

## Design your own Roman city by อนุญัตน์ ปังเส็ง

You have learned a lot about Roman urban planning, individual building types, construction techniques, materials, and the patrons and architects who commissioned and designed Roman architecture. Now is the time to put that knowledge to practical use. This is a creative project enabling you to apply what you've studied in your own unique way. Please take advantage of that opportunity and, above all, have fun!

You are an architect and city planner and are competing for the major commission of your lifetime: to design and build a newly founded Roman city. The city is to be the home of 10,000 inhabitants. To obtain the commission you must submit a proposal to the patron describing your city and one "featured building:" What is the name of your city? What is its location and date? What is the city's urban plan? Is it designed like a traditional Roman military camp (castrum) or in a more unusual way? What does its featured building look like? And why is it conceived in that way? Remember that your city should NOT be a duplicate of something that exists, but an IMAGINARY city that might have existed in the Roman Empire. Also keep in mind that the patron might be the emperor, the Roman state, a local governor, a local city council, a wealthy local or foreign benefactor or benefactress, real or imagined, etc. It is up to you to create and tell this story.

Drawings (by hand, computer generated, or some other format that could be presented on the Coursera site) of the plan of the city and its one "featured building" should be accompanied by a 500-word description of the city and the reason for its construction, giving its name, date and location (Italy or one of the Roman provinces). If you prefer, you may select a location elsewhere but, if you do, you must explain why that location is plausible and believable, based on fact or fiction. The location and date, which you select, will determine the city's form and the materials used to build it. You will also need to offer a description of your "featured building." In order to make a case for winning this competition, you will need to include at least some of the essential components of a Roman city, so be sure to think carefully about what buildings to include in order to make yours an attractive, functional, and distinctive city. This will also require you to do your homework and assemble your documentation through research on the Internet and/or in the Library (see a selection of relevant sources below).

You have a lot of freedom to be imaginative here. Nonetheless, if you invent a plan or building that goes against the norm in Roman architecture, you will need to offer an explanation in your written description. So, for example, if you were to include a concrete building in Roman Asia Minor (modern Turkey), this would require justification on your part because, as we shall see in a later lecture, Roman buildings in that part of the world were made primarily of marble. Your explanation can be fictional but it should sound believable.

I can't wait to see what you create!

Diana Kleiner

Rubric:

Since Design Your Own Roman City is the capstone project in this course, 40% of the course grade will come from this project. We are providing customized peer review guidelines for this project, which you should review before you conceive of and submit your own project. You should submit the paper and drawings below. You will either have to scan your non-computer generated drawings or take pictures and then upload them.

Does the author provide a narrative context or “story” for this city, including information about (but not limited to) its location, date, and patron? Please rate the quality of this aspect of the project.

Does the author provide a description of the construction techniques, materials, and style of architecture, and are such features of the city explained in terms of their historical, geographic, and chronological context? Please rate the quality of this aspect of the project.

Has the author shown attention to the layout or spatial arrangement of his or her city (this might be discussed in the description, but should also be apparent from the city plan itself)? Please rate the quality of this aspect of the project.

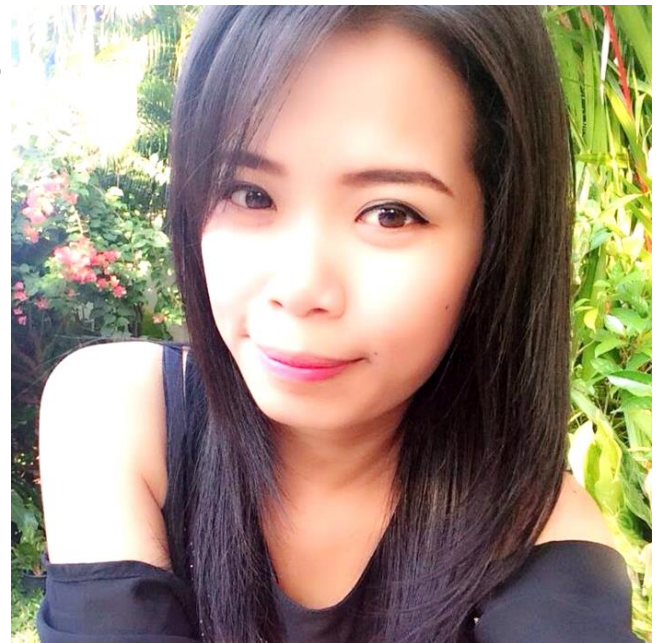
Does the design incorporate at least some of the important components of architecture necessary for a new city, including civic and public architecture (forum, basilica, or baths), commercial areas (individual shops or larger market halls), sacred spaces (temples), entertainment district (theater, amphitheater, or stadium), residential architecture (single-family dwellings, apartment houses, or suburban villas), tombs (outside the walls), and infrastructure (roads, walls, aqueducts)? Please rate the quality of this aspect of the project.

Does the author offer a more detailed explanation of the “featured building” of his or her city? Please rate the quality of this aspect of the project.

Overall, does the author offer a compelling argument in support of his or her new city? Please rate the quality of this aspect of the project.

Overall, does the author’s city plan and “featured building” and his or her description of them demonstrate careful thought and creativity? Please rate the quality of this aspect of the project.

Each of the criteria is worth 5 points, for a total of 35. However, it is impossible to score less than 7 with a submission of any sort. Also, 25 words of feedback are needed.



It is 100 CE.

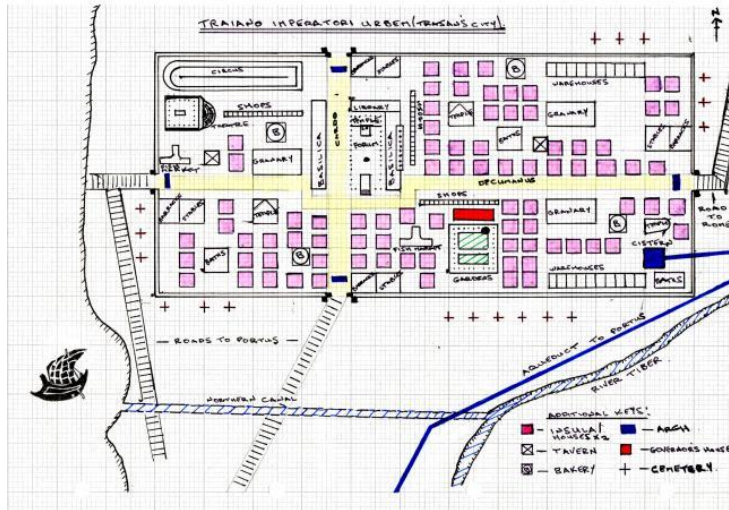
Working in partnership, the architect Apollodorus of Damascus and myself wish to apply for the Commission being offered by Emperor Trajan, to design and build a new Roman City that will house 10,000 people.

Emperor Trajan has also ordered the building of a grand new harbour basin at Portus in Italy. The harbour in the neighbouring port of Ostia has been silting up and large ships are now having difficulties docking there. The port of Ostia has always been a difficult location to defend as well. As a result of these serious problems at Ostia, Emperor Trajan has asked for a new City to be built close to the harbours at Portus.

We propose that the new city be called 'Traiano Imperatori Urbem' (Trajan's City). It will be a completely new build, 30km to the South West of Rome. Located 3km North of Ostia it will be a short distance North East of Portus, just above the Northern canal.

Water will be supplied to the new city from the aqueduct system already serving Portus and the city will also incorporate parts of the existing road from Portus to Rome, therefore saving money.

A high wall with four gated entrances will surround the new City. The City will be protected naturally by the sea to the West, the Northern Canal to the South and the Tiber River to the South and East of the City.



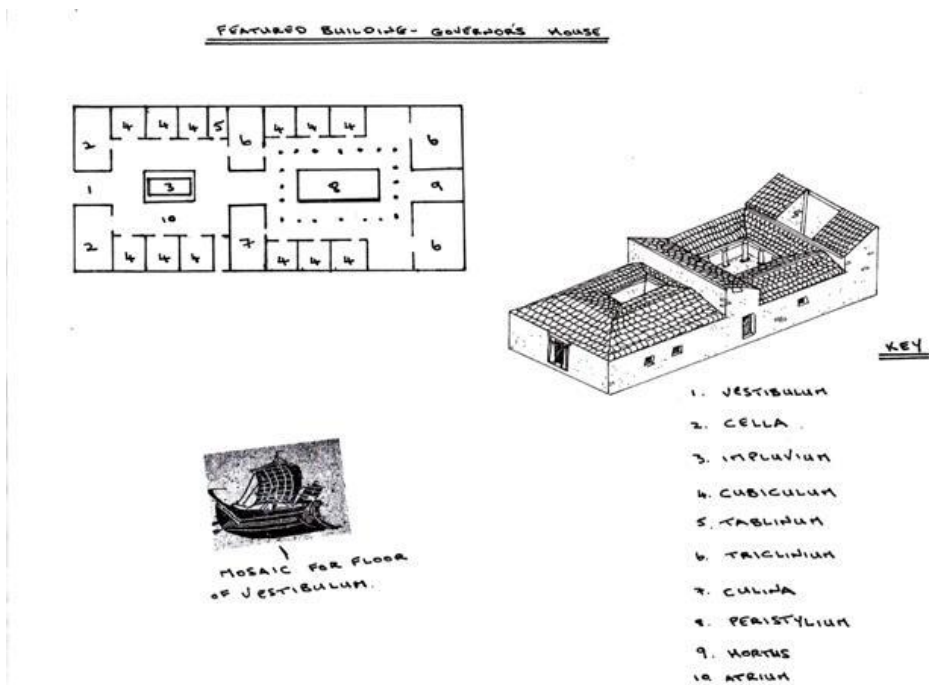
Our plan for the new City is attached above. From this it can be seen that public, spiritual, entertainment and housing facilities have been fully considered. Commemorative Arches in honour of Emperor Trajan will also be erected, just inside the City walls at each entrance.

As Portus has an Imperial Palace and an Amphitheatre, these will be shared with the population of the new City. The new City site will be spacious and will have enough room for a mixture of Insula, single Domus and suburban Villas. Villas can also be built outside of the City walls.

The Decumanus has been re-designed to pass by the main entrance of the Forum. The Decumanus and Cardo will be lined with Pine trees to provide shade.

Building materials required would include timber from the Appenine Mountain area for framing concrete and also making roofs, iron nails, stones obtained locally, tiles, brick, lime, pozzolana, and tufa obtained from the areas around Rome and Marble for columns and decoration. Some building materials will also be recycled from both Portus and Ostia.

Concrete will be used to construct walls, foundations, buildings and vaults. The City walls will be faced with stone while the City Public buildings and houses will be reticulate faced with brick. White Luna Marble will be used around the Forum.



The Governor's House will reflect this important Civic position (see above). Coloured marble will be used for the floors. Wall paintings will also be very important features within this building.

We trust this detailed proposal, meets with Emperor Trajan's approval.