

region: the participatory planning frameworks that consume the statistics, weigh the alternatives, and direct the shape of Los Angeles's urbanism.

In this environment, professional plans for the future form of the metropolis and the planning discourses of everyday life gradually become one. "Everyday" people are asked by this process to consume and form opinions about everything from large-scale infrastructural decisions to tot lot beautification. Information is routinely posted online, and citizens know, particularly those obsessed, that armed with these data, they too are experts with regard to the best means and designs to address local needs. Even when they are dulled by the data, they consider themselves entitled to have the final opinion. Given the consequent focus on the local and the self-interested, this process nevertheless sets up the planner to play a key facilitation and brokering role. This is not easy given the microscopic viewpoint of much of the citizenry, but it is possible, even as it demands new planning practices and frameworks, in essence the construction of a "New Planning," for consensus building and decision making.

### **The Long Collaborative Development of L.A.'s Urbanity**

The more the planning process regarding the look and feel of Los Angeles becomes subject to an institutionalized and multilayered everyday social discourse, the better this landscape gets, and the less it is a "blank." This is not Pollyannaish optimism. Since I moved to Los Angeles in 1985, the air is cleaner, there are more good places to hang out, historic preservation has become a fact as opposed to an aberration, innovations of national importance such as the introduction of bus rapid transit have been adopted, and mixed-use projects are reinventing the look and feel of suburban commercial strips. On the present agenda of the city are grassroots demands for inclusionary housing and the greening of the Los Angeles River. Ten years after the voters banned further construction of below-grade fixed-rail subways, advocacy groups and a smattering of local politicians are even calling for the construction of new underground lines, an at first glance apostate L.A. position that has been calmly received—all this progress even within a political and social context where the driver is supposedly NIMBYism.

Los Angeles, now planned through multiple layers of input, back-