



Research & Studies

By Urban Development
and Planning Unit

Towards a Legislative Framework for Sustainable Urban Governance in Baghdad

Abstract

The city of Baghdad faces growing urban challenges associated with rapid population growth, unregulated urban expansion, infrastructure degradation, weak urban transport efficiency, deteriorating public service quality, and overlapping responsibilities among the institutions governing the capital. Despite the multiplicity of laws regulating local administration, municipalities, and urban planning, they fail to form an integrated legal framework responsive to Baghdad's specificity as the political, administrative, and economic capital of Iraq. This research aims to propose a legislative framework for managing the city of Baghdad grounded in the principles of urban governance and sustainable development, thereby enhancing institutional integration, elevating planning and implementation efficiency, and achieving optimal utilization of urban resources.

The research adopts a descriptive-analytical methodology by analyzing the capital's urban and legislative reality, reviewing relevant scientific literature and international experiences, and formulating an actionable legislative vision tailored to the Iraqi environment. The study concludes that enacting a dedicated law for the city of Baghdad is a fundamental step toward building a more efficient and resilient urban system capable of driving sustainable development, enhancing quality of life, safeguarding the capital's historical identity, and fostering its national and regional competitiveness.

1. Introduction

National capitals serve as the focal points for political, administrative, and economic decision-making, reflecting a state's institutional maturity and its capacity to manage urban resources efficiently and sustainably. In contemporary urban thought, capital city management is no longer restricted to providing municipal services or executing infrastructure projects; rather, it has evolved into a strategic process requiring a clear legislative framework, functional institutions, and integrated planning, execution, and monitoring mechanisms to ensure sustainable development and enhance quality of life.

Baghdad stands as one of the world's most ancient and influential capitals in urban history, having served for centuries as a regional center of governance, culture, and economics. However, over recent decades, the city has confronted accumulating challenges, including accelerated population growth, unguided urban sprawl, heightened pressure on infrastructure and public services, diminished urban transport efficiency, and the compounding effects of political, economic, and security conditions on urban development trajectories.

Despite state efforts to develop the capital, Baghdad's management remains anchored in a fragmented legislative framework dispersed across local administration, municipal, and urban planning laws—lacking a unified law regulating the capital as an entity with sovereign and strategic functions distinct from other Iraqi cities. This reality has led to a multiplicity of governing bodies, overlapping jurisdictions, and weak institutional coordination, ultimately impeding decision-making efficiency and delaying strategic project execution.

International experience indicates that capital cities succeeding in managing urban growth have adopted specialized legislative frameworks tailored to their functional nature, offering a clear institutional reference point and bridging urban planning, administration, funding, and oversight within a long-term developmental vision. In this context, urban governance emerges as a pivotal modern approach to city management, founded on transparency, accountability, participation, institutional integration, and strategic planning.

Accordingly, this research addresses the primary question: How can an integrated legislative framework for managing the city of Baghdad be constructed in alignment with urban governance principles to address current systemic deficiencies and promote sustainable development?

The study operates on the hypothesis that developing Baghdad requires more than injecting financial resources or launching new projects; it demands comprehensive legislative and institutional reform to reorganize capital management and unify planning, execution, and oversight.

The research aims to:

- Analyzing the urban management and legislative reality of Baghdad.
- Diagnosing deficiencies within the existing legal and institutional framework.
- Extracting transferable lessons from global capital management models.
- Proposing an integrated legislative framework aligned with urban governance and sustainability.

The study adopts a descriptive-analytical methodology, examining scientific literature, analyzing relevant legislation, and assessing the capital's urban administration while drawing on international practices to synthesize a legislative vision suited to Baghdad's management development.

The significance of this study lies in offering a holistic legislative vision linking law, administration, and spatial planning, serving as a scientific contribution to support legal reform for Iraq's capital and founding a baseline for dialogue among legislative, executive, academic, and professional stakeholders.

2. Conceptual Framework of Urban Governance and Urban Legislation

Over recent decades, cities have undergone rapid transformations driven by demographic growth, urban expansion, globalization, and technological advancements, leading to a fundamental shift in the philosophy of urban management. Urban management is no longer confined to delivering municipal services or executing infrastructure projects; rather, it has evolved into a comprehensive process aimed at balancing economic development, social equity, and environmental protection within an institutional and legislative framework capable of responding to rapid shifts. In this context, the concept of Urban Governance has emerged as a paramount modern approach to city management, owing to the mechanisms it provides to ensure inter-institutional coordination, foster community participation, and enhance decision-making efficiency.

Urban governance is defined as a system of rules, institutions, and processes that regulate the relationships among governmental entities, the private sector, civil society, and academic institutions in managing urban development, thereby realizing the principles of efficiency, transparency, accountability, participation, and the rule of law. This concept signifies a paradigm shift from traditional centralized administration to a collaborative model based on partnership, coordination, and role integration, enabling a more flexible management system responsive to societal needs.

Modern literature emphasizes that the success of urban governance relies on a set of core principles, most notably: clear distribution of powers, decision-making transparency, institutional accountability, active stakeholder engagement, reliance on strategic planning, and the utilization of data and modern technologies in city management. Furthermore, urban governance is intrinsically linked to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly United Nations Goal 11, which calls for making cities inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

Urban Legislation constitutes a foundational pillar of urban governance, serving as the legal framework that regulates relationships among public institutions, delineates their competencies, defines the rights and obligations of various parties, and provides the statutory basis for preparing, executing, and monitoring master plans. Without clear and balanced legislation, urban management becomes susceptible to overlapping jurisdictions, fragmented decision-making centers, and weak coordination among executive bodies—culminating in reduced planning and implementation efficiency alongside elevated development costs.

National capitals possess distinct characteristics separating them from other cities; they accommodate supreme state institutions and represent the hub of political, administrative, economic, and cultural activities. This inherent complexity necessitates specialized

legislation tailored to their unique functional nature. Consequently, many nations have moved toward enacting standalone laws to govern their capital cities, clearly establishing the institutional hierarchy, coordination mechanisms between central government and local administration, and the respective responsibilities for planning, execution, and oversight.

The scope of urban legislation extends beyond regulating administrative relations; it encompasses guiding spatial development, protecting the environment, managing natural resources, preserving urban heritage, regulating investment, and elevating public service quality. Thus, effective legislation serves as an instrument for development as much as a mechanism for regulation, directly impacting a city's capacity to attract investment, achieve spatial equity, and foster competitiveness.

In light of the above, developing the city of Baghdad requires more than merely updating spatial plans or implementing service projects; it fundamentally demands restructuring the legislative framework governing capital management in alignment with urban governance principles. This approach establishes a more integrated relationship among planning, execution, and oversight. Accordingly, the legislative framework proposed in this study is not a mere legal amendment, but a holistic vision to reform Baghdad's management governance system, rendering it better equipped to respond to sustainable development imperatives and future challenges.

Building on this foundation, effective urban legislation serves as the link connecting strategic vision to institutional execution. The success of any urban reform in Baghdad remains contingent upon a clear legal framework that assigns responsibilities, guarantees policy continuity, and enhances coordination among diverse stakeholders. Transitioning to analyze Baghdad's current status in the subsequent section serves as a practical application of the theoretical concepts presented herein, paving the way for constructing the proposed legislative framework.

3. The Current State of Baghdad's City Management and Its Institutional and Legislative Challenges

Baghdad represents the largest urban agglomeration in Iraq, fulfilling political, administrative, economic, and cultural functions that position it as the core axis of national development. However, the city's growth over past decades has not been matched by a parallel evolution in its administrative apparatus or governing legal framework. This disparity has widened the gap between urban development imperatives and existing institutional capacity, resulting in accumulated urban, service, and environmental challenges that directly degrade administrative efficiency and overall quality of life.

Although Baghdad relies on a legal framework comprising local administration, municipal, and urban planning laws alongside sector-specific enactments, this framework has evolved piecemeal to address isolated issues rather than forming a cohesive legal system tailored for capital management. Furthermore, the division of responsibilities among the Mayorality of Baghdad, Baghdad Governorate, sectoral ministries, and central authorities has bred jurisdictional overlap and fragmented decision-making centers—eroding planning and implementation efficiency while hampering strategic project management.

3.1 Institutional Challenges

The proliferation of entities responsible for Baghdad's governance stands out as a paramount institutional hurdle. The absence of a unified institutional authority leads to redundant powers, weak inter-agency coordination, project implementation delays, and difficulty in establishing accountability when initiatives stall. Divergent priorities among entities often result in a lack of a shared vision, yielding fragmented projects that fail to deliver the intended developmental impact.

This issue is acutely manifested in urban planning, where entities operate strictly within their respective statutory mandates without an institutional structure ensuring integration across urban design, transport management, housing, infrastructure, investment, and environmental protection. Consequently, a comprehensive management vision remains absent, reducing interventions to reactive measures rather than strategic solutions.

3.2 Spatial and Service Challenges

Baghdad has experienced accelerated spatial expansion that frequently breached the boundaries of its master plan, spawning informal settlements, encroachments on agricultural lands, and mounting pressure on public infrastructure. Population growth has surged demand for housing, services, and transit at a pace that specialized public agencies have been unable to match.

Urban transit is among the most severely impacted sectors; the city relies overwhelmingly on private vehicles amidst limited mass public transit options, worsening traffic congestion and inflating commute costs and energy consumption. Additionally, water supply, sewage, and power networks suffer severe strain due to aging infrastructure that cannot accommodate current urban growth.

3.3 Deficiencies in the Legislative Framework

The fundamental challenge lies not in a deficit of legislation, but in a lack of integration. Existing statutes govern isolated sectors, whereas capital management demands a unified legal framework bridging urban planning, local administration, investment, transit, environmental stewardship, and heritage conservation under a single institutional vision.

Furthermore, current laws lack clear coordination mechanisms, fail to mandate long-term strategic visions for the capital, and lack standardized indicators to evaluate urban performance or review policies periodically. Consequently, city management remains tethered to ad-hoc administrative decisions rather than sustainable development blueprints.

3.4 The Need for a Dedicated Capital City Law

Baghdad's distinct status as the capital of the Republic of Iraq dictates a legislative model separate from general municipal statutes. Housing supreme state institutions and serving as the primary hub of economic and cultural activity, the capital requires a legal framework that delineates institutional responsibilities, guarantees planning-execution integration, and ensures institutional stability and policy continuity.

Enacting a dedicated law does not mean creating an additional administrative layer; rather, it aims to reorganize existing institutional relationships, define jurisdictions with precision, and establish binding coordination, monitoring, and evaluation mechanisms—thereby upgrading city management efficiency and strategic execution.

Most challenges confronting Baghdad stem not merely from resource constraints or technical skill gaps, but fundamentally from the absence of an integrated legislative and institutional framework. Transitioning toward a new legislative framework is therefore not merely an administrative choice, but an essential entry point for urban governance reform and sustainable development. The following section outlines the proposed legislative framework, drawing on urban governance principles and international best practices while respecting the administrative and legal context of the Iraqi capital.

4. International Experiences in Capital City Management and Transferable Lessons for Baghdad

Global capitals share commonalities as seats of political power, administration, economy, and culture; yet, the distinctiveness of their functions and the complexity of their urban fabric have impelled many nations to adopt tailored legislative and institutional frameworks for their management. Despite differences in political and administrative systems, international experience reveals shared principles grounded in clear division of responsibilities, institutional integration, strategic planning, and reliance on legislation as the primary mechanism for regulating urban development. Rather than advocating a literal copy of these models, this study aims to extract transferable lessons adaptable to the Iraqi context.

4.1 The London Experience (United Kingdom)

London represents an advanced model of capital governance through a legislative framework that regulates the relationship between central government and local administration while clearly defining institutional mandates. City administration is led by an elected Mayor and a local legislative assembly, while specialized bodies oversee transport, planning, economic development, and environmental management within a structured coordination framework.

The British model is characterized by binding strategic plans that undergo periodic updates, backed by key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure policy implementation efficiency. Furthermore, legislation enables extensive participation from the private sector, universities, and civil society in formulating urban policies, thereby promoting development continuity and mitigating the influence of short-term political shifts.

Lesson for Baghdad: Establishing a clear leadership authority backed by a legal framework that delineates powers and ensures institutional coordination is an essential prerequisite for upgrading capital city management efficiency.

4.2 The Paris Experience (France)

In recent years, Paris underwent institutional reforms designed to strengthen integration between the core city and its surrounding suburban perimeter by creating coordinated administrative structures. This arrangement enables transport, housing, environmental, and spatial planning issues to be addressed across a comprehensive metropolitan scale rather than within traditional administrative boundaries alone.

This experience highlights the value of long-term planning, coupling urban development with public transit investment, safeguarding urban heritage, and enhancing public realm quality while preserving the city's historical identity.

Lesson for Baghdad: Capital city management must treat Baghdad as an integrated metropolitan system, requiring multi-unit administrative coordination and the alignment of transit, housing, and service projects under a unified vision.

4.3 The Singapore Experience

Singapore stands as a leading global exemplar of integrating legislation with urban planning. City management relies on agencies endowed with clear statutory mandates and flexible laws that accommodate policy updates in response to economic and social shifts. This model leverages digital data and Geographic Information Systems (GIS), linking land use with infrastructure, transit, and investment while enforcing rigorous environmental protection and resource efficiency standards.

Lesson for Baghdad: The proposed law should incorporate statutory provisions supporting digital transformation and mandating spatial databases in urban planning to boost decision-making efficiency and minimize resource waste.

4.4 The Seoul Experience (South Korea)

Seoul has prioritized urban governance by promoting transparency, incorporating citizen participation in decision-making, and leveraging digital technologies for public service administration, alongside developing an advanced mass transit system linked to land-use policies.

This approach has elevated administrative efficiency, strengthened public trust in state institutions, upgraded service delivery quality, and achieved advanced levels of urban sustainability.

Lesson for Baghdad: The success of any legislative reform must be paired with community engagement, open access to information, and digital tracking/evaluation systems to foster transparency and institutional accountability.

4.5 Synthesis of Lessons Learned and Application Prospects in Baghdad

International precedents demonstrate that successful capital management does not depend on a single administrative template, but on common principles adaptable to national realities. For Baghdad, these experiences can be operationalized through a legislative framework founded upon:

- Clearly defining institutional mandates to prevent jurisdictional overlap.
- Establishing a supreme coordination body to steer urban development in the capital.
- Adopting a long-term strategic vision that transcends political cycles.
- Integrating spatial planning with transit, housing, investment, and environmental policies.
- Accelerating digital transformation and GIS utilization in city management.
- Engaging universities, professional syndicates, the private sector, and civil society in urban policy design.
- Establishing urban performance indicators and periodic assessments to monitor progress and implementation efficiency.

Leveraging international insights does not imply replicating foreign models; rather, it entails tailoring their underlying principles to Iraq's legal and administrative environment while recognizing Baghdad's distinct historical, political, and social character. Thus, international precedent serves as a benchmark for drafting modern legislation without substituting national solutions tailored to the city's specific requirements and capabilities.

Table 1: Summary of Lessons Learned for Baghdad

City	Institutional Framework	Key Success Element	Lesson Learned for Baghdad
London	Greater London Authority (GLA)	Unified Strategic Leadership	Creating a supreme authority for the capital.
Paris	Métropole du Grand Paris	Capital-Suburbs Integration	Unifying metropolitan urban policies.
Seoul	Seoul Metropolitan Government	Digital Management & Data	Digital transformation and smart administration.
Singapore	Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA)	Long-Term Planning	Re-envisioning Baghdad 2050.

5. The Proposed Legislative Framework for Managing the City of Baghdad

The analytical findings presented in preceding sections indicate that challenges confronting the city of Baghdad stem not merely from resource deficits or technical skill constraints, but fundamentally from the lack of an integrated legislative framework regulating capital management and defining inter-institutional relationships. Therefore, any reform initiative for Baghdad must commence with restructuring the legal architecture governing its management to guarantee clear allocation of responsibilities, policy stability, and integration across planning, execution, and monitoring.

This research proposes the drafting of a Special Law for the City of Baghdad to serve as the supreme legal baseline for capital governance. The statute aims to unify institutional vision, organize jurisdictional mandates, and embed urban governance principles to realize sustainable development and enhance citizens' quality of life.

5.1 Philosophy of the Proposed Law

The proposed law rests on viewing Baghdad as a city of exceptional character, distinct from other Iraqi municipalities given its status as the political, administrative, economic, and cultural capital of the state. Consequently, its management must be grounded in specialized legislation tailored to this unique identity, providing relevant institutions with a clear mechanism for coordination and joint action.

The law does not aim to introduce additional administrative layers or inflate institutional complexity; rather, it seeks to reorganize existing institutional relationships, precisely delineate responsibilities, and establish binding coordination mechanisms to eliminate policy conflicts and optimize urban management efficiency.

5.2 Governing Principles of the Legislative Framework

The research proposes anchoring the law in the following principles:

- Unity of capital administration and institutional integration.
- Clear distribution of competencies to eliminate jurisdictional overlaps.
- Adoption of long-term strategic planning.
- Commitment to urban governance, transparency, and accountability.
- Environmental protection alongside urban and cultural heritage conservation.
- Community participation and the engagement of universities and professional syndicates in policy design.
- Promotion of sustainable investment and improvement of the economic environment.
- Institutionalization of digital transformation and spatial data in planning and management.

5.3 Proposed Institutional Structure

The study proposes establishing the Supreme Council for the Development of the City of Baghdad as the ultimate authority responsible for formulating urban policy for the capital. The Council would comprise representatives from the Council of Ministers, the Mayoralty of Baghdad, Baghdad Governorate, relevant sectoral ministries, independent experts, and representatives from universities and professional syndicates.

The Supreme Council would be tasked with:

- Formulating a long-term strategic vision for the capital.
- Adopting the master structural plan and overseeing its periodic updates.
- Coordinating strategic projects among government bodies.
- Monitoring the implementation of development plans and programs.
- Publishing an annual report on urban performance indicators.
- Proposing statutory amendments required to adapt to emerging developments.

This Council aims to provide unified institutional leadership without impinging upon the executive mandates of existing agencies, achieving integration rather than duplication.

5.4 Urban Planning and Development Management

The law must statutorily obligate all public entities to operate under a unified strategic vision for Baghdad extending to the year 2050, subject to five-year reviews in light of demographic, economic, and environmental shifts.

Additionally, the statute must bridge spatial planning with housing, transit, infrastructure, investment, and natural resource management policies, ensuring projects operate as components of a holistic development program rather than isolated initiatives.

The study stresses the necessity of embedding Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and urban databases into plan formulation and decision-making, thereby elevating management efficiency and fostering operational transparency.

5.5 Financial Administration and Urban Investment

Urban development cannot be realized without a clear financial structure supporting strategic project execution. Therefore, the law should incorporate provisions regulating capital funding sources, establishing multi-year budgeting mechanisms, and promoting public-private partnerships (PPPs) to guarantee sustainable financing and reduce reliance on conventional annual budget cycles.

Furthermore, the law must establish a stable regulatory environment to attract investment across housing, transit, energy, and urban revitalization, ensuring these investments align with the capital's strategic vision.

5.6 Digital Transformation and Smart City Integration

Digital transformation has become a cornerstone of contemporary urban administration. Consequently, the law should mandate institutional adoption of digital systems for service delivery, permit issuance, project tracking, and urban data management.

The study further proposes establishing a unified digital platform for the city of Baghdad to enable inter-institutional data exchange, provide real-time information to support decision-making, and foster transparency for citizens and investors.

5.7 Monitoring and Evaluation

The efficacy of any legislation depends on robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. The law should mandate the preparation of an Annual State of the City of Baghdad Report, compiling performance indicators across transit, housing, public services, environment, investment, and quality of life.

Additionally, an independent strategic review mechanism should be created to periodically evaluate plan execution, identify performance deficits, and recommend corrective measures, ensuring continuous institutional development.

5.8 Expected Impact of the Proposed Framework

Implementing this legislative framework is anticipated to achieve the following outcomes:

- Unifying the statutory baseline for capital governance.
- Enhancing inter-agency coordination efficiency.
- Accelerating the execution of strategic projects.
- Elevating spatial planning quality.
- Strengthening institutional transparency and accountability.
- Increasing Baghdad's attractiveness for investment.
- Safeguarding urban heritage and the environment.
- Enhancing overall quality of life and national/regional competitiveness.

Thus, the proposed law does not constitute a mere legal fix for an administrative problem, but establishes a national framework to rebuild Baghdad's urban management system around urban governance and sustainable development principles. It lays the groundwork for a new era defined by long-term planning, institutional synergy, data-driven management, and state-society partnership.

6. Requirements and Mechanisms for Implementing the Proposed Legislative Framework

6.1 Political Will and Institutional Support

- Government and legislative backing for the proposed law.
- Policy continuity shielded from governmental transitions.

6.2 Institutional Reform

- Reorganizing relationships among the Mayoralty of Baghdad, Baghdad Governorate, and central ministries.
- Establishing a transparent organizational structure delineating jurisdictional authority.

6.3 Sustainable Financing

- Diversifying revenue sources.
- Fostering public-private partnerships (PPPs).
- Monetizing urban land assets and development projects.

6.4 Capacity Building

- Personnel training and skill development in spatial and strategic planning.
- Expanding collaboration with universities, research institutions, and academic centers.

6.5 Digital Transformation

- Institutionalizing Geographic Information Systems (GIS).
- Constructing centralized urban spatial databases.
- Accelerating e-government integration.
- Establishing key performance indicators (KPIs) for urban administration.

6.6 Stakeholder and Community Engagement

- Active civic participation.
- Involvement of professional syndicates and academic bodies.
- Engagement of the private sector in policy formulation.

6.7 Monitoring and Assessment

- Publishing the annual ‘State of Baghdad’ report.
- Five-year cyclical reviews of master development plans.
- Continuous tracking of performance measurement indicators.
- Statutory revisions as required by emerging urban conditions.

7. Conclusions

Drawing upon the empirical analysis of Baghdad’s urban management reality, the literature review, and synthesis of international precedent, the following conclusions emerge:

- The city of Baghdad suffers from interconnected urban challenges extending beyond service delivery and physical planning deficits, directly tied to the lack of an integrated legislative and institutional framework governing the capital.
- Proliferation of disparate statutes and fragmented institutional mandates have generated institutional overlap, weak coordination, and degraded planning and execution efficiency, negatively impacting urban development trajectories.
- International precedents demonstrate that successful capital city management requires dedicated legislation clearly assigning authority, establishing a unified institutional reference point, and bridging planning, management, and execution.
- Urban governance offers an optimal framework to reform Baghdad’s management system, rooted in transparency, institutional accountability, stakeholder participation, strategic planning, and data-driven decision-making.
- Enacting a Special Law for the City of Baghdad should be viewed not as a minor statutory tweak, but as a comprehensive reform project restructuring capital governance and forging synergistic links between local authorities and central state institutions.
- The proposed legislative framework’s success remains contingent upon sustained political commitment, progressive institutional reform, reliable financing, human resource development, and digital transformation.
- This research offers a preliminary legislative architecture serving as a scholarly baseline to draft a comprehensive bill for managing Baghdad, subject to refinement through institutional dialogue and legislative review.

8. Recommendations

Based on the study findings, the following action items are recommended:

- **Drafting a Special Capital Law:** Formulating a dedicated bill for the city of Baghdad defining the capital’s institutional structure and regulating executive-legislative relationships.
- **Establishing the Supreme Council:** Creating the Supreme Council for the Development of the City of Baghdad to steer long-term urban visioning, coordinate major strategic projects, and track execution.

- **Formulating Baghdad Vision 2050:** Developing ‘Baghdad Vision 2050’ as a binding national blueprint linked to socio-economic and environmental development plans, subject to periodic reviews.
- **Master Plan Digitization:** Updating Baghdad’s master plan and linking it to a centralized GIS digital platform to optimize decision-making and spatial planning efficiency.
- **Baghdad Urban Observatory:** Establishing an Urban Observatory to collect and analyze urban spatial metrics, producing annual quality-of-life reports to guide evidence-based policymaking.
- **Institutional Performance Systems:** Adopting quantitative and qualitative urban performance measurement metrics to guarantee ongoing monitoring of development initiatives.
- **Academia & Syndicate Engagement:** Institutionalizing the participation of universities, professional syndicates, research centers, and civil society organizations in urban policy formulation.
- **Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):** Incentivizing PPPs across infrastructure, housing, urban regeneration, and transit initiatives within a transparent legal framework.
- **Urban Heritage Preservation:** Safeguarding Baghdad’s architectural identity and cultural heritage by mandating heritage conservation in all planning programs.
- **Five-Year Legislative Review:** Mandating periodic five-year statutory reviews of urban laws and policies to ensure adaptability to demographic, technological, and environmental shifts.

Conclusion

Baghdad, with its historic, political, and cultural preeminence, warrants a modern legislative framework capable of addressing its urban complexities and future challenges. This research demonstrates that urban reform begins not merely with physical projects, but with restructuring the legal and institutional architecture governing planning, execution, and oversight.

The proposed legislative vision integrates urban governance and sustainable development principles, drawing on international best practices while remaining grounded in Iraqi administrative reality. Rather than offering a definitive final statute, this study provides a scholarly framework to initiate constructive dialogue among the Council of Representatives, the Council of Ministers, the Mayorality of Baghdad, academic bodies, professional syndicates, and research institutes toward enacting modern legislation.

Ultimately, transforming Baghdad requires more than enacting a statute; it demands political will, capable institutions, broad civic partnership, and transparent evaluation mechanisms. Only then can legislation transcend statutory text to become an operational catalyst—

rebuilding the capital, driving sustainable development, and securing Baghdad's stature as a city of history and a capital for the future.

References

Arabic References

1. Mayoralty of Baghdad. (2023). Report on the Status of Services and Infrastructure in Baghdad. Baghdad: Mayoralty of Baghdad.
2. Chadirji, R. (1986). On the Causality and Dialectics of Architecture. Baghdad: Dar Al-Shu'un Al-Thaqafiyya Al-'Ammah.
3. Central Statistical Organization (CSO). (2024). Annual Statistical Abstract. Baghdad: Ministry of Planning.
4. Republic of Iraq. (2005). Constitution of the Republic of Iraq. Baghdad.
5. Ministry of Construction, Housing, Municipalities, and Public Works. (2023). Urban Development and Housing Policies in Iraq. Baghdad.
6. Ministry of Planning. (2018). National Development Plan (2018–2022). Baghdad.
7. Ministry of Planning. (2024). National Urban Development Strategy in Iraq. Baghdad.

English References

1. Campbell, S. (1996). Green cities, growing cities, just cities? Journal of the American Planning Association, 62(3), 296–312.
2. Calthorpe, P. (2011). Urbanism in the Age of Climate Change. Island Press.
3. Florida, R. (2014). The Rise of the Creative Class (Revised ed.). Basic Books.
4. Gehl, J. (2010). Cities for People. Island Press.
5. Hall, P., & Pain, K. (2006). The Polycentric Metropolis. Earthscan.
6. Healey, P. (2006). Collaborative Planning: Shaping Places in Fragmented Societies (2nd ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.
7. Jacobs, J. (1961). The Death and Life of Great American Cities. Random House.
8. Lynch, K. (1960). The Image of the City. MIT Press.
9. Newman, P., & Kenworthy, J. (2015). The End of Automobile Dependence. Island Press.
10. OECD. (2021). The Governance of Land Use in OECD Countries. OECD Publishing.
11. OECD. (2023). National Urban Policy Review. OECD Publishing.
12. United Nations. (2015). Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. United Nations.
13. UN-Habitat. (2020). International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning. United Nations Human Settlements Programme.
14. UN-Habitat. (2022). World Cities Report 2022: Envisaging the Future of Cities. United Nations Human Settlements Programme.
15. World Bank. (2023). Iraq: Public Sector Modernization and Urban Development Report. World Bank.

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this paper are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Institute.

Thank you

