

THE MATRYOSHKA OF URBAN INSTRUMENTS IN URBAN INTERVENTION PROJECTS IN SÃO PAULO

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to analyze the arrangements for the governance and social participation in the Arco Jurubatuba Urban Intervention Project (UIP), an urban instrument provided for in the 2014 São Paulo (SP) Master Plan, and its impacts on low-income territories. The article presents a case study of two Special Zones of Social Interest (ZEIS) located within the area of the project, in the south zone of the city. Two questions guided the investigation: (i) To what extent did the communities participate in the discussions regarding the proposal?; and (ii) What were the governance arrangements that resulted from the proposal, considering the overlap of instruments within the UIP. It is highlighted that the institutional arrangements and the instruments selected for formulating and implementing the UIP increased the complexity of the project, the fragmentation of the process and the superficiality of the procedures for participating and legitimizing the intervention. Choices made during the UIP design and its “matryoshka” of instruments made it difficult for people to identify when and where crucial decisions were made regarding the intervention that affected low-income territories, thereby impairing social participation and postponing (even preventing) any resistance.

Keywords

Institutional Arrangements; Urban Instruments; Urban Governance; Social Participation; Urban Planning; Urban Intervention Projects; São Paulo (city).

A MATRIOSKA DE INSTRUMENTOS URBANÍSTICOS NOS PROJETOS DE INTERVENÇÃO URBANA EM SÃO PAULO

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Resumo

Este artigo tem como objetivo analisar os arranjos de governança e a participação social em um Projeto de Intervenção Urbana (PIU), instrumento urbanístico previsto no Plano Diretor de São Paulo (SP) de 2014, e seu impacto em territórios populares. Apresenta-se neste texto o estudo de caso de duas Zonas Especiais de Interesse Social (ZEIS) situadas no perímetro do PIU Arco Jurubatuba, na zona sul da cidade. As questões que orientaram o trabalho foram: (i) como se deu a participação das comunidades desses territórios populares nas discussões sobre o projeto de intervenção que as afetaria; e (ii) qual o arranjo de governança resultante da proposta, considerando a sobreposição de instrumentos dentro do PIU. Evidencia-se que os arranjos institucionais e os instrumentos selecionados para elaboração e futura implementação do PIU aumentam a complexidade do projeto, a fragmentação do processo e a superficialidade dos procedimentos de participação e legitimação da intervenção. Escolhas feitas durante a elaboração do PIU e a matrioska de instrumentos resultante dificultam a identificação do momento e do locus de tomada de decisões cruciais sobre a intervenção que atinge os territórios populares, prejudicando a participação social e adiando (ou impedindo) contestações.

Palavras-chave

Arranjos Institucionais; Instrumentos Urbanísticos; Governança Urbana; Participação Social; Planejamento Urbano; Projeto de Intervenção Urbana; São Paulo (cidade).

THE MATRYOSHKA OF URBAN INSTRUMENTS IN URBAN INTERVENTION PROJECTS IN SÃO PAULO¹

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Introduction

From the 1970s to the 1980s, urban policies and city management were impacted by the role that urban space takes on in applying surplus capital for financial gains, as well as by new paradigms of state action – the retraction of executive action, the expansion of associations with the private sector and market deregulation.

In the field of urban planning, proposals for specific intervention (construction, destruction and reconstruction of parts of the city), as opposed to a comprehensive, integrated plan, a focus on public-private partnerships, and the actions of local governments to attract external sources of financing and new investments all gained centrality (Harvey, 1996; Swyngedouw; Moulaert; Rodriguez, 2002).

1. Preliminary versions of this article were presented at the 26th World Congress of Political Science (IPSA, 2021) and at the XIX National Meeting of the National Association of Postgraduate Studies and Research in Urban and Regional Planning (ANPUR, 2022). GUERESI, S. A Governança Urbana e os Projetos de Intervenção Urbana em Territórios Populares na Cidade de São Paulo [Urban Governance and Urban Intervention Projects on Low-Income Territories in the City of São Paulo]. WORLD CONGRESS OF POLITICAL SCIENCE, 26. 2021 [virtual]. [S. l.]: International Political Science Association, July 10-15, 2021. Theme: New Nationalisms in an Open World. GUERESI, S. A matrioska de instrumentos urbanísticos nos projetos de intervenção urbana em São Paulo [The matryoshka of urban instruments in urban intervention projects in São Paulo]. National Meeting of the National Association of Postgraduate Studies and Research in Urban and Regional Planning, 19. 2022, Blumenau. *Annals [...]*. Blumenau: Anpur, May 22 to 26, 2022 [online]. Theme: Urban and Regional Planning – Organizing Hope.

This dynamic changed the actors involved, the institutional arrangements and the instruments of public action, with patterns of urban governance becoming more complex, thereby making it difficult to identify where the power and decision-making were located. (Swyngedouw; Moulaert; Rodriguez, 2002; Guironnet; Halbert, 2015; Raco, 2014).

In Brazil, the so-called strategic planning of cities and proposals for urban transformation in delimited areas encounter an urbanization process which has been marked by benefiting different parts of the city in an unequal manner, thereby maintaining and generating socio-territorial inequalities (Kovarik, 1979; Maricato, 1979; 1996; Bonduk; Rolnik, 1979; Rolnik, 2003). Thus, these have not represented a break with a previous universalizing urbanization pattern, as in other countries. By investing in urban transformation associated with attracting capital and private investment, pressure on low-income territories and the influence of the private sector in government decision-making have been broadened. (Arantes; Vainer; Maricato, 2000; Sánchez, 2001; Novais, 2014; Rolnik, 2015; Freitas, 2018; Nobre, 2019).

Since the 1980s, Brazil has also experienced the creation of social participation arrangements, and of urban instruments that aim to mitigate the effects of socio-spatial segregation in cities, through a fair distribution of the burdens and benefits of urbanization, the regularization of precarious settlements and housing production. These were aligned with the principles of the urban reform movement: the right to the city and citizenship, democratic management and fulfillment of the social function of the city and of property (Grazia, 2003; Bonduk, 2018).

On the one hand, there existed redistributive mechanisms, social participation, the regularization and urbanization of favelas, and innovative housing programs, and on the other, a relaxation of rules in exclusive urban areas to attract private capital, a concentration of investments, negotiations with “relevant” actors and the expulsion of the low-income population. These conceptions coexist in the regulatory framework of national urban policy (Estatuto da Cidade; Brasil, 2001) and of municipal policy (master plans), as well as in the management practices and governance structures of Brazilian cities. The two apparently contradictory agendas are often articulated perversely, to accommodate interests (Rolnik, 2021; Santoro, 2021).

The city of São Paulo has a history of more than two decades in the use of proposals that combine the relaxation of urban rules with the sale of construction rights on restricted perimeters, commencing with interconnected operations and moving on through urban consortium operations. These experiences have been criticized for being subordinate to market interests, thereby aggravating socio-territorial inequalities and deepening the territorial concentration of investments (Fix, 2001; 2003; Castro, 2006; Ferreira, 2017; Stroher, 2019; Nobre, 2019).

In the face of criticism, urban design, association with other urban instruments, and management and governance measures, are presented as improvements that enable the potential for transformation and for the financing that this type of intervention may offer (Montandon, 2009; Maleronka, 2010; Sandroni, 2011).

After the 2014 Strategic Master Plan (SMP) (São Paulo, Cidade, 2014) was approved, the use of urban instruments for transforming delimited areas, such as urban operations, began to require the prior development of an urban intervention project (UIP), which is presented as an instrument for improving the planning process. It would provide an additional stage of a social pact on an intermediate scale, between general urban norms and a specific intervention in the territory. It could contemplate the specific dynamics of portions of the urban fabric and an articulation of sectoral policies (São Paulo, Cidade, 2016; Aparecido Jr.; Fiaschetti, 2018).

In October 2022, the UIP monitoring section of the São Paulo City Hall presented information regarding eighteen projects, four of which were in the implementation phase, that is to say, had been passed (São Paulo, Cidade, 2022). Although it is not possible to assess their implementation, UIPs have been the subject of debate and studies that analyze both regulatory aspects and the process of discussion, choice and preparation of projects.

This interest may be explained because the process through which public policies are designed, as well as the resulting design, renders an influence over the implementation and results, in addition to impacting meanings and the distribution of power between actors (Lascumes; Le Galés, 2007; Howlett; Mukherjee, 2018; Pires, 2019). Furthermore, territorial planning policies in Brazil have been marked by a formal legal tradition, overvaloring laws, regulations and other normative acts, in which the discussion of norms becomes a relevant arena of dispute.

The UIPs may either be an initiative of the public authorities or proposed through Expressions of Private Interest (EIP). Santoro and Nunes (2018) identified three typologies in the city of São Paulo: (i) UIPs for urban terminals, for the concession of urban mobility equipment and its surroundings; (ii) UIPs for transforming large plots of land, generally the property of a single owner; and (iii) UIPs for urban restructuring, in extensive areas, with multisectoral interventions. The latter is exemplified by the Arco Jurubatuba UIP (AJ-UIP), and which is addressed in this article.

The AJ-UIP was proposed by the municipal government and publicly discussed in 2017; sent as a bill to the Legislature in 2018 (São Paulo, Cidade, 2018c); suspended by a court decision in 2019; and resumed in the Legislature, in 2022, also by a decision of the Court. The discussion process of this UIP and the proposal forwarded as a bill enables aspects to be identified that are common to other UIPs and to proposals for changing urban operations currently in force.

The proposal for the AJ-UIP has been analyzed focusing on two communities, demarcated as Special Zones of Social Interest (known in Portuguese as ZEIS) in the 2014 SMP (São Paulo, Cidade, 2014) and located within the perimeter of the intervention project: Jardim Cristal and Morrão.

The article seeks to answer two main questions: (i) To what extent did the communities participate in the proposal that was to affect them, considering the process of social participation itself and the way in which these territories were included in the proposed project?; and (ii) What were the governance arrangements that resulted from the designed proposal, considering the overlap of instruments within the UIP.

The hypothesis is that the institutional arrangements and the instruments selected for preparing the proposal and for the UIP itself brought about an increase in the complexity of the project, the fragmentation of the process and a superficiality of the legitimization procedures for the intervention. As a consequence, this has made it difficult to identify what and where crucial decisions were made regarding the urban interventions that would affect low-income territories.

The analysis is mainly based on documentary research (Bills, official electronic presentations, technical reports, descriptions of public hearings and consultations, minutes of meetings, etc.) on city hall websites; an analysis of related legislation (laws and other municipal and federal regulations), as well as consulting articles, news items and academic studies on UIPs. Subsidiarily, primary information was also used, and was obtained through a workshop with representatives from the two communities, a guided visit by local leaders and individual interviews with residents.²

The article is organized into four sections, in addition to this introduction and final considerations. In the first, a brief conceptual discussion is presented on the investigation of institutional arrangements and the public policy instruments for governance studies. In the second, the general characteristics are provided of the studied ZEIS, together with the perceptions of residents concerning the government's intervention proposals in the territories. The third section addresses the process involving the public discussion on the development of the UIP and the inclusion of communities in this project. The fourth section reveals how a veritable

2. The field activities were conducted as a team, with the participation of Douglas Tadashi, Guilherme Rodrigues, Maria Luiza Belo and Marília Müller, between the months of May and June 2019, as part of an academic study in the discipline Counter-hegemonic Territorial Planning: Theories and Practices, with slightly different and complementary objectives to those presented in this article. Four individual interviews were held, with three residents from Jardim Cristal and one from Morrão. The interviews were recorded on video, with the verbal authorization at the beginning of the recording. All information regarding the interviewees remained confidential.

matryoshka of instruments was constructed on low-income territories, making participation difficult and postponing definitions, which thereby increased the vulnerability of the affected communities.

1. Urban governance, institutional arrangements and public policy instruments

The emergence of governance studies (1980-90) is related to changes in State actions (with the retraction and transfer of executive functions, an expansion of the regulatory function and the participation of civil society); an increase in the complexity of policy problems and of public policies themselves; and a multiplication of spatial levels and scales involved in the functions of government responsibility (Bevir, 2011; Rhodes, 2012).

Governance appears in the literature in reference both to structures (rules, institutions, organizations) and processes (ways of producing policies, mechanisms to overcome contradictions) and from two perspectives. On the one hand, it is associated with prescriptive models and the presence of predefined elements considered positive (“good governance”). In the second perspective, it appears as an analytical strategy in the relationship between state and non-state agents in implementing public policies (Levi-Faur, 2012; Marques, 2013; Mccann, 2017; Cavalcante; Pires, 2018).

Marques (2013, p. 16-17) conceptualized governance as “sets of State and non-State actors interconnected by formal and informal ties operating within the policy-making process and embedded in specific institutional settings”.

For Capano, Howlett and Ramesh (2015), modes (or arrangements) of governance are momentary balances, materialized within a set of instruments that demonstrate the principles of coordination between actors. This take place in a dynamic process, since arrangements and instruments may change over time, altering meanings and the distribution of power. In this process, actors seek the best position in the governance arrangement, and rules and instruments are at the center of political disputes.

This dynamic approach has been adopted by the present study, which enables governance to be captured as it really is, and not as it should be (Brownill; Carpenter, 2009), and, if applicable, also reveals what did not happen and what did not work out (Marques, 2013).

In the field of urban studies, transformation projects in delimited areas are frequent in studies on urban governance, since these experiences provide evidence for the emergence of new actors, institutional arrangements and policy tools. Traditional structures begin to coexist with more diffuse, flexible configurations, which combine different spatial and administrative scales; involve multiple

agents; and bring about the fragmentation of competencies and responsibilities (Swyngedouw, Moulaert; Rodriguez, 2002).

In practice, one mode of governance does not replace another. Combinations and hybridisms occur, which are relatively gradual and change over time. In the regulatory framework of Brazilian urban policy, from the City Statute (Brasil, 2001) through to municipal master plans, arrangements and instruments related to apparently contradictory agendas coexist: the urbanism of exception and principles of urban reform. In practice, the combination adopted may configure very different modes of governance.

The change from traditional hierarchical structures and relationships toward a so-called collaborative, negotiated scheme may result in more social participation or partnerships restricted to a few agents, excluding other groups from the decision-making process. This is what Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez (2002) call a democratic deficit of the “privatization of urban governance”.

Even public policies that formally contemplate social participation may have a design that relegates it to the background, whereby more important decisions remain with certain actors, and criteria, apparently technical, are adopted, which do not incorporate vulnerable communities and other groups involved (Fonseca; Avelino, 2018).

Studies have shown that aspects related to the institutional design (arrangements and instruments) of public policies may lead to the (re)production of inequalities through mechanisms such as imbalances in power and representation, selective instrumentation and a fixation of meanings (Pires, 2019). Gomide and Pereira (2018), when analyzing large infrastructure projects, demonstrated how the temporality and the form of inclusion and representation of negatively affected communities, in councils and audiences, have an influence over the scope and the influential capacity of these social groups, reinforcing their vulnerability.

An analysis of arrangements and instruments operationalizes the study of governance. Institutional arrangement is the set of rules and processes, formal and informal, that define how actors and interests are articulated when implementing a specific public policy (Gomide; Pires, 2014). The arrangement is the portrait of the momentary equilibrium in the governance process, defined by Capano, Howlett and Ramesh (2015).

Pires and Gomide (2018) clarified that the arrangements complement one another and are filled by instruments that routinize, organize and stabilize them, mediating the interaction between actors and the mobilization of resources, for example.

Lastly, it is assumed that the instruments are not mere operational tools, but devices that are both technical and social, which organize the relations between

the government and those governed (Lascoumes; Le Galès, 2007). The management of these instruments, often presented as being neutral and technically chosen, is a political process.

2. The Jardim Cristal and Morrão communities

Jardim Cristal and Morrão are located in the southern region of the municipality of São Paulo, in the sub-prefecture of Capela do Socorro, with approximately nine hundred homes, according to estimates by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2020).³ These are occupations neighboring the Interlagos Racing Circuit, founded in 1940, from which Jardim Cristal is separated by Rua Adib Casseb, and Morrão, by Avenida da Estação (Figure 1).

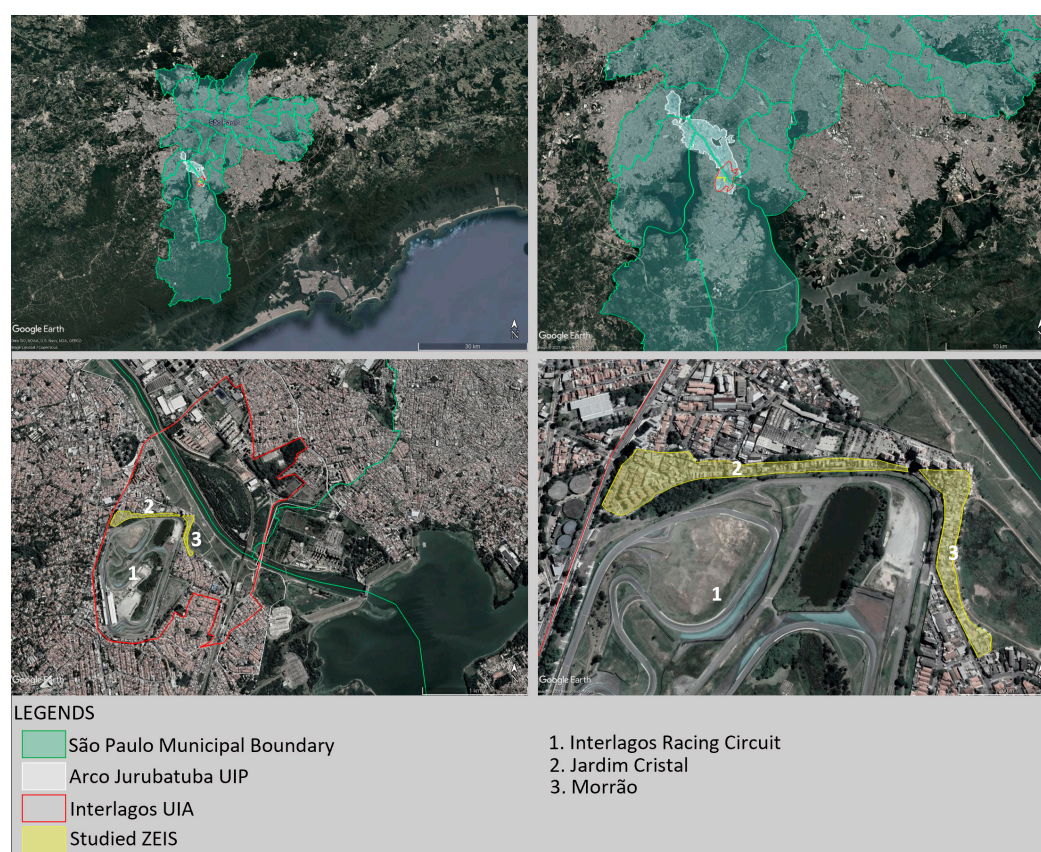


Figure 1. Location of the studied ZEIS and the perimeters of the intervention project

Source: Own elaboration, with satellite images by Google Earth (2021).

3. Jardim Cristal and Morrão are called Autódromo II and Manuel de Teffé in the IBGE list of subnormal clusters, whose individual perimeters do not correspond exactly to the division recognized by the communities. Jardim Cristal corresponds to Autódromo II and a part of the cluster called Manuel de Teffé, while the other part of this second corresponds to Morrão. Therefore, data from the two subnormal settlements were grouped together.

Demarcated as ZEIS, they are within the perimeter of AJ-UIP, which was forwarded to the municipal Legislature as Bill No. 204/2018 (São Paulo, Cidade, 2018c). The 2014 SMP (São Paulo, Cidade, 2014) established that the proposal for the so-called Arco do Jurubatuba, one of the sectors of the Metropolitan Structuring Macro Area (MEM), should be forwarded by 2017, and the AJ-UIP Bill (São Paulo, Cidade, 2018c) fulfilled this determination.

The occupation of Jardim Cristal began in the 1960s, and that of Morrão in the following decade. According to reports from residents, collected in exercises to reconstruct the timeline of the occupations, the first threats of eviction occurred during the term of mayor Jânio Quadros (1986-1988), with a road connection project that was to pass through where the houses were, next to the wall of the Racing Circuit. During the government of Luíza Erundina (1989-1992), part of it benefited from urbanization works and the housing policy of the self-management collectives. During the governments of Paulo Maluf (1993-1996) and Celso Pitta (1997-2000), the focus shifted to the construction of vertical housing complexes, known as Singapore. More recently, under Fernando Haddad's administration (2013-2016), public land was donated for the construction of housing, and the land regularization of the occupation area would be guaranteed.⁴

With each municipal government, the (non) recognition of these communities has changed, as well as the solutions (un) offered to meet their housing needs. This trajectory explains the varying definitions and diffuse limits of urban irregularity, managed politically, administratively and technically to establish what type of intervention the place is subject to. Legal and illegal, formal and informal, planned and unplanned are not watertight classifications, and it is not the objective condition of a family or the settlement that determines if, how and when the right to housing will be realized (Telles, 2010; Rolnik, 2015).

In 2019, some of the residents did not believe that the AJ-UIP would ever happen. The history of struggles and achievements, as well as the housing service policies that alternated, justify their skepticism: other projects proposed eviction, but were not implemented; government actions helped to consolidate the occupation. After fifty years, it is difficult to identify what has changed in the new project. Furthermore, there have been reports of promises made by political actors: "city councilors in the region, two of them, have already issued documents, including in the communities, [saying] that this intervention will never happen" (verbal information, *Jardim Cristal, Resident 1*. Interview held on June 9, 2019).

4. History based on reports from residents, in a workshop held on May 5, 2019, and in individual interviews held on June 9, 2019. Mayors during the period were also Marta Suplicy (2001-2004), José Serra (2005-2006) and Gilberto Kassab (2006-2012), whose mandates were not referred to.

Successive projects – and whether or not they were ever put into action – have played their role in the permanent transience of these communities (Rolnik, 2015). If there has been a plan, the territory was not planned as it should have been (although it may well be so); if there has been a promise of regularization, it was irregular (but may cease to be so).

This process goes beyond what is in the regulations, since there are irregularities produced by high-income populations that have not been threatened. It should be highlighted that threatened low-income territories do not always have illegal origins. In Jardim Cristal, for example, most families were, at some point, beneficiaries of housing policies. The management of normative irregularity is combined with territorial stigma, essential for the dispossession processes of low-income territories, deepening the vulnerability of the population involved (Rolnik, 2015), as explained by some of the statements from residents:

If the project happens, I think there will be an apartment, which is better than a shack, because it will be mine. (verbal information, *Morrão, Resident 1*. Workshop held on May 5, 2019).

I've got used to it here, because it's been over forty years, but if they say I have to leave, I have to leave, because it's not mine (verbal information, *Morrão, Resident 2*. Interview held on June 9, 2019).

The stigma of being “irregular”, “favela dweller”, “non-owner” has an impact on the ability of families to contest and mobilize against each new project, in the same way that the trajectory of government actions and omissions plays a fundamental role in constructing and maintaining this condition.

3. The insertion of low-income territories into the UIP

The institutional design of participatory channels and procedures, in addition to revealing the type of participation it promotes, highlights its limits, since it selects both the actors who will participate and the content that will be discussed or accessed (Borba, 2011).

Gomide, Machado and Pereira (2019) indicated how institutional arrangements with low levels of inclusion or representation by marginalized actors results in a disregard for the rights of these populations, thereby further increasing their vulnerability. Even if the failures of representativity and participation are corrected, there are nonetheless steps and actions that have been taken with irreversible effects.

Lotta and Favaretto (2016) highlighted an increase in the damage incurred by vulnerable populations and in the contestations in territorially blind projects, which consider territories as repositories of investments, and the local characteristics as risks to their implementation, prioritizing compensatory and mitigating actions.

Santoro, Lima and Mendonça (2018) demonstrated that diagnoses that make existing housing needs invisible in areas subject to intervention lead to an undersizing of the commitments, inadequate solutions and an aggravation of these needs.

3.1 The participative process

Regulating the process for developing a UIP was achieved through Municipal Decree No. 56,901, of March 29, 2016 (São Paulo, Cidade, 2016) which, in general terms, established steps and procedures, together with the minimum content that should be produced and made available. Basically, there is a stage that diagnoses and clarifies the public interest in the intervention, which then goes out for public consultation. The project is then drawn up and submitted for further consultation. Lastly, the UIP is created, by law or decree, depending on the arrangement chosen for its implementation. With particular regard to participation, two (virtual) public consultations are mandatory.

The decree established minimum elements for any UIP. However, the actors involved, conflicts, demands and number of people affected may differ greatly, depending on the instrument to be used, and the size and location of the area subject to intervention. The UIPs that have previously been proposed range from less than 10 hectares to more than 5 thousand and, by definition of the SMP, may be implemented through consortium urban operations, urban concessions, urban intervention areas or local structuring areas (São Paulo, Cidade, 2014).

At first glance, the process described in the regulatory decree for the UIPs appears to involve a gradual dynamic of development, in stages interspersed with public validation. However, the timeline for preparing the AJ-UIP (Figure 2) highlights a different reality.

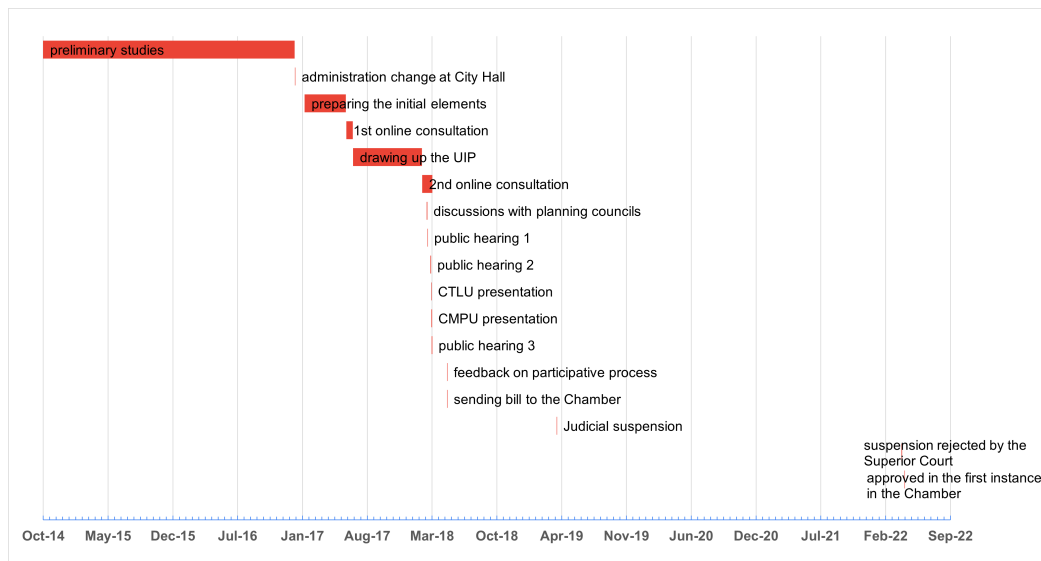


Figure 2. The AJ-UIP preparation timeline

Legend: Technical Chamber of Urban Legislation (CTLU); Municipal Council for Urban Policy (CMPU).

Source: Own elaboration.

There is a huge disproportion between the period of time for internal work at the city hall (preliminary studies and development of the project), with no participation from the communities involved, and the time during which public consultations are opened. Almost two years passed between an internal workshop that began to discuss the AJ-UIP, held in 2014, and the second public consultation, when the project itself was issued. In contrast, just over a month separated this second consultation from forwarding the project to the Legislature, a period in which all public hearings and meetings with some of the participatory councils took place.

In addition to the lack of time, there are other aspects that undermine the effectiveness of the participatory process, such as the beginning of the second public consultation taking place on the Thursday before the Carnival holiday, in February 2018; a meeting with representatives of the participatory councils of the four sub-prefectures involved – Campo Limpo, M’Boi Mirim, Santo Amaro and Capela do Socorro –, where only five participants attended, also in February 2018 (São Paulo, Cidade, 2018a); and a feedback meeting on the contributions of the participatory process, with the presence of only seven participants, on the same day that the bill was forwarded to the Legislature (São Paulo, Cidade, 2018b).

With regard to the participation instruments, public consultations (the minimum required) provide a model of individual participation (in theory, anyone may participate, on their own initiative), and are commonly used for collecting opinions or registering complaints. These are not suitable for discussing policy

alternatives, as is the case with UIPs, which are more suited to participatory institutions such as conferences or collective forums, aimed at the participation of interested actors or groups (Cortes, 2011). In consultations promoted by the city hall, each comment is counted as a “contribution”, regardless of the relationship with the content or the intervention territory.

According to the AJ-UIP diagnosis (São Paulo, Cidade, 2017), there were forty favelas and fifteen nuclei within the intervention perimeter,⁵ with around 10 thousand households, in addition to sixty ZEIS. Despite the contrast between these numbers and the number of contributions in the virtual consultations (32 in the first and 52 in the second), there is no record of the city hall ever having carried out any specific mobilization with these communities, which should have participated right from the time of the diagnosis and prospecting stage of actions.⁶

The São Paulo State Public Defender’s Office played a fundamental role in mobilizing communities for three public hearings, held after the online consultations (Barbosa; Ungaretti; Magami, 2018; Magami; Ferreira, 2019) and proved to have the greatest participation: 644 people. Mendes (2019), who attended two AJ-UIP hearings in person, recorded the main concerns expressed by participants as being (i) threats of eviction; (ii) the resettlement of those evicted in the same neighborhood; (iii) the inclusion of social housing in the project; and (iv) more accessible language.

In the case of Jardim Cristal and Morrão, the mobilization was initiated by a resident who had made contact with representatives from the Public Defender’s Office at an academic seminar on urban conflicts, in March 2018, when the two virtual consultations and the three public hearings had already been held.

There were also problems concerning the way that the minimum content was to be taken to public consultations, as required in the decree. In the first consultation, little or nothing was learned other than that the area under discussion would be the subject of (some) intervention, given the generality of the material on the proposal: a set of reproductions of the SMP and the regulatory decree itself, in generic formulations.⁷ Although little is revealed regarding the project, the first consultation is a stage of social validation for the UIP.

5. “Nuclei”, according to the definition used by the São Paulo City Hall, are favelas that have an infrastructure for water, sewage, street lighting, drainage and garbage collection.

6. Mendes (2019) identified the same failure of dissemination and mobilization in field research with other communities that made part of the AJ-UIP.

7. See the page of the first consultation at: <https://minuta.gestaourbana.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/piu-arco-jurubatuba/>. July 9, 2023.

In the second consultation, more detailed documents were made available.⁸ However, the essentially technical language, the number of maps and tables, added to the short time given in order to understand, analyze and discuss it, characterize this other stage of legitimation, at best, as informative.

3.2 The project

The AJ-UIP covered 2,192 hectares, divided into three urban intervention areas (UIAs). Jardim Cristal and Morrão, which occupy around 3.6 hectares (0.16% of the UIP area), was part of the Interlagos UIA, of 395 hectares. Discussing an intervention of this size, with more than fifty identified communities, is unlikely to allow specific demands to be considered. The chosen configuration conditions a spatial and planning scale that limits everything from the mobilization process to the cartographic representation of the project. Thus, the participatory process was not designed to minimize this difficulty, as observed in the previous section.

This choice made it almost “natural” that portions, which represented less than 1% of the whole were not seen in detail during the discussion. Of the eight maps attached to Bill 204/2018 (São Paulo, Cidade, 2018c), Jardim Cristal and Morrão appear in two (Figure 3). With greater precision on the map of precarious settlements and ZEIS (Map 4 of the Bill), in which it is possible to observe the marking of planned road works in red, the names of the communities are different from those recognized by residents and community leaders. On the map of what would be the Interlagos strategic project (Map 8 of the Bill), the most imprecise spot is identified as “ZEIS 1 of the surrounding area”. On other maps, not even the occupied perimeter appears marked.

The colored spots make what exists invisible and indicate that there are problems that need to be solved. What is “favela” and “ZEIS 1” is also a bluish spot called “floodplain environmental compartment” or is crossed by red lines on the “roadway improvements” map. This form of representation and project makes it difficult for inhabitants to identify that they are being served or affected by the project, thereby discouraging and delaying their mobilization.

8. See material from the second consultation at: <https://minuta.gestaourbana.prefeitura.sp.gov.br/pl-arco-jurubatuba/#/consulta>. Viewed on: July 9, 2023.

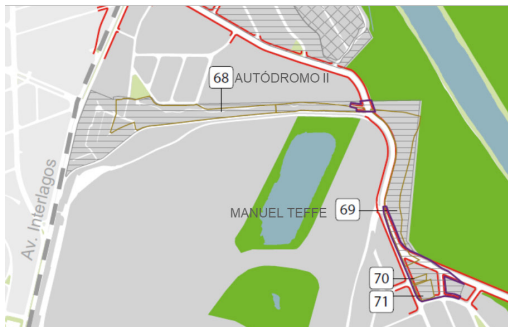
Perimeter of the occupations from satellite images



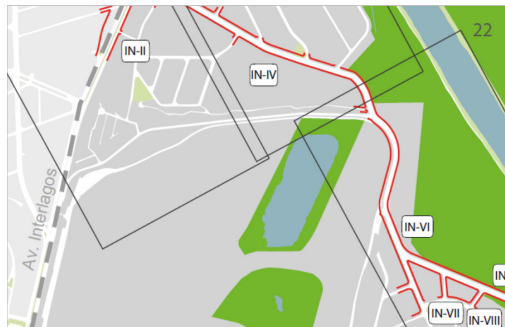
Map 3 of the Bill – environmental compartments and drainage systems



Map 4 of the Bill – precarious settlements and the ZEIS*



Map 6 of the Bill – Highway improvements



Map 7 of the Bill – Intervention Program**



Map 8 of the Bill – Interlagos Strategic Project

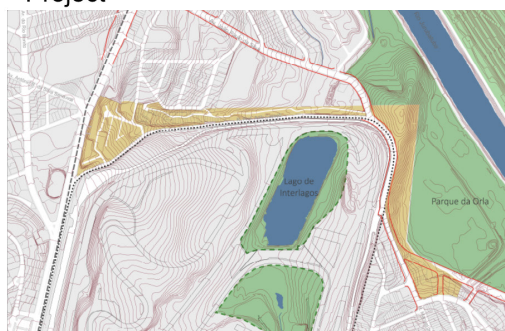


Figure 3. Image of the occupations and the representations of the Jardim Cristal and Morrão communities in maps from Bill No. 01-00204/2018 (not to scale)

Legend: * In map 4 of the Bill the names of the two settlements corresponding to the codes were added, according to the legend of the official document; ** In map 7 of the Bill, interventions 04, 06 and 07 correspond, respectively, to the categories “park”, “environmental axis” and “roadway system”, according to the caption of the official document.

Source: Own elaboration, with satellite images (Google Earth, 2021) and images from the official maps (São Paulo, Cidade, 2018c).

At the same time that maps make these forms of territorial appropriation invisible, the text of the AJ-UIP Bill (São Paulo, Cidade, 2018c) announces commitments to housing assistance, in accordance with the growing discursive centrality of this agenda in proposals for urban transformation, in order to legitimize interventions that, in practice, would ultimately go on to aggravate housing needs (Santoro; Lima; Mendonça, 2018).

The provision of social housing appears prominently in the text of the proposed law, among the first sections of general objectives, guidelines and intervention program. However, on the map that territorializes the actions to be undertaken there are no dwellings (see detail of Map 7 of the Bill, in Figure 3). It is not only in the analyzed area; there is not even a category for housing interventions in the legends of the Intervention Program Map. The generality of the legal text – in which “housing assistance” and “perimeter residents” have no address or correspondence on the maps – equally opens or not the possibilities of assistance.

Thus, the low-income population residing in the area, who have different housing needs, justify and legitimize the urban renewal project, which provides them with no guarantees. This combination of uncertainty and the possibility of assistance is another way of postponing conflicts and disputes.

In contrast to the generic formulations of the initial provisions of the bill (which signal with no guarantees), the explicit mention of the communities surrounding the Interlagos Autodrome (Racing Circuit) in the materials made available during the public consultations, and the solution given in the bill, indicate that the occupation of the territory, which has existed for approximately fifty years, is in dispute.

In the second public consultation, Jardim Cristal and Morrão were part of the perimeter of the Interlagos strategic project, within the Interlagos UIA. In a technical report dated February 2018, the image of a reference study for the aforementioned strategic project (Figure 4) showed the replacement of the two favelas with other morphological typologies. In Morrão, the idea was to create a park, vertical groups of social housing and commercial towers in front of the Racing Circuit. In Jardim Cristal, there would be high-rise buildings. This image had an impact on the community mobilization meetings, which were (un) able to see themselves in the project.



Figure 4. Reference study for the Interlagos Strategic Project

Source: São Paulo, Cidade (2018d).

In the bill sent to the Legislature, the perimeter of the strategic project was modified, in order to exclude the communities of Jardim Cristal and Morrão, which were now identified as “ZEIS 1 in the immediate surroundings”. The objectives of the strategic project would be

to promote the maintenance of the Interlagos Racing Circuit as a facility capable of hosting motor sport events, associated with implementing a public park and *promoting the urbanization and regularization of areas demarcated as ZEIS-1 in its surroundings* (São Paulo, Cidade, 2018e, art 32, emphasis added).

It is not possible to state that the exclusion from the official perimeter of the strategic project would have removed the ideas expressed in the reference study presented in the technical report of the second public consultation. Although the urbanization of favelas, indicated in the objectives, is traditionally aimed at precarious settlements that will be consolidated, through some urban interventions, resettlement is provided for in the case of displacement motivated by “construction works, flood or unsolvable geotechnical risks, or being in areas of permanent preservation or with the impossibility of sewage collection” (São Paulo, Cidade, 2021).

Contributing to the concern regarding the future is a device foreseen in the AJ-UIP, which Barbosa, Ungaretti and Magami (2018) called “mobile ZEIS”: the perimeter of the ZEIS delimited in the Strategic Master Plan that were reached by public improvements foreseen in the UIP could be “transferred” to land not originally demarcated as a Special Zone of Social Interest and in which the parameters foreseen for the ZEIS of origin would be reproduced. In these new areas, families affected by improvements that would extinguish the original ZEIS would preferentially be served definitively.

The imprecision with regard to what is intended or what will actually be carried out in the urban intervention project keeps the power of decision-making restricted, opens space for mediators and negotiators of interests, conflicts and investments and defers contestations, which may make them unfeasible.

4. Matryoshka of instruments

Jardim Cristal and Morrão, within the intervention perimeter of the UIP, made part of the Interlagos UIP. Within this, they were in the immediate surroundings of the Interlagos strategic project. The UIP bill also provided for the possibility of using other planning instruments and management bodies. In the 2014 SMP (São Paulo, Cidade, 2014), these communities were demarcated as ZEIS.

The first “layer” is ZEIS-1,⁹ which legally implies special rules for use, occupation and management: (i) public interest in maintaining the existing occupation; and (ii) the requirement of setting up a management council, with representation from residents, the Executive Branch and organized civil society, which should approve any intervention in the area. The installation of the council needs to be prior to the preparation of a ZEIS urbanization plan, as determined by the Master Plan.

With the AJ-UIP proposal, other layers emerged (Figure 5). Initially, integrating the perimeter of a UIP signified that it was in an area considered to have potential for structural transformation. This indicated that changes should be made, in the settlement (urbanization, eviction, construction of new housing, etc.) and in its surroundings (change in neighborhood patterns, increase in land prices, etc.).

9. The ZEIS-1s “are areas characterized by the presence of favelas, illegal subdivisions and social housing developments, and low-income housing settlements, predominantly inhabited by low-income populations, where there is a public interest in maintaining the resident population and promoting land regularization and urban planning, environmental recovery and the production of social housing” (PDE 2014, art. 45, I) (São Paulo, Cidade, 2014).

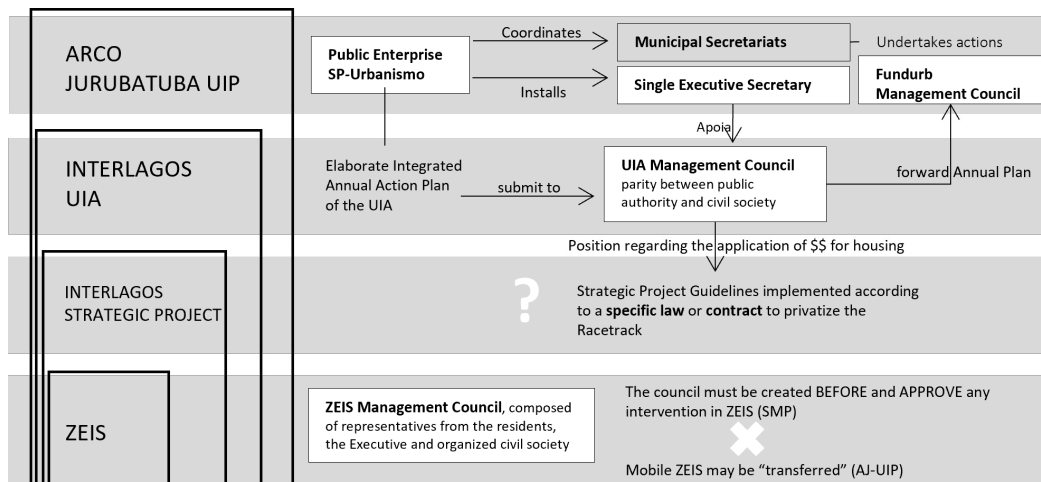


Figure 5. Governance diagram of the AJ-UIP
Source: Own elaboration.

The AJ-UIP did not propose a governance structure that encompasses its perimeter as a whole, but rather, the bill outlines a coordination and decision-making arrangement related to this level. It deals with a concerted action between municipal bodies to implement the UIP and describes responsibilities for nine municipal departments, which would act under the coordination of SP Urbanismo. This public company would establish a Single Executive Secretary, common to the management councils of the three UIPs, for administrative and bureaucratic services. Finally, it would be up to the Management Council of the Municipal Urban Development Fund (Fundurb) to annually assess plans for applying UIA resources. It may be observed that SP Urbanismo is the only organization with responsibilities to coordinate the UIP as a whole, focusing on the execution of planned actions, which would be negotiated – supposing they were – in sectoral bodies or related to parts of the UIP territory.

Within the AJ-UIP, Jardim Cristal and Morrão were to become integrated into the Interlagos UIA, which had a joint management council between the public authority and civil society, as determined by the SMP. The management councils of the three UIAs had eighteen members each, coordinated by the Municipal Department of Urban Planning and Licensing (SMUL). Its role consisted of monitoring the implementation of the intervention program relating to the UIA perimeter. The Bill proposed a system to operationalize the execution of the interventions foreseen in the UIP: the management councils would annually approve an Integrated Action Plan, prepared by SP Urbanismo to detail the use of resources, and this plan would be submitted to the Fundurb Management Council (São Paulo, Cidade, 2018c).

Among the nine representatives of civil society on each council, three would be residents or workers in the area within the UIA adherence perimeter. The others would be representatives of professional, academic, and business entities and non-governmental organizations, with significant actions in the UIA, in addition to representatives from the sub-prefecture and housing councils. On this layer, there could be some influence by residents from the communities affected by the interventions, but there is no indication that emphasis would be given to an integrated vision of the UIP.

Within the Interlagos UIP, the Interlagos strategic project would be created, with the objective of associating the exploitation of the Racing Circuit with the implementation of a public park and promoting the urbanization and regularization of areas demarcated as ZEIS-1 in the surrounding area.

The concession or sale of the Racing Circuit was one of the priority projects in the municipal management privatization program that began in 2017 (João Dória-Bruno Covas). The AJ-UIP Bill provided that, if the equipment was privatized, the strategic project guidelines would be implemented according to a specific law or contract. The resources raised in the privatization would be linked to the implementation of the strategic project, with at least 40% destined for the urbanization and regularization of the surrounding ZEIS. The management of these resources would depend on the privatization instrument adopted. The UIA management councils would be responsible for the prior representation on proposals for the application of resources linked to social housing. The privatization process¹⁰ would bring even more elements to the process.

The AJ-UIP was judicially suspended, in April 2019, until the management councils of the ZEIS affected by the project were constituted, in order to discuss the planned work. The decision clarified that, although it should not be confused with the ZEIS urbanization plan, which legally should be subsequent to the creation of the councils, the UIP would imply intervention in the ZEIS areas. The understanding was that “the provisions relating to the ZEIS prevail over those relating to any other zone of incidental use on the lot or glebe, for the purpose of disciplining subdivision, use and occupation of the land” (São Paulo, Estado, 2019, p 11). In 2022, the Legislative process was resumed, and the PIU-AJ was approved and sanctioned in June 2023.¹¹

10. The bidding edict for the Racing Circuit concession, published in November 2019, was suspended on the recommendation of the Municipal Court of Audit, in April 2020.

11. This article was written and submitted for publication before the approval of Law No. 17,965/2023, which is why it does not include an analysis of the changes in relation to Bill 204/2018. It should only be noted that the Interlagos strategic project was excluded from the law and the “mobile ZEIS” were

Final considerations

It would seem that elements have been uncovered, which confirm the hypothesis that the institutional arrangements and instruments chosen for the design of the AJ-UIP increase the complexity of the project, the fragmentation of the process and the superficiality of the legitimization procedures for the intervention.

Due to the extension of the AJ-UIP, it is reasonable to assume that each UIA contained therein could have been the object of a UIP, i.e., it could have been subjected to the drafting process regulated by Decree No. 56,901/2016 (São Paulo, Cidade, 2016). The scale of the material made available in the consultations, the actors mobilized and the content of the public hearings would have been different. Likewise, the UIAs could have been consortium urban operations – a similar arrangement, but with other requirements. These choices condition aspects related to the management and governance of the intervention.

In the process of preparing the AJ-UIP, the choice of mechanisms and instruments that give preference to individual, diffuse participation, without the specific mobilization of the affected communities, the short period of time for appropriating and discussing the available materials, as well as their language and format, demonstrate that the process called “public discussion”, instead of expanding social participation, formalizes successive stages of validation, frequently imprecise, and often with excessive technical detail. This construction of an apparent consensus, in stages prior to the effective perception of the consequences of the intervention on existing settlements, postpones and hinders the possibility of contribution/contestation by communities.

In the draft law, the uncertainties regarding housing assistance indicate that there is room for negotiation and decision-making, but these issues are not explicit in the AJ-UIP and, therefore, do not appear in institutionalized spaces for public discussion. Whether Jardim Cristal and Morrão will remain as they are, whether they will be completely or partially removed, what type of housing solution will be offered to residents – these decisions were put off until either the bill becomes processed in the Legislature, for the Racing Circuit concession process or for later.

Finally, the multiple regulatory layers ultimately bring about a fragmentation of the process, shuffling the cards between the intervention project and the decision-making process. Decisions are made on different scales and structures and it is

maintained, so that any definition of Jardim Cristal and Morrão was postponed. SÃO PAULO (City). Law No. 17,965 of June 19, 2023. Approves Urban Intervention Project for the Arco Jurubatuba perimeter, in compliance with item III of § 3 of art. 76 of Law No. 16,050, of July 31, 2014; creates the Vila Andrade, Jurubatuba and Interlagos Urban Intervention Areas. *Diário Oficial da Cidade de São Paulo* [Official Gazette of the City of São Paulo]: São Paulo, 20 Jun. 2023.

somewhat difficult for the overall vision to be taken in by all the actors involved. The AJ-UIP, as proposed, increases the complexity and difficulty in understanding what is being discussed and what will actually take place, and hold over some of the details and decisions, while broadening details in other aspects. It thus contradicts the arguments that the UIP increases transparency and the participation of society in decisions regarding the direction that this part of the city will take.

Many instruments have been foreseen, and the bill also opens up space for other strategic projects to be created, after approval of the UIP, establishing programs of public interest and rules for subdivision, use and occupation of land in areas considered susceptible to processes of urban transformation and qualification – which coincides with the very definition of an Urban Intervention Project. They would be implemented through “specific UIPs”, which could herald the use of any of the urban policy instruments. These are UIPs within UIPs, which may foresee new instruments. A veritable Matryoshka doll, whose capacity seems infinite, thereby making it difficult to identify where and when crucial questions will be decided upon regarding urban interventions that affect low-income territories.

The complexity of instruments (a UIP that contains UIAs, that contain strategic projects, that contain ZEIS and environmental zones) thus configures the selective invisibility of the exact intended intervention and aggravates the invisibility of the communities that have lived there for approximately fifty years, preventing their views from being expressed on the transformation that should occur.

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Submitted: October 4, 2022.

Approved: August 23, 2023.

How to cite: GUERESI, S. The matryoshka of urban instruments in Urban Intervention Projects in São Paulo. *Revista brasileira de estudos urbanos e regionais*. V. 26, E202419en, 2024. <https://doi.org/10.22296/2317-1529.rbeur.202419en>.

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