



# International Association for China Planning

## Newsletter

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**Special Issue on Shenzhen and Beijing Conferences**

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The IACP played a key role in the organization of two important conferences in China this June, and had an extensive presence at a third conference in August. On June 6-7, in the city of Shenzhen, the Shenzhen Municipal Planning Bureau and the IACP jointly hosted the *International Seminar on Shenzhen's Urban Restructuring and Sustainable Development*. The IACP also assisted the Ministry of Construction, the Ministry of Culture, and the State Administration of Cultural Heritage to hold the *International Conference on Urban Culture/2<sup>nd</sup> International Forum on City Planning* in Beijing, June 9-11. Later, August 2-4, in Beijing, a number

of IACP members also participated in the China Planning Network's *1st Urban Transportation Congress*.

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**Highlights from the *International Seminar on Shenzhen's Urban Restructuring and Sustainable Development*, Shenzhen, China, June 6-7, 2007**



**IACP Chair Tingwei Zhang speaks at the Shenzhen Seminar**

The Shenzhen Municipal Planning Bureau and the International Association for China Planning co-hosted the seminar, which included presentations by two key local officials, Ms. Yan Xiaopei, Vice Mayor in charge of urban development, and Mr. Wang Peng, Director of the Municipal Planning Bureau; three members of the IACP board, Profs. Tingwei Zhang, Zhong-Ren Peng, Qing Shen and Ming Zhang; and seven other academic and professional speakers, including five who were invited from abroad with the help of the IACP: Mr. Jeremy Harris,

former Mayor of Honolulu; Mr. Edward Garza, former Mayor of San Antonio; Prof. Michael Hibbard, University of Oregon; Dr. Lili Liu, World Bank; and Diane Sugimura, Director of Planning and Development for the City of Seattle. Profs. Yue-man Yeung, emeritus of Chinese University of Hong Kong, and Mee Kam Ng, Hong Kong University, attended from Hong Kong.

Vice Mayor YAN Xiaopei set the tone of the seminar by stating outright that Shenzhen's growth strategy over the past 25 years has become unsustainable. Its land-hungry approach to planning and development has consumed more than 700 square kilometers of its total "buildable land" of 1,046 square kilometers. Yue-man Yeung and Mee Kam Ng later described in greater detail how Shenzhen's economic role occupies an increasingly uncertain position between Hong Kong and the lower-wage manufacturing centers of the Pearl River Delta, such as Dongguan.

The presentations from abroad focused primarily on how changing economic conditions affect the planning process (Chicago and Portland); and on how cities make sustainable development an integral part of their economic development strategies (Portland, Seattle, Honolulu and San Antonio). Qing Shen and Ming Zhang also presented on travel behavior studies in Shanghai that suggest how Chinese planning might promote more "green transportation".

Seminar participants also toured Shenzhen's planning exhibition; its emerging central business and civic district; two urbanizing villages (*chengzhongcun*); a high-end market housing development; and the port.

### **Highlights from the *International Conference on Urban Culture/2<sup>nd</sup> International Forum on City Planning*, Beijing, June 9-11, 2007**

The *International Conference on Urban Culture/2<sup>nd</sup> International Forum on City Planning* in Beijing was a landmark event for urban planning in China, even given the increasing number of conferences being held in China on the subject of urbanization and urban planning over the last 2-3 years. Most strikingly, this was the first international conference of its size to be hosted jointly by the Ministry of Construction, the Ministry of Culture, and the State Administration of Cultural Heritage. With this unprecedented official alliance sharing the stage, the conference provided possibly the highest profile convergence of thinking yet to take place in China on the relation between urbanization and culture. It also represented a strong official endorsement of the idea that public policy should take this relation into account.

The conference appeared to manifest three main sources of interest in the relation between culture, urbanization and planning. First, there is the expectation that cultural development – including the preservation of heritage and the explicit fostering of urban identity – is an indispensable key to economic success. A number of presentations focused on the economically beneficial role that the "cultural sector" plays directly in urban development. These included one entire session devoted to "New Hi-Tech and Innovative Industries, Cultural Industries and Urban Development."

A second group of sessions and presentations responded to the implicit fear that rapid urbanization is a threat to urban identity and culture because it involves so much destruction and standardization. These presentations focused on the importance of historic culture (heritage) to continued cultural development, and specifically on how to preserve heritage in the course of rapid urban growth and change. Concerns about the tension between development and historic preservation are not new in Chinese urban planning discourse. This conference, however, marked something of a turning point at the national level. Previous debates tended to view the conflict as a zero-sum game, in which preservation and development were mutually at odds. The participation of the Ministry of Culture in this conference added the new dimension of *cultural development*, in which heritage preservation as well as all forms of development are combined. A prominent example of this linkage was the presentation by Academician and Professor Wu Liangyong on "Cultural Heritage Preservation and the Creation of the Cultural Environment."

Finally, the conference reflected a relatively new, humanistic turn in current urban planning discourse in China. In this view, urban cultural development is not only the source of economic prosperity or the goal of heritage preservation, but is also an essential component of ecological sustainability (fostering a broad public sense of environmental responsibility for future generations) and of democracy (promoting broad public participation in environmental decision-making, and ensuring that urban planning satisfies both the interests of the majority as well as the

needs of marginalized groups). Professor Ruan Yisan's presentation on "Urban Heritage Preservation and the Maturing of Non-governmental Civic Capacity in China" updated an important recent frontier of research in this area.

The concluding document of the conference, the "Beijing Declaration," summed up the new orientation (Chinese original version at <http://www.cityup.org/topic/annual/opening/200707/1116.html>; preliminary English version at <http://www.cityup.org/topic/annual/opening/200707/1114.html>). One of its concluding statements is especially striking, given the orientation of Chinese urban planning over the past generation: "We do need commercial and industrial cities. But what we need even more are cultural cities."

The conference attracted participants from 23 countries and more than 1000 mayors, planners, architects, and others interested in urban culture and planning. Key participation from outside China included the keynote address by Stanford University Nobel Prize-winning economist Michael Spence; a closing session speech by the Italian Ambassador Ricardo Sessa; serial presentations on urbanization levels in China by Vernon Henderson of Brown University and John Quigley of UC Berkeley; presentations on Italian urban service management systems by Paolo Cantarella and Raffaele Morese; presentations by Sam Casella, former President of the American Institute of Certified Planners, and by Jeffrey Soule, Policy Director of the American Planning Association.

## **IACP Role in the Beijing Conference**

The International Association for China Planning played a key role in increasing international participation in the conference, beyond those speakers mentioned above. IACP board members who attended or presented at the conference included Tingwei Zhang, Qing Shen, Zhong-Ren Peng, Fulong Wu, Ming Zhang, and Dan Abramson. IACP general members who presented at the conference included Yidong Hu, Richard LeGates, Lan Wang, Lei Wang, Xinhao Wang, Chris Webster, Jiawen Yang, Li Yin, and Feng Zhang. The IACP was also instrumental in bringing a number of non-member speakers to the conference. These included Bharat Dahiya of UN-Habitat, Fukuoka; Jim Diers, founding Director of the Seattle Dept. of Neighborhoods; David

Perry, University of Illinois at Chicago; Edward Garza, former Mayor of San Antonio; Jeremy Harris, former Mayor of Honolulu; Michael Hibbard, University of Oregon; Lili Liu, World Bank; Diane Sugimura, Director of Seattle's Dept. of Planning and Development; Edward J. Sullivan, an attorney with the law firm Garvey Schubert Barer in Portland; and Barry Weisberg, University of Illinois at Chicago.

In addition to placing these presenters on panels organized by the joint ministries, the IACP also organized two special roundtable sessions. Eleven presenters from mainland China, Hong Kong, South Korea, and the USA gave ten presentations in the roundtable sessions. Topics of the presentations included globalization and Chinese industrial development, LULU, urban form and travel behavior, urban



**IACP meets with Vice Minister of Construction Qiu Baoxing. From left to right: Ming Zhang; Qing Shen; Richard LeGates; Lili Liu; Dan Abramson; Tingwei Zhang; Qiu Baoxing; Jiawen Yang; Fulong Wu; Xinhao Wang; Zhong-Ren Peng; David Perry; Yin Li.**

growth modeling, school bus services, and urban governance.

Most IACP members present at the conference were able to join a special chat session with Dr. Qiu Baoxing, First Vice-Minister of Construction, who was the moving force from within the Ministry of Construction responsible for realizing the conference.

Further information about the *International Conference on Urban Culture/2<sup>nd</sup> International Forum on City Planning* in Beijing, June 9-11, 2007, including full text of many of the speeches and presentations (most in Chinese only), can be found online at <http://www.cityup.org/topic/annual/In dex.html>



**IACP & friends at the dinner gala: Jiawen Yang; Xinhao Wang; Chen Xiaoli; Chris Webster; Mike Hibbard; Diane Sugimura; Jeremy Harris; Tingwei Zhang; Lili Liu; Fulong Wu; Richard LeGates; David Perry; Qing Shen; Shi Nan; Yin Li; Ming Zhang; Zhong-Ren Peng**

Many of IACP's friends also attended the conference, including Shi Nan, Editor of China's premier urban planning journal; Wu Shiqiang, Dean of School of Architecture and Planning at Tongji University; Mao Qizhi, Associate Dean and Professor of Urban Planning at Tsinghua University; and Pan Haixiao, Professor of Urban Transportation Planning at Tongji University.

### **IACP at China Urban Transport Conference in Beijing**

IACP participated extensively in the 1st China Urban Transport Congress conference organized by the China Planning Network (CPN) in Beijing, August 2-4, 2007. Two board members, Zhong-Ren Peng and Ming Zhang attended the conference as invited VIP guests, together with TRB Chair Michael Meyer, ACSP President Mickey Lauria, UITP (International

Association of Public Transport) Vice President Sung Jick Eum, WCTRS (World Conference on Transport Research) President Werner Rothengatter, Minister Qiu Baoxing, Vice President of Tsinghua University Jining Chen, etc.

At the conference, Zhong-Ren introduced the Portland's experience in urban growth management and transportation, and the implications to China. Ming's presentation compared bus rapid transit (BRT) and rail Mass rapid transit, and provided a new perspective to urban public transport development in China. About 300 officials, planners, students, researchers, and industry leaders attended the 2.5 day conference. The event was well reported by the China national media including Xinhua News Agency, CCTV (channel 1,2,4,9), People's Daily, Central Government website, SOHU, SINA, etc. as well as in the West by Financial Times, American Planning Association, Elsevier, etc. Two other IACP board members, Jinhua Zhao and Zhan Guo, played a key role in organizing the conference, as executive commissioners of the China Planning Network (CPN). Visit the conference website for details:

<http://www.chinaurbantransport.com>