

SECOND EDITION

CHARLES
LANDRY



THE
CREATIVE
CITY

A TOOLKIT FOR URBAN INNOVATORS



The Creative City

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A Toolkit for Urban Innovators

SECOND EDITION

Charles Landry

COMEDIA

earthscan

publishing for a sustainable future

London • Sterling, VA

First edition published by Earthscan in the UK and USA in 2000

Second edition first published in 2008

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ISBN: 978-1-84407-598-0 paperback
978-1-84407-599-7 hardback

Comedia
The Round, Bournes Green
Near Stroud, GL6 7NL, UK
www.comedia.org.uk

Typeset by MapSet Ltd, Gateshead, UK
Printed and bound by TJ International, Padstow
Cover design by Susanne Harris
Cover illustration by Christopher Corr

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Earthscan publishes in association with the International Institute for Environment and Development

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Landry, Charles, 1948-

The creative city : a toolkit for urban innovators / Charles Landry. — 2nd ed.
p. cm.

ISBN 978-1-84407-599-7 (hardback) — ISBN 978-1-84407-598-0 (pbk.) 1.
City planning. 2. Urban renewal. I. Title.

HT166.L327 2008
307.1'216—dc22

2008020601

The paper used for this book is FSC-certified. FSC (the Forest Stewardship Council) is an international network to promote responsible management of the world's forests.



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Acknowledgements

I wish to thank a number of people who have helped me. Franco Bianchini for his generosity with ideas and with whom I have frequently discussed and written about many of the themes covered. (Sir) Peter Hall with whom I co-wrote *Innovative and Sustainable European Cities* and who has given me sustained encouragement. François Matarasso whose constructively critical comments and help in editing the book have been invaluable in clarifying its arguments. (Lord) Trevor Smith and the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust whose trust in me over the years, as well as co-funding for this project, I hope I can now repay. Phil Wood, the coordinator of the Creative Town Initiative in Huddersfield, who had the courage to implement a ‘creative city’ project and co-funded the writing of this book through the European Commission’s Urban Pilot Project scheme.

Others I would like to thank include my Comedia colleagues Ken Worpole and Liz Greenhalgh who have a long-term interest in the future of civilized cities as well as Geoff Mulgan and his other collaborators in Demos such as Perri 6 and Charles Leadbeater. The book has been influenced by writers and thinkers such as Howard Gardner, Gareth Morgan, Jane Jacobs and Art Kleiner. Important too have been Comedia clients and especially Harry Schulman and Timo Cantell from Helsinki who have supported the Creative City work for over six years, as well as friends with whom I have debated themes such as Tom Burke, Bob McNulty, Jude Bloomfield, Marc Pachter, Jonathan Hyams, Deborah Jenkins, Ilid Landry and Lia Ghilardi. Thanks too to Tom Fleming, Helen Gould and Annabel Biles, who helped to provide case studies, Rob Lloyd-Owen, who helped with the chapter on creative techniques, and Jim Lister.

I especially thank Susie, Max and Nancy to whom I can now devote myself much more as well as my canine friends, Daisy and Bertie, for their constant companionship.

Setting the Scene

The Creative City describes a new method of strategic urban planning and examines how people can think, plan and act creatively in the city. It explores how we can make our cities more liveable and vital by harnessing people's imagination and talent. It does not provide definite answers, but seeks to open out an 'ideas bank' of possibilities from which innovations will emerge. Most of us sense that where we live could be a better place. Many of us know of places that show how cities can be made more human and more productive. Yet cities balance on a cusp – decision-makers can repeat past policies in a climate of slow decline, or they can seek to reinvent their city as a vibrant hub of creativity, potential and improving quality of life. Undoubtedly, for the most part, old approaches do not work. We cannot solve 21st-century problems with 19th-century mindsets: the dynamics of cities and the world urban system have changed too dramatically.

Yet the urban utopia already exists in the dispersed experience of global best practice. Here are innovative ways of creating employment or applying technology and unleashing the skill of the young or the elderly. There is inspiring architecture that speaks to a city's soul and identity, and there are clever energy-saving devices or public transport that is a joy to use. There are retail environments that merge entertainment and learning, and public spaces that encourage urban buzz and celebrations that capture the unusual, the uplifting and the creative.

Since these good examples are widely dispersed they are hard to recognize and difficult to learn from. Instead we see the city as a place of fear, crime, pollution and degradation, forgetting that cities are the wealth creators – over 80 per cent for developed nations – generating the prosperity of nations, however unfairly distributed or shared. Cities provide opportunities and interactions which can

solve their own problems and improve the quality of life of whole regions. Yet urban life is still seen in a derogatory light.

THE CENTURY OF CITIES

The Creative City is a call to action because the 21st century is the century of cities. For the first time, over half the world live in cities – in Europe the figure is already over 75 per cent and in the developing world it will shortly reach 50 per cent, whereas in 1980 it was 29 per cent worldwide. Yet most live in cities through need, not desire. A regular UK survey shows that over 80 per cent of people want to live in a small village compared to 4 per cent who do. We cannot create enough villages to meet these aspirations. Instead we must make cities desirable places to live and be in, partly by re-creating the values that people perceive to exist in a village – a sense of place and belonging, continuity, safety and predictability – and partly by nurturing distinctly urban possibilities – buzz, interaction, trade, unexpected delight and much more.

CREATIVITY: THE LIFEBLOOD OF CITIES

Cities have one crucial resource – their people. Human cleverness, desires, motivations, imagination and creativity are replacing location, natural resources and market access as urban resources. The creativity of those who live in and run cities will determine future success. Of course this has always been critical to cities' ability to survive and adapt. As cities became large and complex enough to present problems of urban management, so they became laboratories that developed the solutions – technological, conceptual and social – to the problems of growth.

Yet there are special reasons for thinking about the problems of cities today in terms of creativity and innovation – or lack of it. Today many of the world's cities face periods of transition largely brought about by the vigour of renewed globalization. These transitions differ from region to region: in some areas, like Asia, cities are growing, while in others, such as Europe, old industries are disappearing and the value added in cities is created less through what is manufactured and more through intellectual capital applied to products, processes and services.

PARADIGM SHIFTS AND BEYOND

The Creative City outlines the fundamental changes occurring in the city at every level; in their entirety they represent a paradigm shift from the typical city of 1970 to the city of today. In this situation, older solutions do not work. What might seem an impenetrable problem from within one mindset might be eminently solvable from within another and the new thinking and conceptual toolkit outlined aims to help readers think through the dilemmas.

Examples are cited only to illustrate a point: *The Creative City* is not intended as sourcebook of urban good practice but many references to those will be found. Many of the cases come from my own experience of working in Europe and the rest of the developed world. While the story of urban dynamics is told from a worldwide view, *The Creative City* is written from a European perspective – not because European cities are more creative, but because I know more about them. I am aware of the great creative cities of yesterday and today in China, India, Africa and South America, yet am deeply etched by my own European culture and have an image of the ‘good city’ that reflects European urbanism. It includes ideas such as that the city centre matters as the neutral meeting place for all parts of the city; the sense that publicly shared space adds to the wealth of cities by enhancing interaction, connections, trade and urban buzz; the feeling that urban life itself has a self-sustaining quality beyond the individual; the notion that mixing, diversity and culture create potential.

Some of these views are shared worldwide, others perhaps not. Nevertheless the concepts, principles and ways of analysing urban problems can be used by anyone and should apply anywhere. The toolkit seeks to enable citizens, policy-makers and decision-makers to grasp opportunities which may only be possible in a city. Once you explore below the surface nearly every place has its creative potential, but in many cities it is blocked. Surprisingly little is known about the conditions necessary for creativity and innovation to emerge – the formal and informal structures that have helped Silicon Valley, Los Angeles, Barcelona, the Third Italy around Emilia Romagna, the advanced technology enclaves surrounding Tokyo or Bangalore develop world reputations for creativity and generation of new businesses and services. *The Creative City* will seek to explore the underlying dynamics of creativity and in so doing show the need to get beyond the idea

that creativity is the exclusive domain of artists or that innovations are largely technological: there is social and political creativity and innovation too.

CREATIVE SOLUTIONS TO URBAN PROBLEMS

At the heart of creativity are creative people and organizations who have particular attributes: when these come together in one area they establish a creative milieu. *The Creative City* asks how such a milieu comes about, enabling cities to become innovative hubs. It assesses how new forms of business and banking get off the ground and what the principles are of organizations such as a South Shore Bank in Chicago, which provides banking services to the deprived. I looked at how ecological approaches to urban development, like those undertaken in Emscher Park in the Ruhr in Germany, got off the ground. I studied the mechanisms of arts solutions to create civic pride and gain momentum like the Love Festival in Berlin. I asked what triggers the imaginative uses of technology for urban development as in Helsinki and new forms of governance as in Tilburg. I wanted to discover the ways in which creativity can be organized and how creative people can be managed; and whether the Huddersfield Creative Town Initiative is the right way forward. It is important to find out how government can work best with business and NGOs and how links between formal and informal networks can be fostered to produce the best results. I was interested too in the role of technology in developing a creative city and considered whether other forms of creativity are more important.

A TOOLKIT FOR PRACTITIONERS

The Creative City argues above all that changes in mindset can generate will, commitment and energy which allow us to look afresh at urban possibilities. A range of approaches and methods to ‘think creatively’, to ‘plan creatively’ and to ‘act creatively’ are described. In their entirety they provide a new way of addressing urban planning. Once taken on board the techniques can be absorbed subconsciously and naturally embedded in day to day decision-making, as well as applied in more formal, methodical ways. A set of new terms and concepts for talking about cities runs

through the text: civic creativity, a creativity harnessed towards the public good; the cycle of urban creativity and how it can be developed, implemented and made virtuous; the lifecycle of urban innovation concept; urban R&D and how pilot projects can be developed, mainstreamed and replicated; cultural resources and how they can be applied; how to think of the city as a learning organism and, finally, the creation of a new form of literacy – the capacity to ‘read’ and understand cities, whoever you are – called urban literacy.

WHY THIS BOOK?

The Creative City was written with three primary aims:

1. To provide readers with a more integrated and holistic approach to thinking about and analysing cities. In the longer run this will change the way decision-makers consider the assets and potential of cities as well as how cities might be organized and managed.
2. To offer a ‘mental toolkit’ that provides readers with the cornerstones of a new mindset and so stimulate readers’ own ideas and solutions for their city.
3. To engender a critical debate amongst decision-makers at different levels and to influence the policy, strategies and actions undertaken in cities.

Preface

The Drama of Urban Change

The first edition of *The Creative City* was published in 2000 and it has reprinted nine times. For this revised edition I have written a new extensive overview chapter (page xxi) that brings the thinking up to date, explains how and why the idea came about, summarizes key issues that are later elaborated upon and describes how cities can rethink their potential assets. I have left the original text and examples almost entirely as written then* and I am aware that if the book were written completely from scratch again, different examples might be used. The main point about the existing examples is the thinking that lies behind them.

At the time, *The Creative City* was an ambitious book in seeking to inspire people to think, plan and act creatively in their city and to get an ideas factory going to turn urban innovations into reality. Its aim was to make readers feel ‘I can do that too’, and to spread confidence that creative and innovative solutions to urban problems are feasible, however bad they may seem at first sight. It argued that if we keep trying to solve urban problems with the old intellectual apparatus and mindset we will come up against the same obstacles. In taking an eagle-eye view of cities around the world it noted that it is astonishing how many ordinary people show leadership qualities to make the extraordinary possible when given the chance.

The book threads a path between being practical and playing with ideas, and is unashamedly conceptual in parts. I believe

* I have made very few, and very minor, updates to information in the original text. Mostly I have restricted myself to a few minor changes such as clarifying ambiguities over dates and amending out of date contact details.

concepts have immense power to shape how we view the world and to simplify the seemingly complex. When change is deep-seated, understanding its underlying dynamics is crucial. It involves thinking afresh about the concepts we use and logics we apply in solving problems and harnessing opportunities. Some things may have been said many times before but not necessarily in the context of the city and this is what I hope will give the book a distinctive feel.

When I first began talking about the Creative City idea around 20 years ago I did not think that it would take off as a concept. My original impulse was to respond to the dramatic economic, social and cultural transformations happening in Europe at that time as our cities needed to restructure and rethink what their role and purpose were. Subsequently, these transformations have affected cities worldwide as cities everywhere have been drawn into the maelstrom of a reinvigorated globalization. In this process, cities have become the hubs of wealth creation and so increasingly more important than nation states; as a result, it is often cities that are competing as proxies for states.

The maturing of the globalized network of cities and its connected competitive drive has led the world of cities to change dramatically over the last 15 years. Led by transnational businesses and, at times, parastatal institutions, and enabled by information and communications technologies, global production networks and associated supply chains have spread like tentacles throughout the world. This has changed the world's urban hierarchy with some cities rising in importance and others falling. Cities of every size in every location face periods of deep transition.

In this new global dynamic, all cities, small and large, need to reassess and rethink their role and positioning – regionally, nationally and globally. This challenges cities to think their opportunities and problems with ingenuity and to review their assets – or lack of them. Cities have had to ask themselves: who am I; where do I go next; what is my identity; what is distinctive about me and what are my assets? What are the conditions my city can create for people and institutions to think, plan and act with imagination and ride the wave of change so that it can benefit?

Every city of real ambition wants to move up the value chain and capture centrality for themselves and become a central hub of wealth creation by exporting, yet controlling from a distance, low-

cost activities and attracting high-value ones to itself. These include research and knowledge creation centres, headquarters, advanced manufacturing, or cultural and artistic creativity. Territory can also be captured in the imagination by driving perceptions and image, and cities such as Dubai, Shanghai and, more recently, Madrid have focused extensively on this.

The overall aim of ambitious cities is to increase their 'drawing power' and to get on the radar screen. This assesses the dynamics of attraction, retention and leakage of power, resources and talent. The right blend makes a city attractive and desirable, with different aspects tempting different audiences: power brokers, investors, industrialists, shoppers, tourists, property developers, thought leaders. Overall, this creates the resonance of a city. The consequence of achieving drawing power shows itself in economic, political and cultural power – the ability to shape things – and, thus, performance and wealth.

Cities now compete by harnessing their tangible (as well as hard and intangible) soft-asset base and project and orchestrate this 'iconically'. Very few cities understand this. The aim is to pull attention to the city, to create a richness of association and recognition, and to grab profile in order to create conditions that can generate downstream impacts.

During the last decade the world axis has shifted markedly towards the East with China and India emerging forcefully as new production hubs – and even they are rising up the value chain, not only turning out mass product but also inventing sophisticated goods and services that are increasingly a match to what is happening in the West. At the same time, the Arab Renaissance has moved apace, in spite of the conflicts in the Middle East. The oil-producing Arab countries are speedily diversifying their economies; in places such as Dubai, oil now only represents 4 per cent of their income. Their sovereign wealth funds (entities that manage state savings) increasingly influence the global economy – for instance, buying up shares in Western banks and financial institutions such as Citibank or Merrill Lynch or owning strategic logistical assets such as ports.

This has created renewed confidence in these regions. Cultural power or soft power always matches economic and political power; indeed, it sometimes drives the latter. Hence it is not surprising that as if out of the blue we suddenly find Chinese art or film compelling and interesting, or are reassessing the Arab contribution to world development or finding its literatures interesting.

In the new interconnected global system, there are cultural zones, which are groupings of cultures and sub-cultures that have a binding narrative or common way of explaining the world, and help us to understand the big cultural differences. Each of these needs a hub or set of hubs through which the major transactions with the rest of the world occur.

These are strategic places and communications nodal points that have a direct effect and influence on world affairs economically, culturally and politically, where global agendas are created, facilitated and enacted. This explains the rise in importance of Beijing, Shanghai, Mumbai or Dubai and the continued importance of Moscow, Paris or New York. These cities, too, are asking: 'How can I be creative?'

In parallel, new ethical agendas have moved forcefully to the fore, of which the environmental imperative is the most important. Cities that do not address sustainability will find it increasingly difficult to be stable and competitive. Their own populations are demanding greater responsibility towards the health of the world and the mobile talented workforce they need does not want to be associated with places that harm our planet. As a consequence, cities are falling over themselves to be more eco-friendly and the eco-cities movement is one expression of this. We will increasingly see cities measuring their eco-footprint and attempting to adjust their regulations and incentives regimes so they approach carbon neutrality. Even the gas-guzzling Arab world is seeking to lead this movement with projects such as the new carbon-neutral Al Masdah city in Abu Dhabi. The so-called clean, lean and green industrial revolution provides the opportunity for mass creativity in science, technology and new design given the raft of products and services that need to be reinvented.

Another issue is inter-culturalism: increasingly vital in a world with mass movements of people. This is different from multi-culturalism. In the latter, we acknowledge and even celebrate difference; yet it often leads to parallel lives. In the former, we ask instead: what do we share and what can we do together? The focus is on diversity advantage rather than its problems since if the possible difficulties of managing diversity are overcome, innovation potential and insights increase. This requires greater cultural literacy, the understanding of how different cultures work and the ability to look at the world through an inter-cultural lens. Great cities manage the art of living together well.

In this context for many the Creative City idea has become a new way of looking at city development as, in essence, it looks at urban assets in a different way and some even talk of a Creative Cities Movement. This is encapsulated in the idea that we are moving from an ‘urban engineering’* approach to urban development, to a ‘creative city-making’ approach.

*April 2008
Bournes Green, Gloucestershire*

* Thanks to Professor Paul Tanimura for providing me with this phrase, and for helping me understand the planning history trajectory.

Introduction

The Creative City: Its Origins and Futures

THE ORIGINAL IDEA

The Creative City idea emerged from the late 1980s onwards along a number of trajectories in response to these emerging trends. The idea, when introduced, was seen as an aspirational concept: a clarion call to encourage open-mindedness and imagination. It intended to have a dramatic impact on organizational culture. Its philosophy was that there is always more potential in any city than any of us think at first sight. It posits that conditions need to be created for people to think, plan and act with imagination in harnessing opportunities or solving seemingly intractable urban problems. These might range from creating wealth to enhancing the visual environment or addressing a social problem such as homelessness. It is a positive concept: its assumption is that ordinary people can make the extraordinary happen if given the chance. Creativity in this context is applied imagination using qualities such as intelligence, inventiveness and learning along the way. In the Creative City, it is not only artists and those involved in the creative economy who are creative, although they play an important role. Creativity can come from any source, including anyone who addresses issues in an inventive way – whether a business person, a social worker, a scientist, an engineer or public administrator. Yet, creativity is legitimized in the arts, and artistic creativity has special qualities that chime well with the needs of the ideas-driven knowledge economy.

The Creative City idea advocates the need for a culture of creativity to be embedded within how the urban stakeholders

operate. It implies reassessing the regulations and incentives regime and moving towards a more 'creative bureaucracy'. Good governance is itself an asset that can generate potential and wealth. By encouraging creativity and legitimizing the use of imagination within the public, private and community spheres, the ideas bank of possibilities and potential solutions to any urban problem or opportunity will be broadened. This is the divergent, broad-ranging thinking that generates multiple options, which needs to be aligned to convergent thinking that narrows down possibilities from which urban innovations can then emerge once they have passed through the reality checker. This, the notion argues, will provide cities with the flexibility to respond to changing circumstances and thereby create the necessary resilience to possible shocks to the system.

In its original formulation, the 'Creative City' notion focused strongly on the potential of the cultural industries as it seemed that cities needed to concentrate on what made them unique and special. Within this context, arts projects and re-using old buildings were especially significant. In 1989 I undertook a study for the city of Glasgow called *The Creative City and Its Cultural Economy*, which shaped my initial thinking. Over time, it became clearer that the economy, the political system and the bureaucracy were all part of a creative ecology as the world of cities needed to refocus. It required a shift from thinking about lifting production volumes and quantity to addressing how to add value, how to create innovations and how to increase urban quality. This has been a challenge for all cities. They have had to adjust their priorities. Rather than managing themselves with standardized or codified rules or by concentrating on the efficiency paradigm centred on inputs/outputs or cost and profit management, they have had to shift to thinking how experimentation and creativity can be encouraged in order to safeguard future profits.

FROM URBAN ENGINEERING TO CREATIVE CITY-MAKING

The city of the future needs to be thought of differently from how we considered cities in the past. A city that encourages people to work with their imagination goes well beyond the urban engineering paradigm in city-making. This focuses largely on hard infrastructures such as roads, monotonous housing developments

or undistinguished office buildings, even though, like frenzied bees, architects try to create ‘iconic’ buildings. It requires, instead, a combination of both hard and soft infrastructures. Soft infrastructure includes paying attention to how people can meet, exchange ideas and network. It shifts focus and encourages physical developments and place-making or urban design that foster communication between people. These places have high levels of amenity and quality. It promotes ‘third spaces’, which are neither home nor work where people can be together. This might be a cafe or other kinds of gathering places. These are likely to be a combination of quiet places and more stimulating ones within a setting where there is greenery and great attention to aesthetics. It is also technologically advanced with public wireless zones where people can work and communicate as they move about.

Those planning this kind of city will think about how to create a good atmosphere; they will be aware of the negative psychological effect of ugly or soulless buildings and how this reduces people’s capacity to work well. They will acknowledge how important being sensitive to culture is and they will balance being globally oriented and locally authentic. They will encourage the artistic imagination in how the city is put together. This is more likely to attract the highly skilled and flexible labour force that the Creative City needs as, increasingly, people with good skills have choices about where they want to live. This city wants dynamic thinkers – creators as well as implementers as creativity is not only about having ideas, it is about making them happen too. It requires a large formal and informal intellectual infrastructure. Yet, interestingly, most universities feel old-fashioned and more like factories for producing knowledge. Often massive and monolithic looking from the outside and uninspiring inside, they are usually not very creative places. This means rethinking what universities look and feel like and considering new kinds of more informal education or learning spaces. Importantly, this more open city is able to give maverick and unusual personalities space to operate, as creative organizations know that in order to work well, mavericks are necessary as they often push the boundaries that are blocking progress.

In this process, strong communication linkages are established internally in the city and with the external world. There is a need for ‘local buzz and global pipelines’. This then helps develop an overall culture of entrepreneurship, whether this is applied to social or economic ends. In other words, a vibrancy fostered by a local

talent pool generates learning processes embedded within a community, and channels of external communication built to reach selected outsiders speed up knowledge and technology transfer. Innovative places ride the paradox of being intensely local and intensely global.

The soft creative infrastructure also includes the overall mental infrastructure and mindset of the city. This is the way in which a city approaches opportunities and problems: the environmental conditions that it creates to generate an atmosphere, and the enabling devices that it fosters to generate innovation through its incentives and regulatory structures, and its rules and laws.

Finally, being creative does not mean that someone is only concerned with the new. Instead, there is a willingness to review and reassess all situations in a flexible way. At times, one needs the courage to either change things if required or to have the sound judgement to keep things as they are after reconsidering things openly. Therefore, history and creativity can be great partners: often, great achievements are combinations of the old and new.

CREATIVITY AS A CURRENCY

In the new configuration of cities, creativity is one of the main currencies. Five key words form a seamless quintet: curiosity, imagination, creativity, innovation and invention. Being 'curious', 'creative', 'imaginative', 'innovative' or 'talented' are nearly synonymous. They are different words with similar meanings. Some clarity is helpful. Curiosity is the starting point because it is the ability to open the mind and to search for insights, learning, possibilities and solutions. This develops the capacity to have insight and to imaginatively understand potential and apply it to projects. Having imagination is the ability to visualize, conceive, dream up or create a mental picture of something. The attributes and qualities of being creative are the ability to think afresh; be enquiring and flexible; see unusual connections; not be frightened of ambiguity, paradox or contradictions; and be original. It is concerned with being pioneering, advanced and ahead of one's time. To be innovative requires creativity and imagination. The process of innovation uses convergent thinking. It takes creative ideas and assesses them, reducing them to those that can work. Being inventive is to be adroit and clever; but the invention is the tangible, often patented, result of an innovation. Talent implies someone with abilities, intel-

ligence and potential. With such attributes, they are more likely to create innovations and to be creative and imaginative. It is only possible to develop assets by, for instance, inventing new services, if a city has individuals, schools and organizations that encourage a spirit of curiosity from which the other things such as innovations flow. The result of these processes can be an innovation in terms of end-product, a service, a technology, a technique and procedure, a process, an implementation mechanism, a problem redefinition, or new professional attitudes.

Creativity is context-driven. What is creative in one circumstance may not be in another. Whereas in the past we might have needed to harness engineering and related inventiveness to solve urban infrastructure problems or public health issues, today the needs are different. Of primary importance is the ability for joint visioning, integrated thinking, grasping the essence of different disciplines, and understanding what the new resources are.

Creativity is like a new currency that is more sophisticated and powerful than finance capital, which is one-dimensional and narrow. The process of being creative combined with other attributes, such as tenacity and focus, sets the preconditions and generates the ability to make money. The process of being creative, though, does even more. It can, in principle, help to solve any problem and can grasp potential. It has many expressions, such as physical things like great design or architecture or transport systems. It is invisible, too, as the ability to express oneself can provide motivation or engender confidence. Creativity also helps to develop culture and identity because the innovations that it generates shape what a place becomes.

The most important condition for creativity is open-mindedness and the capacity to listen. Most Fortune 500 companies recognize this asset and apply a variety of theories of inventive problem-solving to enhance their competitiveness. Those that run, manage and govern cities also need to see its potential. In a society where ideas are increasingly the key currency, the ability to create ideas drives both social well-being and prosperity, provided the culture is willing to change, and fosters the infrastructure to turn concepts into innovations. Places with a large talent pool, clusters of innovation-driven firms, significant research centres, and a business and social climate conducive to risk taking have greater capacity to solve problems and create opportunities.

CREATIVITIES: INDIVIDUAL, ORGANIZATIONAL AND CITY-WIDE

This 'creative city of imagination' must identify, nurture, attract and sustain talent so that it is able to mobilize ideas, talents and creative organizations in order to keep their young and gifted, as well as older interesting people too. What being creative means as an individual or organization is relatively easy to understand; yet to be creative as a city is a different proposition given the mix of cultures and interests involved that need to be brought together in some coordinated way.

It is simple to grasp what a creative individual might be like – for instance, their capacity to make interesting connections, to think afresh, to have sparks of insight fostered by a listening capacity. They have energy and some sense of where they are going, although how is often unclear. The same is true for a creative organization. But already the priorities are different and it adds a layer of complexity and a different dynamic takes place.

A creative organization needs creative individuals in it; but for the organization to work it needs other types of people too: consolidators, sceptics, solidifiers, balancers, people with people skills, solid administrators. Some people consider them as less interesting; but that is dangerous because for the creative organization to work, it needs mixed teams and diversity. It may be the case that a creative organization has quite 'ordinary' people in it; but because its spirit or ethos is open, exploratory and supportive, this maximizes the overall potential. This, then, leads to greater sustained organizational achievements.

At the next layer of complexity – the Creative City – issues become very difficult as the complexity rises exponentially since it contains a mass of individuals and an amalgam of organizations with different cultures, aims and attitudes. The task of urban leaders is to orchestrate and align these differences with an overarching set of ideas or a vision that takes the city forward. The Creative City notion stresses how rules of engagement between differences of opinion can be negotiated to move forward. Therefore, mediation between differences and finding common threads become an important skill.

The characteristics of such a city tend to include taking measured risks, widespread leadership, a sense of going somewhere,

being determined but not rigidly deterministic, having the strength to go beyond the political cycle, and, crucially, being strategically principled and tactically flexible. To maximize this requires a change in mindset, perception, ambition and will. It requires, too, an understanding of the new competitive urban tools, such as a city's networking capacity, its cultural depth and richness, the quality of its governance, design awareness, and understanding how to use symbolic and perceptual knowledge and eco-awareness. This transformation has a strong impact upon organizational culture and will not be achieved within a business-as-usual approach.

The Creative City balances a dynamic and occasionally tense equilibrium since when the old and new come together there is a creative rub. The stability is provided by an ethical framework that provides the overall guiding principles to the evolving, more creative city. This is what I mean by cities needing to strive to be the most 'creative city for the world', rather than 'the most creative city in the world'. The word 'for' indicates giving something back and taking on responsibilities for the global community – so, for instance, trying to be creative in how one deals with environmental challenges.

To move from the more traditional city to a more imaginative one requires thousands of changes in mindset, creating the conditions for people to become agents of change rather than being passive recipients or victims of change. This sees transformation as a lived experience, not a one-off event. It demands invigorated leadership.

The built environment – the stage, the setting, the container – is crucial for establishing such a milieu. It provides the physical preconditions or platform upon which the activities or atmosphere of a city can develop. A creative milieu is a place that contains the necessary requirements in terms of 'hard' and 'soft' infrastructure to generate a flow of ideas and inventions. A milieu can be a building, a street or an area and, ultimately, a whole city.

THE NEED FOR CREATIVITY

Why did the popularity of creativity come about? From the late 1980s onwards, there was an increased recognition that the world is transforming radically even though industries in the more devel-

oped Western world already had to restructure from the mid-1970s onwards. For those at the receiving end, it felt like a paradigm shift.

The creativity movement has taken time to take root and to unfold in its fullness; but its momentum has moved apace with the shift in the global terms of trade now apparent. This was eased by the Internet-based 'new economy' where we move from a focus on brawn (physical labour) to brain work, where value added is generated by ideas that are turned into innovations, inventions and copyrights.

This development process has left many countries and cities disoriented and flailing as they searched for new answers to creating a purpose for themselves and new kinds of jobs, while their cities were physically locked into their industrial past with old structures waiting to be re-used or torn down. This led to soul-searching at different levels and many decision-makers concluded that the old ways of doing things did not work sufficiently well as they did not prepare cities for the emerging context. The education system, for instance, did not seem to prepare students for the demands of the 'new' world. Equally, traditional organizational systems, management techniques and leadership models with their control ethos and hierarchical focus did not seem to provide the flexibility, adaptability and resilience to cope in the evolving competitive environment. Noticeably, cities whose atmosphere, look and feel were seen as coming from the industrialized factory age did not do well, especially where they viewed the quality of design as an add-on rather than as the core of what makes a city attractive and competitive.

Coping with these changes required cities to reassess their resources and potential and led to a process of necessary reinvention on all fronts. This in itself is an act of imagination and creation. Being creative thus seemed like the answer and the battle for greater creativity occurred on several fronts. First, for example, the educational system with its then more rigid curriculum and tendency to rote-like learning did not sufficiently prepare young people who were being asked to learn more subjects, but perhaps understood them less. Critics instead argued that students should acquire higher-order skills such as learning how to learn, create, discover, innovate, problem solve and self-assess. This would trigger and activate wider ranges of intelligences; foster openness, exploration and adaptability; and allow the transfer of knowledge between different contexts and disciplines as students would learn

how to understand the essence of arguments rather than recall out-of-context facts. Second, harnessing the motivation, talent and skills increasingly could not happen in top-down organizational structures. Interesting people, often considered to be mavericks, increasingly were not willing to work within traditional structures. The brightest instead often set up their own firms, where they worked with a portfolio that they could control rather than being part of a corporation. This also led to new forms of managing and governance with titles such as matrix management or stakeholder democracy, whose purpose was to unleash potential and bring greater fulfilment. The drive for innovations required working environments where people wanted to share and collaborate for mutual advantage. This was necessary outside the workplace and increasingly the notion of the creative milieu came into play, which is a physical urban setting where people feel encouraged to engage, communicate and share. Often, these milieus were centred on redundant warehouses that had been turned into incubators for new companies.

THE POWER OF CULTURAL RESOURCES

Today we can talk of creativity and even the Creative City Movement; but back in the late 1980s when most of the constituent ideas were developed, the key terms discussed were culture, the arts, cultural planning, cultural resources and the cultural industries. Scientific, technological and engineering creativity were not part of the original vocabulary even though they have a substantial contribution in making cities work. Creativity as a broad-based attribute, as a new kind of currency, only came into common (as distinct from specialist) use during the mid-1990s. Later, some of the phraseology changed. The cultural industries became the creative industries and the creative economy. There is still a lack of clarity between the terms. ‘Cultural industries’ are those that shape the culture and, thus, include casinos or theme parks as well as design or the arts. The creative industries exclude the former as they only involve creative invention.¹

The notion of the creative class then emerged in 2002 and the publication of Richard Florida’s book *The Rise of the Creative Class*² gave the ‘movement’ a dramatic lift. Equally, the rise of the digital media and increased focus on design became a bridge in

linking technology with innovations arising from the arts. This, in turn, opened up discussions of combinatory creativity, such as the sci-art movement, where the joint insights of scientific and artistic thinking are pulled together. In addition, the rise of the notion of the 'experience economy' increased the importance of artistic creativity given its focus on sensory experience.

The necessary broader imagination required to establish a creative city, such as bureaucratic creativity or social innovation, remain, unfortunately, under-explored even though without it, it is impossible to call oneself a creative place.

There remains rightly a strong focus on cultural resources given that being distinctive is vital in an age of increasing blandness and homogeneity. These are embodied in people's history, habits and past knowledge, and they are unlocked through imagination and then turned into unique, practical possibilities and solutions. These resources are not only material 'things' such as buildings, but also traditions or attitudes such as the idea of '*wakaḥ*' in Islam based on its tenet of charity. This has encouraged the endowments in Muslim countries that, for instance, provide low-cost housing, contributing to social inclusion in many cities. Another resource can be a symbol, such as a monument recording the foundation of a city or troubles overcome, that inspires citizens. In 1995, Kobe had the massive Great Hanshin Earthquake, referring to the elevated freeway that collapsed, and every December in commemoration Kobe holds an event called *Luminarie*, where the city centre is decorated with illuminated metal archways. This reminds them of their remarkable achievement, largely through voluntary activity, in getting the city back on course. It can be the repertoire of local products in crafts, manufacturing and services, such as the intricate skills of violin-makers in Cremona, Italy, the woodcarvers of the Cracow region in Poland, or the makers of ice hotels in northern Finland.

Urban cultural resources include the historical, industrial and artistic heritage representing assets, including architecture, urban landscapes or landmarks, such as bridges like San Francisco's Golden Gate or the Eiffel Tower. They can be traditions of learning in science, the humanities or the arts, such as in Bologna, whose rich learning environment has made it one of the most vibrant places in Europe. The same is true both in Cambridge, England, and Cambridge, Massachusetts – the home of Harvard. They involve local and indigenous traditions of public life, festivals,

rituals or stories, as well as hobbies and enthusiasms, such as Adelaide's sense of itself as a city of 'free citizens'. Amateur cultural activities can exist simply for enjoyment; but they can also be rethought to generate new products or services. Resources such as language, food and cooking, leisure activities, clothing and sub-cultures, or intellectual traditions that exist everywhere are often neglected, but can be used to express the special nature of a location. And, of course, cultural resources are the range and quality of skills in the performing and visual arts and the creative industries. Cultural resources are the raw materials of the city and its value base, and they replace our traditional assets.

Further on we discuss and contrast traditional assets and resources with emerging notions of urban assets, including the use of 'iconics' or eco-awareness.

Creativity is the method of exploiting these resources and helping them to grow. The task of urban planners is to recognize, manage and develop these resources responsibly. An appreciation of culture should shape the technicalities of urban planning and development rather than being seen as a marginal add-on to be considered once the important planning questions, such as housing, transport and land use, have been dealt with. So, a culturally informed perspective should condition how planning, as well as economic development or social affairs, should be addressed. Cultural resources reflect where a place is, why it is like it is and where its potential might lead it. This focus draws attention to the distinctive, the unique and the special in any place.

THE CHANGING PLANNING PARADIGM

General transitions in the history of societies, cities and their economies are reflected in how cities develop and how urban planning is conceived. The form and priorities of city-making to develop a city's assets are different under the era of labour-intensive mass production-based industrialization from those of high-technology-focused and knowledge-based development.

In the former, planning is largely top down and seen, in essence, as urban engineering and the construction of public works, such as roads, railways and ports. Over time this developed as a bureaucratic, professionalized and centralized planning system that was largely closed. This focuses on dealing with the surge of urbaniza-

tion and, especially, housing and facilities, such as hospitals, as the city spreads into the suburbs. As the effects of this approach showed its weaknesses, planning has emerged as more participatory, and open systems of planning have materialized that are increasingly more communal. This creates a strategic dilemma. It is easier to get things done in a more top-down way without consultation – the issue is whether it is sensitive and reflects people's deeper needs and whether these forms of development are resilient over time. Think here of Dubai or Beijing.

To survive well, bigger cities must play on varied stages – from the immediately local, through the regional and national, to the widest global platform. These mixed targets, goals and audiences each demand something different. Often they pull and stretch in diverging directions. One, for instance, demands a local park or public transport link, the other airport connectivity for people and cargo across the world and the ability to insert themselves into strategic global production networks.

An alignment is beginning to emerge between the needs of local communities and the global mobile class – and cities need to attract these talented itinerants – as both want a high-quality environment and facilities.

A city suitable for factory work looks and feels different from one geared to encouraging people to be curious and inventive. In the one, people are seen simply as units of mechanical production; in another, as the key ideas and, thus, wealth generators.

This, in turn, is recasting the planning paradigm. The notion of the creative city proposes that planners broaden their horizons and insights and become more imaginative in understanding the lived experience of the city. At the same time, the imagination and creativity of the wider public are encouraged. This requires that a larger group work together to plan the city rather than those merely concerned with land use. Only then can the asset base of the city represented by its people be properly harnessed.

Creating sustainable, vital and economically successful places requires core professions, such as physical planners and landscape designers, whose primary concern is planning, delivering and maintaining the city. It also includes elected and appointed decision-makers or infrastructure providers. The second group of associated professionals has a great impact, such as the police or health professionals, economists, cultural activists or those who understand social issues, as well as the wider public. The capacity

for ‘inclusive visioning’, team-working, leadership and the ability to manage processes and change then rises to the fore. Planning and strategy-making then becomes more of an enabling process whose goal is to provide the conditions for contact, vitality and liveability.

PEOPLE AS ASSETS

Seen in this way, people and how they feel are highlighted as the crucial resource. The material infrastructure that makes cities work organizationally needs to support their well-being. This means planning needs to think emotionally. People resources have supplanted natural resources as the main source of competitiveness. Human talent, skills and creativity are replacing location, natural resources, undifferentiated pools of labour and market access as the central urban resources. The inventiveness and innovations of those who live in, work in and run cities determine their future success.

This switches the central planning question around so that it fosters those things which support people’s imagination, competence and capabilities with an entrepreneurial spirit to match. There is, then, a focus on a city’s sensory landscape and its emotional and psychological impact. These invisible, soft, intangible and less definable assets become more important and focus on questions such as ‘How do we create conditions for people to become curious or imaginative?’, ‘What atmosphere encourages people to give of their best?’ or ‘How do we show eco-awareness?’ as these characteristics draw people to places and respond to their deeper yearnings.

Making the best of urban assets

Good city-making is about maximizing assets and what is considered an urban asset has broadened dramatically. Urban assets and resources can be:

- hard, material and tangible, or soft, immaterial and intangible;
- real and visible, or symbolic and invisible;
- countable, quantifiable and calculable, or to do with perceptions and images.

Normally, cities thought of assets rather like inventories in a factory or warehouse merely as tangible things, such as a transport system, a research institute or facilities like hospitals, parks or iconic buildings.

What was true for companies is now true for cities. Yet, just like once on a company's balance sheet patents, human capital or talent were not calculated because they were seen as intangible. In 1950, 80 per cent of assets consisted of material things: equipment, real estate and inventories. Today, the figure is around 50 per cent; the rest are intangible assets. They are the drivers of corporate wealth creation and prosperity. Now we know they have value and need to be calculated. They are the new equivalents of physical and material assets. For instance, attributes such as 'reputation' or a city's global 'resonance' become significant and these are built up as a composite from hard and intangible factors.

For investment projects where access to highly skilled people is critical, the 'soft' considerations have a higher importance in the decision-making process. This relates primarily to functions such as headquarters, research and development, creative industries employment and shared service centres. It does not relate to cost-based facilities, such as manufacturing plants, distribution centres and back office operations.

In rethinking the repertoire of urban assets creatively, there are 15 main elements to assess. They fall into four groups: material things, activities, matters of attitude, and perception and organizational concerns.

The first category includes the natural setting and location; natural resources; history, heritage and the built fabric; infrastructures from the physical, such as metro-systems and housing, to information technology connectivity.

The second includes urban housekeeping from noise maintenance and waste collection to social care; traditions, both tangible and intangible; the presence of industries and services; levels of skills and talent; and the range of activities, from trade fairs to sporting, artistic and community-based festivals and events.

The third involves attitudes and attributes, such as levels of openness, tolerance, joined-up thinking, a 'can do' approach and entrepreneurship; the perceptions of the city internally and externally; and the presence of a culture of curiosity, creativity and competence.