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INTERPLAN

"Lifestyle Centers": The New Public Spaces in Manila

By Ron Slagen

The recent boom of high-security, mega-shopping malls in a large section of metropolitan Manila in the Philippines, illustrates the influence of a small group of developers. These de facto planners are shaping the city's urban redevelopment, and consequently, its public life. It also illustrates an attempt, in the absence of public spaces (and planners), to rediscover Manila's disappearing pedestrian-oriented lifestyle. As a result, the development of privatized public spaces is quickly outpacing the creation of public open spaces. This trend is worsening the existing socio-spatial segregation between Manila's extremely rich and poor residents.

Metro Manila, also known as the National Capital Region (NCR), is the political, economic, social, and cultural center of the Philippines. With a population of more than 10.5 million, it is the fifth largest metropolis in Asia. Composed of 14 cities (the largest of which is Manila) and 3 municipalities, each with its own mayor, this region owes much of its fragmented character to a decentralized governance system. The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) is the regional development body charged with planning and zoning decisions for all 17 jurisdictions. Yet beyond small public works projects including public urinals, artwork, and traffic control, MMDA has had little noticeable impact on the city's development. Further diluting any oversight powers of a broader governmental body, in 2004, the federal government passed Executive Order 444 which authorized the devolution of services and functions from the national government to local governments. As a result, Metro Manila lacks strong regional governance over land use and development. This oversight vacuum has given developers an opportunity to reshape the cityscape with a powerful hand.

Luxury condos sit above indoor mall parking in Greenbelt 2, a lifestyle center in Metro Manila.

Outdoor seating, cafes, and landscaping create a variety of privatized social spaces in Greenbelt 3.

A variety of private projects visibly dominate urban Manila. Dozens of new high rises, malls, and skywalks are linked within the central business district (CBD). The environment created is purposefully geared towards elevating the pedestrian above the city's chaotic street life. This development pattern is further highlighted by its juxtaposition with what comprises civic space in most of the city: unplanned slum settlements and their community basketball courts. Beyond the historic Rizal Park, a 143-acre public park conceived by Daniel Burnham 100 years ago, only two recently upgraded public spaces—Roxas Boulevard and Avenida Rizal—are considered popular places for public gatherings. (As few other public spaces for civic expression exist, Filipinos have become renowned for taking to the streets in times of political protest.) Hence, in a city of 10.5 million residents, the supply of public space clearly falls far short of demand; and in a hot market for their product, private developers are seizing upon this opportunity.

No city better reflects this pattern of privatized public space than Makati City, the modern-day financial capital of the Philippines. Makati is 10.6 square miles and constitutes 4.3 percent of Metro Manila's total land area. Over the last 50 years, this once unbuildable tidal marsh has evolved into a world class city, home to corporate headquarters and high-end residential and commercial districts touting names such as Greenbelt and Rockwell. Uninhibited by regulatory control, these planned pockets of Metro Manila represent narrow-visioned urban environments, characterized by "malled" public spaces.

The surge of mall development can be attributed principally to Ayala Land, Inc., the wealthiest and best-known real estate developer in the Philippines. Their prominence is witnessed in the name of Makati's main boulevard: Ayala Avenue. Greenbelt, their most notable project,

(continued page 2)

INSIDE

01 Public Space: Manila
02 Note from the Vice Chair
03 Enrique Penalosa Interview
04 Santiago's Annillo Plan
05 Book Excerpt: Design Like You Give A Damn
09 Planner Profile: Sarah James
10 Book Review
11 Photo Op-Ed
12 Calendar

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Note from the Vice Chair, at Large

Makadini mese, "How is everyone doing?" Greetings and Welcome! I am honored and totally excited to have this opportunity to address you as the Vice Chair At-Large of the APA International Division.

Our membership is spread across 22 countries and you all remain the Division's greatest asset. Let's all strive to make knowledge contagious. There are numerous ways to do this: share your knowledge, experience, connections, and adventures, by writing articles for InterPlan; participate in our Planners Exchange Program; mentor a student or new professional; organize a colloquium, workshop, or some small event that involves local networking. Remember, modest funds in support of these activities are available. I encourage you to regularly check our webpage, newsletters, and e-mail for updates. Please remember to keep your contact details up-to-date.

You'll be glad to hear that the Division officers are busy forging relationships with organizations such as International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISoCaRP); the International Urban Development Association (INTA); the International City Planners Network (ICPN); and the International Association of Impact Assessment (IAIA). We also remain committed to forging stronger ties to other APA Divisions and student associations. Students are the next generation of practitioners—we want to see more and more get involved with the International Division. To keep membership affordable, we've kept our student membership down to $10. I'm particularly very excited about our Student Grant Program which awards funds to offset some costs associated with study abroad programs and/or international research.

If you're in the Los Angeles area, I would be delighted to hear from you; drop me an email and let's get together (feremenga@yahoo.com). On behalf of the entire Leadership Committee, I wish you all the best for 2007 and beyond. We hope to see you in Philadelphia for the National Conference in April.

Doug Feremenga

claims to be the country's first "Lifestyle Center," geared towards high-end, specialty shopping, dining and entertainment. In 2003, Greenbelt was the only Asian recipient of the Urban Land Institute's prestigious Award of Excellence for "promoting responsible leadership in the use of land to enhance the total environment." The center is a network of residential buildings, hotels, retail shops, cinemas, restaurants, coffee shops, skywalks, and social spaces—all connected to the Metro Rail Transit (MRT) system. The designers hoped that by locating in the CBD near transit, people of all classes would be able to converge in the city. Moreover, by including an outdoor church in the center of the mall complex, they hoped to instill meaning and culture into their space; resembling the city's earlier Spanish tradition of the church plaza.

Elements of the Greenbelt are commendable. But as this model spreads, it is further propagating a "mall culture" that is redefining the organization, function, and identity of the city. While restoring a type of pedestrian-oriented development to Manila, for the poor, the choices of public open space remain extremely limited. That said, Roxas Boulevard and Avenida Rizal show some government interest in developing public open spaces; and perhaps more notably, these projects mirror a society demanding more of them.

Author
Ron Slangen is an urban planner at Earth Tech, Inc. in New York City. In 2005, he was the recipient of a Kinne Fellowship from Columbia University's Department of Urban Planning, under which he spent three months studying public space in Manila. He subsequently co-founded the Asian Public Space Project (APSP), a non-profit group based in the Philippines, with a Filipino architect (James Acuna, Hong Kong). Ron can be reached at rslangen@hotmail.com.

Interview with Enrique Penalosa

November 16, 2006, New York APA 2006 L'Enfant Lecture on Urban Planning and Design

Conducted by Michael Sabel, InterPlan

What should a politician care about most? Says Enrique Penalosa, former mayor of Bogota, Columbia (1998 to 2001), it's improving conditions for the poor and vulnerable. During his term in office, Penalosa emphasized three criteria to define success: equity, access, and happiness. First, he asked citizens to "re-imagine the city." Then he helped transform Bogota—with libraries, parks and greenways, car-free days, and arguably the best Bus Rapid Transit system in the world. Currently, Mr. Penalosa is a planning and development consultant.

InterPlan thanks Enrique Penalosa for taking the time to sit down with us recently.

InterPlan **(IP):** As Mayor of Bogota, what were your greatest accomplishments in term of planning and development?

Enrique Penalosa **(EP)**: In Bogota, we totally transformed the city through a number of sweeping changes. It went from a place of hopelessness to one that shows confidence in a better future. I'm responsible for creating and implementing the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system that was copied from Curitiba, Brazil. Today, it's probably the best bus system in the world. The network of bicycle-ways we created in Bogota now moves nearly 5% of the population every day. We created a 45-kilometer long park, requiring the restoration of several wetlands. The Alameda El Porvenir we built is a 17-kilometer long pedestrian avenue through Bogota's poorest neighborhoods. There's nothing like these in the developing world.

We also incorporated and built many fantastic libraries, which attract more than 400,000 people every month. And in downtown, for example, we undertook

Enrique Penalosa, former Mayor of Bogota, Columbia, speaking at the World Urban Forum.

some very important projects. We demolished more than 20 hectares to create a park two blocks from the Presidential Palace. Hopefully, it will stimulate a lot of residential development near the palace. But it will take time. So, the importance of this project may not be fully realized for maybe 50 years or more.

IP: Compared to Colombia, the United States has a more decentralized, deliberative political system and Americans are generally averse to sweeping changes. As the mayor of a large American city, could you have accomplished so much in only three years in office?

EP: Certainly, greater participation of the population makes implementing very innovative ideas difficult. But, some of the more radical steps I took simply required enforcing existing laws that people weren't following. I stopped tens of thousands of cars from parking on the sidewalk; this wasn't permitted to begin with. I began enforcing the law requiring wider sidewalks be constructed; the existing width requirements weren't being followed. So, I could do many things without City Council approval simply because they were already "the law."

To answer your question about the United States, there are times when I'm visiting smaller communities in New England and I learn how implementing innovative ideas can prove difficult. By definition something that is "innovative" will only be supported by a few at first. How can you convince the majority before they really live it? It's a quandary.

But, politicians in the U.S. are also less willing to assume political risk and show passion for a very clear vision. As a leader, you just need to make these decisions. Some people will like the results. Others won't. And sometimes you must spend your political capital and hopefully after you implement these measures people will realize you were right all along. But maybe sometimes it will take generations before they realize and you will have lost the next election. Some politicians want to be loved by everybody, all the time. This is not a way to accomplish anything—it's an institutional problem that leads to paralysis.

IP: Prior to becoming mayor of Bogota, you spent years thinking about urban planning, transportation, and equity issues. What advice would you give for understanding and addressing these issues to a newly elected mayor in a developing nation?

EP: The first step is to create a vision of what an ideal city block would be like and move forward from there. The "demonstration effect" is very powerful. You don't have to change the whole city at once. In some case, though, the scale does need to be large enough to make this effect work. For example, you cannot just put in a bike path for 3 blocks; it has to be 30 miles or something so it really changes habits. But ideally, you should just work block by block, neighborhood by neighborhood and create demonstrated effects that people will see.

My broader advice would be very simple: always think about creating a city around the most vulnerable members of society. But, that's not what usually happens. Ours is the post-communism age, where we think government should not interfere with individuals and individuals seeking their own good will yield the best results for society. City government interventions are an anachronism in this time of triumphant capitalism. And, making matters worse, very often, many politicians become mayors simply as a step forward in their political career. Most of the time, they lack a clear vision and are easily influenced.

IP: What are the biggest challenges for American planners in going beyond "rei-

(continued page 4)

magining the cityscape"—as you recommend—to then implementing plans based on equity, access, and happiness?

EP: I think the greatest challenge of all cities is to make them more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly. As planners know, there are tons of things that can be done in the US and everywhere else to achieve that. But we live in a time of great complacency so it can be difficult. Planners tend not to question the establishment, and maybe, in order to create the cities of the future, we have to. We have democracy, and this means that public good should prevail over private interest. But, too often enough, that's not the case. In the US, eminent domain is widely and intensively used to acquire properties for roads, for airports, for courts, but not for pedestrian spaces or parks. Maybe planners should start thinking about that. "Reimagining the Cityscape" also means confronting the challenges of increasing density. How to do it? It's much easier to accomplish in some place than others.

IP: What are the key components to the new urban planning model for developing countries that you write about in your upcoming book?

EP: Basically, people don't realize how powerful it can be to simply follow the precept that the public good should prevail over private interests. Just look at what has happened in the advanced countries. Central Park was created when New York City was poorer than most cities in developing countries are today. So there should not only be more Central Parks, but much bigger and better Central Parks. Unfortunately, we don't see much of that.

I also discuss how the biggest problem in the cities of developing countries is that private property around growing cities does not serve the public good. As prices go up, the supply doesn't increase to meet the needs of the poor. So, there needs to be much more government intervention. We need to seek more just societies—that's the principal that should guide us. I think there are many policies that could be implemented if we were really interested in creating more just societies.

Santiago's Annillo Interior Plan:

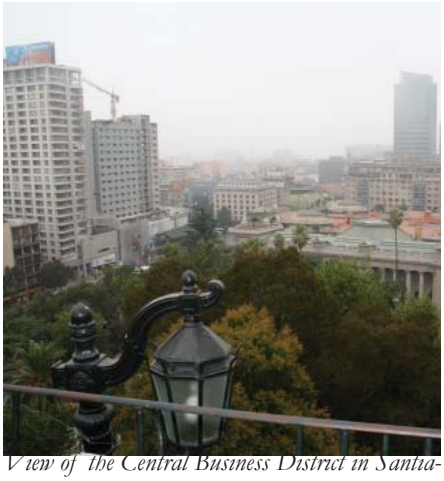
A Robust Scheme for Revitalizing Chile's Capital

By David A. Johnson

Seventeen years after leading a successful and bloody coup, Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet finally relinquished power in 1990. The return of democracy following his departure has encouraged extraordinary growth and new prosperity in this South American country. The capital city, Santiago, has benefited most. When Pinochet left office in 1990, the Santiago metropolitan region contained approximately 4.8 million people. By 2002, that number had jumped to 5.8 million.

Not surprisingly, Santiago now shares many of the problems faced by large and expanding cities around the world. These issues include traffic congestion; air pollution; affordable housing shortages; access to public transportation; sprawl; uncontrolled high-rise development in the city's core; public space deficiencies; and poor quality of urban design.

In response to the situation, Chile's Ministry of Housing and Urbanism launched an imaginative plan called Annillo Interior (Inner Ring Plan). Santiago's deteriorating inner-ring area consists of continuous parcels adjacent to a little-used rail line which circles the Central Business District. The Plan focuses on revitalizing these underutilized lands and using their development to integrate the twelve separate communities that now comprise the greater Santiago metro area. Planners hope renewal and repopulation of the decaying inner-ring will help Santiago continue on its path towards becoming a world class city.



View of the Central Business District in Santiago, Chile. (Photo: Gobierno de Chile, Ministerio de Vivienda y Urbanismo)

Annillo Interior was produced over a four year period from 2001-2005 by the staff of the national Ministry of Housing and Urbanism with contributions from Santiago's four leading universities: Universidad de Chile, Pontifical Universidad Catolica, Universidad de Santiago, and Universidad Central. URBE Arquitectos served as a consultant. Annillo Interior is currently being implemented and a number of component projects are scheduled to be completed by 2010.

The Plan includes the following goals:

•Construct new public spaces, greenways, and boulevards to link existing parks and provide a continuous green ring around Santiago.

•Initiate public projects to foster and guide private investment and development.

•Complete a ring transit system using abandoned rail rights-of-way, plus new roads and bicycle paths.

•Utilize buffer and setback requirements, and other planning tools to help avoid conflicts between residential and commercial/industrial zones.

•Streamline existing, overly-complicated administrative rules and processes

(continued page 5)

that impede urban development.

Two components of Annillo Interior are especially exciting in terms of scale and design. First, an old railroad maintenance area will be transformed into a brand new urban neighborhood to include 52 acres (21 hectares) of housing and related facilities, 17 acres (7 hectares) of small production spaces and 20 acres (8 hectares) of green space. Portions of old railroad shops will be preserved and reused for cultural purposes.

And then there's the cleverly conceived Parque La Aguada (Water Park). This includes a floodable park of 148 acres (60 hectares) along the banks of the Zanjon de la Aquada (Water Canal). The project's design will prevent future flooding in the southern ring area. During the peak winter rainfall and autumnal snow melt periods, the Parque La Aguada will store flood waters. When the park dries out, the public will enjoy the area's fields, open-air theaters, and opportunities for water sports. New residential development is also being encouraged on several large redevelopment tracts bordering the park.

As with any sweeping planning endeavor, the question looms: How much of the Anillo Interior plan will be implemented? If past success is an accurate gauge of the national government's commitment to the Plan, there's a good chance all or most of it. Projects already completed in the first implementation phase of the Anillo Interior include extensions of Santiago's excellent Metro system, new freeway construction, a new Justice Center, and channelization of portions of the Mapocho River.

The first phase of Anillo Interior is scheduled for completion in 2010. Not coincidentally, that is also the year Chile will celebrate its Bicentennial anniversary as a Republic. To mark this event, major reforms have been promulgated for five public sectors. This includes Reforma Urbana (the others are education, labor, health, and law).

The Annillo Interior is one of the major projects initiated under Reforma Urbana. The other is the Bicentennial Portal to Santiago— a large housing development to be constructed on the land where the Cerrillos Airport is currently located. With the Bicentennial as a stimulus, and with the strong support of the national government, the likelihood of a successful realization of the Anillo Interior is greatly enhanced.

Resourceful planners in Santiago have used experts from local universities and ministries; involved a broad mix of actors and participants; and carefully phased individual constituent projects over an appropriate time period. These aren't planning innovations. However, in Santiago, these tactics and many others have converged in thoughtful and promising ways. Our profession should keep an eye on Santiago as it plans a path forward.

Author
David A. Johnson, FAICP, is Professor Emeritus of Planning at the University of Tennessee.

Featured Book Excerpt

DESIGN LIKE YOU GIVE A DAMN
Architectural Responses to Humanitarian Crises

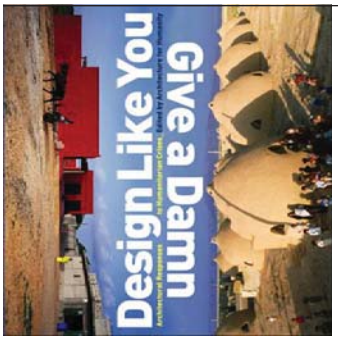
Edited by ARCHITECTURE FOR HUMANITY, Published by Metropolis Books & Distributed Art Publishers, 2006

The greatest humanitarian challenge we face today is that of providing shelter. Currently one in seven people lives in a slum or refugee camp, and more than three billion people-nearly half the world's population-do not have access to clean water or adequate sanitation. The physical design of our homes, neighborhoods, and communities shapes every aspect of our lives. Yet too often architects are desperately needed in the places where they can least be afforded.

Edited by Architecture for Humanity, Design Like You Give a Damn is a compendium of innovative projects from around the world that demonstrate the power of design to improve lives. The book offers a history of the movement toward socially conscious design and showcases more than 80 contemporary solutions to such urgent needs as basic shelter, health care, education, and access to clean water, energy, and sanitation. Featured projects include some sponsored by Architecture for Humanity, as well as many others undertaken independently, often against great odds.

Founded in 1999 by Cameron Sinclair and Kate Stohr, Architecture for Humanity is a grassroots nonprofit organization that seeks architectural solutions to humanitarian crises. Through design-build programs, competitions, educational forums, and partnerships with community development and relief organizations, Architecture for Humanity creates opportunities for architects and designers from around the world to assist communities in need. Where resources and expertise are scarce, innovative, sustainable, and collaborative design can make a difference.

Recognizing the unique contribution of this book, InterPlan is featuring an innovative case study from the book on the following pages.



Transitional Community

Location_Tangalle, Hambantota, Sri Lanka
Date_2005
Organization_Oxfam, Great Britain
End client_Displaced families
Shelter and settlement advisor_Sandra D'Urzo
Shelter architect_Elisabeth Babister
Shelter engineer_Zulficar Ali Haider
Water/sanitation engineer_Enamul Hoque
Construction_Volunteer and self-help
Additional support_Local engineering and construction support
Funding_Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC)
Cost per unit_$580
Total cost_$9,860

An important strategy for speeding reconstruction has been to design and build transitional housing using materials that can be repurposed for the construction of permanent housing.

This achieves two goals: First, it allows humanitarian aid agencies to provide shelter on temporary sites rather than waiting for land-use issues to be resolved. Second, it can help defray families' construction costs for building permanent housing by giving them materials that they can later sell or repurpose. Oxfam's work in Sri Lanka following the tsunami that struck Southeast Asia in 2004 offers an example of this approach.

Over the course of three months Oxfam designed and constructed 17 transitional shelters for families using a mix of wood, corrugated roof sheeting, cement blocks, and other materials. The settlement was located in Tangalle, a coastal village in the Hambantota district of Sri Lanka, near one of five permanent development offices the aid group maintained in the country prior to the disaster.

In the immediate aftermath of the disaster, many people found shelter with friends and relatives. However, community leaders identified a group of 17 families that had lost everything and had nowhere safe to stay. Through a series of workshops, Oxfam collaborated with these families and the local government to design a safe shelter that would enable them to store their belongings securely and would be spacious and cool enough to carry out everyday tasks, such as mending nets or drying fish. Including officials as well as families in the discussions helped establish an open forum where both felt comfortable asking questions and sharing ideas. The result was a design that met government approval and the displaced families' needs.

But finding a suitable location presented a challenge. People wanted to stay near their community, livelihoods, schools, and families, but there was little land available near Tangalle, and the government was finding it difficult to relocate families out of the "buffer zone," a 100-meter no-build zone along the coast. After discussions, Oxfam agreed with the local government to build the transitional shelters in a children's playground in the middle of the village, enabling families to maintain community ties and have access to services and support.

Oxfam employed an engineer and a site supervisor to oversee the construction, but skilled and unskilled work was carried out by the families themselves, who were paid a daily wage. In that way the project also helped replace lost earnings. Remarkably, a third of those involved in the pilot scheme were women, giving them access to income and a sense of empowerment.

The shelters were designed so that they could be dismantled after a year. Timber joints were bolted, and the floor was made from cement tiles rather than a solid slab. Latrines also were built for the shelters, including three permanent ones intended to benefit the whole community once the temporary shelters were dismantled and the park returned to normal use.

"These are 'transitional' as opposed to 'temporary.' Emergency shelter is temporary and is intended just to provide shelter for survival. Transitional implies something that is longer-term and gives you space to carry out livelihood activities rather than just surviving."

Elizabeth Babister, shelter advisor

right
A covered porch and walkway
All photographs Elizabeth Babister

Planner Profile and Interview:

Sarah James and "The Natural Steps System"

In 1986, Sarah James began her career as a city planner in the United States. Since then, she's become a well-traveled consultant, educator, and author. In the early 1990s, she learned about a conceptual framework for sustainable development called "The Natural Steps System." Says James, "It was a perfect approach for planners as we are trained to think and to work comprehensively." In 2001, native Swede Torbjörn Lahti led James on a tour of his country's "eco-municipalities" that had adopted this four-step approach to planning. In 2004, they published a book together called The Natural Step for Communities: How Cities and Towns can Change to Sustainable Practices. Many thanks to Sarah for responding to questions from InterPlan. She can be reached at james.s@worldnet.att.net.

The following is an edited transcript of the original interview conducted by Jeantine Nazar for InterPlan.

InterPlan **(IP):** Tell us about the training you conduct on the sustainable movement?

Sarah James **(SJ):** My co-author, Torbjörn Lahti and I give workshops and training for planners, local officials, municipal employees, community leaders, and citizens on how from a very practical standpoint, all the community and different parts of the community can move systematically and comprehensively towards sustainable practices.

InterPlan **(IP):** What is "sustainability" and why is it so important?

SJ: The best way to understand sustainability is to look at the larger picture and ask, "What is happening that is unsustainable? What is the problem?" At the global level, two trends that have been well-documented by scientists are converging. On the one hand, the natural systems of the world are deteriorating and this is happening at an accelerated rate. Half of the world's forest cover is gone now. And on the other hand, population and consumption are rising and consumption is rising disproportionately in the developed versus the developing world.

These trends are rushing towards each other like two trains in a tunnel, on the same track. We are somewhere in the middle of the tunnel and we don't know when these two are going to collide. Some people say in the next 10 years and some people say in the next 25 years.

IP: Please tell us about the "Natural Steps System."

SJ: The Natural Step was developed in early 1990s by a group of Swedish scientists and environmentalists. They worked for several years to develop consensus about what needs to happen to start moving away from unsustainable trends. They developed four conditions based on science and natural law that need to exist in order for a society to be sustainable. These four helped to clarify what it means to be sustainable and helped define success in very practical terms. **The American Planning Association's Planning for Sustainability Guide (http://www.planning.org/policyguides/sustainability.htm) includes four guiding objectives based directly on these four system conditions for a sustainable society.** They include:

1. Reduced dependence on fossil fuel and underground metals and materials that are accumulating in our society. Underground metals and minerals, and fossil fuels have been increasing in our eco-sphere far more than their natural occurrences. So, far example, Green House gases exist in the atmosphere in far greater proportions than they exist naturally underground as fossil fuel. And, mercury is present in our surroundings at 10 to 12 times more than it naturally exists. We know those things are toxic.

2. Reduce dependence on chemicals and other manufactured substances that can accumulate in nature. We need to use planning approaches that would reduce dependence on chemicals and other natural substances. All the chemicals and synthetic substances that we create are proliferating in society at rates far faster than they can be broken down and reabsorbed. The Planning for Sustainability Guide states that "Over 70,000 chemical compounds are now present and accumulating in the ecosphere. Many of these may be toxic to humans or other species."

3. Reduce dependence on activities that harm life-sustaining ecosystems. We are using the earth's natural resources far faster than they can replenish themselves. This includes water, soils, forests, and wild life. We need to use planning approaches that reduce our encroachment on nature.

4. Meet the hierarchy of present and future human needs fairly and efficiently.

The first three conditions have to do with ecology and the fourth has to do with human beings in our society. The Planning for Sustainability Guide states that "Fair and efficient use of resources in meeting human needs is necessary to achieve social stability and achieve cooperation for achieving the goals of the first three guiding policies."

IP: Tell us about Swedish eco-municipalities and their practices.

SJ: Sweden consists of over 70 eco-municipalities of greatly varying size, geography and situations. Included

(continued page 10)

are villages of 300 people to cities of 700,000. All are committed to dealing with problems of population, growth and sprawl, urban disinvestments, and absorption of immigrants.

In the mid-1980s, Övertorneå became the first eco-municipality in Sweden. Now about 25% of Swedish municipalities have adopted the Natural Steps System. Sweden defines an "eco-municipality" as one that has officially adopted these four system conditions as their official guiding policy; they must also have committed to a bottom-up approach to implement them.

For example, Övertorneå was a town of about 5,000 people with a depressed economy in the early 1980s. The Town Planner started to imagine a different future and revitalization within a sustainable context. By 2001, Övertorneå had become 100 percent free of fossil fuel use in its municipal operations. This was even more amazing considering that municipalities in Sweden are responsible for providing heat and power to all buildings of businesses and residents in their jurisdiction. Övertorneå converted its five village heating plants from oil to biomass, and its buses and cars began running on alternative fuels. This led to the creation of over 300 new enterprises in an economically depressed area and the region became Sweden's largest organic agriculture region. Tourism was also given a boost.

Another example is Umeå, a city of more than 130,000 people. Umeå was growing rapidly and needed a power plant. They built a new one based on solid waste rather than running entirely on fossil fuels. This plant now provides heat to over 90 percent of all the city's buildings. Umeå eliminated their landfill problem, stopped using fossil fuels for creating power, and so eliminated their green house gas emissions. Cost savings were also realized because transporting fuel is more expensive than moving solid waste.

IP: Why have Swedish eco-municipalities been so successful? Why it is so hard for the United States to have a sustainable society?

SJ: Sweden is much smaller than other European countries. Also, Scandinavian countries have a sense of limit and their borders are close to each other. In the US, we are still dealing with the frontier way of thinking. We think "If things go wrong, we can just go somewhere else." The United States has this abundant supply of land and water and Americans do not like the idea of limits.

IP: What's going on in the US in terms of sustainable development?

SJ: There is so much sustainable development going on in our country. But, it's largely happening through a "cycle approach," meaning one municipality may be doing a green program and another a climate change program and another a watershed management initiative—all are separate issue-oriented projects. However, with the Natural Steps System, all four objectives must be applied together. That sets it apart.

When the book was published in 2004, Torbjörn Lahti and I gave several presentations in this country. Planners came to the workshops and began working on turning their hometowns into eco-municipalities. For example, last year in Wisconsin, Ashleen, Madison, and Washburn officially adopted either the Natural Steps System or APA Sustainability Guidelines or both. Also, in New Jersey and New Hampshire, they are learning to adopt this whole system approach rather than just a single-issue one. Last year, an informal network called North American Eco-municipality Network was formed by some of these municipalities (http://www.sustaindane.org/main/ecomunicipality_network_right.htm).

Book Review

Making Planning Work:
A Guide to Approaches and Skills

Reviewed by Dan Reuter
By Cliff Hague, Patrick Wakely, Julie Crespin and Chris Jasko,
ITDG Publishing, 2006

Planners everywhere face conflicts and challenges involving inadequate housing, diminishing resources, insufficient communication tools and a lack of political will. Making Planning Work: A Guide to Approaches and Skills (ITDG Publishing, 2006, 80 pages) by Cliff Hague, Patrick Wakely, Julie Crespin, and Chris Jasko can help to clarify many of these issues. The book was developed in anticipation of the World Planners Congress and UN-Habitat World Urban Forum III held in Vancouver, B.C. in June, 2006.

Making Planning Work aims to help planners understand and prepare for the continuing onslaught of global urbanization. The authors explain horw rapid change will overwhelm indigenous planning and government resources in many countries. The book also examines the scope of urbanization ahead. But, equally important, Making Planning Work provides a much needed perspective on professional practice. Consider that, according to the authors, most planners and planning academics come from wealthy countries. They are far removed from the less developed countries where 93 percent of the world's urban population increase is forecasted to occur over the next 15 years.

The book outlines 25 case studies of successful strategies from around the globe—instances where problems of urban development have been transformed into opportunities. The authors want the traditional definition of "planning" expanded, particularly in developing countries, where there's a scarcity of professionals. But, they argue that simply fielding an army of well-educated planners isn't enough. Each

(continued page 11)

practitioner must also be sufficiently savvy and skilled to influence decision makers and the political process; understand the managerial functions of development; and intervene in the day-to-day administration of infrastructure and service delivery.

So, how can planners become more relevant and influential? The book offers "immediate and pragmatic actions" to take at different levels. These include more effective use of the internet to spread knowledge and forge networks; greater investment in the development and delivery of affordable and accessible learning; more coherent approaches and proliferation of training on-the-job; increased networking and combined pressure by international professional bodies; and encouraging greater media awareness amongst planners.

Making Planning Work is required reading for all planners and planning students who will face challenges in their careers (translation: most of us). Recently, the world population living in urban areas exceeded 50 percent for the first time in history; approximately 30 percent of these urban dwellers live in poverty. By 2030, 5 billion people or close to 65 percent of the world's population will reside in urban areas; if trends continue, half will be eking out their lives mired in poverty. The book encourages the profession to ask itself, "Are planners really ready to assist?"

PHOTO OP-ED

Hackney, East London

Photo Credit: Tony Montana / WHAT_architecture exclusive photography

This local nursery and daycare located in Hackney, East London, has been recognized throuhgout the UK for its combination of high quality, imaginative design, and its ambitious aim to spur regeneration in a very deprived part of the UK. The Rooftop Nursery (a creative way to provide much-needed outdoor playspace on a small site, without requiring greater amounts of very expensive inner-city land) is part of a publicly funded initiative that aims to get mothers back to work by offering affordable child care. But in order to provide such care, the building had to be low cost. Yet rom the beginning, it was decided that low cost did not have to mean low quality architecture. This response is consistent with an increasing recognition at all levels of the private and public sector that high quality design is fundamental to quality of life, and can have a significant impact on health, educational attainment, and intellectual and social development of children.

Hackney is one of the most deprived boroughs in the UK; it suffers high levels of unemployment, single-parent homes, violent crime and poor educational achievement in local schools. The area in which the nursery is located is dominated by council estates (housing projects) which were built on sites bombed during the Second World War, and which have suffered from a lack of investment or maintenance. For all of these reasons this nursery is a phenomenal injection into the community, provides a colourful and rich environment for local children, employment opportunities for local residents, and represents the hope for regeneration in the area.

Submitted by Alexandra Reitman, a Conservation, Urban Design and Planning Officer for the London Borough of Hackney Planning Service.

PHOTO OP-ED

Photo Credit: Jumana Nabi

Beirut, Lebanon

Known around the world as the site of the March 14th rallies in 2005 and the current "opposition" protests, Downtown Beirut's Martyr's Square can trace its present-day location back to 500 A.D. when the city was destroyed by a major earthquake. Over the centuries, the square has taken on new meanings, purposes, and monikers. In modern day Lebanon, it is arguably the only place in the country with which all Lebanese can identify.

Because of its neutrality, development on this square can be risky and contentious. During the 1975 to 1990 Civil War in Lebanon, Martyr's square was the no man's land between East and West Beirut, and today, opposing political coalitions use the square for popular protests. Still recovering from the Civil War, the area of Martyr's Square today is more than twice the size of the original square, while parking lots cover blocks awaiting development (off the left side of the photo).

In the photo, the Martyr's Statue, recently returned to the square, commemorates four nationalists hanged in the square by the Ottoman's. The mosque in the background was recently finished, having been built with Saudi money, in a style more at home on the Arabian Peninsula. Directly in front of it is the grave site of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, who was assassinated on February 14, 2005. Also shown in the photo is the Virgin Megastore (foreground right), and the overgrown remains of Ancient Berytus left to weeds (foreground).

The photo was taken during the memorial for Parliament Member and Editor of the Al Nahar Daily, Gibran Tueni, who was assassinated in December 2006.

Jumana Nabti (MIT - MCP, MST 2004) is a transportation planner in San Francisco, who despite the current protests on Martyr's Square, will be relocating to Beirut in the coming months.

EVENTS CALENDAR

Feb 9
"Age of Connectivity: Cities, Magnets of Hope"
UN Headquarters
New York City
(212) 963-4200 or e-mail habitatny@un.org

April 2-3
International Conference: New Concepts and Approaches for Urban and Regional Planning Policy and Planning
Leuven, Belgium
www.planning-and-development.be/

April 16-20
21st Session of the Governing Council (UN-HABITAT)
UN-HABITAT Headquarters
Nairobi, Kenya
infohabitat@unhabitat.org

April 19-22
HOPES Conference: "Confluence: Where Water Meets Design"
Sponsor: University of Oregon, Ecological Design Center
Eugene, Oregon
Hopes.uoregon.edu/about_hopes
E-mail Dianne Ahmann at dahmann@uoregon.edu

June 9-19
APA's China Study Tour
Sponsor: APA China Program
Multiple Cities in China
http://www.planning.org/apainchina/studytour/

June 10-14
45th International Making Cities Livable Conference
"True Urbanism: Designing for Social & Physical Health"
plus an exhibit on "New Designs for Mixed-Use Urban Fabric"
Sponsor: The City of Portland & Portland Metro Planning Council
Portland, Oregon
www.livablecities.org/

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