ECONOMIC PLANNING- THE ROLE OF TOWN PLANNING IN ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The speed of urbanization in Nigeria is clear to see, all Nigeria's cities will have increase in population within a generation. In subsequent years, the influence of Regional urban planning in architecture has become the pillar for modern construction. It has influenced development of cities on a national and global scale, it's crucial importance to environmental planning is undeniable. The aim of this study is to appraise the role of town planning in architectural development in Nigeria. This paper offers critical literature review on the issues relating to planning, development and management of sustainable cities using analytic appraisal method. It further recommends that to encourage the development of building infrastructure in a town, architects and urban planners must aesthetically and functionally balance the design and building of towns, since architectural development is dependent on town planning. In conclusion, critical actions have to be taken to ensure that sustainable building policies are adhere to in the design and planning of towns.

Keywords: architecture, building policies, infrastructure, sustainable, urbanization, urban planning

Introduction

Generally, planning consists of goals and means. The goals contributed in a plan must be explicit and coherent, and there must be means available for achieving the goals. From this perspective planning can be defined as consciously directed activity with pre-determined goals and means to carry them out (Agrawal A.N. and Kundan Lal 1980. P 13). Therefore, planning is the application of rationale, logical and analytical reasoning in the pursuit of set objectives.

Economic planning is concerned with centrally directed allocation of resources to primary, secondary and tertiary sectors of the economy. It aims at increasing the gross national product, agricultural production, industrial output, savings and investments.

By definition, Building Infrastructure means a structure or networks of buildings, structures, pipes, controls, and equipment, or portion thereof, which provide transportation, utilities, public education, or public safety services. To achieve an effective economic plan, series of planning must be involved, which have to be managed by professional bodies. This study scope is narrowed down to the collaboration ofarchitectural and an urban-regional sector in the planning and management of building infrastructures.

Regional planning is a sequence of programmed and coordinated actions designed to solve current and anticipated problems of a region. Thus, regional planning is considered as a response to certain problems of urban region arising from rapid population growth, increasing urbanization, increasing costs of living and personal inability and problems of depressed industrial and rural regions suffering from economic malaise (Glasson John 1974).

According to Susan Fainstein (2014), defines urban planning as the design and regulation of the use of space that focus on the physical form, economic functions, and social impacts of the urban environment and on the location of different activities within it. Town planning concerns itself with both the development of open land and the restructuring of existing parts of the city. It therefore involves goal setting, collection and analysis of data, design, strategic thinking and public consultation.

The architects are in charge of the design and project planning, and they are a lot responsible for the visual appearance of buildings and structures while the urban planners are responsible for the design of public spaces and the interaction between constructed form and public spaces. Economic growth may be one of the urban planning designation, which means an urban planner may be in charge of identifying opportunities for the economic growth and promoting investment in a certain area.

Literature Review

Town planning is the art and science of ordering physical development to secure practicable degree of functionality, convenience, economy, aesthetic and safety in our environment (Keeble, 1969). It is simply the organization of elements of town and other urban environments. According to Stren and Polese (2000), one of the main aims of sustainable urban policy is to "bring people together, to weave parts of the city into a cohesive whole, and to increase accessibility (spatial and otherwise) to public services and employment. Fertner, (2012) showed that cities expand in terms of land twice as fast as population rate.

The Concept of Town Planning

According to business jargons, planning is the fundamental management function, which involves deciding beforehand, what is to be done, when is it to be done, how it is to be done and who is going to do it. It is an intellectual process which lays down an organization's objectives and develops various courses of action, by which the organization can achieve those objectives.

Town planning plays a major role in shaping the natural surroundings of our lives. The urban and regional planning decree enacted in 1992 and reveiwed in the year 2004 targetted towards physical development in the surrounding. This document defines the various types of physical development plans at the federal, State and local level. The federal government is mandated to formulate national policies for urban and regional planning and development. This Law establishes three bodies for the proper implementation of the National physical development plans i.e.; the Local Planning Authority, the State Urban and Regional Planning Board, and the National Urban and Regional Planning Commission. The above institutions are required to have a Development Control department that has the power over the development control on all lands and estates.

Part V of this Law requires a local plan to designate any area to be an improvement area for the purpose of rehabilitating, renovating and upgrading the physical environment, social facilities and infrastructure of the area, hence making the profession a creative-artistic and a social job. Architects leave their social and environmental footprints every time they erect a building. Great places and cities don't happen by chance and as such, the place of design excellence cannot be over-emphasized in managingthe transformation of our cities. According to Precious N.A and George N.(2016), various policies or laws have been positioned at the national, state, city and local government levels to provide a useful and valuable framework or zoning for cities which drives infrastructure development and capital development in terms of creating jobs, attracting investors and increase internally generated revenue.

Objectives of Town Planning

i. To ensure orderly development.
ii. To create and promote an adaptive and sustainable city.
iii. To make the right use of the land for the right purposes by zoning.
iv. To preserve the individuality of the town.
v. To preserve the aesthetics in the design of all elements of town or city plan.

The Planning Process

The crucial part of plans is knowing the type of strategy to execute in solving certain developments and their planning term. The following are steps utilized in planning processes;

a. Identification and definition of the problem.
b. Defining the objectives:
    i. To regulate growth
    ii. Combat the bad effects of past growth
    iii. To improve facilities and optimize resources utilization.
    iv. Provide a comfortable, beautiful and healthy environment.
c. Data collection through studies and survey:
    i. Identification of trend and direction of growth.
d. Analysis of the data collected: in form of study maps, charts and graphs.
e. Forecasting: Demographic projection and forecasting which is based on the migration, industrialization and urbanization.

f. Design: Preparing development plans and widening of roads.
g. Fixing the priorities: Spotting and identifying the priorities based on need and urgency.
h. Implementation:
   1. Timely intervention by suitable and relevant authorities and must satisfy the required obligations.
i. Review, Evaluation and feedback: Follow-up by inspections and report reviews.

The figure below shows the example of a typical simplified urban planning process for a new development area.

Simplified Urban Planning Process

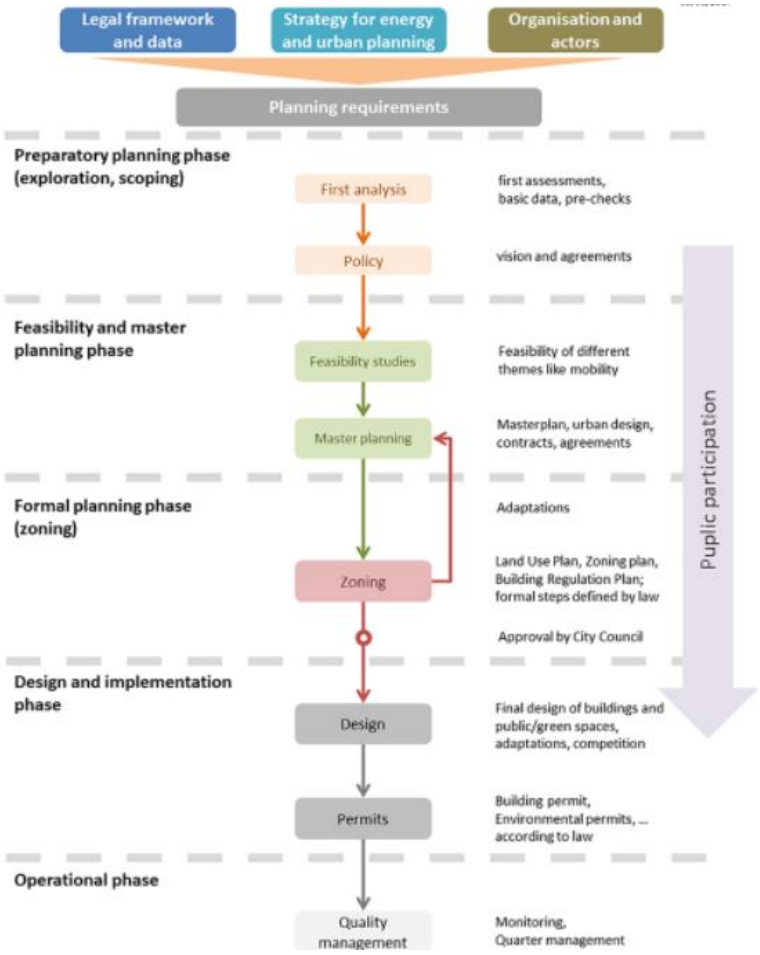


Fig.1

The developed scheme could then serve as the basis for discussions as to which energy criteria, decisions, stake holders and instruments are needed at what point in the process. The result would then be an upgraded planning scheme which can be very useful for further developments.

There are different types of planning terms which are;

a. Short-term planning
b. Medium-term planning
c. Long-term planning

Short-term planning is a planned action for rapid economic growth or balanced physical development of the region or nation for one-year period. Annually, the government announces the budget, which contains incomes, expenditures, policies that can create enabling environment for the growth of the national economy. This is a short term plan which

has 'the task of setting how the government's policy should be carried into effect (Tinbergeen Jan 1967, Agrawal A.N. and KundanLal 1980). The short term is governed by the medium and long-term plans, both in respect of the goals to be pursed and the methods by which these are to bed achieved (Agrawal A.N. and KundanLal 1980).

Medium-term planning is a planned action for the economic growth or physical development of a region or nation between 3 and 5 years or 7 and 10 years. The plan quantifies the objectives of the government that need to be achieved year by year through short-term plans.

Long-term planning is a planned programme of actions for the national/ regional economic growth for the period of 10, 15, 20 or more years. This perspective plan provides the framework for the programmes and policies to be embodied in short-term and medium-term plans. Although the long-term plan indicates the path to economic growth, the future cannot be accurately predicted and forecasted, especially in unstable societies.

Different Types of Plans

a. Structural Plans: This is a plan that focuses attention on certain aspects of the environment such as location of buildings and facilities.

b. Development Plans: This is a plan for development or improvement of the area under focus. It includes a master plan, a regional plan, development plan and a new town development plan.

c. Comprehensive Plan: This plan combines the prescription for all aspects of city development. It analyses the economy of the town or city, its demographic features and the history of its spatial development which serves as a template to plan on how the town will evolve over a long number of years.

The Importance of Town Planning

The following are reasons why the need for town and urban planning arises;

1. Rapidly Growing Populations

The population of many cities and urban areas are rapidly evolving and will continue to into the future. Hence, the need to review the structure of the town in order to create a more serene environment for living.

2. Demand for more compact cities

There is also increasing demand for a more compact city model. This compact city model is denser, better connected and walk able, facilitating better access to employment, public transport, entertainment and other opportunities. It has also been proven that a compact city is both more liveable and productive.

3. Resilient Cities

There is an increased focus on creating resilient cities and places that adapt to the effects of a changing climate. The challenge is to ensure that the pressure for development in new and improved infrastructure creates better places and serves as an advantage to existing communities as well as those moving into the area. The decisions made now will continue to affect lifestyles for decades into the future.

4. Rapidly Changing Technology

Technology is changing the way we live, work and enjoy our cities. It is providing us with new tools to make our cities, infrastructure and buildings smarter, liveable and more resilient.

5. Ambitious infrastructure and urban renewal program

The collaboration of the government and private sectors has an interest to upgrade and deliver additional infrastructure such as transport, education facilities and hospitals together with a program of urban renewal on major government owned sites. A focus on design will assist in maximizing the benefits from this investment and ensure that new infrastructure builds on existing places and creates even greater ones.

The Contribution of the Architectural Development

The future of a town, city or urban settlement depends largely on the competence of Town planners and Architects. Architects duties are diversified ranging from planning, urban design, landscape architecture, engineering and real estate developers. A large percentage of the world's population lives in urban areas, and the future of humanity is

absolutely urban (Mclaren et al, 2015). Architectural professionals need to remind themselves of their core contribution in the forming and establishing well designed societies, better streets, better homes, and providing better urban environments.

In Architecture and quality of life (ACE 2004), a two-way relationship between the quality of a built environment and the quality of life. The quality of life does not solely depend on economic growth. The architectural profession has a role to play in turning urban challenges to opportunities. It may do so through the following ways:

1. Design of urban environments starting from the basic home structure.
2. Provision of adequate knowledge to champion good design and empower people in order to facilitate bottom-up participation.
3. Production of integrated design interventions that serves to address various requirements.
4. Production of a safe and healthy physical environment.

Merits of an Excellent Urban Design

1. Providing choices for affordable housing living
2. Create a people-friendly public place, which supports community development and social interaction.
3. It favours social interaction among neighbouring towns and settlements.
4. Ease of movement and accessibility either by walking, cycling, and public transport.
5. Supporting businesses and economic performance of local residents, and easy access between home and work.
6. Enabling housing, living and working diversity and choice.
7. Reducing energy and water cost through compact, accessible development patterns i.e poorly designed towns create long term costs.

Issues Regarding Urban Planning and Architecture

The town planner's willto design a living space faces constant challenges as they constantly experience dramatic transformations in their operations. Among the major challenges faced are:

1. Population development
2. Dealing with the need to design for an inclusive society by providing accessibility to services and establishing good movement network. Architects however need to be sensitive to the entire urban-rural spectrum and must embrace new opportunities offered by ICT.
3. Having to deal with sustainable rehabilitation of built fabric and seeking feasible measures to redesign user behavior.
4. Development of planning instruments to regulate chaotic unplanned urban growth.
5. The need for a defense system in the housing sector in Nigeria has been the cause of rapid change in architecture.

Conclusion and Recommendation

During the process of landscape-urban planning transformation the problem of creating a stable spatial urban planning city structure where the elements of urban landscaping play the role as significant as town planning ensembles, monuments, and other architectural-spatial dominants of the city is being solved. It is important to create a stable, flexible, ecologically effective and safe city environment, an important method for which is landscape town planning transformation of formed spatial-planning city structure. There should be an urgent requirement for rehabilitation of towns and cities which focuses at sustaining the quality of life of their occupants. Therefore town planners and architects should adapt these physical structures while maintaining the day to day activities of the people.

There are various existing policies and designs that have been formulated through urban planning and Architecture which have provided foundation for other professionals. These policies and designs should be strictly adhered to with an efficient, adaptive and sustainable measures to reflect the architecture of the country.

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