Urban planning and Sustainable development

Work, workspace and sustainable urban development: rethinking planning and design of cities for sustainability

Urban planning is a complex process involving large number of actors such as planners, developers, legal executives, consultants, community, and environmental end user groups. The local plan (e.g. a land use, settlement plan, and transportation plan) normally sits within a framework of higher-level policies and strategies (the strategic plan), which requires continuing dialogue and co-operative working between the local and strategic planning agencies. Indeed, planners have to manage changes. They should conceive planning for diversity because we are witnesses of a social shifting but also of a physical shifting of cities.

Relationship between technology and urban planning.

A key element for sustainable urban development supported by more effective use of ICTs is the provision of an interactive virtual urban planning environment. This environment allows the planners, developers, legal executives, community groups and environmental groups to jointly explore what-if scenarios and reach consensus on complex social, economical environmental and sustainability issues. It also allows a useful means of cross-disciplinary debate regarding development plans providing immediate feedback on important issues in the present situation. By integrating diverse workspaces, sustainable working environments can be created:

- Mixed uses; Reduced car traffic;
- Provision of green /open spaces;
- Regeneration of derelict land;
- Minimised emissions; Increased safety and security...

Creating new experiences in existing urban fabric

Being innovative in urban planning is also to permit new experiences in existing urban fabric.

For instance, a new urban experience with new type of building (Centre Georges Pompidou, Library in Seattle- OMA, new media creative district in London); or new exhibition areas, which allow new experiences of learning, new communities of sharing, through innovation in architecture.

It enters in urban regeneration strategy and in a new way of thinking and involving all stake-holders. Retail allows also creativity in urban design: creation of a destination by focusing on its hedonistic value. Retail can be connecting with education ("learn something when you shop"). Retail can be a centre of activities that connects all other functions. It becomes the driving force for a regeneration scheme.

Phosphore II is a virtual concept from Eiffage Group to build an eco-city anticipating demand in sustainability, providing access to centrality and mobility between different sub poles and including mix uses buildings.

In Bilbao, Spain, infrastructures have created community and Bilbao has entered in a worldwide community (Calatrava’s bridge, Gehry’s Guggenheim, Foster’s metro...). The City put in place a prospective planning for 2030 to prepare today a different future based on new scenarios.

In Fukuoka, Japan, urban design is a catalyst for economic development. Fukuoka which is not a capital city is a mix between international competitiveness, local context and regional renaissance. Fukuoka’s authorities outlined 4 values of the Grand Design: mixed uses, sustainability, street space, walkability.

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