

In cities throughout the world the considerable expansion has taken place at the periphery. While the population of the metropolitan Philadelphia continues to grow, the population of the core city itself declined from over two million in 1950 to a little over a million in 2000. The major growth has been suburban. Vast tracts of housing and accompanying commercial and retail facilities have been built in the suburbs. In countries, such as India, the major developers of such urban designs have been the Public Works Departments of the Central and State governments. In the United States, it has been the private developer who has been responsible for almost all the development although much has been made possible by the federally funded highway system and other federal government subsidies. At best these suburbs have been thoughtfully designed in terms of providing the amenities to enable all segments of the population to lead full lives. At worst, they are simply dormitories.

The new suburbs have generally been built along one of two different lines of thought: the Bauhaus/Le Corbusian model or the Garden City model. The outskirts of many cities in Europe (such as Paris and Madrid) and Latin American cities (such as Caracas; see Figure 3.4) have major developments of tower or slab blocks of housing set in park-like areas on their peripheries. They have been influenced by Le Corbusier. Most of the suburban development in countries such as the United States and Australia have followed the Garden City ideal and still do. More recently the New Urbanist ideology, a Neo-Traditionalist approach to urban design, has had a wide degree of support.

Many precincts do not have clear edges but have strong cores such as a square or a street. The design of streets and squares is generally the purview of landscape architecture but it can be urban design. It is landscape architecture if only the open space is designed; it is urban design if the enclosing elements are included in the design. In the latter case they form a precinct.

Urban renewal

Urban renewal, as its name suggests, refers to the process of rebuilding areas of cities that have become obsolete and abandoned, or are in a state of considerable decay. Unless cities become economically static urban renewal projects will continue to be undertaken. Over the last half of the twentieth century much has been learnt about how best they can be conducted. The field of urban design as a professional endeavour has grown with the experience of building total or all-of-a-piece urban renewal projects.

Sometimes, urban renewal has involved slum clearance and the total rebuilding of environments but more usually now it has involved selective demolition and the integration of the old and the new in their design (e.g. Charles Center, Baltimore; see Chapter 5). Often the urban renewal occurs in a *laissez faire* manner without any overall cooperative intention. It would not be regarded as urban design here (although some projects might be regarded as piece-by-piece urban design). Some urban design projects have involved the retooling of existing areas by upgrading their physical infrastructure and the provision of new uses for existing buildings