

Between Innovation, Adaptability and Urban Neighborhood Planning in Israel

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ABSTRACT

Innovation in the field of housing is seen today as the ability of various actors - tenants, property owners, entrepreneurs and authorities - to operate in the housing space and develop it according to currently unknown needs. At the other end of the scale are neighborhoods known in the literature as "anti-adaptive", which do not have open ends for change, updating, and personal expression in the present and future. This conceptual framework was used to examine all the plans for new neighborhoods with a thousand housing units or more produced in the State of Israel from 1990-2020. We assessed the extent to which innovative planning concepts were adopted in Israel and those that integrate the residences in a quality way within the existing cities.

The findings are a wake-up call for planners and policymakers. The research shows that the planning for residential neighborhoods, the fruit of government planning on public land, blocks innovation at two levels. At the planning level, it reconstructs a fixed spatial pattern rooted in the state's early days that has remained intact ever since. At the neighborhood level, public planning reproduces anti-adaptive patterns, determines the structure of the neighborhoods, and is a barrier to future residential innovation. The lack of innovation has serious consequences. Against the expectation that public land and government initiative will be directed to create housing at a variety of prices in response to a multitude of needs, the study reveals that public land and government planning in Israel produce apartments that are more expensive than the average in the city where they were designed. Most neighborhoods are planned as separate units from the city, in an internalized and repetitive structure, with low density and spatial inefficiency.

Keywords: neighborhood planning; residential neighborhoods; Israel; innovation; adaptability

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