Public Spaces for Public Life

Seattle 2008

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Urban Quality Consultants

0. Pedestrians are invisible in planning

1. Public life is changing

2. Four scenarios

3. Five cities

GEHL ARCHITECTS

URBAN QUALITY CONSULTANTS

O. Pedestrians are invisible in the planning process

Lots of data on vehicular traffic

- Always Traffic Departments with data about vehicular traffic
- constantly new models, marketing, high speed, noise, pollution, organisations etc.

No data on pedestrians

- same old model, no marketing, low speed, small size, no pollution, usually no organisations etc
- No city department for Public Life

Data is key - Making People Visible in Planning

Public Space - Public Life surveys

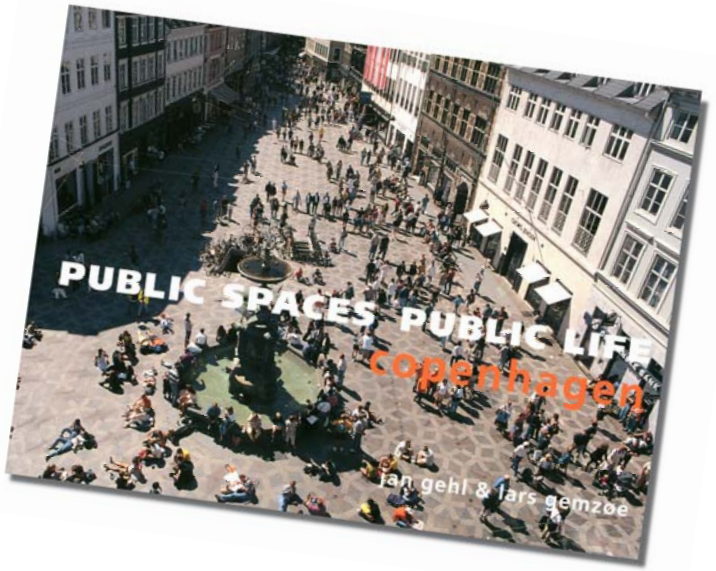
Many of the reports can be downloaded as PDF-files on our website

www.gehlarchitects.dk

Gehl Literature

Life Between Buildings
Jan Gehl

Public Spaces -
Public Life
Jan Gehl & Lars
Gemzøe

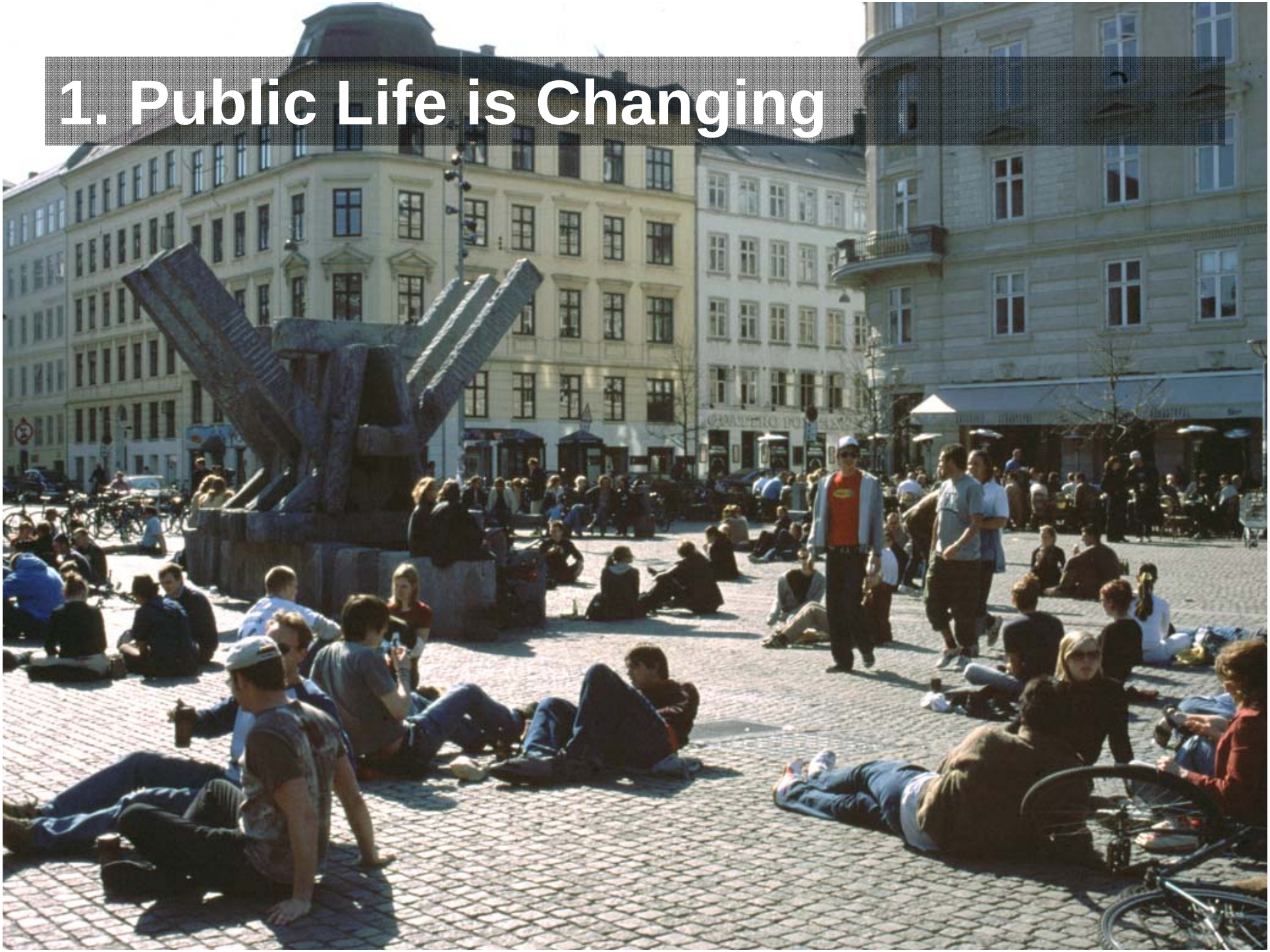


New City Spaces
Jan Gehl & Lars Gemzøe

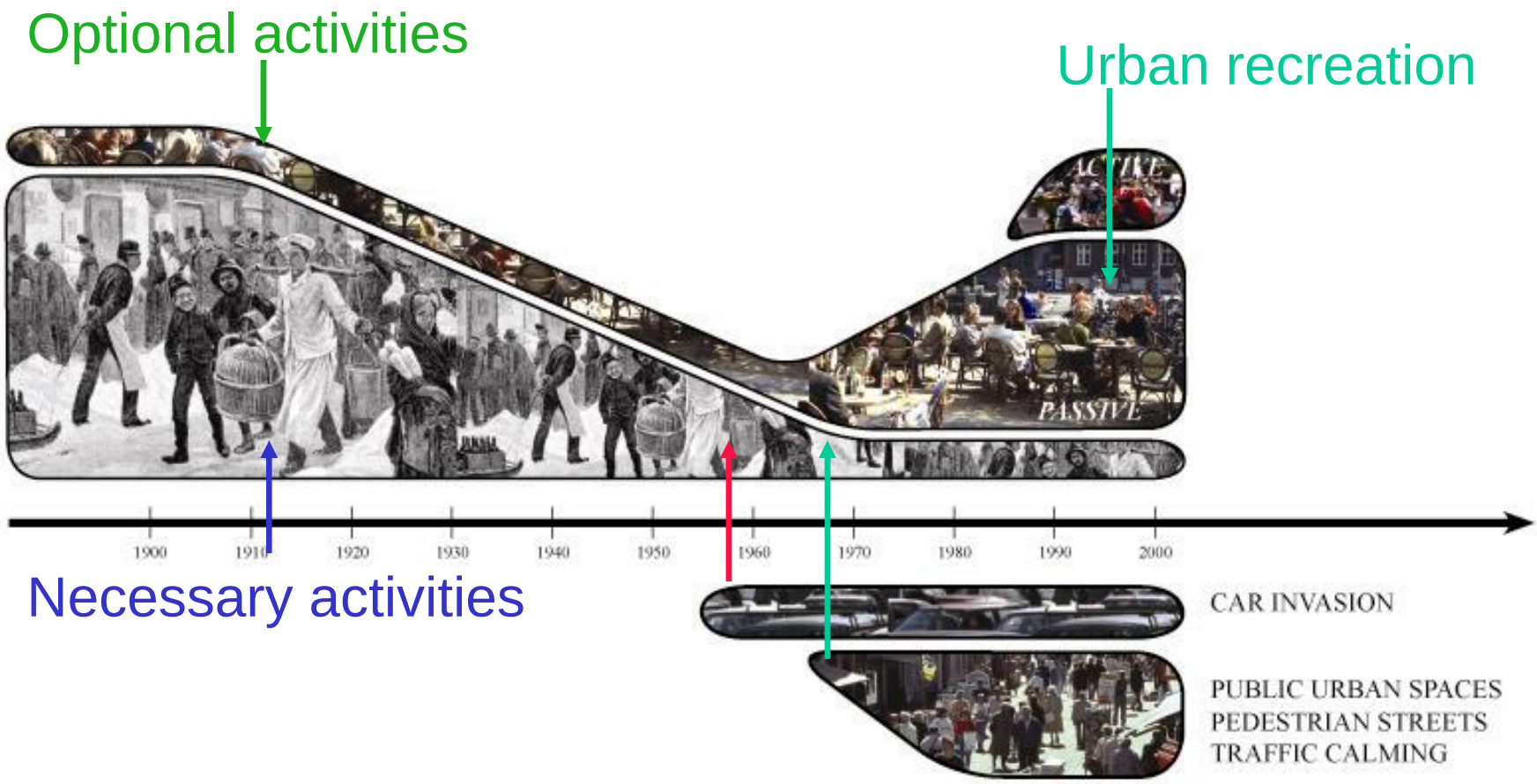
New City Life

Gehl, Gemzøe,
Søndergaard &
Kirknæs

1. Public Life is Changing

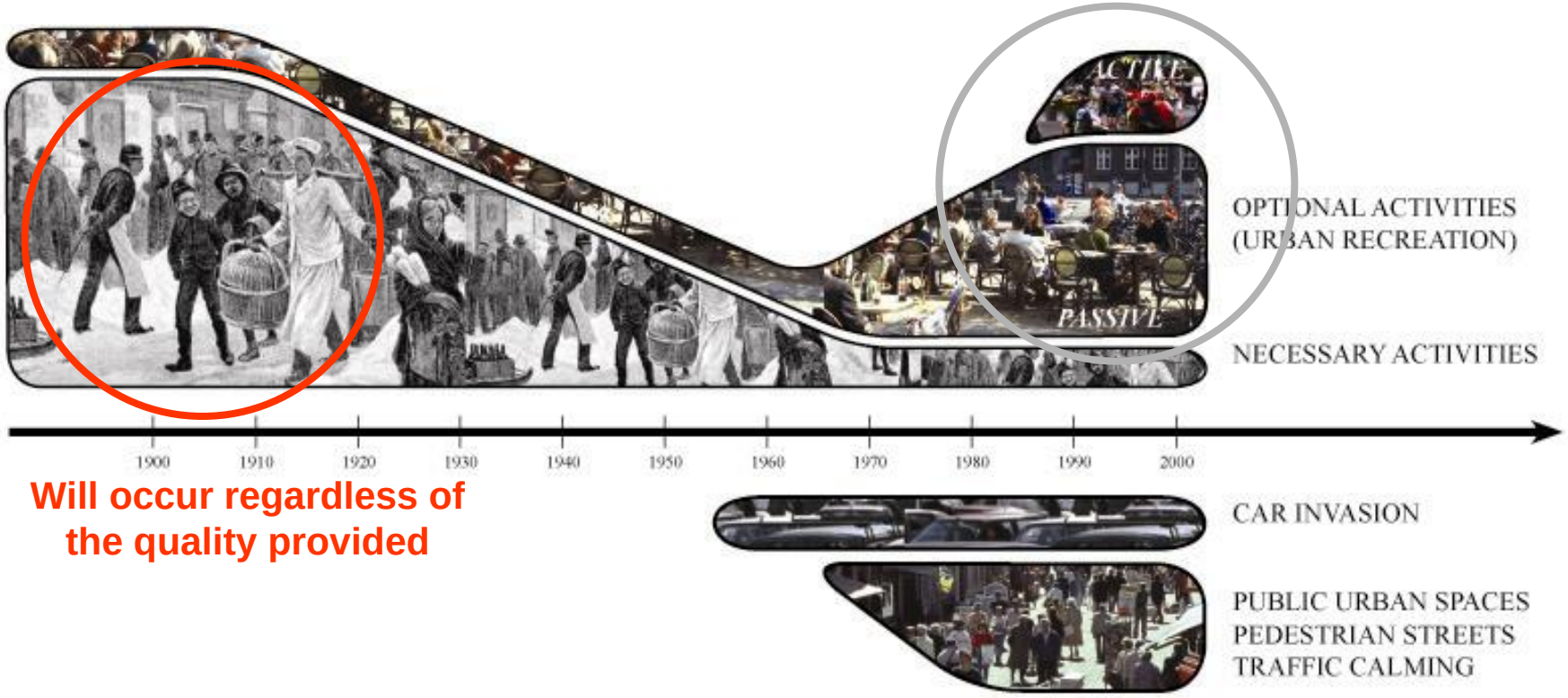


1. Public Life is Changing



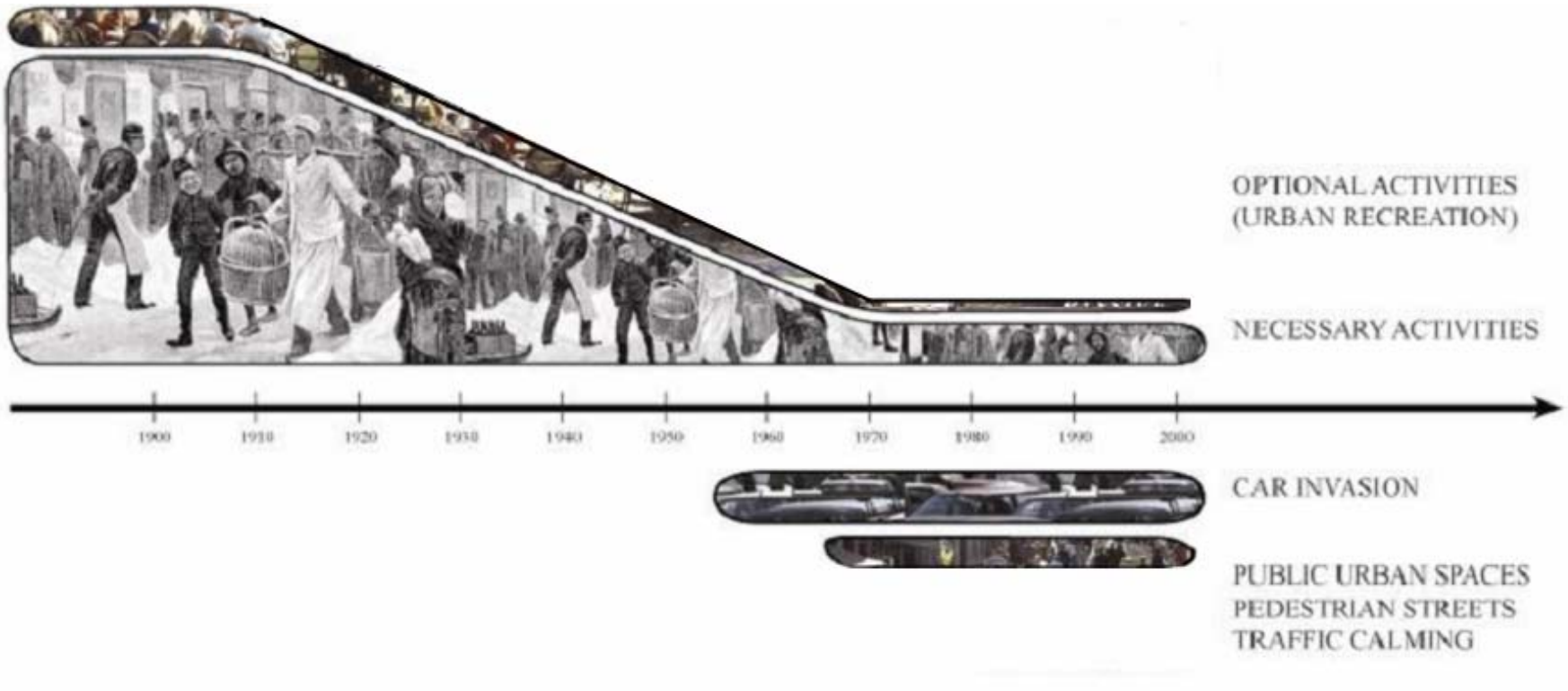
From necessary to optional activities

Will occur only if good quality is provided



Will occur regardless of the quality provided

Public life - if good quality is not provided



New City Spaces

Jan Gehl &
Lars Gemzøe

2. Four scenarios

- The traditional city
- The invaded city
- The abandoned city
- The reconquered city

The traditional city

The invaded city

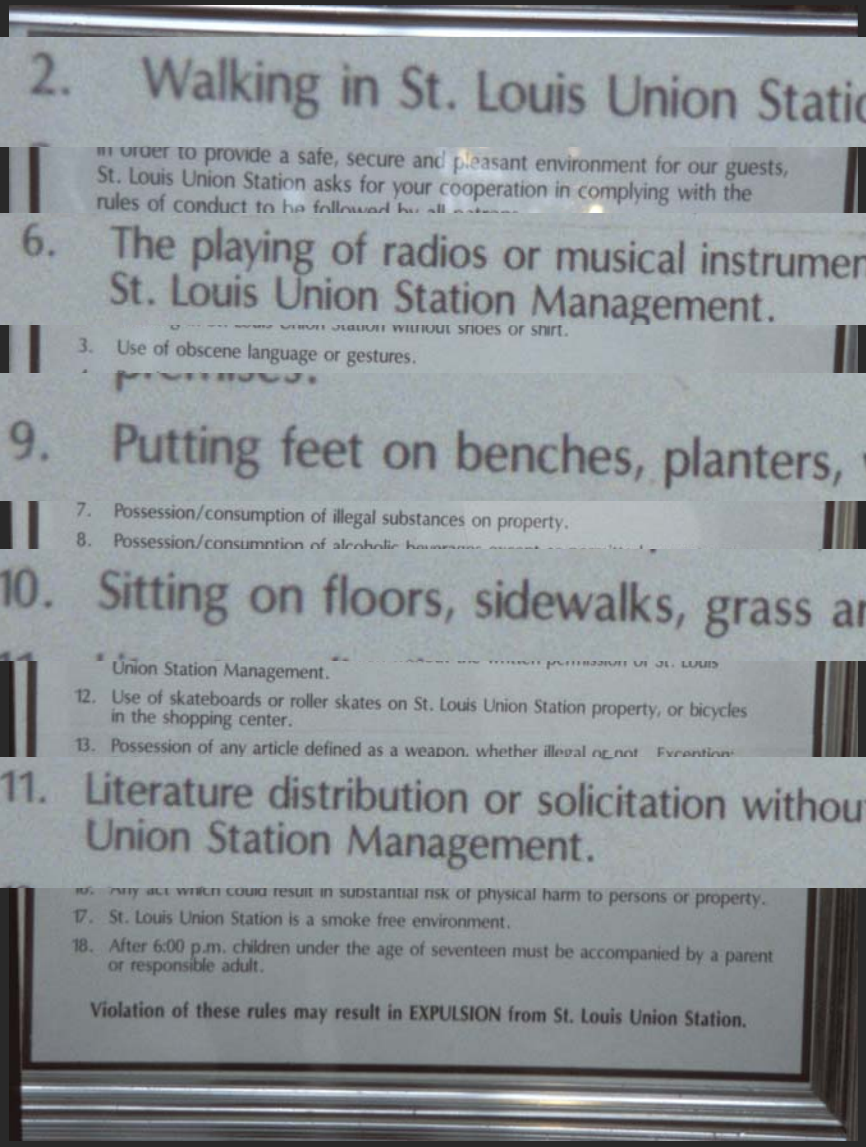
The abandoned city

Clarksdale Mississippi

hometown of John Lee Hooker

The abandoned city and the shopping center

Private spaces - private rules



Growing health problems

Park and sweat structure

We need cities where it is a pleasure to walk and bike

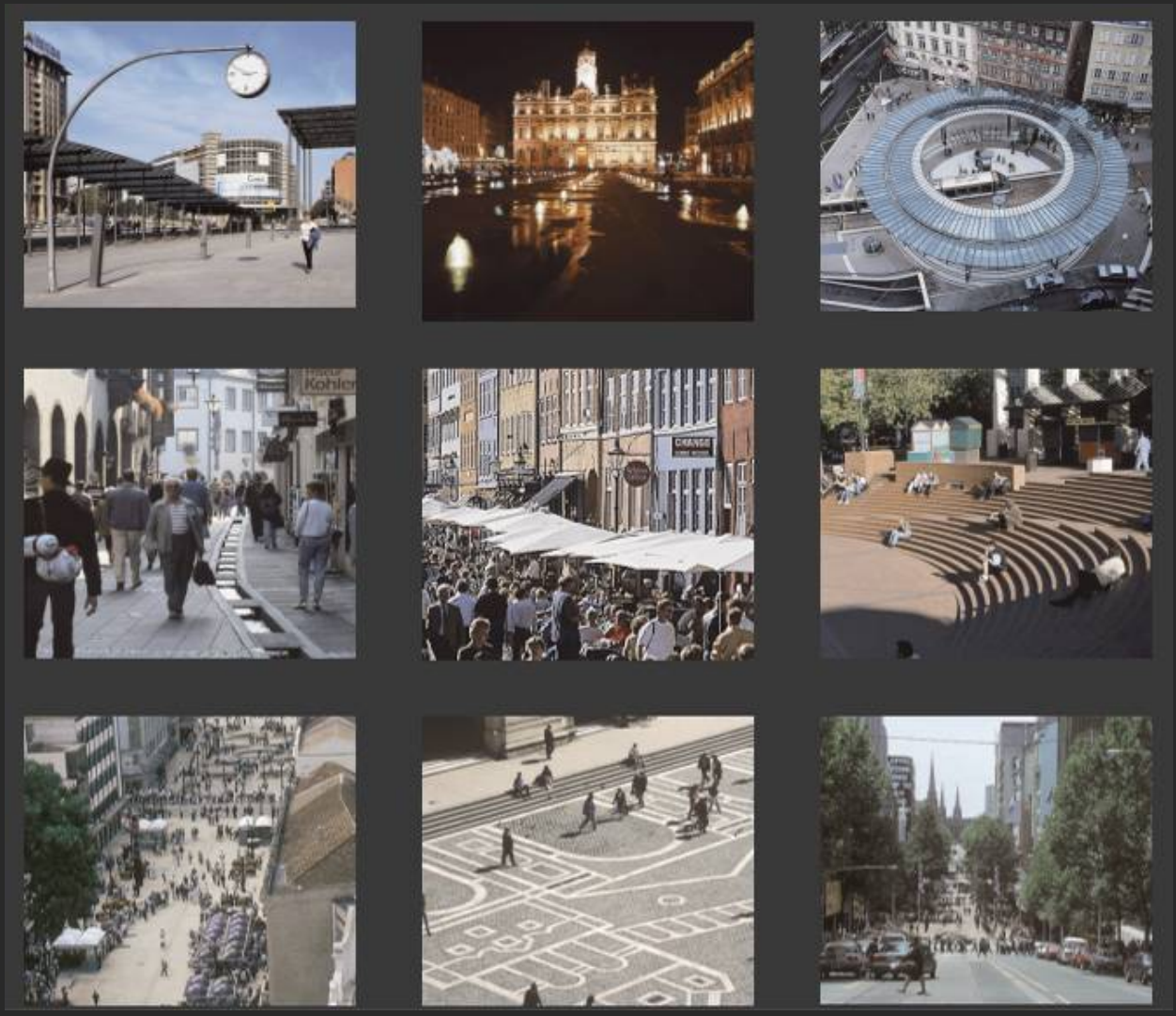
The reconquered city

3. Five visionary cities

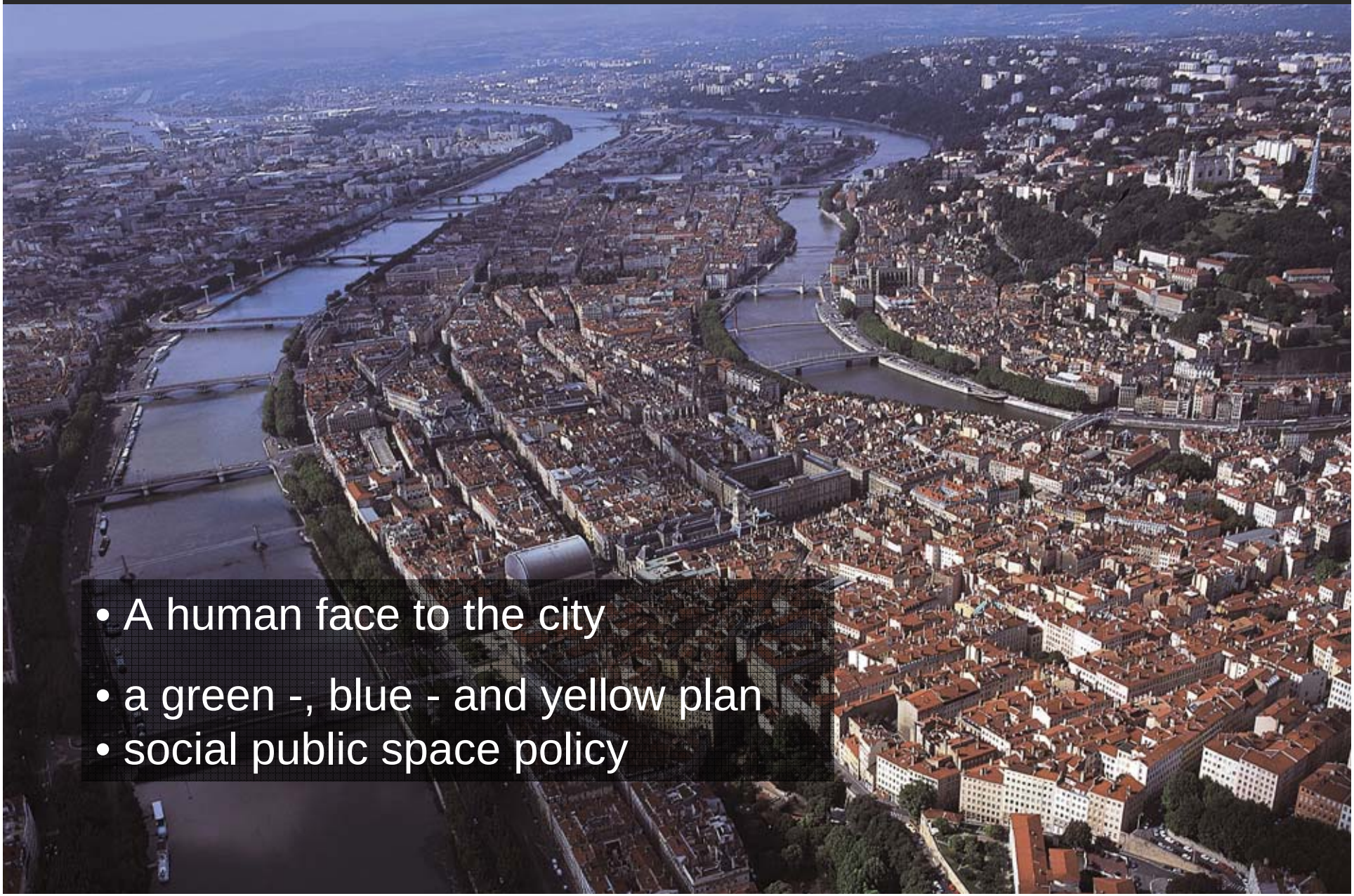
- Barcelona
- Lyon
- Strasbourg
- Freiburg
- Copenhagen
- Portland
- Curitiba
- Cordoba
- Melbourne

+ more:

- Bogota
- Cape town

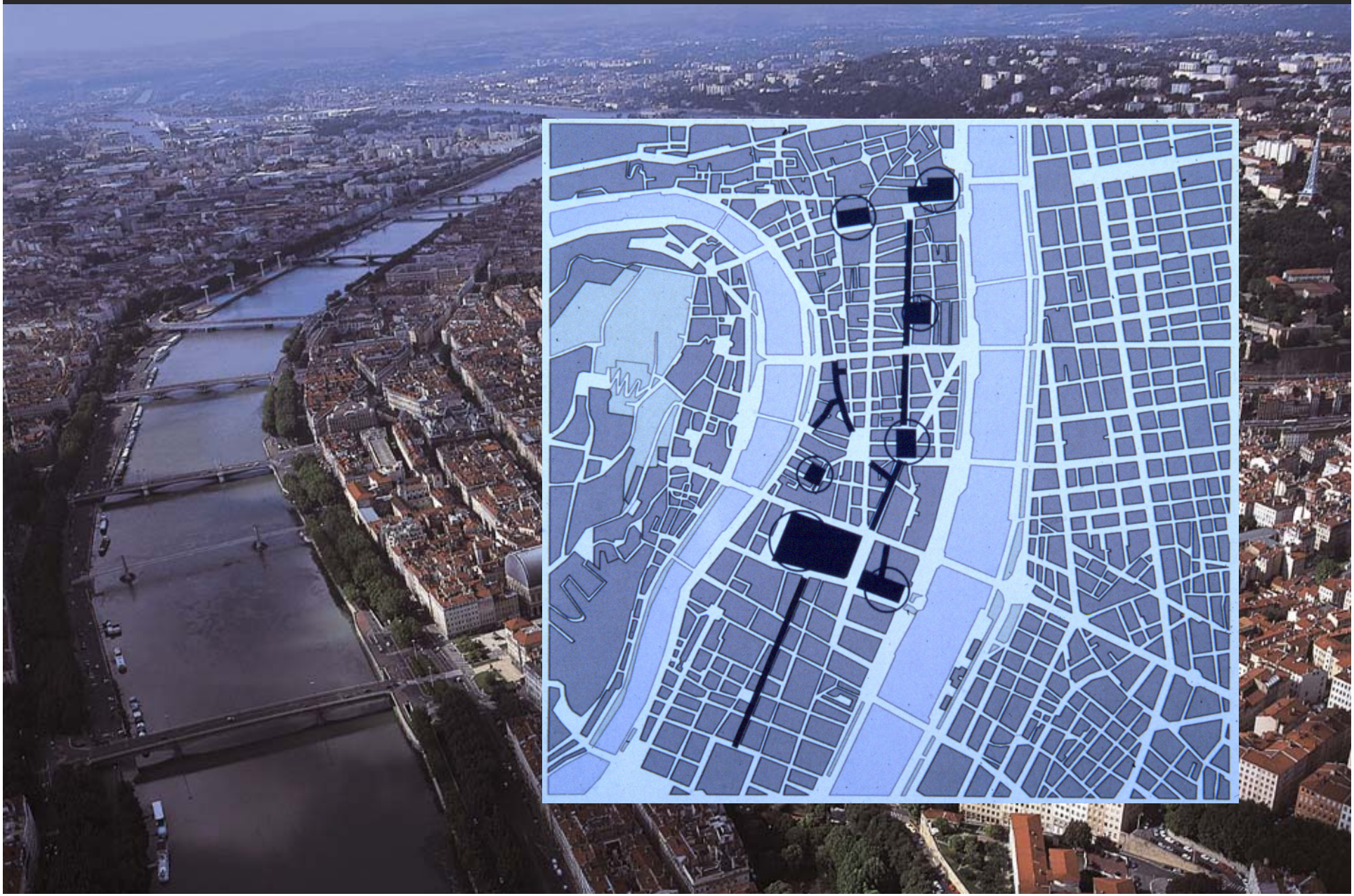


Lyon - France

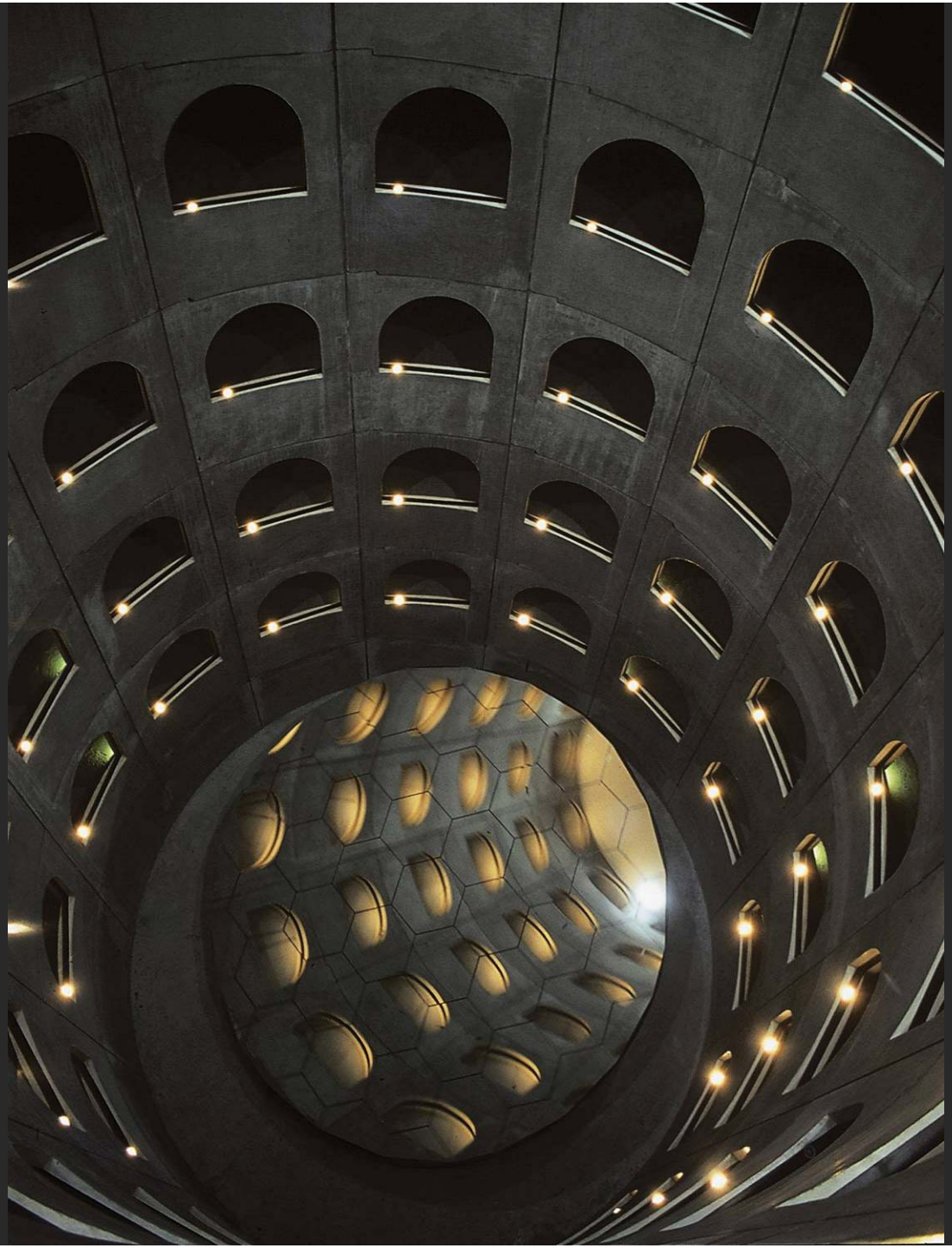


- A human face to the city
- a green -, blue - and yellow plan
- social public space policy

Lyon (1.3 mill. region)



Lyon



Lyon

Lyon

Lyon

Lyon

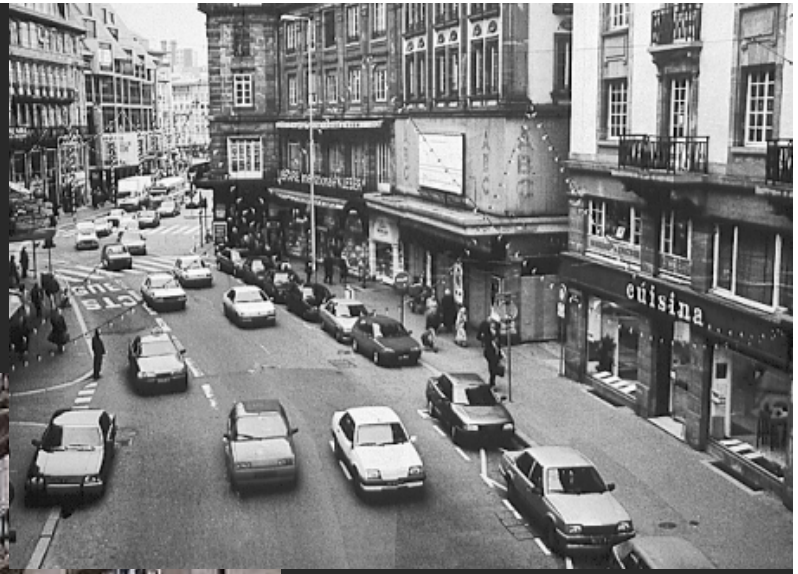
Lyon

Strasbourg - France

- Combined public space and traffic policy
- linear renovation of public spaces along the new tramway tracks

Strasbourg - 250,000 (city) / 435,000 (region)

Before



and after

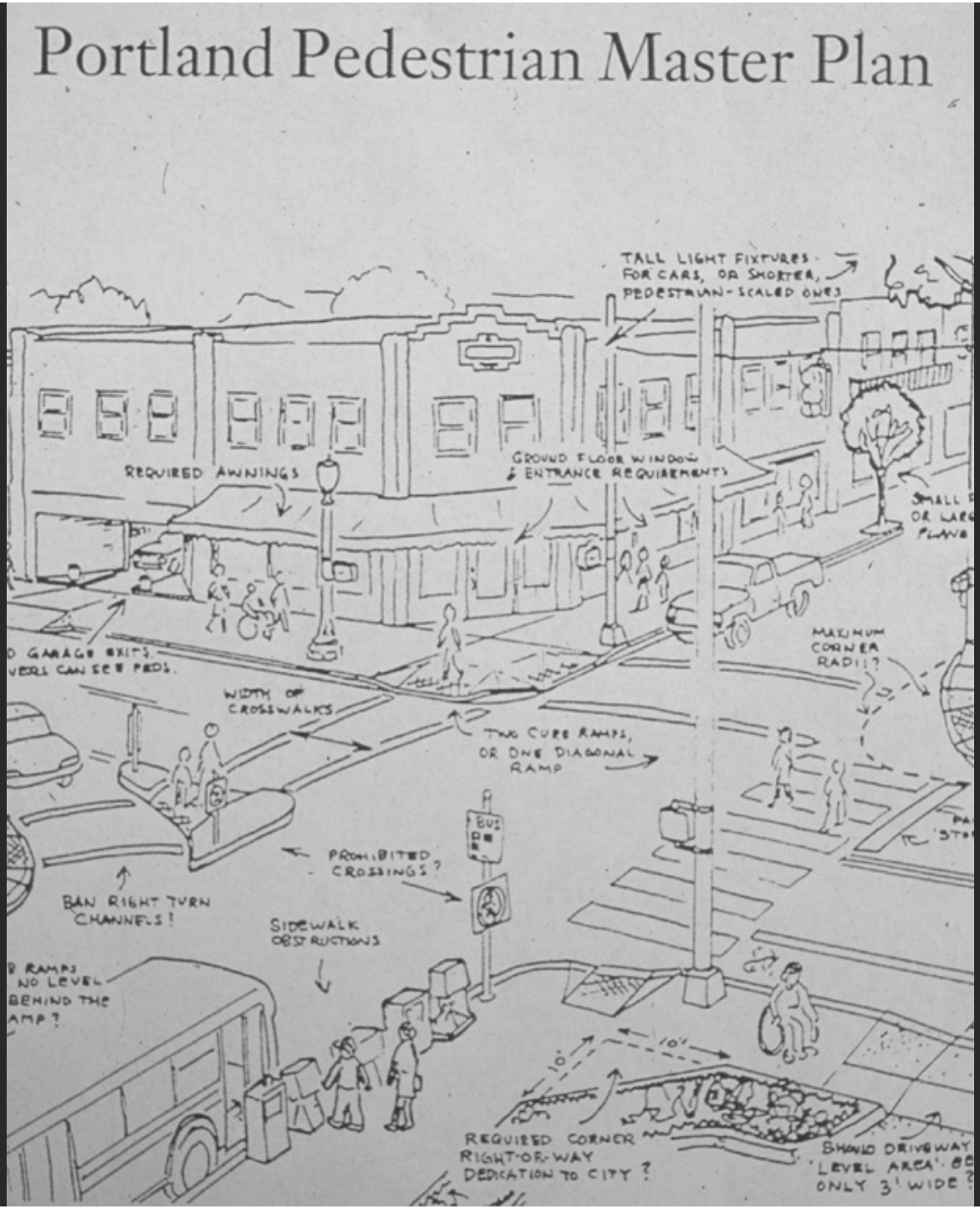
Strasbourg

Portland Oregon - USA

- creating a heart - a meeting place
- pedestrian friendly policy
- grassroots

Portland - 1.5 mill. (region)

Pedestrian Master Plan



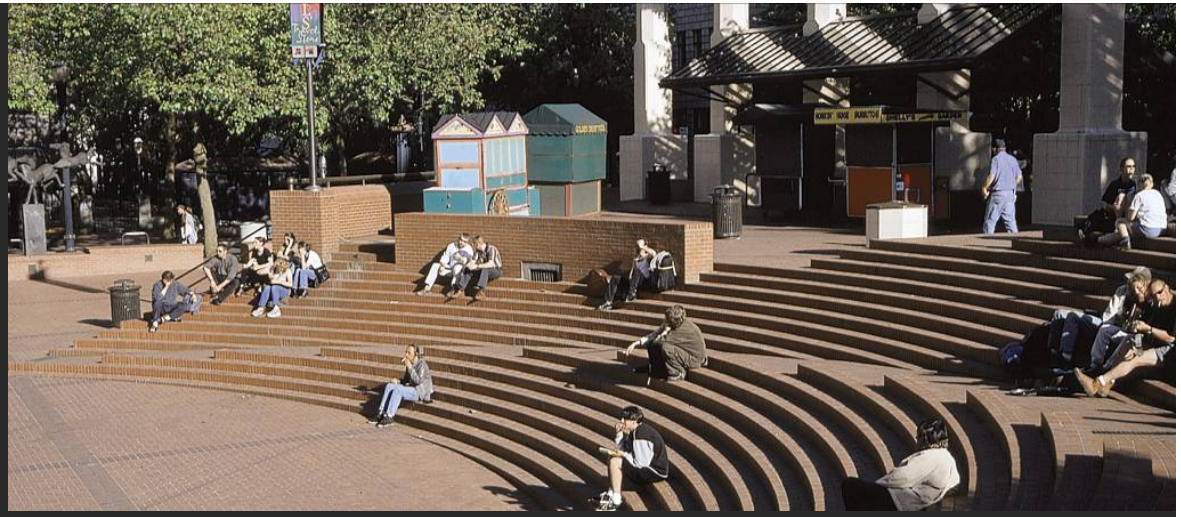
Wide well furnished sidewalks

Public Transit - free in down town zone

Pioneer Courthouse Square - before

Pioneer Courthouse Square - after

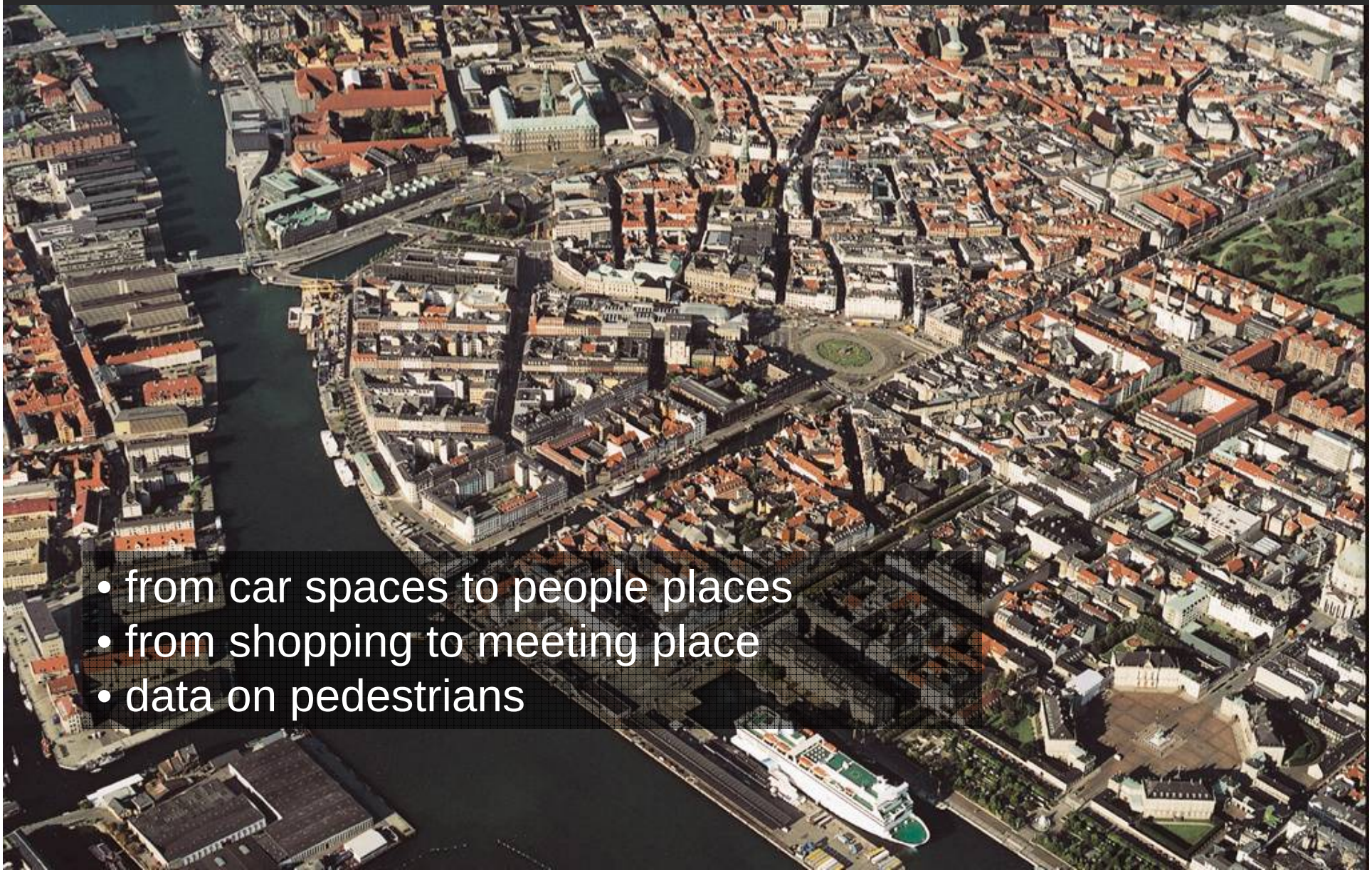
A meeting place



“One reason it works so well is that the residents, having fought and paid for it, owns it”.

Gianni Longo,
A guide to to Great American Public Spaces

Copenhagen - 1.3 million inhabitants

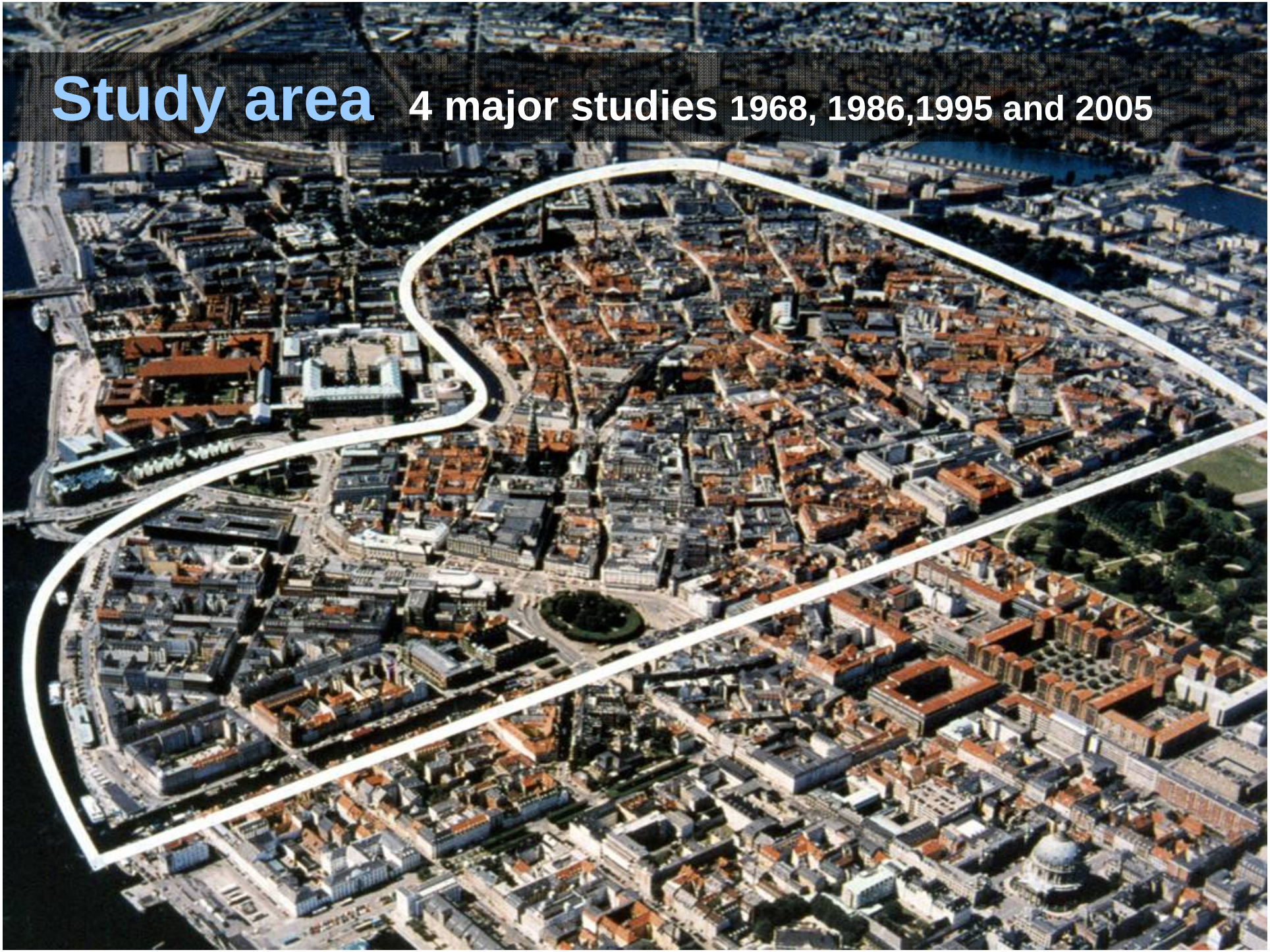


New City Spaces

Copenhagen 2005

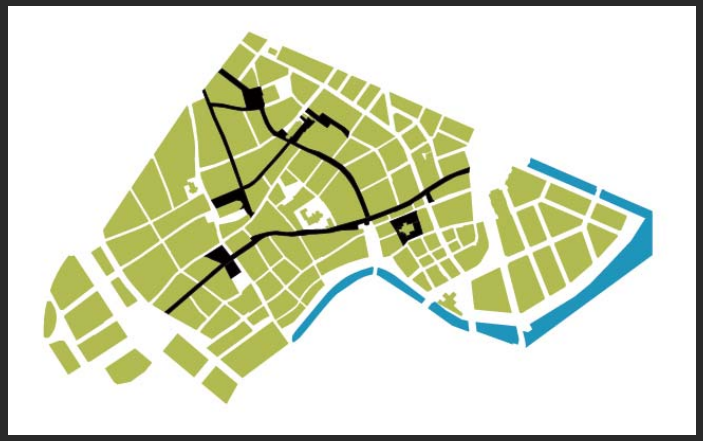
Jan Gehl & Lars Gemzøe

Study area 4 major studies 1968, 1986,1995 and 2005



From car invasion ….to people places

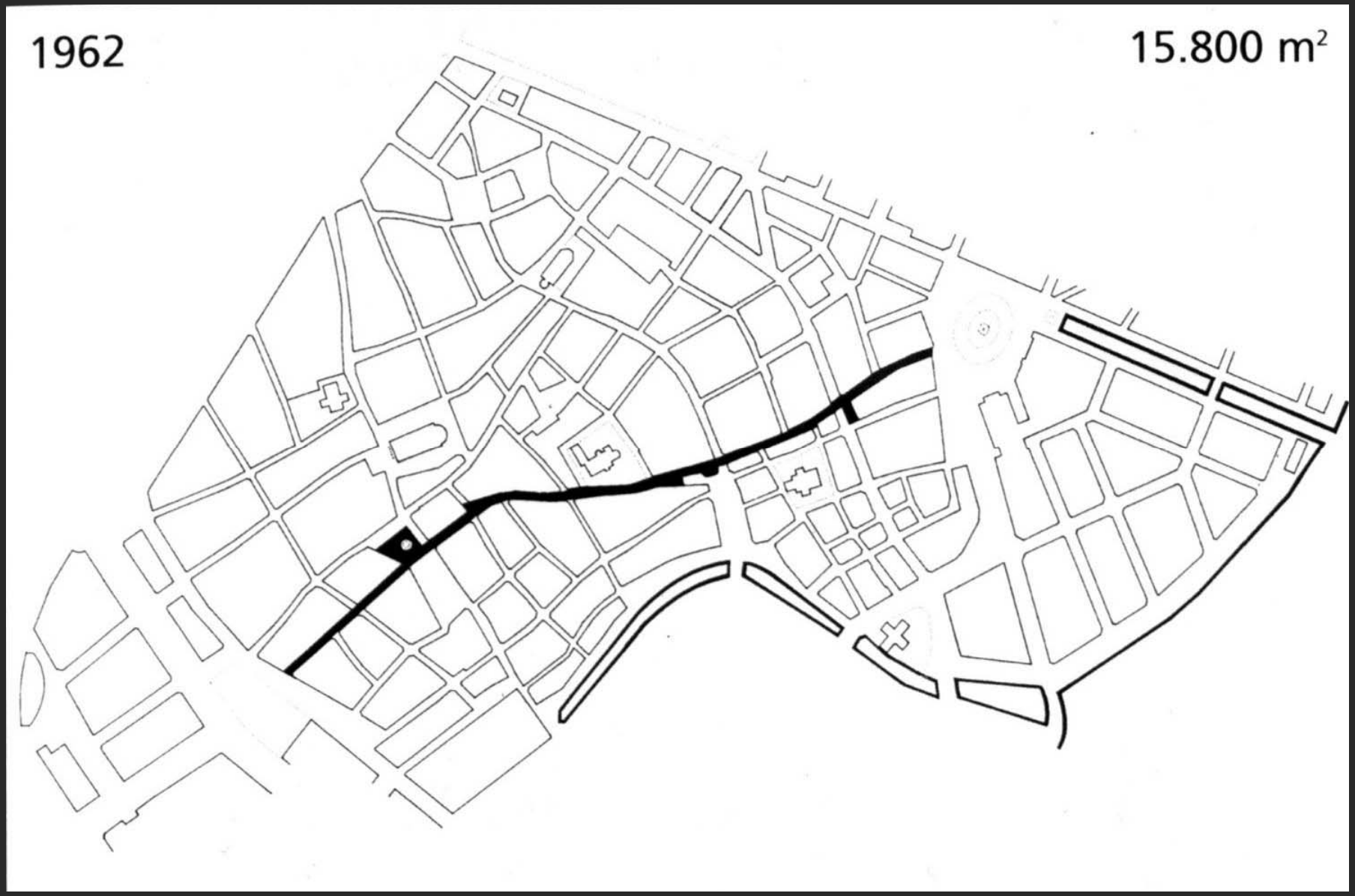
1962 First Pedestrian street

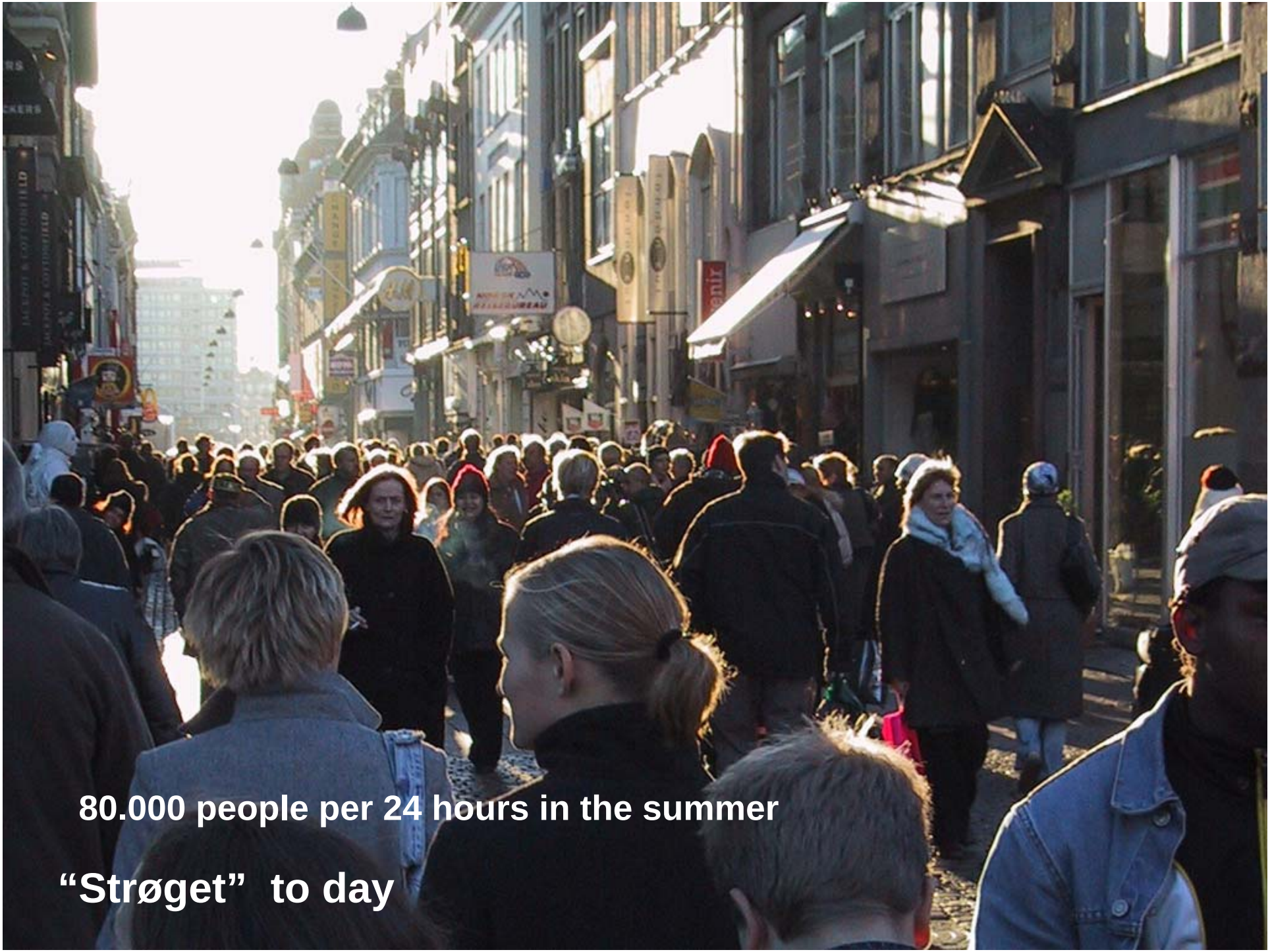


1973 Network of streets

2006 More and more places to stay

Strøget - the first car-free street 1962




80.000 people per 24 hours in the summer
“Strøget” to day

Pedestrian streets became very popular ….even on rainy days

FALCK

Jazz festival
TUBORG
JAZZ TAK

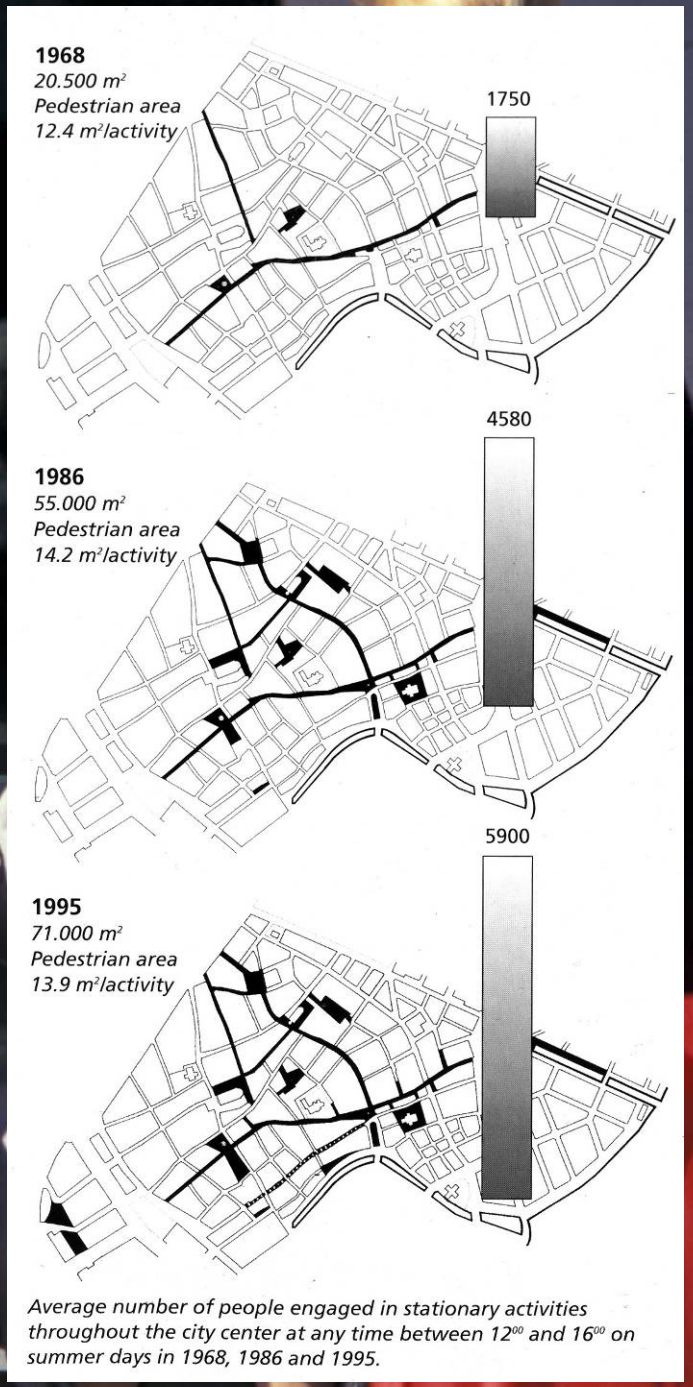
Carnival

Kindergarten picnic

Staying

Almost 4 times more car free m²

Almost 4 times more people staying

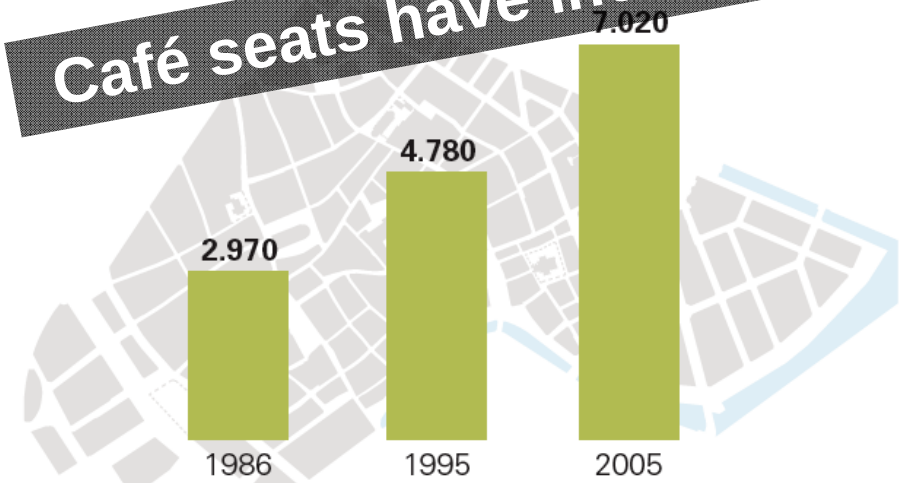


Average number of people engaged in stationary activities throughout the city center at any time between 12⁰⁰ and 16⁰⁰ on summer days in 1968, 1986 and 1995.

The number of café chairs has increased with more than 60% from 1986 to 1995

Café seats have increased with almost 50% since 1995

Number of café chairs throughout the inner city study area 1986-2005



The number of café chairs rose by 61% from 1986-1995.
The number increased by another 47% from 1995-2005.

Outdoor cafes all year round

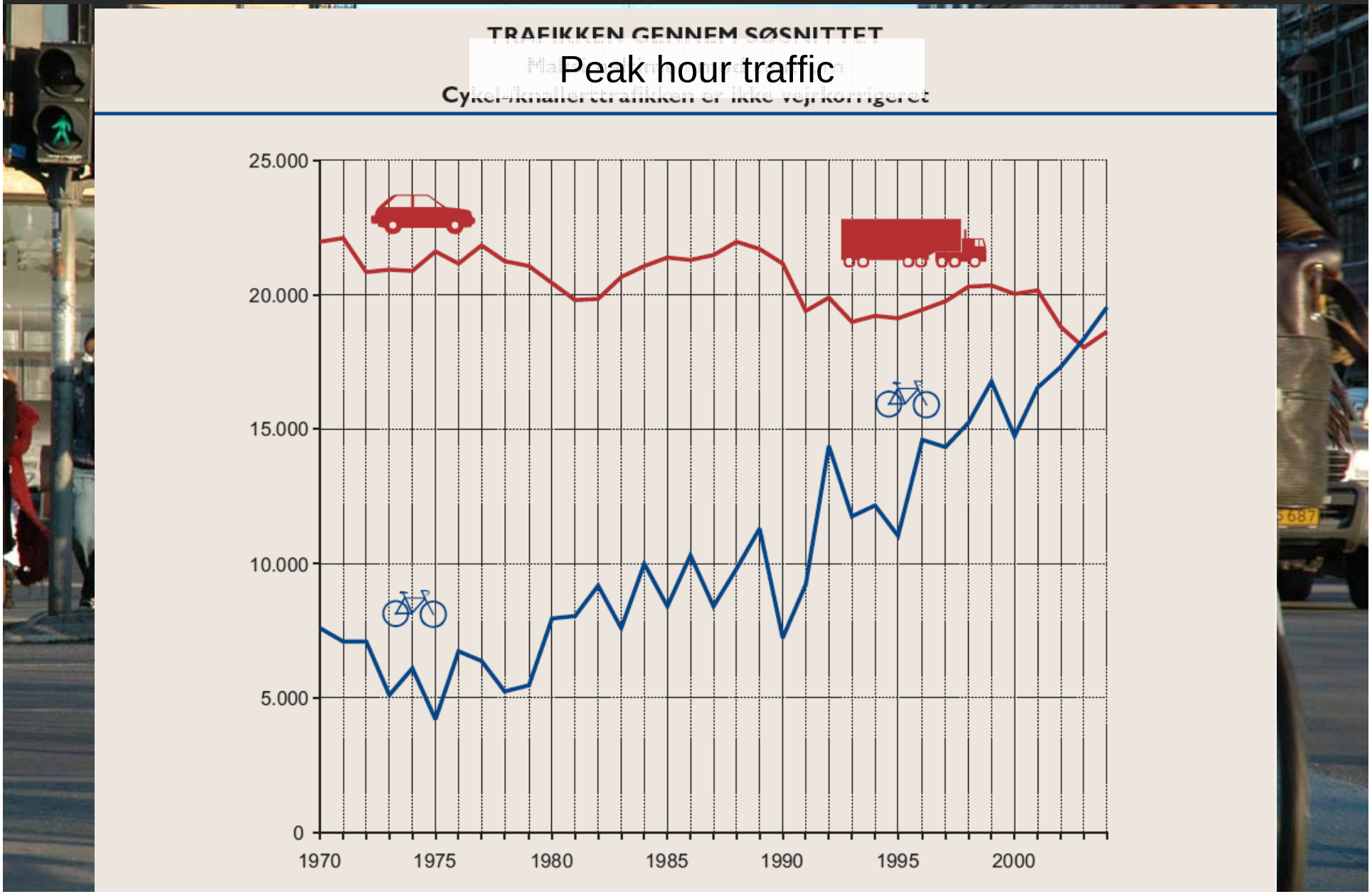
Enjoying the winter season

Urban recreation at the waterfront

The city of bicycles is a soft city

Going to work in the municipality of Copenhagen

Bicycling has doubled in the last 10 years



Green wave for bicycles

From 17 km/h to 20 km/h

I CPH

The Best Bicycle City in the World

Aim for 2015

- More than 50% bike to work
- 50% reduction of accidents
- 80% feeling safe bicycling

KØBENHAVNS KOMMUNE
Teknik- og Miljøforvaltningen
www.kk.dk/cyklernesby

www.kk.dk/miljoemetropolen

Melbourne - Australia

- turning streets into fine places to walk and stay
- new public spaces
- getting housing and students down town

Melbourne - 3.3 mill inhabitants

The Donut

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

An empty, useless city centre

ARCHITECTURE
Norman Day

EFFECTIVE city planning has been almost unknown in Melbourne for at least 30 or 40 years.

For the ordinary Melburnian that means our city has been progressively destroyed. It no longer contains the attraction and charm it once had.

To the city retailer — ever ready to adapt to new circumstances — it means expensive expansion into the suburbs to chase the customers who no longer visit the city.

The purist is left with the half-truth — well, quarter-truth — of a "Paris end" to Collins Street, and the reality of just another little Chicago. And that could be unfair, because Chicago is a relatively attractive city.

Property developers and investors, who are mainly the large insurance groups and banks, have simply fulfilled their obligations to their shareholders to make bigger and better profits.

As a result, the city has reaped more rates, which increase at a similar ratio to the size of each new building.

So our planning body, Melbourne City Council, is also a beneficiary of its laissez-faire approach to new development.

committees, Strategy

city, empty and useless except during office hours.

Our planners lack the courage to bring the city back to life.

Last week American architect Jaquelin Robertson spoke about his experiences as city planner for New York City.

His problems were like ours, only magnified by the size of that biggest apple, but there the comparison ends. His depart-

actually instigated creative

Mr. Robertson spoke of bonuses for incorporating shopping blocks, theatres and apartment housing into new office developments.

New projects, he said, are enmeshed into the city fabric through an insistence on connecting tunnels, shopping plazas and under-street arcades to link buildings, streets and metro stations.

There are planning bonuses in New York to encourage retention of historical buildings.

New buildings include mixed functions of arcades, shops, cinemas, offices and top-floor apartments, all in the city centre.

New York has had success with the creation of malls and redirection of traffic. Compare that with the dismal bitumen in Bourke Street.

Melbourne's heritage of north-south lanes and arcades — for example, the Block and the new City Square arcade — should set the pattern of future development.

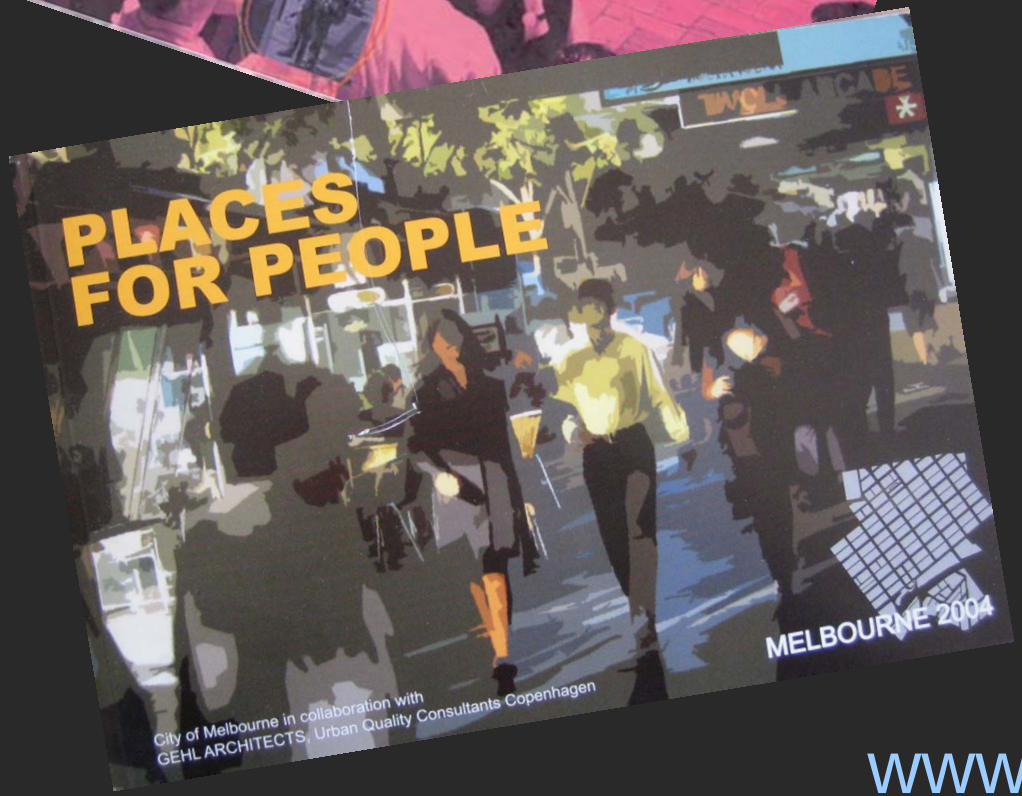
Our planners should be reaffirming the notion of Melbourne as an arcaded city instead of allowing architects to allocate useless, wind-swept forecourts "for the public use".

Having almost succeeded in castrating the Strategy Plan, we should not pin too many hopes on the existing system.

The lessons from New York

It remains to

The Age c. 1980



Places for People 1994

Report by Jan Gehl

Places for People 2004

Report Gehl Architects

www.gehlarchitects.dk

1.3 AN INCREASING STUDENT POPULATION

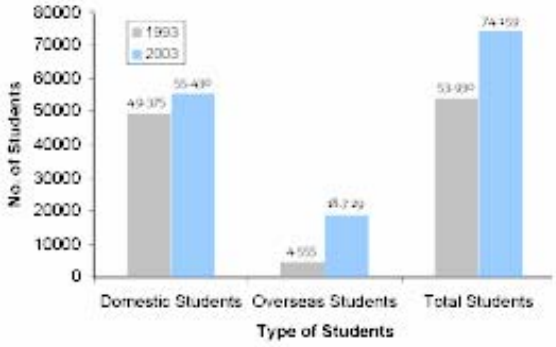
37,5%

MORE STUDENTS

IN THE MELBOURNE CITY AREA

1993-2003

Domestic and overseas students visiting City of Melbourne campuses



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.

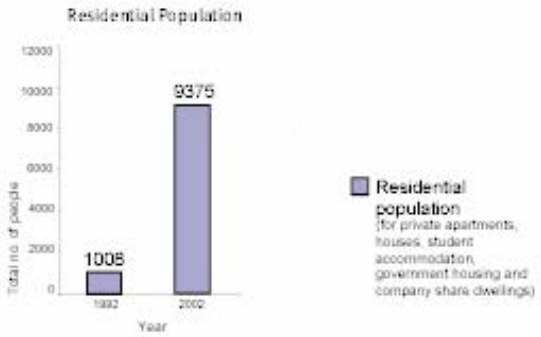
Wider Melbourne has NN educational institutions, of which XX are located within YYkm radius of the city centre. The number of students attending academic institutions and/or living in the city centre has expanded by ZZ% since 1993 – yielding Q,000 residents in 2003.

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.[1]

[1] Florida (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 down town

1983

More People living down town

1992

738 dwellings

More People living down town

2002

9,895 dwellings

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

More public spaces

More public spaces

More public spaces

Lively streets

New Street trees

Melbourne
1992

2005

pre 1992

1992

2005

SUPRÉ
Dotti
2005

1992

SAFETY ZONE
KEEP LEFT
2005

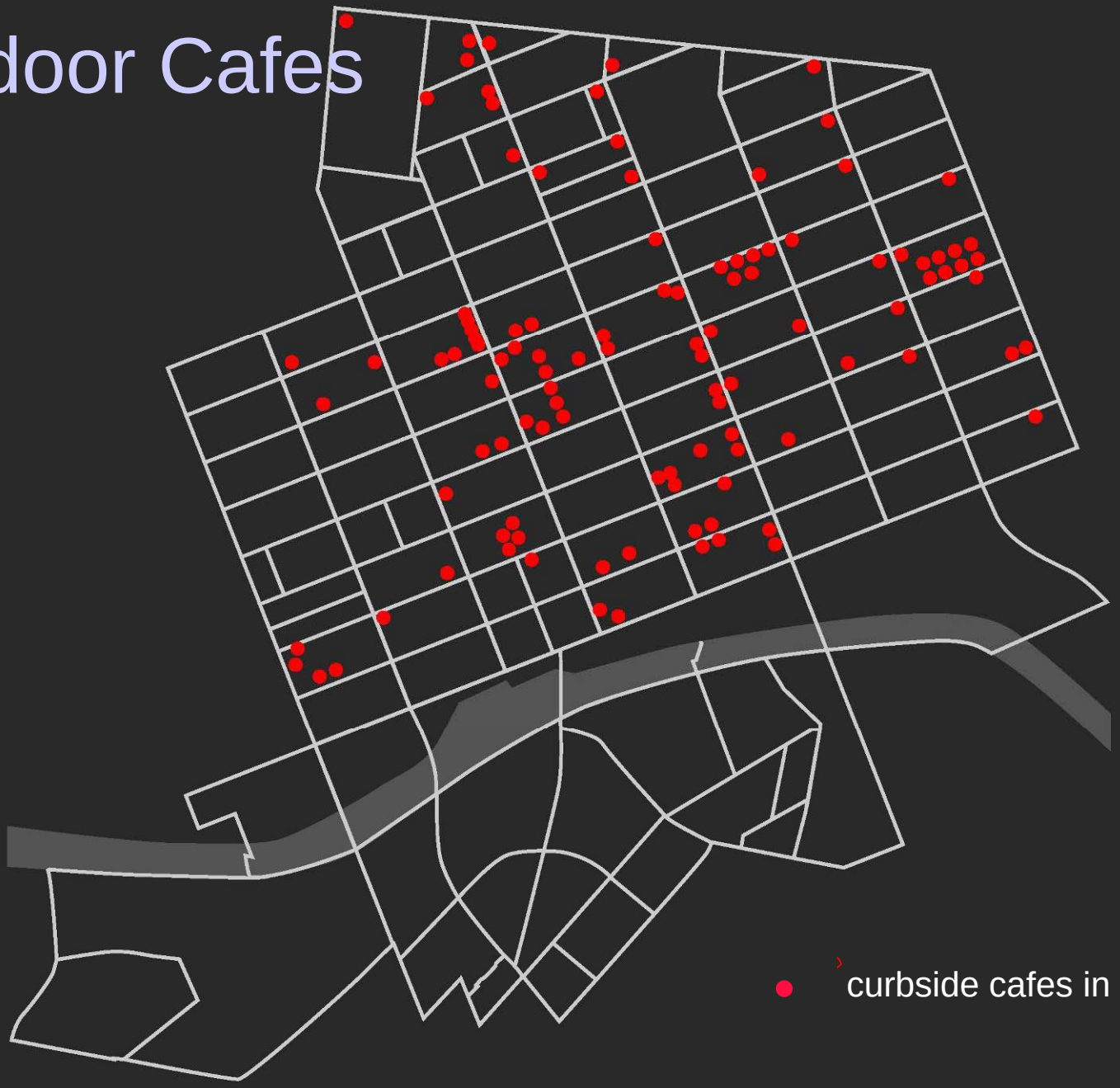
Bluestone paving

Bluestone paving

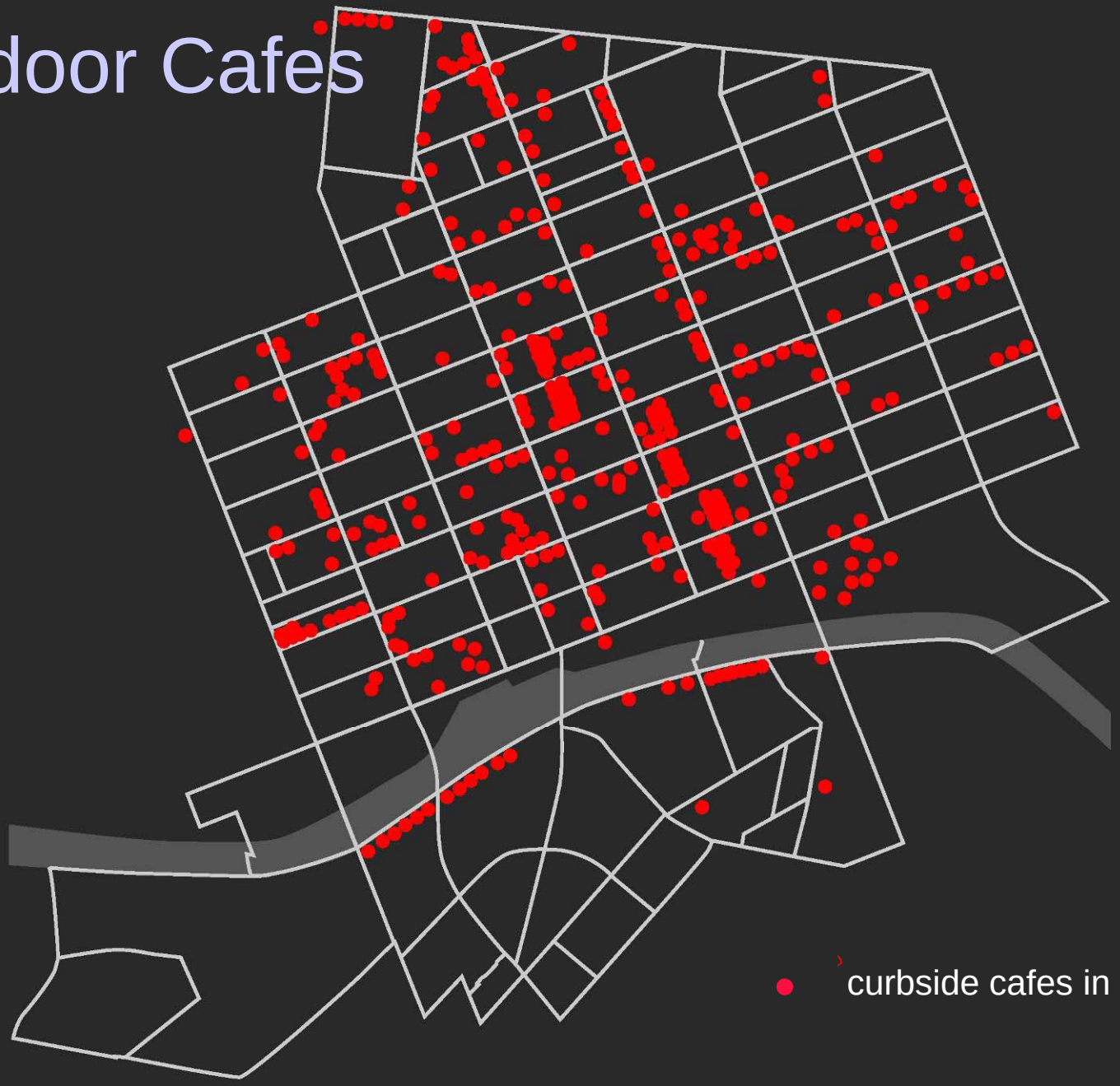
Bluestone paving

Outdoor Cafes

Outdoor Cafes

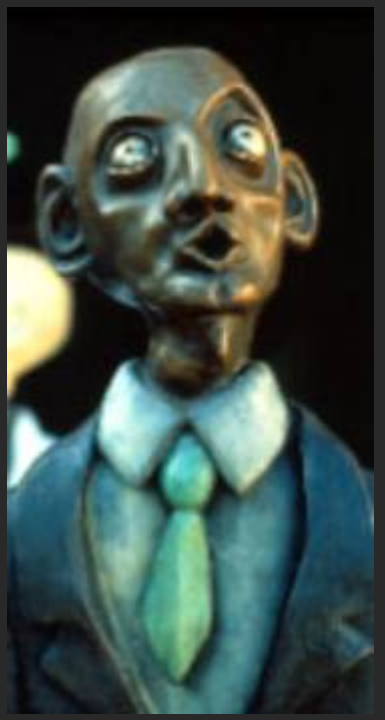


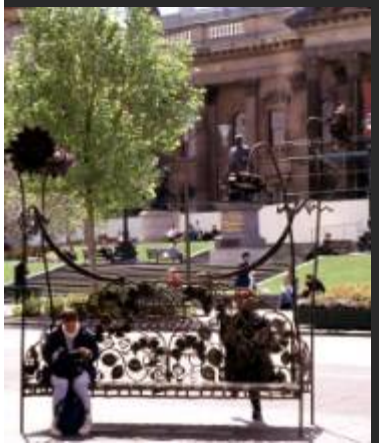
Outdoor Cafes



HSBC

ZONE 1





New public spaces

Federation Square

Pedestrian traffic weekdays daytime: +40%

Pedestrian traffic evening: +100 %

Stationary activities +200-300%

Melbourne has got an ambience at street level - almost like Paris!

A city can invite more driving

A city can invite more bicyclists

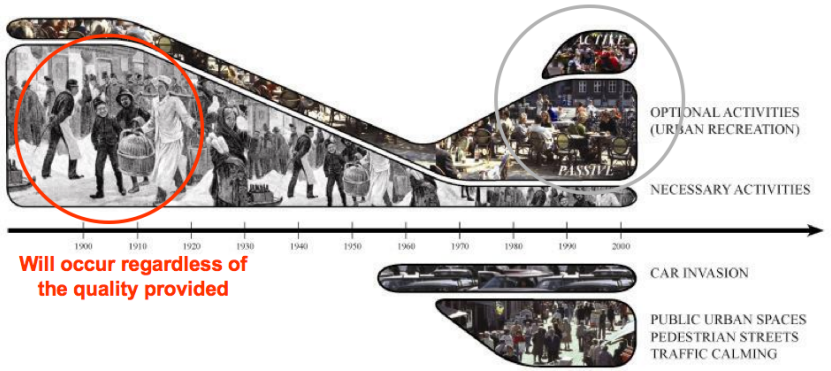
A city can invite people

More good public space = more public life!

…..but someone has to take action

Remember.....

From **necessary** to **optional** activity



Thank you