

INTERPLAN

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International Division

Making Great Communities Happen

2021 SPRING

A Publication of the International Division of the American Planning Association

Which Way Forward?

Future of the Planning Industry in Post-Conflict Syria

Beyond the Informal: Latin American Perspectives

Turks and Caicos Islands National Physical Development Plan

Humanitarian Planning Committee: Webinar Spotlight

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A PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DIVISION
OF THE AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION

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American Planning Association

International Division

Creating Great Communities for All

INTERPLAN

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I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples

- Mother Teresa

Growth for the sake of growth is the ideology of the cancer cell.

- Edward Abbey

CHAIR'S COLUMN

Well, we have had a year. For many of us, it has been a year of isolation, frustration, and loss. It was not the year we wanted and the challenges we face have not ended. I must say, however, that everything felt a little easier after January 20th. I feel like a weight has been lifted; I am more focused, more productive. It feels like what I do matters more, that the value of my work is not being washed away by forces of the universe. There is light at the end of the tunnel.

It has been a year of change for APA, as well. The planning profession has for many years recognized the importance of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). But this year it became recognized as central to everything we do. There is a new AICP continuing education requirement for EDI. Indeed, most APA webinars now include at least some discussion of EDI. I see the impact around me: in the work programs of metropolitan planning organizations, in the requirements for grants, and in the conversations we have every day. Division members should know that this change is something the APA Division Council has long promoted and some of these changes have been in the works for several years. We have made an impact on the organization.

Members of the International Division must recognize the crucial role we play in advancing EDI. The challenges posed by the pandemic have led APA to back away from some of its international work, focusing on what it views as core activities. While this is understandable, the APA International Division views engagement with the developing world as an essential part of EDI advocacy. Close to 700 million people globally remain in extreme poverty, currently defined as an income of less than \$1.90 per day; these numbers are expected to show a substantial increase in 2020 for the first time in 25 years. I feel it is not possible for the APA to pursue equity as a core value without including programming in the developing world in its workplan.

It is critical that the APA find ways to highlight international examples in its programming. On issues ranging from transportation to resilience to COVID response, state of the art of practices can be found outside the United States. In order to meet its commitment to advocating for excellence in planning and providing our members with the tools to meet the challenges of growth and change, the APA needs to highlight best practices throughout the entire world, including in the developing world.

The International Division encourages its members to play a role in promoting engagement, education, and activities focusing on the developing world within APA. Even something as simple as participating in a webinar can help us to demonstrate how much interest there is in these issues. We always welcome members to share their ideas with us for new topics and actions. ■



Michael Kolber, AICP, is a senior planner for the City of Trenton, NJ. He worked for the NJ Departments of Environmental Protection and Community Affairs and served overseas as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Burkina Faso and as a Monitoring Specialist for the International Rescue Committee in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Domestically, Mr. Kolber served as a volunteer in the United Way of Greater Union County and the Manhattan Borough President's Office. Michael has an M.S. in Urban Planning from Columbia University.

Humanitarian Planning Committee Webinar Spotlight

Lyndsey Deaton

Chair of the Humanitarian Planning Committee, Vice Chair at Large

We have the privilege of presenting two great speakers, Emily Clifton and Dr. James Miller for the Humanitarian Planning Committee's bi-monthly webinar. This is a free webinar series that is open to the public focused on supporting planning professionals in the humanitarian and development areas. Our presenters have summarized their key points in the spotlight articles below. To learn more, please contact the Chair, Lyndsey Deaton directly at Lyndsey@uoregon.edu.

Be sure to sign up to watch International Division Chair, Michael Kolber, present our next webinar, "Tuungane: Community-Driven Reconstruction in DR Congo" on March 23, 2021 at 7:00 pm EST.

The Humanitarian Field Today: Opportunities and Challenges for Planners

by Emily Clifton

Director of Humanitarian Program Portfolio, Save the Children

The objective of humanitarian action is to save lives, alleviate suffering, and maintain human dignity during and in the aftermath of crises, as well as to prevent and strengthen preparedness for the occurrence of such situations. Humanitarians provide programs to address the impacts of conflict, disease, natural disaster, and famine—all of which can increasingly be attributed to climate change. Over the past two decades, the humanitarian field has seen urban crises that are larger in scale and frequency than ever before. Humanitarian crises are typically considered acute responses, but the average population displacement now lasts nine years! These new challenges directly correspond to planning professional's skills in developing place-based solutions engaging diverse communities of stakeholders, balancing short-term and long-term impacts, and developing and evaluating alternatives. Now more than ever, planners are needed to support humanitarian programs.

Today, there are 26 million refugees in the world—8 million more than in 1995 – and 46 million internally displaced people (IDPs), a tenfold increase in the same period. All in all, we are tracking a 100% increase in the number and duration of crises in the past 15 years resulting in 168 million people in need of humanitarian assistance as of 2020. While the amount of funding

The HPC mission is to integrate planning professionals into the humanitarian assistance and development fields in order to support stakeholder-driven, comprehensive, and sustainable solutions to crises-affected communities.



Large parts of the village Eita succumb to flooding from the sea in Kiribati. (Getty image)

DIVISION INITIATIVE

directed toward humanitarian responses, aid, and actions has increased from \$2 billion 20 years ago to \$30 billion in 2020, it is not enough to meet the scale of the challenges..

More needs to be done to address the root causes of humanitarian crises, which are increasingly a messy mix of conflict, climate shocks, poverty, and social inequalities. “Nexus” is a popular buzzword in the industry, referring to the intersection of humanitarian works, development, and peacebuilding. This nexus combined with the longer duration, increased frequency, and progressively urban characteristics of humanitarian crises needs new solutions that look holistically at broad impacts, but are also situated in the environmental context of each community. I hope that planners will join the humanitarian coalition and help us save lives.

More needs to be done to address the root causes of humanitarian crises, which are increasingly a messy mix of conflict, climate shocks, poverty, and social inequalities.

Adapt Humanitarian Shelters to Cultural Living Patterns

by Dr. James Miller

Assistant Professor at Western Washington University

Historically, humanitarian responses apply “outside” planning ideas and concepts while ignoring the local knowledge that affected communities possess. The post-disaster reconstruction process following the 2010 earthquake in Haiti followed this trend. I lived in Haiti for five months and worked directly with local communities to understand how they functioned and how their daily patterns intersected with the planning and design of post-disaster settlements in Leogane and Port-au-Prince. I wanted to learn if and how the communities would adapt the settlements to their traditional way of life. I found that the community’s traditional settlement patterns were important to their ability to produce and restore social relationships (social capital).

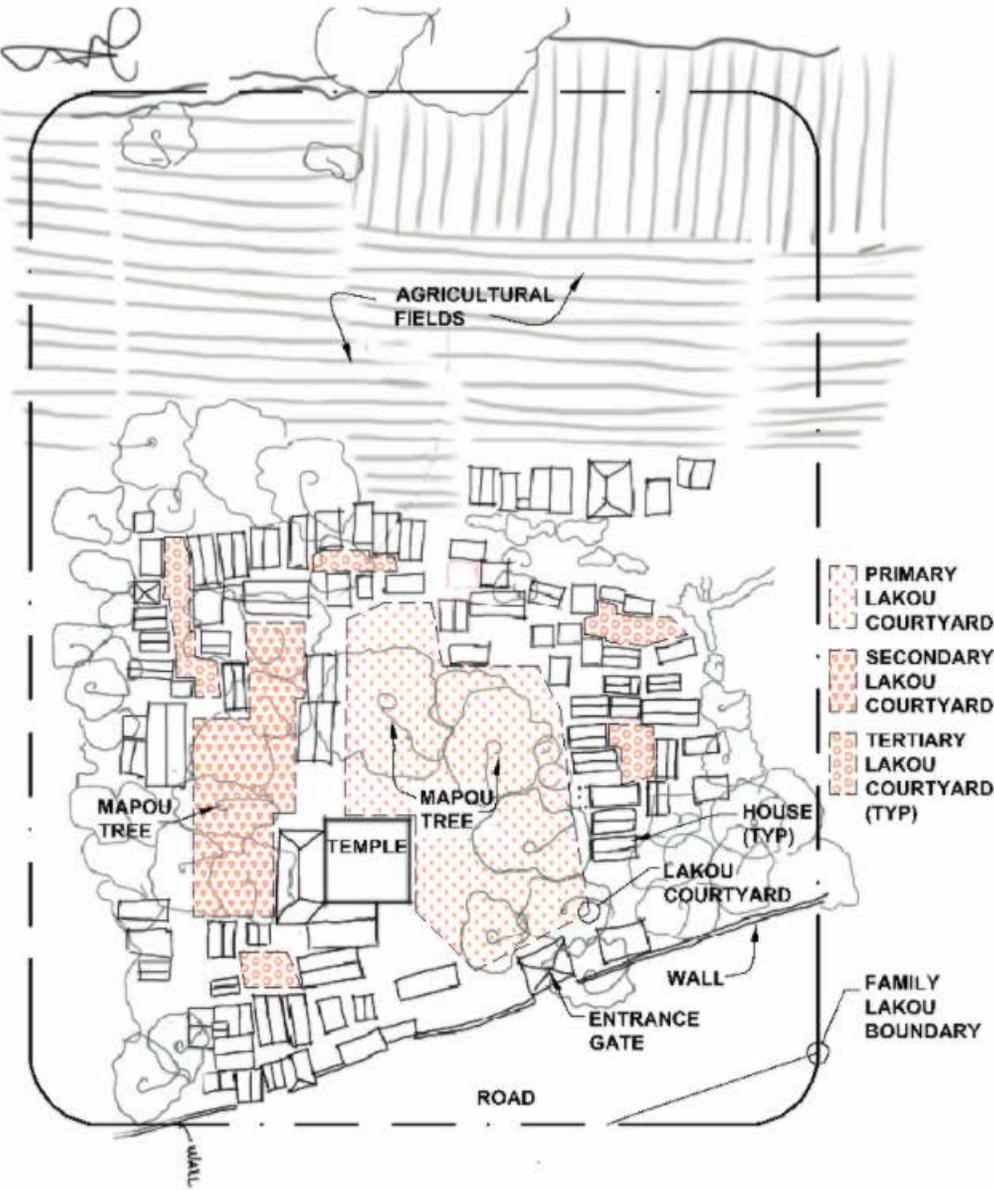
Over 40 interviews with Haitian residents, I learned about the deep meaning behind the lakou—the primary Haitian traditional settlement pattern that reflects a familial social structure. The lakou consists of several small structures arranged on a common property with layers of transparency. The size, arrangement, and orientation of the structures are all driven by the organization of the family unit. For example, some lakou may be at the scale of an entire area development because it has iteratively grown to incorporate a large extended family over multiple generations. Other lakou may only be at the scale of an 1/8-acre site because it supports a nuclear family. By investigating the experience of Haitian residents residing in a range of scales, I was able to learn how this traditional pattern emerged despite the “one-size-fits-all” approach of the humanitarian response efforts.



Post-disaster settlements in Haiti.
(Source: James Miller, 2012)

Research findings were triangulated through behavior mapping of the interior courtyards and other observations. The findings revealed the local residents in Haiti adapted the post-disaster settlements to function as a traditional lakou. This case study validates the resilience of the lakou, the inclusive nature of the lakou system, and the important role it plays in the production of social capital within post-disaster communities in the study areas. Traditional settlement patterns are critical for

post-disaster community wellbeing and to support social capital. Planners are needed in humanitarian response so that these place-based traditions and cultural values are incorporated into the planning and design solutions. To learn more about this study, please check out my full article in the International Journal of Disaster Resilience in the Built Environment (2019) called "Post-disaster recovery through the evolution of the lakou, a traditional settlement pattern." ■



Site plan depicting layers of lakou. (Source: James Miller, 2012).

Establishing Japan Committee

Jing Zhang

Vice Chair of Communications

On February 18th, I sent a message in the Division's e-news looking for members who are interested in joining a shared interest group about Japan. To date, 12 people signed in -a good start. While the program is still in its inception stage, I have asked myself some questions to get my thoughts straight and to keep all informed.

Why establish a Japan Committee?

The short answer: I like Japan.

The long answer: There are a lot of things to learn from Japan. Japan, among other things, has impressive transit-oriented land use, pedestrian-friendly streets, and hazard management programs, as well as human-scale architecture and infrastructure. More importantly, Japan demonstrates a decent marriage between Eastern culture and Western democracy, setting a good example for the rest of East and Southern Asian countries, especially China. On a personal level, being Chinese, I feel intuitively at home with Japan. Japan carries the essence of classical Chinese culture, such as that stemming from the Tang dynasty (618-907). Notable aspects include Buddhism, the layout of ancient cities, and Kanji, adopted logographic Chinese characters.

What is the purpose?

My first thought is to bring like-minded people together to discover cross-cultural learning potential. The committee will decide its purpose, which I believe will evolve as we proceed. My personal take is to learn more about Japan, to find like-minded colleagues, and to create interesting projects.

What will the committee do?

Again, it is what we hope to define as a group. Definitely we will review a variety of publications and consider partnerships among planning schools and professionals in both countries, maybe culminating in international planning tours in the long run. As one of my colleagues rightly pointed out, we are the same but shaped by different experiences, making us good at some things and less so at others. It would be beautiful to help American planners learn from what Japanese planners are good at and to help Japanese planners learn from what American planners are good at.

If you are interested in joining the group, let me know. My email is jingzhangaicp@gmail.com. ■

Division's International Planning Excellence Award - Africa

The Division presents the 2021 International Planning Excellence Award to honor planning projects that show exemplary leadership and inspiration in planning across the world. The 2021 Award has been designated for projects located in African countries exclusively.

The 2021 Award has three categories:

- *Community and Regional Planning Award*
- *Infrastructure Planning Award*
- *Environmental Planning Award*

It also has two special awards to recognize the excellence of a project in a particular aspect of planning:

- *Excellence in Heritage Preservation Award*
- *Excellence in Advancing Social Equity Award*

Submission Deadline: March 31, 2021

Contact: jingzhangaicp@gmail.com.

More information on international.planning.org/committees-projects/awards

Beyond Jean Gottmann

Where Japan is at and will be heading for

by Takafumi Inoue



Takafumi is a planner at KUROFUNO Design Holdings Inc. His current work focuses on creating a diverse and inclusive environment through spatial and real estate developments, which also properly reflect the existing local identities and cultures to maximize the uniqueness that each place has. He holds a Master of Urban Planning from Harvard Graduate School of Design with a concentration in urban design and real estate development, and a B.A. in Policy Management from Keio University – Tokyo, Japan, where he graduated as a valedictorian.

Through his writings, Jean Gottmann succeeds in developing a concise framework that explains and conceptualizes overgrown metropolitan areas, defined by the relentless pursuit of wealth due to capitalism and an unprecedented diffusion of human inhabitation accelerated by the advancement of technology like mortalization. Needless to say, this point has been demonstrated throughout history. What is more noteworthy, however, is his idea that the urban is a reflection of humanity. He believed strongly in liberalism on the basis of religious and ethical views.

One interesting feature for Japanese ethical view is that Japanese have historically been acquiring the ability to control their own ego. For instance, during the Edo period, Samurai had to release their land by the order of the Tokugawa government, which required the separation of management from ownership, and thus, had to shift from pursuing capital accumulation to virtue accumulation. These moral and ethical views are unique compared to dry-field and pastoral civilizations in which the core ideology puts the finest focus on pursuing expansion and growth, while overlooking the importance of finite natural resources. Japan, perhaps, can be a moral hinge between various civilizations in terms of coexistence of civilization and nature.

However, Japan also has a serious issue to wrestle with. It is undeniable that Japan has been struggling with the notion and implementation of diversity and inclusion of immigrants given it's relatively homogeneous nature of the society. In addition, Japan has been making a positive move towards addressing the yawning gender gap but the generation gap still exists.

With an aging population and a low birth rate, Japan's population has shrunk, resulting in a strong need for obtaining a workforce from outside the country mainly for economic development. Though Gottmann says that migrants come into megalopolitan areas from the surrounding regions, it is never easy for Japan as the hurdle to accept immigrants has been high due to a variety of factors such as policy, cultural difference and so forth. Tokyo once had a framework, which had been hugely influenced by the idea of Megalopolis, but was limited to a special area and did not carefully ponder the necessity of discussion around diversity and inclusion of people. Again, the discourse and its implementation around diversity and inclusion have been lagged behind when compared to other global peers. Japan perhaps misused Jean Gottmann's idea of Megalopolis just to survive the depopulating society, which was not ethical ironically.

Public participation and involvement of people in the process of urban planning and policy making are a basic principle of democracy. Given that public participation plays an important role in fermenting and consolidating the concrete vision towards the future of Japan, planners, with the public officials and community leaders, should focus on building a sustainable and inclusive participatory ecosystem, in which public value can be enhanced by public participation and vice versa.

Beyond Jean Gottmann - Japan can and needs to do better. ■



hands in prayer

by Lorenzo Mastino, AICP



Born in Rome, Italy, Lorenzo studied planning at Arizona State University and lived in the experimental city of Arcosanti, where he embraced the thought of architect Paolo Soleri. He then moved to Nevada, where he implemented the state's first form-based code for the City of Las Vegas. Since 2020, he is a planner with Douglas County, near Lake Tahoe. He is the Vice President of Nevada APA.

In the remote regions of the Gifu and Toyama prefectures you can find Shirakawa-go (白川郷) and Gokayama (五箇山). The two towns, which are only 10 miles from each other and unravel along the Shogawa river valley, gained UNESCO world heritage site status in 1995. Their unique feature are the traditional structures called Gassho-Zukuri (“hands in prayer”), which derive their name from the distinctive A-frame construction that features a steep pitch and thatch gable roofs harvested from the surrounding area. Despite being made mainly of wood, some of the structures, which still function today as homes, shops, and inns, are 250 years old!

BRING ME THERE



Street in the historic Tokyo neighborhood of Asakusa (浅草), which in the Edo Period (1603-1867) was the leading entertainment district located outside the city limits. Away from the commercial arteries, pedestrians and vehicles alike utilize the narrow streets. Buildings vary in age and style, and just like the infrastructure are tightly squeezed next to each other at the right-of-way line. White painted stripes divide vehicular and pedestrian traffic and, aided by the vertical elements that edge the pavement, they influence the low design speed. Looking east you can catch a glimpse of the iconic Skytree, the tallest structure in Japan, located across the Sumida River.

Takayama (高山市) is a city of nearly 90,000 people located in the Gifu prefecture. Nested in between mountain ranges, it is one of the gateways to the remote villages of Shirakawa-go and Gokayama. Takayama developed as a castle town during the Sengoku Period (1467-1615), and became a renowned center for arts and crafts, particularly the ones based on wooden materials. Along the Miyagawa River and its greenways are markets, restaurants, and the historic district of Sanmachi Suji, with streets lined by traditional wooden structures.





For centuries, Osaka has been regarded as Japan's economic hub due to the strategic coastal location and proximity to connected waterways. Today, the Osaka Business Park offers a stark contrast with the ancient walls and moat of the castle grounds. Several wall belts wrap the restored main castle tower, and some of the stones that compose them are solid pieces as heavy as 130 tons, like the legendary Octopus Stone. Following one of the waterways, it is possible to reach Dotonbori (道頓堀) the largest nightlife and entertainment district.



Turks and Caicos Islands National Physical Development Plan

by Katie Poppel



Having worked on a wide range of domestic and international projects, Katie focuses on multifunctional public spaces that bring about economic development to benefit people, their health and wellbeing and the ecosystems that surround them. She brings a background in both urban planning and landscape architecture to all projects, allowing for a broader understanding in a multidisciplinary approach to all projects. Her recent work in South Florida, the Caribbean, and Vietnam specifically addresses elements of climate change and resiliency. As a talented designer and ardent photographer, Katie's human-centric approach brings sensibility and meaning to a place. She lives and works in NYC for EDSA.

What follows is an overview of the 2020 Turks and Caicos Islands National Physical Development Plan (NPDP). This plan was completed by a team of expert consultants led by landscape architecture and planning firm EDSA. The TCI NPDP is an excellent case study for furthering planning for both the built and natural environments; the present and the future; and truly tying together the public and private realms of planning and design.

The 2020 Turks and Caicos Islands National Physical Development Plan (TCI NPDP) is a plan for the people, developed with the people. The world is experiencing global health challenges, climate change, social unrest, rapid growth, and changing economies that will impact the tranquility of the Country. The last 10-year NPDP was completed in 1987. Now more than ever, the Turks and Caicos Islands needs an updated, forward-thinking, culturally focused National Plan to guide future growth, development, and preservation of the archipelago.

A series of recommendations and strategies are included in the plan. They focus on five key themes: (1) Equity: Empowering ALL People of the Turks and Caicos; (2)



All photos and graphics used in this article are provided by the author

PROJECT EXHIBITION

Resilience, Sustainability, and Multifunctionality: Promoting Economic and Environmental Diversity; (3) Island linkage: Creating Physical, Psychological and Emotional connections across the entire Country; (4) Nature as Beauty: Protecting the Environmental Jewel; and (5) TCI Culture: Preserving the Heritage and Authenticity of TCI. The next step is to implement the strategies towards a brighter future that will ensure the Country's prosperity for many years. **PROJECT LOCATION** The Turks and Caicos Islands (UK Overseas Territory) are a part of the Lucayan Archipelago. The islands are located southeast of the Bahamas and north of Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

PROJECT SCOPE (DESIGN INTENT)

The Intent of the NPDP is to strike a balance of economic, social, physical, and environmental objectives that sustain the natural beauty and serenity of the Islands, while utilizing its natural resources in a sustainable manner and providing for responsible development, growth and the foundation of the updated National Physical Development Plan. The plan is meant to serve as the strategic planning tool aimed at guiding future decisions and outcomes towards economic prosperity, social equity and justice, and the preservation of the natural environment.

The NPDP is meant to be a strategic planning tool for facilitating and giving directions to decisions so that it can contribute to economic efficiency and to achievement of social goals and objective, while preserving the natural environment. Most importantly, the NPDP will be a strategy for sustainable development that brings together the aspirations and capabilities of government, civil society, and the private sector to create a vision for the future, and work together tactically and progressively towards it.

PROJECT SIZE

The TCI NPDP is an archipelago-wide, national plan. The Turks and Caicos Islands are comprised of 40 cays and/or islands, with the majority of the almost 40,000 population on six islands. The archipelago land area covers 160 square miles, while the total area including water is 230 square miles.

PROJECT CONTEXT

The Ministry of Infrastructure, Housing, and Planning of the TCI Government issued an invitation to tender for the preparation of a ten (10) year National Physical Development Plan (NPDP) for the Turks and Caicos Islands in February 2017. This will be an update to the previous 1987 National Physical Development Plan. The NPDP will offer TCI a ten-year outlook while also providing a broad strategic overview of all major issues relevant to national development planning. The plan is meant to serve as the strategic planning tool aimed at guiding future decisions and outcomes towards economic prosperity, social equity and justice, and the preservation of the natural environment – the jewel of the Turks and Caicos.

The project was divided into five phases: review and assimilate existing data, gap analysis and initial strategy focus, site visits and public consultation, draft national physical development plan, and the final draft national physical development plan.

Phase 1+2

Review and Assimilate Existing Data + Gap Analysis and Initial Strategy Focus Phase 1 and 2 formed the Site Inventory and Analysis Report. The report included context, analysis of information and statistical data, literature review of components utilized to build the



Grand Turk, Turks and Caicos Islands



- Park Open Space
- Park Local
- Park Reserve
- Park National
- Agriculture
- Tourism / Hospitality
- Commercial Local
- Mixed Use
- Infrastructure / Civic
- Industrial
- Special Industrial
- Airport
- Future Community Development
- Residential High Density
- Residential Medium Density
- Residential Low Density A
- Residential Low Density B
- Residential Low Density C

1 mile





National Physical Development Plan. The consultant team elected to use GIS data to analyze the Turks and Caicos Islands archipelago in tandem with other documents, resources, and data. An important document that was folded into the vision and themes was TCI's Vision 2040 defines short, medium, and long-term goals focused on economics, governance, social, and built and natural infrastructure to create a sustained, more livable future for the Turks and Caicos Islands.

The consultant team was able to squeeze in a few in-person site visits and interviews before the global pandemic changed the course of site visits and interviews. The team's scope of work did not include generating new data. The data provided by TCIG ultimately formed the base, or foundation blocks, for the project.

The team identified key development issues; these development issues stem from the research, discussions, conversations with governmental, private stakeholders, and TCIslanders.

The consultant team also composed an analysis methodology to map potential suitability to move forward to the strategic focus and analysis. This section highlights the consultant team's most imperative layers of data to be analyzed individually and together in order to establish the most suitable areas within the TCI archipelago to continue or expand development and those areas to be conserved, preserved, and limited for human development. The team has developed and proposed a draft analysis methodology to map potential suitability.

Several data gaps were found during the data collection stage. The team utilized applicable data and understandings from our experience to economic

benchmarks from our in-house data as well as our experience in demand forecasting to determine select inputs that underly the demand modeling. The methodology for applying these inputs is discussed within each section of the economic assessment.

Together, these analyses and summaries combine into the Site Inventory and Analysis Report: the baseline of understanding for moving forward with the planning stage. The report is the backbone for the subsequent documentation of the National Physical Development Plan (NPDP).

Phase 3

Site Visits and Public Consultation. In order to facilitate a baseline understanding of the islands, site visits, interviews, and meetings with community leaders, government officials, stakeholder representatives and the public at large were originally planned throughout most phases of the project.

However, the COVID-19 global pandemic impacted the public consultation phase by limiting the number of in-person interviews and meetings. Consequently, the public outreach process needed a stronger technological component, with a multi-faceted website (planning.gov.tc) including surveys, recorded meetings, social media links, interactive mapping, and general comment forms. The team also utilized videoconferencing to the fullest extent to reach the public, key stakeholders, and government officials. The team received almost 1,000 survey responses and hosted over 100 meetings and discussions, in-person, phone, and video chat, with TCIslanders and other interested parties. The public, stakeholder, and government official input were invaluable to the growth and development of the plan.

The intersection of increased natural disasters and their intensity, a slew of development with lackadaisical restrictions and new building technologies, and the effects of globalization have had a detrimental effect on the environment of TCI.

Phase 4+5

Draft and Final National Physical Development Plan
During this phase of work, the “heavy lifting of the interpretation” occurred and the draft of the NPDP was generated.

The team then moved into physically drafting the National Physical Development Plan, creating six (6) island framework plans, six (6) island land use plans, as well as eighteen (18) area action concept plans (AACP) for the islands of Providenciales, North Caicos, Middle Caicos, South Caicos, Grand Turk, and Salt Cay.

Phase 4 wrapped up with a series of seven (7) in-person presentations on the six islands which constitute the scope of the study. These provided valuable input from local residents and stakeholders, while phase five will produce a set of specific deliverables within the final National Physical Sustainable Development Plan.

After publicly posting the draft NPDP report for eight (8) weeks, the consultant team gathered further suggestions and recommendations from TCI Islanders and governmental entities. The NPDP was refined and presented it in a series of six (6) in-person meetings throughout the various inhabited islands, as well as the Physical Planning Board, Planning Department, and Review Committee, and, ultimately, the TCI Cabinet. The NPDP was approved by TCI Cabinet 18 December 2020.

IMPLEMENTATION METHODOLOGY

The NPDP is only as strong as its implementation mechanisms. The implementation process is multifaceted. First, the NPDP proposes an updated understanding and process to the Development Plan Approval Process; additional steps include starting the process with the Planning Department, inter-departmental collaboration, and select other conditions that should be considered for each proposal. Secondly, the NPDP recommends adding to the Planning Department structure with additional staff and additional advisory committees. The NPDP also recommends that the Physical Planning Board diversify its members’ backgrounds. Next, the focuses specifically on policy and project implementation and priorities – from

an archipelago scale and an island scale. Lastly, the NPDP includes mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation throughout the 10-year lifespan of the NPDP.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT AND CONCERNS

Planning, especially as an integral part of the process of design, is becoming ever-more apparently needed in the Turks and Caicos Islands. The last NPDP was completed in 1987; TCI experienced a development (mainly tourism) boom after the completion of the 1987 plan, as well as numerous natural disasters. The intersection of increased natural disasters and their intensity, a slew of development with lackadaisical restrictions and new building technologies, and the effects of globalization have had a detrimental effect on the environment of TCI. The update to the NPDP needed to be fully thought-out, even if that is not what was in the project scope. EDSA put together a team equally balanced between the economic and environmental sides of sustainability and resilience. The TCI NPDP has laid out important concerns and priorities for TCI to tackle and grow in a sustainable manner for both humans and the natural environment.

COLLABORATION (CLIENT + TEAM)

The TCI NPDP was a project for the Government of the Turks and Caicos Islands. The TCI NPDP multidisciplinary consultant team worked with many departments and divisions within the TCI Government, but most closely with the Planning Department. EDSA led the project, but it was a team effort. ATM studied coastal conditions and risk and proposed development compatibilities on ranked scales. Blue Dolphin Research and Consulting brought knowledge and skill as it related to using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and physical attribute mapping. EDS added local knowledge and considerations to the team as they relate to engineering and infrastructure. Lambert Advisory brought economic expertise in both large- and small-scale project initiatives. TrafTech Engineering examined the status of the traffic conditions and future alternatives on the islands. Zago Consulting added expertise in the tourism industry, which is especially prevalent in the Turks and Caicos Islands. Richmond Financial served as local liaison to the team. ■

Which Way Forward?

Charting the Future of the Planning Industry in Post-Conflict Syria

by Michael Coulom



Michael Coulom is a planner and master's candidate in the Department of City & Regional Planning at UC Berkeley. His research focuses on post-conflict planning and community development. Originally from Hartford, CT, Michael has extensive experience as a public involvement specialist on transportation megaprojects. He speaks English, Spanish, and Arabic.

This article is an excerpt of a report completed with the support of the APA International Grant.

Weaponization of Planning in Syrian Reconstruction

Ongoing violence in Syria is severely impacting the human and built environments. Over 30 percent of the nation's housing stock is estimated to be damaged or destroyed, with additional disruption to public health, education, and utilities services (The Toll of War 2017). While these and other threats and actions have displaced 12 million Syrians since 2012, ongoing government reconstruction programs are exacerbating the national housing crisis and weaponizing planning to implement unpopular urban renewal programs ("Syria Refugee Crisis Explained" 2020).

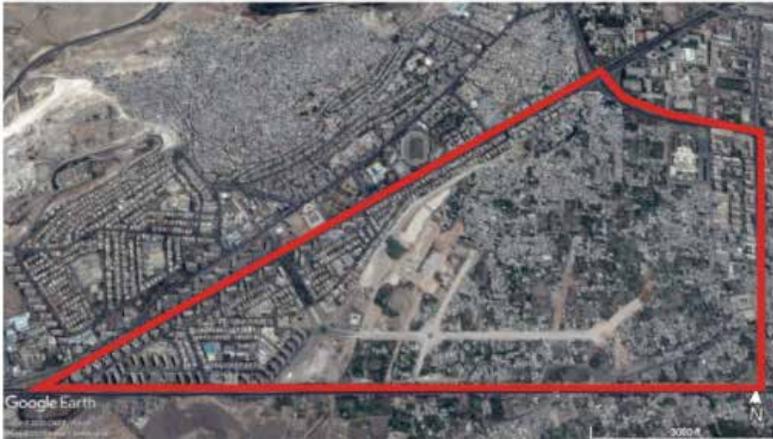
The government of Bashar al-Assad has declared redevelopment zones in districts throughout the country with little opportunity for public comment or engagement. The government's flagship redevelopment project, Marota City, has evicted 6,733 households since 2014 and razed over 500 acres of land including intact housing, orchards, and pasture (Karam 2018). Like other declared redevelopment zones, property owners are entitled to compensation in the form of shares in a joint stock corporation (Haugbolle 2018). For owners of smaller homes and agricultural property, however, the

value of allotted shares is typically insufficient to afford a comparable replacement, and threats of violence preclude many owners from claiming their property (Hanna 2018).

The Future of Syrian Planning, Scholarship, and Student Life

The impacts of the war and the Assad regime's weaponization of planning threaten the pipeline of future planners, beginning with elementary school and continuing on through higher education and early employment. One in three Syrian schools have been destroyed and 2.1 million children inside Syria are not enrolled in formal education (Education Section Facts and Figures 2018; Evaluation 2016). Many now school-aged children have never enrolled in formal education, posing long-term challenges to literacy and computational skills development.

Educational disruption is acute among university students and others seeking advanced degrees. Safety and security concerns, compulsory military service for university-aged males, internal displacement, and emigration present significant obstacles to accessing higher education in Syria (Dillabough et al. 2019). Enrollment and graduation rates among Syrian students enrolled in Lebanese universities have plummeted, and the Faculty of Architecture at



May 7, 2016

An extensive new road network stretches towards the eastern end of the neighborhood. A new roundabout is visible at the center, facilitating east-west and north-south circulation, including to the main highway to Beirut, which forms the southern boundary of the district. Most of the neighborhoods fields and orchards have been razed.



May 2, 2017

Properties ancillary to the new road network are demolished, beginning with those at the center of the neighborhood.



May 28, 2020

Little progress has been made since late December of 2017. Some more buildings along the site periphery have been demolished. Cars visible in the parking lot of the Marota City administrative building indicate occupancy.

Aleppo University—where many Syrian planners receive their training—came under direct attack in 2013 during an aerial bombardment that killed at least 82 people and caused many students and faculty to flee to Jordan (Watenpaugh et al. 2014; Sheikh 2016; Sands 2013).

The pipeline of professional planners has been further disrupted by the absence of meaningful training and professional development opportunities. The collapse of the Syrian economy has delayed or put a stop to most public and private infrastructure and community

development programs, and international sanctions prohibiting foreign engagement in Syrian reconstruction activities have constrained almost all international agencies from aiding in reconstruction beyond the provision of shelter and very limited instances of infrastructure and utility rehabilitation (UNHCR – Syria: Main Activities 2020; Ways out 2019). One young Syrian architect and engineer remarked that “Youngsters don’t have a chance to do anything other than the monkey work” on ongoing reconstruction projects like Marota City (Interview 2019). Without adequate training and work

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experience, the next generation of planners, architects, engineers, and builders may be less equipped to manage national reconstruction efforts.

Recommendations

Focus groups conducted by Syrian engineer and architect Ammar Azzouz and Abeer Abdelal of Young Syrian Architects in late 2017 identified the need for additional academic and educational support, opportunities to connect with international researchers, online courses in construction project management, knowledge transfer between English and Arabic, and training opportunities outside of Syria (Azzouz and Abdelal 2019). Individual American architects, planners, and professional associations can support meeting these needs through the following:

1) Publish resources in Arabic and disseminate them broadly among Syrian audiences.

While targeted primarily to professionals in the United States, institutions like the American Planning Association (APA) have published ample resources in English concerning issues adaptable to the Syrian context. The APA and similar institutions should consider working with Syrian professionals to prioritize the most useful resources for translation or adaptation into Arabic, including print and digital reports, video recordings and podcasts to reach wide audiences across Syria and other Arabic-speaking countries.

2) Promote professional exchange by sponsoring participation for Syrian professionals and students at in-person conferences, webinars, and fellowship programs.

Syrian and American professionals would benefit from two-way knowledge exchange and interaction. The APA and participating agencies and corporations should consider fundraising and professional sponsorship for travel, lodging, and registration costs for Syrian participants, as well as promoting participation in online programming and sharing conference recordings.

3) Provide scholarship support for Syrian students inside Syria and abroad.

Some universities and academic institutions in the United States and Europe have responded to threats against Syrian students by providing scholarship and fellowship opportunities to displaced scholars. Foreign support of Syrian students may take the form of financial

assistance towards the cost of tuition, supplies, travel or accommodation, mentoring, or professional development programs.

4) Monitor Syrian planning initiatives and speak out when prompted.

American and other non-Syrian planners must seriously consider their involvement in Syrian reconstruction activities if and when international sanctions are relaxed. Lack of political reform and the Assad regime's continued approach to expropriative urban renewal strategies mean planning in Syria will likely continue to be used for violent means into the foreseeable future. Following the lead of Syrian practitioners and scholars, foreign planners and other professionals should carefully monitor ongoing planning and reconstruction activities in Syria. Professional associations, institutions, and corporations can exercise their experience in government lobbying to advocate their home governments for policies that advance just and equitable development in Syria. This they should only do with policies and programs promoted or vetted by trusted Syrian partners with popular support. ■

Aleppo, Syria (Source: Unsplash M G)



Beyond the Informal: Latin American Perspectives

by Alican Yildiz



Alican Yildiz is a PhD Candidate at College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning at University of Cincinnati. His research practice focuses on plan, design and management of socio-spatial environments (e.g. public spaces, social housing, and food markets) and their structural/reciprocal relationship with urban life. With the support of the APA International Division Grant, Alican investigated those issues in the context of Mexico City's resiliency and sustainability strategies.

This article is an excerpt of a report completed with the support of the APA International Grant.

The field study took place in Mexico City's San Miguel Teotongo informal settlement to explore the coordination or mismatch between the current physical conditions of an informal settlement and the physical planning principles (e.g. water access, environmental quality, and improved mobility system) articulated in the government's resilience and sustainability plans for Mexico City (CDMX). I also mobilized the study framework to assist with the Graduate Urban Design and Architecture studio at UC School of Architecture and Interior Design, led by Gregory Marinic, and in collaboration with Pablo Meninato of Temple University. Ultimately, this research project aimed to deliver interdisciplinary planning lessons, and to examine the ability of government-required master plans versus organic/informal urbanism to advance environmental resilience and social welfare.

The studio team visited the San Miguel Teotongo informal settlement on February 6th, 2020 to conduct observations and collect data at the particular sites. Located in the northeast of CDMX Region, the neighborhood was formed at the end of 1980s, by families mostly from Oaxaca, Mexico. This settlement movement was due to the local real estate brokers' offer of cheap lots for the domestic migrant families who were leaving rural areas to find decent employment opportunities within the rapidly growing CDMX region.

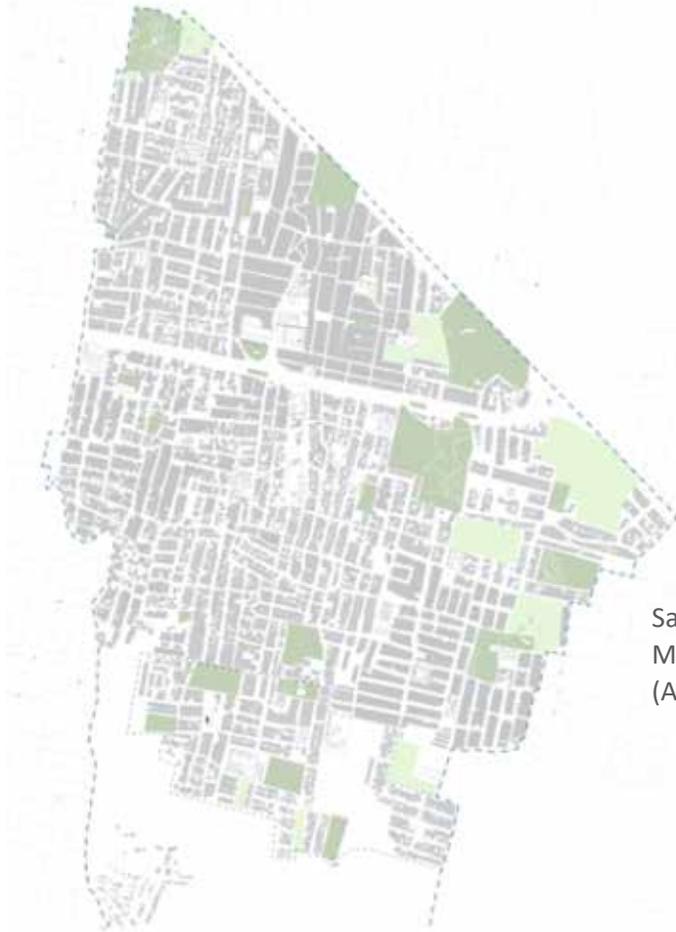
Like other new settlements in CDMX, San Miguel grew beyond the local government's control, and is still expanding through self-built and unregulated construction projects. Currently, the settlement's population has between 80,000 – 100,000 residents, but is changing seasonally per job-related intra-emigration waves within the Mexico City conglomeration.

During the field study, I participated in the students' site visits along with conducting my own targeted field observations. That process allowed me to understand the existing environmental conditions as well as to document the available physical planning interventions articulated in the CDMX's resilience/sustainability strategy. The results revealed that the people of San Miguel have adopted local solutions to water and transit shortages. Across the neighborhood, I was able to document that many self-built houses had installed rainwater catchment units and water tanks in order to overcome water access issues. The conversations with the residents unveiled that the households were able to have that modular water infrastructure on the rooftops with the financial and planning assistance of the CDMX administration.

This is not an enormous overhaul of the existing ecological conditions through a top-down and neighborhood-wide water infrastructure project, but an incremental and successful precedent of spatial



San Miguel Teotongo – Site Conditions and Water Tanks on Rooftops (Author, 2020)



San Miguel Teotongo Building Mass and Open Green Spaces (Author, 2020)



A minibus vehicle in San Miguel Teotongo (Author, 2020)



An Underutilized Public Park in San Miguel Teotongo (Author, 2020)

pragmatism that professional planners can mobilize to deliver direct positive impacts in the lives of informal settlement residents. The existing transit relations in and out of San Miguel Teotongo also demonstrate how the local people have creatively approached transit connections. For example, the minibus system operates through the presence of formal and informal urbanism by connecting to the formal public transportation modes outside of the neighborhood. The connection beyond the neighborhood is regulated by the formal transit planning authority. Yet, the presence of the minibuses in San Miguel and their routes are regulated by the drivers, who are also the neighborhood residents. The neighborhood also does not have any physical infrastructure to designate or signal pick-up and waiting locations for minibuses.

The residents overcame intra-mobility challenges by using bikes to reach informal minibus stops and other amenities within San Miguel Teotongo. This formal-informal pairing also supports the mobility pillar of the CDMX's resilience/sustainability strategy through decreasing demands on private vehicle use, encouraging cycling and walking as well as contributing to goals to improve air quality. Nevertheless, the CDMX administration has not yet been able to demonstrate a tangible attempt to deliver the environmental quality pillar of the CDMX's resilience/sustainability strategy through tactical and incremental physical interventions.

For instance, San Miguel Teotongo has a relatively high density of open green areas, yet these lack even basic maintenance and safety measures such as lighting and trash collection. The settlement also lacks green infrastructure projects and programmatic elements to reactivate and increase the social use and benefits of such public spaces. The site visits also pointed to the existing and growing dissatisfaction among residents about the physical conditions of public spaces and the unavailable social amenities such as kindergartens, public pools, and sports centers. These aspects revealed a mismatch between the overall environmental quality of San Miguel Teotongo and the physical planning principles articulated in the CDMX resilience/sustainability strategy. However, the findings of the field studies do not suggest that CDMX's resilience/sustainability strategy failed, given the relative achievements of tactical urban interventions within the framework of water resilience, air quality, and improved mobility. Moving forward, these research implications generated practical guidelines

for the students in the graduate studio to develop their design proposals. As such, comprehensive urban design concepts for San Miguel Teotongo and social housing proposals are developed with a programmatic approach that regards social and ecological contexts. This research driven pedagogy was helpful to utilize planning principles to inform an architectural production through materializing the CDMX resilience/sustainability strategy and embracing the informal settlement aspect of San Miguel Teotongo.

Thus, the lessons learned from the Mexico City study offer tangible guidelines to professional planners. Resilience/sustainability plans require ongoing organizational and/or institutional support to provide funding and timelines for implementing and monitoring physical planning goals. The lack of particular physical developments in San Miguel and the residents' feedback revealed that CDMX's strategic plan falls behind in that regard. This underscored the importance of collaboration within various built environment professions (e.g. city planning, urban design, architecture, landscape architecture) through the interdisciplinary methods and practices. It is also a professional imperative and an ethical responsibility for planners to utilize both master plans and local engagement to enrich the everyday lives of our clients: the diverse communities in the world's emerging urban centers. ■

A Short Interview on Bangladesh



Nazmus Sadat serves as the student representative for Region VI in the Student Representative Council of the APA. Mr. Sadat graduated from Pabna University of Science and Technology in Bangladesh.

Question 1: How will you introduce urbanization in Bangladesh to US planners?

Nazmus Sadat: Bangladesh is an emerging country in South Asia with its booming economy. Investments in industrialization are increasing as the economy shifts away from agriculture.

Unlike the U.S. where planners have considerable influence on urban development, Bangladesh relies more on other professionals. At the local level, civil engineers and architects often lead the development, and at the national level, economics plays the central role. It is worth mentioning that Marxian economic doctrine is popular in Bangladesh's political culture.

Question 2: What about the cities?

Nazmus Sadat: Bangladesh has a large population, bigger than that of Russia, Mexico, or Japan. However, its territory is about the size of the state of Illinois. Overcrowded cities create overwhelming problems, such as pollution, waste mismanagement, and excessive traffic congestion. In Bangladesh, public transit, bicycles, buses, tuk-tuks, rickshaws, taxis, and private cars are all viable modes of transportation, while most people use buses and rickshaws to meet their travel needs, especially in small towns.

Question 3: How do you think US planners can contribute to the urban development in Bangladesh?

Nazmus Sadat: In the age of globalization, knowledge sharing can help solve problems in new and exciting ways. Compared with Bangladesh, the U.S. has experienced a long period of urbanization. American planners can share their expertise and lessons learned from urbanization in different parts of the country.. Bangladesh can benefit from collaborating and sharing knowledge with the American planning community. ■



Urban Oasis Project

The Urban Oasis: Integrated Development of Hatirjheel Area is a wetland restoration project. It is a vital component to safeguard a large part of the city from flash floods and to bring back the waterfront legacy once this city endured. This project covers an area of 311 acres. Infrastructural and landscape components include expressway, overpass, lakeside walkways, benches, viewing decks, floating amphitheater, children park, water park, viaducts, taxi terminals, etc.

The project aims at:

- *Preserving low-lying floodplain areas of Hatirjheel*
- *Establishing connectivity among major urban mobility corridors*
- *Reintroducing water-based mode of transportation*
- *Integrating the north and the south part of the city*
- *Bringing back the waterfront legacy by restoration and conservation*

Once a symbol of environmental degradation, the Hatirjheel area now symbolizes a remarkable example of environmental restoration and remains a source of inspiration for environmental restoration throughout Bangladesh.

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