

Mashhad Municipality, Iran



Mashhad, the second largest city in Iran, attracts 25 million pilgrims each year at the shrine of the eighth Imam of the Shiite community. The city is extremely earthquake prone; a magnitude 6.6 quake devastated Mashhad in 1673. In addition, the city is flood-prone as the inundation of South Western Mashhad in 1992 and of Northern Mashhad in 2011 showed. One-fifth of the city's 2.43 million population lives in the city's oldest buildings. And, of the millions of pilgrims that descend on the city annually, around half choose to stay in the old quarter. The local government of Mashhad Municipality, relying on 42 years of experience in renovating old buildings, has adopted various strategies to rebuild and retrofit eight metropolitan districts based on the individual profile and character of each district.

The latest innovation is financial: the city has partnered with the private sector by forming a proactive stakeholder alliance represented by municipalities, investors, contractors and owners. The alliance has led to the successful renovation of more than 420 hectares of old buildings since 2005 with a budget about of US\$800 million. In addition, the city has provided citizens with a variety of incentives leading to the renovation of several schools, hospitals and mosques by charitable donors.

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