Urban Design: Patterns, Scale and Places for People

APA Planning Commissioner Training Workshop
April 16, 2016

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**Urban Design**

**The Function of Urban Design**
- Form, Pattern and Connectivity
- Street Life and Life at the Street Edge
- Design as Community Identity
- Design as an Economic Engine

**Urban Design requires local references to draw upon**
- History and cultural identity
- Current physical resources and constraints
- Aspirations for your community’s future
Urban Design considers the totality of the physical environment

Planning sets policy and plan guidelines

Architecture gives focus to the building site

Urban Design integrates; it is collaborative and interdisciplinary and works at a scale between architecture and town planning
Urban Design considers the totality of the physical environment - *the art of making places for people*

People
Planning
Architecture

“First life, then spaces, then buildings – the other way around never works.” - Jan Gehl, Professor Urban Design, School of Architecture Copenhagen, Denmark
Form Pattern and Connectivity

Urban Design can be thought of in terms of four concepts—

**Form**
- The form of the urban skyline will express the desired balance of competing expectations placed on the land from the market-driven economic value, the scale and context of the surrounding built and natural environments, and the functional response to factors such as climate and human comfort.

**Edges**
- Edges may exist as abrupt divisions in the urban realm but can also provide a contrasting interface to highlight exceptional circumstances that can create unique and positive opportunities.

**Orientation**
- The ability to recognize one's precise physical position in a city helps ensure comfort and security through identifiable landmarks that help humanize the scale of the city into discernible segments.

**Places**
- Places are identifiable as neighborhoods, streetscapes, parks and plazas, that evoke positive human emotions and feelings of comfort arising from positive interactions with the built environment and natural landscape which serve to be retained in memory.
Form - Density, Bulk, Height, Open Space
Density Ranges – Suburban to Urban
1. Building Component and Term Illustrations

Rationale
Some terms discussed in this section are illustrated and identified below, and clarify architectural, urban design, and planning terminology.

Building Components & Terms

**Street Wall & Setbacks**
- Zero Side Setback
- Street Wall (pink surface)
- Zero Setback at back of sidewalk

**Tower Components**
- Tower top
- Tower shaft
- Building Base
- Street Wall
- Elevation view of Park Plaza Tower

**Building & Bulk Control**
- Mechanical Penthouse
- Stepback
- Notch
- Entry
- Ground Sidewalk Level

**Bulk – Height and Mass**
Edges

Boundaries can defined and expressed by
• urban character
• major circulation routes
• natural areas
• rivers and streams
Orientation

- Vistas provide connection to landscape
- Axial views reinforce hierarchy of community values
- Street level breakdown perception of distance
- Solar exposure
Place
Place is a notion of identifiable space with particular qualities within a community

- Neighborhood Scale or smaller
- Purposeful, with meaning
- Sense of respite & comfort
- Safety and refuge
- Historical
- Enjoyment & Activity
Place and Diversity

- Quality and character of public spaces, as well as of its built form. Eclectic
- Inviting streets; walkable, shade, places of rest, sidewalk width, trees, landscaping
Place and Diversity

- Diversity; building ages, types, styles and scale
- Diversity in residential; ownership and rental, micro, small and family
Continuity, Connection, Unity

Continuity, connection, unity can be felt many ways
• Lot size, consistent setbacks, landscaping, sidewalks, bulk control, rhythm, roofs, pattern and materials. We tend to feel more comfortable with consistency.

How do we think about compatibility within existing neighborhoods?
• Continuity, connection, unity is not emulation of a style in a neighborhood. We need to think wider than “pattern book” design solutions.
**Continuity and Connection - Street Patterns**

- Building engagement to pedestrians and the street
- Widths of sidewalks
- Widths of streets, traffic speed
- Street Patterns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Street Patterns</th>
<th>Gridiron (c. 1900)</th>
<th>Fragmented Parallel (c. 1950)</th>
<th>Warped Parallel (c. 1960)</th>
<th>Loops and Lollipops (c. 1970)</th>
<th>Lollipops on a Stick (c. 1980)</th>
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<td><img src="image" alt="Street Patterns Image" /></td>
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Continuity and Connection - Movement

- Barriers to movement – traffic, lack of sidewalks or wide walks and bike paths, areas of crime
- Connectivity – walkable, bikeable, transportation options
- Convenient access to systems – transit, pedestrian and bicycle access;
Continuity, Connection, Unity

Preservation of the past; historic buildings, places and events
Continuity, Connection, Unity

Infill development in existing neighborhoods
Urban Design as Community Identity & Economic Vitality

creating the exceptional

• Design is a fundamental determinate of environmental & economical sustainability
• Design can be quantitatively measurable
• Design is a reflection of you and your aspirations
• Design builds on your history and community identity
Urban Design as Community Identity & Economic Vitality

creating the exceptional

• General Plans, Ordinances, and Guidelines set standards expectations and aspirations
• Implementation process must provide for flexibility
• Attitudes must enable quality and success
Urban Design as Community Identity & Economic Vitality

creating the exceptional

Design builds on your history and community identity