

Framework Assessment for Urban Projects

Benchmarks: International Case Studies

October 2024

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For more information, please email adc@moc.gov.sa

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King Faisal Road, Al Diriyah
P.O. Box 3424, Riyadh 13711
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

www.archdesign.moc.gov.sa

ARUP

13 Fitzroy Street
London W1T 4BQ,
United Kingdom

arup.com

AÉON

7575 Ahmad Al Gazawi Street,
Riyadh 12334-2673,
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

aeonstrategy.com

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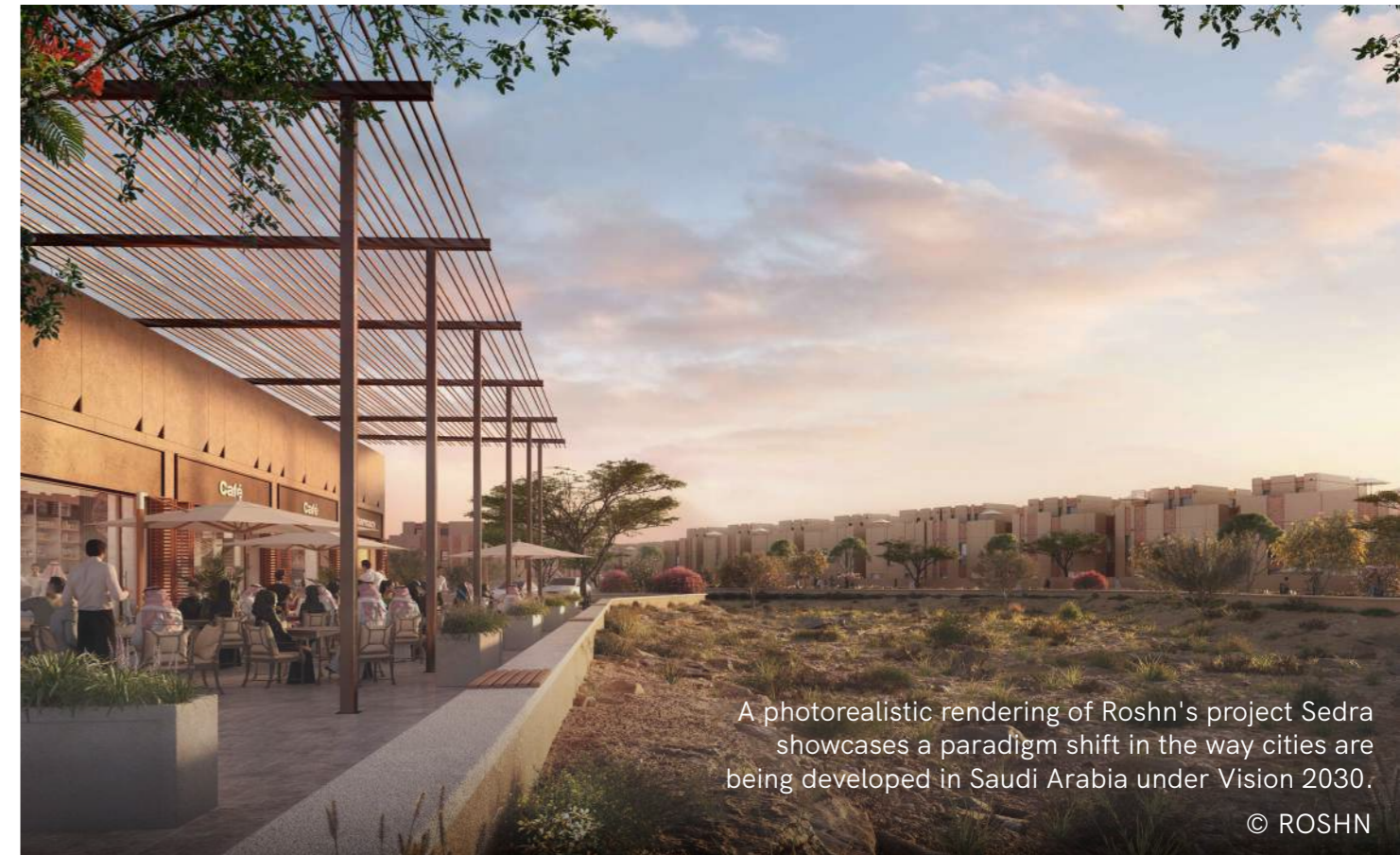
1 Urban Transformation Initiative Overview

WHAT IS THE URBAN TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVE?

Urban Transformation (UT) is an initiative initiated by the Architecture and Design Commission (ADC) to assess and guide the transformation and activation of public spaces in Saudi Arabia. This chapter introduces the initiative, its process, and relevant policy and programs.

1.1 Alignment with National Efforts

Fueled by Vision 2030, Saudi Arabia is at a significant moment in history where considerable change is happening in all aspects of life: society, culture, tourism, energy, business, and more. This change translates into the built environment, especially public spaces, where urban layers converge and intertwine.



Vision 2030

The transformation of public spaces will help accelerate the national changes and momentum by bringing together communities and a new way of living. They will encourage a healthier lifestyle that is more connected to art and culture, where social dynamics inform the identity of the urban fabric and help promote tourism and retain talent. These public spaces will provide fresh air and green space for Saudi's young and growing population.

Many guidance documents and toolkits have recently been developed across various government entities and project initiatives in the Kingdom.

There is a clear need to accelerate the delivery of positive change that embodies the design guidance these strategies promote.

Several KSA ministries and entities are currently engaged in this implementation process. Therefore, the role the ADC plays in this ecosystem must be complementary and can be one that forges productive partnerships.

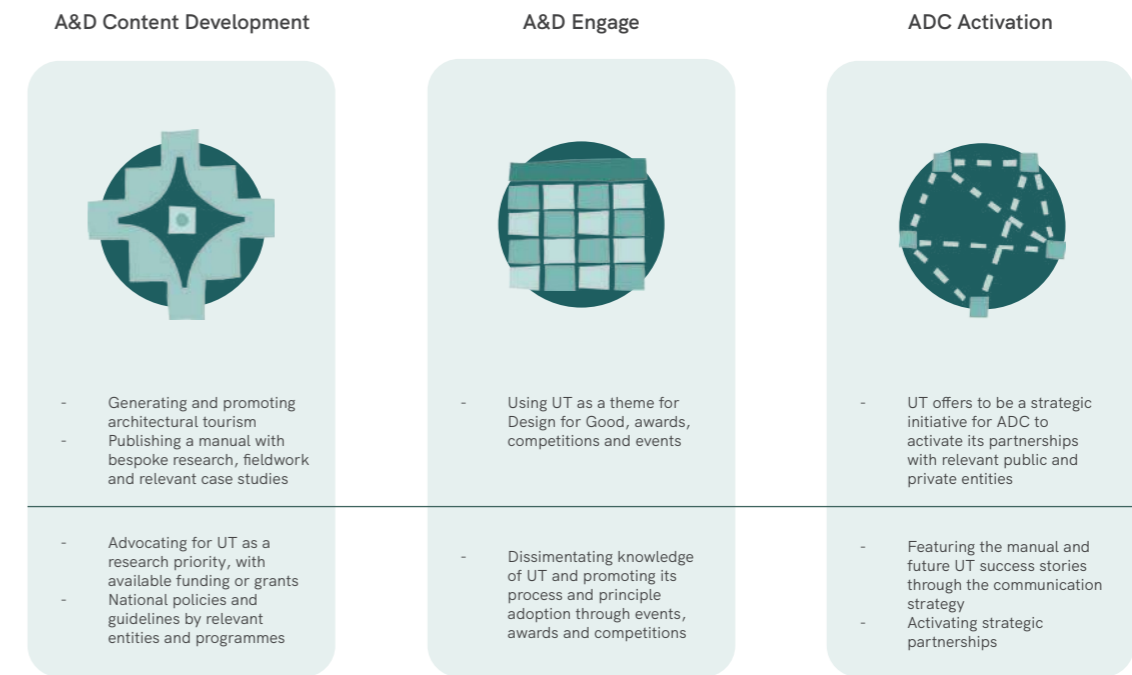
The ADC has a unique opportunity to position the Architecture and Design industries in leadership roles in delivering high-quality spaces by developing clear manuals for entities to follow. ADC has the timely opportunity to play the role of connecting people and places with design quality. In addition to broadcasting widely the benefit of holistic design-thinking at all scales.

Architecture and Design Commission

The ADC has set six strategic objectives guiding it towards meeting the overall vision and desired outcomes of supporting excellence in the Architecture and Design ecosystem within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia:

1. Sector Development
2. GDP Contribution
3. Talent
4. Global Recognition
5. Sustainability
6. Community of Innovation

The six Strategic Programs and initiatives illustrated in the diagram below will achieve the strategic objectives. The Urban Transformation initiative sits under Architecture & Design Sector Development. However, it links to the other Strategic Programs and initiatives through a system of support.



King Salman Charter for Architecture and Urbanism

In 2021, the ADC launched the King Salman Charter for Architecture & Urbanism (KSCAU). This Charter serves as a strategic foundation for urbanization and the future of architecture and design in the Kingdom. The Charter draws inspiration from Saudi’s best buildings and urban spaces and seeks to capture the essence of ‘Salmani Architecture.’ Saudi Arabia has a wide breadth of regional diversity of vernacular expression. The Charter aims to acknowledge and celebrate the Kingdom’s unique locales by drawing inspiration from the many geographic regions into new designs that stay true to their specific place and context.

Each region demonstrates how its architectural history is unique to the place. The form for these vernacular societies has often been shaped by local circumstances such as climate, technological constraints, materials, the influence of place, economics, socio-cultural and religious expression through building organizations, forms, and ornamentation that illustrate a physical manifestation of the needs, spirit, and aspirations of local people.

The Urban Transformation initiative is founded on the Charter’s values, focusing on high-quality public spaces and contextualized urbanism.

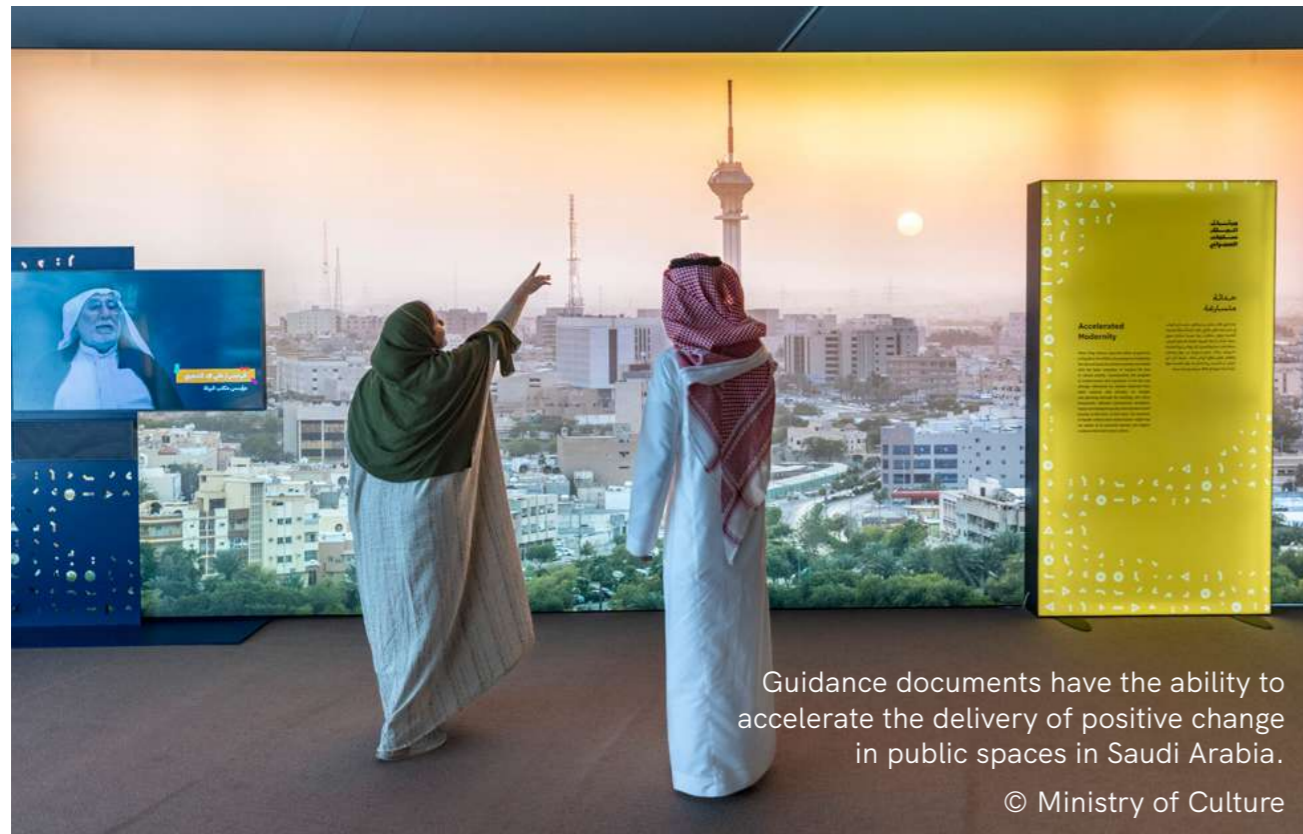
New Design Codes and Design Guidance in KSA

Aligning with the Saudi Vision 2030, public Entities such as the Development Authorities Support Center (DASC) and Ministry of Municipalities and Housing (MOMAH) are actively working on a regulatory framework encompassing a comprehensive set of national and regional design guidelines. These range from standardized national thematic guidelines to more technical, detailed public realm and architectural design guidelines.

MOMAH is also working with 17 Amanahs to transform and upgrade the public realm

in Saudi cities through an ambitious urban transformation program. Under the umbrella of this program, there are several urban interventions at different scales, including streets, plazas, and spaces that will prompt a behavioral shift in urban lifestyles.

Precise alignment and coordination are essential amongst all public entities to ensure the efforts complement and lead to more robust and successful urban outcomes.



Guidance documents have the ability to accelerate the delivery of positive change in public spaces in Saudi Arabia.
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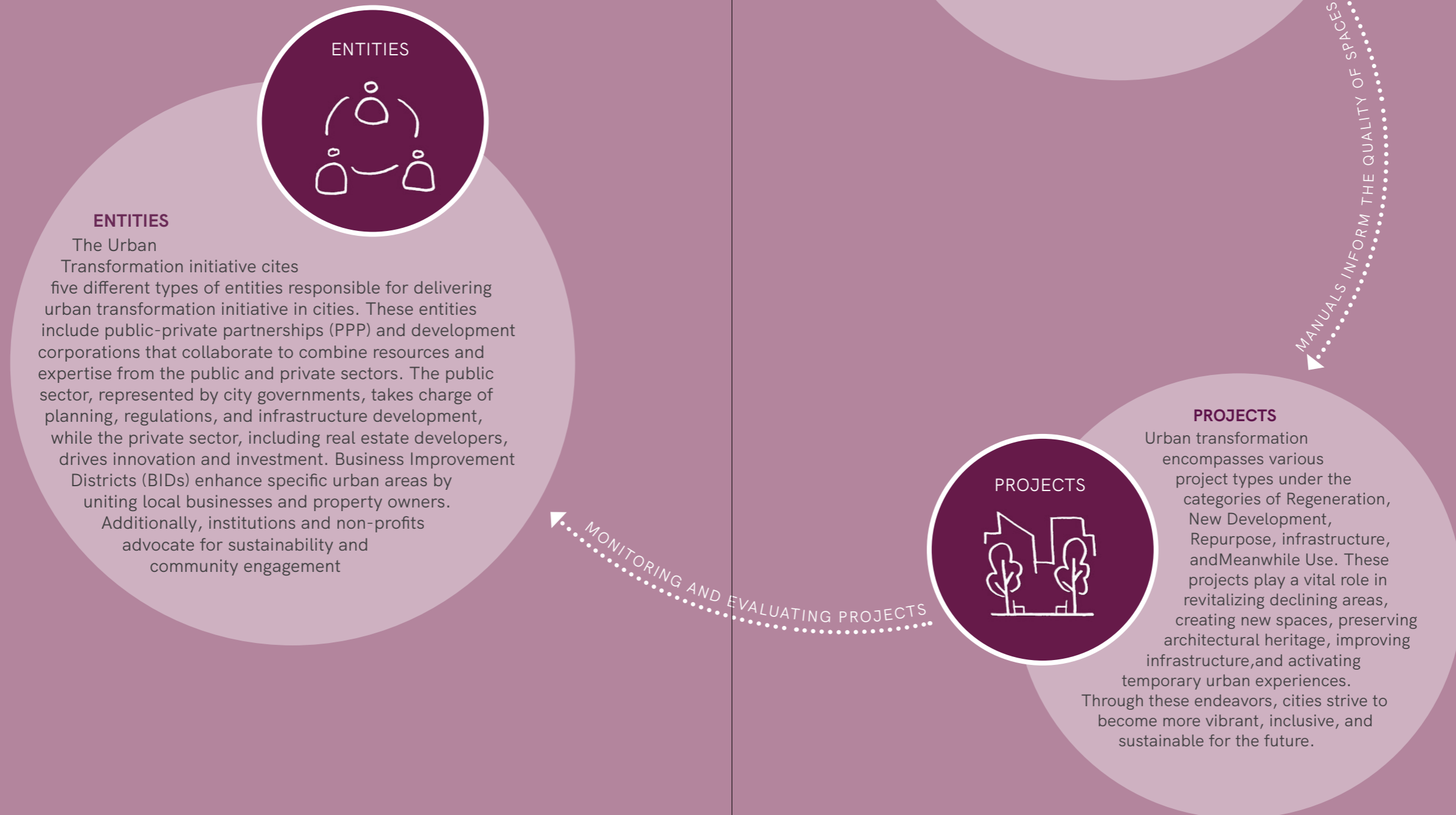
Wadi Al Aqeeq in Al Madinah, developed by Al Madinah Region Development Authority
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2 Urban Transformation Ecosystem

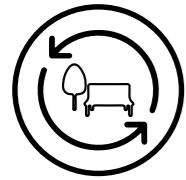
Urban Transformation requires the involvement and collaboration of the multiple forces that shape a city including policy, economics, civil society, and community. This chapter covers the urban transformation ecosystem, delineating the key components towards the development of successful urban transformation projects.

2.1 UT Ecosystem Components

There are many paths and sources of urban transformation – whether it’s a municipal government, a guidebook, or a well-resourced development project. The three Ecosystem components of the Urban Transformation Ecosystem are Manuals, Entities, and Projects



Types of Projects



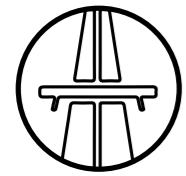
01 REPURPOSED

This refers to the change of use of a specific space and is considered to be a very localized experiential intervention.



02 MEANWHILE USE

An interim stage of development that activates a site for a period of time before being developed into a more permanent end state.



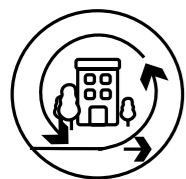
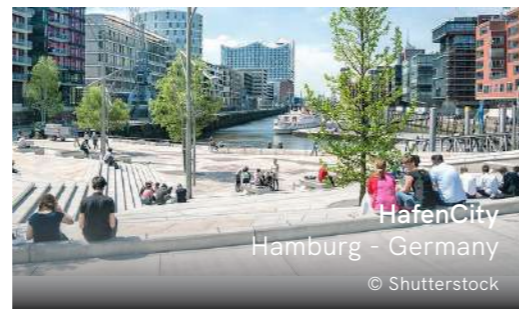
03 INFRASTRUCTURE

New or underutilized infrastructure that is repurposed to maximize opportunities and benefits for the wider public.



04 NEW DEVELOPMENT

Public realm within a broader development scheme that meets the needs of new or existing communities.



05 REGENERATION

Public realm introduction/ improvements that help revitalize economic or social decline areas to benefit new and existing communities.



Types of Entities

01 PPP / DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS INVOLVE COLLABORATION BETWEEN A GOVERNMENT AGENCY AND A PRIVATE SECTOR COMPANY THAT CAN BE USED TO FINANCE, BUILD, AND OPERATE PROJECTS. FINANCING A PROJECT THROUGH A PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP CAN



02 PUBLIC SECTOR

The public sector refers to organizations the government runs to provide a service for the population and communities. Money to pay for these services is raised through various taxes - this may include the provision and maintenance of public spaces. In Saudi Arabia, Ministries and Amanahs fall within this category.



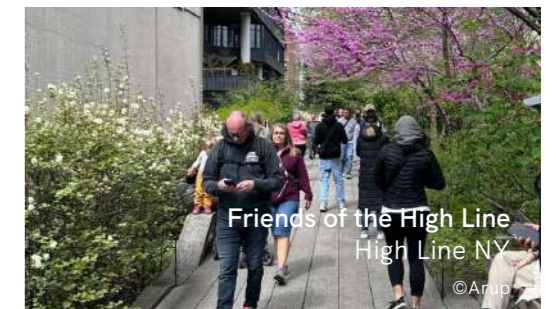
03 PRIVATE SECTOR

The private sector is the part of the economy run by individuals and companies, encompassing all for-profit businesses not owned or operated by the government. Public spaces are often part of wider private development or redevelopment projects. In some cases, once built, the public spaces may be turned over to the public sector, a BID, or a foundation for long-term stewardship. Private developers fulfill this role in Saudi.



04 BID / BUSINESS CONSORTIUM

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a defined area where a levy is charged to all business rate payers in addition to the business rate bill. This levy is used to develop projects that will benefit businesses - and their constituents - in the local area - not common in Saudi Arabia.



05 INSTITUTION/ NON-PROFIT

A non-profit is an organization established to achieve a purpose other than making a profit, typically designed to better its community by facilitating donations and grants into programs. These organizations may be exempt from tax, and surpluses are not distributed but retained to serve the organization's members and the community they serve. An NPO may be registered as a charitable organization or foundation; it may also choose to outsource management and maintenance of public spaces.



Types of Manuals

The provided chart illustrates a selection of Saudi and international manuals and guidance that currently exist and are relevant to Urban Transformation. These documents are categorized along the horizontal axis, from high-level principles and visionary guidance to detailed technical design codes. This mapping exercise explores the existing landscape of resources

available. Discerning the spectrum of available materials provides invaluable insights into developing the scope of the Urban Transformation Manual and its direct relevance to national projects. Such an analysis is vital in appreciating the breadth of existing guidance and its implications for informed decision-making in urban transformation endeavors.

KEY

- National level
- Local level

INTERNATIONAL MANUALS

Implementing Good Design: Government Architect NSW Australia	Safer Parks: Improving Access for Women and Girls	Prague Public Space Design Manual - Prague Public Space Development Strategy	It's Our Space: A guide for community groups working to improve public space	Public space site-specific assessment by UN-Habitat	Principles for a Human City: Prepared by Argent for King's Cross

Public Realm Design Manual, Abu Dhabi, UAE	Public Spaces/ Public Life - Sydney	Glasgow: Public realm design and maintenance guide	Spaces as Places: City of San Diego	Street Design Manual: New York City Department of Transportation



SAUDI MANUALS

King Salman Charter for Architecture and Urbanism	National Public Realm Design Manual	Al Madinah City Experience Playbook	National Urban Design Guidelines	Toolkit for Urban Inclusion in Arab Cities

Manual of Arriyadh Plants	Sports Boulevard Design Code Manual

3 Criteria for Assessment

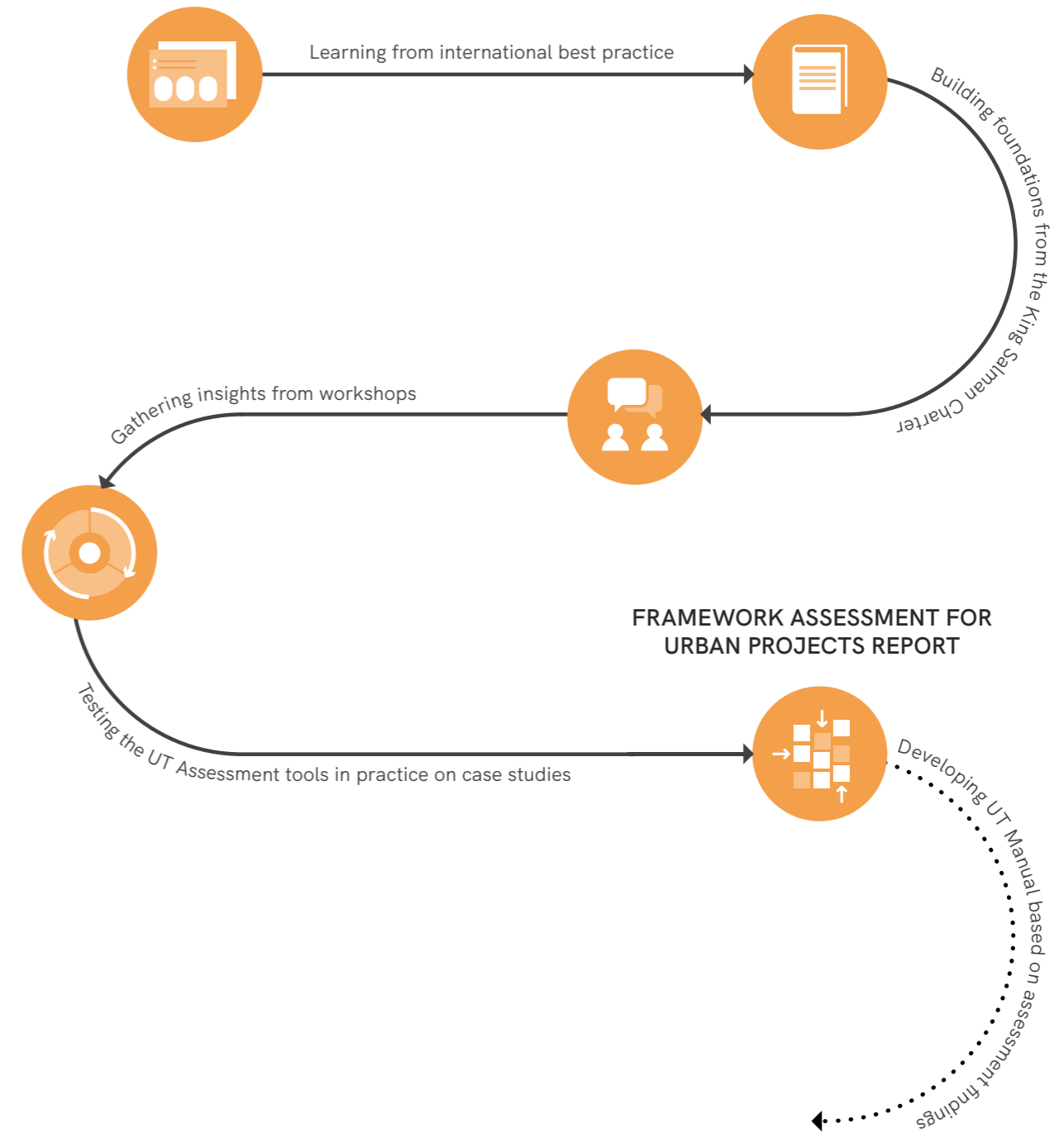
ASSESSING PUBLIC SPACES

The urban transformation ecosystem mapped out which entities are responsible for the creation and transformation of public spaces. To ensure these are of the highest quality, the following key step is to delineate the ingredients or qualities of successful public spaces. This chapter introduces the Assessment Criteria as a tool to evaluate the value and impact of existing and transformed spaces. It can be used to baseline existing conditions or drive quality urban transformation from vision to delivery.

3.1 Developing the Criteria

The Urban Transformation Assessment Tools are informed by international best practices and local values. Intended to baseline existing spaces and vision UT initiatives, the tools were tested in practice in public spaces in Saudi Arabia and internationally.

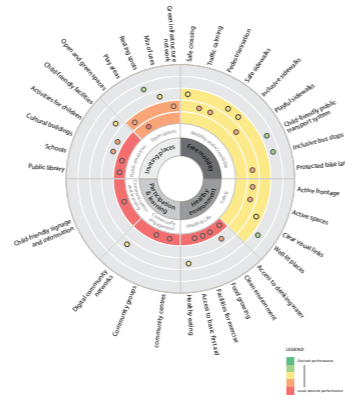
DEVELOPING THE UT ASSESSMENT TOOLS



International Best Practices

Several public space assessment tools are used around the world. Each includes a set of metrics for success, from comfort to sociability to health, spanning both the quality of spaces and experiences through qualitative and quantitative evaluations.

Some are designed for community use, while others are aimed at practitioners. These tools have been studied, with lessons from each informing the development and finalization of the criteria wheel.



Project for Public Spaces

A New York-based organization advocating for community-powered public spaces. The Project for Public Spaces tool defines success by sociability, use, access, and comfort.

Urban Childhoods

This assessment tool, developed by Arup, measures essential elements for inclusive spaces for children and young people (in this case, in Belfast, Northern Ireland), including mobility, safety, well-being, community participation, and amenity.



Better Places Matrix

Developed by the Policy Exchange in the UK, the matrix measures placemaking quality. A total score is given for a place's physical, socio-economic, and psychological characteristics.

UN-Habitat Global Public Space Programme

Guidelines to achieve quality public spaces at the neighborhood level to support Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11. The tool equips locals and professionals to assess public spaces.

The King Salman Charter's Core Values

The King Salman Charter guides Saudi Arabia's pursuit of design excellence across the diverse Architecture and Design (A&D) ecosystem. Each value is reflected in the Assessment Criteria, embedding these within the urban transformation agenda and every project.

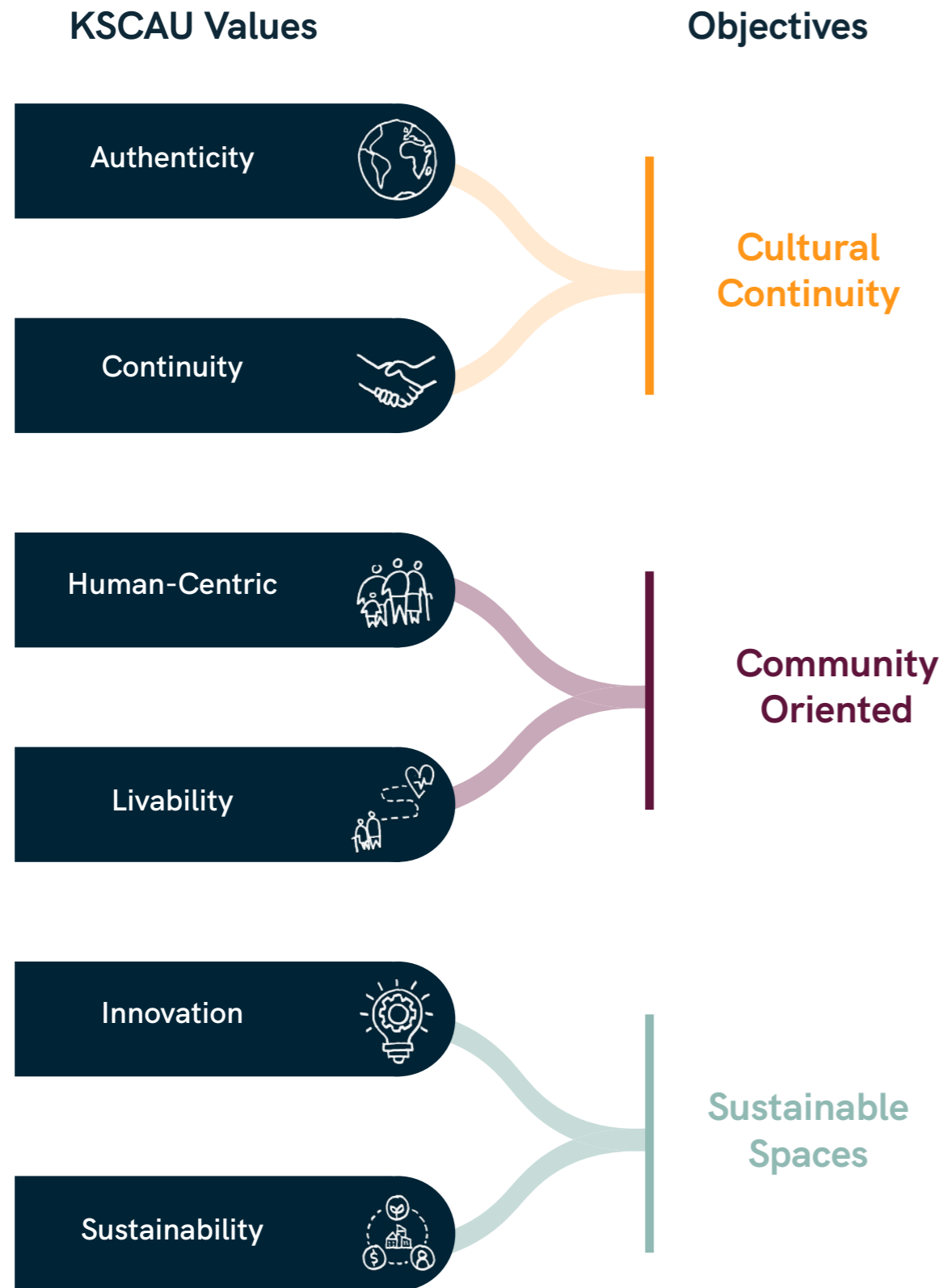
The values are in three pairs; the metrics were informed by how the values should manifest within Saudi's A&D ecosystem.

The Charter encourages designers to study, understand, translate, and incorporate the essential qualities of the overall history of a specific region into our century and interpret this for an appropriate fit for future generations. It is in this spirit that Urban Transformation has been assessed.

Therefore, notions of identity, resource consumption, and inclusion are examined through the wheel.

<p>Authenticity</p> <p>The presence of a fundamental design rationale or thought process seeking to create urban spaces and architectural formations that belong emotionally and physically to the place</p>	<p>Continuity</p> <p>The combination of old and new through an understandable, non-static cultural identity in the pursuit of creating harmony across time and the 'physical' proposition and the 'place' within which it manifests.</p>	<p>Human Centric</p> <p>The connection to the tactile and less tangible aspects of the built environment, which creates a lasting memory of our past, present, and future via our sensory experience of a place.</p>
<p>Livability</p> <p>The active pursuit of improving the quality of life by creating a safe, attractive, socially cohesive, and healthy built environment, with accessibility and convenience for all residents.</p>	<p>Innovation</p> <p>The mindful habit of exploring the natural progression and the creative freedom to reimagine our built environment in new ways to meet our present needs and anticipate our future demands.</p>	<p>Sustainability</p> <p>The practice of measurable and social, economic, and environmental protection that manifest in the decision-making of strategic urban goals</p>

3.2 Core Values and Foundations



CULTURAL CONTINUITY

This category captures how the design and activation of a public space can articulate and tell stories about its local context, values, and identity.

Success in this category will reference physical elements of the space’s history and future. These spaces will positively preserve skills, enhance the local economy, respect historical artifacts, and create vibrant, loved places that celebrate local art and culture.

COMMUNITY ORIENTED

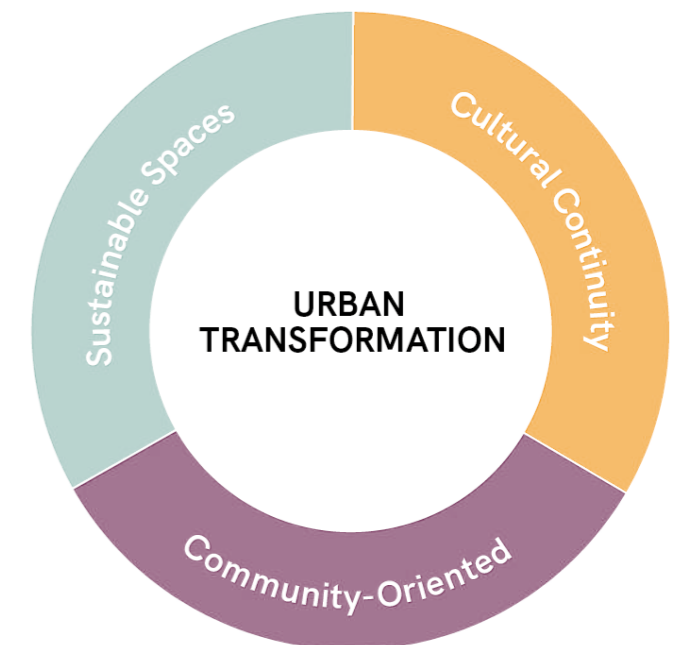
This category captures how public spaces can enhance the quality of life and enrich one’s well-being through multi-sensory experiences.

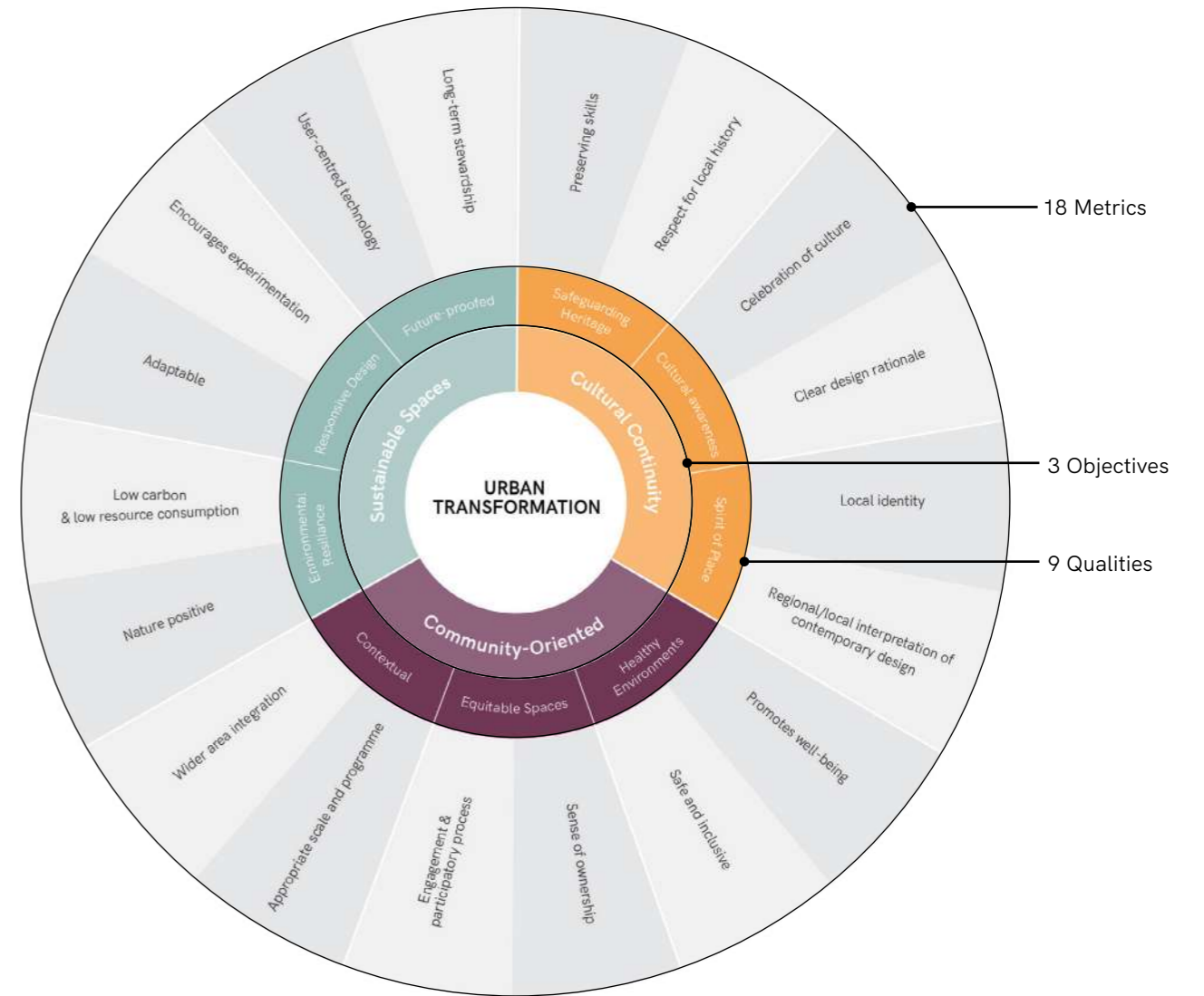
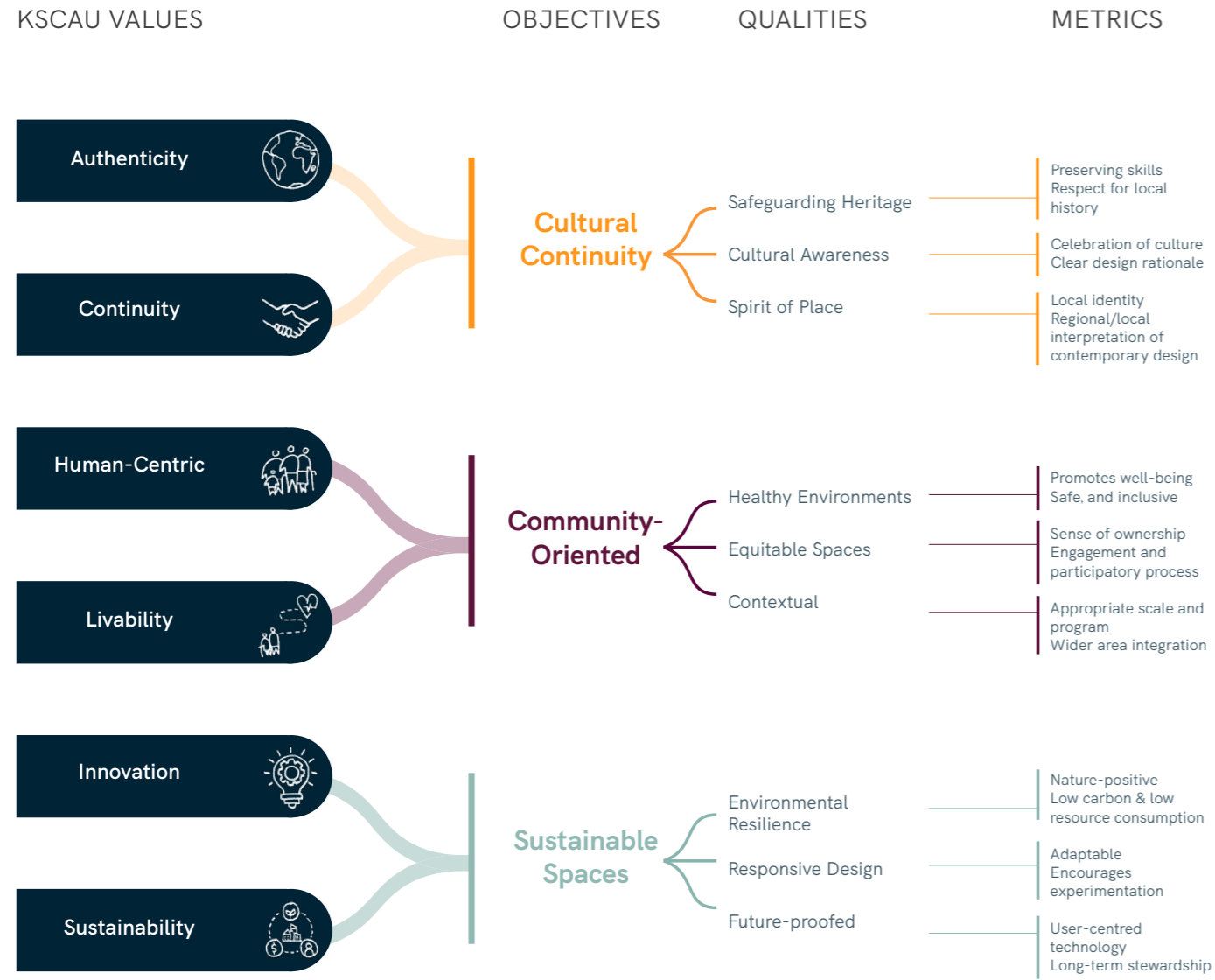
Success will ensure that safety, comfort, and accessibility are paramount so that everyone feels included and welcomed; after that, they can find or create their own spaces where they feel a sense of belonging. Ensuring this is realized is a healthy way to build spaces people want to be a part of and return to regularly.

SUSTAINABLE SPACES

This category captures how public spaces can play a significant role in climate resilience through embedding social, economic, and environmental solutions that center people and the planet.

Success in this category means leveraging well-tested technologies and experimenting with traditional ones to reduce our carbon footprint. Doing so is a step in the right direction so that each public space could inspire and enable people to lead more sustainable lifestyles.





An assessment framework developed for Urban Transformation

Cultural Continuity

1 PRESERVING SKILLS

Supports local communities in maintaining and transferring traditional skills, craftsmanship, and knowledge.



Using local materials and hand-carving techniques across the building's facade.

2 RESPECT FOR LOCAL HISTORY

Incorporates meaningful elements, structures, and narratives from the past to foster a sense of continuity.



An ancient Roman temple is integrated within the company's HQ for the public to visit.

3 CELEBRATION OF CULTURE

Incorporates culturally significant elements, symbols, and traditions of the area and its people.



A community-oriented space decorated with murals made by local residents.

4 CLEAR DESIGN RATIONALE

Ensures that all design aspects are purposeful, align with a project's objectives, and enhance functionality and aesthetics.



Extending local infrastructure projects to public 3space initiatives through participatory design.

5 LOCAL IDENTITY

Reflects and honors the qualities, character and aspirations of local communities.



Musicians playing at the street corner for passersby to enjoy.

6 REGIONAL / LOCAL INTERPRETATION OF CONTEMPORARY DESIGN

Interprets traditional and local cultural design in a contemporary manner.



An operable screen provides a contemporary interpretation of a traditional motif.



Community-Oriented

7 WELL-BEING

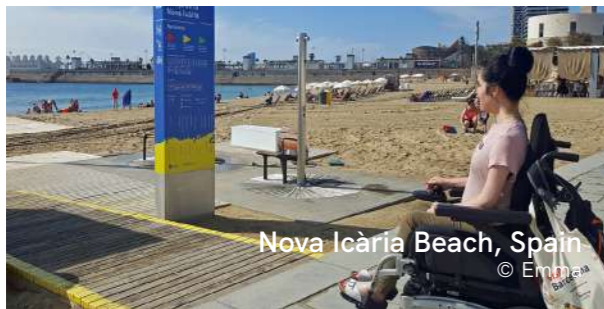
Promotes active lifestyles and seeks to enhance its users' physical and psychological health.



An easily assembled and movable playground provides play spaces in refugee settlements.

8 SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE

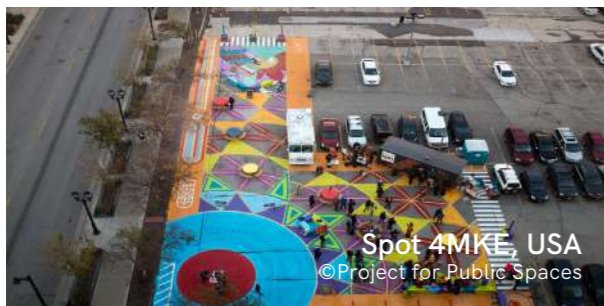
Delivers inclusive spaces that are safe, secure, and accessible to all individuals, e.g., Regardless of age or ability.



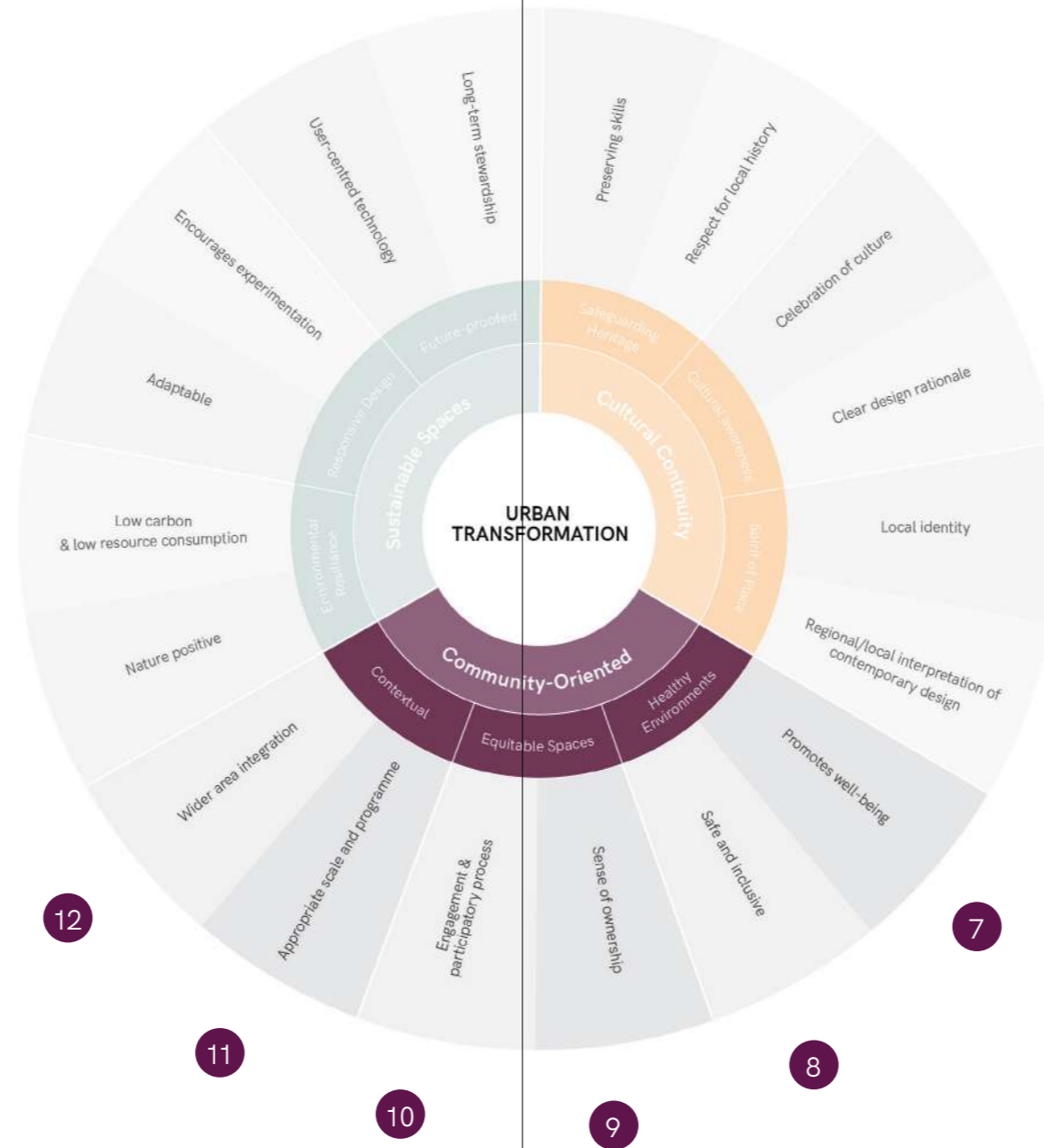
Boardwalks on the sand, amphibious wheelchairs, and lifeguards provide for accessible beach use.

9 SENSE OF OWNERSHIP

Cultivates a sense of collective pride, belonging, and shared responsibility amongst its users.



Community engagement across the project's creation led to greater use.



10 ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATORY DESIGN

Embraces the voices and agency of local communities and challenges traditional notions of expertise.



The locals helped shape the brief and were consulted throughout the scheme.

11 APPROPRIATE SCALE AND PROGRAM

Spaces are designed around people's needs to create a harmonious relationship between buildings, infrastructure, and nature.



Pocket parks are revitalizing neighborhoods and attracting people to nearby shops.

12 WIDER AREA INTEGRATION

Connected to the wider environmental, socio-economic, and spatial context, including infrastructure and communities.

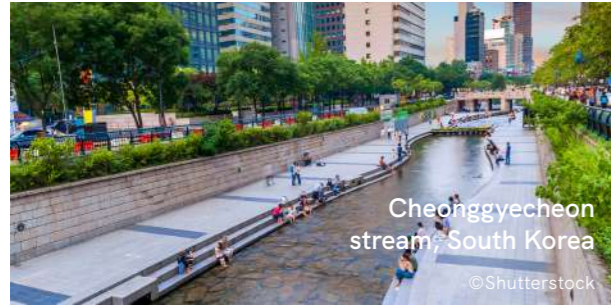


A well-connected park accessible via multiple subway stations and in walking distance to diverse areas.

Sustainable Places

13 NATURE POSITIVE

Designs that generate ecological value increase biodiversity and ecosystem restoration to combat climate change.



10.9km of eco-friendly public recreation space that has reduced the heat island effect and 16 significantly improved air quality in this area.

14 LOW CARBON & LOW RESOURCE CONSUMPTION

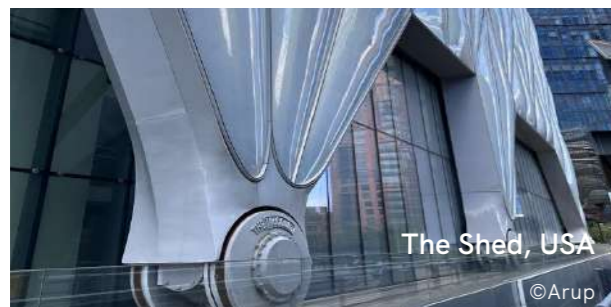
Delivers design solutions that minimize resource consumption and carbon emissions over the lifecycle of the space.



Plant selection favors native, drought-tolerant, and low-maintenance species.

15 ADAPTABLE

The design is economically, environmentally and socially adaptable and responsive to an ever changing context



Moving the roof creates a more extensive cultural center as and when needed.



16 ENCOURAGES EXPERIMENTATION

Promotes experimentation and testing in the design and use of the space to inform decision-making and improve outcomes.



An experimental playground with interactive climbing features, sand pits, and treehouses.

17 USER-CENTRED TECHNOLOGY

Responsibly applies technology to enhance the experience and the performance of public spaces.



Outdoor digital way-finding totems to inform visitors of landmarks and activities.

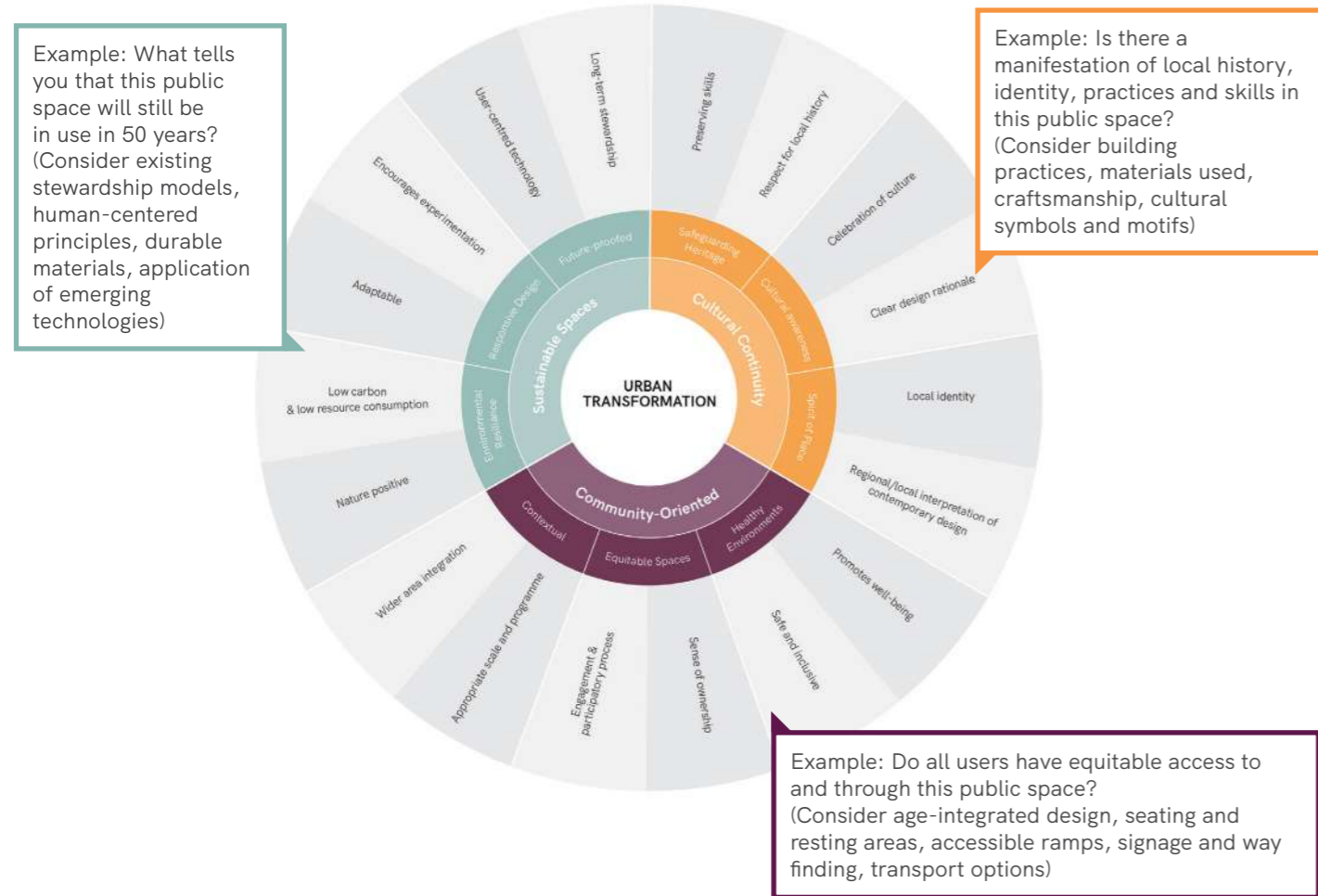
18 LONG-TERM STEWARDSHIP

Establishes effective governance models that ensure the space is collectively managed and sustained long-term.



An NGO that engaged local community members to look after the park, ensuring that the public was part of the park's stewardship.

3.3 Urban Transformation Assessments



The Urban Transformation Assessment Wheel and corresponding prompts

01 Urban Transformation Assessment Wheel

Urban transformation can be assessed by key categories based on the Charter's core values:

- Cultural Continuity
- Community Oriented
- Sustainable Spaces

Each category unfolds into six metrics, covering a breadth of qualities and experiences of quality public spaces. Definitions and illustrative examples from around the world can be found overleaf.

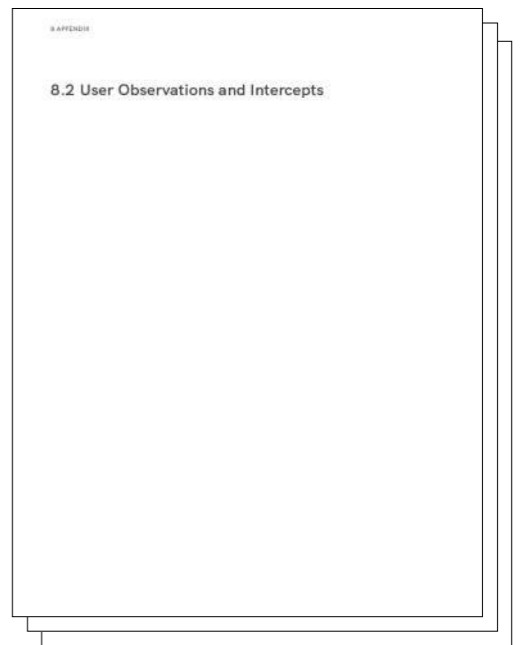
The wheel was developed, tested, and iterated while evaluating spaces in Saudi Arabia and internationally, and examining international case studies. It will be developed further as a tool within the forthcoming Urban Transformation Manual.

02 User Assessment

Accompanying the assessment, an observation guide provides qualitative and quantitative inquiries to build a fuller picture of the urban experience from a user perspective, focusing on:

- User Observations - assessing how spaces are used, by whom, and when people interact with the space and one another.
- User interviews - enriching the observational lens through short intercept interviews which unearth the value and potential barriers for users.

See the appendix page 144 for a complete list of questions.

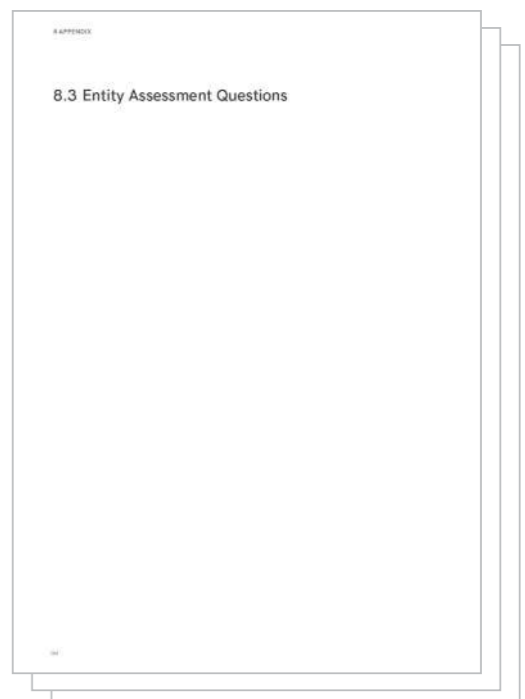


03 Entity Assessment

Multiple entities can deliver urban transformation - each has varying existing capacity to do so. The entity assessment seeks to understand an entity, its ambitions, and local challenges. This will inform the design and content of the manual. A semi-structured interview guide covers issues such as:

- Process - planning, public engagement, and implementation
- Design - priorities and maintenance
- Health and well-being
- Sustainability and Climate change mitigation (including biodiversity)

See the appendix page 154 for the complete list of questions.



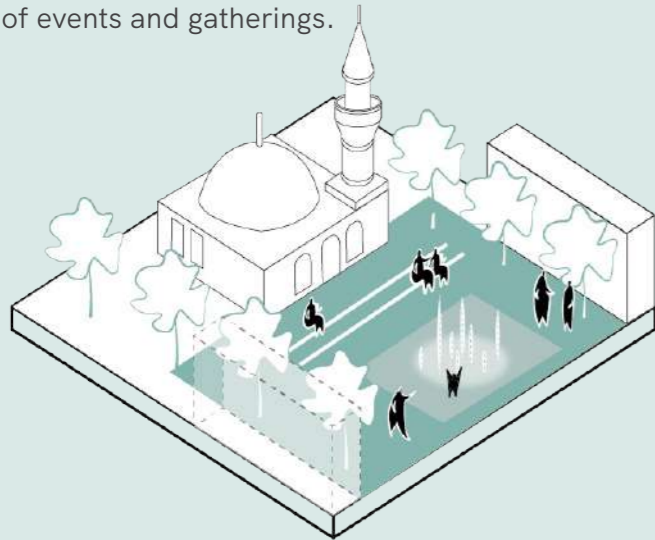
4 Urban Observations

The assessment criteria will be applied to public spaces in Saudi cities. It is critical, therefore, to understand existing spaces, their use, and their broader socio-economic and spatial context. This is often a context of rapid growth and change, bringing opportunities and challenges to it. At the same time, it is important to take account of existing trends and initiatives that the urban transformation methodology might draw on.

4.1 Defining Public Space in Saudi Arabia

1. CIVIC SQUARES AND PLAZAS

Urban spaces that are often associated with civic buildings or other key destinations, predominantly hard surfaces to allow for flexibility and the hosting of events and gatherings.



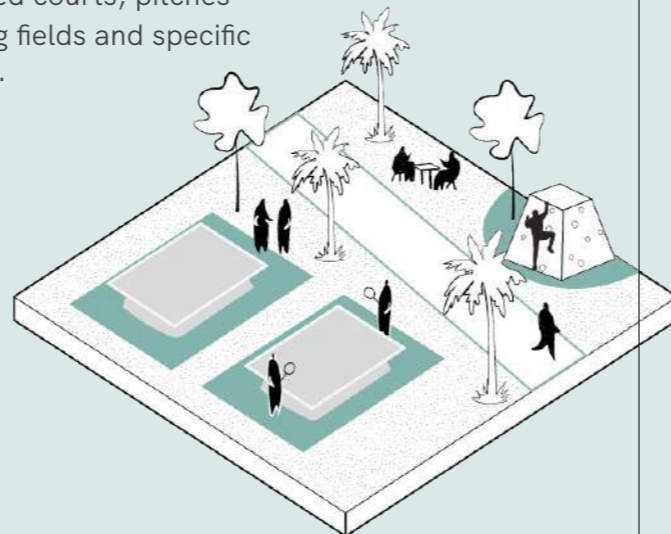
2. STREETS AND PROMENADES

Connective linear networks of the public realm that welcome active travel and may occasionally host events along their length.



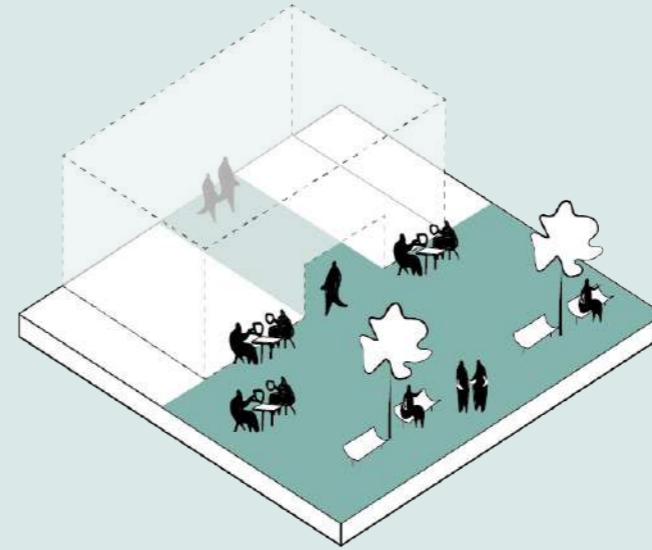
4. RECREATIONAL

Spaces designed to support sports and athletic activities that require dimensioned courts, pitches and playing fields and specific equipment.



3. PARKS AND GARDENS

Urban space that is planted with trees and shrubs providing contact with nature, and designed to support passive leisure activities such as picnics, as well as active spaces for outdoor eating, play, and events.



6. INDOOR PUBLIC SPACES

Public libraries, museums, train stations, indoor markets, and other public buildings or facilities that are public and open to all.

These could also include semi-public community spaces such as 'diwaniyat,' where there is a high level of permeability between the indoors and outdoors.

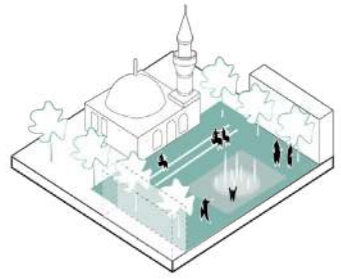
5. NATURAL OPEN SPACES

Large outdoor space that is driven by natural ecosystems like wadis, mountains, and beaches. Often natural and wild in character, they provide nature-based solutions.

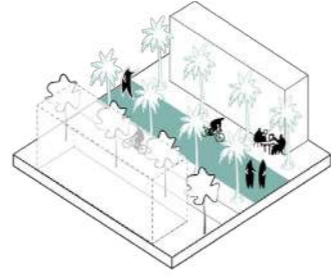


To rigorously apply the assessment criteria, it is essential to clearly define the role of public spaces in the Saudi urban context and what they include or exclude.

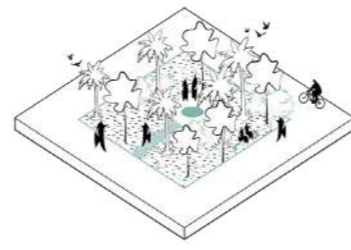
The illustrations on this page provide the range of typologies of public spaces that this report and project focus on.



1. CIVIC SQUARES AND PLAZAS



2. STREETS AND PROMENADES



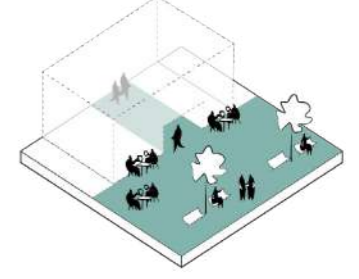
3. PARKS AND GARDENS



4. RECREATIONAL



5. NATURAL OPEN SPACE



6. INDOOR PUBLIC SPACES

SMALL



Courtyard



Sidewalks



Neighborhood park



Playground



Beach



Train Station

MEDIUM



Neighborhood plaza



Shaded walkway



District park



Sports field



Wadi



Library

LARGE



Landmark plaza



Corniche



City park



Sports centre



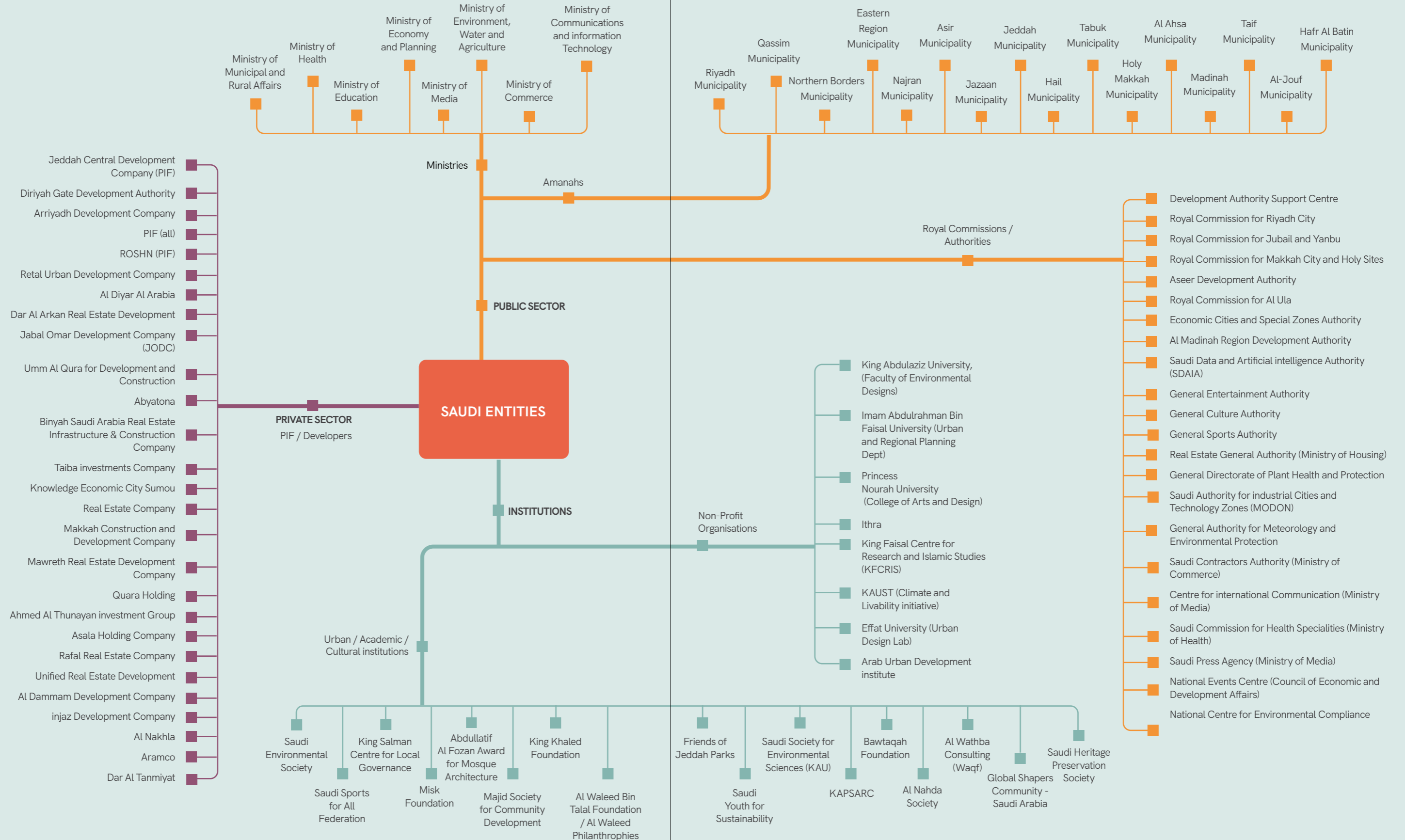
Nature reserve



Market

4.2 Defining Saudi Entities

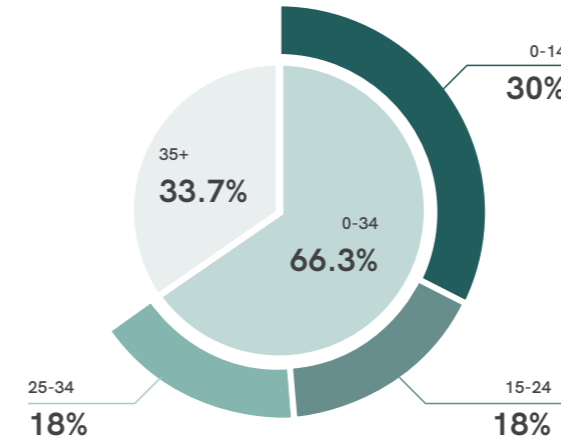
A long list of entities relevant to Urban Transformation.



4.3 Diversity of Saudi Cities

Climate

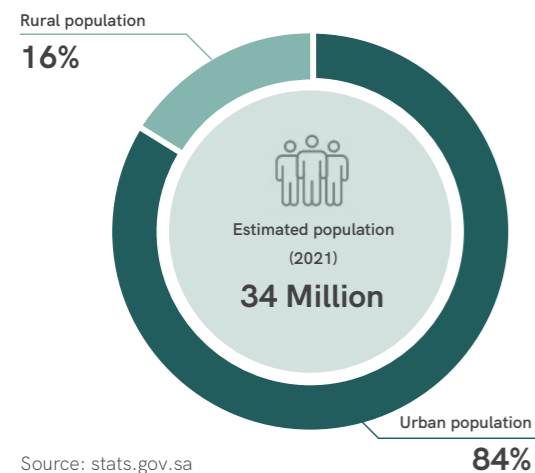
Saudi is characterized by an arid climate. However, there are nuances in the environment from region to region. Humidity, rainfall, weather patterns, and geology vary from the cities in the mountains to the coasts to the oases.



Communities

There is great diversity in the local population of Saudi due to its rich and layered history. There is a range of age groups, ethnicities, and socio-economics.

Percentage of youth and children in the Saudi population, 2021 Source: Estimated population for the middle of 2021, GASTAT, 2021



Culture

Saudi Arabia's regions vary in their culture and traditions. Each region has a rich and unique history that has informed the urban and rural lifestyles of today's cities, including the industries in which they work, the foods they eat, and their local art and building materials.

4.4 Opportunities in Saudi Cities

Overview of Opportunities

Awareness is quickly growing among citizens and government institutions of the value of improving cities and public space. National policy and public investment prioritize 'humanizing cities' and transforming car-oriented and homogenous cities to become walkable, sustainable, and unique. Public participation and inclusive engagement is gaining traction and has become more common, albeit not yet required.

There is an increasing recognition in Saudi Arabia that climate change, combined with the expected population growth in the region, will call for a transformation in the way Saudi cities have been developing over recent decades.

The impending metro system in Riyadh is a positive example of planning for that transformation. It is hoped that, over time, behavioral change will be catalyzed, and

people will choose to leave their cars and enjoy the convenience of public transportation. This is especially critical as the workforce numbers and, in turn, commuting are on the rise as more and more women are employed outside the home. Indeed, the fact that women are increasingly present in the city center and business districts should also influence how the public realm and public spaces are designed.

A notable and new focus is on health, fitness, and well-being. This will permeate everyday life and call for the creation of new public spaces and destinations. As new areas of the cities are developed and existing areas intensify, the introduction of meanwhile, or temporary uses, is understood as both a way to test long-term uses and to encourage non-car-based activities. Indeed, there is already a long local tradition of informal kiosks and market structures in plazas and parks.

01 Appetite For Participatory Design



02 A Growing 'Humanization' Initiative



03 Rapid Urban Development



Key urban opportunities in Saudi Arabia

Key Opportunities in Saudi Cities



01

Appetite For Participatory Design

Without a formal requirement for participation in the planning process, it has been common practice in recent years for Entities to facilitate participatory design sessions for local communities in designing the public realm. This shows a clear interest from the public sector in listening to and understanding community needs in public space. It also shows the strong appetite that the local communities have for playing a role in shaping their neighborhoods and cities.



© Center for Local Governance



© Eastern Province Municipality



© Eastern Province Municipality



© Riyadh Municipality

Examples of various participation sessions across KSA over the last few years. This includes a workshop to plan cycle networks in the Eastern Province organized by Eastern Amanah and a workshop to design a new park in Riyadh, run by the King Salman Center for Local Governance.

Key Opportunities in Saudi Cities

02

A Growing 'Humanization' Initiative

There is a strong and ongoing movement around human-centered cities, which is known in Saudi as 'Humanization.' It calls for designing streets and cities for people rather than cars by widening sidewalks and providing trees for shade and walkable neighborhoods. It is a formal initiative with roots in the 1990s, led by the previous Mayor of Riyadh, Dr Abdulaziz BinAyyaf, and is growing further under Vision 2030. It is evident from discussions in city councils, newspapers, social media accounts, and informal debates in the Majalis.



The public realm developments in Olaya, Riyadh, demonstrate the ongoing efforts to humanize the city by creating comfortable pedestrian networks.



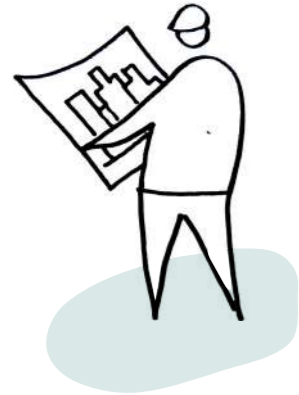
"The fact is that, somewhat unknowingly and in the midst of our preoccupation with comprehensive and rapid urban development, we appear to have lost some of what it takes to make a city more human. Humanization, in broad terms, has to do with providing facilities and activities that make life more attractive, caring, and humane."

- Previous Mayor of Riyadh, Dr Abdulaziz BinAyyaf, in his book 'Enhancing The HumanDimension in Municipal Work', 2017



Several initiatives in KSA to promote 'City Humanization' including an award, a conference, and a photo of a weekly street market in Riyadh named Bastat Al Riyadh to promote urban humanization.

Key Opportunities in Saudi Cities



03

Rapid Urban Development

Saudi cities are experiencing a boom of urban investment and growth. Public and private developments of housing, tourism, and retail demonstrate that there are many opportunities to transform public spaces. Major projects like the Riyadh Metro are expected to open and unlock new neighborhoods and active travel modes for Saudi citizens. Amongst all this growth, there is an opportunity now to define quality and success in future public spaces.



“The speed and breadth of development is staggering, and there is no doubt that there will be a larger uptick in tourism growth as many destinations open their doors from 2024/5 onwards.”

- Arabian Business 2023

Left page and above: Renderings of upcoming large-scale projects in Saudi Arabia that include the King Salman Park and Roshn projects, amongst others.

4.5 Challenges in Saudi Cities

Overview of Challenges

Saudi cities have grown at an impressive rate over recent decades. New institutions and residential and commercial development have been built on a vast gridiron pattern defined by multi-lane high-speed roadways.

The result is that the urban environment suffers from the dominance of the private automobile. This has negatively impacted the urban form and, in turn, the health and well-being of residents. It is also, most importantly, damaging to environmental sustainability.

Examples of traditional Saudi urbanism are still evident in the old centers. They are self-cooling, human-scaled, walkable, active places that express local identity and character. In short, they achieve many of the qualities that are desirable in all public spaces. However, many of the lessons these historic centers can provide seem to have been largely ignored. Cities must accommodate 21st-century lifestyles; however, globally, this is a moment of reflection as we see that, in many instances, we have created environments

that do not fulfill the qualities we most seek in our cities and neighborhoods.

The three points illustrated below all culminate in environments that promote unsustainable lifestyles and behaviors that are neither fit for individual well-being nor that of the planet. Given the ever-increasing high temperatures, the lack of shade and hard standing surfaces, which produce heat islands, are worrisome.

The 'King Salman Charter for Architecture & Urbanism,' as noted previously in this report and incorporated into the Assessment Criteria calls for an urban fabric that is in stark contrast to the sprawl evident across the Kingdom today.

01 Homogeneity & 'Placelessness'



02 Car-Dependence & Car-Scale



03 An Inhospitable Public Realm



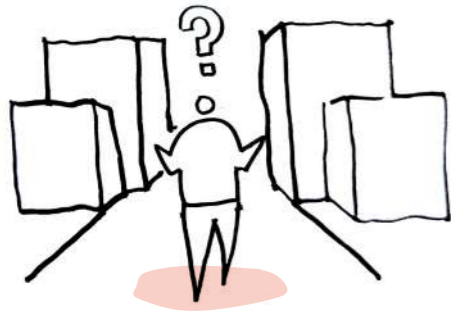
Key urban challenges in Saudi Arabia

Key Challenges in Saudi Cities

01

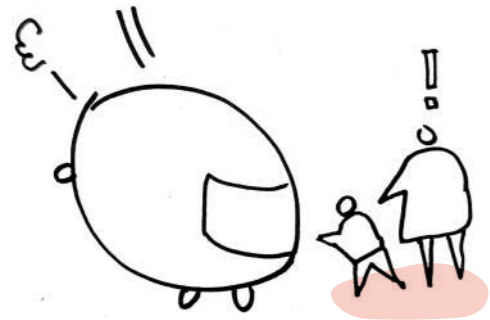
Homogenous And 'Placelessness'

The wide roadways and big commercial or institutional boxes that line them create an environment that could be anywhere. They offer no local or unique identity. More so, public spaces are limited in their identity and character and tend to be passive places. They often resemble one another. There are limited examples of placemaking and programming efforts to create a unique public place.



Bottom left: Aerial of Riyadh, showing homogenous urban sprawl, split by large areas of road infrastructure. Top, opposite, and bottom right: lack of street furniture or features that provide identity in Riyadh streets.

Key Challenges in Saudi Cities



02

Car-Dependence And Car-Scale

The contemporary development of Saudi cities caters to the driver, not the pedestrian. The sprawling development forces the need to travel to and between destinations by car. This is neither equitable nor environmentally sustainable. This is exacerbated by the fact that public transportation and active travel options do not yet exist in many cities.



© Al Khobar Municipality



© Shutterstock



© Al-Riyadh newspaper



© Arup

Top: Large areas of Riyadh are dominated by highways, catering to private vehicles. Bottom left: Saudi national day traffic jam. Bottom right: Endless, impermeable parking for events in Jeddah serves no use outside event days.

Key Challenges in Saudi Cities



03

An Inhospitable Public Realm

The streets and spaces between buildings - the traditional purview of the public realm - are hostile to pedestrians. The distances between destinations, lack of shade, exposure to environmental conditions and lack of pedestrian and cycle infrastructure make it challenging for people to spend time in public spaces during the day or travel by any mode other than a car.



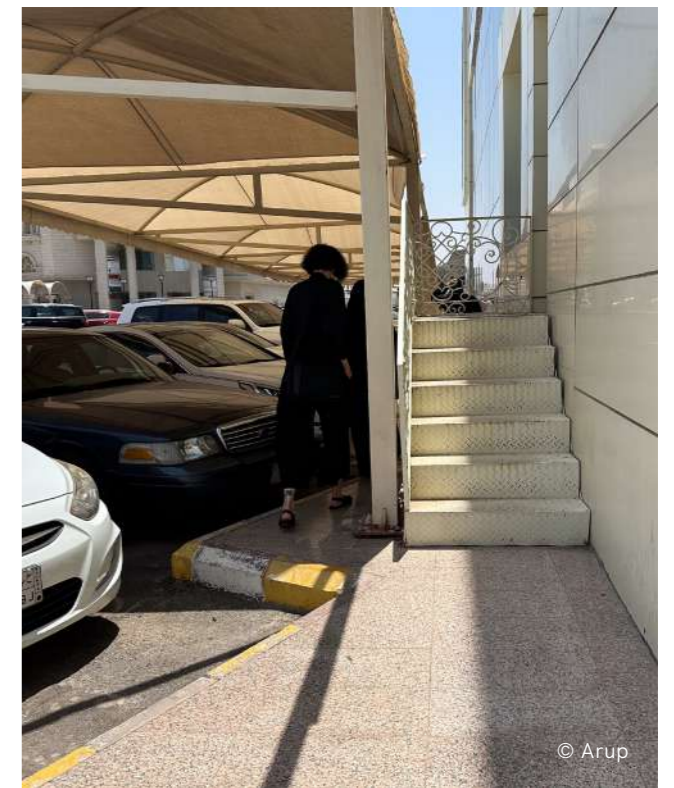
© Jeddah Municipality



© Buro Happold



© Arup



© Arup

Top and opposite: Urban parks in Saudi Arabia with no shaded amenities. Bottom left and right: Oversized roads with shaded parking but minimal space for accessible pedestrian access.

5 Benchmarks: International Case Studies

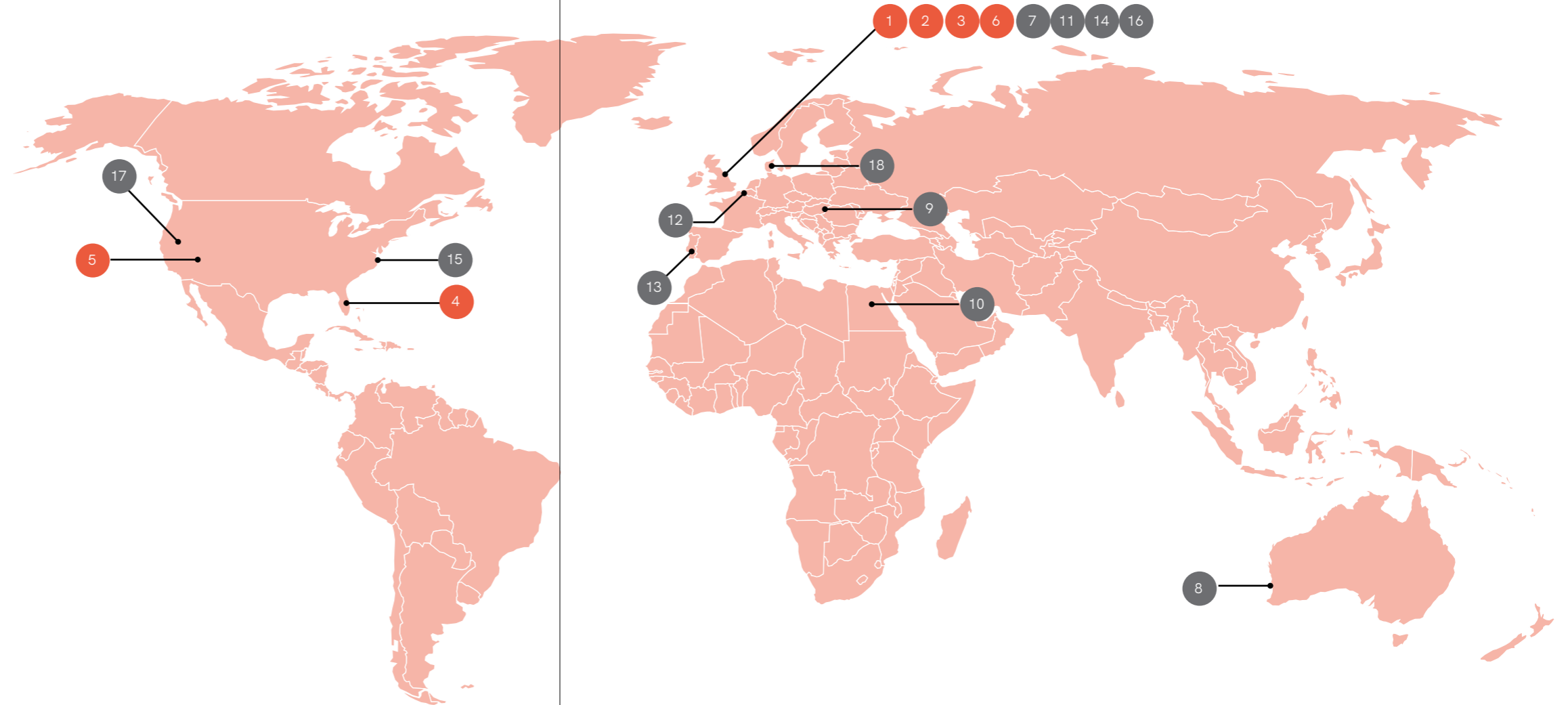
BEST PRACTICE IN URBAN TRANSFORMATION

Six international cases studies were assessed to test the assessment criteria further and learn lessons from global benchmarks. This set of case studies also allowed further testing of the Urban Transformation assessment framework that is set out in Chapter 3.

5.1 Selected International Case Studies

As part of the analysis of international best practices, six case studies were carefully selected that showcase different urban transformation project types and the various entities responsible for successfully delivering them. Valuable insights were gathered from these successful projects worldwide through meticulous research and examination.

Effective approaches, valuable lessons, and innovative solutions that have proven successful in different urban contexts were identified. The analysis explored the roles and contributions of various entities in delivering these transformative projects. The comprehensive collection of these six case studies has provided a rich knowledge repository, this enabled informed decision-making and the adoption of best practices for future urban transformation endeavors, fostering inclusivity, sustainability, and overall project success.



SELECTED CASE STUDIES

1. The Strand Aldwych, London, UK
2. Comune Di Milano, Milan, Italy
3. Eccleston Yards, London, UK
4. The Underline, Miami, USA
5. Mesa Arts Centre, Mesa, USA
6. Granary Square - King's Cross, London, UK

LONG LIST (APPENDIX PAGE 130)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London, UK 8. Yagan Square, Perth, Australia 9. Teleki Square, Budapest, Hungary 10. Al Azhar Park, Cairo, Egypt 11. Somerset House, London, UK 12. FLOW, Brussels, Belgium | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Community Kitchen in Terras da Costa, Costa de Caparica, Portugal 14. What If? Vacant Lots, London, UK 15. The High Line, New York, USA 16. Pop Brixton, London, UK 17. Downtown Las Vegas, USA 18. Superkilen, Copenhagen, Denmark |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

5.2 How to Read the Case Studies

Page 1

Project type | **Reference image**

Project name | **Aerial photograph**

Project information

Project description | **Spatial information**

Project Benefits and Lessons

Entity Benefits and Lessons

After intervention/ reference images

The image shows the first page of the case study. It features a header with 'Project type' and 'Reference image'. The main content includes a large photograph of 'The Strand Aldwych' with the title 'The Strand Aldwych' overlaid. Below this is an aerial photograph and a 'PROJECT DESCRIPTION' section. To the right, there are two columns of text: 'PROJECT BENEFITS' and 'PROJECT LESSONS', followed by 'ENTITY BENEFITS' and 'ENTITY LESSONS'. At the bottom, there are two side-by-side photographs labeled 'Before intervention' and 'After intervention'.

Page 3

Project type | **Project Assessment Tool**

Project Assessment Results

Key

The image shows the third page of the case study. It features a large circular diagram titled 'Project Assessment Tool' in the center. The diagram is divided into several segments, each representing a different aspect of the project's performance. To the left of the diagram, there is a 'Project Assessment Results' section with a list of 'MATRICES PERFORMING WELL', 'MATRICES FOR IMPROVEMENT', and 'UNDERPERFORMING MATRICES'. To the right, there is a 'Key' section with a legend for the diagram's segments.

Page 2

Project type | **Project overview**

Project assessment summary

Reference images

Relevance to Urban Transformation initiative

The image shows the second page of the case study. It features a 'Project Overview' section with a 'PROJECT OVERVIEW' sub-section. Below this is a 'PROJECT ASSESSMENT SUMMARY' section. To the right, there are two reference images: one showing a wide view of the street and another showing a close-up of a building facade. At the bottom, there is a section titled 'RELEVANCE TO URBAN TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVE'.

Page 4

Project type | **Entity overview**

Entity assessment summary

Reference images

Relevance to Urban Transformation initiative

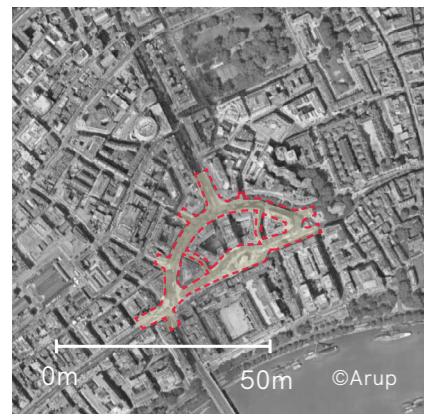
The image shows the fourth page of the case study. It features an 'Entity Overview' section with an 'ENTITY ASSESSMENT SUMMARY' sub-section. Below this is a 'RELEVANCE TO URBAN TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVE' section. To the right, there are two reference images: one showing a street scene with people and another showing a close-up of a building facade.

REPURPOSED
Case Study 1



The Strand Aldwych

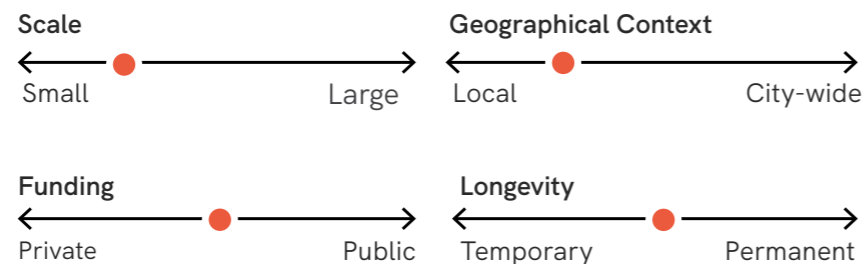
© Mickey L.F. Lee



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Strand Aldwych is home to cultural, educational, and creative institutions, as well as numerous businesses, all surrounded by established residential neighborhoods. The project's goal was to transform this once-polluted and traffic-congested street, The Strand, into a pedestrian-focused destination with strong links to the surrounding neighborhoods. The design has created a new pedestrian and cycle-friendly public space featuring widened footways, new crossings, landscaped areas, and pockets of informal seating. The successful transformation was achieved through collaborative efforts, engaging the local authority and over 70 local stakeholders, who actively participated in co-designing and shaping the new destination.

Location
London, UK
Entity
Westminster City Council
Northbank BID,
Type of Entity
Public Sector, BID
Climate Temperate
Stewardship
Northbank BID
Size
S - 0.7 ha



PROJECT BENEFITS

- 01 Successful example of businesses and institutions coming together to improve the public realm.
- 02 Transformed an area from a traffic-dominated and polluted street to a healthy pedestrian area.
- 03 Meanwhile-Use to test strategies and inform long-term permanent design.
- 04 Indigenous and seasonal planting creates value for local wildlife and biodiversity.

PROJECT LESSONS

- 01 The temporary redesign includes wide-open areas that still resemble a large boulevard in some areas. Removable planters and art features could be used to create more intimate scale and human-centered experiences.

ENTITY BENEFITS

- 01 Encouraged exemplary collaboration within and between cultural and educational institutions, SMEs, and students enabling high-end-level research, innovation, and a public showcase
- 02 Public realm consultation was held with local stakeholder groups presenting options that would suit the area

ENTITY LESSONS

- 01 The BID responsible for this redevelopment project could have worked more closely with local suppliers and designers to ensure local skills and materials were used in the design
- 02 The project duration was long, from ideation to planning approval to testing temporary schemes on site. This risks the design being outdated as needs change with time.

Before intervention



Repurposed: Closed and converted a busy roadway into a significant new public space

After intervention



Temporary design installation to inform permanent long-term improvements.



Project Assessment

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Strand Aldwych transformation project is a prime example of repurposing urban infrastructure to create a vibrant social space that benefits residents and the environment. It re-imagines a formerly polluted and traffic-dominated street in central London to create a vibrant pedestrian-focused destination connecting local neighborhoods and weaving historic landmarks, local businesses, and cultural and educational institutions into an interconnected community hub. Temporary design interventions allow for adaptability and help to ensure its future permanent state is responsive to community needs. Active engagement with the local authority and stakeholders prioritizes inclusivity and fosters a sense of ownership and pride in the community. Overall, the project showcases successful urban renewal, enriching the urban experience and promoting sustainability.

PROJECT ASSESSMENT

- **Cultural Awareness:** While it successfully integrates local culture and heritage by carefully considering landmarks like the King's College Chapel, Somerset House, and King's College, the public space lacks a clear narrative or distinct character. This may be attributed to its current evolving and transient state, which affects its choice of materials and the quality of its design rationale and execution.
- **Community Oriented:** The project made significant improvements to the area by reducing automotive traffic and implementing walking and

cycling infrastructure, resulting in more robust connections to surrounding neighborhoods. Traffic studies confirmed enhanced movement, reduced journey times, and improved safety after altering traffic flows. Key stakeholders were actively engaged, advocating for a healthier environment that promotes active travel, better air quality, and increased greenery.

This collaborative approach led to the creation of equitable spaces that seamlessly integrate the area's rich cultural and educational assets and business offerings. The site's integration with a wider area emerges as the best-performing metric, closely followed by being an equitable space and healthy environment. Overall, the transformation revitalized the area and established a vibrant, human-centric destination.

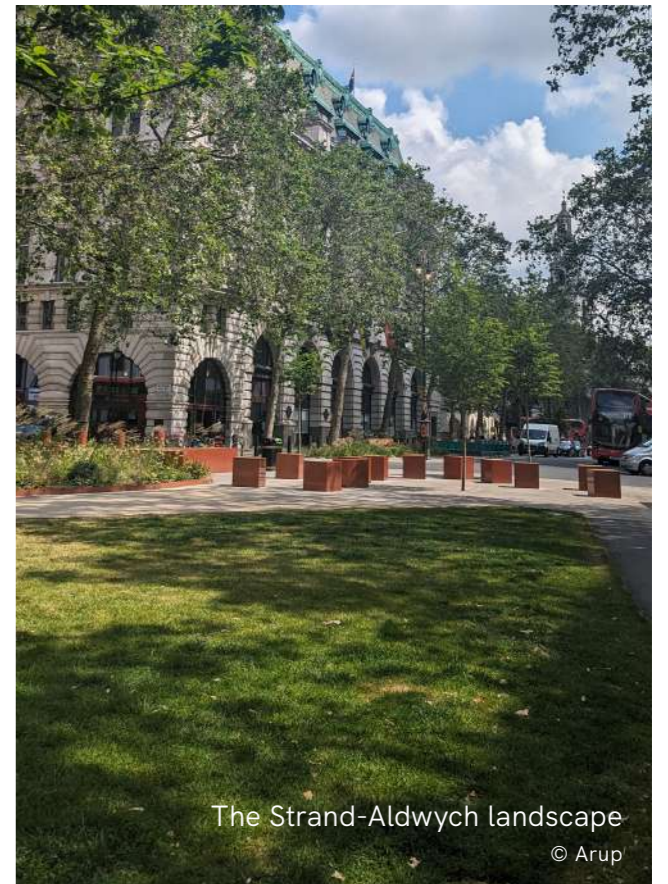
- **Sustainable Spaces:** By repurposing the existing street, the project successfully achieved significant reductions in carbon emissions and resource consumption and improved biodiversity. User behavior and temporary interventions were carefully observed through controlled experimentation and monitoring. This process empowers local communities and entities by applying real-world data to inform the permanent design.

Crucial to the project's success was partner collaboration, facilitated through the establishment of the BID (page 25). This collaboration played a key role in ensuring long-term stewardship. It resulted in positive changes to the project's vibrancy, productivity, and creativity, which in turn have had a favorable impact on the area's economy.

RELEVANCE TO URBAN TRANSFORMATION

The trend of transforming urban infrastructure into public spaces is gaining momentum worldwide. With Saudi cities grappling with wide streets, resource scarcity, and pressure to reduce carbon emissions, repurposing existing car-dominant streets offers a viable solution to enrich urban life without excessive consumption of new materials and resources.

Embracing this shift towards adaptive reuse of urban infrastructure demonstrates a sustainable and thoughtful approach to urban planning and development and results in the delivery of more resilient, lower-carbon spaces that serve their community's needs.



The Strand-Aldwych landscape

© Arup



Assessment Summary

MATRICES PERFORMING WELL

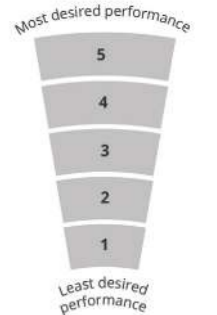
- Low Carbon and Low Resource Consumption
- Long-Term Stewardship
- Wider Area Integration
- Celebration of Culture
- Well-Being
- Safe and Accessible
- Engagement and Participatory Process
- Appropriate Scale and Program
- Nature Positive
- Adaptive
- Encourages Experimentation

MATRICES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Respect for Local History
- Local Identity
- User-Centered Technology

UNDERPERFORMING MATRICES

- User-Centered Technology
- Preserving Skills
- Clear Design Rationale
- Regional/ Local Interpretation of Contemporary Design





Entity Assessment: BID

ENTITY OVERVIEW

The Strand Aldwych Joint Project Board comprised of Westminster City Council (WCC), the Northbank BID, and key stakeholders.

They commissioned the design practice Publica to develop a public realm vision for Aldwych, which would establish an overarching integrated framework for transforming this significant part of the West End.

It has been developed in partnership with local stakeholders, including the Northbank BID, King's College London, London School of Economics, Somerset House Trust, St Mary Le Strand, and The Courtauld Institute.

ENTITY ASSESSMENT

- **Process:** The project was led by WCC to establish a 'creative thinking quarter' through a collaborative process (i.e. visioning workshops) with existing businesses, stakeholder groups, and institutions to improve this new space's activation and management. The Board was set up to provide strategic oversight and agree on objectives and outcomes for the project.

The stakeholder groups consisted of local citizens, cultural advisors, and programming & operations groups who were engaged throughout the process to ensure these perspectives were incorporated into the development of the design. A public consultation received 1,424 responses to the three options put forward by the winning design team led by LDA Design.

- **Design:** Two parallel thought processes around programming and design overlapped with the

practicalities of engineering, traffic studies, and deliverability, resulting in the creation of a unique design process for the concept design of the public space at Strand Aldwych. WCC selected LDA Design as the landscape architecture consultant for this scheme. Northbank launched a process for involving artists in the design development for Strand Aldwych going forward. This process is aimed at gathering expertise outside the technical scope of the project and contributing to the identity and culture of the new neighborhood at the early concept stages of design.

- **Funding Model:** This £22m, five-year construction project was led by Westminster City Council. WCC entered into a Management Collaboration Agreement in partnership with Northbank BID and King's College London. The purpose of this agreement was to collaborate and support the Council in managing the arrangements and associated costs related to the capital investment and works undertaken at the Strand.

- **Stewardship:** Due to stewardship provided by the BID, the project is well-maintained and efficiently governed. The Northbank BID, in partnership with Westminster City Council, has achieved significant recognition for its work on the transformation of this space, with the project winning 'The Mayor's Award for Good Growth' and the Business London Planning award for 'Best Heritage or Culture Project.' It has also received a commendation for 'Best Project for Sustainable Planning.'



The 'Skate the Strand' a free, temporary pop-up skate park marked the start of the transformation of the Strand Aldwych area.

© Westminster City Council

RELEVANCE TO URBAN TRANSFORMATION

The project is a testament to successful collaboration and thoughtful urban development, creating a welcoming environment that elevates the overall experience for residents, visitors, and businesses. Although Saudi has no precedence for BIDs, this Entity type can be a relevant and valuable model for specific neighborhoods with large businesses and landowners in Saudi cities.



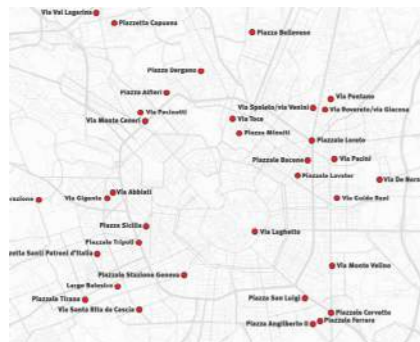
© Artp

REPURPOSED
Case Study 2



Comune di Milano

© City of Milan



Comune di Milano project distribution across the city.

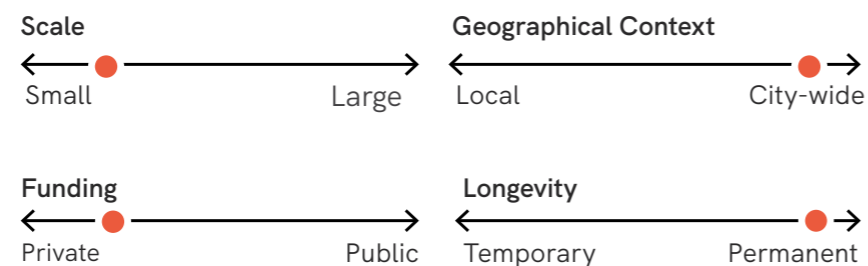
Location
Milan, Italy
Entity
City of Milan (collaboration with Bloomberg Associates and the Global Designing Cities initiative)

Type of Entity
Public partnership
Climate Temperate
Stewardship
City and community volunteering
Size
Various

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The city of Milan received praise for turning 23,225 square meters of surface car parking into a series of dynamic public spaces around the city.

The project started in 2018 when a large-scale reinvention of Milan's public spaces started taking place. In a simple yet refreshing solution, the focus was given to converting car parking into public plazas, especially in neighborhoods with little green space. The project aims to enhance the public realm and turn parking areas into community gathering places, extend pedestrian areas, promote sustainable forms of mobility to benefit the environment and improve the quality of life in the city.



PROJECT BENEFITS

- 01 Adaptive reuse is simple, fast and economical to test experimental solutions to support future decision-making on permanent solutions
- 02 High community participation and engagement throughout the design and implementation process
- 03 Creates a local identity through paint and color

PROJECT LESSONS

- 01 The projects have not made significant improvements to the local biodiversity or demonstrated responsiveness to extreme weather events, which is an area for improvement in the future.

ENTITY BENEFITS

- 01 City of Milan spent 6 months learning about tactical urbanism methodologies and implementation
- 02 The city has created an internal design team to manage and run these projects
- 03 City of Milan shifted from the role of implementing projects to facilitating them for local stakeholders

ENTITY LESSONS

- 01 The city is still largely responsible for event activation and maintenance of public spaces as handing responsibility to local stakeholders is taking time

Before intervention



Via Spoleto/Via Venini intersection before the tactical measures were implemented

After intervention



Via Spoleto/Via Venini intersection during the transformation of the space,



Project Assessment

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Milan is a successful example of recreating people-first streets by fostering strong community ties, making neighborhoods more resilient, and connecting people with local businesses, transportation, and one another. The Comune di Milano's repurposing of parking areas across the city has made neighborhoods more livable, healthier, and car-free, shaped by new bike lanes, traffic calming interventions, and reclaiming public spaces by extending and activating existing lifeless urban spaces.

PROJECT ASSESSMENT

- **Cultural Continuity:** The project scored high in fostering a high spirit of place. It doesn't create a unique space that respects local history, as the schemes embody a contemporary celebration of culture but make little reference to the past. Although there is an effort to empower local communities to apply their traditional skills and craftsmanship, this is limited as the validation process is long and complicated due to health and safety regulations.
- **Community Oriented:** This assessment area was the best performing, scoring maximum results in all areas relating to healthy environments, equitable spaces, and a strong connection to its context. The city-wide initiative does well in connecting with the wider context by creating pedestrian and cycling networks that link public spaces across neighborhoods. The rigorous engagement

and participatory process improves all matrices related to fostering a stronger sense of ownership, social cohesion, and safe, accessible, and inclusive spaces. The design and development of public spaces are entirely generated by local stakeholders and facilitated by city officials.

- **Sustainable Spaces:** The project encourages radical experimentation, which is responsive and adaptive to its context. The 'learning by doing' model delivers inexpensive, quick, and flexible public spaces that help to inform and future-proof permanent interventions incrementally. Environmental outcomes have reduced carbon emissions, spaces are cooler, greener, and less polluted by cars, and sustainable travel is encouraged.



RELEVANCE TO URBAN TRANSFORMATION

Comune di Milano is exemplary in its approach to engagement and participatory process. While the initial pilot projects were top-down to test, experiment with the methodology, and demonstrate the value to local stakeholders, the project is now bottom-up. Stakeholders came together to develop ideas, which were then facilitated by the city through implementation. The shaping of these unique spaces reflects the community, which inadvertently fosters a stronger sense of ownership and increased social cohesion.

Around forty projects have been successfully delivered across Milan since 2018, providing new, accessible open spaces to one out of every two Milanese.



Assessment Summary

MATRICES PERFORMING WELL

- Preserving Skills
- Celebration of Culture
- Clear Design Rationale
- Local Identity
- Regional/Local Interpretation of Contemporary Design
- Promotes Well-Being
- Safe and inclusive
- Sense of Ownership
- Engagement and Participatory Process
- Appropriate Scale and Program
- Wider Area Integration
- Low Carbon and Low Resource Consumption
- Adaptable
- Encourages Experimentation
- Long-Term Stewardship

MATRICES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Respect for Local History
- Nature Positive

UNDERPERFORMING MATRICES

- User-Centered Technology





Entity Assessment: Public

ENTITY OVERVIEW

The Comune di Milano is a program of the City of Milan developed by Agenzia Mobilità Ambiente Territorio (AMAT). It is an example of a public partnership in collaboration with Bloomberg Associates and the Global Designing Cities initiative, which provided technical expertise. The city spent six months learning about tactical urbanism. They have now built a dedicated design team to manage and run projects of this nature. The design team has grown to 15 people who are responsible for public space evaluations, concept design, public engagement, facilitation, and implementation throughout different phases, including meanwhile use and even permanent interventions.

ENTITY ASSESSMENT

- **Process:** initially, the city identified a handful of sites around the city of deprived neighbourhoods that lacked access to quality open space. The top-down selection kickstarted the programme and provided the opportunity to learn, test, and validate the methodology together with local stakeholders. Today, the city puts out calls for proposals for self-organised local stakeholders to approach the city with their own brief and ideas for their local space. The city then facilitates a 5-step process to co-create spaces collaboratively.
- **Design:** The process consists of five key stages once proposals from local stakeholders have been accepted by the city. The process of transforming the public

space begins with an analysis and design stage, where pedestrian, cycling, and vehicular traffic patterns are thoroughly assessed, and urban design factors such as shade, noise levels, and existing uses are considered. The tactical testing phase follows, during which the square takes shape with redesigned signs, street furniture, and plants, bringing it to life within a few weeks. Subsequently, the usage of the square is closely monitored, studying traffic flows and surveying users. The data gathered from testing and monitoring informs the final permanent design stage, guiding the creation of the public space. Finally, the project is implemented using durable materials, which marks the completion of the transformation process.

- **Funding Model:** The city provides technical support and the cost of providing activation elements such as basic urban furniture like planters, benches, picnic tables, and ping-pong tables. The initial pilot projects had no budget - most of the paint, plants, and other activation elements were either repurposed or donated by the local stakeholders. Currently, there is no specific budget allocation, but small financial contributions from the maintenance budgets of other city departments for urban greening and street works have been accessed.
- **Stewardship:** The "Collaboration Agreement" is a written agreement through which the City of Milan and the active residents define the organization of maintenance, shared management, and regeneration of communal spaces. This promotes collaboration with



The spaces provide seating, areas for play, cycle hire and are welcoming to all generations.

© City of Milan

the Administration to implement programs that address the management, maintenance, improvements, and activation of various forms of urban commons.

RELEVANCE TO URBAN TRANSFORMATION

The Comune di Milano project exemplifies tactical urbanism and participatory design in transforming public spaces across a city. It emphasizes community engagement, data-driven decisions, flexible funding, and collaborative stewardship, offering valuable insights into Saudi cities' urban transformation. In addition, the Bloomberg program that supported the City of Milan offers a model that ADC may wish to emulate as a champion and guide for Urban Transformation projects.



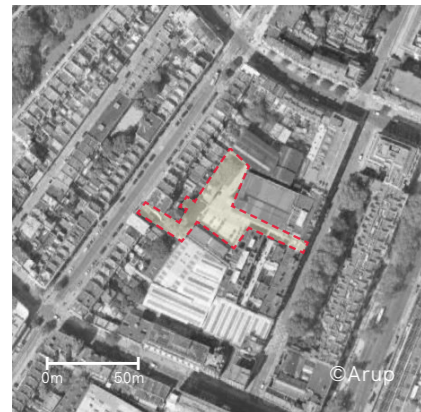
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REPURPOSED
Case Study 3



Eccleston Yards

© Grosvenor

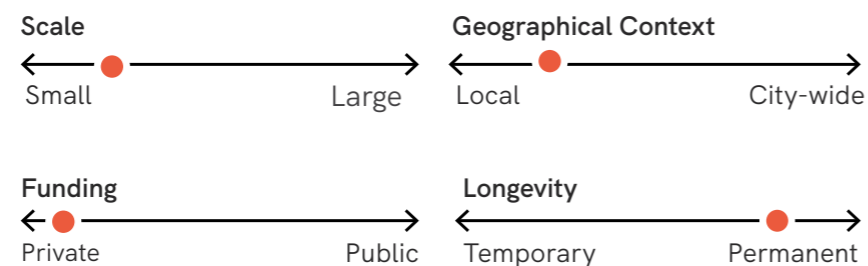


PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Grosvenor sensitively reinvigorated a derelict and underutilized car park and the site of Eccleston Place Power Station into Eccleston Yards. With the creation of a new public courtyard and new pedestrian connections, it is now a popular hub for independent businesses, entrepreneurs, and creative talent.

The project involved extensive public participation and engagement to co-create a place with a unique character that caters to the everyday life of the surrounding local stakeholders.

Location
London, UK
Entity
Grosvenor
Type of Entity
Private developer
Climate Temperate
Stewardship
Grosvenor
Size
S - 0.74 ha



PROJECT BENEFITS

- 01 Productive adaptation of an underutilized space
- 02 Provides an oasis, a welcoming series of outdoor rooms within an area dominated by bus traffic
- 03 Allows for testing ideas, building consensus, and responds to evolving demands and priorities of a community

PROJECT LESSONS

- 01 Although there are some softscape elements in Eccleston Yards, this site could have benefitted more from wider nature positive solutions that increase biodiversity.

ENTITY BENEFITS

- 01 Exemplar financial and stewardship model that manages, coordinates and activates the place.
- 02 Extensive engagement with the local community and an ongoing stewardship program to ensure its maintenance and upkeep

ENTITY LESSONS

- 01 The entity could provide more information to the visitors of this space about the historic uses of this site to illustrate the urban transformation narrative more clearly.



Eccleston Yards was previously the location of Eccleston Place Power Station, which supplied electricity to the Mayfair & Belgravia area for the first time in 1891.



The yard was redeveloped from a service yard to a co-working and creative hub in 2018.

REPURPOSED
Case Study 3



Project Assessment

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Eccleston Yards is an urban transformation project that has reprogrammed and activated a series of vacant and underutilized buildings and a courtyard. Embracing the best practices catalyzes urban transformation within major regeneration projects. Community participation and sensitivity in restoring historic buildings celebrate local culture, creating a unique character. Grosvenor focuses on sustainability, reducing emissions waste, and promoting reuse. Projects include carbon footprint measurement, composting, and increased recycling. Emphasizing biodiversity and reducing packaging waste, Eccleston Yards is a testament to successful urban renewal with a mindful approach.

PROJECT ASSESSMENT

- **Cultural Continuity:** Eccleston Yards scored high in the matrices connected to Spirit of Place and above average in Cultural Awareness Respect for Local History. Eccleston Yards development in London fostered an authentic and culturally aware space in the community by preserving local heritage, engaging with residents and stakeholders, and celebrating diverse cultural assets. The project seamlessly blended historical elements with contemporary design, reflecting the community's history and creating a sense of continuity. By embracing and celebrating local culture, the development has become a vibrant hub that strengthens the community's identity and pride.

- **Community Oriented:** Overall, this was the best-performing theme as a space that respects its broader context, is equitable, and healthy. The Eccleston Yards redevelopment prioritized community engagement, which created a vibrant, inclusive space. The pedestrian thoroughway promotes walkability, increases connectivity, enhances safety, and reduces noise pollution. The project considers physical accessibility for all, yet affordability remains a concern for a more inclusive community. While commendable, future considerations must balance the perception of exclusivity and inclusivity for a diverse population, ensuring an equitable environment.
- **Sustainable Spaces:** The Eccleston Yards community actively pursues sustainability initiatives to reduce their environmental impact. They cut emissions, improve energy efficiency, and manage waste effectively. Adopting sustainable materials and promoting reuse also helps minimize waste. Implemented projects include supporting tenants to reduce carbon footprints, reducing food waste, boosting recycling rates, and supporting active transport with bike facilities. They prioritize awareness campaigns, circularity, biodiversity, and value from waste streams. Efforts to increase the recycling of single-use coffee cups support Grosvenor's dedication to a greener, eco-friendly community.



Outdoor local fitness and wellness studios such as yoga with the Eccleston Yards courtyard.

© The parent

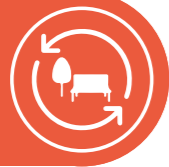
RELEVANCE TO URBAN TRANSFORMATION

The tactical activation and interventions of Eccleston Yards have effectively reduced urban sprawl and inefficient development. The project fits seamlessly into more comprehensive planned change strategies while adapting to the rapidly evolving urban context. The project's vision allows for testing ideas, building consensus, and responding to the evolving demands and priorities of the community. As an effective tool for urban renewal during times of significant change, Eccleston Yards provides a safe foundation for supporting communities and addressing their needs while contributing to the sustainable development and health of the local area.



The project celebrates the off-white and green wall tiles from its former industrial past.

© Arup



Assessment Summary

MATRICES PERFORMING WELL

- Local Identity
- Regional/Local Interpretation of Contemporary Design
- Preserving Skills
- Celebration of Culture
- Low Carbon and Low Resource Consumption
- Adaptable
- Long-Term Stewardship
- User-Centered Technology
- Wider Area Integration
- Appropriate Scale and Program
- Sense of Ownership
- Safe and Accessible
- Well-being

MATRICES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Clear Design Rationale
- Engagement and Participatory Process
- Nature Positive
- Respect for Local History

UNDERPERFORMING MATRICES

- None





Entity Assessment: Private

ENTITY OVERVIEW

Grosvenor is a respected global property enterprise with a 340-year history, specializing in direct investments in the UK and North America while collaborating with local property partners worldwide. Their focus on sustainability enhances urban spaces and well-being, particularly in the UK and North American property sectors. Their Diversified Property investments division supports like-minded local partners through joint ventures and investment funds, bolstering property exposure across regions. This strategic approach ensures a continuous commitment to transformative urban initiatives. Private developers like Grosvenor offer financial capability, efficiency, innovation, expertise, and the potential for public-private partnerships, which can collectively contribute to successful and community-oriented urban developments. As one of central London's oldest "great estates," Grosvenor owns a 300-acre freehold landholding, including c. 100 acres of Mayfair and c. 200 acres of Belgravia. Eccleston Yards is a collection of strategically refurbished and repurposed buildings and open spaces that now play an important role in Belgravia while meeting Grosvenor's ambition to deliver great places for people to live, work, and visit.

ENTITY ASSESSMENT

Process: Grosvenor is the long-term owner of six heritage properties framing an under-utilized central courtyard with limited access. Grosvenor's Asset Management team managed and maintained these assets, focusing on

proactive lease management and thorough building maintenance. Within the buildings, 16 active tenancies and lease arrangements were synchronized to enable the landlord to secure vacant possession and to allow for the assets to be redeveloped. This clear strategy was an essential step toward the project's implementation and was closely aligned with the vision for broader neighborhood transformation, which significantly influenced Eccleston Yards' projected lifespan. Grosvenor directly commissioned design and engineering services through well-established relationships with several consultants. Rigorous internal assessment and scrutiny by the executive committee resulted in funds being allocated towards specialist exploration that informed viability. Specifically, Arup's involvement provided deeper insights through idea collation, including a "premortem" exercise that highlighted potential risks. The subsequent scheme was built from this, alongside ongoing public consultation with key stakeholders in the neighborhood. The project was successfully delivered and culminated in a much-loved, well-attended, and exciting place.

- **Design:** The entity's brief was to reposition Eccleston Yards to become synonymous with entrepreneurial activity and wellness through high-quality, accessible, flexible public realm, managed, and proactive stewardship. This strategic alignment resulted in its classification as medium-term meanwhile using a strategy with a 7-10-year lifespan aimed at fostering revenue growth and redefining the area's distinctive character.

- **Funding Model:** The financial model used for the project was innovative. Part of a £1 billion



Pop-up food truck and kiosks in the Eccleston Yards courtyard on a summer's day in London.
© Grosvenor

investment program for the Belgravia area. The plan relied solely on rental income to repay the strategic refurbishment costs within seven years, aligning with the anticipated start of broader neighborhood developments. This led to determining a cost per sq ft for the development, notably lower than Grosvenor's usual for their other Belgravia assets. The funding to finance the project came from internal sources.

- **Stewardship:** The Grosvenor Asset Management team is responsible for the space's management and upkeep. Right from the start, a dedicated place manager was assigned as the first refurbished building became ready for occupancy. This individual oversees tenant relationships and engagement and orchestrates an activity program to attract visitors to the destination. The venue hosts various events, such as open-air screenings, food markets, and outdoor fitness and wellness studios.

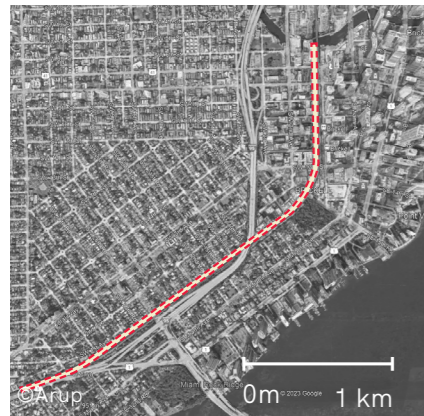
RELEVANCE TO URBAN TRANSFORMATION

The Grosvenor Group's role in successfully delivering Eccleston Yards illuminates the benefits of private developers leading urban transformation. Private entities offer distinct advantages that bring a vision together coherently and resources into well-designed and maintained spaces. However, potential pitfalls loom. While such an approach can yield vibrant areas, the lack of public ownership and control raises concerns about inclusivity and access. Public space management hinges on the developer's ethos, potentially diverging from community interests. This dynamic may restrict informal stewardship and citizen participation. Achieving an equilibrium between private investment and public inclusivity is challenging, underscoring the necessity for prudent balance in future urban revitalization endeavors.

INFRASTRUCTURE
Case Study 4



The Underline



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Underline is an ambitious project that involves a collaboration between public and private entities to develop 120 acres of land owned by Miami-Dade County, the City of Miami, and the City of Coral Gables. The initiative aims to create a remarkable 16 km linear urban park beneath Miami's Metrorail system, focusing on enhancing regional mobility and promoting diversity, culture, and lifelong learning. The project seeks to achieve these through innovative urban trails and engaging programming, forging connections between people, their environment, and each other to establish a safe, healthy, equitable, and sustainable community.

Location
Miami, USA

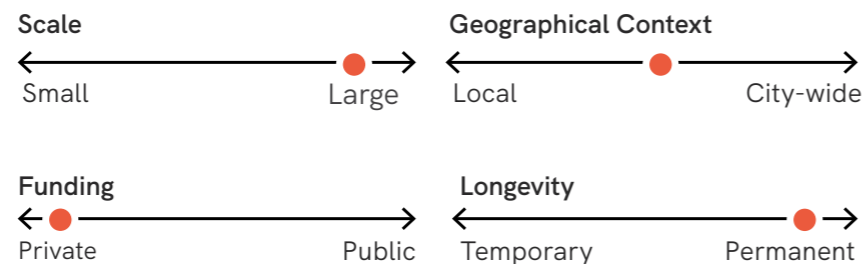
Entity
Miami-Dade County

Type of Entity
PPP - public-private partnership

Climate
Arid - Humid

Stewardship
Miami-Dade County and Friends of the Underline

Size
XL - 48.5 ha



PROJECT BENEFITS

- 01 Provided safer active travel options for pedestrians and cyclists
- 02 Infrastructure can positively impact urban environments beyond its intended use. Linear spaces designed as both routes and destinations exemplify this versatility
- 03 The Underline created more than 1,000 jobs during construction and 400+ permanent jobs during operations of the park

PROJECT LESSONS

- 01 The Underline empowered locals to regenerate urban spaces and re-imagine their relationship with the public land

ENTITY BENEFITS

- 01 Shared resources for funding urban by combining public and private resources, enabling funding beyond the public sector's capacity. A demonstration of how PPP works well when private sector technology and innovation combine with public sector incentives to complete projects with desirable outcomes.

ENTITY LESSONS

- 01 PPP's are complex models that provide a lot of benefits but require time to be established.

Before intervention



After intervention



The Underline transforms the land below Miami's Metrorail into a 16km linear park, urban trail, and public art destination.



Project Assessment

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Underline is more than just a neighborhood space; it represents a bold re-imagining of community parks, fostering connections and unity among people. Once fully realized, its substantial scale will revolutionize how city dwellers move, interact, and enjoy recreational activities. With urbanization making cities denser and available spaces scarcer, the demand for such places has surged. The Underline is a shining example of optimizing existing, unused, and unwelcoming infrastructure within the city, transforming them into valuable assets for the wider public. By breaking down barriers and offering diverse urban spaces and functions, this project strives to enhance the overall quality of life for the community it serves.

PROJECT ASSESSMENT

Cultural Continuity: The Underline project excelled in all metrics linked to the Cultural Awareness and Spirit of Place objectives. The project aligned well with its goals of transforming the space under the elevated rail line to prioritize pedestrian and cyclist safety and create over 100 acres of open space with restored natural habitats, implementing a clear design rationale. Through strong community engagement efforts involving residents in a community-based placemaking process, the project celebrates the local culture. It also respected local history by integrating natural landscape features with heritage significance and upheld local identity through community engagement. However,

there was no significant evidence that it incorporated meaningful elements and narratives from the past to foster a sense of continuity, apart from repurposing the rail infrastructure. While details on preserving local skills are limited, the presence of a diverse Farmers Market, seasonal produce, handmade crafts, artwork, locally sourced products, events, and art installations supports the continuity of traditional skills, craftsmanship, and knowledge, contributing to the project's overall success.

- **Community Oriented:** Across the objectives of Healthy Environments, Equitable Spaces, and Context, the project scored the highest performance. The linear park offers diverse community programs, including rotating public art installations, free art classes for adults and children, and health and wellness initiatives. It aims to connect neighborhoods and provide distinctive spaces for various community needs. With an emphasis on promoting a healthy lifestyle, the park offers recreational features and volunteer opportunities. It nurtures an inclusive and engaged community with a strategic plan for equitable development.

- **Sustainable Spaces:** The Underline has a comprehensive Technology Master Plan, incorporating various technological initiatives like free internet, virtual tours, and educational mobile apps. The project emphasizes sustainability and biodiversity, utilizing green infrastructure, native vegetation, and renewable energy like solar powering the plaza. It also features



Community gardening event, Day in the dirt.
©The Underline

RELEVANCE TO URBAN TRANSFORMATION

The Underline showcases an innovative solution for reconnecting divided neighborhoods and demonstrates how urban infrastructure can transform neglected spaces into vibrant, people-centric areas. They become architectural marvels, cultural icons, and tourist attractions, serving as physical and social connectors. The Urban Transformation project can draw inspiration from this approach. Re-imagining under-utilized spaces such as underpasses, which are common spaces in Saudi cities that are often seen as derelict and unsafe, has the power to unlock city-wide value.



Black art celebration
concerts during the evening
©The Underline

Assessment Summary

MATRICES PERFORMING WELL

- Respect for Local History
- Clear Design Rationale
- Local Identity
- Celebration of Culture
- Regional Interpretation of Contemporary Design
- Well-Being
- Safe and Accessible
- Sense of Ownership
- Engagement and Participatory Process
- Appropriate Scale and Program
- Wider Area Integration
- Nature Positive
- Low Carbon and Low Resource Consumption
- Adaptable
- Encourages Experimentation
- User-Centered Technology
- Long-Term Stewardship

MATRICES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Preserving Skills

UNDERPERFORMING MATRICES

- None



INFRASTRUCTURE

Case Study 4



Entity Assessment: PPP - public-private partnership

ENTITY OVERVIEW

The Underline is a public-private partnership between the Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTPW), the Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces (PROS) Department, Friends of the Underline, the City of Miami, and the City of Coral Gables. Public-private partnerships involve collaboration between a government agency and a private-sector company that can be used to finance, build, and operate projects, such as public transportation networks, parks, and convention centers. Financing a project through a public-private partnership can allow a project to be completed sooner or make it a possibility in the first place. The private partner participates in the designing, completing, implementing, and funding the project, while the public partner focuses on defining and monitoring compliance with the objectives. Public-private partnerships entail risks for both partners, including construction and demand risks, as well as the general public, concerning accountability and the potential for corruption and rent-seeking activities.

ENTITY ASSESSMENT

- **Process:** The inception of the idea occurred with a local resident. Initially, the city focused on selecting several sites around the city: deprived neighborhoods that lacked access to quality open space. The top-down selection kickstarted the program and provided the opportunity to learn, test, and validate the methodology together with local stakeholders. Today, the

city calls for proposals for self-organized local stakeholders to approach the city with briefs and ideas for their local space. The municipality then facilitates a 5-step process to co-creating spaces in collaboration with local communities.

- **Design:** The Underline was designed by Field Operations, the same landscape architecture studio that developed the High Line in New York. Brickell Backyard was the first phase of The Underline, located at the northernmost portion. Phase 3 is currently in design, with construction expected to begin in late 2023.
- **Funding Model:** Funding for the public-private project's construction comes from a combination of federal, state, local, and private contributions, amounting to over \$140 million for all three phases of The Underline. The construction funding for all phases has been successfully secured. The Underline Management Organization, aka Conservancy, oversees the ongoing operations, maintenance, programming, and art with financial support from public and private sources. The Friends of The Underline handle private funding for programs and art, while Miami Dade County and the Friends organization share responsibilities for operations and maintenance costs.
- **Stewardship:** Friends of The Underline is a 501C3 non-profit organization advocating to transform the underutilized land below Miami's Metrorail into a 10-mile linear park, urban trail, and canvas for artistic expression to create a safer, healthier, more connected, mobile, and engaged community. They apply for grants,

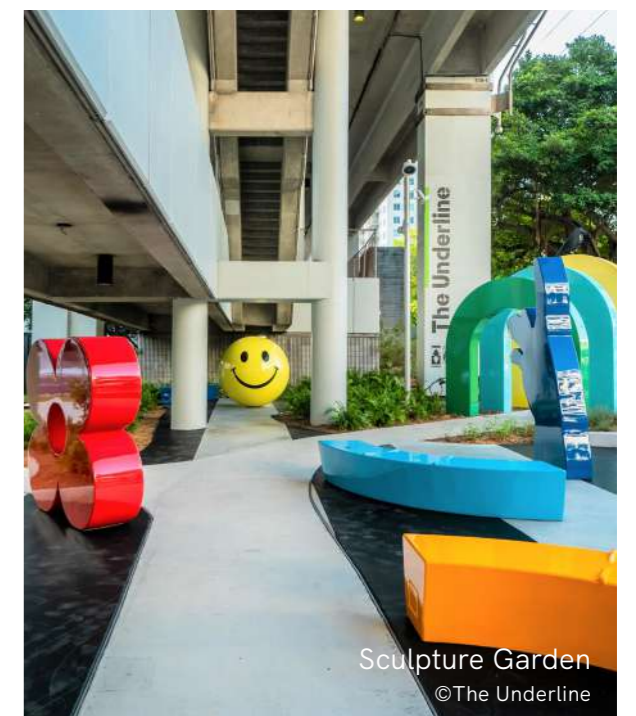


The Underline sound stage, Miami Ballet
©The Underline

manage donations, maintain the space, and promote the park. They also ensure there is ongoing programming.

RELEVANCE TO URBAN TRANSFORMATION

Urban transformation projects can learn three crucial lessons from the advantages of public-private partnerships (PPPs). Firstly, the collaborative pooling of resources from the public and private sectors facilitates funding for expansive initiatives that exceed individual capacities. Secondly, risk distribution within partnerships enhances effective risk management, alleviating the burden on each party. Lastly, private sector involvement introduces specialized expertise, fostering innovative solutions to intricate urban challenges.



Sculpture Garden
©The Underline



Mesa Arts Centre

© Martha Schwartz Partners



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Mesa Arts Centre is the largest arts complex in the desert southwest and a catalyst for urban redevelopment and community pride. The center encompasses four theatres, an arts education facility with 12 studios, and a contemporary art museum, all clustered around a dramatically landscaped oasis, creating a diverse, comprehensive cultural complex.

The design was inspired by elements of the surrounding desert, and a place where the rich interplay of overlapping shadows, trees, and architectural canopies creates a calm and inviting environment.

Location

Mesa, USA

Entity

City of Mesa / Mesa Arts Centre

Type of Entity

Non-profit / Institution

Climate

Dry

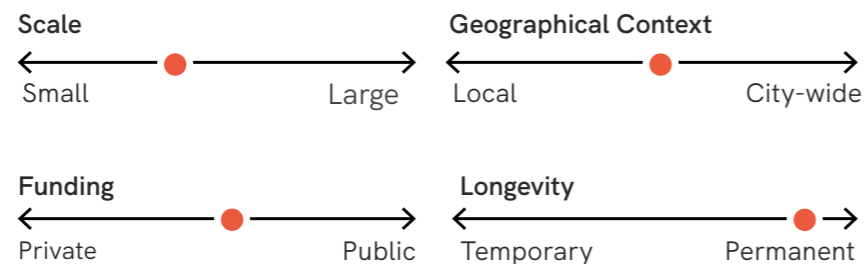
Stewardship

Mesa Arts Centre

Institution

Size

M - 2.8 ha



PROJECT BENEFITS

- 01 The Centre represents a rebirth of Mesa, with arts playing a central role in its transformation
- 02 The Mesa Arts Centre stands out in its unique design and architectural significance
- 03 The design emphasizes accessibility, functionality, and sustainability

PROJECT LESSONS

- 01 The design took inspiration from several natural features such as the "arroyo" to become a more sustainable site, however there was a lack of skills to build the arroyo to ensure these features were functional and did not fail.

ENTITY BENEFITS

- 01 A single institution can maintain consistency in design, maintenance, and operations, providing a cohesive and recognizable identity to the public space
- 02 Demonstrates the value of effective collaboration between the community, client, and design team in defining the identity of downtown Mesa

ENTITY LESSONS

- 01 Reliance on philanthropists for financing the scheme poses risks for the project and a challenge to replicate this model again.

Reference images



The open spaces forge connections with the wider context



The landscape is highly mindful of creating sustainable public spaces.

NEW DEVELOPMENT

Case Study 5



Project Assessment

PROJECT OVERVIEW

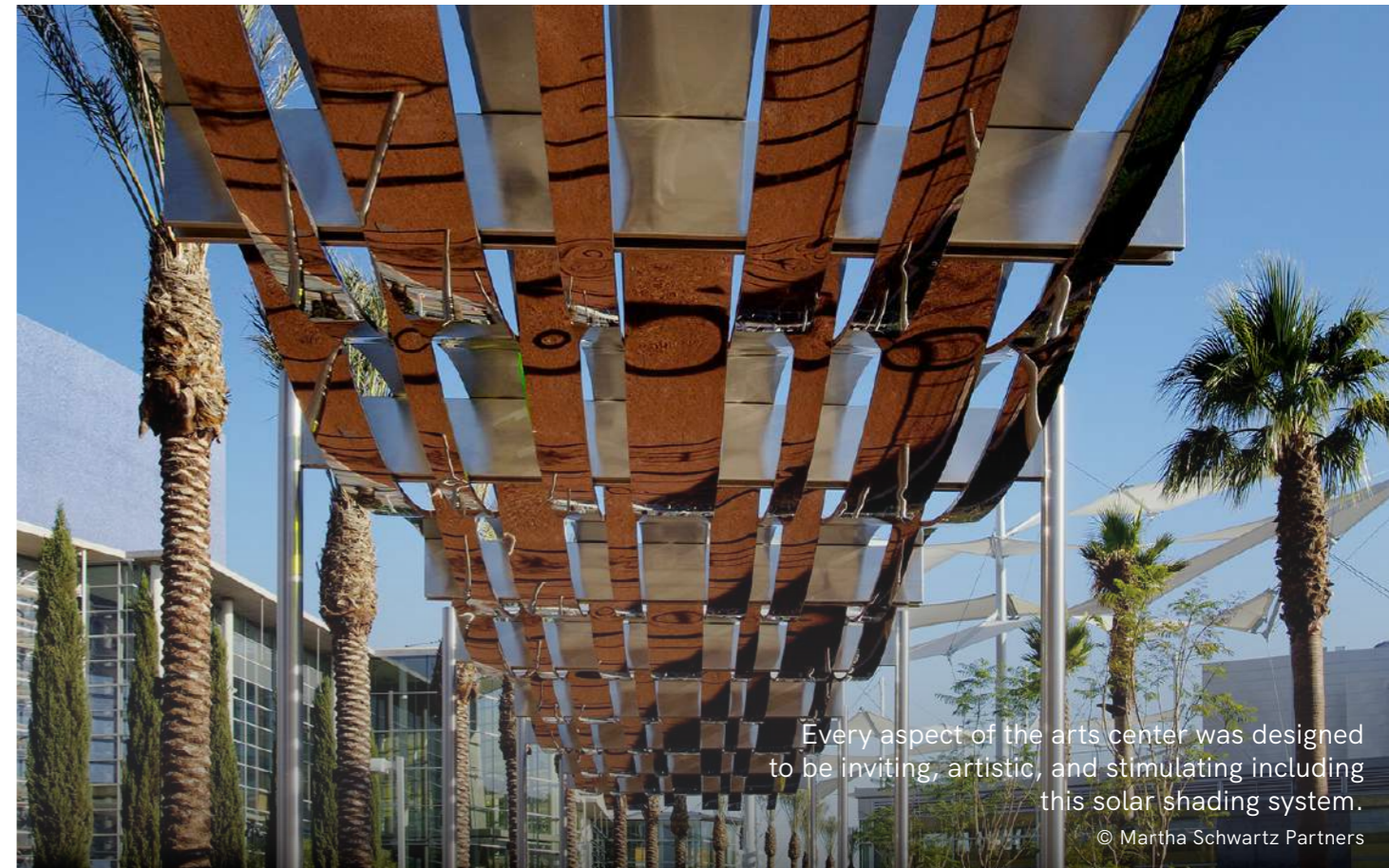
The Mesa Arts Centre was intentionally established in downtown Mesa as part of a broader effort to revitalize the city. Decades ago, Mesa boasted a thriving downtown with numerous businesses and attractions, but suburban expansion after World War II caused a decline in the city center. As people moved into newly thriving suburbs, downtown businesses suffered, leading to a cultural and reputational shift. The Mesa Arts Centre was strategically positioned near the light rail station to draw people back into the city. Its presence not only dominates the surrounding area but also influences the perception of what Mesa should be, encouraging a renewed focus on urban activity and life.

PROJECT ASSESSMENT

• **Cultural Continuity** The Mesa Art Centre's landscape and building design is unique, making it a prominent feature of the downtown environment and providing a new local identity. Its distinctiveness enhances the context and blends harmoniously with the surroundings. Despite a lack of significant local history influencing the design, the center successfully combines historical reference with contemporary urbanization trends, setting it apart from other cities dominated by high-rise development. Local contractors were involved during construction, but some climate-responsive engineering along the arroyo has faced challenges due to a lack of skill or awareness concerning climate change implications.

• **Community Oriented:** The Mesa Arts Centre excelled in all aspects, including respect for its context, equitable spaces, and healthy environments. Unlike many large-scale developments, local stakeholders were actively engaged during the innovative design process. The Centre prioritizes community involvement, a sense of ownership, and diverse programming, promoting an inclusive atmosphere. This regeneration of the downtown core instilled a strong sense of place in Mesa. The Centre's intentional design features inviting entrances, pathways, and colorful panels, creating an immersive art and culture experience. Its mission is to encourage visitors to explore and embrace the artistic offerings within the complex, ensuring accessibility for all.

• **Sustainable Spaces:** The Mesa Arts Centre achieved sustainability through responsive design, drawing inspiration from natural elements such as arroyos and desert canyons. It incorporates various sustainable features, including thick walls, solar shading, and a water system resembling southwest waterways. Additionally, water-efficient landscaping, heat-island effect reduction, passive water harvesting, and the use of recycled materials contribute to its eco-friendliness. The Centre's impact on arts and culture-related spending attracts visitors, benefiting the local economy. The open spaces offer spatial options, encouraging experimentation, and spontaneous activities. Moreover, the site design promotes biodiversity by restoring 35% of the area with permeable ground cover and native vegetation.

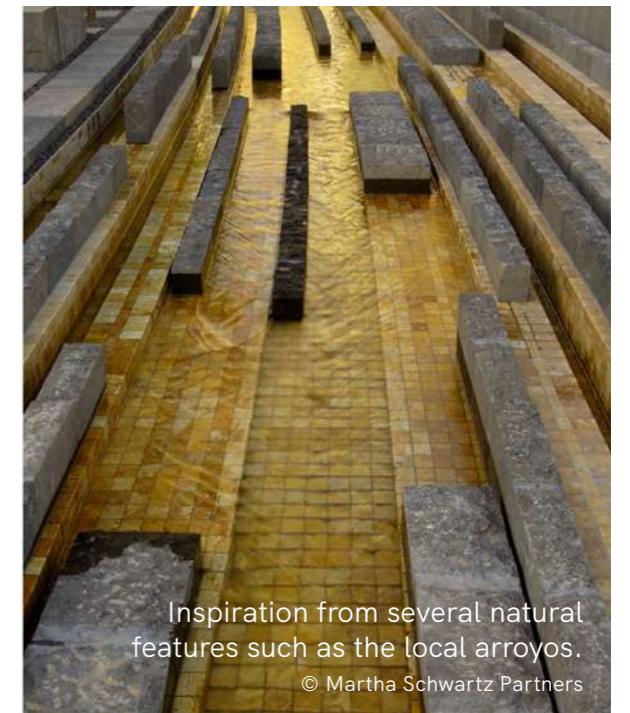


Every aspect of the arts center was designed to be inviting, artistic, and stimulating including this solar shading system.

© Martha Schwartz Partners

RELEVANCE TO URBAN TRANSFORMATION

Mesa Arts Centre is a prime example of how art, place, and community can lead to reinvestment and the revitalization of a declining downtown city center. Cities in Saudi and Arizona share similarities in their arid climates, so valuable insights into sustainability and human comfort can be applied.



Inspiration from several natural features such as the local arroyos.

© Martha Schwartz Partners

NEW DEVELOPMENT

Case Study 5



Assessment Summary

MATRICES PERFORMING WELL

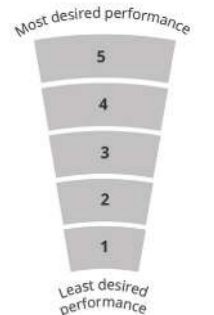
- Celebration of Culture
- Clear Design Rationale
- Local Identity
- Wider Area Integration
- Appropriate Scale and Program
- Engagement and Participatory Process
- Sense of Ownership:

MATRICES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Regional/Local Interpretation of Contemporary Design
- Long-Term Stewardship
- Adaptable
- Respect for Local History
- Increased Biodiversity

UNDERPERFORMING MATRICES

- User-Centered Technology



NEW DEVELOPMENT

Case Study 5



Entity Assessment: institution

ENTITY OVERVIEW

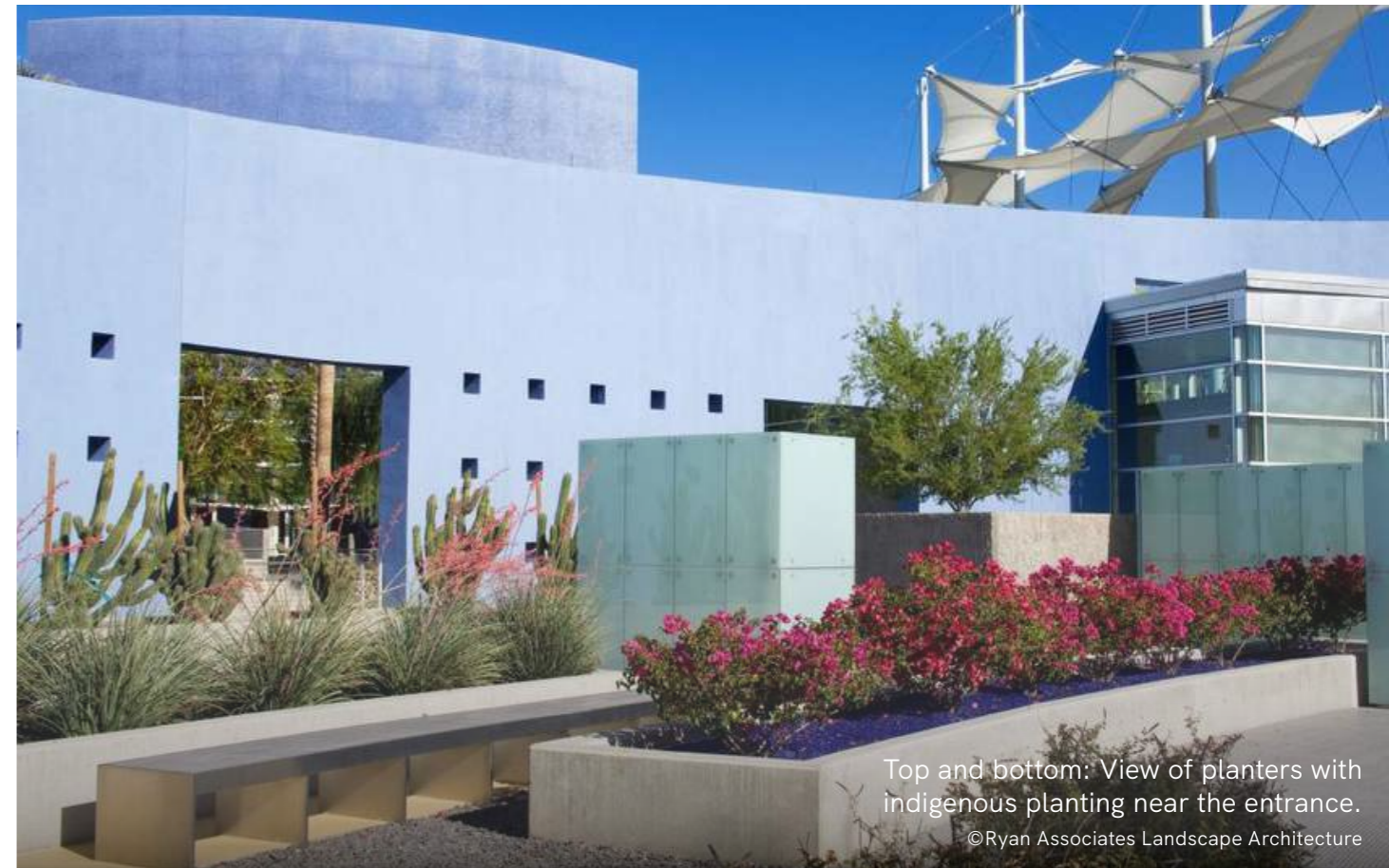
The Mesa Arts Centre is an example of an institutional entity responsible for overseeing the design procurement and design process through to the implementation of a single project. The Mesa Arts Centre is demonstrative of an approach that leads to long-term social, economic, and environmental sustainability.

ENTITY ASSESSMENT

- **Process:** The City structured a bidding process that ensured only qualified bidders could apply while complying with the state's restrictive procurement requirements. Twenty-five stakeholder groups were actively engaged in shaping the design, producing guiding principles that directed the master planning efforts in collaboration with the client and design team. The brief was to create a visually and socially vibrant nucleus that would transform the city center. The Centre's interaction with the community has significantly increased in the last eleven years, going from limited interactions of community engagement to a thriving dynamic of programs, festivals, and classes designed to give the people of the city ownership of the Mesa Arts Centre.
- **Design:** Martha Schwartz and Partners were invited to join the team as landscape architects. The central "geode" concept was developed, providing a solid exterior and a magical inner space. This structure established urban density and spatial definition, with a "Shadow Walk" as a grand promenade showcasing dramatic

shadow patterns and creating a cool oasis in the desert landscape. The Shadow Walk is paralleled with the "Arroyo," a water feature that offers relief from the intense sunlight and heat, safety from vehicles, and accessible space for people to enjoy. The project team included the client, landscape architects, architects, structural, mechanical, and civil engineers, a community oversight group, and construction managers and contractors.

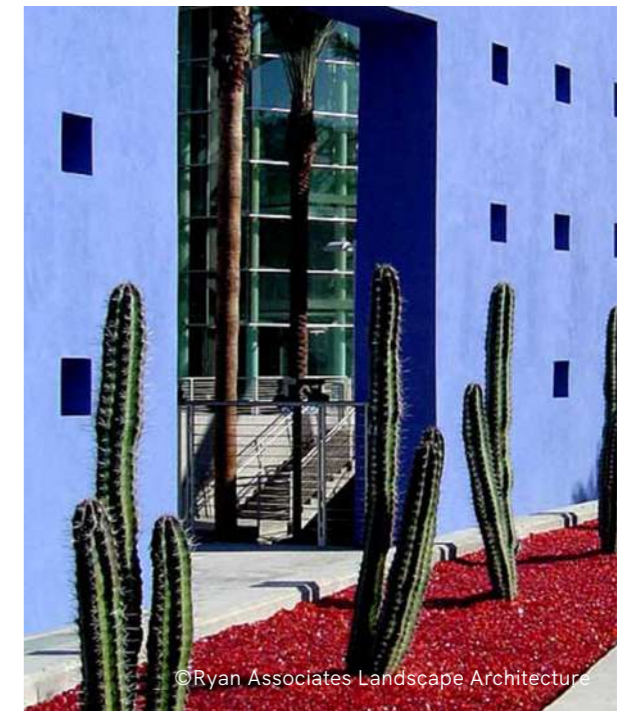
- **Funding Model:** in 1998, the city passed a quality-of-life bond issue to help pay for the Centre. The mayor, Wayne Brown, left office in 2000. However, he continued, with his wife, to fund the project privately through fundraising campaigns. They ultimately raised \$4.5 million in private-sector funding. The construction budget fell short due to many stakeholders with differing objectives and a State Statute that only required selection via low bid. Still, the integrity of the project was protected. From 2000 to 2005, the local economic impact of arts and culture went from \$18.1 million to more than \$47.57 million. In five years, the event-related spending by visitors from outside Maricopa County grew tenfold.
- **Stewardship:** The maintenance of the public realm is managed by the Mesa Centre management team. The people of the city have ownership of the activation, such as programs, festivals, and classes, which gives a sense of ownership over the Mesa Arts Centre



Top and bottom: View of planters with indigenous planting near the entrance.
©Ryan Associates Landscape Architecture

RELEVANCE TO URBAN TRANSFORMATION

The Mesa Arts Centre's path to defining the identity of downtown Mesa through economic and cultural revitalization, together with the landscape design, exemplifies successful collaboration between the community, client, and design team. Having a single institution responsible for regenerating a public space can streamline decision-making, ensure accountability, and provide a cohesive vision. However, it is important to note that it may also result in limited creativity, reduced public participation, and the potential for biased decision-making. To strike a balance, involving diverse stakeholders and promoting public participation can lead to more inclusive, innovative, and community-driven regeneration projects.



©Ryan Associates Landscape Architecture

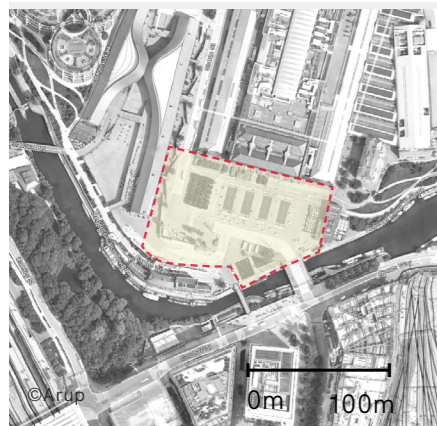
REGENERATION

Case Study 6



Granary Square

© Arup



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

King's Cross is one of the largest and most successful redevelopments in the United Kingdom. Over the past 20 years, an underused industrial site has been transformed and rejuvenated with new streets, squares and parks, homes, shops, offices, galleries, bars, restaurants, schools, and even a university.

One of the key public spaces within King's Cross is Granary Square, fronted by an art school housed in an adapted industrial building to the north and a canal to the south.

Visitors encounter the signature space as they walk from the train station to the district. Welcoming to all, it provides long benches, fountains, and a Shade courtesy of a grove of trees.

Location

London

Entity

King's Cross Central Limited Partnership - Related Argent

Type of Entity

Private developer

Climate

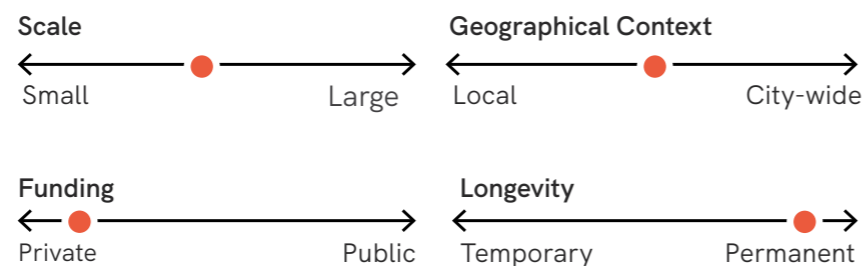
Temperate

Stewardship

Argent's in-house management and subcontractors

Size

XL - 27ha



PROJECT BENEFITS

- 01 A successful example of urban transformation through placemaking, public realm design, and heritage
- 02 Net Zero Carbon Buildings Commitment and high sustainability targets.
- 03 Adjacency to Central Saint Martins created a lively and accessible space with diverse amenities for leisure, culture, and education, resulting in a vibrant day-and-night economy.

PROJECT LESSONS

- 01 Granary Square is a unique case as part of wider King's Cross masterplan. It stands as a successful example in a high-demand area located at a transport node that not many projects will be able to compare to.

ENTITY BENEFITS

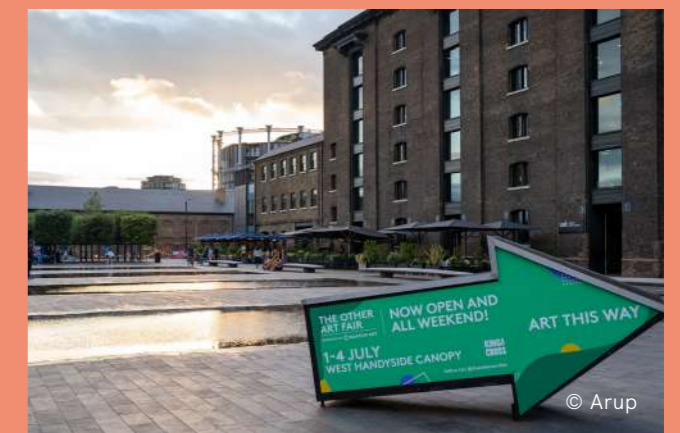
- 01 A single developer with a clear vision and resources can lead to well-designed and maintained spaces; the developer could hand pick the design team.
- 02 Private funding can unlock and transform previously inaccessible land into vibrant, mixed-use developments

ENTITY LESSONS

- 01 Lack of public ownership and control raises concerns about inclusivity and access
- 02 Balancing private and public interests can be complex, necessitating clear design processes and management regimes to avoid conflicts and safeguard citizens' rights



Children playing in Granary Square fountains on a summer day.



Signage for the art fair with Granary Square fountains and gardens in the background.

REGENERATION

Case Study 6



Project Assessment

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Argent, a private developer, developed Granary Square. It thoughtfully accommodates evolving social and economic behaviors, blending human-scale elements and diverse choices, providing a thriving, diverse space. The project combines history and modernity, creating a neighborhood with a distinctive cultural identity. The vibrant square, offering diverse amenities, contributes to a lively day-and-night economy.

However, the square does not benefit from a resident association like other parts of King's Cross, so it lacks a strong sense of ownership. Limited vehicular access facilitates various events, fostering a healthy and dynamic environment. King's Cross development's dedication to the Net Zero Carbon Buildings Commitment and sustainability goals is laudable.

PROJECT ASSESSMENT

- **Cultural Continuity:** This project excels in all metrics, highlighting the importance of integrating history and nature to create a unique neighborhood. The redevelopment process meticulously preserved and restored historic buildings like the Granary, Coal office and Goods Yard, adding to the area's charm. The Granary transformed into Central St Martins, enhancing the cultural identity. Retaining industrial elements such as railway tracks and setts add historical significance. The Square features a contemporary design with historical nods, including fountains that pay tribute to its aquatic

past. This dynamic and inviting space fosters social interactions and embraces the local community.

- **Community Oriented:** The King's Cross development, notably Granary Square, is a lively and accessible space with diverse amenities for retail, leisure, culture, and education, encouraging a vibrant day-and-night economy. However, the square lacks a strong sense of ownership due to its transient and touristic nature. Parts of the development benefit from residents' associations, promoting a sense of belonging. The square's traffic-free pedestrianized public realm hosts various free arts and cultural events, showcasing its versatility throughout the year. However, these are organized by the developer, which throws into question how truly public the events and spaces are. The project sets ambitious targets across health and well-being, connections to nature, and diversity and inclusion.

- **Sustainable Spaces:** The King's Cross's sustainability goals are to achieve net-zero carbon by using renewable energy, optimizing energy efficiency, and offsetting emissions. They aim to be waste-free by reducing consumption and improving waste infrastructure. They also monitor energy and water consumption, enhance resource efficiency, and promote low-carbon travel and sustainable procurement. They focus on maximizing connection to natural ecosystems through biodiversity monitoring, habitat improvement, and engaging people with nature-based projects in collaboration with local wildlife organizations and green infrastructure initiatives. However, these efforts are limited by urban density.



Free open air film screenings on the canal during the summer months

©Arup

RELEVANCE TO URBAN TRANSFORMATION

Granary Square in King's Cross is celebrated for its successful fusion of placemaking, public realm, and heritage. Lessons from this project could apply to other regeneration projects; however, the site's proximity to an emerging business district and a very busy transport node made it commercially viable and needed less public intervention. Regeneration projects

in London face lower risk due to high demand for commercial and residential spaces. In contrast, projects in regions with lower demand require more public financing as private funding is more challenging to attract.

REGENERATION

Case Study 6



Assessment Summary

MATRICES PERFORMING WELL

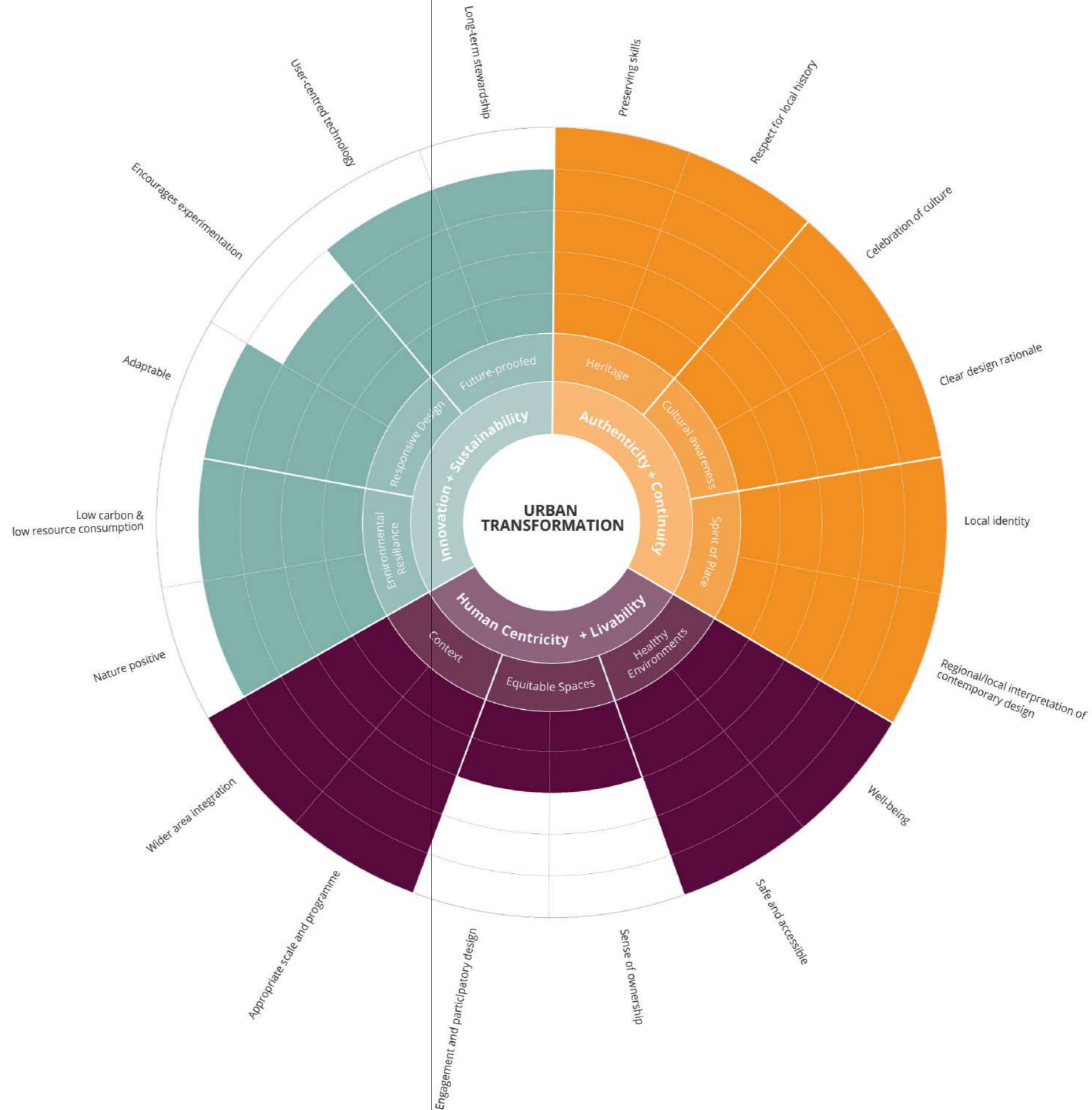
- Preserving Skills
- Respect for Local History
- Celebration of Culture
- Clear Design Rationale
- Local Identity
- Regional/Local Interpretation of Contemporary Design
- Well-being
- Safe and Accessible
- Appropriate Scale and Program
- Wider Area Integration
- Nature Positive
- Low Carbon and Low Resource Consumption
- Adaptable
- Long-Term Stewardship

MATRICES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Increased Biodiversity

UNDERPERFORMING MATRICES

- Sense of Ownership
- User-Centered Technology
- Engagement and Participatory Process



REGENERATION

Case Study 6



Entity Assessment: Private

ENTITY OVERVIEW

The increasing prevalence of privately owned public spaces (POPS) in the UK is a response to financial constraints faced by local authorities. Notably, King's Cross is an example of a privately funded project that successfully facilitated the development and maintenance of these spaces. While some cities resist private control, others grapple with maintaining public spaces, leading to the appeal of private development as a viable option.

ENTITY ASSESSMENT

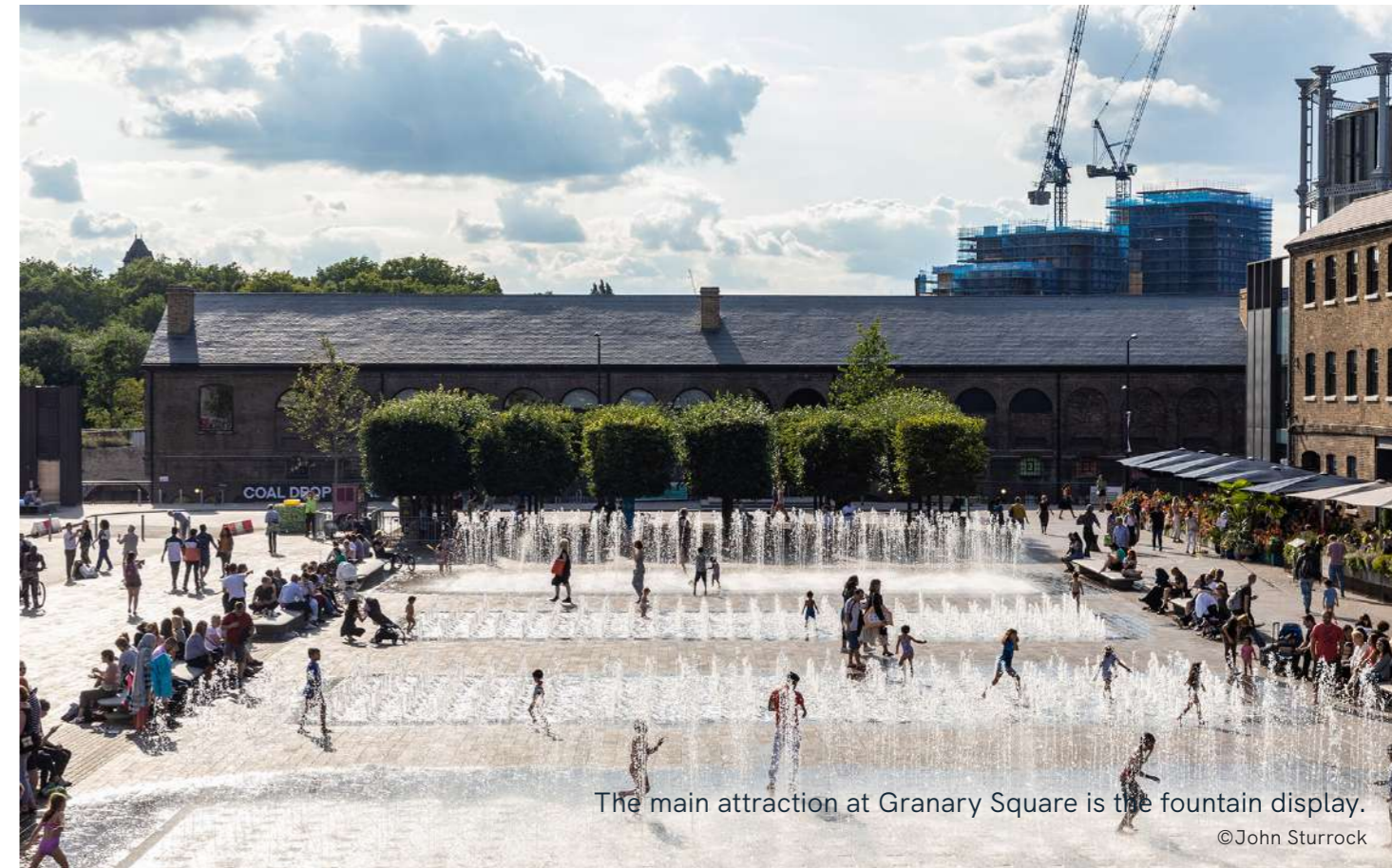
- **Process:** The project began with years of intensive studies and consultation with the local community, government, and other stakeholders. This work formed the basis for a vision for the development – **Principles for a Human City**, from which the masterplan evolved. The key objective was to create robust economic, social, and physical connections between the development and the local area, focusing on sustainability and community engagement. The collaborative planning process with Camden Council centered on designing Granary Square's central heritage area, which aligns with the adaptable approach of the broader King's Cross master plan.
- **Design:** Situated at the core of the King's Cross masterplan, Granary Square was envisioned as an active heart, a space for all types of people to gather and interact. The developer's vision was to create an accessible and dynamic public area at the center of the development. As a pivotal point, it connects

people crossing the canal via a pedestrian boulevard from King's Cross-St Pancras to the south, dispersing them to the north and east. The 8,000 square meters square features low stone benches, choreographed fountains, and minimal street furniture, offering expansive views. Townshend Landscape Architects designed the square; the Fountain Workshop designed and built the fountains, and Speirs + Major designed the lighting.

- **Funding Model:** The importance of capturing land value and utilizing finance mechanisms to create positive feedback loops is essential for sustainable neighborhood development. The King's Cross case study is an exemplary model, employing a combination of tax-based and development-based value-capture finance instruments to achieve this goal successfully.
- **Stewardship:** Argent's in-house team and Assets ensure efficient reporting and monitoring of the square. Day-to-day management is contracted to Savills, who employ service partners for security, landscaping, and more. Cleaning and recycling are handled by an on-site team funded through estate service charges. Sub-contracted security operates 24/7, monitored by CCTV cameras. King's Cross leads events and activation.

ELEVANCE TO URBAN TRANSFORMATION

The private land ownership model adopted for Granary Square has both advantages and disadvantages when it comes to managing spaces meant to be public. On one hand,



The main attraction at Granary Square is the fountain display.

©John Sturrock

having a single developer with a clear vision and resources can lead to well-designed and maintained spaces. However, the lack of public ownership and control raises concerns about inclusivity and access. Public space management depends on the landowner's ethos and attitude, which may not always align with the broader community's interests. This model may limit opportunities for informal stewardship and citizen involvement in shaping the space. While it has resulted in a vibrant and attractive area, lessons must be learned to strike a balance between private investment and ensuring public spaces genuinely serve the needs of all citizens in future regeneration projects.

principles for a human city

A document prepared by Argent St George, the selected developer for King's Cross Central, and the landowners, London and Continental Railways and Exel

July 2011
Edition 3

A guidebook prepared by the developer at the onset of the King's Cross masterplan to guide the development and vision of the project.

6 Emerging Themes

The Framework Assessment Urban Projects Report provided a good overview of Saudi and international public space typologies and a rigorous way of measuring their performance. It has also taken stock of the many entities that do and can play a role in realizing Urban Transformation. Most importantly, it has drawn out the themes the Architecture and Design Commission will focus on to support the entities.

Emerging Themes for the Urban Transformation Manual

After examining and assessing the current state of Urban Transformation in Saudi Arabia, ADC has a clear opportunity to play a meaningful role in successfully transforming public spaces.

Awareness is growing among citizens and government institutions of the value of improving cities and public space. National policy and public investment prioritize 'humanizing cities' and transforming car-oriented and homogenous cities to become walkable, sustainable, and unique. Public participation and inclusive engagement is gaining traction and has become more common, albeit not yet required.

Many entities are active in the ecosystem of Urban Transformation, each playing a different role in policy, investment, implementation, maintenance, activation, and awareness. From the ministry level down to local municipalities, mega real-estate developers, and community non-profits, precise coordination and communication are vital in delivering a purposeful manual that complements and does not compete with existing simultaneous efforts.

To enhance ADC's impact within this ecosystem, the following three areas have been identified as key themes for the new Urban Transformation Manual:

1. A manual that successfully guides the process of **public participation** to design inclusive and well-loved public places.
2. A manual that puts forward principles that achieve places that are integrated, sustainable, and **resilient**
3. A manual that advocates for models of **stewardship** of public space and delineates the approach to long-term successful placemaking in creating active, lively, and unique spaces true to their place.

7 Glossary

Glossary of Key Terms

Urban Transformation:

Re-imagining urban spaces to accommodate the specific needs of communities. The design-led transformation must consider safety, health, well-being, environmental conditions, and the impact of climate change; it must consider all stakeholders' local needs.

Urban Development:

The social, cultural, economic, and physical development of a piece of city. A primary focus is on strategic policy and built form alongside land use.

Public space:

An open space that is open and accessible to the general public. The public use of space does not itself require public ownership, but rather, the key is that it can host activities, events, and other collective activities.

Placemaking:

An approach to planning, designing, and managing public spaces that capitalizes on a local community's assets, culture, and aspirations, intending to create public spaces that improve urban vitality and promote health, happiness, and well-being.

Meanwhile Use:

A temporary use that activates a site for a period of time before being developed into a more permanent end state. It may 'seed' the longer-term permanent use or activity.

Resilience:

The capacity of individuals, communities, institutions, businesses, and systems within a city to survive, adapt, and grow no matter what kinds of chronic stresses and acute shocks they experience. (Ref: 100 Resilient Cities)

Stewardship:

The careful and responsible supervision and management of a place or space over the long term to ensure its performance and role remain consistent with the original intentions set out during its design process.

Public participation:

The inclusion of citizens in determining aspects of the future of their neighborhood, as well as diverse methods of community engagement, allow people to express their requirements and aspirations for a space or place.

Entity:

An entity is a public or private sector organization that carries out governmental, institutional, or business functions. It will have a robust structure outlining its role and lines of accountability.

Ecosystem:

A complex network or interconnected system where the members of that system must work with and around each other to keep the system stable, ideally optimizing the collective benefit.

Acronyms

ADC - Architecture and Design Commission

MOC - Ministry of Culture

UT - Urban Transformation

MOMAH - Ministry of Municipalities and Housing

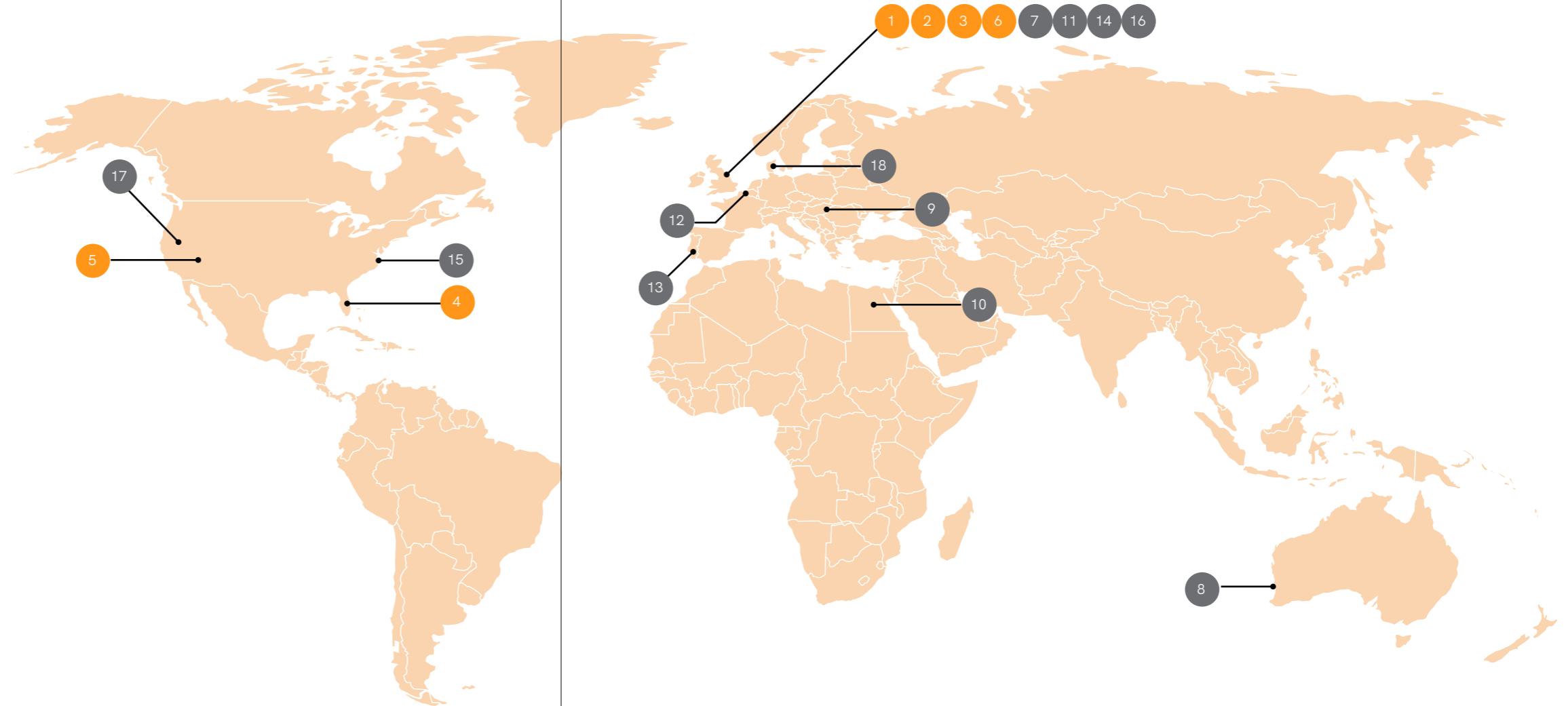
DASC - Development Authorities Support Center

8 Appendix

8.1 International case studies: Long list

Continuing our exploration of international best practices, an extensive long list of case studies has been compiled, covering a diverse range of urban transformation projects. This comprehensive collection not only expands on the initial six case studies but also provides a broader perspective on the various strategies and entities involved in successfully delivering these projects.

By analyzing this extensive list, the goal is to deepen understanding, draw from a wider range of effective approaches, and refine methods to ensure future urban transformation initiatives are inclusive, sustainable, and successful.



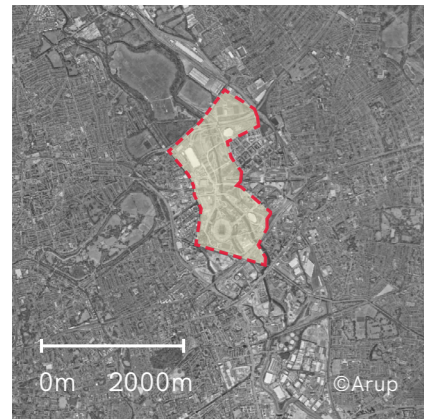
LONG LIST

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| 7. Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London, UK | 15. Downtown Container Park, Las Vegas, USA |
| 8. Al Azhar Park, Cairo, Egypt | 16. A'Beckett Urban Square, Melbourne, Australia |
| 9. Setas de Sevilla, Sevilla, Spain | 17. Dalston Space Making, London, UK |
| 10. FLOW, Brussels, Belgium | 18. Teleki Square, Budapest, Hungary |
| 11. Passeig de St Joan, Barcelona, Spain | |
| 12. Somerset House, London, UK | |
| 13. What If? Vacant Lots, London, UK | |
| 14. The 606, Chicago, USA | |



Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park

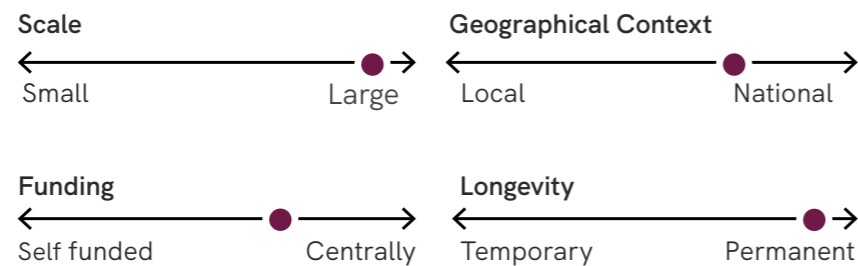
©T. Graham Arup



Location
London, UK
Entity
LLDC
Climate
Temperate
Stewardship
TBC
Size
XL - 360 ha

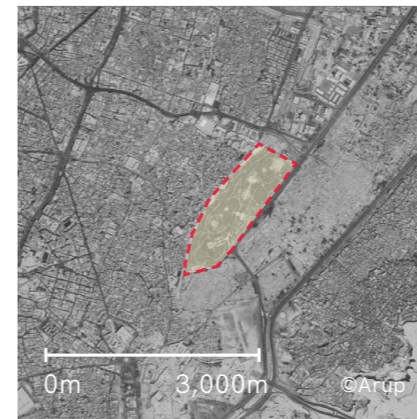
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Transformed from an industrial wasteland, the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park showcases the power of architectural ingenuity, urban design, and community vision. The park's legacy extends beyond its role in the 2012 Summer Olympics, embodying sustainable development, social cohesion, and economic revitalization. Its green spaces, infrastructure, and mixed-use zones have revitalized the surrounding neighborhoods, attracting continued investment, fostering creativity, and promoting active lifestyles. The Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park stands as a testament to how thoughtful urban planning can rejuvenate an area beyond large sporting events, forging a model for future urban transformations worldwide.



Al Azhar Park

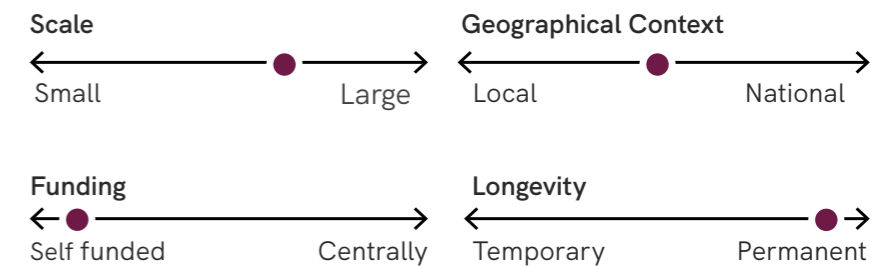
©Arup



Location
Cairo, Egypt
Entity
Aga Khan Development Network (NGO)
Climate
Dry
Stewardship
TBC
Size
M - 30 ha

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

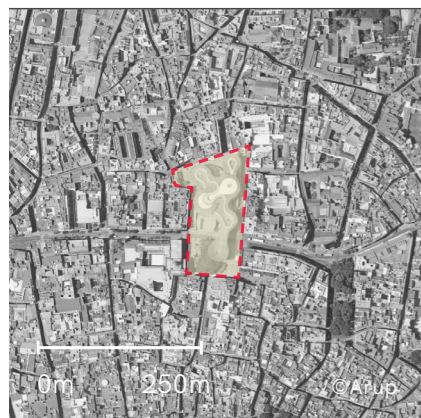
A lush oasis in one of the world's densest cities, Al Azhar Park, was previously a centuries-old landfill. Today, nestled in the heart of Cairo, the park offers respite from the bustling city and celebrates Egyptian culture. Its landscaped gardens, historic structures, and panoramic views have not only improved the aesthetic fabric of the metropolis but also generated employment and educational opportunities for local communities. Al Azhar Park showcases how urban regeneration can breathe new life into urban centers, bridging the past with the future while enhancing community well-being.





Setas de Sevilla

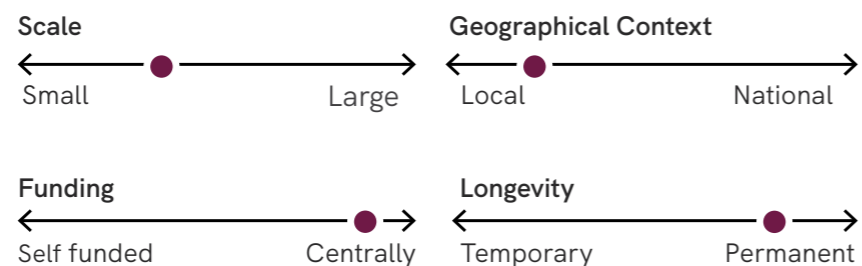
©Arup



Location
Seville, Spain
Entity
City Council of Seville
Climate
Dry
Stewardship
Sacyr (Private)
Size
S - 1.5 ha

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The regeneration of Plaza de la Encarnacion, through the Setas de Sevilla (previously known as Metropol Parasol), showcases the transformative power of architecture and cultural programming in revitalizing underutilized urban spaces. The monumental and sculptural wooden structure provides shade and shelter and redefines community interaction. Its multifunctional design, housing a market, museum, and panoramic walkways, injects vibrancy into the area, attracting locals and tourists alike. Since opening, the project has catalyzed economic growth and sparked cultural engagement: it underscores the potential of creative urban interventions to invigorate cities while fostering a sense of identity and pride.



FLOW

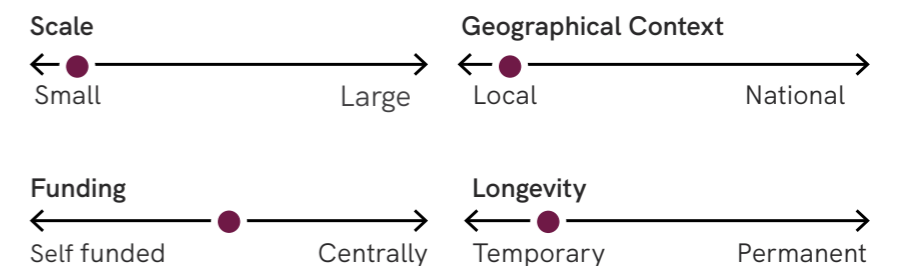
© Public space org



Location
Brussels, Belgium
Entity
Pool is Cool (NGO)
Climate
Temperate
Stewardship
Pool is Cool (NGO) and the local government
Size
S - 0.05 ha

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

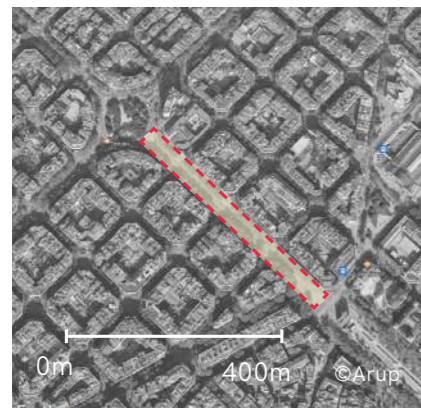
FLOW is the first open-air swimming pool built in Brussels in over 40 years. Situated within an industrial site, the pool not only provides free outdoor recreational facilities and activities but also serves as a catalyst for community revival: over 50 young people were involved in the construction and management of the pool, building a strong sense of ownership in the local community. By offering a range of activities beyond swimming, FLOW engages diverse demographics, fostering social cohesion, inclusivity, and well-being. Furthermore, its modular approach to reusing metal frames and reclaimed wood preserves the neighborhood's character while introducing a sculptural, contemporary, multi-purpose structure.





Passeig de St Joan

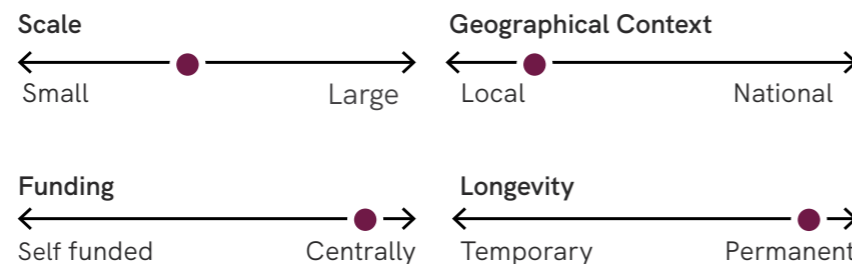
©Adria Goula



Location
Barcelona, Spain
Entity
City Council of Barcelona
Climate
Dry
Stewardship
City Council of Barcelona
Size
M - 3 ha

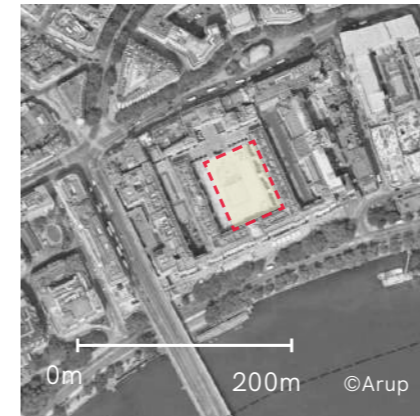
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Once a congested, car-centric thoroughfare, the Passeig de St Joan has been transformed into a vibrant pedestrian-friendly avenue. Lined with retained large trees, segregated cycling lanes, and dotted with spaces to play, eat, and meet, the redevelopment has reinvigorated the neighborhood's fabric. The new boulevard promotes active travel and nurtures a sense of community and ownership. The redesign has attracted local businesses, residents, and tourists, breathing new economic life into the area. The Passeig de St Joan showcases how thoughtful design can seamlessly merge aesthetics, functionality, and social engagement for a thriving, healthy, and human-centered city.



Somerset House Courtyard

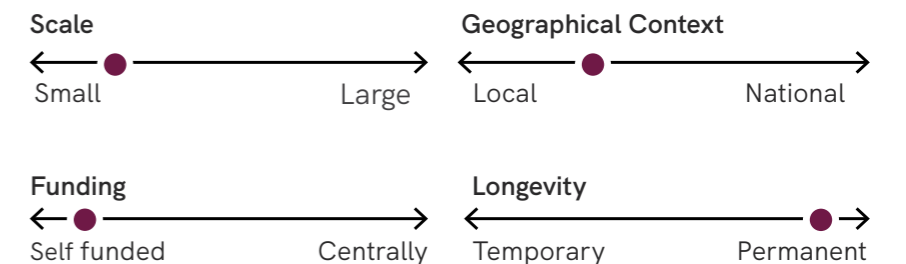
©Ed Reeve



Location
London, UK
Entity
Somerset House Trust (Charity)
Climate
Temperate
Stewardship
Somerset House Trust (Charity)
Size
S - 0.55 ha

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Formerly a private car park, the historic Somerset House courtyard was reinvented in 2001 into a dynamic, outdoor cultural hub that bridges past and present in the heart of bustling London. By preserving its architectural heritage while activating the square through a seasonal, year-round program of pop-up events, it has become a vibrant center for art, events, and public engagement. The courtyard's flexible use attracted creative industries and catalyzed economic growth in the surrounding area. This site exemplifies how simple strategic urban interventions paired with site-specific programming can revitalize heritage sites, fostering a sense of identity, community, and artistic expression.





What If? Vacant Lots

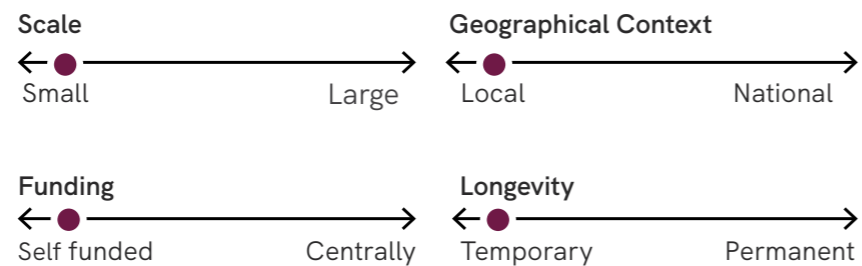
@ what if projects



Location
London, UK
Entity
What If and Groundwork
Type of Entity
Private (What if) and non-profit organisation (Groundwork)
Climate
Temperate
Stewardship
Varies - mostly community-led
Size
S - Varies

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

London's What If? The vacant Lot program, launched by What If: projects in 2007, showcases urban regeneration's potency. It revitalized housing estate spaces, creating 21 allotment gardens uniting outdoor havens, cultivation areas, and social zones. Fostering engagement drives change in underserved pockets. Reclaiming 1.9 acres, Vacant Lot created gardens, sparking communal ties via barbecues, gatherings, and exchanges. Beyond 880+ plots provided, this renewal transforms forgotten areas into inclusive growth hubs. A testament to transformative power, the initiative reshapes neglected urban landscapes into vibrant, community-driven spaces across all of London.



The 606

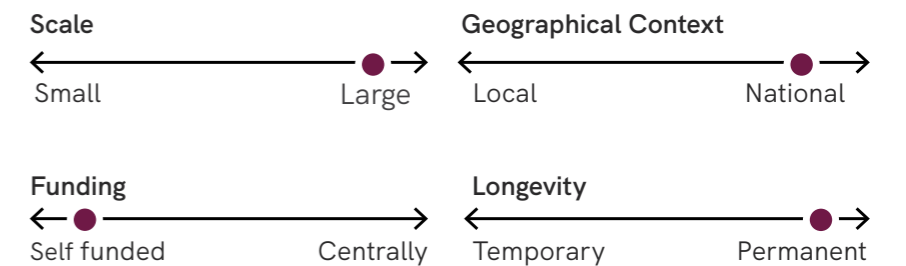
©Arup



Location
Chicago, USA
Entity
The City of Chicago, The Chicago Park District, and The Trust for Public Land
Type of Entity
Public Private Partnership
Climate
Temperate
Stewardship
The Chicago Park District
Size
XL - 4.3km

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The redevelopment of Chicago's Bloomingdale Line into The 606 exemplifies urban regeneration. As train traffic slowed, the city aimed to address limited green space, proposing the line's conversion into a park. The 2004 Logan Square Open Space Plan led to a coalition, including Friends of the Bloomingdale Trail and The Trust for Public Land. This collaboration sought to create a park and trail system connecting neighborhoods. Community engagement and expertise shaped the project, resulting in The 606's multifunctional design with art, history, trails, and green spaces. Mayor Emanuel's initiative further drove the public-private partnership, fostering urban renewal and offering diverse recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.





Downtown Container Park

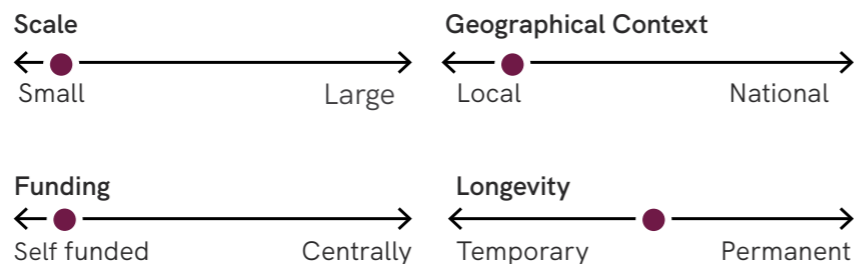
© Ken Lund



Location
Las Vegas, USA
Entity
DTP Projects
Type of Entity
Private
Climate
Dry
Stewardship
DTP Projects
Size
S - 0.5ha

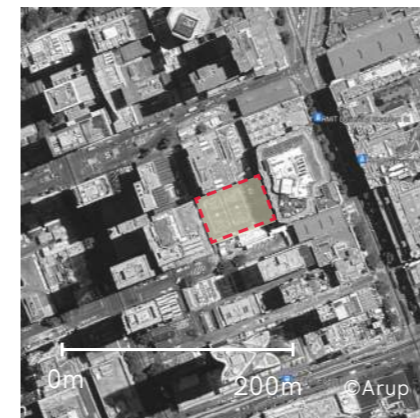
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Downtown Container Park's transformation in Las Vegas epitomizes an urban regeneration marvel. Formerly a mere retail space, it has evolved into a dynamic community hub, exemplifying sustainability and innovation. By repurposing shipping containers, this project revitalizes disused materials while fostering a vibrant ecosystem of local businesses, artists, and events. The park's layout encourages social interaction, fostering a sense of belonging within the community. Through thoughtful design and adaptive reuse, the redevelopment showcases how urban spaces can be reinvigorated, promoting economic growth and enhancing the city's identity while prioritizing environmental consciousness and urban connectivity.



A'Beckett Urban Square

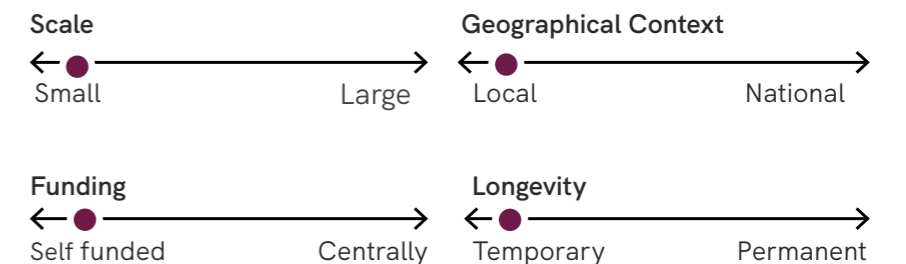
© John Gollings



Location
Melbourne, Australia
Entity
RMIT University
Type of Entity
Institution
Climate
Temperate
Stewardship
RMIT University and student groups
Size
S - 0.28ha

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

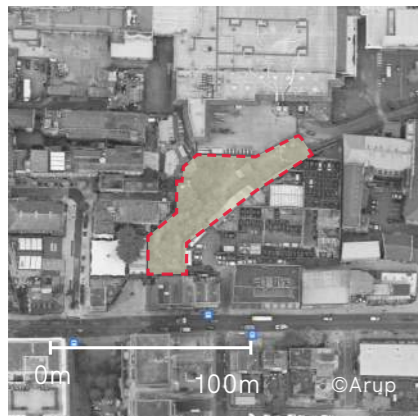
The A'Beckett Urban Square was formerly an underutilized car park that was ingeniously transformed into a thriving temporary recreational space. As the site awaits redevelopment, RMIT transformed it into a 2,800 square meter 'pop-up' park accessible to the public. It exemplifies adaptive urban design, featuring multi-use sports courts, spectator seating, table tennis, BBQ facilities, and Wi-Fi; the square caters to students and young urban dwellers. Its lean yet impactful design, inclusive of vibrant colors and artwork by Ash Keating, reshapes the area into a dynamic stage for community engagement. The squares underscore the potential of repurposing neglected spaces into vibrant public spheres, embodying vitality, recreation, and artistic expression.





Dalston Space Making

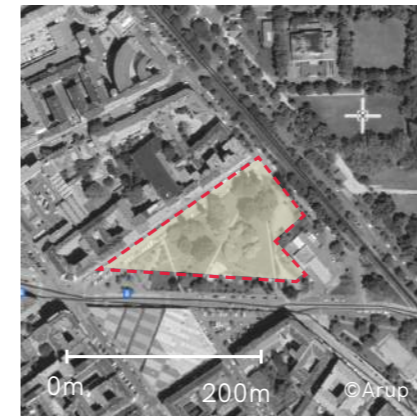
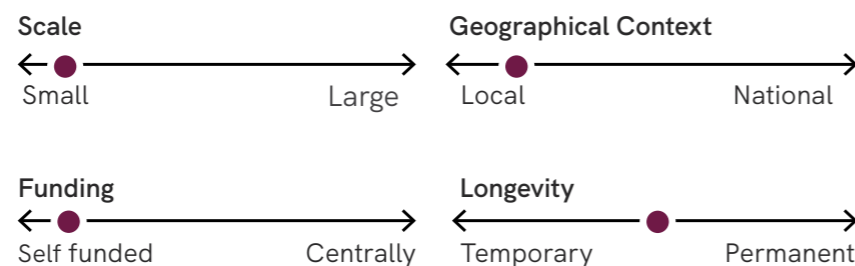
Teleki Square



Location
London, UK
Entity
DTP Projects
Type of Entity
Private
Climate
Temperate
Stewardship
DTP Projects
Size
S - 0.5ha

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

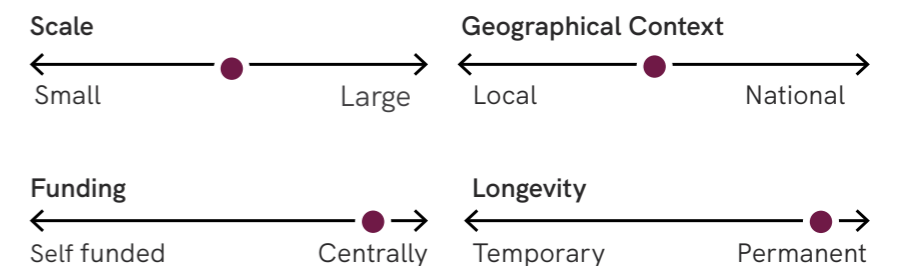
The Dalston Space Making project departed from conventional approaches to revitalization by drawing inspiration from Dalston's diverse and artistic community. Beyond fulfilling a predefined brief, the project involves the community in shaping the very essence of the initiative. This innovative process encompasses formulating the brief, cultivating participatory involvement, nurturing personal connections, and refining ideas through ongoing conversations. The project forges a dynamic synergy by melding local concerns with strategic objectives. Dalston Space Making embodies an evolution in urban renewal, driven by communication, action research, and collaborative vision-building with residents, businesses, and organizations, ultimately birthing a vibrant, community-rooted transformation.



Location
Budapest, Hungary
Entity
Municipality of Jozsefvaros
Type of Entity
Public
Climate
Temperate
Stewardship
Municipality of Jozsefvaros
Size
M - 1ha

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project has revitalized an ailing space into a vibrant community hub in a socially diverse but disadvantaged neighborhood. Through an EU-funded initiative, an inclusive planning process unfolded, converting a previously barren and dysfunctional area into a much needed neighborhood center. Beyond physical transformation, the endeavor fostered a sense of community ownership, exemplified by the formation of the Teleki Square Association, which was responsible for activating the area. The rejuvenated square not only provides recreational and social opportunities but also stands as a beacon of collaborative urban renewal, illustrating how purposeful engagement and design can uplift physical environments and communal spirits.



8.2 User Observations and Intercepts

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 - 2.2 Qualitative Observation.....148
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1. Site Assessment

Site name Date & Time Weather

1. Is there a manifestation of local history, identity, practices, and skills in this public space?
(consider building practices, materials used, craftsmanship, cultural symbols, and motifs)

2. Has this public space been thoughtfully designed so that local cultures and communities will congregate and co-exist with others?
(consider spaces for meanwhile use, inclusive cultural programming, community education, and spaces for religious and cultural events)

3. Do all users have equitable access to and through this public space?
(consider age-integrated design, seating and resting areas, accessible ramps, signage and wayfinding, and transport options)

4. Does this public space have features that increase a person's quality of life?
(consider inclusive activities and amenities, aesthetic spaces, safe to use, active travel)

5. What tells you that this public space will still be in use 50 years from now?
(consider existing stewardship models, human-centered principles, durable materials, and application of emerging technologies)

6. Are there features that indicate how sustainably this space has been designed and/or managed?
(consider passive design strategies, waste, water and energy management, sustainable transport, and community engagement)

3. User Intercepts

Site name Date & Time Weather

Introduce yourself. **Describe** the project. **Ask** for 5 minutes and **apologize** for any disruption.

1. Can you tell me what you are doing here today?

2. Why did you choose to visit this place today?

3. How long do you plan to stay here?

< 1hour 1 hour 1-3 hours 3+hours

4. Which times of the day do you enjoy visiting this place?

Morning Afternoon Evening Doesn't matter

5. How often do you visit this place each month?

Once per month 2-4 times 5+ times first time

a. Which public spaces similar to this do you visit? _____

6. If a foreigner was visiting the country, would you encourage them to visit this site?

Yes No Depends

7. What do you love about this public space?

8. What would you change about this public space?

4. Introspection

Site name

Date & Time

Weather

Write down your impressions of this public space. Consider how being here makes you feel, think and behave.

Consider your responses in the site assessment regarding culture, accessibility, wayfinding, sustainability and more.

5. Appendix: ethnographic photography

Ethnographic images are powerful artifacts that communicate how people interact with one another and the places they visit. These artifacts enrich our research so that we can understand how people interact and wish to connect with their spaces. Ethical behavior is paramount so visitors are not uncomfortable during the process.

5.1 Guidance for taking pictures

1. Gain consent: Seek informed consent from individuals or communities before taking their photographs. Respect their autonomy and ensure they understand how the images will be used.
2. Build trust: Establish a rapport with the individuals by spending time with them, listening to their stories, and showing genuine interest in their culture and lives.
3. Understand cultural context: Learn about the cultural practices, traditions, and sensitivities of the community you photograph. This helps you capture images that respect their values and avoid misrepresentation.
4. Be sensitive to privacy: Respect boundaries and privacy considerations. Avoid intruding on personal spaces or capturing intimate moments without explicit permission.
5. Collaborate and co-create: Involve the community in the process by allowing them to participate actively in storytelling and the representation of their culture. Seek their input and perspective to ensure an authentic portrayal.
6. Challenge stereotypes: Avoid perpetuating stereotypes through your photography. Capture a diverse range of individuals, experiences, and narratives that challenge preconceived notions and promote cultural understanding.

8.3 Entity Assessment Questions

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1. Process

1.1 Planning

1. What is your vision for and role in delivering public spaces?

2. Is your focus on creating new spaces, improving existing spaces, or both?

3. Who sets the brief for a new or improved public space?

4. How do you procure the design of public spaces?

1.2 Public Engagement

1. Is public engagement part of the design process? If so, please describe how you approach this. Do you follow any design guidance or manuals?

2. How do you reach and communicate with the public?

1.3 Implementation

1. Who oversees the project management and delivery of your projects?

2. How do you ensure implementation is executed with a high standard of workmanship?

2. Design

1. What are your key design priorities? Are these documented somewhere?

2. What role do designers have in the process, and are there other disciplines involved in the design process?

3. What amenities do you prioritize? Do you design for safety and accessibility?

3. Identity and culture

1. How do your projects promote or embed cultural values in public spaces, and is there guidance in place to integrate culture - or cultural programming - into city planning?

2. Does the local vernacular and identity influence your designs? If so, how? Please share examples.

4. Finance

4.1 Funding

1. Where does the funding come from to finance the design and implementation of your projects?

4.2 Economic Impact

1. Do your public spaces become instrumental in promoting local businesses? If so, how? Please provide successful and unsuccessful examples.

2. Do your projects increase the value of land or the desirability of a place? If so, how? Please provide successful and unsuccessful examples.

5. Usage

5.1 Management

1. Who is responsible for the management and maintenance of public spaces?

2. Do you plan for 24-hour/day all-season public usage?

3. Are you responsible for programming specific events and activities? And if so, what type of programs do you do, and how frequently do they happen? Which programs have been most effective?

5.2 Maintenance

1. Do you monitor the long-term performance of your public spaces? If so, then what metrics and targets do you set, and at what time intervals? And how (i.e., digitally, on-site observation)?

6. Health and Wellbeing

1. Have your projects made a positive impact on the health and well-being of the local stakeholders? If so, how?

2. Do you consider activities for people of all ages/generations/abilities? Please share some examples.

3.Are you responsible for programming specific events and activities? And if so, what type of programs do you do, and how frequently do they happen? Which programs have been most effective?

7. Sustainability and Climate Change Mitigation

7.1 Climate and Climate Change Mitigation

1.Do you have climate/sustainability targets, and/or do you follow any international guidance like the UN SDGs? What impact has been delivered on projects so far?

2.Have you implemented future-proofing principles to mitigate against climate change in your public space projects? If so, how? Can you provide successful and unsuccessful examples?

3.Do you use design measures to mitigate the potential environmental impacts of your projects - e.g., the carbon footprint of delivery and offsetting, waste disposal, renewable energy/ energy efficiency, and/ or material selection?

7.2 Biodiversity

1.Do your projects aim to improve the ecology and biodiversity in the local area? If so, how can you share successful and unsuccessful examples?

2.Do you have a set of requirements or specific city-based land use targets to meet to integrate greenscape?

Extra Questions:

- Do you consider wayfinding strategies that are legible to all users? If so, how?
- Do you consider seasonal uses in your designs? If so, how? Can you provide successful and unsuccessful examples?
- Do you consider microclimate design considerations? Can you provide successful and unsuccessful examples?
- Have you encountered any challenges in using these technologies in monitoring and management? Have these been overcome, and if so, how?
- How do your projects leverage technology, including AI, to create smart, efficient, and safe public spaces, and what operational guidelines are in place for their maintenance and management?
- What are your key priorities generally? Are these documented somewhere and/or issued as part of the brief for a public space?
- Have there been safety issues in your spaces? What are they, and how are these addressed?
- Is any kind of formal surveillance ever utilized? What form does this take, and how is it communicated to and received by the public?
- Do you connect your projects to walking and cycle routes? Please explain the process of embedding this within your projects using examples.
- Do your public spaces include public art made by local artists? If so, what role does art play within your public spaces?
- Who else has a role in caring for public spaces? What do they do?
- How do people make spaces their own?
- Do your public space projects focus on addressing urban blight, and if so, how? Can you give me some examples?
- Do you incorporate the concepts and characteristics of neurourbanism in social spaces to promote inclusivity in the urban sphere?

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