

ID 1501 | A CONTRASTIVE STUDY ON STRATEGIC VALUE OF PUBLIC SPACE PLAN IN URBAN DEVELOPMENT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF SPACE PRODUCTION

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE TENDENCY OF PUBLIC SPACE PLAN AS A CATALYST

Public space is one of the most important elements to realize the concept of resilient city. Not only could it provide emergency shelters when disasters, it also could provide a flexible and sustainable development for industries as a macroscopic spatial strategy.

The value of public space has been rising gradually with calls for human-centered environment, after its concession for economic development in decades. Because it could beautify environment and promote social communication. What's more, it has a tendency from its own ecological, social and aesthetic value to strategic one as a catalyst in urban development.

Urban catalyst, means that a particular element has a positive influence on the external or internal conditions of the existing ones and causes a "chain reaction", promoting continuous urban development as arrangement (Atton W. & Logan D., 1994). There is no doubts that public space has a great potential to be a catalyst in urban development.

1.2 SPACE PRODUCTION VALUE OF PUBLIC SPACE

To realize the strategic value of public space as a catalyst, there is a main contradiction between high investment and low output of capital. Because the strategic value of public space is significant but abstract beyond capital, while the space production value of that is very low in fact, both of which disjoint to some extent. Therefore, it'll be a breakthrough to improve public value from the perspective of space production.

Space production, means the transformation from production of goods to that of space in a certain place, in other words, from usage value to commercial value of land measured in term of capital. So, what's the space production value of public space? Currently, it has presented mainly as the environmental improvement and a following increase of its surrounding land value. However, one-off land deal is not enough to support the long-term development of public space. So this paper take two cases to analyze their sustainable development and interaction with the surroundings from the perspective of space production.

2 CASE STUDY ON SKYLINE PARK IN DENVER, USA

2.1 BACKGROUND

2.1.1 URBAN DEVELOPMENT: URBAN SPRAWL & DOWNTOWN DECLINE

In 1890s, the downtown of Denver was the main commercial center in the Rocky Mountain Region. However, after 1960s, the urban sprawl started continuously with many shopping malls in the suburbs. Lots of citizens, especially the wealthy, and commercial activities moved to the suburbs, which made the downtown uninhabited and lifeless. The direct reason is private cars which reduced the distance between the downtown and suburbs, while the internal one is the decline of life quality in the downtown, causing the loss of economic vitality and social communication.

2.1.2 URBAN PLANNING: ACTION, INVENTORY & INTEGRATED PLAN

American system of urban planning consists of 2 sub-systems of Urban Planning and Urban Design, with 2 hierarchies of Strategic Plan and Implementary Plan respectively (Table 1). Because of the nearly finished urbanization in early 20th century, American urban planning has presented mainly as inventory and integrated plan.

	Urban Planning	Urban Design
Strategic Plan	Master Plan	Strategic Urban Design
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● American Comprehensive Plan; ● British Structure Plan; ● Japanese Area Division. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● American Urban Guide Plan; ● British Urban Design Strategy; ● Japanese Urban Institution.
Implementary Plan	Implementary urban development planning	Implementary Urban Design
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● American Zoning Regulation, Land Subdivision and Site Planning; ● British Local Plan; ● Japanese Land Use District Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● American Special Urban Design Guidelines; ● British Development Brief and Design Guide; ● Japanese Planning Permission.

Table 1 - American system of urban planning and design

2.1.3 URBAN MANAGEMENT: PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

In the range of downtown, the Board of Directors of Downtown Denver, Inc(DDI), which has developed as Downtown Denver Partnership(DDP) nowadays, was established in 1955. As a leader, place-maker, convener, idea generator, facilitator, recruiter, team-builder and policy advocate, it guides some special projects to manage and develop the downtown as a unique, diverse, vibrant and economically healthy urban core of the Rocky Mountain Region (DDP, 2014). It also balances the benefits of partners and provides more opportunities for bottom-up projects.

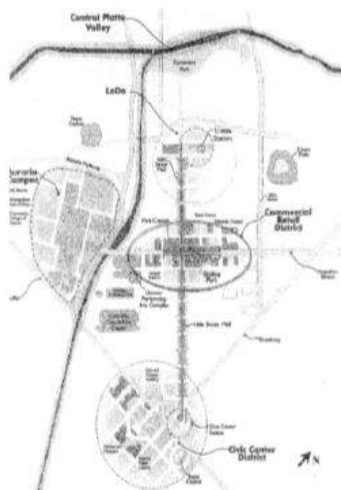
In the range of city, the Denver Urban Renewal Authority (DURA) was established by the government in 1958 to assist in the redevelopment of blighted property in Denver, working with the residents, businesses, civic leaders, area developers together(DURA, 2016). Most of all, DURA has managed a portfolio of \$340 million in Tax Increment Financing (TIF) bonds and over \$166 million in outstanding TIF reimbursement obligations(Komara A., 2004). When these projects are fully built out, its investments will have leveraged an estimated \$8 billion of private capital in previously blighted and underutilized areas of our city(DURA, 2008).

2.2 DESCRIPTION

2.2.1 SKYLINE URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT & SKYLINE PARK

As a part of the renewal movement counteracting widespread suburban sprawl and autofocus retail, Skyline Urban Renewal Project was centrally approved within Denver's downtown in 1967 (Figure 1). Typical of urban renewal efforts, DURA's first jobs was to raze deteriorated structures so that the land could be made available to those interested in redevelopment. Ironically, historic resources were lost and it's the reason of the name "Skyline".

Skyline Park, a now-demolished park, was constructed in three blocks in the earliest stage of this program as a focal point. In 1968, Marvin Hatami was consulted by DURA to develop an original design scheme but it served as only a transitional space that would have given visitors little reason to linger. In 1970, DURA initiated a request-for-proposals bidding and finally selected Lawrence Halprin & Associates to refine and implement another scheme. The new concept introduced a formation inspired by the local natural environment into the downtown, because they noticed that rapid development was forcing Denver to lose touch with its vast and dramatic mountain landscapes. The Halprin firm requested they be granted design rights over the first storey of park-facing buildings in order to control their appearance, while there were also some other guidelines including height restriction etc. established in the reports based on Hatami's scheme. However, all restrictive guidelines were negated eventually, because it would deter developers(Hirsch P., 2006).



In 1973, Skyline Park was completed and opened to the public. However, Skyline Park Master Plan released in 1997 recommended its complete demolition. After the struggles in the later 5 years, DDP made the decision to demolition in 2002 and finished it in 2003.

Figure 1 - Map of downtown Denver illustrating Skyline Park's context. From Urban Strategies/Greenberg Consultants, Skyline Park Revitalization Initiative, April 2001, p. 17.

2.2.2 THE 16TH STREET MALL AND DOWNTOWN REVIVAL

In 1971, DDP proposed a plan of pedestrian-scaled development along the 16th Street but it was put off owing to the lack of capital. In 1980s, to meet the requirement of the commercial developers, the 16th Street Mall Plan was proposed again, then finished and opened to the public soon. It was not only a pedestrian-friendly plan but also an integrated plan including commerce and various transportations. It forbade cars and provided free buses as well as light rail connecting the two stations along the street, which was very effective to reduce 50% traffic jam. Most of all, the open street was expanding and forming a pedestrian system which was a new catalyst to promote prosperous commercial activities beyond expectation (Figure 2).

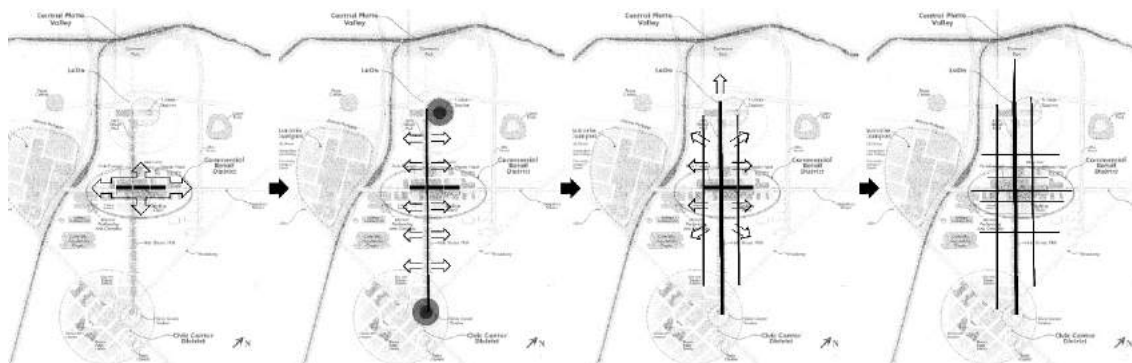


Figure 2 – The expanding process of 16th Street, From Urban Strategies/Greenberg Consultants, Skyline Park Revitalization Initiative, April 2001, p. 17, illustration by the author.

2.3 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STRATEGIES AND BACKGROUND

2.3.1 COINCIDENCE: REASONS OF ITS SUCCESS IN REVIVAL

From the perspective of urban development, it's a coincidence in content. The pedestrian-scaled block could promote social communication and commercial activities. Facing various problems in the city, pedestrian strategy has a positive and multilevel value. Its point in success is human-centered. As the only public space in the 16th Street, Skyline Park have induced the revival of the 16th Street Mall, although it didn't reach the arrangement. But it could be imagined that Skyline Park would play a much more powerful role in the public space system, if the government insisted the implement of those original guidelines. Anyway, the following expansion and infiltration of public space system was far more significant. Compared with the vertical space production of residences or commercial buildings, it's a kind of horizontal space production of public space. The primary value brought was the increase in the value of surrounding land, what's more, the continuous value was its support to the sustainable development of commercial area. Although it still couldn't be measured by money, it has already linked to the survival of commerce directly.

From the perspective of urban planning, it's a coincidence in method. American urban planning is more efficient and adaptive in process. Its Strategic Plan and Implementary Plan have a close connection and both of them have a dynamic interaction according to the situations and trends.

From the perspective of urban management, it's a coincidence in mechanism. Not only could Public-Private Partnership build an open platform, it also could regulate and control the market with some preferential policies. For example, TIF assistance is a policy to encourage the crowdfunding investment. To some extent, it's the key to the success of this project as the first Public-Private Partnership under the management of DURA.

2.3.2 CONTRADICTION: REASONS OF ITS FAILURE AND FINAL DEMISE

From the perspective of urban development, Skyline Park didn't solve the social interpersonal problems radically. On one hand, it rooted from the Hatami's design intention as the transitional space for more pass and less stay. He thought the accessibility of open space could promote the development of commerce, but he ignored the importance of communication. On the other hand, it's too hard to relieve race conflict. When the park became an insecure shelter for the poverty, it has been abandoned to some extent.

From the perspective of urban planning, the original purpose of Skyline Park is to entice private investors to buy the lands near this unique public amenity. So it's a balance between short-term capital absorption and long-term sustainable development. Finally, the inertial thinking of capitalist contributed to the choice of short-term capital absorption. It's a pity that DURA had to compromise under financial pressure and reduced the restrictive guidelines, making the walking system scattered and eventually depressed.

From the perspective of urban management, the primary cause of its demise is that both the government and developers emphasis on commercialism. In the letter Halprin sent to Cultural Landscape Foundation, he expressed his disappointment and helpless. It can be seen that the blindness of capitalism cannot be coordinated with the mind of planners as well as harmonious development of society.

3 CONTRASTIVE CASE STUDY ON RAILWAY PARK IN TIANJIN, CHINA

3.1 SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BACKGROUNDS

3.1.1 URBAN DEVELOPMENT: URBAN EXPANSION AND SPRAWL

The first similarity of Denver, America and Tianjin, China was the law of urban sprawl without the consideration of time dimension. However, during the implementation of the projects, Denver was at the late stage while Tianjin was at middle. As one of megacities in China, there was a great and continuous increase of populations and industries in its center in the past decades. Also, there was the following urban sprawl in the suburbs.

The second one is their intelligent and connotative development. But they were still at different stages of development. Tianjin was accelerating the transformation process from the secondary industry to service, from low value-added one to high. As a result, with the demise or removal of factories, industrial railways has been the useless and dusty city assets, blocking the traffic and leaving a negative image in the city.

The third one is the imbalance between demand and supply of social communication. In the both cities, urban expansion and sprawl has superficially resulted from the decline in quality of life, further internally caused the lack of social communication. Compared with America, the society in China is simple relatively without such ticklish problems.

3.1.2 URBAN PLANNING: BLUEPRINT, INCREMENTAL & SPECIALIZED

In fact, Chinese urban planning took American as a reference, so it is a derivative of American with some Chinese local characters. However, there are 3 differences between them. The first one is American action plan and Chinese blueprint plan. In America, the Strategic Plan is parallel with Master Plan as well as

corresponding Strategic Urban Design, both of which guide and control their parts in Implementary Plan. In China, on one hand, the Strategic Plan is much higher than Master Plan. It seems a blueprint to guide the national or regional development through some macroscopical and conceptual strategies and principles. On the other hand, Chinese system is lack of Strategic Urban Design. In other words, the urban design in China is just equal to Implementary Design in America, just submitting to the rules in Regulatory Detailed Plan and focusing on spatial forms, traffic organization and landscape, etc. without its own strategic value. As a result, there is always a long distance between Strategic Plan and specific urban projects. The second is the difference between American inventory plan and Chinese incremental plan. The main reason is their different stages in the process of urbanization. Because of the nearly finished urbanization in early 20th century in America, it has laid the emphasis on urban renewal of limited lands. Although the urbanization and urban sprawl has been still underway in China, there must be a tendency from quantitative plan to qualitative plan and from space capitalization to information capitalization. The third is the difference between integrated plan and specialized plan. Although the Chinese Master Plan seems cover all parts, they're not integrated as a whole and separate from each other in the next specialized plan.

3.1.3 URBAN MANAGEMENT: PUBLIC-PUBLIC PARTNERSHIP

Taking the full-developed Public-Private Partnership in America as a reference, China has been encouraging the cooperation between the government and private enterprises recently, though there is still a room to improve. In fact, the current practice is “Public-Public Partnership” to some extent, because most of the cooperation is between the government and state-owned enterprises which doesn't play a great role in leveraging private capital.

3.2 DESCRIPTION

Railway Park in Tianjin, China is a recent renewal project along the inner ring and the abandoned industrial railways in the center of city(Figure 3). It was just approved in 2003 and completed in 2016. It took full advantages of the cultural resources of railways and their surrounding industrial heritage. As a result, it has been a greenway with the length of 45 km, average width of 100 m and increase of green area about 123.5 hm². Its spatial structure has an integrated consideration of road networks, slow traffic system, public space system, river system and public service facilities, etc. It contains various functions, such as ecological conservation, industrial cultural education, entertainment and sports, etc. Not only could it provide citizens a low-carbon lifestyle, it also open up an industrial corridor in the city, both of which may be new name cards of Tianjin.



(a) Land use

(b) Location in the center

Figure 3 - Map of Railway Park in Tianjin. From Tianjin Railway Park Plan, 2016.

3.3 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STRATEGIES AND BACKGROUND

3.3.1 COINCIDENCE: REASONS OF ITS SUCCESS IN REVIVAL

From the perspective of urban development, it's a coincidence in context. With the concept of sustainable and human-centered development, public space could improve the quality of urban life, and further promote social communication. On one hand, it's a turning point to solve the previous urban problem by unblocking roads and reuse industrial heritage. On the other hand, it's a meaningful catalyst to induce industrial innovation and transformation through micro regeneration. As a result, it has been a spatial carrier of new culture and industries. The value of public space production here is not only increase the land value and expand public space system but also, what's more, get feedback from sustainable development of industries and life.

From the perspective of urban planning, it's an optimization in method, catering to the tendency of action plan, inventory plan and integrated plan. First, it provides a strategic action plan as an innovative connection between Master Plan and Regulatory Detailed Plan in China. Second, micro regeneration is a worthy exploration to take the advantage of inventory land and refresh disused but valuable heritage. Third, integrated plan, including open space, transportation, commercial and industrial development, etc. is the reason why it could play an effective role as a catalyst.

From the perspective of urban management, it's a breakthrough in mechanism. With the limited capital, the government would have too large pressure to pursue those expensive environmental projects. Bottom-up mechanism must be a key to relieve this difficulty. In this project, the planners shows their initiative and voluntary to pay more attention to urban development, although there may be some sacrifice. It realizes the real practice of Public-Private Partnership in China as well as the forth distribution – spatial distribution with the principle of space justice, which is a sublimation of public space production without any doubts.

3.3.2 RESOLUTION OF CONTRADICTION

Demise is not bad absolutely. Instead, the standards of judgement should be about their necessity of existence even if they have disappeared. Skyline Park in Denver is a typical case that ever had a positive influence on the urban development but went to demise, while Railway Park in Tianjin has been a sustainable spatial carrier to support the continuous urban evolution. Both of them are our references to think about the plans in the future.

4 CONCLUSION

In summary, there are 2 ways which can improve the value of public space from the perspective of space production. One is forming and spreading public space system, the other one is promoting the sustainable development of industries to feed back. So public space plan and design should not only shape space and beautify environment but also, what's more, plan in a large scale and play a significant role in cities or even regions. It must take local conditions into consideration and adhere to the human-centered concept absolutely. Meanwhile, our public space plan and management should run more Public-Private Partnership projects and go for more action plan, inventory plan as well as integrated plan.

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ID 1516 | FROM INFORMAL TO FORMAL PUBLIC SPACE: THE ORGANIZATION AND INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION OF TACTICAL URBANISM MOVEMENT IN SAN

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1 INTRODUCTION

Tactical Urbanism (TU) has become a force in urban design which cannot be ignored. Its representative is a new approach in requesting new types of public space which have changed the traditionally top-down, long-term planning process to bottom-up, action-oriented experiments to improve the public realm. TU is implemented by different sectors with different motives, but the ultimate goal of TU is the same: trying to improve the built environment with some low cost, fast, flexible installations to test the outcomes of the intervention.

There are growing attention on the social media and the internet about the transformation of the unutilized streets or spaces, such as the too wide sidewalks or vacuum parking lot. Through the simple intervention such as putting some tables and chairs for the public to rest, landscaping the parking lot to be an attractive site of the neighbourhood, etc. The collective name of these activities called “Tactical Urbanism.” These small activities can enhance the people’s quality of life and well-being. Its impact on urban design is increasing, and thus more and more people pay attention to this movement. Although the outcome of the TU is obvious (e.g. better public realm), few people know the mechanism of it and its background. TU is not a sudden occurrence but an outcome of some movements in the U.S. (e.g. Play Street, Open Street, Guerilla Gardening, Pop-up Retail, Pop-up Cafe). It has many different forms in different cities, but the spirit of it remains the same.

In this paper, we make a comparison between San Francisco’s “Pavement to Park (P2P)” and Taipei’s “One Day Street Life Experiment Activity (ODSLEA)”. San Francisco’s P2P program is regarded as the earliest and most successful development of TU that seeks to convert parking space into spaces for cyclists, pedestrians, residents, neighbourhood interactions, and local businesses. On the other hand, ODSLEA was a one-day activity held on September 15, 2013, in Taipei, which was highly similar with P2P on the surface. Here comes my question: What are the similarity and difference between these two tactical urbanism movements in essence?

Using a case study approach, this paper relies on first-hand interviews with key stakeholders and second-hand data such as papers, websites, reports, manuals, and promotional campaigns to study the history, organization, institutional arrangement, and the management dimension of P2P and ODSLEA with particular attention on the motivation of the initiators. This paper is expected to understand the motivations of the initiators of TU through the interview and second-hand data; it is important to know the motivation because it would lead to different results. Through the comparison between the P2P and the ODSLEA programs, this research aims to contribute to making a suggestion to all the TU initiators and participants to examine their TU programs that if they contain the TU spirits or not. If not, they are supposed to modify their programs to achieve their goals: to improve the built environment.