

Department of Urban Planning
UCLA School of Public Affairs

UP 273 Physical Planning Studio: Pacoima

Fall 2008, PAB Room 4320A

Thursday 2:00-4:50 PM

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Office Hours: 2:00-6:00PM Tuesday, and by appointment

Special Resource: Veronica Padilla, bolis31@yahoo.com (Co-Executive Director, Initiating Change in Our Neighborhoods - ICON), and MA Urban Planning Alumnus (2006)

This is an introductory level design course organized in the studio format. The purpose of the course is to help students develop the knowledge and skills required to analyze and plan urban neighborhoods for design intervention and development. This year we will focus on the neighborhood of Pacoima in the Northeast San Fernando Valley. Almost a fifth of the population lives below the federal poverty level. Pacoima has seen some dramatic demographic transitions in the last three decades. It is now a predominantly Latino majority neighborhood but it used to be primarily African American. The neighborhood has also experienced a disproportionate history of divestment and lack of investment. The objective of the studio is to leverage the neighborhood's considerable assets and develop strategic physical plans to enhance the quality of life in Pacoima by identifying avenues for public actions and private investments. Renewed public attention and private investments, however, can lead to gentrification, and the displacement of lower-income residents and businesses. The proposed plans must include strategies to mitigate potential displacement.

The underlying approach of the course is to provide students with a grounded, hands-on, physical planning experience through individual and group assignments. The studio aims to help students recognize and appreciate how various elements of physical planning -- location and accessibility; topography; land uses; street networks; block sizes, configurations and plot layouts; set-backs and build-to-lines; built form and massing; density and floor area ratio; identity and architectural character; historical heritage; landmarks; open spaces; pedestrian circulation; parking; street furniture; signage; etc. -- perform. The course readings will emphasize the qualities of a well-designed public realm, design strategies for successful placemaking, housing and employment opportunities in mixed-use developments, and physical strategies for urban revitalization. The studio will also be a laboratory to examine urban design's claim that unlike most other planning approaches, innovative design interventions can help policymakers avoid tradeoffs.

We will attempt to collaborate with local community groups and policy entrepreneurs to prepare a set of draft strategic plans that may help the residents of Pacoima to visualize, discuss, and determine the future of their community. Our key resource and contact is Veronica Padilla of ICON. She is also an Area Planning Commissioner and a former president of the Pacoima Neighborhood Council. We also

have access to another alumnus, Christine Mahfouz (Christine.mahfouz@lacity.org), the Planning Director for Council Member Richard Alarcón (Council District Seven). Another alumnus that's willing to help us is Raul Bocanegra (Raul.bocanegra@asm.ca.gov). Raul is the Chief of Staff for Assembly Member Felipe Fuentes (Assembly District 39). We are also fortunate to have access to both Marlene Grossman (Marsplan@aol.com), the former Executive Director of Pacoima Beautiful (<http://www.pacoimabeautiful.org/>) and Nury Martinez the current Executive Director (nmartinez@pacoimabeautiful.org). Both Marlene and Nury will join us for lecture and presentation sessions and be great resources for the studio. Finally, we will also draw on the expertise of a number of our alumni at Emerging Markets, Inc., an economic development consulting firm that strives to bring private investment to low-income neighborhoods through strategies that have the support of the local communities and directly benefit the poorer residents (<http://www.emergingmarkets.us/>). The reader includes two readings about their work.

Pacoima

Pacoima lies in the Northeast San Fernando Valley and has its own Neighborhood Council (<http://www.pacoimanc.org/>). The site area that we have selected for this studio is part of the larger neighborhood. Almost all of our site area falls within Council District Seven. The boundaries of our site are mostly freeways: The 118 (Ronald Reagan Freeway) on the north (northwest); the 210 (Foothill Freeway) on the east (northeast); Orborne Street on the south (southeast); and the 5 (Golden State Freeway) on the west (southwest). This easy access to numerous freeways is an important asset of the neighborhood, but the proximity and intensity also creates urban design challenges.

Pacoima residents have a distinct identity and sense of pride. But the neighborhood lacks a strong physical identity as conventionally understood in urban design and placemaking terms. However, Pacoima has a number of physical attributes that can be leveraged to create a clearer identity and a more attractive and livable built environment. It is laid out on a regular grid of mostly small, residential blocks. In contrast, many of the industrial, public housing and multifamily housing developments cover larger blocks. Manufacturing and industrial uses have declined but remain an important component of the neighborhood. Most of the housing stock was developed post-war and is in solid condition, but overcrowding is a problem. The Whiteman airport is an important land use and might be an opportunity for focused study and dramatic proposals. The adjoining Hansen Dam and Lake is an active recreational space. But easily accessible, neighborhood parks are limited. Like most of Los Angeles, the main commercial corridors, particularly Van Nuys Boulevard, Laurel Canyon Boulevard, and San Fernando Road are streets with significant potential for revitalization and more intense activity.

If you are looking for readings and literature about life in Pacoima, consider starting with Mary Helen Ponce's *Hoyt Street: An Autobiography*. It is about her experiences growing up in the San Fernando Gardens in Pacoima. Not about Pacoima, but still worth looking at is *Always Running – La Vida Loca: Gang Days in LA* by Luis J. Rodriguez. It's a memoir of life in East Los Angeles. Finally, you might also enjoy the movie *La Bamba*. It is a drama based on the life of Pacoima-native Richard Valenzuela, better known as the singing superstar Ritchie Valens.

Organization and Grading

The studio will meet once a week. Students are expected to attend all class sessions. Classes will be a combination of lectures, discussions, video presentations, studio sessions, and student presentations. I also plan to invite guest speakers and studio critics. Students must complete the assigned readings in advance of the class, and be prepared to contribute to the discussion. The primary text for the course is a reader, which needs to be assembled. Links to some of the readings are provided in the course description. Other readings (from Week 4 onwards) can be accessed electronically from the password protected, class web-site. In addition, a list of useful references is noted in the course description. I might also distribute additional readings and handouts in the class.

Design proposals will be prepared on a group basis, and the groups will have the autonomy to define and select their site-areas within the neighborhood. In the studio, we will discuss how large these site-areas should be (but in the past I have encouraged groups to limit themselves to around a half-mile by half-mile area, or about 160 acres), and how efforts can be coordinated between the groups. The final grade will be based on four assignments, one individual and three group-based, with pin-up and PowerPoint presentations, and a final report -

Assignment 1, individual neighborhood review:	10%
Assignment 2, group site analysis, concept, and case study:	20%
Assignment 3, group design project (mid-term):	30%
Assignment 4, group design project (final):	40%

Assignment 1: The individual neighborhood review is a preliminary site analysis exercise that identifies your primary area (or issue) of interest in Pacoima. Your presentation should also explain why you consider the identified area as an appropriate focus for the studio assignment. Along with other considerations, such as design-work experience, we will use similarity of interests as the key basis for forming groups for the next stages of the studio. Please plan to pin-up and present this assignment.

Assignment 2: The groups will define their site-areas and present their analysis. In addition to site-area analysis, groups will analyze some aspect of the entire Pacoima neighborhood. We will collectively decide what aspects to assign to each group. In this manner, the work of the different groups will be complementary, and the design proposals in the next stage can be based on the collective analysis of the class. Groups should also present their conceptual directions for the neighborhoods, and include case studies that can guide design in the next stages. Please plan to pin-up your presentation or use PowerPoint to present.

Assignment 3: The groups will present their preliminary strategic plans for the neighborhood, with a focus on their defined site-area. The plans should elaborate on various design and development elements, as well as strategic private and public investment priorities and phasing. Groups should also consider and illustrate how their proposals and design principles are relevant at a larger scale, including the entire neighborhood and the city. We will try to have the presentations in the neighborhood.

Please plan to pin-up your presentation or use PowerPoint to present. We will try to arrive at a consensus and have a uniform presentation medium.

Assignment 4: The groups will present their final strategic physical plans. The fourth assignment includes a pin-up or PowerPoint presentation (again, we will try to agree to a uniform medium) and a final report in hard copy and electronic format. The final presentation will be at UCLA but we will also invite guest-critics from the neighborhood.

Content and Structure of Sessions

Week 1 COURSE INTRODUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the course and the studio project • Introduction to the first assignment • The site planning process • Video: The social life of small urban spaces (1979) or One pair of eyes: Reyner Banham loves Los Angeles (1972) • Optional: Sketching Clinic with Charan Singh (Room 4320A, October 1, 5:00-6:30PM)
Week 2 SITE VISIT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood briefing and guided site visit: Veronica Padilla, ICON, and Christine Mahfouz, Planning Director – Council District 7 • <u>Meeting venue:</u> Pacoima Community Center, 11243 Glenoaks Blvd., Pacoima, CA 91331 • Discuss the first assignment
Week 3 FIRST ASSIGNMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pin-up review of individual sketch designs • Organization of groups for the next stage and introduction to the second assignment
Week 4 SITE ANALYSIS & HISTROY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative and quantitative methods of survey and analysis • Guest speaker: Marlene Grossman, former Executive Director, Pacoima Beautiful
Week 5 SECOND ASSIGNMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group presentations of site analyses, preliminary concepts and case studies • Introduction to the third assignment (mid-term)
Week 6 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE & PUBLIC PLACES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest speakers: Nury Martinez, Executive Director, Pacoima Beautiful and Raul Bocanegra, Chief of Staff for Assembly Member Felipe Fuentes • Social life of urban spaces • Streets • Semipublic spaces • Street vendors
Week 7 HOUSING & WORK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Density and housing • Mixed-use developments • Urban manufacturing • Guest speaker: Stephanie Klasky-Gamer, President

	<p>and CEO, LA Family Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Foreclosure • Public Housing • Los Angeles' small lots or town home ordinance • Design guidelines
Week 8 MID-TERM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group presentations of mid-term in Pacoima (Venue: Pacoima Community Center – To be confirmed) • Introduction to the final assignment
Week 9 URBAN REVITALIZATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest speaker: Daniel Tellalian, Director, Emerging Markets • Place-based and people-based strategies • Schools as community centers and facilities • Gentrification • Resident Ownership Mechanisms, Community Land Trusts, and Community Benefits Agreements
-- Thanksgiving Break --	
Week 10 STUDIO SESSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrap-up • Working session with desk-reviews
Week 11 FINAL PRESENTATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations at UCLA (4320A) with invited guest-critics

Useful References

- Alexander, Christopher. 1977. *A Pattern Language: Towns, Buildings, Construction*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Barnett, Jonathan. 1995. *The Fractured Metropolis: Improving the New City, Restoring the Old City Reshaping the Region*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Barnett, Jonathan. 2003. *Redesigning Cities: Principles, Practice, Implementation*. Chicago: Planners Press.
- Chase, John, Margaret Crawford and John Kaliski (1999). *Everyday Urbanism*. New York: Monacelli.
- Garvin, Alexander. 1996. *The American City: What Works, What Doesn't*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Jacobs, Allan. 1993. *Great Streets*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Jacobs, Jane. 1961. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Kromer, John. 2000. *Neighborhood Recovery: Reinvestment Policy for the New Hometown*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Leccese, Michael and Kathleen McCormick. 1999. *Charter of the New Urbanism*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Lynch, Kevin and Gary Hack. 2000. *Site Planning*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Simonds, John O. 1998. *Landscape Architecture: A Manual of Site Planning and Design*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

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Course introduction

Week 1: September 25, 2008

No Readings

Site visit

Week 2: October 2, 2008

Lin, Joanna (2008). L.A. City Council OKs \$18.7 Million for Plaza Pacoima. *Los Angeles Times*, August 13.

<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-pacoima13-2008aug13,0,1235924.story>

Pacheco, Vivian (2008). *Going “De Novo”: Tapping into Emerging Markets at the Branch Level*. Working Paper 2008-01. San Francisco, CA: Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco

<http://www.frbsf.org/publications/community/wpapers/2008/wp08-01.pdf>

de Cardenas, Diana (2002). *Pacoima CERC*. UCLA Spotlight. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA.

http://spotlight.ucla.edu/programs/pacoima_CERC/

First assignment

Week 3: October 9, 2008

No Readings

Site analysis and history

Week 4: October 16, 2008

Krier, Leon (1984). “Urban Components,” *Architectural Design*, 54, 43-49.

Jacobs, Allan (1985). “Clues.” In *Looking at Cities* (pp. 30-83). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Spreiregen, Paul (1965). “Making a Visual Survey.” In *Urban Design: The Architecture of Towns and Cities* (pp. 49-66). New York: McGraw-Hill, American Institute of Architects.

Zeisel, John (1981). “Observing Physical Traces,” and “Observing Environmental Behavior.” In *Inquiry by Design: Tools for Environment-Behavior Research* (pp. 89-136). Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing.

Lynch, Kevin and Gary Hack (2000). “A Site and Impact Checklist.” In *Site Planning* (pp. 420-425). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Second assignment

Week 5: October 23, 2008

No reading

Environmental justice and public places

Week 6: October 30, 2008

Whyte, William (1988). "The Design of Spaces." In *City: Rediscovering the Center* (pp. 103-131). New York: Doubleday.

Jacobs, Jane (2000). "The Uses of Sidewalks: Safety." (From *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 1961.) In *The City Reader*, ed. Richard T. LeGates and Fredric Stout (pp. 106-111). New York: Routledge.

Jacobs, Allan (1996). "Requirements for Great Streets," and "Qualities that Contribute." In *Great Streets* (pp. 270-308). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Loukaitou-Sideris, Anastasia (1997). "Inner-city Commercial Strips: Evolution, decay-retrofit?" *Town Planning Review* 68(1), 1-29.

Marcus, Clare Cooper (2003). "Shared Outdoor Space and Community Life," *Places* 15(2), 32-41. Also, Andres Duany (2003). "To Rally Discussion," *Places* 16(1), 78-79.

Daley, Richard (2003). "Revitalizing Chicago through Parks and Public Spaces," *Places* 15(3), 26-29.

*Environmental justice reading(s) to be added

Housing and work

Week 7: November 6, 2008

Pyatok, Michael (2000). "Martha Stewart vs. Studs Terkel," *Places* 13(1), 40-43.

Loomis, John (1997). "Manufacturing Communities," *Places* 10(1), 48-57.

Parker, Cheryl (1997). "Making a Twenty-First Century Neighborhood," *Places* 10(1), 36-45.

Blumenfeld, Jane (2004). *Townhouse Staff Report*. Los Angeles, CA: Los Angeles City Planning Department.

<http://www.smallbutsmart.org/documents/TownhouseStaffRpt.pdf>

City of Toronto. 2003. *Toronto Urban Design Guidelines: Infill Townhouses*. Toronto: Urban Development Services.

<http://www.toronto.ca/planning/pdf/townhouseguideline.pdf>

Calthorpe, Peter (1993). "Residential Areas." In *The Next American Metropolis: Ecology, Community, and the American Dream* (pp. 83-89). New York: Princeton Architectural Press.

Mid-term presentation

Week 8: November 13, 2008

No Readings

Urban revitalization

Week 9: November 20, 2008

Hopkins, Elwood and Daniel Tellalian (2006). Place Matters: How Community Development Departments are Rediscovering Communities. *Community Investments* (Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco Economic Letter), 17(4), 14-18.

<http://www.frbsf.org/publications/community/investments/0602/place.pdf>

Sucher, David (1995). "Getting Around." In *City Comforts: How to Build an Urban Village*, pp. 126-166. Seattle: City Comforts Press.

Garvin, Alexander. 1996. "Revitalizing neighborhoods." In *The American City: What Works, What Doesn't*, pp. 229-250. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Lynch, Kevin and Michael Southworth (1974). "Designing and Managing the Strip." In *City Sense and City Design*, edited by Tridib Banerjee and Michael Southworth, pp. 579-616. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Chung, Connie (2002). Using Public Schools as Community-Development Tools."

http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/publications/communitydevelopment/W02-9_Chung.pdf

Robinson, Lisa (2005). Market Creek Plaza: Toward Resident Ownership of Neighborhood Change. Oakland, CA: PolicyLink.

<http://www.policylink.org/pdfs/MarketCreekPlaza.pdf>

November 27, 2008

Thanksgiving Day

Studio session

Week 10: December 4, 2008

No Readings

Final presentation

Week 11: December 11, 2008

No Readings