

INTERPLAN

APA

American Planning Association
International Division

Making Great Communities Happen

A Publication of the International Division
of the American Planning Association

challenge and change



SPRING 2010 | In this issue...

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Welcome to *Interplan!*

by Keith Hall, AICP
Vice Chair of Communications

Over the last two years, the International Division established *eNews*, an electronic newsletter that keeps members current with informal news and events. The division also initiated a Google Groups discussion board where members can post messages and exchange information on global planning topics and conducted surveys to gauge member satisfaction.

The International Division plans to continue improving services to members. This first issue of *Interplan* in 2010 features a new format. The updated design highlights content provided largely by division members and their colleagues to give members a greater personal stake in the division and its publications. We published editorial guidelines on the division's pages in the APA website describing this new focus.

The next issue of *Interplan* will feature student projects, and we ask the student members of the division to submit their papers for publication in the next issue. The *editorial guidelines* provide more detail on guidelines for written articles.

Also stay tuned for the launch of a new planning exchange program that will be announced at the APA conference in New Orleans. The leadership team has had numerous and substantial discussions on the best approach to manage the program while keeping in mind the potential costs and work involved for volunteers on a limited budget. But we have a solution!

And finally, the leadership team would especially like to thank Puja Bhutani, Alex Ikefuna, and Richard May for serving on the elections committee. The election concluded on January 15, 2010, and the new leadership team is presented to the left.

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American Planning Association
International Division

Making Great Communities Happen

The State of Town Planning in Ghana: A World Town Planning Day Assessment

By Kwadwo Fordjour, AICP

Increasing globalization and macro-economic successes have made it necessary to look closely at the impacts on urbanization, poverty, social equity, and environmental quality in Emerging Economies, such as those in Africa. Most of these emerging economies are the least exposed to local town and country planning movement that have shaped the rest of the world's greatest places to live.

About 40% of Africans live in towns and cities, and it will grow to 50% by 2015 although Africa is the least urbanized. Significant numbers of the urban dwellers live in informal settlements known as slums and zongos that lack basic services, provide inadequate housing, and contribute to overcrowding and unhealthy living conditions.

In Ghana, the cities and environs of Accra, the capital, and Kumasi, Ghana's second largest city, account for the majority of urban dwellers. These metropolitan areas are characterized as dark and filthy. They have high incidence of malaria, cholera, and other environmental related diseases. Piped water is unreliable; solid waste management is abysmal, and homes are built without permits and in flood prone areas. The majority of homes in the suburbs have no roads water or sewerage connections. Accra and Kumasi are no exception to deplorable conditions common in African urban settlements.

Ghana, with estimated population of 22 million people, has made inroads to economic development, poverty reduction, and democracy. It is a success story in African as an emerging economy. It has a liberal investment climate and excellent opportunities in all sectors of economic activities. Ghana also has abundance of natural resources. Gold, timber, cocoa, diamond, manganese, and recently discovered oil make up the major sources of foreign exchange in Ghana. Ghana is the fastest growing democracy in Africa. Ghana gained independence from Great Britain in 1957 and has had a stable democracy since 1992. There is a large presence of international organizations that have partnered



Cape Coast, Ghana (istockphoto.com #384450)

with the government of Ghana on development projects. The goals and objectives of these partnerships are to use the experience in Ghana as a gateway for wider impacts on the African continent.

However, this progress is threatened by deplorable and unacceptable town and country planning policies and practices, or the lack of them. Without effective urban planning and management in Ghana, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals will be a mirage - goals that cannot be attained. The Ghana vision 2015 to attain middle-class economic status may remain a dream.

None of the 385 towns and cities in Ghana were planned; they had neither a structural plan nor capacity to implement a plan. Out of 24 accredited universities in Ghana, only one, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), offers courses in planning. Most of the towns and cities lack planning staff. Only 61 of the 166 metropolitan areas have a token presence of a town planning department. A district of over 140,000 people that covers 1,000 square miles has only one planning officer.

Many planners have diverted to other businesses because planning profession is not appealing in Ghana. It is a matter of priority for the government of Ghana to provide adequate support and collaborate with bilateral and

The State of Town Planning in Ghana

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international organizations, private and non-profit organizations, KNUST, and Ghana Institute of Planners (GIP) to restructure the planning system. On Thursday, December 20, 2007, the President of Ghana inaugurated the Local Government, charged to develop appropriate and adequate capacity in the enforcement of local government bye-laws; environmental and waste management; land use planning; and revenue mobilization. The program was to deploy or transfer 3,000 current civil service personnel to work in the Local Government Services.

The local government system was established in the nation's 1988 Constitution to decentralize government services and to involve residents in decision-making at the local level. This is the area where the American Planning Association's (APA) International Division can play a major role as the world's most experienced educational organization in planning. APA's recent experiences in China, Mexico and Central America demonstrate its global recognition and influence.

GIP and other Ghanaian planning bodies participated, for the first time, in the celebration of the World Town Planning Day on November 8, 2007 by hosting a planning conference and appearing on media talk show to articulate the role of planning in Ghana's Vision 2015 to attain a middle class status. GIP has expressed an interest in collaborating with APA's International Division and other international planning organizations to promote good planning practices, capacity building and technology transfer as well as other planning and training sessions.

American planners working in Ghana could help further develop the capacity of the Ghanaian planners; District, Municipal, and local government officials; and KNUST students. On December 15, 2008 APA's International division hosted a webinar on planning in Ghana that attracted over 300 practicing planners and planning students worldwide. APA has the capacity and experience to work with Ghanaian community leaders, elected officials, professionals, government, and institutions to address different community issues. APA will

bring more American planning professionals into contact with Ghanaian leaders and organizations. Also working side by side with the Ghanaian planners, APA will impact knowledge, skills and good planning practices to the GIP counterparts.

In July 2007, the Ejisu Visioning project was born and sponsored by APA. The Ejisu Visioning project is a good model to start with as a field based learning. APA, GIP, and KNUST hope to establish a permanent collaboration in planning and community development in Ghana to champion and promote good planning in Africa.

The GIP has struggled in the past ten years as an active professional organization. Therefore, it does not have much visibility in the national planning and community development arena. APA would mentor GIP to be effective planning organization by helping build its membership and develop educational programs for them. GIP members may job shadow APA members in the USA by working with an American planning agencies or consultants, by attending conferences, and professional development tours in both public and private sectors in the USA.

For more information about the program or to provide support, contact:

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News Briefs and Upcoming Events

By Mike Cote

Resilient Cities 2010

Bonn | May 2010

ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, together with the City of Bonn and in cooperation with many partner organizations, will host Resilient Cities 2010, the annual global forum on urban resiliency and adaptation to climate change. The Congress will be held on 28-30 May 2010 in Bonn, Germany, preceding the UN climate talks in Bonn, which are scheduled for 31 May – 11 June 2010.

Resilient Cities 2010 is the first edition of an annual convention to share the latest scientific findings, effective approaches and state-of-the-art programs on climate change adaptation and resilience-building in cities and urbanized areas.

Partners will convene to share knowledge and experiences on a variety of themes. Case examples of local adaptation practice on all six themes will illustrate approaches and experiences. Resilient Cities 2010 will enhance exchange, learning, networking, debate and policy development on approaches and solutions to climate change adaptation for cities and municipalities. It also aims at setting the direction for future planning and investment at the local level. The event will bring about policy propositions and impulses for innovation.

For more information, visit:

<http://resilient-cities.iclei.org/bonn2010/program/>

Toward a Just Metropolis

San Francisco | June 2010

Toward a Just Metropolis: From Crises to Possibilities is a conference for planners, designers, activists, policymakers and citizens dedicated to a just future for all human settlements. It will be held June 16-20, 2010 and will be hosted by the College of Environmental Design at the University of California, Berkeley.

This joint conference of The Center for the Living City, Architects/Designers/Planners for Social Responsibility (ADPSR) and New Village Press, Planners Network (PN), and the Association

for Community Design (ACD) merges the annual conferences of these national and international organizations who have worked to bring together progressive urbanists and innovative ideas for more than three decades.

The conference will unite planners, architects, designers, urban activists, educators, journalists, policymakers, academics, students and concerned citizens from diverse backgrounds across North America who share a passion for social, environmental and economic justice. All are committed to exchanging their experiences and visions for more robust civic engagement, innovative planning and inclusive community building.

These same organizations previously partnered on a joint national conference in New Orleans in 2007 to address social justice and community-initiated rebuilding efforts in the Gulf Coast following Hurricane Katrina, a week-long event in multiple cities that connected grassroots partners with visiting urbanists. Following this model, we are working to connect with local organizations involved in grassroots community building as well as progressive planners working in local and regional government agencies. We anticipate formal participation from dozens of local agencies and communities groups.

Toward a Just Metropolis will be hosted by the Department of City & Regional Planning and the College of Environmental Design (CED) at the University of California, Berkeley under the leadership of new dean Jennifer Wolch, a longtime voice in the fight for more just and sustainable cities. The College will be the site of many core conference activities, including classroom workshops and plenary sessions. Mobile workshops will take place throughout the region in cooperation with local community-based organizations, regional advocates, and policy analysts. To increase community access to the conference events, including the film festival and the urban typhoon, we are pursuing sites with easy access to public transportation in the San Francisco East Bay Area.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.justmetropolis.org>

More News and Events

By Mike Cote

UN Climate Change Conference (COP15) Copenhagen | December 2009

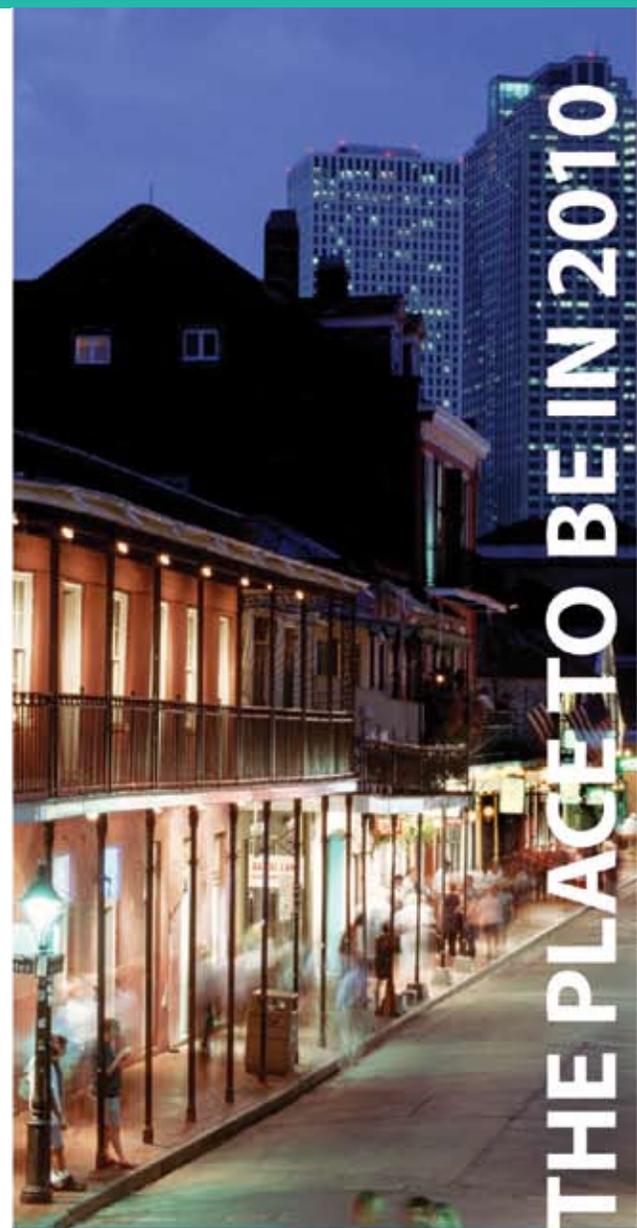
In December, I attended the United Nations Climate Change Conference 2009 in Copenhagen (COP15) as part of the Vermont Law School (VLS) delegation. At first the trip was uncertain, as the United Nations finalized VLS's observer status just one month before the conference was scheduled to start. We rented a cute Danish cottage in southern Copenhagen and traveled to and from the Bella Conference Center via free public transportation sponsored by the UNFCC and the City of Copenhagen.

The eight of us took full advantage of the free buses and metro and explored the city at every chance. Copenhagen is an urban planners dream city. Centuries thick and rich with history, an incredible mix of charming, old world and sleek modern architecture, all connected by magnificent *bike lanes*, narrow snaking streets, and ankle twisting cobblestone walkways. Copenhagen impresses with its human scale design features, features that provide comfort, ease, and pleasure for visitors and natives alike. I've explored many cities from Honolulu, Hawaii to Santa Fe, New Mexico and never have I seen more smiling faces.

The the 15th Conference of the Parties was by and large dubbed Kyoto II, a new treaty to combat human induced climate change. The goal - control carbon pollution from developed and developing countries, fund adaptation projects globally, and possibly strengthen the framework laid out in the Kyoto Protocol.

The conference was serious business with leaders attending from 128 countries and senior officials from 65 more. It was the highest concentration of world leaders in one space in all of human-political history. For comparison, Kyoto dealt with just 47 countries. Nearly 15,000 delegates, observers, media, NGOs, scientists, advocates, etc., were scheduled to attend the conference. And, due to a maddening clerical error by UNFCC organizers, nearly 40,000 showed up - UN certification letters in hand. Needless to say conference organizers dropped the ball and lines to get through security were indeed very, very long. In fact by the second week the conference had become so bloated with attendees, and the threat of a shut-down by *protesters* becoming more and more real, the UNFCC decided to disallow any observers from entering the Bella Center. In other words, no one could attend the conference during the final 4 days except leaders and a handful of select media. Exhibitors had to break down their displays and presentations were canceled.

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THE PLACETTO BE IN 2010

HEAD SOUTH TO THE DELTA

American Planning Association's
2010 National Planning Conference
Saturday, April 10–Tuesday, April 13
New Orleans

www.planning.org/conference



American Planning Association

Making Great Communities Happen

All-Encompassing Planning Legislation in the United Kingdom

By Mary Kay Peck, FAICP

How do you resolve a number of significant planning issues all at the same time? Take the sting out of LULUs—those “locally unwanted land uses”? Attain national infrastructure needs for the next generation? Meet goals for sustainability and carbon reduction? Ensure a competitive edge in a rapidly changing global economy with the necessary infrastructure?

The United Kingdom’s response wraps the answers to all those questions into a single piece of legislation - the 2008 Planning Act. It makes sweeping changes to the way planning is conducted and leads to the establishment of national policies on significant infrastructure. The 2008 Planning Act makes four significant changes to the planning approval process:

1. Establishes a simplified and single review process for nationally significant infrastructure.
2. Creates an independent review board, the Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC), which will make all decisions on nationally significant infrastructure applications.
3. Sets forth a number of National Policy Statements (NPSs) that will be formulated to guide the IPC in its decision making.
4. Details requirements for infrastructure applications, including requiring applicants to obtain public input before submitting applications.

The most significant aspect of the act according to Gideon Amos, chief executive of the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) is that the “National Policy Statements will make national policy in this area explicit for the first time, replacing a reliance on past decisions one development at a time as the only expression of policy.”

The Act applies within England and Wales and to all major infrastructure projects, such as major energy generation, railways, ports, roads, airports and water and wastewater infrastructure (see sidebar). The goals of the 2008 Planning Act

are many:

- (a) Provide a one-stop review process for nationally significant infrastructure.
- (b) Balance national needs with local needs, while protecting the environment.
- (c) Meet the challenge of climate change and achieve England’s goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by the year 2050.
- (d) Replace aging electric generating plants by providing a diverse and secure energy supply that includes renewable energy as well as nuclear and fossil power plants that include carbon capture and storage.
- (e) Create a building block for future economic success.

The Application Procedure and the Role of the Infrastructure Planning Commission

The Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC) was established in the 2008 Planning Act to provide a streamlined review process for nationally significant infrastructure and to shorten the review period to one year. Previously, eight separate reviews were required for infrastructure projects, with the process lasting as long as seven years.

As is the case for many U.S. local governments, a pre-application process is specified. Before submitting an application to the IPC, the applicant is required to consult with impacted local governments, the landowner (if that is not the applicant) and the people who live in the vicinity of the proposed project. Notice must also be published in a local newspaper. During the pre-application process, the applicant must also present their proposed application to impacted local governments and residents. The applicant must take into account the comments that are received and determine whether to submit the application as originally proposed or with modifications.

The IPC has set service targets for its reviews to ensure that they meet the goal of completion within one year. The commission will hold

Planning Legislation in the UK

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hearings on applications, accepting oral and written testimony from the applicant and stakeholders. Written, detailed decisions, based on the National Policy Statements, will be issued. Decisions can be challenged in court.

Commission appointments were made by October 1, 2009 and potential applicants and stakeholders have been receiving IPC counsel since. The IPC has adopted values of independence, impartiality and inclusiveness. The appointed members are recognized experts in their fields who have backgrounds in planning and engineering. The IPC will begin accepting applications on March 1, 2010 for nationally significant infrastructure projects and anticipates receiving as many as 50 applications in the first year.

National Policy Statements

The subjects of the National Policy Statements are shown in the sidebar. The NPSs will address issues in a big-picture framework and develop criteria based on national need. The intent is for debate on the need for each type of infrastructure to occur as the statements are formulated, rather than when individual applications are presented. Each individual application will then be evaluated by the IPC on its merit and consistency with the national policy statements, rather than on whether or not there is a national need for the proposed project. The NPSs are to be general in nature, with the exception that some may identify specific sites for nationally significant infrastructure.

The initial draft NPSs were released in November 2009 and include statements for Overarching Energy, Fossil Fuel Electricity Generating Infrastructure, Renewable Energy Infrastructure, Gas Supply Infrastructure and Gas and Oil Pipeline, Electricity Network Infrastructure, Nuclear Electricity Generation and Ports and Harbours.

The draft energy NPSs are located at:
www.energy-nps-consultation.decc.gov.uk

The draft Port and Harbours NPS is available at:
www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/open/portsnps

Nationally Significant Infrastructure Subject to the UK's 2008 Planning Act

Energy

- Power generating stations
 - Nuclear and fossil fueled*
- Renewable energy installations
 - Wind farms, solar, and tidal facilities*
- Electrical transmission networks
- Oil and gas pipelines and storage

Transportation

- Airports
- Ports
- National roads
- Railroads

Water and Wastewater

- Sewage treatment infrastructure
- Water supply infrastructure
- Hazardous waste disposal
- Dams and Reservoirs
- Transfer of Water Resources



source: istockphoto.com (#5102362)

NPSs on roads and railroads will be published in early 2010, followed by the NPS on hazardous waste in mid-2010. The water supply NPS is scheduled for late 2010 and the final NPS on aviation will be available by 2011.

Each NPS includes an opportunity for public scrutiny and involvement. Notices of the draft NPSs are published in local newspapers and posted on several websites, including those of local governments and the IPC. For the energy NPSs, five national events were scheduled to explain the statements and accept testimony.

Planning Legislation in the UK

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Local events are held for site specific NPSs. Formal review questions are listed on the websites above for each of the draft NPSs. Responders are asked to base their comments on evidence rather than opinion only. As an example, the following questions are asked on the Overarching Energy NPS comment form:

- (a) Do you think that the Government should formally approve the draft Overarching Energy NPS?
- (b) Does the draft NPS provide the IPC with the information it needs to reach a decision?
- (c) Does the draft NPS provide suitable direction to the IPC on the need and urgency for new energy infrastructure?
- (d) Does the draft NPS provide suitable information to the IPC on the Government's energy and climate policy?

At the conclusion of each review period, public comment will be considered, a summary of the responses will be prepared and any necessary revisions will be made. The NPSs are subject to approval by the Parliament before being officially adopted by the British government.

Conclusions

The goals of the 2008 Planning Act are lofty and admirable. The Act aims to look at the

long-term infrastructure needs on a national basis; promote sustainability; create economic growth and jobs for skilled workers; and speed the UK's transition to a low-carbon economy. It provides a very streamlined review process for nationally significant infrastructure, while upholding the authority for local governments to approve local development projects. It appears to be a more logical and reasoned approach to policy making than that used in the United States, where policy is often made on a city by city, county by county and state by state approach.

The system is successfully meeting all the established milestones so far but has yet to be tested; the first applications will be accepted in March, 2010. "A suite of National Policy Statements provides the basis for more certainty and therefore for more investment in improved infrastructure, time will tell if the policies can deliver on this promise" said Gideon Amos. It will be worth revisiting the UK's revised planning system in a few years to gauge its performance and determine what could be transferable to the United States.

Mary Kay Peck, FAICP is the founding principal of MKPeck Associates and an internationally recognized planning and municipal leadership consultant. Ms. Peck is also a former president of the American Planning Association. For more information, she may be contacted at mkpeck@mkpeckassociates.com.

Critical Infrastructure for Resilient Communities: International Post-Katrina Lessons from New Orleans

By Bruce C. Glavovic, MNZPI

Note: This article was reprinted from an earlier edition of Interplan. The upcoming APA National Conference will be held in New Orleans, and this article reminds us of challenges the city has faced from the floods through to rebuilding that many planners will see at the conference.

Who can forget the shocking television images of people stranded in New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina? But three years on, many

people assume that 'things are back to normal'. Despite massive rebuilding efforts, many New Orleanians continue to face tremendous hardship; and their future is uncertain at best. It behoves us to learn the tragic lessons that Katrina wrought; so that we can build more sustainable, hazard-resilient communities. My reflections are based on six visits to the region between July 2006 and June 2008 to interview planners, academics and others involved in recovery efforts.

A City Under Water

Katrina was a Category 3 hurricane when it passed New Orleans on the 29th of August 2005. About 80% of the city was flooded when levees failed that had been designed to protect the city against Category 3 hurricanes. More than 1,720 people died as a consequence of the levee failure and the dismal Government response; turning a natural disaster into a human catastrophe. The entire city was 'shut-down' for about six weeks until the water that filled the 'bowl' between the Mississippi River and Lake Ponchartrain was pumped out. Nearly all those living in the bowl – black and white; rich and poor – were affected by the deluge.

Those caught in the rising waters were people who could not or did not want to evacuate: mainly the poor, infirm, aged or immobile – many of whom were African American – some 20% of the city's pre-Katrina population of about 455,000 people. Notwithstanding massive recovery efforts since that time, nearly every aspect of city life is marked by Katrina's stain – like the water lines still etched on many buildings. In early 2008, it was said that about 300,000 people were living in the city. People are rebuilding their lives. There are clear signs of improvement in some neighbourhoods. But many may never return and neighbourhoods remain blighted. Virtually every aspect of the city and what it means to be a "New Orleanian" needs rebuilding – a monumental and daunting challenge. New Orleans will not be the same.

But it is being rebuilt. Moreover, it should be rebuilt because it is a distinctive and special place.

Over the last 300 years, the city has faced many calamities, including flooding, and it has persisted and even flourished. Successive colonisers struggled to secure this strategic location on the banks of the Mississippi that continues to provide a major gateway for exports and imports. The city is known around the world as the home of jazz, is famous for its cuisine, its Mardi Gras parades, and for its distinctive architecture. The challenge is to rebuild the city in ways that are safer, more sustainable and resilient – in a manner that retains its genius loci. Clearly, 'business as usual' will not work.

Recovery efforts must confront a legacy of political, economic, social, cultural, infrastructural, institutional and environmental vulnerabilities whilst opening up new opportunities for creating sustainable livelihoods. This is arguably the greatest land-use planning challenge – and opportunity – that the USA has faced in many decades.

Recovery planning in New Orleans: Rising from the water?

Recovery planning efforts were initiated within a month of Katrina and continue to this day. They involve a wide range of agencies at all levels of Government and a diversity of private sector and non-governmental organisations. Statewide efforts in Louisiana include the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority of Louisiana's Comprehensive Master Plan for a Sustainable Coast, and the Louisiana Speaks' Regional Plan developed under the aegis of the Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA). There have been a number of significant citywide recovery planning initiatives in New Orleans.

Appointed by the Mayor in September 2005, the Bring New Orleans Back (BNOB) Commission produced a technically sound plan that focused on urban design issues and land-use options to reduce future flood risks, prioritise redevelopment resources and maintain services for the anticipated smaller population. It was not possible to involve the public in the planning process because of the post-Katrina diaspora. The plans did not outline what would become of the people whose homes were in the 'green dot' zones – areas identified as inappropriate for rebuilding and conversion to open space. The plan caused an uproar. Facing Mayoral re-elections, the Mayor distanced himself from the Commission and the plan was 'moth-balled.' The City Council started a neighbourhood planning process in early 2006 – commonly called the Lambert Plans. Returning residents participated actively in the process. But it was taken as given that all areas of the city should be rebuilt – regardless of the risks in low-lying areas.

Another planning process was initiated by the LRA in the summer of 2006 because funding stipulations necessitated that the plan be citywide and include flooded and unflooded

COP15 in Copenhagen: A Personal Experience

Continued from Page 3

But, the COP15 was staged like any other conference. It was held in the large, sleek Bella Conference Center just outside of downtown Copenhagen. And like any other conference there were registration tables, information kiosks, food courts and vending machines, and atrocious corporate carpeting.

At the COP15's core were three elements. First was the plenary session, where world leaders gathered in an ultra-secure room to wear funny headsets and negotiate a climate treaty. By "world leaders" I don't mean representatives of nations, but presidents – names like Hu Jintao, Barack Obama, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Nicolas Sarkozy. Even Hugo Chavez attended the COP15. Every 3-5 minutes it seemed as though a fresh key note speaker would take the microphone and pledge to fight climate change (if only the US would sign on with them). Others left the hubris at home and made impassioned calls for an actionable negotiation outcome. For example, Ian Fry's speech, seen [here](#), will bring you to tears. With nowhere to go, the population of his island nation Tuvalu, which is just 2 meters above sea level, will be devastated by sea level rise.

The second prominent element of the conference were the side-events. These were in essence standard conference sessions but with talks and presentations by world leaders and advocates. I previously blogged about a few sessions that I attended that included a new report on melting ice by [Al Gore](#) and an update by the IPCC by [Rajendra Pachauri](#). Others in our delegation witnessed talks by Nobel Laureate Wangari Maathai, [US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton](#), and [US Senator John Kerry](#). For urban planners concerned about climate change impacts, Teresa Clemmer of Vermont Law School covered [US adaptation and mitigation initiatives](#) by the Department of the Interior, which manages over 500 million acres of land in the US.

For a full calendar of the COP15 side event sessions, including PowerPoint presentations, PDFs, and contact information, go [here](#).

The third element of COP15 were hundreds of

exhibitor booths and workshops. The amount and diversity of the exhibits and workshops was overwhelming. There were booths by huge corporate giants such as Mercedes-Benz, Cisco, and Dong Energy. Tiny island nations threatened by sea level rise such as Tuvalu and the Maldives sponsored modest booths. And activist NGOs such as Tck, Tck, Tck and World Wildlife Fund handed out informational pamphlets and even thumbdrives to attendees. During one of the workshops, I had the privilege of [touring by boat](#) Copenhagen's Middelgrunden Windfarm located in the Danish/Swedish Sound, aka the resund straight, which separates the Baltic Sea and Atlantic Ocean. Twenty turbines produce 40 MW of power for the city. Ironically, and perhaps sadly, most of Copenhagen's power is generated from [massive coal burning power plants](#) with coal shipped in from China.

Unfortunately the 15th Conference of the Parties did not produce a new treaty. China, India, Saudi Arabia, and of course the United States, among other developed nations did not allow a treaty to accord. Instead, the US and China cut a gentleman's deal and got other countries to sign on to it. Click [here](#) for a copy of the agreement.

The deal is a non-binding political agreement that collapsed the UNFCCC's standard operating procedures and protocol. Our delegation, like the thousands of other attendees who were refused access to the Bella on the last days, had resorted to vicarious online conference going. We watched the plenary on our laptops, followed tweets by Reuters and the Associated Press, and refreshed our browsers to read the latest by dynamic, connected bloggers. Here is what the deal [produced](#):

- (a) Nearly all countries agree to keep global average temperature from rising more than 2C
- (b) Transparency provision: Developed countries set clear carbon pollution reduction targets by 2020 and will, by the end of January 2010, publish the policies and actions each nation will take
- (c) The United States pledged to reduce carbon emissions by 17% below 2005 levels by 2020, the same amount in Waxman-Markey bill passed by the House in June 2009

COP15 in Copenhagen: A Personal Experience

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- (d) China pledged to cut carbon intensity by 40-45 percent below 2005 levels by 2020. The country will offset emissions by planting 100 million acres of forest, and produce 15% energy via solar
- (e) \$30 billion over the next 3 years to a global fund for poor nation's climate related disasters, such as drought, floods, and famine
- (f) The global fund increases to \$100 billion per year after the first 3 years lapses. Some of the money funds clean energy projects in developing countries.

None of the details of these bullet points have been ironed out. I feel as though these points are substantial steps, but they aren't incredibly sexy. It would have been a blockbuster if the agreement bound countries to comply with strong and new international laws. The COP16 will be held in Mexico City sometime in 2010, perhaps with enough momentum from Copenhagen a binding agreement will be produced, but I'm not holding my breath.

Michael Cote is an urban planner who focuses on climate change adaptation issues. He attended the COP15 with the generous support of the American Planning Association-International Division and sponsorship of Vermont Law School.

New Orleans, from page 9

areas. Not surprisingly, the relationship between these different plans was confusing; and many residents were understandably cynical about planning given the BNOB debacle.

The LRA's Unified New Orleans Plan (UNOP) was designed to integrate earlier plans into a single plan that would guide future reconstruction investment. UNOP was undertaken at both district and citywide scales to produce 13 district plans and a citywide plan. Previous neighbourhood planning efforts contributed to the district plans providing community based design and land-use planning recommendations. The UNOP citywide plan was framed around policy and regulatory mechanisms to prioritise rebuilding and prompt safer future development.

The Office of Recovery Management was established in January 2007 to coordinate the overall recovery process in the city. Seventeen 'target areas' were identified for investment to act as catalysts for future development. Securing the necessary funding to turn plans into action has been difficult. Moreover, those outside target areas are understandably concerned about their recovery prospects. There have also been a range of other sector- and neighbourhood-specific planning processes. Efforts are now being made to develop a 20-year citywide Master Plan that has the force of law – in an effort to remove politics from land-use decisions.

On the 10th of July 2008, the City Council unanimously agreed to ask voters to make an amendment to the City Charter to this end in a public ballot scheduled for the 4th of November 2008.

Where do things stand and what is the prognosis after three years of recovery planning? It would be a gross understatement to say that New Orleanians are frustrated with the slow pace of recovery. The core business district and more affluent neighbourhoods look 'normal.' But large areas of the city are derelict. Ad hoc rebuilding is occurring regardless of exposure to flood risks. Based on my interviews with many planners and professionals involved in the recovery process, it is clear that pre-Katrina vulnerabilities are likely to remain in place for the foreseeable future. Planning efforts to date may result in little more than marginal improvements to the city's sustainability and resilience. There is a compelling need to focus attention on the 'critical infrastructure' that needs to be put in place to secure a safer and better future for New Orleanians. All communities need robust critical infrastructure.

Critical infrastructure for sustainable, hazard-resilient communities

The term 'critical infrastructure' usually refers to physical assets that are essential for a well-functioning society, including power supply,

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telecommunications, water supply, public health facilities, etc. Katrina highlights equally important non-material forms of critical infrastructure that are fundamental for building sustainable, hazard-resilient communities.

Ecological infrastructure: Diverse, healthy and productive coastal ecosystems are essential for meeting the needs of coastal communities and providing vital goods and services, including a potentially life-saving 'eco-shield' against coastal storms. The loss of Louisiana's critical wetland habitat seems destined to continue despite general agreement on the need to restore these treasured coastal ecosystems.

Cultural infrastructure: Local traditions, customs and social memory about resource use enables people to respond to environmental feedback and build community cohesion. We need to learn from and secure the livelihoods of long-standing Louisianan communities, such as Cajuns, who have learned to live in harmony with and are attuned to the natural cycles of the region.

Social infrastructure: Strong social ties, norms and networks build trust that facilitates cooperation and community development. Rebuilding this infrastructure is crucial albeit extremely difficult in the face of the post-Katrina diaspora.

Political infrastructure: Transparent, accountable and devolved public decision-making processes are essential to empower communities. Dysfunctional institutions and fraught inter-organisational relationships have compounded response and recovery difficulties. Building social and governmental institutional capacity in the aftermath of Katrina is challenging but imperative.

Human infrastructure: Aware and capable citizens have access to resources, skills and knowledge, and are thus able to make wiser decisions about issues affecting their future. Efforts to rebuild the New Orleans school system through the Recovery School District master planning process offers hope for the future.

Economic and financial infrastructure: A diverse economy and access to affordable financial resources are essential to establish and maintain small businesses and pursue sustainable livelihood alternatives. Yet many businesses and some sectors remain in a precarious position despite three years of recovery effort.

Physical infrastructure: Resilient physical infrastructure and public facilities are required to meet community needs in the face of recurring hazard events. Much progress has been made in rebuilding flood-damaged physical infrastructure but much remains to be done. The cause of the levee failure has been examined, and repairs and improvements have and are being made. But concern persists about whether or not the targeted Category 3 level of protection will be achieved with these measures. No provision has been made to improve the levee system for hurricanes greater than Category 3.

Household infrastructure: Individuals need to plan and provide for themselves and their dependents so that they can become self-reliant in the face of adversity. However, in order to build household resilience, people need to know that the foregoing critical infrastructure is in place. At a basic level, many New Orleanians remain cynical about Government assurances that the levees are 'safe.'

In conclusion, the conditions that gave rise to pre-Katrina vulnerability appear to be entrenched despite extensive recovery planning and rebuilding. New Orleanians are desperately trying to rebuild this iconic city. But another major hurricane is inevitable. And, in the face of persistent vulnerability, its impacts could be even more devastating than those experienced after Katrina. Developing and safeguarding critical infrastructure requires transformative and developmental planning processes that empower communities to build 'layers of resilience' to cope with 'waves of adversity'. The 'drowning of New Orleans' thus underscores an age-old lesson for planners: 'Business as usual' is destined to perpetuate unsustainable and inequitable practices that entrench physical and social vulnerabilities that are brutally exposed by

Continued on Page 13 (bottom)

Sarkissian's Kitchen Table Sustainability Featured in New Podcast

By Beth Offenbacher

This past December, Australian community engagement practitioner and author Dr. Wendy Sarkissian was the special guest for PublicDecisions' popular PublicForum Book Talk program (learn more at www.PublicDecisions.com). Part of the PublicForum series, these book talks feature leading thinkers and practitioners whose work relates to stakeholder engagement. This podcast was particularly relevant given the recent United Nations' Conference on Climate Change in Copenhagen.

Sarkissian is the co-author of *Kitchen Table Sustainability: Practical Recipes for Community Engagement with Sustainability* (with Steph Vajda and Yollana Shore, Nancy Hofer and Cathy Wilkinson). Visit www.kitchentablesustainability.com for Wendy's blog and extracts from this book.

Published by Earthscan (2008), this timely book opens the door so that the theory and practice of sustainability can enter into the experience of the "everyday" and be released from the exclusive provinces of experts: planners, bureaucrats, scientists, intergovernmental panels, roundtables, cabinet and board tables. As the book explains, top-down approaches close the door to ordinary people, who, sitting at their kitchen tables, feel unable to have the informed

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hazard events. And technically-sound plans (often driven by well-intentioned 'outsiders') will fail if they are carried out in a hasty and context-insensitive manner. Notwithstanding the imperative to 'build back' quickly, measured steps need to be taken to ensure that recovery planning processes are founded on the authentic endorsement of all sectors of society. Only then can communities make wise choices about their future.

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conversations about sustaining our futures that every household needs to have. It proposes a model for participatory community engagement, education and development and provides both conceptual and practical tools for those working for and with communities who want to build a knowledgeable and truly sustainable society.

Sarkissian is passionate about our future, the future of work, of housing, of communities and of citizen participation and she is committed to finding spirited ways to nurture and support an engaged citizenry. She holds a Masters of Arts in literature, a Master of Town Planning and a Ph.D. in environmental ethics and has pioneered innovative planning and development approaches in an astonishing variety of contexts, which has earned her 40 professional awards. She has worked with senior managers and advisors to government departments and private enterprise, primarily in the urban, community, housing and development sectors. Widely regarded as a leader in her profession and acclaimed as a humorous and thought-provoking speaker, Sarkissian is a Fellow of the Planning Institute of Australia and the award-winning author of nine books on housing and community engagement. Her other new books include *SpeakOut: the Step-by-Step Guide to SpeakOuts and Community Workshops* (Earthscan, 2009) [see <http://speakoutplanning.com/>] and *Creative Community Planning: Transformative Engagement Methods for Working at the Edge* (Earthscan, January 2010).

The podcast from this PublicForum Book Talk features an insightful exploration of practical approaches for transforming community engagement with sustainability — and what you can do in your community to promote and support these critical conversations. We've posted this free audio interview on our website at <http://www.publicdecisions.com/library.html> and it will soon be available in iTunes.

Beth Offenbacher, Chair of the APA International Division, is a public participation consultant to the planning industry at Waterford, Inc. (www.waterfordinc.com) and she is also chief learning officer at PublicDecisions.com, which serves planning professionals and others whose work involve stakeholder engagement.

Working Internationally: Some Thoughts from the Field

by R. Jerome Anderson

Seen from a distance, working on international assignments may seem exciting, adventurous or even glamorous. Up close, such assignments may have their drawbacks, such as a lack of water and electricity (often unpredictably), severe sickness with poor toilet facilities and hours spent in bone-jarring travel over barely passable dirt roads. For those who wish to pursue an international planning career, following are a few observations garnered from seventeen years of international work.

Not All International Work is Equal

The first thing to know about international work is that it comes in many varieties. Planners, mostly with solid civil engineering or architectural backgrounds, found work in the real estate boom in the Gulf States. As Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and the other states of the Gulf Cooperation Council diversified their economies and created extensive real estate developments, many jobs for planners were created in Riyadh, Doha, Abu Dhabi, Dubai and the other cities of the region. Working conditions in these cities are generally good – modern, air-conditioned office buildings abound, hypermarkets and other stores with western products are numerous, and restaurants offering every conceivable kind of food beckon. While the recent recession has definitely reduced the number of such jobs available, as the economies of the region regain their strength more positions should be available. Planning jobs in these cities generally require a strong engineering background, and for those who have combined engineering or architecture with planning, work in the Gulf is definitely something to consider.

Development assistance offers another kind of work for planners. Donor agencies, such as the United Nations and the World Bank, employ planners in the many projects and programs they fund. Bilateral donors such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Great Britain's Department for International

Development both hire staff to manage programs and hire consultants to implement programs. Most work done for USAID is performed by for-profit contracting companies, who in turn hire consultants on a project basis, although these firms do maintain core staffs to write proposals and manage projects. Planners may find work in these firms, either in the home office or, most typically, in the field on the projects funded by the donors. These projects may be located in relatively pleasant environments or they may be in rather difficult places. For instance, Croatia had a number of USAID-funded projects in the 1990s, and consultants there enjoyed the beauty of the country and the European lifestyle. Increasingly, however, projects take place in post-conflict zones such as Iraq, Afghanistan and Southern Sudan. Living conditions in these countries, especially outside the capital cities, can be rather primitive, not to mention dangerous.

Preparation for International Assignments

As noted above, work in the Gulf requires a solid technical background, either in civil engineering or architecture, with an advanced degree in planning. Most advertisements for planners in the Gulf seem to require an engineering education. Given the amount of infrastructure that must be installed in these projects, the engineering requirements are not surprising. For those with the appropriate background, the Gulf



Juba, Southern Sudan (Photos by Author)



Faizabad, Afghanistan (left), Nairobi, Kenya (center), Doha Skyline (right)

has been, and may yet possibly be, a place of lifetime employment for many.

For those considering a career in development, preparation is different. Generally a solid social science undergraduate major is required. Study of a foreign language, either Spanish, Portuguese, French or Arabic should be included. Most positions in international development require at least a master's degree, so the planning degree, at the master's level, should be earned after completing a generalist (or possibly area studies) undergraduate degree.

International work is varied, and the type of skills needed depend on the kinds of programs being funded, and funding is dependent on the political winds blowing in the capitals of the various countries that fund development projects. When the Soviet Union collapsed, a number of land and planning-related positions became available. Urban planners were called on to design new land-regulation regimes and help cities move to demand-driven land use instead of administratively-directed land use. Also at this time, land titling and registration was seen as critical to market-oriented development, and many positions were open for individuals with knowledge of, or experience in, land titling and registration. Later, after land registries were established, property taxation was seen as necessary to help municipalities, so property tax specialists found themselves in demand.

How do planners prepare for such a changing job market? One way to do so is to obtain both a generalist planning degree, for flexibility, but develop, in addition, one or two specialties. For example, much work is being done in housing by groups such as UN-Habitat or Cities Alliance. A solid planning degree with a

specialty in housing would prepare a person to work for these agencies or on projects funded by them. Another skill often seen in demand is geographic information systems (GIS). A good GIS analyst/programmer can often find international work on projects as diverse as food security, climate change, desertification or infrastructure planning. Because there is much emphasis on the agricultural sector in development, a planner with good rural land use planning skills may find work as well. There is a special need for individuals who understand the linkages between the urban and rural sectors.

Getting the First Job

Often it is impossible to find a position without experience, but recent graduates do not generally have experience, and so find themselves in a difficult situation. One solution to this conundrum is to enter the Peace Corps or similar volunteer-type programs. Many development consultants have spent time in the Peace Corps, and that experience has given them the edge they needed on the job market. There are two times when entry into a program like the Peace Corps may be advantageous. One is after completion of the undergraduate degree. If a person is undecided about the course to pursue in graduate school, a couple of years in the field often gives the perspective and insight needed to select an appropriate graduate program. Alternatively, if a person has selected a graduate program while still an undergraduate, the time for a Peace Corps-type opportunity may be after completion of the master's degree. One real benefit of a Peace Corps assignment is the real-world, international experience it gives. Once a person has completed one international assignment, it is much easier to obtain another one.

Working Internationally, From page 14*Baku, Azerbaijan**Drawbacks to Working Abroad*

As mentioned in the first paragraph, there can be real hardships associated with international work, especially in more remote or dangerous places. But those are not the only difficulties. There is much waiting for international work. Donor agencies announce future projects, consulting firms recruit for those projects, candidates submit their resumes and then nothing happens. Donor schedules are delayed, funding priorities change, and the consultants who need the work may be left hanging for weeks or even months, waiting for the email or phone call that says “you are hired, we’re sending you the plane ticket to your next assignment.” A potential development assistance consultant must have both the psychological and financial resources to endure the often endless waiting that is a part of the international consultant’s life.

Another drawback is separation from friends and family. While some positions in the field are accompanied, many are not, and a person must either bear the cost of bringing a significant other to the field (if that is possible, which it may not be in conflict zones), or enduring the separation such assignments bring. This is an emotional strain that should not be overlooked when considering a career in development. While some couples do manage to maintain dual careers in development, this is rare, and projects on which both partners can work are even less frequent.

A third drawback can be difficult situations with

counterparts. While some counterparts welcome foreign assistance, others do not. Just because a person is an “expert” from overseas does not mean the advice offered will be accepted or heeded. Counterparts often have their own agendas that differ, sometimes markedly, from the neatly drawn work plans of the foreign advisors. The foreign policy goals of the donor country that initiated the particular project may not be accepted by the unwilling government officials in the host country. Any planner who engages in international consulting should be prepared to be ignored or even rejected by host country counterparts.

Conclusion

International work is not for everyone. It can be, at once, exciting, boring, dangerous, difficult, satisfying, frustrating and intensely rewarding. There are few joys in life than can match the effective transmission of new skills and the growing competency seen in counterparts who really wish to learn and improve their own lives and the conditions in their countries or communities. Such positive experiences keep a career in development alive, and the motivation to keep doing development strong. But such rewards come with a price, and anyone who wishes to enter the field must be willing to pay the price.

*Al Faisaliah Tower
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia*

**Thanks
to the authors
of the articles
in this issue of
Interplan!**

The Tenth Asian Urbanization Conference

A Report by George Pomeroy

Amidst the globalizing context of Hong Kong, the Tenth Asian Urbanization Conference was convened August 16-19, 2009. Organized locally and hosted by the Center for Urban Studies and Urban Planning at the University of Hong Kong, the conference was a resounding success, with over 120 participants presenting over 80 papers or posters, and drawn from 21 countries and territories.

Local organizers Professors Anthony G.O. Yeh and Roger C.K. Chan put together an impressive program of scholarly sessions, complemented by several technical tours and a banquet with a cultural program. Plenary session presentations included “Planning for Coordinated Development Between Hong Kong and the Pearl River Delta” by the Planning Director of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Mrs. Ava S.Y. Tse Ng and “Rethinking Asian Cities and Urbanization: Four Transformations in Four Decades” by Professor Yue-man Yeung of The Chinese University of Hong Kong. The conference opened with welcoming remarks from Professor Lap-Chee Tsui, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Hong Kong, Professors Yeh and Chan of the University of Hong Kong, and Professor Ashok K. Dutt, representing the Asian Urban Research Association.

Scholarly papers broadly addressed a variety of topics under the umbrella of urbanization in Asia. Representative papers among the 80+ presented included “The Evolution of the Spatial Structure and Hierarchical Pattern of the Chinese Urban System” (Ruibo Han and Huhua Cao of the University of Ottawa, Canada), “Spatial Plans and City-Region Governance in China” (Fulong Wu and Fangzhu Zhang of Cardiff University, United Kingdom), and “An Analysis of Spatial Structure of Dhaka: Associated Problems and Issues” (Ishrat Islam of Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology, Bangladesh).

On several occasions during the conference, Professor Ashok K. Dutt, Professor Emeritus of Geography, Planning and Urban Studies, University of Akron, was recognized for his scholarly and organizational leadership in



Attendees awaiting the Opening Address to the Tenth Asian Urbanization Conference.

accomplishing these ten Asian Urbanization Conferences. Dutt is among the founding members of the Asian Urban Research Association (AURA), the umbrella body organizing these conferences and has the remarkable distinction of being the only person to attend each of the ten conferences.

There were three technical tours provided by conference organizers. A half day technical visit was made to the Hong Kong Planning and Infrastructure Exhibition Gallery, the CBD, and the Wan Chai Redevelopment District. A second technical visit was made to Macau to examine heritage tourism planning and the impacts of rapid casino development in the former Portuguese colony. An third and overnight technical visit was made to selected parts of Guangdong Province, including the booming cities of Guangzhou and Shenzhen, where site visits were made to the CBDs, planning bureau and exhibitions of each. The tour was ably organized by University of Hong Kong Ph.D. students Huang Dingzi and Tang Yangzhou, who have planning experience working in both the Guangzhou and Shenzhen Planning Bureaus.

The Eleventh Asian Urbanization Conference is scheduled to be held in Hyderabad, India in December, 2011. Hosted by Osmania University, the lead organizer is Professor Kalpana Markandey of the Department of Geography. Hyderabad is India's fourth largest city and world renowned as a center for Information Technology (IT) industries, with

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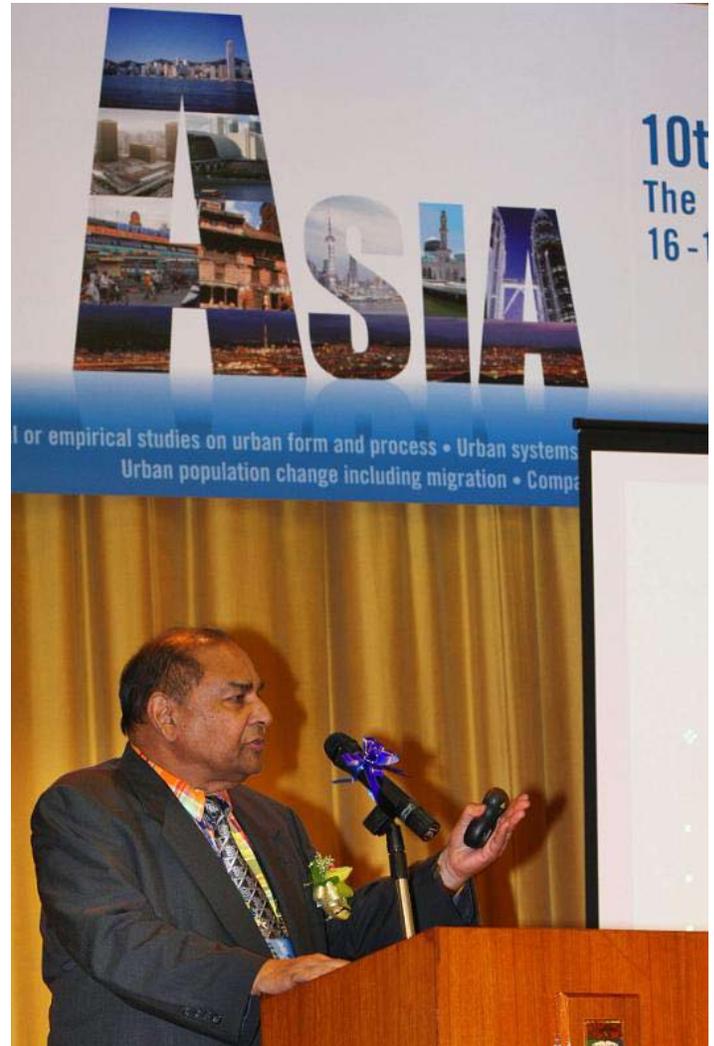
*The Tenth Asian Urbanization Conference
Continued from Page 17*

substantial investments being made by Microsoft and dozens of other multinational IT companies. A conference website and announcement will be distributed soon. In the meantime, contact Professor Kalpana Markandey, Dept. of Geography, Osmania University, India for further details at kalpanamarkandey@yahoo.com.

The Asian Urbanization Conferences are organized via the Asian Urban Research Association (AURA). AURA's mission is to take part in the work regarding the themes of the Asian Urbanization Conferences, in the dialogue between highly qualified and active scholars in the field from various parts of the world, and expand the network of international professional contacts, as well as to exchange views and experiences, analyze the situation of Asian urbanization and the policies of different countries for their urbanization processes, grasp new trends of research, evaluate urban and regional planning approaches and the processes per se, and to present research papers for discussion and selection for publication. For more information on AURA, please consult the <http://webspaceship.edu/aura> or contact the George Pomeroy, Secretary of AURA's Executive Committee at gmpome@ship.edu.



Conference Organizers Dr. Roger C.K. Chan and Dr. Anthony G. O. Yeh of The University of Hong Kong.



Professor Emeritus Ashok K. Dutt, University of Akron, addressing conference attendees. Dr. Dutt has attended each of the ten Asian Urbanization conferences.

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Congratulations Chuck!

Chuck Billand is APA-ID's nominee to the AICP College of Fellows!

Late last year, APA-ID sought nominations for candidates of the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Certified Planners. A nomination committee was convened to review nominees and make a recommendation to the APA-ID leadership team. The APA-ID Leadership Team thanks members Bill Pugh, Jayne Engle-Warnick, and Thora Cartledge for their hard work in reviewing nominations and putting together the nomination package. As a result of the hard work of the nominating committee, this year's APA-ID nominee will be recognised at the APA National Conference in New Orleans as Mr. Charles ("Chuck") Billand, FAICP.

During his 45-year career, Chuck has developed housing finance programs, practiced participatory neighborhood planning, led community redevelopment initiatives, and mentored municipalities in many parts of the world – from Helwan, Egypt to New Delhi, India, not to mention a number of American cities, including recent work in Little Rock, Arkansas. His projects have successfully revitalized neighborhoods and upgraded slums, and his stakeholder-driven planning has helped transform the planning and international development professions in other countries. Chuck's professional practice has been special in the way that it has bridged domestic and international contexts, transferring innovative tools and experience while benefitting disadvantaged communities at home and abroad.

Chuck has served as the President and Managing Partner at TCG International, LLC (TGCI) since 1996 where his work focuses on housing and community development in cities throughout the world. Chuck is a founding member of the American Institute of Certified Planners (1976). This June, Chuck will also celebrate his 20th year as a member of APA-ID.

The APA-ID leadership team thanks Chuck for his longstanding support for the division and for his contributions to the international practice of planning. Be sure to congratulate Chuck when you see him at the APA National Conference in New Orleans!

Urban Design with Light

A light show gives new life to the façade of the ferry terminal in Auckland, New Zealand.



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