

Mahmood Al-Wahaibi


(Member)



Mahmood Humaiyid Al-Wahaibi was born and raised in Ruwi, Muscat. His father, the sheikh of the Al-Wahaibi people, dedicated his entire life to serve his people who live in Ruwi, the heart of Muscat. Those people have inhabited the area for 3,000 years. The rapid urbanization of Muscat after 1970 and the changing urban landscape of Ruwi to become the new central business district of the country transformed the life of the Al-Wahaibi people, causing them to have to rapidly adapt to modernity. Since a young age he have carried his father's legacy with him. After his father's death, his fascination with urbanization grew with him. As a result, h decided to go forward with his interest in Urban Studies and Planning to be a well-equipped specialist with a solid foundation in this field. It is his desire to not only contribute to the field of urban and regional planning, but to also bring this research to the forefront of the planning projects and implementation in Oman.

His educational journey started when he moved to the U.S. at young age to pursue his dream and experience the world on his own. H moved initially to Minnesota to earn a degree in Urban Planning with limited knowledge of a place that he has only heard about in magazines. Adventuring through the uncharted waters and winters of Minnesota led him to earn his undergraduate degrees from University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, where he double-majored in Urban Studies and Geography and double-minored in GIS and Criminology. He was one of the very first students in the history of the University who graduated with Double Majors and Double Minors in 4 years. He was in the Dean's list for 2 consecutive years for my excellent academic performance.


During his stay in Minnesota, I worked mostly with Non-Profit Organizations (NGOs) such as Greater Frogtwon Community Development Corporation, Do it Green Minnesota!, and Citizens League. For instance, hr worked as GIS specialist with Greater Frogtown where he was tasked to digitize old utility maps and help draft neighborhood masterplan. Through his work at these organizations he gained grassroots experience and knowledge of Urban Planning as a field that exists to serve the people who are in need and to speak up for the weak. He became more knowledgeable of community development and conducting forecasting studies on possible scenarios in order to try and insure sustainability.



After graduating he moved into a successful professional career with Douglas OHI as Business Development Manager. At the age of 26, he was the youngest senior manager in the organization chart. His academic interest pushed him to continue working on different research projects to study urbanization in Oman in general. Therefore, he joined the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign which arguably has the best Urban Planning program in the world and the oldest in the US. He earned his degree in Urban and Regional Planning with 4.0 GPA, making him the first Omani student to graduate from this college with an advanced degree, and one of the few to graduate with 4.0 GPA in the history of the university as well. He was awarded The Karl B. Lohmann award for Departmental Excellence for my outstanding scholarly performance and earned the Illinois's Leadership Certificate from Illinois leadership Center in a 1-year long program sponsored by Rolls Royce for distinguished students with leadership potential. In addition, he has earned specialized degrees in international relations from Yonsei University in South Korea in international relations and Korean Language. He earned his degree with 4.5 GPA (the highest GPA in Korean academic grading) to be the first ever Omani in the history of the institution.

His academic and research interests have led him to conduct research in cooperation with Oman National Spatial Strategy (ONSS) team and Oman Railway company under ASYAD, which is the main logistics company that owns Oman railway company and all logistics hubs in the country including ports. ASYAD is the rebranding name for Oman Global Logistics Group. For instance, he has researched the possible impact of Oman's railway project socially, environmentally, and economically. He has linked the railway project to possible reduction of fatalities in car accidents based on scientific methods. Also, for the ONSS team he has produced a comprehensive evaluation of current logistics capacity of Oman followed by an augmented form gravitational-model to predict non-oil export up to 2022 based on different political scenarios. Professionally, he has been chosen to be a member of the American Planning Association (APA), which is the biggest planning organization in the world as a certified planner. In addition, in 2018 he earned his LEED Green Associate accreditation from the U.S, Green Building Council (USBG) as well as Certified IBDL Coach by International Business Driving License (IBDL) Foundation.

Currently, he works with the ONSS team to evaluate logistics potential of the country in relations to the existing spatial connectivity of Oman. This strategy is crucial to have a deeper understand of the existing potentials of the country to help current economic diversification efforts. Moreover, he has been regularly invited to regional conferences such as Telecom Innovation Oman, eMobility Forum, and Middle East Rail Conference in Dubai to speak about spatial implications of economic diversification in the Gulf Region. Economic pressures, geopolitics and demographic change are real challenges facing the future inspirations of all Gulf States including Oman, and his work addresses those challenges. .





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