

When I started FOCUS eleven years ago, I never thought it would demand so much of my time and dedication. But I also never dreamed that it would be so well received by alumni, students, and planning professionals in California, and be honored with awards from the American Planning Association. This year's issue represents yet another threshold: for the first time FOCUS had to turn down articles submitted by external authors due to the volume of material submitted! There are two possible reasons for this abundance of submissions. First, that our journal provides academia and the profession useful content, covering local and regional to national and international contexts. Second, that FOCUS's editorial policy has been correct in searching for articles with a clear and direct relationship to the practice of planning, without the onerous demands of blind-review journals but with an eye to quality and usefulness. What readers will find in the present issue are perfect representatives of these choices and the reasons behind FOCUS's success story.

Opening FOCUS as customary, in "A Planner's View" Chris Clark shares his views of why private consultants do not get gold watches, while the Cartoon Corner adds some satirical humor to an otherwise very serious endeavor that is publishing this professional journal. The Special Section features the guest presentation made by Andrea Broaddus at the CRP Department in 2014, on the impact of London's Congestion Charge policy and its impacts on travel patterns and choices, and possible lessons for sustainable transportation in United States cities.

The Essays Session opens with renowned scholar Jon Lang, professor emeritus at the University of New South Wales, Australia. He discusses international urban design paradigms, branding, and the need for a neo-functional and ecological approach that values the culture of places. Next, Uta Birkmayer—founder and CEO of Xsense authentic places in San Luis Obispo—continues in the same important vein of planning and urban design: the need to understand the real sense of a place and honor it through our design interventions. True placemaking is also about equity and social justice, issues at the base of the lessons discussed by Anne Wyatt, planner and CRP alumnus, in her article about Dignity Village, a self-built and self-organized encampment of families in Portland. Ivor Samuels—famous British urban design scholar and constant collaborator of FOCUS—follows with yet another issue directly linked to placemaking: design coding as a tool to generate design quality in private residential developments, an inspiration from new urbanism. Next, João Pedro Costa, professor at the University of Lisbon, reminds us of the increasing impacts of global warming and the rise of sea level on places, and the need to step up to the challenge and invest in creative solutions, bringing in European examples. Last in the section, Carlos Smaniotto Costa and Jacqueline Hoyer, researchers and faculty in Germany, discuss four recent applied research proj-

ects in public open spaces in Europe and their importance in changing planning paradigms in the European Union.

Opening the section on Faculty and Student Work, Karlo Felix summarizes his senior project that consisted of a thorough study of the City of Vallejo's alleys and the development of tools to protect and value this important element of its original morphology. Senior BCRP student Clarissa Caruso and I follow with an article discussing a project developed by the third-year urban design studio for the City of Milpitas, winner of three awards from the American Planning Association in 2014. Another excellent studio project is discussed next by Faculty Emeritus Zejlka Howard and BCRP senior Shelby Messner, in their account of the Broadway Corridor Study developed in collaboration with the City of Redwood by the fourth-year planning studio. Next, CRP Professor Emeritus David Conn, Professor Jennifer Pedrotti, and BCRP senior Alice Zanmiller write about the success of the new class Intergroup Dialogues, devised to help Cal Poly increase diversity education on campus. CRP Assistant Professor William Riggs and Henry Pontarelli, planner and principal at LWC in San Luis Obispo, discuss the Community Sustainability Plan as a tool to achieve a balance between social, economic, and ecological factors. Closing the section, Assistant Professor Riggs presents a thought provoking discussion on leadership and its importance for efficiency, user satisfaction, and innovation in public planning and governance.

The International Section is back, with an account by BCRP senior Kirsten Harrison on her semester studying at the Metropolitan Studies program in Germany, going through a range of classes that added much to her education as a planner. Next, Lorenza Pavesi, a doctoral student from the University of São Paulo, Brazil writes about her experience spending almost a year at the CRP Department developing research towards her dissertation on the influence of the Townscape movement in planning circles in the United States, Italy, and Brazil. In the Spotlight Section, CRP Department Head Hemalata Dandekar shines light on the community outreach work provided through our studios in recent years; alumnus Geoff Bradley writes about the Metropolitan Planning Group, a firm that he co-founded and which has become one of the busiest in the Bay Area; and alumnus Sierra Russell, interviewed by FOCUS, talks about her career as a planner and the challenges of deciding to become a lawyer. Closing the Spotlight Section are the abstracts of all masters' theses and projects defended this past academic year in CRP.

Once again, FOCUS is a good representation of CRP's mission of disseminating good planning for more sustainable, equitable, and inclusive communities.

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