

Progressive Planning

The Magazine of Planners Network

Planning in the Face of Anti-Immigrant Sentiment



María-Teresa Vázquez-Castillo

March 25th, 2006 demonstration in Los Angeles, CA.

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2008 Planners Network Conference
Social Housing in Bolivia
Women and Public Space

The Seventh Generation

"In our every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations."

-From the Great Law of the Iroquois Confederacy

Palestine's Problems: *Checkpoints, Walls, Gates and Urban Planners*

by TOM ANGOTTI

East Jerusalem, Occupied Palestine

Part One in a series on urban apartheid.

It takes two hours every day for Palestinians to cross the military checkpoint from Bethlehem to Jerusalem so they can get to work. Bethlehem is in the West Bank and Jerusalem, though divided, is part of Israel. The checkpoint is flanked by the giant Israeli Wall. Once they are in Israel, Palestinians are then confronted with gated communities that are off-limits to them.

The checkpoint, the Wall and the gate are the most visible signs of Israel's control over Palestinians and their land. But the invisible weapon is urban planning. Israeli geopolitical strategy to control and occupy all of Palestine has been imbedded in its approach to housing, urban development and the location of human settlements. Behind the physical and symbolic barriers lie the invisible urban and military planners.

The Checkpoints

The Bethlehem checkpoint is one of around 500. Some divide Israel and the West Bank, like the Bethlehem checkpoint, but most are within the West Bank. To get an idea what this means to Palestinians, imagine having to pass a military checkpoint to commute between San Francisco and Oakland. Or to go from your house to your backyard orchard. The Israeli Army controls all movement between West Bank towns, within some towns and also between

Israel and the West Bank. Israel doesn't allow Jewish citizens to enter the West Bank, except for those living in illegally-built settlements in the West Bank. They take exclusive Israeli-built and -protected roads to get to and from their homes. These roads are off-limits to Palestinians. This is one of the most developed examples of apartheid urbanization in the world, with separate settlements, separate roads and separate standards of living.

The Palestinian commuters from Bethlehem to Jerusalem, mostly men over the age of thirty, are herded like cattle through turnstiles and fences and run through metal detectors, surveillance cameras and document checks. They are the "lucky" ones—the small minority that got permission to enter Israel to work, where there are more jobs and higher pay than in the West Bank. But the commuters have to go back to Bethlehem the same day or they will be hunted down. Every worker has a magnetic card that must be swiped in the morning and again in the evening so that the Israelis will know if they miss the return trip. Palestinians are, in effect, prisoners of a powerful security state able to engineer the movement of people and their use of public space. Israel is the world's leading innovator and producer of high-tech military and surveillance equipment, and a major contributor to the strategy and technology of the U.S. occupation of Iraq.

As an older white North American, I could avoid all this humiliation at the checkpoint and didn't even ⇨

Winter 2009 Issue Contents:

Palestine's Problems: Checkpoints, Walls, Gates and Urban Planners
by TOM ANGOTTI.....Page 2

Immigration

Racialized Regulation: Planning in the Face of Anti-Immigrant Sentiment
by STACY ANNE HARWOOD.....Page 8

Anti-Immigrant, Sanctuary and Repentance Cities
by MARÍA-TERESA VÁZQUEZ-CASTILLO.....Page 10

Controlling Immigrants by Controlling Space: Current Issues in Historical Perspective
by JENNIFER RIDGLEY and JUSTIN STEIL.....Page 14

Housing Overcrowding in the Suburbs: The Politics of Space and the Social Exclusion of Immigrants
by BENJAMIN ROTH.....Page 18

Red Hook Vendors on Wheels
by ARIANNA MARTINEZ and PATRICIA VOLTOLINI.....Page 21

Shifting Geography, Emerging Conflicts: Undocumented Immigrants' Access to Higher Education
by NINA MARTIN.....Page 24

Voices and Images from a Journey Across Our America
by LOUIS MENDOZA.....Page 27

The Great Sleep-In: Demonstrating for Public Housing in Paris
by ERNESTO CASTAÑEDA.....Page 31

2008 Planners Network Conference

Expose, Propose and Politicize: The Planners Network Conference, Winnipeg, Canada, July 17–19, 2008
by MICHAEL DUDLEY.....Page 34

Shifting Cultures to Achieve Sustainable Transportation
by ARNE ELIAS.....Page 38

Visioning Sustainable Transportation: Win-Win Solutions that Achieve Economic, Social and Environmental Objectives
by TODD LITMAN.....Page 39

A HOP, SKIP and JUMP to "Branding" Transit: How Incremental Improvements to Transit and Cycling Can Boost Ridership and Bring New Life to Downtowns
by WILL TOOR.....Page 43

Exploring Creative Practices and Urban Know-How at the Planner's Network Conference
by HEATHER MCLEAN.....Page 47

Feature Articles

Women, Democracy and Public Spaces
by REGULA MODLICH.....Page 50

Social Housing in Bolivia: Challenges and Contradictions
by EMILY P. ACHTENBERG.....Page 54

Exclusionary Planning in East Jerusalem
by EFRAT COHEN-BAR.....Page 61

How to Join, Purchase Back Issues, etc.....Page 62

www.plannersnetwork.org

Planners Network
106 West Sibley Hall
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853, USA
Ph: 607.254.8890
Fx: 612.626.0600
Email: sbs17@cornell.edu
Website: www.plannersnetwork.org

EDITORS

Tom Angotti, Eve Baron, Jason Blackman, Ann Forsyth, Chester Hartman, Kara Heffernan, Clara Irazábal, Marie Kennedy, Norma Rantisi, Amy Siciliano

LAYOUT

Donovan Finn (magazine)
Mandana Nouri-Nekoei (e-newsletter)

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have to stand in line or flash my passport. I fit the acceptable racial profile. On the Israeli side, I stood with two women from Women for Human Rights, an Israeli group that witnesses this daily violation of the right to the city and takes notes documenting it. Young Israeli soldiers toting rifles and machine guns swaggered and smiled at us. On the Palestinian side, there were only street vendors and taxi drivers. Paradoxically, once in the bustling streets of the West Bank town, despite the occasional bombed-out and demolished building, occasional tourist destination and the ever-present Wall, I felt free and welcomed.

The Wall

Israel started building its giant Wall enclosing the West Bank in 2002, after the launch of the second Intifida, the Palestinian uprising against the Israeli occupation. While Israel claims the purpose of the wall is defensive, a careful look at its route shows

that it was planned as a land grab that would further shrink the boundaries of a future Palestinian state. Violence and attacks on Israelis have declined sharply in the last few years because of political agreements between the two sides, not the Wall, which is filled with gaps, far from complete and possible to evade with a little ingenuity.

The Wall, like the Israeli settlements—with some 300,000 settlers in the occupied territories—aims to create “facts on the ground” that would dictate the parameters of an eventual negotiated settlement. The Wall, most of it built on Palestinian land, takes huge loops that incorporate illegal Israeli settlements built on Palestinian land. If completed, the 760-kilometer Wall would effectively turn the Palestinian territory into a handful of isolated Bantustans and make a viable Palestinian state with a unified economy and infrastructure impossible. Following the example of Gaza, Israel would effectively turn Palestinian towns into prisons and be able to monitor and control all movement between them. This dark dystopia would result in one of the most technologically sophisticated apartheids in the history of cities.

The Gated Communities

The Israeli settlements in the West Bank are designed and function as exclusive gated communities. While some actually have physical gates, many do not, controlling access through other means. The “gates” are often symbolic and take the form of electronic surveillance perimeters. Israel’s Former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon engineered the location of settlements with the strategic thinking of a military planner playing



LEFT: The Bethlehem checkpoint.

RIGHT: The wall.

FAR RIGHT: Gated community.

the urban planning game. The settlements are placed on hilltops where they can oversee the daily life of Palestinians and, should the military need to intervene at any time, provide them with the most strategic sites. The idea is that the architects and planners charged with developing the settlements blend military and urban planning so as to create a symbolic and real sense of superiority and control over the land and people below. Palestinians are not allowed in, though exceptions are made for some service workers. In his brilliant book, *Hollow Land: Israel's Architecture of Occupation*, Eyal Weizman shows how Israel's control of the high ground and monopoly of the underground water supply constitute a "vertical occupation" that has resulted in the destruction of Palestinian agriculture and the displacement of entire villages.

Gentrification and Ethnic Cleansing in Israel

The planning paradigm for the Israeli settlements in the West Bank has been reproduced within the state of Israel and is now deeply imbedded in the urban structure. We see it in the gated Israeli communities that have sprung up on hilltops in the mixed Arab-Israeli regions and cities. There, too, the exclusive neighborhoods seek to reinforce economic and social dominance through segregated living and work environments.

After creation of the state of Israel in 1948, most Palestinians fled or were forced out of their homes and villages and became refugees. But many stayed, and today Palestinians within the state of Israel account for about 20 percent of the population. Half of all Palestinian households are under the poverty line compared to a national average of 18 percent.

They remain second-class citizens, usually living in segregated residential enclaves and often threatened by displacement and gentrification. It is here that Israel's urban planners play their role, often unconsciously, as implementers of a broader geopolitical strategy, a land grab and ethnic cleansing of historic proportions.

The Palestinian population in Israel is concentrated in the Galilee region in the north, the Negev desert to the south, East Jerusalem and in "mixed towns" like Haifa. In all of these areas, exclusive Israeli hilltop settlements are part of a conscious policy of "Judaizing" areas with Arab populations—a concept that might also be called ethnic cleansing—through government land use and housing policy. The Israeli government owns 94 percent of the land and leases it freely for the construction of new Jewish settlements; they also provide the infrastructure and subsidize services. The Palestinian population, however, is rarely given permission to build or expand. To meet the needs of a rapidly growing population, Palestinians often build without legal approval, but they are subject to heavy fines and/or demolition orders. Some 18,000 Palestinian homes have been demolished.

Jaffa was an Arab settlement on the Mediterranean Sea that is now a neighborhood in the metropolitan region of Tel Aviv, Israel's largest city. Palestinians there are being pushed out by real estate investment. As land values and rents go up, many Palestinians can no longer afford to stay.

Fahdi, a community organizer in Jaffa fighting gentrification, says there is a larger significance to his struggle. "My family was from a [Palestinian] village

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Tom Angotti



Tom Angotti



north of here. It was confiscated by Israel. My family had papers showing they had owned the land since the Turkish period. They came to Jaffa. I am a citizen of Israel, but we can't get our land back. Everything for me starts with that."

Fahdi described the recent case of a Palestinian who couldn't get permission to add rooms to his house and now faces eviction for a building violation. He has an option to buy but with current real estate prices what they are, cannot afford to. In another case, a renter facing eviction is willing to buy the property valued at approximately \$160,000, but the government will only accept cash and no bank will lend the family money because they do not have sufficient income. Fahdi noted that while Palestinians struggle to hold on to their homes, gentrifiers move in with ease and have no problem getting permission. They include Jews from Europe looking for second homes by the sea, and Israeli settlers from the West Bank who bring with them both an ideological mission to separate themselves from Palestinians and guns that are publicly displayed to make sure their mission is known.

Tom Angotti



Tom Angotti



In the Galilee region, the landscape is also being transformed by Israeli hilltop settlements, while Palestinian towns are unable to get official permission to grow. According to Neighbors, a group of Israelis and Palestinians dedicated to planning with social justice, 91 percent of the land in Arab settlements is used for housing as opposed to 55 percent in Jewish settlements. This is a direct result of the official policy of limiting the growth of Palestinian towns. With so little land for expansion, there is little room left for public open space and services.

In the southern region of the Negev, 76,000 Bedouins live in settlements that the Israeli government has designated as unrecognized, illegal and subject to eviction whenever the land is needed for infrastructure or the military, or simply at the whim of the Israeli government. And in Arab East Jerusalem, which is directly administered by an Israeli civil administration, Palestinian neighborhoods get minimal services like garbage collection and street repairs while also facing incursions by both Israeli gentrifiers and religious sects seeking to Judaize the city.

Thus, urban planning throughout Israel is firmly rooted in Israel's long-term geopolitical strategy of controlling all of the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, the dream of Israel's Zionist founders. Its realization was interrupted by the resistance of the Palestinian people who owned, lived on and worked most of that land. Israel now directly controls 78 percent of it, and the rest is under limited Palestinian control in the West Bank and Gaza, where Israel can and does intervene militarily and take land when deemed in their interest. Incredibly, if a

TOP: Sachnin, A Palestinian Town.

BOTTOM: A Jewish settlement

settlement is ever reached in the current negotiations, Palestinians are likely to end up with only about 15 percent of the land.

The Right to the City

Despite official policy, there are many hopeful signs of change. Resistance and struggles against displacement are widespread in Palestinian communities, which work in partnership with human rights and social justice groups in Israel. The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions (ICAHD) organizes protests and Planners for Planning Rights (Bimkom) brings professional and legal expertise to bear to protect communities from displacement. A host of organizations continue to challenge the Israeli checkpoints and Wall.

But Israel has little incentive to change course and agree to a two-state solution and the establishment of full rights for Palestinians. It has the most powerful military and largest nuclear arsenal in the Middle East and is one of the largest recipients of U.S. military aid. And the Bush administration carried forward the U.S. tradition of tolerating the Wall, checkpoints and gradual incursion of Israeli settlements in Palestinian territory even while issuing ineffective verbal protests. While the incoming Obama administration has given no signs it will change course, there is an opportunity now for progressive people in the U.S. to raise their voices as President Obama seeks to reinvent the U.S. role in the Middle East and address continuing demands from Arab nations for a just peace in Palestine. Obama opposed a U.S. war in Iraq that mimicked Israel's high-tech, scorched-earth strategy—the same strategy that failed miserably in Israel's 2003 attack on Lebanon. But it will take a lot of pressure from within the U.S. to move Obama's cautious foreign policy team past the powerful Israeli lobby. Urban planners should tell the incoming administration and Congress that the right to the city is a fundamental human right.

Tom Angotti teaches at Hunter College, City University of New York, and during his sabbatical year is doing research and writing about urban enclaves and urban agriculture. For more information about the issue raised here, see: www.bimkom.org; www.icahd.org; www.stopthewall.org; www.btselem.org.

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Racialized Regulation: *Planning in the Face of Anti-Immigrant Sentiment*

by STACY ANNE HARWOOD

Immigration is one of the most volatile issues in the U.S., and increasingly so since 9/11. On the one hand, immigration and customs officials say they are merely enforcing existing laws, but on the other hand, recent efforts to arrest people without documentation suggest that “mere enforcement” is an understatement. Homeland Security’s largest-ever workplace crackdown included the arrest of over 1,200 people working in meatpacking plants in six states in December of 2006. These widely publicized arrests have only escalated efforts to pass local anti-immigration ordinances across the U.S.

While immigration policy is widely understood as a federal issue, the impacts and contestation of immigration materializes at the local level. Many municipalities are using local regulations as border checkpoints, even for those native-born residents who are perceived as “different.” Mike Davis writes in *Magical Urbanism* that these types of local regulatory borders are “invisible to most Anglos, but slap Latinos (as well as other people of color) across the face.” The rules, regulations and procedures of local authorities are used to police difference.

As more communities undergo demographic changes, old-timers will push for regulation and newcomers will contest such policy choices.

Historians have long documented the use of local, state and federal policy to segregate and discriminate against a racialized other/people of color, including African Americans, Chinese, Mexicans and Jews. These studies focus on explicit oppressive practices—racial zoning and other segregationist policies. Despite an end to de jure segregation and today’s lip service to diversity, land use planning and other local policies continue to include elements that exclude and control based on race and ethnicity.

This special issue of *Progressive Planning* provides a window into how these debates play out in local communities throughout the U.S. In addition, many of the articles highlight how local immigrant communities assert their rights to the city by resisting local efforts to exclude or limit their ability to live, work, study and recreate. Vázquez-Castillo starts off with a discussion about the range of local policy responses and

ensuing protests in California cities. Escondido, Costa Mesa and Newport serve as examples of where planning is used as a tool to control immigrants within municipal boundaries, while Los Angeles, Maywood and San Francisco have declared themselves to be safe havens for immigrants.

Each year, the National Civic League awards ten cities “All-American City” status for their efforts to take on and resolve local challenges. Ironically, some of these communities are also known locally, as well as nationally and sometimes internationally, for anti-immigrant ordinances and inhumane enforcement practices. Ridgley and Steil delve into the historical roots of anti-immigrant sentiment in Hazleton, a small “All-American City” in Pennsylvania where in 2006 the city council approved the Illegal Immigration Relief Act. Presented as a “race-neutral” policy, it has been used to harass legal permanent Latino residents as well. Roth describes residential occupancy standards in Elgin, Illinois, another “All-American City.” Elgin has focused on code enforcement to reduce the number of people living in one housing unit instead of addressing the lack

of affordable housing. Elgin's aggressive approach led to a federal lawsuit, but it has not stopped the city's efforts to eliminate affordable housing by converting large homes from multifamily to single family.

Martinez and Voltolini document the struggle of the Red Hook vendors to maintain a culturally important and vibrant market in New York. When the vendors' permit was not renewed, the vendors mobilized to resist displacement. As a result of loyal customers and coverage by the local media, the vendors were later re-granted permits by the Park's Department, but new restrictions have weakened the sense of community and celebration of Latino life for which the market was known.

Martin's article lays out how anti-immigrant policies are playing out at the state level in North Carolina. The debate centers on whether undocumented students should pay out-of-state tuition and be

barred from financial aid in the community college system. Later the question shifts to whether all undocumented students should be banned from attending any of the community colleges. Martin's piece raises a number of questions about how local residency should be determined and by whom.

The final piece in this special issue takes us on a journey across America to meet people on both sides of the conflict—native-born citizens and foreign-born residents. Through his conversations with local people throughout the U.S., Mendoza wonders if we can forge a new path. Can immigration reform, at all levels, federal, state and local, be just and not anti-immigrant, anti-Mexican and anti-poor?

Embracing diversity, while very much part of American liberal rhetoric, finds little room in local policy and conventional city and town planning practices. This tension, and failure to adequately address it, should

be of concern to those exploring the possibilities and boundaries for democracy in a multiracial society. While much of the immigration debates focus on border control and national security, local communities are taking matters into their own hands by passing racially charged legislation that directly and often negatively influences the social, political and economic integration of immigrants into a local community.

Progressive Planning received more articles than could be printed in this special issue. So we will be including additional articles on immigration in the next issue, forthcoming in May. The editors thank all of the authors for their thoughtful contributions and look forward to hearing back from readers!

Stacy Anne Harwood is an associate professor in the Department of Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

Anti-Immigrant, Sanctuary and Repentance Cities

by MARÍA-TERESA VÁZQUEZ-CASTILLO

*This is our land. This is our street.
Get the hell out of here.*

--Joseph Turner, founder of Save our State (SOS)

In the early twenty-first century, a new stage of the anti-immigrant city is in the making, targeting immigrant communities of Latino origin, specifically of Mexican origin. Between 2005 and 2007, California cities such as Escondido, Costa Mesa and Newport have used city planning tools to control immigration within city boundaries based on arguments about securing the border and protecting the fiscal well-being of urban areas. In response, cities such as Los Angeles, Maywood and San Francisco have proclaimed themselves sanctuary cities, safe for immigrants.

Background

California cities are not the only ones drafting and approving ordinances to control immigration. More than fifty cities, suburbs and towns of all sizes and populations have followed these trends. Even areas with insignificant increases in immigrant populations are launching anti-immigrant ordinances as “pre-emptive” measures to prevent the relocation of immigrant communities within their jurisdictions or to expel

the immigrants already present. This is the case of Hazleton, Pennsylvania, which on 13 July 2006 approved three anti-immigrant ordinances: the Illegal Immigration Relief Act Ordinance, the Landlord-Tenant Registration Ordinance and the Official Language Ordinance. These ordinances restrict the hiring of undocumented labor, ban landlords from renting to the undocumented and make English the official language (see “Controlling Immigrants by Controlling Space” in this issue).

Like Hazleton, the City of Escondido, California, claiming that immigrants cause overcrowding, crime, poverty and disease, approved several anti-immigrant ordinances. One of the Escondido ordinances bans renting to undocumented immigrants by requiring landlords to check a tenant’s immigration status and report it to the city. In turn, the city must check the tenant’s status with the federal government. If tenants are found to be undocumented, landlords have ten days to evict or else face “misdemeanor charges, fines and the loss of their business license.” Other ordinances ban undocumented residents from jobs, education and medical attention, while still others prohibit “overcrowding,”

change the definition of “family” in zoning codes and declare their cities as English-only territories.

Exclusionary Zoning and Anti-Immigrant Planning

It is well-known that zoning regulations and ordinances have been used historically to exclude and segregate so-called minority populations. The history of the development of urban and suburban areas is full of examples of exclusionary practices against African Americans, Mexicans, Chinese, Japanese and Jews, among other groups. Although the civil rights movement attempted to eliminate these discriminatory practices, they have endured, disguised in new forms. Traditionally, prejudiced city officials, administrators and planners have used planning tools to legitimize segregation in or deprivation of access to housing, transportation, recreational activities, education and other services.

The proposal and passage of anti-immigrant ordinances have divided residents of these cities, creating tension between different ethnic and religious groups, different generations of immigrants, the business and landlord communities and

civil rights organizations. This last sector has challenged the legality of the ordinances with regard to the violation of fair housing laws, contract rights and due process. Between October 2006 and September 2008, some of the anti-immigrant ordinances have been defeated, but because new ones are on the way, it is crucial to understand the dynamics and forces supporting them. Paradoxically, the regulation of international immigration has moved to the local level as cities and towns make decisions about immigration, something traditionally only done by the federal government. And though countries in the European Union are competing to showcase themselves as examples of diversity—highlighting their multicultural assets and their success in integrating immigrants into city politics to promote local economic development—the U.S. in the wake of 9/11 has lurched in the opposite direction.

Costa Mesa and Maywood

Two Southern California cities, Costa Mesa and Maywood, are prime examples of contradictory stances on immigration. While Costa Mesa has proposed anti-immigrant ordinances, Maywood has become a sanctuary city. Costa Mesa is located in Orange County, just over forty miles from downtown Los Angeles, and has a population that is nearly one-third Latino. Maywood, located just under ten miles from downtown Los Angeles, has a population that is 97 percent Latino. Interestingly, both cities have been losing population since 2003. It is important to highlight this trend because population growth has often been an argument used to justify hostility toward immigrants. While anti-immigrant Costa Mesa is an affluent beach community, immigrant-friendly Maywood is a working-class city. Thus, not only ethnicity, but social and economic class, are important elements in

determining the friendliness of cities towards a low-income immigrant population.

The National Context

At the national level, the atmosphere toward immigrants has been poisoned by stepped-up immigration raids and adoption by the House (but not the Senate) of the Border Protection, Anti-Terrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act of 2005, otherwise known as the Sensenbrenner Act or H.R. 4437. The name of the act demagogically blends border protection with anti-terrorism. By portraying Mexicans as the “illegals,” the act has contributed toward racializing the word *immigrant* to signify Latinos in general and Mexicans in particular. As part of the same trend, hate crimes against Mexicans have increased.

In this context, municipal policies directed against immigrants are part of a national anti-immigrant backlash. ➡



RIGHT: May 1st, 2006 demonstration in Los Angeles, CA.

María-Teresa Vázquez-Castillo

Imprisoning undocumented workers, denying them the right to a hearing and penalizing the provision of humanitarian aid to them, as proposed in the Sensenbrenner Act, all violate international human rights. When cities enter the picture and begin denying the right to mobility and the right to housing, they are challenging their residents' basic civil rights.

Costa Mesa: Anti-immigrant City

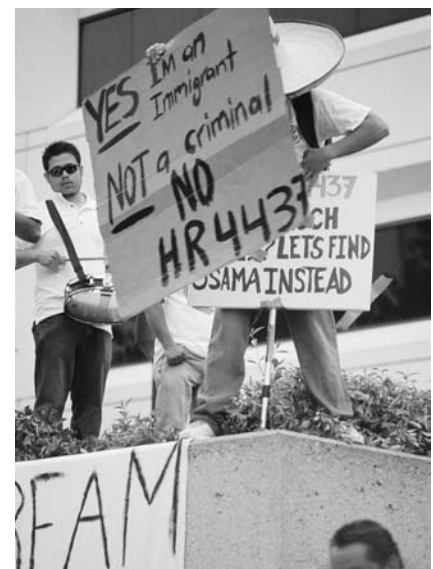
Costa Mesa was the first city in the country to actually approve funding (about \$195,000) to train members of its local police to act as immigration officers. As part of this anti-immigrant agenda, that same year, Costa Mesa's city council voted to close the Costa Mesa Job Center, a day labor site, in order to prevent the hiring of undocumented workers. Despite a population that was 29 percent Latino and in which 24 percent of residents had Mexican heritage, the city council had no Latino representation at the time these anti-immigrant measures were approved. With five council members, all Anglo and anti-immigrant, the City of Costa Mesa voted to support HR 4437 in March of 2006. The Costa Mesa regulations violated the civil right of access to housing and the international human right of access to health, education and humanitarian aid. For the city council and its supporters, it did not matter that the city had gained a reputation as an uncompassionate, xenophobic city.

Maywood: "Sanctuary" City

In 2005, the city of Maywood, like many other cities in the region, implemented checkpoints supposedly to make sure that drivers had a driver's license. As a result, the cars of the many unlicensed drivers, mostly working-class Latinos, were impounded for a month, causing a huge economic hardship in a city in which the median household income is less than \$37,000. In addition to the impounding of their cars, drivers were also penalized with fines. In response, the city council, composed of five members of Latino origin, decided on a radical measure: eliminating the traffic division within the police department. This predominantly Latino and working-class city also became the first city to pass a resolution to oppose the Sensenbrenner Act, in January 2006. Then in April 2006, Maywood declared itself a sanctuary city. Since 2006, other cities have followed Maywood's example by declaring themselves

sanctuary cities. One city to follow suit was San Francisco, where Supervisor Tom Ammiano declared: "When certain people are targeted and denied access to social services, the health and safety of the entire city is compromised."

Rejecting the adoption of immigration functions at the local level has levied a high price. Anti-immigrant groups such as the Minuteman and Save Our State (SOS) have been targeting the sanctuary cities, protesting outside city halls and lobbying for a reduction in the federal funds granted to sanctuary cities. In Maywood, Mayor Thomas Martin began receiving death threats and hate mail. The situation has become so hostile that in a phone interview in October 2007, a Maywood municipal staffperson urged me to avoid the use of the word "sanctuary" to refer to the city as it was "very problematic." Anti-immigrant attacks are undermining Maywood's public stance as an inclusionary and integrationist city.



Both photos: María-Teresa Vázquez-Castillo

"Repentance" Cities

Most recently, a third model of city has emerged: the Repentance City. An example of this type of city is Riverside, New Jersey, which, after passing Sensenbrenner-style ordinances and regulations, reversed its decision when it witnessed the flight of Latinos (mostly of Brazilian origin). Recently, one of Riverside's civic and business leaders has been touring East Coast cities, giving inspirational talks and advising other cities: "Don't do what we did. It will drag the reputation of your town into the mud."

Two Models and the Beginning of a Third

The cases of Costa Mesa and Maywood point to two models of cities that are emerging within the new immigration regime in the United States. On the one hand, we have the anti-immigrant city, characterized by a highly organized community

that opposes not simply Latino immigrants, but specifically Mexican immigrants. On the other hand, we have the re-emergence of the sanctuary cities. The sanctuary city is a form of resistance that claims a right to space and a right to the city. Unfortunately, sanctuary city policies are typically characterized by slow response, poor organization and low funding. These cities are under attack by anti-immigrant forces that, in their quest to resist the browning of U.S. cities, mobilize an abundance of financial, media and political resource and manage to resist feeling any shame about supporting policies that violate international human rights and local civil rights.

These two models of cities point to divergent directions in community organizing. Anti-immigrant cities rely on racist community organizing, where groups like the Minutemen and SOS organize their constituencies to undermine the incorporation and

integration of immigrants, ignoring the destructive consequences for the local and state economy. Sanctuary cities follow a humanitarian and cross-border community organizing tradition, acknowledging the advantages of capitalizing on the diversity of immigrant communities.

Perhaps most interesting of all is the recent emergence of repentance cities, which hold the promise of overcoming anti-immigrant politics and gaining new allies for immigrant rights.

(Note: All photos are part of an exhibit titled *The 2006 Immigrant Demonstrations in Los Angeles*. The exhibit has been shown at Pomona, Kansas, ACSP Chicago and will be exhibited again at LASA in Brazil during the summer.)

Maria Teresa Vázquez-Castillo is an assistant professor in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at California State University, Northridge.

FAR LEFT: "Freedom of Movement. Capital travels freely, why cannot people do the same?" April 9th, 2006 demonstration in Placita Olvera in downtown Los Angeles, CA.

LEFT: May 1st, 2006 demonstration in Los Angeles, CA..

RIGHT: March 25th, 2006 demonstration in Los Angeles, CA.



Maria-Teresa Vazquez-Castillo

Controlling Immigrants by Controlling Space: *Current Issues in Historical Perspective*

by JENNIFER RIDGLEY and JUSTIN STEIL

In July of 2006, the city of Hazleton, Pennsylvania, became a focus of national media attention when its city council approved the Illegal Immigration Relief Act Ordinance (IIRA) proposed by Mayor Lou Barletta. Allegedly targeting “illegal” immigration, the ordinance established a \$1,000 a day fine on landlords who rented to people who were in the country without authorization, and enabled the town to revoke the licenses of businesses who hired the undocumented. The first version of the IIRA also declared English the official language of the town and prohibited the publication of city materials in any other language. The Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund and the American Civil Liberties Union immediately filed a lawsuit, arguing that the ordinance was preempted by federal law and would lead to discrimination against Latino residents, regardless of immigration status. Implementation of the ordinance was halted by a federal district court injunction and eventually struck down on the grounds that it was preempted by the federal government’s exclusive control over regulation of immigration, and the city subsequently appealed. Still, passage of the ordinance alone has already had significant effects on Hazleton.

Hazleton’s ordinance is one of the better known of more than 1,000 state and local bills regarding immigration introduced in 2006 and 2007. As in Hazleton’s tenant registration provision, many of these statutes seek to control immigration by regulating the use of public and private space. These efforts to establish divisions based on immigration status are tied to a long history of housing and land use policies used to differentiate among residents based on perceived race or ethnicity. The emphasis of Mayor Lou Barletta that Hazleton is an “all-American” small town under siege by unprecedented “illegal” immigration obscures the city’s history of immigration and labor conflict. This article highlights some of the parallels between Hazleton’s experience at the turn of the last century and at the turn of the most recent one. It also examines Hazleton’s current situation in light of its history as a city that emerged largely because of efforts to control immigrant laborers in the anthracite coal mining industry in the nineteenth century.

Immigrant Labor and Ethnic Hierarchies

After anthracite coal was discovered in central Pennsylvania in the first decades of the nineteenth century, local

entrepreneurs founded the Hazleton Coal Company in 1836. The town of Hazleton was incorporated fifteen years later with a population of about four thousand. As industrial growth accelerated through the second half of the century and demand for anthracite increased, coal breakers (the towers that break chunks of coal into smaller pieces) sprouted quickly from new mines surrounding the city and coal companies throughout the region began recruiting migrants for the dirty, dangerous work. Hazleton grew to a population of 12,000 by 1890 and 25,000 by 1910 before peaking at 38,000 in 1940, and then beginning a sharp decline.

At first, companies sought recent immigrants from England, Scotland and Wales, many of whom already had experience working in the coal industry. These workers were favored for the highest skilled and highest paid positions, while Irish migrants were relegated to the more dangerous and lower paid jobs. But no matter their position, mine workers rarely prospered, facing instead the constant threat of injury or death on the job. When signing up immigrants from Great Britain and Ireland became more and more difficult as migrants eventually became increasingly resistant to the exploitation of their labor in such a low-wage, high-

risk industry, mining companies established active recruiting networks across Southern and Eastern Europe, constantly seeking a more malleable workforce.

Employers also produced and exploited ethnic hierarchies in the mines to drive a wedge between employees and distract public opinion away from developing sympathy for the miners and their dangerous work. Workers were paid by the piece, measured variously by the ton, the car or in linear yards. Rates varied across mines and even within the same mine. The allocation of unequal responsibilities, reliance on uneven measures of production and the payment of varying wage scales even among similarly situated workers within the same mines were tactics that served to forestall organizing.

The Spatial Organization of Social Life around the Mines

A crucial part of this strategy of division was the spatial organization of social life around the mines. To accommodate and control the growing workforce on which the booming industry relied, mining corporations in and around Hazleton built company towns and laid them out to represent and reinforce the social divisions on which the industry relied. It is estimated that two-thirds of the housing in the anthracite coal region of central Pennsylvania in the late nineteenth century was owned by mining companies. Company managers and owners, who were usually of English descent, generally lived in large houses near the center of town where the hotels, doctors' offices

and Episcopal Church were located. The Irish foremen and the Southern and Eastern European laborers were relegated to smaller houses on the "patches," the small settlements that the mining corporations built up around the company store and closer to the polluting anthracite breakers in which they worked.

The spatial divisions of social life limited the interaction of different ethnic groups outside of the ethnic hierarchy in the mines. The organization of the towns embedded social hierarchy in space, from proximity to doctors to proximity to cemeteries, and segregated by ethnicity. Each ethnic group created its own churches, beneficial societies and fire companies and the communities largely turned to co-ethnics for support in the face of a hostile society. These conditions made it incredibly hard to unite workers in a truly multiethnic union that might be able to improve worker safety or increase wages. These difficulties were heightened by mining companies' violent suppression of labor unrest, including public hangings of labor leaders and threats from armed militias formed by the corporations.

The 1897 Lattimer Massacre and the Forging of Worker Solidarity

A turning point in efforts to organize workers across ethnic lines took place just outside Hazleton in 1897. In August, thirty-five immigrant workers at a nearby mine went on strike against an arbitrary rearrangement of work schedules requiring two additional unpaid hours of work. The supervisor

ordering the new schedule then hit one of the workers with an ax handle and over the next two days more than two thousand miners joined the strike, demanding the supervisor's discharge. The strikers created a temporary local chapter of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) that had a Hungarian president and an Italian vice president. Their demands included equal pay for immigrant and native-born miners and an end to the company store as well as the right to select and pay their own physician.

The strike continued to gain momentum through August and into September. On 10 September, unarmed workers marched towards the company town of Lattimer to encourage miners there to join the strike. The Coal and Iron Police fired indiscriminately into the crowd, killing twenty-two and injuring thirty-six more, mostly Slovakian and Polish immigrants. The massacre contributed to a newfound understanding among native-born miners of the need for solidarity with their immigrant co-workers and enabled the UMWA to become a more integrative force among workers.

National Security and Immigration Control

While immigrant and native-born workers of varying ethnicities in the mines were able to find increasing solidarity, economic depression in the 1890s followed by the social upheaval after World War I generated heightened nativism. At the same time, the Russian Revolution increased fears about national security and ⇨

corporate leaders worried about growing union power. In 1919, a number of U.S. politicians called for a “one-language nation” and groups like the National Security League established study groups to train teachers in inculcating “Americanness” in their immigrant students. The Mayor of Gary, Indiana, declared that the response to the perceived threats to national security was deportation.

These fears about national security and immigration led to the “Palmer Raids” against immigrants associated with the labor, communist or anarchist movement. Attorney General Palmer turned the popularity of his anti-immigrant stance into tentative plans to run for the presidency. Speaking to the Georgia delegation of the Democratic National Convention, Palmer said, “I am myself an American and I love to preach my doctrine before undiluted one hundred percent Americans, because my platform is, in a word, undiluted Americanism.”

The 2006 Illegal Immigration Relief Act

Almost a century later, immigration control is again linked in political discourse to contemporary fears about national security, and politicians like Hazleton’s mayor have seized upon anti-immigrant sentiments to seek higher office. In establishing his platform, Mayor Barletta emphasized that “Hazleton is small-town USA...an all-American city” that must be defended from the dangers of illegal immigration.

But just three short years ago, Barletta and others were excited

by the arrival of immigrant entrepreneurs who were helping revitalize Hazleton’s declining downtown. What changed?

As Hazleton has grown over the past decade as a manufacturing and logistics center, employers have needed more workers. Latino immigrants and citizens have moved to Hazleton to take advantage of employment opportunities, high vacancy rates and modest home prices in Hazleton’s downtown. As a result, the city has undergone a significant demographic transformation since 2000 from a population of 23,000 people that was 93 percent white and Anglo to an estimated 33,000 people, one-third of whom are Latino. Ironically, as the Latino population increased between the 1990 and 2000 Census, the proportion of foreign-born residents in Hazleton actually decreased, since many of the recent Latino arrivals are U.S. citizens born in Puerto Rico or young people born in historic immigrant gateways like New York.

These recent arrivals found a city with a declining population and plummeting property values. The collapse of the coal industry and departure of the textile industry in the second half of the twentieth century had led to persistent disinvestment and accelerating class divisions between the city and its suburbs. These transformations contributed to general anxiety among the older residents who remained in the city about their economic future and their control over the place they called home. Hazleton’s IIRA played into the economic and social anxiety

that the changing geography of capital investment in the area had created and brought tensions to the surface in heated discussions over the meaning of quality of life, immigration and legality.

Control Over Urban Space

In his speech to the Hazleton City Council introducing the legislation, Mayor Barletta argued that the best way to deter immigrants was through control over residential space by making it impossible for immigrants to find a place to sleep at night. Clarifying the strategy of turning to landlords as the “first line of defense” in controlling the space of the city, Barletta stated: “Let me be clear. This ordinance is intended to make Hazleton one of the most difficult places in the U.S. for illegal immigrants.”

The housing regulation, a seemingly race-neutral policy, could be used to harass Latinos by requiring the constant production of various forms of documents in order to access basic human needs for shelter and work. Even though the ordinance has never been implemented, its passage has had significant impacts on the residents of the town, including Latino citizens, legal permanent residents and the undocumented.

The Impacts of the Ordinance

Members of La Casa Dominicana of Hazleton have expressed fears that they will be forced to produce citizenship documents to complete routine transactions in the city and concerns about the safety of their children in school. Latino

residents from surrounding towns have expressed reluctance about coming into the city because of concerns that they will be stopped unnecessarily by police. Residents have expressed fears that if they let family members or friends stay with them and it turns out that the guest is out of status—even if they unaware of this—they may face legal consequences for “harboring” the undocumented. In the face of all this uncertainty and insecurity, many Latino residents have left.

The ordinance’s threat to restrict access to the spaces crucial to everyday life has created fear among Latino residents. It has furthermore reinforced the exclusionary social identities that the conflict over the ordinance helped create and perpetuated the spatial segregation on which such exclusionary identities thrive.

The Implications of the Ordinance

Throughout its history, differential access to space has been used to construct and reconstruct social difference in the U.S. Local authority over housing codes, bylaws and zoning regulations has long been used to reinforce segregation, maintain a marginalized labor force and reinforce racialized boundaries of national membership.

In Hazleton in the nineteenth century, the differentiation of space was used to reinforce ethnic hierarchies and control a divided immigrant labor force. Today, local immigration ordinances such as the IIRA are part of a larger strategy advanced by national anti-immigration groups

to make life for undocumented, and arguably, documented, immigrants more and more difficult so that they will eventually leave or “self-deport.” In this attempt to make it impossible for some to live in the U.S., the first and most effective step is once again to exercise close control over space, over the places people live, work and recreate. This control over what we consider basic entitlements of citizenship—freedom of movement and access to public accommodations—changes the space of the city and who has access to it.

The proliferation of ordinances such as Hazleton’s IIRA encourages segregation and raises significant fair housing and civil rights issues. The ordinances also have important political ramifications for urban governance, and tremendous impact on issues of social equity, neighborhood cohesion and equal access to public space and services. Looking at Hazleton’s history reveals that these efforts are not new, but are intertwined with the complex historical relationship between space, immigration and labor.

Just as immigrants and the native born in Hazleton at the end of the nineteenth century came together to resist increasingly violent repression by mine owners, immigrants and the native born in Hazleton today are also forging new alliances. While Mayor Barletta remains overwhelming popular among voters, there is a growing resistance to the anti-immigrant politics he represents. In response to the ordinance and the discrimination it generated against Latino residents, local leaders organized the Hazleton Area Latino Association and

the Hazleton Hispanic Business Association, which were both plaintiffs in the successful lawsuit against the city.

Undeterred by the hostile climate and believing that political participation is essential to gain equal representation, an unprecedented number of both native- and foreign-born Latino citizens ran for elected offices in 2007, including to the city council and school board. While none were elected, their candidacy is a first step toward making Hazleton’s local government represent its recent migrants in addition to its earlier ones.

The miners around Hazleton a century ago overcame efforts by employers to foster divisions along ethnic lines and found strength in their unity. Similarly, recent arrivals in Hazleton are forging a newfound solidarity regardless of whether they are citizens, legal residents or the undocumented. Their increasing organization has empowered them to challenge the mayor’s efforts to demonize and drive out the undocumented, and the recent arrivals are indeed changing the face of Hazleton as generations of immigrants before them did. As migration has shifted to smaller towns and rural areas across the country, new allegiances are forming in these communities, expanding what it means to be part of “small-town America.”

Jennifer Ridgley is a PhD candidate in the Department of Geography at the University of Toronto. Justin Steil is a JD/PhD candidate at Columbia Law School and the Columbia Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation.

Housing Overcrowding in the Suburbs:

The Politics of Space and the Social Exclusion of Immigrants

by BENJAMIN ROTH

Household overcrowding among immigrants in Chicago's suburbs has long been a contentious issue for local elected officials and a vocal segment of agitated constituents. Concern for overcrowding in these local communities often masks anti-immigrant sentiments and is (re)drawing the boundaries of exclusion in ways that impede the integration of immigrants. Elgin, a suburban city west of Chicago, exemplifies this problem.

"All-American" City

Elgin's residents are proud of their city—with its symphony orchestra and quaint location on the Fox River. In 2002, Elgin was designated an All-American City, a prestigious annual award given out by the National Civic League to communities that "demonstrate their ability to address serious challenges with innovative, grassroots strategies that promote civic engagement and cooperation." Elgin is also distinct because it is remarkably diverse for a Chicago suburb. According to 2006 Census data, nearly 30 percent of Elgin's 100,000 residents were born outside the U.S., the large majority in Mexico.

As with any community, Elgin faces certain challenges. In the mayor's opinion, household overcrowding is at the top of the list of challenges. Mayor Ed Schock, a retired teacher and school administrator who has

been at his post for nearly a decade, noted in a 2007 interview with the author that overcrowding was "the single biggest issue in Elgin... We've been working on this for years and it continues to be a problem."

Indeed, overcrowding—and the political debate it provokes—has a long history in Elgin. In the 1960s, household overcrowding among African-American residents led to a politically contentious proposal to build multi-unit housing in the community. A chorus of homeowners protested for fear that it would hurt property values. They succeeded in defeating the initiative, but overcrowding persists. Today Mexican immigrants—not African Americans—tend to be overcrowded, and the proposed solution is aggressive code enforcement rather than the construction of affordable housing.

Overcrowded and Unwelcome

Until recently, overcrowding in Elgin was increasing. Between 1990 and 2000, the percentage of households considered overcrowded by the Census increased from 6.6 to 10.7. Overcrowding has since declined, however, and at the time of my 2007 interview with the mayor, only 3.5 percent of households in Elgin were overcrowded according to the 2007 American Community Survey. If so

few households are overcrowded, why does the mayor see this as Elgin's single biggest problem?

Quite simply, overcrowding is important to Mayor Schock because it has ramifications for his own political future. Not everyone in Elgin is of the same mind regarding overcrowding, but the constituents he is most concerned about are the ones who complain about it. These voters are often agitated because their overcrowded neighbors leave trash in their yards, host noisy *quincini* parties and snatch up coveted street parking with their multiple vehicles. Echoing homeowners in Elgin from fifty years ago, residents fear that this apparent disregard for suburban behavioral norms will threaten home values. The mayor contends that these concerns are not meant to single out immigrants—it just so happens that immigrants are more likely to be overcrowded than non-immigrants. In other words, according to Mayor Schock, this is not a story of xenophobia or discrimination, just homeowners concerned about their investment.

Other constituents are more stridently opinionated, however, particularly about who is overcrowded, how immigrants are affecting their town and what should be done about it. This group of residents has made it clear during public meetings and

online discussions that overcrowded residents are not welcome in their community because of *who* they are: immigrants. Some constituents use the municipality's code enforcement arm to threaten their immigrant neighbors, calling in complaints about overcrowding, which the city then responds to by sending out an inspector. But code inspection records indicate that most of the complaints are unfounded. In effect, residents have sent a clear message to their immigrant neighbors: We're watching, and we don't like what we see.

The debate has left Mayor Schock in a bind. It would be politically dangerous to ignore the complaints of his most vocal constituents, yet actions that seem most intuitive—to make housing more affordable or enforce codes more effectively—do not seem politically feasible. Schock is reluctant to build more affordable housing because he fears “it would create a community backlash” that would cost him political capital. Homeowners still fear that it would weaken property values, and Schock argues that Elgin already has more units of affordable housing than neighboring municipalities.

The alternative—and, in his opinion, the most effective—approach to curb overcrowding rates is late-night raids of households that are suspected to be overcrowded. His logic is that most immigrant households have numerous members in the labor force, so announced occupancy inspections during the day often fail to yield evidence of overcrowding. Elgin inspectors' previous late-night raids, however,

were the subject of a federal lawsuit in 1998 that garnered national media attention, and more negative press would not be good for Elgin (or the mayor).

The mayor and the code inspectors remain unconvinced that they did anything wrong in 1998—Elgin settled the lawsuit—and housing advocates fear that the municipality may return to aggressive enforcement practices. For the mayor, the central issue is to bring non-complaint households into compliance with city code by changing the behavior of deviant households. The possibility that overcrowding may be a more complex problem or symptomatic of other factors seldom seems to surface in the debate, and that occupancy codes themselves may be part of the problem has never been considered.

Occupancy Codes: To Protect or Target?

Occupancy codes and aggressive enforcement mechanisms have become a red herring in this debate, distracting from the economic and social factors that help explain household overcrowding among immigrants. This was not always the case. When occupancy codes first emerged in the U.S. in the early 1900s, they were designed as tools to promote better living conditions for European immigrants in crowded urban tenements. Although they did not address macroeconomic reasons for overcrowding, these codes and their enforcement held exploitative landlords accountable in an attempt to guarantee better housing for immigrants.

Now, a century later, despite many alterations, occupancy codes are still normative guidelines that stipulate the minimum living space a person requires. While there is no national consensus on what that minimum should be, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) interprets the Fair Housing Act to mean that a “reasonable” occupancy level is two people per bedroom. Mayor Schock and Elgin's code inspectors refuse to question the city's current occupancy codes. In fact, they are vehement that occupancy codes in Elgin are too lax and they resent that HUD has restricted their ability to strengthen them.

While occupancy codes were originally designed to *protect* immigrant tenants from opportunistic landlords, enforcing the codes in Elgin requires either adequate affordable housing or a safety net for displaced families. More affordable housing is not imminent, however, and homelessness services are inadequate. According to the director of the homeless shelter in Elgin, the existing safety net is ill equipped to help whole families, and they only have Spanish-speaking staff 30 percent of the time. If the occupancy codes were aggressively enforced, displaced immigrant families would be forced to go from one overcrowded dwelling to another, or leave Elgin altogether.

Thus, occupancy code enforcement is deployed as a political mechanism of exclusion that isolates the very people the codes were originally designed to protect. Codes are no longer used as a tool to protect ⇒

the housing rights of immigrants. Instead, these standards and certain modes of enforcement may actually deter immigrants from settling in Elgin at all—let alone help them integrate into the community.

A New Debate

A small, Chicago-based policy firm published a report in February 2008 that sought to change the terms of the overcrowding debate by clarifying why it happens, who it affects and how municipalities should respond. The report was based on data gathered from elected officials, community leaders, planners and immigrant residents in three of Chicago's suburban municipalities that have relatively high rates of overcrowding.

The report was not received well by many residents of suburban municipalities. Dozens of online posts responding to the media coverage the report received were critical, defensive and often indignant. Some posters stated that overcrowded immigrant residents were “illegals” who should “respect our laws” or “go home.” These comments illustrate a stance toward overcrowding that threatens to deepen inter-group divisions in Elgin. To the extent that such views inform the current overcrowding debate, an outside report will do little to spur change.

First, the debate needs to be fundamentally restructured by Mayor Schock and the Elgin City Council. They must reconceptualize overcrowding as an issue about economics and resources instead of an issue about individual behavior.

Certain policies and initiatives need to be reexamined. Elgin's initiative to “de-convert” large historic homes—many that are currently multi-family dwellings—back into single-family residences is one example. Elgin is offering landlords individual grants of up to \$90,000 to restore these houses, many of which house immigrant residents. The de-conversion process thus will displace these tenants and reduce the number of affordable housing units in the city. Clearly this initiative does nothing to ease overcrowding, and may further aggravate it.

Another policy that needs to be reexamined is Elgin's growth goal for the underdeveloped area west of the downtown. The plan is to build “executive” housing—or what Mayor Schock calls “unaffordable” housing—to strengthen the city's tax base. The recent drop in demand for large lots and expensive homes, however, may give the city council pause before pursuing this growth agenda. Given that demand for affordable housing in Elgin is unmet, this development, in contrast to the mayor's proposal, should feature a diverse housing stock to accommodate a range of income levels.

Second, immigrants—whether overcrowded or not—need to participate in the overcrowding debate. At present, their voice is conspicuously absent on this issue. Overcrowded residents, understandably, are less likely to voice their opinion at public forums where the issue of overcrowding is discussed. Housing organizers, however, must work to include the voices of immigrant residents in the debates on overcrowding.

Conclusion

The overcrowding debate in Elgin obscures any collective obligation to ensure that all residents, regardless of origin, have adequate housing. Instead, the terms of the current debate mistakenly place the onus on overcrowded residents themselves, who are cast as the outsiders, the non-compliant, the law-breakers. This is damaging to overcrowded residents, to Mexican immigrants and to the community at large. In this respect, Elgin, the “All-American City” has fallen short of its designation as a grassroots community that draws on innovation, democratic participation and cooperation to resolve difficult problems.

The present housing crisis, rising unemployment rate and mounting concern over the recession may change the way local residents in Elgin think about overcrowding and the impact they perceive it has on their own well-being. In other words, if overcrowding becomes a socially accepted form of cutting costs during hard economic times, the problem of overcrowding may recede from the public eye. The barriers to incorporation faced by immigrant newcomers, however, are unlikely to disappear on their own. If overcrowding is no longer a barrier, something else will take its place. Changing the terms of the overcrowding debate today could lead to a more effective response to barriers to immigrant incorporation that emerge in the future.

Benjamin Roth is a PhD. candidate in social welfare policy at the University of Chicago and participated in the 2007 Latino Policy Forum study of overcrowding in suburban Chicago.

Red Hook Vendors on Wheels

by ARIANNA MARTINEZ and PATRICIA VOLTOLINI

For over twenty-five years, Latin Americans from Mexico to Chile have gathered at Red Hook Park in Brooklyn, New York, to play and watch soccer while enjoying the smells and flavors from home. In recent years, the Red Hook Vendor Market has become very popular, attracting “foodies” and “fashionistas” from the five boroughs of New York. It is not uncommon to see a local Ecuadorian family picnicking right beside a group of Ivy League students that had come on their bikes to the neighborhood. In a city as diverse as New York, one might expect such scenes to be typical, but in fact, with increasing gentrification pressures and ethnic segregation, this type of cultural, economic and spatial integration is increasingly hard to find.

With the prospect of Ikea coming to Red Hook to anchor the major waterfront redevelopment project nearby, the vendors received the bad news that the City Parks Department would not renew their permit for the following year. This meant that at the end of the summer of 2007, the market would have to close for good. Instead of being perceived as a positive sign of immigrant integration and local economic development, the popularity of the market was considered a hindrance by city authorities. After intense struggles and numerous negotiations, the vendors remain today, operating

under a renewed six-year lease. The lively and colorful tent market, however, has been replaced and reconfigured with vendor trucks that resemble the increasingly controversial “taco trucks” that so many municipalities try to eradicate.

This article looks at the transformation of the Red Hook Vendor Market and the role of community participation. In doing so, it considers what has been gained and lost during the process of the market’s mainstreaming, and concludes with reflections about the meaning of displacement to immigrant communities.

The Red Hook Vendor Market, a Brief History

Despite its current cult status among New Yorkers, until recently Latin American immigrant families mainly frequented the Red Hook Vendor Market as a place for informal gatherings. The collection of colorful tents, diverse foods and country flags gave the market a strong sense of place. These characteristics also gave it a resemblance to outdoor public markets all over the Caribbean, Central America and South America. The market became a destination for entertainment, leisure, social interaction and networking.

During the 1990s, the demographics of Brooklyn began changing. Gentrification pressures started to

bring younger, whiter and more affluent residents to traditionally working-class immigrant neighborhoods, like Carroll Gardens and lower Park Slope, which are close in proximity to Red Hook. At the same time, a large influx of new Spanish-speaking immigrants further fueled the demand for space in an increasingly expensive city. The vendors felt the need to organize and formed the Food Vendor Committee, which later became known as the Red Hook Vendor Association. By the mid-2000s, the Red Hook vendors were widely known throughout the city’s food blogs and visited by all sorts of people who came to watch a soccer match or simply grab an arepa, and by 2006, the association had a market manager and had received non-profit status.

The Conflict

As part of the pro-development agenda adopted by the city, Red Hook became the site of a major waterfront revitalization project anchored by Ikea. Though the vendors were surprised to find out that their permits would not be renewed, one could have predicted it would happen during such a hot New York City real estate market when more “desirable” land uses were preferred and less desirable land uses were discouraged and banned.

The rationalization for ending the vendor presence in Red Hook ⇒

Red Hook Vendor Camera Project 2007



Red Hook Vendor Camera Project 2007



Marcos Lainez



Marcos Lainez



Park was that their vending permit was “outdated” and needed to be “reorganized.” Vendor Association Manager Cesar Fuentes informed us that the Parks Department informed vendors that their permit did not reflect the city’s long-term business model or the style of other outdoor food vendors in the city. In addition, they were told that their permit needed “revamping” in order to reflect their permanence in the park.

The negotiations for the park space and the right to serve food involved not only the Parks Department, but also the Department of Health, which claimed that the vendors needed to comply with the provisions of the standard health and sanitation requirements. In order to meet these requirements, authorities required the vendors to substitute food trucks for their tents.

In the meantime, the association began mobilizing its customers. News that the market would close spread through the food blogs and local and national newspapers. The association harnessed public and political support and received backing from various city agencies and politicians, as well as the mayor’s office. The campaign culminated with the visit of Senator Charles Schumer. By making their voices heard, the vendors and their market became the symbol of immigrant resistance against displacement.

The Victory

Given the widespread visibility and support the vendors had organized, the Parks Department finally issued the vendors a new license for six more years, demonstrating the important role of

TOP TWO PHOTOS: Red Hook ballfield food vendors before they were moved to vendor trucks.

BOTTOM TWO PHOTOS: Vendors in their more isolated vendor trucks

broad community participation in preserving diverse public spaces and ultimately preventing the displacement of the vendors.

Ikea has been open on the nearby Red Hook waterfront for over six months and the vendors believe it has had less of an impact on the neighborhood and market than initially assumed. The vendors have even discovered one advantage of Ikea. The store runs a free ferry service between Manhattan and Red Hook on weekends during the market's hours, making the trip to Red Hook shorter and more attractive to many, while simultaneously helping to decongest the streets from traffic.

"We are embracing change," Cesar Fuentes proudly states, marking a new phase to Red Hook Park and to the vendor businesses. Since the market reopened with a renewed lease, its increased popularity has brought new economic opportunities. One vendor was nominated for an award as one the best food vendors in New York City while other vendors have received catering invitations. That the vendors were allowed to remain in Red Hook Park is a outcome to celebrate, but there are drawbacks to the final settlement.

The Concessions

The move from tents to food trucks transformed not only the vendors' stalls, but the entire relationship between vendors and customers, changing how the park is used and by whom. According to Cesar Fuentes, in the new arrangement customers are "alienated" and the

interaction between vendors and customers is restricted. In addition, the park no longer resembles a vibrant, colorful Latin American market. The new truck model restricts the market to the edge of the park along the sidewalk, separating vendors from the soccer field and from the picnic area and destroying the fluidity that existed between the different uses of the park. Social interaction among the diverse ethnic groups and between vendors and customers, soccer players and fans, has been reduced.

Red Hook Market is also no longer a place for Latin Americans to socialize. Cesar Fuentes notes that there was a time when the vast majority of customers were Latinos. Now, approximately 90 percent are Anglos. The change vendors are embracing in Red Hook is much broader than simply a change in the market layout—it encompasses changes in the socio-economic structure of the market, including the class and ethnicity of customers.

The change from tents to trucks has also changed the dynamics involved in food preparation and selling. With tents, there was space for everybody in the family to be involved in preparing and selling food, whereas trucks only allow one to three people to take part. And, perhaps saddest of all, some of the original vendors have been displaced entirely. In order to stay, vendors had to buy their own trucks, each of which cost between \$20,000 and \$50,000, something financially impossible for many.

Redefining Displacement and the Future of the Market

Despite the challenges, vendors are adapting to the new truck model and the Red Hook Market continues to attract an increasing number of customers. Nonetheless, questions remain about the future of the market. The vending permit given by the Parks Department expires in six years, and there is no guarantee that it will be renewed.

Currently, the Red Hook Vendor Association and Architects for Humanity are collaborating on a design competition for a new model for the park that complies with health codes and highlights the "old feel" that both customers and vendors prefer. Organizers hope that the design suggestions generated in the competition can be incorporated into a future market layout.

In thinking about the market's future, planners need to think about what has been lost even though the market has not been physically driven out. How do we understand displacement? Shall we only consider physical displacement? What about loss of community and cultural expression? What about the loss of places that encourage interaction across racial, ethnic and class divisions? As planners, we need to be attuned to the more subtle aspects of displacement in order to preserve and create unique gathering and community-building places such as the Red Hook Vendor Market

Arianna Martinez is an instructor at LaGuardia Community College, City University of New York. Patricia Voltolini is a PhD. student at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University.

Shifting Geography, Emerging Conflicts: *Undocumented Immigrants' Access to Higher Education*

by NINA MARTIN

In the last decade, the geography of immigrant settlement patterns in the United States has shifted, creating new conflicts over immigrants' access to jobs, housing, drivers' licenses and health care. While traditional gateway states such as California, Texas, New York and Illinois still attract large numbers of immigrants, new destinations have rapidly emerged in southern states such as North Carolina, Georgia and Virginia. In fact, some of the most aggressively anti-immigrant programs and policies have been pursued by states, counties and municipalities in the South. In this respect, the South—where many states and localities are in the forefront of experimenting with policies and programs designed to empower local officials to regulate and restrict the lives of undocumented immigrants—is the new battleground in the fight for immigrants' rights.

In this article, I focus on the issue of access to higher education for undocumented students in North Carolina. The relatively short history of immigration to the state and less developed organizational infrastructure designed to serve immigrants means that advocates are struggling to craft effective responses to the new landscape of anti-immigrant policies.

North Carolina has one of the fastest growing Latino immigrant populations of any state, accounting for 27 percent of the state's total growth over the last fifteen years. In several small towns and rural areas, the white and black populations have been eclipsed by Latinos. The demographic reality facing these places has generated intense feelings in communities and debates in the media regarding the assimilation and integration of this population. A nativist discourse has emerged that often presents the problem as one of illegal Mexicans practicing unwelcome behavior—cheating the state out of taxes, overusing social services, refusing to speak English and causing crime and moral disorder. This view of the situation has been articulated in the news by several county sheriffs, including Alamance County Sheriff Terry Johnson, who commented: "Their values are a lot different—their morals—than what we have here. In Mexico, there's nothing wrong with having sex with a 12-, 13-year-old girl.... They do a lot of drinking down in Mexico." Johnson County Sheriff Steve Bizzell told a reporter that Mexicans are "trashy" and "breeding like rabbits," and that "everywhere you look, it's like little Mexico around here."

These statements by officials in power are matched by various anti-immigrant policies and programs that have been implemented at the state, county and municipal levels in an effort to make North Carolina inhospitable to undocumented immigrants. This kind of "deportation by attrition" has made it harder, if not impossible, for people to access drivers' licenses, education and health care. And, in some cases, local officials have used their power to initiate deportation proceedings against people through highly questionable, and possibly unconstitutional, means. In July 2007, for example, officials in Alamance County turned over to immigration authorities a librarian who had grown up in the area after they found that she had used a false social security number when she applied for the job. The librarian came to their attention after an investigation of the county health department revealed that undocumented people had been receiving services. It appears that health records were used to detect her immigration status.

Over the last year, the North Carolina State Board of Community Colleges has adopted the most restrictive policy in the nation regarding undocumented immigrants' access to higher

education. At several points attempts have been made at the state level and by some members of the community college system to allow undocumented students who graduate from North Carolina high schools to attend community colleges and pay in-state tuition. Each of these attempts to improve undocumented students' access to community colleges has been met with a backlash that has further restricted their access.

A policy set in May 2007 allowed undocumented students to attend college at the out-of-state rate but barred them from receiving any financial aid. In May 2008, a leading official in the community college system announced his intent to see this policy changed and made more restrictive. The board consulted with federal officials who told them that there were no federal government rules preventing undocumented students from attending colleges and universities. Despite this information, in August 2008, the board followed the official's advice and banned undocumented students, even those able to pay out-of-state tuition rates, from attending any community college in the state, pending a consultant's study of the issue. State politicians of both political parties, most notably both candidates for the governor in the 2008 election, have registered their support for the ban. The results of the study will not be known until spring of 2009, but its release and the subsequent decision will be critical in determining

who has the right to economic advancement in North Carolina.

In this environment of increasing hostility and restrictiveness, what actions can be taken by city planners, policymakers and advocates who wish to increase access to higher education? Ten states have adopted a different approach to educational access by implementing laws that grant undocumented students (who meet certain requirements, such as having graduated high school in the state, maintained residency for a specified time period and achieved academic success) in-state tuition at public universities and colleges and, in some instances, access to financial aid. Often called "student adjustment" policies, such policies do not get adopted by chance or by luck, but through the concerted efforts of organized interests who cultivate and motivate a base of support within and outside the immigrant community. Illinois passed a Student Adjustment Act in 2003 and I draw on some examples from this successful campaign in order to assist those in North Carolina and elsewhere who wish to contest the existing ban. While not exhaustive, I find that laying the groundwork for such a change should include building strong advocacy coalitions among civil society organizations, undertaking leadership development among youth, and reframing the discourse.

Migrant civil society organizations have been leaders in advocating

for policy change on a number of issues affecting immigrants. In Illinois, over 100 non-profit organizations came together under the auspices of two umbrella organizations to support the Student Adjustment Act. A collaborative approach to policy advocacy is a way for smaller organizations to participate and for all groups to benefit from the strength of their numbers. This approach also protects organizations from potential backlash by funders or policy makers by directing criticism towards the umbrella organization and away from the less powerful individual groups. In Illinois, one of the most successful aspects of the coalition stemmed from its ability to bring together organizations representing a wide range of nationalities. The Student Adjustment Act was therefore seen as benefiting many ethnic groups rather than only Latinos, as is often portrayed.

Students can constitute a powerful force in conveying the importance of educational access. The voices of students bring credibility and passion to the debate. Ron Bilbao, a student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a leader in the Coalition for College Access, told the college newspaper: "Our administration and elected officials aren't going to stand up for this, so students have to lead this effort—so that our friends, our peers and people we don't even know, in the future will have the same education that we had." A powerful moment in Illinois came during a press ⇒

conference when a group of undocumented students wore commencement regalia and asked for lawmakers to make their dream of a college education come true.

Crafting policy generally requires research into the costs and benefits of various options. Planners and advocates can play an important role in generating “alternative knowledge” from the people most affected: immigrant students. The Center for Urban Economic Development at the University of Illinois at Chicago conducted a survey of immigrant students in 2002 that helped to demonstrate the barriers to college access that would be overcome through the passage of in-state tuition. In addition, the study estimated that the economic cost to the state for each graduating class would be between \$3.3 and \$11.6 million. By contrast, in 2002 the state collected an estimated \$69.2 million in taxes from undocumented immigrants.

The economic argument is powerful but it is not sufficient. It must be linked to a conception of a just and equitable society. Planners can play a pivotal role in envisioning and articulating alternatives. But many confounding questions confront us. What would this society really look like and how do we find a vocabulary to articulate it, given the doubt cast on words such as “liberal” and “feminist,” and when the idea of distributing wealth gets recast as socialism? We desire a place where all people can realize their potential and we must continue the difficult work of elaborating this vision.

Localization of immigration regulations means that a new geography of activism must emerge that works at the local scale, but also in tandem with ongoing national efforts. The Dream Act, a federal bill which would clarify that states are allowed to give in-state tuition to undocumented students and allow these college graduates to

adjust their immigration status with certain restrictions, failed to get traction several times earlier this decade. But the Dream Act may still be realized. Perhaps with a new administration, the Dream Act will gain momentum, especially since one of its main sponsors, Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL), is a close ally of the new president. A national solution would mean that we wouldn’t need to worry about the patchwork quilt of immigration policies that is emerging. After all, immigration is a federal responsibility and only Congress is allowed by the Constitution to craft immigration law.

Nina Martin is an assistant professor in the Department of Geography at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Upcoming Progressive Planning Themes:

- **Racial integration**
- **Peter Marcuse and Progressive Planning**

If you are interested in submitting articles, please email editor@plannersnetwork.org

Voices and Images from a Journey Across Our America

by LOUIS MENDOZA

No doubt, this journey will be a huge physical and mental challenge to me. And yet, in what I hope is not just an exercise of the imagination, I like to think that my own struggle to realize this journey can be seen as a metaphor for the journey and challenge this nation must undertake to make itself right again. At best, then, it will be a journey of reconciliation between the ideal and the real that is premised on the need to confront certain truths about and limits with our present condition. My hope is that this Journey Across Our America will be not only my story, but the story of many whom I encounter who are both part of the problem as well as the solution. (Blog entry 1, 13 February 2007, <http://journeyacrossouramerica.blogspot.com/>)

Having moved to Minnesota from Texas in the summer of 2004, I found myself obliged to think about migration and immigration in new ways. Immigration and

its consequences, the ensuing friction, fears and fights, is not to be escaped in states like Minnesota or other “new destinations” of Latino migration throughout the midwestern and southern United States. My position as chair of Chicano Studies carried unique expectations and obligations to be a resource of information and facilitator of people’s understanding of this “emerging” population, and to be an ally and advocate of immigrant rights. Of course, a Chicano-Latino presence in the urban and rural communities of Minnesota is a century-long phenomenon, not something new at all.

With an opportunity for a sabbatical in 2007-2008, I developed a project on the Latinoization of the U.S. that focused on how Latino immigration was changing our cultural, social and political geography. In the spring of 2007,

immigration was emerging as a heated issue in the still nascent 2008 presidential election as politicians debated comprehensive immigration reform. This debate was spurred, in part, by tensions between a normally conservative business sector that benefits from immigrant labor in the manufacturing, agriculture and construction industries and social conservatives who complain that the fabric of American culture is being threatened by insurmountable linguistic and cultural differences that are incongruous with American values. Not insignificantly, these concerns were precipitated by the emergence of Latinos as the nation’s largest ethnic minority and rapid demographic change in regions that had been either relatively culturally homogeneous (e.g., the Midwest and some parts of the Northeast) or understood themselves through the lens of ⇒

RIGHT: A mural celebrates the multi-ethnic immigrant history of East Boston.



Louis Mendoza

a traditional black-white paradigm (e.g., the South). Moreover, a political controversy and growing perception of intense workforce competition emerged as social conservatives argued that there was a one-to-one correspondence between unemployment among “legal” citizens and the presence of “illegal” workers.

Wanting to get beyond the mostly superficial media coverage of conflict among newcomers and “citizens,” I decided that the best way to really explore this problem was to travel across the country and see firsthand the impact of new (im)migrations, to speak directly with folks inside and outside the Latino community about what their presence here means and to learn lessons from their experiences as a means of broadening and deepening my perspective. My first impulse was to drive across the country, but as I thought of previous cross-country trips, I began to think of all I missed as I sped past places, towns and landscapes, as well as others

in their cars or on foot. I decided therefore to bicycle across the country in order to experience more closely the people, landscape and environment—the context in which the immigration issue unfolds.

From the first day of July to the middle of December in 2007 I cycled through thirty-two states. What follows is a brief snapshot of a few of the images I saw and insights I garnered.

In Boise, Idaho, I met with Fernando Mejia, who moved here from Mexico nine years ago to reunite with his father. Fernando is a student intern with the Idaho Community Action Network and he spoke with me about the need to build a multi-racial movement for comprehensive immigration reform.

This is kind of underground, but we want people to start doing civil disobedience around comprehensive immigration reform, but mainly we want white people to do that. I am building relations with white students. And I am really

Louis Mendoza



Louis Mendoza



LEFT, TOP: A pro-immigrant sign asserts this Tucson homeowner’s position regarding the criminalization of aid to immigrants.

LEFT, BELOW: In Brooklyn, NY and Humboldt Park, Chicago, residents resist gentrification that threatens to raze buildings, displace residents, and destroy immigrant community cohesion.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Across the country, immigrant labor sustains the U.S. economy, be it in the watermelon fields of Utah (top) or as construction workers in New Orleans’ French Quarter (bottom).

honest. I tell them I am spending time with you because I want us to get to know each other and I'd like you to do some civil disobedience.... And they said, "Cool, cool," and actually they have been helping quite a bit. Two weeks ago we thought there was going to be a raid. So we went to the fields and the places we thought there was going to be raids. We took some students. We went from 11 P.M. to 3 A.M., but it ended up being a drug bust.

In many small towns across the country—in Oregon, Minnesota, Michigan, Idaho and Texas—I heard from people that these small towns would not have continued to survive were it not for the immigrants in the factories, fields, mills and mines. Ironically, it's the new immigrants who make it possible for the native-born residents in these towns to continue their traditional way of life—even as they have had to adjust to Mexican restaurants and *tienditas* and Spanish language in their schools and newspapers, and on the radio and the soccer fields. No doubt some resistance, resentment and suspicion exist, but I think many, if not most, see the necessity for change. In Melrose, Minnesota, where immigrants have helped meet the labor needs of the town's largest employer, the Jennie-O turkey processing plant, I met with people working with immigrants to ensure that they felt part of the community, whether it was people like John and Peggy Stockman organizing informal English classes or the police chief who played an important mediating role between native-born residents and newcomers.

Many historically Latino neighborhoods face the risk of erasure due to gentrification, whether in the inner city of large cities like Chicago and New York or in cities and towns along the Mexican border. In the heavily Latino sections of Humboldt Park, Chicago, and Brooklyn, New York, economic development is eradicating historical dwellings, raising taxes and making housing costs soar. Many communities along the border are also facing gentrification as land speculators position themselves to benefit from the commercial development that will accompany the new border crossings that will be needed if a wall is successfully erected. Long-time Latino residents worry about not just affordability but the loss of community cohesion that has helped their communities survive, thrive and balance their distinct cultural identity with that of the assimilating forces of mainstream institutions.

In Harlingen and El Paso, Texas, Tucson, Arizona, and San Diego, California, immigrant rights advocates noted the absurdity of building a fence along a border that has long been porous by design. Concerns about national security don't withstand scrutiny when one considers the economic and cultural interconnectedness that marks life on the border, as well as the fact that there has never been a documented case of terrorist entry from the southern border. Carlos Marentes, executive director of the Border Agricultural Workers Project in El Paso, Texas, shared the following thoughts with me.

Immigration is a hot issue, but in reality, society doesn't know what to do with immigration.... For many years immigrants were ignored by the majority. We knew that they were working in Mr. Bob Smith's farm or with Ms. Lucy taking care of the children, but this was not an issue, until recently. The issue is now a debate in every home in every place....you have the two extremes. On the one hand, some are pro-immigrant either because ➔



Tony Vapias



Louis Mendoza

of beliefs or because we appreciate our own immigrant origins or because many people have a sense of humanity and solidarity—for many people immigrants, after all, are human beings. On the other extreme, you have the anti-immigrants who are racist, who believe in the idea of [racial] supremacy but also who understand things need to [stay] the same; this way a few can benefit at the expense of everybody. But within those two groups you have most of North American society who doesn't know what to do, who listen to us and think what we say makes sense, but also listen to the opposite side and think some things that they say makes sense. So what we have right now in the United States is a moral dilemma and people are afraid to make a decision. Sometimes they are pro-immigrant sometimes they are anti-immigrant.

...Here at the border, immigration is a way of life. As you can see, the farmworker's center is located right across the street from the United States Immigration Service, and there's a purpose for that. We are here to support the farmworkers. In dealing with the issues affecting farmworkers everyday, we have to deal with immigration policies and the human aspect, the inequality, the hypocrisy, the contradictions of immigration policy....The farmworkers use the facility for safe haven, the ones that live far from the area. Well, la migra is across the street. So we are like one of those marriages that take place without love, only by convenience. We hate each other but we are together here.

This reality of migration at the border includes tragic aspects. Suffering of people has resulted from intensified

aggression against the border population. September 11th made things worse for us at the border. Now we live in an environment which is clearly anti-immigrant, anti Mexican and anti-poor. If you review the latest activity against immigrants in this area, those activities have been in poor communities. You don't see the border patrol activities, for example, near the fields. Probably the majority of our members are chili pickers and you hardly see any activity of the border patrol during the most intensive months of agricultural activity.

The immigration problems are a result of our free trade policies and bad foreign policies. We also are concerned with anti-immigrant discourse in the media and from the TV, how this anti-immigrant rhetoric creates a situation where extremist groups think that they have to do something against immigrants.... Most of the immigration legislation before congress that failed included strong measures to control the border. All of them also included a temporary guest worker program. So you have two contradictions... what they want is the type of policies that have been working in this country for many years.

To me, the immigration policies of this country resemble a case of domestic violence. The man beats the women, does whatever he wants to do with the woman and it's not because he wants the women to leave. It's because he wants the woman to stay under his control. So, this is where we have immigration policies that attempts to have an immigrant population under control. But we don't want them to leave, we want them to do the dirty jobs

Marentes' poignant words about the dilemma we face on immigration speak to the many challenges facing comprehensive, meaningful and just immigration reform. Even as ICE (Immigration and Custom Enforcement) conducts ever more workforce raids, the debate about immigration has been pushed into the background as the economic crisis in the country has intensified. Nonetheless, this critical issue will not go away and the next administration in Washington will need to confront it.

Space limitations have only allowed me to share a brief snapshot of a very complex and contentious issue—one that, if it is to be resolved, will require a diligent and protracted effort to lead us to a place where we may gain new insight into our common ground and mutual destiny. In many ways, the journey towards resolution on immigration will mirror the road we traveled this presidential election cycle: we face a crossroads between who we aspire to be and how we have lived up to now. Can a new path be forged?

Louis Mendoza (lmendoza@umn.edu) is an associate professor of Chicano Studies at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities.

The Great Sleep-In: *Demonstrating for Public Housing in Paris*

by ERNESTO CASTAÑEDA

On 3 October 2007, a piece of street theater was unfolding on the sidewalks of Rue de la Banque, a street in downtown Paris close to the Euronext Paris Stock Exchange.

Protestors, mostly legal immigrants, were camping out and demonstrating in front of *Le Ministère de la Crise du Logement* (Ministry for the Housing Crisis), a fake ministry created in cyberspace and in front of a formerly vacant building occupied since early 2007 by three activist groups: *Droit au Logement* (DAL) or Right to Housing; *Mouvement d'Animation Culturelle et Artistique de Quartier* or Movement for Artistic and Cultural Neighborhood Organizing, a group of activist artists trying to get housing by occupying vacant buildings; and *Jeudi Noir* or Black Thursday, a group of students without housing. Since the *squatté* (as this activity is called by activists and the media) of the ministry had garnered relatively little attention from the government, activists decided to take their claims to the streets to increase their visibility and draw more media attention to the housing crisis.

According to the *Abbé Pierre Fondation*, in 2002 there were more than three million people inadequately housed in France, while, according to DAL, around two million housing units were vacant in 1999. Private owners prefer to leave second and third homes empty rather than renting them to people who they fear could stop paying rent and take advantage of laws that protect renters—for example, making it illegal to evict people during the cold winter months.

The “sleep-in” started on the night of 3 October 2007, when around a hundred people slept in red tents in the middle of the Rue de la Banque, a small street in front of the squatted building. Two days later, at around 5:00 A.M., police evacuated the participants from the street and removed the tents, claiming that the tents were trash left in a public area (even when there were people sleeping inside). The few tents not taken by the police were hung in protest from the balconies of the squatted building. Over the next several nights, people slept on

the sidewalks without tents. Again around 5:00 A.M., this time on 10 October, a large number of anti-riot police cleared the streets. Buses full of police remained in the area throughout the day to prevent the protestors from returning, forcing them to go back to their overcrowded apartments on the outskirts of Paris.

Self-Segregated Squatting: Reproducing Racial, Cultural and Legal Boundaries

Most of the people who were sleeping in the streets as a form of protest were not homeless in the narrow sense, but rather people who lived in crowded arrangements, boarded with others illegally or could not pay their current rents and risked being evicted. While most of the people participating were black, the spokespeople—white native-born French activists—spoke in the name of the participants.

I visited the encampment area on many occasions. On my first visit on 7 October, I talked to a young French man originally from Rhône who used to work as an engineer in a large firm that makes electric equipment but was fired one day for wearing Bermuda shorts at the factory. This case became famous in the independent and progressive French media and afterwards the victim became active in various causes, among them housing. This relatively famous activist was accompanied by another person from the same area, a working-class man of North African origin who had lost his job and since then lived in the streets.

Among all the people participating in the camp that day, these two men seemed the most willing to talk to anyone curious about what was going on. They talked for an hour with a small group of young white French women, one of whom was writing a newspaper article about the protest. I tagged along and listened to the conversation and also asked some questions. The men told us what they stood for and what they wanted—

quite simply, more public housing and more access to it for those in need.

During our conversation, the families involved in the protest started to distribute food. The people camping on the sidewalk got in line. One woman from Africa who was part of the protest said to us: “Come and eat with us because we are all the same. Are we not? Things have to be equal. Come eat our food.” This new French citizen was clearly drawing on the French motto of liberty, equality and fraternity. Nonetheless, the white French women dismissed her politely, seemingly nervous about the nature of the food being served. The white activist we were interviewing also refused the food, saying he had already eaten.

We continued talking next to where the food was being distributed. After a while a man came and gave food to the activist. The activist took it initially, but after the man who had brought the food left, the activist said that he had already eaten and offered the plate of couscous to us. After I finished eating, I went and thanked the woman who had offered us the food. Afterwards another woman of African origin offered me a drink derived from corn and milk. I drank it and we chatted about her housing situation.

I did not think much about this at the time as I was hungry and curious to try new foods. But this minor incident shows how even among a group of progressive French, full of solidarity, I (a Mexican studying in the United States) was the only non-African who had eaten “their food” with the squatters in what they saw as a sign of deep equality. Among the squatters, some of

African origin appeared to have noticed and started talking to me, appreciative that I had eaten with them. I didn’t ask anyone where they came. When they talked about their cause they were quick to point out that they were all French citizens, clearly relating to French Republican ideals of equality. For strategic and political reasons, they were presenting themselves as French so that the media would not portray them as immigrants asking for rights for which “they were not eligible.”

A woman told me, “People think we are undocumented but no, we all have our papers. All of us are French. Undocumented people do not have a right to public housing.” In pushing their agenda, they reproduced the division between documented and undocumented immigrants and stigmatized the undocumented in order to advance their own claims as political refugees, legal residents or new citizens. The group identified themselves not as immigrants, but simply as people “*sans logement*” or “*sans abri*” — without housing or shelter—and would often chant “*Nous sommes les mal-logés*,” translating to “We are the badly housed.”

Instead of asking where they were from, I asked the African-looking woman where the corn drink originated, to which she answered Mali. It turned out that about 80 percent of the hundred or so people who had taken to sleeping in the streets in protest happened to be women from Mali and their children. None of the newspaper reports I had read pointed this out, they just said “women and children of African origin,” using a widespread practice of categorizing people by continents based on dress and skin color, effacing the particularities of their sending communities and cultures. ➡

Ernesto Castañeda



Ernesto Castañeda



On my second visit on 9 October, I arrived on the other side of the street. This time I caught the least visible of the squatters, since they were hidden behind parked cars. In the last set of “beds” I found not African women and children like on the other side of the street, but three white French women and two women from North Africa who spoke French. It seemed that there was racial and spatial segregation even at the sleep-in. The reasons may have been partly cultural and partly related to language differences, since the refugees from Mali had a limited knowledge of French.

I approached this other group of women. One of them had just brought chocolate, bananas, bread and yogurt from the supermarket and she and her friends were saying amongst themselves that this was “like a picnic.” The woman asked me what I was doing there, clearly distrustful, saying that Sarkozy had agents observing them. She cautioned others not to talk to me. I said that I hoped to eventually write a story about the demonstration.

Among the group there was an Algerian woman to whom I was the most interested in talking because of my research on immigration from Algeria. The French woman would later complain that no one was interested in talking to her because she was white, French-born and formerly middle-class. She claimed that the reporters preferred to talk to the activists or to the people of color. While most people there were *de jure* French citizens, because of their ethnic features they were *a priori* classified as immigrants and thus drew more attention. Throughout the days of the protest, politicians and celebrities alike came to the site to be photographed and show their solidarity with the poor people from Africa who were not given adequate housing by the French state even when they had papers. It seemed that the activists’ tactic of using minorities to gain attention for their cause, something new in France, was working.

Indeed, previous housing rights demonstrations by white French citizens had not received such favorable media attention as did the demonstrations with people of color. The Mali immigrants had been mobilized based on ethnic group ties and networks from their towns of origin, so they had a high potential for collective action that was tapped into by the French activists. But at the same time that the Malians were being used in a public

relations campaign, they were learning new mobilization tactics and tools, politicized into the rights discourse of their new land and taught how to be good French citizens, i.e., politically contentious.

While I was talking to the group of white women, a middle-aged French man approached and asked what “we” were doing. What was the purpose of being there? Until when would we be there? He was the owner of the car parked next to the women. He said he was worried about people sitting on it, breaking the windows or worse, setting it on fire, as happened in the famous riots in 2005. The French women assured him that they meant no harm, that they cleaned the street twice a day in order not to leave any trash and that they would take care of his car. He said that he lived “around the corner, but in a very small place” and thus empathized with the women because while he would like to move to a bigger place, he knew he would not be able to afford it. He thanked the women and offered to bring them coffee in the morning.

The protesters and their many allies held a big march some weeks later. Afterwards they were able to arrange meetings with Minister Christine Boutin, head of the Ministry for Housing and Urban Affairs. After many press conferences and internal discussions, protest leaders signed an agreement in which the government guaranteed to offer housing *only* to the people protesting at the Rue de la Banque site, explicitly saying that they would not do the same for people in the future. Months later I contacted the woman from Algeria I had met. Her situation had not changed and she was still living in overcrowded conditions. A big march was held to celebrate the one-year anniversary of the encampment, but the cases of many of the protesting families are yet to be resolved.

Ernesto Castañeda is a doctoral candidate in sociology at Columbia University. His dissertation compares the avenues for political action of Mexican immigrants in New York City with North Africans in Paris and Barcelona.

Expose, Propose and Politicize: *The Planners Network Conference,* *Winnipeg, Canada, July 17-19, 2008*

by MICHAEL DUDLEY

Welcome to this special section of *Progressive Planning*, which reports on the 2008 Planners Network conference, held this past July in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The conference title, “Flat not Boring,” was an amusing reference to southern Manitoba’s notoriously unvarying geography. More revealing was the theme of this year’s conference: “Planning in Challenging Climates.” Topics included planning for food, alternative transportation, storytelling in planning, indigenous planning, creative practices, alternative economics, teaching climate change and political activism.

The PN conference was just one of two major planning events held in Winnipeg in July. The Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) national conference, “Planning by Design in Community: Making Great Places,” drew over 700 participants to the city’s convention center (see www.cip-icu.ca/2008winnipeg/english/index.htm). The PN conference attracted some 200 participants for a free public event, a day of mobile workshops across the city and one day of sessions at the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Manitoba.

The free public kick-off event was an evening about alternative transportation featuring Todd Litman of the Victoria Transport Policy Institute and Will Toor, former mayor of Boulder and current Boulder county commissioner (see the articles by Litman and Toor in this issue).

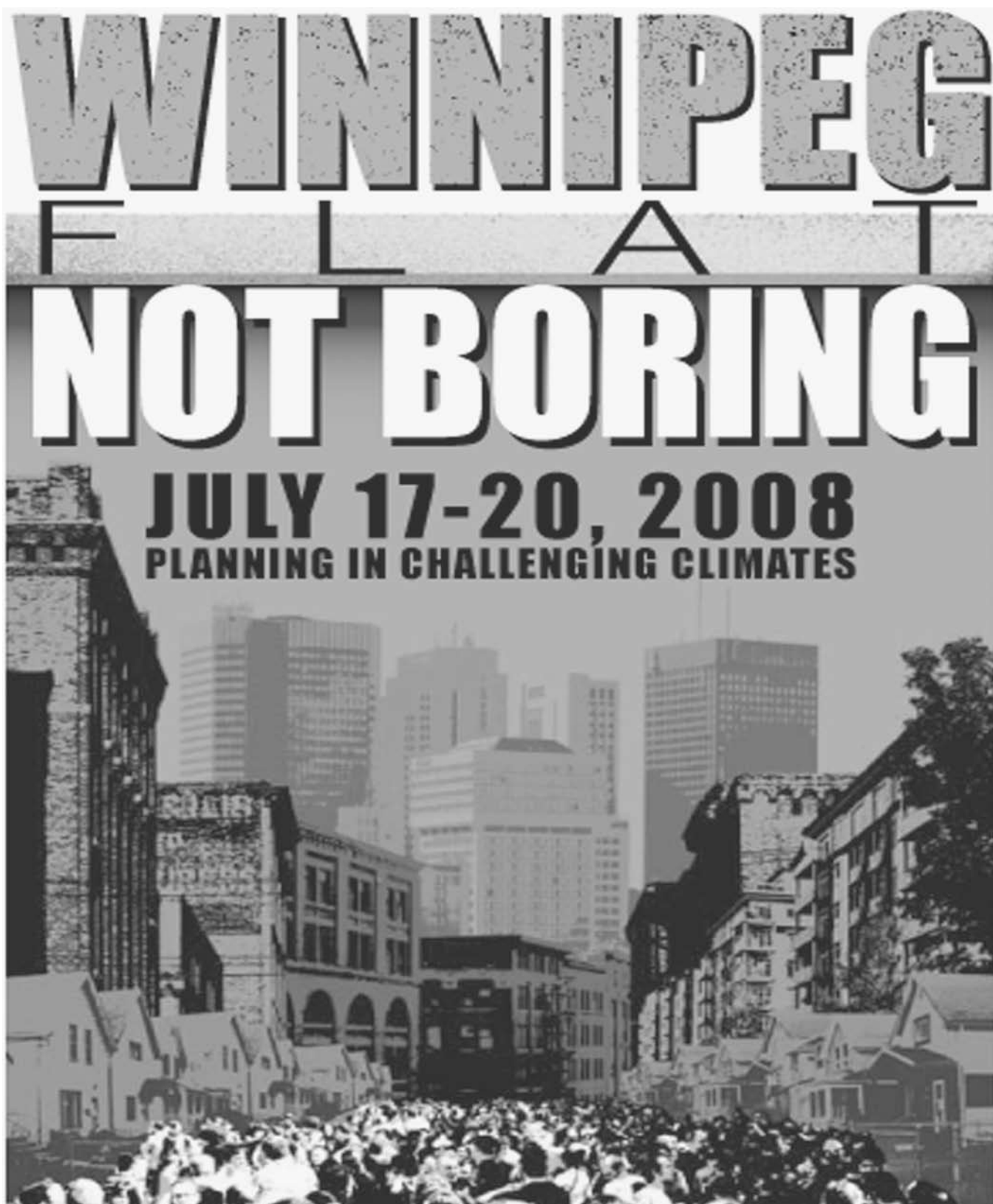
On Friday, attendees could choose between ten different mobile workshops, ranging from inner-

city tours to Aboriginal initiatives to an examination of Winnipeg’s ecology. The workshops focused on local examples that demonstrated how the engagement of community-based, non-profit organizations and activists can challenge dominant planning assumptions. For example, the ecology workshop showed how non-profits are addressing local environmental issues, and that community engagement is crucial for improving and protecting environmental integrity and bridging the gap between people and natural environments in urban settings.

This focus on activism was also a key element of the session “Writing for Progressive Planners,” the purpose of which was to provide planning activists with the tools to write effective opinion pieces for alternative and mainstream media outlets. Session leaders Tom Angotti and Louise Dunlap (author of *Undoing Silence: Tools for Social Change Writing*) stressed that, while urban issues are extensively reported in various media, the essential “understory” of social and environmental injustices is often missing.

At two sessions on creativity and “urban know-how,” participants discussed how, as planners, we need to regularly revisit the ways in which we interact critically with our surroundings; what once seemed creative can quickly become stale. Whether engaging the public in community design or spearheading walking tours, it is important that we avoid simply seeking evidence to reinforce our existing beliefs—a stereotype is a stereotype, be it held on the fringe or not. Panelists showed how they are using film, photography ⇨

The 2008 Planners



Network Conference



ABOVE

TOP: Aboriginal writers collective, Friday night.

MIDDLE: The Magnificent Sevens.

BOTTOM: Mobile workshop #8.

OPPOSITE PAGE

TOP: Peter Marcuse.

MIDDLE: Registration desk on Thursday night.

BOTTOM: Planning's Dirty Laundry project.

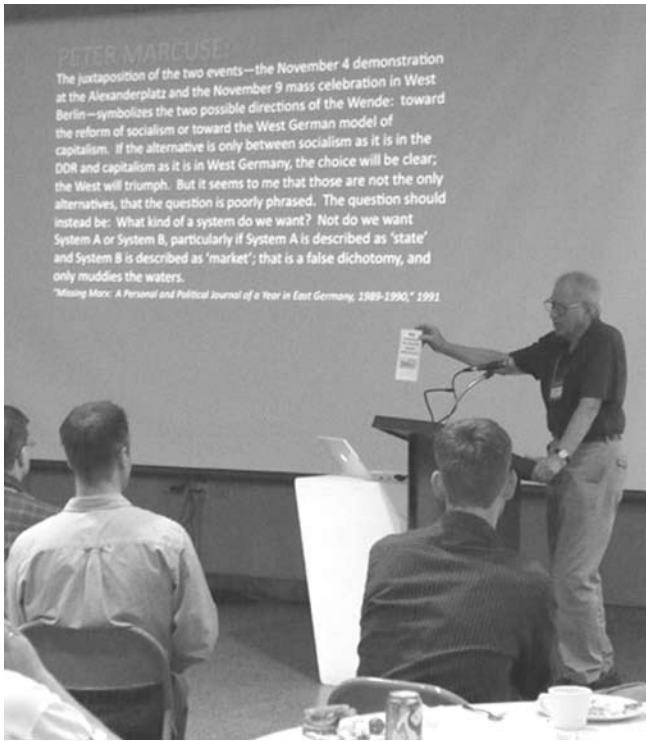
and informal gatherings as lenses to interpret our surroundings. In the process, they are finding that space can be used in very complex ways in the most unexpected places, with everything from the sidewalk to the screen sparking the imagination (see pages __ for Heather McClean's article on these sessions).

The lunch-hour plenary was a tribute to long-time planning scholar and social critic Peter Marcuse, perhaps most famous for his 1978 article on the "Myth of the Benevolent State" (*Social Policy*, 1978, 8:4), which provided critical counter-narratives for key American housing policies. Marcuse has also contributed numerous articles to *Progressive Planning*. One of his best-known articles critiques as "delusional" most of the discourse on sustainability. Throughout his career, Marcuse has sought to highlight inequalities in society through a unity of theory and practice. Conference Co-Chair Richard Milgrom suggested that his favorite Marcuse quote could be a motto for Planners Network: "Expose, Propose & Politicize."

In that spirit, participants could take in an art installation of decorated t-shirts and other apparel that exposed "planning's dirty laundry," which cataloged such harmful practices as redlining, restrictive covenants and anti-immigrant ordinances.

Like the CIP conference earlier in the week, there was a focus on planning for agriculture and food security. Governance structures and urban policies, such as food charters, were shown to be key to supporting such innovations as community-supported agriculture, tribal agriculture on reservations and farmers' markets, which are often impeded by inflexible municipal permitting. The urban ecology tour of Winnipeg's ecosystem highlighted the surging interest in community gardens on campuses and in the inner city, while also illustrating cross-cultural values and community engagement in land reclamation and food security initiatives.

Another session looked at the potential for making planning accessible and inclusive, rather than crisis-oriented, through the use of community design centers and public-interest planning that takes a "storefront" approach. While such initiatives require a great deal of support from their communities, they also need



PETER MARCUSE
The juxtaposition of the two events—the November 4 demonstration at the Alexanderplatz and the November 9 mass celebration in West Berlin—symbolizes the two possible directions of the Wende: toward the reform of socialism or toward the West German model of capitalism. If the alternative is only between socialism as it is in the DDR and capitalism as it is in West Germany, the choice will be clear; the West will triumph. But it seems to me that those are not the only alternatives, that the question is poorly phrased. The question should instead be: What kind of a system do we want? Not do we want System A or System B, particularly if System A is described as 'state' and System B is described as 'market'; that is a false dichotomy, and only muddies the waters.
"Missing Max: A Personal and Political Journal of a Year in East Germany, 1989-1990," 1991



to avoid appearing to duplicate the city's planning functions. Still, they could go a long way toward addressing information disparities in planning, which can cause citizens to fear that decisions about their communities are being made behind closed doors—a case in point of which arose during the conference.

During the week of the conference, the City of Winnipeg announced a controversial proposal for a new football stadium in the inner-city neighborhood of South Point Douglas, which sits in a V-shaped bend in the Red River. While the proposal has since been relocated elsewhere, the stadium would have required extensive demolitions and a huge investment in new infrastructure, and it would have made surrounding areas not only unaffordable, but subject to intense vehicular traffic, all of which had local residents very worried. PN members were given a tour which involved a lengthy roundtable discussion on how to fight such proposals effectively—a very real example of planning in a challenging climate. PN delegates were prominently featured in the local press for their uniformly negative appraisals of the proposal!

Other progressive topics included housing and workers' co-ops (Manitoba's provincial government was lauded for its strong support for co-ops and the workers' co-op movement) and strategies for dealing with gentrification. The renewed Winnipeg neighborhood of West Broadway was seen to dance a thin line between urban revitalization and gentrification, ensuring that landowners, residents and government agencies work closely together to accommodate all needs.

Throughout the conference, attendees were challenged to look at planning in new ways, through the eyes of others and in terms of how planning can contribute to addressing societal power imbalances. Coming as it did immediately following the CIP conference, the PN conference was a stimulating and celebratory way to cap an exciting week of planning deliberations in Winnipeg.

Michael Dudley is a research associate at the Institute of Urban Studies at the University of Winnipeg. Michael extends his thanks to his colleagues Katy Walsh and Art Ladd for their contributions to this article.

Shifting Cultures to Achieve Sustainable Transportation

by ARNE ELIAS

Current transportation systems are an intertwined web of mutually supporting economic, regulatory, technical and cultural systems, extremely challenging to disentangle in order to be able to respond to changed conditions. Novel strategies and approaches, which take into account specific and local conditions, are needed to advance transportation towards sustainability. In the following articles, Todd Litman and Will Toor discuss such strategies.

Litman outlines a list of existing initiatives, programs and strategies, along with metrics for evaluating benefits that are useful measures of shifts in such factors as fuel usage and ridership. Toor recounts the history of formulating and implementing sustainable transportation practices in Boulder, Colorado. His is a textbook case study of the challenges encountered in negotiating change and the skills required to navigate incumbent social and political cultures to implement transportation demand management systems. The two pieces together demonstrate that expert and local knowledge are necessary in the often long, drawn-out process to engage choice ridership—those riders who have alternatives to transit—and develop new transit routing methodologies. Additionally, the pieces show that the combination of providing high-quality and sustainable travel choices—utilizing policy and pricing tools and social marketing support programs—is fundamental to advancing sustainability in transportation and the redesign of our cities.

Achieving sustainable transportation will require dealing with technology lock-in—where social, structural and economic arrangements substantially and broadly support and preserve incumbent socio-technical systems. These arrangements are difficult to dislodge even when they become inappropriate for new and changing conditions. While incumbent behavioral, technical and infrastructural elements are often seen as the product of market distortions, they are in fact far more complex cultural structures that incorporate multiple elements such as markets and value systems that require the sort of strategies and approaches outlined here by Litman and Toor.

Arne Elias is executive director of the Center for Sustainable Transportation at the University of Winnipeg.

Visioning Sustainable Transportation: *Win-Win Solutions that Achieve Economic, Social and Environmental Objectives*

by TODD LITMAN

Introduction

To promote more sustainable transportation, it is essential that we find ways to correct market distortions. Although individual distortions may seem modest and justified, their effects are cumulative and contribute to a cycle of automobile dependency. In fact, many transportation problems, like urban traffic congestion, are virtually unsolvable without market reforms, which, in the case of congestion, demands improved travel options and more efficient pricing.

Such initiatives are referred to in this paper as “win-win transportation solutions” in that they increase both overall economic efficiency and social equity. Win-win strategies are a type of preventive medicine—equivalent to putting the transportation system on a healthier diet—that can avert the need for more difficult and expensive measures.

All of this is not to suggest that automobile travel provides no benefits; it simply indicates that in a more optimal market, consumers would choose to drive less than they do now—and be better off as a result. As an analogy, food is essential for life and so provides tremendous benefits, but that does not mean everybody would benefit from eating more, or that all food should be subsidized. At the margin (relative to current consumption), many people are better off eating less. Food subsidies may be justified in some cases, but it would be economically and medically harmful to subsidize all food for everybody. Similarly, that mobility provides some benefits does not prove that *more* driving is better or that driving should be subsidized. Given better options and more efficient pricing, many motorists would choose to drive less and be better off as a result.

This article identifies a dozen such cost-effective and technically feasible win-win strategies that correct existing market distortions that reduce

transportation system efficiency. These strategies provide multiple benefits, including congestion reduction, road and parking cost savings, consumer savings, safety, improved mobility for non-drivers and energy conservation and emissions reductions. These strategies also tend to increase overall economic productivity, employment and wealth.

Planning Reforms

Conventional transportation planning and funding practices favor automobile travel and undervalue alternative modes in various, sometimes subtle, ways. Least-cost planning is a term for more objective and comprehensive planning that:

- Funds alternative modes and demand management strategies equally with roadway and parking facility expansion, based on cost-effectiveness;
- Considers all significant impacts (costs and benefits); and
- Involves the public in developing and evaluating alternatives.

Least-cost planning creates more efficient and equitable transportation systems, particularly over the long run as more durable planning decisions are affected. When fully implemented, it also typically reduces automobile travel between ten to twenty percent compared with conventional, automobile-oriented planning.

Following are some examples of win-win transportation strategies, the result of least-cost planning.

Pay-As-You-Drive (PAYD) Pricing: Pay-as-you-drive pricing (also called distance-based and mileage-based pricing) means that vehicle insurance, ⇨

registration, taxes and leasing fees are based directly on the vehicle's annual mileage. The more one drives, the more one pays, and conversely, the less one drives, the more one pays. For example, a \$400 annual insurance premium becomes 3¢ per mile, and a \$1,200 annual premium becomes 10¢ per mile. A typical U.S. motorist would pay about 7¢ per mile for insurance, plus 3¢ for registration, fees and taxes. This should reduce affected vehicles' annual mileage ten to fifteen percent, providing comparable reductions in congestion, facility costs, accidents and pollution, plus consumer cost savings. Because this is more equitable and affordable than standard pricing, it is particularly beneficial to lower-income motorists, who drive significantly less on average and value opportunities to save money.

Parking Cash-Out and Pricing: Parking cash-out means that commuters who are offered a subsidized parking space can instead choose the equivalent cash value or other benefits. For example, employees might be able to choose between a free parking space, a monthly transit pass, vanpool subsidies or fifty dollars cash per month. This option typically reduces automobile commuting by ten to thirty percent and is fairer, giving non-drivers benefits comparable to those offered motorists.

Road Pricing: Road pricing means that motorists pay directly for driving on a particular roadway or in a particular area. Congestion pricing (also called value pricing), on the other hand, refers to road pricing with higher fees during peak periods. Economists have long advocated road pricing as an efficient and equitable way to fund transportation facilities and services and reduce traffic problems. Efficient road pricing typically reduces affected vehicle traffic by ten to twenty percent, with larger reductions if implemented with improvements to alternative modes.

Freight Transportation Management: Freight transportation management includes various strategies to increase the efficiency of freight and commercial transportation, including improving distribution practices—such as better siting industrial locations to improve efficiency—and shifting freight to more resource-efficient modes. Although less than 10 percent of total traffic consists of commercial vehicles, they have a great impact due

to their weight. Reductions of five to twenty percent of freight vehicle travel can be achieved through freight transportation management.

Transportation Demand Management Programs: Transportation demand management (TDM) programs include various services and incentives to encourage use of alternative modes. Commute trip reduction programs target employee travel, while school and campus trip management programs target students and school staff. Transportation management associations are member-controlled organizations that provide transportation services in a particular area, such as a commercial district, industrial park or mall. TDM programs typically reduce affected automobile travel by five to fifteen percent if they rely only on information and encouragement, and ten to thirty percent if they include financial incentives like parking cash-out.

Transit and Rideshare Improvements: There are many ways to improve public transit services, including additional routes, increased service, high occupancy vehicle priority, comfort improvements, lower and more convenient fares, improved user information, marketing programs, transit-oriented development, improved security and special services, such as commuter express buses and special event shuttles. Typically, between five to ten percent of urban automobile trips will shift to high-quality transit, and quality transit can leverage additional travel reductions by stimulating more compact development. For example, people who live in transit-oriented communities tend to drive ten to thirty percent less than residents of automobile-oriented areas.

Rideshare Programs: Ride sharing (car pooling and van pooling) is a particularly efficient travel mode when it makes use of otherwise unoccupied seats. It is particularly appropriate for more dispersed destinations that cannot be served efficiently by public transit. Rideshare programs promote ride sharing and match riders.

Walking and Cycling Improvements: Walking and cycling can substitute for some motor vehicle trips directly and indirectly support other alternative modes like public transit. There are many ways to promote walking and cycling, including improved facilities (sidewalks, crosswalks, paths and bicycle parking),

traffic calming, shortcuts, streetscaping, encouragement programs, and more mixed land use (so more activities are within walking distance). People typically drive five to fifteen percent fewer vehicle miles in communities with good walking and cycling conditions than in more automobile-dependent areas.

Smart Growth: Current land use development practices tend to increase vehicle travel by dispersing destinations, separating activities and favoring automobile travel over alternative modes. Smart growth refers to development practices that result in more compact, accessible, multi-modal communities where travel distances are shorter, people have more travel options and it is possible to walk and bicycle to more destinations. Smart growth policies typically reduce per capita vehicle travel by between ten and thirty percent.

Car Sharing: Car sharing refers to automobile rental services intended to substitute for private vehicle ownership. It requires affordable, short-term (hourly and daily rate) vehicle rentals in residential areas. Car sharing has low fixed costs and high variable costs, encouraging users to minimize their driving and use alternatives when possible. Motorists who shift from car ownership to car sharing typically reduce their vehicle travel by between thirty and sixty percent.

Revenue-Neutral Tax Shifting: Many economists recommend shifting taxes away from income and business activity to vehicles, vehicle fuel and road

use as a way to stimulate economic development while recovering more roadway costs and petroleum externalities and encouraging energy efficiency and technological innovation. Transition costs are minimal if implementation is predictable and gradual, and tax shifting can be progressive with respect to income if revenues are used in ways that benefit lower-income people. For example, fuel taxes can be increased 10 percent annually for several years, offset by tax reductions targeting lower-income households.

Evaluating Win-Win Benefits

Win-win solutions can provide significant benefits, including congestion reduction, road and parking facility cost savings, accident reductions, consumer savings, energy conservation, emissions reductions, improved mobility options for non-drivers and increased public fitness and health.

Estimates of program efficacy can be validated by comparing annual vehicle mileage in the U.S. with other wealthy countries that have transportation policies that reflect more of the win-win strategies just described (see Figure 1). For example, Northern European countries with higher fuel taxes and more investment in alternative modes have a lower per capita vehicle mileage, between thirty and forty percent lower than the U.S., even though these countries have yet to widely implement some win-win strategies like pay-as-you-drive fees and congestion pricing. ➡

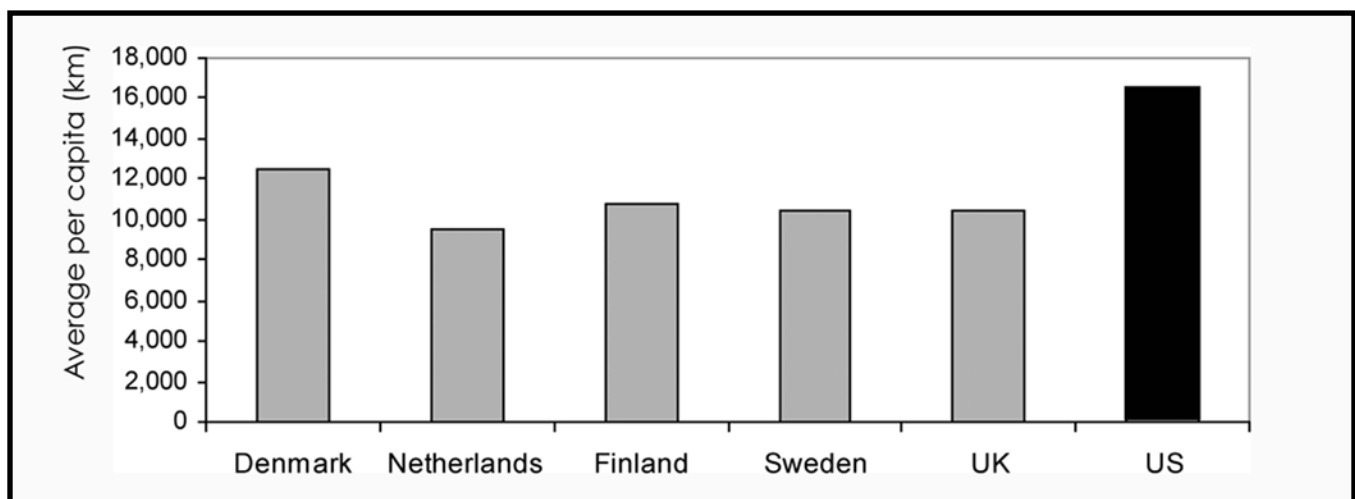


Figure 1: Per Capita Vehicle Travel, 2000 (European Commission & USDOT Data)

To understand why such large benefits are possible, it is useful to consider some basic economic principles. Efficient markets have certain requirements: a wide range of consumer choices; efficient pricing that reflects production costs; and neutral public policies that do not arbitrarily favor one good over another. Current transportation markets violate these principles in ways that reduce efficiency and exacerbate transportation problems.

For example, many commuters are offered subsidized parking but no comparable benefit for alternative modes such as walking, cycling, ride sharing or public transit. This is a market distortion that favors automobile travel over other modes and reduces travel options. Offering commuters parking cash-outs typically reduces automobile commute trips by between fifteen and twenty-five percent. Similarly, using a fixed fee pricing structure—where vehicle insurance, registration and lease fees are not based on how much a vehicle is driven—encourages driving and fails to account for the increased costs that result from more driving, like accidents and road wear.

Described differently, current pricing fails to give motorists the savings that result from driving less. A motorist who reduces vehicle travel helps reduce congestion, parking costs, accidents and pollution emissions, but few of these savings are returned directly to the motorist. This is both inefficient and unfair. People who drive less than average end up subsidizing those who drive more than average, a market distortion that is regressive since lower-income people tend to drive less. An efficient market gives consumers more of the savings that result when they reduce their mileage.

Other distortions involve planning bias. For example, many jurisdictions have funds dedicated to roads and parking facilities that cannot be used for other transportation improvements—even ones that may be more cost effective and beneficial. More objective and comprehensive planning tends to increase support for alternative modes and mobility management strategies, resulting in a more diverse and efficient transportation system.

Conclusions

Win-win transportation solutions are market-based policy reforms that increase efficiency by removing distortions that limit consumer choice and stimulate motor vehicle travel. They also help create a more equitable and efficient transport system that benefits consumers, supports economic development and yields other positive results. Many transportation problems are virtually unsolvable without such reforms.

Conventional planning tends to treat mobility management strategies as measures of last resort to address specific problems like congestion and air pollution. Win-win solutions take the opposite approach, applying market reforms whenever cost effective and taking into account all costs and benefits.

Most individual win-win strategies have modest impacts and so are not considered the best solution to any particular problem. As a result, they are undervalued by conventional planning, which may focus on a narrow set of objectives. However, when all impacts are considered, win-win solutions are often the most cost-effective way of improving transportation overall; their impacts are cumulative and synergistic. If fully implemented, win-win solutions could meet Kyoto emission reduction targets while increasing consumer benefits and economic development.

Todd Litman is the founder and executive director of the Victoria Transport Policy Institute (www.vtpi.org). The principles outlined in this article are described in more detail in "Win-Win Transportation Solutions," available at www.vtpi.org/winwin.pdf and in related chapters in the Online Transportation Demand Management Encyclopedia at www.vtpi.org/tdm/index.php.

A HOP, SKIP and JUMP to “Branding” Transit: *How Incremental Improvements to Transit and Cycling Can Boost Ridership and Bring New Life to Downtowns*

by WILL TOOR

Over the last fifteen years, Boulder, Colorado, has succeeded in making a rather dramatic shift in the transportation choices of its residents. Daily bus ridership is five times what it was in 1990, and bicycle use is about ten times the national average. A combination of innovative planning, ambitious target-setting and creative project financing has made Boulder a leader in sustainable transportation initiatives.

Boulder is a college town of 100,000 people located about thirty miles from Denver. Since the late 1960s, Boulder has been famous (or infamous, depending on one's perspective) for its growth management policies. The core of this approach was two-fold: 1) the establishment of an urban service area by intergovernmental agreement with the surrounding county; and 2) the passage by voters of substantial open space taxes, which allowed the city and county to acquire over 140,000 acres of land, permanently hardening the urban growth boundary. Despite repeated predictions that these policies would drive business away and cause the area to fade economically, the opposite has happened. During the 1980s and 1990s, Boulder had an employment boom, driven by biotech, high tech, natural foods, clean energy and other start-ups spun off from the University of Colorado. By the turn of the century, a net of 50,000 people a day were commuting into Boulder.

Traffic Congestion: A Growing Problem

Along with the economic benefits came significant increases in traffic, leading to vigorous community debate. Up until the late 1980s, Boulder's approach to land use and transportation was pretty traditional. While the older core of the town was quite pedestrian friendly, the newer eastern part was built with large arterials, low-density development and minimum

parking requirements—resulting in many large parking lots—creating an environment poorly suited to anything but automobiles. In the 1980s, the city built a bypass around its east side, but by the end of the decade this approach came to a crashing halt, running straight into fiscal, physical and political realities.

The physical reality was one shared by most mature communities. Congestion primarily occurs on streets within the existing developed areas, so any attempt to solve the problem by expanding the roadway network requires condemning existing homes and businesses—an expensive, politically difficult and often unjust proposition. Boulder ran into this when city planners suggested adding lanes to Table Mesa Drive, one of the city's main arterials. Since this would have required condemning land from many homeowners, the community reacted furiously and the city quickly backed off.

At the same time, a growing number of people, including city staff, elected officials and citizen activists, began arguing that the city needed to change focus and develop a new approach based on limiting traffic rather than accommodating it. A multi-year political battle erupted between advocates of this demand management approach and advocates of road and parking expansion. The city examined a number of scenarios ranging from a maximum roadway expansion scenario to a variety of demand management scenarios. Studies indicated that the city could invest about \$200 million in roadway expansion at almost no net benefit, only reducing peak period congestion from 60 percent of arterial miles (if the city did nothing) to 51 percent. By contrast, modeling suggested that a demand management scenario could reduce peak period congestion to 20 percent of arterial miles while giving residents more travel choices and having lower environmental impacts. ⇒

A New Plan: GO Boulder

In 1995, the city adopted a transportation master plan. The plan's top investment priorities were to maintain the existing infrastructure, expand transit and improve the bicycle and pedestrian network—all in pursuit of halting any increase in vehicle miles traveled. While low-cost, low-impact investments in traffic flow could be funded (such as re-striping to add a turn lane at a key intersection), major road projects were off the table.

In a rather unusual step for local government, the plan called for the creation of GO Boulder, a new department located outside the transportation bureaucracy. GO Boulder, which was staffed with creative people, was urged to develop new ideas and given permission to fail along the way. It quickly proved its worth as it revolutionized public transit in Boulder. It all started, however, with the simple act of market research—asking people who did not use transit why not and what type of transit would be an attractive choice.

It quickly became clear to GO Boulder that local transit service was designed to serve the needs of transit-dependent riders rather than choice riders—those who had other options but might use transit

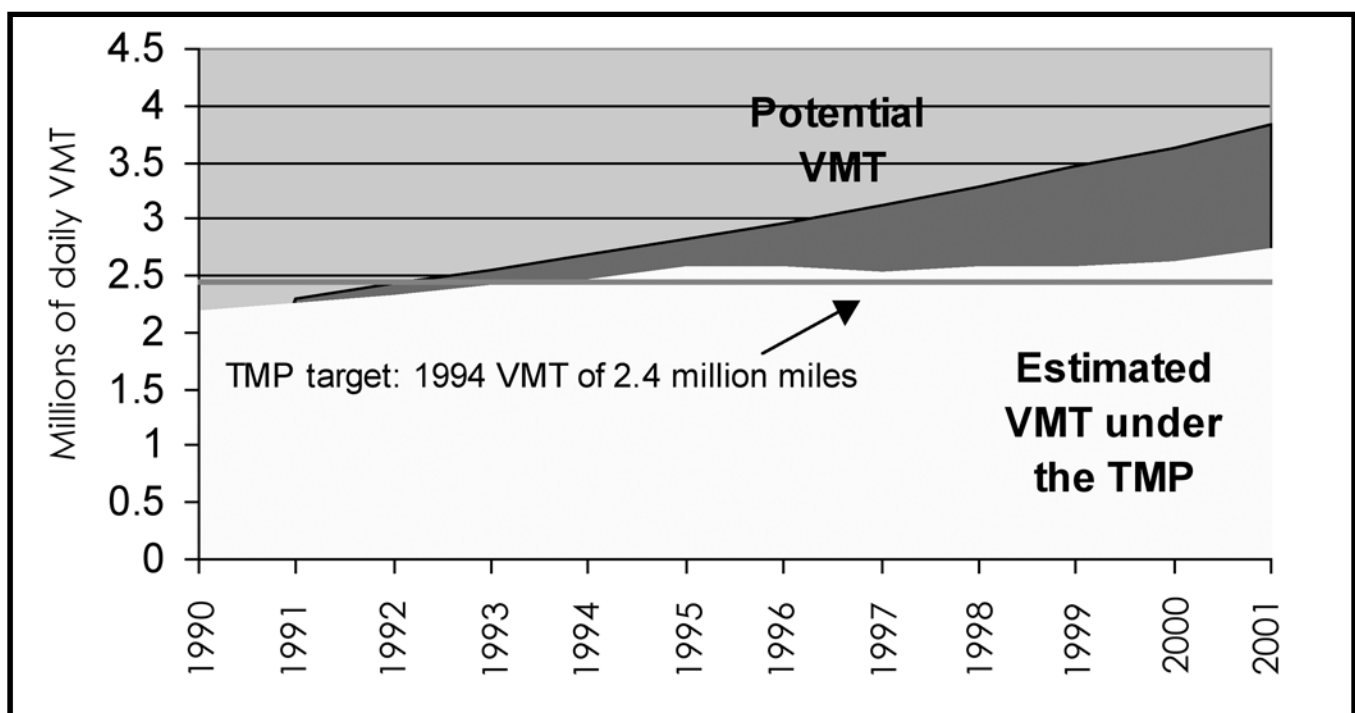
for discretionary trips. This was manifest in routes designed to maximize geographic coverage so that many people had the option to use the route if they needed to, but at very low frequencies. The result was that most people who had other options chose the other options.

Based on the market research, the choice riders wanted bus routes with a number of characteristics:

- Easy-to-understand bus destinations
- Fast, direct routes
- A friendly, pleasant experience
- Routes that go where people want to go
- High-frequency service that makes it “schedule-free”
- Cash-free fares so that riders did not need to pay every time they used the system

Implementing the Plan

In response to these findings, one of the first things GO Boulder did was to propose the creation of a student bus pass program. The city and the University of Colorado teamed up and together approached the Regional Transportation District (RTD). The initial negotiations were quite difficult, but ultimately all of the players agreed to a pass that would give free access to the local bus system and a discounted fare



on regional buses. Each student would pay a \$10 fee per semester, generating about \$550,000 annually for the RTD. In addition, the city agreed to invest in the program, paying 25 percent of the program cost during the first year, gradually phasing out its contribution over a five-year period. Students voted by a four to one margin to support the fee increase and to allow it to be increased by up to 10 percent a year without another vote of the student body.

The impact on ridership was immediate. Before the passes were issued, a survey by the RTD indicated that 300,000 student bus trips took place in the 1991-92 school year. Within three years, this number tripled to 900,000. By 2001, student ridership had grown to over 1,850,000. A follow-up survey in 2000 showed that 64 percent of student bus trips would otherwise have taken place in private automobiles.

The success of the student bus pass program quickly led to the creation of employee pass programs, first in downtown Boulder, then in Denver and then in other areas across the RTD district. Boulder then proposed a network of simple, high-frequency routes served by small, friendly-feeling buses, obtaining earmarked federal funding to create the first one, the HOP. Utilizing a local non-profit paratransit agency as the service provider, the HOP linked the university campus, the downtown and the local shopping mall in a circular route. The service was so successful that the city felt an obligation to maintain it after the federal grant ran out—and even though Boulder had never been in the business of funding transit operations.

In 1997, the RTD agreed to create the next link in the network, the SKIP. The SKIP was another small bus with high frequency service that ran next to the campus in a straight line on Broadway, the main north-south route. Frequency was set at every five to seven minutes during peak periods and seven to ten minutes during off-peak periods. The SKIP replaced a previous route that ran every fifteen minutes during peak times and every thirty minutes at off-peak times, and which used to leave Broadway to connect to the downtown transit center, adding several minutes to crosstown trips. The impact of the SKIP was extraordinary, with ridership almost three times the route it replaced. As of 2002, the SKIP alone carried more riders each day than the entire Boulder local system did in 1990.

The city continued to pursue new “community transit” routes, in each case applying for federal funding to pay for the first two years of the cost of a new route. The RTD agreed to take the funds that were going toward existing routes that were ultimately replaced and use these as the local match for the federal funds. Using this model, funding was approved for the BOUND, JUMP, DASH, BOLT and STAMPEDE routes. The RTD agreed that if the routes were successful—meeting ridership projections at the end of two years—they would be absorbed into the system and funding would be continued. Community groups helped design the routes, the schedules and the appearances of the buses, all of which were brightly painted so that they are easily recognizable from a distance. The non-traditional route names were used to help create “branding” for the routes. ➡

RIGHT: The ability to access transit by bicycle greatly extends the effective range of the Community Transit Network.



Courtesy of Spense Havlick

Impacts of GO Boulder

The result of all this has been a very significant increase in transit use. Daily ridership on local routes is over 25,000, five times larger than in 1990, even though the city's population has only grown by 13 percent since then.

At the same time, the city invested heavily in improving the environment for walking and biking. The goal was to give safe on-street and off-street options to reach all major destinations. Planners were very creative in figuring out ways to bring in money—using local transportation, parks and flood prevention fund, as well as federal grants—to build a remarkable network of on-street bike lanes and off-street paths almost completely grade-separated from street crossings. Sometimes this was quite controversial, as when downtown merchants marched on city hall to protest the loss of parking spaces as downtown streets were made bicycle friendly. But over time, bicycles became a more and more prominent transportation choice, with about 14 percent of all trips today made by bicycle—ten times the national average.

Controversy faded as the real estate market responded to this huge mode shift away from automobile travel to downtown, replacing many surface parking lots with mixed-use buildings. This led to a downtown renaissance and higher densities, as well as an opening for substantial increases in affordable multi-family housing.

While the city did not meet its 1995 goal of halting an increase in vehicle miles traveled in the Boulder Valley beyond 1994 levels, careful measurements have shown that traffic increased at only one-fifth the rate of the Denver metropolitan area overall.

Lessons Learned

There are a number of lessons to be learned from Boulder's twenty years of experimentation with a different approach to transportation.

First, it is possible to make significant shifts in transportation choices over a relatively short

time frame, even without large infrastructure investments. None of the successes to date have relied upon large-scale investment in rail or bus rapid transit (BRT) infrastructure. While the city has not rejected such investments and is working with the RTD to pursue commuter rail and BRT lines connecting Boulder to other parts of the metropolitan area, it has chosen not to wait, but to make smaller, incremental improvements that can be quickly funded and implemented.

Second, high frequency routes and improved customer service are key to making public transit work for people who have a choice about how they travel.

Third, financial incentives really matter. When people perceive parking as free but need to dig for change every time they ride transit, they are far less likely to ride than if they had to pay each time they parked, but perceived their transit ride as free. Because the student and employee bus pass programs and the neighborhood Ecopass program change how people pay to ride transit, they have been among the most powerful and cost-effective tools used in Boulder.

Fourth, non-motorized transportation is important. Creating an environment that is comfortable for cyclists and pedestrians improves the quality of life, has synergistic effects that make transit more desirable and is relatively cheap.

Finally, when these policies are pursued over a long enough period of time they have a significant impact on the built environment. While planners are accustomed to thinking about transit-oriented development around major rail and BRT lines, Boulder's experience suggests that many of the benefits of transit-oriented development can be achieved along local bus and bike routes.

Will Toor served as mayor of Boulder from 1998-2004 and is currently a county commissioner in Boulder. He is co-author of the book Transportation for Sustainable Campus Communities: Issues, Examples and Solutions (Island Press, 2004).

Exploring Creative Practices and Urban Know-How at the Planner's Network Conference

by HEATHER MCLEAN

Art, culture and various notions of creativity framed the 2008 Planner's Network conference in Winnipeg. As a PhD. student and activist interested in critical, participatory art practices but also leery of the current "creative class" discourses, I was pleased to moderate two panels that provided a space to explore this engagement with arts and cultural practices in planning and discuss the contradictions of the role of "creativity" in urban planning politics.

The main goal of the *Creative Practices* and *Urban Know-How* panels was to engage students, professors, activists and practitioners around questions relating to the role of creativity in planning practices and provide a space to share ideas on the pedagogical and political potential of these interactions. The presentations were meant to provide a glimpse into the interventions that link artistic practices with community development, activism and everyday urban life.

Simultaneously, I also hoped we could debate the dangers of celebrating and reproducing some of the current, mainstream notions of creativity in planning. This current trend of promoting broad notions of creativity and aestheticized spaces has been popularized by planning consultants and policymakers like Richard Florida. Florida argues that members of his "creative class"—composed of scientists and engineers, university professors and poets and architects, to name a few—are attracted to amenity-rich cities. Critics of Florida's thesis, including geographer Jamie Peck, argue that this focus on creativity is a fashionable urban development script that prioritizes certain notions of urban middle-class consumption and revitalization.

Some questions the panel addressed included: Why is creativity increasingly valued in planning practice? Are creative planning practices trendier right now because they are linked to "revitalization" strategies in

urban development? Conversely, can these practices provide transformative ways of stimulating community participation? Who gets to define what and who is creative? What people and places are left out of this categorization? How are these questions connected to broader issues of social exclusion in cities in a neoliberal era?

The current fascination with creativity in urban planning is reflected in the literature as it relates to the commodification of the arts, social and spatial exclusion and gentrification. The discussions in these panels illuminated these tensions and gave us room to challenge our conceptions about creativity and planning.

The first panel consisted of an eclectic mix of activists, students and planning educators, a broad group that reflected the versatility of the term "creativity" and its contradictions. In his presentation "Cinema and the 'City of the Mind': Using Motion Pictures to Explore Human-Environment Transactions in Planning Education," Michael Dudley, a researcher at the University of Winnipeg's Institute of Urban Studies, spoke about the use of film in teaching, and how analyzing such films as *Crash* and *The Matrix* can help students understand the complex role urban space plays in individual and collective identity formation. By linking scholarly readings with these films, Dudley finds that students are better able to examine the complexities of urban life and politics, as well as the possibilities that city spaces can hold.

Dudley's presentation overlapped with the ideas I explored in my own paper entitled "Performance, the Politics of Creativity and Critical Geography: Toronto Case Studies." I investigated how participatory grassroots performance art interventions in Toronto are directly and indirectly linked to larger political debates about gentrification and the marketing of cities. Using the Queen West Art Crawl walking tour that took place in one of Toronto's rapidly gentrifying neighborhoods as ⇒

a case study, I critically examined how the neighborhood was portrayed by the artists in the walk and in media articles about the walks. I began by unpacking what I saw as loaded, exclusionary language used by the artists when describing their work in newspaper articles and argued that these stereotypes reinforced bounded social spaces in a gentrifying neighborhood. The micro-level politics of these interventions were thus connected to the politics of gentrification, public space and planning for the “creative class.”

The Queen West Art Crawl was then contrasted with the Amazing Place walks facilitated by the Toronto-based activist group Planning Action, which worked closely with a Scarborough community development organization. These walks aimed to engage residents in playful interactive performances in a range of public and private spaces in the neighborhood, also providing an opportunity to examine the dynamics of social and spatial exclusion in this inner suburban, low-income neighborhood.

Tom Pearce, a student in the Department of City Planning at the University of Manitoba, extended these discussions about creative ways for animating and narrativizing space with his research on sidewalk spaces in his presentation “The Story ... Underfoot.” He spoke of a unique design intervention he created for an urban design competition where he recorded peoples’ stories and then inscribed them right into the sidewalk. These concrete stories memorialized the residents and brought memory and life to these banal, cement spaces.

All of the examples introduced in these presentations illustrated how various artistic practices provide

opportunities to critique complex histories, identities and political layers of space and are important methods for engaging residents and students in dialogue.

These examples are linked to a long tradition of artists and theorists who use everyday space in their work to examine how our spatial practices blur the boundaries between politics, art and everyday lives and spaces. Currently, some cultural geographers, including David Pinder, find hope in the growing resurgence of these practices (like urban psychogeography) because, according to Pinder, they open up new ways for interacting in cities—what he calls “writing the city.”

We need, however, to view “creative cities” policy and practice with caution. As I showed in my panel paper, even grassroots arts initiatives can become instrumental in celebrating and marketing cities in the competitive global hierarchy because they assist in developing distinctive, marketable neighborhoods where a “creative class” of upwardly mobile urban professionals feel comfortable consuming and cultivating their lifestyles.

Within these dynamics, artists and planners interested in fostering creative spaces both willingly and unwillingly end up playing the role of cultural intermediary, connecting policy-level decisions with local artists and their interventions. Cultural workers are, therefore, valued for assisting in cultivating neighborhood-level distinctiveness valued by planners, business improvement areas and real estate developers.

These tensions were evident in the conference’s *Art in the City* mobile workshop, which introduced participants

RIGHT: Amazing Place participants learning about their local library - one of the stops on the Amazing place routes.

FAR RIGHT: Bicycle sculpture adorns the entrance to Art City - a not for profit arts centre for children in Winnipeg’s West Broadway neighborhood.



Courtesy of East Scarborough Storefront

to Winnipeg's Exchange District. Here, artists' spaces are squeezed by increasing rents and enthusiastic investors interested in developing the kind of urban landscape geographer Deborah Cowen refers to as the landscape of "Hipster-Urbanism," an endless strip of bars, galleries, cafes and restaurants. Having witnessed this type of rapid gentrification in downtown Toronto neighborhoods, I worry about the future of Winnipeg's Exchange District, a neighborhood where many low-income residents, many from First Nations communities, reside in single-room occupancy hotels alongside these unique artist networks.

I was intrigued by some of the examples discussed in the second panel, which connected creative arts practices with planning, but also found the discussion about how Winnipeg could "compete" with other Canadian cities—using good urban design to attract people to live and work downtown in more aestheticized spaces—troubling. It was clear from the *Art in the City* workshop, which introduced us to various grassroots Winnipeg arts institutions, that Winnipeg clearly has its own unique aesthetic qualities. I therefore question whether Winnipeg needs to get caught in a race to "keep up" with other cities. Some participants raised the question of once a city starts to compete on aesthetics and image, who decides what the normative and desired image should be and is this attention-seeking game sustainable for everyone?

These discussions continued during the "The Winnipeg Fiction" presentation by Winnipeg-based architects Melissa McAllister and Laine Veness, which outlined

a participatory architectural and artistic practice they had been working on in the Exchange District. Using new media technologies, they provided opportunities for residents to post their opinions about what they wanted to see in the neighborhood in terms of built form and design and to map how they move through those spaces that were most meaningful to them. These cognitive maps were then presented in a gallery space where participants could view and discuss them. Some audience members raised important points about the accessibility of these types of participatory interventions that rely on a certain comfort level with new media and internet technologies. Others questioned the power dynamics of holding these events in gallery spaces: Would everyone feel comfortable accessing these spaces and if people feel excluded participating, what stories would then be highlighted and who would end up being ignored? These questions fostered critical dialogue about the role of artistic practices in urban planning, and also about the social imaginaries and boundaried social spaces that can be produced and reinforced in these types of interactions. Discussions highlighted the need to evaluate whether or not certain spaces and practices lead to gentrification where people not part of the "creative class" get pushed out of their neighborhoods.

Overall, the audience and panel members raised some fascinating questions that challenged us all to think through the complexities of creative interventions in planning. Discussions revealed the potential of using innovative methods for engaging with residents and urban spaces, but also the slippery slope of social exclusion in a time when creativity and quirkiness are sought after in planning policies, processes and urban development schemes.

As city spaces throughout the world are constricted by rapid growth, sprawl, gentrification and privatization and our lives squeezed by neoliberal cuts to community centers, programs and services, we need to interrogate the exclusivity of "creative city" planning and consider how arts and culture may be colonized. Simultaneously, it is also essential that we enliven public and private spaces with artistic practices that connect us to the broader politics of radical planning and democratic engagement.

Heather McLean is a PhD. candidate in the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University.

Heather McLean



Women, Democracy and Public Spaces

by REGULA MODLICH

Hundreds of poor and often indigenous women are disappearing from public spaces in cities of Latin, Central and North America only to be found raped, mutilated and murdered. Girls and women in Africa are assaulted on their daily trek to fetch water for their families. Millions of women are still not allowed to show their faces in public spaces because of the dictates of their religions. Almost everywhere, women limit their democratic right to access public spaces, especially at night, because of fear—real or perceived.

Throughout the world, women continue to be substantially poorer than men, making the “feminization of poverty” a widely accepted description of reality. In addition, in most cultures, women are socialized for nurturing and domestic responsibilities—with the accompanying logistical, social, economic and mobility restrictions in both public and private spheres. As long as this is the reality for women, half of humankind is denied human and democratic rights. Public spaces are the essential glue bonding social and physical components of a community together, and how women fare in them is a good indicator of how democratic, equitable and equal a society is.

Public Spaces and the Struggle for Women’s Rights

The history of International Women’s Day (IWD) illustrates the pivotal role of public spaces in women’s struggles to enlarge their democratic sphere. IWD commemorates the protest march of women textile workers in the streets of New York against poor wages and working conditions on 8 March 1852. Although police brutally attacked and arrested the peaceful protesters, the women succeeded in setting up their first labor union. Since 1909, IWD has been observed in ever more cities all over the world—in almost every case on streets or in other public spaces. Public IWD rallies were an important part of the first wave of feminism, which gradually won women the

right to vote in almost every country, and it was an IWD demonstration that sparked the Russian Revolution in 1917.

Resurgence of IWDs in the 1960s accompanied the rise of the second wave of feminism. Women realized that the vote had not ended discrimination against them or guaranteed them basic human rights. Women’s public demonstrations brought into the open previously closeted issues, such as violence against women (public and private) and women’s poverty and homelessness.

Since the 1970s, the “Take Back the Night Movement” explicitly has focused on the limited access women have to the public sphere, especially at night. While most men don’t give it a second thought to go out at any time of day or night, women have been conditioned to be fearful, often with reason. Cultures vary in conveying this message to women. In literature, movies and folklore—the Brothers Grimm fairy tale “Little Red Riding Hood” is a good example of this—women are warned not to venture out alone. Patriarchal religions reinforce this to various degrees, with some women covering themselves up completely and requiring a family chaperone whenever they go into public spaces. In these societies, women enjoy the fewest democratic and human rights, including the right to education, health care, the vote and freedom from abuse.

Theoretically, democratic societies provide public access to all citizens to their city halls, parliaments, courts and institutions where political decisions are made and power is wielded. Yet in hardly any country do women comprise more than 30 percent of elected officials. Only when women can access public spaces and institutions safely, affordably and with child care, and without obstacles, restrictions, fear or social contempt, can they start demanding equity and equality within these institutions and

spaces. To get there, systemic change, through strategies such as gender mainstreaming, affirmative action and quotas, is needed.

Gender Mainstreaming in Vienna, London and San Francisco

Cities such as Vienna, London and San Francisco have adopted gender mainstreaming. In this view, gender, unlike biological sex, is recognized as a social construction. Gender, as the City of Vienna's website puts it, "is what we have been brought up to be and how society has shaped us....Mainstreaming means that the different life situations of women and men are taken into consideration in all decisions..."

In other words, "gender mainstreaming" requires that the long undervalued realities of nurturing and domestic work—regardless of who does it—be considered in public staffing, budgeting, policy and implementation decisions. Again, per the City of Vienna, "Gender equality can no longer remain a fringe topic, but has to become an integrated part of all processes, measures and of quality management." San Francisco sees gender mainstreaming as implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which was adopted in 1979, and which 165 countries, not including the U.S., have signed.

Implementing Gender Mainstreaming

Recommendations from a 1999 gender analysis of service delivery and employment practices of the

San Francisco Juvenile Probation and Public Works Departments, ranging from human rights training for staff to an annual gender analysis of budgets, are today being implemented. In 2008, San Francisco even offered a research internship in "Public Space and Public Life" to map how the design of a public space influences who uses it and how, taking into account group size, gender, length of stay, crowding and adapting spaces to other uses.

In 2007, London adopted *Planning for Equality and Diversity in London*, a major document covering goals, terminology, spatial and social issues of target groups including children, the disabled, faith communities, immigrants, visible minorities, gypsies and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals, as well as women. *Gender Equality and Plan Making: The Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit*, produced by the Royal Town Planning Institute in the UK, provides a "gender mainstreaming toolkit" for planning. And the City of Vienna website includes a section on "planning and ➔



Records of the National Women's Party, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Wash. D.C.



Records of the National Women's Party, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Wash. D.C.

TOP: Women marching in national suffrage demonstration in Washington, D.C., May 9, 1914.

BOTTOM: Crowd converging on marchers and blocking parade route during the March 2, 1913, inaugural suffrage procession, Washington D.C.

building for everyday life and for women,” with a subsection on “gender mainstreaming in planning” and another on “safety in the public sphere.”

Specific design projects in Vienna illustrate what can be accomplished when gender mainstreaming is taken seriously. In the 1990s, four women architects, a woman landscape architect and the Women’s Office of the City of Vienna initiated a major residential project, *Frauen-Werk-Stadt*, the name of which plays on “Women-Work-City” and “Women-Workshop.” The site is at the edge of the expanding city but with good transit access. The City of Vienna and a non-profit, women-led, developer jointly built 357 apartments for a full range of households, from families to the elderly, with a day care center and some supporting commercial facilities. Design of the public and open spaces was an important selection criterion. Car-free at grade, pedestrian access became a priority, with a specially designed play street. Smaller garden courtyards are designed and equipped with toddlers and caregivers in mind. Public access to roof terraces and play areas on top of at-grade waste storage rooms allow for vistas and visibility. Sitting steps in the central “village common” offer a hang-out for teens. The desire to have visual and auditory contact from apartments to ground govern building height, layout and fenestration. Direct light and extra space encourage socializing at entrances, in common areas and in utility areas. All these design features have achieved a sense of safety and community, verified by their usage. In 2000, *Frauen-Werk-Stadt II* was built, containing 142 multi-generational apartments, some with attached granny flats, and the services of an agency that assists people with special needs. Today, all developments which apply for municipal subsidies have to meet the needs of “everyday life” and women.

Several redesigned parks in Vienna achieve boy-girl balance through gender-sensitive planning. They effectively integrate girls’ play patterns, sports, facilities and better visibility into playgrounds, sports areas and parks. Vienna also has design guidelines for “ramps for prams.” Another project focuses on women and traffic and transportation planning. Already one street has become more user friendly through simple

changes such as modifying tree species and spacing, parking, loading, better lighting, benches, accessible phone booths and a pedestrian-controlled traffic light

Women, Planning and Safety in Toronto: The Continuing Struggle

Since the 1970s, women in Toronto have struggled to inject gender mainstreaming concepts into public design and planning, with varying degrees of success. Their continuing struggle reminds us that we must be constantly vigilant and never take our successes for granted.

Toronto women planners and feminists formed Women In/And Planning (WIAP) in the 1970s. A report from Britain, *Women Plan London*, inspired WIAP members to obtain a government grant to conduct workshops with twenty-five Toronto women’s groups. The concerns and hopes women expressed in the workshops were published as *Women Plan Toronto: Shared Experiences and Dreams* (see also “Gender and Urban Planning: Time for Another Look” in *Progressive Planning*, Spring 2008). For over fifteen years, Women Plan Toronto (WPT) prepared countless interventions and submissions to demand safe, women-friendly housing, urban planning, mobility and services. When the city and metro Toronto prepared their official plans, WPT provided gendered feedback regarding employment areas, land use planning, transportation and open spaces. During municipal elections, WPT prepared pamphlets, held workshops and evaluated candidates based on their positions on women’s issues. During



Ellen Shub, www.ellenshub.com

one election, the *Toronto Star*, Canada's largest daily newspaper, reproduced the entire WPT pamphlet.

In 1989, Toronto City Councilor Barbara Hall, who would soon be mayor, prepared *The Safe City: Municipal Strategies for Preventing Public Violence against Women*. Reflecting the saying "where women are safe, everyone is safe," the report focused particularly on the public safety concerns of women and called for the formation of the Safe City Committee. The Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence against Women and Children (METRAC) developed the first ever safety audits. The entire Toronto transit system was audited, resulting in the installation of mirrors, designated waiting areas under surveillance and emergency phones. Safety audit kits provide women with an effective and straightforward tool to systematically evaluate the safety of urban spaces, especially public spaces, and present their findings to those responsible for their design and maintenance. Visibility, sight lines, movement predictability, lighting, maintenance, entrapment spots and access to help all became criteria to identify safety concerns.

As neoliberalism set in during the 1990s, however, both public funding and support for gender equity disappeared. Hard-won women's and child care centers, domestic violence programs and pay equity fell to budget cuts, like dead flies to a swatter. After an exhausting and unsuccessful struggle against the amalgamation of the city and its suburbs into an unwieldy megacity, with the accompanying negative effects for women, WPT fell dormant. Today, another group, the Toronto Women's City Alliance,

has emerged. Inspired by the concept of gender mainstreaming, it calls for a women's office in the city, mandated to address gender issues through gender mainstreaming—thus attempting to change local government from the inside.

The Important Role of Planners, Architects and Designers

Planners, architects and designers need to consider both the public space and the context of adjacent uses. Monumental structures, facades or uses that lack eyes and ears on streets or public space intimidate and alienate pedestrians, especially women. Windows, balconies, round-the-clock activities from mixed uses and human scale all help create a sense of comfort. Within public spaces, the presence of art, high standards of maintenance, landscaping, public toilets, and street furniture (benches for rest and interaction, play equipment for children, lighting and visibility for safety, even waste bins) ensure enjoyment, social interaction and trust, the underpinnings for a caring and democratic society.

Only when urban planners listen to women and other vulnerable groups about their relation to public spaces can planning contribute to real democracy. Equal, safe, unrestricted and unobstructed access to public spaces for all is essential.

Regula Modlich (rmodlich@evdemon.ca) is a retired feminist urban planner involved in *Women in/and Planning*, *Women Plan Toronto*, *Toronto Women's City Alliance* and *Women & Environments International* magazine.



FAR LEFT: Marie Kennedy and Kathy McAfee at the 1979 Take Back the Night March in Boston.

NEAR LEFT: International Women's Day rally in the late 1980s starting out from Convocation Hall, University of Toronto and following major streets of Toronto.

Social Housing in Bolivia: *Challenges and Contradictions*

by EMILY P. ACHTENBERG

Bolivia's vice minister for housing, Ramiro Rivera, had been on the job only two weeks last March when his office was occupied by 100 angry members of *Ponchos Rojos* (Red Ponchos), a militant Aymara peasant group. Three weeks later, wheelbarrow porters from the Abastos market in Santa Cruz staged a similar protest. Both groups were demanding that the MAS (Movement Towards Socialism) government, headed by indigenous president Evo Morales, make good on its promise to deliver low-cost housing to their constituencies.

As befits a self-proclaimed "government of the social movements," the MAS has articulated a strong commitment to a progressive, non-market vision of social housing, epitomized by the slogan: *Vivienda Digna Para Vivir Bien: Evo Cumple!* (Decent Housing for a Good Life: Evo Delivers!). Meeting with our visiting group of U.S. housing and neighborhood activists last summer, Vice Minister Rivera traced the social housing concept back to the *ayllu*, the traditional socio-political organization in Bolivia's rural indigenous communities, where every family's right to the land is protected. "We don't believe in making a market commodity out of *Pachamama* (Mother Earth)," he told us.

Yet, the reality is more complex. During our visit, we gained perspective on the challenges and contradictions facing the MAS government as it seeks to implement a progressive social housing agenda within the constraints of a mixed economy, a politically divided society and a state bureaucracy undermined by twenty years of neoliberal restructuring.

The Social Housing Program: PVSS

The MAS' ambitious \$90 million Program for Social and Solidarity Housing (PVSS) was launched

with significant fanfare in April 2007, promising to provide at least 14,500 new housing units by the end of the year. Bolivia's 300,000 unit housing deficit (consisting of unlivable and overcrowded units) would be reduced by 5 percent, and totally eliminated in ten to twenty years. The program would also generate 73,000 new jobs, reduce unemployment and emigration, promote investment and provide a major stimulus to the national economy.

In important respects, PVSS represents a departure from Bolivia's discredited housing programs of the past, which gave stable middle-income workers better access to private mortgage credit, often to buy a second home. Under PVSS, the government provides direct loans on favorable terms to enable renters with limited means to build or buy their first new home in urban or peripheral areas. In rural communities, beneficiaries receive direct grants.

In the urban program, twenty-year government loans are available for 100 percent of land and construction costs. Interest rates are 0 percent for houses in the lowest price categories (\$2,500 to \$8,000 initially, indexed to inflation), and 3 percent for houses in the next price tier (\$8,001 to \$15,000). For a point of reference, the interest rate on a typical private bank loan, for which few families in Bolivia qualify, is at least 10 percent.

In rural areas, the government directly subsidizes up to 60 percent of construction costs (initially capped at around \$3,600/unit), while families contribute the remaining 40 percent through self-help labor or donated materials. Departments, municipalities and non-governmental organizations are encouraged to offset one-third of the national government's cost. Similar grants are available for remodeling, ⇒

upgrading and expansion of rural housing, with an initial production target of 26,600 units.

With these financing terms, an urban family earning the minimum wage of \$83 per month can afford a new \$5,000 house with a monthly payment of around \$21, at 25 percent of income. The smallest loan of \$2,500 can benefit a family earning as little as \$42 per month.

Moreover, although PVSS funding is derived from mandatory housing benefit contributions paid by salaried public- and private-sector workers and employers, for the first time in Bolivia's history these funds also benefit informal sector workers. (Only the 3 percent loan program is limited to salaried workers.) Informal sector workers, whose earnings vary tremendously, now constitute an estimated 80 percent of Bolivia's workforce and are an important MAS constituency. This initially controversial PVSS feature has become a hallmark of the MAS government's approach to social programs, resurfacing in a recent dispute over proposed pension fund legislation, which caused a rift between the government and the national trade union federation.

Despite these novel features, PVSS also represents a continuity with the past, reflecting the political, economic and institutional constraints under which the MAS government operates. Like previous programs, the emphasis is on new construction, which has high political visibility.

While PVSS projects are typically targeted to social sectors such as unions, neighborhood organizations and indigenous groups, the program is largely driven by the private sector, subject to government regulation. For example, the *financieras* who review credit applications, disburse government funds and collect loan repayments are primarily established cooperative banks and other financial institutions. The *constructoras* who develop and build the housing are typically private or cooperative construction companies.

Major materials producers like SOBOCE, the largest cement company in Bolivia, which is owned by Samuel Doria Medina, head of the center-

right National Unity (UN) party, have committed discounted materials to the program, and some are participating as builders. According to Doria Medina, whose company's production capacity stands to double from government construction projects, "SOBOCE's business philosophy is to support the country's development."

As a result of this pragmatic design, the launch of PVSS was greeted enthusiastically across the political spectrum—an unusual event in Bolivia. The program even received a strong editorial endorsement from Bolivia's newspaper of record *La Razon*, a consistent MAS critic.

Experience to Date: A Mixed Record

During the first year, PVSS experienced major start-up difficulties. By the end of 2007, despite significant demand, only 8,000 housing units had been approved and funded, with scant evidence of actual construction. In his January 2008 State of the Union address, Morales lamented the government's disappointing performance while pledging at least another 14,500 units for 2008.

Over the past year, however, the program's pace has accelerated considerably. As of the end of August, funds were committed for approximately 27,600 units in 200 projects, and all available PVSS resources were exhausted. Approved projects, located in 52 of Bolivia's 112 provinces, were widely disbursed throughout the country. More than 90 percent of the units were new construction.

Interestingly, the distribution of program benefits has not favored the western, heavily indigenous and poorer regions that represent MAS' political base. On the contrary, the eastern "Media Luna" departments (and allied Chuquisaca) have received a disproportionate share of units (55 percent) and funds committed (64 percent) relative to their share of total population (40 percent). Agro-business elites in these resource-rich regions have been waging a violent "autonomy" campaign in opposition to the Morales government, although outside the provincial capitals the MAS maintains strong support.

On the whole, the housing approved by PVSS to date appears to be relatively affordable. Approximately half the units funded are in the rural program, targeted to the lowest population strata. In the urban program, three-quarters of units are in the \$5,001 to \$8,000 price range.

From MAS' perspective, PVSS has surpassed its original goal, achieving in just seventeen months what it had promised to accomplish in two years. Still, in terms of tangible results, fewer than 4,000 units have actually been completed (with another 1,000 anticipated to be delivered by year-end).

To be sure, substantial time lags from project initiation to funding and completion are typical of all government housing programs. But with more than 86,000 credit applicants approved or in process, the government appears to be creating its own credibility gap. As one MAS representative has noted: "Bolivia as a state has great economic limitations. We've got a program for social housing which has generated a lot of expectation...but... expectation mustn't exceed reality!"

Many problems encountered in the PVSS program appear to be systemic in nature. Materials costs have doubled over the past year, a predicament not unique to Bolivia. Some labor cost increases have been induced by internal shortages, e.g., as skilled bricklayers migrate to take advantage of new opportunities in Bolivia's mining sector, or abroad.

In the cities, rising land costs, due in part to PVSS-generated demand, are a significant problem. A prominent bank participating in the program is

under investigation for allegedly inflating land costs through straw purchases at several sites. This is the third *financiera* to be relieved of its PVSS responsibilities for suspected irregularities, a factor which has contributed to program delays. Still another prevalent problem is the inability of prospective purchasers to secure clear land title, a prerequisite for PVSS loans which require mortgage security.

Delays have also resulted from administrative shortcomings, related in part to Bolivia's



All photos: Ben Achtenberg

TOP: Community-built housing in Maria Auxiliadora, Cochabamba.

MIDDLE: NGO-community self help housing, Cotoca, Santa Cruz.

BOTTOM: Nearly completed PVSS housing, El Alto.

centralized governmental structure, a controversial political issue today. Popular frustration with centralized government has been manipulated by regional elites to fuel the autonomy conflicts that brought the country to the brink of civil war last September. The weakened capacity of public-sector institutions is a legacy of twenty years of neoliberal retrenchment, compounded by the new MAS bureaucracy's inexperience and persistent corruption allegations. In its less than two-year life, the PVSS program has had four housing vice ministers (Ramiro Rivera was replaced last October).

PVSS has also not been immune to partisan conflict. Funding commitments have often appeared to be politically motivated, especially during the August 2008 recall referendum campaign (a plebiscite vote on Morales' government) when significant awards were made to projects in the embattled departments of Santa Cruz, Tarija and Chuquisaca. The government has also used PVSS funds to settle political disputes with rebellious social movement organizations, such as the transport workers' union.

Most dramatically, in October 2008, following Morales' strong referendum victory (67 percent) and successful negotiation in the Congress to bring the new Constitution to a popular vote, the municipality of Santa Cruz (headquarters of the regional opposition) destroyed 100 PVSS houses constructed for a local indigenous group. While the immediate cause of this conflict was a jurisdictional dispute between two municipalities, the episode had broader political overtones. As ex-Vice Minister Rivera noted, "The anti-MAS municipalities don't

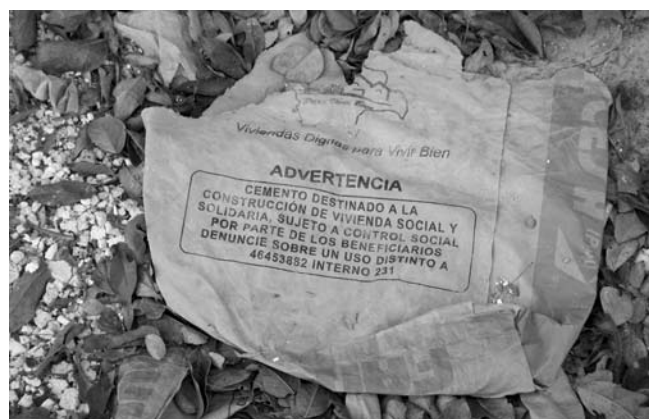
want PVSS to succeed." The government is pursuing legal remedies for restitution, as well as punishment of the offending officials.

The 386-unit "Integration of the Americas" project in the municipality of La Guardia, Santa Cruz, illustrates many of PVSS' contradictions and challenges. Built for the wheelbarrow porters' union (which had previously occupied government offices to protest construction delays), the houses were nearly completed but not yet occupied when we visited last August.

The units feature a utilitarian design and are densely packed across the site, and at a total cost of \$5,000 (including land), they are extremely affordable. While some residents have criticized the quality of construction and are demanding an investigation of their *financiera's* possible role in land speculation, owners—all former renters—interviewed in a recent news account welcomed the reduced costs, increased security of tenure and accessible location of their new homes. Miriam Sánchez, a single mother of five, commented: "What hurt me most, living as a tenant, was that having children seemed to be a sin...a barrier to finding a place to live. The dream of having my own home seemed impossible to realize, until now."

The NGO Perspective

An alternative approach to social housing is offered by RENASEH (the National Network of Human Settlements), a coalition of eleven NGOs that combine housing advocacy, development and organizing, which has led the struggle for housing



All photos: Ben Achtenberg

rights in Bolivia. To date, NGOs have not played a significant role in the PVSS program, although Habitat for Humanity has participated from the start as a *financiera*.

In RENASEH's view, social housing (urban as well as rural) should emphasize incremental construction and remodeling of units with reliance on individual and collective self-help, progressive microcredit loans and other forms of creative, non-mortgage financing. This is the dominant shelter strategy that poor Bolivian families have used for generations. For households with unstable sources of income, it is easier to borrow small amounts and upgrade living space incrementally as family needs expand. Focusing on rehab, RENASEH maintains, will stretch scarce public resources further. Arguably, Bolivia's "qualitative" housing deficit—those lacking basic services or in poor condition—ranges from 600,000 to 900,000 units and is more pressing than its quantitative housing needs.

Moreover, self-help and community financing strategies build solidarity, empower communities and foster a collective, participatory stake in housing. This approach, RENASEH believes, is more consistent with social housing objectives than is reliance on market-oriented strategies that encourage households to spend beyond their means. Says Guillermo Bazoberry, an architect, "For most

Bolivians, housing is a form of social security, not an investment. The government should be helping people and communities directly, to make the informal housing economy work better."

Over the past fifteen years, RENASEH's member NGOs have helped families build 10,000 new homes and renovate 30,000 units, utilizing incremental and self-help building and financing strategies. Moreover, their 15,000 microcredit loans have a repayment failure rate substantially lower than that of traditional banks.

Critics argue that families with the most pressing housing needs (including female-headed households) may lack the time and skills for individual or collective self-help, and point to the public and private costs of uncompensated labor. In addition to the loss of construction jobs and economic stimulus, creating a decent unit takes longer, and quality may be compromised. The critical supportive services provided by the NGOs (including architectural, construction management and organizational assistance) are labor-intensive and may be difficult to replicate on a larger scale.

Still, successful examples, such as the *Maria Auxiliadora* community we visited in Cochabamba, are inspirational. Founded by a group of victims of domestic violence, the community has ➡

FAR LEFT: "Decent Housing to Live Well"

NEAR LEFT: Discounted cement for PVSS housing.

RIGHT: Rosemary Irusta, Maria Auxiliadora community founder, Cochabamba.



Ben Achtenberg

worked with several NGOs to build and renovate approximately 100 houses in nine years. The majority of members are female-headed households (divorced, widowed or with husbands working abroad). The land is owned cooperatively, unusual in Bolivia, and the houses individually—similar to the U.S. community land trust model. Houses cannot be rented or sold, and revert to community use if vacated.

To finance the housing, the community uses a traditional collective savings system called *pasanaku* in which members' personal funds are pooled and redistributed, as needed, to each family in turn. Progressive microcredit loans of between \$1,000 and \$3,000 are made by the NGOs to individual households, but are guaranteed collectively (with no mortgage security). Mutual-help construction is a community obligation; the community has developed its own water, sewer and irrigation systems. The *pasanaku* system

is also used to finance family and community enterprises (such as catering, sewing and construction materials).

The community has approached PVSS for funding to build additional units. The cooperative form of land ownership poses a challenge, but this may be ameliorated by the new constitution.

Social Housing and the Constitution

RENASEH was instrumental in securing the right to housing in Bolivia's new constitution, now scheduled for a referendum vote in January 2009 (and widely anticipated to be approved). Its members organized a petition campaign, formed alliances with health, education and labor sectors by demonstrating the importance of social housing to their agendas and promoted community input on housing during the drafting process.

Ben Achtenberg



LEFT: Self-help construction with Habitat for Humanity, La Guardia, Santa Cruz.

Article Nineteen of the new constitution establishes every Bolivian's right to a decent, adequate home and living environment that dignifies family and community life. It requires all levels of government to promote social housing programs, including adequate financing, based on principles of solidarity and equity, and with preference to groups having the least resources and greatest need. (An unanticipated benefit of the autonomy conflict, notes RENASEH, is that all levels of government now want to take credit for social housing.)

Article Fifty-Six guarantees both private and collective ownership of property, provided that its use is not harmful to the collective good. The original draft explicitly allowed the government to expropriate surplus urban land not serving a social function to be reused for social housing. This anti-speculation provision was removed in a compromise with Samuel Doria Medina to prevent his UN party from joining the opposition boycott of the Constituent Assembly vote. The final constitution negotiated between MAS and the opposition parties in Congress emphasizes that urban real estate is not subject to confiscation.

Looking Ahead

With the new constitution about to be ratified, Bolivia has resolved, for the moment, its political tensions. The MAS government now faces the real (and perhaps more difficult) challenge of delivering on its promises.

In November, the government announced that resources had been found to fund another 26,000 units of social housing in 2009. In line with the new decentralization trend and toward the goal of more delegated decision-making, satellite program offices have been established in several departments. The government is considering allocating funds to each department on the basis of population, with projects to be selected jointly by the departments, municipalities and popular organizations. An agreement has been signed with the National Federation of Neighborhood Boards (CONALJUVE) to promote participatory decision-making in housing design and construction.

To contain costs, the government has announced plans to develop a state cement company with loans from Iran and Venezuela. This is widely seen as an attempt to outmaneuver Doria Medina, a potential rival to Evo Morales in the next election. Measures to curb land speculation are also being considered. All projects are being audited for irregularities in land costs and acquisition practices—an issue which has cast a cloud over the entire PVSS program.

Finally, RENASEH hopes to work with the Housing Ministry to develop a program for urban housing remodeling, expansion and upgrading based on its successful community experience. Habitat for Humanity is now acting as a *constructora* for several projects. Whether the incremental building and financing approach can be scaled up and made compatible with the political and institutional requirements of a national housing program remains to be seen.

In many respects, the PVSS program illustrates the larger challenges and contradictions of the government's efforts to bring about "revolutionary" change through democratic reform. As with other MAS initiatives (such as gas nationalization and agrarian reform), ambitious social goals have been constrained by underlying economic and market forces and the need to accommodate opposing political interests. The weakness of existing government institutions and bureaucracies is an obstacle to the achievement of MAS' redistributive agenda across the board. Tensions between the consolidation of state power and popular demands for more democratic and community-oriented practices are characteristic of relations between the social movements and the MAS government today.

As it evolves, the PVSS social housing program will likely continue to provide a revealing window into Bolivia's radical process of social transformation.

Emily P. Achtenberg is an affordable housing consultant and urban planner. She last visited Bolivia in August 2008.

Exclusionary Planning in East Jerusalem

by EFRAT COHEN-BAR

Jerusalem's new mayor and city council have an opportunity to reverse decades of discriminatory housing and planning regulations that apply to Palestinian East Jerusalem. This is a major conclusion of the annual report recently released by the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI).

According to the ACRI report, 67 percent of Palestinian families living in East Jerusalem are impoverished. The report takes note of the official Israeli policy to preserve a Jewish majority in Jerusalem and shows how the planning bureaucracy has been enlisted to advance this goal. In what is supposedly a unified city, West Jerusalem and East Jerusalem are worlds apart in terms of human rights and development opportunities, and urban planning is a major tool for limiting development opportunities in East Jerusalem.

Tougher Regulations for Palestinians

One-third of Jerusalem's population lives in the Arab neighborhoods of East Jerusalem, often in congested conditions and without suitable infrastructure. Neither existing nor proposed government plans, however, would meet the minimal housing needs of the city's Palestinian residents. Residents of East Jerusalem face huge obstacles obtaining building permits, which are much easier to get in West Jerusalem. Even if building permits are impossible to obtain, many Palestinians resort to illegal construction—because they have been given no other legal alternative—which the city cracks down on in East Jerusalem much more efficiently

than it reviews and grants requests to build. As a result, Palestinians face penalties that include heavy fines and demolition of illegal structures, a practice very rarely employed in Jewish neighborhoods.

Twenty thousand unauthorized housing units have been built in East Jerusalem since 1967, most of them during the 1980s and 1990s. The city has often responded by bringing in the bulldozers, a measure that qualifies as a severe violation of the rights of Palestinian residents, considering that they have no viable alternatives.

Other restrictions fall only on Palestinian residents. For example, in the rare cases when they do receive building permits, Palestinians have to submit evidence of land ownership and registration. Indeed, proof of land ownership is required everywhere in Israel, but Jewish land titles are documented and organized, making it relatively easy to establish title to a parcel of land. A considerable portion of East Jerusalem's land, however, is not regularized or recorded in the land registry.

In 1967, when Israel took control of East Jerusalem, the state decided not to register land in East Jerusalem as had been done under British and Jordanian rule. This left many landowners without proper proof of ownership. It also applied a seemingly arbitrary restriction only upon East Jerusalem: anyone who applies for permission to change the designation of a parcel of land, say from non-residential to residential, must have a minimum

area of 10 dunams. Almost all landowners in East Jerusalem, however, have smaller plots.

Several months ago, City Hall proudly announced its intention to promote plans for 10,000 new housing units in East Jerusalem. One might see this as a positive change of policy or a new ray of hope for East Jerusalem's residents. Most of these plans, however, are still preliminary and lack details, so they cannot be used as a basis for issuing building permits. Many years will pass before these plans reach the stage of final approval, and this could be followed by several years of attempts to acquire building permits. Unless a new mechanism is created soon that would allow for rapid authorization of building permits and eliminate the need for demolitions, it will be a long time before any of the 10,000 housing units are built.

Israeli legal precedent recognizes that no resident can be punished for breaking the law if there was in fact no way for him or her to have met all legal requirements. For residents of East Jerusalem, unauthorized construction is virtually the only option. This is why the existing regulatory procedures need to be shelved until fair planning solutions are put in place for the neighborhoods of East Jerusalem—something the new municipal government now has the opportunity to do at long last.

Efrat Cohen-Bar is an architect in the community planning department of Bimkom: Planners for Planning Rights in Israel.

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Stacy Harwood • María-Teresa Vázquez-Castillo • Jennifer Ridgley and Justin Steil
Benjamin Roth • Ariana Martinez and Patricia Coltolini • Nina Martin
Louis Mendoza • Ernesto Castañeda

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