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<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/35v0b85k>

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Publication Date

1982-06-01

Peer reviewed

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Working Paper No. 384

June 1982

Institute of Urban and Regional Development

University of California, Berkeley



TOWARD AN URBAN DESIGN MANIFESTO

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We think it's time for a new urban design manifesto. Almost fifty years have passed since Le Corbusier and the International Congress of Modern Architecture (CIAM) produced the Charter of Athens, and it is over twenty years since the first Urban Design Conference, still in the CIAM tradition, was held (at Harvard in 1957). Since then the precepts of CIAM have been attacked by sociologists, planners, Jane Jacobs, and more recently by architects themselves. But it is still a strong influence and we will take it as our starting point.

Make no mistake, the Charter was, simply, a manifesto: a public declaration that spelled out the ills of industrial cities as they existed in the 1930s and laid down physical requirements necessary to establish healthy, humane and beautiful urban environments for people. It could not help but deal with social, economic and political phenomena, but its basic subject matter was the physical design of cities. Its authors were (mostly) socially concerned architects, determined that their art and

*This work grew, in part, from a seminar at the University of California, Berkeley during the Spring of 1979. The seminar participants, all students, were: Susanne Allen, Hilda Blanco, Karen Burks, Patricia Colombe, Leslie Gould, Moises Kajomovitz, Stanley Kebathi, Vernen Liebmann, Jeffery Luxemberg, Daniel Marks, Diana Martinez, Cibele Rumel, Ignacio San Martin, Georgia Schimenti, and Charles Setchell.

craft be responsive to social realities as well as to improving the lot of man. It would be a mistake to write them off as simply elitist designers and physical determinists.

So the Charter decried the medium-sized (up to six stories) high density buildings with high land coverage that were associated so closely with slums. Similarly, buildings that faced streets were concluded to be detrimental to healthy living. The seemingly limitless horizontal expansion of urban areas devoured the countryside and suburbs were viewed as symbols of terrible waste. Solutions could be found in the demolition of unsanitary housing, the provisions of green areas in every residential district, and new high rise, high density buildings set in open space. Housing was to be removed from its traditional relationship facing streets and the whole circulation system was to be revised to meet the needs of emerging mechanization (the auto). Work areas should be close to but separate from residential areas. To achieve the new city large land holdings, preferably owned by the public, should replace multiple small parcels (so that projects could be properly designed and developed).

Thousands of housing estates and redevelopment projects in socialist and capitalist countries the world over, whether on previously undeveloped land or as replacements for old urban areas, attest to the acceptance of the Charter's dictums. The design notions it embraced have become part of a world design language, not just the intellectual property of an enlightened few, even though the principles have been devalued in so many

developments.

Of course the Charter of Athens has not been the only major urban philosophy of this century to influence the development of urban areas. Ebenezer Howard, too, was responding to the ills of the 19th century industrial city, and the Garden City movement has been at least as powerful as the Charter. New towns policies, where they exist, are rooted with Howard. But you don't have to look to new towns to see the influence of Howard, Olmstead, Wright and Stein. The superbloc notion, if nothing else, pervades large housing projects around the world, in central cities as well as suburbs. The notion of buildings in a park is as common to Charter-inspired development as to garden city designs. Indeed, both movements have a great deal in common: superblocs, separate paths for people and cars, interior common spaces, housing divorced from streets, and central ownership of land. The garden city inspired communities to place greater emphasis on private outdoor space. The most significant difference, at least as they have evolved, is with density and building type, the garden city people preferring to accommodate people in row houses, garden apartments and maisonettes while Corbusier and the CIAM designers went for high rise buildings and, inevitably, people living in flats and at significantly higher densities.

We are less than enthralled with what either the Charter or Garden City Movements have produced in the way of urban environments.

The emphasis of CIAM was on buildings and what goes on within buildings that happen to sit in space, not on public life that takes place constantly in public spaces. Buildings tend to be islands, big or small. They could go anywhere. The orientation is often inward. From the outside the building, like the work of art it was intended to be, sits where it can be seen and admired in full. And because it is large it is best seen from a distance (at a scale consistent with a moving auto). Diversity, spontaneity and surprise are absent, at least for the person on foot. We find little joy or magic or spirit in the Charter cities. They're not urban, to us, except for some definitional status that one might find in a census. Most garden cities, safe and healthy and even gracious as they may be, always remind us more of suburbs than of cities. But then they weren't trying to be cities. The emphasis has always been as much or more on "garden" as on "city".

Both movements represent overly strong design reactions to the physical decay and social inequities of industrial cities. In responding so strongly, albeit understandingly, to crowded, lightless, airless, "utilitiless", congested buildings and cities that housed so many people, the utopians did not inquire what was good about those places, either socially or physically. Did not those physical environments reflect (and maybe even foster) more values that were likely to be meaningful to people individually and collectively, such as those of publicness and community? Without knowing it, maybe these strong reactions to urban ills ended up by throwing out the baby with the bath water?

In the meantime we have had a lot of experience with city building and rebuilding. New spokesmen, with new urban visions, have emerged. As more CIAM-style buildings were built people became more disenchanted. Many began to look back to the old pre-industrial cities, through picturesque lenses. From a concentration on the city as a kind of sculpture garden, the townscape movement, led by the Architectural Review, emphasized "urban experience". This phenomenological view of the city was espoused by Rasmussen, Kepes, and ultimately Kevin Lynch and Jane Jacobs. It identified a whole new vocabulary of urban form; one that depended on the sights, sounds, touch and smells of the city; its materials and textures, floor surfaces, facades, style, signs, lights, seating, trees, sun and shade, all potential amenities for the attentive observer and user. This has permanently humanized the vocabulary of urban design and we enthusiastically subscribe to most of its tenets, though some in the townscape movement ignored the social meanings and implications of what they were doing.

The 1960s saw the birth of community design and an active concern for the social groups affected, usually negatively, by urban design. Designers were the "soft cops" and many involved professionals left the design field altogether, for social or planning vocations, finding the physical environment to have no redeeming social value. But at the beginning of the 1980s the mood in the design professions is a conservative one. There is now a withdrawal from social engagement, back to formalism. Supported by the pseudo meanings of semiology and other abstract

themes, much of architecture has become a dilettante and narcissistic pursuit, a chic component of the high art consumer culture increasingly remote from most people's everyday life, finding its ultimate manifestation in the art gallery and the art book. City planning is too immersed in the administration and survival of housing, environmental and energy programs, responding to budget cuts and community demands, to have any clear sense of direction with regard to city form.

While all these professional ideologies have been working themselves out, massive economic and technological as well as social changes have taken place in our cities. The scale of capitalism has continued to increase, as has the scale of bureaucracy, and the automobile has virtually destroyed cities as they once were. Now the energy crisis is creating a totally new context for the future of urban design.

In formulating a new manifesto, we react against different phenomena than did the leaders of CIAM fifty years ago. The automobile cities of California and the southwest present utterly different problems from those of nineteenth-century European cities, as do the CIAM-influenced housing developments around European, Latin American and Russian cities and the rash of squatter settlements around the fast-growing cities of the Third World. What are these problems?

Poor Living Environments

While housing conditions in most advanced countries have improved in terms of such fundamentals as light, air, and space, the surroundings of homes are still frequently dangerous, polluted, noisy, anonymous wastelands, while travel around such cities has become more and more fatiguing and stressful. But livability is not the only problem.

Giantism and Loss of Control

The urban environment is increasingly in the hands of the large-scale developers and public agencies. The elements of the city inexorably grow in size, massive transportation systems are segregated for single travel modes, and vast districts and complexes are created which make people feel irrelevant.

People, therefore, have less sense of control over their homes, neighborhoods, and cities than when they lived in slower-growing locally-based communities. Such giantism can be found equally in the housing projects of socialist cities and the office buildings and commercial developments of capitalist cities.

Large-Scale Privatization and the Loss of Public Life

Cities, especially American cities, have become privatized, partly because of the consumer society's emphasis on the individual and private sector, creating Galbraith's "private affluence

and public squalor", but spurred on immensely by the spread of the automobile. Crime in the streets is both a cause and a consequence of this trend, which has resulted in a new form of city, one of close, defended islands, with blank and windowless facades surrounded by wastelands of parking lots and fast-moving traffic. As public transit systems have declined there have been fewer places in American cities where people of different social groups actually meet each other. The public environment of many American cities has become an empty desert, leaving public life dependent for its survival solely on planned formal occasions, mostly in protected internal locations.

Centrifugal Fragmentation

Advanced industrial societies took work out of the home, and then the neighborhood, while the automobile and the growing scale of commerce have taken shopping out of the local community. Fear has led social groups to flee from each other into homogeneous social enclaves. Communities themselves have become lower in density and increasingly homogeneous. And so the city has spread and separated out in space to form extensive monocultures and specialized destinations reachable often only by long journeys; a fragile and extravagant urban system dependent on cheap available gasoline and an effective contributor to the isolation of social groups from each other.

Destruction of Valued Places

The quest for profit and prestige, and the relentless exploitation of places that attract the public, has led to the destruction of much of our heritage, of historic places which no longer turn a profit, of natural amenities that become overused. In many cases, as in San Francisco, the very value of the place threatens its destruction as hungry tourists and entrepreneurs flock to see and profit from it.

Placelessness

Cities are becoming meaningless places, beyond their citizens' grasp. We no longer know the origins of the world around us. We rarely know where the materials and products come from, who owns what, who is behind what, what was intended. We live in cities where things happen without warning and without our participation. It is an alien world for most people. Little surprise that most withdraw from community involvement to enjoy their own private and limited worlds.

Injustice

Cities are symbols of inequality. In most cities the discrepancy between the environments of the rich and the environments of the poor is striking. In many instances the environments of the rich, by occupying and dominating the prevailing patterns of transportation and access, make the environments of the poor relatively worse. This discrepancy may be less visible

in the low-density modern city where the display of affluence is more hidden than in the old city, but the discrepancy remains.

Rootless Professionalism

Finally, design professionals today are often part of the problem. In too many cases, we design for places and people we do not know and grant them very little power or acknowledgement. Too many professionals are more part of a universal professional culture than part of the local cultures for whom we produce their plans and products. We carry our "bag of tricks" around the world and bring them out wherever we land. This floating professional culture has only the most superficial conception of particular place. Rootless, it is more susceptible to changes in professional fashion and theory than local events. There is too little enquiry, too much proposing. Quick surveys, instant solutions, and the rest of the time is spent persuading the clients. Limits on time and budgets drive us on, but so does lack of understanding and the placeless culture. Moreover, we designers are often unconscious of our own original roots, which in hidden ways influence our preferences.

At the same time, the planning profession's retreat into trendism, under the positivist influence of social science, has left it virtually unable to resist the social pressures of capitalist economy and consumer sovereignty. Planners have lost their beliefs. While we believe citizen participation is essential to urban planning, professionals must also have a sense of

what we believe is right, even though we may be vetoed.

Goals for Urban Life

We propose therefore a number of goals that we deem essential for the future of a good urban environment. They are livability; identity and control; access to opportunity, imagination and joy; open communities and public life; self-reliance and justice.

Livability

A city should be a place where everyone can live in relative comfort. Most people want a kind of sanctuary for their living environment, a place where they can bring up children, have privacy, sleep, eat, relax, and restore themselves. This means a well-managed environment relatively devoid of nuisance, of overcrowding, noise, danger, air pollution, dirt, trash, and other unwelcome intrusions.

Identity and Control

People should feel that some part of the environment belongs to them, individually and collectively, some part for which they care and are responsible, whether they own it or not. The urban environment should be an environment which encourages people to express themselves, to become involved, to decide what they want and act on it. Like a seminar where everybody has something to say and contribute to communal discussion, so should the urban

environment encourage participation. Urbanites may not always want this. Many like the anonymity of the city, but we are not convinced that the freedom of anonymity is a desirable freedom. It would be much better if people were sure enough of themselves to stand up and be counted. Environments should therefore be designed for those who use them or are affected by them, rather than for those who own them. This should reduce alienation and anonymity (even if people want them); it should increase people's sense of identity and rootedness, and encourage more care and responsibility for the physical environment of cities.

Respect for the existing environment, both nature and city, is one fundamental difference we have with the CIAM movement. Urban design has too often assumed that new is better than old. But the new is only justified if it is better than what exists. Conservation encourages identity and control and, usually, a better sense of community, since old environments are more usually part of a common heritage.

Access to Opportunity, Imagination and Joy

People should find the city a place where they can break from traditional molds, extend their experience, meet new people, learn other viewpoints, have fun. At a functional level, people should have access to alternative housing and job choices; at another level, they should find the city to be an enlightening cultural experience. A city should have magical places, where fantasy is possible, a counter to and an escape from the

mundaneness of everyday work and living. Architects and planners take cities and themselves too seriously; the result too often is deadliness and boredom, no imagination, no humor, alienating places. But people need an escape from the seriousness and meaning of the everyday. The city has always been a place of excitement; it is theater, a stage upon which citizens can display themselves and see others. It has magic, or should have, and this depends on a certain sensuous, hedonistic mood, on signs, on night lights, on fantasy, color and other imagery. There can be parts of the city where belief can be suspended just as in the theater. It may be that such places have to be framed so that people know how to act. Until now such fantasy and experiment have been attempted mostly by commercial facilities, at rather low levels of quality and aspiration, seldom deeply experimental. One should not have to travel as far as the Himalayas or the South Sea Islands to stretch one's experience. Such challenges could be nearer home. There should be a place for community utopias; for historic, natural, and anthropological evocations of the modern city, for encounters with the truly exotic.

Authenticity and Meaning

People should be able to understand their city (or other people's cities), its basic layout, public functions, and institutions; they should be aware of its opportunities. An authentic city is one where the origins of things and places are clear. All this means that an urban environment should reveal its significant meanings; it should not be dominated only by one type of

group, the powerful; neither should publicly important places be hidden. The city should symbolize the moral issues of society and educate its citizens to an awareness of them.

This does not mean that everything has to be laid out as on a supermarket shelf. A city should present itself as a readable story, in an engaging, and if necessary provocative way, for people are indifferent to the obvious, overwhelmed by complexity. A city's offerings should be revealed or they will be missed. This can affect the forms of the city, its signage and other public information and education programs. This may mean encouraging locally based industries and handicrafts, locally grown foods, natural materials, self-help projects, not only to save energy but to understand its source.

While livability, identity, authenticity and opportunity are characteristics of the urban environment that should serve the individual and small social unit, the city has to serve some higher social goals. It is these we especially wish to emphasize here.

Community and Public Life

Cities should encourage participation of their citizens in community and public life. In the face of giantism and fragmentation, public life, especially life in public places, has been seriously eroded. The neighborhood movement, by bringing thousands, probably millions of people out of their closed private lives into active participation in their local

communities has begun to counter this trend, but this movement has had its limitations. It can be purely defensive, parochial and self-serving. A city should be more than a warring collection of interest groups, classes and neighborhoods; it should breed a commitment to a larger whole, to tolerance, justice, law and democracy. The structure of the city should invite and encourage public life not only through its institutions, but directly and symbolically through its public spaces. The public environment by definition should be open to all members of the community, unlike the neighborhood. It is where people of different kinds meet. No one should be excluded unless they threaten the balance of that life.

Urban Self-Reliance

Increasingly cities will have to become more self-sustaining in their uses of energy, and other scarce resources. "Soft energy paths" especially will not only reduce dependence and exploitation across regions and countries, but will help re-establish a stronger sense of local and regional identity, authenticity and meaning.

An Environment for All

Good environments should be accessible to all. Every citizen is entitled to some minimal level of environmental livability, minimal levels of identity, control and opportunity. Good urban design must be for the poor as well as the rich.

Indeed, it is more needed by the former.

And we look towards a society that is truly pluralistic, one where power is more evenly distributed among social groups than it is today in virtually every country, but where the different values and cultures of interest- and place-based groups are acknowledged and negotiated in a just public arena.

These goals for the urban environment are both individual and collective, and as such they are frequently in conflict. The more a city promises for the individual the less it seems to have a public life; the more the city is built for public entities the less the individual seems to count. The good urban environment is one that somehow balances these goals, allowing individual and group identity while maintaining a public concern, encouraging pleasure while maintaining responsibility, open to outsiders while sustaining a strong sense of localism.

An Urban Fabric for an Urban Life

We have some ideas at least for how the fabric or texture of cities might be conserved or created to encourage a livable urban life. We will here emphasize the structural qualities of the good urban environment; qualities which we hope will be successful in creating urban experiences that are consummate with our goals.

Do not misread this. We are not describing all the qualities of a city, we are not dealing with major transportation

systems, with open space, the natural environment, the structure of the large scale city, or even the structure of neighborhoods, but only the grain of the good city.

There are five physical characteristics that must be present if there is to be a positive response to the goals and values central to urban life. They must be designed, they must exist, as a prerequisite of a sound urban environment. All five of them must be present, not just one or two. There are other physical characteristics that are important, but the five are essential. They are: livable streets and neighborhoods, some minimum density of residential development as well as intensity of land use; an integration of activities--living, working, shopping--in some reasonable proximity to each other; a man-made environment, particularly buildings, that define public space (as opposed to buildings that, for the most part, sit in space); and many, many separate distinct buildings, with complex arrangements and relationships (as opposed to few, large buildings).

Let us explain, keeping in mind that all five of the characteristics must be present. People, we have said, should be able to live in reasonable, though not excessive, safety, cleanliness and security. That means LIVABLE STREETS AND NEIGHBORHOODS: with adequate sunlight, with clean air, with trees, vegetation, gardens, open space, pleasantly scaled and designed buildings, without offensive noise, with cleanliness and with physical safety. Many of these characteristics can be designed into the physical fabric of the city.

You, the reader, will say, "Well of course, but what does that mean?" Usually it has meant specific standards and requirements--things like sun angles and decibel levels and lane widths and distances between buildings, and a lot of other things like that. Many researchers have been trying to define the qualities of a livable environment. It depends on a wide array of attributes, some structural, some quite small details. There is no single right answer. We applaud these efforts and have ourselves participated in them. We will say, though, that desires for livability and individual comfort have by themselves led to fragmentation of the city. Livability standards, whether for urban or suburban developments, have often been excessive.

Our approach to the details of this inclusive physical characteristic would center on the words "reasonable, though not excessive . . ." Too often, for example, the requirement of adequate sunlight has resulted in buildings and people inordinately far from each other, beyond what demonstrable need for light would dictate. Safety concerns have been the justifications for ever-wider streets and wide, sweeping curves rather than narrow ways and sharp corners. Buildings are removed from streets because of noise considerations when there might be other ways to deal with this concern. So, while livable streets and neighborhoods are a primary requirement for any good urban fabric, whether for existing denser cities or for new development, the quest for livable neighborhoods if pursued obsessively can destroy the urban qualities we seek to achieve.

A MINIMUM DENSITY is needed. By density we mean a number of people (sometimes expressed in terms of housing units) living on an area of land, or the number of people using an area of land.

Cities are not farms. A city is people living and working and doing the things they do in relatively close proximity to each other.

We are impressed with the importance of density as a perceived phenomenon and therefore relative to the beholder and agree that for many purposes perceived density is more important than an "objective" measurement of people per unit of land. We agree, too, that physical phenomena can be manipulated so as to render perceptions of greater or lesser density. Nevertheless, a narrow winding street, with a lot of signs and a small enclosed open space at the end, with no people, does not make a city. Cities are more than stage sets. Some minimum number of people living and using a given area of land is required if there is to be human exchange, public life and action, diversity and community.

Density of people alone will account for the existence or non-existence of certain uses and services we find important to urban life. We suspect, for example, that the number and diversity of small stores and services--say groceries, bars, bakeries, laundries and cleaners, coffee shops, secondhand stores and the like--that will be found in a city or area is in part a function of density. That is, that such stores are more likely to exist, and in greater variety, in an area where people live in greater

proximity to each other ("higher" density). The viability of mass transit, we know, is in part dependent on the density of residential areas, and in part on the size and intensity of commercial and service destinations. And in turn, more use of transit reduces parking demands and permits increases in density. We are saying that there must be a critical mass of people, and that they must spend a lot of their time in reasonably close proximity to each other, including their homes, if there is to be an urban life. The goal of local control and community identity is associated with density as well. The notion of an optimum density is illusive at best and is easily confused with the health and livability of urban areas, with life styles, with housing types, with the size of area being considered (the building site or the neighborhood or the city), and with the economics of development. A density that might be best for child rearing might be less than adequate to support public transit. Most recently, energy efficiency has emerged as a concern associated with density, the notion being that conservation will demand more compact living arrangements.

Our conclusions, based largely on our experience, as well as the literature, is that a minimum net density (people or living units divided by the size of the building site, excluding public streets) of about 15 dwelling units (30-60 people) per acre of land is necessary to support city life. By way of illustration, that's the density produced with generous town houses (or row houses). It would permit parcel sizes up to 25 feet wide by about 115 feet deep. But other building types and lot sizes

would also produce that density. Some areas could be developed with lower densities, but not very many. We don't think you get cities at 6 dwellings to the acre, let alone on half-acre lots. On the other hand, it is possible to go as high as 48 dwellings units per acre (96 to 192 people) for a very large part of the city and still provide for a spacious and gracious urban life. Much of San Francisco, for example, is developed with three story buildings (one unit per floor) above a parking story, on parcels that measure 25 feet by 100 or 125 feet. At those densities, with that kind of housing, there can be private or shared gardens for most people. No common hallways are required, and people can have direct access to the ground. Public streets and walks adequate to handle pedestrian and vehicular traffic generated by these densities can be accommodated in rights-of-way that are 50 feet wide or less. Higher densities, for parts of the city, to suit particular needs and lifestyles, would be both possible and desirable. We are not sure what the upper limits would be but suspect that as the numbers get much higher than 200 people per net residential acre, for larger parts of the city, the concessions to less desirable living environments mount rapidly.

Beyond residential density, there must be a minimum density (maybe "intensity" is a better word) of people using an area for it to be urban, as we are defining that word. We aren't sure what the numbers are or even how best to measure this kind of density. We are speaking here, particularly, of the "meeting" areas of our city. We are confident that our lowest residential densities will provide most meeting areas with life and human

exchange, but are not sure if they will generate enough activity for the most intense central districts.

There must be an INTEGRATION OF ACTIVITIES--living, working, shopping as well as public, spiritual and recreational activities--in some reasonable proximity to each other.

The best urban places have some mixtures or uses. It is the mixture that in part responds to the values of publicness and of diversity that encourages local community identity. Excitement, spirit, sense, stimulation and exchange are more likely when there is a mixture of activities than when there is not. There are so many examples that we all know. It is the mix, not just the density of people and uses, that brings life to an area, the life of people going about a full range of normal activities without having to get into an automobile.

We are not saying that every area of the city should have a full mix of all uses. That would be impossible. The ultimate in mixture would be for each building to have a range of uses from living, to working, to shopping, to recreation. We are not calling for a return to the medieval city. There is a lot to be said for the notion of "living sanctuaries," that consist almost wholly of housing. But we think these should be relatively small, of a few blocks, and they should be close and easily accessible (by foot) to areas where people meet, to shop or work or recreate or do public business. And the meeting areas, except for a few of the most intensely developed office blocks of a central business district or a heavy industrial area, should have

housing within them. Stores should be mixed with offices. If we envision the urban landscape as a fabric, then it would be a salt and pepper fabric of many colors, each color for a separate use or a combination. Sure, some areas would be much more heavily one color than another or an even mix of colors. Some areas, if you squinted your eyes, or if you got so close as to see only a small, small part of the fabric, would read as one color, a red or a brown or a green. But by and large there would be few, if any, distinct patterns, where one color stopped and another started. It would not be patchwork quilt, or an even-colored fabric. The fabric would be mixed.

In an urban environment, BUILDINGS (and other objects that people place in the environment) SHOULD BE ARRANGED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO DEFINE (and even enclose) PUBLIC SPACE, RATHER THAN SIT IN SPACE.

It is not enough to have high densities and an integration of activities to have cities. A tall enough building with enough people living (or even working) in it, sited on a large parcel, can easily produce the densities we have talked about, and can have internally mixed uses, like most "mixed use" projects. But that building, and its neighbors will be unrelated objects sitting in space if they are far enough apart and the mixed uses might be only privately available. In large measure that is what the Charter of Athens, the garden cities, and standard suburban development produce.

Buildings close to each other along a street, regardless of whether the street is straight, or curved, or angled, tend to define space if the street is not too wide in relation to the buildings. The same is true of a space--a plaza or a square. As the spaces between buildings become larger (in relation to the size of the buildings--up to a point) the buildings tend more and more to sit in space. They become focal points for few or many people, depending on their size and activity. Except where they are monuments or centers for public activities (a stadium or meeting hall) where they represent public gathering spots, buildings in space tend to be private, inwardly oriented. People come to them and go from them in any direction. This is not so for the defined outdoor environment. Avoiding the temptation to ascribe all kinds of psychological values to defined spaces--such as intimacy, belonging, protection--values that are difficult to prove and which may differ for different people, it is enough to observe that spaces surrounded by buildings are more likely to bring people together and thereby promote public interaction. The space can be lineal as with streets or in the form of plazas and squares of myriad shapes. Moreover, interest and interplay among uses is enhanced. To be sure, such arrangements direct people and limit their freedom--they cannot move in any direction from any point--but presumably there are enough choices (even avenues of escape) left open, and the gain is in greater potential for sense stimulation, excitement, surprise and focus. Over and over again we seek out and return to defined ways and spaces as symbolic of urban life emphasizing the public space more than

the private building.

It is important for us to emphasize PUBLIC places and a PUBLIC way system. We have observed that the central value of urban life is that of publicness, of people from different groups meeting each other and of people acting in concert, albeit with debate. The most important public places must be for PEDESTRIANS for no public life can take place between people in automobiles. Most public space has been taken over by the automobile, for travel or parking. We must fight to restore more for the pedestrian. Pedestrian malls are not simply to benefit the local merchants. They have an essential public value. People of different kinds meet each other directly. The level of communication may be only visual, but this itself is educational and can encourage tolerance. The revival of street activities, street vending and street theater in American cities may be the precursor of a more flourishing public environment, if the automobile can be held back.

There must also be symbolic, public meeting places, accessible to all and publicly controlled. Further, in order to communicate, to get from place to place, to interact, to exchange ideas and goods, there must be a healthy public circulation system. It cannot be privately controlled. Public circulation systems should be seen as significant cultural settings where the city's finest products and artifacts can be displayed as in the piazzas of medieval and renaissance cities.

Finally, MANY, MANY DIFFERENT BUILDINGS AND SPACES WITH COMPLEX ARRANGEMENTS AND RELATIONSHIPS are required. The often elusive notion of human scale is associated with this requirement, a notion that is not just an architect's concept but one that other people understand as well.

Diversity, the possibility of intimacy and confrontation with the unexpected, stimulation, are all more likely with many buildings than with few taking up the same ground areas.

For a long time we have been led to believe that large land holdings were necessary to design healthy, efficient, aesthetically pleasing urban environments. The slums of the industrial city were associated, at least in part, with all those small, overbuilt parcels. Socialist and capitalist ideologies alike called for land assembly to permit integrated, socially and economically useful developments. What the socialist countries would do via public ownership, the capitalists would achieve through redevelopment and new fiscal mechanisms that rewarded large holdings. Architects of either (or both) ideological persuasion promulgated or were easily convinced of the wisdom of land assembly. It's not hard to figure out why. The results, whether by big business or big government are more often than not inward oriented, easily controlled or controllable, sterile, large-building projects, with fewer entrances, fewer windows, less diversity, less innovation, and less individual expression than the urban fabric that existed previously or that can be achieved with many actors and many buildings. Attempts to break

up facades or to otherwise articulate separate activities in large buildings are seldom as successful as when smaller properties are developed singly.

Health, safety, and efficiency can be achieved with many smaller buildings, individually designed and developed. Reasonable public controls can see to that. And, of course, smaller buildings are a lot more likely if parcel sizes are small than if they are large. With smaller buildings and parcels, more entrances must be located on the public spaces, more windows and a finer scale of design diversity would emerge. A more public, lively city is produced. It implies more smaller groups getting pieces of the public action, of taking part, of having a stake. Other stipulations may be necessary to keep public frontages live, free from the deadening effects of offices and banks, but small buildings will help this more than large ones. There need to be large buildings, too, covering large areas of land, but they will be the exception, not the rule, and should not be in the centers of public activity.

All These Qualities . . . and Others

A good city must have all these qualities. Density without livability can return us to the slums of the nineteenth century. Public places without small scale fine grain development would give us vast overscale cities. As an urban fabric they stand a good chance of meeting many of the goals we outlined. They directly attend to the issues of livability though they are aimed

especially at encouraging public places and a public life. Their effects on personal and group identity are less clear, though the small scale city is more likely to support identity than the large scale city. Opportunity and imagination should be encouraged by a diverse and densely settled urban structure. This structure should also create a setting which is more meaningful to the individual inhabitant and small group than the giant environments presently being produced. There is no guarantee that this urban structure will be a more just one than those presently existing. However, in supporting the small against the large, more justice for the powerless may be encouraged.

Still, an urban fabric of this kind cannot by itself meet all these goals. Other physical characteristics are important to the design of urban environments. Open space, to provide access to nature, as well as relief from the built environment is one. So are definitions, boundaries if you will, that give location and identity to neighborhoods (or districts) and to the city itself. There are other characteristics as well, public buildings, educational environments, places set aside for nurturing the spirit, and more. We still have work to do.

Many Participants

While we have concentrated on defining physical characteristics of a good city fabric, the process of creating it is crucial. As important as many buildings and spaces are many participants in the building process. It is through this involvement

in the creation and management of their city that citizens are most likely to identify with it, and conversely to enhance their own sense of identity and control.

An Essential Beginning

But the five characteristics we have noted are essential to achieving the values central to urban life. They need much further definition and testing. We have to know more about what configurations create public space: about maximum densities, about how small a community can be and still be urban (some very small Swiss villages fit the bill and everyone knows some favorite examples), about what is perceived as big and what small under different circumstances, about landscape material as a space definer, and a lot, lot more. When we do know more we will be still further along toward a new urban design manifesto.

We know that any ideal community, including the kind that can come from this manifesto, will not always be comfortable for every person. Some people don't like cities and aren't about to. Others, who do, will not be enthralled with all of what we propose.

Our urban vision is, in part, rooted in the realities of earlier, older urban places that many people, including many utopian designers, have rejected, often for good reasons. So our utopia will not satisfy all people. That's all right. We like cities. Given a choice of the kind of community we would like to live in, the sort of choice earlier city dwellers seldom had, we

would choose to live in an urban, public community that embraces the goals and displays the physical characteristics we have outlined. Moreover, we think it responds to what people want, and that it will promote the good urban life.