FOCUS

20

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College of Architecture and Environmental Design
California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo

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Welcome to Focus 20! As we celebrate the 20th volume of Focus, I am deeply grateful for the dedication of Dr. Vicente del Rio, our managing editor, whose commitment has shaped this journal into a testament to our department's history and commitment to excellence in planning education. This year marks Dr. del Rio's final year editing Focus. The twenty volumes of "Focus" stand as a legacy and a source of inspiration for future planners, educators, and students. On behalf of the city and regional planning department, I want to express our heartfelt thanks to Vicente for his hard work, and I also want to thank him for being a wonderful mentor and friend over the years.

Focus is an opportunity to reflect on our accomplishments over the years. Looking back at the past year, we undertook significant projects, including a comprehensive curriculum redesign for transitioning from quarters to semesters. This redesign allowed us to create a contemporary and innovative curriculum while staying true to our learn-by-doing philosophy.

In our bachelor's program, we have reduced the number of core course units, allowing students more flexibility to specialize or diversify their education. This change will accommodate transfer students, enabling them to graduate in two years instead of the current three-year pathway, hopefully increasing both the number of transfer students and the diversity of our student body. Additionally, we are designing a pathway for BSCRP students to "blend" their education into our master's program, enabling them to earn both degrees in five years. The department will offer five new General Education courses related to planning, introducing the field to non-planners. Additionally, the new curriculum allows for more off-campus education, including study-abroad opportunities, and more interdisciplinary education with other departments in the College of Architecture and Environmental Design (CAED).

Our redesigned MCRP program addresses four pressing issues: housing, social justice, and health; innovative transportation; sustainable and resilient communities; and technology and planning. This new program equips students with the knowledge, values, and methods to tackle these challenges with practical solutions.

Last year, we celebrated our forward-looking curriculum with a successful symposium, "The Future of Planning," where attendees explored the forefront of planning related to various critical issues. The symposium provided a platform for meaningful discussions and connections among attendees, culminating in a memorable evening at the Hotel SLO roof garden.

As we continue to refine our curriculum and courses for the transition to the semester system in 2026, our advisory board, CiRPAC, plays a crucial role in ensuring that our new curriculum remains industry-friendly and that our graduates remain at the forefront of the planning field.

One more good news for the CRP department: We started this academic year by welcoming Ryan Sandwick as an assistant professor to our faculty. A southern California native, Ryan is returning home after a decade away. He holds a joint appointment between the Department of City and Regional Planning and the Department of Landscape Architecture, focusing on Urban Design and Landscape Architecture. You'll find his bio in this volume.

I invite you to enjoy this milestone volume of "Focus" and extend my gratitude to everyone for their continued support of our department. Looking ahead, we are committed to further enhancing our program's offerings and impact. We will continue to engage with our students, faculty, alumni, and industry partners to ensure that our programs remain responsive to the evolving needs of our students and the planning profession. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about our program or wish to support us in any way.

Amir H. Hajrasouliha, PhD
Department Head and Associate Professor;
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Editor's Overview

One year shy of full retirement, and after two decades piloting FOCUS, I decided to call it quits and pass the managing editor role on to a new generation. It was not an easy decision after so many years of a fulfilling process that begins with procuring authors and articles, editing them, producing an attractive publication, having the final hard copy in hand, and receiving feedback from readers. So, for the current issue, I decided to add a personal tone to my opening notes.

Soon after I was hired in 2001, I was surprised to find out that neither the CRP Department nor the CAED had a professional periodic. My previous academic experience has taught me how important they are to celebrate faculty and student achievements and departmental beliefs; record academic development; help in the accreditation process; inform the professional community; and attract new students. At the time, I idealized a template for a CAED periodical that all departments would adopt but publish themselves focusing on their own work¾therefore the name, FOCUS. I was unable to attract the dean's attention but Professor William Siembieda, then CRP department head, saw its potential and encouraged me to move ahead: "You can do it, but as an overload" ¾as expected in a teaching university and years before Cal Poly adopted the "teacher-scholar" model. With the help of two students (Brie Holan from CRP, and Yosman Okano from Architecture—today successful professionals), FOCUS's first issue came out in 2003 in B&W and with beautiful cover art by Yosman.

In its first phase, which lasted until 2011 (Volume 8), FOCUS suffered from the typical difficulties of a time before easy access to digital processes and the internet: we had to seek donors, acquire a minimum quantity of hardcopies from a print shop, and deal with distribution and sales ourselves. Nonetheless, in 2006 FOCUS received two awards from the American Planning Association (the Award of Excellence in Education from the Central Coast Section, and the Outstanding Planning Award in Journalism from the California Chapter). Things changed for the better with the incredible possibilities offered by CreateSpace, an online publishing resource later taken over by Amazon's Kindle Digital Publishing, making FOCUS available worldwide through a cheap print-on-demand process. In 2012 (Volume 9), the journal was redesigned, received a new and distinct cover design by Schani Siong (then an MCRP student, now a planner with San Luis Obispo County), and started being published in colors. Besides the wide exposure through Amazon's website with access to hardcopies, FOCUS's PDF version is available from Cal Poly's library Digital Commons and CRP's website. Through its 20 years of existence, the journal grew, conquered new themes, attracted international authors, started a peer-review section, and reached an international readership.

FOCUS 20 begins with Chris Clark and Claudio Acioly penning their thoughts on ethics and the importance of public space, respectively, and follows with Geoffrey Payne's eulogy to John Turner, a champion for the rights of people to build their shelter who was instrumental in altering the official perspective on housing at international agencies such as the World Bank and the United Nations. This year, Special Events included a presentation by Brenda Scheer on urban morphology and planning, and a review of CRP's symposium on the future of planning by Brianna Grossman. The Essays section includes contributions from Greece (Elisavet Papageorgiou on cultural projects and waterfront redevelopment), New Zealand (Barbara Ribeiro, David Pattemore, Adam Morris, and Daniel J. Exeter on regenerative placemaking), Britain (Ivor Samuels on the future of the green belt), and the U.S. (Carlos Almeida on the importance of sketching for the design process). The section on Faculty and Student work includes essays on the 2023 status report on California's climate action plans, by Michael R. Boswell; on planning for stronger fire resilience at the wildland-urban interface, by William Siembieda and Matthew Malecha; on how development improved the lives of women in a village in India, by Hemalata C. Dandekar; and on a third-year BSCRP studio urban design project in Monterey, by Caroline Roistacher. In the International section, Diogo Mateus and I write about the 4th international summer urban design workshop in Lisbon. Finally, the Spotlight section includes interviews with CRP alumni Noah Christman, Emily Huang, and Marissa Ritter, plus brief notes on projects developed by our studios during the 2022/2023 academic year. As customary, FOCUS includes Cartoon Corners featuring sharp-eyed work by Tarcisio Bahia, Simon Taylor, Bruno Galvão, and Blaze Skyra.

I hope our readers enjoy FOCUS 20 and help me consider my two-decade mission accomplished! And, like me, look forward to next year, when FOCUS will be picked up by a new generation of editors who, I am sure, will introduce positive changes. Thank you for your continuous support and encouragement.

Vicente del Rio, PhD
Professor Emeritus and Managing Editor;
City and Regional Planning Department, Cal Poly.

The Kind of Planners We Need

Chris Clark

J.D. and Lecturer Emeritus,
CRP Department, Cal Poly.

We need a new kind of planner. Not new in kind, but new by degree. More central, empathic, and compass-driven. Why? The world is beginning the most dramatic change since humans have surfaced on this planet. And, oddly, it's because of humans that the world is changing. And to some extent, because of we, planners.

Now, if you're under the age of 137, you might argue that it is not your fault. Oil magnates and railroad barons got the ball rolling. Others bought in for the glitz. But must we keep it on the same path? What shall we be?

Central

Imagine that a group of Black families petitioned the city to forestall the development of a shopping center on the premise that it will not serve their neighborhood. The developer is well-connected, which means the council may be pre-disposed to them.

You are in a meeting called by the city manager, and it includes directors and staff of several departments, including, of course, planning. The city manager begins the discussion with, "I'm not here to influence your work…"

You are the planner staffing the project. The other departments are important, but you represent the only discretionary (go-no-go) component of the proposal. You leave the meeting and begin to sense an ominous pressure. You know your planning director is a year from retirement and sits mostly silently at the planning commission. You don't know what it's like at the top, but now you begin to feel what it's like at the center. It is lonely.

You will write the staff report, attend meetings with the parties, attend the hearings, answer questions, and let the process take its course. You are not the decision-maker. You provide information, analysis, and – think about it – *recommendations*.

You could remain virtually invisible, safe. But you could also stand up at the commission meeting and say, "We have something before us that is very important to acknowledge and deliberate…" *Take* the center, and see if you can make it hold.

Empathic

Suppose the largest monetary value you possessed was in property, and that property was subject to a thousand rules with various interpretations and human judgments. Wouldn't that make you a bit queasy? Suppose you bought a piece of property, and the mortgage on that land cost you two thousand a month (on empty land!), and after spending tens of thousands on plan preparation and studies and legal work, you had to wait for over a year to get a permit. And this is before you can begin a two-year building process. Could you sustain the joy of future home ownership?

Would you be concerned if that permit were in the hands of a twenty-something planner? This is someone who has, maybe, owned a car. You are concerned they think you are from that other "class" of people, landed. Perhaps they don't see you as just a few years ahead of them income-wise. Or know that the house, when built and occupied by you, will absorb upwards of half your income (or more). Maybe they misinterpret that raised pitch in your voice as rudeness rather than the product of sleeplessness.

Asking these questions from the applicant's perspective allows for the onset of empathy. What does it mean or necessitate? How does a planner undertake the work of moving the project forward with the levels of communication necessary to ensure? That is a substantial responsibility. But a lot is expected of all of us. So, stand in their shoes.

Compass driven

We occupy a world awash in post-truth and anti-science. That's an overstatement but apt for a broad swath of the population. You will attend many meetings and have many conversations with people who do not believe you or do not consider you credible. That's a departure from my experience as a young planner. Whatever arguments I had, they were—or the most part—conducted on the same plane of reality. It was a monoverse.

To succeed in the times ahead, your mind must be grounded in logic. You will learn the rhetorical flaws identified by the Greeks

(Aristotle!). You will become competent in the science of the natural world, climate change, demographics, and the ability to convey these to anyone. You will learn the art of establishing credibility without bullying. You will speak truth to power and the powerless.

You will always feel uneasy. But that is appropriate when the tiny point of a needle directs the way into the unknown terrain ahead.

And so…

All of this said none of it is intended to push you into a path of belligerence. There is little long-term value in being opinionated, pushy, or indifferent to other ideas. The tenor of this new planner is calm, informed, educated, and clear. This is not a battle; it is a campaign. Long-term and well thought out.

Of course, a planner is a bureaucrat. A cog in the government machinery. Working to make a living, one that must persist the length of a career—which is a recipe for risk avoidance. But is that really necessary?

Life is short, and a career is shorter. How should you approach it? Given the age of the universe and its size, why not just do the right things? Do the work and never utter the words of Melville's scrivener Bartleby, "I'd prefer not to." Be central, empathic, and compass-driven.

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Public Spaces and the Quality of Life in Cities:
Evolution or Revolution?

Claudio Acioly Jr
Architect, urban planner, and development practitioner.

The availability of public space and its free access by the wide public has become synonymous of quality of life in cities in an increasingly urbanized world. There is a growing awareness of the transformative power of urbanization where public spaces play an important role in the quality of life.[1] International forums, NGOs, prestige exhibitions[2] and UN-Habitat's global program[3] dedicated to public spaces indicate that urbanism must embrace the planning, conceptualization, design, and creation of public spaces.

In this sense, the role of planning and urban design are likely to become even more critical and relevant for cities in the 21st century. Urban practitioners, architects, urban planners and urban designers ought to develop a sense of responsibility for well-defined public spaces in their decisions on spatial design and plans that must integrate human development dimensions into the physical, economic, environmental and social development outcomes.

What is the impact of the availability of public spaces in people's life in cities? It goes without saying that for the first time in history, a spatial attribute of cities has become part and parcel of the global agenda for sustainable development. Urban public spaces have been elevated to an important variable for the achievement of the our planet's sustainable development. The Sustainable Development Goal 11 (SDG 11) of the United Nation's Agenda 2030, particularly the SDG 11-Target 11.7, aim at providing "by 2030 the universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities".

Agenda 2030 is an ambitious sustainable development agenda adopted by all nations in 2015 at the United Nations in New York with the ambition to leave no one behind in human development. Since the United Nations' projections indicate that nearly 70% of the world population will be living in cities and urban agglomerations by 2050, it is easy to conclude that the form and function of public spaces will profoundly impact on the wellbeing of the global population.

Public spaces are physical artifacts that deliberately define the public realm in our cities. These are places of public use, open and freely accessible to the general public and are comprised of streets, pathways, public squares, parks, beaches and public areas which are subject to urban design and urban planning interventions that ensure its safety, accessibility, use and usufruct by citizens at large. Public spaces enable us to celebrate diversity and social cohesion and collectively strive for live in peace and prosperity in cities.

In this brief note, I argue that we must incorporate the attributes that define quality of life in designing public spaces, and overcome the limitations of architectural, formalist and urbanistic abstractions. In doing so, we ought to embark on a path of evolution and revolution that generate people-centred urban spaces where full citizenship can blossom. Public spaces that can genuinely encourage coexistence and social interaction and become places of social encounters and urban politics that fundamentally contribute to the construction of prosperous, sustainable and inclusive cities.[4]

In the 21st century, urbanism and urban design must overcome functional and aesthetic formalism, understand their potential for place-making, and incorporate attributes of quality of life in order to transcend the placelessness often experienced in cities. Do we need an evolution and revolution of our concepts and government policies, a paradigm change to incorporate innovative methodologies and approaches that may help

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Note about the author: Claudio Acioly Jr has more than 40 years of international experience in more than 35 countries, working for multilateral and bilateral international development organizations such as UN-Habitat, World Bank, UNECE, UNDP, UNEP, European Union and others. He has been working with Acciona Engineering of Spain, and is associated with the Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies of the Erasmus University of Rotterdam. and taught at the Latin American and Caribbean Programme of the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy (2003-2023).

[1] Acioly, Claudio (2015). Cidade e Espaço Público: Revolução e prosperidade. Revista Qatsi de Urbanismo e Planejamento Urbano, PUC-RGS, Nov 2015.

[2] The Project for Public Spaces. www.pps.org

[3] United Nations Human Settlements Programme, UN-Habitat. https://data.unhabitat.org/pages/gpsp

nurture changes in our professional practice? The answer is yes, and it includes innovations in education and training.

We observe that ordinary citizens, without necessarily being involved in the professional debate, start to demand public spaces of quality that they can use safely, access easily on foot or public transport, find their basic needs, and enjoy open space and amenities in their neighbourhoods and cities without hesitation. Places to meet friends, gather with peers and express cultural identities, and voice collective and political manifests, take pleasure of being in an urban environment, and celebrate urbanity in its fullness.

We know that social change and political transformations are often triggered by and staged in conducive urban public spaces within the city fabric of easy access that have unique attributes that attract and retain people. Tahir Square in Cairo, for instance, is forever engraved as a special place with the images of the Arab spring in Egypt (Figure 1). Throughout history and different generations, public spaces in Paris seem to attract and retain people when celebrating a victory of the national soccer team, demonstrating for freedom, or protesting injustices and government policies. Waterfront areas in Stockholm and Rotterdam were redesigned to attract and receive residents of all social classes who are looking for places for outdoor leisure, to ramble, rest, and contemplate water sceneries.

In 1953, Rotterdam built Europe's first pedestrianized street, the Lijnbaan, designed by Jo van den Broek and Jacob Bakema, prominent Dutch architects; today it is a World Heritage listed monument (Figure 2). These traffic-free strips of shopping were a groundbreaking intervention that has influenced urban design and retail architecture worldwide. Lijnbaan continues to be a lively public space that attracts city residents daily. The concept expanded towards other areas of the city center and, in 1990, the adoption of an inner-city development plan promoted mixed land use, combining living, culture and entertaining, and increased housing options with greater accessibility by non-motorized transportation, pedestrians, and public transport. The transformation of Rotterdam's inner city was remarkable.

In 1972, the city of Curitiba built Brazil's first pedestrian street in its historic core, with a similar concept adopted by Rotterdam and additional attention to greenery and the design of street furniture that influenced many other cities in Brazil (Figure 4). As part of urban revitalization strategies, we observe today

Figure 1 a & b: Tahrir Square in Cairo. Above, during a normal day. Below, on July 29, 2011 during the Friday of Unity. (sources: a) https://www.barcelo.com/guia-turismo/en/egypt/el-cairo/things-to-do/tahrir-square; and b) photo by Ahmed Abd El-Fatah, Wikimedia Commons)

Figure 2: Lijnbaan, Europe's first pedestrianized street, shortly after opening in 1953. (source: www.wederopbouwrotterdam.nl)

[4] Acioly, Claudio and Annamika Madhuraj (2019). City and Public Space: Urban Transgressions, Revolution and Prosperity. Draft Paper. https://claudioacioly.com/city-and-public-space-urban-transgressions-revolution-and-prosperity-2019

the emerge of new generations of urban design interventions that curb spaces for cars, prioritize pedestrians and the human scale and advance public spaces of quality that encourages accessibility by pedestrians and the use of bicycles and public transport. Rotterdam is a trend setter in this respect.

Large metropolis like Barcelona, Portland, Paris, Bogota and others have adopted people-centred policies that, among other things, promote quality of life improvements, better public spaces, the redesign of streets, and the concept of the 15-minute city (Figure 5). This is combined with land-use interventions that create convenience for residents by offering all residential services within walking distances, reducing the need for motorized vehicles. In Singapore's Compact Township Concept, for example, all residents can find, within a walkable radius of 500 mts from their homes, daily amenities such as pharmacy, bakery, post office, bank, the grocery shop, and supermarkets. Public spaces also fit the purpose of these plans. The 15-minute city encompasses all that and its advocates argue that it helps tackle greenhouse gas emissions and create cities that are made for people and not for cars. Unfortunately, those who oppose it are not prepared to give away the space of their cars, and some embrace conspiracy theories that neighbourhoods of 15 minutes result in the loss of liberty and free circulation.[5]

City governments and city leaders have become much more concerned with the adverse impacts of urban decay not only in the economy but also people's life and the quality of the urban environment, and increasingly on the impacts on climate change. Public spaces are part and parcel of the regeneration and revitalization of cities that focus on the scale, needs, and demands of lay citizens. Flagship projects that recreate symbolisms and places of identity and the urbanism of place-making combined with mix land uses are increasingly highlighting the success of public interventions focused on urban renascence. These are part of an agenda promoting cities for people as advocated by renown architects like Richard Rogers and Jan Gehl that touches the form and density of cities and the design and supply of public spaces. Bringing climate change adaptation and mitigation measures to the urban planning and design interventions that are focused on public spaces increase the complexity of these projects and call for a much more integrated approach to urban planning and design. This will definitely influence the form and function of public spaces.

Indeed, public spaces are much more than streets, sidewalks, and plazas where strangers brush shoulders and circulate

[5] Simon, Julia (2023). It's a global solution – if it can get past conspiracy theories and NIMBYs. In *NPR's Climate Week*, National Public Radio. https://www.npr.org/2023/10/08/1203950823/15-minute-cities-climate-solution

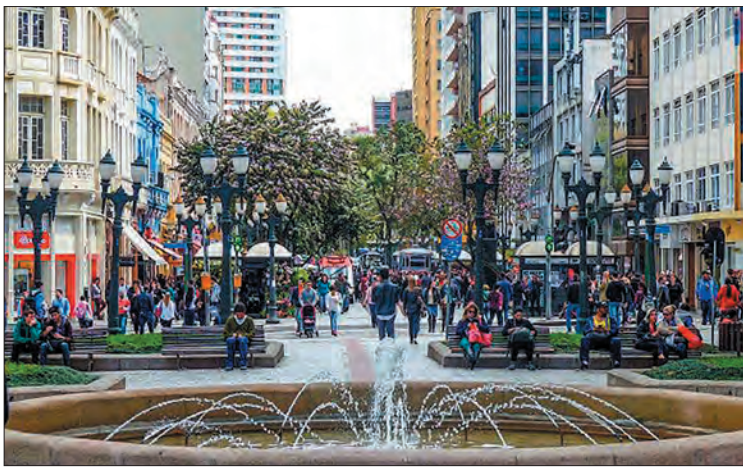

Figure 4: Rua das Flores in Curitiba. The first pedestrian street in Brazil. (source: https://muraldoparana.com.br/opiniao-de-valor-curitiba-mulher/)

in organised passivity: they are reminders that cities can sustain creative pursuits. By wandering about in a city's public realm and in their own sense of time, people contribute to sense of place and express the ultimate sense of belonging through levels of social control and engagement in the use, maintenance, and management of public areas. Different formulas of co-responsibility between citizens and their local/municipal governments seem to be the order of day. However, there are stong forces towards the privatization of public spaces in cities of the Global South under the argument that local governments lack of financial resources to properly maintain them. This is certainly a grab on the space of the commons and generate protests such those defending Rio de Janeiro's Jardim de Alah park and São Paulo's Ibirapuera Park.

A body of researches, studies, plans, and projects from the last two decades underlines the importance of public space and its role in urban revitalization and the generation of better

Figure 5: Forest of Hope, a stylized cluster of trees over a public plaza, Altos de Cazucá shantytown, Bogotá. (photo by Jorge Gamboa, https://www.area-arch.it/en/forest-of-hope/)

quality life and identity of cities.[6] In addition to that, the regular reporting[7] on the SDG 11.7 reveal the progress in the provision of public spaces in cities worldwide, its universal accessibility and its impact on people's life.[8] The City Prosperity Index (CPI), launched by UN-Habitat in 2012 was a change maker in that respect.[9] It revealed a ground-breaking assessment of cities that unequivocally demonstrated that cities that provided public spaces at scale, freely accessible, were the cities that achieved higher prosperity index. Furthermore, the CPI showed that cities with high street connectivity[10] also recorded high city prosperity index. In other words, there was strong co-relation between structured urban fabrics that contained well-planned streets and open public spaces and high city prosperity index. That means urban planning and design matters. In other words, cities that are well-planned and offer a network of public spaces are able to produce prosperity that is shared by all residents. Reversely, cities with large informal areas, low street connectivity, and poor public space provision penalize their inhabitants, prevent them from prospering and create vicious cycles of social and spatial exclusion.

However, the process of urban design itself has been frequently highjacked by vested political interests that prioritize market development and grand designs rather than solutions that are focused on human-centered development. The commercialization and financialization of urban spaces and the surge of private investors prioritizing consumption and market development compromise local needs and discourages activities that don't produce financial dividends, such as free seating and unhindered accessibility, public toilets, and open areas where people simply socialise and exercise their right to the city.

There is little doubt about the need to foster a new paradigm in urban design that recognises the relevance and impact of well-design and maintained public spaces that stimulate sustainable urban development. On the one hand, it creates an urban environment conducive of social transformations that reclaims the essence of living, sharing the benefits of a thriving city and urban economy. On the other hand, it contributes to human prosperity and a better quality of life for today's city dwellers and the future generations.

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[6] UN-HABITAT promotes studies, pilot projects, guidelines, and recommendations emphasizing the importance and role of public space in for urban development and sustainability. Its global program on public spaces reports on the progress of the Global Agenda 2030's SDG 11. Partnerships with NGOs have promoted international debate, meetings, and seminars, such as Project for Public Spaces (www.pps.org), the Placemaking Weeks events, and 'The Future of Places', conferences (www.futureofplaces.com).

[7] https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2020/07/indicator_11.7.1_training_module_public_space.pdf

[8] UN-Habitat (2023). Rescuing SDG 11 for a Resilient Urban Planet. Synthesis Report. https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2023/11/sdg_11_synthesis_report_2023_executive_summary_2023.pdf

[9] The City Prosperity Initiative is based on the City Prosperity Index (CPI) that is both a metric drawn on indicators and baseline information that helps cities to assess the impact of public policies on urban prosperity under six domains (1) Productivity, (2) Infrastructure, (3) Quality of Life, (4) Equity and Social Inclusion, (5) Environmental Sustainability and (6) Governance. The availability and accessibility of public spaces are measured under Quality of Life.

[10] UN-Habitat (2013). Streets as Public Spaces and Drivers of Urban Prosperity. https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2020/08/streets_as_public_spaces_and_drivers_of_urban_prosperity.pdf

Eulogy to John Turner

British architect, writer, and champion for the rights of people to build and manage their own shelter and communities 1927-2023

In the 1950s and 60s John Turner, who has died aged 96, addressed the housing challenges faced by members of rural communities in Peru when they migrated to urban areas in search of a better life. Official planning and design approaches were neither appropriate nor affordable to such people, and Turner was immensely impressed by their resourcefulness in creating their own housing developments and even complete neighbourhoods. Turner's writings, as John F. C. Turner, presented Peru's urban squatter settlements –*barriadas*, as they are called in Peru– to a global audience as not a problem but a resource.

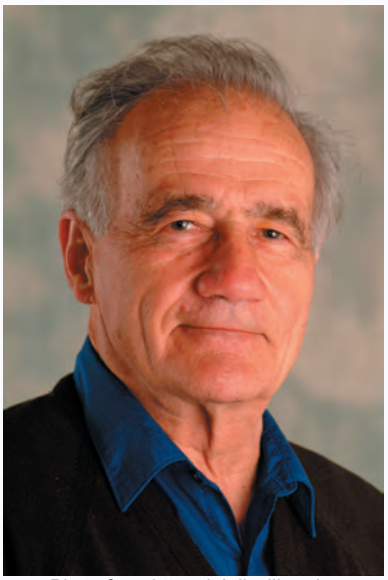


Photo from https:rightlivelihood.org

Predominantly poor people moved on to land on the urban periphery, subdivided it into residential plots and places for community facilities, and built their own housing using whatever materials came to hand. Settlements were improved gradually as people became integrated into the urban economy, making urban development effectively self-financed.Such achievements were widely regarded as "unplanned" or "informal" and therefore to be removed or prevented. However, Turner argued that it was an approach that worked for the people involved, and that professionals should learn from them. His views came to influence generations of architects, planners and other built environment professionals globally and inspired a wide range of sites and services projects and in-situ upgrading programmes.

While studying architecture at the Architectural Association (AA) School of Architecture in London, he had himself been influenced by the ideas of Patrick Geddes, Lewis Mumford and the anarchist newspaper Freedom, edited by Colin Ward. He qualified in 1954, and three years later was invited to work for state housing agencies in Peru, where he was joined by his friend Patrick Crooke after an earthquake in 1958. They built the case for incremental development based on the fact that, given adequate access to land, basic resources and freedom to control key local development decisions, people and their local organisations can and often do build and maintain attractive places.

These principles formed the basis for seminal articles such as *Squatter Housing: An Architecture That Works* (1968) in the journal Architectural Design. He started by editing an issue in 1963 and continued until 1976, showing how squatter-barriada builders who choose to invest their life savings in an environment that they create transform themselves in the process. He saw housing as a verb, an action rather than a thing, with value in social not just economic terms. The process of production, from planning to design and construction, should reflect the needs, aspirations and resources of the people to be accommodated. His research coincided with an increase in people's opportunities to move freely from place to place. The mass migration into urban areas that began then, and has continued since, needed a fresh approach.

Together with his colleagues the US anthropologists Lisa Peattie and William Mangin, Turner produced compelling evidence that communities should be actively engaged from beginning to end if urban areas were to be socially inclusive. He expanded on this approach when in 1965 he moved to the Harvard-MIT Joint Center for Urban Studies in the US. In 1970, the government commissioned him to lead an evaluation of self-help housing in the US, material from which led to the publication of his book *Freedom to Build: Dweller Control of the Housing Process* (1972), co-edited with Robert Fichter.

Turner returned to the UK in 1973 as a lecturer at the AA and then at the Development Planning Unit, University College London. He directed short courses for senior professionals from countries that were being urbanised. On one occasion he ended his introductory lecture on participatory housing and announced that there would be a 15-minute break. The course participants sat still, indicating that they expected the door to open and a trolley to arrive with refreshments, at which point he

asked: "Who is going to buy the tea and coffee and who will help with the washing up?" That was when they realised that he meant what he said about the need for active participation. It was a key moment, and within days the course members were bantering in the kitchen as a group of friends.

Rather than seeing issues through the conventional political lens of left-right, Turner viewed the concept of power from the perspective of "top-down" or "bottom-up", and strongly advocated the latter. He described himself as a "moderate anarchist") and defined the architect as an enabler and organiser of a necessary equilibrium between a community and the state. He distilled his views in his most successful book *Housing By People - Towards Autonomy in Building Environments* (1976), which coincided with the first global Habitat conference in Vancouver, where he was a keynote speaker.

Turner's documentary *A Roof of My Own* (UNTV, 1964) was incorporated into a video for which he wrote the script, made in 2016 by the architect and urbanist Kathrin Golda-Pongratz of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, Barcelona. It was shown to the community that he had studied on the outskirts of Lima. Many current residents recognised themselves helping their parents build their homes and provided personal testimony for Golda-Pongratz's film *City Unfinished – Voices of El Ermitaño* (2018). She arranged to house Turner's extensive archive in the Historical Archive of the College of Architects of Catalonia (COAC). The arguments for empowering local communities and to make those in power listen to those in need remain as valid today as when Turner promoted them.

He was appreciated by international aid agencies such as the World Bank and UN, and was a consultant to several governments in developing nations, for providing frank, incisive comments about the need to understand how local processes worked. In 1988 he was awarded the Right Livelihood award for "championing the rights of people to build, manage and sustain their own shelter and communities".

Born in Kensington, central London, and brought up in Kent, John was the son of Jocelyne (nee Gaskin), daughter of the artist Arthur Gaskin, and Austin Charlewood Turner, an architect. His twin brothers, Richard and Arthur, died in their 20s; his sister Mary Ann became a botanical illustrator. After attending St Edmund's school, Hindhead, Surrey, and Wellington college, Berkshire, he enrolled at the AA. His first marriage, to Catherine Wilson in 1950, ended in divorce. David, their one child to survive into adulthood, died in 2019. In 1971, he married Beth (Bertha) Berry, and she edited *Building Community: A Third World Case Book* (1988), which they produced together. John is survived by Beth, his stepchildren Heidi, Jayne and Christopher, grandchildren Vanessa, Amarun, Paccha and Tomi, and Mary Ann.

John Francis Charlewood Turner, born July, 9, 1927, died September 3, 2023.

Geoffrey K. Payne
Housing and urban development consultant based in London. Director, Geoffrey Payne Associates. Author of Somewhere to Live, *among other books. http://gpa.org.uk*

Both photos by John Turner showing the self-help housing process at El Ermitano, Lima, Peru,1963. From https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/reputations/john-fc-turner-1927

FOCUS 20

Special Events

Urban Morphology:
Tracing the Evolution of Urban Form

Brenda Case Scheer
FAIA; FAICP; Former Dean and Professor of Architecture and City Planning; College of Architecture and Planning, University of Utah.

The study of urban morphology allows planners and designers to understand the evolution and the the fundamental elements that shape cities, helping them contextualize new development. This essay is the edited transcription of a presentation by Brenda Case Scheer, a leading U.S. scholar in the field, delivered through Zoom to Cal Poly's CRP on February 18, 2021. See Brenda's book "The Evolution of Urban Form: Typology for Planners and Architects" (Planners Press/Routledge, 2017).

Urban morphology is the study of cities and their form as they change through time. I use urban morphology in practice as a planner and designer, but I am also a theorist, as I typically try to explain the ideas behind urban morphology. An urban morphologist analyzes places by comparison, either from one place to another place in a similar time frame or from the same place in different eras, using maps of the same scale (Figure 1).

A comparison of maps of the same place in different years is called a diachronic comparison. Going down the diagram in Figure 1, you can see the plans of the same block of Salt Lake in 1847, 1870, 1915, and 2014. A diachronic comparison reveals how a particular place or city evolved. Another technique is a synchronic comparison, shown at the top of Figure 1, where Salt Lake City is compared to New York and Savannah, at the same scale to see how they compare in size, form, and extent. Salt Lake has much larger blocks and lots than New York and Savannah, for example. If you wanted to study downtown San Luis Obispo, for example, you would compare it at different periods starting in the 19th century. The morphological elements to be studied include streets, blocks, buildings, and lots.

Urban Morphology

Urban "form" is defined as the semi-permanent physical objects in a city that don't move: a train track is part of the urban form, but the train running on it is not. The urban form is also a physical thing itself, not what that thing "means" or who lives there or owns it. As an example, let's take a school building. Urban form is an analysis of the building itself: all its measurements, what it is made of, when it was built or added to, how it sits on its site, and how these things have changed over time —this is the kind of data that makes up morphology. Many other aspects of the school are also important: the demographics of its student population, what kind of school it is, who runs it, or its importance as a symbol in the community. However, these aspects do not pertain to form, although they may influence or correlate to it. This is a distinction I want to make because it clarifies what urban morphology is and is not and helps define its usefulness to us as a separate domain of knowledge. When I talk about urban morphology, I refer to what exists in the world or what existed historically. The sole focus of what I am doing is collecting information and data on the physical forms. Urban morphologists collect this information for itself and its relationship to meaning, ownership, history, and so on. We also use this data to design or rehab new places.

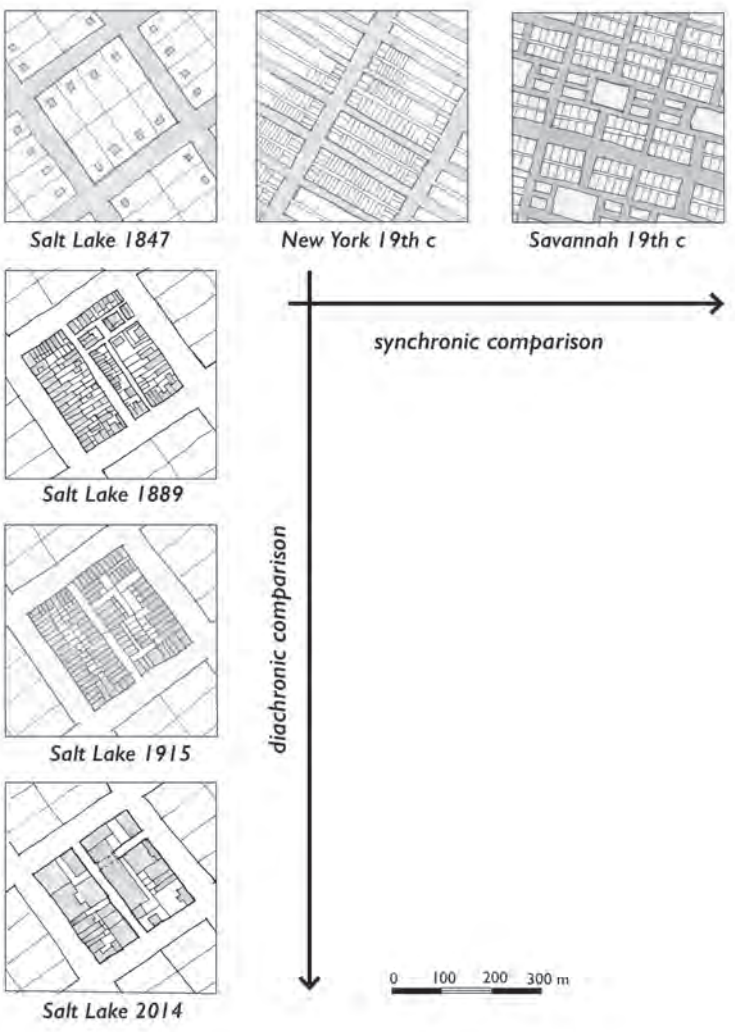
There are three distinct elements in urban morphology: built form, boundaries, and land. (Figure 2) Built form is defined as a place's solid, human-created, semi-permanent objects, like street signs, paving, buildings, and infrastructure. Boundaries are imaginary lines, like lots or rights of way, that indicate where the form is located and restrict its size or extent. On a map, almost all the occupied space is divided by these boundaries, which we can measure and describe. Natural land is the final essential element of urban morphology, and it is a critical limitation and inspiration to a place's initial layout and formation.

Note: Thank you to Brianna Grossman (MSCRP student) for working on the original transcription. Final edits by Brenda C. Scheer.

An ordinary street demonstrates how these elements are studied. The street's paving is an object we can see and feel, but the boundary line of its right-of-way limits the space of the street. The paving is ripped every few decades, but the street path rarely changes. The street right-of-way contains many objects, including underground utilities, sidewalks, paving, and streetlights. If we distinguish between the path and the objects in the path, we can better understand how urban form changes. The path (boundaries) of the street will persist for a very long time, while the objects buried or placed on it will change frequently. Although built forms like buildings and stadiums always seem permanent, research shows that buildings and objects will not persist for centuries, but the path of a street and the contour of the landform can easily last a thousand years.

In Florence, Italy, today, a map can quickly reveal the outlines of the old paths of the Roman city plan, which is over two thousand years old. It is fascinating that urban morphology allows us to look at the development of cities over an exceptionally long time. We have maps from at least 1660 of Manhattan that show familiar paths like Wall Street, named after the wall that used to protect the island's tip (Figure 3).

Figure 1: Synchronic and diachronic comparisons of Salt Lake maps.



Morphological elements must have several general characteristics: they must be measurable and mappable, distinct from each other, and exist in a specific place on Earth. By observing these elements, patterns can be determined. For example, a grid of streets is a typical pattern. A combination of buildings and streets forming a regular or discernable pattern is called an urban tissue or fabric. A city will be made up of multiple tissues that represent different periods of development.

Some patterns are easier to see when walking down the street, but others can only be seen with a more distant, mapped view (Figure 4). Urban tissues are often unique to a specific place, like the perimeter block pattern designed for Barcelona or an older Italian fabric of very small lots and urban buildings along a street. In the US, a common fabric is suburban subdivisions, with houses and lawns of similar size on curvy roads. Another tissue is found in the Middle East, where the streets are narrow, and the buildings are compact but have open-air courtyards.

Buildings also occur in recognizable patterns, often produced as near copies of each other, called building types. This definition of type refers to the similar form of buildings, not to the type of land use, like libraries or airports. For example, in morphology, a rowhouse is a building type, even though the building may used as an office, residence, or a daycare center. However, the rowhouse was originally built as a residence, so its initial form reflects that. Building types may have quite different architectural styles. Still, they are remarkably similar, such as their height or width, the arrangement of windows and doors, or their relationship to the street. There are also different patterns of streets, for example, a limited access highway vs. a tree-lined boulevard. Types and tissues refer to abstract patterns of definable objects, not to a unique example.

Historical sources play an integral role in urban morphology. In the United States, Sanborn Maps are extremely useful when it is necessary to analyze different periods. The Sanborn Fire Insurance Company created these maps to inform the company of the building materials. To make these maps, surveyors would survey all the buildings, lots, and streets and map them every 20 to 30 years or more often for larger cities such as New York. Sanborn maps are available for every developed city, town, or place but typically not for rural areas or smaller towns because they do not need fire insurance. Nineteenth-century and early 20th-century maps are publicly available online from the Library of Congress website, and local libraries often have the

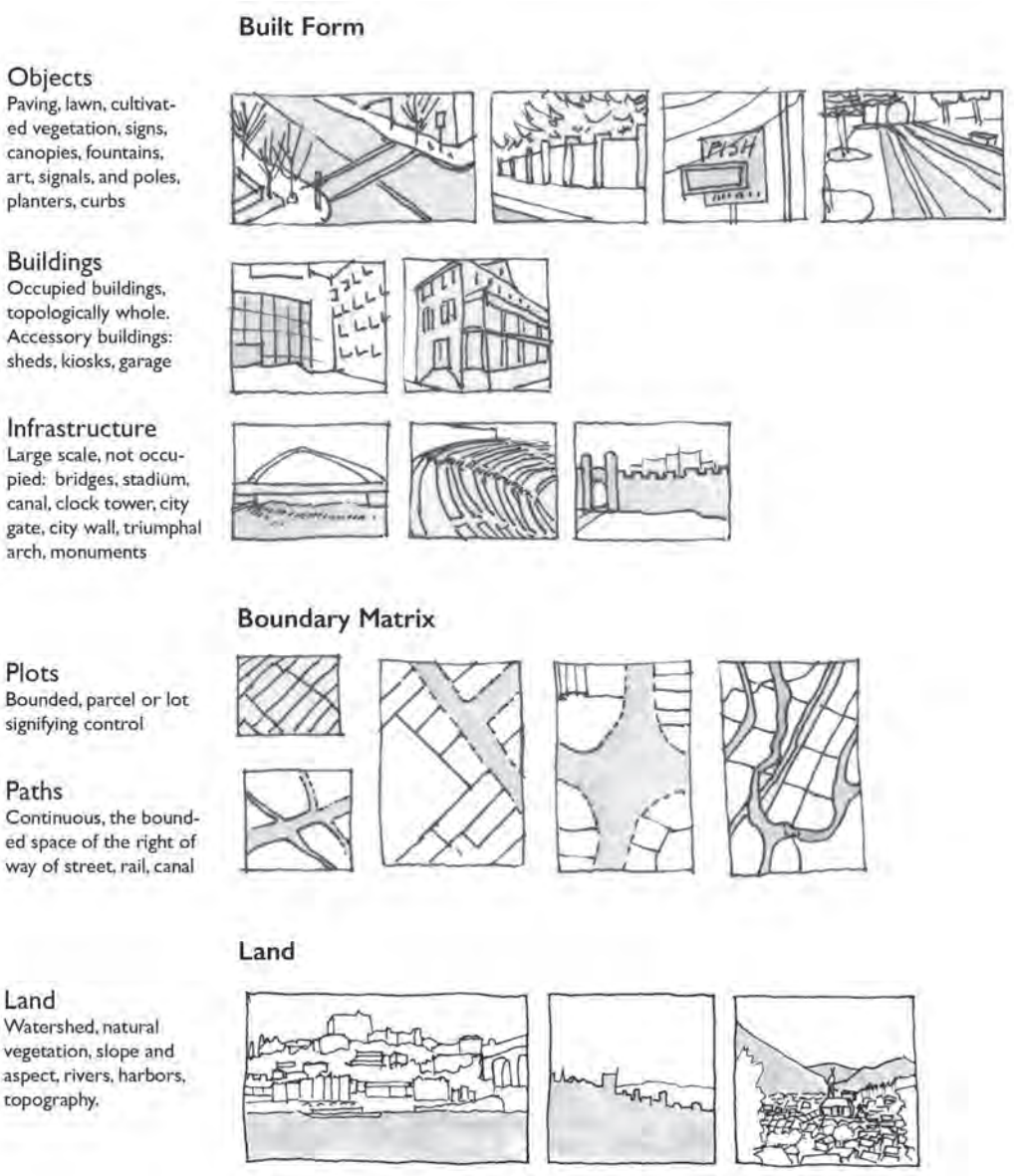
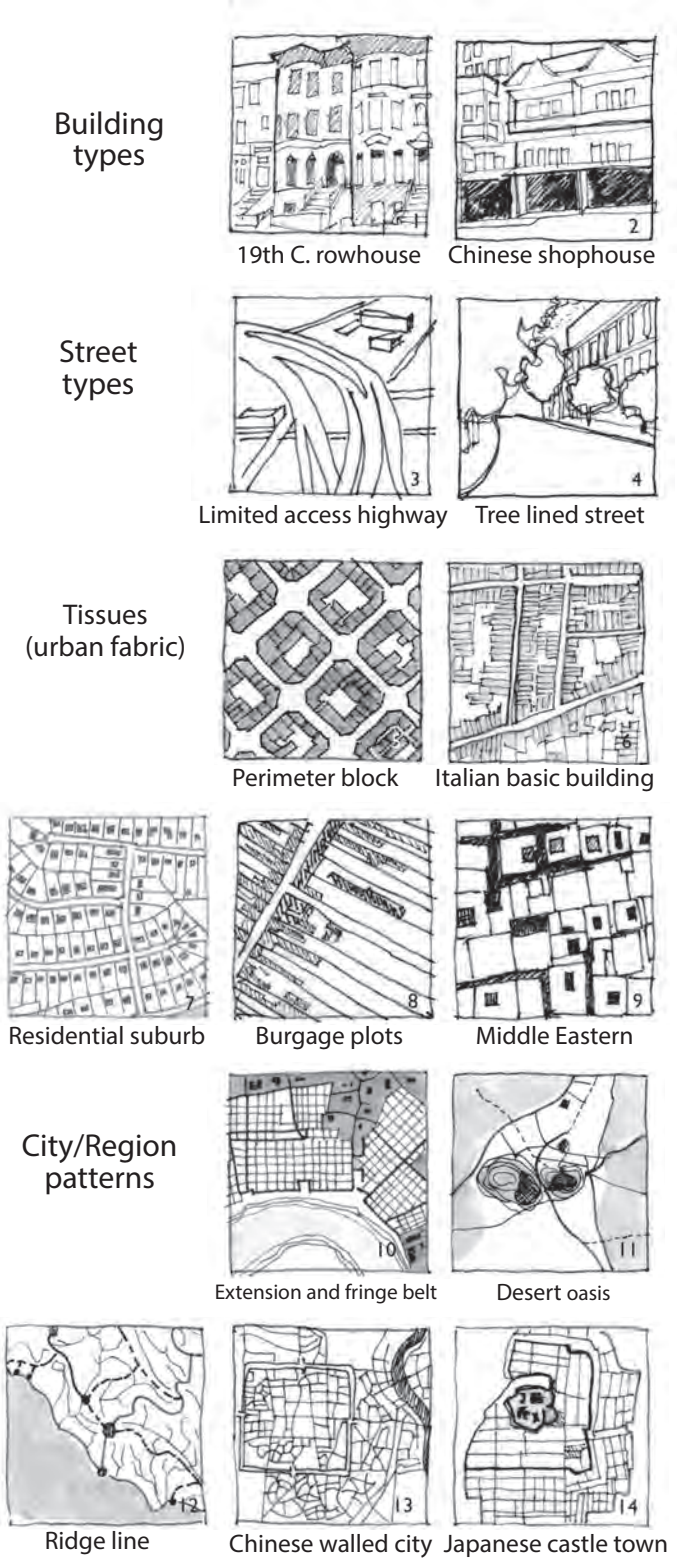


Figure 2: The three distinct elements in urban morphology: built form, boundaries, and land.

Figure 3: Manhattan 1660 and 1997. The shaded areas are the original blocks of lower Manhattan, transposed on a1997 map of the same area. The land area has increased dramatically in the intervening years, but the original street network remains largely intact.

Figure 4: Morphological elements and patterns.



original paper maps. Of course, in the past thirty years, we have had easy access to GIS maps and historic aerial photos, which can be a rich resource for morphological data.

Patterns of Change

Urban morphology, or the study of urban form, is most useful as a way of understanding how a place changes over time or compares to other places simultaneously. Returning to Figure 1, we can see how a single block of Salt Lake City over time compares to the same scale urban fabrics of other cities built in the 19th century. Salt Lake City blocks, streets, and lots were much larger than the fabrics constructed in the same period, which will lead us to look for the reasons behind this anomaly. Comparative analysis is the key to this kind of research as it reveals exciting patterns and historical elements. It also can point the way to future development. The comparison of the same Salt Lake City block over time raises other questions and provides a few answers: why are there so many small streets inside the blocks? How did the change in development types in the 20th century affect the urban fabric?

Because I study American urban form, I became interested in Salt Lake City when I moved there. Most people immediately recognize that the streets are very wide, but what often goes unrecognized is the very large blocks and the disorder in the buildings—there is very little pattern to go with the highly structured street grid. I studied the plan of Salt Lake and mapped how some of the blocks changed from the time they were established to the present day, using Sanborn Fire Insurance maps and contemporary GIS. Although these blocks and their lots were the same size and established at the same time, the development that occurred over time was different. It turned out that the original idea was that there would be very large lots with small houses, orchards, and gardens, which did not work out. The large lots were immediately subdivided and then subdivided again. Figure 5 shows how one of the original blocks in Salt Lake developed over time.

As the blocks were very large, small internal streets were often built to give access and frontage to the land inside the block. This pattern occurs repeatedly in the earliest built-out parts of Salt Lake City. The little internal streets and the irregular subdivision of the original lots made a mess of the planned grid, which led to more irregularity. Research shows, for example, that it is easier to build something unusual if it is in a place with no prevailing pattern. In most places with regular built-out patterns (think of a regular street of houses), it is nearly impossible to aggregate several lots and build a more prominent building. However, this is easier in many older parts of Salt Lake City because of the irregular lots and buildings.

While all this irregularity is often an urban design problem, there are some advantages. Contemporary building types, like a giant basketball arena or a shopping mall, can fit on one or two blocks. It is also advantageous for the downtown to have room for parking garages in the middle of the block. Rapid redevelopment possibilities are also beneficial in a place growing as fast as Salt Lake.

Morphologists are interested in questions and observations like these, which can sometimes only be understood if the urban form is isolated from other conditions, such as technological, social, and economic change. On the other hand, the analysis of urban form raises questions like, Why did this happen? What were the ideas behind it? For example, one of the ideas driving Salt Lake's design was the ideal of an agricultural village, a place where all the pioneers would live together in the town and go out to their fields only when necessary. That idea ended up working for a short time, but it controlled the initial scale and fabric of the city, which in turn will affect the city's development for a very long time.

Physical and Temporal Theory of Change

Going back to the elements in Figure 2, a theory that I developed helps illuminate the importance of the rate of change of different components. Figure 6 arranges those elements as layers representing different rates of change in the urban landscape. This is a diagram (read from bottom to top) of the endurance of various components that make up the city. The elements –built form, boundaries, and landform, change at vastly different rates. The land changes little, particularly on the regional scale. The land rarely changes except for immense disasters such as earthquakes or flooding. The pre-urban form is a boundary layer that occurs before urbanization, like fields and roads. These boundaries usually persist even after a place is developed into a city. The paths of ancient Roman roads still connect cities and form the edges of new settlements. Old farm roads persist in brand-new subdivisions in the US.

Buildings, as we have seen, last only a short time. Some buildings built today are expected to last only 30 or 40 years. The ones that last the longest are often single-family houses because they are owned by individuals who maintain them. In past times, monuments like churches and palaces were very persistent. Even so, buildings are less durable than the patterns of the streets. Even more ephemeral are the objects, which are things we put down and take up almost every decade: paving, signs, and street trees.

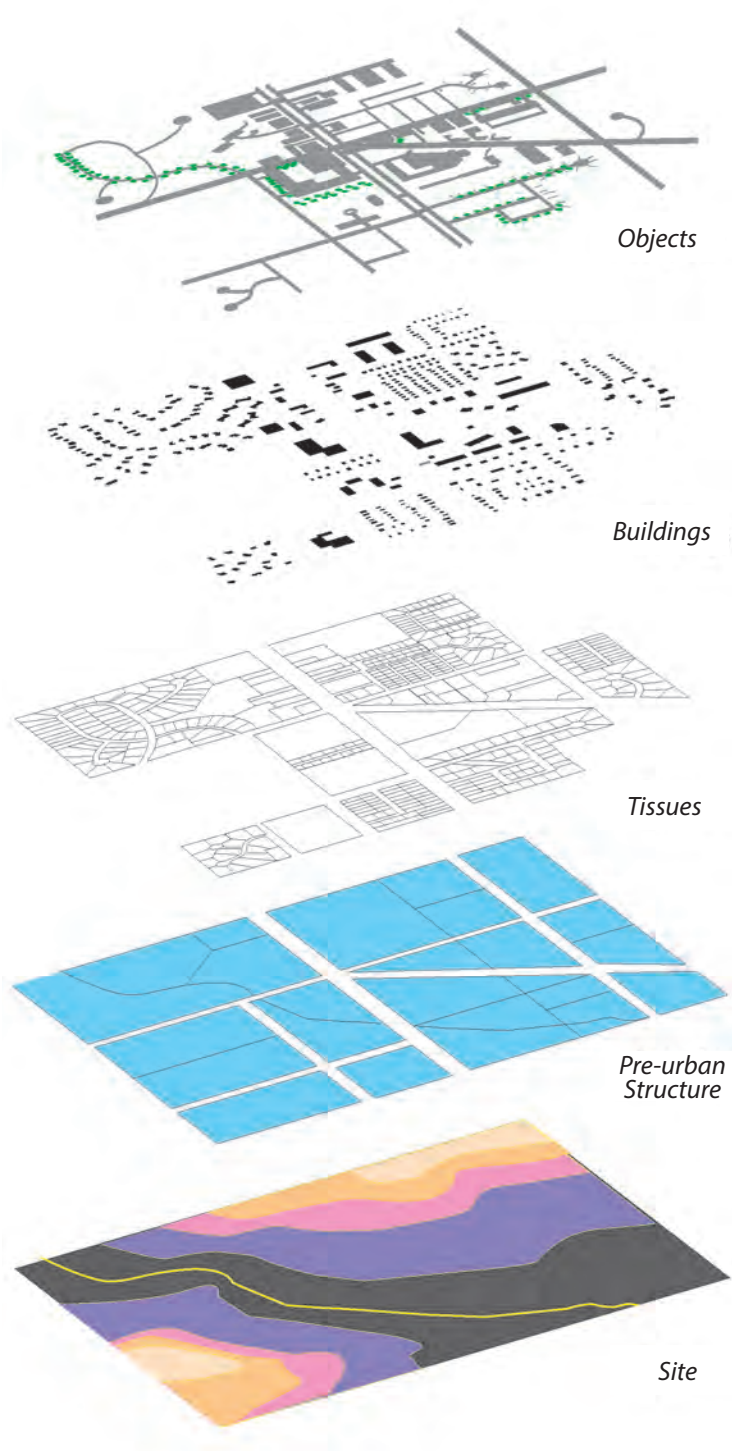
The idea of persistence is of great importance to designers and planners. It is much easier to plan for change if you plan the things that change more frequently—buildings and objects.

Figure 5: An of the original Salt Lake City blocks as developed over time.

On the other hand, a proposal to change the location of a street right-of-way will be much more controversial and difficult than changing any given building. For the same reason, urban designers and planners need to be thoughtful about the initial design and placement of streets because streets are rarely going to change, perhaps not for centuries.

The fabric of streets and lots can be destroyed, but it is highly disruptive and rare. Urban renewal in the 1960s in the US is an example where large swaths of land, including buildings and

Figure 6: Morphological elements as layers representing different rates of change in the urban landscape.



street patterns, were cleared. In history, we have many examples of the destruction of large cities by conquering armies. When the Spanish came to what's now Mexico City, they wiped out the (Aztec) existing city. This level of disruption requires a great deal of power and a strong intention to destroy not only the urban fabric but also the entire way of life that formed the place. These are intentional and usually violent acts.

Conversely, we can also observe street patterns enduring despite violent destruction. When the United States bombed Hiroshima at the end of World War II or when London was completely burned to the ground in 1660, in both cases, the streets were rebuilt in the exact location, with many of the same property boundaries.

There are so many lessons for urban planners in this simple idea of the persistence of different elements of urban form. Some proposals are reasonable from the standpoint of morphology: new buildings that are a variation of the preexisting type, large developments that aggregate existing plots of land, closing a street to traffic, and creating a park on a vacant lot. Other ideas are complicated, like ignoring or altering the pattern of lots or abandoning and building over a street.

Urban Morphology in Practice

For a time in the early and mid-twentieth century, planners were preoccupied with the messy conditions of the city, which was undergoing rapid technological and demographic change. There was an idea that a new type of city should be designed to match our modern technologies and to solve our old problems. This led to some extremely disastrous urban policies that cleared existing urban form and laid down new, untested patterns.

Today, most planners better understand the need for a slowly evolving urban form that can change to match our evolving technology but also respond to historical patterns. Urban morphology looks to history represented by the actual urban fabric of a place for expression and anticipation. Planners today better understand the historical fabric and appreciate the advantages and naturalness of a slow evolution of the city rather than disruptive and abrupt change. Putting urban morphology into service of planning involves these four urban design actions: repair, reuse, reveal, and evolve.

Repair

Large-scale urban typologies dominated for much of the 20th century (e.g., malls and superhighways). In some cases, entire neighborhoods were wiped out. This destruction completely disrupted the natural evolution of places, often by creating a place controlled centrally and on such a large scale that it required great power to change it. This is completely the

opposite of natural urban evolution, where incremental change is much more common and flexible adaptation is the result. One of our large tasks as planners in this century has been to repair these large tears in the urban landscape. Using the remaining urban form as a template can help repair the urban fabric and return it to the scale appropriate for urban life.

Sometimes, restoring a pattern or fabric that has been disrupted or lost is possible, especially if it is a network of streets or open spaces. Syracuse, New York, is a notable example. As in many places, wherever an elevated highway touched the land, buildings were subsequently torn down, and parking lots and vacant land began to grow where there was once an active urban fabric, occupied by a minority population. This kind of disruption was common wherever urban freeways were built. The slash through the middle of a city is a disruption to the grid of connected streets and the fabric of a neighborhood. In Syracuse, it was decided to tear the aging freeway down and replace it with a surface boulevard that will accommodate new, intense land uses and cross streets. This repair vision relies on an understanding of the historical morphology and a willingness to recognize the damage the highway has caused to adjacent minority neighborhoods. In Boston, the slash of an urban highway was repaired by building over it, creating new land and buildings that would reconnect the existing downtown to the waterfront. This successful intervention has greatly impacted the redevelopment and renewal of the entire downtown.

Many repair projects are under consideration throughout the US, notably old malls that are repurposed and recreated into neighborhoods with connected streets instead of large parking areas. Other ideas include breaking up the former aggregations of blocks and street closures to make a better and more human network of roads.

Reuse

Many newer developments are expected to imitate older development patterns that were more suited to a human-centered life than a car-centered one. This requires analyzing a morphological pattern that may have appeared over a hundred years ago and adapting that pattern to new places and problems. For example, it is often possible to reuse an older townhouse typology. Reusing and adapting a pattern requires a design delicacy because building types from the 19th century, which we admire, can be challenging to adapt to 21st-century uses and technologies. The key is to preserve the grain and scale of the community while allowing modern sensibilities and inclusion ethics that were never a part of older forms. For example, townhouses in the 19th century were built assuming that the servants would occupy the attic floor and that everyone could manage all the stairs involved. At that time, cars, electricity, and even running water were unheard of or uncommon. Often, you will hear people say, "These are great townhouses; let's build some new ones!" Under many current laws, they can be impossible to duplicate, and new ones are often insensitive to the patterns that made the older ones work well. Figure 7 is an example of a multi-story townhouse that we can admire, and next to it is a new townhouse that has a two-car garage in the rear and no stoop to protect it from the prying eyes of the street. These adaptations can create a very different urban life. In urban morphology, part of the analysis is to understand what makes these older types attractive (like the stoop that creates an urban social life) and the issues in adapting that type for a modern and accessible home.

Another way of using morphological research is to reuse these historical tissues to borrow from one place to another. A proposal by Christian Sottile for Savannah, Georgia, would reimagine the historic pattern of streets and squares for a new place a short distance away. The plan was to use same-sized squares but with larger plots of land that would better suit modern building types. Designing with a similar pattern legitimizes the new place and relates it to the past. Because it is remarkably similar in scale to the original, it makes it an amazingly comfortable and exciting place without creating a whole new idea about a city. The project is then related to what came before, but it is a brand-new development area.

Reveal

Another strategy related to urban morphology is to discover or uncover something previously unclear or even unknown and reuse it to enhance the sense of place. The best example is the High Line in New York City. An abandoned elevated railroad track ran through Manhattan. A single person photographed it and advocated for its reuse. After that, it was reinvented and revealed as an elevated urban park. Its sensational presence brought new investment and new life to this part of the city. Since 2005, Atlanta's "Beltline" has had a similar effect, inspired by an old railroad corridor redeveloped as a green trail. The general idea is to take a closer look at some of the abandoned or underutilized elements of the city to recognize how unique that place is, using the techniques of urban morphology.

Another example is in Salt Lake City. Regent Street was one of the hundreds of mid-block streets created because of the great size of the initial blocks. This street has been reimagined and rebuilt into a small-scale, pedestrian-oriented street filled with charming restaurants. Morphologically, this very old street has been there since 1890 but has been entirely uncelebrated.

In Salt Lake City's downtown comprehensive plan, there are now design guidelines for the alleyways and streets that were

Figure 7: On the left, an old multi-story townhouse and, on the right, a new townhouse with no stoop for privacy from the sidewalk level.

created in the 19th century. Morphological research made it possible to recognize the recurring pattern of small, almost secret streets all over the city.

Evolve

What happens if we think about the evolution of our modern-day building tissues? Ubiquitous single-family housing neighborhoods need to be reimagined for 2090, for example. We would question ourselves, "What's going to change?" Many things will be remarkably similar, and single-family housing neighborhoods will also persist for a long time. In a hundred years, we can assume that most of the houses will still be there or replaced with a very similar house. Using the knowledge of that persistence of form, planners can begin to reimagine a more resilient and ecologically driven neighborhood.

For example, houses might be energy-independent or share a neighborhood-scale power source. Wide streets can be reduced, resulting in more public space because vehicles will get smaller or even fold up. Our large homes, garages, and lots may see an evolving use pattern, with food growing, workshops, studios, social spaces, and additional dwelling units. Single-family neighborhoods, which have become less and less dense, may increase significantly in population in the next hundred years.

This follows a pattern you can observe in older neighborhoods in some cities, where large single-family homes have been divided into eight smaller units. Many cities have already approved zoning that allows extra units to be created on single-family lots.

Conclusions

Urban morphology is both a research topic and a method of architectural and urban planning practice. As planners, we are resolved to make positive changes. Having some notion of what is relatively permanent and what is not is essential. Recognizing an area's current and historic building types is not a very common practice, even though it is simple. There is so much understanding to be gained from mapping and recognizing the unique city, its tissues and fabrics, and its changes over time. Understanding the morphological background adds an understanding of the patterns of change that have already happened and helps predict what could be expected to happen next.

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The Future of Planning Symposium

April 21, 2023; City and Regional Planning Department

Brianna Grossman
MCRP student

On April 21, 2023, at Cal Poly's Swanson Center of Effort Conference Hall, the City and Regional Planning (CRP) Department welcomed students, faculty, alumni and partners to the symposium "The Future of Planning" in celebration of the College of Architecture and Environmental Design (CAED)'s 75th anniversary. Facilitated and partially sponsored by the City and Regional Planning Advisory Council (CiRPAC), the symposium included presentations and discussions with five California planners at the forefront of our field who were invited to speak about the most critical issues facing current and future planners.

With Cal Poly transitioning from a quarter to semester system by the start of the 2026-2027 academic year, the symposium presented an exciting opportunity to restructure the current curriculum to reflect the world ahead. CAED Dean Emeritus Christine Theodoropoulos opened the symposium by establishing the focus on the future: "Do you structure a curriculum around skills? Do you structure it around subject areas? Maybe you need to look into what are the future issues for planning are, and that is how you start to configure a learning experience for future planners."

The Dean's sentiments carried into the conversation between Jimmy Paulding, District 4 Supervisor of San Luis Obispo County, and Phil Serna, District 1 Supervisor of Sacramento County, who both spoke to the challenges they currently deal with in their public service positions. Homelessness, as Serna explained, remains a top issue in urban, suburban and rural areas, and has a major influence on the county's budget. The challenge has forced Serna and Paulding to rethink and expand their responsibility as planners and representatives.

Planners will be expected to provide diverse types of housing to meet the needs of unhoused people and ensure the best possible delivery methods for resources such as substance abuse help and mental health services. Serna and Paulding further noted how a more efficient system of approving housing permits and strengthened regional collaboration could help cities mitigate the housing crisis, at least for now.

During the COVID-19 pandemic when remote work increased significantly, many office and commercial buildings became vacant and, therefore, could be developed into housing solutions. Paulding and other elected officials along the Central Coast worked on ways to create living units in existing development, like repurposing the vacant commercial spaces in downtown SLO. Urban repurposing can be challenging, considering not all commercial units are equipped to be homes, but "we need to be looking at how to maximize and fully utilize existing developed space," Paulding urged. Another way to do so, he explained, is by making predesigned Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) plans available for homeowners. SLO County introduced a new program that allows residents to obtain ADU plans over the counter for varying levels of square footage. Paulding hopes ADUs can help create more affordable housing without scrambling to find new development spaces.

Perhaps today's most urgent and growing challenge continues to be climate change and disaster preparedness. Just this year, San Luis Obispo saw unprecedented atmospheric rivers and flooding, and the greater state of California has long been dealing with catastrophic wildfires.

"We've got to get with the program. We need to prioritize disaster preparedness as much as we need to ensure that we're designing our communities to make them more resilient," Paulding said. Building infrastructure that can withstand extreme weather events, planning for more efficient transportation and continuously revisiting and updating mitigation plans illustrate a willingness to adjust to climate change's present consequences. "And of course, I think we all understand what [climate change] is by now because we live it. It's no longer something that we see in a very distant future, decades away. It's happening to us now", Serna said.

After a short Q&A, the discussion ended and was quickly followed by a panel with Steven Lewis, Leora Tanjuatco Ross and Saharnaz Mirzazad. The group continued earlier conversations about housing, climate change and social justice. Following the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns, there

The Future of Planning Symposium opening session at Cal Poly's Swanson Center of Effort Conference Hall.

has been a greater sense of awareness of the social inequities and systemic faults facing our communities. Having a strong value system to combat these injustices is a characteristic of an effective planner, said Steven Lewis, architect and urban design principal at ZGF Architects. Social justice, among other topics, dominated the conversation as the group discussed the lack of available housing for low-income Californians.

"Our current planning process prioritizes the wants of the comfortable over the needs of the marginalized and our society in general," said Leora Ross, national director of Yes-In-My-Backyard Action Group. She stressed the need for a more democratic, community-based approach to planning, rather than the accustomed project-by-project process. Instead of approving individual proposals and catering to small, short-term projects, planners should focus on enforcing state fair housing laws and meeting people out in the community to gauge the overall needs, Ross explained.

There were also talks of the interconnectedness of housing with other issues. Saharnaz Mirzazad, Chief Deputy Director at the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, encouraged planners to expand beyond their silos and work together with other disciplines to problem-solve. "We need more of that," she said while expanding on ways that her department has reevaluated the housing crisis. "One of the things that was in last year's budget was housing as a climate strategy, which was a new way of thinking about the housing issue. Housing is a climate issue. They are intertwined. We can't separate them from each other," she said.

Some of Mirzazad's work as chief deputy director involves engaging communities in climate action and assembling California's Fifth Climate Change Assessment. Part of the newest assessment includes a Tribal Committee, a necessary addition, said Mirzazad, noting the historical lack of indigenous and minority voices in California governance. She's hopeful the Tribal Committee will help play a major part in shaping California's future climate action. The establishment of the committee serves as a reminder for elected officials to be more intentional with their engagement with underrepresented communities. Mirzazad suggested participatory budgeting practices as a direct tool planners can adopt to engage community members, who are otherwise overlooked, in financial decision-making and resource allocation.

Heidi Vonblum, planning director of the City of San Diego, closed out the event with a presentation of the current work at San Diego. She acknowledged the struggle of addressing so many urgent issues while accommodating the needs of various communities. "Work progress is incremental. We cannot solve every single problem every step along the way, but we can have an intentional pathway forward to get us there," she said. A critical part of that problem-solving, as Mirzazad touched on, comes from continuous and thoughtful public engagement.

"We are focused on engaging residents in new ways, meeting real people where they are, speaking in languages and words that people actually understand, targeting engagement with community-based organizations," Vonblum said. Equitable public engagement is such an essential practice, the City of San Diego has an entire division dedicated to thoughtful engagement methods. The goal is to enact policies and plans that represent San Diego's diverse demographic, rather than just those who have the privilege to participate in such planning conversations.

Looking forward, city and regional planning will continue to confront urgent challenges. But with so many ideas for creative, community-based solutions presented by the guest speakers, it's up to future planners to harness the courage to execute them. As Steven Lewis noted, leading with empathy and an appreciation for the challenge will guide our communities in the right direction: "People are resilient. They will find a way where there is no way."

After questions from the audience, the symposium ended but the conversation continued, engulfed in the panoramic view of the campus, where many of the attendees studied and began their careers in city and regional planning. Later that day, as the soft golden hues of the remaining sunlight backlit the City of San Luis Obispo, the attendees gathered on Hotel SLO's rooftop bar to relax and resume the engaging conversations from earlier that day.

The discussions encouraged by the symposium help raise issues that are already defining the path for our profession and will certainly become more crucial in the near future: the housing crisis, homelessness, climate change, the water crisis, social justice, shrinking public budgets, and public engagement and participation in the decision-making process are among the most urgent issues in California which need to be considered in new undergraduate and graduate planning curricula.

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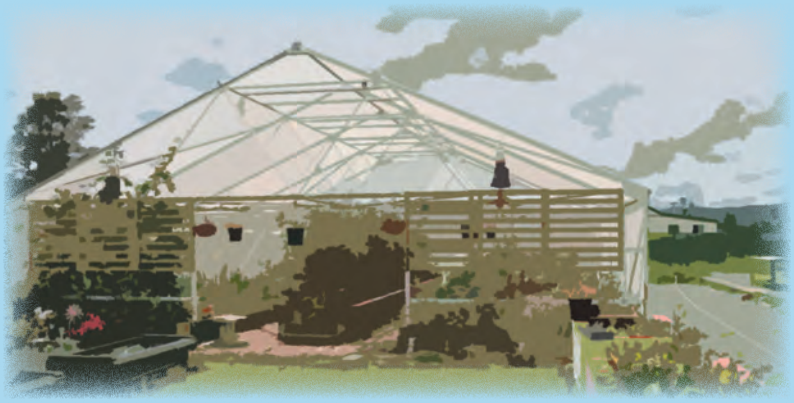
The happy hour social event at Hotel SLO's terrace.

FOCUS 20

Essays



Participatory Cultural Projects in Waterfront Redevelopment

Elisavet Papageorgiou
Architect engineer, MSc.; Designer, communicator, and coordinator of cultural events.

Through the examination of five European projects, Elisavet Papageorgiou discusses the transformative power of art and culture, international collaboration, inclusive engagement, and the active involvement of younger generations in reshaping urban waterfront areas. Participatory cultural and art projects can unite communities, artists, and planners in transforming waterfronts into vibrant cultural hubs and generating sustainable places.

Waterfronts hold a significant place in urban landscapes, historically serving as hubs of trade, commerce, and recreation. In contemporary urban planning, there is growing recognition of their potential to be revitalized through participatory cultural and art projects as they can unite communities, artists, and urban planners, transforming waterfronts into vibrant cultural and artistic centers. These types of projects can promote social cohesion by bridging cultural divides and fostering inclusivity.

When art and culture projects are integrated with sustainable design and ecological restoration efforts they benefit both the environment and the community. One one side they help improve environmental health, including the restoration of natural habitats and pollution reduction. On the other side, residents' participation in creating art installations cultivates a sense of ownership and belonging, strengthening social bonds. They create a strong sense of place and identity for waterfront communities, reflecting the area's unique history and characteristics. Engaging residents in planning and execution of art and culture projects empowers communities, leading to more sustainable and socially beneficial outcomes.

This article discusses several European projecs to underscore the transformative power of art, international collaboration, inclusive engagement, and the involvement of youngsters in reshaping urban waterfront areas. This holistic approach holds the promise of creating urban spaces that are not only more vibrant and sustainable but also culturally rich, contributing to a brighter future for waterfront communities worldwide.

We include five participatory cultural projects. The first, "Memory of Water", is a collaborative project across several cities in Europe that showcases the transformative potential of artist-led collaborations, fostering inclusivity and sustainability. The "Connecting Georgia" project emphasizes the role of artists in post-industrial waterfront development. The project "SOS Climate Waterfront" demonstrates the significance of international collaboration in addressing climate-related challenges in waterfront cities, and it advocates for innovative and adaptable solutions to enhance resilience. "The Dream City in Nordhavn" project encourages the active involvement of children in shaping urban development, aligning with Denmark's architecture policy, and emphasizing children as future co-creators. "Ermoupolis – Psychogeographic map" in Syros, is a project that highlights the importance of citizen participation in preserving waterfront heritage, bridging the gap between historical significance and contemporary experiences.

Background

Historically, waterfronts have been bustling hubs of trade, commerce, and recreation, playing a pivotal role in the social, economic, and cultural life of cities worldwide. In contemporary urban planning, there is a growing recognition of the potential of waterfront spaces to be revitalized through participatory cultural and art projects, offering a unique opportunity to unite communities, artists, and urban planners in collaborative efforts that can transform waterfronts into vibrant cultural and artistic centers (Landry & Bianchini, 1995). Jan Gehl emphasizes the significance of creating attractive, accessible, and inviting waterfront spaces that can serve as places for recreation, social interaction, and relaxation (Gehl, 2011).

Participatory cultural and art projects near waterfronts can help foster social cohesion by bringing diverse communities together. Art has the power to bridge cultural divides and promote inclusivity (Macnab, 2013). When residents participate in creating art installations, they develop a sense of ownership and pride in their community. This sense of belonging strengthens

social bonds and enhances the overall well-being of residents (Stott, 2017).

These projects can also create a strong sense of place and identity for waterfront communities. Public art installations and cultural events often reflect the unique characteristics and history of the area, helping residents and visitors connect with the waterfront on a deeper level and strengthening their attachment to the space (Sharp et al., 2005).

Engaging residents in the planning and execution cultural and art projects empowers communities. Participation in decision-making processes regarding waterfront redevelopment fosters a sense of agency and ownership, resulting in more sustainable and socially beneficial outcomes (Hunt, 2006).

Furthermore, many waterfront redevelopment projects incorporate sustainable design principles and ecological restoration efforts, which can improve the environmental health of waterfront areas, including the restoration of natural habitats and the reduction of pollution. Integrating art and culture with environmental sustainability can yield positive outcomes for both the environment and the community (Trott, 2020).

In addition to social and environmental benefits, waterfront redevelopment projects often lead to economic revitalization in surrounding areas. The presence of cultural and artistic attractions can draw tourists and visitors, stimulating local businesses and generating revenue. These projects also create job opportunities for artists and cultural workers, contributing to the local economy (Kostopoulou, 2013).

Case Selection Criteria

A specific criteria was used to select the cases to discuss and ensure a well-rounded exploration of participatory cultural events in waterfront areas. Diversity was a key consideration, with cases intentionally selected to represent a diverse range of factors, including geographical locations, types of waterfronts, and scales. Diversity also enables a comprehensive understanding of the impact of these events across various contexts.

The type of waterfront played a crucial role in case selection, as cases were chosen to encompass different types of waterfronts, such as riverfronts, urban waterfronts, ports, and island coastal areas. Each type presents distinct challenges and opportunities for redevelopment and community engagement.

In addition to diversity in geographical and typological factors, the selection of cases also considered a variety of target groups for participatory cultural events. These groups included scientists, artists, children, and local citizens. The inclusion of such diverse participants allowed for an examination of how different demographic segments engage with and benefit from these events.

Moreover, the article aims to capture the multifaceted nature of cultural events by considering a wide range of art and design forms of the projects. These included architecture, sustainable design, visual arts, performing arts, and interactive installations. This diversity in artistic expression facilitated a comprehensive analysis of the impact of different art forms on various aspects of waterfront redevelopment.

The selection of cases for this study also considered the scale and funding sources of participatory cultural events in waterfront areas. The cases represent different project scales, including those funded by large European initiatives, regional programs, and local community efforts. This criterion aimed to provide insights into the influence of funding sources and the scale of projects on the outcomes, sustainability, and community engagement in waterfront cultural events.

Memory of Water: The Transformative Power of Art in Urban Waterfront Revitalization
Project partners: Intercult (SE), Fablevision (UK), Baltic Sea Cultural Centre (PL), Municipality of Levadia (GR), Municipality of Ostend (BL), Ormston House (IR), University of West Scotland (GB), River// Cities Platform Foundation.
Supported by Creative Europe.

Connecting Georgia
Project partners: Intercult (SE), PPV Knowledge Network (Kiev), TU Art Platform (Mariupol).
Supported by: Swedish institute

The "Memory of Water" project, led by Intercult in Stockholm, is a shining example of the profound impact that artist-led collaborations can have on waterfront regeneration initiatives. Across cities such as Levadia, Gdańsk, Stockholm, Limerick, and Govan, artists worked with various stakeholders, including citizens, community groups, politicians, and urban planners. This collaborative approach fostered a profound sense of inclusivity and shared ownership over revitalizing waterfront areas.

The program comprised twenty-three interconnected activities such as performances, podcasts, citylabs, webinars, digital exhibitions, research residencies, architectural competitions, and documentary productions. This multifaceted approach provided a diverse and holistic exploration of water-related themes, fostering interdisciplinary engagement and knowledge dissemination (Figures 1 & 2).

At the heart of the project were three primary priorities: audience development, capacity building, and transnational mobility. The overarching goal was to engage local communities, disseminate

information concerning waterfront regeneration, and initiate an inclusive dialogue among all stakeholders involved. The project's residency themes revolved around memory and heritage, inclusivity for underrepresented communities, and environmental responsibility. Sustainability was a central theme, and the project placed a strong emphasis on disseminating its results through the River/Cities Platform Foundation.

The culmination of the Memory of Water project was the creation of hybrid city labs, acting as platforms for collaboration between citizens, artists, experts, NGOs, and the public sector. These events addressed local challenges in a broader European context, fostering innovative solutions and cross-cultural understanding (Figures 1 & 2).

One of the key takeaways from the "Memory of Water" project was the transformative potential of socially engaged artistic practices. These interventions stimulated cross-sectoral dialogues, empowered communities, and inspired innovative solutions for waterfront regeneration. The tangible impact of art on urban planning and policy showcased the pivotal role artists can play in shaping the trajectory of urban development. Additionally, the role of art in environmental education was underscored, as it engages learners emotionally and creatively, making it a valuable tool for addressing pressing environmental issues. The works of art had a crucial educational effect, as in environmental education, evidence suggests that it is better approached through emotions and generally through art because creativity engages the learners during the learning process, opening hearts and minds to new ways of doing and being (Kyriazakos, 2019) (Figure 3).

As part of Memory of Water, the action "Connecting Georgia" sought to connect Batumi with European cities in a collaborative exploration of post-industrial maritime heritage. Artists from Stockholm and Batumi engaged in co-creation and research, initiating an international dialogue about urban planning and waterfront development. The project's objective was to investigate the impact of artists on planning waterfronts with post-industrial cultural heritage. In "Connecting Georgia," ten artists participated, each developing artistic interventions related to post-industrial cultural heritage, social sustainability, and urban development (Intercult, n.d.) (Figure 4).

The cases of "Memory of Water" and "Connecting Georgia" demonstrate the transformative power of artists in the revitalization of urban waterfronts. Through their collaborations with diverse stakeholders, artists have played a pivotal role in fostering inclusivity, sustainability, and innovative solutions in communities that were once overlooked. These projects underscore the vital role of art in shaping the future of urban waterfront areas, creating vibrant, inclusive, and environmentally responsible communities. By actively

Figure 1: Mural by Siegfried Vynck in Levadia. (Photo: Intercult database)

Figure 2: "Let the river take it" community action in Levadia. (Photo: Intercult database)

Figure 3: Intervention by Mary Conroy in Gdansk. (Photo: Intercult database)

Figure 4: Oskar Gudehn performing in Stockholm. (Photo: José Figueroa)

engaging local communities and emphasizing sustainability, artists are contributing to the development of urban waterfront areas that are more inclusive, accessible, and environmentally responsible. Through their collaborative efforts, the River// Cities Platform and project partners have sought to create positive and lasting change in the communities they serve, leaving a lasting legacy of inclusive and sustainable waterfront revitalization (Memory of Water, n.d.).

SOS Climate Waterfront: Researchers' Participation in Waterfront Cities Development

Project partners: Universidade Lusofóna de Humanidades e Tecnologias (PT), KTH Royal Institute of Technology (SE), Intercult (SE), Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (GR), Sapienza University of Rome (IT), Alpha Consult (IT), River//Cities Platform Foundation (PL), City of Gdańsk (PL), Gdańsk University of Technology (PL), Stichting CPO Noord-Holland - CPONH (NL)
Supported by: Horizon 2020 - Marie Curie Actions

Waterfront cities in Europe are encountering various challenges, ranging from heat waves and heavy rainfall to sea-level rise and mass migration. The SOS Climate Waterfront project was initiated to address these pressing issues. With funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 program, the project aimed to develop strategies for sustainable urban development in vulnerable waterfront areas while fostering international collaboration and cultural exchange.

The project's hallmark was its international collaboration. Experts from five European cities—Lisbon, Gdansk, Stockholm, Thessaloniki, and Rome—worked together to confront the unique challenges posed by their respective waterfront areas. Throughout the project, ten international expert gatherings were held, during which participants engaged in dialogues, shared knowledge, and visited each of the five cities to gain a deep understanding of the local context.

The SOS Climate Waterfront Approach is a pioneering interdisciplinary initiative to address the critical challenges climate change poses and its impact on urban and waterfront areas. It seeks to bridge the gap in our understanding of how various aspects of urban planning, architectural design, and technology interconnect with water-related strategies and how they influence each other in shaping proactive measures and conscious solutions for the benefit of communities, human well-being, and socio-economic activities in vulnerable waterfront territories (Intercult, 2021).

To achieve its goals, the project emphasized international and regional cooperation through workshops, conferences, networking meetings, and dissemination activities. Workshops brought together researchers, PhD students, and post-docs to explore critical issues within the partner institution's domain and analyze the waterfront's response to climate change. Conferences assembled experts, municipal representatives, and international scholars to share research, fostering mutual understanding and best practices. Networking meetings served to fine-tune the project's execution, allowing for internal evaluation and planning (Figure 5).

The project's commitment to dissemination and outreach is evident in its focus on publications, policy briefs, reports, and collaborations with relevant organizations, expanding awareness of Sustainable Open Solutions. These solutions address environmental, societal, and transportation challenges, encouraging a broader discussion about how we can adapt to a changing climate and protect our vulnerable waterfronts. In the quest for a sustainable future, SOS Climate Waterfront is a beacon of collaboration and knowledge sharing in the face of climate-related adversity.

The SOS Climate Waterfront project's key findings shed light on the critical aspects of developing waterfront cities. One of the central findings of the project emphasizes the need for

Figure 5: SOS conference in Stockholm (Photo: Intercult database)

Figure 6: Stockholm team visualization.

urban planning and design to embrace speculative thinking for resilience. The trend of prioritizing rationale over creativity has often resulted in cities focusing on threat mitigation rather than adaptability. In the face of 21st-century uncertainties, the project advocates for a shift in mindset that fosters innovative and adaptable solutions, ultimately making waterfront cities more resilient to the challenges posed by climate change.

The SOS Climate Waterfront project's success can be attributed, in part, to its emphasis on cultural diversity and cross-cultural communication. The project recognized the importance of valuing and integrating cultural differences when addressing complex environmental challenges. By bringing together experts from diverse cultural backgrounds, the project promoted a more inclusive and holistic approach to waterfront city development. This exchange of knowledge and ideas contributed to a deeper understanding of the challenges of climate change and water management in different regions. (SOS Climate Waterfront, 2018) (Figure 6).

The Dream City in Nordhavn:
Children's Participation in City Development

Project partners: Metropolis – Copenhagen International Theatre, By & Havn, COBE architects, Tvillingehallen school, Copenhagen Kids, Strandvejsskolen.
Supported by: By &Havn, Østerbro Lokaludvalg, Copenhagen Municipality's Culture and Leisure Committee.

The Dream City in Nordhavn was a unique urban development project that exemplifies the active involvement of children in shaping the future of their city. This project initiated by Metropolis - Copenhagen International Theatre aimed to engage students in envisioning and creating a vibrant urban environment within Copenhagen's new district in the port of Nordhavn. With an expected influx of 40,000 new residents over the next 25 years, the Dream City project sought to provide a platform for children to contribute their ideas and dreams for the future.

Nordhavn's historical significance as a hub for maritime and industrial activities adds depth to its architectural heritage. The project capitalized on this heritage by building the new district on top of the old, creating a space for future generations of Copenhageners to thrive. Nordhavn's transformation presented a unique opportunity to include the youngest generation in the city's development. The project was spearheaded by the Land Development Company By & Havn in collaboration with COBE architects, who had previously developed vision plans for Nordhavn. By involving artists, architects, and 150 students from Strandvejsskolen, the project aimed to offer children a chance to actively participate in the design and planning of the new urban distric (Figures 7 & 8).

Figure 7: Workshop at Strandvejsskolen . (Photo by the author)

Figure 8: A postcard from the future. (Photo by the author)

Figure 9: Examining the waterfront areas. (Photo by the author)

Figure 10: Architectural model from beton blocks. (Photo by the author)

Recently, there has been a growing emphasis on including children and young people in city design and development. The Danish government's architecture policy, "Architecture Policy – People at the Centre," focused on educating children and young people about the potential and co-determination in architecture. The Dream City project aligned with this approach, emphasizing children as future users, co-creators, and even critics, ensuring their perspectives on space, color, and urban living are considered and integrated into the city's fabric.

The Dream City project was not just an innovative and interdisciplinary learning experience but also a pioneering endeavor to give children a direct role in shaping urban development. The project's success served as a model for future collaborations between schools and urban development projects, offering young people the opportunity to contribute concrete proposals for large-scale city initiatives (Figures 9 & 10).

This project was closely aligned with the principles of the new public school reform, which promoted the "open school" concept, encouraging innovative teaching methods and interactions with the local community. During the project, artists and architects took the lead, and the school's regular curriculum was put on hold for a week to engage in interdisciplinary themes and group activities. The classroom was essentially relocated to Nordhavn for this immersive educational experience.

The Dream City project followed a well-structured series of steps, actively engaging students in creating a 300 m2 dream city in Nordhavn (Figures 11 & 12). During the first phase, students were divided into six groups to explore Nordhavn, noting its distinctive attributes, picturesque vistas, and industrial remnants, setting the foundation for a deeper understanding. In contrast, the following phase saw the focus shift to envisioning urban space changes, where students used postcards to convey their ideas for Nordhavn's future, with subsequent days dedicated

Figure 11: The final exhibition. (Photo by the author)

Figure 12: The final exhibition's interactive map. (Photo by the author)

to crafting new places within the area. Instructors introduced different themes, such as the concept of a green and blue city, designing bridges and towers, and creating vibrant city spaces. Students got hands-on, fashioning models using a variety of materials. These creative workshops were hosted within Nordhavn, offering an inspiring backdrop for the students' work.

The unique combination of physically challenging surroundings, innovative teaching methodologies, and the opportunity to experiment with various design processes fostered an atmosphere of intense enthusiasm and collaboration among the students. This amalgamation of engaging, innovative activities in an unfamiliar yet captivating setting allowed students to maximize their educational potential. (Drømmebyen i Nordhavn: Dokumentation, 2014)

Ermoupolis Psychogeographic Map: Engaging Citizens in Waterfront Heritage

Coordinator/Production: Eye's Walk Festival (GR)
Partners: LEME (PT), Passage (DK)
Supported by: Municipality of Syros Island, South Aegean Region, Circostrada, EFFEA European Festival Fund for Emerging Artists.

In Ermoupolis, a town in the island of Syros, Greece, a unique project unfolded, emphasizing the vital role of citizen participation in preserving waterfront tangible and intangible heritage. The Eye's Walk Digital Festival's "Ermoupolis Psychogeographic map" took place in 2023, shedding light on the maritime legacy of the city, particularly the port of the city and the Neorio Shipyard, a historic maritime landmark. This immersive project played a significant role in integrating art, oral history, and cultural geography to deepen citizens' connection to their local history and heritage.

"Cities have psychogeographical contours, with constant streams of movement, fixed points, and fixed angles, which discourage entry or exit from certain zones" (Debord, 1967). Psychogeographic maps, stemming from the Situationist International movement, are innovative tools within urban geography and psychology. They are significant for urban planning, offering insights into how urban spaces influence emotions and behaviors. They serve as a platform for cultural critique and encourage a deeper personal connection to one's environment. In scientific literature, they are explored in the context of urban psychology, phenomenology, and spatial experience (Ley, 2010; Sadler, 2013), offering valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of urban life.

The Eyes Walk Digital Festival, known for its unique approach to cultural heritage, created a Memoryscape-Soundscape Walk in the city of Ermoupolis as part of the psychogeographic map of the town (Figure 13). The citizens and visitors of Ermoupolis were taken on an immersive journey through time-based on

Figure 13: Port of Ermoupolis: Psychogeographic map, "Birds" Performance, Ban Lei. (Photo: Yannis Vavitsas Photography)

oral histories and testimonies of Syros' citizens who live and work along the coastal area (Milidaki, 2023a). This initiative sought to create an audio walk and soundscape along the waterfront, adding a rich layer of cultural history to the city's present. At the festival, multiple productions took place all across the port, such as dance performances, workshops aimed at adults and children, sound performances, and visual art productions.

The significance of citizen participation was the central element of the production. In Ermoupolis, where the shipyard has been an integral part of the community for over a century, it's the local memories, experiences, and stories that paint the complete picture of the shipyard's history. Citizens and workers who shared their testimonies became the narrators of their own stories, highlighting their connection to Ermoupolis' cultural heritage. (F. Milidaki Q. Bonastra, personal communication, 2023).

The project drew inspiration from the narratives, personal experiences, and ambiance of the coastal region surrounding Ermoupolis, home to the historic 'Neorio Shipyard,' first emerged in the mid-19th century, along with various other industrial structures, both public and private (Figure 14). Given the contemporary logistical, emotional, and psychological significance of this location to the city and the delicate relationship between the shipyard and its residents, an advocacy campaign accompanied the overarching artistic undertaking (Milidaki, 2023b).

This campaign empowered the labor class and the citizens of Syros to participate more actively in political and social life in their community. It also aimed to increase their understanding of cultural heritage and promote their attachment to oral history. By advocating for inclusivity, the project overcame barriers such as fear and suspicion of sharing memories and concerns (Milidaki, 2023b)

Art naturally played a crucial role in the project. It awakened collective consciousness and fostered social responsibility and interaction. By using the power of artistic expression, the Eyes Walk Digital Festival encouraged the community to take an active role in shaping their cultural narratives and expressing their ideas on heritage and the environment (EFFEA, 2023). (20)

The project combined the elements of oral history, art in the public space, and advocacy to create a well-rounded and engaging experience for the community (Figure 15). Through a soundscape and audio walk, it managed to bring the maritime history of Ermoupolis while integrating the diverse voices of the labor class and local citizens.

Figure 14: Port of Ermoupolis: Psychogeographic map, "Forbitten" Performance, Quim Bonastra/Mito Collective. (Photo: Yannis Vavitsas Photography)

Figure 15: Port of Ermoupolis: Psychogeographic map, "...and the women were diving in the sea with their camisoles" Audio route, Filia Milidaki. (Photo: Yannis Vavitsas Photography)

The "Ermoupolis - Psychogeographic map" project was not just a theoretical exploration but a practical endeavor that engaged the citizens of Ermoupolis in preserving their waterfront heritage. Through oral history, art in public space, and advocacy, the project empowered the community, bridging the gap between the shipyard's history and the voices of those who lived it. It stands as a testament to the power of citizen participation in preserving and celebrating a city's rich heritage.

Conclusion

Participatory cultural and art initiatives in waterfront re-development have proven highly effective for comprehensive urban enhancement. The cases discussed here illustrate the broad-reaching potential of such projects. Collaborative efforts between artists and diverse stakeholders foster inclusivity, sustainability, and innovation in previously overlooked urban waterfront communities. These projects emphasize creating more accessible, eco-conscious, and inclusive waterfront spaces that benefit residents and visitors alike.

International collaboration and interdisciplinary research, as demonstrated, are essential for addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by waterfront cities. Such approaches highlight the importance of adaptability in navigating 21st-century uncertainties and the significance of recognizing and valuing cultural diversity when addressing complex environmental issues.

The active involvement of younger generations in urban development, as showcased, holds promise for the future of city planning. Empowering children to co-create their urban environments sets a precedent for more inclusive and dynamic cities shaped by the generation that will inherit them.

Furthermore, the potential of citizen engagement in preserving and celebrating waterfront heritage, as revealed, underscores the enduring importance of connecting communities with their history and cultural identity, reinforcing bonds, and cultivating a sense of collective heritage.

These cases collectively underscore the transformative power of art, international collaboration, inclusive engagement, and the active involvement of younger generations in reshaping urban waterfront areas. This holistic approach holds the promise of creating urban spaces that are not only more vibrant and sustainable but also culturally rich, contributing to a brighter future for waterfront communities worldwide.

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Strategic Foresight: Imagining and Enacting Food as Public Service Through Regenerative Placemaking

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The authors discuss a transdisciplinary research project that led to the transformation of a public site by an edible landscape that reconnects people with food processes while supporting pollinators. They diverted from the community garden model to a regenerative placemaking approach in which food as a public service for people and pollinators embodies the permission to harvest and eat the produce grown by someone else. Grounded in a strategic method called "futures cone", the authors helpeded to implement these ideas in Waharoa, New Zealand, in partnership with a district council and a local indigenous community group.

Humanity is facing pressing sustainability challenges. The planet is warming, we continue to lose biodiversity, and human population health is declining. Decades of evidence documenting these issues have not stopped these declines (e.g., United Nations, 1987, 1992; FAO, 2012, 2013). Land is at the heart of the problem and hopeful pathways for change.

Publicly owned land is a precious resource often used as ornamental landscapes or parks in New Zealand and elsewhere. The regenerative placemaking implementation in the city of Waharoa, New Zealand, took the shape of an edible landscape spanning across a 1,312.34 sq.ft. former bowling green. A two-fold purpose drove the involvement of the research team: i) reconnecting people with food processes to promote dietary choices that support health and well-being while ii) providing connected, safe habitats for pollinators to increase ecosystem services in the built environment. The innovation of our approach lies in integrating regenerative placemaking, social food reconnection, and pollinator biodiversity through repurposing public land uses. The Waharoa implementation's starting point was a small-scale intervention in Auckland, also in New Zealand, enabled by the Auckland Council (local government).

There is a significant need and opportunity to directly address the potential factors that harm insect pollinators in cities (Baldock, 2020) and harness the city's potential as "a refuge for insect pollinators" (Hall et al., 2017). Inspired by this potential, a transdisciplinary research team at the Auckland Council mapped gaps in pollinator pathways and opportunities for new food-growing sites in Auckland city's publicly owned land (see GIS mapping in Ribeiro, 2020a). The team argued for providing connected, safe habitats for pollinators while reconnecting urban people with food processes. Ribeiro's publications supported a successful submission to the Kaipātiki Local Board, where part of a local park's ornamental landscape was substituted for edible plants (Ribeiro & Lewis, 2021; Ribeiro & Turner, 2021; Ribeiro, 2020a, 2020b, 2019). The Auckland Council planted feijoa trees near the Monarch Park playground (Figure 1). The Auckland intervention could not function as proof of concept due to its small scale, but it

comprised a starting point. This starting point was significant because it proved that change is possible and financially inexpensive, provided political will exists.

Both the Monarch Park starting point and the Waharoa implementation required extensive stakeholder engagement due to the underlying mechanisms of our regenerative placemaking model: access to public land, a group of people keen to manage the land in the long run, and funding to activate the site. While the Monarch Park intervention was managed by the Auckland local council, in Waharoa, two members of the research team facilitated a co-design session with stakeholders from the Matamata-Piako District Council (two partners) and the Kaitiaki Trap'n Train Trust community group (five partners). A total of nine people shared their expectations about the partnership regarding the implementation of a public, edible landscape in the Waharoa former bowling green.

We chose a Strategic Foresight method for the stakeholder engagement in Waharoa called the futures cone and co-designed a vision that all stakeholders could own, share, and implement. This article contextualizes the method in the literature and discusses its application in the co-design session that resulted in the successful Waharoa implementation.

An Overview of Strategic Foresight

How we think about the future has changed throughout history, and up to the 20th century, future thinking was largely deterministic. There were amateurs and professionals (e.g., seers, oracles, soothsayers, planners, social critics, and prophets) who worked on the premise that the future already existed and could therefore be seen in advance if the methods were correct (Henchley, 1978; Kuosa, 2011; Schultz, 2015). A broad range of social, political, technological, and scientific changes in the last fifty years meant the study of the future moved from predicting the future to mapping alternative futures to shaping desired futures (Inayatullah, 2013).

Riel Miller (2006), Head of Foresight Literacy at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), states that anticipation, in whatever form, is one of the fundamental determinants of our actions and feelings. These actions (or inactions) may (or may not) play a role in what happens next (Miller, 2006). Miller (2006) articulates how anticipation of the future matters because it plays a role in shaping the decisions we make now. The fundamental premise of strategic foresight, or future thinking, is that while the future cannot be predicted, it can be actively influenced or created (Störmer et al., 2020).

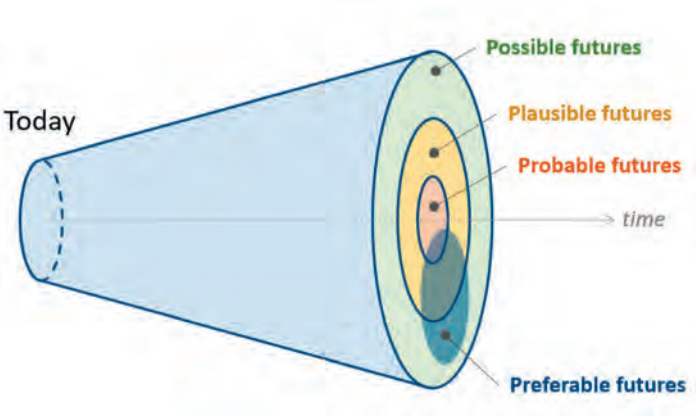
Strategic foresight has been gaining traction in government and the private sector worldwide because foresight methods provide an opportunity to rethink our futures creatively and accelerate

Figure 1: Monarch Park small-scale intervention (source: authors)

the introduction of social change and innovation for facilitating transformative change (e.g., Berkhout & Hertin, 2002; Cederquist & Golüke, 2016; Pereira et al., 2018). Strategic foresight integrates the perspectives and tools of possible, probable, and preferable futures, often through the use of a futures cone (Figure 2), which futurists derive through normative foresight processes (trend and emerging issues analysis) and exploratory foresight processes (open consideration of what is possible) (Cook et al., 2014; van Dorsser et al., 2018). In this research, we used the futures cone strategic foresight method to structure our co-design methodology for bringing stakeholders on board with a vision we could all own and share (Quist & Vergragt, 2006; Quist, Thissen & Vergragt, 2011).

The use of the plural in 'futures cone' is deliberate, as there is never one future but always many alternative futures. Charles Taylor first tried to visually represent this concept to illustrate the geopolitical scenarios he posed in Alternate World Scenarios for Strategic Planning (1988). The concept was called a 'cone of plausibility,' which graphically represents the relationship between the present moment and the certainty of our knowledge about future events. The further ahead we look, the greater the number of possible events and levels of

Figure 2: The futures cone. (based on Hancock & Bezold, 1994)



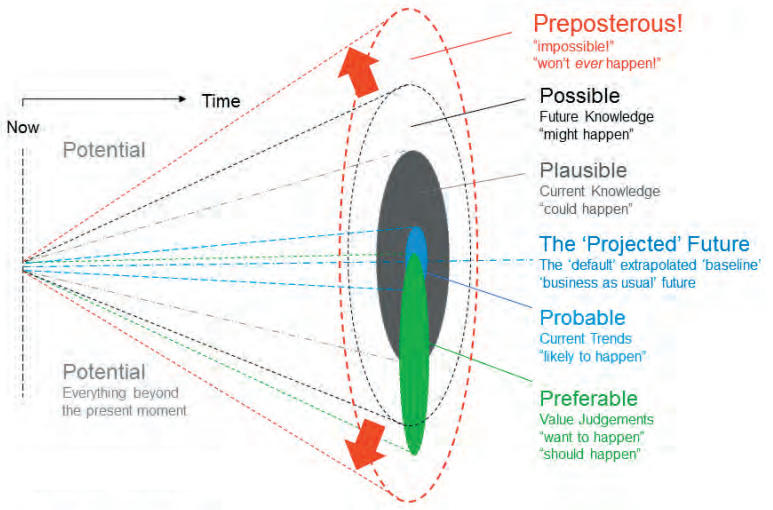


Figure 3. An expanded range of alternate future types. (source: Voros, 2017).

uncertainty (Taylor, 1990; Epaminondas, 2021). Since Taylor's initial development of the cone of plausibility, many simplified and modern alternatives of the futures cone have been developed by futurists, including Trevor Hancock, Clement Bezold, and Joseph Voros (Figure 3).

Co-Design Method: Futures Cone

Different versions of the future cones have been used in co-design sessions and workshops to structure informed conversations about what could be done to tackle different kinds of sustainability challenges (Quist & Vergragt, 2006; Quist, Thissen & Vergragt, 2011). Stakeholders often use the futures cone for choosing a preferable future as the vision to be owned and shared. This vision then structures the co-design of an actionable plan starting from the present, which details the steps required for the chosen desirable future to become a reality.

In Waharoa, the research team's endeavor was to co-design an actionable plan towards a preferable future with a community group from a town that scores highly on the Deprivation Index (IMD2018) and district council employees. Utilizing a sophisticated tool could compromise the communication flow instead of enabling a co-designed vision all stakeholders could own and share. To mitigate this risk, we simplified the futures cone foresight method, which is also adapted to include a back cone representing the relationship between past, present, and future (Figure 4). The past is significant because people rely on their memories to think through what the future may look like, and we tend to build narratives around patterns extracted from our memories. In Figure 4, a cone is used to look backward due to the limits of interpretation and evidence, and as such, there are a range of plausible pasts. This cone's purpose was to enable the communication flow further, so we worked on a single version of the past, present, and future and collated these narratives into an actionable plan for the Waharoa intervention to succeed.

The Waharoa Implementation

The Waharoa implementation represents a step forward regarding the Monarch Park starting point. The former bowling

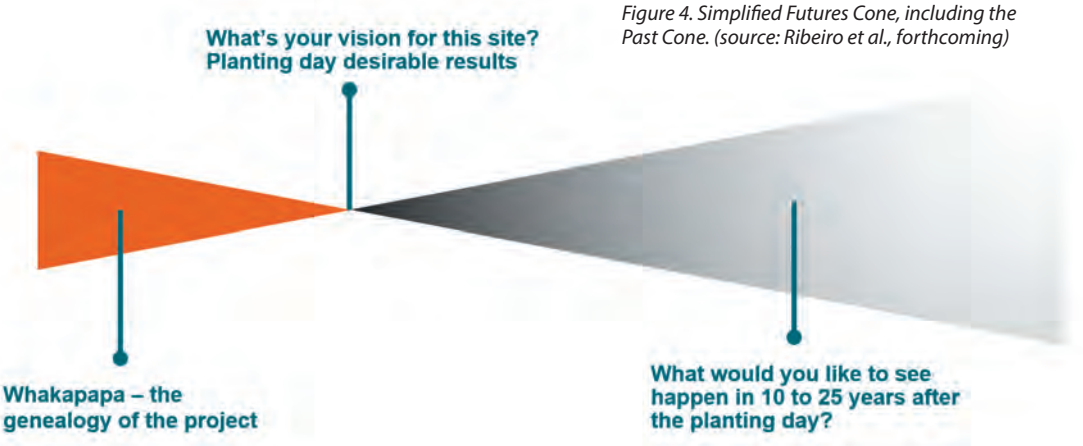


Figure 4. Simplified Futures Cone, including the Past Cone. (source: Ribeiro et al., forthcoming)

green site in Waharoa is large enough to serve as proof of concept, which we are using as a template for negotiating future interventions in New Zealand. As was the case with Monarch Park, the Waharoa implementation was grounded in the three core components previously outlined: access to public land (local government's remit), the partnership with a group keen to manage the edible landscape (could be council or a community group), and the research team who led the engagement, structured the project and sponsored the planting supplies. The group keen to manage the edible landscape in Waharoa was an Iwi Trust., comprised of Māori local residents, to whom we will refer interchangeably as "community group" or "Trust" from now onwards.

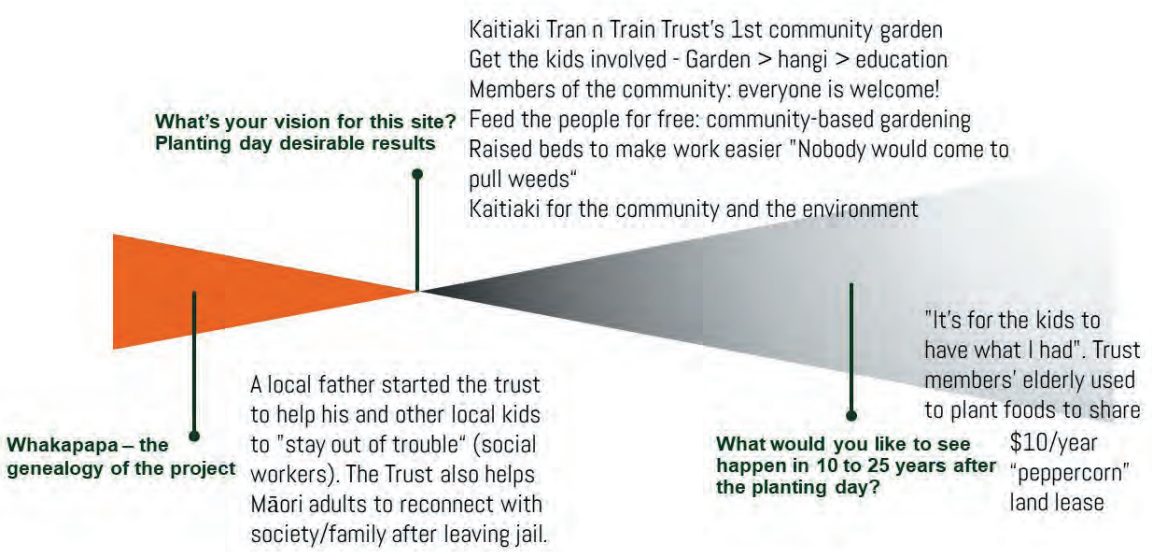
Converting parts of public land (a former bowling green) into an edible landscape was the first disruption in Waharoa, which the Trust and the Matamata-Piako District Council were already considering due to the Trust's interest in starting a community garden. The futures cone helped us understand what the notion of community gardens meant to the Trust, and the co-design session revealed how their vision aligned with ours. We used a simplified version of the futures cone at the co-design session (Figure 4) to ensure our engagement method was fit to communicate with a deprived community group.

At the co-design session, conversations with members of the Trust revealed some of them perceive reconnecting Māori adults who left jail with whānau (friends and family) and "keep rangatahi (youth) out of trouble" (i.e., local authorities) as a core purpose of the Trust. Although the Trust had never started a community garden before, our co-design session indicated narratives of planting and harvesting practices as pathways to nurture their core values (Figure 5) while helping feed locals "who need it." One of the Trust leaders framed the site as a place where "the gates are always open, never locked, and everyone is welcome," which aligns with our approach to food as a public service or free food for all.

It is too soon to elaborate on potential connections between these cultural elements and the disruption we are trying to achieve through food system change for healthier people and enhanced pollinator biodiversity through regenerative placemaking. It is worth noting, however, that these connections may be there, and this research will continue evolving as the land and the people working on the Waharoa site continue to change. In our future sites, it may also be as simple as council employee(s) managing land alongside residents. Either way, everyone is welcome to plant or harvest edible plants or do both.

It was challenging to bring people from different backgrounds and levels of ecosystem services knowledge on board with a shared vision for social food reconnection coupled with pollinator biodiversity. Regarding the latter, some of the Trust members expressed concerns, particularly regarding being stung by bees. When the researchers signaled there are other kinds of pollinators, such as other insects and birds, they voiced concerns about having their produce "stolen." A researcher then indicated that without pollinators, some fruit trees would bear no fruits, which resonated with members because food was vital to the Trust's core values (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: Narratives captured at the co-design session in Waharoa, using our simplified version of the Futures Cone method. (source: Ribeiro et alt., forthcoming)



The Waharoa implementation was grounded in the co-design session we conducted with the Trust and district council employees, in which our tailored futures cone proved effective. This process made a tangible difference to the Trust by focusing attention and energies on a plan that could be implemented. One of the group's leaders commented, "this has really re-energized us. It's given us the lift we needed to get this done". The co-designed plan also involved a list of foods that were culturally appropriate and could help support pollinator biodiversity. The research team diverted part of a grant to sponsor the planting supplies and activate the site.

Together, we created a vision for multi-use spaces that provide edible experiences, support pollinators important for producing that food, and provide an opportunity for communities to engage in the process from an educational perspective (see Figure 6). The Trust is leading the planting at the Waharoa site.

Conclusion

The element of impermanence at the intervention sites is significant to this research. In Waharoa, as a local Māori community group cultivates an edible landscape surrounded by the Waikato region animal farming landscape, the land will change every season while they harvest and plant new foods and non-edibles. The research team will continue working on measuring the impact of the intervention on social practices and pollinator biodiversity as the project evolves. Our hope is the experiences and foods people take home each day will empower the community to make dietary decisions that promote health and well-being and deepen their understanding of the importance of pollinators. While these social changes ripen through a few cycles of planting and harvesting, we also hope pollinators may thrive there.

The research team is now preparing to measure pollinator biodiversity at the project site in Waharoa by conducting pollinator surveys. The social food reconnection component will be assessed through interviews after allowing one year to pass for practices to change and evolve. While it is soon to tell if we succeeded at supporting pollinator biodiversity and social food reconnection, Waharoa is already significant. It demonstrates how our regenerative placemaking model presents one pathway for implementing much-needed disruptions to the public land uses of ornamental landscapes and parking in New Zealand and internationally by activating multiple values through the same asset. From a research perspective, Waharoa's significance also lies in testing our regenerative placemaking model at a scale large enough that it could serve as proof of concept.

This proof of concept required us to perform outside the usual project management expectations in research. When faced with budget restrictions for the planting to start, the team diverted

Figure 6: Waharoa Living Lab (LL). Before: top left (September 2022). After: bottom left and right side photos (January 2023). (photos by the authors)

part of the grant to sponsor supplies. While managing the purchases of planting supplies might sound outside the research scope, it was vital for the implementation to succeed. And what the community group did with $400 AUD (approximately US$ 257.00) worth of planting supplies was remarkable. The Trust changed the landscape from poorly managed grass to a garden teeming with food. The $400 figure proves how financially inexpensive our proposed regenerative placemaking model is and how much it depends on political will.

Political will is vital, given that access to public land is paramount. The Matamata-Piako District Council took a leap of faith in the vision that initiated this project, by introducing the research team to the local community group that is managing the edible landscape and placing a Community Advisor with a degree in Horticulture on-site working alongside the research team and the Trust. According to Councillor James Sainsbury (personal communication; 29 Nov. 2023), "as with most not-for-profit community groups, the lease arrangement between MPDC and the Kaitiaki Trap and Train Trust is fixed term with a peppercorn rent [approx. $10/year]". The engagement methodology grounded in the futures cone strategic foresight method proved fit-for-purpose to aid the co-design of a vision for the Waharoa site that all stakeholders involved could own and share.

Without the council's support, this implementation would have likely failed. Yet, the same could be said about the local Māori community group, who is managing the land, and the research team who led the engagement, structured the project, and sponsored the planting supplies. Grounded in these three pillars, we are currently scoping a new site in New Zealand to demonstrate the knowledge transferability of this action research agenda and its potential to upscale nationally and internationally.

• • •

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Time to Ditch the Green Belt? The Case of Oxford

Ivor Samuels

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The Green Belt concept was originally devised in the late 19th century to avoid urban sprawl, provide an idillic living environment, and avoid the slums and smoke of large cities. However, using the example of Oxford, Ivor Samuels argues that it may be time to revise it due to its impact on housing prices and for not being useful as an amenity for people to use.

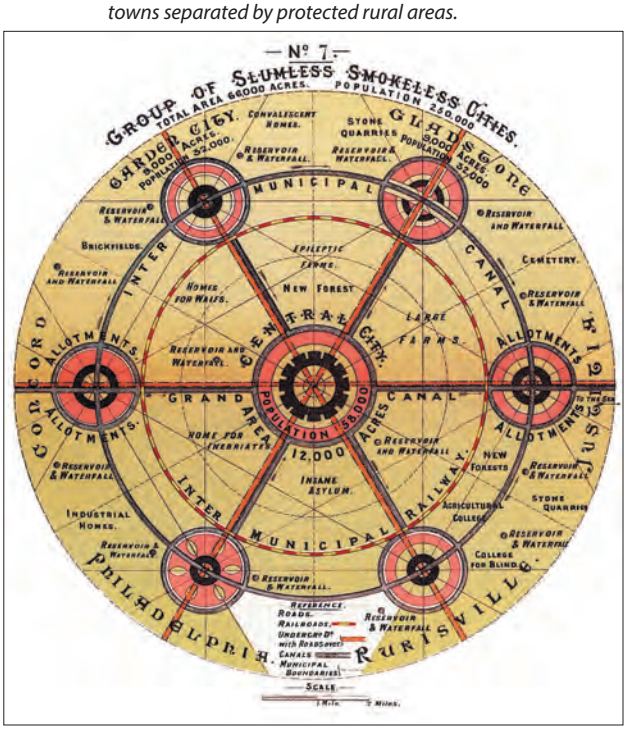
Historically, towns and cities have long sought to maintain unbuilt areas around their perimeters. For example, in England in 1580, Queen Elizabeth tried to prevent new buildings from being erected on a three-mile belt surrounding London to halt the spread of plague. In more modern times, the term "green belt" was used by housing reformers at the end of the nineteenth century to describe a restriction on building around London to prevent the city from spreading into the surrounding countryside. The industrial city was perceived as a place of dirt, crime, and disease in contrast with the healthy natural habitat of the countryside.

The green belt concept was a fundamental instrument for Ebenezer Howard's Garden City proposal, first published in 1898 and republished in 1902 as Garden Cities of To-morrow (Figure 1). Towns and cities would be separated by areas of countryside where urban development would not be allowed. The growth of the urban areas would be tightly constrained, and as demand for more space increased, new towns would be created beyond the protected countryside. Initially, the modern green belt can be regarded as an Anglophone conception because after the United Kingdom, it was first implemented in Australia (e.g., Adelaide) and the United States (e.g., Greenbelt, Maryland), before it was adopted worldwide.

A green belt around London was first proposed in 1935 and then incorporated in Patrick Abercrombie's Greater London Plan of 1944 and more widely in the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947, which allowed local authorities to include green belts in their development plans. It is important to note that this legislation was adopted soon after the New Towns Act of 1946, intended to accommodate urban expansion in new settlements rather than allow the sprawling extension of existing urban areas. The Development Corporations, such as that for Stevenage, set up to implement the New Towns, had powers to acquire land to develop housing, town centers, and industry. While green belts are still being implemented, Milton Keynes, the last and now the most extensive New Town, was established more than half a century ago in 1967.

In addition to checking unrestricted urban sprawl, the green belts were, and still are, meant to prevent neighboring towns from merging into one another and preserve the setting and unique character of historic towns. They are also intended to safeguard the countryside while allowing recreational access to adjoining urban populations. It is intended that by restricting urban extensions, development will thus also be encouraged on unused and derelict urban land within urban areas.

Figure 1: Ebenezer Howard's diagram for towns separated by protected rural areas.



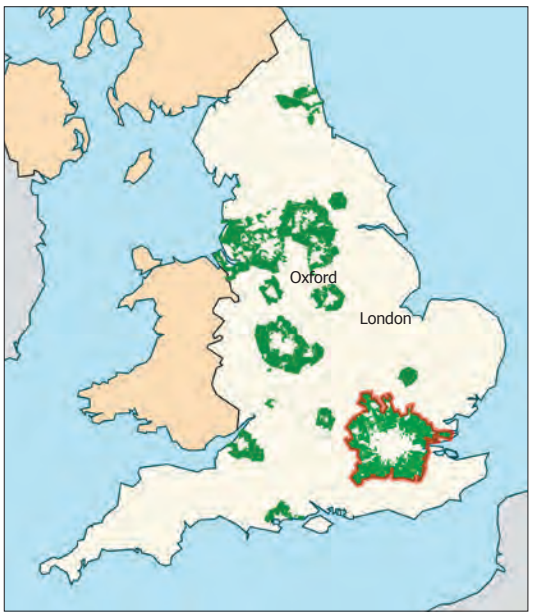


Figure 2: The English Green Belts. (by Hellerick; https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=26130819)

Figure 3: A publically displayed advertisement for a petition to be presented to the British Parliament for the protection of Green Belt land. (photo by the author))

The green belt has been a fundamental element of British urban planning for over a century since Howard devised it. In 2017, there were 1,634,700 hectares designated Green Belt in England, i.e., 13% of its total area (Bishop et al., 2020) (Figure 2). The green belt is actively supported by an N.G.O., the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (C.P.R.E.), which regards every attempt to build on designated green belts as a conspiracy to destroy the natural environment. Concerning the focus of this essay, the C.P.R.E. Oxfordshire conducted a survey in 2015 that revealed that "76% of Oxfordshire residents believe that the green belt should remain open and undeveloped."

Green belts have continued to be implemented in the U.K. even under elected governments, such as the present one, which has favored the deregulation of planning. These regimes used the dubious excuse that over-regulation has restricted house building in a context where the shortage of new housing is a problem, as in many developed countries. Green belts have always been protected against these deregulatory tendencies. Local threats to loosen them have resulted in severe electoral reversals where ruling parties have been voted out of office, such as in Buckinghamshire in 2021, where the incumbent Tories were voted out of office in favor of a Liberal Democrat candidate. Currently, a parliamentary petition is being promoted that seeks to legislate the prioritizing of building on land within existing built-up areas rather than encroaching on green belts (Figure 3).

Oxford and its Green Belt

There is a widely acknowledged crisis in house building in the U.K., which has built an average of 230,000 new houses yearly for decades against an official target of 300,000. House prices have risen dramatically by 80% in the last 20 years as the median price-to-income ratio has increased from five to nine times the pay rate. In Oxford, the ratio is 12 times the average pay and, according to the Centre for Cities (2023), Oxford has the highest house prices of any city in England relative to the average income (Office for National Statistics, 2022). In its 26 October 2023 issue, the *The Oxford Times*—a weekly local newspaper—reported that house prices in Oxford had risen by 6.8% over the year ending in August 2023. This contrasted with a fall of 0.6% in the rest of England. Anecdotes tell of academics arriving in Oxford to interview for a faculty position but pass by a real-estate agency on their way from the railway station. Upon seeing the housing prices, they cancel the interview, turn around, and return to the train station.

The Oxford City Council boundaries closely define the historic city with its Green Belt, penetrating the city's heart (Figure 4). Three adjoining, mainly rural districts, share parts of this protected area. Thus, the city can't expand without encroaching on land under the jurisdiction of an adjoining

Planning Authority. With its flourishing economy, primarily based on a network of universities and private educational establishments, buildable land has been prioritized for business development, including education, instead of housing development. Together with Green Belt constraints, these factors explain the city's high housing cost.

Small development sites have been identified at the city's edge, which, in some cases, partly encroach on the Green Belt (Figure 5). These have been called onion ring development. They are poorly connected with existing development, far from facilities, too small to provide new shops or schools, and challenging to connect to public transport routes. The solution has shifted the responsibility for delivering new housing sites to the adjoining authorities.

The resistance to new housing in the surrounding districts, where inhabitants resent new housing because they regard it as changing the unique character of their villages and reducing the value of their properties, has led to what has been termed "cow pat" development, i.e., small pockets of housing in outlying towns and villages. This is yet another popular topic for attack by local newspapers (Figure 6). These developments inevitably generate private vehicle traffic because they are too far for active transport to work and facilities such as schools and clinics are not concentrated enough for adequate provision of public transport, especially after the decline in public transport following Covid 19. The result is congestion and pollution in Oxford, which has reverted to measures such as Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (L.T.N.s) to solve these problems. This solution has encountered violent local opposition, and conspiracy theorists have claimed it is an attempt to restrict individual freedom.

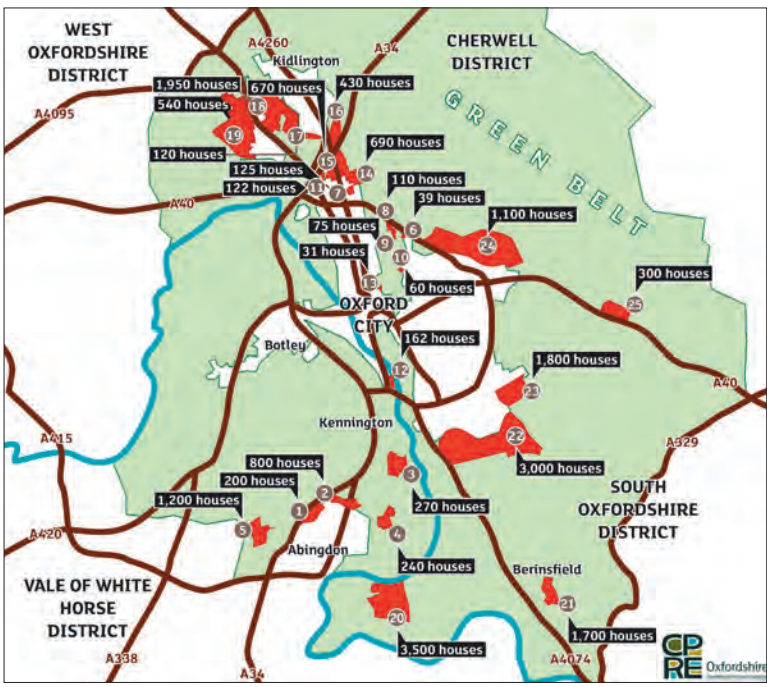
For these reasons, despite its champions, there is a current questioning about the Green Belt. The issue has become so topical that The Economist, not a journal usually involved in planning matters, devoted a significant article to the problems arising from the Oxford Green Belt (Koster, 2023). The author's argument focused on a planned development north of Oxford, which aroused opposition because the 4000 houses proposed would join Oxford to the neighboring small town of Kidlington and result in the historic city "losing what is special about Oxford" (Koster, 2023).

Conclusion

Opposition to the concept of green belt and the way it is being protected, despite the problems it poses, has been convincingly argued but with little success. For example, Papworth (2015) pointed out that half of greenbelt land is used for intensive agriculture, which is hardly environmentally friendly and does

Figure 4: Oxford and its Green Belt. The boundaries of the City and the adjoining Districts are shown in red. (source: OpenMap and the Department for Communities and Local Government; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oxford_Green_Belt)

Figure 5: The City of Oxford, the Green Belt, and possible development sites in red (2021). (source: https://www.cpreoxon.org.uk/care/oxford-green-belt/)




REACHING 76% OF ADULTS IN OXFORD EACH MONTH

The Oxford Tim

Established in 1662

Thursday, November 9, 2023

YOUNG engineers had constructive fun building paper towers when Oxford High School welcomed 84 primary school pupils to a science session. The children from St Francis, New Marston, Cutteslowe and St Nicholas primary schools joined the High School's own Year 8 students for the JCMS – Juniors in Engineering, Maths and Science – morning this week. Picture by Ed Nix

Rampant development 'set to swallow villages'

Albert Tait

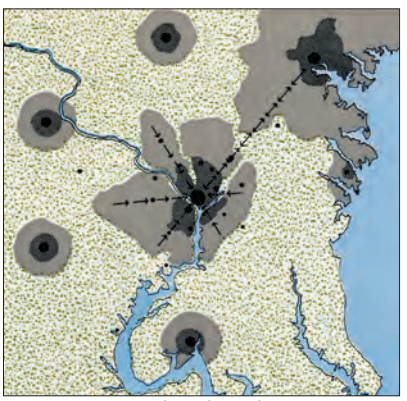
Figure 6: Front page of Oxford's weekly newspaper (Nov. 9, 2023) with one of many reports on the opposition to new housing in rural settlements. These contested "cow pat" developments are the result of the Oxford Green Belt restricting growth of the city. (photo by the author)

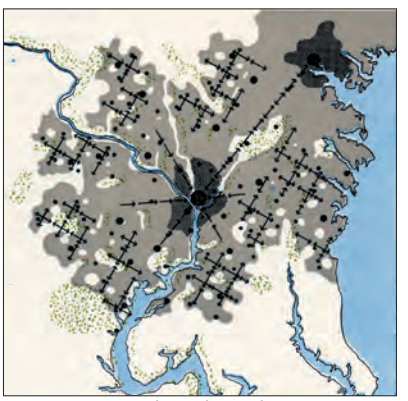
not provide amenity space for people. Besides, in promoting higher densities in towns to protect the greenbelts, we deprive the urban population of green spaces. The report points out that simply removing land restrictions within a 10-minute walk of a railway station could deliver one million new homes in the London Green Belt.

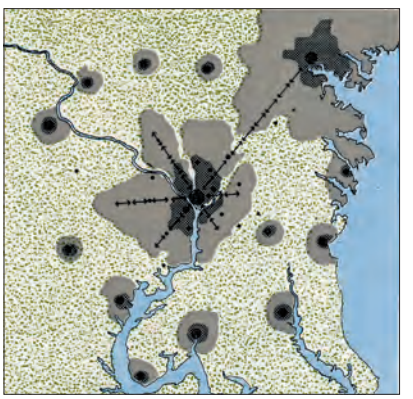
Ebenezer Howard conceived the green belt idea while England's arts and crafts movement was seeking a return to a preindustrial world in reaction to the growth of cities and their problems. The quest for networks of small, self-contained but connected towns set in an idyllic countryside could be interpreted as another version of this movement in reaction to the growth of industrial and post-industrial conurbations.

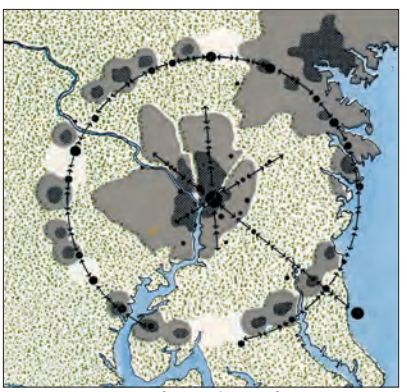
Alternatives to the green belt, which retained access to open countryside for urban dwellers and preserved agricultural land, have been promoted for decades with limited success. One example is the green wedge, or finger plan, proposed for Washington D.C. in 1961 by the National Capital Planning Commission that recommended a plan with radial corridors for expansion as preferable to several other alternatives (Figure 7).

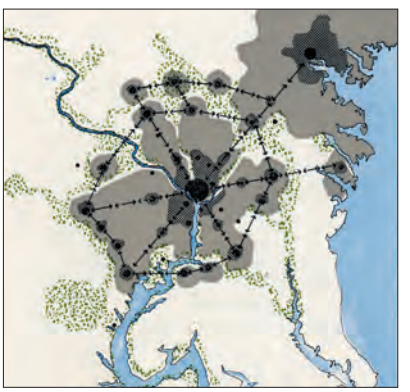
Figure 7: Alternative growth models for Washington DC. The preferred radial corridor plan is # 6. (by the National Capital Planning Commission (The Nation's Capital - A Plan for the Year 2000, 1961); reproduced from Buchanan, 1963)


1: Expansion by independent cities.


2: Planned sprawl.


3: Satellite new towns.


4: A circumferential ring of towns.


5: Peripheral communties.


6: Recommended plan for expansion based on radial corridors.

In the U.K., this project was cited favorably in the influential Buchanan Report of 1963 on the problem of urban traffic. The green finger model has been successfully implemented in Copenhagen and Aarhus, where it offers the advantages of the green belt and the possibility of providing efficient and economical public transport along a limited number of routes.

A green finger plan would be challenging to implement in Oxford because of opposition from the adjoining rural districts. This suggests that the administrative areas used for making plans should correspond to those within which people live, work, and do their daily activities. In the case of Oxford, this area extends beyond the current boundaries and is now the basis for making plans.

• • •

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Figure 8: Oxford's Green Belt. (source: CPRE; https://www.cpreoxon.org.uk/care/oxford-green-belt/

Hand-Sketching as an Integral Part of the Design Process

Carlos Almeida
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In this essay, Carlos Almeida discusses the importance of hand-sketching as the simplest, fastest, and most efficient way to represent places, building and objects. These notes originated from workshops that he has administered to Maryland's Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in Baltimore. Carlos has published in FOCUS several times and, besides his professional work in architecture and urban design, he is active in Urban Sketchers international.

It is known that the oldest form of representation and graphic communication is drawing or more commonly known as hand-sketching. Some people might have said that it is about painting. Today, it is more accurate to say that drawing by hand is sketching or hand-sketching. Whether it is painting or hand-sketching, they both are connected, despite their different techniques of representation.

Succinctly, hand-sketching is the outline of forms, and painting is about filling in color and texture. Whether the cavemen started hunting representations from drawing/sketch to painting is a discussion that has taken a lot of time from some scholars. However, we know that drawing, and for that matter sketching, is the simplest, fastest, and most efficient way to convey ideas, represent and interpret objects, diagrams, buildings, streets, plazas, cities and so on. Anything can be sketched but the more we understand how to use simple tools the easier it becomes to understand the world we live in.

The art of sketching is about taking the time to see and understand what surrounds us or a new subject of study. It is fair to state that when we are in a certain urban setting, whether traveling abroad or just going out to dinner, we are part of a journey in which some aspects are retained, as Kevin Lynch once referred to in his book *The Image of the City*, and if we decide to sketch what we see, numerous elements in those places such as forms, spaces, textures, patinas, colors, contrasts, depth, light, shade and shadow can more easily be memorized. The list can be extensive.

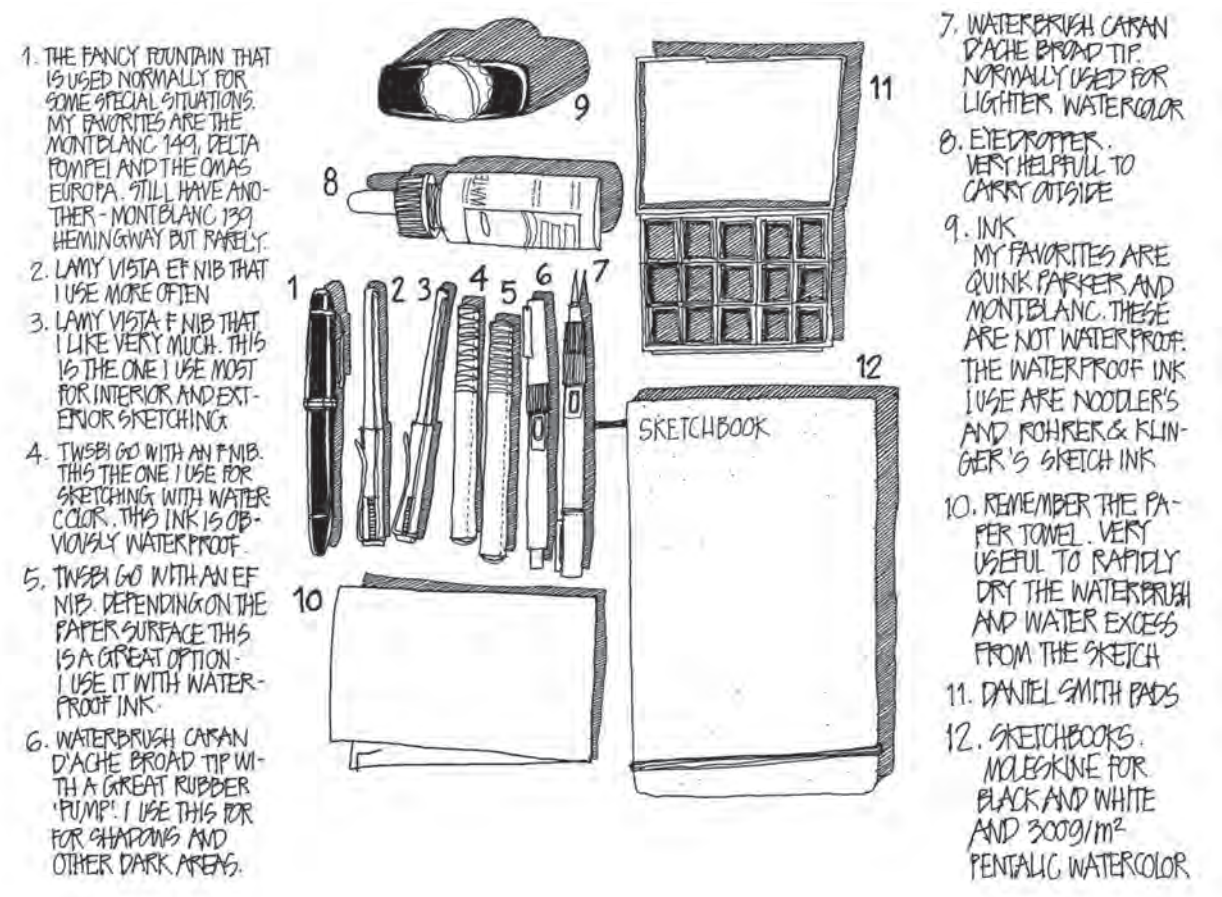
Hand-sketching becomes an important tool to conceptualizing forms, devising plans, parti diagrams, imagining user paths whether occupants of a building or pedestrians on the street. As Paolo Belardi, architect and professor from the University of Perugia once noted, the process is one of thinking by hand through drawing. Similarly, Juhani Pallasmaa, former dean of architecrture of the Helsinki University, observed that he believed that the pencil in the architect's hand is a bridge between the imagining mind and the image that appears on paper. This notion is easely observed by looking at sketches by Frank Gehry, Richard Meier, Norman Foster, Renzo Piano, Alvaro Siza, and many others architects and designers. Recent studies published by the Association of Physiological Science have shown a surprisingly powerful influence of drawing on memory and enhanced learning.

To make a point, in my case, I use to revisit my sketchbooks, and he memories that come back after so many years by just looking at hand-sketches are amazing. Sometimes a small episode, a chat with a passerby, a group of people, and other humanly things. I remember these experiences. The habit of sketching does bring other elements than just the practical matter. There is a social dimention in it, as well. Public places are inhabited by people, a combination that makes sketching so exciting. "Thinking with your hand" is enjoyable, and hopefully this essay will instill in you the encouragement and joy to draw more by hand.

Supplies

The selection of supplies varies from person to person. As a principle, however, the simpler the better (Figure 1). If we can manage to sketch effectively without the need of too many tools to accomplish it, that is a great strategy to begin with. As mentioned before, the use of electronic devices is another medium that may allow, using sketching apps, full hand-sketching experience.

Figure 1: Common materials in my personal experience.

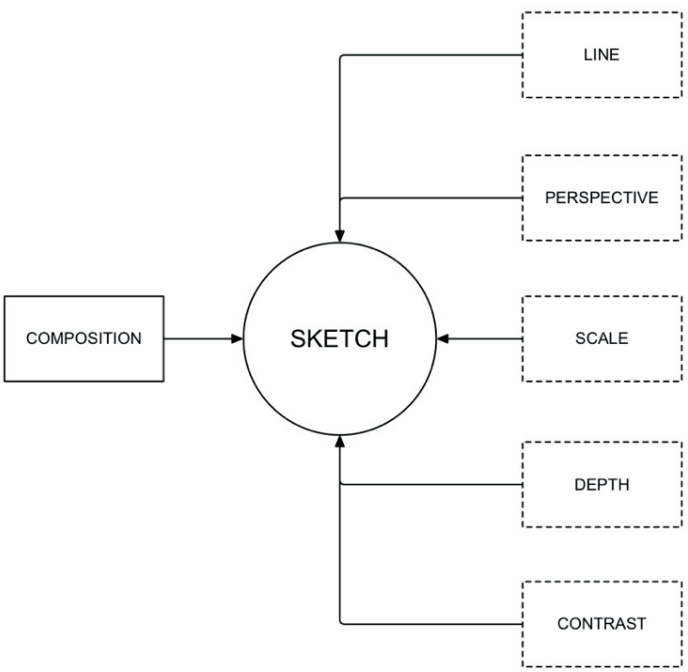


Six Principles

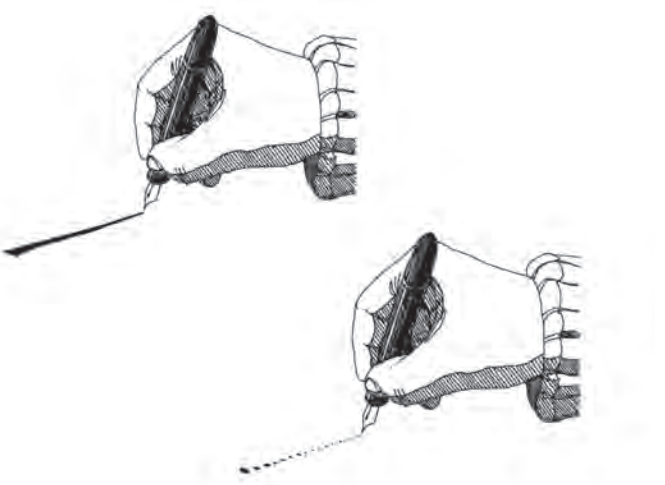
Hand-sketching, like handwriting, can be learned and easily mastered if simple tools are used and practiced. But the understanding of those simple tools or techniques still requires a commitment to practice. I would like to emphasize practice. After all, we learn on how to sketch by sketching.

Certainly, some tips and tricks are part of the practice and, all combined, should be put to good use. There are several major topics that are relevant in any hand-sketching as tools, to effectively convey the message. Among them are the principles of:

1. Line
2. Perspective
3. Scale
4. Depth
5. Contrast
6. Composition



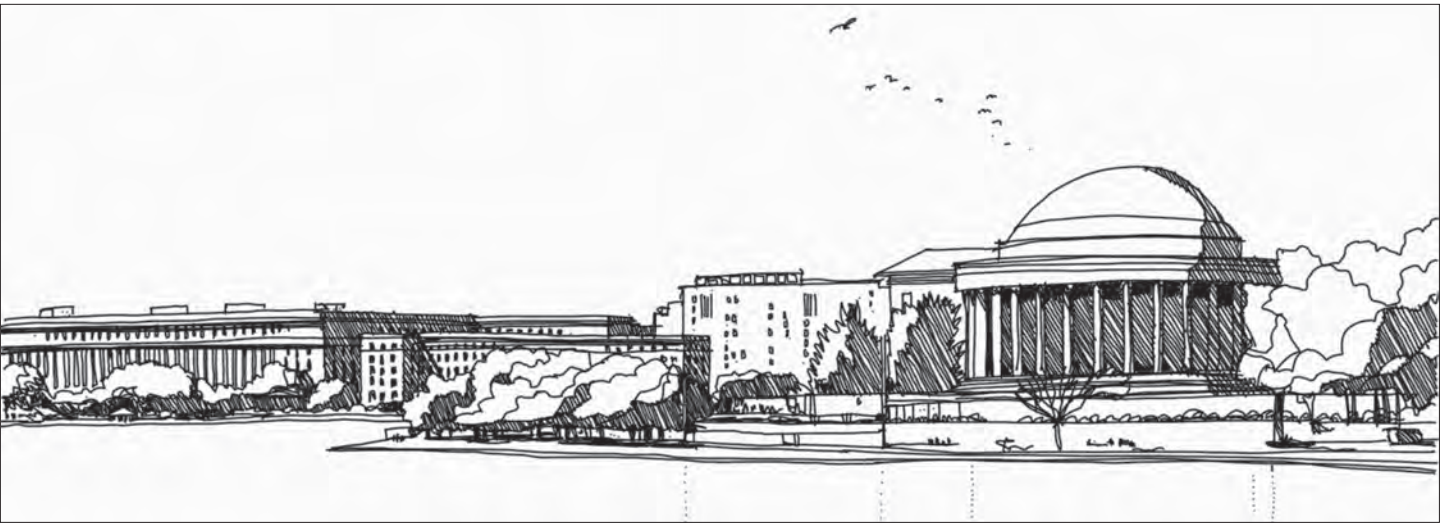
These principles can be achieved by simply using a piece of paper and a pen or pencil. I am not suggesting that digital means cannot be used; these devices also allow drawing by hand, it's just a different technology. For example, the use of the iPad or similar electronic devices with sketching apps.



The parts and pieces that are essential in any hand-sketching, can be summarized as follows:

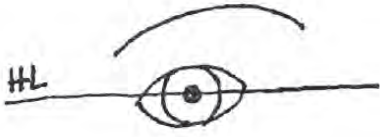
Principle 1: Line

Geometrically speaking, lines are formed by dots in space, lines can form surfaces, surfaces form solids. We know this well but in a piece of paper there are ways to graphically represent these geometrical forms effectively by composition and array of lines depending on the situation.

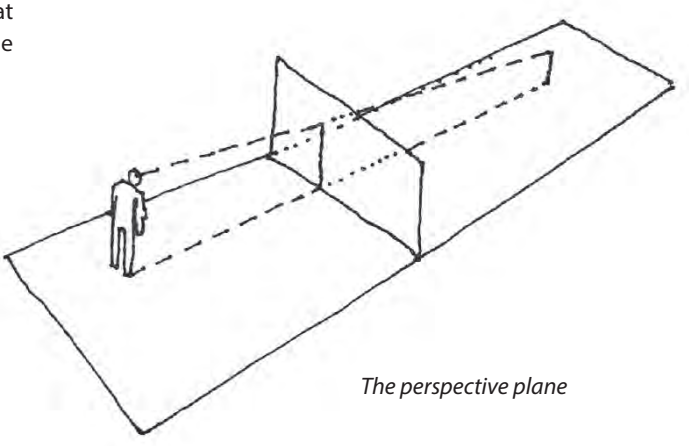


Principle 2: Perspective

Perspective is more than just definition of the horizon line and vanishing points, it is related with other topics, that combined, determine if the composition is balanced in scale and proportion. Some quick and easy steps can just do that.

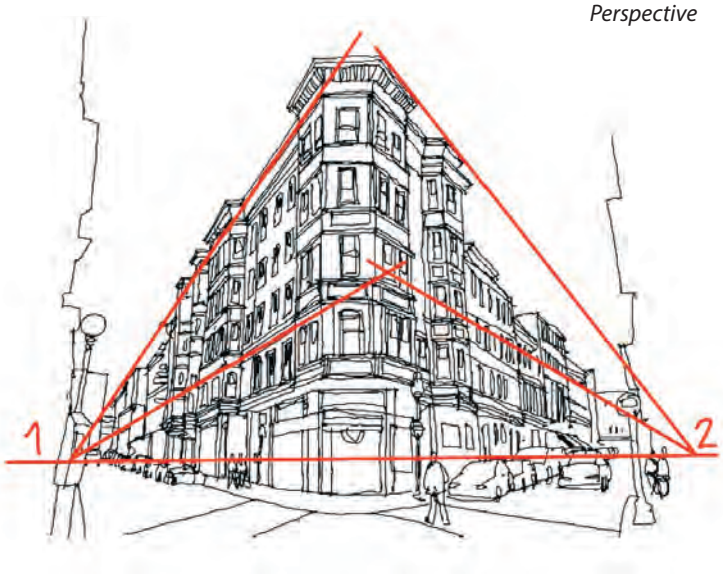


Horizon line and vanishing point



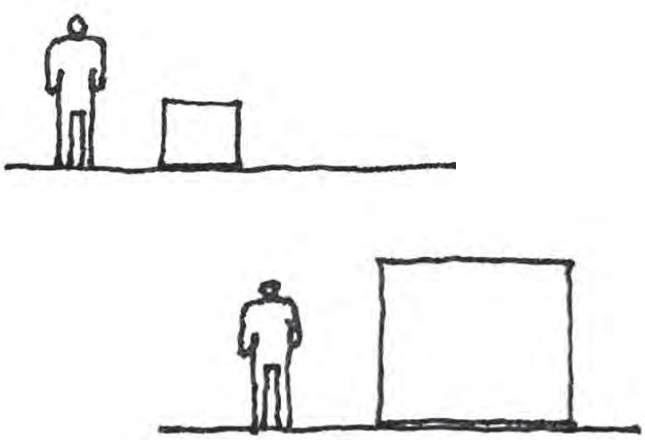
The perspective plane

Perspective



Principle 3: Scale

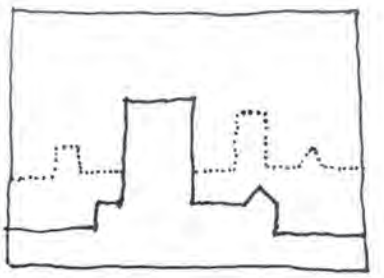
Scale is one of the pillars of a good and reliable sketch. In general, scale is based on elements of reference to define others and the general scene, whether urban or other in context. This is independent of the perspective, which may be right, but if the elements are not proportionally correct making the entire composition unreliable. There are simple ways that can help the sketcher to draw anything with some level of accuracy.

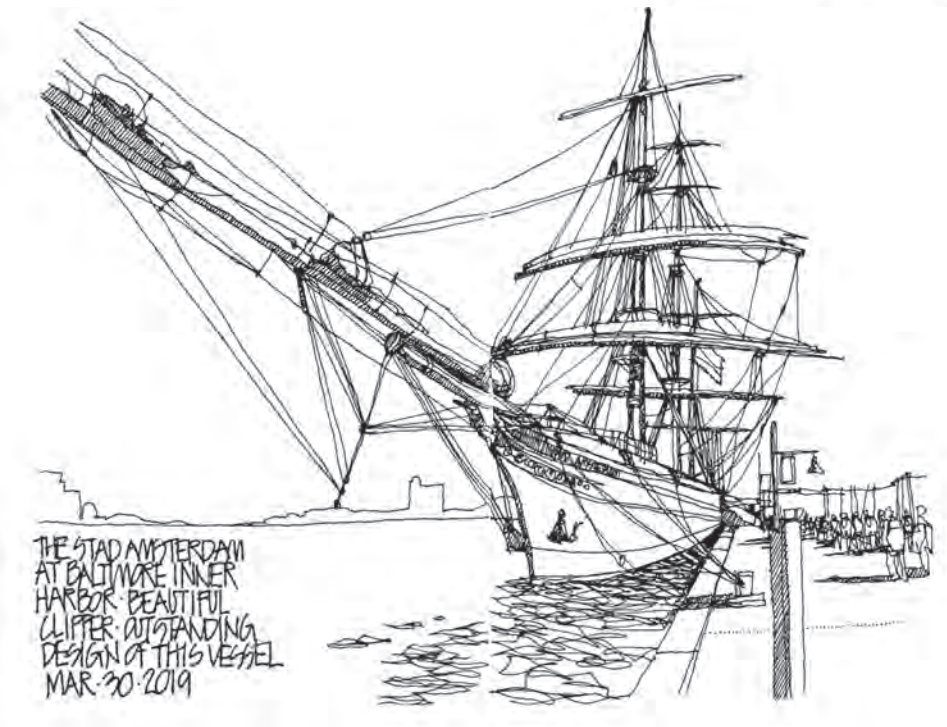


Scale

Principle 4: Depth

Depth might seem to be a difficult task in a piece of paper or other flat surface but, along with scale and perspective, is achievable with simple touches that makes the entire composition reliable. There are some foreground-background techniques to achieve the necessary depth the sketcher is looking for. For example, the simultaneous use of stippling, hatching, and scribbling to name a few.

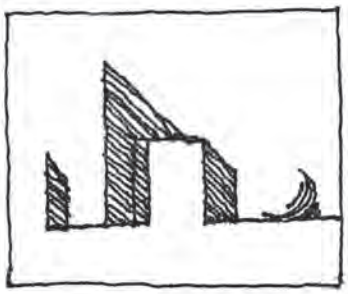


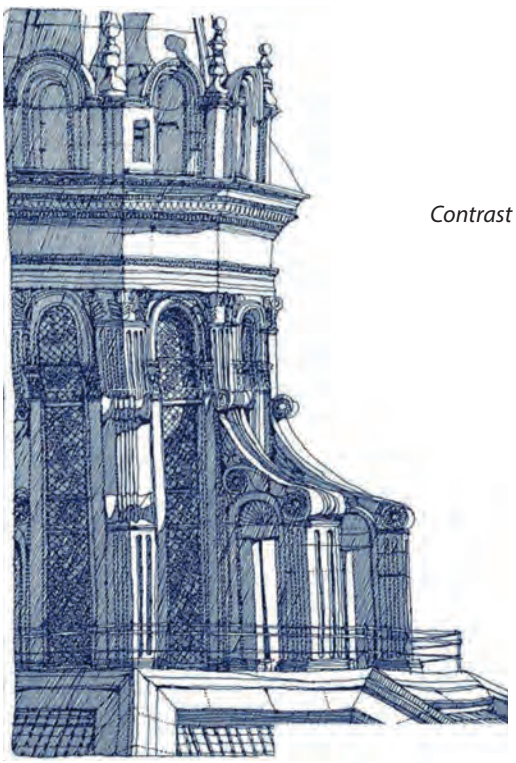


Depth

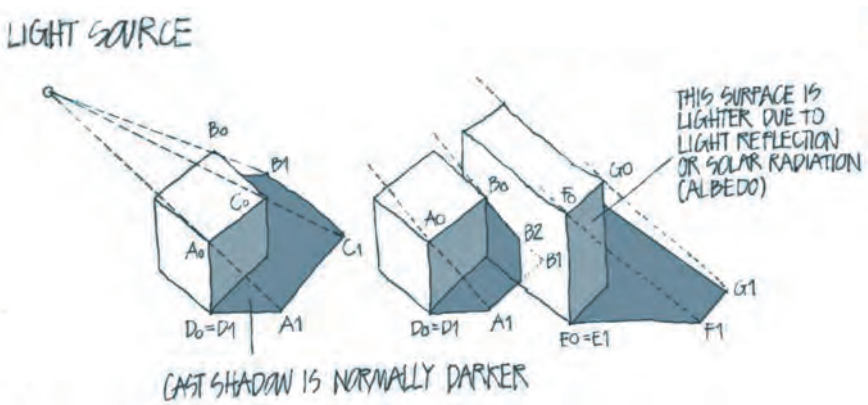
Principle 5: Contrast

Perhaps it was Lucas Cranach the inventor of the Chiaroscuro or, perhaps, we can think of the old masters that used this technique so well, but we don't need to be a master to get a good contrast in our sketches. The basic understanding of light and shade and the light source[s] are essential to give the contrast we need by using simple lines.



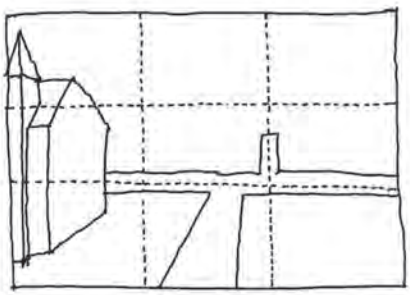


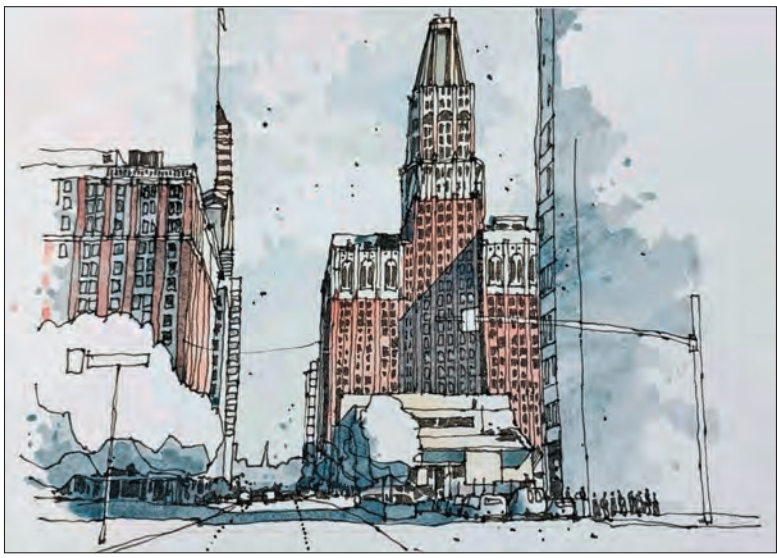
Contrast



Principle 6: Composition

Composition is paramount in drawing completeness and balance. In order to avoid boring views, that's where composition is applied to attract the viewer and, for that matter, to make sure the message is received and understood. Normally, the most common rule is the photographer's rule, or the rule of thirds.





Final Remarks

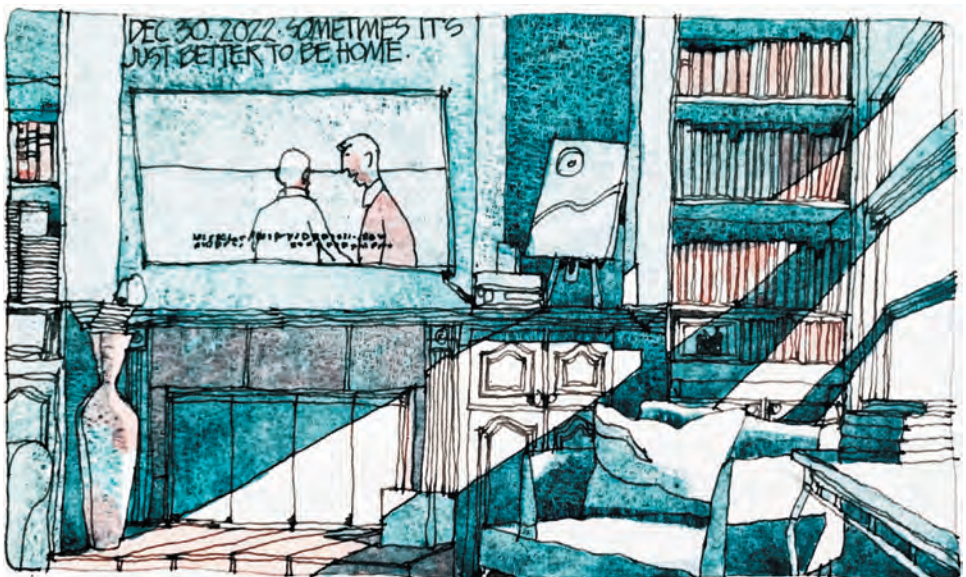
Independently of techniques, which in general require practice but can be easily learned, drawing by hand is in itself an instrument to achieve a goal. Whether drawing outdoor or indoor, applied as a whole, combined or individually in specific situations, techniques are just chapters of a great book of Drawing by Hand which contains an entire substance, a theme, and a message. It communicates ideas that reach out beyond mere isolated parts or the sum of them all. All chapters, however, are integrated and related, and are dependent on the situation.

Physical and intellectual elements are involved and inextricably linked. Both hand and human mind are strongly connected, and they cannot be perceived as separate entities. There's an emotional component that is inherent to the unique moment, place, and socio-environmental aspects that are influential to the outcome, and drawings produced that cannot be replicated.

> "No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man." (Heraclitus)

Drawing by hand is about communication in a world of exploration and discovery. We can comfortably state that drawing by hand is another quest for discovery, not creativity. As humankind progresses and becomes more knowledgeable is based on discovery of existing elements.

The world is out there has already been created but it is expecting us to discover it. It needs to be explored, discovered, and understood. We –humans– are not only inventors, but we are great explorers. When we're drawing by hand, and we use specific tools as described above and, through thoughtful and observation processes, we pave the way to communicate perceptions, emotions, feelings, discoveries, messages, aspirations, concerns, humor, and love, among many other wonderfully things that are very unique in certain moments and times. We are thoughtful communicators when we are drawing by hand.



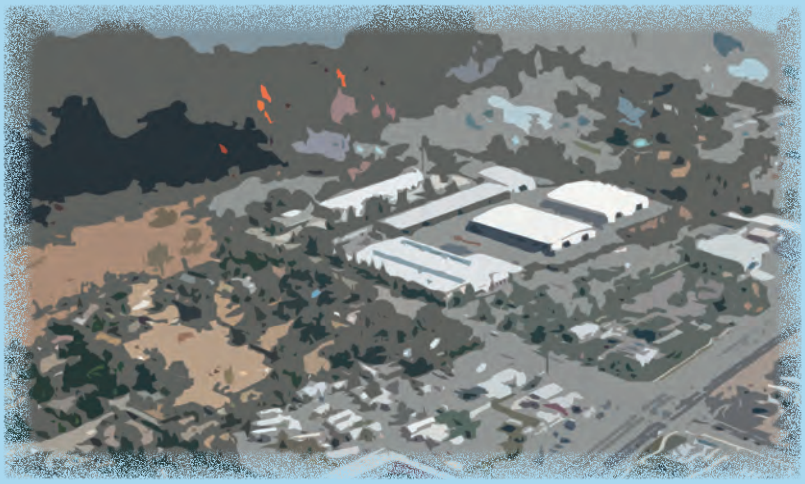
Global Warming

by Tarcisio Bahia de Andrade

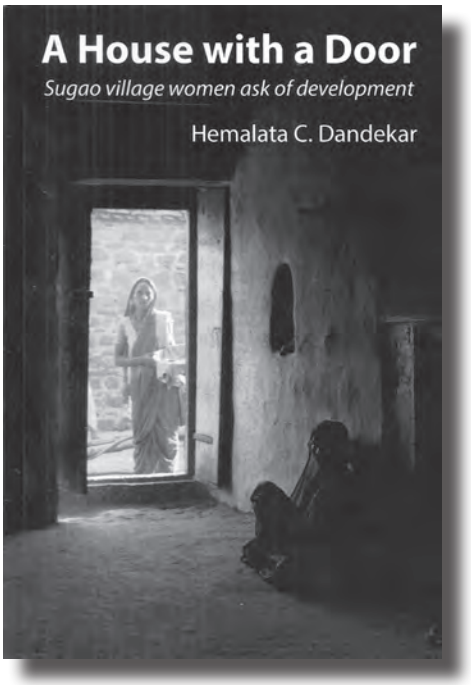
Architect, PhD.; professor, Department of Architecture and Urbanism, Federal University of Espirito Santo, Vitoria, Brazil. Besides teaching and consulting, Tarcisio has a regular column on urban issues in the local newspaper, and founded Vitoria's section of the Urban Sketchers. He is a constant contributor to FOCUS.

FOCUS 20

CRP Faculty and Student Work



New books by CRP Faculty

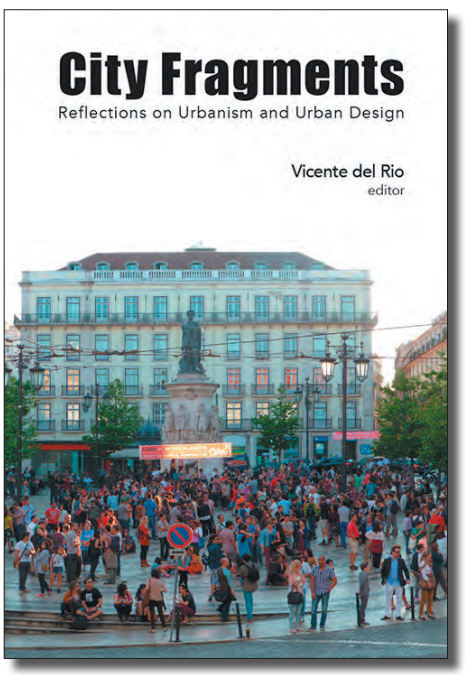


A House with a Door *is an anthropological study of women from village Sugao in Deccan Maharashtra, India, whose stories provide a rare view into their world and their expectations of development. Eloquently delineating their life, work, joys and despairs, they convey warmth, humor, curiousity, strenght of character, courage and, at times, resignation and despair. Their stories hold a universal truth about the importance to a woman of a door—to open to who she chooses, and to step out of to do what she wishes.*

Available from Amazon. ISBN-13 : 979-8842180745

City Fragments *is a collection of fifteen essays about urbanism and urban design that reflect Vicente del Rio's 40-plus-years academic and professional career and his love for studying cities and designing better places for all. The essays in Part One (Thoughts) present robust theoretical discussions, while those in Part Two (Actions) discuss specific plans and projects he co-authored.*

Available from Amazon and, in Brazil, from RioBooks. ISBN-13: 978-8594971005



California Climate Action Plans: 2023 Status Report

Michael R. Boswell

PhD; Professor,
City and Regional Planning Department, Cal Poly.

California Climate Action Plan Reports is a series of periodic reports on the status of climate action planning in California, edited by Professor Michael R. Boswell. These reports investigate Climate Action Plans (CAPs) that are based on community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emission inventories and contain substantive policy to reduce emissions. This is the second report, published in September 2023.

There are 253 California city and county climate action plans (CAPs), with at least an additional 45 in progress. They are based on community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emission inventories and contain substantive policy to reduce emissions. These CAPs cover the entire community and are not just "municipal" CAPs. The CAPs in the database may also address climate adaptation, but plans that only address adaptation (and not GHG emissions) are currently not accounted for in the database.[1]

Coverage

Of the 253 CAPs, 22 of 58 (38%) counties have CAPs and 231 of 482 (48%) cities have CAPs (Figure 1). Of the 39,538,223 people in California (2020), 28,797,223 (73%) are in jurisdictions covered by CAPs; 23,601,768 are in cities and an additional 5,195,455 are in unincorporated areas of counties.[2] The average population size of jurisdictions covered by CAPs is 113,823 and the average population size of those not covered by CAPs is 38,147. Thus, it is clear that larger jurisdictions are more likely to prepare CAPs than smaller ones.

For counties, 12 of the largest 20 have completed CAPs, with an additional one in progress. Table 1 shows the status of the 10 largest counties (unincorporated population). For cities, 41 of the 50 largest have completed CAPs, with an additional 3 in progress. Table 2 shows the status of the 20 largest cities.

Year Adopted and Age

Figure 2 shows the distribution of all CAPs by the year they were completed. The oldest plans in the database are from the mid-2000s with 2016 being the median year completed. Although no specific criteria exist to determine whether a plan is out of date, the CAPs in the database can be examined against several important climate policy milestones. Of the plans in the database, 61 (24%) predate the 2013 Scoping Plan, and 123 (49%) pre-date the 2017 Scoping Plan.[3] In 2016, California passed Senate Bill 32 which set a 2030 GHG emissions reduction target of 40% below 1990 levels; only 118

Figure 1: Map of California Climate Action Plans.

Note: This report is based on data from the California Climate Action Plan (CCAP) Database as of January 1, 2023: http://climateactionplanning.com/ccapdbase/

[1] Additional details about the CCAP database can be found at: https://bit.ly/CCAPReport_1

[2] Since county CAPs typically only cover unincorporated areas of the county, we use unincorporated population in this analysis.

[3] See: https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/our-work/programs/ab-32-climate-change-scoping-plan

Table 1: CAP Status for 10 Largest Counties in California (unincorporated population).

County	2020 Population (unincorp.)	CAP Status (as of 12/31/22)
Los Angeles	1,022,474	Completed
Sacramento	612,395	Completed
San Diego	521,302	Completed
Riverside	391,880	Completed
Kern	308,220	*No CAP*
San Bernardino	300,747	Completed
Contra Costa	178,260	Completed
Fresno	162,519	*No CAP*
San Joaquin	161,255	*No CAP*
El Dorado	158,949	*No CAP*

Table 2: CAP Status for 20 Largest Cities in California.

City	2020 Population	CAP Status (as of 12/31/22)
Los Angeles	3,898,747	Completed
San Diego	1,386,932	Completed
San Jose	1,013,240	Completed
San Francisco	873,965	Completed
Fresno	542,107	Completed
Sacramento	524,943	Completed
Long Beach	466,742	Completed
Oakland	440,646	Completed
Bakersfield	403,455	*In Progress*
Anaheim	346,824	*No CAP*
Stockton	320,804	Completed
Riverside	314,998	Completed
Santa Ana	310,227	Completed
Irvine	307,670	*In Progress*
Chula Vista	275,487	Completed
Fremont	230,504	Completed
Santa Clarita	228,673	Completed
San Bernardino	222,101	*No CAP*
Modesto	218,464	*No CAP*
Moreno Valley	208,634	Completed

(47%) of California CAPs post-date SB 32. Executive Order B-55-18 (2018) first established the state's goal of carbon neutrality by 2045 (subsequently codified into law by AB 1279 in late 2022). Only 85 (34%) of California CAPs post-date E.O. B-55-18.

Carbon Neutrality

Currently, the database has incomplete data on GHG reduction targets. Data is available, though, on which jurisdictions have adopted "carbon neutral" or "net zero goals" for GHG emissions, and thus are potentially consistent with the 2022 California Climate Crisis Act (AB 1279). There are 41 CAPs that explicitly include such goals, although there are likely some jurisdictions that have adopted such goals and not yet updated their CAPs. Table 3 shows the cities and counties with CAPs that have explicit "carbon neutral" or "net zero goals" no later than 2045 (there are six more with 2050 goals).

"CEQA-Qualified" CAPs

CEQA Guidelines section 15183.5(b) establish how "Plans for the Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions" can be used of CEQA purposes, including six specific criteria the plans must meet.[4] Many jurisdictions have chosen to adopt these so-called "CEQA-qualified" plans or "qualified GHG reduction plans." Of the 253 CAPs in California, 96 (41%) are "CEQA-qualified." This status determination is based on official statements in the plan itself or the plan adoption ordinance; the plans have not been independently audited against the criteria. Notably, only 53 of the "CEQA-qualified" CAPs post-date SB 32, which established the 2030 GHG emissions reduction goal into law.

Critical Policy Issues

A limited content analysis was conducted to examine whether CAPs mention a key issue for climate action planning in California. The content analysis was limited to a keyword search and did not examine the specific use or context, thus limiting the interpretability. A keyword search of critical policy issues shows that many CAPs make no mention of these issues. Specifically, 73% mention electric vehicles, 26% mention heat pumps, 31% mention energy storage, and 56% mention equity or justice.[5]

[4] See: https://casetext.com/regulation/california-code-of-regulations/title-14-natural-resources/division-6-resources-agency/chapter-3-guidelines-for-implementation-of-the-california-environmental-quality-act/article-12-special-situations/section-151835-tiering-and-streamlining-the-analysis-of-greenhouse-gas-emissions

[5] A sample of CAPs was examined for the level of detail in policy and policy implementation for a few key issue areas. Additional detail will be provided in a future report.

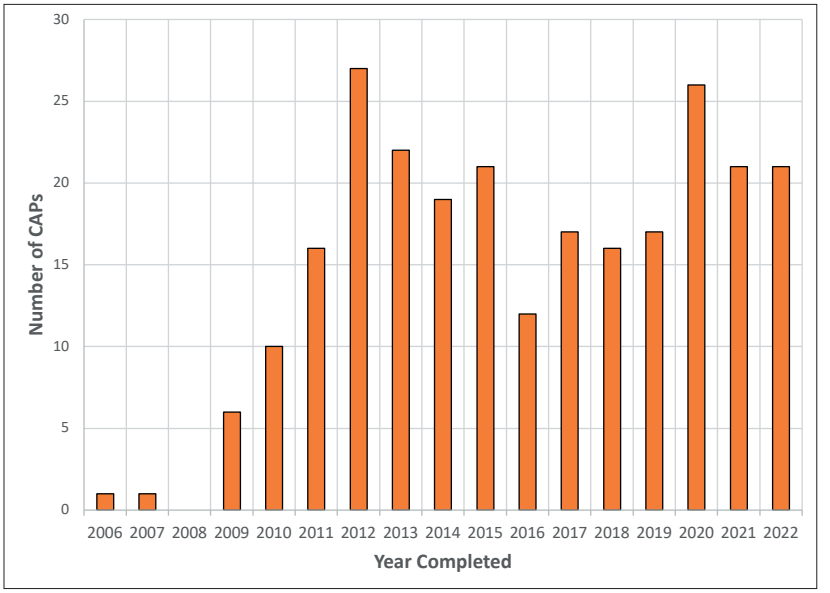


Figure 2: Completed California Climate Action Plans by Year.

Table 3: City and County CAPs with a "Carbon Neutral" (CN) Goal, by Year of Goal.

CN by 2030	CN by 2035	CN by 2040	CN by 2045	
Fairfax	Los Altos	Cupertino	Agoura Hills	Ontario
Sebastopol	San Diego	San Mateo*	Albany	Oxnard
Watsonville	San Luis Obispo		Antioch	Pleasanton
Winters	Santa Cruz		Burbank	Redwood City
	West Hollywood		Carmel-by-the-Sea	San Anselmo
			Chico	Santa Clara
			Chino	Santee
			Dublin	South Lake Tahoe
			Escondido	South Pasadena
			Livermore	Tiburon
			Long Beach	Marin*
			Millbrae	Santa Cruz*

*Note: County indicated by **

Conclusions

Several conclusions can be made regarding the state of CAPs in California based on these data.

1. Coverage is extensive with 73% of Californians residing in a jurisdiction with a completed climate action plan. Rural areas and smaller communities are less likely to have plans.

2. Many plans are outdated. About half pre-date SB 32 and the 2017 Scoping Plan.

3. Many plans are missing critical policy areas that are needed for California to reach its GHG emissions reduction targets.

4. Many plans lack needed information and detail for successful implementation.

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Strengthening Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Fire Resilience through Better Planning:
The PIRS™ for Wildfire Process

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The PIRS™ for Wildfire applied research project is being conducted by teams from Cal Poly and Texas A&M, with the authors as principal investigators. The Texas A&M faculty developed the approach and tested it in cities on the East and Gulf coasts. Cal Poly faculty are experienced with hazard mitigation and land use planning in California. The project is supported by a grant from the John and Betty Moore Foundation. This progress essay is based on a poster presented at the meeting of Cal Poly's Wildland Urban Interface Fire Institute's Advisory Board in April 2023.

Wildfires, expanding in frequency and intensity due to the effects of climate change, are increasingly impacting the natural and built environment. Seven of the ten most destructive fires in California have occurred in the last five years[1], and one in four Californians lives in an area considered high-risk for wildfires.[2]

However, communities in California and across the United States increasingly adopt many different plans in their "network of plans" —e.g., General (Comprehensive) Plan, Hazard Mitigation Plan, Community Wildfire Protection Plan, Climate Action Plan, and various sectoral or area plans. Often produced by multiple "siloed" departments or stakeholder groups with limited coordination or spatial understanding, these plans are frequently poorly integrated and may, in fact, exacerbate vulnerabilities including the risk of wildfire especially in the wildland urban interface (WUI).

Note: Besides the co-authors as principal investigators, the research project team included: at Cal Poly, Dan Turner (CalFire Chief, retired), Margot McDonald (Professor of Architecture), Chris Dicus (Professor of Wildland Fire and Fuels Management), Andrew Fricker (Associate Professor of Geography), Heath Hooper (undergraduate student, Environmental Management), Kolton Kladifko (graduate student, MCRP); at Texas A&M, Siyu Yu (Assistant Professor, Department of Landscape and Urban Planning), Jaimie Masterson (Director, Texas Target Communities Program); and at the University of North Carolina, Philip Berke (Professor of Environmental Planning).

1 https://www.fire.ca.gov/our-impact/statistics (accessed 10/30/23)

2 https://ccst.us/wp-content/uploads/The-Costs-of-Wildfire-in-California-FULL-REPORT.pdf

A New Approach

Fire suppression has proven inadequate as a mitigation strategy, and new approaches are needed. One such approach is the Plan Integration for Resilience Scorecard™ (PIRS™) for Wildfire, currently under development in collaboration with four California communities that have high fire hazard risk. The method is a tool that enables the systematic and spatial evaluation of a community's network of plans to strengthen wildfire resilience. It provides an infomed way of helping the built environment become fire safe.

WUI fire in Phoenix, Arizona, 2020. (source https://elitecommandtraining.com/course-calendar/s-215-fire-operations-wildland-urban-interface-wui-newport-beach-fs-7-april-2020/; accessed 10/30/23)

By collaborating with four California communities (the cities of Atascadero and Temecula, and Santa Barbara and Sonoma counties), we seek to harmonize the guidance provided by their networks of plans, assessing their plans spatially and through the lens of wildfire risk to facilitate adjustments that improve coordination, and strengthen wildfire resilience in the most vulnerable locations.

The PIRS™ method used on this research project was originally developed for flooding hazards with funding from the Department of Homeland Security Science and Technology Directorate. It has since been adopted as a preferred method by the American Planning Association (APA).[3]

Method

The PIRS™ for Wildfire process involves the following steps:

1. Delineate "district-hazard zones"

To reduce "ecological fallacy"[4] issues and enable spatial plan and policy evaluation, the community is first subdivided into relevant planning districts (e.g., neighborhoods, U.S. Census block groups) and hazard zones (e.g., Fire Hazard Severity Zones), which are combined using GIS to form layers of mutually exclusive "district-hazard zones", the spatial unit of analysis for a PIRS™ for Wildfire analysis.

2. Review the community's network of plans

The community's network of plans (e.g., General Plan, Hazard Mitigation Plan, CWPP, Climate Action Plan) is then closely examined for actionable policy statements that are likely to affect wildfire resilience and that contain place-specific terms that help identify where they apply, and where they do not. Relevant policies are added to the scorecard.

3. Evaluate plans spatially

Each policy is then given a score of "+1" (increases wildfire resilience), "-1" (decreases resilience), or "0" (neutral) and assigned to the appropriate district-hazard zone(s) based on its place-specific term. This is repeated for all relevant policies across the community's entire network of plans. Scores are then summed for each district-hazard zone.

4. Assess vulnerability (optional)

Social, physical, or other types of vulnerabilities can also be spatially assessed and compared to the spatial plan evaluation. The location of critical facilities or evacuation routes may also be considered in the analysis.

Clustering vs. diffuse home spacing in the WUI, Fire Mitigation in the Wildland Urban Interface. (source: 6 https://transect.org/modules.html; accessed 10/30/23)

5. Analyze results

The scorecard and maps of the results help identify spatial patterns, synergies, conflicts, and gaps in the community's network of plans and policies and how it is likely to affect wildfire risk.

6. Advance plan integration and wildfire resilience

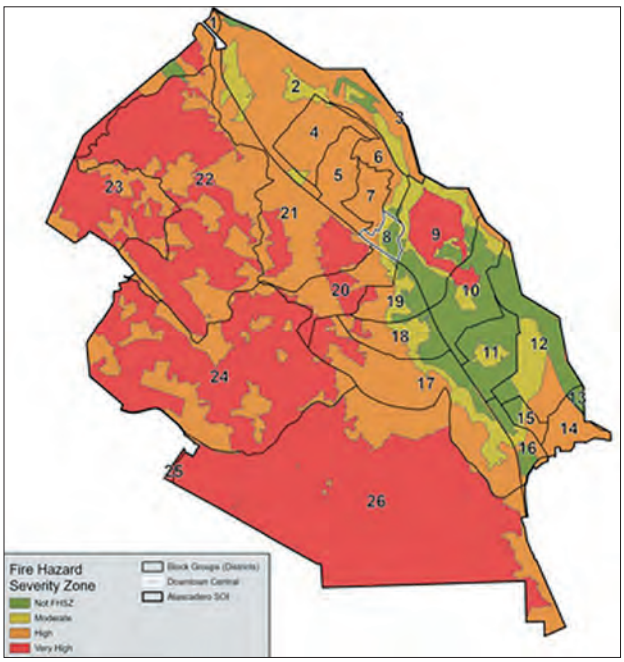
Guided by the spatial and hazard-focused PIRS™ for Wildfire analysis, community plans can then be improved by adjusting or adding policies (e.g., clustering development in the WUI) to resolve identified conflicts and strengthen wildfire resilience

Preliminary Findings

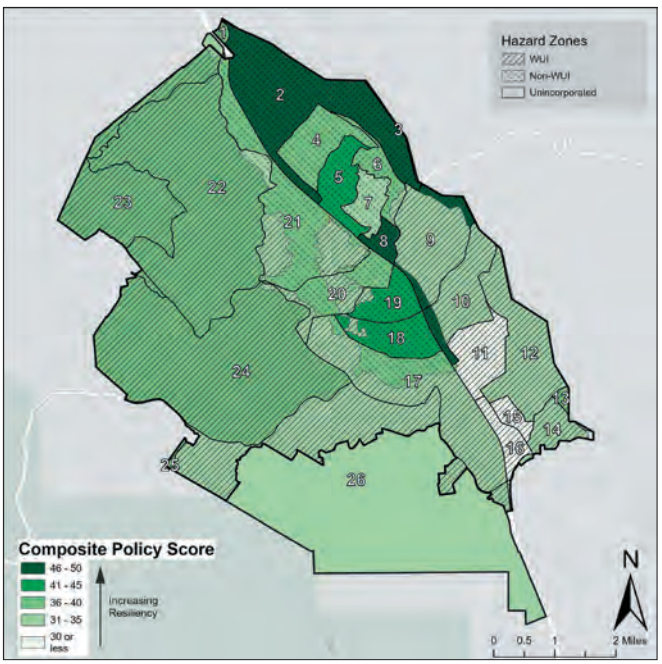
- Early results suggest the PIRS™ method is effective in the WUI context. Our community partners are engaged with and learning from the process.
- The new perspective and data are helping communities better understand the effects of their plans and policies of wildfire risk.

[3] https://www.planning.org/learn/course/9250858 (accessed 10/30/23).

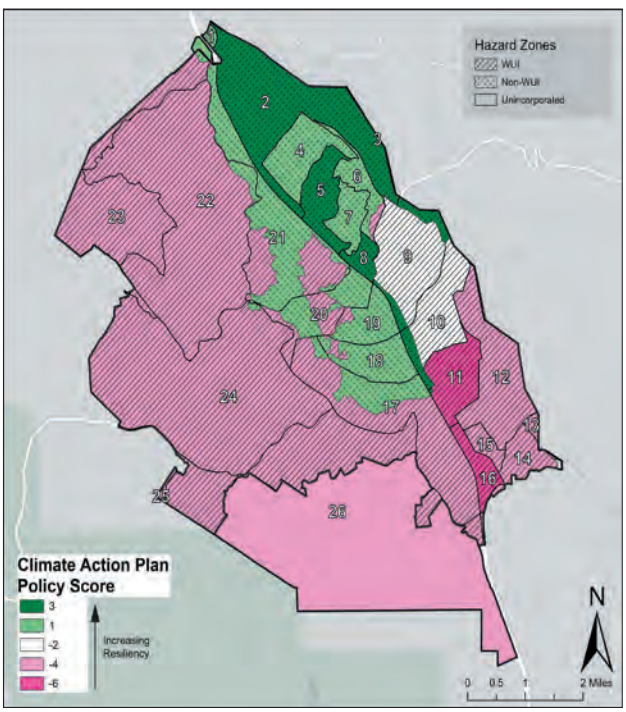
[4] Piantadosi, S., Byar, D. P., & S. B. Green (1988). "The ecological fallacy," *The American Journal of Epidemiology*, 127(5), 893-904.



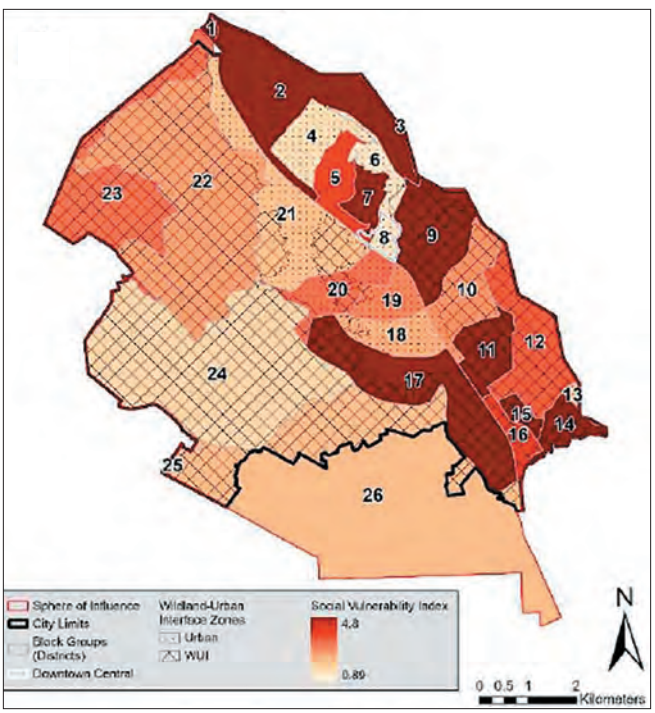
Cal FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zones for Atascadero, CA.



Composite "Network of Plans" Policy Score for Atascadero, CA.



Climate Action Plan Policy Score for Atascadero, CA.



Social Vulnerability Index Overlayed with CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zones for Atascadero, CA.

Plan Integration for Resilience Scorecard for Wildfire *Atascadero Climate Action Plan (2014)* The '3-point test' To be included in the analysis, a policy must...	Districts →	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Hazard Zones →										
POLICY										
C-6: City Government Tree Planting Program Establish a tree planting program to increase the number of native, drought-tolerant trees on City-owned property, parks and streetscapes. (p. 3-6)	WUI	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1
	Non-WUI	1		1	1			1	1	1
C-6.1: Plant at least 2,000 trees on City-property by 2020, subject to water availability. (3-6)	WUI	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1
	Non-WUI	0		0	0			0	0	0
Measure TL-8: Atascadero General Plan Facilitate mixed-use, *higher density*, and *infill* development near transit stops, in existing community centers/downtown, and in other designated areas. (3-18)	WUI	-1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	-1	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Non-WUI	1		N/A	N/A			N/A	N/A	N/A
TL-8.1: Continue to *facilitate construction* of high quality mixed-use and medium and high-density land uses located close to transit nodes, existing bus routes, or park and ride facilities with regularly scheduled, daily service. (3-18)	WUI	-1	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	-1	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Non-WUI	1		N/A	N/A			N/A	N/A	N/A
Measure T-2: Native Forest Regeneration Increase the amount of vegetated open space within the City to permanently increase carbon storage. (3-27)	WUI	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1
	Non-WUI	0		0	0			0	0	0
T-2.1: Continue to work with developers and landowners to permanently preserve open space and regenerate native forest within Atascadero. (3-28)	WUI	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1
	Non-WUI	0		0	0			0	0	0

Atascadero, CA PIRS™ for Wildfire Scorecard.

- The focus on hazards and the spatial framework reveals patterns of policies that support wildfire resilience, "hot spots" of policy conflict, and "cool spots" with limited policy attention.
- Vulnerability assessments provide additional insight into areas of need in the communities.
- The fuel path disturbance conceptual approach (i.e., fire spread structure-to-structure, structure-to-vegetation, and vegetation-to-vegetation) is one of the conceptual frameworks being developed as part of the PIRS™ for Wildfire process.

Next Steps

- Assist our municipal partners in their use of the PIRS™ for Wildfire results to guide their general plan update processes (and network of plans updates) to strengthen integration and wildfire resilience.
- Continue with our county partners to expand the analysis to meet their planning goals.
- Develop a PIRS™ for Wildfire Guidebook, based on these initial applications and community collaborations.
- Advise communities on how to use their newly gained knowledge and empirical data gained through the PIRS™ for Wildfire process when applying for federal and state wildfire mitigation grants.

For more information on PIRS™ and plan integration, visit the link *www.planintegration.com* or scan the QR code bellow.

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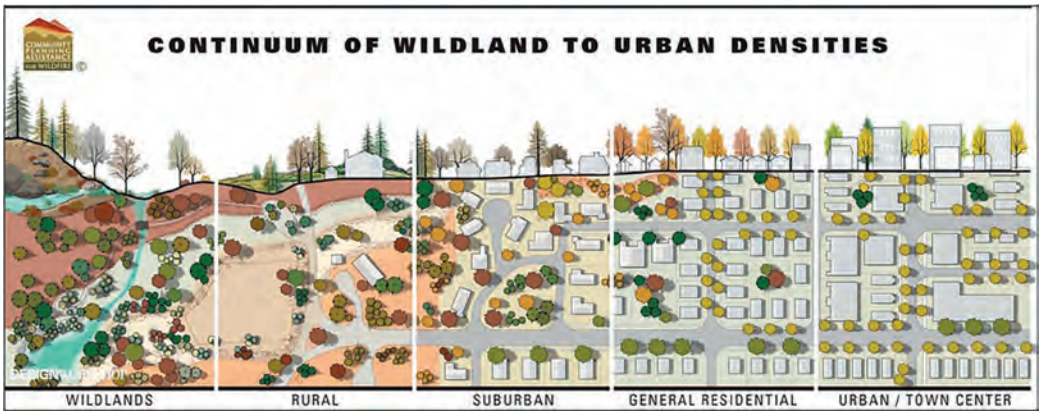

Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI), Community Planning Assistance for Wildfire. (source: https://cms5.revize.com/revize/wascocounty/WUI%20Visuals%20Community%20Guide_2018.pdf ; accessed 10/30/23)

Revisiting Sugao Village

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City and Regional Planning Department, Cal Poly.

In this article, Hemalara Dandekar discusses her impressions from revisiting a village in India, that she had visited several times over almost fifty years, done significant research on the lives and aspirations of women. Experiencing and participating in their daily routines revealed the choices that were available to them Development and economic prosperity appear to have changed and improved village lives of many.

In November 2023 I revisited Sugao, a village in Maharashtra State India, where I had lived in for a year and a half almost fifty years ago. Starting in 1976, I gathered quantitative data through a household survey, meticulously executed, that took me door-to-door in the nooks and crannies of the village. In this process I also interviewed villagers, took copious notes at night, to collect the kind of information anthropologists now call "dense data" or more recently "thick data." At that time, Clifford Geertz's article "Thick Description: Towards an Interpretive Theory of Culture" (Geertz, 1973) influenced me as I transitioned from practicing architecture to doing academic research. I was working towards a doctoral degree in Urban and Reginal Planning at UCLA.

Observing and reflecting on people's interactions and movement in buildings and spaces had been an essential tool for me, one that led to good architectural design that responded to people's needs. But the technical, engineering aspects of my training in architecture led me to meticulously survey the village, household by household, to ground my qualitative observations and collection of narratives, in quantified and verifiable information about people and place. These two ways of knowing, quantitative and qualitative, based my arguments about village change for my Ph.D. dissertation.

Over the years, it was the conversations with people in the village, particularly the women I got to know intimately, which lingered in my mind. In 1976-77, I had been well funded by a Fulbright Doctoral fellowship but had nowhere to spend money. The village's few tiny shops sold only the basics. There were no guest houses or rooms that I could rent to live in. I had depended on the hospitality and generosity of my hostess, who I call Bharatibai in my publications, a widowed women from a well-to-do family in the village who had offered me shelter. I lived in her home in Sugao and, for that privilege, despite many attempts to convince her otherwise, she refused any payment.

My experiences of living within a family in the village was transformative for the architect that I was, trained in Mumbai, urbanite to the core, now Americanized with little or no experience of rural life in India. I had no plans to write about the conditions or lives of women. Rather I concentrated on documenting and describing those aspects of Sugao society and economy that were amenable to planned development. But the process of talking to villagers, from all strata of society, house by house, left me with unforgettable vignettes of rural women's lives. Experiencing and participating in their daily routines and talking to women friends in Sugao revealed the choices that were, or mostly were not, available to them. They contrasted sharply with those that I, an urban, educated woman, was fortunate to have.

I coined the name Sugao (beautiful village) in an attempt to provide some measure of anonymity to the people I met whose views and whose life conditions I wrote about in my scholarship on development planning. My first book on Sugao explored urban industrialization in Mumbai, particularly the flourishing textile industry, and its impact on rural life and culture through rural-urban linkages, particularly human and economic ones (Dandekar, 1986). In the mid-eighties, now a faculty member at the University of Michigan, I began to document more systematically Sugao women's lives and to ask them about their aspirations. Individual life stories interested me, and I wrote them down thinking they might be of interest to others. But the manuscript I put together failed to find a publisher. At that time, academic presses were not interested in "stories" and the manuscript languished in my study. But in 2022, I rewrote the manuscript and self-published as a book,

[1] Changes in Sugao that are described in the book drew on my survey in 1977 and earlier surveys by the Gokhale Institute dating back to 1942. The objective was to delineate major measurable parameters of change in village life and economy as a result of industrialization.

featuring thirty-five life stories and photographs of the Sugao women I got to know between 1976-1992 (Dandekar, 2022). Drawing on my previous published work for context,[2] my hope was to provide, in a small way, a voice to Sugao women who had impressed me with their strength and perseverance.

With some trepidation I took one copy of this book with me on a recent short and impressionistic visit to Sugao in November 2023. During the interim three plus decades since my last visit, I had shared none of my academic work and publications with village people, not even with my closest friends. Not even with Priya, Bharatibai's niece who was part of my family doing my doctoral work, and her doctor husband. I had stayed in touch with them and visited by phone, but I had not given them copies of any of my writings on Sugao. So many years later, showing at least this recent book on Sugao women to Sugao people felt like the right thing to do. And the reactions to seeing the one copy I took to Priya, and then to the village, were overwhelming and positive. The women who were still alive and had been featured in the book loved seeing their photographs. They crowded around that one copy, exclaimed over each photograph, pointed out to each other who was who, and explained what they were doing, what field they were in, what crops they were tending to (Figure 1). They came to meet me bringing their daughters-in-law and their grown children. They shared stories of the times we had spent together in the fields and in their kitchens so many years ago. Their memories were fresh, and far more detailed than my own recollections.

Suman (A House with a Door, Chapter 19), whose future I had worried about in the book, was laden with heavy gold necklaces, traditional in design, a long one with three strands of large gold beads, another shorter with two strands of smaller gold beads, a third sporting a gold heart, and yet another gold chain. Large gold earring were anchored firmly to her ears with a gold chain. It seemed this was what she wore routinely now. She had no intimation that I was coming and had rushed over the moment she heard that I was at Bharatibais house. Her gold jewelry was worth thousands of dollars and were a tangible indicator of her wealth. She had built a modern new two-story house where her old dilapidated one room house used to be, around the corner from Bharatibai's (Figure 2). Her two sons were now grown, and she lived with one of them and his family in her new house. Her other son lived in the nearby city of Wai where he also owned a house. He had become quite well-to-do as a merchant trading in fertilizer and agricultural supplies. Suman was clearly in charge of that family. Her grandson was learning English, the kitchen of her house was large, had the most modern cabinets

Figure 1: Sugao women friends' pore over a copy of the book on Sugao women. Although few can read English they are very interested in the photographs.

Figure 2: Suman offers me tea in a fine porcelain cup and saucer as we sit on a sofa in her new house. It is a far cry from the mud floor of her old house where we used to drink tea in cracked cups with broken handles.

[2] Several stays in Sugao inform this work, most significant a year and a half residence in 1976-77 to study the impact of development programs in the post-Independence period. Resulting publications include: Dandekar, H. C. and Brahme, S., "Role of Rural Industries in Rural Development," in R. P. Misra and K. V. Sundaram (eds.), *Rural Area Development* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1979); Dandekar, H. C., *Rural Development: Lessons from a Village in Deccan Maharashtra, India* (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1978); Dandekar, V. M., Brahme, S., and Jagtap, M. B., A Village in Transition, Study of "Sugao," Satara District, Maharashtra State (Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, 1978); Dandekar, H.C., "Modernization of Agriculture, Monetization of A Village Economy" (in South Asia Bulletin, 3-2, 1983, pp. 15- 30); and, most importantly Dandekar, H.C., *Men to Bombay - Urban Influence on Village Life in Deccan Maharashtra, India (l942-82)* (Ann Arbor: Center for South and Southeast Asia Publications,1986).

and appliances (Figure 3). The flooring was of high quality, the bedrooms were upstairs, and there was a roof deck from which one could view the whole village. After serving me tea in a fine porcelain, she walked me from her house to the door of Rani's old house. We both paused a moment, somber, remembering the sad death of our old friend. "I told her not to go to Mumbai." Suman said to me, repeating the words she had uttered more than three decades earlier. "He (her husband) was no good. I told her not to go after him. Her sons are like him now. They are going nowhere."

So many years later, the sorrow and loss were still close to the surface for Suman, despite her material wealth, her improved living situation, and her considerable power as the family matriarch. Her, and my, inability to make a difference to Rani's life trajectory was still a point of sorrow and guilt. For both of us.

Hiru (A House with a Door, Chapter 9), whose future I had worried about, had come into her own (Figure 4). Back then she had been abandoned by her husband at a young age and had been living, seemingly precariously, in an outer room of her family's courtyarded house, cooking for herself and cutting a lonely figure. Now she was the matriarch of the family. Her only sibling, the brother who had exiled her to that peripheral room in their old house, was a heavy drinker. He had died at a young age from his indulgences, leaving behind his wife and young children. Hiru had assumed the role of family elder. They now had a modern concrete house on Sugao's outskirts, easily reached off the village's main road. They lived together as a joint family, consisting predominantly of women: Hiru, her sister-in-law, and the wives and families of her brother's sons (Figure 5). They had rented their old traditional courtyard home in the village, lacking in amenities, to relatives who were less well-to-do.

Located opposite Bharatibai's house, the Neo-Buddhist community had by and large vacated their tiny, dilapidated homes. Most had moved to modern apartment homes built with government subsidy on village common lands up on the hill behind the main square. One of them, who was invited (summoned!) to come down to visit me, looked not much older than her photograph I took almost four decades earlier and features on the back cover of my book (Dandekar, 2022) (Figure 6).

Everywhere, dotting in an indeterminate pattern here and there in the fabric of village houses, old one-story homes built of stone and mud mortar had been replaced with new two- and three-story modern ones of reinforced concrete (Figures 7 & 8). A substantial, reinforced concrete two-story village hall with a roof terrace had been built facing the main square, replacing the one story tiled, dilapidated room that used to be where the *panchayat* (governing village body) used to hold its meetings. I had a general sense that the old order of two dominant family groupings and their men who previously decided for the whole

Figure 3: Suman with grandchildren in the modern kitchen of her new house.

Figure 4: Hiru and Priya in the kitchen of Bharatibai's house. Priya's brother and his wife now lived there tending the family lands.

Figure 5: Hiru and her family in the kitchen of their new house.

Figure 6: A Neo-Buddha woman. It is a community whose homes have been relocated and improved with government assistance.

Figure 8: The new village hall is two-story, sturdy, and built of cement concrete plastered white.

Figure 7: A new three-story courtyard house built of concrete had replaced the traditional one and a dairy is operating from the storefront. The bright green and orange containers are used to collect and ship the milk.

village had given way to a new order, less closed in, more influenced by education, technology, and nearby urban places.

Newer modern homes, like Hiru's, had been built on the village alongside the somewhat improved roads, the one leading into Sugao from the highway and the other out from the village to adjacent villages and hamlets. Sugao was no longer the sleepy, small village, internally turned, only loosely connected to its region, that I had written about so many years ago. Development planning coupled with technological change, particularly the ubiquitous cell phone, appeared to have accelerated its economic and spatial integration at a regional scale. It was a village that a reader of my book *Men to Bombay Women at Home* might not immediately recognize (Dandekar, 1986). Development and economic prosperity appeared to have changed conditions for many, including the poorest Neo Buddhists, and improved village lives.

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ARCH Alum Sponsors CRP Studio and Downtown Monterey Revision Plan

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In the spring of 2023, a group of 30 city and regional planning (CRP) junior students had the opportunity to enroll in a studio where they formulated ideas for the downtown area of Monterey, CA. The project was proposed to tge CRP department by Wallace Gordon, an architecture alum. As a native of Monterey, he chose to fund and help facilitate this project, donating $25,000 to provide students with the necessary resources. Since Gordon grew up in Monterey, he provided extensive knowledge to the students completing the project by helping explain the historical situation and overall idea.

Students drove to Monterey in a charter bus and stayed overnight in a hotel. They walked around the city and the project area and sruveyed it, met with City and Planning Commission members, business owners, and city planners. A meeting with stakeholders allowed the students and faculty to gain insight into the community's concerns, goals and strengths. Later in the quarter, they presented their ideas to the City Planning Commission.

CRP Department Head Amir Hajrasouliha recognized the importance of the trip and the time spent there. "Students could visit Monterey, but also the surrounding areas, to have a better understanding of the context, and then spend a day visiting downtown and talking to the business owners."

Students experience a wide range of benefits from studio courses. They learn to deal with the essential challenges of urban design planning and consider factors such as housing availability, transportation, tourism, safety, rising sea levels, and more. Gordon considers that some of his most fruitful experiences at Cal Poly were the off-campus interactions in conjunction with the on-campus education. He notes that "getting off-campus and seeing and working in the real world is essentially the essence of Cal Poly's Learn by Doing."

For Leslie Rivera, now a senior student, being part of this studio gave her first-hand experience of working with a real-world client. She thought it was valuable because it helped her learn how a project starts, how to develop it, and how to work with the community and people with stakes in the project. It is important that students get the chance to work with real stakeholders and, in this studio, they met with business owners, planning commissioners and city staff. "Working with a real client and with people with specific interests was a good experience to learn how to start and develop a project," Rivera said.

This type of work benefits students and the communities involved. To Kimberly Cole, community development director at the City of Monterey, "the community appreciated working with an emerging generation of planners to discover their perspectives on urban spaces. The City Planning Commission is interested in having the students return and discuss implementation options."

Although the course occurred in the spring, the project continued into the summer. With the funds received from Gordon, three students continued working on revising and editing the final document. Rivera was among them and considered "it's been a unique opportunity and a really good experience being able to have this project fully funded."

Gordon believes that community-based studio projects are an incredible asset to students and communities and would benefit from ongoing sponsorship or donations. He said : "I think the investment in it, from whoever wishes to invest, is a spectacular dividends, both to the school and the community. I would highly, highly encourage people to sustain this and get it to grow." He believes it is important to give back and help students start their journeys and learn about being a part of the built environment and all the different aspects it takes to come together. "It's truly a great benefit and joy for somebody who spent their life in design and improving the environment. For me, it's part of continuing the joy of being an architect."

A short documentary on the studio's three-dimensional model for downtown Monterey is available at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xmj6WdhG4D0

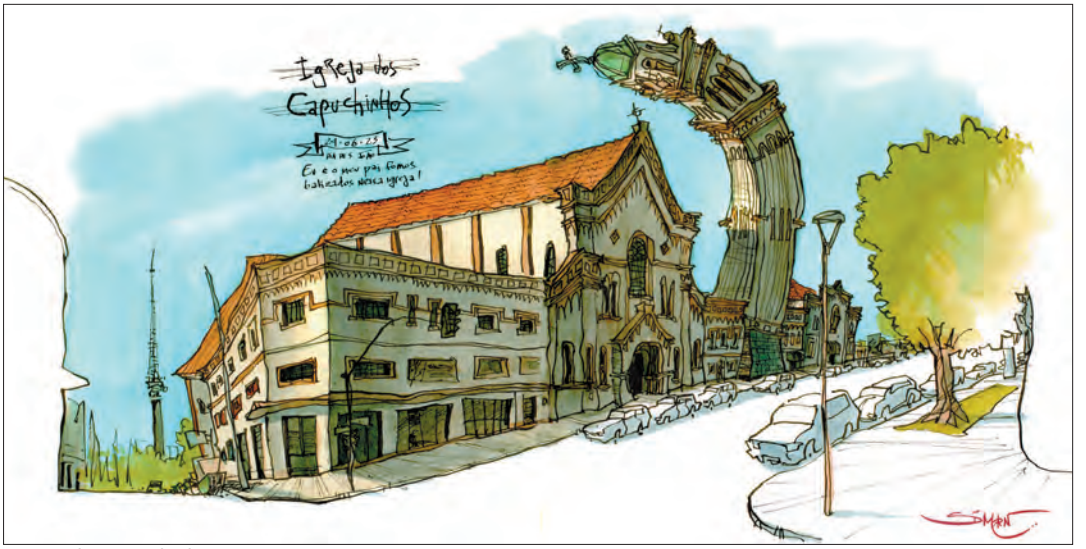
To support CRP students and help them participate in enriching community-based studios such as this one, please consider proposing projects and/or donating to the department.

Architecture Alumn Wallace Gordon speaking to the students and faculty during their visit of Monterey.

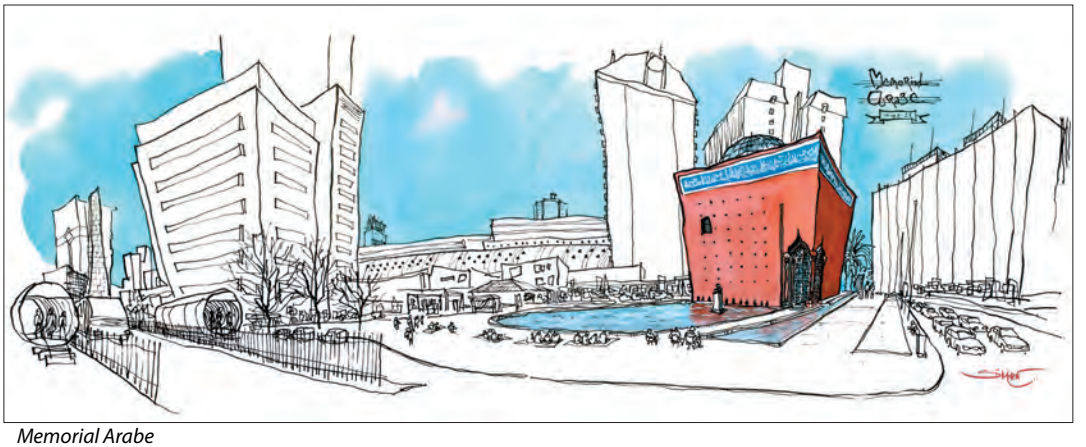
Monterey planning director and stafe presenting to students.

Bird's eye view of the general urban design concept.

A detailed view of concepts for opportunity sites.



Igreja dos Capuchinhos



Memorial Arabe

Largo da Ordem

Urban Scenes from Curitiba

by Simon Taylor

Simon is a designer, visual artist, and cartoonist from Curitiba, Brazil. He works for several Brazilian newspapers, published four books with his work, and featured in several art exhibits. Simon is an avid urban sketcher with a distrinct style, and was president of Brazil's chapter of Urban Sketchers International. He did exclusive work for two FOCUS 17 and 19. See Simon Taylor's work at www.simontaylor.com.br

FOCUS 20

International

3rd International Urban Design Workshop in Lisbon - Summer 2023: Walk to Plan, Plan to Walk

Vicente del Rio

*PhD, Professor Emeritus, City and Regional Planning, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.*Visiting Professor, Universidade Lusofona de Lisboa.

Diogo Mateus

PhD, Professor and Coordinator, Urbanism Program, Universidade Lusofona de Lisboa.

In the Summer of 2023, the authors resumed the successful series of urban design summer workshops in Lisbon, Portugal where the CRP Department has a long-established relationship with the Urbanism program at the Universidade Lusófona . This was the workshop's forth iteration and had 9 participating students from Cal Poly and from Lisbon). The following lines is a brief description of the workshop's two intensive weeks.

The 4th International Urban Design Summer Workshop happened from June 26 to July 7, 2023, at the Universidade Lusofona (UF) in Lisbon.[1] Coordinated and taught by professors Vicente del Rio (CRP, Cal Poly) and Diogo Mateus (UF), the group included nine students: four from CRP, two from the University of California at San Diego, and three graduate students from UF (originally from Angola and Cape Verde).

As with the previous iterations of the workshop, besides introducing Lisbon's history and urban qualities, we focused on walking as a method to learn about place-making and a goal towards greater livability in urban projects.[2] On the first day, after the welcoming sessions and lunch on campus, the group visited the Museum of the City of Lisbon and its rich collection of historical and archeological artifacts. One of the museum directors, Dr. Paulo Fernandes, walked us through the city's several layers of history since pre-Roman times and talked about the impact and transformations caused by the big earthquake, fires, and tsunami of 1755. The group enjoyed seeing the large-scale physical model of pre-earthquake Lisbon and watching 3-D animations that recreated those moments. The group then followed to the Center for Urban Information, run by Lisbon's city planning department, where Dr. Helena Montiel talked about the current planning efforts before an impressive physical model of the entire city. Lastly, city planners Antonio Folgado and Marcia Lameirinhas spoke about the plans and the community participatory process efforts currently affecting the area where the site chosen for the workshop is located. The area is highly diverse, with many immigrant groups speaking nearly one hundred languages and dialects!

The following three days included walks guided by professors del Rio and Mateus in different districts of Lisbon—such as Alfama, Baixa, Rossio, Bairro Alto, Alvalade, and Oriente—representing different historical periods and planning/design paradigms. During these walks, the students wandered around, observed, sketched, and analyzed place qualities, a method inspired by Walter Benjamin's concept of flâneurie. Students had to report on their observations, structuring them around seven specific urban design qualities: complexity and surprise, vitality and robustness, enclosure and linkages, transparency and vistas, legibility and coherence, architectural richness, and personalization and community values. The group also enjoyed a live demonstration of watercolor sketching by Professor Filipa Antunes (UL) at Porta do Sol, a plaza overlooking the Alfama and the Tagus River, before proceeding with their own sketching. These days' walks and findings would inspire the students to develop their projects during the workshop's design phase.

On Friday of the first week, the group started the design phase by visiting and performing a walk-through analysis of the project site and its context (Figures 4 to 6). Located along one of Lisbon's most important arterial avenues, the project site covers most of a block where Portugalia, one of Lisbon's most well-known beer factories and beer garden, was located. Although most of the site has been vacant for years, the remains of a historical industrial building, and a renovated annex still functions as a restaurant and beer place. There is also a vacant 10-stories office building on the site. The city and the community are intensely

[1] See details of the workshop and final products are available at https://www.ud-workshop-lisbon.net/

[2] For a discussion of this methodology see: del Rio, V. (2015). Urbanity, the Flaneur, and the Visual Qualities of Urban Design (in V. del Rio (ed.), *City Fragments: Reflections on Urbanism and Urban Design*; San Luis Obispo/Rio de Janeiro: KDP/RioBooks).

Figure 1: Professor Filipa Antunes demonstrating watercolor sketching at Porta do Sol. (photo: V. del Rio)

Figure 2: Professor Diogo Mateus during the walking tour of Alvalade's modernist sector. (photo: V. del Rio)

interested in preserving historical remnants and revitalizing the block with residential and community-serving uses. The collected information was compiled, discussed, and organized back on campus. On Saturday of the first week, guided by Professor del Rio, the group visited the beautiful hill town of Sintra and its medieval castles and palaces. On Sunday, a free day, some of the students went to the beach in Cascais while others just relaxed in Lisbon.

The second week consisted of an intense design charrette. Divided into two teams, with a balanced mix of participants of different backgrounds and nationalities, the group conducted a quick SWOT discussion and analysis before proceeding to the concept development phase. The teams then defined their proposals for developing the site. They included a vision statement, objectives, design ideas, concept diagrams, and a final design concept, including a site plan, cross sections, a SketchUp 3D model, and representative pedestrian views. The workshop culminated with the teams presenting their proposals to faculty and local planners in PowerPoint and poster formats and submitting a final report, which included their observations on urban design qualities as collected in the first week and their complete analysis and proposal for the project site. The proposals included feasible, culturally, and contextually appropriate ideas for Lisbon and the site's socially and functionally complex milieu. Once again, Lisbon was a fascinating learning laboratory where history, culture, accessibility, sound design, and social and ethnic mix combine to generate one of the world's most attractive and livable cities.

Figure 3: Sketch of Castelo São Jorge and Alfama from Miradouro Don Pedro de Alcantara, by Owen Underwood (CRP).

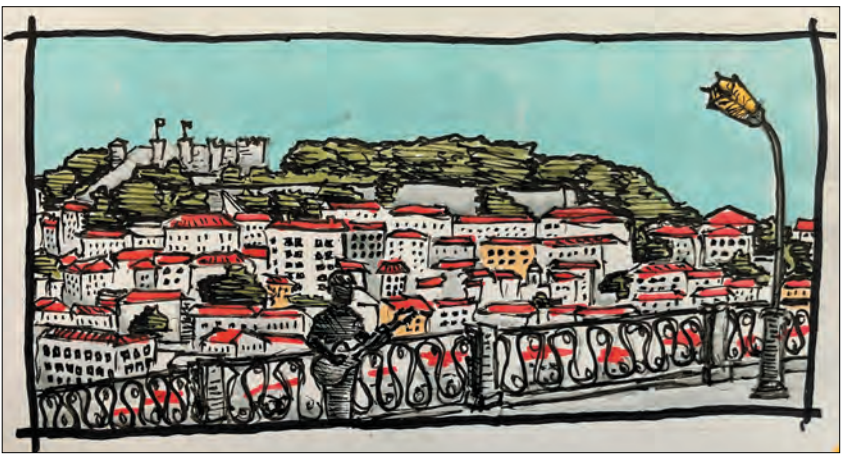


Figure 4: View from Porta do Sol, by Jennifer Hugoo (CRP).

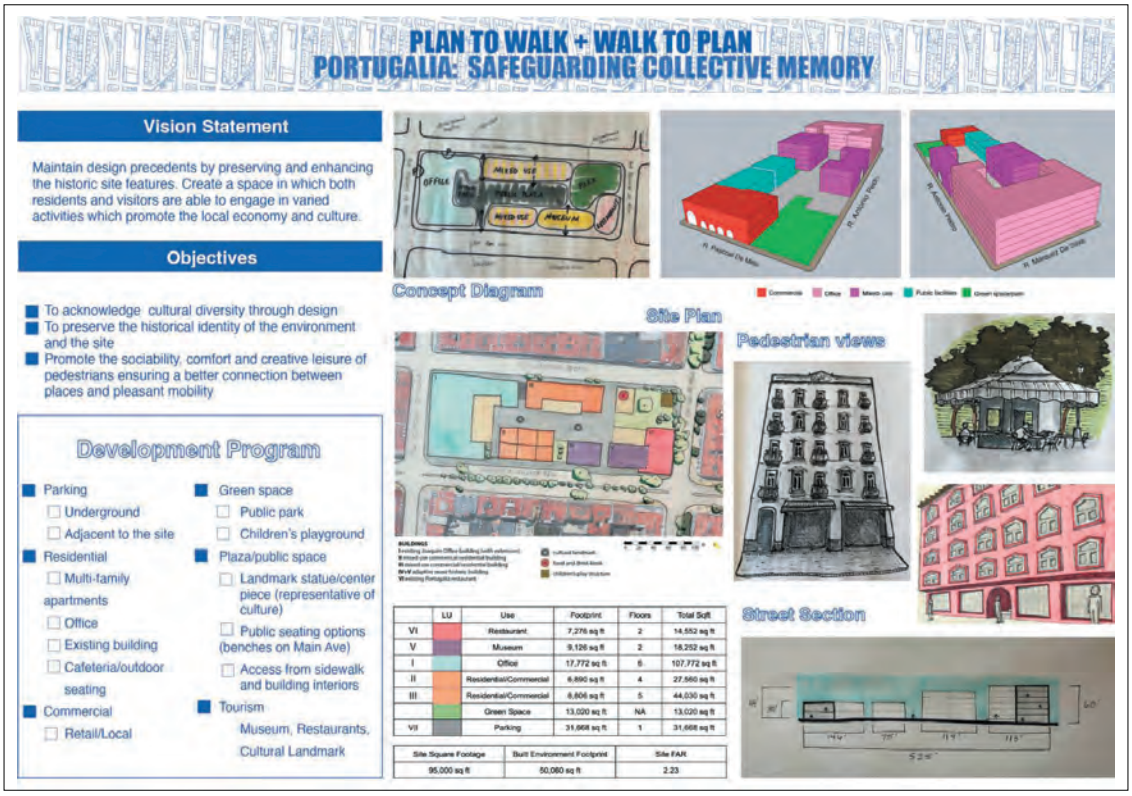
Figure 4: Aerial view of the project site. (source: Google Earth)

1: Existing Portugalia restaurant
2: Delerict historic building
3: Vacant office tower

Figure 5: Corner of Avenida Almirante Reis and Rua Pascoal de Melo. The Portugalia restaurant and, on the left, the delerict historic building. (photo: V. del Rio)

Figure 6: View of the interior of the project block looking south. The historic building shows on the left and the vacant office tower on background . (photo: V. del Rio)

Figure 7: Poster with the proposal by Team A (Owen Underwood, Dania Garcia, Miriam Sullivan and Edson Lourenço).



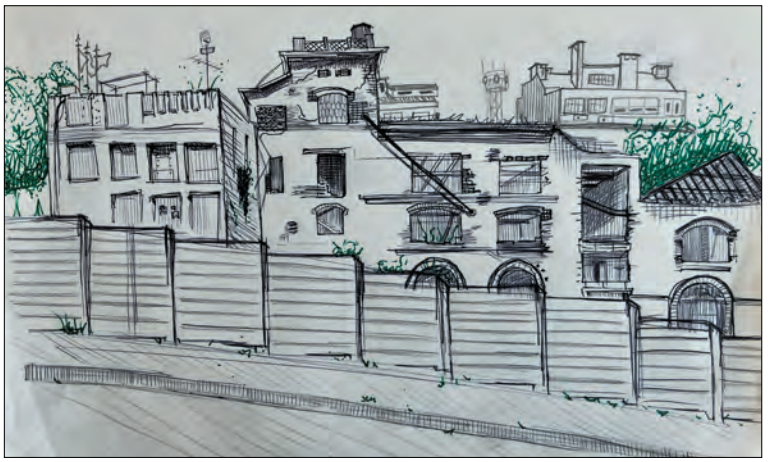


Figure 8: Parcial view of the project site and existing buildings from Rua Antonio Pedro, by Miriam Sullivan (CRP).

Figure 9: Sketch representing the Alfama and Castelo Sao Jorge, by Emily Deggeller (CRP).

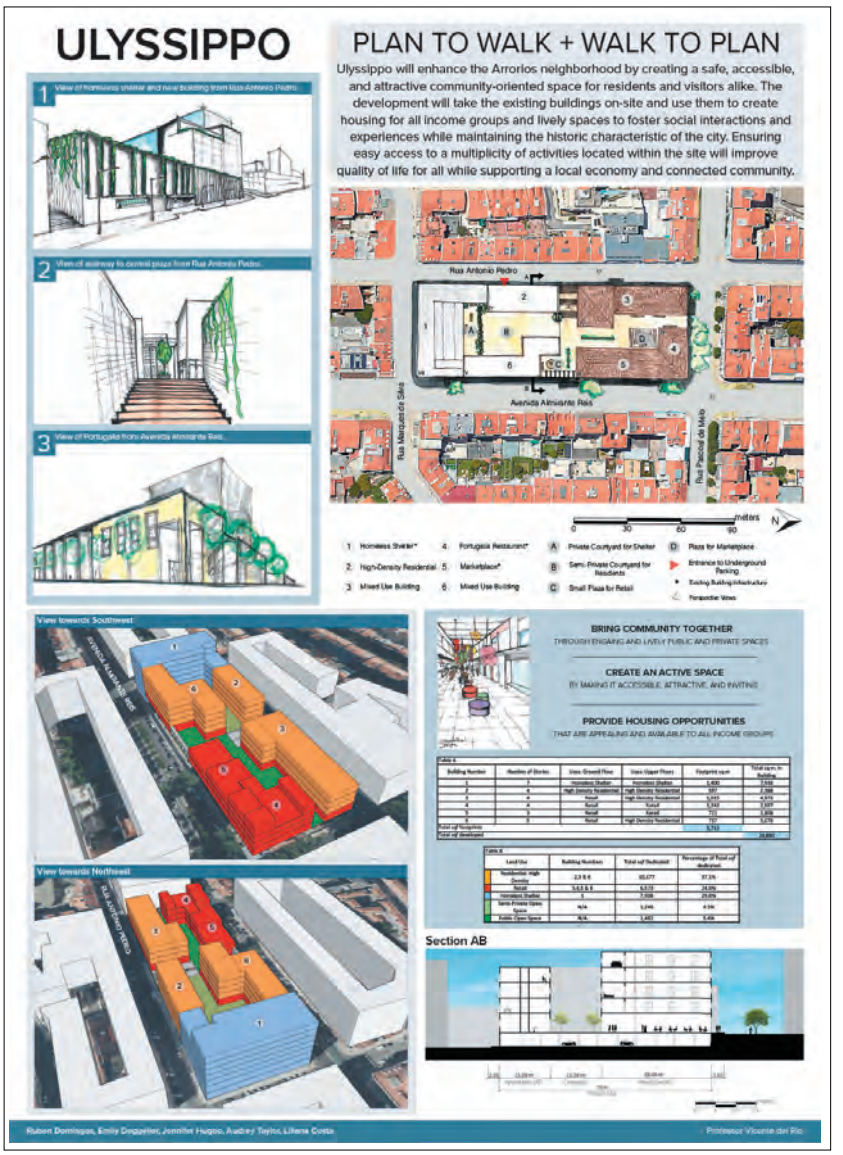


Figure 7:
Poster with the proposal by Team B (Jennifer Hugoo, Emily Deggeller, Audrey Taylor, Ruben Domingos, and Liliana Costa).

Zoning

by Bruno Galvão

Bruno Galvão is a Brazilian graphic designer and art illustrator currently living in São Jose dos Campos, state of São Paulo. He specializes in political satire through cartoons.

See Bruno's blog at http://chargesbruno.blogspot.com

FOCUS 20

Spotlight

New Faculty
City and Regional Planning Department

Thandolwenkosi Mthembu (Thando)

A full-time lecturer, Thando's work focuses on urban and rural development that pay homage to the cultures of sub-Saharan African countries. She holds an architecture degree from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, a postgraduate diploma in Urban Planning from the University of Witwatersrand (Johannesburg), a Master of Science in Urban Planning for Developing Countries and Transitional Regions from Oxford Brookes University (England), and a certificate in Inclusive Education from the University of Cape Town. Having taught in the United Kingdom, South Africa, and now in the United States, Thando has a diverse range of global perspectives and experiences.

As a young specialist in urban strategy for developing countries, Thando is passionate about solutions that are inclusive and economically impactful for the urban poor, and champions for women's advancement in male-dominated sectors. In 2016, she featured as one of the Mail and Guardian Top 200 Young South Africans for her contribution to built environment education and activism.

Among her experiences, Thando participated in the master planning for the first African Smart City, and established Power Generation, a youth-focused organization fostering education and skills development for disadvantaged communities. Additionally, she serves as an ordained pastor and certified Church Lay Counsellor.

Ryan Sandwick

Ryan is an Assistant Professor of Urban Design and Landscape Architecture on a joint appointment between Cal Poly's City and Regional Planning and the Landscape Architecture departments. He received his Bachelor of Science in Landscape Architecture from the University of California, Davis, and a Masters of Science in City Planning and Regeneration from the University of Glasgow.

After a career in the private sector, Ryan moved to academic and non-profit settings where design and planning was fundamental to economic development, particularly in rural communities. His interest focuses on how design and planning can best serve cultural, economic, and environmental needs through investments on the public realm. Ryan has worked with a variety of scales, and his impact-focused approach is embedded in his teaching.

CiRPAC
City and Regional Planning Advisory Council, Cal Poly

The City and Regional Planning Advisory Council (CiRPAC) was formed in 2015 with a three-prong mission: to advise the department on the needs of industry and the profession so that future graduates are prepared to enter the workforce and be successful; assist the department in meeting its advancement goals; and to serve as a voice for promoting the interests and activities of alumni.

Ginger Anderson
Land Use Planner, Stantec.

Geoff Bradley
Principal, M-Group.

John Donahoe
Director of Planning and Entitlement, Sanford University.

Paulo Hernandez
Principal-Owner, JPH Consulting.

Pam Johns
Community Development Director, City of Folsom.

Lesley Lowe
Transportation & Environmental Planning Manager, Sanford University.

Steve Lynch (chair)
Director of Planning and Entitlement, Sand Hill Property Co.

Martin Magaña
Director of Trasportation, Coachella Valley Association of Governments.

Dawn Marple
Principal Planner, Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group.

Lisa Ring
LOR Planning & Environmental Consulting, LLC.

Richard Rojas
Deputy City Manager at the City of Norwalk, CA.

Leeanne Singleton
Environmental Analyst City of Hermosa Beach.

Rachel Raynor
Senior Planner, RRM Design Group.

David Yoke
Vice President of Acquisitions, SummerHill Homes.

Heidi Vonblum
Planning Director, City of San Diego.

More about CiRPAC and its members at https://planning.calpoly.edu/content/alumni/index

Conversations with Alumni

Noah Christman

Bachelor of Science in City and Regional Planning, Cal Poly, 2005

FOCUS: Tell us about your professional path after graduation.

My professional path has meandered more than I'd expected or intended! My passion at Cal Poly was urban design, so I took every class I could to hone those skills, fully expecting to stay in that field for the entirety of my career. And, for a while, that appeared to be my path. After graduation, I worked for a residential architecture firm in Orange County, where I designed both greenfield and infill communities throughout Northern California. It was a boom time for residential development and the projects I worked on ranged from just a few acres to thousands.

However, when the housing bubble burst, the firm was forced to hemorrhage hundreds of employees to stay afloat, and in late 2008 I found myself on the hunt for new opportunities. The result was joining up with a handful of former colleagues to help found a small, multidisciplinary firm that combined urban design, branding, strategic planning, and facilitation to serve a wide base of clientele, from non-profits like the Urban Land Institute to municipalities throughout Southern California.

After a few years of that experiment, I became restless with the work (and, as a Northern California native, with Southern California itself) and moved back to the Bay Area. I spent the first year as a freelance designer, which afforded me the opportunity to undertake urban design and graphic communication projects for public, private, and non-profit clients across the United States, Europe, and China. But work-for-hire can be a lonely enterprise and I wanted to make a larger impact closer to home, so I began volunteering at SPUR—one of the Bay Area's most respected urban policy thinktanks—during the weekdays.

What I'd intended to be a part-time exercise soon turned into a full-time job offer to lead the organization's public programming, so I uninstalled CAD and began instead designing ways to engage the public with region's pressing urban issues, including obstacles to developing affordable housing, the impacts of public transit fragmentation, the critical importance of equity in urban design, and the economic ramifications of the COVID pandemic on our cities. We hosted forums on the opportunities and pitfalls of autonomous vehicles before they roamed San Francisco's streets and discourses about the viability of California High-Speed Rail before the first ceremonial shovel struck Fresno's soil. By the time I left, I'd led the creation of nearly 2,000 events, reached 110,000+ attendees, curated dozens of exhibitions, and helped open the organization's satellite offices in San José and Oakland — SPUR's first expansion outside of San Francisco since its founding more than a century prior.

FOCUS: What is your current job. What is your title and position in the organization? What are your primary responsibilities, and what type of work do you get involved with?

In 2022, I pivoted my career again, leaving SPUR to join Lighthouse Public Affairs as a partner. I recognize that the term "public affairs" can sound broad and ambiguous, so when people inquire about what I do I typically just tell them that I solve problems. At Lighthouse, we work with clients across California to find solutions to their most difficult challenges. Because each client's needs are different, that means a project might incorporate any combination of lobbying, regulatory navigation, stakeholder engagement, communications, policy development, and more. Though our client base is highly diverse—including sports teams, tech giants, non-profits, mobility companies, and municipalities—the throughline of all our work is a necessity that it positively impacts the urban realm. Regardless of whether we're connecting a major bank with community leaders or advocating for state legislation on behalf of a housing developer, our north star is always the betterment of our cities.

FOCUS: What is (are) the most exciting projects you have been working on recently?

Two standout projects come to mind. The first is a recently completed 18-month effort to keep Caltrain's electrification project on track, which included helping source a combination

of federal earmarks and state grant funding to fill the project's $410 million budget deficit, as well as project managing the coordination between the railroad, state transportation agencies, the manufacturer of the electric trains, and other consultants. Our success on both fronts enables Caltrain to start phasing out its diesel rolling stock and begin revenue service with electrified, zero-emissions trains between San Francisco and San José by the end of 2024.

The second is an ongoing pursuit to entitle and build a major industrial center in San Francisco. Lighthouse is working with the project's developer to navigate the city's convoluted political and regulatory environment, while concurrently facilitating meetings with local stakeholders to help them sculpt a robust community benefits package. If approved, the project will replace four low-slung, obsolete warehouses from the 1940s with more than two million combined square feet of innovative production/distribution/repair, support facilities, maker spaces, and retail, all generating thousands of local jobs in one of San Francisco's most historically underinvested neighborhoods.

FOCUS: How does your education reflect in your work? Do you feel that the CRP classes and skills you learned supported your professional practice?

Though I haven't been a practicing "planner" for more than a decade, I find much of the knowledge base and skills that I learned in school are still as relevant as ever. While I'm no longer using CAD and 3D modeling software daily, my comprehension of urban design and architectural principles is invaluable when collaborating with architects and developers. Reference tomes like the "green bible" and Bill Fulton's Guide to California Planning and courses about civic process, negotiation, and the intricacies of planning code instilled a foundational understanding of how planning and policy affect cities and, to this day, still help me navigate the complexities of municipal government. And then, less explicitly, the program imbued in me a deeper perspective and appreciation for the urban environment as a whole and how the nuances (or oftentimes lack thereof) in design and policy decisions influence both the tangible and intangible world around us.

FOCUS: Which do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of Cal Poly's program?

It's been many years since I was in the program, but a strength that recall it having at the time was that it seemed to be a true exemplification of Cal Poly's "learn by doing" philosophy in a way that felt practically unparalleled by other programs, at least when it came to the undergraduate curriculum. Whereas other universities focused primarily on theory, Cal Poly's program leaned heavily into practice, with projects having real-world applicability and contemporary resonance. As for weaknesses —and take this with a grain of salt as the curriculum has likely changed over the last 20 years—there weren't enough urban design classes offered for the students that were more drawn to the physical side of planning. I would have loved to see a few more specialty courses available, including advanced CAD and 3D modeling and design/build, as well as additional options for high-level traditional drafting and design.

FOCUS: From your perspective, which are the critical knowledge areas or skills/tools for planners entering the field?

This is difficult to answer because it depends completely on where a student wants to take their career. I probably know

Noah was the first at CRP to master and use SketchUp consistently. This was his model for the Park Marina Area Concept Plan in Sacramento. For the CRP 553 graduate studio, 2005. (see FOCUS 3, April 2006)

just as many planners that are actively doing "planning"—working in the public, private, or non-profit sector and using the hard skills they learned in school—as I do planners that have transitioned their careers into tangential sectors like development, politics, activism, and community engagement. However, what's held true regardless of the direction chosen is that even if one's career wends from sector to sector, as mine has, a background in planning offers a fundamental backbone of knowledge for all manner of jobs that can then be augmented and reinforced as a professional career unfolds. I can think of few degrees that offer the same degree of flexibility for future growth and career experimentation.

FOCUS: What was the most challenging aspect of transitioning from the BCRP program into professional practice?

In academia, most projects, even if they're grounded in reality, operate as primarily hypothetical exercises in a vacuum. In professional practice, deadlines, budgets, and myriad external factors present real-world constraints that exert their respective pressures, meaning that completed projects are rarely as good as you want them to be. I'm generalizing a bit here, but even when exercising the university's "learn by doing" motto, it's nearly impossible to truly grasp and account for how working under real-world conditions will affect your work until you're subjected to them.

One of the first instances in which I realized this was when I was forced to remove the sidewalks in a residential community that I was designing. The parcel was oddly shaped, and in order to make the project financially pencil out, the developer needed to achieve a specific density of units at certain square footages. Once I tacked on on-street parking requirements, as well as minimum street widths and rear and front setback standards, there was no room remaining for even a minimal sidewalk. The project never went past the design development phase, but I couldn't recall a school project ever being so neutered by an encumbrance of restrictions. But because projects like that one were so frequent and innumerable, I quickly used it as constructive learning experience to inform my future efforts.

FOCUS: What do you think are the big challenges for planners in the next years? How do you think Cal Poly can adapt and teach students to face these challenges successfully?

Tomorrow's planners will have to manage all manner of challenges, but the effects of climate change are by far the most existential. From urban design decisions that make cities more conducive to weathering a more unpredictable climate, to implementing policy that accommodates climate migration, to normalizing managed retreat along our coasts, climate change will impact countless decisions for planners in the future. Well, at least until humanity is forced to flee to the moon, Mars, or some orbital space colony; planners will then encounter another overabundance of problems to resolve.

Another challenge that comes to mind is the impact of new technology on the urban realm. Ownership of the right of way is already a hot button issue in many cities, with private cars, public transit, active mobility, and delivery services all jockeying for a piece of the limited real estate between curbs. But what happens to the street once autonomous vehicles roll out in more substantial numbers? Taking it a step further, how do we plan for eVTOL flying taxis? How does the ability to alight from rooftop to rooftop affect a streetscape that has already been decimated by online retail and hollowed out downtown business districts?

Teaching to anticipate these scenarios is difficult because they can often seem so otherworldly (and literally are, in the case of humanity's exodus from Earth), and each are comprised of multifaceted, fathomless challenges. So rather than trying to address those individual challenges, it's important to learn how to identify and solve for the bigger picture. What are the themes that link potential climate change scenarios? One is the notion that large numbers of people will face a loss of belonging and community, whether their own city is now unrecognizable or a shifting climate forces them to move somewhere new. Add in the divides—including geopolitics, gender, race, language, and religion—that continues to cleave humanity as it has done for millennia, and these displaced populations will suffer profoundly. Teaching students how to center belonging and community in their work now will be an essential tool to help them to cultivate those tenets in cities around the world whose residents may see their communities transform as a result of climate change.

FOCUS: Any final words of advice for the young planners?

The diversity of what you can do with a planning degree is incredible. When I was in school, I had a fairly binary outlook on mine and my classmates' post-graduation outcomes: we were most likely going to either work in the public sector or at a private design firm. However, I soon realized how ignorant of a perspective that was, and how nuanced and multifaceted the planning field is. A degree in planning can take you to all the places you assume and so many more. It can open all kinds of doors to all manner of careers, and it affords you an important perspective on how the world is shaped that so many others are blind to. I look forward to seeing how you use it to make this world better.

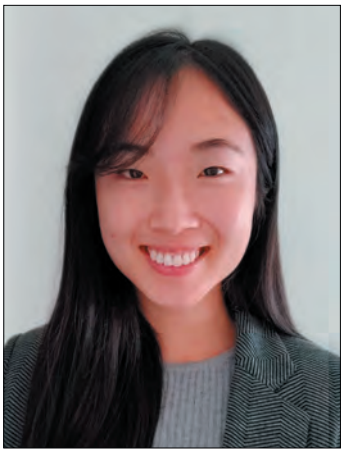
• • •

Conversations with Alumni

Emily Huang
AICP, Bachelor of Science in City and Regional Planning, Cal Poly, 2019.

FOCUS: When and why did you decide to become a planner?

My decision to study planning was due in large part to my father. He knew I had an interest for cities and design growing up, and discovered a book listing different career paths and city planning stood out to the both of us. I also became more passionate about conservation and climate resilience through my AP Environmental Science class in high school. After visiting Cal Poly and learning more about the program, I was sold! I graduated in 2019 with a BS degree in City and Regional Planning and a minor in Sustainable Environments.



FOCUS: Can you talk a bit about your professional path: from beginning until becoming a planner?

I started as an intern with 4Creeks, a private civil engineering/planning firm based in the Central Valley. There, I gained a lot of hands-on experience working on CEQA documents, air quality analyses, land use entitlement, and master planning. Since we were a smaller team, I was able to work on a lot of different projects, and many of them complemented what I was currently learning in class. I was offered a full time position as an Assistant Planner after graduating from Cal Poly. While I was with 4Creeks, I also worked part-time as an Outreach Associate with Active San Gabriel Valley, a non-profit organization advocating for safer and healthier communities in the SGV. There, I supported COVID-19 education and outreach during the height of the pandemic and got the chance to engage with the community I grew up in. After two years at 4Creeks, I had the opportunity to work for Stantec in Downtown Los Angeles.

FOCUS: What is your current job? What are your primary responsibilities, and what type of work do you get involved with?

I am currently an Urban Designer/Planner at Stantec, an international design and engineering firm. My job entails conceptual planning, preparing planning reports, mapping, and site design. A lot of the work I do revolves around transit-oriented development, downtown revitalization, and site reuse planning. I have also started doing more work around water, proposing projects to address water equity and access among underrepresented communities in the greater Los Angeles area.

FOCUS: Any plans and projects that you have been involved that you can call your favorites?

I've worked on transit-oriented station vision plans, feasibility studies, area-wide plans, CEQA documents, development standards and urban design guidelines, as well as site and streetscape plans. My favorite project that I've worked on so far is an area-wide plan for a city's waterfront through an Environmental Planning Agency (EPA) grant. My team and I explored existing conditions, helped define a long-term vision with community stakeholders, and established a set of revitalization strategies for their waterfront, which has historically been dominated by brownfields and vacant property. I thoroughly enjoyed sketching out different concepts, and identifying mobility, land use, and urban design strategies to reinvigorate their waterfront while reflecting community needs. It brought me back to urban design studios at Cal Poly!

FOCUS: How does your Cal Poly education reflect in your work? Did the classes provide you with a good foundation for your practice? Anything else should have been covered?

Overall, I think the coursework provided a great foundation for the work I do because what we learned and how we learned it, were extremely practical (cue Cal Poly's learn by doing). The things I learned in design studios, GIS, environmental planning, and even planning theory have always stuck with me and have come up in my career more than once. Of course, a quarter can't reflect some of the "real-world" constraints out there such as budget and politics, which I've learned throughout my professional practice.

Something I wish that could be covered more is technical writing and plain language for planners, as well as writing with

Stantec and the communiy tree planting program.

multiple authors. As planners, we do a lot of writing and rarely ever alone. Communicating ideas effectively is a crucial aspect of planning that also requires time and practice.

FOCUS: Which do you feel are the strengths and weaknesses of Cal Poly's BSCRP program?

I think the biggest strength of Cal Poly's BSCRP program is not just the coursework, but the diversity in backgrounds and experiences among faculty. Especially in a field that emphasizes the importance of diversity, I am grateful to have learned about planning from multiple perspectives outside of the United States.

Something I think the program can benefit from is introducing multidisciplinary courses. In my professional practice as a planner, I often work or engage with civil engineers, architects, landscape architects, economists, and developers. Having a class or project that facilitates this type of multidisciplinary coordination would better reflect a planner's day-to-day work. Engaging with other disciplines early on can also allow students to better understand different thought processes, workflows, and critical information that may not be common knowledge across disciplines.

Another topic that I find critical as a planner that I wish was more directly addressed in school is developing interpersonal skills. With such a forward facing profession that centers on collaboration and building trust, I wish there was a class that can hone in on social skills involved with active listening, negotiation, and handling difficult conversations. Although I'm not sure what that looks like, I'm sure having a class that covers topics like this can be beneficial to all majors.

Design guidelines for the Housing Element Rezoning, Corona.

FOCUS: From your perspective, what are the critical knowledge areas for aspiring planners?

I believe that housing, climate action, and technological applications in planning are critical knowledge areas for planners entering the field. Especially with the rise of AI, smart cities, and autonomous vehicles, planners need to understand the ethics and moral ramifications of these applications if implemented improperly.

FOCUS: What was the most challenging aspect of transitioning into professional practice?

Not everyone thinks like a planner! I think the most challenging but also very important aspect is the political side of planning that I had to learn over time. A lot of good, meaningful work can be pushed back or halted because there's no political support, even if there is community buy-in. Those in power sometimes aren't willing to make those changes, or even be open to the idea of change despite very apparent community benefits, which can be extremely frustrating.

FOCUS: Can you talk about your involvement with the APA? How important it is for planners to get involved?

I am currently one of the co-directors for the APA Los Angeles Young and Emerging Planners Committee. As the co-director, my goal is to create a safe space for students and emerging planners to advance their careers, network, and have fun! I've planned events around social, educational, and professional development including walking tours, guest speakers, project showcases, and happy hours. Getting involved with the APA is a wonderful opportunity to meet others with similar interests and aspirations, and to stay up-to-date with your local planning community.

FOCUS: What do you suggest to planning students who would like to follow a professional path similar to yours? What do you see as the big challenges for planners over the next 5-10 years?

For aspiring urban designers and planners out there, try to find opportunities to develop your design skills through classes, your peers, and mentors. Start developing a portfolio of curated work or project samples if you haven't already. If you are able, travel, and get outside of your comfort zone to learn from other people and places.

I think one of the biggest challenges now, and will be over the next 5-10 years, is climate change. With natural disasters increasing in intensity and frequency, it is critical that planning and design decisions address both mitigation and adaptation to protect our communities.

APA LA YEP Project Showcase.

FOCUS: Any final words of advice to the new generation?

Yes, I have three pieces of advice:

1) Always be ready to learn, ask questions, and be inspired by others! Connect with your classmates, professors, alumni, and your community. And even when you graduate, the learning doesn't stop. Find things you love outside of planning and are passionate about, and pursue those as well. I still feel like I'm learning something new every day.

2) Apply and interview, even if it's not your dream job. I recommend applying to as many jobs/internships as you can and interview, if time permits of course! As someone who struggles with social anxiety from time to time, I see it as practice to become more confident in answering questions and articulating the story I want to tell.

3) It's okay if you're not sure what you're doing. Many times in my career, I felt like an imposter because I didn't know the answers to everything that was being asked of me. Don't be afraid to fail, and learn to be comfortable with the uncomfortable. It shows that you're growing, and that's only natural!

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Conversations with Alumni

Marissa Ritter
Bachelor of Science in City and Regional Planning, Cal Poly, 2019.

Envisioning my future career was challenging, but I was driven to find a path where I could be creative, solve problems, and help people. The search to find all three of these goals wrapped into one major seemed elusive until I visited Cal Poly. That is where I first began to understand the kind of impact that could be made through urban planning. This is what attracted me to the City and Regional Planning major, where I graduated from Cal Poly in 2019 with my Bachelor's degree.

After graduating, I was invigorated by the opportunity to explore urban design even further by joining the Urban Planning Study Abroad trip in Lisbon with Professor Vicente del Rio. This workshop was dynamic and gave me a hands-on view of the different forms of urban planning. I learned so much about the urban form of Lisbon and its qualities that inspired me to explore its beauty further. It expanded my knowledge and curiosity about urban planning. It was also a great training ground to learn more about working with people from different backgrounds. There were many students in this class from around the world, and I was able to learn about their techniques and experiences.

With my degree and the fresh knowledge I gained from the Lisbon workshop, I landed a planning job in San Diego at KTUA, a local landscape architecture and planning firm. Jumping into this role expanded my design skills and refined my technical skills. My responsibilities encompassed various tasks, from drawing and rendering conceptual site plans to 3D modeling, digitizing data in GIS, drawing floorplans in CAD, graphic design, project branding, and document design and production. I am very grateful that I could work on a wide variety of projects at KTUA that utilized my knowledge of these programs taught through my CRP degree. At KTUA, I started actively participating in community engagement efforts.

This is where I realized that working with people from other backgrounds during my time in Lisbon helped me develop the active listening skills vital to community engagement efforts. Listening to residents during these outreach events exposed me to the significant disparities in disadvantaged communities. This experience continues to inform my work today on fair housing projects.

My next career move took me to Rincon Consultants, where I am a community planner. This position has allowed me to grow in new ways. My focus now revolves around two pivotal aspects of planning: Housing Elements and Specific Plans. In the housing domain, I've been actively assisting various cities and counties throughout California in writing their 6th cycle Housing Elements.

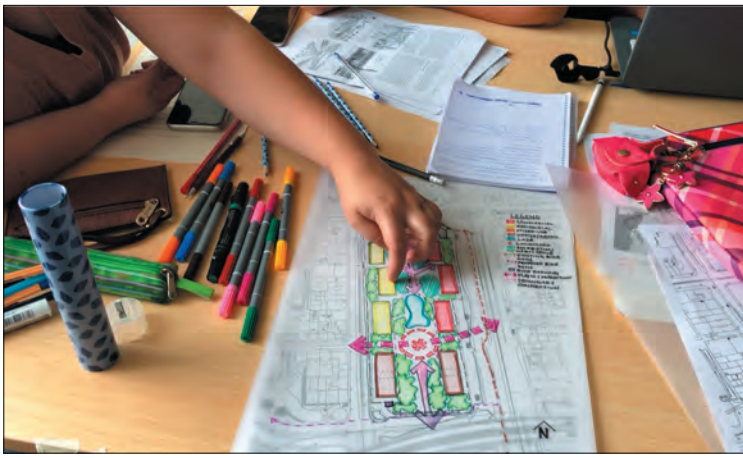
My responsibilities encompass drafting multiple sections of the Housing Element, particularly emphasizing the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing, Sites Inventory, and Housing Resources. In my work on the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing sections, I concentrate on assessing data across the region to: identify areas lacking access to opportunity and address inequities among protected class groups; promote integration and mitigate segregation; and transform racially or ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into zones of opportunity.

Regarding site Inventories, I conduct assessments of vacant and underutilized parcels throughout the city to determine their viability for developing residential units at various income levels per the State's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) requirements. These sites are further analyzed in the Housing Resources section, considering their proximity to opportunities and the city's infrastructure and services. Additionally, I have the privilege of working on Specific Plan documents, allowing me to delve into my passion for urban design and exercise my creativity. In this capacity, I assess and refine design guidelines, and I'm responsible for document layouts.

Working on these types of projects at Rincon has been enjoyable because of the tangible and rewarding outcomes. In doing the site intentories work for housing elements, I get a view into the community, what its desires are, and how to create outcomes wanted by residents; and for Specific Plans, it's rewarding accomplishing a project that will be developed

and looking forward to seeing the work I put into a project come to life.

Throughout my career as a planner, I have had the privilege of working on many diverse and exciting projects. I particularly like working on Specific Plans and Parks Master Plans. Currently, my involvement with Specific Plans allows me to channel my interests into the design aspect of planning. These dynamic projects are very engaging because each city and project presents unique challenges and opportunities. In my previous role at KTUA, I worked on several Parks Master Plans, identifying ways for cities to enhance their park amenities and expand open spaces. These projects particularly appeal to me because they involve fieldwork and community outreach, providing a well-rounded and rewarding experience.



The international urban design workshop in Lisbon.

Reflecting on my time at Cal Poly, I am amazed at how integral my education is to my daily work. Cal Poly's "learn by doing" philosophy has been instrumental in my professional success. The knowledge and planning tools acquired during my CRP program have seamlessly translated into my work environment. For instance, the "Planning for Multiple Publics" class continues to influence my approach when working on fair housing, especially in assessing areas for reducing segregation and enhancing opportunities for vulnerable populations. This class and numerous others taught me the importance of good writing. The majority of my time now is spent writing. Focusing on this skill and refining it is more important than ever. I encourage CRP students to use the resources available to focus on their writing skills and strengthen them during their time at the university. If a CRP student were to focus on one particular type of writing, I would encourage them to work on technical writing and data analysis skills. I regularly work with census data, analyze it, and write reports that compare other datasets. Expose yourself to more of these real-world scenarios, and I believe it would sharpen your writing abilities.

Additionally, I rely heavily on planning tools we were taught, such as GIS, CAD, and Adobe Suite, in my day-to-day tasks. My knowledge of programs like these opened the door to various opportunities. I would encourage students in the CRP program to focus on improving their skills with these tools.

Community engagement work in El Monte with KTUA.

I believe the skills and tools we learn are a strength of the CRP program. However, I would say that one of the most challenging aspects of transitioning from campus life to the professional world was adapting to the transition from a structured class schedule to the autonomy of working eight-hour days. Additionally, the nature of the work environment can pose challenges, particularly for remote workers like me who don't have regular face-to-face interactions with colleagues. This shift in dynamics may be a significant adjustment, especially for those accustomed to the high level of collaboration often found in BSCRP classes.

My advice to those in the CRP program is to strengthen your knowledge base by looking at more planning items outside the classroom. California's legislation and laws are ever-evolving, and aspiring planners must familiarize themselves with these topics. Staying current with the latest developments in legislation within your chosen planning field can be essential to your success and put you a step ahead of others.

Given that my current role is focused on housing, I can see this will remain a persistent challenge in California over the next 5 to 10 years. Our role as planners will demand innovative solutions for accommodating a growing population and addressing homelessness. Beyond staying familiar with legislative developments, I encourage current students to engage in discussions with their peers and professors to explore viable housing solutions, as that can be crucial to our future success. Cal Poly can play a pivotal role by ensuring students are attuned to current laws and encouraging critical thinking and innovation in response to these pressing challenges.

Looking back to my first walk down the CRP hallway, when on my college tour of Cal Poly, I remember being captivated by the creative energy in the presentation boards on display. Being drawn to the CRP department and this profession was as rewarding as I had envisioned. Each step since graduation has been fulfilling as I continue to be stretched in new ways. Ultimately, I know my planning will make a difference for California's communities, and I thank Cal Poly for setting me up for success in this fantastic profession!

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Image from the Specific Plan for Thousand Oaks. (rendering by RELM)

3D Graphics/ renderings for a park project in Escondido during my time at KTUA.

Learning from California:
Highlights from CRP Studios 2022/2023 AY

Planning and design studios are fundamental for the CRP department mission and both the undergraduate and graduate curriculae. As the best vehicle for Cal Poly's learn-by-doing pedagogy, the studio experience allows students to engage in quasi-real projects and work with real cities and their officials, stakeholders and communities, helping them to become better prepared for professional life.

Undergraduate (Sophomore year):
CRP 203 Urban Design Studio II (Spring 2023).
Instructors: Beate von Bischopinck and Thando Mthembu.

Design Development of the CalTrans Site, San Luis Obispo.

CRP 203: Final poster by Briana Medvecki, Jennifer Hugoo and Emileo Padilla Chavez.

The students worked on two combined sites at the corners of Madonna and South Higuera roads, bordered by San Luis Creek and Highway 101. Formerly, this 15-acre area was part of Japan Town and it is presently occupied by CalTrans facilities who has plans to vacate it in the future. Due to its location, the area has great potential for redevelopment as a gateway to SLO. An existing historic building located on the site at South Higuera had to be preserved and reused, and the influence of adjacent ETO Park, a small existing neighborhood, and the place history had to be considered.

Working in small teams, the students assessed existing conditions including the impact of SLO's general plan, the Mid Higuera Enhancement Plan, and zoning regulations before studying planning precedents and moving to conceptual development and visioning. The teams came up with creative redevelopment proposals combining tourist amenities, housing, and commercial uses. Design ideas were captured through a mix of analog and digital tools to represent site plans, sections, land use diagrams, and pedestrian and bird's eye views. A final portfolio and a poster concluded each team's work.

Undergraduate (Junior Year):
CRP 341 Urban Design Studio III (Spring 2023).
Instructors Amir Hajrasouliha, Beate Von Bishopink, and Thando Mthembu.
Client: Monterey Resident Mr. Wallace Gordon.

Downtown Revision Plan, Monterey CA.

Responding to a request from Mr. Wallace Gordon (Cal Poly Alum, member of the CAED's Advisory Board, and Monterey resident), this studio engaged in developing an urban design vision for Monterey's downtown that could ensure it is a welcoming place for residents and tourists alike. Due to their location and potential, the class identified ten specific sites for further studies and concept development, and a comprehensive transportation plan was proposed for the area.

The students and instructors spend two days in Monterey exploring the city and meeting with Community Development Director Kimberley Cole, her staff, and groups of stakeholders. Important information was provided by Mr. Gordon with his profound knowledge of the city and its history. The students studied and mapped existing conditions, procured applicable precedents, and developed urban design visions and a transportation proposals. Over the board and digital tools were utilized to develop the final proposals, including ArcGIS CityEngine for three-dimensional modeling. The combined work resulted in a document that will help Monterey implement a new vision for its downtown.

A short documentary on the studio's three-dimensional model for downtown Monterey is available at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xmj6WdhG4D0

(see he article in this FOCUS's Faculty and Student Work section)

Graduate (First Year):
CRP 553 Project Planning Lab (Spring 2021).
Instructor: Hemalata Dandekar.
Client: City of Atascadero Planning Deparment.

Atascadero Downtown Conceptual Design Plan.

An urban design-focused plan for Atascadero City's historical core, included the iconic City Hall and Sunken Gardens and projected a 30-year horizon for four interlinked zones. Each offered unique thematic contributions and services for residents and visitors to the City of Atascadero as follows:

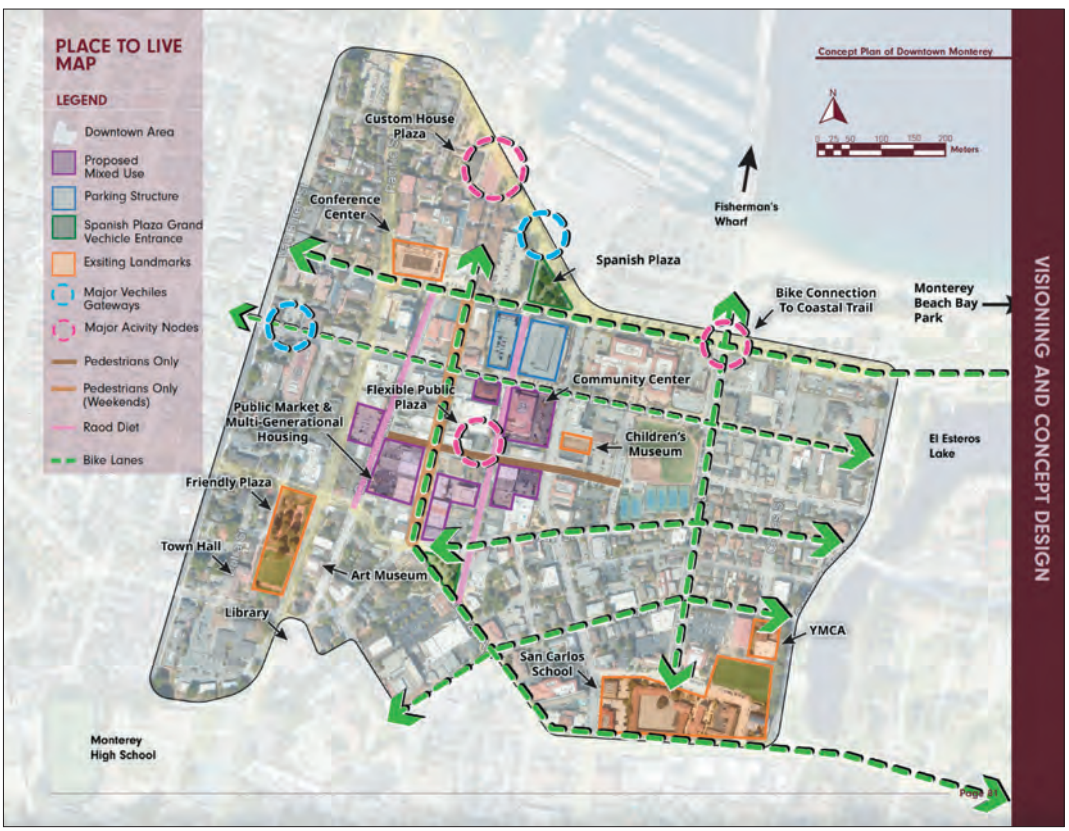
1. Colony Gardens: mixed-use commercial development enhanced pedestrian connections between the Sunken Gardens, Colony Square, and El Camino Real.

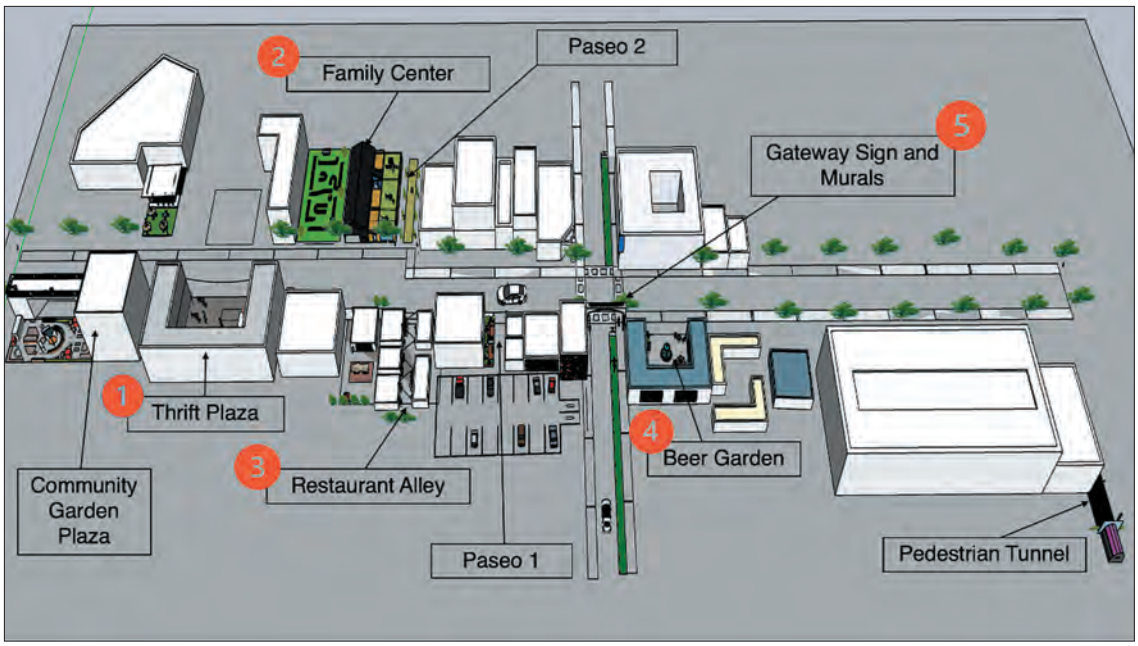
2. Gateway District: historic revitalization and promotion of the arts offered venues for family-centric community events.

3. Old Town at the core of Atascadero: affordable space for a small-business-incubator and a variety of shops, restaurants, and public spaces integrated with pedestrian only pathways.

4. The Printery District: abandoned and underutilized spaces were repurposed to create community-oriented services, affordable housing options, and pedestrian greenways that improved connectivity to the periphery of the city core.

CRP 341: Visioning and concept for Monterey's Downtown. Place to Live Map: enhancing livability for residents.





CRP 553: Vision for Old Town Atascadero as small business incubator with a variety of shops, restaurants, and pedestrian plazas and paseos.

The four zones were woven together through design elements that included mixed-use developments which were interconnected with a pedestrian network to improve walkability and expand greenery and shade coverage. This concept plan for Atascadero brings life back into Atascadero's city core through a resident-focused design plan that differentiates the city so as to also appeal to visitors.

Graduate (Second Year):
CRP 552/554 Planning Lab (Fall 2021 & Winter 2022)
Instructor Dave Amos
Client: City of Desert Springs.

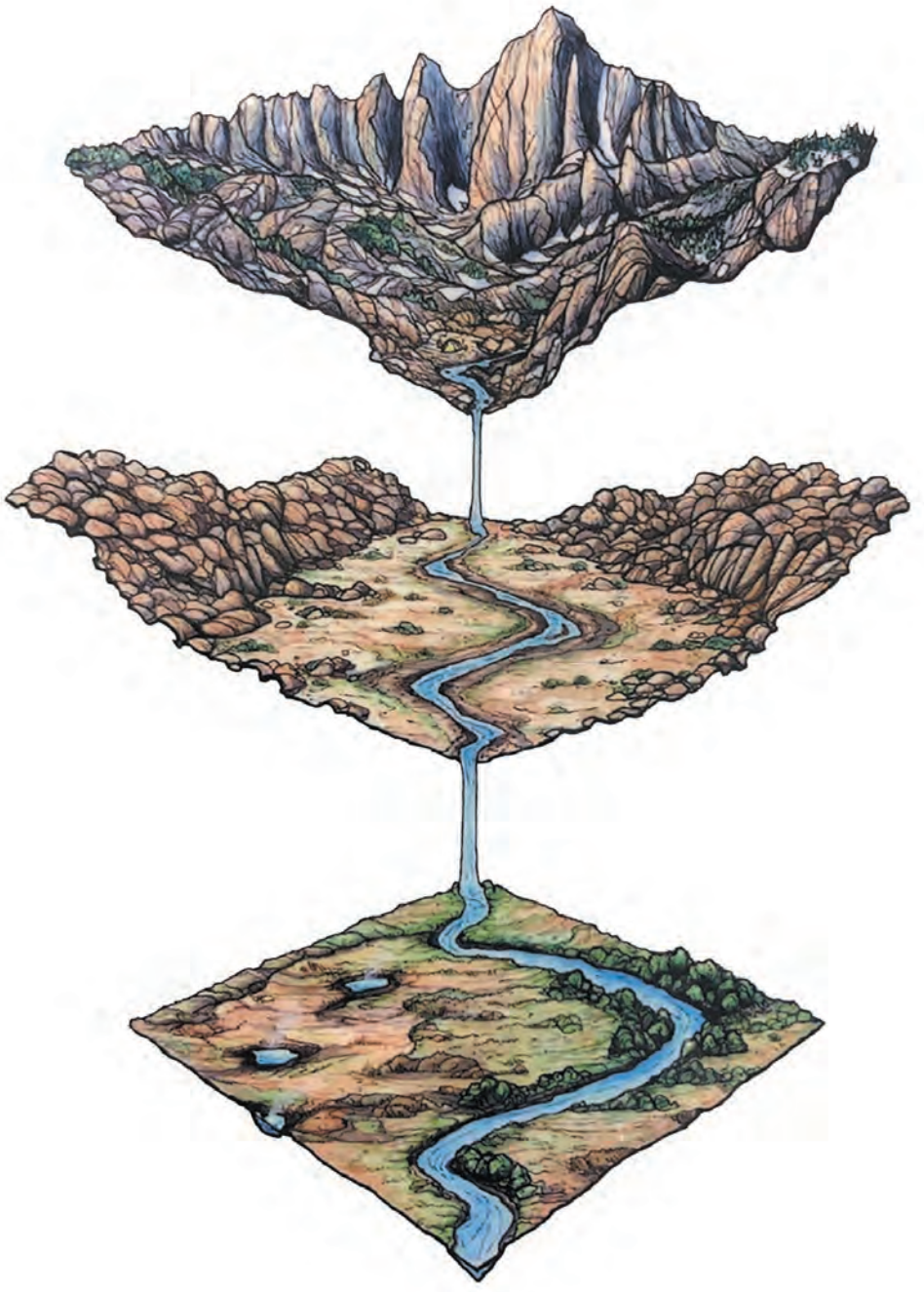
Downtown Concept Plan, City of Desert Springs.

Students in this graduate planning studio completed a Downtown Concept Plan for the City of Desert Hot Springs, California. The plan includes strategies the City can use to revitalize a flagging downtown and differentiate itself from nearby cities like Palm Springs. Students researched policies to reduce storefront vacancies, increase shade for the extremely hot environment, rezone land for more commercial uses, and improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

The studio ran from September 2022 to March 2023 and in that time the graduate students visited Desert Hot Springs twice to solicit public input for the plan. Students tabled at local stores to understand the existing conditions. They then held a visioning workshop to chart a vision for downtown in collaboration with participants. The students also conducted online outreach through a website, survey, and Zoom town hall.

CRP 552/554: Students holding a work meeting with community members in Desert Springs.

The City's reaction to the completed Concept Plan was positive and the results were shared with the City Council. The City hopes to use the plan as a foundation for their efforts to improve downtown.



Cascading Environments

(inspired by Mount Whitney and Alabama Hills, Owen's Valley)

by Blaze Skyra

Blaze is a CRP alumn, Berkeley grad, and Bay Area based development professional. He is also an accomplished artist and illustrator, having collaborated with FOCUS several times.

See some of Blaze's art work at https://blazesyka.com/

FOCUS is a professional-oriented yearly journal. It highlights the work promoted, discussed, and produced in the City and Regional Planning Department, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

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