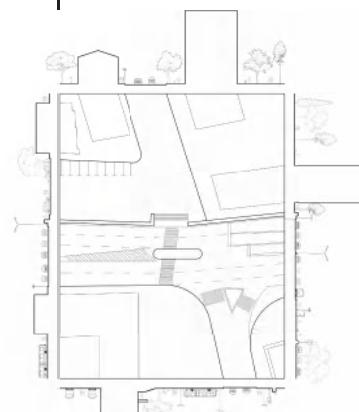


Coner Spaces in Tallinn

Research Plan
A Matter of Scale
AR3MET105_2023



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Introduction

When it comes to urban spatial characteristics, the influence of regional and ethnic characteristics has always been an attractive topic. The city is not only a geographical location, but also a social, cultural and economic organism. Therefore, when we study the urban space, we need to pay attention to the multi-dimension and complexity of the city. On the other hand, how to accurately perceive and understand the characteristics of a city under complex conditions can help us dialectically understand its social and cultural background.

Ever since Estonian began to awaken in the second half of the 19th century, the people of the land have been exploring their own national identity. This desire must have profoundly influenced the urban development of its capital, Tallinn, which was further complicated by the ensuing Soviet and Nazi occupation. After six

historical periods of last century, Tallinn has formed a unique urban context with various styles and characteristics. These include traditionalism, functionalism, Art Deco, Scandinavian classicism, Soviet modernism, international socialist classicism, and so on.



-1917
Tsarist Russian rule



1918-1939
the first independence period



1940-1941
the Soviet occupation



1941-1945
the Nazi German occupation



1945-1991
the Soviet occupation



1991-
the Republic of Estonia

Complex historical structure leads to complex urban context.

Therefore, at the beginning, I was interested in the hybrid of Tallinn's buildings and tried to find the urban identity behind all of these hybrid. But when I got to Tallinn, I

realized, the complexity of spatial components inevitably brings difficulties in the research process. It's difficult to simply define the so-called characteristics of Estonia, and the Hybrid features in its urban development cannot be reflected through a specific building or block.



What are the characteristics that have remained constant throughout the years of change?

When I conducted a precedent study on the warehouse complex of the old city port in Tallinn, I found that there is such a kind of space in the urban fabric of Tallinn. Due to the mixed urban styles, the obstacles on the road of ethnic exploration

and the multiple effects of complex urban modernization process, some areas or specific spaces show chaos or incomplete spatial functions.



It's difficult to simply define the identity of Estonia, and the Hybrid features in its urban development cannot be reflected through a specific building or block.

I choose the crossing space as the research object. These crossings are distributed throughout the city and can well cover various types of urban composite spaces. This composite is not only stylistic and formal, but also functional.

Based on the research on the status, causes and future improvement possibilities of this type of space, my project research raises the question of what is the relationship between urban identity and general urban public space.

With the theme of "**Corner Spaces in Tallinn**", this paper studies the urban spatial characteristics formed under complex historical background, and how to carry out urban renewal under the premise of respecting the original urban context.

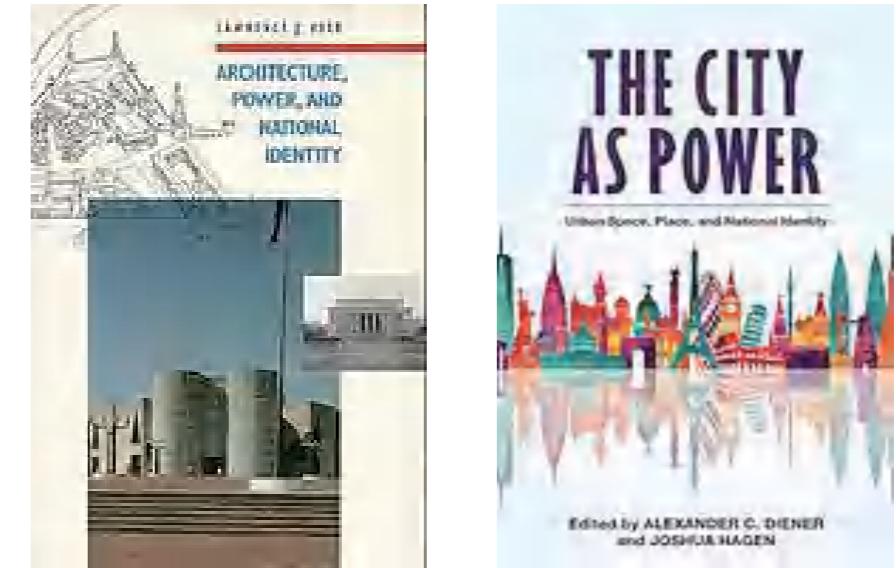
Theoretical Support

Before starting my research on Tallinn, I was inspired by some relevant theories, which have played an important role in my understanding of Tallinn's urban context. The theory collection is divided into two stages. In the first stage, I mainly focus on the expression of national identity through urban space and the relationship between hybrid and urban iteration.

1. Urban spaces and national identity

Urban space can often represent a certain kind of urban spirit, and even national character. Different historical periods often leave different era marks on the same building, which can be used as a breakthrough to understand the society and history behind it. Or a certain type of building in each era will have different forms of expression, such as municipal buildings, theaters, stadiums, plazas and so on. Therefore, the study

of a certain or a specific type of architecture and urban space has a deeper symbolic representation.



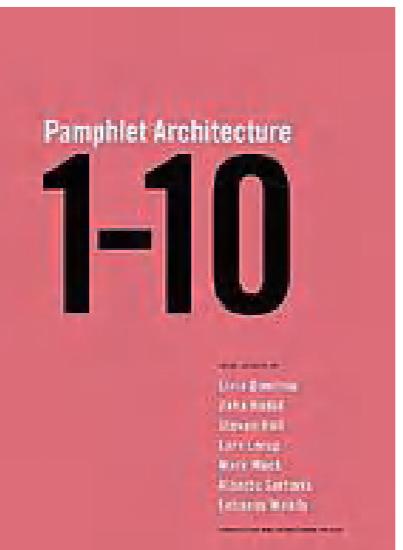
Vale, L. J. (1992). *Architecture, power, and national identity*. Yale University Press.

Diener, A. C., & Hagen, J. (Eds.). (2019). *The city as power : urban space, place, and national identity*. Rowman & Littlefield.

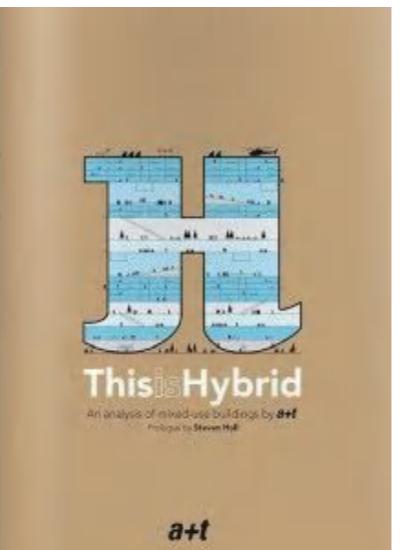
2. Iteration and Hybrid

The city with complex historical stage often shows the hybrid in the urban space. The superposition of styles and forms behind different social backgrounds and even ideologies represents the whole process of urban iteration. The mix can be divided into the mix of a single building, the mix of architectural groups, the mix of

community buildings, the mix of facade forms, the mix of use functions and so on. Its broad semantic range gives it a variety of possibilities for research objects.



Princeton Architectural Press. (1998). Pamphlet architecture 1-10.

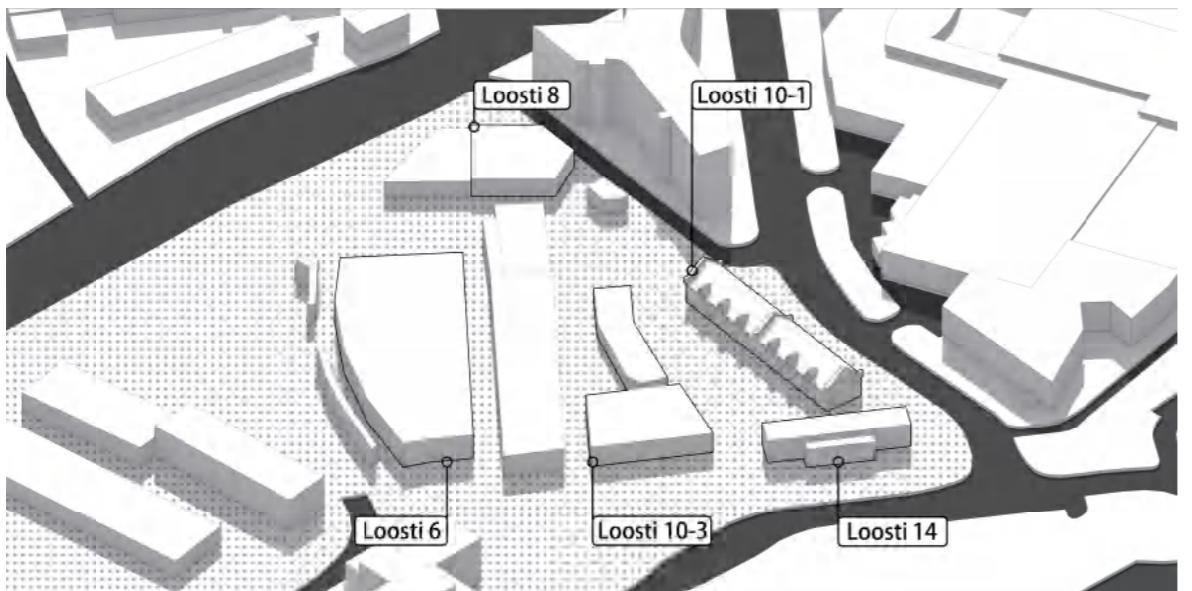


Per Aurora Fernández, Mozas, J., & Arpa, J. (2011). *This is hybrid : [an analysis of mixed-use buildings by a+t]*. A plus T Ediciones.

However, after the field investigation in Tallinn, I found that the mixed degree of Tallinn's urban context was so broad that it was difficult to grasp the specific research content. It is difficult to find a clear clue for research because of the complex architecture itself and the complex history of each location. There's no single building or urban space has the characteristics of all historical periods at the same time. Also there's no representative examples of any one type of architecture throughout all the historical periods. So I started looking for ideas in other directions.

In the subsequent precedent study, since my research object was the warehouse complex of the dock, I found that such composite space could better reflect the development process of the city than a single building or even a series of buildings, because such composite space could carry more people's activities,

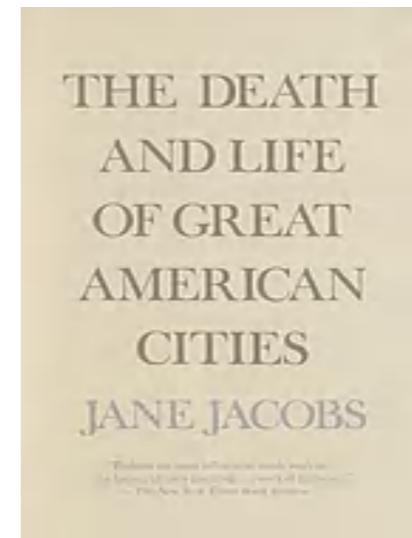
and people's needs and experience were always the theme of urban activities. Then I began to focus on urban activities, hoping to study the unique urban context of Tallinn from the perspective of the relationship between space and activities.



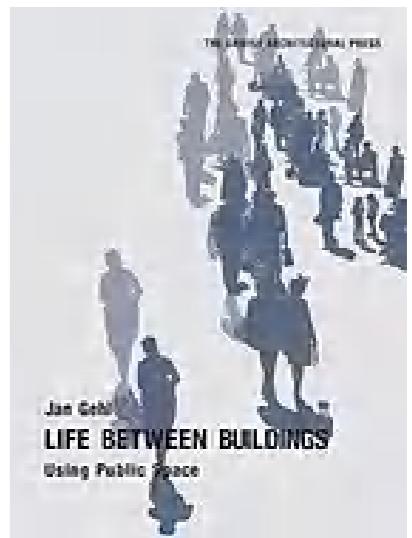
Precedent Study

3. Urban Activities

Therefore, in the second stage of theoretical reading, on the one hand, I began to focus on urban activities. Space is defined by the activities of the people in it, and is characterized by certain events that occur over and over again. The characteristics between buildings change as the social situation changes, but the basic principles and quality standards used when working for human quality in the public sphere have proven to be very stable. I think this can be used as an entry point to study urban space.



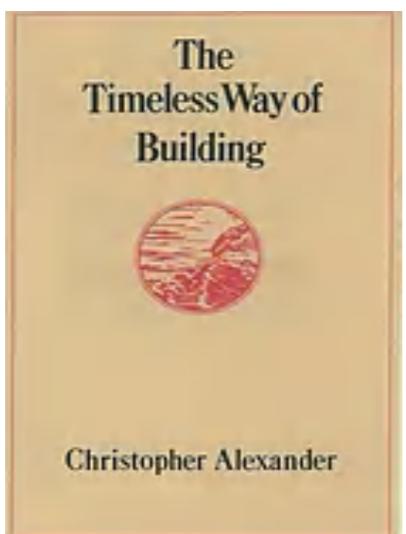
Jacobs, J. (1992). *The death and life of great american cities* (1st Vintage books). Vintage Books.



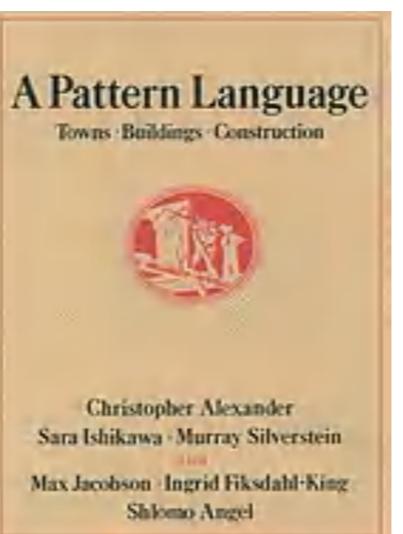
Gehl, J., & Koch, J. (2011). *Life between buildings : using public space*. Island Press.

4. The Pattern Language

On the other hand, I learned about pattern language theory. All architectural actions are controlled to some degree by a pattern language, and the rich and complex order of a city arises from thousands of creative actions. Once we have a common pattern language in cities, we can bring cities and buildings to life with the most ordinary behaviors. Language is like a genetic system, giving small actions the power to form a whole.



Alexander, C. (1979). *The timeless way of building* (Ser. Center for environmental structure series, v. 1). Oxford University Press.



Alexander, C., Ishikawa, S., & Silverstein, M. (1977). *A pattern language : towns, buildings, construction*. Oxford University Press.

Methodology

This paper will mainly carry out the research through four methodological steps, including: previous investigation, map analysis, field investigation, typology analysis. The first three steps will help build a cognitive system of Tallinn, and the fourth step will help build a library of spatial elements and use the typological elements to build a pattern language system.

Then, by studying the specific spatial samples selected, the paper discusses the situation of pattern language in actual use, analyzes how their forms are affected by urban hybrid, and how they reflect the urban development in the historical stage. When conducting spatial sample analysis, I will take an objective and neutral stance to ensure the homogeneity of sample languages.

For the next stage of work, I think it is first necessary to summarize what is the pattern of Tallinn. I plan

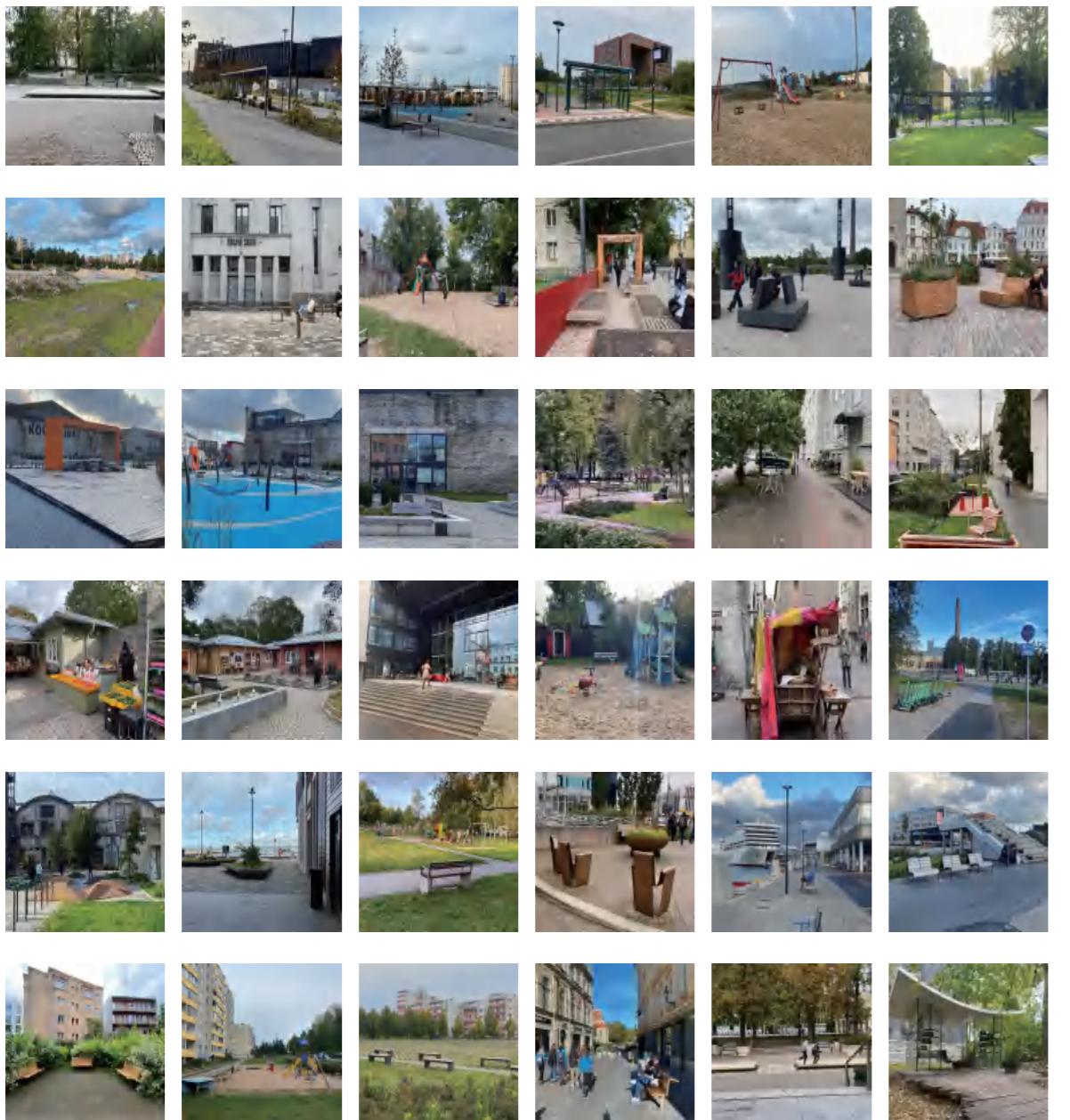
to start from two aspects:

Pattern-elements

It is first necessary to summarize what is the pattern of Tallinn. I plan to start from two aspects, the first is the elements that make up public space. I will study the various types of existing public Spaces in Tallinn to summarize and extract the main elements of them.

During the two weeks of site investigation in Tallinn, my team members and I focused on the existing public space in Tallinn. Various community activity Spaces, square Spaces, traffic and rest Spaces all have the same or different use conditions. For example, some venues are fully equipped and just completed construction, but no one is used and cold; Some facilities are visibly aged; Some Spaces are currently used in ways that are very different from the original design; Some Spaces bring

people a lot of inconvenience due to scale or guidance problems. However, all sites can take their spatial characteristics as samples to extract a set of spatial elements corresponding to their current situation. These elements will serve as the basis for studying its model.



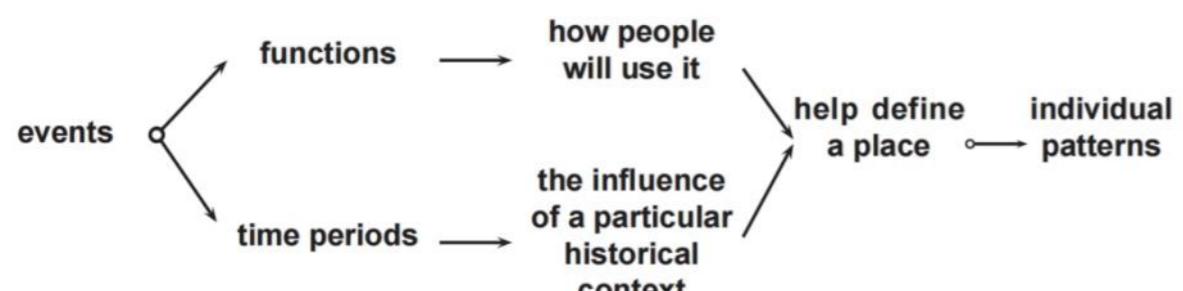
Urban public space in Tallinn

Pattern-events

There are the events that happen in space. Since space is defined by human activities, it is also important to discuss spatial events that occur in specific functions and different historical contexts when generalize patterns of urban space.

By starting with public life and the area where it takes place, architectural design becomes a means to an end rather than an end in itself. The public space between buildings is another dimension of architecture that deserves more careful treatment. These Spaces are places where social interaction and perception, urban entertainment, and the sensory experience of urban life take place, in other words, the physical characteristics of a space can be understood by studying the activities that take place in one place. At the same time, people's activities in a certain space also affect and reflect the

scale and interaction of this space. These activities and events include necessary, optional, and social types of behavior.



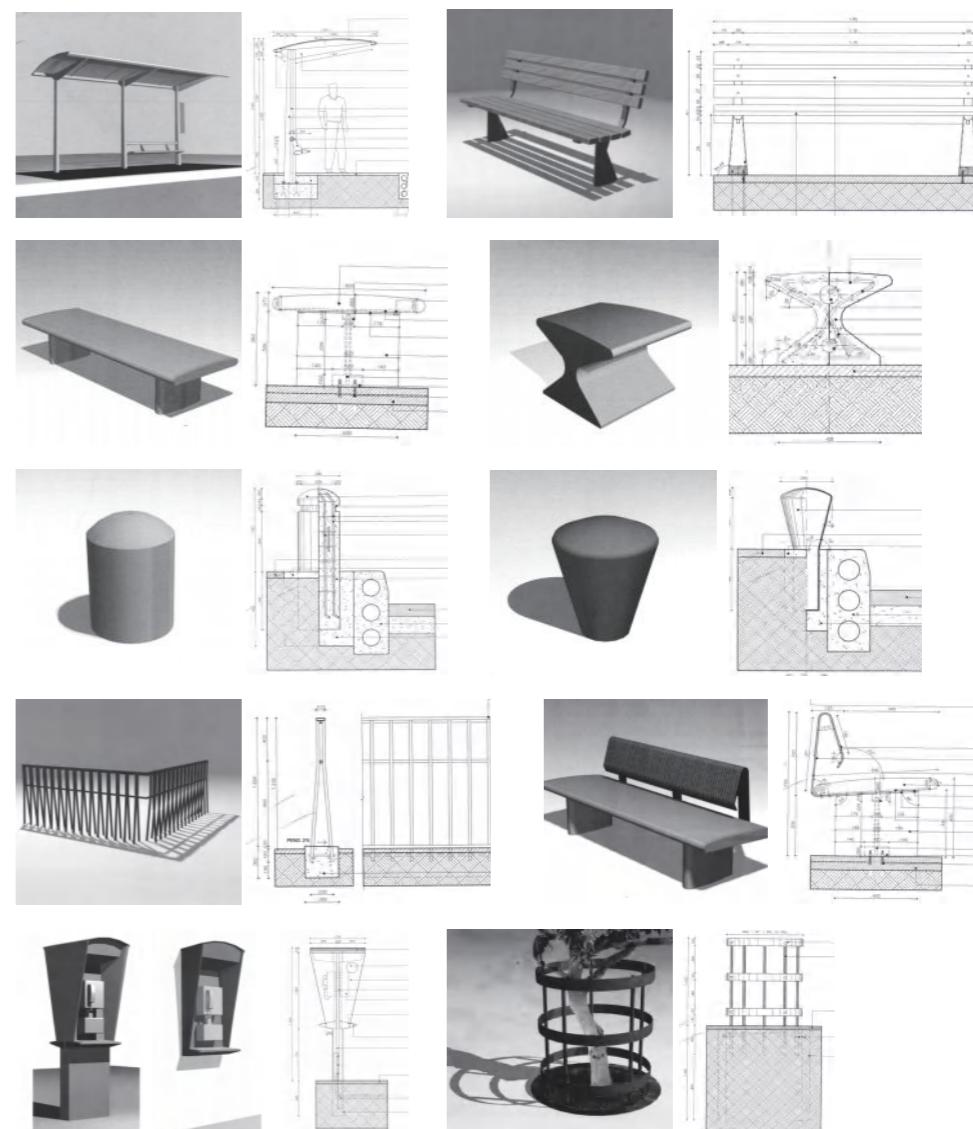
The space pattern is extracted from events

Pattern Library

On the basis of these two aspects, I hope to establish a pattern library, a series of individual patterns, as a basic tool for subsequent research and design.

By analyzing the elements and activities of the existing public space, the function it carries can be summarized as a collection of several simple furniture or structures, which can have a certain style, have a similar design logic, and follow a certain scale standard.

These independent patterns themselves can not support the use of a space design alone, but together with other items to form a certain scale of composite modules. This also provides a methodological basis for the subsequent research and design.



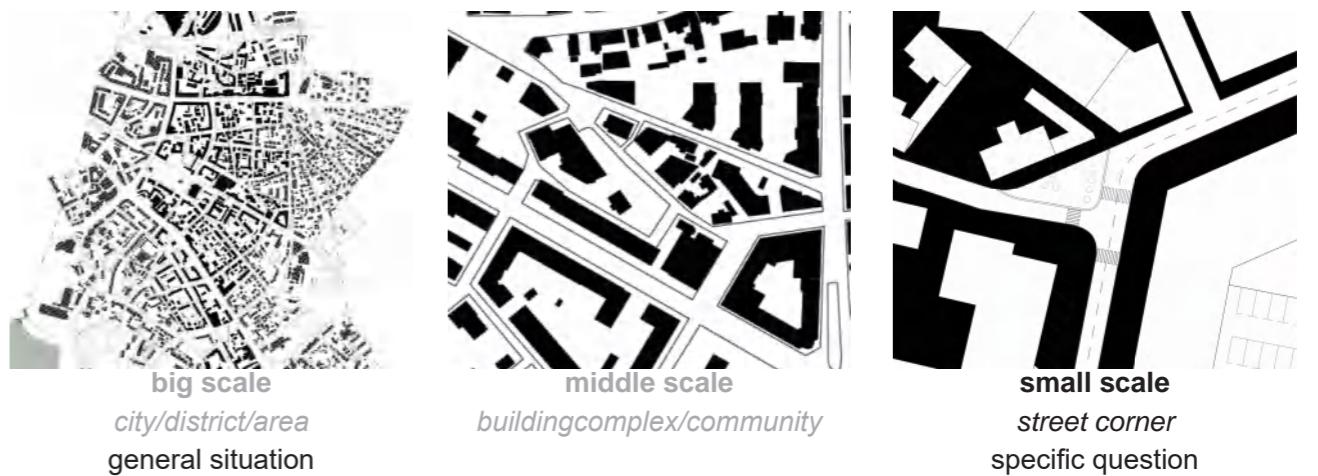
*Build a library as a series of **individual patterns** in order to further develop a pattern language.*

Mapping

Then another part of the work is to select the research location by mapping. My original intention is to analyze the urban characteristics of Tallinn through sample research, so the selection of sample location is particularly important. The distribution of samples should be able to show the urban texture of Tallinn relatively comprehensively and completely, and summarize as many possible types of urban public space as possible, so as to make the research content more convincing and credible.

When select the research objects, I hope to be able to take into account the largest possible type coverage and the smallest possible research objects. Large-scale samples, including the city itself, subdivisions and functional areas, can reflect the overall situation, but because the scope is too large, it is not feasible to study as an individual

research topic. The medium-scale sample includes building complexes and communities, etc. Although the scope of the study is controlled, it is still inconvenient to implement the research results into the design. Small-scale samples include urban corner Spaces, street intersections, etc., which can well focus attention on a single building or specific space. Therefore, I will choose small-scale urban corners as spatial samples for research in this topic.



These crossings are distributed throughout the city and can well cover various types of urban composite spaces. This composite is not only stylistic and formal, but also functional. This enables the

small-scale space to occupy as many sample types as possible in function and form, and the small-scale street corner space can be traced throughout the city, and can cover a larger area by points and surfaces.

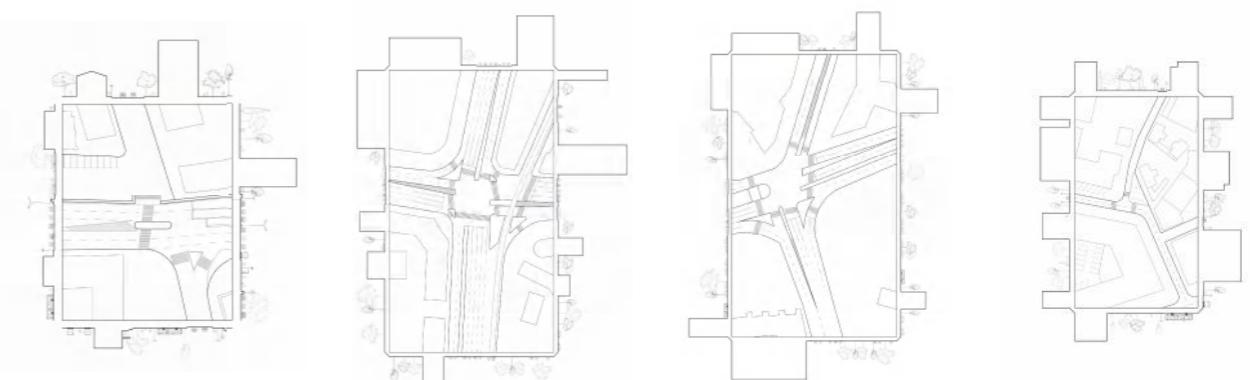


Taking "Line 6" as an example, the corner space can be spread all over it.

Field Analysis

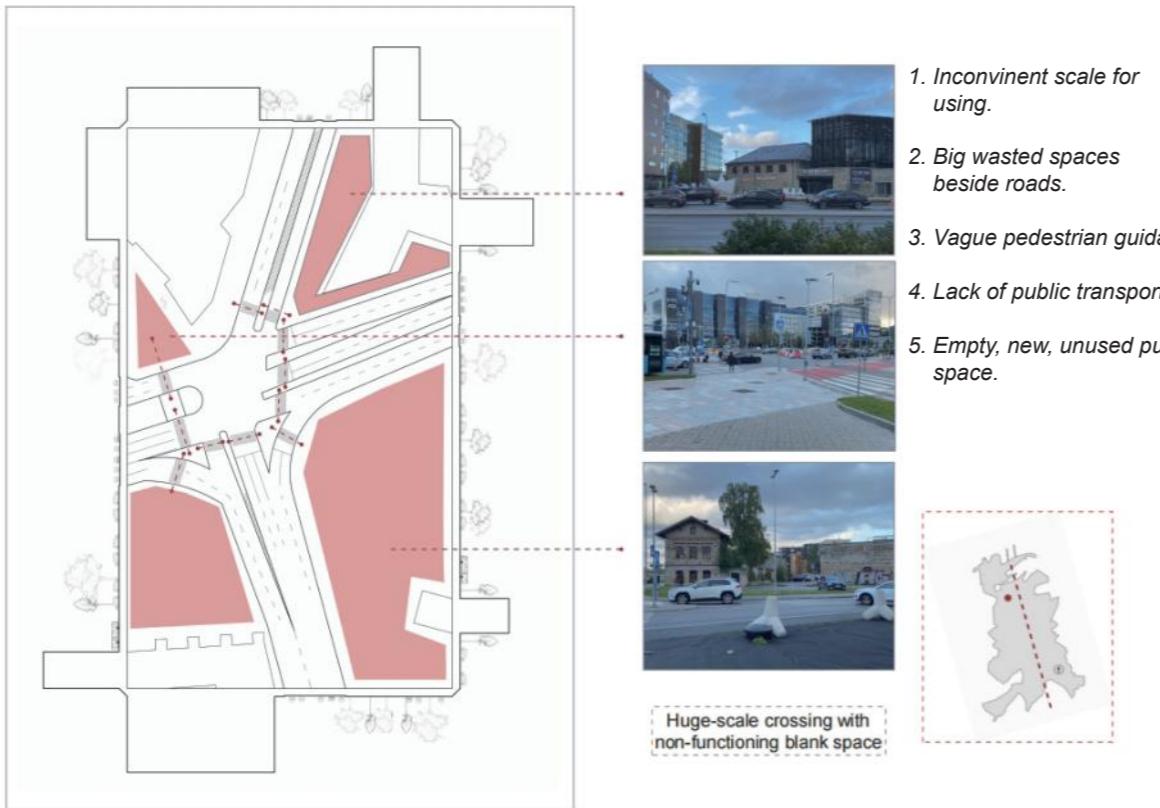
Through further research and selection of specific crossings and corner spaces, I can first sort out and analyze these fields typologically. When studying the street corner space, we should not only focus on the external public space, but also pay attention to the relationship

between the surrounding buildings and the public space. Urban life cannot exist in isolation from the building, which also provides ideas for the subsequent renovation design: instead of combining pattern furniture on the external public space, independent pattern is used as the medium to design the relationship between the public space and its surrounding architectural elements.



Through further research and selection of specific crossings and corner spaces, I can first sort out and analyze these fields typologically.

The solutions to these problems will be developed for the purpose of design, and the next step of pattern language research and site design will be carried out in combination with the previously established pattern library.



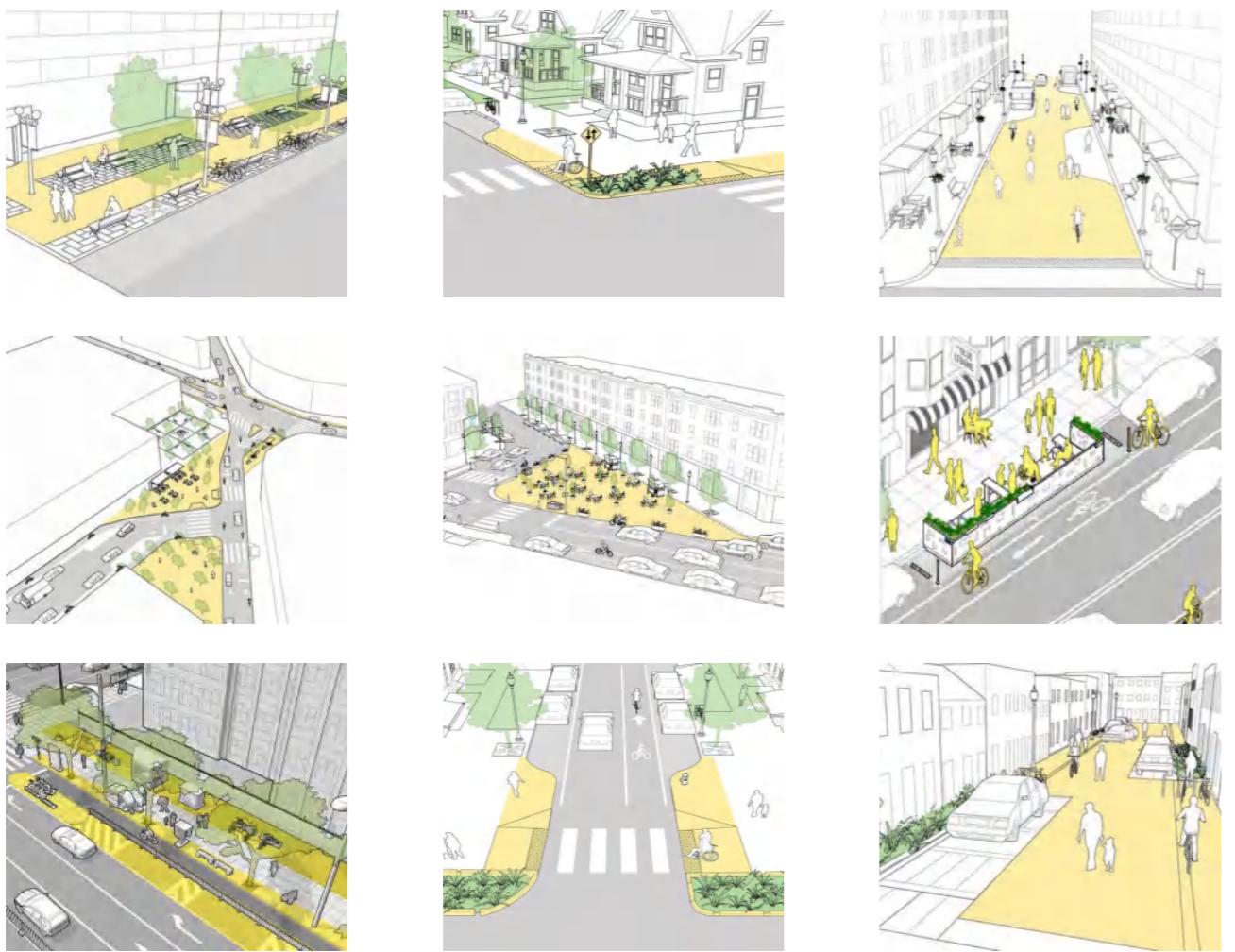
An example of analyzing the existing problem of a street corner.

Design Brief

For the design goal, I imagine that I can use typology library as a tool and street corner problem solving as a formula to carry out a series of urban space renovation. The previously established typology library will play a role in this step. Each individual pattern is combined in a different way to form a system covering the entire city to help embody the urban character of Tallinn. The process and methodology of combining these individual patterns to create a pattern language while solving proper problems is the final goal of design. I hope my design will not only limit in outdoor public spaces, but can be developed into an urban activity strategy which can discuss the relationship between public space and surrounding buildings.

The result of the final design should be to transform the public space and surrounding buildings according to the pattern language of

Tallinn's urban public space, in order to solve the problem of the existing street corner space. As the types and issues of public space vary, the final result will be a discussion of public space and the activities in it.



References of street corner space renovation. Each individual pattern is combined in a different way to form a system covering the entire city to help embody the urban character of Tallinn.

Conclusion

In summary, my design goal will be to create:

- *A certain pattern for Tallinn's urban space*
- *A series of street corner renovations design as a system*

Also as a design subject tailored to local conditions, I hope to try to answer the following questions through research on the specific location of Tallinn:

- 1. Does Tallinn's hybrid urban space have a specific identity?*
- 2. Can design help people experience the diversity of Tallinn's urban context?*
- 3. Whether there are some criteria for possible projects?*

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