

# The sanitary politics and medical infrastructure in the post-war Soviet Kharkiv (1943–1991)



Vadim Ilin,  
Kharkiv National Medical University

## Both elements of the Soviet urban life:

- Had to demonstrate advantages of the Socialism (balanced and planned development; accessibility of healthcare), were parts of the Soviet ideological project
- Show inconsistency with declared ideals
- Disclose the ways of the Soviet system functioning

# Factors for the post-war Kharkiv development

- Large industrial center
- One of the 14 most destroyed Soviet cities in WWII
- City with unfinished modernization



# War outcomes for Kharkiv

- 1 out of 2.8 million sq. m of housing destroyed
- 260.000 out of 900.000 of pre-war population died
- "Kharkiv cleaning succeeded by 70%" (from a German report on the city destruction)



## House of Projects (Karazin University nowadays) before and after the war





“Months and Sundays of cleanness”



On the right: students rebuild the Kharkiv Medical Institute, mid 1940s

Leftward: Voskresnik at the Infectious hospital, 1959

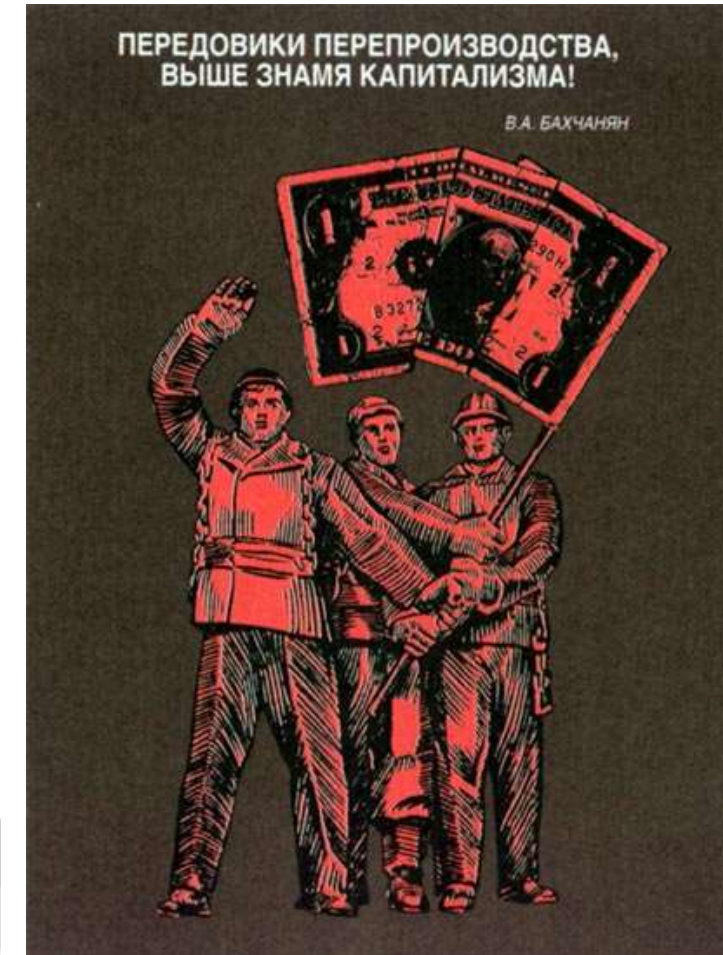
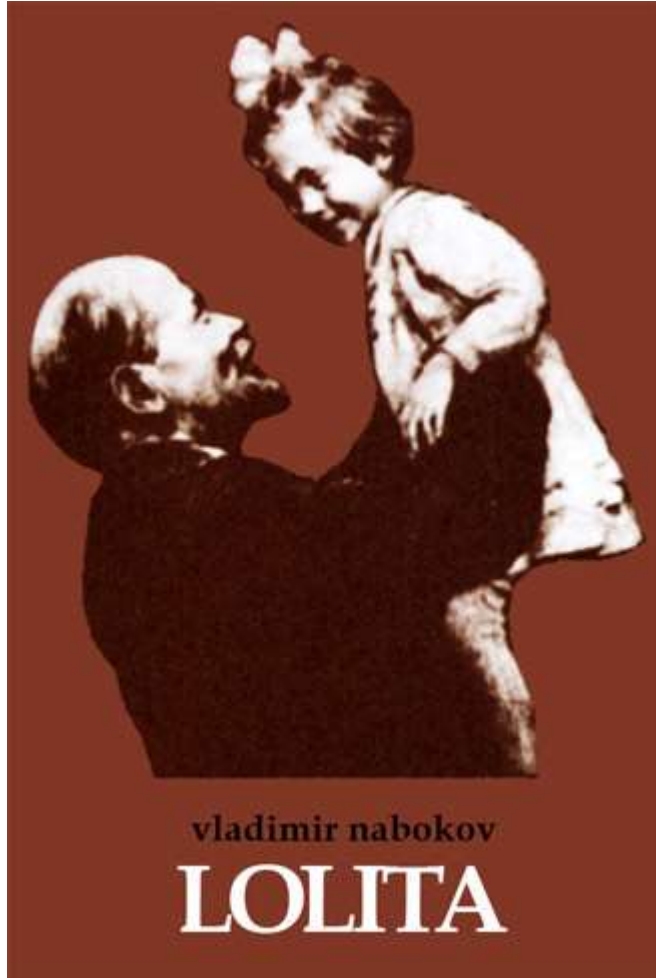
Public toilets – places of speculation, secret meetings and roundups





“In Kharkiv there are about two garbage vans”

*Vagrich Bakhchanyan – Kharkiv artist-conceptualist, 1974*





“Kharkiv Regional Executive Committee considers it necessary to inform the Council of Minister of the Ukrainian SSR that industrial and population growth in Kharkiv outpaces the rate of increase the capacities of water supply and sewage systems”

*The report to the Council of Ministers and Gosstroy of the USSR on capital construction in Kharkiv and oblast, 1964*

The annual mastering of funds allocated for construction:

- Industrial objects – 83 %
- Water supply – 65 %
- Sewage – 40 %

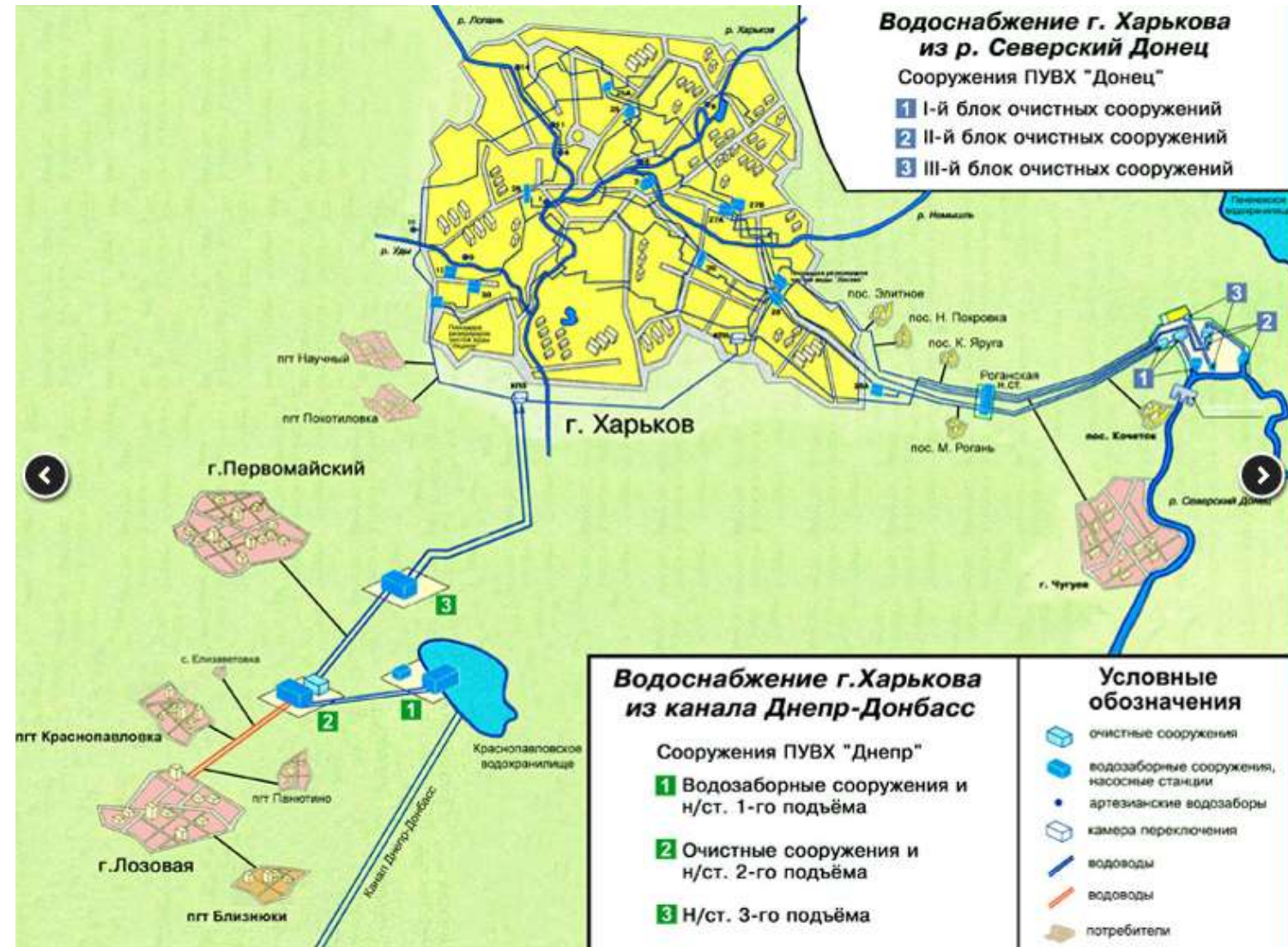
Alexander Marzeev  
(1883–1956)



The Dykanivka waste water treatment plant



Building of **the Dnieper-Donbas canal** in 1982 solved the problem of Kharkiv water supply





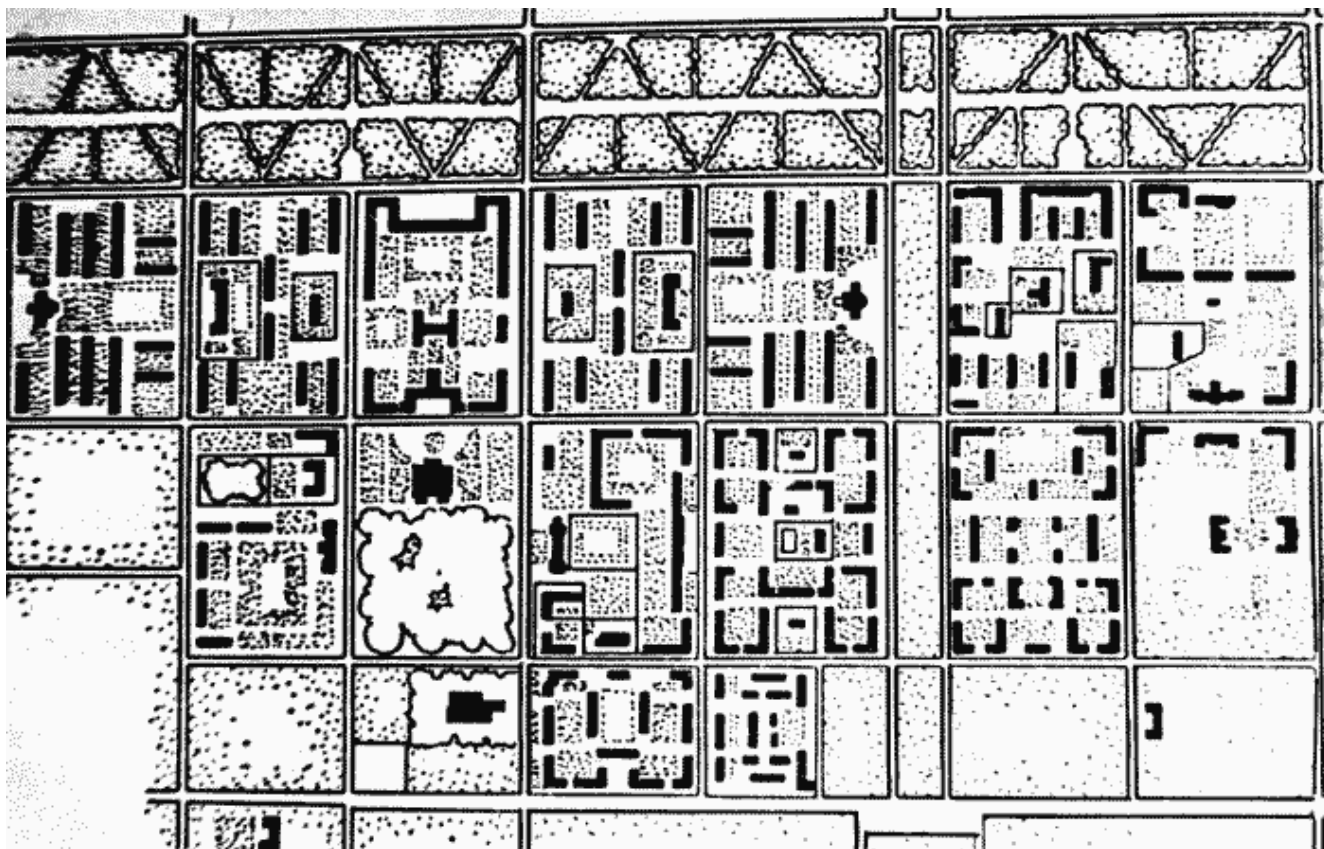
In the 1960s 50 Kharkiv enterprises were not connected to sewerage and polluted rivers



Lopan' – one of the two main Kharkiv rivers, 1950



The Kharkiv Tractor Plant (KhTZ) sanitary zone is vanished now





# Set of public buildings for the microdistrict complex development

Policlinic’s capacities were designed to serve a certain district population



Source: Шквариков В.А. Жилой район и микрорайон. М. Стройиздат, 1971. С. 31.

Наименование типов зданий	С х е м а	Т и п ы, вместимость	Для населения микрорайонов (тыс. жителей)				Для жилых районов (тыс. жителей)		
			6	9	12	16	30	45	65
Детские ясли-сад дневные		140 мест	●	○	○	○			
		280 мест	●	●	●	●			
Детские ясли-сад круглосуточные		140 мест		●	○	○			
		280 мест			●	●	●	○	
Общеобразовательные средние школы		1104 учащ.	●			○			
		1496 учащ.		●		●			
		1888 учащ.		○		○			
		2280 учащ.			●				
Общественные центры микрорайонов		4 типа	●	●	●	●			
Комплексные физкультурные площадки микрорайонов		4 типа	●	●	●	●			
Комплекс хозяйственно-технического обслуживания		3 типа	●		●	●			
Культурный центр жилого района		3 типа					●	●	●
Торговый центр жилого района		3 типа					●	●	●
Спортивный центр жилого района		3 типа					●	●	●
Поликлиника		800 посещений					●		
		1200 посещений						●	
		1600 посещений							●



10 years after the war Kharkiv medical network had not reached the pre-war level



Scarcity of specially designed facilities led to abnormally high density of beds in hospitals



“For a month he suffered in a violent environment surrounded by paranoid people, schizophrenics of all stripes... For good behavior they transferred him to the "calm" half of the hospital... At the violent half the first couple of weeks he had to share a bed with a boy younger than him”

*Source: Лимонов Э. Молодой негодяй. К. «Глагол», 1992. С. 73.*



Population growth and housing construction also outpaced the medical infrastructure development



The largest Kharkiv district Saltivka with 500 thousand population

“These premises do not satisfy the needs of medical facilities because it is impossible to organize there X-ray, physiotherapy rooms and some other important services”

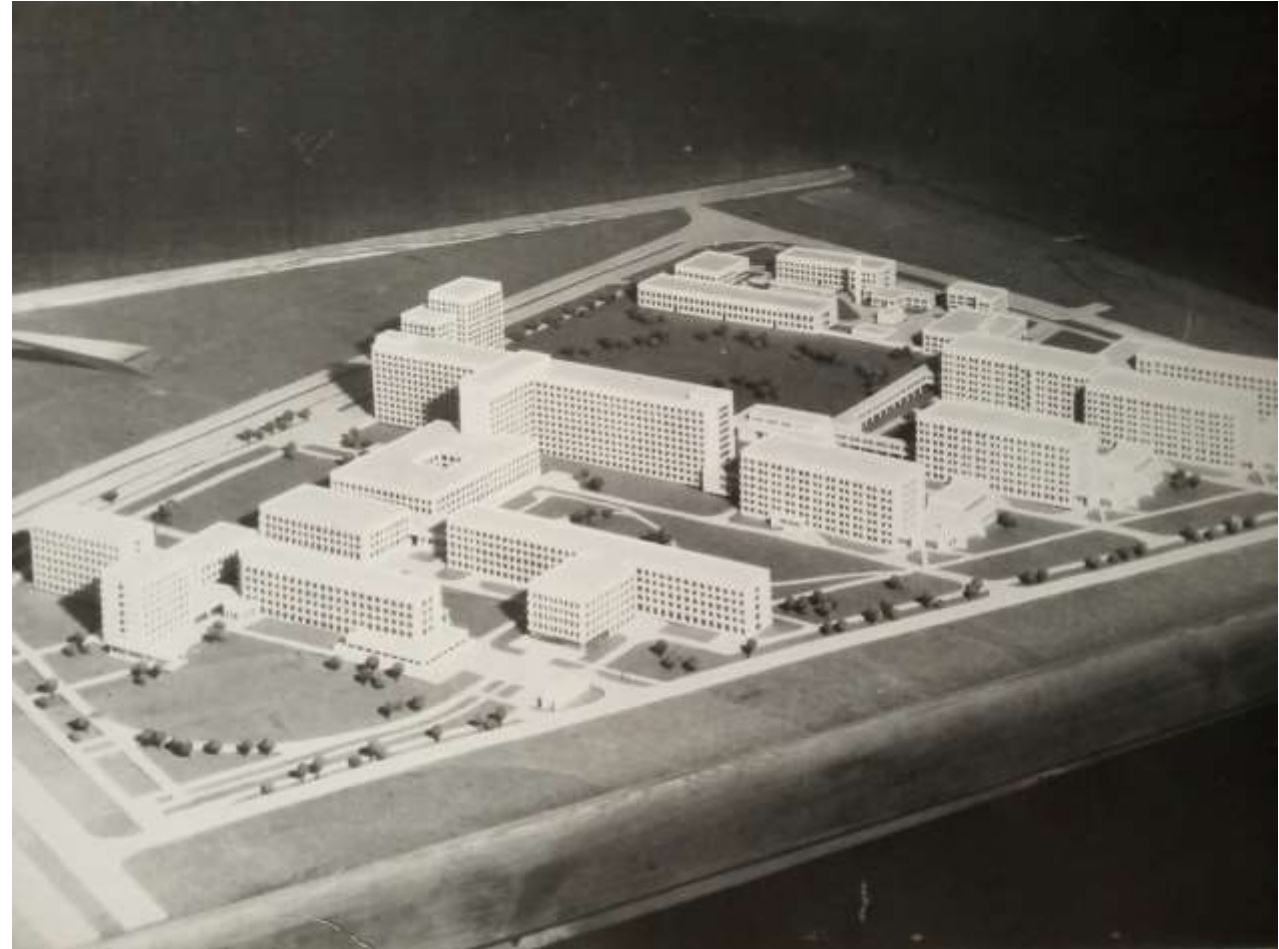
*Head of the City Health Department V. Ehorova, 1968*





## Objectives of the long-term plan for the Kharkiv medical network development adopted in 1972:

- Create large multi-profile medical complexes
- Provide accessibility of outpatient, specialized and ambulance care
- Ensure the technique innovation of medical facilities





**Vladlen Girzhanov**

Head of the administrative department  
of the regional party committee in 1975–1989



**Vladimir Paramonov**

Second secretary of the regional party  
committee in 1980–1988



Obstacle for plan's implementation –  
**lengthy delays in construction of the medical facilities**

**Пока в разряде невыгодных**  
числятся стройки здравоохранения в Харьковской области

“Health care development in Kharkiv is classified as disadvantageous yet”

**Замороженные  
миллионы**  
— это десятки недостроенных  
больниц, поликлиник, роддомов

“Frozen millions – are dozens of unfinished hospitals, polyclinics and maternity homes”

## Participation of medical stuff and students at construction of the Ambulance hospital and the Institute of Pharmacy









Kharkiv became one of the first cities in the USSR where a modern ambulance system appeared





Все изменения сохранены на Google Диске

Добавить слой

Поделиться

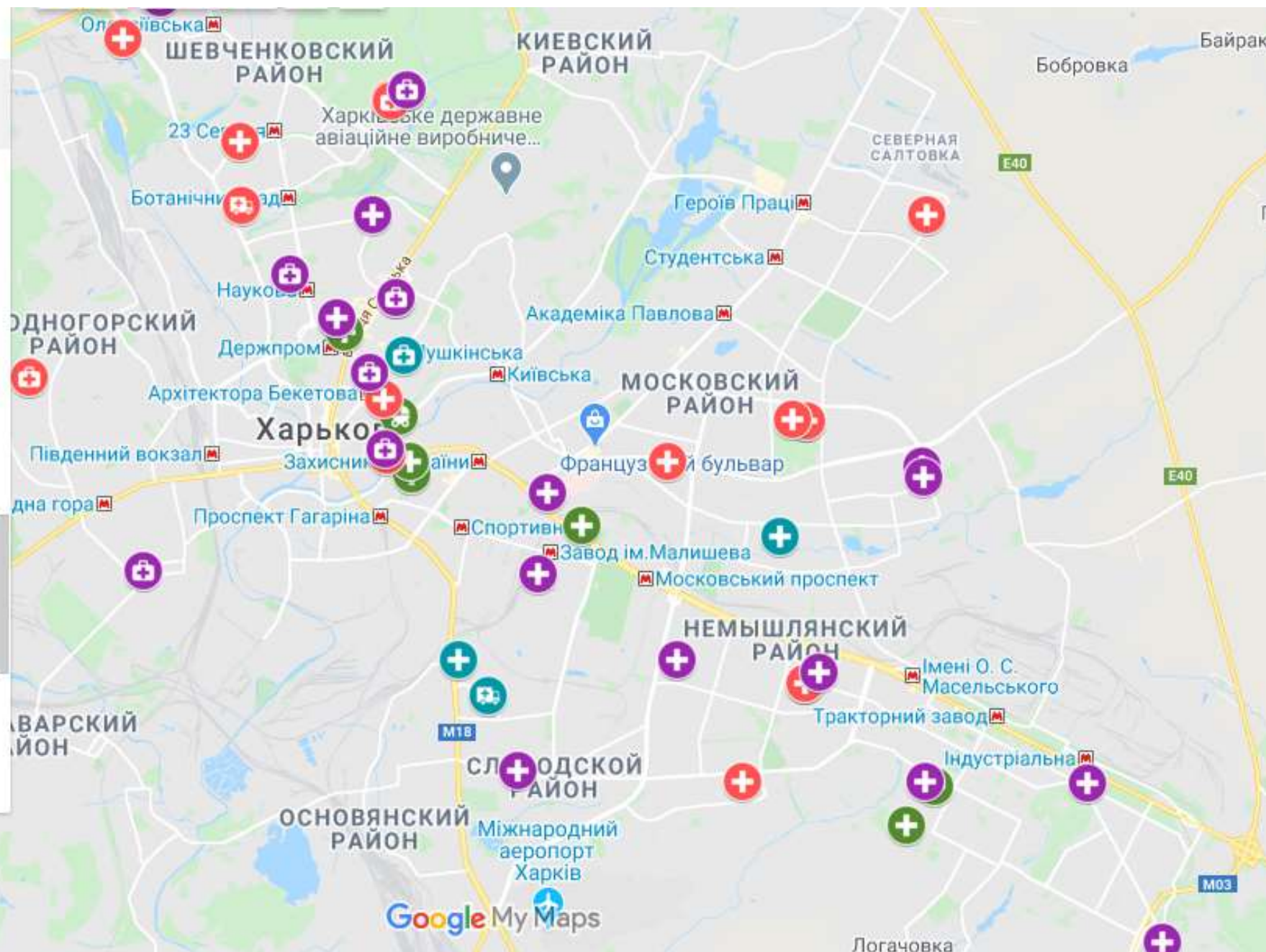
Предварительный просмотр

- 1977 - відкрито стоматологічн...
- 1977 - вперше в СРСР в НДІ ...
- 1977 - відкрито Обласну дитя...
- Др. пол. 1970-х - відкрито міс...
- 1970-ті (приблизно) - міська п...
- 1974 - клініка НДІ охорони зд...

☒ 1980-ті

Індивідуальний стиль

- 1980 - відкрито Республіканс...
- 1981 - відкрито Обласну кліні...
- 1983 - побудовано поліклінік...
- 1983 - побудовано поліклінік...
- 1984 - міська поліклініка № 8
- 1983-1985 - побудовано Обл...
- 1984-1989 - будівництво 9-по...
- 1986 - введена в експлуатації



# Conclusion

- Mobilizing and preventive measures were markers of the unfinished modernization.
- Kharkiv sanitary problems were solved due to transfer of the Western experience ensured by possibilities of the Socialist economy.
- Environmental pollution highlighted the same feature of the planned economy that caused a production of low-quality goods.
- Backlog of sewerage, water supply and healthcare from industrial development violated the basic principle of the Soviet urban planning – harmonious city development.
- Correction of disproportions became possible only when the central initiative on the long-term planning found the support of local enthusiastic administrators.