

## Intro to Critical Planning Journal Volume 25: Planning in Crisis

We started making Critical Planning Journal (CPJ) Volume 25 shortly after the first global pandemic in a century took hold. It will, thus, come as a surprise to few that we revisit the theme of *Crisis*. Intermingled with the global impact of COVID-19, the time between CPJ issues saw “strong-men” authoritarians empowered around the world and the racism of state violence undressed. We watched George Floyd slowly die under the knee of Officer Derek Chauvin for nine minutes and twenty-nine seconds. Social and spatial fissures exploded.

Accordingly, the CPJ Editorial Collective reconvened in 2020 after a two year hiatus. A group of over twenty doctoral and masters students in UCLA’s Urban Planning program, the Collective developed a call for papers that asked authors to respond to this moment by considering the historical relationship between planning and crisis. Our editors were unequivocal: planning is not in a steady march towards justice. Rather, planners and their allied practitioners around the world have been directly implicated in the root-causes of inequality and social cleavage, thereby helping to condition modern discord. So, crisis, itself, should be examined as an ongoing phenomenon of concern to planning scholarship. We sought out pieces that brought to light stories of injustice, history, and course-correction that could offer future pathways towards redress.

As multicultural and multilingual scholars, we set out to broaden who could submit and who could read the final printed journal. We invited authors to submit pieces in any language, knowing that within our collective we had the capacity for multilingual review. We were excited to receive a small number of submissions in languages other than English, and hope that this can grow in future volumes. Notable in Volume 25 was a large number of Portuguese submissions and articles concerning Brazil by Brazilian authors. Recognizing Critical Planning as a Los Angeles-based journal, all submissions were translated to ensure legibility to Spanish and English readers alike. Volume 25 is designed to flatten the global linguistic hierarchy dominated by English.

We closed our call for papers on January 15th 2021, having received a tremendous cohort of submissions from around the world. The themes of Volume 25’s articles are broad, and reflect the range of geographies and interests of our authors: COVID-19-era food-system insecurities around the world; white supremacist housing histories; barriers to institutionalizing the constitutional right to housing in Brazil; varying applications of “land-as-security.” As managing editors, we have unpaid debts to all the

members of the CPJ Editorial Collective, who offered their time and labor in order to bring these works to the fore.

The articles in Volume 25 are arranged both thematically and geographically. We begin with the ways in which planners and unfettered market conditions have mediated social disparities along racial and economic lines in the United States. In their piece, Tessa Vogel, Mark Adam Rud, Mitch Markey and Jaap Vos question the use of traditional planning practices in rural areas. They introduce the framework of “sporadic pixelated use for residence” to explain how the urbanization of rural landscapes intensified as a result of the global pandemic, which resulted in the vulnerability of agricultural land stocks transitioning into residential development. These authors argue that a *planning for future generations ethos* at all scales of agricultural land governance will bolster the preservation of growing land in the country. Moving from rural to urban, Melissa Rovner explains that early 20th century developers marketed Los Angeles’ View Park neighborhood as a racial haven for White homeowners, while subdividing tracts deprived of basic amenities to be marketed towards Black families and the working poor. These exercises demonstrate how planners and developers created and exacerbated racialized disparities in wealth that have rippled through generations. Staying in Southern California, Peter Chesney argues that “transportation neoliberals” regulated the ride-share ancestor, the jitney, out of existence in the early 20th century. Chesney contends that while the jitney has remained in-vogue globally, in Manila’s jeepney and Zimbabwe’s konbi for example, it was resurrected in Southern California in 2012 as the ride-share company Lyft. An outside-of-LA County mandate, strong unions, and heavy regulation, argues Chesney, can strengthen the public mandate of paratransit, and help regular people get around. The analyses in each of these three articles help us think through, and possibly out of, complex problems of urbanization in the U.S.

The second half of the journal moves us through the United States and into the comparative geographies of Latin America. Examining the shared opportunities and limits of tenure in Mexican ejidos and the suburbs of Detroit, Carrie Gammell and Samuel Maddox document the concept of land as security. In both cases, the authors find that speculation threatens the distribution of land typologies that were key to how each federal government shaped the livelihoods of their citizens. Issues of security beyond land are found in Felipe Orsenz’s article that tackles urban-food security

in Mexico City. Thinking through the vulnerability of centralized food markets revealed by COVID-19, Orsenz suggests that markets like Mexico City's Central de Abasto, and the city's food security as a whole, have to become less concentrated in order to survive under the pressures of NAFTA and neoliberalism. Food plays a central role in Stefan Norgaard's examination of a crisis of violence that continues to exist in Mexico's State of Michoacán. Stemming from elicited forms of competition inside of the global avocado trade, and defying surface level analyses that suggest Michoacán's crisis of violence has abated, our author argues here that a move towards ethnographic, community-level research methods can help to reconcile the disparities between described and lived realities. Our final piece offers a pathway towards transformative urbanization by examining the crisis and failures of implementing Brazil's Right to the City legislation. Clarissa Freitas and Luísa Vieira da Ponte provide an account of public participation in land regularization in Fortaleza, Brazil. The authors compare how invited and invented spaces of participation are used during land regularization processes in two informal settlements. In doing so, they demonstrate how the integration of conflict and addressing the "real" city within a process of participation can create transformative inclusion through tenure security and improved quality of the built environment. Taken together, these articles ask us to consider the role urban planning plays in creating and withholding secure futures.

In addition to standard form articles, we also present to you a number of creative submissions. These pieces help us consider different ways of knowing and speaking about planning-in-crisis through visual and written-forms of relatively unleashed expression. What did it *look* like to walk the streets of Southern California in the summer of 2020? What would people *show you*, if you asked them to imagine the homes they couldn't travel to while locked down? How would a poet sing to you what it felt like to become an urbanist as a kid with a back-pack, strap-hanging from one edge of the city to the next? What does mass production upon the earth look like *from the sky*? These are some of the critical questions that Volume 25's artists and urban planning scholars, Hilary Malson, Mike the Poet, Cassie Hoeprich, and Rayne Laborde ask.

Since the publication of Volume 24, we at UCLA Urban Planning have lost irreplaceable members of our community, VC Powe and Dr. Leobardo Estrada. Dr. Estrada, an expert demographer, urban planning researcher, and teacher, was a gift to all students he guided. VC Powe was the Executive Director of External Programs at Luskin, and is remembered as a tireless student advocate. In this volume, a group of Leo's students reflect on his life and legacy. Masters of

Urban Planning student, Daniel Luu, memorializes VC in his piece, *Rest in Peace and Power*.

It is a tremendous privilege and responsibility to steer Critical Planning Journal towards any given year's publication. We are now twenty-five volumes old. That is over a quarter century of advancing heterodox planning scholarship and decentering hegemonic players and vernaculars. Because the practice of planning - that is, the organized craft of making good places through policy, social mobilization and design - continually faces threats of cooptation into ineffective and sometimes nefarious channels, the need for alternative forums like CPJ is as pressing as ever.

Finally, as this Volume is completed at a time where we are seemingly exiting crisis, in the tradition of Critical Planning, we ask that you reconsider this notion. Rather than hurriedly assembling retrospectives on the accomplishments and failures of COVID-era planners, we might shift discourse towards ongoing inequality, unintended consequences, the job not done, and the work remaining. As editors, our hope is that the volume before you might serve as an example of such a discourse.

We hope you enjoy reading this Volume as much as we did putting it together.

Your Co-Managing Editors,  
Daniel Iwama & Jessica Bremner