Urban transport network as the main factor of urban development (the example of St. Petersburg)

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Abstract. The article uses the example of Saint Petersburg to describe the state policy of the first half of the XIX century to improve the work of city authorities in the field of transport network, management, urban land improvement and construction. The government has set a task to "activate the mechanism" for effective work of the St. Petersburg city Duma, to create conditions for delegating powers in independent construction, economic and Supervisory activities to the city community. Having analyzed the legal framework of that time, we can say with confidence that the solution to the problem lies in increasing the number of real estate objects, improving the urban transport network in the Russian capital and their revenue-generating capacity.

1. Introduction

The first two decades of the 19th century were the time of the preparation of proactive city public administration activities concerning comprehensive efforts to manage the city economy and build necessary facilities.

As early as in the first years of the reign of Alexander I, it became clear that self-government authorities in cities were inefficient and, sometimes, even non-functional. Such authorities were established in accordance with the Grant-Charter issued to the cities, Imperially confirmed by Catherine the Great in 1785 and subject to “revision” during the years of the reign of Paul I.

Instructions for government inspectors were issued for the purpose of studying the administrative and economic activities of City Councils. The public servants were to assess the work of public administration and police authorities in terms of economic management and oversight and obtain information on real estate assets owned by the cities. Initially, the government inspectors were sent to the Tula Governorate, Yaroslavl Governorate, Saratov Governorate, Voronezh Governorate, Livonia Governorate, Tver Governorate, Smolensk Governorate, Pskov Governorate, Volhynian Governorate, Vitebsk Governorate, as well as to Tambov, Ryazan, and Mogilev. The governorates were selected on the basis of their economic situation [1]. This work was to provide a comprehensive statistical report on the cities inspected and proposals on their new management and administration.

Due to a large amount of work related to the collection of statistical data in Russian cities, the law-maker only published the Code of Laws on improvements in cities and settlements in 1833 instead of the creation of new City Regulations [2]. This publication (in terms of urban improvement) included all existing enactments concerning city revenue management and financial estimates for the cities in accordance with legal documents. It was the establishment of the optimal administrative structure and economic basics of the viability of city communities that should have created the basis for work of city
self-government authorities, inter alia, in terms of land improvement, economic management, and construction of necessary facilities.

Simultaneously, a decision was made to focus on the practical reforming of the 1785 City Regulations [3] with regard to Saint Petersburg. If it had not been not for such measures, it would have been impossible to build a system for the management of the city community in terms of construction and economic activities, settle issues concerning land improvement, or reasonably finance these processes.

2. Materials and methods
The Imperially approved City Regulations became the main document that determined a new direction of the state policy regarding the economy, construction and urban land improvement management in cities. This document was published in the second half of the 19th century, viz. in 1870 and 1892. The City Law was issued in 1843. It replaced the outdated 1785 City Regulations published as early as during the reign of Catherine the Great. Simultaneously, a whole range of enactments was published. They established strict accountability to state authorities, regulating urban development, in financial documents. This contributed to an increase in the Saint Petersburg budget revenues and made it possible to later delegate rights to freely dispose of property, as well as resolve matters of economy, construction and urban land improvement management, to city communities.

3. Results
A network of real estate assets was established in the Russian capital in stages. These stages generally correspond to the periods of reforms in the management of the construction sector of the Russian Empire and, therefore, differ in their approaches to the approval process for projects, cost estimates and contract awards, job standardization, and work performance. The first stage lasted from 1785 till the 1810s. It started when Catherine the Great’s ideas of self-governance were implemented and was related to the commencement of the city communities’ work. The second stage started with the reforms of Alexander I, i.e. in 1802, while the third stage lasted from the 1840s till the 1860s. The fourth and final stage was in the second half of the 19th century [4].

The present article addresses two stages from 1802 till 1840 and from the 1840s till the 1860s. These periods are characterized not only by the differences in the central management of the construction sector, but also by achievements in terms of strengthening public administration efforts in cities, and, therefore, by changes in their layout and development [5].

In 1802–1840, the management of the construction sector and city economy was put under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The Urban Development Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs [6] (since 1811 — Department of State Economy and Public Buildings [7]) managed research focusing on the studies of the organization of public administration in the Empire, its range of tasks, and developed bills that contributed to solving these problems.

The first step to the search for a real balance between the revenue and expenditure items of the Saint Petersburg budget was to establish the Budget Committee (1802–1808) [8].

The urban community covered the following expenses: financing of the police, City Council and its offices; upkeep of public parochial colleges, city flax, salo, oil and other warehouses, city barracks and prisons; upkeep of six boat bridges; construction of sidewalks, waste channels, underground pipelines; pavement of squares; repair of descents on Vasilyevsky Island and along the Neva banks; lighting of the territories near inhabited areas, barracks, city custody facilities, areas near bridges and on squares; installation and upkeep of police booths, etc. [9,10].

In 1804, a uniform (and equal for all residents) levy of 0.5% off each ruble of the capital according to the estimated value of every house, household and area in the city was established. The value of buildings was estimated depending on their strength, location, as well as “benefits for each household”, i.e. the income from trade or lease of the premises, as well as possible income from lease.

At the end of every year, the City Council sent its representatives to examine all new or rebuilt buildings and estimate their value that was the basis for the tax rate. Having actual data on the city
budget, the Budget Committee could, using these funds, manage the urban development works: make new streets, lay underground pipes, pavement, and roads, build bridges, clean canals and rivers, i.e. essentially solve the issues of municipal economy.

Simultaneously, a system for the approval of the expenses of the Saint Petersburg City Council for taxes, construction, and economy was established. The list of income and expenses developed by the City Council was submitted to the Ministry of Internal Affairs for consideration and, then, after review, finalization, and approval, submitted to the State Council for the Imperial approval. All changes made during the year to the list of expenses were also to be Imperially approved.

In 1804, the total estimated value was 70,597,575 rubles. Therefore, the real estate levy of residents in the amount of 0.5% per ruble should have been almost 352,988 rubles per year [11]. Despite this fact, there was far too little money for these measures. The committees established to solve this issue noted an increased budget deficit in Saint Petersburg, which was 1,465,603 rubles in 1820. Since the beginning of the 1820s, the State Council regularly heard reports from the Minister of Finance concerning the budgets of the Saint Petersburg and Moscow City Councils. A decree to increase the levy on Saint Petersburg real estate owners to 1% was issued in 1823. After the re-estimation of all real estate in the city, the municipal treasury should have received 1,543,065 rubles, as opposed to 690,367 rubles received earlier. However, this measure was not as successful as expected.

A new city law started to be elaborated in 1823. Its purpose was to engage more residents interested in the improvement of the economy in the Russian capital in the elections and work of the City Council. It meant people who were residents not only “under the right of ownership” but also “under the right of wealth”. The new City Regulations for Saint Petersburg were issued as late as in 1846 [12].

In 1833–1865, the policy was to strengthen the centralization of state administration in all sectors [13], including design & estimate and construction & economic ones. The centralization stage was associated with the transfer of all civil engineering activities to the Main Directorate for Transportation and Public Buildings. Correspondingly, the matters of city administration were transferred to this department as well [14]. The enactment of the new City Regulations and fiscal controls of that time had a meaningful effect.

In the early 1840s, the “Rules for the Construction Sector in Saint Petersburg” which established a new system of management with regard to the construction of structures owned by the public were issued. New regulations on the “consideration and execution of Saint Petersburg inventories” were issued on March 31, 1847 [15]. There was a change in the submission of the Saint Petersburg budget for approval.

The budget for the next year and reports for the preceding year were made according to a form that had existed before in the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Initially, the inventories were made by the Executive Council [16] and then submitted “for discussion” to the General Council no later than on July 5. After an inventory was returned from the General Council back to the Executive Council, the document was considered under the chairmanship of the Civil Governor. To carry out construction works, the balance of the city funds remaining after the allocation of the capital by all expense items provided for in the city books was given to the community. This money was given to the Directorate of the First District of Transportation, and the works to be performed were approved in accordance with the amount of the reserves [17]. If the available funds were insufficient, the City Council was entitled to borrow money, and it was registered on the books as funds with a special purpose.

It became possible to increase the number of real estate assets owned by the City Council, take measures to develop territories and repair public buildings, as well as lease the property since the amount of the city income was one-fourth of all municipal income of the state. During almost 50 years (from 1804 till 1850) [18], the amount of money operated by the Saint Petersburg City Council increased 60 times [19].

It is safe to say that the elaborated plant of strict control over the budgetary expenses that existed in the second half of the 19th century contributed to this increase. As early as in the second half of the
19th century, a Construction Department was established at the municipal government for works in the area of construction, urban development and economy [20]. It should also be noted that the financial stability of the City Council made it possible to borrow funds and build large facilities in the Russian capital.

4. Conclusion
The first half of the 19th century was the time of improving the work of city councils in terms of managing municipal economy, urban land improvement and construction in the cities. Nowadays, this matter is especially relevant. That is why it is in the focus of this study. On the basis of legal and financial documents (city inventories of various years) of the first half of the 19th century, we have managed to reveal the meticulous work of government committees that, in the long run, had a meaningful effect as early as in the second half of the 19th century. This effect consisted in the fact that city councils not only could conduct independent economic activities in their territories but also had the functions of initiating bills and exercising control in this area.

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