

Urban Revitalization Of Mass Housing
International Competition



(Ministry of Housing)

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Introduction

Bahrain, officially the Kingdom of Bahrain is a small island country situated near the western shores of the Arabian Gulf. It is an archipelago with Bahrain Island the largest land mass at 55 km (34 mi) long by 18 km (11 mi) wide. Saudi Arabia lies to the west and is connected to Bahrain by the King Fahd Causeway. The peninsula of Qatar is to the southeast across the Gulf of Bahrain. The planned Qatar Bahrain Causeway will link Bahrain and Qatar and become the world's longest marine causeway.⁽¹⁾

Bahrain underwent a prosperous period in the 20th century due to the discovery of oil reserves in the 1930s. The country won independence from Britain in 1971 after being a British protectorate for 111 years and since that citizens being provided with free health care, education, pensions and suitable houses.

Since its establishment in 1975, Ministry of Housing had been mandated to provide housing for all low income Bahraini Households. Today, the Ministry offers all eligible citizens four main types of services: Direct provision of housing units and flats; rental flats; loans for purchasing, building or renovating housing units; as well as land plots, if required.

HISTORY OF MINISTRY OF HOUSING

The history of the Ministry of Housing goes back to year 1975, when His Highness Sheikh Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, the prince of the State of Bahrain, may Allah rest his soul, issued a decree to establish a Ministry of Housing, to provide social housing for citizens with limited income, and Sheikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa was appointed as the first minister of the Ministry of Housing at that time.⁽²⁾

(1) About Bahrain. Website: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahrain> , accessed on 12/1/2014 at 8:00 pm.

(2) History of ministry of housing. Website: www.housing.gov.bh accessed on 12/1/2014 at 10:00 pm.

Since the establishment of the Ministry, it began constructing several housing projects in various governorates of the Kingdom; the Ministry achieved remarkable success in applying the governmental policies related to housing, by using extensive research and adoption of modern technical specifications.



(3) An old photo from Isa town housing

The most notable achievements of the Ministry, which contributed significantly in fulfilling housing needs of the citizens were: the construction of housing units in the new cities at that time, as several housing projects were implemented in Isa Town, which was established in 1968 and named after the deceased prince, Sheikh Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, as well as the establishment of Hamad Town in 1984, which was also named after the name of His Majesty, King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince during that historical period.

After that, the construction of housing projects has continued over the last 36 years till the present day, whether through the residential compounds in the five governorates of the Kingdom, or through constructing new cities like Zayed City, and recently, the Northern City, Sharq Al Hidd City and Sharq Sitra City.

Many factors confirm that affordable housing is important in Bahrain: (4)

- **Population growth** rates spiked over the past four years with the population topping the one million mark growing over 40% from the year 2006.
- **Scarcity of land** with urbanization being concentrated in the north making residential expansion a challenge.
- **Bahrain's average household size tops 6.5** per household unit. Currently, many young locals prefer to reside in their own homes which increases demand for affordable housing units.
- **The low standard of living for an average Bahraini family** became a challenge as an average Bahraini government employee makes a monthly income of BD 630 and in light of an inflated economy, real estate market prices have gone up with home prices ranging between BD 160,000 – BD 300,000 making housing an Unattainable commodity.
- **Home financing options are not versatile** as very few Bahrainis qualify, due to higher financing requirements and interest rates. Social loans offered by Eskan Bank are not sufficient as the BD 40,000 offered will not realistically help to pay for homes at current prices

The achievements of the Ministry of Housing:

It has made significant progress in recent years. In the first ten years following His Majesty King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa's accession to the throne in 1999, The Ministry of Housing and Eskan Bank distributed more than 36,000 social housing support services to the citizens of Bahrain, including:

- 13,500 housing units (houses and flats) at a cost of BD 510 Million.
- 16,600 housing loans with a value of BD 400 Million.
- 1,850 flats for subsidized rental.
- 4,600 residential land plots, valued at BD 200 Million.



(5) A new housing project of Wadi Al-Sail

Moreover, under the noble directive of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the Ministry has given subsidies to many citizens who have low incomes or special needs. Subsidies and benefits have included:

- Waiving half the remaining housing loans.
- Waiving half the installment value for housing units.
- Amending the law to allow women who are the heads of households to apply for Government housing services.

- Rebuilding derelict houses.
- Introducing rental subsidy for citizens who have been on the waiting list for housing services for longer than five years.

Housing 2030 vision: (6)

Housing strategy consistent with the vision of Bahrain, where they contribute to raising the standard of living of the citizens by continuing to provide and improve housing services, and is closely linked to social support programs listed among the National Economic Strategy .

Our Values:

- Sustainability.
- Equality and justice.
- Learning and knowledge management.
- Creativity and competitiveness.
- Quality of life and social stability.

Key Business Factors:

- Creating Social and Psychological stability.
- Maintaining the social fabric.
- Sustainability of housing security.
- Ensuring adequate and healthy housing.
- Maintaining urban environment and developing it.
- Building up responsibility and taking care of Humanitarian cases.



Some Standard specification for housing projects

- Connected villas shall be permitted to be built on one side or more or detached or both, provided that the share of each villa shall not be less than 200 square meters of the land area.

Front recession:

- Building shall be permitted on the ground floor at a distance of at least 3 m from the land border of the front overlooking a street or road.
- Upper projections above the ground floor shall be permitted with a maximum of 1.20 m.
- In case the building overlooks more than one street, the recession shall be no less than 3 m.
- Projections above the ground floor for a maximum of 1 meter from the branch street side shall be permitted.
- In the event of building residential flats car parks may be roofed to the front borders of the land provided the building in the upper floors recedes 1.8 meters from the front border of the land.

Rear and side recession:

- Building shall be permitted on the ground floor at a distance of at least 2 m from the side and rear borders of the land.
- Upper projections shall be permitted above the ground level.
- The width of internal roads in residential compounds shall not be less than 8m, provided that the recession of the building's front façade shall not be less than 5 m from the border of the internal road.

- A building's height shall not exceed 3 stories with a maximum height of 13 m.
- Case of building a basement, the maximum height shall be 14.50 m.

Roads Design Requirements

Provision of areas for delivery and service vehicles

Type of Development	Minimum Requirements
Commercial premises	One space per 4,000m ² GFA up to 20,000 m ² GFA plus one space per 8,000 m ² thereafter (50% of spaces adequate for trucks)
Shopping Centres	One space per 1,500 m ² GLA up to 6,000 m ² GLA plus one space per 3,000 m ² thereafter (all spaces adequate for trucks)
Supermarkets, shops and restaurants	One space per 400 m ² GFA up to 2,000 m ² GFA plus one space per 1,000 m ² thereafter (all spaces adequate for trucks)
Wholesale, Industrial	One space per 800 m ² GFA up to 8,000 m ² GFA plus one space per 1,000 m ² thereafter (all spaces adequate for trucks)
Hotels	One space per 50 bedrooms or bedroom suites up to 200 plus one per 100 thereafter plus one space per 1,000 m ² of public area set aside for clubs, lounge and restaurant, (50% of spaces adequate for trucks)
Residential flat buildings	One space per 50 flats or home units up to 200 plus one per 100 thereafter plus one space per 1,000 m ² of public area set aside for club, lounge and restaurant, (50% of spaces adequate for trucks)
Other uses	One space per 2,000 m ² GFA (50% of spaces adequate for trucks)

Level of service criteria for intersections

Level of Service	Average Delay per Vehicle (secs/veh)	Traffic Signals, Roundabout	Give Way & Stop Signs
A	14 or less	Good operation	Good operation
B	15 to 28	Good with acceptable delays & spare capacity	Acceptable delays & spare capacity
C	29 to 42	Satisfactory	Satisfactory, but accident study required
D	43 to 56	Operating near capacity	Near capacity & accident study required
E	57 to 70	At capacity; at signals, incidents will cause excessive delays Roundabouts require other control mode	At capacity, requires other control mode

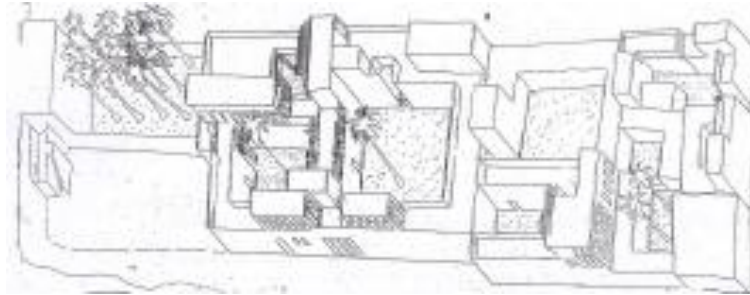
Pedestrian level of service on walkways

Level of Service	Space (m/ped)	Average Speed(m/min)	Flow Rate(ped/min/m)
A	over 12.1	over 79	less than 7
B	3.7-12.1	76-79	7-23
C	2.2-3.7	73-76	23-33
D	1.4-2.2	69-73	33-49
E	0.6-1.4	46-69	49-82
F	less than 0.6	less than 46	variable

Typical mid-block capacities for urban roads with interrupted flow

Type of Road	One-Way Mid-block Lane Capacity (veh/hr)	Capacity PCU per hour
Median or inner lane:	divided road/undivided road	1,000/900
Outer or kerb lane:	with adjacent parking lane/clearway conditions/occasional parked cars	900/900/600
4 lane undivided:	occasional parked cars/clearway conditions	1,500/1,800
4 lane divided:	clearway conditions	1,900

Old Bahraini houses design (Courtyard House)



- Basic concentric pattern: the courtyard is the center for movement for the surrounding enclosed spaces.
- Introverted type of usually two stories.
- Spaces divided into: family, guests, services.
- Number of courtyards depends on the family's wealth and social status.
- each courtyard named for its main function.
- The courtyard is considered the basic "regulator" for the rest of the activities and the rhythm of movement within the house.
- Focused on the "extended family" concept.
- The courtyard house: compatible with the social role of and the social
- ranking of the family tribe it belongs to the number of courtyards, building form and spaces .

Elements of a Courtyard House



- general architectural layout of the Bahraini traditional house, was based on the courtyard pattern, which makes the house inward.
- This allowed the female and children to move freely inside the courtyard and maintained their privacy as required in Islam.
- The main entrance is followed by a corridor leading to the courtyard.
- This corridor (dehlees) is a slice cut in the enclosure, which indirectly leads to the courtyard through a black wall portion that blocks the view of the courtyard.
- The majlis(Hall) used for men and guests is the only room with external windows and an access door to the dehlees, where men meet for social and business purposes. Another room is connected to the dehlees for preparing coffee for guests. The place is small and hardly enough for one person.
- Interestingly, a guest passing by can see the legs of the person sticking out from the room and can understand that the owner of the house is in the majlis.

- At the entrance, a three sided closed room with one side open to the courtyard is provided. This was called Lewan, which was fused with the courtyard and is used for sitting area with airy space.
- The floor was filled with seashells to allow the moisture from humidity to drain to the soil below and kept the surface dry and clean.
- Inside the courtyard, there is a well to collect drinking water and for cooking and washing the dishes. It was called Jeleeb.
- This well is of different depths at different locations of Bahrain.

