Green Urbanism:  
Nature’s Services and Urban Design

University of California at Los Angeles  
Summer 2017  
Walker Wells, AICP  
Monday, 5PM – 8:50PM

Final Project

The goal of the final project is to apply various Green Urbanism concepts and tools to a specific geographic area. The objectives are to 1) respond to the existing conditions of a particular site and 2) establish an approach for applying green urbanism principles and techniques as part of the planning and urban design process.

The Site: The former Los Angeles County Metro bus maintenance site in Venice, California. The site boundaries are Main Street, Pacific, Sunset Avenue, and Thornton Place.

The Situation: The site was recently vacated by Metro, after being used for bus storage and maintenance for the past fifty years. Metro adopted a policy in 2015 stating that affordable housing will be developed on 35% of all Metro property. The Venice maintenance yard site is being considered for several uses, including affordable housing, artist housing, and homeless services. The Venice area is also considered to need park space, beach parking, spaces for cultural activities, and a community garden.

The Scenario:

The Metro Board and planning staff are seeking innovative proposals for the study area and is open to a wide range to ideas for the sites: affordable housing, environmental education center, bike share, bus hub, energy generation, community gardens, stormwater capture, waste management, etc.

Your team has been invited to develop and submit a conceptual proposal for the property area. In order to prepare the proposals, please follow the steps outlined below.

The Assignment:

1. Visit the location.  
   Walk the area, take photographs, and create a base map that inventories the following features:

   - Energy distribution and generation  
   - Water Supply and Sewage Treatment  
   - Stormwater inlets and pathways  
   - Transportation infrastructure, including, where applicable, public transit routes and stops, bike lanes, and pedestrian access ways.  
   - Waste management  
   - Food production  
   - Social Spaces and other opportunities for communication and events
Note any key observations (sounds, smells, activity, appearance, function) about the relevant things that you have documented. The site visit and analysis should serve as the point of departure for developing your proposal.

Note that when visiting the site you have legal access to all public streets and sidewalks, but you cannot enter private property without permission of the property owner. Be respectful when taking photographs of people and property and be sure to explain clearly the purpose of your visit if asked.

2. Create a Conceptual Proposal by:

- Developing a strategy to intervene and transform the site in ways that respond to the overall situation and challenge described above, your own analysis of the site, one or more of the Hanover Principles, and the concepts and tools discussed in class (urban ecology, green building, green infrastructure).
- Determining if the transformation needs to be sequenced (or phased) and if so, what phase would provide the foundation for subsequent phases.
- Describing your concept in two ways:
  - In words, through the use of a project metaphor or evocative title.
  - Graphically through either the map, a series of diagrams, or sketch representation. (A combination of these elements is acceptable).

3. Prepare a Proposal Description and Presentation by:

- Using text, images, info graphics, charts, and resource-based analysis to explain your proposal.
- Establishing at least two sustainability indicators that will measure the benefits your proposal will bring to your site. Describe in your presentation how your proposal will affect these indicators.
- Preparing a 10-slide presentation that explains how the proposal follows from the analysis of the area, the main concepts of the proposal, and what benefits it will bring to the area.
- Printing out a copy of the presentation and bringing it to class.

Assignment Logistics:

- The assignment should focus on the topic area assigned to your group.
- Your group will have the opportunity to share your proposal concept with the instructor on July 24th.
- On July 31st your group will make a 10-minute presentation, using the 10-slide electronic presentation. All members of the group should take part in the presentation.
- To avoid technological hiccups the day of the final presentations, your presentation should be saved and presented as a full screen .pdf file. Therefore no moving images, Flash, sound, or slide transitions should be incorporated. If your presentation is not in this format you will not be able to show any images during your presentation.
Your group will be graded on how well prepared it is for the presentation meeting, as well as both the final oral and graphic presentation.

**A note on costs, financing, quantification, and “feasibility”:**

Your group is being asked to develop a *transformative* concept proposal. As such, do not feel overly limited by issues of cost – we do not require a first cost estimate for the proposal or a projection of long term operating costs and savings. However it will be helpful to provide a general outline how your proposal would get funded or financed and who would be motivated to support the your concept. This could be through a particular private sector financing mechanism, government loans or incentive, individual contributions, or combination of the thereof.

A good proposal must include some quantitative evaluations of your proposed intervention. This means making a good faith attempt to calculate quantities like the volume of water, tons of waste, kilowatts or BTUs of energy, number of people, pounds of food, etc. Connecting the “source/input” with the “sink/output” is also important (for example if you propose to capture stormwater, where will it be used and does the quantity of what is captures and what is used match up?)

In terms of feasibility, it acceptable to imagine and propose a future vision that is significantly different what is currently in place or that is currently approved. This means that it acceptable to move roads, tear down buildings, relocate infrastructure, and propose emerging technologies or systems that are not currently permitted by building codes or approved plans.