



**STRATEGY FOR TERRITORIAL PLANNING AND  
DEVELOPMENT FROM A LOCAL PERSPECTIVE IN  
THE PORTOVIEJO MANABÍ CANTON**

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**Summary**

*The objective of the work is to analyze from the theory the various contributions that allow the enrichment of the strategic planning of territorial ordering in the canton and the city of Portoviejo. The article presents a theoretical analysis on the concepts of strategic planning and the instruments for territorial ordering and urban development of cities and their repercussions for the territory. The historical foundations that serve as a basis for the strategic planning process of the Portoviejo canton and the main references that exist in this regard are examined. As a method, a bibliographic review work is applied that provides useful experiences to expose the final conclusions of the article in a well-founded way. An analytical investigation with a descriptive character is shown that allows to base the proposal that justifies the establishment of strategic planning for the ordering and territorial development in the canton and the city of Portoviejo. As results, a holistic vision of strategic planning and its repercussions for the development of the territory, the peculiarities of its conception and implementation are offered, as well as the models that allow its evaluation and permanent control and that serve as the basis for the decision-making at the governmental and social levels. It is concluded that there is a need to continue research in this regard, since the temporal dimension of the exercise of government in the cantons threatens the fulfillment of strategic goals aimed at the well-being of society and the development of the territory in the long term.*

**Keywords:** *Planning Strategy, Land Use Planning, Territorial Sustainability, Planning Instruments.*

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## 1. Introduction

The works of Strategic Planning peaked with the works of Steiner at the end of the sixties (De la Rosa & Carrillo, 2010), which were expanded and deepened by Porter a decade later with his postulates on competitive strategies (Porter, 1981; 1985).

At the end of the 20th century, Ackoff worked on interactive strategic planning (Ackoff & Greenberg, 2008) and at the beginning of this century, Hitt and Mintzberg studied strategic management and global management (Hitt et al., 1999; Mintzberg & Huy, 2003). Theorists such as Thompson worked on various aspects of strategic management and management (Thomson et al., 2012).

The objective of strategic planning is to promote the sustainable development of cities, in accordance with recognized international standards in this regard. It constitutes a key element for the establishment of the city model that is to be built, developed, and advanced. In this effort, proactive coordination is required between the public and private sectors, so that all the efforts of the society involved contribute to the concept of resilience and necessary adaptation to changes and transformations, to ensure the improvement of the level and quality of life of all citizens (Camones, 2023).

An urban strategic planning process according to Borja & Castells (1998) consists of defining a city project, which is based on the unification of a diagnosis and the coherent mobilization of public and private actors, where the social participatory process is a priority with respect to the definition of its content.

It can be said that at present urban strategic planning is a peculiar type of governance, in which a certain design of city society is taken into account. In this regard, Mintzberg (2006) points out that the strategy leads to some of the fundamental aspects of organizations as instruments of perception and collective actions. It is a recently applied concept for the development of cities and the most notable cases date back to the eighties of the 20th century. The city of San Francisco in the United States was one of the pioneers in this regard and developed its strategic planning process between 1982 and 1984 (Ramírez, 2010).

In 1983 Barcelona was the venue for the Meeting of European and American cities for the exchange of experiences in strategic planning. The event was the propitious framework to expose the experiences on the strategic planning of cities such as Amsterdam, Lisbon, Lille, Toronto, Santiago de Chile and the host city itself. The meeting served to corroborate the validity of the synergy created by public and private actors around the same objective, in the interest of increasing efficiency in the use of available resources and raising the quality of life of the inhabitants (Alonso et al., 2007).

The first evaluations of the validity of the strategic planning of cities took place in Europe, mainly in Italy where the works of Perulli (2007; 2008) on the heritage cities of Florence and Venice were recognized.

The National Planning Secretariat of the Republic of Ecuador established that it is up to each city to design its development and territorial planning plan, of which progress it must submit a quarterly report (National Planning Secretariat [Senplades], 2017). The Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Portoviejo canton complies with said regulations since 2011 (Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Portoviejo canton, 2011).

The strategic planning of territorial ordering constitutes an important element that allows an efficient and sustainable management of the territory, which allows promoting the balance between economic, social and environmental development, as an aid to prevent and mitigate risks and territorial conflicts and guarantee the citizen participation in decision-making (Balducci, 2011; Massolo, 2015; Rodríguez-Gámez, 2012).

Strategic planning is a key tool to consolidate a sustainable and resilient development model in the territories, through a local to national approach. Being part of the design of public programs and policies aimed at promoting this key vision as actors committed to change (Hernández, 2021; Pereda & Zabaleta, 2018).

The set of technical standards developed with the objective of ordering the use of land where cities are located, as well as regulating the specific conditions for its transformation or conservation, is what

specialists call urban planning (Heymans et al., 2019).

For authors such as Ornés (2009), from a legal point of view, urban planning must be considered based on six dimensions: spatial, social, economic, legal, tax and political. The spatial dimension is related to the organization and location of the different uses and activities depending on the availability of surface and the value of the land, which translates into an exercise of sovereignty over it.

Through the social dimension, collective and individual interests in land ownership are recognized, but respecting its social function.

The economic dimension refers to a certain value of the land to the extent of the interventions that are carried out on it and endow it with an economic value. It determines the faculty of its expropriation for reasons of public utility.

From the legal point of view, it implies the decisions made by the government, its institutions and by civil society and must respond to constitutional and legal principles.

The tax dimension that involves the forms of decentralized collection, the central government allocations, and the payment of special contributions, given that land ownership is considered by governments as a privilege that must be remunerated based on the social.

The political dimension of urban planning lies in its involvement with the decision-making process between the government and local civil society, to outline the strategies that the territory must follow for its future development and therefore specify of a government management or strategic direction and must be legally ordered. Therefore, urban planning constitutes the foundation of public policies that will coordinate the actions of the plans, programs and projects that make up the planning and territorial development plan. Hence the close link that exists between urban planning and development of the territory.

Land use planning is a public policy that systemically regulates, structures, organizes and imposes the use and value of land occupation and land ownership. The strategic plan uses inputs to

generate development, such as land use and territorial planning, along with others such as sustainability, governability, governance, and the economy (Blecic et al., 2008; Guerrero et al., 2020; Rodríguez -Gómez et al., 2017).

In Ecuador, the most important planning and territorial ordering instrument that the country has is the national territorial strategy, which establishes the guidelines on the physical ordering of the territory, natural resources, infrastructures, economic activities, equipment, heritage protection natural, cultural and human settlements (Guerrero et al., 2020).

Although it continues to be a problem for many territories, experts on the subject agree that it is necessary to leave behind the era in which cities grew in an anarchic, uncontrolled and order less manner and that planning as an inseparable development process must mark the paths to continue depending on the physical geographical, economic, social and political peculiarities that distinguish each locality (Anand, 2007; Beckmann, 1998).

The Territorial Planning and Development Plan of the Portoviejo canton in the Province of Manabí Ecuador, is the result of collective work that since 2011 has been carried out by numerous specialists, authorities and the social actors involved. Among the most recent contributions we can cite those of Alban et al. (2019), Towel& Macías (2020), Arteaga (2021); Diaz& Pin-Amen (2022).

For a better understanding and didactic ordering of the article, a general review of the development of urban planning and its link with development is carried out, based on the peculiarities that this process has in the Portoviejo canton. The historical foundations that serve as a basis for the process of strategic planning of cities and the main references that exist around it are analyzed. The methodology and instruments of strategic planning itself are addressed, which ranges from the design of the plan in accordance with the development models, the diagnosis of the environment based on the demand and supply of the city, to the formulation of the vision of future and the execution of the plan. The methodology for the evaluation and follow-up of the

plan is referred to, where the instruments used for it are emphasized.

As a result, a holistic vision of the plan for territorial planning and development of the Portoviejo canton is offered with its foundations, the peculiarities of its conception and implementation, as well as the ways that allow its evaluation and permanent control, to serve as a basis. in the decision-making process at the governmental and social levels.

## 2. Materials and Methods

The article is based on a review work that aims to examine the methodologies and models that are used in the Portoviejo canton to deploy the planning and territorial development plan, so that it is possible to contribute experiences capable of enriching the theoretical arguments for the establishment of strategic and sustainable planning for socioeconomic, social, and environmental development in the territory.

For this, analytical research methods were used with a descriptive nature, which were based on an exhaustive bibliographical review and comparisons between the various theoretical contributions made on territorial planning and development plans and their behavior in the praxis of the territory.

The measurement and analysis of the information collected allows us to affirm that it is a qualitative study, through the combination of logical and empirical methods in the search for knowledge.

## 3. Analysis and Discussion of the Results

### Models and Instruments of Strategic Planning

The issue of strategic planning occupies a prominent place in the international scientific debate. There are various proposals for models and instruments that are used to plan and put strategies into practice at a business, local, territorial, national, and global scale. New proposals emerge every year and many people become aware that the future must be strategically designed, whether for a country or a city. Everyone agrees that its preparation must be based on the diagnosis of the scenario in which it will be implemented and a critical analysis of the

results of the strategies that have been developed so far (Ortiz-Díaz, 2017).

For the study, choice, formulation, and implementation of strategies there are innumerable theoretical proposals. Torres (2014) mentions among them: the analysis of strengths, opportunities, weaknesses, and threats (FODA); the strategic position and action evaluation matrix technique (PE-PA); the matrix of internal, external and attractive factors; the public sector portfolio matrix; the product-market evolution matrix; and the quantitative strategic planning matrix (MPEC).

It is valued that before adopting any decision aimed at establishing the strategic planning of a city, there must be a process of raising the awareness of the actors about the need to make structural changes that lead to a new city status, with transformations that allow the origination of a new characterization of the internal and external environment of the city. Only with this pre-existing perspective can the decision to undertake a strategic plan be made, since it constitutes the most effective way of carrying out the set of actions that the public and private sectors must develop in the future (Torres, 2014).

As part of the decision-making process, it is necessary to assess the collective effort required to carry out a strategy. Commitment and consensus are fundamental aspects to convince the actors of the need for change and the implicit transformations in the execution of urban strategic planning (Güell, 2019).

It is necessary to define the analysis of a group of elements during the process to make the decision and carry out the strategic plan of the city, among them: who will assume the leadership in the planning process; What resources do the social actors involved have for implementation? and the delimitation of responsibilities for each of the planned plans, programs, and projects. These elements must be clarified as part of the diagnosis of the city environment that will be the setting for the execution of the strategic plan of the city (Barrios, 2011).

The diagnosis of the environment must cover both the internal particularities of the city that could facilitate or delay the materialization of the plan (bridges or barriers; strengths or weaknesses) or the

particularities of the external environment of the city itself, but that may hinder or promote its execution. of the strategic plan (Ciccolella & Migniqui, 2009).

It is not advisable to start the strategic planning process of the city without first carefully studying the previous development models from the physical, economic, and social point of view, which allows framing what happened previously and that can serve as a reference for subsequent effects. for the implementation of the strategic plan that is intended to be applied (Parraguez et al., 2006).

You must understand the historical trajectory of the city and the requirements that need to be achieved so that the community can be resilient and thrive in its environment. Their competitiveness, the characteristics of their habitat, and the peculiarities of their location in the physical geographic space of their environment must be studied (Wong, 2005).

The city development model implies the analysis of the demand that exists on the city, of the urban systems with which it maintains relations, as well as the own offers that it can offer to the citizens and to those who visit it (Wong, 2005).

For the conformation of the strategic development plan of the city, the examination of the external and internal aspects and the scenario where the city is located is required (Sánchez-Dudus et al., 2007).

External analyzes cover three basic aspects: environmental analysis, demand analysis and study of urban systems. These aspects make it possible to establish the bases that allow us to understand the opportunities or threats that can affect the functionality of the city, but that are beyond its control and cannot be modified, which is why they require resilience and proactivity to face them (Mora, 2010).

The opportunity for the city can be defined as a fact that allows it to gain competitiveness or attractiveness in relation to its competitors and decision makers must examine in depth the attractions that the city presents, and the possibilities of success related to its use (Paz, 2005). The study of the issues raised previously will allow decision makers to act in correspondence with the following variants (Robles, 2015):

- Develop immediate actions and targeted efforts to exploit the potential of the opportunity if it is attractive and has a high probability of success.
- Discard the opportunity and not include it in the strategic plan if its attractiveness is low and its probability of success is irrelevant.
- Temporarily following up on the opportunity and waiting a reasonable time before incorporating it into the plan, if it meets only one of the two conditions, it is attractive, but with little probability of success or vice versa.

A threat will always be a threat and its manifestation, whatever its severity or probability of occurrence, should not go unnoticed, since it usually has consequences for the development of the strategy (Parra, 2007).

Depending on their severity, threats can be very serious, serious, and less serious. Their probability of occurrence in each case can be high, medium, and low, which allows decision makers to act in accordance with their severity and probability of occurrence (Bocanera, 2005). Its analysis and examination allow to foresee the following actions:

- Promote the creation of contingency plans to reduce the effects of threats and act proactively for their consideration in the city's strategic plans.
- Monitor threats by articulating strategic plans, programs and projects aimed at confronting them.
- Develop prophylaxis and prevention plans to monitor and control threats and prevent their occurrence.

The examination of the demand constitutes another of the aspects that are considered within the characterization of the development model of a city (Tovar, 2007). The demand of the residents in the first place and the companies that reside in the physical space that the city occupies, the investors that contribute the finances and resources for the improvement of the basic infrastructure, the governmental institutions or not and in general all the actors of civil society and even the tourists who visit it exert pressure on the city that translates into the demand they make on it (Fernández, 2013).

According to Roca et al. (2012) a city should not be considered as a solitary entity, isolated from the other cities and urban centers that surround it: there are commercial, economic relations, administrative, political, and cultural interdependencies, which are permeated by means of communication and historical links that they are sustained through migrations and other elements of social development.

Neighboring cities influence each other because of complex internal and external relationships. Networks are formed among them called urban systems, within which innovation, the generalization of results, experiences, control, organization of socio-productive life and even existing problems, constitute problems of common knowledge and solution (Aquilué & Ruiz, 2021).

The study of urban systems makes it possible to study the relationships that cities maintain with other urban centers, whether they are relationships of collaboration or of competition and rivalry, to find out in which areas or sectors these relationships develop and their future repercussions. Hence, the study of urban systems is a basic requirement for the preparation of the strategic plan of the city (Amoros & Cantos, 1997).

The companies, and the service provision sectors and even the residents themselves, capture the information that reaches them from the environment and from their neighbors to configure the city's offer in terms of satisfying the expectations of demand and those of other cities. that surround you. The success or failure of the city is determined by the degree of flexibility, effectiveness, and quality in satisfying its own demand and its neighbors with the offer it provides. With this, it faces the challenge of the present and allows it to pave the way for future development (Barberán & Pazmiño, 2018).

The offer in the urban scenario requires the permanent examination of threats and weaknesses of certain elements of the infrastructure that lack what is necessary to be able to more than satisfy the services and products demanded by the demand. The strengths in the urban area are given by a reinforcement and adequate preparation of the city infrastructure to satisfy the demands of the demand

with quality and promptness (Calvento & Colombo, 2009).

The analysis of the environment, the demand and the urban systems allows us to notice the external factors that are characterized by their heterogeneity and their difficult comparison with each other. Threats and opportunities for the city emerge from these three analyses, derived from changes in the environment, the demands of demand and the actions of neighboring cities.

The correct evaluation of the elaborated strategic plan constitutes an effective way of feedback to know the relationship between the strategic vision deployed, the goals and challenges proposed and their fulfillment according to what was planned.

The control and evaluation of the plans makes it possible to keep the strategic plan in the focus of attention of all the social actors involved and to know if the goals established in the short, medium, or long term have been met.

The indicators to be achieved must be clearly defined in the territorial planning and development plan. An indicator is the mathematical expression that allows to measure the behavior of an action, a goal, a project, or plan. Therefore, the indicator must establish what is going to be measured and the unit of measurement that it will use to do it (Guevara et al., 2015).

Among the indicators that make it possible to measure strategic plans effectively are: those of impact that measure the transformations that have occurred over time in a given scenario; the result indicators that make it possible to measure the consequences or effects of these transformations; and the management indicators that facilitate the measurement of the effectiveness and efficiency of the actions undertaken to carry out the transformations (Guevara et al., 2015).

The benchmarking of cities as a methodological tool proposes the theoretical postulates established by this type of procedure: see, investigate, and appropriate the best experiences of other cities in the development of their own strategic plans. It is a well-known methodology, but little applied. However, the interaction that the city has with other urban centers is a key element for the conformation of the strategic plan of any city (Castiella et al., 2016).

The evaluator must design the indicators so that they serve as an instrument for measuring compliance with the plans, projects and programs conceived in the strategic plan.

In accordance with the recommendations of the National Planning Secretariat of Ecuador, to monitor compliance with the territorial planning and development plan, the method group of conceptual tools of the logical framework system should be used (Ortegón et al., 2015), to which establishes the following procedures.

Construction of a narrative memory of objectives, establishment of compliance indicators, establishment of means of verification, and establishment of compliance assumptions.

Within the strategies for the follow-up and monitoring of the plan, the narrative memory of objectives is included first. This establishes the procedure for the identification of general objectives of the planning and territorial development plan, at the level of purpose, purpose, components, and the identification of the objectives of the plan of activities and components.

Within the compliance indicators, they are established for each of the four levels: purpose, purpose, components, and activities, as well as specifying that the indicators must be precise in terms of quantity, quality, space, and time.

Within the scope of verification, the means are established where compliance with the general and specific objectives of each of the components of the plan can be verified. Within the framework of the idea of compliance, the necessary assumptions that must lead to the fulfillment of the proposed objectives are established.

It is specified that once the general and objectives of the planning and development and territorial planning have been established, and the disposition of the compliance indicators for each one of them, those responsible for follow-up and monitoring must verify in a sequential and systematic way compliance with each objective, for which they must use the pre-established means of verification. Any impossibility or delay in meeting the objectives could only be justified when those responsible for executing the plan do not have the elements established in the cases of compliance, such as the

timely delivery of information and the availability of resources or events. of force majeure.

The evaluation model proposed by Arteaga (2021) is based on the execution of ten well-defined phases, each of which is included around responsibility of the main socially involved actors, as explained below.

First phase: understanding of the fourteen exclusive powers of local government, which are granted by the Organic Code of Territorial Organization, Autonomy and Decentralization of local governments (National Legislative Assembly, 2010). The analysis of the context is carried out by applying the PESTEL analysis, which assesses the political, economic, social, technological, ecological-environmental and legal factors.

Second phase: preparation of the documentation on the indicators and goals of the strategic plan, which makes it possible to clarify public management policies. Above all, it requires that the goals must be quantifiable, measurable and be in line with the proposed indicators. The phase includes the elaboration of a matrix where relevant information about the strategic objectives, the specific indicators, the programs, projects and action plans, the operational indicators, the baselines with the updated goals are recorded, consigning those responsible for compliance in each case. The matrix must contain the strategic objective in question, the indicators, the program, project, or plan that fulfills it, the baseline for its development, and the goals that must be met in each stage or year to achieve the proposed objective.

Third phase: the matrix is prepared that reflects the findings found in each program or project with the direction of the person in charge, the elements that were reviewed, the finding found and if it shows conformity or non-conformity with the effects that it could cause. It must contain the evaluated program, project or plan, the findings that were found in its execution, it must specify whether the findings are compatible or not compatible with the development and if they do not correspond to the plan, the improvement proposal must be specified. suggests, the date on which the proposed improvement or correction must be executed and the person(s) responsible for carrying it out.

Fourth phase: involves the deployment of the evaluation, for which a special multidisciplinary team must be structured to oversee evaluating each of the goals planned and documented in the second phase and which ones were met based on the analysis and evidence. The evaluation report must refer to the project or plan being evaluated, the corresponding strategic indicator, the strategic goal proposed for the period, to what extent the goal has been met, what causes affected its compliance or non-compliance, and the effects. What will this situation have for the general strategy?

Fifth phase: the findings registered in the matrix proposed in the third phase are validated based on establishing the existing gaps between the goals that were planned and those that were met, so that the factors that influenced the non-compliance can be clearly defined.

Sixth phase: the results of the evaluation must be recorded in a report that is intended to be useful for decision makers. It should be written clearly, simply, understandably, consistently, and cost-effectively. It must contain information on the execution of what was planned and an analysis of the breaches with their causes and proposals for improvement.

Seventh phase: the socialization of the report with the results of the evaluation carried out among the officials and all the social actors involved is a very important element, as well as all those who have the leadership capacity that allows them to make the necessary adjustments and undertake the actions of improvement. Actions must be recorded in a plan or project.

Eighth phase: refers to the moment of approval and execution of the action plan to improve the findings found in the evaluation of the goals and indicators. The plan or project must clearly specify the corrective actions that must be carried out, who is responsible for doing so, and the time dimension in which said actions must be carried out.

Ninth phase: consists of systematically monitoring the execution of the improvement action plan, for which three basic aspects are considered during monitoring and control: the evaluation of the management carried out, the results obtained by the proposed actions and the impact of the same, all

framed within the time and conditions approved in the plan.

Tenth phase: feedback is the last phase of the proposed methodology and its objective is to achieve continuous improvement of the entire process through the cycle of planning, execution, verification and action, which leads to innovation when management for results is carried out.

### **Historical Context of Urban Planning in Portoviejo**

Molina's work (2004) exposes important historical references to the city of Portoviejo dating back to March 12, 1535, the date the city was founded by the Captain of the Spanish conquering army Francisco Pacheco of the troops of Diego de Almagro.

In the indications issued by King Carlos V it was reflected that to find a town a healthy place should be chosen, neither too high nor too low due to the humidity and sickness, with abundant water, nearby woods, and abundant pastures. El Higuerón de Rocafuerte, 25 km from the geographical space occupied by the current city, served to raise the banner of Castilla and the Villa Nueva de San Gregorio de Puerto Viejo was founded and Francisco Pacheco recognized as its first Lieutenant Governor.

Since its foundation, the city of Portoviejo followed the same layout as the original cities that the Spanish founded in the conquered lands. A large space for the construction of the public square and the church, which formed the central nucleus around which the rest of the city was distributed (Molina, 2004). In the year 1541 a fire destroyed the first documents, the Green Book on the foundation and the first plans or sketches that were made by the conquerors to account for their management.

As an ancient city Portoviejo had certain privileges such as having its own council and the right to elect its mayors, but in practice the city depended on the larger and more powerful city of Guayaquil, even the dependency extended until after the year 1819 that the cantons of Portoviejo, Montecristi and Jipijapa were created as part of the Manabí province of the southern department of Gran Colombia (Alcívar, 2016).



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Throughout history, the town of Portoviejo has moved several times to its current location. The last of the transfers of the town took place on August 18, 1565, the date on which the president of the Royal Court of Quito, Don Hernando de Santillán, ordered the visitor Bernardo de Loaysa to move Puerto Viejo one league further inland (Barcia-Moreira, 2018).

The initial design of the city encompassed Rocafuerte, Olmedo, Bolívar, Sucre and Córdova streets, where the houses and administrative buildings were grouped in front of the layout of the Plaza de Armas that currently bears the name of Vicente Amador Flor (Molina, 2004).

Figure 1 shows a map of the city of Portoviejo drawn up at the beginning of the 20th century.



Figure 1: Map of the City of Portoviejo Drawn up at the Beginning of the 20th Century

Source: map of the city of Portoviejo dated July 13, 1911, prepared by Alonso González Illescas.

### The Urbanization Process in the City of Portoviejo

In the investigation carried out by Ponce (1994) it is stated that "Latin American prehistoric cities were an example of construction in their time". Contemporary urban planning techniques had a positive impact on traditional urban planning methods. The constructive actions were adapted to the various spaces with buildings that stand out on plains or mountains. The terraces were occupied to take advantage of the firmer ground, stones were used to build the foundations of the houses on which the wooden columns that supported the structure were erected, street systems were designed within the city to promote a better flow of the population.

The authors Ponce and Pelegrín (2020) pointed out that in the Latin American region since the 1950s there has been a horizontal growth of cities with the gradual loss of historic centers. With the absence of a favorable policy to deploy an adequate process of

urban planning and territorial ordering, an inappropriate use of space was operated, and adaptive metamorphoses were promoted to respond to the interests of certain interest groups, for the use of buildings in own benefit.

According to the authors themselves, another element to consider is related to the increase in the population that demanded the use of spaces that turned out to be small and people began to look for places with greater comfort, which led to an expansion towards the peripheries with informal constructions to form new neighborhoods and citadels. The groups with greater economic resources settled in large spaces. Low-income people sought out and occupied low-cost land and all of this fostered the dynamism of urban development towards the peripheral part of the city with the loss of value of the central areas.

According to data from the National Institute of Statistics, the Portoviejo canton has an area of 96,756 ha, which represents 5.12% of the total area of the Manabí province. It has a population of 238,430 inhabitants, of which 17,847 live in the urban area and 66,583 in the rural area (National Institute of Statistics and Censuses [INEC], 2017).

The urban development of the city depends on the regulations established by the central government, especially regarding the construction of houses on urban land. Figure 2 shows a timeline with the main state regulations that affected the urban development of the city of Portoviejo.

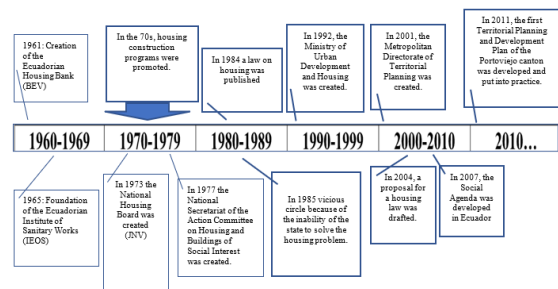


Figure 2: Timeline with the Main State Regulations

In 1961, the Ecuadorian Housing Bank (BEV) was created with the aim of promoting the national mortgage market and covering the housing deficit (Congress of the Republic of Ecuador, 1961).

In 1965, the Ecuadorian Institute of Sanitary Works (IEOS) was founded as a private law entity with a social and public purpose (Kuffner, 2005).

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In the 1970s, turnkey housing construction programs were promoted without the participation of the population, aimed at citizens to enter the housing program (Acosta, 2009).

In 1973, the National Housing Board (JNV) was created, attached to the Presidency of the Republic, which oversaw formulating housing policies (Acosta, 2009).

In 1977, the National Secretariat of the Social Interest Housing and Building Action Committee was created, within the Latin American Economic System (González and Veliz, 2019).

In 1984, a law on housing was published in the Official Gazette of the Republic (Acosta, 2009).

In 1985, a vicious circle began because of the state's inability to provide a global solution to the needs of the marginalized population, who could not acquire homes because they did not have a well-paid job (González and Veliz, 2019).

In 1992, the modernization and change in the system of access to housing was promoted by the Government. The Ministry of Urban Development and Housing was created (Acosta, 2009).

In 2001, an updated version of this policy was prepared, and the Metropolitan Territorial Planning Directorate was created, which launched the Land and Housing Unit (Acosta, 2009).

In 2004, a housing law proposal was prepared by the Housing Commission of the National Congress (Acosta, 2009).

In 2007, the Social Agenda in Ecuador was prepared, which raised the increase in the number of beneficiaries and the amount of the housing subsidy (Presidency of the Republic, 2008).

In 2011, the first Territorial Planning and Development Plan of the Portoviejo canton was prepared and put into practice (Gobierno Autónomo Descentralizado del cantón Portoviejo, 2011).

According to Ponce and Pelegrín (2020), the model that can be seen in the city of Portoviejo is that of selective suburbanization, which offers few nuances of the stages of urban development prior to the fifties of the last century, which was influenced by subordination from the country's weakened economy to fluctuations in international economic

relations and the cultural penetration of foreign powers, criteria with which Mendoza (2021) agrees.

According to the criteria of González and Véliz (2019), in the city of Portoviejo there are five levels of income for the population. Table 1 shows the basic characteristics that distinguish the five levels or urban areas in the city, according to their typology and income levels of the population.

Table 1: Basic Characteristics that Distinguish the Five Levels or Urban Zones in the City of Portoviejo

Urban areas	Urban spaces they occupy	Urban typology of buildings	Social strata that occupy it
1	Historical center of the city	Divided buildings with several floors, with shops on the ground floor and continuous portals that allow movement through the entire area protected from sun and rain	Occupied by people with income levels 1 and 2
2	Transition zone between the historic center and the periphery	Divider typology of lower height (between one and two floors), but without services on the ground floor or continuous portals. There is not much commercial activity. In these cases, there is almost no garden, because where it originally existed, the space was paved or delimited by bars, or the upper floor is projected onto it.	Set by people who are included in strata 3 and 4 by their income level
3	Peripheral areas of the city	Detached single-family homes with a certain influence of modern architecture and with a high occupation of the land, since it is common for the garden spaces and side corridors to be roofed in order to increase the space to the detriment of the original conditions	Group for people included in strata 4 and 5 by their income level
4	Within the downtown limits of the city and in the peripheral areas	Luxurious gated private condominiums	People with an income level 5 and some of level 4
5	Peripheral areas (especially in the hills that border the city)	Informal dwellings built with natural or precarious materials, which continue the tradition of vernacular architecture brought by the rural population when they migrate to the city. The thatched and fiber roofs are replaced by corrugated zinc plate covers or other metallic materials.	People with income level 1 and 2. Very poor and poor.

Source: Own elaboration based on information provided by González and Véliz (2019)

Solorzano (2021) in his studies on the impact of the urbanization of Portoviejo on the elderly, concludes that the inhabitants belonging to the third age do not feel alluded to the direction that the development of the city takes and do not have a homogeneous criterion on the reforms applied after

the earthquake of 2016. They request that their criteria be taken into consideration and included in decision-making related to the urban planning of the city, but they show enthusiasm in the urban works that are currently being carried out.

The author himself points out that the regulations and ordinances derived from the cantonal government do not regulate the relevance of compliance with standards aimed at satisfying the needs of the population that is still young, but that will naturally have to age. This fact is a problem, since construction companies can take advantage of not carrying out works in this sense to lower costs (Solorzano, 2021).

It is important to note that the situation referred to above contrasts with the effort in the construction of parks and recreational and social expansion sites in the city, of which the La Rotonda and Las Vegas parks are the most reliable examples.

Urbanization approaches based on social housing also underwent conceptual transformations: from housing designed for employees and workers, they became housing for the low-income population, which contrasts with the accelerated growth in prices and the reduction in people's purchasing power. with the lowest income levels.

#### **4. Discussion**

The dimensions of urban planning enunciated by Ornés (2009) constitute the bases to delineate the strategic planning of the ordering and the sustainable territorial development of the territory. All are linked as a proactive system that gives it dynamism and serves as the basis for the implementation, management and implementation of urban development projects. In particular, the political dimension serves as a link between the interests of strategic planning and the lines drawn for territorial ordering.

In the historical evolution until the year 2011, the city of Portoviejo followed a pattern of growth with informal constructions carried out with their own means and an inappropriate use of the land, with a growing demand nuanced by the progressive migration of the rural population, in search of better conditions. socioeconomic. The urban situation of the city did not have an adequate urban development

plan, without planning adjusted to scientifically endorsed standards and requirements, which would allow all social forces to act in a coordinated and proactive manner in the interest of ordering land use and of cantonal development. Gradually the urban design of the European checkerboard gave way to a city extended towards the peripheries, the loss of the heart of the city and a marked differentiation of social sectors that led to the breakdown of the social fabric of the city, in accordance with what was indicated by Ponce and Pelegrín (2020).

According to the researchers González and Véliz (2019), despite the fact that in 2011 the preparation and execution of territorial planning plans began, difficulties still persist that are manifested in social fragmentation in the use of urban spaces of the canton, in which five urban areas can be distinguished, each one with a characteristic constructive typology, depending on how it is associated with the five income levels of the population: level 1 (very low economic income); level 2 (low economic income); level 3 (Medium economic income); level 4 (high income) and level 5 (very high income).

Studies on urban development and its impact on the various social sectors are present, as part of the evaluation and control exercised by the socially involved actors in the planning and territorial development plan.

Multi-family buildings conceived as social housing have not been assimilated by the population and this rejection increased to a greater extent after the earthquake that occurred in 2016 and had a significant impact on the urban structure of the city.

According to Zambrano et al. (2019) the city of Portoviejo has gone through several periods that marked its history. During the colony, the territory was subject to a stage of discovery and exploration. During the 19th century, the city was strengthened geographically in its current location, while the economic trend based on agriculture and livestock was reinforced, although it acquired some importance by becoming the administrative center of the region.

The author himself emphasizes that during the liberal era from the end of the 19th century to the third decade of the 20th century, the city was

consolidated as a political and bureaucratic axis, the provision of commercial services and agricultural activity. Commission brokers, exporters, importers and banking services are developed. There was a boom in culture and a period of prosperity (Zambrano et al., 2019). During the 20th century, the city reaffirmed itself as the center of bureaucratic and administrative development of the province, beginning a period of expansion and economic growth (Solorzano, 2021).

The threats that loom over cities are challenges that must be faced and can be derived from trends towards unfavorable changes or an unexpected and unintended event in the environment, in such a way that they can deteriorate the scenario in which they usually develop. In these cases, the decision-makers and managers of the strategic plan must have a deep command of the so-called Edsel Murphy's Law: if something can go wrong, it will... Only then will they be able to face the unforeseen. And although they will not be able to prevent certain things from happening or certain phenomena from manifesting, at least they will be prevented, they will know why they occur, they will learn to accept them and they will be in a better position to reduce their effects, in accordance with what was indicated by Parra, (2007).

The demand that is exerted on a city is a highly complex matter, much more difficult to study and know than the demand that is exerted on any other social or productive activity, tourism demand, for example. This is since in most cases the demands made on the city by various groups or social actors are different and may even be contradictory, in line with what was indicated by Varisco (2004).

In the strategic plan, the issue of demand on the city must be treated with great care, since a balance must be achieved between citizen satisfaction and enabling the development of productive activities and services that are carried out in the urban environment. Roughness's must be ironed out and a consensus found among all the social actors involved, otherwise, the city will configure an offer that does not meet the expectations and needs of the actors, in accordance with what was indicated by Cámara and Morcate, (2014).

Knowledge of how cities act in relation to neighboring cities constitutes a way to understand the development of productive and socio-economic processes and the evolution of the city under the imprint of these processes, which makes it possible to anticipate the changes that may occur and adopt corrective measures, if necessary, in correspondence with what was indicated by Duarte et al. (2013).

Portoviejo is the cantonal capital and occupies a privileged position in the central part of the province of Manabí, which allows it to maintain a close relationship with the urban area that surrounds it, made up of the urban parishes of Andrés de Vera, Colón, 12 de Marzo, October 18, Francisco Pacheco, Picoazá, San Pablo and Simón Bolívar (Decentralized Autonomous Government of the province of Manabí, 2021).

The Portoviejo canton borders the Sucre, Rocafuerte, Junín, Bolívar, Pichincha, Santa Ana, Jipijapa, Montecristi, and Jaramijó cantons, with which it has historically maintained close economic and trade relations and is linked by a well-established road network. structured (Decentralized Autonomous Government of Portoviejo canton, 2016).

The analysis of urban systems allows us to know the degree to which the supply and demand of other cities influence the functioning of the city and constitute a factor of its proper functioning and development.

The primary task related to the analysis of the offer that the city can offer consists of determining the weak or strong points of its functional structure, which allow it to satisfy the requirements of competitiveness, habitability, sustainability, governability, and the conditions to respond effectively to the challenges posed by the claim. The study of the urban system from the point of view of the offer that the city can make, makes it possible to determine if the city can be more competitive, habitable, sustainable, and governable, in accordance with what was exposed by Rojas (2015).

The city of Portoviejo presents specific characteristics that can be synthesized from three angles, each of which allows obtaining the information that constitutes the precedent to formulate the strategic vision of the development

plan. The analysis of these aspects allows us to synthesize the formation of a matrix that structures the threats and opportunities according to their impact and probability of occurrence, the result of the analysis of the environment, the demand, and its relationship with the urban systems, as well as the consolidation of the diagnosis of the offer of the city and the socioeconomic positioning of the city.

In accordance with what is indicated in the territorial planning and development plan of the Portoviejo canton, the main threats conceived are the following (Gobierno Autónomo Descentralizado del cantón Portoviejo, 2016).

- Seismic threat that is based on the traditional seismic risk of the city. Even though in the province of Manabí there were records of telluric movements, where the city had never been the epicenter of a phenomenon of this nature until the fateful earthquake that had the city as its epicenter on April 16, 2016.
- Volcanic threat that is conditioned by the existence of an inactive volcano in the neighboring canton of Jipijapa.
- Threat of floods and droughts due to the manifestations of La Niña and El Niño weather events, deforestation, and the construction of infrastructures in inappropriate places.
- Threat of contamination of surface water and soil.
- Among the main opportunities are the following (Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Portoviejo canton, 2016).
- Existence of a commonwealth of cantons whose strength and resources constitute opportunities to confront the difficulties and phenomena that may arise.
- There are collaboration and assistance agreements with institutions and actors to carry out the canton's strategic plan.
- Implementation of community environmental education programs.
- Availability of resources that allow to face the problems of coverage and improvement of the water supply.

- Existence of tourist resources that favor their sustainable exploitation.
- Existence of projects to improve agricultural production.

The consolidation of the diagnosis makes it possible to determine the strengths and notice the weaknesses, offering a vision of the offer that the city can offer to its citizens, its companies, those who visit it and the neighbors.

Some of the strengths identified in the Portoviejo canton are the following (Gobierno Autónomo Descentralizado del cantón Portoviejo, 2016).

- Existence of municipal ordinances that regulate and regulate the most significant aspects of the operation of the canton.
- There is availability of budget, material and human resources that allow the development of economic and productive life.
- Existence of a strong social fabric committed to cantonal development.
- The territorial ordering and development plan promotes the participation of all social actors and the joint efforts of the public and private sector to achieve the proposed vision.
- The society has a cultural identity, climatic goodness, topographic regularity and a strategic geographical location, which favors agricultural activity as the basis for the economic and social development of the territory.

However, there are situations that can limit socioeconomic development and life in the canton. Among the weaknesses identified, the following can be pointed out (Gobierno Autónomo Descentralizado del cantón Portoviejo, 2016).

- There are not enough job opportunities for the entire population of the canton.
- The educational and public health services present difficulties in the development of their work.
- The coordination between the institutions to carry out the plans and programs conceived in the strategic plan is weak.
- There is deterioration of physical spaces and basic infrastructure.

- There is an increase in violence and drug addiction among sectors of the community.
- Planning and control of land use, price control in marketing, and insufficient financing for agro-productive investments are inadequate.

From the analysis of external and internal factors, the central position occupied by the city of Portoviejo from the socioeconomic point of view in relation to the other urban centers that surround it is deduced.

The canton of which the city of Portoviejo is its capital has significant potential to guarantee the socioeconomic development of the territory and has a broad social base, but its strengthening is necessary through the institutionalization of democratic spaces for citizen participation, to give the organizations the necessary tools in the interest of management, monitoring and control in the execution of the proposals made according to the National Development Plan.

The diagnosis allowed to inventory all the resources available to the territory. More than 217 tourist resources were registered in the canton with a dominant concentration in the urban area of the city of Portoviejo, where a key sector is generated to develop and promote the productive chain of the industry and tourist services (Decentralized Autonomous Government of the canton Portoviejo, 2016).

It was found that the city's strategic development plan includes various local development projects that open positive expectations for the city, with a significant impact on the development of the canton.

The previous analyzes allowed to arrive at the formulation of the strategic vision of the city, which constitutes the bases for the urban planning model and the territorial development that is desired for the future.

The vision is creative, but impregnated with voluntarism about what the future is intended to be and at the same time realistic, which is why it needs to be controlled within the framework of the territorial planning and development plan to avoid unrealistic objectives being set, impossible to achieve. carry forward. The vision must be credible

for citizens and contain within itself the feasibility of its realization.

According to the contents of the Organic Code of Territorial Ordering, Autonomy and Decentralization (COOTAD), the Decentralized Autonomous Government of the Portoviejo Canton, prepared the development and territorial ordering plan, with a strategic horizon of 15 years.

It is expected that in the year 2026 the Portoviejo canton will be the center of regional development, leading the political, administrative, economic, sociocultural, and environmental integration, through the leadership of the planning and execution of programs and projects that generate new development opportunities aimed at guaranteeing community welfare. It is expected to achieve the adequate use of the high sociocultural potential that the territory possesses, under the leadership of the government authorities that must work for social inclusion, gender equity, financial solvency of the society, through the articulation of organized, transparent processes. and participatory, aimed at distributing resources according to the needs and priorities of the communities, with trained and efficient human talent, which reflects an image of trust and credibility, providing quality services.

From the formulation of the strategic vision of the canton and after identifying the essential problems that must be solved to ensure the future development of the city, the planning process of the strategies aimed at materializing the formulated vision was developed.

The strategic planning of territorial ordering and development of the canton requires the widest participation of all the social actors involved and putting into practice the work dynamics that allow the achievement of consensus around issues that may present conflicting interests.

After preparing the actions that correspond to the conceived programs and projects, the implementation of the proposals made by the working groups during the planning process begins, which requires constant effort and dedication to prevent the strategic plan from becoming an exercise in theoretical reflection.

The implementation of the plan is the longest and most decisive stage where the challenges for its

fulfillment become an objective and constant task, since it is about building the desired future and avoiding the frustrations and disappointments that may arise in the social actors involved. The plan requires constant monitoring and evaluation, an aspect that will be developed below.

In accordance with what was pointed out by Martín (1993), the project evaluation process implies the systematic collection of reliable and valid information and data analysis to achieve a realistic and quality evaluation.

In correspondence with the criteria of Martín and Merinero (2010), most of the available bibliography about strategic planning of cities focuses on the way in which the plan should be prepared and how it should be put into practice. Therefore, the way in which these plans must be controlled and evaluated is relegated to the background.

For the Portoviejo canton, it is important to have a tool that allows it to make accurate assessments about compliance or not with its strategic plan. An instrument that allows to effectively measure the impacts generated and the actions contained in the plan, which in turn allows the measurement of the effectiveness of governance, correct and adjust the objectives set if necessary.

In accordance with Fernández (2018) the evaluation of the strategies cannot be seen only in the quantitative aspect of the economic performance and the management of the project. The qualitative repercussions related to the impact on the city and its surroundings must be examined in depth and in detail, using plan progress indicators, plan impact indicators in the city, and comparative indicators with other cities, so that They allowed measuring the growth of the canton in relation to neighboring cities.

Ecuadorian laws place the responsibility of conceiving and executing the planning and territorial development plan in their territories on local governments (Asamblea Nacional Legislativa, 2016), but the temporal dimension in which the local government exercises its mandate threatens the materialization of approved plans, so that in practice planning loses its strategic essence and the plans continue to be projects with short-term goals, which are committed to solving immediate problems

within the period of their mandate and satisfaction is not prioritized immediate needs over long-term strategic development.

Nor is there a specific methodology that helps local governments to systematically control and evaluate the planning and territorial development plan. Most of the investigations carried out in this regard propose suggestions on how to plan and execute it, with little attention to a systematic process of evaluation and control of its execution. This problem does not allow the local government to detect deviations from the proposed goals in time and therefore, they do not adopt corrective measures to prosecute them.

In accordance with what was indicated by Arteaga (2021), the methodology used to evaluate the strategic plan must have an inclusive nature, be easy to apply and aimed at guaranteeing institutional benefits, be based on recognized standards and have a flexible structure that allows its adaptation. to the needs and capacities of the institution, criteria shared by the authors of the article.

The plan evaluation model established by the National Planning Secretariat is very general and does not clearly outline the steps that must be followed when evaluating the city's strategic plan, which is why it is difficult to execute given the ambiguity with which it is formula and based on the weaknesses presented by the established model, it is convenient to apply the proposal made by Arteaga (2021) for the evaluation of the strategic development plan.

## 5. Conclusions

The Territorial Planning and Development Plan of the Portoviejo canton is articulated through the interrelation established between five demanding systems: environmental, sociocultural, economic, territorial, and political. The plan proposes to develop a total of 21 Programs with 265 Projects.

The space of interrelation that is established between the demanding systems, constitutes a way of approaching an integrated diagnosis that allows to form the structural base to formulate a proposal of evaluation of territorial strategic development.

The conception of clear, pertinent, and measurable indicators is one of the basic

requirements to establish an adequate evaluation of the city's strategic development plan.

There are several ways to undertake the monitoring and evaluation of the strategic development plan, among which are the proposal of the National Planning Secretariat and the most recent one made by Arteaga (2021). In both, unavoidable aspects are considered when evaluating the plan, such as the analysis of the management of the projects based on the results, the measurement of progress, impact and environment indicators, the application of city benchmarking, meetings, and seminars. exchange, as well as the preparation of reports and corrective action plans.

Among both proposals to guarantee the monitoring and evaluation of the strategic development plan, it is considered that Arteaga's (2021) is the most complete and viable to achieve the objectives proposed in the Portoviejo canton.

It is recommended to continue deepening the research on strategic planning and the instruments required to guarantee the ordering and territorial development in the canton and the city of Portoviejo, based on the consideration that the temporal dimension of the exercise of government hinders the fulfillment of the activities and strategic goals aimed at achieving the well-being of citizens and the sustainability of the territory.

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