

Participation in Bauru master plans, Brazil: analysis of the historical evolution of the consultation process

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Résumé de l'article

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PARTICIPATION IN BAURU MASTER PLANS, BRAZIL: ANALYSIS OF THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

**Maria Helena Carvalho RIGITANO
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❶ RÉSUMÉ

La participation citoyenne est instrumentalisée au Brésil depuis 1988, date à laquelle la constitution fédérale a réglementé la participation dans les programmes d'urbanisme, plus spécifiquement dans le développement des schémas directeurs. Cet article présente une reconstitution historique des schémas directeurs développés à Bauru – Etat de Sao Paulo – Brésil. D'abord, les méthodes de consultation participative de 1968, 1988 et 2005/2006 sont comparées à l'aide d'une grille d'analyse. Ensuite, le degré de participation communautaire aux processus est estimé par l'application d'une typologie fondée sur le niveau de participation des habitants. Enfin, nous proposons de mettre en évidence et de discuter les effets produits par les changements de coalitions d'acteurs au pouvoir, de l'approche de la planification stratégique, du cadre juridique dans lequel s'inscrit la consultation participative, de la reconnaissance de l'importance de la communauté et du savoir-faire acquis au long du processus.

MOTS-CLÉS ■ Participation citoyenne, processus participatif, plans directeurs



❷ ABSTRACT

In Brazil, a policy on citizen participation and consultation in urban intervention programs, in particular in the development of master plans, was first introduced into the Federal Constitution in 1988. This article presents an historical reconstitution of Master Plans in Bauru – State of São Paulo – Brazil. The 1968, 1988 and 2005/2006 consultation methods are analyzed using established criteria. The degree of community participation in the processes is estimated by drawing on a typology based on the level of involvement by residents. The effects of participation caused by changes in political regime, technical planning vision, legal support to consultation, recognition of community importance and knowledge acquired during the process are highlighted and discussed.

KEYWORDS ■ Citizen participation, participative process, master plans

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INTRODUCTION

The history of urban intervention programs in Brazil begins in the first decades of the 20th century when the 'improving and embellishment plans' for Rio de Janeiro and the 'avenue plans' for São Paulo were developed. These plans were influenced by the technical ideas of intervention plans such as transport and urban sanitation.

During the 1960's while the intense urbanization process was occurring, the idea that intervention plans could be conceived and used as technical instruments powerful enough to solve the 'urban problems' of the times was accepted by many of Brazil's elite.

This widely-shared belief prompted the Federal Government to establish a Federal Office in 1964 whose mandate was to encourage municipalities to develop Master Plans. In 1967, the State of São Paulo Organic Law of Municipalities (São Paulo, 1967) reinforced this principle by making State financial aid or loans contingent of whether or not municipalities has officially adopted a Master Plan.

Medium-sized counties lacked technical staff to help them develop their Master Plans so they had to rely on outsourcing. In most cases, these specialized professionals, with no prior experience or knowledge of the municipality, produced unrealistic and utopian plans.

Beginning in the 1980's, Latin American societies went through a series of institutional changes and political transitions, ranging from totalitarian to democratic forms of government. During this period the political debate revolved around state democratization and citizen participation.

During the process of consolidation of the Constitution of 1988, a multi-sectoral movement of national scope fought to include in the constitutional text instruments that established the social function of the city and of property in the process of the construction of cities. Once again taking up the cause of Urban Reform, this movement brought up to date and to the conditions of an urbanized Brazil, a platform built since the 1960s. [...] Then, in 1987, an alliance of social actors involved in urban issues – movements for social housing and regularization of land possession, unions, professional associations of engineers and architects, legal assistance groups, urban squatters, NGOs, and academics – joined together to prepare the Popular Urban Reform Amendment – which,

supported by 250,000 signatures, was presented to the Constitutional Congress. As a result of this action, for the first time in history, the Constitution included a specific chapter on urban policy that called for a series of instruments to guarantee, within the jurisdiction of each municipality, the right to the city, the defense of the social function of the city and property, and of democratization of urban management (articles 182 and 183) (Rolnik, s.d., p. 12).

The 1988 Federal Constitution established that "a Master Plan, approved by Municipal Authority, mandatory for towns with more than twenty thousand inhabitants, is a basic political instrument for urban development and expansion" (Brasil, 1988).

Despite the legal implications, no implementation deadline was set, no accountability guidelines were developed and/or penalties defined for disregard of rules and regulations.

Nevertheless, the true milestone in the history of urban planning came in 2001 with the Federal Law 10.257 (Brasil, 2001), known as the Statute of the City¹. It proposed changes to the process for developing Master Plans, which responded to the demand for citizen participation and for the democratic management of cities. This law established a time limit (October 2006) and defined penalties for non-compliance by mayors.

According to Burgos (2007) the inauguration of the Ministry of Cities in 2003 and the establishment of a representative group of professionals engaged in urban reform, heralded an era of broadened participation experiences in urban politics.

The requirements defined in the Statute of the City were complemented by the 2005/2006 national campaign 'Participatory Master Plans: the city belongs to all' promoted by the Federal Government, which in produced "a real explosion of participative processes"².

¹ The Statute of the City aims to regulate the chapter on urban policy found in the 1988 Constitution. "Resulting from an intense negotiation process which lasted more than ten years, within and beyond the National Congress, the Statute confirmed and widened the fundamental legal-political role of municipalities in the formulation of guidelines for urban planning, as well as in conducting the process of urban development and management" (Rolnik, s.d., p. 11).

² According to information issued by the Ministry of Cities in a research conducted in October and November of 2006, 1622 out of

Motions from the City Council³ provided guidelines and recommendations to municipalities related to participation in the process for developing Master Plans, basic plan content and deadline for approval.

There is an increasing demand today for greater participation of civil society in public policy-making. This issue is being debated in many countries including Brazil.

According to Howard and Gaborit,

Public consultation has become an important task for promotion of urban planning projects. The idea of citizen participation has grown in the United States with the advocacy planning movement during the 1960's. It has expanded during subsequent decades, being reshaped and redefined by politicians, planning professionals, developers, activists, and citizens. (2007, p. 2).

International influences, countrywide democratization and institutional channels for participation provide incentives for the dissemination of consulting and participation processes in Brazil. Burgos (2007) argues that today, the number of existing channels for participation and collaboration is such that debates now focus on issues of quality of participation and of evaluation of previous experiences.

According to New Economics Foundation (NEF),

Participation is a buzz-word that means different things to different people. One way of looking at participation is using a version of the 'ladder of participation' first developed by Sherry Arnstein⁴. This is now 20 years old, but is still relevant. It shows the different ways in which the organization responsible

for an activity – for example a local authority – can involve participants – in this case their citizens (NEF, 1998).

Arnstein (1969) states that “the typology, which is designed to be provocative, is arranged in a ladder pattern with each rung corresponding to the extent of citizens power in determining the plan and/or program” and warns however that the typology does not consider the barriers that may impede the process of ascending each rung. Including these barriers would entail increasing drastically the number of rungs to about 150 in all.

The focus of this paper is not on process related variables. Instead of addressing this complex issue, it aims to provide a historical reconstruction, examine the way in which plans are developed and analyze the level of citizen participation in Bauru's Master Plans of 1968, 1996 and 2006⁵.

These time periods refer to three specific moments when the development of Master Plans in Brazil reached a peak, first under Military Government supervision, then, in the aftermath of the adoption of the Federal Constitution and the Statute of the City. The case of Bauru reflects the development and growth process in Brazil, which was a consequence of changes in how participation was defined politically, socially and conceptually. This paper draws on data from several primary sources including published documents and reports found in the archives at City Hall, legislative records, magazine articles and newspapers from each period under study.

Based on the principles established by Carson and Gelber (2001), the paper presents the results of a comparative analysis carried out on citizen participation in the three mentioned processes. Participation level is estimated according to the eight rungs on the Ladder of Citizen Participation proposed by Arnstein (1969).

I. BAURU MASTER PLAN – 1968

In the 1960's, as urban problems throughout Brazil intensified, Federal and State governments responded by encouraging cities to develop their Master Plans (MP).

the 1682 municipalities who accepted to update their Master Plans had begun the process. (Burgos, 2007, p. 134).

³ The Cities Council is linked to the Ministry of Cities, and comprises representatives from all federal, state, and municipal public agencies and civil society through many segments (community groups, unions, academic bodies and NGOs).

⁴ In the late 1960's, when experiences of citizen participation appear in the USA and Europe, Sherry Arnstein published an article in which she questions the degree of citizen participation in decision-making processes. An eight rung typology called “Ladder of citizen participation” is proposed. Starting from the bottom rung, Arnstein labels them according to the level of population decision power: (1) Manipulation, (2) Therapy, (3) Informing, (4) Consultation, (5) Placation, (6) Partnership, (7) Delegated Power, (8) Citizen Control.

⁵ Bauru is a town with 370 000 inhabitants in the State of São Paulo, Brazil.

In 1966, to develop the city's MP, an agreement of collaboration was signed between Bauru City Hall and USP – São Paulo University.

At the request of contracted professionals, the mayor passed a law enacting the creation of a Master Plan Commission and a Consulting Council.

In theory, research would be conducted by technicians from USP's Urban Research and Development Center – CPEU, and the Municipal Commission would be responsible for overseeing and reviewing their work.

Various city and public agency representatives sat on the Municipal Commission appointed for the purpose of selecting participants, advocating and assessing and bringing together the contributions from the community.

These attributions served to bolster claims that active local community involvement in the MP development process was an issue of concern for both technicians and politicians. In spite of that, no records of meetings were found between the representatives of the Commission, community members and technicians over the course of the planning process.

The technicians were already in São Paulo working on the MP, when the Commission took office. Six months later, the technicians reported their conclusions to the city's architects and engineers who responded with "neither debate nor discussion of any kind"⁶. The final report included a diagnosis of the current urban conditions, and general guidelines for zoning which have never been implemented.

The Bauru Master Plan final draft was submitted to the mayor who had reached the end of his term of office. The plan was presented in a public ceremony attended by USP technicians, commission members, local authorities and the newly elected mayor. The mayor publicly expressed "his purposes in fulfilling the established rules during his term" (Autoridades, 1968).

However, the mayor asked his advisors to prepare an Action Plan early on during his term. Many of the elements of the Master Plan were not carried over. Concerning the discrepancies between the proposals in the approved Master Plan and interventions that were implemented, the City Hall

Architect⁷ justified this gap by arguing that the Master Plan was "soothing, imported and utopian". He declared that as soon as he assumed his position in the Technical Planning and Projecting Office, he would put an end to the Master Plan viewing it as a kind of "historical curiosity" (Agroquisa, 1988, p. 75-76).

The Master Plan elaborated by the CPEU (Prefeitura Municipal Bauru, 1968) provided an important diagnosis of problems faced by the municipality and drew on local knowledge. However, the diagnosis did not appear to have played a significant role in defining the guidelines and project proposals. Local knowledge apparently was not taken into account by the technicians. Initiatives that came out of the MP did not follow the recommended assessment guidelines.

2. BAURU MASTER PLAN – 1996

A nation-wide movement in support of a new Brazilian Constitution appeared in the late 1980's. In Bauru, a Committee was formed in 1986 to revise the Master Plan of 1968. The president of the Committee invited the population to participate in discussions held in community-based groups, trade unions, service-related clubs and other municipal agencies.

Although no meetings were held during the next two years, a report by the president of the committee was released in which data and maps were compiled without consulting the local population. He also drew up the political agenda for the following year when the new mayor would take office.

There remains a gap between the discourse about the importance of community involvement in the MP development process and the reality in the field where no initiative was taken in this direction.

The new Federal Constitution was adopted in 1988 and the MP was required in all counties with a total population of more than 20 000 inhabitants. In addition, a statute in the Constitution mandated citizen participation in plan-making.

The São Paulo State Constitution, revised in 1989, made it mandatory to adopt a MP in every municipality, including rural areas.

The Bauru Organic Law, enacted the following year in 1990, required a formal public participation

⁶ Engineer José Cardoso Neto gave exclusive interviews to the authors in December 2007 and April 2008, not published.

⁷ The City Hall architect had taken part in the development of the Master Plan while a student of architecture at USP.

process for MP development, with a completion deadline set at 18 months. The Federal and State Constitution, as well as the Organic Law did not however develop accountability guidelines or define penalties if this requirement was not fulfilled.

Once Bauru's Organic Law was approved, the municipal government created a committee to promote popular participation in the Master Plan, which was made up of class-based groups, civil society and community groups, to assist in disseminating information about the MP discussion meetings to the wider population. The municipal technicians were responsible for collecting data and suggestions from municipal departments and for developing liaison with the community.

The county government promoted a Seminar called "Bauru in Themes" that ran for five days and aimed at encouraging community participation in the discussions on the issues to be addressed in the MP.

A bill was drafted on the basis of the data and suggestions collected at the Seminar and proposed to City Council in 1991. No further action was taken on the bill.

Once again, with a new mayor taking office in 1993 a Commission was created to develop a Municipal MP. The Commission was composed of 25 representatives from government agencies and civil society. While most of them came from class-based groups representing architecture, urban planning, engineering, commerce and industry, no one claimed to be representing popular movements or citizen groups.

The public meetings and the discussions on the Master Plan took place only in 1996, when the Commission was under new management and the Master Plan's Center for Studies was officially established. Over 40 meetings were necessary to tackle the various issues to be addressed in the legal text.

Both public and private agencies and groups came together to assist in dealing with the issues and contribute suggestions and proposals at a series of thematic meetings.

The ideas that came out of the discussions that took place during the municipal conferences on health and social care, as well as the documents and produced at the "Bauru in Themes" Seminar were collected and debated during community meetings hosted by the Regional Administration.

The MP was submitted to City Council for consideration during a public hearing and was approved in 1996 through a municipal bylaw (Prefeitura Municipal Bauru, 1997).

Many of the actions proposed in the MP were implemented, in particular those closely related to environmental issues, thanks to efforts made by NGOs to this dimension of the proposals.

3. BAURU PARTICIPATIVE MASTER PLAN – 2006⁸

In 2001, the Federal Law number 10.257, called "Statute of the City", provided advanced planning instruments to effectively fight against real estate speculation and land regularization (Brasil, 2001). However, Municipal MP has precedence over this Law, which set a deadline of 5 years i.e. 2006. The focus of the debates during the 1st Bauru Conference held in 2003 was on the new MP development process. The process would need to take into account the demands of the new Federal legislation, Statute of the City, and in particular, of citizen participation.

A Work Group under the direction of municipal agents instigated debates by hosting a series of thematic Council sessions on urban expansion and land use, housing, transit system, drainage, urban parks and transport. Community meetings were also organized throughout the seven Regional Administrations of the city and technical meetings with public agencies, class-based groups and universities.

In 2005, the Federal Government conducted a national campaign promoting the development of Participative Master Plans (PMP). The Federal Government provided didactic materials (booklets and videos) about the application of the new urban legislation (guidelines and objectives) and the need of citizens' involvement in the debates over the PMP.

During the 2nd Bauru Conference held in 2005 in accordance with a Federal Government orientation, the Working Group expanded to include university representatives, class-based groups and social movement representatives. This new entity, the Management Group (MG), was officially recognized by a municipal act and was given the responsibility to coordinate the development of the PMP.

⁸ The description of the procedures used in the elaboration process of Bauru Participative Master Plan is based on Prefeitura Municipal Bauru, s.d.

It was during this conference that an agreement was reached on the division of municipal territories into urban and rural sectors established according to watershed. Debates addressed issues related to the environment and accessibility at the community level. Planning initiatives would be divided into twelve urban and nine rural sectors.

Another issue that was raised and debated was the way in which the population would be represented at the PMP Final Meeting. The PMP bill text would be approved at this meeting and submitted for approval to City Council.

Representation was divided as follows: section 1 was composed by social movements, section 2 by unions, class-based groups and research institutions and section 3 by public agencies.

The role of social movements was considerably large, with the highest percentage (60%) of the total representatives. The unions, class groups and research institutions represented another 20%, as well as the federal technicians, state and municipal public agencies.

In urban areas, community representation was proportional to the number of inhabitants per area, with one delegate for each 3000 inhabitants. In rural areas, each sector chose at least three community representatives: one land owner, one resident and one worker.

The MG participated actively in training workshops organized by the Ministry of Cities and provided guidance in the form of managing the participatory planning process. The goal of the MG was to balance workloads and responsibilities.

The MG was also given the task of coordinating the work, mobilizing local community groups, reaching local leaders; distributing personal invitations throughout the community and organizing outreach events and using newspapers, radio and television to publicize activities.

Before every meeting, publicity campaigns were launched in the local media to promote their work.

The following steps describe the process.

3.1 Awareness

The first step was to offer participants an overview of their district and of watershed dynamics raising awareness and suggesting to them ways that

they might play a role in the Participative Master Plan development process.

Following a brief presentation of the Working Group giving by a technician, participants were asked to join smaller discussion groups to address critical issues facing them and to propose solutions.

Every proposal was recorded and displayed during the subsequent meetings to increase public awareness of what had previously been discussed and to create opportunities for new contributions from the participants.

A total of 77 meetings enabled 3026 people from various backgrounds and different interests representing rural or urban areas, class-based groups, religious communities and service-related clubs to contribute to the planning process.

3.2 Community Evaluation and Technical Evaluation

On several occasions, Community Evaluation began during the Awareness Meetings, followed by on-site visits to the mentioned “hot-spots”, usually accompanied by people from the community. The primary goal of these field excursions was to study the problems that need to be solved, provide photographic evidence and identify boundaries on maps.

The next step, Technical Evaluation, consisted in interpreting surveys conducted on the positive and negative aspects related in particular to the preparation phase of the MP as well as visits to various municipal services and technical agencies, the solutions to meet the most pressing needs and the short and long term proposals to be included in the MP.

Members of the Working Group and the Management Group were invited to join a “tour” of urban and rural areas. The purpose of this field trip was to identify both the problems that needed attention and the positive aspects that could be improved.

In all, 29 meetings brought together 1082 people.

3.3 Proposals Presentation and Delegates Election

During the final step, conclusions were drawn from the analysis and proposals for improvement for

each area were made on a host of issues including mobility, environment, infrastructure, development, social function of property and housing.

Elections were held before the close of the meetings. In all, 130 delegates from section 1 were elected, proportional to the number of inhabitants in the sector, which is equivalent to 60% of the total.

Delegates from section 2 took part in a plenary session to hold elections. In all 43 delegates or 20% of the total were elected.

Delegates from section 3 were appointed by the mayor who chose them among technicians who participated in the discussions on developing the PMP. Again, 43 delegates or 20% of the total were selected.

The elected and selected delegates participated in training workshops on urban planning legislation, which provided them with information on the instruments of the Statute of the City and helped them grasp the scope of the proposals made in the PMP.

At this stage in the process, 538 people took part in 16 meetings.

3.4 The Final Conference

The main purpose of the Final Conference was to examine and approve the memorandum on the PMP bill. Many people were present at the voting sessions, including municipal technicians and invited interested citizens, but only the delegates were granted the right to vote.

The memorandum was sent to City Council for approval in 2006, but it was only sanctioned into law in 2008, as Law number 5.631/2008 (Prefeitura Municipal Bauru, 2008). Delegates proposed only one modification to the document which concerned the construction coefficient, as a result of stakeholders' pressure.

At the 4th Municipal Conference held in January 2010, delegates insisted that the original proposal be reinstated.

4. ANALYSES OF THE MASTER PLANS DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION LEVEL

A considerable amount of documents have been made available so far, which focus mainly on developing strategies for working with a host of

groups, as well as citizen consultation methods and techniques. To date, although several countries have shown an interest in these sorts of guidelines such as Act government (2001), NEF (1998), Renn et al. (1993), little systematic consideration is given to assess the effectiveness of participatory processes.

The main problem in the evaluation of participation methods is the absence of any optical benchmark against which they might be compared and measured, which arises in part because of confusion as to what we mean by effectiveness (Rowe and Frewer, 2000, p. 24).

In order to evaluate public participation methods, Rowe and Frewer (2000) established the following criteria: representativeness, independence, early involvement, influence, transparency, resource accessibility, task definition, structural decision-making, and cost-effectiveness.

Carson and Gelber (2001) then proposed a manual of principles and procedures "for achieving better community consultation" based on Rowe and Frewer's criteria. The results of the analysis are summarized in Table 1. The first column shows the principles on which the development processes were founded, while columns 2, 3 and 4 provide an overview of the key points of the 1968, 1996 and 2006 Master Plans.

These principles are used as benchmarks, indicating that there was a real concern to make the process more participative and a keen interest in providing an efficient consultancy system. Both qualitative (who participated, when the participation occurred, which means of communication was used) and quantitative parameters (number of participants, geographic distribution) were used to establish the validity of this interpretation.

Verifying whether the principles were in fact adopted, even though they do not guarantee efficiency, allows us to measure the level of participation. The 'ladder of citizen participation' typology (Arnstein 1969) was used to classify and compare the three consulting processes. According to Rydin and Sommer (2000) the Litmus project also made use of Arnstein's typology.

Table I
Community consultation and participation in Bauru's Master Plan development processes

PRINCIPLES	MASTER PLAN 1968	MASTER PLAN 1996	PARTICIPATIVE MASTER PLAN 2006
Make it timely: Community must have sufficient time to express its ideas and opinions to influence outcomes.	A Municipal Commission was constituted in the beginning of the process, but citizens had no opportunity to participate.	Many commissions were constituted during the entire process and some public events were held (conference, seminar) but most participants came from technical institutions	The community was involved from the beginning of the process thanks to the creation of a Management Group which was responsible for dividing the municipalities into sections and overseeing the election of delegates.
Make it inclusive: the selection must include a representative sample of citizens	The Commission was composed of private and public groups and agencies, but citizens did not participate. The proposal was developed by the team of hired technicians and was presented to an audience of invited local technicians (engineers and architects).	The Commissions were composed by private and public groups, mostly represented by professionals and coordination did not include citizen participation. Some public meetings were held, but with little citizen participation.	Public meetings open to all community members were held in several urban sectors. The process made it possible to organize 122 meetings with a total of 4691 participants.
Make it community-focused: The focus must be on an issue that affects the entire community	The community was not consulted.	The proposals elaborated by the technicians took into account some suggestions submitted during the public meetings.	During the public meetings were prioritized the problems that affected the community as a whole.
Make it interactive and deliberative: the community must have access to information to help broaden understanding of issues raised	The community was not consulted.	Proposals were presented to residents' associations in all 7 Administrative Regions and in public sessions at the City Council during the last stages of the process.	During the process, the participants joined together in small groups to allow everyone to participate in the debates about the specific problems facing the community. Elected delegates representing each segment voted on the final proposal.
Make it effective: define clearly the process of decision-making and the outcome of community participation	Citizens were not involved in the process. The plan was considered as a solution for all problems, but the proposals were later identified by technicians who participated in its development as utopian.	Technical view still played a leading role in decision-making, without population engagement. Citizen participation was not highly valued.	At the first meeting, all submitted proposals were systematically assembled and presented at another meeting as measures to be adopted or as suggestions to be included in the PMP Bill. Responses are first approved by elected delegates. Debates involved political considerations to address conflicting interests. This was the focal of the decision-making process.

Make it matter: value the consulting process by complying with recommendations	Discussions with local population did not occur. The community did not get involved in decisions made by technicians.	Discussions were restricted to technical groups. Changes to some important issues concerning environmental problems were made before approval in the MP, as a request by NGO's to play a role in the process.	Delegates monitored the bill's progression and the vote at City Council, attempting to avoid having to make drastic changes to the bill's original version. These activities as well as the pressure from the delegates during the 4 th Conference are indicative of a high level of citizen involvement.
Make it well-facilitated: facilitator/mediator must be flexible and independent	Since the community was not consulted, mediation was not appropriate in this case.	As most meetings addressed more technical issues, providing participants with didactic material was unnecessary.	At the beginning of each meeting details about the current stage of the project were offered. Making the language accessible to a wide audience was a concern, as was the use of images to increase understanding about the issues.
Make it open, fair and subject to evaluation: The process itself must be evaluated	The process was never evaluated because there were no consultations.	The process was not evaluated.	An evaluation was conducted at the end of the process using a Likert scale questionnaire approach. A total of 118 individuals who had participated in the PMP development process (technicians and community) accepted to take part in the survey. The questionnaire addressed various aspects of all stage of the process.
Make it cost effective: resources should be sufficient to coordinate the consultation process	No resources were spent because there were no consultations.	No resources were allocated specifically for conducting consultations. Community satisfaction or possible benefits from the process were not considered.	Resources allocated for consultations were limited, and made some stages difficult to complete such as mobilization, advertisement, and didactic material production. The limited resources allocated to the evaluation process were the most criticized aspect of the PMP, in spite of being well geographically distributed among a significant number of participants.
Make it flexible: choose the appropriate mechanisms according to circumstances and type of users	The only public presentation made consisted of illustrative panels of final proposals. It is believed that this mechanism is insufficient.	At meetings, the proposals were presented on thematic maps and opportunities were given to make suggestions for change. This procedure may not be adequate for all participants.	The method applied was based on the Ministry of City guidelines, with variations on meeting dynamics and prepared materials which varied according to each community. Visual resources such as maps and aerial pictures were used, debates were held and technical visits were offered.
Work in collaboration: Discussions must resolve conflicts and help reach agreements and avoid misunderstandings.	No collaborative work was undertaken.	It is not known if technicians involved in the process adopted this perspective.	All proposals made by community and other groups were discussed at the final Conference in preparation for the vote.

In 1968, the Master Plan was not publicized to the wider community and did not provide opportunities for consultation. In fact, the community received few details concerning its launch and some information on the main conclusions that were reached by the team responsible for the plan as shown in Table 1, Column 2.

According to Villaça (1999), “super plans” were developed during this period and had a significant impact on the outcome of the process. Driven by the illusion of a technical vision of scientific neutrality, the plans had no basis in reality and did not provide effective instruments for implementing planning policies at the local level.

Community participation was referred to in the discourse as a way to support technical and political decisions, but was omitted completely from planning practice. In this sense, the 1968 Master Plan development process reached the bottom rungs of the ladder of citizen participation proposed by Arnstein, which she labeled as “Manipulation” and “Therapy”, and characterized as “Non-participation”.

These two rungs describe levels of non-participation that have been contrived by some to substitute for genuine participation. Their real objective is not to enable people to participate in planning or conducting programs, but to enable powerholders to “educate” or “cure” the participants (Arnstein, 1969, p. 217).

The 1996 Master Plan development process included wider public participation than in the previous period. However, participation was limited mostly to representative groups (see Column 3).

Consultation was neither interactive nor focused on the community, and did not include communication facilitators. Citizens simply did not get involved in any aspects of the debate. According to Arnstein (1969), this process would reach the 3rd and 4th rungs, “Informing” and “Consultation”, which are characterized as “Symbolic participation” or “Tokenism”.

When they are proffered by power holders as the total extent of participation, citizens may indeed hear and be heard. But under these conditions they lack the power to insure that their views will be heeded by the powerful. When participation is restricted to

these levels, there is no follow through, no “muscle”, hence no assurance of changing the status quo (Arnstein, 1969, p. 217).

In 2006, the participative process undertaken in preparation of the Participative Master Plan was marked by an enormous improvement compared to the two previous periods. The involvement of a large number of people in various urban and rural sectors was unprecedented in Brazil. This was the result of a major effort of the Working Group and Management Group to effectively provide the possibility of greater participation by a diversity of people.

Consultation included most of the principles defined by Arnstein, as is demonstrated in Column 4. It is evident from our analysis that this process reached somewhere between the 5th and 6th rungs of Arnstein’s ladder, the “Placation” and “Partnership” levels of participation. The process enabled all those concerned to get involved. The proposals were incorporated into the legal text and the community could monitor the process from start to finish. Their views had a direct bearing on decision-making.

Placation is simply a higher level tokenism because the ground rules allow have-nots to advise, but retain the powerholders the continued right to decide. Further up the ladder are levels of citizen power with increasing degrees of decision-making clout. Citizens can enter into a Partnership that enables them to negotiate and engage in trade-offs with traditional powerholders (Arnstein, 1969, p. 217).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Findings from the analysis of the three Bauru Municipal Master Plans development processes show the extent to which changes have occurred in recent decades. The changes observed in this study are a consequence of the expansion of institutionalized forms and channels of public participation. While the 1968 development process was under way, the country was run by a military dictatorship. Community participation was limited to organized groups and opportunities were not provided for popular participation. Master Plan development was considered a technical matter drawing on scientific knowledge. Ordinary citizens were simply left out. The Master Plan was developed by city staff only and involved little outside input. Intentionally or not, according to Arnstein (1969), citizen manipulation occurred.

By 1996, Brazil has shifted towards greater democratic principles as embodied in the new Constitution. The process that led to the 1996 Master Plan's approval did include a community participation component. However, involvement was restricted to class-based groups and resident associations. Although the scope of discussions taking place during the meetings was broadened, the public at large was not involved. Far from being inclusive, the consultations did not adequately address people's concerns, resulting in symbolic citizen participation.

Finally, the process leading to the approval of the 2005/2006 Master Plan provided many opportunities for people from various social backgrounds and urban and rural sectors to participate. Citizens could express their opinions, agree and disagree, make suggestions and proposals.

Representatives were elected in open sessions and were assigned the task of monitoring the process from start to finish and of ensuring that the proposals discussed and approved were included in the legal text. However, participatory practices were not established within different spheres of public action and across municipal departments.

In fact, such management practices are increasingly being recognized and applied by the government's executive branch, but their legitimacy still depends in part on the willingness of technicians to open decision-making to a wider audience. To ensure effective public involvement, policy mechanisms for promoting participation are not enough.

- Citizens rarely participated in the 1968 and 1996 Master Plans development processes. Effective participation occurred during the 2005/2006 process. Clearly, citizens are keen on participating in the consultation process, appreciate being consulted and expect to be given the opportunity to voice their views and concerns.
- Urban Planner's more specialized interests may explain part of their involvement in the consultation processes. Highly qualified professionals joined the teams but citizen participation was rare during the first two projects.
- Technicians had reservations about citizen participation in decision-making processes, as did politicians who were opposed to 'power sharing' with the community.

- The majority of the Legislature did not approve of the 'division of powers' in matters relating to urban planning. They challenged the notion that participation was an integral part of representative democracy. Participation should not be regarded as the equivalent of a tax that all citizens are obliged to pay, but as a citizen's right to contribute, to interact in society, to take part in the process of decision making and assert ownership of their territory.

Public participation is a slow and constantly-evolving learning process, due to the complexity of the issues raised in discussions on urban planning policies. Success requires continuous training on the part of municipal technicians and civil society representatives who must work together closely and share information and experiences.

Therefore, climbing up the Arnstein ladder requires a lot of effort and persistence by those involved in the process. Municipal technicians' attitude must change as must the behaviour of government officials as a whole. Instruments in support of knowledge sharing – which is the true nature of participation – will provide new opportunities for citizen inclusion in decision-making processes.

Our study has demonstrated that increases in participation in the Bauru Master Plans are not intrinsic to the development process. Rules on participation can be legally binding and public authorities can be required by law to include public consultation in the decision-making processes. Increased public participation gives rise to new challenges for Brazil which vary from city to city depending on the stage of development it has reached.

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