

Sections 12, 13 and 14 review the range of analytical techniques available for predicting the performance of these strategies, appraising their performance against the objectives, and developing optimal strategies.

Section 15 “Implementation and Evaluation” considers good practice in implementation and in monitoring performance.

Section 16 “Case Studies” presents four case studies of cities which have adopted some or all of these approaches.

Section 17 provides a brief glossary, and Section 18 is a list of reference.

The guidebook identifies an “ideal” decision-making process for sustainable land use and transport planning in the European context. However, in a further EU-funded project, SPARKLE –“Sustainability Planning for Asian Cities making use of Research, Know-How and Lessons from Europe” (2004), the transferability of this “ideal” process to South East Asia was put under scrutiny, through two seminars (in Bangkok and Hanoi) and eight intensive participatory workshops in Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Some insights gained from these activities were reported in Emberger et al. (2008)<sup>1</sup>.

The authors of this book provide a comprehensive guidance in generating optimal land use and transport strategies to meet the challenge of sustainability. The overall structure of the “ideal decision making process” seems to be suitable for cities in both developed and developing countries. Notwithstanding, compromises and adaptations have to be made to meet local circumstances in both contexts.

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<sup>1</sup> Emberger, G., Pfaffenbichler, P., Jaensirisak, S., & Timms, P. (2008). Ideal decision making processes for transport planning: A comparison between Europe and South East Asia, *Transport Policy*, 15, 341-349.

## **Basics Landscape Architecture 01: Urban Design**

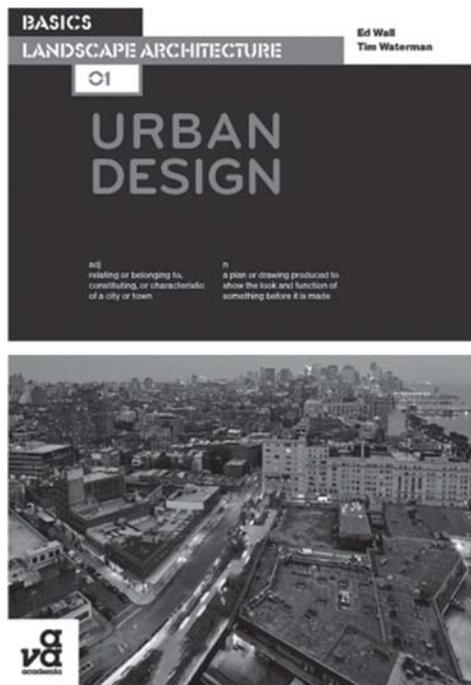
Waterman, T. and Wall, E. (2009)

Lausanne, Switzerland: AVA Publishing

184 pp.

In the present days, especially in Thailand and many other countries, the discussion related to urban design profession is a hot topic among related disciplines like architecture, landscape architecture and urban planners. One aspect accepted by most disciplines is that urban design is a multidisciplinary field that requires other knowledge outside architecture field, such as engineering, social, economic, politic, and so on. In landscape architecture, there is some similarity in the nature of work. This includes the design and organization of outdoor space(s), the necessity of contextual study, and the awareness of time and change in the design. Thus, many landscape architects, both in academic and professional, may come across the feeling of strong tie between landscape architecture and urban design that sometimes it is even impossible trying to separate one from another. For those landscape architects who have had this feeling and yet never taken formal urban design courses, this book could shed some lights on the confusion.

“Basics Landscape Architecture 01: Urban Design” is a book with an eye-catching cover. It belongs to the series of applied arts and design books, *The Ava Series*, published by AVA Academia who expresses themselves as “*Creative publishers for the applied visual arts*”. Their main goal is to introduce series of attractive-looking text books to visual arts students who usually prefer graphic communication to pages of plain text. For this purpose, AVA Academia did an excellent job. This book contains very nice and clear graphic that is not only attractive, but also informative enough to help demonstrate what authors try to convey.



The book is structured by three main parts: Introduction and instruction to use the book, the core contents, and the reference and resources. The first and last part may be extra for regular books, but as for text books, these are essential. The core contents are organized in six chapters ranging from the most basic aspects to more complex issues. The authors try to simplify the subject matters by breaking each chapter down into five sections of 4-6 pages in each. A section is then divided to 2-3 sub topics with example projects. Although, the design of the book seems to realize and pay attention to mitigate the complexity of this organizing system, there are still pros and cons to it. The fact that each topic ends in two pages makes it easy, or sometimes is encouragement, for one to find the pausing point during their reading. And in that case, the clear break between each topic could weaken the readers' understanding of how these topics are related. Combining some of the sub topics or expanding further the details and example projects in each topic could help engage the readers' awareness of the overall contents.

As for the contents, the authors intend to explore the relationship between landscape

architecture and urban design. It is also clear that the book provides a basic knowledge for landscape architects on the overview of urban design. In short, this book unfolds the definition and important aspects of urban design through the eyes of two formerly trained landscape architects, who continuously working in urban design field in United States and Europe for many years. They are both now working professionally along with teaching in universities in London. With the authors' professional and academic experiences, their writing dose make ease for many landscape architects who have been intuitively working on urban design projects to understand and revisit their experiences related to this area of work.

For ones who have fundamental knowledge in landscape architecture, there are two levels of learning they may get out of this book. One is the reinterpretation of things they have already familiar, but through different point of view. For example, the contents in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter explain about the tangible elements in urban design, such as city, territory, neighborhood, street, buildings & open spaces, people, etc. These are the aspects that a good landscape architect always considers when designing an urban space. The other part, though, is the knowledge that helps broaden the eyes of a landscape architect to realize the more complex relationship between tangible elements in urban landscape and other intangible aspects, such as movement, culture, societies, politics and economy, as emphasized in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> chapter.

For the first and last chapters of this book, the authors successfully wrap up the story together and tide back to the statement highlighted in the introduction. Chapter 1 starts with the most crucial question being raised among the designers in the present days, "What is urban design?" This chapter contains brief information about history, evolution, and definition of urban design. They also emphasize the bridge between landscape architecture and urban design and why they are inseparable

from each other. Compressing the contents that could simply occupy a whole book into 24 pages with plenty of supporting graphics, the authors are able to pin point the essential information that answers the question stated at the beginning. This brief summary is informative enough to convey the core idea, yet evoke the curiosity to explore further into the topic. In chapter 6, the last chapter, various case studies are collected to demonstrate the connection between other chapters. Couple of brief paragraphs, no more than two pages of text and graphics per each case study is, in some cases, a bit too concise articulate the physical form of the projects. Regardless of that, this chapter still provides good introduction to notable urban design projects worldwide. In addition, the authors also conclude the “discussion points” for each case study. Some of these points can really set off compelling discussion in a school seminar class or even in professional conversation. Many of the questions indeed emphasize the relationship of landscape architecture and urban design, such as the one for New Delhi case study, where the authors ask: *How should we define the landscape? Is it the spaces between the buildings? Is it the green spaces of parks and gardens? Or is the whole city actually a landscape that needs to be considered as a connected system?*

In summary, this particular book, and potentially other text books in the AVA Series, should be able to fulfill the forgotten needs of landscape architecture students as well as those of other visual arts. Subscription of appropriate series in school library is also worth it, as they can be used both as reference books for students and required text book for courses. The attractive graphic in the book can indirectly add inspiration to students that hopefully lead to curiosity and further researches in the topic. Moreover, although starting as a text book for school, this book can be appealed to professional landscape architects and those in related fields as well. The fact that this book

is neither a heavily academic book, nor a flashy magazine with pages of advertisement, it offers another different choice for professional readers. And with good graphic, pocket book sized, and brief but informative contents in each topic, it can be perfect for landscape architects’ “bed-time story book” that can help brush up their academic point of view as we as stimulate some bright, new ideas for their professional projects.

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## **Towards a Sustainable Northern European Housing Stock: Figures, Facts and Future**

Itard, L. and Meijer, F. (2008)

Amsterdam, The Netherlands: IOS Press

213 pp.

Itard and Meijer’s book *Towards a Sustainable Northern European Housing Stock* addresses one of the most challenging issues on sustainable development confronting the world. Sustainable housing in this book is narrowly focused on the environmental dimension and specifically on the energy consumption of residential building stock. Although European countries have in recent two decades put sustainable housing high on the political agenda, the results so far are modest. Based on a search and inventory of data on the existing building stock and developments of related policies towards sustainable housing in eight Northern European countries including Austria, Finland, France, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland and United Kingdom, the book aims to