrastructure and other support services and amenities. This will solve the majority of land ownership issues, the need to provide the proper compensation for property loss or reuse as well as the invitation of local land owners to become part of the investment or development community.

Goals and Objectives

The new City of Light is defined by the following goals and objectives:

- 1- The entire development is to be driven by the private sector including those investors from within Afghanistan and outside international agencies and interested individuals.

2- The development will seek Afghan engineers, local workers and craftsmen and will encourage local employment and training.

3- The development will require new infrastructure including new sanitation, fresh water, electricity and IT systems. Some of these systems will be part of the City infrastructure, but wherever possible this project will rely on self-generating power systems, water conservation and sewer recycling and disposal systems.

4- The development will call for new roadways and bridges over the Kabul River, if necessary, with proper understanding for traffic and parking. These roadways shall incorporate new up-to-date street lighting and green space facilities.

5- The pedestrian movement will be enhanced through the use of new public transit system.

6- The design will generate public parks and recreational grounds and open markets including cultural and entertainment buildings for the people of Kabul.

7- The development will generate a new tax base for the City of Kabul that will help the City to rebuild some of its road network, infrastructure and its public services programs outside the City of Light area.

8- 10% of the profit to be made from these developments will be used towards funding seed money for local investments in home repairs, upgrades and commercial local spaces. ARCADD will generate a plan for this reinvestment to occur with the consultation of the Afghan Government.

9- The development will use up to date standards, building

codes, fire safety and handicap access requirements.

10- The development will create a new architectural character that will place Kabul as a unique mark among other international cities.

Methodology and Implementation

The implementation of this project will depend on giving a vital role to the private sector. The role of the Government of Afghanistan and the designer of this project will be mainly of support and less of control.

The first effort will include an engineering and architectural study that will help shape the physical characteristics of the City of Light and will outline its immediate infrastructure needs and the overall implementation strategy of the project.

Based upon this study, the designer will work with the Municipality of Kabul and the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing on the implementation of the City of Light infrastructure.

Agencies such as the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, other Islamic Banks and Middle Eastern financial agencies will be invited to sponsor the construction of the infrastructure through grants and specialized loans based on delayed payback through private sector development.

Once the infrastructure is in place, public bids will be made for the development of each land parcel by either local or international groups or a combination, using long term lease holdings.

Employment Opportunities and Reduction of Poverty

It is critical to recognize that the City of Light, as part of its role,

will result in employment of over quarter million people in the construction sector and its support services for the entire duration of construction which is estimated to be between 20 to 25 years. In addition, the final job count of positions of people employed by firms, companies and other agencies occupying the City of Light will exceed one million in skilled labor, service and professional positions as well as a full back up of maintenance and support operation staff.

Cost and Payback

The estimated cost of the entire development is about \$9.6 Billion over the span of 25 years born entirely by the private sector. It is anticipated rate of return on the investment is about 17% (all costs will be paid back within less than 7 years.) It is important to state, however, that the rate of return will be gradual and will depend on the encouragement and promotion of the City of Light and its development opportunities in the Central Asian Countries, the Middle East, Europe and the United States.

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LEGEND

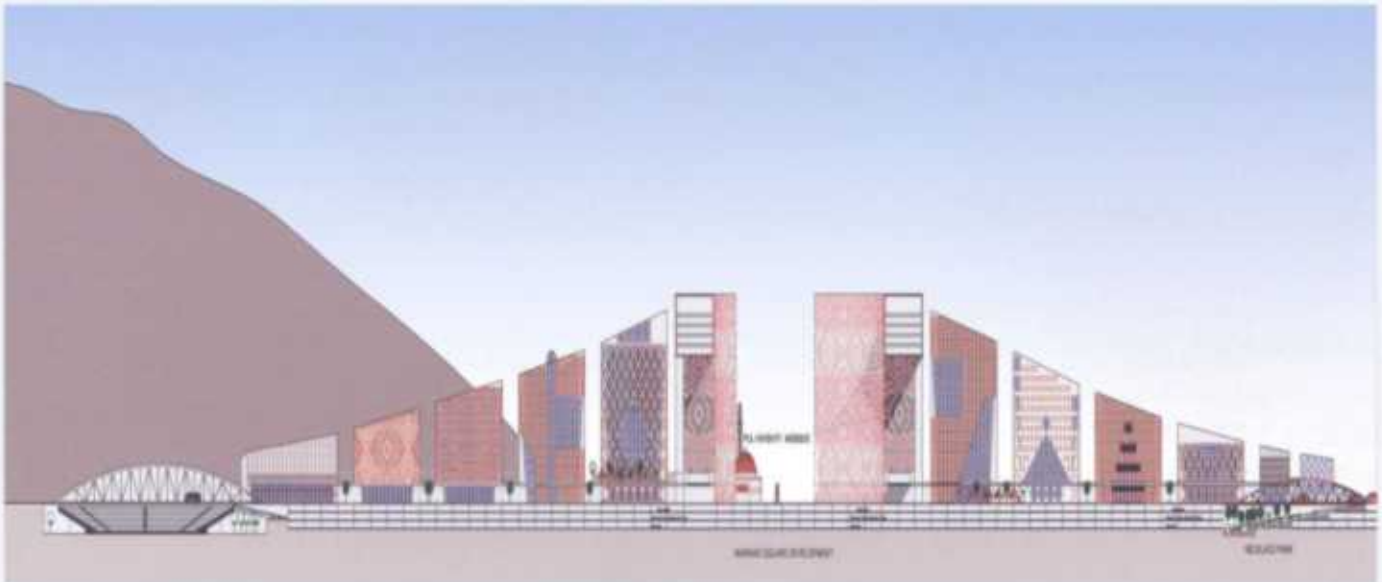
- - HISTORIC STRUCTURES
- - MEDICAL
- - COMMERCIAL AND RETAILS
- - HOUSING UNITS
- - APARTMENTS
- - GREEN AREA
- - ROAD NETWORK
- - KABUL RIVER
- ◆ - MUSEUM OF AFGHAN HERITAGE

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Kabul-City of Light

ELEVATIONS AND SECTIONS



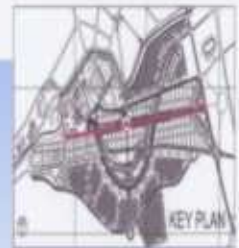
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MAWAND SQUARE DEVELOPMENT



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SECTION THROUGH MAWAND STREET



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MIXED RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL AND RETAIL DEVELOPMENT