

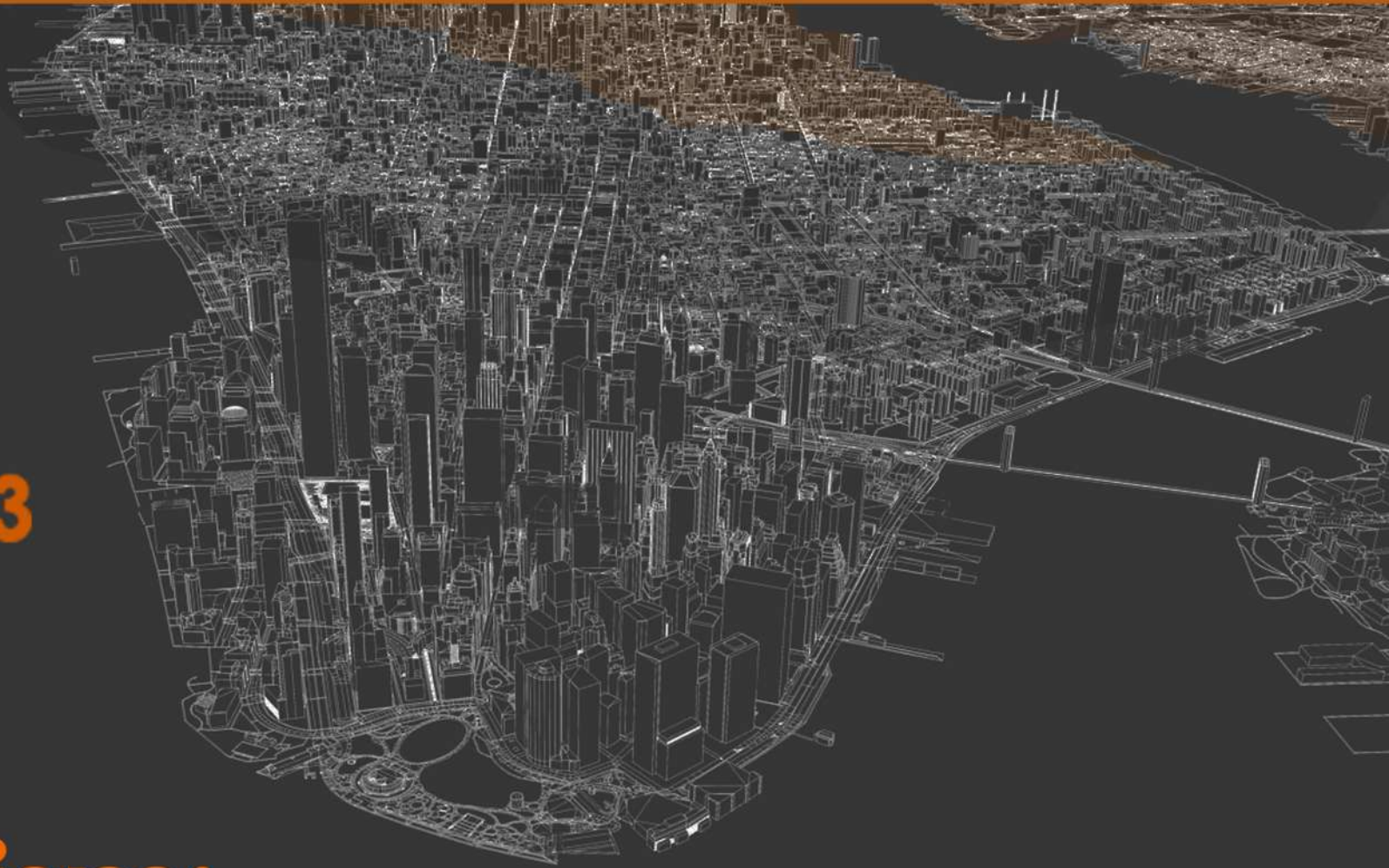
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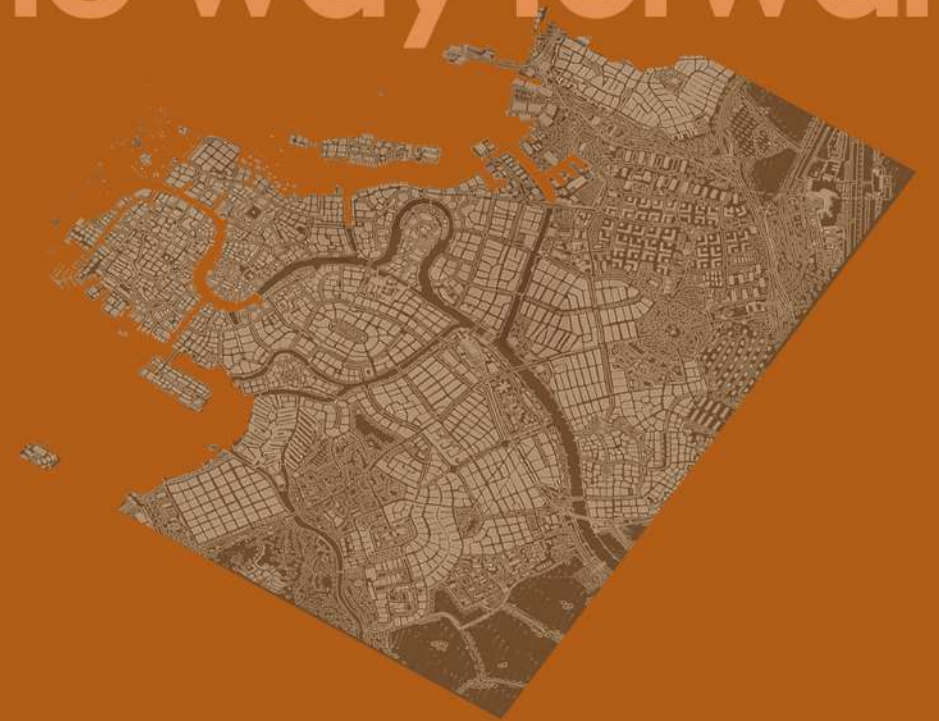
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Adaptive Urbanism:

Challenges and the way forward



Centre for Cities.
Department of Architecture
University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka



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Theme:

**“Adaptive Urbanism:
Challenges and the way forward”**

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For the ninth consecutive year, ICCPP conference took place in Colombo in 2023. This time, we talked about a new way of doing cities through adaptive urbanism. The theme is very apt given the fact that the ever more complex city making practices need new ways of thinking, that are more adaptive to all kinds of circumstances. Recent happenings in Colombo demonstrate clearly that a change in management can move a city from being one of the most livable to a miserable one. Some years ago, Colombo was considered one of the most livable cities in the world; yet today, it is being transformed into one of the unlivable places; with congestion, upheavals, people's protests, robberies, soaring food prices and most critically a community living in fear and frustration. It is understandable that most people think that this is not a good city to live any more.

Interestingly, conference participants did not subscribe to this pessimism. They tried to throw light on some of the critical aspects of livability: social and societal processes, attachment to places and what makes great places, and in particular how to transform Colombo and other Sri Lankan cities to be great places. They tried to articulate how to overcome the current difficulties by pointing out hidden yet enjoyable spaces and places in and around the cities in Sri Lanka and their nuanced happenings. They tried to show how to achieve adaptive transformations through professional, democratic and participatory means, rather than protests. We are grateful to the conference organizing team, and especially those who care a great deal about cities to bring this issue forward and offer an optimistic perspective of the future of cities even in the midst of such adversaries.

Needless to say, the conference papers have been thoroughly vetted; reviewed by an international review panel, who have gone through the papers twice over: first by examining the abstracts and then the full papers. Not many conferences do so and can demand a small group of international reviewers to be so stringently on the refinement of the papers presented. This is a great asset ICCPP has nurtured from its beginning and surely has provided a solid base and strength to its proceedings. We are grateful to the many distinguished academics on the Review Panel, who have never refused to help when the need arose for reviewing many papers and to comment upon each aspect of them to bring them to a level of perfection.

The same spirit of perfection prevailed among the local conference organizers; namely the Faculty at the University of Moratuwa together with their support staff. They have toiled over a year to get this event to a fruitful outcome. Their efforts have made a huge impact not only in the conference and its day-to-day organization, but also in the production of its many outcomes. The papers that have come out of the conference will surely be contested, yet provide much needed intellectual inputs in the progression of ideas that will fashion the cities in future. University of Moratuwa has been always fully supportive of this event and their great contribution cannot be measured and acknowledged sufficiently. Without this institutional support, ICCPP would have come to an end long time ago, but UOM is an institution with a management that goes beyond the call of duty to support intellectual endeavours.

Last but not least, the paper presenters have been tremendously tolerant, willing and rigorous in their responses to the many comments and criticisms of the original papers and research that, upon refinement have reached very high standards. They owe our great admiration of their pursuits and the desire to participate and excel. That is indeed our biggest strength which ensures that the ICCPP continues and flourishes as a meaningful and intellectually rich endeavour in the calendar of the Sri Lankan academic scene. We wholeheartedly thank all those who have extended their support to make this conference yet another successful event.

Ranjith Dayaratne and Janaka Wijesundara, 2023

FOREWORD

In this century, more people have moved to cities than ever before and this is bound to continue to happen. Living in cities offers seductive modern comforts although there are also inherent problems of overcrowding, polluted air, lack of nature and overwhelming presence of vehicles and machines. Today, these have become even more worsened and difficult with the emergence of health related issues such as the pandemics and epidemics. Some cities also face natural disasters as well as man-made issues such as wars, human conflicts and political instabilities. Economies are shrinking economies and high inflation rates are adding serious burdens to the urban communities.

With the Covid-19 pandemic, many cities and neighborhoods around the world looked into new ways of restructuring their urban and built forms, their functional arrangements, modes of accessibility and movement, production and services, use of technology and knowledge, and consumption and conservation. At the same time, political conflicts and wars in midst of political conflicts have brought new challenges on sustaining life in cities. As is usually the case, these have affected the East more than the West.

In this context, managing the cities has become extremely difficult, critical and challenging. All cities are now interconnected and the world economy swell as globalization have fundamentally changed the role of urban business systems. The trend transforms mechanisms and patterns of market economy of institutes; and stimulates an appearance of new economic, social, and political problems. Hence, there is an urgent need to look for different strategies and mechanisms to deal with the situations and manage the development of cities. There is no alternative because cities will be the habitations of all people in the years to come.

One of the new approaches to the cities is connected to the idea of adaptive urbanism: an approach, which is a significant shift from how the cities are typically planned and managed. It is based on the understanding that cities need to develop flexibility and the capacities to respond to shifting demands and external pressures, being prepared to deal with unpredictable economic, environmental or political crises. Adaptive urbanism thus offers a resilient approach to production and habitation of cities and it is vital to understand its nuances and place-specific manifestations and potentials, especially in the current economic and social upheavals around the world.

This conference proposes to examine the multi-faceted nature of adaptive urbanism: how it is practiced and how it could be practiced.

In this sense, it is fair to claim that the intentions of the ICCPP-2019 have been well realized adding a body of knowledge that will eventually help the professionals to manage and care for the multitude of cities that already exist and are emerging.

Ranjith Dayaratne and Janaka Wijesundara, 2023

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THE FLUID CITY - DESIGNING IN A PERIOD OF CONSTANT CHANGE

By

Professor Peter Bishop, Professor of Urban Design,
The Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL

ABSTRACT

We are living in a period of unprecedented change. Pandemics, economic turmoil, climate change, political uncertainty and the impacts of new technologies are not only challenging how we plan and shape our cities - but the nature of urban living itself. In this talk Professor Peter Bishop will explore some of the trends that are affecting cities, their implications and how we can respond through agile design initiatives including temporary and tactical urbanism. He will draw on work in London, Germany, Holland, the Middle East and Australia.

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