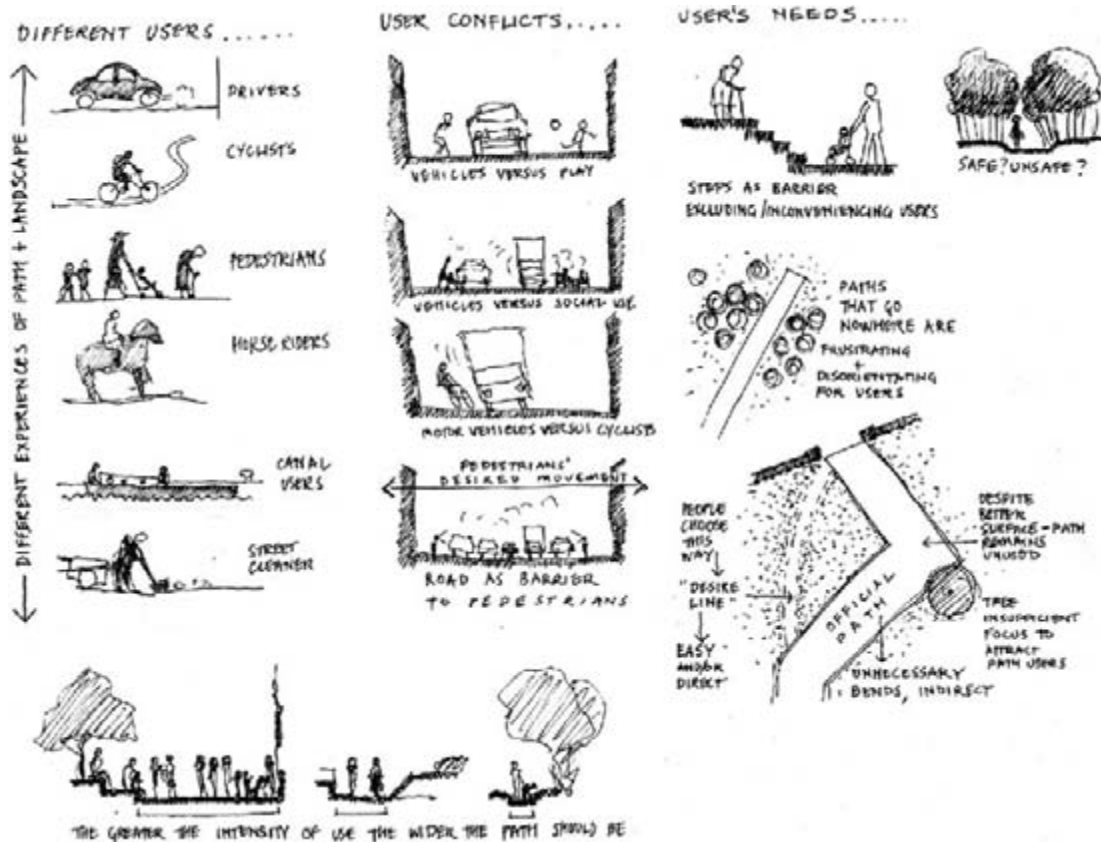


Paths ◦ People's use and experience of paths



Different users, uses and modes of transport

Different users, uses and modes of transport have diverse design requirements. Landscape architecture involves the consideration of different modes of travel and also of different users and means of accommodating these and reducing conflict between them. In many urban landscapes the designer must resolve conflicts between motor vehicles and pedestrians.

Intensity and frequency of use of a path influence a designer's choice of width, form and surface. Perceived and actual safety and security are also important factors in path design.

Official and unofficial paths

A vital consideration in design is to facilitate people's movement with appropriate surfacing. Grass, other planted surfaces and earth are not resistant to heavy foot traffic. 'Desire lines' are tracks worn across unsurfaced ground that indicate frequent pedestrian use. If a surfaced route has been made but does not provide (or appear to provide) the easiest way, desire lines occur. Desire lines can also indicate where paths are needed. The landscape architect must, in these situations, be sensitive to the effects of topography on people's choice of route. People often prefer to walk on steeply-sloping ground rather than use steps with high risers, and will also make short cuts if a path on sloping ground appears to be too indirect.