

# A Hippocratic Oath for the Built Environment <sup>1</sup>

*For too long, too many beautiful places throughout the world have been disfigured and rendered impersonal, resulting in a loss of human diversity, health and well-being, economic creativity, and environmental sustainability.*

## Urbanists and Architects

Take a stand

### ***To first, do no harm***

Never placing client, commercial, artistic, or personal objectives above those of the residents;  
Never considering science, technology and industry as ends unto themselves;  
Never promoting aggression, confusion, or alienation;  
Never causing involuntary isolation, or loss of privacy;  
Never disrupting the harmonious cohesion of an existing environment;  
Never experimenting on people without their full informed consent;  
Never repeating urban and building designs or patterns that show clear evidence of failure;  
Never applying generic solutions that disregard the local context, heritage and resident needs;  
Never demolishing existing quality buildings that can be cost-effectively adapted for new uses;  
Never building with materials that are non-maintainable, non-renewable, or non-recyclable;  
Never undermining natural systems or their capacity, or unnecessarily wasting natural resources.

Take responsibility for

### ***Built Environments that promote Human Rights***

**Equity and justice** to honor and empower resident ownership and participation;  
**Protection and safety** to assure a just mediation between conflicting needs and freedoms;  
**Equilibrium and harmony** to facilitate prosperous lives people choose to live;  
**Respect and comfort** to promote a sense of worthiness and belonging;  
**Health and well-being** to secure the future of humanity on earth;  
**Beauty and elegance** to support the pursuit of happiness.

***We recognize that the built environment will not, by itself, provide these rights, but neither can they be provided without a coherent and supportive physical framework.***

Our Premise

### ***To re-enforce the rich diversity of local place***

#### **~ Sustainability of Resources ~**

for health and survival

#### **~ Resilience of Structures ~**

for strength and adaptability

#### **~ Beauty of Place ~**

for prosperity and happiness

Our mission

### ***To promote the health, prosperity and well-being of people***

Facilitate natural evolution and adaptation through successional development;  
Recognize the importance of urban self-organization, collaboration and subsidiarity;  
Seek to capitalize on natural, built and human assets;  
Continuously add value and sense of place with each intervention;  
Personalize place by celebrating the human and contextual idiosyncratic qualities;  
Harmonize settlements and replace ugly badly built buildings;  
Create gateways to both celebrate and secure;  
Provide durable and adaptable settlements and buildings;  
Use natural, maintainable, renewable and recyclable materials;  
Appropriate successful architectural traditions and urban patterns regardless of origin.

Our profession

### ***To bring local vision to life***

We take a nature-wise and humanist stand for the well-being of people.  
We co-design to empower the residents and innovate responsibly.  
We are vigilant, upholding ethical practice, fair trade and local empowerment  
With common sense expertise, we use locally adapted tools:

Public Charrettes, Inquiry by Design, Matrix for Diversity,  
Permaculture, Transect Models, Retrofit Tools, Form-based Codes,  
Context-Sensitive Street Standards, Walkable Mixed Use Design Models, ...