



City of Falls Church
Planning Commission Speaker Series
January 2020

Urban Design in the Suburban Realm

A conversation about the suburbs as they transition from car-centric places to people-centric places that include functional sidewalks, pocket parks, sidewalk dining, etc., creating opportunities for social interaction and strengthening a sense of community.



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PLA, Partner
LandDesign | Washington DC

Gabriela is a partner and landscape architect in LandDesign's Washington, D.C. office. With an architecture background, Gabriela approaches her projects comprehensively with the goal to transform the public realm into a legible, safe and engaging environment. She works with design teams and municipal staff to convey a sense of place through underlying details that make big ideas work. Gabriela is known for her legacy impact on the design of many of LandDesign's mixed use, urban infill, public space, residential and commercial projects. She leads teams in the design of large, complex master plans, bringing a deep understanding of design elements that make spaces engaging, enduring and, above all, successful.

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40 YEARS+



5 OFFICES

Backed by 185 equally passionate professionals who are **motivated by possibility**. For 40 years we have **immersed ourselves in client visions**, and now provide service from **offices nationwide**.



4 STUDIOS

New York City, NY
San Francisco, CA
West Palm Beach, FL
Naples, FL



[OUR FIRM](#)

[OUR BRAND](#)

[MISSION](#)

[HOW WE THINK](#)

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LandDesign.



<https://publicspace14.wordpress.com/2014/02/27/the-social-life-of-small-urban-spaces-an-explanation/>

"What attracts people most, it would appear, is other people."

"There is a rash of studies underway designed to uncover the bad consequences of overcrowding. This is all very well as far as it goes, but it only goes in one direction. What about undercrowding? The researchers would be a lot more objective if they paid as much attention to the possible effects on people of relative isolation and lack of propinquity. Maybe some of those rats they study get lonely too."

"The street is the river of life of the city, the place where we come together, the pathway to the center."

William H. Whyte

HUMAN **CONNECTION**

(Why is it a Challenge in the Suburbs?)

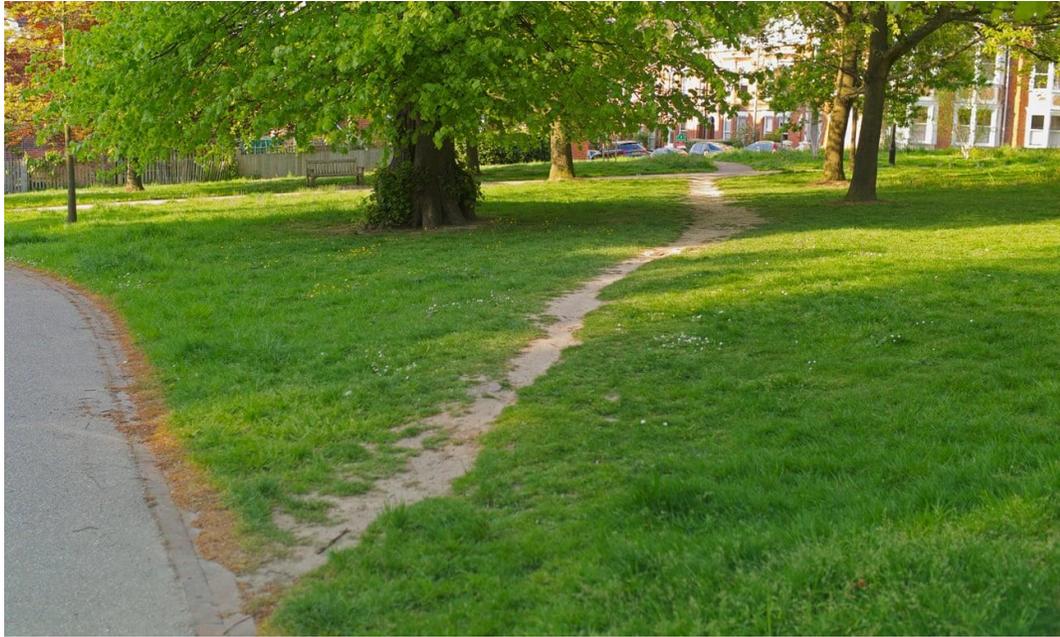




CVS/pharmacy 24 HOURS

FDB

HARCUITS

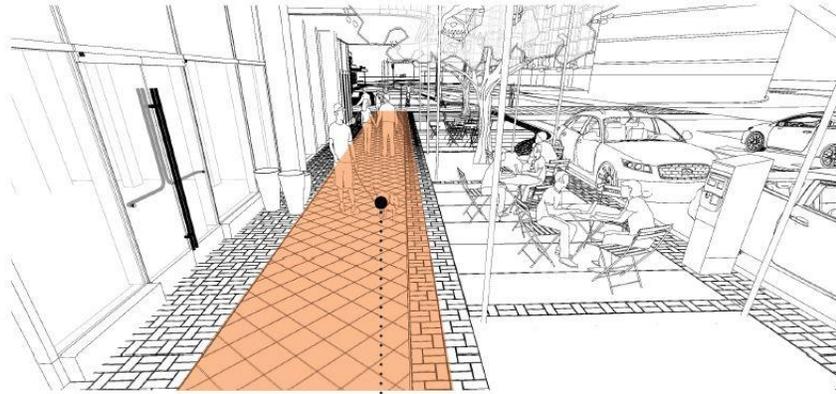


Automobile dominant environments



Spaces not designed for casual interaction

GOOD URBAN DESIGN
PRINCIPLES



HALLWAY

There are two ways to approach the Hallway:
 1. There is not actual lighting fixtures in this zone, it is purely a pathway to walk through and allow the lighting of the facade and of the outdoor rooms to create this pedestrian artery.
 2. There is lighting in this area. This lighting then acts as a thread that carries pedestrians from one district to the next.

Source: LandDesign

The key to the success of this kind of new-style community is enough density to create “an active public realm.”

Source: WP Brand Studio - The Washington Post

Good Street Form

Streets are the connective tissue of every city. Some streets are busy downtown corridors while others are quiet and tranquil. At its best, good street form cultivates a sense of soul by achieving these five qualities.



Defines the character of a city



Embraces the human scale



Forgives



Invites participation



Supports a range of interactions

Consumers are particularly seeking places that:

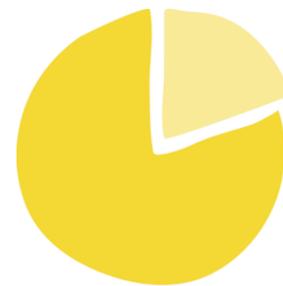
1. Are in a peaceful and relaxing setting
2. Provide value and a high-quality product
3. Facilitate a healthy lifestyle via sidewalks, trails, and fitness facilities
4. Reflect consumer success and achievements in life
5. Provide opportunities to meet and interact with neighbors
6. Have the newest technologies and on-trend designs

Source: RCLCO

Source: Our Living Streets (Created by National Street Service, Greenfield Labs, and Gehl)

1. **IDENTITY:** MAKE INNOVATION VISIBLE AND PUBLIC
2. **DIVERSITY:** MIX INNOVATION WITH A RANGE OF OTHER USES
3. **CONTINUITY:** START WITH EXISTING PEOPLE AND PLACES
4. **SOCIABILITY:** BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER THROUGH PLACES AND PROGRAMMING
5. **PROXIMITY:** BUILD THINGS CLOSE TOGETHER ON THE GROUND—NOT JUST ON THE MAP
6. **MOBILITY:** CONNECT TO THE BROADER CITY AND REGION THROUGH MULTIPLE TRANSPORTATION MODES
7. **FLEXIBILITY:** EXPERIMENT, OBSERVE, REPEAT
8. **UNITY:** GOVERN WITH VISION AND HOLISTIC, INCLUSIVE STRATEGIES





**Streets
often
make up
more than
80%
of public
open space
in US cities.**

**This is more space than all
parks combined.**

(NACTO Urban Street Design Guide)

PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE //

(Does it matter to the end-user?)



*West End Park
Falls Church, VA*



*Mr. Brown's Park
Honoring the three men
who own or owned
Brown's Hardware on E.
Broad St., the City's
oldest small business.
Falls Church, VA*



TALKING

DEMOGRAPHICS





Universal access



Flexibility of space





Inviting to all

WHAT
ARE THE **INGREDIENTS?**



COMFORT //





real. food. fast
b.good

SAFETY //



YATES CORNER

LENAS

MT VERNON AVE





DOWNTOWN STATESVILLE, STATESVILLE, NC



UNIVERSALLY
APPEALING & INVITING //





100

20% OFF
DENIM



FLEXIBILITY //





PERMANENT

VS

POP UP (*TEMPORARY*)

OCTOBER 2012

GREENSBORO DR

SOLUTIONS DR

Under-used corner of a parking lot

Food trucks lined Solutions Drive

APRIL 2016

GREENSBORO DR

SOLUTIONS DR

Tyson's Partnership + The Meridian Group

Opportunity to create a People - Place

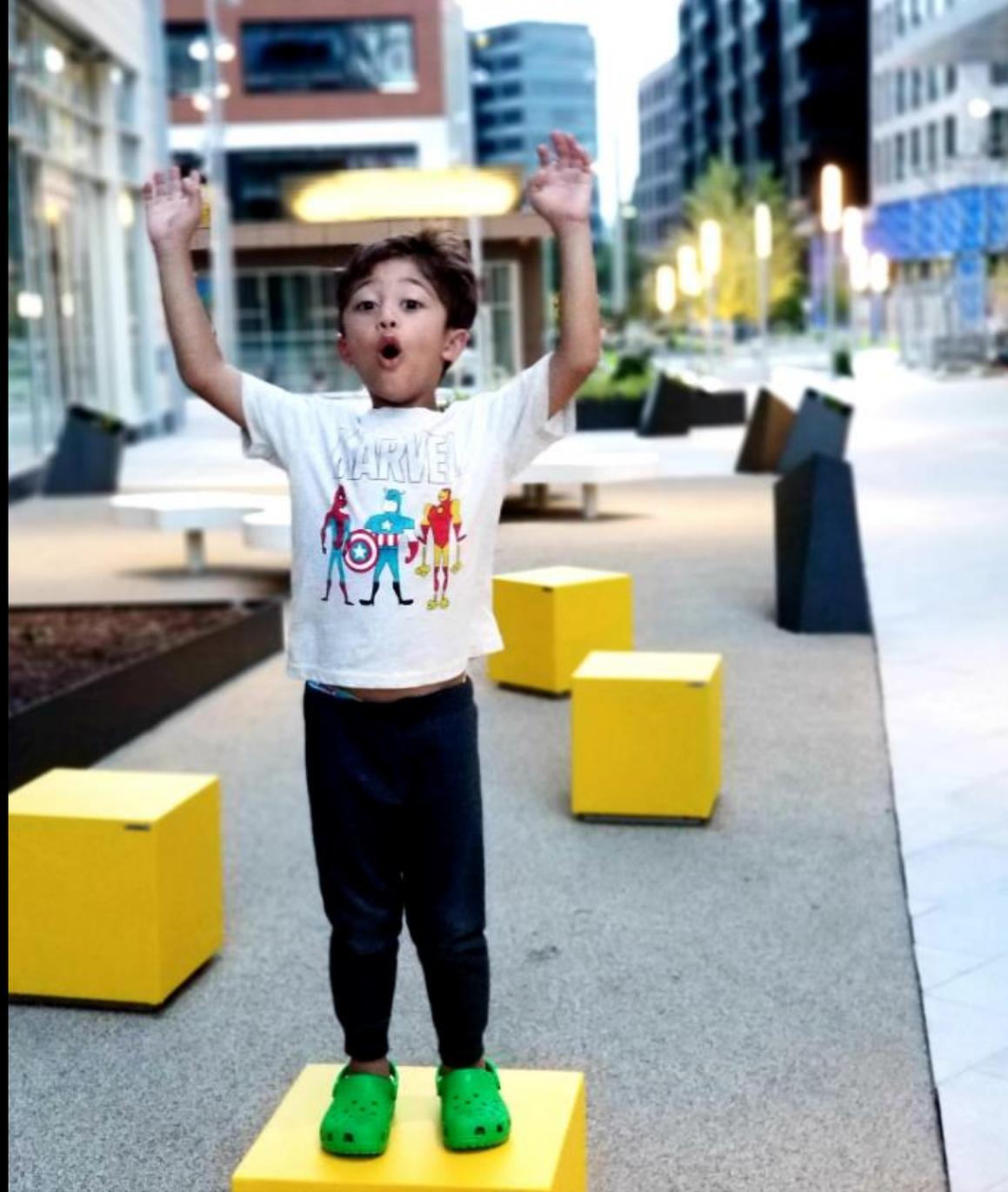
//FROM PARKING TO POP-UP

LandDesign.
CREATING PLACES
THAT MATTER.



BORO POP UP PARK, TYSONS, VA









NOTHING

IS

STATIC



Too many public venues are poorly maintained and often fail into some level of disrepair or destruction. So we waste our public funds on parks, etc., that ultimately fail. We tend to do so by leaving out good maintenance practices and simply redesigning the space over and over (or replacing it with some other “ better” development type).

The Case for Quality Public Space for All - THE DIRT
Chella Strong, Assoc. ASLA, landscape designer with Ecopolitan



CREATING NEW

TRADITIONS







TRENDS &
EXPECTATIONS



YESTERDAY

In 2000, reed hastings tried **to sell netflix to blockbuster for \$50 million**

Today netflix is worth **\$32 billion** and has 50 million paid subscribers

Since 2017, Uber has been **the most popular form of transit in NYC** surpassing taxis

Kodak invented the first digital camera **and put it in the closet**



TODAY



YESTERDAY



GOLF COURSES



DEPARTMENT STORES



FOOD COURTS



OFFICE PARKS

TODAY

85 percent of U.S. residents identify proximity to parks, playgrounds, open space, or recreation centers as an important factor in their decision of where to live

pop up industry has grown to approximately \$10 billion in sales

Americans ages 22 to 37, found that 49 percent spend more on dining out than they put towards retirement

Shared workspaces have grown at an incredible rate of 200% over the past five years



ENTERTAINMENT



POP UP RETAIL



FOOD HALLS



COWORK SPACE

YESTERDAY

PREPACKAGED FOOD



WASTED WATER



HEAT ISLANDS



TODAY

More than 80 percent of U.S. consumers reported that **healthy options on the menu played some role in their decision** when choosing a restaurant in 2016

The Green at College Park Sustainable Landscape - utilized native plants, large-scale rain garden, rain water collection system for irrigation, pervious paving materials

reflective surfaces and cool roofs - White roof and skylights on Las Vegas, Nevada Walmart

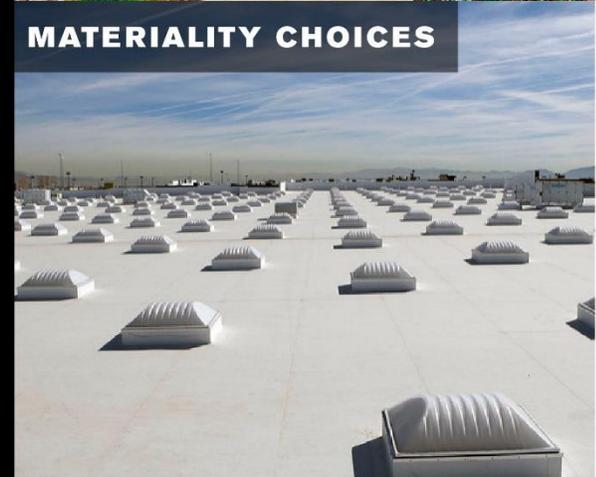
FRESH FOOD



STORMWATER MANAGEMENT



MATERIALITY CHOICES



TODAY

RETAIL STRIPS



CAR DOMINATED STREETS



FINDING PARKING



POPULARITY OF CARS



TOMORROW

Legacy West boasts more than 1,200 luxury apartments and 127 urban villas over 415,000 dynamic square feet of open-air retail and restaurant space

Access to green streets provide psychological relaxation and stress alleviation, stimulating social cohesion, supporting physical activity, and reducing exposure to air pollutants, noise and excessive heat.

Tesla car owners picked up a new superpower: A feature called Summon can command the car **to drive itself for parking or pickup**

responsive electric vehicles could save energy, time, and space, **reducing the need for more private cars** and urban parking spots

5 MINUTE WALK EXPANDED



GREEN STREETS



CALL YOUR CAR



COMMUNITY WIDE TRANSIT



TODAY

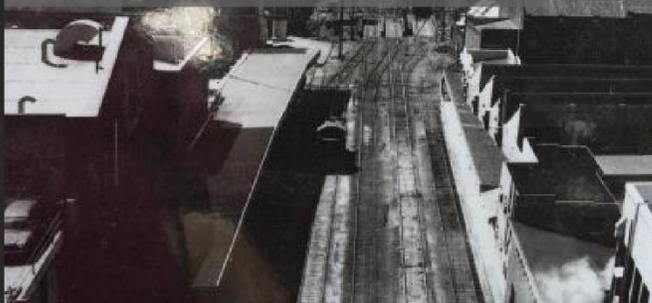
PARKING DECKS



PARKING AT THE MALL



DERELICT INFRASTRUCTURE



ZOMBIE BUILDINGS



TOMORROW

1111 Lincoln Road - German automaker BMW unveiled both its i3 and i8 electric prototype concept cars on the parking structure's seventh floor

pavement makes up 35 to 50 percent of total surface area in cities, and **40 percent** of that pavement is **parking lots**

More than 1,000 businesses fill the red-brick, **pedestrian-only thoroughfare** at Pearl Street Mall in Boulder

The Goods Line uses the route of a former freight railway line that has been transformed to a piece of **social infrastructure**

"Within a quarter-mile to a half-mile radius [of Klyde Warren Park]...we've seen well **over a billion dollars in new projects.**" -John Crawford, CEO, Downtown Dallas, Inc

EVENT SPACE



URBAN LIVING



OPEN SPACE



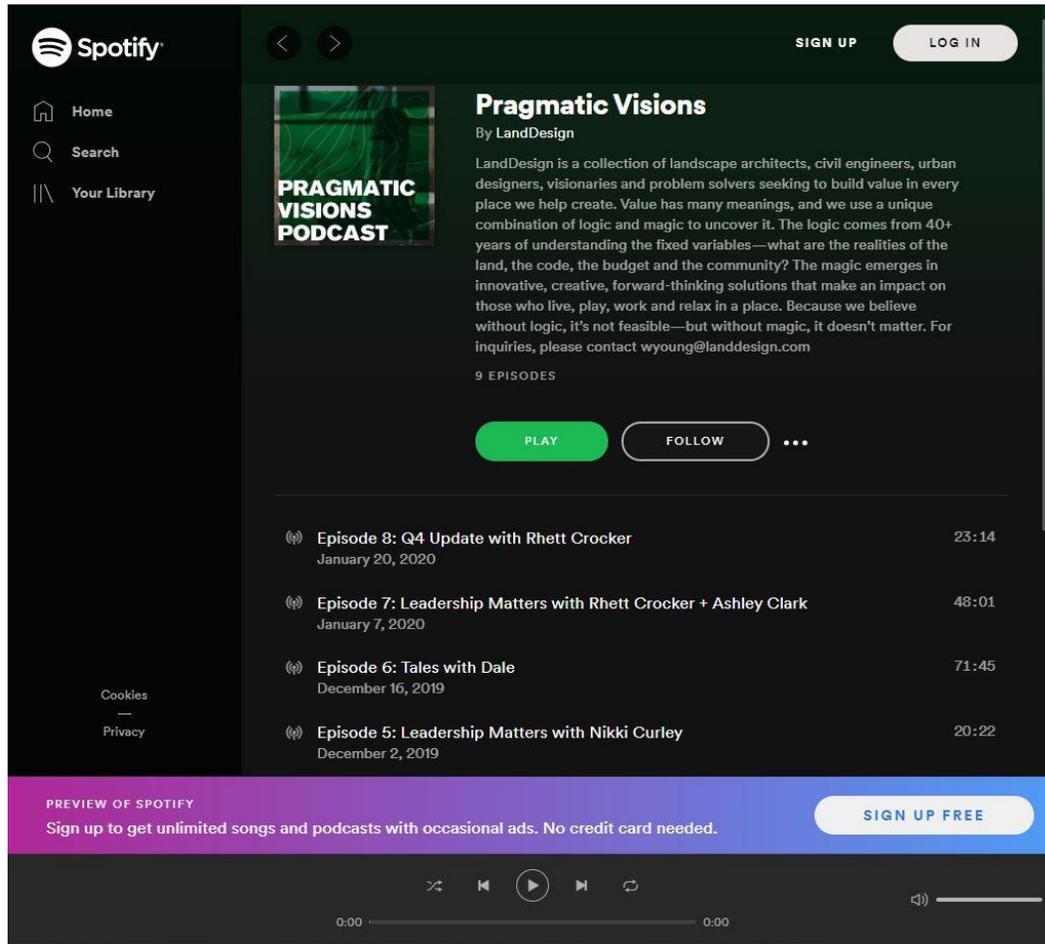
PUBLIC PARKS



References & Resources

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3. Whyte, William H. *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*. Conservation Foundation, 1980.
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https://play.google.com/music/m/la3mihxjqr6br473ezlgvtqmli?t=Pragmatic_Visions
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