

## eight principles for creating successful places

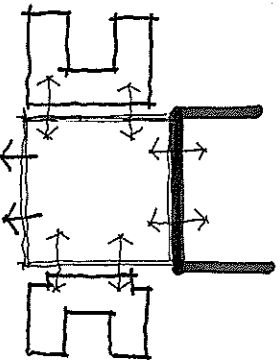
ADAPTED FROM PROJECT FOR PUBLIC SPACES

### image and identity

Historically, public spaces in the form of squares were strongly associated with the secular and religious centres of towns and cities. Squares were significant as places to conduct matters that concerned business, religious and social affairs, as they were closely tied to important civic buildings such as city halls, cathedrals and other administration buildings. Successful public spaces are often associated with important landmarks and this partnership plays a significant role in activating the space and creating an identity for it.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Public spaces should be designed to reinforce the existing image of a place or, where there is none, facilitate the creation of a new identity that tie existing uses while respecting the aspiration of current and potential users.

**PUBLIC SPACE GUIDELINES:** Urban Space, Views and vistas

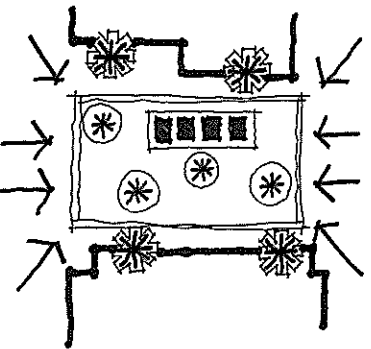


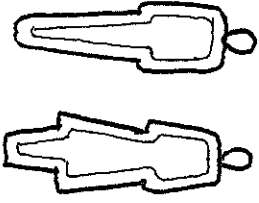
### attractions and destinations

Successful public spaces feature a collection of smaller places that appeal to a variety of users. These include outdoor cafes, vendor carts, fountains, sculptures or bandstands for performances, providing a mix of uses that draw people throughout the day.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Design of public spaces should include or allow for other uses to generate a mix of activities. Where there are adjacent activity generators and attractions, this should be complemented by allowing for spill-over or allow for alternative and user-friendly activities.

**PUBLIC SPACE GUIDELINES:** Urban Space, River, Public Art





## amenities

Good amenities make public spaces comfortable. Having the right amenities and locating them smartly often make a substantial difference in how people choose to use and defend the place, or whether they choose to use it at all. Lighting, seating, bins, drinking fountains, interactive art (permanent or mobile), water and power source and public toilets are some elements that appeal subconsciously to potential users and help establish a convivial setting for social interaction or solitary repose.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Public space design should allow for maximised "user-friendliness" by increasing opportunities for rest and meditation, as well as recreation. Elements that provide shade and added comfort can be retrofitted to existing structures such as walls and immovable barriers while serviced activity nodes should follow movement corridors to maximise exposure and passive security and safety.

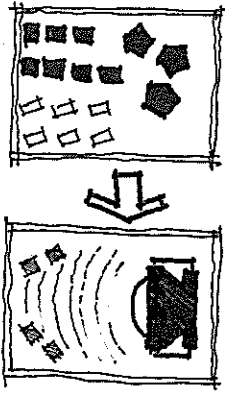
**PUBLIC SPACE GUIDELINES:** Urban Space, Streetscape, Landscape, Public Art

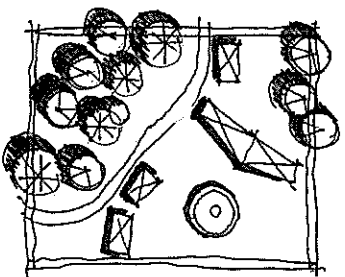
## flexible design

Designing public spaces with permanency limits their neutrality (as everyone's space) and their ability to adapt according to users' needs. It's natural for uses of a public space to change during the course of the day, week, month, and year and in order to respond to these fluctuations, a measure of flexibility needs to be built in. Retractable or temporary structures can replace permanent ones, and on-site storage for tables, chairs, umbrellas, and games can be included for use at a moment's notice. Robust public spaces provide for the widest range of activities and for a large variety of users.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Public spaces, large and small, should be designed to allow greatest flexibility for use and user. Instead of designing some users out, design should allow for the evolution of the space and its use during the day and night, which does not place any priority of one user over another.

**PUBLIC SPACE GUIDELINES:** Urban Space, Connectivity, Landscape





### **seasonal strategy**

Relating to its flexibility in design, exciting public spaces have the ability to change with the seasons. These places exhibit seasonal drawcards that attract users and maintain levels of activity through the year. Rollerblading and skateboarding, outdoor cafes, fresh produce markets, exhibition sports, night festivals, and evening movies are some activities that help adapt the space to one that is useable from one season to another.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Activities should be encouraged on future public spaces and design should facilitate this. Spaces shouldn't be cluttered with permanent structures to allow for maximised use potential. Design of public spaces must ensure that it achieves a high level of comfort by being climatically and environmentally responsive, through active and passive elements.

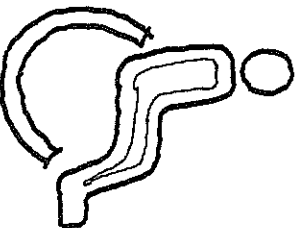
**PUBLIC SPACE GUIDELINES:** Urban Space, Streetscape, Landscape

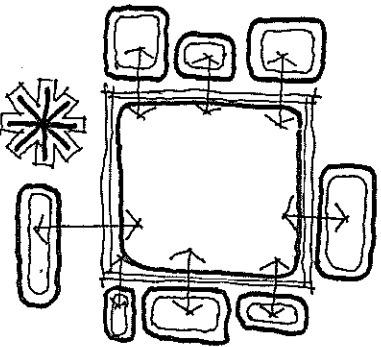
### **access**

To be successful, public spaces need to be easy to get to and feature equitable access within. Lively places are always easily accessible on foot where the surrounding streets are narrow to slow traffic and minimise the distance for users to cross. Pedestrian crossings are well-marked and are timed for pedestrians and not vehicles, and public transport nodes are located nearby.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Access to public spaces should facilitate an easy and frequent transition for the pedestrian user. Strategies to bring this about must be achieved in partnership with transport engineers and traffic designers to deliver efficient access. Ultimately, pedestrian needs must be prioritised to achieve a successful public space that is legible and visible. With regards to internal access, and considering constraints, design must allow access for a maximum number of users and user types.

**PUBLIC SPACE GUIDELINES:** Urban Space, Connectivity, Streetscape, Landscape, Views and Vistas



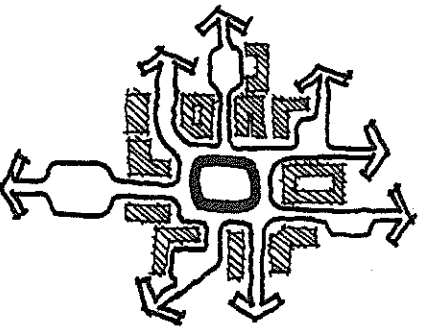


### **inner + outer space**

Public spaces do not exist exclusively of its surrounds: streets and footpaths greatly affect accessibility and use, as do the buildings that surround it. Public spaces enclosed by complementary uses such as cafés and food shops, retailers and libraries benefit greatly from this association. Conversely, pedestrian-friendly streets and footpaths entice pedestrians and walkers-by to use the space. A successful activation of a space often relies on the activities that occur adjacent to it.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Public spaces should be designed to allow active engagement with users. They must retain a high level of visual and physical accessibility and uses on the outer space must complement the inner space and maintain equitable access to it.

**PUBLIC SPACE GUIDELINES:** Urban Space, Connectivity, Streetscape, Views and Vistas



### **reaching out like an octopus**

The paths leading to a successful public space often play significant roles in activating the space. The influence of a good public space starts at least a block or two away. The streets, footpaths, laneways and building ground floor areas that lead to the space create interest that draws the user along, affording glimpses of the space which entice pedestrians to move toward it.

**RECOMMENDATION:** An overall concept, which considers the network of streets, footpaths and minor spaces, should be incorporated into the design to establish an overarching vision for the public space. The feeder network should be designed appropriately to allow for increased pedestrian activities, focusing on allowing an easy transition from the public domain to the space itself.

**PUBLIC SPACE GUIDELINES:** Urban Space, Connectivity, Streetscape, Views and Vistas, Public Art