



# network **NOV 06** news



**PLUS network is an international peer learning Network of cities sharing their experiences, expertise and tools to undertake very long term planning for urban sustainability. Please visit our website at [www.plusnetwork.org](http://www.plusnetwork.org)**

## Sound Bytes from the Network

“... one of the most valuable exchanges I have ever been in.”  
Michael Mucha, Director of Public Works, Olympia, Washington, speaking to Olympia’s City Council about the PLUS Network September Peer Exchange in Vancouver.

## New Members!

We welcome **Olympia**, Washington as the first U.S. city to join the Network. On September 18, 2006, Olympia’s City Council approved its membership in the PLUS Network. Mayor Mark Fouch signed the MOU and the City expressed interest in hosting one of the next peer exchanges.

**Iqaluit**, Canada, is the first remote community to join the Network! Mayor Elisapee Sheutiapik officially made Iqaluit, the capital city of Nunavut Territory, a member of the Sustainable Cities: PLUS Network.

In September, **Nuwara Eliya**, Sri Lanka, became the third Sri Lankan city to join the PLUS Network. Mayor Chandena Lal Karunaratna signed the MOU, thereby bringing this beautiful resort town into the Network.

**Suncheon**, South Korea, formally joined the PLUS Network on October 20, 2006. The MOU signing ceremony between Suncheon’s Mayor, Kwan Kyu Roh, and ICSC’s President and

CEO, Dr. Nola-Kate Seymoar, formed part of Korea’s National Conference on Local Agenda 21, which was held in Suncheon, October 19-21.

## News from Network Cities

**Edmonton** The City of Edmonton launches [FocusEdmonton.ca](http://FocusEdmonton.ca) to develop a long-range municipal development plan: *City Plan*. *City Plan* will set Edmonton’s direction for future land development and redevelopment decisions. It includes a 30-year growth strategy and policies to achieve the plan’s goals over the next 10 years. Cities are complex systems and an integrated approach is needed to build a successful city. While *City Plan* will focus on land use, it will also consider how transportation, infrastructure, the environment, intermunicipal planning, and fiscal conditions affect the framework for growth. Edmonton’s existing land use policies and plans will also be integrated into *City Plan*.

**Chihuahua** The Municipal Planning Institute (IMPLAN) is updating its Land Use Plan with a long term urban sustainability approach aimed at harnessing urban development and improving the quality of life of its citizens. This process will define the next 30 years, taking into consideration 4 of the major challenges they are facing: transport and mobility, labour issues, public space, and housing and neighborhoods. To achieve this, IMPLAN is implementing ‘Prospective Strategy’. The process will build future scenarios based on consensus among multiple stakeholders and then select the target future scenario, based on the degree of influence the City has on different variables. The final outcome will be a strategic framework, which IMPLAN will use as a basis for their Land Use Plan. Salvador Herrera, Director of the IMPLAN, noted that the first workshops will be organized for citizens who have expertise in different fields. They will develop concrete strategies and scenarios of the optimum city model for Chihuahua. Starting in January, the

**NETWORK CITIES:** AUSTRALIA Adelaide • BRAZIL Curitiba • Porto Alegre • Salvador • CANADA Calgary • Edmonton • Halifax Region • Iqaluit • Niagara Region • Ottawa • Saint John • Greater Vancouver Regional District • Whistler • COSTA RICA San Jose • KOREA Suncheon • MEXICO Chihuahua • Colima • Matamoros • MONGOLIA Ulaanbaatar • ROMANIA Bucharest • PHILIPPINES San Fernando • SENEGAL Dakar • SOUTH AFRICA eThekweni (Durban) • SRI LANKA Badulla • Matale • Nuwara Eliya • TANZANIA Dar es Salaam • USA Olympia

workshops will be opened to all citizens. At the opening ceremony of the process, which was attended by more than 70 organizations, Mayor Juan Blanco Zaldivar invited the public and private sectors to be part of this process and together make Chihuahua the best city in which to live in Mexico.

**Colima** The City of Colima, Mexico, held its First International Conference on sustainability from September 20-22, 2006, entitled: "Building a vision for the future: In the quest for urban sustainability". It was sponsored by the Municipality of Colima and its new Institute of Planning (IPCo). The audience, comprised of representatives from the public, private and academic sectors, had the opportunity to learn about long-term planning frameworks, sustainability city visions, strategies and processes, and specific models of urbanization presented by representatives from the PLUS Network and the cities of Chihuahua, Vancouver, Calgary and Whistler. The event was a major success as it helped sow the seed of sustainability among participants, and get their commitment to support the process of making Colima a sustainable city. PLUS Network members who attended the Conference commented on how satisfying it is to realize that their experiences can be shared and adapted to be relevant to different local realities. In addition, this exercise gave them the chance to reflect on their own work.

**Whistler** Whistler 2020 has just launched its new website [www.whistler2020.ca](http://www.whistler2020.ca)! Find out more about the Whistler 2020 vision and strategies and action to achieve this vision.

**Halifax** On September 22, Dr. Karl-Henrik Robèrt, founder of The Natural Step, spoke in Halifax at a meeting of Atlantic Canada mayors, and delivered a public presentation entitled "Sustainability: The Leadership Challenge", organized by GPI Atlantic. The Natural Step (TNS) has recently completed a high level analysis of the Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) using the TNS Framework. Commonly referred to as a "Sustainability Analysis", this provides a baseline analysis of HRM's sustainability performance and will be used to help HRM better understand how it can contribute to a healthy and sustainable Halifax. As part of this project, TNS held a series of educational workshops on The Natural Step Framework, and consulted with 13 of the city's functional areas. To download, go to [www.naturalstep.ca/resources.html](http://www.naturalstep.ca/resources.html).

## Events

### Current Events

*Public Participation: For the long-term*

September 13&14, Vancouver, Canada

In September, representatives from the cities of Calgary, Whistler, Olympia, Portland, and Vancouver participated in a peer exchange to share their current experiences on public participation. The session served as both a learning exchange for cities involved in the Network and a training opportunity for ICSC's project officers departing for Africa to work with the cit-

ies of Dakar, Senegal; e Thekwini (Durban), South Africa; and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Each city had the chance to present their overall sustainability work and their current work around participation, the presentations were followed by in-depth discussion around ideas for moving forward and lessons learned.

Beginning on World Food Day, October 16, and concluding on October 20, the PLUS Network held its sixth Web Dialogue, this time on the topic of urban agriculture. The dialogue invited six experts in the field of urban agriculture to lead the discussion: Wendy Holm, a Bowen Island, B.C. based Agrologist, resource economist, columnist and author; Dr. Evan Fraser, Lecturer at the School of Earth and Environment at the University of Leeds (U.K.); David Mkwambisi a PhD Research student in Environment and Development at University of Leeds, and a Lecturer at Bunda College of Agriculture in Malawi; Yona Sipos, Ph.D. student in Integrated Studies, Faculty of Land and Food Systems; Sumana Wijeratne, Project Manager at the International Centre for Sustainable Cities and Jennifer Ferguson, Project Officer in the Research and International Office at Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The discussion was lively and informative. Topics discussed ranged from broad issues such as whether necessity is a precursor of comprehensive policies that promote urban agriculture to more specific examples such as the use green roofs. The dialogue covered more than 10 topics relevant to urban agriculture and included close to 50 postings. The dialogue entries are available to all PLUS Network members, simply log-on to the members only site from the PLUS Network website ([www.plusnetwork.org](http://www.plusnetwork.org)) and follow the links to the web dialogue.

Zoe Mullard and Amber Zirnhelt joined ICSC in September. Zoe and Amber will both be assisting with various aspects of PLUS Network's communications and documentation. Zoe recently returned to Vancouver from Ecuador where she worked for 3 years in the Department of Trade at the Canadian Embassy in Quito. Amber's background includes a M.Sc. in Geography from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland where she focused on community planning and participatory engagement around the use of public space.

### Upcoming Events

Our first PLUS Network Biennial Conference was such a success, we are already thinking about 2008! In the coming weeks, we will issue a formal *Request for a Host City* for the 2008 PLUS Network Biennial Conference. If you would like more information, please contact Denise Pritchard at [dpritchard@icsc.ca](mailto:dpritchard@icsc.ca) or 604-666-5245.

On November 8-9, Durban (South Africa) will host a PLUS Network Peer Exchange for our African cities. This 2-day exchange will be divided into a session on 100-year Long Term Planning and participation in a conference on the informal

economy with regional and international participation, including case studies from Zambia, Tanzania, Senegal, Brazil, and India.

#### State of the Fraser Basin Conference: Sustainability – Inspiring Action

November 16 & 17, 2006, Vancouver, Canada

The conference will bring together a range of stakeholders to discuss key sustainability issues in the Fraser Basin region. ICSC will be profiling the organisation, the PLUS Network and our focus on long-term planning.

For more information visit: [www.fraserbasin.bc.ca](http://www.fraserbasin.bc.ca)

#### Building *SustainAble* Communities

November 22–23, 2006, Kelowna, Canada

This conference will feature presentations from world-renowned experts on sustainability, as well as plenary sessions, and break-out sessions about building sustainable communities. The conference will highlight tools for sustainability including smart bylaws, Federal gas tax funding, provincial planning and funding opportunities, Okanagan initiatives and public consultation. Breakout sessions will also feature a range of best practices such as land-use planning, water-centric planning & conservation, transportation and energy planning. Dr. Nola-Kate Seymoar, President and CEO of ICSC will be presenting on ‘SustainAble Cities in the Making’.

Edmonton’s new City-Region Studies Centre at the University of Alberta is hosting a symposium entitled ‘Learning to Think and Act Like a Region’ on November 30, 2006. Learning from the PLUS Network will be presented by Dr. Nola-Kate Seymoar.

In December, the Municipal Planning Institute of Chihuahua–Mexico (IMPLAN), will celebrate its first year of being part of the PLUS Network and the end of the first stage of prospective strategic planning. IMPLAN will present the city’s path of development over the next century, to citizens, public officials and private companies. This event will be attended by Jane McRae, Director of Programs of the PLUS Network, Graciela Amaro, President of the Mexican Association of Municipal Planning Institutes and Gilles Antier from the Land Use Institute of the Ile-de-France (Paris metro).

## Highlights

### CIDA Africa Project – Walking the Talk of Sustainability with Partners in Dar, Durban and Dakar

by Lama Mugabo, Project Manager, ICSC

From September 21 through October 15, Jane McRae, the Director of Programs at ICSC, and I went on a three-week inception mission for our CIDA funded capacity building initiative.

In each city, we introduced the ICSC project officer, who will be posted there for the next 6 months. We consulted with municipal leaders, civil society actors and CIDA representatives. The three-year agreement allows us to work in the field with our partners in each city.

Our mission started in Dar es Salaam, the city intimately known as “Haven of Peace”. It was wonderful to see our Tanzanian partners and we examined the city’s pressing issues and discussed ways the PLUS Network could assist Dar to implement its long term planning vision. Dar has a visionary mayor who is dedicated to fostering the emancipation of women and youth. His entire administration is fully committed to the project.

Critical issues in Dar include: how to extract methane gas out of its landfill and use the energy to light the City’s street lights; how to unleash the creative energy of the informal sector to increase revenue for the municipality and improve the quality of life for the residents of Dar; and how to help commuters reach their destination without the headache of traffic congestion.

The second week, we traveled to the South African port city of Durban. The e-Thekwini municipality (Durban) has had a head-start on the sustainability planning journey in comparison to Dar and Dakar. It benefits from a robust economy and a well-established planning history. However, Durban, like other major South African cities, is scrambling to find a way to curb crime before they host the World Cup in 2010. Durban has agreed to host the first African Peer Exchange, being held on November 8 and 9, focused on ways to merge the informal sector with the formal economy.

One of the most striking things you notice travelling from Durban to Dakar is the chaos of Dakar. But as time passes, one begins to discover the city’s charm. The city has a relatively low crime rate, graceful and friendly people, and street vendors that engage in a lively way with their clients. For instance, one day a man tried to sell me a piece of art:

“It’s beautiful, but I don’t need it”, I told him.

“Buy it any ways” he insisted.

“Why should I buy it if I don’t need it? I asked,

“To make me happy!” he smiled.

If this entrepreneurial energy could be harnessed to generate more revenue, Dakar might be able to unlock the key to its crippling traffic congestion, waste management problem and energy crisis.

We noticed a common thread throughout our exchange with local municipal leaders: Each city identified the neutrality of the Canadian project officer as a catalyst to getting stakeholders involved. Reflecting on the essence of our trip, Jane McRae concedes that “putting long-term filters on the city vision allows cities to move away from their individual agendas, and think

broadly, to focus on what is needed to make our cities more liveable for all citizens”.

We are eager to see what we harvest from our Peer Exchange Workshop in Durban. Stay tuned.

## Sustainability Highlight

*Suncheon, South Korea's River Project  
by Dominica Babicki*

The Dongcheon River evokes a familiar image: a large river flowing through a city – in this case, through the City of Suncheon, South Korea. As is also the case with many other cities around the world, the population grew and industry expanded and consequently the river's water quality deteriorated.

Sewage and industrial discharge in the Dongcheon River not only contaminated the river but also led to the virtual disappearance of the sweetfish. Sweetfish are very sensitive to water pollution and had not been seen in the river since the late 1980's. However, in the early 1990s, the first attempts were made to improve the water quality of the Dongcheon by treating the discharge spilled into the river. As the water quality improved, the public began to access the river more frequently and consequently, demand better amenities near the river. This led to further improvements to the water quality. In particular, citizens felt it was important to bring the sweetfish back to the Dongcheon River.

In March of 2004 a project was initiated to make the Dongcheon River clean enough for the sweetfish to migrate back to the river. The project engaged citizens, businesses and local government, spanned over two years and cost over US \$6 million. The goal of the project was to restore 7.3 kilometres of the river to Grade 1 water quality.

The principal indicator used to assess the water quality of the Dongcheon was to observe the presence or absence of the sweetfish. In order to grow and spawn, sweetfish need the river to have Grade 1 or 2 water quality (BOD no higher than 5ppm); flow in a natural manner (meanders with eddies and runs) and include natural vegetation and fish ladders. To implement this river restoration project, all sectors of society worked together:

- Citizen groups organized a “Green Team” that provided opportunities for youth and children to watch and learn about the river.
- Businesses cooperated with NGOs and local authorities to organize campaigns and events aimed at preserving the

Dongcheon. The business community also shared information about the river's water quality with the public and was diligent in carrying out an environmental impact assessment and respecting the water quality standards.

- Local government, working with NGOs, restored the river to its natural form, installed fish ladders and monitored the return of the sweetfish.

The Dongcheon River restoration project has not only been successful in bringing back the sweetfish but also has created an important educational venue for the people of Suncheon. The project teaches citizens the values of restoring river ecosystems and shows how people can co-exist with the environment. Citizens groups and NGOs continue to take an active role in monitoring the water quality in the Dongcheon and this important ecosystem.

*We highlight a contribution from a Network Member in each of our newsletters. Please contact Dominica Babicki babicki@icsc.ca 604-666-3417 with suggestions for future highlights*

## Key Secretariat Personnel

The International Centre for Sustainable Cities (ICSC), a non-government organization based in Vancouver, Canada, is the Secretariat of the PLUS Network. For more information on ICSC, please visit our website at [www.icsc.ca](http://www.icsc.ca).

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For further information on the PLUS Network please visit [www.plusnetwork.org](http://www.plusnetwork.org) or contact:  
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