



COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY

Department: Architectural Engineering & Environmental Design Department

Course: Graduation Project

Code: AR – 501

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Local Public Council in an Egyptian Governorate



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Introduction

At a time when the Egyptian society eagerly aspires to a genuine democratic life and a matured political experience, the grass root application – as embodied by local public councils – seems to be seriously undermined, and often stigmatized by corruption and incompetence.

One primary requirement for a genuine democratic experience is the distinct independence of the executive, legislative and juridical authorities in a state. In many incidents, the activities of local councils are accommodated within governorate premises. This can clearly compromise the independence of the legislative authority, being assimilated within the executive counterpart – even at the physical level.

Challenges

Architects have always played a major role in gearing the community forces towards new development paradigms. Therefore, as near-future architects/developers, students are required to design new premises for the local public council of an Egyptian governorate of their choice. The proposed designs should realize all symbolic, conceptual, functional, spatial and programmatic considerations.

The proposed design should introduce an innovative understanding of the proper functional and spatial requirements for healthy democratic practices that are in-line with the political and technological vocabulary of the twenty-first century.

It is also expected to be iconic in a way that expresses the symbolic significance of the council as the 'parliament of the governorate' that represents the legislative authority at the governorate level.

More importantly, it should symbolically address the positive values associated with democracy, such as participation, diversity, plurality, transparency, bottom-up development, grass-root influence, and the like.

Additionally, the project should express the unique identity of the governorate in which it is being built. Such identity may be characterized by natural settings, cultural activities, or historic features. The characteristic attribute(s) of the studied governorate should be represented in an abstract symbolic expression.

Site

Part of students' challenge is the site selection. The chosen site should be in the capital city of the proposed governorate. It should also be in a distinguished location that suits the symbolic and functional value of the project. The site area should range around 30,000m² plus.

Project Elements

The suggested functional/spatial elements to be incorporated in such a project shall include [but is not limited to] the list hereunder. Yet, every student is expected to develop his/her own detailed program in accordance with their research findings and concept statement.

- Main Assembly hall [500 occupants]
- Entrance piazza [+medium for public participation]
- Entrances [for MP's, press, public, services, etc.]
- Foyers and informal meeting spaces

- Specialized committee rooms [20+ committees, depending on studied governorate]
- MP offices
- Meeting halls [different scales]
- MP accommodation / hotel
- Administration
- Library
- Archives
- Museum
- Press conference hall / studio
- Supporting services [bank, post office, flight and train booking, official registry, cafeterias/restaurants, prayer rooms, medical center, storage, electro-mechanical rooms, etc.]
- Car parking area(s)