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## **Keynote Lecture by Julio D Dávila (DPU, UCL)**

### **Can planning help deliver healthier cities? Reflections from practice and some pointers on policy**

The roots of modern urban planning can be traced to a concern with public health in 19th Century Europe. Although inspired by a need for collective survival by avoiding mass epidemics, this concern contributed in practice to greater equity and helped give the local state a more prominent role. In recent decades, medical and technological advances have dramatically improved life expectancy even among poorer urban populations, yet yawning gaps subsist between rich and poor areas in both the Global North and the Global South. In many contemporary cities planning is often manipulated thus deepening social gaps and widening spatial fragmentation. Drawing on inter-disciplinary research evidence, this talk argues that urban and infrastructure planners need to become more aware of the contribution that a politically engaged and socially aware planning can make to healthier cities.



*Julio D Dávila is Professor of Urban Policy and International Development, and Director of the Bartlett Development Planning Unit (DPU), a research and postgraduate teaching department in University College London (UCL).*

*He has over 25 years' experience in over a dozen countries in Latin America, the Middle East, Africa and Asia. He worked at the International Institute for Environment and Development (London and Buenos Aires), and at the Colombian Government's National Planning Department. Much of his research work focuses on the role of local government in progressive social and political transformation in developing countries; the governance dimensions of urban and peri-urban infrastructure, especially public transport, and water & sanitation; the intersection between planning and urban informality; and the linkages between rapid urbanisation and health.*

*Julio's latest book is entitled 'Urban Mobility and Poverty: Lessons from Medellín and Soacha, Colombia'.*