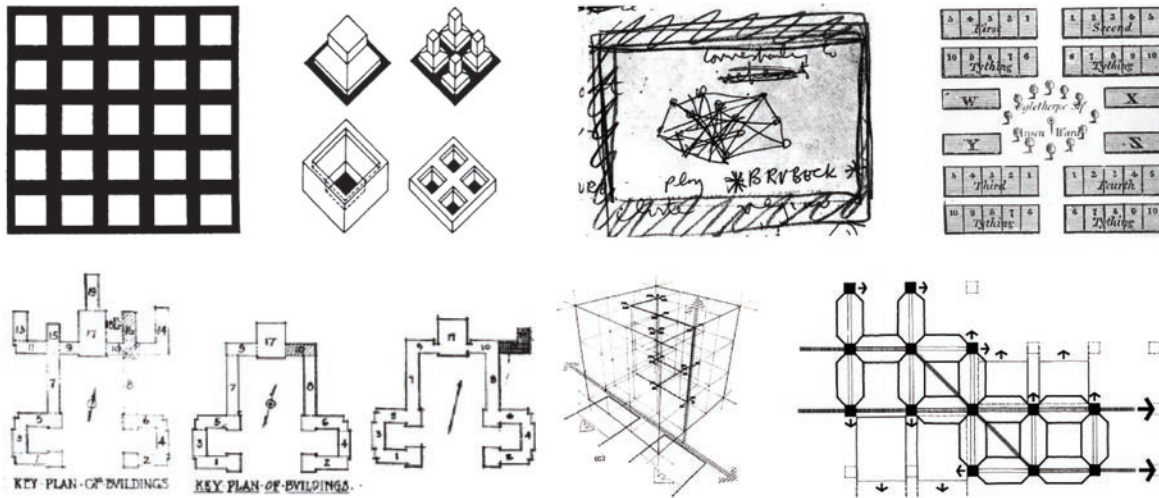


CALL FOR ARTICLES (AND PROJECTS) FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF  
*Projections*, the MIT Journal of Planning

*Configurational studies of the built environment:  
Designing for growth & change*

Deadline for submitting articles: June 1, 2010

Notification of acceptance: July 15, 2010



*Projections*, the Journal of the MIT Department of Urban Studies and Planning, focuses on the most innovative and cutting edge research in planning. Each volume is devoted to a different topic of interest to planning scholars, students, and professionals. As a peer-reviewed publication, *Projections* welcomes original high quality submissions at the vanguard of planning theory and practice. Volume 10 of *Projections* explores configurational studies of the built environment, focusing on contemporary propositions on two specific performance dimensions that urban environments face over time: *growth* and *change*.

The physical pattern of urban infrastructure, the two and three-dimensional geometry of built form and its circulation routes, the shape of public space and paths that connect them are key variables deployed by the urban designer to configure the change and growth of the city. The urban designer's intention, through the exploration of different configurations and their probable consequences, is to discover the means whereby each part and the whole of the city becomes a better host for the activities of its users. Activities, their location, their intensity and their rate of change can also be variables in the city design process, but more often these attributes of the city are presented as the 'needs' to be accommodated by a proposed change or addition to the city's

configuration of infrastructure, built form and public space that will enable a city to become a more elegant, generous, just and functional host.

The relationship between the configuration of elements of the city and its performance as a host along any of these dimensions has been the subject of some study- and a good deal more assertion. Among others, Kevin Lynch searched vigorously for plausible propositions that would link physical configuration with the qualities of cities [1]. A great deal of study about the qualities of a city as a function of its form also takes place in the practice of urban design.

We propose to edit an issue of *Projections* that presents and reviews contemporary propositions about the configuration of the built environment by academics and practitioners of urban design. Our goal is to provide the readers with an overview of the kinds of questions that are being addressed, the methodologies that are used to address these questions, and the tools that have been developed to analyze the comparative advantages of different configurations of urban form. We seek articles that focus specifically on urban design as a determinant of the quality or performance of cities and/or demonstrate effective and novel practice or theoretical analysis techniques on the subject.

To focus an otherwise vast range of research, we center the issue of *Projections 10* on two specific and related performance dimensions that urban environments face over time: *growth* and *change*. We ask both theorists and practitioners of urban design to reflect upon design strategies that enable and/or allow different settlements patterns to adapt, with ease and elegance, to changes in use, and/or to present and reflect on design strategies that will readily accommodate growth in demand over time.

We believe these two dimensions or variables of city form are crucially important in any urban setting that seeks to offer sustainable development, and find them inadequately represented in current academic as well as practical debates of sustainable city design. Though theoretical discussions of ‘adaptability’ in urban design have engaged planners and architects for decades [2, 3], the imperative for elegant and efficient configurations of infrastructure at the scale of the city has further increased with the more recent rapid expansions of cities in Asia, the Middle East, South America and Africa. The lack of accommodation for activity change in the configuration of the built environment often leads to demolition and redevelopment, imposing very considerable environmental, fiscal, and energy costs on a city.

Therefore, we ask authors to discuss spatial strategies and formal provisions that allow urban design schemes to successfully adapt to anticipated or unforeseen types of change and growth, involving least friction and cost. We pose the following questions:

- What are the strategies for accommodating growth and change available to urban designers?
- What evidence do we have about the actual performance of these strategies?
- What costs and challenges are involved in implementing the strategies in practice, and who bears them?

We ask authors to link the discussion as clearly as possible to the physical pattern of the city.

To orient authors' in the discussion, we present an open-ended list of some common sources of change and growth that affect the built environment of the city:

1. Changes in the amount and nature of social and economic activities hosted by an urban area.
2. Changes in demography and social composition of an urban area.
3. Changes in land values of a neighborhood, leading to pressures of redevelopment and densification.
4. Changes in life styles, social values, real incomes and norms of the population leading to changing aspirations and demands on the built environment.
5. Changes produced by the evolution of technology in both the public and private realms (transportation, production and services).
6. Policy, legal and administrative changes that bear on city design and development.
7. Changes in natural and climatic factors, including temperature, water, air-quality, vegetation or wildlife.
8. Changes brought on by war, disasters, civil unrest, etc.

Authors can choose to address the capacity of urban spatial configuration to adapt to any or all of the above categories, or expand to additional categories of urban change and growth. We provide some literature references on adaptability of the built environment in the bibliography, at the end of this document [2-16]. We welcome critical analysis, theoretical papers, plans, analyses of projects and other forms of reflections on designing for change and growth in the built environment.

#### **Editor of Volume 10:**

Andres Sevtsuk, PhD candidate in Urban Studies & Planning, MIT

#### **Editorial Board**

*Projections* is a unique collaboration between graduate students in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at MIT and an editorial board composed of leading scholars in the areas most closely linked to the topic under discussion. The editorial board for Volume 10 includes leading academics

and practitioners from around the world whose work focuses on configurational studies of the built environment. The editorial board of Projections 10 includes:

1. Joan Busquets, Harvard GSD
2. John Habraken, Netherlands
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**Details for Submission**

Submissions must be sent electronically to: [projections@mit.edu](mailto:projections@mit.edu)

Featured article submissions should not exceed 6,000 words. Shorter articles, such as research briefs and student research notes, should not exceed 1,000 words. All submissions should be written according to the standards of the American Psychological Association publication manual. Notes should be placed at the end of the document. Please double-space all parts of the manuscript and leave one-inch margins on all sides. Tables and images should be separated from the text, not exceeding a width of 3.5 inches. Images should be provided in .Tiff, not exceeding a width of 5 inches and a resolution of 600 dpi (a width of 3,000 pixels.) Include a cover sheet with the title of the article, the author's name, phone number, email address, and a two-sentence biographical statement.

The last date for submitting finished articles is in **June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010**. The editor will confirm the reception of the work by e-mail. The acceptance decision on the papers will be communicated by the editor July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010. Projections, Volume 10 is scheduled to be published by December 2008.

For more information, please visit the website: <http://web.mit.edu/dusp/projections/> or contact the managing editor for Projections, Volume 10:

Andres Sevtsuk at [projections@mit.edu](mailto:projections@mit.edu)

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