

# URBAN PARKS OR ANTI-URBAN VACUUMS?

Peter Boyle

The recent campaign by 'The Age' for a park on the vacant Queen Victoria Hospital site in Melbourne raises some questions about our perceptions of urban parks, their role within the city and what these parks should be. The fondness which Australians show for their parks has grown out of an anti-urban attitude inherited from our Anglo-Saxon forebears. Because of this attitude many believe that parks are intrinsically good places contributing positively to their settings. The reality is often the opposite. 'Parks are not automatically anything' (Jacobs, 1961) and in fact these volatile places are often the site for a range of undesirable and anti-social activity. Rather than contributing positively to an area they can be unpleasant, unsafe and uncared for vacuums within the urban fabric.

Why are some parks, then, more successful than others? Why, in some cases, even after they have had large sums of money spent upon all sorts of interventions reflecting the latest design trends do they still remain little used and unsuccessful? What are the physical characteristics present in robust urban parks attracting a diversity of users throughout the day and the year?

Research conducted over the last European summer as part of proposals made for a major site in Prague identified the following characteristics associated with parks in urban settings that sustain diverse activity.

**1. Integration into the Grid.** People will tend to use a park more when it is readily accessible during their normal day to day activity. Its location in relation to other uses and the movement patterns of the city

will be the primary determinant of the level of use that it receives. Therefore it should be located on a route that connects it with other areas of the city and within 250 metres of a local centre or population centre. It should connect clearly to the surrounding street network and support easy access from nearby uses.

**2. The Edge.** Urban parks are part of the public realm, not separate to it, and so depend upon public use and surveillance for the maintenance of acceptable behaviour within them. Therefore, the edge of the park should be a zone of transition between the street and the park. It should be visually, if not functionally, open inviting entry. Uses that support and relate to each other and to the park should be encouraged on the streets surrounding the park, such as cafes and restaurants, shops, public facilities like libraries and schools, as well as housing and workplaces.

**3. A Diversity of Spaces and Activities.** A robust park is one that provides for the widest range of uses without undue conflict between the users of the space. Therefore, the park should be designed to support use by, and be comfortable for, groups such as children, teenagers, the elderly and the disabled as well as those who are more able to more easily exercise their choice.

**4. Ecology.** A naturally diverse setting will begin to define and establish a sense of place for the park particularly if it grows out of the local identity of the area. At the same time an ecologically diverse park is able to be managed more as a closed system creating the potential for a more sustainable future.

# URBAN DESIGN FORUM

ISSUE No.26

JUNE 1994



▲ Southbank Park, Brisbane - a very recent and very popular central park on the former Expo site."

**5. Management.** Urban parks like the rest of the public realm require ongoing management of natural and cultural processes. People can feel threatened within parks and they look to the presence of others, particularly officers, for a sense of security. Therefore, both formal and informal management of parks are desirable to support a sustained level of activity. Encourage the vending of appropriate products such as food, flowers, arts and crafts, cycle or skate hire on the edges of the park or on streets adjacent to the park. The development of activity programs and

calendars of events such as concerns, drama, and festivals can be used to draw people.

Often the sole criticism of a park's worth as a setting for human behaviour rests upon its visual character rather than its capacity to support sustained and diverse activity by a range of users.

Peter Boyle is a landscape architect and urban designer. He is director of the firm Urbanitis in Melbourne.



▲ Option 1B "Central alignment, tunelled; Grade separated at Princes Highway, Elevated over Marsh Street, Central Station"

## NORTH ARNCLIFF: FIRST CHARENTE IN NSW

by Wendy Morris

A 45 hectare industrial area in Sydney's inner southern city of Rockdale was the focus of the most recent Australian charrette. This little known area is about to be put on the map in a big way with the proposed M5 motorway and Airport Rail link both planned to terminate in its midst. Already bisected by two rail lines and an above ground heritage sewer and bounded by formerly industrial waterways and the Princes Highway, the incorporation of this new infrastructure posed both problems and opportunities. Could a new station provide the basis of the area's revitalisation to an urban village? Could the existing viable industry be substantially maintained? How could re-development occur sympathetically around a major heritage site, Tempe House? How could the noise and visual intrusion of a motorway be managed?

The Rockdale Council, supported by two key landholders, commissioned consultants Devine Erby Maslin together with the Fisher Stewart team to conduct a charrette, under the leadership of Paul Murrain, to investigate by design the above issues and produce a series of detailed options for future development of the area.

The charrette process, in contrast to conventional planning processes, was regarded as providing the only effective way of integrating consideration of a range of complex and inter-dependent matter

together with extensive community and landholder consultation.

The charrette studio was set up in a disused factory in the area, providing convenience for the community, and an unusual setting for the numerous meetings with government agencies, developers and other stakeholders.

By the end of the intensive five day event, a combined new route was proposed for both the motorway and the rail line, which positioned a new station central to the area and minimised the barrier effects of the motorway. This option, along with others, was explored to test its potential for re-development into a higher density, mixed use, walkable and transit-supportive community, together with its impact on heritage and natural features.

The North Arncliffe charrette again highlighted the benefits of this simultaneously interactive, public, enquiry-by-design process when dealing with complex issues coupled with strong community interest. Landowners, residents and environment groups all expressed the common view that they had been able to have a real input into the process and the outcomes.

Further information: Stephen Goldie, Director of Planning, Rockdale Council, ph: (02) 567 1174.

# letter to the editors

Dear Editors

## A NATIONAL REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE IN URBAN DESIGN

It was most enlightening to see coverage of two fundamental but normally ignored issues in your Urban Design Forum of March 1994.

The first, in "What wasn't said" by Leigh Woolley, highlighted the hidden potential and opportunity area of "regional" urban design. He rightfully called for the inclusion of "regional" design and development agendas for the Nation's diverse non-metropolitan regions and noted the possibility that the make up of the PM's Urban Design Task Force might maintain "...the traditional Bi polar metropolitan bias, to urban issues."

Many of Australia's regional cities and towns maintain a "sense of place", urban design and visual environment/precinct, status unmatched in capital cities.

There is a plethora of existing urban design opportunities waiting for "population". Take the high quality of traditional townscapes of many of the Victorian Central Goldfield's cities and towns, Bendigo, Ballarat, Maldon, Rushworth and Beechworth, the power of Whyalla's steel townscape near the lookout and beach, the grandeur of (little known) Rockhampton's Heritage Riverfront and the urban seascapes of Port Lincoln, Warrnambool and the village atmosphere of Bowral, Hahndorf and the civic urban order of newer cities such as Mildura.

Of course many such cities and towns did not have the urban (over population) development pressures that caused the denuding of many of the capital cities of urban design quality. In many regional instances it is a case of conservation and enhancement of a wealth of existing assets rather than with the capital cities, trying to again create, mitigate the threats or

rescue, last vestiges of their traditional urban fabric and design excellence. Initiatives that now present great monetary and community cost and difficulty.

Such urban design qualities are a very cogent urban settlement competitive advantage, a visual, spiritual and cultural edge. As such they substantially add to the case for stimulating non-metropolitan Regional development. It is to be hoped that the Task Force will identify this situation and have due regard to the difference of Regional contexts. Until regional centres are seen as compact sophisticated urban centres, often of high urban design quality in a rural setting, rather than "country towns" and regional development is seen as an additional and superior option to "consolidation" in urban settlement pattern matters, the unsustainable population pressures on metropolitan cities and urban design futures, will continue.

Secondly, John Lewis' philosophical article on the definition of urban design and "black hole" theory (and counter force)

was most apt. Undoubtedly most urban design initiatives whether micro (a townscape initiative), or macro (a national urban design taskforce) are driven by elements such as opportunity, commitment, politics and community lobbying and energy, usually at grass roots level. In practise the jigsaw or project by project approach inevitably occurs. Strategic and Holistic design plans are desirable, but even then achievement will be incremental. I concur with the conclusion that the key to outcomes is for urban designers and planners to engage in such driving forces that Lewis describes as the "coal face"; if urban design resources of the Nation are not to remain on butter paper or gather dust at the back of the office."

Yours faithfully

Norm Cameron

**Norm Cameron is a Town and Regional Planner, City of Bendigo Member Federal Government Regional Development Task Force**

## Melbourne's Pedestrian Spaces

- sitting down on the job? Nathan Alexander & Philip Morey

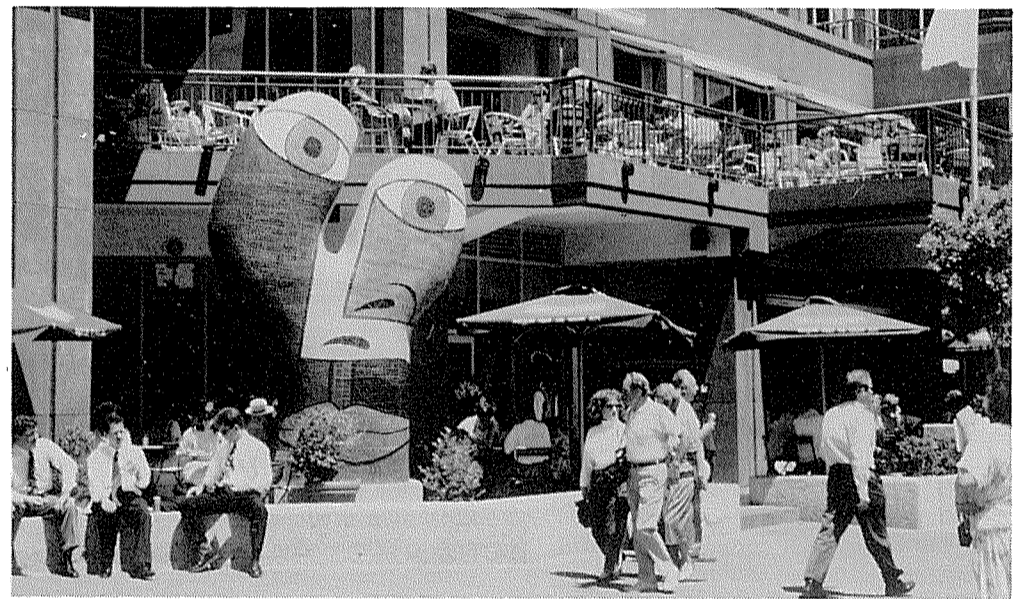
Consider your city's three busiest pedestrian spaces. How well are they used? Melbourne found out recently as part of a study, Places for People: Central Melbourne 1994, to be released in August. Jan Gehl, an urban designer and researcher from Copenhagen, collaborated in the work. Through him, we also know the use of Copenhagen's spaces.

We went to our three busiest pedestrian spaces, Southbank at Southgate, Bourke Street Mall, and Swanston Street Walk. We chose a balmy weekday when no special events were on, but when the greatest number of people would be out enjoying

themselves spending time in the city. We counted the number of people inhabiting the spaces, not simply using them as through routes. We counted people standing around or sitting in outdoor cafes, public seats, steps and ledges. How much are these spaces used?

Most of the people in Southbank sit on the terraces outside the cafes. (The plan shows street cafe areas bounded by dashed lines.) Viewing the city skyline and watching the world go by is so attractive that Southbank is our busiest space - over ten people every hundred square metres of pedestrian outdoor space.

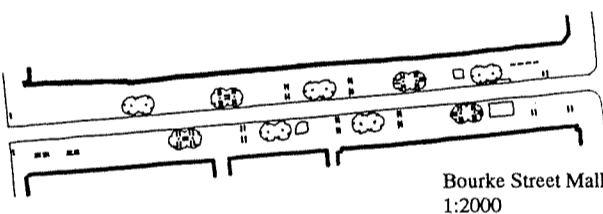
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▲ Southbank Promenade one of Melbourne's new pedestrian spaces.

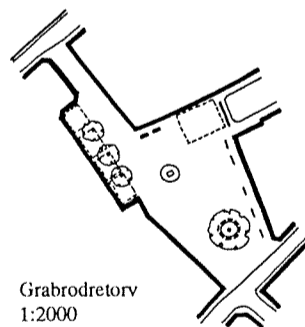
### Bourke Street Mall

1. Total area	6600 m2
2. Pedestrian area	5150 m2
3. Seating capacity on seats or benches	336
4. Seating capacity per unit area	65/1000 m2
5. Max. recorded no. of people sitting	203
6. Max. recorded public seating utilisation	60 %
7. Most use of secondary seating	65
8. No. of street cafe seats	0
9. Max. recorded no. people in cafe seats	N/A
10. Max. recorded cafe seating utilisation	N/A
11. Max. recorded stationary activities	
12. 12:30	382
13. Stationary activities per unit area	7.4/100m2



### Grabrodretov

1. Total area	3350 m2
2. Pedestrian area	3000m2
3. Seating capacity on seats or benches	60
4. Seating capacity per unit area	20/1000 m2
5. Max. recorded no. of people sitting	51
6. Max. recorded public seating utilisation	85 %
7. Most use of secondary seating	5
8. No. of street cafe seats	248
9. Max. recorded no. people in cafe seats	240
10. Max. recorded cafe seating utilisation	97%
11. Max. recorded stationary activities	
12. 15:00	596
13. Stationary activities per unit area	19.8/100 m2

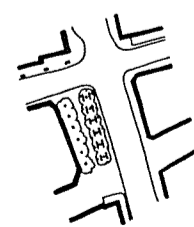


### Gammeltovej

1:2000

### Gammeltovej

1. Total area	3300 m2
2. Pedestrian area	2000 m2
3. Seating capacity on seats or benches	88
4. Seating capacity per unit area	28/1000 m2
5. Max. recorded no. of people sitting	56
6. Max. recorded public seating utilisation	64%
7. Most use of secondary seating	1
8. No. of street cafe seats	40
9. Max. recorded no. people in cafe seats	40
10. Max. recorded cafe seating utilisation	100%
11. Max. recorded stationary activities	
12. 15:00	444
13. Stationary activities per unit area	22.2/100 m2



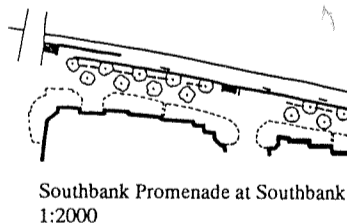
### Magazins Torv

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### Magazins Torv

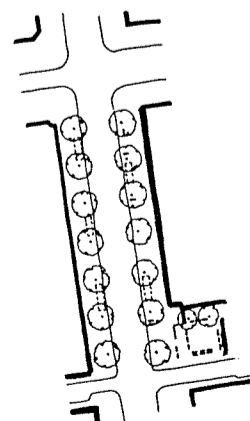
1. Total area	1050 m2
2. Pedestrian area	450 m2
3. Seating capacity on seats or benches	64
4. Seating capacity per unit area	142/1000 m2
5. Max. recorded no. of people sitting	34
6. Max. recorded public seating utilisation	53%
7. Most use of secondary seating	2
8. No. of street cafe seats	100
9. Max. recorded no. people in cafe seats	32
10. Max. recorded cafe seating utilisation	32%
11. Max. recorded stationary activities	
12. 16:00	80
13. Stationary activities per unit area	17.7/100m2

1:2000



### Southgate

1. Total area	4800 m2
2. Pedestrian area	4800 m2
3. Seating capacity on seats or benches	116
4. Seating capacity per unit area	24/1000 m2
5. Max. recorded no. of people sitting	92
6. Max. recorded public seating utilisation	79 %
7. Most use of secondary seating	61
8. No. of street cafe seats	516
9. Max. recorded no. people in cafe seats	441
10. Max. recorded cafe seating utilisation	85 %
11. Max. recorded stationary activities	
12. 20:30	494
13. Stationary activities per unit area	10.3/100m2



### Swanston Street between Bourke and Little Collins Streets

1:2000

### Swanston Street between Bourke & Lt Collins Sts

1. Total area	3650 m2
2. Pedestrian area	2300 m2
3. Seating capacity on seats or benches	96
4. Seating capacity per unit area	42/1000 m2
5. Max. recorded no. of people sitting	31
6. Max. recorded public seating utilisation	32 %
7. Most use of secondary seating	8
8. No. of street cafe seats	110
9. Max. recorded no. people in cafe seats	49
10. Max. recorded cafe seating utilisation	45 %
11. Max. recorded stationary activities	
12. 13:30	120
13. Stationary activities per unit area	5.2/100 m2

# UDF CONFERENCE REPORT

## METROPOLIS NOW : getting it right

Juris Greste

This was the somewhat perplexing as well as tantalising title of a three day conference in Brisbane, March 14-16.

In the dictionary sense of 'metropolis' (the main city) it is inevitable. Does this limit the scope of the conference to Brisbane? Metropolis Now or later. Do we have any choices? Getting it right. Getting only our main cities right? Right for whom? Have we learned nothing from 7,000 years of urban civilisation? Thus the conference certainly lived up to the uncertain expectations of a cocktail with an ambiguous label.

Conferences are often like the mining process for rare minerals. A lot of material gets turned over and sifted. The chances of finding what you are looking for vary. Often it is more useful to yarn with the fellow "diggers" about other prospects and experiences.

However, the March "operation" was not without some gain. Even if it did not turn up many diamonds, here are a few semi-precious pieces.

● In opening the proceedings Brisbane's Lord Mayor Ald. Jim Soorley noted five important points for good cities. One of those was the social element. "Have we made 'people' the central element of planning" remained a rhetorical question. However, it was encouraging that the leader of the biggest local government area in Australia raised it at all.

● Jan Caulfield and John Wanna in their joint paper "Federalism and the Problem of Co-ordination in Planning Policy" raised numerous interesting questions. However, what caught my attention was their reference to the House of Representatives Standing Committee for Long Term Strategies 1992 report "Patterns of Urban

Settlement" conclusion (among others) that Commonwealth policy initiatives had a greater impact on urban form and use of infrastructure than did state planning policies. This will be of little surprise to some. Yet it is likely that the significance and gravity of this conclusion will continue to be underestimated. Fuel pricing, roads funding, automotive industry strategies and national housing policies will continue shaping unsustainable urban sprawl while local authorities and urban designers desperately try to stem the tide with ladles (un-researched guidelines and grossly underfunded campaigns).

● Ray Block, Financial Consultant, SBC Australia Limited, reminded us to distinguish between the speculators and the investors. Good cities can only come about by investment, not speculation. Thus we need long term goals and strategies because "the game is not played in a day."

● Some salutary observations and rousing commentary on the present quality of leadership (or lack of it) from Ivan Deveson AO, Chairman, Seven Network. A few memorable phrases:

- participation and consensus-seeking has diluted decisiveness
- egos interfere with teamwork. We must make 2 + 2 = 5
- get rid of the 'cost plus' mentality
- good cities attract good people.

Pity that those who most needed to hear this inspiring 'sermon' were probably not there.

● Robert McNulty, President, Partners for Livable Places, has been a welcome frequent visitor to this continent - yet probably not frequent enough. Highlights from his always positive and provocative thoughts were:-

- "The physical design of our communities creates a backdrop to act out civic dramas." (As well as personal lives).
- The key concept is livability, but livability must be defined by criteria, which in turn are founded on benchmarks, supported by research.
- "Livability - as has also been said about great architecture - often lies in the details."
- Focus on the least advantaged in the city and be inclusive.
- Actions speak louder than strategic planning.

● One speaker who seldom fails to make his audience sit up is Robert Gottlieb, Executive Chairman and Editorial Director BRW Publications. To return to the mining metaphor, it was like striking a lode. Some of the bigger nuggets were:-

- Demographic and lifestyle shifts will wrought important changes on suburbs.
- We can do anything - if we really want to!
- The year 2000 Olympics in Sydney will uncover to the rest of the world our biggest asset - space. We must manage it wisely.

● The last word in this review must go to Hugh Kellas, Administrator, Policy Department, Greater Vancouver Regional District. They seem to be achieving urban regional goals many of us dream about. Having outlined the choices and set some goals for greater Vancouver, Kellas States unequivocally "Business as usual will not get us there."

Statistics can be quite illuminating. Of the 177 registered delegates 10% were presenters, 35% came from the private sector, 8.4% were practicing planners, 5.6% represented architectural practices, 73% were Queenslanders.

Following Metropolis Now was a day of CITY IMAGE 94 deliberations. This was a follow-on conference after a similarly entitled event in 1990. After the usual

formalities and another opening by Mayor Soorley (it was purely co-incidental that our local government elections were a fortnight following) Assoc Prof Gordon Holden set the scene and structure for the day - why?, what?, how?, and test!

Most of the faces in the audience were different from the previous three days. They were probably people closer to the coal face, expecting some tools and techniques to clear the mine shaft. The Why? part was ably addressed by Robert McNulty. He confronted the substantially Brisbane audience with the uneasy observation that Brisbane really has not worked out its place in the region (other than being the state capital). Does Brisbane have a place in the "specialty" city market? Is there a lifestyle in Brisbane that cannot/is not replicated elsewhere? This is a question that all cities must find an answer for to compete in the global/national city stakes. Brisbane is still looking for that definition.

The old hands of Wendy Morris and Harry Bechervaise maintained a hard edge on the How? component with their experience based presentations - Wendy on the use of design workshops, charrettes, design briefs, guidelines and performance codes and Harry on CAD based models for safeguarding public amenity in the street.

Beyond that most of the rest of the day had difficulty making contact with the ground. To mix the metaphor, the aroma from the kitchen was promising but many of us walked away hungry. There seems little doubt on the merits of the why? However, before we dwell on the "how" and "test" we must put a lot more effort into the "what" part or we will not know what we are digging for. And "business as usual" will probably not give us the answer either.

Juris Greste is an urban design consultant based in Brisbane.

## Snippets from the west .....

### Third National Forum On Urban Design

Forum 94 is to be held on Rottne Island, near Perth, between 29 September and 1 October, timed to coincide with school holidays and cheap return flights (particularly when the West Coast Eagles show the rest of Oz how to play footy once again!). We will have a very lively forum on Rottne with, at least, one international keynote participant. (Kenneth Greenberg from Toronto, has expressed his interest in participating). It should also be a good time for collecting new vintages from the South West, the Great Southern and the Swan Valley. See details in Conference Calendar.

### Urban Villages

The study "Urban Villages for Perth", undertaken for Department of Planning and Urban Development, Homeswest and the Shire of Swan, by Hocking Planning and Architecture Pty Ltd, in association with Anne Dunlop, Jan Martin, Wendy Morris, Arup and Associates and Turen Property Services, is now available from DPUD, 469-489 Wellington Street, Perth, WA 6000, at a cost of \$10.00 plus postage.

The Shire of Serpentine - Jarrahdale, located on the south-eastern corner of the Perth metropolitan region, has shortlisted consultancy teams to undertake a Green Towns/Urban Villages study over the next 5 months. The study will be well advanced by the time of Forum 94.

The Subiaco Urban Village contract between the State Government and the City of Subiaco was finalised last week. Forbes and Fitzharding have been appointed the urban design consultants for the project, by Landcorp, prior to the establishment of the Subiaco Urban Village Redevelopment Authority.

### and Grand Projects ....

Richard Court's Liberal Government (having replaced the Council of the City of Perth with Commissioners), is contemplating a series of "Grand Projects" for Perth. The Premier is particularly interested in these projects. We are hopeful that a number of important announcements will be made before Forum 94, which will provide plenty of grist for our Rotto deliberations.

## from elsewhere .....

### Like a Phoenix Arising ....

Arts Victoria, the Ministry responsible for promoting and developing the Arts in the state that likes to see itself as the capital of Australian culture, has recently disposed of its advisory committee on Art in Public Spaces. Over the years, this committee has been successful in initiating and guiding a number of public artworks, the most recent being the MCG sculpture as part of the "Great Southern Stand" project. There were also numerous smaller, "placemaking" projects, such as the community centre at Box Hill, which featured a true collaboration between the landscape architect (Kevin Taylor), the architects (Greg Burgess Architects), the artist ( Maggie Fooke) and the community.

The committee's demise is at least partly because public art is enjoying an historic high point, with a number of projects brokered outside the committee process, and with the Melbourne City Council committing itself to "a percent for arts" policy. Almost certainly, the ever tightening budget was a factor: committee members started to get the hint when first the secretarial support was withdrawn, and then even the coffee!

Still, art must go on. Many of the members of the committee, and others who have been associated with it over the years, felt there was still a need for a group to act as an advocate and for public art and as a focus for discussion generally. In a sense, both Arts Victoria and the committee agree that the public arts scene in Victoria has "matured", to the point where the advocacy role should move out of the bureaucracy and take on a life of its own. The proposal is to start an "Urban Arts Forum", as a sort of sibling to Urban Design Forum, and with much the same loose structure. It is seen as a relatively informal group of people with interests or experience in placing art into the public environment. It will retain a link back to Arts Victoria but will be essentially independent. For further information, contact Stephen Axford (03)628 5470 Department of Planning and Development, 477 Collins Street, Melbourne.

### New Victorian Residential Code

New medium density housing in Melbourne is now regulated by an urban design and performance-based code. The Victorian Code for Residential Development: Multi-dwellings was introduced in December 1993. Copies are available from the Department of Planning and Development Bookshop, PO Box 2240T, Melbourne

3001, for \$12 (including postage).

### Ryde Urban Village Study

The Ryde City Council has just begun a study to consider restructuring their municipality into a series of urban villages in order to enhance its economic capacity. This innovative study has aptly been awarded to the Australian Centre for Innovation and International Competitiveness. This project provides an excellent opportunity to further investigate the links between employment and urban form.

### Better Cities Program Back On Track

Encouraging reports are coming in from round the country about the various Better Cities programs that involve new public transport infrastructure. They are now increasingly focusing on design of surrounding new urban development to ensure it is transit-supportive.

### Prime Ministers Urban Design Task Force

The Task Force has met approximately monthly since October and is currently preparing its report, anticipated to be delivered to the PM about July. In responding to its charter, the group has focussed on the broad influences on Australian urban form, and will be highlighting ways in which development processes, government policies, professional practice, design education and the media can be redirected to better value and enhance the public realm of Australian cities and towns.

Use of the Bourke Street Mall is over seven people every 100 m2. The public seating is also well occupied. Unlike Southbank, the Mall has no street cafes, but it does have a lot more buskers and other street performers, and people selling on the street.

Swanston Street Walk is the newest kid on the block, and its busiest section is between Bourke and Little Collins Street. Here the number of people standing or sitting around is half that of Southbank, and the seats outside the five greasy spoon cafes aren't used much. The Walk has lots of potential for more intensive use. Surveys show that use by pedestrians has increased since partial pedestrianisation was implemented.

For Melbourne these places have a lot of street life. These three spaces which have all been created or revamped in the last few years, seem to be either accepted or on the way to acceptance by the people of Melbourne.

Is Melbourne's street life up to the world's best practice? The figures for Copenhagen's three busiest spaces suggest we have some way to go. That city's busiest space receives twice the use per square metre as Melbourne's best. Why is this so? Should we be concerned?

Part of the explanation may be that we've been observing these spaces for less time than the Danish. We haven't yet surveyed use at the very peak of the busiest days. For example, Swanston Street certainly has lunchtimes when people occupy more than one third of the public seats at one time. Even assuming some gain here, the use figures won't double.

Seating may offer a partial explanation. Melbourne's three spaces average 57% peak occupancy, Copenhagen's 67%. Perhaps Copenhagen's seats are more comfortable, or better positioned. Perhaps more people are strolling past! Certainly

seating capacity is not lacking in Melbourne's three spaces. Melbourne's spaces have an average of forty-five seating places per 1000 m2 to Copenhagen's thirty-nine.

Copenhagen's spaces are smaller on average, and are clearly swellings in the street network, places to rest. Melbourne's spaces are all linear, long and narrow, suggesting movement, places to pass through. Copenhagen's three spaces are older, and are either part of the extensive network of purely pedestrian streets that crosses the city centre or very close to it. These reasons go some way to explaining the greater use, but are not sufficient in themselves.

The prime reason Copenhagen's spaces are twice as busy as Melbourne's seems to have little to do directly with physical design. Copenhagen's spaces simply have more people standing in them - 59% of the total compared to Melbourne's 17%. More cultural and more commercial activities happening in the plazas mean more to see and more reason for people to stop as they walk through the spaces.

It would be interesting to compare activity levels in pedestrian spaces of other large Australian cities against this survey, to see if further conclusions on design and lifestyle can be derived.

We need to encourage more intensive use of our cities' plazas and pedestrian streets. As a generalisation, the more people in a space, the more interesting people find it. How do we generate this extra activity? Copenhagen's lessons appear to be:

Many small, comfortable plazas. A pedestrian street network connecting the plazas. Lots of residents and students. Lots of official encouragement of events and festivals.

To register interest in Places for people: Central Melbourne 1994 contact Nathan Alexander at the City of Melbourne on (03) 658 8848.

## Conferences and Seminars

### PLANNING AND FUNDING URBAN TRANSPORT June 15-16, 1994, Melbourne

Aimed at keeping our cities livable, this conference is not just about transport planning; it's about the future of our cities. Keynote speaker/debater is Dr Vukan Vuchic, of international renown in relation to urban public transport. Organised by VEPLA and University of Melbourne. Contact Nicholas Low on (03) 344 6417.

### CREATIVE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT Soil and Water Management for Urban Development, September 6-7, 1994, Sydney

A critical component of sustainable urban design, this conference will focus on best practice in urban soil and water management, and plans to feature renowned German urban designer Herbert Dreiseitl presenting his inspiring work on creatively integrating open stormwater systems as water features into cities and towns. Contact Alison Frost, UWS, Hawkesbury, Ph: (045) 701 690.

### WATER AND URBAN DESIGN September 8 or 9, 1994, Melbourne

A presentation by German urban designer Herbert Dreiseitl together with an informal workshop is proposed. Contact Wendy Morris (03) 628 5469.

### THIRD NATIONAL FORUM ON URBAN DESIGN Thursday 29 September to Saturday 1 October, 1994

Kingstown Barracks  
Rottnest Island, Western Australia  
The Forum 94 follows successful conferences held in Broken Hill in 1992 and

Sydney in 1993. This forum will be a stimulating yet informal get together of people from the many disciplines involved in urban design. Speakers and programme are presently being finalised. Further details available from HP&A, 417 Rokeby Road, Subiaco, WA 6008, phone: (09) 388 2810, fax (09) 388 2817.

### BREAKING THE BOUNDARIES: COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE AND URBAN DESIGN Adelaide, 21-23 October, 1994

A one day conference on Friday 21st October in Adelaide, followed by a two day residential Urban Design Forum on 22-23 October in close proximity to South Australia's famous vineyards. A key focus of the weekend will be the examination of Adelaide's new Urban Design Advisory panels.

The Friday event will focus on cross-disciplinary practice in relation to urban design.

Contact Richard Brecknock ph/fax: (08) 389 7196.

### MAKING CITIES LIVABLE 17TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE September 5-9, 1995, Frieberg, Germany

Advance notice of this 1995 conference advises that its focus will be on new urban neighbourhoods - creating community, ecological design principles, transportation priorities, economic vitality, walkability and city identity. Frieberg's new urban neighbourhood Reiselhof will be featured. Proposals for papers should be submitted by 1st December 1994.

Contact IMCL, PO Box 7586, Carmel, California, 93921, USA phone: (408) 626 9080, fax (408) 624 5126.

### Support Urban Design

#### Research and Education!

The urban design program at the University of Sydney, similar to some other programs in Australia, produces both Masters (and Diploma graduates) in Urban Design, as well as a stream of subjects for professional development. To help support student and staff research projects and teaching you may want to consider a tax-deductible and Training Guarantee Act compatible contribution that would memorialise your firm's name in a program of higher education. (The Training Guarantee Act, while suspended for two years, may still provide an incentive for firms that have not yet met their current obligations). For more information, please contact Professor Peter Droegge, Lend Lease Chair of Urban Design, GO4 The University of Sydney, NSW 2006 tel (02) 692 4576, fax (02) 692 3855."

### Urban Design Advisory

#### Committee for Ultimo-Pyrmont

The much debated redevelopment of Sydney's Ultimo-Pyrmont area (300 ha), flagship in NSW's Building Better Cities initiatives, is getting under way. NSW Minister of Planning and Minister for Housing Robert Webster announced in January the formation of a new state committee, to advise him, the Sydney City Council and other consent authorities - as directed - on pending master plans and development applications. The group, acronymed UDAC, has since been holding bi-weekly meetings. Its members are DPM Brian Howe's adviser Geoff Campbell, Councillor Elizabeth Farrelly, RAPI representative Michael Harrison, Department of Planning deputy director Sue Holliday, NSW RAI president Ken Maber, NSW Boma president Greg Paramor, and architect Harry Seidler. UDAC is chaired by Peter Droegge, Professor of Urban Design at the University of Sydney's Faculty of Architecture."

### Fitzroy & Treasury Gardens Draft Masterplan

A draft report for the Fitzroy and Treasury Gardens has recently been completed by the Melbourne City Council and has been released for public comment. Copies of the report are now available from the Urban Design Branch at the 5th floor, 225 Bourke Street Melbourne. Further details can be obtained from Ron Jones on ph. (03)658 8847.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Urban Design Forum is published for information and interest by the Urban Design Forum Incorporated. The views in UDF are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of organisations with which they are associated.

Word processing, artwork and layout: Melbourne City Council, Urban Design & Architecture Division (Howard Lindsay).

Distribution: This edition is distributed as a supplement to the "Australian Planner" (RIPA) Reg. Pub. No. SBP 0566, by Local Government Associations in each State, by the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (Victoria) and to various other interested people in Australia and overseas.

Editors: Rob Adams, Bill Chandler, Wendy Morris, Bruce Echberg.

Contributions for UDF 27 DEADLINE: 15th August 1994. Send to Bill Chandler, 12 Vincent Street, Surrey Hills 3127.

## NEW BOOKS

### VIOLENCE TO NON-VIOLENCE

Individual Perspectives, Communal Voices, compiled by William Kelly. Harwood Academic Publishers/Craftsman House, 1994.

This remarkable and compelling anthology springs from the relationship between art and contemporary culture. It questions society's role in setting up the contexts for violence in the home, in our streets and in international conflicts. It is a supremely intelligible and optimistic work with writings by many involved with law, film, design, visual arts, media, environment protection and other disciplines, combined with William

Kelly's powerful graphic imagery. "...a fine and much needed hymn to peace and an intelligent indictment of violence..." (Michael Spens, UK).

### THE NEW URBANISM

Peter Katz, McGrawHill, 1993

This substantial book describes and illustrates projects in North America by such well known "new urbanist" designers as Duany Plater Zyberk and Peter Calthorpe, as well as others rather less famous. It is the first comprehensive documentation of the work of this major movement away from suburban sprawl. Highly recommended.

