

Planning & Land-Use Strategies Summit (PLUS²)

Disrupting the City

Overview and Recommendations

Friday - June 10th 2016
Los Angeles, CA



“A house is not a dollar. A house is a house. Housing is a human right.”

- Tatiana Bilbao

“It’s not about empowering, it’s about co-powering. The power is already in the community and as advocates we need to bring that out and co-power.”

- Tamika Butler

“My most important lesson has been building trust. Our communities have so much distrust.”

- Maryann Aguirre

“This is the first time I’ve ever listened to both a fascinating urban conference and birds singing. Great experience.”

- Vishaan Chakrabarti



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview..... 2

Speakers..... 3

Agenda..... 9

Recommendations..... 11

OVERVIEW



On June 10th, 2016, Leadership for Urban Renewal Network (LURN) organized the Planning and Land-Use Strategies Summit (PLUS²) for a fourth time. This year's event was hosted in Historic Filipinotown in Los Angeles. The annual summit convenes a multi-disciplinary group of experts to hear short presentations from innovators who are leading work to improve the lives of residents in cities.

The sessions at PLUS² result in new ideas and relationships that we hope can help further the community development work of attendees.

This year's theme was "Disrupting the City."

LURN was interested in examining the various disruptions that are taking place in cities. Disruption can be a good or a bad thing. Many community development practitioners are seeing disruptions in housing, transportation, technology, economics, and even policy making. What are these disruptions? How do they work? How are they impacting various communities? How can we influence them to insure they work for us?

To begin to broach these topics, LURN invited speakers from Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York City, Mexico City, and other places who were tackling disruptions, or being disruptive themselves.

SPEAKERS



BILL ROSCHEN

Bill Roschen is a principal at Roschen Van Cleve Architects and a past president of the Los Angeles City Planning Commission. Bill's career manifests the new paradigm of "citizen architect" as a civic leader who can engage communities in thoughtful conversations required to advance infill and redevelopment projects that make neighborhoods sustainable, affordable, livable and healthy. Bill received his Bachelor of Arts in Architecture from Arizona State University with emphasis on sustainable design and holds a Masters degree in Architecture from Columbia University, with an emphasis on city planning and urban architecture, historic preservation and philosophy aesthetics. He and his partner, Christi Van Cleve, conceived and currently teach a four-part series of graduate seminars and a certificate and Masters Degree program at Woodbury University School of Architecture, and have initiated the UP (Urban Policy) program and Policy Tanks within the School of Architecture.

CARMEN ROJAS

Carmen Rojas is the CEO of The Workers Lab, an accelerator that invests in entrepreneurs, community organizers, technologists, economic justice organizations, issue campaigns, and businesses to create scalable and self-sustaining solutions that improve conditions for low-wage workers. The Workers Lab is focused on ideas, services, and products that will achieve sufficient scale to impact workers across sectors, industries, and geographies, and result in self-sufficient revenue models. Prior to assuming this position, she was the Acting Director of Collective Impact at Living Cities, where she focused on improving economic opportunity for low income people. Carmen holds a Ph.D. in City and Regional Planning from the University of California, Berkeley and was a Fulbright Scholar in 2007. She taught in the Department of City & Regional Planning at the University of California at Berkeley from 2009-2011. Her teaching focused on the history of cities in the US, a practicum on local economic development, planning pedagogy, and race in the practice of city planning.

CHRISTOPHER GOETT

Christopher Goett is the Senior Program Officer in charge of housing, economic development and Smart Growth programs. Goett came to CCF from the Council on Foundations, where he led a team responsible for a national portfolio supporting place-based philanthropy, community foundations, civic engagement, coalition building and community development. Throughout his career, Goett has been actively involved with community development and civic engagement in low-income neighborhoods across the country. Prior to joining the Council, he worked with the National Community Reinvestment Coalition, the Community Preservation and Development Corporation, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Goett graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from Villanova University and earned a Masters of Social Work degree with an emphasis on community organizing and economic development from the University of Maryland, Baltimore. He was named a 2014 PLACES Fellow with the Funders Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities.

CLARE FOX

Clare Fox is the Executive Director of the Los Angeles Food Policy Council (LAFPC), where she supports and collaborates with a large network of public, private, non-profit and community sector leaders to catalyze policy and systems change for a sustainable and fair food system. Clare joined the staff of the LA Food Policy Council in 2011, eventually serving as the Director of Policy and Innovation. She has worked as a researcher, strategic planning consultant, program coordinator and organizer for a diverse range of organizations, including UCLA Downtown Labor Center, LA Community Garden Council, Green For All, as well as many grassroots collectives. In her first career, she was a radio producer at National Public Radio and Youth Radio, where she taught radio and media production to young people throughout Los Angeles - from Boyle Heights to Inglewood. She currently serves on Mayor Garcetti's Los Angeles Promise Zone Leadership Council, the Board of Directors for LA Compost, and was a founding board member of Critical Mass Dance Company. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Critical Social Thought from Mount Holyoke College as well as a Masters in Urban Planning from UCLA, and all her work is informed by a lifelong commitment to social and racial justice.

DAVID MARIN

David Marin runs East L.A. BBQ Co., a startup catering business that was born out of a love for barbeque and the Raiders. Marin began selling his famous barbeque at pre-Raider game meet ups in Elysian Park, and his food became a staple for Raider-loving Angelenos. Marin's flavors and techniques are drawn from his Mexican heritage and his obsession with American barbeque. His entrepreneurship, innovation and love for the Raiders were the inspiration behind launching this up-and-coming catering company. Marin and his barbeque battalion—made up of his wife, Carla, and a few close family friends—have been called to cater several events from Mother's Day to Cinco De Mayo and for other Raiders-themed club meet ups across Los Angeles. While still juggling a full time job, Marin plans to continue expanding his catering business and also hopes to open up a food truck in the future.

JAVIER CABRAL

Javier Cabral has been writing professionally about food, drinks, and culture for 11 years. He published his first national cover story for Saveur Magazine on the cuisine of Zacatecas, Mexico at the age of 21. He has valiantly served as restaurant scout for Jonathan Gold for the LA Times, too. Currently, he is holding down the entire west coast for MUNCHIES as their staff writer.

KELLYN BLOSSOM

Kellyn Blossom is the California Public Policy Manager for Uber. Prior to joining Uber, Kellyn served in the White House as the Associate Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, where she was a liaison for local governments across the country. She also served at the Department of Homeland Security as the Director of Public Engagement and Special Assistant to the Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Before joining the Obama Administration, Kellyn worked on numerous political campaigns at the local, state and federal level. She graduated from Brown University and the Harvard Kennedy School.

MARCEL PORRAS

Marcel Porras is the Chief Sustainability Officer for LADOT, where he directs the city's newly established Shared Mobility Group including taxis, bike share, car share, ride share, and autonomous and connected vehicles to ensure that available transportation amenities are maximized in Los Angeles. Most recently, Marcel worked in the Office of Mayor Eric Garcetti as Associate Director of Transportation where he worked to develop and implement the Mayor's transportation agenda. Prior to joining the Mayor's Office, Marcel worked on various issues related to planning, economic development, and transportation for then Councilman Eric Garcetti. Born and raised in Southern California, Marcel is an avid traveler, who has lived and worked in Latin America. These experiences provide him with a unique range of perspectives on cities, urban development, and mobility. Marcel holds a Master's Degree in Urban Planning from UCLA, as well as a Bachelor's Degree in History and Latin American Studies.

MARYANN AGUIRRE

Maryann Aguirre was born and raised in Boyle Heights and is the daughter of Mexican immigrants. Maryann became a mother at the age of 17 and as a young mother with little to no access to a vehicle she was no stranger to multi-modal transportation. Maryann joined the all women bicycle collective Ovarian Psychos in 2011 and during her 4 years as an active core member, she centered much of her work and passion around women of color on bicycles as an alternative method of transportation and a tool for social change. Maryann is currently a Program Specialist at Multicultural Communities for Mobility, which advocates for safe alternative transportation access in underserved communities of color within greater Los Angeles. Her contributions to the organization include numerous projects that involve community organizing, education and social action that promote equitable, walkable and bike-able neighborhoods by and for low-income people of color. Maryann is also a League Certified Instructor (LCI) and a member of the Bicycle Advisory Committee for the City of Los Angeles. Additionally, Maryann works as an Administrative Coordinator at InnerCity Struggle, a non-profit organization that advocates for social and educational justice in East Los Angeles.



MAURICIO LIM MILLER

Mauricio Lim Miller founded Family Independence Initiative (FII) in 2001, with a mission to support and accelerate low-income families' own efforts to improve their social and economic mobility. A first-generation immigrant, Mauricio's personal history deeply informs his life's work. He was inspired to develop FII after researching the histories of communities in the United States who managed to rise from intense poverty to middle-class standing. In his research, he found something simple, yet extraordinary: Pathways to success require a group effort. Individuals and families turned to extended family and friends for support and resources, and followed the example of the successful families around them. In recognition of his unconventional approach to generating economic mobility among low-income families, Mauricio was awarded a MacArthur "Genius" Fellowship in 2012. He was appointed by President Obama to the White House Council for Community Solutions and is an Ashoka Fellow. Prior to founding FII, Mauricio spent 22 years as the Director of Asian Neighborhood Design, a community development agency in San Francisco and Oakland.

TAMIKA BUTLER

Tamika is the Executive Director of the L.A. County Bicycle Coalition. Prior to leading LACBC Tamika was the Director of Social Change Strategies at Liberty Hill Foundation, where she oversaw the foundation's boys and men of color program and the foundation's LGBTQ grant strategy. Before Liberty Hill, Tamika worked at Young Invincibles as the California Director, where she was responsible for the development of all of Young Invincibles' programs in California. She transitioned to policy work after litigating for three years as an employment lawyer at Legal Aid Society-Employment Law Center. Tamika received her J.D. in 2009 from Stanford Law School, and in 2006 received her B.A. in Psychology and B.S. in Sociology in her hometown of Omaha, Nebraska. Tamika currently serves as the co-chair of the National Center for Lesbian Rights Board of Directors, serves as the Institute Co-Director of the New Leaders Council - Los Angeles, and is an advisory board member for the Legal Aid Society-Employment Law Center's Fair Play for Girls in Sports program.

TATIANA BILBAO

Tatiana Bilbao is a Mexican architect whose innovative works often merged geometry with nature. She was committed to collaboration as an essential feature of her work. She started her own firm, Tatiana Bilbao S.C., in 2004 and was later appointed professor of design at her alma mater, the Universidad Iberoamericana (UIA) in Mexico City, where she earned a degree in architecture and urbanism. Previously, she also cofounded an architectural think tank called Laboratorio de la Ciudad de México (LCM) and an urban research center, MXDF. Prior to this, Bilbao worked as an advisor for urban projects at the Ministry of Urban Development and Housing, Mexico City. Her work engages a distinctly interdisciplinary approach, collaborating with artists such as Ai Weiwei on projects in China and Spain, as well as in Mexico. Bilbao was the recipient of various awards, and in 2010 she was named an Emerging Voice by the Architectural League of New York. In addition to the projects mentioned, Bilbao built a number of arresting houses of various scales and shapes, a funeral home, a pavilion, a music hall and sports center, and structures along a pilgrimage route.

UMBERTO CRENCA

Umberto is an artist and founder of AS220, Rhode Island's unjuried, uncensored, and all-ages forum and home for the arts located in Providence. Now in its 30th year, AS220 serves as an international model for access, equity, and sustainability in the non-profit arts world. Bert has been internationally recognized for his work with AS220, sharing best practices with organizations as far away as New Zealand, Taiwan, Ukraine, Estonia and Kuwait. Notably, Umberto recently received honorary doctorate degrees from Brown University and Roger Williams University for his commitment to community development, creating opportunity for artists, and the revitalization of downtown Providence. Bert has served on transition boards for the last three Mayors of Providence, most recently as Co-Chair of the Economic Development Transition Team. In 2003 Bert was the recipient of a scholarship in Strategic Perspectives in Non-Profit Management from The University of Harvard Business School and has also received fellowships from the Rhode Island Foundation and the Pew Civic Entrepreneur Initiative. As a visual artist, performance artist and musician,

Crenca's works and performances have been exhibited globally in galleries and on stages including the Galleria Del Corso in Latina, Italy; La Galeria Matadero in San Juan, Puerto Rico; the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) Museum in Providence; the Newport Art Museum in Rhode Island; and the Fringe Festival in Edinburgh, Scotland.

VINCE BERTONI

Vince Bertoni is the Planning Director for the City of Los Angeles and has 27 years of professional planning experience. Previously, Vince served as Director of Planning and Community Development for the City of Pasadena, Deputy Planning Director for the City of Los Angeles and as Planning Director for the cities of Beverly Hills, Santa Clarita, and Malibu. Vince is a member of the California Planning Roundtable and has held several leadership positions with the California Chapter of the American Planning Association including President, Vice President for Policy & Legislation, Director of the Los Angeles Section, and Co-Chair of the American Planning Association's 2012 National Planning Conference. In addition, he has served on the Board of Directors of the League of California Cities and as President of the League's Planning & Community Development Department. Vince has been active on statewide legislation; having served on the Housing Element Reform Working Group formed by the State Assembly and Senate and testified before the State Senate on infill real estate development strategies. Vince has a Bachelor's Degree in Transportation and Urban Geography from San Diego State University and is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners.

VISHAAN CHARABARTI

Vishaan Chakrabarti is the Founder of Partnership for Architecture & Urbanism. Simultaneously, Vishaan is an Associate Professor of Practice at Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning & Preservation (GSAPP), where he teaches architectural design studios and seminars on urbanism. His highly acclaimed book, *A Country of Cities: A Manifesto for an Urban America*, argues that a more urban United States would result in a more prosperous, sustainable, joyous, and socially mobile nation. Prior to PAU, Vishaan was a principal at SHoP Architects where he co-led major architecture and urban design projects. Previously, Vishaan served under Mayor Michael Bloomberg as the Director of the Manhattan Office for the New York Department of City Planning, where he successfully collaborated on the now realized efforts to save the High Line and other projects. Chakrabarti holds a Master of Architecture from the University of California at Berkeley, a Master of City Planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and dual bachelor's degrees in Art History and Engineering from Cornell University. A registered architect in the State of New York, Vishaan was named one of the top 12 "Game Changers" by *Metropolis Magazine* for 2012, and is a former *Crain's* "40 Under 40" and David Rockefeller Fellow.

VU-BANG NGUYEN

Vu-Bang Nguyen is a program officer focused on SVCF's regional planning grantmaking strategy. He was previously an associate director of land use and housing at Urban Habitat, where he was site lead for the Great Communities Collaborative, working on regional planning initiatives and local transit-oriented development campaigns. He also co-authored *Moving Silicon Valley Forward*—research on the costs of inequitable development in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties—and *Moving to Work*, which examines the intersection between workforce development, economic development and equitable transit-oriented development. Vu-Bang also has worked for the City of Berkeley's Department of Planning, the Town of Los Gatos Planning Division and for a real estate development company working on infill residential development projects in Fremont, San José and Los Gatos. Vu-Bang holds a master's degree in city and regional planning from the University of California, Berkeley and also earned his bachelor's degree in architecture at Berkeley's College of Environmental Design. He is a longstanding member of the American Planning Association (APA) and the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP). He currently sits on the board of Youth United in Community Action in East Palo Alto, CA and Asian Pacific Environmental Network in Oakland, CA.

AGENDA

DISRUPTING THE CITY



**The “Creative Class” & Gentrification:
Art and Culture as the Means**

Umberto Crenca, AS220

**Catalytic Philanthropy: Piloting and
Scaling Ideas that Disrupt the
Status Quo**

Carmen Rojas, The Workers Lab
Vu-Bang Nguyen, Silicon Valley
Community Foundation
Christopher Goett, California Community
Foundation
Rudy Espinoza, LURN (Moderator)

**Ecology, Technology and Social
Mobility: Designing the City
of the Future**

Vishaan Chakrabarti, Partnership for
Architecture and Urbanism

**Feeding Los Angeles: Disruptions and
Changing the Way We Eat in the City**

Clare Fox, LA Food Policy Council
David Marin, East L.A. BBQ Co.
Javier Cabral, MUNCHIES (Moderator)

**Breaking the Cycle of Poverty:
Accelerating the Economic
Mobility of Families**

Mauricio Lim Miller, Family Independence
Initiative

**Rezoning the City: How Planners Are
Working to Change the Way We Live**

Vince Bertoni, City of Los Angeles
Planning Department

**Transportation in a Changing City:
Disrupting Urban Mobility**

Marcel Porras, Los Angeles Department
of Transportation
Kellyn Blossom, Uber
Maryann Aguirre, Multicultural
Communities for Mobility
Tamika Butler, L.A. County Bicycle
Coalition (Moderator)

**Addressing the Housing Crisis
through Design**

Tatiana Bilbao, Tatiana Bilbao Studios



RECOMMENDATIONS

Our team is so thankful for those who made the day a success. Our speakers were excellent as expected. Each of them has put in years of work to not only be an expert in the field, but also to think outside the box to “disrupt” what is currently taking place. Our guests were equally important. Indeed, LURN believes that each of us has a role to play in making cities great places to live for everyone. This year’s PLUS² hosted over 230 leaders from public agencies, private companies, and a strong representation from community-based organizations. Our team worked hard to make sure that the convening “looked and felt” like Los Angeles so our discussions could be grounded in the opportunities and challenges that Angelenos face everyday.

While the day was designed so guests can stop in to hear one or two lectures whenever their schedule allowed, we saw many people stay throughout the day. Our closing reception had over 120 guests, affirming our feeling that we need more spaces to dialogue about issues impacting urban areas as well as comfortable settings where we can get to know each other and build meaningful relationships. These observations are important to us because we intend to work harder to incorporate more people into future events we host. We took to heart Mauricio Lim Miller’s implicit call to action, that conferences should not only include people practitioners like ours, but also the families we work with everyday.

The following are some of the key “takeaways” from PLUS²’s:



Artists don’t gentrify, planners and developers do. In cities like Los Angeles, “arts districts” are becoming the center of private investment. New shops and new housing units are drawing more residents to areas once inhabited mostly by artists or that have an abundance of empty warehouse space that could be used as a gallery. This new investment is spurring displacement, and in some cases positioning artists, especially local artists, as agents of gentrification themselves. An important distinction to make in this process is that artists are not the primary cause of gentrification, but rather are used by developers and planners who see their creativity as an opportunity to commodify a neighborhood.



Philanthropy should invest in organizing. One of the most important ways to change the conditions of cities is through policy. In order to shape policies, deliberate community organizing needs to take place that builds the capacity of residents to get involved in changing systems. The philanthropic sector can play an important role in making sure that these important grassroots

movements have the resources they need to hire organizers, support community involvement, and develop clear strategies to win. Additionally, the philanthropic sector can be an agent of change by investing in cross-sectoral partnerships and “start ups” that may not have a track record, but have a clear and informed strategy to make a positive impact in low-income neighborhoods.



Housing should be a right. We need to be mindful of market forces that make housing into a “product.” An important take-away from PLUS² was the notion that housing should be a right. A house is a house: not a product. This perspective is helpful for those of us who are grappling with how to advocate for, and build more, affordable housing. In some neighborhoods, finding housing is nearly impossible caused by a lack of supply, an increased demand, and rampant real estate speculation that often forgets that a house is just a house. Everyone should have one.



The future of cities revolves around people, not cars. Cities should realign their transportation investments around the needs of all people. Equity should be a key driver, and future transit priorities should focus on making sure that planning for cars does not trump planning for other methods that can facilitate the movement of people more efficiently and equitably. PLUS² guests responded well to the idea that transportation is a civil rights issue; it involves our freedom to move around our city. We should all work towards making sure that all people from all areas of our cities have an opportunity to move around.



We need to invest in how we communicate to the public on planning issues. Unfortunately, we don’t invest in making sure that city departments have the resources they need to engage the public in crucial decisions influencing new municipal codes and zoning changes. This needs to change. Cities should prioritize outreach workers, community organizers, and even public relations positions in departments as important as City Planning. New rezoning efforts and community plan updates should be influenced by the voices of as many community members as possible, but this can only be done with a significant investment in teams that can engage people meaningfully.



Poverty impacts all of us. An important topic that surfaced at PLUS² is the implicit separation that takes place in community development work between practitioners and those we are serving. We often talk about the poor as “them,” causing a psychological rift that separates our goals from

theirs and sometimes patronizing their ideas and ambitions. This perspective needs to change. The poor is in fact us. We are all impacted at various levels by economic inequality, a lack of affordable housing, shortsighted policies, and bad transportation investments. Solutions to poverty must be born out of a sense of solidarity not separation.



Disruption in food policy sometimes begins by breaking the law.

Sometimes, policy needs to adapt to the changing needs of residents; food policy is no exception. Some of the most innovative food entrepreneurs began by breaking laws that were antiquated (street vending is a prime example). In our work, we should consistently check in on existing policies and reflect on their effectiveness to serve all members of a community. At times, we may see that a policy that once was needed, may need to be updated or removed all together.



We should work toward developing “affordable lives.” It’s clear that we need to be more intentional about developing affordable housing, but we should take a comprehensive look at the full costs of living a good life. The goal should be designing and building communities where we can sustain “affordable lives,” and this entails not just the cost of housing, but also the costs of transportation, food, education, healthcare, and the availability of jobs near a person’s home. This holistic outlook can help inform how we advocate for specific policies in urban areas.

Ultimately, we’ve heard from many of our guests that the sessions prompted some self-reflection. Are we making a positive difference in the lives of marginalized communities? Are we contributing to the “status quo” or are we advancing something better? How are we engaging productively with other stakeholders? How are we effectively communicating issues and offering solutions? Are we adding value to our field? How do we disrupt how we provide affordable housing, train small businesses, offer affordable transportation, and change eating habits to support better health?

The LURN team also walked away with even more resolve to work hard for our communities and examine the work we’re doing in low-income communities. The fact is that “the system” is no longer working for us or the communities we work for everyday. Indeed, they have always been flawed. Perhaps the solutions are simple, but they have yet to be implemented with intentionality and fearlessness.

Now more than ever, it is crucial we come together and examine how we can “disrupt” the systems that are not working for us, and ensure that the disruptions that are taking place in our cities take into account the needs of the growing poor and working class.



A very special thank you to all of our sponsors:

LURN would like to thank our sponsors. For many of us who have organized events, finding resources is difficult (especially for an event that sought to discuss “disrupting the city”). Each of the following organizations not only contributed to the production of PLUS², they were wholeheartedly supportive of the event’s vision.





The Planning and Land-Use Strategy Summit (PLUS²) is hosted and curated by Leadership for Urban Renewal Network (LURN).



Leadership for Urban Renewal Network (LURN) is a nonprofit, community development organization based in the neighborhood of Boyle Heights in Los Angeles. Founded in 2008, LURN's mission is to bring people together to design, build, and promote sustainable communities that allow people to live their greatest potential. LURN works towards this mission in 3 ways: advocating for thoughtful urban policy, designing and implementing economic development projects that support small businesses, and providing research and program design services to organizations who align with our mission.

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