

Public Spaces with Love celebrates the stories, designs and lessons behind Singapore's cherished public spaces, revealing how they are shaped, cared for and reimagined.

These are the spaces that ground our daily rhythms, expand the boundaries of how we live, work and play, and make us fall in love with our city, our home.



Public Spaces

with



**Explore the stories and designs
behind Singapore's public spaces**

Public spaces with love

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behind Singapore's public spaces**

Published by the
Urban Redevelopment Authority

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ISBN 978-981-94-4385-7 (Print)
ISBN 978-981-94-4386-4 (Digital)

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Celebrating our public spaces

We encounter, experience and inhabit public spaces every day – from the ordinary to the extraordinary, from the routine to the remarkable.

Public spaces enhance our overall well-being. Whether they are parks, open plazas and shaded atriums, or the streets that people use every day, they offer us relief from the city's bustle and make it more engaging and liveable.

They keep our neighbourhoods thriving by drawing customers to nearby businesses. As extensions of our living rooms, they provide conducive spaces for our social lives to flourish. They are places where we watch the world go by, catch up with family and friends, and where life unfolds.



Image: Chee Boon Pin

How did our public spaces come about? How are they shaped, cared for and reimagined over time? In this book, we delve into a selection of public spaces across Singapore to uncover the stories and insights behind these spaces, the design strategies used, and the reasons why we love them and keep returning.

To better capture the variety of ways public spaces that shape our lives, this book is organised into three chapters:

Everyday spaces explores familiar places we pass through daily as we go about our lives: going to school, shopping, running errands.

Respite from work looks at how going to work now extends beyond the office environment. Public spaces around workplaces have become increasingly important for recharging and socialising.

Weekend hangouts illustrates the role of public spaces in enhancing the character of districts. As places that allow people to soak in lively atmospheres or simply enjoy quiet moments, these endearing spots make our city more appealing.



Image: NAFA



Everyone plays a part in our public spaces. Whether by designing, building, programming or using such spaces, we can make them more attractive, comfortable, useful and enjoyable for all. This book will hopefully inspire you to contribute to making our city more liveable and lovable.

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Shaping public spaces through the years

Public spaces are an integral element in the planning and urban design of Singapore. Over the years, as our city grew, so have the number, variety and quality of our public spaces. They reflect the changing lifestyles and aspirations of our people. Public agencies, architects and developers have responded by developing new typologies of public spaces to respond to changes in the way we live, work and play and climatic conditions. At the same time, we find ways to celebrate and cherish those familiar places.

1960s and before

Beginnings of early public spaces.



Image: Ministry of Information and the Arts Collection, courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

1970s and 1980s

Public spaces were created with the rise of new development typologies.



Image: G.Preichelt Collection, courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

1990s

Guidelines were introduced in 1993 to encourage the provision of public spaces within private developments. Early pedestrianisation efforts were pursued.



Examples

- Hong Lim Park (1885)
- Empress Place (1907)
- Commercial Square at Raffles Place Park (1965)
- Toa Payoh Town Centre (1966)

- People's Park Complex (1973)
- Golden Mile Complex (1973)
- UOB Plaza Two (1974)
- Marina Square (1985)

- Ngee Ann City Plaza (1993)
- Clarke Quay (1993)
- Bussorah Mall (1993)
- Bugis Junction (1995)
- Albert Street and Waterloo Street pedestrianisation (1998)

2000-2016

A 2003 Public Space Master Plan was developed to identify areas for more engaging public spaces in the city centre.



Image: SOM, Studio Periphery

- LASALLE College of the Arts (2007)
- Marina Barrage (2008)
- Discovery Walk (2009)
- Asia Square (2013)
- Bedok Town Square (2016)
- South Beach Tower (2016)
- Guoco Tower Urban Park (2017)
- Marina One (2018)

2017

The Privately Owned Public Spaces (POPS) guidelines provided more detailed considerations to elevate the quality of public spaces.



Image: JTC

- Paya Lebar Quarter (2019)
- CapitaSpring (2021)
- One Holland Village (2023)
- Sengkang Grand Mall (2024)
- Punggol Digital District (2025)
- Geneo, Science Park (2025)

2019 onwards

The Lively Places Fund was introduced in 2019 to co-fund community and individual public space efforts.



- Upper Thomson staircase mural (2022)
- Potong Pasir benches (2023)
- Singapore Archifest installations at Kampong Gelam (2023)

One Holland Village regularly features busking and other activities at their various public spaces.

Image: Finbarr Fallon

“

In a dense urban environment, public spaces serve as the most important breathing spaces among crowded buildings and busy roads. They encourage us to pause and enjoy a place, to interact with others, rejuvenate our minds and heighten our spirits.

They are probably what makes us *fall in love* with a city¹.

Dr. Chong Keng Hua

Provost & Vice President (Academic)

Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, University of the Arts Singapore

Founding Partner, COLOURS: Collectively Ours

Everyday spaces

We encounter public spaces in our neighbourhoods daily. Lively city rooms in shopping malls. Void decks under our public housing blocks. Plazas in town centres. Even spaces under train viaducts! These support and anchor our social lives, making us feel at home and connected to one another.

“

**We are social creatures
– meeting, seeing and hearing other
people face to face and using one’s
own senses has always been and still is
*a great and necessary joy*².**

Jan Gehl

Founding Partner, Gehl Architects



Early city room: People's Park Complex

Image: G.Preichelt Collection, courtesy of
National Archives of Singapore

People's Park Complex atrium space taken
between 1985 to 1999.

Public spaces are most meaningful when they become part of our daily routines. In 1973, one of the earliest large public space in Singapore was completed in the form of the interior atrium of People's Park Complex, the country's first modern shopping-cum-residential complex. It realised what the late Japanese architect Fumihiko Maki once theorised as the "city room" – a kind of interiorised public space for planned and spontaneous events³.

“

Singapore needs some of these buildings in the city for all Singaporeans to get together. So, we planned this People's Park with a big, huge concourse, a big, huge atrium ... and we were very, very clear that cities that have buildings like that have a civic space.

It's a people's space, and we call it a city room⁴.

Ar. Koh Seow Chuan
Founder, DP Architects

As megastructures such as People's Park Complex and Golden Mile Complex became part of the city skyline in the late 1960s and 1970s, Singapore architects and developers experimented with creating social infrastructure within them. When designing the interior of People's Park Complex, architects Tay Kheng Soon, Koh Seow Chuan and William Lim from the architectural firm Design Partnership (now DP Architects) envisioned the atrium as a collective space that would reflect the vibrancy of a traditional street market.

The architects also acknowledged the site's history as the People's Park Market. The former gathering spot for hawkers and shoppers inspired the development of the city room formed by four interlocking atriums to support social life, albeit in a modern and comfortable air-conditioned environment. It became an early prototype for atrium spaces in subsequent shopping malls.

American architect and author James Carrico, who studied the role of public spaces in Singapore's mixed-use megastructures in 2022, noted that People's Park Complex's city room was one of the few large indoor public spaces at the time⁵. "Despite its consistent use of relatively straightforward orthogonal geometry, the overall spatial effect remains somewhat dazzling to the casual visitor even today," Carrico reflects.

The atrium space has hosted many community and national events over the years and continues to be regularly used today.



Image: Finbarr Fallon

This photo was taken in 2018 by photographer Finbarr Fallon as part of his documentation of older strata-titled malls. He loves the space for its unpolished and authentic feel.

Void decks:

Let's meet downstairs



“

The void deck carries fond memories for many of us. The term ‘void deck’ is a uniquely Singaporean one, referring to the ground floor of Housing & Development Board blocks that has been left open as sheltered space, where residents can gather to meet friends or where our children can run around rain or shine⁶.

Dr. Yaacob Ibrahim

Former Minister, Ministry of Communications and Information

It was urban planner Alan Choe, Head of the Urban Renewal Department at the Housing & Development Board (HDB), who used the term "void deck" when he was describing an open transition storey between the roof of the shopping podium block and the base of the residential block at the HDB's first mixed-use complex at 32 New Market Road in Chinatown. Built in 1968, the Park Road Redevelopment Scheme comprised a three-storey commercial podium topped with five storeys of flats.

In a 1967 interview with The Straits Times, Choe described the void deck in this development as a "buffer zone to promote cross ventilation and lighten the appearance of the building". He suggested using it as "play and recreational areas for residents"⁷. The void deck in this development had various community facilities such as a kindergarten, a landscaped play area and even a wading pool for toddlers.

By the 1970s, the void deck took root across public housing estates. E.W. Barker, then Minister for National Development, decided in 1973 to keep the ground floors of public housing flats as open spaces, especially for children, as there was a lack of recreational spaces at the time⁸. Besides serving functional purposes, such as ventilation and flood prevention, void decks have become important shared spaces for residents to meet and to hold social functions, celebrations and funeral rites⁹.

Residents turned the void deck at Block 857B Tampines Avenue 5 into a lively play area in 2021 with interactive murals that feature traditional childhood games.



Image: HDB





Image: Chee Boon Pin

Residents who had lived in the same block for 40 years met each other for the first time and became friends. It was also here that a 96-year-old woman, who had lived in isolation due to immobility, finally found friends to talk to.

"People look forward to coming. It's more than just coffee and tea. It's the conversation and sharing. People start caring about each other, and this benefits their health," says Singh¹⁰.

Coffee corner at Block 122 Toa Payoh View initiated by Singh (in blue polo shirt), Project Chairman, Toa Payoh View Residents' Committee.

Block 122 Toa Payoh View

Over the years, void decks have become critical gathering places. An example is at Block 122 Toa Payoh View. The void deck houses a coffee corner initiated in 2016 by Philip Phajan Singh, Project Chairman of the neighbourhood's Residents' Committee. The space is not only a venue for residents and visitors to enjoy a meal together, it also hosts regular activities such as exercise classes, educational talks and medical check-ups.

These simple gatherings have built indelible bonds among neighbours and inspired heart-warming stories.



Image: Chee Boon Pin



Image: Chee Boon Pin



TOUCHpoint@AMK 433

As part of an initiative to help seniors interact more meaningfully within communities, the void deck at Block 433 Ang Mo Kio Avenue 10 was redesigned to create more flexible spaces for residents to use.

Completed in 2019, TOUCHpoint@AMK 433 was designed by COLOURS: Collectively Ours in collaboration with Freight Architects, and supported by Lien Foundation and CapitalLand Hope Foundation. It was one of the 10 creative public spaces envisioned in the 2018 publication, *Second Beginnings: Senior Living Redefined*¹¹.

The revamped space features a day rehabilitation centre and gym run by TOUCH Community Services. Some 200 residents were involved in its design. It resulted in the blending of indoor and outdoor areas to encourage seniors to spend more time outside. A new sheltered drop-off point for Block 433 was also added and created a new space for gathering¹².



Image: Ordinary Studios

Design strategies for TOUCHpoint@AMK433



Image: Ordinary Studios



Image: Ordinary Studios

Moveable furniture and a mobile pantry allow residents to customise the spaces to suit their needs. The common activity area can be opened fully or partially to allow for different activities or to accommodate future changes. Most of the void deck remains open, welcoming all residents to use it.



Image: Ordinary Studios



Image: Finbarr Fallon

Town squares:

Anchoring estates

Bedok Town Square and pedestrian mall

Besides void decks and communal spaces, the town square is a major focal point for connecting in public housing estates. As part of HDB's Remaking Our Heartland programme, the first new-generation town square was introduced in Bedok in 2016. Amenities and facilities in the town were reorganised and upgraded to free up land for the plaza and other public spaces, including a pedestrian mall. Such spaces serve as welcoming markers and can host a diverse range of community activities and uses.

The design and use of the plaza were shaped by residents through a community visioning exercise. They shared their wishes on the types of programmes and activities that they would like to see and even voted to name the plaza "Bedok Town Square". It is a partially sheltered space with a giant ceiling fan, offering residents a well-ventilated and conducive thoroughfare and rest stop. Power and water points were installed to support a range of events and activities too. Since 2016, Bedok Town Square has hosted more than 270 events, reaching over 440,000 residents. Similar plazas have since been developed in other towns, such as Punggol and Yishun.

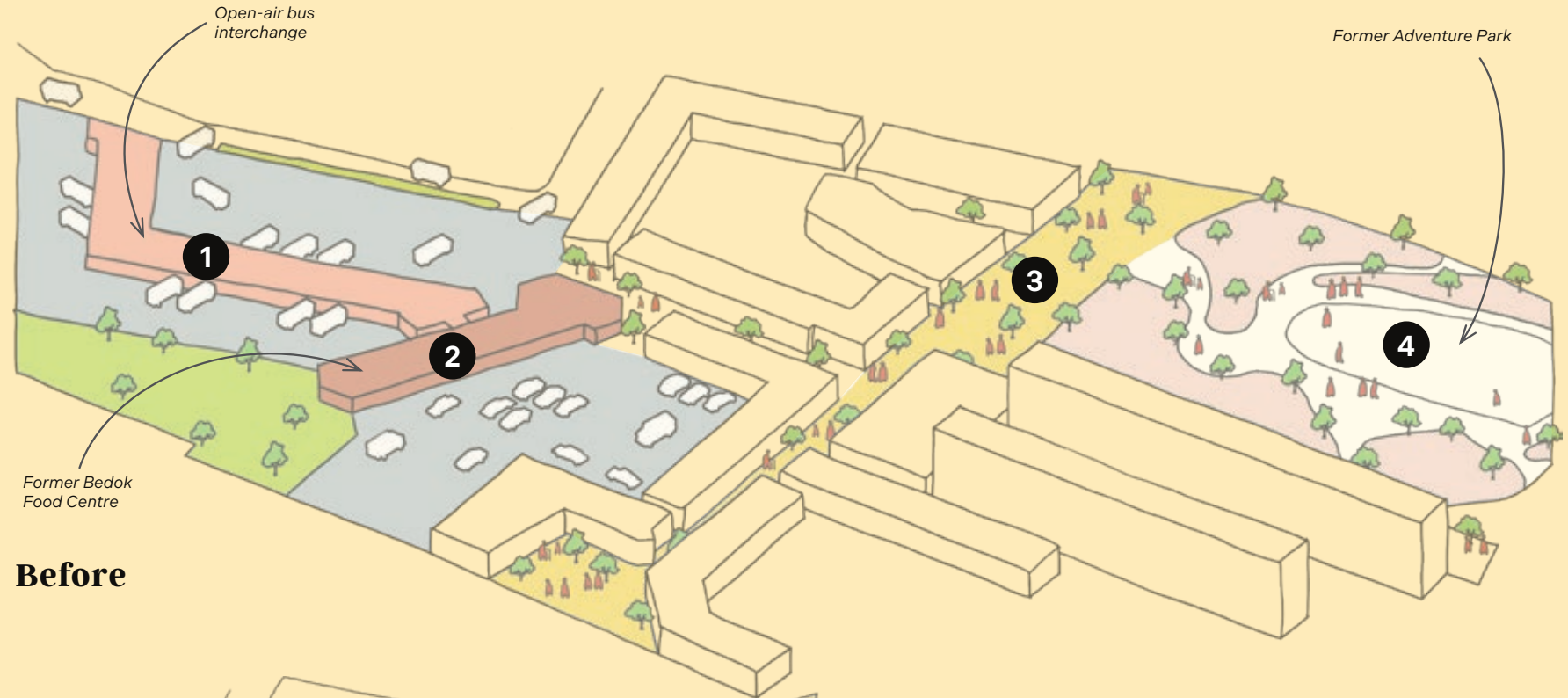


The Bedok Town Square (left) and pedestrian mall (below) are well used and loved by residents and visitors.

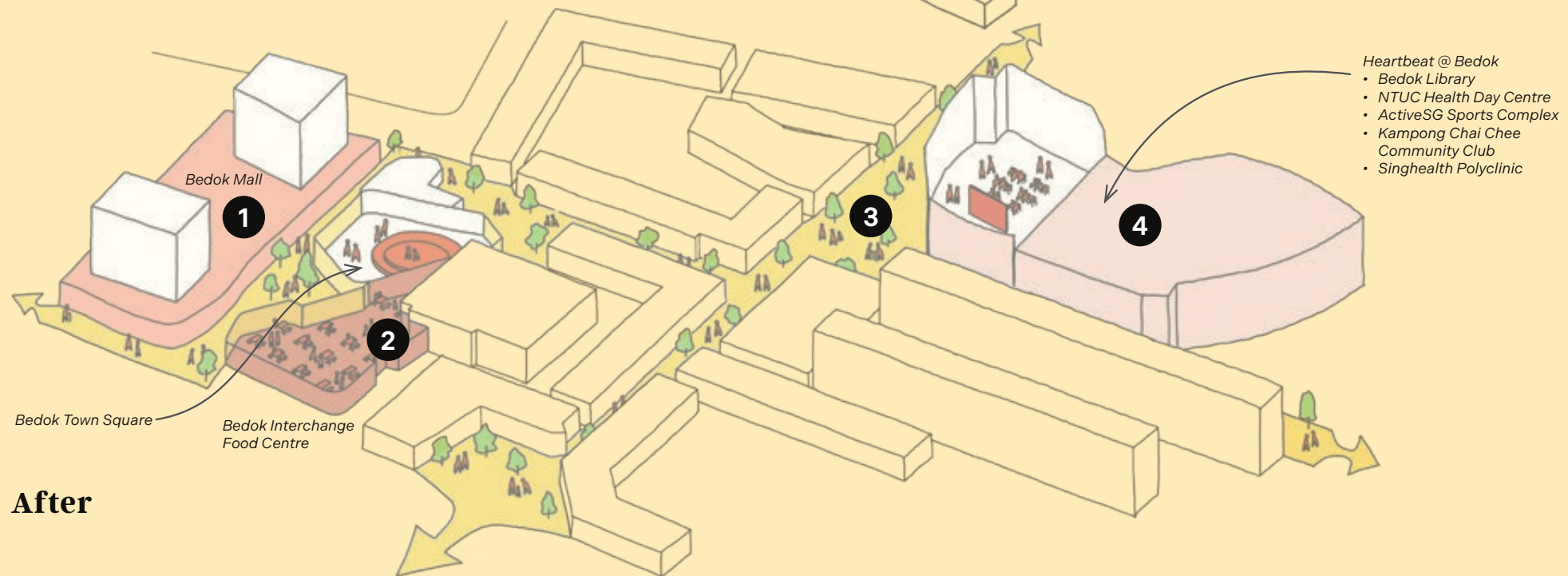
Image: Finbarr Fallon

Key changes made to Bedok town centre:

1. The former bus interchange has been integrated with Bedok MRT Station, shopping mall and residences.
2. The Bedok Food Centre's surface carpark is housed in a multi-storey building to make way for more public spaces.
3. The pedestrian mall has been further enhanced.
4. The former adventure park has been transformed into Heartbeat@Bedok, an integrated complex with many amenities such as a sports centre, library, community club and a senior care centre.



Before



After



Image: Finbarr Fallon



Image: Finbarr Fallon

From left (clockwise): The pedestrian mall, Bedok Food Centre and the town square.

Vertical kampung:

Raising public spaces to the skies

“

With our climate getting hotter, how can we design more conducive public spaces of different scales that are comfortable for people to use and relax in?

We deliberately designed the ground floor space in Kampung Admiralty to be covered and shaded so that people can gather here,

rain^{or} *shine*¹³.

Ar. Wong Mun Summ
Co-Founder, WOHA Architects

In recent years, integrated developments have given rise to multi-layered public spaces for the community. An example is Kampung Admiralty, which was completed in 2017. The 11-storey integrated development offers not just 104 housing units for seniors, but also comprises a medical centre, a senior care centre, a childcare centre, as well as retail and dining outlets, including a 900-seat hawker centre. The nearby healthcare, social and commercial amenities support intergenerational bonding and promote ageing in place. They also allow seniors to remain active and connected while accessing the support they need.



Image: Patrick Bingham-Hall

Children enjoying the playground on the sixth storey (above) and the ground floor atrium space (left).

Key public spaces in Kampung Admiralty

Urban farm
The farm has handicap-friendly ramps for barrier free access.

Senior apartments

Within the single structure organised like a "club sandwich" are various levels of public spaces. A spacious, sheltered plaza at ground level functions as a community space for the neighbourhood. Terraced gardens on multiple levels connect the different programmes and users too.

On the rooftop, a community park overlooks the apartments for seniors. The roof garden is intimately scaled for exercise, chatting and gardening. It is planted with fruit trees, herbs and spices, vegetables and medicinal plants. Familiar edible plants harvested by the residents include chiku, longan, chilli and sweet potato leaves.

Child and eldercare facilities
Eldercare and childcare facilities are placed together to encourage the young and old to interact and bond.

Exercise corner and playground
These spaces encourage intergenerational bonding.



Image: Henning Larsen, Stefanus Ian

The expansive atrium space is a great place for group activities, and a hawker centre overlooks it.



Image: Finbarr Fallon



Throughout the development, lush greenery provides visual relief and lowers the ambient temperature, while the community park helps residents feel more connected to nature. Rain gardens and bioswales help redirect stormwater for purification. The treated water is recycled for auto-irrigation of the landscape, saving about four million litres of tap water annually¹⁴. Leonard Ng, Director for APAC, Henning Larsen, explained that the landscape was conceived not just for visual delight but to function as the village square that centres around community and bonding with nature.

According to a 2018 ecological audit by design firm bioSEA, the green areas in Kampung Admiralty host about 50 animal species, including mammals, birds and butterflies – more than the nearby parks¹⁵.

Ar. Pearl Chee, Director at WOHA Architects, who led the project, shares: “With these facilities co-located under one roof, the use across different functions is very seamless. It has many layers of public spaces on different scales. We have elderly enjoying the outdoors and others from the neighbourhood – even from some distance away – enjoying the gardens and greenery¹⁶.”

Co-locating for the community

Other integrated developments are pushing new frontiers to create engaging and meaningful public spaces. The 12-hectare Bukit Canberra in Sembawang features fitness areas, dining options, wellness services, park spaces and more. Another example is Sengkang Grand Mall, which brings together an MRT station, a bus interchange, a hawker centre, a community club, shops and amenities.



Image: DP Architects Pte Ltd

A key feature of Bukit Canberra is its many green spaces.

Providing more generous public spaces

Ar. Seah Chee Huang, CEO, DP Architects and Ar. Siew Man Kok, Founding Director, MKPL Architects, share why more public spaces should be included in key developments.

Bukit Canberra is designed with a variety of public plazas and community spaces. Why is this important?

Chee Huang: The larger vision of this place is that we want it to be a place of many places within a park of many parks. This community enclave was designed to offer a diverse range of biophilic spaces and uses to cater to different segments of the community.

Whether it is the pedestrian mall or the wide array of differentiated public domains, gardens, trails and green spaces, we see these as not just being used for wayfinding for seamless movement and flow; such spaces offer opportunities for people to spend quality time, be it alone or with friends and loved ones, to forge more memorable experiences.

We hope that residents who visit and spend time here will find a space that they can identify with and, over time, develop a sense of pride and ownership so that they would want to help care for and maintain the place well. From place-making to place-keeping and even place-loving, that is the positive impact of quality public space and amenities on enhancing a stronger sense of community and deepening social capital¹⁷.



Image: DP Architects Pte Ltd



Key public spaces and pathways in Bukit Canberra



Image: DP Architects Pte Ltd



Image: CapitaLand

Sengkang Grand Mall stands out for its generous provision of public spaces. Why is this important?

Man Kok: Sengkang Grand Mall has shown that providing generous and well-designed public spaces have made these places more popular and that means the shops and restaurants enjoy greater footfall. This benefits businesses, people and the larger neighbourhood.

Beyond the size of public spaces, considering the right scale is also important in relating to the site and its context. For public spaces in suburban neighbourhoods, you need to create a different kind of atmosphere and vibe than those in other areas like Orchard Road¹⁸.

Sengkang Grand Mall's atrium space regularly hosts many community events and activities.

Viaduct spaces:

Linking the neighbourhood



The lovely Punggol Green space under the MRT viaduct is a key focal point for the neighbourhood.



Punggol Green

Once a grey, dead space underneath a viaduct from Punggol MRT Station to Sam Kee LRT Station, this 1.2-hectare area is now a vibrant community space. Since its completion in 2022, Punggol Green community park has become a focal point for residents in the neighbourhood.

URA planners first identified the opportunity to enhance this viaduct space as a connection to nearby developments when studying the area. Dr Janil Puthucheary, Adviser to Pasir Ris-Punggol GRC, was a key champion in the design process, seeing the potential to turn the space into a park. Working with People's Association and DP Green, the space was created with input from residents.





Before

Image: DP Green

“

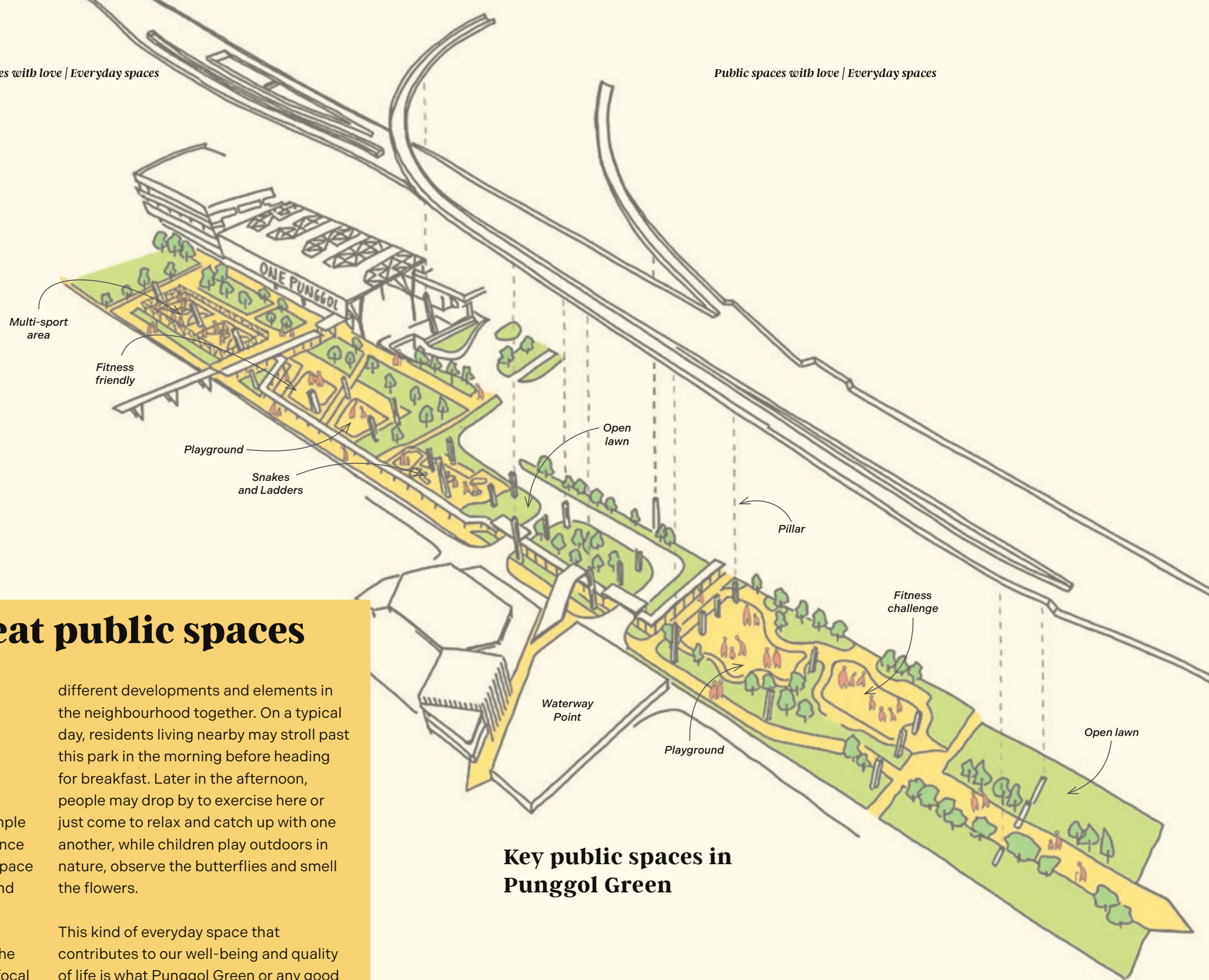
Credit goes to the design team for turning this unpleasant space into a beautiful park. Design really matters. This park is a great example of how we can reimagine ordinary and even unpleasant public spaces to create more interesting ones.

Dr Janil Puthucheary
Adviser, Pasir Ris-Punggol GRC



After

Image: DP Green



Key public spaces in Punggol Green

Designing great public spaces

Dr Janil Puthuchery, Adviser, Pasir Ris-Punggol GRC, and Thun KongSub, Senior Associate, DP Green, share lessons from Punggol Green¹⁹.

Dr Janil: A key lesson is to keep it simple in terms of ease of use and maintenance over time. It should be an attractive space where people can feel comfortable and want to remain longer.

KongSub: When we were designing the space, we saw its potential as a new focal point and social spine that can bring the

different developments and elements in the neighbourhood together. On a typical day, residents living nearby may stroll past this park in the morning before heading for breakfast. Later in the afternoon, people may drop by to exercise here or just come to relax and catch up with one another, while children play outdoors in nature, observe the butterflies and smell the flowers.

This kind of everyday space that contributes to our well-being and quality of life is what Punggol Green or any good public space can offer.

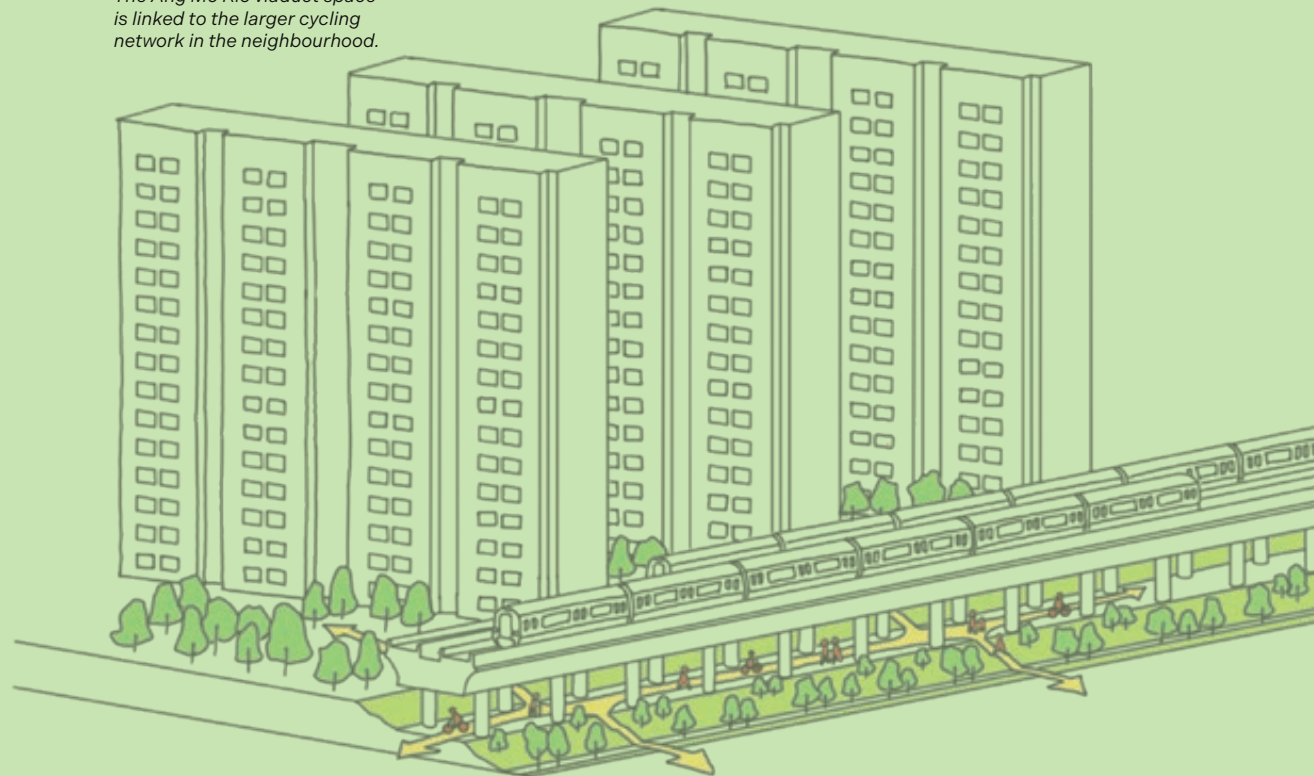


Ang Mo Kio MRT viaduct

Walking and cycling under Ang Mo Kio MRT viaduct is no longer just a journey of convenience but a delightful one too. Along its line of grey concrete columns are a series of colourful murals inspired by well-known children's stories, such as Alice in Wonderland, Jack and the Beanstalk, and The Crow and the Pitcher. They were created by Taiwan-born interior designer Zoe Lin for a URA ideas competition while she was living in the housing estate.

The enhancement launched in 2016 is part of wider efforts to transform Ang Mo Kio into a model town for walking and cycling. The space beneath the viaduct is now part of a dedicated path for cyclists and pedestrians to move around easily and safely. When completed, the 20-kilometre cycling network will be the longest in any residential town!

The Ang Mo Kio viaduct space is linked to the larger cycling network in the neighbourhood.





“

It was a busy place. There were elderly reading newspapers on benches, people rushing to work and others jogging. It was also a beautiful space with greenery nearby. I thought to myself that more could be done to the space to engage the people using it²⁰.

Zoe Lin

Artist for the Ang Mo Kio MRT viaduct murals

Artist Zoe Lin and the mural creation process (left).





Let's play: Playgrounds and play spaces

Play spaces are also important everyday places in the city. In Singapore, quirky and fun playgrounds in its public housing estates stand out as distinctive public spaces. Some of these designs are so iconic that they have become landmarks, such as the dragon playgrounds along Ang Mo Kio Avenue 3 and Toa Payoh Lorong 6.

The dragon playground was designed by Khor Ean Ghee in 1979. Originally from Penang, Malaysia, he joined the HDB in 1969 after studying fine arts in Taiwan and earning an interior design diploma in the United Kingdom. He had never designed a playground before but went on to create over 30 of them. His personal favourite is the dragon playground.

"The thinking then was to have more local identity and themes. We wanted something different, designs that reflect what we see in Singapore²²," shares Khor, who often took his inspiration from Singapore's culture and history when designing these playgrounds.

“

Like many Singaporeans who grew up in the '80s and '90s, I spent my childhood having fun in the playground of my public housing estate. I never thought much about these spaces then, except how high I could reach on the rubber tyre swings, the thrill of spinning on a merry-go-round, what fun it was building sandcastles, and that time always flew by so quickly before my mother would usher me upstairs to do my homework²¹.

Justin Zhuang
Partner, In Plain Words

The dragon playground at Ang Mo Kio Avenue 3, is designed by former HDB interior designer Khor Ean Ghee in 1979.



Lim Chee Peng enjoys bringing his children to such playgrounds as they offer him and his family respite in Singapore's high-density environment. "The old playgrounds become an entry point to older neighbourhoods (referring to the dove playground at Dakota Crescent). More importantly, playgrounds can become social spaces. The experience is not only for kids but also for parents. It's important for people to be able to sit and watch, so it's not just a place to keep kids in but also a place to bring a community together," reflects Lim²⁴.

The watermelon playground at Tampines Central Park, designed by HDB architect Lee-Loy Kwee Wah in the 1980s.

More than just play

Such HDB playgrounds have helped many Singaporeans develop fond experiences and memories. Antoinette Wong discovered the watermelon playground at Pipit Road when exploring the MacPherson area. "It brought out the child in me. A watermelon design was used so that when kids play in the playground, they can find out what this fruit is. We now talk about education outside the

classroom and books; the playground was such a starting point. These playgrounds represent the resilience that Singapore has shown as it grew from life in kampungs to public housing estates," shares Wong. She has photographed many such playgrounds and created pins to share memories of these public spaces with others²³.



Adventure Playground @Canberra

For new-generation HDB playgrounds, residents are increasingly involved in shaping the designs together.

The Adventure Playground@Canberra is the first playground to be co-designed and built by the community in 2018. Its key feature is a tree-like climbing structure that brings alive residents' idea for a treehouse and kelong that was inspired by the fishing villages of Sembawang's past.

Located next to Block 334 Sembawang Close, the playground was shaped over four years by engaging about 2,000 people through design workshops, pop-up booths and surveys. Residents were also invited to complete the installation of the playground together on a Sunday.

"I've lived here for seven years and because of this playground, I've had the chance to know neighbours I've never met," shares Canberra resident Jane Khoo²⁵.

“

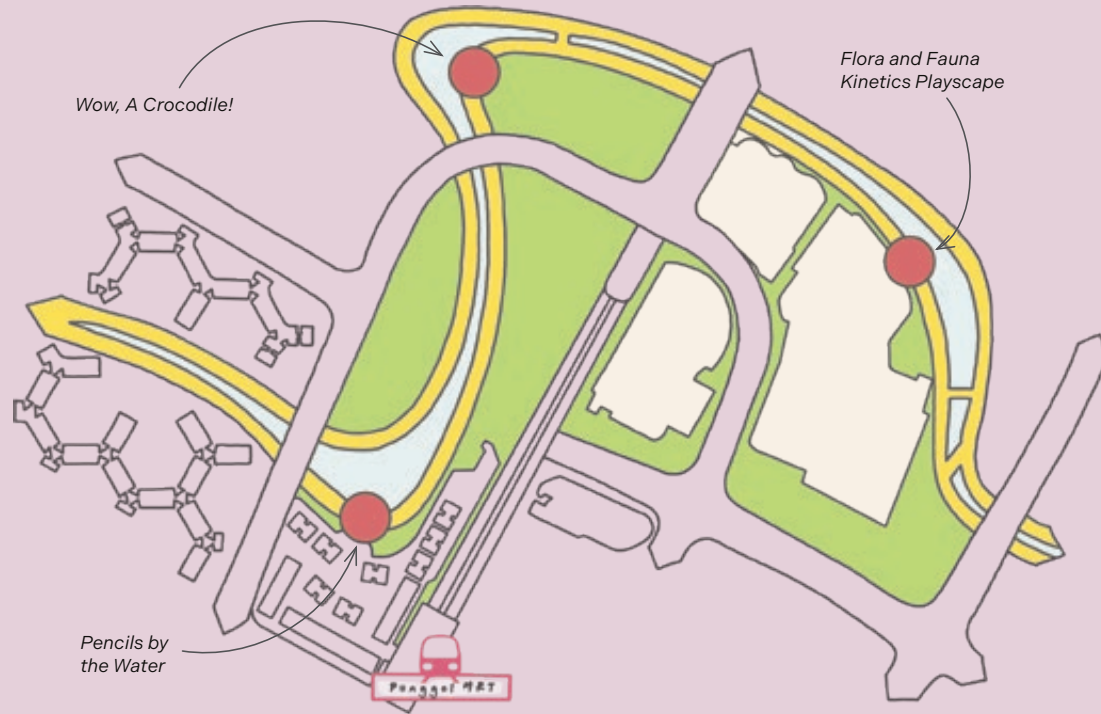
When I became a grandfather, I brought my grandson to the playground for the first time and made many new friends. Playgrounds are increasingly important in an ageing society. These become places that we find delight in, not just as users but as observers of play among children and families²⁶.

Dr. Ho Kong Chong

Head, Urban Studies, Yale-NUS College and
Associate Professor of Sociology, Faculty of Arts and
Social Sciences, National University of Singapore



Image: HDB



PLAY@Punggol

Besides conventional playgrounds in public housing estates, play spaces can come in the form of creative installations in key locations. Punggol Waterway is home to giant pencils, fluttering insects and a larger-than-life crocodile that bring fresh energy and fun to the area. These are winning designs from URA's PLAY@Punggol Design Competition, which was open to Singapore-based practising architectural and landscape designers. Completed in 2025, these installations inspired by Punggol's heritage are part of broader efforts to give architects opportunities to enhance public spaces.

In addition, students from nearby Edgefield, Greendale and Punggol Secondary Schools helped to survey these spaces and contribute to the competition's design brief.

Parts of the installations are made using recycled wood logs from the development of neighbouring Punggol Digital District too.

According to public surveys conducted in 2025, these installations have been positively received. Many feel they have brought greater "vibrancy" and "excitement" to the waterway and created more opportunities for "adults and children to play". The new installations are also popular places for visitors to relax, gather or rest after exercising around the waterway.



Image: Finbarr Fallon

Pencils by the Water

By DP Green Pte Ltd (Team: Poornima Bargotra, Thun KongSub, Yvonne Tan)

Consisting of 12 larger-than life pencils, the striking landscape along the waterway offers inspiration and sparks of imagination. "These simple pencils reflect our carefree childhood experiences, doodling whilst dreaming of new possibilities²⁷," shares Yvonne Tan, Director, DP Green.



“

Given Punggol’s rich flora and fauna, we hope the installation encourages us to appreciate and connect more with the natural world around us.

Isabel Allana Bautista
Senior Designer, Land Design One



Flora and Fauna Kinetics Playscape

By Land Design One Pte Ltd (Team: Kathleen Lacsina, Isabel Allana Bautista, Brian Baker, Neal Samac)

The playscape featuring bees, dragonflies and butterflies harnesses light and kinetic play. The result is a magical experience that encourages people to savour the natural environment in new ways²⁸.



Image: Finbarr Fallon

Wow, A Crocodile!

By Land Design One Pte Ltd (Team: Kathleen Lacsina, Jovan Tong, Choong Yu Huan, Brian Baker, Neal Samac)

Paying homage to crocodiles that once roamed Punggol, this installation depicts a crocodile emerging from a wavy waterbody that reflects the flow of the neighbouring waterway. Adults and children can climb through, pose for photos and play in the sand beside it. "We wanted to show the crocodile as very strong and powerful, with open jaws where people can walk through," explains designer Jovan Tong from Land Design One²⁹.

In-between spaces:

What you can do with colours

Creating delightful public spaces often does not need expensive or big enhancements. Sometimes, ordinary elements in our urban fabric just need a splash of paint to accentuate common public spaces that already serve as conduits and rest stops for residents. Examples include the staircase along Upper Thomson Road and the benches at Potong Pasir.

Staircase at Upper Thomson

For years, a concrete staircase has served as a shortcut for residents of Yew Lian Park to access the nearby shophouses and the Upper Thomson MRT Station³⁰. Few paid attention to this passageway until Joanne Teh learnt about the Lively Places Fund that could support enhancements to public spaces. The resident of Yew Lian Park and President of the Yew Lian Park Residents' Association saw the potential to create a safer and more attractive staircase for residents and visitors. She tapped on the fund to commission a mural and install a handrail, which have transformed this everyday space.



Kopi sessions organised by Joanne Teh to get feedback from residents for the Upper Thomson staircase.



Image: Yew Lian Park Residents' Association



The mural design reflects the heritage of the area and was created with feedback and stories from the neighbourhood's almost 250 households. For example, it features the former Imperial Theatre, a once popular hangout among residents. There are also illustrations of animals such as monkeys and wild boars that often frequent the area. Teh together with a team of residents and volunteers took six months to plan and carry out the project which was completed in 2022.

The improved staircase is not only safer to use, but has also become a striking landmark. It even has its own Google Maps pin! The project's success has spurred Teh to embark on other efforts to enliven her estate. It has even inspired her friends to do the same for their neighbourhoods too.



Potong Pasir benches

At Block 144 Potong Pasir Avenue 3, a community plaza along Kallang River has long served as a resting spot for residents. Pharmacist and self-taught artist Anne Neo, who often passed by this place, saw the potential to improve it with the help of the Lively Places Fund.

In 2023, she led resident volunteers to paint 33 benches in the area. The process took a few months, from conceptualising the designs to completing the painting. The volunteers included families, seniors and children, including students from the nearby St Andrew's Secondary School.





Image: Anne Neo

Many residents and students of St Andrew's Secondary School helped to paint the 33 benches.

Each of the 33 newly painted benches features motifs and designs developed through discussions with residents. They reflect the area's identity and activities such as birdwatching, cycling and ball games.

Neo has always been passionate about using art to brighten her surroundings. Besides this project, she has also initiated and created 15 murals and paintings in various locations across Singapore, including nursing homes, senior activity centres, libraries, outdoor spaces and playgrounds³¹.



Tips on enhancing public spaces

Public space champions, Joanne Teh and Anne Neo, share tips from their experience of enhancing everyday spaces.

Joanne: It is important for the public space to reflect the local heritage and identity. I organised two kopi-chats with residents, together with the artist, Muhammad Izdi, to learn stories about the neighbourhood. This inspired many images in the final mural on the staircase³².

Anne: Don't be too caught up in your original designs. Keep an open mind for new ideas and possibilities. Often, it is better for the designs to be simple and relatable so that it can appeal to many different groups of people³³.



Image: Joanne Teh

Joanne Teh (left) and Anne Neo (below)





Sean Gwee at the Everton Park back lane street festival he organised.

Back lanes: Unlocking hidden spaces

With a little imagination, incidental spaces can be transformed with temporary activities that offer cosy and intimate gathering places – adding buzz to the neighbourhood.

“

What I really liked about this simple space activation was that people weren't used to doing something in back lanes. It's an 'Oh, I didn't know you could do that' kind of thing. It was a great step forward to help us rethink how we can better use our public spaces³⁴.

Sean Gwee
Designer and Entrepreneur



Image: Benjamin Foo

Everton Park back lane

What can you do with a back lane for under S\$100? Designer and entrepreneur Sean Gwee not only brought life to this incidental space but also smiles to residents and visitors of Everton Park estate.

For two days in 2015, he organised kampung games and invited henna artists and jugglers to perform at a back lane at the estate near Tanjong Pagar. The effort demonstrated new possibilities for this untapped public space. It also showed how small-scale activations can be impactful too.





Image: Citizen Adventures



Image: Citizen Adventures

Geylang back lanes

Another individual who has transformed back lanes in his neighbourhood is Cai Yinzhou, Adviser, Bishan-Toa Payoh GRC. In 2015, he invited art studios and food trucks to take over the back alleys of Geylang as part of a temporary street closure at Lorong 24A Geylang. "The event was open to anyone and everyone, and more than 70 migrant workers mingled with Singaporeans," recalls Cai in a 2021 interview³⁵, who founded the social enterprise Citizen Adventures to raise awareness of social issues and support minority communities.



Image: Citizen Adventures

Key activities organised in Geylang by Citizen Adventures and Cai at one of the Back Alley Barber sessions (above right).

Cai has also used the back alley to give out free haircuts since. "We encountered a migrant worker friend who had not had a haircut for four months to pay off his father's medical bills. So, I started learning to cut hair by watching YouTube videos to be able to give him a free haircut," he shares.

From one to three barbers and eventually a team of 60 volunteers, the Back Alley Barbers initiative has given thousands of haircuts. Besides migrant workers, Cai and his team also offer free haircuts to residents of nursing homes and low-income communities on a weekly basis.



Image: Citizen Adventures



Image: Citizen Adventures

Citizen Adventures regularly organises tours (above: Cai leading a tour) and other activities to help people to appreciate the local cultures and rediscover the area.

Local interests:

How public spaces are deepening passions

Besides being extensions of our living rooms, public spaces can serve as platforms to support the many interests and passions of communities around them.



Void deck 3.0

Block 846 Tampines Street 82

National University of Singapore students turned the void deck into a high-tech gaming and gathering place in 2021 in partnership with the local Residents' Committee.

Image: HDB

5G Community Green Hub

Block 112 Bishan Street 12

Residents built themed gardens in 2021, growing edible vegetables like xiao bai cai and kai lan. Over 200 students and residents were involved.



Image: HDB

Buona Vista's Green Eye View

Block 7B Commonwealth Avenue carpark rooftop

Residents turned the rooftop parking deck into a community garden in 2023.



Image: HDB

Pet Park

Bukit Panjang Neighbourhood 2 Park at Petir Road

Residents turned an empty green space into a pet park in 2024 where dog lovers can meet and interact.

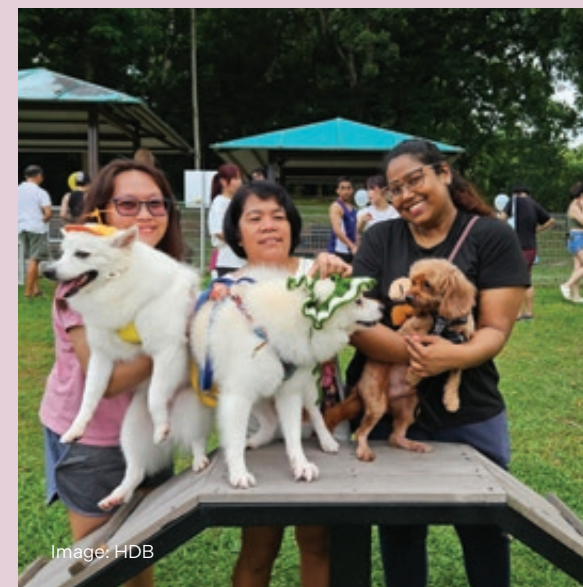


Image: HDB

Lively Places Fund

The Lively Places Fund administered by the URA and the HDB has supported 270 public space initiatives since 2019. It provides individuals and communities co-funding of up to S\$20,000 to create meaningful and delightful public spaces that bring people together. As part of this support, the National Arts Council also offers up to S\$5,000 to artists for their contributions to public space enhancements.

For more information, visit:
<https://go.gov.sg/livelyplacesfund>



Where that river always flows

Block 25 Jalan Berseh

Four benches along Rochor Canal were created by the community led by Ang Jet Hong and his mother, Eunice Teng. The designs inspired by the history of the Singapore River, were conceptualised by Ang and architect Jezamine Chua.

Artistry in Motion @ West Coast Park

West Coast Park, near Carpark 1

A shipping container turned into a vibrant artwork has brought new life into a cosy corner in West Coast Park. The project by 80-year-old Malcom Chen, Founder, Ageless Bicyclists, has created a new place for cyclists of all ages to gather.



Ready to activate public spaces?

Here are 10 tips to get you started:

- 1 You can do it**
Anyone, whether a resident or a stakeholder in the area, can develop new ideas and help improve public spaces around us.
- 2 Almost anywhere**
There is a variety of public spaces across Singapore that can be activated and enhanced.
- 3 Benefit the community**
Enhancing a public space should not be for commercial or marketing reasons. It should benefit the immediate neighbourhood and area and help bring the community together. The enhanced space should also be easily accessible for everyone to enjoy.
- 4 Start small**
Enhancing a public space does not require expensive or extensive efforts. You can start with a simple idea that can be implemented easily.
- 5 Build partnerships**
You don't have to do it alone. Find like-minded partners and tap on others' strengths and expertise. This can include artists, architects and residents who can support your efforts in different ways.

- 6 Involve and engage**
Engage relevant communities in the immediate area to generate ideas and implement them. For example, reach out to your local Residents' Committee network or business associations. Nearby shops and residents can provide support and should be involved in the process too.
- 7 Be patient**
If you are seeking co-funding support from the Lively Places Fund, be prepared to clarify and explain your proposal. Proposal assessment may take some time. Do factor in the time needed to obtain the go-ahead especially if there is deadline to meet.
- 8 Maintain and care**
After the space is activated, ensure that it continues to be well maintained and cared for. Activations usually stay on for six months or longer.
- 9 Do it again**
Things don't always work out as planned. Learn from past attempts or other people's efforts.
- 10 Play your part**
There are many ways to contribute. You can tell family and friends about an interesting public space. You can also support others in enhancing a space or lead a project yourself. It takes all of us to create more engaging and exciting public spaces.

Respite from work

Whether in the city centre or in the suburbs, going to work has gone beyond simply spending time in the office. Its immediate surroundings, including public spaces, has become more important for workers, visitors and friends to relax, unwind or catch up with one another. Offices and mixed-use private developments are increasingly providing such accessible public spaces for everyone. This is partly in response to URA's urban design guidelines that require developments to provide them.

“

Very often, public spaces within our office buildings tend to cater more specifically to office workers or visitors. But what about everybody else? As designers, we wanted to support this by providing more public spaces than what you would normally expect from an office building.”

Nicolas Medrano
Principal, Skidmore, Owning & Merrill

About the Privately Owned Public Spaces (POPS) design guidelines

In 2017, POPS design guidelines were introduced to provide more detailed considerations on the design of public spaces within major developments across Singapore.

For instance, first-storey public spaces may be exempted from Gross Floor Area computation if they fulfil the urban design guidelines and operational requirements under the scheme. Since then, many buildings have included lively and comfortable public spaces for all to enjoy.



Image: Chee Boon Pin

According to the POPS guidelines, a well-designed public space should have the following elements:

- 1** Large enough with an open layout for more people to enjoy.
- 2** Prominently located on the ground level and be easily accessible and inviting.
- 3** Clear signages and sufficient seating are provided for people to gather and relax in.
- 4** Well-shaded with landscaping and greenery for a more comfortable experience.
- 5** Power, water points and lighting to be included to support activities or artworks.

Learn more about POPS at:
<https://go.gov.sg/pops-sg>

You can also find POPS on a map:
<https://go.gov.sg/pops-sg-map>



Image: Finbarr Fallon

Examples of POPS spaces, Asia Square (this image) and Guoco Tower Urban Park (left)

Asia Square



Image: Finbarr Fallon

An early notable public space provided within a private development is “The Cube”, located between the office towers of Asia Square. The 9,300-square-metre “city room” completed in 2013 was developed by MGPA (now known as BlackRock Property Singapore) and designed by Denton Corker Marshall (DCM), in partnership with Architects 61.



Image: Finbarr Fallon

The space is naturally lit and fully enclosed with semi-transparent fritted glass skirt walls. Skylights punctuate its 16-metre-high ceiling in a random pattern to enhance the natural lighting. Landscaping and seating make the space inviting for workers, residents and visitors to have lunch, enjoy a quiet moment or participate in curated activities.

Designing Asia Square's city room

Adrian FitzGerald, Senior Director, DCM and Ar. Michael Ngu, CEO, Architects 61, share the origins and design of Asia Square's city room.

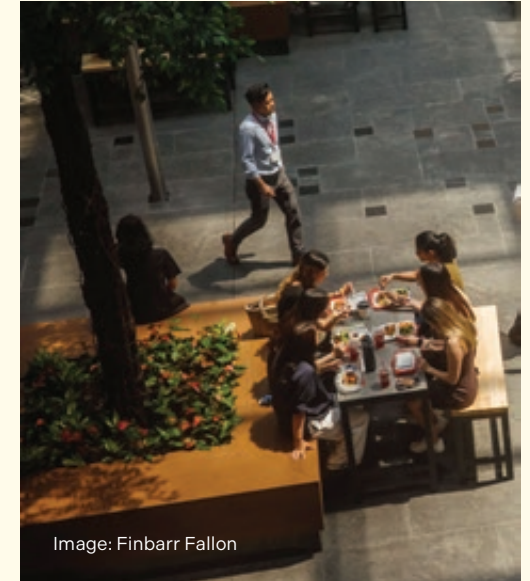
How did the idea for the city room come about?

Adrian: There was already a designated 15.4-metre pedestrian mall between the two separate sites where Asia Square's Towers 1 and 2 were located. When we were looking at both sites, we saw the opportunity to go beyond this. We suggested creating a much bigger and more continuous public space instead.

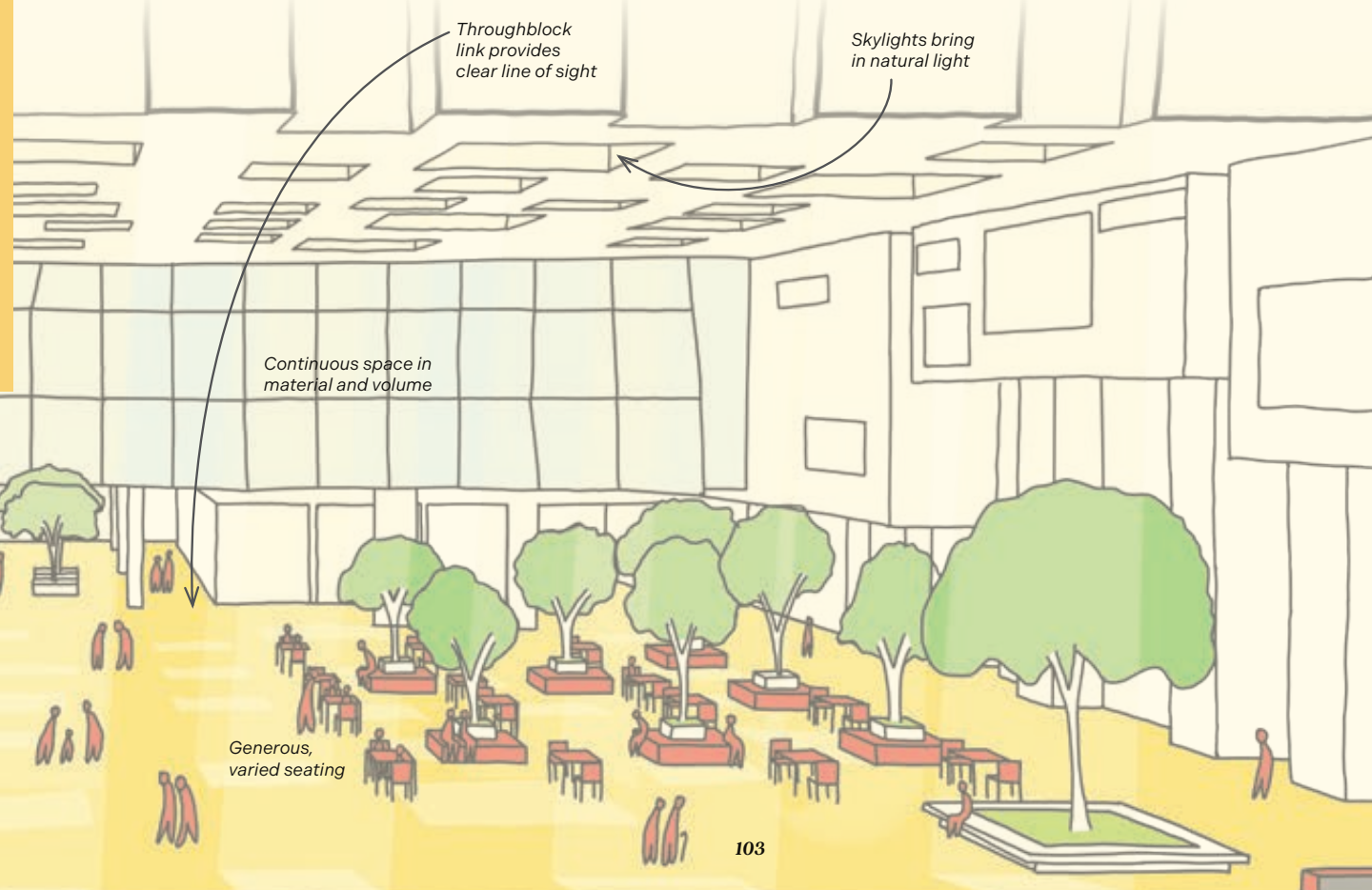
Michael: We would not have had the opportunity to create such a wonderful public space if not for the fact that both towers were developed by the same developer.

What is your idea of a city room?

Adrian: I have always been fascinated by city rooms. When I was an architecture student back in the 1970s, I recall looking at a scheme by architect and urbanist Leon Krier. He had taken a lithograph of an Italian plaza and drawn a vast open roof on top of it. That was the first time I was introduced to the idea of the city room. In Italy, plazas are often referred to as living rooms, where in dense living areas, the plazas encourage people to come out and engage one another. Designing Asia Square gave me the opportunity to create such a city room.



Key design highlights of the Asia Square public space



Tell us more about the design considerations.

Adrian: In Singapore, we are always exposed to the intense heat and frequent tropical downpours. So, I concluded, to have a usable open space, you had to have a roof. We then designed the space to be column-free to provide maximum flexibility on how it can be used. It was naturally ventilated and lit. A series of skylights on the ceiling ensured that there was no need for artificial lighting during the day. When you enter the space, it doesn't feel like a privatised space but rather a natural extension of the public realm.

Michael: A factor that contributed to the success of the space was having cafes and restaurants. This made the space more engaging and enticing for people to stay longer.

What is one lesson learnt on designing a good public space?

Michael: I think there should not be any level difference and significant variations in the entire public space in terms of colours, finishing and materials. It should be one continuous space visually and volumetrically between the open walkway, the covered walkway and the city room.



Image: Finbarr Fallon

The Asia Square public space is regularly well used by workers and visitors.

“

Most Wednesdays, I take my kids to Asia Square for the weekly chess meetup, and it's become one of our favorite routines. There's a relaxed energy to it — serious games happening at one table, laughter and friendly chatter at another. It's a perfect mid-week break for all of us — mentally stimulating for the kids, and quietly delightful for me.

Ng Li Shan
Senior Architect, URA



Image: Finbarr Fallon



At Tanjong Pagar in the Central Business District (CBD), the 13,900-square-metre park is one of the largest public spaces in Singapore. The Guoco Tower Urban Park is housed within a mixed-use development of offices, residences, shops and restaurants that was completed in 2017. It is sheltered by a 15-metre-high glass canopy covered with solar panels, while built-in sound and lighting systems support activities and accommodate up to 2,000 people.

Guoco Tower Urban Park

The developer GuocoLand and architecture firm Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM), in partnership with Architects 61, went beyond land sales requirements to integrate a city room with Tanjong Pagar Park, creating a generous and continuous public space. Its porous design with water features and landscaping creates a cooler environment, and the space offers places for lunch and curated activities too. It's no wonder the park has become a hit with workers and nearby residents.



Image: SOM, Studio Periphery



Image: GuocoLand



Image: GuocoLand

Beyond a space for office workers

Nicolas Medrano, Principal, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) and Valerie Wong, Managing Director, Asset Management, GuocoLand, share lessons on designing and curating the vibrant and lively Guoco Tower Urban Park³⁶.

Tell us about the design of the Urban Park.

Nicolas: The space where the Urban Park is currently located was originally intended for a building when Tanjong Pagar MRT Station was developed in the 1980s. As part of the land sales requirement, a city room and public plaza must be integrated into the overall development. This is typically done within the building footprint or under the building boundary.

But after studying the site carefully, we decided to move the city room to Tanjong Pagar Park over the MRT station, creating a more generous and continuous urban park throughout the ground floor of the site. We moved the carpark into the building's podium to keep it hidden from view and away from public amenities. We also utilised the existing MRT structure for the city room canopy.

In designing the public space, we wanted to create a space that different groups of people can easily access and use. Aside from allocating spaces for cafes and restaurants, we intentionally left a large part of the public space open and flexible. This offers a greater variety of experiences for people as it allows them to decide how they want to use the space.

Why is it important to provide such an expansive public space?

Nicolas: Very often, public spaces within our office buildings tend to cater more specifically to office workers or visitors. But what about everybody else? For cities like Singapore that have high-density environments, public spaces are increasingly important as front yards or extensions of our living rooms to offer a greater sense of relief, enjoyment and delight.

As designers, we wanted to support this by providing more public spaces than what you would normally expect from an office building.

The space also feels larger because we removed the boundaries between the more private spaces of the building and the spaces in the public realm, such that it feels more seamless when you come out from Tanjong Pagar MRT Station to go to the ground level.

This urban park feels much cooler and is full of greenery. How did you design such a comfortable space?

Nicolas: Singapore's climate is quite extreme. It became critical for us to design the space for human comfort and significantly cool the park, surrounding plazas and streets.



Image: Chee Boon Pin

We made sure that the space was very well shaded and protected from the intense sun and created natural comfort through wind flow. We incorporated water elements and softscapes at the fringes, so that when the natural breeze comes into the site from the east and west, its naturally cooled.

We conducted many wind flow analyses using CFD (computational fluid dynamics) tools to help shape the architecture from the beginning. The canopy over the space is open on the west and the east. There is a building facade on the north and there is a screen on the south. This not only captures the primary wind direction, funnelling it through the site, but also accelerates the prevailing wind such that you feel cooler when you are in the space.

The design also allows air to move in and out from the north and south whenever the wind changes. This means that even if there is a storm and the wind changes, you can still feel the wind throughout the site. Porosity is key in ensuring that wind can flow through the site throughout the year.

Regarding the greenery, we worked closely with Cicada, our landscape designer. Plants ultimately need sunlight. Thus, we deliberately placed the plants at the periphery of the canopy. It is the greenest

where there is full exposure to sunlight, rain, and the natural environment.

Besides good design, what makes this space more engaging is the year-round calendar of events and activities

Valerie: Most people who access and use the space tend to be office workers. But we also have residents dropping by from nearby residential areas. When curating activities for this space, we try to plan for events that appeal to a wide range of people; from yoga to pets and plant events, artisan markets, a women's run and even mid-autumn festival celebrations.

We have to be mindful of managing the needs of the restaurants and cafes. Noise from the events should not affect businesses and the people sitting around.

On weekends, when it is quieter, families like to come by and I sometimes see toddlers playing with the water jets. We now even have new inhabitants – the chickens! One thing that has been well received is the public seating. It encourages people to stay longer and feel like they are part of a larger community. It also offers a quiet space for people to relax.

What has been the impact of the space, on people and the neighbourhood?

Nicolas: I see such a public space contributing to our overall health and wellness. It is an extension of our natural environment and enables us to interact with our colleagues, friends and families. The space is comfortable; there is fresh air, daylight and wind flow so you feel more at peace, and you feel like it is your space. This benefits us on an individual level and as a community.

Valerie: Besides serving the office crowd and residents, I observe that there is also an impact on the immediate neighbourhood, as more people are motivated to come to this place. It benefits the shops and businesses in the area too.

Greenery is denser at the edges exposed to the sun and less dense under the canopy with shade

The canopy is orientated to capture prevailing winds

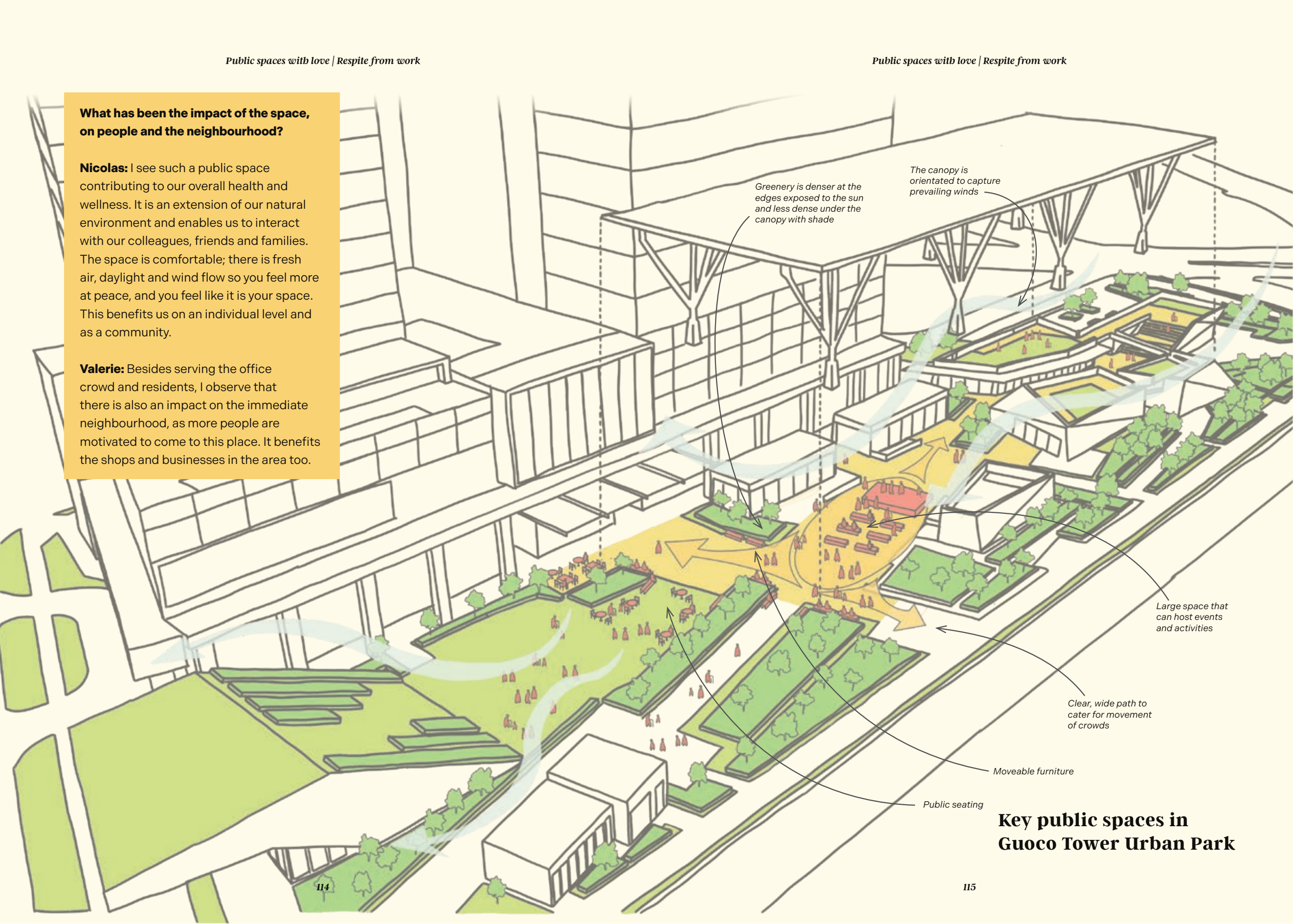
Large space that can host events and activities

Clear, wide path to cater for movement of crowds

Moveable furniture

Public seating

Key public spaces in Guoco Tower Urban Park



CapitaSpring

In the heart of the CBD, this mixed-use development takes the provision of public spaces to a new level.

Key public spaces in CapitaSpring

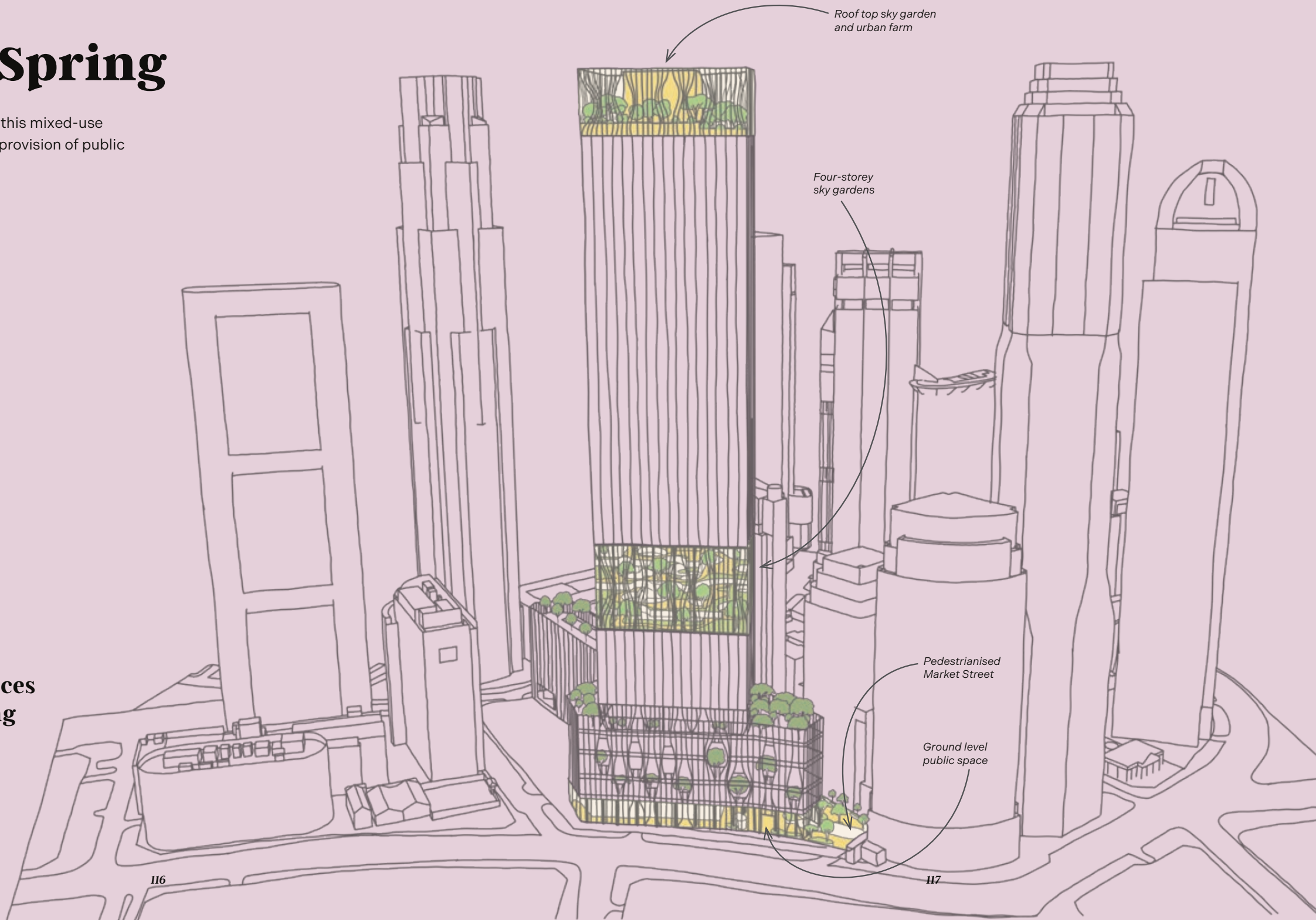




Image: Finbarr Fallon

On the ground floor of CapitaSpring, an 18-metre-high “city room” acts as a welcoming entrance into the tower. It connects to an underground pedestrian network and sheltered walkways leading to the neighbouring buildings. Between the tower’s 17th and 20th floors is also a four-storey sky terrace filled with 38,000 plants. This “Green Oasis” peeks through openings in the building’s pinstripe facade that are drawn apart like curtains.



Image: Finbarr Fallon

Public spaces with love | Respite from work

Within, people may exercise at the outdoor gym, hold meetings at the work pods or simply enjoy the outdoor breeze. Finally, an urban farm on the rooftop of the 51-storey tower offers panoramic views of the city. The farm has 150 species of fruits, vegetables and flowers, and supplies 70 to 90 kilograms of produce each month to the building's restaurants.

The various public spaces help foster a vibrant social life in the tower designed by Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG) (in collaboration with Carlo Ratti Associati) and RSP Architects Planners and Engineers. They weave together offices, serviced residence units and the Market Street Hawker Centre – rehoused from the site's former Golden Shoe Car Park – to create a development for the community to come together not only for work, but also to live and play. This is why CapitaSpring was conferred the President's Design Award Design of the Year in 2023 as well as Deutsches Architekturmuseum (DAM) Museum's International High-Rise Award in 2024.



Image: Finbarr Fallon



Image: Finbarr Fallon

“
It (CapitaSpring) creates an urban effect that becomes increasingly magnetic, lulling one into the generous, multistorey, indoor-outdoor ‘urban rooms’. Often fully enclosed or with limited access, this street level strategy, shifting of colonnades, urban rooms, and canopies that ‘nose’ out from behind the building’s perimeter enrich the urban life of Singapore and introduce a level of access and porosity unprecedented in the city³⁷.”

David Erdman

Chairperson, Department of Graduate Architecture and Urban Design, School of Architecture, Pratt Institute

Image: Finbarr Fallon



Image: Finbarr Fallon

A “social mixer” for the CBD

Brian Yang, Partner, Bjarke Ingels Group, reflects on designing the many engaging public spaces within CapitaSpring³⁸.

What role was CapitaSpring envisioned to play in the CBD?

Brian: From our conversations with CapitaLand, we understood that it was envisioned to be a development that would go beyond a typical office tower.

Over the years, the CBD had become a place that saw significantly less footfall after office hours. CapitaLand wanted a catalyst that would encourage people to spend more time in the CBD. It was not just about meeting the efficiency of floor area but creating something that would provide the CBD with a space for the community.

Tell us more about how the ground-level city room was designed to connect to nearby buildings and networks.

Brian: It's essentially a very high-volume sheltered public space that is accessible 24 hours a day. Within the city room, we also placed two food and beverage kiosks, as well as mobile and fixed seating elements. The ceiling was rigged with plug-and-play lighting and sound systems to support stage events. In essence, we tried to provide the infrastructure for it to become the community node for the surrounding area.

For the space to be activated, we connected it to the surrounding context, whether above or below ground. An important aspect was pedestrianising a part of Market Street and trying to make the tower porous and welcoming. CapitaSpring has become quite a popular meeting point for the public. Many events have been organised for CapitaSpring's tenants, including Oktoberfest and family day, which make it more than just a place for work.

Why was it important to create the Green Oasis within the building?

Brian: A key challenge in the tropics is the heat and humidity. We found that beyond the 17th storey of the tower, you get above the heights of many of the adjacent buildings and there is good natural ventilation that removes much of the humidity. In combination with the solar shading from the entire office component above, it makes the Green Oasis a pleasant place to be in. During the design process, we did extensive simulations of ventilation and solar gain to determine the result.

Creating this high jungle space in the middle of the tower also gave us the opportunity to provide amenities like a restaurant on storey 17 and an events pavilion on level 20. They are connected by a spiral of informal spaces from work pods to jungle gyms and social spaces. You could say that the Green Oasis is a kind of social mixer that contains all the elements you need to create a vibrant and diverse community.



Image: Finbarr Fallon



Marina One

Image: Finbarr Fallon

A green oasis in Marina Bay's financial district is this integrated development comprising four towers with offices, apartments and a retail podium. Marina One, completed by ingenhoven associates, in partnership with Architects 61, in 2018, is a model of sustainable design with its organic shape and distinctive louvres.

At the core of the development is the "Green Heart", which offers nature in the heart of the city. It is made up of a series of biodiversity gardens that extend over several storeys and offer spaces for contemplation and social interactions.

The interaction between the geometry of the buildings and the gardens facilitates natural ventilation and enhances its microclimate. Drawing inspiration from the climate variations at different heights within a rainforest, the landscape architecture mimics a green valley with climatic changes at different levels too³⁹.



Image: Finbarr Fallon



Image: ingenhoven associates / HGEsch



Image: ingenhoven associates / HGEsch

“

We can develop denser cities that are highly liveable by designing walkable streets for people, creating a wide array of public plazas and spaces for connection and spontaneous encounters, and opening the ground levels of our buildings for more street life.

Christoph Ingenhoven
Founder, christoph ingenhoven architects

Image: Finbarr Fallon

Offering relief in a dense city

Christoph Ingenhoven, Founder, christoph ingenhoven architects, believes more public spaces should be created in denser environments for more liveable and delightful cityscapes⁴⁰.

What does designing a green building mean to you?

Christoph: Plants and landscapes play a key role in almost all our projects. Urban green spaces must be considered an integral aspect of the building from the outset. At Marina One, the “Green Heart” is the central design element. We have gone beyond the fully air-conditioned boxes that (still) dominate the city’s CBD to instead develop a high-rise building typology specifically for Singapore’s humid tropical climate zone.

How can we continue creating liveable and delightful living spaces even in denser environments?

Christoph: A dense city is much more vibrant and lively compared to a flat and vast one. We have already gone past the car-centred phase of urban development from 30 years ago. Given the world’s growing population and our increasingly complex needs, our cities will become denser.

But that threatens to reduce the public space. Architects have a duty to create and protect public spaces through their design. We can develop denser cities that are highly liveable by designing walkable streets for people, creating a wide array of public plazas and spaces for connection and spontaneous encounters, and opening the ground levels of our buildings for more street life.



Image: Finbarr Fallon

Geneo, Singapore Science Park

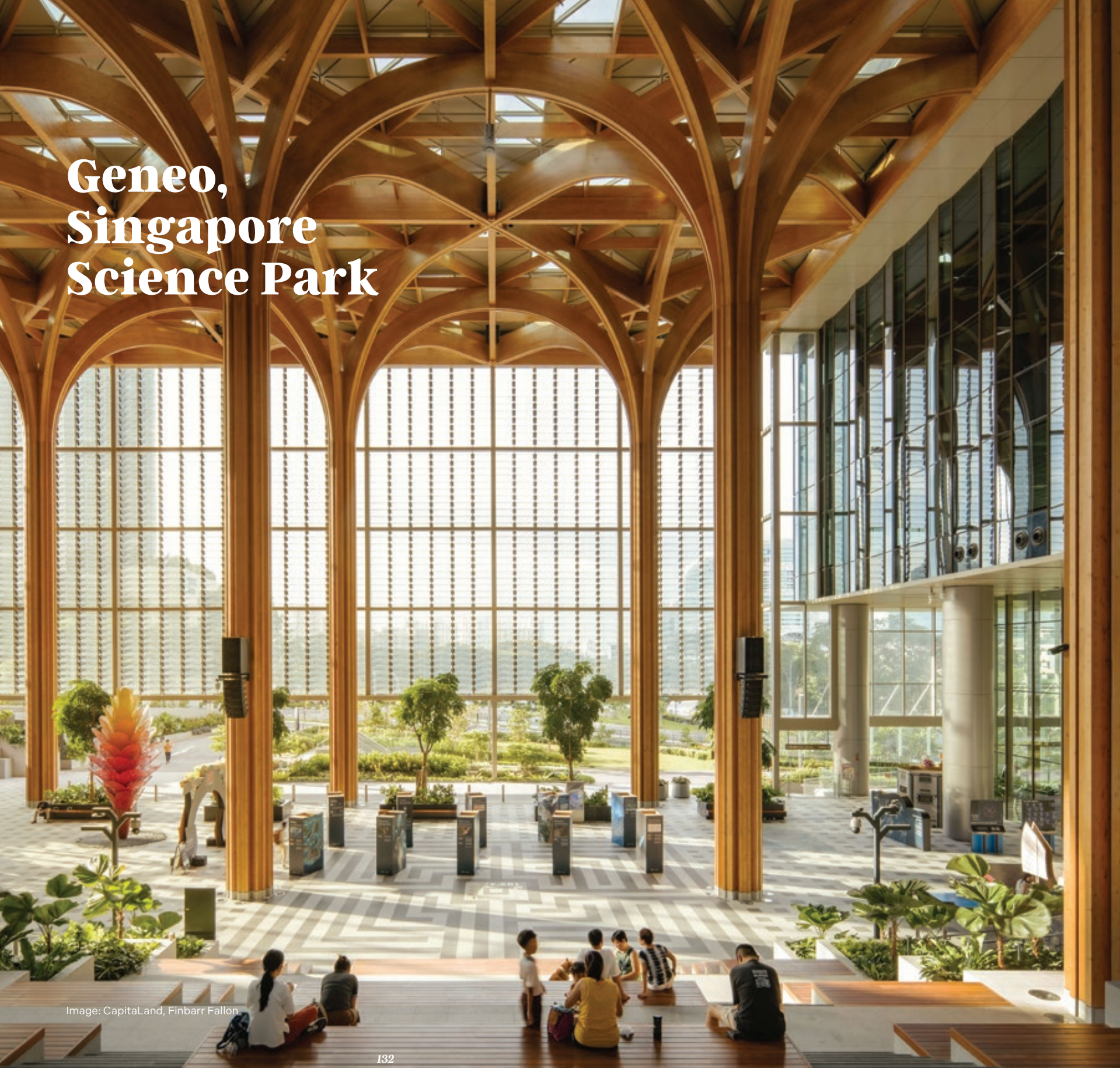


Image: CapitaLand, Finbarr Fallon

Just a 15-minute drive from the CBD is this addition to the Singapore Science Park. The cluster of five buildings, Geneo, completed in 2025 offers flexible wet lab-ready floors, co-working labs and smart-enabled offices for innovation as well as research and development activities in biomedical sciences, digital technology and more. In addition, a seamless, sheltered connection between the buildings enhances connectivity and convenience for visitors. Geneo further enlivens the park with work-live-play elements, including a lodging facility, retail and food and beverage outlets, lifestyle amenities, and green spaces for relaxation.

At the heart of the development designed by Serie Architects, in partnership with Multiply Architects and Surbana Jurong, is a 3,000-square-metre public space with an impressive entrance. Ar. Christopher Lee, Co-Founder and Principal, Serie Architects, likens the space to a piazza in European cities but adapted for Singapore's tropical climate. It is naturally ventilated and designed to achieve good thermal comfort while keeping the rain out.



More than just a physical space, the plaza at Geneo serves as a central hub and connector for both tenants and the public. It brings in like-minded communities together through regular curated placemaking activities and events that ultimately strengthens the role of the Singapore Science Park.



The all-weather plaza is covered by a pixelated glass canopy that is held up by a cathedral-like timber structure. It houses various public spaces, including an amphitheatre for industry events and community programmes. The striking canopy that goes up to 27 metres is the tallest in Singapore made from mass engineered timber. It draws photography enthusiasts and the public, and remains lively and bustling even after office hours and on weekends.



Punggol Digital District



Image: JTC

The Campus Boulevard (above) and the campus heart (right) within the Singapore Institute of Technology campus.

Singapore's first smart and sustainable district stands out not only for providing public spaces in privately-owned buildings but also for its extensive network of them. The 50-hectare Punggol Digital District opened in phases since 2025, houses growing technology sectors such as cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, robotics, fintech and smart living.



Image: Henning Larsen, Finbarr Fallon



Image: JTC

JTC's 2025 Wonderlab event at the district's main atrium space.

It is the first "enterprise district" in Singapore, where JTC is the master developer with the flexibility to plan and curate land uses, including executing space swaps between industry and academia across different plots. The design seamlessly integrates the business park, the campus of the Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT), and community amenities, with no distinct physical boundaries between these spaces. Lecturers, students and workers can thus easily access and use any available spaces for collaboration and the exchange of ideas.

What also sets this district apart is the extent of amenities and public spaces available. They are woven into it, including communal sky terraces and collaborative spaces accessible to the public. Shops, eateries, healthcare facilities, childcare centres, playgrounds and parks serve not only students and workers but also the wider Punggol neighbourhood.



Image: JTC

People can move freely throughout the district via a dedicated network of walkable streets and cycling paths, including Campus Boulevard, a pedestrianised street that leads to the waterfront overlooking Coney Island. The design is made possible by placing service facilities, such as the electrical substation, district cooling and logistics systems, underground. The district's main roads are also located at its edges to free up the ground level for more public spaces that are car-free.



Image: Finbarr Fallon

Great public spaces: 5 design tips

1

Design generous public spaces

"When you design a public space, make sure it is generous. One Holland Village has shown that providing generous and well-designed public spaces have made these places more popular and that means the shops and restaurants enjoy greater footfall. This benefits businesses, people and the larger neighbourhood."
Ar. Siew Man Kok, Founding Director, MKPL Architects

2

Design for ease of use and maintenance

"Keep it simple in terms of ease of use and maintenance over time. It should be an attractive space where people can feel comfortable and want to remain longer."
Dr. Janil Puthuchery, Adviser, Pasir Ris-Punggol GRC

3

Design for human comfort

"Design the space for human comfort. We made sure that the space (Guoco Tower Urban Park) is very well shaded and protected from the intense sun and created natural comfort through wind flow. We incorporated water elements and softscapes at the fringes, so that when the natural breeze comes into the site from the east and west, its naturally cooled."
Nicolas Medrano, Principal, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill

4

Design for accessibility

"It's essentially a very high-volume sheltered public space (CapitaSpring's ground floor atrium) that is accessible 24 hours a day. For the space to be activated, we also ensured it is well connected to the surrounding context, whether above or below ground."
Brian Yang, Partner, Bjarke Ingels Group

5

Design for community and sense of place

"We hope that residents who visit and spend time here (Bukit Canberra) will find a space that they can identify with and, over time, develop a sense of pride and ownership so that they would want to help care for and maintain the place well. From place-making to place-keeping and even place-loving, that is the positive impact of quality public space and amenities on enhancing a stronger sense of community and deepening social capital."
Ar. Seah Chee Huang, CEO, DP Architects

Weekend hangouts

Where do people go when weekends come? They look for places that give a different vibe and rhythm from the everyday places. They would be in hip neighbourhoods, historic districts, the arts and culture precincts and even way out destinations. Most often, these places would have great public spaces that host weekend markets, festival, performances or just to browse and explore. These are what make the city appealing and special.

“

If there is any one lesson that I have learned in my life as a city planner, it is that public spaces have power. It's not just the number of people using them, it's the even greater number of people who feel better about their city just knowing that they are there. Public space can change how you live in a city and how you feel about a city.

A successful city is like a fabulous party; people stay because they are having a great time⁴¹.

Amanda Burden
Chair, New York City Planning Commission and Director,
Department of City Planning, New York City (2002–2013)



Bras Basah.Bugis

Walkable streets and lively public spaces have been the key focus for the Bras Basah.Bugis district since the 1990s. It is part of the URA's larger vision for the district to be a lively heritage, arts and learning enclave.

To enhance walkability, the strategy was to create a network of pedestrian malls, covered walkways and laneways between buildings, including second-storey links, so that people can move around easily and comfortably⁴².



The dedicated cycling lane along Bencoolen Street (top) and installations designed by NAFA (above) have made the street more delightful.

Enhancing sidewalks: Queen Street, Bencoolen Street and Waterloo Street

Over the years, enhancements have been made to the district, such as creating wider sidewalks, more attractive seating and additional public spaces along Queen Street, Bencoolen Street and Waterloo Street. Surrounding educational institutions such as LASALLE College of the Arts, School of the Arts and Singapore Management University have also been designed with public spaces that play host to regular events and activities curated for students and the public to participate in.

In 2014 and 2017, URA, together with the National Heritage Board (NHB) and Land Transport Authority (LTA), collaborated with students from the district's Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA) to design and paint new public benches on the widened sidewalks along Queen Street and Bencoolen Street. This complements a dedicated cycling path developed along Bencoolen Street in 2017, where two of the four original car lanes were converted into sidewalks for pedestrians⁴³.

Today, improvement works are underway to expand the sidewalks along Waterloo Street to provide more public spaces for arts and cultural events. There will also be improved connections to the Bencoolen MRT Station, and more trees will be planted to create a shadier environment.



Legend
 Albert Mall and Waterloo Mall

Early pedestrianisation efforts: Albert Mall and Waterloo Mall

Some of the earliest pedestrian malls in the Bras Basah, Bugis district were Albert Mall and Waterloo Mall, a 700-metre stretch developed by the URA in 1998 with the pedestrianisation of Albert Street and part of Waterloo Street. It was part of the broader plan to provide a comprehensive pedestrian network from Little India to Marina Centre through Bugis Street and Suntec City.

The design of the pedestrian malls incorporated feedback from community leaders, temple representatives and businesses in the area. The malls were created not only to facilitate walking but also to provide public spaces that could host commercial and community activities on special occasions⁴⁴.

After



Image: Finbarr Fallon

Before



Image: Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

From a road (above), to a pedestrianised street (left), Albert Mall remains a popular spot for locals and visitors to stroll around and enjoy the area.



A central plaza, strategically located at Albert Street and Waterloo Street, was designed to hold stage performances and bazaars. The stretch of the mall facing the temples could provide a place for visitors and residents to relax too. The open space outside the temples would accommodate the occasional large crowds during festive celebrations, while the mall in front of Stamford Arts Centre could host arts performances.

Along the malls are designated spaces for festival tentage and outdoor refreshment areas too. The community has since adapted and customised spaces for celebratory displays, such as putting up a God of Fortune sculpture during the Chinese New Year. Today, Albert and Waterloo Malls are an integral part of the area's character and continue to support the vibrant street life.



After



Before



Armenian Street

A more recent pedestrianisation effort was the conversion of the four-lane Armenian Street. As it was not a heavily used road, various stakeholders, together with government agencies (the URA, NHB and National Parks Board (NParks)), saw the potential for a permanent road closure.

After



Before



From 2015 to 2018, several possibilities were explored, eventually leading to its pedestrianisation in 2019. The street has become a lovely, walkable space in the heart of the city. It also regularly hosts activities and events, such as the Singapore Night Festival. Part of Armenian Street is now an urban botanic garden, extending the greenery from nearby Fort Canning. Art lovers, students and visitors have also enjoyed picnics, music performances and art showcases here.



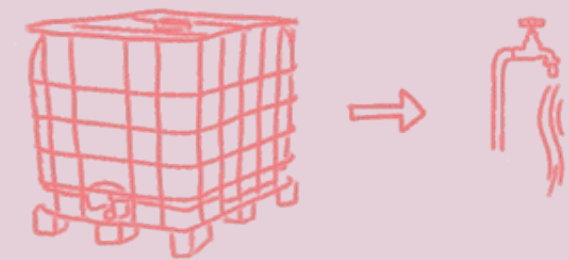
Image: Finbarr Fallon



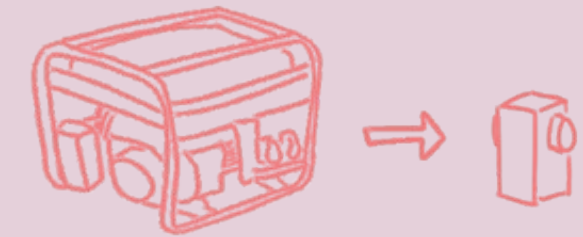
Image: Finbarr Fallon



Image: Finbarr Fallon



Bulky equipments like the water tank and gas generator are integrated seamlessly into the design of the street. These enable events to be staged at Armenian Street. Can you find where these are located along the street?



After



Image: Finbarr Fallon

From a road to a pedestrianised space, residents and visitors have been enjoying the more intimate public space in Tiong Bahru.

Before



The conversion was the result of ideas and contributions from 30 residents and stakeholders. They came together in 2022 with the LTA, URA and several young architects to brainstorm ideas for this public space. LTA designed the benches on the side to match the façade of the buildings and they are movable to support small activities and events.

A cultural performance (right) and bazaar (below) as part of the 2017 Aliwal Arts Night Crawl in Kampong Gelam.

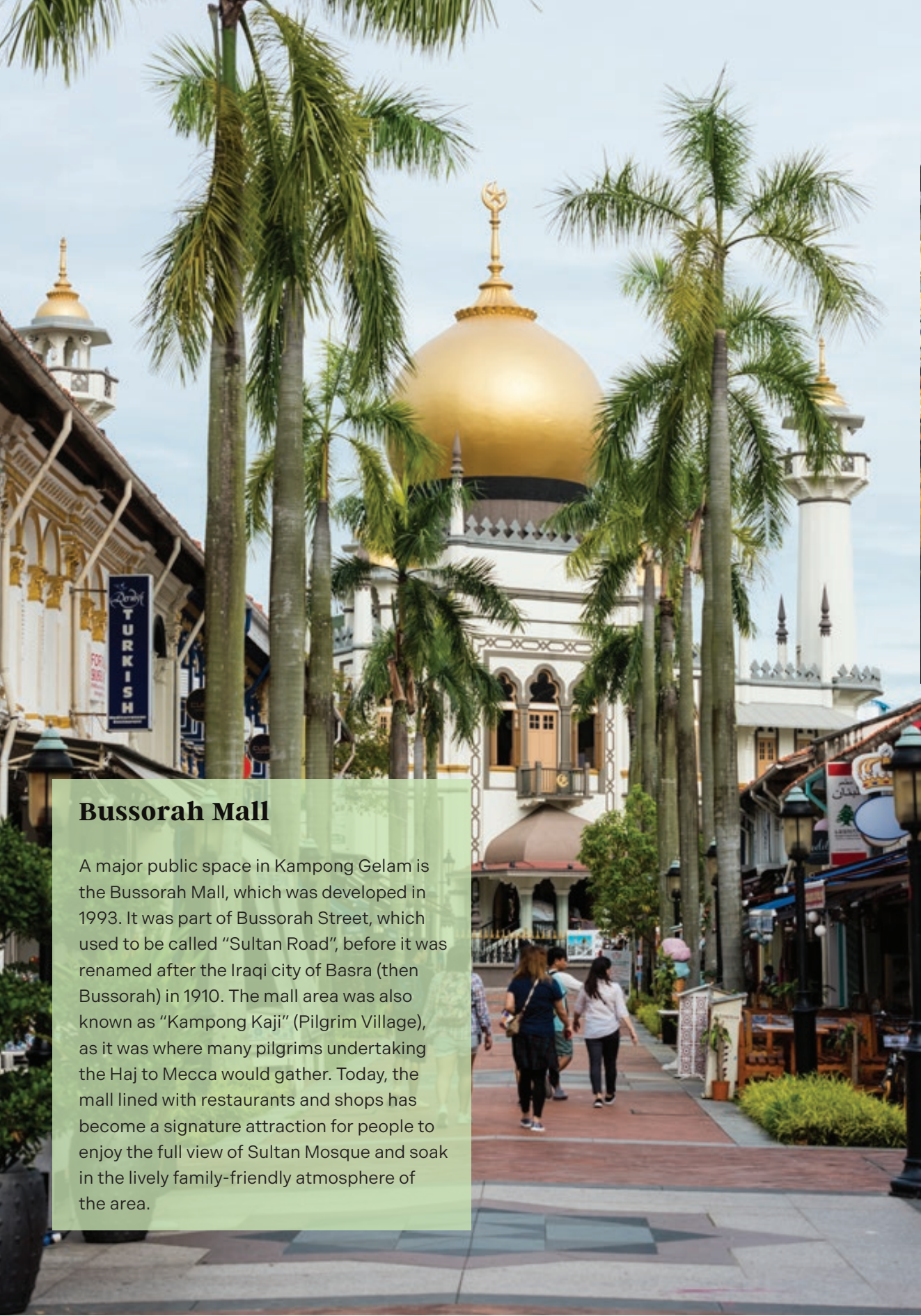


Image: One Kampong Gelam

Kampong Gelam

Kampong Gelam is one of Singapore's oldest urban quarters. In 1822, Sir Stamford Raffles, the founder of modern Singapore, allocated the area to Malay, Arab, Bugis, Javanese and other communities, which later became the seat of Malay royalty. The historic core was gazetted as a conservation area in 1989.

The neighbourhood has evolved into a mixed-use, multi-ethnic area whilst retaining its strong Malay and Muslim heritage. Enhanced public spaces over the years have preserved its culture, attracted visitors, supported local businesses and strengthened its distinctive identity.



Bussorah Mall

A major public space in Kampong Gelam is the Bussorah Mall, which was developed in 1993. It was part of Bussorah Street, which used to be called "Sultan Road", before it was renamed after the Iraqi city of Basra (then Bussorah) in 1910. The mall area was also known as "Kampong Kaji" (Pilgrim Village), as it was where many pilgrims undertaking the Haj to Mecca would gather. Today, the mall lined with restaurants and shops has become a signature attraction for people to enjoy the full view of Sultan Mosque and soak in the lively family-friendly atmosphere of the area.



The many key activities and spaces that make Kampong Gelam unique: the popular Bussorah Mall (left), outdoor dining along Haji Lane (above) and curated events such as the 2017 Aliwal Arts Night Crawl (below).

Street closures

Over the years, local communities and placemaking groups such as One Kampong Gelam (OKG) have activated many street closures to showcase the area's culture and heritage and attract visitors. This started with weekend car-free zones along Haji Lane in 2013, and later extended to Bali Lane (2014), Bussorah Street (2014) and Baghdad Street (2016)⁴⁵.

These efforts enabled people to experience the streets more intimately. Saeid Labbafi, Co-Chairman, Kampong Gelam Alliance, said the street closures raised footfall to the area by 15 to 20 per cent compared to days without them⁴⁶. He also noted that more families visited the area too and spent more time in the precinct as well.



Image: One Kampong Gelam

Art everywhere

One noticeable feature of Kampong Gelam is its many art murals on the walls of shophouses and other corners of the precinct. The murals were commissioned and created by building and restaurant owners as well as stakeholders such as marketing and events company AMC Asia!, institutions and OKG. Some of these murals can be found along Haji Lane, Bali Lane and Victoria Street.

Many were created by artists Didier Jaba Mathieu and Ernest Zacharevic. Other local artists have also entered the scene, including street art group RSCLS and local artist Yip Yew Chong. Another showcase of street art is a unique outdoor gallery of 30 artworks created in the back alleys of Bussorah Mall in 2019. Framed art pieces hang alongside the wall murals and commissioned graffiti. They range from colourful modern pieces to works reflecting the culture and heritage of the area.

In 2021, OKG worked with 17 artists to create unique street art stretching nearly 240 metres along Ophir Road and Bali Lane. The initiative features time portals and larger-than-life pigeons that are part of a five-metre-high Hall of Fame that reflects the past, present and future of Kampong Gelam. These artworks presented on metal noise barriers erected around the construction sites for the North-South Corridor are supported by the URA, LTA and the Singapore Tourism Board⁴⁷.



Inspired by Kampong Gelam's heritage

During the month-long Singapore Archifest 2023, some 400 square metres of state land, car parks and walls in Kampong Gelam were enhanced with temporary installations by local artists, designers and architects. The installations to celebrate the precinct's heritage were supported by the Lively Places Fund and attracted over 100,000 visitors, many who were drawn to installations such as the Forest Fabric and Dulang-Dulang.



Image: Spatial Anatomy

Collective Memories of Kampong Gelam

By architectural designer Jerome Ng, spatial designer Zed Haan and artist Kevin Ong

Located between a shophouse and old cemetery, the installation created a linear landscape reflecting nearby five-footways. It encouraged reflection on the influences and forces that have shaped Kampong Gelam's past, present and future.



Image: Spatial Anatomy



Image: Kendrick Tay

Fabric Forest

By Ar. Jezamine Chua and curator Kendrick Tay

Drawing from Kampong Gelam's past as a pilgrim stopover to Mecca, the installation featured canopies and tiered benches offering respite under Angsana trees. The fabric forest encircling the trees flowed with pedestrian movement, capturing the area's textile heritage.



Image: Spatial Anatomy

Dulang-Dulang

By Syazwan Hanif, Founder, cmdR consulting, and architect Syafiq Jubri

The specially designed tables and seats transformed a parking zone into an inviting public gathering space. Inspired by the Dulang (a steel tray for communal eating in Malay culture), the furniture multiplied the tray's circular geometry to create common tables, and topped with plants and herbs typically used in Malay cooking, creating an overall sensorial experience. Following the temporary experiment, the coach parking lots have been permanently converted into an open space.



Image: Faiz Zohri

Scaffold Bridge over Fence

By landscape architect Faiz Zohri

A temporary bridge built over the fence to an open field recalled the former Pondok Jawa site, capturing memories of this key Javanese community space. The installation has created greater interest in this historic site. To make the space more accessible, the fence has been removed.

A Particular Place

By artists Leonard Yang, Leow Wei Li and Akai Chew

A mural on shophouse walls explored Kampong Gelam's layered history through maps, iconography, photographs and imagined scenes. The illustrations captured the area's varied identities, which were contributed by the community.

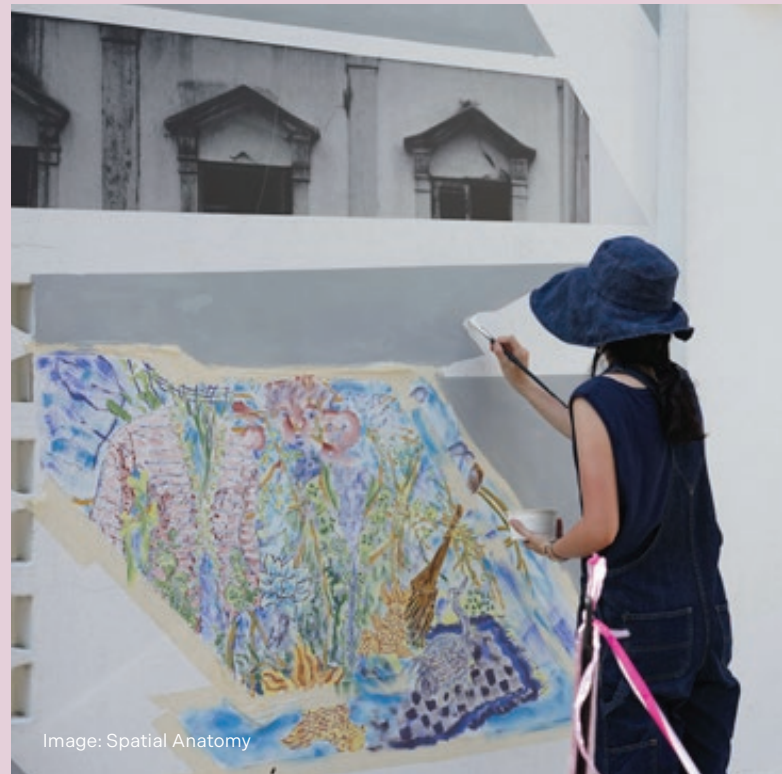


Image: Spatial Anatomy



Asterisk Constellation

By Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD) Assistant Professors Christine Yogieman and Kenneth Tracey

A special canopy structure was created using stainless-steel tubes extracted from decommissioned MRT train and tensioned cables. The design developed by SUTD's Dynamic Assemblies Lab using digitally designed tensegrity⁴⁸ principles glowed at night too, offering a magical park experience.



The Empress Lawn has become a key place for many activities and gatherings.

Civic District

Located in the heart of the city centre, the district is home to some of Singapore's most notable historic buildings. It stretches from Fort Canning to the Singapore River and the seafront beyond the Padang. The Civic District was demarcated in the Raffles Town Plan as an administrative zone for the colonial government in the 1820s.

To enhance the area as an arts, cultural and lifestyle precinct, the URA carried out major improvements in 2015 to help people experience and enjoy its many public spaces and attractions. The district now has a more extensive pedestrian-friendly network and enhanced spaces and venues for outdoor events such as arts performances⁴⁹.

Key enhancements in Civic District





Image: Ministry of Information and the Arts Collection, courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

The space in front of the Empress Place building used to be a roundabout (above) and today, it is a great gathering place for people in the city (right).

Empress Place

Named in memory of the late Queen Victoria in 1907, this public square in the district sits in front of the Empress Place Building which houses the Asian Civilisations Museum today. It is possibly one of the oldest public spaces in Singapore.

In 2015, the driveway within Empress Place area, which separated the museum and the neighbouring Victoria Theatre and Concert Hall, was paved over to give priority to pedestrians and create a seamless park-like setting. Part of Fullerton Road was subsequently realigned to create a more spacious lawn too. New infrastructure, such as power, water and lighting, was also installed so the space can host various outdoor events, including concerts.





Esplanade Park

Not far from Empress Place is this park that was built in 1943 and upgraded in 1991. The park has many significant monuments such as the Cenotaph, Tan Kim Seng Fountain, Lim Bo Seng Memorial and the Dalhousie Obelisk. In 2015, the park was further improved with additional landscaping and benches equipped with mobile phone charging points. Five new Angsana trees were planted within it to commemorate a popular meeting spot known in Hokkien as “Gor Zhang Chew Khar” (the spot under the five trees).



Tourist week regatta along Queen Elizabeth Walk in 1966 (below) and the stepped plazas introduced in 2015 (left).

Queen Elizabeth Walk

Within Esplanade Park lies this seafront promenade that was named in honour of Queen Elizabeth II’s coronation in 1953. Stepped plazas were introduced in 2015 to enhance the experience of this historic public space. Today, families often come here for picnics while couples take romantic walks. When the sun sets, the evening glow makes the place even more beautiful against the historic city backdrop and the Marina Bay skyline.

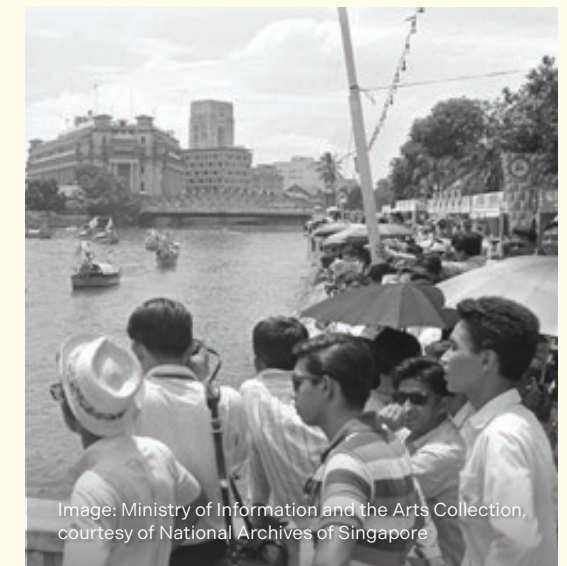


Image: Ministry of Information and the Arts Collection, courtesy of National Archives of Singapore



Marina Bay

This key destination for both locals and tourists has grown and developed its own distinctive identity as a live-work-play extension of the Central Business District (CBD). It is the result of long-term planning and meticulous implementation that started in the 1970s. Today, Marina Bay is a people's bay – with something for everyone.

To activate the many public spaces specially designed around the 360-hectare site, regular events and programmes are organised. Examples include the annual Marina Bay Countdown, National Day Parade and i Light Singapore. Over time, the public spaces around the bay have become popular with businesses and stakeholders who use it for kite flying, carnivals, pop-up markets, movie nights and more⁵⁰.





Marina Barrage

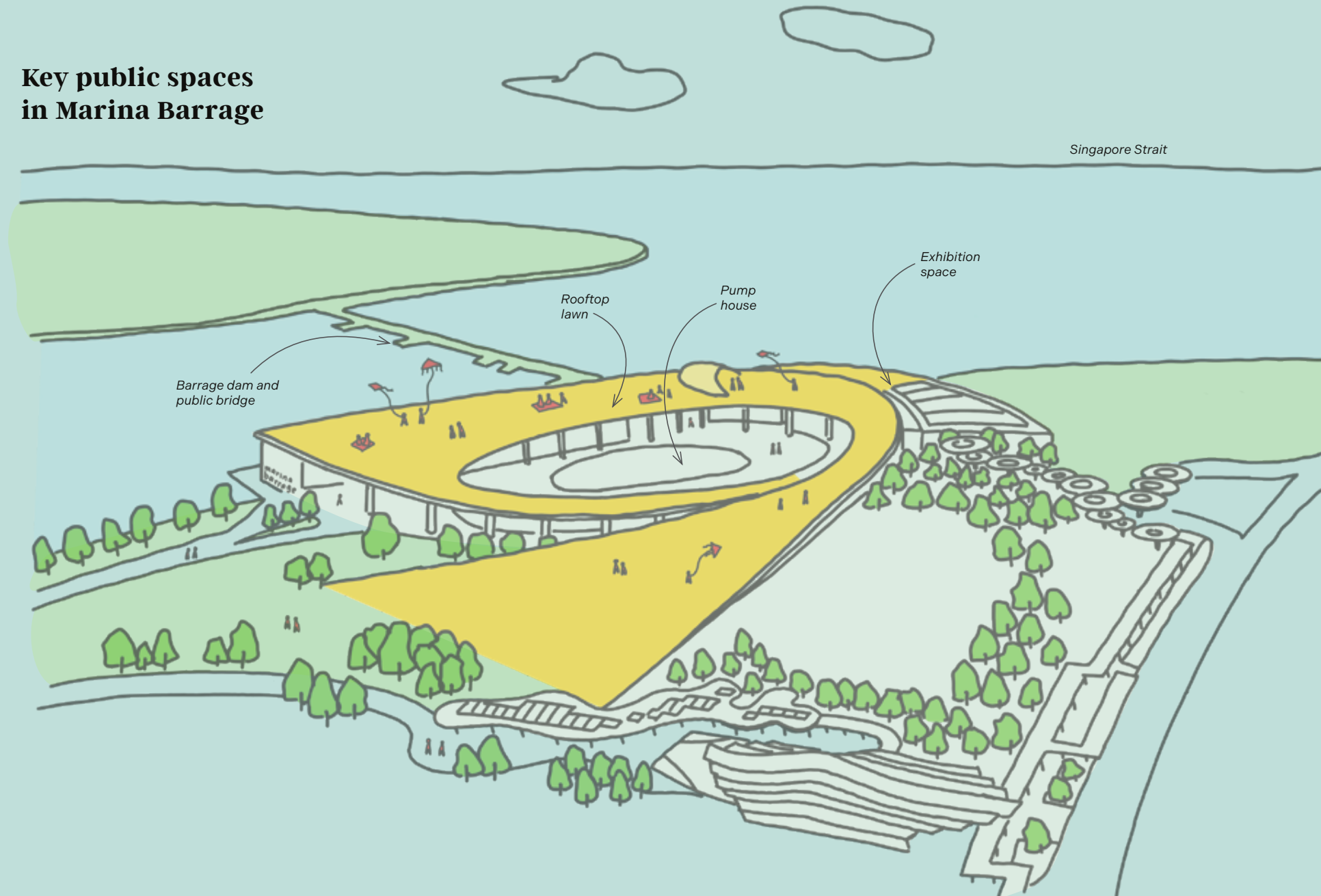
A more unusual public space in Marina Bay is the rooftop of this pump house that has become popular for kite flying and picnics. Since the late 1990s, plans have been underway to convert Marina Bay into a freshwater reservoir. A barrage was introduced in 2008 to segregate the planned Marina Reservoir from the open sea, which resulted in the creation of Singapore's 15th freshwater reservoir, Marina Reservoir.

“Did you know that the Marina Barrage did not even start out as a public space project? The attendant pump house was originally designed as a utilitarian building. But we saw it as an opportunity to be better designed to relate to the waterfront and Gardens by the Bay next to it.

As the building had to be located at the waterfront promenade, we seeded the idea to bring the waterfront promenade to its rooftop instead so that users can continue to enjoy the waterfront from a higher vantage point,” shares Fun Siew Leng, Chief Urban Designer, URA⁵¹.

Guided by URA’s Design Advisory Panel, the final design of Marina Barrage features a large, turfed ramp leading to an extensive green roof over the pump house. It is as if the Gardens by the Bay has been brought in one continuous sweep up to the new public space on the rooftop overlooking the Straits of Singapore. “Never in our wildest dreams did we imagine how a seed of an idea would eventually become such a popular destination with Singaporeans,” Fun adds.

Key public spaces in Marina Barrage





Today, this expansive public space attracts people from all walks of life. The development also has a public area with a water playground, an art trail and the Sustainable Singapore Gallery. The barrage holding steel crest gates across the Marina Channel also functions as a pedestrian bridge connecting the waterfront promenades at Marina South and Marina East. Since Marina Reservoir is now unaffected by varying tidal conditions, it is ideal for recreational activities such as windsurfing, kayaking and dragon boating.

During a 2020 focus group discussion on what makes Singapore loveable, a member of the public shared: "Marina Barrage offers a view of the Singapore skyline along with lots of greenery. It also has enough space for plenty of activities for family and friends, whether it is kite flying, having a picnic or playing with water⁵²."

“

The space under the Benjamin Sheares Bridge was unused until it was converted into a site where different activities can take place at various times of the day. Although this is a much quieter recreational space compared to, say, East Coast Park, I often see families using this space during weeknights and weekends⁵³.

Ar. Chin Li Nah

Senior Associate Director, DP Architects



Image: Gardens by the Bay

Benjamin Sheares Bridge

Another unexpected public space near Marina Bay is one that is tucked under the Benjamin Sheares Bridge, Singapore's longest road bridge with the highest elevation, a unique space that offers a quieter alternative to other busier public spaces.





The distinctive bridge spans the mouth of the Singapore River and Marina Bay and was named in honour of Dr Benjamin Henry Sheares, the second President of Singapore. The elevated bridge is raised by columns, piers and tapered H-shaped trestles in reinforced concrete. The structure is 29 metres at its highest point, and the trestles that support the bridge were specially designed to facilitate the passage of ships underneath, to and from the shipyards that used to operate at Kallang Basin⁵⁴.

This versatile space is suitable for walking, cycling and sporting activities. Spanning Marina Bay, it offers breathtaking views of the waterfront skyline at Bay South Garden and provides access to the water sports facilities at the edge of the scenic Bay East Garden, where the future Founders' Memorial will be located. It also features open hardscape, minimising the need for returfing. The space is partially sheltered by the Benjamin Sheares Bridge, offering protection from the elements.



Orchard Road

Singapore's major shopping belt and lifestyle destination originally had many orchards and plantations. There used to be fruit tree orchards, spice gardens and pepper farms on both sides of Orchard Road. From the 1970s to the 1990s, it developed into a shopping district with a slew of hotels and shopping malls.



“

It's nice to have this open space to step out and take a breather. Perched above Orchard Road, it offers a great vantage point overlooking the city's hustle and bustle. It offers a small pocket of stillness and a perfect spot to people watch.

Joshua Toh

Designer and tenant at Design Orchard

Design Orchard

To further enhance Orchard Road's retail offerings and support Singapore's creative industry, Design Orchard was developed in 2019 to offer affordable production and workspaces for emerging local designers. The design by WOHA Architects also came with a prominent rooftop that is tiered away from the junction to form an urban amphitheatre as well as a shaded pocket park. The vantage point enhances people's experience of Orchard Road, providing a quiet public space for shoppers and visitors above the busy streets.



Image: WOHA, Patrick Bingham Hall



Image: WOHA, Darren Soh



Before



After

Discovery Walk

Not far from Design Orchard is this pedestrian mall that offers a different kind of shopping experience. The previously open Stamford Canal above Somerset MRT Station was reimagined as a lively retail alley lined with outdoor kiosks, alfresco dining and public art. The idea to deck over the canal was conceived by the URA in 2001 as part of Orchard Road's rejuvenation efforts.

The project involved coordinating the sale and development of several State Land parcels and private developments with different development timeframes. Two of the parcels were launched and sold in 2005 and 2006 to develop Orchard Central and Somerset@313. Both were completed in 2009, which contributed to the start and end of Discovery Walk.



In 2014, three buildings belonging to the same owners – Specialist Centre, Phoenix Hotel and Orchard Emerald – were redeveloped into Orchard Gateway. This completed the final middle section of the Discovery Walk.

The owners were encouraged to redevelop their buildings under the Orchard Road Development Commission scheme, which offered additional Gross Floor Area for redevelopment that brings transformative benefits to the street block.

URA's Design Advisory Panel also offered guidance to ensure the new developments would relate well to each other. The result is a seamless Discovery Walk that offers a more intimate experience off the bustling Orchard Road⁵⁵.



The former Specialist Shopping Centre, Phoenix Hotel and Orchard Emerald were redeveloped into Orchard Gateway in 2014 to complete the middle section of the Discovery Walk.



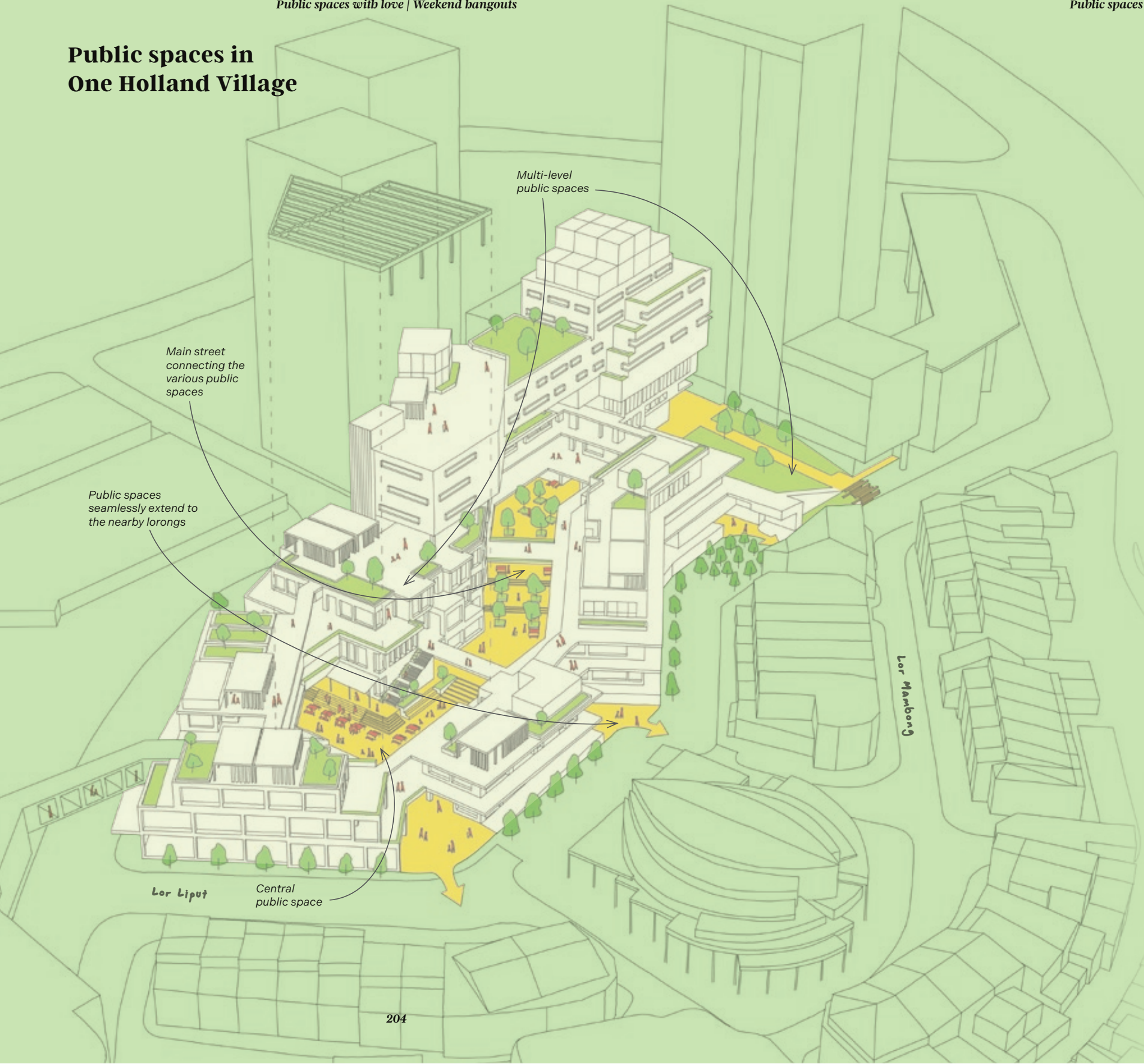
Holland Village



Image: Kevin Siyuan

Located close to Orchard Road is this area formerly known as a “mini-Orchard Road” as it is home to distinctive shophouses, intimate streetscapes and a cosy atmosphere. While it was originally developed in the 1930s to cater to the needs of nearby British military bases, Holland Village has evolved into a lively mixed-use enclave today.

Public spaces in One Holland Village



The area was designated as an Identity Node as part of the URA's 2003 Identity Plan. Urban design guidelines were put in place to guide redevelopments so as to retain Holland Village's low-rise character.

One Holland Village

Completed in 2024, this mixed-use development by MKPL Architects was shaped by urban design considerations that ensured the area's familiar village-like experience was maintained. A low-rise zone complements the existing two-storey shophouses, while the new pedestrian mall and public spaces within it were planned as extensions of the existing Lorong Liput and Lorong Mambong. The widths of the pathways within One Holland Village closely match the existing lanes or lorongs in Holland Village to continue the street experience and offer multiple entry and exit points for people to easily access the development.



Image: Finbarr Fallon

What is most striking about One Holland Village is its generous public spaces found across the open-air shopping mall. They include the spacious ground level, smaller, cosy spaces on different floors and a landscaped terrace on the fourth storey that has plenty of chairs for people to sit and catch up with one another.

There are many public art installations throughout the development too. A prominent piece, by German artist Tomislav Topic, hangs above the main public atrium. Composed of 410 lacquered steel panels and suspended in a delicate grid of 41 colours, it provides shade, depth and adds character to the space. The development also has a pet-friendly focus, making it welcoming not just for people but for furry friends too.



Image: Finbarr Fallon



Image: Finbarr Fallon



Image: Finbarr Fallon

Being generous is rewarding

Ar. Siew Man Kok, Founding Director, MKPL Architects shares how public spaces can give developments a boost⁵⁶.

Tell us about the design of public spaces in One Holland Village.

Man Kok: When you design a public space, make sure it is generous. When I designed One Holland Village, I intended for it to also have extensive public spaces. With a lot of public seating and a variety of free spaces provided, it has become very vibrant and engaging. Many people visit just to hang around, with the flexibility to make these spaces feel like their own.

And many of these spaces are naturally ventilated.

Man Kok: It is not true that Singaporeans do not like naturally ventilated environments. You just have to design the spaces to be very comfortable.

What are benefits of having extensive public spaces?

Man Kok: One Holland Village has shown that providing generous and well-designed public spaces has made these places more popular and that means the shops and restaurants enjoy greater footfall. This benefits businesses, people and the larger neighbourhood.

What are some lessons you learnt from designing good public spaces?

Man Kok: Beyond the size of public spaces, considering the right scale is also important in relating to the site and its context. For public spaces in suburban neighbourhoods, you need to create a different kind of atmosphere and vibe than those in areas like Orchard Road or even One Holland Village.



Image: Finbarr Fallon



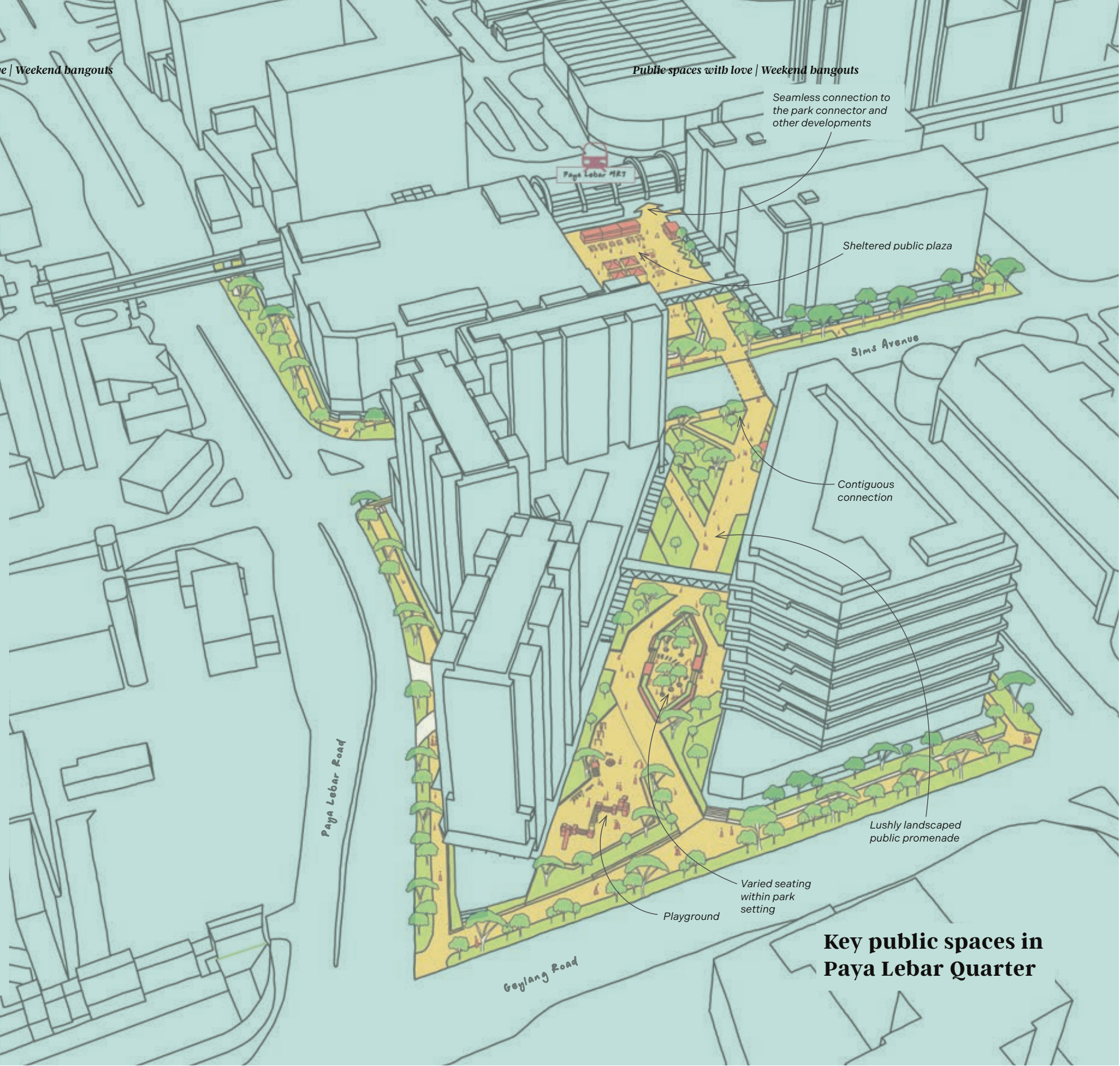
Image: Finbarr Fallon

Paya Lebar Central

Also at the fringe of the city, and near the culturally rich Geylang Serai precinct, Paya Lebar Central is a sub-regional centre that offers businesses alternative spaces beyond the CBD.

Paya Lebar Quarter

The mixed-use development, which was completed in 2019 by Lendlease, serves as a key anchor for the neighbourhood. It is designed as a pedestrian-friendly hub comprising of three office towers, a retail mall and three private residential blocks. There are 9,300 square metres of public spaces, cycling paths and lush greenery, which are seamlessly connected to the Paya Lebar MRT Station, the larger Paya Lebar area, and the wider park connector network.



Public spaces with love | Weekend bangouts

Public spaces with love | Weekend bangouts

Seamless connection to the park connector and other developments

Sheltered public plaza

Sims Avenue

Contiguous connection

Lushly landscaped public promenade

Varied seating within park setting

Playground

Paya Lebar Road

Geylang Road

Key public spaces in Paya Lebar Quarter



Image: Finbarr Fallon



Image: Finbarr Fallon

The main public plaza in the middle of the development is designed as a vibrant social space with an alfresco setting for people to enjoy food, drinks and activities. It links to the mall and office towers, serving as an important gathering place for office workers and nearby residents. The spacious, airy area is sheltered by an Ethylene Tetrafluoroethylene (ETFE) canopy, allowing it to host events all year round. They include festivals and celebrations, such as bazaars and cultural activities that support the local culture and communities.



Image: Finbarr Fallon



This public space was previously an open canal, which was built over as part of Paya Lebar Quarter to create a more expansive public realm. Today, it connects seamlessly with the immediate surroundings, making it more accessible for all.

A park-like environment with comfortable seating around the space also offers retreats for those seeking to get away from the main busy area. A children's playground adds a family-friendly touch.





Katong-Joo Chiat

This historic area in the East, once home to seaside houses and coconut plantations, has retained its rich diverse heritage in its shophouses and culture. Its former shoreline, marked by Marine Parade Road, has since been reclaimed to create a public housing estate and East Coast Park.

As part of the development of URA's Historic East Identity Corridor, residents in Katong-Joo Chiat participated in a 11-month public engagement. The Identity Corridors, identified in the Long Term Plan Review 2022, aim to enhance Singapore's distinctive stretches with unique characters through visioning workshops and community discussions.

The over 2,300 participants called for more meaningful public spaces in their neighbourhood. This would enliven the area, showcase local heritage and provide gathering places for people to enjoy. A key outcome is the planned pedestrian mall along East Coast Road between i12 Katong and Katong V, which will feature landscaping, seating, recreational facilities and spaces for community events.

Retro Factory Flea Market at Katong Square.



Celebrating Katong-Joo Chiat

Various spaces in the area hosted colourful heritage-inspired installations during Singapore Archifest 2025 to demonstrate ways of creating vibrant public spaces. The installations supported by URA's Public Space Programme and the Lively Places Fund included student works as part of their studio study⁵⁷, in collaboration with architects. Some of URA's 20 Under 45 architects⁵⁸ worked with the community on projects too.

Image: Chee Boon Pin



Archipavilion

By RT+Q Architects

A striking three-dimensional reimagining of the Archifest logo offers a cosy space where visitors can relax. The installation was adorned with a "croshade", a shading canopy formed by crochet pieces, conceptualised by curator-crocheter artist Edwin Goh who worked with the community to develop it.



Image: Sean Yeo



Image: Chee Boon Pin

Kueh Kueh at Katong

By SUTD students Tan Jia Yue, Poon Jun Zhe and Yeo Hai Feng, with SAA Architects, an SJ company

Kueh Kueh at Katong was inspired by the Nonya confections made in local kitchens – their steamed ridges, translucent layers, blue-pea flower and coconut blends. Inside, interlocking furniture pieces shift and rearrange like recipes passed down through generations. These modular pavilions, installed at the front lawn of the former Joo Chiat Police Station, invite residents and visitors to gather and celebrate the neighbourhood's rich heritage.

Sit in with Tiffin

By SUTD students Zahira Shofwatunnisa and Nikhita George, with RSP Architects Planners & Engineers

Sit In with Tiffin is a mobile installation in Katong's Roxy Pedestrian Mall inspired by traditional tiffin carriers. Featuring nostalgic artefacts from Roxy Square, familiar local scents, and a stand-in cinema, it evokes collective memories of Katong-Joo Chiat, activating public space through exploration, sensory engagement, storytelling, and community gathering rooted in shared heritage.



Image: Chee Boon Pin

The Jetty

By SUTD students Zachary Lim, Wong Zi Yi and Su Yan Ting, with RSP Architects Planners & Engineers

The installation conjures echoes of the old Joo Chiat Jetty where land met sea and life unfolded in familiar moments – the scent of salt, wheels on timber planks, hawkers cranking ice kacang machines. Today, it serves as a cyclist rest stop in a park paying homage to its coastal roots by framing Choa Bungalow and Parkway Parade.



Image: Chee Boon Pin

If Surfaces Speak

By Goy Architects (Ar. Goy Zhenru⁵⁹, Kathlyn Lay, Deborah Wong)

Building on the spirit of the adjacent Katong Square Antique Centre and flea market, this set of simple benches celebrates the preservation of historic objects and spaces. The installation repurposes handmade embossed cement sand tiles from Yogyakarta, Indonesia. By spotlighting traditional craftsmanship, it invites visitors to value material heritage that shapes our streets and homes, preserving historical textures and patterns that might otherwise be lost to mass production.

Goy Zhenru (left) and Deborah Wong (right) at one of benches they created.



Image: Tiah Nan Chyuan

Blueprint of a Shophouse

By OMG Atelier (Ar. Lee Hui Lian and Ar. Lim Pin Jie⁶⁰), with Jerome Ng and Shivshankar Nair

This beautiful mural reveals the intricate spatial richness of shophouse typology through technical blueprints. Featuring the anatomy of such buildings and ideas for their adaptive reuse, the vivid scenes depict layers of stories reflecting Katong-Joo Chiat's development from plantations to contemporary community life, while imagining future uses such as vertical farming.

Lee Hui Lian with Goh Pei Ming, Adviser, Marine Parade-Braddell Heights GRC, during one of the painting sessions.

Where communities gather

Edmond Wong, a third-generation owner of Kim Choo Kueh Chang and resident of Katong-Joo Chiat, reflects on the area's rich character and the role of back lanes in bringing people together⁶¹.

Tell us about growing up in Katong-Joo Chiat.

Edmond: I've spent my entire life here and am now the third-generation owner of Kim Choo Kueh Chang, started by my grandmother in 1945. Growing up in the zinc houses, I played in nearby fields, climbed trees and built forts with friends in a very open, carefree environment where neighbours looked out for each other. Beyond the beautiful architecture and cultural heritage, it's the intangible aspects that draw people here. There's a strong sense of belonging and attachment. Many customers who've moved away still return, sharing fond memories of the area.



Edmond Wong (middle) at one of the Historic East Identity Corridor engagement sessions.





One of the major Historic East Identity Corridor engagement sessions.

How is the Katong-Joo Chiat Business Association shaping the neighbourhood?

Edmond: The association brings business owners together to help all businesses thrive while building stronger community spirit and gotong royong values. We hope stakeholders like artists and residents will collaborate with us to promote heritage and culture while creating new memories and experiences for residents and visitors.

We also hope to enhance safety and walkability through wider pedestrian pathways. There should also be simple furniture for resting, clearer wayfinding for neighbourhood exploration including the back lanes.

Do you see the activation of backlanes as a way to build stronger community bonds?

Edmond: The back lanes were where families and residents used to gather, encouraging us to rediscover our neighbourhood and see another side of Katong-Joo Chiat. Activating these lanes can bring communities and business owners closer together. My association members are currently engaging stakeholders to explore linking back lanes near Haig Girls' School for an exciting initiative.

Bidadari

Located in the North-East, the area was once home to Alkaff Gardens and later served as Singapore's main cemetery before it closed for burials in 1972. Nature subsequently reclaimed the abandoned land, creating a popular spot for birdwatchers and outdoor enthusiasts.

In 2013, plans were unveiled for a new public housing estate designed as a "Community in a Garden" that utilised the area's natural topography, rich history, and central location to provide about 10,000 new homes across 93 hectares. Planned as six distinctive neighbourhoods that responds to Bidadari's unique site topography and wooded context, the Bidadari estate seamlessly blends infrastructure with the existing greenery and rolling landscape, offering residents a unique "living in a park" experience⁶².

In line with HDB's roadmap of developing community-centric towns, the public spaces in Bidadari are planned for community gatherings and events. The vibrant mixed-use town centre named Market Square, next to Woodleigh MRT Station, hosts a range of facilities to serve the daily needs of residents. Additionally, precinct shops and smaller commercial cum social communal facilities and pavilions are located conveniently throughout the neighbourhoods. They provide interesting gathering and rest points along the greenway and inject vibrancy into the estate.

Bidadari Park

At the heart of the estate is the 13-hectare park that opened in 2024. Several “green corridor” public spaces extend outwards from it, serving as pedestrian and cycling links to other parts of the estate.

The realignment of Upper Aljunied Road paved the way for the pedestrianisation of the original stretch. It also allowed for the creation of the Bidadari Heritage Walk, which preserves the rich heritage and memories of the estate. Lined with a canopy of mature trees, this 700-metre Heritage Walk recounts the history and stories of the area’s rich heritage, including prominent personalities from the past⁶³.





Image: Finbarr Fallon

Within the park sits the new Alkaff Lake, a first-of-its-kind multifunctional drainage infrastructure for stormwater management. In dry weather, it looks like a regular lake and forms part of the recreational and aesthetic community space for the public. During heavy rainfall, it doubles up as a stormwater retention pond to prevent flooding in the area. The 1.8-hectare lake holds up to 40,000 cubic metres of water — equivalent to 16 Olympic pools — and can accommodate depths of up to four metres during heavy rainfall⁶⁴.

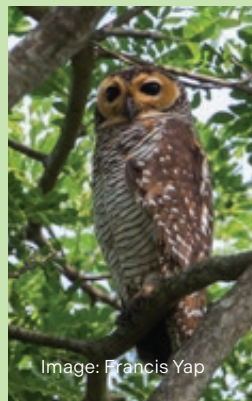


Image: Francis Yap

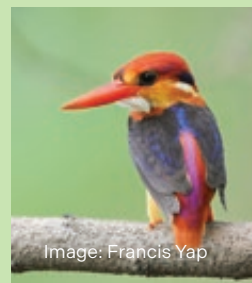


Image: Francis Yap

The area is rich with wildlife, such as the oriental dwarf kingfisher (above) and the spotted wood owl (left).



Image: Henning Larsen, Agnes Chain



Rail Corridor

Another expansive green space is the 24-kilometre recreational corridor stretching from the former Tanjong Pagar Railway Station in the South to Woodlands in the North. It threads through diverse communities, connecting around one million residents within a one-kilometre radius. There have been continual efforts over the years to shape the Rail Corridor into an inclusive green community space for all.

Rifle Range viaduct

Along the Rail Corridor, community nodes that serve as gathering spaces were identified for local communities to use as their own backyard space for leisure and recreation. One of these nodes is a hidden tranquil public space under the Pan Island Expressway's Rifle Range viaduct. The space serves as a transitional space from the Rail Corridor to the Rifle Range Nature Park and the nearby residential estate.

As part of the design process, National Parks Board carried out 3D scanning to help analyse the spatial experience in the area and worked closely with Architects 61 and Henning Larsen to introduce landscaping and murals of birds and other nocturnal animals on the pillars. Lighting was kept minimal at night in consideration of the local biodiversity. Do you know the site supports one of the largest colonies of long-tongued nectar bats?



Inspired by the Queenstown library and former Tanglin Halt gas holder, the new playground at the node will add more opportunities for play.

Queensway node

Another interesting public space along the Rail Corridor is under the Queensway flyover, which has created an enormous fully sheltered space to the west of the trail. Surrounded by Tanglin Halt, Mei Chin and Queensway estates, this covered space was envisioned as a functional and inviting space for community activities both day and night.

The winning idea by a team led by architect Samuel Lee from Designshop Pte Ltd, in collaboration with HKS Singapore from a 2024 design competition has been refined with various stakeholders and envisions turning the space into a community node for sports, events and gatherings.

Play facilities at the node are inspired by familiar landmarks in Queenstown, such as the Queenstown library and the former Tanglin Halt gas holder. Attracting 20 entries, the design competition reflects residents' and the stakeholders' desires for a multifunctional community space and opens opportunities for architects and designers to help enhance public spaces⁶⁵.

The large, sheltered space beneath the Queensway flyover could be transformed into a new multi-functional space for sports, events and gatherings.



Image: Designshop Pte Ltd, HKS Singapore



Image: Designshop Pte Ltd, HKS Singapore

Creating delightful public spaces together

Beyond physical enhancements and programming, there are other considerations that can help develop more adaptable and sustainable public spaces for communities.

1 Invest in the design process

"We must make space for meaningful conversations and invest in the design process, in prototyping, in design making and research, to hone our tools and skills. No one can create something powerful and impactful overnight. For example, the process that engaged young designers to redesign micro parks in Hong Kong included a lot of experimentation to find the right materials and test suitable furniture that suited the specific locations, contexts and communities⁶⁶."

Marisa Yu, Founding Partner, Hong Kong-based architecture and research design studio ESKYIU and Co-founder and Executive Director of non-government organisation DESIGN TRUST

2 Involve the larger community

"Even if a good idea is raised (for a public space), I would ask, are you connecting to the right community? Can I introduce you to these people? We don't just want to focus on just one idea or a one-time grant application. The bigger picture is that we are also connecting people to work together with one another, which can be cross-generational, like having youths work with seniors in the area⁶⁷."

Placemaker Lee Jia Ping, Founder, Kuala Lumpur-based placemaking consultancy Pollin8 Sdn Bhd

3 Be flexible in adapting spaces

"We need to start seeing public spaces in our neighbourhoods as not just places that are fixed and cannot be changed. As our needs and perceptions continue to evolve, we should be more open to adapting and changing the spaces around us that can further serve our needs and help strengthen our bonds⁶⁸."

Dr. Emi Kiyota, Associate Professor, Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine and College of Design and Engineering, and Deputy Executive Director, Centre for Population Health, National University of Singapore

4 Create spaces for and by communities

"We need to find more opportunities to curate and design public spaces that are already highly accessible. Those that are along daily routes for example. We need to think about how to connect people to spaces and vice versa. In Toa Payoh West for example, we saw many small gardens that were adopted by residents. Some of them put up handwritten signs that said, 'please don't steal my plants.' As designers, we need to remember these little things and find ways to create public spaces that can be spontaneously adopted by the community⁶⁹."

Ar. Franklin Po, former Founder, Singapore-based architectural firm, Tierra Design

5 Tell stories for spaces to come alive

"Storytelling is often underestimated as a vehicle. It is a simple yet powerful way to make a public space or place come alive and feel more relatable and endearing. Stories can make places more meaningful and engaging, especially if they resonate with the personal experiences and interests of people. We must remember that the key focus of places is not just about the buildings, it is always about people⁷⁰."

Christopher Law, Co-Founder, Hong Kong-based multidisciplinary and placemaking practice, Oval Partnership

6 Build capabilities in communities

"Public space enhancement efforts should ideally serve as opportunities for capacity building for those who participate in the process. It goes back to building a stronger sense of ownership of the space. After a space has been activated or enhanced, the capacity building would contribute to continued activation and ownership of the space⁷¹."

Dr. Jeffrey Hou, FASLA, Provost's Chair, Professor and Head of the Department of Architecture, National University of Singapore

Project details

Chapter 1

Touchpoint@AMK 433

Design Team

COLOURS: Collectively Ours

Project Architect

Freight Architects

Client

TOUCH Community Services

Mechanical & Electrical Engineer

iCON Consulting Engineers Pte Ltd

Civil and Structural Engineer

MSE Consultants Pte Ltd

Landscape Consultant

COLOURS: Collectively Ours

Sponsors

Lien Foundation

CapitaLand Hope Foundation

Kampung Admiralty

Architect & Interior Design

WOHA Architects

Client

Housing & Development Board

Civil and Structural Engineer

Ronnie & Koh Consultants Pte Ltd

Mechanical & Electrical Engineer

AECOM Singapore Pte Ltd

Quantity Surveyor

Davis Langdon KPK (Singapore) Pte Ltd

Landscape Consultant

Henning Larsen

(formerly Ramboll Studio Dreiseitl)

Landscape Contractor

Nature Landscapes

Greenmark Consultant

AECOM Singapore Pte Ltd

Contractor

Lum Chang Building Contractors Pte Ltd

Bukit Canberra

Client

Sport Singapore

Architect & Project Team

DP Architects

DP Design

DP Lighting

DP Sustainable Design

Civil and Structural Engineer

T.Y.Lin International Pte Ltd

Mechanical & Electrical Engineer

AECOM Singapore Pte Ltd

Quantity Surveyor

AECOM Cost Consulting and Project Management (Singapore) Pte Ltd

Project Manager

Arcadis Singapore Pte Ltd

Landscape Consultant

Henning Larsen

(formerly Ramboll Studio Dreiseitl)

Façade Consultant

ARUP Singapore Pte Ltd

Acoustics Consultant

ARUP Singapore Pte Ltd

Sengkang Grand Mall

Developer

CapitaLand Group Pte Ltd and City Developments Limited (Joint Venture)

Design Architect

MKPL Architects Pte Ltd

Project Architect

SAA Architects Pte Ltd

Landscape

COEN Design International Pte Ltd

Civil and Structural Engineer

MOTT Macdonald Singapore Pte Ltd

Mechanical & Electrical Engineer

BELLMACS Pte Ltd

Quantity Surveyor

THREESIXTY Cost Management Pte Ltd

Punggol Green

Owner

People's Association

Landscape Architect

DP Green

Architect

DP Architect

Lighting consultant

DP Lighting

Project Manager

SIMP Consultants

Civil and Structural Engineer

BECA Carter Hollings & Ferner
(S.E.A) Pte Ltd

Mechanical & Electrical Engineer

BESCON

Quantity Surveyor

THREESIXTY Cost Management Pte Ltd

Contractor

Guan Ho construction

Lively Places Fund

Hidden Gem @ Yew Lian Park Staircase

Designer

Joanne Teh and Muhammad Izdi

Co-Funding Support

Urban Redevelopment Authority

Location

Upper Thomson Road

Lively Benches (Potong Pasir)

Designer

Anne Neo

Co-Funding and Support

People's Association
Urban Redevelopment Authority

Location

Hardcourt space opposite Block 144
Potong Pasir Avenue 3

Void Deck 3.0

Project team

Law Kai Xiang, Chew Keng Onn, Lee Jun Yao
Francis, Alvin Soh Wei Jie, Feng Weihai

Co-Funding Support

Housing & Development Board

Location

Block 846 Tampines Street 82

5G Community Hub

Project team

Julie Lim, Lynda Lee, Deepti Rajan, Judy Toh,
Morris Gabriel

Co-Funding Support

Housing & Development Board

Location

Block 112 Bishan Street 12

Buona Vista's Green Eye View

Project team

Kelvin Goh, Jess Tan, Pitpit Chandra,
Lynn Kueh, Steve Choo

Co-Funding Support

Housing & Development Board

Location

Block 7B Commonwealth Avenue
Carpark Rooftop

Pet Park

Project team

Roger, Rajan, Roland, Meenakshi Sundaram,
Jenny, Franklin, Anthony, Steven Ng,
Soma Roy, Ms Goh, Joseph, Elsie

Co-Funding Support

Housing & Development Board

Location

Bukit Panjang Neighbourhood 2 Park
at Petir Road

Where That River Always Flows

Designer / Organiser

Ang Jet Hong, Eunice Teng and
Jezamine Chua

Co-Funding Support

Urban Redevelopment Authority

Location

Block 25 Jalan Berseh

Artistry in Motion @ West Coast Park

Designer / Organiser

Malcolm Chen, Mohammad Shahril "Shafyre",
Saranya Nareshbabu

Co-Funding Support

Urban Redevelopment Authority

Location

Near Carpark 1, West Coast Park

Chapter 2

Asia Square

Developer

Macquarie Global Property Advisors

Design Consultant

Denton Corker Marshall Pte Ltd

Architect

Architects 61 Pte Ltd

Mechanical & Electrical Engineer

Aecom (S) Pte Ltd,
Meinhardt (Singapore) Pte Ltd

Civil and Structural Engineer

Aecom (S) Pte Ltd,
Meinhardt (Singapore) Pte Ltd

Quantity Surveyor

Northcroft Lim Consultants Pte Ltd

Main Contractor

Hyundai Engineering & Construction Co. Ltd

Guoco Tower

Developer

GuocoLand Limited

Design Architect

Skidmore, Owings & Merrill

Project Architect

Architects 61 Pte Ltd

Landscape Consultant

Cicada Landscape Architect Pte Ltd

Mechanical & Electrical Engineer

Meinhardt (Singapore) Pte Ltd

Civil and Structural Engineer

ARUP Singapore Pte Ltd

Master Builder / Main Contractor

Samsung C&T Coporation

CapitaSpring

Owner

CapitaLand Integrated Commercial Trust

Developer

CapitaLand Development

Concept Architect

Bjarke Ingels Group in collaboration with
Carlo Ratti Association

Project Architect

RSP Architects Planners & Engineers
Pte Ltd

Main Contractor

Dragages Singapore Pte Ltd

Mechanical & Electrical Engineer

Squire Mech Pte Ltd

Civil and Structural Engineer

Meinhardt Singapore Pte Ltd

Landscape Consultant

COEN Design International Pte Ltd

Quantity Surveyor

Asia Infrastructure Solutions Singapore
Pte Ltd

Marina One

Developer

M+S Pte Ltd

Project Manager

UEM Sunrise Berhad
Mapletree

Design Architect

christoph ingenhoven architects

Project Architect

Architects 61 Pte Ltd

Piling Contractor

Sambo E & C Co. Ltd

Principle Contractor

Hyundai Engineering & Construction Co. Ltd
GS Engineering & Construction Corp

**Civil and Structural/ Civil and Structural
Engineer | Environmental Sustainability
Design Consultant Engineer**

BECA Carter Hollings & Ferner (S.E.A) Pte Ltd

Fire Safety Engineering Consultant

BECA Carter Hollings & Ferner (S.E.A) Pte Ltd

Quantity Surveyor

Langdon & Seah Singapore Pte Ltd

Landscape Architect – Foreign

Gustafson Porter LLP

Landscape Architect – Local

ICN Design International Pte Ltd

Lighting Consultant

ARUP Singapore Pte Ltd

Façade Consultant

ARUP Singapore Pte Ltd

Geneo Science Park

Owner

CapitaLand Ascendas REIT and
CapitaLand Development

Developer

CapitaLand Development

Concept Architect

Serie Architects and Multiply Architects

Project Architect

Surbana Jurong Consultants Pte Ltd

Main Contractor

Woh Hup Pte Ltd

Civil and Structural Engineer

Meinhardt Singapore Pte Ltd

Mechanical & Electrical Engineer

Squire Mech Pte Ltd

Landscape Consultant

Grant Associates Singapore Pte Ltd

Quantity Surveyor

Arcadis Singapore Pte Ltd

Punggol Digital District

Developer

JTC

Architect

WOHA Architects

Landscape Consultant

Henning Larsen
(formerly Ramboll Studio Dreiseitl)

Main Contractor

Woh Hup (Private) Limited

Civil and Structural Engineer

KTP Consultants Pte Ltd

Mechanical & Electrical Engineer

BECA Carter Hollings & Ferner (S.E.A) Pte Ltd

Chapter 3

Tiong Bahru pocket space

Main Project Leader

Land Transport Authority

Community Engagement and Support

Urban Redevelopment Authority

Greenery

National Parks Board

Marina Barrage

Developer

Koh Brothers Building & Civil Engineering Contractor Pte Ltd

Consultant

Camp Dresser & McKee International (S) Pte Ltd

Design Architect

Architects Team 3 Pte Ltd

Landscape Architect

ACLA Limited

Civil and Structural Engineer

Koh Brothers Building & Civil Engineering Contractor Pte Ltd

Crest Gate System Installation Specialist

Metax Engineering Corporation Ltd

Drainage Pumping System Installation Specialist

Metax Engineering Corporation Ltd

Engine-Generator System Integrator

Tractors Singapore Limited

Electrical, Instrumentation & Control Sub-Contractor

Cegelec Pte Ltd

Boat Hoist Supplier

Loyang Marine Pte Ltd

Design Orchard

Client

JTC

Architect & Landscape

WOHA Architects

Main Contractor

Sunway Woodcraft Construction Pte Ltd

Precast Contractor

LWC Alliance Pte Ltd

Civil and Structural Engineer

Web Structures Pte Ltd

Mechanical & Electrical Engineer

Belmacs Pte Ltd

One Holland Village

Developer

Sekisui House, Sino Group, Far East Organization (Joint Venture)

Design Architect and QP

MKPL Architects Pte Ltd

Project Architect

RSP Architects Planners & Engineers Pte Ltd

Landscape Consultant

Tinderbox Landscape Studio Pte Ltd

Mechanical & Electrical Engineer

Rankine & Hill (S) Pte Ltd

Paya Lebar Quarter

Owner

Milano Central Pte Ltd

Developer

Lendlease Singapore

Design Team

DP Architects

DP Design

DP Engineers

DP Green

Bidadari Park

Client

Housing & Development Board

National Heritage Board

National Parks Board

National Water Agency

Lead Consultant in Multidisciplinary Team

CPG Consultants

Architect

CPG Consultants

Civil and Structural Engineer

CPG Consultants

Environmental Engineering and ABC Waters Professional Engineering

CPG Consultants

Landscape Architecture

Henning Larsen

(formerly Ramboll Studio Dreiseitl)

Water Sensitive Urban Design

Ramboll Waters and Henning Larsen

Main Contractor

Expand- Landscape Engineering Joint Venture

Mechanical & Electrical Engineer

CPG Consultants and BECA

Project Management

CPG Consultants

Quantity Surveyor

AECOM

Signage and Wayfinding

CPG Consultants and Henning Larsen

Site Supervisory Team

Construction Professional

Rifle Range viaduct

Main Project Leader

National Parks Board

Design Architect

Architects 61 Pte Ltd

Landscape Architect

Henning Larsen

(formerly Ramboll Studio Dreiseitl)

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- 57 The detailed study of the Katong-Joo Chiat area was a collaboration between the URA and SUTD. The initiative was led by Andrew Lee, Senior Director at SAA Architects; Ar. Lee Tat Haur, Founder of Tat Architects; Associate Professor Yeo Kang Shua from SUTD; and Khoo Teik Rong, Associate Director at RSP Architects Planners & Engineers. Conducted as part of SUTD's 2024 option studio on urban identity and architectural insertions, the project involved students engaging local stakeholders and proposing small-scale architectural interventions that responded to community needs. In 2025, a follow-up studio led by Teik Rong further developed and refined the ideas explored earlier. Serving as a bridge between academia and practice, SAA and RSP collaborated closely with the students to finalise and construct their installation designs.
- 58 URA's '20 Under 45' programme was initiated in 2004 to spotlight emerging young architects in Singapore. For more information: www.go.gov.sg/20under45-fourth-edition.
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Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following organisations and individuals who have contributed to the book:

Government agencies

Gardens by the Bay
Housing & Development Board
JTC
Land Transport Authority
National Heritage Board
National Parks Board
Public Utilities Board

Individuals

Anne Neo
Calvin Chua
Joanne Teh
Janil Puthucheary
Syafiq Jubri
Yinzhou Cai

Private organisations and institutions

Architects 61
Bjarke Ingels Group
CapitaLand
christoph ingenhoven architects
COLOURS: Collectively Ours
CPG Corporation
Denton Corker Marshall
DP Architects
DP Green
Far East Organisation
GuocoLand
Henning Larsen
Land Design One
Lendlease
MKPL Architects
MS Property Management Pte Ltd
RSP Architects Planners & Engineers
SAA Architects
Skidmore, Owings & Merrill
WOHA Architects