

POST-SOCIALIST SUBURBANIZATION AND SPRAWL DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS - NIŠ CASE STUDY

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Abstract. *One of the characteristic forms of suburban development in the second half of the 20th century is urban sprawl. Various authors state that sprawl characterizes the urban development of both capitalist and former socialist cities. The cities of Central and Eastern Europe, however, remained compact during the entire period of socialism, and did not begin dispersed development until the 90's. The goal of this paper is to examine the spatial-functional characteristics of the capitalist sprawl model and determine similarities and differences to the post-socialist suburban development patterns. A typical sprawling settlement of the capitalist city is presented in this paper: Platte Ridge neighborhood in the metropolitan area of Kansas City, Missouri, USA. Then two suburban segments of the City of Niš, Serbia from the post-socialist period are analyzed, which represent typical cases of the residential and retail decentralization: Podvinik/Vinik residential zone beyond the urban boundary, and a retail center at the periphery of the city in Duvanište neighborhood. The paper points out to problems that urban design of capitalist sprawl produces in the usage of space in the post-socialist city.*

Key words: *suburbanization, urban sprawl, residential and retail decentralization, urban design*

1. INTRODUCTION

The second half of the 20th century was marked by explosive demographic growth and high degree of urbanization (Stanilov, 2003). The suburbia as we know it today appeared, in various formats which greatly depend on the social system of the state, political system and market conditions. One of the characteristic forms of suburban development is urban sprawl (Stanilov, 2003). Sprawl is characterized by the spreading of development beyond the urban boundary that far exceeds the needs of demographic

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growth (www.smartgrowthamerica.org). Even though it mainly represents a random low-density development pattern, it can also refer to suburban extensions with higher densities. Various authors state that sprawl characterizes, to a smaller or a greater extent, the urban development of both capitalist and former socialist cities: sprawl is a typical American suburban form (Appelbaum, 1976; Pack, 2005); current suburban growth in the post-socialist city takes the form of capitalist sprawl (Tammaru, Leetmaa, Silm & Ahas, 2009; Stanilov 2007; Sykora & Ourednicek, 2007).

Urban sprawl is particularly characteristic of the United States of America, where this process originated. With the increase of motorization degree at the beginning of 20th century, millions of people moved out to peaceful suburbs in quest of the “American dream” – possessing their own house with two cars. National development policy and programs encouraged suburbanization in multiple ways: by construction of state highways (instead of investment in public transport), subventions for new water and sewages systems, low price of fuel, giving tax exemptions for purchase of suburban homes, etc (Pack, 2005). Nowadays, in the USA more people live in suburbs than in urban zones. These sprawling suburbs often extend across huge areas of peripheral parts of cities, and they are characterized by low population densities, strictly segregated uses (residential, retail and office use), poorly accessible traffic network with huge urban blocks, absence of developed and well-organized centers and social segregation.

Unlike in the capitalist cities, the urban sprawl in Central and Eastern European cities (CEE) began late, in the 90's of the 20th century. The urban edge of most of the socialist cities was the outer boundary of large housing estates. These districts represented the outmost city periphery, and they were separated from surrounding rural settlements by the agricultural belt. After 1990, formation of a new suburban ring started in the areas between large housing estates of the Modernism and surrounding rural settlements. It can be stated that sprawl is neither the only nor the prevailing mode of development of post-socialist cities. However, residential suburbanization has become the most visible symbol of post-socialist urban transformation (Sykora & Ourednicek, 2007). As a result of a growing public preference for detached single-family houses with private yards, a substantial amount of new residential development occurred beyond the urban boundary, and many of the original weekend cottages were converted into permanent residences (Hirt & Stanilov, 2007). These suburbs often still lack basic public facilities and infrastructure. These areas are mainly occupied by thinly spread individual housing, and the denizens are dependent on the use of cars to meet the basic needs. Beside the residential suburbanization, the process of rapid commercial suburbanization also began.

The goal of this paper is to examine the spatial-functional characteristics of the capitalist sprawl model and determine similarities and differences to the post-socialist suburban development patterns. The characteristics of urban design of capitalist sprawling settlements are determined first. A typical urban sprawl in the United States was chosen in order to perceive better the original features of this development and their implications. The analyzed Platte Ridge neighborhood in the metropolitan area of Kansas City, Missouri is a part of Northland suburban area (Fig. 1). Certain suburban segments of the City of Niš, which have emerged in the post-socialist period, are analyzed next. The chosen examples include sprawling neighborhoods Podvinik and Vinik beyond the urban boundary of Niš, and a large new retail center at the periphery of the city in Duvanište neighborhood. The analyzed area at the foot of the hill Vinik was formed in the 70's as a settlement of weekend cottages, which

were transformed into permanent homes in the post-socialist period. New low-density residential development also occurred in this area (Fig. 3A). The retail center in Duvanište neighborhood was built in the last decade under great market pressure, after the second change of the Master Plan of Niš 2010-2025, which enabled the development of large retail formats.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW: COMPARISON OF POST-SOCIALIST AND CAPITALIST SUBURBIA

The post-socialist suburbia is becoming more and more alike the suburban models of Western Europe and North America. K. Stanilov (2007) points out the following common characteristics:

- *Primacy of individual/private over collective/public interests.* After decades of living in cramped, standardized units, for many Eastern European residents the purchase of a house in the suburbs has a symbolic meaning of breaking away from the socialist past and a possibility to personalize their own living space.
- *Triumph of market forces over regulation.* Suburban development thrives only in the context of deregulated land markets. The liberalization of the markets was one of the top priorities of the CEE countries during the first years of the transition period. The conversion of agricultural land to urban uses has become a standard procedure facilitated by special legal provisions. Previously adopted plans were often later updated in order to incorporate new informal developments.
- *Social implications.* Owning a suburban home requires significant household resources, so residential suburbanization in Eastern Europe necessarily produced social segregation. This process, which started as an upper class phenomenon, gradually spread to larger segments of the middle class.
- *Automobile dependence.* Automobile ownership is a main component of suburban living. Many of the former peripheral villages surrounding CEE metropolitan areas, that have served as seeds of post-socialist suburbanization, are connected with public transit, but the level and quality of this service is significantly below the aspirations of the new suburban residents. Consequently, there was an explosive growth in automobile ownership.
- *Reliance on public subsidies.* Suburbanization in the former socialist countries has been supported by public policies and funded by state and EU budgets. The expansion of the expressway systems was the main contributor to suburbanization, since it attracted foreign investors interested in building large scale residential communities in the suburbs.

The major points of distinction of the post-socialist suburbs from similar developments in Western Europe and North America include (Stanilov, 2007):

- *Condensed evolution.* The direct application of models imported from the West has reduced considerably the timeline of suburban evolution in the post-socialist metropolis. While it took the Western suburbs about two centuries to progress from a place of individual summer homes to massive agglomerations of residences and businesses, in Eastern Europe this transition has occurred only within a decade.
- *Sequence of suburbanization.* While suburbanization in the West proceeded in successive waves, beginning as decentralization of population followed by

suburbanization of retail and offices, this process was happening simultaneously for all urban uses at the metropolitan periphery of the CEE cities. The decentralization of retail has been a particularly strong trend, due to the eagerness of international retail chains and commercial property investment funds to enter the new markets opening up in the region. Therefore, big-boxes and malls at city edges frequently preceded residential developments in those areas.

- *Decentralization rate.* Residential suburbanization in the former socialist countries is taking place at a slower rate compared to the United States or Western Europe. This pattern is explained by the fact that while suburbanization of Western cities occurred in the context of metropolitan growth, in Central and Eastern Europe residential deconcentration is proceeding in a period of slow or negative population growth. Another factor limiting residential suburbanization of the post-socialist city has been the lack of municipal resources for infrastructure extensions into the outlying areas.
- *Suburbanization patterns.* Compared to their Western counterparts, residential development in the CEE suburbs has resulted in denser and less sprawling patterns. This is due to several factors: the limited level of public financing for infrastructure extensions, combined with the high price of land, the lower level of personal incomes, and the slower rate of residential decentralization. Based on the criteria of density alone, most suburban communities that have developed during the post-socialist era in the former socialist countries could qualify as smart growth projects in the United States.
- *Territorial administration.* Unlike the history of suburbanization in the West, the process of residential decentralization in Central and Eastern Europe has not been fortified by a process of concurrent administrative separation and fragmentation. Many of the new suburban communities are adjacent to the communist housing estates, and still lie within the administrative boundaries of the metropolitan jurisdiction. This is due to the fact that many of the small towns and villages surrounding the largest Eastern European cities were annexed to the central city territories during the 60's and 70's in order to create land reserves for future urban growth of cities.
- *Social differentiation.* The values of residential properties in the suburbs of CEE metropolitan areas are fairly high relative to the price of the average dwelling in the city. Living in a single family house remains still a luxury that only a few Central and Eastern European urban residents can afford. Thus, the new post-socialist suburbs are still quite homogeneous in terms of their social makeup. The only instances of a social mix appear in the suburbs built around existing villages, where the old settlers are of rather modest means.

3. SPRAWL DEVELOPMENT IN THE CAPITALIST CITY: PLATTE RIDGE, KANSAS CITY, MO

Strict segregation of uses in a city area has always been a firm characteristic of urban planning in the United States of America. Such policy has led to zoning regulations separating housing from business, catering and other commercial uses. Combined with transport policy, zoning regulations encourage sprawl and prevent more sustainable forms of development. As a result of such planning policy, the US is dominated by

sprawling residential settlements with low population density, completely auto-dependent. Urban sprawl is characterized by a multitude of congested highways, along which are aligned commercial strips, big-box structures, deserted shopping malls and office parks (Tachieva, 2010). Uses in suburbia are separated from each other in a manner of isolated enclaves in urban mega-blocks, there is no integration. Retail facilities are also the only use in their own zone, and as a rule, their structures are large, accessible exclusively by car, with large parking lots. Retail can be grouped with catering, which is shaped in the same manner. Suburban residential neighborhoods have no other amenities, nor even a local store for everyday needs.

These features are well illustrated in the example of the Platte Ridge neighborhood: vast areas are occupied by traffic infrastructure; solely residential zone prevails (mainly individual buildings on large plots); zones of schools, parks, churches and commercial strip (retail and catering) are isolated from housing (not-walkable) and located along major highways; diversity of non-residential uses is low, and cultural, administrative and civic facilities are not present at all (Fig. 1). All of these uses are positioned in urban mega-blocks and are auto-accessible only. Local centers do not exist.

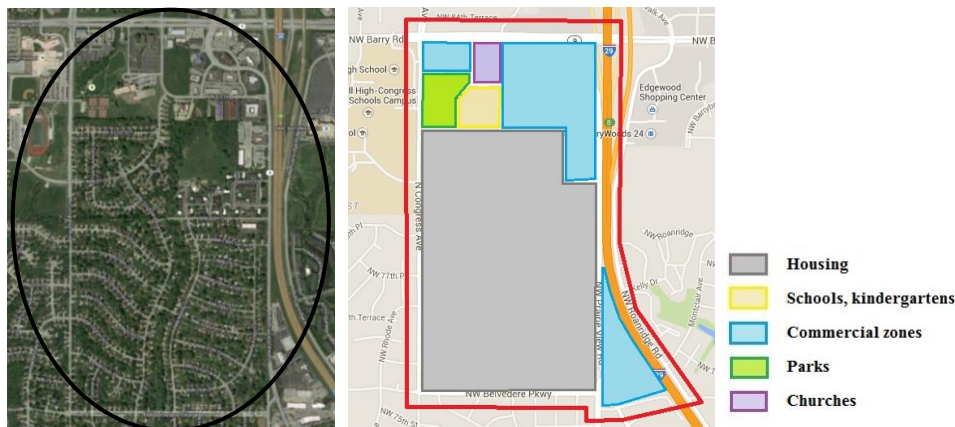


Fig. 1 Urban sprawl in the capitalist city and zones of different uses: Platte Ridge neighborhood, Kansas City, Mo, USA.
Source: <https://www.google.rs/maps> and authors

Suburban population of developed capitalist countries has negative attitude towards high densities as they are equalized with lower quality of urban environment, traffic jams and reduced spatial standards (Llewelyn-Davies et. al, 2009). This particularly refers to the population density, but also to the density of non-residential uses in residential areas. Urban sprawl with very low population densities is in particular characteristic of the American suburbia, where the market determines development models. Residents of suburbia prefer their homes to be isolated and to be located on large property lots, because: they comprise less denizens and less traffic, allow better privacy of the neighborhood and increase land cost, which prevents the less wealthy classes from moving into the neighborhood (Schmitz, 2003). For this reason, commercial uses are excluded from residential zones. Very low levels of population density in the analyzed case do not provide sufficient support for non-residential uses at the local neighborhood level (Table 1).

Table 1 Population density in the analyzed neighborhood

Neighborhood	Population (in)	Area (ha)	Popul. density (in/ha)
Platte Ridge, Kansas City, Mo	2.300	146	16 in/ha

In capitalistic cities, the share of public spaces in total urban area is significantly lower, and decreases with the distance from the center (Stanilov, 2007). Only a small number of city parks can be found at the suburban periphery of American cities. In sprawling neighborhoods, the habit of walking is altogether abandoned due to huge walking distances, and thus the focal points of pedestrian traffic - the open and public spaces - disappear. Social contact is made difficult, because of private ownership of suburban areas and permanent efforts to avert the passers-by, in order to increase neighborhood safety (Schmitz, 2003). Without any central facilities or public spaces, no local centers can be formed within the residential zone. The only public spaces are located inside the shopping malls, which take on the role of the district center. In the analyzed case of Platte Ridge neighborhood in Northland suburbs, it can be observed that the commercial activities are grouped within their zone; their structures have large floor plans, and are surrounded by huge parking areas that hinder pedestrian access (Fig. 2). Such urban design does not encourage social interactions, so there are no public spaces in the immediate surroundings of the structure. Retail parks as an urban form have a long tradition in the United States of America as the so-called commercial strip. It is a group of structures that contain several large commercial chains, usually located at the periphery of the city or outside the urban boundary. The urban design is modest, with buildings designed as Gnd. level or Gnd. level+1. Since these are usually areas with low population density, the structures have a suburban character and are auto-oriented.

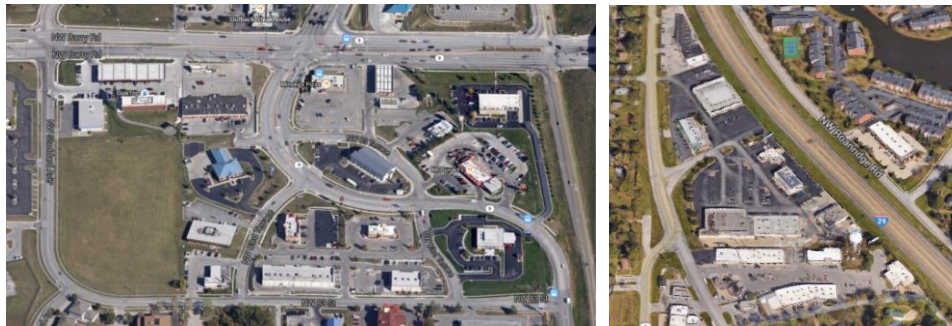


Fig. 2 The absence of public spaces in the commercial zone of suburbia in Kansas City – structure surrounded by parking lots.

Source: <https://www.google.rs/maps>

Auto-oriented transport model enhanced urban sprawl and favored segregation of uses. The urban growth of American cities nowadays reaches enormous proportions, due to vast available land resources in the US (Dinić & Mitković, 2011). The US transport network nowadays shows serious deficiencies as it failed to follow the population growth and spatial dispersion of population. There are numerous reasons which brought this about: huge increase in number of people and households; changes in residential habits

requiring each family to possess at least one car for everyday life; suburban road system of major arterials of large profile, from which neighborhood cul-de-sac streets are accessed, created jams at a few points of access into suburban neighborhoods; inefficient land use with segregation of uses, that cannot be reached without a car and that generate needs for large parking space (Schmitz, 2003). The analyzed case of Platte Ridge confirms that low population density and auto-designed environments do not allow walking or serving suburbia with the public transport, as well as they favor the segregation of uses.

4. POST-SOCIALIST SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT: NIŠ CASE STUDY

Even though the phenomenon of sprawling suburbia occurred in Eastern Europe much later than in Western Europe, it unfolded following the capitalist sprawl model. After the transition to market economy in the year 1989, investments in the commercial real estate market in CEE cities reflected the spatial distribution of both residential and non-residential uses, causing a dramatic transformation of urban structure of the post-socialist city (Stanilov, 2007). Even though the post-socialist period has been marked by the dispersal of all urban activities, the decentralization of office, retail, and industrial uses has had a stronger impact on the spatial structure of the CEE metropolitan areas than the concurrent processes of residential deconcentration (Stanilov, 2007). The suburbanization of the post-socialist cities differs from the patterns of capitalist suburbanization, where residential deconcentration led the dispersal of the rest of the urban functions away from the inner city (Stanilov, 2007). The process of residential suburbanization in Central and Eastern Europe proceeded at a fairly slow rate. The suburbanization of office and particularly retail functions, however, presented a dramatic shift in the patterns of urban development (Stanilov, 2007). The decentralization of retail usually preceded the process of residential suburbanization, instead of following it.

The boom of residential construction at the urban periphery of the post-socialist city is a result of various factors: the rise of commercial facilities at the expense of residential use in the city center, the restitution of land, the relaxation of land development controls, the establishment of an open land market and the diversification of residential choices (Stanilov, 2007). After decades of living in small apartments of collective housing, the residents of Eastern Europe began buying houses in the suburbs (Stanilov, 2007). Tammaru et al. (2009) note that new development occurs in the form of scattered mono-functional settlements on former agricultural land, adjacent to the existing urban fabric or completely independent of it. Boundaries between urban and rural become unclear.

In the case of the City of Niš, residential decentralization appears beyond the urban boundary, at the south and west hillside of Vinik hill, in the area between former rural settlements Donji and Gornji Komren, neighborhood Branko Bjegović and the road leading to village Kamenica (Fig. 3A). The genesis of sprawling development in this area is mostly associated with the period of transition. At the foot of the Vinik hill, along the roads to Hum, Kamenica and Knjaževac, the first spontaneous construction of weekend cottages began in the 8th decade of the 20th century (Simonović, 1995). In the post-socialist period, began a process of transformation of these weekend cottages into permanent homes (Vinik neighborhood), and new low-density residential development also occurred in this area (Podvinik neighborhood) (Dinić & Mitković, 2016). Since the development of these settlements unfolds in the area between the established urban boundary and former villages,

and since the urban territory has a lower value of demographic growth than the suburban territory, it can be stated that the development in this area has the characteristics of post-socialist urban sprawl.

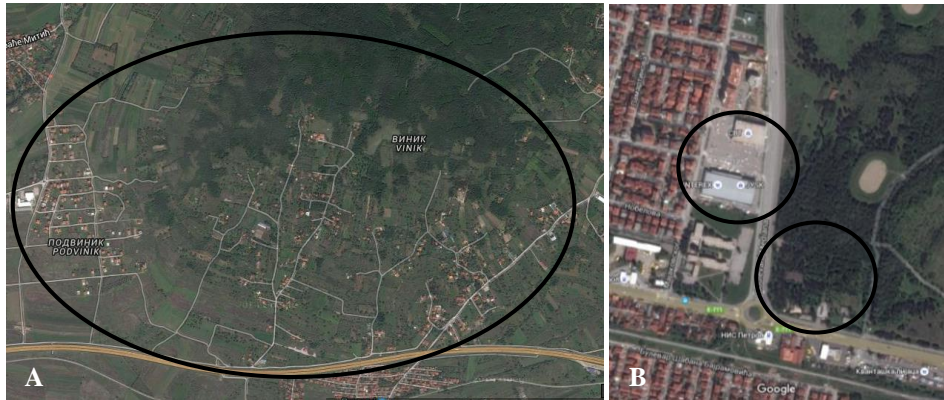


Fig. 3 Decentralization of residential and retail uses in the post-socialist city: A) residential zone Podvinik and Vinik, B) retail centers in Duvanište neighborhood, both in Niš administrative area.

Source: <https://www.google.rs/maps>

Most of the structures in both neighborhoods were constructed illegally, so there is no adequate infrastructure in the area. The Vinik area is solely a residential zone (mainly individual buildings on large plots), with no other amenities, not even a local store. Basic urban needs of denizens of Vinik zone are partially met in the neighboring settlement of Branko Bjegović, which also originated as an informal settlement (school, kindergarten, health center, local retail). These facilities are pedestrian-isolated from housing in Vinik zone. All other urban needs are met in the city and residents are dependent on cars. Very low levels of population density in the analyzed case indicate the beginnings of suburbanization in this area, and do not provide sufficient support for non-residential uses at the local neighborhood level (Table 2) (Dinić & Mitković, 2016). Planning documents are trying to control sprawl in this area by increasing residential densities and the concentration of non-residential uses, providing public services (schools, kindergartens) and creating local centers in both neighborhoods (MP of Niš, 2011).

Table 2 Population density in the analyzed neighborhoods

Neighborhood	Population (in)	Area (ha)	Popul. density (in/ha)
Podvinik and Vinik	2.000	150	13

Besides the lack of adequate infrastructure, in the case of Vinik suburbs there are no public spaces within the residential zone. The only public spaces are located in the surrounding neighborhoods, which makes establishing social contacts very difficult. The low-density pattern of suburban growth enables public transit options to the growing suburban areas (Hirt & Stanilov, 2009) and stultifies walking. A necessary precondition

of suburban life is to own a car. Although many of the former peripheral villages surrounding socialist cities were connected with public transit, the level and quality of this service is significantly below the aspirations of new suburban residents (Stanilov, 2007). Therefore, a sudden rise in the level of motorization occurred.

The new patterns of non-residential development have had both a positive and a negative impact on the urban structure of the post-socialist city. In a majority of cases, the employment options were increased for the denizens of peripheral settlements, and the level of public services was significantly improved. On the other hand, the decentralization of these activities has also generated an array of urban problems, such as: the increase in automobile traffic due to the location of new developments in areas poorly serviced by public transit; the subsequent rise in the levels of air and noise pollution; the diminishing access to jobs for the segment of the population without cars; the disappearance of open space at the urban periphery; and the increase in public costs for providing infrastructure and services to the outlying areas (Stanilov, 2007). Another negative trend in the post-socialist metropolitan areas has been the mono-functional development at the city periphery. Office parks, large scale retail, commercial facilities or light industry as a separate group of structures of low density, are usually located at the periphery of the city, auto-oriented and not well integrated into the surroundings. The most common case is the one where a main road is laid out at the city periphery, and along this road the uses that generate high levels of traffic are positioned (retail or office use). This layout favors automobile access, it is not pedestrian-friendly, and important facilities are located at the city periphery in the form of „big-boxes“.

The altered market conditions at the end of the 90's in the City of Niš also caused the decentralization of retail (Fig. 3B). Under great market pressure, after the second change of the Master Plan of Niš in the year 2004, there was a change of use of a formerly planned school complex in Majakovskog street into an „urban residential zone with business“. The plot was soon subdivided for the construction of social housing and retail. The larger part of the plot (2ha) was included in the newly formed secondary city center, and a megamarket and large scale shops were built (engineering goods and household shops Interex-Neptun-Jysk). The total area occupied by buildings is 10.000 m² and there is a parking lot for 500 vehicles. This retail center in Duvanište neighborhood was built on the undeveloped land (undeveloped land was considered „available“, regardless of the standing plans), totally independent from the city centers network. Later, this area was integrated into the secondary city center by force. One more new retail park Stop Shop opened in 2016. in the location of the former tourist complex of the motel Medijana. Retail area encompasses a megamarket and various shops of 13.000 m², with a surface parking lot for 300 vehicles. Although the retail park is accessible by public transit, the dominant manner of access is by car.

Retail parks in the post-socialist city became popular only at the beginning of transition period. All of the mentioned newly built retail structures have a classic big-box design – huge setbacks and large surface area, they are low rise objects (Gnd. level or Gnd. level+1), surrounded by vast parking lots, auto-oriented with difficult pedestrian access, with blank facades, without any organized/green public spaces for gathering, without *genius loci* (spirit of the place) and with no integration into the surroundings (Fig. 4). It is noted that such retail formats cannot form high-quality public spaces. The only pedestrian and public spaces arise directly to the entrance area of the facility, and along with catering facilities lean on parking, without any quality views.



Fig. 4 Urban design of retail facilities in Duvanište neighborhood.

Source: A) http://www.elit-m.com/photos/gallery/5/85/thumbnails/500x500/85_neptun%20cela.jpg,

B) <http://www.putinzenjering.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Stop-Shop-1.jpg>

5. CONCLUSION

In the analyzed case of post-socialist suburbanization of the City of Niš, some common characteristics of urban design with capitalist sprawl can be identified, that generate the same problems in usage of space in both formats.

In the case of post-socialist sprawl of Vinik and Podvinik settlements, non-residential uses are not present, while housing is spread out across a vast area. Mono-functionality and poor integration of urban functions represent the main factors in creating the settlements of insufficient vitality (Dinić & Mitković, 2016). Population density is very low, which is similar to capitalist sprawl. There is no adequate spatial framework for vital public spaces, and denizens are dependent on cars. However, standing planning documents disable further sprawling of this suburbia and distinguish it from capitalist sprawl. Standing regulations limit plot sizes for individual housing (which increases population density), they also provide for medium-density areas and establish the locations of neighborhood centers. It should be noted that the unfavorable economic situation in the post-socialist city served as an unintentional mechanism for limiting the residential suburbanization and sprawl. However, the rise of standard could possibly lead to the scenario where former rural settlements, at a 30-minute driving distance from the city, become very favorable places for residing due to their contact with nature (Dinić & Mitković, 2016). Therefore, improving public transport on the entire city territory must be taken into account, in order to stimulate sustainable transportation models.

Decentralization of commercial use is also a characteristic of the post-socialist development of the City of Niš. Retail park is a format that has arrived late to Serbia, but quickly gained popularity. In a similar manner to the capitalist sprawl, auto-oriented commercial strips along major roads are developed, which are pedestrian unfriendly and surrounded by parking lots. The analyzed retail park is situated at the city periphery, but the thing that distinguishes it from capitalist sprawl is the fact that it is located in the moderate density urban zone, that can uphold a neighborhood center. In this case, it is particularly unfavorable that such facilities are built in the area that is intended for the formation of the secondary city center according to planning documents. Current planning trends state that auto-oriented big-box formats are not acceptable in city centers (mono-functional zones such as big-box retail, catering, office), because these facilities

generate massive traffic of individual vehicles. In the analyzed case, the urban design, uses and accessibility of a retail park are not suitable for a central location, so it should not be positioned within the immediate area of a settlement center. However, commercial big-box structures can be located in the circumferential area of a center, between the immediate center and housing, in those streets that do not require active façades. A necessary pre-condition for such objects is good accessibility from major roads, but access to public transit also needs to be provided, as well as pedestrian links to the surrounding residential area. In those particular cases when existing big-box structures need to be integrated in the immediate center area, it is necessary to perform their remodeling, activation of street façade fronts and provide for quality landscaping and paving. These structures can fit into their surroundings by forming an additional layer of smaller structures /shops, which are supposed to create better pedestrian scenery, both functionally and visually.

Finally, it can be concluded that the post-socialist City of Niš is not currently developing according to the model of capitalist sprawl, and that this development scenario is highly unlikely in the future. However, this paper draws attention to the ongoing adoption of certain negative characteristics from capitalist sprawl development patterns. This planning practices need to be carefully reviewed, in order to avoid creating unsustainable suburban environments in the future.

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POST-SOCIJALISTIČKA SUBURBANIZACIJA I DISPERZIVNI RAZVOJNI OBRASCI – STUDIJA SLUČAJA GRADA NIŠA

Jedan od karakterističnih formata suburbanog razvoja u drugoj polovini 20. veka je disperzija. Različiti autori navode kako disperzija karakteriše podjednako urbani razvoj kapitalističkih i nekadašnjih socijalističkih gradova. Međutim, gradovi Centralne i Istočne Evrope bili su kompaktni tokom čitavog perioda socijalizma, a disperzivni razvoj ubrzano započinju tek devedesetih godina. Cilj ovog rada je da ustanovi prostorno-funkcionalne karakteristike kapitalističke urbane disperzije i utvrdi sličnosti i razlike sa post-socijalističkim suburbanim obrascima. U radu je prikazano naselje koje predstavlja tipičnu urbanu disperziju u kapitalističkom gradu: susedstvo Platte Ridge u metropolitanskom području Kansas City-ja, Missouri, USA. Potom su analizirana dva suburbana segmenta grada Niša, Srbija nastala u post-socijalističkom periodu, koji predstavljaju tipične primere decentralizacije funkcija stanovanja i trgovine: stambena zona Podvinik/Vinik izvan urbane granice i trgovački centar na periferiji grada u naselju Duvanište. U radu se ukazuje na probleme koje urbani dizajn modela kapitalističke disperzije proizvodi u korišćenju prostora u post-socijalističkom gradu.

Ključne reči: *suburbanizacija, urbana disperzija, decentralizacija stanovanja i trgovine, urbani dizajn*