

**JAIME LERNER TO SPEAK AT GBCSA CONVENTION '08**



Jaime Lerner, the renowned ex-mayor of Curitiba, Brazil and a former President of the International Union of Architects has been confirmed as a keynote speaker at the GBCSA Convention & Exhibition in November. Lerner will present his "Sing a Song of Sustainable Cities" presentation and share his wealth of knowledge on the subject.

From building opera houses with wire to mapping the connection between the automobile and your mother-in-law, Jamie Lerner delights in discovering eccentric solutions to vexing urban problems. In the process he has transformed the face of cities worldwide...

For many city governments seeking visible improvements in their congested streets, the pace of change is measured in months and years. For Jaime Lerner, it's measured in hours. As mayor of Curitiba, he transformed a gridlocked commercial artery into a spacious pedestrian mall over a long weekend, before skeptical merchants had time to finish reading their Monday papers.

Since then he's become a hero not only to his fellow Brazilians, but also to the growing ranks of municipal planners seeking greener, more sustainable cities. His dictum that "creativity starts when you cut a zero from your budget" has inspired a number of his unique solutions to urban problems, including sheltered boarding tubes to improve speed of bus transit; a garbage-for-food program allowing Curitibaans to exchange bags of trash for bags of groceries; and trimming parkland grasses with herds of sheep.

In addition to serving three terms as mayor of Curitiba, Lerner has twice been elected governor of Parana State in Brazil. His revolutionary career in urban planning and architecture has not only improved cities worldwide, but has also brought him international renown. Among his many awards are the United Nations Environmental Award (1990), the Child and Peace Award from UNICEF (1996), and the 2001 World Technology Award for Transportation.

"Lerner is a longtime proponent of what might be called "blitz urbanism": the rapid, workable improvement that does an end run on bureaucrats and doubters" *Justin Davidson, Newsday*.

For more information on other top presenters speaking at the convention, see our convention website at [www.gbcsa-convention.org.za](http://www.gbcsa-convention.org.za)!