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HOUSING ARCHAEOLOGY CUPA 48'

Rozana Montiel, José Castillo, INFONAVIT Mexico City, Mexico



Housing is a pertinent issue in Mexico City. The required housing production has been calculated at more than half a million dwellings per year and a huge number of existing dwellings need to be replaced. However, in line with the steady liberalization of the Mexican economy, the government has almost entirely relinquished social housing production. Since the 1990s, new homes have been realized mainly by private developers. Spatially, the result is disastrous: uncontrolled urban expansion, a large number of abandoned dwellings, and the typical functional separation of living, working, and infrastructure that produce daily recurring traffic jams and a congested public transportation system.

Over the past three years, a collective of 32

design firms has begun to innovatively redevelop the existing social housing. Central to the approach are the physical and social upgrading of existing residential districts and single-family dwellings through active residents' participation. This new approach to urban renewal, based on collaboration between Infonavit (the federal Institute for workers' housing), professionals, and citizens, could bring radical change to the way housing is produced and transformed in Mexico, an approach that focuses on creating resilient neighborhoods that feature meaningful and pleasant public spaces in collaboration with citizens. In that sense, this is an inspiring example for many other cities that have to reflect on the transformation of the existing city.