

Transforming Space to Place: Best-Practice Approaches and Initiatives

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Abstract : Urban citizens have come to expect more from their cities, demanding optimal conditions for business creativity and professional development, along with efficient, sustainable transportation and energy systems that feed robust economic development and healthy job markets. Urban public spaces are an important part of the urban environment, creating the framework for public life and quality thereof. The transformation of space into successful public places are crucial in this regard as planning must safeguard flexibility towards future changes, whilst simultaneously be capable of acting on short-term demands in order to address the complexity of public spaces within urban areas. This research evaluated two case studies of different cities in Belgium which successfully transformed spaces into lively public places. The transformation was illustrated and evaluated by means of visual analyses and space usage analyses of the original and redesigned space, along with the experience and value that the redesign brought to the area. Selected design elements were identified and evaluated based on the role in the transformation process, in an attempt to draw conclusions with regards to theory-practice relevance and to guide the transformation of space to place of (similar) public spaces.

Keywords : space, place, transformation, case studies

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