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Johor Bahru: A Quality of Life City

Mohd Johari Mohd Yusof

The city of Johor Bahru is Malaysia's Southern Gateway, which was founded in 1855 by Temenggung Daeng Ibrahim, the father of Sultan Abu Bakar. The city was originally named Tanjung Puteri and it started out as a small Malay fishing village. In 1994, Johor Bahru was given a city status and since then this city has rapidly grown and becoming Malaysia's second largest city with a population of over 1 million.

Aspiring towards the highest possible quality of life, Johor Bahru through Iskandar Malaysia Development Region has planned to protect and to preserve their natural resources and urban green spaces. Hence, the urban landscape planning studio project for year 2013 addresses these issues by proposing six design concepts and ideas in continuing protecting the city's fragile ecological environments. All these six proposals comprise three different significant zones of Johor Bahru city center, Stulang Laut and Danga Bay area. Three project are presented here.

Various concept ideas were derived from these six projects. These appealing, interesting and unique ideas suggested that urban development should aim to be more self-sufficient in its use of resources rather than depleting resources drawn from areas outside the city. Furthermore, the proposed concept ideas also suggested that urban

landscape should be developed in a manner that takes into account the physical character of the original natural environment on which the city is built. In this context, the designers argued that green infrastructure in Johor Bahru city should not be seen as merely the 'left-over' spaces that have not yet been developed within an urban area, but as spaces functioning as parts of a city's life-support system. They benefit the urban dwellers by providing them with better surroundings in which to live and work hence enjoying a better quality of life.

In this project, the designers explore an effective and comprehensive system for planning the protection and development of urban green infrastructure, now seen as essential to ensure the preceding environmental and social benefits can be maintained as urban growth continues. Through their ideas, the designers hope to make cities more attractive and healthy places to live, work and visit. In overall, the studio exercise and project have brought some creative and appealing ideas in protecting urban ecologies and its natural resources for future sustainability. This exercise also portrays unique design solutions for protecting these urban green spaces and at the same time do not compromise the needs of the future generations towards these valuable spaces.

Jury Review

Devendiran S.T. Mani

Overall site analysis was thoroughly appraised in terms of existing landscape components. The students have carried out clear objectives and goal to facilitate the site constraints by providing linkages between various external spaces. Conceptual approach is adequate but lack creativity. Although the Master Plan itself is clear, the presentation technique and graphic could support better the designers' intention. The students have great potential. Overall, the design intentions are good and the approaches are feasible. The designers need to emphasize more on transpiring their intentions graphically in order to convey messages to the viewers. There are no indication of planting strategies and enhancements of the existing vegetations.

Khalillah Zakariya

The students have highlighted the issues on linkages of green spaces and sites in the city, the lack of cultural activities and public spaces, and the deterioration of Sg. Segget. These issues are specific and relevant to the conditions of most cities where the spaces are at times disconnected. The flow from site synthesis to design strategies is clear. The student has demonstrated ideas of incorporating green technologies in the proposal, such as green solar panel and rainwater harvesting. Since Sg. Segget functions as the central and natural spine of the city, the idea analogy could have tapped into the river as the source of resource and connections. The green spaces in the master plan start to show how the city's development can have re-attachment with nature. However, the functions of each space and its role as space for art and culture are left unexplained. The students have potential to push further on the idea of the river filtration and hydroelectricity by integrating the river with the diverse activities of the city. The graphic presentation is good. To further improve, the student should illustrate the different spatial occupation in the public spaces through photomontages.



Green Journey through Art and Culture

Mohd Johari Mohd Yusof, Kamariah Dola, Norsidah Ujang & Abd Aziz Othman

The Segget River was formerly known as Seagate River which means a gate giving access to a river was chosen by Shafiq as his detail design area. This project aims to heighten the Johor State pride through restoring the river hence functioning as a natural spine of the Johor Bahru city. Design strategies of 4R (reconnect, reutilize, reattach and recover) were proposed to demonstrate ideas of attaching back nature to the city and also ideas of connecting again the cultural activities along this river. In his design, Shafiq has also incorporating green technology such as providing green solar panel and harvesting rainwater in recovering the water quality of this river. This project has successfully illustrates design activities along river bank that would promote relaxation and enjoyment when strolling along rivers in a busy city such as Johor Bahru.

DESIGN STRATEGIES

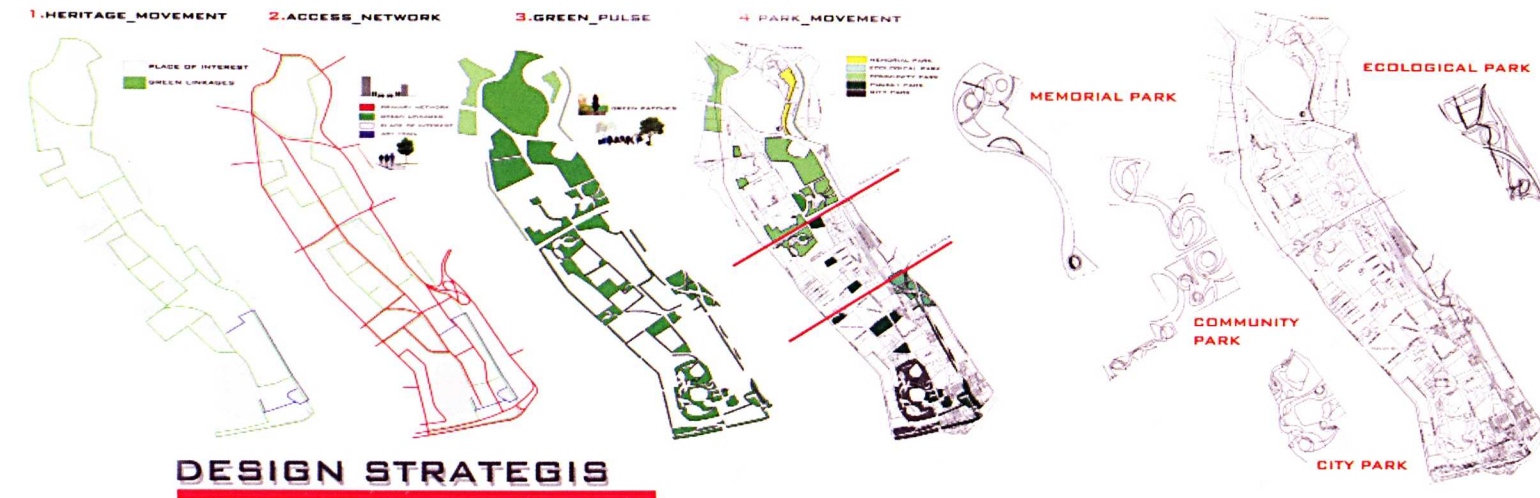


Muhammad Shafiq Zulkifli



The Vigour of Pulse

Kamariah Dola, Suhardi Maulan, Mohd Johari Mohd Yusoff, Norsidah Ujang & Aini Yasmin Ghazalli



DESIGN STRATEGIS

Due to fast economic and social changes of the site, the city needs to revive its lost identity. Arefah's design attempts to recreate the identity of Johor Bahru city centre and sustaining the city heritage by enhancing its community spirit in cultural and historical values. Revitalization and reprising the importance of Segget River and surrounding parks, referred to as blue pulse and green pulse. The history and culture of the area become the main focus of her design. Her

design includes reconnecting pedestrian and public transportation linkages to heritage and historical sites and parks surrounding the city. The idea development shows an interesting concept of fluid dynamism which could be taken further into relating it with the fluidity of the river and the activities rather than merely designed forms.

1 THINKING PROCESS



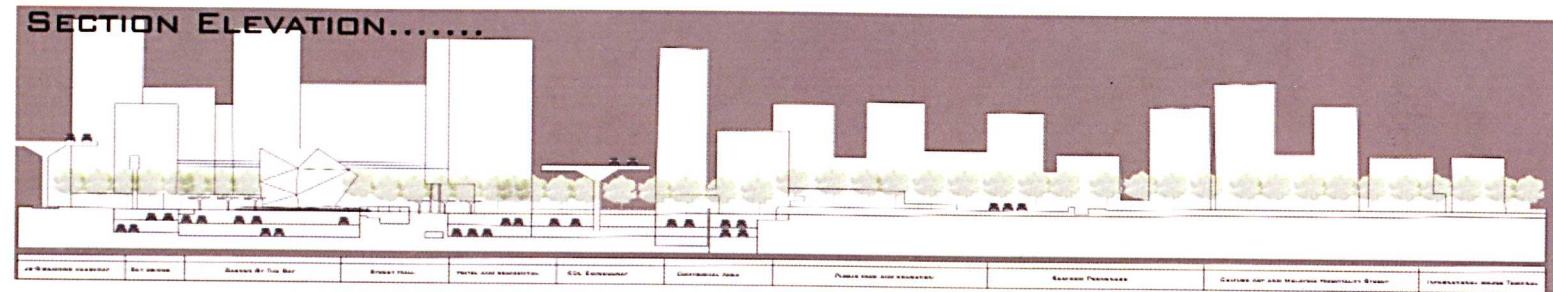
Arefah Rahim



Walking through Opulence

Abd Aziz Othman, Mohd Johari Mohd Yusof, Norsidah Ujang & Kamariah Dola

It is a series of green spaces – designed for the community and environmental needs with distinctive character of spaces. They offer a wide range of activities capturing the spirit of these places. The emphasis is on the significant visual and physical linkages. A system of pedestrian walkway is introduced from the residential areas to the city's business centre. The corridor varies from the conventional to the ecological approaches in terms of the site context to provide an extraordinary walking experience. Promenades and elevated walkways create strong sense of identity as a modern and innovative experience for Johor Bahru city.



Mohd Amirul Hussain

