

## INTRODUCTION

The world is undergoing radical change at the beginning of this new decade. As Professor Manuel Castells articulated in a keynote speech at the October meeting of the American Collegiate Schools of Planning (ACSP), the fall of communism and the rise of a global economy represent unparalleled changes in the world order and present new concerns and opportunities for planners. Within the U.S., crisis often seems imminent these days, in light of infrastructure fiascoes, the growing number of homeless, increasing levels of crime, and the apparent likelihood of a recession, among other concerns. The local NBC-affiliate station recently broadcast a special report entitled "What's Wrong with the System?" which repeatedly pointed to planning failures. Indeed, the planning field may never before have faced challenges as great as those it faces today.

This fifth volume of the *Berkeley Planning Journal* takes on these challenges. The articles in this volume present a wide and diverse range of issues, from poverty to disaster preparedness, which are representative of the issues that will be paramount in the decade ahead. An important characteristic that is common to these articles is a questioning of conventional wisdoms about the nature of these issues. Bryson, Bromiley, and Jung's award-winning article in the *Journal of Planning Education and Research* argues that "[t]he absolutely critical role for planners appears to be the efforts they make to identify exactly what the problems are that need to be solved."<sup>1</sup> The articles in this volume are directed towards such an identification and reformulation of problems. In this way, they lead to new approaches to analyzing and eventually resolving these problems.

On May 3, 1990, the Department of City and Regional Planning held a symposium for its alumni entitled "Planning in the 1990s." Seven faculty members spoke on issues ranging from growth to the world economy and the design of cities. Transcriptions of two related presentations from this symposium have been included here. First, Elizabeth Deakin reviews the state of knowledge on growth control and growth management. Although the effect of these measures is still highly uncertain, they have received a great deal of support from a wide range of people. Her own research has found that what is often called "growth control" is in fact designed to facilitate growth, rather than restrict it, and that these measures are often used to fend off anti-growth movements.

Judith Innes reviews state growth-management programs, highlighting their importance as a new way of achieving coordinated public action among various levels of government. She discusses the significant role of geographic information systems (GIS) in developing and

widely disseminating the information that will be critical to the success of these programs. Both Deakin's and Innes's discussions are especially relevant for California, where growth continues unabated and pressures for regional- or state-level control of growth are mounting.

Jim Bergdoll and Rick Williams summarize the innovative research behind their project, "Density Perception on Residential Streets," winner of an American Institute of Certified Planners' (AICP) Student Project Award. This work shows how physical characteristics influence perceptions of density and suggests that there are better ways of measuring density with respect to its visual impacts than the traditional dwelling-units-per-acre. This work has particular significance in light of the growing realization that the low-density, sprawling land-use patterns typical of U.S. metropolitan regions contribute significantly to automobile dependence, energy use, and air pollution. Their work suggests that people will be more accepting of higher-density residential areas if they are more carefully and thoughtfully designed, and provides guidance for areas like California that must find ways to cope with rapid growth.

The Loma Prieta earthquake that rocked the Berkeley area just over a year ago certainly contributed to the sense that the system is not working quite as it should. Although the Bay Bridge was quickly repaired, the complete collapse of the Cypress freeway and perpetual delays in the repair of other double-deck freeways have contributed to the decline in the public's faith in the system. However, Cynthia Kroll, John Landis, Qing Shen, and Sean Stryker show that the earthquake had remarkably little impact on the local economy overall, though perhaps more significant impacts on small businesses. The theme of their paper is that "preparedness works," although they suggest that there is a need for improved coordination and flexibility in planning for disaster response.

Poverty is certainly one of the gravest issues that the U.S. will face in the next decade and beyond, and it must be of concern to planners. Elizabeth Mueller declares that traditional definitions of poverty -- focused on the individual or on culture -- divert attention from its basic causes and thus from appropriate policies. Instead, she examines structural and institutional factors and finds that they do a better job of explaining the history of immigration and poverty in the U.S. This alternative formulation of the problem of poverty suggests that we need to develop alternative policies if we are to make progress toward its solution.

Moving away from a U.S. focus, You-Tien Hsing's paper on the Chinese experience with collectivism in rural areas provides at least two important lessons, in light of the dismantling of state-control of economic activities that is underway throughout Eastern Europe. First, she finds that there is insufficient evidence to support the conventional

view that collectivism resulted in a lack of incentives or inefficient use of resources. Second, the criteria by which collectivism has been judged, she argues, should be broadened to include achievements in social welfare and not just economic considerations. A reformulation and re-evaluation of the problems associated with collectivism may lead us to new policy directions.

This volume of the *Journal* continues the tradition established in the previous volume of including review articles in the hope of "disseminating ideas which may facilitate dialogue in what is an increasingly diverse (some might say disparate) field."<sup>2</sup> Michael Smith-Heimer reviews the literature on housing "filtering" and its role in federal housing policy. He concludes that while some filtering does occur, there are several factors which combine to reduce its effectiveness as a foundation for housing policy. Raphael Fischler's eloquent review of Rabinow's *French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment* stresses that this work, although focusing on the development of planning in France, has important lessons for American planning practitioners, historians, and theorists.

Finally, we once again include an "Urban Fringe" essay, this time a light-hearted look by Stephen Tyler at the very serious and sometimes deadly problem of traffic congestion in California. In fact, thinking as radical as his may be just what we need to even begin to address this seemingly unsolvable puzzle.

The *Journal* is published by the graduate students of the Department of City and Regional Planning, who accept this responsibility on top of the pressures of dealing with academic demands and outside commitments; this year's late publication date reflects the challenge of balancing these disparate duties. Our policy of dividing responsibilities and handing over leadership each year means that much of what we learn about the publication process is lost in transition, but also that more of us have the opportunity to learn by doing. The creation of each issue of the *Journal* continues to be a valuable experience for us. More importantly, the *Journal* continues to provide a place for the dissemination of innovative ideas. We hope that this volume, by addressing the reformulation of a wide range of issues that will be of concern to planners in the future, continues as a significant contribution to the planning field.

Susan Handy, Editor

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Bryson, John M., Phillip Bromiley, and Yoon Soo Jung. 1990. "Influences of Context and Process on Project Planning Success," *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 9(3): 183-195.

<sup>2</sup>*Berkeley Planning Journal* 4 (1989): 2.