



# network **JULY 06** news



**PLUSnetwork is an international peer learning Network of cities sharing their experiences, expertise and tools to undertake very long term planning for urban sustainability. Please visit our website at [www.plusnetwork.org](http://www.plusnetwork.org)**

## **New Members!**

Peter Partington, the Regional Chair of the Regional Municipality of Niagara, and Pam Gilroy, Regional Clerk, signed an MOU on May 12, 2006 for the Region of Niagara, Canada to join the Network.

Several cities took advantage of their Mayors' presence at the PLUS Network Biennial Conference and the World Urban Forum to sign MOUs to join the Network. These included:

- Mayor U.N. Gunasekara of Badulla, Sri Lanka
- Mayor Hilmy Mohamed of Matale, Sri Lanka
- Mayor Mary-Jane Ortega, San Fernando, Philippines

In addition, José Fogaça, Mayor of Porto Alegre, Brazil, recommitted Porto Alegre's involvement in the Network through a formal signing ceremony at WUF.

Letters of intent have been received from Gatineau, Iqaluit, Regina, Toronto and the City of Vancouver in Canada; Suncheon, South Korea; Nuwara Eliya, Sri Lanka; Sula Valley, Honduras; and Havana, Cuba. We are also in discussion with Chicago, Olympia, and Portland, U.S.A.; Port Alberni and the Okanagan Partnership in Canada; Katowice, Poland; Bayamo, Cuba; and Manchester, U.K. regarding

membership.

## **News from Network Cities**

**Calgary:** From the imagineCalgary July newsletter: "The imagineCALGARY Charter - the 100 year vision and goals and 30 year targets and strategies - was accepted for information by a Committee of Calgary City Council on July 19th. The chair of the Land Use Planning and Transportation Committee, Alderman Druh Farrell, calls it a pivotal day for Calgary. Farrell - one of five aldermen to sit on the Round Table - told the meeting that imagineCALGARY was probably one of the most meaningful things she has ever contributed to during her time in office."

**Chihuahua:** The Institute for Urban Development Planning (IMPLAN) held a series of thematic workshops this month as part of its plan to create city regulations which will help improve the look of the city. City issues such as the loss of public space, misuse of green areas, predominance of space given to the automobile and the lack of space for pedestrians were presented and discussed. Proposals for improvement were introduced by Salvador Herrera, Director of IMPLAN Chihuahua, with participants from the media and construction industries suggesting how Chihuahua might improve how the city functions and looks.

Also, Horacio Gonzales of IMPLAN Chihuahua spent one week at the City of Vancouver in a job shadowing arrangement with the Planning Department. Calgary and Chihuahua are now looking at replicating this experience in Calgary.

**Halifax:** On July 5, 2006 the Halifax Regional Municipality Capital District and the consulting firm Office for Urbanism

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marked the official project kick-off of the Regional Centre Urban Design Study. HRM Regional Council has initiated the much-anticipated Urban Design Study to engage the public on issues of urban design within the area of the Capital District and surrounding urban core neighbourhoods of Halifax and Dartmouth.

"HRM's Regional Plan, Economic Development Strategy and Cultural Plan all strongly emphasize good urban design as critical for economic growth and for building healthy, sustainable, vibrant communities," says Mayor Peter Kelly. "I am pleased to be part of the first major public milestone of the Urban Design Study. There will be numerous opportunities for public participation throughout the next 18 months, at locations throughout the Regional Centre. Public participation will be critical to the project's success."

Curitiba: The citizens of Curitiba are now participating in the 2007 Annual Budget, using Internet terminals located around the city. After registering online, citizens answer the question: "What do you like the most in Curitiba?" They then have the chance to suggest specific actions that should be prioritized in the coming year, choosing from two areas in the following categories: supply, social action, culture, economic development and work, education, sports and leisure, housing, lighting, environment, roads and transport, sanitation, health, security, transport and tourism. Public meetings will take place on July 25, 26 and 27 in all regions within the city, where participants will be guided on how to use the computers and to enter their contributions. Citizens can also submit their responses in person.

## Events

### Current Events

There are numerous staff changes at ICSC to announce this month. Samantha Anderson, Senior Project Officer with the PLUS Network, will be on maternity leave from mid-August, with two people taking over her role. Isabel Budke comes to ICSC with experience in the fields of sustainable development and aboriginal issues, through her work with the BC Treaty Commission. She holds degrees in Resource and Environmental Management. Previously in charge of ICSC's Eastern Europe programmes, Dominica Babicki returns to ICSC after a two year stint as a Research Associate at the Centre of Urban and Regional Ecology, University of Manchester. Dominica also holds a Masters in Resource and Environmental Management.

Lama Mugabo will be joining ICSC in September as Senior Project Officer in charge of the CIDA Africa project. Through his work as a sustainability development consultant, he has created a resource guide on human settlement issues and facilitated Community Economic Development courses.

Lama was the National Co-ordinator for the Remembering Rwanda 10th Anniversary Memorial Project in 2004 and is also one of the founders of the non-profit Building Bridges with Rwanda that works to bring Canadian support to Rwandan efforts to rebuild society and quality of life in post-genocide Rwanda. He holds degrees in Communications and Community Planning and is fluent in English, French and Swahili.

Natalia Verand recently joined ICSC as Junior Project Officer for the PLUS Network. She has seven years' experience in community-based sustainable development projects in Peru and holds degrees in both Business Administration and Conservation Biology.

Paul Evans is ICSC's new Librarian and Webmaster. He holds a degree in Library Science and has a background in sustainable agriculture and cooperatives.

### Upcoming Events

A series of workshops on urban greening will be held in Sri Lanka in August with participation from the three PLUS Network member cities as well as a number of other cities interested in sustainability initiatives. In addition, Nola-Kate Seymoar will be presenting on long-term planning and the PLUS Network to the Planning Committee of the Urban Development Authority, the national department responsible for all urban planning in Sri Lanka.

Several of the African PLUS Network member cities will be attending the local government event Africities 4 Summit, to be held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 18 to 22 September 2006. The Theme of the Summit is: "Building joint actions for the effective realization of the Millennium Development Goals in African Local Governments." For more information see: [http://www.africities.org/index\\_eng.php](http://www.africities.org/index_eng.php)

ICSC has secured funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to support Dakar, Dar es Salaam and Durban's participation in the PLUS Network, assist with local long-term planning efforts and the implementation of sustainability initiatives. An inception mission will take place in September and a schedule for peer exchanges with other Network cities in the following year is being developed.

A peer exchange between Canadian and U.S. cities on how to move planning initiatives outside of the municipality and locate them in the community will be held in Vancouver in September. If you are interested in attending, please contact Denise Pritchard at [dpritchard@icsc.ca](mailto:dpritchard@icsc.ca).

## Highlights

### PLUS Network Biennial Conference and the World Urban Forum

From June 15th to 18th, the Sustainable Cities: PLUS Network held its first Biennial Conference, attracting over 100 attendees to Vancouver from 22 member cities around the world. Member cities made presentations to demonstrate how they were bringing sustainability principles and long-term planning into city development. A plenary discussion led by Bliss Browne of Imagine Chicago focused on the reasoning behind creating long-term plans, and Gwendolyn Hallsmith of Global Community Initiatives led workshops on Systems Thinking in Long-term Planning and Resiliency. Dave Bronconnier, Mayor of Calgary, chaired a Mayors' Roundtable on the importance of working collaboratively to achieve sustainability outcomes.

City members were able to become even better acquainted with one another during the welcoming reception at the home of President and CEO Dr. Nola-Kate Seymoar, a boat cruise around Stanley Park, and a reception hosted by the imagineCalgary team.

The Conference was an excellent opportunity for the Network to reaffirm its focus and for members to deepen their commitment to long-term planning. One of the outcomes was the decision to create a Steering Committee, consisting of six to twelve members, to provide strategic direction for the Network. A PLUS Network Conference Report is being produced to summarize the proceedings, and all presentations will be available to members on the PLUS Network website. We look forward to the second Biennial Conference in 2008 when all members will gather again.

The PLUS Network also had a big presence at the World Urban Forum, which immediately followed the Conference. The PLUS Network World Urban Forum session chaired by ICLEI President Konrad Otto-Zimmerman on June 20 was very well attended; so much so that over 50 people were turned away because the room was filled to capacity. Mayors of member cities demonstrated their pioneering long-term approach to urban planning, discussing their key challenges, opportunities and current actions as they plan beyond their current electoral term.

A number of mayors from ICSC member cities also attended the Mayors' Roundtable hosted by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and United Cities and Local Governments, which took place during the World Urban Forum. The focus of the Roundtable was

on actions and solutions to address the challenges facing local governments who would like to implement the Millennium Development Goals.

As well, ICSC's booth in the Exposition Hall was a constant buzz of activity. The booth was a great way for ICSC to introduce itself to World Urban Forum participants and spread the word about the great work being done by the PLUS Network and its member cities.

### Sustainability Highlight

*Sustainable Development through Participatory Urban Greening in Sri Lanka by Sumana Witjiratna and Emma Boucart with assistance from John Calimente*

The rapid increase in urban sprawl in many Sri Lankan cities has reduced productive agricultural land and made it a challenge to provide adequate services for the population. These unplanned settlements have created many social, economic and environmental problems in the urban communities, increasing urban poverty and created a new group of vulnerable people. Major setbacks include the drastic reduction of green cover, soil and water pollution, land degradation, and improper waste handling which has resulted in numerous health problems.

With this background, the International Centre for Sustainable Cities (ICSC) initiated the Urban Greening Partnership Program (UGPP) with its partner the Sevanatha Urban Resource Centre, a Sri Lankan NGO, in three cities-Matale, Badulla and Moratuwa.

Through urban greening initiatives in Sri Lankan communities, UGPP aims to increase family income through increased food production, improves the capacity of partner organizations, creates links between communities and local governments, and empowers communities in urban areas.

Running from September 2003 until 2006, UGPP was launched in three Local Authorities by developing good relationships with the municipal councils and city communities. The program was based on the urban greening model developed by ICSC and the Thailand Environmental Institute in Bangkok, Thailand.

A series of awareness programs, surveys, and workshops held by the major partners and other stakeholders helped each community develop a "Green Plan". Through enhanced community empowerment, households became actively involved in urban greening activities, working hand in hand with municipal councils. Since home gardening already had a long tradition in Sri Lanka, the project also gave local people the tools to

rediscover a more sustainable way of life. For example, composting was reintroduced as a way to recycle waste and fertilize home gardens.

In short, UGPP's role was simply to help people understand their capacity for self reliance and help them work to achieve it. The assistance provided was only a starting point for people to discover what they could do through an exchange of knowledge and experience. For example, a 13-year-old in Matale, Mohamud Sadir, began creating his own home garden simply by watching and imitating the efforts of his neighbours.

Two years after the start of the project, those involved had achieved significant economic, social, environmental and cultural improvements. This was very evident in the communities of Badulla and Matale. Since the community involved in the project in Moratuwa was affected by the tsunami in December 2004, the project objectives were altered in order to help them reconstruct houses, while giving a lower priority to urban greening. The communities were technically supported by the partners for the first two years, and by the third year each project municipality had made sufficient budgetary allocations to allow development of urban greening programs in additional municipal wards.

*We highlight a contribution from a Network Member in each of our newsletters. Please contact Samantha Anderson [sjanderson@icsc.ca](mailto:sjanderson@icsc.ca) 604-666-5505 with suggestions for future highlights*

## Organizational Structure

### The Partners

The PLUS Network Partners serve as the management committee for the Network, sit on the selection committee and on the International Panel of Advisors. They are:

- The International Centre for Sustainable Cities (ICSC)
- ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI)
- The Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD), and
- The University of British Columbia's Design Centre for Sustainability

### Key Secretariat Personnel

The International Centre for Sustainable Cities (ICSC), a non-government organization based in Vancouver, Canada is the secretariat of the PLUS Network. For more information on ICSC, please visit our website at [www.icsc.ca](http://www.icsc.ca).

Dr. Nola-Kate Seymoar, President and CEO of ICSC, Chair of

the Management Committee.

Jane McRae, Director of Programs

Samantha Anderson, Senior Project Officer and Communications Manager

Lama Mugabo, Senior Project Officer

Denise Pritchard, Project Officer and City Liaison

Natalia Verand, Junior Project Officer

### International Advisors

#### • Co-Chairs:

**Mike Harcourt**, Canada, former Mayor of Vancouver and former Premier of the Province of British Columbia

**Elizabeth Dowdeswell**, Canada, former Executive Director, UN Environment Program

#### • Network Partner Representatives:

**Konrad Otto-Zimmermann**, ICLEI- Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI)

**Johnny Carline**, Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD)

**Elisa Campbell**, University of British Columbia (UBC)

#### • Members:

**Alan Artibise**, Divisional Dean, Arizona State University, USA  
**Sengul Ackar**, President, Foundation of Support for Women's Work, Turkey

**Bliss Browne**, Founder and President, Imagine Chicago, U.S.A.

**Jeb Brugmann**, President, Globalegacy International Ltd., Canada

**Ken Cameron**, CEO, Homeowner Protection Office, Canada

**Gwynne Dyer**, Journalist, England

**Gwendolyn Hallsmith**, President, Global Community Initiatives, USA

**Prema Gopalan**, Executive Director, Syawam Sikshan Prayog, India

**Sir Peter Hall**, Professor of Planning, University College of London, England

**Hazel Henderson**, Evolutionary Economist and Author, USA

**C.S. (Buzz) Holling**, Professor Emeritus, Department of Zoology, University of Florida, U.S.A.

**Jeff Kenworthy**, Associate Professor, Institute for Sustainability and Technology Policy, Murdoch University, Australia

**Ashok Koshla**, President, Development Alternatives, India  
**Jaime Lerner**, President, Uniao Internacional de Arquitetos do Brasil (International Union of Architects)

**Esther Mwaura Muiru**, Groots International, Kenya

**Karl-Henrik Robèrt**, Founder, The Natural Step, Sweden

**Alice Soulek**, President, Back Stop Light Reflector, LLC and Alice B. Soulek, LLC, USA

**Nicholas You**, Coordinator, Best Practices and Local Leadership, UN Habitat, Kenya

Thanks also to our sponsors:



For further information on the PLUS Network please visit [www.plusnetwork.org](http://www.plusnetwork.org) or contact:  
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