

Toward a Walkable Seattle

Drawing on International Experience

Introduction:

- People at the centre of Planning

Drawing on International Experience:

- Melbourne
- New York
- Copenhagen
- Mexico City
- Seattle



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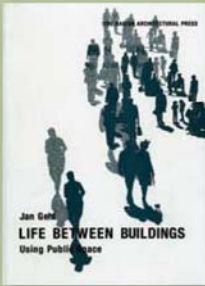
Helle Søholt

Managing Director & Founding Partner

GEHL ARCHITECTS

URBAN QUALITY CONSULTANTS

40 YEARS OF RESEARCH



Life Between Buildings

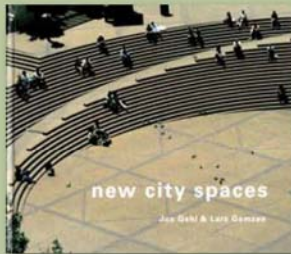
(Jan Gehl) First published in 1971, it continues to be a widely used handbook on the relationship between public spaces and the social life in cities. Published in many versions and 15 languages.



The work and further research of Gehl Architects is based on Jan Gehl's 4 decades of extensive research carried out at The School of Architecture, The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts.

The research of Gehl Architects deals with the many factors that influence public life, public space and how people use it.

The research is the basis of our world wide urban quality consultancy and reflects our viewpoint that working with the public realm requires a multi-disciplinary approach; as our field of work encompasses not only architecture and planning but also psychology, anthropology and sociology to truly understand how people experience and use the city.



New City Spaces

(Jan Gehl and Lars Gemzøe, 2001) provide an international perspective on the renaissance of public life and public spaces. City strategies from Barcelona, Lyon, Strasbourg, Freiburg, Copenhagen, Portland, Curitiba, Cordoba and Melbourne are presented as well as 39 remarkable new public spaces. Published in Danish, English, Spanish, Portuguese, Czech and Chinese versions.



New City Life

(Gehl, Gemzøe, Kirknæs & Søndergaard, 2006) Over the past 50 years, the use of public space has changed dramatically. New City Life is a handbook describing how to improve the quality of life in the city by responding to the challenges facing cities in the 21st century. Published in Danish and English.



Public Spaces - Public Life

(Jan Gehl and Lars Gemzøe, 1996) describes 34 years of development of the public spaces in Copenhagen and documents the impressive growth of public life that followed. Winner of the "Edra/Places Research Award" USA, 1998.

MAJOR CITY IMPROVEMENTS PROJECTS



EXAMPLES OF SURVEYED STREETS



Our aim:
To place People in the Centre of Planning



Cultures are different...



Climates are different and seasons change...



But the way People inhabit and use Space is universal



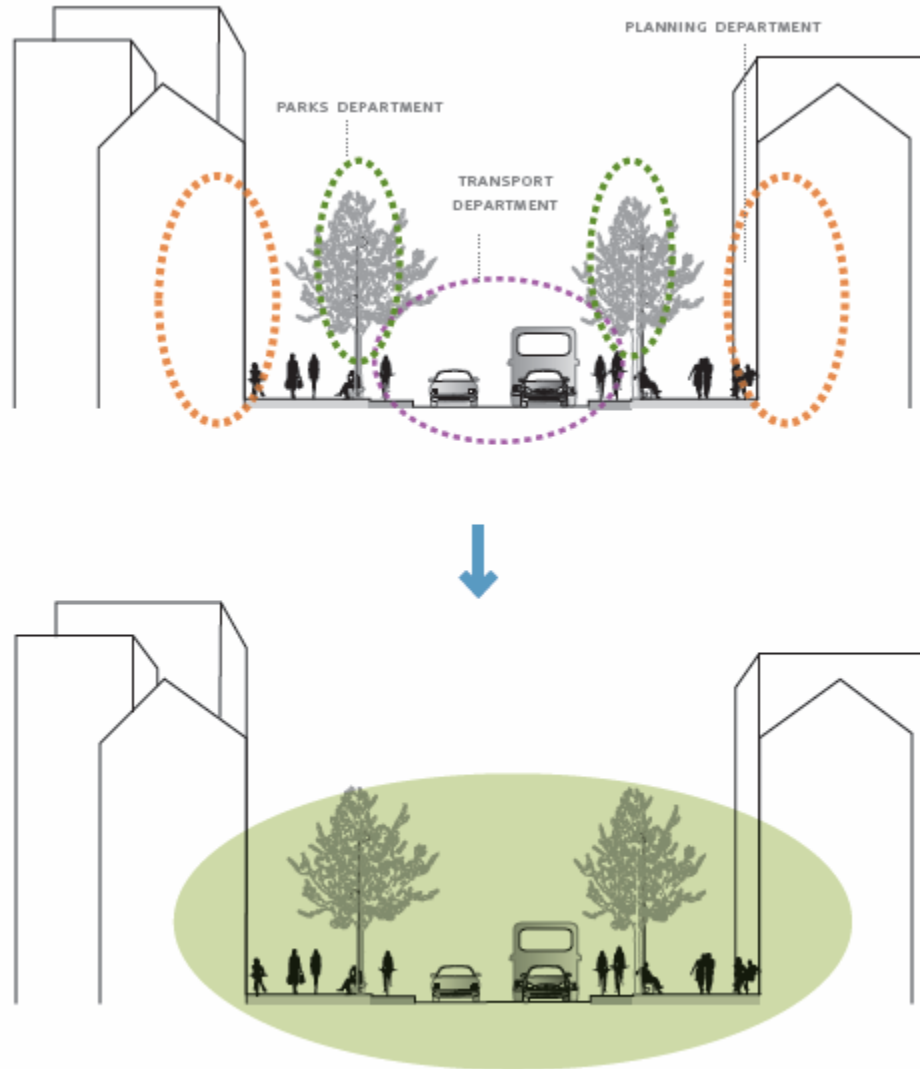
Seeing is a question about time



60-110 km / Hour – Speed of cars



The need for a holistic approach to urban design



A HOLISTICALLY COMMISSIONED, IMPLEMENTED AND MAINTAINED PUBLIC STREET

Moving beyond safety and Comfort towards lively and liveable streets

traffic speeds & quantities allow safe sidewalks
vehicle types allow safe sidewalks
traffic noise levels allow pedestrian & bicycle movement
bicycle tracks
efficient crosswalks encourage pedestrian & bicycle movement
acceptable air quality for pedestrians
lack of obstacles to pedestrians & cyclists
high quality walking routes
well-connected bicycle network
noise levels allow conversations
sidewalk activities & recreational uses are possible
engaging visual environment
opportunities for new & spontaneous events



SAFETY



COMFORT



LIVELINESS

FROM A VEHICULAR DOMINATED STREET...



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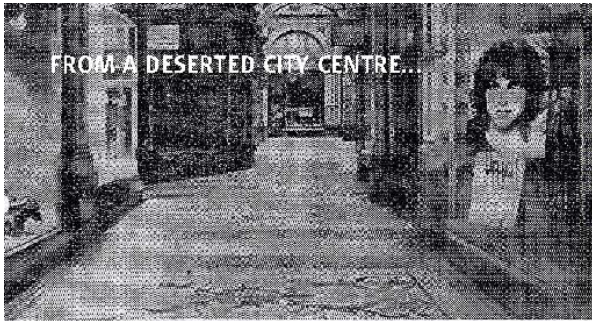
NEW ROAD 2001



...TO A VIBRANT, INCLUSIVE & PEOPLE-ORIENTED STREET



NEW ROAD 2007



FROM A DESERTED CITY CENTRE...

Block Arcade . . . part of a pattern that should stay.

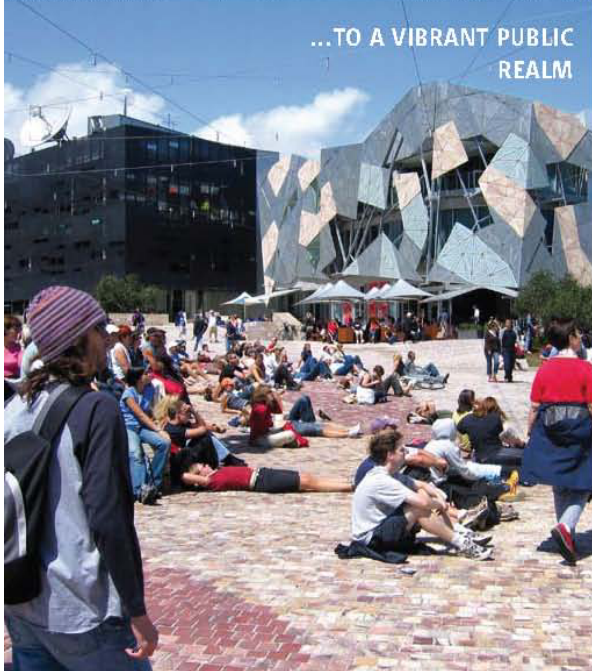
ACTIVE city planning has been almost unknown in our city for at least 30 or 40 years. It means expensive new buildings, shopping plazas, under-street arcades to link footpaths, streets and metro stations. There are planning bores in New York to encourage reuse of historical buildings. New buildings include a range of functions — arcades, cinemas, offices and top-apartments, all in the city centre. New York has had success in the creation of malls and reduction of traffic. Compare that to the dismal bitumen in Bo Street.

Melbourne's heritage of a vibrant city, empty and useless except during office hours.

An empty, useless city centre

ARCHITECTURE
Norman Day

city, empty and useless except during office hours.



...TO A VIBRANT PUBLIC REALM

MELBOURNE PLACES FOR PEOPLE

ACHIEVEMENTS

NEW SQUARES, PROMENADES & PARKS



NIGHT TIME PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC HAS INCREASED BY 100%



STATIONARY ACTIVITIES HAVE INCREASED BY 300%



A LARGER RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY



DAYTIME PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC HAS INCREASED BY 40%



AN INCREASING STUDENT POPULATION



A REVITALISED NETWORK OF LANES & ARCADES



ART PROGRAMS



MORE PLACES TO SIT & PAUSE



ATTRACTIONS & PLACES TO GO



A 24-HOUR CITY



BETTER BICYCLE & PUBLIC TRANSPORT ACCESS



A GREENER CITY



VASTLY IMPROVED BUSINESS ECONOMY



Places For People, 1994



Places For People, 2004

PLACES FOR PEOPLE

In 1994 Professor Jan Gehl was invited to Melbourne to conduct a survey examining the issues and opportunities regarding public space and collected data on public life. The data was presented in Places for People: Melbourne City 1994

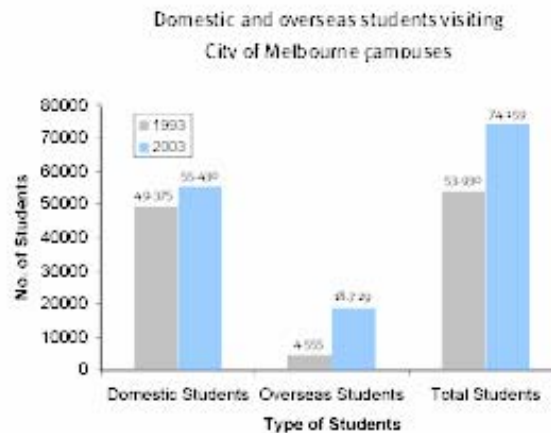
In 2004 Gehl Architects conducted an update on the 1994 study. The results were clear and concise: By having followed the recommendations from the 1994 report and introducing an active design strategy Melbourne achieved a rebirth of public life in the city.

They improved their quality of the public realm and has introduced 71% more people-oriented high-quality urban spaces from 1994 to 2004.

Places for People was awarded the 'Edra Places Award' 2006 as well as 'The Australian Award for Urban Design' 2005.

1.3 AN INCREASING STUDENT POPULATION

37,5%
MORE STUDENTS
IN THE MELBOURNE CITY AREA
1993-2003



Universities and other educational institutions contribute to an active, lively urban environment by creating a people climate oriented towards young people. Students make a major contribution to the city's vitality and cultural diversity, providing a youthful stimulus and international perspective. They also tend to engage more overtly with the street scene and other public spaces because they are more available to spend time out of doors, and in so doing make a strong contribution to the local economy.

Melbourne has expanded the number of educational institutions in the city centre over the past decade, in most cases integrating these facilities into the city fabric.

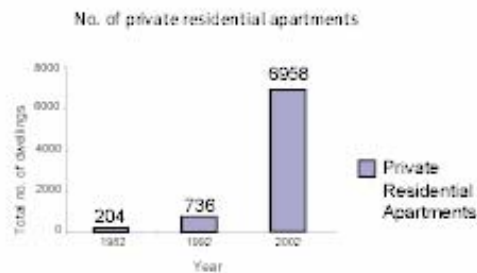
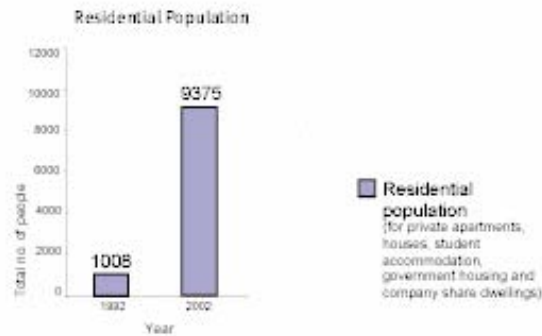
Wider Melbourne has NN educational institutions, of which XX are located within YYkm radius of the city centre. The number of students attending academic institutions and/or living in the city centre has expanded by 22% since 1993 – yielding Q,000 residents in 2003.

Student housing is mostly located outside the central city, but some student apartments are located in the city centre. Student populations are expected to continue to rise as the number of student places at Melbourne's universities and institutes increases, and is supported by growth in inner city low-cost housing.

Traditional university towns throughout the UK, Europe and the US have long demonstrated that the presence of major research institutions in the city is a huge advantage in bringing technology, talent and tolerance to the local community. More recently, Richard Florida argues that an increased student population is a vital part of the creative/knowledge city, where high concentrations of creative people results in a high concentration of creative economic outcomes.⁷

⁷Florida (2003) *The Rise of the Creative Class*: 218

1.2 A LARGER RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY



830%
MORE RESIDENTS 1992-2002
&
3311%
MORE APARTMENTS 1982-2002



A substantial increase in Melbourne's residential population has been generated in a short span of time. The result of a well-organised strategic initiative, *Postcode 3000*, this is arguably the most impressive achievement within the last 10 years, and has been highly influential in creating a more lively and safer 24 hour city.

Residential occupation has increased from approximately 760 dwellings in 1992 to over 9900 in 2002. Notably, this growth has occurred throughout the central city rather than being confined to one or two specific areas.

Postcode 3000 encouraged residential living back into the city by converting a large amount of available empty space in the city's older, unoccupied building fabric into new models of apartment-living, and subdividing vertically into multiple, individually-owned units. The program focused on retaining and recycling Melbourne's historic buildings and the widest possible range of built forms to assist in preserving local character.

Specific measures to attract more residents have been:

- offering apartments at prices comparable to suburban areas;
- adding structures on top of existing buildings, whether these are maintained as commercial premises or adapted to residential uses; and
- converting redundant buildings to residential purposes and other mixed uses.

Today the central city residential apartment market, initially stimulated by various economic incentives, now has its own impetus driven by demand. In economic terms, the follow-on effects of this residential growth include new street use patterns and local participation as the new local community utilises the central city as its recreational base.

More People living downtown

1983



More People living downtown

1992

738 dwellings



More People living downtown

2002

9,895
dwellings



1.4 LIVELIER STREETS FOR PUBLIC LIFE



Swanson Street before and after the conversion in 1992 into a pedestrian and tram street.



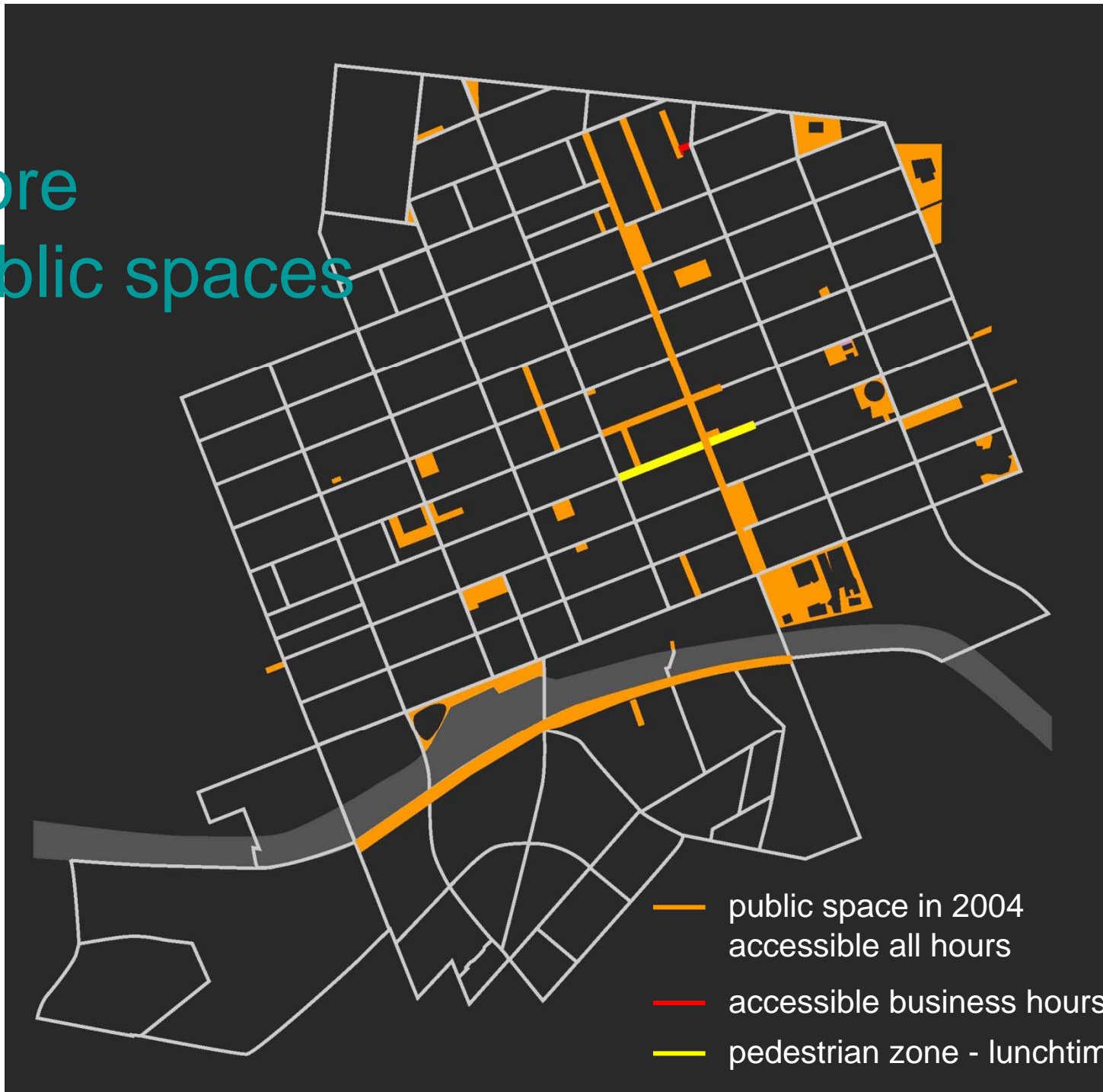
More public spaces



More public spaces



More public spaces



Lively streets



A Fine grain network of streets and lanes

1994: 300m
2004: 3.4km
ACCESSIBLE AND ACTIVE
LANES, ARCADES AND ALLEYS



New Street trees





1992



2005



pre 1992



1992



2005



1992



2005



2005

Outdoor Cafes



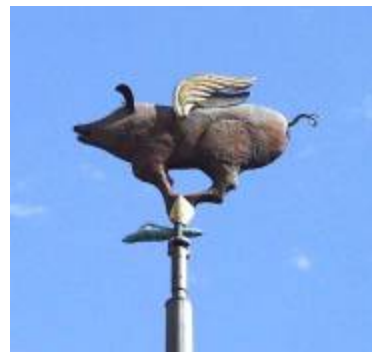
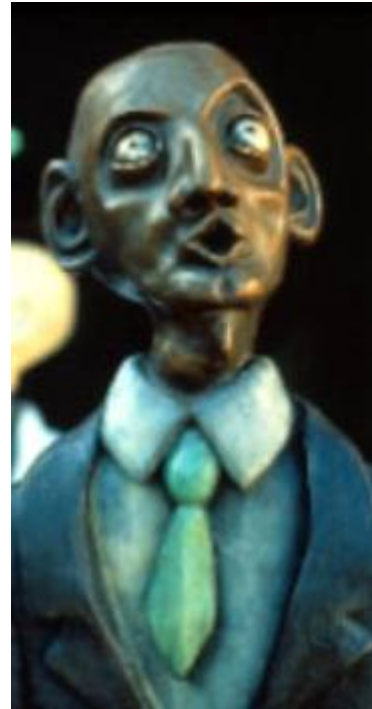
• curbside cafes in 1980

Outdoor Cafes



Outdoor Cafes





New public spaces



Federation Square

Pedestrian traffic weekdays daytime: +40%

Pedestrian traffic evening: +100 %

Stationary activities +200-300%

- Turning streets into fine places to walk and stay
- New public spaces
- More housing and students down town

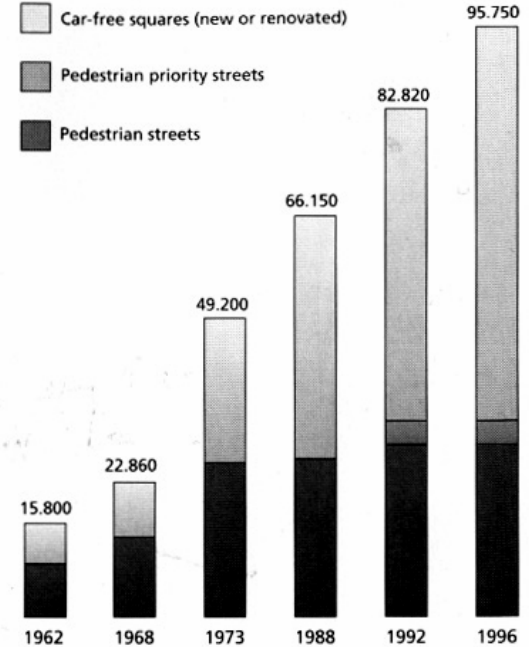
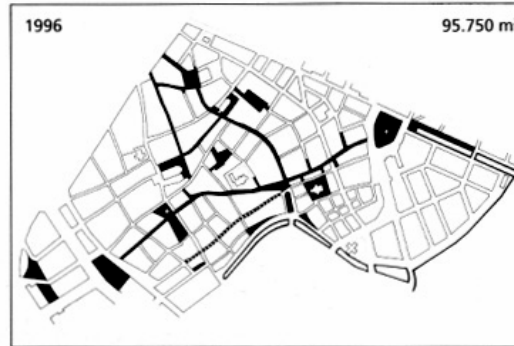
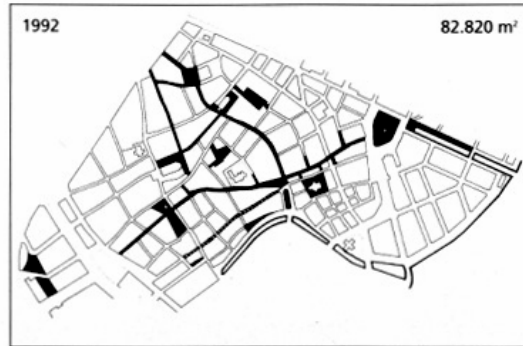
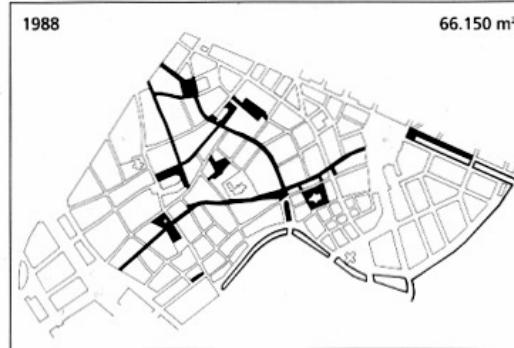
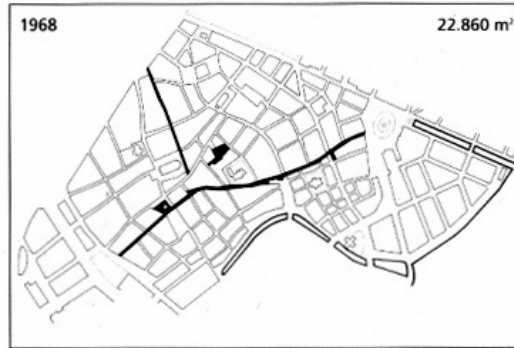
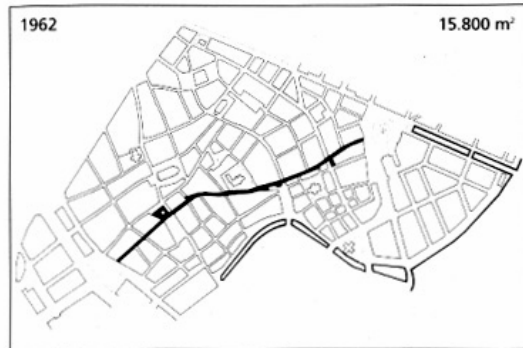


Copenhagen

as Best Practice



DEVELOPMENT OF CAR-FREE STREETS AND SQUARES 1962-1996



Development of pedestrian areas in Copenhagen city center from 1962 to 1996 (in square meters)

Illustrated on this page are 34 years of gradual transformation of Copenhagen city center.

By 1996, the city center had some 96.000 m² set aside for people activities, a six-fold increase from the first stage in 1962.

The bar graph above shows that the creation of pedestrian streets was actually finished by 1973. Effort has been concentrated subsequently on reclaiming and improving the city squares – the potential oases of the city.

The Copenhagen Streets in the 1960ties



The main street "Strøget"
before 1962



80.000 people per 24 hours in the summer

“Strøget” to day



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Strædet - beforeand after

Nyhavn - beforeand after



Copenhagen Modal split



36% use a bicycle
27% drive a car
33% use public transit
5% walk

70% continue to bike in the Winter



36% use a bicycle
27% drive a car
33% use public transit
5% walk

The City has become a People City



More and more cities are introducing the Copenhagen Model
Sustainability helps focusing on pedestrians and bicyclists





NYC Dept. of Transp.
w/ Gehl Architects,
Published: 13 nov 2008

World Class Streets:

Remaking New York City's Public Realm



GEHL Architects i New York





9th Ave. Apr.07

9th Ave. Sep.07





9th Ave. Sept.07



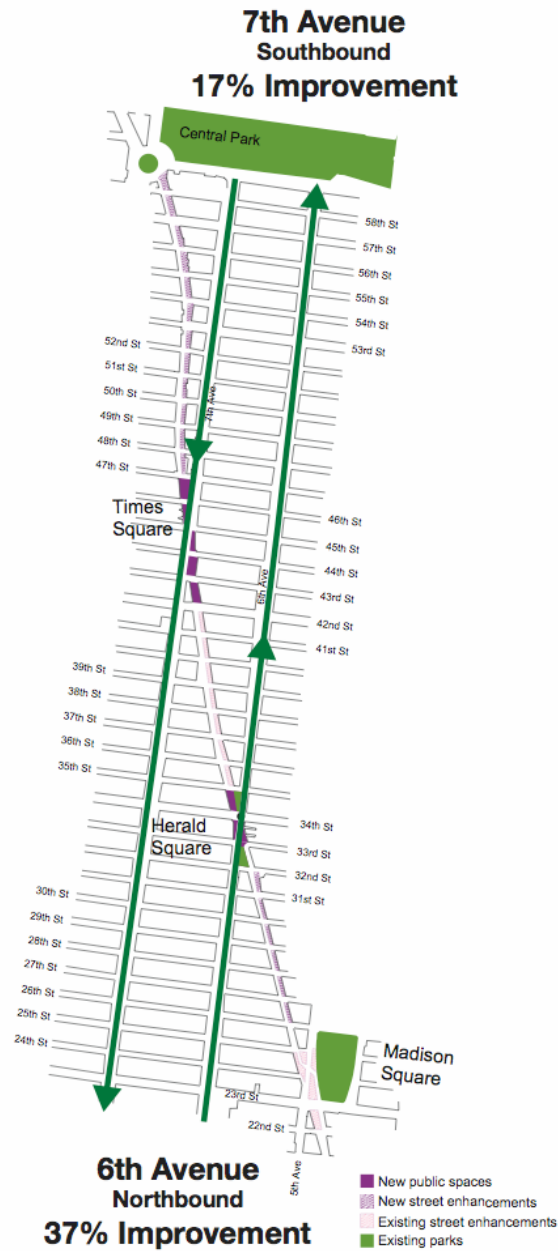
Madison Square Nov. 2008

Broadway Boulevard Oct.2008



Broadway Pilot Program

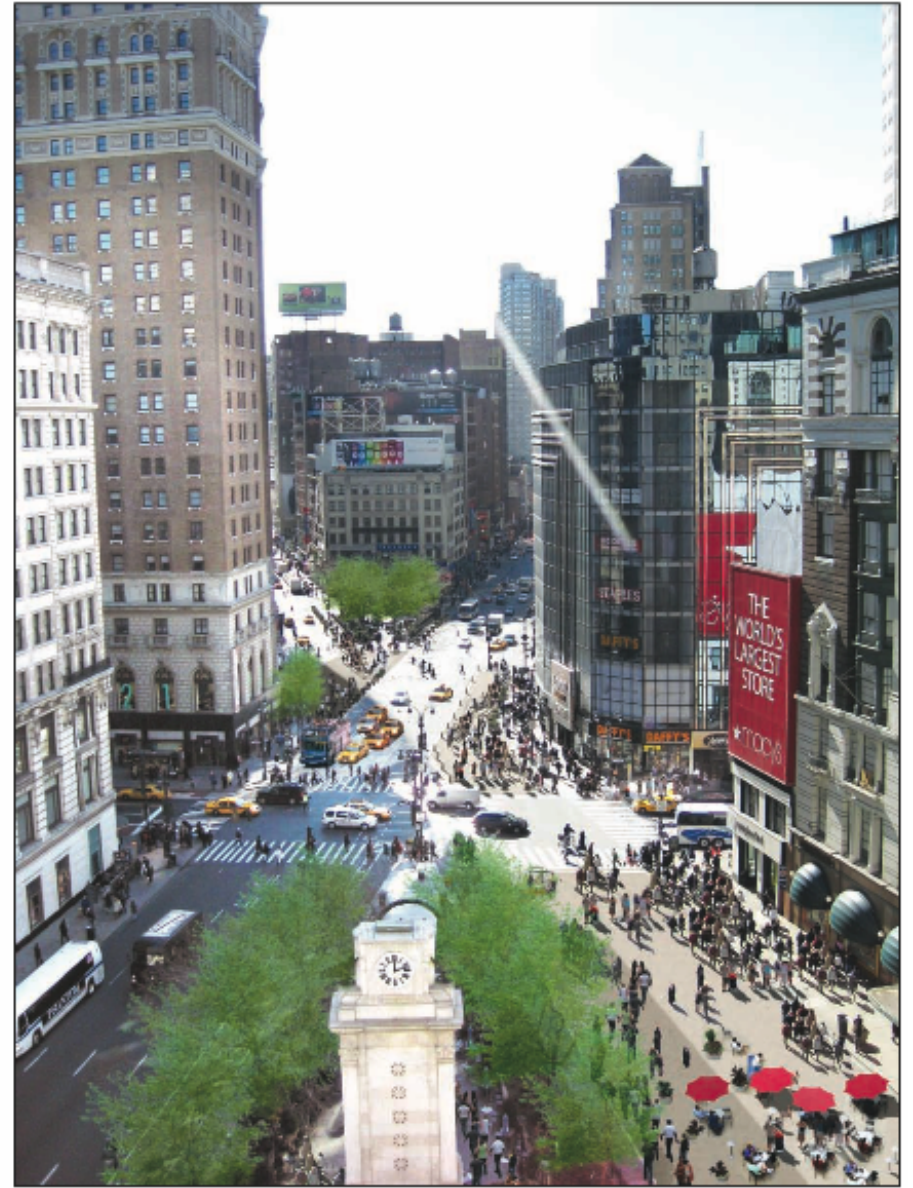
Expected Travel Time Improvements



Herald Square



BEFORE

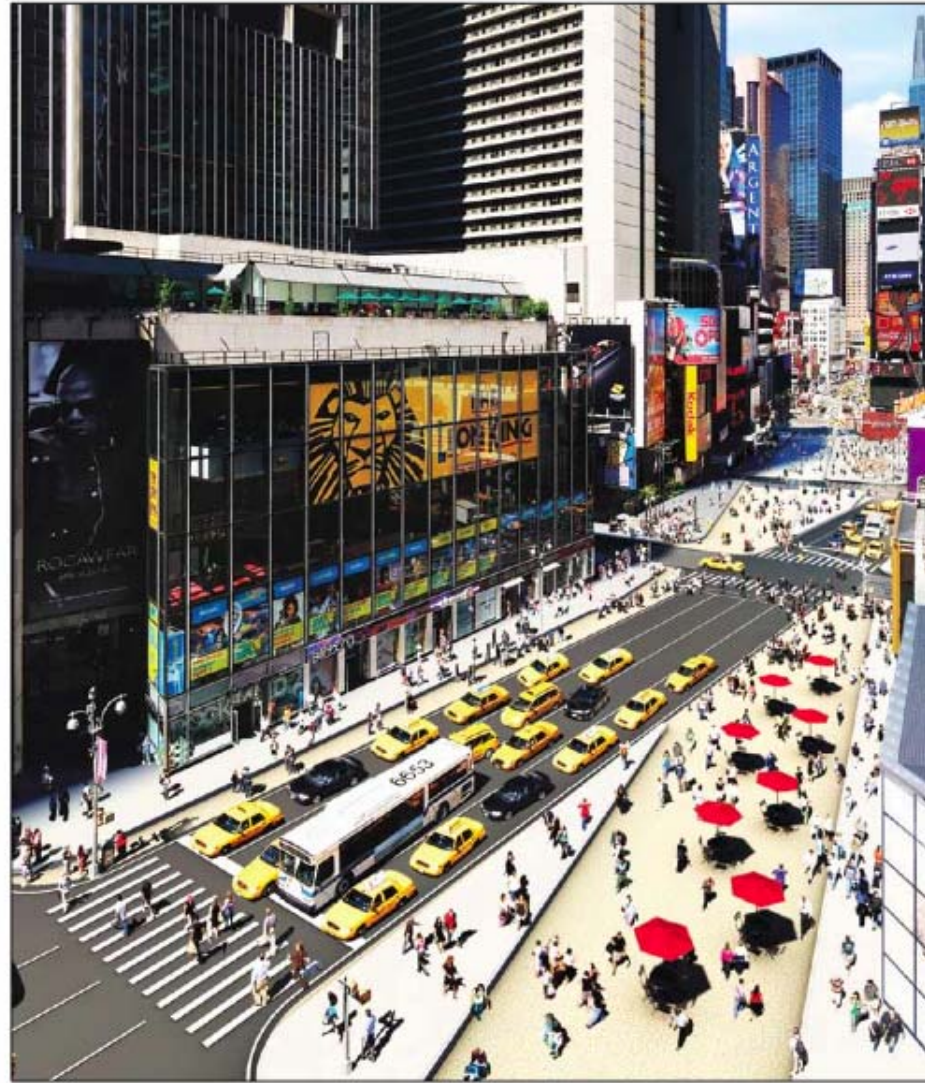


AFTER

Times Square



BEFORE



AFTER

Summer Streets

3 SATURDAYS IN AUGUST





Gehl Architects working with UNAM in Mexico City

Towards a **liveable** and **sustainable city**

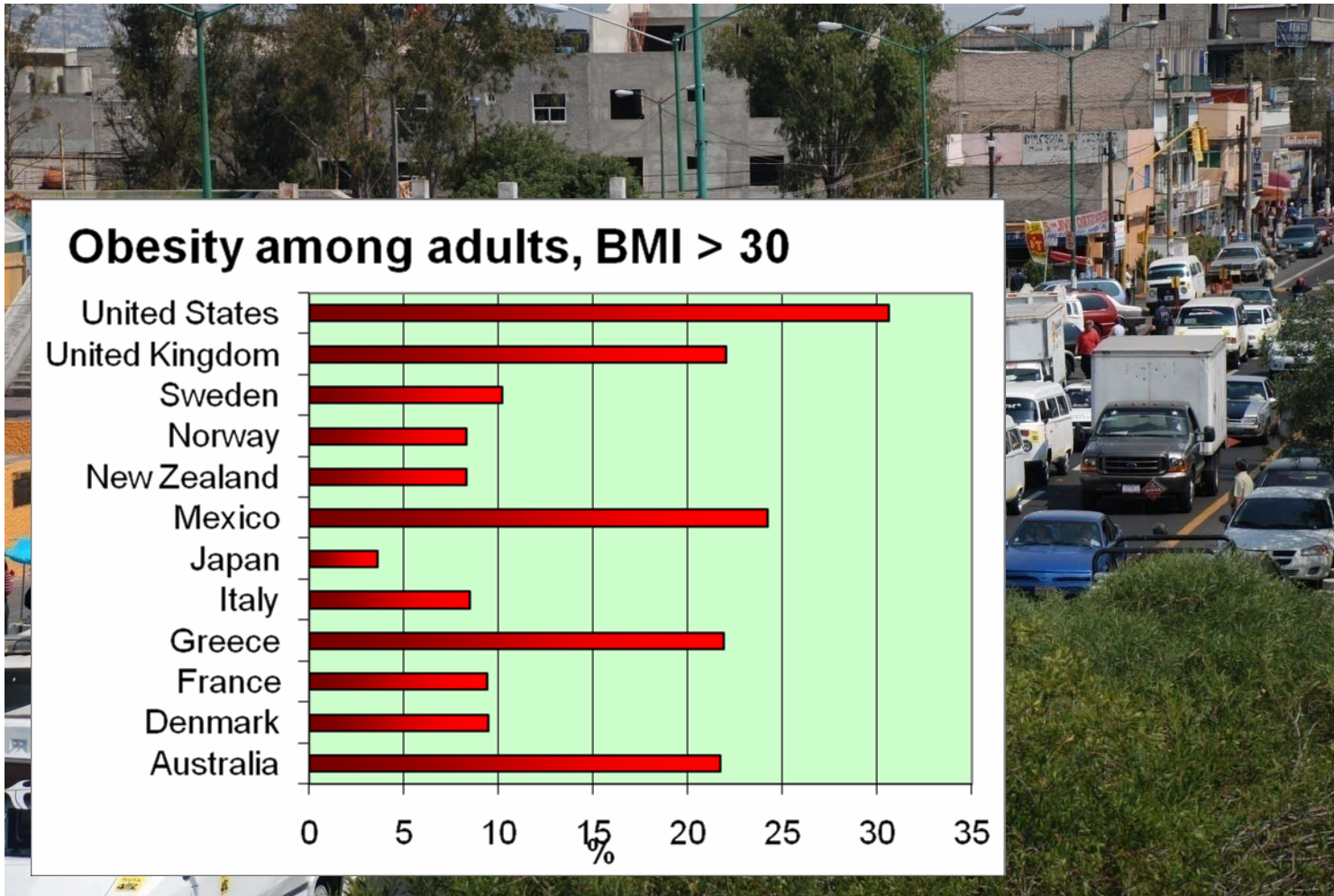
Developing the Mexico City Model for establishing a Bicycle Culture

The **Gehl Team** at work

Jens Rørbeck, Lin Skaufel, Troels Andersen, Gil Penalosa



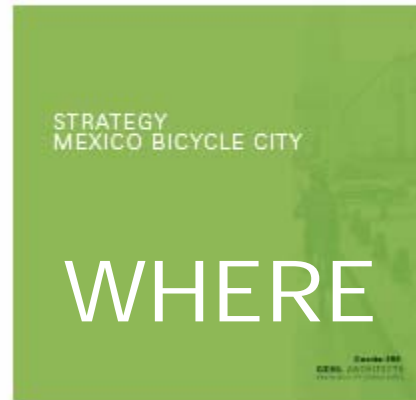
People Use in Average 2.5 hours in transport / Day
in Mexico City



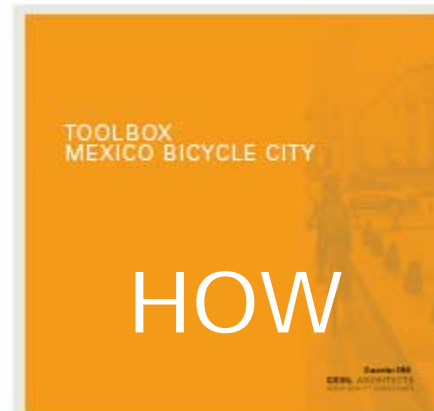
Customised for the different users:



Vision document



Strategic document



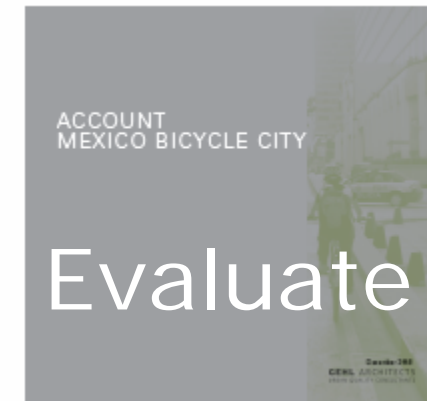
Toolbox



Best practice

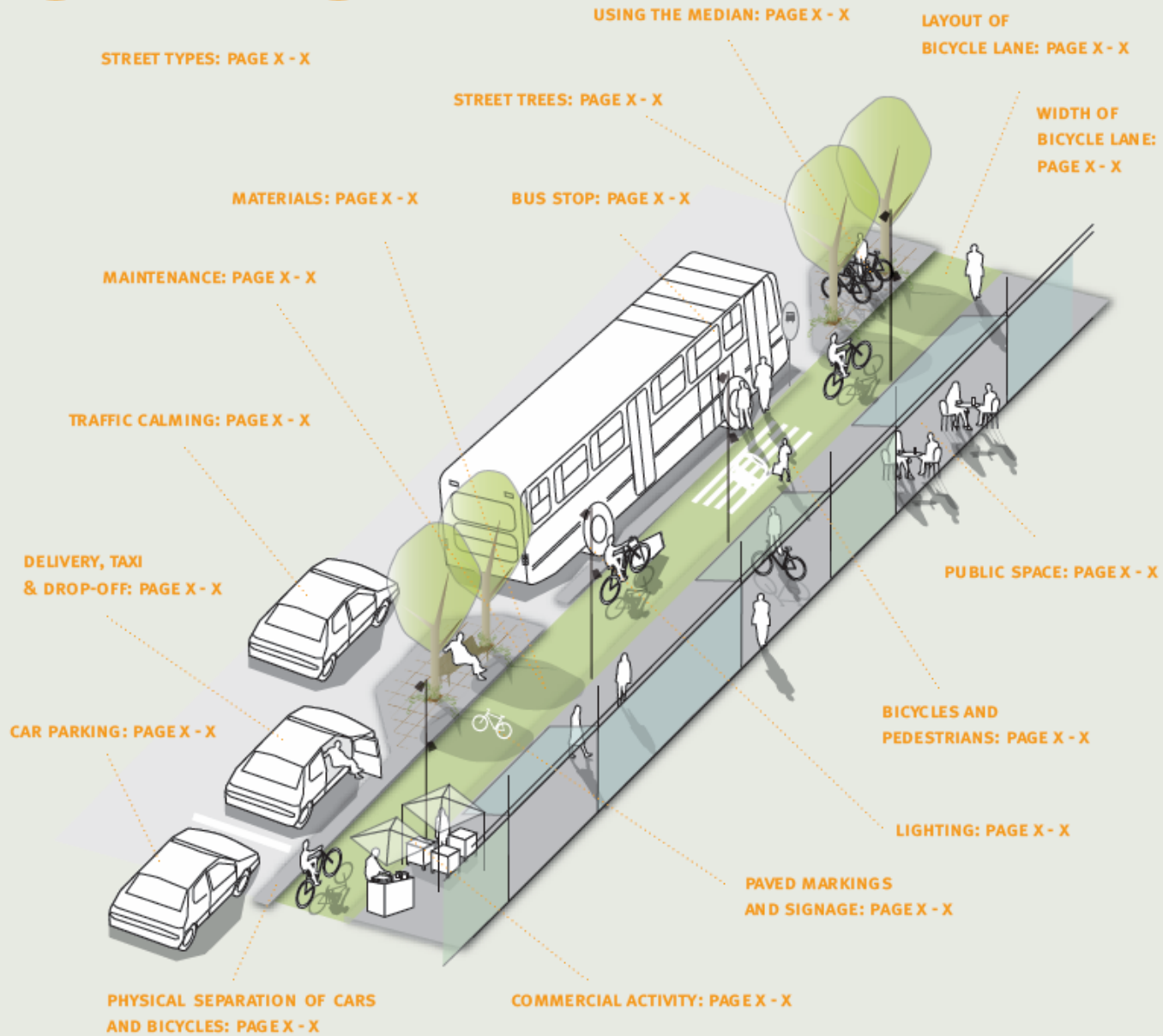


Brandina- culture



Bicycle account

STREETS







More than a bicycle project!



We can design a City full of Sustainable Buildings



But it does not mean that the City is Sustainable

Images from US, Mexico, Europe, Asia





DOWNTOWN SEATTLE 2009
PUBLIC SPACE &
PUBLIC LIFE

GEHL ARCHITECTS





INTRODUCTION



ANALYSIS



RECOMMENDATIONS



INSPIRATION

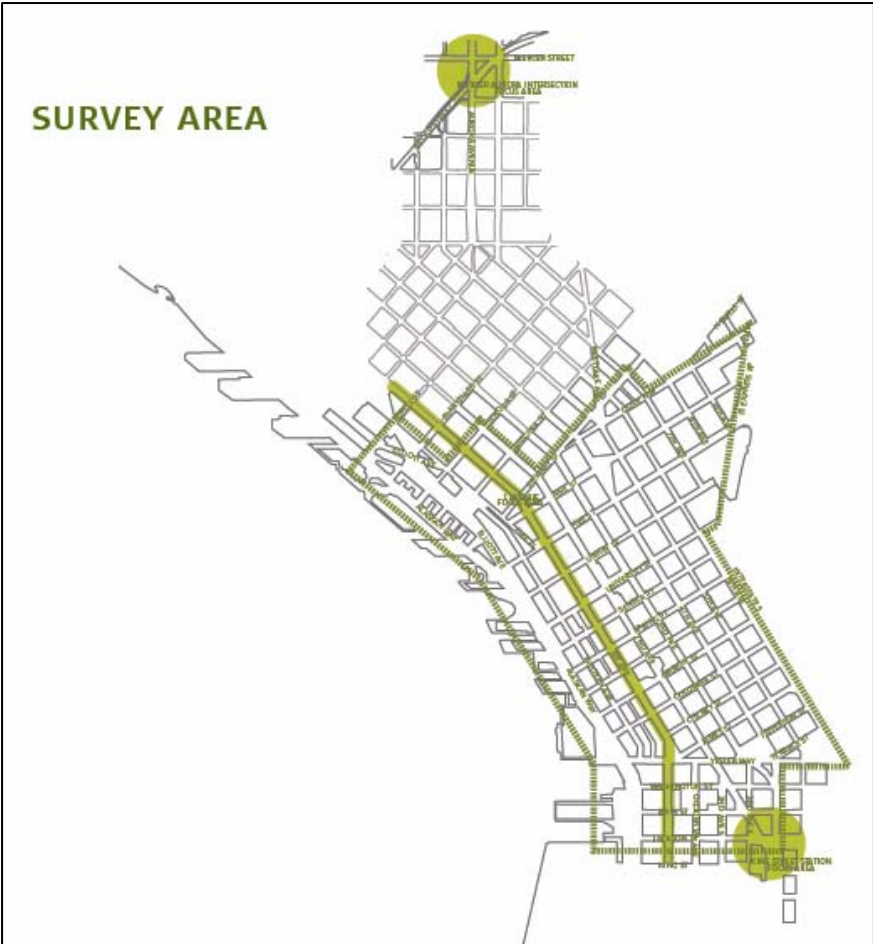


REFLECTIONS

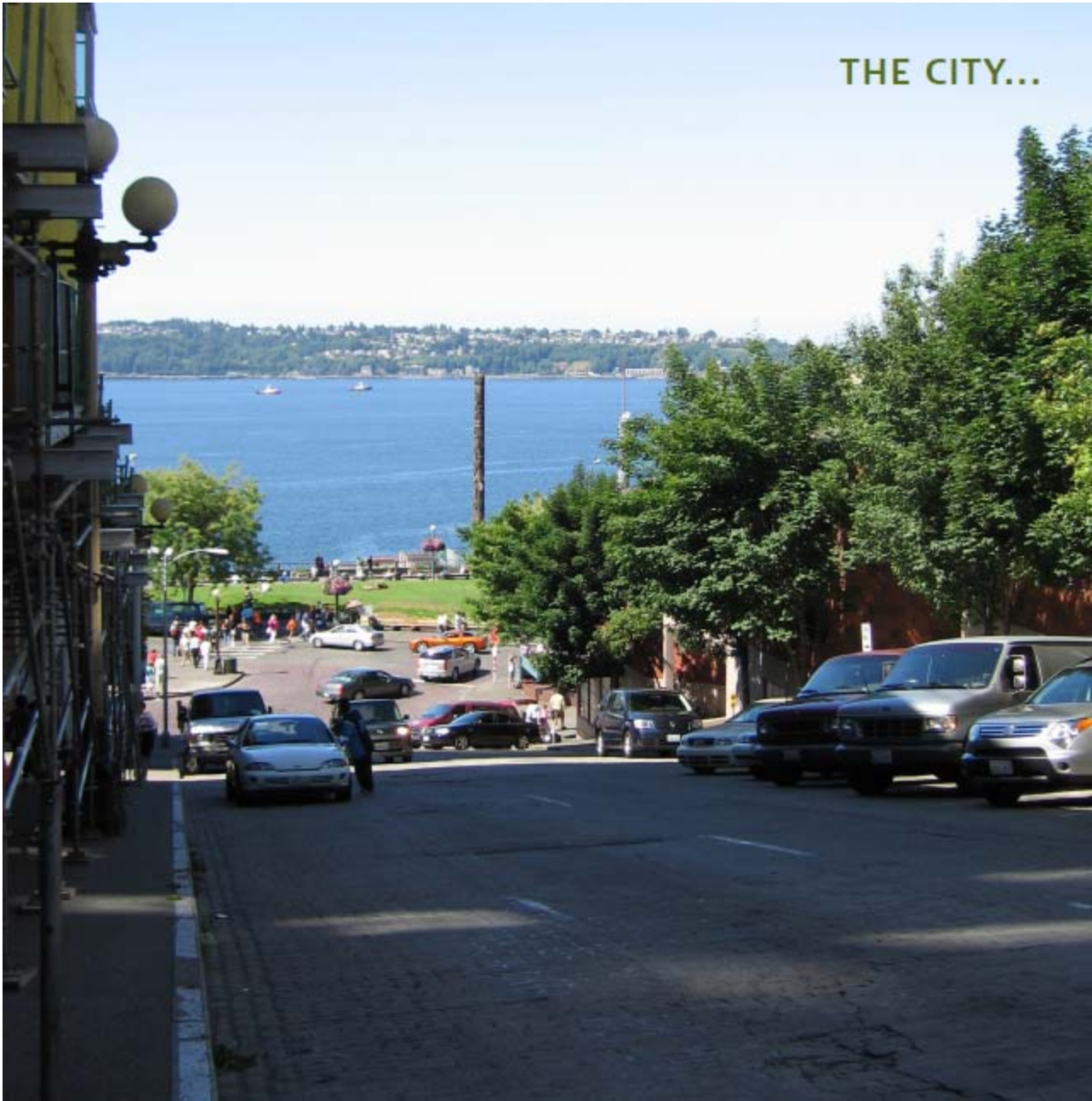


DATA COLLECTION

Equal focus on hardware & software: UW student at work



Seattle



THE CITY...

Seattle



DESIGNED FOR CARS



DISCONTINUOUS NETWORK



LACK OF BICYCLE NETWORK



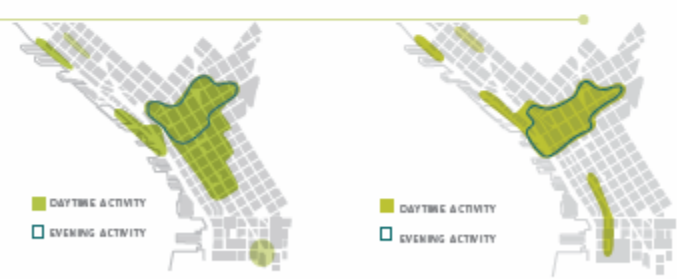
DULL & INACTIVE STREET FRONTAGES



PEDESTRIAN MOVEMENT

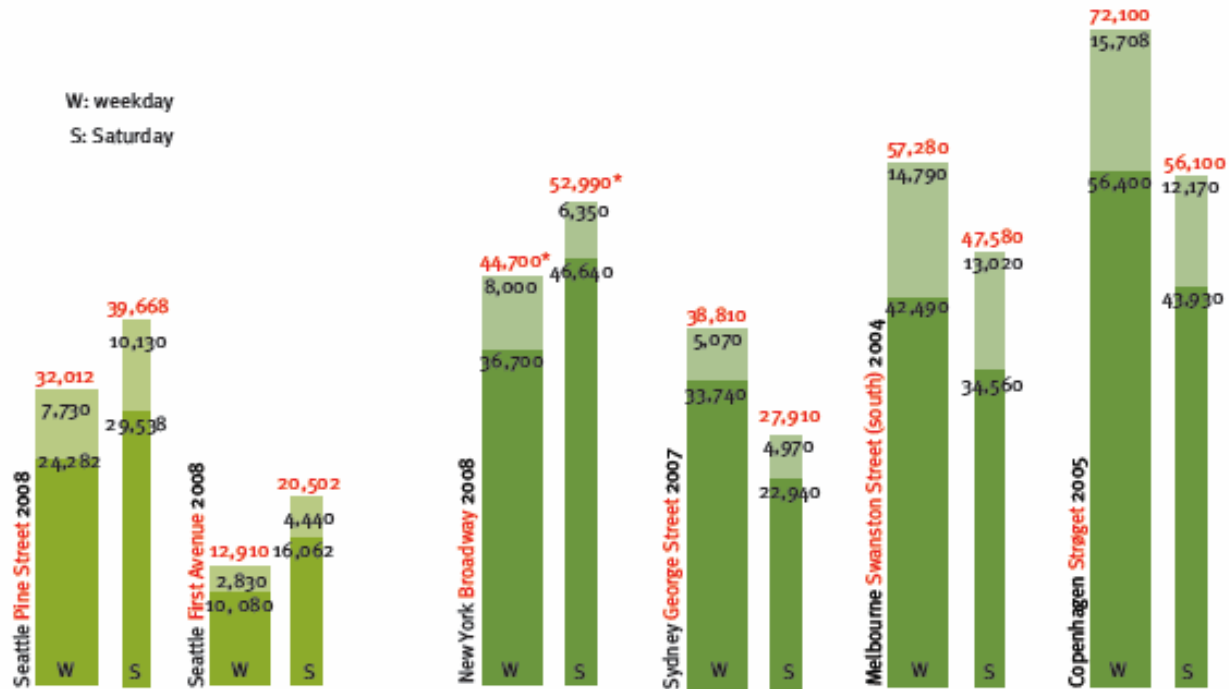
summer weekday: 8 am - 6 pm

SUMMER WEEKDAY SUMMER WEEKEND



COMPARED WITH OTHER CITIES

W: weekday
S: Saturday



*counts only until 8 pm

- Seattle streets, 10am - 6pm
- Seattle streets, 6pm - 10pm
- Other cities, 10am - 6pm
- Other cities, 6pm - 10pm

Note for Seattle numbers:
Pine Street by Westlake Park
1st Ave between Pike St & Union St
Waterfront at Alaskan Way by Seattle Aquarium

NEW YORK, BROADWAY



MELBOURNE, SWANSTON ST



SYDNEY, GEORGE ST



COPENHAGEN, STRØGET

A FRAGILE PEDESTRIAN NETWORK



- SEATTLE'S CURRENT PEDESTRIAN NUMBERS ARE QUITE LOW IN COMPARISON TO OTHER CITIES'.
- TO PROMOTE WALKING AS A MODE OF TRANSPORTATION AND FOR RECREATIONAL PURPOSES, WE MUST INVITE PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITY. INVITATIONS ARE ABOUT QUALITIES OFFERED TO PEDESTRIANS.
- MANY CARS IN A STREET WILL LOWER THE QUALITY FOR PEDESTRIANS.

DISCONNECTED WATERFRONT





THE BLUE GREEN DOWNTOWN

- Upgrade waterfront - waterfront city
- Links between downtown and waterfront
- East-west streets as green connectors
- "Alleys as green lungs"
- Green roofs and walls
- Storm water filtration and recycling





THE INVITING DOWNTOWN

- Public space network that links public spaces, streets, and recreational sites
- Public space hierarchy identifying three different levels:
 - City scale
 - Neighborhood scale
 - Block scale





THE UNIQUE DOWNTOWN

DISTRICT: RETAIL CORE

♥ HEART: WESTLAKE PLAZA



DISTRICT: OFFICE CORE

♥ HEART: NEW CIVIC PARK



- Three neighborhood-like districts
 - Retail core
 - Office core
 - Pioneer square
- Identify a "heart" for each district
- Describe character, network and functions for each district



DISTRICT: PIONEER SQUARE

♥ HEART: OCCIDENTAL SQUARE



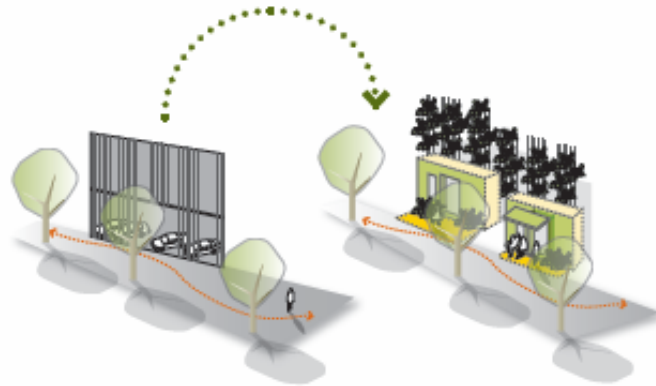
VISION:

- A great main street
- Fantastic pedestrian connection
- Active ground floor frontages
- New street car line
- Good connections to important destinations
- A vibrant shopping and recreational street
- Summer and winter variation



1ST AVENUE, 2008

ACTIVE FACADE



ALLEYS AS BLUE-GREEN LUNGS



Sarah Ferreter, UW, fall 2008



Heide Martin, UW, fall 2008

VISION:

- Transform selected alleys into blue-green lungs
- Create green corridors and daily contact with nature
- Upgrade lighting and materials, waste storage and collection systems, provide space for art installations and temporary events.
- introduce activities and uses and make the alleys safe, active and multifunctional in all seasons and times of day.



Typical alley today



The lesson from Copenhagen ; Melbourne ; New York

If public spaces of good quality are provided
- they will eagerly be used



Thank you

