

LiNK

News media of the Agency for Cooperation and Investment
of Medellín and the Metropolitan Area - ACI Medellín

2020 - 2021 | N°8 | ISSN 2422-2453

A project that will
transform the
western part of
the city and will
have a positive
impact on

**ONE MILLION
PEOPLE**

from 32 neighborhoods
of Medellín.

**THE
FUTURE
IS
INITIATING**



AGENCY FOR COOPERATION AND INVESTMENT
OF MEDELLÍN AND THE METROPOLITAN AREA

Creating bonds with the world for development

MEDELLÍN JUMPS INTO THE FUTURE

At the ACI Medellín we create bonds to fulfill the dreams of the “Medellín Futuro” development plan. This journalistic work tells the stories and facts of this growth path.

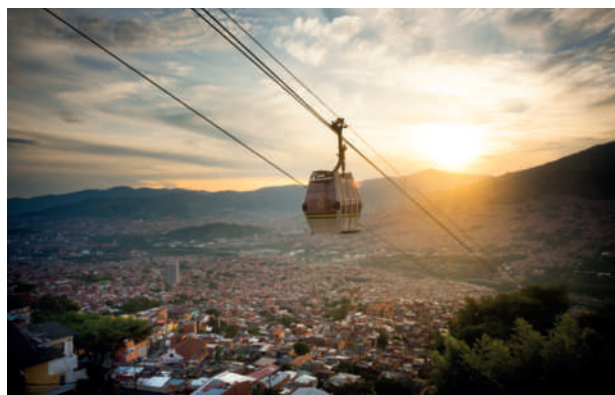


Photo credits:
Bureau Medellín





●● Medellín, a city full of color, fun and joy for residents and tourists.





LINK, official magazine of the Agency for Cooperation and Investment of Medellín and the Metropolitan Area – ACI Medellín
-. Year 9, No 8, August 2021

Executive Director:
Eleonora Betancur González

Editorial Board:
Eleonora Betancur González, Executive Director; Communications Division ACI Medellín

General Coordination:
Juan Camilo Montoya Echavarría,
Communications Director

Research and texts:
El Colombiano

Graphic layout, design, and coordination:
Lorena Piñeros Bedoya,
Communications Professional

Translation: Fiorella Faillace Castaño,
Assistant to the Executive Director;
www.GoBilingual.co

Photography: Medellín Mayor's Office,
ACI Medellín, El Colombiano, Medellín
Bureau, Empresa de Desarrollo Urbano
(EDU)

ACI Medellín is a partnership among
public entities.

ISSN 2422-2453





CONTENT

07

Editorial: We connect with the world to inspire and create the future we desire

08

"I dream of seeing young people in Medellín's neighborhoods working on innovation and technology," Daniel Quintero Calle, Mayor

11

INNOVATION

- The Perpetuo Socorro and the Infinite Transformation of Ideas

- 10 actions that are transforming Medellín into a software valley

20

SURROUNDINGS

- An integral transformation will take place in Medellín with the 80th Ave. Metro

- An educational landmark has been created in the west of Medellín with the Fourth Industrial Revolution Educational Campus and learning transformation

- A Medellín that embraces environmental sustainability

30

INVESTMENT

- International companies generate employment and contribute with knowledge when settling in Medellín

- Training digital talent: key to the innovation ecosystem

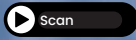
35

COMMUNITIES

- Cooperation faces the contingency and strengthens relationships between cities

- Medellín embraces its diversity and promotes peace-building

- The new ways of culture in Medellín



Building a better future is everyone's responsibility. At ACI Medellín, we have embraced the challenge of joining that global commitment.

Welcome to the future

**ELEONORA
BETANCUR**
Executive Director,
ACI Medellín.





WE CONNECT WITH THE WORLD TO INSPIRE AND CREATE THE FUTURE WE DESIRE

By: ELEONORA BETANCUR
Executive Director ACI Medellín

Leading the internationalization of Medellín in the context of a pandemic has been challenging, but at the same time, it forced us to rethink how to position the city in the world, how to continue being close to our foreign partners and keep their interest in our territory alive.

This global emergency taught us that nations must unite to overcome crises, that we are very vulnerable and that cooperation and solidarity will be key to facing what the future holds. Therefore, in ACI Medellín, as an agency supporting the sustainable development of the city through cooperation and attraction of foreign investment, we united efforts to manage donations of medical supplies for our health personnel. We also

coordinated the international management toward projects that will consolidate the Development Plan for the Future Medellín 2020 - 2023.

The goals and challenges of the city never end. We have adjusted our strategies of relations with the international communities by leveraging virtual channels. We innovated in new formats, invited investors from other countries who know the advantages and human talent that Medellín offers. We also led the city's participation in important global discussion spaces, key to charting the path of post-pandemic recovery.

Our main areas of work: international cooperation and foreign investment, are two vital tools for consolidating the economic revival and restoring the social fabric. In a world still uncertain under COVID-19, the task of governments and the public sector becomes more important. From our place, we will appeal to our diplomacy and capacity of gathering to unite the experiences that Medellín needs most.

In this magazine, you will find stories, voices and other actions of Future Medellín. Within these pages, there are details of the most ambitious and largest projects the city has led during the past 25 years, such as the Metro of 80th Ave., the 101 strategy for a software valley,

success stories of international companies with headquarters in the city, a look at the role of international cooperation in today's context, the epicenter of education for the Fourth Industrial Revolution: Ciudadela Occidente, culture and music in the neighborhoods, among others. You'll find the city's commitment to respecting diversity and enhancing peace-building, the road to environmental sustainability, which are some of the articles that make up this edition.

Resilience, strength and determination will remain great news for the world. The challenges ahead are undoubtedly more difficult and to face them, we will continue to strengthen alliances with the world, sharing our best and bringing the world to the city.

The responsibility for building a better future lies within us. At ACI Medellín, we have taken on the challenge of joining that global commitment. Welcome to the future!

I DREAM OF SEEING YOUNG PEOPLE IN MEDELLÍN'S NEIGHBORHOODS WORKING ON INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY PROJECTS

Daniel Quintero Calle

Interview with the Medellín City Mayor, Daniel Quintero Calle, the youngest person in the history of Medellín, to lead and manage the second most important city in Colombia.

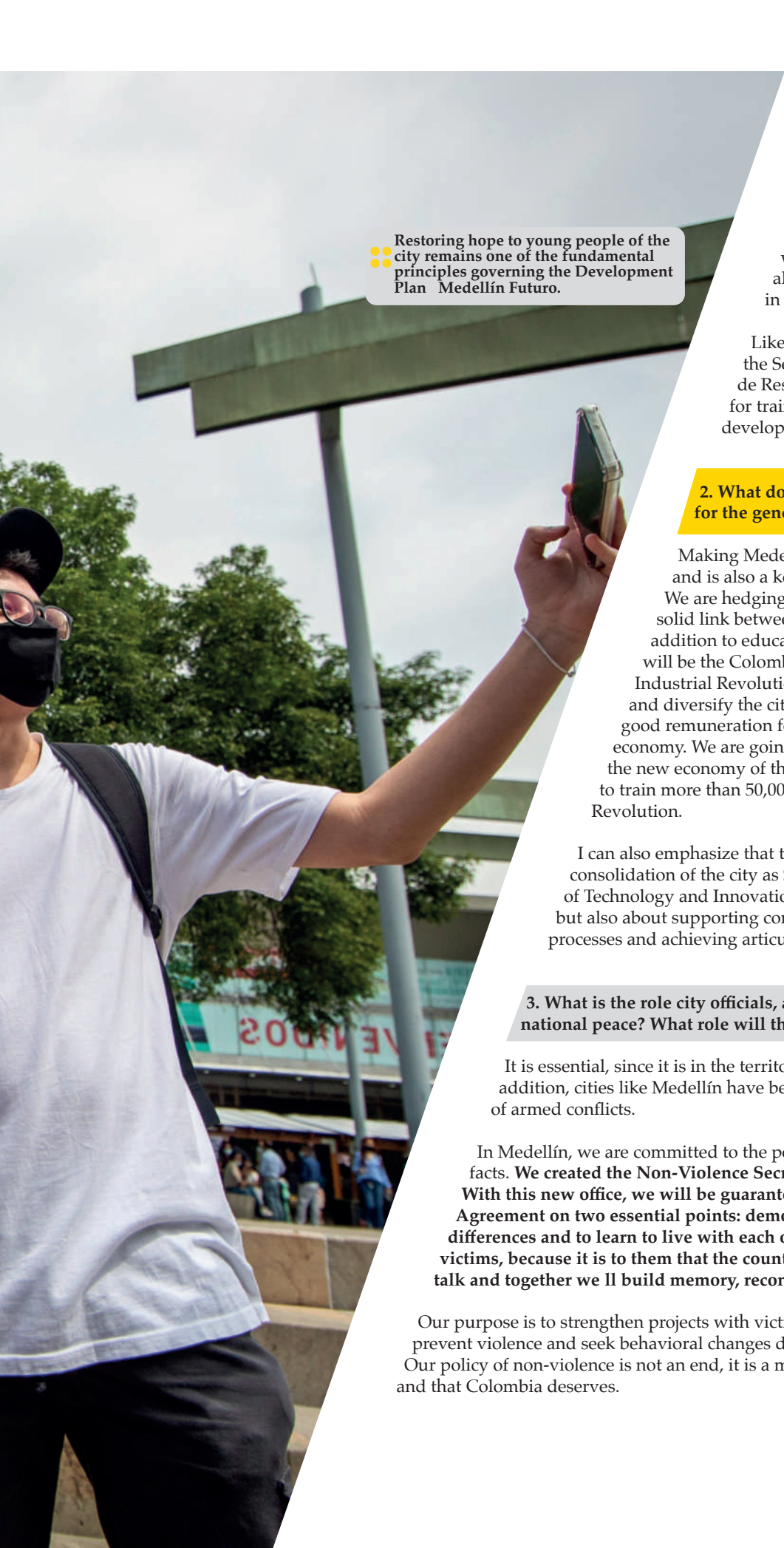
He was Deputy Minister of Digital Economy of the Ministry of Information and Communications Technologies (MinTIC, for its acronym in Spanish) and now implements innovation as a pillar for Medellín's entrepreneurship and development. **This is how he is leading the city toward a leap into the future.**

1. How are digital skills for young people and citizens being improved for industry 4.0 and the software valley?

Together with Ruta N, Sapiencia and the Ministry of Education, we are implementing a new development model for the city through an unprecedented educational transformation that will enable human talent to be trained for the thousands of qualified jobs required, generating new opportunities for the diversification and modernization of the city's economy.

Beyond traditional training, there are efforts aimed at strengthening digital skills, via seedbeds, training camps, short courses on international platforms, certifications or other modalities. Specifically, it is important to highlight the experience of Ruta N that has supported more than 25 technology learning communities (CUEE 2.0, 2019)





Restoring hope to young people of the city remains one of the fundamental principles governing the Development Plan Medellín Futuro.

promotes the program for connecting supply with the demand for ICT talent. This program alone has generated about 4,837 jobs for the city in the last four years (DAP, 2020).

Likewise, software seedbeds promoted by the Secretariat of Education at INEM José Félix de Restrepo are also highlighted, ones tailored for training different communities on software development.

2. What does Medellín becoming a software valley mean for the general public?

Making Medellín into a software valley is a major challenge and is also a key part of post-pandemic economic recovery. We are hedging our future on the software valley with a solid link between university, the industry and the state, in addition to educational transformation. This means Medellín will be the Colombian capital of digitization in the Fourth Industrial Revolution, one that can boost economic development and diversify the city's economy, creating thousands of jobs with good remuneration for citizens in areas associated with the digital economy. We are going to create more than 26,000 new jobs within the new economy of the software valley. For that reason, we are going to train more than 50,000 people in job skills for the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

I can also emphasize that the software valley is aligned with the consolidation of the city as Smart City, for Medellín is the Special District of Technology and Innovation. This is not only about addressing education, but also about supporting companies in their digital transformation processes and achieving articulation within the sector.

3. What is the role city officials, and specifically your own, in building national peace? What role will the Non-Violence Secretariat play?

It is essential, since it is in the territory where violence has long been felt. In addition, cities like Medellín have been displaced and exiled for decades as a result of armed conflicts.

In Medellín, we are committed to the peace of Colombia and demonstrate that with facts. **We created the Non-Violence Secretariat to give this the importance it deserves. With this new office, we will be guaranteeing the fulfillment of the Havana Peace Agreement on two essential points: democratic participation to better understand differences and to learn to live with each other, and a very strong commitment with the victims, because it is to them that the country owes so much. Let's listen to them; let's talk and together we will build memory, reconciliation, truth and recidivism.**

Our purpose is to strengthen projects with victims and, in general, with actors of conflict, prevent violence and seek behavioral changes directed toward integral human development. Our policy of non-violence is not an end, it is a method of building the society that we dream of and that Colombia deserves.

4. We have seen many approaches by companies and governments of the world to your administration. What cooperation agreements, alliances and mutual support are you forecasting for Medellín in the coming months?

Today's world requires working together with other cities and countries. Medellín has a lot to teach and more to grow. We must also be connected with the world.

We are engaging in relations with strategic actors in the region, also with partners at the national level, and we are approaching cooperation agencies in Germany, France, Spain and the European Union.

We have ongoing projects with the Embassy of India, Finland, Barcelona City Council, Segittur, Bloomberg, JICA, Danish Refugee Council, IDB, Ministry of Economy, Trade of Japan and with C40 Cities network.

"Medellín Futuro" proposes an international city, capable of offering good practices and receiving support in what we want to grow, for example, in science, technology and innovation. For this, we are also exploring relations with other countries.

5. An accessible city is definitive when considering an eco-city model. How will you achieve your ideal of making Medellín pedestrian and bike-friendly?

A city for walking, for cycling and a public service with clean technologies, are some of the purposes of the Ecocity Strategic Line of our Development Plan. With this, we improve air quality, life and move toward sustainable mobility.

The Medellín Program is a pedestrian and bike-friendly initiative that includes the construction of 40 new kilometers of bicycle routes, the implementation of two stations that integrate the bicycle user with the Metro system, three existing road bridges for universal accessibility, the design of a 14-kilometer bicycle route to connect the north and south of the city and a cycling integration project for the the Universidad Nacional and Universidad de Antioquia campuses.

With these actions, we want to increase cycling, from 1% to 4%, as well as the participation of women in the use of This mode of transport, from 12.3% to 20%.

6. Medellín is an example with its mobility ecosystem (metro, tram, metrocable, etc.) What valuable lesson is left to Medellín after 24 years of the Metro being inaugurated and what role will the 80th Ave. Metro play?

The Medellín Metro has been the axis of the social transformation of the city. It has integrated the communities and shortened distances; it has also enabled the improvement in quality of life of citizens. The Metro is the backbone of the development of mobility in the city from north to south.



Mayor Daniel Quintero dreams that every child in Medellín will be able to have a computer. "Giving Chromebooks" is happening all over the city.

More than a lesson, it is the confirmation that we are in the right path, and shows our interest and management implemented from day one of my administration to advance in the most ambitious project of the city in the last 25 years: the 80th Ave. Metro.

This project will benefit many people, will transform the urban planning of the west of the city and is also ecological. It will reduce CO2 emissions by five million tons, because it will operate 100% with electricity.

7. Your administration's slogan is Medellín Futuro - Future Medellín. How would you describe the Medellín of 2023? How do you foresee it?

Artificial Intelligence is now intended to replace certain human cognitive abilities and, rather than automate them, make them digital. While in the Deputy-Ministry of Information and Communications Technologies, I created the Deputy-Ministry of Digital Economy, so that Colombia would begin to face these challenges.

Many jobs are going to be at risk. A job can be lost in Colombia because a new machine was developed in China.

Hence, to not fall behind, comes the idea of thinking of Medellín as the valley of software and as a city of the future.

The construction of new massive sustainable transport systems, such as the Metro of the 80th Ave. and the large north-south bike route will contribute to mobility and show us the path to the Ecocity that we have proposed.

Furthermore, the jobs that their construction will generate will serve as measures to revive the economy. More specifically, I dream of Medellín without so many private-owned cars, with more

people commuting on bicycles and public transport, a city where pedestrians are the priority.

At the same time, I dream of seeing young people in all neighborhoods working on innovation and technology projects that will impact the world, robotics projects, Internet of Things, Blockchain, Artificial Intelligence and data analytics.

After this four-year period, Medellín will have made a leap to the future.

8. What lesson do you want to leave your daughters Maia and Aleia of your term in office, at the forefront, leading a city like Medellín?

I want them to understand the beauty of the little things. Behind a destination, there will always be a new story to be known.

Medellín is a place to explore, because where some see a simple park, others see a stage to meet nature, or what for some is a just metro transport, for others it is a metro discovery ride.

It's all a matter of opening your eyes a little further to meet the wonders of the city. In every corner, there is a landscape, a meal, a sculpture or a character.

In short, the city is a treasure and I want them to learn how to discover it, but also how to take care of it and contribute to its further positive transformation.



The Perpetuo
Socorro and the
infinite
transformation
of ideas

10 actions that
transform
Medellín into
a software
valley



THE PERPETUO SOCORRO AND THE INFINITE TRANSFORMATION OF IDEAS

It is very easy to walk around Perpetuo Socorro and be amazed. The astonishment that accompanies each new route increases as visitors experience the transformation of its streets, walls and corners. In the same way those thoughts originated years ago in some corner of Medellín, they now come to bloom in these streets and continue to flourish.

The first thing that stands out to the passer-by is the colors in the neighborhood, the artistic interventions, the plants that have started to opaque the concrete, and the architectural designs of its buildings and premises. One of those buildings is protected by a group of mirrors that reflects everything that happens around it and, if you look at it from a closer standpoint, you will see the dream come true of a community that works, following a path, where good ideas, economy and sustainability are always along the same road, together in a creative district.

This building was the first of its kind to open its doors in this area of the city. Mateo Jaramillo, Mattelsa's founder, chose this structure on Calle 35 in what used to be an industrial neighborhood, to be the headquarters of his company. **We were looking for a place that had some of our identity and we needed a strategic location.** That's why they started searching for areas of Medellín where there was an established economic structure already in place, such as the Provenza or Laureles areas. However, the first one was discarded because of its distance to the Medellín Metro system and because it has a hillock access, not so friendly for a traditional bicycle ride. **We also searched in the northern area, near the Ruta N district, and in Llanogrande, until we came to the conclusion that there was no space in Medellín to which we really belonged or a place where we could come to be part of a transformation,** recalls Mateo.

**IF YOU FEEL YOU DON T FIT IN THIS
WORLD, IT S BECAUSE YOU RE
HERE TO CREATE ONE!**

A year later, Mateo arrived at a place he then could see with a different set of eyes, Wynwood, Miami's arts district, an area that began its metamorphosis at the beginning of the millennium to become a community with more than 400 businesses and 200 murals, a business industry based on arts and a major destination for innovation and urban/street art. **There, we had a serendipity. If you feel you don't fit in this world, it's because you're here to create one! We repeated this to ourselves and decided to create our own 'Wynwood' and find an area to promote a sustainable district from scratch.**

With this new perspective, they found an urban jewel, the "Perpetuo Socorro." A sector with three and four lane streets, low vehicle flow, near downtown Medellín and a 40 minute walk from the first "Parque de Laureles" square and another 40 minutes to El Poblado square. Mateo says that **"the best thing about it is that it is flat and easy for everyone to access by bike and it is close to two Metro stations. So we began to dream about a place with schools, markets, offices, producers, restaurants, cafes, everything coexisting under the principle of sustainability. And today it is possible because, when you start to understand the magic, and then you meet the 'magicians,' everything falls into place. The first 'magician' to appear was Jorge Mario Aristizábal, CEO of Concreto, who put the creative district on the table."**

A WAREHOUSE FOR MEETINGS AND PERPETUAL TALKS

Mattelsa came to the area as a magnet to attract the curiosity of other entities, that with no second thought, joined this creative journey.

Comfama was one of them. This company entered the big leagues by renting a warehouse, near the Hospital General de Medellín to turn it into the house of creativity. The current manager of this project, Ana Isabel Maya, says **it is the place where everything can happen, where the creator can experience, make them visible, connect with others and feel that they have a place of their own. Because of its versatility, we call it the trans headquarters of Comfama: the one that transforms and transgresses.**

With Mattelsa and Comfama, the space was opened for a new conversation with the Medellín Mayor's Office and other entities that also sought to establish their headquarters in this collective construction. Thus was born the "Corporación Perpetuo

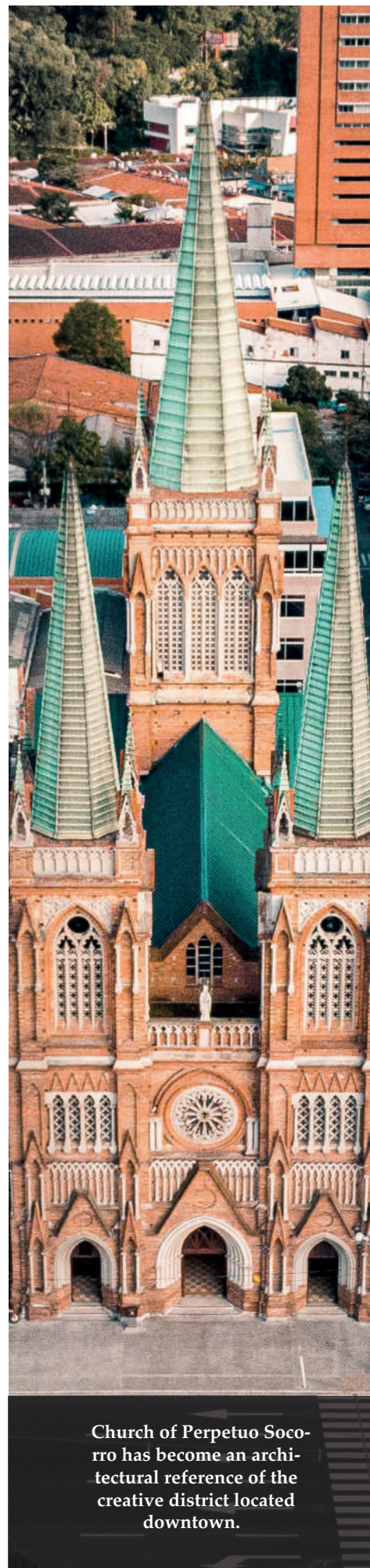
GATHERING ALL CREATORS IN THE SAME PLACE WILL MAKE US MORE COMPETITIVE SO AS TO ACHIEVE A GREAT CREATIVE DISTRICT FOR MEDELLÍN AND THE WORLD

Erika Jaramillo,
Director of the Perpetuo Socorro Corporation

Socorro," of which the Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana (UPB) and the Almacentro Shopping Center are also part. The Secretariat of Economic Development of the Municipality established the zone as an Economic and Creative District and the Orange Development Area (ADN, for its acronym in Spanish) of the capital of Antioquia in 2019.

Strengthening and energizing Orange Economy in the city is one of the tasks undertaken by the Agency for Cooperation and Investment of Medellín and the Metropolitan Area (ACI Medellín) which, as stated by its Executive Director, Eleonora Betancur, "...plays a key role in attracting international companies or organizations that seek to understand the strategies and benefits offered to companies in the creative sector. In this way we work for the real estate, social, cultural and productive development in the more than 30 hectares that make up Perpetuo Socorro."

Erika Jaramillo, Director of the Corporation, emphasizes that Medellín needed a space where culture and the creative economy could be discussed. **Gathering all creators in the same place will make us more competitive so as to achieve a great creative district for Medellín and the world. Benefits will include promoting local procurement, avoiding smuggling, creating new jobs, boosting the local and national economies and promoting culture and identity. Without culture there is no identity, neither individual, nor national, expressed Jaramillo.**



Church of Perpetuo Socorro has become an architectural reference of the creative district located downtown.

TALENTS WITH PAUER

In 2018, Comfama was already working on planning a strategy with Ruta N, focused on creative ventures and their role in generating new jobs. They called it ELPAUER (Phonetic spelling of “The Power”). Today, it offers support in the generation of business models and the development of administrative skills, as well as access to financing for the 90 creators who are part of its portfolio. Ana Isabel Maya, also in charge of this alliance, underscores the creation of community among the creators and their learning processes.

She agrees with Alejandro Santa, musician and general director of LaMusica.fm, a virtual music store that is part of ELPAUER’s portfolio. “We are very eager to work to create things and make Medellín that place where proposals do flourish, and to achieve this we need these spaces where we can undertake and learn all the time.”

Alejandro started his project thirteen years ago dreaming of being able to live on the music business. “We started asking ourselves how we could sell and distribute. We didn’t know anything about rights; the digital worlds had generated many gaps.” So he decided to focus his energy around the music industry and the construction of an ecosystem that generates sustainability and productivity. This is also a pedagogical process with other musicians who don’t know how to monetize their work.

Today, ELPAUER is part of the strengthening offer of “Ruta Naranja,” a space created by Ruta N and the Medellín Mayor’s Office, where creative people can develop their business ideas. One-hundred and six jobs and an innovation lab welcome good ideas.

A LONG-LASTING DISTRICT

Another objective of the Corporación Perpetuo Socorro is to make the Creative District of Medellín a green district. Sustainability, from all perspectives, is a priority task; that is why it represents one of the major principles in this process. “We are advocates of sustainable mobility with the use of bicycles and public transportation. We are under a reconfiguration of space, with more sidewalks and fewer streets. In one year, we already have two EnCicla (city’s bicycle program) stations, two bike paths, two

parks and a street that used to be for cars is now a public space,” adds the director of Corporación Perpetuo Socorro.

The Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana (UPB) was also involved in this task. Juliana Restrepo, Dean of the School of Architecture and Design of UPB, explains that “the University leads the urban development board for the Perpetuo Socorro, which aims to establish guidelines and proposals for the development of the neighborhood, in terms of physical infrastructure, green infrastructure and mobility.”

Erika adds that this urban renovation has a greater purpose than simply adding square meters and beautifying spaces. “Here, the content goes first and progressively, the urban transformation will come, one that has the commitment of the more than 30 creators who are already in the neighborhood.” The Perpetuo Socorro has welcomed already photographic studios dance academies, co-working spaces, restaurants, cafes, health markets, artisan breweries, and the list goes on.

“Distrito Cafetero” was one of the first undertakings to reach Perpetuo Socorro. They have four brands of their own coffee and work with another 40 in the entire region of Antioquia. “We arrived at the neighborhood attracted by creativity, culture and business,” says its manager, Sebastián Ortiz. “These three guidelines move most of the companies that are working here to deliver a more evolutionary vision of the city.” Sebastián highlights the value this represents for foreign investors. “On our side, we have the representation of a French

company that has been in the market for 100 years manufacturing espresso machines and we have done very well with them. Foreign companies and investors are seeing a business opportunity in the local creative ideas. And the fact that a special district is being created for culture and creativity makes the offer even more attractive.

The Executive Director of ACI Medellín, Eleonora Betancur, says, **There are different companies, delegations, governments and international**

associations that come to Medellín to learn about the city’s strategies in terms of innovation and creativity. The Creative District is the first place on the list to show them.

Beyond the tax benefits of being declared an Economic and Creative District and a Orange Development Area (ADN, for its acronym in Spanish), Perpetuo Socorro “becomes a node where cultural, social, economic and tourism converge, generating creative consumption dynamics for locals and visitors,” concludes Erika. All of this is driven by content and ideas that, in turn, promote systemic improvements in the quality of life of all citizens.

**ACI MEDELLÍN
SETS ITS SIGHTS
ON CULTURAL
AND CREATIVE
IDEAS AS THE
MAIN ENGINE
TO PROMOTE
THE ORANGE
ECONOMY IN THE
CAPITAL OF
ANTIOQUIA.**



At the Bodega Comfama (Comfama Warehouse), they host creative and cultural events where literature, arts and music find a common place to express themselves.



10 ACTIONS THAT TRANSFORM MEDELLÍN INTO A SOFTWARE VALLEY

Technological innovations such as the Internet of Things, Artificial Intelligence, Blockchain and Data Science are rapidly changing production systems in the world. This phenomenon is known as the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Medellín has understood its commitment to this path as an opportunity to create new jobs, to making its administrative processes work more efficiently, diversifying its economy and internationalizing.

This onset requires an investment in infrastructure, human talent, and business modernization that not only aspires to bringing the city in line with what happens elsewhere on the planet, but also to become a Latin American model of the possibilities offered by technological transformation.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution implies a change in the conception of the world. There are other ways of understanding education, professions and trade that did not exist before, undertakings that challenge traditional ways of creating and infinite possibilities for improving productive processes in all economic sectors. Even if it seems far away, Medellín is already under way and these ten initiatives are proof of that.

The objective is to generate a change in the economic vocation of the city, based on the technologies of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, of innovation, of a knowledge-based industry

Mateo Vélez,
advisor to the Strategic
Projects Management
Office of the Secretariat
for Economic
Development.

1. SOFTWARE VALLEY CENTERS

Converting ideas into entrepreneurship, regardless of where they come from, is the objective of these centers that will be located in each of the comunas (districts) and townships of Medellín.

To this end, the community will be made available to specialized personnel and teams that allow it to develop products and services, with the privilege of technological guidance, such as software development and applications.

The Software Valley Centers will operate in what are now the Zonal Development Centers, which supported subsistence economy projects.

They will also serve public institutions as practical spaces for students and teachers to approach new technologies. The first of them will be in San Javier, Comuna 13.

2. EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

To familiarize professionals of the future with the possibilities of Industry 4.0, it is necessary to introduce new knowledges to formal education. That is why an important part of the Software Valley strategic line is the curricular transformation of the institutional educational projects, or curriculum (PEI, for its acronym in Spanish) of the public schools and the implementation of universal technical high-school training (Skills Training for Employment (STE) known as “media técnica”).

Of the 220 official institutions of the city, 184 already have a Skills Training for Employment (STE) programs that prepare students in skills necessary for the Fourth Industrial Revolution. However, the work is constant, as technological advances keep evolving, as well as the need to sensitize teachers and students alike.

Although the emphasis is on technology, engineering and mathematics, the importance of humanities to achieve comprehensive training is not to be lost, hence the program is called SER + STEM (Being + STEM). “I wish we could start on ‘Buen Comienzo’ (the program that serves children in their first five years of life),”



●● Software Valley Center of the Comuna 13
●● Photo courtesy of:
Empresa de Desarrollo Urbano EDU

says Ana Agudelo, a member of the education and population care team of the Strategic Projects Management Office of the Secretariat for Economic Development, “to accompany them on their way from toddlers so that they can see how the world is changing and begin to love these new dynamics.”

This strategy requires the improvement of the computer equipment of the public schools, a problem that is addressed with the program “Computadores Futuro,” (Future Computers) that wants to renovate this structure and which dreams that every child of the city will be able to have a PC. The program is in the process of being scoped and it is expected it will define what the real impact will be for the children of the city next year.

3. NEUTRAL NET

Improving the penetration and quality of the Internet is an obligation to speak of a city with a technological vocation. **Close to 30% of Medellín does not have broadband Internet access,**

network depends on high-income areas. is to close that gap the available Internet still under feasibility still to be adjusted but in 2023. “The Software part, known as a hard part, which these that want to equitable for both in terms of access,” adds Pablo Cubanes, Advisor to the Mayor for the Software Valley Strategic Line and Economic Reactivation.

THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS PROJECT IS TO CLOSE THAT GAP AND IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF THE AVAILABLE INTERNET

as the deployment of the the private sector that favors The objective of this project and improve the quality of to 500 Mbps. The project is study, the business model is is expected to be completed Valley strategy has a soft capacity building, and it has is precisely initiatives like offer quality connectivity, high- and low-income areas



4. DATA GOVERNANCE

The pandemic caused by COVID-19 showed the importance of information at critical times but this is not the only application for analytics.

The data governance program wants to collect packages from all local government agencies for scientific analysis that enables efficient and sound decision-making. This data will be available to the different institutions and also to the public, in an exercise of transparency.

THE PROJECT IS BEING MANAGED BY GOALS, IN SETS OF DATA TO BE AGGREGATED EACH YEAR.

In 2020 the goal is to add 50 sets of data from the entities of the municipality and create value. “Medellín me ciuda” (Medellín cares for me) is a great example of what can be achieved.

Explains Mateo Vélez, contractor of the Strategic Projects Management of the Secretariat for Economic Development.

5. ENGLISH FOR THE SOFTWARE VALLEY

English, in addition to being the most spoken language in the world, is the one used by the tech industry. Therefore, it is a requirement for those who want to work in this field and the local government wants to encourage their teaching and learning from different sources. The first of them focuses on students and teachers.

An agreement was reached for 10,000 scholarships through Comfama (Family Compensation Fund), as well as the ongoing agreement one with the School of Languages of the University of Antioquia, a line that is managed from the Secretariat of Education.

For its part, the Secretariat for Economic Development is committed to covering the shortcomings of professionals who want to perform in the trades of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and, through an agreement with the Pascual Bravo University Institution, has provided a portfolio of specializations in virtual skills at different levels. In addition, “there is a Board called “Código Medellín,” led by the



● Photo courtesy of:
● Empresa de Desarrollo Urbano, EDU

Mayor’s Office, in which public, private and academic sector actors participate, to devise, plan and implement strategies for all matters related to the public policy of languages of Medellín. From the business end, the first Tech Fest was held, an event focused on intensive training and job offers related to bilingualism that took place last November,” says Jessica Cataño, part of the Strategic Projects Management of the Economic Development Secretariat.



Ruta N has become a point of arrival for international companies that land in Medellín. From their modern building with ample collaborative spaces, they work for the Medellín of the future we envision.

Photo courtesy of:
Medellín Bureau

6. MUÉVETE A MEDELLÍN

This program of the Medellín Futuro Development Plan, executed by the Secretariat for Economic Development through the Cooperation and Investment Agency of Medellín and the Metropolitan Area - ACI Medellín, focuses on attracting technology-based foreign companies to start their operations in the territory. To this end, it has undertaken an internationalization work of this line of the Development Plan and supports other programs that can favor its initiatives, such as English for the Software Valley. In addition to the relationship work with

companies related to this local government strategy, it is working on the construction of a management plan to strengthen the presence of free trade zones to include companies related to the Software Valley.

The idea is that Medellín is an exportable product, that is, that both companies and talent are world-class and we extend the borders that we have so marked within the Valley of Aburrá, to make the city much more attractive, says Pablo Cubanes, Advisor to the Mayor for the Software Valley Strategic Line and Economic Reactivation.

THE IDEA IS THAT MEDELLÍN BECOME AN EXPORTABLE PRODUCT

ACI Medellín also works in the search for strategic alliances of international cooperation for territorial development (financial non-reimbursable, technical, among others).

In the strategic line of the Software Valley, it is focusing on consulting, exchanges of good practices, exchange of knowledge and experiences with other cities, expert advice, among others.

7. POST-SECONDARY LEARNING

The speed of technical advances means that informal education, which includes short diploma and other courses, is increasingly being used, as these allow for an agile updating of knowledge.

Technology companies have been the first to set their sights on this type of training to improve the skills of their human talent.

Even Google has its own offer of qualifications, something Medellín also has its sights on. The city is a pioneer in

promoting this type of training in the country. The Secretariat for Economic Development and the Secretariat of Education support the improvement of specific capacities from different angles for those who want to enter the Industry 4.0.

The **Ciudadela Universitaria de Occidente**, which will be ready in the middle of next year, wants to have this emphasis, as does the “Ciudadela Universitaria del Norte,” which is being planned for the area known as the “Feria de Ganado.”

Both venues are looking to bring these opportunities closer to citizens and, through infrastructure, generate a cultural change, explains Ana Agudelo, contractor of the Education and Population Care line of the Strategic Projects Management Office of the Secretariat for Economic Development.

In order to fulfill this strategy, Sapiencia became the Agency of Postsecondary Education of Medellín and is in charge of delivering 25,000 scholarships in specific training during this four-year period (1,500 already delivered), especially thought for professionals who want to reorient their careers. The Secretariat for Economic Development aims to deliver another 25,000 for the same purpose.

8. SPECIALIZED INNOVATION CENTERS

According to Colciencias data from 2017, cited in the Development Plan “Medellín Futuro” 2020 - 2023, **only 3.05% of the researchers work with companies and only 1.28 % dedicate their work to industrial and technological development in the country.** In 2018, DANE (National

Statistics Office) recorded that less than 7% of companies invested in research and development between 2016 and 2017.

With the idea of starting to solve this deficiency, the strategic line of the Software Valley has thought up centers of specialized innovation focused on encouraging research and the development of strategic sectors for the local economy, which will be created as result of the articulation of the academia,

industry and government triple helix committee.

The first will focus on biological research and will open next year, to solve the identified city and industry challenges.

25,000
SCHOLARSHIPS
IN SPECIFIC
TRAINING
DURING THIS
FOUR-YEAR
PERIOD

9. DIGITAL BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

The pandemic evidenced the gaps in many companies’ digital capabilities, from lack of infrastructure investment, to lack of e-commerce platforms or adequate communication channels. Therefore, the Secretariat for Economic Development has a program to assist in the digital transformation of those needs.

This year, they selected 200 SMEs to make a diagnosis and accompany businesses in the process of cultural change. In addition to the structure of their online stores, these ventures received marketing workshops and specialized consulting. Although this was the most obvious need, the goal is to have these companies also implement tools such as data analytics, customer relationship management software, and automation in their processes.

10. RED MESH

Having the ability to collect valuable data is a key part of how analytics can serve in decision-making.

Medellín has a satisfactory experience with the Medellín Early Warning System and the Aburrá Valley - Siata that has allowed it to regulate the industrial activity and circulation of vehicles according to air quality, among other variables, thanks to a series of sensors and stations located at strategic points, reporting data in real time.

This technology will take advantage of the “Red Mesh” project that wants to extend a new network of sensors installed on the street lights, which will change from sodium to LED technology.

The first phase comprises of 5,000 sensors and for its implementation the project is searching for strategic partners. These will be in District F, located north to south between Pablo Tobón Uribe Hospital and La Iguana creek, and from east to west from Ruta N, in Carabobo, to the Avenida 80 in the Robledo sector.

Spaces for collaborative work are some of the features in the Software Valley Centers, where entrepreneurs will have the possibility to create and connect ideas among each other.



●● Photo courtesy of:
●● Empresa de Desarrollo Urbano, EDU

SURROUNDINGS



01 An integral transformation will take place in Medellín with the 80th Ave. Metro

02 An educational landmark has been created in the west of Medellín with the Fourth Industrial Revolution Educational Campus

03 A Medellín that embraces environmental sustainability

AN INTEGRAL TRANSFORMATION WILL TAKE PLACE IN MEDELLÍN WITH THE 80TH AVE. METRO

The National Government and the Medellín Mayor's Office will jointly invest COP3.5 billion to build this massive transport mega-project the second most important in the history of the city.

This is the largest and most important mass mobility project in the Aburrá Valley in the past 25 years, after the construction of Metro A-line. This is how the 80th Ave. Metro is outlined, a project that will transform the city's west-side and will positively impact the lives of one million people, in 32 neighborhoods of Medellín. It is estimated that this work will begin at the end of 2021.

In spite of the pandemic, the path to its achievement was accelerated during this 2020. Approaches between the Municipality and the National Government, led by Mayor Daniel Quintero, allowed the project to be declared of strategic importance. Thus, last September 16th, the co-financing by the National Government was made official through a CONPES document that endorses it. "With this approved agreement, Medellín is ready to have one of the most important works of this decade for the development of the city," said Luis Alberto Rodríguez, Director of the National Planning Department (DNP, for its acronym in Spanish)

Then, on September 28, another milestone was set for this new metro line. President Iván Duque was present at the Metro's maintenance facility, in the municipality of Bello, to sign the CONFIS document that commits the National Government is to allocate the resources for the construction. The total cost of the project is estimated at COP3.5 billion, of which the National Government will contribute 70%, equivalent to COP2.4 billion, and the Municipality the remaining COP1.1 billion.

URBAN TRANSFORMATION

In terms of urban planning, the light-rail corridor will be a trigger for urban renewal. The project is 13.5 kilometers long, with 17 stations that cross the entire western part of the city, integrating with the Metro system in four stations: Caribe, Floresta, La Palma (BRT line 1) and Aguacatala.

But beyond being a system of mass mobility, the 80th Ave. Metro will generate development in many other areas. In order to estimate its impact, the Empresa de Desarrollo Urbano of Medellín (EDU for its acronym in Spanish), through its Urban Modeling Center, created a three-dimensional digital model of the project's layout, adding layers of information on environmental, social, mobility, regulatory, cadastral and urban operation, which allow the identification of challenges and opportunities in the territory.

We are talking about this model with all the actors involved in the project, in a more real and technical visualization of what the project will be, said Wilder Echavarría, EDU CEO. The manager stated that the property and land acquisition is being carried out for two fundamental road interchanges that will be built at the intersection of Colombia and San Juan streets across Avenida 80. In total, there will be seven road intersections to be updated on Avenida 80 which, according to Echavarría, will help improve east-west mobility in the city.

"For these two projects (Colombia and San Juan) we are acquiring 245 plots of land that will clear the space for elevated bridges and to generate new public spaces, safe crossings and green areas. In addition, we are permanently accompanying and dialoguing with the communities to mitigate the risks associated with the construction activities," the manager pointed out.

In addition, ACI Medellín has led international opportunities to attract foreign capital to participate in the development of the work and promote its execution. "We have worked in the relationship of companies and investors with the experience and capacity to participate in the construction bids that will start in 2021.

We have interacted with business leaders from Latin America, North America, Europe and Asia who have shown interest in learning about the project's tech specs. We work in an integrated manner with the Medellín Mayor's Office and the Medellín Metro," said Jonathan Ballesteros, Director of Cooperation and Investment Management of ACI Medellín.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPORTANCE

Sergio López, Manager of the 80th Ave. Metro project, said that they want to prioritize mobility by bicycle, walkability and mass mobility over that of cars. Therefore, in addition to strengthening the public transport system, it aims to discourage the use of vehicles to reduce traffic and lower emissions.

"A mistake that had been made historically in mobility systems is that development had never been oriented to mass mobility," he explained.

It is not in vain that this route will be named E-Line, in relation to a concept of Eco-city that the municipal administration takes into account for its projects. "The Eco-city is a city vision, to understand that climate change exists and to make decisions to favor the improvement of Medellín's environmental conditions," added López.

Being a mass mobility system, one hundred percent electric, that will move close to 180,000 users per day, it is estimated that the emission of some 131,754 tons of CO2 per year will be

avoided. Also, with its construction thousands of green jobs will be generated, that is, job opportunities that are created thanks to infrastructure or any kind of policy that reduces pollution.

On his part, Alexander Jiménez, from the Medellín Metro company, added that today, they have identified the trees that may need to be intervened during construction works, either by pruning, moving or transplanting.

Those trees will be compensated by planting of five new-ones. In addition, Jiménez explained that the Metropolitan Area (environmental authority) is very demanding in terms of the trees required by the city, according to the species and the area where they are planted, so each new tree planted will respond to that need.

BEING A MASS MOBILITY SYSTEM, ONE HUNDRED PERCENT ELECTRIC, THAT WILL MOVE

180,000 USERS PER DAY, IT IS ESTIMATED THAT THE EMISSION OF SOME 131,754 TONS OF CO2 PER YEAR WILL BE AVOIDED. ALSO, WITH ITS CONSTRUCTION THOUSANDS OF GREEN JOBS WILL BE GENERATED, THAT IS, JOB OPPORTUNITIES THAT ARE CREATED THANKS TO INFRASTRUCTURE OR ANY KIND OF POLICY THAT REDUCES POLLUTION.

THE ECO-CITY IS, AS A CITY VISION, TO UNDERSTAND THAT CLIMATE CHANGE EXISTS AND TO MAKE DECISIONS TO FAVOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF MEDELLIN'S ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Sergio López
80th Ave. Metro
project CEO.





PROJECT KEY MILESTONES

●● The Urban Modeling Center of the EDU was used to develop a three-dimensional digital model of the 80th Ave. Metro.

01

When the 80th Ave Metro is ready, citizens will be able to use it without an extra fare, that is, a person who is at any of the 17 stations will be able to connect with the whole Aburrá Valley, with the same ticket.

Along with the Metro, street-car/tram, bus lines - BRTs and cable-cars, Medellín will be a reference point for the multimodal mass transportation systems.

02

Its construction is expected to begin in late 2021 or early 2022, and will last for five years.

It will even represent an alternative for post-pandemic economic recovery, given that nearly **1,500 direct jobs and thousands more indirect jobs will be created during construction.**

03

The purchase of 20 simple composition trains has been authorized today, these trains are 33 and 35 meters long and will be connected to double their length to 66 meters.

However, their wagons will not be separated, but will be connected by a tunnel, just as the city's metro system is today.

04

The Medellín Mayor's Office has expressed that during this administration the pre-feasibility studies and design of an underground Metro that will cross from El Poblado to Castilla **will be contracted, with the aim for future administrations to make it a reality.**



The Educational Campus for the Fourth Industrial Revolution is composed of flexible spaces that adapt to the community needs.

Inside the campus, more than 226 trees were planted and there are 15,246 sqm of green spaces.

It is calculated that when it is in full operation, the campus will bring an additional 10,000 people daily to the San Javier Metro Station.

AN EDUCATIONAL LANDMARK WAS BORN IN THE WEST OF MEDELLÍN



Basketball and volleyball courts, CrossFit track, multi-sports court and synthetic grass fields make up some of the sports facilities of the campus.

Photos courtesy of:
Empresa de Desarrollo Urbano, EDU

After a 20-month construction phase and an investment of COP167,000 million a mega-project for education is ready to be delivered to Medellín is ready to be delivered to Medellín in 2021.

It is the West University Citadel, an infrastructure that adds to the Pedro Nel Gómez University Citadel, with the aim of projecting Medellín as an epicenter for training on Industries 4.0 and creative entrepreneurship.

The campus was developed in the lot that was back then occupied by "El Buen Pastor" women's prison, a space between Comunas 12 (La América) and 13 (San Javier), which comprises close to 60,000 sqm the equivalent of 57 Olympic swimming pools.

"This first construction becomes a public facility that will give people spaces to develop their knowledge. It means bringing institutional resources closer to the community and meeting the goals of the Development Plan, said Juan David Agudelo, Medellín's Undersecretary of Education.

theater and two open-air gyms, as well as laboratories, computer centers and more than 300 sqm of habitable terraces.

There is nothing left of what was the prison. A 115-year-old building where women purged sentences, today is a place that is on the verge of materializing and directly supporting three of the strategies of the "Medellín Futuro" 2020-2023 Development Plan: **Software Valley, Educational and Cultural Transformation and Ecocity.**

Alliances have already been forged to achieve this with firms such as Platzi, Google, Microsoft, Coursera and LinkedIn. These will include content development needed for the courses that will be offered.

"We are talking about the possibility of training in programming, simulation, Internet of Things (IoT), automation, Blockchain and Artificial Intelligence. Also everything that is developed around arts using technological tools and knowledge: architecture, visual and graphic arts, digital animation, etc.", explained Juan David Agudelo, Medellín's Undersecretary of Education.

What is expected is to provide specialized, professional, tailored and superior training. However, the Undersecretary said that the Citadels are not universities as such, but spaces that will facilitate education as well as job placement in shorter periods.

Of all that area, 37,000 sqm are intended for public space and 23,000 sqm are built area. The project, which has 13 buildings and will house 8,000 concurrent students, is 99% complete today.

Some of the features that the campus will have include 16 multipurpose classrooms, 18 conventional classrooms, an auditorium for 164 people, a 2,300 sqm library, a

TRAINING TOWARDS THE FUTURE

According to Agudelo, the campus will be a space dedicated to science, technology and innovation, which will be framed mainly in the offer of educational programs that are in line with Industries 4.0 and creative initiatives.

Among the projections it is expected that the Citadels will become as landmarks for national and international attraction, events, training programs and knowledge transfer.



THROUGH SHORT BUT CONTINUOUS EDUCATION, YOUNG PEOPLE WILL HAVE RAPID TRAINING THAT ENABLES THEM TO WORK IN THE SHORT TERM

Carlos Chaparro,
Sapiencia director.

View of the main facade of the Ciudadela de la Cuarta Revolución Industrial (Fourth Industrial Revolution Campus), a symbol of transformation and hope in Comuna 13.

PREVENTING DROPOUT MODEL

The “Citadel de Occidente” is the first built within the framework of the public policy for university citadels of Medellín, infrastructures with which it is sought to increase the coverage of higher education. All educational and administrative management will be in charge of the Medellín Higher Education Agency (Sapiencia).

However, as clarified by Carlos Chaparro, Sapiencia Director it is not intended to operate decentralized programs of the universities as if they were campuses within the Citadel. This initiative is more intended to implement a new educational model, aiming at short cycles formal education, adapting to world trends.

Although details need to be defined, Chaparro explained that the intention is taking some undergraduate courses, according to the interest and profile of the student, and adding others that are complementary in nature. Thus, the student will be able to put together a training journey that should not be entirely theoretical, but should include practices in laboratories and companies to bring them closer to the demands of the world of employment.

This proposal seeks to avoid dropout levels and increase coverage in higher education, which according to the Quality of Life Report of Medellín 2016-2019 is 66% and 68% for undergraduates and postgraduates, respectively. “Young people from lower incomes in precarious situations do not see a scholarship as a solution for their future. Due to the pressure to provide for their homes, they end up dropping out and searching for (mainly) informal jobs, as their situation is immediate and urgent. A solution to avoiding this challenge is to train them in a short and articulated way towards labor insertion.” concluded Sapiencia Director.

PROJECT OUTLOOK

This educational model, and what symbolizes turning a prison into an educational center, has attracted the attention of foreign investors who see Medellín as an example of resilience and renewal, in the face of the episodes of violence that the city suffered in the past. Proof of this were the 81 business meetings that were held thanks to the joint work of the ACI Medellín, the Agencia APP, Ruta N and the Secretariat for Economic Development during the last edition of

The designs for the Northern University Citadel are in their final phase today. This is another educative infrastructure development part of this strategy.

The building will be located between Comunas 5 (Castilla) and 6 (Doce de Octubre), on properties adjacent to the Feria de Ganado and near the Metrocable Picacho station. It will have the capacity to host 8 thousand students as the one in the west of the city. Likewise, during 2021 another Citadel start operations, this one 100% digital. It will be called @Medellin. The digital platform is being implemented currently, and it is expected to have 25,000 enrollments.

the Colombia Investment Summit an international business conference in which strategic projects such as the Citadadel University, the 80th Ave. Metro and Parques del Río were showcased.

Eleonora Betancur, Executive Director of ACI Medellín, commented that the event showed the optimism international investors have placed in Medellín. Now what follows is to continue supporting the articulation of public and private entities “to make the necessary resources available and finally make business a reality, so we can grow in employment, quality of life and positioning of the city with external audiences”.

URBANISM AND ARCHITECTURE

Wilder Echavarría, manager of the Empresa de Desarrollo Urbano, (EDU for its acronym in Spanish) explained that the construction process was a hybrid development in materials, composed of 13 buildings in concrete and steel, with circular and semicircular shapes. “It is a bioclimatic and innovative architecture in accordance to all current ecological trends. It complies with all educational

regulations, but the important thing is that it is framed within an area of protection and infrastructure (API, for its acronym in Spanish) and that it is very much in line with all the ecological connectivity of the place,” explained.

At the beginning of December 2020, the first 12,000 sqm of public space were delivered for the enjoyment of citizens, with 500 linear meters of bike paths, outdoor gyms and urbanism. Additionally, in the free space of the Citadel there are fields, jogging tracks, playgrounds and other elements to allow the socialization of the community.


Echavarría said the jail even had a deteriorated 643 sqm chapel that did not belong to a Medellín diocese. It was decided to repower it and now it can be used as an educational space or to deploy a Software Valley center at the service of entrepreneurs with capacity for 200 people.

All this transformation of the sector means better conditions of security, tourism and economy, making the area more attractive. “The Citadel will generate new social dynamics in the sector, it will increase trade and mobility connections. We want it to fit very well in the city and with projects such as the future 80th Ave. Metro. The idea is that more bicycle paths are gradually created to promote sustainable mobility”, concluded the EDU manager.

Once physical structures are delivered to the Ministry of Education, together with the EDU, they will begin a phase of complementary works to allow the provision of laboratories, classrooms and spaces. Therefore, according to estimates by Sapiencia, it could be in operations in 2021.

It is quite symbolic for Medellín to tear down a prison and build an educational complex of such quality. The territory changes to generate opportunities, more humane conditions and a future for young people,” explained Echavarría.

What follows is the construction of the North Citadel. With this, Medellín will complete a strategy that started with the Pedro Nel Gómez University Citadel, located in Robledo and has consolidated a new reality that lays the foundations for new opportunities for the youth of Medellín.



**THIS IS TIERRA
AMADA
(BELOVED
LAND),
WHERE THE
HUMMINGBIRD
MAKES YOU
VERY HAPPY**

Doña Gloria González
welcomes with love all
who arrive at her house,
located in Altavista, one
of the five townships of
Medellín.



A MEDELLÍN THAT EMBRACES ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Gloria González sowed, with joy and love, the EcoOrchards provided by the Municipality of Medellín for cultivation of food at home.

Medellín articulates a plan to mitigate the impact of climate change and develops actions to promote food security through EcoOrchards that guarantee quality food for families.

This is Tierra Amada (beloved land), where the hummingbird makes you very happy, so does Doña Gloria González to all who arrive at her house, located in Altavista, one of the five townships of Medellín. “And I give everyone a lot of affection with coffee or tea.” She prepares them with plants that she takes directly from her garden. She has lemon grass, basil, citron, stevia, nettle, sage and mint. She also has other plants that she directly brings to her kitchen, such as coriander, corn, and beans. “During the entire pandemic, I never had to go to the store to buy beans. It is better to get food from here, from my house,” she says with a sense of pride.

Taking food from nearby crops is no longer the privilege of some European countries or cities like Seattle, in the United States, pioneers in the implementation of urban edible gardens. Medellín is moving in giant steps in the exploitation of the territory to transform it into green and sustainable landscapes, with abundance of life, biodiversity and the possibility of sustenance for many families.

These ecogardens or EcoOrchards are just the tip of a pencil the city uses to write a new page in the history of its struggle to protect the environment. According to Juliana Colorado, Secretary of the Environment of Medellín, “The city is committed to making its territory evermore sustainable. This is why, with the technical approval of C40 Cities the city formulated the Climate Action Plan (PAC

for its acronym in Spanish), with aim of developing strategies for the mitigation and adaptation of the city to the effects of global warming.”

The city’s goal is to be carbon neutral by 2050. “This is an important contribution to keeping the global temperature rise to a maximum of 1.5°C, according to the objectives set out in the Paris Agreement,” adds Colorado.

The CAP is also articulated with C40 Cities, a climate leadership network of 97 affiliated cities around the world, which are setting the path to a healthier and more sustainable future.

The key here is the international cooperation and knowledge exchange promoted by ACI Medellín.

“The mayors of the C40 cities, which represent more than 700 million citizens and a quarter of the world’s economy, are committed to meeting the most ambitious goals of the Paris Agreement at the local level, as well as cleaning up the air we all breathe,” highlighted C40 Cities, in its most recent report (2019).

The Secretary explains that the CAP demonstrates how Medellín will adapt and improve its resilience to climate threats, especially resulting from rising temperatures and more intense rains. To date, the Secretariat of the Environment, an entity that leads its formulation and development, has a first draft that includes the diagnosis and actions to be implemented.

This route must become a guide for the public and private sectors, for building synergies and moving forward as a sustainable city, adds Juliana Colorado.

FOOD GROWN AT HOME

As Doña Gloria and her “Tierra amada,” thousands of citizens are cultivating their food thanks to the EcoOrchards project, an initiative that stems from the need to optimize the geographical advantages that the Valley of Aburrá has: solar radiation, climate, average temperature per year and annual rains.

“With them we seek to achieve mission goals, such as the protection of natural resources, soil, organic waste management and transformation, training in good environmental practices and transforming environments,” explains the Secretary. This strategy also contributes to the second United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 2030: Ending Hunger, achieving food security and promoting sustainable agriculture.

Gloria González started her own EcoOrchard in 2019. She says that her favorite part is “when the little plants are sprouting. I always discover when a flower is born. It makes me very excited.” She began on a piece of land of the Community Local Board, accompanied by ten other women. “There, we started and managed to get the first products out. They were beautiful people.”

She now receives baskets from the Secretariat to maintain the orchard at home. “Because almost everything is cement, I find it a delicacy to have that motivation and desire for a greener city. It is also being done on a small scale so as to be achieved. We even plant edibles on the balconies,” she explains as she shares her list of benefits of the EcoOrchards for her community: to avoid hunger, diminish

violence, improve the quality of life and increase our love for the earth.

Due to the pandemic, interest in producing food from home, and also in applications for the implementation of orchards, has increased.

Therefore, the Secretariat has strengthened training through partnerships with institutions such as the Empresa de Desarrollo Urbano, (EDU, for its acronym in Spanish), the Secretariat for Youth and the Remington Educational Institution.

"By September, there were about 4,200 people trained to grow their own orchards. In that month, we resumed face-to-face visits, with the aim of strengthening existing orchards and implementing new ones."



Several secretariats have included strategies geared toward EcoOrchards: Social Inclusion, Women, Education, Economic Development and Youth.

The objective is to strengthen the project and unify a collective work plan, to have a greater impact on the city.

Among the youngest, the "Terrestres" strategy was implemented.

"This will serve to strengthen food security, the sustainability of the planet, and, of course, as a result, improve our mental health," says Alejandro Matta, Secretary for Youth. A total of 441 young people between the ages of 14 and 28 have already received the first kits. Thus, the participation of the whole community in the construction of an Ecocity is reaffirmed.

The EcoOrchards want to educate in composting practices, to identify their benefits in reducing organic solid waste that reaches the landfill.

WHAT IS AN ECOCITY?

The fourth strategic line of the Development Plan "Medellín Futuro 2020 - 2023" focuses on the creation of an Ecocity, "a commitment to the recognition of the interdependence between human beings and ecosystems in general, to promote alternative forms of production, reproduction of life and habitability in the territory," as stated in the document.

The main objective is to definitively link Medellín into dynamics for environmental sustainability. To achieve this, goals were established based in four components:

1. Sustainable and intelligent mobility
2. Public utilities, alternative energy and solid waste utilization.
3. Conservation and protection of all life forms.
4. Ecological urbanism

The quality of the air in the city and the growth of the number of vehicles create new challenges on mobility for the capital of Antioquia.

In the construction of an Ecocity, the objective is to consolidate mobility with an integrated transport systems, which guarantees universal accessibility and generates health-friendly corridors, which protect all road actors and guarantee their safety and continuity in their commuting.



1,800 bicycles of the EnCicla program move daily through Medellín providing mobility solutions for ● students, workers, tourists and all ● kinds of people who choose this medium of transportation for its ease, economy and environmental preservation.

Lina López, manager for Human Mobility, assures that the role of active mobility becomes a key factor in the dreamed Ecocity. "It seeks for more people to walk and ride bikes, or integrate their walks or bike trips with public transport."

It also makes us reflect on the traditional use of streets. **We have always been told that this is a public space used for motor vehicles, but active mobility invites us to rethink that space, how those environments should be changed so that**

people feel welcomed to use different means of transport.

The goal is to have more lanes designed to allow the transit of bicycles, that those streets have green spaces that invite people to commute, even more: walking.

This will boost the reduction in pollution, noise, and better appropriation of public space, highlighted Lina López.



WHAT ARE CYCLING NETWORKS LIKE?

- Bicycle lane norte-sur: progress was made in the formation of the committee and in the definition of the route, which will run through the center of Medellín.
- With 40 km, the coverage of the bicycle network will be expanded. Progress was made in the 7 km design to be built in 2021.
- The pedestrian bridge was dismantled from Barranquilla street, in the north of the city, as part of the strategy we all pass, which seeks to convert pedestrian bridges into semi-traffic crosses.
- We have begun the transformation of three road bridges over the Medellín River. Progress made in identifying them: Colombia, Calle 30 and San Juan.

Educating the community is a medium- and long-term process.

Infrastructure changes are necessary and become an inhibitor to transform behaviors.

If you tell people: bike more, walk more, but as you walk out to the street what you see are spaces where the use of cars is prioritized, the gap between discourse and reality is even greater.

LINA LÓPEZ

Human Mobility
Manager of the
Medellín Mayor's
Office.

EnCicla stations connect Medellín with other municipalities of the Metropolitan Area, as Envigado, Sabaneta and Itagüí, with almost 6,600 daily loans in 101 stations.

INVESTMENT



International
companies
generate
employment
and provide
knowledge

Training digital
talent:
key to the
innovation
ecosystem



20 companies from nine countries have established in the city in 2020, as a result of management of ACI Medellín, Ruta N and Procolombia.

Rockwell Automation opened its offices this year in Medellín at the Centro Empresarial Buró 4.0 in the heart of the financial district in El Poblado area.

Photos courtesy of:
Rockwell Automation

INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES GENERATE EMPLOYMENT AND PROVIDE KNOWLEDGE

Whether due to their architecture, infrastructure, commerce or culture, different cities have a factor that makes them different and, in many cases, charming for their visitors and residents. Medellín is not the exception specially in its urban and social transformation.

The evolution in infrastructure, notable in some aspects such as transport and public spaces, has been fundamental. The city's committed approach to innovation has also been decisive for international investors and companies to be interested in settling in the territory and joining in working for its development.

One of the highlighted strategies is to turn Medellín into a Software Valley, technology-based and for the Industry 4.0. thus, leveraging progress of the territory and creating opportunities for the community. This city project is supported by institutions such as ACI Medellín, Ruta N, Procolombia and the Centre for the Fourth Industrial Revolution, which are in charge of attracting foreign investment and sharing to the world the advantages of Medellín for digital entrepreneurship.

Paola García, Vice President of Investment at Procolombia, confirmed that 804 international projects have settled in Colombia during the past five years. Likewise, according to the Ruta N portal, 20 companies from nine countries have

established in the city in 2020, as a result of management of ACI Medellín, Ruta N and Procolombia. These are expected to create about 1,012 jobs between 2020 and 2021.

Some of the global companies that have landed in the Aburrá Valley are Teleperformance, UPS, Holcim, Algar Tech, Endava, Owens Illinois, Endrock Growth & Analytics, Rockwell Automation, Somo, Arbusta, among others. Next, these last three share their experiences of their arrival in Medellín.

SOMO, DIGITAL AGENCY: THEY FOUND LOCAL TALENT RELATED TO THEIR VALUES AND CORPORATE CULTURE

Created in the UK in 2010, Somo is a digital products agency, with customers such as HSBC, Audi, Siemens, Vodafone, EasyJet, among others. After having its two offices in England (London and Bristol) and another pair in the United States (Charleston and Washington, D.C.). The idea of opening a new branch arose and that was the opportunity for Medellín.

Through Ruta N programs, they learned about the potential of the city. After evaluating several strategic areas in Latin America, they defined that Medellín was the best option due to the increase in talent trained in digital skills. "It is not an accident, it is a strategic plan. The city and its institutions invest and bet on this. And not only is it good now, but it continues to grow, like our company and the others that also arrive," says Nick Haywood, Chief Delivery Officer at Somo Medellín.

Likewise, finding that there was human talent focused and able to tune into their corporate culture was another defining factor for Somo's arrival. "In Medellín we find people related to our values, which are courage, a focus on achievement and a passion for innovation," says Haywood.

This is how at the beginning of 2020, before the pandemic, they were able to land in the Aburrá Valley. The mandatory isolation led them to work from home, which they did well due to being a digital company, but it did not stop the team from continuing to extend their ties.

"We delayed growth a bit due to this situation, but we are already growing again. Right now we are 25 people, in January we expect to be 50 and later, 100," adds Nick Haywood.

WE WERE SURPRISED THAT IT WAS VERY EASY TO FIND GOOD TALENT AND GOOD CULTURE.

WE ARE A DIFFERENT COMPANY IN TERMS OF THE IMPORTANCE WE GIVE TO OUR WORKERS. THEY ARE HAPPY AND WE GROW AS A TEAM; THESE ARE SIGNS THAT WE ARE DOING THINGS WELL

Nick Haywood,
Chief Delivery
Officer,
Somo Medellín.

ROCKWELL AUTOMATION: LEVERAGING THEIR GROWTH STRATEGY ON KNOWLEDGE AND BILINGUALISM

Rockwell Automation is a leader in industrial automation and digital transformation. Its headquarters are in Wisconsin (United States) and it employs around 23,000 people worldwide, in 100 countries. In Medellín, Rockwell Automation opened its campus in June 2020, and plans to consolidate a team of software engineers, programmers and advanced automation professionals, focused on software development to support the growth of its customers

Medellín is one of the fastest growing technology centers in Latin America. There is a considerable amount of technical talent available in the city, which has also undergone a great transformation in the past 30 years and has invested heavily in its infrastructure, education and quality of life, acknowledges Juan David Carrasquilla Arango, Medellín Campus Manager, Software & Control by Rockwell Automation.

The COVID-19 pandemic made his team join virtual work.

However, in parallel, they have started to build their own facilities in the city. "It has not been easy to start virtually, but the entire team has integrated very well and now we are delivering the expected results to the corporation," says Carrasquilla.

Likewise, they have successfully met the goal of hiring around 60 employees in 2020 in Medellín, and expect to have more than 100 collaborators on campus, by the end of fiscal year 2021. "We have worked closely with ACI Medellín, Ruta N and Procolombia to align ourselves and take advantage of local policies. Having people with technical and bilingual skills is key to our growth strategy," concludes Juan David Carrasquilla.



The new Rockwell offices are characterized by having much of their space for resting, leisure and interaction among peers.

ARBUSTA: FASCINATED BY THE INNOVATIVE SPIRIT AND TRANSFORMATION OF THE CITY

Arbusta is a technology company that provides experiences to support the digital transformation of organizations, through automation and data management processes, usability, machine learning, among others.

It has about 300 employees and has offices in the cities of Rosario, Buenos Aires, Medellín and Montevideo.

Although born in Argentina, five months later they were already in the Aburrá Valley (between 2015 – 2016), so the growth has been in parallel.

Landing in Medellín was carried out by ACI Medellín, Ruta N and the alliance known then as Medellín Ciudad Inteligente. We started our first recruits and timid in the San Joaquín neighborhood. We grew and then we moved to the Ruta N building, says Emiliano Fazio, Director and co-founder of Arbusta.

Currently, 54% of the Arbusta team are women and 90% are first-job-opportunities in technology for centennial talent.

Arbusta comes out of the strong belief that the digital native has a talent for the digital industry and deserves a job opportunity, says Fazio.

They took advantage of this time to present the book in the city, "The power of overlooked talent," by Carlos March and Andrea Vulcano. This publication tells the case of Arbusta and its millennial and centennial talent development model for Industry 4.0.

Regarding their takeoff in Medellín, the director says it was extremely significant for him to know the history of the city.

"I heard about the topic of innovation and it seemed very nice, but I was much more captivated by the profound effort that Medellín has made to transform itself. I was moved to meet the protagonists of this transformation and I felt that something very special was happening in Medellín. I don't know if it is the result of being the most innovative city, but for seeing a town

that, when it has a common goal, does extraordinary things," says Fazio.

Arbusta aligns their dream with the Software Valley strategy of generating opportunities for young digital natives, who can develop their potential from the knowledge economy.

When we founded Arbusta, we knew they needed more than just training: a first opportunity to show themselves and show the industry and its community that they can really create value, Fazio concludes.

We saw the radiance and the thrust of Medellín and we felt the need to come to be influenced with that and to contribute to a city that is worthwhile. Over time we justified the fact of being in Medellín. We got to know it, we committed ourselves to the city and we supported the effort.

Emiliano Fazio, Director and co-founder of Arbusta.

TRAINING DIGITAL TALENT: KEY TO THE INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM



Digital human talent in Medellín

Training young people in technology is something which requires articulation among universities, private and public sectors around the same objective to make Medellín in a Software Valley.

Articulated strategies and programs of different institutions look to developing digital and human skills to promote talent and the transformation of realities in the city.

When he was still in school, Sebastian Pérez tried to develop an application with his classmates. That experience and the influence of his older brother, who works in the field of technology, reaffirmed his enthusiasm for the digital world. Today he is 19, and is in the fourth semester of Software Development Technology at the Pascual Bravo University Institution, with a scholarship from Sapiencia, the Higher Education Agency of Medellín.

"I have found it to be a wonderful experience. Both Sapiencia and the university have been very attentive to my process. In the future, I see myself with many capabilities for a good job opportunity and to continue learning much more," says Sebastián.

According to the Ruta N Medellín website, the Fedesoft Observatory and the Colombian Ministry of Information and Communication Technologies, the country will require some 200,000 specialists in everything related to information technologies by 2025. These professionals are the support of the so-called 4.0 industry, digital transformation or Fourth Industrial Revolution.

Likewise, there is a demand for developers, data scientists and experts in topics such as agile development methodologies, mobile applications and engineering focused on Artificial Intelligence. "The most in-demand skills are project management and software development, at 52%. The remaining 48% is related to other skills such as React, Node.js, HTML, Angular, Marketing, Java, CSS and PHP, which complete the list of the IT industry 10 most demanded skills, according to our

latest report on talent demand and offer," explains Iván Castaño Pérez, Director of Ruta N.

On his part, Carlos Alberto Chaparro, Director of Sapiencia Medellín, indicates that one of the most important skills today is the ability to team work and to create synergies. In addition, the understanding of all types of texts, an adequate level of English and handling of information, in other words, knowing how to use information in a practical manner, are also essential. In addition, it is mandatory to strengthen citizenry components. "It is not enough that we train a functional workforce, useful for work, if they do not have skills to relate to others. We must educate good people," Chaparro points out.

OPPORTUNITIES 4.0

Daniela Rodríguez is 25 years old and she is a health administrator. Although she began her professional career in this area, she found a new passion that she decided to explore. "I attended a forum on women's participation in science and technology where we were encouraged to be part of that industry. I started to go to the free meet-ups and study programming languages on my own. I liked it more and more and I looked for alternatives to study," says Daniela.

That's how Daniela found the Fondo Sumanti, a fund for education in specialized talent, focused on technology and innovation. A program of Ruta N, Sura Asset Management, Comfama and Protección that, in turn, connects students to the needs of companies in the sector, thus favoring employability.

In this case, the agreement was with the Evertec company. I had the opportunity to study in the virtual platform, with the advice of those who work in the company, who guided me on the skills to be acquired. Then there was a practical

part of challenges to be developed. And a huge plus was the possibility of staying in the company if one finished successfully," says Daniela. And that's how it was for her: "It was worth it. For me personally this process brought me quality of life. In the company, human quality is spectacular, and they value people."

Just like this, there are several organizations looking for local talent. In 2020, with support of and advisement of ACI Medellín, some 24 companies have settled in the city. And with the help of Ruta N, Sapiencia, higher education institutions and other entities, there's support focus on specialized training for young people in the city.

These joint efforts responded to one of the strategies of the Medellín Development Plan, which aims to consolidate the city as a Software Valley, with decided support from organizations such as the ACI Medellín, in charge of the international projection of the project.



Photos courtesy of:
Archivo Pioneras Dev

THE CITY'S TALENT IS PREPARING TO TAKE ON THE CHALLENGES OF THE INDUSTRY 4.0.

FOSTERING YOUTH

One of Ruta N's strategic programs is the Talent and Employability program, which links business demands to the skills of the city's youth and their intentions to be employed, as well as to generate employment and entrepreneurship. "We start from the fact that quality employment generates a better quality of life. In this regard, the premise of Ruta N is to seek the economic model's transformation to help generate greater well-being," highlights Iván Castaño Pérez, director of the corporation.

"A colleague from the University told us he had seen the call. We thought 'That must be a lie!' How are they going to hire people without experience? We looked for the information, we went to the meeting at Ruta N and that's how it all started," remembers Valeria Granado, a fourth semester IT student at the Universidad de Antioquia and currently a junior developer at Evertec.

Through the Fondo Sumanti and its alliance with Evertec, Valeria studied programming. "First it was about studying and learning the language, then applying what was learned to develop some challenges posed by the company. Thanks to that, I'm at Evertec. It has been an enriching experience; every day I learn something new. I feel very good and it is my first job," says Valeria.

TRANSFORMING EDUCATION

Carlos Chaparro, Director of Sapiencia, explains that the Technology Scholarship initiative, a program in agreement with the educational institutions of the municipal and departmental level, is being redirected to digital industry programs. Likewise, the core of the strategy is the training of specialized human talent, articulated by Sapiencia and companies of the Industry 4.0. "There will be 50,000 scholarships for citizens of Medellín. With three months of theoretical training and two of labor insertion," underscores the Director. Areas include programming and software development, big data, Blockchain, precision agriculture, fashion 4.0, art and digital animation.

Another experience is that of Lina Xiomara Redondo, 21, a sixth semester student of Technology in Community Management and a scholarship holder at Sapiencia. She is currently doing her professional internship at Cementos Argos' Rio Claro plant. "Here, I support community processes, education and training, and programs for corporate change. In my career, I gained a lot of knowledge. It has administrative, environmental and technological components, everything that is required for a contextual understanding and for working in society," she says.

During the mandatory isolation, Lina also took the opportunity to complement her training and advance in the courses on the @Medellín platform, Ciudadela Universitaria Digital on: entrepreneurship; environmental sustainability; victim care; citizenship and democracy, and biosecurity. "All very relevant, which contribute to the training and improvement of the human being. I recommend the platform because the tutors are very attentive. There is space for interaction, forums, asking questions... we are not there for a grade, we are there for learning," says Lina.

Sapiencia's Director, Carlos Chaparro, says the idea is that @Medellín will move from being a platform to a digital community that will house the city's digital training programs, with both public and private offerings. The initiative will also include several other actors from the private sector. Thus, education is renewed and is a fundamental pillar in the consolidation of Medellín as a Software Valley and the city as a great ecosystem of innovation.

INNOVATION WITH INCLUSION

Approximately, only three out of 10 IT jobs are held by women. It is precisely to give women a leading role in this area and to close these gaps that Pioneers Dev was created. "It was very difficult to find my peers. I wanted to connect with women who might have my same interests and motivations, because I love technology and I was always the minority. I wanted to identify women who were doing amazing things to have them as role models, someone to look up to, co-create etc.," says Marian Villa, CEO of Pioneers Dev.

"Innovation is not an area or a department. It's what we do day by day to change the ways in which we behave"

Iván Castaño,
Ruta N Director

"Pioneras" initially emerged as a community of knowledge and by 2017 it was transformed into an NGO non-profit entity. Currently, it is making a transition into a social enterprise, one that works with training and connecting talent with IT companies, especially women. "We have different training programs, such as the Meetups (which are free), workshops and bootcamps, which are training programs in various technologies. Soon we will be announced as a training institution of the Fondo Sumanti," says the CEO.

Marian Villa describes Pioneers as a life-changing experience through which many women were able to find employment opportunities. "For me, it meant finding a purpose. I began to take a more active role and realized that many women did not have the same privileges. Knowing that you are helping them change their lives is fulfilling," she says. The CEO also points out that the McKinsey Global Gender Gap study shows that countries around the world that invest in diversity and inclusion policies can increase their GDP by up to 11%.

On the other hand, the COVID-19 pandemic also demanded new perspectives

and skills in the digital landscape. "We must understand that the Fourth Industrial Revolution is overall an educational, social and economic transformation, which is going to create new forms of work. Ruta N, as a center of innovation and entrepreneurship, is projected towards the territory as a creator of opportunities and proposes a comprehensive digital transformation through the Software Valley Centers Strategy," concludes Director, Iván Castaño.

In this way, each story, each individual who had the opportunity to expand his or her capabilities and be trained in digital issues represents the joint efforts of various institutions such as Ruta N, Sapiencia, ACI Medellín, which believe in education as the foundation of the Mayor's great commitment to turn Medellín into a Software Valley, well known around the world and which generates opportunities for the community.



Photo courtesy of:
Medellín Bureau

IT IS IMPORTANT TO BE ABLE TO MAKE THAT TRANSITION FROM BEING CONSUMERS OF TECHNOLOGY TO BEING CREATORS OF TECHNOLOGY. UNDERSTANDING THAT LOGIC AND PROGRAMMING LANGUAGES ARE THE BASIS FOR EMPOWERING TALENT AND CREATING OUR OWN MODELS

Marian Villa,
CEO Pioneras Dev.

COMMUNITIES



Cooperation
faces the
contingency and
strengthens
relationships
between cities

Medellín
embraces its
diversity
and promotes
peacebuilding

The new
forms of
culture
in
Medellín



●● Photo courtesy of:
●● Medellín Bureau

●● Graffiti (as urban art) in Medellín
●● has become a symbol of transformation
for the city and into a tourist attraction
that fills streets with people of
different races and cultures and creates
publications in influencers' social
media from all over the world.

COOPERATION FACES THE CONTINGENCY AND STRENGTHENS RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CITIES

Today, with a pandemic and a new normal, international cooperation is a key element in the development and solution of shared problems.

International cooperation is a way of generating greater linkages, of positioning the work plans of local and state institutions and of accessing technical, financial and knowledge resources. Since 2002, ACI Medellín has consolidated itself as the cooperation and investment agency of Medellín, with these concepts as key drivers. All of them translate into opportunities for the social, environmental and economic development of the city, supported by different entities.

To a greater or lesser extent, international cooperation has always existed, previously, stronger between states. **Now it is taking place between cities. This is a very important paradigm shift, a new dimension in global cooperation. Because no matter where you are, there are shared concerns and limitations,** says Oscar Chamat, Policy and Research Manager for Red Metropolis and focal point for Latin America. Red Metropolis is an association of 141 metropolitan areas of the world, through which people's networking and capacity building are sought, with diplomacy as a cross-cutting function.

Thus, there is bilateral cooperation, among governments, multilateral cooperation, with agencies such as the IDB, the World Bank, the UN; and decentralized cooperation, directed to NGOs, foundations, universities, municipalities, governorates and metropolitan areas. "In Medellín, ACI Medellín was the first institution to ask how to bring the world's opportunities, in a decentralized way," adds Pablo Maturana, director of cooperation for the Metropolitan Area of the Aburrá Valley.

Also, Paola Arjona, technical director of AL-LAS (Euro-Latin American Alliance of Cooperation), explains that when cities develop international action it is not *per se*, "but because policies are transversal and enhance the urban model of the government in office. Relationships are promoted as solutions to everyday problems found." What AL - LAS seeks, for example, is to foster an exchange of knowledge and provide practical tools for cities, in addition to strengthening the links between Europe and Latin America.

COMMON INTERESTS

Undoubtedly, there are problems in common, such as the climate crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, the saturation of health systems and food distribution concern different territories. Organizations such as C40 Cities work to generate learning experiences between cities, in this case, on issues related to the fight against climate change. There are 97 cities that make up C40 Cities 12 are Latin American and Medellín is one of them.

Manuel Olivera, Regional Director for Latin America at C40 Cities, highlights strategies aimed at greenhouse gas mitigation, adaptation to climate change risks, technical and financial support. Moreover, the idea is also "to show the leadership of mayors, who are city representatives, not only for resource attainment, but for them to present their work and have more credibility regarding their plans and commitments to climate change," he says.

On the other hand, there are also historical links, such as the one created by Colombia with Japan, for more than 100 years. During both world wars, Colombia received migrants from the Asian country, and was even among the first Latin American nations to establish relations. This is now reinforced by the Japanese Chancellery and JICA, Japan International Cooperation Agency.

COOPERATION HAS ALWAYS BEEN IMPORTANT AND HAS ACCOMPLISHED MANY THINGS, WHICH ARE SOMETIMES NOT SO VISIBLE, BUT ARE THERE

RICARDO CHIKU,
JICA's Technical and Financial
Cooperation Coordinator.

But why does a country like Japan want to cooperate with Colombia? Ricardo Chiku, JICA's Technical and Financial Cooperation Coordinator, describes that the main objective is to bring the experience that has led Japan to its own progress to serve other territories and thus foster development. This, led by the hand of training and experts.

Two key axes for JICA have been the prevention of natural disasters and the regions prioritized for post-conflict, since a major peace-building project was carried out between 2008 and 2017. The Agency also extends its strategies to SMEs, to improve the quality of products and make them more competitive as business partners. "We try to see how we can complement each other," underscores Chiku.

MEDELLÍN STANDS OUT

Back in 2017, the Metropolitan Area of the Valley of Aburrá created a cooperation deputy direction, precisely to promote the metropolitan world agenda in the areas of environment, planning, territorial planning, security and coexistence. Both ACI Medellín and the Metropolitan Area are part of the Antioquia Cooperation Network, currently led by the Government of Antioquia and composed of Comfama and Comfenalco, family compensation funds; the Antioquia Federation of NGOs, the Instituto para el Desarrollo de Antioquia (IDEA) and the Makaia Corporation. Pablo Maturana, Director of Cooperation for the Metropolitan Area, says that this articulation exercise has enabled socializing opportunities and initiatives, promoting public policies and generating knowledge.

In its short journey, the Metropolitan Area Cooperation branch has established relations with the Embassy of France, for an energy efficiency plan in public buildings;

with the World Bank, for sustainable housing projects and environmental protection service payments; and with the Climate Research Foundation, in creating a climate vulnerability plan. It is also part of Red Metropolis, ICLEI Colombia, the Ecomobility Network and the Climate Coalition.

Manuel Olivera, of C40 Cities, says that Medellín has played an important role in the organization, mainly with the issue of electric mobility, with projects that have transcended administrations over time.

Medellín was also selected as a Latin American representative at the Youth Forum, says Olivera.

On the other hand, the Technical Director of AL-LAS, Paola Arjona, says that "ACI Medellín is an international reference for its capacity to manage the crisis, since they put all the required tools for cooperation at the service of the citizens. During the pandemic, they have shown the importance of bridging the gap between the local and the global, at a time when borders are clearly diluted and we have a universal problem."

And not just in the Latin American context. Ricardo Chiku of JICA says that Medellín is recognized in Japan as a model city for innovation, especially for projects related to mobility and urban development. "The city and its institutions, despite the change in government terms, have always been interested in proposing new ideas and seeking us as a reference point to improve their processes," says Chiku.

As for Red Metropolis, Oscar Chamat says that **"Medellín, for us, is always a reference and is among the first cities for reinvention and reengineering. In many seminars, the city and the Metropolitan Area are present to share their experiences."** As Pablo Maturana, Director of Cooperation for the Metropolitan Area of the Aburrá Valley says, "Cooperation is a long-term thing, of alliances and friends. The most important thing is that it has been possible to build trust and good relationships with Medellín."

ACI MEDELLÍN IS AN INTERNATIONAL REFERENCE FOR ITS CAPACITY TO MANAGE THE CRISIS, SINCE THEY PUT ALL THE REQUIRED TOOLS FOR COOPERATION AT THE SERVICE OF THE CITIZENS

PAOLA ARJONA,
Technical Director of AL-LAS

COOPERATION DURING THE PANDEMIC

This global public health situation of COVID-19 has put cities at the top of the line, as it is these who respond directly to the resulting difficulties.

This is how cooperation, rather than being suspended or postponed, became a fundamental tool for dealing with the crisis. To devise a recovery strategy against COVID-19, C40 Cities, the Climate Leadership Group, formed a team with seven mayors to gather recommendations, experiences and possible solutions.

The Mayor of Medellín was part of that group. As a result of this exercise, the Agenda for the Recovery from Covid was created, which was shared with the rest of the world. Many cities have managed to learn from what others are doing, says Manuel Olivera, Regional Director for Latin America at C40 Cities.

From the Euro-Latin American Alliance for Cooperation between Cities - AL-LAS, the question was how to make a city work when everyone is at home. "In partnership with Red Metropolis, we created Cities for Global Health, a self-managed platform for each city to share in real time the measures taken to combat the pandemic. We currently have more than 600 practices from 150 cities," says Paola Arjona, Technical Director.

One of the lessons learned is the need for timely and accessible information. Therefore, another tool implemented by AL-LAS together with the Decentralized Cooperation Observatory was a series of webinars to learn, first-hand, what was happening in cities and how international action could support pandemic management.

"We realized that not only do we need to manage knowledge, but to mobilize. What is shared in forums and seminars results in local public policies. The pandemic showed us the importance of networking", highlights Arjona.

Finally, Paola Arjona speaks of a double challenge: to respond to a crisis that still does not end and to think about the time-after. **We have to rethink what we want as a city. Think development in a comprehensive manner and define priorities with local actors. There is an important opportunity for cooperation, and it is to rethink that city model and support the changes needed to make it more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable,** she concludes.



Cities must have international relations and a voice in a context where the large global problems are local: migration, climate change, food crisis, COVID-19, etc.

PAOLA ARJONA,
Technical Director, AL - LAS.

●● The pandemic has forced us to find new ways to attract cooperation, investment and tourism to the city safely, ensuring that health and economic and social development can live together in harmony.

●● **Photo courtesy of:**
●● Medellín Bureau



Diversidad en Medellín



●● Photo courtesy of:
●● Medellín Bureau

●● Medellín painted some of its streets with the colors of the rainbow symbolizing the union that we all must have over personal beliefs and ideologies. By doing this, the city proves its inclusiveness to the whole world by carrying a message of peace and non-violence.

MEDELLÍN EMBRACES ITS DIVERSITY AND PROMOTES PEACEBUILDING

Knowing Medellín goes beyond recognizing its streets and parks, its seven hills, its most emblematic buildings or knowing the Metro stations by heart. **Knowing the city is also being aware of its history, of how the past continues to build the present and of the reality of each individual who inhabits it.**

With their particular characteristics, the population groups give life and color to the capital of Antioquia. On this occasion, our attention is placed on three communities that need recognition and the restoration of their fundamental rights: ethnic populations, the LGBTIQ+ collective and victims of armed conflict.

To recognize them, improve their quality of life and opportunities, the Medellín Mayor's Office opted for the creation of new agencies focused on eliminating social gaps and building territorial peace.

Among them are the Ethnic Groups Management Office, the Sexual Diversities and Gender Identities Management Office and the Non-Violence Secretariat.

CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY

"Just as an artist expects applause from the audience when they finishes a song, or like a teacher who when a class ends wants students to tell him new things they've learned. We as leaders want to feel heard and our particular needs responded to, at the end of our meetings with the municipality," says Edinson Rivas, director of the Corporation for Afro-descendant Development.

Edinson is the father of three girls. He is a teacher, with a degree in mathematics and physics from the Universidad Tecnológica de Chocó. He arrived in Medellín 12 years ago with a very clear goal: to work for the community. "From a very young age I have been very aware of social processes. In Chocó, I was already leading youth organizations." This experience gave him the tools to forge his own path in the city, first as president of the Community

Action Board of his neighborhood and now as director of the Board for the Afro-descendant Population.

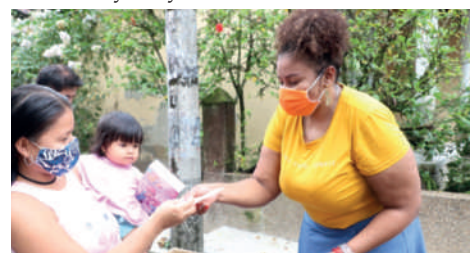
Today, his voice is heard loudly in the Ethnic Groups of Medellín, which, among its greatest challenges, seeks to stimulate meeting spaces that allow the visibility of the black, Afro-descendant, Raizal and Palenquera population (NARP, for its acronym in Spanish) made up of about 236,000 people, as well as strengthening income generation alternatives that contribute to reducing social gaps.

International cooperation is key in the development of community initiatives. The work of the ACI Medellín and its network of allies becomes essential to attract new views, investments and support of the different social processes.

Betsy Mayelis Romaña, a missionary support professional from the Ethnic Groups Management Office, emphasizes the disadvantage in the "enjoyment of fundamental rights" that not only the NARP population faces, but the indigenous population, as well. In Medellín, there are about 6,000 people belonging to 36 ancestral peoples. Eduardo Peña is part of the Zenú native Colombians, and is originally from Tuchin, Córdoba, the birthplace of the "Sombrero Vueltaio" (turned hat).

He paved his way in Medellín by studying history at the Universidad Nacional. Soon, thanks to his desire to generate change, he became the president of one of the eight urban councils in the city: the Chibcariwak. "I dream of continuing to contribute to the recognition of our councils. According to Colombian regulations, they do not exist in the city. The imaginary is that we are all in rural areas and we are not. There are many of us who have come to the capitals looking for better life opportunities."

The Management is already working on implementing care with an ethnic and comprehensive approach for indigenous families, as well as creating decent working conditions. "Along the way we have found statistics and stories that tell us that these populations are at a disadvantage compared to the rest of society. For this reason, from the Ethnic Groups Management Office we arrived to give rise to our expectations and projections and to work for the fulfillment of all our rights," adds Betsy Mayelis Romaña.



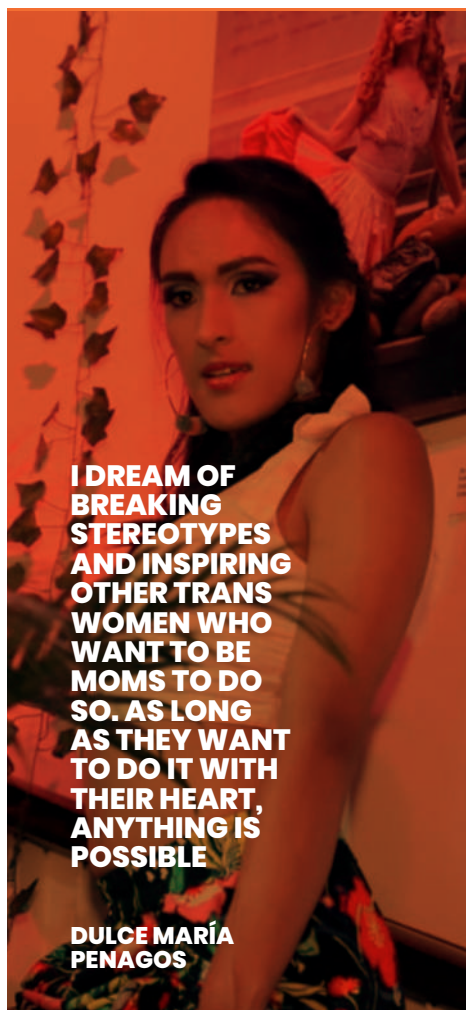
●● The Ethnicity Management Office of Medellín watches over the rights of the different groups that coexist in the city.

RESPECT AND INCLUSION

Transforming the city and its imaginaries, with pride and recognition of differences, are the first steps towards having a Medellín with space for all colors, personalities, beliefs, preferences and identities. The dream behind the creation of the Management Office for Sexual Diversities and Gender Identities is to ensure the rights of the LGBTIQ + community, to create a city where freedom does not cost lives and everyone, without exception, has the same opportunities to personal and professional growth.

Olga Patricia Llano is the manager appointed to lead this task and celebrates the generation of more winning strategies for this population. "Having this Management Office allows us to develop ideas and turn them into new realities. We started doing preliminary studies and identifying the current panorama of the population's working conditions, as well as monitoring the Strategic Plan of the LGBTI Public Policy of Medellín (2018 – 2028) and determining the alerts, seeing what is being fulfilled and what we are missing."

Within the plans, a volunteer system is being developed so that more people come to the Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity, located in downtown Medellín, and educate them on how they can contribute to the improvement of the conditions and opportunities that this population has. Work is also underway on managing resources to create a foster home



and leadership school that covers all issues related to sexual diversity and gender identities.

The Management office promotes the application and systematization of legal orientation and accompaniment in identification processes, fundamental for the trans population.

The participation and voice of the population is key to promoting each initiative. **In December 2020 we promoted Colorful Christmas, a strategy to show citizens diverse bodies and promote the talents and roles of the trans population of Medellín, which has been so stigmatized for its non-hegemonic positions,** adds manager Olga Patricia Llano.

Dulce María Penagos constantly participates in the activities that take place at the Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity. With her courage and passion, she dreams of being an inspiration to other trans women. Since she was little, she wanted to be a mother, to have a baby. Some years ago she made the decision to turn that idea into a reality, so she looked for a partner in the trans community. "After a long time and searching for the right person, I reached an agreement with my friend Julián (...) We agreed that it would be three attempts and indeed we succeeded with the last opportunity. He showed me the two lines in the pregnancy test, I was super excited," says Dulce. Today mom and dad are happy with their baby Miguel Angel. "The pregnancy had its complex moments, but we supported each other all the time. If you put your mind to it, you can achieve many things."



●● Comuna 13 is recognized for its resilience and peace-building processes.

BRAVERY AND SOLIDARITY

Anaydalit Delgado is the coordinator of the Medellín Victim Participation Board and leader of the Association of Displaced Persons and Women of Antioquia. She was born in El Bagre, Antioquia, where she tried multiple times to start her own business, but extortion and constant threats forced her to forge a different path in Medellín. “I got to study nursing. However, when I finished I went back to El Bagre to continue working with my husband. But the conflicts continued and surviving like this was very difficult,” she says.

One day at 6:00 a.m. the Farc took her out of her house. She left with one of her daughters and just the clothes she was wearing. She returned to the Antioquia capital in 2006, this time to stay. At that time, the SENA was very involved in supporting the victims. I learned a lot there and met other people who had also experienced cases similar to mine. Thus was born the *Asociación de Desplazados y Mujeres de Antioquia* (the Association of Displaced People and Women of Antioquia).

Because of Anaydalit and her story, which is also the story of many other Colombians, and because each person who has been a victim of the armed conflict, the Non-Violence Secretariat was created.

As its secretary, Juan Carlos Upegui, explains it is a proposal that follows a fundamental principle: the sacredness of life. “We are promoting an approach to protect life from all fronts of the Mayor’s Office: mobility, security, inclusion. We

saw the need to be able to accompany the victims in the search for justice and truth with greater strength”.

He adds that it is also very important to accompany ex-combatants in their transition to civil life and the prison population that has historically suffered exclusion and lack of access to many of their rights.

One of the main challenges is the implementation of the peace agreements in Medellín and the goal is to achieve this with the community:

“Learning to solve different conflicts and transform them through peaceful means. It is about changing the city’s cultural chip, that, although it has made significant progress in reducing violence, still has important challenges and this cultural transformation is one of them,” emphasizes the Secretary.

Education and action. The first, education, for the recognition of each individual and their particularities, their history and their context. The second, action, is so that the ideas and projects undertaken by these agencies support the population with real results and bring the institutions closer to the fulfillment of the “Medellín Futuro” Development Plan 2020-2023

“**MY DREAM IS TO TRANSFORM THE PAST INTO AN OPPORTUNITY FOR LEARNING, AN INSPIRATION FOR THE WORLD, FOR MEDELLIN TO BE RECOGNIZED WORLDWIDE AS AN EPICENTER OF RECONCILIATION, AS A LABORATORY FOR PEACE**”

**JUAN CARLOS UPEGUI,
SECRETARY FOR NON-VIOLENCE**



THE NEW FORMS OF CULTURE IN MEDELLÍN

The isolation, which was necessary for the mitigation of COVID-19 in the city, demanded creative ways to continue living arts. These creative projects are now recognized in the world.

Sergio Gil stated that working as a professional musician is like having a mom-and-pop store. You have to offer diversity "to get your monthly income." Thus, he teaches guitar, double bass and electric bass in an academy in Caldas, Antioquia, known as "Viva la Música," all the while studying piano in order to expand his teaching skills. He plays bass in "La Furruska," a ska band, and has an acoustic tropical music project called "Mar del Ser." He also composes. He is a session musician and in 2016, he started, along with Cristian Mejía, María Isabel Hurtado and Marcela Forero, "La Backing Rap," a band that wants to be a meeting point between music and literature.

"It's not for business; we do it for leisure/ We gather and share foolish thoughts/ There are certain silences and noises that I carry/ There are several fears that I now discard," as sung in their single, "Ocio," from their first recording. Music, more than a way of making money, which Sergio clarifies is a human need, is a way of expressing oneself and enjoying life, which ends up positively infecting those who share it.

For "La Backing Rap," 2020 has been quite a productive year, contrary to what might be expected as a result of the public health situation around the world. In May, they were selected as part of the call for the "Stimulus Program for Arts and Culture - Agenda Cultural 2020 - Houses of Culture," which defines the agendas of these cultural spaces in the city. Though these places were closed to the public, several agencies of Medellín Mayor's Office joined forces in an initiative that allowed the reactivation of the cultural sector, thus bringing art to citizens who were in compulsory preventive isolation: the "La Ruta Medellín Me Cuida."

It's not for business; we do it for leisure/We gather and share foolish thoughts/There are certain silences and noises that I carry/ There are several fears that I now discard

●● Rap, hip hop, and urban music have become the most popular expressions among young people of Medellín, inspired by figures that today position Medellín before the world as one city full of brightness and magic.

A BREAK DURING QUARANTINE

Riding on the back of a truck that was transformed into a professional stage, "La Backing Rap" and 20 other groups covered, during the months of May and June, 150 kilometers while crossing 80 neighborhoods around the city. "We were invited by the Secretariat of Culture to be part of the first pilot project; we didn't know if it would work but it was wonderful," says Harrison Palacios, Director of "Explosión Negra," a band that combines native rhythms of the Colombian Pacific with modern elements, such as hip-hop and some electronic sounds.

"That first experience was carried out in the Comuna 16, in the Belén neighborhood, and it was great, because we were two months into the quarantine at that time. Everything had stopped and everybody was locked-up. Then, getting that opportunity was a great incentive, a relief for the soul," says Harrison. One image he won't forget is that of a grandmother dancing with her grandson at their front door, a memory he shared during the virtual seminar "How can cities directly support their musicians," organized by Music Cities Events during the awards ceremony for the Best Initiative of a City to Directly Support. Its Musicians prize that was delivered to the Ruta Medellín Me Cuida on September 23rd.

This recognition, whose application was led by ACI Medellín, is a way of reaffirming that we are in "a creative and artistic city, that we continue to toast our sights on arts and culture as tools for a process of social transformation, but also, for the integration of the artistic sector with the government, to work together very closely and, above all, to maintain Medellín as a creative and innovative city which has solved its problems while experiencing the

most difficult times," says Álvaro Narváez, Deputy Secretary of Arts and Culture in the Arts, Scene and Events Division.

For Narváez, the award is an "encouragement" to continue working forward. After the "Route," the same format was used for "Dance for Life" and "Circus of Hope," tours that also supported professional artists from these two disciplines. "When we decided to be part of these awards which there are several projects from different cities participating, we entered the forums and stated how we are supporting artists. What we are showing is that Medellín is a great, creative city, that there is a lot of local talent and that this takes us to a new level of discourse in the world. The city starts to be viewed as a valuable place for creation," he explains.

A CONSTANT TASK

This is not the only recognition that Medellín has received in 2020 for its commitment to using tools of arts and culture for social transformation. On May 28th, the city was awarded the International UCLG award - Mexico City - Culture 21 for the Artistic and Cultural Practices Network. This award was possible thanks to the support of the Agency for Cooperation and Investment of Medellín and the Metropolitan Area - ACI Medellín.

"We have been working in the "Medellín, Creative City for Music" program with ACI Medellín for a long time and when we started this term in office, we decided that we were going to register the city in international awards, because we believe in local talent," says Narváez.

"It's hard work because every year we can apply for about 15 initiatives for international awards. We are sure that our work helps make visible that our city

is doing things right, that we are a good partner to work with, and that we strive to continue our process of transformation and development everyday," says Eleonora Betancur Gonzalez, ACI Medellín Executive Director.

For Harrison Palacios, it is necessary that citizens have the same faith in local talent as governmental entities do and that they support it. **Sometimes people do not pay as much attention to locals, but we have so much expression, so much talent and, also now, in times of isolation, there are many artistic projects that have begun to do their work using virtual tools. The invitation is for people to support these initiatives and get connected,** he says. The next event was **Festiafro**, which was held on October 23rd at the Pedregal open-air theater, with controlled entry and live streaming.

THE PATH TO REINVENTION

The path to reinventing mass-public events, the main source of income for the cultural sector, have been suspended since March of this year, when COVID-19 began to rise in Colombia. It was the first sector to stop its activities and it was expected would be the last to return to normal. Artists and entrepreneurs have used their creativity to keep their trade alive with virtual events or self-concerts. However, it has not been an easy transition and the income is not the same. The challenge for the guild is to continue exploring options and for the public and the artists themselves, the challenge is to learn to enjoy other ways of showcasing and consuming culture.

Just like Sergio Gil, who never stops moving toward continuing living his passion for music and culture, Medellín hosted different events that were reinvented in order to remain open and alive. Some of these are the Flower Festival, which had tours throughout the city to bring the "cultura silletera" (flower saddle tradition) to neighborhoods, and the Festival Internacional Altavoz, during the end of the year. "Backing Rap" was also selected to be part the "Festival" on the alternative stage, by public call.

Music is not only a way of life for hundreds of artists and managers, scientists around the world have studied its power to reduce heart rate, lower blood pressure, reduce stress hormone levels and provide relief to patients who have undergone surgery, as well as victims of strokes and heart attacks.

Studies have even concluded that regularly enjoying cultural events, including concerts and plays, can increase life expectancy. Although no scientific trials were made during the **Ruta Medellín Me Cuida**, both artists and the public can affirm that it brought life and relief; it was a demonstration of the transformative power of culture.



●● The "Ruta Medellín Me Cuida" (Medellín takes care of me) was greeted with enthusiasm by the citizens from their homes.

We believe
in the power
of alliances
with the world
to achieve
sustainable
development
and build a
better place
for people



AGENCIA DE COOPERACIÓN E INVERSIÓN
DE MEDELLÍN Y EL ÁREA METROPOLITANA

Creamos lazos con el mundo para el desarrollo



●● Medellín, known as the city of Eternal Spring, lives full of colors in the middle of cars, in their people, in their townships and especially in the peasants who cultivate this land that produce flowers, smiles and love in every corner of the world to which the products of this region are exported.



No hace falta explicar,
cuales fueron los motivos,
pero tuve que irme...
Una nueva vida he
construido, pero cada
día te recuerdo, con más
fuerza...
Y a veces me sorprende
imaginando, que estoy en
las calles de mi barrio, que
estoy en la esquina con mi
gente...
son tantas las cosas que
extraño, porque aquí todo
es tan diferente...

Me han contado que
estás increíble, que en
cada esquina se nota el
progreso,
para nosotros no hay nada
imposible, póngale la firma
que un día regreso...

Y es que te echo tanto
de menos, que a veces la
nostalgia me hace soñar
despierto...
Ser antioqueño es más que
un sentimiento, ¡Vamos pa'
lante! ¡Somos paísa!

Y a pesar, de la distancia,
te llevamos en el alma,
Y aunque pase el tiempo,
hoy me doy cuenta, que
allá está mi corazón...
Estemos dentro o estemos
fuera, por nuestra tierra
damos la cara,
Y es verdad lo que decían
los abuelos, ¡un antioqueño
nunca se vara!
No importa dónde estés,
eh, eh, ¡Sos Paísa!

Lo que siento no se mide
en kilómetros, yo te quiero
más allá de la razón,
Por vos sos, soy paísa que
llega lejos, hijo de la tierra
y luchador...
Soy... cafetero, yo estoy pa'
las que sea, sólo pintela
parcero, soy paísa de pura
cepa,
De frijoles y de arepa, de
flores y verjaquera, de
guaro y aguapanela...

Innovación y compromiso,
son las bases de nuestro
paraíso,
Un lugar privilegiado sobre
la faz de la tierra, rodeado
de eterna primavera.

No importa dónde estés,
¡Eh! Ave María pues.
Acordate que te quiero, de
mi nunca te olvidés,
Contale al mundo entero
que estamos orgulloso, y
dónde quiera que estés,
¡Sos Paísa!



@SOSPAISA

WWW.SOSPAISA.COM - INFO@SOSPAISA.COM



Photo credits:
Bureau Medellín



Scan the QR code to
listen to the
"Sos Paísa" song.





**Y A PESAR,
DE LA
DISTANCIA,
TE LLEVAMOS
EN EL ALMA,
Y AUNQUE
PASE EL
TIEMPO,
HOY ME DOY
CUENTA, QUE
ALLÁ ESTÁ MI
CORAZÓN**

Network of paisas
abroad.





Alcaldía de Medellín



@ACIMEDELLIN / WWW.ACIMEDELLIN.ORG / MEDELLÍN - COLOMBIA