

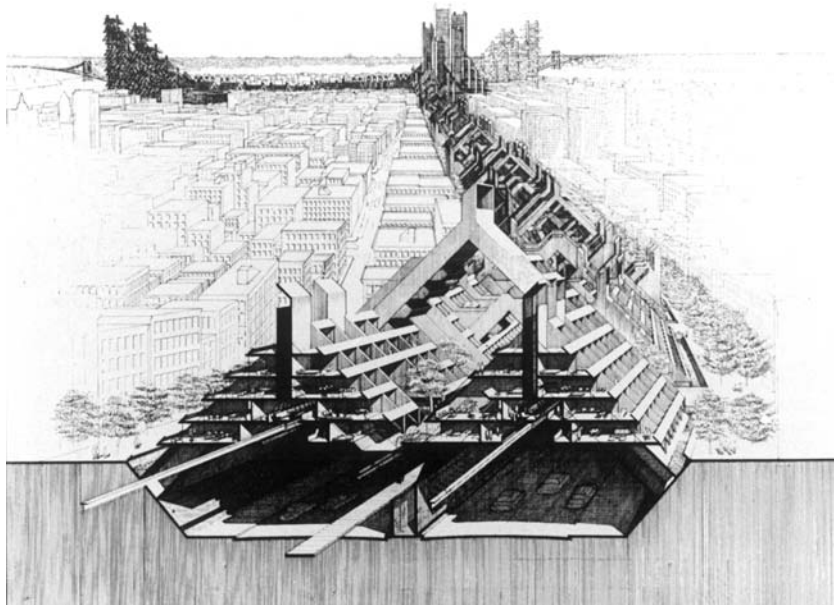
Buildings as Urban Designs?

Buildings have also been regarded as urban design when they incorporate some mix of those elements that are traditionally regarded as components of cities. They are considered to be vertical precincts. Some individual high-rise buildings contain such elements as a hotel, apartments, shops and a religious facility within them. If they are large enough such buildings are called ‘megastructures’. They are cities or precincts of cities within single buildings.

Megastructures

During the 1960s and 1970s a number of megastructures housing various types of facilities were built. Even more were proposed. They include the works of people such as Paolo Soleri whose Arcosanti is painstakingly being constructed in Arizona. Today such large single-structure projects tend to be confined to major suburban shopping centres surrounded by parking for cars. A major twentieth century building type, such centres make a substantial impact on city forms and life. Whether the design of megastructures, by themselves, should be considered to be urban design is open to question.

The *City of the Future* suggested by Hugh Ferriss during the 1920s was one precedent for this line of thinking, and Le Corbusier’s schemes for Algiers was another. Their deviations from the norms of urban development and design have attracted considerable attention. The schemes include Roadtown (1970) by Paul



Collection of the author

Figure 6.6 Mega-roadtown, a proposal by Paul Rudolph, 1970.