

## Challenges of Strategies for Improving Sustainability in Urban Historical Context in Developing Countries: The Case of Shiraz Bein Al-Haramain

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**Abstract :** One of the problems in developing countries is renovating the historical context and inducing behaviors appropriate to modern life to such a context. This study was conducted using field and library methods in 2012. Similar cases carried out in Iran and developing countries were compared to unveil the strengths and weaknesses of these projects. At present, in the historical context of Shiraz, the distance between two religious shrines of Shahcheragh (Ahmad ibn Musa) and Astaneh (Sayed Alaa al-Din Hossein), which are significant places in religious, cultural, social, and economic terms, is an area full of historic places called Bein Al-Haramain. Unfortunately, some of these places have been worn out and are not appropriate for common uses. The basic strategy of Bein Al-Haramain was to improve social development of Shiraz, to enhance the vitality and dynamism of the historical context of Bein Al-Haramain and to create tourist attractions in order to boost the city's economic and social stability. To this end, the project includes the huge Bein Al-Haramain Commercial Complex which is under construction now. To construct the complex, officials have decided to demolish places of historical value which can lead to irreparable consequences. Iranian urban design has always been based on three elements of bazaars, mosques and government facilities with bazaars being the organic connector of the other elements. Therefore, the best strategy in the above case is to provide for a commercial connection between the two poles. Although this strategy is included in the project, lack of attention to renovation principles in this area and complete destruction of the context will lead to its irreversible damage and will destroy its cultural and historical identity. In urban planning of this project, some important issues have been neglected including: preserving valuable buildings and special old features of the city, rebuilding worn buildings and context to attract trust and confidence of the people, developing new models according to changes, improving the structural position of old context with minimal degradation, attracting partnerships of residents and protecting their rights and finally using potential facilities of the old context. The best strategy for achieving sustainability in Bein Al-Haramain can be the one used in the distance between Santa Maria Novella and Santa Maria Del Fiore churches in historical context where while protecting the historic context and constructions, old buildings were renovated and given different commercial and service uses making them sustainable and dynamic places. Similarly, in Bein Al-Haramain, renovating old constructions and monuments and giving different commercial and other uses to them can help improve the economic and social sustainability of the area.

**Keywords :** Bein Al-Haramain, sustainability, historical context, historical context

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