

**International Society of City and Regional Planners**



**ISOCARP**

**Knowledge for Better Cities**

**Strategic  
Position  
Paper  
2021-2023**

**DISCUSSION DOCUMENT**

21 December 2020

## About ISOCARP

Founded in 1965, the International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISOCARP) is a global association of professional urban and regional planners. Our network brings together individual and institutional members from more than 85 countries, who work in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

With over five decades of accumulated knowledge and expertise manifested in both our members and within the Society, we initiated 'ISOCARP Institute' as a research spin-off for generating and disseminating knowledge for better cities. ISOCARP has successfully organized annual World Planning Congresses with thousands of papers, articles and contributions, accruing a wealth of knowledge for cities and territories.

The Society's main event is the annual ISOCARP World Planning Congress, which focuses on a globally significant planning theme each year. The Congress is open to both members and non-members. Since 1965, the Congress has always promoted the creation and sharing of knowledge in the planning profession, combining a unique, triple perspective on theory, policy and practice. At the Congress we launch our annual World Planning Practice Review as well our Planning Excellence Awards.

The Society and Institute share 'Planetary', a digital knowledge-platform by and for its members and visitors: [www.isocarp.org](http://www.isocarp.org).

## Executive Summary

The Board of the International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISOCARP) is determined to establish a new Strategic Plan, the first one since 2017. The world has evolved since then and dramatically since the pandemic COVID-19 outbreak in 2020. As a global association of professional planners, we owe it to ourselves and to our partners to plan our own future, on long-, mid- and short term. To kick-start the discussion and to invite all our members, we<sup>1</sup> present this ISOCARP Strategic Position Paper 2021-2023. Based on the feedback, the Board will finalize and present a more concise and formal Strategic Plan to be presented at the Special General Meeting on 2 February 2021.

The ISOCARP Strategic Position Paper 2021-2023 (ISPP) is the result on an internal reflection. It follows the method of strategic visioning and forecasting:

- by (re)formulating our vision and mission statement;
- by self-assessing our 56-year young Society via a SWOT-analysis;
- by using the SWOT-analysis to define 4 possible SWOT-strategies;
- by prioritizing and detailing the most desirable strategy;
- by aligning the desirable strategy with the Strategic Forecast presented at and endorsed by the Annual General Meeting on 10 November 2020.

Admittedly, the Board is very well aware of the disruptive impact of the pandemic health and interrelated economic and social crises. However, spurred by the potentially much severe impact of the climate and biodiversity crises, we strongly believe that humanity can only overcome these compounded crises in a place-based planned way. That makes us confident we will bounce back after this year's severe blow. It will however take time and will require a transformation of our way of recruiting and maintaining members – our greatest asset, of organizing our landmark World Planning Congresses, and of planning and implementing our member-to-member and member-to-client planning activities and services. Obviously, this will also require adjustments in our governance and operational approach, and overall need a different kind of business model to adjust the resources to the ambitions of the vision and mission statement. The ideas suggested as part of the 'transformative strategy' provide a platform for discussion and will need to be complemented by a more specific Strategic and Financial Plan for the entire term of the new Board.

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<sup>1</sup> This Discussion Document is not a formally endorsed Board document and does not necessarily reflect the personal views of each Board Member.

All members are invited to take part in this strategic discussion, with the Special General Meeting on 2 February 2021 as an excellent opportunity to exchange views and celebrate the joy of planning forward.

## 1. Background and Rationale

After the successful 2019 World Planning Congress in Jakarta, the newly established ISOCARP Board committed to develop a new Strategic Plan, overwriting ISOCARP's last Strategic Plan (dating back to 2017). As a Society of professional planners, we undermine our standing by acting without a clear plan. However, after an initial brainstorm session with our Secretariat in December 2019, and gaining new insights during our active presence at the 10<sup>th</sup> World Urban Forum in Abu Dhabi in February 2021, all of our attention was on how to weather the pandemic storm that brought our 'business as usual' to a complete stand-still. Contrary to our intentions, at the Annual Assembly of Members on 10 November 2020, the previous Board could do little more than providing a limited Strategic Forecast, leaving it up to the new Board to establish a new Strategic Plan for the next 3 years or so. On 10 November 2020, the largest Annual General Meeting (AGM) since our foundation in 1965, enthusiastically endorsed the Annual Board Report 2019-2020, including a Strategic Forecast as the foundation of this Strategic Position Paper and the final Strategic Plan for the period 2021-2023.

This ISOCARP Strategic Position Paper (ISPP) is commissioned by ISOCARP Board to establish the future direction of the International Society of City and regional Planners - ISOCARP. It comprises a vision and mission statement, a self-assessment of the current situation resulting in four strategic scenarios, and actions and organization to realize the most favorable scenarios. The ISPP will serve as discussion platform for ISOCARP members and result in a new ISOCARP Strategic Plan 2021-2023.

Our vision on sustainable cities and regions hasn't changed much since our foundation in 1965 and more in particular since the adoption of our new [Constitution](#) in 2018. But the world around us changes rapidly – the past year rather dramatically. Hence, we need to adapt our strategy to steward the change we need plan the cities and regions we can sustain.

The ownership of a strategic plan is essential. Without fiery enthusiasm most documents are easily forgotten.

## 2. Vision Statement

Our Vision Statement describes the bigger picture. The Vision is what we aspire desire for the future. The mission is what we do, for whom and how. It is important to clearly state what we believe in and to aim for that on a daily basis.

Article 2 of our Constitution provides clear aims: a) to be the international society for those professionally involved in city and regional planning, and b) to support at a global level the practice, teaching, promotion and improvement of city and regional planning, and housing. Yet, after the 2019 World Planning Congress in Jakarta and its Declaration, there is a growing member and Board commitment to increase our standing vis-à-vis the Global Agenda for Sustainable Development. In our [ISOCARP Brochure 2020](#), we explained how we can contribute to the Global (Territorial) Agenda and the Decade of Action to implement the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals agreed upon by all United Nation members and thus a vast majority of humanity:

- ISOCARP promotes good health and well-being in policies, plans and designs (SDG 13);
- ISOCARP contributes to quality education and gender equality through training programs and young planners' workshops in both Global South and Global North (SDGs 4 and 5);
- ISOCARP promotes clean water, renewable energy, sustainable innovation and infrastructure, reduced inequalities, responsible consumption, climate action and protection of life on land and below water in city and regional planning, through its planning services, projects, publications, and World Planning Congresses (SDGs 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14 and 15);
- ISOCARP invests in partnerships for the goals, e.g. by joining UN-Habitat's Planners for Climate Action and co-implementing European Sustainable Development projects (SDG 17);
- ISOCARP's main focus, however, is the implementation of SDG 11 on creating 'Sustainable Cities and Communities', through the application of the United Nations New Urban Agenda (NUA) and UN-Habitat's International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning (IG-UTP), by providing a unique platform to turn inspiring planning practices into science and put theories into practice.

Hence, complementary to the vision in our Constitution, this paper presents a new Vision and Mission Statement that is more responsive to this Global Territorial Agenda and seeks to position our Society as a 'champion of change' to reach the higher goals for humanity and the planet we call our home.

## Vision

Make cities and regions inclusive, safe, healthy, resilient and sustainable through integrative participatory placemaking and urban & territorial planning.

## Mission

Support communities making their cities and territories more sustainable through integrative participatory placemaking and urban & regional planning. We pledge to mobilize professional urban and regional planners to co-implement the vision enshrined in the Sustainable Development Goals, the New Urban Agenda and the International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning by:

- Advocating inclusive placemaking and urban/territorial as precondition for sustainable development of cities and regions;
- Promoting placemaking and planning profession, planning education and planning research, accessible for all;
- Enhancing public awareness and understanding of major planning issues at the global level;
- Representing and providing networks and communication channels for its members and partners;
- Improving the planning practice through creating a global network of planning and placemaking practitioners;
- Developing urban and regional planning activities, services and resources;
- Creating and sharing knowledge through congresses, workshops, projects and publications.

While the Vision Statement is rather generic and outcome/impact-oriented, the Mission Statement is more action/actor/result-oriented, with a combined place- and people-based planning approach to contribute to the higher aims of ‘leaving no places and people behind’ in the daily fight for more sustainable planetary development. This would entail a shift from a purely professional society towards a goal-oriented planners’ community.



THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF CITY AND REGIONAL PLANNERS  
**THE POSITION OF ISOCARP**



This does not mean we are reducing the Society’s position as a mere amplifier and enabler of the United Nations. We are not a state nor UN-funded organization. We are a society of planners by and for individual and institutional members and working with cities, working with educational and research institutions, and also working with other global organizations at large that share common values. This is further

elaborated in the diagram below.



THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF CITY AND REGIONAL PLANNERS  
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Based on our overall positioning, and if confirmed by the Assembly of Members, the suggested Vision and Mission Statement will be providing a guiding compass for long-, medium- and short-term actions and most appropriate use of our limited resources as an independent Society.

However, before prioritizing future strategies and actions, we must acknowledge our internal strengths/weaknesses versus our external opportunities/threats – as a basis for scenario-planning.

## 2. Challenges and Opportunities

To strategize on our future pathways, we need to understand where we come from, where we are, and what would happen if we don't intervene. The SWOT-Analysis below is a subjective inventory - what came to mind to the people contributing to it thus far. While it started before the pandemic outbreak, it needed to be adjusted to the pandemic and related economic and social global crises. While open for additional suggestions, we believe it touches upon the most urgent challenges we face as an organization. As a reminder: while the Strengths and Weaknesses address the internal characteristics of our Society, the Opportunities and Threats are more about the external parameters having a likely impact on ISOCARP.

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global accessibility</li> <li>• Unique global advocate for planning and planners' rights</li> <li>• The World Planning Congress (since 1965!) and its World Planning Practice Review (since 2005)</li> <li>• Network of individual and institutional members</li> <li>• Growing diversity and interactive involvement of members</li> <li>• Members as planning volunteers</li> <li>• Functional Scientific Committee</li> <li>• Combination of planning practice and research</li> <li>• Well established planning activities (UPATs, YPPs, Excellence Awards)</li> <li>• Rapid response to the pandemic crises with plenty of cyber activities and the first entirely virtual/paying World Planning Congress in 2020</li> <li>• Increasingly vocal and visible through social media</li> <li>• Global Planning Aid initiative as catalyst for pro-poor planning support</li> <li>• Established Office in The Hague, Netherlands</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global North perspective / weak representation of Global South in ISOCARP governance</li> <li>• Critical mass problem + ageing membership profile</li> <li>• Small player in the level playing field of (inter)national planning associations</li> <li>• Weak financial basis - no core funding – limited membership-based revenue – uncertain future for Congress revenues as main income</li> <li>• Value for membership as persistent issue</li> <li>• Flawed CRM/Member-binding</li> <li>• Unclear role/value of/for Institutional members</li> <li>• No clear policy targets/no target indicators/no campaigns</li> <li>• Membership as core funding not possible anymore</li> <li>• No clear/assigned role in achieving SDG(11), NUA and IGUTP</li> <li>• Perceived as a corporate professional body by many potential sponsors/charitable donors</li> <li>• Insufficient vocal for regional/territorial planning vs city/urban planning</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Pandemic as catalyst for Advanced Digitalization</li> <li>• Decade of Action (to implement the SDGs) – incl new MoU with UN-Habitat as strategic partner</li> <li>• Growing awareness on the need for planning and planners</li> <li>• Growing interest for Partnerships with other likeminded organizations = potential (core) funding</li> <li>• Digitally more agile (potential) members</li> <li>• The ISOCARP Institute as a respectable 'Centre for Urban Excellence'</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The pandemic is not over yet!</li> <li>• Uncertain future for on-ground/in-person planning activities (incl. largely attended Congresses)</li> <li>• General eroding of member-based model</li> <li>• Growing arena of well-resourced 'sustainable urban development &amp; governance' players</li> <li>• Planning discredited for sustainable development failures</li> </ul>

At some point in the nearby future, it would be helpful if we can a) map out the key drivers of a rapidly changing world (ranging from depletion of natural resources, population

growth, largely unplanned urbanization, loss of biodiversity, global warming to social inequalities and multilevel territorial governance) and b) map out the most relevant stakeholders holding keys for change towards the world we need and can sustain<sup>2</sup>. This will further enrich our Strategic Position Paper and provide more clear pathways to a) the planning domains and aims to prioritize over time and b) to prioritize the planning agencies to partner with.

### 3. Strategic Scenarios

There are four basic strategic scenarios to address the challenges and opportunities listed in the SWOT-Analysis. A strategy can be more passive or pro-active. An understanding of this is needed to assure a forward-looking, future-oriented organization, opposed to an organization which is reactive and defensive. The four strategies can be summarized as:

1. Strengths + Opportunities = Offensive Strategy
2. Weaknesses + Opportunities = Transformative Strategy
3. Strengths + Threats = Defensive Strategy
4. Weaknesses + Threats = Survival Strategy

#### Offensive Strategy

In this most optimistic scenario we are confident that our internal strengths and external opportunities will allow us to make bold strides to leap onto the next level by the end of 2023: a well-resourced/sponsored Society with 1000+ members resulting in a measurable impact on the fight for sustainable development through urban and territorial planning and placemaking, through a well-stocked portfolio of member-to-member planning activities as well member-to-clients activities through its Institute. The Congress and its Review will remain a flagship hallmark that will entail a rolling program of activities. The offensive strategy is further characterized by:

- Strategic partnerships and joint action programs with major key players to advance a progressive Global Territorial/Planning Agenda (all relevant UN-agencies, WRI, C40, ...);
- Core-funded by well-resourced non-profitable organization(s) or institution(s);
- Alternate on-ground and virtual World Planning Congresses complementary to the World Urban Forums;
- A well-resourced leading ISOCARP Journal of Planning Practice & Research;

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<sup>2</sup> See e.g. [UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan 2020-2023](#)

- Decentralized governance through well-established regional chapters;
- Balanced planning activities and services in both Global North and Global South;
- A well-resourced hosted professional secretariat to run all the activities of the Society and its Institute, with strategic oversight by a Board and Advisory Stakeholder Committee.

## **Transformative Strategy**

In this moderately optimistic strategy, the focus is more on using the opportunities to address our endemic weaknesses, before aspiring a more offensive strategy. Not excluding any of the features from the offensive strategy, this scenario will focus on key features including:

- Further strengthen and innovate our Cyber backbone developed during the first pandemic wave (Cyber Agora, Cyber Planning Lab, virtual Community of Practices & Research);
- Further improve our CRM and incrementally increase steady membership towards 1000 individual and institutional members;
- Complement our legacy through active prospection of place-based planning activities with remote alternatives and digital platforms;
- Partially virtualize our World Planning Congresses and establish a digital paper platform;
- Investing in a new common digital platform (website) for the Society and its Institute;
- Expanding PULSE (our digital newsletter) with a 'Planning Blog' for/by members
- Develop freemium products/services for members;
- Experiment with selective regionalization of ISOCARP (regional chapter Africa + other territorial CoPRs);
- Become more vocal on planning rights of communities and rights and duties of qualified planners;
- Incrementally transform the overall governance of Society and its Institute including a further professionalization of the joint Secretariat (including shift of executive tasks from Board to Secretariat);
- Developing a podium function for our Secretariat through local collaboration.

## **Defensive Strategy**

This moderately pessimistic strategy has its focus on the threats and how to address them by making better use of our strengths. This is about:

- Retain our existing members;
- Call upon member- and partner solidarity to weather the pandemic crises;
- Concentrate all energy of Board and Secretariat on our 'secured' flagship activities only – free all other initiatives (Congress, Awards and Review);
- Limited prospection of client-based planning services;
- Executive tasks by both Secretariat and Board members.

## Survival Strategy

This most pessimistic strategy starts from the premise that our strengths are outperformed by our weaknesses to address the most likely threats such as the pandemic outfall. This basically translates into:

- Freezing remaining assets;
- Make a liquidity scheme with a risk analysis;
- Staff reduction to bare minimum (admin) – compensated by executive tasks by Board members.

The overall strategy, as preferred by the Board, is to remain aware of all four strategic scenarios with a preference for a **Transformative Strategy** with a **Defensive back-up** option in case of a third wave of the pandemic crisis deep into 2021 (with potential disruptive impact on the Doha Congress). The rationale for this preference stems from the Strategic Forecast as presented in the Board Annual Report 2019-2020, as approved by the members at the AGM of 10 November 2020. As we will illustrate below, most of these Strategic Forecasts fit best in the Transformative Strategy. However, as the AGM asked the (new) Board to revise the budget in order to preserve our basic assets, a Defensive contingency planning is needed in conjunction.

We are hopeful that our financial reserves and primary revenue generating activities will prevent us from resorting to a survival strategy during the pandemic outfall, while we will need at least three more years before aspiring a more bold offensive strategy – while remaining ready and prepared to gear up or down whenever the circumstances require to do so. We will now further outline this Transformative strategy.

## 4. Transformative Strategy

The first question to be addressed in a more elaborated transformative strategy is the ‘what question’. The founders of ISOCARP called for a community of city and regional planners. The context of 2020 is definitely different than the context in 1965, and so is the ‘job description’ of city and regional planners, often now referred to as urban and territorial planners. While there is no need to consider a name change, we surely need to redefine our profession and passion within the spectrum of most pressing planning needs today. This is needed to overcome a persistent public perception that contemporary planners are still largely seen as architects and engineers ‘making (master)plans’.

While acknowledging the different scale, modus operandi and financing, our transformative strategy and policy should certainly tune in into the global strategic planning objectives raised by UN-Habitat and many other related global players. Adapted to our own legacy and fields of excellence, our Vision Statement could be broken down in following key components;

	ISSUES	ISOCARP ACTIONS
<b>PLACE-BASED PLANNING</b>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Planning &amp; Placemaking for towns, cities and city-regions</b></li> <li><b>Planning for eco-regions</b></li> <li><b>Planning for countries and beyond</b></li> </ol>	Policies, Plans and Designs Place-based governance Place-based legislation Place-based financing	Excellence Awards Urban Planning Advisory Teams Regional Planning Advisory Team National Planning Advisory Team Transnational Community of Practices & Research Public Space/Placemaking Programme
<b>PEOPLE-BASED PLANNING</b>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Children &amp; Youth</b></li> <li><b>Women</b></li> <li><b>Elderly &amp; Disabled</b></li> <li><b>Poor &amp; Deprived</b></li> </ol>	Child/Elderly-responsive planning Gender-responsive planning Disabled-responsive planning Pro-poor planning Minority/Indigenous based  <i>Human Rights based participatory planning</i>	Students Awards Young Professional Planners Programme Female Planners Actions Senior Planners Actions Barefoot Placemaking & Planning Training
<b>ISSUE-BASED PLANNING</b>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Health-based</b></li> <li><b>Mobility-based</b></li> <li><b>Climate-based</b></li> <li><b>Nature-based</b></li> <li><b>Housing-based</b></li> <li><b>Energy-based</b></li> <li><b>Innovation-based</b></li> </ol>	Urban Health Urban Mobility Climate Action NBS Housing Energy Innovation	Thematic Community of Practices & Research P4CA

In this indicative matrix, the blue font issues and actions are already somehow in place, while the red font issues and actions are critical for the transformation of ISOCARP towards a more inclusive planning-oriented community of planning practitioners and researchers. It will require dedication and additional resources to achieve this more balanced planning approach for and by our members. Done well, it should however result

in mobilizing more members in Global North and South. However, instead of covering all issues 'lightly' it might be a good strategy to yearly pick a selection of key planning issues from each of the three planning approaches. This could enable the mobilization of specialized players on these themes that could support and eventually co-fund activities.

Related to the 'what' question is the 'how' and 'whom' questions. The 'how' is about planning methods but also the skills needed to apply these methods, which requires life-long learning and training – a strategic opportunity for ISOCARP and its Institute. The 'whom' question has a very short and very long answer. The short answer is: by professional planners. While this is the very essence of ISOCARP, we however have to acknowledge the reality that many if not most professionals involved in sustainable urban and territorial development did not have a planning education or planning degree. Moreover, the exponentially increasing planning demands can simply not be fulfilled by the existing planning education resources while many aspirant planners simply do not have the financial resources to enjoy planning education. Hence, we will need to redefine professional planners based on either/and/or planning education and planning practice, while our target group for capacity building and training should also be expanded to grassroots' community developers by providing 'self-help basic placemaking and planning' skills. The 'whom' question is also related to the question to the basic stakeholder clusters of governmental organizations, education sector, private sector, civil society and media. Planners can be employed or working with one or a combination of these clusters while as a professional non-profit organization (part of the civil society) we need to collaborate with key stakeholders in the other clusters. It is obvious that what, how, whom questions, and answers have substantially evolved since 1965 and that needs to be addressed in a transformative strategy. The 2015 International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning (IG-UTP), enshrined within the 2016 New Urban Agenda, provide a solid compass to guide that transformation. ISOCARP will need to scale and step up its efforts to recalibrate its outreach and objectives based on the new body of international planning conventions, while moving to the frontline of pro-active normative planning work at the global scale – e.g. exploring a more holistic New Territorial Agenda including urban and territorial green deals.

The matrix below shows how the transformative strategic objectives can be differentiated in time. More importantly the matrix indicates what will be needed to achieve these objectives in terms of governance, operations and finances.

	LONG-TERM (3-10Y)	SHORT-TERM (1-3Y)
<b>OBJECTIVES</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Co-implement SDGs (11+related/NUA/IGUTP) – Decade of Action!</li> <li>2. Advocate new Territorial Agenda</li> <li>3. Advocate &amp; realize planning-based and planners-supported SD</li> <li>4. Advocate &amp; realize grassroots planning rights</li> <li>5. Premium Digital Platform for Planning Knowledge &amp; Exchange</li> <li>6. Complementary toolbox of Planning Activities (m2m and Planning Services (m2c)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Align annual World Planning Congress Theme with SDG/NUA - to mobilize global sponsors</li> <li>2. Partially virtualize our World Planning Congresses and establish a digital paper platform;</li> <li>3. Strengthen and innovate our Cyber backbone (open/closed)</li> <li>4. Complement our legacy through active prospection of place-based planning activities with remote alternatives and digital platforms;</li> <li>5. Investing in a new common digital platform (website) for the Society and its Institute;</li> <li>6. Expanding PULSE (our digital newsletter) with a 'Planning Blog' for/by members</li> <li>7. Become more vocal on planning rights of communities and rights and duties of qualified planners;</li> <li>8. Develop methodology and business model for Global Planning Aid/Barefoot Placemaking &amp; Planning services</li> <li>9. Strategic Partner- &amp; Donorship – partially focused on specific planning themes</li> </ol>
<b>PARTNERSHIPS</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Well connected to all major territorial agenda setting global players</li> <li>8. Well connected to all major planning associations (through Global Planners Network)</li> <li>9. Preferential partners for specific planning topics</li> <li>10. Broad partnership coalition established to advance life-long planning education</li> <li>11. Broad partnership coalition established to advance Barefoot Placemaking &amp; Planning</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Develop a new partnership strategy as follow up of this Strategic Plan</li> <li>11. Review the accreditations/representations to UNESCO &amp; CoE</li> <li>12. Develop and implement new MoU and Workplan with UN-Habitat as most strategic partner – including workplan for WUF11</li> <li>13. Establish workplans for all active MoU's</li> <li>14. Review all inactive MoU's</li> <li>15. Prioritize new MoU's based on the Partnership Strategy</li> </ol>
<b>GOVERNANCE</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. Board with strategic oversight role over all operations of Society, its Institute and their common Secretariat</li> <li>13. Strategic Partnerships</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16. Restructuring the Board around operational clusters (through Policy Resolutions)</li> <li>17. Embedding the new Cyber Agora, Cyber Lab and CoPRs in our governance</li> <li>18. Incrementally transform the overall governance of Society and its Institute including a further professionalization of the joint Secretariat (including shift of executive tasks from Board to Secretariat);</li> <li>19. Revised constitution for the Institute to ensure integrated governance of the Society, its Institute and their joint Secretariat</li> <li>20. New Board Policies on Governance matters</li> <li>21. Experiment with selective regionalization of ISOCARP (Regional Chapter Africa + other territorial CoPRs)</li> <li>22. Develop and implement strategy to activate Institutional Members</li> </ol>
<b>OPERATIONS</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14. Unified Professional Secretariat</li> <li>15. The Hague/Province South-Holland as host city/region for our Secretariat (or other Dutch city)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>23. Functional description of Secretarial positions incl: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Executive management for Soc/Inst Secretariat</li> <li>• Financial manager Soc/Inst</li> <li>• Congress Content/Logistics Director</li> <li>• COMS-director</li> </ul> </li> <li>24. Making a new start in a new office space</li> <li>25. Developing a podium function for our Secretariat through local collaboration with Platform 'Stad' (The Hague), VDM/SURE METREX.</li> </ol>
<b>FINANCING</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16. Financially sustainable and transparent</li> <li>17. Core-funded by members AND donors</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>26. Develop a new Financial Plan for the period 2021-2023, including a revised Budget for 2020-2021</li> <li>27. Further improve our CRM and incrementally increase steady membership towards 1000 individual and institutional members.</li> <li>28. Develop freemium products/services for members and adjusted pricing policy for non-members</li> <li>29. Organize additional paper presentations</li> <li>30. Generate donations</li> </ol>

This transformative strategy is underpinned by following principles and actions outlined by the previous Board and endorsed by the Assembly of Members on 10 November 2020:

**First principle: by the members, for the members**

- Improved Planetary website and social media communications.
- Membership growth in all parts of the world.
- Open and members-only platforms to encourage engagement and participation by planners and nonmembers.
- Continue to enhance the opportunities for members to support the Society and to lead new projects and programs.
- Strengthen relationships with national planning institutes and multinational planning institutions.

**Second principle: knowledge for better cities and regions**

- Extend the reach of the World Planning Congress, and its Annual Review of World Planning Practices, our other publications and archive, training, communities of practice, forums and regional events
- Publish the Society's position on critical issues and speak directly to governments and international bodies.

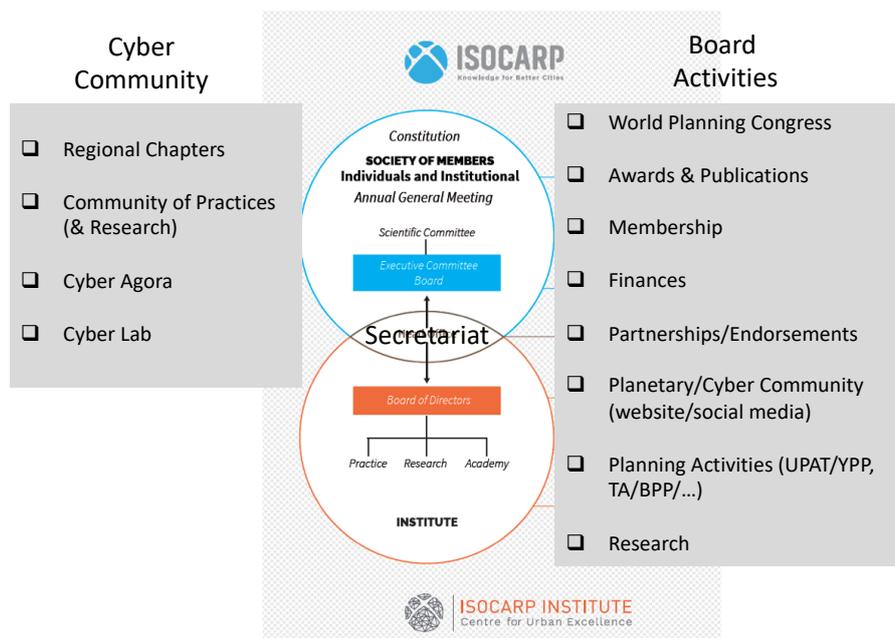
**Third principle: member government**

- Integrated governance of two financial administrations (Society-Project Office).
- Professional Secretariat and appropriate digital infrastructure.

**Fourth principle: growth and innovation**

- Weather the pandemic storm; adapt in ways that accelerate strategic change.
- Come out stronger with a mix of in-person and virtual events and tools to advance member to member collaborative knowledge generation and exchange.
- Strategic partnerships for increased advocacy on global recognition of planning and planners.
- Planning Aid for poor and deprived communities.
- Targets for assets and fund raising.

Applied to the current structure of ISOCARP, a transformed structure could look like the indicative scheme below:



Regardless of the final structure of Board Activities by both the Society and its Institute, a professional executive management will be crucial to help achieve the redefined Vision and Mission. This will entail a rethinking of the current business model, thus far largely based on membership fees and income from on-ground/in-person planning events and activities. The new Strategic and Financial Plan 2021-2023 will need to address this shift towards a new business model.

## 31. Way Forward

ISOCARP-members will be encouraged to reflect on this Strategic Position Paper as a lead up to a discussion on the Draft Strategic and Financial Plan 2021-2023 to be presented by the Board at the already planned additional Assembly of Members on 2 February 2021.

The final adoption of the Strategic and Financial Plan 2021-2023 will be complemented by more detailed work- and project plans, both on collective basis for the entire Board and Secretariat, as well for the designated project or activity clusters and cluster managers.

END