

# Urban Spaces

No.4

## 城市空间与景观设计 4

[美] 约翰·莫里斯·狄克逊 编著

中国建筑工程出版社



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The Design of Public Places

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## Contents by Project Type

**Note:** Most projects in this book include, by their nature, more than one function. A few guidelines to categories below:

- Mixed-Use Developments:** reserved for those with substantial mix of uses within buildings (beyond accessory parking or retail included in buildings listed as office, residential, etc.).
- Communities:** wide mix of uses, typically on cleared land, with new buildings and infrastructure.
- Urban Redevelopment:** large in scope, including existing construction and infrastructure.
- Remodeling/Re-use:** including specifics on re-use of individual buildings.
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## Introduction

**The key characteristics of good urban development can be distilled from a review of current projects.**

In their various ways, the projects presented in this book revitalize the public realm that has been sapped for decades by dispersed development, dominance of the automobile, and misguided planning and zoning policies. As I've examined all of these 150-plus projects, certain of the most promising qualities of urban development for this new century have come to the fore.

One widely accepted goal of urban projects is to achieve a mix of functions that will generate round-the-clock activity. Attendant benefits include the opportunity to walk, not drive, from home to work or shopping and the reduction in total resources devoted to parking – with many of the spaces serving residents at night and workers and shoppers by day. Mixed use also establishes a day-and-evening economic basis for a richer variety of retail and dining facilities. There are rarely good restaurants, at any price point, in districts occupied only by day workers.

Mixing pedestrians and vehicles on the same right of way, reversing decades of planning dogma, has now become a criterion for good urban development – or even good shopping center remodeling. Few people, it turns out, enjoy vast parking lots or garages, but we must not forget that vehicles do little to enhance the pedestrian experience, so the setting shared by pedestrians and vehicles demands subtle design. And some pedestrian-only precincts, which are found in admired historical cities, are still desirable.

A well-designed urban complex projects a strong sense of place. It has memorable architectural elements and/or spatial compositions of its own, and it effectively incorporates – at best capitalizes on – local attributes of climate, topography, and traditions.

Many projects are able to benefit from the reuse of existing structures. The best incorporate them without papering over their design peculiarities, their accumulated scars, or the dissonant juxtapositions that often come with adaptation to new circumstance. No theme-park restorations, please.

Good community or urban redevelopment plans make effective connections with the surrounding community, including but not limited to knitting their streets into existing networks. The kinds of uses accommodated should complement the surrounding area, without undermining existing activities and without creating jarring social shifts at project boundaries. Admittedly, real-world pressures often make such ideal relationships hard to achieve.

Where a project is one element of a larger revitalization process, there is no question that it must be designed

to support that larger set of goals, at best exceeding the requirements of the plans they contribute to.

Good urban projects support public transportation. Density and mix of uses are keys to aggregating enough riders to support a bus or rail line. Clustering higher-density residential around stops or stations also supports adjoining commerce, which in some notable cases makes the transportation node a destination in itself.

Promotion of economic and social integration is an objective of many of our finest urban developments. The separation of people by economic strata, while not totally avoidable, can be reduced in many creative ways. Many of the new communities and neighborhoods presented in this book encourage an economic mix by offering a wide variety of residential units within a small area – studio apartments, lofts, “granny” units over garages – in a fine-grained mix with more lavish residences. It has been proven over and over that, given a sensitively designed environment, affluent residents will happily opt to live among people with a wide range of resources and lifestyles.

Sustainability has become something of a buzz word lately, but there is no question that it is the obligation of all designers – all people – to conserve resources and reduce waste. While one of the proven ways is to encourage walking instead of driving – or even taking the train – there are many other architectural and planning strategies. Much of the savings of energy and material resources are the province of mechanical engineers and product designers, but architects can do much to reduce the demand for artificial lighting, air conditioning, and heating, while choosing building components wisely. Planners and landscape architects can make valuable contributions to minimizing traffic and pollution, promoting natural ventilation, directing rainwater runoff, and providing for natural shade.

Somewhat sadly, many of our most creative urban efforts involve mitigating the effects of earlier public work by adapting thoroughfares built to please traffic engineers to make them appealing to pedestrians, by making freeways more compatible with surrounding neighborhoods, by dividing monumental vacant plazas into places of human scale and activity, and by carving attractive open spaces out of massive building clusters. As the following pages indicate, we are mending our past urban ways at the same time we are creating new environments that foster real public places – environments where people enjoy the company of strangers.

**John Morris Dixon, FAIA**



## Preface

Richard M. Rosan,  
FAIA  
*President,*  
Urban Land Institute

Creating competitive, attractive cities that are cherished for generations is the goal of many cities, developers, planners, and urban designers today. Anyone who works in any aspect of the land use profession affects where and how people live, work, and play. And, while there is much left to be accomplished, people around the world are rediscovering the power of cities to connect people, to give them a sense of pride and belonging.

It is becoming increasingly obvious that as our world becomes more urbanized, cities are struggling with many of the same issues: managing growth, responding to demographic changes, building enough affordable housing, providing adequate transportation options and parking, and in general, finding the best way to rebuild, restore, and renew our urban areas.

The impact of urbanization is evident in countries around the world. People are moving to cities and urban regions as never before. By 2025, the United Nations projects that urban population growth will make up about 90 percent of the world's population growth. It estimates that in 20 years, 85 percent of the population in the United States will live in urban areas; in Europe, 83 percent; in Asia, 55 percent; and Africa, 54 percent.

Even at a 55 percent urbanization rate, Asia's population is so huge that an enormous number of people—well over 1 billion—will be living in urban areas. Currently, China, with 1.3 billion people; and India, with close to 1.1 billion, house more than one-third of the world's population. The U.S. ranks a distant third, with 295 million; followed by Indonesia with 241 million; and Brazil, with 186 million.

We can expect mega cities—a term coined by the UN to describe cities with at least 10 million inhabitants—to become increasingly commonplace. The United Nations projects that in just 10 years more than 20 cities will have more than 10 million people. Of these, only two—New York and Los Angeles—will be in North America. Six cities—four in Asia, two in Latin America—will have populations exceeding 20 million.

Clearly, it's not a matter of whether growth will occur. It's how and where growth will occur. To be sure, growth brings economic and social benefits, but if growth is mismanaged, it also can mean greater poverty, inadequate infrastructure, land scarcity, and a deteriorating environment.

Building competitive cities means building more than just places to live and work. It's about creating places that inspire, places with character, places that draw people through a powerful sense of identity. In cities around the world, changing demographics and changing household formations are having a profound effect on what is built and where it is built.

While every city has its own personality, there seem to be common characteristics behind every successful urban regeneration: strong political leadership; the creation of an environment for intellectual stimulation and creativity—to be a “brain-gain” city rather than a “brain-drain” city; tolerance of diversity; a commitment to provide housing to people with a variety of incomes; a solid track record in creating long-lasting public-private partnerships; a commitment to transit-oriented development and transportation infrastructure; and a dedication by the local officials to aggressively preserve land for parks and open space.

The cities that are able to offer a high quality of life—in the form of efficient transportation, recreational and cultural amenities, diverse neighborhoods, and a safe, clean, lively environment—will be the winners. This applies to both high-growth cities, which are scrambling to keep up with population increases, as well as low-growth cities, which are scrambling to retain and attract residents.

Creating places that give wonderful memories should be the ultimate purpose of urban regeneration. As community builders and place makers, all of us have a tremendous responsibility in shaping both the private and public space in which people carry out their lives.



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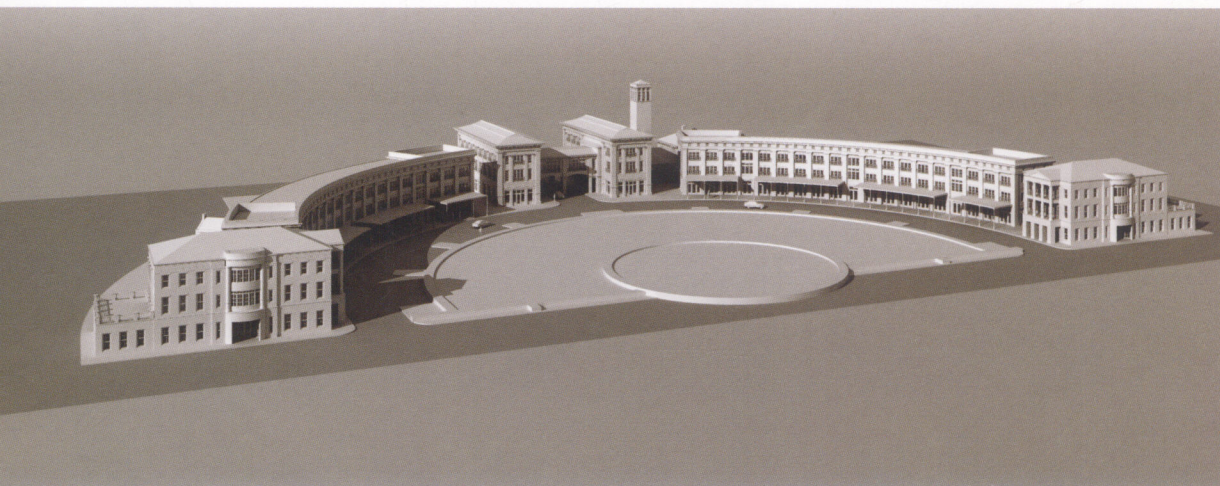
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The distinctive crescent shape of the two-city-block site called for an appropriately formal design response for this mixed-use development. The symmetrical pair of curved buildings, each with about 28,400 square feet, will house residential units over street-level retail, civic, and office spaces. At the far ends will be matched loft buildings of about 10,800 square feet each. The central pair of pavilions will be linked by an over-the-street bridge to form one office building of about 27,400 square feet. Delicate canopies along the curved buildings are patterned after colonnades from the Old Market in Omaha. Smaller two-story "carriage house" residential structures behind the formally laid out buildings will make a scale transition to adjoining neighborhoods. The Classical design of the complex will create "an instant landmark," in the words of planner Andres Duany.







**Opposite, top:** Overall view of crescent around public plaza.

**Opposite, bottom:** Portion of crescent with steel canopies of historical character.

**Above left:** Central pavilions linked by bridge over street.

**Left:** Elevation of one central pavilion.

**Rendering:** Arnold Imaging.





## New Longview Lee's Summit, Missouri



The site of this 260-acre planned community is Longview Farm, the 90-year-old country estate of a lumber baron, which is listed on the Historic Register. The design preserves 14 of the 17 farm structures and integrates them into a walkable environment. Numerous previous proposals for the property had been turned down by the community. A multi-day public design charrette conducted with the community achieved almost unanimous support for this master plan. Months of work were spent with city staff on the details of the rezoning. The mixed-use development will

include 1,100 residential units, 250,000 square feet of retail, and 250,000 square feet of offices, plus space for civic structures and public open spaces totaling 70 acres. A regional arterial road that was planned to bifurcate the site was redesigned as a multilane boulevard that accommodates the traffic while enhancing the community.



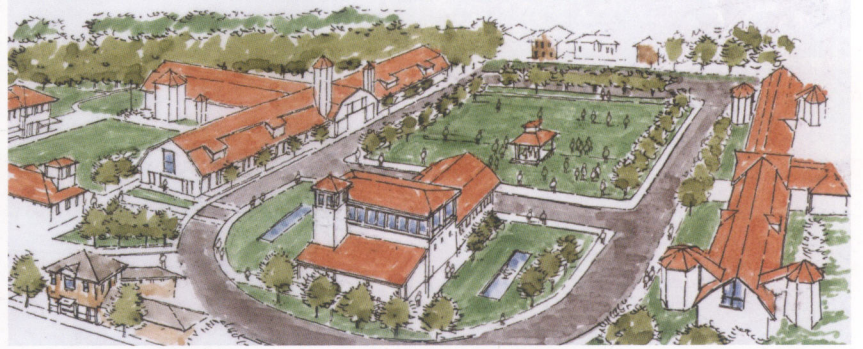
**Above left:** Master plan, with existing mansion at lower right.

**Left:** Park land around mansion.

**Clockwise from photo above:** completed houses; residential neighborhood; civic center reusing farm buildings; multifamily crescent; variety of building types along boulevard; theater; houses and neighborhood retail.











For a 22-acre site adjoining an existing Post-World-War-II neighborhood, planning and architectural design were carried out for 130 residential units. It was essential to make the development attractive yet very affordable. Rezoning for a planned residential district required establishment of strict design regulations. The six types of dwellings include townhouses and single-family houses, ranging in

size from 1,100 to 2,600 square feet and in price from \$150,000 to \$275,000. A pool and clubhouse are included in the project. Existing streets were extended through the new development but "tamed" to reduce speed and discourage through traffic.

**Above:** Typical street and houses.

**Left:** Master plan.

**Below left:** Central green.

**Bottom left and below:** Typical houses nearing completion.





## 180° Design Studio

## Ottawa University Master Plan Ottawa, Kansas

This campus master plan features a new student learning center and upgraded residential and athletic facilities. The objective was to create a stronger campus feeling, with a true center and a series of "outdoor rooms." Parking is dispersed around the perimeter of the site. An axial green at the main entrance offers numerous parking spaces integrated into a formally landscaped setting. Residential buildings line another axial green. A tower marking the center of the campus rises above a circular plaza at its front and aligns on the far side with the 50-yard-line of the athletic field. New buildings are to vary in character from relatively large-scaled and symmetrical for focal buildings to more intimate and irregular for the residential structures, all of them clad in traditional materials.

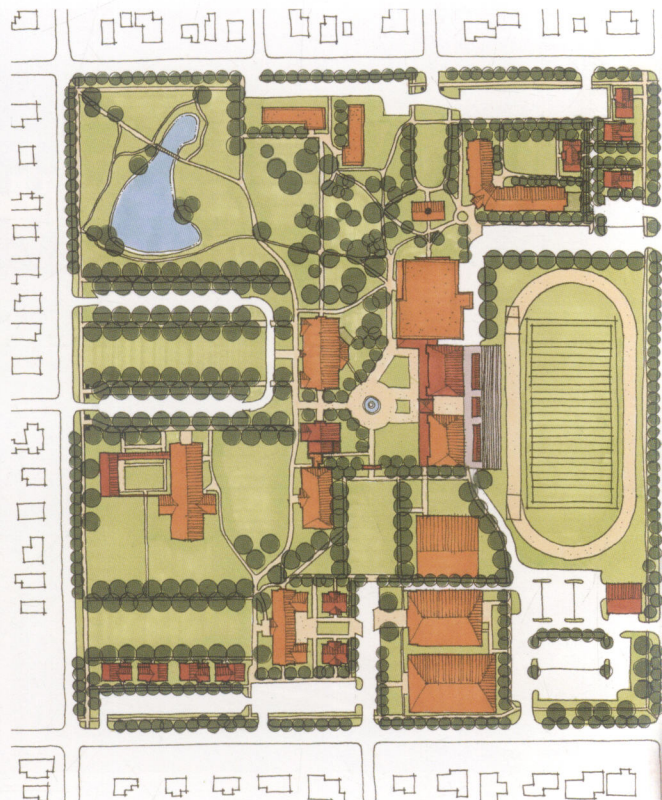


**Top:** Circular plaza and signature tower at campus center.

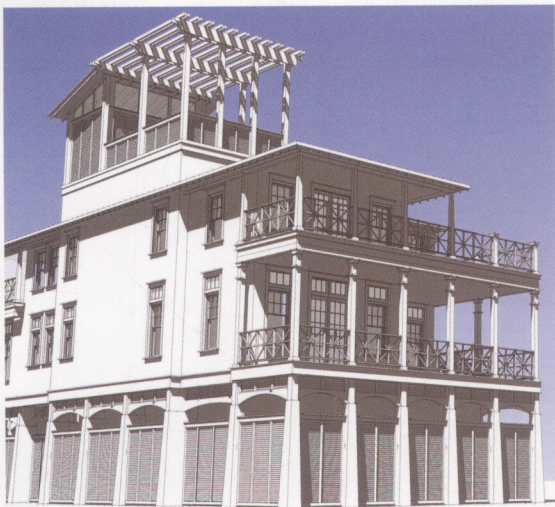
**Above:** Residential green, with small-scaled student housing at right.

**Above right:** Master plan.

**Right:** Axial entrance green.







**Top and above left:** Elevation and digital model of 71st and Metcalf project.

**Above:** Aerial rendering of Union Hill development.

**Left:** Beachtown Galveston Village model home.

**Below:** Longfellow Court residential buildings.

Several residential projects show the firm's adaptation of traditional housing forms to specific circumstances. The 71st and Metcalf development in Overland Park, Kansas, proposes 24 townhouse and flat units, ranging from 650 to 2,000 square feet to serve different markets, on a 2.1-acre suburban infill site. Union Hill, Phase 3, in Kansas City includes apartments, townhouses, and retail on a two-city-block site complicated by steep topography. A single-family model home for Beachtown Galveston Village is meant to establish a design image for the community, dealing effectively with restrictions such as the

raised first floor required at this beachfront location. Longfellow Court in Kansas City, developed by the firm itself, proposes 18 units, including detached single-family, townhouses, duplexes, and flats, in a scheme that achieved unanimous approval for 35 zoning variances.

