

MIU-Movement for Israeli Urbanism



NEW

Approach to

ZIONISM

MIU – the Movement for Israeli Urbanism develops awareness of and provides practical, professional support for improving the existing urban built environment throughout Israel. We recognize that the vitality of Israel's cities is inextricably linked to the **vitality of the country** as a whole, and to her ability to fulfill her role as a **home for world Jewry**.

MIU's mission is to improve the quality and sustainability of urban life in Israel by promoting awareness and by providing tools to planning professionals and to local communities.

MIU supports people-oriented planning that prevents deterioration and atrophy of cities, **promotes sustainable local development that enhances economic and cultural opportunities**, advocates for and directly facilitates **democratic** planning processes.

MIU's innovative approach recognizes **concern for quality of urban life** and concern for the natural environment as two sides of the same coin.

MIU believes that the solution to both concerns lies in **strengthening Israel's existing cities** prior to continued expansion.

MIU is committed to revitalizing and renewing Israel's existing urban centers in order to address the country's present challenges. Only in this way will Israel be able to provide high quality of living, sustainability, and economic opportunities for its citizens.

A strong, sustainable Israel will serve as a proper home for Jews all over the world.

92% of the population in Israel lives in urban areas, many of them in sprawling cities with deteriorating cultural and economic centers. The rest reside in towns, most of whom have never developed into successful entities. Moreover, Israel currently has one of the lowest ratios of open space per capita in the world. **Strengthening Israel's existing cities** is in contrast to the inclination to build new settlements in the Negev and the northern regions of Israel which has enjoyed renewed enthusiasm in recent years.

Initially, Israel's challenges centered around defense and the absorption of mass Jewish immigration. Therefore, establishing new settlements in strategic locations was appropriate.

Today, Israel's challenges as a highly developed, industrialized country are mainly in providing **high quality of living, sustainability and economic opportunities** for its citizens. This can only be achieved by **making the existing cities and towns successful**.

Key to this success is urban planning that focuses and leverages the investment of public funds, and collaborative planning with **public participation** that strengthens **communities** and creates great places of which residents can be proud.

MIU is acting as the leader in the conversation about sustainable development in Israel, bringing together research organizations, government officials and industry professionals to the same table for the first time through a collaborative planning process to **develop both policy guidelines and tools**.

This collaborative effort can only be effectively accomplished if led by an NGO such as **MIU**, whose members come from all sectors. This is an innovative way to address the challenges of a **multi-sector partnership that is vital for effective governance**.

MIU employs **creative tools** which complement its innovative approach to planning.

MIU encourages **solution-oriented workshops** called "charrettes," during which residents, elected officials, and stakeholders of a city sit together with planning professionals in a **cooperative and democratic effort** to better serve the needs of the people. The resulting projects reinforce individual engagement with the community by placing ownership of the solutions in the hands of the participants. The **charrette** process was unknown in Israel until **MIU** successfully organized and facilitated the first charrette in Kiryat Shmona in December 2007.



MIU's key accomplishments include **increased awareness** to sustainable urban planning in Israel, and **increase in collaboration** of different government offices with MIU on projects and a dramatic increase in the number of organizations that contact MIU to act as a national partner and national advocate for local projects.

MIU is a leading NGO in the field of urban planning and is highly respected by funds, government offices, and environmental organizations alike.

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