

URBAN DESIGN in CONTEMPORARY CITIES



Josep Lluís Sert (1843-1903)

"is that part of city planning which deals with the physical form of the city" (J. L. Sert)

What is "urban design"



"the most creative phase of city planning in which imagination and artistic capacities play the important part." (J. L. Sert)

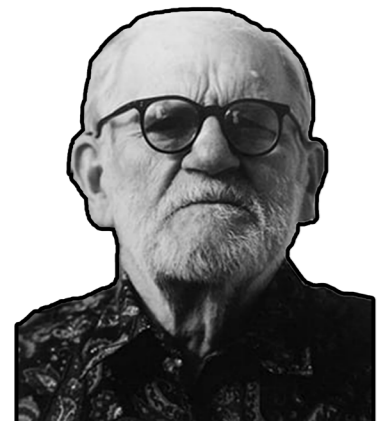
URBAN DESIGN as a DISCIPLINE

The emergence of the urban design as discipline is based on a series of symposium conferences held in 1956 at Harvard University by Jose Luis Sert, Dean of Harvard Graduate School of Design and the founding member of CIAM.

Participants agreed that the distinction between the "art of building" and the "systematic nature of planning" is not sufficient to build new cities or rehabilitate existing ones. In both the United States and Europe, hopes and ideas for a new discipline devoted to urban design were on the agenda, thanks to CIAM, which had focused attention on urbanization since the early 1940s.

Later, many definitions of urban design have been put forward by different people.

THEORIES, THEORICIANS and ARGUMENTS



Gordon Cullen (1914-1994)

If, therefore, we design our towns from the point of view of the moving person, it is easy to see how the whole city becomes a plastic experience, a journey through pressures and vacuums, a sequence of exposures and enclosures, of constraint and relief.



Kevin Lynch (1918-1984)

Imageability; that quality in a physical object which gives it a high probability of evoking a strong image in any given observer.

PATHS - EDGES - DISTRICTS - NODES - LANDMARKS

It would be foolish to set performance standards for cities. Situations and values differ.

VITALITY - SENSE - FIT - ACCESS - CONTROL
EFFICIENCY - JUSTICE



Christopher Alexander (1936-2022)

...towns and buildings will not be able to become alive, unless they are made by all the people in society, and unless these people share a common pattern language, within which to make these buildings, and unless this common pattern language is alive itself.



Jane Jacobs (1916-2006)

My attack is not based on quibbles about rebuilding methods or hairsplitting about fashions in design. It is an attack, rather, on the principles and aims that have shaped modern, orthodox city planning.

If a city's streets look interesting, the city looks interesting; if they look dull, the city looks dull.



Denise Scott Brown (1931-)

Architects are out of the habit of looking nonjudgmentally at the environment, because orthodox Modern architecture is progressive, if not revolutionary, utopian, and puristic; it is dissatisfied with existing conditions. Modern architecture has been anything but permissive: Architects have preferred to change the existing environment rather than enhance what is there



Alexander R. Cuthbert

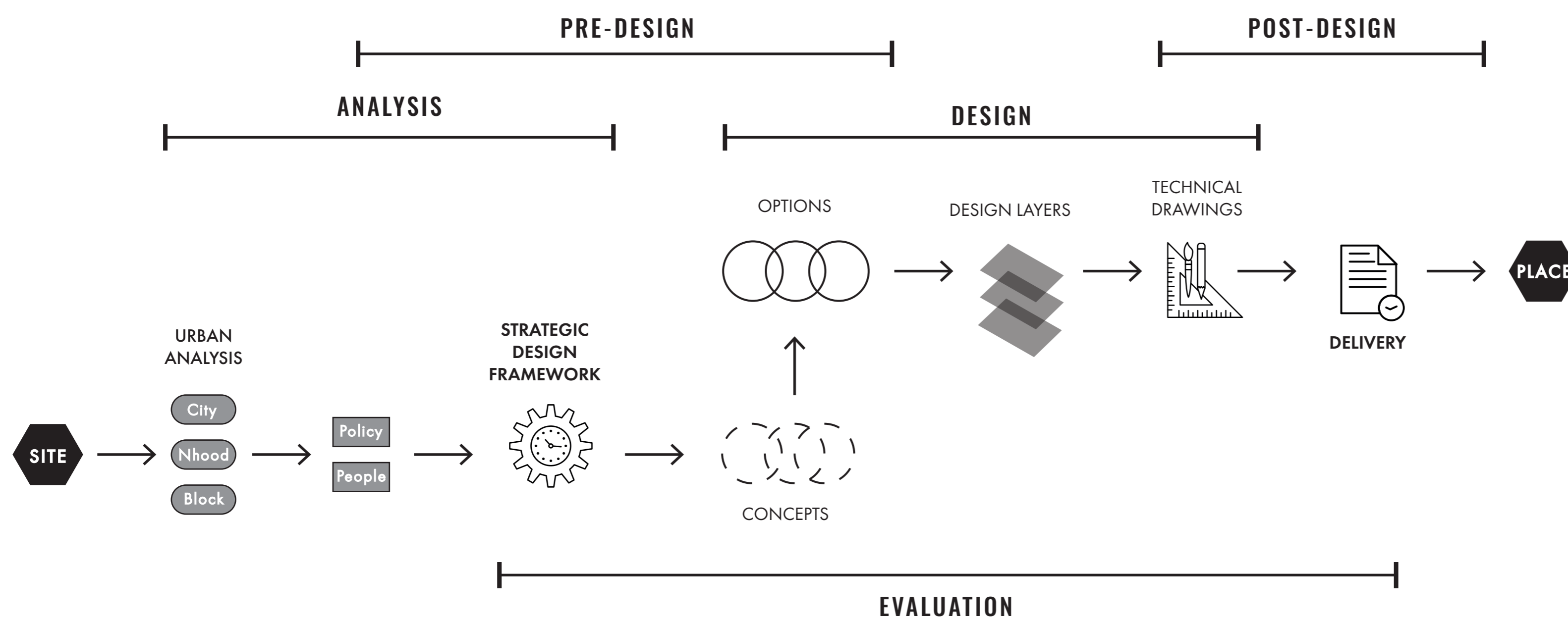
...the fact that Urban Design as a discipline has been unable to develop any substantial theory which it could call its own.

...an appropriate foundation for urban design should be located within spatial political economy rather than architectural determinism, policy planning or a generalised anarchy of ideas within mainstream urban design.

THEORICIANS and THEORIES

Gordon Cullen, played a leading part in developing the townscape approach. In his book *Townscape*, Cullen argues that, if we design the towns from the view of the moving person, which would be a pedestrian, "it is easy to see how the whole city becomes a plastic experience, a journey through pressures and vacuums, a sequence of exposures and enclosures, of constraint and relief." **Imageability** with its five elements, put forward by **Kevin Lynch**, in his book *The Image of the City* which is published in 1960. Lynch, in his book *Good City Form*, published in 1984, he defined seven criteria for "good" cities and settlements. **Pattern language**, is created by **Christopher Alexander** and described in his book *A Pattern Language: Towns, Buildings, Construction* which is published in 1977. The structure of the network is explained before in his book *The Timeless Way of Building*, which is published after but the introduction to *Pattern Language*. In his book *Pattern Language*, he argues that people can draw for themselves. He thought about the relationships between different scales of the city - which are neighborhood, street, buildings, fine details- and wanted to show how the city could be shaped by these relations. **Wholeness**, which is always been consideration of Alexander, explained in his book *A New Theory of Urban Design*, which is published in 1987, he states that: "...we propose a discipline of urban design which is different, entirely, from the one known today. We believe that the task of creating wholeness in the city can only be dealt with as a process. It cannot be solved by design alone, but only when the process by which the city gets its form is fundamentally changed." **Denise Scott Brown** (1931-), with Robert Venturi (1925-2018) developed alternatives to the Modernist design sensibility of their time. Their aim was to show how urban design and architecture could be enriched by popular culture and how masterplanning could be inspired by historical and urban context. **Jane Jacobs**, writer and urban activist, best known for *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, which is published in 1961 and among the most influential books in the history of planning and urbanism. Beside what a place looked like, also her considerations been about how it worked. Her book attacked contemporary planning practice at the time and advocated for mixed-use neighbourhoods. She has brought a different perspective by defining the essential complexity of urban life and promoting the street as the focus of urban life. **Cuthbert**, in his book *Designing Cities*, which is first published in 2003, he argues that the design of urban space cannot be encompassed by any single theory. He says that it is not clear urban design concept because it is not clear what the term "design" constitutes and what kind of knowledge is required to participate in designing cities.

PROCESS of URBAN DESIGN



PROCESS

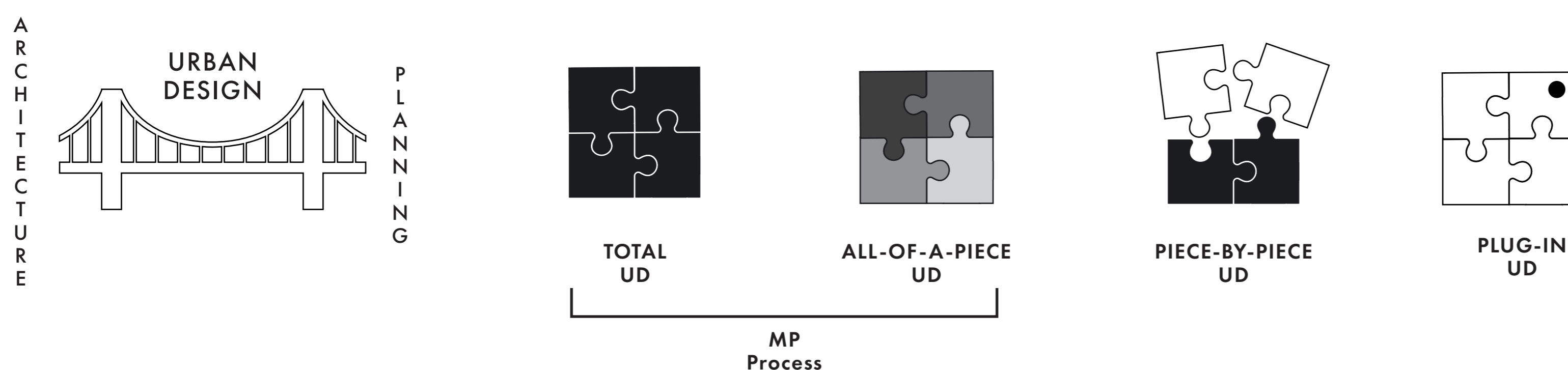
To explain the urban design process, the diagram in the book *The Urban Design Process* which is published in 2019, is taken as a basis. The scheme has been put forward as a result of studies conducted at Manchester University for many years.

The process follows a "stages of work" pattern which is similar in all design disciplines. These stages are: Analysis, Pre-Design, Design and Post-Design. Although the scheme is linear, the steps are flexible and adaptable as each project site has its own characteristics. While the process is shown in sequential steps, there are steps in which evaluations back through are also seen. It has been clearly stated that the diagram is intended to be a guide, a roadmap for designers, it never gives an idea about the design, just informs the designer to make more appropriate decisions, the design is made by the designer. The aim of the process is to create a reliable base where each stage informs the other and where designers and stakeholders participate in the decision processes with a flexible, transparent and holistic approach.

The process represented in the scheme, works from initial site through final place. Strategic design framework, ties the analysis, the design development and detail together. This framework is developed through primary and secondary analysis which are urban analysis and policy-people. The framework then informs the evolution of the design through concepts and options. The layers make this work in practice.

It is suggested that the analysis of the project site should be done in three stages/ scales: city, neighborhood and block/site. For each of these analyzes at different scales, it is mentioned that the designer must both do location-base analysis by visiting the site and surroundings, and desk-based analysis by utilising digital materials. Three methods have been proposed as a simple guide for managing these analysis processes: scoping, sensing and synthesising

SCALE of URBAN DESIGN and MASTERPLANNING



SCALE

The fact that urban design is considered to be on a scale between urban planning and architectural building, and that it does not have a clear definition, still causes the concept of scale to be confused.

Total urban design where one team is in control of the whole project. **All-of-a-piece urban design** where one team creates a master, or conceptual, plan and writes guidelines for the development of individual sites within that plan by different entrepreneurs and their architects. **Piece-by-piece urban design** where proposals to get specific activities into an area are controlled by zoning codes and incentives and penalties. **Plug-in urban design** in which infrastructure elements are used as catalysts for development.

MASTERPLANNING

Masterplanning is a long process, of which masterplan, is one part. It is a process which is collaborative and multidisciplinary. It formulates planning and design principles for an area. These principles relate to environmental, social and economic impact of development and also to three-dimensional physical form. Master plan's role is to show how these principles can be implemented.