CALL FOR ABSTRACTS
Submit by 3rd July 2015

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Professional planners and allied professionals around the world will mark World Town Planning Day 2015 with an international online conference on:

**Housing Regeneration: Strengthening Communities**

The role of citizen-led interventions related to community empowerment and delivering of affordable housing in the regeneration of existent urban contexts: small scale, tactical community – led and bottom up demand oriented development as catalysts of change.

In a context where urbanisation and economic inequity economic disparities are increasing the housing challenge takes on unprecedented dimensions creating urban policy questions around the globe. The level of housing pressures, particularly concerning affordable housing, is intensifying. From favela upgrading in Brazil, to the housing crisis affecting the Western World, to the informal settlements and dilapidated inner-city dwellings in many cities in Africa and Asia and the Pacific, interventions in the rehabilitation of the existent housing stocks challenge land and urban policies, socio-economic inequality, models of financing and the privatization of the public domain.

Retrofitting and regeneration of the housing stock is more than securing adequate shelter. It goes far beyond the dwelling unit, it is about people encompassing social and economic aspects of life, physical elements and cultural barriers crossing the urban forms. In this direction many bottom-up initiatives have emerged while institutions, government offices and developers find themselves inadequately organized to enable and support them.

The focus of the 2015 WTPD online conference will be to showcase and celebrate such plans and policies around the world. We seek examples of projects, tools and programs that:

- have achieved measurable improvements towards housing regeneration
- can be replicated around the world to address similar issues in other communities
- are inclusive and engage with all sectors of the community.

We invite you to contribute to the 7th Online Conference for World Town Planning Day by submitting a paper relating to the conference title and the following session themes.
GOVERNANCE – TOP-DOWN POLICY V BOTTOM-UP INITIATIVES

A suitable balance is required between top-down, policy makers, bottom-up movements and local community-led interventions in providing the conditions for long-term housing regeneration strategies.

- How can we help to accommodate the participation of community groups and spontaneous bottom-up initiatives in the definition of cohesive housing policies?
- How can we empower and engage those who become invisibles and left out of the discussions, policies and design decisions that shape the city in which they live?
- How small and incremental acts of retrofitting of existing urban fabric and regulations can perform to generate other ways of constructing and regenerating the city?
- What are the emerging experiences in spontaneous and bottom-up experiences in housing regeneration and community development?
- What does it mean to recover a built heritage derived from a mix of different cultures? How can we merge urban renewal process and bottom-up, uncontrolled physical interventions happening in cities?
- How can we combine bottom-up dynamics with long-term urban policies?
- The challenge of sufficient quality and quantity of housing in the context of massive and rapid growth. How to master limits and possibilities of current upgrading of formal and informal settlements?

LEGAL INSTRUMENTS FOR HOUSING SOLUTIONS

- What are the legal instruments available to us to rethink the models of property and ownership?
- Can we reshape existing models of property by redefining affordability?
- How to rethink existing models of ownership and facilitate accessibility to housing and the value of social participation enhancing the role of communities in co-producing housing and enabling a more inclusive idea of ownership?

ECONOMIC IMPERATIVE - FINANCING HOUSING

- What alternative funding models can be used to assist bottom-up urban regeneration: crowdfunding, seed-investment, cooperative financing, community land and development trusts, community shares, community investment, development trusts and social finance.
- How do public and private actors organize and manage private sector-led urban development projects?
- How to minimize negative effects of gentrification?
- What is the role of bottom up initiatives and citizen participation in the private-public urban management model?

SOCIAL INCLUSIVENESS – HOUSING FOR ALL

- How can we restore the ethical imperative of the co-creation of the city and of the common good as well as new models of co-habitation in order to develop agendas of socio-economic inclusiveness?
- How do we develop policies that address the needs expressed by the housing demand?
- How can communities realise shared goals while maintaining their social, cultural and functional identity?
SERVICING HOUSING – THE INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIRED TO SERVICE HOUSING
- How can we enhance possibilities and plan coordination for collective services?
- How can the increasing differentiation of stakeholders with diversification of roles benefit the production of public services?
- What are the interactions between housing demand and other urban services (mobility, workspace, retail, health, energy, water, waste, etc.) as part of an integrated urban regeneration process?

THE ROLE OF PHYSICAL DESIGN
- How can social needs be better integrated into everyday physical design practices?
- Can physical design engage, and how, with policymakers and participative community to provide empowerment and enhance the regeneration of the urban centres and the housing stocks contributing to make a change in inhabiting the city?

PLACE CENTRED REGENERATION – PLACEMAKING
- Public space as part of the extending living environment and the creative process of engaging citizens and stakeholders in city making.
- How can placemaking create/provide explicit benefits for marginalized community residents who are often left behind in traditional revitalization efforts? “Who benefits?” What is the role of place making strategies in building the identity of a neighbourhood?
- What are the emerging practices? And who are the actors driving these actions?

HOUSING AND HEALTH – THE IMPACT OF REGENERATION ON COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING
- How demographic changes, migration flows (with related flows of capital, talent and creative energy) challenge housing demand and the regeneration processes of urban centres?
- What is the role played by urban planning in delivering health improvements in the way it designs and reshapes our cities? How to better equip those who design to develop healthier cities for the future?
- How do planning policies and legislation impact the ability for housing regeneration projects and initiatives to improve and sustain the delivery of socially, economically and ecologically just food and water resources?

DISASTER RECOVERY AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE
- Innovative strategies for low-cost disaster preparedness in developing countries
- Innovative strategies for post-disaster recovery of housing and communities
- How can existing informal housing be made more structurally sound against earthquakes?
- How can housing resilience be increased in flood zones?
- Increasing community resilience to cope with disasters

UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES
- What are some examples of housing policies or initiatives which have had unintended consequences – either positive or negative?
OFFERS OF ABSTRACTS

The themes above may inspire you, or you can offer an abstract on some other aspect of the broad conference topic. We will favor papers that are thought provoking, relevant and creative, stimulating delegates’ interest throughout the conference program.

Each presentation should last 20 minutes. There will be 10 minutes for questions after each paper, as well as an opportunity at the end of the conference to have a more general discussion on topics raised. We also offer shorter presentation options if you prefer to speak for less than 10 minutes.

Online Conference Support
Perhaps you have never presented at an online conference before: we can reassure you that it is easy and enjoyable and we are here to support you. No special computer equipment is required, just a reliable internet connection and a speaker/microphone headset connected to your computer, and you may need to download a small piece of software to your computer. We provide training sessions and try-outs before the conference for all speakers at convenient times.

Conference Timing and Time-zones
The online conference will start at 12:00 UCT (Universal Co-ordinated Time) on Wednesday 4 November and finish at 14:00 UCT on Friday 5 November. In other time-zones:

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<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Start Time</th>
<th>End Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>7 am (07:00)</td>
<td>9 am (09:00)</td>
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<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>12 noon (12:00)</td>
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<td>Jo’burg</td>
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<td>New Delhi</td>
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<td>Sydney</td>
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Sessions will be arranged within this 26-hour period so that presenters can give their papers at a suitable time. We try to ensure that conference participants in every time-zone can join at least some sessions during business hours. The Final Program will show the schedule for time-zones round the world. We are currently looking at options for on-line publishing of selected papers. If you are interested in being considered for that, please submit a FULL paper by 30 September.

Key Dates

- **3 July** Abstracts for papers
- **Aug/Sept** Acceptance notified
- **30 September** Full papers due
- **17 October** Slide presentations due
- **Late October** Training sessions

Please submit Abstract by 3 July 2015.