SECOND EDITION

URBAN DESIGN FOR AN URBAN CENTURY

SHAPING MORE LIVABLE, EQUITABLE, AND RESILIENT CITIES

LANCE JAY BROWN, FAIA • **DAVID DIXON,** FAIA • **OLIVER GILLHAM,** AIA

WILEY

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In Memoriam: Oliver Gilham, AIA

The authors wish to acknowledge the essential contribution our friend and co-author, Oliver Gilham AIA, made to the original edition of this book. Oliver died in 2009, but his spirit and values infuse every page of Urban Design for An Urban Century. *A gifted urban designer and acute observer of cities, Oliver never stopped working to deepen his and our understanding of human settlement and the conditions that would shape those settlements in the twenty-first century. His 2002 book* The Limitless City: A Primer on the Urban Sprawl Debate *helped shape much of the thinking that underpins this book. Although an ardent critic of sprawl, in* Limitless City *Oliver presented both sides of the debate even-handedly in an effort to help nonprofessionals understand the issues and the stakes involved—a characteristic of his humane and generous spirit. This book owes much to his broad view, keen insights, and sense of urgency about improving the built environment.*

Acknowledgments

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Most of all, our heartfelt gratitude for patience, support, and wisdom to our wonderful families: Irma Ostroff; Fred Lacerda; Sarah, Andrew, and Peter Dixon; Catlin Rockman; and Maya S.E. Brown and Sergio Brown-Fondevila Cosculluela.

Introduction

Urban Design: A Social and Civic Art

Urban designers can make a strong, positive difference in the lives of the people on whose behalf they work. This book melds theory and practice to argue, however, that urban designers can only make such a difference when they understand the forces that shape people's lives—and, in turn, the places they inhabit. (As Winston Churchill noted, the reverse is also true: places shape the lives of the people who use them.)

Much has changed in the field of urban design since the first edition of this book appeared in 2009. During the writing of the first edition, a typical day for one coauthor began with his teaching students about how American downtowns constantly change their physical form in response to shifting economic, social, and environmental forces. Later, he might meet with colleagues from across New York City to advance a green housing initiative. His day might have ended with moderating a seminar on new approaches to creating mixed-income neighborhoods. For the other coauthor, a typical morning included writing design guidelines for more walkable streets in suburban Atlanta; the afternoon might be spent preparing plans for new, mixed-use urban neighborhoods in Norfolk, Virginia, and Kansas City, Missouri; and the day might end with hammering out the draft of a talk on the benefits of urban density.

While preparing this new edition, both of us held the same jobs we had held in 2009, but our work had taken on a much more global focus and a decided emphasis on the environment, economic development, and the use, control, and design of urban space.

A reader might reasonably assume that since the first edition the wrenching global economic retrenchment would have slowed the evolution of urban design. The worst economic downturn since the Great Depression doubled unemployment and reduced housing values by one-third in the United States. In the European Union, it precipitated an even harsher economic contraction and a dangerous monetary crisis. Yet the pace of change in urban design grew even faster than it had, accelerated by shifts in social, cultural, and environmental values that made living in urban areas more popular, as measured by market demand.

The years following the first edition also saw a growing recognition of manmade and natural threats that nonetheless presented opportunities for transforming our cities. The September 11, 2001, attack on the World Trade Center has posed an enormous challenge to American society, and more than a decade later we continue to grapple with its implications. Four years after the attack, Hurricane Katrina swept across southern Louisiana and Mississippi, devastating both physical and psychic landscapes and raising fundamental questions concerning social equity, our preparedness, and even where and how we build our cities. Hurricanes have long ravaged the Gulf Coast (8,000 residents of Galveston, then the largest city in Texas, had died in the Hurricane of 1900). New York City, however, had never experienced a storm like Irene, the tropical system that flooded parts of the city in 2011. Just over a

year later, Hurricane Sandy, supercharged by a warming climate, ravaged huge swaths of metropolitan New York and New Jersey. Not since World War II had a global capital suffered so much damage; the closest analogue for an American city is the 1906 earthquake and fire in San Francisco. In the wake of these storms, few people still question the reality of global warming (even if some political figures find it expedient to do so). In his 2013 inaugural address, Barack Obama became the first American president to mention climate change.

December 2010 marked the beginning of a period of dramatic political change in the Arab world.[1] Much of the Arab Spring's political activity, especially in Egypt, played out in city centers near seats of power. Images of demonstrations in Cairo's Tahrir Square, protests in the streets of Tehran, and battles raging in Syrian towns and cities were conveyed daily by broadcast and social media. The occupation of urban land signified the degree to which one side or another had wrested a temporary control.

Within a year, nonviolent but no less passionate demonstrations began in New York City under the Occupy Wall Street banner. This protest against the influence of financial institutions and growing social inequality began in September 2011 and spread rapidly across the United States and the world; cities small and large saw citizens gather, protest, and often set up camp in urban spaces. Nowhere did the friction between protestors and the forces of civic control prove greater than near Wall Street itself, in Zuccotti Park, where the protests began. The larger debate sparked by the Occupy protests over a growing gulf between the rich and the poor, the corporate and the individual, also became a debate over public use and private space and the devil's bargain that muddied those waters. The Arab Spring abroad and the Occupy movement in the United States spotlighted the often overlooked role that the connective tissue of open space plays in cities today.

In the first edition of *Urban Design for an Urban Century*, we described urban design as "finding the right fit between people and place." The forces of the intervening years—the velocity of economic change, a widening gap between haves and have-nots that is often most glaring in cities, an increased global awareness fostered by the Internet and new media platforms, and a deepening sense of environmental responsibility—demonstrate the failure of that formulation to capture fully what urban design is capable of.

> The celebration of the star architect too often encouraged object buildings—buildings that willfully ignore time, place, and context. Cities are more than sculptures to be understood only from a bird's-eye view or figure-ground diagram; they are constantly changing entities with unique physical and social landscapes made vibrant by the people who live, work, and celebrate in them. It is the chemistry of that interaction between people and environment that gives value and identity to the place where people live. Urban design continues to be a vital discipline because the care and shaping of our cities is too complex and too important to be left to those who see it only as a vehicle for creating objets d'art.
>
> *M. David Lee, FAIA, vice-president, Stull and Lee Inc. Architects and Planners*

There *is* no way to decisively secure the right fit between people and place. Urban design entails a constant search for an ever-changing fit between people, time, and place. Through urban design people understand, integrate, and manifest influences in flux—culture, environmental response, economics, philosophy, politics, social context, and technology—and in the process shape and reshape their cities.

1. A social and a public art

Urban design never takes place in a theoretical or artistic vacuum. The forces that shape a place must also shape the basis for judging the work of urban design. Without discounting the importance of individual creativity or

In the twenty-first century, the province of urban design is no longer the spaces between buildings or the decoration of streetscapes. Rather, the meaning and role of urban design is to recognize and enhance the fundamental relationship between physical form and the social life of our communities.

Jean Marie Gath, principal, Pfeiffer Partners Architects and Planners, New York

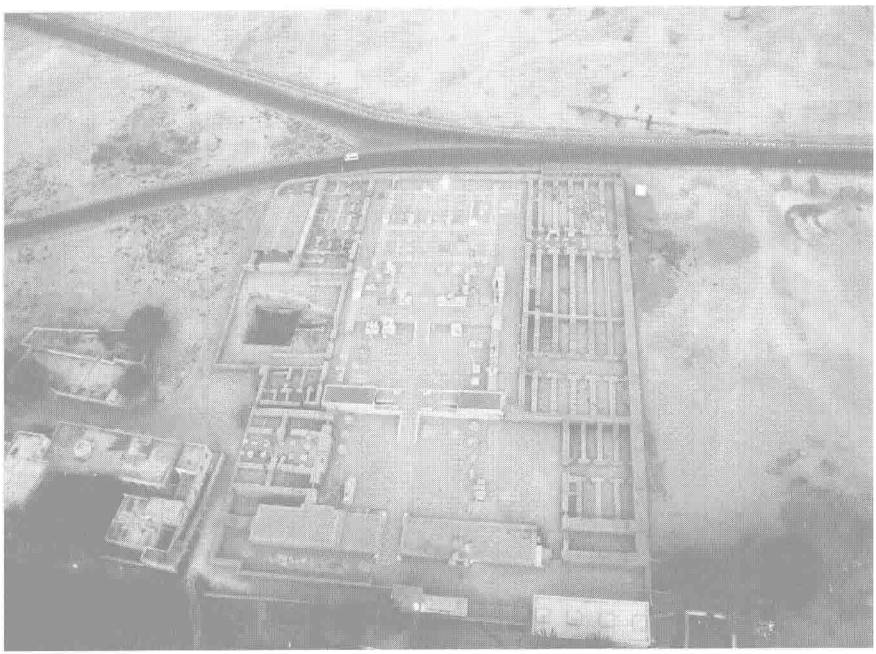
skill, we approach urban design as a social and public art, one informed by underlying forces that then tap creativity and skill to translate this information into plans reflecting their time and shaping particular places for the people who use them.

2. Historical precedents

For his book *A World Lit Only by Fire*, historian William Manchester chose a title that captured a central reality of day-to-day life six centuries ago. He intended to help modern readers see the late-medieval world from the perspective of its own era, not ours.[2] Any history of urban design requires a similar effort to appreciate the vastly different worlds in which humans have designed spaces and settlements.

The practice of architecture and urban design stretches back to humans' first intentional attempts to shape their environment. Although the earliest human settlements likely evolved without conscious planning—as some still do—we can trace a continuous history of places that were visibly designed: Neolithic

I.1 "LasVegas . . . [was] where we could discover the validity and appreciate the vitality of the commercial strip and of urban sprawl, of the commercial sign whose scale accommodates to the moving car and whose symbolism illuminates an iconography of our time. And where we thereby could acknowledge the elements of symbol and mass culture as vital to architecture, and the genius of the everyday, and the commercial vernacular as inspirational as was the industrial vernacular in the early days of Modernism." —Robert Venturi, FAIA, accepting the 1991 Pritzker Prize (from www.pritzkerprize.com) Courtesy Clément Bardot via Wikimedia



I.2 Merneptah's Mortuary Temple (ca. 1200 BCE) served as a religious, bureaucratic, and economic center. It also suggests the political significance of early planned urban development. A stele proclaimed: "The kings are overthrown, saying: 'Salaam!' / Not one holds up his head among the nine / nations of the bow. / Wasted is Tehenu / The Hittite Land is pacified / Plundered is the Canaan, with every evil / Carried off is Askalon / Seized upon is Gezer / Yenoam is made as a thing not existing. / Israel is desolated, her seed is not. / Palestine has become a [defenseless] widow for Egypt. / All lands are united, they are pacified; / Every one that is turbulent is bound by King Merneptah." Courtesy Wikipedia user Pufacz

settlements in western Europe, ancient palace complexes of Mesopotamia, funerary and religious compounds of third-dynasty Egypt, ancient Greek and Roman fora, pueblos of the American Southwest, Aztec city-states, Cahokia Mounds on the eastern edge of the vast North American plains, the Forbidden City of Beijing, and the boulevards of nineteenth-century Paris all reflect a drive to form settlements in ways that expressed their builders' beliefs and responded to nature, economics, and other forces around them.

From Mesopotamia onward, urban design has served as a conscious act of mediation among a constellation of influences—economic and social dynamics, religious and cultural beliefs, environmental constraints, and others—unique to a community or era. Monarchs, priests, military engineers, the urban designers of their day, did look at their work as the creation of monuments and the adornment of their communities. But more consciously, they were reacting to the needs and aspirations

> Urban design is an art and not a science or an engineering discipline, but a social and public art rather than a personal or fine art. . . . Unlike a painter or sculptor, in every aspect of my work I am responsible not only to myself but to my fellow man and to future generations.
>
> *Douglas Kelbaugh, FAIA, dean, Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor*

of the gods, economic systems, and societies they served, and they strove to prepare their communities to meet the demands of the world around them. Urban designers may not worship Baal today, but as much as any builder in the ancient world, they too must meet the needs of the larger world.

Urban designers often use historic precedents as models for contemporary urban design, and not just when they work in historic settings. Architectural forms can live long after their purpose vanishes—for example, designers still think and design in terms of gateways, squares, boulevards, and grids. Understanding what gave rise to these forms can prove more valuable than studying the forms themselves.

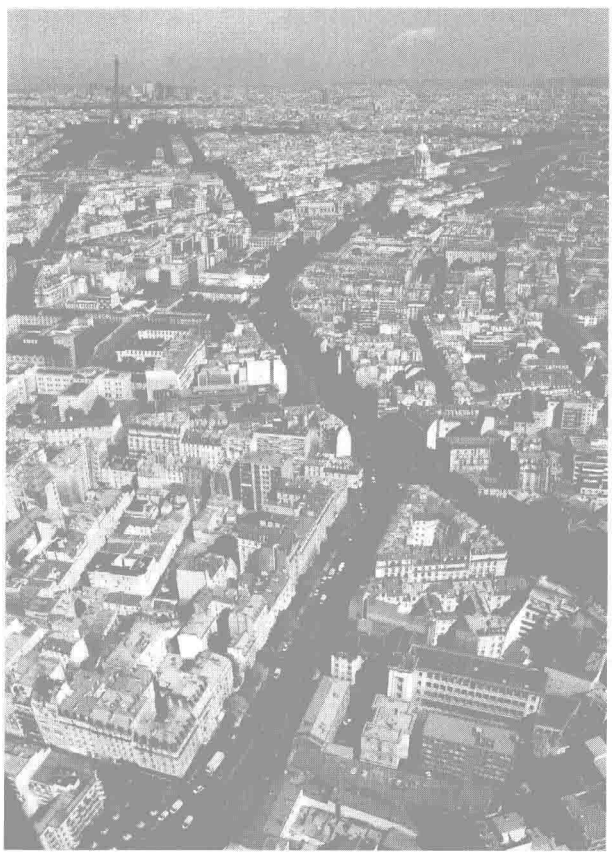
The reconstruction of the Ishtar Gate at Berlin's Pergamon Museum lets modern visitors experience one of history's jaw-dropping gateways and offers a glimpse into the Babylonian mind of the seventh century BCE. A modern visitor readily understands the gate's size and majesty as a proclamation of Babylon's significance and the splendor within its walls. Yet to Babylonians, who lived in a world where few people traveled beyond the village of their birth, who had no concept of the individual (as our era understands the idea), and who saw history as an endlessly turning wheel of seasons, the Ishtar Gate announced not human splendor but a city of gods as well as humans. For the gate's creators, the roaring lions evoked the protective power of the gods that dwelt inside the gates. Over subsequent centuries, gateways have been used for collecting tolls (Jerusalem), commemorating military victories (Rome), and controlling access to walled cities. In the twentieth century, evocative gateways, historically built for a different reason, sometimes became mechanisms of social exclusion (as in gated communities).

I.3 A reconstruction of Babylon's Ishtar Gate from the seventh century BCE, at the Pergamon Museum, Berlin, suggests the feeling the gate might have evoked in its creators: awe of the protective power of the gods that dwelt inside the city. Courtesy Wikipedia user Gryffindor

> One remarkable man, the Franciscan friar Roger Bacon . . . stands on an isolated pinnacle of his own in the Middle Ages. . . . It has been claimed for him that he announced the idea of Progress. . . . His aim was to reform higher education and introduce into the universities a wide, liberal, and scientific programme of secular studies. . . . With great ingenuity and resourcefulness, he sought to show that the studies to which he was devoted . . . were indispensable to an intelligent study of theology and Scripture.
>
> *John Bagnell Bury,* The Idea of Progress: An Inquiry into Its Origin and Growth *(London: Macmillan, 1920)*

The squares of Greco-Roman cities like Pompeii and Renaissance cities like Siena reflect the forces that shaped those cultures—and offer striking contrasts to the Ishtar Gate. As gathering places for wealthy property owners, Pompeii's forum and Siena's Piazza del Campo celebrate both the rise of an affluent urban class engaged in commerce and its claim to a political voice. Neither square served as a setting for public buildings or broad community enjoyment, as modern squares do. Cities shaped

during the Baroque era and later, such as Paris, reflect the influence of monarchial government and authoritarian rule in great diagonal boulevards, monumental spaces, and long vistas slashing across clustered medieval blocks. The squares and grand boulevards of these cities served as models for both the grand commercial main streets and vibrant squares of early twentieth-century American cities and the destructive, windswept squares and overscale "boulevards" carved out of urban neighborhoods during urban renewal.



I.4 Designers working under authoritarian regimes often had the freedom to create monumental spaces and long vistas, as in Paris. Copyright © iStockphoto.com/FotoVoyager.com

> Once the urban transformation had been effected, the city as a whole became a sacred precinct under the protection of its god: the very axis of the universe went . . . through its temple, while the wall . . . was both a physical rampart for defense and a spiritual boundary of greater significance.
>
> *Lewis Mumford,* The City in History: Its Transformations and Its Prospects *(New York: Harcourt Brace, 1961), 48*

Scorned in the years after World War II as an antiquated approach to urban neighborhoods but valued today as a defining quality of walkability, the grid originated to support military efficiency and taxation in Greek settlements. Its adoption by most American cities owed largely to a desire for efficient land distribution and development in a society that believed strongly in the moral benefit of owning property. The young United States, with its abundant acreage, saw property ownership as an economic prerequisite to democracy—a clear distinction from Europe and other societies that restricted property ownership to a small elite. Only in the District of Columbia did Americans pursue the monumental design and diagonal boulevards characteristic of continental Europe—following a plan laid out by a French national.

3. A changing world and the birth of urban design

The outlines of the discipline of urban design began to take shape in efforts to tame the burgeoning industrial centers of mid- and late-nineteenth-century Europe and America. The changes unleashed by the Industrial Revolution, including unprecedented urban growth, triggered a need to revisit basic assumptions about the form and organization of urban communities. No cities in history had attained anything close to the size and complexity of the industrial cities that blossomed across Western Europe and in North America after 1850—and none had grown and changed so rapidly. Before the Industrial

I.5 As factories multiplied in cities, many residents found the resulting noise, smoke, and soot intolerable. Courtesy the Library of Congress, FSA-OWI Collection

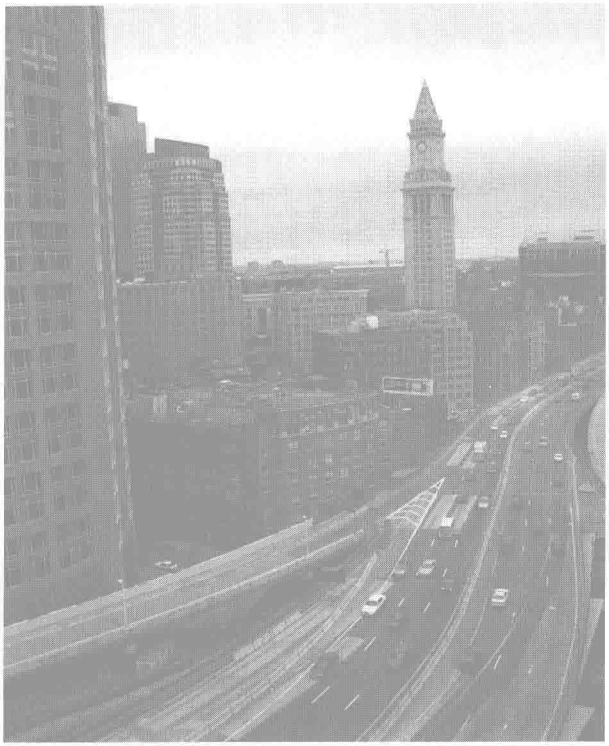
I.6 For the well-to-do, suburban housing offered an escape from crowded industrializing cities. Courtesy Oliver Gillham

Revolution, few cities changed substantially during a resident's lifetime, and when they did, the change resulted from the intervention of a powerful elite.

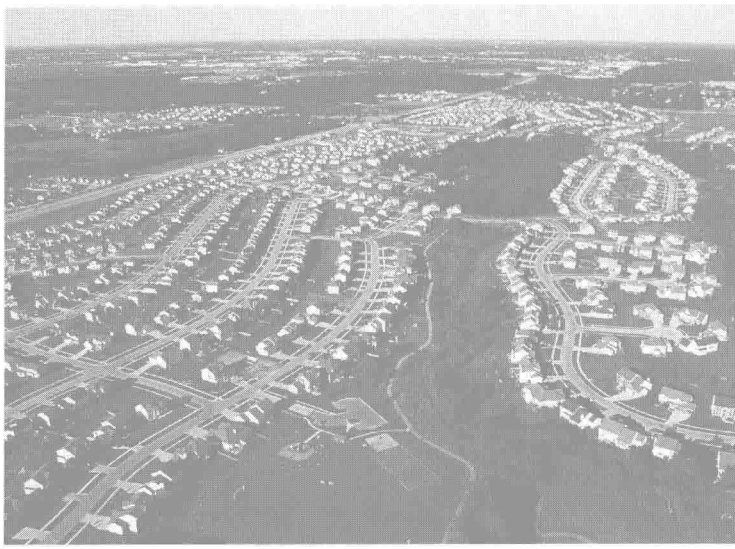
After the Civil War, American industrial cities grew at an astonishing rate. The number of U.S. cities with populations greater than 200,000 grew from four in the mid-nineteenth century to more than forty by the early twentieth century. Industrialization alone did not drive this growth; electric streetcars and new building technologies allowed cities to grow both horizontally and vertically. Architects began to approach cities from a new design perspective that would feel familiar today, as they wrestled with noise, pollution, and poverty, new technologies, and a new and profound separation between urban residents and nature. They joined European colleagues in advocating sweeping measures under the banner of the City Beautiful movement: mass rebuilding to restore beauty and nature to cities. Architects and others—more so in the United States than in Europe—explored ways to escape industrialization's disagreeable side effects by creating suburban retreats for the rich and, later, the middle class.

It was the decline of America's industrial economy after World War II, however, that led to formal recognition of urban design as a distinct discipline. Taking hold even more rapidly than the rise of urban manufacturing, this decline produced a full-blown crisis, as jobs and residents—up to half in some cities—fled to the suburbs, taking most of the center cities' wealth with them. A confluence of seemingly unrelated factors accelerated this dramatic migration: the advent of near-universal automobile ownership among middle- and upper-class Americans; the construction of a vast national highway system that began in earnest in the 1950s and made suburbs easily accessible; government programs that made home ownership more attainable; a dramatic rise in the number of households with children (and a subsequent demand for backyards); and the broad diffusion of technologies, including television, that eroded the ties binding people to their urban neighborhoods.

Alarmed by physical deterioration in American cities, the U.S. Congress enacted federal housing laws in 1949 and 1954 that provided significant funding for eliminating "slums" and "blight" in cities. In response, Josep Lluís Sert, then dean of Harvard's Graduate School of Design, organized the Harvard Urban Design



I.7 Highways of the urban renewal era often cut large swaths through dense older neighborhoods. Courtesy Boston Public Library, Prints Division



I.8 These same highways cut very different swaths across formerly rural areas—dispersing the economy of America's cities from older neighborhoods to miles of strip development. Courtesy U.S. National Soil Conservation Service

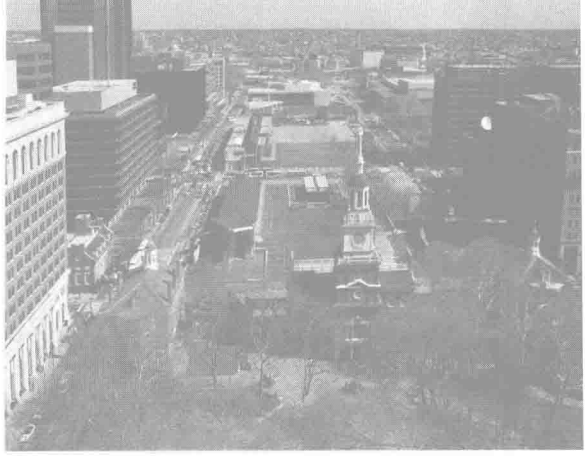
Conference in 1956. Sert was the first to use the term *urban design* to describe a particular approach to planning. In contrast to the City Beautiful movement and other reactions to industrialization, he did not urge participants to look to the past.

With the exception of author Jane Jacobs and urban historian Lewis Mumford, virtually all of the distinguished participants gathered in Cambridge at the birth of urban design as a formal discipline defined recentralization very differently than their present-day counterparts. These leaders of architecture, planning, and landscape architecture agreed with Edmund Bacon, executive director of Philadelphia's City Planning Commission, that the federal government's commitment to invest in urban renewal represented "a responsibility we cannot duck" to sweep away the archaic crowding of traditional downtowns and urban neighborhoods and replace them with "modern" environments shaped around expressways, parking structures, and malls—symbols of progress in 1956. These leaders believed in applying Mies Van der Rohe's architectural dictum "form follows function" to city form, and more than anything, "function" meant opening up dense cities for economic renewal.

Like Mies, most of those who helped define urban design saw their task as a fine art, which, like modern painting, celebrated the rejection of Old World social and political values closely associated with traditional

Recentralization—a fight to defend core cities against the centrifugal forces of suburbanization.

Josep Lluís Sert, in an address to the Harvard University Graduate School of Design Invitation Conference on Urban Design, April 9, 1956



I.9 a,b Philadelphia created Independence Mall in the early 1950s—a three-block swath whose stated rationale of commemorating historic events served as an excuse for an urban renewal project that buffered downtown from deteriorating neighborhoods to the east and cleared "slum neighborhoods" to create sites for new office buildings. Wikimedia Commons

architecture and urban form. The modern movement had coalesced around a rejection of the rigid social order and the deference to the anciens régimes that had dominated Europe prior to World War II. The fact that Hitler, Stalin, and Mussolini had embraced classical ideas of architecture and city-building only reinforced a desire for approaches to planning that broke with tradition. The urban designers who gave shape to the urban renewal movement of the 1950s and 1960s took pride in ripping out what they saw as the archaic relics of an irrelevant and discredited past and creating a modern city shaped around the automobile and a rational aesthetic that celebrated progress. Mumford balked at this impulse, saying that "if this conference does nothing else, it can at least . . . report on the absolute folly of creating a physical structure at the price of destroying the intimate social structure of a community's life." So fully did urban designers equate the renewing of cities with the rebuilding of cities that nearly forty years passed before Mumford's warnings about destroying intangible social capital gained broad acceptance among urban designers.[3]

Distracted by Cold War fears that dense cities were vulnerable to atomic attack, racial fears that precipitated white flight, the decline of America's industrial economy, a shift in wealth from cities to suburbs, and other challenges, initial efforts to save cities proceeded with scant attention to their impact on community life. Instead, urban designers allied themselves with planners and architects as early champions of massive rebuilding projects intended to lure investment back to cities.

No individual better embodies the tendency against which Mumford warned than New York's "master builder," Robert Moses. Trained not in planning or design but in political science, he became the most visible practitioner of urban renewal in the United States. While holding a variety of positions, he functioned as New York City's de facto master planner from roughly 1930 to 1965. Moses's concept of urban renewal, which involved "rationalizing" the city's form to accommodate twentieth-century infrastructure, took precedence over all other considerations. He built expressways that sliced through neighborhoods in all five boroughs (and well into other parts of the state) and replaced thousands of units of traditional neighborhood housing with blocky high-rises inspired by architect Le Corbusier's tower-in-a-park model.

Urban renewal values did not go unchallenged. A series of influential writers struggled to reconnect the design of cities to human and environmental values. Kevin Lynch's *Image of the City* (1960) introduced the

I.10 Robert Moses viewed his Battery Bridge project (1939) as a high-profile opportunity to modernize the image of New York City. The Battery Tunnel was constructed instead. Courtesy Library of Congress, New York World-Telegram & Sun Collection

concept of shaping urban form around the ways that people actually experience the built environment. In *Design with Nature* (1969), Ian McHarg argued for starting with the natural environment in creating human environments. Two years later, Victor Papanek built a case for understanding the role of social forces in *Design for the Real World: Human Ecology and Social Change* (1971). Novelist James Baldwin dubbed urban renewal "Negro removal," in anger at the widespread dislocation it brought to black neighborhoods.

While these authors and their allies attracted the notice of some planning and design professionals, their work had little impact on popular thinking—or policy makers. If anything, their advocacy widened the gulf between the evolving values of practitioners and decision makers and the general public. As dissatisfaction with and then disdain for urban renewal grew in the 1970s, it discredited Sert's message of recentralization, too. Urban design coalesced as a discipline just as suburban growth accelerated and the term *sprawl* took hold to describe the increasingly decentralized forms that growth followed in the United States.

Within a decade of the Harvard conference, however, new voices began to emerge from outside the planning and design professions. Over the next fifty years, social commentators, economists, environmentalists, public health officials, preservationists, neighborhood activists, and others—often speaking from disparate perspectives—built a compelling case for recentralization that is the foundation of contemporary urban design. Unlike Sert's call to reinvent cities, these voices framed a vision around reinvigorating cities instead. If anything, that vision today marks suburbs as the targets for reinvention.

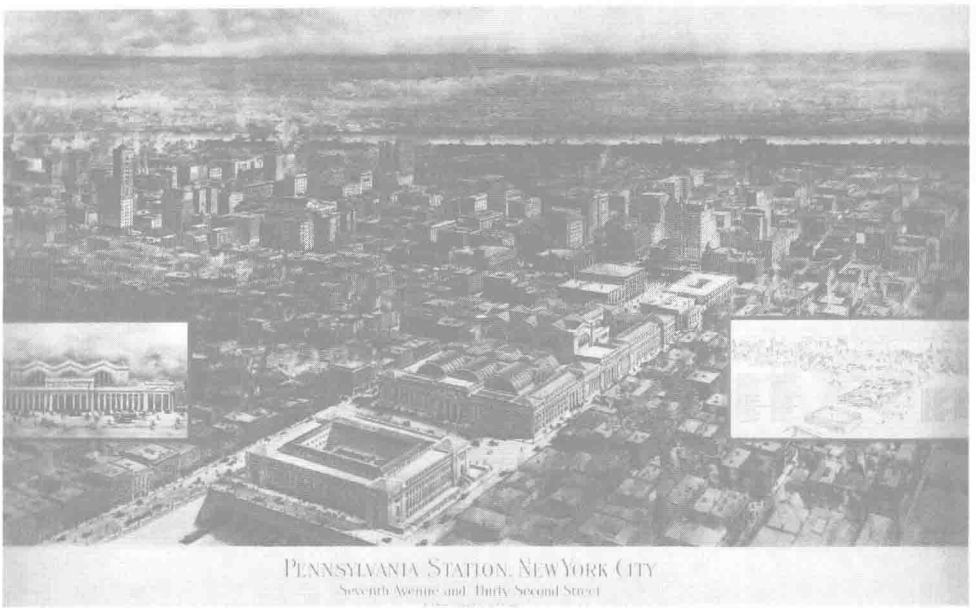
The most influential of the new voices that appeared in the years after the 1956 conference was that of Jane Jacobs. In *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, published in 1961, she evoked the joys of urban streets and condemned both the isolation of suburban life and the damage wrought by urban renewal. *Death and Life* rekindled a passion for urban living that spread gradually over six decades, even though for years critics dismissed its call for a return to traditional urban values as a romanticized ideal that ignored economic and social realities. One year after *Death and Life*, Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* unleashed a passion for protecting the natural environment that took hold much more quickly than Jacobs's paean to urban life. *Silent Spring* inspired the first Earth Day in 1970, which evolved into a global day of recognition of environmental issues. Initially, environmentalists dismissed cities as culprits in polluting air and water. It was not until the 1990s that environmental awareness had a widespread impact on thinking about urban form, yielding a very different understanding of cities' environmental impact.

I.11 Skidmore, Owings & Merrill's design plan for Moynihan Station in Manhattan recaptures much of the grandeur of McKim, Mead & White's Pennsylvania Station, demolished in 1963. The current, underground station would relocate across the street to the dignified Farley Post Office Building, also a McKim design. The plan responds to a widespread yearning for the urban qualities lost to urban renewal and subsequent years of disinvestment. Courtesy SOM, © pixelbypixe

I.12 The SOM plan grafts a glass superstructure onto the neoclassical Farley Building to define a striking arrival area that serves as a memorable new transit-oriented entry to New York. Courtesy SOM, © pixelbypixel

The demolition of New York City's neoclassical Pennsylvania Station in 1963—a case study in urban renewal's undiscerning hostility toward traditional form and embrace of all things "modern"—mobilized a new preservation movement. Preservationists across America condemned the terminal's destruction and mobilized locally to safeguard America's architectural heritage. As a direct result, Congress passed the National Historic Preservation Act in 1966. Heightened awareness of and legal protections for historic preservation had a pervasive influence on urban design. But the most significant outcome of Penn Station's destruction was the enfranchisement of grassroots movements, which became active participants in the process of urban design. In the early 1970s, inspired by early preservation successes, activists in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, New Orleans, and other cities mobilized to fight plans for elevated expressways that would cut through urban neighborhoods. From the mid-1970s on, the influence of local communities grew steadily in shaping urban design proposals and determining the likelihood of their adoption by local governments.

In the late 1970s and 1980s, federal policy turned against cities. When a bankrupt New York City asked for federal financial aid, the *New York Daily News* ran an infamous headline summarizing President Gerald Ford's response: "Ford to City: Drop Dead." President Ronald Regan (who reportedly did not recognize his own Housing and Urban Development secretary, Samuel Pierce, at a White House function in 1980[4]) campaigned against "welfare queens," thereby linking racial hostility and urban poverty, and slashed federal funding to cities by more than 50 percent. African-American leaders began to argue that civil rights and the fate of cities were intertwined; ignoring cities meant ignoring the poor and people of color. Urban leaders began to use the word *equity* in calling for an "urban agenda" that balanced federal spending on suburban highways with investments in mass transit, job training, education, and other programs that contribute to the quality of life of urban residents.



I.13 A 1910 Hughson Hawley rendering of Penn Station and the Farley Post Office complex. Wikimedia

New thinking about cities coalesced around the "smart growth" movement in the 1990s. Organizations like the American Planning Association and the Natural Resources Defense Council insisted that ending sprawl and conducting growth back toward a city's core were essential to protecting the environment. They found models in policies introduced in small cities like Boulder, Colorado, as early as the 1960s, as well as efforts to protect rural land in the Pacific Northwest that led to growth boundaries around Portland (established in 1979), and Seattle (1992). In 1994, Parris Glendening won election as governor of Maryland on a platform calling for the reorientation of state policies to favor growth in existing communities rather than the exploitation of undeveloped land. As governor, Glendening gave smart growth a new level of prominence.

In the early 2000s, new ideas about the role of cities reached ever wider audiences. In an influential 2004 article, *New Yorker* staff writer David Owen turned on its head the conventional wisdom that cities degraded the environment and were less healthy than pristine rural areas. From high levels of transit use to apartment building heating, he catalogued the many ways that Manhattan's density enabled its citizens to use energy far more efficiently—and consequently leave a far smaller carbon footprint—than their friends in the suburbs or the country. Not only did they use resources more efficiently, Manhattan residents walked more often than most Americans, which made them healthier, on average, than their counterparts elsewhere. America's largest city, Owen showed, was its greenest and healthiest. His provocative article, circulated widely (and later expanded into the book *Green Metropolis: Why Living Smaller, Living Closer, and Driving Less Are the Keys to Sustainability*), buttressed a gathering consensus about the need to reverse sprawl to address both and environmental and personal health.[5]

Beginning in 2000, Dr. Richard Jackson—then working for the Centers for Disease Control and