

TITLE: PLANNING FOR JUSTICE

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Manifesto for the Just City



The Just City in the 21st century.

In the globalized world, frontiers resignify. As we surround ourselves with information about a plural, diverse and connected planet, the spatial segregations and territorial conflicts intensify and assume global proportions. The nowadays city faces a challenge: inserting itself in a transnational financial circuit while, given the dimension of democracy, fulfilling its duty to represent its residents in the configuration of the urban space. The just city needs to recognize the oppressions and disparities structured by capital and provide democratic spaces where groups are able to dialogue on an equal basis and decide for the collectivity, putting

discussions and divergences in check. This city should not deny or minimize the disagreements and the conflicts, but recognize the interests of all without provoking erasures.

As urban planners, key professionals in the construction of the city's space, we have in our hands the task of contributing to the transformation for a more collective city, one that builds solidarities in diversity and that faces conflicts as a driving force for thinking alternative and innovative solutions in face of oppressions.

**"A city without conflict
presums a city where
everyone thinks the same"**

Principles.

Inclusion.

Planning needs to respect and recognize all cultures and ways of living, as well as issues of gender, race and sexual orientation.

Integration and Multidisciplinary.

A just city has the contribution of countless other professionals besides the urban planner.

Active Participation.

Broad popular participation in the decision making spaces is necessary for structural changes to be made through public policies. The role of the planner as an agent capable of dialoguing and finding possible paths in this process of constructing social justice is also fundamental.

Right to the City as a fundamental right.

For sustainable urban spaces that reproduce the wishes of their inhabitants.

Action plan.

1. Planners as mediators in the negotiation of urban conflicts!

Starting from this plural city, full of conflicts and different visions, the planner has a role and a duty - which is, by the way, political - of mediation in the democratic field, so that the collective interest prevails in urban disputes.

In cases where institutional decision-making spaces do not open up for this type of action, for popular participation or for public debate, it is necessary to look for loopholes, and new spaces for action, together with excluded urban groups, working through insurgent planning, looking for new ways for everyone's voices to be heard.

2. Use planning as a transformation tool!

Urban planning has the capacity of transforming the city's space. Investing in a more inclusive type of planning is a duty of a democratic public administration. Planning does not always serve this purpose, especially when it is related to neoliberal interests, large economic groups and the private sector in general. Thus, to reach a just city, we argue that the planning should be thought as a tool of transformation - that is, it must be associated with the search of social-spatial justice, the mitigation of social and spatial inequalities, and the visibility of the interests of marginalized groups.

3. Engage and empower bottom-up actions!

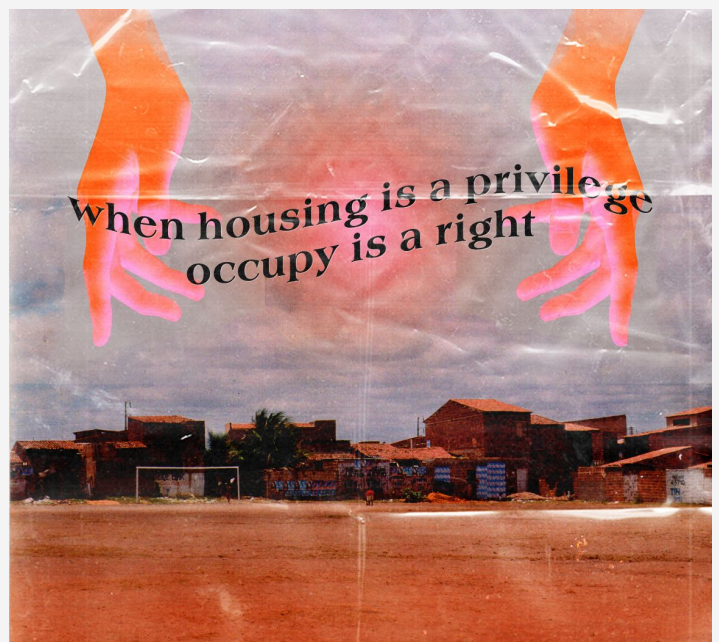
Changing the spatial dynamics of contemporary cities meets the idea of realizing the potential of the participation of its multiple residents. It is only the citizen practice, the daily exercise of citizenship, of rights and duties, that collaborates to guarantee rights, social achievements, structural change and the decolonization of territories. Planners must ensure active participation and encourage popular power and citizen autonomy, recognizing in the knowledge of the residents potential for alternative planning.

4. Human Rights and Citizenship

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights must be used as a global tool with great potential of working towards the claim for a just city. Including the Universal Human Rights as a basement and strategie during the planning processes and territorial dispute is important because it creates an international legal and argumentative base.

5. Guarantee the Right to Decent Housing!

Recognized as a human right, housing is an essential element for our social reproduction. The access to this right does not come down to a ceiling and four walls, and should include a series of dimensions that integrate an adequate and dignified life standard. Urban planning must consider the right to housing as key for the guarantee of a more just city, proposing programs and plans focused on habitation that disarm the hegemonic logic of housing as a merchandise and respect the diversity of ways of living.



source: authorial collage produced by the authors. 2020.

6. Planning that enables access to urban land!

Urban planning must be designed so that it provides more democratic access to land, allocates spaces for social interest housing, demarcates vulnerable territories as priorities for urbanization, recognizes the importance of the social function of property and legitimizes occupations in obsolete properties.

7. Creating a Legal Framework

Create a legal apparatus capable of ensuring the claims made here and a governmental plan that includes the citizens in the construction of the city through participatory projects. A legal framework that institutionalizes the access to the right to housing and the right to the city must be implemented to regulate the exploratory advances of the market. A robust body of laws, however, is not enough if it is not regulated. Thus, it is also our responsibility, not only as planners, but also as citizens, to claim this effectiveness.