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RESTORING STREET SPACES: A FRAMEWORK LINKING AESTHETICS, INTERACTION, AND IDENTITY

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Through case studies, this paper proposes an integrated four-dimensional framework – environmental aesthetics, social interaction, place identity, and urban morphology – to evaluate street space restoration. The findings reveal that success depends not only on localized design but is also constrained by the broader spatial structure, necessitating multi-dimensional collaborative optimization.

Key words: street space design, environmental aesthetics, social interaction, place identity, adaptive reuse, urban form.

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary urban renewal is transitioning from large-scale demolition and reconstruction to small-scale, incremental approaches of "restoration" and "adaptive reuse." As the most prevalent public space, streets have garnered increasing attention from both academia and industry in their regeneration strategies. However, existing practices often prioritize singular objectives or focus solely on aesthetic improvements, while others emphasize functional enhancement, thereby overlooking the multifaceted roles of street spaces. Streets serve not only as elements of urban visual landscapes but also as vessels for social interaction and anchors for users' psychological identity. Building on this, this paper proposes a comprehensive evaluation framework integrating four dimensions – environmental aesthetics, public life, place perception, and urban morphology – through case studies to examine the practical efficacy and inherent constraints of different restoration strategies.

PURPOSE

This study investigates the specific mechanisms of street public space restoration through case analysis, focusing on three key dimensions: enhancing environmental aesthetics, facilitating social interaction, and strengthening place identity. It explores the synergistic relationship between localized restoration strategies and urban morphology, while clarifying how spatial structure constrains restoration effectiveness. Based on this analysis, the paper proposes design principles for adaptive reuse of street spaces, providing theoretical references for contemporary urban renewal practices.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The integration of public art, landscape elements, and decorative structures into street public space restoration presents both opportunities and challenges for urban designers and planners. One of the key benefits identified in this study is the potential to create visually appealing environments that captivate residents and strengthen their emotional connection to urban spaces. By incorporating elements such as artistic installations, green infrastructure, and well-designed street furniture, designers can evoke specific aesthetic responses and associations that complement the functional purpose of the public space.

Furthermore, the inclusion of these elements can enhance the memorability and impact of street spaces, as they engage multiple sensory channels in users' perception. Research in environmental psychology suggests that multi-sensory experiences are more likely to be encoded into long-term memory and elicit stronger emotional responses compared to single-sensory stimuli. The presence of trees, seating, and distinctive paving not only improves visual quality but also creates opportunities for richer spatial experiences that encourage prolonged use and social interaction.



Fig. 1. Chongqing Jixiang Street reconstruction design comparison
(Map Design Agency)



Public space restoration operates on principles of place-making and emotional resonance in spatial translation. It extracts diverse urban design methods from successful case studies, reflecting the visual, functional, and experiential dimensions of spatial transformation through forms, materials, and the perception of spatial meaning. These principles, when applied in design practice, enable the exploration of possibilities for converting theoretical concepts into practical implementation in street restoration projects (Fig. 1).

The effectiveness of these elements in street space restoration may vary depending on factors such as population demographics, cultural preferences, and the surrounding urban fabric. While certain design interventions may resonate strongly with one community, they may have limited impact on others. Therefore, designers should conduct community research and participatory planning to identify the most relevant spatial elements for their target users. Case study comparisons reveal that spaces with higher usage frequencies typically demonstrate superior performance in providing well-designed rest facilities and pleasant environments.

Overall, the discussion highlights the potential of integrating public art, landscape elements, and decorative structures into street space restoration to create engaging urban environments. By carefully balancing visual aesthetics with functional considerations and understanding community preferences, designers can leverage multi-sensory experiences to enhance intervention effectiveness and strengthen the connection between residents and the urban spaces they inhabit.

CONCLUSIONS

This study underscores the significance of integrating public art, landscape elements, and decorative structures into street public space restoration to create compelling urban environments. By combining visual and functional stimuli, designers have the opportunity to evoke emotional responses, increase spatial memorability, and strengthen the connection between residents and restored urban spaces. The findings suggest that carefully curated design interventions, when harmoniously integrated with the existing urban fabric, can enhance the overall impact and effectiveness of street space restoration projects.

Successful integration requires careful consideration of aesthetic coherence, community preferences, and long-term maintenance. The study further reveals that these elements contribute to transforming public spaces into vibrant neighborhood centers by enhancing environmental aesthetics, supporting diverse social activities, and shaping place identity. However, their effectiveness depends on integration within comprehensive public space systems, coordination with macro-scale urban morphology, and support through consistent maintenance.

Looking ahead, further research into the optimal application of these elements in street space restoration could yield valuable insights and refine existing practices. By continuing to explore the interplay between physical design interventions and human perception, urban designers can push the boundaries of creativity and innovation, ultimately enhancing the quality of urban life through more impactful and memorable public spaces.



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ВІДНОВЛЕННЯ ВУЛИЧНИХ ПРОСТОРІВ: МОДЕЛЬ ПОЄДНАННЯ ЕСТЕТИКИ, СОЦІАЛЬНОЇ ВЗАЄМОДІЇ ТА ІДЕНТИЧНОСТІ МІСЦЯ

У статті досліджуються підходи до відновлення вуличних громадських просторів у сучасному міському середовищі. На основі аналізу кейсів запропоновано інтегровану чотиривимірну модель оцінювання ревіталізації вулиць, що поєднує естетику середовища, соціальну взаємодію, ідентичність місця та морфологію міського простору. Результати дослідження свідчать, що ефективність відновлення вуличних просторів залежить не лише від локальних дизайнерських рішень, але й від ширшої просторової структури міста, що зумовлює необхідність комплексної багаторівневої оптимізації. Отримані результати можуть бути використані при формуванні дизайнерських стратегій ревіталізації міських вулиць та розвитку якісного громадського середовища.

Ключові слова: вуличний громадський простір, естетика середовища, соціальна взаємодія, ідентичність місця, адаптивне використання, урбаністична морфологія.