

BARRIER 4: URBAN DESIGN

Thursday, 19 May 2022
12:30 p.m. – 02:30 p.m.

Also broadcasted through the
AHA Forum virtual platform.
Access at ahamadrid.org

Key words: urban planning; urban design;
architectural design; quality and technical
regulations; city models and urban sprawl; public
spaces; services and infrastructures;
environments; quality; liveability; inclusion;
equity; segregation and inequality; technical
regulation; administrative processes.

The way cities are designed and built has a major impact on urban sustainability, inclusion, and safety. It also conditions the provision of sufficient land for housing, the location of services and facilities, and the construction of adequate and affordable housing. Meanwhile, the quality and safety of construction, both of housing buildings and public space, are determined in part by regulations and codes, and can have a significant impact on the cost of construction, as well as the administrative processes required for the construction and habitability of spaces.

Housing is the main use of buildings in the city, and in general terms it usually comprises at least 60% of the built-up land. City and Housing have a feedback relationship: the way cities are built depends, to a great extent, on the way homes are built; but also, the opposite applies: the model chosen for the development of cities is largely determined by the location and form adopted by the dwellings.

The location of housing, and particularly social housing, is highly relevant when determining the socio-geographical justice of an urban area. It is common to observe how job opportunities, accessibility, transportation, urban facilities, green areas, and services are not located in a balanced way in the city, nor are they proportional to the number of people who live in the neighbourhoods – this has impact on determining the value of the land, and indirectly, in determining the costs of housing.

Housing construction is a complex and, above all, costly process. The cost of housing is often influenced by the cost of land, design and construction projects, construction permits and taxes, the cost of materials, machinery and labour, financing costs - in some cases - and the profits of those involved in the process - builders and developers. The costs of housing production - as well as of the whole process leading to housing construction, including urban development - end up raising their costs in such a way that they become unaffordable for a significant part of the population, with tangible consequences on the whole residential real estate market, including the increase in the cost of second-hand housing.

On many occasions, public housing policies include proposals aimed at reducing production costs. These proposals generally focus on the incorporation of factory-made products in the construction processes, which eventually allows for a reduction in time and workers needed during the construction work. Less frequently, these policies have also promoted the use of local materials and construction techniques, the promotion of self-construction, and the education and training of workers in the sector to increase their productivity.

Finally, the conditions of the built space – considering first the public space, but also the relationships that are established with the private spaces and buildings, have an indirect impact on the conditions of the dwellings, and above all on the determination of the urban quality of neighbourhoods, and therefore on the conditions under which the processes of urban segregation are generated. Caring for the quality of the built space, even in low-cost interventions, can be essential to avoid the degradation of spaces

Architectural design

Since the arrival of the modern movement in architecture, architectural design has been seen as an indispensable tool to address the suitability of housing. Through the design of spaces, it is possible to generate and increase the habitability of the spaces, generating better conditions of lighting, ventilation and sanitation of the environments. Likewise, it plays a fundamental role in the cultural adaptation of homes, in their safety and in their comfort levels, as well as in the quality of the built spaces and the materials used.

In terms of affordability, architectural design has played a leading role in reducing construction costs through various mechanisms: from improving the functionality and use of space indirectly reducing the built area– to facilitating the use of affordable materials and construction systems, including local construction materials and techniques. Likewise, it contributes to affordability by generating and adapting designs to progressive construction and/or self-construction schemes.

On the other hand, architectural design is decisive in the construction of urban space, both in terms of the form and quality adopted by buildings, as well as in terms of public space and green areas in cities.

Architectural design has an even greater responsibility in terms of inclusion. The adaptation of spaces for people with reduced mobility, visual impairment, or any other type of disability depends to a large extent on how the spaces are designed. Recent studies show that the configuration of spaces also has a fundamental role in the health and mental comfort of people, and terms such as "neuro-architecture" are already beginning to spread among academic and professional fields. Similarly, in terms of inclusion, many investigations and examples have been demonstrating the preponderant role that architectural design can have in shaping inclusive spaces from a gender perspective.

Finally, architectural design has proven key in the need to adapt buildings to the challenges arising from climate change, particularly in reducing the energy demand of buildings, the use of materials with more sustainable life cycles, the use of water recycling systems, as well as the increase in resilience through elements linked to the design of public spaces, among others.

Technical codes and regulations

Technical codes and regulations are essential to guarantee the parameters under which homes are built and/or improved. They are primarily responsible for ensuring that the buildings have adequate levels of safety, comfort, and functionality. Technical codes and regulations also play, on some occasions, an important role in defining the quality of the built elements. Sometimes, however, codes and regulations may lag and fail to respond to the possibilities and needs of the sector at a given time.

In terms of affordable housing, codes and regulations also play a fundamental role by allowing – or not – the development of architectural typologies or specific construction techniques that would reduce construction costs.

As noted above, since the adoption of the "enabling approach" in housing policies, together with other components of the regulatory frameworks, it is through them that the intervention parameters of different actors are defined, and therefore, their participation is encouraged to a greater or lesser extent.

Codes and regulations usually pose a delicate balance: then they must be strict enough to guarantee the safety, quality and operation of buildings and interventions; and at the same time, they must have sufficient flexibility to allow the incorporation of a wide range of technical and design solutions, as well as the possibility of integrating innovation processes. This balance is not always easy to achieve.

Administrative processes

The administrative processes linked to the approval of projects and construction works may, eventually, hinder their development. In some contexts, the direct financial costs and time that it takes to obtain permits can impact the final costs of housing. Difficulties in receiving construction permits can also encourage the development of projects outside of formality, which often do not meet sufficient quality and safety parameters to guarantee adequate housing. It is therefore necessary that the administrative processes that govern the obtaining of permits for the project, the construction and occupation of the real estate are conceived from a facilitating and not restrictive logic; and therefore, that the diagnoses and programs defined in the sector can address possible improvements in the procedures.

CROSSING BARRIER 4:

Speakers come from academia, private sector and private sector associations. In addition to their discussion, the audience will learn from the city of Madrid how housing and the city are interlinked, as well as from the C40's initiative *Reinventing Cities*.

Objective of the session

To propose three priority actions to accelerate the crossing of the barrier.

Guiding Questions

- Why the tight relationship between the city (in terms of urban form) and the housing of the population (in terms of providing housing to citizens) are so disconnected after the long learning processes of decades?
- Which mechanisms could be implemented to establish minimum qualitative parameters in terms of the affordable housing and the built space around it?
- How architects can be more involved in the design and definition of housing policies at national and local levels?
- Is affordable housing a priority on the curricula and the study plans of professionals' careers linked to the housing sector?
- If massive construction of repetitive building developments would lead to "anonymous cities", with little character, which types of affordable housing would contribute to a positive city image?
- How to incorporate the development of codes and technical regulations flexible but efficient, incorporating local techniques and materials when possible?
- Can well-designed and built housing be affordable? How to overcome the cost vs quality barrier?

Final question

Please name three action-oriented proposals that from your point of view will accelerate the crossing of barrier 4 on Urban Design.

Agenda of the session

- 12:30 p.m. Opening intervention of the Chair's session.
Martha Thorne, Dean, IE School of Architecture and Design
- 12:45 p.m. Initial proposal of priority actions to face the barrier by each speaker:
- *Iñiqui Carnicero*, Director General of Architecture and Urban Agenda (tbc)
 - *Odile Decq*, Founder, Studio Odile Decq
 - *Heather Dodd*, Founding Partner, Savage+Dodd Architects
 - *Cheryl S. Durst*, Executive Vice President and CEO, IIDA
 - *Paul Karakusevic*, Founding partner, Karakusevic Carson Architects
- 1:10 p.m. Reactions from the Chair/speakers to the introductory remarks and first round of guiding questions to focus the discussion on specific proposals.
- 1:25 p.m. Presentation of the first case: Reinventing Cities
Hélène Chartier, Director of Urban Planning and Design at C40
- 1:35 p.m. Reflections on the case presented and second round of guiding questions
- 1:45 p.m. Presentation of the second case: Madrid Nuevo Norte
Miguel Hernández, General Director
- 1:55 p.m. Reflections on the case presented and third round of guiding questions
- 2:05 p.m. Presentation of the second case: New European Bauhaus
Marcos Ros, Member of the European Parliament
- 2:15 p.m. Reflections on the case presented and fourth round of guiding questions
- 2:25 p.m. Wrap-up and summary of priority actions proposed for the AHA Forum Madrid Declaration
- 2:30 p.m. End of the session

Biographies of invited chair and speakers

Martha Thorne, dean, IE School of Architecture and Design. She is an architect, academic, curator, editor, and author. Former Executive Director of the Pritzker Architecture Prize (2006-2021). Prior to joining IE University, she was Associate Curator of the Department of Architecture at The Art Institute of Chicago. Martha Thorne received a Master of City Planning degree from the University of Pennsylvania and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Urban Affairs from the State University of New York at Buffalo. She undertook additional studies at the London School of Economics. She currently serves on an international jury for the award, ArcVision: Women and Architecture, a prize honouring outstanding women architects. She also lectures and assists with international architectural competitions.

Iñiqui Carnicero, Director General of Architecture and Urban Agenda. Got his PhD in architecture from the Polytechnic University of Madrid. In addition to his professional work as an architect, he has been active in the fields of teaching, research and curating, responding to housing, urban and revitalization issues of the existing architectural fabric. His built work has been the result, for the most part, of first prizes in public competitions with a variety of programs that includes collective and social housing, among others. He was awarded with the Golden Lion in 2016, FAD Award for Architecture in 2012, COAM Award 2012, AIA New York Housing Award 2015, Emerging Architecture Award 2011, Hauser Award 2011 and Design Vanguard 2011, among others. He has been teaching in Spain and abroad, mostly the United States. Other international activities include the co-curatorship of the Spanish Pavilion at the 2016 Venice Biennale with the exhibition "Unfinished", awarded the highest award, the Golden Lion for the best national pavilion.

Odile Decq, Founder, Studio Odile Decq. Decq received her degrees in architecture, urbanism and planning from the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris. In 1986, Decq partnered with Benoît Cornette and they created the architectural firm ODBC. They won several awards and international recognition for their work. Decq's notable projects are social housing buildings in Paris and an A14 freeway bridge in Nanterre. In 1996, the studio received the Golden Lion at the Venice Architecture Biennale. In 2001 Odile Decq was selected for the realization of the extension of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Rome and did later other notable projects. Teaching is an integral part of Decq's practice, being a professor at the Ecole Spéciale d'Architecture in Paris since 1992, where she was head of the architecture department from 2007 to 2012. In 2014 Odile Decq decided to create in Lyon the Institute of innovation and creative strategies in architecture: Confluence.

Heather Dodd, is a partner in Savage + Dodd Architects based in Johannesburg South Africa. Savage + Dodd Architects believe in the power of design in restorative spatial justice and urban resilience. This is reflected in the scope of projects undertaken in the Practice, which encompass buildings within the public realm such as universities and social housing, which are reflective of new building types for a new society. Heather has a particular interest in social housing and urban regeneration and has been involved in many large scale housing projects contributing to the revitalisation of the inner city of Johannesburg. She is currently completing a Practice based PhD entitled 'Small Moves. Spatial tactics for Transformation'

Cheryl S. Durst, Executive Vice President and CEO, IIDA, is a communicator, innovator, and visionary leader. She is the Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer of the International Interior Design Association (IIDA), while previously she was the Senior Director of Education and Professional Development. Promoted to Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer in 1998, she began the task of rebuilding and redefining the organization, which was teetering on the brink of bankruptcy and closure due to organizational mismanagement. Today, with 15,000 members across 58 countries, Cheryl oversees the strategic direction of IIDA, curates and publishes *Perspective*, the association's thought-leadership journal, manages a team of 25 professional staff members, leads the 10-member International Board of Directors, and directs all outreach and programmatic efforts, including more than a dozen global design competitions, which recognize worldwide excellence in interior design.

Paul Karakusevic, founding partner, Karakusevic Carson Architects, works on social and public housing and civic buildings. Wholly focussed on the public sector, the practice now counts 15 local authorities, the Greater London Authority (GLA), Transport for London (TfL) and the Olympic Legacy and Homes England as regular client groups for whom we are leading some of the largest and most complex public housing, public buildings and masterplans in the UK. Projects have won numerous RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects), UK Housing Design, New London Architecture (NLA) and Civic Trust Awards. He has been selected as a Mayor's Design Advocate, to provide design guidance to City Hall and local councils and is a patron and trustee of the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust / Blueprint for All, the London Festival of Architecture and until recently, he was a trustee of the Architecture Foundation.

Case studies

Hélène Chartier, Director of Urban Planning and Design at C40 Cities. Previously she was C40's Head of Zero Carbon Development. The team she leads develops programs bringing together cities and progressive players in the built environment sector in order to accelerate zero carbon buildings and sustainable urban regeneration. She especially leads the Reinventing Cities and Students Reinventing Cities initiatives as well as C40 activities on Net-Zero Districts and 15-minute City. Prior to joining C40, Hélène was advisor to the Mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo, where she especially leads the construction of the Greater Paris Metropolis. Hélène also worked for the Paris Urbanism Agency as well as for the global architecture and engineering firm, Arup. Hélène has a master's degree of science and engineering from the renowned French college, Ecole Centrale. She is based in Paris, and she lived in the past in London and New York.

Miguel Hernández, Director of Strategy and Corporate Development for Distrito Castellana Norte. With a degree in architecture from the Universidad Politécnica de Madrid and an MBA from the Instituto de Empresa, Miguel Hernández is a senior member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (FRICS). He currently serves as director of the Strategy and Corporate Development area for Distrito Castellana Norte (DCN). Over the course of his career, Miguel Hernández has served as chair of the reputable international network of real estate experts, Urban Land Institute (ULI), and headed Aguirre Newman. In addition to Madrid Nuevo Norte, he has worked on projects like 22@ in Barcelona; Cais Mauá do Brasil, in Porto Alegre; the regeneration of the Tiexi district in Shenyang (China), as an EU expert; the Nueva Centralidad de Arica in Chile; and the Desarrollos Urbanos Integrales Sustentables in Mexico, contributing to the latter two on behalf of the Inter-American Development Bank.

Marcos Ros, Member of the European Parliament. He is a member of the Socialists and Democrats Group and sits on the Committee on Culture, Education and Sport; and is substitute member of the Committee on the Environment. He is a professor on leave of absence from urban planning at the School of Architecture of Cartagena. He has a PhD in architecture, specialises in urban planning issues and has a long experience in university education and in rehabilitation of the architectural heritage. He has launched two weeks ago the New European Bauhaus' Friendship Group in the European Parliament, which has more than 30 members of parliament interested in this initiative.

