

INTERPLAN

Urban Renewal in France: Can A New Agency Bridge the Social Divide?

Despite the frenzy of media attention around the November riots in France, a key issue behind the civil disobedience was not fully covered by press in the United States: France's new and ambitious urban renewal initiative. The new national regeneration program, or programme nationale de la renovation urbaine is aimed to renew and revitalize poor urban areas on the outskirts of France's largest cities. Over the next five years, five billion euros (\$6 billion) will be allotted to improve the country's most distressed public housing projects. Often home to marginalized communities of first and second generation immigrants, and characterized by monotonous architecture, poor accessibility, high unemployment and crime rates, they exemplify France's most prominent social disparities. Although the program promises a much-needed makeover to a neglected urban form, the social consequences could prove more far-reaching.

The National Urban Regeneration Agency (ANRU) was created by the French Department of Employment, Housing and Social Cohesion (Ministère de l'emploi,



In the city of Nantes in western France, a tower block built in the 1960s was demolished in 2004, to be replaced by a low-rise mixed-use development, as part of the country's national urban renewal program.

de logement et de la cohésion social) in 2003 to facilitate the planning process for towns wishing to implement urban regeneration schemes. To achieve the revitalization of these areas, the agency is regrouping and redistributing part of the housing sector's finances toward municipalities, public agencies, and public and private organizations carrying out renewal projects.

ANRU solicits comprehensive renewal plans developed over the course of several months of meetings of various constituencies involved in a project. Once approved by the mayor of the municipality concerned, the plan is submitted to the agency, which determines funding levels for the project. Ultimately, ANRU's presence is intended to facilitate the planning process and permit effective long-term action by serving as the sole interlocutor for all stakeholders. The program's goal as defined by ANRU is to improve France's disadvantaged neighborhoods in the suburbs, to demolish the most decrepit housing projects and to reduce the housing densities in these areas. The program is expected to stimulate a more economically and socially diverse population by promoting greater diversity in housing.

ANRU has approximately €5.25 billion to subsidize projects during the first five years, which is expected to stimulate €30 billion in investment by the program's



completion in 2011. As of December 2005, the agency had approved €17.2 billion of projected work for the next five years. This total includes preliminary studies, design and construction costs, as well as logistical fees for relocating thousands of displaced households.

The program's defining feature is its "one-for-one" approach: for each housing unit demolished, a new unit will be built. In all 250,000 housing units will be razed and rebuilt in different configurations and densities. The relocation of households to existing units will allow new, less dense forms of urban development on the razed land. The net quantity of housing units will remain the same, 400,000 units will be rehabilitated, and new public amenities and facilities will be developed.

By redistributing some public housing and providing incentives for private developers to build private housing, ANRU strives to achieve greater social and economic diversity, or mixité sociale. This term was first adopted by the state in the 1980s as part of earlier initiatives to discourage housing segregation. In 2000, a law was passed that furthered this cause by requiring every town in France with more than 3,000 inhabitants to have a minimum of 20 percent public housing.

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Public housing in France, or logement social, comprises all renter-occupied housing subsidized by the government. The income thresholds of its occupiers vary greatly, but in general are greater than those required in the United States to qualify an individual for either public or affordable housing. Consequently, one-half of all rented housing in France is subsidized by the government.

ANRU's program has already affected 275 neighborhoods where more than 1.5 million people live. These neighborhoods, classified as "sensitive" zones (zones urbaines sensibles, or ZUS) are the target of over 95 percent of ANRU's budget. Today, 751 ZUSs are recognized in France and its outer territories. By prioritizing those neighborhoods with the greatest need for government intervention, ZUS

Editors' Note

INTERPLAN Readers,

This edition of InterPlan introduces an entirely new look and feel to the publication, along with an expansion of content and themes. As the new Editors, our goal is to ensure that the newsletter provides International Division members with valued perspectives and insights on international planning issues and professional development, while serving as a forum for dialogue between members on relevant topics. Each issue will feature: an original cover story; a Planning Profile on a city, firm or individual planner; a Dialogue Question and responses; a Photo Op-Ed; and other articles, information, and announcements. **We invite your submissions and feedback!** Please contact us at: interplannews@gmail.com

Tracy Sayegh and Michael Sabel

designation opens access to ANRU's subsidies.

ANRU shares some objectives of recent urban revitalization schemes in the United States, most notably the HOPE VI program. From 1996 to 2003, HUD awarded \$395 million through 287 HOPE VI demolition grants towards the demolition of more than 57,000 severely distressed public housing units. This figure is only one fifth the number of demolitions anticipated by ANRU in France.

The French government's role in public housing is clearly substantial, but it is important to consider who benefits from its investment. Despite France's history and reputation for revolution and strike, community involvement in neighborhoods affected by ANRU has been weak. The majority of the inhabitants of neighborhoods eligible for ANRU subsidies are renters who are involved in the decision-making process on a limited basis as compared to the housing authorities that own their apartments. Projects are often presented in public meetings after decisions have already been made. In addition, widespread complacency with state planning initiatives and public confidence in the state's position on issues affecting immigrant communities are partially responsible for this lack of involvement.

Ultimately, ANRU's intervention in France's most distressed neighborhoods may bring physical improvements, but will it address other issues contributing to the marginalization of these communities? Will jobs be created? Will crime decrease? Will communities have a say in how state money is spent? Although it is too early to evaluate the success of ANRU's program, the National Agency for Social Cohesion and Equal Opportunity (Agence nationale pour la cohésion sociale et l'égalité des chances) was established on January 11, 2006 to give greater attention to these issues. Whether its creation will aid in bridging the social gap of these communities is an issue to be followed closely in the coming years.

Jacob Simpson is an American working in France for a subsidiary of the Caisse des Dépôts, a state-owned financial institution that performs public-interest missions on behalf of French central and local authorities. He completed his Masters in Urban Planning at MIT in 2004 and came to France through an exchange with the Ecole Nationale des Ponts et Chaussées.

Dubai: Balancing Development and Effective Planning?

In Dubai, a Rhode Island-sized state in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) federation, the type and scale of development can defy the imagination. Dubai boasts the world's largest indoor ski slope, manmade harbor, and shopping mall; the planet's tallest building (the Burj Dubai); an amusement park twice the size of Disneyworld (Dubailand); and two manmade off-shore island chains (one shaped like a palm tree and the other a world map). Clearly, planners in Dubai wouldn't object to Daniel Burnham's familiar mantra, "Make no small plans."

In recent years, Dubai has risen to prominence as an international center for trade, finance, tourism, shopping, and real estate development. Yet, beyond the ambitious projects and slick marketing materials are complex planning-related questions: What is driving this building craze? With pedestrian-oriented development and public transit a hard sell for residents in a sweltering desert climate, can auto-oriented projects be made more efficient? And, how will Dubai provide its substantial foreign labor force—those constructing the buildings and providing a host of essential services—with quality housing and improved working conditions?

For the most part, Dubai's development is built on equity, and not debt, with oil revenue traditionally providing resources for Dubai's growth and infrastructure investments. The emirate is also working hard to diversify away from a purely oil economy by selling itself to the world as a centrally located, stable center for business and finance. Either way, the speed with which projects are envisioned and executed is driven by access to vast amounts of capital and the close connections between the development community and the municipal government. Planners in Dubai mention how the main driver behind projects is the vision of a few people, with limited concern for maximizing return on investment. The result is planning and development undertaken on a scale and speed that would baffle an American planner (except,



Ten buildings are under simultaneous construction in this photograph.

perhaps, one in Las Vegas).

Dubai's native population is small in comparison to the total population of the city (1.4 million). Therefore, they understandably enjoy privileged access to leadership positions in both the public and private sectors. This often means a vision shared by decision makers in both sectors—and a limited ability for others to influence massive projects that may negatively impact the city, stressing services and infrastructure. This dynamic is particularly clear with regards to the transportation system; increasing numbers of skyscrapers are being built in the middle of road networks that choke on traffic. These large-scale developments are connected to major arterials with few access points or alternate routes provided. There is talk of constructing a light rail line from the downtown area to Dubai International Airport. Beyond easing the trip for arriving and departing tourists, it's hard to imagine this system becoming an efficient mode for getting around the city.

In addition to Dubai's physical scale of development, a social and economic phenomenon exists that is of great interest to the planning-minded. Almost 80 percent of Dubai's population is comprised of expatriates, with individuals from a range of socio-economic strata and countries lured by the emirate's many job opportunities (including the service sector, construction, engineering, planning, security, banking, and finance). Therefore, the functioning of Dubai's economy is directly tied to the ability to tap into a large foreign workforce (and results in significant transnational flows of remittances to home countries). In fact, many of these expatriate workers are employed in the low-wage service sector. There is an obvious disparity between the luxurious living enjoyed by the profes-

Dubai:

Land area: 3,885 sq km

Population: 1.4m

Languages: Arabic (English, Hindi and Urdu are all widely spoken)

Main Exports:

Crude oil, natural gas, dried fish, dates

Major Industries:

Petroleum, fishing, petrochemicals, construction materials, some boat building, handicrafts, tourism

sional class, many from the west and other Arab countries, and the substandard housing and working conditions endured by those from developing nations. Unfortunately, those with less means—mostly from India, Pakistan, and the Philippines—have also faced difficulties such as limited channels for recouping unpaid wages and obstacles to organizing for improved housing and working conditions.

Decision-makers largely ignore this dynamic and, consequently, planners are not called upon or given the resources to address these issues. For the time being, Dubai will continue to build its long-term future with a highly transient population. Yet, by beginning to focus on the social and economic integration of its large transnational workforce and on regional, not solely site-specific, infrastructure and amenities, Dubai has the potential to become a successful planning and development model for other "global cities" facing similar challenges.

Jennifer K. Lindbom, AICP, is a Senior Planner with ACP-Visioning and Planning, where she focuses on integrating public participation and physical planning in communities throughout the United States. Ms. Lindbom is also Secretary-Treasurer of the International Division. She recently spent a week in Dubai.

Planning Profile

In each issue of *Interplan*, the Division will highlight firms, individuals, or organizations working in the field of international planning. This issue includes an introduction to the multinational firm GHD. Many thanks to Tibor Kovats, Manager of Planning, and Janki Dalal, Urban Planner/Architect, both of GHD, who met with Jennifer Lindbom to discuss planning in Dubai during her recent trip to the United Arab Emirates. For more information about GHD, please read on and visit: www.ghd.com.au.

GHD

GHD is an international professional services company serving the global market sectors of infrastructure, mining and industry, defense, property, buildings and the environment. GHD was established in 1928 and today is ranked among the world's top engineering and archi-

tecture companies. The firm employs over 4,000 people—architects drafters, engineers, planners, scientists, surveyors, economists, management consultants and support staff—in a network of offices throughout Australia, New Zealand, Asia, the Middle East and the Americas.

According to Dubai-based Tibor Kovats, GHD's head planner, the company currently employs around 80 planners in Australia, New Zealand and the Middle East. In the Middle East, GHD has been involved in a number of projects including several towers in Doha, Qatar, and the World Islands and The Palms projects in Dubai.

The World Islands consists of 300 offshore islands representing countries of the world and covering an area more than 45 square kilometers, located 4.5 kilometers from the mainland. The development will provide exclusive and private waterfront retreats, accessible only by marine transport. It is considered a first of its kind and is expected

to cater specifically to the elite residential and tourist market.

GHD played a major role in developing the master plan for the first phase of the World Islands project, covering all aspects of infrastructure planning and maritime engineering. Because no roads connect the islands to the mainland, ensuring provisions for services and utilities has presented many unique challenges. Says GHD's Project Director, Paul Morris, "GHD has worked on a number of significant waterfront developments for Dubai master developer Nakheel and this is by far the most complex to date. There is little precedence existing for a development with the types of logistical, technical and construction challenges presented by the World Islands. Conversely, few projects have ever inspired such innovative solutions to tackle such challenges." These include a high speed water taxi service, and state-of-the-art, self-contained utilities. For more information on Dubai's World Islands visit: www.theworld.ae.

CITIES IN FOCUS

BEIRUT: CITY CENTER RECOVERY

This article was originally featured on www.worldview.org

Framework for Postwar Renewal

During the 1975-90 Lebanese war, Beirut's downtown bore the brunt of destruction with the entire infrastructure and two-thirds of buildings left beyond salvage. Abandoned during the war, many derelict structures were occupied by some 20,000 displaced families. The city center foreshore lay disfigured by 15 years of uncontrolled dumping. The government's finances were stretched to the limit on a nationwide recovery program and the country's public institutions, weakened by war, were not capable of taking on a large-scale and

complex project of urban restructuring. In addition, the fragmentation of private property ownership resulting from Lebanese inheritance laws, made renewal through existing ownerships a practical impossibility.

Lebanon's first postwar government was determined to turn disaster into opportunity through a unique form of public-private partnership. Creating a special zone, the Beirut Central District (BCD), the government commissioned its urban planning and formed a private development corporation - SOLIDERE - in which the BCD's former owners and tenants pooled their property assets in exchange for controlling shares, with new shareholders contributing the company's working capital. SOLIDERE was required to fund the relocation of displaced families, undertake the necessary clearances, construct the city center's entire infra-



structure and public domain and carry out environmental reclamation and sea defense works on the new waterfront. In exchange for financing on behalf of government all infrastructure and land reclamation, the company was granted ownership of 29 hectares of new development land on the reclaimed area.

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The Master Plan goals

The city center Master Plan provides a framework for regeneration based on these underlying goals:

- To reconnect the city after the trauma of war and recover Beirut's lost regional role in competition with other cities.
- To replace the traditional model of a single-use, employment-based CBD with a new kind of mixed-use, residential downtown.
- To encourage a unique regional identity, originating in the context, climate, history and culture of the place.
- To provide extensive green spaces in the heart of a dense city, re-establishing there the city's meeting point and common ground.
- To reject the Modernist-inspired city of object buildings and internal private malls and create a city of active public streets and public spaces befitting the Mediterranean climate.
- To control the massing of development by mandating maximum heights, streetwall controls and other building envelopes. In conservation areas these prescribe a scale in keeping with retained buildings, while elsewhere retaining the form and scale of the street. High-rise development is limited to key gateways or landmark sites that command spectacular views.

Public Domain: reclaiming the city's meeting point

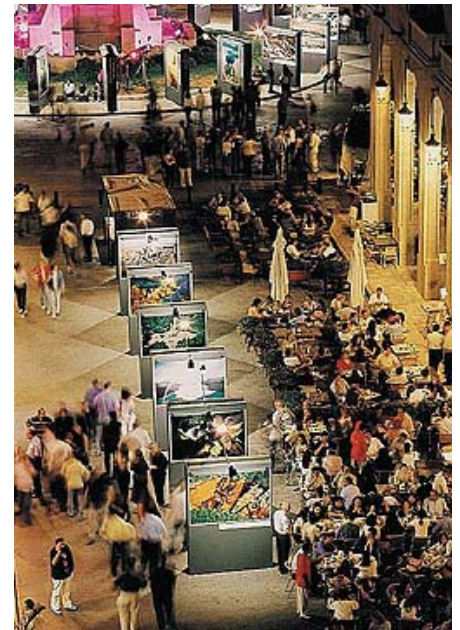
In the contemporary city the public domain is widely perceived as under threat and in decline. The regeneration of Bei-

rut's downtown is, however, producing a public domain of the highest quality. SOLIDERE was required under its formation decree to build the entire infrastructure and public space of the city center, comprising half its land area, and deliver it to the public authority. The company finalized the majority of the infrastructure in 1996 and continues to work through a rolling program of more than 60 public parks, gardens, squares, pedestrian areas and waterfront promenades. SOLIDERE is also undertaking the integrated design of street furniture, signage and public area lighting as well as commissioning public art for the city center. Public space is perceived to exert a significant impact on land sales, as well as creating a strong focus of attraction for the city as a whole. SOLIDERE is, therefore, motivated to build a public domain of the highest quality. Recent surveys estimate a total of 3 million visitors a year from across Lebanon and overseas, making the city center the most active visitor destination in the country. Key factors are the Mediterranean climate and lifestyle that permit and encourage the social use of public space in ways that are inconceivable elsewhere in the Middle East. Public spaces in the downtown are rapidly emerging as one of central Beirut's unique and differentiating assets.

To learn more about conservation, new development, and the urban waterfront in Beirut's city center, read the full article at: <http://www.worldviewcities.org/beirut/city.html>

Worldview is an online publication and project of the New York Architectural League

Angus Gavin is Head of Urban Development for SOLIDERE, the company chosen to oversee Beirut's redevelopment.



RECOMMENDED READINGS ON INTERNATIONAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Challenge of Third World Development by Howard Handelman (4th edition, Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 2006) is a recently updated examination of the issues confronting the developing world. While Handelman's concise text is a bit short on specific planning interventions, it more than makes up for this by offering readers a view of third world development that is far more textured than those analyses that either overly emphasize economics or simple treat underdevelopment as failure of political processes.

The chapter titles reveal the breadth and depth of his approach: Understanding Development; Democratic Change and the Change to Democracy; Religion and Politics; The Politics of Cultural Pluralism and Ethnic Conflict; Women and Development; Agrarian Reforms and the Politics of Rural Change; Rapid Urbanization and the Politics of the Urban Poor; Revolutionary Change; Soldiers and Politics; and the Political Economy of Third World Development. Grounded in theoretical literature, but written accessibly with attention to the key current challenges in various developing nations, Handelman's book is just the sort of comprehensive overview that international planners need to better understand the context within which they are operating.

Cities of the World by Stanley Brunn, Jack Williams and Donald Zeigler (3rd Edition, Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003) is a more general text on urbanization. This book covers all areas of the world, including developed nations, but with solid chapters on developing regions. This book combines history, contemporary problems, and planning with far more focused discussions of planning interventions, as well as a series of case studies on some of the world's largest cities. Cities of the World is clearly intended as a classroom text. In combination with the Handelman book described above, it

provides a fairly comprehensive overview of urbanization and development from a global perspective.

International Planning Organizations by Richard Stephens (Victoria, British Columbia: Trafford Publishing) is a directory identifying more than 1,000 agencies, associations, institutes, schools and societies sharing an interest in city and regional planning. Created in the early 1980s, the directory has evolved into an informative reference for contacting international planning oriented organizations in nations from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe.

The book also provides a broad list of multinational planning organizations including the Association of African Planning Schools, the Commonwealth Association of Planners (CAP), the European Union, International City Planners Network, the International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISoCarp), the Student Planning Network (Germany), and various applicable contacts within the United Nations. A number of U.S. organizations are listed as well. This not-quite-pocket-sized directory is a handy reference and easily transportable with a lap top or backpack. For more information to go www.trafford.com/4dcgi/view-item?item=9107

Christopher Silver and Paul Wack contributed to this section. Christopher and Paul are the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, respectively, of the International Division.

If you contribute an article or book review to Interplan (of at least 600 words) and we publish it, we'll send you a planning or international development-related book of your choosing, for free (limits \$25 including shipping & handling)! We'd love to see a review on Confessions of an Economic Hitman, by John Perkins but welcome reviews of any international planning-related book.

EVENTS CALENDAR

April 16-20

Jeddah International Urban Forum 2006
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
www.jiufex.com

April 22-26, 2006

APA's 2006 National Planning Conference, San Antonio, TX
<http://www.planning.org/2006conference/>

May 10-12

The 2nd China International Exhibition and Forum on Urban Planning and Architecture
Beijing, China
www.planning.org/APAinChina/events/2ndchinaexhibition.htm
Exclusive U.S. Sponsor: The American Planning Association (APA)

June 19-23

World Urban Forum (WUF III)
Vancouver, Canada
www.unhabitat.org/wuf/2006/introduction2005.asp

July 12-14

12th International Conference on Transportation and the Environment in the 21st Century
Sponsored by the Wessex Institute of Technology (UK)
Prague, Czech Republic
www.wessex.ac.uk/conferences/2006/urban06/

October 9-12

42nd ISoCarp Congress
"Cities Between Integration and Disintegration"
Istanbul, Turkey
www.isocarp.org

October 14-17

U.N. Habitat: A Landmark Gathering to Make Headway in Promoting Sustainable Land Management in Africa
Bagamoyo, Tanzania
To request more information, e-mail infohabitat@unhabitat.org



Northern Sulawesi, Mopugad, Indonesia, 2005

PHOTO OP-ED

In front of an elementary school, second generation children of rice-farming migrants from Java and Bali wear the colors of the Indonesian flag in front of fence sporting the blue and yellow of the provincial soccer team. The gateway to the school references the overlapping communal associations existent in their lives. The split candi gateway was a public project undertaken by the local Balinese Hindu society and the tiered-roof mosque in the background is another major institution serving nearly 1/3 of Mopugad's residents. In many parts of Indonesia, particularly as decentralization unfolds, religious organizations have picked up where the public sector leaves off.

Submitted by Amanda Ikert (MIT - SMArchS, MCP 2005), a Junior Associate at The Asia Foundation in San Francisco who is currently researching environmental sustainability issues in Asia.

INTERPLAN DIALOGUE

Let Your Fellow Planners Know What You Think!

The International Division will be sponsoring two sessions at the upcoming APA National Conference in San Antonio (April 22-26). One of these will be "Welcome? Planning, Immigration, and American Communities" where panelists will discuss immigration's influence on communities, and hear examples of how planning tools are used to accommodate (and integrate)

non-native residents. In light of the upcoming session, Interplan brings you this Interplan Dialogue Question(s):

What do you believe is the most critical immigration-related planning issue today? How could the planning community respond to this issue?

Please send responses to:

interplannews@gmail.com

In the spring edition of Interplan, we'll publish as many responses as space permits.

Don't forget about the other session the International Division is sponsoring in San Antonio! Panelists for "Planning Across

International Borders" will probe the international and state jurisdictional issues inherent in international planning in the El Paso-Las Cruces-Juarez metroplex. Learn about the challenges posed by differing state systems in the region. Success stories involving international planning will be highlighted, including transportation, land use, and economic development.

Want to join the International Division?

Check out www.planning.org/joinapa
Want to register for the APA National Conference in San Antonio? Check out www.planning.org/2006conference and click on "Register"

