

Planning for Climate Transformations

Journal of Planning Literature

Call for Abstracts for reviews, perspectives, and empirical research

Linda Shi, Cornell University
Joan Fitzgerald, Northeastern University

Increasingly alarming climate impacts and ambitious calls to decarbonize society pose unprecedented challenges for cities and their built environments, political economic systems, and governance regimes. The need for societal transformation has never been greater (Ajibade & Adams, 2019; Fazey et al., 2018; Henrique & Tschakert, 2020). Yet, even as climate mitigation and adaptation research and practice have evolved, there is significant discord in defining the policies, processes, and values that shape practice on the ground (Shi & Moser, under review). Commitment to climate action varies widely across levels of government, sectors of society, and domains of practice, with some espousing reforms that others decry as a recapitulation of extractive and exclusionary development. Given the outfall of historic large-scale, top-down projects, new calls for urgent, large-scale climate adaptation—such as managed retreat and mega-green or grey infrastructure—raise questions as to how such projects can possibly advance more just, equitable, and sustainable cities (Goh, 2020). Many initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and make the energy transition—including energy efficiency retrofitting and transitioning to electric vehicles—have subsidized the wealthy without necessarily benefitting low-income, minority, migrant, or informal communities (Fitzgerald, 2020; Sunter, Castellanos, and Kammen, 2019; Shonkoff, Morello-Frosch, Pastor & Sadd, 2011). As the COVID-19 pandemic has made all too apparent, societal vulnerability to climate change is rooted in racial, class, caste, urban-rural, and other socio-economic disparities that challenge solidarity, redistribution, and collective action.

The climate crisis, rooted and intertwined as it is with historic urban and development dynamics, presents an invitation to the field of planning to consider both what planning has to contribute in this moment and how societal crises require planning itself to transform. What has the field learned from decades of research and practice to inform the design and implementation of new climate policy proposals—whether the Green New Deal, Just Transition, or climate adaptation and migration? What can we learn from effective practices around the world that can be transmitted to practitioners and students? How does planning's core strengths in deliberative planning and community development inform how to support the learning, dialogue, and social movements necessary for deep change? At the same time, how has planning research, practice, and pedagogy been complicit in contemporary crises, for instance through its relationship with the state; prioritization of maximizing land values; siloing and colonialism of knowledge; and scales or models of planning practice? What barriers inhibit planning research, practice, and pedagogy from rising to this challenge and transforming itself?

To support renewed U.S. and international momentum towards urban climate action, the *Journal of Planning Literature* (JPL) will publish a special issue on how planning can contribute to societal transformation and just transition to a carbon-free future. The special issue aims to publish up to eight articles that can take diverse forms. We will prioritize review papers in line with JPL's mission and the need to synthesize and take stock of planning knowledge. However, strong original research, case studies, and perspective pieces will also be considered. We seek articles covering

different geographic regions, including Europe, the Global South, and the Global East, as well as papers that provide a comparative or relational perspective. Research related to areas of planning outside of environmental planning, such as housing, informality, economic development, transportation, community development, regionalism, finance, and technology, is especially encouraged. All submitted papers will be reviewed following the journal's standard review process. The American Collegiate Schools of Planning's 2021 annual conference in Miami is thematically focused on climate change and provides a venue to present work submitted to this issue.

Topics of interest include but are not limited to:

- What are the implications of the current climate crisis—and its corresponding social justice, economic, and political crises—for planning theory, research, pedagogy, and practice? What are the barriers to mobilizing planning effectively as a field to respond to the climate challenge?
- How do historic planning experiences and practices with social transformation—whether in social movements and cultural change, or spatial, technological, and infrastructural shifts—inform contemporary efforts to identify and implement effective, feasible, just, climate transformation?
- What does a transformative planning pedagogy for climate change look like? What would it teach and how? How can planning programs help build a foundation for integrative and transformative education across fields of practice within academies? How can theories from other disciplines (e.g. social movements or business development) inform the roll out and scale up of a transformative climate planning pedagogy?
- How does planning for just transitions and climate transformation respond to social, ethnic, religious, and political polarization? How does planning for urban climate equity and justice relate to urban-rural inequality and urban reliance on rural water, food, and energy?
- What examples demonstrate the principles, practices, and process of just, adapted, and carbon-neutral urbanism?

Submission and Timeline

Please submit an extended abstract (600 words or less) describing the proposed article. Select the SI (Special Issue) option when [uploading the abstract](#). Those identified as strong fits with the scope will be invited to submit a full paper. Articles in JPL should not exceed 11,000 words (see [JPL guidelines](#)), with non-review pieces typically being shorter. The urgent need for urban planners to respond to the climate crisis is reflected in the timeline for submitting a full manuscript. Please contact Joan Fitzgerald (jo.fitzgerald@northeastern.edu) and Linda Shi (lindashi@cornell.edu) with questions.

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| February 19, 2021 | Abstract deadline |
| March 23, 2021 | Notification to proceed |
| July 23, 2021 | Deadline to submit full manuscript for review |
| Spring (May) 2022 | Target special issue publication date |

References

- Ajibade, I., & Adams, E. A. (2019). Planning principles and assessment of transformational adaptation: Towards a refined ethical approach. *Climate and Development*, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17565529.2019.1580557>
- Fazey, I., et al. (2018). Ten essentials for action-oriented and second order energy transitions, transformations and climate change research. *Energy Research & Social Science*, 40, 54–70. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2017.11.026>
- Fitzgerald, J. 2020. *Greenovation: Urban Leadership on Climate Change*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press.
- Goh, K. (2020). Planning the Green New Deal: Climate Justice and the Politics of Sites and Scales. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 86(2), 188–195. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01944363.2019.1688671>
- Henrique, K. P., & Tschakert, P. (2020). Pathways to urban transformation: From dispossession to climate justice. *Progress in Human Geography*, 0309132520962856. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132520962856>
- Shi, L., & Moser, S. C. (under review). Transformative Climate Adaptation in the United States: Trends and Prospects. *Science*.
- Shonkoff, S.B., R. Morello-Frosch, M. Pastor & J. Sadd. (2011). Disparities in rooftop photovoltaics deployment in the United States by race and ethnicity. *Climatic Change*. 109 (Suppl 1): S485–S503 DOI 10.1007/s10584-011-0310-7
- Sunder, D. S. Castellanos, & D. Kammen. (2019). Disparities in Rooftop Photovoltaics Deployment in the United States by Race and Ethnicity. *Nature Sustainability*. 2: 71-76.