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Planning for Urmia City toward Reducing Consequences of Urmia Lake's Drying

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Abstract

Nearly most of the cities in developing countries are somehow suffering from environmental problems. While such cities are confronting rapid population growth and urban sprawl, environmental disasters like air and water pollution, drying lakes, droughts, etc. are challenging the future of these cities. Urmia city in Northwest of Iran, located near an invaluable natural park (Urmia Lake) is not an exception. The problem is that Urmia Lake in recent years is experiencing a rapid process of drying, mainly because of infrastructure development in it, dams on rivers, drought and inefficient water resources management. It is obvious that Urmia City which has been relied on the lake throughout its history currently is environmentally in danger, especially because of salty dusts dispersion. So Urmia lakes crises made Urmia city as one of the risky centers. In addition, deteriorating environmental conditions at inside and proximate area of the city increases vulnerability of it. This research is seeking for planning strategies to overcome this issue and decrease its consequences. But past experiences show that decreasing these consequences are not possible only by planning strategies and design in cities. For this purpose, a deeper approach is needed; an approach that considers all aspects of city and environment and the people living in it. One of the new approaches in urban planning to improve the interaction between urban and environment, is Eco-City approach. Basis of Eco-city is development and rehabilitation in a manner of consistent with the nature and culture. Eco-city seeks for strategies to overcome environmental crises through cultural ideas. Thus, this approach focuses on human environmental structure (city) and his lifestyle. In order to construct an analytical framework for the research, the Idea of Eco-city was based on two main concepts; 1) Urban Living System, and 2) efficient transportation.

To investigate the Urmia City relating documents were researched and some field studies were done. Through these studies, environmental, historical and cultural spots in all over Urmia city were listed. Afterward, to identify the nodes out of spots, a questionnaire was used and some data bases were explored. In this case (Eco-city of Urmia) Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) was used for data analysis. Results shows that, Urmia city has physical, cultural and environmental potentials for making changes in resident's life style toward better coordinate with nature. At the end, relying on this potentials strategic plan to improve environment in Urmia has been provided. This plan mainly includes improving the ecological network in the city and linkages between green areas and water streams, reinforcing the link between cultural and environmental nodes and population centers, planning an efficient public transportation system according to identified network. This research concludes that in order to better plan the cities to overcome environmental problems, it is necessary to integrate the nature and culture of the cities. It is a need to ease people's participation and help them to plan their cities themselves. In this way there is more hope that cities can resist in front of ecological disasters and environmental crises.

Keywords: Eco-City, Urmia, Urban Living System, Natural Nodes, Cultural and Historical Nodes, Efficient Transportation.

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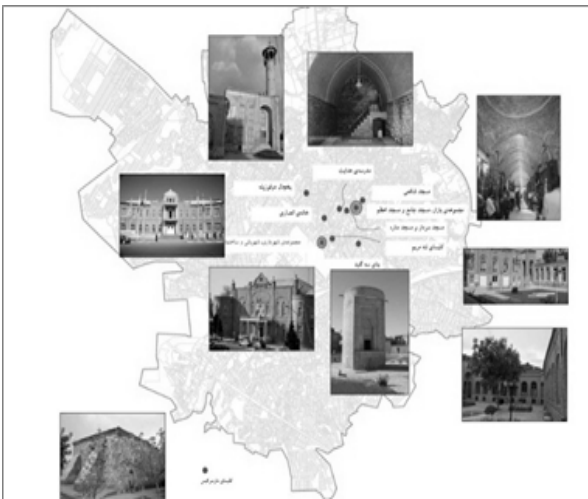
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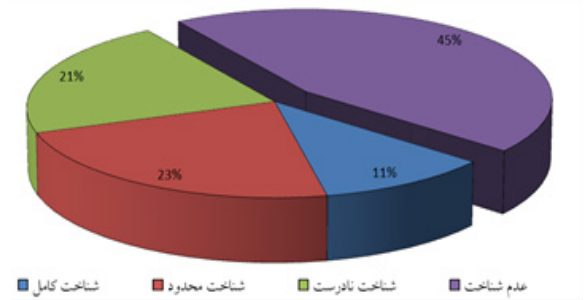
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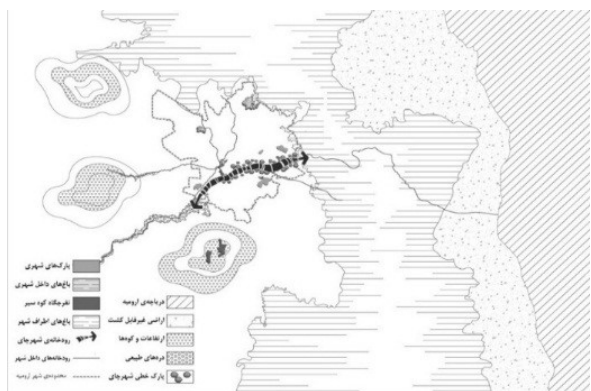
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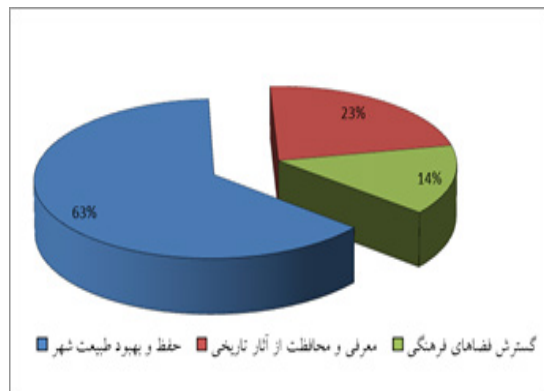
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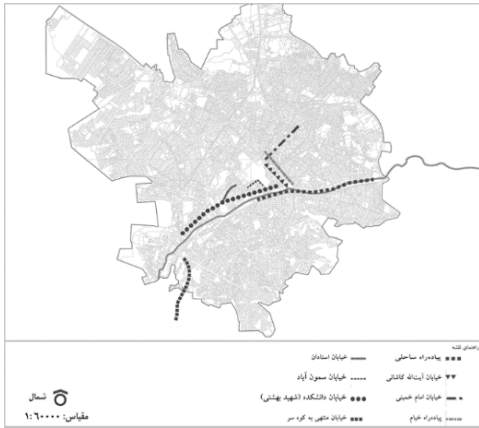
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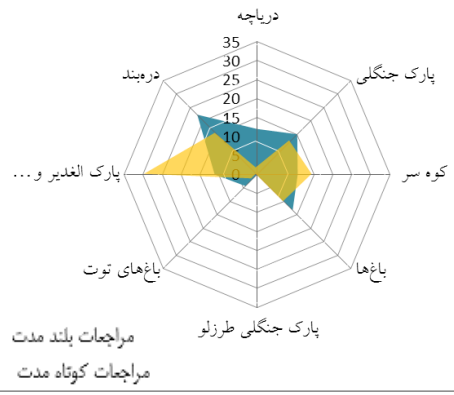
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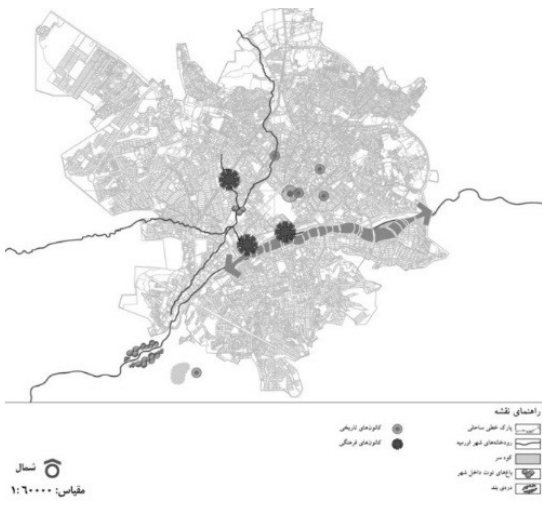
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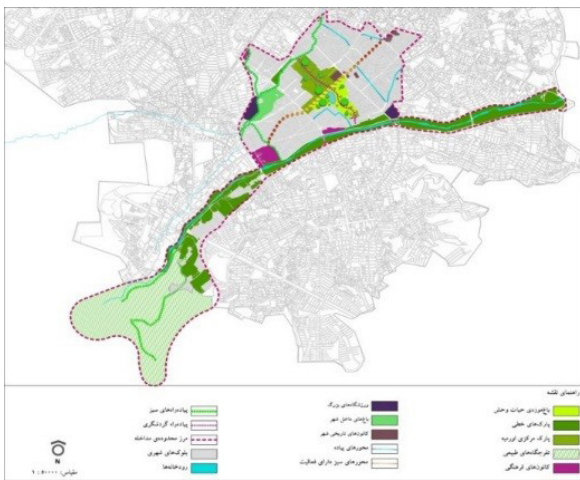
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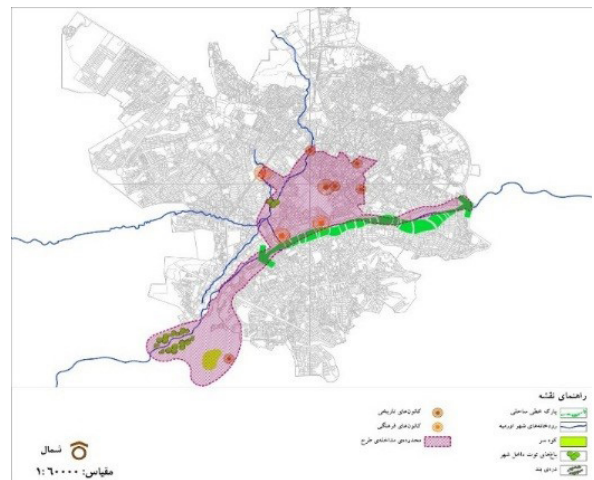


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