

Life and Architecture in the Public Realm



by Nick Saddler

Table of Contents

3	Introduction	64	Shopping Malls
4	Defining Public Space	65	New Urbanism
5	<i>Public Spectrum</i>	66	Technology and the Public Realm
6	<i>Proxemics</i>	68	A Shifting Vision of the Public Realm
7	<i>The Public Realm Through Time</i>	70	Works Cited
8	<i>Types of Public Space</i>		
11	Public Space Analysis		
12	<i>Methodology and Goals</i>		
16	<i>Marienplatz</i>		
18	<i>History</i>		
19	<i>Analysis</i>		
22	<i>Conclusions</i>		
24	<i>Piazza del Campo</i>		
26	<i>History</i>		
27	<i>Analysis</i>		
30	<i>Conclusions</i>		
32	<i>Piazza del Duomo</i>		
34	<i>History</i>		
35	<i>Analysis</i>		
38	<i>Conclusions</i>		
40	<i>Trafalgar Square</i>		
42	<i>History</i>		
43	<i>Analysis</i>		
46	<i>Conclusions</i>		
48	<i>Washington Square Park</i>		
50	<i>History</i>		
51	<i>Analysis</i>		
54	<i>Conclusions</i>		
56	<i>Victoria Square</i>		
58	<i>History</i>		
59	<i>Analysis</i>		
62	<i>Conclusions</i>		



Theoretical Premise Research

Life and Architecture in the Public Realm

While one might think of the public realm as any and all space outside one's front door, the reality has never been as simple. Throughout history, different activities and philosophies have shaped the ways societies interact with public space, which has in turn contributed to the ever-changing state of public architecture and public space planning. Even in the modern day, the public realm is ill-defined, and really exists as more of a spectrum from public to private. Though many activities once thought of as public have moved into the private domain, cultural differences and the differing urban character of cities continue to contribute to sometimes massive differences in how the public realm is regarded between nations or even nearby cities.

These differences that develop throughout place and time cannot be attributed to one single law or idea, but rather a collection of factors. The public life of cities is shaped as much by the decisions of government officials and city planners as it is by the ways people simply choose to interact with the public realm. Social interaction, political demonstration, religious life, cultural events and exchanges, commercial transactions, and environmental quality all contribute in major ways to how the public perceives the public realm, and how designers design for it. In examining societal views of the public realm, it is of the utmost importance to examine how these factors have contributed to the shape of the public realm over time. The public space of an ancient Middle Eastern city, will be different from that of a medieval European city, which will in turn be different from a cosmopolitan western city, but ideas from all times and eras will undoubtedly still be reflected in the modern shapes and perspectives of the public sphere.

Defining Public Space



The public realm is defined quite differently across different disciplines, cultures, and times in history. This has resulted in a huge variety of different views, opinions, and physical manifestations of public space. In examining and identifying the key differences and the reasons for these differences, it is important to identify the core concepts that remain relatively true regardless of the context of time and place. This is also intended to provide an objective definition and framework for my further examinations of public space.

The public realm has had many manifestations since it began being separated from private space. Though in the past, public and private space have been ill-defined, recently the picture has become clearer as to how we can objectively define what is and isn't public. The definition is not quite black and white, the resulting definition is instead a simple but universal spectrum organized by the general accessibility of spaces that aren't quite public, but also aren't private to members of the general public.

Public Spectrum

Public Space

Space that is generally open and accessible to anyone who may want to use it at any hour of the day.

Public Space
Streets, Sidewalks, and Publicly-Owned Plazas & Parks

Privately-Owned Public Space

Space that is privately owned but legally or otherwise may be used by any member of the public at most times of the day.

Privately-Owned Public Space
Atriums and Privately-Owned Plazas

Semi-Public Space

Privately owned businesses that allow all members of the public to enter when they are open, or if they are paying customers.

Semi-Public Space
Coffee Shops, Stores, and Malls

Non-Public Space (Private)

Inaccessible to the public. Private owner of the space controls who enters.

Non-Public Space
Residences, Offices, etc.

Proxemics

The idea of the public realm not only has legal definitions but many qualitative factors defining how people interact with it that can vary greatly across cultures. One of the most important factors influencing the ways that individuals interact with one another in the public realm is the study of proxemics, pioneered and popularized by Edward T. Hall in his book *The Hidden Dimension*.

Hall describes proxemics as having four levels. These are defined as intimate space, personal space, social space, and public space. These four spheres are outlined in the infographic to the left. While the provided distances are not intended to be exact, they range true for most people, especially in the Western world.

As Edward Hall will point out however, some cultures will have just enough differences in their proxemic norms that it might make an outsider slightly uncomfortable and be perceived as infractions on one's personal bubble.

Public Space

10ft+ from person. Distance from a public speaker. Typically passing someone at this distance they are not considered to have passed into your proximity. Though loud speaking can still attract attention at this distance, a formal social engagement does not occur at this distance.

Social Space

4 - 10ft from person. Encounters between acquaintances or associates. Less intimate/familiar. Might be crossed on a typical city street when passing others.

Personal Space

2 - 4ft from person. Comfortable distance for encounters with close friends. Might also be crossed in crowded events/places (e.g. concerts, walking through Times Square.)

Intimate Space

0 - 1ft from person. Extremely personal encounters (e.g. embracing)

The Public Realm Through Time

Sociologist Lyn Lofland has identified three important and distinct eras in the development of the public realm, they are as follows:

Pre-Industrial

It is impossible to say when public-private distinction actually began. At one point all activity was carried out in what would be considered the public realm by today's standards. However, as long as humans have clustered together into settlements and cities, there has been some public-private distinction. In the pre-industrial city, a multitude of activities took place in the public. This included all buying and selling, most social interactions, schooling of children, and even going to the bathroom. At any given time while walking down a public street, one might see a variety of activities performed by a people from a variety of social classes, and their place in life was typically readily identified by their public appearance.

Industrial

Technological innovations of the industrial revolution made it so less and less activities had to be carried out in the public. When people went into the public they typically did so with people of a similar social group and carried out activities that were very much tied to their social group. While at a given time you may see a large variety of people in the public at once, their status could not nearly as easily be defined by merely their appearance, and instead one would have to observe their actions to determine how a particular person figured into the picture of the industrial city.

Modern

In the modern city, very few activities necessitate entrance to the public realm. While many activities can still be carried out only in the public, in a given day someone can reasonably lead a fairly normal life without contact with the public. While one may see a variety of social groups, races, and walks of life in the modern city, the variety of activities that occurs in the public is greatly diminished from the pre-industrial city. At a given time, in a given place, the majority of activities and people that one will cross paths with will be determined by what is nearby a given location.



Types of Public Space

Organic Space

Organic space refers to space that was not specifically planned for but was left open due to reasons of site usage, environmental obstacles, preservation of landmarks, or many other reasons. Given how common organic public space was in pre-industrial cities, it is often difficult to trace back to the origins of these spaces as many of them have been used as public gathering spaces for thousands of years. Typically settlements and cities will grow around these organic spaces giving the spaces amorphous forms. One easily observable example of this is Boston Common, which was used as a grazing spot for many of the settlements cows and thus built around until its designation as a public park in the 1800s. Other examples: Piazza del Campo, Siena, Italy; Hyde Park, London, UK.

Planned Space

Planned space might seem like a vague umbrella statement, but by 'planned' I am referring to a premeditated sort of planning, in which a space is specifically set aside as public lands. As pre-industrial cities often grew and changed without much regard for strict planning, this sort of premeditated planning often did not occur until the industrial revolution. During the industrial revolution there was an influx of people to cities and as a result a boom in building and a sharp incline in the spatial expansion of cities. This outward expansion created a much greater demand for open public spaces, especially green spaces within cities. Some cities are planned with public space in mind well in advance and others are planned as the needs and demands of the city are assessed. Examples of planned public space: Central Park, New York City, NY; Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, CA; Victoria Square, Adelaide, Australia.



Reclaimed Space



Found Space

At some point in the development of cities, planners must evaluate decisions made previously, or by those that came before them. Additionally, sometimes cities outgrow or fill up their boundaries and planners must be creative with how they accommodate new public space in cities. Reclaimed space refers to converting unusable space into something that can be used by the general public. Most commonly, abandoned, unused, or buildings in spaces that could otherwise be better served by a different use, might be demolished to make way for new public space. Another common strategy especially in waterfront cities is adding area to the city's boundaries by filling in shallow water with land. Some spaces may need to be reclaimed in extenuating circumstances, for example the 9/11 Memorial in New York City repurposes the site of the collapsed World Trade Center towers into a powerful memorial that celebrates the foundations of the towers. Another example: Trafalgar Square, London, UK.

Found space is a term in theater that refers to the idea that nearly any space can be suitable for a live performance and that unique spaces can even lend themselves to interesting performances. This idea can be applied nicely to cities as well. Sometimes a space that is not designated as a public gathering space will be inhabited by city dwellers for one reason or another. Additionally, some small or awkwardly shaped spaces may not be able to fit into other assigned roles and may be best served as small, intimate gathering spaces. This is certainly the case for one of America's most famous public spaces Paley Park, which is sandwiched in what is basically an alley in between two high rises in Midtown Manhattan. While an alley might not be perceived as a pleasant space, the rushing of a waterfall, a few smatterings of plants and trees, and a handful of cafe tables have transformed this space into a beautiful, if tiny, public space.



Public Space Analysis

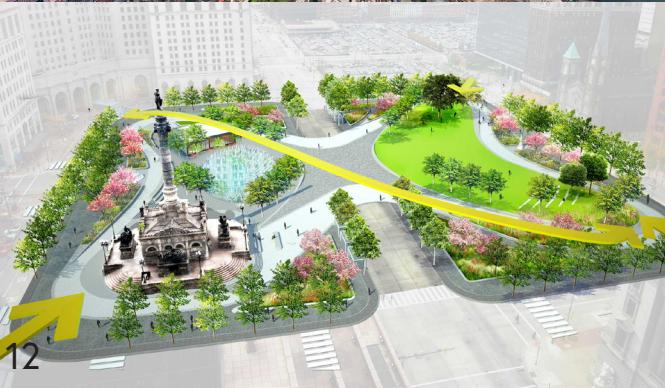
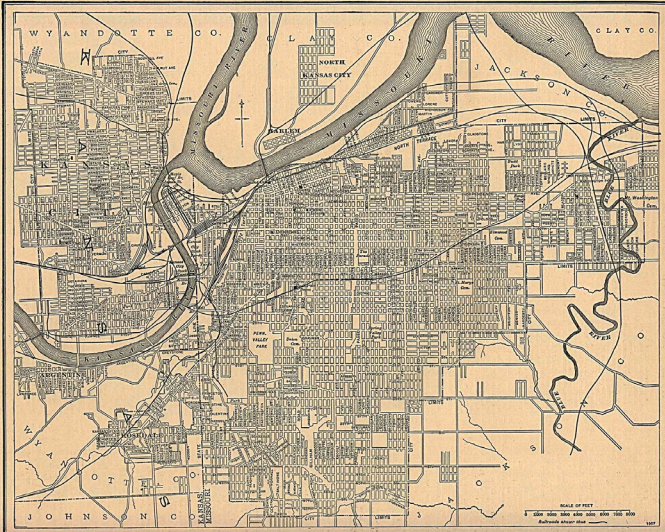
Case Studies and Historical Research of Public Space

Spaces Examined

- 16 *Marienplatz*
Munich, Germany
- 24 *Piazza del Campo*
Siena, Italy

- 32 *Piazza del Duomo*
Milan, Italy
- 40 *Trafalgar Square*
London, UK

- 48 *Washington Square Park*
New York City, NY
- 56 *Victoria Square*
Adelaide, Australia



Methodology & Goals

In order to properly evaluate the ways in which public life and architecture shape one another, I will be taking a look at six different, prominent public spaces in various cities. These six spaces were selected on the criteria of being of different time periods, regions, cultures, and/or types. I have not personally visited any of these spaces, so my research is being carried out through readings, online research, aerial site reconnaissance, and the studying of street level photography in each space.

My first goal will be to document the history of the space, chronicling the historic factors that led to the space taking on the form it bears today, looking at how the broader patterns of history contributed to the development and local culture of the city it lies within, and significant events and customs that have occurred in the space. I will also be studying modern qualitative descriptions of each space in order to determine the most important architectural aspects and cultural fixtures of the space to guide my further research.

I will then be mapping the immediate surroundings of each site, and examining through a series of graphics: the nature of sun and wind; the flow of pedestrian, vehicle, and transit traffic; the urban character as determined by the age of buildings; the amount of green cover and plants in the space; the usage of the surrounding buildings; and the overarching districts and dispersion of important monuments. I will be going into my methodologies for each of the categories on the following pages.

As I examine these six categories across the six sites, I will identify common threads first between the various aspects on each site, second between similar aspects on different sites, and third in the overarching patterns of how spaces are defined by these characteristics. By examining these aspects and categorizing the results I hope to evaluate the successes and failures of these individual sites over time in order to determine where the architecture of the public realm may be headed in the near future, as well as developing a clear definition and even perhaps a set of rules for how design for the public realm should be approached.



Sun, Wind, & Climate

Though cities have seemingly become this unstoppable force wherever they spring up, ultimately nature remains a more powerful force than anything man-made. As such, even the most modern cities are built according to the climates and microclimates of the region they are in. In this section I will examine the paths of prevailing winds and the sun in an attempt to see how public spaces have been designed to either harness or block these elements. I will also be looking at the larger patterns of temperature and precipitation as, especially in cities predating some modern conveniences like heat and air-conditioning, these conditions can have a large effect on the designs of buildings and general patterns of architecture. Finally I will also look at the ways that cities have influenced the microclimates within them by creating things such as wind currents and heat-island effect.



Pathways

The accommodation of pedestrians, automobiles, and transit in the public realm has been one of the greatest issues facing modern cities. Whereas pre-industrial cities have had to be retrofitted to accommodate cars and transit, industrial and modern cities have been planned around these modern inventions sometimes putting pedestrians to the wayside. In this section I will overlay the pathways of each of these methods of transportation on the basemap of each of the public spaces I am examining. In doing this I will attempt to observe patterns in how they interact with the public space, how each has been planned for, and which method has been given preference by planners. I will attempt to draw conclusions about how various paths of movement have either shaped, or been shaped by the architecture of the public realm.



Urban Character

Few cities on earth have remained unchanged since their creation, as such, every city is a palimpsest of different architectural styles, influenced by the ideologies and activities of the times in which their buildings were constructed. Some cities have resisted modernization by imposing restrictions on what styles and uses can be built and where they can be built, while others have become eclectic mixes of many different styles. I will be examining the ages and styles of buildings surrounding these public spaces and attempting to identify patterns. A color gradient will be used to identify the general relative age of each building to the buildings surrounding them. Buildings which have been damaged but restored or reconstructed faithfully will be referred to by their original constructed age, while buildings which have been significantly modified or adapted will be referred to by the date of the work that changed the style and character of the building.



Green Cover

Bringing green space into cities has been one of the modern epithets of urban design. As cities continue to grow, the demand for abundant and accessible green space within urban areas has increased immensely. However, it has not always been this way. Small, closer-knit, densely populated pre-industrial cities often had little or no green space as untouched nature was still readily accessible for most city dwellers. I will be looking at where grass, trees, and plants are placed in public spaces in order to examine the motivations behind why it may have been placed there. In older cities, as most public spaces were not originally designed with green space in mind, I will also be examining the dates and reasons for the addition of trees and plantings in an attempt to draw conclusions about the changing nature of public space in cities.



Spatial Usage Landmarks & Districts

The types and amounts of people attracted to certain public spaces are often dependent on what kinds of activities are planned for and encouraged in each space. Successful public spaces often become hotbeds of cultural activities and popular social gathering spaces. To determine where and how these spaces succeed, I will be looking at the variety and types of building uses surrounding each public space, including mixed-use versus single-use development. By comparing these analyses to the pathways around the space, the character and age of the buildings, and the placement of landmarks and monuments, I will attempt to draw conclusions about how certain mixes and arrangements of different building uses activate and elevate the culture of public spaces.

Urban public spaces, especially those that experience heavy traffic, are often the locations of the most important landmarks and monuments in a given city, whether these monuments were deliberately placed there, or the space grew around them. Additionally, sometimes entire districts with unique character and activities become landmarks in their own right. I will be pinpointing and identifying patterns in the placement of important monuments and architectural landmarks. I will also be highlighting distinct districts within and surrounding the public spaces. Using this framework I will examine how different structures and patterns of landmarks effect the urban character and the movement of pathways. I will attempt to identify how the city has grown or changed with respect to the monument and how it reflects important events in history or culture into the public space.



Munich, Germany

Marienplatz

Marienplatz, Munich, Germany

| Opened: 1158 | Era: Pre-Industrial | Type: Organic |

The Marienplatz is a narrow public plaza located at the historic center of Munich. The plaza is fed by the Kaufingerstrasse on both the east and west and it is only about 100 feet wider than the grand street that feeds it. Though the Marienplatz is fairly small in scale, compared to some other public spaces I am examining, it is no less grand in scope.

Considered the main square of Munich, the Marienplatz has long been the home of city government activity. This includes the location of the Old Town Hall at the east corner of the plaza and the neo-goth New Town Hall which defines and absolutely dominates the north edge of the space. The New Town Hall has an ornate glockenspiel in its tower rather than a bell. This glockenspiel draws many tourists every year, particularly at 11 and 5 o'clock every day when the glockenspiel chimes.

Munich has long been the home of the world famous beer hall, the Hofbrauhouse, and plays host to the largest Oktoberfest celebration in Germany every fall. Munich and especially the Marienplatz have also become known for their Christmas celebration, which involves a sprawl Christmas market (Christkindlmarkt) that inhabits many of the city's squares in December every year, as well as a large Christmas tree that is lit up every year in front of the Town Hall.





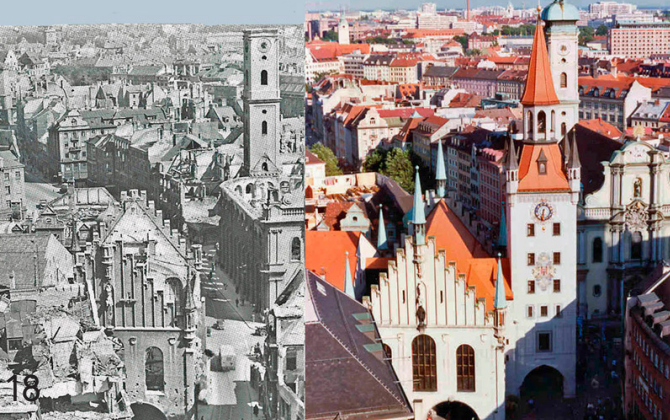
History

The Marienplatz has, as far as any written records indicate, been the cultural center of Munich since it was founded in 1158. Despite having a tumultuous history at the center of many medieval conflicts, the city of Munich continued to grow around the Marienplatz, and eventually Munich was named the capital of the German state of Bavaria.

The plaza received the name Marienplatz around 1638 when a Marian column, called the 'Mariensäule,' which commemorated both the end of the Bubonic Plague and Swedish occupation of Bavaria during the Thirty Years War, was erected.



The square has been bound by government buildings for most of its existence, the original town hall on the east side of the space burned down in 1460 and was rebuilt in the 1470s where it took on the gothic form that can be seen today. Today it is referred to as the Altes Rathaus or 'Old Town Hall'. The need for a new town hall was addressed in the late 1800s when the old town hall was becoming overcrowded. Construction of the new town hall, designed by Georg Joseph Hauberrisser, took decades to complete. The New Town Hall, 'Neues Rathaus,' finally completed in 1909 exhibits an extremely ornate, decorated neo-Gothic style and has become the centerpiece and focal point of the square as it dominates nearly an entire side of the square and towers over the Marienplatz with its 259 foot spire.

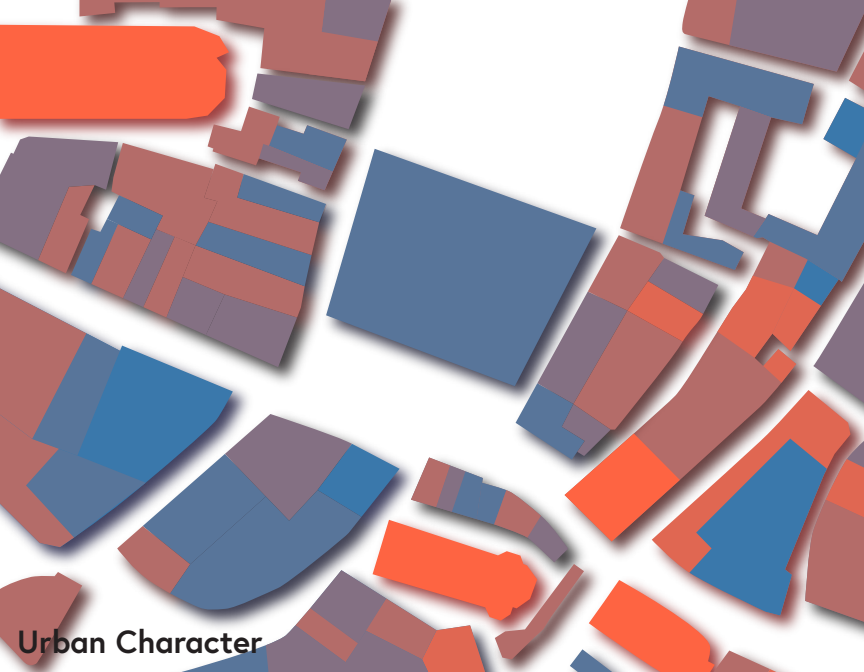


World War II took its toll on Munich as it did most of Germany, many of the buildings surrounding the Marienplatz were damaged or destroyed including the Old Town Hall. Many of these buildings have been faithfully and diligently restored.



Munich has a humid continental climate. It experiences warm summers, cool winters, and four distinct seasons. It also experiences a moderate amount of precipitation with distinctly rainy and humid summers. Munich lies in the mountainous region of Germany known as Bavaria which contributes to prevailing winds from the southwest and northeast. As with all northern hemisphere settlements the sun comes from the south, with noon and afternoon suns being largely shielded from the narrow square, while morning sun from the east shines down on the space over the Altes Rathaus down the Kaufingerstrasse.

Like many European cities, Old Town Munich is not dominated by automobiles. There are several vehicle access points to this part of the city but they are used primarily by delivery vehicles, especially to the southeast of the Marienplatz where market stalls receive daily deliveries. The majority of the pedestrian traffic comes along the Kaufingerstrasse and spills out into the square. From this point some traffic fans out to the north and south but the Kaufingerstrasse remains by far the most important pedestrian axis in Old Town Munich. The churches and cathedrals in the area also command a lot of tourist attention. Within the Marienplatz, another access point for pedestrians, is the two entrances to the underground metro (called the U-Bahn).



Urban Character

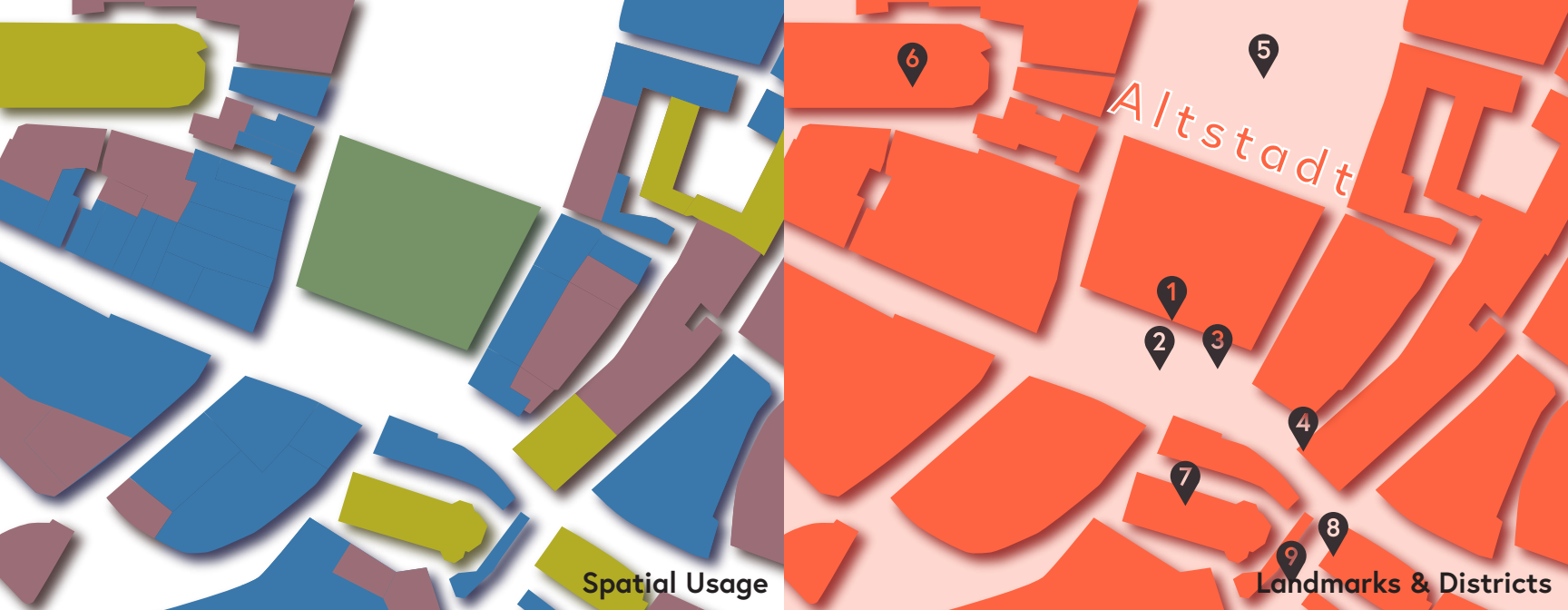
Green Cover

Older Buildings Newer Buildings

Tree Canopy Grass Cover

The Marienplatz has the look of a medieval square and in many ways it is. Its shape and form remains remarkably true to its original organic form as a public space. However, very few of the surrounding buildings still hold true to their historic form and character. Notably, three old churches that define the skyline of Old Town Munich stick out as surviving examples of the city's medieval architecture. The Old Town Hall, the Altes Rathaus, on the east side of the square also remains remarkably true to its original gothic style, despite having been destroyed and rebuilt many times, most recently following World War II. Many of the other buildings surrounding the Marienplatz still bear the scale and form of the medieval city, but have been updated with newer materials, windows, and decorative styles on the facades, rendering them unrecognizable from their medieval forms. The New Town hall, bearing a distinct gothic form, is actually one of the newer buildings in the area, built in 1909.

Munich, despite its age, seems to have embraced trees and greenery in public spaces. Though the immediate surroundings of the Marienplatz don't have any large groves of trees or significantly tree lined streets, there seems to be trees and planters littered wherever there is space or a perceived need for a splash of green. On the opposite side of the New Town Hall from the Marienplatz, is another square called the Marienhof. The Marienhof is larger in size than the Marienplatz giving it a less densely packed and more relaxed atmosphere, it features a lawn at its center shrouded in clusters of trees and is a popular place in the city center for people to just lay down and relax. The Marienplatz itself is devoid of trees and it actually works in its favor, as nothing obstructs the architectural marvels surrounding allowing free vision and movement through the space.



- Civic, Cultural, Institutional
- Retail, Commercial
- Residential
- Mixed-Use

The main street that runs through and expands into the Marienplatz, the Kaufingerstrasse, is lined almost entirely by retail buildings. This extends into many of the side streets. Some of the older buildings to the south have also been converted into office space with retail on the ground level. Though not as dominant as some cities, there is some mixed residential and retail. It is likely that most of this district would have been more residential at one point in time before it became more of a tourist destination. Much of the residential space that hasn't been transformed into retail is high-end hotels. There are a few museums, churches, and other cultural institutions around the plaza, with the Old Town Hall being one of the more significant attractions. The New Town Hall is unique for the area in that it houses city government offices, with retail on the ground floor.

Point of Interest

The entire area surrounding the Marienplatz is considered to be the Altstadt or 'Old Town.' The Altstadt contains many, if not most, of Munich's landmarks. Just within the plaza are the two town halls, the medieval gothic Altes Rathaus at 4, and the newer neo-gothic Neues Rathaus at 1. Within the square, the two most popular landmarks are the Mariensäule at 2, and the Fischbrunnen fountain at 3. At 5, on the opposite side of the town hall, is another popular square called the Marienhof which has a more relaxed atmosphere with grass for sitting and picnicking. Many churches surround the area, at 6, the largest and most prominent is the Frauenkirche. At 7 is the Sankt Peter Kirche, and across the street at 8 is the Heiliggeistkirche. While the Marienplatz used to host a market, the market has been permanently moved just south to 9, now known as the Viktualienmarkt.

Conclusions

While many pre-industrial squares are defined by religious buildings or at least permeated by religion in some form, the Marienplatz is an excellent example of a successful secular square from a time when such a thing was fairly rare. Relatively small in scale compared to other squares with medieval origins, as well as many of the other squares even just in Munich, the Marienplatz could have almost been mistaken as just a slightly wider section of the Kaufingerstrasse, and perhaps it was just that at a point in time, but through years of gathering and tradition, the Marienplatz has asserted itself as Munich's most important public space.

Whereas other squares that I am examining have attempted, mostly successfully, to create dramatic nodes of many facets and forces within their cities, the Marienplatz is rather subdued in that regard. The designers of Munich's public spaces seem content with keeping many of these forces separate and this is nowhere more evident than in the Marienplatz.

It is impossible to discuss the many successes of the Marienplatz without talking about the surrounding spaces that feed and feed off of this central square. The Marienhof, separated by the New Town Hall, is the absolute contrary of the Marienplatz. It is wide open, garnished with clusters of trees and a large patch of grass, receiving light and relaxed foot traffic, it is a picturesque, sleepy European square and its distinctiveness from the exciting, constant motion of the Marienplatz helps both spaces succeed.

The year-round marketplace, the Viktualienmarkt, lying just off the southeast corner of the Marienplatz, moves the buying and selling activity that once happened within the square just to the side of it, keeping the tradition alive but leaving the limited space of the plaza open for various gatherings and other cultural events.

Though the Marienplatz seems to be resistant to joining too many forces in this space, if it is a meeting of anything, it is a successful meeting of government and commerce. The two significant and historic Town Hall buildings define and tower over the space while the street level is adorned by shops that spill out onto the streets. Even the street level of the imposing, neo-gothic New Town Hall has cozy little shops on its ground level. The Marienplatz is a successful space because it succeeds as a node for the city without trying to accommodate too much activity, being unafraid to relinquish and adapt traditions while still remaining one of the most vital spaces in Munich.







Piazza Del
C a m p o
Siena, Italy

Piazza del Campo, Siena, Italy

| Opened: 1297 | Era: Pre-Industrial | Type: Organic |

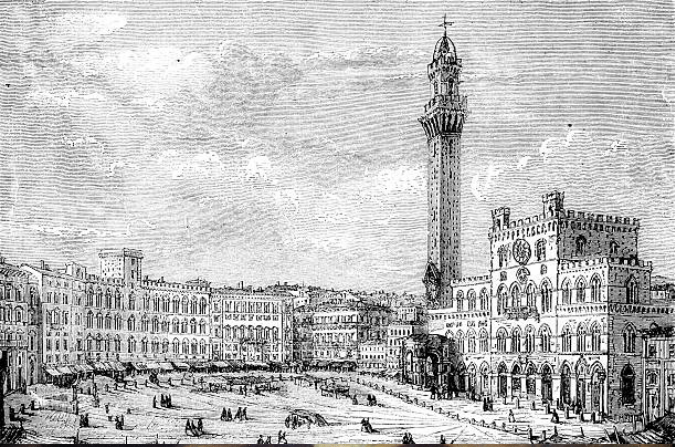
Siena, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is like a snapshot of a medieval Italian city. Founded officially in the late 1200s in Tuscany, the Piazza del Campo, or just 'Campo' has long been the cultural center of this city. The city and especially the Campo attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors every year to admire the pristinely preserved medieval and renaissance architecture, visit the many museums and cultural institutions, and eat and drink at the many cafes and restaurants.

The Campo plays host to the Palio, a horse race held twice a year in the summer, which attracts thousands of people to this public space. Competitors are from each of the 17 contrades of Siena, historic subdivisions represented by various animals, and the event receives national and international attention. Bleachers for spectators are set up around the perimeter and many more spectators stand in the center of the Campo. Racers travel in a circular motion around the Campo.

Other than the Palio, the Campo hosts plenty of other markets, events, and spectacles throughout the year, but remains just as active even on normal days. Seating from cafes and restaurants spill out onto the pavement and pedestrians are drawn to the sloped center of the piazza to sit, lay, or relax in the sun as if the Campo were a beach or the grand lawn of Central Park.

The Piazza del Campo remains one of the most prominent public squares in Italy and all of Europe for its many cultural events, well preserved medieval architecture, and staggering beauty that has been showcased in many forms of art.





History

Siena has in all likelihood been settled since around 400 BC by Etruscans. This tribe of Etruscans transformed central Italy by making farming in this region viable with their new methods of irrigation. The historic center of Siena at the Campo was designated as such because it existed in a valley at the center of three separate hilltop Etruscan settlements.

Originally the site was just an open marketplace but the city quickly grew around it, as the Palazzo Pubblico and many of the other grand palazzos defining the outer rim of the shell-shaped piazza were built in the late 13th and early 14th centuries. Siena's ruling group of governors decided to have the Campo paved to legitimize it as the city's center in 1349. The fishbone patterned pavers are arranged in nine sections, all pointed at the Palazzo Pubblico, representing the nine ruling governors of Siena creating one ruling body. In the center of the north curve of the Campo is the Fonte Gaia, not just any fountain but a celebration of the miles of hydraulic tunnels built to bring water into the city in 1419.

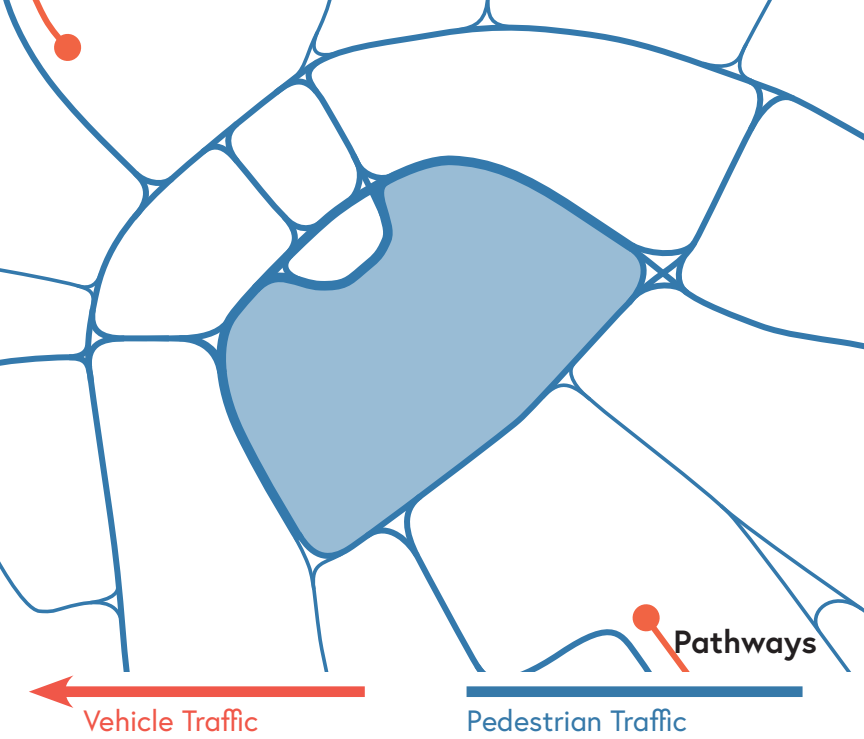
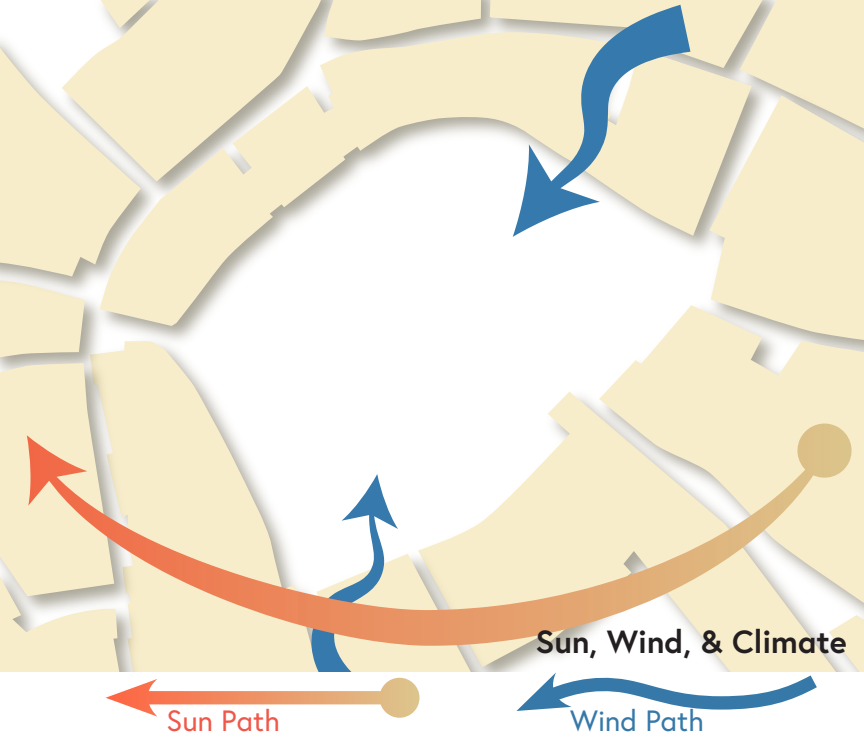


Throughout its lifespan, reaching a height in the 14th century, the Campo hosted many cultural events, particularly games, including boxing matches, bull fights, and most importantly horse races. Eventually these horse races became a cultural mainstay of the Campo as the Palio. Around this time, at the eve of the Black Death, Siena is reported to have been equal to Paris in population, but Siena was ravaged by the plague losing over two-thirds of its population, and it has never quite recovered.



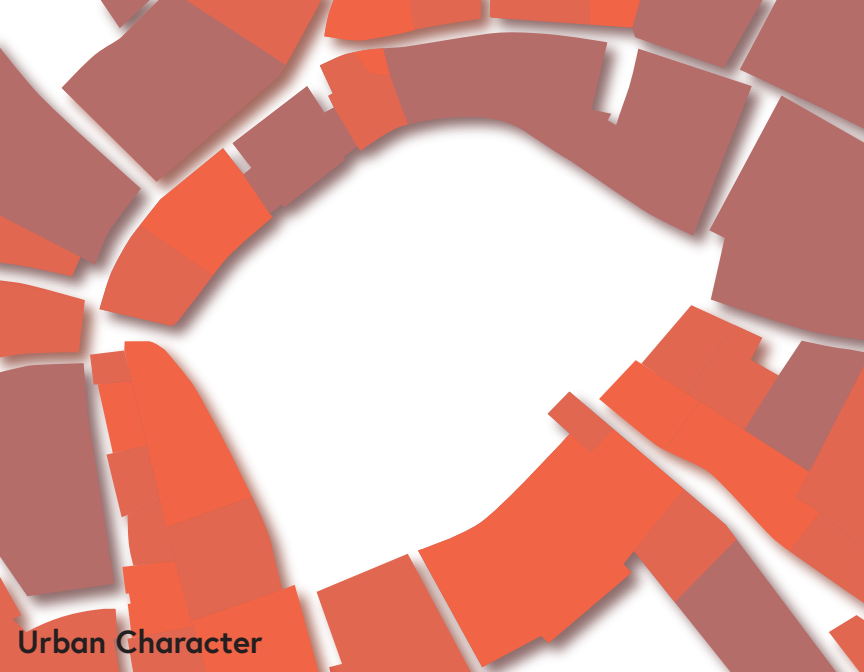
Though Siena never returned to being the bustling hub that it was prior to the plague, it was still a place of great cultural importance in Italy and remains so today. During the Renaissance, Siena's art school became quite well known and produced many well known Renaissance artists. As a result there is an abundance of art documenting the streets and public spaces of Siena, particularly the Campo.

The first modern Palio was held in the Campo in 1633 and has remained a steady tradition up to the modern day. Due to its well preserved medieval architecture, Siena was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1995.



Siena lies in a hilly region of Tuscany in the center of the Italian peninsula. It experiences winds from mountains to both the north and south in almost equal measure, but winds cause very minimal disruption in the streets and squares of Siena as the buildings are all nearly three or four stories tall and shield the narrow streets from most if not all winds. Siena has an inland Mediterranean climate with warm summers and mild to cool winters with little precipitation in most months. The sun, visible well over half of the days of the year, comes from the south, behind the Plazzo Publico and the Torre del Mangia, both of which cast long shadows on the Campo most days of the year. The narrow streetscapes allow little sunlight into the streets at most times of the year.

Vehicle traffic is incredibly limited in the streets of Siena. This is partially due to how narrow the medieval streets are. There are parking spots and vehicle access points to the north and south of the piazza mainly for tourists. Delivery and maintenance vans are typically the only vehicles that can be seen on the streets of medieval Siena. Newer, more automobile friendly neighborhoods exist to the north and south. Pedestrian traffic is expectedly heavy around the piazza. The heaviest pedestrian traffic keeps to the outside, while some wander into the center of the square to sit down or simply admire the architecture, shops and cafes around the perimeter of the piazza draw the most attention from pedestrians. As the streets fan out from the piazza, so too the amount of pedestrians thins out.



Urban Character

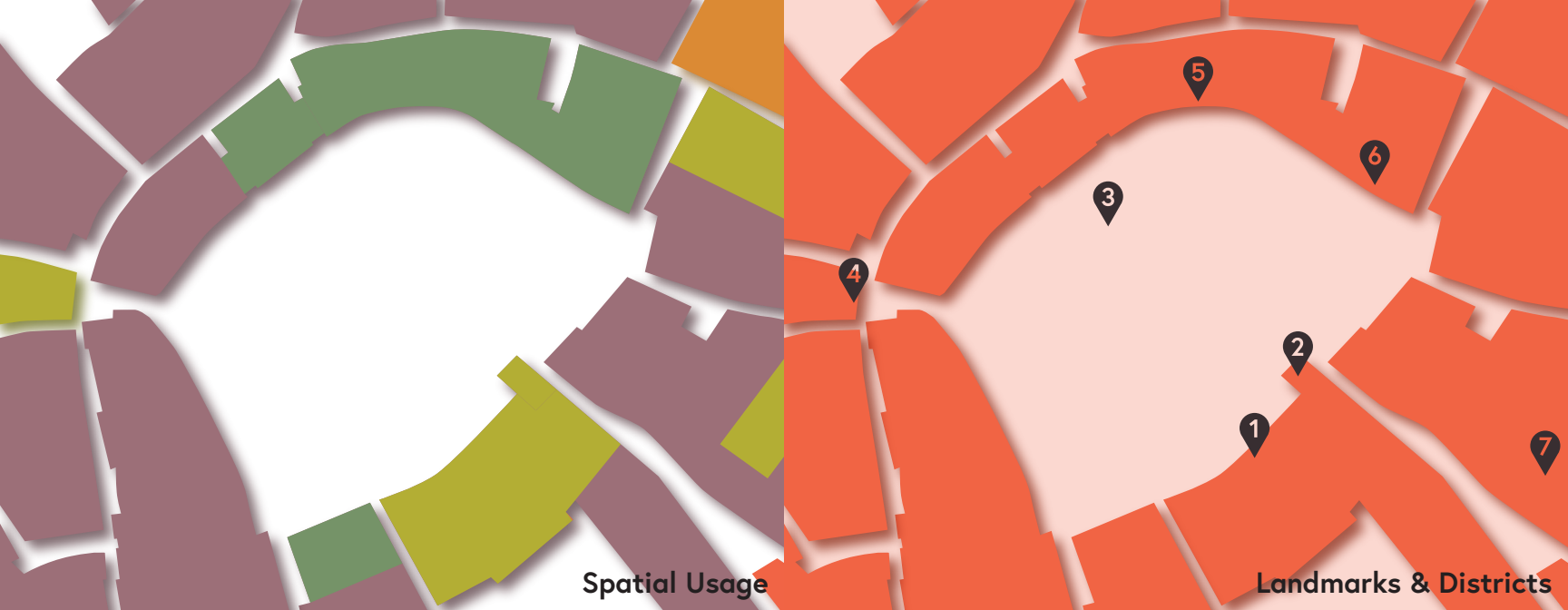
Green Cover

Older Buildings Newer Buildings

Tree Canopy Grass Cover

Siena is pretty much devoid of modern construction. Its medieval and renaissance era buildings are incredibly well preserved and make up the overwhelming majority of the cityscape. The materials, patterns, and colors used in each building remain remarkably similar to each other after years of changing building styles and construction methods, due to centuries of strictly enforced building codes. Given the obvious similarity, one could be fooled into thinking that the buildings in the Campo were built relatively close together in time. On the contrary, the great palazzos surrounding the Campo range in age from the 1200s all the way up to about the 1700s. Still the architectural styles remain remarkably consistent, and as such, small differences in style and decoration stand out significantly. Farther from the Campo, some newer 1900s buildings exist but even they are similar in materiality and scale.

Green space in cities has not always been a common thing. As such, the Piazza del Campo has essentially no trees or plants within its historic core; at least not within its public spaces. The reason for this may be because, given the size of Siena as a city, untouched nature, just on the outskirts of the city, is still readily accessible. In fact, even the terrace just on the back side of the Palazzo Pubblico (just barely in frame on the south side of the graphic) has sweeping views of the Tuscan countryside. Though greenery in more modern cities is a welcome addition, it is interesting to examine the reasons for which a medieval city such as Siena might have elected to not have any.



Spatial Usage

Landmarks & Districts

- Civic, Cultural, Institutional
- Residential
- Retail, Commercial
- Mixed-Use

- Point of Interest

Siena, more than any other city I am studying, is primarily mixed-use. Specifically mixed residential and retail. Nearly every building has a shop, restaurant, or cafe at street level with typically hotels, hostels, and residences above. Some historic, grand palazzos surrounding the Campo have been converted to museums and tourist attractions, however even these buildings still have retail at the ground level, especially facing the Campo where nearly every bit of leasable space is occupied by cafes or restaurants that spill out onto the Campo and offer a relaxing place to enjoy a meal or coffee with sweeping views of the grand piazza. As with many medieval and renaissance cities, Siena is a city full of grand churches and cathedrals. However, interestingly enough none of these really border the Campo.

As a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Siena itself is sort of a whole landmark of its own; a snapshot of a vibrant medieval city. Some of the city's most important structures look out over the Campo. The most significant and dominating of these is the Palazzo Pubblico at 1, the town hall of Siena. At 2, a later addition to the Palazzo Pubblico, is the Torre del Mangia one of the tallest secular towers in Italy, equal in height to Siena's cathedral signifying equal importance of church and state. At 3 is the Fonte Gaia, a fountain built into the sploing form of the Campo. The Campo is bordered by palazzos once owned by powerful families of Siena, at 4, the Palazzo delle Papesse, at 5, the Palazzo Sansedoni, and at 6, the Palazzo Chigi Zondadari. Though many of the city's religious buildings are farther away from the piazza, at 7, tucked behind the Palazzo Pubblico, is the Siena Synagogue, built in the 14th century by the once vibrant Jewish community of Siena.

Conclusions

While it is exceedingly likely that a space like the Campo will never be built again, it seems that the importance of a space of this kind cannot be reinforced enough. Though the preservation of Siena and the Campo keep the city frozen in time and observable from the first hand perspective of a modern city dweller, the ways in which people's interactions with the space continue to shift are even more telling of the importance and timelessness of this space.

The Campo is lucky enough to be more or less free of the influence of automobiles. While this is a simple impossibility of modern cities, it at least allows an unfiltered look at the ways in which architecture influences the movement of pedestrians. The Campo is reminiscent of a Greek amphitheater. It has an audience and a focal point like a stage. Even the pavers on the ground dictate movement and vision in such a way that is very reminiscent of the ways one might move about and observe an amphitheater.

Reinforcing the importance of focal points, retail establishments form a sweeping arc around the Palazzo Pubblico, an interesting contrast between the imposing scale of the city's primary government building and the warm, inviting comfort of the city's cozy cafes and restaurants. In fact the Palazzo and Torre del Mangia are such dominating focal points that on an average day nearly everyone in the Campo can be seen admiring its architecture.

At some point, the Campo was the center of all activity in Siena. Though this sense of centralized community will probably never be reclaimed modern in cities, at least not to the same extent as in Siena, the Campo remains as a powerful testament to the importance of drawing on existing culture, activity, and pathways to create centralized gathering spaces. Michael Webb discusses the gravity of this intersection by saying, "We can glimpse the energies that created the Campo: as the symbol of a vital, independent community, a masterly balancing of factionalism, and a flexible public arena. Lucid, elegant, and complex as a mathematical equation, it is also a work of art whose colors change with the light, casting its spell on successive generations." Though the Campo is now merely a museum for a once vibrant cultural square, it serves as an important and successful example of public space feeding off the energies around it.







Piazza Del
D u o m o
Milan, Italy

Piazza del Duomo, Milan, Italy

| Opened: 1330 | Era: Pre-Industrial/Industrial | Type: Reclaimed-Planned |

Milan, the second most populous city in Italy, is an important hub of arts, fashion, commerce, and culture, not just for Italy, but for all of Europe and the entire world. This has earned Milan the honor of being an Alpha Global City, a title it shares with the likes of Chicago, Los Angeles, and Amsterdam, bestowed by the Globalization and World Cities Research Network.

This status is not one that Milan takes lightly, and this is reflected especially in its public spaces. Barely a mile from the historic center of the city, modern skyscrapers rise in a expansive skyline. The city is among the most modern and most eclectic in Italy. Its public spaces are reflective of its commitment to cultural vibrance and excellence at nearly everything that comprises a modern cosmopolitan city.

One of Milan's most robust public plazas is the Piazza del Duomo in the historic core of the city. Surrounding the piazza is one of the world's largest cathedrals, one of the world's oldest shopping malls, and numerous museums and landmarks, all the way down to tiny cafes dwarfed by grand scale of the square. The Milan Cathedral and the Galleria Vittorio Emmanuelle II battle for the attention of tourists and visitors; their shared existence in this space creates an axis in what may otherwise be an uncomfortably large and long approach to the cathedral, turning it into an active and high energy intersection of people of all types in the city.





History

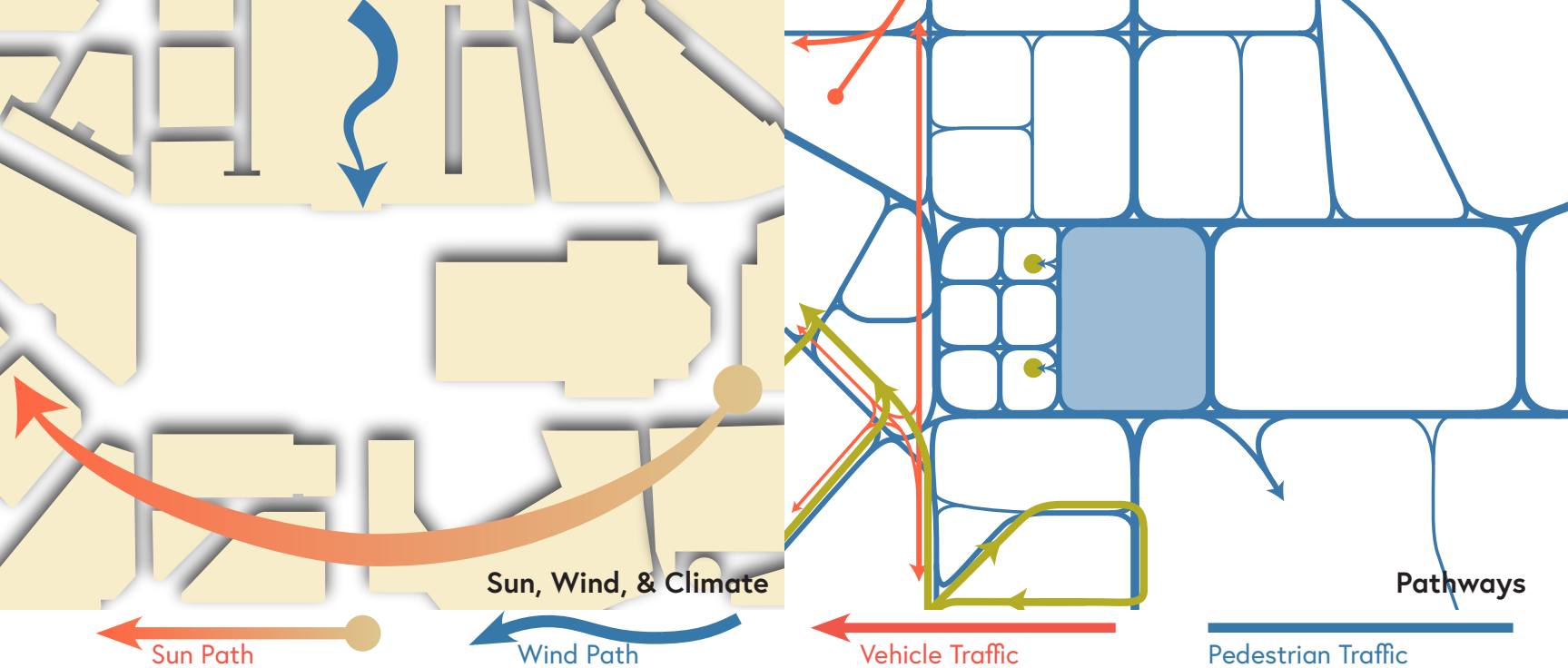
The Piazza del Duomo has gone through so many changes since its original creation in 1330 that it is almost absurd to even consider all of the iterations of the square to be the same space. Azzone Visconti, lord of Milan in 1330, was the first to see the potential that the area had as a public gathering space. Visconti ordered the demolition of a few taverns to create a public marketplace originally called the Piazza dell'Arengo. His successor had the piazza further expanded with the demolition of more buildings. Around this time the construction of the cathedral began on the site of an old basilica bordering the square. Though the expansion of the square stalled for a while, the rise of the massive cathedral transformed the space, as did the creation of a new Royal Palace on the south side of the site. The new Royal Palace, constructed in 1773, featured a large forecourt that met the original space of the piazza at an oblique angle, effectively expanding the space of the piazza.



Construction of the cathedral continued slowly for another century and eventually as the once successful piazza started to wane, the city called for a complete redesign, with a focus on honoring King Vittore Emmanuelle II. In 1860, a competition was used to select the architect and eventually the job went to architect Giuseppe Mengoni. Mengoni called for a covered galleria to inhabit the blocks north of the piazza, with a triumphal arch on either end of the piazza creating a pathway through the existing space, connecting it to the new galleria. Mengoni fought the city for the proper funds to complete the project and slowly but surely throughout the 1870s the galleria and first triumphal arch were completed. Plans for the second arch were abandoned when Mengoni died from falling off a scaffolding while inspecting some work in the piazza. His plan was officially considered completed when the statue of King Vittore was erected in the center of the square in 1896.

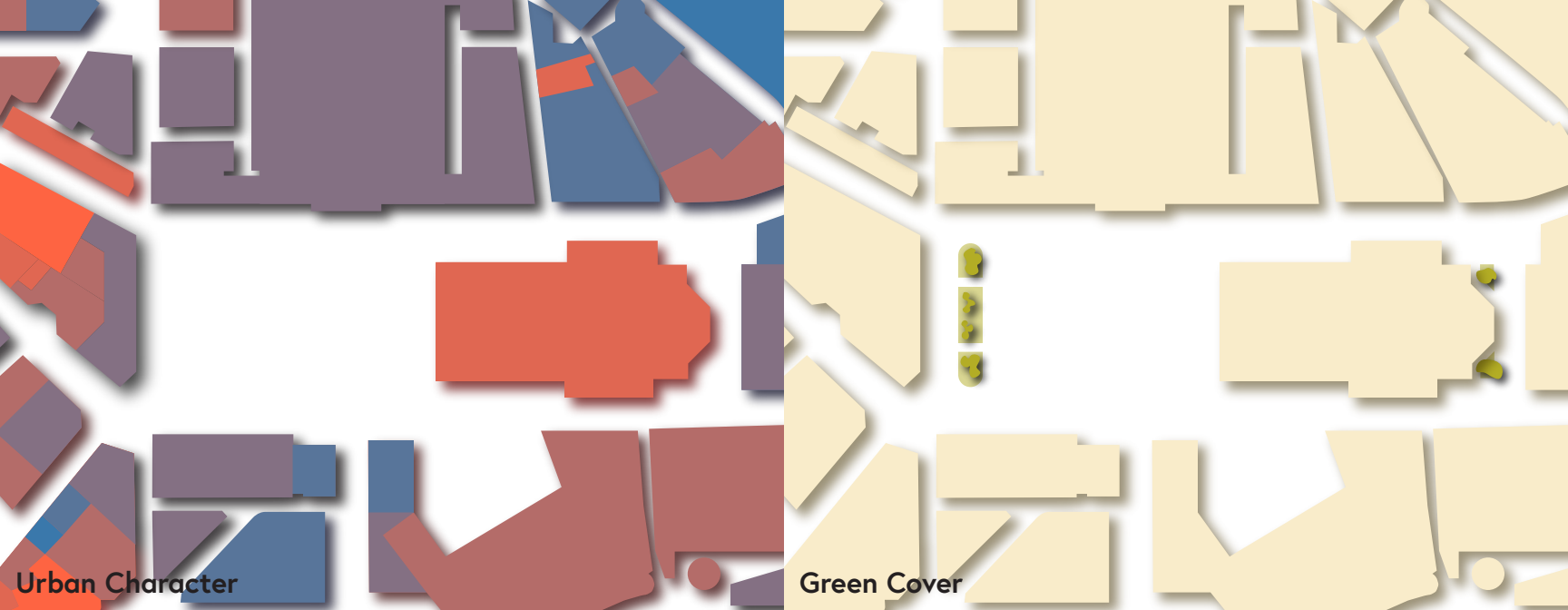


Few changes have been made to the piazza since. The only addition of note is the fascist era Arengario which was built where the second triumphal arch was intended to be in Mengoni's plan. The galleria was damaged in World War II bombings, resulting in the iconic photo shown to the left but damage was not extensive and has since been repaired.



Milan has a temperate climate, experiencing hot summers, and mild foggy winters. The region receives little precipitation but fog is exceedingly common as warm air from the south meets cool air from the mountains to the north. Wind is also not a large factor as what light wind there is comes from the north and is shielded from the piazza by the Galleria. Snow is not uncommon in the winter but it usually doesn't accumulate much and melts quickly as temperatures fluctuate greatly at times. When it's not foggy or cloudy (most of the year) the sun shines brightly from the south on the piazza illuminating the entire space with little shade from buildings or trees, at times causing an intense heat-island effect.

Milan has both an extensive above ground streetcar system as well as an underground metro. The streetcar approaches the site from the south and loops around to drop visitors off just one block south of the Arengario. The metro stop in the piazza is accessed through staircases that spit out right into the center of the square. Cars have some, but mostly limited, access to the site. The Via Giuseppe Mengoni, named after the piazza's architect, runs north to south through the westernmost edge of the piazza and provides some parking for visitors. Pedestrian traffic ultimately dominates this public space as swarms of tourists and locals alike can be seen passing through the square, around the cathedral, and into the Galleria. The Galleria is of course devoid of automobile traffic, but so too are many of the side streets surrounding it to the east, west, and south.



Urban Character

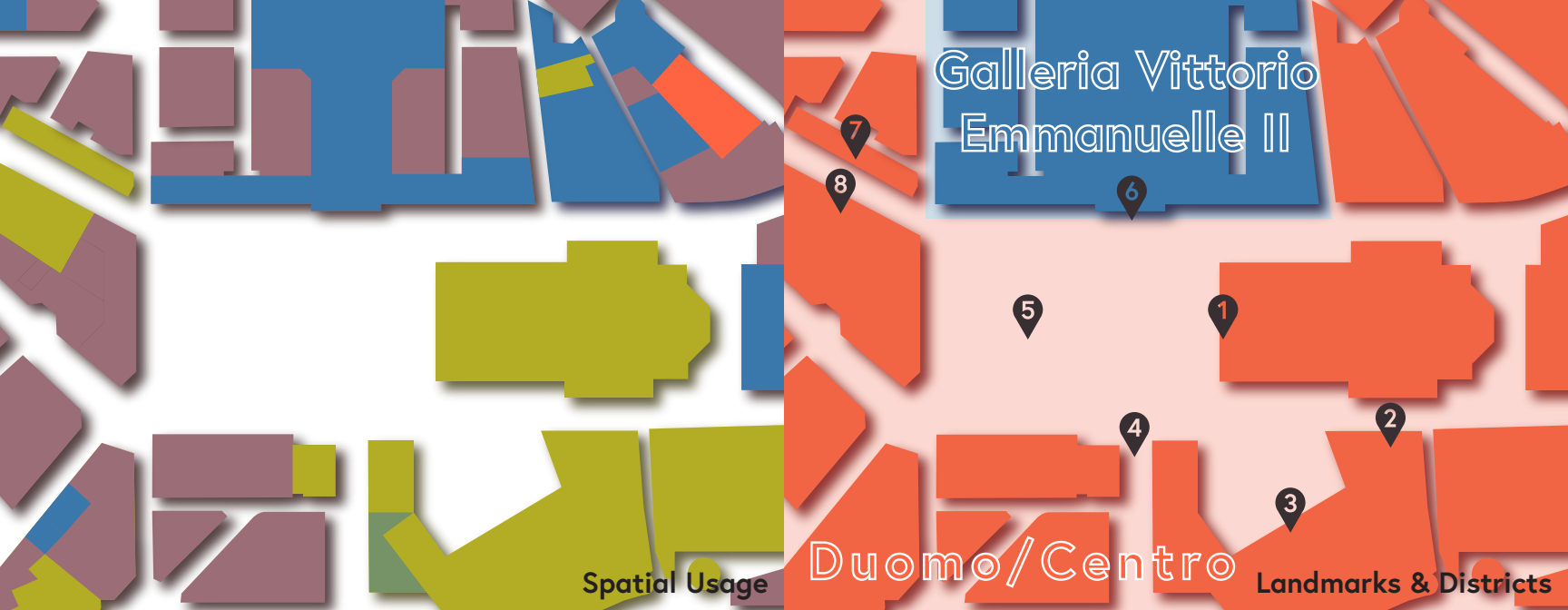
Green Cover

Older Buildings **Newer Buildings**

Tree Canopy **Grass Cover**

Compared to other Italian cities, Milan typically stands out from the medieval and Renaissance cities, being perceived as a more modern city. This perception is mainly correct, as many of Milan's medieval buildings have been demolished in favor of early industrial replacements. The oldest buildings near the piazza are some significant and well preserved churches and palazzos from the early 1300s to the west. The cathedral is an interesting beast as it officially began construction in 1386 and took over 600 years to assume its current form, finally being considered completed in 1965. It appears in dark red here as its completed form is representative of a 1600s style of architectural design. Most of the buildings surrounding the piazza including the Galleria were built in accordance with Mengoni's plan in the 1870s. To the south of the piazza, a few fascist-era buildings constructed in the 1950s have been preserved and repurposed.

The Piazza del Duomo was not originally designed with green space in mind, and in fact there is still only very small amounts of trees and plants in the area. At one point there was triangular patches of grass surrounding the area hosting the statue of King Vitorre. At some point these patches were removed in favor of a strip featuring plants and trees sectioning off the westernmost portion of the piazza as an access street and parking area. There are also some trees on the back side of the cathedral but still most of the square is paved over. None of these green elements were included in Giuseppe Mengoni's original plan for the piazza.



- Civic, Cultural, Institutional
- Retail, Commercial
- Residential
- Mixed-Use

The Piazza del Duomo is quite literally an intersection between secular and religious life in Milan. The cathedral, a popular tourist attraction, but also notably still an active religious institution lies at the center of the piazza. Next to it are old civic buildings which have been mainly converted to art museums. The rest of the piazza is dominated by active and high-end retail establishments. Some of it is mixed use and features residential or hotel spaces above, but a lot more still is single-use commercial or retail, especially on the side of the piazza inhabited by the Galleria. Two of the oldest buildings near the piazza are medieval era palazzos to the northwest, which have been converted to museums and tourist attractions.

Point of Interest

As one of the largest churches in the world, the Milan Cathedral (1) commands much of the attention of visitors to the piazza. At 2, contained within the historic Royal Palace, is a museum revolving around the construction of the cathedral. 3 is the entrance to the Royal Palace itself. 4 is the fascist Arengario which is now a modern art museum. At 5 is the statue of King Vittore, dedicated in 1896 signifying the end of a long period of construction and major changes to the piazza. At 6 is triumphal arch at the entrance of the world famous Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II. 7 and 8 are both well preserved old palazzos. 7 the older of the two, and the oldest building in the vicinity by centuries, is Palazzo della Ragione. 8 is the Palazzo dei Giureconsulti, significant as it was a prominent gathering space in the city prior to the Piazza del Duomo assuming the shape it bears today.

Conclusions

The Piazza del Duomo has reinvented itself many times but none of the reinventions have been nearly successful as the one carried out in the 1800s that attempted to turn the piazza into an intersection of the many cultural facets of Milan. Mengoni's transformation of the centuries old piazza finally transformed the space into a worthy node of the forces that created such a vibrant and cosmopolitan city as Milan.

The contrast created by the proximity of the secular triumphal arch of the Galleria and one of the largest, grandest celebrations of god in the massive Milan Cathedral, is almost comical. Even more bizarre is how well these two fixtures of the space, as different and competing as they could possibly be, work together to activate and elevate the piazza. The Piazza del Duomo is unafraid of being overwhelming, and it actually succeeds because of this.





The background consists of numerous irregular, torn pieces of orange paper scattered across a white surface. The pieces vary in size and shape, some resembling geometric forms like triangles and rectangles, while others are more abstract. The edges of the paper scraps are jagged and uneven, giving the impression of a collage or a pile of discarded paper.

Trafalgar
Square

London, UK

Trafalgar Square, London, UK

| Opened: 1844 | Era: Industrial | Type: Reclaimed-Organic |

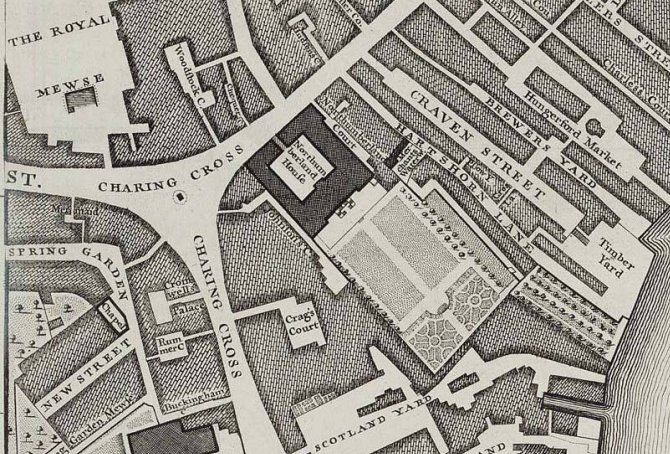
Trafalgar Square is a relatively new public space in a very old city. Opened in 1844 after clearing many existing buildings to make the square possible, the square was plopped into a city that already had thousands of years of history. London was founded in 43 AD by Romans and has been growing and changing ever since. The area surrounding Trafalgar Square known as Charing Cross has been built up and recognized as an important center of London since the early 1000s.

Despite having to either work with or combat thousands of years of history, as well as the well-documented resistance to change exhibited by the citizens of London throughout time, Trafalgar Square has become an important and highly-regarded (both nationally and internationally) cultural gathering space.

The square is littered with and surrounded by monuments and cultural landmarks. Most importantly, one of Britain's most historically significant art galleries, the National Gallery, lies at the north end of the square, which almost serves as a sort of grand entrance to the gallery drawing over 5 million visitors each year. The square draws countless more visitors and tourists, whether they come to look at the monuments such as the statues of Charles I and Nelson's Column, or just have a seat by the fountains and relax.

Given its central location and proximity to London's West End theater district, Trafalgar Square also plays host to many concerts and cultural events, as well as political demonstrations. Though its existence seems contrary to thousands of years of history, Trafalgar Square has managed to cement itself as one of, if not the single most important public gathering spaces in London.





History

Opened initially in 1844, Trafalgar Square is relatively new in comparison to the rest of London; however, the location of the square, known as Charing Cross, has held great significance to London since long before Trafalgar Square was established.

The name Charing Cross originally came from a wooden cross that was placed there by King Edward I around 1291 at the intersection of major streets The Strand, Whitehall, and Cockspur, right outside of the Royal Mews (stables) which were formerly on the current site of Trafalgar Square. The cross was eventually removed during the English Civil War in 1647 (though a modern replica exists a few blocks away at the Charing Cross train station). A statue of King Charles I replaced the cross in 1675.

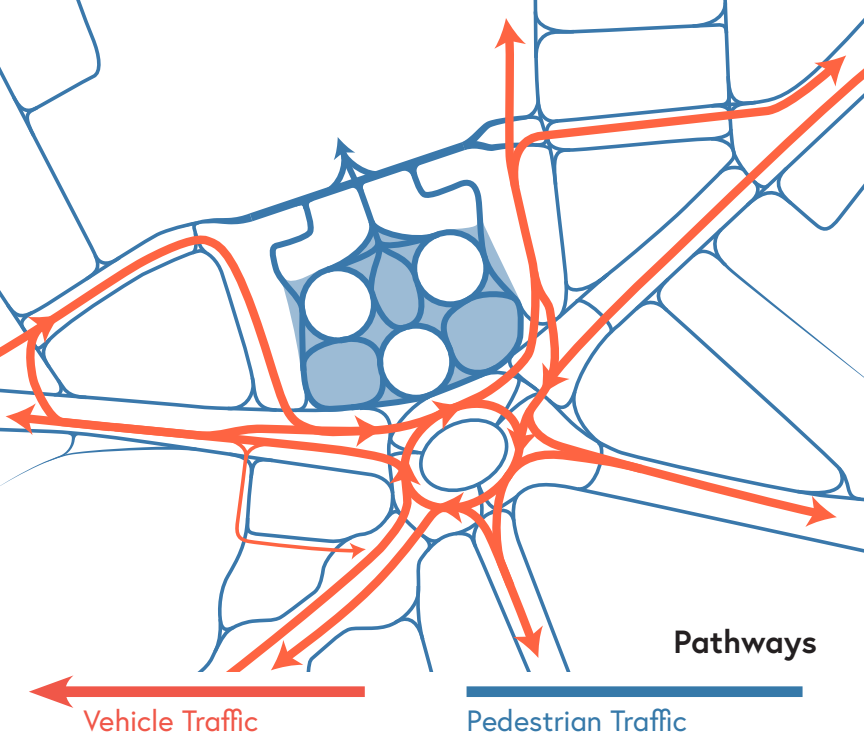
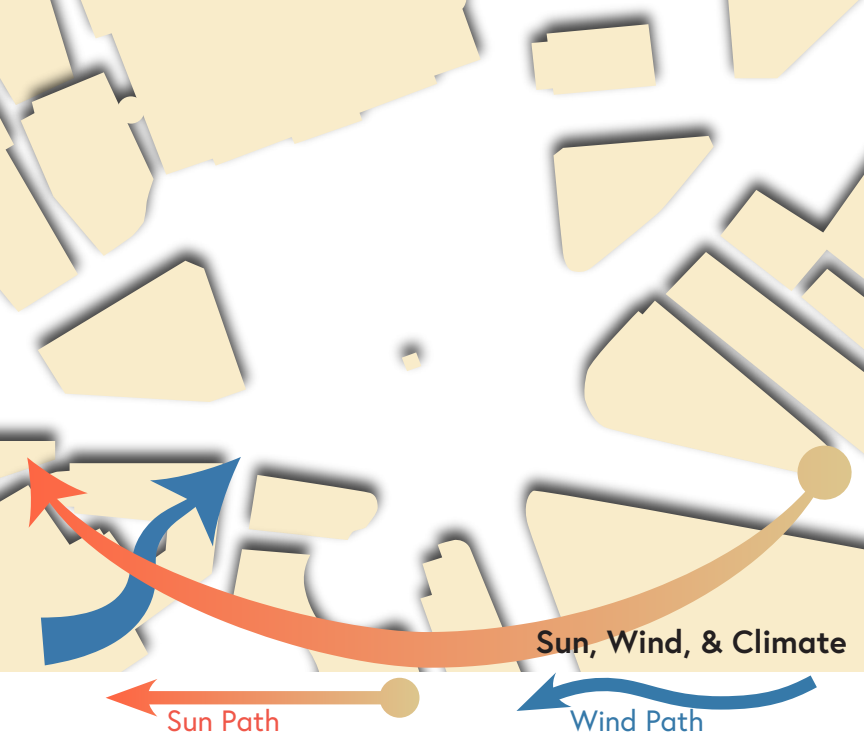


During the Restoration in the 1660s, several monarchs were executed at Charing Cross. Public executions remained a mainstay of this public space until the 1800s when Trafalgar Square was established. Named after the 1805 Battle of Trafalgar, which was itself named after the battle location of Cape Trafalgar near Gibraltar, the square began to take shape in 1832 with the clearing of the Royal Mews and other surrounding buildings to the north of Charing Cross.

The square was built slowly alongside the National Gallery bordering the north side of the space which also began construction in 1832. During this time the square's design went through many changes. Among these changes were the two iconic fountains, as well as the square's namesake which was long debated on and settled shortly before the square opened in 1844. One of the final additions to the square, a 169 foot column flanked by lions commemorating Admiral Horatio Nelson, who died in the Battle of Trafalgar, was erected in 1867 and is the monumental centerpiece of the square.

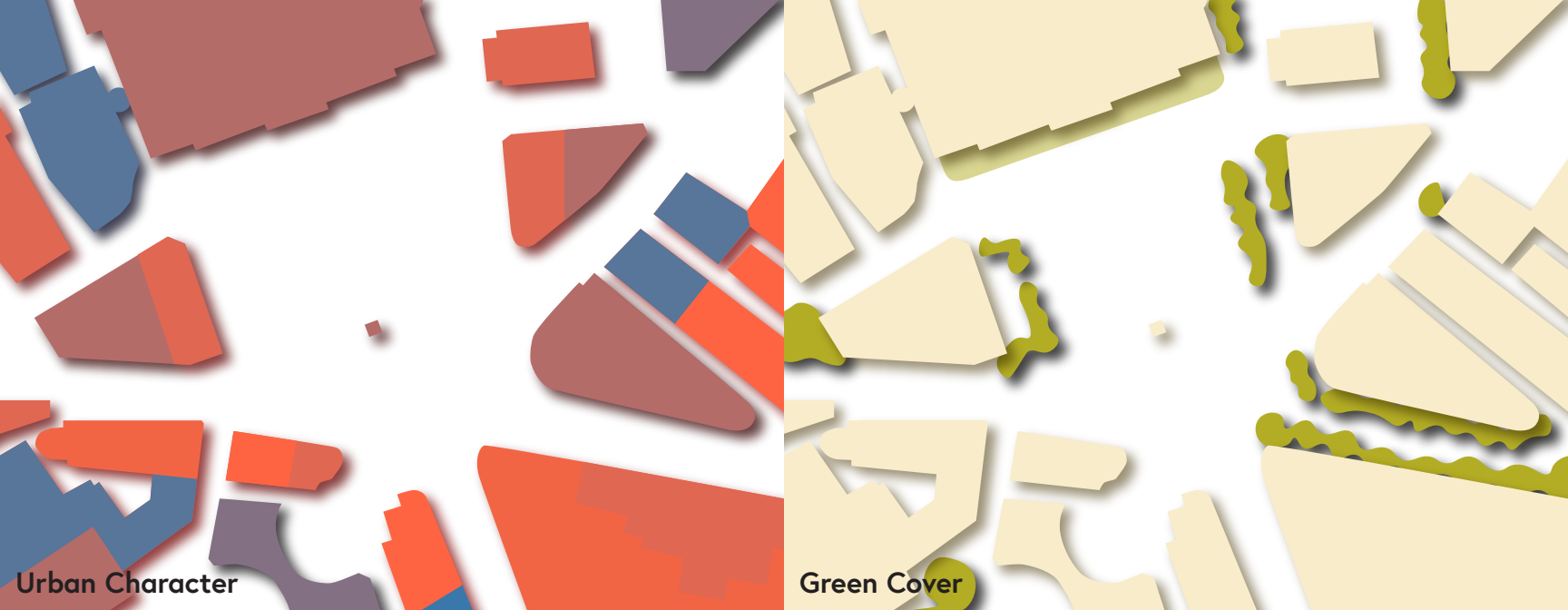


The square has changed very little since Nelson's Column was added. Most recently some refurbishing work was done in 2003, accommodating more street space and adding some trees.



London has a fairly mild climate, with winters above freezing, and fairly warm but not hot summers. Wind and precipitation are fairly steady year round, in fact London is known for its rainy climate, even though in reality it experiences rain less than 50% of the days of the year. It does however, experience very few sunny days. The days when the sun does shine through the clouds, it can be seen in the south of Trafalgar Square. Wind speeds are not typically very high, but most days of the year experience at least a light breeze coming overwhelmingly from the south/southwest.

The intersection of Charing Cross has been an important crossroads for the city of London for almost a thousand years. This includes the historic crossroads of The Strand, Whitehall, and Cockspur Streets (all still named as such today), as well as the more modern streets The Mall and Northumberland Ave, which crosses through the historic location of Northumberland House to the southeast of the intersection. More modern one-way streets connect The Strand and Cockspur to the National Gallery. This intersection experiences some of the heaviest automobile traffic in the city. Pedestrian activity in the area primarily travels to and from Trafalgar Square. Astonishingly few brave the center of the busy traffic circle to visit Charles I, but many tourists still find their way into the square where there are no clear pathways and pedestrians tend to instead meander around, or cluster in groups for photos, or just relax by the fountains and monuments.



Urban Character

Green Cover

Older Buildings **Newer Buildings**

Tree Canopy **Grass Cover**

Unshockingly, many of the buildings surrounding Trafalgar Square are very old, with the oldest remaining buildings dating back to the 1600s, well predating the actual construction of the square. However, many more have been constructed or at least updated since the creation of the square. The National Gallery was constructed alongside the square in the 1830s and 40s but has been expanded and updated many times since. Though the ages of the buildings around Trafalgar Square vary by sometimes up to centuries, the urban character of the area has been kept very consistent and even, despite some modern buildings and additions, homogenous in places considering how eclectic most of London is. This works in the favor of the square as it has become an essential tourist stop in the city and a classic and iconic view of London.

Trees and green spaces have not always been a staple of urban streets and squares. At one point in history, even the largest cities could easily be escaped in favor of untouched nature with just a short walk or horse ride. Even as London continued to grow, just to the west and southwest respectively existed massive urban parks St. James's Park, and Hyde Park that both contained large green spaces that existed for centuries prior to the creation of Trafalgar Square. The first trees in the area likely came with the creation of Northumberland Ave to the southeast a couple decades after the square's completion. Even the trees within the square weren't placed there until a remodel in 2003. The city has experimented with adding grass patches within the square for picnicking, sunbathing, and the like, but the experiments have been fleeting as the square remains permanently paved.



- Civic, Cultural, Institutional
- Retail, Commercial
- Residential
- Mixed-Use

As a major cultural hub of London, Trafalgar Square is flanked on most sides by museums and other cultural and civic buildings. The National Gallery occupies almost the entire north side of the square. Government buildings can be seen on the west and southwest of the site. Most of the historic buildings to the south and west are mixed commercial/retail and residential. Some more modern single-use office buildings are scattered around the area but for the most part offices are clustered into older mixed-use buildings. A few older single-family row homes lie on the side streets and alleys between Charing Cross train station and Northumberland Avenue.

- Point of Interest

In the center of the historic Charing Cross is the statue of Charles I (1), one of the oldest standing monuments in the area. At 2 is Nelson's Column, the centerpiece of Trafalgar Square. The National Gallery is at 3, the third most visited museum in the country and eleventh in the world. At 4 is the historic church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, predating the square by over 100 years. 5 is the location of the modern Eleanor Cross, once the namesake and centerpiece of Charing Cross. At 6 is the Admiralty Arch, a beautiful and ornate gate to The Mall, connecting the square to St. James's Park and Buckingham Palace (7). To the north a few blocks (8) is Leicester Square, an equally popular square and the centerpiece of London's popular Soho district. Towards 9, views of the City of London can be seen down the Strand and just a few blocks away is the Charing Cross train station.

Conclusions

Though some London locals revile the city's popular squares such as Trafalgar Square in much the same way that New Yorkers avoid the tourist-packed Times Square, it is impossible to deny many of the incredible successes that can be attributed to Trafalgar Square as both a staple of London and an important blueprint for urban public spaces.

The long and dense history of the Charing Cross made the notion of adding a new public space by overwriting nearly a millennium of history a practical impossibility, but the designers of Trafalgar Square addressed these issues with an equally improbable level of success. Despite being just over one hundred years old itself, Trafalgar Square has not only become one of the best places to go to soak up London's rich history but it has also written a fairly rich history of its own (even if its not particularly glamorous).

Trafalgar has been rightfully criticized on its quality as a gathering space, Michael Webb, author of *The City Square* calls Trafalgar Square, "a place to walk around and admire, or to traverse briskly on the way to somewhere else. Open to all, exclusive to none, the square became a forum to impress strangers and simulate a sense of community." He is not incorrect in this assessment but perhaps he is missing the most important factor of Trafalgar Square.

Though denizens of the city of London may not be going for an afternoon stroll in the square or meeting up with a friend for coffee, Trafalgar Square succeeds with flying colors at what it is trying to accomplish: it is a successful amalgamation of over a thousand years of history and culture into a fitting forecourt or 'welcome mat' to the City of London.

As one approaches Trafalgar Square up Whitehall through the tightly packed Victorian buildings; as Nelson's Column begins to tower over the street; as the wide expanse of the National Gallery appears with glimmering fountains adorned by lions in the foreground, there is an overwhelming feeling of arrival. Even more overwhelming is the suddenly clear understanding of what London has to offer as a city, and therein lies the success of Trafalgar Square.







Washington
Square Park
New York City, NY

Washington Square Park, New York City, USA

| Opened: 1826 | Era: Industrial-Modern | Type: Planned |

While nearly every one of New York City's parks and plazas have been overshadowed by the grand scale and scope of Central Park, many of the city's parks have achieved similar success and popularity at a smaller scale among locals and tourists alike. In fact it wouldn't be a stretch to say that New York's public park spaces have become somewhat of a blueprint for the modern American city square. One of the most continuously successful of all of these is Washington Square Park.

Washington Square Park is the public cultural center of Greenwich Village, one of Manhattan's youngest and most culturally diverse neighborhoods. Greenwich Village is home to over 20,000, frequented by at least 50,000 NYU students, and visited by countless more tourists every year.

Washington Square Park occupies 9.75 acres, about 8 square city blocks, and has become known worldwide for many reasons. Washington Square is the center of New York University's Manhattan campus, which has buildings clustered on the south and east sides of the park. It is impossible to deny the profound impact that the interaction between the university and the park have had on the public life of the neighborhood and the shape of the public space in and surrounding Washington Square Park.

The park's proximity to the university has made it an important space for public performance and political demonstration. Street art, music, and performance of all kinds can be seen throughout the park despite the city's recent efforts to establish some control over the types and amounts of performance and art that can be practice in the park; while the park has also played host to political demonstrations and rallies of all sorts throughout history, ranging from protesting working conditions in factories following the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire, to a rally of Obama supporters during his presidential campaign that amassed over 20,000 people in the space. Despite all of this, Washington Square Park is most importantly one of the most popular places in the city for people in all walks of life to just stroll or spend an afternoon in the sun.



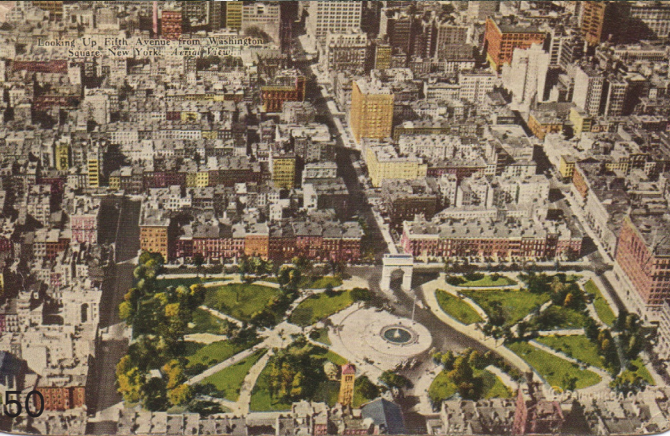


History

Washington Square Park has not always been the light and lively place that many know it as today, in fact quite the opposite, it began with a rather dark past. Originally the marshy land that eventually became the park was used as a potter's field (in other words: a graveyard). There are also records of the park being used for public hangings. This gave rise to the urban legend of the 'Hangman's Elm,' an old elm tree in the northwest corner of the park that is believed to have been used for these executions (though the same records indicate that it was probably not that exact tree).

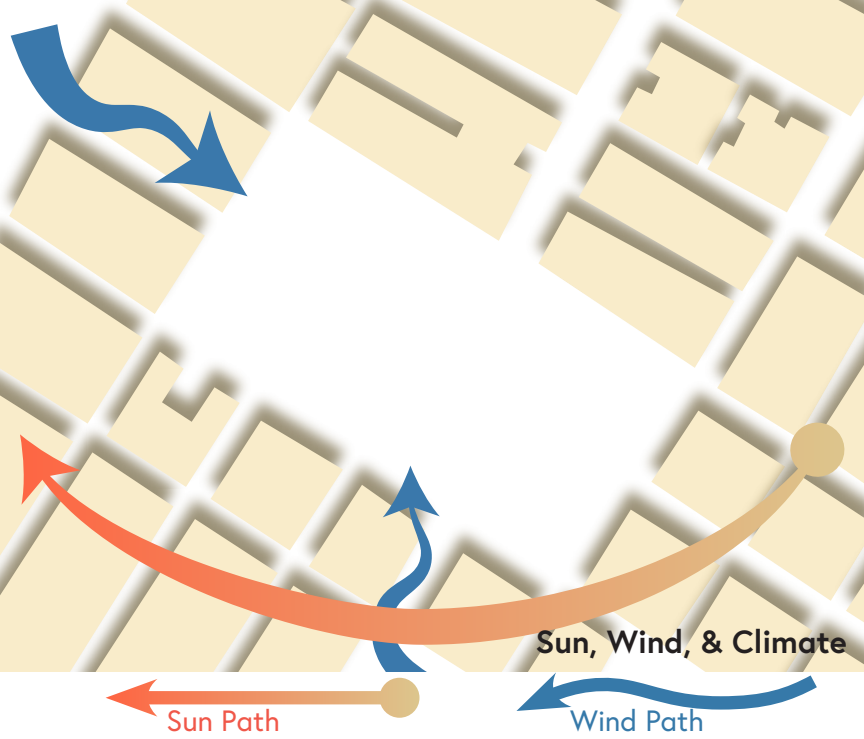


The park was designated as such when the city bought the land in 1826. Originally it was a military parade ground, and proximity to the park made the land surrounding it very valuable real estate, giving rise to the rows of Greek Revival houses that can still be seen on the North side of the park today. The park's iconic arch stems from a temporary arch made of wood and plaster (*pictured top left*) erected 1889 to celebrate the centennial of Washington's inauguration as president. The arch was replaced with a permanent arch, more ornate and made of marble rather than plaster, in 1892.



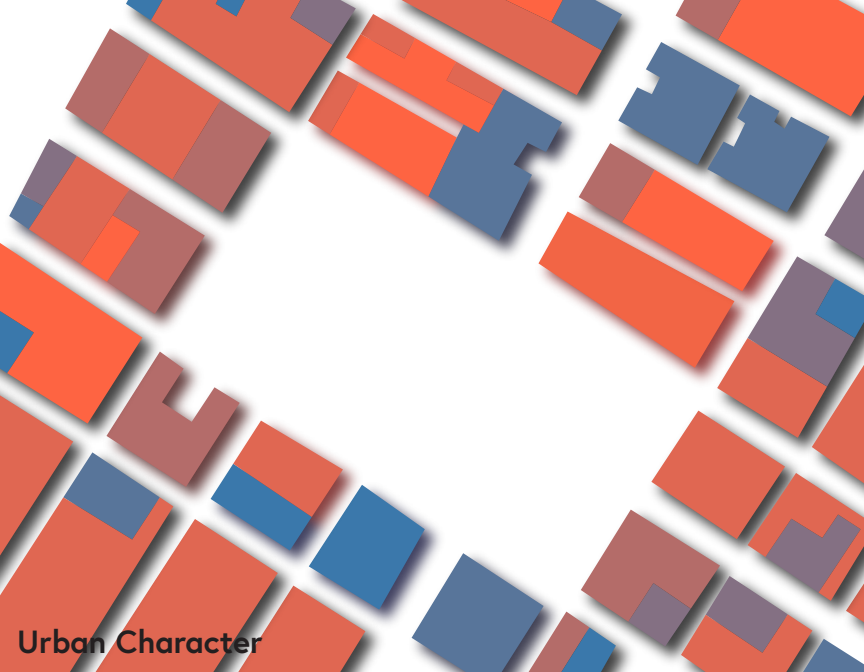
In 1934, many changes came to the park by way of New York parks commissioner Robert Moses including plans to convert the iconic fountain into a wading pool (as it still is today) as well as a controversial plan to extend 5th Avenue through the park and under the arch. This plan was heavily opposed but finally saw the light of day in 1952 (*pictured center left*). It continued to face heavy opposition, including from significant locals Jane Jacobs and Eleanor Roosevelt, who are both credited in part with finally outlawing traffic from the park entirely and greatly limiting traffic around the park.

In the 1960s and 70s, the park became known for attracting bohemian and beatnik types due to its musical and political culture, though this was viewed as undesirable at the time, this culture has become ingrained in the modern culture of Washington Square and can still be observed today.



New York City has a humid subtropical climate due to its proximity to the Atlantic Ocean and experiences four distinct seasons and many types of weather. Warm, light, summer breezes come from the south off the Atlantic while stronger winter winds come from the northeast and blow parallel to the northwest-southeast running streets. The large groves of trees on the two ends of the park likely provide a good amount of shelter from these winds. The trees also cast shade over much of the park as the sun shines from the south. Taller buildings on the sides of the park cast shadows on the edges of the park and surrounding streets.

The flow of both automobile and pedestrian traffic has long been a battle between the city and the citizens of New York. Today, due to efforts from the likes of Jane Jacobs, no vehicle traffic runs through the park. The streets surrounding the park are all one-way, mostly one or two lanes, and receive very little automobile traffic. In particular, pedestrians seem to own the streets south and east of the park due to the area being traversed mainly by NYU students. Some streets are even closed entirely to vehicle traffic. Pathways through the park are organic but direct as they mostly lead pedestrians to and from major landmarks and intersections. Major thoroughfares in the area include the 'Avenue of the Americas,' an extension of 6th Avenue to the west and northwest of the park which carries heavier traffic toward Midtown away from the park, and 5th Avenue which begins on the north of the park but doesn't experience very heavy traffic until where it meets Broadway in Midtown.



Urban Character

Older Buildings Newer Buildings

Compared to many other cities I have examined, New York is a relatively new city, this does not however mean that there is not a lot of history contained in many of its blocks. While the perception of New York is often that of a modern city littered with skyscrapers, it is its eclectic mix of old and new that gives it its character. On the north side of Washington Square Park, the old Greek-Revival row homes from the 1830s are in direct contrast to the pristine, modern NYU buildings on the south border. Lying within a National historic district, the north and west sides of the park are mainly older and historic buildings, with a few newer single-use residential buildings appearing to be from the mid-1900s, likely predating the historic district. While NYU has done an admirable job of preserving and converting many older buildings lying within their campus, the presence of many modern buildings give NYU's campus on the south side of the park a much more eclectic feel.



Green Cover

Tree Canopy Grass Cover

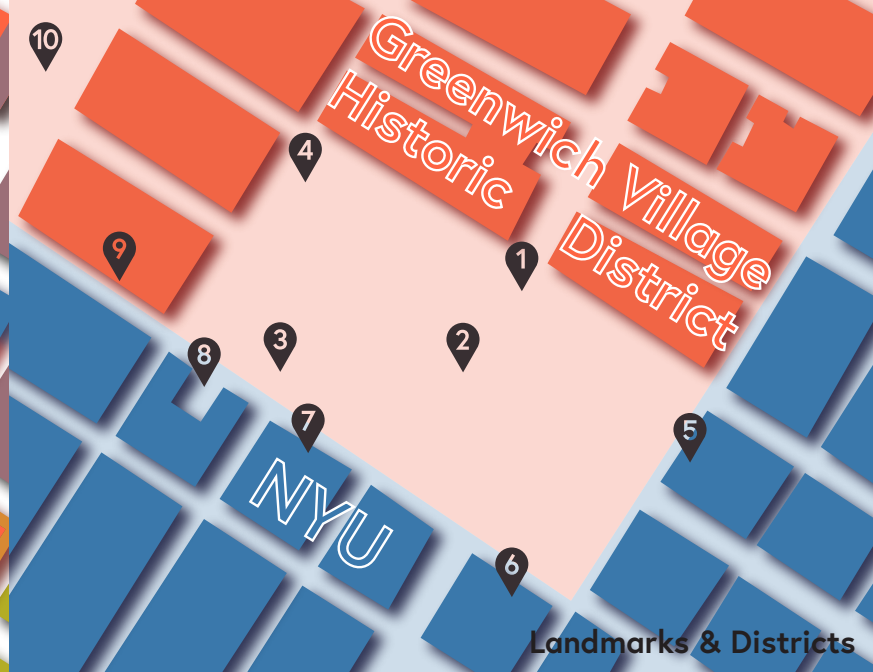
In contrast to older European squares, modern American urban parks often place an emphasis on bringing green space into city centers. New York, one of the most populous and extensive cities in the world, has prioritized and even popularized bringing green space into urban parks and plazas. Washington Square park is a great example of this, as it has paved open space to accommodate pedestrians and higher activity, but much of the park is treated more like an urban forest with a dense tree canopy and grass covering most of the park. This reflects a shift in ideology from older pre-industrial public spaces, whereas those spaces were intended to accommodate a large variety and high volume of activity, Washington Square Park seems to be focused more on leisure and offering an escape from the bustle of city life, rather than embracing it, and this is reflected in the density of planting.



Spatial Usage

- Civic, Cultural, Institutional
- Retail, Commercial
- Residential
- Mixed-Use

Most of New York City's blocks are defined by mixed residential and retail development, with shops and restaurants on the ground floor of most buildings and residences above. This formula is interrupted where NYU meets Washington Square Park as single-use university buildings surround the south and east sides of the park. Some university buildings have intermixed well with older mixed-use buildings, exhibiting a mix of classrooms, faculty offices, and student housing even with some retail at the ground level. On the north side of the house there is rows of single-use houses. This usage seems to be done in the name of preserving the historic interiors and exteriors of the 1800s Greek Revival homes which are among the oldest buildings surrounding the park. Otherwise there are very few newer single-use residential buildings or retail/commercial buildings.



Landmarks & Districts

Point of Interest

Within the park, at **1**, is the Washington Square Arch, the figurative 'entrance' to the park and beginning of 5th Avenue. At **2** is the park's famous wading fountain. A newly designed park house at **3** houses bathrooms, offices, and other support spaces for the park. At **4** is a large elm tree, rumored to be Hangman's Elm. To the south and east within the bounds of NYU are many significant historic and modern architectural landmarks. At **5** is the historic Silver Center, housing the school's arts college. At **6** is the Philip Johnson designed Bobst Library. **7** is another historic building, the Juan Carlos I Center. **8** is the school's law department located in Vanderbilt Hall. Down the street at **9** is the gothic-revival Washington Square Methodist Church built in 1860. The major thoroughfare in Greenwich Village, the Avenue of the Americas which turns into 6th Avenue runs parallel to the park at **10** and features an active streetscape with many shops and restaurants.

Conclusions

Washington Square Park has become one of New York City's most vital public spaces and the reason for this can really be boiled down to it being a distillation of New York City's vibrant culture. With the proximity of New York University and Greenwich Village, one of the New York's most culturally diverse neighborhoods, Washington Square Park has fed off of these to become a magnet for artists, musicians, and tourists alike.

While New York City is renowned for being one of the most walkable and public-transit-friendly cities in America, it is still unmistakably a Western city, with cars being the main force that have shaped the streets of the city. Washington Square Park is not an anomaly in this regard but having experimented with different solutions to rectify pedestrian and vehicle traffic with one another, the current solution in place is a wonderful compromise between the two forces.

Pathways are something that are celebrated in Washington Square Park, with the grand Washington Square Arch signifying the beginning of the park from 5th Avenue and inviting entrance to the space. The size and form of the pedestrian pathways through the park reflect the amount and intensity of activity that occurs over them. The main axis of the park is characterized by wide paths that many pedestrians travel along drawing them to the park's major landmarks and monuments, while a more meandering path winds its way around the perimeter of the park for a smaller amount of people just strolling through the groves of trees.

Many of New York's Parks are like small artificial slices of nature, Washington Square Park has a large and extensive tree canopy and large patches of grass; decidedly different from the city squares of old Europe. Much like a smaller scale Central Park, this creates an interesting contrast with the built environment, which itself is one characterized by contrast, as Greek Revival Houses from the 1800s contrast brand new, starkly modern NYU campus buildings on opposite sides of the park.

New York City's parks and public spaces could be rightfully criticized by their willingness to draw from and even copy European counterparts, as Washington Square Park's arch and wading fountain certainly remind of a sort of Parisian romanticism, but their persistence through hardships, willingness to reinvent themselves, and celebrations of the things that make their city great have made New York City's public spaces like Washington Square Park the blueprint for the modern public square.







Victoria
Square

Adelaide,
Australia

Victoria Square, Adelaide, Australia

| Opened: 1837 | Era: Industrial-Modern | Type: Planned |

Parks and public spaces are of the utmost importance to Adelaide, the planned capital of the Australian state of South Australia. Founded in 1836 by Colonel William Light, Adelaide was planned to be a square mile gridded city with large, wide boulevards, and parks situated at the intersections of some of the major streets. Though Adelaide has far outgrown its historic boundaries, the plan for the city to be surrounded by green space and nature has been successfully realized as the city core is surrounded by about a half-mile-wide green belt.

Victoria Square, the planned public square at the center of the city, was designated as such shortly after the city was founded, and it has lived up to its intention since. Playing host to many major festivals, carnivals, and social events throughout the year, and hosting smaller-scale planned events nearly every night of the week, Victoria Square has long been a quintessential urban gathering space for Adelaide.

The square is also of architectural significance as some of the oldest and most important monuments in the city are contained within and in the immediate surroundings of the square. As the capital of South Australia, most of the city's government buildings are housed in the same Romanesque Revival buildings as when the city began. Adelaide is also known for its massive amount of churches, sometimes being referred to as "The City of Churches," and as such a handful of gothic-revival churches and cathedrals surround the square.

As the city attempts to revamp its urban spaces, Victoria Square has also become the center of a development boom as many modern high rises have been built nearby in the downtown core, and many more are still planned to rise in the immediate vicinity of the square, transforming the skyline and urban shape of downtown Adelaide.





History

Cultural activity at the location now known as Victoria Square dates back to well before European settlers made their way to Australia. The Kurna people, a group of indigenous Australians, have long used this location for ceremonies and festivals, and it was considered to be the cultural center of their domain, which included most of the Adelaide Plains of South Australia. Their name for the site was 'Tarndanyangga' or 'The Dreaming Place of the Red Kangaroo.'

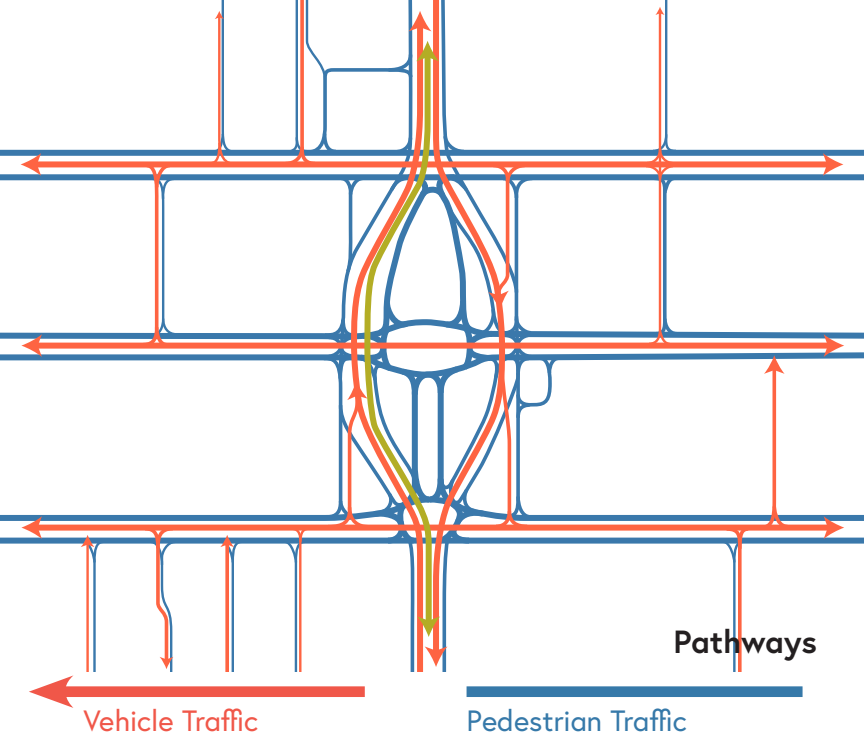
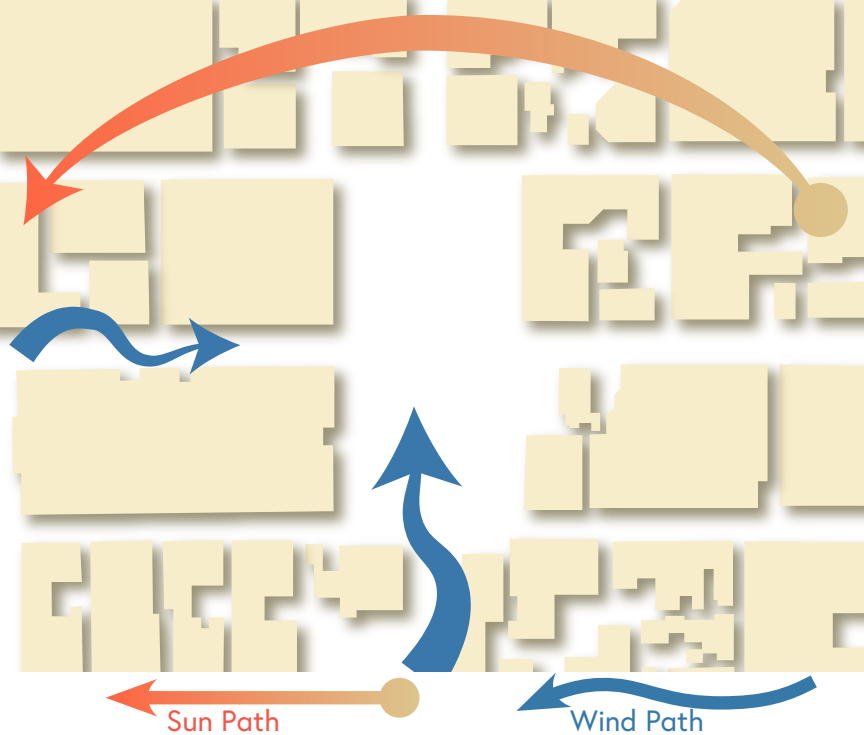
Upon his arrival to Australia, Colonel William Light, founder and planner of Adelaide, planned a large public square at the center of the city's gridded streets. In Light's plan, the square was originally known as The Great Square but upon its completion it was named after Queen Victoria. The square officially opened in 1837 and in 1894 a statue of Queen Victoria herself was dedicated at the center of the square.



The square changed many times in design, originally King William Street skirted the edges of the park but eventually the streets that met the edges of the park were extended through the park. The park underwent a major redesign in 1967 when the surrounding streets assumed their diamond form, extending from King William Street and fanning out around the center of the park. Also in the 1960s, the Kurna people resumed some of their cultural events in the square which have been embraced by the city as they have officially ascribed the name Tarndanyangga as an alternate title for the square.



A plan to revamp the park once again was accepted in 2013 and partially built in 2014. The plan includes new gardens on the south end, the elimination of the Grote Street crossing, and sweeping curved canopies on the east and west sides of the park. The plan has only been half realized as the north half of the park was converted in 2014 and then the second phase of the plan stalled at the city. It remains to be seen if the plan will be completed any time soon.



As the only square I'm studying that is in the southern hemisphere, Victoria Square is the only public space on my list that experiences sunlight predominantly from the north. This is actually slightly unfortunate as the taller buildings to the north cast shadows over the northern edge of the square for most of the day. Adelaide experiences a warm climate, with fairly hot summers, and rarely ever dipping below freezing in the summer. Prevailing winds run almost exactly parallel to the north-south-oriented streets of the city, with the strongest winds coming from the mountains to the south and significant ocean breezes coming from the west off of the Gulf of St. Vincent. Winters are short and normally bring what little precipitation that the city does experience in a given year, but most months are warm and dry.

Due to its unique planning in the 1800s, Adelaide has notably massive blocks of about 1500' by 500' (six times the size of New York City's, about 250' by 500'). As such, the major streets running east to west and north to south experience heavy traffic. Each block is divided fairly randomly by alleys that receive a very light flow of pedestrian and vehicle traffic, but serve to break up the huge blocks in a few locations. Franklin Street and Gouger Street run on the north and south sides of the square respectively, and Grote Street runs through the center. King William Street meets the park at the north and south sides and is diverted around it. Parallel to King William is the route of Adelaide's tram which has a stop on the west side of the park. Pedestrian traffic is steady and significant around and through the park. Access points to the park are pedestrian crossings where King William and Grote Streets meet the park in the center of the north, south, east, and west edges of the park.



Urban Character

Green Cover

Older Buildings Newer Buildings

Tree Canopy Grass Cover

Nearly every block in Adelaide's downtown features an incredibly eclectic mix of old and new. This has become a defining feature of Adelaide's urban character. Adelaide is known for its many old churches and civic buildings as it has been the capital of the state of South Australia since its creation. The city appears to have experienced a boom in development in the mid to late 1900s when many new high rises popped up replacing older, possibly historically significant buildings. The city is once again experiencing a boom in new building, this time on the sites of parking lots and unused empty spaces between buildings. The square itself has changed quite a bit since its creation, the current iteration of the park that can be seen is a combination of the most recent 2013 redevelopment which has been completed in just the north half of the park, and the prior 1967 redesign which can still be seen in the south half where the redevelopment has not yet reached fruition.

Since its inception, Adelaide has been planned to have ample green space. The downtown is surrounded completely by a large belt of park land, and within the downtown there are five significant squares, with Victoria Square in the center and one near each corner of the square mile that is the downtown. All of these squares feature ample green space with lots of grass and trees. Victoria Square features open green space in its center diamond and clusters of trees at the corners. Nearly every major street bordering the square is lined with trees creating pleasant streetscapes in lieu of a significant streetwall in some areas especially to the south of the square where most of the buildings are set farther back from the street.



- Civic, Cultural, Institutional
- Retail, Commercial
- Residential
- Mixed-Use

Point of Interest

In contrast to many downtown urban spaces, Adelaide's downtown appears to be overwhelmingly single-use. A majority of buildings, especially those built before and into the early 1900s are only a couple stories tall and most of these buildings are currently being used as retail and office space. Newer, larger, office buildings also exist but more often than not lack the ground floor retail space. Surrounding the square itself are many cultural buildings, including university buildings, civic buildings, and churches. These buildings draw many visitors but are, again, largely single-use. On the north and west of the site, a few old civic buildings have been repurposed into apartments or hotels, with retail on the first floor. Some of the few mixed-use developments in the area. Some single-use apartment buildings and houses can be found further out from the center of the downtown area.

Adelaide has a small and confined downtown core of only about one square mile. As such, the area does not really have many distinct neighborhoods. Many of the landmarks in the area are either churches or civic buildings; at 1 is the Romanesque Adelaide Post Office, one of many former and current civic buildings flanking the square. At 2 and 5 are significant churches Pilgrim United and St. Francis Xavier respectively. At 3 is the Torrens Building housing the programs of many international universities. Within the park, at 4 is the statue of Queen Victoria (namesake of the square), and 6 is the Three Rivers Fountain, an important gathering space. At 7 is the Central Market a historic marketplace that has been expanded and improved over the past century. The Chinatown district of Adelaide is roughly contained within the Central Market but spills out into the nearby streets just enough to be considered its own district. At 8 is the entrance arch to Chinatown.

Conclusions

Unlike most, if not all of the other cities I have examined, Adelaide, as a very new city in the grand scheme of things, is still struggling to find its identity. At the forefront of this struggle is the issue of rectifying the city's planning from a decidedly different era with modern urban sensibilities. Throughout all of this, the city's vibrant public spaces have been an absolute asset.

Victoria Square, as the literal center point of the city, seems to be leading by example for the city's other public spaces. Having undergone many reinventions throughout its time as the city's primary public space, Victoria Square seems to have found the right balance between the many everchanging facets of Adelaide.

Victoria Square was a planned disruption to the massive and rigidly gridded blocks that surround it. Though this disruption has been circumvented and handled in many different ways throughout the square's existence, the ultimate solution of weaving the once straight streets around the park in a sort of diamond shape proved to unlock the potential of this great space.

Adelaide's urban character and culture is still very eclectic and formative. With a huge mix of building forms, styles, and ages it might seem like one has travelled to another city even just travelling one block. This is another area where the city's planning has been a detriment to its development, as many of the buildings in the city center are single-use and were not designed to accommodate residences. In fact the downtown area, despite being more active than ever, has less than half the population that it did at its height of nearly 45,000 in the 1920s.

Despite some of these setbacks, Adelaide's urban spaces have remained as steadily active as ever and have even improved. By perfectly accommodating automobile and transit traffic without obstructing pedestrian access to the park, Victoria Square has been able to optimize access, while nightly events in the park and annual festivals that draw thousands of visitors every year have legitimized the space as a successful public square.







Shopping Malls

In the 1950s, with suburban sprawl spreading in full force, a new kind of public space began to pop up in America's urban areas: the shopping mall. As the public spaces of cities moved farther and farther away from pedestrian focused development and towards automobile-centric development, there was some demand for walkable, convenient retail districts close to suburban communities.

Though shopping centers such as the Galleria in Milan, and the Burlington Arcade in London, have existed for over a century and undoubtedly inspired the design of modern shopping malls, their intentions were slightly different. These early versions of shopping malls existed in conjunction with high density urban cores and were intended to supplant disorganized retail districts rather than outright replace them.



The late 1900s shopping malls that arose mainly in the United States, though originally intended to stave off some effects of suburban sprawl, have ultimately become a catalyst for it. Surrounded by parking lots and garages, malls have done more to encourage automobile-centric development in cities than nearly anything else, despite their original intention to deliver walkable retail centers.



The effects of malls on cities have not been all negative. Though malls fall more under the category of semi-public space, as the private owner sets the hours in which the mall is accessible, and reserves the ultimate right to decide who can and can't enter; they have still become a more or less meaningful public gathering space for cities. Much like urban public spaces, malls feature their own versions of squares and plazas with seating areas and central features like fountains. Out of convenience, and perhaps lack of better options, suburbanites often flock to malls to meet with friends, grab a bite to eat, or even just walk around. This has vaulted malls to a high level of success over the last few decades, however, malls have experienced a sharp decline in recent years with more decentralized developments and urban renewal projects gaining favor in cities, leaving many empty, abandoned, and lifeless malls across the United States.

New Urbanism

An interesting and polarizing development in the design of cities is the rise of a design philosophy known as 'new urbanism.' New urbanism focuses on returning to some design ideals and philosophies that shaped cities centuries ago, especially those reflected in public spaces.

New urbanism, on paper, involves a return to pedestrian and transit focused development, emphasis on mixed-use buildings, and the creation of vibrant and active squares at the center of new developments. These are all generally positive changes for modern cities, and while some applications of these new urbanist ideals have been extremely successful, many more have ended up as nothing more than glossed-up suburban developments hidden behind a shield of good intentions.

The success of new urbanist developments seems to live and die by how well they address issues facing cities and urban communities. Many new urbanist projects have received criticism for failing to create diverse and mixed-income communities like proponents of the philosophy claim it should. New urbanism has also received criticism for failing to properly stifle automobile-centric development, instead just doing a better job of hiding and dressing it up than prior developments. On a qualitative level, many city-dwellers have remarked that new urbanist developments don't pass the eye test, stating that many of these projects look 'creepy,' or even like 'counterfeit' cities.

The range of success of new urbanist developments is all over the place, but the ones that fail or face heavy criticism seem to often be plagued by the same issues, namely, copying or emulating successful urban spaces without understanding or addressing the same underlying factors that made these spaces successful. Today, many new urbanist developments continue to pop up especially in suburban areas, and while many have become successful mainstays of their communities, others have become ghost towns.



Technology and the Public Realm

I have already discussed, at length, the effects that the inventions of the railroad and automobile have had on the public spaces of cities, and the public lives of those who live within them. Even after over a hundred years of existence, these inventions continue to have profound effects on urban spaces today, and are hot points of contention with regards to city planning, urban design, and combatting climate change. Since the mid-1900s and early 2000s we have experienced countless more innovations that either have had or potentially can have significant ramifications on the public realm and the design of public spaces.

The invention and ongoing perfection of radio, telephone, and television technology are three such examples. These inventions have changed the ways in which humans communicate with one another. It is no longer necessary for people to leave the comfort of their homes to learn about the happenings of the world, talk with a friend or family member, or experience music, art, or entertainment. The introduction of mobile phones and the internet have even furthered this disconnect between public space and living a relatively public and connected life. The conjunction of these two inventions brings a connection between the user and nearly every member of the civilized world at the touch of a button. Buying and selling has also been revolutionized by the internet with websites, such as Amazon and Craigslist, as increasingly more things are available for sale online and can be delivered with increasing speed and efficiency, eliminating a large amount of buying and selling that requires entrance into the public realm.

It can, and has, been argued that the internet is a sort of public sphere of its own, or rather that the internet contains many different public spheres. Websites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Youtube have been used as platforms for everything from political discourse to conversations between friends. Few have attempted to argue the validity of the internet as a platform for public activity, but many scholarly studies and academic journals have attempted to dissect the issue of whether or not the internet can be truly considered part of the public realm.



British sociologist John Thompson has posited the principle of 'mediated publicness' expanding on and contrasting with some of Jurgen Habermas's original ideas of what comprises the public sphere, adapted for the modern age of the internet. First, Thompson argues that interactions over the internet are despatialized meaning that people can see things from a variety of times and spaces from a different physical location with no control over the angle or knowledge of the context with which they observe events. Second, Thompson argues that interactions through the internet are mainly unidirectional, with the person sending information, in many cases, being unable to receive direct physical feedback from the person/people receiving the information. Third, Thompson argues that technology has increased the varieties and amounts of people that any individual piece of information can reach, which, while true, I am unsure how this disqualifies the internet from being part of the public sphere.

Whether or not you subscribe to Thompson's views as to what extent the internet can be considered part of the public sphere, it is hard to deny that the internet has changed the ways that public interactions and discourse are carried out. The idea of mediated publicness is a compelling and simple explanation for the extent to which interactions facilitated by technology and over the internet differ from traditional interactions and exchanges in the public sphere.

The unfortunate reality of technology and the public realm, is that many people have and will use technology to supplant and replace public interaction, mistakenly believing that it is a different means to the same end. Richard Sennett, author of *The Fall of Public Man*, prior to the popularization of the internet, explored the idea that public life had already shifted to be much more withdrawn than it was even just a few decades prior. While there is certainly validity to Sennett and Thompson's cautions, and technology certainly does present many challenges to public life, it does not seem that the public realm is in danger of being completely destroyed by technological advancements.



A Shifting Vision of the Public Realm

At some point in the life of cities, it was decided that the upkeep and forward progress of the public realm was not a necessity due to an overwhelming amount of activity migrating into the private sphere. Luckily, cities have recently begun to shed this misconception, however no real consensus seems to have been reached as to how old and perhaps outdated visions of how the public realm manifests itself as architecture should be rectified with the modern technologies, ideas, and activities that are taking hold of cities.

The lack of a consensus could be perceived as a good thing, as the findings of my six individual studies of different public spaces have revealed that different contextual situations call for a variety of different responses, however the lack of new ideas and philosophies for urban designers to rally around should not be mistaken for merely a responsiveness to context.

The most successful pre-industrial and early industrial public spaces seem to be joined by the common thread that they desired to become nodes of public activity in the urban sphere. This notion was much more desirable when an overwhelming majority of daily activities occurred in the public realm. As time moved on through the Industrial Revolution this desire to be a hub of activity seemed to wane quite a bit, but many of these squares created prior to this shift in mentality remain vibrant public squares, even some of the most successful and well-known in the world.

So, why then do the spaces that were created and designed for a time so long ago continue to overshadow well-designed modern public spaces? An idea that I keep returning to is that history and culture cannot be created, it can only be accommodated, reasoned with, and incorporated into public spaces. This can be seen in the ways that Trafalgar Square incorporates and celebrates the centuries of London history before it into the urban fabric around it; or the way Siena turned the Fonte Gaia into a celebration of the miracle of running water when the city's pipelines were completed, creating a timeless monument.



It takes only a quick flip through my individual studies of pathways to realize that cities have become absolute messes of different intersections of automobiles, pedestrians, trains and other forms of transit. One of the major problems facing the public realms of cities is that they are too accomodating. Designers accomodate everyone and everything out of fear that someone might be inconvenienced on their way from point A to point B. As a result, on some level, every modern city and every modern street has similar things to offer to visitors and city dwellers alike.

In order for public space to make a full return to being the vital hubs of activity that they once were in cities, designers must recognize that they cannot directly control or predict the activities of the city dwellers. Simultaneously, designers of public spaces must stop being afraid of inconveniencing city dwellers, a mutual respect is required between the two forces.

The time of designers being able to *create* significant nodes in cities seems to have passed, as has the time of cities growing around their public spaces. As such, designers of today can only work with what they are given. This means identifying significant nodes and intersections, landmarks of all sizes and importances, and cultural resources, and weaving them into meaningful public space, while preserving urban character yet being unafraid to disrupt and make statements.

In the preindustrial city, the biggest challege facing the public realm was how to accomodate an overwhelming amount and variety of activity, the resulting response was centralized, open city squares. As the Industrial Revolution struck, the new challenge of public space was how to accomodate trains, streetcars, and automobiles while maintaining pleasant and usable public spaces. In the modern city, the challenge is that with the public realm available at our fingertips and most activity moved to the private sphere, there is no longer an inherent need for vibrant and utilitarian, architecturally defined public space. The modern public realm does not need to be revitalized, it needs to be vitalized, and the challenge doesn't even yet stretch as far as to include public squares. The challenge that must be addressed is getting people out their front doors.



Works Cited

- Atkinson, D. (1995). *Common Sense of Community*. Demos.
- Cichanowicz, L. (2016, August 10). *The History Of Marienplatz In One Minute*. Retrieved December 15, 2017, from <https://theculturetrip.com/europe/germany/articles/the-history-of-marienplatz-in-one-minute/>
- Hall, E. T. (1992). *The Hidden Dimension*. Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith Pub.
- L. (2016, November 18). *Trafalgar Square*. Retrieved December 15, 2017, from <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/our-building-and-squares/trafalgar-square>
- Landry, C., & Bianchini, F. (1994). *The Creative City*. The Round, Bournes Green Near Stroud, Gloucestershire, England: Comedia.
- Lofland, L. H. (1985). *A world of strangers: order and action in urban public space*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.
- Lofland, L. H. (2009). *The public realm: exploring the city's quintessential social territory*. New Brunswick: Aldine Transaction.
- Piazza del Campo in Siena. (n.d.). Retrieved December 15, 2017, from <https://www.discoveruscany.com/siena/piazza-del-campo.html>
- Sennett, R. (1975). *The fall of public man*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Sennett, R. (1993). *Conscience of the Eye: the design and social life of cities*. London: Faber and Faber.
- Walker, A. (2014, April 18). *Why Is New Urbanism So Gosh Darn Creepy?* Retrieved December 15, 2017, from <https://gizmodo.com/why-is-new-urbanism-so-gosh-darn-creepy-1564337026>
- Washington Square Park. (n.d.). Retrieved December 15, 2017, from <https://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/washington-square-park/history>
- Webb, M. (1990). *The city square*. London: Thames and Hudson.

