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Introduction

The value of density has changed dramatically over the past century in planning: ‘high densities being formerly the bane of planners, but more of a panacea for what ill the city today’. (G Morrow) Density takes very many forms, with correspondingly different implications, and urban design projects and regulatory frameworks have a major impact upon the character of the city. Existing urban and suburban areas have become subject to pressures for densification through site consolidation, multi-unit projects, lower setbacks, greater bulk and height. The impact of ‘urban density’ has acquired a new currency in urban policy debates, and increasing density, or ‘urban intensification’ practices largely define urban transformation today.

This course is part of a three city ‘Urban Systems’ program between Calgary, Barcelona and Melbourne that will conduct a comparative analysis of issues related to density in different locales of each of these cities.

In Melbourne, it is proposed that the program will investigate 6-8 ‘sites’ across a transect of Melbourne, from Southbank through the Central City and the inner suburbs to the middle ring suburbs in the north. Each of the selected case studies will represent a local community with relatively high density – whether ‘traditional’ urban villages (e.g. established pre-2000) or ‘emerging’ high density communities that have been guided by Victorian and Local Government policy over the past decade (e.g. intensification within existing activity centres along transit routes).

By examining local planning policies that address increasing density in developments – whether medium density infill or high-rise apartments – and through mapping and interpretation of urban quality, it will be possible to assess the impact of density on the public realm and the relationship of higher densities with community strengthening.

The density, vitality, and physical form of urban sites in all three cities will be documented according to a commonly agreed to set of parameters and protocols. It is intended that this work will feed into a future project in which the case studies in the three cities will be collated, analyzed, and compared.



Objectives

1. To examine some of the issues associated with urban intensification in different locations within the metropolitan pattern
2. To develop an understanding of the benefits of increasing urban density that will protect and enhance highly valued places through well-considered planning policy and innovative design.
3. To understand the best possible conditions that densification in activity centres and local neighbourhoods can deliver to their communities
4. To observe the urban and architectural typologies that support and promote incremental increases in urban density, with demonstrable public realm and community strengthening outcomes
5. To observe or understand the place-making opportunities that emerge in activity centre development

Teaching Approach

The class will consist of in-class discussions, walking tours, presentations by local professionals, and project working sessions. A detailed schedule will be provided at the beginning of the course.

Content: Topic Areas

A detailed list of topic areas will be provided on the first day of class.

Means of Evaluation

Students are expected to participate in all class sessions and to complete a major mapping/analysis project of one of the selected urban sites.

Interim Presentation: 20%
Final Presentation: 20%
Final Document: 60%
Total: 100%

Grading Scale

Final grades will be reported as letter grades, with the final grade calculated according to the 4-point range. Assignments will be evaluated by percentage grades, with their letter grade equivalents as shown.

Grade	Grade Point Value	4-Point Range	Percent	Description
A+	4.00	4.00	92.5-100	Outstanding - evaluated by instructor
A	4.00	3.85-4.00	85-92.49	Excellent - superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter
A-	3.70	3.50-3.84	80-84.99	Very good performance
B+	3.30	3.15-3.49	76-79.99	Good performance
B	3.00	2.85-3.14	73-75.99	Satisfactory performance
B-	2.70	2.50-2.84	70-72.99	Minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies
C+	2.30	2.15-2.49	66-69.99	All final grades below B- are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty

				of Graduate Studies course requirements.
C	2.00	1.85-2.14	63-65.99	
C-	1.70	1.50-1.84	60-62.99	
D+	1.30	1.15-1.49	56-59.99	
D	1.00	0.50-1.14	50-55.99	
F	0.00	0-0.49	0-49.99	

Notes:

- A student who receives a "C+" or lower in any one course will be required to withdraw regardless of their grade point average (GPA) unless the program recommends otherwise. If the program permits the student to retake a failed course, the second grade will replace the initial grade in the calculation of the GPA, and both grades will appear on the transcript.

Readings

Foundation readings (essential):

- Plan Melbourne, Chapter 4: Liveable Communities and Neighbourhoods, Victorian Government, 2014
- Creating Places For People: an Urban Design Protocol for Australian cities, Australian Government, 2011
- The Character of Urban Intensification: A Report of research projects funded by the Australian Research Council, 2002-2010, Kim Dovey & Ian Woodcock, Faculty of Architecture, Building & Planning, University of Melbourne, 2010
- Transforming Australian Cities for a more financially viable and sustainable future: Transportation and urban design, City of Melbourne & Victorian Government, 2010
- Places for People: Melbourne 2004, City of Melbourne & Gehl Architects, 2005

Foundation readings (desirable):

- Baukultur as an impulse for growth – good examples for European cities, Gehl Architects and Centre for Public Space Research, 2006
- Structure Planning for Activity Areas, Victorian Government Dep't of Transport, Planning and Infrastructure, 2010

Locality specific readings will be provided during the course.

Notes:

1. Written work, term assignments and other course related work may only be submitted by e-mail if prior permission to do so has been obtained from the course instructor. Submissions must come from an official University of Calgary (ucalgary) email account.
2. Academic Accommodations. The Academic Accommodations Policy can be found at: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy>. It is the students' responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodations and have not registered with Student Accessibility Services, please contact them at 403.220.6019. Students who have not registered with Student Accessibility Services are not eligible for formal academic accommodations. More information about academic accommodations can be found at www.ucalgary.ca/access. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course.
3. Plagiarism - Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when: (a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test), (b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author, (c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or, (d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved. While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that

such references be explicitly and clearly noted. Plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offence. It is recognized that clause (d) does not prevent a graduate student incorporating work previously done by him or her in a thesis. Any suspicion of plagiarism will be reported to the Dean, and dealt with as per the regulations in the University of Calgary Graduate Calendar.

4. Information regarding the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>) and how this impacts the receipt and delivery of course material