

INTERPLAN

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Entre Mer et Fleuve Senegal's Historic Urban Landscape *by Samantha McLean*

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Interplan is the flagship publication of the *APA International Division*. The newsletter provides a space to share stories and information about international planning professionals, efforts, and events. It is published three times per year - once before the National Planning Conference (NPC), once after NPC, and once at the end of the calendar year.

To submit articles, news, and photos, please review the editorial guidelines at <https://goo.gl/wzqEGu>. To view past issues since 2002, please log in to your account and go to <https://www.planning.org/divisions/international/newsletter/>



CHAIR'S COLUMN

by Tim Van Epp, AICP

APA 2018 National Planning Conference in New Orleans

The International Division (ID) endorsed six sessions and the ID Executive Board was proactively involved in organizing and moderating three of these sessions – Planning Livable Communities for ALL Ages, International Coastal Resilience Planning, and International Smart Cities Planning. All sessions were successful and well attended. We also had a well-attended and successful Annual Business Meeting and ID Reception.

Annual Business Meeting

The main topic of the Annual Business Meeting was our planning to engage the enormous student component of our membership, now standing at around 1,000 out of a total membership of 1,300. See Elections below for more information. Other topics addressed included: (1) our plans for events in the coming year, including webinars and especially the National Planning Conference in San Francisco in April 2019; (2) participation in the APA task force to prepare a Knowledge-Based Governance paper on an overarching APA international strategy; (3) APA's activities relating to the Global Planners Network and World Urban Forum; and (4) our ongoing Divisions Council Research Grant for Planning Livable Communities for ALL Ages.

Trifecta of Elections and Appointments

The ID called for nominations in three different categories, including Student Representative, Regional Coordinators, and our full suite of Executive Board Officers. The ID has decided to establish a new elected/ voting position on the Executive Board for a Student Representative to coordinate student engagement initiatives and liaise among the students, the ID Board and APA Student Representative Council. In addition, the ID is setting up a network of appointed Regional Coordinators to provide a local home base in regions where our student and regular members tend to be concentrated around the country. Eventually, we hope to extend this network to overseas regions as well. Lastly, our full suite of voting Executive Board officers are up for election. Nominations for all three categories of officers were due by June 30. Results will be communicated to all Division members.

APA National Planning Conference in San Francisco, April 2019

The year 2019 will mark the first time that there will be an international track: “International, Comparative and Global Planning”. As a division, we need to rise to the challenge and put on a significant number of high quality sessions that attract and fully engage Bay Area, US and international participants. A number of session concepts have been put forth by ID members so far; a few of these include:

- Planning Livable Communities for ALL Ages – Phase 2: Housing
- Smart Cities in the Asia-Pacific Region
- International Port Development (including mobile workshop to Port of Oakland)
- Sustainable and Green Cities Planning at the International Financial Institutions
- Sustainable Development Goal 18 and the New Regional Agenda
- Working Abroad

If you would like to contribute in some way to any of the above session proposals, please contact the Division Vice Chair for Events, Marc Lewis-DeGrace, at marc.lewisdegrace@gmail.com. If you would like to propose another session of your own, the APA session proposal portal is open from June 1-25, 2018 at <https://www.planning.org/npc19/>. Guidance on how to prepare a winning session proposal is provided at <https://bit.ly/2kLx2Vl>.

APA International Survey

APA's International Knowledge-Based Governance Task Force is conducting a short survey to assess member interest in international activities and related topics to support its development of a knowledge-based governance paper evaluating the association's international program. The deadline for responses was June 13.

Emerging ID Initiatives

We have begun discussions on several new initiatives, including: (1) working with an Indonesia presidential advisory committee on a new approach to using public private partnerships to develop infrastructure; (2) providing capacity building on planning basics and organizing a summit on coastal/ climate resilience in the Caribbean; and (3) supporting regional planning conferences and internships in Central and Eastern Europe in partnership with the University of Indiana.



WINDOW TO THE WORLD

Backpacking in Bonifacio: Lessons Learned on the Road

by Beatrice “Tippe” Morlan AICP

Tippe Morlan, AICP, is a Community Planner for Park City Municipal Corporation with a background in community development, sociology, and resort town planning. When Tippe is not working, she can usually be found traveling the world. She can be reached at: beatricemorlan@gmail.com.



A case may be made for the idea that wanderlust is an inherent part of every city planner’s personality. By the nature of our trade, we all, to some degree, have a desire to see and understand the ways in which cities develop and function all across the globe. And so it has become my personal hobby to find ways to see the world while maintaining my day job as a municipal city planner. With a fair amount of “comp time” earned from many late night public meetings and a fourteen work week, I have managed to visit 60 countries throughout my career so far.

Most recently, I had the pleasure of visiting the Philippines. I found a super cheap airfare to Manila and didn’t have a reason to say no. It’s really not hard to justify these kinds of trips which have enriched my knowledge of what cities can and should (or even should not) be. I was able to visit for a week, and while I was fortunate enough to visit the beautiful beaches of Palawan and the turquoise rivers and waterfalls of Cebu, the most interesting place I explored was the master planned community of Bonifacio Global City - or BGC for short.

Urban Identity

BGC is a very dynamic and bustling part of metropolitan Manila full of skyscrapers and expatriates. It's also a city with a fascinating urban identity crisis.

BGC was built upon what was once Fort William McKinley, a 25 square kilometer US military base. After the Philippines gained independence from the US, the fort was renamed to Fort Bonifacio and was used as the headquarters of the Philippine Army.

Today, BGC has many other names and is also known as Fort Bonifacio, The Fort, or Global City. To muddle things even further, BGC is technically under the administration of the city government of Taguig within Manila, and Wikipedia tells me that the local governments of Makati and Pateros have claimed jurisdiction for this area as well.

Public-Private Redevelopment

The 1990s brought much change to the area when 240-hectares (or just under 600 acres) of the Fort was turned over to what is known as the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA), a development corporation established by the Philippine government through the Bases Conversion and Development Act of 1992 with a mandate “to help strengthen the Armed Forces while building great cities” (1), and “to facilitate the conversion of former US military bases and Metro Manila camps into productive civilian use” (2). BCDA partnered with the Bonifacio Land Development Corporation to develop and maintain this entire city-within-a-city. BGC is effectively a case study in public-private partnerships and government sponsored master planned communities.



Commercial Success

According to its website, “Bonifacio Global City is now one of the premier business and residential districts in the country, with a combined gross floor area of 1.8 million square meters to be built within the next three years.” Indeed, many cranes and dotted the skyline of towering skyscrapers that I saw there. BGC as it exists today is completely unrecognizable as a former US and Filipino military base. In fact, from my perspective as a tourist, the City Center area along its High Street almost feels like the Santa Monica Third Street Promenade. An evening on High Street is full of chain-store coffee shops, fountains, and plazas buzzing with people eating dinner, shopping, walking their dogs, and listening to street musicians. It honestly felt like I was visiting a new city at home in the USA.

During my trip, I was fortunate to meet up with an old college friend who works with the Urban Land Institute in the Philippines and also lives in the neighborhood. After having an impromptu walking tour of the City Center and learning about the fascinating history of BGC, we had dinner in the hidden bar in the back room at Pink's Hot Dogs (yes, the famous Los Angeles Pink's Hot Dogs) and made our way to a hidden hangout inside the back storage room of a 7-Eleven on the first floor of one of BGC's many skyscrapers. These are amenities and experiences that can be found in any vibrant urban city across the globe. It was amazing to see how much a city like BGC has to offer its residents and visitors alike.

While it can be difficult to figure out exactly where you are when you are in BGC with its layers of identity and history, this booming new city is a great example of creating value, especially in terms of real estate and experiences. This is a city which has grown, built up from empty fields and unused military property within the last decade alone. Its success as a redeveloped area should be noted, and if any planner should find themselves in Manila in the future, BGC's High Street is definitely worth a stop.



TAKE ME THERE

Between Sea and River: Senegal's Historic Urban Landscape

by Samantha McLean, LEED Green Associate

Samantha McLean is a globally minded professional, researcher, and LEED Green Associate with a passion for creating and supporting resilient communities. She is currently a Fulbright grantee in Saint-Louis, Senegal. Samantha has a Master of Community Planning from the University of Cincinnati and a Bachelor of Arts in International Affairs from the George Washington University. Read more about Samantha's experiences as a Fulbright grantee and view her portfolio at samanthammclean.com. She can be reached at samantha.m.mclean@gmail.com.



View of Ile de Saint-Louis from the Langue de Barbarie across the small arm of the Senegal River. Source: Ji-Elle, Wikimedia Commons.

Saint-Louis, Senegal, home to the Ile de Saint-Louis, a UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS), is defined by its built and natural environment. In the international media, it is often dubbed as the ‘Venice of Africa,’ as the Senegal River delta permeates the city’s landscape and historic architecture line its streets. Just as with Venice, the city is vulnerable to the effects of climate change. After completing my graduate thesis on the potential for using green infrastructure in the WHS, I moved to Saint-Louis on a U.S. Student Open Study Fulbright grant. While my thesis explored employing environmental resources to build resilience, I now aim to explore how climate change planning can consider Saint-Louis’ natural, built, and intangible heritage. I use the UNESCO Historic Urban Landscape Approach as my guide.



Aerial view of Saint-Louis. The UNESCO World Heritage Site is outlined in white. Source: Hotel Cap Saint-Louis; Modified by Author

Between Sea and River, Between Past and Present

When asked what makes Saint-Louis unique, you will hear many Saint-Louisiens say “entre mer et fleuve” (between sea and river) – the Senegal River and the Atlantic Ocean. Its rich historic fabric only bolsters the city’s unique environmental setting. Formerly the capital of Senegal and French West Africa, the city boasts colonial architecture, in varying states of conservation. It was and continues to be a hub for arts, culture, and music, in addition to artisanal fishing. Saint-Louis is 250 kilometers north of Senegal’s current capital, Dakar, and is the administrative capital for the Saint-Louis region. Three main areas compose the city, located in the Senegal River delta: the Ile de Saint-Louis, the Langue de Barbarie, and Sor. The Ile de Saint-Louis, the UNESCO WHS, in the middle of the Senegal River, is separated from the Atlantic Ocean on the west by a narrow 300-meter-wide peninsula, the Langue de Barbarie.

Over the years and into the 21st century, the Ile de Saint-Louis has struggled to preserve its historic buildings, while simultaneously facing environmental challenges. The city of Saint-Louis was identified as one of the African cities most threatened by rising sea levels associated with climate change (CLUVA 2013). The communities on the Langue de Barbarie, home to fishermen, are most affected by coastal erosion caused by rising sea levels. Over 50 families have already been relocated inland after the sea swept away their homes. A compromised estuarine ecosystem also threatens the city. In 2003, a four-meter breach was made in the



Langue de Barbarie in order to relieve river flooding and direct it into the Atlantic Ocean. Today, the breach has widened to over three kilometers. This manmade breach has disturbed the natural flows of the river and ocean, as well as the surrounding habitat.

Historic Urban Landscape Approach

To date, much heritage preservation and planning in Saint-Louis has been focused on the UNESCO WHS' built heritage. However, climate change threats require that Saint-Louis take a more dynamic approach in heritage preservation and urban planning. It is vital that communities are engaged in the effective management of heritage. Putting people at the center of heritage management recognizes that heritage is an integral part of society, playing an active role in communities (Court and Wijesuriya 2015).



Senegalese boy looks towards the Atlantic Ocean among the destruction caused by it on the Langue de Barbie. Source: Author

The 2011 UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) supports this notion. It defines the HUL as “the historic layering of cultural and natural values and attributes, extending beyond the notion of ‘historic centre’ or ‘ensemble’ to include the broader urban context and its geographical setting.” It includes “perception and visual relationships,” “social and cultural practices and values,” and “the intangible dimensions of heritage as related to diversity and identity.” The HUL Approach integrates intangible, built, and natural heritage into planning interventions thus improving long-term sustainability (van Oers and Roders 2012).

Saint-Louis’ Historic Urban Landscape

The first step in the HUL Approach is to conduct a comprehensive survey of heritage resources in the area. There is a lot of literature concerning the UNESCO-classified built heritage, so I was interested in learning more about heritage as defined, classified, and lived by local community members.

I surveyed community members, of all ages, in five neighborhoods: the two residential neighborhoods on the Ile de Saint-Louis and the three neighborhoods on the Langue de Barbarie. I had originally wanted to complete community mapping activities with the interviewees, but I learned quickly that many community members did not visualize space in a two-dimensional way. I should note that the community mapping activity worked well with younger generations! To engage community members, I worked with a translator to translate the interview from English into Wolof, the primary language here.

We met interviewees in their homes, on the street, in restaurants, and at their workplace. We were careful to phrase questions in a culturally appropriate manner. Rather than asking, “Where are important heritage resources in your neighborhood?,” we asked questions like, “Where do you spend most of your time and why? Where do you go for work/food resources/etc.? Why are you proud of your neighborhood? Where are important areas in your neighborhood for your ancestors?”



*High school students participate in community mapping activity.
Source: Author*

These interviews yielded great insight into the cultural values and identifies that are not found in heritage preservation plans or architectural inventories. I learned about the importance of “grand places” gathering areas and religious sites for the Islamic brotherhoods in Senegal. I observed and listened to fishermen explain their daily routine and how their great-grandfathers used to walk an hour across sand to the oceans edge, the same edge that now abuts houses. While anecdotal, the insight from these interviews contribute to an understanding of the historic urban landscape and what it means to residents. My goal is to produce a report and maps of heritage resource identified by these communities. I am also using historical accounts, photographs, and neighborhood plans to support my understanding of the landscape.

Implications for Planning

Preserving heritage in Saint-Louis in the coming decades must extend beyond the WHS-centric static preservation plans and building standards. Climate change is shaping the historic urban landscape and thereby affecting the integrity of not only classified built heritage, but also intangible and natural heritage. Drastic changes to the environment and continued relocation of communities are inevitable in Saint-Louis as the sea encroaches and as such, leaders will need to engage community members in answering:

- How the aspects of the current historic urban landscape can be preserved
- How important elements of cultural identity can be incorporated into the new/changing landscape
- How the inevitable loss of landscape can be honored

These questions are not only important for heritage preservation, but for sustainable development in the city. A community member’s capability to interact with heritage is directly tied to their well-being (Hodder 2010). As I have seen through my conversations with Saint-Louisiens, community members identify themselves in relation to their neighborhood social networks, family, and livelihoods, all of which are aspects of heritage. Leaders need to ensure that in spite of changes posed by climate, community members are able to fulfill their social, cultural, and economic capabilities. Understanding the existing historic urban landscape is the first step.

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PROJECT GALLERY

Rethinking resilience: Women's organizing and adaptive capacities in self-built neighborhoods

by Julia Duranti-Martinez

Julia Duranti-Martínez, MA, MSCRP, is a critical community development professional with experience in facilitation, human rights accompaniment, and direct service provision. Having worked in the Dominican Republic, Colombia, Chile, and Bolivia, she is excited to pursue her passions for popular education and community-led development as the Community Land Trust Learning Coordinator for the New York City Community Land Initiative beginning in August 2018. She can be reached at julia.duranti@gmail.com.

As a recent graduate of dual Master's programs in Latin American Studies and Community and Regional Planning at The University of Texas at Austin, I had the opportunity to deepen my commitment to community-led development via the Dominican Republic Planning Practicum and my own thesis research from 2016 to 2018.

A collaborative research project, my thesis explored community resilience in Los Platanitos, a self-built neighborhood in Santo Domingo Norte, through women's organization Mujeres Unidas (Women United). These experiences enriched my reflections on the importance of mobilizing community knowledge in partnerships for improving community quality of life and resilience.

Although planners typically think of resilience in terms of cities' ability to "bounce back" from disasters, conversations with communities may reveal a more holistic understanding of this important concept. For instance, Mujeres Unidas often frames their work in terms of social strengths and relationships. As Mujeres Unidas founder and co-researcher Elisa put it, "You have to have love for the struggle, patience, and keep calm to achieve what you want and all the dreams you have in mind."

Highlighting the importance of love and persistence to improving community quality of life, Elisa's comment reflects key dimensions of community resilience described throughout collaborative research conducted with Mujeres Unidas. Reframing resilience in this way can help planners recognize it as intertwined with vulnerabilities and engage more thoughtfully with community-led development efforts. By better understanding the ties that bind communities together and spur them to action, planners will be better able to help mobilize existing networks and adaptive capacities to mitigate environmental hazards and injustice.

Project Context

Latin America is currently the most urbanized region in the world (UN Habitat, 2012). This intensive urban growth has led to many self-built neighborhoods that receive little state support and are often characterized by unsanctioned infrastructure, limited public services, insecure land tenure, and lack of access to sanitation (UN Habitat, 2016). One such self-built community is Los Platanitos, an urban neighborhood of about 2,000 residents in Santo Domingo Norte, Dominican Republic. Denied land titles and housing, early residents constructed a settlement on top of a former landfill in the 1980's, over time developing a consolidated neighborhood.



Los Platanitos. Photo credit: Bjørn Sletto

One of the greatest concerns for residents of Los Platanitos are the three open cañadas (drainage channels) that flood constantly and fill homes with contaminated water and refuse. Until 2017, most of the neighborhood was only accessible by foot and motorcycle, further compounding the risks associated with frequent floods. Electricity is available during limited hours of the day by unofficially tapping into the city’s electrical grid, and potable water is brought in by truck twice a week. Privatized trash collection serves only parts of Los Platanitos.

To improve conditions in the neighborhood, public and nonprofit sectors have engaged in limited infrastructure upgrades. Most recently, the Santo Domingo Water and Sewer Corporation (CAASD) broke ground on a project to remove trash, expand the drainage channel, and cover the cañadas in Los Platanitos with a road. The project initially progressed rapidly, displacing 60 families who lived in the path of the new roadway and leaving many homes with no toilet or drainage facilities. The change in grade due to the installation of the drainage pipe also exacerbated flooding in certain areas. The project abruptly came to a halt in July 2017, and as of June 2018, residents continue to struggle with the lack of toilets and potable water, worsened flooding, and social fractures for relocated families who do not know when or if they will be permanently resettled.

Los Platanitos thus presents many planning challenges, but my work focused on the diverse ways that resilience emerges through interpersonal relationships, mutual aid, and loving attachment between people and place. Similarly, my work with Mujeres Unidas conceives of Los Platanitos as economically and socially intertwined with the formal city rather than an isolated sector that can be unilaterally upgraded.



The cañadas and associated flooding, and solid waste management remain key concerns for residents. Photo credit: Bjørn Sletto

Mujeres Unidas and Relational Resilience

Mujeres Unidas seeks to improve community infrastructure, strengthen social relationships, and create opportunities for social microenterprise, while promoting women's participation in local planning processes. The motivations for their work, they say, is the mutual support and love they experience as members of the women's group and the communal benefits that derive from their efforts. Instead of framing their work in terms of technocratic development objectives, they draw on narratives of love, persistence, and community to explain their organizational development and achievements. Their work together has served to deepen relationships of support and care between low-income Afro-Dominican women in Los Platanitos, many of whom provide care work to wealthy Dominican families as well as their own. This work has historically been uncompensated and unrecognized, but women in Mujeres Unidas are now assuming roles as community leaders with important insights to contribute to urban planning.

Through Mujeres Unidas women in Los Platanitos have begun to articulate their right to the city. Members argued that their organizing efforts have increased their visibility in local planning processes, which they measure through recognition from institutions, new partnerships, and a feeling of increased confidence in their own knowledge developed through capacity-building. Women also take pride in the fact that their work may provide an example for other communities experiencing similar challenges.

Additionally, Mujeres Unidas' work reflects loving attachment between community members as well as with their surroundings. The frequency with which women named love as a motivation for their work stands out as a key dimension of community development in Los Platanitos. Drawing on bell hooks' understanding of love as an active and participatory process (hooks, 2000), loving attachment reflects the ways in which Mujeres Unidas are in relationship with one another and bring community into being. This is not always easy; people have conflicting priorities and visions, as well as disagreements. But loving attachment highlights this process of enacting love and working toward social change despite tensions and challenges. It thus constitutes a significant dimension of resilience in Los Platanitos.



Mujeres Unidas celebrate at the conclusion of our 2017 UT Austin practicum. Photo credit: Farzad Mashhood

The fate of Los Platanitos and the 60 families that have already been displaced by the current cañada intervention project remains uncertain. But the example of Mujeres Unidas illustrates the social ties that bind communities together and mobilize them to action, which is instructive for planners who seek to cultivate community resilience. An understanding of resilience focused exclusively on natural systems and large-scale interventions misses the intimate daily practices and relationships that bring communities together and represent their greatest strengths. Accordingly, community development planners have a role to play in supporting community organizing, as well as helping to facilitate relationships and knowledge exchange between communities. Practitioners must engage in this process with the utmost care, and remain critically attentive to how power across intersectional identities like race, gender, and class manifests in our work with community partners. Affirming community knowledge as valuable and recognizing loving attachment between people and place in turn has the potential to produce community development without disruption and displacement.

References

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INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

Brazilian Urbanism: Past, Present, and Future

This 3-credit course, led by faculty member Richard Kos, AICP from San Jose State University's Dept. of Urban & Regional Planning, will introduce students to Brazilian urbanism topics between January 4-14, 2019.

Students will start their exploration with five days in the beautiful UNESCO World Heritage city of Ouro Preto, settled by Portuguese colonists in the 1600s who exploited the region's vast gold deposits. Students will see colonial-era architecture, meet with federal university architects and urban planners, and take part in a service learning project in the São Cristovão community. Students will work side by side with community leaders who aspire to make their neighborhood cleaner, more sustainable and attractive to tourists.

Next stop: Rio de Janeiro! We will meet with the city's planners to learn about urban issues facing this megacity. Topics will include planning for the 2016 Olympic games, adaptive reuse of Olympics venues, infrastructure improvements to support mass tourism, and an exploration of Rio's favelas, botanical gardens, and the city's huge tropical forest park. We will also visit the Christ the Redeemer statue for mesmerizing views of Rio and we'll have one "down-time" day between course activities to relax on the beaches of Copacabana.

For details, and to apply (August 30 deadline), please contact Richard ("Rick") M. Kos, AICP

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You may also visit this website for more information,

<http://www.sjsu.edu/gei/flp/programs/winter/brazil-kos/index.html>



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Photo Credit: Samantha McLean