THE ROLE AND OPPORTUNITIES IN URBAN SUSTAINABILITY FOR SMALL AND MID-SIZE CITIES

REPORT FROM

URBAN THINKERS CAMPUS

THE CITY WE NEED
OMAHA, NEBRASKA
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INTRODUCTION

The Joslyn Institute for Sustainable Communities (JISC), located in the Nebraska Flatwater Metroplex region of the rural midwestern United States, was honored to host an Urban Thinkers Campus (UTC) among twenty-eight such Urban Thinker Campuses held throughout the world in 2015. The primary focus of the Nebraska Flatwater Metroplex UTC was the urbanization challenges and solutions impacting small and mid-sized cities. The central goal of the UTC gatherings initiated by the UN-Habitat as part of the World Urban Campaign, was to identify characteristics and core principles of The City We Need to be included in the New Urban Agenda advanced by Habitat III in 2016 as the graphic above serves to illustrate.

CHALLENGES

The challenges to the cities we need, whether mega-cities or small and mid-sized cities, are many and markedly complex. They cross borders, government jurisdictions, regions, countries, religions, economic status, political ideologies, continents and oceans. The World Urban Campaign partners pointed to key challenges in 2012. The challenges remain the same, though perhaps intensified, in December 2015. They are as follows:

- Persistence of an unsustainable model of urbanization;
- Growing urban inequalities worldwide;
- Steady increase of the number of slum dwellers (as well as political and environmental refugees) in parts of the world;
- Increasing urban risks of climate change, and disasters; and
- Negative consequences of violence and crime, (and increasing concern of terrorism) in cities.

The Role and Opportunities in Urban Sustainability for Small and Mid-Size Cities conference theme centers on the understanding that more than 70 percent of the world’s population lives outside urban areas of more than 500,000 residents. While ample attention has been paid to the expected enormous growth of the world’s mega cities and global urbanization, comparatively scant attention has been focused on the enormously relevant small to medium-sized urban centers during this period of transformative urbanization, as well as on the rural areas that are significant sources for this growth.

These non-urban areas are wellsprings from which we derive myriad resources. From Alaska’s vulnerable commercial and subsistence fishing, to loss of farmland in Nebraska, underutilized farmland in Colombia, and loss of both farming and fishing habitats to pollution in China’s

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1 See map of the area in Annex 1.
2 Two other Urban Thinkers Campuses were held in North America: New York City and Vancouver, Canada (both in October 2015).
3 Parenthetical language added to this report dated December 2015.
Pearl River delta, it has become abundantly apparent that urbanization is inextricably linked to the health of rural communities and their natural resources.

With local governments leading the vanguard of climate change policy, small to medium-sized (up to 1 million in population) cities are uniquely positioned to explore, promote and exemplify policies supporting sustainable urban-rural interconnections, such as regional food systems and integrated planning, while mitigating the effects of a changing climate.

The Nebraska Flatwater UTC sought to meet the challenge for an increased focus on sustainable planning and policy for small and mid-size cities—from urban centers of fewer than 100,000 people up to 1,000,000, and focuses on the rural-urban synergy and necessity of sound natural resource conservation management in a time of unprecedented growth.

**PRINCIPLES**
The WorldUrban Campaign partners identified a set of principles preliminarily articulated in the Manifesto for Cities. They are intended to guide the focus of conversations for developing a new urban paradigm for “The City We need” in the 21st century. From principles come policies and action tailored to local conditions, created and implemented by local leaders working in collaboration with local citizens to develop and sustain human communities designed for the well-being of their inhabitants.

**World Urban Campaign Principles for a New Urban Paradigm**
1. The city we need is socially inclusive.
2. The city we need is well planned, walkable and transit-friendly.
3. The city we need is a regenerative city.
4. The city we need is economically vibrant and inclusive.
5. The city we need has a singular identity and sense of place.
6. The city we need is a safe city.
7. The city we need is a healthy city.
8. The city we need is affordable and equitable.
9. The city we need is managed at the metropolitan level (is well planned, financed and governed at all levels).

The Nebraska Flatwater Urban Thinkers Campus agenda was designed with all nine principles in mind. Presenters, conveners and participants were encouraged to refer to these principles as they developed, presented and explored additional perspectives throughout the campus sessions.

At the same time, the Nebraska Flatwater Campus Steering Committee chose to highlight two of the nine principles for additional focus they felt were particularly relevant to small and mid-sized cities. The topics for Urban Thinker Sessions and Urban Labs were identified accordingly. The highlighted principles were:

- **The city we need has a singular identity and sense of place.** It recognizes culture as key to human dignity and to sustainability. It involves cultural actors to unlock the creative potential of all citizens. It strengthens the bonds between city and its surrounding hinterland.

- **The city we need is managed at the metropolitan level** (formerly is well planned, financed and governed at all levels). It coordinates sectoral policies and actions (economy, mobility, biodiversity, energy, water, and waste) within a comprehensive and coherent local framework. Communities and neighborhoods are active participants in metropolitan decision making.

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF CONSTITUENT GROUP PARTNERS**
In addition to a slate of working principles, the World Urban Campaign (WUC) partners identified constituent groups represented within the WUC, which were officially adopted as the General Assembly of Partners.

The Nebraska Flatwater Campus Steering Committee paired some constituent partner groups for the manage-

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4 Flatwater Urban Thinkers Campus participants found the “managed at the metropolitan level” language does not apply to the structure and governance features of small and intermediary cities. Also noted in Section III: Session Outcomes.
ability of the campus sessions designed for the number of participants. Participants selected a preference at the time they registered for the UTC event.

The six constituent partner groups represented at the Nebraska Flatwater UTC were as follows:

- Research & Academia
- Parliamentarians (National, State & Local Elected Officials)
- Women, Indigenous People & Youth
- Private Sector & Foundations
- Professionals & Trade Unions
- Civil Society & Grass Roots Organizations

**CAMPUS OVERVIEW**

The Nebraska Flatwater Urban Thinkers Campus was convened on November 16–17, 2015, at the University of Nebraska–Omaha. The objectives were to share, learn, debate urban challenges and solutions with small and mid-sized cities in mind, and ultimately build consensus for drafting emerging principles and practices that can positively contribute to a new urban paradigm.

From the moment W. Cecil Steward, Founder and President of the Joslyn Institute for Sustainable Communities and host of the Nebraska Flatwater UTC, opened the event with a hearty welcome and a challenge to think hard and work together, through to the closing remarks of gratitude at the end, participants were clear about their purpose for participating in the Campus meeting. Their preparations, engagement and expressions of commitment revealed an attitude that seemed to say:

“We must think about the challenges, concerns, principles and aspirations of sustainable development in small and mid-sized cities needed to accommodate the anticipated urbanization surge in coming years. We must each expand our own perspective limited by our individual knowledge and experiences—put ourselves in the hearts and minds of our constituent partners that inhabit small and mid-sized cities in South America, Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and elsewhere on our shrinking planet. Our task is to develop valuable thinking to contribute to a new urban agenda that serves them, as well as ourselves.”

The Campus was purposely designed as an open space to share, learn, and brainstorm the elements of a new urban paradigm moving toward Habitat III. The format of the Campus was flexible, including facilitated sessions that invited a high level of interaction. Each participant had equal opportunities to voice his or her views, ideas, and stories to support an emerging collective vision.

The result was a lively exchange among a diverse array of participants who came to grapple with urbanization challenges and issues related to small and mid-sized cities with an intention to build consensus and develop a proposed a framework of principles for the new urban future.
The diverse array of urban researchers, planners, professionals, leaders, decision-makers, concerned citizens and students attracted to the Nebraska Flatwater UTC event created a lively and rich open forum for sharing provocative ideas. Among the 150 onsite participants were residents of Omaha and Lincoln, mid-sized cities with populations of 447,000 and 273,000, respectively, located within the 24,000-square mile eastern Nebraska Flatwater Metroplex region where the UTC event was held.

Interest in anticipated urban growth challenges for small and mid-sized cities drew attendees from numerous other midwestern US cities in Iowa, Minnesota and Missouri, as well as from Fairbanks, Alaska; New York City; Tanzania; and Togliatti, Russia. Adding to the diverse mix of participants were 325 remote viewers in France, Kenya, Mexico, Portugal, Qatar, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

Diverse perspectives offered by presenters and participants made sharing fun as well as provocative. The point wasn’t to agree on everything, but to learn and come to a workable consensus. The open sharing took the form of passionate expression, open challenges, civil arguments, and heartfelt exchange of knowledge, experiences, concerns that often culminated in creative optimism for a new urban agenda.

In a spirit of sharing, the Campus included Urban Thinkers Sessions that invited thematic exchanges across partner groups. Key themes addressed in the Urban Thinkers Sessions included the following:

- Working for Urban-Rural Integration
- Considerations on the Role of Labor in the Development of Small and Middle-Sized Settlements, a session that was streamed live from Geneva, Switzerland
- Tackling Climate Change: Municipal Adaptation Planning
- Urban–Rural Connections: Energy and Food
- Stuck in Place: The Role of Transportation Equity and Access to Opportunity
- Urban Compactness and Ecosystem Services

Live streaming media sessions and Internet technology expanded the sharing to include presentations from Geneva, Switzerland, and Medellín, Colombia, followed by question and answer sessions and discussion among the remote presenters, local participants, and viewers around the globe.

Key themes addressed in the live streamed videos from Colombia included:

- Medellín: Porosity and Exchange
- The Case of the Urabá Region: Municipal Integral Plans: A Strategic Urban Planning Approach to Foster Urban Consolidation in Small-Sized Towns in Colombia.

In a spirit of learning, the Campus included Urban Labs for exploring new practices and models intended to enable and inspire participants to address the new urban paradigm. While the labs focused on new thinking and innovation, participants had to also question the likelihood of new models to be implemented at a meaningful scale. Innovation and implementation were the key words for Urban Labs.
Main fronts of innovation and new thinking emerged in Urban Lab sessions that focused on the following themes:

- Local Knowledge and Resiliency in Resource-Dependent Communities
- Community Identity and Communication
- Challenges and Techniques of Building Support and Consensus among Disparate Community Factions for Sustainable Design
- Local Governments Working Together to Regionalize Climate Action
- Water, Food & Shelter: An Alaskan Perspective on Sustainable Communities
- Innovations in Municipal Finance for Sustainable Development
- Updating Your City Plan: Review of APA’s Sustaining Places Guidebook and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Indicators
- Quality of Life and Sustainability Metrics

**PLENARY DEBATES AND DRAFTING SESSIONS**

The City We Need plenary sessions’ debates brought participants together for discussion about key issues and priority principles impacting the proposed city we need.

The first debate session included three panelists with different backgrounds and expertise to debate the concept of city ranging from non-rural to megacity. This debate served to fuel the considerations discussed in the constituent partner drafting sessions that followed.

A second debate session convened participants in a plenary session in which the constituent group chairs sat on a panel to report on each group’s discussions, emerging themes, ideas and solutions. These debates helped participants move toward consensus by airing the numerous perspectives in question in the large group, which often prompted push-back and challenges from other participants. These sessions help to prepare constituent group participants to draft final positions around the main themes for The City We Need.

Following the second debate, conveners, chairs, rapporteurs and participants of each constituent group reconvened in a joint drafting session. There they negotiated their final statements of the key principles for The City We Need and presented them in the closing debate.

By the end of the conference, participants generally agreed that the Urban Thinkers Campus model provided a useful format for pursuing for subsequent debates that serve to bring partners around a shared table to negotiate principles, policies, and action plans relative to key issues for the Habitat III Conference and the New Urban Agenda.

The presentations and facilitated sessions scheduled throughout the two-day Urban Thinkers Campus produced the fodder for lively City We Need debates.

**BUILDING CONSENSUS**

Active engagement and critical exchange of ideas among committed people were at the heart of the Urban Thinkers Campus model designed for those who believe that urbanization is an opportunity for co-creating a positive, sustainable transformation.

The Nebraska Flatwater Metroplex Urban Thinkers Campus provided a context for participants to build consensus around core urban development issues for small and mid-sized cities. Through the Campus format, urban thinkers were invited to converge on common values and principles they wanted to support within the constituent
partner groups in which they chose to participate. Participants of constituent groups were asked to focus on:

- Debating urbanization challenges and issues in small and mid-sized cities impacting their particular constituent
- Refining and/or rewriting as needed the two principles highlighted for the Nebraska Flatwater UTC event with small and mid-sized cities in mind.
- Proposing no more than three final position statements reflecting principles, policies or actions needed to support inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities.

The consensus that constituent groups developed in their drafting sessions summarizes their views and proposals that are intended to contribute to a joint City We Need emphasis to feed into the New Urban Agenda.

**CAMPUS OUTCOMES**

The puzzle pieces representing divergent thinking began to converge midday on Day Two in the form of group consensus around key points and principles. The energy of tension and anxiety that had escalated to point of discomfort and frustration (a sense of chaos) for some by the end of Day One was indeed the level of energy intensity, sustained through an overnight period of rest, which was needed to yield the sense of clarity and resolve the following day.

Individual Nebraska Flatwater UTC thinkers had begun to take on the identity of the constituencies they represented and were speaking more clearly and passionately on their behalf. The principles for a new urban paradigm that represented both constituent interests and the communities of which they are a part were taking shape just as the UTC event was running out of time. The pressure was on to get it right during the final constituent drafting sessions.

Highlights of reported final positions from each of the constituent groups are described below. Collectively we can refer to them as elements of a new urban paradigm for the small and mid-sized cities we need.

**Elements of a New Urban Paradigm for the Small and Mid-sized Cities We Need**

The Nebraska Flatwater UTC participants both challenged and refined the principles identified for particular focus during the constituent sessions.

**Two Selected Principles for Debate**

**Original Principle 1**: The city we need has a singular identity and sense of place.

**Revised Principle 1**: The city we need has a multifaceted identity made up of diverse neighborhoods and peoples who consciously share a common sense of place.

It recognizes and values the multiplicity of diverse cultures, people and their points of view in the processes of expanding perspectives and planning for sustainable growth on behalf of all inhabitants. It functions as a resilient learning community that responds to changing needs of a growing population in the context of an ever-changing world of human and natural events.

It strengthens its relationship with surrounding rural regions, recognizing the valuable resources rural areas provide for urban inhabitants.

The general consensus among Flatwater UTC participants is that the words in the principle statement are too restrictive and do not convey the evolving and variable features of a small and mid-sized city’s identity.

Considerations for revised language and sentiment in principle statements and descriptors are as follows:

**Quick reference of original principle statements and descriptors for this Urban Thinkers Campus**

**The City We Need**

The City We Need has a singular identity and sense of place. It recognizes culture as key to human dignity and to sustainability. It involves cultural actors to unlock the creative potential of all citizens. It strengthens the bonds between city and its surrounding hinterland.

The City We Need is managed at the metropolitan level (is well planned, financed and governed at all levels). It coordinates sectoral policies and actions (economy, mobility, biodiversity, energy, water, and waste) within a comprehensive and coherent local framework. Communities and neighborhoods are active participants in metropolitan decision making.
Creating new knowledge and sharing it with surrounding area is part of a shared identity. (R&A)

**Reference Key for Constituent Groups**

| (R&A) Research & Academia | (P) Parliamentarians | (WIP&Y) Women, Indigenous People & Youth | (PS&F) Private Sector & Foundations | (P& TU) Professionals & Trade Unions | (CS&GRO) Civil Society & Grass Roots Organizations |

Reconsider the term singular to avoid ambiguous meanings and to clarify the recognition of the individuality in urbanism among small and mid-sized communities. Potential replacements may include the terms unique or mosaic. Within this principle, the interpretation of culture may have various meanings and connotations as well. Expressly, the term identity may present difficulties in verifying the authenticity of community identity due to marketing and branding campaigns. As such, identity may need to include aspects of history, geography, and economics. This constituent group also recommends that this principle needs an incorporation of engagement, potentially replacing the term unlock with engage. (P)

Identity should be a culture of socially responsible and community oriented business leadership. Sense of place is formed by making investments in community development and infrastructure priorities that are supported by business, philanthropy, and government entities. (PS&F)

Reword “singular identity” to something more inclusive, such as “shared” or “common.” Singular emphasis is simplistic, connoting an exclusionary mindset to anyone or anything that doesn’t mold into the singular identity. The word “citizen” in the descriptor leaves out non-citizens, such as refugees. (P&TU)

A sense of place is important. A well-designed city produces pride, memorability, and shared identity through the use of public spaces and landmarks.

In addition, the city infrastructure is to be planned to better connect diverse neighborhoods and parts of town together. (P&TU)

The City we need has a shared and dynamic identity that embraces a variety of perspectives and a sense of Inclusivity. (CS&GRO)

- Identity is not a thing but process. Identity is fluid, a living organism that evolves and is not static. Includes diverse voices so citizens can resonate with a vision or place. Not erratic change but moves and evolves together.
- It is comfortable with conflict and uses it as a source of learning and changing as part of its identity.
- It is open to an evolving shared identity as a fluid and changing thing that must be co-created and re-created at all levels.

**Original Principle 2:** The city we need is managed at the metropolitan level ([formerly] is well planned, financed and governed at all levels).

**Revised Principle 2:** The city we need is well planned, managed, financed and governed at all levels.

It serves as an active collaboration forum for sustainability planning across the governing jurisdictions within the region it occupies. It actively seeks to coordinate and implement policies and actions that retain local autonomy while building and enhancing regional cooperation.

The general consensus among Flatwater UTC participants seemed to be one of suspicion the apparent contradiction between “managed at the metropolitan level” and the previous language that referred to “planned, financed and governed at all levels.” People strongly favor the use of inclusive, democratic processes for managing, decision-making and governing small and mid-sized cities toward a new urban paradigm.

Considerations for revised language and sentiment in statement and descriptor are as follows:

Strategic governance must coordinate diverse agenda to advance the education and social inclusion that encourages the participation in
managing and governing. Key is to get “ground-up” and “cross-the-board” input from sectoral agenda-setters (R&A).

Particular concern regarding the marginalization of small communities within the metropolitan context and a limitation placed on the value of local autonomy. While a degree of autonomy must be released based on the necessity of cooperation, a balance should be pursued that reduces competition among metropolitan jurisdictions, provides incentives for collaboration, and promotes regional governance and collective action. Management in the city we need should likewise encompass a preservation of autonomy while encouraging active engagement. This approach should comprise entrepreneurship, e-government strategies, knowledge networks, and recognize the agility of government. Primarily, professional management suggests a need for ‘well’ managed cities. In this way, the recommendation of this constituent group is to modify this principle to the city we need is well managed. (P)

The city we need is well planned, financed, and governed at all levels.
The private sector, foundations, and government should work collaboratively to implement sustainable community development and improve quality of life. (PS&F)

What DOES this statement mean exactly? Debate revolved around whether a city should be managed at metropolitan level or at all levels. Some noted the need for gaining input from residents at the grassroots level; yet others saw value in more regionally managed areas for meeting sustainability goals. Does “metropolitan level” include grassroots levels, as well as other levels—presuming states, regional, and/or national levels? (P&TU)

The City We Need uses managing/decision-making processes that are accessible and educates, engages and empowers all citizens (e.g. a percentage of the budget be assigned to engagement efforts). (CS&GRO)

- People need to be involved in decision-making process. Use technology to engage people. Need infrastructure to support this.

- It is the municipal responsibility to engage citizens: need policies and practices to facilitate engagement; to engage people in constructive conflict by making meetings accessible (time and place).

- Government must to do more outreach, make the effort to make the contact and take the initiative.

**NEW PRINCIPLES TO CONSIDER**
The following new principles were suggested for small and mid-sized cities.

**The City We Need is a learning city.** Community is absorbing and learning in today’s world. Roles of people in the research and academia are to support local community to find desired knowledge based on their experiences and to reinforce the understanding about the city we need and sharing it through multiple formats for more effective and efficient barrier-free learning. Lead interdisciplinary cooperation in terms of knowledge development and learning. (R&A)

**The City We Need uses bold and innovative strategies to achieve meaningful outcomes.** (CS&GRO)

**The City We Need chooses public and governmental officials who hold themselves accountable to the citizenry for their decisions and promises.** (WIP&Y)

**The City We Need preserves, honors and respects the history, culture and needs of women, indigenous people, youth and new immigrants by including them in planning and implementation activities.** (WIP&Y)

**The City We Need ensures equitable, effective and affordable access to infrastructure including transportation, education, healthcare and human services for women, indigenous people, youth and new immigrants.** (WIP&Y)
The City We Need is open to proactive professional groups (such as planners) to participate in “bottom-up” democratic processes that focus on the concept of social equity. (P&TU)

The City We Need utilizes technologies in innovative ways, specifically telecommunication technologies, for gaining input from residents into generating and implementing urban policy. (P&TU)

**SUGGESTIONS FOR REVISED PRINCIPLES**

(among original group of nine)

“The City We Need is well planned, walkable and transit-friendly” presumes extensive transit availability. This may not be true of all cities, particularly small and mid-sized communities, and may not be practical and/or feasible within these jurisdictions. It was recommended the principle be modified to “The City We Need is well planned, walkable and with transportation options.”

“The City We Need is socially inclusive.” Expand the description of this principle to include far more than “providing spaces for all segments and age groups of the population to partake in social and cultural expressions and eliminating all physical and spatial forms of segregation and exclusion.” Tie it with the dynamic, shared unifying sense of identity and shared sense of place. Where and how do grassroots organizations engage? Create collaborative spaces that are socially inclusive and use them for collaborative learning and discovery as well as democratic decision-making. Make space for determining shared values and shared vision of who are and where we’re going—open to changes but ongoing. Include refugee populations along with women, indigenous people, children and youth constituent partners.

**GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRINCIPLES OF NEW URBAN AGENDA**

Regarding the principles for a New Urban Agenda, the Parliamentarians constituent group suggests an emphasis on the representation of sustainability within each principle.

Provide needed clarification of meaning for specific terms and phrases, such as “well planned” (the meaning within this context), “development” (how far and how much), and “inclusive” (including engagement, education, and awareness).

Principles should involve a collaborative component, identifying the coordination of local actors and the sharing of resources and information. As sustainability requires an adaptive and agile approach noting that prescriptions may differ for small and mid-sized communities. Overall, it is recommended that these principles demonstrate a more active and less passive stance.

The City We Need must address the need for education and process engagement. Recommended that the concepts of education and engagement be acknowledged within and throughout the New Urban Agenda principles.

**SESSION REPORTS**

**OPENING REMARKS**

W. Cecil Steward, President and CEO of the Joslyn Institute for Sustainable Communities, welcomed all of the attendees to the Urban Thinkers Campus. His opening remarks emphasized the need for a ‘spirit of engagement’ to take hold of for the next two days. Cecil stressed that issues facing small and mid-sized cities would require more than economic solutions alone and that the visions for our communities must recognize our greatest resource—the Earth—is the only planet we have. Two short video clips were shown; one from a popular TV show and the other from a documentary. The two video clips, along with Cecil’s own remarks, stressed the themes of being informed on issues, thinking critically about those issues, and engaging to make a better, more sustainable future.
Nicholas You, a representative from UN-Habitat, provided a historical backdrop of the Habitat III project. Taking place in 1976, the first Habitat conference saw the emergence of urbanization as a prominent theme. The initial policy reaction was an attempt to hold back, and even reverse, the urbanization process. However, the consensus today is that cities, as centers of creativity, potential, and freedom, attract people seeking opportunities; hence, urbanization is an inevitable process that must be managed for a more sustainable future. Nicholas highlighted the importance of sustainable management by noting that more money will be invested in cities in the next 35 years than in all of human history. How these investments are made will have profound effect on the livelihood of billions of people, as well as our planet.

The Habitat II conference in 1996 highlighted problems with extreme poverty in cities. Nicholas shared a couple of lessons learned from some false assumptions made at the conference.

First, while having indicators is of utmost importance, it is more important to be measuring the right thing. An example was given of an African city where 72 percent of residents had access to water. However, after a nearby dam broke, the realization was made that the quality of the water and the quality of the infrastructure delivering the water needed to be measured.

Second, it was believed that individuals living within a certain radius of schools, hospitals, and other shared institutions, would have access to those services. Yet barriers still remain for many people (citizenship status, homelessness, lack of income, etc.); and policy makers and implementers need to acknowledge these factors.

Moving forward, the two mega-trends that have emerged since the last Habitat conference are globalization and climate change. On a positive note, Nicholas pointed out that “sustainability” has become a mainstream concept since 1996, thus offering a way for diverse stakeholders to talk about the challenges facing cities today. Small and mid-sized cities, in particular, have the potential to provide a more sustainable rural-urban link. Nicholas recommended undertaking forms of experimentation that would allow local urban economies to be linked more closely to the resources in their own immediate region.

Nicholas concluded by explaining how the output of the Omaha campus would become part of the Habitat III’s crafting of a New Urban Agenda.

THE CITY WE NEED DEBATE

Day One of The City We Need Debate
The Concept of City: Non-rural to Megacity

Panelists:
Jeffrey Soule, FAICP, Policy Director, American Planning Association
Charles Schroeder, Executive Director, Rural Futures Institute
Andrew Rudd, Urban Environment Officer, UN-Habitat

Moderator:
W. Cecil Steward, FAIA, President, Joslyn Institute for Sustainable Communities

Facilitator:
Stuart Chittenden, David Day Associates

Background: This debate featured a lively exchange among the three panelists and the moderator and concluded with a question and answer session with the audience.

Emerging issues: The prominent issue discussed centered on the ways of ensuring sustainable growth for small to mid-sized cities. Andrew Rudd described historical choices made regarding infrastructure planning that have locked people into certain choices. For instance, the post-World War II infrastructure planning of interstates, highways, and road systems constricted the types of choices city residents made on where to live. Such infrastructure encouraged suburban growth, leading to the core city facing tax constraints, thereby encouraging even more suburban growth.
The proper role of planners and other professionals was another issue. Chuck Schroeder stressed the importance of listening to communities who say, “We don’t like where we are right now” and then collectively identifying goals and strategies that the community, not the outside experts, wants to pursue. The experts’ (planners and professionals) role is more of a listener and facilitator. In a similar fashion, Jeff Soule highlighted the need for planners to promote cultural heritage by understanding the unique culture of a each place they work in. Jeff argued that the goals of economic redevelopment need to be balanced with preserving each city’s own culture heritage.

Finally, affordable housing emerged as a critical issue based on the audience participation portion of the debate.

**Recommendations:** In the broadest sense, all three panelist recommended small and mid-sized cities to build on the unique set of assets already within their grasp. Andrew gave an example of four cities in the Netherlands coming together, identifying what each was best at, and pursuing it in a cooperative nature rather than competing against each other. Likewise, Chuck’s work at RFI focuses on identifying the assets a community already has, as opposed to an emphasis on attracting assets from the outside. For Jeff, the unique set of assets revolved around the cultural heritage and values worth preserving.

The strength of Jeff’s point emerges when thought in terms of another recommendation: to pass on knowledge we have gained for sustainable ways of living. In this sense, to conserve the cultural heritage and values of a place is to pass on to the following generations what has worked and what has not worked. Andrew’s discussion connected here by showing how we are recognizing the mistakes made in post-WWII infrastructure planning. The attempt now is to learn from the more compact, sustainable designs in the pre-WWII era.

Also recommended was the need for collaboration. A regional-type of collaboration appeared as the consensus. Andrew’s previous example of the Netherlands speaks to a more regional collaboration, while Chuck also affirmed regional planning. Small and mid-sized cities offer sustainable collaboration advantages in the sense that the surrounding rural areas may be able to provide significant food security and other resources to the immediate urban area if managed properly.

The issue of affordable housing was addressed by Jeff Soule, who drew attention to the need for cities to have an affordable housing strategy. Without a strategy, market forces have shown that affordable housing is elusive for many residents.

Finally, the collaborative efforts need to be accountable and transparent to the public. The importance of not only the collaborative process, but of measuring the outcomes, and sharing those outcomes with the public was cited as an important aspect of collaborative planning and management strategy.
Emerging Issues: Most of the constituent groups focused on the theme of inclusion/exclusion. The principle stating that a city should have a singular identity was consistently questioned because many felt it would result in negative stereotypes, excluding individuals and groups that don’t fit within a homogeneous identity. The Research & Academia group contemplated how expert knowledge could be utilized by communities without enforcing external values, which can drive out, or exclude, local values and knowledge. The Parliamentarians & Local Government group, as well as the Private Sector & Foundations group, wrestled with ways to provide more opportunities for bottom-up governance, and for gaining input from the public on policy-making.

The need for public investment in the future was discussed. Infrastructure investment in transportation, communication networks, and schools were thought to be lacking. Multiple groups mentioned the need for long-term thinking and considering benefits to the entire community, as opposed to meeting the short-term, self-interest of certain individuals and groups. Overall, the audience portion of discussion questioned market-dominated values involved in land development and overcoming special interests that work against long-term, sustainable development. Finally, most of the constituent groups stressed the importance of helping those most in need—especially children, minorities, and the elderly.

Recommendations: In addressing the theme of inclusion, Research & Academia recommended cities have a “knowledge platform”, that is, a process or institution that identifies an ambassador in charge of helping disperse knowledge to city governments, community groups, individuals, and others. Nicholas You mentioned participatory budgeting, which originated in Brazil, as a way of including more people in policy making. Another strategy is to offer money for members of the public to participate in community meetings. Information sessions, a type of public meeting, were criticized for only informing and not offering an avenue for engagement in decision-making.

Greater access to quality education for all people was a recommendation that cut across attempts for greater inclusion, greater investment in future, and attempts to empower children. It was recommended that motherhood be recognized as a job, as worthy of dignity in itself, and as producing great value to society.

URBAN THINKER SESSIONS

Day One of Urban Thinker Sessions: Urban–Rural Interdependencies

Natalie Umphlett, High Plains Regional Conference Center
Facilitator: Stuart Chittenden, David Day Associates

Working for Urban-Rural Integration: Consideration on the Role of Labor in the Development of Small and Middle-sized Settlements

Edmundo Werna, United Nations International Labor Organization (ILO), Geneva, Switzerland

Background: Edmundo Werna’s presentation was streamed live from United Nations ILO headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. He specifically addressed the role of labor and food security.

Emerging Issues: According to Edmundo, issues concerning labor include occupational safety and health, skills training, labor rights, worker participation, and gender equality. Food supply chains are also changing with more agriculture in peri-urban (described as the landscape interface between town and country, or also as the rural–urban transition zone where urban and rural uses mix and often clash) and urban territories, and more food processing occurring in rural areas. These shifts in food production...
impact employment as well as the ability of poor people to afford food.

**Recommendations:** For labor issues, Edmundo stressed the importance of municipalities to localize a “decent work agenda” that includes employment creation, rights at work, social protection, and social dialogue. In addition, local authorities can help organize workers and enterprises at the grassroots level.

Finally, Edmundo highlighted the importance of local identity, particularly with food, and how people are more willing to work when they are culturally connected to something. Local identities are worth preserving and can add to economic growth in the cultural production sector.

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**Tackling Climate Change: Municipal Adaptation Planning**

Natalie Umphlett, High Plains Regional Climate Center

**Background:** Natalie Umphlett discussed ways climate data can inform municipal planning strategies.

**Emerging Issues:** Many people have challenges in accessing and understanding climate science. City officials can use climate data to be aware of changes occurring in their own region. Such information can prove valuable for strategic planning purposes. For instance, changing heat or precipitation patterns could affect water usage by residents in the city and surrounding hinterland.

The political discourse surrounding climate change was also cited as a troubling issue. Natalie noted that many in the High Plains region are immediately turned off by talk of climate change or sustainability.

**Recommendations:** Organizations such as HPRCC offer city officials and other stakeholders a team of climatologist that can provide climate data for more cost effective decisions. The HPRCC is one of six such regional climate centers in the U.S. and offers a possible model for other parts of the world. The HPRCC collaborates with local officials to help translate what can be complex data into a more understanding language.

Regarding the politically polarizing nature of climate change and sustainability discourse, talking about an individual’s own experience was recommended. An example was given of speaking with farmers about the changes they have had to make with growing crops and how that has changed compared to their parents’ generation.

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**Urban-Rural Connections: Energy and Food**

Chuck Hassebrook, Sandhills Wind Energy

**Emerging Issues:** Both Chuck and Andrew highlighted the ways in which a cities have been delinked from their own immediate rural areas, leading to less sustainable cities. Both panelists also noted the need to increase the bio-
diversity in and around cities. Chuck discussed how large-scale farming of livestock has limited the grass and forage around cities, which contributes to CO2 emissions.

**Recommendations:** Chuck believes Nebraska can make significant strides in renewable energy by incentivizing wind energy development and solar energy. Nebraska is the third best state for wind, but produces only a 1/7th of what Iowa does. Solar energy can also be improved, but technological developments need to be incentivized in order to get solar energy from places and times where it is supplied, such as western Nebraska during the day, to areas where it is demanded, such as Eastern Nebraska in the evening.

Chuck and Andrew both recommended a stronger urban-rural link with food production. Chuck also favored reinvigorating diverse family farming as a way to improve soil.

**Stuck in Place: The Role of Transportation Equity and Access to Opportunity**

**Emerging Issues:** David discussed the ways in which the spatial development of cities has led to inequalities for poor, disabled, and minority residents. A lack of public transportation, or other affordable transit options, has cut off residents in certain parts of cities from being able to access better employment, education, and other services.

**Recommendations:** David suggested the need for more robust investment in public transportation, as well as re-thinking the use of housing subsidies that currently favor unsustainable, sprawl development. Light-rail was cited as a positive step that some cities, such as Minneapolis and Denver, are taking in order to provide more residents with access to employment opportunities.

**Urban Compactness and Ecosystem Services**

**Emerging Issues:** Both Chuck and Andrew highlighted the ways in which a cities have been delinked from their own immediate rural areas, leading to less sustainable cities. Both panelists also noted the need to increase the biodiversity in and around cities. Andrew pointed out that world cities have expanded spatially two to three times faster than their populations, and are thus following the suburbanization patterns that the U.S. undertook after WWII.

Andrew noted the difficulty of delivering services to a widely dispersed city population.

**Recommendations:** Chuck and Andrew both recommended a stronger urban-rural link with food production. Andrew mentioned towns in Brazil that are using an urban growth boundary to encourage development within the already existing urban area, as well as linking rural farming to the immediate urban food market.

**MULTIMEDIA SESSIONS FROM COLOMBIA**

Live streaming video presentations by two urban design experts from Medellín, Colombia, followed by live discussion and question-and-answer sessions.

**Medellín: Porosity and Exchange**

**Presenter:** Camilo Restrepo Ochoa, Design Critic in Architecture at Harvard University School of Design; founder and principal of Agenda architecture studio; Coordinator of Strategies for Centre for Urban and Environmental Studies (URBAM) at Escuela de Administración, Finanzas y Tecnología (EAFIT)

**Facilitator:** Stuart Chittenden, David Day Associates

**Background:** Restrepo Ochoa described how Medellín has used new and diverse programs incorporating urban porosity, social infrastructure and innovative social urbanism to create enormous changes among disenfranchised and high-risk neighborhoods. His video describes a diverse and multi-scale urban architecture, a strategy combining high impact strategic works with local processes and small-scale interventions, facilitating the articulation of govern-
mental policies and programs (top-down) with local initiatives (bottom-up), and linking strategic processes to create a new urban fabric. This transparent and inclusive process creates mobility, connects people, creates social nodes through parks, schools, libraries, health care, creating connections where there were none and breaking down barriers. The people in these neighborhoods have a new-found sense of ownership, pride and increased social mobility.

URBAN LABS

Local Knowledge and Resiliency in Resource-Dependent Communities

Presenter: Jim Powell, University of Alaska Southeast

Facilitator: Marcus Chaffee, Co-Creative Labs

Objective: Discuss and determine grassroots approach to sustainably developing small to medium-sized towns with focus on 5 factors (economic, environmental, social/cultural, technology and public policy). (Note that sustainability is normative as communities have their own values.)

Background: Emerging and rapidly changing global systems threaten local knowledge systems. Employing a sustainability and resiliency lens and local adaptive capacity indices for resource-dependent communities will be suggested and discussed.

Types of capital: natural, built, human and social. Community sustainability adaptive learning framework – 5-step process: input → develop → select → integrate → apply to outputs (with feedback loop as 5th step). New institutionalism: all actors and stakeholders (sectors) involved in the process.

Small town characteristics:
• Opportunity to be socially connected, can meet your politician
• Quality of life – is social network greater
• Support infrastructure – resource depend towns where they are linked to the economics of the town

City capacity for transformations: measurement, knowledge, developing strategies.

Emerging Issues:
Social – lack of: culture/cultural identity, social capital, family structure and political representativeness. Sense of desperation, fear and hopelessness.

Economic issues – employment, fair wages, and economic disparity.

Transportation – social, economic and physical challenges to have accessibility to mobility. Safety and connectivity and reliability and perceived lack of resources. Lack of (perceived vs. real) community spaces and connection.

Day Two

The Case of the Urabá Región: Municipal Integral Plans (PMIs): A Strategic Urban Planning Approach to Foster Urban Consolidation in Small-Size Towns in Colombia

Presenter: Francesco Maria Orsini, Director of Consulting at Centre for Urban and Environmental Studies (URBAM) at Escuela de Administración, Finanzas y Tecnología (EAFIT)

Facilitator: Stuart Chittenden, David Day Associates

Background: Francesco Maria Orsini’s group at URBAM was asked by the Colombian government to come up with a program to address serious challenges facing four communities in the Urabá Region. These small cities are growing rapidly, but have very low-capacity: low levels of quality of life, bad or nonexistent infrastructure, low institutional capacity, serious environmental degradation, and economic growth. He described the innovative process he and his colleagues have adopted, using green infrastructure and environmental protection, biodiversity, public spaces, inter-institutional coordination and sustainable practices to create “a meaningful narrative to foster the project’s identity and appropriation, so that we are building not just streets and sewers, but dreams of visions, dreams of what can be, dreams of identity for the towns and people of Urabá Región.”
The page contains a discussion on recommendations for building community identity and communication, along with a mention of emerging issues and challenges in sustainable design. Here is a breakdown of the content:

**Recommendations:**
Forward thinking leadership.
Accountability, transparency, future planning, problem solving.
Build systems (issue specific), and navigate the system.
Holistic approaches.
Identify externalities, interdependencies and system thinking that accounts for interdependencies in sectors.
Building a sense of community, honoring language and culture, bringing information to communities: true public feedback and engagement.
Early education. Dual career path opportunities to learn/work at same time.
Sustainability and teaching the future generations on what they can do on that at that level.
Public policy.
Entrepreneurial initiatives e.g. crowdfunding.
Transportation – educate government and citizens on transportation and its effect, incentivizing alternative transportation options.

**Other concerns:**
How do we build for increasing populations because of climate change (sustainable food and energy production)?
Create a vision of creativity, hope and inspiration leadership.
Increase informed voter turnout and citizen engagement.
How to do bottom-up approaches? How to get public input that is effective and meaningful?

**Community Identity and Communication**

**Presenter:**
Jay Leighter, Creighton University

**Facilitator:**
Dan Gilbert, Omaha Healthy Kids Alliance

**Background:** This session explored the concept of identity, particularly the inescapable fact that individual and community identities are inextricably linked. Participants reflected on their own sense of identity and how these relate to their daily communal living.

Leighter provided some definitional background about the characteristics of city identity. City identities are dynamic and are achieved through the communication between citizens. Identities are multi-dimensional and have features that vary in terms of how difficult they are to change through communication. These dimensions include master (fixed, like gender and race), interactional (role), relational (inter personal), and personal (individual) aspects. Identities and their components could be more or less salient from time to time for different reasons.

**Emerging Issues:** A singular, shared city identity presents particular challenges because of the variety and diversity of communities living in cities. Participants discussed why small and mid-sized cities need to have shared identity or what that might mean. Participants were divided into 6 groups, each discussing what a city can and cannot do by having a shared sense of identity. Through the communication, participants drew conclusions that a city can “meaningfully engage by generating commonly held results,” “promoting its competitive advantages by defining its marketable brand” and “focusing on areas of agreed strengths and benefits.” In addition, they also listed disadvantages of the lack of city identity such as “unplanned and unorganized growth,” “confusions in planning caused by missing common values,” and “unbridgeable differences and internal conflicts within the community.” In the name of identity, participants talked about future, shared experiences, history, and the importance of shared identity for reaching agreement and consensus.

**Recommendations:** This session emphasized the importance of intra-community communication to establish a city identity, and having one would bring about various advantages.

**Challenges and Techniques of Building Support and Consensus Among Disparate Community Factions for Sustainable Design**

**Presenters:**
Tim Kenny, Nebraska Investment Finance Authority (NIFA)
Royce Sheibal, NIFA Assistant

**Facilitator:**
Kim Roth Howe, Co-Creative Labs

**Background:** This session explored the use of customized information databases enabling consensus-seeking authorities to propose, analyze and deploy multi-domain sustainability initiatives. The presentation explored reshaping community-level data as evidence of “authority” and use for planning and policy tracking. Actual experiences in cities
were highlighted to illustrate “unique identity” concepts. Additional proposals of policy and practice were shared for consideration.

From the onset of the session, Tim explained that a simpler title for the presentation could be “How to Get Things Done”. His role with the NIFA primarily deals with helping communities in the state address issues such as affordable housing, which often requires building broad community support and consensus around a prioritized development or infrastructure project. In their experience, success has been found when a community can find the “sweet spot” between authority (those with the financial or political power to take action), capacity (those with the time and energy to devote to the effort), and support (those who stand behind the project in various capacities). When all three elements are present, the project moves ahead more comfortably because there is an agreed-upon process and consensus about the direction moving forward.

Emerging Issues: Projects can sometimes be held back or even misdirected from early planning stages because stakeholder/public perceptions can be based on opinions rather than facts. In such cases, it becomes difficult for those in charge of a project to garner valuable, well-informed public feedback, and members of the community who want to be involved are not aware of how to take effective action amidst a sometimes over-complicated structural hierarchy. This separation can make the public input process unproductive – and even unpleasant – for all parties involved. Such a process not only deflates a development project, but can weaken the community’s sense of urgency and scare off the leadership support for the issue.

Recommendations: NIFA has addressed this issue of public misperceptions by creating a public information dashboard, which provides useful charts, statistics, and reports for counties across the state. By ensuring that decisions are guided by facts, the process of reaching consensus becomes much more manageable. The group also emphasized the importance of education, both to increase awareness of the importance of a project, and to educate more citizens on how to effectively take action in the process.

Local Governments Working Together to Regionalize Climate Action

Presenter:
Jessica Johnston, International City/County Management Association

Facilitator:
Todd Swirczek, Adjunct Faculty, University of Nebraska
Omaha, City of Omaha Planning

Background: Local governments are on the forefront of climate action around the world. Often unable to wait for federal level action, communities are taking on adaptation and mitigation activities at the local level. In an effort to leverage resources and protect shared natural resources, communities are coming together and forming regional compacts to address shared climate challenges. This session looked at how regionalizing for climate action is taking shape in different communities. Participants were challenged to begin thinking about points of entry and the feasibility of implementing a similar regional mechanism in Nebraska and/or the greater Great Plains/Midwest region.

Jessica presented various regional efforts to address climate change. Data was presented on how cities contribute to climate change, survey results concerning local government’s sustainability efforts, as well as case studies on how local governmental collaboration can combat climate change.

Emerging Issues: Climate change is obviously an issue for the entire globe, but has different effects in different localities. Jessica presented data showing that climate change is expected to lead to an 11 percent decline in crop production, while global demand for those crops will rise 1.2 percent.

Much of the CO2 emissions contributing to climate change take place in urban areas. However, Jessica cited ICMA survey data showing that 72 percent of cities do not have a sustainability plan. In addition, cities that have tried to address sustainability have often done so through task forces that don’t have formal power.

Another issue is a lack of funding for sustainability
plans. Surveys of cities showed that there was often only one person on staff to address sustainability issues. Overall, 62 percent of cities said lack of funding was a barrier to adopting sustainability plans. The political will to address climate change also came up as an issue related to lack of funding.

**Recommendations:** The number one recommendation was to regionalize, which gives local governments the ability to leverage small amounts of fiscal resources for staff investment, allows for knowledge-sharing across jurisdictions, and garners attention of state and federal agencies in regards with funding for adaptive infrastructure. Jessica gave an example of a four-county collaboration in South Florida that has sustainability action plans in the region, while also sharing resource staff and knowledge with one another. Based on group discussion, a regional approach was also thought to be best for states with dispersed population such as Nebraska.

Jessica provided useful “points of entry” for talking about climate change in Nebraska. These might include agriculture, fresh water basins, water conservation, energy usage, and flood protection. It is important to find elected officials, public administrators, and other stakeholders interested in these issues, and then show how sustainability plans can be integrated to address the issue.

**Water, Food & Shelter: An Alaskan Perspective on Sustainable Communities**

Presenter:  
*Jack Hébert, Cold Climate Housing Research, University of Alaska*

Facilitator:  
*Marcus Chaffee, Co-Creative Labs*

**Background:** The Cold Climate Housing Research Center, headquartered in Fairbanks, Alaska, was founded with the mission of “Promoting and advancing the development of healthy, durable and sustainable shelter for Alaskans and other circumpolar people”. The organization’s founder talked about the Sustainable Northern Communities program that addresses critical housing and infrastructure needs. CCHRC has partnered with more than twenty villages across Alaska to design and build buildings that combine traditional knowledge with 21st century technology. The program is based on a holistic approach, incorporating building science research, economics, energy, health, and culture to produce high-performance, affordable housing for the world’s cold regions.

The history of Alaska is a history of immigrant Europeans bringing and enforcing ways of living, housing, and other factors on indigenous people who had accumulated their own values and knowledge of how to survive in a rigid climate. The Europeans’ buildings were difficult to keep warm, and the inside air could not stay clean.

Jack showed how the effects of climate change can be seen and felt in Alaska. Rising water levels and melting ice are displacing communities from land that they have lived on for hundreds, if not thousands of years. Many communities’ housing stock has been destroyed by flooding caused by climate change.

To help these communities rebuild, Jack and CCHRC take a holistic approach. They start by engaging the community and getting their input into every aspect of the home design. After the design phase, the building phase utilizes materials from the immediate area. The expertise of CCRI is utilized to make the homes more sustainable, that is, more energy and cost efficient. For example, CCRI has the knowledge and technology to store solar energy from the summer and put it to use in the winter.

**Emerging Issues:** The affordability of housing for all residents was a prominent issue. Related to the discussion were the many economic and political barriers working against affordable housing. Examples mentioned are housing subsidies that favor suburban housing, a market-driven
culture of flipping houses, and market forces favoring short-term thinking that produces low-quality buildings that don’t last.

Another major issue discussed was food security, specifically the presence of food deserts in many U.S. cities.

Finally, the issues of safety and exclusion in cities were discussed. Discussion focused on the safety one feels from being a part of a community.

**Recommendations:** A holistic approach to development was favored by the group. They suggested that development should occur with respect to local values, having a sustainable connection with the immediate rural area, and provide for adequate food and shelter for all residents. It was suggested that communities should have “tenurial rights” that override individual property rights when it comes to providing food and shelter. Tenurial rights were specifically recommended for addressing food deserts.

Promoting community gardens was recommended as a way to increase food security, as well as provide a meeting ground for an inclusive, safe community.

Finally, educating different people—especially business and real estate developers—on the impacts of climate change and sustainable living was recommended.

**Innovations in Municipal Finance for Sustainable Development**

Presenter: *John Bartle*, Dean of College of Public Affairs and Community Service, University of Nebraska–Omaha

Facilitator: *Kim Roth Howe*, Co-Creative Labs

**Background:** This session provided ideas for Habitat III consistent with the UN principles of sustainability by highlighting best practices, inspiring innovative thinking on sustainable development for small and medium-sized cities, and suggesting practical policies that can be implemented internationally. It became clear how financial policies can stimulate sustainable development, particularly if they are holistic and recognize inter-relationships in urban areas. Financial incentives can serve to reinforce sustainable practices. Financial practices should have consistent revenue and expenditure plans.

**Emerging Issues:** Municipal finance should stimulate sustainable development holistically; recognize interrelationships among the different aspects of urban life (transport, citizen empowerment, growth, environment, health and safety); reinforce sustainable practices; and have consistent spending and revenue plans.

Participatory budgeting is becoming more popular and seeks greater transparency and accountability. Some cities are experimenting with crowdfunding for designated projects.

Informal municipal collaboratives where cities work together is an attractive approach.

It is a challenge to foster sustainable development practices in a heterogeneous value system. Participatory budgeting is a model to which municipalities are turning as a means weigh different values and endeavor to reach consensus, however, engagement remains a challenge as well as literacy in the budget process.

The question persists whether government should continue to provide services that the for-profit sector can provide. Local governments need to decide what services people want, what are they willing to pay for, and how are those revenues spent? Similarly, communities need to be responsible for their own growth.

**Recommendations:**

- Develop and support existing platforms to optimize participation in the budget process, ranging from a private sector strategy of crowd-sourcing to a move to participatory budget processes.
- Encourage the use of inter-local agreements among and
between neighboring jurisdictions, consolidating services and cost-sharing where appropriate.

- Support research to inform understanding of optimal population size for self-regulation and natural resource management.
- Make budgets understandable and accessible to the inhabitants of the community.
- Empower cities to consider the long-term future. Identify indicators for measurement and ways to transition between sources of funding.
- Make sustainable development more competitive, e.g. writing RFP to capture costs.
- Professionalization of management.
- Show social costs that are not traditionally captured.
- Public education is a necessary tool.
- Define practical policies that can be implemented internationally (broad perspective).

**Updating Your City Plan: Review of APA’s Sustainability Places Guidebook and SDG Indicators**

**Presenter:**
Jeff Soule, FAICP, America Planning Association

**Facilitator:**
Todd Swirczek, Adjunct Faculty, University of Nebraska Omaha, City of Omaha Planning

**Background:** Settlement patterns matter in dealing with energy and climate change. Historic cities have many sustainable characteristics: walkability, compactness, mixed use and a diverse population living together. Resilience and energy are new elements to include in comprehensive plans, along with the underlying principle of cultural conservation.

Climate action plans can be a component as well because the same characteristics of historic settlements are also examples of local material use, expertise and adaptive design to elements of climate and geomorphology. This session explored APA’s Sustaining Places guidelines, UNESCO’s Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations. Participants used the Omaha Blackstone neighborhood as an example of cultural mapping as a tool for local plan engagement.

Urban populations are growing rapidly in developing countries. Global forces demand comprehensive planning in these areas to solve problems of rapid urbanization, such as the gap between rich and poor, and environmental degradation. Sustainable urban growth needs strategic development planning and implementation. In doing so, public education and engagement on cultural and natural conservation are critical. Soule explained the importance of cultural identity in promoting sustainability.

**Emerging Issues:** Attendees tried to apply the content of presentation to the context of the Omaha area, and that led to a short discussion about the midtown Omaha redevelopment. However, they had difficulties connecting the presentation to their planning experiences in the Omaha area. There were no substantive outcomes. Many challenges, such as ever-changing plans that waste resources, decision-making that reverses current investment, achieving public input without barriers, and conflicting and changing values, were discussed during the Q&A session. At the same time, the possibility of new planning approaches such as cultural mapping, the historic urban landscape (HUL) approach, and the mixed use of regulation and incentive to achieve comprehensive planning goals were highlighted, too.
Recommendations: Soule provided a list of recommendations for updating city plans. His recommendations include use of the HUL approach in planning and strategy; development of a collaborative framework for implementation; linking heritage and urban form to development objectives and capital budget; benchmark goals and objectives, measuring and reporting results; emphasizing economic and job benefits of sustainability measures; emphasizing the importance of settlement patterns in energy saving; reusing buildings and infill vacant land; provide incentives for residents and businesses; examining the lessons from historic cities; and elevating the global dialogue on culture, planning, and design.

Quality of Life and Sustainability Metrics

Presenters:
W. Cecil Steward, FAIA, Joslyn Institute for Sustainable Communities
Sharon Kuska, University of Nebraska–Lincoln, College of Architecture

Facilitator:
Milo Mumgaard, Legal Aid Nebraska

Background: W. Cecil Steward summarized his service to the University of Nebraska–Lincoln and his current role at the Joslyn Institute, a non-profit organization that he created in 1996. After showing data related to climate change, he offered an overview of the history of 20th century technological developments in the United States including the development of automobiles, skyscrapers, telecommunications, and the interstate highway system. Steward's visualizations of the "merger between architecture and the visual world" were used to support an overall claim that "decisions and patterns of land use efficiency have unintended consequences which we are finding it difficult to overcome."

Emerging Issues: Some of the emerging issues identified included carbon emissions, affordable housing, access to health care services, overreliance on fossil fuels, and preservation of natural resources (such as Nebraska’s aquifers). One of Steward’s primary suggestions was that language related to “quality of life” could be synonymous with discussion of “sustainability.”

Dr. Sharon Kuska discussed Sustainometrics, a tool for measuring and outlining sustainability goals. Sustainometrics argues that sustainability should account for five domains: the traditional “economic,” “socio-cultural” and “environmental” domains as well as two supplemental domains—“public policy” and “technological.” Stakeholders who want to build sustainable communities should consider using the EcoStep™ tool to help generate indicators that fall under the five interdependent domains. After participants develop indicators and decide how they are to be measured, they place circles in three time ranges—short
term, medium-term, and long term on the model that can be color-coded and sized according to urgency and scale. Together, this dynamic tool allows users to “see at glance where we need to put our attention.” One of the specific applications Kuska discussed occurred in the spring of 2001 as various stakeholders in the Omaha region were asked to think about how the growth of the metropolitan area will affect the 157 communities within its 60-mile radius.

**Recommendations:** While subjective qualities might be included in a planning process, Eco-Step indicators must be measurable and replicable.

The tool can be used as a device for prompting communication to resolve conflicts that may arise, e.g. competing interests. Using the tool enables parties to see an enlarged perspective into which competing interests can often be explored and better understood.

It’s useful for various parties in a particular situation, i.e. residents, government and non-profit representatives, to come together to go through a process of agreeing on indicators that work for them.
CONSTITUENT GROUP EXPLORATION AND DRAFTING SESSIONS

Research & Academia

Convener:
Jay Leighter, Creighton University

Chair:
Susanne Trimbath, STP Advisory Services

Working Position Statement:
On the first day, the working position of this group was defined by focusing on the characteristics of research and the role research plays in the sustainability, ethics, power, and their connection to The City We Need. Attention was given to the relationship between the public and academic researchers. The constituent group agreed the public should play a central role in driving research questions and benefiting from research results.

In developing The City We Need, research results should provide information and data for policy decision-making and should enhance citizen understanding. Technology should support the sharing of results across institutions and with the public. Teachers and researchers should contribute to the education and training of environmentally-aware citizens and set a research agenda that is interdisciplinary and problem-based to address the needs of more sustainable city. This constituent group was adamant that “research and academia” should be inclusive of research and education beginning in k-12, extending through university and into an approach to life-long learning.

Final Position Statement:
On Day Two, the final position statement was reviewed and reaffirmed. The key points of the Research & Academia Constituent Group’s statement center on continuous learning processes, ranging from k-12 to life-long learning, and cross-sectoral collaboration to promote sustainability through research and learning.

A sustainable city is a learning city. The roles of researchers and academics should be to support local community to develop knowledge. Understanding about the city we need should be shared through multiple formats for more effective and efficient barrier-free learning. Good research seeks problems and questions derived from experiences from the local community, and to lead interdisciplinary cooperation in terms of knowledge development and learning.

Sustainable small and medium-sized cities are important for surrounding communities (many of which are more rural) to create new knowledge and share it with citizens from nearby places. Regarding strategic governance, sustainable small and medium-sized cities can coordinate diverse agenda to advance the education and social inclusion that encourages the participation.

Overall, the discussion was a good chance to reassure the roles of researcher and academia for developing The City We Need.

Parliamentarians (National, State & Local Elected Officials)

Convener:
Bob Blair, University of Nebraska–Omaha

Chair:
Chris Anderson, City Administrator, Central City, Nebraska

Background:
This constituent group recognizes the need to adjust the goals of cities toward broader themes of urban thinking and sustainability. Within these constructs, the issue of energy remains an exigent concern. Designing plans with goals toward energy should reflect a transition from a linear to a circular economy, utilizing the local markets and finding solutions that likewise shift from disposal to integration. This will necessitate a framework of best practices, involving the sharing and dissemination of city solutions and innovations that are transferable on an international scale. This should acknowledge limitations, particularly in the finiteness of resource usage and the associated connotations of growth. This requires a change in the paradigm of growth, as not all growth may be good, and providing a new definition of city success that signifies the differences of growth and sustainable development.

Emerging Issues:
This constituent group recognizes the need for education improvements and accelerated innovation in a dynamic urban environment. Education must be across all sectors, cognizant of the urban-rural impact, with further emphasis on emerging topics in conservation, biomimicry, and integrated economics. In particular, this should be part of a more evolving role of government, pursuing ways to...
promote bottom-up governance. This must address the paradox of sustainability, referring to the need for long-term solutions versus the short-term perspectives of political cycles. This must also assist in finding a balance in how to change behaviors effectively and reflect individual community needs. This involves engaging elected officials, addressing entrenched political stigmas, improving city design, and reducing competition among metropolitan jurisdictions. In all, local governments must assume responsibility for sustainability and support an atmosphere of feasibility and creativity.

Recommendations:
Regarding the principles for a New Urban Agenda, this constituent group suggests an emphasis on the representation of sustainability within each principle. Clarification is needed in the extent of objectives toward specific terms, such as well planned (the meaning within this context), development (how far and how much), and inclusive (including engagement, education, and awareness). It is recommended that these principles involve a collaborative component, identifying the coordination of local actors and the sharing of resources and information. As sustainability requires an adaptive and agile approach, prescriptions may differ for small and mid-sized communities. Overall, it is recommended that these principles demonstrate a more active and less passive stance.

Final Position Statement:
The Parliamentarians and Local Government Constituent Group has specific recommendations toward the stated principles of the New Urban Agenda.

The principle that The City We Need has a singular identity and sense of place should be reconsidered; the term singular should be rethought to avoid ambiguous meanings and to clarify the recognition of the individuality in urbanism among small and mid-sized communities. Potential replacements may include the terms unique or mosaic. Within this principle, the interpretation of culture may have various meanings and connotations as well. Expressly, the term identity may present difficulties in verifying the authenticity of community identity due to marketing and branding campaigns. As such, identity may need to include aspects of history, geography, and economics. This constituent group also recommends that this principle needs an incorporation of engagement, potentially replacing the term unlock with engage.

The principle that The City We Need is managed at the metropolitan level involves several considerations. In particular, there is a concern of the marginalization of small communities within the metropolitan context and a limitation placed on the value of local autonomy. While a degree of autonomy must be released based on the necessity of cooperation, a balance should be pursued that reduces competition among metropolitan jurisdictions, provides incentives for collaboration, and promotes regional governance and collective action. Management in the city we need should likewise encompass a preservation of autonomy while encouraging active engagement. This approach should comprise entrepreneurship, e-government strategies, knowledge networks, and recognize the agility of government. Primarily, professional management suggests a need for ‘well’ managed cities. In this way, the recommendation of this constituent group is to modify this principle to The City We Need is well managed.

The principle that The City We Need is well planned, walkable and transit-friendly suggests a presumption of extensive transit availability. This may not be true of all cities, particularly small and mid-sized communities, and may not be practical and/or feasible within these jurisdictions. It is recommended by this constituent group that the principle be modified to the city we need is well planned, walkable and with transportation options.

An overall observation of this constituent group is that The City We Need must address education and engagement. It is recommended that the concepts of education and engagement need to be acknowledged somewhere within the New Urban Agenda principles.

Women, Indigenous People, and Youth

Conveners:
Jim Powell, University of Alaska, Southeast
Mary Ferdig, Sustainability Leadership Institute

Chair:
Elizabeth Hunter, Leo A. Daly

Background: Three General Assembly of Partners constituent groups were combined into one constituent group for the Nebraska Flatwater UTC for the sake of conference manageability. While there was not enough time to delve into the unique concerns of each partner group, the combined group identified common concerns across all three groups. And, in fact, the drafting team offered a fourth constituent group; the contention is that this is a emerging
group that must be recognized: new immigrants, including refugees.

**Emerging Issues:** Women, regardless of economic wherewithal, remain an extraordinary and relatively undervalued asset in the processes of resolving challenges and participating in the creation of evolving urban environments. Significantly disproportionate pay, fewer positional leadership opportunities, lack of recognition where credit is due, and general respect and physical safety issues remain key indicators of women’s challenges. These factors exist despite the documented characteristics of women’s inherent patterns of thinking and behaving that reflect cooperative, integrated perspectives and solutions for persistent and “unresolvable” issues.

Children and youth need the attention of mothers and women as well as fathers—all of society. Children and youth face issues such as cyclical, generational poverty and minimum standards of childcare. Foster care must offer stability, mental stimulation and learning. Learning at home as well as in public educational systems is critical and must include emerging technologies, financial literacy, entrepreneurial training and other practical skills taught in the context of human practices of empathy, responsibility, perseverance, self-management, and awareness.

Indigenous people who have been disadvantaged by well-established immigrant cultures in their areas must be recognized and honored in the small and mid-sized cities we need. In addition, new immigrants, some of whom are refugees from violence or intolerant regimes, need to be acknowledged as well. Both indigenous and immigrant people need places to grow the foods specific to their cultures, to meet people with their own cultural heritage, as well as to integrate with others’ cultural heritage and practices as they choose. Affordable housing, nutritional locally-grown food, tailored adults classes to help decipher and navigate complex healthcare, educational and economic systems are examples of support critical in small and mid-sized cities we need.

Accountability and follow-through among city leaders, elected and otherwise, for committed actions are among the most important principles needed in small and mid-sized cities.

Each of these constituencies offer wisdom and perspectives that will enhance the planning and implementation for sustainable small and mid-sized cities we need.

**Final Position Statement:**
The City We Need ensures accountability and follow through for preserving, honoring and respecting history, culture and needs of women, indigenous people, youth and new immigrants by engaging them in planning and implementing actions on behalf of their own well-being.

The City We Need ensures accountability and follow through for valuing and planning for diverse livelihood strategies for women, indigenous people, youth and new immigrants with respect to basic human needs including employability, affordable housing, healthy local foods, clean water and safety.

The City We Need acknowledges the value of the wisdom and perspectives of women, indigenous people, youth and new immigrants in processes for co-creating sustainable urban habitats.

**Private Sector & Foundations**

Convener:
*W. Cecil Steward*, Joslyn Institute for Sustainable Communities

Chair:
*Mike McMeekin*, Lamp Rynearson & Associates

**Background:**
The group began the session by forming a better understanding of the two themes provided for the conference. There was concern that the term “singular identity” implied sameness or uniformity, while a truly vibrant city will celebrate diversity and may not be known for just one identity. The group instead preferred to describe a city’s identity as collaborative, distinct or unique.

**Emerging Issues:**
The private sector can play a critical role in the formation of The City We Need by investing resources back into the community, and can sometimes take a more active role...
than the government sector in promoting sustainability because of its degree of separation from local politics, bureaucracy, or limiting regulations. The group discussed that the private sector should be willing to invest in infrastructure projects or community development whether receiving direct benefits from the project or not. However, emerging trends show more private sector involvement in local plans and projects, which can sometimes redirect community priorities away from what is in the best interest of the community as a whole. Such processes should be conducted with an emphasis on transparency, and it is critical that community decisions are not made out of self-interest rather than the common good.

**Final Position Statement:**
*The City We Need has a singular identity and sense of place.*

The group formed two recommendations for this theme. The first was that part of this identity should be a culture of socially responsible and community-oriented business leadership. Second, that sense of place is formed by making investments in community development and infrastructure priorities that are supported by business, philanthropy, and government entities.

*The City We Need is well planned, financed, and governed at all levels.*

The group made one recommendation for this theme, which was that the private sector, foundations, and government should work collaboratively to implement sustainable community development and improve quality of life.

**Professionals & Trade Unions**

Convener:
Sharon Kuska, University of Nebraska–Lincoln, College of Architecture

Chair
John Kretschmar, William Brennan Institute for Labor Studies, University of Nebraska–Omaha

**Background:** A group of professionals and trade unionists met to debate and brainstorm regarding two proposed principles for a new urban paradigm. The two principles discussed were (1) *The City We Need has a singular identity and sense of place;* and (2) *The City We Need is managed at the metropolitan level.* Each principle had text providing further elaboration on the meaning of the principles. That meaning was subjected to debate over the course of Day One and parts of Day Two. Day Two’s session also focused on coming up with three recommendations.

**Emerging Issues:**
A city with a *singular* identity was contested. There was a general consensus that such an emphasis is simplistic, while connoting an exclusionary mindset to anyone or anything that doesn’t mold into the singular identity. On the first day, attempts were made to reword *singular identity* in order to better capture the essence of the principle when it states, “it involves cultural actors to unlock the creative potential of all citizens”. The terms *shared* or *common* were believed to be better ways of describing the identity of The City We Need. In addition, there was concern that the word *citizen* left out non-citizens, such as refugees.

Having a strong sense of place was affirmed. A well-designed city could produce pride, memorability, and shared identity through the use of public spaces and landmarks. In addition, the city infrastructure can be planned to better connect diverse neighborhoods, or parts of town together, rather than creating barriers within the city.

In regard to the second principle, debate revolved around whether a city should be managed at the metropolitan level or at all levels. Some noted the need for gaining input from residents at the grassroots level; yet more regionally managed areas have proven useful for meeting goals of sustainability. Confusion arose as to whether metropolitan level truly accounted for grassroots level, as well as what constituted all levels—does all include states, regional, and/or national levels?

The discussion on the second day focused more on how professions, as groups with expertise, have a certain amount of power. The consensus was that this expertise needed to be used in ways that promote democracy, including workplace democracy, as well as always advocating for the voiceless and the environment.

**Final Position Statement:**
On Day Two, the group came up with a number of recommendations and voted for their top three. The recommendations are as follows:

1. For the first principle, re-word *singular identity* to something more inclusive, such as *shared*.
2. Professional groups, such as planners, use their expertise to aid in “bottom-up” democratic processes that focus on the concept of social equity.
3. Utilize technologies, specifically telecommunication tech-
technologies, for gaining input from residents into generating and implementing urban policy.

Civil Society & Grass Roots Organizations

Conveners:
Kim Roth Howe, Co-Creative Labs
Marcus Chaffee, Co-Creative Labs

Chair:
David Corbin, Nebraska Sierra Club

Background: This session opened with a summary of the overall goal of the UTC and a recap of how the information will be used by UN–Habitat. Discussion revolved around coming to consensus on “unique identity” as cities are made up of different identities. (UN representative present clarified that the UN would decline to prescribe a definition of the term identity).

Those participating represented diverse groups (social, political, nonprofit, community building, international, neighborhood, environmental, academic, volunteer placing organizations, community activist).

Emerging Issues:
Participants considered the universality of the notion that the city we need has a unique identity.

This assertion is predicated on the need to have a safe space to have the tough discussions necessary for the diversity of different perspectives, customs, and beliefs to come together in a unifying vision that is socially inclusive. This process cannot happen without working through conflicting viewpoints within a community.

Bold Nebraska and its fight against the Keystone XL Pipeline was referenced as an example of a grassroots organization achieving a singular vision with a great diversity of participants.

Participants also grappled with how a city might achieve a “singular identity” and not be homogeneous. Identity should be focused around passion and vision. They again cited the example of the Keystone XL pipeline; the issue of water brought people together with sense of community. Similarly, the built environment has a unifying effect of place-making.

There was discussion on the November Paris bombings: How can we empathize with people we don’t know? How does this relate to Omaha? How do we achieve understanding of others in our community in order to build the knowledge that fosters empathy?

Change without representation stems from stereotyping and undervaluing a community. Don’t assume you know the constituents.

Natural and built environments do not need to be considered separately. Sense of place and identity are not merely commercial fabrications; they need to be decided upon by the people, based on customs and beliefs.

A city that has a singular identity of sense of place is one where diverse opinions are heard and assumptions are not made of what communities needs without the constituents’ input.

Recommendations
Relating to Identity: Move away from singular identity to shared/unifying sense of place, recognizing that identity is not a thing but process that should afford a level of decision-making and input contributed by civic groups. Identity may evolve, and in doing so, may allow for change. However, inhabitants and grassroots organizations are necessary facilitators of this process.

The City We Need also needs to acknowledge the need for collaborative space to craft shared values and a vision inclusive of diverse voices. Change ought not be erratic but moving and evolving together.

Relating to planning, governance and finance: People need to be involved in decision-making process, drawing on and/or developing the necessary infrastructure and technology to engage the public. It is the municipality’s responsibility to engage citizens, responding to the need for policies and practices to facilitate engagement, and to engage people in constructive conflict by making meetings accessible (time and place). Government needs to do more outreach, make the effort to make the contact and take the initiative.

Decision-making processes are accessible to all citizens and engage diverse citizens through education and empowerment (capacity expansion), removing barriers, creating commitment to investment in engagement, education, engagement, empowerment.

Final Position Statement:
The City We Need has a shared and dynamic identity that embraces a variety of perspectives in order to create a common vision.

The City We Need has a decision-making process that is accessible and educates, engages and empowers all
citizens (e.g., a percentage of the budget assigned to engagement efforts).

The City We Need uses bold and innovative strategies to achieve meaningful outcomes.

**CLOSING REMARKS**

Nicholas You, UN-Habitat World Urban Campaign Advisor and Chair of the General Assembly of Partners and Media and Communications Constituent Group, said he was most pleased with the Nebraska UTC. He thanked W. Cecil Steward and the Joslyn Institute of Sustainable Communities (JISC) for convening the UTC as well as the many diverse and committed participants. He promised that the Nebraska Flatwater UTC report will be a valued contribution to the combined thinking of other UTCs leading to the Habitat III’s New Urban Agenda.

W. Cecil Steward, President and CEO of JISC, thanked Mr. You and the roomful of exhausted but satisfied participants for their spirited and committed participation in two intense days of the Nebraska Flatwater Metroplex Urban Thinkers Campus.

Steward reinforced the fact that 70 percent of the world’s population lives outside urban areas of more than 500,000 residents. Our UTC debate and consensus about the sustainably challenges and prospective solutions for small and intermediary urban centers, established within rural regions across the globe, would surely add value to a New Urban Agenda for UN-Habitat III.

He reminded us that smaller urban centers, such as ours in the Flatwater Metroplex region, and surrounding rural areas are significant sources for this growth in the processes of transformative urbanization. Non-urban habitat areas, such as those in our farming region, provide a myriad of vulnerable resources upon which civilizations depend -- ranging from declining commercial and subsistence fishing habitats to loss and underutilization of farmland anywhere in the world.

Nicholas You and Cecil Steward close out the successful Urban Thinkers Campus

Steward also made the point that smaller cities we need are uniquely positioned to support sustainable urban-rural interconnections. They are de facto learning communities – not unlike the learning community we have formed here for these two days. The sustainability solutions for urban growth in small and medium-sized cities – as active learning communities – are designed to fit the particular conditions and needs of the regions in which they reside.

It’s up to us to continue the conversations we’ve started today about our region, just as it’s important for other “small and mid-sized cities we need” to function as learning communities in their regions.

W. Cecil Steward put forth two questions for participants to ponder as they departed the Nebraska Flatwater UTC: “What’s next? Where and how do we want to continue the Nebraska Flatwater Metroplex urban sustainability conversation?”
ANNEXES
NEBRASKA’S FLATWATER METROPLEX
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16 / The City We Need has a unique identity and sense of place.

### Program / November 16–17, 2015

**Registration**  
8:45–9:30 am

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<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>9:30–10 am</td>
<td><strong>Open Remarks</strong></td>
<td>W. Cecil Steward, Joslyn Institute, Room: Bootstrapper Hall</td>
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<tr>
<td>10–10:15 am</td>
<td><em>The Role and Opportunities in Urban Sustainability for Small and Mid-Sized Cities</em></td>
<td>Nicholas You, UN–Habitat, World Urban Campaign, Citistates, and Guangzhou Institute, Room: Bootstrapper Hall</td>
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| 10:15–10:30 am | **Toward Habitat III**  
**Contextualizing The City We Need** | Nicholas You, UN–Habitat, World Urban Campaign, Citistates, and Guangzhou Institute, Room: Bootstrapper Hall |
| 10:30–10:40 am | **Discussion / Q&A Session**                                                               |                                                                                  |
| 10:40–11 am | **Coffee Break**                                                                          |                                                                                  |
| 11–11:40 am | **The City We Need Debate**                                                                | Jeff Soule, APA, Chuck Schroeder, Rural Futures Institute, Room: Bootstrapper Hall |
|            | *The Concept of City: Non-rural to Megacity*                                              | Andrew Rudd, UN–Habitat, Room: Bootstrapper Hall                                 |
| 11:40–12:30 pm | **Urban Thinker Sessions: Urban–Rural Interdependencies**  
**Pecha kucha-style presentations and discussion** | Edmundo Werna, International Labour Organization (ILO), Room: Bootstrapper Hall   |
|            | Working for Urban-Rural Integration: Considerations on the Role of Labor in the Development of Small- and Middle-Sized Settlements | W. Cecil Steward, Joslyn Institute, Room: Bootstrapper Hall                       |
|            | Tackling Climate Change: Municipal Adaptation Planning                                      | Natalie Umphlett, High Plains Regional Climate Center, Room: Bootstrapper Hall   |
|            | Discussion                                                                                |                                                                                  |
| 12:30–1:50 pm | **Luncheon**                                                                             | Medellín: Porosity and Exchange, presented by Camilo Restrepo Ochoa, Harvard School of Design & Urban, EAFIT |
|            | **Media Session**: Video from Medellín, Colombia, followed by Q&A                         |                                                                                  |

**Notes:**  
- Room assignments and schedules are subject to change.  
- For more information, visit the Joslyn Institute for Sustainable Communities website.
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<td>1:50–3 pm</td>
<td><strong>Urban Labs</strong></td>
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<td>Local Knowledge and Resiliency in Resource-Dependent Communities</td>
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<td>Chair: Jim Powell, University of Alaska Southeast</td>
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<td>Community Identity and Communication</td>
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<td>Challenges and Techniques of Building Support and Consensus Among Disparate Community Faction for Sustainable Design</td>
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<td>Chair: Tim Kenny, Nebraska Investment Finance Authority</td>
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<td>Facilitator: Kim Roth Howe</td>
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<td>Local Governments Working Together to Regionalize Climate Action</td>
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<td>Chair: Jessica Johnston, International City/County Management Association Facilitator: Todd Swirczek</td>
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<td>3–3:20 pm</td>
<td><strong>Urban Labs Discussion</strong></td>
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<td>4:40–5 pm</td>
<td><strong>Report on Constituent Drafting</strong></td>
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<td>Summary and report of drafting sessions by constituency chairs</td>
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### Recap
9–9:30 am

| Recap of Day 1 and Recalibrating for Day 2 | W. Cecil Steward, Joslyn Institute | Room: Bootstrapper Hall |

### Urban Thinker Sessions
9:30–9:55 am

| Stuck in Place: The Role of Transportation Equity and Access to Opportunity | David Harris, Legal Environmental Assistance Foundation |
| Urban Compactness and Ecosystem Services | Andrew Rudd, UN-Habitat |

| Discussion | |

| Room: Bootstrapper Hall |

### Coffee Break
10:40–11 am

### Urban Labs
11 am–12:10 pm

| Water, Food & Shelter: An Alaskan Perspective on Sustainable Communities | Innovations in Municipal Finance for Sustainable Development | Updating Your City Plan: Review of APA's Sustaining Places Guidebook and SDG Indicators | Quality of Life and Sustainability Metrics |
| Chair: Jack Hébert, Cold Climate Housing Research | Chair: John Bartle, University of Nebraska–Omaha CPACS | Chair: Jeff Soule, American Planning Association | Chairs: W. Cecil Steward, Joslyn Institute, and Sharon Kuska, UNL |
| Facilitator: Marcus Chaffee | Facilitator: Kim Roth Howe | Facilitator: Todd Swirczek |

| Urban Labs Discussion | Summary and discussion of Urban Labs |

| Severa Parlor | Centennial Hall West | Centennial Hall East | Anderson Hospitality Room |

### Lunch
12:30–1:50 pm

<p>| Media Session: Video from Medellín, Colombia, followed by Q&amp;A |
| The Case of the Urabá Región: Municipal Integral Plans (PMIs): A Strategic Urban Planning Approach to Foster Urban Consolidation in Small-Size Towns in Colombia, presented by Francesco Maria Orsini, Urbam, EAFIT |</p>
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<td>The City We Need Debate</td>
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<td>Representing the Interests of Small and Mid-Sized Cities to the U.N.</td>
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## URBAN THINKERS CAMPUS PARTICIPANTS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Karen Abrams</td>
<td>Policy Research &amp; Innovation</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lissette Aliaga Linares</td>
<td>University Of Nebraska—Omaha</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chris Anderson</td>
<td>City of Central City</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jack Anderson</td>
<td>Creighton University</td>
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<td>Taylor Anderson</td>
<td>University of Nebraska—Lincoln</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annette Artherton</td>
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<tr>
<td>Court Barber</td>
<td>City of Lavista</td>
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<td>John Bartle</td>
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<td>Brandon Beck</td>
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<td>Bradley Bereitschaft</td>
<td>University of Nebraska—Omaha</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jamie Berglund</td>
<td>Greater Omaha Chamber</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<td>Del Bharath</td>
<td>University of Nebraska—Omaha</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ann Birch</td>
<td>City of La Vista</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert Blair</td>
<td>University of Nebraska—Omaha</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>Katie Blesener</td>
<td>Big Muddy Workshop, Inc.</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<td>Janet Bonet</td>
<td>Protrans</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark Brohman</td>
<td>Nebraska Environmental Trust</td>
<td>United States</td>
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<td>Michaela Brown</td>
<td>World Essence Travel</td>
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<td>Audrey Buckley</td>
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<td>Rex Cammack</td>
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<td>Mark Canney</td>
<td>Lincoln Parks &amp; Recreation</td>
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http://www.joslyninstitute.org/utc.html

Photos, speakers’ presentations, background information and documents, links
http://www.joslyninstitute.org/utc_resources.html

Videos from the live streaming plenary sessions
https://vimeo.com/joslyninstitute/videos

Camilo Restrepo Ochoa’s video presentation on pathbreaking porosity and exchange in Medellin
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Stac5eSTdog

Francesco Maria Orsini’s video presentation on innovative, sustainable approaches to urban consolidation in four low-capacity small cities in Colombia’s Urabá region
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8mg7QmwytwQ

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