

Sheet XXVIII: Built-up area development from the end of the 18th c.*Anna Kowalska & Grzegorz Kowalski*

The map presents the spatial development of built-up areas of Łódź within its current administrative boundaries starting from the end of the 18th century until 2000. The term ‘built-up area’ includes housing, administrative, industrial, service, and similar buildings as well as the roads, streets, and squares in which they stand.

The thematic idea is illustrated against the background of the existing street grid with the various colours indicating the inhabited areas at specific moments in history. Additionally, marked has been the current extent of green areas which include forests, parks, allotments, sporting and recreational grounds, and unmanaged forests.

The map shows the range of built-up areas:

- at the end of the 18th century
- c. 1840
- c. 1870
- c. 1910
- c. 1950
- c. 2000

Additionally, in view of the significant role that railways have played in the city’s development, the areas of railway lines built in each period have been marked, too.

The selection of historical moments to present the city’s development was determined by the unimpressive quantity of available cartographic data resources that would depict the urban development of all the areas within the current administrative boundaries of Łódź.

At the end of the 18th century most of the areas within the current administrative boundaries of Łódź were covered by vast forest complexes, interspersed with agricultural clearings. Developed areas at that time included the settlements of 20 compactly built villages in rural Łódź, the locations of 17 mill settlements, and 5 elongated irregular Dutch settlements with dispersed development.

Based on the decree issued by the governor of the Congress Kingdom of Poland dated 18th September, 1820, Łódź, as well as a number of other settlements, was named an industrial town. Between 1821–1828 in the greenfields delimited were new artisan settlements and a transport system of outgoing roads which has survived until now. Apart from the earlier developments, built-up areas around 1840 included the settlements established as a result of Prussian colonisation after the second partition of Poland. These were large, rural colonies originally initiated by Frederick II, and built-up areas of the early industrial Łódź: the artisan settlement of Nowe Miasto, waterside factory properties on the River Łódka, and the weavers’ settlements of Nowa Łódka and Ślązaki.

In 1840–1870, the areas of housing and factory development filled in the grid of streets with weavers’ and clothiers’ settlements, and waterside factor properties. The development also extended to Nowa Dzielnica, newly laid-out in 1840. In the city’s landscape there also appeared railway sites being part of the factory line that was built in 1866 and terminated at Koluški.

In 1870–1910, developed areas significantly expanded beyond Łódź’s northern and southern administrative boundaries. The development of villages progressed, too. A new railway line to Kalisz and an access railroad to the factory railway line were built.

In 1910–1950, the administrative boundaries of Łódź were extended twice to incorporate in its area partly built-up boroughs on the outskirts and poorly developed adjacent villages and hamlets. Further railway connections were established: Widzew-Zgierz, and Chojny-Olechów. Built-up areas included some hitherto undeveloped rural lands inside and outside the ring railway.

In 1950–2000, initially in the areas destroyed during World War II and the poorly developed areas inside the ring railway, and then in the suburban and rural areas outside the ring railway and along the major outgoing roads built were new vast council and cooperative housing estates, single-family housing estates, and new industrial districts. The layout of these newly developed areas to a large extent erased the earlier spatial patterns.

Literature and sources

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Cartographic files of Wojewódzkie Archiwum Państwowe in Łódź.

Cartographic resources of the Library of Łódź University.

Topographic map in a scale 1:10 000 with coordinates from 1942 issued by the Chief Surveyor, Warsaw 1993.

Private cartographic collections.

Field surveys carried out in July and August 2001.