

# Urban Design Studio: Taipei Shan Sung District Study

1996 ACSA *Design Studio* Project Award

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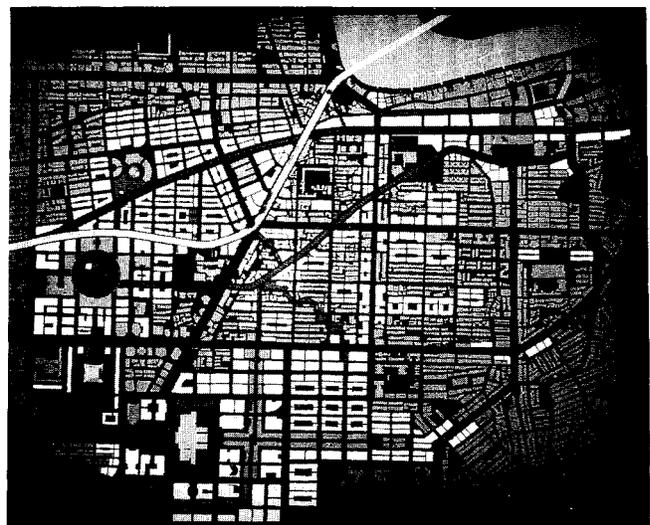
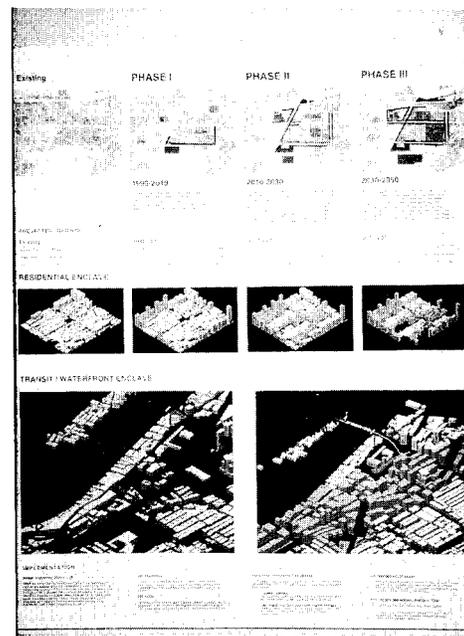
The pattern of Taipei today consists mainly of three overlapping systems of streets: the symbolic city, a central axis, and a grand avenue along Jenai Road, connecting the two seats of governmental authority; the public city, created by the grid of major streets and laid out largely during the Japanese period; the local city, a myriad of minor streets and alleyways in the local neighborhoods that Taipei residents share. What makes Taipei's environment unique is how these systems have been interlaced. This pattern, which has evolved as Taipei's economy has boomed over the past two decades, is now being transformed by a number of forces.

The urban design studies which follow examine how a number of new organizing themes might be adopted for the development of the eastern district of central Taipei. What forms of development should be encouraged on the new development sites that become available? Can the quality of life be improved for the current residents of the area, while allowing substantial new development? What should be the balance in the Sung Shan district between the symbolic city, the formal city and the local city? How should new areas and old be connected?

## PROJECTS

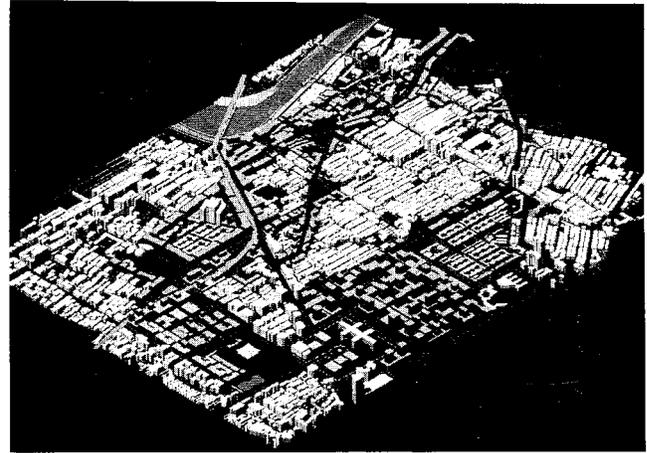
### Enclave City

Enclave City enhances the existing pattern and fabric of Taipei to allow higher densities and to create identifiable neighborhoods. The edges of major thoroughfares are intensified to create "neighborhood" spaces in the interior areas while increasing the opportunity for city-wide commercial development along the edges. In some parts of the study area these enclaves are enhanced through rezoning and in others by reorganizing blocks and building new housing types. In addition to new and enhanced enclaves, the plan includes the development of major "public" nodes in areas such as the Sung Shan Station, the new Cultural District, and new development district east of City Hall. Enclave City is based on the recognition of a modular and self-supporting unit of residential fabric which is typical of most of Taipei; with an inner core of residential uses, supported on the ground floor by neighborhood retail and services such as grocery stores, laundromats and food stalls, and a periphery of intense commercial uses, fronting the larger arterial roads.



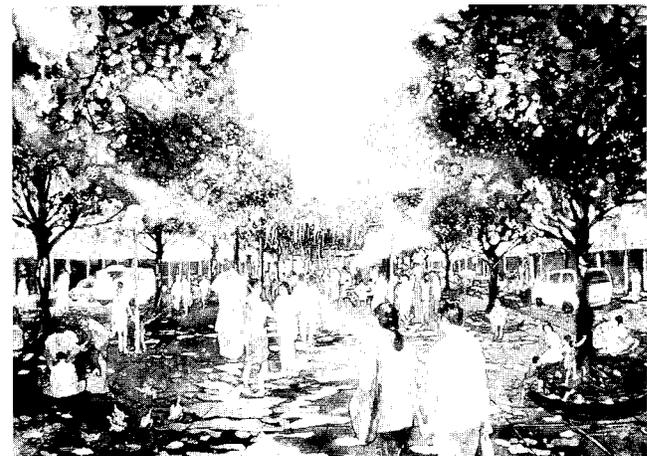
### Connected City

Taipei is a city that has modernized at the expense of its former self, a city that has severed many of the vital threads that make up healthy urban fabric. Piecemeal redevelopment at ever higher densities has fragmented many districts, leaving behind spaces that are poorly connected to each other. As a result the city lacks the definitions and connections—pedestrian, temporal, ecological and cultural—necessary to be a livable place. This proposal creates a "seamless city." Where important connections have been severed the Connected City repairs them, and where major new developments are proposed, the Connected City provides passages to new places. Networks of plazas, walkways, pedestrian oriented streets, and parks link the established east-west city-wide axis to major redevelopment areas north of the Sun Yat Sen Center and west to the Sung Shan Station. Throughout the study area, unique and innovative methods of providing both pedestrian and automobile access are used to connect new developments and to retrofit the older neighborhoods.



### Green Link City

Green link city plans to infuse the Sung Shan district with trees and greenery to promote aesthetic and sensory relief from the built environment, while creating a system of connections throughout the area. The system of green links includes linear parks, landscaped boulevards, pedestrian walkways and small courtyards. In addition to the green connections, the tobacco industry land is redeveloped into an integrated cultural district and park, the rail yards are redeveloped as housing, and the Sung Shan Station creates a new "gateway" to the city. The Sung Shan area currently is a composite of two urban systems: one is essentially the network of neighborhood places used for everyday activities such as grocery stores, schools, temples and housing; the other is a piece of the larger city fabric and its municipal and provincial institutions along the main east-west axis of Taipei. The underlying approach of the Green Link City scheme is to connect these two systems through the development of a new cultural center and a connected network of new open spaces.



### A Cultural Boulevard

In Taipei, the dominant location of public space is the street. All other spaces, whether monumental or humble, are defined by the street and related to it. All of life's daily activities are encountered on Taipei's streets: transportation, large and small commerce, socialization and communication. The Cultural Boulevard scheme merges the complexity of Chinese culture with the dynamics of Taipei in a plan which decentralizes the facilities for the proposed cultural center along a new Boulevard. This Boulevard integrates many spaces and places throughout the Sung Shan district. Available land is used to build a new road along which the proposed "cultural center" is dispersed and a "cultural district" which embraces surrounding neighborhoods, is formed. The new cultural facilities along the boulevard are divided into four groups: Performing Arts, Archives, History Museum and Communication. While related by broad cultural content, each of these has a potentially distinct and urban function.

