Core Program Master-Thesis HS 2021: LIFELINES

Networks of Public Spaces for inclusion in Zurich

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Image: Corredor Verde, Cali / Colombia. (West 8 Landscape Architects, Rotterdam)

The basic idea for this year's Master's thesis is the interplay of a linear public space system providing identity and orientation outside the center of Zurich. The design paradigm of densification needs to consider private open space and combine social and environmental developments to produce quality public space networks.

This design challenge includes project development as policy recommendations and public advice for upscaling such concepts already successful in other cities in Zurich.

The transformative redevelopment of existing street corridors and the interplay of architecture with landscape design and activism is critical for bringing together segregated communities in quality public space along degraded transport corridors. We propose a combined strategy of urban design, landscape planning, architecture, and art that provides

prototypical solutions and policy recommendations to produce multifunctional inclusive public space. Selected corridors and arterial roads in Zürich, outside the city center that will be considered are Hardbrücke, Hardstrasse, Hohlstrasse, Seebahnstrasse, or Albisriederplatz, Badenerstrasse, much in accordance to the Communal Richtplan, Zurich. Our strategy for such an implementation is linear multifunctional corridors connecting the immediate context with feeder routes, participatory public spaces, markets, playgrounds, production, and creating new eco-systemic connections with increased social and ecological qualities.

In recent years, the bust and boom cycle in Zurich West has confirmed an international urban upgrading model linked to gentrification processes with a measurable level of success. We have recognized international developments, sometimes permanent and temporary strategies such as Chengyecheon River Park, Seoul, Isarpark, Schlachthof / Munich, Corredores Verdes / Medellin or Cali, Closed Highways in Sao Paulo or Bogota, etc. These spatial processes have followed a widely known practice of consolidating a sequence of transformations, short-term strategies for long-term value production. Neighborhoods are re-evaluated through investment often initiated by art, popular culture, and place-branding.

What role can architecture and urban and landscape design play, strategically integrating and enabling the impact of upgrading existing public space and new real estate value that fosters inclusion and extends the opportunity of participative urban landscapes for all?

Prototypical architectural interventions and transformations of the existing, including but not limited to the recovery of space, the re-functionalization, and intensive use of outdoor areas used by automobiles (parking to areas of play, etc.), restoring and creating new ecosystems, the redesign of integrated mobility networks are part of the concrete actions of development. Implementing social and ecological infrastructure, intensifying diverse landuse programs and placemaking, effecting changes in ownership structure, and impacting the number of people served are indicators to measure the value of urban landscape design interventions, intangible products, and activities in support of policies. They deliver on social targets, such as the increase in access to education, work, health, the general quality of life and wellbeing; the upgrade of inclusionary neighborhoods, green space, and building stock alongside upward socio-economic mobility, tax-income goals necessary and consequential for long-term planning.

Urban- and Landscape Design can create a measurable impact in cities by increasing social justice, health, and wellbeing. The development of robust frameworks adaptable to change enables processes for regeneration with long-term operational, environmental and social benefits in response to global, local, and site-specific challenges. The role of architects is to imagine and model sustainable urban scenarios recognizing urban corridors as new possibilities and lifelines to impact meaningful and multidimensional transformative design strategies.

Preparation Phase:

Baseline-study of the current situation Challenges and Opportunities, prioritization Analysis of active Stakeholders and Decision-makers Scenarios of future development, precise site selection
Synthesis for further action and prioritization of development steps
Design Concept and definition of a thesis for the specific location and alternative locations
Formulation of an impact-based design program accompanied by public advice and policy advice.

Elaboration-Phase

Design of a specific prototypical site-specific Pilot-Project, metrics of quantitative and qualitative impact, Scale and up-scale possibilities,

Work to be done in preparation phase:

The teaching format includes the offer to Master-Thesis students to participate in meetings with our Chair's design teams working actively in similar projects. Ashden Foundation and SECO to transfer the Medellin project to the Sarajevo context. We are actively developing the transition of such a project from tropical Colombia to the tempered climate of the Balkans. Methodologically we will engage in the method of Imaginarios Urbanos of Armando Silva, together with doctoral candidate Melanie Fessel. Participation in a Video and 3_D modeling course offered by our Chair. Elective with Dozent: Clearhos Papanicolaou and Michael Walczak. On-site case studies in Sarajevo will be based on this format, where the City of Zurich is involved.

Expected outcomes:

Development on interlocking metropolitan, regional, local scales.

10.000 overall mapping

1:2000 regional mapping

1:500 baseline mapping

Detail Ground floor plan1:200

Before and After illustration

Process Diagram in steps of year, month, week, or day (to be decided)

Atmospheric Visualization

Working model, and final model transitional measures and technologies, so long as these accompanied by the gradual framing and acceptance of binding commitments.

Text-based policy advice

Video and photographic biography of the area

Documentation of the working process

Author declaration

Prerequisites:

Portfolio presentation

Advanced knowledge in digital modeling techniques using Rhinoceros 3D Knowledge in large-scale geo-located datasets using Q-GIS Understanding in algorithmic thinking using Grasshopper 3D and/or Python

Strong audiovisual communication techniques using Unreal Engine, Premiere Pro, Aftereffects, Cinema4D. Participated in the Elective "Action! On the real City "would be of great advantage.

Preparation phase:

Percentage designer: 80%

Percentage non-designer(s): 20%

Elaboration phase:

Percentage designer: 80%

Percentage non-designer(s) 20%