

The changing face of urban planning

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Elastic planning

The world of cities is changing and with it how we plan for them. Every shift in the means of economic wealth creation creates a new social order, a new type of city, new ways of learning and things to learn and new settings in which learning takes places. It requires different cultural capabilities.

To plan an industrial city is different from planning a city where knowledge intensity is key or a city where you want to encourage individuals or organizations to be imaginative and to feel commitment to your place.

In the one people are seen simply as units of mechanical production in other as the key ideas and thus wealth generators. This in turn is recasting the planning paradigm.

Planning over time has had to have an elastic framework to reflect emerging needs. Now a new form of planning is necessary, because it responds to a novel set of demands. I call this creative city making and its operating dynamics, its logic and the priorities differ from traditional spatial planning.

In any planning for cities some basic issues remain consistent. Clearly traditional planning with its focus on land uses, how space is organized or where differing types of settlement should occur continues as do planning decisions about infrastructures such as roads, utilities like electricity or sewage. For instance, Kamez a suburb of Tirana in Albania, mushroomed as an informal settlement with no rules over last 25 years from a greenfield site to a place of 300,000 people. Clearly a more formal physical planning structure needed to be put in place, such as road infrastructures or utilities as well as how building permits would be agreed. So we cannot decry this form of planning.

These are, though, hardware concerns and this has largely been the way planning has been seen and those that have determined the look and feel of places have had this this background and mindset. I call this the 'urban engineering paradigm of city making'. This focus has shaped the

discipline of planning and the skills applied. These were based largely on engineering, architecture and surveying. These groups have a certain mindset that is both positive and negative. The culture of engineering is logical, rational and technologically adept, it learns by doing, it tends to advance step by step and through trial and error. It is hardware focused. It gets things done. There is a weakness in that this mindset can become narrow, unimaginative and inflexible and forget the software aspect. The cult of the architect is another aspect that can help and hinder how planning and the city evolve. Architects as manipulators and creators of three dimensional space often feel they are the central actors and shapers in making a city. Yet often you ask yourself the question 'do they understand or even like people'. This can lead them to under estimate the contributions other disciplines make, such as those who understand social dynamics, how culture works or even disciplines like anthropology.

Planning has . Initially there was 'the planner', a professional discipline that has existed for just over one hundred years and over time sub-disciplines like the spatial, transport or environmental planner evolved. Between them they developed techniques from building codes to infrastructure standards to guide the process of city life. Urban planning would say of itself that its goal is to improve the built, economic and social environments of communities so being the geographical expression of a society's choices. It further expanded and matured as a consequence in three significant ways: Community involvement, urban design and place creation and finally sustainability.

The first emerged in the early 1970's based on ideas of people like Saul Alinsky highlighting the need for planning to involve those affected by planning decisions. As noted: 'if you want to know how the shoe fits, ask the person who is wearing it, not the one who made it'. It is increasingly recognised that engagement helps people get the surroundings they want as well as ensuring communities become safer, stronger, wealthier and more sustaining.

The concern with community highlights the planning of social infrastructure, which is the inter-dependent mix of facilities, programmes, projects, services and networks, in education, health, housing, culture, and social affairs that aim to improve quality of life for a community. It moves from only hard infrastructure such as community facilities to include issues of community capital, social inclusion and relationships.

'Urban design', a discipline that is young, perhaps 35 years old, added another dimension in seeking to shape the physical setting for life in cities. With a focus on the art of making places it has an integrative perspective involving the design of buildings, groups of buildings, spaces and landscapes. This involves understanding the possibilities of blending planning guidelines with how developers make their sums add up and what makes places special. There had been a concern that planning was good at dividing space and not creating place. The notion of urban design has broadened as people seek to involve other

disciplines so 'place-making' has become a fashionable term. It implies bringing together all those who can contribute to make a place and that includes those who understand the software of a city.

A space becomes a place when it is imbued with meaning and significance. Place making is an approach to planning, designing and managing public and private space that seeks out the distinctive and special by listening to those who use it and in the process a vision or story of place is created. You can even make a motorway a place. Richard Reid, a designer, persuaded the New Zealand transport authority to rethink the route of motorway into Auckland, which was to cut off the edge of a volcano sacred to Maoris. His sweeping redesign and landscaping circumnavigated the volcano and now the interface between volcano, the motorway and cycleway as the divider is beautiful and much loved by motorists, cyclists and viewers alike. The resistance to do this by the transport engineers and their governing body was long, but even they now agree the improvement is vast.

Finally, the rise of the sustainability agenda with growing force from the 1970's onwards has reshaped planning goals and the way plans are judged. The concept is now embedded as a matter of course into any urban plan.

The idea of planning with a culturally literate mindset, important as it is, has not yet embedded itself. Nor has a form of planning that recognizes the power of creativity and imagination. This brings us to creative city making and we explore its assumptions, aims and challenges in more detail.

The creative city making paradigm

The art of creative city making involves thinking through a number of factors, they include:

- An understanding that planning cities is perhaps the most important human endeavour as it deals with the conditions for people and groups to live together in relative harmony. The skills and insights needed for this combine the physical, cultural, social, psychological, technological and economic domains. Planning education, unfortunately, is still largely focused on the physical aspects and architecture. This needs to change.
- The creative city making concept seeks to be a shift in paradigm. It highlights a different organizing map for thinking about cities. It seeks to describe a new wider world of thought and worldview of the discipline of planning and urban development. It is an integrated approach which incorporates the specific sub-sector perspectives such as understanding social dynamics, cultural needs and how the built fabric of a city is put together. In doing this it hopes to create new insights.

- The world of cities is changing dramatically and with it notions of what makes great places and cities as well as ideas of who should be responsible for planning them. There is an older and newer thinking about cities in relation to planning and design, organization and management, the use of resources, the role of culture and how cities are marketed. The new planning paradigm should supersede the previously dominant model of urban development focused on the hardware of the city - the 'culture of engineering' approach.
- Successful city making understands urbanity. This is the art and science of how the hardware and the software of a city blend together and how a good physical fabric can assist in generating a positive multi layered experience. The totality of these experiences result in the urban culture of a place. New priorities are required to enhance urbanity involving new competences, a new understanding of what urban assets are and new ways of working to maximize potential.
- A city is not a set of lifeless buildings and roads, but primarily the activities of people who bring it to life. This means only holistic thinkers, and these are rare, and thus perhaps instead integrated teams comprising those with knowledge of people, social dynamics and culture need to work with those who understand transport, engineering, physical planning, recreation and housing issues. The agendas, strategies and plans need to be jointly conceived, planned and implemented. Crucially, the depth, interest and vitality of a city's urban culture creates both better communities and is ultimately a new source of competitiveness for cities.
- The attributes and attitudes that helped make some cities partly successful in the past may hinder their potential to become great liveable cities in the future.
- The cities we have mostly disappoint. More of them are ugly rather than beautiful, even though we can argue about 'what is beautiful' or satisfactory from a sensory perspective. They tend to look the same with their large tower blocks often sprawling endlessly into the far horizon. There is too much traffic and noise. A few places delight, yet how do we get more of the cities we want? Thinking deeply first about peoples' culture and then their needs and desires and using our imagination to understand these viscerally is a start. A next helpful step is to respond inventively and with creative insight.
- All through history the city has been the hub for transactions and exchange, of ideas, of knowledge, of trade, of services. The city was always the place where mixing and interacting has happened in spite of separations between classes, groups and the rich and poor, or the powerful and disenfranchised. The challenge is to foster these exchanges and to seek to bridge the gaps.

- The city has always been a source of problems as well as a laboratory for finding inventive solutions to any problems it creates. Now the special focus should be on creating innovations to heal the environmental distress in cities, second to find ways that the diversity of people in cities can co-exist in better harmony and to encourage a 360% holistic perspective to ensure the complexity of the city is fully understood.
- The city was always a place of inventiveness. The difference between the past and today is that cities now are self-consciously trying to encourage and plan the pre-conditions for creativity. The central and vital characteristic to make this happen is to foster a more open mindset, management style and organizational structure for inventive ideas and projects to flourish. This allows a city to respond to changing circumstances, to become adaptable and resilient. This requires more 'creative bureaucracies' that are adaptive, open and create the conditions for people to think, plan and act with imagination.
- Creativity is context driven. What was 'creative' in the 20th century will be different from what is creative in the 21st. The priorities 100 years ago might have been public health. Today it might be dealing with wicked problems such as making the most of diversity or climate change.
- What is regarded as creative in one culture and in one circumstance will differ. However, there are principles of creativity that cut across all cultures and time. These include: A combination of childlike freshness and deep experience or the ability to connect the seemingly disconnected and to see patterns across different things.
- Creativity on its own is not enough. It only gains true importance when an idea is turned into an applied innovation and reality. A balance of skills is needed for creative city making. However the default position for all those involved in city making should be a willingness to be open and to question assumptions when necessary.
- What is an innovation in one context may be ordinary in another. Turning an old industrial building into a creative economy incubator may be common practice in Europe but a novelty in India. Or developing a city vision through a public private growth alliance may happen frequently in North America but more rarely elsewhere.
- There are ways of measuring the level and quality of innovations in a city. Some may be paradigm shifts with stronger impacts like embedding ecological thinking deeply, some innovations like culture as a driver for economic growth were once a new invention, but now are good practice that most places follow. Over

time a city needs a combination of all these such as paradigmatic shifts, forward looking innovations and good practices that have been tried and tested elsewhere.

- The innovation journey has a trajectory starting with encouraging people in your city to be curious. If they are curious they can become imaginative. With imagination it is possible to conceive and reconceive things and to envision possible futures. Then it is possible to be creative and to have ideas. These in turn need to go through the reality checker and to be tested. Only some of the creative ideas will survive and become an invention. Once widely applied they then becomes an innovation.
- Today the central driver and engine for growth of a city is its ability to keep and to attract highly skilled, talented and imaginative people to a city. This is an investment in future prosperity. Crucially such people, who have choices about where to live, increasingly choose the city before the company or job. This means a city needs to rethink its look, feel, appeal and atmosphere to entice these talented and potentially creative people to stay there or be attracted to it.
- Liveability, which is the ability to create good facilities and cultural distinctiveness move centre stage in addressing urban development. The agendas of knowledge nomads and 'ordinary people' align on liveability issues and the desire for distinctiveness. The wish to be exploratory, which is important pioneering people, is less an issue for most citizens.
- A creative city recognizes that an imaginative person can be a scientist, artist, business person, social activist, a bureaucrat, an urban planner or a politician. It is their personal attributes that make them creative rather than what they do. However, creativity is legitimized in some spheres more than others, for instance the arts of cultural industry sectors like design or new media. This can be a problem even though the creative industries have a special role in helping city development.
- Today the creative economy sectors like design, new media, music, film or the arts as well as the associated cultural infrastructure like museums or galleries can play a central role in fostering the creative urban agenda. They have many impacts including being large job creators, they create positive images for a region, they are a symbolic factor and are thus a location factor as well as providing enjoyment.
- Creativity is a powerful, soft resource as important as coal or steel or the ability to produce manufactured goods were in a former era. It is a set of attributes that can help create distinctiveness and value in a more knowledge intensive economy. It can add value to products, services, processes and techniques of doing things as well as how the city itself is shaped and develops.

- Creativity is now seen as a new currency the equivalent to having finance capital. It is equally important. There are also others forms of capital that together can make better cities, including: Human, social, heritage, knowledge and leadership capital.
- Being creative is a way of thinking and openness is its key attribute. Other characteristics include: curiosity, a questioning attitude, the ability to stand back, listen and re-assess, the courage not to take a given credo, practice or theory for granted and to dare to think outside of the box, the gift of seeing relevance and connections between apparently different things. This applies to individuals, organizations and the city itself. Creativity becomes a flexible, multifaceted resource and its qualities shape peoples' mindset and how they operate as well as the culture of the city. Not every place is equally creative, but everywhere can become more creative than it already is.
- By thinking imaginatively many new resources and possibilities are uncovered. It is the 21st century version of natural resources. We have moved from a world where natural advantages determined potential to one where harnessing and mobilizing creative advantage more effectively than others determines a city's success.
- Imaginative thinking has wide significance cutting across all forms of knowledge including science, technology, the arts with applications in the social, political and economic domains.
- By creating the conditions for people to think, plan and act with imagination a creative milieu is established. This is both a physical setting and a set of attitudes that shape the way the city operates. This gives the city its personality. Within this specific sectors may be creative such as a specialism like shoes, machinery, the arts or information technology. However, this alone is insufficient to be deemed a creative city.
- A truly creative place has a 'creative ecology', where all the interconnected systems that make a city function are open to being reassessed when necessary. This might involve those concerned with transport systems, those dealing with social affairs, those developing new business ideas or even managing the city itself. This means being willing to review the tried and tested and to be able to assess well when to open out possibilities and when to close in and be focused.
- Creative city making is concerned with both the software and hardware of the city as well as the 'orgware' of a city.
- The software of the city focuses on its culture, which includes its formal and informal learning systems, the way people across

organizations can network, interact and meet, the atmosphere and generated within the city through activities and facilities.

- The city is mostly opaque and obscure. It is difficult to see the city in its totality both from within and how it expresses itself externally. We mostly see its external appearance. You can rarely detect the creative energy often hidden behind walls. Therefore many things stand as a proxy or substitute indicating its creativity. This might be its cultural vitality, its events, gastronomy and cafes or unusual buildings, the streetscape or facilities.
- A city should not simplistically claim it is a creative city. Perhaps it might call itself an 'emerging creative city' as a sign of its aspirations, but preferably it should be others who call your city creative. Here there are elements of push and pull. You push through your intentions and by creative achievements a virtuous cycle ensues where you are pulled by the external recognition you get.
- A city does not reach an end point when it is then finally creative. The creative city concept is dynamic not static, it is more a continuous process of being alert to opportunities than a detailed plan. The truly creative place knows about timing and balance. It is alert.
- Urban creativity needs a purpose and an aim, which is to give back to its community and even the world and to help a city region to become more resilient, to future proof itself, become more prosperous and to enhance its well-being.
- A creative place should have an ethical framework and moral compass that guides its imaginative energies and actions. Today a deep concern to be ecological sustainability is one such element. Another is to develop a humane environment where peoples' needs are primary. A third is to develop a rich multilayered experience for those living in a city. In all of these domains a vast number of new innovations are required.
- A creative city is not necessarily a comfortable place. Inevitably there will be some tension between the old and the new and between holding onto tradition or fostering innovation. Yet, in an open minded place which fosters a culture of discussion and debate this tension can be productive. It can make the city alive and vital.
- There is a deeper impulse that drives our wish to change, adapt, seek improvements or to innovate. It is our need to survive and our innate sense of playfulness as human beings. It is this child like freshness that on occasion we need to recapture.

- We can increasingly assess how creative a city is and the key factors are, how a city:

nurtures and identifies its creative potential and reinforces its cultural distinctiveness in order to generate more innovations and so make the city more resilient

enables and supports this creative capacity so that opportunities and prospects are maximized

exploits and harnesses its expertise, talents and aspirations

and finally how is this lived and expressed in the city through its urban design and related matters

- This can be evaluated through 10 domains, which are:

1. Openness, trust, accessibility & participation
2. Talent development & the learning landscape
3. The political & public framework
4. Strategic leadership, agility & vision
5. Professionalism & effectiveness
6. Entrepreneurship, exploration & innovation
7. Communication, connectivity & networking
8. Distinctiveness, diversity, vitality & expression
9. The place & place-making
10. Liveability & well-being

'The City 1.0' 'The City 2.0' & 'The City 3.0'

In order to understand the trajectory towards a creative city better and the complexities of urban transformation we can describe a simple method. We can call the historic city we have inherited from the past 'The City 0.0' and there are many variations on this. Then there follows a sequence of 'The City 1.0', 'The City 2.0' and 'The City 3.0'. Most cities need to move decisively from a 1.0 city to a 3.0 city which is essentially the more creative city. Below is a thumbnail sketch of some of their features.

The City 1.0

We can portray 'The City 1.0' in a stereotypical way as follows: The main symbol of this urban type is the large factory and mass production; the mental model is the city as a machine; the management and organizational style is hierarchical and top down; structures are siloed, vertical with strong departments and there is little if any partnership; the method of acquiring knowledge is by rote learning and repetition; there is a low tolerance of failure; functions, such as working, living and leisure, are separated; there is little understanding of aesthetics. There is a parallel planning version of 1.0 which focuses largely on land-uses; comprehensive development is the preferred modus operandi; and participation is low and not encouraged. Transport 1.0 is largely focused on making the city suitable for the car and pedestrians seem less important. This results in ugly road infrastructures. Culture 1.0 concentrates mainly on traditional forms; cultural institutions dominate; it is reliant on patronage either by wealthy individuals or by the public sector; audiences are quite narrow with elites being the main participants, although folk events are widely popular; culture is seen as detached from commerce.

Overall this is the rational, ordered, technically focused and segregated city. It is the hardware focused 'urban engineering paradigm' for city making. It reflects a mental attitude and approach to life. It had its highpoints from the 1960's to 1980's. Unfortunately residues of this approach still exist both in terms of how people go about their business and in terms of the institutions and physical fabric that is still built today. The latter is essentially soulless, rather ugly and lacking any inspiration. These approaches may have been very productive, efficient and relevant to their time, but not anymore.

The City 2.0

'The City 2.0' by contrast has other priorities and evolves from the 1990's onwards. Its industrial emblem is the science park and high tech industry; its management ethos has flatter structures; partnership working rises in importance as does collaborative working; learning systems open out. There is greater awareness of the need to integrate disciplines. The mental model sees issues as more connected and this urban form is more aware of how the software and hardware of the city interact. Urban design becomes a higher priority. It begins to focus on the emotional feel of the city and its atmosphere.

There is also an attempt to make the city more spectacular by using new bizarre architectural forms produced by a roving band of nomadic architects. Gleaming glass towers proliferate, bold shapes break out of traditional patterns of the square box; skyscrapers explode onto the landscape, some with good public spaces. Vast retailing, entertainment or cultural centres try to bewitch, enchant and seduce you; citizens become more like customers and consumers.

Yet there is also a move to reflect human need and human scale. How people interact rises up the agenda. The city becomes a canvas and stage for activities. Planning 2.0 is more consultative. It sees the city in a more rounded way by linking the physical, the social and economic and the notion of transport 2.0 becomes more about mobility and connectivity. The city is less car dominated, walkability and pedestrian friendly street design with buildings close to the street become a priority; as do tree-lined streets or boulevards; or street parking and hidden parking lots. This 2.0 city seeks to reinsert mixed-use and diversity of shops, offices, apartments, and homes. It encourages too a diversity of people - of ages, income levels, cultures, and races.

Respect for ecology and the value of natural systems rise as do the use of eco-friendly technologies and energy efficiency. More local production is in evidence. There is more emphasis on distinctiveness, aesthetics, human comfort, and creating a sense of place.

Culture 2.0 shifts focus. There is a greater awareness of the power of creative economy sectors and the link between the arts and their role in the broader economy; culture becomes a competitive tool, it is used to encourage urban regeneration and revitalization; this increases the popularity of museums and galleries in the quest to change the city's image; activating street life and promoting festivals becomes part of the cultural repertoire. At the same time community driven arts projects proliferate as part of a growing movement of engagement and inclusion.

The City 3.0

'The City 3.0' goes one step further, it takes on the virtues of City 2.0, and is based on harnessing the collective imagination and intelligence of citizens in making, shaping and co-creating their city. It can be called 'soft urbanism' as it takes into account the full sensory experience of the city. In making the city it considers the emotional impact of how people experience the built fabric and thus is strongly concerned with

the public realm, human scale and aesthetics. It understands that blandness and ugliness weakens the city. Its mental model is to see the city as an organism. It is an adaptive city that through its flexibility in operating itself has more chances to become resilient and to future-proof itself. Organizationally it is more flexible; horizontal and cross-sector working become the norm. There is a recognition that in order to succeed we must sometimes fail. Thus there is a greater tolerance of risk.

Learning and self-development is crucial to the City 3.0. In the City 1.0 knowledge institutions remained factories to drill in knowledge rather than communities of enquiry; they taught specific things rather than acquiring higher order skills such as learning how to learn, to create, to discover, innovate, problem solve and self-assess. These are all attributes that artists are good at. This is more likely to trigger and activate wider ranges of intelligences. This fosters the adaptability to allow the transfer of knowledge between different contexts and how to understand the essence of arguments rather than recall out of context facts. Only then can talent be sufficiently unleashed, explored and harnessed.

The City 3.0 too recognizes that encouraging entrepreneurship is key to making the city of the future work. Thus in Economy 3.0 creativity and innovation capacity rise in importance and the system fosters a start-up culture. Open innovation systems often drive development processes and there is collaborative competition. Micro-businesses and SMEs have far greater importance and the key players are very tech-savvy. These companies have greater impact when they can connect with mainstream industry to mutual advantage. This urban form is concerned with creating cultural and physical environments which provide the conditions for people to be creative. Thus its industrial emblem is the creative zone or creative quarter.

'Third places' become important, which are places neither at home or an office where it is possible to work on the move. This is part of the 'here and there' and 'anywhere and anytime' phenomena, which is a characteristic of our age. A creative place can be a room, a building, a street, a neighbourhood, yet a creative quarter implies more than one structure. Typically they are anchored around one the several hundred old warehouses, breweries; train or bus stations or textile factories that have been rejuvenated the world over. They resonate since they exude

memory and physically their spaces are large, adaptable and flexible. This is key since part of this world is a pop-up culture where activities appear overnight and then disappear. Things are less solid and permanent.

Planning 3.0 moves away from a strict land-use focus and is more integrative as it brings together economic, cultural, physical and social concerns. Mixed use is crucial to its planning ethos. It works in partnership and finds interesting methods of participation. It recognizes that planning is increasingly concerned with mediating differences between complex issues such as fostering urban growth whilst containing the downsides of gentrification. Citizen participation in decision making is encouraged and it takes a holistic approach to identifying opportunities and to solving problems. This ranges from rethinking how policy is made to developing an appropriate regulations and incentives regime that helps fulfil aims like becoming a green city or 'cradle to cradle' thinking. Indeed being eco-conscious is part of a new common sense. Equally the idea of being intercultural is vital. This city 3.0 recognizes that talent attraction is as important as talent retention. Thus immigration laws are adapted to attract the best from the world.

This 3.0 city uses the available technologies to create smart applications. These are interoperable, immersive self-regulating and interactive devices that tell us how our city is going in real time. These help visualize and track the city in motion. The aim is to use the technical capacities to create a smart economy, smart mobility, a smart living environment. Making this happen requires smart grids and sensors, open participatory and open data platforms and apps for city services. These help monitor aims like being sustainable. It seeks to have a complete and integrated view of city systems such as energy, transport, health and employment by analysing, gathering citizen feedback and leveraging information across all city agencies and departments to make better decisions. The aim is to anticipate problems, such as traffic bottlenecks or excess energy use, in order to minimise the impact of disruptions to city services and operations. Transport 3.0 moves from a sole mobility focus to thinking about seamless connectivity. This is only possible with smart and rethought governance, where it is necessary to coordinate cross-departmental and cross-agency resources to respond to issues rapidly and in an integrated way.

Culture 3.0 increasingly sees people make their own culture. They are less passive consumers and challenge themselves to enhance their own expressive capacities; they often remix existing work and playfully re-create. They even delve into the source code which in turn enhances their curiosity. Culture is performed in more unusual settings – the street, a local café or a pop-up venue.

These overall trends within the City 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0 clearly overlap. Many still display a 1.0 mindset in a world that increasingly operates at 3.0. Planning still has older features as do some working in transport or related disciplines. The cultural institutions of 1.0 co-exist with those people who live a 3.0 cultural lifestyle and thus they need to adapt.

Misalignment & disconnection

The major faultline usually in cities is the misalignment between an evolving 3.0 world and its economy, culture and social dynamics and the existing operating system that still has several 1.0 features. This creates tensions and misunderstanding and this disconnection needs to be overcome. There is a large grouping in most cities not merely defined by age, that can operate globally, is widely connected and networked, that understands the new business models driven by the internet where ideas sharing is more prominent, which thrives in an open innovation environment and often has a portfolio career. To operate well they require a responsive regulations and incentives regime. For instance, they need flexible office leasing or rental arrangements geared to project focused work rather than being locked into longer term contracts. Or they need sympathetic banks or subsidy schemes who appreciate the nature of emerging companies and their ways of working.

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