

Privatization of a Western Area of Mexico City. Where higher Income Families live.

INTRODUCTION

At the present time México City has a population of more than 19 million inhabitants and its urban area covers more than 1300 sq. Km. This Metropolis is geographically located in 2 federal entities, the State of Mexico and the Federal District, the latter with a little less than 50% of the population and the conurbated municipalities of the State of Mexico making up the rest of the population.

The Federal District consists of 16 Delegations with a total area of 1500 sq.kms., half of them occupied by urban land and with a population close to 9.5 million inhabitants. From the State of Mexico, which is much larger, more than 20 of its municipalities conform the other half of the City.

The conurbation process of the State of Mexico municipalities to the Federal District started in the 50's and increases constantly. By 2005 it was calculated that the conurbated municipalities surpassed the population of the Federal District. Mexico City as a whole is estimated will keep on growing up to 2045 with a maximum population between 23 to 25 million inhabitants. These forecasts are done considering the decreasing trend that the annual population growth rate has shown since the 80's which by the middle of the 70's reached its maximum of more than 6% and by now it's less than 1% in the Federal District and 1.5% in the conurbated municipalities.

In this scenario and for the objective of our paper, which is to follow the privatization process of the urban space, we picked one of these conurbated municipalities, Huixquilucan, with an estimated total population of 223,000 inhabitants for 2005. Located in the western part of the Federal District and with a total area of 142 sq.kms, from which, 32 of them are urbanized areas representing 23% of the total municipal area. A large portion of this urban area is part of Mexico City, the rest are scattered small towns (see MAP 1).

OBJECTIVE

The main objective of this paper is to measure in quantitative terms the privatization process of urban land which started in Mexico City in the 1980's, this, studying Huixquilucan which nowadays is part of the City and is one of the more affluent municipalities of the country.

It is important to notice that although in terms of population this entity just accounts for a small part of the total population of Mexico City, a very important fraction of it allocates wealthy neighbourhoods experiencing a dramatic privatization process which is noticeable for anyone visiting it, therefore, this study refers to measurements of territorial manifestations and does not attempt to penetrate in the reasons of this process which should be studied by sociologists or urban anthropologists, hence we assume the general point of view of why this phenomena is taking place and this is for security reasons and acquisition of status

HUIXQUILUCAN MUNICIPALITY

Huixquilucan is located in the eastern part of the State of Mexico, specifically recognized as Region 12, it borders: to the north with the Naucalpan Municipality; to south with the Ocoyoacac Municipality and the Miguel Hidalgo and Cuajimalpa Delegations which belong to the Federal District; to the east with the latter Delegation; and, to the northeast to the Municipality of Lerma.

Huixquilucan accounts for 141.89 square kilometers being its Municipal head the town of Huixquilucan de Degollado, accounting for another 53 human settlements, most of them small towns or pueblos.

Fernando Greene Castillo
Privatization of a western area of Mexico City
42nd ISoCaRP Congress 2006

In 1950 Huixquilucan registered 13,491 inhabitants, in 1970 the population was 33,527, by 1990 , 168,221 inhabitants were accounted, while 193,468 inhabitants were registered by the census in 2000. This year, of the total population of this municipality, the Study Area of this paper, which is officially recognized as the Naucalpan de Juarez region, accounted for 56%, 5 pueblos including the head town accounted for 20%, the rest 24% were located in scattered human settlements all over the Municipio.

Pertaining to the yearly population rate of growth, we registered the next figures: 1960-1.86%; 1980 8.83%; 2000 2.84%. A dramatic decrease is observed, for this reason it is estimated that by 2020 the total population will be 272,771 inhabitants with an annual population growth rate of less than 1%.

This municipality In 2000, registered 137,475 inhabitants older than 12 years , from them 22% were older than 15, of this group 80,763 had elementary education, 57,153 had concluded high school studies while 23,610 had a university education, that is to say 45,838 inhabitants did not have more education than elementary level.

By 2000, 72% of the economic active population were working in tertiary activities, 27% in the manufacturing sector and close to 1% in primary activities, that is to say, although a big portion of this municipality is non urban, livestock, agriculture and forestry are no longer important economic activities .

The orography of this territory is very accidented with altitudes that vary from 2500 to 3400 meters above sea level, altitud increasing from east to west accounting for many mountains with steep slopes and extensive ravines which integrate a topofoms system of hills and small mountains neighbouring with deep revines. There are many small rivers in this territory which run in a dense net of cliffs and ravines, with a depth of 40 to 100 meters, some of them spring in the heights of the mounatins of the region, while others are a continuation of rivers from other areas.

Huixquilucan still posseses a very important natural vegetation which integrates different abiances and ecosystems according to the climate, terrain forms, soil and different types of plants and trees, therefore, an important part of it is covered with pines, oyamel and oaks .

These municipality has five different type of areas considering land uses:

- Urban areas, basically located in the east of the municipality and with many scattered settlements on the west with a rural-urban typification;
- Agriculture without irrigation systems, that is to say adjusting to the rainy seasons, done in terraces, activity developed in areas which were originally forests in the western part, also near urban settlements. Nowadays agriculture has decreased significantly reason why agricultural lands are semiabandoned and covered with natural herbs and weeds that grow on the site;
- Forests which occupy an important part of the studied entity and with an abundant vegetation localized in the western and central part of the municipality. Its size has significantly diminished because of the deforestation for opening of lands to agriculture and urban uses.
- Ravines,cliffs, river basins and brooks found in the western part;
- Altered zones in the east of Huixquilucan where vegetation has been eliminated and erosion is present punctually;
- Open mines for the extraction of construction materials such as sand, gravel,and stone, located in the west which although is not an important economic activity of the municipality causes a major deterioration of the territory.

Considering this scenario and in spite of its shortcomings, Huixquilucan is considered a high quality scenic region, hence, many affluent young families , make this their place of residence and the urban development continues regardless of the problems caused by this.

It is also important to say that the urban policy for this municipality is that of urban growth, with controls over it, mainly, future urban developments should comply with three policies: a) ravines, river basins and brooks could not be touched in any way; b) new developments will

Fernando Greene Castillo
Privatization of a western area of Mexico City
42nd ISoCaRP Congress 2006

not be authorized unless the Water Commission of the State of Mexico guarantees the availability of this resource ;and, c) new developments should build the road infrastructures which surround them contained in the present urban plan, this in order to create a net of avenues in the new spaces planned for urban development; the interior of these neighbourhoods could be privatized with all the cost of urbanization charged to them

STUDY AREA

The Study Area is located at the eastern region of Huixquilucan and its urbanization is almost complete. Nowadays its population is estimated in 136,175 inhabitants from which 91,175 lived in 31 residential neighbourhoods with an area of 1563 hectares and a total of 27,235 authorized dwellings from which by now, it is estimated that 18,235 are occupied, therefore, the estimated total population once these residential neighbourhoods are totally built and occupied would be 136,175 inhabitants for an average density of 87 inhabitants per hectare,.

The rest of the population in the study area which accounts for an estimated population of 83,760 middle and low income inhabitants, live in traditional neighbourhoods and barrios which occupy 698 hectares with an average estimated density of 120 inhabitants per hectare. (see MAP 1 and TABLE 1).

Some important characteristic of this Area are:

- Most of the families living there are high income families, this is ,a very affluent population;
- In the last 16 years many big neighbourhoods mainly for housing were developed, this surrounding a commercial zone developed at the end of the 80's known as Interlomas, which apart from Santa Fe also in the western area of Mexico City, is the most important commercial and business district in the whole Metropolitan Area;
- Two of the bigger residencial projects include 3 golf courses, designed by signature golf architects, fact that gives an enormous surplus to land values;
- From the 90's a rising phenomena in terms of height of buildings is noticeable since authorizations of housing projects allowed buildings up to 20 stories high;
- New high risers are self contained in terms of facilities for recreational, social and health activities such as , open spaces for leisure and sports, rooms for social activities, spas and even facilities for different religious cults.
- The target of the real estate market is for young professionals in the high income brackets starting a family
- Many of these developments were authorized as closed;
- Old neighbourhoods were closed as much as they could leaving open only regional avenues which the government did not authorize to close;
- Authorized closed neighbourhoods as well as the one opened initially and now closed are practically taking care of themselves, the municipal authorities decrease their involvement in them since they are taking care of their security, gardening and maintenance of lighting and pavements.

PRIVATIZATION OF THE URBAN SPACE

Causes

There are many reasons why the urban space is privatized in Mexico City and in particular at Huixquilucan. This paper assumes that the main cause of this phenomena is for security reasons and a second factor is the fact that privatization allows affluent families to live in secluded urban developments where presumably all neighbours are alike, this creating a "high quality ambiance" and status.

Fernando Greene Castillo
Privatization of a western area of Mexico City
42nd ISoCaRP Congress 2006

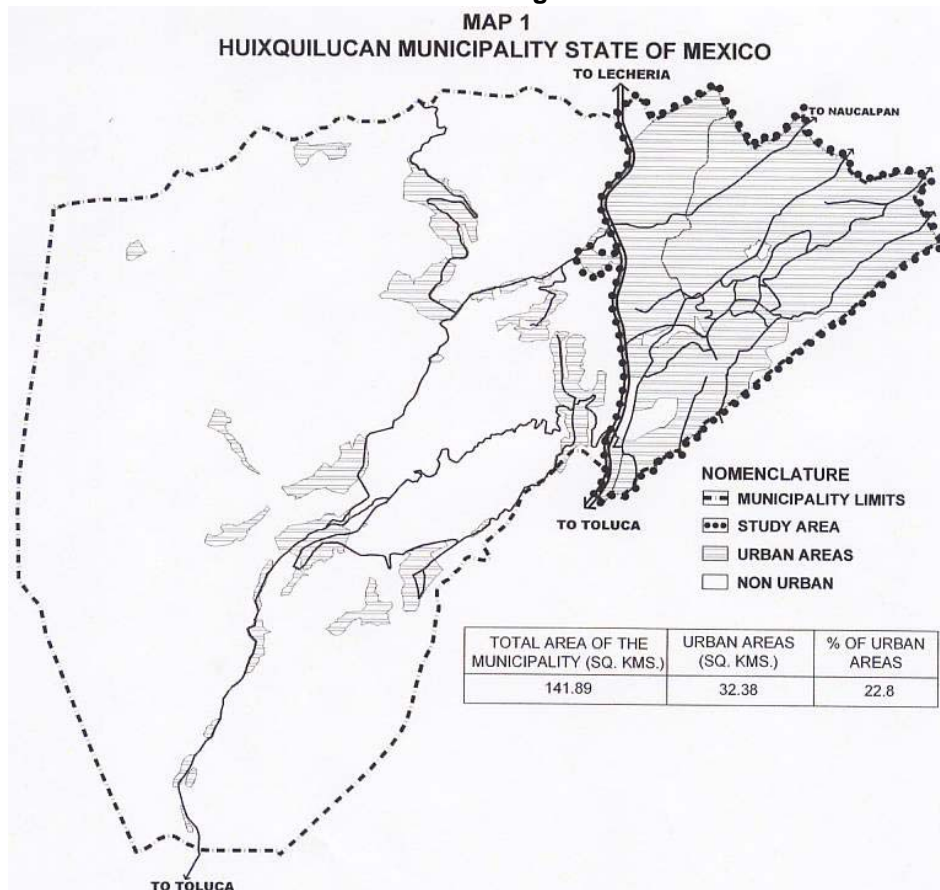


TABLE 1

TYPE OF AREA	NO.	AREA (HAS.)	NUMBER OF DWELLINGS	ESTIMATED POPULATION	DENSITY (POP. /HAS.)
Residential Neighbourhoods(a)	31	1563	27,235	136,175	87
Traditional Neighbourhoods and Barrios(b)	8	698	N/D	83,760	120
Federal areas-water corps(b)		146			
Non urbanized land(b)		183			
TOTAL STUDY AREA		2590		219,935	38

(a) See TABLE 2

(b) Author's estimations

Occupation of the territory

The residential area of Huixquilucan started its development in the middle of the 1950's, at the same time some adjacent traditional neighborhoods or barrios also were born. It could be said that the direction of the urban occupation has been from east to west, the closer to the Federal District the older the neighborhood or barrio.

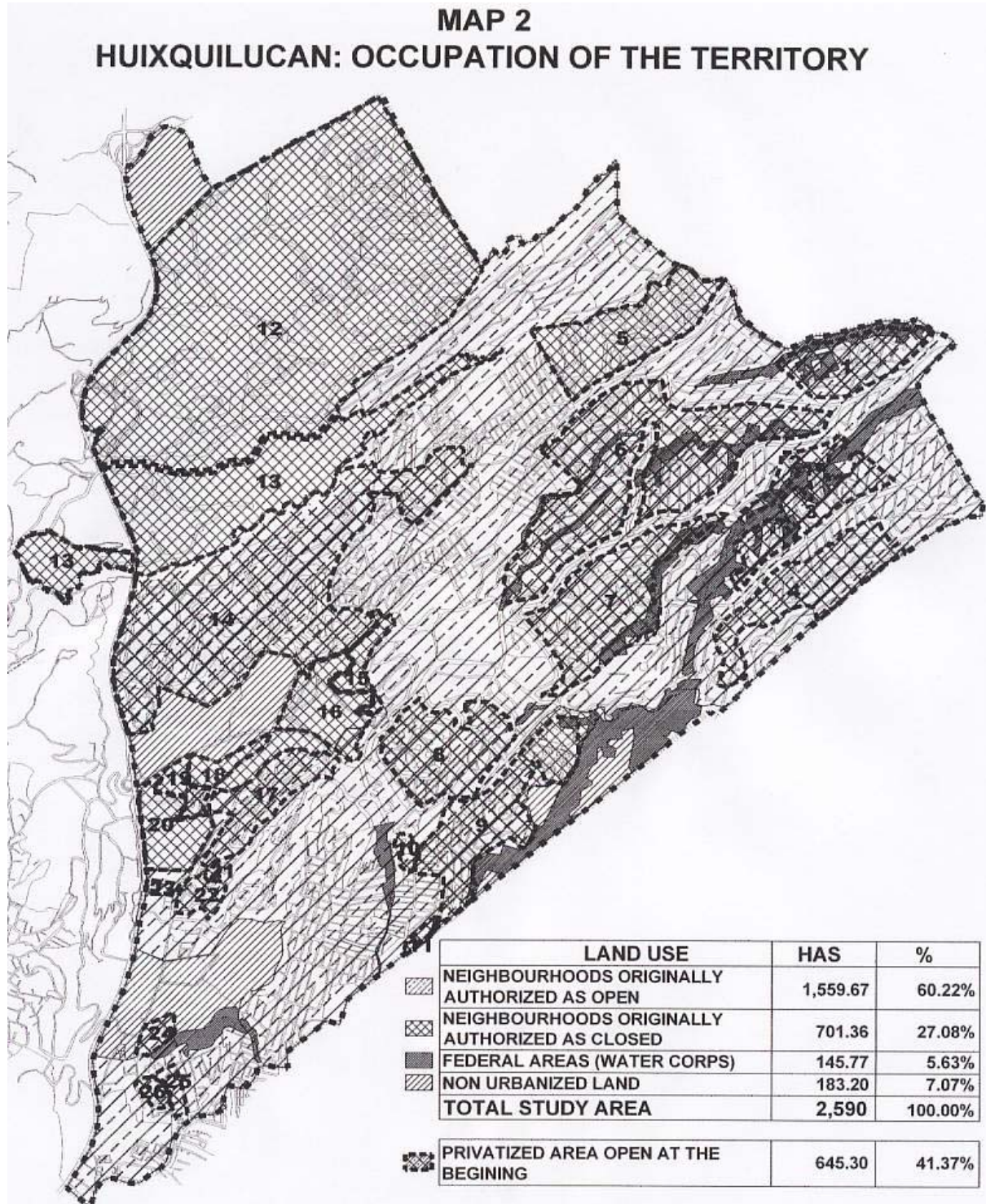
Original authorization of land uses

In order to be able to measure territorial changes regarding privatization, two classifications were made; Neighbourhoods or Barrios originally authorized as open and neighbourhoods or Barrios originally authorized as closed.

From this analysis we conclude that neighbourhoods authorized as open when concluded had 1560 has., figure, which represented 60.22% of the total Study Area, on the other hand

Fernando Greene Castillo
Privatization of a western area of Mexico City
42nd ISoCaRP Congress 2006

neighbourhoods authorized as closed from the beginning accounted for 701 has. or 27.08% of the total Study Area, the remaining 12.7% are Federal Areas or non urbanized land. It is important to say that while open neighbourhoods are older, closed neighbourhoods were very recently authorized, the first of them at the end of the 90's. The reason why the government is authorizing closed developments is because crime in all its forms has dramatically grown for the last ten years, hence, urban developers which design for affluent families pressure the authorities in order allow them to produce commodities which are very welcome in this bracket of population. (See Map 2)



studied residential areas

Fernando Greene Castillo
Privatization of a western area of Mexico City
42nd ISoCaRP Congress 2006

For the purpose of this paper 31 residential areas were studied, these divided in two classes, neighbourhoods and urban housing developments, this classification made up basically considering, in general terms old neighbourhoods which were authorized as open while the new housing developments were all authorized as close. (See table 2).

TABLE 2

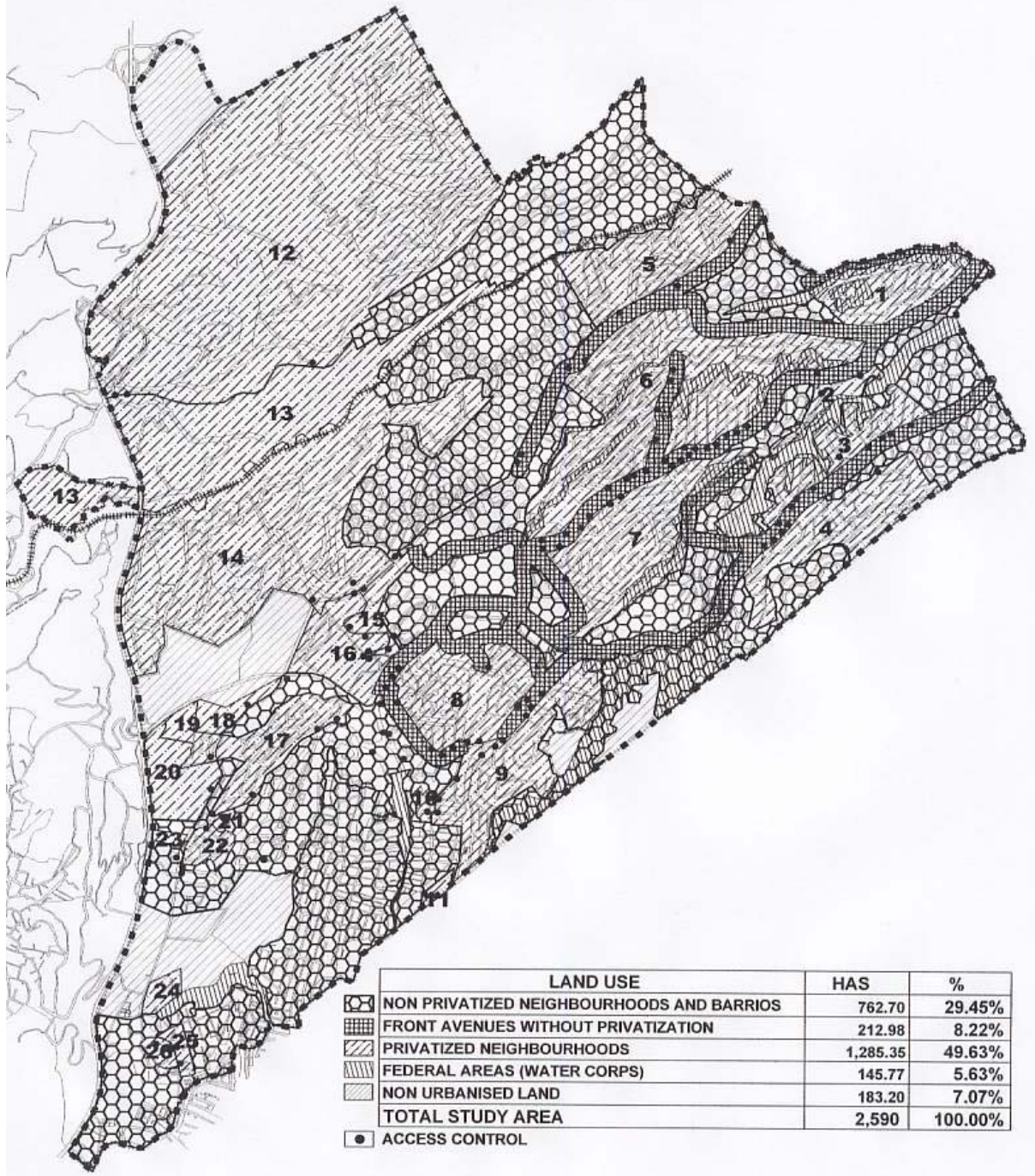
No.	NEIGHBOURHOOD OR URBAN HOUSING DEVELOPMENT	AREA HECTARES	LOTS	AUTHORIZATION DATE	PUBLICATION DATE OR AUTHORIZATION NUMBER RECORD	NUMBER OF DWELLINGS
1	Balcones de la Herradura o Lomas del Jazmín	10.63	187	28/02/1973	25/02/1987	187
2	Bosques de la Herradura	74.89	1,033	07/12/1972	25/02/1987	1033
3	Bosques de las Lomas XV Sección	20.55	170	25/10/1974	25/02/1987	170
4	Bosques de las Palmas	17.61	199	06/12/1983	25/02/1987	99
5	La Herradura	180.06	(1)	31/03/1962	25/02/1987	1,886
6	Lomas Anáhuac	45.11	(1)	30/07/1969	25/02/1987	443
7	Lomas de las Palmas	55.64	688	17/07/1969	25/02/1987	688
8	Lomas de Tecamachalco Sección Bosques	111.36	(1)	03/12/1956	25/02/1987	793
9	Lomas de Tecamachalco Sección Cumbres	13.00	(1)	11/09/1957	25/02/1987	199
10	Lomas del Olivo	3.38	49	15/03/1973	25/02/1987	49
11	Lomas del Sol	15.89	(1)	24/08/1974	25/02/1987	340
12	Parques de la Herradura	61.99	(1)	30/01/1979	25/02/1987	1115
13	Paseos de las Palmas	28.99	(1)	30/07/1975	25/02/1987	646
14	Riconada de la Herradura	3.43	67	23/01/1979	25/02/1987	67
15	Lomas de la Herradura	42.42	(1)	17/11/1972	25/02/1987	(1)
16	Hacienda de las Palmas	76.54	(1)	22/07/1991	22/07/1991	2,500
17	Lomas Country Club	141.36	233	(1)	19/12/1996	1,328
18	Centro Urbano San Fernando-LaHerradura	54.83	123	(1)	03/10/1991	(1)
19	Real del Country	8.74	56	10/12/1998	19/02/1999	107
20	Residencial Club de Golf Lomas	17.78	23	22/07/1991	19/12/1996	436
21	Residencial Villa Florence	11.70	72	25/11/1992	04/05/1999	415
22	Valle de la Palmas	26.68	15	(1)	25/02/1987	700
TOTAL NEIGHBOURHOODS		1,022.58	2,915	-	-	13,201
URBAN HOUSING DEVELOPMENT						
1	Fronroso	3.01	7	12/01/1999	03/02/1999	277
2	El Bosque	6.12	9	18/11/1996	19/12/1996	360
3	Fuentes de las Lomas	23.63	82	30/08/1999	24/07/2000	498
4	La Enramada - Jardines del Golf	12.96	18	23/12/1996	12/02/1997	480
5	Bosque Real	417.90	196	24/08/1999	07/09/1999	10,469
6	Greenhouse	68.21	408	10/07/1995	01/08/1995	1,302
7	Los Sauces	1.41	7	16/07/1999	22/07/1999	240
8	Toledo	3.03	4	30/11/2001	OF. 206020015/H016-01	240
9	High Lands	4.14	8	19/11/96	OF. 206114010/H055-96	168
TOTAL URBAN HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS		540.31	739	(1)	(1)	14,034
TOTAL		1,562.99	3,654.00	-	-	27,235

SOURCE:
 AUTHORIZED DRAWINGS. Dirección General de Administración Urbana
 (1) NOT INDICATED IN THE: "Gaceta de Gobierno del Estado de México"

Fernando Greene Castillo
Privatization of a western area of Mexico City
42nd ISoCaRP Congress 2006

Neighbourhoods accounted for a total of 22 cases occupying 1022 hectares with a total of 2915 lots, most of them for the construction of single houses, however, in some cases high rise housing is allowed, the total number of dwellings being 13201. Nine housing developments were studied with a total area of 1563 hectares, 3654 lots and 27235 authorized dwellings, in this type of developments the majority of them are part of high rise buildings.

MAP 3
HUIXQUILUCAN: CONDITION OF TERRITORY
REGARDING PRIVATIZATION



Fernando Greene Castillo
Privatization of a western area of Mexico City
42nd ISoCaRP Congress 2006

From these housing developments , Bosque Real authorized fully privatized from the start and the newest of them stands out, this because of its size, 418 hectares and its 10469 dwellings figure that represents more than 30% of the total of these type of developments. Considering the figures above, 2583 hectares were studied in which more than 40 thousand dwellings are authorized.

Privatization phenomena

The privatization phenomena of Huixquilucan should be analyzed considering that up to 1998 most of the residential areas were neighbourhoods authorized as open, while from this year on, all new housing developments or neighbourhoods have been authorized with a closed condition, this mainly because of security or for status reason as pointed out before.

At the present time and for the total of our Study Area with a total of 2590 hectares, 1285 hectares or 50% of the total stands as private areas in which access controls do not allow any one to enter unless previous identification or proof of living in that particular place.

Many of the old neighbourhoods that had suffered privatization could not do it completely since some of their avenues stand as regional infrastructures, therefore they could not be closed and the properties at its sides remain open. These non privatized front avenues, which nowadays are part of privatized neighbourhoods occupied 213 hectares representing 8.22% of the total Study Area.

Non privatized areas are composed of small parts of the aforementioned privatized neighbourhoods and traditional neighbourhoods and barrios, accounting for 763 hectares or 30% of our Study Area.

The rest of the 329 hectares or 12.7% of the total Study Area are Federal Areas containing water corps or the remaining non urbanized land.(See MAP 3 and TABLE 3).

CONCLUSIONS

1. From the 90's on, organized crime started increasing at a fast rate all over Mexico. The Federal Government as well as governments of different states declare that crime is diminishing, nevertheless, the public perception is very negative since many people have suffered some major or minor incident or know of someone who has. Depending upon the public officials who declares something related to crime, the causes of it vary. For civil servants with a democratic-socialist perspective, the main cause of crime is the failure of the economic model to create well paid jobs, for this reason according to them, close to half a million people migrate to the United States each year. For democratic-conservatives the reason of rising crime is because Mexico's Congresses have not been capable of agreeing in structural economic, political and work reforms needed to increase the annual rate of economic growth.

In any case, it does not matter if crime rises or falls or the causes of it, most of the population is taking precautions against this phenomena, more over affluent families which are more desirable targets .

The territorial manifestation of this perception is the privatization of entire chunks of the urban space of municipalities with affluent families like the one we are studying.

2. Since the middle of the 90's the State of Mexico where Huixquilucan is located, has attended the thisproblem by authorizing residential neighbourhoods as closed.
3. Our study area is a clear example of this privatization process since according to our results half of the territory is now privatized, this includes private property, streets and parks.

Fernando Greene Castillo
Privatization of a western area of Mexico City
42nd ISoCaRP Congress 2006

TABLE 3

POLY GON	(HAS)	NEIGHBOURHOODS	
			4. This privatization phenomena has changed the urban panorama, since old residential neighbourhoods which were born open now have many many gates, while new residential neighbourhoods with authorizations to be built as closed not only have gates but also are walled
1	22.13	LA HERRADURA	
2	6.51	LA HERRADURA	
3	23.26	TECAMACHALCO SEC. BOSQUES	
4	45.56	TECAMACHALCO SEC. BOSQUES TECAMACHALCO SEC. CUMBRES	
5	50.86	BOSQUES DE LA HERRADURA	5. Most of the territory of the old residential neighbourhoods where high income families live in the area have already been privatized.
6	111.78	BALCONES DE LA HERRADURA	
		LA HERRADURA	
		PARQUES DE LA HERRADURA	
		RINCONADA DE LA HERRADURA	
7	54.42	LOMAS DE LA HERRADURA	6. Traditional neighbourhoods and barrios where low middle and low income families live have remained open from the beginning, in these barrios there is no perception that families living here would prefer the close mode.
		PARQUES DE LA HERRADURA	
		LOMAS DE LA HERRADURA	
8	45.65	LOMAS DE LAS PALMAS	
		PASEOS DE LAS PALMAS	
		C. U. SAN FDO LA HERRADURA	
		VALLE DE LAS PALMAS	
9	51.83	LOMAS DE LAS PALMAS	
		LOMAS DEL OLIVO	
		LOMAS DEL SOL	
		VALLE DE LAS PALMAS	
10	3.07	LOMAS DE LAS PALMAS	
		LOMAS DEL OLIVO	
11	2.26	SN	
12	422.01	BOSQUE REAL	
13	139.93	BOSQUE REAL	
14	181.22	LOMAS COUNTRY CLUB	
		REAL DEL COUNTRY	
15	9.04	CLUB DE GOLF LOMAS	
16	26.52	CLUB DE GOLF LOMAS	
		GREENHOUSE	
17	28.61	HACIENDA DE LAS PALMAS	
18	7.28	SN	
19	6.98	GREENHOUSE	
		LOMAS COUNTRY CLUB	
20	24.74	FUENTES DE LAS LOMAS	
21	0.80	HACIENDA DE LAS PALMAS	
22	7.05	HACIENDA DE LAS PALMAS	

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