

# Mexico City Airport Planning

... in four Scenes

# Scene One

*Analyzing Texcoco*  
Conversation between the  
D.F. Planning Director and D.F. Mayor



# Failure of Airport Planning Process

Process failed because:

- Closed-door political decisions
- Excluded stakeholders
- Limited frame of reference
- Invalid decision rules

# Planning Structure Needed to Guarantee D.F. Involvement



- Events of the last year created a unique opportunity for a more equal distribution of power
- Regional planning council would ensure adequate involvement of all stakeholders

# Political Strategy

- To get political buy-in from State and Federal government for this new planning structure, D.F. needs to establish strategic alliances with opposition groups, especially the *campesinos*
- Furthers your political ambitions
- Expands PRD's political base



# Scene Two

## The Alliance

Meeting with D.F. Mayor,  
D.F. Planning Director and  
Ignacio Del Valle (Leader of  
*San Salvador Atenco campesinos*)



# Concerns

- No reason to trust new promises, need concrete actions on part of D.F.
- Historically non-responsive to indigenous
- Left outside power structure

# Reasons for alliance

- We need continued support
- Interests connected from desire to stop growth
- D.F. government helpful in stopping airport

# What we want

- Guarantee to protect land rights
- Representation on airport decision making body
- Veto power over site
- Indigenous rights bill support
- Measure of autonomy over local decision making



# Building an Alliance

- Can't provide all these things
- Can provide
  - Seat at the table on airport planning process
  - Place on decision making bodies about social impacts of airport siting
  - PRD support for passage of Indigenous Rights Bill

# Scene Three

## Vision for Airport Planning

D.F. Mayor calls a meeting with  
President Fox

Governor of State of Mexico

Ignacio del Valle

and D.F. Planners



# Airport Planning Process Failed

- Stakeholders were excluded in the decision making process
- People have expectation of democratic rule; it is our responsibility as politicians to fulfill this
- Political process has been discredited; government needs to redeem ourselves

# Where We Are Now



- Solution still needed to airport problem; Benito Juarez lacks capacity to meet air travel needs
- Problem-solving process needs reworking
- Possibilities need to be explored, e.g., new airport, expanding current airport, sites in other cities, etc.

# Moving Forward

- Forum for all stakeholders to be heard
- Expand scope of planning participants
- More transparency in decision-making
- Increased coordination of interests
- Balance national, regional and local interests
- Balance government and popular interests

# Mandate of MZMC Regional Airport Planning Commission

- List all alternative sites for the airport
- To examine all alternatives in light of five concerns:
  - Economic interests and impacts
  - Technical requirements for airport
  - Social costs
  - Environmental impacts
  - Infrastructure connecting airport to city
- To elaborate a new regional airport plan



# Approval of Regional Airport Plan

- Constant communication between citizens, representatives, politicians, and planners.
- Citizens in neighborhoods provide both source and ultimate approval of plan
- Final approval by DF Mayor, Governors, and President
- If this process is successful, the structure could be institutionalized as a Regional Planning Body.

# Scene Four



## Agreeing to the Plan

Conversation between the  
President of Mexico and  
Governor of State of Mexico



# Initial Doubts



- Limits Federal power in decision making
- No guarantee that national interests are met
  - Global competitiveness
  - Economic growth
  - Employment
  - Improved infrastructure

# Dilemma

- With the airport problem left unresolved, it is difficult to achieve the nation's goals
- Cannot revamp airport planning process because the project's credibility has been jeopardized

# How the MZMC RAPC can Help

- Restore credibility to the airport project: through citizen participation, transparency, and coordination
- Re-legitimize the Federal government
- Confirm commitment to democratic principles
- Establish support of all stakeholders

# State Government Agrees



- Process can help
  - Restore PRI reputation
  - Guarantee PRI participation in the decision-making process
  - Address the interests of my constituents (new infrastructure, attract new industries, raise property values)



# Additional Benefits



- Establishes common priorities for the region
  - Employment
  - Quality public services
  - Infrastructure and transportation
  - Environment
- Reconciles tensions regarding how to achieve these priorities (means to the ends)

# Tensions Between Groups

- Will the solution to the airport problem
  - Promote economic development? For whom?
  - Provide an efficient allocation of resources?
  - Be sustainable?
- These tensions need to be reconciled for agreement to be reached – the process can help do this

# Cast

D.F. Planning Director.....Chris Hodges

Mayor Lopez-Obrador...Elizabeth Bast

Ignacio del Valle.....Will Bradshaw

President Fox.....Claudia Canepa

Governor Motiel...Mark Emmert

D.F. Planner.....Sarah Connolly

*Fin*