Reinventing Social Nodes in the City

**MODERATOR:** GABRIELA CANAMAR CLARK

**PANELISTS:**

IRENA SAVAKOVA  
KRISTINA CRAWLEY  
CINDY MCCLEARY  
JOAN FLOURA
Panelists

REINVENTING SOCIAL NODES IN THE CITY

Gabriela Cañamar Clark, PLA
LandDesign

Irena Savakova, RIBA, LEED AP BD+C
LEO A DALY

Kristina Crawley, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP
LEO A DALY

Cindy McCleary, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP
LEO A DALY

Joan Floura, PLA, LEED AP, DBIA
Floura Teeter Landscape Architects
Our Discussion Focus

Synopsis

The social infrastructure of cities is evolving as traditional social nodes have moved online. Typologies such as bank cafes, urban libraries, urban markets and urban boutique hotels offer renewed and socially vibrant opportunities for creating dynamic zones of social activity, driving well-balanced placemaking and channeling economic dividends for development.

Our panel discussion will explore new ways of activating social nodes and weaving new and previously untapped typologies, using experiential design to evolve the social infrastructure of cities.

Learning Objectives:

- Share our understanding of trends and approaches in urban placemaking.
- Identify new opportunities to create social nodes in the city.
- Leverage experiential design to activate spaces.
Agenda
Reinventing Social Nodes in the City

Multi-Layered City
Opportunity Zones
Urban Social Nodes
Q & A
The Multi-Layered City

Social Vitality = Economic Power
Globally, more people live in urban areas than in rural areas
We live in an urban world

Population distribution

- In 2018, 1 in 8 live in 33 megacities with more than 10 million inhabitants
- By 2030, the world is projected to have 43 megacities, most of them in developing regions
We live in an urban world

Our world translated in numbers

World Urbanization Prospects

- Population living in urban areas
  - Northern America 82%
  - Latin America & the Caribbean 81%
  - Europe 74%
  - Oceania 68%
  - Asia approximating 50%
  - Africa 43%

Data based on the 2018 UN Report

in 1950
30% of global population

in 2018
55% of global population
- lives in urban areas
- 600 of largest cities = 22% of the world’s population

in 2050
68% of global population
- will live in urban areas
Urbanization Trends 2007-2025

- People live in 600 largest cities = 22% of global population

The top 600 cities generated > than 1/2 of the world GDP in 2007

$30 trillion of GDP in 2007 = 38% of the global total

The top 100 cities generated

$21 trillion of GDP in 2007 = 38% of the global total

- The global urban population is growing by 65 million annually

- For the first time in history more than 1/2 of the world’s population is living in urban environments

- Tokyo: the world’s largest city 37 million inhabitants

- Delhi 29 million

- Shanghai 26 million

- Mexico City & São Paulo - approx. 22 million inhabitants

- Cairo, Mumbai, Beijing & Dhaka 20 million inhabitants.

Data based on the 2018 UN Report
Urbanization

Social vitality = Economic Power of Cities

- Larger cities attract the most talent
- Large cities attract more investment
- City network effects stimulate economic growth
- Declining household size expands demand for housing and other household durables
- Companies tend to look at clusters of cities for market opportunities

2.0 billion people will live in 600 cities in 2025 = 25% of the global population

The top 100 cities generated $21 trillion

The top 100 cities are projected to generate $64 trillion of GDP in 2025 = 60% of the global total
The Multi-Layered City Model
Social Vitality = Economic Power of Cities
The Multi-Layered City Model

Social Vitality = Economic Power of Cities
The Multi-Layered City Model

Social Vitality = Economic Power of Cities
Opportunity Zones
Opportunity Zones

A chance to re-stitch the social fabric

▪ Basic Definition:
  ▪ an economically distressed community where new investments, under certain conditions, may be eligible for preferential tax treatment.
  ▪ In simpler terms: tax incentives for investors and developers will transform declining areas into thriving and vibrant locations.*

Qualified Opportunity Zones (QOZ) Nationwide: 8,700**
▪ Washington, DC = 25 census tracts
▪ Maryland = 149 census tracts
▪ Virginia = 212 census tracts
Greater Washington contains +4% of total OppZones

*City Lab – The Problem with Opportunity Zones, May 2018
**Economic Innovation Group – Opportunity Zones: The Map Comes into Focus, June 2018

IMAGE CREDIT: HEIGHTS SECONDARY SCHOOL, ARLINGTON, VA (LEO A DALY/BIG)
Opportunity Zones
A chance to re-stitch the social fabric

- Historical Performance and Outcomes of Investment Zones:
  - No reporting requirements to prove returns are accruing both to communities and investors** and when that happens:
    - Subsidized Gentrification: Accelerated population displacement*
    - No change in job creation: skills mismatch and rejection of existing workforce*;
    - No change in poverty reduction*;
    - Housing affordability issues are increased*;
    - No change in health and wellness outcomes*;
    - No increase in educational outcomes or early childhood results*;
    - The Tax Shelter Effect doesn’t make bad real estate good, it makes good real estate better*** (Long holds to realize tax deferrals (tax-free if held >10 years) requires a lengthy time investment in an uncertain location = risky and distressed locations are aggressively invested and upended into the newest “hot neighborhood.”)

*City Lab – The Problem with Opportunity Zones, May 2018
**Kresge Foundation’s Social Investment Practice – The Problem with Opportunity Zones, March 7, 2019
***WBJ - Opportunity Zones Abound in Greater Washington, June 2019
Opportunity Zones
A chance to re-stitch the social fabric

What would make the biggest difference(s) in urban opportunity zones in tandem with financial investment?

▪ Encouraging and Empowering Social Citizenship: political, civil, and social rights achieved, granted and recognized in full status to each citizen of a community. Avoid displacement from gentrification, integrate social nodes and re-stitch the urban fabric in a sustainable and integrated way for the long-term:

▪ How can we use social citizenship to encourage social nodes?

▪ Providing social gathering spaces, and the programming required to keep them activated, inclusive, and integrated into the community – recognizing the vernacular of each location.

▪ Social nodes combine sustainable and culturally rooted designs, investing in both the people and the space.

▪ Inclusive community involvement not only in the design process but also the ongoing programming of social nodes.

*City Lab – The Problem with Opportunity Zones, May 2018

IMAGE CREDIT: LA CASA PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING, WASHINGTON, DC (LEDA DALY/STUDIO 27)
Opportunity Zones
A chance to re-stitch the social fabric

Programming Questions:
- Who are the influencers in the community?
- How do we give a voice to the citizens?
  - Social Diversity Inclusion
- What does inclusive social representation in public spaces look like?
  - Cultural and Socioeconomic Authenticity
- How do we focus the design and programming on fulfilling the unmet needs of the community in an economically sustainable way?
  - Address the economic, cultural, and gathering needs

Reinvention + Investment of Sustainable Social Nodes:
- Urban Parks
- Markets
- Community Libraries
- Social Retail and Experiential Cafes

IMAGE CREDIT: HEIGHTS SECONDARY SCHOOL, ARLINGTON, VA (LEO A DALY BIG)
Established Urban Social Nodes

Markets  Urban Parks  Libraries
Established Urban Social Nodes

Urban Parks
Eastern Market Metro Plaza

Elevating its Mission

- Designed as part of the Washington DC master plan by L’Enfant and part of the city’s original infrastructure
- Evolved with the changes in transportation, neighborhood context, land use, etc.
- Currently undergoing through a re-design process to bring community together through the inclusion of multi-general social activities.
- Improve multimodal transit access
- Maximize park/open space usage and flexibility
Established Urban Social Nodes

Community Libraries
53% of Millennials have used the library in the past year, as compared to:

45% of GenXers have used the library in the past year.

43% of Baby Boomers have used the library in the past year.

36% of Silent Generation have used the library in the past year.

Libraries and their place in the city
Resetting the current perspective

PEW Research Center Studies based on 2012 - 2018

- In-person library use in the US has remained steady
- College graduates are more likely than those whose education ended with a high-school diploma.
- Parents with children are more likely than non-parents
- Only 8% of library users prefer a mobile app to the in-person visit.
Libraries and their place in the city
Re-engagement as a place for social commerce

Social Commerce: Df: the use of digital media or methods to connect individuals to sales, advertising or the conveyance of information that has economic value.

...but expanding the definition, commerce refers to the exchange of goods and services or something of value.

...the value is becoming, the opportunity to socially engage, network, work, create commerce and connect.
Foreign Born Cultures are less likely to use libraries than US Born cultures. BUT, the differences in what different cultures and social demographics use the library for is what is most intriguing…

Libraries and their place in the city
Re-engagement as a place for social equity


Cultures most likely to seek the advancement of or search for information: latino, caucasian, central asian

Cultures most likely to utilize computers and web services or self-navigating services; first born cultures, black americans, american youth.

Economic groups most likely to use the library; families with your children and 1 income, those with advanced education.
Case Study: Seattle Public Library calculated the economic return in the economy to the new library:

- Year 1: $16M Net New Spending
- Year 5: $80M Net New Spending
- Year 10: $160M Net New Spending

Libraries and their place in the city:
Re-engagement as a an economic development driver

Pew Research Center studies based on the 2016-2018

- Economic Development Return on Libraries (for $1 spent)
  - Virginia (Fairfax County) ROI...................................$6.51
  - Maryland ROI........................................$ Not Calculated *
  - Florida ROI..................................................................$7.50
  - Minnesota ROI...........................................................$4.62
  - Wisconsin ROI...........................................................$4.06

- *92% those polled indicated they believe they receive "return" on the public investment in libraries
Established Urban Social Nodes Markets
Urban Social Nodes

Urban Markets: Transform Lexington Market
Transform Lexington Market
Baltimore City, Maryland
A Vision for Lexington Market

Transform Lexington Market

- Now more than ever, Baltimore needs a place that unites us racially, socially, economically, intergenerationally, and geographically.
  - Lexington Market, a community-owned, public market in the heart of the city, can be that place.
  - Lexington Market can serve as a tipping point that unites our city and creates a living example of a diverse, inclusive, and equitable Baltimore.
Complex set of issues

- **Safety** and what does safety mean to various populations?
- **Crime and drug use** in the area and at the existing plaza. Include creative solutions to assist users and dealers to find alternate sources of income.
  - Career development opportunities
  - Programs that place users into treatment vs. jail
- **Vendor selections**. How do you have healthy choices available and how are local businesses included as vendors?
- **Litter and trash collection**. Multiple jurisdictions responsible for adjacent areas and they are not coordinated.
- **Gentrification**. How do you avoid gentrification of the area? Is it possible?
Community Engagement Process

Community Engagement Goals

▪ Lexington Market is diverse and inclusive in terms of its vendors, customers and partners
▪ Improved safety and quality of life for residents, businesses, and institutions in the areas surrounding Lexington Market
▪ Lexington Market is aesthetically pleasing, operationally well-run, financially sustainable and programmatically responsive to community needs.
Community Engagement Process

Community Engagement Access Points

- Advisory Board: Comprised of stakeholders and community members from key institutions and groups throughout Baltimore.
- Working Groups: Opportunity for Community members to engage in the design, operations and programming of Lexington Market.
- Community Listening Tour: Opportunity for the development team to conduct deep listening in the communities and invite more community members into the working groups.
- Town Hall Meetings: Community members are able to hear updates and provide feedback in the design, operations and programming efforts that are the core to the re-development of Lexington Market.
- Community Survey: Allows the community to give input into the vision for the market.
- Focus Groups: Opportunity for small groups to provide input and discuss hopes and dreams for the market of the new generation.
Urban Social Nodes

Viability & Transformation
Retail Banking
Trending – new social node typology
Retail Banking
Need = convenience + social interaction
Retail Banking

Community hub = convenience + social interaction
Retail Banking
Curated experience = convenience + social interaction + inspiration
Q&A

Gabriela Canamar Clark, LandDesign
Irena Savakova, LEO A DALY
Kristina Crawley, LEO A DALY
Cindy McCleary, LEO A DALY
Joan Floura, Floura Teeter Landscape Architects