



**International Society of City
and Regional Planners**

10th Young Planners' Programme

**Cancún, Mexico
4-6 September 2000**



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REPORT by the Young Planners' Coordinator

Fernando Brandão Alves, Portugal

I. INTRODUCTION

Once again I had the stimulating opportunity to deal during almost five days with young planners from different parts of the World, co-ordinating their involvement in this Young Planners' WORKSHOP under the theme of the XXXVI International Congress of ISoCaRP "People's Empowerment in Planning: Citizens as *Actors* in Managing their Habitat". For the 10th time a small group of Young Planners was selected to work on a specific subject.

A. The Young Planners

Thirteen young planners were selected to this Workshop:

- Amit Prothi (USA)
- Annemarie Loots (South Africa)
- Andile Skosana (South Africa)
- Bruno Marques (Portugal)
- Elsona van Huyssteen (South Africa)
- Engela Meyer (South Africa)
- Itaru Yoshie (Japan)
- Jorge Canaz Lopes (Mexico)
- Maria Bazán Lopes (Argentina/NL)
- Maria Perez Rincón (Mexico)
- Marilyn Regino (Philippines/Germany)
- Samantha Braid (South Africa)
- Shipra Narang (Índia).

B. About the Role of the Young Planners' Coordinators

Scientific contents and demands were developed by both Co-ordinators – *Prof Fernando Brandão Alves* appointed by the Executive Committee of ISoCaRP, and *Arch. Jean Luca Tofaneli* from Buenito Juarez Municipality.

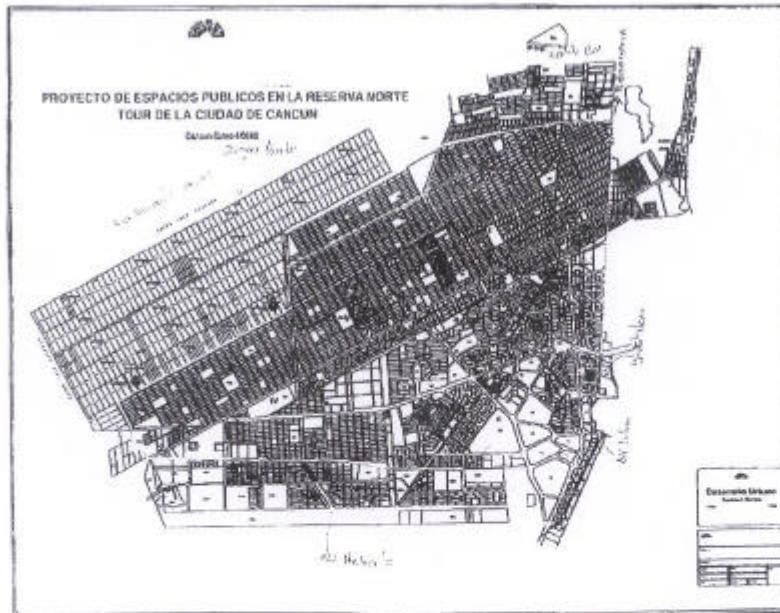
Their role consists also in helping and guiding the discussions of the working groups and in the rehearsal of the presentation of the Congress Audience. However, the Co-ordinators should give Young Planners a working scenery where they may have all freedom and space to develop their own ideas and discussions with their colleagues.

C. The Teams

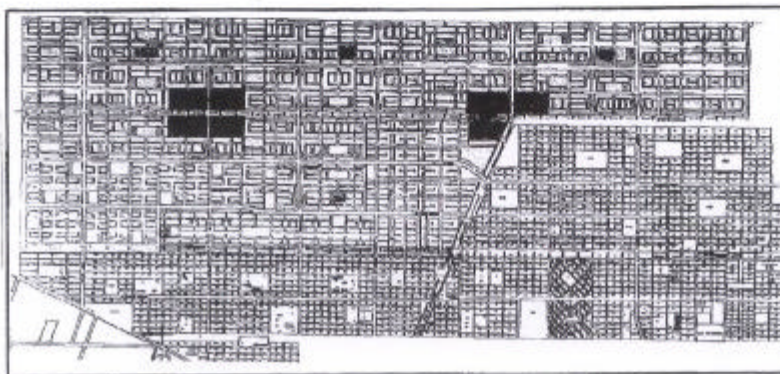
Two teams were created in order to manage and cover the all study area – in this way, the study-area was divided in two sub-centres, which means each group had to deal with one of the sub-centres and its complexities.

D. The Scope. Realities and Key Issues

Further information was shared by local technicians and the co-ordinator *Jean Luca* (from the Municipality); in this way, Young Planners could view and assimilate the study area in a broader development reality and the selection and identification of key issues and different scales and complexities. (see Maps 1 and 2)



MAP 1



Map 2

II. SCIENTIFIC CONTENTS AND DEMANDS

Object:” New spreading areas for housing-conceptual proposals for the development of proposed Sub-Centres in Northern Reserve, Cancún, Mexico”

A. Principles and Concepts

In order to take and sustain the Young Planners' proposals some principles were a very important presence in the workshop since the very first moment.

- a) Cancún, being a new city, but also its relation to old memories and cultures – thus Young Planner's had to think about innovated alternatives for the study areas which could stimulate new behaviours of people through their art and activities.
- b) The possibility of people help building their city, which also means new places for safety activities and meetings, laser amusement crossing cultures, where local people and tourists together may take their own advantages in this (new) popular places;
- c) Sustainability of the city and of the area;
- d) Identity and values - creating an identity in these new spreading areas, where people might be proud to get related with tourists and other Mexican visitors;
- e) New ideas and components for the urban proposals; dual with new human scales and dimensions, values and different urban components; also the feeling that public urban spaces should not be forgotten;
- f) Finally, working towards new and compared concepts.

III – REPORT – DAY BY DAY (SUMMARY)**Day 1****4 September 2000**

- * Site visit tour;
- * General presentation of the study area by *Santy* (architect Buenito Juárez Municipality);
- * Further information (see next Figure) sharing by *Jean Luca* (architect Buenito Juárez Municipality);
- * Discussion + debate over: *Strategy / How to approach project*.

SEVERAL EQUIPMENTS IN URBAN SUB-CENTRE (REGIONAL LEVEL)			
SUBSISTEM	ELEMENT	SUBCENTRE I M2 AREA	SUBCENTRE II M2 AREA
<i>Education</i>			
	Primary schools	20000	20000
<i>Public Assistance</i>			
	Public veil-space	-	2000
	Cemetery	-	15000
<i>Public Administration</i>			
	Municipality Delegation	3000	2500
	Civic Court of Justice	1500	-
<i>Culture and Cult spaces</i>			
	Local Library	3000	-
	Theatre	8000	-
	Museum of Education	3000	-
	House of Culture	6000	-
	Temples	10000	-
<i>Recreation / Laser</i>			
	Civic plazas	5000	5000
	Cinema	3600	-
	Urban parque	60000	90000
<i>Sports</i>			
	Pavilions	30000	30000
	Sportive unity	-	25000
	Gymnasium	-	10000
<i>Health</i>			
	Consulter clinic	500	-
	Clinic	-	10000
<i>Commerce</i>			
	Public market	10000	-
	Self-service	10000	10000
<i>Supplies</i>			
	Basic unity of supplies	-	10000
<i>Communications</i>			
	Mail station, public phone station, telegraphs	2500	2500
<i>Transports</i>			
	Taxi-station	500	500
	Bus-station	2000	5000
<i>Urban public services</i>			
	Police -station	1500	-
	Gas-station	2000	2000
	Fire-station	-	2900
	Electric-station	10000	10000
	Central water pump	2500	2500
	Water reservatory	2500	2500
TOTAL PER URBAN SUB-CENTRE		197100	257400
TOTAL AREA – Ha 45.45			

□ **Site visit to the study area called “La Guadalupana”** – new low and middle-income development in Northern Reserve.

- Drive through the older parts of the city towards North Reserve; brief history and context provided by *Santy*;
- At La Guadalupana the developer explains the scope of the development as well as his company's involvement and some design details;
- The group got to see the three alternate types of houses provided in the development;
- The group was also shown the building techniques used in the development.

□ **Presentation by *Santy* at Workshop venue**

- *Santy* introduced the group to Cancún by explaining the history of the city and placing it in the regional context;
- She provided statistics and gave an indication of the dominant trends in Cancún and the region;
- The position and perspective of the local municipality was also explained;
- Discussion over some issues began.

□ **Further information sharing led by *Jean Luca***

- Continuing from where *Santy* left off, *Jean Luca* proceeded to give a more in-depth presentation of Cancún's new Planning Department's position;
- The 1993 General Plan was explained and he gave us more insight into the technical and legal aspects of the development of the Northern Reserve;
- *Jean Luca* also introduced the project for this Young Planner's Workshop.

□ **Discussion and Debate over Project**

- Discussion followed as the group tried to find clarification of certain aspects of the project leading to a debate over the purpose of the exercise;
- It was agreed that the project would serve as a guide for members of the municipality by incorporating all criticisms and shortcomings of the municipality's progress thus far. Further, the project would focus on the Northern Reserve as a whole with special attention given to providing workable alternatives for the two sub-centres;
- No agreement was reached as to the make-up of the project teams.

YOUNG PLANNERS WORKSHOP

Day 2

5 September 2000

- * Powerpoint Presentation by *Santy* (from Buenito Juarez Municipality);
 - * Group breaks up into project teams;
 - * Project teams continue with task at hand;
 - * Project teams report back to each other about progress thus far.
-

☐ Powerpoint presentation by *Santy*

- The group was shown the Powerpoint presentation on which yesterday's session was based;
- Several documents for use during the project were provided;
- These include:
 - * The legal and Institutional Framework of Human Settlement in Mexico;
 - * Basic Concepts in Mexican Law;
 - * Northern Reserve Urban Development (Partial Program).

☐ Group breaks up into project teams:

- People moved into two groups as two members were absent and this was the most convenient solution.
- The project teams set off with the work under the guidance of the Co-ordinator *Fernando Brandão Alves* and Municipality members;
-

☐ Work in the teams

☐ Team reports about Day Results

- The Co-ordinator *Fernando Brandão Alves* stimulated the teams to conclude the day by presenting what they had to each other;
- This was then an opportunity to begin some discussion between the teams.

YOUNG PLANNERS WORKSHOP

Day 3

6 September 2000

- * Early morning meetings;
 - * Working towards completed concepts. The Co-ordinator *Fernando Brandão Alves* gave some discussing points to try that groups could reach their own principles and theoretical concepts which could justify positions and proposals;
 - * Finishing touches and preparing for presentation.
-

□ Early morning meetings

- Each project team took time this morning to summarise what they did yesterday and to gather their thoughts on what had to be done today.

□ Working towards complete concepts

- The morning session at the venue was predominantly to give all the ideas of the day before clear shape and to fit them into a coherent concept and approach to each of the new sub-centre developments.

□ Finishing touch... Specific supervision of the Co-ordinator on material, its nature, and graphic quality.

- Much of the afternoon was spent reworking and refining the proposals;
- By the end of the session both teams were preparing material for the presentation on 7 September.

* Special thanks to the Young Planner *Andile Skosana* (from South Africa) who gave a fruitful help to this 2nd Part (Day by Day report).

7 September 2000

Both Teams presented their results in the Opening Plenary Session to the main Congress Audience.

All Young Planners participated after that to all main Congress workshops.

October 2000

TEAM 1

Project: Conceptual Design Proposals for the Development of Proposed Sub-Centre 2 (Sub Centro 2), Northern Reserve, Cancún, Mexico

Project Team 1:

Annemarie Loots, South Africa
 Engela Meyer, South Africa
 Amit Prothi, India/USA
 Andile Skosana, South Africa
 Elsona van Huyssteen, South Africa
 Itaru Yoshi, Japan

INTRODUCTION

The establishment of the City of Cancún goes back to 1969 when Infratur¹ commissioned several studies in the area, which resulted in President Luis Echeverría issuing a decree (published in the Official Federation Gazette on August 10, 1971) recognizing Cancún and its surroundings as places suitable for tourism development, housing, planning and related activities. The Municipality of Benito Juárez, the authority under which the Cancún falls, is located in the State of Quintana Roo on the east coast of Mexico. Since its inception, the City has observed significant growth. The focus of tourism development was to take advantage of the Caribbean blue seas that border the Yucatán Peninsula. As a result, today the area caters to around two million annual visitors. Tourism has become one of the most important economic generators in the region and Cancún has seen large movements of migrants coming to work in its hotels and other tourism related industries.

Urban planning in Mexico is guided by the *General Law on Human Settlements, 1993*. The said law defines urban development as the process of planning and regulating the Foundation, conservation, improvement and growth of population centres. Amongst others, it determines that -

- greater powers be assigned to municipalities; and
- citizen participation should be integrated with the formulation, modification, implementation, evaluation and monitoring of urban development programmes.

In February 2000, Cancún adopted the Urban Development Programme (UDP) that was drafted based on the *General Law on Human Settlements*. The UDP clearly indicates that the municipality anticipated significant growth, and planned accordingly. Early in its planning exercise, it established two areas (known as the Northern Reserve and the Southern Reserve) intended to provide housing for the growing population. However, in the past few years, the Southern Reserve has been developed to near capacity resulting in significant development pressure on the Northern Reserve. As part of the UDP, the City has established a framework for development for the Northern Reserve. By 2010, a total of 272 500 inhabitants are anticipated to live in 1,090 hectares comprising the reserve. In addition to housing, the City has established two sub-centres where it envisions service functions and facilities.

Given the speed at which development is moving ahead, the City anticipates that these sub-centres will become active parts of the community before the end of the next decade. The scope then for this project was to provide physical layouts and test the development programme that the City had established for these sub-centres. Our team focused on Sub-

¹ A Mexican organisation dedicated to identifying appropriate places for tourism development, now called FONATUR.

Centre 2, essentially with an awareness that the City was looking for developmental ideas and design concepts which recognised the pressures of growth, yet had the ability to evolve as the surrounding community grew.

APPROACH OF THE PROJECT TEAM

In the (by now) established tradition of the Young Planners Workshops, our multi-skilled and multi-cultural team kicked off our work with a lot of enthusiasm and eagerness. However, very soon we realised that (as it goes at the start of most planning projects) the first challenge was to deal with perceptions, pre-conceived ideas and communication within the project team itself and between the project team and the client. We thus (after a bumpy start and a lot of deliberation of what we want to do, what we think we should do, what we could do, what we want to give comments about and what we had opinions about) decided to make it even more complicated by facing a REAL SITUATION!

The approach followed by this project team thus are based on the following decisions:

- given the background of the project and the specific needs of our client (and in this instance also host) – work with the project brief as set out by the Municipality of Benito Juárez;
- develop proposals that are creative, but also implementable and realistic within the legal and institutional constraints faced by the local municipality and planners (including the existing UDP, land management system and bounding participation and decision-making procedures);
- in the spirit of the Young Planners Workshop (and most other planning projects) face the challenge of limited access to information and technology and other logistical constraints; and
- value the local experience and knowledge (of the planners and the people of Cancún) and be sensitive towards their unique situation, local political circumstances and lives in which they were so generous of letting us have a 'furtive glance' of and a learning experience in.

GENERAL AIMS OF THE PROJECT

In line with the conference title of "People's Empowerment in Planning: Citizens as *Actors* in Managing their Habitat" we obviously, in the context of our agreed approach, had to seriously consider how the planning process and proposals would contribute to empowerment of people in planning. The challenge in Cancún and in our project specifically was, however, to do this while taking into account:

- that participation of the local community has taken place (even though to our and the local planners' opinion in a limited and less than ideal way);
- that the approval of the Urban Development Programme for Cancún has taken place through a process of public consultation;
- the restrictions imposed by the current legal procedures to accommodate public participation; and
- the local sensitivity regarding land ownership and development.

The project team thus tried to come up with development and design processes and proposals that would contribute to the empowerment of people in the planning of the sub-centre, through:

- ensuring compatibility with consultation that have taken place;

- providing for empowerment and participation in creative ways, within the context of legal and local realities; and
- realising that empowering people is not only about enabling them to partake in 'talking and deciding about their city' but by enabling them to share in the economic and social opportunities offered and partake in the developing, but also functioning and management of their habitats.

Within this context and taking into account the background to the project (i.e. proposals for the development and design of Sub-Centre 2), the general aims of the project, have thus been identified as the following:

- Address the *expressed* needs and problems of the local community in the surrounding area in terms of services and facilities;
- Spatially integrate the sub-centre to other parts of the city to contribute to sustainability, efficiency and equality;
- Empower the surrounding local community in terms of opportunities and access to services that will enliven their lives;
- Strengthen and integrate the local economy by promoting a diverse range of economic activities; and
- Explore and enhance existing strengths and opportunities of Cancún and the site in specific.

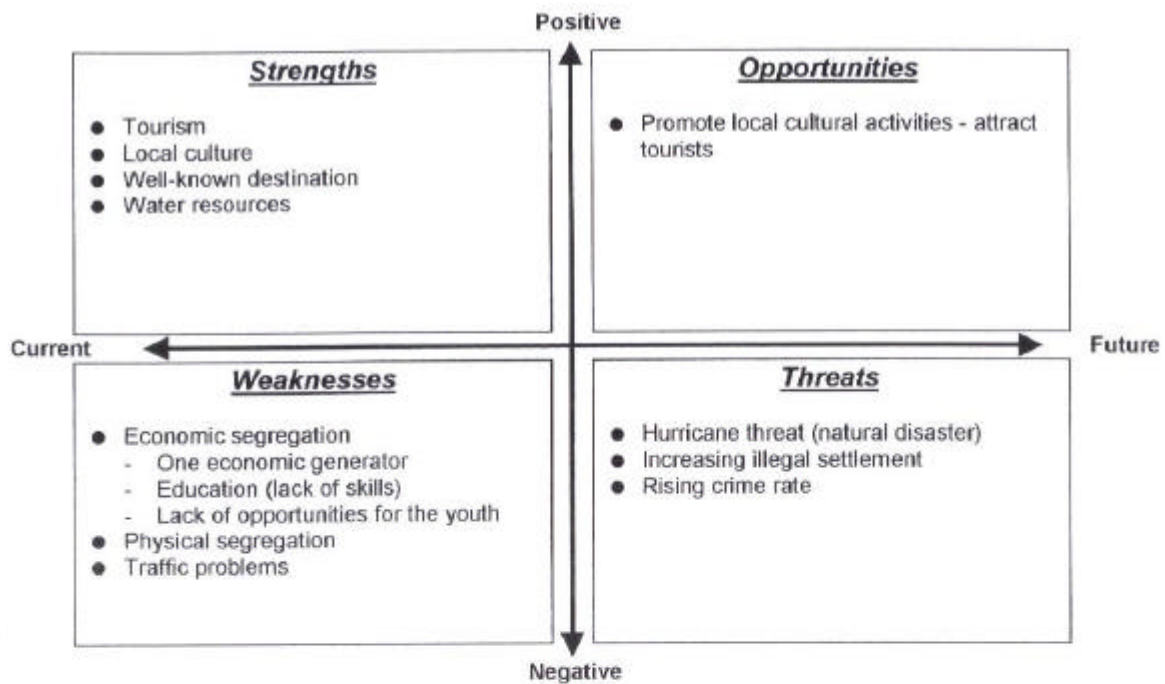
CURRENT REALITIES AND KEY ISSUES

Before proposals are made for the development of Sub-Centre 2, it is important to view the project and the project area in a broader developmental context. Therefore the current realities were analysed and key issues identified on the regional, sub-regional and local (site) scales.

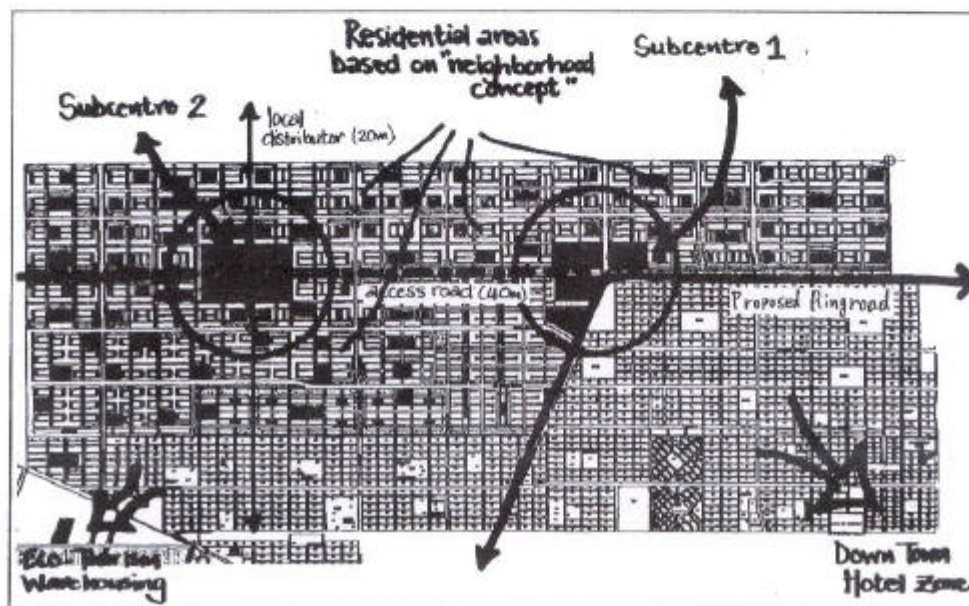
Physical characteristics of the area will evidently play a major part in the proposed development of Sub-Centre 2. The underground water resources could be capitalised on, while the threat of hurricanes might impede development. However, the most crucial structural obstacle to address is the physical segregation of Cancún. This physical segregation also has significant social and economic implications.

As mentioned earlier, the city is a well-known tourist destination. However, most tourists stay within the Hotel Zone where they have access to the ocean and water-related activities. The creation of new sub-centres provides an opportunity to provide alternative attractions that might bring tourists into the city itself. The local Mexican culture that is found in the city of Cancún should be nurtured and subsequently promoted in order to provide the international tourist with an alternative to the commercialised Hotel Zone. This provides a means to address the economic segregation in the area. However, the economic deprivation of these areas of Cancún can not be ascribed to the physical segregation alone. The economy of the city is based on one generator, tourism, and because of the fickle nature of this activity, the future of the city's economy may be vulnerable. Related to this need for diversification in the economy might be a lack of education and training opportunities to broaden the skills-base of workers in the area.

Other threats in the area include the growth of informal settlement and the rising crime rate. The current reality was analysed in terms of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, which are depicted in the diagram below.



SITE ANALYSIS



Similar to most other parts of the city, the Northern Reserve is laid out as a grid. This affects the configuration of Sub-Centre 2, which will be rectangular in shape and will be bound by a system of neighbourhood streets aligned in the north-south or east-west direction.

Residences will comprise the predominant land use in the surrounding area. An arterial road, in the east-west direction, is proposed through the middle of the sub-centre. This road will provide easy access to and from the sub-centre to other parts of the city including the proposed Sub-Centre 1. However, this highway also creates a barrier that splits Sub-Centre 2 into two portions, a northern half and a southern half.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

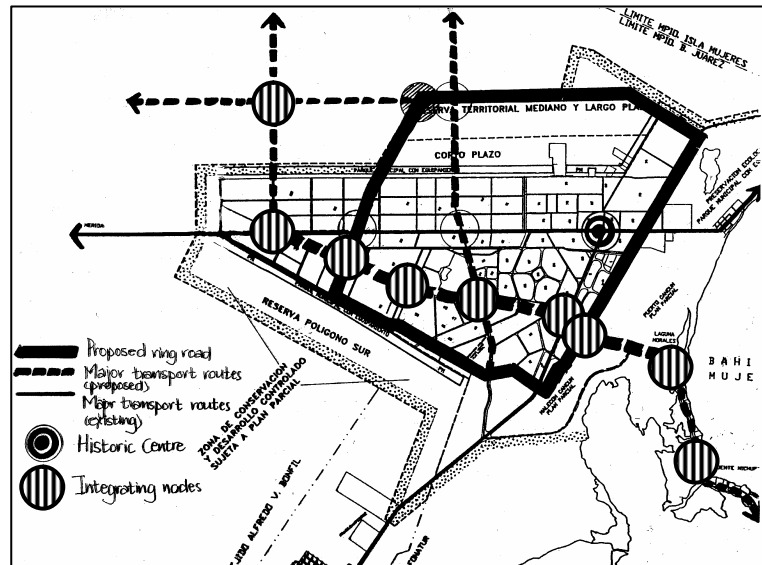
In order to come up with development proposals for the sub centre, within the reality of the constraints and legislative context the local municipality is facing, a set of design objectives were formulated. These design objectives give guidance to ensure the physical manifestation and alignment of the development and design proposals with the sub-regional and local contextual analysis and aims of the project. The design objectives are set out in order to illustrate *what* must be achieved, *how* this can be achieved and *through* which specific proposals it will be achieved in the design.

WHAT?	HOW?	THROUGH...
Integration into the urban and social fabric	Permeability Linkages Diversity	System of nodes Interfaces Green system Access Link activities Make places
Create a heart of activity and opportunities	Access to services Creating a range of opportunities for local community	Appropriate amenities Urban square Multiple use of space Local activities – “Tiangvis”
Creation and reinforcement of ethnic identity	Place belonging to the people Place of cultural and symbolic value	Recognisable cultural symbols and forms Complements and incorporates the ecology 'Zocalo' - important square Breaking the monotony Sense of surprise Local building forms and typology Vernacular architecture Legible high quality public spaces
Alternative tourist destination	Access High quality services Vibrancy Social & cultural interface	Good linkage with hotel zone - public transport Good amenities Legible high quality public spaces

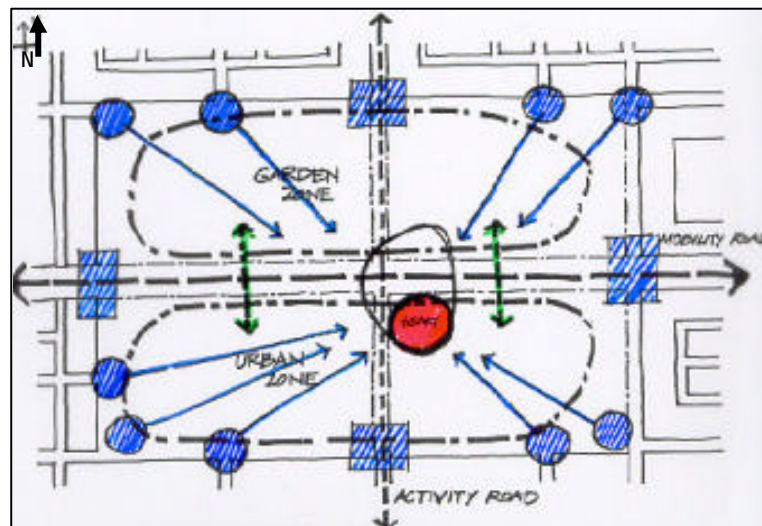
DESIGN CONCEPT – AN URBAN OASIS

Being an unintegrated city, weak legible linkages between the Hotel Zone and the old town exist. On the other hand, significant effort is taken to create a high quality environment in the Hotel Zone, whilst similar effort seems to be missing in the design of the new residential areas. The design concept should address this deficiency of linkages and discrepancy of design. For this purpose, a dual scale concept is proposed, spilling around the central idea to create an urban oasis within the Northern Zone.

On a citywide scale, it is proposed that a series of integrating nodes be established from the Hotel Zone, along the main arterial, with Sub-Centre 2 forming the major node and destination point in the north. These nodes should be legible within the urban fabric. Urban spaces with strong spatial definition, well-designed elements and vibrant activities within these spaces should contribute to this. If water as design element is used as focal points in these integrating nodes, but also in a linear form along the route, the legibility and attractiveness of the linkage will be strengthened.

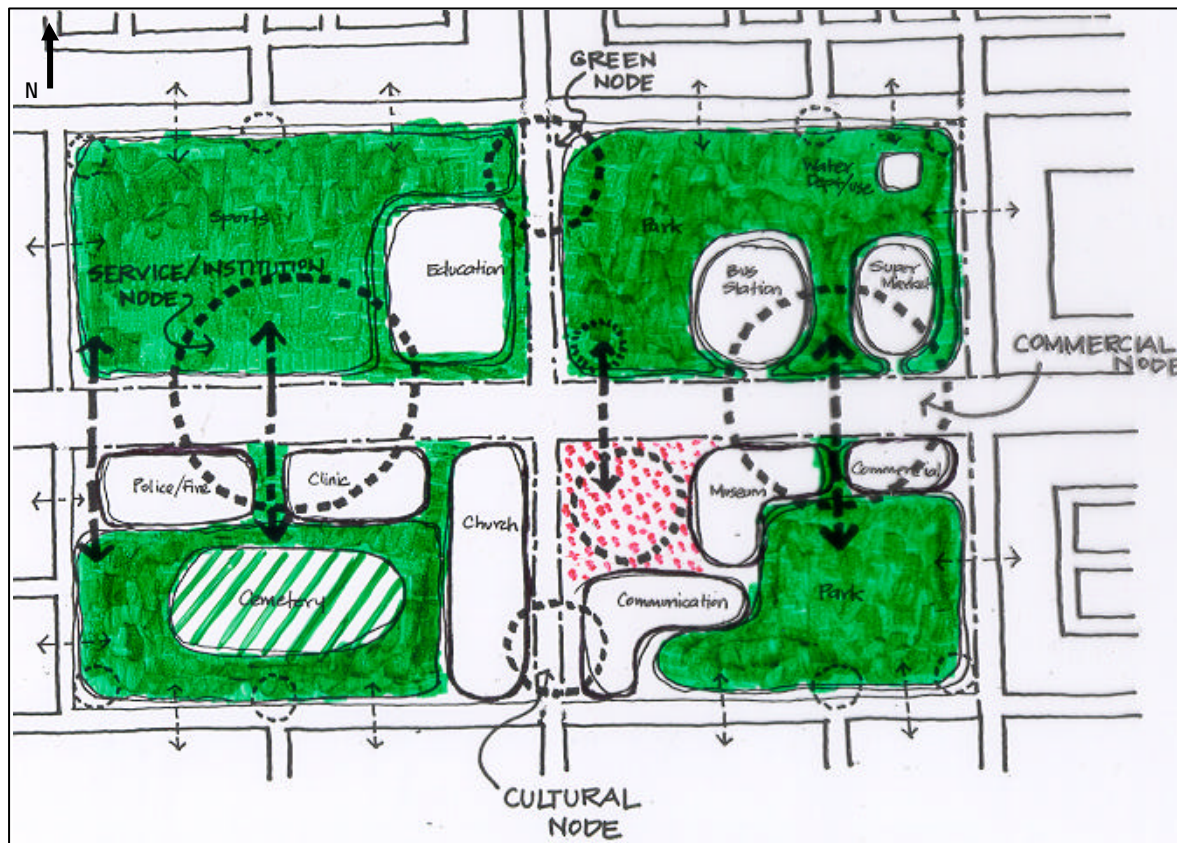


On a precinct scale, an urban heart for the sub-centre should be created through the establishment of a Zocalo. A Zocalo is a square that is traditionally found in Mexican cities. It is used as a flexible space for open-air activities. The proposed high order road ('mobility route') further physically divides the site. Building on this separation, the creation of two zones is proposed, namely an urban zone and a garden zone. The concept of an urban oasis should be strengthened by making use of plenty of water and green open spaces linking urban elements and integrating activities. Open space and water should consequently be used to establish 'green' and 'blue' systems connecting the two zones, the elements and the activities.



DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

Based on the concept as illustrated and the municipality's requirements for services to be accommodated in the sub-centre, the proposed development is illustrated in the following diagram:



This diagram contains a few key design elements, namely character zones, formgiving elements and functional nodes.

Character zones:

- *Urban zone* identifies the southern part of the sub-centre that should be developed with uses that can provide a strong urban character and help define the Zocalo. Typical uses include the church, communications building and museum. Buildings in this zone should establish strongly defined spaces. Urban spaces should be mostly squares with hard surfaces, but softened through individual landscaping elements.
- *Garden zone* identifies the northern part of the sub-centre that should be developed with uses that can provide a garden character. Typical uses include sports facilities, parks and water-related functions. Buildings in this zone should be established as pavilions standing within a park landscape. Vegetation should define spaces and open areas should mainly have soft surfaces. Even parking lots should be developed with grass blocks with a strong presence of lush landscaping to create a park-like character.

Formgiving elements:

- *Gateways* should be established at the entrances into the sub-centre where the external roads connect with the site. Gateway elements should be highly visible, providing a distinct entrance point into the heart of the area. The usage of water as a

design element and focal point is proposed and should provide the starting point for the 'green' and 'blue' systems running through the site and terminating in the Zocalo.

- *Mobility route* defines the road running east-west through the site. The northern side of the road will convey a garden character, whilst the southern part will convey an urban character. Although the road will function mainly as an east-west vehicular linkage, it should also be made pedestrian friendly. Sidewalks should provide for safe walking and cycling and adequate linkages should be provided over the road between the garden zone and the character zone. The median on which large electricity pylons are located, should be landscaped.
- *Activity route* defines the road running north-south through the site. The southern part will convey a strong urban character on both sides of the road, while the northern part will convey a garden character on both sides. The road will function mainly as an internal road with pedestrian related activities bordering it on the sides.
- *Pedestrian routes* define the network of paths for pedestrians and cyclists crossing the site. These paths should form the 'green' system establishing linear spaces from the gateways to the Zocalo. The water as 'blue' system should provide direction and movement in the linear space. A continuation of these systems over the main roads (mobility and activity routes) is critical (water could even flow in grooves over the road). The pedestrian network will structure movement and activities on the site, whilst the linear green open spaces and water elements could provide the glue that can tie the different elements of the sub-centre together.
- *Zocalo* is considered to be the heart of the sub-centre and should be established through space-defining buildings. It should have a focal point, (preferably a water element) as confluence point for the 'green' and 'blue' systems starting at the gateways and flowing towards the Zocalo in the centre. Water could even be used on hard surfaces by providing deep grooves between stones through which water could flow.

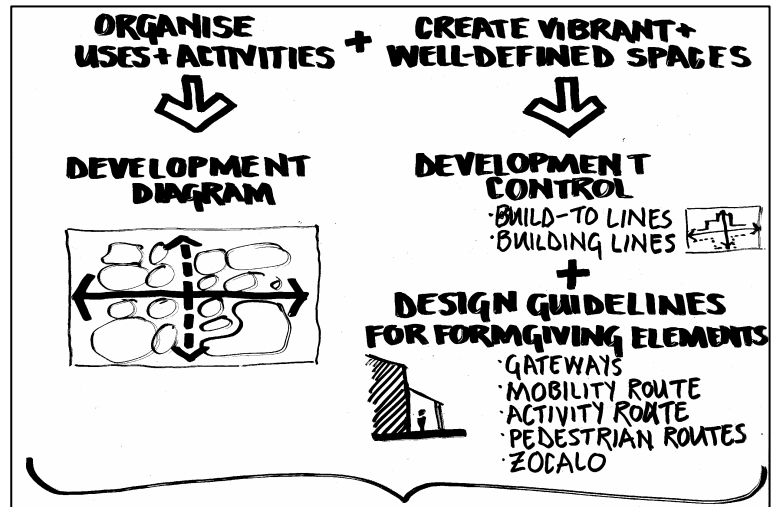
Functional nodes:

- The *Green node* at the northern end can help to establish a connection to the north by bringing the open land to the north of the Northern Reserve into the sub-centre.
- The *Service/Institutional node* towards the west will be one of the first to be developed and will help establish a neighbourhood anchor for residential development which is likely to grow from the southeast. This will also help to draw people across the Zocalo.
- The *Cultural node* to the south will provide access for tourists from the south and will connect to other tourist activities through the integrating nodes up to the Hotel Zone. Marketing of this node can be tied at a citywide tourism plan.
- The *Commercial node* to the east emphasises a commercial connection that will be established, since the proposed highway will connect the sub-centre to Sub-Centre 1 and other parts of the city. This linkage is likely to develop as a commercial corridor.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT APPROACH

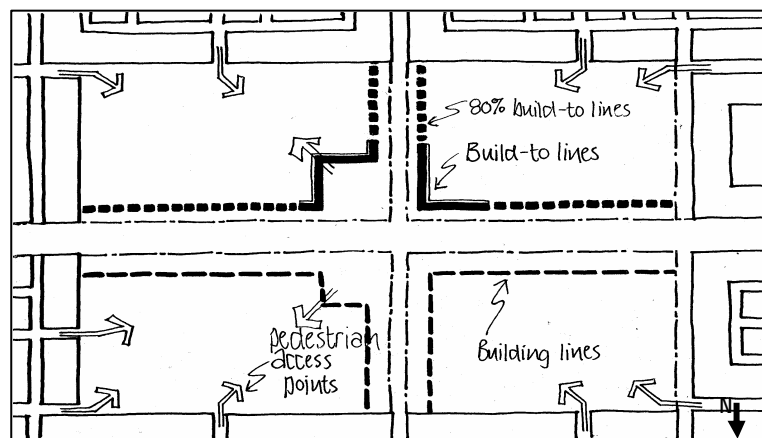
Instead of providing a detail design, a two-pronged approach to create an acceptable urban form is proposed. The approach is based on the following objectives for the development of the sub-centre:

- To organise uses and activities; and
- To create vibrant and well-defined spaces.



The development diagram is proposed as management tool to organise uses and activities. To create vibrant and well-defined spaces, development control mechanisms and design guidelines for formgiving elements are proposed.

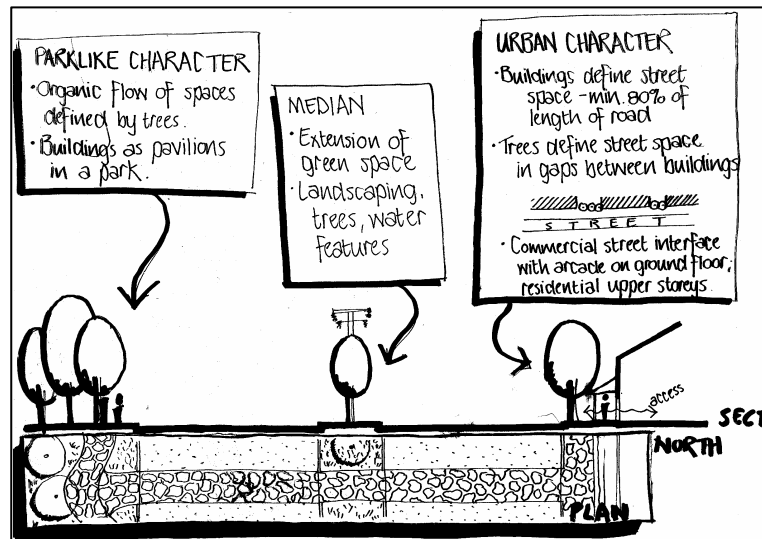
Development control mechanisms include aspects such as building height, and coverage. A critical development control mechanism to create an acceptable urban form is building lines and build-to lines. To create well-defined spaces in the urban zone, build-to lines are proposed.



The full length of the Zocalo should be built up, whilst at least 80% of the activity route through the urban zone and the side of the mobility route fronting onto the urban zone, should be covered by buildings. Where gaps between buildings occur, trees should provide for a continuity of the line. The garden zone should have building lines to prevent buildings to be located too close to the roads and thus influence the garden character to be established. A landscaped space opposite the Zocalo on the northern side of the mobility route should be defined by trees to balance the urban space to the south.

Design guidelines for formgiving elements should further contribute to the establishment of an acceptable urban form. An example of concept guidelines for the mobility route is herewith provided. In order to establish a complete set of guidelines for each of the formgiving elements: the following guidelines should be defined:

- *Interface guidelines* to address the transition area between internal and external space (e.g. ground floor uses to create activity in the space, transparency of the facade);
- *Architectural guidelines* to address the establishment of an appropriate architectural style and character for buildings in the sub-centre;
- *Site development guidelines* to address issues such as parking, services, deliveries; and
- *Site development guidelines* to address the type of vegetation and landscaping details to be used in order to create a coherent character.



IMPLEMENTATION

An approach for implementation should be based on the objective to provide an urban heart from the start. The growth of Sub-Centre 2 should thus be phased to grow simultaneously with the housing development that will surround it.

With regard to the **function** of Sub-Centre 2, the following are of importance:

- Simultaneous job creation with implementation should take place. For this, a job creation programme should be launched.
- Prevent island development by linking the residential areas on the outer boundaries of the sub-centre with the heart.
- Establish most important services first to provide for real needs and to draw people to the area.

With regard to the **urban form** of Sub-Centre 2, the following are of importance:

- Establish the Zocalo as soon as possible. Of specific importance is to create a space as urban heart from the start. This space could be defined by trees at first but should evolve into the Zocalo, growing more urban in character over time.
- Incrementally develop the green/blue system. From the inception of Sub-Centre 2, this system should provide safe and attractive linkages from the residential area towards the urban heart. The idea of an urban oasis should be created even before any buildings are erected.

Lastly, a process for public participation in the design of public spaces should be established. Design charettes could be used with great effect.

CONCLUSION

The development of the Northern Reserve will take place in the near future and will address the current housing problem. However, the development pressure on Cancún resulting from the influx of people into the area and the possible vulnerability of the tourism industry, will remain. Therefore the proposals for the establishment of Sub-Centre 2 is not only an attempt to respond to the immediate needs of the surrounding area and its inhabitants, but is also aimed at initiating uses and functions and providing services that may contribute to the long-term sustainability of the greater Cancún area. Cancún may experience some problems and might be under pressure to provide in the needs of a growing population, but the successes of the past, a well-established and sound planning system and the willingness and enthusiasm of the local people and the local authority confirm the potential of the area to deal with the difficulties in a sustainable manner.

In our deliberations and actions to come up with these proposals for Sub-Centre 2, we as a group gained insight into the challenges faced by people/planners in other parts of the world. We came to realise that there are striking similarities in the type of problems, but also very contextual constraints. There are, however, numerous ways to approach a situation like this one and maybe various options that might provide solutions to the problems faced by the Municipality of Benito Juárez. Our proposals have been informed by our own experiences in our respective countries of origin and we hope that we could thereby provide a stimulating perspective on the challenging situation in Cancún.

TEAM 2

Project: Conceptual Design Proposals for the Development of Proposed Sub-Centre 1, Cancún, Mexico

Project Team 2:

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BACKGROUND

- Cancún is a town planned and developed for tourism, which forms the backbone of the city economy.
- Traditional growth of Cancún was ORGANIC.
- Subsequently, urban planning in Cancún took a “grid-iron” pattern, which has continued.
- Proposed plan for northern Reserve also follows the same grid-iron pattern.

KEY CONCERNS

- The city of Cancún is based on a single economic activity - Tourism...such cities can be fragile systems
- The hotel zone is presently entirely divorced from the “other” parts of the city
- The northern Reserve must not become simply an appendage to the existing city area.
- This Reserve and its inhabitants - the people of Cancún - must be integrated physically, socio-economically and culturally with the rest of the city

GOAL

- To develop Cancún in holistic and sustainable manner, integrated and in harmony with the development goals of the entire region.

OBJECTIVES

- To explore sustainable economic alternatives, for Cancún and the surrounding areas, taking into account the existing local resources.
- To develop the Northern Reserve so as to integrate it socio-economically, physically and culturally with the rest of the city, both the people and the urban structure.
- To suggest measures for enhancing capacity of Benito Juárez Municipality to make planning and development more inclusive and responsive to the real needs of the local people.

STRATEGIES

- **Level 1: Municipal + surrounding area**
 - Promotion of indigenous or local cultural crafts/industry
 - Re-defining the character of tourism from place-based (static) to more activity-based (dynamic)...CULTURAL TOURISM.
 - Development as educational hub or center for knowledge / technology-based activities for the region.
 - Promotion of other subsidiary economic activities in the region.
- **Level 2: City area**
 - Integration of old/existing city area with Hotel Zone on one hand and new development on the other.

STRATEGIES

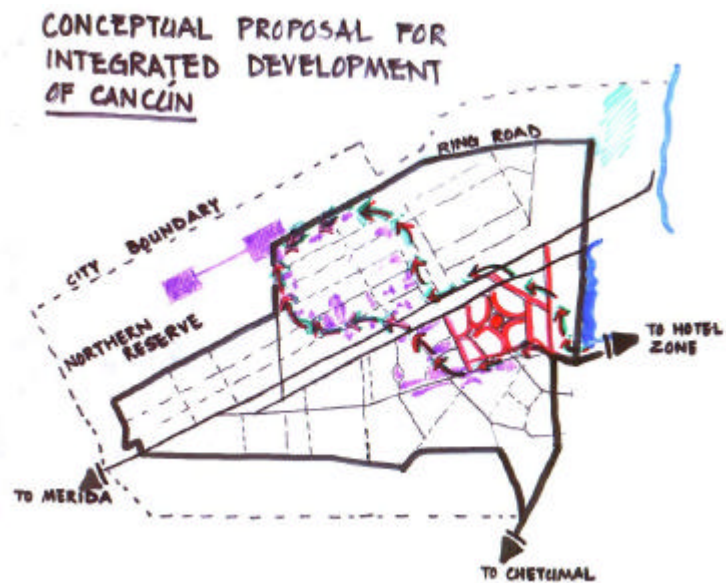
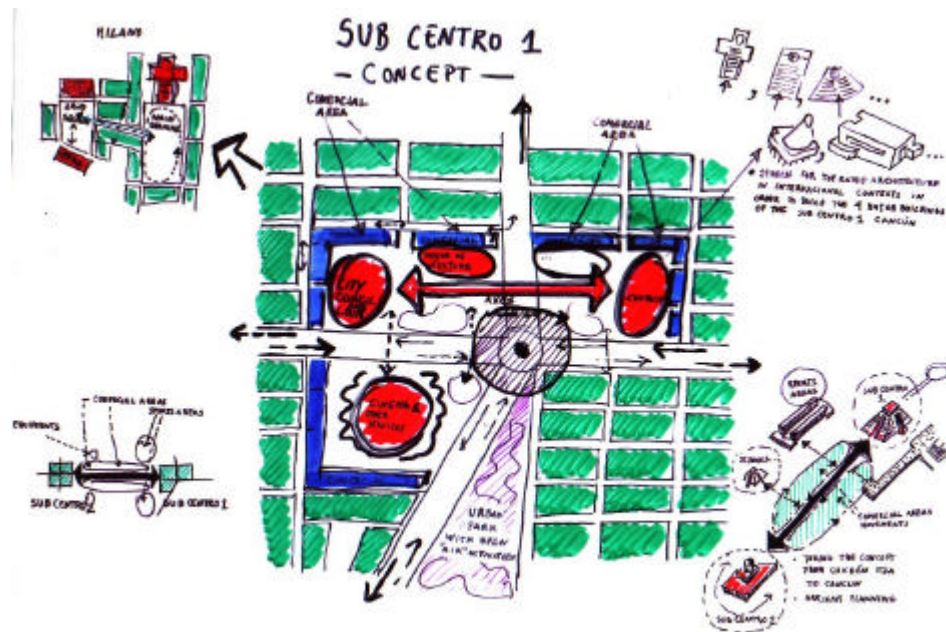
- **Level 3: Northern Reserve Area**
 - Creation of **innovative urban spaces** - NO PROTOTYPES.
 - Introduction of multi-use spaces and structures - such as Open air/ living museums, arenas for cultural/folk activities, educational residences/youth hostels.
 - Budget accommodation for tourists.
- **Level 4: Urban Sub-center**
 - New site of development to serve as a GATEWAY to Cancún in order to create IDENTITY for the city.

Setting a new paradigm of development area of cultural and social interaction and integration.

DEVELOPMENT PATTERN ADOPTED BY THE CITY

A Review and Some Concerns

- Development of Northern Reserve as proposed is not strategically/physically integrated with the city.
- Lack of information to make plans more responsive and dynamic.
- Need to build capacity of the Benito Juárez Municipality to undertake urban planning and management in the context of the changing development paradigm.
- Lack of public participation match between people's expectations and planners' perceptions??
- Need to base development planning and decision-making on a wider consultative process.



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We would specifically like to thank Professor Fernando Brandao Alves who effectively guided our efforts through constructive questioning, and who demonstrated remarkable poise when managing us energetic (and strongly vocal) young planners.

We hope to meet you all again.

Amit Prothi, Young Planner

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