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Editorial Note

The publication of Volume 31, Issue 2, for the year 2026 represents an important transitional stage in the development of the Journal of Planner and Development. This issue follows the implementation of a series of scientific, editorial, and technical updates intended to strengthen the journal and enhance its academic presence at both the regional and international levels.

Beginning on 1 July 2026, the journal adopted English as the primary language for newly submitted manuscripts. This policy forms part of the journal's effort to broaden its readership and research community, increase the discoverability and citation potential of published articles, and better prepare the journal to meet the requirements of international indexing services and scholarly databases.

The articles published in this issue were submitted and accepted before the new language policy came into effect. Their editorial procedures were therefore completed, and they are published in Arabic within the transitional arrangements approved by the Editorial Board. This approach preserves the academic and procedural rights of authors whose manuscripts had already completed the evaluation and acceptance stages under the previous policy, and it does not represent a reversal of the language policy adopted for new submissions.

The development process included rebuilding the journal website in English, updating the journal's description, aims, and scientific scope, reorganizing the policy and guideline pages, developing the official manuscript template, and strengthening article metadata requirements. It also included updates to the policies governing peer review, research integrity, similarity screening, publication ethics, and the responsible use of artificial intelligence tools.

The Editorial Board expects these updates to establish a clearer institutional pathway for publication, improve the quality of submitted research, strengthen transparency in dealings with authors, reviewers, and readers, and prepare the journal for a gradual transition toward a broader international presence while preserving its scientific identity and its role in addressing planning and development issues in Iraq and the region.

About the Journal

Journal of Planner and Development is a peer-reviewed, open access academic journal published by the Center of Urban and Regional Planning for Postgraduate Studies, University of Baghdad. The journal provides a scholarly platform for publishing rigorous research in urban and regional planning, urban design, sustainable development, environmental planning, spatial analysis, geoinformatics, planning technologies, urban systems, and socio-spatial studies.

The journal aims to support the production of scholarly knowledge and the development of research methods and tools that contribute to understanding and addressing contemporary urban and regional issues. It publishes Original Research Articles and Review Articles that make a clear contribution to planning theory, methodology, policy, or practice.

Descriptive reports, consultancy or institutional documents, opinion papers, project summaries, and technical applications that do not provide a clear contribution to planning knowledge or practice fall outside the journal's scope.

Aims and Scientific Scope

1. Urban and Regional Planning Theory and Practice

Urban and regional planning; urbanization and urban transformations; contemporary planning systems; the history of planning thought; Arab cities and cultural transformations; urban governance; planning policies; and planning laws and regulations.

2. Sustainable Development and Environmental Planning

Urban sustainability; climate change and urban adaptation; environmental planning; pollution; urban resilience; green infrastructure; natural resource management; and low-carbon planning.

3. Urban Design, Housing, and the Built Environment

Urban design; public spaces; housing planning; quality of urban life; urban morphology; urban heritage; community-oriented design; and built environment studies.

4. Spatial Analysis, Geoinformatics, and Planning Technologies

Geographic Information Systems; remote sensing; urban spatial analysis; operations research; urban modelling; smart cities; artificial intelligence in planning; and urban big data.

5. Urban Systems, Economy, and Socio-Spatial Dynamics

Urban economy; urban sociology; urban geography; rural–urban development; tourism planning; industrial sites; spatial justice; demographic transformations; and the spatial dimensions of economic and social development.

Journal Language Policy

Journal of Planner and Development adopts English as the primary language for new manuscripts submitted from 1 July 2026 onward. Articles must include their essential metadata in both English and Arabic, including the article title, author names, institutional affiliations, abstract, and keywords.

Articles accepted before the implementation date of this policy are subject to the transitional arrangements approved by the Editorial Board, ensuring that their procedures are completed under the conditions and policies in force at the time of submission and acceptance.

Submission, Peer Review, and Publication Procedures

1. Electronic submission of the manuscript and all required files and forms through the journal website.
2. Technical screening to verify file completeness, metadata accuracy, and compliance with the official template.
3. Similarity and originality screening.
4. Initial editorial screening to assess the manuscript's relevance to the journal's scope and its scientific and methodological quality.
5. Referral of eligible manuscripts to independent reviewers under a double-blind peer review system.
6. Completion of the required revisions and submission of a revised manuscript and a detailed response letter to the reviewers.
7. Final editorial decision.
8. Technical and language editing, proofreading, and preparation of the final version.
9. Review and approval of the publication-ready version by the corresponding author.
10. Online publication in the volume and issue assigned to the article.

Passing the technical screening does not constitute scientific acceptance of the manuscript. Publication fees do not influence reviewer selection, reviewer reports, or editorial decisions, and fees are requested only after a final acceptance decision has been issued.

Editorial Board

The journal's Editorial Board includes academics and specialists in urban and regional planning, urban design, architecture, the built environment, sustainability, spatial development, geoinformatics, and socio-spatial studies.

Name	Role	Institutional Affiliation	Specializations
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Lect. Dr. Abd Al-Wahab Ahmed Jameel	Editorial Board Member	Center of Urban and Regional Planning for Postgraduate Studies, University of Baghdad, Iraq	Urban and Regional Planning; Smart Cities; Environmental Planning

Journal Staff

The journal staff support the editorial office in language editing, administrative coordination, manuscript follow-up, financial procedures, and the management of the journal's editorial workflow.

Name	Position	Scope of Work
Lect. Thamer Khalaf Atiwi	Language Editor	Supports the editorial office in language editing and the review of manuscript texts before publication.
Assist. Lect. Ammar Ghalib Salim	Technical and Language Support Officer	Providing technical support for the journal website and electronic publishing system and assisting with the linguistic review of published content.
Eng. Noha Zaid Abd Al-Sahib	Administrative Correspondence and Documentation Officer	Office correspondence and administrative documentation related to the journal's operations.

Publication Ethics and Research Integrity

The journal is committed to originality, integrity, transparency, and editorial independence throughout the submission, peer review, and publication processes. Manuscripts are subject to similarity screening, and the journal does not accept plagiarism, unauthorized self-plagiarism, redundant publication, manipulation of data, images, or maps, inappropriate authorship, citation manipulation, or undisclosed conflicts of interest.

Authors bear full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, integrity of data and references, and ethical declarations of their research. Any use of generative artificial intelligence tools in editing, translation, coding, data processing, or content generation must be disclosed, and an artificial intelligence tool may not be listed as an author.

Submitted manuscripts and peer review reports are treated as confidential documents. Reviewers and editors must not upload them to public artificial intelligence tools or unsecured platforms.

Policy on Publications by Editorial Board Members and Editorial Independence

Journal of Planner and Development permits the Editor-in-Chief, Managing Editor, and Editorial Board members to submit their research for publication, provided that such manuscripts are subject to all submission, screening, peer review, and publication requirements applied to other manuscripts, without preferential treatment.

When a manuscript is authored or co-authored by the Editor-in-Chief, Managing Editor, or an Editorial Board member, the author concerned is fully excluded from every stage of its editorial handling, including initial screening, reviewer selection, access to reviewer identities or correspondence, assessment of reviewer reports, and the final editorial decision.

In such cases, the manuscript is assigned to an independent editor who has no conflicting interest with the authors or the subject of the research. The independent editor assumes full responsibility for supervising the peer review process and making the editorial decision in accordance with the journal's double-blind peer review policy and its approved scientific and ethical standards.

An author's editorial position does not affect the decision to send a manuscript for peer review, accept it, or reject it. All decisions are based on scholarly originality, methodological soundness, quality of analysis, compliance with publication ethics, and the manuscript's contribution to the journal's scope.

When an article authored or co-authored by an Editorial Board member is published, the journal includes an editorial note stating that the author did not participate in the handling, peer review, or decision-making process and that all procedures were managed independently.

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The views and conclusions expressed in published articles are those of their authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editorial Board, the Center of Urban and Regional Planning for Postgraduate Studies, or the University of Baghdad.

Reviewers Who Contributed to the Peer Review of This Issue

As part of the journal's commitment to ensuring the quality of published research and strengthening the objectivity of editorial decisions, the Editorial Board highly values the scholarly contributions made by the reviewers in evaluating the manuscripts included in this issue. Their reports and scientific and methodological comments contributed to improving the manuscripts and verifying their originality, methodological soundness, clarity of findings, and relevance to the journal's scope.

The Editorial Board extends its sincere thanks and appreciation to:

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17	Assist. Prof. Dr. Sarah Mahmoud	Center of Urban and Regional Planning for Postgraduate Studies , University of Baghdad

The journal affirms that the reviewers' efforts constitute an essential element in maintaining the rigor of scholarly publishing, supporting academic integrity, and improving the quality of research submitted in the fields of planning and development.

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