City Planner Encyclopedia Article

City Planner

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City planning involves not only the orientation of buildings and streets in a city but also the economic, social, and population conditions of the community. To develop available land or renovate existing property, city planners must understand architecture, surveying, economics, and even politics, in addition to many other variables.

City planners determine a city's need for buildings and services based on mathematical models that predict an increase in population. Population is calculated using census data, municipal registers (which record births, deaths, migration, marriages, and divorces), and statistical samples of the population as a whole. An expected increase in population will mean a need for more schools, hospitals, and businesses.

Maps and land surveys help the city planner determine where to locate new buildings or parks. A topographic map shows the elevation of the land— where fields, valleys, and waterways are located. An **areagraph** measures areas, in acres, to scale. Depending on a city's land use regulations and zoning codes, the city planner decides where to build residential homes, businesses, and public facilities.

Cities were once laid out in a circular design with a public square or government building in the center and residential homes radiating out around it. Planners today use the same principle, locating residential areas near schools and churches, with shopping, business, and industrial facilities on the periphery of the community. Today, planners must also consider environmental regulations, pollution emissions, and waste disposal.

See Also

Census; City Planning; Population Mathematics.

Bibliography

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