

Improving Sustainability Concept in Developing Countries

Incorporating Local Urban Environmental Conservation and Regional Development:

Port Fouad, Egypt

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Abstract

Incorporating local urban environmental conservation and regional development in Port Fouad town is the main concern of this paper. This paper focuses on investigating the regional development impact on local urban environment of Port Fouad town. The investigation of the national and regional development policies, particularly the current Suez Canal Zone Development policy, will be used to define goals, interests and objectives of the development of Port Fouad and adjacent. The analysis of these development policies will be explored along with the projects provided to Port Fouad area to define the urban planning and environmental issues that may arise in Port Fouad during the development process. The assessment of the potentials and constraints of Port Fouad development will be conducted to outline the criteria and guidelines for initiating the master plan of Port Fouad. A general development plan will be proposed to the area, particularly Port Fouad Island. In addition, a master plan for the development of Port Fouad Island, which could contribute to the conservation of urban environment of Port Fouad, will also be proposed. Finally, the environmental effect of the proposed master plan is also defined.

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1. Introduction

Port-Fouad has a unique location. It is situated on the Mediterranean in the northeast corner of Egypt, east Port Said city at the main entrance of the Suez Canal Waterway, Figure 1. Port-Fouad district is one of the seven districts of Port-Said governorate. Port Said governorate is one of three governorates; Port Said, Ismailiah and Suez, that define Suez Canal Zone. Port Fouad district is separated from Port Said city by the Suez Canal waterway. Port Fouad district, until the beginning of the 1980s, was a part of Sinai Peninsula and, in turn, Asian continent.

The inhabitant areas of Port Fouad town were also segregated from Sinai Peninsula by establishing the new eastern waterway channel of Suez Canal. Currently, Port Fouad district is divided into two main parts, Port Fouad town and eastern part. Port Fouad town now is an island, which is surrounded by the Mediterranean in the north, the Suez Canal waterway to the west and the new eastern channel to the south and east. Eastern part of Port Fouad, moreover, is located in Sinai Peninsula. It consists of the new eastern Port Said harbor, free zone and a planned new city for about one million inhabitants, Figure 2. Both the island and rest of Port Fouad are connected to each other and to Port Said and Sinai by a ferry boat system.

Port Fouad location at the intersection of the historical routes between Asia and Africa is reflected on its physiography and climate. Port Fouad climate could be described as Mediterranean, with average annual temperature of 21.5 °C and average precipitation of 17 mm. The area is a geological and scenic entity with distinctive characteristics, which is the basis of its attraction for recreation, particularly on the shore of the Mediterranean and Mallaha Lake. The site, as well, supplies mineral wealth, fishing and a pleasant climate for living. This is in addition to the port opportunity. These resources are all valued regionally, nationally and, to some extent, internationally.

Port Fouad district extends over an area of approx 511 sq km. The area of Port Fouad district is about 40 percent of Port Said governorate. Port Fouad town, the inhabitant area, is 31 sq km with total population of about 81591 in 2015. The study site, therefore, represents a relatively large and significant part of the administrative and political system of Egypt. The area, currently, is facing economic interests at the regional and national levels, which are intensively ongoing. It is called Suez Canal Area Development Project (SCADP). The aim of the SCADP includes increasing the role of the Suez Canal Zone in international trading and to develop the three canal cities: Port Said, Ismailia and Suez. These economic interests involve: 1) building seven new tunnels between Sinai and Port Said and Ismailia; 2) improving the five existing ports; 3) increasing the waterway capacity by allowing ships to navigate into two different directions at the same time; 4) building a new city, new Ismailia city, an industrial zone, fish farms, completing the technology valley, transferring the canal cities into an important trading center globally; and 5) building new centers for logistic and ship services, Figure 3.

Within this context of economic development, urban environment of Port Fouad could be adversely influenced if this development is not well planned and managed. This is because the occupied area of Port Fouad town is one of the most inhabitable areas with density of approx 2632 per/sq km. Moreover, this location can allow Port Fouad district to play a great role in the economic development, particularly for urban and population growth to support this economic development. Other adjacent towns will also be directly affected by this development such as Baloza and Eastern Qantara towns, to the south of Port Fouad District.

This role could be achieved if the urban environment of Port Fouad is considered to the level of coping with the requirements of this economic development, particularly urban and population growth. Contradictory, if Port Fouad did not receive the right planning on the right time, during this stage of ongoing economic development, urban environment of Port Fouad will be adversely affected, in terms of spatial pattern and character, rate of urban growth, population density, environment, etc.

Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to define the expected role of Port Fouad during the process of economic development in the area. In addition, urban planning is the main tool that can allow towns to cope with the economic development requirements and without adversely influencing the environment. This hypothesizes could be proved as

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