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The MAYOR's VISION and LEADERSHIP

in Sustainable Urban Economic Development

La vision et le leadership du maire dans le développement urbain économique durable

Presented Publicly (soutenue publiquement)

By

Benny Vaknin

<u>Le Jury President:</u> Prof. Lucio Ubertini

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SCIENCES ET TECHNOLOGIES

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Vitae

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<u>Education:</u>

1971 – 1974:   B.A. Economics and Business Administration - Hebrew

          University of Jerusalem.

1986 – 1988:   Diploma in Land Assessment and Property Management

        -    Technion (Israel Technological Institute)

 1990 – 1994   LL.B – Bachelor of Law, Tel Aviv University (qualified

         lawyer).

2007 – 2009   LL.M - Master of Law, Bar Ilan University.

2013-2015   Doctorate in Urban Economics, Lille University, France in co-operation with the Civil and Urban Engineering Department, NYU

- Business English – Israel Open University.
- Program for Young Leaders in the USA - US Government.
- Course for Chairman of the Board of Directors – Israel Center for Management
- Negotiation management - Israel Center for Management

<u>Languages</u>

Hebrew, English , French Arabic (working knowledge).

<u>Awards</u>

- Kaplan Prize
- Prime Minister's prize for quality and excellence.

Work Experience

2013 –　　　　　 Chairman of Communications Company.

2008 – 2013　　 Mayor of Ashkelon

2005 – 2008　　 Chairman – NTA Metropolitan Mass Transit System Ltd

　　　　　　　 (The light train for Tel Aviv and the Dan Metropolitan Area).

2004 – 2005　　 Chairman of Board of Directors – Pelephone

　　　　　　　 Communications. Pty. Ltd.

1991 – 2003　　 Mayor of Ashkelon

1979 – 1991　　 Deputy Mayor of Ashkelon

1976 – 1979　　 Senior economist, Baxter Travinol (US based company).

1974 – 1976　　 Factory economist, Yuval Gad

1973 – 1974　　 Bank Hapoalim, Assistant to head of investment department.

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Work Process

This doctorate is mainly based on the author's experience of seventeen years as mayor and 13 years as deputy mayor of the city of Ashkelon. This research project is in fact the result of 30 years.

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The author would like to acknowledge and thank the graduate students from the NYU Urban Infrastructure Institute for their great assistance in editing the thesis.

Last but foremost, a heartfelt thanks to the residents of Ashkelon who entrusted the author with the position of mayor of the city of Ashkelon and for enabling him to translate his vision from thoughts and ideas into actions and real results.

Dedication

"This research is dedicated to,

My parents, Meir Vaknin and Sol Vaknin, who devoted their lives to my education and taught me to never stop learning in life. My wife Piedad, who encouraged and supported me throughout this arduous undertaking. My children Yair, Yochi, Aviad and Nethanel who were a great source of inspiration and encouragement for me."

Abstract

The research is focused on a case study of the historical development of the City of Ashkelon over several decades and, more specifically, during the tenure of the author as its Deputy Mayor (1979 – 1991) and as the City Mayor (1991 – 2003 and 2008 – 2013). It is focused on the analysis of sustainable development challenges that have faced the city during these periods and the strategies adapted to implement the mayoral vision and promote population growth, economic development, societal integration, environmental protection policy and improvement of quality of life. It also describes the substantial problems that have confronted the city in previous periods when there was a lack of Mayoral strategic vision and leadership. During that time, Ashkelon failed to develop as compared to other cities with a clear development vision, which was carried out successfully by their Mayors with a competent and self-determined leadership.

This research illustrates how the development of a mayoral strategic vision affects every sphere of activity of the city. It presents an in-depth analysis of the development of the mayoral vision contents, implementation strategy and impacts on the city stakeholders, civil society and municipal team involved in shaping and implementing the city development strategies. This analysis clearly illustrates that the Mayor's leadership, accompanied by self-determination and perseverance, is essential for meeting the goals of the Mayoral vision.

Ashkelon was extremely successful in sustaining its urban growth from a population of 63,000 in 1991 to 138,000 in 2017 and promoting its economic development. Its growth could be attributed to the mayoral vision of introducing urban economic development as an integral part of the functions of the municipality, although, in fact, the responsibility for these functions has been assumed by the national government. With the Mayor's leadership the City of Ashkelon was one of the first cities in Israel to undertake the responsibility for economic development whereas most of the cities viewed their principal role in managing the traditional municipal services;

The Mayor's agenda of sustainable development goals implied that all urban development plans must take into account the consequences for future generations. For this reason, the research emphasis was placed on the sustainability analysis of all the development plans in Ashkelon. City sustainability implies that its development strategy takes into account the future needs of the residents of the city, including high standards of urban development in the fields of education, culture, environmental protection, societal integration, economic development and municipal services, leading to economically viable and environmentally sustainable high quality of urban life.

The research also illustrates that the vision and the leadership of the Mayor can creatively lead to a regional development gateway for trans-boundary collaboration that transcend cultural or geo-political frontiers, facing common sustainable development challenges. In this framework, the shared vision and common leadership of the Mayors of the City of Ashkelon and the city of Gaza led to the development of joint projects in education, environmental protection, regional infrastructure and economic development.

This research describes the self-retrospectives of the author's experience as the Mayor of the City of Ashkelon for 17 years and as Deputy Mayor for the preceding 12.5 year as well as assessment of the strategies perseveringly pursued, which under extreme conditions of a quasi-continuous conflict zone, have enabled to successfully address city challenges and achieve a most significant outcome towards the mayor's vision goals. Facing the human societal, environmental and economic challenges suitable strategies were continuously adapted in the light of the new realities to meet the strategic vision goals and transformed the city from high crime rate city with a negative self-image of the residents into a fast-growing socio-culturally diversified urban environment, grumping from 45,000 in the 80s to 145,000 today, with high quality educational system and environmentally sustainable economic growth.

The work combines empirical material, decision-making considerations and case study analyses, through practical and personal experience from the author's experience as the Mayor of Ashkelon. The research objective is to serve as an all-encompassing codex model for visionary city leaders who are involved, more particularly, in sustaining urban economic development. Its purpose is to serve as a case study analysis model for mayors, service managers and professionals in t sustainable urban development.

Today, the City of Ashkelon can face the future with confidence. The social and economic groundwork has been laid for Ashkelon to upgrade the urban resilience of the residents, public and private corporations and industries and their ability to cope with difficult situations has been nurtured. The status of Ashkelon in Israel and in the world has been transformed into an image of a growing, vibrant and modern city and the residents of Ashkelon can take pride in their participation in building the positive trends in the development of the city, which could not have been possible without their participation and inspired trust in the city future. As past Mayor of the City of Ashkelon, it is through the retrospective self-analysis of the venues undertaken by the Author and, more specifically, their outcome at a given context, that the Author could reach an integrated deep understanding of the role and impacts of mayoral visionary goals and leadership on the outcome achieved with the residents' support and is looking forward with hope and confidence to the future.

Résumé

La recherche est axée sur une étude de cas du développement historique de la ville d'Ashkelon sur plusieurs décennies et, plus particulièrement, pendant le mandat de l'auteur en tant que maire adjoint (1979 - 1991) et maire de la ville (1991 - 2003 et 2008 - 2013). Il se concentre sur l'analyse des défis du développement durable auxquels la ville a été confrontée pendant ces périodes et sur les stratégies adaptées pour mettre en œuvre la vision du maire et promouvoir la croissance démographique, le développement économique, l'intégration sociétale, la politique de protection de l'environnement et l'amélioration de la qualité de vie. Il décrit également les problèmes importants auxquels la ville a été confrontée au cours des périodes précédentes où la vision stratégique et le leadership du maire faisaient défaut. Pendant cette période, Ashkelon n'a pas réussi à se développer par rapport à d'autres villes ayant une vision claire du développement, qui a été réalisée avec succès par leurs Maires avec un leadership compétent et autodéterminé.

Cette recherche illustre comment le développement d'une vision stratégique du maire affecte chaque sphère d'activité de la ville. Elle présente une analyse approfondie du développement du contenu de la vision du maire, de la stratégie de mise en œuvre et des impacts sur les acteurs de la ville, la société civile et l'équipe municipale impliqués dans l'élaboration et la mise en œuvre des stratégies de développement de la ville. Cette analyse montre clairement que le leadership du maire, accompagné d'autodétermination et de persévérance, est essentiel pour atteindre les objectifs de la vision du maire.

Ashkelon a extrêmement bien réussi à maintenir sa croissance urbaine de 63 000 habitants en 1991 à 138 000 en 2017 et à promouvoir son développement économique. Sa croissance pourrait être attribuée à la vision du maire d'introduire le développement économique urbain comme partie intégrante des fonctions de la municipalité, bien que, en fait, la responsabilité de ces fonctions ait été assumée par le gouvernement national. Sous la direction du maire, la ville d'Ashkelon a été l'une des premières villes d'Israël à assumer la responsabilité du développement économique, alors que la plupart des villes considéraient leur rôle principal dans la gestion des services municipaux traditionnels ;

L'agenda du maire en matière d'objectifs de développement durable impliquait que tous les plans de développement urbain devaient prendre en compte les conséquences pour les générations futures. Pour cette raison, l'accent a été mis sur l'analyse de la durabilité de tous les plans de développement à Ashkelon. La durabilité de la ville implique que sa stratégie de développement prenne en compte les besoins futurs des résidents de la ville, y compris des normes élevées de développement urbain dans les domaines de l'éducation, de la culture, de la protection de l'environnement, de l'intégration sociétale, du développement économique et des services municipaux, conduisant à une haute qualité de vie urbaine économiquement viable et écologiquement durable.

La recherche montre également que la vision et le leadership du maire peuvent conduire de manière créative à une voie de développement régional pour une collaboration transfrontalière qui transcende les frontières culturelles ou géopolitiques, face aux défis communs du développement durable. Dans ce cadre, la vision partagée et le leadership commun des maires de la ville d'Ashkelon et de la ville de Gaza ont conduit au développement de projets communs dans les domaines de l'éducation, de la protection de l'environnement, des infrastructures régionales et du développement économique.

Cette recherche décrit les auto-rétrospectives de l'expérience de l'auteur en tant que maire de la ville d'Ashkelon pendant 17 ans et en tant qu'adjoint au maire pendant les 12,5 années précédentes, ainsi que l'évaluation des stratégies poursuivies avec persévérance, qui dans les conditions extrêmes d'une zone de conflit quasi-continue, ont permis de relever avec succès les défis de la ville et d'atteindre un résultat des plus significatifs vers les objectifs de la vision du maire. Face aux défis sociétaux, environnementaux et économiques, des stratégies appropriées ont été continuellement adaptées à la lumière des nouvelles réalités pour atteindre les objectifs de la vision stratégique et ont transformé la ville d'une ville à taux de criminalité élevé avec une image de soi négative des résidents en un environnement urbain socioculturellement diversifié à croissance rapide, passant de 45 000 dans les années 80 à 145 000 aujourd'hui, avec un système éducatif de haute qualité et une croissance économique écologiquement durable.

L'ouvrage combine des éléments empiriques, des considérations décisionnelles et des analyses d'études de cas, grâce à l'expérience pratique et personnelle de l'auteur en tant que maire d'Ashkelon. L'objectif de la recherche est de servir de modèle de codex global pour les dirigeants urbains visionnaires qui sont impliqués, plus particulièrement, dans le développement économique urbain durable. Elle vise à servir de modèle d'analyse d'études de cas pour les maires, les gestionnaires de services et les professionnels du développement urbain durable.

Aujourd'hui, la ville d'Ashkelon peut envisager l'avenir avec confiance. Les bases sociales et économiques ont été jetées pour qu'Ashkelon améliore la résilience urbaine des résidents, des entreprises et des industries publiques et privées et leur capacité à faire face à l'avenir.

Le statut d'Ashkelon en Israël et dans le monde a été transformé en une image de ville en pleine croissance, dynamique et moderne et les habitants d'Ashkelon peuvent être fiers de leur participation à la construction des tendances positives dans le développement de la ville, ce qui n'aurait pas été possible sans leur participation et leur confiance inspirée dans l'avenir de la ville. En tant qu'ancien maire de la ville d'Ashkelon, c'est grâce à l'auto-analyse rétrospective des lieux entreprise par l'auteur et, plus particulièrement, de leurs résultats dans un contexte donné, que l'auteur a pu parvenir à une compréhension profonde et intégrée du rôle et des impacts des objectifs visionnaires et du leadership du maire sur les résultats obtenus avec le soutien des résidents et qu'il envisage l'avenir avec espoir et confiance.

Contents

Table of Contents

LIST OF TABLES

List of Figures

Chapter 1 – Introduction, Purpose & Structure of the Research Thesis

Purpose

The purpose of this research is to demonstrate the importance of the mayor's strategic vision and leadership in sustaining urban economic development. Without a strategic vision, it is not possible to establish targets, meet goals and lead to achievements, which the city seeks to attain.

For this purpose, the following section is focused on the definition of the Mayor's strategic vision with its multiple dimensions and briefly summarizes the main research conclusions:

1. The vision is the direction, which the mayor decides to follow in the development of the city to reach the identified goals.

2. The vision may consist of integrating many successive subject-matter specific visions to depict the direction in which the city is to be led - the main goal that is to be achieved and the city's image to be created. Each aspect of urban development has its own specific vision. There are therefore multiple visions focusing on the various issues such as: educational programs, sustainable economic development, cultural legacy, societal activities and all the other municipal areas that the city must deal with, which are all building blocks for forming the central strategic vision of the mayor.

3. The research shows that Mayoral leadership is crucial for realizing the strategic vision and creating the roadmap and municipal strategy for promoting and realizing the changes necessary for its implementation. The Mayor's leadership is essential in creating motivation and inspiring the stakeholders and people concerned to join efforts in order to realize the strategic vision.

4. The research is focused on a case study of the historical development of the City of Ashkelon over several decades and, more specifically, during the tenure of the author as its Deputy Mayor (1979 – 1991) and as the City Mayor (1991 – 2003 and 2008 – 2013). It analysis the challenges of sustainable development that have faced the city during these periods and the strategies adapted to implement the mayoral vision and promote population growth, economic development and improvement of quality of life. It also describes the substantial difficult problems that have confronted the city in previous periods when there was a lack of Mayoral strategic vision and leadership. During that time, Ashkelon failed to develop as compared to other cities with a clear development vision, which was carried out successfully by their Mayors with a competent and self-determined leadership.

5. This research illustrates how the development of a mayoral strategic vision affects every sphere of activity of the city. It presents an in-depth analysis of the development of the mayoral vision contents, implementation strategy and impacts on the city stakeholders, civil society and municipal team involved in shaping and implementing the city development strategies. This analysis clearly illustrates that the Mayor's leadership, accompanied by self-determination and perseverance, is essential for meeting the goals of the Mayoral vision

6. Every organization must formulate its vision and determine the goals that it aspires to achieve. As the leader of the city, the Mayor is responsible for formulating a vision, which must describes the future state of the city the Mayor wishes to attain. The research shows clearly that from the moment a vision for the city was formulated and implemented consistently with perseverance, the City of Ashkelon began to develop and flourish.

7. A vision may consist of integrating many successive subject-matter specific visions to depict the direction in which the city is striving to achieve its goals. Subject to the comprehensive vision of the Mayor, which determined the overall direction of the city development and its expected attributes, image and character that the city Ashkelon was to become, there were sector specific visions dealing with all operational and functional aspects of the municipality. Examples of these "sector driven visions" for Ashkelon involved:

   - Educational system vision, which was established with the participation of all those involved in education.
   - Economic development vision, which involved all the important stakeholders and organizations participating in the economic growth.
   - Urban planning and development in all areas of activities in Ashkelon, including physical, societal, environmental, educational or economic.

8. The vision implementation strategy shall involve the managers and workers of the municipality whose functions have had a bearing on the vision being formulated. This approach effectively promoted the commitment of the managers and workers to strive for implementing the vision.

9. The leadership of the Mayor is essential for realizing the strategic vision. During those periods in which the City of Ashkelon experienced a lack of vision and leadership, the situation in the city deteriorated significantly. This deterioration led the Ministry of Interior to suspend the elected mayor and the council members and ensure the local governance with an appointed committee for running the city for several years until the reinstatement of an elected council in the municipal elections, which are held each 6 years

10. Leadership involves creating a Team committed to accomplish the vision and appointing managers who can assume leadership in the various functions and service sectors of the municipality. For the sustainable development of the City of Ashkelon it was necessary to appoint a leading team of Directors for economic development, educational program development and other essential public services. Together with the Mayor, the directors of the municipal services formulated the vision for the city critical systems and worked diligently with all parties concerned for its implementation.

11. Ashkelon was extremely successful in sustaining its urban growth from a population of 63,000 in 1991 to 138,000 in 2017 and promoting its economic development. Its growth could be attributed to the mayoral vision of introducing urban economic development as an integral part of the functions of the municipality, although, in fact, the responsibility for these functions lies with the national government. With the Mayor's leadership the City of Ashkelon was one of the first cities in Israel to undertake the responsibility for economic development whereas most of the cities viewed their principal role in managing the traditional municipal services;

12. All urban development plans must take into account the consequences for future generations. For this reason, the research emphasis was placed on the sustainability analysis of all the development plans in Ashkelon. City sustainability implies that its development strategy takes into account the future needs of the residents of the city. This requires high standards of development in the fields of education, culture, environmental protection and economic development leading to high quality of life

13. The research illustrates that the success of implementation strategy of urban economic development clearly depends on all the different aspects of municipal services, such as educational, environmental protection and societal development services;

14. The research also illustrates that the vision and the leadership of the mayor can creatively lead to a regional development gateway for trans-boundary peace and collaboration facing common sustainable development challenges. In this framework, the shared vision and common leadership of the Mayors of the City of Ashkelon and the city of Gaza led to the development of joint projects in education, environmental protection, and regional economic development.

Key lessons - Ashkelon as a model for other cities. The research objective is to serve as an all-encompassing codex model for visionary city leaders who are involved, more particularly, in sustaining urban economic development. Its purpose is to serve as a case study analysis model for mayors, service managers and professionals in the field of sustainable urban development.

1.1 Thesis Structure

Leading researchers (1) state that the success of a Mayor or a Head of a Local Authority will be measured by his ability to strengthen the urban economy, to improve and ensure good societal conditions for his residents and to create an environmentally sustainable and affordable way of life. Research of the McKinsey Company (1) concluded that mayors of cities, who were successful in bringing about real long-term changes in their cities, did so by adopting three main sustainable development principles:

- Smart growth – Adopting strategic thinking, drawing up plans that instigate change, integrating environmental perception in the plans and meticulously preserving equality of opportunities for all.
- Doing more with less – Meticulous management of expenditures, constant search for possible opportunities and partnerships, utilizing advanced technology, organizational changes in order to prevent hidden unemployment and duplication of tasks and undertake well thought out and responsible investments.
- Establishing stakeholders' alliances - formulating a personal vision and public communication strategy, building a qualitative work-team, creating an organizational culture that promotes personal responsibility and fostering consensus among the residents, local business people and all interested parties.

The principles stated by these experts appear to be essential for understanding the case study conducted in this research and are developed in the following chapters of this thesis.

Chapter 2 – The Mayor's Vision; Terms of Reference

This chapter presents the purpose of the research, its subject matter and the terms of reference used to define the Mayor's vision and leadership. The purpose of this research is to demonstrate the importance of the mayor's vision and leadership in sustaining urban economic development. The chapter outlines the problems of the City of Ashkelon related to the lack of vision of its Mayor, a paucity of leadership, corrupted leadership over many years, a low public image of the city, negative population growth, practically no economic development, a high crime rate, a low level of education, inferior social circumstances, no urban development plans and low standards of infrastructure.

The chapter describes the general vision of the Mayor, dealing with the direction in which the city should be led. The vision for each issue of urban activity confronting the city is taken into account in forming the general vision. The role of the Mayor's leadership, without which no vision could be realized, is defined. This includes the appointment of the mayor's team with a general director of the city who is also a leader, a city engineer, heads of the divisions of education, the environmental protection, sport and culture, welfare and community relationships who are capable of providing leadership to their organizations. The

appointment of suitable professionals one stage lower, such as heads of schools, with adequate leadership qualities is also addressed.

Chapter 3 - National and Local Government Models in Israel

This chapter presents an analysis of the institutional relationships and governance authority sharing between the national and local governments in Israel and their impacts on the Mayor's capacity to implement urban development programs. The local authority is an independent entity, which is responsible and accountable for carrying out activities within the area of its jurisdiction. However, interference on the part of the national government is essentially dominant in defining the authority of the local government and supervising its activities. It appears that the local authorities in Europe and the USA are more independent than their Israeli counterparts. The Mayor, directly elected, has the authority to formulate the vision and goals for the local government and implement the municipal programs and urban development projects for their accomplishment. The chapter also describes the institutional structure of the City of Ashkelon, emphasizing that the experience of the City of Ashkelon demonstrates that the challenges facing local governments in Israel drive the rise of local mayors with leadership and ability skills which are essential in order to implement their vision within the national governance jurisdictional structure and the regulatory environment of the State of Israel.

Chapter 4 - The City of Ashkelon; A historical review of a sustainable city

The purpose of this chapter is to review the historical development of the City of Ashkelon since its creation, especially as it is related to the urban geographical, societal and economic developments of the city throughout the different periods and to draw lessons learned and conclusions drawn from these historical developments. It illustrates, through various historical periods starting from the time of the Bible through the Philistine Canaanite Byzantium and Roman periods how the urban geography of the city was shaped.

A Canaanite city 5000-year-old was uncovered on the shore. Throughout the Byzantium and Roman periods, the entire City of Ashkelon was situated on the shore as a commercial port city. During the Arab period, the economy of the city was based mainly on agriculture and textile industry, which in turn was based on cotton grown in the surrounding area. The economic change occurring during the Arab period, led to urban transformation with the building of the town of Mijdal, 4 km to the east of the seashore, to create proximity between the town and the cotton plantations and agricultural settlements. With the establishment of the State of Israel this urban development apparently undermined the growth of the city in the 50s, 60s and 70s, as the city lost its great advantage as a regional trade port city. The chapter presents the societal and economic urban development challenges facing Mayor Eli Dayan and the author as his deputy, in the 1980s, when they began remedying the historical consequences of the urban miss planning of the city by developing the seashore and establishing new industrial areas. Upon the author's election as mayor in 1991,

the author placed an emphasis on constructing a large industrial site in the south east of the city for a wide array of different industries and embarked on an accelerated development of tourism in the city, which included building the marina, the promenade and hotels in Ashkelon.

The mayor's vision of urban development was also focused on addressing the problem related to the lack of internal territorial continuity in Ashkelon. Because the urban geography of the city of Ashkelon was defined by the location of Migdal as its center and its expansion around the old city of Mijdal, large spaces were created between the neighborhoods of Afridar and Barnea which were built in the west of the city and the neighborhoods in the east, Shikkun Dromi, Migdal and Ramat Eshkol. This urban development created large economic, social and educational gaps between city's neighborhoods. Chapter 4 presents the urban planning vision of the mayor for a united city and his strategy to remediate the severe consequences of the historical urban miss-planning of the city during the Arab period. It illustrates that the mayor's leadership was critical in its recovery from the significant damage done as a result of a lack of vision in the planning of the city at the establishment of the state.

Chapter 5 - The Master Plan for Urban Development of the City of Ashkelon

The chapter describes the urban planning process of the city. The lack of a master plan for the city and a detailed city building plan is discussed in this chapter along with the goals of the city planning and the statutory promotion of the plans. The employment situation of the city at the beginning of the 1960's, when most of the residents were employed in services or in agriculture is discussed along with the need to change the employment mix of the city. The chapter describes the plans for the development of the infrastructure of roads, the public transport system, areas of employment and neighborhood development.

Chapter 6 – The Vision of the Mayor for Creating a Unified City – Land Use Planning

In the 60s and the 70s the City of Ashkelon was facing severe societal, economic and physical land use problems. The city was split into neighborhoods, which were separated and isolated from each other. This physical reality prevented urban development continuity with connections between the neighborhoods. The separation between the neighborhoods and their isolation from each other created both a societal and an educational problem for the city. Substantial societal gaps were created as well as problems in education between the children of the different neighborhoods.

In the 70s these neighborhoods were spread out and isolated from each other with large empty spaces between them. Some of the empty spaces were turned into agricultural land. Others were neglected. Each neighborhood existed as a separate suburb. There was a distinct difference in infrastructure between the neighborhoods. The Mayor vision focused on changing Ashkelon urban structure and ensuring its continuity through new neighborhoods.

In this chapter, one of the most difficult problems of the city is described. This is the lack of urbanization continuity with large distances between the various neighborhoods resulting in their isolation from each other, which created large physical gaps between the residents and educational and social rifts between the neighborhoods. This chapter describes how the city was united by building new neighborhoods in the open spaces between the existing ones. This involved dealing with government opposition and struggling with the relevant ministries, which preferred building additional housing in the existing neighborhoods instead of incurring the additional expenses of building new ones. In the public domain, an educational campus was built in a central area between all the neighborhoods so that pupils from all parts of the city would come to learn, thus promoting integration amongst young people from all corners of Ashkelon.

Chapter 7 - Urban Economic Development

Until the beginning of the 1980's, cities in in Israel concentrated mainly on giving services such as drinking water, sanitation maintenance etc. Ashkelon was one of the first cities in Israel that branched out into the field of municipality-led economic development.

The main points of urban economic development were:

- The developments of industrial parks - Thousands of dunams of industry were developed and hundreds of factories were built (see map).

- Attracting investors and entrepreneurs by granting reductions in city taxes and giving grants.

- Developing residential neighborhoods and building tens of thousands of apartments.

- Development of tourism by means of building a marina, promenade, bathing beaches, hotels and tourist centers.

- Establishing urban companies, which would promote development.

- Promoting Public-Private-Partnerships and B.O.T. projects together with private entrepreneurs, for example for the building of the marina, a sewage purification plant and a seawater desalination plant.

The author describes the strategies used to promote the economic development of the city. Furthermore, in this chapter, the development of housing in comparison to several other cities, over many years, is discussed along with the decrease in unemployment during his tenure as the Mayor.

Chapter 8 - Environmentally Sustainable Urban Development

The essential purpose of a program for an environmentally sustainable urban development is to ensure that urban growth and economic development address the need of the present generation without compromising

the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The vision of the mayor is to maintain the quality of life and protect the environment while promoting economic growth. In this chapter the work plans are described for all subjects related to environmental quality protection and their implementation strategies as well as the results achieved.

The various programs for streamlining energy consumption by enacting electricity saving policy in all schools, kindergartens and public institutions, by using means of monitoring, changing light-bulbs with more economical ones, electronic instruments and sensors for switching of electricity etc. are described. Furthermore, saving street lighting costs by means of transition to economical light-bulbs and light fixtures and a system for monitoring the consumption of electricity in each public institution are also described.

The chapter also discusses the involvement of residents and pupils in study programs, which were introduced for promoting "A green city" awareness for all ages about environmental protection. Environmental protection programs involved:

1. Developing parks and green areas with:

    a. A commitment to plant 5000 trees annually was maid.
    b. Dozens of community gardens were laid out.
    c. Information was disseminated to the residents as to the contribution of a tree to the quality of life.

2. Monitoring stations for air pollution, seawater protection from pollution and laboratory tests which were conducted in 2013 in Ashkelon and along the entire shoreline of Israel. These microbiological tests have shown 0% pollution for Ashkelon as compared with other coastal cities, which attained 3% or more.

3. Cooperation of the Ashkelon municipality with all the green organizations in the country

4. Preservation and cultivation of sustainable water resources

5. An entire new system for recycling garbage, including new facilities for garbage separation was set up.

6. The development of an environmental - friendly transport system accessible to all. the entire transportation system including bicycle paths and the improvement of transport for the physically challenged and other innovations are presented.

Chapter 9 - Sustainable Water Resources Strategy

In this chapter all the programs for the development of water resources in Ashkelon are described including: setting up the desalination plant, programs for saving water in all public institutions and municipal facilities and programs for disseminating information to all residents. The quality of water is one of the best in the country. Sewage purification plants were built using state of the art technology. An infrastructure of new water pipelines and facilities for water treatment was built resulting in a substantial decrease of loss of water in Ashkelon, which is one of the lowest in the country. Furthermore, collaboration with "MEKOROT", the Israeli water company was initiated.

Chapter 10 – Societal Urban Sustainability Impacts

The author opens this chapter with his vision – "In my vision Ashkelon will be a city of social justice in which the social and economic resources will be fairly allocated". The vision was realized by means of building one of the most developed and comprehensive systems of social welfare and community services in the country, which, together with the involvement of residents, supports hundreds of social and community workers and professionals, for the good of the low-income population groups and for strengthening the community as a whole. The City programs include assistance support for

- Assistance for needy families, disabled and physically challenged persons
- Clubs for the blind, deaf, mute and handicapped,
- Kindergartens for children with various disabilities, etc
- Assistance for the elderly such as old-age homes and day centers
- Prevention of violence in the family and juvenile crime.
- Centers for promoting employment.
- Centers and projects for assistance to new immigrants
- A volunteer center to activate hundreds of volunteers
- Rehab centers for drug addicts and alcoholics.
- Many other widespread projects to help the community and society as a whole

Measuring Outcome - In Israel there are various scales for measuring the socio-economic situation. The scale gives relative weight to various components such as income per capita of the residents, the housing situation, employment, level of education and other various factors. The results described in this chapter show that during the Author's tenure as Mayor the socio-economic situation improved and Ashkelon become comparable with the major and central region cities such as Jerusalem, Ashdod, Beer Sheba, Holon, Bat Yam and Netanya.

In Ashkelon, during this period, relatively large budgets were allocated for dealing with issues of welfare and community. The data clearly show that the municipality of Ashkelon allocated larger budgets to welfare

and community all the other cities of the same size. The data also show that there was a significant increase in the expenditure per capita for welfare, which exceeded budget allocated inmajor cities including Jerusalem, Ashdod, Netanya, and Haifa, leading to a significant decrease in the percentage of unemployment.

The social and economic development plans, undertaken by the mayor, brought a dramatic decrease in the percentage of unemployment in Ashkelon. The data of the Central Bureau of Statistics show the tremendous success in decreasing unemployment in Ashkelon. In 2013 the data show a dramatic decrease in unemployment to a rate of 6.7%, as compared to 6.9% for the southern region and the national average of 6.2%. Furthermore, the unemployment in Ashkelon was the lowest in the southern area and for the first time in history lower than that of Ashdod, which is a bigger city as the port city of the south, and than Beer Sheba, the capital of the Negev, with an unemployment rate of 7.3%.

Chapter 11 - Development of the Education System in Ashkelon

The resilience of a city and its residents depends, first and foremost, on the success in education. This is the essence of the vision of the mayor. In this chapter dozens of educational programs are described which made Ashkelon one of the leading cities in the field of education. The Mayor's strategies and results are described emphasizing the achievements:

- End of High School Diploma of matriculation - In 1990 only 50% of the pupils received a matriculation certificate this number rose to 75% in 2013. Ashkelon today is far above the national average and is one of the leading cities in the country regarding the rate of matriculation.

- School dropouts - In 1991 the percentage of school dropouts in Ashkelon was 8%. In 2013 the percentage of dropouts went down to 1% in comparison to the national average of 2%. This was achieved by special programs for endangered children.

- Large and efficient budgeting for education - The author demonstrates how the investment per capita for education in Ashkelon is one of the highest in the country as well as the degree of its increase from 1991 to 2013. In 1991 the expenditure for education was NIS 328 per capita. In 2013 it rose to NIS 1,810 per capita. This is much higher than the national average and much higher than Jerusalem, Bat Yam and Lod. The author demonstrates that the percentage expenditure for education of the regular budget of Ashkelon, which is 31% - is one of the highest in the country.

- A revolution in academic education - The vision of the mayor was to create a University City. In 1991 200 students studied in the Ashkelon College in old buildings. In 2013 there are about 5500 students including those studying for degrees and other post high-school studies. In this chapter the academic education programs developed in Ashkelon are discussed along with their results.

29

Chapter 12 – Sustainable Cultural Development

This chapter shows how cultural activities in the city are necessary and essential for the resilience of the city as recognized by UNESCO. This chapter clearly demonstrates how the vision of the mayor for a city of culture was realized. The mayor believed in pluralistic culture, which would preserve and nurture the culture of all the communities building the city.

The City cultural programs include: a conservatory, a cultural center, theatres, dozens of dance groups, and buildings for music, which were set up. Community centers such as the Center for Yiddish culture the Andalusian orchestra, Georgian, Russian and other community and ethnic ensembles came into fruition. The Mayor's vision was to establish a tie between the development of tourism and culture. International festivals, festivals of music such as the "Brizah" festival and a Jewish film festival were held in Ashkelon on an annual basis. In this chapter the author describes how the integration of cultural programs into the economic development agenda of Ashkelon was implemented.

Chapter 13 - Urban renewal in Ashkelon

The mayor's envisioned a physical renewal combined with a social renewal in all neighborhoods of the city including infrastructure, housing, commerce and industry while promoting preservation of the historical heritage of the city and ensuring the rehabilitation of buildings for education and culture. The urban renewal of Ashkelon was comprehensive, physically, socially, educationally and culturally. An extensive rehabilitation of the infrastructure was carried out. This comprehensive urban renewal included infrastructure - roads, sidewalks, water and sewage pipelines, drainage systems and city parks, rehabilitation of housing and public buildings – schools, kindergartens, public institutions, commercial centers and renewal of industrial areas. This chapter provides a description the urban renewal program, its planning, implementation process and their environmental, social and economic impacts.

Chapter 14 – Regional Vision and International Cooperation

The vision of the Mayor of Ashkelon aspired to lead the entire region, including the Gaza Strip, to joint activities with the intention to promote regional growth economically, educationally, culturally, socially and environmentally with the overall objective of peaceful and fruitful coexistence. The chapter describes the initiative that the author undertook as the Mayor of Ashkelon to create cooperation and promote regional co-development projects with the Mayor of Gaza. Examples of such projects including the Creation of a Computer Learning and Information Management Center for both professional degree programs and public education, environmental sea-shore protection through pre-disposal treatment of sewage into the marine environment which endangered the entire cost, integrated water reclamation management, etc. These projects are briefly described along with the long-term mayor's vision of sustainable peace through education, economic growth and regional infrastructure.

The chapter also describes the Mayor's vision with regard to the role, benefit and perspectives of international cooperation and experience sharing with other cities, which have been among the author's corner stones as part of the Mayor's vision and improvement strategies of key public services. This cooperation involved collaboration with international organizations such as the United Nations and UNESCO, EU information management projects, Twin Cities throughout the world for exchanging information, culture, youth exchange etc., case studies-based performance benchmarking comparisons with other cities on a variety of issues, and lessons learned from the experience of other cities. This chapter describes the international cooperation with many cities, their case studies, benchmarking and lesson learned.

Chapter 15 – Summary of the Research and Conclusions

This chapter describes the self-retrospectives of the author's experience as the mayor of the City of Ashkelon and assessment of the strategies perseveringly pursued, which under extreme conditions of a quasi-continuous conflict zone, have enabled to successfully address city challenges and achieve a most significant outcome towards the mayor's vision goals. Facing the human societal, environmental and economic challenges suitable strategies were continuously adapted in the light of the new realities to meet the strategic vision goals and transformed the city from high crime rate city with a negative self-image of the residents into a fast-growing socio-culturally diversified urban environment, grumping from 45,000 in the 80s to 145,000 today, with high quality educational system and environmentally sustainable economic growth. Today, the City of Ashkelon can face the future with confidence. The social and economic groundwork has been laid for Ashkelon to upgrade the urban resilience of the residents, public and private corporations and industries and their ability to cope with difficult situations has been nurtured. The status of Ashkelon in Israel and in the world has been transformed into an image of a growing, vibrant and modern city and the residents of Ashkelon can take pride in their participation in building the positive trends in the development of the city, which could not have been possible without their participation and inspired trust in the city future. As past Mayor of the City of Ashkelon, it is through the retrospective self-analysis of the venues undertaken by the Author and, more specifically, their outcome at a given context, that the Author could reach an integrated deep understanding of the role and impacts of mayoral visionary goals and leadership on the outcome achieved with the residents' support and is looking forward with hope and confidence to the future.

Chapter 2 – The Mayor's Vision – Terms of Reference

2.1 The Research Purpose

This doctoral dissertation is focused on a case study analysis of the Mayoral experience of the author, his vision and leadership in the sustainable urban development, in all its various aspects, of the City of Ashkelon. It includes both the physical city development i.e. construction, infrastructures, economic development, as well as all the aspects pertaining to the societal, educational, and cultural activities of community life of the residents. Several chapters in the research are related to sustainable urban development - from both the physical and socio-political points of view.

The basis for the research

This research is based on the introspective analysis of the personal experience of the author as the Mayor of Ashkelon for 17 years (and deputy mayor for 12.5 years). The work combines empirical material, decision-making considerations and case study analyses, through practical and personal experience from the author's experience in the municipality of Ashkelon.

The mayor's vision and leadership

The subject matter of the research is "The Mayor's Vision and Leadership in Sustainable Urban Development" in which the author demonstrates research-wise and experience based how the vision and the leadership of the mayor are essential in leading the city (in this case Ashkelon) to the impressive achievements in accelerating economic development and reducing socio-economic gaps between the various population groups of the city. The reason for the success of the city is a result of the combination of the leadership of the mayor, which entailed management of the different areas of action of the city and determining the priorities for the future.

This chapter will deal with the definition of the Mayor's vision and leadership, with terms of academic significance reference of Mayoral vision and leadership. Its purpose is to demonstrate the Mayor's vision and leadership of the City of Ashkelon and their role in the sustainable development of the City.

2.2 Defining the Mayor's vision (4)(9).

The vision represents the dream, the yearning and the aspirations of the organization inspired by its leadership for the future. It expresses the soul of the organization and its ideological aspects. The vision is the anchor, the central idea around which the organization functions and is the focus point for its members. The vision provides a positive significance and is a source of strength and energy for organizational action. It is a source of inspiration, enthusiasm and apparently of "a sense of belonging" as well. The vision is the

"northern star" - giving direction and aspirations that will never be fulfilled in their entirety. The uniqueness of a vision is the fact that it is a powerful motivator for striving for its implementation.

2.2.1 The structure of the vision

An organization vision is structured on several levels - from the abstract and general level which is presented in the opening sentences of the vision, through its mission and ending in the formulation of the more concrete level where the values and strategy are detailed. Those levels are briefly described in this section:

The first level – Definition: The vision is the key sentence that describes briefly the essence of the business. The vision is not the dream in its entirety. It is a statement to the world, which carries with it a positive message. It is a general expression of intention of what the Mayor wants the City to become and what the highest aspirations are, i.e. to build together the best possible city.

The second level - The mission: The mission answers the following questions:

- What is the organizational "raison d'etre" - the purpose of existence?
- What is its assignment and goals?
- What is the implementation strategy and timelines for the municipality? The goal being to provide quality services to every citizen in Ashkelon.

The Third level - Core Competency –The unique sphere of activity: This sphere answers the following questions:

- What is our field of expertise?
- What is the organization focusing on?
- What are its core qualifications?
- What are its areas of excellence and what differentiates it from others?

The core area of expertise of the municipality of Ashkelon involves the recruitment of qualified workers and quality based managers who can create and deliver high quality services for every resident. For this reason, as the Mayor, the author dedicated significant effort for the development of "human capital" and organizational development of the municipality.

The fourth level - Beliefs, values and behavioral norms: The values and norms of an organization express its position regarding the implementation strategy(s) of the vision and its performance measures.

The basic question is what are the behavioral criteria illustrating successful accomplishment of the organization vision, values and mission on a competitive base with others?

The values address the question "How?"- In the Municipality of Ashkelon, as Mayor, the author set groups of values for identified issues. These values were established with the participation of all the workers, managers and elected officials (council members) and shared publicly with the consumers' society and relevant parties. These sets of values included:

a. <u>High values of service</u> - A "Service Covenant" between the municipality and the residents was prepared, in which the municipality commitment was to give service of excellence and high-quality service to the satisfaction of the residents. The citizens are in the center of the Mayor's efforts dedicated to serve the residents.

With the author's leadership as the Mayor of the City of Ashkelon the municipality of Ashkelon became committed to supply the highest quality service possible. This included education of a high standard and top-level cultural, recreational and sport services as well as a good and enjoyable quality of life. The Mayor's vision implied that all services that the municipality offered in any sphere of its activities must have been of the highest possible standard (15). It was for this reason that under the author's Mayorship the city of Ashkelon was awarded "the Prime Minister's Prize for Quality and Excellence" (12).

b. <u>Municipality Staff oriented values</u> - With the leadership of the Mayor, the municipality of Ashkelon developed staff oriented value based frameworks for interest and progress of its staff, workers and managers. The municipality invested in training, studies and refreshment courses. The staff, workers and managers worked as teams with everyone participation and involvement in accomplishing the Mayor's vision. Workers and managers are given freedom to create, to initiate and to develop ideas and they are fairly remunerated by means of quality social and cultural activities, together with employment security for every worker. The work in the Ashkelon municipality has a "family" sense.

c. <u>Values of experiential learning for innovation and change (4)(9) -</u> As a mayor of Ashkelon, the author encouraged workers and managers to take initiatives and calculated risks, to put forward innovative ideas and to introduce new learning and work systems, which added knowledge to all spheres of municipal activities.

d. <u>Ethical and moral values: (4)(9) -</u> The Ashkelon municipality wrote a code of ethics for each and every worker. The municipality functions were strictly managed within the framework of the law. All workers carry out their duties in honesty and fairness, safeguarding the trust that the residents placed in them. They worked with strong motivation to serve. Any digression from the law or the Code of Ethics was dealt with the appropriate sanction, including dismissal from working in the organization.

The entire Mayor's vision as the leading source for the activities of the organization is summarized in Table 1. The vision leads the organizational process (4)(9). It consists of steps indicated in Table 1.

Where to?	Vision, the core of the organization, mission	Purpose
In What way (how)?	Values, principles of action, concepts, myths, beliefs and symbols	Guiding principles
What systems?	Management Organization, regulations, customs, communication, remuneration, structure of job	Management & Operation Systems
With what means?	Buildings, technology, means of action, creative financing instruments, "action tools"	Means & Mechanisms

Table 1: Mayor's Vision Components

The vision is built so that each level supports the level above it. The mission supports the vision; uniqueness of values supports the mission and the vision; the behavior of the workers in everyday life serves as an actual expression of all the above statements.

2.2.2 Essential characteristics of efficient vision and mission (4)(9)

The following are essential characteristics of efficient vision and mission:

a. A vision must be able to raise enthusiasm, be challenging and linked to actions. The characteristics of a vision are efficient purposefulness and values.

b. A vision must be achievable within a reasonable period and not too abstract.

c. A vision must be implementable for the main part, in the present and must not remain only as aspirations for the future.

d. A vision is the fruit of a leadership process and involves the workers, managers and all parties concerned in its formulation

e. Every manager and worker has to absorb the vision and express it in a day-to-day behavior.

f. The sentences in the vision must be written in simple terms and must be brief in order that the workers will be able to internalize them easily.

g. The vision must be formulated concisely and accurately in order to enable assessment of the degree to which it was implemented.

h. The values and the vision are directed at the target population and are therefore directed at all citizens of Ashkelon. It is directed at the managers and workers of the Ashkelon municipality and they, all of them, are part of the vision.

i. The vision and the values must be periodically reexamined and adapted as it was done with the author's leadership for the Ashkelon municipality staff.

2.2.3 The Mayor's Vision and Leadership in Urban Economic Development

<u>Definition of the Mayor's Vision -</u> Vision must carry the true expression of basic principles that guides any society or organization. In their book Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies, Jim Collins and Jerry I. Porras (1) test models and define vision as: "The Ten Commandments and the American Constitution are an excellent example; a collection of high basic principles that maintains the unity and capacity of people to live as a nation, and as an organization. The Principles protect the organization, the organization protects the principles, and they express its vision".

The vision can be phrased in general abstract terms or it can be focused. Below are several examples of vision declarations in the world of business:

1. Walt Disney - To make millions of people happy.
2. Sony - To be pioneers - not to follow in the footsteps of others but to do the impossible.
3. IBM - To make an effort to achieve excellence
4. General Electric – I am proving the quality of life through technological innovation.
5. Boeing - To be the pioneer of aviation at every point in time.

For a city, the Mayor's vision, expressing his beliefs, is a key element in leading and managing the sustainable development of the city. When the author was elected mayor in July 1991, the formulation a mayoral vision together with a strategy for its implementation became essential governance tools for building the future of the city of Ashkelon. To this end, the author had to review all the activities of the Municipality of Ashkelon and their impacts on the city as a whole, in order to set forth goals, create a relevant work plan, and determine guidelines for decision-making process in all public service sectors involved.

The goals the author set forth included:

1. Formulating the Mayor's vision.
2. Setting forth organizational goals for the municipality of Ashkelon as an Organization that will lead the implementation of the Mayor's vision.
3. Determining the goals for the next 20 years and identifying operational implementation strategies.
4. Evaluating the state of the organization including its abilities and the present infrastructures to assess the existing organizational strengths for implementing the strategy.

5. Identifying the challenges and goals for the different segments of the municipality.

6. Identifying opportunities and strengths of the Ashkelon Municipality and of the City of Ashkelon.

The work plan followed by the author included:

1. Conducting a diagnosis of the strong and weak points, both within the municipality and at the city level.

2. Formulating a proposed plan of action for implementing the vision from the wide and general level down to detailed plans for specific municipality units.

3. Focusing on different organizational aspects of the municipality such as the development of "human capital", creating organizational culture, defining process and dealing with the suitable placing of professional workers.

4. Establishing a Strategic Planning department, headed by a professional with a expertise in the fields of economics, urban geography, and urban development.

5. Establishing an economic development department to deal with increasing employment possibilities in Ashkelon, bringing industry to the city and developing commerce and tourism.

6. Forming a professional framework for writing working plans. These plans combine operational details with budget expenditure with plans that emerged through a bottom up process, starting with the individual municipality worker and/or small units, through departments and branches until finally arriving at the table of the mayor.

7. Establishing priorities that would be conducive to the fulfillment of the vision and the implementation of the strategy as well as priorities for reaching the goals and meeting the challenges confronting the organization.

8. Following all these stages, formulating the Mayor's vision, values, organizational infrastructure, implementation strategies and their performance measures to assess success of measures implemented.

2.2.4 The Process of planned change in an organization vision (4):

According to Dr. Amir Levi (Ref.4 ch.1) the strategy for shaping the vision needs to include planned change management from the future to the present. There are a few possible processes (Ref.4 ch.1) for creating a vision and reassessing it, with planned change management, which are briefly described in this section as a framework for the assessment of the author's Mayoral Vision.

A - Process of growth from the bottom up - This process is generally characteristic of small organizations such as schools, NGOs, community centers, small, businesses etc. It entails the creation of the vision, the

mission and the values from the bottom up by means of personal and group work. Workers, on an individual basis, learn to define for themselves value concepts and personal vision and to formulate them. They then examine and define an organizational vision and values and by comparing personal vision with those of their colleagues, attempt to create an agreed upon value system, credibility and vision.

B - Process of leadership - The Leadership is focused on building the vision and formulating the values, which may account for individual or teamwork input. The ideas permeate downwards thorough various organizational systems and methods such as written instructions, training etc.

C - Process of a continuous dialogue – created often by integrating A and B into a process

The work is done simultaneously at all levels - at the personal as well as at the organizational levels. Formal and informal discussions and dialogues take place at all levels in which agreements and differences are pinpointed. Managers and workers hold open discussions and a process of organizational learning are created. From this process, the vision and the values of the organization emerge. As a result of this process, the involvement of the workers in the process of determining the vision increases their identification with the organization and their commitment to the results.

A Shared Vision - A shared vision changes the framework of the relationships between the workers and the organization. A shared vision is a step toward building mutual trust and encouraging team spirit. This process creates a common identity, mutual goals and a joint vision with operating values shared by all. A joint vision inspires perseverance, which enables the process to creatively overcome difficulties in implementing the vision. The shared vision creates a thinking process throughout all the systems of the organization and helps fostering long-term commitment. Genuine concern for the shared visions stems from accounting for the personal visions. The late President Kennedy, for example, expressed the vision of placing a man on the moon, which indeed happened. Maintaining a learning organization without a shared vision is an impossible task.

From a personal vision to a shared vision - How separate visions consolidate and become a shared vision? - When a group of people shares a vision regarding an organization, each person perceives the organization at its best in his own image. Everyone carries the responsibility for the entire organization and not just for parts of it. With the formation of the shared vision, the shared vision becomes identified as collective "Our vision". The formation of the joint vision must be considered as one of the components in the daily work of managers. A vision can stem from the top down or from personal visions at the lower levels of the organization. The leadership of the organization must make allowance for the existence of many visions, simultaneously, and by appropriate action strive to take them into account.

A shared vision and system thinking - The formulation of a shared vision will not be viable without system thinking. The vision states what the organization is committed to be or become. System thinking shapes the organization roadmap and functional or operational mode to accomplish the vision with its organizational values. The people involved in the organization have to learn, first and foremost, how the present policies and operations create their present reality. Only then a basis for a transition towards a more fruitful or a new vision can begin to be laid.

Leadership - It is necessary to distinguish between leadership and governance. Governance may be defined as a top-down process in which the staff at all levels of the organization follows instructions and or operational protocols issued by an officially designated authority - e.g. military officer. Leadership is today key for good governance process, which strives to stimulate and develop the potential capabilities of each person involved in the organization to best accomplish his/her tasks as part of the overall commitment of the organization to its vision. Leadership requires certain human abilities (4) (16) that include:

- The ability to present a vision - to define the aim clearly.

- Personal example - expressed in actions and values as expected from others.

- Balance between rationality and emotional attitude to the mission.

- Leading changes - the ability to contend with changing situations.

- Understanding people - understanding the actions of people in complex situations.

- Organizing capabilities - the ability to set up and operate human structures.

- Courage - the ability to take difficult decisions, which include elements of risk.

- Delegation of authority - the ability to delegate authority to others without relinquishing any responsibility for results. (4)(14)

Examples of a diversity of leadership types may include: Military leadership, Educational leadership, Political leadership, Business leadership, Social leadership (14), Voluntary leadership, Personal leadership (14), Formative leadership, Egalitarian leadership, etc.

2.3 Conclusions (4)(9)
2.3.1 The importance of the vision:
a. Vision creates a course of action for everyone in the organization and focuses this action in a specific direction.

b. Vision gives significance to action. Workers do not simply carry out actions willingly but contribute to a better and more qualitative world.

c. Vision enables the organization and its members to live through difficulties in troubled times. It gives a reason to continue striving for an important aim.

d. Vision is a focus for motivation, pride and organizational belonging. It is a motivator for implementation, giving workers a sense of pride in being part of a mission, which is significant not only to themselves but also to their customers.

<u>Leadership and vision</u> - Leadership is derived from the outlook of leaders. The central denominator that is shared by leaders who successfully led groups, organizations and countries to exceptional achievements, is their ability to share with the people involved the direction and the guiding principles that they follow in their action. Defining direction and/or identifying the organizational values and principles are the central fulcrum for achieving the emotional bond between the leaders and the people led as key element in accomplishing the vision. This central component of a leadership is critical to the commitment to implement the vision (4), which may involve:

- <u>Formulation of the vision</u> as a central fulcrum in the hands of the leader in contending with the complexity or the uncertainty that characterizes the organizational environment in the present and in the future.
- <u>Turning the personal Leader's vision</u> into the vision of the organization

<u>Note</u> that the leadership vision defines the value system that guides the shared identity and constitutes the basis for mobilizing commitment and discipline.

<u>The Leader's role</u> in forming the organizational vision and inculcating it into the day-to-day operation of the organization depends upon the abilities of the leaders at each decision making level. Through such a decision making process the organizational identity is defined with a significance given to every action in order to inculcate and create the organizational commitment to the customers, promote value system and guiding principles of the organization and develop the leadership capabilities (4)(16) to:

- Determine direction and developing the vision for the future.
- Implement strategies for achieving the changes necessary for accomplishing the vision, including consensus building for organizational agreements and molding the people to implement it.
- Create motivation and inspiration and spurs people on to overcome obstacles.

Leadership role is to attain significant, vision driven changes within the organization, such as a completely new alignment, groundbreaking thinking etc. It set up the direction and guiding principles for the Organizational Management, at all levels of decision making, which generally deals with identified short-range results, planning, staffing, budgeting and problem-solving strategies (1)(4) (7)(9).

2.3.2 The relevance of the chapter on vision and leadership for the thesis

This chapter outlined the framework and significance of the mayor's vision and leadership, which must be achieved not only in terms of the general goals of the city, but in every area that the municipality assumes the responsibility for. Leadership is necessary to realize the vision for every particular area of endeavor. For this reason, each of the following chapters begins with the mayor's vision for the subject area being discussed, including education, sustainable economic development, urban renewal, etc. Furthermore, a codex of visions has been created for each and every subject area, which, in turn, constitutes a base for the entire integrated vision of the mayor. The mayor's leadership in realizing, for example, the vision for improving the education system required educational leadership throughout the transformation of the system including appointments of the heads of schools and establishing performance measures for impacts assessment. For each municipal area performance measures were established to assess success.

The assessment was carried out by a company specialized in the field of research and surveys, Geocartographica, which is headed by Professor Avi Dagani and Dr. Rinah Dagani, and which is the leading company in Israel in the field of research and surveys for the public sector. The company conducted public surveys in order to ascertain the satisfaction of the residents with the services that the municipality provides. In this way it was possible to learn the attitudes of the residents regarding the services provided in education, social services, economic development, etc. Furthermore, a separate company was commissioned to measure productivity and the degree of the achievement of the goals in various fields of the city's endeavor. These tools enabled to determine whether, in pursuit of the mayor's vision, the municipality was heading in the right direction in the short term in each and every area of the work of the municipality. An example of this is the educational vision of the mayor, where performance measures included progress of the pupils, educational achievements in acquiring the end of high-school baccalaureate matriculation certificate and tests carried out in the elementary schools. In those cases where improvement became necessary further city's investments were allocated. This is demonstrated for each chapter of this thesis. The realization of the vision was a dynamic process that effectively integrated, adapted and internalized in the municipal systems new developments or more innovative systems, for example, in the education system and the frameworks for economic development. These new systems are detailed in the coming chapters of the thesis.

The role of communication with the public and with vested interest of stakeholders for determining the mayor's vision is essential. The mayor must involve the public and the media. In the beginning of the author's tenure as the mayor the only media that existed locally was printed media - primarily local newspapers or booklets that the municipality distributed to the houses of the residents. Public meetings with residents also took place. It was only at the end of the 90s and at the beginning of the 21st-century that the

mayor's team started using digital social networks such as Internet Facebook and WhatsApp. When the vision was formulated public meetings were held in the neighborhoods with residents and invited local journalists. A continuous and fruitful dialogue was created with the residents. Frequent meetings were also held with vested interest stakeholders for example, with industry's experts, people involved in tourism, etc. in order to hear their opinions about the economic development the city. Meetings were also held with the heads of the schools and other professionals involved in education in order to hear their opinions. Similar approach was adopted for performance measure in all the municipal sectors and its outcome is discussed in the following chapters.

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Chapter 3 - National and Local Government Models in Israel

3.1 The regime in Israel

The regime in Israel is parliamentary. The people of Israel elect 120 members of the Knesset in national elections by voting for party lists, (proportional representation) and not by voting for a specific Member of Parliament. The Knesset (parliament) elects the government and the prime minister.

The regime is based on three authorities:

The Legislature - the Knesset with 120 members.

The Executive - the government that carries out the laws of the Knesset and

The Judiciary – the court system, which normally is made up of the Magistrate Courts which are under the Regional Courts, which are under the High Court.

Israel has no constitution. The opinion prevailing amongst most legal experts at present is that Israel is a young country with a diverse society and is not as yet ripe for approving a constitution. Generally speaking the legal system is made up of laws accepted by a simple majority in the Knesset and of basic laws which require a special majority of Knesset members in order to be accepted. The purpose for these basic laws is to serve as a foundation in the future for a constitution for Israel.

This chapter describes the role of local governments in Israel, the legal structure of cities in the country and the relationship between the central and local governments. Furthermore, it provides a broad understanding of the importance of the vision and the leadership of the mayor with regard to the functioning of the city vis-a-vis its relationship with the government and the governmental offices.

The National Government of Israel is the executive arm of the State of Israel. It is headed by the Prime Minister, who appoints the ministers, subject to the approval of the Knesset (Israeli Parliament) (6), which regulates the authority of the Prime Minister and the national government, their election process and their tenure. The local government constitutes the Local Authority.

3.2 Local Government models

The European Charter of Local Self-Government - The European Charter of Local Self-Government states that "the local authorities are one of the main foundations of any democratic regime" (Preamble to the Charter, paragraph 4). The essence of the European model ensues from this declaration. The European concept actually implies that the central authority (the national government) grants autonomy and delegates authority and responsibility to local authorities (2)(3) (5). In Israel there is a discernable centralizing of control in the hands of the national government ministries with regard to actions taking place at the local level. In many instances the local authorities receive financing from the national government for projects conducted under the supervision of the relevant ministries. However, the local authorities are institutionally independent and have to assume their responsibilities for environmentally sustainable economic and societal development of their cities.

Local Governance - The Mayor and the City Council members are elected by the local residents. The local authorities provide their residents with essential services and are accountable for their performance. In Israel, the mayor is elected directly by the residents (i.e. all residents over the age of 17). Direct election of the mayor contributes to separating local politics from national party politics. The election of the mayor is, therefore, pertinent regarding the personal responsibility and the accountability of the mayor to his residents. The local governments in Israel are greatly dependent on the national government. The local authority is a

legal entity and as such it is subject to the law and can be prosecuted in court. The Supreme Court of Israel, in its capacity as High Court of Justice, carries out the legal inspection of the legality of the actions for all levels and categories of the governing institutions. In the scope of this function the High Court of Justice also supervises the activities of the local authorities and any individual or organization that believes that their rights have been impinged as a result of action of the local authority is entitled to appeal to the High Court of Justice for legal action against the local authority.

Institutional status of Local Governance - The local authority is a corporation, established in accordance to the law and it is authorized to act only within the framework of what is stipulated in the law. Local authorities are prohibited from carrying out any action that is not supported by the law. Deviations from the framework of the law are considered to be unauthorized activities by the local authorities and are subject to cancellation.

Legislating by-laws: Where there are no national norms covering issues concerning municipal services, local authorities are authorized to establish norms for regulating affairs within their municipal borders. The law empowers local authorities to enact bylaws, which constitute a form of secondary legislation. Bylaws are applicable only within the area of jurisdiction of the local authority enacting them. The purpose of the bylaws is to enable the local authority to carry out the functions and provide the services that were allocated to it by law. The local authority is not authorized to legislate bylaws dealing with issues that do not fall within the scope of its authority.

Legislature basis (since 1939) for Local Governance in Israel - The City Council Ordinance was published in order to regulate, in detail, the operations of city councils. The ordinance stipulates the election system, the functions of the council members, their authority, the sources of income of the council, process for approving the city budget, the collection of municipal taxes and the procedures dealing with the current management of the municipality (2)(8). Several Local Governance models exist in Israel, including:

   a. City Municipality - A local authority of a single settlement, which was granted a city status. The area of jurisdiction of the city is defined in an approved map.

   b. Local council - A local authority of a number of settlements without a city status. Generally these are small settlements with defined areas of jurisdiction of the council.

   c. Regional council - The local authority of a number of settlements, generally villages, including Moshavim (cooperative settlements) and/or kibbutzim (collective settlements).

In Israel there are 255 local authorities including 72 city governments, 128 1ocal councils and 55 regional councils.

The role of the local authorities in Israel (2)(6)(7) - The laws pertaining to local authorities define the obligations and responsibilities of the authority of the local authorities in Israel. Their many functions include, inter alia, the supply of water, the laying down of a sewage system, ensuring adequate sanitation in the city including the gathering of garbage, maintaining cleanliness of the streets and public areas, paving roads and sidewalks, installing streetlights, setting up and maintaining city gardens, operating social and communal services, establishing an education system, creating cultural and sport services, maintaining health and welfare services, religious services and other essential services.

Sources of income of the local authorities (5)(11) - These sources include:

   a. Independent tax collecting: The local authorities are authorized to enact regulations concerning the collection of local taxes from the residents, levies and payments for various municipal services such as culture, sport libraries and others, income resulting from the legislation of local bylaws, levies and fees for building permits water, sewage, roads and others.

   b. Income from designated government ministries: According to the law, the local authorities are financed by designated government ministries, such as the Ministry of Education for education services, the Ministry for Social Welfare, the Ministry of Housing and others.

   c. Balancing grants: The government, through the Ministries of Finance and Interior, transfers balancing grants to local authorities, mainly for the purpose of bridging the gap between their income and expenditure. A formula has been worked out in order to determine the grant for those local authorities that are eligible for it. Ashkelon, for example, does not receive a balancing grant and is independent in terms of budget.

   d. Other grants: The government ministries allocate grants to local authorities such as the Ministry of Tourism for festivals and marketing tourism, the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption and others.

   e. Donations: The local authorities are authorized to seek large and exclusive donations for specific projects and activities, etc.

3.3 Interaction between the National Government and the Local Authority (3)(6)(7)(8)(9)

The responsibilities of government ministries regarding local authorities

The Minister of the Interior has far-reaching powers in supervising the activities of the local government. However, in recent years, more and more functions and authority have been transferred from the national to the local government. Many government ministries have a decisive influence on the functioning of the local authorities. In particular, the Ministries of Education, Culture and Sport, Welfare and Community Services, Protection of the Environment, Finance, Transport, National Infrastructures and Road Safety and

Housing have a great influence on the activities of the local authorities. Ministers who are in charge of implementing the law have the authority to proclaim ordinances and issue directives aimed at efficient implementation of the law. These government ministries influence many of the activities of the local government as well as enforcement of laws and regulations pertinent to activities under their control. There is a large variety of activities and interactions between all government ministries and the local authorities.

The ministry of the Interior:

According to the law, the ministry of the Interior is responsible for local governments in Israel. The minister is authorized to establish cities and local councils, to dissolve elected councils, to alter the jurisdiction of a local authority, to approve bylaws, and to confirm budgets, contracts and the receiving of credit. Other ministries, especially the ministries of Education and Welfare are, by law, responsible for the maintenance of education and welfare services by means of local government

The interaction between the national and the local governments in Israel are both special and intricate. Historically, as it was not possible to operate with a national government before the establishment of the state, the Jewish institutions strengthened the local governments, which often preceded the national government. On the other hand, the mandatory authorities sought to control the Jewish mayors and for this reason restricted the activities of local governments led by the mayors to seek approval for many activities.

Since the independence at1948, the national government of Israel believed that it alone could meet the challenges of the young state - not only with regard to security and economics but also in dealing with the activities that are characteristic of local government. Since 1948, there is an institutional transfer process of responsibilities with authority delegated by the national government to the local government. However, multiple functions delegated to the local governments were not granted official expression by means of amendments of the law. The 1980's witnessed the beginning of a process of local government independence. An independent local leadership developed which concentrated on local needs of each and every city and the severing of the ties between this local leadership and the rule of national political parties. Despite the process of independence of local government and the self-release from some of the restraints of the national government, this independence has become complex within the dynamic context of both independence of local actions and strong centralization. In the author's opinion, in Israel, the governance system is highly centralized as well as the level of involvement of the national government in the activities of the local government. While there is a recognized intent to delegate authority from the national to the local government it has not yet been significantly implemented.

The Knesset Oversight Influence over the Local Authorities - The Knesset has the authority and influence over the local authorities. The laws of the Knesset define the authority of the local governments. The local

authorities have the opportunity to present their position on any issue pertaining to a specific local Authority or to all of them in the relevant Knesset committees (6).

The Role of the State Comptroller with regard to Local Authorities - The local authorities are subject to inspection by the State Comptroller. The State Comptroller Law defines the authority of the inspection and the framework of the report on the local authorities. The State Comptroller also acts as the ombudsman for complaints of the public, citizens and organizations who feel that they have been mistreated by the local authority and appeal to this office (1)(2).

3.4 Legal framework of the city of Ashkelon

The City of Ashkelon, like all cities in Israel, was established by the government within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Interior.

The city operates within the context of various laws that are applicable to city municipalities. Those are:

- The City Municipalities Law,
- The city municipality Ordinance and
- a series of laws that regulate the functions of the city.

There are also regulations, rules and procedures enacted by the Minister of the Interior and other ministries.

3.5 The City Government of Ashkelon

Figure 1: shows the governing structure of the Municipality of Ashkelon. It consists of:

The mayor - The mayor is elected by direct elections by the citizens of the city according to the law. The city operates by means of policy decision of the Mayor that has the authority to assume the governance of the municipality.

The city Council - The city Council is elected by the citizens by means of lists of candidates, which run for elections to the council. There are no direct elections for members of the Council. The city Council is responsible for confirming the city budget, city taxes, control and supervision, as well as passing bylaws order to regulate urban affairs such as maintaining public order, city cleaning, financing, etc.

The Deputy Mayors and the members of the Council - The Mayor of the City is authorized to defer executive functions to deputy mayors and to members of the city Council. Furthermore, there are Council committees dealing with various aspects of city life, which are elected by members of the Council.

Governing Structure of the Municipality of Ashkelon

The Mayor

3 Deputy Mayors	
City Council 23 members	
Divisions Appointees	**Municipal Committees**
Finance	City Building & Planning
Civil Engineering	Finance
Environment	Tenders
Education	Security
Welfare	Human Resources
Divisional and departmental Committees dealing with other municipal activities	

Table 2 - Governing Structure of the Municipality of Ashkelon

Table 3: shows the state allocation per resident. It leads to the following conclusions:

1. Total investment in every resident surpasses that of many big cities in Israel. It is higher than in Jerusalem, Givatayim, Holon, Bat-yam and Ashdod.

2. Ashkelon municipality invests in every resident sum 5,144 N.I.S, and it is more than many cities in Israel invest, more than Jerusalem, Holon, Bat-yam and Ashdod.

3. Income of the city from the state per resident, i.e. 2536 N.I.S, is higher than in most of the big cities in Israel. The main conclusion is that a resident in Ashkelon has greater benefits from living in the city.

Table 3 - STATE ALLOCATION PER RESIDENT (N.I.S PER YEAR 2014)

CITY	POPULATION OF THE CITY 2014 (in thousands)	TOTAL INVESTMENT IN EVERY RESIDENT	INVESTMENT IN RESIDENT FROM THE BUDGET OF THE CITY	PARTICIPATION OF THE STATE IN THE BUDGET OF THE CITY %	INCOME OF CITY FROM THE STATE per RESIDENT
ASHKELON	126.8	7680	5144	33%	2536
JERUSALEM	849.8	7104	4486	37%	2618
TEL AVIV	426.1	12.682	11.049	13%	1632
HAIFA	277.1	10620	7231	20%	1868
ASHDOD	218	6887	4731	31%	2157
BEER SHEBA	201.1	8194	5905	28%	2290
RAANANA	70.2	11660	9524	16%	2136
BAT YAM	128.5	6438	4246	34%	2192
HERZLIA	90.7	11.307	9260	18%	2047
HOLON	187.3	6968	5033	28%	1935

Table 3 - STATE ALLOCATION PER RESIDENT, central bureau of statistic.

3.6 Conclusions

1. The local authority is an independent entity, which is responsible and accountable for carrying out activities within the area of its jurisdiction. However, interference on the part of the national government is essentially dominant in defining the authority of the local government and supervising its activities. It appears that the local authorities in Europe and the USA are more independent than their Israeli counterparts.

2. In the author's opinion, in Israel, the governance system is highly centralized as well as the level of involvement of the national government in the activities of local government. While there is a recognized intent to delegate authority from the national to the local government it has not yet been significantly implemented. Examples: there are laws, decrees and many circulars of the general directors of government ministries that grant supervisory, enforcement and intervention authority to the national government, such as audits of accountants, the need for approval of the Ministry of the Interior and the control of the Ministry of Finance in many issues having monetary implications.

3. This type of jurisdictional relationships between the national and local governments also applies for the framework of planning and building. The state maintains a high-level intervention capacity that may significantly influence the local level in the field of building and planning. Generally speaking, the institutions for planning and building are: The National council and the regional and local councils. This hierarchy of planning and building institutions grants a clear advantage to the state in the management of planning and building in the country.

4. The local government committees experience lack of authority to be independent in granting confirmation for planning or building on the local level. Another example is the matter of land ownership. In Israel, about 93% of the land is owned by the state. There are many fundamental conflicts between the national and local governments concerning the use of land. The State, as the owner of the land, represented by the Israel Lands Authority, places many restrictions on the local councils for planning and building. In the author's opinion, the State should implement more delegation of authority to the local government. This is necessary as an appropriate managerial process to enable more independent decision making of the local government and promote citizen's direct input to support their elected leaders in managing local affairs.

5. The Mayor has the only directly elected position-holder in local government, which enables him to function independently. He is not dependent on a small number of council members who could depose him and create instability in the governance of the city as was the situation until 1978, whereby the mayor was elected by a relatively small number of council members. The present situation enables the mayor to develop a vision for the city according to his perspective of what is necessary. Furthermore he is able to realize his

vision as he has the legal tools to both formulate and realize his vision without being concerned that personal or party interest of council members could lead to his removal from office. It is only the citizens who, by means of elections, can remove the mayor. They can judge whether the city is being steered in the right direction, according to the mayor's vision and whether the mayor is successful in carrying it out.

6. The personal election of the mayor ensures acquired and natural leadership abilities. Without leadership it is not possible to take the lead in realizing the vision. The local Government in Israel enables rise of local leaders with leadership and ability skills. The system of local governments in Israel makes it impossible for leaders lacking leadership skills and abilities to survive.

7. Other cities can learn from the experience of the City of Ashkelon how to enact the process of formulating a general comprehensive vision as well as a specific vision for each particular subject area, such as economic development, education, urban renewal, etc. Furthermore, cities in Israel can learn from the experience of Ashkelon how to develop leadership abilities and determination in order to realize their vision in every municipal sector.

The following chapters outline the mayor's vision in every sphere and, not less importantly, illustrates that his leadership abilities are key elements in realizing his vision. Performance measures are used to assess success in each municipal sector.

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Chapter 4 - The City of Ashkelon – Historical Review of a Sustainable City

4.1 Introduction - Urban Geography as Essential Tool for Urban Planning

The following section briefly describes the basis and the essence of Urban Geography (Urban Geography - Elisha Efrat, Achaiasaf, 1994) (5). Urban geography enables the spatial analysis of the city challenges in populated, relatively overcrowded areas, where the population is involved mainly in commerce, industry

and services and in which the city supplies the essential services of education, welfare, cultural activities, sport, transportation, water supply, municipal waste management and other public services as well as various administrative functions. Urban geography relates mainly to the borders of the city and its physical structure, the use of land by the city, the functioning of the city, urban transport, the urban population, the main commercial center, interaction between cities, emigration, urban planning etc. For the purpose of this research it is emphasized that urban geography contributes as an essential tool to urban planning. In depth analysis of the spatial structure of a city can assist in taking decisions for future building and infrastructure development (5).

The History of Urban Development (1)(5)

To provide the context of the historical urban development of the City of Ashkelon a brief review of the History of Urban Development is summarized in this section.

The Ancient City - The history of ancient cities goes back about 6,000 years. A homogeneous population group organizes itself and lives together in a specific geographical location. Its main activity is caring for food and water for their sustenance. The development and increased efficiency in the production of food releases people from these tasks and enables them to deal with additional tasks such as public services, social functions, and improvements in agricultural methods such as making basic work-tools etc. The urban population recruited animals to help in agriculture and to create basic energy. From using animals there was a transition to energy derived from flowing water and from wind. This transition, in fact, led to the growth of cities with workers with different areas of expertise and the development of urban community culture and leadership. Actual cities in ancient times were established about 3,500 years B.C.E. Ashkelon and Jericho are examples of ancient cities, which existed worldwide in the Mediterranean Basin; South America, for example in Mexico and Guatemala; Egypt; India; China; and elsewhere.

A common characteristic of all these ancient cities was that they were all established in geographical areas where conditions conducive to human sustenance prevailed, water resources were available and conditions for making agricultural development existed. With the creation of agricultural surpluses, groups of people who were freed from the necessity of working in agriculture transferred their activities to community and social affairs and the development of local leadership to assume the governance of the City. In the course of time, this leadership would often take the form of a kingdom with a royal family, a governorship, religious leadership, or a more complex quasi-democratic governance structure models of City-States as was culturally appropriate. The Greek City State of Sparta, Athens etc. are typical examples.

The cities of ancient times had certain common characteristics despite cultural and religious differences between them. Most of ancient cities had a kingdom type of governance or a religious leadership with a

social elite, which lived, in a separate part of the city. Each city had a center in which government buildings and religious institutions were erected. The craftsmen lived in the area surrounding the city Centre and the poor lived in the outskirts. With time, the city became a social and cultural focal point. The cities were built mainly at transportation crossroads with accessible water resources. Several ancient cities were built on the ruins of more ancient ones. The Greeks, for example, built cities on the ruins of ancient Phoenician cities. During the Roman Empire cities throughout Europe were also built on ruins of ancient cities. Figure 1 and 2 are from the archaeological site of Canaanite gate.

Figure 1 – The Cnaanite City Gate, Ashkelon Discovered Lawrence E. Stager

Figure 2. Kardo – commercial street in the Canaanite period, by Ashkelon Discovered by Lawrence E. Stager.

Cities in the Middle Ages - The existence of middle age cities in Europe dates back to the l0th and 11th Centuries. It is in this period that a process of agricultural production surplus became effective to release workers for other urban community tasks such as creating and managing services, assuming governance leadership, etc. It was during this period that the conditions described above were fully attained. Between the 11th - 13th centuries there were approximately 3,000 cities in Europe. The main characteristics of the location of cities in the Middle-Ages (5)(3) were:

- **Rivers:** The use of sources for water supply, transportation routes and lines of defense.
- **Shores**: Harbors-cities sprung up on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, the Atlantic Ocean and the Baltic Sea. The existence of connections between countries - especially in trade - necessitated the establishment of seaports along the seacoast, which was the decisive factor in the building of harbor-cities.
- **Land-routes**: European cities, rich in rivers or harbors, grew up along land routes with examples such as London, Hamburg, Ghent, Mediterranean cities and others.

These harbor-cities constituted powerful land and/or sea commercial connection networks for their economic development and with a regional economic influence often enjoyed a city-state status. These fast-growing cities were the sources for institutional, societal and economic transformations such as the appearance of the Guilds.

- **Guilds**: The guilds in the middle Ages were groups of people with a common economic occupation. There were guilds of merchants, craftsmen etc. These guilds transformed the cities into commercial centers.

Historically three types of cities existed in the middle-ages including cities which were established either before, during or after the Roman era with the development of urban planning for new cities. With their societal transformation the cities had all certain prominent elements, including: a cathedral, a municipality building, the guildhall, the market place, a fortification wall with gates into the city. Thousands of cities were built during the Middle Ages.

Cities in the Renaissance - In the period of the Renaissance - the 15th - 18th centuries, strong city administrations were established, and power and control were transferred to the merchant elements in the city. During the Renaissance, modern building practices were developed which included wide avenues, which served as a symbol of the city and were also designed for improving quality of life with strategic defense concepts. The streets and the avenues replaced the narrow lanes of the Middle Ages. Large palaces, gardens, fountains and squares were built, which were surrounded by residential and commercial buildings.

The historical legacy of European Cities of the Middle Ages presented sources of knowledge for the upcoming cities in the modern world, characterized by crowded buildings, agricultural surrounding areas with the main governance, religious, commercial and societal institutions in the City Centre such as a cathedral, market, city hall, etc. The cities were economically operated by commercial guilds, which transformed them into focal economic centers of power, regional governance, and industry growth (Elisha Efrat; The basics of urban geography) (5).

The Industrial Revolution (1830) - The development of industrial production caused a flow of people into the cities - a fact that accelerated their development. There was a migration from rural villages to the cities. Factories were built, train-lines were laid down and workers' neighborhoods and slums adjacent to the factories were created. Whereas the regime in the Middle Ages was based on small trade and crafts, the Industrial Revolution brought about a basic transformational change in the structure of the city of the middle Ages and industry became the hall mark of the modern city. The industrial plants served as a Centre of urban settlements and residential areas grew up surrounding the plants and the factories. During this period there were various stages of development that influenced the development of the cities:

- The exploitation of flowing water for the creation of energy attracting the building of plants in their vicinity.

- The development of steam energy, making the proximity to sources of water unnecessary.

- The digging of sailing canals facilitating the transport of coal and goods.

- The laying down of train-lines enabling the transport of workers and goods independently of sailing canals. The train station became an urban focal point for trade, business, production etc.

The Establishment of suburbs **-** In the 19th century an urban development process of establishing suburban cities started. People searching to live in more spacious surrounding than those within the city limits moved to the suburbs. Train-lines connecting the suburbs to the cities enabled the growth of suburbs (5)(4).

4.2 Historical Review of the City of Ashkelon (Biblical Time – State of Israel, 1948)

Ashkelon in Biblical Times - Ashkelon is one of the most ancient cities in the world. The location of Ashkelon on the highway connecting Egypt in the south with countries in the north such as Syria and Lebanon, influenced the city and its history. Ashkelon is mentioned in an Egyptian Papyrus before the Children of Israel came to Canaan. In this papyrus, there is a list of cities, which served as economic centers along the Via Maris and as Egyptian government centers in Canaan. Ashkelon is included in these cities as a city under Egyptian conquest. The papyrus includes a list of products and liquor. (Appendix p.27). Ashkelon was conquered by the son of Pharaoh Ramses II (1212 - 1202 BCE). Ashkelon during the Canaanite period was a main commercial city in the east Mediterranean sea. Figure 6. shows the map of the main cities in the region during this period (2000 B.C.).

Figure 3,4. Ashkelon's map during Canaanite period. Ashkelon during the Canaanite period was a big and main commercial city in the east Mediterranean Sea. The map shows the main cities in this period the year 2000 B.C, Ashkelon Discovered by Lawrence E. Stager.

In the Old Testament, Ashkelon is mentioned from the time of Joshua to the time of King David (2)(3)(20)- From the Old Testament it is apparent that Ashkelon was a city of economic importance. The lamentations of David on the death of Saul (Samuel 1, 2,20) tell about the environs of the city and its commercial markets. Ashkelon produced glass, taxes were collected in the city and there was trade in fish and an appreciable quantity of clothes and material. The Important fields of commerce in the Assyrian period and before it were fish and textiles. In the time of the Judges, the tribe of Judah conquered Ashkelon and Gaza. In the days of Ramses III (1175 BCE) the philistines ruled Ashkelon (1)(2)(3)(6)(9) (12) (14) (17)(27).

The Philistines rule of the coastal cities became a dominant factor, militarily and economically, within the population of Ashkelon. Ashkelon was one of the central cities under Egyptian rule together with Gaza and Ashdod. In the Philistine period, Ashkelon had special status politically and commercially. From the story of Samson, we learn that despite the struggle between the Philistines and the inhabitants of the coastal cities, including Ashkelon, there was an interaction between the two peoples and there was even intermarriage between them. The Persians ruled Palestine in the years 539- 322 BCE. This was a period of paganism influence by Eastern Greece. During Persian rule, the population of Ashkelon was comprised mainly of Philistines. In this period, the economy of the city was based not only on trade, the port and fishing, but on agriculture as well in the surrounding areas including wheat, sheep and cattle. At this time, Ashkelon was dependent on Tyre.

Figure 5. Ashkelon on the sea. An arc of earthworks one and a half miles long encloses the immense 150 acre ancient city. Ashkelon municipality.

Ashkelon in the Hellenistic (Ptolemaic) Period (1)(2)(3)(6) (9)(11)(12)(17) - During this period, the City of Ashkelon was greatly influenced by the process of Hellenization. The dependence of Ashkelon on the city of Tyre came to an end. Under the Hellenists, Ashkelon was a medium size city unlike Gaza, which became the powerful city of the region. The main commercial activity of Ashkelon was in the trade.

Ashkelon in the Seleucid – Hashmonean Period (198 B.C.E) (1)(2)(3)(4)(7)(8) -Ashkelon and other coastal cities were granted the status of "Polis". During this period Ashkelon was granted the right to mint currency and maintain its independence. Furthermore, Ashkelon retained its uniqueness as a sea-trading city.

The Roman Period (2)(3)(12)(13)(14)(15)(16)(18)(20) - In 102 B.C.E., the Romans conquered Palestine. However, during this period, the Romans continued the independence of the City of Ashkelon and the city continued to mint currency. During the Roman period, Ashkelon reached the peak of its prosperity. Ashkelon integrated into the Roman political-cultural alignment together with the other Hellenist cities. There was no political pressure on the city's inhabitants and they were able to develop both culturally and economically.
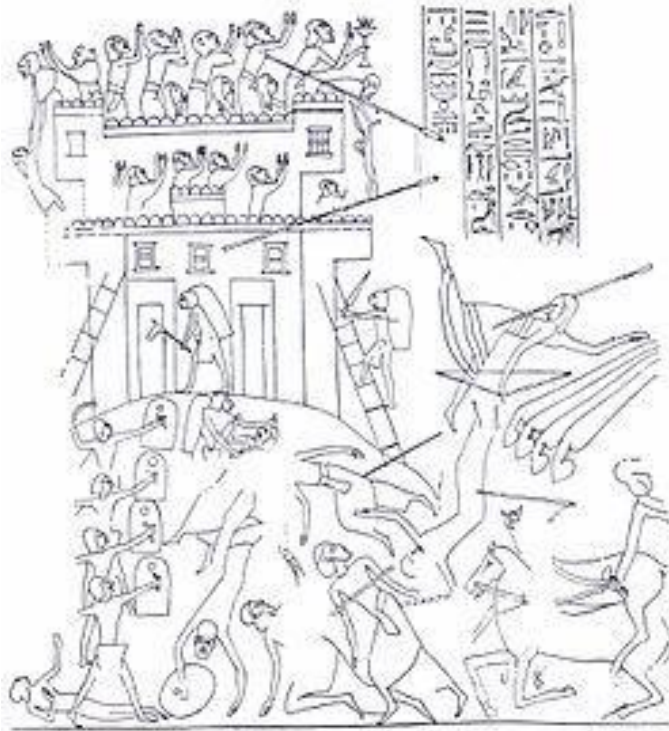
Figure 6: Built over 3,500 year span, from 2000 B.C. to 1500 A.D., the protective rampart defines the flat, semicircular mound on which the ancient city stood. Photo Richard Ceave: Ashkelon Discovered by Lawrence E. Stager

During the rule of Herod, the King of Jews, Ashkelon continued to be independent and maintained good relationship and stature with the rulers. Herod granted Ashkelon public buildings and structures, such as bath-houses, viaducts, and huge pillared halls. Ashkelon continued to mint numerated coins and this situation continued during the rebellion of Bar Kochva as well. In summary, during this period, Ashkelon developed from a small, insignificant and subjugated town into one of the central and important cities in Palestine. There is a tendency to presume that Ashkelon became an important and central city when at the time it was a Philistine city as mentioned in the Bible. However, when the development of the city is explored, it become apparent that in the time of Philistine rule, Ashkelon was important only on a regional level. It was, in fact, only in the Roman period that Ashkelon reached the peak of its political - cultural development and was one of the largest and most central cities in Palestine. Ashkelon exploited to its advantage the political changes in the country and derived maximum advantages from them. Ashkelon succeeded in developing economically in terms of land based economy (agriculture, textiles, sheep and cattle) and marketed her products as a sea-trading city, being recognized as such throughout the Mediterranean.

Figure 7. Byzantin wall years 324-638. Ashkelon municipality.

Figure 8. Roman port years 63 B.C. – 324. Ashkelon municipality.

Ashkelon in the Moslem Period (2)(3)(8)(12)(14)(16) - In the Moslem Period, Ashkelon continued to maintain its status as a central trade city and a regional center for agricultural crops. This was actually a continuation of the trend set during then Byzantine period. Ashkelon had an agricultural, periphery, fertile land, a temperate climate, groundwater reasonably close to the surface and a reasonable rainfall - all of which enabled maintaining a good agricultural economy. The agricultural crops included, inter alia, grapevines, wheat and cereals, fruit trees, dates and vegetables. The agricultural produce was of good quality and was marketed both throughout the country as well as in countries outside of Palestine. During this period, Ashkelon also became a regional textile center and manufactured material and cloth. The city was actually a port-city and continued to serve as a crossroad. Connecting the north to the south and was therefore an economic center providing seaport and merchandise transfer services mainly for agricultural produce and textiles.

Ashkelon in the Ottoman Period (1571 – 1918) (2)(3)(8)(12)(14)(16) **-** In this period, the population of Ashkelon was comprised mainly of Moslems, with the exception of a small number of Jews and Christians. Under the Ottomans, the economic - trade center of Ashkelon moved eastward to the town of Mijdal. The main business of trade of Mijdal was textiles. The cotton fabrics of Migdal became renowned throughout the country. Mijdal housed many weaving mills through which employed hundreds of weavers.

Figure 9/ Ottoman period years 1571 – 1918. Ashkelon municipality.

Figure 10. Map of Majdal Ashkelon- the Aarabic and Ottman period. The map shows the agriculture character of Ashkelon. Conder & Kitchener, 1882, 422.

Ashkelon during the British Mandate (the beginning of the 20th Century until 1948) (1)(2)(3) - During the British Mandate, Migdal was a middle-size city and the main occupations of its inhabitants were fabric production and weaving.

Figure 11. In the Arabic and Ottoman period Ashkelon was a commercial and agricultural center of the region. Avi Sason collection.
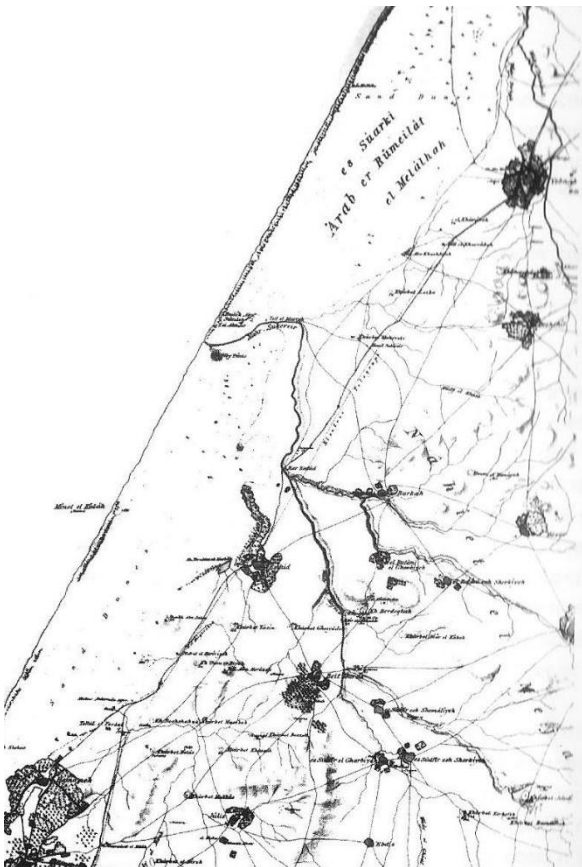
Figure 12. Map of north Majdal- the Aarabic and Ottman period. Conder & Kitchener, 1879, sheet xvi.

Figure 13. Map of Majdal Ashkeon- the British Mandat period. Air photo year 1945- Avi Sason collection.

The Mandatory government built police stations in central strategic cities. Two such police stations were built in Migdal, which indicates the importance of Migdal for the British governance. The police stations were set up in order to maintain public order and to enforce the law in the surrounding towns and villages. The central branch of economic activity in Migdal was agriculture. All the fertile agricultural areas around Migdal were characterized by orange groves, citrus orchards, vegetable fields etc. alongside with the branch of fabric production and weaving that sprung up in Migdal.

The New Era of the City of Ashkelon (since 1948) - Since the independence of the State of Israel the City of Ashkelon, reborn in 1948, has known a New Era of societal transformation and economic development through several periods which are briefly discussed in this chapter along with the challenges the local government had to face, its vision, goals, urban development strategies and main achievements and/or failures for each period.

4.3 Early Stage of Development of the City of Ashkelon (1948 – 1978)

During the first two years since the establishment of the State of Israel, the Arab inhabitants of Migdal were under Israeli government. In 1950, the Arabs of Migdal left the city. In January 1950 the population of Ashkelon was 3,000. Two thirds of them were new immigrants and a third were demobilized soldiers from the War of Independence. During this period the population of Ashkelon grew from 3,000 to 53,000. The increase in population during these years was a main factor in the economic development of the city in terms of business and employment. From 1950 to 1965 the population of the city increased, primarily as a result of the influx of new immigrants coming from many Arab countries, especially Morocco.

Figure 14. School Building – British Period. Ashkelon municipality.   Figure 15. Governor Building. Ashkelon municipality.

Ashkelon was thirteenth in the urban growth scale. There was an impressive increase in population from 1950 to 1965. From 1965 to 1985 there was a relative decrease in population growth rate and Ashkelon was relegated to the fifteenth place in the scale. The fast population growth without an adequate urban strategic

planning coupled with the distance of Ashkelon from the major cities of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem as the Centers of Economic Activities of the newborn State raised difficult economic, societal, environmental, educational and other strategic and operational challenges to the incoming Mayor and local government of the City of Ashkelon.

Socio-demographic structure - During this period the building of the city was based on five neighborhoods. These neighborhoods structure was detrimental from both urban and cultural aspects. The lack of planning for merging of the neighborhoods created many empty spaces of un-built areas between them. The population in the various neighborhoods resulted in deep social gaps.
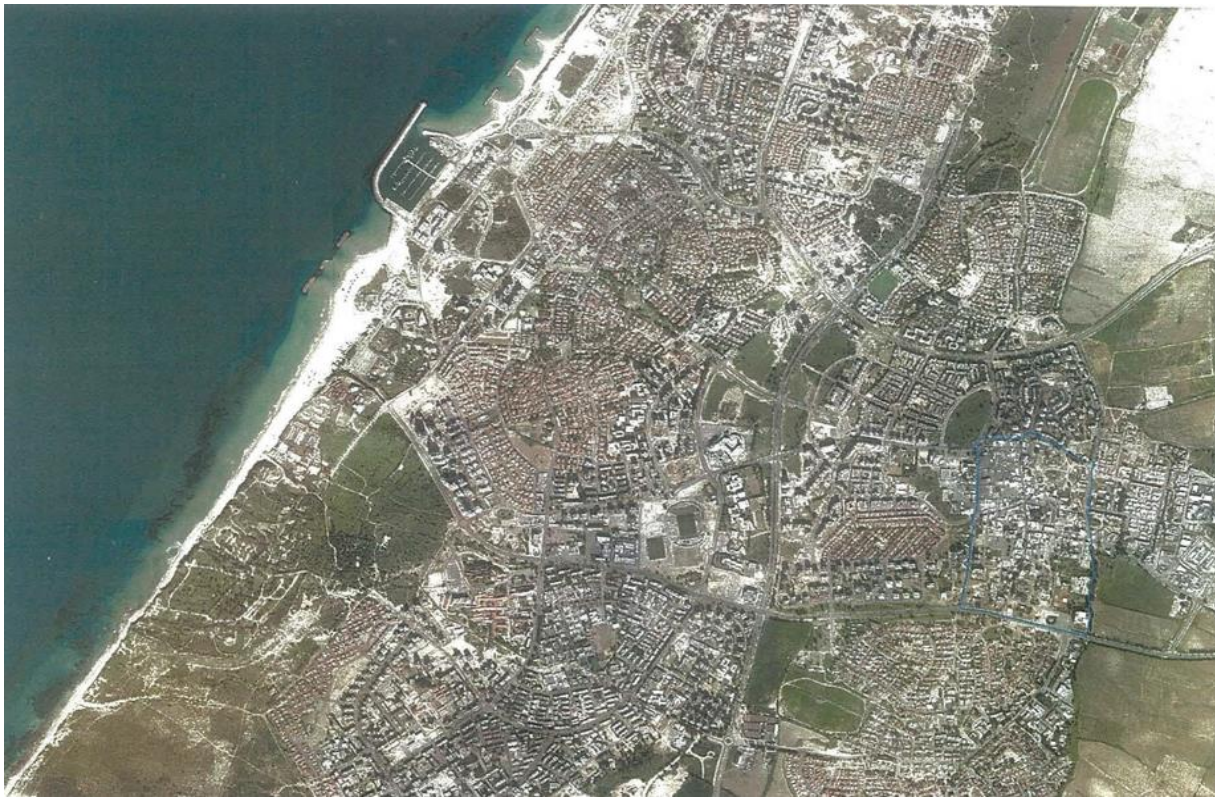
Figure 16. Aerial Photograph of Ashkelon. Ashkelon municipality.

In the 1970's the socio-economic situation of the city worsened. Investors and entrepreneurs did not come to Ashkelon. The socio-economic gaps between the neighborhoods worsened. The rate of growth of the city was negligible and there was a negative increase in population as a result of migration from the city. Until the late 1970's the socio-economic demography showed that a relatively high income population lived in the Afridar and Barnea neighborhoods while the population of the neighborhoods of Shimshon, Giv'at Zion, Ramat Eshkol and Migdal were rather poor.

From 1974 to 1977 the municipality of Ashkelon underwent an extremely severe political and managerial crisis, which culminated in accusations of corruption of elected officials, some of whom were sentenced to

prison. The financial situation of the municipality worsened and the municipal debt, crime and violence rates were rife in the city. The Minister of the Interior appointed an investigation committee, which examined the management of the municipality and reached the conclusion that the municipal council should be revoked and replaced by a government appointed oversight committee. On the 27th of November 1977 the city council was revoked and replaced by an appointed oversight committee, headed by the District Commissioner of the Ministry of the Interior for the south, Mr. Yitzchak Vardimon.

In the 1970's the City of Ashkelon faced a severely problematic situation, socially and economically, with one of the highest rates of unemployment and crime in the country. The headlines of the national press described extensively the criminal events in the city. A big article in "Yedioth Achronoth" (the most popular newspaper in the country at that time) defined Ashkelon, in large headlines, as "a city with no mercy". This headline haunted the city of Ashkelon for more then a decade. The image of the city was unacceptably "disturbing" and the Ashkelon municipality was famous for its corruption. The two deputies of the mayor were found guilty of bribery and other forms of corruption and were imprisoned. The residents of Ashkelon were embarrassed to recognize that they were living in the city.

In 1976, the mayor of Ashkelon was removed and the city council dissolved. The Minister of the Interior took over the governance of the city and appointed a Oversight Committee to run the city. An "Appointed Oversight Committee" is a legal entity made of officials of various government ministries, appointed by the ministers to manage the municipality or a local authority that following the Minister's assessment was concluded to be malfunctioning with severe inadequate financing and operational practices. The Appointed Oversight Committee for Ashkelon managed the municipality from 1977 until the end of 1978.

The Institutional Transition

In 1978, Eli Dayan, then 28 years old, freshly graduated from law school of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and the author, 27 year old, graduate of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem who has started to work as an Economist for several private companies and industries in the region (1)(2), decided to establish a local independent political party ("Ashkelon Bitnufah" - Ashkelon In Momentum) in order to participate in the municipal elections. Highly motivated to improve the situation in the City of Ashkelon this newborn party ran a very successful election campaign on a shoestring budget. Hundreds of strongly motivated young people joined the party and, against all odds, the unexpected occurred. Eli Dayan and Benny Vaknin won the election against all the competing parties including the party of two ex-senior army officers, highly decorated for their roles in the Six Day and Yom Kippur wars - Brigadier Generals Arieh Keren and Natke Nir and well recognized for their military and management experience. Eli Dayan was elected Mayor of the City and the author became his deputy mayor. This unexpected success made a significant impression and headlines throughout the entire country (1)(2).

4.4 The Main City Development Challenges

The Negative Image of the City in the 70s – among the main problems facing the City of Ashkelon until the beginning of the 1990's was its negative image as a high crime rate city, the lack of positive self-image of its residents facing societal tension and safety risks among neighborhoods, and the inability to attract industries and investments for the City development. The negative image of the City was the result of a relatively high crime-rate, increasing unemployment rate, a low income and weak socio-economic level of the residents, insufficient transportation to the economic center of the State, lack of local environmental development such as investments in the City seashore, archeological sites, tourism or recreational facilities, considerable social gaps between the southern and northern neighborhoods raising tension and insecurity, negative economic growth due to unemployment and migration from the city and other strategic issues. The distance of Ashkelon from the Tel Aviv and to some extent Jerusalem and the lack of adequate transportation to these Cities significantly impede any municipal attempts to attract high-level employment and industry to the city. The socio-economically weak population and the overcrowded buildings resulted, inevitably, in a high percentage of criminal activities.

The support of the national government ministries was insufficient and to some extent diverted against the long-term strategic interests of the City of Ashkelon. The Ministry of Housing for example provided only law level residence building, as at planned designated for low-income population groups deepening the lack of societal balance in contrast with the attempt to attract high-level employment population. The Ministry of Industry did not promote the establishment of industrial areas to encourage industries and alleviate unemployment. The Ministry of Tourism allocated most of its budget to the development of tourism in Eilat and Tiberius and did not consider Ashkelon seriously as a tourist resort. Transport between Ashkelon and the center of the country was poorly insufficient and there were no trains neither highways in any of the routes between Ashkelon and either Tel Aviv or Jerusalem. The consequences for the city, as a result of the negative image, were severe impediments to the development of tourism and dissuasion of prospective investors in industry, commerce and tourism who avoided investing in the city. As a result of its negative image higher-income population groups did not come to Ashkelon and those in residence often left the City at this time. The negative image caused serious economic and social harm with harsh consequences for all the residents

The housing problem - In the 1950's and 1960's thousands of small apartments were built, with high degree of density, by the State, through the Ministry of Housing, with a very low living standard for the immigrant population that was coming into Israel at that time - mainly from Morocco. For this reason there was a severe shortage of large apartments in the city. Furthermore, the low-income level of most of the residents made it impossible for them to buy larger apartments or houses. Higher income population groups left the

city while low-income groups came to live in the public housing, which was provided very cheaply by the government (by means of Amigur- a national company). This situation resulted in a growing distress for the elderly, handicapped and poor persons who did not receive adequate housing and became a burden for the welfare services in the city. Another result of the inadequate housing was that often, two families lived in one residence. These inadequate physical living conditions raised social problems and families with children of school age were forced to live in unsuitable, continuously deteriorating conditions. Some of these children joined the ranks of marginal and deprived youths, a phenomenon that exacerbated social tensions and increasing crime rate.

The gap in housing between the neighborhoods - There were wide gaps in the quality level of housing between the different neighborhoods. The southern neighborhoods, especially Givat Tsion and Migdal, were severely overcrowded while one-family houses or low-rise buildings characterized the northern neighborhoods, Afridar and Barnea, with large four-room apartments.

The significant economic gaps between the northern and southern neighborhoods increased social tensions in the City. Families with improved economic circumstances left the southern neighborhoods and additional law income families moved into these neighborhoods, deepening the negative image of these neighborhoods and the distress situation of the children. A concentration of low-income population groups also caused deterioration in the level of education and resulted in the increase in crime rate.

Societal and community problems - Until the 1990's, there was an intensification of the societal and community problems in Ashkelon - some of which persist until today, albeit to a lesser degree. They included:

Elderly problems - Ashkelon has had a relatively high elderly population. There was a high percentage of residents aged 65 - 75 including disabled and frail people who required nursing care and were occasionally confined to their beds. This population was in need of a wide range of social services. Many of these elderly people lived in apartments and neighborhoods, which did not, adequately, met their requirements because of the limited scope of the available social services. There were many demands for health care and nursing services as well as for financial support. These people did not contribute to the economy of the city. On the contrary, they became a burden. The large flux of new immigrants from the CIS (former USSR) in the 1990's exacerbated the situation further. The elderly people were a burden to their own families who, generally, did not have sufficient income level to address their needs.

Youth problems - At the end of the 1980's, the number of youth between the ages of 16-19 known to have dropped out of school was about 500 - about 6% of that age group. These young boys and girls were not placed in any alternative framework and created a nuisance while becoming part of delinquency, crime and

growing drug abuse population. The main cause of the problem was the overcrowded living conditions of the family. Without an adequate educational framework, these abandoned groups of young people caused considerable harm to the society and to the community. They have had a negative influence on other children as well and on the neighborhood. The city suffered from the consequences of the behavior of these young people who contributed to deepen the distress image influencing higher income population groups to leave their neighborhoods or the city.

Lack of entertainment and recreation - Surveys conducted by the municipality of Ashkelon in the 1980's and 1990's, revealed that a large portion of the population were dissatisfied with the entertainment, recreation and cultural activities in the city. The level of entertainment and cultural levels is also an indication of the quality of life in a city. The needs of different population groups required a diversity of entertainment and leisure. There was a shortage of playgrounds for children in the 1960's and 1970's and lack of discotheques, bars and pubs for the youth. Prior to the building of the Cultural Center, in the 1990's there was no suitable venue for theatre and concerts for the adult population. A shortage of places of entertainment bred dissatisfaction among the residents of the city and was damaging its economy, as people looked for their entertainment in Tel Aviv instead of spending money in the city.

Land use and property problems - In Ashkelon there was a large supply of available land at a relatively low price. Although this was seemingly an advantage for the city development, it was also disadvantageous as it rendered any project of evacuation and rebuilding of old neighborhoods, economically not worthwhile. For this reason, urban renewal was not viable in economic terms. This problem existed in both the housing and the commercial spheres. Some neighborhoods were in urgent need of renewal of their buildings, which had to be demolished and rebuilt. However, the low price of apartments rendered this uneconomical. The result was that undesirable and criminal elements settled in these areas. The property value in these neighborhoods became extremely low. These distress areas had an adverse effect on the image of the city and created social problems.

State owned land problems - Most of the land in Ashkelon was owned by the national government. This fact created difficulties in the development and marketing of this land, both for residential as well as industrial purposes. The reason for this was that the price of land development was relatively high with the government managing on the basis of a budget, which resulted in a freeze in the land development in certain parts of the city. Consequently, the slow land development resulted in city loosing economic advantages.

Unemployment and economic problems - This problem was the most difficult and central challenge of the city. It existed from the very first day of the founding the City of Ashkelon, although in recent years some solutions were implemented. Its roots were anchored in a lack of vision for employment structure and opportunities of Ashkelon, which was associated with the needs to:

1. Attract high standard level Industry

2. Intelligently invest in coastal development and tourism.

3. Accelerating efficient development of the city relatively large service system(s) including essential services such as the hospital, municipal and government services given in Ashkelon as the district capital

4. Improve commercial services, which were at a mediocre level.

The employment structure was problematic and encouraged a low-income level population to come to the city. The high percentage of unemployment led to migration of stronger elements from the city in order to seek employment elsewhere.

The main reasons for the unemployment problem were:

1. Weak and inadequate governmental assistance. In the 1970's and 1980's the government did not give any special encouragement to the industry to come to Ashkelon.

2. Ashkelon "falls between the chairs". On the one hand, the city was located far from the economic center of the country without an adequate transportation to the center - a significant disadvantage for local unemployment, while on the other hand the city was located in the vicinity of the local economic center of Sderot, Ofakim, Yerucham and Beer Sheba, which, because of their distance from the center of the State, received benefits and economic encouragement from the state.

3. Institutional responsibility of the state for the regional development of industry with insufficient support, which was delegated later on to the local government. This was particularly sensitive in the context of the stiff competition with industrial zones that receive governmental aid as national preference areas "a" and "b".

4. Lack of focal points with relative advantages for economic development, which needed to be created and lack of prospective tenants which has dissuaded entrepreneurs from investing in building rental industrial facilities.

5. Lack of professional manpower in hi-tech. Investors in hi-tech preferred investing in the center of the country, close to concentrations of hi-tech professional workers.

6. The distance from the economic center of the country with no train service and no fast highways raised impediments to industry investments. The security situation and the proximity to Gaza created a sense of risks for businesses.

7. <u>The lack of a commercial port of the city</u>. In the competitive environment of the Israeli cities developed after the independence Ashdod has had an advantage due to its commercial port and shorter distance from Tel Aviv.

8. <u>The periodic publication of crime rate in the city</u> deters entrepreneurs from coming to the city.

In recent years, to address these challenges the City of Ashkelon has developed two industrial zones covering an area of more than 900 acres. The northern industrial zone has an area of some 400 acres and the southern zone covers some 500 acres. In the north, on the highway leading to Tel Aviv, a large industrial site has been designated together with a hi-tech park which is located next to the train station in order to benefit from the advantage of transport for hi-tech workers who could be employed there.

<u>Commerce centers development problems -</u> Until the 1980's commerce in Ashkelon was primarily based on neighborhood located commercial businesses, commerce in Migdal and the city market. In the 1990's three shopping malls and a large shopping center, "Power Center" at the entrance to Ashkelon, were built. The neighborhood shopping centers started to decline and a large turnover of tenants occurred. "Power Center" and the "Giron" mall attracted many shoppers at the expense of the neighborhood centers. The shopping center of Migdal was outdated and there was a demand for urban renewal. Throughout the country, large shopping centers were built outside the cities in rural areas and attracted shoppers from the cities. The public looked for commercial centers that combine shopping with restaurants and entertainment and comfortable parking conditions.

In Ashkelon, as in many other cities in Israel, there was a phenomenon of unrestrained expansion of trade into the industrial areas. This resulted locally in reducing the potential for the development of the industry to the benefit of commerce and economic damage caused to the classic commercial centers of the city.

<u>The tourism challenges -</u> Ashkelon has a coastline, which is 12 km long. There are large reserves of land for the construction of 5,000 hotel rooms. The government has had the ability to propel cities to international success. This was what the state did in the cases of Eilat and Tiberias. The State invested virtually nothing in the development of hotels in Israel. The government budget for developing hotels in Ashkelon was negligible. The security situation was also not conducive to the encouragement of tourism in Ashkelon. There was a continuous strong pressure of entrepreneurs to change hotel rooms into residential buildings. The investments of the state in the population of Ashkelon were virtually zero. Ashkelon has had a rich history going back some 5,000 years. However, large investments, beyond the ability of the municipality, were needed to conduct archeological excavations. The required government investments were non-existent. Ashkelon has had a negative city image which impeded its turning into as a tourist resort. This was a vicious circle that was difficult to break. The small number of hotel rooms and the resultant negligible number of

tourists coming to the city, did not justify the development of recreational and entertainment facilities along the coast. The lack of tourism development was detrimental to this important source of employment for the residents of Ashkelon as well as to other related areas of economic activities in the city.

<u>The transportation challenges</u> – this problem involved two aspects:

- Transport to Tel Aviv and the economic center of the country.
- Transport and traffic within Ashkelon.

The problem of the transport connection between Ashkelon and the center of the country

- Difficult accessibility to Tel Aviv. There was no train service between Ashkelon and Tel Aviv. Nor was there a train connection between Ashkelon and Beer Sheba (or anywhere else for that matter).

- There were no important multilevel highway interchanges between Ashkelon and Tel Aviv. Two such interchanges were planned for Rishon Le Sion and Cholon. The lack of such interchanges lengthened the travel time to Tel Aviv.

- Public transport accessibility to Tel Aviv was extremely low with inadequate frequency and last bus leaving at 23.00.

- There was a lack of coordination of the transport system with the various agencies dealing with the Ministry of Transport, the Public Works Company, Israel Railroad, the Ministry of the Interior, the local authorities, the National Operator Egged (bus company) and the police

- The inadequate transport service to Tel Aviv limited the possibilities for residents of Ashkelon to work in the center of the country as well the opportunities for shopping and entertainment in Tel Aviv.

- The limited public transportation for travelling to Ashkelon affected the City economy because of the difficulty for people to visit the city and to participate in cultural and recreational events, doing shopping or spending time at the beach.

- There was only one main entrance point into Ashkelon – the Ben Gurion Avenue creating congestion until the northern entrance connected the central and northern neighborhoods to the main highway to Tel Aviv, shortening the travel time to Tel Aviv and decreasing the congestion on the Ben Gurion Avenue.

- Many of the roads were only one-way, including important roads between and within the neighborhoods creating frequent traffic jams as there were no crossing road that connected the north of the city to its south. The traffic between the north to the south was essentially through the neighborhoods triggering congestion and affecting the development of the neighborhoods.

Capacity Building Needs of the Municipality Staff at all levels - Entering the municipality, the new city leadership found a greatly demoralized staff, workers and managers. The managers had experienced a difficult period of police investigations and an air of suspicion existed amongst the workers. The financial situation was bad and the Ashkelon municipality had a large deficit. There was virtually no development budget and the image of the municipality and the city as a whole was very negative. The level of management of the departments of the municipality was inadequate. The first task was therefore to appoint a number of new, qualified managers and encourage the existing managers. Furthermore, there was practically no computerized system and all the bureaucratic work was hand-written leading the author to immediately undertake the computerization of the entire municipality. The major challenge was the staff resistance to change. While the author had an experience in the computerization of managerial systems based upon his work for an American company, which used a very advanced computerized system, it was not easy to install computers in departments headed by elderly conservative although knowledgeable and capable managers, and train them to adapt to working with a computerized system. The author enacted a program for streamlining the municipality and introduced managerial models from the private sector, such as cost-effectiveness examinations of all activities suggested by department heads.

4.5 The Mayor's Vision and Implementation Strategies during the Tenure of Mayor Eli Dayan (1979 – 1991)

The effective partnership between Eli Dayan and the Author in managing the city proved to be very successful. Eli Dayan was a young, visionary and charismatic person, with excellent rhetorical capabilities. He understood the law and was a sophisticated politician who enjoyed being involved with people and was well accepted and liked by them. However, he needed managerial and financial experience. The Author, on the other hand, had both economic and financial professional knowledge supported by his experience in the private sector.

Mayor Eli Dayan dealt very effectively with enlisting donations in Israel and abroad, as well as obtaining financial resources from government ministries. At the same time, the author set up an efficient and successful monetary monitoring system, with every municipal division having its budget supervised. As economist the author also dealt with the issue of income -increasing municipal revenue by successful enforcement of collecting money from debtors. The municipal sources of income were changed by passing appropriate by-laws and a progressive system of taxation was introduced so that the stronger (socio-economically) neighborhoods would pay higher municipal tax than the weaker ones and appropriate reductions for families with low incomes were implemented. During this term the author succeeded in stabilizing the municipal monetary system and introducing efficient managerial standards, acting as the General Director of the municipality.

At this time, the government of Israel initiated the project for neighborhood renewal (project renewal), which was the brainchild of the prime minister at the time, Menachem Begin. The basis of this project was that every Jewish community in the world would adopt a city in Israel and would donate money for this purpose, while the government contributed an additional matching grant. Ashkelon was fortunate to be adopted by the Jewish community of Great Britain, which was very warm and well established. The heads of the community were very Professional. A joint administration was established with representatives of the British Jewish community, the government and the Ashkelon municipality. The author headed this administration. Neighborhood Project Renewal contributed significantly to the development of the city. Many residential buildings, which had been neglected and, therefore, created an atmosphere of deprivation, were rehabilitated, environmental infrastructures were improved and many other programs were carried out. This project dealt with both the physical aspects of the neighborhoods (rehabilitation of homes, paving roads and sidewalks, gardening etc.) as well as with social and educational aspects, including building kindergartens, schools, crèches and other social and educational progress.

Governance Strengths During the Tenure of Eli Dayan as the City Mayor - As mentioned above, during this time, a stabilization of the urban planning and strategic framework was initiated within the Ashkelon municipality. An improvement in the image of the city occurred, especially in relation to keeping the law and acting in an ethical manner while upgrading the functional operation management capacity of the municipal departments. The financial system was organized and balanced, the situation in the neighborhoods improved, advances were made in education, resources were used for strengthening weaker population groups, social and educational projects were initiated and carried out and generally speaking, there was a positive atmosphere in the city. Comparisons were made between the progress of the city at this stage and the situation in previous years, which were difficult both for the municipality and the city.

Governance Weakness During the tenure of Eli Dayan as the City Mayor - Unemployment in Ashkelon remained high. Despite efforts of Mayor Eli Dayan to increase employment, the unemployment rate was higher than the national average. Other challenges included:

1. Despite the achievements in education in comparison to the previous tenure, the progress made was not sufficient. The percentage of matriculants was still low -only 50% - i.e. 5O% of school-leavers did not obtain a matriculation certificate.

2. To a certain extent, Ashkelon still retained its image of a development city. This was mainly the unavoidable result of the activity of Mayor Eli Dayan in the framework of the Forum of Development Cities and his struggle, which was extensively reported on in the media, to gain recognition for Ashkelon as a development city for the purpose of obtaining government industrialization grants.

3. The fact that in later years, Mayor Eli Dayan was also a member of parliament, which, although useful for the city because of his connections to the central government, also resulted in periods of absence from the city and a lessening of his involvement with the citizens of Ashkelon. At this time, the media dealt extensively with the development cities and their struggle. As a member of Knesset, Eli Dayan played a leading role in this aspect, as a protector of the development towns and for this reason, Ashkelon appeared in the media as a development town. (3)(4)

4.6 Conclusions

Mayor Eli Dayan and the Author as his Deputy Mayor were elected after a period marked by corruption in the municipality of Ashkelon and the heads of the municipality went to prison. They were elected because they created for themselves an image of young, honest and educated people, both of them being graduates of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Eli Dayan was a young successful lawyer and Benny Vaknin an economist. After the period of corruption in the municipality, the public demanded honest people who would dedicate themselves to serving the public. The conclusion is that one must serve the public with faith, honesty fairness and energy.

The vision and the leadership of Eli Dayan and Benny Vaknin was a joint vision to build the "city of quality" based on a strong commitment to upgrade the educational system and promote economic development, which would reduce the problems of unemployment in the city. Their common vision was based on the reality of depressed situation of the city of Ashkelon, with two young educated people, who grew up together and were both committed to fundamentally change the city for the benefit of all its residents.

Learned lessons from what had transpired during the author's tenure as deputy mayor to Mayor Eli Dayan are summarized in the following chapters. The most important lesson was that the key challenge for the sustainable development of the City was essentially the critical need to improve the very low and degraded self-image of the residents of Ashkelon. From the beginning of his service in public life, Eli Dayan aspired to be a member of the Knesset and during part of his tenure as mayor he served as a member the Knesset as well. As a member of the Knesset with an overall national perspective, he saw himself as one of the leaders in the struggle for the development towns in Israel, which, at that time, had a very low national image. Ashkelon was also categorized as a development town – a factor that was detrimental to the image of the city. The Author drew conclusions and learned lessons from this situation and for this reason his Mayor's vision was aimed in separating Ashkelon from the forum of developing towns and branding it as a coastal tourist city. The author set up the form of coastal towns in Israel in the framework of the Center for Local Government and was elected as the chairman of coastal cities forum in Israel. Through focused

publicity and advertising Ashkelon became recognized, as being comparable to Tel Aviv, Herzliya, Netanya and other coastal cities in the public eye. In this way the image of the city was strengthened and improved.

The purpose of this chapter was to demonstrate the historical development of the city of Ashkelon since its creation, especially as it is related to its urban geography and economic development of the city throughout the different periods and to show learned lessons and conclusions from the developments throughout the history of the city of Ashkelon. It illustrates, through various historical periods starting from the time of the Bible through the Philistine Canaanite Byzantium and Roman periods how the urban geography of the city was shaped. A Canaanite city 5000 years old was uncovered on the shore. The Kardo, that is the main street of the city, was on the shore as well as the site of the Philistine city, which was uncovered by archaeological excavations. Throughout the Byzantium and Roman periods including the period of Herod the Great, the entire city of Ashkelon was situated on the shore. Findings in the National Garden of Ashkelon also demonstrate that the city was located on the shore. Remnants of grand buildings of the city Council, of the government also on the shore, further support this testament. This means that though all these historical periods, Ashkelon was developed as a commercial port city.

During the Arab period, the economy the city was based mainly on agriculture and textile industry, which in turn was based on cotton, which was grown in the surrounding area. The change occurred during the Muslim period, when the town of Mijdal was built about 4 km to the east of the seashore. The purpose of building Mijdal in its present location was to create proximity between the town and the cotton plantations and agricultural settlements in the surrounding area. During the Islamic era the development of the seashore was neglected and the Arab town of Mijdal, which was populated only by Arabs, was built. Today, this is the neighborhood of Migdal. This development apparently undermined the development of the city in the 50s, 60s and 70s, as a trade port city on the shore.

Following the establishment of the State of Israel and the capture of Mijdal, in 1948, the government established the new Jewish settlement of Migdal in the town of Mijdal. The main street of Migdal, Herzl Street gained great economic impetus. During the 1950s new neighborhoods for the absorption of new immigrants were created in and around Migdal, one of them being Shikkun Dromi which today is named Givat Sion. This urban development, away from the historical role of a port city on the shore, caused a major impediment as the city lost its great advantage as a regional coastal trade center. This resulted in promoting employment in Ashkelon in the agriculture sector rather than investing in the development of industry, trade and tourism.

In the 1980s Mayor Eli Dayan and the author as his deputy, began remedying the historical consequences of the urban planning of the city by developing the seashore and establishing new industrial areas. Upon the author's election as mayor in 1991, the author placed an emphasis on constructing a large industrial site

in the south east of the city, which is comprised of 2,000 dunams (500 acres), for a wide array of different industries.

The chapter on economic development contains a description of the industrial development of Ashkelon. Furthermore, as the Mayor, the author's embarked on an accelerated development of tourism in the city, which included building the marina, the promenade and hotels in Ashkelon.

The mayor's vision of urban development was also focused on addressing the problem related to the lack of internal territorial continuity in Ashkelon. As a result of the establishment of the city of Ashkelon being defined by the location of Migdal as its center, large spaces were created between the neighborhoods of Afridar and Barnea which were built in the west of the city and the neighborhoods in the east, Shikkun Dromi, Migdal and Ramat Eshkol. This urban development created large economic, social and educational gaps between city's neighborhoods. The chapter on the urban planning vision of the mayor for a united city the author describes his strategy to rectify the severe consequences of the historical urban miss-planning of the city and outlines the positive developments in the city of Ashkelon and the manner in which they were achieved. It illustrates how the mayor vision and leadership were critical elements in upgrading and improving the city and adapting it to modern times, while at the same time recovering from the significant damage done to the city and its urban social economic and educational development as a result of a lack of vision and faulty planning of the building of the city at the establishment of the state.

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Chapter 5 – The Master Plan Development for the City of Ashkelon

5.1. Introduction to Urban Planning of the City of Ashkelon

This chapter describes the Mayor's vision and its implementation through the planning history of the City of Ashkelon since 1948 with the successive preparation of the various master plans for urban development, land use and construction. The author describes the inception of his vision, as a driver for the urban planning of the City of Ashkelon, and its fruition within the institutional, legal, societal, economic, financial and national transformation context of the State of Israel.

The legal situation – The Planning and Building Law 1965 (1)(3)(4) - The preparations of physical plans are carried out according to the Planning and Building Law. The law stipulates in detail the planning institutions in Israel and the kinds of plans that can be prepared based on the above law. The planning institutions approve master plans for cities and regions throughout the country. All plans approved by the planning institutions are immediately considered to have been granted legal validity.

There are three levels of planning institutions (1)(2)(3)(4)(5)

1. National- The National Council for Planning and Building.

2. District - The District Committee for Planning and Building.

3. Local - The Local Committee for Planning and Building.

National level of master planning - These are plans drawn up by the National Council for Planning and Building and are approved of by the national government.

District level master planning - These are plans prepared by the regional committees and approved by the National Council. The city of Ashkelon, for example, belongs to the southern district of Israel and is, therefore, subordinate to the plans of this district.

Local level master planning - Every city prepares a local master plan which is submitted to the district committee for approval. As the Mayor of Ashkelon the author served as a member of the district committee for 12 years and chairman of the local committee of Ashkelon for 17 years.

A local master plan is a plan at the municipal level and refers to the delineation of areas of land within the city borders. It contains building instructions and limitations. A local master plan has to be consistent with the district and national master plans and cannot contradict those plans. The local planning committee approves the detailed plans. A detailed plan, which cannot contradict the upper hierarchy level of planning, deals with the planning of a section with in the general (local) master plan and contains details that were not included in the local master plan. It contains details of the designation of ground for specific purposes - open land, public institutions such as schools and kindergartens, buildings for religious purposes, cultural facilities, shops, recreation, air raid shelters and others.

5.2 The history of Urban Planning of the City of Ashkelon since 1948

The National Plan of New Cities - In 1953, the government of Israel prepared a national plan of new cities. Ashkelon was designated as a sub-district center, encompassing all the cities and agricultural settlements in the surrounding region. Ashkelon is situated on the southern coastal plain of Israel. The geographical center of the city is some 50 km to the south of the center of Tel Aviv, 15 km from the center of Ashdod, 60 km

from the center of Jerusalem and 50 km from the center of Beer Sheba. Its history of urban planning involved:

A master plan based on neighborhoods -1965 - In 1965, a plan was prepared for Ashkelon, which designated Ashkelon as a sub-district center with a population objective of 60,000 people. The plan was based on a neighborhood structure covering five neighborhoods with each neighborhood living separately and at some distance between them. The neighborhoods included: Migdal, Giv'at Tsion (Shikkun Dromi), Afridar, Shimshon and Barnea. The plan figured agricultural areas between the neighborhoods, consisting of orange groves. The plan defined industrial areas as well as areas for tourism and recreation, a national park, a health center and hospital, cultural and sport facilities and a sub-district center, serving the entire region. In fact, each neighborhood was isolated from the others with its own commercial center and neighborhood education facilities.

This plan caused many societal problems and did not meet the needs of Ashkelon. The plan also dealt inadequately with the transportation needs within the city. The plan was based on one major city highway and did not give a realistic answer to the transportation links between the neighborhoods - including the industrial areas. It gave rise to a deep polarization between the residents of the neighborhoods.

Migdal, the commercial center dating to the biblical times was designated as the central business center instead of a central focal point between the neighborhoods. Single-family houses were built in Afridar and Barnea as opposed to the other neighborhoods, which were characterized by crowded apartment blocks. Economically well-established populations concentrated in Afridar and Barnea whereas Shimshon and Giv'at Tsion were inhabited by low-income, socio-economically weak population groups. Between 1956 and 1972 Giv'at Tsion and Afridar were built and construction began in Shimshon. During this period, the development of the northern industrial area began as well as a certain degree of development along the coastline. The development in Shimshon was carried out at an accelerated pace. New immigrants, mainly from Morocco, who arrived in the 1960's, were absorbed in this neighborhood.

The 1974 master plan of the City of Ashkelon - This master plan integrated lessons learned from the mistakes of the 1950 master plan and was expected to correct them. This plan set as an objective for Ashkelon, a population of 120,000 residents by 2,000. While this plan continued to follow the basis of the neighborhood structure it also included certain plans for joining neighborhoods. A plan for a territorial continuum between the various parts of the city was drawn up. A main city center, a coastal strip, recreation and hotels, industrial areas and an improved and proper transport system were included in the new master plan. In fact, the planning of Ashkelon is still, up until the present, based on the 1974 master plan (4).

The intention of the master plan for the City of Ashkelon was to effectively address its developmental problems facing expected rise in population and the increase of the residents' needs. Furthermore, the plan needed to figure out possible venues of development and spread of the population, addressing critical issues of overcrowded housing, development of the main city center, urban transportation planning with arterial roads for the city to ease congestion throughout the neighborhoods, exploitation of the potential value of the coastline of Ashkelon, and other strategic and operational issues. Ashkelon is situated on the coast and it is clearly necessary to take advantage of the possibilities that a coastal city presents, as well as taking into account the agricultural areas within the city. A suitable land use is situated on the coast and it is clearly necessary to take advantage of the possibilities that a coastal city presents, as well as taking into account the agricultural areas within the city. A suitable land use allocation of the ground of Ashkelon for the different goals that the city intended to pursue was called for. The 1974 master plan intended to deal with all these issues. The plan determined planning guidelines for the development of the city from an overall perspective of the physical, aesthetic, economic and societal needs of the city. This plan was, in fact, the operative plan for the City of Ashkelon for the last 40 years.
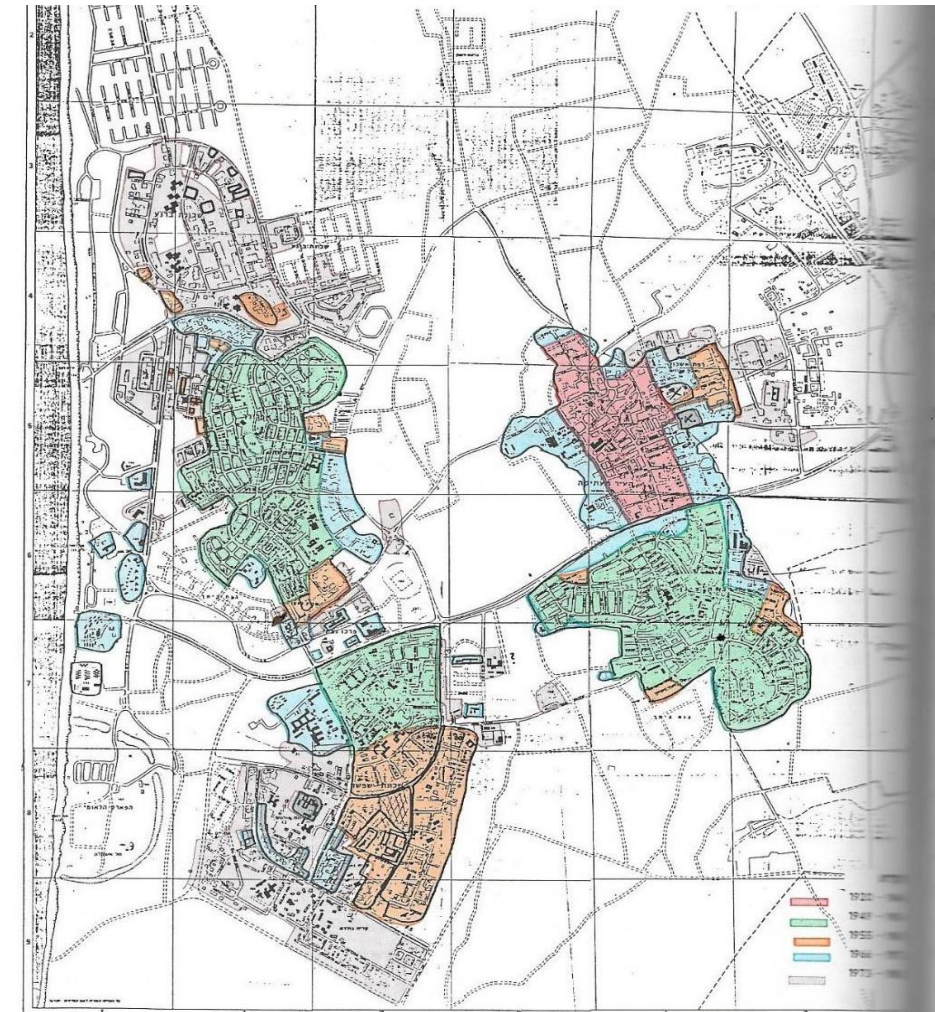
Figure 17: Development of built-up area from the year 1920 until 1983. D. Hashimshoni- master plane Ashkelon.

| 1920-1948 | | 1955-1965 | | 1973-1983 | |
| 1949-154 | | 1966-1972 | | | |
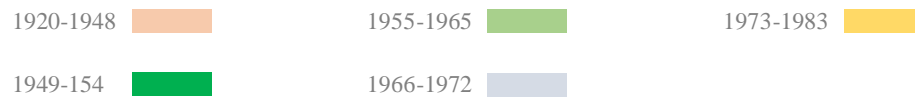
The city limits of the plan included:

- The area of jurisdiction of Ashkelon is 12,500 acres

- The western limit is the coast and the National Park

- The eastern limit is the north south national highway

- Agricultural land within the city.

- A relief of the city is characterized by two long eolianite ridges, parallel to the coast, with a low valley passing between them (3)(4).

Specific Goals of the master plan:

a. Designing the fabric of the city including the connection to the seashore

b. Creating a consolidated and functional city structure with a territorial continuum between the various components of the city and enhancing Ashkelon's image as a city.

c. Laying out venues of future development and functional directions for the city.

d. Creating a city center which serves as a focus for all parts of the city.

e. Creating a pleasant quality urban environment for the residents of the city, which will guarantee comfortable housing, quality services and proper and efficient development of the city (3)(4).

City structure - The plan created a structure composed of residential neighborhoods surrounding a linear activity axis as a city center, which spread from the east to the west and reached the coast. This axis contained residences, commerce, the main city center and public institutions. A secondary activities axis was created for the hotels and recreation areas along the coast. Other axes included the residential neighborhoods and industrial areas in the south and the east of the city. The plan took into account approximately 750,000 m^2 of floor space for commerce and services. The main city center was planned as a sub-district center, which included the municipality, government buildings, offices, commerce and cultural institutions such as the Cultural Civic Center, the central library, the city square etc.

Institutional Status - Ashkelon is the administrative capital of the sub-district of Ashkelon, which includes Ashkelon, Ashdod, Kiryat Gat, Kiryat Malachi, Sderoth and the regional councils of Beer Tuvya, Shafir, Yoav, Chof Ashkelon and Shaar Hanegev. All in all, 95 settlements are included.

Economic Development - The 1974 master planning of economic development and employment opportunities included:

a. Agro-industrial activities with packaging houses, fruit processing, canning, wood industry plants, metal, plastics and dozens of small and medium sized industries.

b. Commercial and business services

c. Tourism - in 1965 five hotels and guesthouses operated in Ashkelon

d. Agricultural work - some residents worked in orange groves both within the city and in its outskirts and were employed in agricultural Settlements surrounding the city.

The 1963 employment of workers living in Ashkelon, according to economic categories, was:

Commerce and services	50%
Tourism	2%
Industry	28%
Construction and public work	10%
Agriculture	10%
Total	100%

The service in the 1960's and 1970's constituted an important factor in the economy of the city. The main reason for this was that Ashkelon served as a center for commerce and services both for the residents of the city as well as for the surrounding areas (the hospital, for example). In Ashkelon, the public services have been prominent. Thousands work in the hospital, education al institutions - both in Ashkelon and in the surrounding areas, government offices, the municipality, the Histadrut (trade union), the Jewish Agency, a wide spectrum of religious services etc.

Commerce in Ashkelon was developing with hundreds of businesses dealing with retail businesses food, clothing, entertainment, guesthouses, personal services and wholesale trade. Ashkelon has also served as a commercial center for the surrounding settlements - towns, co-operative settlements offering storage, haulage and transport services.

According to the 1974 master plan, 61% of all businesses in Ashkelon were expected to be concentrated in Migdal, occupying about 20% of all the business floorage space in the city. The retail trade in Migdal grew at a large rate as did the retail trade in textile and clothing, household equipment and appliances, furniture, building materials and agricultural equipment, private doctors, lawyers and small businesses such as shoemakers' watch repairers and carpenters. There was no doubt that Migdal is the main business center.

Table 4 summarizes the socio-economic indicators for Ashkelon in 1972.. The Socio-economic index is an economic and sociological combined total measure of a person's work experience based on income, education and occupation. Table 4 indicates the following:

1. Significant socio- economic gaps between neighborhoods in the year 1972.
2. The northwest Afridar- Barnea neighborhoods are in the upper scale of the socio economic index (100%).
3. The southeast neighborhoods: Migdal, Givat Zion and Shimshon are in the lower socio-economic scale index.
4. Shimshon neighborhood is divided to 5 sub-neighborhood (A,B,C,D,E) which were renamed later as - Ben Gurion, Jaboutinsky, Golda, Neve Yam and Neve Alonim.
5. Big gap in education status between Afridar- Baenea and the other neighborhoods. In Afridar- Barnea 21.5% of the people education +13 year and more (+13) in Migdal only 2.7% to 3.6% in Givat Zion only 3.3% in Shimshon between 3.3% to 5.6%
6. Occupation: in Afridar- Barnea 44% had academics occupation. And 23.9% in industry and agriculture occupation in the other neighborhoods only 10% (average) had academic occupation and about 55% in industry and agriculture occupation.
7. Housing density in Afridar- Barnea only 1.5% lived more than 2 people in the room in the other neighborhood about 45% (average) lived more than 2 people in the room.
8. Cars- 45.3% of the people of Afridar- Barnea had cars, in the other neighborhood only about 5.5% (average) of the people had cars.

Table 4 Socio- economic indicators - Year 1972

Neighborhood	Socio-economic index	% students with +13 years of education	Occupation %		Housing density %	Car %
			Academics	*Industry *agriculture	More than 2 people/ room	
Afridar&Barnea	100	21.5	44.1	23.9	1.5	45.3

Migdal 1	7.4	3.6	6.3	56.7	36.9	4.3
Migdal 2	9.8	2.7	3.8	67.9	33.3	3.7
Givat Zion	14.9	3.3	14.4	55.4	59.5	3.6
Shimshon A	12.3	4.5	8.1	63.4	50.8	5.7
Shimshon B	13.2	3.3	11.6	59.8	52.1	5.6
Shimshon C	32.9	5.8	14.1	50.5	24.9	10.6
Shimshon D	33.1	4.8	12.9	49.8	3.1	8
Shimshon E	18.1	5.6	8.6	61.6	42.5	8.3

Table 4: Socio- economic indicators - Year 1972, central bureau of statistic.
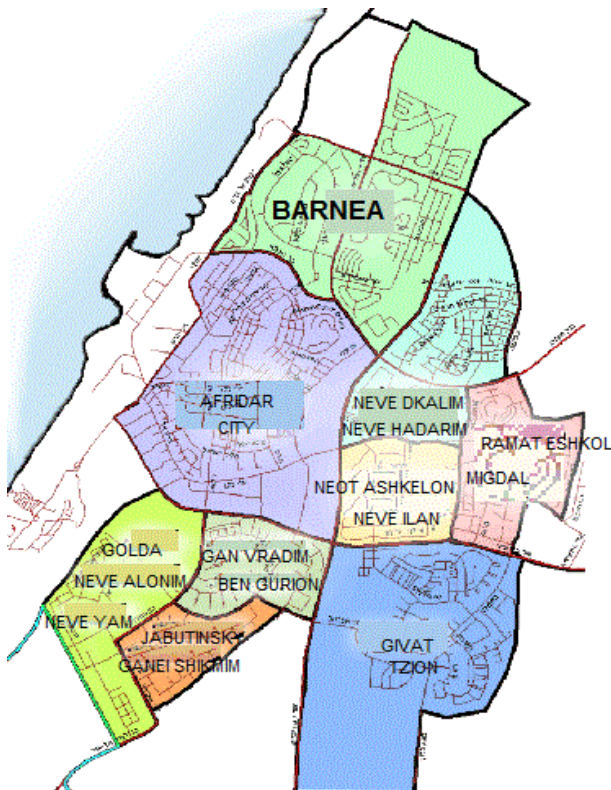
Figure 18: – The Ashkelon City Neighborhoods (2017). Ashkelon municipality.

Figure 18 shows the map of the city Neighborhoods of Ashkelon (2017). Table 5 summarizes the socio-economic indicators for Ashkelon in 1983, indicating the following:

1. The socio-economic gaps between the neighborhoods in Ashkelon, in the year 1983, are significantly reduced as compared to the situation in 1972. The gap between the northwest neighborhoods Afridar-Barnea and the southeast neighborhood - Migdal, Givat Zion and Shimshon still exists but is reduced.

86

2. The ethnic profile of the neighborhoods is remarkable with the southeast neighborhoods being populated with Oriental Sefaradi Jewry- Jews of Middle Eastern, North Africa, while the northwest neighborhoods - Afridar and Barnea are populated with Ashkenazic Jews- of European extraction.

3. The conclusion is that there is socio-economic gap between "Sefaradic" and Ashkenazic Jewry.

Table 5 Socio- economic indicators - Year 1983

Neighborhood	Socio-economic index	Years of education +13%	Occupation %		Housing density %	Car %
			Academics	Industry agriculture	More than 2 people/room	
Afridar- Barnea	98	40.6	52.6	25.3	0	95.6
Afridar A	91.9	33	43.2	20.5	0	92.7
Afridar B	84.8	26.9	45	22.7	0	91.1
Afridar C	78.8	22.7	39.5	26.7	0	90.4
Afridar D	75.3	22.4	37.1	36.5	0	92.6
Migdal A	16.3	6.1	13.8	55.5	9.1	81.7
Migdal B	23.8	5.5	7.9	46	7.3	81.7
Givat Zion A	13.2	5.3	11.8	59.6	10.3	80.6
Givat Zion B	21.1	6.7	13.2	49.2	9.5	81.6
Shimshon A	19.8	4.2	12.7	52.6	3.7	72.7
Shimshon B	26.8	5.4	10.8	53.4	3.7	79.4
Shimshon C	20.4	5	10.1	44	3.4	64.6
Shimshon D	35.2	8.1	14.4	47.6	3.4	80.7
Shimshon E	35.4	14.7	20.2	47.9	8.1	84.5
Shimshon F	39.3	11.6	13.4	47.9	3.9	82.8

| Shimshon G | 29.8 | 9.6 | 17.2 | 44.5 | 7.7 | 79.9 |

Table 5: Socio- economic indicators - Year 1983 Source table: central bureau of statistic.

The development of Migdal as the main business center of Ashkelon was tied to the history of the built up areas of the city. Migdal was the first area to be inhabited by Jews after the war of Independence. The commerce that established itself in the deserted Arab shops, developed not only by serving the inhabitants of Migdal but also the residents of the large ma'abaroth (transition camps for new immigrants who arrived in Israel after the establishment of the state) which were setup in close proximity to Migdal and the new agricultural settlements that were established in the region. The neighborhood of the southern hills, which was built nearby during the 1950's, was in reasonable distance in order to receive commercial services from the relatively developed existing business center.

When the population concentration of Ashkelon moved to the western part of the city in the 1960's, the commercial center in Migdal was sufficiently developed to attract shoppers from these more distant areas as well and it was difficult to establish a competing commercial center in the west. There were several types of commercial centers in the neighborhoods including suburban commercial centers along with small local centers.

Figure 19: Migdal neighborhood 1950 -Ashkelon municipality.

Figure 20: Afridar neighborhood 1955 - Ashkelon municipality.

Figure 21: Givat Zion neighborhood 1956 - Ashkelon municipality.

5.3 The Deficiencies in the Urban Structure of Ashkelon until the 1990's

Land use limitations and deficiencies included:

a. Natural restrictions - Natural restrictions such as orange groves and agricultural areas within the city and the topographic rift between the eastern and western ridges of the city.

b. Lack of continuum between residential neighborhoods - The original plan of the city was based on "neighborhood units" and created four physically separated neighborhoods

c. Lack of focal point - The physical separation of the neighborhoods from each other, created the lack of a focal point that would consolidate them as one entity.

d. An eccentric urban center - The Migdal city center is located in the east away from both the main geographical center and the main population concentration of the city.

e. Inefficient road system - There was only one single entrance to the city. The connection with the neighborhoods (as well as between them) and with the hotel area and the coast was insufficient. Transportation between the neighborhoods and the industrial areas was difficult. The entire transportation network was dependent on one arterial road – the Ben-Gurion Avenue. The transportation network was not graded according to the type of traffic passing through its various sections and the traffic was not categorized according to objectives. As a result, regular activity throughout the city was impaired.

Social Structure Limitations - According to the 1974 master plan, Ashkelon suffered from social polarization. In Afridar, the building standards were high and the neighborhood was well kept. In terms of the level of education and income of the population, the residents of Afridar were the social elite of Ashkelon. Comparatively, the standard of building in the other three neighborhoods - Shimshon, Hagvaot Hadromiot, and Migdal were low. The environment in these neighborhoods also left much to be desired and

90

generally the level of education and income of their residents was low, which adversely affected their self-image. Afridar has a very positive image while Shimshon, Hagvaot Hadromiot and Migdal faced societal problems. Afridar responded to the aspirations of the residents of Ashkelon with regard to the standard of housing and social status. For this reason, in the three problematic neighborhoods the residents have had a negative image of their living conditions and the stronger elements of their population left deepening the distress situation.

Economic structure limitations - deficient industrial structure - Close to half of the employees in industry in 1968, worked in packaging houses and factories for fruit processing - that is an employment that was largely seasonal in nature, with virtually no chance of progress. This was true for most of the workers involved in the local industry of the textile, leather, chemical, electricity and electronics industries. Industrial activity was minimal. The economic development challenges involved:

a. Low level of services - The services were not adequately developed. The business services, such as banking and insurance were of a low standard as was the level of high school and vocational education, which were in their early days at that time.

b. Relatively low standard of living - As a result of the make-up of the mixed population, mainly due to a relatively large number of people with low degree of education and a defective economic structure, the standard of living was low and this reflected itself in a number of phenomena that are characteristic of these circumstances:

1. Overcrowding in housing (2 families in an apartment).
2. A low rate of ownership of long-term assets possession.
3. A relatively high rate of families in need of social welfare.
4. A relatively low number of breadwinners per family.

A low standard of living constitutes to a major economic barrier from a social point of view.

5.4 The 1974 Master Plan Projections

Censoring year	1975	1985	2,000
Present population + natural increase in new immigrants	57,000	80,500	116,500
Immigration (within Israel)	2,000	5,000	14,000
Total	59,000	85,500	130,500

Table 6: Forecasting of the population growth-Central Bureau of Statistics..

91

According to the 1972 – 1974 master plan, the population of Ashkelon was expected to grow to 130,000 by the year 2,000. Figure 9 displays the forecasting of population growth:

As a result of the forecasted increase in the population of Ashkelon, a considerable expansion of the economy was expected to occur. The assessment was a forecasted demand increase of manpower that would reach in 2000 five times (500%) the 1965 demand with significant changes of the employment structure. It was anticipated that:

a. The proportion of services would grow.
b. The proportion of industry would grow slowly.
c. There would be a significant decline in employment in agriculture.
d. There would be a greater variety of industries.

<u>Physical infrastructure</u> - The 1974 master plan outlined a range of physical infrastructure and land use policy (for about 30 years) for the city, in order to create an "urban environment" which would promise a decent and comfortable life for the citizens and proper and efficient activities for the city. A suitable physical infrastructure was a corner-stone for an overall development plan, which was essential for promoting a dynamic of growth and prosperity for Ashkelon. The infrastructure plan was based on the following principles:

a. Designing a city complex which clearly indicated its connection to the seashore

b. Creating a city structure, which ensured consolidation, functionality, territorial continuity between the different components and other attributes of the city.

c. Offering future venues of development with a suitable physical basis for a population of 130,000 people, with the required services and functions.

d. Creating a city center capable of serving as a focal point and a backbone for the city fabric.

e. Suitable integration of the main city center within the suggested new city center.

f. Planning residential neighborhoods as environmental units, while ensuring a suitable standard of wellbeing for the residents with regard to housing, services and environmentally acceptable conditions for pedestrians and vehicle borne residents.

g. Formulating guidelines for rehabilitating residences in the existing neighborhoods.

h. An upgraded road system which offered additional entrances into the city from the national highway, speedy connections to the adjoining regions and main centers in the country, a regulated flow of traffic within the city and compliance with the environmental standards in all parts of Ashkelon.

i. Legislating regulations for preserving the landscape.

j. Preventing harming of the orchards when they do not hinder the continuum of the development of the city (1)(2)(3)(4).
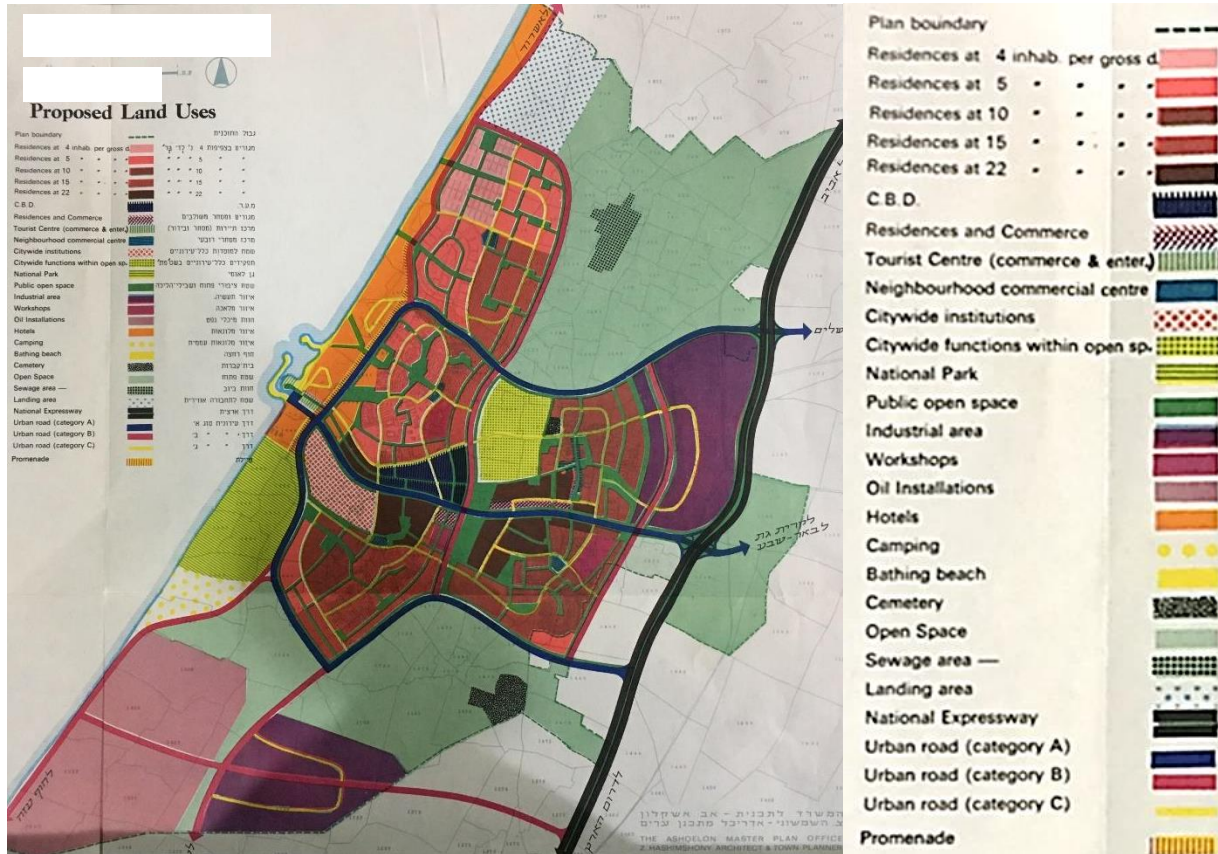
Legend:
1° ▮ - Areas for industry.
2° ▮ - The regional civic and commercial center.
3° ▮ - Orchards and agricultural areas.
4° ▮ - along the coastline - Areas for facilities for tourism.
5° ▮ - High-rise residential buildings.
6° ▮ Building for single-family homes.
7° ▮ - Areas for preservation and the National Park

Figure 22: The 1974 Mater Plan- Municipality of Ashkelon

Furthermore, the criteria for the master plan included an urban planning that expressed the connection to the seashore with the following target objectives:

Environmental sustainability - Using the natural city advantages of the location in order to offer a pleasant environment to most of the population with comfortable living areas in terms of micro-climate, landscape and convenience.

Efficiency - Consolidating the entire spectrum of city services with a balance of supply and demand of services within the neighborhoods.

City Center - Convenient and safe for pedestrians and for vehicle-borne residents, which would allow for integrating the main city center with minimum investment.

Architectural Form - A silhouette emphasizing centrality and an opening to the sea.

Functional structure - Physical and functional consolidation with a concentration of the population in proximity to central services.

Land use policy: targeting high-density populated regions in rear regions and those surrounding the center.The central functions of the city were concentrated within the confines the western range in the direction of the sea. Along this axis, which is the Ben Gurion Avenue, to the east and the west of it, residential areas, commercial complexes, the main city center, public and cultural institutions were planned to be constructed.

Coastal development - the hotel and landscape area were planned to spread from north to south along the seashore. This area was planned to contain hotels, entertainment centers, bathing beaches and vacation facilities. Two centers of activities were situated next to each other. The residential areas served as a fill in for the two axes and created a consolidated and continuous web between them.

Industrial areas - They were located in the north and the south, isolated from the other areas of activity - especially the residential areas.

Roads and transport - A network of straight and graded roads planned for traffic categorized according to functions. A main artery, the Ben Gurion Avenue was planned to feed the central activity areas. Secondary arteries were planned to encircle the neighborhoods and the residential areas with pedestrian footpaths within the city.

Residential areas - The structure of residential areas included five neighborhoods Migdal, Giv'at Tsion, Shimshon, Afridar and Barnea. Each neighborhood had land for additional population and a complete set of neighborhood services - commerce, work- shops, elementary and high-school education and culture. The neighborhoods were consolidated as a result of expansion with additional building between them. Every neighborhood was planned as an environmental unit protected from traffic disturbance. These areas were expected to offer a maximum internal accessibility and areas in which the movements of pedestrian and motorized traffic are separate

Urban renewal - The rehabilitation and renewal of the neighborhood of Migdal, Hagvaoth Hadromioth and Shimshon was urgently necessary.

<u>Open Green Areas</u> - The National Park and the City Park, with an area of 200 acres, in the geographical center of the city, in the valley between its two ridges, were the main open spaces in Ashkelon. Besides them there are also neighborhood parks.

<u>Preserving the landscape:</u> As a coastal city with landscape and archeological treasures, there are guidelines to protect views of the sea and other special sites.
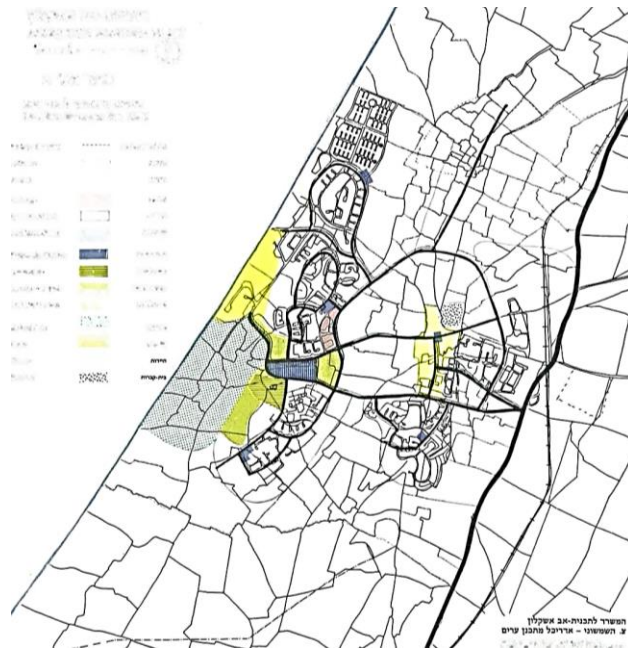
Legend:
1. ▭ - areas designated as residential neighborhoods.
2. ▬ Ben Gurion Boulevard is the only entrance to Ashkelon

Figure 23: Ashkelon Master Plan 1956 -Municipality of Ashkelon
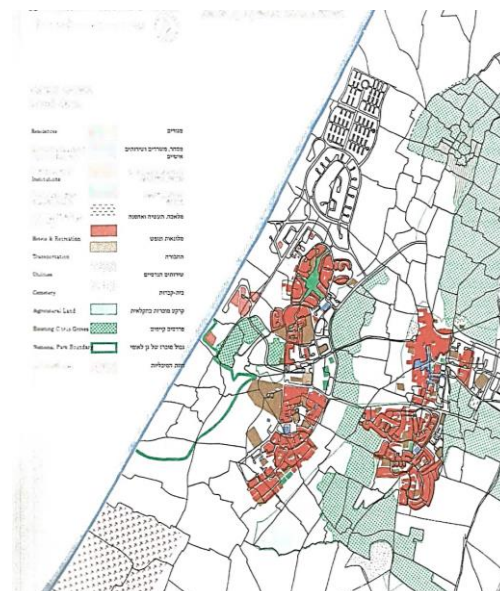
Legend:
1. ▭ - orchards which are the only ones remaining in the city and in its immediate surroundings.
2. ▬ - residential areas.

Figure 24: Ashkelon Master Plan 1972 – 1974-Municipality of Ashkelon.

Figure 23 shows the Ashkelon Master Plan in 1956. The map of the 1956 land use illustrates the discontinuity of urban housing development between east and west neighborhoods, which are completely separated from each other. This land use plan indicates the two urban centers prevailing in Ashkelon at this period including the international trade gate and commercial as well as residential urban center located along the shore and the agricultural trade based center in the east close to the agricultural lands. The Only entrance to the City was the Ben Gurion Boulvard. While the City development involved the creation of multiple commercial centers these two historical urban centers have still a major impacts on the sustainable development of the city.

The 1972- 1974 Master plan map illustrates the discontinuity in urban housing development between the different neighborhoods. The commercial center is located mainly in Migdal, which is far from the coast.

Notes:

1. There are three entrances into the city
2. ⬤ Menachem Begin Boulevard is the northern entrance.
3. ⬤ Ben Gurion Boulevard is the central entrance
4. ⬤ Haim Bar Lev road is the southern entrance.
5. ⬤ Yitzchak Rabin Boulevard, connects the north and the south of the city (colored purple).
6. ⬤ the roads within the neighborhoods.

Figure 25: Ashkelon 1972 - 1974 Master Plan, road system. Ashkelon municipality.

Figure 25 illustrates the development of the main artery network roads (2017), which currently involves 3 entry roads into the city and a boulevard connecting the north and the south of the city across the neighborhoods.

Figures 26 and 27 show respectively the green areas and topographic landscape preservation plan, embedded in the Ashkelon master plan, figuring two north-south green spaces along the shore and along the Eastern and Western ridges, with the height of some 75 m, offering a vantage point for viewing the landscape of the sea in the west and of green areas in the East. Figure 16 shows the development of the residential areas from 1920 to date. Figure 28 shows the transportation network connections among the main centers of industrial and leisure activities.
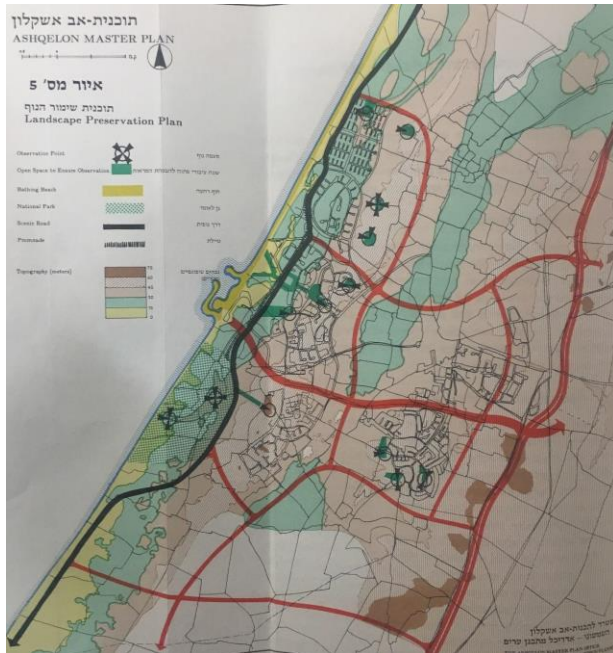
Figure 26: Ashkelon master plan, green areas topographic landscape preservation plan. - Municipality of Ashkelon

Figure 27: Ashkelon master preservation plan. - Municipality of Ashkelon

Development of Built-Up Area In Residential Neighborhoods
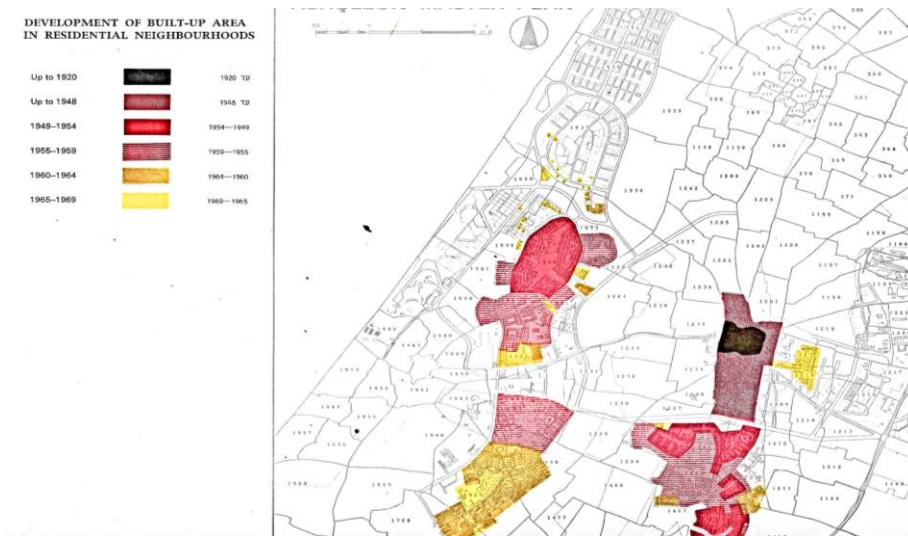
Notes:
1. ⬛ - Residential construction up until 1920
2. 🟧 - Residential construction up until 1948
3. 🟨 - Residential construction until 1960
1. 🟪 - Residential construction until 2013

Figure 28: Stages of residential building in Ashkelon - Municipality of Ashkelon

Legend:
1. ▬▬▬ - Central traffic route from east to west.
2. ▬▬▬ - Industrial area.
3. ▬▬▬ - Along the coast bathing beaches.
4. ▬▬▬ Regional
5. commercial center.
6. ➔ The arrows show the connections between the different activities in the city such as between the industry and the city, between the hotels and the city, between the neighborhoods and the commercial areas etc.

Figure 29: Transportation Connections between local nodes of activity - Municipality of Ashkelon

5.5 Objectives and Principles of a Dynamic Master Plan

Introduction and Background **-** The city of Ashkelon was chosen as a model city for the first experiment in Israel and apparently worldwide for preparing and implementing a dynamic master plan. This experiment constitutes a significant part of the PhD research as outlined in the following chapters.

The author would like to point out that the following section is based on the work of the geographer and urban planner, Eliyahu Stern, of the Universities of Tel Aviv and Ben Gurion, Beer Sheba, and the architect and urban planner, Daliah Lichfield of London and Jerusalem as well as the members of a Steering Committee comprised of representatives of the government from the Ministries of Interior, Housing, Transport, Tourism, Protection of the Environment, the Israel Lands Authority and the Branch for Urban Planning of the Ashkelon Municipality. This Steering Committee was chaired by the author as the Mayor of the City of Ashkelon.

It should also be stated that a normal master plan is actually a binding document, which is prepared once, covering a long period of time. There are master plans that were prepared 50 years ago but they do not allow taking into account the changing realities of life and their implementation became unfeasible. A dynamic master plan is a continuous thinking-tool. It is a collection of all-encompassing urban policy guidelines dealing with defined areas. The guidelines serve as criteria for the considerations of the decision-makers. Dynamic planning solutions are offered in response to developments in a dynamic urban framework.

Detailed plans, unlike master plans, are valid for five years. In this case, the purpose is not to deal with a detailed plan, which presents a scenario with unequivocal instructions.

The Characteristics of a Dynamic Plan include:
   i.   A continuous dialogue between all parties involved and those with vested interests within the municipal jurisdiction of the city.
   ii. Professional work including inter-disciplinary connections between various relevant concerns, such as the public and private sectors and considerations for physical, economic, social and other variable issues.
   iii. A continuous and not ad-hoc planning process for many years. The dynamic master plan will be revised and reconfirmed every five years.

This working model efficiently supports updating the planning decisions to account for changing circumstances (1). It required:

1. Learning what took place in Ashkelon in the decade that preceded the program.
2. Gathering data and identifying central problems of Ashkelon. Identifying problems was done through workshops and meetings with the City stakeholders.

The Legal Status of the Dynamic Master Plan for Ashkelon - Actually, the dynamic master plan is a local master plan, which legally requires approval of the National Council and District Committee for Planning and Building (Planning and Building Law of 1965). One of the innovative features of the Ashkelon dynamic master plan was the full consideration of additional issues, such as the critical socio-economic situation of the city, which the law did not address, and a proposed plan with a general strategy for developing the city, which will meet the societal goals as detailed in the master plan.

From legal perspectives, implementation of the dynamic master plan required the Ministry of the Interior to prepare an amendment to the Planning and Building law, explicitly recognizing this sort of plans as part of the planning setup documentation. A short-term legal solution was reached with a dynamic master plan that would be comprised of three main parts:

a. Analysis of background material and alternatives.
b. General strategy (population development, economy, education).
c. Planning means, guidelines and policy for physical development.

The third part, which dealt directly with physical planning, could be approved as it appeared in the local master plan for Ashkelon while the first two parts served as background material, which explained and clarified the planning target objectives. The Minister of the Interior could therefore enact ordinances and

determine that the background material served as a planning means for the master plan. The suggested intent was to introduce gradually the dynamic master plan until it is fully approved keeping the parts of the existing master plan that are consistent with the general strategy of the dynamic master plan.

National and Regional Background and Status of the City of Ashkelon

The national status of Ashkelon - The status of Ashkelon in the framework of the National Master Plan is defined as a medium-size city with a target population of 220,000 inhabitants and a consolidated urban structure, surrounded by a rural region. The National Master Plan defines Ashkelon as a city situated on a tourist route with areas of recreation and sea-based tourism activities - a seaside resort. For this reason, the hotels and tourism areas were located mainly on the coast.

The regional status of Ashkelon - In the National Master Plan, Ashkelon is described as a main city with regional functions and influence. The city is designated as a sub-district capital, giving health, governmental and general commercial services to the region.

Population Growth - In 1979, when the author was elected deputy mayor, the population of Ashkelon was 50,000. In 2013, after the author had served as the Mayor for 17 years the population had reached 134,000 residents. From 1990 to 2000 Ashkelon absorbed 40,000 new immigrants.

Total new immigrants	Russian	Ethiopian	Other
40717	34712	1958	4047

Figure 30: Distribution of new immigrants in Ashkelon-Municipality of Ashkelon.

The Housing setup in Ashkelon - At present there are 36,000 homes in Ashkelon. The socio-economic gap between the neighborhoods that is described in this research is especially obvious in the field of housing. In the prestigious neighborhoods of Afridar and Barnea, more than 50% of the homes have four or more rooms while in Shimshon, Givat Tsion and Migdal - the weaker socio-economic neighborhoods - the percentage of such residences reaches only 30%.

5.6 Performance Measures and Impacts Assessment

The average income per capita in Ashkelon is lower than the national average. Within Ashkelon, there is a large gap in the average incomes of residents of Barnea and Afridar as compared with those of Shimshon, Givat Tsion and Migdal.

Table 6: Socio-Economic Cluster Indicators - Average income, unemployment, immigration, population, socio-economic cluster in Ashkelon

Year	Socio-economic cluster	Balance of immigration		Unemployment (thousands)	Average Monthly income	Population (thousands)
		emigration	immigration			
1991	3	2,760	2,369		2,654	64,4
1992	4	2,804	3,058	1,538	3,123	66,7
1993	4		4,453	2,406 (10.4%)	3,181	73,3
1996	4	3,028	3,775	2,240 (9.7%)	4,158	87,9
1999	4	2,808	3,235	2,670	4,253	96.2
2000	4	2,898	2,842	2,661	4,235	98.9
2001	4	3,211	3,453	2,424	4,589	101.5
2002	4	2,818	2,820	2,186	4,805	103.2
2003	4	2,530	2,350	1,471	4,993	104.5
2007	4	3,004	2,947	999	4,539	108.9
2009	5	3,151	3,618	1,404	5,505	111.9
2010	5	2.749	3,318	1,080	5,645	114.5
2011	5	2,568	3,447	1,030	6,176	117.4
2012	5	2,702	3,756	1,207	6,534	120
2013	5	2,690	4,369	1,420	6,693	123.5
2014	5	2,934	4,471	1,593	6,998	126.8

Table 6: Socio-Economic Cluster Indicators - Average income, unemployment, immigration, population, socio-economic cluster in Ashkelon - Central bureau of statistics. - Central bureau of statistic in Israel.

Table 6 Summarizes the evaluation of the socio-economic indicators from 1991 to 2014.

It shows that:

1. The population of Ashkelon in 1991 was 64,000 residents, and in 2014 127,000 residents. Population growth of 98 percent.

2. The average income per capital per month in 1991 was 2,654 N.I.S in, 2014 was 6,998 N.I.S. growth of 264 percent.

3. In 2014 only 1,593 unemployed, when the population almost doubled. It means big reduction in unemployment in Ashkelon.

4. The immigration in 1991 was negative, 2,369 people immigrated to the city, but 2,760 people emigrated from the city (-391 people). In 2014 the trend changed with positive immigration of 1,537 people (4,971-2,934).

5. The socio-economic cluster in 1991 was 3 and was upgraded to 5 In 2014.

Tables 7 and 8 shows the results of a socio-economic performance measure survey conducted in different cities in Israel in 2013. The results show that the socio-economic indicators of income per persons and per household in Ashkelon exceeded significantly the income per person of Beer Sheba, Capital of the South Region of Israel, and was quite consistent with that of the central region cities, such as Ramat Gan and Netanya.

AVERAGE AGE OF ECONOMIC HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD	AVERAGE ERNERS IN HOUSEHOLD	AVERAGE PERSONS IN HOUSEHOLD	HOUSEHOLDS IN POPULATION (THOUSANDS)	HOUSEHOLDS IN SAMPLE	CITY
49.3	1.46	3.16	47.8	162	ASHKELON
51.0	1.63	3.02	78.1	255	HOLON
53.7	1.19	2.59	40.4	194	BAT YAM
45.3	1.23	4.55	29.8	174	BENE BERAQ
49.0	1.33	2.52	58.8	196	RAMAT GAN
51.4	1.5	3.05	56.5	263	NETANYA
49.2	1.41	2.89	68.4	279	BEER SHEVA
47.7	1.52	2.9	35.5	171	REHOVOT
47.4	1.47	3.28	2.321.9	9.507	HOUSEHOLDS-TOTAL

Table 7: Sampling data for socio-economic performance measures of cities in 2013. - Central bureau of statistic in Israel.

GROSS MONEY INCOME-TOTAL	MEDIAN OF GROSS MONEY INCOME PER HOUSEHOLD	MONEY EXPENDITURE PER PERSON	MONEY EXPENDITURE PER HOUSEHOLD	NET MONEY INCOME PER PERSON	NET MONEY INCOME PER HOUSEHOLD	AVERAGE YEAR OF SCHOOLING OF ECONOMIC HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD	CITY
19.267	13.580	3.360	10.613	4.520	14.276	12.9	ASHKELON
18.136	15.050	3.617	10.935	5.026	15.197	12.7	HOLON
11.859	10.840	3.236	8.373	4.065	10.519	12.2	BAT YAM
14.070	10.392	2.225	10.125	2.546	11.584	16.5	BENE BERAQ
18.167	14.933	4.790	12.068	5.933	14.946	13.9	RAMAT GAN
16.004	13.437	3.285	10.021	4.480	13.667	13.0	NETANYA
14.333	11.531	3.323	9.595	4.274	12.343	13.9	BEER SHEVA
19.516	15.458	4.256	12.351	5.503	15.970	15.0	REHOVOT
17.711	13.430	3.561	11.681	4.457	14.622	13.7	HOUSEHOLDS-TOTAL

Table 8: Monthly income and consumption expenditure per household, in cities numbering 100,000-199,999 resident's year 2013.

- Central bureau of statistic in Israel.

Name of city	Cluster 2008 (1 to 10)	Rank 2008 (1 to 252)	Cluster 2013 (1 to 10)	Rank 2013 (1 to 252)	Index value 2013	Index population 2013
Ashkelon	5	121	5	127	0.032	123,000
Ashdod	5	112	5	118	0.109	216,113
Ramla	4	85	4	103	0.333	68,000
Lod	4	104	4	93	0.448	71,450
Jerusalem	4	99	3	61	0.802	827,804
Bat Yam	5	117	5	130	0.025	128,561
Beer Sheva	5	140	5	136	0.035	198,195
Netanya	5	145	6	151	0.24	195,762
Eilat	5	143	6	153	0.247	48,122
Haifa	7	192	7	188	0.652	271,963
Tel Aviv	8	215	8	223	1.221	417,507
Savyon	10	252	10	255	3.058	3,469

Table 9: comparison of Socio-economic index-based ranking and clustering of cities in Israel in 2013 as compared with 2008. - Central bureau of statistic in Israel.

Notes:

1. The population socio-economic index in 2013 does not include residents of nursing homes, penitentiary institution and similar.
2. The index value is calculated by means of factorial analysis and standardized so that the mean index value for all the local authority from the mean value measured by standard deviation units
3. The ranking of the local authorities on a 1 to 10 scale is identified by means of statistical data
4. Ashkelon is ranked in cluster 5, whereas its past ranking was in cluster 3.
5. In the year 2008, Ashkelon as in rank 121, in the year 2013 was in the rank 127.

Main conclusion- significant progress has been achieved in upgrading the socio-economic status in Ashkelon. The growth of the city, its economic development and improvement of quality of life also entailed progressive change in employment.

Year	Industry	Commerce and Finance	Public services	Other services and businesses
1983	30	15.9	32.2	21.9
1995	23.9	21.1	29.6	25.4

Table10: Percentages of people employed in various branches- Central bureau of statistic in Israel.

In 1987, 30% of the population was employed in industry. In 1995, industry employment decreased to 23.9%, while the percentage of employees in trade and in finance in 1983 was 15.9% and increased to 21.1% in 1995.

Economic Development of the City of Ashkelon – Today main sectors of employment and economic development can be briefly summarized as the followings:

Industry: There are two industrial zones in northern and southern Ashkelon, which since 2013 served as home to hundreds of industries.

Tourism: There are today 700 hotel rooms in Ashkelon, a marina for 60 sailing crafts, a promenade and bathing beaches. Ashkelon aspires to reach 5,000 hotel rooms.

Commerce: The city offers commercial services both to the residents of the city as well as to the surrounding areas.

Year	Commercial areas (m^2)
1990	50,000
1997	109,000

Table 11: Inventory of commercial areas in Ashkelon (in m^2) - Ashkelon municipality

5.7 Master Plans - Assessment

1. The master plans for Ashkelon were prepared in 1956 and 1972. This research intends to demonstrate how the vision and the leadership of the mayor of the city are integrated in the execution of the master plans or change them. During the tenure of Mayor Eli Dayan, the Mayor and the author, as his deputy, regretfully, were not successful in realizing the execution of many of the goals that were in these master plans, especially in the fields of tourism trade and industry. One of the main reasons for this was that during this period there was not a large immigration of Jews to Israel and the citizens of Israel preferred to build their homes in the center of the country, in Tel Aviv and in towns and cities surrounding it.

2. Figure 24 shows the Effect of External National Changes on Internal Urban Processes in Ashkelon.
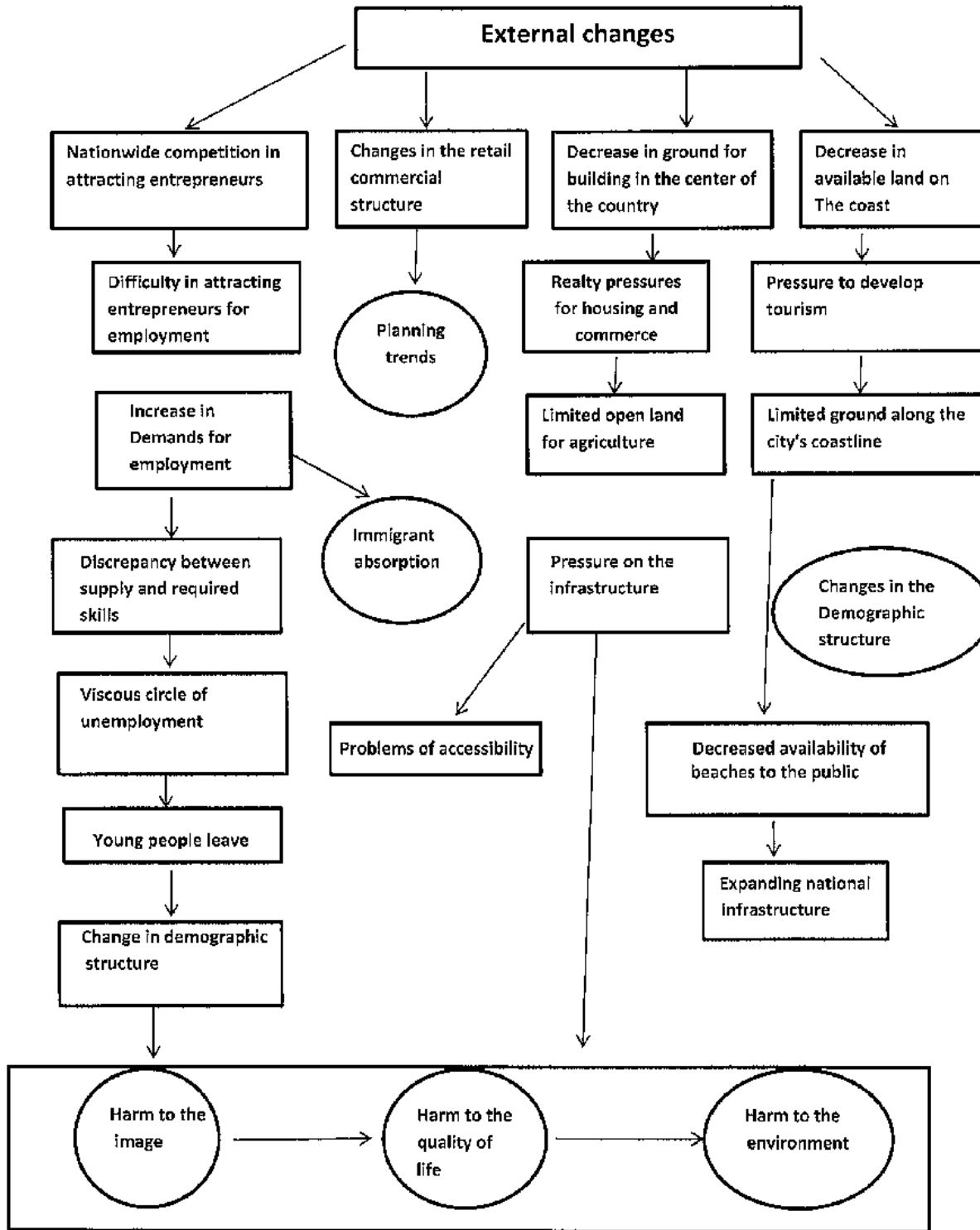
Figures 31: The Effect of External National Changes on Internal Urban Processes in Ashkelon.

3. When the author was elected in 1991 there was a large wave of immigration to Israel, which although it required a large investment of resources, brought many benefits to Israel. The author

was capable of using this immigration for the benefit of Ashkelon and the implementation and the realization of his vision. For this reason it was necessary to activate and carry out parts of the master plan and to revise other parts in order to realize this vision. This required strong leadership as carrying out certain parts of the master plan required determination and commitment to purpose. It was very difficult to make changes in a master plan in Israel. However, with the author's leadership this was achieved. In the next chapter the author describes the realization of his mayoral vision of a united city and continuous land use for neighborhoods development, integrating all the neighborhoods. This required change in the master plan, which could only be achieved with mayoral leadership, leading the re-planning and convincing the government's planning offices, especially the Internal and Housing ministries.

4. The vision of the mayor for developing tourism and industry in Ashkelon is discussed in subsequent sections. In the master plan of Ashkelon of 1972, the planning of tourism development appears, and succeeded in partially executing it, through projects such as the marina and the wave- break.

The marina was an important lever for developing tourism. Many concerned institutional entities opposed the building of the marina, which was a critical step in realizing the mayor's vision for developing a tourist city. By dint of determined leadership, the author succeeded in realizing changes in the urban planning of the city. Other projects were planned such as a golf village, which would have been a tremendous lever for developing tourism. It required allocation of hundreds of acres of land close to the shore for the fairways of the golf course. The Mayor was not able to implement this plan because of the opposition of the Director of the Israel Land Administration, the owner of the land, who persistently sabotaged the project, as the Land Administration was primarily interested in land that could create revenue for the State.

In this case the Mayor's failure in carrying out the plans have created an opportunity for the future. The Author's vision, as the Mayor, was featuring Ashkelon as a commercial center for the peripheral settlements surrounding Ashkelon, including kibbutzim and moshavim. To this end, he introduced changes in the master plan. This is discussed in the coming chapters dealing with the development of the neighborhoods of Migdal and the Ashkelon commercial and cultural centers.

5. The concluding notes of this chapter are that preparation of a master plan must be consistent with a vision of the mayor and Implementing a master plan requires leadership. The dynamics of life necessitates the need for the vision of the mayor to be constantly adapted to new opportunities and this, in turn makes it necessary to update the master plan. Changing a master plan requires leadership that reveals itself in determination, perseverance and devotion to the task at hand expressed through the leadership of the mayor and his ability to get all concerned parties in Ashkelon to change the

master plan by convincing all concerned that his vision is key for the sustainable development of the city.

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Chapter 6 – The Vision of the Mayor for Creating a Unified City – Land Use Planning

6.1 Introduction – city development and its societal and economic challenges

In the 60s and the 70s the City of Ashkelon was facing severe societal, economic and physical land use problems. The city was split into neighborhoods, which were separated and isolated from each other (see attached map no.). This physical reality prevented an urban development continuity with connections between the neighborhoods. The separation between the neighborhoods and their isolation from each other created both a societal and an educational problem for the city. Substantial societal gaps were created as well as problems in education between the children of the different neighborhoods (1)(2)(3). The neighborhoods are briefly presented below:

Migdal Neighborhood - At the time of the liberation of Ashkelon, in the War of Independence – 1948, there was an Arab settlement in the Migdal neighborhood. This neighborhood was built about 4 km east to the coast. Dated to the biblical time, the current settlement exists due to the proximity to the surrounding agricultural region, along the valley of Wadi Hamamah which has water flowing, and the geo-location on the road that, via Gaza, connects Egypt to Ashkelon, Tel Aviv and northward to Lebanon and Syria. The houses were built in the Arab style with yards and small vegetable plots that were attached to some of the homes. The main streets were commercial thoroughfares for their entire length with single story shops (i.e. Hertzel, Haavodah and Tsahal streets). During the War of Independence, the Arab residents fled their homes and Jews moved into them. These Jews were new immigrants from Yemen, Libya, Iraq and a small number of holocaust survivors from Romania, Poland and Hungary. Most of the residents of Migdal worked in agriculture and trade with low to medium income level.

Givat Tsion Neighborhood - At the beginning of the 1950's, waves of new immigrants from Arab states together with holocaust survivors from Europe came to Israel - some of them to Ashkelon. The immigrants lived in tents and in transition camps. The young state built the neighborhood of Givat Tsion with residences and infrastructure of a very low standard to meet the urgent housing demand. Immigrants from Morocco, Iran, Tunis and other countries arrived in 1956 and were the first population groups that settled in Givat Tsion. The residents of the neighborhood worked in agriculture, in factories and in services with low socio-economic level. The neighborhood's population was made up of new immigrants who could barely face their daily struggle to make a living.

Afridar neighborhood - In 1953, the South African Zionist Federation decided to build a neighborhood in Ashkelon. The heads of the Federation chose land that was near the coast, with beautiful hills looking over the sea. However, this neighborhood was about 1.5 km From Givat Tsion and Migdal and for this reason,

there was no contact or connection between them. The immigrants from South Africa were English-speaking Jews who were educated. Some of them were well off financially. The neighborhood was built at a high standard, similar to the luxury neighborhoods that Jews in South Africa lived in. The infrastructure was also of a very high standard, with roads, sidewalks, streetlights, fountains and public parks and gardens as well as a large public park. The physical infrastructures were also of very high quality as was the commercial infrastructure. The neighborhood had a uniquely beautiful commercial center, which housed commercial services, offices, a movies house and a theatre hall. Cultural facilities were built including " Beth Ha-am" (a public hall), a city museum, a central library, tennis courts and sports fields. The commercial center was reminiscent of the Union Grounds (the government center) in Pretoria, South Africa.

Barnea Neighborhood - In the mid 1950's, building began in the neighborhood of Barnea, with hundreds of large plots for building houses on the shore. Plots of land were sold to people of a high socio-economic standard. Business people and people with high incomes moved to Barnea, which became a prestigious neighborhood.

Shimshon Neighborhood - The building of the Shimshon Neighborhood started towards the end of the 1950's. It was populated mainly in the 1960's and 1970's, mostly by immigrants from Morocco who came to Israel in the 1960's. The remnant of immigrants in the transition camps also moved into Shimshon. The great majority of the residents of Shimshon were Sephardi Jews of a low socio- economic level, including low-income workers and elderly people. In the 1970's the level of crime rate in the neighborhood was rising and its public image was very low.

Ramat Eshkol and Ramat Chen Neighborhoods - These neighborhoods were built in the 1970's, mainly for residents who had been evacuated from their homes in Migdal by the Ministry of Housing. The resident of these neighborhoods are elderly with low-income level. The crime rate in these neighborhoods has been high and their public image has been very poor.

In the 70s these five neighborhoods were spread out and isolated from each other with large empty spaces between them. Some of the empty spaces were turned into agricultural land. Others were neglected. Each neighborhood existed as a separate suburb. There was a distinct difference in infrastructure between the neighborhoods. Givat Tsion lacked roads, sidewalks and street lighting in part of the neighborhood. The situation in Migdal was similar. Parts of Shimshon needed streetlights and there was a lack of green areas and plants. The neighborhood was characterized by monotonous concrete cubes. Afridar and Barnea were neighborhoods with houses, red tiled roofs, parks and trees, with attractive landscaping.

Figures 32: The neighborhoods of Ashkelon., Afridar Neighborhoods - Ashkelon municipality.

Figures 33: Afridar neighborhoods - Ashkelon municipality.
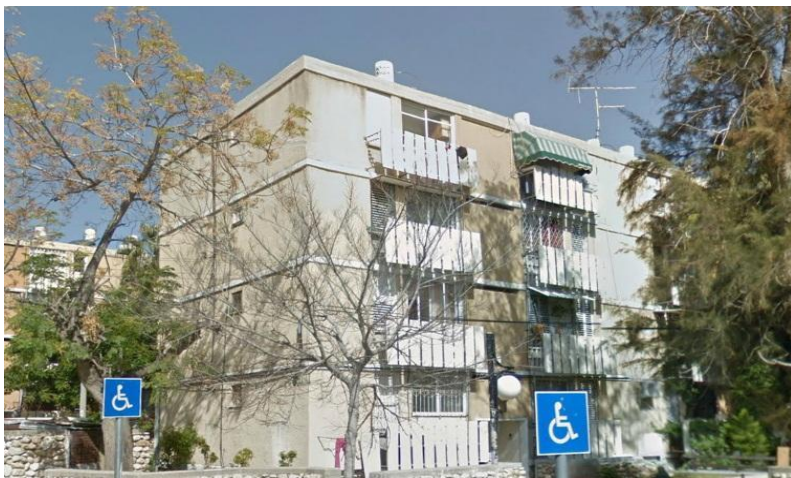
Figure 34: Samson neighborhood - Ashkelon municipality.

The socio-economic conditions of the neighborhoods - There were extremely wide gaps between the neighborhoods with regard to their socio-economic situation. While residents in Afridar and Barnea had a high socio-economic level in the other neighborhoods, including Shimshon, Givat Tsion and Migdal they had low-income level, with a considerable percentage of the residents in need of social welfare.

Differences in ethnic origin and in housing standards - In Afridar and Barnea most of the residents were from Europe and South Africa including Israeli veterans. Most of the residents of Shimshon, Migdal and Ramat Eshkol originated from Morocco.

The standard of education of the children of the neighborhoods - The standard of education of children in Afridar and Barnea was very high. Some of the schools in Afridar are considered to be amongst the finest in the country. These schools have produced pilots and senior army officers and the percentage of pupils achieving national baccalaureate matriculation was very high. The level of education of the schools in the other neighborhoods was significantly lower, although there were schools in these neighborhoods that aspired to a higher standard of scholastic achievements and produced good pupils as well. There was also a correlation between success at school and ethnic origin. Most of the "Ashkenazi" (emigrants from Europe) pupils learned in schools in Afridar and Barnea while the "Sephardi" (emigrants from north Africa) pupils went to school in the other neighborhoods.

6.2 The Mayor Vision for a Unified City

The need for a change of the urban structure - It is retrospectively clear that the urban structure of the City of Ashkelon in the 70s was deficient and that it was necessary to unify the city and integrate its neighborhoods. This unification required the preparation of new master plans and big infrastructure development budgets. There was a need to create a demand for housing in neighborhoods other than Afridar and Barnea and to build public institutions and educational, cultural and community facilities.

The government ministries, especially the Ministry of Housing and the Israel Lands Authority opposed building new neighborhoods, the reason being that they did not wish to invest big budgets for new infrastructures and it was easier for them to add thousands of apartments to those already existing, especially in Shimshon and to rely on existing infrastructures instead of financing for new ones. The Author, as the Mayor of Ashkelon, conducted a difficult and stubborn struggle with the relevant government ministries insisting emphatically on the construction needs of new neighborhoods in order to begin immediately connecting the existing neighborhoods and ensuring coherently the urban continuity with the required infrastructure.

Planning for Unification of the Neighborhoods - The Mayor vision focused on changing Ashkelon urban structure and ensuring its continuity through new neighborhoods. For this purpose, a new neighborhood

connecting Migdal with Afridar was planned with sub-district offices in the west. It was also envisioned that a new neighborhood be built alongside Ben Gurion Avenue connecting with Givat Tsion in the south. A neighborhood along the Ben Gurion Avenue would prevent the isolation of the neighborhoods alongside the central neighborhood of the city.

Despite the opposition of the Ministry of Housing and the Lands Authority, development works for the new neighborhoods were initiated with the means dedicated by the Ashkelon Municipality. The Mayor succeeded in convincing two construction companies to start building in the new neighborhood, although there were concerns and risks involved for the contractors going into new neighborhoods. Furthermore, a large group of members of "Egged", (a national public transportation cooperative) was convinced to build their own neighborhood. The building started, and the apartments were sold.

The Ministry of Housing and the Lands Authority saw the successful development and joined the mayor by participating in the planning, allocating development budgets to the new neighborhood and marketing it. The Neot Ashkelon neighborhood saw the beginning of the realization of the Mayor vision of a unified city.

The Shimshon neighborhood was over crowded, it was therefore planned to close the open area between Shimshon and Givat Tsion by building public projects. This unification started during the tenure Mayor Eli Dayan, with the author serving as a deputy mayor, having the responsibility for the execution of these projects. The city unification projects included a variety of urban centers and infrastructures, such as:

- Building the tennis center – the tennis center, one of the biggest in the country, was located between Givat Tsion and Shimshon, alongside Ofer Avenue. This contributed to both the physical and the social connections between the two   neighborhoods, with people from all over the city coming to the center.

- The city swimming pool - Opposite to the tennis center the city swimming pool was built along with the city country club. These projects also promoted connections between the neighborhoods, because residents throughout the city came to the swimming pool. In this area, between Shimshon and Givat Tsion, additional public projects were built.

- The city conservatory- Hundreds of pupils learned music in the framework of this project, which was also built between Givat Tsion and Shimshon. The fact that pupils from all over the city came to the conservatory to learn music, promoted social integration between them.

- The "Golden Age" Home - This important project was dedicated for elderly people who came to the home from all over the city. This project also encourages social connections between the neighborhoods.

- Additional public projects- Other projects, such as the municipal Social Welfare offices, were also built between Shimshon and Givat Tsion.

- New neighborhoods were built between Shimshon and Givat Tsion, including:

- Gan Haveradim Neighborhood - alongside Ofer Avenue, which attracted new people including young couples.

- Gan Haperachim Neighborhood - built with hundreds of houses, attracting people who settled in this neighborhood and raised its socio-economic level, contributing to the city unification.

- Unifying the neighborhoods of Migdal with the neighborhoods of Afridar and Barnea - The land between Migdal and Afridar was unbuilt agricultural land. As the Mayor considered that unification and urban structure continuity of Migdal and Afridar are of the utmost importance - land use policy was established to allow for both residential building purposes and commercial enterprises. This required approval of the government ministries to have new neighborhoods built in areas, which had, hitherto, been agricultural. The new neighborhoods were: Neve Dekalim, Cochav Hatsfon, Neve Veradim and Neve llan.

Figure35: Neve Dkalim neighborhood 1998   Figure 36: Cochav Hatsfon neighborhood 1956

- Ashkelon municipality.   - Ashkelon municipality.

6.3 The national context for the city expansion and the building of the new neighborhoods

In the beginning of the 1990's big waves of immigrants from the UIS (former USSR) reached Israel. The author identified the opportunity to absorb a large number of these immigrants in Ashkelon in order to leverage the development of the city and further the realization of the vision of a unified Ashkelon with urban physical continuity accelerating societal integration for community cohesion. The government of Israel developed a plan for the absorption of these hundreds of thousands of people into the country and worked on plans for building apartments and finding housing solutions for the new immigrants. The Minister of Housing at this time was the late Ariel Sharon (beginning of the 1990's). The Ministry of Housing

prepared a plan for placing thousands of caravans in cities in Israel. Some of these caravans were imported from abroad and others were made in Israel. One thousand caravans were produced for Ashkelon.

The author opposed placing caravans in Ashkelon and fought against the entire government, which exerted tremendous pressure to approve placing caravans in the city, including personal pressure of the Prime Minister. The Minister of Housing, Ariel Sharon, as well as the Ministers of the Interior and Finance and other ministers applied significant pressure, considering the plan proposed by the Mayor of Ashkelon to be a swift solution for housing the newcomers. Because of the refusal to cooperate and agree on placing caravans in Ashkelon, the Ministry of Housing even imposed certain sanctions. One night, semitrailers came to Ashkelon and unloaded hundreds of caravans at a location south of Shimshon. The Mayor appealed to the courts and received an injunction for the removal of these caravans. His success in the court case was mainly due to the legal arguments that the placing the caravans was illegal and contravened the Planning and Building Law. The Author successfully elicited the assistance of the media, including the television and the printed press, for his struggle against the Ministry of Housing and the government and his resistance to placing caravans in Ashkelon created headlines.

The Mayor's concern was that these caravans would soon become slums and would breed crime and prostitution and his firm conviction was that the government would not remove these Caravans within three years as was promised. Future developments proved the Mayor right. These caravans remained for 15 and even 20 years in the cities in which they were placed and served as breeding grounds for crime and prostitution. Other mayors, who accepted caravans, later expressed their regrets for not joining the Mayor of Ashkelon in his struggle against the Ministry of Housing. Following many legal arguments, the upshot was that Ashkelon was the only city in the country that did not accept caravans.

The Ashkelon Municipality, with the Mayor's leadership, prepared a plan for building about 4,000 apartments in the new neighborhoods, which hitherto had been agricultural ground, with some of the construction areas breeding swamp ground in Ashkelon for mosquitos, snakes etc. The Minister of Housing, Ariel Sharon, invited several city mayors, including the author to his office and presented an emergency plan for building thousands of apartments throughout the country. He asked each mayor to take on himself promoting the speedy building of 1,000 apartments in his city. At that time, there were mayors who were hesitant about absorbing large groups of immigrants, as they feared that the socio-economic weak population groups who were coming to Israel would cause harm to the socio-economic level of their cities. For this reason, many mayors did not promote the quick building of apartments in their cities. However, the author's vision was that absorbing thousands of immigrants, even if they came without means from their countries of origin would accelerate urban development. He believed that their absorption and integration in an appropriate manner, would serve as an excellent leverage for the city development and speedy growth of

Ashkelon. He presented the plans for building the new neighborhoods in Ashkelon and responded to the Minister of Housing Ariel Sharon confirming his intent "to build about 4,000 apartments is in Ashkelon and not just 1,000". Everyone at the meeting, including the minister, was surprised. But the minister responded: "Go ahead. I give you my blessing". This did indeed take place and over the next few years the new neighborhoods were built and Ashkelon took in some 40,000 new immigrants. The building of these neighborhoods created an urban building continuum between Migdal and Ramat Eshkol in the east and Afridar and Barnea in the west.

6.4 Infrastructure Investment

Table 12 shows that annual investment in Infrastructures (roads, water pipeline, sewage pipes, drainage) was high in the 90's to meet the growing needs of the expanding and new neighborhoods built for the new immigrants. Great investment was also required in the years 2009-2013, because of demand increase due to the fact that Ashkelon became attractive city with high positive immigration.

Total investment in infrastructure

Drainage (km)	Sewage pipes (km)	Water pipeline (km)	Roads (km)	Year
10.4	24.1	30.4	6.5	1992
12.2	12.3	8.1	0.9	1993
3.1	5.5	8.9	2.9	1996
2.7	7.8	4.7	2.4	1999
1.8	1.3	1.1	-	2000 (tube)
4	8.1	5.9	2.3	2001
-	-	-	2.1	2002
1.9	4.5	0.7	1	2003
6.2	16.6	10.1	2.1	2007
2.3	17	82.1	-	2009
0.8	6.8	1.9	1.1	2010
-	0.3	-	2	2011
2.2	8.9	11.8	4.6	2012
-	2.3	7.7	8.2	2013
-	3.7	0.3	2	2014

Table 12: Total investment in infrastructure: Central bureau of statistic

6.5 Conclusions

1. In the 60'S and the 70's, the city of Ashkelon faced severe societal, economic, and physical land use problems. The neighborhoods of Ashkelon were not connected.

2. The physical gap between the neighborhoods created social and educational gap between the residents.

3. The research shows that the realization of the Mayor's vision for physical city unification contributes to reduce the social and educational gaps. This is constituent with the international experience of urban land use policy for city unification in Israel (1), Los Angeles (2) and other cities.

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Chapter 7 – Urban Economic Development

7.1 The Mayor's Vision for Urban Economic Development

<u>The Ashkelon Mayor taking the leadership in urban economic development -</u> Until the 1980's, the subject of urban economic development was not developed in Israel. Local authorities were mainly occupied with municipal services and local tax collecting and economic development was mainly the responsibility of the national government with very limited involvement of the local authorities.

During the 1980's, as an economist and deputy-mayor of Mayor Eli Dayan, the author recognized the important role the local government should have in economic development. Ashkelon was the first city in Israel to set up a municipality branch for planning an economic development strategy, headed by Dr. Alan Marcus, an urban geographer and a specialist in urban planning.

The Mayor's vision for urban economic development entailed a systemic analysis of the potential risks and opportunities envisioned for both the municipal services and the business community growth in the city of Ashkelon.

This analysis highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of Ashkelon and its potential economic development opportunities. The opportunities taken into consideration in engaging the municipal government in driving the economic development of the city included:

1. Local urban initiatives built upon the institutional status of Ashkelon as the capital city of the region in cooperation with the local agencies and new natural and human resources
2. The municipal experts are more capable than government officials to capitalize on the local knowledge, face the challenges within the context and attracting investors and entrepreneurs
3. The city is able to market itself and its economic potential more effectively than the government.
4. The city can upgrade special skills to identify, pursue and promote economic opportunities through industrial partnerships, incentives and land-use policy.
5. The city can explore partnerships with local economic developers such as industrial companies, banks, private businesses, hotel and commercial enterprises.
6. The municipality must focus on economic assistance to specific groups within the society such as new immigrants, detached youths, handicapped and those with various employment restrictions.
7. The municipality has in-depth knowledge of the make-up of the mixed population.
8. The mayor and his team are on the spot and have an intimate knowledge of the local needs.
9. The Mayor and the city engineering and architecture team are closely involved in the planning of the city and are, therefore able to lead the planning and development of the city more than the national government officials;

10. The municipality bears the responsibility for the economic and social welfare of its residents and must, therefore, create the tools for dealing with these challenges;

11. Most of the information and data concerning the state of the city, its attributes and its residents' concerns are continuously shared with the municipality and for this reason the municipality is best positioned to identify viable economic opportunities and recognize societal needs

12. The municipality has the ability - which must be further developed - to locate and utilize natural and human resources and to be involved in essential processes of economic development.

13. Government response and its officials' reaction to local city problems are often significantly delayed and therefore the city has to assume the leadership of its economic development.

The Mayor's Vision for economic development included as its corner stone the development of Ashkelon as a high-tech competitive center. To be nationally and internationally recognized for high-tech industries, the vision seeks to establish technological incubators with creative technological ideas in a diversity of fields such as Biology and Medicine streaming into it. The function of the "hothouse" incubator would be to receive these creative ideas and assist the start-ups in developing them as hi-tech products. Furthermore, the "hothouse" incubator would assist all the inventors involved, in setting up hi-tech companies and attracting other companies to invest in Ashkelon.

The State of Israel, by means of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, initiated the establishment of "technological hothouses" in some cities in Israel, primarily in development towns. With the Mayor's leadership Ashkelon, originally not included in this program, was awarded support for creating its technological incubator. The Technological "hothouse" was established in 1991 and absorbed professionals in the fields of Science and Engineering, with hundreds of ideas, patents and creative plans, which were proposed to its leadership. The Modus Operandi of the Incubator and its program are presented later in this chapter. With the Mayor's leadership, the first bit of land for setting up a Hi-tech Park in Ashkelon was purchased in order to begin building the hi-tech facilities in the north of the city nearby the train station.

7.2 Brief historical review of the local government participation in economic development

Before analyzing the economic development in Ashkelon, the author presents a general survey of the global and national trends of economic development carried out by cities in the last decade. The revolution in urban economic development began in the 1980's. Whereas in the past urban development in Israel had been carried out by the central government with external agencies acting as its agents - the 1980's saw a dramatic change whereby the local governments became involved in urban development (2)(3)(4)(11). This was logically expected because, who, but the local government, had intimate knowledge of the characteristics and advantages of its city?

The local government now has a decisive role in assertive actions and initiatives for attracting investments and creating suitable conditions for economic activity. Depending on external entrepreneurs instead of cultivating local enterprises does not necessarily help in urban development and at times even causes harm. Local entrepreneurships utilize local advantages and increase the percentage of resources remaining in the area. For this reason, cultivating local enterprises is an essential element for urban economic development both in the short as well as in the long term.

As the Mayor, the approach the author adopted from the moment of his election, about twenty years ago, was that the task of the municipality was not only to provide services and to act in administrative matters, but it had also to assume an enterprising role in the economic development of the city. This meant that in addition to supplying services and infrastructure to the residents, the municipality had to become active in attracting investments and cultivating local entrepreneurship, marketing the city, initiating the mobilization of economic resources etc. The expected behavior of the city as "an entrepreneur" generated the image of a competitive city, using its assets, infrastructure and high quality services to proactively pursue partnerships with industries, strategic investors and other public and private stakeholders in looking for economic opportunities that will propel it forward and that will encourage existing economic activities within its domain.

In this context, the local authority had to adopt new operational modes in order to promote economic development in the city while continuing to maintain the municipal services as "a business" and employing methods used in the private sector in order to improve efficiency in operating municipal services and in managing the city's assets. This included privatization of essential urban services and transferring them to external contractors, operating franchises given to external entitites, creating advantages stemming from the scope of city infrastructures such as sanitation, water, recycling of waste etc. (2)(3)(4)(11).

The Local Authority role as an Entrepreneur in urban economic development - In the 1960's and 1970's entrepreneurial activities of a local authority were viewed as counter-productive to the national macro-economic goals and for this reason, the national government opposed such activities when undertaken by the local authorities. However, the physical, social and economic deterioration of many cities in the world led to a significant change in this approach. Consequently, promoting economic development of a city became recognized as a city development strategy, which did not oppose macro-economic national aims. On the contrary, it was recognized to serve at the local level, complement and strengthen the national goals.

This institutional development legitimized the creation a new "race" of competitive cities, working with the industry, private sector entrepreneur and economic development organizations, which were created as public corporations to perform specific functions and/or municipal services as financially self-dependent

agencies and pursue appropriate partnerships with both public and private sector corporations. Examples include (1)(5)(13): local urban trade and economic bureau, independent urban corporations shaped on the format of NGO's, Urban NGO's and associations, specific corporations for handling special economic matters such as the Association for Culture, Youth and Sport, Corporations for water and sewage, Supplying services and activities by means of business partnerships, privatization of public services, joint franchises, contracting out etc. Because of its intimate knowledge of the internal fabric the local authority became a leading force in focused economic development, which effectively supported alleviation of unemployment and the wellbeing of deprived target groups such as the unemployed, minorities, youth, old age pensioners and other groups within the community (2)(3)(4)(11).

Local Government Strategies for Promoting Economic Development - Four economic development strategies have been used by local authorities:

1. Self-marketing to external investment enterprises - The local authority gives incentives in the form of grants and tax benefits as effective means of attracting industrial partners and investors and encouraging the expansion and/or opening of new industrial zones in the city

2. Attracting Entrepreneurs for partnerships in economic development fields of municipal services, commerce and recreational initiatives, including:

   - Building offices for administrative purposes.
   - Shopping centers
   - Tourism

   The local authority supplies the infrastructure and the entrepreneurs invest money privately. Examples of this model are:

   ● The building of the marina in Ashkelon by private entrepreneurs with infrastructure prepared by the municipality.
   ● The dockland in London
   ● Battery Park in New York
   ● Atidim Park in Tel Aviv
   ● Attracting head offices of big service and industrial companies to the city (banks, Insurance companies, industrial concerns etc.) (1)(2)(4)(11)(13).

3. Political Initiative - The city struggles to receive direct or indirect government budgets in order to develop the local economy. Direct budgeting stimulates private economic activity by means of government-initiated benefits such as grants, loans and governmental tax benefits. Ashkelon, for example, has consistently fought to gain the status of a development city with national preference

for both industry and tourism. For tourism the city received grade "A", which gave the investor a grant of 24% of his investment or tax exemption for ten years. The same benefits were given to the industry. There was also a struggle to get the government to establish national or regional institutions in the city, for example a university or a college etc. Regarding Ashkelon, for example, the local government fought for setting up regional government offices in the city and, in fact, the regional offices of the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Finance, the Income Tax offices and the National Insurance offices are all located in Ashkelon as well as government owned regional projects such as the desalination plant.

4. <u>Encouraging local businesses</u> - Diverting resources to local entrepreneurship and small businesses gave employment to residents at a relatively low cost and created an economic local upward spiral. Activities of this kind of business were more stable and served to leverage the budgetary basis of the city and creating employment. Examples of the city programs that effectively encouraged local economic activities include:

  - Loan funds
  - Encouraging small business enterprises
  - "Hothouses" for entrepreneurs
  - Centers for vocational training
  - Consultation centers for neighborhood personal business
  - Neighborhood financial institutions.
  - "MATI" – the Ashkelon center for dealing with entrepreneurship (1)(2)(4)(11)(13)
  - The Mayor's initiatives for encouraging the local economy include:

1. Development of two large industrial sites with garden areas, trees and green strips.
2. Exemption of industries that came to Ashkelon from paying city taxes for the first five years.
3. Making sure that the government would provide Ashkelon special status including incentives to set up industrial enterprises in the city.
4. Giving priority to local manufacturers and suppliers.
5. Encouraging and supporting industries that work according to a sustainability plan, promoting health of the residents and that of their workers.
6. Encouraging industries and places of employment to maintain social responsibility.
7. Encouraging and supporting initiatives for producing clean energy.
8. Operating a program in the education system for establishing contact between pupils and industrial corporations.

9. Setting up a Technological **Incubator** of which the author was the chairman for about 20 years.

7.3 The Local Government followed several Modus-Operandi for Entrepreneurial Activities:

1. <u>The local authority as the owner of the service</u> - The principle of this model is that the local authority operates as a productive service or asset management based economic enterprise. Normally this model relates to public services, which can either be operated on a profitable basis or for which the public management responsibilities cannot be delegated. These services are usually run by either the appropriate municipal service or a municipality owned urban company. Examples:

   o Educational and cultural Centers
   o Operating parking lots.
   o Operating bathing beaches and swimming pools
   o Operating sports facilities

2. <u>The local authority as service operator in partnership with an external entity</u> - The local authority operates a municipal service or asset management service in partnership with a private or governmental external body. This is the system by which local authorities operate many municipal services in the fields of health, education, welfare, and land development. At present, the Ashkelon municipality develops land and infrastructure for neighborhoods in partnership with the Ministry of Housing and the Israel Land Authority. This is done by means of the Ashkelon Economic Company.

3. <u>The local authority as essential support for economic activities of private bodies</u> - Here the local government has to deal with situations in which specific activities would not take place or would not be carried out efficiently without its involvement. An example is the Ashkelon Country Clubs. Two country clubs were approved for opening but neither one would have been built solely by private entrepreneurs without the assistance of the Ashkelon municipality. At the same time, the local authority can prevent the execution of a project, which could cause harm to the city. For example, as Mayor the author prevented the construction of a chemical plant, which would have harmed the environment and would have prevented the opening of many other industries in the region (1)(2)(4).

Examples of local economic development projects:

1. Physical rehabilitation and urban renewal – local example: the rehabilitation of Migdal.

2. Community based neighborhood development with residents' involvement

3. Business development with emphasis on encouraging small businesses and promoting local export.

4. Partnerships with the private sector, NGO's, public agencies for specific services, examples:
    - Partnership for a home for the elderly in Ashkelon.
    - Partnership in an NGO for dealing with the elderly.

7.4 Managing Municipal Tasks through Urban Companies

The municipality of Ashkelon was independent in terms of its budget and did not receive grants from the state. This independence gave the local government greater freedom in shaping its own future of urban development. (1)(2)(4)(10). Tackling bureaucratic hurdles, the Mayor's vision was that efficient urban economic development undertaken by the municipality will require legally recognized institutional frameworks for self-financing, establishing partnerships with the private and/or the public sectors and autonomic management of economic initiatives. Such institutional frameworks could be established through the foundation of urban companies, which may be either entirely municipal owned or different models of public-private or public-public partnerships.

Since the 90s, with the mayor's leadership urban companies have been an essential part of the complex economic development of the City of Ashkelon as efficiently managed by the municipality (1) for various fields of economic activity. Their main function has been the building of an efficient management system for the development of certain areas of activity, which had to preferably be dealt with by self-dependent corporations, controlled by the municipality, with a close financing stream, rather than by the municipality itself, whereby service budgets and their inter-service transfers are subject to the municipality's decision at any time. These self-dependent urban corporations could have the ability to mobilize resources, pursue partnerships with the private and/or the public sectors and manage themselves efficiently, while at the same time being subject to public scrutiny and supervision. The status of the urban companies, their legal structure and their main role in the economic development of Ashkelon is presented hereafter.

The Mayor's leadership in accomplishing the vision of Urban Economic Development – The author, as Mayor of Ashkelon, had a difficult and hard struggle with the national government, especially with the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Commerce and Industry, who were responsible for the development of the city southern industrial site. Development was carried out on a negligible annual budget of the government - this being the situation of most industrial sites in the country, resulting in a slow pace of progress. The Mayor engaged discussions with the Ministers concerned in order to convince them to allow the Ashkelon municipality to develop the industrial sites and to obtain the development costs from the entrepreneurs. After a year of struggle and effort the responsibility for the development of the industrial site was transferred over to the Mayor, who delegated this responsibility to the Economic Company of Ashkelon with a municipal official appointed to market the site to the industry. National industry incentives were related to the preferential status of the industrial site. For this purpose The Mayor struggled with the

government in order to obtain "Development Status A" (the highest status) for the site. The government, however, decided to grant the requested site status, which gave the investor a grant of 20% of his investment or an exemption from income tax for 6 years. This status, which undoubtedly was an important advantage, was only given for a few years and it became necessary to constantly extend it. The Industry incentives included:

1. Reductions in city taxes: The city council approved the Mayor proposal to give any new factory that opened in Ashkelon an exemption from city taxes for 15 years. This is an important advantage for new factories.

2. Subsidies in ground purchase: As a result of the Mayor's effort to receive status B for Ashkelon, the price of ground for the industry became relatively low, with a subsidy of nearly 50%

3. Subsidy for developing the ground: The industrial site development was done by the Ashkelon Economic Company and was, therefore, relatively cheap.

4. Administrative assistance: The Industrial Officer in Ashkelon accompanied each entrepreneur throughout the entire process from the moment of setting foot in Ashkelon - purchasing ground, planning and building administration, up to the opening of the factory. Assisting the entrepreneurs in dealing with the complexities of the Israeli bureaucracy was very useful and greatly appreciated by them.

5. Marketing and advertising campaigns: The municipality carried out marketing and advertising campaigns for the industrial sites in all the media - newspapers, television and radio, as well as holding conferences. Each industrial site was aggressively marketed.

In conclusion, thanks to the Mayor's vision and leadership in realizing his industry incentive policy, the southern industrial site, approximately 500 acres, was populated almost entirely. Unfortunately, not many hi-tech industries came to Ashkelon, mainly because the State did not help in promoting this site. Hi-tech people preferred to be nearby Tel Aviv and Ashkelon seemed to be too far. Furthermore, there was no professional capacity in Ashkelon with hundreds of electronic and computer engineers who could be employed by the hi-tech industry. The following sections present the Mayor's vision and leadership in economic development in the main sectors of activities.

7.5 Development of Tourism Industry in Ashkelon

The Mayor's vision - Tourism is generally a difficult enterprise in Israel, due to both the security situation and to the high cost of tourist services, which are more expensive than in the countries surrounding Israel (E.g. Turkey, Arab countries, the Greek islands, which are all cheaper). It is especially difficult to develop

tourism in Ashkelon because of the security situation. Nevertheless, as the City Mayor the author's vision was that Ashkelon could become a large tourist center offering recreational and relaxation services, with hotels and tourist commercial centers along the 12 km of its seashore. In the center of the seashore the Mayor envisioned an international marina and a scenic promenade along the entire seafront. He also envisioned a golf village and the development of the national park, which contains archeological sites, as attractive poles for thousands of tourists enjoying holidays in Ashkelon

In order to realize this vision, a strategic plan was prepared for the development of local tourism, which was based on:

1. Building a strong tourist - orientated project as an anchor - the marina.
2. A second tourist anchor - the golf village.
3. The development of the archeological sites in Ashkelon.
4. Developing the promenade extending along the entire coastline of the city.
5. Building Hotels.
6. Developing the beaches.
7. Developing sea sports.
8. Developing competitive attractions.
9. Advertising and marketing Ashkelon as a tourist center.

   Mayor's leadership in realizing the vision:

1. Building the marina - The idea of building a marina in Ashkelon in the 1990'a seemed unrealistic. This is major project costing millions of dollars, which could not be financed by the municipality. However, the relatively low cost of ground in the city rendered the project feasible. It was only the Mayor's determination that made possible building the marina. Its development was delegated to the Economic Company in order to enable management flexibility. The financing strategy involved the following principles:

    a. The government had to recognize the marina as an infrastructural project, which made it eligible for a state grant. A state grant of 5 million dollars was allocated for this project

    b. The Electric Company that was building a power station in the city at that time, had to agree to compensate the city. After a long struggle, including discussions with the government, it allocated 3 million dollars.

    c. International tender: an international tender for building the marina, according to which the selection of the entrepreneur was based on the lowest price for building the marina, was issued, with the municipality acting as the marina operator. The cost of the marina project,

which was complicated and complex from both the economic and engineering aspects, amounted to 30 million dollars.

The marina of Ashkelon is recognized as an international harbor and as a gateway to and from Israel. The Israel customs and border police serve the marina. Hundreds of boats from abroad come to Ashkelon each year.

2. <u>The golf village</u> - The building of a golf village in Ashkelon was a cornerstone in the development of tourism. It was planned with an entrepreneur who owned land in the north of the city. The international, 18 hole golf course, was planned as part of the golf village containing hotels, 1,000 holiday apartments, a tourist commercial center and a country club. The municipality met all its obligations as did the entrepreneur, but building the golf village that was to be built on state-owned land, was delayed because of the bureaucracy of the Israel Lands Authority and government officials. This was a typical example of a government caused bureaucratic failure to meet the project deadlines.

3. <u>Development of archeological sites -</u> Ashkelon has a historical legacy of 5,000 years. At the initiative of Eli Dayan, as the Mayor of Ashkelon, with the author serving as his deputy mayor, donations were collected in the USA for developing archeological excavations in Ashkelon. The donors donated more than 20 million dollars. The excavations were carried out mainly in the National Park. Unique archeological findings were discovered, including a Canaanite city more than 9.000 year old, a local gate of 4,000 years ago and a Philistine city. The archeological excavations became attractive for archeological tourism in Ashkelon.

4. <u>Development of the promenade along the seashore</u> – the Mayor's vision involved hotels, coffee houses and commercial centers lining the promenade with thousands of tourists strolling on it and enjoying the beaches of Ashkelon and its micro-weather. The Ashkelon promenade is really a beautiful site and is considered to be one of the finest in Israel, visited by thousands of tourists every year.

5. <u>Building hotels -</u> Generally speaking, it is difficult to convince entrepreneurs to build hotels in Israel and even more so in Ashkelon. The costs of building a hotel are high and the returns on the investment take quite some years. With determination and consistency, the Mayor succeeded in bringing three highly rated hotel chains to the city after ensuring that Ashkelon was granted by the government a development status "A" for building hotels, which made it feasible to have a grant of 24% of the building costs of the hotel or an exemption form taxes for ten years. The "Holiday Inn" hotel chain joined this development project giving impetus to the economic development of the city.

6. <u>Development of the beaches</u> - Ashkelon has one of the most beautiful shores in Israel. Tens of thousands of people from all over the country enjoy the beaches of the city together with thousands of tourists from abroad. Organized clean beaches with life-savor stations were set up with shaded beach shelters, lawns, sanitation facilities, municipal supervision and life-saving service, fitness equipment, beach volley-ball courts, small soccer fields and other beach facilities. The Mayor envisioned the beaches to become one of the most effective poles of attraction, offering facilities for all sea-sport activities with programs including:

- A program for every child in Ashkelon to learn sea-studies such as rowing (kayaks sailboats etc.). All Ashkelon schools participate in this sea-sport program.
- A school for sea-studies in Ashkelon, with qualified teachers, instructors, study-rooms etc.
- Diving clubs were opened.
- Fishing clubs
- A yearly sea-festival.
- A beach-soccer to tournament.
- Beach volley-ball
- A surfer's beach
- Triathlon which includes swimming
- Sailing-boat competition
- A flotilla from Israel and abroad

7. <u>Development of tourist attractions:</u> a variety of projects intended to attract tourists from Israel and abroad were set up, such as:

   a. Ashkeluna: - A center for water slides and games.
   b. A new tourist market in Migdal, which included hundreds of stalls selling a wide range of commodities. Tourists have indicated their enjoyment of the market.
   c. A 700 year old Khan which includes a local museum was opened
   d. Song and music festivals such as the "Brisa" festival etc.
   e. Artists fairs and exhibitions
   f. Archeological excursions to the National Park.

8. <u>Advertising and marketing Ashkelon as a national tourist site</u> involved preparation of a marketing and advertising plan for Ashkelon as a tourist city, which included:

- Information and advertising booklets and other material in Hebrew and English.
- Internet sites in Hebrew and English.
- Advertising on TV, radio and in the press.

- Participation of Ashkelon in tourist fairs in Israel and throughout the world.
- Exploiting every opportunity to advertise and market Ashkelon by means of Israeli embassies throughout the world, advertising through the Jewish Agency etc.

7.6 Development of Regional and Local Commercial and Service Centers

The Mayor's vision and its realization - The author envisioned Ashkelon as a regional commercial center, offering services not only to the residents of the city but to the surrounding cities, towns and agricultural settlements. Commercial development creates hundreds of jobs and the fact that people from outside the city come to shop here, is actually an additional element for employment. For this reason the Mayor envisioned building a large commercial center at the "Silver Cross roads" similar to centers in the USA, located at road junctions. The purpose was that thousands of shoppers from outside of Ashkelon would avail themselves of the center and this is indeed what has happened. This center offered thousands of square meters of commerce and entertainment. Three shopping malls were built in the city. Development of the Commerce was a driver for renewal, such as in the case of the commercial streets in the Migdal Neighborhood. The commercial center of Migdal is unique in character, combining the new with the old and the ancient. A pedestrian mall is being built and shops and the fronts of shops are being renovated. This all-encompassing renovation gave Migdal a new and attractive appearance (see chapter on urban renewal).

New, modern and attractive commercial centers were built in all the city's neighborhoods. These commercial centers employ hundreds of people and make it possible for the residents to do most of their shopping close to home. Most of these centers have proven to be successful and some of them have become communal meeting places. Examples are centers in the neighborhoods of Afridar, Barnea, Shimshon, Neoth Ashkelon and others.

Entertainment centers were mostly located at the seaside, with coffee shops and restaurants at the marina and the Delilah beach center. Today drawing board are focused on a large commercial center behind the marina coffee shops and restaurants along the promenade, and large commercial centers in the southern and northern industrial sites. (6)(7)(8)(10)

The Mayor also envisioned that Ashkelon will become a regional service center, offering services both to the residents of the city as well as to the cities and agricultural settlements in the region.

The regional services in Ashkelon include:

1. Health services

a. Barzilay Medical Center. The center offers health and hospitalization services to the entire region, with a population of some half a million people. The center has 500 beds. Approximately 2,000 people are employed in the center, including hundreds of doctors and academics.

b. Regional services of the various sick funds. There are regional centers of the Maccabi, Meuchedeth, Cialit and Leumi sick funds, employing high-level workers.

c. Private health centers in the fields of dentistry, cardiology and professional services serve clients and patients throughout the region.

d. Magen David (ambulance and first-aid center) serves the entire region.

Figure 37: Barzilai Medical Center - Barzilai public relations - Ashkelon municipality.

2. <u>Government Services</u>

- The regional income-tax offices.
- The regional offices of the National Insurance.
- The Ministry for the Environment. The union of eleven local authorities for the environment has its offices.
- The regional center for fire-fighting serving eleven local authorities.
- The regional Government Employment Bureau.

3. <u>Regional Courts, Police and General Security Services</u> - The regional Magistrate Court, the Traffic Court and the Court for Local Affairs as well as the Rabbinical Court and the Judgment Execution Office all reside in Ashkelon. In addition to the local police station, the police staff headquarters offices for the Lachish area, responsible for the local police stations in the region, are located in Ashkelon as well as the staff offices for the south of Israel of the General Security Services, and employ hundreds of policemen locally and in the sub-district.

Figure 38: <u>Regional Courts</u> - Ashtrom Company.

4.   <u>Regional education services including</u>:

    a.   The regional offices of the Teachers Organization reside in Ashkelon.

    b.   The Ashkelon Pedagogic Center offers training programs to teachers from the entire region.

5.   <u>Regional college</u> - The Academic College of Ashkelon offers university education to the entire region and has a student body of some 6,000 students. Hundreds of lecturers and highly qualified workers are employed by the college.
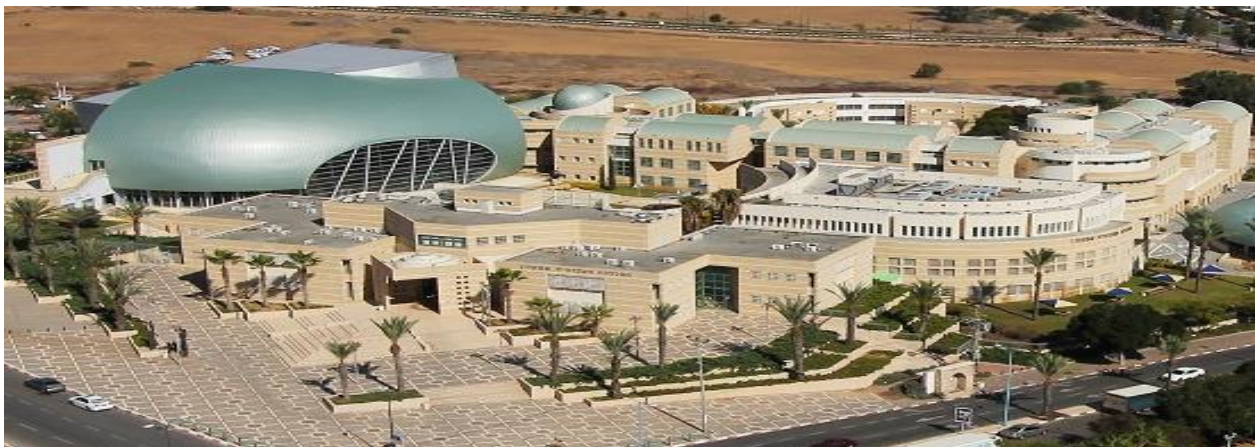
Figure 39: The Academic College of Ashkelon - Ashkelon The Academic College.

6.   <u>Regional Transport Center</u> - With the Mayor's leadership, Ashkelon has become a regional, multi-modal transport center. Its national and regional transport networks currently include:

    i.   <u>The train to Tel Aviv and the center of the country:</u> After the Mayor struggled for many years with the Ministries of Finance and Transport the rail road line between Ashkelon and Tel Aviv, which connects Ashkelon to all the cities in the center and the north - came into reality. This railroad line has given a tremendous economic boost to Ashkelon as it provides for the mobility of workers and people between Ashkelon and the center of the country

ii. <u>Train to Beer Sheba and the south:</u> Today, the line to Beer Sheba is under construction to enhance public transport service and inter-city people mobility for work opportunities and business development, commerce, financial and administrative services, recreation, and other attractions that Ashkelon has to offer. Furthermore, students at the Ben Gurion University in Beer Sheba and the Sapir College in Sderot use this line.

iii. <u>A transport center for busses, minibuses and taxis:</u> Close to the train station, there is, at present, a small bus terminal that connects the train station to other bus stations in Ashkelon. There are plans to build a regional transport center that will also include a large commercial center. This center will link Ashkelon to all the cities, towns and settlements in the region by bus. This is a transport project, which will, in combination with the train, offer integrated transport solutions to Ashkelon and all the surrounding settlements.

7.7 Energy Center - Ashkelon Power Plants and Harbors

<u>The Mayor's vision -</u> One of the biggest projects - on a national scale - was the building of the power plant in Ashkelon. This plant intent was to supply electricity to Ashkelon. As a Mayor the author was faced with conflicting interests of tremendous economic advantages, which would ensue for the city and employment growth as opposed to environmental considerations. There were stakeholders who supported and those who opposed this project. The author had to explore and examine the worthwhileness of building the power center in Ashkelon.

<u>The advantages stemming from building the power plant in Ashkelon</u>

1. Employment possibilities: The building of the plant was expected to take 5- 10 years and create employment for some 2,000 workers. A considerable number of the workers would have received training in relative fields and could continue in their employment in the building of additional plants (this is what actually happened in Ashkelon when the 2nd plant was built). At their operational stage the plants employ 400 - 500 people.
2. The income from city taxes, which the city expected to receive from the power plant, would have been high. The plants occupy a lot of ground in Ashkelon, resulting in high taxes, which Ashkelon could use for education, culture, societal needs and urban development.
3. A power plat would have created an image of an industrial and economic strength.
4. It could effectively attract additional sources of employment such as a coal-harbor, transport services, security services, catering etc.

5. The plant would have offered a suitable workplace for young people with a variety of professional opportunities including high salary careers in the field of electricity services: This would have contributed to an economic growth with a more diversified socio-economic city demography.

6. A variety of other advantageous including the support of the Electric Company for social, community, educational and other projects in the city

The disadvantages associated with the power plant

1. Harming the quality of the air and the environment and generating air pollution.

2. Harming the image of the city, especially with regard to tourism as the site of tall chimneys emitting steam or smoke would have created a sense of air pollution

3. A large area of the coast would have been allocated to the building of a power plant.

The Mayor, driven by environmental protection considerations initially opposed the building of the power plant in Ashkelon. However, realizing that it was a State decision which the municipality could not prevent he struggled for major investments of all the necessary budgets in preventing pollution. The decision was to invest 250 million dollars in purchasing advanced filters, capable of reducing the rate of air pollution to nearly zero.

Building a private power plant for electricity fueled by gas - The Mayor supported the building of a private power plant for supplying electricity, fueled by gas, as a non-polluting energy source. The plant was built and currently employs hundreds of workers and generates city taxes for the municipality.

Building the third power plant fueled by gas - The Mayor currently supports the project of building a third power plant fueled by gas for the simple reason that the amount of pollution caused by gas is virtually zero. The decision to build a third power plant, fueled by gas, was taken despite the opposition of the Electric Company and the Ministries of Finance and Infrastructure.

Figure 40: The Ashkelon Rotenberg power plant - Rotenberg public relations .

Building a coal harbor - A coal harbor was built in Ashkelon for the purpose of importing coal for the power plants in Ashkelon. The coal harbor did not cause pollution and its advantage was that it eliminated the traffic capacity needs of the trucks carrying coal to the power plants.

Figure 41: Coal harbor Ashkelon- Katsa Company.

The oil harbor (KATSA) - In Ashkelon there is a harbor for importing and exporting oil. This harbor was built in the 1960's and employs many workers from Ashkelon. KATSA Company pays city taxes to the municipality and participates in many social and educational projects in the city. Within the oil harbor, a harbor for importing and exporting chemicals was built. The Mayor fiercely opposed dealing with chemicals that are harmful to the environment and that are potentially dangerous to the safety of the residents.

Figure 42: The oil harbor (KATSA)- Katsa company.

7.8 Employment Growth Strategies

The Mayor's Vision and its Realization - Within this context, the Mayor envisioned Ashkelon as a city offering a variety of employment opportunities to all its young residents and aspiring to attract newcomers with full employment as existing condition prevailing for every citizen to live in dignity.

For this purpose, in addition to the employment opportunities described above - industry, tourism, commerce and services - additional employment possibilities were identified in any and every proposed project to create sources of employment for residents of Ashkelon (6)(7)(8)(10)(11). Several employments generating initiatives included:

a. Setting up call centers - These centers, subsidized by the government gave work to many students and currently employ about 1,500 people.

b. Setting up support centers for service companies - The Municipality encouraged many service companies - security, cleaning, supportive nursing etc. - to establish their company centers in the city. These activities created hundreds of new jobs in Ashkelon.

c. Employment support for Ashkelon artists - Organizing an Andalusian orchestra, which has received a considerable budget from the Ministry of Culture and have employed dozens of musicians and other workers. "Kedem" Theatre, which has received a budget from the Ministry of Education, is expected to employ theatre-people. The municipality and other institutions have encouraged purchasing works of art, such as environmental sculpture and design, from artists living in Ashkelon.

d. Employment fairs organized by the Municipality - The municipality, in cooperation with other relevant agencies in the city dealing with employment such as the government employment bureau, personal companies etc. have been holding annual employment fairs. Intensive advertising encouraged prospective employers to present their requirements for workers. Specific fairs were organized for students, demobilized soldiers and other identified groups. Under the auspices of these fairs, many contacts were made between prospective employers and employees.

e. Vocational training center - In cooperation with the Ministry of Labor, vocational education networks and other relevant institutions the vocational training center in Ashkelon offers professional training courses in various fields such as electricians, fitters and turners, builder and other professions, which are required by the national and regional employment market.

f. Center for promoting entrepreneurship (MATI) - The Center assists small businesses in promoting business development.

Figure 44: Industrial Zone Ashkelon –Ashkelon Municipality

7.9 Performance Measures and Impacts Assessment

Figures 12 and 13 show that the unemployment rate of Ashkelon in the year 2002 was 17%. This was very high in comparison to the rate of the national average (i.e. 10.3) and in comparison to the rate average of the south of Israel (i.e. 13.9%). in the year 2013 the rate of unemployment in Ashkelon decreased to 6.7%, lower than the average rate of the south region of Israel (i.e. 6.9%).

Table 13 shows that in 2013 the unemployment rate in Ashkelon was the lowest in the south region of Israel. It was the first year that unemployment in Ashkelon was lower than Ashdod (7%) and lower than Be'er-sheva (7.3%). These results clearly indicate the success of the economic development strategy and social programs undertaken by the municipality of Ashkelon with the leadership of the mayor. Figure 44 illustrates that the employment rate in Ashkelon (63%) is higher than the average of major cities (59.7%) including Haifa, Jerusalem, Ashdod, Beer Sheba, and is rather close to the average of the central region cities.

Rate of Unemployment in Ashkelon

Year / Unemployment	South Region %	National Average (%)	Ashkelon %
2001	12.1%	9.4%	
2002	13.9%	10.3%	17%
2003	13.6%	10.7%	17%
2007	8.4%	7.3%	8.1%
2008	6.9%	6.1%	8.1%

2009	7.9%	7.5%	9%
2010	7.5%	6.2%	7.5%
2012	7.3%	6.9%	7.1%
2013	6.9%	6.2%	6.7%

Table 13: Rate of Unemployment in Ashkelon - Central Bureau of Statistic of Israel- 2002

Rate of Unemployment in Ashkelon comparison south region of Israel

City	Unemployment Rate %
Ashkelon	6.7
Ashdod	7
Be'er-sheva	7.3
Kiryat-gat	10.9
Netivot	9.1
Ofakim	12.9
Sderot	10.7
Kiryat-malachi	11.2
South region average	6.9

Table 14: Rate of Unemployment in Ashkelon comparison south region of Israel - Central Bureau of Statistic of Israel.
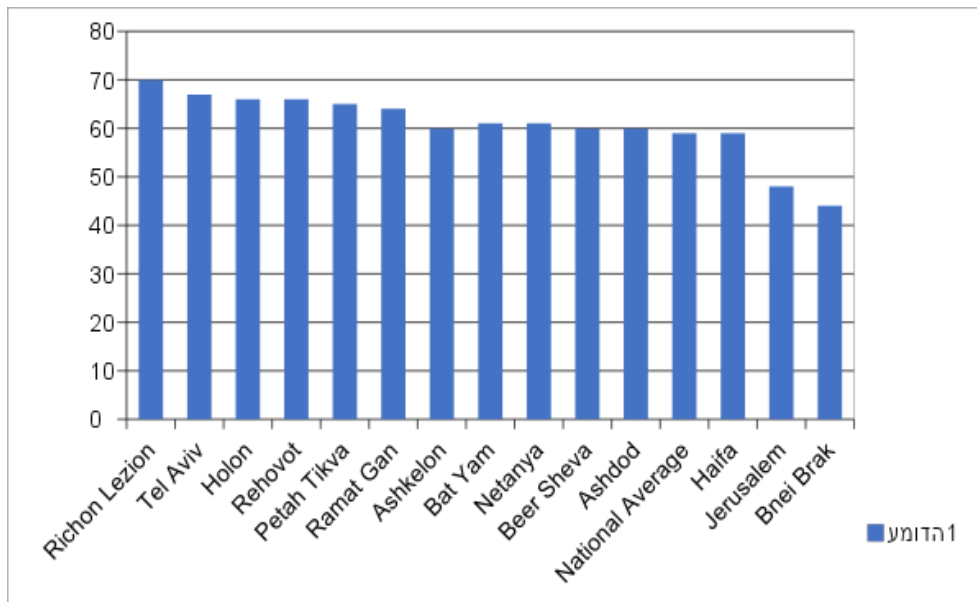
Figures 44: Employment rates in major cities in Israel – year 2013. -Central bureau of statistic in Israel.

7.10 Residential Construction - A Stimulus for Growth and Employment

The Mayor's vision - In 1991, the population of the city was approximately 60,000. As stated in the master plan, the Mayor envisioned Ashkelon as a metropolitan city aspiring to reach a population of 250,000 residents.

Population Growth in Israeli Cities (1955 to 2013) and Urban Density at 2013

POPULATION (THOUSANDS)							
DENSITY PER SQ.KM	2013	2008	1995	1983	1972	1955	CITY
2681	124	111	83	53	43	17	ASHKELON
1697	199	193	153	111	85	21	BEER-SHEBA
15697	129	130	139	129	100	16	BAT YAM
4686	216	204	130	66	40		ASHDOD
4135	90	86	83	63	41	21	HERZLIA
9835	186	176	164	133	99	31	HOLON
4232	273	264	259	226	220	158	HAIFA
6924	72	69	52	40	31	17	LOD
5406	125	111	85	68	39	26	REHOVOT
6775	197	180	146	102	71	31	NETANYA
23426	173	152	131	96	76	28	BNEI BRAK
6643	830	760	603	429	314	146	JERUSALEM
8087	419	403	349	327	364	360	TEL AVIV

Table 15: Population Growth in Israeli Cities (1955 to 2013) and Urban Density at 2013 - Central Bureau of Statistic of Israel

Migration Balance in Israeli Cities – End of 2012

Migration balance	Emigration (thousands)	Immigration (thousands)	City
1.1	2.7	3.8	Ashkelon
-1.3	22.6	21.3	Tel Aviv
-8.7	19.2	10.5	Jerusalem
3	6.1	9.1	Petach Tikva
-0.7	8.8	8.1	Haifa
-0.9	8.5	7.6	Ramat Gan
-8	7.8	7	Rishon Lezion
-0.1	5.8	5.7	Holon
0.7	4.7	5.4	Netanya
0.6	4.1	4.7	Rehovot
-1.1	5.6	4.5	Bat Yam
-0.9	5.4	4.5	Beer Sheva
-1.5	5.4	4	Bnei Brak
-1.5	5.4	3.9	Ashdod

Table 17: Internal Migration and average number of students in class, Year 1998 & 2013 - Central Bureau

City	Average number of students in class 1998	1998 Internal migration rate /1000 residents	Average number of students in class 2013	2013 Internal migration rate /1000 residents
Ashkelon	28.9	-1.5	27	17.4
Jerusalem	27.7	-10.4	24	-5.2
Tel-Aviv	25.4	-15.2	24	0.8
Haifa	27.4	-17	24	0.7
Ashdod	27.8	23	25	-8
Beer Sheba	25.9	-6.4	24	
Benybrak	26.7	-29.29	26	-11.9
Bat Yam	27.7	-26	24	-8
Dimona	24.9	-6.5	23	-10.9
Herzelia	29.2	-12.2	26	0
Holon	29.3	-14	27	-5.3
Netanya	28.8	3.5	27	13.4
Rehovot	28.4	6.1	27	14.4

of Statistic of Israel.

Table 15 illustrates the Population Growth in Israeli Cities from 1955 to 2013 and their Density at 2013. It indicates that the Ashkelon population grew in a comparable rate with other cities (in percentage) reaching a population density, which is one of the lowest in Israel. This requires greater investments in the infrastructure leading to high quality of life in Ashkelon. Since 1981 the population has grown by 137% reaching today about 136,000 residents in Ashkelon. About 40,000 new immigrants and 38,000 veteran Israelis settled in Ashkelon.

Table 16 shows the migration balance of Israeli Cities at the End of 2012, illustrating that the migration balance of Ashkelon is among the highest in Israel indicating the high attractiveness of Ashkelon due to its economic development and improvement of quality of life engaged by the Mayor over two decades.

Table 17 shows the Internal Migration and average number of students in class for the Years 1998 and 2013. It illustrates that while the city of Ashkelon as well as other Israeli cities has absorbed a significant immigration the number of students per class slightly decreased.

The rapid population growth generated an ever growing need for residential building construction, which presented significant advantages for the city, including:

1. A large supply of residential apartments ensures reasonable prices and makes it possible for young couples and people in employment to buy a home.
2. Providing apartments to new immigrants and people relocating to Ashkelon from other places in Israel helped in achieving the Mayor's goals of increasing the population of the city.
3. Residential construction in the city stimulated growth and employment and created work for thousands in the building industry - cement mixers, architects, engineers, real estate agents etc.
4. Building created a demand for building materials and for the businesses of supplying them, such as floor tiles, ceramic products, plumbing and electricity and all the various sorts of building materials.
5. Residential construction created work for development contractors from Ashkelon, for products and materials needed for paving roads, public parks, etc.
6. Residential construction brought in its wake a great deal of commercial construction as well as public institutions such as schools, kindergartens and social and community facilities.
7. All these opportunities stimulated additional sources of employment. (2)

Implementation Strategies for realizing the Mayor's vision – These municipal strategies involved:

1. Preparation of master plans, urban building plans and specific building plans, which were prepared in advance to enable statutory plans for residential construction to be readily available for immediate execution. After realizing that there was a great demand for residential housing in Ashkelon, plans were prepared for the east and the south of the city featuring up to 2,000 residential units.

2. Development of plans for roads, sidewalks, water, sewage and drainage were readily available for immediate execution.

3. In some sites infrastructure development plans were brought forward, especially for drainage, water, sewage and roads. The early execution of these plans encouraged building entrepreneurs to start building the neighborhoods.

4. The Mayor carried out campaigns for advertising Ashkelon in Israel and throughout the world, which were organized jointly by the municipality, the local contractors and other economic partners and governmental agencies. They included publicity in the printed press, radio, TV, advertising agencies and participation in relevant fairs in Israel and other countries. These campaigns attracted a large population of quality people to the city of Ashkelon.

Figure 18 shows that number of buildings for housing, public building and non-housing (tourism, industry, commerce etc.) building in Ashkelon in 2012 to 2014 is comparable to Jerusalem and Beer Sheba and significantly greater than Haifa and several central region cities, including Bat Yam, Herzlia, and Netania.

Building for housing, Public Buildings and other Uses in Ashkelon and other

PUBLIC BUILDING 10^3 m^2	INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE	BUILDING FOR TOURISM AND BUSINESS	BUILDING FOR HOUSING 10^3 m^2	ALL PURPOSE BUILDING 10^3 m^2	CITY
16.8	49.8	7.9	243.8	318	ASHKELON
46	17	6	265	334	JERUSALEM
62	109	186	399	756	TEL AVIV
34	4	40	176	254	HAIFA
18.1	19.4	100	319.8	457	ASHDOD
38.6	3.7	2.4	262	307	BEER SHEBA
14.9	23.8	0.2	41	80	BNEI BRAK
1.8	1.3	0.3	26.3	30	BAT YAM
2.5	0.1		11.7	14	DIMONA
	10		50.9	61	HERZLIA
3.9	34.2	11.7	61.6	111	HOLON
2.3	13.8	8.2	2.6	27	LOD
6.4	94.2	18	131.9	250	NETANYA
2.4	51.7	7.3	126	187	REHOVOT
571	745	734	6660	8945	TOTAL IN ISRAEL

Table 18: Building for housing, Public Buildings and other Uses in Ashkelon and other Cities - Central Bureau of Statistic of Israel.

7.11 Delegating Municipal Tasks of Economic Development to Urban Corporations

The Legal Structure of Urban Corporations

The Urban Corporations founded in Ashkelon were established by the local authorities to fulfill specific tasks and constitute institutionally and legally separate entities. The constitution of an urban corporation is subject to the approval of the ministry of the Interior. The Municipalities Ordinance (Establishment of Corporations) 1980 states that "No municipal authority will found a company, subsidiary company, cooperative association or any other association for any purpose that lies within the authority of the municipal council and its functions, and will not purchase shares or securities or any other right or advantage in any corporation whose goals, in the opinion of the council, assist in achieving any such aim and will not function as the owner and will not be a member of the association, without the approval of the Minister of the Interior and subject to his stipulated terms". Because the establishment of an urban corporation requires the confirmation of the Ministry of the Interior, a series of compulsory procedures has been determined that the local authority must follow when submitting a request for confirmation from the Ministry. The procedural requirements include:

1. An official letter from the head of the local authority (Mayor).
2. A preliminary assessment of the general director of the local authority concerning the establishment of the company, emphasizing the expected benefits to be derived.

3. The opinion of the legal counsel of the local authority, mainly related to the compliance of the request with the instructions of the law.
4. The decision of the local council
5. A strategic plan which must include:
   - A detailed plan for the future of the local authority with emphasis on the involvement of the urban company in these plans.
   - An analysis of relevant alternatives for providing the service by means of the urban company.
   - A detailed economic plan with specific attention to the expected costs and sources of financing.

The ownership status of the Urban Corporations established in Ashkelon – These corporations were either fully owned by the municipality or independent entities, which could be owned by other stakeholders, public or private, but controlled by the municipality. These corporations are managed as self-dependent businesses, maintaining standards of the private sector, and can pursue public-private and public-public partnerships for projects. However, they are subject to the statutes, laws and rules of the public administration. The companies are, in fact, the implementation arm of the municipality and manage projects delegated to them by the municipality. The corporations established since the 80s are:

- The Ashkelon Economic Company Ltd.
- The Company for Culture, Youth and Sport Ltd.
- The Company for Educational Institutions Ltd.
- The Company for Community Centers in Ashkelon
- E.T.I, - Knowledge Based Industries - Ashkelon
- The Ashkelon Foundation
- The Ashkelon Water Foundation Ltd. (2)
- M.A.T.I.-Association for Promoting Small Business Enterprise.

A brief description of each company is presented below:

Ashkelon Economic Company Ltd. (A.E.C.) - A.E.C. was established in 1989. Its directorate is made of three members of the city council, three senior officials of the municipality, mainly from the monetary and engineering branches, and three knowledgeable public figures with academic backgrounds, preferably in the fields of economics and finance. The mayor serves as the chair of the directorate. The projects delegated to A.E.C. were mainly economic development projects that required resources that the company was capable of obtaining. (Attached is a presentation describing the company, prepared by the author in 2012). Examples of these projects include:

The Cultural Center – where A.E.C. system of financing and execution contributed to successfully building the Center.

Figure 45: The Cultural Center of Ashkelon. - Ashkelon Municipality

Construction of the Marina (see appendix p.29) - Building the marina was a joint project of the municipality and private entrepreneurs (Details are given in the append ix). Only under the A.E.C. as an independent operator such a joint project could be executed.

Figure 46: Ashkelon Yacht Marina - Ashkelon Municipality.

Urban Development of Areas in the Neighborhoods - The development of neighborhoods in Ashkelon was delegated by the Mayor to A.E.C. In the past, this development had been done by the State or by the contractors who built the neighborhoods. The approved budgets were in the hands of the government resulting in very slaw development and some of the neighborhoods remained without any development at all. The completion of the development in these neighborhoods took many years. Contractors did all they

could to save money and did not complete the green development. Through the A.E.C. financing of high standard rapid development was achieved. The money was collected from the owners of the land and, therefore, the A.E.C. could retain some revenues, which were used to implement public projects such as the building of the Cultural Center. The attached presentation describes the development in the neighborhoods.

Development of Industrial Parks - A.E.C. efficiently contributed to overcoming the bureaucratic impediments of the national government and thereby facilitated the accelerated industrial site development and a faster pace of marketing the land.

Building Residential Apartments - In Israel today, the general opinion is that the prices of housing are high and that young couples experience difficulties in buying a home. The same problem existed in the years 1995 - 1997 and for this reason, the Mayor commissioned to A.E.C. the responsibility to build 60 apartments at a reduced price for young couples. This initiative brought other contractors to lower their prices.

Construction of Industrial Buildings for Rental - In the 1990's, entrepreneurs were not keen on constructing industrial buildings for rent. There was, anyway, only a small amount of building taking place. Entrepreneurs insisted that only after potential tenants were found, would they start building rental industrial buildings. Industries, however, will generally look for buildings that were ready for rent. For this reason, the Mayor delegated to the A.E.C. the responsibility to construct industrial buildings, which were then rented to industries.

Figure 47: Industrial Buildings for Rental - Ashkelon Municipality.

"Build your own home" Neighborhoods - Build your own home neighborhoods" are neighborhoods in which families purchase land and build their own low-rise homes. The size of the plots varies from 250 - 500 square meters. The A.E.C. developed such neighborhoods throughout the city. In this way, attractive neighborhoods

were built all over Ashkelon. The profits from these development projects were invested in improving the quality of life of the residents by building public institutions.

Figure 48: "Build your own home" Neighborhoods - Ashkelon Municipality.

Student Hostels - As the Mayor decided to promote the Ashkelon College and encourage students to study there, it became apparent that the possibility of living in student hostels would have attracted many students to the college. For this purpose, the Mayor commissioned to A.E.C. the responsibility of building the hostels for students at the college. One hundred and eight units were built.

The Promenade Along the Beach-front - The A.E.C. built the promenade along the seashore. This included developing the beaches. The result is a beautiful promenade built with high quality standards. Today the promenade runs from the southern point of the Ashkelon shore all the way to the northern point.

Figure 49: The Promenade Along the Beach-front - Ashkelon Municipality

The Golf Village Project – The responsibility for the development of this project was commissioned to A.E.C.

Wave Breakers - The flow of waves and the movement of sands on the shores of Ashkelon caused damage to the cliff, next to the sea, as well as to the bathing beaches. Breakwaters were selected as the optimal environmental protection solution. These projects, which were both costly and technically complex, were successfully carried out by A.E.C.

Figure 50: Wave Breakers - Ashkelon Municipality

The Main City Center Project (M.C.C) - The M.C.C. is one of the biggest projects that were ever undertaken in Ashkelon. In the framework of the master plan for Ashkelon, designated as the Civic Center, it included public buildings, government offices, a central square, commercial and residential buildings. The City Cultural Center, which was already operational, the city museum, the city library and the Medithech, which have all been built, were also part of the Civic Center. Furthermore, it was envisioned that the city-square would be surrounded by coffee shops, restaurants, commerce and residential apartments. The responsibility for executing this project was delegated to A.E.C.

Figure 51: The Main City Center Project - Ashkelon Municipality

Figure 52: The city library and the Medithech - Ashkelon Municipality

The Artist's Village - One of the plans of the A. E. C. is to build an artist's village in the center of old Migdal, next to the khan that was built 700 years ago. The intention is to provide a unique historical environment for artists from Ashkelon, Israel and abroad to come to live in the village and set up their studios there.

Fisherman's Village - This is a unique project with a special flavor. There are hundreds of fishermen in Ashkelon spread out all over the city. The Mayor's vision is to set up a fisherman's village with special facilities such as stalls for selling fresh fish, caught by the local fishermen. The village will also function as a holiday village for tourists who will enjoy its special atmosphere.

146

Setting up a Hi-tech Park in Ashkelon - With the Mayor's leadership A.E.C. purchased the first bit of land in order to begin building the hi-tech facilities in the north of the city nearby the train station.

Figure 53: Hi-tech Park in Ashkelon - Ashkelon Municipality

In conclusion – The extensive experience of A.E.C. shows that in the Israeli context of highly centralized state-controlled land use development urban companies such as A.E.C., constituting legally self-dependent institutional entities, may efficiently contribute to facing bureaucratic impediments and realizing the Mayor's vision for accelerated urban development.

The Ashkelon Foundation - The Ashkelon Foundation was established in 1989 in order to expand and increase the activities aimed at catering for the needs of the residents of the city of Ashkelon which was growing in population at an unprecedented rate, in the fields of society, community culture, education and welfare. The Board of Directors of the foundation is made up of public personalities who serve on a voluntary basis. The Foundation goals are to:

- Expand and increase current societal, cultural and educational activities run by the Foundation, the Ashkelon Municipality and other organizations in the city.
- Develop new educational, cultural and community oriented programs in coordination with the Ashkelon Municipality.
- Enhance education in Ashkelon.
- Increase the numbers of young people in Ashkelon in universities and other post high-school learning and training institutions.
- Cooperate with and assist other voluntary organizations in the city in order to empower them in the retaliation of their goals.

The main Activities of the Foundation are focused on:

- Enlisting donations and grants from non-governmental bodies both abroad and in Israel in order to finance projects in the city.
- Serving as an intermediary in the transfer of funds donated to other public and voluntary organizations in order to assist them in conducting their activities in an appropriate, efficient and legal manner.
- Managing projects

Projects Initiated and managed by the Foundation include:

- Kindergarten for children with CP (Cereb al Palsy).
- Municipal swimming pool
- Neve llan and Neve Dekalim Community Centers
- The Center for Excellence - Special programs for talented and motivated students (computers, science, astronomy etc.).
- Beth Zipporah (educational center for additional study activities for children from weaker population groups - primarily from Ethiopia).
- Scholarships and loans to students (in return for participation in community and welfare programs in the city).
- Preparation for enlistment into the army
- Programs for children at risk
- PACT (Parents and Children Together) - Program for immigrants from Ethiopia for children aged 0-6 years together with their parents.

As deputy mayor of Ashkelon and later as its Mayor, the author was the driving force behind the establishment of the foundation. The director of the Foundation at present time is Mayor Eli Dayan.

Figure 54: New Kindergartens - Ashkelon Municipality

The Urban Company for Small Business Development Centers (MATI) - MATI centers are non-profit organizations, budgeted by the Ministry of Industry and Trade, and specialized in helping small and medium business in their development initiatives.

In Israel there are currently about 25 MATI's centers all over the country, which provide a variety of consulting, mentoring, training and business planning, marketing consulting, preparation of business plans, financial advice, professional courses, workshops, mentoring and assistance. As in other western countries, small businesses (employing roughly between 3- 19 people) are the largest employer in the working sector.

However, the government does not regard the nurturing of small businesses as a priority and for this reason, budgets for improving small businesses are not adequate and the banks are heap difficulties on the owners of these businesses both in terms of giving the loan and in terms of the high interest demanded. Each year some 52,000 small businesses are opened but at the same time about 46,000 small businesses close on a yearly basis. In order to make some progress in remediating the situation, the Ministry of Industry and Trade set up MATI which functions in many towns and cities in the country. The main problems confronting small businesses, which MATI attempts to address are:

- A lack of business - management skills.
- Unreasonable terms for loans credited.
- A lack of professional support and accompaniment

Through MATI, the ministry attempts to address these issues in the following manner:

- Encouraging, supporting and educating toward entrepreneurship.

- Running seminars and workshops for small business owners and workers in business techniques, financing, marketing, customer service etc.
- MATI facilitates cooperation with loan funds and agencies outside the banking system in order to enlist loans and credit for small businesses under reasonable conditions.
- MATI has a list of consultants who advise and accompany small businesses
- When MATI was set up, many mayors saw the benefits and immediately cooperated with MATI in establishing centers in their cities and allocating budgets
- As Mayor of Ashkelon, some 14,000 prospective small business operators attended lectures and sought advice from MATI and 4,200 opened businesses.

In order to assist in financing and credit, the Mayor negotiated a special loan fund, jointly run and financed by the Ashkelon Municipality and the Jewish Community of Baltimore ESA, which was dedicated to developing educational programs and projects in Ashkelon.

The Urban Company for Culture, Sport and Recreation in Ashkelon Ltd. - Following the Mayor's vision the purpose of this company was to coordinate activities in the fields of culture, youth, sport and recreation with the goal of raising the level of the quality of the leisure time of the residents of Ashkelon by means of cultural activities, informal education, sport and recreation. The Goals of the Company are to:

- Ensure that each unit would work according to an annual plan.
- Prepare of a marketing plan by the Company
- Promote cooperation between the activities of the units.
- Raise financing and leverage resources from funds and sponsors for the activities of the Company.

Projects Managed by the Company include:

The Sports Center - The Center which, at the time that it was built was the second largest in the country, covers an area of 5,400 square meters, with 2,500 seats and a possibility to expand to 5,000 seats. It hosts:

- Basketball matches of the premium league, basketball and futsal (indoor soccer) competitions, fencing, gymnastics, dancing and fitness rooms for thousands of trainees.
- Cultural events and festivals.
- Events for schools, kindergartens and youth.
- A restaurant and coffee shops which supplement income

Figure 55: The Sports Center - Ashkelon Municipality

The City Conservatory - The Company manages a conservatory in which hundreds of children, youths and adults learn music on a wide range of musical instruments. The Conservatory offers workshops and courses.

Figure 56: The City Conservatory - Ashkelon Municipality

The Ashkelon Chamber Music Orchestra - The Company manages the Ashkelon Chamber Music Orchestra with dozens of players, which appears at all major events in the city as well as at various events in the country.

The City Swimming Pool - The Pool is run by the Company. It is open-air in the summer and covered and warmed in the winter. Thousands of residents of all ages learn swimming at the Pool and use it as a place of recreation.

Figure 57: The City Swimming Pool - Ashkelon Municipality

<u>The City Dance Group (Hora Ashkelon)</u> - The Company runs the dance-school with some 1,400 pupils and which holds activities for all age groups.

<u>The Company for Supplementary Extracurricular Educational Activities for Children</u> - The Company runs:

1. After-school-clubs of *extracurricular activities* for children. These children come from socio-economically problematic homes and are in need of a supportive framework in the afternoons.
2. Day-care centers (pre-kindergarten).

<u>The Cultural Unit</u> - The Company organizes cultural activities such as theater plays for children of kindergarten and school age and festivals. Thousands of residents participate in these events, which include:

- <u>Ashkelon Sea Festival</u> - The Company holds an annual sea festival, which includes swimming competitions, kayak and sailboat races and diving and fishing events.

- <u>Business Entrepreneurship for Youth</u> - Training the youth in setting up a business

- <u>Theatres</u> - "Menorah" Theatre for Russian speakers and "Kedem" Theatre with plays, which are held in various venues throughout the country.

<u>The Company for Community Centers in Ashkelon</u> - The Mayor's vision was to establish a company that would manage city wide the 12 community centers for culture, youth and sport these centers. These centers encompass hundreds of workers and dozens of activities in the fields of culture, youth and sport. Some activities are given at no charge while others require payment. This company could more efficiently control and optimize the capacity to produce more activities, many of which can be based on economic worthwhileness. The company has demonstrated its efficiency in coordinating the activities among the

centers, optimizing their resources, enlisting financial support and resources from various sources and expanding the activities for youth as well as sport activities, all at a lower cost.

7.12 Setting up a Technological Incubator for Knowledge Based Industries

<u>The Mayor's vision</u> - Merely establishing an incubator is not enough in today's environment to create a hi-tech industry because the businesses are operating on a hypercompetitive market. Introducing new technologies to the marketplace poses a number of unique competitive problems and is particularly problematic for emerging firms. There is a gap between the firm and its potential markets resulting from issues such as public acceptance, technological obsolescence, social concerns, channels of distribution, development of an aftermarket, overseas manufacturing, and the process of moving to the next market. Helping companies to meet the challenge of hyper competition has become an important part of economic policy worldwide. Building indigenous companies has become an essential element in regional economic development. This economy development strategy may be beneficial and necessary in the long-term for several reasons. It harnesses local entrepreneurial talent and builds companies, which in turn create jobs and add economic value to a region. In addition it keeps home-grown talent within the region and encourages economic diversification and technology innovation by creating a climate which rewards productivity and innovation.

There are a number of stimulants for entrepreneurial activity and thus to generate economic development. The stimulants have been the main influences on the entrepreneurial activity and the development of business incubators in the U.S. These factors include an increasing focus on capital formation, changing institutional relationships, supportive government programs, reassessment of intellectual property, and new approaches to innovation. First, a growing pool of capital is today available the entrepreneurial process, primarily so-called venture capital. Venture capitalists generally focus on mid-growth companies with approved track record and rarely provide seed capital i.e. capital to prove a concept, build a prototype, and permit the entrepreneur to start a company.

Business incubators can help the entrepreneurs to the stage where they can tap the resources of the venture capital industry by providing financial resources and act as facilitators for future financing as the companies matures. Secondly, another stimulator is the commercialization of technology among various institutions. Entrepreneurs within these institutions the opportunity to commercialize their ideas.

153
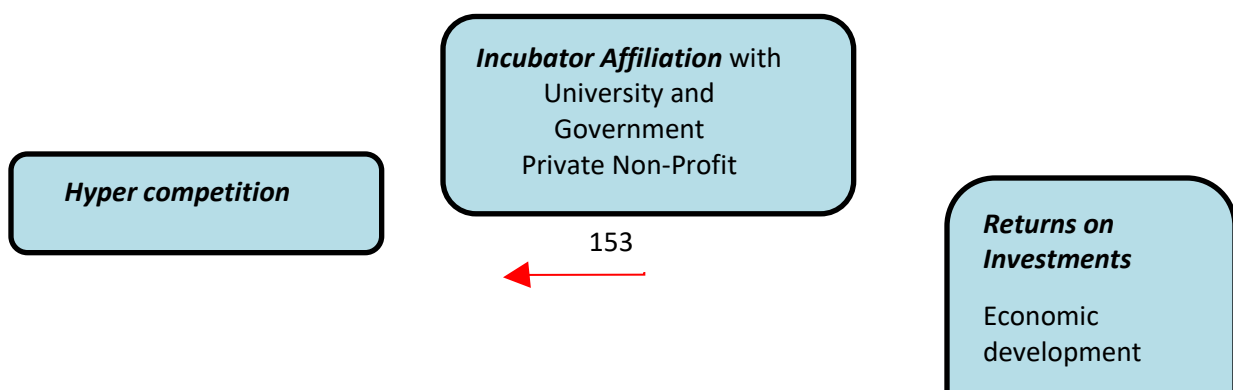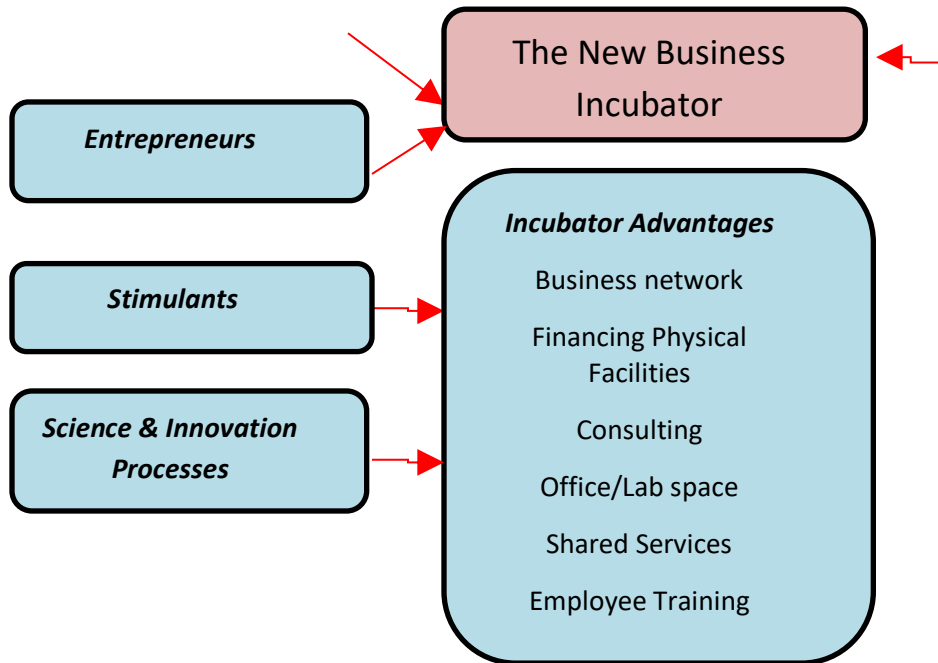
Figure 58: The ATI (Ashkelon Technology Incubator) Business Structure

The heart of the commercialization process is the ability to transform scientific and technical developments into profitable business concepts. Institutions such as government laboratories, industry, universities, colleges and non-profit organizations are important sources of research and development. These institutions are searching for ways of stimulating entrepreneurship, collaborate, and diffuse technology in order to profit from their intellectual property assets. The technology incubator can give potential entrepreneurs within these institutions the opportunity to commercialize their ideas.

Third, the entrepreneurial process is stimulated by the proactive role of governments, which are actively seeking to fund and support technological efforts, which have potential for commercialization. Local and state agencies support entrepreneurial activities by funding research and development, establishing science parks, tax incentives, and emphasizing on quality educational programs. Fourth, universities, laboratories, and industry are reassessing intellectual property policies because of the hyper competi

The general ownership of scientific and technological developments, patents, licenses and royalties, is becoming more important because these institutions produce entrepreneurs who wish to commercialize their ideas

A fifth stimulant to the new business development is a removal of barriers to innovation by creating an environment favorable to entrepreneurial activity. Both national and local governments have modified laws and incentives to attract qualified personnel and encourage technology-oriented firms. Even some

corporations have established flexible corporate cultures to encourage entrepreneurial activity recognizing that entrepreneurship increases productivity.

The hyper-competition, the stimulants for entrepreneurial activity and the need for entrepreneurial education have entailed the development of new concepts of business incubators. The inputs and the outputs of this new business incubator are depicted in Figure 58. (Source: Smilor, R.W., Gill Jr., M.D., 1986, p.19.).

The goal of a business incubator is to increase the success of new technology ventures by linking the critical elements of the entrepreneurial process: talent, technology, capital, and know-how. Economic development relies on people with entrepreneurial talent, which can emerge from several sources: universities, corporations, research labs, communities and public sector. When their entrepreneurial talent is combined with technology these people can recognize opportunities and generate ideas with real potential. The third component of the process is capital. The capital is the catalyst and provides the financial resources necessary to realize the entrepreneur's ideas. The last element necessary for the know-how, which is the ability to leverage business and scientific knowledge is by linking talent, technology, and capital in emerging companies. The role of the incubator is to provide know-how by offering expertise involving management, marketing, finance, accounting, production, manufacturing, as well as assistance in legal and scientific matters. It is very rare that one entrepreneur possesses both the technical expertise for technological innovation and the business knowledge for successful product commercialization.

Even though incubators differ regarding what services and assistance they provide to the client companies, some generic features related to the incubator concept can be identified. When the incubator has concluded the initial screening and the project has been accepted then it will be able to receive e.g. low-cost office and laboratory space, administrative services, access to library and computer facilities, skilled consultants, a rather cheap workforce consisting of graduate and undergraduate students, special contacts with bankers, venture capitalists, technologists and government officials. In such an environment the entrepreneur has a higher possibility of succeeding since less energy has to be spent on matters like the aforesaid, instead he or she can focus on developing the product. In addition, the entrepreneur is during this time surrounded by others facing equal difficulties and they will gain from assisting each other with their respective knowledge.

The incubator is however not only an organization it is also a physical unit consisting of a single building or group of buildings in which the entrepreneurs will be housed thus promoting the interaction between them. The institutions supporting the incubator might provide the entrepreneurs with secretarial support, accounting services, technical editing help, computer equipment, conference space, health and other benefit packages and access to university facilities and expertise to a minor fee.

The organization of incubators vary because they have different priorities, the priorities, in turn, are related to the funding of the incubator. Funding might come from federal, state and local governments, communities, universities, private individuals and foundations and corporations. General goals of incubators are to develop firms and stimulate entrepreneurship. More specifically the incubators might strive for job creation, the creation of investment opportunities for college endowments, expansion of the tax base for local government, improvement of the image of college technical programs, acceleration of the transfer of technological innovation from the academic and research worlds to industry, a higher attraction of venture capital to the region by improving the quality of locally based entrepreneurial talent, and creation of a set of indigenous companies.

Many of the first incubators are university-affiliated and located close to universities. Such a location implies several advantages as it gives access to libraries, advanced technical equipment and laboratories, technically skilled labor and a creative environment. The incubator companies can thereby profit from the resources of the university in several ways.

Another link between the university and industry is the science park, sometimes also called technology or Research Park. These parks are located close to universities and their purpose is to attract both R&D and the manufacturing facilities of established technology based companies. A science park might be a tool of an area for attracting companies and individuals from out of state. In addition, when the university has links to such a park it might be able to further benefit from firms incubated in its facilities since incubated firms are prime candidates for science park tenants.

The Swedish in-depth study proposed a transfer of the entire Israeli program of incubators and outlined appropriate program policies. The Swedish experts stated that the Israeli technology incubator program was an appealing alternative for Sweden in order to stimulate integration, even though Sweden has not received a comparable influx of immigrants. Introducing a similar program would allow Sweden to make use of the competence and knowledge possessed by the immigrants. However, while this aspect has been one of the principal drivers of the successful incubator program of Israel the author prime goal was to promote the incubator's role as an economic development tool by creating viable companies and commercializing technologies.

Internationally the technology incubator program was considered to be a successful role model for incubation programs even though some researchers questioned the effectiveness of the program. They claimed that it was too early to evaluate the effectiveness of the incubators. Taken into account the considerable attention the technology incubators have attracted worldwide the author strongly believes that it was worthwhile studying them to assess early successes and potential economic development impacts.

About Ashkelon Technological Industries Ltd. (ATI) – A.T.I. is a business development center, which actively partners with new hi-tech companies in the process towards the commercialization of a novel product on world markets.

All project applications - a yearly average of 150 - are subjected to a rigorous examination process. Ashkelon Technological Industries' projects are founded on viable and marketable technologies, each of which forms the basis for new and unique products that are suitable for a wide market. Only the best projects qualify for implementation and investment.

The projects operate in areas such as biomedical engineering, biotechnology, including genetics, diagnostics and pharmacology, as well as medical devices, mechanical & electronic engineering, alternative advanced materials and environmental projects. With its integrated companies Ashkelon Technological Industries builds technical and management teams, which advance the project from a technological idea to its materialization as a company in its own right. It advises, guides, and takes an active role in the management of the companies, providing partial finance, accountancy services, financial back up and intensive marketing. Ashkelon Technological Industries offers investment opportunities from early stage seed funding to post-incubation strategic partnerships for private investors, venture capitalists and strategic partners.

ATI Modus Operandi - With over a decade of experience in helping emerging high-tech companies, ATI developed a very effective methodology for accepting new members into the ATI 'family' of companies and then helping them put their best foot forward. Moreover, the author and co-workers have a good record in recognizing true potential - even when it is not always immediately apparent. ATI receives more than 150 applications every year from universities, research institutes, inventors and entrepreneurs, both in Israel and abroad. Its rigorous step-by-step screening process ensures that only novel ideas with sound technology, strong market potential and the ability for patent protection are accepted. Successful candidate companies are required to demonstrate that they have advanced beyond the 'first idea' stage towards practical implementation. Successful inventors and entrepreneurs have to show an impressive skill level and extensive experience in their field, while being able to adapt and integrate well into a management team.

All accepted projects receive seed capital from the Office of the Chief Scientist (OCS) of the Ministry of Trade and Industry. This finance, US$ 300,000 for a two-year period, goes towards initial establishment and operational costs of the company, starting the project off on a sound footing. Even so, all projects require additional financing and partnering that cannot always be fully met in the Israeli market. It is in this manner that ATI helps generating any number of quality companies by making that much needed effort to raise complementary funding, find potential strategic partners and penetrate world markets. Following the two-year business development program as supported by the OCS, ATI may help the project through their

application to other finance, R&D or beta-site programs, while continuing to offer business development services, as appropriate for the project's needs.

Insight - ATI 's Service & Facilities - Application Process - ATI's Chief Scientific Officer (CSO) assesses each application for its originality, technological advantage and market viability. If these criteria are satisfied, the CSO meets with the applicants and helps them preparing a presentation, firstly to ATI's Project Acceptance Committee and later to Israel's Office of the Chief Scientist (OCS). A subject matter expert, linked to the OCS, assists the successful company throughout its tenure at ATI. Companies are accepted within ATI once contractual obligations have been completed.

Incubation Period - Companies stay with ATI for two years. Throughout this period, they enjoy the full range of ATI's services and facilities. The author and co-workers deal with every company in a flexible and customized way, appointing a special technical and management team and building an individual progress plan. Companies benefit from the marketing initiatives that promote ATI's web site, in which they feature prominently. They also use our extensive network of links with international markets. All these advantages greatly increase the chance of graduating as viable independent companies.

Facilities & Services - The author and co-workers are located in Ashkelon's South Industrial Park and have 1,500m2 of space for modern offices, highly customizable laboratories, workshops and beta-sites. ATI's office facilities include a central facsimile and photocopier, conference room with presentation equipment and an equipped kitchen. In addition, each company is provided with water and electrical services. Computer services Include fully networked computer equipment, Internet connection and access to our massive database of business contacts. The author and co-workers also offer our companies a wide range of personal services: management, marketing, technical, human resources, legal, financial & accounting.

ATI's support environment - The ATI technology incubator in Israel (Ashkelon Technological Industries) provides a high quality professional and supportive incubator environment for the potential investor, entrepreneur or inventor. ATI expertise covers a wide variety of high-tech fields – advanced materials, bio-technology, communications, electrical engineering, environment and medical devices enabling it to manage one of the most extensive project lists of any technology incubator in Israel. However, alongside its critical mass of projects, ATI is also noted for the breadth and depth of management and marketing support provided to the start-up companies. This support goes all the way from being highly focused about accepting new projects to developing a huge database of international business contacts for companies to exploit. ATI's large management team ensures that every company receives a high degree of personal attention - a 'hands-on' approach.

<u>Investment Opportunities</u> - ATI's numerous companies offer unique investment opportunities for private investors, venture capitalists, and strategic partners. ATI's investment opportunities range from early stage seed funding to post- incubation strategic partnerships. When investing in an ATI based company at the seed stage, the potential investor can be reassured that the identified technological development has already been vetted by a rigorous selection process, ensuring that only companies based on a scientifically sound, high market potential technology solution, which have been recommended by industry experts and academics, have been accepted for ATI support. From an initial examination of about 100 applicants per year, only 10% qualify for implementation. The selection process involves screening for technological viability, originality, market potential, and patentability. Inventors are also screened for their skill level and experience as well as for their capacity to join a management team.

<u>Examples of successful current companies:</u>

- <u>Uri-Dent</u> is currently operating as an ATI company at ATI's site in Ashkelon. Uri- Dent Ltd. is developing unique dental products for the global market and will initially produce Prefabricated Tooth Colored Crowns for Primary Dentition and Young Permanent Molars. Uri-Dent's superior project team was assembled through ATI's connections within Israeli academia, and has been pivotal for Uri-Dent's successful technical and business development. ATI's wide-ranging services and facilities have provided Uri-Dent with a sound framework within which to develop their technology. In addition, ATI's marketing and business development services have helped Uri- Dent receiving the necessary private investment to continue expanding. Uri-Dent has recently received a proposal for cooperation and investment from an international strategic partner. This massive investment is sure to propel an innovative company such as Uri-Dent to initial success and facilitate the company's development

- <u>Nutralease Ltd.</u> was established and implemented by ATI in 2001 with a specific goal of developing industrial applications and commercializing a unique and innovative technology emerging from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, in the field of pharmaceutical drug delivery. Nutralease has the full rights to the IP, and since its inception has developed the technology in the Pharmaceutical industry (improved drug delivery) and in the Functional-food industry (food products fortified with health related supplements). The company is already selling products for incorporation into Functional foods. Products have been launched in Israel. Total investment to date was about 1 million Dollars US. The company is owned by the entrepreneurs and Adumim Food Ingredients, a listed company, traded in Tel Aviv stock exchange. Next phase financing or strategic partnership is required to maximize and capitalize on the company's potential in Pharmaceutical applications.

- <u>Calsys</u> has developed a radar collision avoidance technology platform for two separate applications. Through ATI's initiation Calsys formed a strategic partnership with Transtec, a daughter company of

Formula. As Transtech's subsidiary company, Calsys has developed a distributed airport radar based on millimeter waves. This radar represents a unique solution to runway incursions. The strategic partnership with Transtech , and investment of 40M Euro, has facilitated Calsys' continued development and success.

- <u>Phone-Or,</u> a pioneer in the field of optical sound solutions, has become a giant in the international Hi-tech market, as their current market value is approximately $220 million. Phone-Or designs, manufactures, and markets integrated optical microphones that incorporate Background Noise Suppression (BNS) technology. These microphones provide the ultimate solution to the speech recognition challenges facing the telecommunications, computer, and automotive industries such as Telematics, PDA/Cellular Communication, Call Centers, PC Dictation, and Internet Telephony. Phone-Or's BNS technology provides unparalleled suppression of random background noise and cyclic and harmonic noise. Their BNS technology provides these industries with a truly hands-free experience with superb sound quality in noisy environments. Phone-Or operated out of ATI from 1992.-1994. While at ATI, Phone-Or used ATI's office and laboratory facilities to complete the initial R&D for their novel technology. ATI provided Phone-Or with guidance in setting and accomplishing technical and marketing milestones. In addition, ATI's marketing staff turned Phone-Or's raw technology into a marketable and viable product by discerning potential markets for the product and creating a product position with these markets in mind. While at ATI, the first marketing thrust for surveillance microphones called SOM began. Phone-Or received massive investments from Kenwood Corp. (Japan), and Inventec (Israel). These Initial investments gave Phone-Or the means to develop their microphone in new directions and set up their current office complex in Yehud, Israel.

- <u>To Summarize</u> - ATI is a full-service technology incubator and is managed as a business. ATI aims to be a self-sustainable business development center and succeeds through its strong incentives to focus on the goal of creating new and viable businesses. By investing in organizational learning ATI has developed unique skills in screening new technologies and an understanding of how to promote and upgrade technologies. ATI is a well-oiled machine for creating business. Thus, in order for the projects to be able to fully take advantage of ATI's business development services, ATI seeks partnerships for its new ventures through capital assistance, strategic cooperation and/or involvement in ATI's activities by external bodies such as a financial VC groups or strategic industry leaders.

Each proposed project must meet the ATI criteria, which are: Product oriented; Rooted in Research & Development; Innovation and uniqueness; Early stage -immature- very high risk level; Significant potential market; Feasible with available resources and Individual initiative. After accepting the project to the

incubator, only team-coordinated work with the incubator staff, the start-up team and the government representatives (especially the officer chief science), will lead to the best results.

Eventually, the outcome of the many high-tech companies that evolved in an incubator, prove that the Israeli incubator model is very successful, with an average budget of $500K, Government support of 85% of the budget, support period of 2 - 3 years and annual Government Budget for the Program: $35M.

7.13 Conclusions

There is no doubt that the accelerated rate of population growth along with city planning for residential housing construction in Ashkelon, contributed to accelerate urban development in many areas and strongly promoted the economic development, while generating the employment growth of the city. Ashkelon was one of the first municipalities that began to independently become active in the area of urban economic development and this has been inspired by the education, knowledge, vision and personality of its Mayor and Deputy Mayor. Towards the end of the 1980s, when the author was elected Mayor, his vision was to create and nurture in Ashkelon urban economic development through creative institutional structure, entrepreneurial initiatives and public–private partnership

City	SELF GENERATED INCOME (1991) 10^3NIS	TOTAL INCOME (1991) 10^3NIS	SELF GENERATED INCOME (2014) 10^3NIS	TOTAL INCOME (2014) 10^3NIS
Ashkelon	49 184	72 526	481,430	988631
Jerusalem	364 364	511 073	2,970,894	5978892
Tel Aviv	693 662	807 496	3 625 645	5,307,386
Haifa	252 573	309 271	1,533,376	3,037,095
Ashdod	66 914	96 542	888,569	1,313,715
Beer Sheba	103 164	156 961	926,501	1,605,413
Bat Yam	68 339	120 352	494,057	833,486
Herzelia	68 339	89 881	613,719	1,050,347
Netanya	102 580	145 551	966,409	2,181,480
Rehovot	50 556	75 115	636,318	1,186,893

Table 19: Self-Generated Income and Total Income in 10^3NIS in 1991 and 2014 - Central Bureau of Statistic of Israel.

CITY	POPULATION OF THE CITY (10^3)	EXPENDITURE 1991 OF THE DEVELOPMENT	INCOME OF DEVELOPMENT	EXPENDITURE 2013 OF THE DEVELOPMENT	INCOME OF DEVELOPMENT

	1991	2013	BUDGET 10³NIS	BUDGET 1991 10³NIS	BUDGET 10³NIS	BUDGET 2013 10³NIS
ASHKELON	64.4	123.5		27 468	1 578	1 407
JERUSALEM	544.2	829.9	263 356	251 994	1 575	1 702
TEL AVIV	353.2		188 527	203 936		
HAIFA	251	273.2	161 229	148 197	2 720	2 057
ASHDOD	90.2	216.5	32 719	25 126	1 194	973
BEER SHEBA	128	199.3	34 945	26 617	2 183	1 884
BNEI BRAK	121.2		41 863	36 396		
BAT YAM	146.4	128.9	17 577	44 065	1 133	1 125
IMONA	28.3		9 160	7 847		
HERZLIA	80.2		19 566	23 808		
HOLON	161.8		34 445	53 996		
LOD	45.5	71.6	19 806	14 667	997	1 107
NETANYA	139.7	197	32 440	33 013	1 739	1 600
REHOVOT	83		20 627	27 346		

Table 20: Income and Expenditure of the Development Budget of Ashkelon and other Cities (in 10³ NIS) in 1991 and in 2013 - Central Bureau of Statistic of Israel.

Tables 19 and table 20 illustrate the impacts of the Mayor's economic development initiatives on the changes in the city budget, both regular and development funds, between the year 1991 when the author was elected as the Mayor and the year 2013 when his tenure has reached its term. In 1991 the regular budget was 72,526,000 NIS and it increased to 988,631,000 NIS in 2013 (i.e. an increase of 14 times), more than the budget increase of most of the cities in Israel. As illustrated in Table 20 the self-generated city income allowed the city to significantly invest in the municipal needs and development projects, leading to significant residents' economy benefit as compared with most of the cities in Israel.

The main point of this chapter is to demonstrate the great benefit of taking the measures and assuming the responsibility for sustainable economic development by the local governance with the leadership of the Mayor. Until the 1980s the local government did not practically dealt with urban economic development, which was under the responsibility of the national government. The change in institutional responsibility occurred in the 1980 when the law for direct elections of mayors of local governments was enacted.

The Mayor's economic development strategies involved:

1. Attracting industry leaders and entrepreneurs and by marketing and granting loans as well as reductions in city taxes and in costs of development, which was executed for them by the municipality.

2. Attracting entrepreneurs by entering into partnerships with the municipality for regional development industry, building offices for rental and tourist projects under the system of Public-

Private-Partnerships between entrepreneurs in which the municipality invest in development and infrastructure and gave incentives and reductions in city taxes etc. The entrepreneurs invested capital in projects. The building of the Marina in Ashkelon is an outstanding example of this.

3. The Mayor struggled with the central government to give incentives for entrepreneurs to come to Ashkelon by establishing a priority of cheaper prices for ground lease and support for expenses of development, which were subsidized through grants, loans and exemptions from income tax. The purpose was to encourage local businesses especially small businesses with the help of MATI - an organization that offers know-how and assistance to small businesses as well as giving loans for opening small businesses and training workers for them. The mayor engaged public private partnerships by privatizing municipal services and transferring them to private contractors such as sanitation gardening sports centers etc. Examples of corporation through PPP between the private sector and the municipality are the marina the development of residential neighborhoods, setting up industrial sites and renting institutions for the aged etc.

The municipality supported public and private entities in setting up projects for city groups such as the country club in Ashkelon, building residential housing and building homes for the aged.

The vision of the mayor in this subject was inspired by his own professional experience as an economist with an emphasis on municipal urban development.

At each and every stage the author reevaluated his vision as well as the rationale for the measures taken for its implementation, such as subsidy for any industrial entrepreneurship, privatization of any public services, and other suitable economic development programs for the municipality. Consistently with his vision, at the governance level the Mayor transferred the responsibility for the development of the industrial areas from the national government to the municipality. This enabled him to set up partnerships with private entrepreneurs in order to develop the industrial sites. In this way the Mayor shortened the timetables for setting up industries by many years. The municipality invested in infrastructures for regional industrial development and in branding and marketing the industrial sites and as a result hundreds of entrepreneurs came to Ashkelon to set up factories.

The development of tourism through the PPP system for partnerships between the private sector and the municipality enabled the building of an arena together with private entrepreneurs and gave great impetus to tourism in the city. Setting up projects by means of the PPP system such as homes for the aged, building offices for rent, buildings for industry in which the municipality gave the ground lease with reduced rates and development incentives as well as other measures accelerated the economic development.

The privatization of public services became a great success. The privatization of cleaning services, gardening, security, sports etc., and the transfer of these services to private companies led to increased efficiency and reduced costs. Furthermore this created more freedom of action for the municipality as contractors could be changed far more speedily than would have been the case with municipal workers. Establishment of. The municipal companies, economic corporations and not-for-profit assistance organizations that were set up serve as a model for all the other cities in Israel. These city companies served as a vehicle for efficiency in realizing the vision of the mayor for urban economic development.

The economic company is a small efficient and professional body that focuses on economic development and is the suitable vehicle for partnership and for executing economic development initiatives for populating residential neighborhoods etc.

The Irvine Company for Culture and Sport is a small and efficient tool for the activation of an economic approach to projects in the fields of culture, sport, entertainment etc.

Mayoral Leadership in realizing the Mayor's vision for urban economic development is shown in this chapter to play a capital role, as without or with weak leadership it is not possible to carry out urban economic development of the city.

The transfer of the industrial areas from the government to the responsibility of the city of Ashkelon would not have happened had there not been strong determined and consistent Mayoral leadership that consistently and with perseverance succeeded as the first governmental case in Israel to transfer the responsibility of the development of industrial areas to the municipality.

Leadership in projects - PPP

Entrepreneurs from the private market are not enthusiastic to set up partnerships with municipalities especially weak municipalities with weak Mayors When setting up a joint project such as the Marina with the partnership of the private and public sectors, the private investor prefers dealing with an economic leader who is able to understand stakeholders' interest and take appropriate decisions and implementation measures. For this reason the partnership for building the Marina was successful. Similar partnerships in the development of residential neighborhoods made possible the construction of 2000 apartments and the construction of buildings for the industry. In simple words an investor from the private market requires an economic leader from the public sector to work with leadership facing the stockholders. When a municipality gets involved with economic development it often treads on the corns of other interested parties. There were local private entrepreneurs who were opposed to the municipality initiative of constructing buildings for industrial use in cooperation with local entrepreneurs. This could be resolved through the deployment of the Economic Company in partnership with the entrepreneurs.

The author and co-workers encountered opposition from contractors who wished to develop residential areas by themselves as well as entrepreneurs who wished to construct buildings for renting on their own. There were also owners of homes for the aged who opposed partnerships with the municipality Workers committees and the Histadrruth (the labour union) opposed the privatization of public services. Parent's organizations opposed privatization of sport activities.

<u>How did the author and co-workers overcome this position</u>?

As the Mayor, the author proved to the public that without partnership between the public and private sectors it would not be possible to construct a marina as no entrepreneur would be willing to build the marina alone. This is an expensive project with many public elements such as sea sports, lessons in sailing for thousands of pupils, cheap anchoring for ships etc. The same was true for all the economic activities that the municipality entered into. It was necessary to demonstrate and to prove the public and to the stakeholders that not only would they not be harmed by these activities but the opposite could be envisioned. These activities would enable the entrepreneurs to take risks when they enter into a partnership with a public body - with a strong municipality and a Mayor who is a leader.

The privatization of municipal services by transferring them from the workers of the municipality to private companies is one of the most difficult tasks to carry out in Israel because of the opposition of the workers committees and the Histadrruth. The author implemented privatization in all the cleaning services of the municipality, the municipal gardening, cleaning of school's kindergartens and public institutions, privatization of the services on the beaches, privatization of all the maintenance of public institutions, of street lighting in the city and of municipal services, privatization of culture such as theatre and hobby study circles. The municipal conservatory and all the community centers were also privatized.

<u>How did leadership manifest itself in the privatization of these services</u>?

With regard to any municipal activity that was privatized, the author presented to the stockholders privatization programs that would have benefitted them. Leadership that does not include the ability to inform to persuade and to show the commitment to the task at hand, would give in and would not be able to carry out privatization of many public services, which may lead to loose significant opportunities for public benefits. Indeed, many cities failed in privatizing public services because they experienced a lack of vision and leadership. Leadership expresses itself by facing the private companies and enforcing that they perform their tasks in accordance with the contract and with commitment to quality and efficient service.

<u>Which areas experienced failures in realizing the Mayor vision for urban economic development</u>?

The author and co-workers built an industrial area with hundreds of factories, but only a small number of hi-tech industries were set up. The main reason for this failure is the distance from Tel Aviv and from the

center and the lack of suitable manpower for high-tech industries. High-tech industries were set up mainly in Tel Aviv and in other cities in the center of the country.

When the author met the owners of high-tech companies few of them, who were originally from Ashkelon, emphasized the fact that the main cause of high-tech being in Tel Aviv or its surroundings is that the workers want to live in Tel Aviv or somewhere in the center of the country. Another cause of failure was that the government did not give priority for establishing high-tech industries in areas that are somewhat distant from the center of the country and suitable manpower could therefore only be found in the center of the country.

In tourism, despite the large investments of the municipality in tourism facilities, such as building the marina, the promenade, wave breakers, and despite the fact that incentives were given such as reductions in taxes not many hotels were built in Ashkelon.

At the beginning of his tenure there were only three hotels in Ashkelon, the main reason for this was the security situation. Which significantly impeded Tourists from coming to Ashkelon for vacation, in a high risk city, where hundreds of rockets fell. For this reason, entrepreneurs did not wish to invest money in tourism in Ashkelon.

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Chapter 8 – Environmentally Sustainable Urban Development

8.1   Reference Definitions of Environmental Urban Sustainability

The literal meaning of sustainability is "the ability to exist and to survive for an extended period of time". The Brundtland Commission (9) formulated the most widely used quotation of sustainable development as "Sustainable development answers the needs of the present without harming the ability of future generations

(United Nations, General Assembly, December 1987, Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development).

In 1987, the UN published a special report named "Our Common Future" in which, for the first time, the question "Can the author and co-workers continue to conduct ourselves the way the author and co-workers do at present?" was posed. The report presented an alternative way to present human conduct and defined "sustainable development" as an alternative way "to fulfill the needs of the present without endangering the ability of future generations to supply their own needs" (7)(8)(9) (10)(11)(12)(15).

For any urban economic development to be sustainable it has to meet the following principles:

1. Urban economic development, which addresses the needs of the present generation should not endanger the ability of future generations to answer their own needs.

2. Environmental issues must be solved at the source and not at "the end of the line".

3. Environmental problems may occur as a result of economic development and societal transformation problems.

4. Environmental hazards do not recognize administrative borders.

Policy Decisions of the Government of Israel - On the 15th of May 2003, the government of Israel decided to adopt the Johannesburg Convention of The World Summit on Sustainable Development, WSSD2, which took place in Johannesburg, South Africa between August-September 2002. Following this decision, government ministries prepared plans for sustainable development related to their sectors of service. A committee of General Directors of the ministries, headed by the Ministry of Environmental Protection, accompanied the implementation of these plans. (7)(8)(9)(10)(11)(12)(15)

The Mayor's Vision for Sustainable Development – With the leadership of its Mayor, since the 90s the City of Ashkelon has aspired to very high standards of living in terms of the environment, education, socio-cultural life, urban development and community integration. Public awareness initiatives at all levels, environmental protection regulations, incentives policy for alternative energy resources, waste recycling and other municipal actions were undertaken to assume efficiently local governance responsibility for environmentally sustainable urban development with improved quality of life for all the city communities and residents. The author's sustainability vision and implementation strategies in the public service sectors along with the public education programs are presented in this chapter, with regard to urban planning, sustainable energy policy and municipal waste management. The challenges and strategies of sustainable water supply are discussed in chapter 8.

8.2 Sustainable Energy - promoting renewable and clean energy solutions

Energy saving initiatives - The municipality developed an energy saving plan for decreasing electrical power use of in public institutions, including quantitative targets and involving temporary clients as well. This involved:

- An electricity consumption survey in 40 schools and 180 kindergartens
- An energy conservation program for all other public institutions, including cultural centers, sports halls, and community centers was carried out.
- A survey looking into energy saving in street lighting was conducted. Energy saving light bulbs replaced the existing ones and electronic energy saving devices for street lighting was installed.
- The entire energy use in the municipality services underwent an energy saving survey.
- The municipality encouraged and also drew up a plan for using alternative energy, mainly solar energy. The municipality installed solar systems on the roofs of schools and public institutions and presented a plan for a solar roof for the city market covering an area of 5,000 square meters.
- New devices for lighting were installed in public buildings and in traffic lights.
- A wide-reaching public awareness program for spreading information regarding energy conservation was carried out in all the education institutions and amongst the entire population of the city.
- Advanced equipment with a high-energy efficiency level was purchased such as fuel-saving tractors and cars (1)(2)(7)(8)(13)(14).

Citizen Involvement in Decision-making and Municipal Actions (4)- The municipality established lines of communication within the different groups of residents in the city - children, youth, invalids, the elderly etc. and enabled an ongoing and suitable dialogue with them by means of public meetings, special Internet sites, and local press and radio. Activities (6)(7)(8) were arranged for the community in the framework of informal education, a joint project with the Housing Culture Association, and neighborhood and residential buildings committees. Educational programs were carried out in the schools such as the school program on "understanding and protecting the environment" which focused on environmental education as the basis for organizing the outlook of the school to be integrated with the community socio-cultural and economic activities. The municipalities public outreach involved:

- Setting up a joint residents-municipality work team.
- Providing municipality support to groups, institutions and NGOs that deal with environmental preservation.
- Promoting initiatives within the business-economic sector for saving energy and preserving the environment.

- Cultivating volunteers for residents' activities of environmental preservation.
- Implementing a policy of a complete transparency of its actions in the field of environmental quality, including publishing information to the public, opening the meetings of the city council to the residents, publicizing the meetings of the city council and inviting the residents to view broadcasts of the meetings on the Internet or to listen and see them on the community TV and the radio. Posters and information brochures were distributed to the public and the proposed yearly budget was presented to the residents in order to enable them to voice their opinions (1)(4)(7)(8).

8.3 Environmental Management of the Municipality and its Institutions

Municipal program for environmental quality protection and sustainable development - For this purpose the Municipality created an environmental quality branch and, within it, a specific department dealing with the subject of sustainable environmental quality. In terms of the vision, the Ashkelon city government has been committed to sustainable environmental quality through the city planning, development and service management. It has been leading and inculcating the model of sustainability with the involvement of the residents in all environmental aspects, and has been working towards the integration of environmental sustainability culture and principles by means of education, combining knowledge, awareness, values and societal conscience together with the development of thought processes, environmental intelligence, human capital and activism. As mayor of Ashkelon, the author served as the head of the District Municipal Association for Environmental Protection for 17 years - an association that incorporates 12 municipalities and local and regional councils in the region of Ashkelon.

To implement the Mayor's vision the municipality established an environmental quality committee within the municipal council with committee members from the city council, representatives of the public and experts in the field of environmental quality. The municipality's goals were to:

- Promote municipal workers' in training, studies and seminars dealing with sustainability, environmental quality and health.
- Enact and manage an authorization process in the field of environmental management.
- Inculcate values of "green purchasing", the preference for locally manufactured and environmentally friendly products.
- Promote the construction of "green" buildings despite the fact that it was 10% more expensive, including "green" schools, kindergartens and public buildings.
- Enforce environmental legislation and adaption policies of environmental quality and societal justice based public health for all residents.

Within this context the Municipality struggled, developed and established:

- Public education programs for providing information on decreasing blood pressure for maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

- Municipal centers for kidney disease and cancer patients, clinics for dental treatment for all schoolchildren just about free of charge, general medical clinics in all the neighborhoods of the city and pre and post-natal care clinics.

- Urban renewal programs including the establishment of new neighborhoods, renovations of residential buildings with preference given to poverty struck neighborhoods and gardening in socio-economically weak neighborhoods and renewal of Migdal - the main commercial center of the city.

- Accessibility program for the disabled to all urban institutions and facilities including parks and public gardens throughout the city.

- Municipal monitoring and inspection program of industrial plants in order to prevent health hazards.

Urban Ecology - Preserving Open Green Spaces (7)(8) - A master plan for open green spaces was prepared. Statutorily, the municipality takes meticulous care of the open spaces in the city. The municipality executed a suitable distribution of open spaces, with large green spaces throughout the city - e.g. the National Park (250 acres), a central park bordering on several neighborhoods, and a promenade along the seashore (without entrance fee). In addition to this, each neighborhood development included a park and a green garden as well as green neighborhood areas. The square meter of open spaces per capita in Ashkelon is today one of the highest in the country and since the 90s at least 5,000 trees have been planted per annum throughout the city. The municipality developed more than 20 community gardens in all the neighborhoods of the city.

An example of the Municipal commitment to environmental quality and sustainability is the "One tree per year" program, which consists of planting a single tree in a year, and its results. The tree absorbs 1,200 kilos of dust a year and absorbs 80 kilos of colloid containing poisonous metals such as mercury, lead and cadmium. A single tree can purify 100,000 square meters of contaminated air while at the same time producing 1,700 kilos of oxygen and absorbing 200,000 kilos of carbon dioxide. Trees can reduce the summer temperature by 3.5 degrees (Celsius) in "green strips" of a width of 50 -100 meters. Plants in public gardens, on sidewalks, on roads and traffic islands absorb noise. Research has shown that dense groups of trees with a green surrounding function as shock absorbers.

Quality of seawater at the beaches of Ashkelon and other cities

CITY	% OF RESULTS EXCEEDING THRESHOLDS IN 100 ML. SEE WATER	NUNBER OF TESTS IN AL BEACHES OF THE CITY
ASHKELON	0%	52
ASHDOD	3%	167

TEL AVIV	6.5% (AVERAGE)	1044
HAIFA	3.5% (AVERAGE)	435
NETANYA	3.6%	363
MEDITERRNEAN SEA – TOTAL	4.6%	5105
SEA OF GALILEE -KINERETH- TOTAL	0.4	1125
RED SEA – TOTAL	0.7	614

Table 21: Quality of seawater at the beaches of Ashkelon and other cities. Microbiological tests from sea water at the beaches, year 2013 - ministry of health.

Table 21: shows that the percentage of quality of seawater test results exceeding acceptable microbial limits in 100 ml. in Ashkelon is the lowest in Israel (0%) attesting to the fact that the sea water in Ashkelon is very clean. This is a significant indicator for high quality of life.

Figure **59**: Preserving Open Green Spaces - Ashkelon Municipality

8.4 Public Awareness - Promoting Environmental, Social, and Health Education (5)

The municipality has initiated and operated several programs for promoting health education and environmental care in the formal and informal educational institutions of the city. These programs include:

- The Globe Program - An international program that keeps track of weather phenomena in the world and deals with plant research. This program is operating in three schools in Ashkelon with the intention to expand to all the schools in the city.

- A sustainability oriented program, which is geared towards training all the teachers in the schools and accompanying activities for promoting a healthy and sustainable way of life in the school. At present the program is operating in four schools with the intention of expanding it city-wide.
- A municipal energy efficiency program, which operates in nine schools and deals with energy efficiency and municipal waste.
- "Path of light" program –The purpose of this program, offered in co-operation with the Israel Electric Company, is to instill the need for safety and sustainable behavior when dealing with electricity. This program is operating in 22 schools.

Figure 60: Preserving Open Green Spaces - Ashkelon Municipality

The "Green Authorization" label is awarded to schools that have achieved the goals and the criteria of a certificate of authorization from the Ministry of Environmental Protection in conjunction with the Ministry of Education and registered with the municipal education system. The program involves meeting 10 criteria, which include:

- 30 hours of study.
- Carrying out a community environmental project focused on rational use of resources
- A visibly "green" school image achieved by establishing and operating a "green" leadership group and carrying out a teachers training program.

In Ashkelon there are 8 accredited schools and another 10 are in the process for gaining "green" accreditation. The intention is for all the schools in Ashkelon to gain accreditation. Altogether, 18 schools include a program for community environmental education in their curriculum. This is the highest achievement in the entire country.

Early age education in sustainability through training of Kindergartens - The intention was to promote environmental education and its application at an early age to instill the principles of education for

sustainability in the curriculum of the kindergarten as a way of life style and behavioral habits and to promote educational early age "green" programs. Current status of the program:

- In Ashkelon, to date, 4 kindergartens have been accredited and the intention is for all the kindergartens to achieve this.
- 25 kindergarten teachers have received training in the program for combining environmental studies with education for sustainability and its accompaniment.
- Every summer, 65 kindergartens participate in ecological workshops in the framework of "green" summer camps.
- The municipality encourages kindergarten teachers, parents and children to participate in workshops and in environmental activities and to attend theatre plays for children, workshops and events dealing with the environment. (15)

"Green" Community Education Centers - The intention has been to operate informal educational framework for programs oriented towards environmental quality and sustainability. The municipality has initiated "green" processes in community centers, which include their accreditation as "green centers" as well as training of the center's director and senior workers. Current status of the program and its activities:

- Four community centers, Shapira, Neve lllan, Katsnelson and Tikvatenu, have been accredited and the intention is to extend accreditation to all the centers.
- "Green" summer camps offer "green" activities to 1,500 children in the afternoon in the centers. The programs include recycling and at source separation.
- Community and cultural events dealing with environmental issues in the framework of "green creativity days" and sustainability.
- Developing environmental leadership and "green" youth councils. Training and accompanying young people in carrying out urban environmental projects.
- Operating the "Environmental Activists" program and involving youngsters as volunteers in the field of sustainability and in activities for environmental protection in Ashkelon.
- Leadership for sustainability in the high schools. Encouraging young people to participate in "The journey to sustainability" and the "green" convention for youth "Striving for a clean sea ".
- The municipal youth council has participated in all the municipal processes for environmental quality and sustainability as well as in the meetings of the municipal council's committees and in urban environmental projects. (14)

The Establishment of a Center for Sustainability Education (5) – With the Mayor's leadership a Sustainability Education Center was established. Its purpose has been to provide instruction in all subjects

related to environmental quality and sustainability, with an emphasis on dealing with municipal waste management and energy and water consumption efficiency. Currently, the Center's activities involve:

- Training teachers in the fields of environmental quality and sustainability.
- Setting up shelters for environmental studies at the Agricultural farm which host educational workshops with examples of dealing with municipal waste, recycling and water and electricity saving programs.
- Operating "Environmental water" programs at the agricultural farm with the goal of gatherings of children and parents on subjects related to environmental quality.
- Operating an environmental program for kindergarten children in cooperation with the Department of Gardens and Parks of the municipality.
- Running a "Blue Day" - saving water.
- Running a "Brown Day" - The process of creating compost and ecological gardening from wastewater treatment
- Running a "Green Day" - Reducing consumption and promoting recycling and water reuse.

Promoting community involvement in Environmental Quality programs (4)(5) - The purpose has been to expose the community as much as possible to the various aspects of environmental quality with emphasis on neighborhood activists, operating groups of volunteers and promoting "green" projects in the neighborhoods. The activities involved:

- Sending groups of volunteers and activists on study tours for training in dealing with municipal waste, sewage, saving water, saving and recycling paper and reducing the use of electricity.
- Running community ecological workshops.
- Exposing residents to meetings with elected officials and professionals dealing with environmental quality.
- Encouraging the community to use recycled products.
- Encouraging the reduction of consumption and correct usage of resources within the community.
- Running the project "The green building" - training and carrying out the program to encourage buildings to become "green buildings" - buildings which maintain a green garden and think in terms of recycling and environmental sustainability.
- "A Green Campus" - Encouraging regional colleges and the Academic College of Ashkelon to promote "green" and environmental projects.
- Community gardens – promoting partnerships in local round table discussions on the development of community gardens as a focal point for community environmental activism. In Ashkelon, about 20 community gardens were set up in all the neighborhoods of the city.

- Organizing in the community gardens ecological workshops for parents and children and demonstration training in the subject matters of environmental sustainability
- Creating municipal facilities in the community gardens for demonstrating garden usages of recycled resources, such as compost piles and sitting corners.

Promoting partnerships for environmental issues - The municipality has created partnerships and provided resources for promoting environmental subject matters across all its various branches and departments and between the municipality and organizations, groups and NGOs that have been active in subjects related to improving environmental quality. The activities have involved:

- Building cooperation between the Municipal Departments of Education and "Green" Groups (e.g. The Green network, The Council for Beautiful Israel, the Jewish National Fund (J N F)) for improving the city through Community Work
- Promoting inter-city cooperation with all the cities and municipalities in the region in the subject matters of environmental quality focused primarily on preserving the bathing beaches and the seashore.
- Ongoing work in conjunction with government ministries dealing with environmental quality issues, especially with the Ministries of Environmental Protection, Education and Social Affairs and Social Services
- Setting up special environmental quality events including:
  - International Clean-up Day
  - 15th of Shevat - Planting activities (mainly trees) throughout the city.
  - "The Day of Good Deeds" - interalia activities related to environmental quality.
  - "Environmental Quality Week".
  - "Earth Day".
  - "Green Councils" convention.
  - Convention of "Striving for a Clean Sea".
  - Training and guidance for education teams and municipal workers
  - Training education teams including school directors and teachers. Setting up school sustainability teams - an organized process of learning and training.
  - Specific training for education teams in:
    a. Introduction to environmental crisis.
    b. Energy efficiency.

176

c. At source separation.

d. Laws related to environmental quality - e.g. Handling of Packaging Materials Law, Recycling Law.

e. Establishing a study forum for environmental quality and sustainability.

f. Giving teachers pedagogic tools for environmental sustainability teaching.

g. Training municipal workers in environmental quality and sustainability.

Figure 61: Municipal Waste Reduction and Recycling - Ashkelon Municipality

8.5 Municipal Waste Reduction and Recycling

The Mayor's vision was to increase efficiency by reducing the quantity of the municipal waste. The following guiding principles have been adopted by the municipality:

● To efficiently reduce the quantities of city garbage a municipal plan was carried out for separating city garbage at source in two streams - wet garbage and dry garbage.

● Household garbage constitutes an environmental hazard.

● In 2012, Ashkelon transferred only 7.5% of the household garbage to the recycling plant. 92% of the garbage of Ashkelon as buried in the Negev. Collecting and burying the garbage are very costly in terms of the municipal budget.

● The state imposes a "burial levy" on every ton of non-recycled garbage that any city buries. The municipality of Ashkelon pays NIS 92 (approximately 23$) per ton of buried garbage. With municipal waste site burial yearly costs amounting to NIS 125 million (approximately 30M$) in 2012 the municipal goal is to close the waste burial sites.

<u>Municipal project for separating dry and wet waste -</u> The project for at source separation was initiated with Ashkelon, together with 30 other cities, succeeding in winning the bid of the Ministry of the Environmental Protection and becoming one of the first cities in Israel to participate in the project for garbage separation at the source. This entailed receiving state finance of N IS 28.5 million (7M$). The project involved raising public awareness and educating the residents of Ashkelon to separate the household garbage already in the home kitchen into dry and wet garbage. Waste recycling and reusing made it feasible to turn approximately 70% of this garbage into a viable resource.
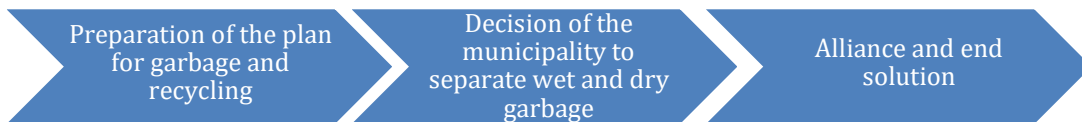
Figure 62 – Decision making process

A detailed municipal plan has been prepared. The Mayor's decision-making process is illustrated in Figure 62.

The separation at source and recycling was planned and a plan for placing containers - 2 containers for every home - green for dry and brown for wet garbage was implemented. By the end of 2013, 9,295 homes were already involved in the program. All the dry garbage is sent for recycling and the wet herbage is used for compost. The plan is for the entire household, industrial and commercial garbage to be sent to recycling plants. Centers for collecting and recycling glass and plastic bottles, containers for cartons, paper and clothes etc. were installed throughout the city. Centers for second hand use of clothes and household equipment etc. were also installed.

<u>Figure 63: separating dry and wet waste.</u>

8.6 Air Pollution Reduction Measures

<u>Sustainable transport system</u>

As the elected Mayor, in 1991 the author was strongly committed to environmental quality preservation and development of air pollution reduction measures in particular his transportation plan was, in based on the principles of environmental quality, the goal was to safeguard the quality of life of the residents and recue air pollution by promoting the use bicycles, public transport and pedestrian paths. For this reason, all transport plans included the author's instructions to yield, priority to public, transport. The transport plan, included:

- Preparation of a master plan for transport based on the above environmental protection principles,
- Paving tens of kilometers of bicycle and pedestrian paths.
- Providing public transport to schools and to the focal employment areas in the city was organized
- Inaugurating the railway lines to Tel Aviv and to the south, at present the railway, reaches Sderot and its extension work to Beer Sheba (about 60 km) has already started.

The city of Ashkelon faces environmental air pollution challenges due to the existence of centralize power generation and coal harbor and oil port. However due to the Mayor's leadership and the environmental quality protection, air pollution indicators show that air pollution in Ashkelon is about the average of air pollution in Israel and significantly lower than in Mayor cities, including Jerusalem, Haifa, and Beer Sheba.

8.7 Conclusions

This chapter presented the Mayor's commitment and leadership for environmentally sustainable urban development. Table 21 shows the EPA Air Quality Index (15) for Air quality, Drinking Water Quality and Accessibility, Garbage Disposal Satisfaction, Quality of Green and Parks and other life quality indicators for the city of Ashkelon as compare other cities in Israel.

The EPA AQI is an index for reporting daily air quality as related to health effects. EPA calculates the AQI for five major air pollutants regulated by the Clean Air Act: ground-level ozone, particle pollution (also known as particulate matter), carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen dioxide. For each of these pollutants, EPA has established national air quality standards to protect public health. Ground-level ozone and airborne particles are the two pollutants that pose the greatest threat to human health in this country. (15)

Pollution in Israel and Several Cities

	Israel	Ashkelon	Jerusalem	Tel Aviv	Haifa	Beersheba	Ashdod	Hadera
Air quality	37.77	37.50	31.52	54.41	19.57	25.00	40.91	25.00

Drinking Water Quality and Accessibility	68.38	50.00	63.89	76.11	60.29	67.86	58.33	50.00
Garbage Disposal Satisfaction	32.31	50.00	53.12	72.78	54.41	42.86	75.00	50.00
Clean and Tidy	49.63	50.00	26.67	58.89	43.06	28.57	58.33	50.00
Quiet and no Problem with Night Lights	50.19	50.00	58.82	48.89	47.06	42.86	41.67	50.00
Water Quality	62.10	50.00	58.93	63.10	50.00	75.00	58.33	50.00
Comfortable to Spend Time in the City	51.85	37.50	50.00	75.54	41.25	50.00	46.43	25.00
Quality of Green and Parks	65.11	50.00	48.53	74.44	50.00	35.71	75.00	50.00

Table 22: Pollution in Israel and Several Cities - Numbo.com (16)

Table 22 shows that with the Mayor leadership and the commitment of the municipal leadership in all the urban sectors the air quality indicator in Ashkelon is about the average of air pollution in Israel and significantly lower than in Mayor cities, including Jerusalem, Haifa, and Beer Sheba.

The main conclusions and lessons learned may be summarized as follows:

1. Environmental urban sustainability is a topic that is at the heart of the city management and requires setting a vision by the Mayor and personal leadership for an accountable process.

2. The Ashkelon municipality created a comprehensive program for environmental quality protection and sustainable development with professional managers. The program involved all areas of life, including Energy saving initiatives, urban renewal program, accessibility program and an observatory for municipal monitoring and inspection program.

3. In particular the program promotes Urban ecology and preservation of open spaces, along with public education and awareness building to provide environmental, social, and health education.

4. An important conclusion is that environmental preservation must begin with an early age education for sustainability culture through kindergardens - residents cooperation (4) and commitment is a critical corner stone for q successful accomplishment of any environmental sustainability program. Therefore, the Mayor must share his vision and promote community involvement in environmental quality programs.

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SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN ASHKELON

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Chapter - 9 Sustainable Water Resources Strategy

9.1 Vision of the Water Sector in Israel

Water is a basic element for both humans survival and for the environment. The national water system constitutes a strategic infrastructure in Israel, and a crucial factor in its development and the realization of its national goals. Management and sustainable development of the water resources should be carried out professionally, efficiently, fairly and transparently, and in accordance with advanced criteria, for the benefit of the public and the public health. The natural sources of water will be rehabilitated and preserved. The Israeli water system will be a global center for technologies and innovation in professional areas of the water industry, and a groundbreaking example of managing water resources under conditions of shortage.

Supreme objective – to ensure the supply of water, provision of sewage services and reusing treated wastewater and the management of drainage and runoff water – with appropriate quality, quantity and reliability, and in an economically viable manner, for the sustainable benefit of all consumers. (5)

In General: The main sources of water in Israel are:

- The Kinereth (Sea of Galilee).
- Groundwater (extracted from the aquifer).
- Alternative water.

Figure 64: The Kinereth (Sea of Galilee) - Israel Truism Ministry

Israel established national company in order to overcome the challenges. The company is called "Mekorot"(8)

Mekorot is a wholly owned government company, under the purview of the Ministry of Energy and Water and the Ministry of Finance. Mekorot was defined in the Water Law as the National Water Company and it

182

is accountable to the Water Authority – the regulator that supervises Mekorot's activities on behalf of the State.

Mekorot was founded in 1937, before the establishment of the State. Since then, Mekorot has made a profound national contribution to realizing the Zionist vision and transforming it into a sustainable reality. The infrastructure and huge water plants, founded by the company, have essentially facilitated life in Israel and provided solutions, at all times, to all sectors – households, fields, farmers and industrial plants.

Mekorot has always considered the development of the State, the blooming of the desert and painting Israel green to be a national imperative. In the spirit of the vision, the company has succeeded in developing knowledge and unique capabilities based on careful and accurate planning processes. Mekorot has formulated solutions over the years, which it has implemented in infrastructure, with "every drop of" entrepreneurship and real substance.

Concurrently with infrastructure and water projects, which are the basis for the existence of a stable and prosperous country, Mekorot carries out ongoing operations for a regular, reliable, and quality water supply. This is in the belief that there cannot be a situation where water is not supplied to all parts of the country, according to the needs.

Mekorot's activities constitute a unique mosaic of programs, which are unparalleled worldwide. Since 2007, Mekorot consists of a group of companies. At the head of the group is the parent company Mekorot Water which deals with the management, production and supply of water, wastewater treatment and effluent reuse. They deal respectively with;

Drilling and Hydrology (8)

Global warming and climatic changes compel Israel to address the continuous decrease in the amount and dispersion of its winter precipitation, limited precipitation, and marked rainfall fluctuations between drought years and rainy years. Irregular precipitation cycles cause significant changes in the natural aquifer recharge rates, thus creating water-consumption demand that exceeds natural replenishment in certain years, with pumping being carried out at the expense of depleting the water reserves in groundwater reservoirs. Despite the considerable addition of "artificial" water (through desalination of sea and brackish water), "natural" water (ground and surface water) still provide the main answer to Israel's water needs. It is therefore important to preserve and develop Israel's natural water sources alongside other means of water production. By supplementing the national water system with water from other resources, water-resource management in Israel is undergoing a significant change. This change is reflected in the demand for large quantities of "natural" water from aquifers and from the Sea of Galilee over short intervals, meaning that local pumping is increased for short periods of time, and hydrology management has to contend with the hydrological

implications of such production (local water-level reduction, temporary local salinization, etc.) In recent years, the field of artificial groundwater recharge has become an important and central field in water-resource management systems in Israel and worldwide. Mekorot's Hydrology Department has gained extensive experience in this field. The main objectives of groundwater recharge are: to increase replenishment, improve water quality, restore natural reservoirs, and use aquifers to store excess water reserves for use during periods of high consumption.

Figure 65: Israel national water system - Israeli Water authority

Figure 66: Wastewater treatment and effluent reuse - Mekorot Company website.

Wastewater treatment and effluent reuse (8)

Mekorot views the promotion of wastewater treatment and effluents reuse for agricultural and industrial purposes, a national mission. Water reclamation for agricultural purposes have three main targets:

1. Diverting more fresh water to households as a solution to the water crisis in Israel.
2. Increasing the quantity of water for agriculture while ensuring economic viability for farmers.
3. Protecting the environment by reducing the ecological damage that untreated wastewater may cause.

Desalination (8)

The needs of the water market, and especially the constant water shortage in Israel, led "Mekorot" to expand its operations from the supply of water from natural sources to producing water from alternative sources as well. Desalination is one of the most prominent methods for producing water from these same sources. With experience of over 50 years in water desalination "Mekorot" is one of the world's leading water companies. "Mekorot" is now leading the water revolution in Israel and is building the "New National Carrier", which will receive the desalinated water from the five desalination facilities along the Mediterranean Sea and transfer them simultaneously in all directions: from the west to east, north and south.

Water Depreciation (8)

"Mekorot" operates at all times to reduce depreciation in its water systems, and is considered to be a record holder in this field as well. Its excellent control is reflected in the low rate of water depreciation, which is less than 3% of the water supplied by the Group! In a country like Israel, which lies on the desert border and where every cubic meter of water contributes to the establishment of yet another settlement and greenhouse and enables the cultivation of another agricultural field, "Mekorot" is committed to conserve and utilize every drop of water. Low levels of water depreciation directly contribute to an increase in the amount of water available, but not only. The contribution is reflected in other aspects such as water conservation, direct reduction in energy consumption, improving the environment and reducing the amount of greenhouse gas emissions. All this is done with both an operational view and environmental responsibility. To meet all the needs of the country's residents – drinking, agriculture and industry – "Mekorot" operates over 12,000 km of water lines of various types, depending on national needs. The pipelines are used for the transport of water of different qualities: fresh water, brackish water, water undergoing desalination, effluents, and more.
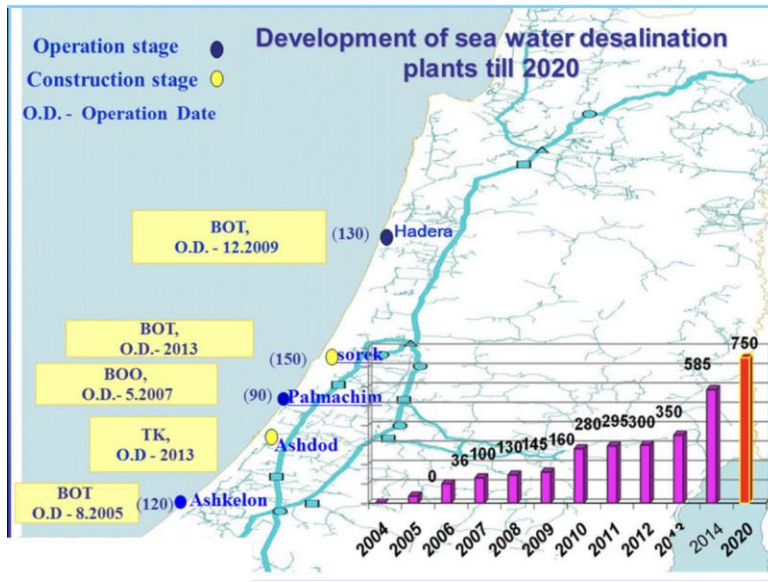
Figure 67 Development of sea water desalination plants till 2020 - Israeli water authority.

Stormwater Catchment (8)

In Israel there are very few natural water sources. The state of those few sources has deteriorated in recent years following hit the country. One of the actions initiated by "Mekorot" to increase the amount of available water and improve the water balance is the collection of stormwater – activity that is also considered unique in the world. Through this activity "Mekorot" succeeds the prolonged drought that in exploiting valuable water that if not for the Company's initiative would have been lost. In an average year of rain, about 25 million cubic meters of stormwater are collected, and directed to various consumer uses. In the storm that struck Israel in January 2013, "Mekorot" managed to collect about 19 million cubic meters of floodwater in the Company's stormwaters collection factories across the country: 13 million cubic meters of water for agricultural use and 6 million cubic meters of water, which were introduced into the groundwater reservoirs so they are later directed for domestic use.

Figure 68: Stormwater Catchment – Mekorot Company website

Sustainable Development (8)

"Mekorot" placed environmental protection and sustainable development as a strategic goal. These areas are some of the Group's fundamental principles, committed to maintaining Israel's water resources and the environment now and for future generations. "Mekorot" has succeeded, thanks to the implementation of a sustainable development policy, to reduce its energy expenses by a total of 1.5% per annum.

Water in Israel is used for drinking and a variety of home needs, agriculture - mainly for irrigating crops, industrial purposes, environmental needs (parks, public parks, landscaping and private gardens), medical treatment and other usages. Table 23 shows the Israel water consumption for Agriculture industrial and home needs.

Israel Water Consumption by Purpose Need 2008-2017

	Agriculture	Industry	Home	Total
2008	1121389.3	120928.5	758484.5	2000802.3
2009	1016192.5	110170.8	684206.9	1810570.3
2010	1099849.2	129585.9	689414	1918849.2
2011	1041720.4	124511.2	664771.3	1831002.9
2012	1085617.7	122747.6	693805.7	1902171
2013	1204678.4	138358.2	733240.7	2076277.4
2014	1121697.5	117431.7	754012.7	2022786.2
2015	1117543.8	893039.3		2046524.9
2016	1252839.2	932723.2		2214672.5
2017	1248551.7	983125.1		2254349.8

Table 23: Israel Water Consumption by Purpose Need 2008-2017 - Israeli Water Authority

Ever growing regional water stress in Israel is one of the major challenges that have always faced the national government and the local municipalities. The government of Israel and the Knesset, has often discussed this issue, almost on a yearly basis, and future projections indicate a continuing shortage of water. The government and the Knesset, by means of the Knesset committees, have even established a parliamentary commission to assess the water crisis in the country. The main conclusions and recommendations (ref) of these commissions were focused on the need to increase the amount of water in Israel by:

1. Setting up desalination plants – which the national water company of Israel "MEKOROT" has carried out over the past three decades, transforming the water supply in Israel from natural water resources (i.e. both surface and ground water), transported through an open state canal from the north to the south, to the deployment of "new renewable resources" of desalination, which currently provide 55% of the water demand. Israel now gets 55 percent of its domestic water from desalination, and that has helped to turn one of the world's driest countries into the unlikeliest of water surplus sources.

2. Recycling of wastewater, this currently concerns of the wastewater that is extracted by means of a process for purifying sewage and fed back into the water system for the purposes of agricultural irrigation, watering gardens and parks, industry needs or disposing into the rivers. Nearly 90 percent of wastewater in Israel is treated for reuse, most of it in agricultural irrigation, making it the leading nation in water recycling.

9.2 Ashkelon Strategy to support the National effort for solving the water crisis

The City of Ashkelon was one of the first cities recruited to assist the country in solving the water crisis. This required Initiating organizational and administrative changes in order to increase production efficiency, minimize water use, protect the ecosystem and undertake other measures (1)(2)(3)(4)(56)(6). Water consumption in Ashkelon in 2010 was 9,119,054 cubic meters, consisting of about 8 million cubic meters for residences and 1 million cubic meters fom industry. The population of Ashkelon in 2010 was 126, 166. (5)(7)

As a mayor the author saw the synergy between the water sustainability solutions and strengthening the environmentally sustainable economic growth of the City of Ashkelon. For this purpose the Ashkelon Strategy to support the National effort for solving the water crisis included:

- The construction of a Wastewater Purification Plant
- Setting up a desalination plant in Ashkelon - one of the biggest capacity in the world and the biggest in the country.
- Increased efficiency of water by the municipality through building new infrastructures and improving and perfecting the existing water system.

- Saving by promoting more efficient water use by the residents.
- Investments in municipal water infrastructure to reduce water loss in the distribution system
- Establishment of a water corporation - "Mei Ashkelon" (Waters of Ashkelon) - the regional water and Sewage Corporation, which was mandated by the National Government in 2010.

9.3 The Sewage Purification Plant

Table 24 shows the percentage of microbial test results exceeding acceptable thresholds under the responsibility of the local authorities, indicating the high quality of drinking water in the Ashkelon district.

Quality of drinking water in Israeli Cities

% Of Test Results Exceeding Microbial Acceptable Limits	NO. of Routine Test Performed	DISTRICT
0.1	6653	ASHKELON
0.3	7894	TEL AVIV
0.0	8068	JERUSALEM
0.2	11770	HAIFA
0.4	23746	NORTH OF ISRAEL
0.0	7627	SOUTH OF ISRAEL
0.2	23520	CENTRAL ISRAEL
0.3	39334	RURAL LOCALITIES TOTA

Table 24: Quality of drinking water in Israeli Cities - microbiological test of drinking water by district, year 2012 - Ministry of Health.

General Description of the WasteWater Treatment Plant (WWTP)

In 2,000 the Ashkelon Municipality with the leadership of its Mayor built the Sewage Purification Plant, using the best practice, technology and equipment available in the world. The Plant, located in the northeast of Ashkelon approximately 3kms. beyond the northern neighborhoods of the city, was planned to deal with 30,000 cubic meters of sewage water daily.

After processing the sewage, the Plant is built to supply secondary treated wastewater, suitable for agriculture. In general terms, the WPP working principle is based on the physico-chemical sedimentation and the treatment of water for the standards of irrigation while dealing with sludge that can be transferred to a compost production plant. The sewage water entering the Plant comes primarily from the industries and residences of Ashkelon.

The sewage from all parts of the city reaches a collecting pipe of some 3 km in length and flow to the Wastewater Treatment Plant by means of gravitation.

Figure 69: Waste Water Treatment- Primary treatment - Large bodies and sand in the raw sewage are removed - Municipality of Ashkelon.

Figure 70: Waste Water Treatment- The secondary treatment is carried out in sedimentation basins, which contain large ventilators - Municipality of Ashkelon.

Figure 71: Waste Water Treatment- The treated wastewater from the Purification Plant is used for agricultural irrigation - Municipality of Ashkelon.

The WWTP process consists of several stages:

- Primary treatment - Large bodies and sand in the raw sewage are removed. These large objects are separated by mine plows and are transferred to a site for wastage removal. After the primary treatment, the sewage flows by means of gravitation into two main sedimentation basins, 22 meters in diameter. The initially treated wastewater flows on for further treatment and the sludge flows into the pumping station for surplus sludge.

- Secondary treatment - The secondary treatment is carried out in sedimentation basins, which contain large ventilators and the sludge is thereby separated from the treated waste water.

- Treatment of sludge - The sludge is pumped into a container for the storage of sludge and is squeezed out in a treatment room equipped with centrifuges for this purpose.

The treated wastewater from the Purification Plant is used for agricultural irrigation. It is transferred to equalization pools and from there is pumped to the "Missa" reservoir and to reservoirs in Netsaim, (a cooperative settlement north of Ashkelon).

The Contribution of the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) to the Quality of the Environment and Sustainable Development can be summarized as follows:

1. The Environment

    a. Instead of flowing into rivers or into the sea or harming the aquifer (as happened to many cities in the world), the sewage water is treated in the WWTP and produces water and compost fertilizer. The treated waste water is dealt with at a level that prevents it from harming or contaminating the water resources, the food, the lakes, the rivers and the sea or raising an odor problem, spreading disease and attracting mosquitos and flies.

    b. In view of the fact that the State of Israel suffers from a shortage of water, the WWTP contributes significantly to society by recycling sewage water for agriculture.

    c. Instead of discarding sludge and sewage, which would then cause serious environmental harm, the sludge undergoes special chemical treatment after which it is used as compost and fertilizer for agriculture, sustainable for crops.

2. Economic Advantages of the WWTP

    a. Ashkelon municipality receives revenue from the sale of water for agriculture.

    b. Ashkelon municipality receives revenue from the sale of fertilizer for agriculture.

    c. The city of Ashkelon avoids incurring possible costs and expenses as a result of discarding sewage water in open spaces.

d. The city enjoys an enhanced environmental quality.

e. It is possible to build a plant for the production of electricity, using gases created from the sludge. A small plant for the production of electricity for local use, already exists. (5)(7)

9.4 The Plant for the Desalination of Seawater in Ashkelon

The Vision of the Mayor

As Mayor the author considered the building of the desalination plant in Ashkelon to be part of his vision to contribute to the country by helping to solve the problem of water shortage. The author believed that he could lower the price of water in Ashkelon and possibly build a desalination plant solely for the use of Ashkelon and in doing so, building an important infrastructural facility, which would create employment and serve as a model for other cities throughout the world. When the government decided to build plants for the desalination of seawater, the author acted swiftly and arranged a meeting with the representatives of "MEKOROT" (the national water company) and met with officials in relevant government ministries. The author immediately initiated and implemented plans, as a result of which, one of the largest desalination plant in the world was built in Ashkelon.

Description of the plant:

The seawater desalination plant in Ashkelon is a reverse osmosis plant, which supplies water of the quality of drinking water to the national water system. The facility was erected in the region of the southern seashore of Ashkelon, in the area of the oil harbor.

The investment to set up the plant exceeded 1B NIS. The plant was financed by means of B.O.T. (Build, Operate, Transfer) by "Sorodium Purchasers", companies of VID, which hold an operation concession for 25 years, after which the ownership of the plant will be transferred to the State of Israel. The facility commenced production on 4.8. 2005 and began transferring water to "MEKOROT" on 23.8.2005. To date, the facility produces about 120 million cubic meters of water, which are transferred to the Israel National Water Carrier pipeline. This amounts to 5% of the annual water consumption of Israel. The facility in Ashkelon is the first in the plan of the government of Israel to build desalination plants with a total production of 505 million cubic meters. (4)(5)(6)

A short description of the operating of the facility

The facility has three suction lines that pump in water from a distance of 9 kms from the shore of Ashkelon and from a depth of about 15 meters. The water first undergoes initial filtering after which the water pressure is increased to 70 bars and the water passes through semi-penetrable membranes to be desalinized by means of reverse osmosis. After completion of the desalinization process, the hardness of drinking water is restored

to the desalinated water. This means that it is transformed into water containing ions of calcium and magnesium, which is then transferred to MEKOROT The brine is returned to the sea. The source of energy - the power station, which was built specifically for this purpose -is operated by "Natural Gas" of the "Delek" group. Gas is available from the stratum opposite Ashkelon. (4)(5)(6).

Figure 72: The Plant for the Desalination of Seawater in Ashkelon - Katsa Ashkelon company.

Figure 73: the water passes through semi-penetrable membranes to be desalinized. - Katsa Ashkelon company.

9.5 Increased Efficiency in Water Consumption by the Municipality

As mayor, the author set goals and objectives for the municipality regarding the saving of water. For this purpose, detailed operative plans were drawn up dealing, essentially with saving water.

The main points of the operative plans were:

1. Reducing the loss of water

    Every city sustains a loss in water in terms of water that leaks out of the municipal pipeline and is wasted. The author introduced a multi-annual plan for re placing old water pipes. The author and co-workers made considerable investments. For this purpose the Municipality received budgets from the World Bank, the Israeli government and local resources. Furthermore, with the author leadership the municipality took care of acquiring the most up-to-date equipment and technology for the purpose of saving water. The result was that Ashkelon achieved one of the highest rates in saving water in Israel.

Water loss in percentage of water supply in Ashkelon and other cities (1996-2006)

city/year	Water Loss in Distribution Systems (%)										
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Ashkelon	10.1	10	11.5	8.4	12.1	9.3	10.3	10.6	9.3	10.7	9.6
Jerusalem	12.4	12.3	14.6	12.3	10.4	11.5	10.3	9.7	12.3	10.7	12.3
Tel-Aviv	9.3	3.7	5.2	6.7	7.7	3.8	6.5	4.7	3.8	6.4	8.4
Beer Sheba	22.8	16.7	17.3	12.1	11.9	9.7	10	14.2	10	9.3	9.1
Hadera	24.2	20.6	28.4	18.1	11.8	15.4	9.3	11.1	10.5	9.6	10.7
Haifa	11	14.8	13.3	13.1	9.7	8.8	8.6	8.6	8	6.7	5.6
Bat yam	18.5	7.1	11.3	10.3	9.7	10.6	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.7	11.5
Tiberia	24.2	20.6	28.4	18.1	11.8	15.4	9.3	11.1	10.5	9.6	10.7
Sderot	17.5	20.7	21.2	27.2	28	20	10	10	12	9	10.5
Ashdod	18	14.4	6	11.6	9.6	10.4	10	5.6	7.3	3.9	7.9
Herzelia	9.5	98	12.8	9.5	8.1	9.4	8.7	10.5	12	8	6.4
Petah tikva	17	12.3	12	11.7	7.9	10.7	7.5	11	8.4	7.3	5

Table 25: Water loss in percentage of water supply in Ashkelon and other cities (1996-2006) - Central Bureau of Statistic

Table25 shows the water loss in percentage of water supply in Ashkelon and other cities (1996-2006) Central Bureau of Statistic. Note that the water loss is estimated as the total water that the municipality buys less the water sold to the residents. The loss is generally caused by infrastructure

faulty maintenance resulting in leakage. Table 26 shows the chronological water loss for the City of Ashkelon during the period of 2003 to 2017. It indicates a significant increase in water loss in 2012, which may be related to the change in the city water service management following the creation of the Water and Wastewater Corporation in 2011 which involved a partnership with other cities in the region. The measures implemented by the corporation with the leadership of the Mayor to reduce the water loss appear to be successful in reducing the loss from about 15% to 9%.

Water Loss In Ashkelon 2003-2017

Year	Water purchase Cubic meters	Water sales Cubic meters	Water Loss %
2003	10,327,089	9,235,185	10.57
2004	10,278,257	9,317,945	9.34
2005	10,860,541	9,703,251	10.66
2006	11,188,731	10,120,149	9.55
2007	11,393,601	10,260,768	9.94
2008	11,183,207	9,696,299	13.30
2009	9,878,229	8,659,967	12.33
2010	10,309,071	9,100,799	11.72
2011	10,198,160	9,468,217	7.16
2012			14.9
2013			12.8
2014			12.28
2015			7.94
2016			8.26
2017			9.31

Table 26: Water Loss in Ashkelon 2003-2017 - Israeli Water Authority

2. Increased efficiency in watering the municipal parks

The author dealt with installing computerized wagering systems, which measure precisely the required amounts of water for the various kinds of plants, trees and grass. The author and co-workers invested in modern equipment and technology for saving water passing through the municipal pipes and bolstered the supervision of the irrigation systems in order to prevent water wastage. The gardening

plans took into account using plants that saved water together with efficient and economic landscaping with an emphasis on saving water.

3. Saving water in public institutions.

The author's policy was to provide schools and kindergartens fixed water quotas and the municipality maintained close control on the water consumption of these facilities.

The water needs of all public institutions, such as libraries, synagogues and community centers, are subject to supervision and measurement, and the public services receive a quota of water consumption which is closely monitored.

9.6 Increased usage efficiency and saving of water by the residents

- There is no doubt that the increase in the price of Water brought about a reduction in the use of water by the residents of Ashkelon.
- Rules were made concerning the watering of private gardens in the morning and the early evening in order to prevent evaporation during the day.
- Many informational activities were carried out for residents on the subject of saving water.
- It is now forbidden to wash motorcars with garden hoses.
- All the central water meters and taps in the homes of the residents were changed.
- Warnings were issued to residences with excessive rates of water consumption.

To meet the critical needs for sustainable water resources the municipality formulated a conservation law for the conservation of water resources and undertook measures, activities and programs, which currently involve:

- Mapping areas such as parks and gardens and irrigation surveys of all the institutions in the city - education, culture etc.
- Operating a water consumption efficiency program, including automation and computerization of the city's irrigation systems - a water sensitive plan, leaving un-built areas for water seepage.
- Encouraging water saving in both the public and private sectors.
- Gardening with water-saving vegetation.
- Preparing a master plan for saving water. The issue of water consumption and sustainable maintenance is taken into account in every process of planning development projects.
- Taking action to minimize the loss of water and evaporation and reduce paved areas in order to facilitate seepage.
- The Municipality's intention was to map all the public installations belonging to the municipality and to install water gauges. It was envisioned that a control station be set up and a system for

allocating the amount of water necessary, for example, for a kindergarten, would have a water gauge to monitor and compare the consumption with the other kindergartens in order to prevent wastage and leakage. (See figure 8)

9.6 The Establishment of the Corporation for Water and Sewage in Ashkelon

The government of Israel passed a law (9). According to which a number of local authorities would have to form a water corporation. The purpose of the law was to create a situation whereby the water economic structure would be run as a closed corporation, which would deal with all budgetary issues of the municipal water and sewage in the framework of a closed corporation.

Previous to this, some municipalities took the revenues from water and sewage and did not reinvest it in improving the water and sewage systems, but used the money for other goals in their budgets. As a result of this, water and sewage systems in many municipalities collapsed and there were many bursts in the pipes, which led to a waste of water. The author must point out here that the Ashkelon municipality never acted this way but always re-invested the income from water and sewage systems in their improvement, completion and renewal.

There was no alternative but to set up a corporation for water and sewage, and the author accomplished this with the city of Netivoth. There are many differences of opinion regarding the establishment of the corporations for water. Many residents and municipalities claim that these corporations create a waste in administrative costs, necessitating the employment of additional managers and personnel for managing the corporations. Apparently, it is the intent of the government to privatize these corporations at a later date and to transfer their management and operations to the private market. (5)(7)

The Legal Framework for establishing the water corporations in Israel is anchored in the Water and Sewage Corporates Law, 2001 & Secondary Legislation, which includes

- Administrative sanctions
- Financial penalties & incentives
- Modern criminal sanctions

It addresses legislative issues which preceded the reform, as the water and sewage services were under the responsibility of the municipalities. In particular, the municipality was simultaneously the supplier and customer. This situation led to tariffs, which did not reflect the costs (for instance in watering parks & gardens the municipal service did not pay a real tariff). The water supply system wasn't based on economic model. Consequently, the water supply management encountered challenges of conflict of interests and the use of water revenues for other municipal services which resulted in inefficiency and lack of investments in infrastructures.

Establishment of water and sewage municipal corporations was based upon the following principles

- Owned by the municipalities but function as business entities (LTD corporations).

- Their sole function is to manage the water and sewage system (SPC).

- Regulated and supervised by the Israel Water Authority (licenses).

- Efficiency and investments in infrastructures.

- Under tariffs regulation that reflects recognized water & sewage service costs.

- Using corporate revenues for maintenance & development of the municipal water system.

- Construction/upgrading sewage of treatment facilities.

Some Background Information – Figure 74 shows the statistical distribution of the water corporations by number of consumers, indicating that:

- 65% are small corporations who serve up to 100K consumers.

- 20% are medium corporations who serve between 100-200 K consumers.

- 15% are large corporations who serve over 200K consumers.

Corporations Size (by Number of Consumers)
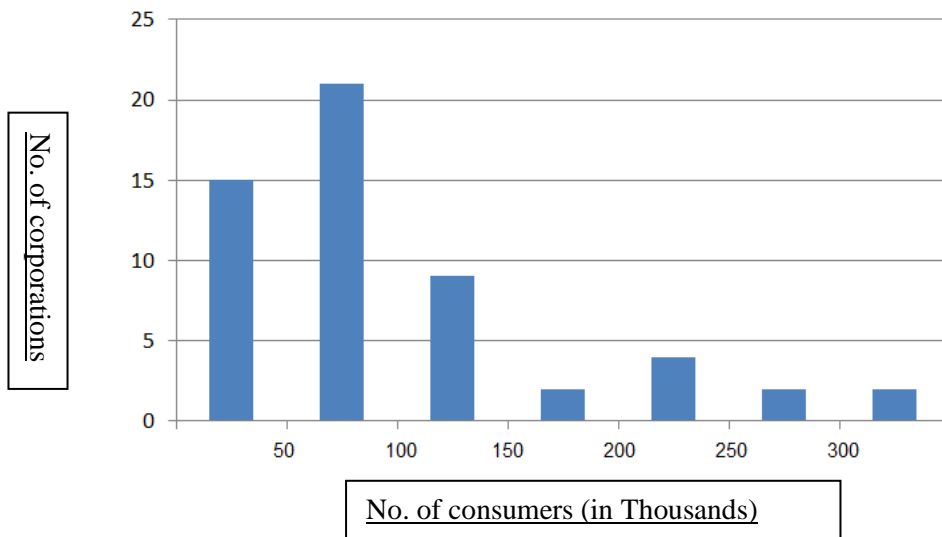
Figure 74: Corporations Size (by Number of Consumers) - Israeli water authority.

There are currently 55 active corporations, operating in 149 local authorities (out of 185 that are incorporation-required), and serving about 6.4 million consumers. 36 local authorities are not yet incorporated. 26 corporations are regional corporations (who serve more than one authority), and 29 are

single-authority ones. The Corporations Business Cycle for 2013 stood around 4.5 billion NIS, which reflects water sales of about 460 MCM.

Figure 75 shows the Non-Revenue Water reported by the local authorities who established water corporations vs. the non-revenue water established by the corporations during 2009.
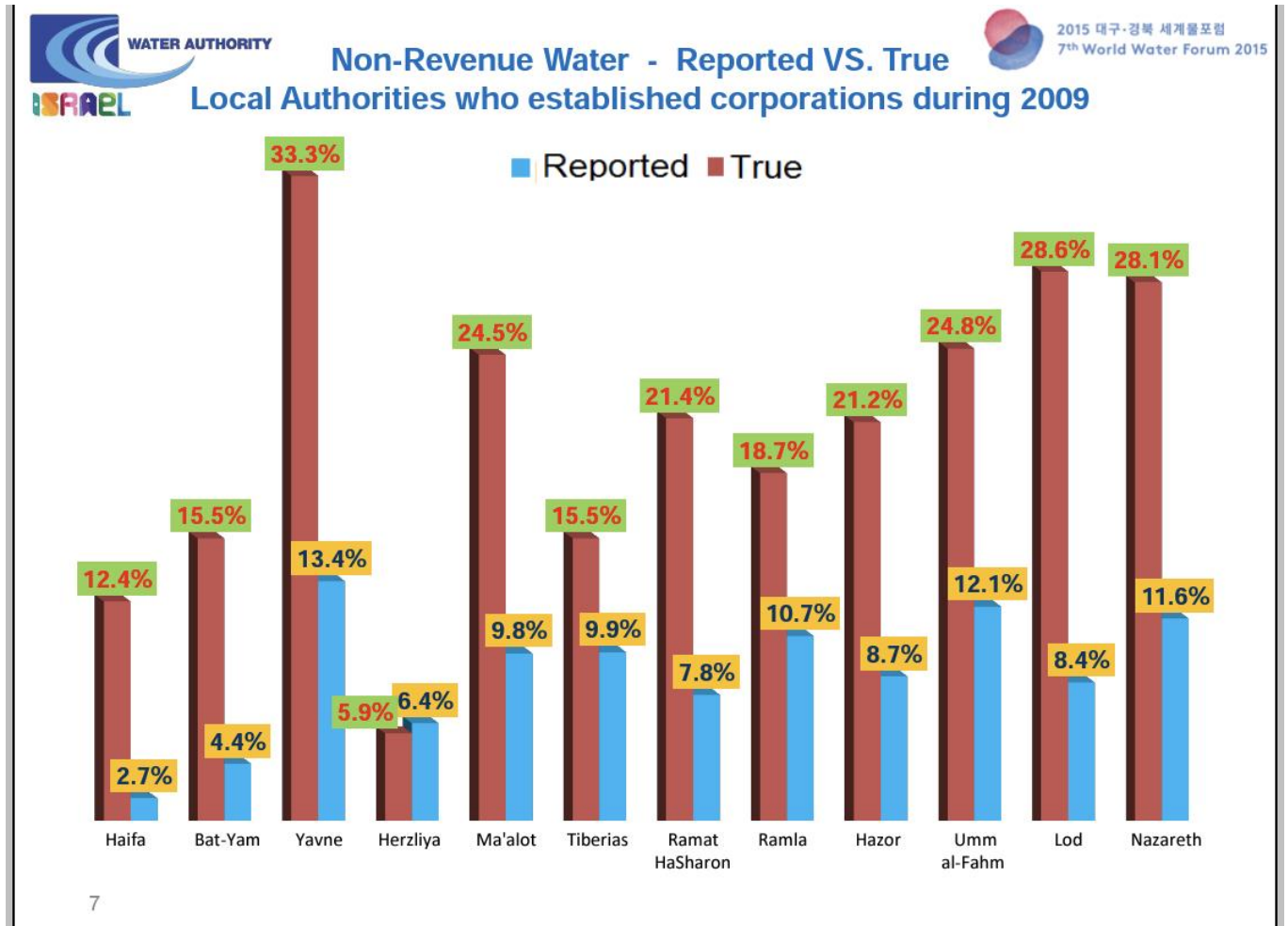
Figure 75: Non-Revenue Water - Reported VS. True Local Authorities who established corporations during 2009 - Israeli water authority

Figure 76 shows the significant improvement of the non-revenue water reduction due to the creation of the water corporations. Figure 77 shows the significant increase in Infrastructure investments due to the creation of the water corporations (in thousand NIS's) as reported by the Israeli Water authority.
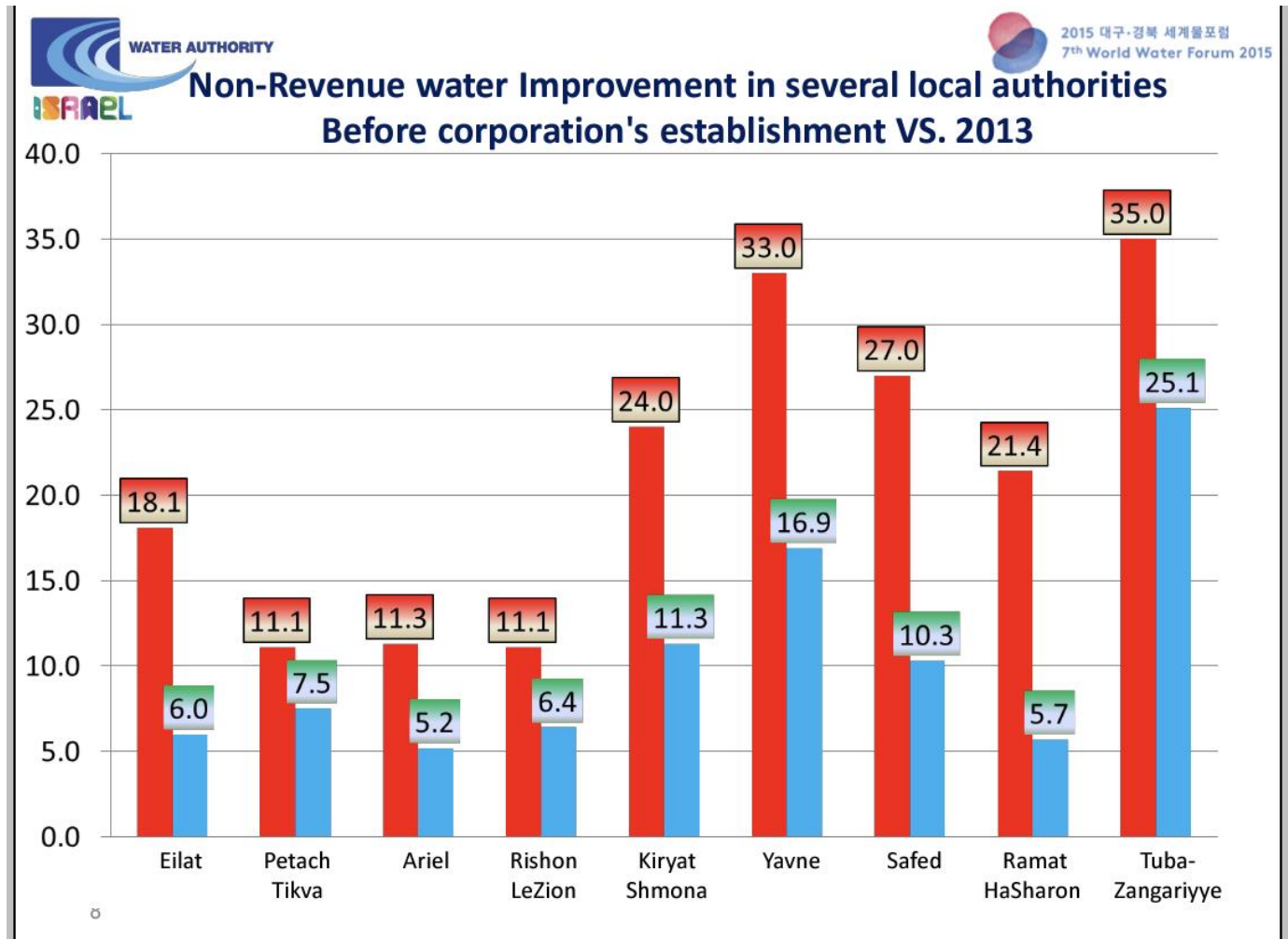
Figure 76: Non-Revenue water Improvement in several local authorities Before corporation's establishment VS. 2013 - Israeli water authority

The creation of the corporations apparently addressed the lack of investment due conflict of interest faced by the local authorities using the water revenues for other municipal investments resulting in a financing stream dedicated to exclusivement to the water service priorities. For a number of corporations these increased investments were also co-sponsored by the government support:

• There are 11 corporations defined as corporations who are entitled to governmental support, all in peripheries.

• So far, over 500 million NIS ware allocated for these corporations, for maintenance and investment purposes.

• In addition, they were granted with bonuses amounting 80%, in favor of sewage infrastructure projects.

Figure 77: Infrastructure investments pre-corporation establishment VS. corporation (in thousand NIS's) - Israeli water authority

9.7 Conclusions

1. Local government must take upon itself part of the national effort for solving the problem of water in the country. The solution of water problems in the country depends on the cooperation with the local government, which must be recruited for this purpose. The conclusion is that the mayor of the city has to declare the city commitment to assist in solving the national water problems:

2. The mayor must formulate a comprehensive master plan for resolving the water problems. For the City of Ashkelon the most essential points are

   a. Constructing a WWTP

   b. Constructing a desalination plant.

   c. Drawing up a plan for increased efficiency in the usage of water for municipal purposes

   d. Giving information to the citizens and making plans for increased efficiency in water usage by them.

   e. Investing in infrastructure for water and sewage the city.

      f. Setting up an efficient and economical urban water corporation for the city.

3. Lessons learned from the establishment of a WWTP in the city demonstrated that it is necessary to:

      a. Set up a facility for water purification using the most advanced technology in the world.

      b. Reach the highest possible level of purification - one that approaches the level of drinking water.

      c. Set up a marketing system in order to sell water for agricultural purposes for watering the parks and gardens of the city.

      d. Set up a product close by for dealing with the sludge and soot and making fertilizer for agricultural use.

      e. Create a plant for generating electricity from the gas released by the sludge for use in the city park

4. Engage lessons learning from the construction of the desalination plant. The first lesson learned was the necessity for setting up a team for dealing with the licensing required for creating a desalination plant. This team enabled speedy construction of the product in the plant feasible, provided appropriate discussions among the parties concerned including:

      a. The Ministry of Finance regarding the high costs of the desalination water.

      b. Electricity production plant, which supplies electricity to the desalination plant in Ashkelon was set up.

      c. The Public Private Partnership planning was set up by using the BOT (Build Operates transfers) model.

      d. Public and private cooperation was created in order to raise money for the project. The involvement of the private sector created a situation whereby the state was not required to grant any money for the project and the private concern received the operating license. This method proved itself due to the fact that there was an open tender for the project and many corporations participated.

      e. The desalination plant and the electric power station added many work opportunities to Ashkelon and brought in large revenues from city taxes.

5. Lessons learned from the program to increase efficiency and to save money from the water being used by the municipality and the residents.

      a. The mayor must personally lead the program for saving and efficiency in the use of water.

      b. The municipality must first set an example for saving and efficiency in the use of water in its own institutions before it makes such demands from the residents.

      c. The program must be general and comprehensive must be accompanied by information to the residents.

6. The results of the efficiency program.

a. The loss of water, or Non-Revenue Water (NRW) as result of leaks and boost defective pipes, decreased appreciably.

b. The Non-Revenue Water (NRW) is measured by the difference between water distributed to the municipality network and the water consumption. In the 90s the NRW was approximately 12%. In 2015 the NRW it decreased to 7.9%. The average for other cities for the same year was between 12% to 15%.

c. Ashkelon is one of the leading cities in Israel in terms of the low NRW. This of course resulted in a considerable saving in the municipal budget.

d. Efficiency in watering the gardens and the flowers of the city resulted in a savings of some 30% in the expenses of water for municipal gardening.

e. Increased efficiency in the use of water in public buildings and institutions brought about the saving of approximately 20% in the water consumption level.

f. The drive for efficiency, the use of modern technology and the information to the residents of the city brought about a decrease of some 10% in the per capita use of water in Ashkelon.

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Chapter 10 - Societal Urban Sustainability Impacts

10.1 General Background to a Sustainable City

Sustainable urban development does not depend only on the natural resources or on the physical infrastructure characteristics. A city is made up of its built environment, including buildings, facilities, infrastructure, that were built within its jurisdictional area, its natural environment, including natural resources, land use, morphology and environmental assets, which impacts its identity attributes and historical development such as coastal cities in the case of Ashkelon, and the human environment which represents the civil society as both the human capital, the city stakeholders, consumers community and the essential drivers of the public and private sectors. A sustainable city has to utilize efficiently all its assets including the space, buildings, facilities, infrastructure and environmental attributes, so that both above and below ground space be used for the activities of the city's residents each day and all day long.

Examples:

- Contaminated land must be rehabilitated.
- Accessibility to all public services is a priority right which must be ensured
- Land use needs to enable improving the environment, economic growth and quality of life

Sustainable development of a city is not merely a matter of environmental quality characteristics but rather a dynamic identity of a city of renewal that provides employment, essential services, etc. (3)(4)(6)

10.2 The Vision of the Mayor for Sustainable Social Development

The author's vision was that Ashkelon has to become a city of social justice in which the social and economic resources are fairly allocated. The access to public resources has to be fair in a city that provides social and community services to all and strives to promote resident involvement, enabling easy access to the entire population to all the urban services, supporting and strengthening the weak and decreasing the gap between the different population groups. The city needs to be a meeting place of interaction between cultures.

10.3 Mayor's strategy to realize the vision for Sustainable Social Development

10.3.1 The Branch for Social and Community Services

Already in the period of his tenure as deputy mayor of Ashkelon with Mayor Eli Dayan, the author established the Branch for Social and Community Services. The task of the branch was to provide the best possible welfare services that the residents of Ashkelon, every family and community, needed, to prevent situations of risk and danger, to strengthen endangered families and communities, to support their integration into society, to offer solutions to challenged population groups - poor people, those with difficulties in functioning, the unemployed, exploited and vulnerable. Hundreds of professional workers are employed in

the branch - social workers, psychologists, community workers and experts -in the fields of society and community.

The social and community services cover all the city's neighborhoods.

10.3.2 The Services of the Branch

These include:

1. Support for needy families -Weak families receive assistance and support and are accompanied by social workers that guide and advise them. Thousands of families in Ashkelon receive social assistance.

2. Running services for populations with special needs.

- Assistance and help to invalids.
- Club for the blind - including personal assistance and support. A protected industry employs blind people and social and community activities for the blind are organized.
- A club for the deaf, which offers suitable social activities and employment.
- A protected industry, which offers employment to the disabled.
- A day-care center for invalids.
- Rehabilitation day-care clubs for handicapped children.
- A hostel for elderly retarded people.
- A multi- disciplinary center for detached youth which deals with endangered youngster, their education, welfare, health, drug abuse and employment. The center offers solutions for endangered youth between the ages of 13 -18, under one roof.
- Centers for the mentally frail and sufferers of Alzheimer disease.
- Day centers for the aged.
- Clubs for social activities for the aged.
- Centers for pa rents offering guidance to parents who have difficulty in functioning adequate in dealing with endangered youths.
- Dealing with the homeless (street dwellers) - providing them with a roof over their head and housing. (2)(3)(4)

Figure 80: Clubs for handicapped - Association of the disabled in Israel

3. Project "City without Violence"

- Establishing a multi-disciplinary center for dealing with violence in the family, between parents and children and sexual assault and violence against young people.

- Fighting violence against elderly people and strengthening their personal security and increasing the personal security of the older population in their natural surroundings.

- Social workers dealing with children in the center for the prevention of violence with the participation of the family.

- Dealing with adolescents who experience violence within the family.

- Integrating social workers in the work of the police in order to support women who submit complaints to the police and encouraging them to enter a treatment process in the center for the prevention of violence.

- A center for dealing with children and youths who suffered sexual assault was opened.

4. Employment

- Accompanying and supporting those in need of assistance integrating into places of work.

- A round table, which gathers the combined resources of all the different bodies dealing with employment.

- Developing training of "human capital", assisting them by distributing study grants and learning a trade.

- Encouraging couples to seek employment.

- A training center in the fields of building, electricity, motor mechanics and carpentry.

5. Dealing with endangered children and youths

- Clubs for children with behavioral problems. The children come to the clubs after school and eat and study at the center until the evening. These are children from problematic families in which the parents experience difficulties in coping with them.

- Programs for empowering parents.

- Setting up a center for parents and children.

- Running day centers for endangered children.

- A multi-system center for endangered children.

- A contact center, which offers treatment solutions to families of endangered children.

10.4 Assistance to New Immigrant Communities

10.4.1 Projects for accompanying and supporting new immigrants from Ethiopia

- Accompanying families suffering from economic stress in order to remove them from the circle of economic dependence and to help them attain economic in dependence.

- A project for the employment of young people between the ages of 18 - 25 from Ethiopia with the purpose of providing them with skills and completing their education, including employment workshops until their integration into the work-force.

- Project " PACT" (Parents and Children Together) - dealing with distressed families from Ethiopia with emphasis on improving the functioning of parents and strengthening the ties between parents and children.

- A special social worker dealing with violence amongst immigrants from Ethiopia.

10.4.2 Projects for new immigrants from the CIS (former USSR)

- A project for encouraging immigration of Jews to Israel from the CIS - personal support for immigrant families, assisting them in their integration into the city, guidance and help with housing, employment, education, social activities for adults and young people.

- Project for promoting the integration of Caucasian immigrants - an ethnic group needing special assistance in order to integrate into Israeli society.

General frameworks for new immigrants:

- Support for the elderly community of immigrants in the neighborhoods.

- An information center for immigrants of all communities, in order to guide them in all matters concerning their absorption into the community.

- Social, community and cultural events for all ethnic groups according to their customs and traditions.

10.4.3 A Volunteer Center

The author's vision was to establish a volunteer center to which thousands of volunteers would come and in which all the voluntary NGOs would meet. Thousands of volunteers would spread out from the center to all the city neighborhoods and would be active in all forms of volunteering. The Ashkelon Volunteer Center was created with NGOs working in all social fields:

- Assistance for the elderly.
- Volunteering in the hospital
- Volunteering in the neighborhood communities.
- Volunteering to help holocaust survivors.
- Many other forms of volunteering.

10.4.4 The Center for Treatment for Drug and Alcohol Withdrawal

In Ashkelon there were hundreds of youths and adults suffering from addiction to d rugs and alcohol. With the Mayor leadership the Ashkelon municipality dealt with this issue professionally. Social workers and psychologists dealt with drug addicts and, of course, a lot of explanatory material explaining the dangers involved in drug usage was distributed to the residents of the city, including information on prevention of drug usage and the consumption of alcohol. (2)(3)(4)(5)
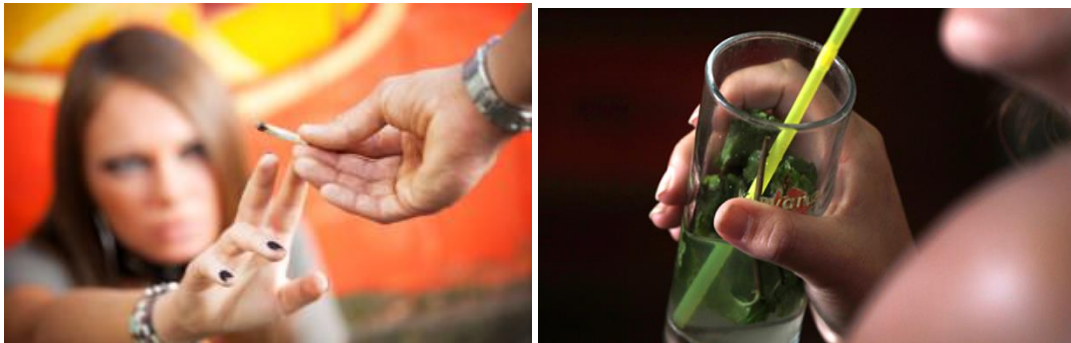
Figure 79: The Center for Treatment for Drug and Alcohol Withdrawal. "Ten Plus" post.

10.5 Impacts Assessment of the Mayor's Societal Sustainability Program

The impact of the Mayor's societal sustainability programs can be assessed using the socio-economic index. This index is calculated with advanced statistical methods taking into account changes in the level of education in the city, sources of income, degrees of mobility, housing features, features of employment and unemployment, recipients of national insurance grants, etc. (Tables 27 and 28) The cities are classified into

10 group clusters with each cluster classifying the socio-economic level, considering that Cluster 1 represents the lowest socio-economic level and Cluster 10 represents the highest socio-economic level.

Table 27 shows respectively the socio-economic index of Ashkelon in comparison with other cities and the grading according to clusters for the years of 1998 and 2014. Ashkelon was graded in cluster 5 in 2014, cluster 4 in 1998 and cluster 3 In the 1980's.

CITY	AREA OF JURISDICTION (103 M2)	CLUSTER		GRADING VALUE		GRADING	
		1998	2014	1998	2014	1998	2014
ASHKELON	45.1	4	5	-0.354	0.015	91	121
JERUSALEM	126.3	5	4	-0.05	0.365	113	99
TEL AVIV	51.3	8	8	0.879	1.083	162	215
HAIFA	59.7	7	7	0.692	0.77	155	192
ASHDOD	44	5	5	-0.081	0.104	110	112
BEER SHEBA	55	5	5	-0.120	0.172	107	140
BNEI BRAK	7.3	3	3	-0.664	0.869	60	66
BAT YAM	8	6	5	0.257	0.04	133	117
DIMONA	31	3	4	-0.664	0.212	59	109
HERZLIA	20.1	9	8	1.247	1.304	175	228
HOLON	18.9	7	5	0.613	0.389	147	161
LOD	9	4	4	-0.228	0.295	101	104
NETANYA	29.1	6	5	0.113	0.234	123	145
REHOVOT	23.1	7	6	0.705	0.694	158	187

Table 27: Socio-economic Index and grading of Ashkelon and other cities for- Central Bureau of Statistics Israel 1998 and 2014'

CITY	TOTAL EXPENDITURE PER CAPITA(N.I.S)		EXPENDITURE PER CAPITA FOR WELFARE(NIS)		TOTAL INCOME PER CAPITA (N.I.S)	
	1991	2013	1991	2013	1991	2013
ASHKELON	1175	7499	196	868	1087	5926
JERUSALEM	942	5210	106	721	939	5202
TEL AVIV	2472		227		2242	
HAIFA	1303	8661	143	963	1232	8665
ASHDOD	1073	5792	179	859	1070	5798
BEER SHEBA	1377	6371	173	1035	1207	6382
BNEI BRAK	1176		144		855	
BAT YAM	802	6220	107	981	822	6227
DIMONA	1551		228		1504	
HERZLIA	1183		92		1096	
HOLON	1116		101		1060	
LOD	1377	4810	223	982	1309	5069
NETANYA	1218	6276	123	807	992	6276
REHOVOT	1039		134		905	

Table28: Total income, total expenditure and expenditure for welfare per capita in the regular budget of Ashkelon in comparison to other cities for years 1991 and 2013 - Central Bureau of Statistics Israel.

CITY	% OF EXPENDITURE FOR WELFARE (1991)	% OF EXPENDITURE FOR WELFARE (2013)
ASHKELON	16.7	15
JERUSALEM	11.2	14
TEL AVIV	9.2	14.8
HAIFA	11	11
ASHDOD	16.7	
BEER SHEBA	12.6	16
BNEI BRAK	12.2	
BAT YAM	13.4	16
DIMONA	14.7	
HERZLIA	7.8	
HOLON	9	
LOD	16.2	20
NETANYA	10.1	13

Table 29: Percentage of expenditure for welfare from the total budget for - Central Bureau of Statistics Israel 1991 and 2013

A different socio-economic scale grades cities from 1 (the lowest) to 252 (the highest). This scale measures additional components of the population such a social welfare and education. In 1998 Ashkelon was graded as number 91 whereas in 2014 Ashkelon sprung into place 121.While in 1998 Ashkelon lagged behind other cities and was given a very low grade - lower then Jerusalem, Ashdod and Bat-Yam, in 2014 Ashkelon passed them and also overtook many other cities

Tables 28 and 29 show the total income, total expenditure and expenditure for welfare per capita in the regular budget and percentage of expenditure for welfare from the total budget for years year 1991 and 2013 of Ashkelon in comparison to other cities for - Central Bureau of Statistics Israel   1991 and 2013

10.6 Resident Participation

10.6.1 The Vision of the Mayor for Resident Participation

The involvement of the individual and the community in all spheres, as a central theme and value in their work, has been one of the key elements in the Mayor's vision. All citizens have the right - in fact the obligation to express their opinion on any matter that concerns them or that affects their lives in any way. Residents need to be involved in decisions affecting their quality of life in order to strengthen the sense of belonging of the individual to the community and to the neighborhood, to develop and strengthen social and community leadership in the neighborhood by means of the neighborhood committee and the city council of neighborhood representatives, committees of residential buildings and leaders of social organizations. This is the author's credo as the Mayor of Ashkelon. He firmly believes that the residents know what is best for them. (2)(6)

From the very beginning, as Deputy Mayor, the author and Mayor Eli Dayan understood the great importance of maintaining a process of permanent and continuous resident involvement. It was clear to the author that resident participation is one of the most important elements of a sustainable city and sustainable social development.

10.6.2 Resident Participation- an Important Condition for Sustainable Development

The residents participated in diagnosing their problems and identifying needs in a resident oriented caring process, by allocating responsibility and the necessary tasks for succeeding with dealing with issues on the individual, group or community level.

An important basic cornerstone in resident participation is the building and developing of social and community leadership. It is easy to agree with the principle of resident participation but it is much harder to give it actual form and it is even harder to implement resident participation in reality. Giving legitimate expression to the community and Neighborhood aspects means paying attention to the voice of the residents. Such attention should not be taken for granted. It requires training and preparation of elected public officials who need to share governing, management and authority with neighborhood activists. This requires a readiness to do so not only on the part of the elected officials but on the part of the public servants working in the municipality as well. Attentiveness and openness to listen and to relate to the ideas of residents, to share with them any information relevant to their sphere of activity and even to include them in the decision making process. The group and the community give the individual additional significance and a framework for reference. (1)(4)(5)

10.6.3 Establishing Neighborhood Committees and the Neighborhoods Council

- Neighborhood Committees- In order to give expression to each and every neighborhood in the city, it was necessary to hold elections in each neighborhood in order to elect a neighborhood committee and chairperson. The neighborhood committee gives significant expression of the needs of the residents living in the neighborhood and helps in addressing specific needs of the neighborhood as a whole as well as the needs of each and every individual. In the course of years elections were held periodically in all neighborhoods of Ashkelon and active committees and chairpersons were elected.

- Neighborhood Council- All neighborhood committee members constituted the Neighborhoods Council, which elected the Council's chairperson. The importance of the Neighborhoods Council is that in addition to dealing with matters of inter-neighborhood cooperation, the members were also involved in decisions relating to the city as a whole functionally, administratively and socially. The structure of the Neighborhoods Council is important, as this is the umbrella organization of all the neighborhoods. (1)(6)

The most important issues for the neighborhood committees are education, society, youth and sport. The improvement of the appearance of the city and the urban-environmental development are decisively important to the connection between social processes and the physical environment in which the residents live. Any steps taken to be attentive to the residents, will contribute to weaving the community fabric.

A genuine, fair and sincere two-way dialogue with the neighborhood committee which represents the residents in the neighborhood and the municipality and the mayor is essential and guarantees the continued development and prosperity of the city of Ashkelon, based on the understanding of what is good and desirable for the residents of the city.

The municipality staff has an overview of the needs of the city as a whole while the neighborhood committees see specific needs of their particular neighborhoods. The mayor, the elected officials and their professional teams are charged with finding the formulas, which strike a balance between the different interests.

10.6.4 The Main Purposes for Residents' Participation

From the Mayor's and the municipality point of view the purpose is multi-facet and its objectives include:

- Enabling interested parties to decide on issues related to their needs, concerns and inspirations
- Increasing resident supervision of the local authorities.
- Transferring authority to the residents.
- Decreasing the centralization of power.
- Mobilizing support and legitimacy for issues on the agenda of the municipality
- Eradicating the feeling of dependence on the establishment.
- Increasing the responsibility of the individual for the environment
- Enhancing the self-image and the self-confidence of the resident
- Increasing faith in the establishment.
- Preventing abrupt political change and acting in accordance to the law

 From the point of view of the municipality:

- Learning the needs and priorities of the residents.
- Adapting the solutions to the needs of the residents.
- Increasing the probability to achieve goals. .

10.7 The Model of the City of Ashkelon in Resident Participation

1. The mayor consistently encouraged and strengthened the work of the neighborhood committees and the neighborhoods' council.

2. The mayor, together with all the senior officials of the municipality, held regular meetings at fixed times with all the neighborhood committees and the Neighborhoods Council in which they heard the requests of the neighborhoods. A written protocol of the discussions and actions to be taken was written. The mayor and his team periodically visited the neighborhoods together with the neighborhood committee with the participation of all the residents.

3. The neighborhood representatives were invited to all the important meetings in which issues relating to the neighborhoods were dealt with and expressed their opinions.

4. The municipality encouraged activists in the neighborhood committees, in the neighborhood administrations and involved them in activities of the municipality. The committees participated fully in all issues relating to the quality of the environment and in giving personal assistance to residents in preparation for the festive seasons and du ring the entire year. They were also key participants in organizing community Bar Mitzvah ceremonies as well as social and cultural events in the neighborhoods.

5. The mayor set up a special department for community work which maintained continuous and close ties, virtually on a daily basis with the neighborhood committees.

6. The municipality operated volunteers in all fields of community activities - emergency services, operating special storerooms which were opened specifically for the purpose of giving out clothes and equipment to needy families, helping in children's clubs, serving in resident's advice bureaus and volunteering to help the elderly.

7. The municipality established the Association for Residential Culture in Ashkelon and operates residential housing committees in thousands of residential buildings throughout the city. The contact with these residential committees adds a new level of contact with the residents. The association assists these committees in cultivating and imp roving their buildings and immediate surroundings and works in close cooperation with the Department of Community Work.

8. The municipality involves people receiving care of various kinds, in the process and the care that they receive of involvement of residents

10.8 Examples of involvement of residents initiated by the Mayor

1. Discussions with residents on the strategic planning for the city: The Mayor held a series of discussions with groups of residents in order to involve them in the strategic planning process. The purpose of this, among others, is to involve residents in formulating the master plan for the city. The

plan covers and deals with all aspects of life in the city of Ashkelon -education, society, economy and employment, transportation, quality of the environment, uses of land, commerce, tourism etc. These groups of residents take part in ma king decisions concerning the short and long term profile of Ashkelon.

2. Urban Steering Teams with Resident's Participation Project Renewal: The Mayor established steering committees, which included residents' representatives dealing with issues of neighborhood renewal. These steering committees were made up of professionals, government and municipal officials and residents representatives. The steering committee of Project Renewal decides on the work program of the project. This includes both physical renewal of buildings and surrounding areas as well as educational and social programs.

3. Joint work teams of residents and the municipality working on issues relating to sustainability in Ashkelon and promoting activities in every field of sustainability in the city, such as recycling and separation at source of waste etc.

4. Meetings of the Mayor with school pupils on the subject of the quality of the environment. The mayor held meetings with pupils in order to involve them in all activities of environmental quality in the city, including projects on the subject of sustainability.

5. Community Parks Public and Neighborhood Parks are set up and maintained jointly by residents and municipal workers. These parks fulfill many human needs, both from the physical as well as the social and community aspects.

10.9 Residents' Participation as a Key element in Resilience Building and Urban Sustainability

Societal Sustainability is a critical complementary element in urban resilience building. Sustainability relates to guaranteeing that the use of available natural resources will not harm the ecological, societal and economic systems and will preserve the resources for the use of future generations as well. In other words, the intention is for development that answers the needs of the present without endangering future needs.

Resilience deals with the ability of systems to absorb disturbances and change without changing their own structure. This is related to the ability of adaptation and renewal of the system in terms of changing itself. The system must be elastic and flexible which will enable it to deviate from its natural course while at the same time adapting itself to the new situation.

Community resilience refers to the ability of the community to successfully mobilize itself and to react to pressure of a specific nature. Community resilience signifies the existence and the development of community resources, which are characterized by changes, uncertainties, the inability to predict and

216

surprises. For this reason, resilient members of the community are able to react to change and influence it in order to support the community, to renew it and to develop new paths for its future. (4)(6)

Eight dimensions of community resilience can be identified:

1. Resources that are at the disposal of the community - the scope, quantity, availability etc. of these resources.
2. Community development - embracing all the projects and activities that were developed by the Ashkelon municipality for the residents and the community.
3. The use of resources by the community - It is necessary for the community to know how to use the resources in an intelligent and efficient manner and to render them available to all members of the community.
4. Activist-agents - These are the instigating elements in the city such as social organization and community partnerships. (2)(3)(45)

10.10 Community Well-being

The well-being of a community relates to realizing the potential of the individual and of the community as a whole to withstand the demands of life. This is measured by the psychological health of the members of the community, its functioning and its quality of life. Resilience is relevant to reaction to change while wellbeing is relevant to a stable situation. Wellbeing refers to the condition of the individual and a high level of happiness with a low level of negative moods. It is measured by the level of economic and social security, the strength of social cohesiveness and the level of autonomy and power of the citizen.

10.11 Conclusions

The Author's vision of Ashkelon was that of an integrated and unified city of social justice in which the social and economic resources are fairly allocated for equity based socially sustainable development. The city carried out a continuous process of support for weak population groups, nurtured sustainable consumption and strengthened the various communities. (1)(6)

The municipality of Ashkelon invested relatively large budgets for dealing with issues of welfare and community. The social and economic plans brought about a dramatic decrease in the percentage of unemployment in Ashkelon. Tables 15 and 16 of the Central Bureau of statistics show the significant impacts of the city economic development programs on decreasing unemployment in Ashkelon.

The vision was implemented by building one of the most developed and comprehensive system of social welfare and community services in the world which, together with involvement of residents, hundreds of social and community workers and professionals, worked for the good of the weak population groups and

for strengthening the community. Residents' participation is a critical governance aspect of building societal sustainability for a resilient city, with a social cohesiveness, enabling the individual and the community to initiate, choose participate and influence rather than reacting to municipal decision.

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Chapter 11 - Development of the Education System in Ashkelon

11.1 Description of the Education System and the Vision of Sustainable Education in Ashkelon

The education system of Ashkelon is the largest public organizational framework in the Ashkelon municipality. It is also the most important. The education system depends on many forms of resources. Its budget constitutes approximately 50% of the entire municipal budget. The largest portion of public land is al located to education institutions such as elementary and high schools, kindergartens, day-care centers the academic college, centers for special educational frameworks and others.

About 40% of the municipal employees work in the education system. The level of personnel working in the education system is of the highest caliber and also the most varied. They include school directors of a high standard, teachers, psychologists, educational counselors, kindergarten teachers, and administrative workers for the entire system. The education system is sound and has a positive service image in the city. It also has an important effect on the status of the city, in that its quality enhances the overall ability to attract newcomers of a high level to Ashkelon, including young and dynamic people.

In Israel there is a law for compulsory education. The Ministry of Education is responsible for education throughout the country and receives its budget from the state. However, every year the government budgets decrease, and the local authorities are forced to seek additional sources of financing in order to strengthen the local education system. (2)(3)(5)

11.2 The Vision of the Mayor for Education and the Educational Program Goals

The resilience of the residents of the city and its quality, depend, first and foremost, on the urban education system. The city of Ashkelon is a city of education, where the education system is central for the city development. The author sees Ashkelon as a life long unified social learning network, in which all the residents participate.

As a mayor who perceives Ashkelon as a city of education, the author felt greatly committed to invest significantly in the education system, to respond appropriately to the needs of the various populations in the city and to offer them suitable educational and cultural study frameworks for all ages from pre-kindergarteners till adults.

The city is obligated to deal with weak children and those with special needs and to create suitable special education programs for them, to make efforts for the progress of the average pupil and to nurture promising pupils and those who excel, to integrate new immigrant pupils to realize the full potential of each and every child and youth, to make appropriate learning materials and facilities available to the different kinds of pupils, to promote cooperation in the classroom among all the pupils, families and teachers of a particular

class, to transform the school into a place of cooperation between the school board, teachers, pupils and pa rents and to develop cooperation on the urban level between the various educational framework in the city, both within the system as well as with all the public and private organizations operating in the city. As a city of education, Ashkelon will encourage innovations, promote new educational, technological, scientific and urban techniques in order to build and maintain educational and cultural institutions of a suitable standard in a well-cared for learning environment rich in knowledge and technology. (5)(6)(8)

11.3 Realization of the Vision of the Mayor for Education

In order to realize the vision for education, aims and goals were set and relevant frameworks were set up, which included the necessary equipment and tools for achieving this. (1)(2)(3)(6)

Goal 1: <u>Improving the scholastic achievements of every pupil</u>

- Different methods were used and adapted to the different kinds of population groups.
- Study programs were prepared to enhance the achievements of each pupil, especially in Mathematics, English and Hebrew. These programs encompassed all the elementary schools in Ashkelon, as well as follow-up on the achievements of the pupils and processes for improvement throughout the school year.
- Setting up a program, which I named "Matriculation 100" -the idea being that 100% of the pupils would matriculate if we gave them the right tools. For this purpose, the municipality budgeted the schools for employing teachers who would help pupils individually in their studies and to progress in the subjects in which they needed help.
- I decided that "every pupil can" and I therefore encouraged schools to use alternative methods of teaching and to introduce innovations into the schools in order to realize the full potential of each pupil.
- We implemented and budgeted special teaching programs that offered solutions to groups of children with specific needs.
- " Long school day" programs were enacted and children were given meals at school.
- Special programs at the schools, after school hours, were set up which gave specific study assistance to specific groups such as programs run by "Beth Zipporah" which were intended for immigrant pupils from Ethiopia as well as after-school clubs for pupils from needy families.

Figure 82: Ort Ronson High school - Ashkelon Municipality

Goal 2: Reducing the dropout rate at all levels in all schools

One of the goals that I paid special attention to was the reduction and prevention of pupil dropouts from schools. When I was elected mayor in 199 1, the dropout rate was 8%. Every pupil who dropped out from school, found her or his way to the streets with nothing to do but to cause harm to their families and to the city, with a potential for involvement in criminal activities. As shown in Figure 2 the dropout rate today is less than 1%.

How did we accomplish this?

- We enacted special programs for combating dropping out of school - e.g. "Mena" (Prevention) and "Omets" (Courage), including extra lessons for week pupils.
- The "Perach" program (Coaching Project). Study stipends are given to university students and in return they help and deal with a weak school pupil.
- The " Pact" program - specifically for immigrant pupils from Ethiopia.
- Close follow-up and supervision by the school di rectors and teachers in the event of any case of a pupil dropping out.
- Increasing the numbers of relevant workers such as truant officers who deal especially with children on the brink of dropping out or that have already dropped out.
- These workers were supervised in order to be sure that they were doing everything possible in order to return the pupils to school.
- Projects and special programs for preventing dropping out such as:
- "Tolerant" classes for children with specific needs.
- Special Education classes.
- Special kindergartens.

221

- After-school family clubs for weak pupils.
- Preventative programs and programs for preparing pupils approaching school-leaving age. Using "Photoshop" -computed graphics.
- Emotional and study assistance - A program for giving emotional assistance in order to strengthen perseverance of badgered youth within the school system.
- A program for business entrepreneurship for suitably gifted youth.
- Groups of "Young Scientists ".
- Special hostels (homes) for endangered youths.
- Enacting the national program for dealing with endangered children and youths.

Dropout rate from school, Year 1991 to 2014

Year	% Dropout from school	The National Average Rate
1991	8%	
2008	2.72%	2.3%
2009	2.42%	2.4%
2010	2.11%	2.2%
2011	0.99%	
2012	0.98%	
2013	1%	2%
2014	1%	2.1%

Table 30: Dropout rate from school, Year 1991 to 2014. Ashkelon municipality
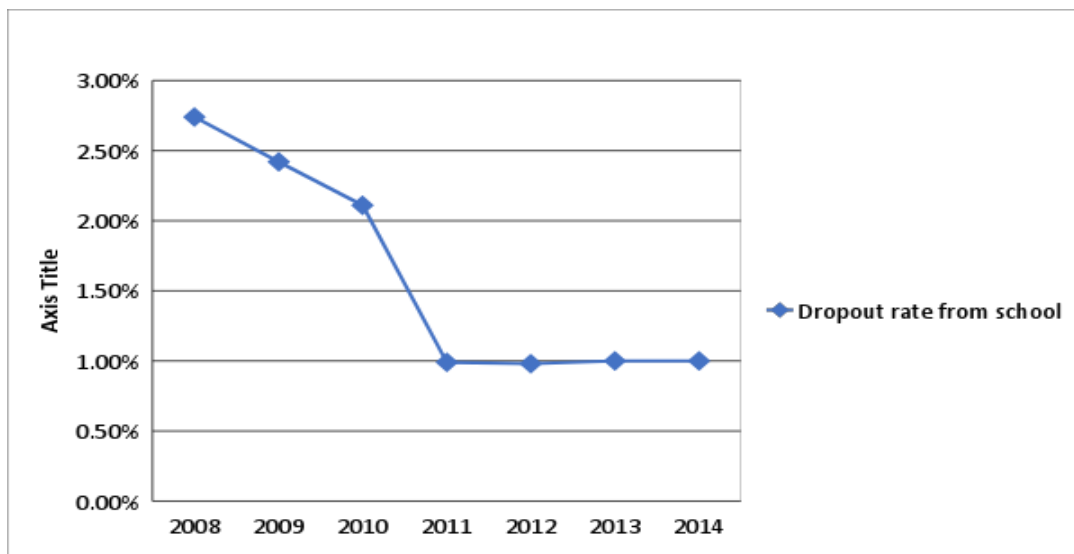
Figures 81: Dropout rate from school, Year 1991 to 2014. Ashkelon municipality

Goal 3: <u>Increasing the number of matriculates and improving the results</u>

When I was elected mayor of Ashkelon, I realized that there was a generation growing up of young people who were not able to obtain employment in many places of work because they had not matriculated. Many of these young people are from poor families - a second generation of socio-economic distress. Regrettably, many of them do not receive a matriculation certificate because of

failing in one or two exams, mostly Mathematics and English. A matriculation is a key to many doors for the progress of young people. Further studies not necessarily academic - such as practical engineering, technicians and other trades, nevertheless require a matriculation certificate. This is obviously true for university education. Furthermore, in Israel, a major yardstick for assessing the quality of an education system is the percentage of pupils who matriculate.

YEAR	ASHKELON	NATIONAL AVERAGEOF DIPLOMA
1995	47.3%	-
1996	45.3%	-
1997	50%	-
1998	50%	-
1999	55%	-
2000	60%	-
2001	66%	45%
2002	64%	48%
2003	62%	48%
2004	61%	49%
2005	62%	46%
2006	62%	46%
2008	70%	44%
2009	71%	46%
2010	69%	48%
2011	70%	
2012	73%	53%
2013	75%	53%

Table 31: Percentage of high school diploma ("bagrut") in Ashkelon and the national average. Ashkelon municipality

The matriculation rate affects, of course, the image of the education system of Ashkelon as well as the image of the city in general. For this reason, the municipality organized special study programs, which are suitable to the various kinds of pupils in the city in order to raise the percentage of matriculates. The educational program carried out in the municipal education system include:

"Matriculation 100" - Extra lessons for pupils after school hours at the schools. The municipality allocated budgets to the schools, enabling them to teach weak pupils and to prepare them for the matriculation exams.

Extra lessons were also given during the school holidays.

- "Omets" - Program for study assistance.
- A special program for children from Ethiopia.
- A special program for children in danger.

In addition, there were various educational programs for all the different kinds of pupils.
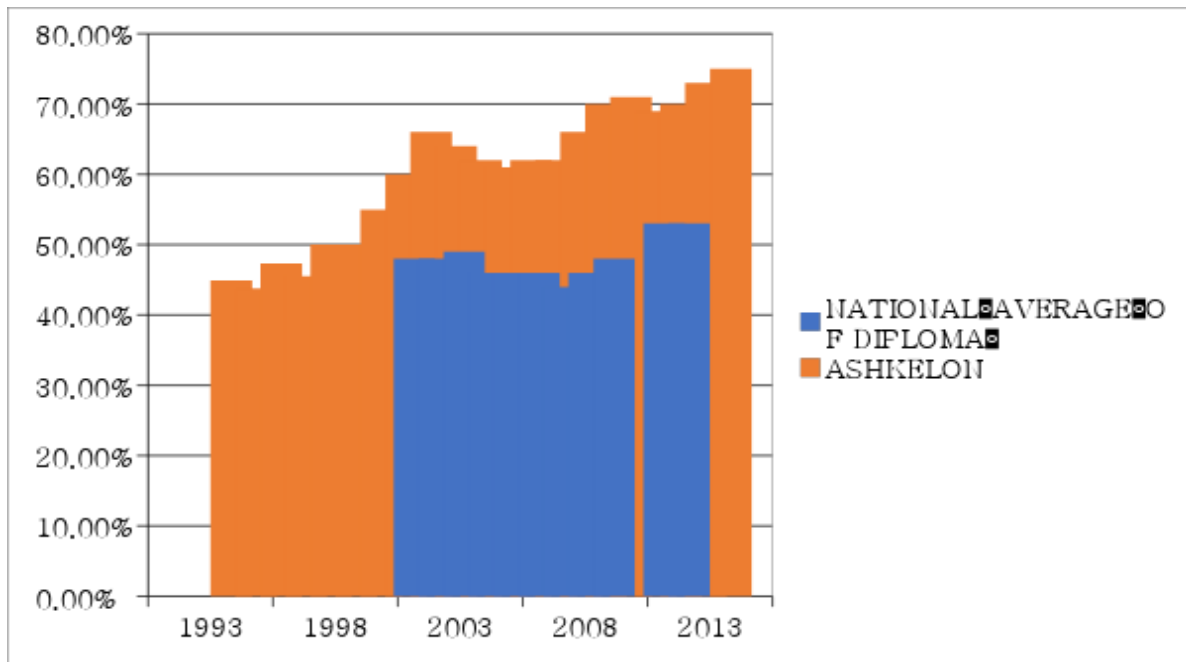
Figure 82: % Percentage of high school diploma ("bagrut") in Ashkelon and the national average. Central Bureau of Statistics Israel

CITY	YEAR 1990 %	YEAR 2009 %	YEAR 2010 %	YEAR 2012 %	YEAR 2013 %
ASHKELON	50%	71%	69%	73%	75%
BAT YAM				65%	70%
HAIFA		69%	69%	71%	75%
HOLON		66%	69%	70%	74%
HADERA		48%	49%	57%	60.4%
NAHARYA		51%	60%	69%	68%
LOD		39%	35%	45%	44%
RAMLA		45%	40%	50%	50%
NETANYA		61%	60%	66%	65%
ASHDOD		71%	66%	70%	65%
RISHON LETZION		62%	65%	71%	76%
TEL AVIV		69%	70%	73%	76%
PETACH TIKVA		69%	63%	68%	71%
REHOVOT		58%	60%	67%	70%
RAMAT GAN		73%	74%	80%	79%
EILAT		62%	59%	53%	62%
ACKO		49%	47%	59%	67%
SDEROT		65%	58%	65%	70%
BEER SHEBA		60%	61%	66%	68%
JERUSALEM		48%	46%	43%	44%
TIBERIA		47%	47%	48%	48%
DIMONA		58%	64%	66%	65%

Table 32: Percentage of high school diploma ("bagrut") in Ashkelon and other cities - Central Bureau of Statistics Israel

Figure 84 shows the significant increase of students getting high school diploma, from 45.6% in 1996 to 75% in 2013. Table 32 shows that Ashkelon has reached the top of the cities in Israel in percentage of students graduating with high school diploma.

Figure 83: "Mekif Ironi Alef" high school. Ashkelon Municipality

Goal 4: <u>Advancement for excellent and gifted pupils</u>

The mayor vision called for promoting the potential of gifted pupils. While dealing with weak pupils, suitable frameworks have been set up for promoting gifted pupils with the potential of attaining results far beyond the average.

In order to achieve this goal a number of programs were implemented

- A special school for sciences; This school was built in which a considerable part of the curriculum was dedicated to science-studies such as mathematics, physics, science etc.
- Art school. In the tenure of the author's predecessor, school for the arts was already built. This school enrolls talented pupils from all over the city and offers a special syllabus in the field of the arts such as theatre, music, dance, painting and sculpture. This school has already produced pupils who have excelled in their art forms on a national level.
- A school for high achievers and gifted pupils. This is the only school of its kind in the country. The goal is to increase the percentage of high achievers from 1.5% to 2.5% in each age group. High achievers from all the schools in Ashkelon attend this school.
- "Amirim" program. This is a special program for high achievers. In the framework of the program, high achievers are chosen, and special workshops are held throughout the year at the School for High Achievers.
- Special program was implemented to develop excellence amongst pupils from Ethiopia.
- "Doctorate" program. Pupils in the 7th-10th grades, who excel in mathematics, learn mathematics at the Ashkelon College and at the end of the 10th grade the take the matriculation exam for 5 units. (The highest level). In their last two years at school (11th and 12th grades), they start studying towards a university degree.

Goal 5: <u>Strengthening the trend for interaction within the education system</u>

Placing pupils in intermediate high-schools (in the framework of high-schools) is done by means of the "Cluster" system. This system takes pupils from all the city neighborhoods and places them in one class. In this way, children from all over the city get to know one another, study together and strike up friendships not only in the study framework but in cultural, sport and recreational activities as well. This system proved itself in terms of realizing author's vision for social interaction between all levels of the society.

Goal 6: <u>Improving the level of management of the schools</u>

- Taking on the best people in the city to manage the schools.
- Training and refresher courses for heads of schools.

- Encouraging heads of schools to acquire academic accreditation and giving grants for studies for university degrees.
- Improving management procedures with in the schools.
- Receiving an international standards recognition in education (ISO 9001 200).
- Supplying every head of a school and teacher with a computer.

Goal 7: <u>Encouraging higher education in Ashkelon</u>

The author envisioned Ashkelon as a university city in which a university would be built. For this reason, the Ashkelon Academic College was established and potential students encouraged to acquire university education.

The Municipal plan which was implemented included:

1. "Mula" program [Preparation for university] - Integrating pupils into study frameworks at the College in order to prepare and accept them for academic studies.

2. Preparatory programs for improving matriculation marks - This program was created In order to accept candidates into university preparatory classes, as well as offering a "second chance" to pupils upon completing their military service to earn a matriculation certificate by preparing them for complementary matriculation exams.

3. Scholarships - all-embracing array of municipal scholarships were allocated, without a precedent in Israel. These scholarships were funded from municipal budgets and by a concentrated effort for receiving donations for this purpose.

4. "Perach" [Tutoring point] - Scholarships for students in order to finance their studies in exchange for tutoring children from the neighborhoods and helping them in their studies

5. Loans – The Mayor vision was that there will not be anyone in Ashkelon who wishes to study but because of his or her economic circumstances would not be able to do so. For this reason, the Mayor arranged loans for financing all expenses for students from the banks in Ashkelon with the municipality paying the interest and linkage on such loans. Student starts repaying the loan one year after completing their studies over a five-year period.

6. College - The municipality donated land for building the college and supported it. Upon the author's election as mayor in 1991 there were 300 students at the college. The author served as the chairman of the board of governors of the Ashkelon Academic College for 12 years. Today close to 6,000 students study in the college, including practical engineers.

227

Figure 84 Ashkelon academic college - Ashkelon Municipality

Goal 8: <u>Integrating the Immigrant Pupil into the Education System</u>

During the author's tenure as the Mayor of Ashkelon, Ashkelon absorbed 40,000 new immigrants. The Mayor envisioned Ashkelon to be "a city of immigrant absorption". Thousands of immigrant children were absorbed into the education system in Ashkelon from the Commonwealth of Independent states (CIS) - previously USSR and Ethiopia.

Programs for integrating immigrant pupils:

1. Mediators for immigrant children at schools - These are mediators that deal personally with immigrant pupils and help them to overcome language difficulties and to be integrated into the scholastic and social frameworks.

2. Special study programs adapted to the needs of immigrant pupil - Extra lessons and help with exams.

3. Assistance scholarships for immigrant pupils

4. "Tsiporah House" A special center which I set up for new immigrants from Ethiopia. After school, these children go to the center where they receive a warm lunch after which teachers help them with their homework and studies, particularly with mathematics, computers and English.

5. Encouraging immigrant pupils to participate in activity groups, and social and cultural, art and music frameworks

6. Setting up homes for endangered immigrant youths

7. "Before the future" Program: A program for preparing immigrant pupils for university studies.

228

8. A national program for immigrant pupils from Ethiopia   A   special   progra   m   for   strengthening these children.

9. "Pact" Program: A program for dealing with toddlers till the age of 6 for children from Ethiopia.

10. "The five year program": Special assistance for pupils from Ethiopia in kindergartens and schools with a high percentage of these children.

11. A national program for endangered immigrant children and youths

Goal 9: <u>Cultivating Educational and Cultural Institutions.</u>

The author's vision was that the schools have to be high standard buildings, well-kept and in a good state of maintenance, providing an appealing study environment - aesthetic and rich in art and knowledge.

To fulfill his vision, the author implemented the following programs

Figure 85: The new high school Mekif Irony H - Ashkelon Municipality

a. <u>High standard building</u>. The Ministry of Education budgets the building of schools with a standard budget which allows for schools with small classrooms, no landscaping, small teacher's rooms, no library and no sports hall. I set a high standard for building spacious schools and the municipality, therefore, added money from its own budget to raise the level of school buildings.

b. <u>Green Building</u>. The state of Israel does not budget "green building" for public institutions as this incurs an addition al 12% increase in the budget. I was one of the few mayors in Israel who declared that all the education institutions in Ashkelon would be built "green" –sustainable building that would contribute to a sustainable environment. As I intended to introduce into the schools study programs dealing with sustainability, I had to serve as an example and this meant that the schools the pupils learned at would be built at the standard of "green building" which helps preserve the environment.

c.   Building a library and a sports hall for every school.

The Ministry of Education does not budget these facilities, but I, nevertheless, decided to build a library and sports hall in each and every school,

d.   Cultivating the courtyards of the schools and kindergartens

The Gardening Department of the municipality assists in cultivating gardens and green courtyards in the schools and the kindergartens and caring for their environmental aspects, with a combination of sculpture and art in the courtyards. There is a program dealing with the quality of the environment in the schools and kindergartens.

e.   A high level, of maintenance of all the educational institutions.

f.   Acquiring modern equipment. This includes modern furniture, laboratories and computers as well as the importance of planning furniture that will be comfortable for the children.

g.   A continuous survey of the safety hazards in all the education institutions.

Goal 10: <u>Cultivating the relationship between the Mayor and the education system</u>

The author's policy was that it is necessary to maintain close contact between parents and the schools and with the education system as a whole. This entails a continuous dialogue with the Parents Committee as well as the parents committees of the schools,

Several programs were implemented to achieve this goal

1. "From the home to the school" programs. (Communication between parents and schools).
2. Programs for pa rents in combination with community schools and contact with and assistance to the parents' committees.
3. Participation of pa rents in "Tolerance Classes".
4. Inter-culture mediation
5. Contacts and cooperation between the parents committees and all the department managers in the municipality.
6. Workshops for parents in community centers and schools.
7. Joint activity circles for parents and children in various frameworks.

Goal 11: <u>Promoting Youth Activities</u>

The Vision of the Mayor - The author's vision was that the youth of Ashkelon should be of a high caliber, concerned and involved in the community, expressing their opinions, active in voluntary projects and taking the lead in the organization of leisure activities in the afternoons. The youth will have close ties with the Mayor and the leadership of the city. The municipality's youth department will, in its programs, emphasize creativity, social values and group development, developing and empowering the leading forces among the youth, and encouraging youth volunteering and skills. It was the author's intention to exploit the positive energies and skills of young people at this period in their lives.

To fulfill his vision regarding youth, the author implemented the following programs

1. Cultivating activities for youth in all the neighborhood community centers.
2. The author established the Urban Company for Culture, Youth and Sport. (see chapter on Urban Corporations).
3. The author ran summer-camps and holiday activities in the summer holidays and du ring other holidays as well.
4. The author encouraged the activities of youth movements and financed a center for each one. The movements were encouraged to work in the city neighborhoods.
5. The author operated homes for endangered youths.
6. We established the city youth Council. Every school elected a Pupil's Committee and these committees elected the City Youth Council. 5,000 youths participate in the activities organized by the Youth Council which has its own center in which it carries out its activities.
7. We promoted the Youth Council by involving it in all city activities. I encouraged the Council to lead actions and processes and to be involved and active in the community life of Ashkelon.
8. The author operated a center for endangered youth in cooperation with a national project dealing with endangered children and youth.

Goal 12: Prevention of Violence.

The purpose of the program is to create safe schools in which no child will be in fear of violence or concerned by it. A detailed program for preventing violence amongst pupils in the schools in order to create an educated and value-based climate in all education institutions was made.

The programs implemented to deal with this issue were:

1. City without violence. This program worked in conjunction with all the agencies in the city dealing with the security of the residents, including police, welfare and youth-workers. Activities that were carried out:

2. "Commando of Friends" - Patrols in the city in order to inspire a fee ling of security amongst the residents of the city.

3. Influencing the behavior of young people.

4. Sport activities until midnight.

5. "Homes" for endangered youth.

6. "Protected" program in the schools (for girls).

7. Parent patrols - Patrols of parents of pupils who patrol the pubs and nightclubs of the city and protect the youngsters by preventing fights among them, dissuading them from drinking alcohol and stopping them from driving if they did drink.

8. Installing closed circuit television cameras in all schools.

Goal 13: Security and Resilience Program

Background - Between 2003 and 2013, 500 rockets were fired at Ashkelon. Some of them hit schools and kindergartens and thousands of children lived in fear. Most of the schools were unprotected and, for this reason, the authors had to implement programs for enhancing security and resilience in the schools and kindergartens.

Activities that were carried out

1. A survey of the security, safety and protection in all the schools and kindergartens.

2. Construction of air-raid shelters and protection sheds in all unprotected education institutions, financed by the state, the municipality and donations.

3. Protective equipment for the schools was purchased by the municipality.

4. Hundreds of satchels with protective vests were distributed to pupils.

5. Information and instruction activities for all pupils in the city were organized.

6. In cooperation with the army, exercises for protection in the event of a rocket attack were held.

7. The "Resilience Program" implemented together with the government. The intention of this program was to teach pupils how to create an internal balance in coping with situations of emergency and calm and to instruct them in dealing with tensions in times of emergency. The program is run in schools and kindergarten and the school heads and educators received training in implementing it.

8. Setting up teams which continuously deal with preparations for emergency situations.

9. "Teachers support coping with anxiety situations". This is a program unique to Ashkelon.

10. Increasing the coordination between all the education institutions and the security agencies in the municipality and the army.

Goal 14: <u>Education for Sustainable Development</u>

The purpose of education for sustainable development is to create in pupils an awareness, understanding and respect for the environment in which they live and to guarantee their commitment to sustainable development on a personal, national and global level. Education is essential for sustainable development and the degree of the ability of people to relate to issues concerning development and environment. Education is also necessary for achieving ethical and environmental awareness, a value-based approach, skills and behavior, appropriate for sustainable development and enabling efficient citizen participation in decision making.

<u>Implementation of the program.</u> The municipality, in cooperation with the Ministries of Education and the Environment, prepared a program for inculcating sustainable development into the education system. In the framework of the program we led processes for authorization of "green" education institutions. During the process, the schools and kindergartens study the subject and internalize a sustainable way of living and run activities dealing with the environment and the community. The municipality dealt with the authorization of some schools and it is our intention to secure authorization for others.

Supervision and follow-up of the education system by the mayor included:

- Three times a year surveys on the school attendance of pupils are carried out.
- The Ministry of Education conducts tests for efficiency and growth in elementary and junior high schools (Meitsav Test).
- The municipality conducts follow-ups of matriculation results at all schools as well as the quality of the results. Together with the heads of the schools we look into the achievements of the pupils in the matriculation exams.
- The municipality follows up on progress and achievements in all the school programs. This inspection is dome before the commencement of the program and a second inspection is done after its implementation.
- A survey of satisfaction with the schools is conducted in the framework of the Quality Standard.
- Safety check-ups of all the education institutions in the city are conducted routinely.
- Regular check-ups and follow ups of the maintenance of all education institutions. (2)(3)(5)(8)

11.4 The Vision of the Mayor for a University City – The Ashkelon College

11.4.1 The Mayor' Vision of a University City

The Mayor's vision included a large university campus, with tens of thousands of students studying in the city and living in the student dormitories. Examples inspiring the author included Lille and Aix en Provence in France, Oxford and Cambridge in Britain, MIT and Harvard in Boston USA.

11.4.2 The Development of the College in Ashkelon

The vision of a university city was already in the author's mind during his tenure as Deputy Mayor and his predecessor, Mayor Eli Dayan shared thIs vision. When the author was elected Mayor in 1991, there was a small college working in an elementary school in Ashkelon as a branch of the Bar llan University in Ramat Gan. A few hundred students studied at this college.

Figure 86: Ashkelon Academic College. - Ashkelon Municipality

With the leadership of the Mayor the development of the College of Ashkelon included the following stages:

1. The College as a University Branch of the Bar llan university - In 1965 Bar llan University initiated setting up branches in the south - Ashkelon and north -the city of Safed. A few hundred students studied at each of these branches. The purpose was to bring peripheral areas such as Ashkelon, which is located near to the City of Gaza, into closer contact with the center of the country by opening a university branch. The university branch operated in the afternoon in a few classrooms of

an elementary school in the city. In the 1980's, Mayor Eli Dayan and the author as his Deputy Mayor gave a lot of assistance to the university branch.

2. A regional college - In 1991, as the Author was elected Mayor of Ashkelon, the branch was awarded the official recognition of the Ministry of Education and was authorized to become a regional college. Students could study two years toward their degree in Ashkelon and complete their third year at the Bar llan University in Ramat Gan. In 1992 it was already possible for students to do their entire degree in Ashkelon under the academic auspices of Bar IIan.

3. The author has served 10 year as the chairperson of the Management Committee of the college. The Ashkelon municipality allocated 80 dunams (20 acres) of ground for building a new college campus. In the presence of President of Israel, Ezer Weitzman, and of the Minister of Education, Professor Amnon Rubenstein, that author as the mayor of Ashkelon laid the cornerstone for the new campus, which was inaugurated in 1998.

4. The college receives accreditation as an institute of higher learning - The board of the college with the Mayor as its Chair, worked diligently in order to fulfill all the instructions of the Council for Higher Learning and in 1997 the accreditation was officially granted.

5. Inauguration of the new campus of the college In 1998 in the new education campus in Ashkelon, which includes several intermediate and high-schools as well - A lot of resources were invested in the campus, which was built with high standards of architecture and construction. The campus contains lecture rooms and halls, laboratories and modern computers, large lawns and one of the biggest university libraries in the country.

6. The Academic college of Ashkelon - In 2000 the Regional College of Ashkelon gained recognition as the Academic College of Ashkelon - the first academic college in the country. In 2003 the National Council for Higher Learning decreed that the College of Ashkelon met all the criteria to be recognized as an institute of Higher Education.

7. The vision fulfilled, today, there are 6,000 students who study at the college (compared to a few hundred in 1991) and the college is the fourth biggest in Israel. According to the Council for Higher Education, the college is in first place regarding the quality of teaching in the colleges throughout the country. An international congress center has also been built on the college campus.

The Curriculum of the College

CITY	TOTAL EXPENDITURE PER CAPITA (N.I.S)		EXPENDITURE PER CAPITA FOR EDUCATION (N.I.S)		TOTAL INCOME PER CAPITA (N.I.S)		% PERCENTAGE OF EXPENDITURE FOR EDUCATION	
	1991	2013	1991	2013	1991	2013	1991	2013
ASHKELON	1175	7499	328	1810	1087	5926	27.9	31
JERUSALEM	942	5210	219	1409	939	5202	23.3	27
TEL AVIV	2472		521		2242		21.1	
HAIFA	1303	8661	286	1570	1232	8665	22	18
ASHDOD	1073	5792	318	1912	1070	5798	29.6	33
BEER SHEBA	1377	6371	450	1833	1207	6382	32.6	28.8
BNEI BRAK	1176		305		855		25.9	
BAT YAM	802	6220	232	1444	822	6227	28.9	23
DIMONA	1551		320		1504		20.7	
HERZLIA	1183		316		1096		26.7	
HOLON	1116		363		1060		32.5	
LOD	1377	4810	292	1190	5069	5069	21.2	24.5
NETANYA	1218	6276	290	2059	992	6276	23.8	32.8
REHOVOT	1039		360		905		27.9	

Table 33: Income and expenditures for education per capita in the regular budget of Ashkelon in comparison to other cities in 1991 and 2013 - Central Bureau of Statistics Israel.

Table 33 shows the Income and expenditures for education per capita in the regular budget of Ashkelon in comparison to other cities in 1991 and 2013, indicating that the percentage of budget allocated for education was among the highest allocated by the cities in Israel.

11.5 Conclusions

The vision of education:

1. <u>The vision of the mayor for education is different from other sectorial visions</u>, especially with regard to economic development and urban building. The vision for education requires belief and commitment on the part of the mayor as well as perseverance and dedication to the task at hand. The vision for education is more complex and more comprehensive than the vision for urban planning for example. It also has long-range effects - longer than those of the physical city visions.

2. <u>The vision of the mayor for education is based on his personal example and experience</u>. From his own personal history and experience the author has learned that education is a critical element for personal achievements, especially in a neighborhood where education was a great societal challenge. Inspired by his own personal experience the author raised the basic question with regard to the societal home impacts on the Mayor's interest and commitment to investments in education. Many cities regard economic development of the city as their chief aim. As far as the author was concerned, his central aim was his vision for education.

3. <u>The budget for education is an investment.</u> It is not a current expense. It is an investment in human capital, which is more important than investment in physical capital. The education of the residents

of the city depends on the education they receive. The education system of a city is the central tool for its sustainable development.

4. <u>Leadership in realizing the vision for education is more complex and requires belief in the</u> road that is chosen and determination to realize the goals and the aims. Leadership in realizing the vision for education requires the mayor to enthuse and lead various and complex groups in the population. Parents must be involved and led to work together to realize the educational vision. Children must be enthused as must be youths of all ages. They must be involved in all aspects of the realization of the vision. School student councils and the various youth councils must all be involved in realizing the vision for education. By dint of his leadership the mayor must convince the relevant national government bodies especially the Ministry of Education to participate in the realization of the vision of the mayor for education. Other institutions, organizations, funds and various other entities involved with education must join forces in order to realize the vision of the mayor for sustainable education.

5. <u>Determining aims and goals for the realization of the vision for education.</u> The Author determined 15 goals in order to achieve his mayoral vision of sustainable education in Ashkelon. The chapter demonstrates the success in realizing these educational goals, some of which were only partially met and additional investment is necessary. These goals can be summarized as follows:

   a. <u>Achieving success in studies</u> - This goal was achieved with an outstanding success The success rate for matriculation in Ashkelon rose from 50% to 70%. A matriculation certificate in Israel is a certificate of entrance into life. A Matriculation certificate is required for acceptance to academic studies or to technical studies. Most employment opportunities also require a matriculation certificate. This research demonstrated that this achievement in the city is the result of special teaching systems that focus on dealing with pupils at all levels. The programs are presented in detail in this chapter.

   b. <u>Limiting dropout rate in schools</u> – The municipal programs to deal with this issue have successfully contributed to the decrease in the dropout rate from education institutions in Ashkelon from 8% to less than 1%. The phenomenon of dropouts and schools does not only concern the dropout itself but impacts also the personal deterioration to the street life and lost of any future perspectives. It also causes damage to the community, to the society and to the city as well. Police reports show that youngsters who dropped out of school deteriorated to a life of crime, which is damaging the city life. Children who are not included in the education system grow up to become criminals, thieves and robbers and to destroy public property. I

c. <u>Nurturing excellence and dealing with gifted children -</u> This program prepares pupils who excel and are gifted to be involved in the future of the city and of the country as a whole. Schools with special frameworks for gifted children were established These programs contributed to raise the percentage of gifted children from 1.5% to 2.5%.

d. <u>Societal integration in education</u> - Few decades ago, there were large gaps between the different neighborhoods in Ashkelon in terms of education and social levels. The children of a particular neighborhood all studied in that neighborhood. The author carried out reform whereby children who reach the age of middle school all study together in classes regardless of which neighborhood they came from. This was achieved through a specially dedicated bussing systems for all the neighborhoods. The reduction of gaps in education between the children of different neighborhoods contributed to a significant decrease in social gaps between different communities.

e. <u>Mayoral leadership in selecting leaders in education -</u> Just as the realization of the vision requires leadership so does success in setting forth the educational system with educational leaders. The mayor responsibility is to ensure that the schools would be directed by excellent school principals, who would not only be good educators but good educational leaders as well. The mayor has also to ensure that the head of the municipal education system would be a person who is capable of leading an education system, in line with the mayor's vision for education.

f. <u>Encouraging the acquiring of higher academic education</u> - Generous programs for assisting in acquiring higher education, information and encouragement contributed to increase the number of students in about 100%.

g. <u>The realization of the vision for University city -</u> The vision of building a college and expanding it from a small university branch, where a few dozen students studied, to a college at which today 6,000 students study in various academic programs demonstrates the author's commitment to education as the first priority for the sustainable city development. The college is also accredited to grant academic degrees.

<u>6. The Mayor's strategy for sustainable education.</u> The education system of the city is large, spread out, varied and complex. As mayor the author built an assessment system for all the kindergartens schools and part of the other educational institutions in the city. Each institution works in order to meet the goals that were set for it. Special annual tests where set for each school which examined the achievements of pupils and the dropout rate as well as safety and maintenance of the schools in addition to the achievements in

matriculation exams and other examinations pupils participated in. All the follow-up reports reached the table of the mayor and discussions with all the education leaders take place dealing with each school and each educational institution. These discussions take place in real time in order to make necessary amendments and adjustments feasible and relevant. The education system in Ashkelon was evaluated by the Ministry of education as one of the best and most successful systems in the country.

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Chapter 12 - Sustainable Cultural Development

12.1   Sustainable Cultural Development Goals

The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate the contribution of the development of culture in Ashkelon to sustainable development.

In May 2012, a team of UNESCO produced a paper showing that culture is the driving force in making sustainable development possible. The essential parts of this paper, prepared by the task force of the UNO, which was convened in 2010, are attached to this work (Appendix 1).

The main conclusions of the work of the task force were:

1. Culture Motivates Sustainable Development.

   a. Research and statistical data show that culture led on to social, economic, and environmental sustainable development.

   b. Cultural infrastructure is a source of revenue.

   c. Cultural tradition, creation, and cultural tourism accelerate economic development.

   d. Research in the Middle East, Africa, South America, Asia, and North and Central America showed that culture increased the gross national product of these countries.

   e. Promoting cultural activity requires relatively small capital investments.

   f. Cultural activity has a positive influence on weak population groups as well as on women.

   g. Cultural activities attract tourism and encourage urban development

   h. Research and statistical data revealed that cultural activity has a positive effect on health and the environment.

   i. Culture is beneficial to education and presents it with challenges.

   j. Cultural projects create new employment possibilities, contribute to family income, improve living conditions, empower people and bring about community based economic growth. (1)

2. Culture Enables Sustainable Development

   a. Sensitive cultural approaches have proved concretely that it is possible to deal simultaneously with economy and human rights and mankind while dealing with poverty.

   b. Culture can make development far more relevant to the needs of people.

   c. Dialogue between people, nations and communities create easier conditions for developing aims and goals.

d. Promoting an approach which focuses on the individual makes development more sustainable. (1)(2)(3)

3. Deriving Benefits from the Potential of Culture

Culture is all encompassing and placing the individual in the center influences all its dimensions. Culture is a powerful social and economic resource for developing society and the community. The reduction of poverty is achieved by means of sustainable development.

4. Incorporating Culture in the Daily Agenda of Development –The Normative Framework

Culture must be incorporated in the development agenda. Clearly defined goals and tasks must be set and mechanisms and appropriate tools must be prepared. Methods for monitoring and assessment must be established and a plan for building and international funds is necessary to contribute to the ability develop cultural institutions, professionals etc. (1)

12.2 The Way Forward

The principles the Mayor adopted in order to enhance the contribution of culture to sustainable development can be summarized as follows:

- Integrating culture as a corner stone the government action and economic development in concept, in measuring, and in the practice of sustainable development.
- Using the contribution of the cultural sector for urban economy and in the struggle against poverty.
- Supporting the tourist and culture industries. Setting up cultural institutions, carrying out urban renewal, which includes cultural assets and cultivating initiatives and enterprises related to culture.
- Emphasizing the safeguarding of cultural assets when planning economic development. There is, unfortunately, often a tendency to harm them.
- Utilizing the traditional knowledge for cultivating environmental sustainability.
- Building a culture that creates social consolidation and to maintain an inter-cultural dialogue.
- The impacts at the individual and community level should contribute to an environment that is conducive to development. (1)(2)(4)

12.3 The Sustainable Development of the Culture Sector in Ashkelon

12.3.1 The Vision of the Mayor for Cultural Development – consisted of the following goals:

- Maintaining cultural plurality.
- Cultivating the cultures and the traditions of the different communities in the city.
- Exposing all parts of the nation to culture and art.

- Building facilities suitable to the needs of all forms of culture and art.
- Protecting cultural assets.
- Creating a culturally strong society in Ashkelon.

12.3.2 The Mayor's Vision

Cultural pluralism: The first Prime Minister of Israel, David Ben-Gurion, believed in creating a "melting pot" and merging all the various cultures. The author, contrary to this ideology, believes in maintaining and preserving all the various cultures of the different communities and ethnic groups in Israel. Preserving ethnic and community cultures enhanced the self- confidence and self-esteem of the particular groups. Affluent members of a specific community or ethnic group donate and invest money for cultivating the culture and traditions of their ethnic group or community and in this way, economic development occurs as a result of the cultural development of each community. The cultural heritage of these communities existed for hundreds of years and preserving the cultural heritage of each and every community presents an enthralling human mosaic, which also contributes to the consolidation of the society as a whole as well as to sustainable development.

Description of the cultural activities promoting pluralism

1. Cultivating Yiddish culture -Yiddish culture has been in existence for over 1,000years. I established a Yiddish theater, a Yiddish club, a Yiddish choir and a Yiddish NGO (Not-for-profit Association). An entire "industry" developed, including a Yiddish international convention of Yiddish speakers from all over the world.

2. Andalusian orchestra- Spanish-Andalusian singing dates back more than 500 years. We set up an orchestra consisting of some 30 musicians, mostly from Russia. All ethnic groups are familiar with Andalusian singing and this created a sense of pride amongst Jews of Moroccan origin. This orchestra created hundreds of jobs and appears in many events throughout the country and, in this way, also created widespread economic development anchored in Spanish-Andalusian music. (2)(3)

Figure 87: Andalusian orchestra - Ashkelon Municipality.

3. <u>Choirs of all ethnic groups</u>:

- Georgian Choir
- Russian choir
- 40 children's troupes of all the different cultures
- Yemenite troupe
- Caucasian troupe
- Yiddish troupe

This multiculturalism and the troupes of the different ethnic groups created a varied cycle for all levels of society in the city. A setup of sales of discs came into being and performances of artists were organized. The strengthening of ethnic traditions resulted in social consolidation, which is conducive to sustainable developme

Figure 88: Georgian Choir - "Kol Krayot" post. Ashkelon municipality.

12.3.3   National and International Festivals

Ashkelon –The city of festivals – The Mayor's vision was that Festivals give a cultural character to a city and there are cities in the world with a tradition of hundreds of years of festivals. Festivals bring about widespread economic development. Various forms of cultural activities and folklore also contribute to sustainable development.

Examples of festivals:

"Brizah" Festival - Immediately upon being elected mayor in 1991, the author established an international festival, "Brizah", which is held in the National Park at the foot of the 1,800 years old Byzantium wall. Some 10,000 people participate in this festival each year, which attracts people from all over the country as well as tourists from abroad. The festival presents performances of a variety of music and song from Israel and the whole world. Ashkelon is now branded as "The City of the Brizah Festival" and this new tradition has contributed to the urban economy and to sustainable development.

Figure 89: "Brizah" Festival - Ashkelon Municipality

Sea Festival - This festival takes place in the marina and on the seashore. It includes competitions in sailing, scuba diving, fishing, beach games, rowing and other fields of sea sport. Participants in the festival come from all over the country.

Surfing Festival - Surfers from all parts of Israel participate in competitions in the various forms of surfing.

Choir Festival - Choirs from different parts of the country participate in this festival.

12.4 Integrating Culture into the Economic Development Agenda of Ashkelon

12.4.1 The Vision for Culture in Ashkelon as a Lever for Economic Development

Investments were realized in building of urban and regional cultural facilities and raising donations for this purpose. These cultural facilities include:

The City Cultural Center -

Soon after the author became mayor, he undertook the planning the City Cultural Center. This was a large project of national dimensions. The center has 1,000 seating places. In fact, only in three major cities in Israel -Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv and Haifa - centers of such large proportions exist. The project cost was about 20 million dollars. At its inception, residents of Ashkelon thought that the center would be empty most of the year. The project was carried out by the Ashkelon Economic Company and used some of its earnings to finance it. The Mayor also negotiated a donation of 1.5 million dollars from a private donor. The Center was built efficiently and at a minimum cost.

Impact assessment of the cultural and economic benefits of building the cultural center:

- Before building of the center, there were only 250 season ticket-holders for theatre and concerts in Ashkelon. Today there are about 10,000 season ticket holders, who enjoy a great number of various shows, including children who attend performances, which cater for their needs. The Cultural Center caused a cultural revolution in the city.
- The center and other services that sprung up as a result of its activities such as coffee shops, shops and stalls selling theatre paraphernalia, performances for other institutions etc. created many additional employment opportunities.
- In terms of economic development, the cultural center serves as one of the focal points for attracting newcomers to the city and is the venue for conventions of large institutions. Thousands of people from outside the city use the services of the center. In this way the center generates additional economic activity. The center upgraded the city to a higher qualitative level.
- Financially, the center is practically self-sufficient. It receives a subsidy, which is relatively small in comparison to other such centers in the country. In this way, the center created additional economic development for the city.

Figure 90: Cultural Center and Theatre -Ashkelon Municipality

12.4.2   Cultural Institutions that were built as a Stimulus for Economic Development:

The Central City Library- This library contains tens of thousands of books and computer, video, communication and music systems. The library added additional economic development to the area and is an additional source of attraction to the city.

The City Conservatory- Thousands of children and adults learn music in this framework. Orchestras operating from the conservatory perform at public and private functions. In addition to its valuable contribution to the cultural life of Ashkelon, the conservatory adds to the economic strength of the city.

The Art Center- Housed in a 150-year-old building, thousands of children and adults study art, painting, sculpture and other related skills at the center.

The Dance Center - More than 3,000 children and adults participate in dance classes and there are dance troupes of the center that appear throughout the country. Most of the troupes are financially se lf-sufficient which, in effect, is an additional economic advantage to the city.

The city Museum - Housed in a preserved building that is about 700 years old (The Ashkelon Khan).

12.5   Conclusions

Culture in Ashkelon and Its Contribution to Sustainable Development

This chapter demonstrates the author's ability to realize his vision for cultural development in Ashkelon - in terms of both facilities building and Ashkelon as a cultural inspiration center, based on a futuristic view that cultural development is not only a current cost but an investment in strengthening the population and contributing to the urban economic development as well, which, in turn, contributes to the sustainable development in Ashkelon and the societal resilience of its communities.

246

In the author's conception and his practice as Mayor, cultural development is part of the general vision of the sustainable development of the city. Cultural development leads to a significant contribution to the economic development of the city. In the framework of urban development, the author preserved cultural assets of historical value and uniqueness for the city communities of Ashkelon.

The author's basic concept and key lesson learned is that the development of pluralistic culture, as described previously, contributes significantly to societal consolidation, which in turn, creates economic sources and environmental inspiration for improving quality of life. (2)(3)

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Chapter 13 - Urban Renewal in Ashkelon rehabilitation – and socio-economic impacts

13.1 The Mayor's Vision for Urban Renewal

Urban Renewal is a process of physical rehabilitation of a physically and/or socially deteriorated urban area associated with a renewal of economic and societal activities. The rehabilitation can involve residential buildings, infrastructures (e.g. roads, sidewalks, drainage, water, sewage, electricity), as well as educational and/or public facilities and commercial sites.

In Europe and the USA these sites are known as Business Improvement Districts (B.I.D.) and the rehabilitation process relates not only to physical rehabilitation. On the contrary, the main emphasis is on harnessing all the interested parties operating in the commercial site, such as merchants, landowners and the municipality. A joint administration is set up which works towards renewing the site by means of labeling and marketing, raising money, initiating events and improving safety and cleanliness. (6)(7)

The author envisioned a large undertaking of renewal and rehabilitation in both physically and socially deteriorated areas in Ashkelon. The rehabilitation program had to cover all the deteriorated commercial centers, especially the rehabilitation of the neighborhood of Migdal, which was built 750 years ago and is the hub of the city of Ashkelon. Migdal, which has been the main commercial center of Ashkelon for hundreds of years, was damaged and spoiled and presented a crucial need for physical, social and cultural rehabilitation. The program included the rehabilitation of the physically deteriorated residential buildings in the Shimshon neighborhood and in the neighborhood of Givat Tsion (where the author grew up) and covered: i) most of the infrastructure in the older neighborhoods, including roads, sidewalks, electricity, water and sewage systems and other infrastructures in need of replacement or renovation; ii) schools, kindergartens and public facilities in the city. All rehabilitation and renewal programs in the city were done with the participation of the residents in cooperation with interested parties such as merchants and business owners, resident house committees and neighborhood committees. The physical rehabilitation had also to be associated with community work as well as social and educational rehabilitation. The Mayor vision was that physical rehabilitation would not be undertaken without educational, social and cultural rehabilitation. (1)(2)

13.2 The Renewal of the Neighborhood of Migdal - the Commercial Center of Ashkelon

The rehabilitation of Migdal concerned actually the rehabilitation of the historical basis of Ashkelon. This is reminiscent of the rehabilitation of Soho or the Docklands in London, Soho and "Little Italy" in Downtown New York and the renewal of the Latin Quarter or the Le Marais Quarter in Paris.

Migdal came into being in the thirteenth century. At that time, Al Daher Beavers, the Mameluke sultan, destroyed ancient Ashkelon which was situated on the shore and established the settlement of Migdal at the east side. Migdal was built in the format of a Mameluke city on the root of a central longitudinal axe (from north to south), which today is named Herzl Street, with the Khan Square at its northern end. The khan is actually a mosque, a place of worship.

Public institutions of the settlement were erected around the khan square. Today the khan is still standing in its original location and serves as the Ashkelon Museum. During the Ottoman period Migdal was the regional administration center in which the regional governor resided.

During the time of the British mandate, in the 1930's and 1940's, the village of Migdal grew and it became the most important settlement in the Ashkelon district with some 10,000 inhabitants.

Migdal was conquered in the 1948 independence war. In the early days of the establishment of the state of Israel Migdal was a separate town as was the new settlement of Ashkelon, which was established on its west side. In 1955 the two settlements Migdal and Ashkelon merged into one city named Migdal-Ashkelon. Since the establishment of the state up to 1965 about 50% of the buildings in Migdal were destroyed.

While new neighborhoods rose in the areas surrounding Migdal and on its west side, the number of inhabitants in Migdal decreased sharply and commercial activity was restricted to daytime only. During the evening Migdal was empty. The infrastructure in the neighborhood was of a very low standard and social and economic decline of the residents of Migdal ensued as a result of the physical deterioration.

In the 1990's a steering committee was set up for the rehabilitation of Migdal. This team included professionals in the field of urban renewal with expertise in architecture and engineering. Experienced professionals in planning, rehabilitation and urban renewal were also included as were community and social workers, representatives of the residents, local merchants and business people who had their businesses in Migdal. The Mayor appointed the Ashkelon Economic Company to manage the project.

The team of professionals devoted years in preparing the master plan for Migdal, which was submitted and approved in February 2010 after a process of in depth discussions.

Most of the infrastructure in the neighborhood was rehabilitated including roads and water and electricity systems. A new pedestrian mall was paved in Herzl Street and the intention was to continue infrastructure rehabilitation throughout the entire neighborhood. (6)(7)

An architectural plan was drawn up with the participation of merchants for the rehabilitation of the fronts of buildings and display windows. Most of the shops and display windows are in a state of neglect, creating an atmosphere of poverty. The municipal project-financing plan was to pay a third of the costs of renovating

the shops by the municipality and offer a loan with generous repayment conditions to be paid by the merchants themselves.

A professional preservation plan was carried out in the khan, which turned into the Ashkelon Historical Museum. Plans were made for the preservation of the residence of the Turkish governor, buildings from the time of the British mandate and the first municipality building. The preservation of historical buildings was undertaken with the Mayor's leadership. One of the historical buildings was rehabilitated and turned into a school of arts in which pupils from all over the city study.

13.3 Educational and Societal Rehabilitation

A thorough education plan for raising the level of education in the neighborhood schools was prepared. The "Asaf Maimon" school, which was about to be closed, was transformed into a school for pupils from all over the city where Judaism on a high level is being taught. This school is now one of the most successful and sought after schools in the city. The same pattern was true for the school for the arts as well as for some of the kindergartens in the neighborhood. The Katsnelson Community Center was renovated and enlarged and social, communal and sport activities are held in which people from all over the city participate. Community and social workers work in the neighborhood in cooperation with the neighborhood committee and deal with detached youth, the elderly and other groups.

Most of the residential buildings were rehabilitated by the municipality, through Project Renewal and by the Ministry of Housing of the Israeli government. New neighborhoods, such as Kochav Hatsafon and new residential apartment buildings were built in order to add to the population and to introduce new activities in the neighborhood of Migdal. (1)(2)

Adjacent to the Khan a new modern city market was built with 450 selling-stalls for all kinds of merchandise. The market is a colorful tourist attraction.

Conclusion - The rehabilitation and renewal of the neighborhood of Migdal was launched and is well underway. This is a difficult and long process, which requires the cooperation of the merchants - and this is not always easy to obtain. However, the Mayor's vision is Migdal is active by day and by night, serving as a central point for commerce, culture and recreation.

13.4 Rehabilitation of Neighborhood Residences

In Ashkelon thousands of apartment blocks and houses were built in the 1950's and 1960's, at a very low standard. The low economic level of the residents made it impossible for them to renovate the buildings and their apartments and homes. The infrastructure laid down by the government was also of a low standard including the few playgrounds for children and parks. In the 1980's the Government of Israel and the Jewish

Agency initiated a "Neighborhood Renewal Project" enabling thousands of residential buildings to be renovated. The municipality, with the leadership of its Mayor rehabilitated the infrastructures and built additional parks, public gardens and playgrounds for children. All physical rehabilitation was accompanied by social, educational and cultural rehabilitation. The budgets that flowed into the neighborhoods for financing social and educational programs were not less than those for physical rehabilitation. Many educational projects were initiated such as youth clubs and additional cultural activities in the community centers including the building of new ones. Weak population groups were dealt with such as detached youths, girls in distress, projects for the aged and others. (1)(4)

The opening of large shopping malls and other commercial enterprises had a negative economic effect on the neighborhood commercial centers. With the Mayor's leadership the municipality began renovating these centers and facing the difficult economic circumstances of the local merchants financed most of the merchant's rehabilitation project.

Figure 91: Samson Neighborhood before and after renovation - Ashkelon Municipality

Figure 92: Ramat Eshkol neighborhood before and after renovation - Ashkelon Municipality

251

13.5 Plan for Evacuation, Rebuilding and Urban Renewal

The intention of this program is to deal with physically, socially and economically deterioration of the urban fabric. In areas declared as "Evacuation and Rebuilding" sites, buildings are demolished and a new more densely populated neighborhood, with improved infrastructure is built Those affected are offered additional building privileges, tax benefits and exemption from betterment tax.

The status of evacuation and rebuilding was first declared as an official policy of the government of Israel in 1988. The Ministry of Building and Housing is empowered to declare area as an Evacuation and Rebuilding site by means of a declaratory ordinance, which is valid for six years. For this purpose, additional laws were passed and ordinances were executed, which made Evacuation and Rebuilding possible. Today, the program is based on the Evacuation and Rebuilding law (compensation) of 2006. (4)

The Rebuilding law implies that any entrepreneur in Israel may approach home-owners in an apartment building (or in several apartment buildings) and obtain a signed agreement to his/her proposed project. In the agreement with the homeowners, the entrepreneur guarantees a new apartment of the same or a larger size. The new building enables more apartments (generally 4- 5 times more apartments than in the original building). The apartments are either given to the previous owners or sold to new purchasers.

Entrepreneurs began entering into contracts for Evacuation and Rebuilding with thousands of apartment owners in various parts of the city. The problem is that in the weaker neighborhoods, Evacuation and Rebuilding is not worthwhile for entrepreneurs because of the low prices of apartments. As a result of this, the project was only carried out in established neighborhoods where the price of land is high.

13.6 National Master Plan for Urban Renewal (1)(4)

The National Council for Planning and Building initiated a national master plan aimed at strengthening existing buildings against earthquakes (National Master Plan no. 38). The purpose of the ordinances of the plan was to strengthen the designated area in dealing with the threat resulting from an earthquake. The government of Israel confirmed the plan and the ordinances in 2005.

All buildings built in Israel prior to 1980 do not meet the requirements of the Israel standard for the ability of buildings to withstand earthquakes. For this reason, these buildings need to be strengthened. This requires a substantial investment, which most apartment owners cannot afford. (1)(2)(4)

Generally speaking, the entrepreneur (or the owner of the apartments in the building) obtains the signature of the residents and executes the strengthening according to the Israeli standard for strengthening buildings against earthquakes. Furthermore, if there is no elevator in the building the entrepreneur puts one in as well as a reinforced security room in each apartment. As payment for the renewal and the strengthening of the

building against earthquakes, the entrepreneur receives additional building rights, generally for another two and a half stories of apartments.

In Ashkelon there are only a few programs of this nature because the cost of vulnerable land is relatively low and it is, therefore, not worthwhile to carry out the strengthening of a building in return for building rights. The program has been severely criticized because it is economically justifiable only in the center of the country where the cost of residential land is high, whereas in the periphery there is no justification for such a program. (1)(3)(4)

The urban renewal of Ashkelon included all schools and kindergartens in the city, which, together with public institutions were renovated in the course of a multi-annual program. The renovations included the yards of the schools, adding on classrooms and building bomb shelters. Some of the schools were transformed into green schools by means of the development of all their yards and gardens.

13.7 Socio-Economic Impacts Assessment

Work-force income in 2008 employees

(neighborhood) Quarter, Sub-Quarter, Statistical Area (S.A.)	Monthly medium wage	Annual medium wage	Total percent employees	Work-force employees 2008
Total Ashkelon	5,370	60,000	89.6	46
Quarter 1	6,350	71,100	84.1	15.7
Sub-Quarter 11	6,490	72,900	82.6	6.6
Sub-Quarter 12	6,250	70,600	85.2	9.11
Quarter 2	5,440	60,000	91.7	17.07
Sub-Quarter 21	5,660	64,800	91.4	10.93
Sub-Quarter 22	5,000	53,400	92.3	6.14
Quarter 3	4,550	50,400	93.3	13.27
Sub-Quarter 31	4,400	49,100	93.2	7.39
Sub-Quarter 32	4,840	52,400	93.4	5.88

Table 34: Source of table: Population Census 2008 – Central Bureau of Statistics Israel.

Quarter 1, Sub-Quarter 1.1, Sub-Quarter 1.2	Quarter 2, Sub-Quarter 2.1, Sub-Quarter 2.2	Quarter 3, Sub-Quarter 3.1, Sub-Quarter 3.2
• Afridar west • Afridar east • Barnea • Ganei Barnea • Esholei Paz • New city center • Barnea bet, gimel • Neot Barnea	• Neve Hadarim • Neot Ashkelon • Neve Dkalim • Migdal • Ramat Eshkol • Givat Zion • Cochav Hazafon • Givat Haprahim	• Shimshon • Shikmim • Jaboutinski • Ben-Gurion • Golda • Neve Alonim • Shapira-Neve Yam • Shimshon bet

Table35: Neighborhoods in City Quarters - Central Bureau of Statistics Israel

Table 34 illustrates the significant improvement of Workforce income since the 80s. The neighborhoods the rehabilitation program, societal and educational development have triggered economic growth of the City of Ashkelon, while decreasing the societal gaps between the neighborhoods. More specifically:

1. Significant improvement in the socio-economic status in the neighborhoods. Salary gap between city neighborhoods with a monthly medium wage varying as:

   o 6,350 N.I.S (average) in the northwest neighborhood (Afridar, Barnea Etc.)

   o 5,431 N.I.S. in the (Middle class) neighborhood of Neot Ashelon, Neve Dkalim, Neve Hadarim Etc.)

   o 4,573 N.I.S. in the southern neighborhood (Shimshon)

   o The monthly medium wage of total Ashkelon is 5,370 N.I.S.

2. The Monthly medium wage in the northwest neighborhood is higher 39% of southern neighborhood (Shimshon), and higher 17% of (Middle class) neighborhood Neot Ashelon, Neve Dkalim, Neve Hadarim Etc.)

3. The main conclusion is that while there is still a significant socio-economic gap between the neighborhoods, the municipality societal rehabilitation and integration programs result progressively in gap decreasing with the years.

13.8 Conclusion of Urban Renewal

In the framework of sustainable urban renewal, the Mayor envisioned urban renewal as a critical component of physical rehabilitation associate with educational and societal revitalization. Physical rehabilitation in

the various neighborhoods concerned the aging infrastructures of roads, sidewalks electrical power, water and sewage system. Parks and gardens were laid out and residential neighborhoods and commercial centers were rehabilitated. Moreover, by means of a well-organized plan, educational institutions and public buildings throughout the city were rehabilitated. The evacuation and rebuilding of old buildings also began as well as the strengthening of buildings against earthquakes.

The process of urban renewal incorporated the physical aspects together with the educational and societal rehabilitation. Every renovation and renewal was accompanied by educational and social programs in the relevant neighborhood. The neighborhoods rehabilitation program, including societal and educational development had a significant impact on the socio-economic though improvement of Workforce income since the 80s for the poor neighborhoods leading progressively to a decreasing socio-economic gaps with the years and economic growth of the City of Ashkelon

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URBAN RENEWAL

REHABILITATION OF RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBOURHOODS AND COMMERCIAL CENTERS

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Chapter 14 Regional Vision & International Cooperation

14.1 The Mayor's Regional Vision of Ashkelon as a Gateway to Peace

Ashkelon is the southernmost city in Israel on the Mediterranean coast. As the crow flies, only seven km separate the southern municipal border of the city of Ashkelon and the Gaza Strip. Some 1.8 million people live in the Gaza Strip and there are a few million people living in Sinai. In his vision, the author saw Ashkelon as the Gateway for Peace.

With the signing of the Oslo agreement, the author thought that his vision was about to become a reality and that the author would be able to stimulate the development of Ashkelon economically and internationally by means of joint regional projects with the neighboring City of Gaza, which will lead Ashkelon to significant achievements in becoming one of the foremost cities in the country.

The author decided to attempt initiating a meeting with the Mayor of City of Gaza.

14.2 Strategic Development of the Regional Cooperation among the Cities of Gaza and Ashkelon

The author contacted the municipality of Gaza and it took about a month before the Mayor of Gaza, Auwan Shauwa accepted to have an initial conference call. The author approached "Yedioth Acharonoth", the most popular newspaper in Israel and the correspondent of the newspaper in the south, Galit Gutman, organized a historic meeting, which could only be arranged by the media (the "seventh kingdom"). The meeting was set to take place in the offices of the Mayor of Gaza.

The correspondent and the author arranged for the meeting to take place in Gaza. The Israel Security Service gave a permit to visit Gaza, although they warned that there was an element of risk involved. The author and co-workers crossed the border into Gaza at the Erez checkpoint and two jeeps from Gaza, with armed fighters accompanied them from the border crossing to the building of the municipality.

In this meeting, the correspondent and the author represented the Israeli side and the host Mayor, his deputies and his professional experts represented the City Gaza. The Mayor of Gaza opened the meeting by welcoming the Mayor of Ashkelon for his visit while raising the geo-political difficulties confronting any inter-city cooperation. The author presented his outlook and his vision for joint action between the Cities of Ashkelon and Gaza stating that the Mayor of Gaza principal challenges are to "take care of the citizens of Gaza, the education of their children, employment for the residents and their welfare" while the author as the Mayor of Ashkelon has to face similar tasks for the citizens of Ashkelon. He suggested that "Despite the current animosity between the two nations and the fact that there is no peace, the collaboration between the two Mayors on common issues could significantly contribute to effectively improve the situation of the residents of Gaza and Ashkelon."

The author emphasized that the first obligation of the Mayors is to care for the residents and to let the national policy makers deal with the political negotiations. He shared his vision that on the way to peace, the prime task of the Mayors is to ease any suffering to the children and residents of Gaza and Ashkelon, and presented to the Mayor of Gaza his proposed plan for joint actions by the two cities.

The author arranged a visit to Gaza of all the council members and senior officials of the municipality of Ashkelon, including the general-director, the city engineer, the development engineers, the heads of education, welfare and others. The Mayor of Gaza visited Ashkelon with his city councilors and senior officials of the municipality of Gaza and a friendship was engaged between the two Mayors.

The Mayor's vision of regional cooperation between the Cities of Ashkelon and Gaza had for objectives to:

- Attract many entrepreneurs to contribute toward peace and invest in the sustainable ecosystem development of the City of Ashkelon and the City of Gaza.
- Leverage economic advantages as a result of the proximity of Ashkelon and Gaza to each other and the opportunities for law capital intensive but high labor intensive sectors such as IT services
- Engage economic development of the City of Gaza through joint projects between the two cities, promoting a shared goal of environmentally sustainable economic development
- Contribute through regional projects to mutual understanding among all the communities in the region facing the common challenges of environmentally sustainable social and economic development of the two cities.

One of the most important corner stones in building cooperation between the Palestinian and Israeli peoples is to promote mutual human and economic development based on series of joint projects on a city-to-city basis or on a regional level. As Mayor the author initiated projects of cooperation between the city of Gaza and Ashkelon. These projects contributed to each city in the municipal level, and brought to acknowledgment between both people.

Since 1997, the Mayor has collaborated with Prof. Ilan Juran, then Chair of the Civil Eng. Faculty at the Polytechnic University of New York, in jointly preparing a regional cooperation program of *Environmental-CoOperation for Regional Infrastructure & Sustainable Ecosystem (ECORISE)*, which was endorsed by the two Mayors to promote joint regional capacity building projects of professional education, infrastructure, waste water treatment for agricultural reuse, ecosystem preservation and environmentally sustainable economic development.

In order to develop the joint regional vision of the two mayors, a working meeting was held, as the result of which a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the Mayors. This meeting took place in Ashkelon on the 17th of February 1988. The meeting was attended by Mayor Benny Vaknin, deputy mayors and

professional experts from the municipality of Ashkelon, Mayor Aown Shawa and professional experts from the municipality of Gaza, representatives of UNICEF and Professor Ilan Juran of the Polytechnic Institute of New York University, who co-developed with Mayor Benny Vaknin the "ECORISE" program for cooperation between the Cities of Ashkelon and Gaza.

City of **Gaza**

City of **Ashkelon**

A Historic Moment in New York
**June 9, 1999,
Polytechnic University
With UNDPI Support 2006 - 2010**

Eco-Peace Mayors' initiative through Education, Capacity Building & Integration of Aquifer Protection and Agricultural Water Reuse
https://www.w-smart.fr/un_mayors_middle-east/

During the period of 1998 to 2003 the program was supported by the Late Thomas Menino, Mayor of Boston, President of the US Conference of Mayors, who hosted project development meetings with the two Mayors, the Clinton's Administration and, more specifically, the NSA, Samuel Gerber, who hosted a meeting with the two Mayors and Professor Ilan Juran recognizing the intrinsic value of Mayors setting aside their differences to jointly face common regional challenges, as well as the World Bank, which co-sponsored the core project of the program focusing on establishing a joint *Computer Learning and Information Center (CLIC)* for both professional education and community awareness building and an incubator for IT service businesses in Gaza. With the support of the Federal Government, the World Bank, Local Governments and other stakeholders the program engaged the planning and development of several joint projects. Later on (2006 to 2010) as a Civil Society Initiative, which was chaired by Prof. Ilan Juran, the program was recognized and supported by the United Nations Secretary General, represented by the Under Secretary for Public Information, and more recently (2015 – 2018) the program, which is presently focused on creating a Mediterranean Network of *Eco-City Observatories for MEDiterranean Sustainable*

Development Goals (ECOMED-SDG) is supported by UNESCO with the regional participation of the members states, including Lebanon, Jordan, the Palestinian Authority, Egypt and the State of Israel. Appendix 1 presents an executive summary of few of the joint projects developed in the program. .

14.3 Key Lessons for Inter-city Regional Cooperation

The main conclusion of the experience of inter-city cooperation between the Mayors of the Cities of Gaza and Ashkelon is that the leaders of the cities can create an infrastructure of mutual understanding between the communities of the Palestinian and Israeli cities. Representing the civil societies they can help the national leaders to narrow the gap in their standpoints towards a sustainable peace. The vision of creating cooperation between two cities, scope and implementation strategies must be shared by the Mayors of both cities.

The vision of cooperation building through joint projects was shared between the Mayor of Ashkelon and the Mayor of the city of Gaza showing that despite political disagreements at the national level, Israeli and Palestinian Mayors could formulate a shared vision of regional cooperation facing common regional challenges. The Mayors' leadership was required as both Mayors had to face significant opposition of both a large part of the citizens, parliament members and policy makers to any kind of cooperation.. Despite this opposition and severe critics, which could significantly impact the outcome of the election in Ashkelon, few month after the meeting of the two Mayors, the author continued building up the regional cooperation and won the elections with approximately 80% of the votes. The mayor of Gaza was also criticized by the media, press, radio television, by extreme groups that called for immediate cessation of any kind of cooperation of Gaza with Ashkelon. In this instance, the leadership of the two mayors of Ashkelon and Gaza was clearly evident. The dedication to the common vision and tasks began to slowly trickle down to the residence of both cities who started reacting positively.

The success of the cooperation between Ashkelon and Gaza spurred other Israeli and Palestinian Mayors to initiate cooperation between their cities. This in turn encouraged the General Director of the Palestinian Centre for Local Governments Isam Akel to encourage Palestinian cities to create connections of cooperation with Israeli cities. The Israel Centre for local government for its part set up a special entity to promote cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian cities on knowledge exchange and experience sharing projects dealing mainly with educational projects, water and sewage treatment.

14.4 International Cooperation of the city of Ashkelon - <u>Vision and Leadership</u>

<u>Scope</u>: With the Mayor's leadership the international activities of the City of Ashkelon focused on worldwide cooperation programs including contact building initiatives, such as:

- o Twin cities. World Jewish communities in the world. World Christian, Moslem and other religious communities. Raising donations abroad for Ashkelon, mainly for education, culture and welfare.

- o Encouraging investment and foreign capital for Ashkelon. Marketing Ashkelon as a focus for tourism and for the purchasing of apartments as an investment.

- o Cooperation with the European Community for projects for economic and urban development.

- o Cooperation with the World Bank for receiving grants and loans and with UN institutions.

- o Exchanges between youth from Ashkelon and other cities in the world.

- o Exchanges between students from Ashkelon and other cities abroad.

- o Cooperation between the Medical Center of Ashkelon and other medical centers and hospitals in the world.

- o Cooperation between the Academic College of Ashkelon and universities in other countries.

- o Assistance from experts from abroad in urban related matters (e.g. taking care of the beaches).

- o Bringing lecturers on urban subjects from abroad to Ashkelon.

- o Cultural exchanges such as international conventions and conferences in Ashkelon on a variety of subject matters such as convention of World Polish Jewry, which is held each year in Ashkelon, or medical conferences for doctors from all over the world.

- o Connections with Harvard University for dealing with the archaeological delegation that carries out archaeological excavations in Ashkelon on a yearly basis.

- o Connections with British Jewry who adopted Ashkelon In the framework of "Project Renewal" - a relationship that continues up until the present.

- o Cooperation between Ashkelon and the Jewish community of Baltimore USA. Baltimore raises donations for projects in education, culture and youth activities.

- o Maintaining contacts with Israeli embassies and consulates throughout the world. Cultivating contacts with branches of the Jewish Agency and the Jewish National Fund

2. The Outcome of the International Cooperation Initiatives:

   - o <u>Twin cities</u> - Ashkelon has twin alliances with: USA – Baltimore; Russia – Chekhov; Ukraine – Oman; Poland – Sopot; Germany - Berlin-Pankow; Turkey - Marmaris.

o <u>Youth exchange programs</u> with Baltimore, USA and Berlin-Pankow, Germany with visits of youth delegations from Ashkelon in these cities and reciprocal visits.

o <u>Immigration of Jews to Ashkelon</u> as a result of twinning covenants as well as tourism - albeit not to a large degree. Ashkelon explains the situation of Israel to these cities and the author and co-workers have, more than once, improved perception of the state.

o <u>Contact with Jewish communities</u> in South America: Argentine, Peru, Chile, Venezuela, Honduras and Brazil; France: Marseille, Paris, Aix-on-Provence and other cities; South Africa: Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban; Britain; Europe; etc.

The Mayor, together with the Jewish Agency, held conferences for encouraging Jews to immigrate to Israel and carried out special immigration projects. As a result of these projects, thousands of Jews from these communities immigrated to Israel and came to live in Ashkelon. The connections with these communities also attracted donors to Ashkelon especially donors who funded kindergartens and educational, health and welfare institutions.

<u>Contacts with Christian communities</u> - The author as the Mayor of Ashkelon established ties with Christian communities, lovers of Israel. These communities are located in the city of Atlanta and in the states of Georgia, Tennessee, and South Carolina as well as in other cities and US states. Christian delegations visited Israel and included Ashkelon in their itinerary. An association of friends, collected donations for building small protective booths for kindergartens and schools against rocket attacks. The Mayor addressed Christian communities throughout the USA and lectured on Ashkelon in their churches and community centers.

<u>Connections with the European Community</u> through participation in EC sponsored tenders, including: <u>Project ED-NET (Economic Development)</u> - Ashkelon was awarded the tender for this project, which focused on creating a network of cities to share knowledge and information in economic development.

<u>Fund raising abroad</u> – With leadership of the Mayor, Ashkelon became one of the most successful cities in Israel in the field of fundraising for projects such as schools, Kindergartens, community centers and projects dealing with education, welfare and culture. These donations involved the Jewish communities around the World including Brittany, France and South Africa among other communities

<u>Recruiting investments and foreign capital, for Ashkelon</u> – as the Mayor of Ashkelon the author personally recruited investors from abroad who came and invested in Ashkelon. In this way, he contributed significantly to both the economic development of Ashkelon and the State of Israel

Examples of foreign capital and investments from abroad include: <u>Holiday Inn Hotel,</u> which employs hundreds of workers and staff in Ashkelon and significantly contributes to increasing tourism in the city. <u>Commercial Tourist Center art Delilah Beach:</u> including a commercial center of restaurants on the beach - Delilah Seaside; <u>Residential buildings and hudreds of holiday apartments nearby the marina;</u> However the investment of Jews from abroad in industry in Ashkelon is relatively small.

<u>An archaeological cooperation with a delegation from Harvard University</u> - Together with his predecessor, Mayor Eli Dayan, under whom the author served as deputy mayor, the author and his co-workers established contact with Professor Yigael Yadin, who was not only deputy prime minister, but also a prominent international archaeologist, specializing in the archaeology of the Land of Israel. Professor Yadin introduced the Mayor to Professor Mazar, a leading archaeologist and to the donor, Leon Levi from New York, US, who donated tens of millions of dollars for archaeological excavations in the National Park of Ashkelon. These excavations are carried out by Harvard University, USA, under the leadership of the renowned archaeologist Lawrence Stager. This archaeological delegation has been coming to Ashkelon for three weeks a year for almost thirty years in order to carry out archaeological excavations in the National Park. The donation of Leon Levy caused a real revolution in the archaeological world concerning Ashkelon. Entire cities were uncovered and archaeological findings of unique international importance were discovered. A Canaanite city and a Philistine city were excavated. A local gateway from more than 4,500 years ago was revealed. Until the discovery of this gateway, the earliest gateways were thought to have existed in the Roman period. The entire archaeological world now recognizes the importance of Ashkelon as an archaeological city. The archaeological discoveries in Ashkelon date back to almost 5,000 years. Special books dealing with the archaeology of Ashkelon have been published and the archaeology of Ashkelon is one of the central subjects in the study of archaeology at Harvard University in the USA and at other universities as well. Tens of thousands of people have already visited and seen the archaeological sites in Ashkelon.

3. Key lessons from International Cooperation – International cooperation among cities on regional and world-wide scales has plaid a significant role in promoting the world recognition of the City, accelerating international investments in its economic development and inspiring its transformation from a "developing city" into a growing, vibrant and modern city, which with fast growing population reached   commensurate life standards with leading cities in the central economic development region of Israel.

Chapter 15- Summary of the Research & Conclusions

When the author started writing his doctorate thesis the author knew very clearly what the subject matter would be. However in the process of collecting the information reading the professional material and sorting out the order of presentation the author soon realized that the author was embarking on an adventurous journey in which he would develop new understandings not only about the different aspects of his work in the municipal city of Ashkelon over a span of 29 years - 17 of which the author was mayor of the city but he also gained an in depth knowledge of himself in that he could in retrospectively look at his visions his priorities and his methods of executing his plans and appreciate the impact this amazing experience had on himself not only as Mayor of the City of Ashkelon but as, an individual person with values, ambitions and principles.

The core conclusion is that the Mayor directly influences the day-to-day lives of the inhabitants. While the author believes that the his central motivation in choosing to run for public office was to work for the benefit of the residents of Ashkelon the full impact of this only now in retrospect becomes dauntingly clear to the author.

The position of Mayor is highly demanding and requires a continuous self-assessment in the light of the Mayor's own values juxtaposed with the realities with which he has to contend. Looking back over his tenure of public service, the author's assessment is that in terms of his beliefs, visions and values, the author strived to make qualitative and meaningful choices, within a complex environment, which will continue to have a positive effect on the various aspects of life in Ashkelon in the future.

The author's visions permeated all walks of life. He emphasized the social aspects of working toward a progressive and stable community in Ashkelon. This basic tenet of his philosophy, however, in his eyes does not stand-alone but is inexorably linked to the physical, economic, political and environmental needs and realities of the city. In this context, sustainability is a cornerstone in his overall strategy. While it is of course true that a Mayor is constantly judged and must monitor himself in an ongoing process during his tenure, the author believes that a major criterion for evaluating his work is the situation he bequeaths to his successors and the consideration that he gives regarding the implications of his actions for future generations. Upon entering public office, the author was confronted with a city that in terms of its municipal situation was in a shamble. The potential of the city, far from being realized and promoted, had been pushed aside and the real aspirations and needs of the residents had been forced to give way to personal interests of the elected officials at that time.

The needs of the city, home to immigrants from many countries, mostly from North Africa, had not been addressed, the physical and economic issues had been neglected and there was no awareness of the responsibility of the City of Ashkelon as the sub district capital in terms of regional environmental care and economic development. The 1967 war, the peace treaty with Egypt and later with Jordan and the signing of

the Oslo accords which paved the way for the establishment of the Palestinian Authority, all created new global and regional realities. The author saw in these momentous events a unique opportunity not only for Ashkelon itself but also for the city of Gaza to make a significant contribution to promoting the peace process and cementing an era of cooperation and reconciliation with the neighboring Arab states and indeed the entire Arab world but in particular with the Palestinians.

The author visualized Ashkelon as being the gateway to peace in the region. For this reason, he initiated contacts with the Mayor of Gaza, which developed into plans for joint programs, which would bring benefit to the two cities Ashkelon and Gaza and to the entire region. It is unfortunate that subsequent events prevented these plans from reaching fruition. However, the author is certain that the time will come when Gaza and Ashkelon will work together in order to realize mutual dreams.

It was only in his tenure that a determined systematic and rational strategy was put forward in an attempt to meet all the challenges and realize the potential of regional developments as well as the untapped physical and human potential of Ashkelon itself in many spheres. His visions encompassed all these issues but the author was constantly aware of new challenges and opportunities. His vision led to practical implementation and many planned and positive changes took place in Ashkelon. The education system has been transformed and is today modern, well equipped, efficiently run and operates on a high level. The physical planning of Ashkelon has bonded the city into a unified urban unit with modern infrastructures well planned residential areas, growing industrial sites and burgeoning commerce. The connection of present and future Ashkelon with its past is a basic characteristic of the awareness of the residents regarding their lives in Ashkelon and involves education and economic sustainability issues.

The large wave of immigrants from the CIS (former USSR) posed both challenges and opportunities. The same is true for the military campaigns and the acts of terrorism the author and co-workers were confronted with. The author developed what seemed to him to be feasible and suitable strategies in the light of the new realities which were unfolding before us. Today, the city of Ashkelon can face the future with confidence. The social and economic groundwork has been laid in order for Ashkelon to face the future with confidence. The resilience of the residents and their ability to cope with difficult situations has been nurtured. The status of Ashkelon in Israel and in the world has been transformed into an image of a growing, vibrant and modern city and the residents of Ashkelon can take pride in their participation in the positive trends in the development of the city, which could not have been possible without their participation and belief in the future. As past mayor of Ashkelon the author take pride in what the author and co-workers have achieved and look forward with hope and certainty to the future.