

## Lack of Consistent Guidelines for Maintenance of Federal Buildings

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### Short Communication

Development of a conservation management plan that brings together historical documentary evidence, physical analysis of the existing fabric, and knowledge of its performance will inform a long term strategy for the care and conservation of the house. At the same time, this project will provide a model for the preservation of similar buildings from this era by demonstrating ways that thoughtful conservation can be applied to modern buildings. In 1956, Brazilian President Juscelino Kubitschek committed his government to the erection of a new federal capital in the country's remote interior, to be inaugurated before the end of his term of office [1]. This constituted a major step toward achieving a two-centuries-old dream of spreading the country's population into the hinterland of Brazil. Through a national competition held the following year, an international jury selected the entry by Lucio Costa for the urban design of the new city the so-called Pilot Plan of Brasilia [2]. A crucial feature of Costa's proposal was a sharp distinction between an administrative civitas of monumental character and the everyday urbs [3]. On a monumental axis running east to west and lined by a sequence of public buildings, the Esplanade of Ministries abuts the capital's foremost civic space, the Three Power Plaza. Brasilia's residential quarters which were meant for five hundred thousand inhabitants and included commerce, service, and educational and health facilities were conceived in terms of neighbourhood units and modulated in superblocks along an arched north-south freeway. This division of the urban fabric between the civic space and the residential areas was highly deliberate [4]. It was intended to make possible the speedy completion of the most prominent civic structures to create an emblematic vision of the nation's new capital. The strategy was effective [5]. For the civitas, world-renowned architect Oscar Niemeyer and his team designed the executive, legislative, and judiciary palaces, Brasilia's celebrated icons. The most essential bureaucracy was accommodated without delay, and the population of the Federal District quickly jumped to about one hundred fifty thousand inhabitants after the inauguration [6]. Half a century later, Brasilia is the fourth-largest metropolis in the country and the home of more than two and a half million citizens. While the original nucleus accommodates chiefly the upper middle classes, by far the greater portion of the population, covering a wider social range, lives in the twenty-seven satellite towns that now exist in the Federal District. Most of these are merged into one extensive multi-centred conurbation sprawling from the Pilot Plan toward the southwest, connected by a few expressways [7]. With the exception of some neighbourhoods teeming with high-rise apartment buildings, dispersion, low densities, and extensive empty lands are the rule. An insufficient mass transportation system, segregation, and neglected public spaces problems not unusual in metropolitan areas are much amplified in Brasilia by misguided urban policies. Some of these shortcomings, such as road specialization and mono-functional zoning, were part and parcel of the Modern Movement ideals, which shaped the urban planning agenda [8]. As a consequence, they are inherent traits of the Pilot Plan and its offspring, the satellite towns, and today they are in urgent need of revision. With respect to preservation in Brasilia, few buildings are listed individually, and regulatory protection remains vague, without detailed guidelines for current conservation [9]. Combined with the problems that stem from administrative disarray,

a pervading admiration for the work of Costa and Niemeyer and a reverence for their original designs constantly impede common sense solutions to the city's problems [10].

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### Conflict of Interest

None

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