Strategy for the urban environment development of the regional capital: prospects and challenges

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Abstract. The article discusses approaches to strategic planning of the urban environment of the regional capital and the challenges that need to be overcome in the course of preparing a strategic development project. Strategic planning of the urban environment of the regional capital has its own important distinctive features. This is due to the status and mission of the administrative centre of the territory. A review of the literature shows the relevance of the research topic and social practice of solving current and future challenges. The strategic planning of the urban environment of the regional capital should be based on such criteria as the involvement of citizens in strategic planning and assessment of the effectiveness of strategies, harmonious development of the urban ecosystem, sustainable social and economic development of the city, infrastructural and administrative support for innovation, increasing social capital, safety of the urban environment in all its manifestations and ensuring the democratic rights and freedoms of citizens. We show the key challenges and vectors of development of the urban environment on the example of the analysis of the development strategy of the capital of the southern region of Russia – Stavropol. The results of a survey of citizens and the business community give an idea of the comfortable urban environment in terms of living and doing business, they are an important addition to understanding the problem areas of the regional capital development.

1. Introduction
Strategic management is a way to combine all actions and decisions in the field of strategic planning into a single management system. The main goal of the implementation of strategic management is to provide the local authorities of the city of Stavropol with a unified system of goals and objectives for the development of the city of Stavropol, relevant and updated through feedback mechanisms, which will help reduce the risk of decision-making. Federal Law No. 172-FL of June 28, 2014 “On Strategic Planning in the Russian Federation” establishes the legal framework for strategic planning in the Russian Federation, coordination of state and municipal strategic management and budget policy, as well as the powers of local governments and the procedure for public, scientific and other organizations in the field of strategic planning.
Strategic planning of the urban environment of the regional capital has its own important distinctive features. This is due to the status and mission of the administrative centre of the territory. A review of the literature shows the relevance of the research topic and social practices for solving current and future challenges.

In the study of Mandeli K., the author has shown the importance of reflecting local values in the formation of public zones of urban space, using the example of the second largest city in Saudi Arabia, Jeddah, which is its “economic capital”, as well as the largest city in the administrative district [1]. In the course of radical re-planning of Jeddah, modern approaches to planning and design in developing cities were used, which made it possible to form a quality urban space. The development of proactive urban design was tailored to the needs of residents and businesses and, in general, improved the quality of the environment. The design of public spaces was carried out taking into account the traditions and values of the regional community and was aimed at improving the image of the economic capital of the state. For our research it is important to focus the environment on comfortable living and its functionality not only from the point of view of the local community, but also from business communications: a developed high-class hotel and restaurant network, discussion and exhibition grounds and complexes, wide representation of financial institutions, etc. In addition, among the mandatory parameters of a comfortable urban environment aimed at the economic prosperity of the capital of the region, there should be territorial and transport accessibility of all infrastructure facilities and the modern level of digital services and their high specifications.

The authors of the article Lim Y., Edelenbos J., Gianoli A., based on a wide review of scientific publications, determine the target settings for the strategic innovative development of the city through sustainability and high quality of life [2]. Current approaches to strategic planning of urban development, according to the authors, are ensuring citizens’ involvement in strategic planning and assessing the effectiveness of strategies, harmonious development of the urban ecosystem, sustainable social and economic development of the city, infrastructural and administrative support for innovation, and increasing social capital. Also, the safety of the urban environment in all its manifestations and ensuring the democratic rights and freedoms of citizens should not be left without attention. All approaches are interrelated and at the level of formulating the target settings of a particular city are interpreted depending on the context of the territory: the achieved level of socio-economic development and contemporary regional and world challenges.

An important aspect of the strategic development of the urban environment, associated with modern energy consumption practices, is considered by the authors of the study Natanian J., Aleksandrowicz O., Auer T. [3]. The study highlights the importance of urban density and configuration for optimizing energy consumption, especially in hot climates. For the strategic planning of the urban environment of the capital of the region, it is important to regulate the energy load not only depending on the type of development (residential or office), but also the effects of the building model (area and materials of walls, windows, roofs) and parameters of their location (distance between buildings, orientation, etc.).

The authors Skalicky V., Čerpes I. propose a comprehensive methodology for assessing a livable urban environment as a basis for strategic planning. In their opinion, the system of criteria for assessing the quality of the living environment should be focused, first of all, on the suitability for human life [4].

Researchers Shaw A., Saharan T. in their work consider the problems of resettlement of the population from areas of dilapidated and hazardous housing in connection with the development of cities and the growth of the quality of life of citizens [5]. The authors’ comparative analysis of the satisfaction of residents who refused the resettlement package and continued to live in their huts, and those who accepted the package and moved to new apartments provided by the government, showed the benefits of resettlement: improved sanitary and living conditions, social well-being and quality of life. For our study it is important that the strategic orientation of the regional capital development program is aimed to improve the quality of life of the population and the gradual resettlement of residents, including the historical centre of the city, from dilapidated to modern residential buildings.
The harmonious development of the urban ecosystem is an important criterion for the planning and design strategy of the urban environment. The authors Veinberga M., Zigmunde D. in their scientific work emphasize the need for new approaches that will provide a qualitative improvement in the aesthetic and environmental characteristics of public urban areas [6]. On the basis of an expert survey they analyzed the criteria for balancing aesthetics and ecology in the urban environment. These include compositional unity, uniqueness, consistency with architecture, condition of built elements, decorative quality of plants, care and maintenance, naturalness, typical landscape, wildlife, presence of wildlife, vegetation structure and use of local plants. For our study it is important to note that Stavropol, being the regional capital, has repeatedly, since Soviet times, been among the best cities for greening public urban areas and has not only high-quality traditions, but also effective practices for organizing the process of landscaping and landscape design. All this creates a unique image of the urban environment and contributes to the development of communicative, cultural, and leisure zones inherent in the regional centre.

The authors Vitkova L., Silaci I. introduce an important concept – a creative city, which helps in determining the strategic vectors of the urban environment development [7]. The basis for the forward movement for a creative city is the socio-cultural potential of organizations and the population: a favourable social climate, a high level of tolerance, the atmosphere of a living city, a rich social life, informal social activity. All these characteristics are important for the strategic development of the regional centre and aim the administrative resource at the correct, effective use of the socio-cultural potential of the territory.

For a city with a rich historical heritage in the process of strategic development, it is important to rely on the existing traditions of the urban environment, giving them new, modern and demanded functions. And here it is appropriate to speak of revitalization as a phased restoration of the urban environment, in which it becomes more habitable. This topic is devoted to the publication of the research results of the authors Fross K. and Guminska A. [8]. They rightly point out that changing consumer expectations regarding public spaces in connection with technological progress and changing lifestyles presupposes a timely update of the quality of the urban environment. The purpose of such changes is to eliminate spatial and ecosystem conflicts of areas and objects and to strengthen the multipurpose potential and sustainable development of territories.

Among the criteria for strategic planning of the urban environment of the regional capital, an important place is occupied by the involvement of the local community in making key decisions. Social practices for the implementation of this approach are presented in the study of the authors Kasala V., Smatanova K. [9]. They note that public participation is necessary for two reasons: to identify the real needs of local residents as an urban environment and to incorporate proposals into urban development programs.

An interesting aspect of designing the quality of the urban environment is associated with the colour coloration of the surrounding architecture and landscape design. In the article, Kraus M. shows the results of the influence of colour on the perception and assessment of the environment; it is reflected in the health and well-being of residents [10].

There are also gender differences in the perception of environmental quality. The authors Kraus M. and Novakova P. come to the conclusion that this knowledge is necessary and useful for developing appropriate strategies for creating and maintaining a stable and comfortable environment [11].

Thus, the review of publications that determine approaches to developing a strategy for the development of the urban environment of the regional capital shows the relevance of the topic under consideration and establishes important markers of its success: citizen involvement in strategic planning and assessment of the effectiveness of strategies, harmonious development of the urban ecosystem, sustainable social and economic development of the city, infrastructural and administrative support for innovation, increasing social capital, safety of the urban environment in all its manifestations and ensuring the democratic rights and freedoms of citizens [12, 13, 14, 15].
2. Materials and methods

To determine the approaches to strategic planning of the urban environment of the regional capital we analyzed the documents of the Strategy for the development of the city of Stavropol, which set out the prospects and modern challenges. We conducted the comparison of the key positions of the developed Strategy with significant criteria for the success of the development of the centre of the region, which were identified in the literature review. We analyzed the results of a survey of residents of Stavropol (427 people), conducted by the City Administration in 2019. They provide information on the satisfaction of residents with the quality of the urban environment and characterize the areas of its improvement. The results of a survey of entrepreneurs (43 people in 2019), as an expert group, were also considered to understand the image of Stavropol as a centre for regional socio-economic development and the compliance of infrastructure components with the expectations of this category of consumers. All stages of the study of the strategy for the development of the urban environment of the capital of the region allow us to draw well-founded conclusions and proposals for its improvement.

Strategic planning in the city of Stavropol is an activity on goal-setting, forecasting, planning and programming of socio-economic development, aimed at solving the problems of sustainable socio-economic development of the city of Stavropol. When developing and implementing strategic planning documents, all documents are agreed on goals, objectives, priorities and indicators of achieving goals. These include: strategy of social and economic development of the city of Stavropol; action plan for the implementation of the Strategy of social and economic development of the city of Stavropol; forecasts of the socio-economic development of the city of Stavropol for the medium and long term; budget forecast of the municipality of the city of Stavropol, Stavropol Territory for the long term; municipal programs of the city of Stavropol.

The mechanism for implementing the Strategy provides for the use of different means and methods of influence: legal regulation, administrative measures, financial instruments (tax, property, tariff, debt, etc.), mechanisms of organizational and information support.

The goals and objectives of the Strategy, the mechanisms for their implementation are taken into account in the development of draft municipal legal acts of the city of Stavropol, including the budget of the city of Stavropol for the next financial year.

Analysis of the developed tasks aimed at the integrated development of the urban environment shows that there are positive coincidences (results) and areas for improvement in terms of the optimal criteria for strategic planning. Well-articulated criteria include the harmonious development of the urban ecosystem, the safety of the urban environment in all its manifestations.

Insufficient attention in this section is paid to promoting the image of Stavropol as the capital of the region and business activity. The urban environment is not functionally shown from the point of view of business and public communications. In general, the tasks have not been formulated for developing the urban environment of the regional capital aimed at sustainable social and economic prosperity of the city, increasing social capital, and ensuring the democratic rights and freedoms of citizens.

We considered the assessment of the quality of the urban environment through the satisfaction of residents with its infrastructural functions. Population survey data in absolute terms are presented in Figure 1.
Figure 1. Satisfaction of Stavropol residents with infrastructure services of the urban environment.

The highest level of satisfaction is caused by the organization of heat, power supply, and water treatment services. The area for improvement is water supply, sanitation, and communication services.

The quality of the infrastructure characteristics of the urban environment was assessed by representatives of the business community of Stavropol in the framework of an expert survey of the city administration.

Table 1. Expert assessment of the quality of infrastructure characteristics of the urban environment (in points on a 5-point scale)

| Infrastructure subsystem of the urban environment | Estimation of the terms of obtaining access to services, average score | Evaluation of the efficiency of documentary registration, average score | Assessment of the objectivity of the cost of connecting business objects, average score | Average value of the quality of work of the infrastructure subsystem of the urban environment, average score |
|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Water supply, sewerage                          | 3.2                                                                 | 3.3                                                                | 3.4                                                                             | 3.3                                                                                      |
| Gas supply                                       | 3.2                                                                 | 2.7                                                                | 2.7                                                                             | 2.9                                                                                      |
| Power supply                                     | 3.1                                                                 | 3.5                                                                | 3.1                                                                             | 3.2                                                                                      |
| Heat supply                                      | 4.0                                                                 | 3.5                                                                | 3.3                                                                             | 3.6                                                                                      |
| Telephone communications                         | 3.9                                                                 | 4.0                                                                | 4.1                                                                             | 4.0                                                                                      |
| Average of the scores                            | 3.5                                                                 | 3.4                                                                | 3.3                                                                             | 3.4                                                                                      |

According to the business community, the most favorable situation in the infrastructural subsystems of the urban environment is in the field of communications – on a 5-point scale, the average assessment of access to services, the promptness of documenting, and the cost of connection was 4.0 points. The worst situation is in the gas supply subsystem, where the average score was 2.9 points. Thus, areas for improving the work of infrastructural subsystems of the urban environment in the development strategy of the regional capital are associated with ensuring sustainable processes in the field of gas supply, electricity supply, water supply, and sanitation. Assessment of the quality of work of infrastructure subsystems can be improved by increasing the objectivity of the cost of services and increasing the efficiency of documenting.
3. Conclusion
The study allows us to draw a number of conclusions aimed at improving the strategy for the development of the urban environment of the regional capital.

Firstly, important criteria for the success of a strategy are: citizen involvement in strategic planning and assessment of the effectiveness of strategies, harmonious development of the urban ecosystem, sustainable social and economic development of the city, infrastructural and administrative support for innovation, increasing social capital, safety of the urban environment in all its manifestations, and ensuring the democratic rights and freedoms of citizens.

Secondly, the analysis of the developed tasks aimed at the integrated development of the urban environment shows that there are positive coincidences (results) and areas for improvement in terms of the optimal criteria for strategic planning. Well-articulated criteria include the harmonious development of the urban ecosystem, the safety of the urban environment in all its manifestations. Insufficient attention in this section is paid to promoting the image of Stavropol as the capital of the region and business activity. The urban environment is not functionally shown from the point of view of business and public communications. In general, the tasks have not been formulated for developing the urban environment of the capital of the region aimed at sustainable social and economic prosperity of the city, increasing social capital, and ensuring the democratic rights and freedoms of citizens.

Thirdly, according to the results of a survey of residents of the regional capital and representatives of the business community, areas have been identified for improving the quality of the infrastructure characteristics of the urban environment. For the population, the area for improvement is water supply, sanitation, and communication services. For the business community – gas supply, electricity supply, water supply and sanitation. Assessment of the quality of work of infrastructural subsystems can be improved by increasing the objectivity of the cost of services and increasing the efficiency of documenting.

In general, we can talk about a satisfactory current state of the infrastructure functions of the urban environment, which is a good basis for capacity building and development of all significant components of the environment. In addition, to ensure the objectivity of public opinion data, independent studies of the satisfaction of residents with the comfort of the urban environment are needed, it will increase the involvement of citizens in the processes of strategic planning and decision-making.

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