

The Effect a Neighborhood Unit's Location the Urban Spatial Dynamism in the City of Ali Mandjeli

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Abstract

This study examines the importance of the location of the oldest and foremost neighborhood unit in The New City of Ali Mandjeli in generating an urban dynamism. It identifies the direct and indirect factors responsible for the movement in the region that resulted in disorganization, lack of harmony, and the imbalance across the urban space. These factors have led to the emergence of various problems that require a reconsideration of the framework, especially in lot No. (06) on the eastern side of neighborhood unit No. (07). Ultimately, this is in order to reduce the current shortcomings and implement possible suggestions for reorganization.

Key words: The New City of Ali Mandjeli, neighborhood unit, spatial dynamism, kinetics domain, urban space, organization process.

INTRODUCTION

Algeria has attempted to deal with the phenomenon of the large demographic growth that led to the deterioration of the urban field and a significant shortage in various equipments and facilities by means of adopting modern planning foundations. These plans included establishing new cities in the high plain and southern regions in order to reach regional balance. Additionally, other cities were planned to take place in the north to lighten the pressure of major cities face in terms of unregulated expansion and population surplus as stated in Law 08/02. On the one hand, this law regards the erection of new cities. On the other, the directive law of the city sets a framework that ensures promoting the city and resolving the issues of the urban field.

The New City of Ali Mandjeli was established with the aim of lessening the concentration of the main city of Constantine and accommodating the surplus of population. This new city with an approximate population of 300 thousand people has known an amazing development in the urbanization pattern and the consumption in a short time. It benefited from the various equipments and facilities that contributed to the restructuring the area of the wilaya.

In order to control the spatial organization, The New City of Ali Mandjeli was divided into 20 neighborhood units distributed over five neighborhoods. Neighborhood unit No. (07) is the oldest of these units and its excellent geographical location contributed to the creation of an urban spatial dynamic that sometimes led to lack of order that distorted the overall outlook. Consequently, numerous spatial problems arose the existing spatial organization, and this study was prompted by the following questions:

How did the location of neighborhood unit No. (07), and particularly lot No. (06), contribute to the creation of an urban spatial dynamic?

What are the factors that have affected and are still affecting the existence of this urban spatial dynamic?

How did its excellent location affect the emergence of spatial disorder that led to distorting its outlook?

Did the flow of visitors to the area lead to the emergence of problems that require reconsideration of its arrangement?

METHODS AND MATERIALS

In this study, descriptive analytical methods are chosen in order to determine the extent of the impact of the site on creating a dynamic urban area.

Also, direct contact was made with the temporary arrivals to the studied area, in order to identify their geographical origin and the reason for their relocation to this neighborhood unit in particular instead of other units. This is done to

clearly pinpoint the actual reasons for the appeal of this neighborhood unit and its attractive features.

329 people were interviewed during regular weekdays and on weekends, Saturdays in particular.

More than 50% of the comers are of other neighborhoods of The New City of Ali Mandjeli, whereas comers of other municipalities from within Constantine and outside of Constantine stand at 27% and 22% respectively.

RESULTS

First: The Actuality of the Spatial Organization in Neighborhood Unit No. (07)

Location and Site of Neighborhood Unit No. (07)

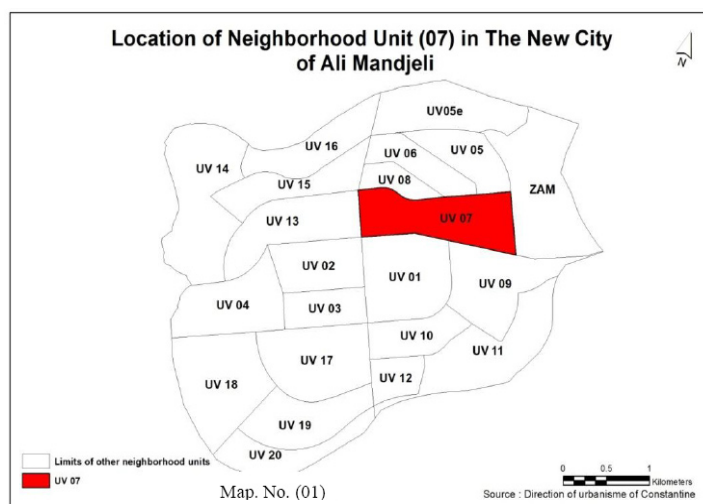
The location of the unit is excellent in reference to The New City of Ali Mandjeli

Neighborhood unit No. (07) is located on the north-eastern side of the city, and as illustrated in the map. No. (01) it is located in District No. 02.

On the north it shares borders with neighborhood units No. (8/6/5), on the south the main street of the new city and the two neighboring units No. (9/1), the east the multi-activity area, and from the west the neighborhood unit No. 13

Neighborhood unit No. 7 occupies an area of 91 hectares, which represents about 35.41% of the total area (257 hectares) of neighborhood No. 02. It also amounts to a rate of 6.06 percent of the total area (1500 hectares) of The New City of Ali Mandjeli.

The site of the neighborhood is located in an area characterized by homogeneity, both in terms of sea level elevation and gradient ratios, as the highest and lowest points are approximately around 780 m and 740 m respectively. Therefore, the average height here is about 760 m.



Map 1. Location of neighborhood unit (7) in the new city of Ali Mandjeli

The Evolution of Population

Neighborhood Unit No. 07 witnessed a continuous growth in its population size from 2008 to 2018. Initially, the population stood at 16,884 in 2008, to then rise to 23,800 people in 2018. This rate of growth at 6,916 people is noticeably high in rate in comparison to national rates in different demographic statistics.

This is due to the policy of emptying the population of the city of Constantine and re-housing the surplus population in close periods and over several years, especially the residents of the tin shacks. Table No. (1) shows the growth of the population of neighborhood unit No. (07) 2008-2018.

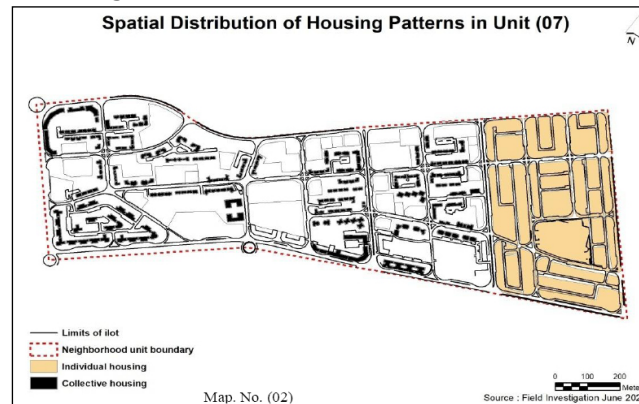
Table 1. The Growth of Population in Neighborhood Unit No. (07)

Years	2008	2010	2014	2018
Neighborhood Unit No.(07)	16884	18858	22650	22650

Source: The Institute of Urban Management of The New City of Ali Mandjeli 2022

Spatial Distribution of Housing Patterns

Map No. 02 shows two types of housing. According to the structure of the building, its height (number of floors), and the facade, the external shape of the building is distributed as follows



Map 2. Spatial Distribution of housing Patterns in unit (07)

Individual Building

The number of individual buildings in the study area is 434, or 8.09% of the total housing units in Neighborhood Unit No. 07, which is estimated at 5,363 housing units. The plots area ranges between 220-240 m² and floors between two and four floors. The buildings are located entirely on the eastern side of the unit.

Collective Housing

According to table No. (02), the collective pattern represents 92% of the total housing units in neighborhood unit No.(07) which is estimated at 5363 housing. This confirms that the predominant pattern in the study area is group housing. It is distributed in several forms in the western part of the field of study, as it is divided according to the formula to which it belongs

Table 2. spatial distribution of housing patterns in Neighborhood Unit No. (07)

Housing Pattern	Number	Percentage
Collective Housing	2958	60.04
AADL Housing	1488	30.19
Promotional Housing	483	9.80
Total	4929	100

Source: The Institute of Management Ain Nahass and Ali Mandjeli 2022

Social Group Housing

It represents the largest proportion distributed on the northwestern side, representing 2,958 homes. 60% of the total housing units in neighborhood unit No. (07), is to house low-income groups. This housing is characterized by a simple architectural style and residential spaces ranging between 50 to 60 m² with two to three rooms.

Promotional Housing

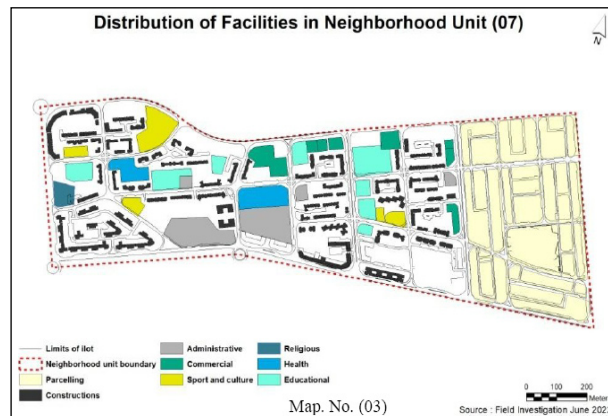
It represents 483 houses, amounting to 9.8% of the total group housing in Unit 07, and 9% of the total. The number of floors in this style ranges between five and seven floors and is typically located along the main road.

AADL Housing

It represents 1,488 housing, representing 30.19% of the total collective housing unit (07) and 27.75% of the total housing units in the neighborhood unit No. (07), the number of floors in this style ranges between 9 and 14 floors. In general AADL housing is located in the southwest, and it is a residence run by the National Agency for the development and improvement of housing AADL funded by the National Housing Fund.

Urban Land Uses in Neighborhood Unit No. (07)

According to the map No. (03), there is a group of equipments and facilities in neighborhood unit No. (07) that occupies, in total, an area of 13.66 hectares, or 15.01 % of the total area. It is mainly found on the western side of the study area, where the collective housing is located.



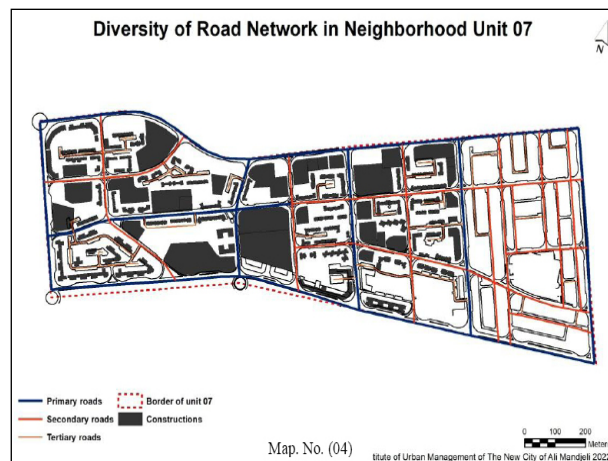
Map 3. Distribution of Facilities in neighborhood unit No. 07

The roads in the neighborhood unit No. 07 are divided according to map No. (05) into:

Main roads: it includes the state road No. (101) which borders the neighborhood unit southern region. It has a width that ranges between (9-8) meters. Its overall condition is good.

Secondary roads: they connect unit 07 to other residential units. The overall condition is good and the width ranges between (4-6).

Tertiary roads: they are directly connected to the secondary roads. The overall condition is average to good. The width ranges between (5-7) meters.



Map 4. Diversity of Road Network in Neighborhood unit 07

Second: The Factors That Contribute to the Emergence of Urban Spatial Dynamics in Neighborhood Unit (07)

Neighborhood unit 07 is one of the oldest and most important neighborhood units in The New City of Ali Mandjeli. It has a large group of collective housing, particularly social, that was created to eliminate tin shacks in the city of Constantine, which was located on the outskirts of the latter. A group of unusual facilities alongside a group of commercial in this unit was completed unlike the rest of the units which wide field movement.

The factors that contribute to this include:

The location of the neighborhood unit No. (07)

The importance of neighborhood unit No. (07) lies in:

* Its presence within the urban perimeter of The New City of Ali Mandjeli.

*The New City is located in the center of an area of 91 hectares and it is located near the activities area and transport network, the tramway and the main road to the new city, which connects it to the rest of the other neighborhood units.

*It is considered one of the important commercial poles in the city, and contains a large number of neighborhood centers with huge number of shops of different specialties.

* It contains the most important service facilities with a regional and national sphere of influence, such as the four-star Al-Hussein Hotel and Electricity and Gas Corporation for the East.

* It is located near the university city of Constantine (03).

Connectivity

Due to its excellent location within District No. 02 and the new city of Ali Manjali, it is characterized by easy access. Through a group of main and secondary roads, where it is bordered on the southern side by an active movement axis (State Road 101) characterized by the concentration of commercial activity along it.

The tram line on the southern side, parallel to State Road (101), added vitality and dynamism to it. In addition, the secondary roads that connect them to the rest of the neighborhood units are a plus. Map No.05

Proximity to the Main Entrances to the City

The New City of Ali Mandjeli contains four main entrances connecting them to the city of Constantine, its dependent cities and the rest of the states. It is shown in map No. (06) as follows:

***Eastern entrance:** It is the link between the city of El Kharoub and Ain S'amara, passing through the new city.

***Western Entrance:** It is located on the same state road 101 from the side of the city of Ain S'mara, passing through Neighborhood unit 18

***North Entrance:** It is the entrance that connects to the East-West highway, passing through the University of Constantine and activities area.

***Southern Entrance:** It is the road designated for heavy load vehicles between National Road (79) and State Road 101. The entrance to the municipality of Ain Samara passes through neighborhood unit No. (10) and leads directly to the commercial center, Retaj Mall, the land station, the final station of the tramway, and the University of Constantine 2. Though State Road No. (101), neighborhood unit No. (07) can be reached. Map No. (05)



Map 5. Entrance to the new city of Ali Mandjeli

The Spread of Malls

Neighborhood unit No. (07) contains a group of malls, specialized in selling clothes, distributed on the southern side on a surface of approximately 1.425707 hectares, as shown in Table No. (03)

Table 3. Surface of Malls

Malls	Surface (Hectares)
Sans Visa	0.066224
La Coupole	0.98742
El Rafahia	0.17908
Salah BAY	0.073044
Commercial agency	0.119939
Total	1.425707

Source: Field Investigation June 2022

In addition, there is a large group of shops, often located on the ground floor of buildings or occupy part of individual buildings, especially in lot No. (06) on the eastern side of neighborhood unit (07). These shops specialize in a specific trade such as selling spare parts, sweets, household necessities, primary trade etc. This has given the studied unit and importance within neighborhood No. (02) and the city as a whole as it contribute to the dynamism and vitality, especially public and religious holidays.

The Presence of Large Scale Facilities

Neighborhood unit No. (07) is distinct in its facilities compared to other units.

This includes administrative ones like the administrative district where a range of services cover the entire area of the city such as the department of taxes as well as the Electricity Distribution Corporation and the gas service that extends outside the territory of The New City. Similarly, there is “Dr. Abdul Qader bin Sharif Hospital” that hosts various specialties, and a group of hotels with the most prominent being the four-star Hotel Al Hussein.

Availability of Modern Means of Transportation

Tram, taxis, and buses, contribute to linking connecting neighborhood unit No. (07) to the city of Constantine and its dependent cities and the rest of the neighborhood units.

Real Estate Ownership of Land

Real estate ownership of the land is one of the elements that help determine the use and management of the plot of land whether commercially or otherwise.

Through the field investigation of the case stud, it appears that neighborhood unit has two properties as shown in map No. (06). The eastern side, is generally dominated by private ownership including lot No. (06) Which is a set of individual buildings of private individual ownership. The western side, however, is 90% state owned lands.



Map 6. Real Estate ownership neighborhood unit (07)

Third: Reasons to Go to Neighborhood Unit No. (07)

Geographical Origin of the Comers

The results of the field investigations categorize arrivals into three types.

Arrivals from Inside the Neighborhoods of the New City

We recorded through the field investigation a 53.57% percentage of arrivals

from neighborhood No. (02) of the total arrivals to it from the neighborhoods of The New City. Of that, 168 out of 329 individuals of neighborhoods 01 and 03 were questioned. Due to the proximity of some of the neighborhood units such as units (01) (03) and (09) that make up these neighborhoods to neighborhood unit No. (07). Neighborhoods (04) and (05) are somewhat remote and their housing plan is fairly new as shown in figure (01).

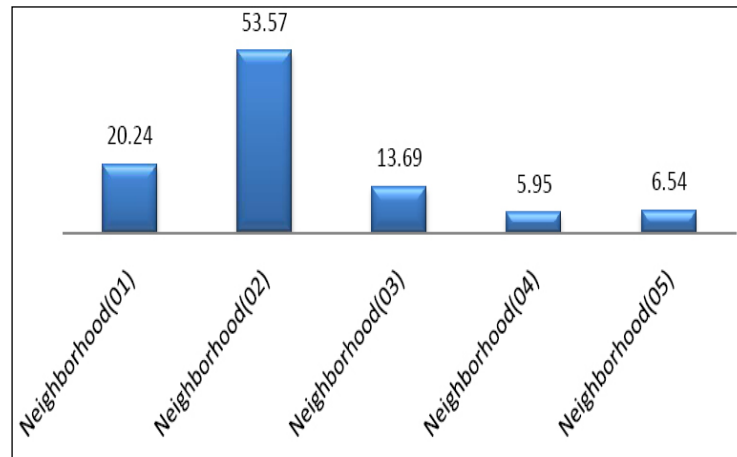


Figure 1. Arrivals from neighborhoods of the New city. **Source:** Field Investigation June 2022

Arrivals From the Most Important Municipalities of Constantine

Figure No. (02) Shows the number of arrivals to neighborhood unit No. (07) in which the municipality of Constantine records the highest percentage at 31.11%, followed by the municipality of El-Kharoub and Ain S'mara with close proportions (27.78 and 22.22% respectively). This is because of the indistinguishable link between the city of Constantine and The New City. This is evident through the transfer of many services, especially commercial ones, to The New City in general and to neighborhood unit (07) in particular. Likewise, there is the emergence of developed and modern trades of good quality.

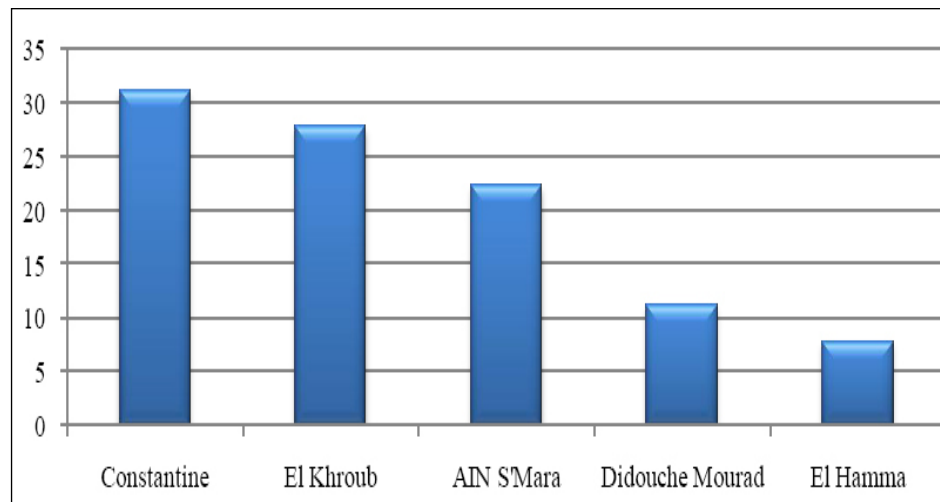


Figure 2. Percentage of Arrivals from Important Municipalities of Constantine Source: Field Investigation June 2022

Arrivals from outside Constantine

The New City, and neighborhood unit No. 07 chiefly, is witnessing a large arrivals of people from outside the wilaya of Constantine during weekends and religious holidays: typically wilayas close proximity such as Batna, Oum El Bouaghi, Mila, and Skikda in varying proportions. As shown in Figure No. (03), about 41%

Come from Oum El Bouaghi and its municipalities due to the presence of better quality services than theirs. Thus, Constantine remains a metropolitan city with a spatial attraction in the Algerian east.

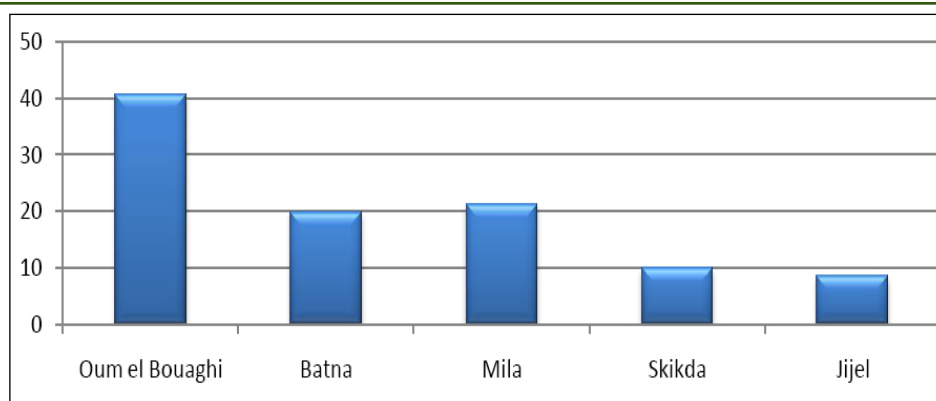


Figure 3. Percentage of Arrivals from Outside of Constantine. **Source:** Field Investigation June 2022

Reasons for Frequent Visits to Neighborhood Unit (07)

In regard to the reasons for frequent arrival to neighborhood unit (07), as shown in Figure (04), it is primarily commercial at 31% for the various groups interviewed. Administrative reasons come second at 28.87%, for the presence of an administrative complex that includes several specialized departments at a local level in neighborhood unit No. (07).

There is also health related reasons at 18.24% due to the establishment of specialized and qualified clinics, major pharmacies, and a grand hospital.

Moreover, private and public educational institutes are available and are sought after by students from within and outside of Constantine, as well as some public schools that are open for students from neighboring units. For instance, neighborhood unit No. (05) suffers from shortage and overcrowded schools. Furthermore, vocational training centers with a range of specializations such as hairdressing and culinary arts have an appeal to other wilayas like Oum El Bouaghi, Guelma and others.

Tourism stands at 9.73%, and is generally for expatriates and passersby with a destination in other wilayas.

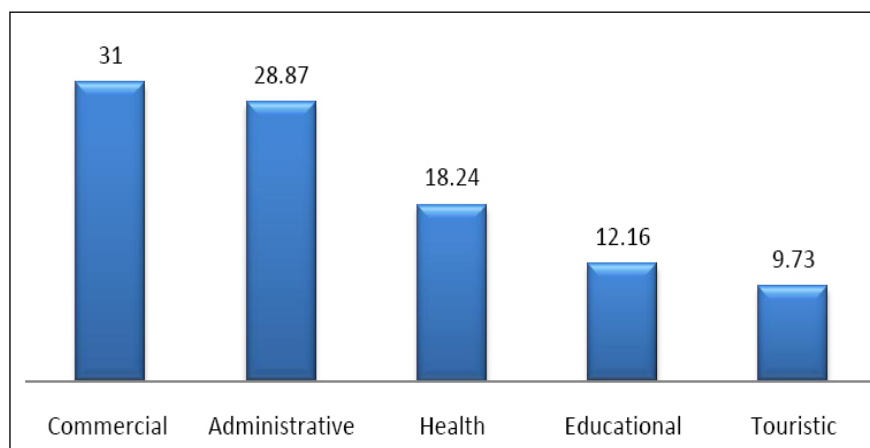


Figure 4. Reasons for Frequent Visits to Neighborhood Unit (07). **Source:** Field Investigation June 2022

Most Visited Commercial Places in Neighborhood Unit (07)

50% of the respondents mentioned to have frequently visited shops located in lot No. (06) On the eastern side of neighborhood unit No. (07). These shops are newly established shops of private ownership with beautiful architectural features. They offer various options directed towards both specialists and regular clients. They range from good quality confectionery materials and plumbing to exported household amenities, clothes, and four and five-star restaurants along the road that connects it to the northern entrance.

35% of the total respondents opt for the La Coupole mall where there is a great deal of clothing shops and a floor for an amusement arcade.

Sans Visa mall is ranked last by 15% of respondents as shown in figure (05)

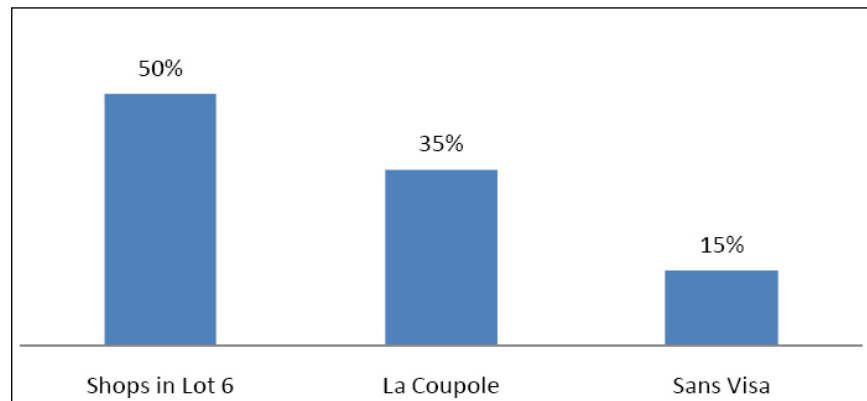


Figure 5. Most Frequent Visited Commercial Places. **Source:** Field Investigation June 2022

Problems Encountered upon Arrival to Neighborhood Unit (07)

Through the field investigation, most citizens arriving neighborhood unit (07) complained predominantly about parking lots and traffic congestion, especially on public and religious holidays. This urges speeding up the process of re-establishing the area of the case study on the whole and lot (06) in particular which is growing at a fast rate. as shown in Figure(06).

Ever since The New City became an independent administrative division (county), road network and green spaces plans have taken place

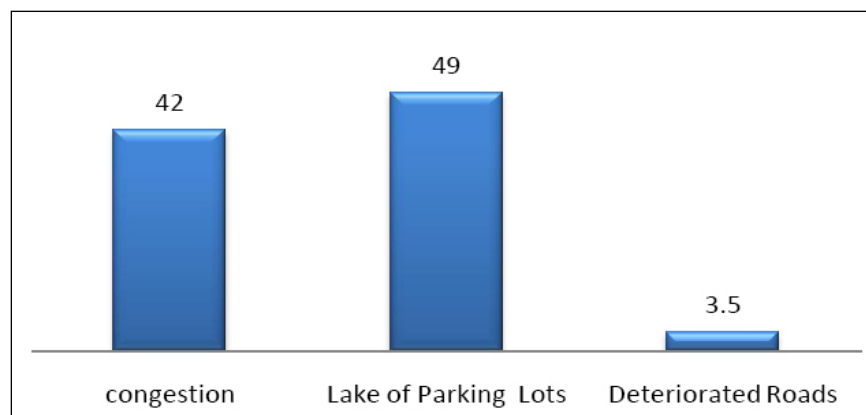


Figure 6. Problems Encountered Upon Arrival **Source:** Field Investigation June 2022

Fourth: Problems Arising in Neighborhood Unit (07)

The major problems noticed can be summed up in:

Traffic Congestion

neighborhood unit No. (07) Suffers typically from traffic congestion on regular basis, weekdays and weekends, but it tends to escalate on holidays and religious holidays. As large crowds visit the area, vehicle movement and pedestrians increase considerably. This leads to noise pollution that disturbs residents' comfort. Pictures No. 01-02



Picture 1-2. Traffic and pedestrian Congestion. **Source:** Field Investigation June 2022

Shortage of Parking Lots

The arrivals to the studied area are forced to park their cars on the roadside, in front of the commercial centers, and administrations. Parking on a secondary position or on the second lane is overall a common feature of the place. Picture No. 03



Picture 3. Secondary Parking in front of Commercial. **Source:** Field Investigation June 2022

Change in the Prevailing Investment in the Plot of Land

This is evident when commerce and administration replaced the function of housing. Accessibility and the excellent location of the studies area, particularly on the eastern side, play a role in that replacement. Lot (06), for example, constitutes entirely of individual buildings, has large scale facilities, and is of close proximity to a newly established transportation network. Therefore, individual buildings, such as in lot (06) have recently transformed to commercial building: banks, private schools, hotels, wholesale commerce. These businesses extend along the main and secondary roads and garner high rent profit.

On the one hand, this has relieved the deficiency of the area. However, on the other hand, it has created spatial and visual pollution by exceeded the permitted dimensions and extending constructions to almost 100% of the plot of land at times. Picture No. 04



Picture 4. Change in Prevailing Investment. **Source:** Field Investigation June 2022

A Significant Increase in Land Price and Rent

The high price of urban land, especially the one with accessibility to the central locations of the city has a significant impact on changing the prevailing investment pattern in the land. (صالح فليح حسن الهيثي، 1976).

The keen charge towards various uses of this central area increases its importance which results in the noticeable change of its morphology.

The Absence of Green Spaces and Playgrounds

The large urban growth witnessed by the case of study ensued a significant shortage in green spaces and playgrounds. Children opt to play in the streets instead of the poorly arranged spaces that exist. Furthermore, the absence of clubs and youth centers

has negatively contributed to the spread of violence and social menaces.

Monopoly

It is known that the center area is an area with a sizeable economy that takes place after the city is subjected to a series of events through which it achieves a sort of balance in the stability of urban land uses unlike other areas. (د.صلاح حميد الجنابي ، 1985) In neighborhood unit No 7, various uses were established and monopolizes once its location proven to generate the highest profit. This brought forth other complementary uses which in turn resulted in a conglomeration amongst all them. In time, specialized areas have become more effective and increased in size.

Fifth: Scientific and Practical Alternatives

After confirming the importance of the location of the neighborhood unit (07) and the most important factors that help in the emergence of an urban spatial dynamism, scientific and practical alternatives ought to be to confront the arising problems that will intensify and expand with urban growth in the field of study and in the rest of the other units which suffers from different problems.

The chief alternatives among those are:

Development of other neighborhood units

By creating structures, basic equipment, and various services in the rest of the neighborhood units, which suffer from a significant shortage, it will reduce the pressure exerted on the neighborhood unit in this study.

Creating a spatial dynamism in The New City Neighborhoods

The New City has received numerous housing programs as a result of the population lessening of the city of Constantine in spite of the complete absence of the most important services in some neighborhood units. Consequently, daily pressure is observed in the study area in terms of traffic, the use of various facilities and the intensity of comers. Therefore, it is necessary to study the uses the land, its percentage, its distribution, and the per capita share until the balance of the population distribution and various uses is fulfilled in the neighborhood units. This is to curb the acute pressure evident in the field.

Strict application of the legal framework:

Countless violations led a great deal of spatial chaos in the study area.

Civil Social Community Participation:

Another factor that caused the situation to escalate is the indifference of the residents towards the issues of their neighborhood and the absence of neighborhood associations.

The problem of transportation and traffic in the city

The transportation network plays an important role in linking the various components of the urban space. (1981 د.صلاح فليح ،). The new city, in general, and neighborhood unit No. 07 , in particular, suffer from transportation and traffic problem especially in the center where in the problem is far more dimensional. This is the chaotic outcome of no effective plan taking place to set firm transport lanes. Bus lanes are one example of that. Moreover, shortage of stops and lack of regulation, if any, resulted in an intense traffic problem. Consequently, network deficit and the inefficacy of roads to steer traffic may be exacerbated with the growth of the city. A continuous population and construction that does not parallel the road network lead, in most cases, to congestion, especially in the city center and some neighborhoods that are centers of trade, shopping, and services such as the Ritaj mall, Square Mall and Markets.

Provision of Parking Lots

Many of the reasons for traffic result from the inadequacy of services in the rest of the neighborhood units which directs the residents towards the studied area. This problem can be solved by establishing neighborhood centers and establishing

parking lots on the axes leading to the various remaining units where residents can depend on the public transport lanes instead of their personal means. The thorough study of transport and traffic with regard to the studies of land use when preparing cities should be emphasized as that attracts a large number of residents and thus a link to the distribution of population densities and services as it is noticed that most of the studies carried out with regard to preparing cities focused on the distribution of land uses first, then transportation and traffic.

CONCLUSION

This study deals with the impact of the location of neighborhood unit No. (07) in The New City of Ali Mandjeli in terms of the dynamics of the field and the contributing factors to problems arising.

The neighborhood unit No. 07 represents the oldest and most important neighborhood unit in the city and is characterized by an excellent strategic location near the main entrances to the new city and the passage of State Road No. (101) and the tram line alongside its borders. Its large scaled equipment and groups of commercial centers, unlike the rest of the other neighborhood units, is also a factor that added to the spatial dynamism.

The problem that emerged clearly was the lack of spatial organization which resulted in utter chaos across the urban space. We were able to offer some alternatives that may assist in solving the problem posed and develop of a comprehensive plan for the development of the rest of the neighborhood units in the city by providing administrative and educational. This is to divert the pressure on this area and promote a suitable image within the neighborhood No. (02) in particular and the new city in general.

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