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KYIV HAS WHAT AMERICA WANTS

Harvard design team advises city on use of former industrial site

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At the invitation of the Kyiv City Administration, an adjunct professor of urban design at the Harvard Design School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and a team of Harvard Design students visited Kyiv to develop a project for one of the city's industrial areas.

After conducting research, Professor Lee Cott and his team of 12 students proposed three different plans for the 150-hectare site, known as Telychka and located on the Dnipro River. Telychka has been an industrial zone since the late 1920s.

The City Administration plans to redevelop the site.

The first plan proposed by Cott and his students envisages transforming the site into a business center. The second plan calls for using the site for entertainment purposes, and the third involves transforming the site into a cultural and educational center.

"We want to use the site as a way of thinking about urbanism and thinking about building cities," he said.

Guy Perry, Design Critic in Urban Design at Harvard, who is currently overseeing several of Central Europe's largest developments, including projects in Warsaw, Prague, Kyiv and Belgrade,



From left to right: Lev Partzkhaldze, chairman of 21st Century investment company, Lee Cott, adjunct professor of urban design at the Harvard University Design School, and Guy Perry, design critic in urban design at Harvard, are part of a team working with the Kyiv City Administration to develop one of the city's decrepit industrial areas. (Post photo by Oleksy Boyko)

said that Kyiv is now entering a period of rapid development comparable to Warsaw 10 years ago.

"Kyiv has a chance to avoid the mistakes that North America and Western Europe made," Perry said. In Kyiv, Perry is working on several projects with the investment company 21st Century.

"This is an excellent site to consider

this subject, as it is a place where a 21st century economy is replacing older industries. It is an opportunity to move forward," he said.

Cott said it is important to think of sustainable and ecological development in projects of this sort, commenting that cities like Kyiv are in the process of destroying themselves. Most developing

cities, he said, like Western cities, are characterized by overdevelopment and traffic problems.

PETROLEUM ADDICTS

"Kyiv is at a crucial point right now," Cott said. "What happens will be very important: will Kyiv go the way of New York and Buenos Aires, with air pollu-

tion and traffic jams?"

He pointed out that cities like America's Atlanta, Georgia have lost some of their appeal because they are unsustainable, polluted, and highly dependent on the petroleum industry.

Over the last few years, the number of trams in Kyiv has been drastically reduced, with some routes closed. In America, tram companies were bought by General Motors and closed down in the 1960s.

"We thought we could let people live healthier lives in the countryside by building highways," Cott said.

Perry said that recent studies in the United States have shown that people who live outside cities are in fact less healthy than those who live in the city's center.

"Tramways are becoming popular again in America, in cities like Portland, Oregon. And it is prestigious for Western European countries like France and Germany to have a new tramway: it implies a progressive, dynamic, model of development," Perry said.

Cott said the Kyiv City Administration can also learn from the model of the existing eco-city of Curitiba, Brazil, which has one of the most developed public transportation systems in the world.

The mayor of Curitiba decided to put huge public investment into buses and made it impossible for people to drive downtown, Cott said.

"Everybody takes public transportation there because the waiting time

See HARVARD

Harvard Design School team plans for Kyiv site's future

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between the buses is 90 seconds," Cott said. "Now they have a hybrid of electric and gasoline transport which doesn't pollute."

Ukraine should be doing everything they can to promote the development of a new generation of new transport technologies, as it is not a petroleum producing country, the architects said.

"Why become addicted like America?" Cott said.

THINK GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY

Andry Myrgorodsky, deputy head of the office of the city's chief architect, said the city will take into account the Harvard students' ideas. The Kyiv City Administration realizes that to have a strong future, Kyiv must work with consultants around the world, he added.

The city will open a tender for development of the site to local architects.

"I am convinced that 90 percent of participants will be local architects, but all their projects will be based on recommendations of Harvard specialists, which

should limit the number of unwise ideas and proposals," Myrgorodsky said.

He hopes that the project will be realized within five years. Factories will be relocated from the site, in accordance with the city's general plan.

"We are using the Telychka site as a way of understanding the city, and understanding ways of making Kyiv more intelligent in design than other cities," Cott said.

Contemporary Kyiv is ahead of many cities around the world, he said, because it is pedestrian-friendly and offers residents green spaces and a river.

"In America, we spend billions of dollars today to try to recreate environments like you have in Kyiv," Perry said. "We would like to learn from the mistakes of the last 50 years to 80 years in North America and Western Europe."

Kyiv needs to plan its development on the current thinking in America and Western Europe, not the thinking of 30 years or 40 years ago.

"Kyiv cannot afford to make those

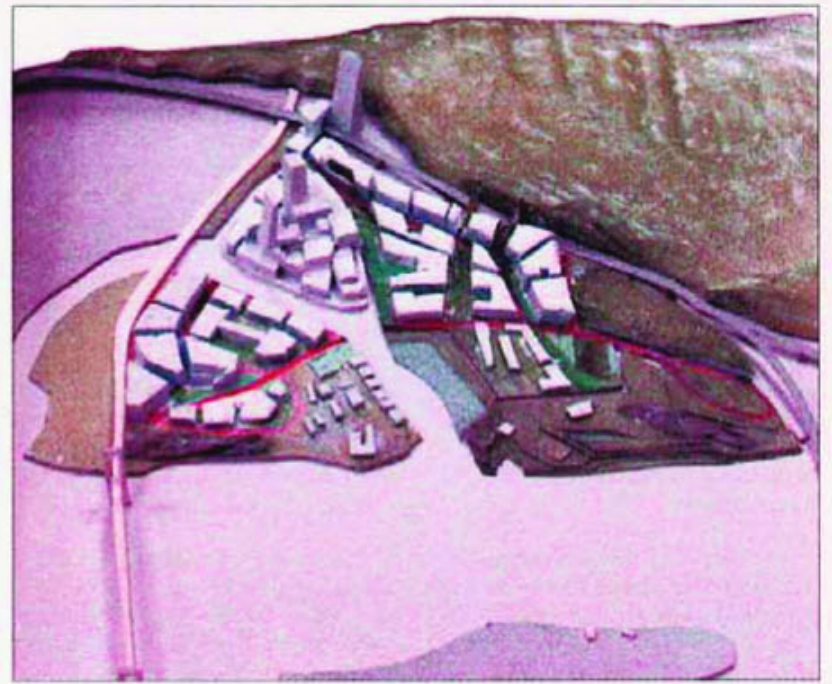
mistakes because it will never catch up if it does," he said.

Warsaw has seen a great deal of investment in the last ten years, but the city's inhabitants are no happier to live there now than they were ten years ago, Perry said, because the investments were not channeled in an intelligent way that would create a better city.

"People in Poland realize that they have missed an enormous opportunity to increase the quality of life. A lot of international investors made a lot of money in Warsaw and in Poland, but only a few people can say that they saw their lives improve."

Cott said that it is very important that the Kyiv city center remains vibrant and useful, commenting that the Dynamo stadium's downtown location is a big plus.

"40 years ago we started building all our stadiums outside the city," Cott said. "Now we are bringing them all back into the cities because we are missing the quality of life they bring, which you have. Kyiv has what America wants."



This model shows a 150-hectare industrial zone known as Telychka, located on the Dnipro River. A team from the Harvard Design School proposed three plans for the site's development to the Kyiv City Administration. (Post photo by Oleksy Boyko)