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The impact of new buildings on the city's image

Abstract. The research examines the visual perception of new buildings and their impact on changing the overall image of the city. Particular attention is devoted to buildings that are visible from other parts of the city due to their greater height and hilly terrain and can complement the overall composition of the city or destroy it. The importance of exploring the analysis of visual connections between the designed object and the environment is substantiated. The purpose of the research is to explore the perception of the city environment as a set of multifaceted pictures and to identify the elements that have a significant impact on the development of the overall image of the city. To achieve this purpose, a research methodology was developed, which at each stage included general scientific methods and special ones. Before starting the work, field research was conducted on the compositional structure of individual cities, and several paintings were selected for more detailed research. A compositional analysis of the selected examples for planning was conducted using the graphical method. It is established that the city's image is most influenced by the last plan, which, in most cases, is not considered when designing new buildings. As a result of the research, the results obtained were verified for compliance with the shape, style and proportions of the newly built objects with the surrounding buildings. A significant number of paintings were identified that do not correspond to the expected result from the standpoint of the observer. Thus, there is a discrepancy between the planned and the received image of the overall compositional and spatial structure. The reasons for this inconsistency in the combination of individual plans are identified, which in turn had adverse effects on the overall image of the city. In addition, the main factors that influence the development of individual paintings have been identified. The result of the research is defined tasks for pre-design research at the initial stage of designing new buildings. This approach will help minimise mistakes in the design of new buildings, particularly those that have visual connections with other parts of the city and have a significant impact on the overall image

Keywords: urban planning composition; urban space; view streets; multidimensional paintings; urban aesthetics; dead field

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INTRODUCTION

In the process of historical development, the city reflects the main economic, scientific, technical and cultural achievements of society. When developing a master plan for a city, several factors must be considered to address the basic functional, economic, and aesthetic needs. In addition, it should be emphasised that the requirements for a person's lifestyle are constantly changing throughout the entire period of society's development, which results in the necessity to develop new requirements for the design of urban space. Therefore, at every stage, the city requires constant transformation. When designing new requirements for the development of the functional and planning structure, street and road network, and ensuring a favourable microclimate, one should remember the aesthetic qualities of both individual elements and the environment in general. The image of the city is developed based both on the harmonious combination of urban structure elements into a single composition and on the specifics of human perception of the environment. The elements of the urban planning composition have a fundamental difference – the larger size of the object, and therefore, it is necessary to consider another parameter – the time during which a person explores the surrounding space. The establishment of the overall image of the city is based on a set of pictures and impressions that a person receives while walking through the city. The greatest influence on establishing a general impression is the set of pictures that a person sees in the process of cognition of the urban environment. Thus, when designing new buildings, and developing the composition of individual elements of the city, the architect must consider the impact of new buildings on changing individual pictures that immediately influence the overall impression and image of the city in general. Recently, there has been an active construction of objects that both distort the surrounding space and destroy the historically developed authentic image of the city.

Numerous scholarly works are devoted to the overall composition of the city. The space of the city as an object of composition was explored by B. Posatsky (2007). I. Bezkorovaina (2013) emphasises the development of vertical dominants in the context of the historical development of the city. An interesting study of vertical dominants and their visual perception, but in a modern city, is the collective work of Ata Tara *et al.* (2021). I. Korotun (2014) devoted her work to the basics of harmonisation of the urban environment. Some works are devoted to the development of streets and squares (Koznarska & Didyk, 2021), and their importance in establishing the image of the city (Koznarska, 2012). G. Kopteva (2013) emphasises the specific features of visual perception of the city in her works. The aesthetic perception of the urban environment is explored by tourism researcher M. Antonets (2014). M. Gabrel & M. Kosmiy (2019) emphasise the emotional component in developing the image of the city. The specific features of the perception of individual elements of buildings and their impact on the visual assessment of the city were highlighted in the work of M. Sadeghifar *et al.*

(2019). An interesting work is T. Dzieduszyński (2022), in which the author proposes to use digital technologies for a comprehensive aesthetic assessment of the architectural environment. The psychological component of space comprehension was explored by L. Xiang *et al.* (2021), Ch. K. Chau *et al.* (2022). Some of the works are devoted to the aesthetic qualities of the urban landscape. In particular, notably, works by Halyna Petryshyn, co-authored with other researchers, are devoted to the uniqueness of the urban landscape (Petryshyn & Sochackiej-Sutkowskiej, 2012) and the importance of water spaces for establishing the overall image of the city (Petryshyn & Polianska, 2020). M. Pórolniczak & L. Kolendowicz (2021) emphasise the specific features of the city's landscape perception and the "Lviv Belvedere" as a unique phenomenon of interaction between two factors: nature and humans, in the process of both establishing and developing the spatial structure of the Lviv Basin's edge T. Maksymiuk & V. Didyk (2011). T. Inoue *et al.* (2022) analyse visual images of the urban landscape. M. Gyurkovich & M. Pieczara (2021) conducted detailed research on the city's panoramas and their aesthetic evaluation. A particular place should be devoted to the work of the Polish urbanist K. Weichert (2008), who dedicated to the elements of urban planning composition. The author systematised the basic theoretical knowledge that influences the development of the city's image. In addition, he emphasised the psychological properties of a person to perceive the urban environment, which occurs as a result of changing paintings over time.

The purpose of the research is to explore the perception of the urban environment as a set of multifaceted pictures. Justify the significance of analysing the visual relationships of the designed object with the environment. Identify the factors that should be considered when determining the image and proportions of a new building to ensure that new buildings are harmoniously integrated with the existing part of the city. Define the tasks for pre-design research at the initial stage of designing new buildings to avoid adverse effects on the overall image of the city.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research of the city's composition requires the processing of a significant amount of illustrative material. The methodology is based on the analysis of individual pictures of the environment, which have the greatest impact on the emotional state of a person and are crucial in developing the overall image. The specific feature of the approach is using field research. Thus, for the study, it is necessary to select pictures of the existing urban environment that contain multidimensionality. Photos should be based on the main visual connections of the city. It is the elements that have visual connections that are the foundation for establishing the image of the city in general.

The research on the development of the city's image should be divided into several stages. Before starting work, it is necessary to explore the general theory of building an urban planning composition and study scientific works on this subject. Then, it is necessary to conduct field research



on the urban environment and select materials for analysis. During the selection process, the focus should be on those paintings that contain visual connections to remote parts of the city and are visible from the vantage point. The most effective way is to immediately compile a diagram of visual corridors, based on which, later, the expected and obtained results can be verified. Later, using the method of graphic analysis, it is necessary to distinguish separate plans of each of the selected paintings. The result is to summarise the research and identify the factors that have influenced the change in the city's image. By verifying the results obtained for compliance with the general theory of city composition, the tendency to change the overall image, considering newly built objects, can be traced and positive or adverse dynamics can be identified.

General scientific research methods were used for the study: empirical (observation, description), theoretical (analysis, generalisation) and special (field research).

A review and examination of scientific works on the composition of the city were conducted. Several studies on the composition of the city and landscape have been identified.

Field studies of the compositional and spatial structure of individual cities were conducted. The emphasis was on prominent streets and venues that have visual connections to remote parts of the city. Among the material received, the most striking pictures of the urban environment were selected, which contain diversity and the presence of new buildings and most vividly reflect the subject of the research.

Based on the selected material, the layout of the paintings was analysed. Each picture was divided into separate parts – foreground, middle ground and background. In other words, each image highlights elements of the city that are distant from the perspective but visible. This approach allowed an opportunity to observe where the designer's mistake appeared, which resulted in the distortion of the environment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The modern city is being built and renewed. It is very crucial to not lose the historical authenticity and image that was designed over the centuries and is unique in this rapid development.

Each period of architecture and urban development has its construction features, technologies, and style. It is necessary to learn how to professionally combine new modern designs with the historical environment in such a way that does not distort the environment and the overall image of the city and complements it organically.

New buildings can either complement the historically established image of a city or destroy it. Consider the main visual factors that should be addressed when locating buildings.

First of all, the environment needs to be explored as a multi-dimensional picture: foreground, middle ground, and background or “dead field”.

Foreground. Usually, in the foreground, the observer observes an element that attracts our eyes in one way or another with its features – a compositional accent (Fig. 1). Even if this element is the main one to be seen in a particular environment, its perception can enhance or negate the environment.

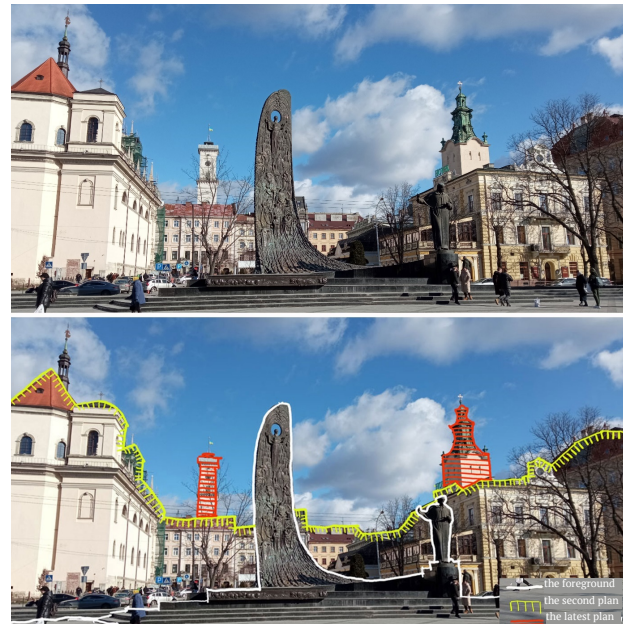


Figure 1. Lviv, monument to Taras Shevchenko. The background is constituted by elements that are frequently located at a considerable distance from the point of contemplation but are nevertheless clearly visible

Source: photo by Koznarska

Middle ground. In the middle ground, the observer's vision is limited to the buildings without individual features that provide the background of the composition. There is not a single point of contemplation in the city where the view would not be limited by the elements of the city. The only difference is what elements constitute this background and how far away from the viewer it is. If the city environment is considered as one big interior, the elements that play the role of “floor”, “walls” and “ceiling” can be distinguished (Wejchert, 2008). Consider the different types of “walls” that serve as space limiters. Accordingly, there can be a related environment consisting of the same type of elements, for example, a series of buildings with a clear building line, the totality of which constitutes a single-plan “wall”. In addition, there can be an alternation of building walls and green spaces – such a space is perceived as much more interesting and attractive. Buildings located at different distances from the point of contemplation are perceived differently – multidimensional “walls”. However, all these elements limit the control of human contemplation to the level of the “floor”.

Notably, M. Gyrkovich & M. Pieczara (2021) use the methodology of analysing the city environment as one large interior in their research to analyse panoramas of the urban landscape. However, the authors evaluate the aesthetic quality by interviewing respondents. Such a method is good for determining the value of individual landscapes of the existing environment to preserve individual established paintings. However, this method will not be useful for determining the tasks associated with the design of new buildings.

The background or “dead field”. The term “dead field” is used by the Polish urbanist K. Weichert (2008)





to define the elements of the background. This term successfully characterises the essence of the problem: in the background of the painting, some elements should not be visible, as they are located at a considerable distance from the point of contemplation but are nevertheless clearly visible. These elements either harmoniously complement the overall composition, for example, Lviv – the monument to Taras Shevchenko: the foreground is composed of elements that are located at a considerable distance from the point of contemplation, but are nevertheless clearly visible (Fig. 1), or spoil it: Katowice – the perspective of Adam Mickiewicz Street is completed by a high-rise dominant that is discordant with the historic environment (Fig. 2a) or a high-rise building in the background causes visual discomfort when perceiving the historically established

buildings from Rynok Square (Fig. 2b); Truskavets – the scale of the historical perspective of the street is broken by the height of the new building (Fig. 2c); Lviv – the unnecessary height of the new building in the historic area provided visual discomfort from Professorska Street (Fig. 2d), and an example of the diminished significance of the Latin Cathedral by the scale of the newly built hotel from Teatralna Street (Fig. 2g). Therewith, the historically established visual axial endings of the streets in the historic area of Lviv have been preserved: the ending of the perspective of I. Franka Street with the monastery bell tower is an example of the preserved historic urban environment (Fig. 2e) and the architectural dominants in the perspective of the street. Horodotska from the west establish a multifaceted picture and identity of the Pryvokzalna district (Fig. 2f).



a) Katowice (Poland). The perspective of Adam Mickiewicz Street is completed by a high-rise dominant that is discordant with the historic environment. b) Katowice. The high-rise building in the foreground represents a visual discomfort when viewing the historically established buildings from Rynok Square. c) Truskavets. The scale of the historical perspective of the street is broken by the height of the new building d) Lviv. The unnecessary height of the new building in the historic area caused visual discomfort from Professorska Street. e) an example of diminishing the significance of the Latin Cathedral by the scale of a newly built hotel off Teatralna Street. f) the completion of the perspective of I. Franko Street with the monastery bell tower is an example of a preserved historic urban environment. g) architectural dominants establish a multifaceted picture and identity of the Pryvokzalna district

Figure 2. An example of visually degraded street perspectives in the historic area of the city – Figs. a, b, c, d, e and preserved historically established visual axial completions of streets in the historic area of Lviv – Figs. f, g

Source: a-c – photo by Koznarska; d-g – photo by Didyk



Notably, in the late 19th and early 20th-century interpretation of the art of statics and order, the architect saw the real environment and, in the process of construction, could prevent adverse effects that could worsen the aesthetic quality of the urban environment. Instead, in the context of modern design, architecture is, first and foremost, the art of balance in movement and dynamic development. The design process is based on a building information modelling platform, where architects mainly consider only the projected object itself in the immediate architectural environment. Even the street scans of the projected facility provided for in the project do not provide a complete

picture of the final implementation. Usually, the architect does not consider whether the building will be visible from the neighbouring street and how harmoniously it will fit into the existing space from a distance. However, it is this “last” plan from the farthest angles that has the main impact on the establishment of the city’s image. Examples of unsuccessful development of the background or “dead field”, which is located at a considerable distance from the point of perception along the axis of street perspectives in the historical area of Lviv, are the perspective of Lesia Ukrainka Street towards the Opera House (Fig. 3a) and the perspective of Zernova Street from V. Chornovil Avenue (Fig. 3b).



a) the perspective of Lesia Ukrainka Street towards the Opera House



b) perspective of Zernova Street from V. Chornovil Avenue

Figure 3. Lviv. An example of the unsuccessful development of the background or “dead field” by the new building, which is located at a considerable distance from the point of perception along the axis of the street perspectives in the historical area of the city

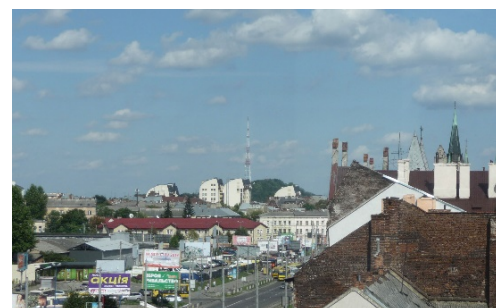
Source: photo by Didyk

The dynamics of the degradation of the perception of the panorama of the Lviv landscape due to the built high-rise buildings within the blocks of historically developed residential buildings are illustrated by the perspectives from the viewpoint in the Skrynia shopping centre from 2005 (Fig. 4a)

and from 2019 (Fig. 4b). Instead, an example of a harmonious combination of all plans in the perception of the panorama of the historic centre of Lviv (protected by UNESCO since 1996) is the view of the castle hill from the southwest from the terrace of the House of Legends restaurant (closed in 2019) (Fig. 5).



a)



b)

Figure 4. Examples of the degradation of the perception of the panorama of the historic landscape due to the construction of high-rise buildings within the blocks of historically developed residential buildings (view from the viewpoint in the “Skrynya” shopping centre): a – 2005; b – 2019.

Source: Photo by Didyk

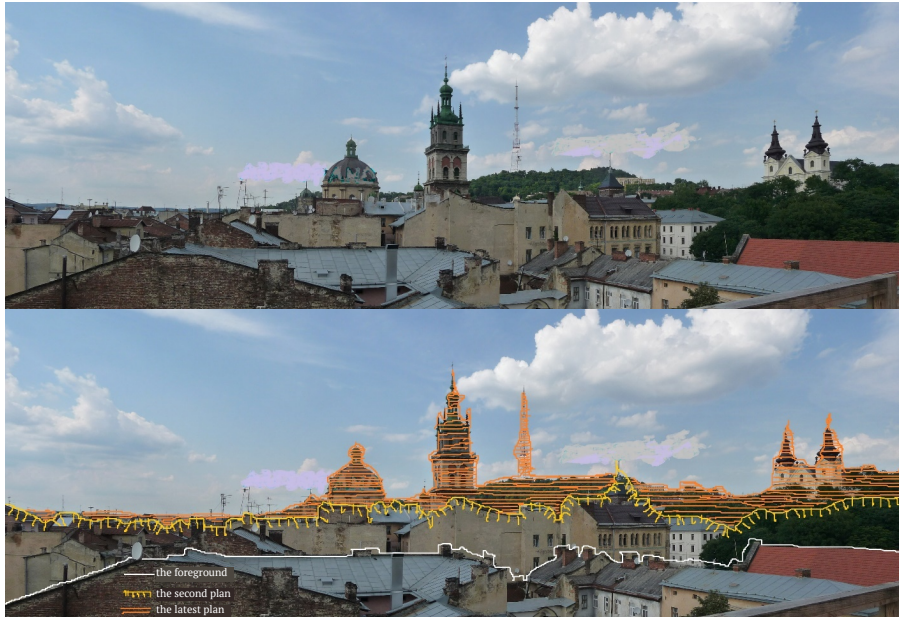


Figure 5. An example of a harmonious combination of all plans in the perception of the panorama of the historic city centre of Lviv (protected by UNESCO since 1996). View of Castle Hill from the southwest from the terrace of the “House of Legends” restaurant (closed in 2019)

Source: photo by Didyk

In addition, it should be noted that the objects that are visible from different parts of the city are in most cases dominant viewpoints (Koznarska & Didyk, 2021). Thus, there are two-way visual connections. However, considering the visibility of these elements of the city, it is necessary to ensure that their appearance harmoniously fits into the existing

image and complements it, rather than spoils it. There are great examples that prove that new architecture can harmoniously complement the image of a city. The new high-rise building of Frankfurt’s business centre in the background harmoniously complements the silhouette of the panorama of the historic city centre from the waterfront (Fig. 6).



Figure 6. Frankfurt – view from the waterfront to the business centre

Source: Get Your Guide (2022)

A similar approach to the analysis of the environment is proposed by the Polish urbanist K. Weichert (2008) in his work “Elements of Urban Composition”, in which he outlines in detail the basic concepts for scientific research of urban planning composition. In addition, he highlighted the main theoretical foundations of combining buildings in one environment, considering the shape, style and proportions.

An interesting approach to the analysis and construction of architectural compositions is presented by T.Dzieduszyński (2022). The author proposed a methodology

for designing spatial compositions using digital technologies. Considering the rapid development of technology, this methodology can be improved and implemented to thoroughly analyse the architectural environment and generate specific requirements for the style, shape and proportions of new buildings in the coming decades.

Based on the research, it should be noted that to increase the aesthetic value of space, it is necessary to consider both the immediate environment and all areas of the city from which the building will be visible when constructing new buildings. The overall image of the city will



depend on how organically the architect fits the object into the urban planning structure. Therefore, before starting the design, it is necessary to analyse all the viewpoints and streets from which the building will be visible and compile

a scheme of visual corridors with the proposed new buildings on the final plan. An example of perception analysis is the scheme of research on visual corridors of new buildings in the background (Fig. 7).

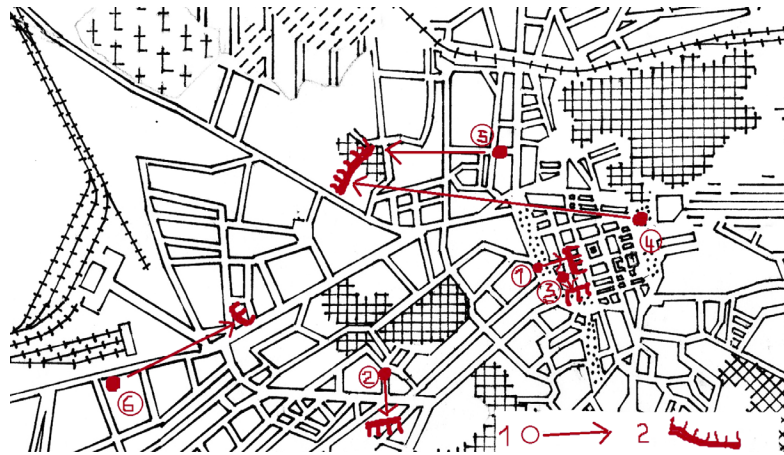


Figure 7. Lviv. Scheme of visual corridors with new buildings in the foreground: point 1 – Fig. 1, point 2 – Fig. 2d, point 3 – Fig. 2g, point 4 – Fig. 3a, point 5 – Fig. 3b, point 6 – Fig. 4b.

Notes: Symbols: 1 – point of perception of the visual corridor; 2 – new buildings in the foreground (“dead field”)

Source: Scheme by the author – Didyk

Based on the scheme, establish the features of the surrounding buildings (shape, style, proportions) and determine the requirements for the architecture of the new building. At this stage, it is necessary to coordinate the building’s height with its surroundings, analyse the nature of the relief and the presence of natural belvederes, and determine whether the proportions and shape of the new building are in line with the surrounding architecture. After such an analysis, it is necessary to carefully explore all the factors and, if necessary, adjust the building’s height, proportions, and shape to match the environment.

CONCLUSIONS

Considering the intensive construction of new buildings, the significance of exploring their visual connections with other parts of the city and their impact on the development of the overall image is substantiated. Based on the analysis of scientific publications, several works devoted to the aesthetic qualities of the composition of the city and landscape were identified. However, there have been no separate studies of the impact of new buildings on the development of the city’s image, which has determined the relevance of this research.

Based on the results of the field research, individual parts of the environment were selected that contain multifaceted paintings. Particular attention was devoted to the new buildings visible from other parts of the city. The graphic analysis of the multifaceted paintings identified examples of the positive and adverse impact of new buildings on the overall image of the city. After verifying the adverse examples for compliance with the compositional principles, the factors that resulted in the distortion of the existing image

of the city were identified. The main factors include the mismatch between the style, shape and proportions of the new building and the surrounding architecture.

To avoid adverse effects on the overall image of the city, the tasks for research at the initial stage of designing new buildings have been identified:

- outline the parts of the city from which the building will be visually visible (a separate scheme of visual corridors with mandatory access to the area can be developed);
- define the basic requirements for the style of the form and proportions of the new building to organically combine the forms of modern buildings with the historically established ones;
- analyse how well the new building corresponds to the proportions of the overall silhouette of the city.

Thus, already at the stage of pre-design studies, it is necessary to establish some requirements for the shape and proportions of the projected building. A particularly thorough analysis should be conducted before the construction of high-rise buildings, as they are urban dominants and have a significant impact on the overall image of the city.

This research proves the importance of an integrated approach to the design of individual elements of the city and emphasises the significance of a thorough analysis of the compositional and spatial structure as a component of architectural and urban planning activities.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.



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Вплив новобудов на формування образу міста

Анотація. У статті досліджено візуальне сприйняття новобудов та їх вплив на зміну загального образу міста. Особливу увагу звернено на будівлі, які проглядаються з інших частин міста за рахунок більшої висоти та горбистого рельєфу і можуть доповнити загальну композицію міста або її зруйнувати. Обґрунтовано важливість дослідження аналізу візуальних зв'язків проєктованого об'єкту з навколишнім середовищем. Метою статті є дослідити сприйняття середовища міста, як сукупність багатопланових картин та виявити елементи, які мають безпосередній вплив на формування загального образу міста. Для досягнення поставленої мети була розроблена методика досліджень, яка на кожному етапі, містила загальнонаукові методи та спеціальні. Перед початком робіт, були проведені натурні дослідження композиційної структури окремих міст та відібрано кілька картин для більш детального дослідження. Графічним методом було проведено композиційний аналіз відібраних прикладів на плановість. Встановлено, що на формування образу міста найбільший вплив має останній план, який, у більшості випадків, не враховується під час проєктування нових будівель. У результаті досліджень, проведено верифікацію отриманих результатів на відповідність форми, стилю та пропорцій новозбудованих об'єктів з навколишньою забудовою. Виявлено значну кількість картин, які не відповідають очікуваному результату з точки зору обсерватора. Тобто, невідповідність між планованим та отриманим образом загальної композиційно-просторової структури. Встановлено причини цієї невідповідності поєднання окремих планів, які у свою чергу, призвели до негативних наслідків у формуванні загального образу міста. Також, виявлені основні чинники, які впливають на формування окремих картин. Результатом дослідження є визначені завдання для передпроектного дослідження на початковій стадії проєктування новобудов. Саме такий підхід допоможе мінімізувати помилки під час проєктування новобудов, а особливо тих, які мають візуальні зв'язки з іншими частинами міста і мають безпосередній вплив на формування загального образу

Ключові слова: містобудівна композиція; простір міста; видові вулиці; багатопланові картини; естетика міста; мертве поле