

auri research brief

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Making Streets for People : Urban Design Issues

Since the 1960s, urban planning in Korea has focused largely on the movement function of streets. More than 140 pedestrian overpasses and many highways were constructed in Seoul during the period of 1966-1970, under Mayor Kim Hyeon-ok. This often resulted in places that are dominated by motor vehicles to the extent that they fail to make a positive contribution to the quality of life.

Streets must fulfill a variety of functions in order to meet people's needs as places for living, working, and moving around. In recent years, there have been changes in policy direction; policymakers have started to think that better-designed streets contribute significantly to the quality of the manmade environment and play an important role in the creation of sustainable, inclusive, mixed communities. Many local authorities strive to improve and enhance the streets; they allocate a lot of their budget to street improvement projects. Considering these circumstances, this study aims to understand the problems of current urban design in Korea and provide future direction for making "streets for people."

In chapter two, the key concepts and new vision of "streets for people" were defined through the literature review. In the latter half of the 19th century, the standards of road design were developed for the purpose of improving public health and the flow of vehicle traffic. Since the mid-20th century, car-

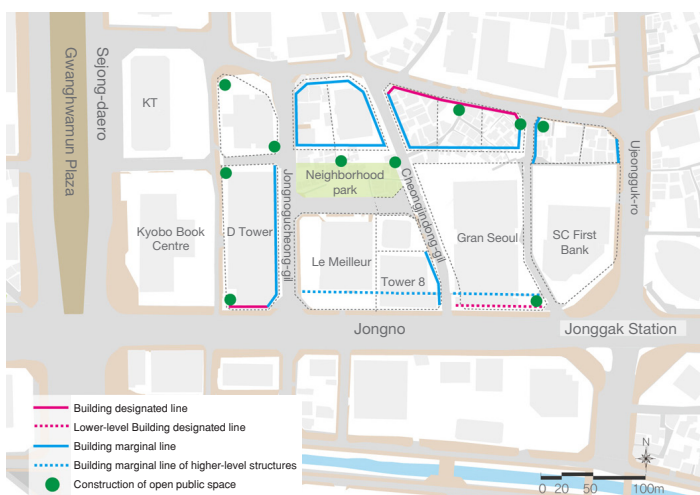
oriented urban planning has received criticism. “streets for people” in this study means “shared space” where spaces are provided for different modes of travel, “street as place” where social interactions occur and diverse activities are accommodated, and “human-scale street” in which people feel comfortable and safe.

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| Movement | Spaces which are designed for different modes of travel (shared space) |
| Function | Spaces where social interactions are possible and diverse activities are held (street as place) |
| Scale | Clean spaces in which people feel comfortable and safe (human-scale street) |

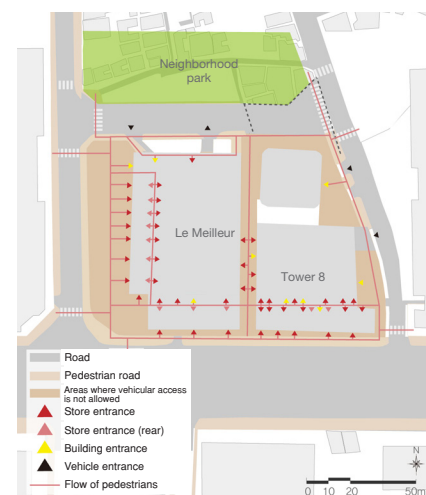
Notion of Streets for People

The analysis framework was established based on the concepts of “streets for people.” Urban design projects were analyzed in two categories; “redevelopment projects” of existing cities and “new town planning,” since the planning process and related legislation are totally different.

The redevelopment project of Cheong-jin District consisted of replacing numerous small blocks in the city center of Seoul with superblocks and massive buildings. The narrow streets where small retail stores were located were replaced by widened streets for the flow of vehicles. The H/D ratio got 6-7 times higher. The street environment analysis of Gangnam-station District showed the limitations of the “District-unit plan,” the most typical urban design tool in Korea. “Pedestrian priority Planning” failed to improve the quality of the pedestrian environment.

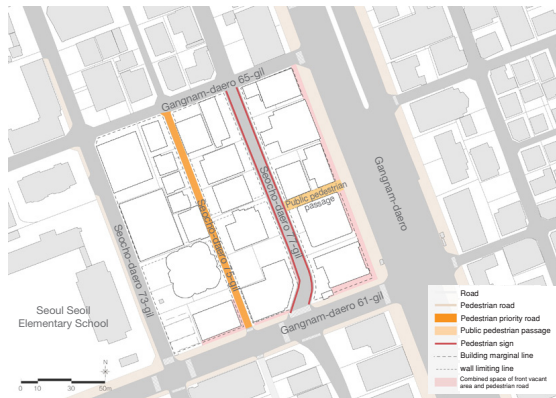


Current status of designation of construction lines and public open space in Cheong-jin District



Current status of actual locations of store entrances in Cheong-jin District

Guidelines for Redevelopment of Streets and Current Status of Actual Locations of Store Entrances in Cheong-jin District



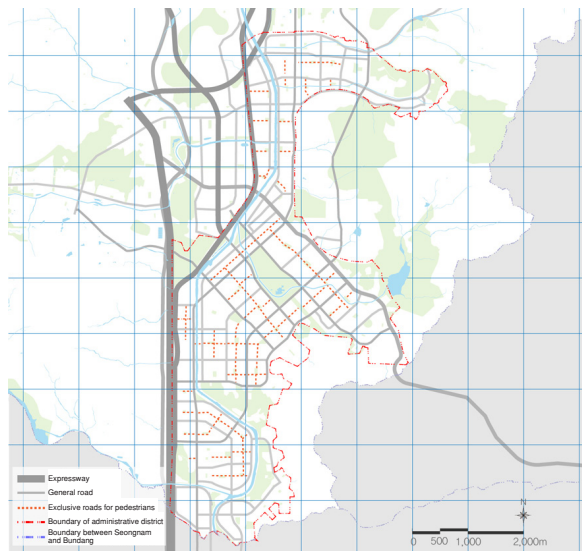
Current pedestrian priority road by District-Unit Plan



Confusion between vehicles and pedestrians

Designation of Pedestrian Priority Streets of District-Unit Plan and Current Status of Flow of Cars & Pedestrians around Gangnam Station

The pedestrian environments of the new towns were even worse than those of the old cities. New towns, regardless of their construction period, were planned on principles of modern city planning. They were composed of superblocks surrounded by highways. The planners tried to create some pedestrian streets in the commercial zones, but most citizens used cars to get there. The planned pedestrian streets suffered traffic congestion and parking problems.



Street System of Jincheon & Eumseong Innovative City and Bundang New Town

The case studies of Tokyo and of Vancouver could give some implications: 1) street space must be provided for the diverse modes of movement, 2) the entire urban structure and traffic system have to be planned in consideration of pedestrians, 3) the “street-based urban redevelopment projects” contribute to making streets for people, 4) the current street

classification system, based on “movement function,” must be re-examined and replaced by new street types considering “place function,” 5) for making lively streets, the public and private realm have to be planned integrally, and it is integral to guarantee the private spaces.



Detailed Plan of Street Landscapes

Source: City of Vancouver(2006), 「southeast False Creek Public Realm Plan」, p.27

The future direction of urban design for “making streets for people” was proposed in this study. For its implementation, the current legislation and guidelines must be changed and each theme has to be developed in depth, which will be the focus of future studies.

Key words : Streets for People, Shared Space, Street as Place, Human Scale, Urban Design, Urban Redevelopment, New Town Planning, Street Type, Street-Based Urbanism

